



HILLINGDON

LONDON

Hillingdon Council Budget Consultation 2017/18 Report

Overview of Consultation Process

- This report highlights the key findings of the Hillingdon Council Budget Consultation. The consultation commenced on 19 December 2016 as an online survey, and closed on 27 January 2017.
- The purpose of the consultation was to seek views from residents and local businesses on Hillingdon Council's budget proposals for 2017/18.
- The consultation was publicised:
 - In Hillingdon People magazine;
 - On Hillingdon Council's website, Facebook page and Twitter;
 - Through the council's All Staff Email.
- Information about the consultation was also sent directly to:
 - Residents on the council's Customer Engagement database;
 - The council's Street Champions;
 - Residents Associations in the borough.
- The survey received 73 responses, all of which were submitted online.
- The total number of responses and **key themes** from all open questions are shown in the Survey Results. Full responses from open questions are shown in the Appendices.
- All results are un-weighted and based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.
- Where results do not add up to 100%, this may be due to non-responses, multiple responses or the rounding up of numbers by computer calculations. Percentages are calculated based on the number of respondents to each question rather than the number of respondents overall.
- Comments have not been edited; however any references to information that could be considered confidential have been removed.

Summary of Key Findings

- 100% of the respondents are residents. One completed the survey as a Street Champion.
- The majority of respondents (68%) are satisfied with the budget proposals.
- The majority of respondents (67%) agree that the budget proposals give value for money to local people and businesses.
- The majority of respondents (81%) feel well informed about the budget proposals.

Survey Results

Q1. How satisfied are you with the council's budget proposals for 2017-18?

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Very Satisfied	18	24.7%
Satisfied	31	42.5%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	8	11.0%
Dissatisfied	10	13.7%
Very Dissatisfied	6	8.2%
Total	73	100.0%

Q1a. Please tell us why:

Positive

- 33 comments regarding:
 - o no increase in Council Tax
 - o good management of funds
 - o refuse and recycling collection
 - o the willingness to pay a bit more towards council tax if they were asked to do so

Negative

- 12 comments regarding:
 - o the decision not to apply the 2% Social Care precept
 - o the amount budgeted for court cases relating to the proposed Heathrow expansion
 - o the investment in theatre and museum
 - o the closure of two children centres

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the budget proposals give value money to local people and businesses?

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Very Satisfied	13	17.8%
Satisfied	36	49.3%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	13	17.8%
Dissatisfied	6	8.2%
Very Dissatisfied	5	6.8%
Total	73	100.0%

Q2a. Please tell us why:

Positive

- 17 comments regarding:
 - o the council putting residents first

- o businesses contributing towards the wider budget
- o delivering value for money, compared to other Local Authorities
- o the willingness to pay a bit more rather than see cut in services

Negative

- 5 comments regarding:
 - o Spending money on youth centre to keep the youth engaged
 - o the need for the post of a members enquiry officer
 - o the closure of children's centres

Q3. How well informed do you feel about the budget proposals?

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Very Well Informed	18	24.7%
Fairly well Informed	41	56.2%
Not very well informed	11	15.1%
Not informed at all	3	4.1%
Total	73	100.0%

Q3a. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the council's budget proposals for 2017-18?

- 5 comments complimenting the council on what it does for its residents.
- 3 comments regarding the closure of children's centres.
- 2 comments about consultation needing to be publicised more widely.

Respondent demographics

Q4. Are you completing this survey...?

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
As a resident	72	98.6%
On behalf of a local business	0	0.0%
Other	1	1.4%
Total	73	100.0%

- 100% of the respondents are residents, one completed the survey as a Street Champion. No local businesses or Organisations were identified.

Q5. Please tell us your postcode:

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
HA4	8	11.1%
HA5	4	5.6%
HA6	6	8.3%
UB3	5	6.9%
UB4	7	9.7%
UB5	1	1.4%
UB7	8	11.1%
UB8	16	22.2%
UB9	6	8.3%
UB10	11	15.3%
TW6	0	0.0%
TW19	0	0.0%
WD3	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
Total	72	100.0%

Q6. Please tell us the name of your business or organisation:

No responses.

Q7. Please tell us the postcode of your business or organisation:

No responses.

Q8. Are you:

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Male	36	51.4%
Female	34	48.6%
Total	70	100.0%

- 3 people taking part in the survey did not respond to this question.

Q9. How old are you?

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Under 18	0	0.0%
18 to 24	1	1.4%
25 to 34	2	2.9%
35 to 44	10	14.3%
45 to 54	9	12.9%
55 to 64	15	21.4%
65 to 74	27	38.6%
75+	6	8.6%
Total	70	100.0%

- 3 people taking part in the survey did not respond to this question.

