

Budget Proposals 2016-17: Feel Good Fortnight

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

Feel Good Fortnight occurs every year and aims to raise awareness about activities available, which benefit the health and wellbeing of everyone who lives and works in West Berkshire. The council currently contributes £10,000 to this initiative.

This funding mainly contributes towards publicity materials and various activities that occur during the launch event, such as Chefs Challenge and performers including choirs and dancers.

It is proposed to cease the £10,000 contribution to Empowering West Berkshire for Feel Good Fortnight.

Summary of Key Points

There were seven responses in total from individuals to this consultation. It was felt that cutting the funding to this activity would not produce any negative effects and there was no opposition to a cut in funding.

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

There were seven responses to this consultation, two of which declared themselves to be a user of the service.

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

Respondents didn't feel that the cut would impact people.

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?

Nobody expressed concerns that it would affect particular individuals more than others.

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

One respondent suggested that people could find the same information on line and one agreed that linking with our suggestion of asking other providers to highlight health benefits.

5. 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.

No suggestions were provided

6. Any further comments?

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Three respondents felt that this project should not have funding and it wasn't a good use of money

Conclusion

The consensus was that cutting the funding of this project would not have any negative effects and that respondents were supportive of the funding cut.

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.

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5 January 2016
Version 1 (CB)