

## Appendix G- Budget Consultation Feedback

### Feedback from the online Survey

The Council has received 30 responses via the online budget survey, as outlined in the following table:

Do you have any comments to make about the phase one budget proposals?	How much do you now feel you understand about why the council must make total savings?	If you have any specific ideas about how the council can save money or generate additional income to protect services, please state these here:
Why did the council get into debt in the first place? It seems that certain areas get the biggest financial spend and other areas are left with no enforcement, street cleaning, graffiti and fly tipping, if we don't see the street cleaners now then this issue will only get worse. Bring back community skips/bulky waste collections (rather than booking a service)	Nothing at all	Sand Martin House - just a council ego project.
	A fair amount	Better deployment of staff
	A fair amount	

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<p>Under the heading HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS on page 18 of the proposal it is mentioned that "Where staff are affected, the Council will seek voluntary redundancies as appropriate to minimize compulsory redundancies and where this is unavoidable, appropriate outplacement support will be considered" My concern with this is that people close to retirement age most especially women between the age of 55 and 65 will be affected. With the experience I have heard shared amongst friends during the pandemic, most private employers target the same age group and especially women, if the council also follows through with compulsory retirements, this will affect a lot more women, than men. As we know, at such stages of life women have crippling responsibilities in their lives but may find it difficult to quickly pick up new jobs. Also, outplacement support sometimes seems to come across as a harrowing hit and miss process. What other support plan can the Council begin to explore now, to ensure some of the most vulnerable women in her employment is catered to, whilst they are expecting what seems to be the inevitable. Could upskilling the most vulnerable be considered?</p>	A fair amount	
	Nothing at all	
	Not very much	There is so much wasted public spaces areas of land which the council could sell at discount to homeowners this will also help save in maintenance and upkeep cost.
	A fair amount	Look at Council Member Allowance. Example Chelmsford City Council April 2020 - March 2021. £6111.00
	Nothing at all	
Yes	Not very much	Do not attempt to introduce a new selective licensing scheme for rented properties. The one which is ending at the end of this month was very expensive and achieved very little apart from driving landlords away from Peterborough and increasing rents for tenants in Peterborough.

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Yes. As per normal the usual suspects are targeted for reduced budgets. However , while there are tough decisions to make on service provision, I see no improvement in duplication of work/areas of responsibility, within the council core. Still very inefficient ( IT ) and still have client contractor relationships that are mostly unnecessary	A fair amount	I counted 6 people involved in sending out a recent FOI , not responding to it. NPS and Aragon doing the same work and three teams involved in waste , 2 PCC and 1 Aragon
Reducing street cleaning, effecting the look and feel of Peterborough, should be one of the last things you consider. It will not only effect property prices, desirability for businesses moving into the area, but also mental and physical health - which leads to costs further down the line.	A fair amount	
I would support the sale of the St George's Hydrotherapy Pool to a private physiotherapist, but only if a reasonable amount of daytime access at affordable rates by the community does form part of the final contract/agreement.	A fair amount	
Whilst it is understandable that the Council needs to make savings, it is not prudent to stop the pavement cleansing as during period when either fruit or leaves fall from trees leaves the Council open to claims for accidents caused by slippage which could cost more in the long term. Also the cancelling of spring & summer planting in parks is counterintuitive in the current climate.	A fair amount	