Q10. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (i.e. a long term condition that affects your ability to carry out day to day tasks)

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Yes	9	12.5%
No	63	87.5%
Total	72	100.0%

- 1 person taking part in the survey did not respond to this question.

Part C - Full responses to open questions

Comments have not been edited; however any references to information that could be considered confidential have been removed.

Q1. How satisfied are you with the council's budget proposals for 2017-18?***Please tell us why:***

1. Seems fair.
2. Whilst wanting better services value for money is key and in the real world efficiency savings must be made The fact that there has been a freeze for so late no tells us that the council was VERY inefficient years ago and through contacts we have, still is.
3. It is free.
4. Good waste collection, no wheelie bins. Good Library
5. Hope none of our money is going to fight the third runway when a lot of us rely on Heathrow for work and a third runway would benefit hillington.
6. Good value and sensible spending.
7. It seems to be a balanced budget.
8. The rises will affect my households' pocket.
9. As an over 65 resident, I am particularly impressed by the following:- No increase in rates for last 11 years (9 years for under 65s). However, I have not experienced any detrimental factors in the service provided. To maintain this economic & service record is superb! WELL DONE!! I would add that one major service factor which I notice weekly is the refuse & recycling collections & street cleaning. They are OUTSTANDING!!!
10. I appreciate that charges should be made in some circumstances but these should be kept to a minimum, I see no relevance to cost outside the borough at all.
11. It does not appear that Council Tax will be raised for the over 65s and services will not be cut.
12. I'm not satisfied that in the currently climate that there is a justification for a town museum. Other town have museum's which are underused and the currently the local libraries i.e Uxbridge already have sufficient areas where they currently hold special events and exhibits throughout the year. This large waste of money could be better spent on social care and truly affordable housing as there is evidence on the Uxbridge high street of higher than usual homelessness. Which the council should be ashamed off especially this winter.
13. increase seem reasonable.
14. I believe LBH do try their best to provide services at a reasonable cost, but I do feel as a Street Champion I do not always get a timely response to my enquiries, and I would appreciate it if you could spend a little more on staff . so that you can check where you place a contract the firms do carry out the work to a reasonable standard.
15. In my view, Hillingdon is a well run council and to be able to do all you do with no significant council tax increase again is excellent. I can therefore criticise the way you are doing its. However, social care, especially for the elderly is a worry (I might myself need it one day) and I am happy to pay the precept should it arise.
16. Budget too high
17. Unsure what a "Crossover" means, is this referring to access to driveways across the footpath.
18. As usual the Council is trying to put its residents first but at the same time making strong economic sense with limited funds available.
19. I believe them to be fair
20. Interested to know what the council tax increase will be for 2017 with more information
21. More money should be spent on helping care in the community
22. I am satisfied because the Council always tries to take into account we pensioners and those of us who are over 70. In view of this and taking into account the extra burdens being

put on the Council, I would like to propose, having consulted with many of my 70+ friends, a change regarding the Freedom Pass. I consider that the Council should charge £10.00 per year for this service, starting when the passes are due for renewal. I feel that this small change may help towards the payment for a great service and may offset some of the admin. charges associated with the service. I am quite sure like us most recipients of this service will comply.

