

Budget Consultation 2018/19

Executive Summary

As part of the budget setting process for 2018/19, the Council consulted with the residents of St. Helens giving them the opportunity to put forward their views on the proposals for Council Tax increases. Residents were also consulted on which areas of service they would like to see the Council spend more, less or the same amount of money, given regard to the reductions in funding facing the Council. The consultation was available on the Council Website from 15th January 2018 until the 5th February 2018. A total of 86 responses were received.

Key Findings

In regard to the proposals for increases in Council Tax in 2018/19, the majority of respondents disagreed with the increase in Council Tax (72%).

The table below provides an overview of the responses to the consultation with regards to how the Council should spend its resources. A graphical representation for each service area is included in Appendix 1.

Table 1:

Service Area	More money	Same amount of money	Less money
Adult Social Care and Health	38%	48%	14%
Parks and Open Spaces	34%	45%	21%
Education	33%	59%	8%
Community Safety	31%	61%	8%
Children's Social Services	31%	55%	14%
Waste Collection and Recycling	28%	54%	18%
Youth and Youth Offending	25%	48%	27%
Libraries, Culture and Heritage	23%	49%	28%
Street Cleansing	22%	65%	13%
Traffic Management and Road Safety	18%	55%	27%
Recreation and Sport	17%	55%	28%
Planning and Economic Development	17%	35%	48%
Highways and Street Lighting	13%	69%	18%
Environmental Health and Trading Standards	13%	55%	32%
Private Housing Initiatives	5%	28%	67%
Average	23%	52%	25%

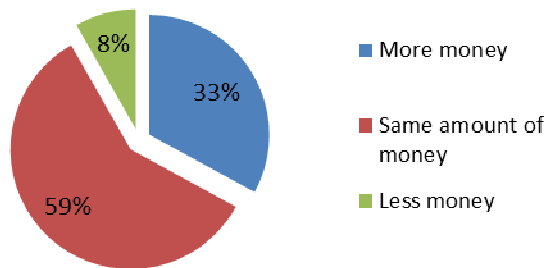
To summarise the findings in Table 1:

- On average, 52% of respondents supported the Council spending the same amount of money on services, with 25% suggesting the Council should spend less and 23% suggesting the Council should spend more.
- The proposed increases on Council Services spend ranged from 5% in Housing to 38% In Adult Social Care.
- The five services highlighted by respondents as the areas they would like to see more resources being spent were in Adult and Children's Social Care, Education, Community Safety and Parks and Open Spaces.
- Only 8% of respondents expressed the view that less money should be spent on Education and Community Safety.
- A significant percentage of respondents (67%) felt less money should be spent on Housing activities.
- Generally, in terms of Highways, Traffic Management and Street Lighting the majority of respondents felt the Council was allocating the correct amount of funding.

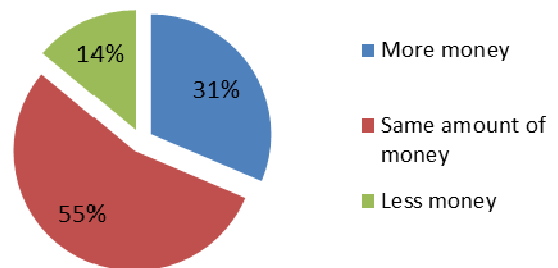
The residents of St Helens were specifically asked if they would like to provide further comments regarding the Council Tax proposals for 2018/19; many respondents did not provide any comments. The main feedback is detailed below but full responses are available for inspection:

- Reduce the numbers of Councillors;
- Reduce Councillor allowances and expenses;
- Council Tax is increasing by a significant percentage and why is the Council increasing by the maximum permitted;
- Increase in Council Tax, reduction in services;
- Increase in Council Tax will adversely affect some households;
- Household income increases less than 6%;
- Reduce the number of Senior managers and salaries;
- Reduce usage of consultants;
- Retain the Park Rangers service;
- Use of volunteers, community groups, local participation;
- Investment in town centre's amenities;
- Critique of Town Centre investment; and
- Improved transparency.