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<p>There is enough flytip around the city as it is, its getting worse each year, yet you are considering reducing this element of service, including the spring clean. We don't get enough cleansing services as it is, we cannot let this city go down the pan and reduce it even more. The more rubbish there is on the street the more people will disrespect the area and drop more litter and rubbish which will create more work for Aragon and then slow them up even more. So there won't be a saving here at all, Aragon will have to do more work with less resources. Our city will turn into a no go area. The same with your proposals on the parks and open spaces. The less you maintain, the less you have standards then the more people will disrespect it, and the more the place will attract ASB, crime and other unwanted behaviour. Our parks should be a place we all can enjoy, with good standards of facilities and cleanliness. If we don't, Peterborough will just become a laughing stock</p>	A great deal	<p>Re-introduce privatisation of enforcement. Make them responsible for covert surveillance, give them incentives to trace offenders down and fine people. But you got rid of the other company doing this because it bought bad publicity, well look at the amazing publicity all this flytipping is doing for the city now and the state of the areas?!!</p>
<p>You reduced street cleansing and grounds maintenance in 2015 for similar cuts. There was public outcry at the state of the city and you then reverted back on these cuts due to the immense amount of public and Cllr dissatisfaction. Yet you are now looking up for the same? The public won't tolerate this. These services have been slashed and slashed over the years and at present we get a very basic and reduced service. There is no more to cut here. Throughout the pandemic the value of our parks and open spaces were immensely valued, not just here in Peterborough but across the country. Yet you are now proposing to reduce the quality of these open spaces, when the council have worked so hard to get to them where they are with such minimal resources. It's such a short sighted decision. These parks bring immense health benefits to all users, just look at the dementia walks at Central Park for instance.</p>	A fair amount	<p>Sell some of your farm land for housing. Reduce the number of Cllr's. It's simply ridiculous the numbers we have.</p>

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<p>In my opinion the council have always been open and honest about the budget proposals over the years but looking at the figures quoted in simple terms the target of a balanced budget falls a long way short. Being realistic about the statement this can only mean one thing which is redundancies. The council have always said that their staff are their greatest asset which is quite right but yet I feel the council need to be more realistic about the future (short and long term) and be honest about the future prospects for staff and council as a whole.</p>	<p>A fair amount</p>	<p>In previous budget statements the emphasis has been too heavily weighted on "savings" and not enough on how we might improve on income. So for example the council should also focus on: 1. Debt recovery 2. Making better use of the provisions that might be available to charge for certain services/functions. 3. increase the various enforcement activities around such things as non-compliance (Regulatory Services for example) and the associated penalty charges that could be introduced. 4. Stop wasting money on external consultancies. 5. consider more carefully whether the outsourced services such as Aragon are and have been better value for money than the previous in-house service deliveries.</p>
<p>We need a bigger emphasis on general upkeep and cleaning of the city. Currently, high traffic areas such as Lincoln Road in Millfield, Lincoln Road in town, Millfield as a whole, New England, Dogsthorpe are riddled with litter and rubbish. Also fly tipping can be seen regularly which goes unnoticed by the council for weeks at a time. Furthermore, many Street signs in 'pedestrian estates' such as Westwood, Bretton, Welland and the Orton's are in need of repair/replacement or, in a number of cases, have the wrong information on them and do not help people find the correct location of a certain house number due to them being numbered in an unorthodox way. The budget proposal for reducing ADS services will make these areas even dirtier. If anything, we need to increase the budget for all cleaning/maintenance services.</p>	<p>A fair amount</p>	<p>Put an extra tax on any establishment where people can take alcoholic drinks out of the premises and onto the streets. This would be in the form of higher council tax for these establishments in particular and in the form of a tax on the capacity to store and sell alcoholic beverages. An inspection would need to be done (at the cost of the business) whereby an inspector would look for, and take note of, any places where alcohol could be stored, such as a fridge, and calculate the maximum amount of litres of alcohol the shop or pub can store at any given time. The tax would then be calculated per litre of theoretically storable alcohol and would have to be paid to the council every month. Due to the sheer number of shops selling alcohol, the aforementioned tax would drastically increase the income for the council alongside the many benefits of reducing the amount of alcohol on our streets. This tax would also be passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices. As a result, people may not be able to afford to buy alcohol as much as before and we would see less litter, less violence, less public urination, less strain on our NHS ambulance teams and police and we would see cleaner streets in general alongside the extra revenue for the council from the tax. This would also encourage people to open businesses with less negative impacts than that of a licensed establishment which would, in turn, save money for the council. This proposition goes further than just raising revenue and would directly protect services such as the NHS and police as they would have less of a burden due to there being less drunk people on the streets.</p>