23. As an over 65 I obviously don't wish to pay any more than I need to, but as you say it will be 11 years since an increase if it means that something's suffer as a result I for one would not mind a small increase.
24. The budget proposal is short sighted. The social precept ensures that the cost does not become unafforded in futures years. Reduction in preventative Service budgets such as children's centres again compounds this. Investment in theatres, museums in this context and only in the north of the borough reinforced that the north of the borough deserves all of the provision. The museum could be on one of the other towns, if it were to be built at all. Raising fees in adult education could restrict some from life long learning. There is a £30,000 gap of household income in the north and south of the borough how do these proposal do anything to raise prosperity for all.
25. Seem reasonable and trying to keep costs to residents of the borough down which is important
26. Hillingdon Council has done very well to keep increases low for many years. Some rises are inevitable and residents should recognise that some increases are no longer avoidable.
27. Hillingdon Council is focussing on what I think is important i.e. weekly waste collection, local libraries, Adult Education, a new theatre and museum etc.
28. Why not consult residents about whether they want a tax freeze? Would be more than happy to contribute extra to enable social care provision to be improved and extended. Freezing council tax is unasked for and totally unrealistic in this day and age.
29. Although increased charges are never welcome, I consider them essential in the current situation where Central Government is failing to support local services realistically.
30. The huge contribution made to Hillingdon Council Tax revenue by Heathrow Airport helps keep the Borough's finances on a sound footing. The amount budgeted for the Court cases to delay the proposed expansion is excessive. I think the Council should finally accept the inevitable and stop wasting money on trying to stop the development, particularly as when it finally goes ahead, Hillingdon's revenue from the Airport will increase even further. Without this budgeted expenditure on legal costs I would be very satisfied with the budget proposals.
31. Some modest increases in charges are probably necessary but these dont seem to be liable to be difficult for most people to pay.
32. Services e.g. adult education seem to be lower than neighbouring Boroughs and I like the plans for capital programmes like plans to improve Uxbridge town centre further. Hillingdon has the best leisure facilities and libraries in London I think so please keep sustaining these.
33. Overall sensible cuts to afford new liabilities.
34. More money needs to be allocated to older people and their care. Although a museum may be nice. The present care system to the housebound needs to be greatly increased and the times allocated increased.
35. dear sirs, if you have to increase council tax so be it, my concern being owners around here and everywhere having extra people living in or on their estate paying huge amounts of money in rent whilst the owner pays the same monthly payment as us two pensioners two doors away, this cannot be right. one house has 15 people living there !!
36. There is no use of the ability to increase the rates for social care provision which is an increasing pressure across the borough.
37. I consider Hillingdon to be an excellent council in comparison to near by councils such as Harrow! However, with continued cuts from central government, councils are hard pressed

to make up the shortfall and we MUST expect some costs to rise as a consequence.

38. Your introduction includes the phrase "whilst avoiding implementation of the social care precept". To make such a confusing and likely misleading statement so early implies you are hiding something. Whilst dissatisfied with a couple of items the whole documents is far to complex for me to make a judgement on.
39. I am aware that less money is coming from national government however freezing council tax does the residents no good as over the 8 years I have been in the borough, I have seen a decline in services despite an increase in residents which would result in more council tax being generated. I'm also aware that the council is looking at implementing a theatre, museum and bunker. Also the council has found the funds to go into a legal battle against Heathrow - with what funds and are all residents in agreement. But more disappointing is that the small budget given to children's centres and family services is being cut (under the disguise of a rearrangement and despite a consultation being in place, various changes are already being implemented). The council's priorities are all wrong!!!
40. Whilst the council is doing a great job in keeping the Council Tax down there are areas that have been squeezed to the limit. As a pensioner I feel I and many others could actually afford to pay another £1.00 a month (£12.00) a year to keep some of the services for the younger generation. We have had our time, but what about our younger residents!
41. They seem reasonable, although I would like to see more funding for music, including choirs, as I feel the benefits to peoples mental health (and physical) would result in fewer visits to GP's.
42. I am very unhappy about the proposals to close 2 Children's Centres because of the proposals for savings in the budget. I believe that there should be an increase in council tax if the council cannot deliver quality services.
43. It prioritises projects which require funding at the appropriate time, but keeps other services in check. Residents have been very fortunate to have had minimal increases over the last few years
44. Satisfied but with reservations as to why there is no council tax increase as in your headline proposals it is stated "growing demands for a rapidly rising population" whether this rise is due to birth rate, immigration that means more rubbish, school places and housing to find. I don't see any reference to social or affordable housing in the draft, I have concern that council tax will be hiked up in the future which would cause rumblings in the community therefore would it not be prudent to have a nominal increase? Rubbish that's the big word on local social media some parts of the borough are dirty the 1.2 m underspend on resident services can we not put toward a satellite civic amenity site in the south of the borough? Finally, the Bunker visitor centre the council have had the funding for this in the bank for months therefore can you confirm this money is safe for that purpose only?
45. I reiterate from the last survey I completed, I cannot see why we are paying exorbitant wages to Adult education class teachers - the fees should be high enough that these classes support themselves and NOT, I repeat NOT be paid for by residents who have completed their education, paid for their children's education etc etc - it is outrageous that we should still be paying for people to learn how to arrange flowers, make baubles - if people want to learn these things they should be paying the going rate to do so.
46. Shows what can be achieved with good management
47. You need to sweep the shopping centres more often. Once a day is not enough. Ruislip High Street, Eastcote and Ruislip Manor shopping centres in the afternoon are dreadful and also at the weekend particularly on a Sunday. Can you increase collection.
48. What are the cost justifications that financially support the new theatre in St Andrews? With street parking problems increasing vehicle crossovers should be encouraged, not have the charges increased. This will result in more cracked and damaged pavements.
49. Hillingdon Council tells us that 'council tax is frozen and no service cuts' on page 11 of the Jan/Feb 2017 Hillingdon People magazine, yet I have received a letter from the Transport Team that is cutting home to school SEN Transport, in favour of group pick-ups to school in

order to 'reduce the overall cost of transport' as part of an 'ongoing plan to make financial savings'.

