

Draft 2022 budget consultation

Isle of Wight residents and organisations, council tax and business rate payers are invited to have their say on the council's budget and council tax for 2022/23.

The council expects to spend around £400 million in the next financial year and we are preparing our draft budget. We won't get all the information from Government that we need to complete the budget until the New Year. While we carry on working on it we would very much like to hear your views on important choices we need to make.

Insufficient Government funding levels and increases in demand for care services have forced the council to make continuous savings and cuts in previous years. Up to April 2021 we have had to make cumulative savings of over £86 million in annual spending

Following those years of insufficient Government funding and with inflation currently at 4.2 per cent and rising, we are trying to keep services running and to provide value for money. We are proposing to increase council tax by the maximum two per cent permitted by Government to help cover some of the gap.

Despite substantial increases in adult social care costs the Government has also cut the maximum additional council tax for these services from three per cent to one per cent. This lower figure will only cover a fraction of the cost to meet the continued growth in demand for services as well as the 6.6 per cent increase in the National Living Wage for our essential care workers that support the most vulnerable in our community.

The Alliance administration cannot rely on Government for any substantial financial assistance that will materially alter our current financing; and has as a result has adopted a new positive strategy focussed on locally driven income generation. A range of initiatives are being developed that build on natural assets of our beautiful Island, capitalise on our council land and other resources and fully utilise our professional staff and external partners. These will take time to evaluate, plan and put into practice but work is underway as they represent a real prospect of driving recovery and benefitting all Islanders.

While these new plans come to fruition, our short-term financial planning indicates that we will regrettably need to make more cuts over the next year to keep pace with other increasing costs. While some of these financial pressures can be dealt with through a range of efficiency measures, some service reductions will be required. Wherever possible this work has prioritised protecting frontline services, but current estimates are, that even with an increase in council tax, we will need to make a further £3 million of savings measures in 2022/23. The hope is that for the following years the Alliance initiatives on income generation will be able to turn the tide away from managing financial decline and to start to slowly restore that which has been lost. We will continue to pressure Government with a substantial case for additional funding for areas of our work where demand and costs of delivering those services continue to rise significantly and to reflect the unique financial pressures associated with delivering services on the Island.

We would like to hear your views to help us make decisions on public spending for our 2022-2023 budget and to help shape our budget strategy for the coming years. This short consultation should take less than five minutes of your time to complete.

This survey will close on 21 January 2022

1 Given the financial challenges the council faces, should we increase council tax or make even deeper cuts to services?

- More than two per cent – would require a referendum.
- Two per cent increase – would mean cuts targeted at specific areas.
- One per cent increase – would mean broad cuts to most services.
- No increase – would mean very deep cuts to critical services.

2 In addition to council tax and business rates, the council raises funds from a wide range of services from leisure to parking for those users. In order to close some of the funding gap, would you prefer to see an increase in charges or reduced levels of services?

- Significant increases - would mean we are able to maintain most services.
- Modest increases - would mean limited service cuts.
- Smaller increases - would mean most services are impacted or reduced.
- No increase - would mean widespread cuts to multiple services.
- None of the above.

3 The cost of and demand for social care has risen sharply, and Government support has not kept up. Recently announced extra government funds will prioritise NHS services over social care services. Government has restricted the ability of the council to raise extra funds to meet this need. How would you prioritise needs?

(Please rank your answers from one to five, with one being your top priority).

- Aged and disabled
- Community and in-home care
- Community based hubs and outreach
- Mental health
- Children's care

4 The council has statutory obligations that it must provide. This leaves very little for discretionary spending after other fixed costs are paid. Where should we prioritise remaining funds?

(Please rank your answers from one to five, with one being your top priority).

Public Health, Homelessness and Housing

Adult and Children's Social Care

Education and Community Services

Environment, Tourism, Leisure and Heritage

Roads, Parking, Transport and Infrastructure

5 Please provide any additional comments that you would like to make:

About you – equality monitoring questions

This information is completely confidential and anonymous and will not be passed on to anyone or reported alongside your responses to the survey. It is not about you as an individual, but to find out if people with similar characteristics have had their say.

You may feel that some of the questions below are a little personal. They are completely optional and you are not obliged to answer them. However, the information we collect will be confidential and any data published cannot be traced back to you.

The Isle of Wight Council is committed to being an equal opportunities provider of services and to making improvements in service delivery and service re-design. We want to make sure that the right services are reaching the right people at the right time. In addition, we are required by law to ensure our policies do not disadvantage any particular groups in our community. To help us achieve this it would be helpful if you would please answer the following questions. Thank you.

6 Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither male or female | <input type="checkbox"/> Both male and female |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | |

7 Are you currently pregnant or have recently given birth?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

8 Which age group do you belong to?

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 and over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | | | |

9 What is your marital status?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-habiting | <input type="checkbox"/> Married | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify |

10 Please tell us if you consider yourself to have a disability, or a long-term illness, physical or mental health condition.

(The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and The Equality Act 2010 define a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect (ie, has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) and has an adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities).

- Yes No Prefer not to say

11 Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

- Heterosexual Homosexual Bisexual
 Prefer not to say Other – please specify

12 How would you describe your ethnic group?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British | <input type="checkbox"/> Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White European | <input type="checkbox"/> Black European | <input type="checkbox"/> White-Black Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify |

13 Do you have a religious belief?

- No Prefer not to say Yes – please specify

Thank you

Thank you for completing this survey, your feedback is important to us. All responses will be collated and used to analyse the current service. The feedback from this will be used to develop considerations for improvements to all waste disposal services in the future. All responses will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Please return this survey by 21 January 2022 to:

**Budget Consultation,
County Hall,
High Street,
Newport
PO30 1UD**