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<p>The proposal says "Economic development remains a key priority for the council" but outlines reduction in street cleaning both in the town centre and elsewhere. The cuts proposed will not aid economic development. The majority of the savings are not coming from the area with the most spend but are coming from areas lost of people really value - which seems unfair to cur services from all to pay for those used by some. Agree with paying for bins for developers and for those who do not look after them</p>	A great deal	
<p>It has become clear to many that the council has a propensity to engage large consultancy firms to advise on even the most trivial of tasks. This is illustrated by the admission in a recent paper issued by the council giving background information concerning the debacle over the plans to fence off a large part of Werrington fields to provide a solution to a "safeguarding" problem, the existence of which neither the council, or Ken Stimpson school have been able to satisfactorily evidence. In that paper the council details how large consultancy firms were employed (and inadequately briefed) to provide services such as the design of the fence and the management of it's erection, after another consultancy firm had been engaged (and inadequately briefed) to identify which area of the fields would be best suited for the task. In the end, due to incompetence, plans had to be changed due to residents pointing out that the land the council proposed to fence is protected under a covenant. When challenged about the use of consultants it was claimed that these skills are not possessed by council staff. It strikes me that the council would be better advised to increase, not decrease, headcount to ensure that all necessary skillsets are covered by council staff and NOT by horrendously expensive consultants.</p>	Not very much	See above.
<p>Well done, Councillors, for grasping the nettle. All of us, families, individuals, businesses, voluntary bodies, have to live within our income, difficult as it may be at times. The alternative for us is what happened to Liverpool City Council in the late 1970s and early 1980s.</p>	A great deal	

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	A fair amount	please look again at V R amongst staff in the DoLS team as this work can be provided more cost effectively by independent assessors and this will provide a saving

I have already filled in this survey, but noticed a couple of typing errors corrected here: I have a number of questions. The budget proposals make assertions which are not simply based on the facts facing those who must make the choices, but on political priorities also. I would challenge some of those assertions. Furthermore the proposals in phase one claim to be open to all options. This is not entirely clear because all options are not included in the document which is meant to inform this consultation paper. Because there are many agencies delivering council services it is not easy for the ordinary voter to make informed comment. Those 'in the know' might simply say 'you don't understand the complexity of the situation facing the council.' In answer to that I would simply say the council should put itself in the place of the ordinary citizen of this city and be entirely transparent about the processes involved and accept that you are in place to serve the whole city not just one political standpoint. The proposals state that: "it (economic development) helps reduce demand on public sector services (?) by improving economic circumstances, financial stability (!?) and resilience, life chances and overall health and well being" An impressive claim, the evidence needs to be provided.

**NOTE- previous response removed to avoid duplication**

Not very much

The proposals assert that all options will be looked at. This may be the case, but not all options are mentioned in the proposals. Two possibilities not considered are: the setting up of cooperative ventures to run services. This would be particularly relevant for the hydrotherapy pool, and parks maintenance. Clearly other possibilities also exist, estate maintenance and cleaning being one mentioned in the proposals. I would like cooperative ventures to be considered, there are examples around the country of councils doing this successfully, alongside bringing services back into full council control.

Reduce the Capital Programme "The council is proposing to reduce the investment in its capital programme activity for 2022/23 to more accurately reflect the level of work it has capacity to deliver. Historically, the council only has capacity to deliver a programme no greater than £80m. Last year the budget allocated to the programme was £147m." I would agree with this intent to reduce capital investment. On the face of it a startling revelation, that's £67m above the historical annual spend. More than fills the budget gap. Where has it gone? Does this mean the council has been over or unrealistically ambitious in the past? St Georges Hydrotherapy Pool. Why is the pool included in this consultation if the decision to sell it has already been made? If sold I presume that the hydrotherapy pool will be offered to the community with a charge..how will this compare to charges while in council hands? –will there be safeguards for community users (i.e. independent oversight of pricing?) There appear a number of opportunities for cooperative development, which could keep benefits/services running rather than simply sell them to private providers, reduce services or not provide them at all. \*