50. The Council again believes in slavishly following a principle that its residents would prefer zero increase in Council Tax at the expense of positively developing services, particularly statutory services, for its residents who are in need. Whilst again there is a zero increase in Council Tax and the Council has chosen not to apply for the 2% social care precept, the budget reveals the way in which the Authority will achieve a balance is by raising charges for service users and even more cynically by raising eligibility criteria. The other means of achieving 'savings' is by maintaining vacant posts - which of course affects service delivery. I was also concerned to see that at the time when the demand for statutory services was at its highest, be it in the realms of education, environment or social care, the Authority continues to financially support non-statutory service areas, such as golf courses, riding facilities and music services: all perfectly laudable, but hardly statutory.
51. The range of activities that benefit from taxpayer funding are deemed essential and worthy of continued public support
52. I was unable to find adequate information about children social services. Notably children centres. There are breakdown costs for golf courses, but nothing over children centres. I would like to know by children centre the running costs. Also how much is set aside for the whole budget for children centres. Children centres can have local donations given. How much and by centre is not shown. You have sited twice in text saving and service transformation saving to be made from children centres, and the claim is significant but the detail is poorly communicated. Part is buried in appendix 5d and part is in a paragraph which is illegible.
53. Amazing achievement. To avoid increasing council taxes whilst suffering particularly: the continuing reduction in funding from National Government; inflation in costs caused by the increase in minimum wage; growing demands in care of the elderly; yet still managing to provide excellent services! Well done.
54. Because fees on services need to be increased, so as to maintain those services

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the budget proposals give value for money to local people and businesses?

Please tell us why:

1. The council put people first.
2. It is free.
3. Seems reasonable, can't freeze Council Tax and provide the same services without an increase somewhere
4. Business contributes and that's good.
5. Already commented - excellent service at an economic cost. To achieve this over so many years without budget increases must have been a great challenge!!
6. The council spend far too much on actually running the council than on services.
7. Do not seem to high.
8. In my view, Hillingdon is an efficient, well run council - one of the best. To keep doing all you do without hikes in council tax is excellent. However, I would be prepared to pay a social care precept should it be levied.
9. Don't know do not trust.
10. Keeping costs down is hard enough but not wasting money, as with so many other Local Authorities, is perhaps the biggest challenge of all.
11. I feel Hillingdon council does better than most other boroughs under difficult conditions.
12. They could raise rates especially to people letting houses and flats.
13. It important that we encourage business in our area.
14. Investment in new facilities in Uxbridge only benefit a few residents. Keep council tax low and not using the social precept to pre- plan and save for the increased demands on social

care means residents will have higher tax hikes or failing in the future which is would be unaffordable. A small gradual increase would help those on moderate and lower incomes to budget.

15. There has to be a limit to savings and stable prices. Hillingdon Council can be proud of its record and achievements.
16. Hillingdon Council is focussing on what I think is important i.e. local libraries, Adult Education, a new theatre and museum etc.
17. Rather depends on individual household priorities.
18. It is important to maintain the council tax freeze for over-65s especially. Perhaps adult education course costs could be frozen for this group too.
19. No extra cost with minimal reduction in services.
20. Why is there a need for a members enquiry officer, apart from the cost to the council there is no explanation as to why this is needed. When there are budget pressures in other areas of the council, this doesn't appear to be providing value to the residents but is about providing a service to members.
21. See previous answer.
22. Far too much emphasis seems to be spent on reducing the expenditure on Social care, which will have serious consequences in the future. I would much prefer to see a modest increase than see Social care continually cut.
23. We don't get value for money. Despite the tax freeze, there is more tax being generated by the increase in population - at least 7 blocks of flats from the Yiewsley High Street to West Drayton Station Road (not taking into account the Drayton Village off Porters Way). We have seen no improvement to services to accommodate the increased population. Money needs to be spent on our youth to ensure that future generations become model citizens as well as to assist the elderly.
24. My particular area of interest is my local library, which gives an excellent service. I understand that Hillingdon has one of the best library services in the country. Wonderful!
25. As an historic site the former RAF Uxbridge deserves its place in history and for future generations as a pivotal landmark in WWII. However, with all the private development of West Drayton (due to crossrail) it would be prudent to see local authority infrastructure improved. GPs and patients using Yiewsley Health Clinic deserve a better environment than the Port-a-cabins which have served as GP surgeries over the last 25 years! And I won't even mention the GWR railway bridge under-pass, consistently drenched in pigeon faeces. My 10-year-old son insists we walk the long way around through the Station.
26. Because they do try and put residents first some friends who live in a neighbouring borough commented that they wished their council was as good as Hillingdon.
27. You are picking on the most vulnerable members of our society - CHILDREN WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES.
28. As outlined previously, I want local services - of both quality and quantity - for local people. 'Value for money' does not simply mean the cheapest: it additionally means that there needs to be a quality and quantity (ie enough) of service provision.
29. All major items of expenditure are deemed to cover essential services.
30. Impossible for me to comment on whole budget. But for my focus children centres the loss is devastating to the local community. Early years are just as important as the school years. In some respects more important and it's these years the budget is ruining.
31. Judging by what I have read about other Councils, I agree we do get value for money on some things

