

Budget Engagement 2017/2018

North Tyneside Council arranged a number of events to capture the views of residents (including young people) on priorities for the Council Budget for 2017-2018. These were held over a six week period across the borough. Opportunities were given to residents to come and have their say either at afternoon or evening meetings.

In addition to face to face options, information was also shared via social media and the Council website, so that residents who were unable to attend face to face events could also have their say.

This engagement builds on the 'Big Community Conversation 2016' which took place from June to September 2016, where we talked to 1232 residents about their priorities for the Borough. We visited 94 locations, events and festivals, covering all 20 wards on at least 3 occasions. The feedback from this fed into Cabinet's initial consideration of its budget proposals.

Overall 98 people attended the 7 face to face events held.

In addition online feedback was promoted via the Council's website – the links were shared via social media too. To date, we have received 109 online responses to the questionnaire on the website.

Links to the online consultation were shared widely – with residents who have signed up to be on our corporate engagement list, to our partners, and also to those organisations and groups who support people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. We offered to organise specific events to these groups and organisations too.

The following overview of the engagement feedback shows widespread agreement with the draft Budget proposals. Key findings highlight requests for:

- Continued good quality adult social care
- A clearer definition of 'affordable housing'
- Maintain support services for those in most need
- North Tyneside to continue to be a clean and safe borough
- Development of infrastructure alongside more housing developments
- Information on the implications of increased self-service, particularly for vulnerable people and those who have limited income but support for need to increase self service

- Greater investment in ICT in order to deliver self-service with support to use IT
- Improvements to be made to the Council website
- Regular reporting on engagement outcomes
- Regular information on progress on regeneration projects
- More information about volunteering opportunities across the borough
- Volunteering being used as a stepping stone to employment through development of skills
- More publicity about the community and voluntary organisations and groups in North Tyneside
- Information about how to be a good neighbour
- More information to help residents understand the cost of services and how they can support more efficient use
- More use of preventative services
- Better targeting of universal services
- Support for reduction in Council buildings

Participants also acknowledged the impact successful partnership working and the achievement of local schools has had on the borough. They gave consistent feedback that we should celebrate this success more often.

Face to face engagement is now complete and there are opportunities to comment online will be available until 20 January 2017. Should any additional comments be received by this date, they will be published in an addendum report and presented to Council on 2 February 2017.