(hydrotherapy pool) \* summer/spring planting in parks No longer carrying out spring and summer planting in the council's parks and open spaces. Applications for Green Flag status for city parks will no longer be made. \* remove dedicated cleansing squad (fly tipping and litter) will be collected by ADS street cleaning crews \* stop the annual spring clean of targeted areas (who loses out here?) \* reduce frequency of cleaning pavements in city centre to once a year Charge for replacement bins? - no doubt there are residents who can afford this..but they are least likely to have bins damaged..what if a householder doesn't replace a damaged bin because they can't afford it? Wheelie bins, especially on the large estates can be left out for long periods and subject to vandalism. Should residents, many the least able to carry the cost, be expected to replace the bins? Where will contents go when bins are not replaced?



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<p>I have just read (Phase one budget) that the Council plans to cut street cleaning and seasonal planting of local gardens, parks and the city centre, this is a real shame for Peterborough as a whole as parts of the city centre looked exceptionally nice this year with everything being more tidy and with the gardens and parks being maintained well. I hope something will be done to keep our open spaces wildlife and public friendly as our parks and gardens in Peterborough are our pride and joy just as much as the Cathedral as these gardens (lido and Bishops) have been around for an extremely long time and it would be shambolic to just go ahead and sort of abandon them, something has to be done about this matter. I hope you understand my frustrations about this as I and many residents want Peterborough to look nice for ourselves and tourists.</p>	<p>A fair amount</p>	<p>I was wondering if this would be a great idea that the Council could progress with; is it possible for the Council to approach companies in Peterborough (large or small) such as IKEA, Amazon, Tesco and so on, just so they could adopt and look after certain planting beds around Peterborough's parks like the Lido, Bishops gardens and Central park? (you could even ask local nurseries or garden centres like Van Hage or Dobbies) In return they could have free advertising on a sign that would be located and placed on each planting bed, usually companies like Tesco's run community schemes that give back to communities by donating or doing, I thought that this would be a great idea that the Council could take forward to these companies as this then takes the burden of planting the beds up in Spring and Summer away from the Council.</p>
<p>Do NOT reduce street cleansing. Peterborough has never looked dirtier, particularly in areas just north of the centre, on Broadway and Eastfield Road.</p>	<p>A great deal</p>	<p>Sell the space where the city market used to be. Create a new pop-up market between Deacon Street and Cromwell Road, beside the bus station and Brewery Tap.</p>
<p>No</p>	<p>A fair amount</p>	<p>Reducing debt are of the proposals you can stop paying Serco double to undertake this work. Previous projects have been done where Serco kept large amounts of taxpayers money for work they were already being paid to do with the same staff that were already employed to do it apart from occasional help from the office favourite who had nothing else to do no extra staff were brought in. They clearly already had the ability to do the work but just put more effort into doing the work when they could profit from it. Strange that taxpayers money can be so easily given away in this way when the Council is in such need particularly and when the HMRC were making debt collection easier at the time of these projects by sharing employment and benefit details with Councils. Stop paying Serco vast amounts of money to fund expensive temporary staff and managers - grants and covid backlogs are now clear and there are still 7 being funded without enough work to keep them going this doesn't seem a good use of taxpayers money. Remaining staff being paid very poorly in comparison - as a council tax payer locally it seems wrong we're spending so much money in these areas</p>