Q3a. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the council's budget proposals for 2017-18?

1. No
2. No
3. They tell us

4. Re-Open South Ruislip Amenity Site to reduce fly tipping
5. We will see how it goes
6. None WELL DONE!! (I have no links with the Authority except as a resident)
7. Do we really need the vastly overpaid top rung of the ladder, cut them and the prices could stay the same if not cheaper. I see no relevance of setting a benchmark with other boroughs as they are more wasteful than ourselves.
8. I receive you emails and follow what is happening in the People mag.
9. I feel an increase in Council tax would be justified to cover the costs of elderly care
10. Avoid Labour amendments !
11. Could be more published and advertised
12. Well satisfied with council services. However more could be done with recycling and traffic flow at peak times through local roads in Ruislip and Ickenham at peak times.
13. Continue your investment in fighting Heathrow expansion. Do not cut preventative devices such as children's centres, day centres and youth provision.
14. Would be good to have a leaflet to read as many residents who are older do not have a computer and have a right to their say.
15. Some residential pavements close to where I live are in the most awful state and was wondering if these ever get maintained by the council? For example the pavements along West Drayton Road towards the big Harlington Road junction is so bad you could break your ankle on it if you are not careful!
16. The summary is helpful.
17. Golf Club fees. Will we ever get 18 holes at Uxbridge? Will we really lose some holes at Ruislip. These are negative aspects to something costing more. Protect both as 18 holers and people will gladly pay more.
18. I know no increases have been made to our council tax and this all sounds good, but this is to the detriment to certain services and now is the time to start to increase.
19. Why did the council decide not to ask the residents about applying the precept allowable for social care provision.
20. I find it hard to understand that whilst the council have approved the vast majority of new housing to take place in the south of the borough yet feel that they need to spend 90% of the secondary schools budget in the North of the borough? Do they really feel the need for thousands of children in the south to have travel right across the borough, with all that it will entail?
21. Not everyone is aware of the budget proposal / consultation - more information needs to be published to the households of what is published when so they are aware.
22. The appendices in the online document present vertical rather than horizontal making their content difficult to assess. Some more attention to presentation is needed here if the content is to be useful.
23. No.
24. I am unhappy about the cuts to Children's Centre budgets and the reorganisation which I believe will have a detrimental effect on services.
25. The Council have done a great job, working with the same budget over a number of years, however a strategic and cohesive long-term plan for West Drayton with vision is required. Don't let private developers throw up shoddy structures, using poor and unsightly materials. For example the Old Woolworths site, Yiewsley jars against the street scene of St Matthews and indeed the Old Town Hall which view down the high street is partly obscured by unsightly glass balconies.
26. It is not easy to assess all the data given in the budget.
27. Of course, any response to budget proposals depends upon which the respondent thinks the role of the local authority should be. Hillingdon has gone down the road of believing that provision of services should be resolutely underpinned by budget prudence, providing attractive, high visibility services in the community. This is at the expense of those in statutory need in the less 'attractive' areas of service provision.

28. Whilst I can understand the budgetary, legal and practical constraints on public expenditure there seems to be an increasing trend to delay maintenance expenditure. For example, repairs to damaged street furniture (lights/pedestrian barriers/signs), parking meters and the maintenance of roadside drainage. In the latter case, the annual cleaning of individual drainage pots does not appear to address connectivity (ie the drain itself might be clear but there is nowhere for the surface water to go). Delaying or ignoring routine maintenance can often prove to be a false economy.
29. Closing services such as children's centres there needs to be more detail given. Cost of the whole budget and by children centre split. Proof behind the decision. Children centres are designed to deliver services to the heart of the communities. Where is the democratic split, success rates, footfall figures, value for money review, ofsted reports. I understand centres can receive local donations. Where is this captured?