

Budget Proposals 2016-17: Eat 4 Health

Summary of Feedback Received and Key Findings

Why we consulted?

Over the last four years we have had to make savings of £23m because we've received less money from central government. We have done this by becoming more efficient at what we do, by reducing some of our administrative functions and increasing our income. Throughout this period we have done our best to protect front line services.

We now have to find another £20m over the next four years, with almost £11m to be found in 2016/17. Much of this will come from further efficiencies within the council, but £4.6m will have to come from services that will impact the public.

In order to inform the budget setting process for 2016/17 we published a list of those proposals which would likely have a direct impact on service users, and sought the views from those affected and interested:

- to understand the likely impact
- to identify any measures to reduce their impact
- to explore any possible alternatives

Approach

All the proposals were published on the council's website on 3 November 2015 with feedback requested by 14 December 2015. Respondents were directed to a [central index page](#), with a video message from the Chief Executive outlining the background to the exercise.

Information relating to this proposal was linked directly from this index page. This contained more detailed information on what was specifically proposed, information on what we thought the impact might be, as well as what else we had considered in developing and arriving at this proposal. Feedback was then invited through an online form, and through a dedicated email address.

Each individual budget proposal was placed on our [Consultation Portal](#) which automatically notified those registered that an exercise had been launched. Members of the West Berkshire community panel (around 800 people) and local stakeholder charities, representative groups and partner organisations were also emailed directly, notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions.

Heads of Service made direct contact with those organisations affected by any of the budget proposals prior to them being made publically available.

A press release was issued on the same date, as well as publicised through Facebook and Twitter.

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Background

Healthy eating, along with physical activity, forms the mainstay of the prevention and management of adults who are overweight and obese. In 2012, 65.5% of the West Berkshire Adult population had excess weight. This is compared to an average of 63.8% in England.

Eat 4 Health is a weight management course that is available free of charge to individuals in West Berkshire who are over 16 years of age and have a body mass index (BMI) of over 25. It consists of a 10 week group based programme.

The proposal is to reduce the funding to the Eat 4 Health course by £7,000.

Summary of Key Points

There were 3 responses to this consultation in total – all from individuals. There was no feedback from organisations. In general, there was support for this proposal as it was felt that the proposed cuts would have little impact on the service provided and that there is plenty of information already available that people can access on healthy eating.

1. Are you, or anyone you care for, a user of this service?

There were 3 responses to this consultation, 1 of which declared that either they themselves, or someone they care for is a user of this service.

2. What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people?

It was felt that there would be little impact on the service.

3. Do you feel that this proposal will affect particular individuals more than others, and if so, how do you think we might help with this?

It was stated that this proposal would only have an impact on those currently using the service. One individual felt that the council had no business in this area.

4. Do you have any suggestions as to how this service might be delivered in a different way? If so, please provide details.

It was expressed that there was plenty of existing information available and public awareness on this issue already.

5. Do you think an online support programme would be successful? Please explain the reason for your response.

It was expressed that this might be successful for those individuals who were not motivated to attend a venue. However, it was suggested that it should be an online programme that is already being used elsewhere. It was also expressed that information is already available online from a number of different sources and so this would be duplication.

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6. **Is there any way that you, or your organisation, can contribute in helping to alleviate the impact of this proposal? If so, please provide details of how you can help.**

There were no suggestions to this question.

7. **Any further comments?**

There were no responses to this question.

Conclusion

There were 3 responses to this consultation. In general there seemed to be support for this proposal as it was felt that this would have little impact on the service provided and that this area was down to individual responsibility rather than something the council should provide.

Please note: *In order to allow everyone who wished the opportunity to contribute, feedback was not sampled. Therefore this wasn't a quantitative, statistically valid exercise. It was neither the premise, purpose, nor within the capability of the exercise, to determine the overall community's level of support, or views on the proposals, with any degree of confidence.*

The feedback captured therefore should be seen in the context of 'those who responded', rather than reflective of the wider community.

All the responses have been provided verbatim as an appendix to this report. Whilst this summary seeks to distil the key, substantive points made, it should also be read in conjunction with the more detailed verbatim comments to ensure a full, rounded perspective of the views and comments are considered.

Sarah Rayfield
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