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It seems to be a rather defeatist approach. There seem to be multiple opportunities for increase in revenue rather than make such massive savings. Over the last few years, this emphasis on savings has caused a steady deterioration of Peterborough as a place to live. To do more of the same is of great concern	A great deal	Generating more income. With the growth in the city, how is it that the overall council finances are not growing with the increase in properties for council tax and businesses for business rates? With the increase in electricity prices, now is the time to invest, as has been previously mooted in solar farms and wind turbines on council land and building roofs to give a sustained boost to council finances and the city's credentials as Environmental Capital. More radically, a change in council tax banding to increase the tax on the more valuable properties for those who can afford to contribute more. Peterborough has some of the lowest council taxes in the country, there is a very strong case for levelling that up! Even more radically, why not offer a council tax reduction to any household with members over 80? Why would this save money? Well, think about it. If granny is saving you £1000 a year in council tax there's much more incentive to keep her at home rather than shipping her out to a council-financed social care facility and she is much more likely to live safely and not require social care in the home.
No.	A fair amount	As a home owner I have to pay for all repairs to the property I fail to understand why your tenants don't have to pay for any repairs (as any/all repairs cost the ratepayers not the individual).
PCC should be lowering the wage of its CEO and leaders. You waste money on consultants for roadworks that are over inflated. You waste money on new promises for PCC. You waste money.	Nothing at all	Lower the wage of the CEO, directors and council leaders. Sell off the new premises at Fletton quays and stay where you are. Don't use consultants that charge a ridiculous amount. Your residents pay stupid amounts of council tax that we get no visible return, we pay taxes on every thing and you want to charge us more. Do the decent thing and recognise you messed up, you wasted money, you have not delivered to your residents. Own up to your mistakes and do not penalise your residents.
Don't reduce street cleaning	A fair amount	

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<p>I do not believe that it is in the best interest of the city to reduce provision for cleansing, including the annual spring clean, pavement washing and planting in parks. Over the last 18 months, it's understandable that some of these actions have been neglected but it's apparent for myself and visitors to the city who I've spoken to that Peterborough is looking more tired and dirty than ever. Areas in the centre of town even smell bad. Litter is a common problem. And I've never seen as many rats in the last 18 months than I had in the previous 18 years. While I understand that money needs to be saved, I believe that neglecting the look and feel of Peterborough will harm it further in the long term as businesses and commuters stay away and we continue to rank high on embarrassing news articles regarding 'UK's worst places to live'. Even more so, continuing to neglect the look-and-feel of Peterborough will have a detrimental effect on the mental health of citizens and inadvertently encourage more littering and less pride in the upkeep of the city. If these reductions are made I and I believe many others will seriously consider moving out of the city to better-kept villages and towns in neighbouring constituencies.</p>	<p>A fair amount</p>	<p>Continue to trim the Serco contract, it has always included a lot of wastage, and reduce the headcount of the highest paid members of staff.</p>

## **Feedback from the Civic Society Group**

was concerned about the impact on the appearance of the City of the environment savings but understood that difficult choices had to be made. it was also felt that some community/friends groups are also very concerned but could well be encouraged to step forward in even greater numbers to support the Council and help where possible with planting etc.

## **Feedback from the Joint Mosque Group**

Aragon service reductions:

- concerns were shared about the impact on the street scene as a result of the proposals to cut Aragon services
- flytipping is already a challenge for the city, and the group felt this would be worsened as a result of the proposals
- the proposal to charge for replacement bins was also a concern; it may serve as a disincentive for people to replace lost or damaged bins, again leading to increased fly tipping and littering
- concern was also raised regarding residents in central areas of the city where secure bin storage is unavailable; here, bin damage is likely to be more prevalent, and Aragon not returning bins to the same spot that they were placed on by the residents also leads to damage and loss. Residents in these areas may be disproportionately impacted by these new charges
- a specific question was raised regarding the statutory duties of the council in relation to public health, and whether the proposals would impact on our ability to protect the public

Communities:

- the consultation document refers to "improving community relationships and working with communities"; the group noted that many volunteers were already working tirelessly for and on behalf of their communities, and working alongside the council, and if more is expected or anticipated, some form of grant funding to support that effort will be vital

Councillor Allowances:

- the group felt that allowances for Councillors needed to be reviewed and reduced, or even removed for the next year or two, to support the overall financial challenge

Assurances:

- the group summarised their overarching concerns, and expressed them in the form of needing assurances as follows:
  - that the impacts of tranche 1 and tranche 2 proposals are fully evaluated, particularly in relation to the impacts on inequalities
  - that a separate assessment is undertaken on the impacts of proposals on health and wellbeing inequalities

- that we identify how we successfully bring together the need for the city to grow against a backdrop of reducing services
- that our work to tackle victim-based issues, including domestic abuse, hate crime and racism, are not impacted by the budget challenge

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