

For publication

Budget Conversation Workshop

Meeting: Scrutiny Select Committee – Resilient Council

Date: 25 January 2024

Cabinet portfolio: Deputy Leader

Report by: Service Director Corporate

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Purpose of reviewing the topic	To update scrutiny members on the approach taken to the budget conversation and specific budget consultations.
What are the objectives of the review?	To consider the initial findings of the budget conversation and update on specific consultation activity linked to the budget strategy implementation plan.
Progress to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget Strategy agreed by Council in July 2023• Budget Strategy implementation plan developed and approved by Cabinet in November 2023• Budget conversation took place between November and December 2023• Specific focused consultation activity taking place between November 2023 and February 2024

1.0 Budget conversation background

- 1.1 As agreed at Cabinet on 14.11.23, the Council launched a general budget conversation to assist the Council to deliver on the budget implementation plan themes:
- Identifying General Efficiencies
 - Increasing Income and Establishing Stronger Commercial Operating Principles
 - Transforming how we Deliver Services
 - Reducing Service Offers / Stop Doing
 - Rightsizing the Organisation
 - Asset Rationalisation and Effective Asset Management
- 1.2 The budget conversation ran from 17.11.23 to 15.12.23 and was available to complete via our website or in hard copy. The budget conversation was publicised via social media, website, posters in key

venues and the Derbyshire Times also ran articles highlighting the opportunity to take part.

- 1.3 Alongside the budget conversation survey, a budget conversation brochure was developed called - *Have your say and help shape the future of local council services*. The brochure attached at Appendix 1 aimed to provide key information about the services we provide, what our services cost to provide and how we are funded.
- 1.4 Graphics, infographics and a careful use of colours, contrast, fonts and sizing was used to make the brochure as accessible as possible. The information was also available in different formats upon request.
- 1.5 The Budget conversation graphics were utilised across all budget conversation and specific budget consultation materials to create a cohesive feel and maximise attention for the activities. Some examples of promotional materials are shown in Appendix 2.

2.0 Budget conversation workshop

- 2.1 The Service Director Corporate will lead a short workshop at the Scrutiny Select Committee – Resilient Council meeting to explore some of the initial findings from the budget conversation.
- 2.2 A number of specific service consultations are currently taking place including garden waste, advice agency grant funding and room hire. A verbal update will be provided to the committee on these ongoing consultation activities.

3.0 Barriers/obstacles

- 3.1 In two tier areas there can be significant confusion about which Council provides which services. This can impact negatively on consultation activity. The budget conversation materials aimed to show clearly which services were the remit of Derbyshire County Council and therefore out of scope for the budget conversation.
- 3.2 Communications and Marketing staff monitoring social media accounts aimed to answer queries and provide information regarding the different Council's remits throughout the budget consultation. They also directed people commenting to take part in the budget conversation as well as commenting via social media posts.

4.0 Suggested scrutiny activity

- 4.1 Comments and suggestions are welcomed on the overall Budget Conversation approach to help inform future years activities.

Document information

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Background documents These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>None</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Budget Conversation Brochure
Appendix 2	Budget Conversation promotional materials examples