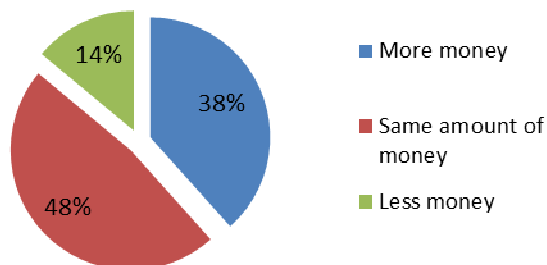
Education



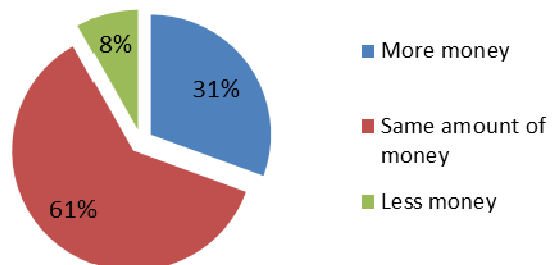
Children's Services



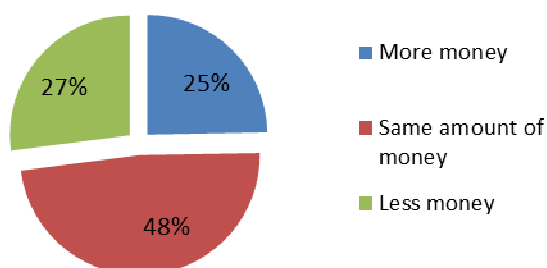
Adult Social Care & Health



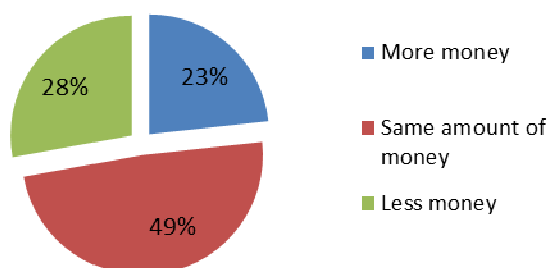
Community Safety



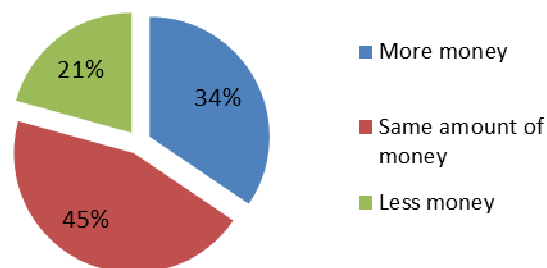
Youth & Youth Offending



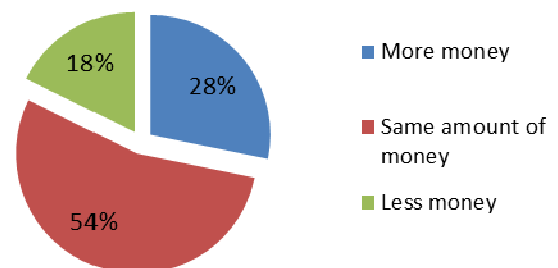
Libraries, Culture & Heritage



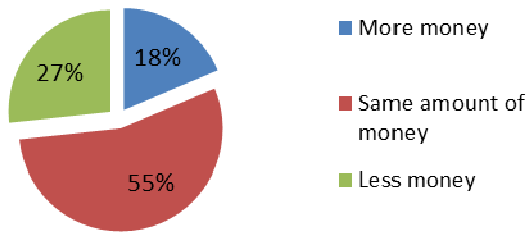
Parks & Open Spaces



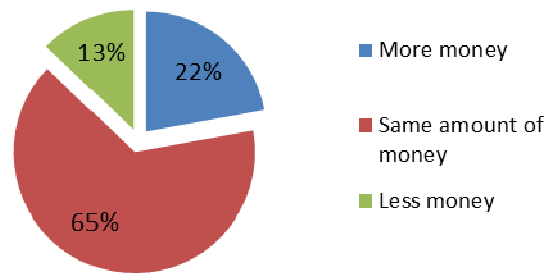
Waste Collection & Recycling



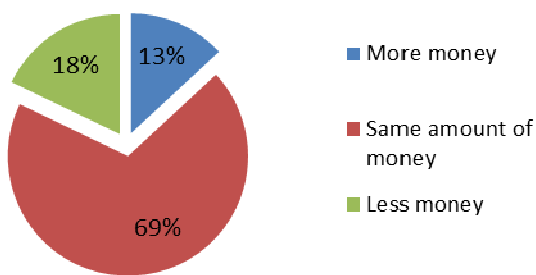
Traffic Management & Road Safety



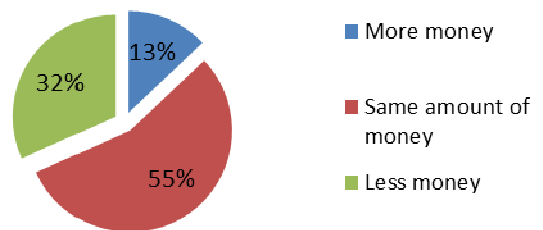
Street Cleansing



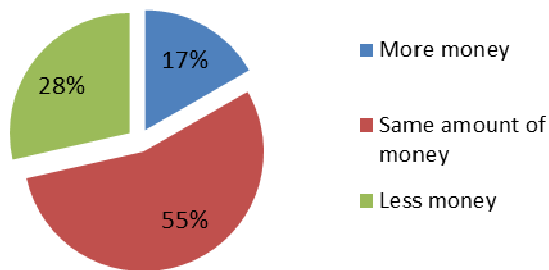
Highways & Street Lighting



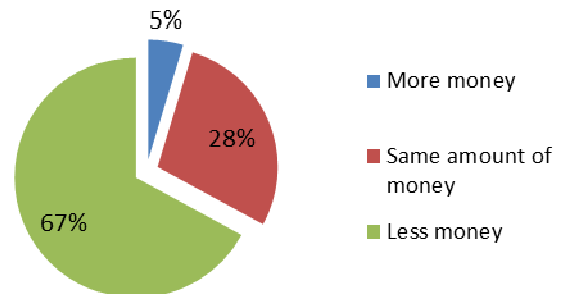
Environmental Health & Trading Standards



Recreation & Sport



Private Housing Initiatives



Planning & Economic Development

