

REVENUE BUDGET 2020 - 2023

CONSULTATION REPORT

FEBRUARY 2020

carmarthenshire.gov.uk

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INTRODUCTION

A mixed-methods approach to ascertaining views on the 2020-23 budget took place during the period from 6th January 2020 to 28th January 2020.

In making savings, the Council is concerned to minimise the impact upon service delivery. In meeting the challenge of saving a total of £16.5 million, many savings are being made through internal efficiencies. It is however recognised that some savings proposals will potentially have an impact on service delivery. These are known as 'policy' proposals and 14 proposals (with a total value of £1.1 million) are being considered by the Council in balancing its budget for 2020-23.

There are a variety of legal and policy reasons why the Council must undertake full and meaningful consultation, where service changes are under consideration.¹ Ultimately, a flawed approach can be a means whereby decisions can be challenged through the courts, through a process of Judicial Review. A decision against the Council would prevent the saving being delivered, as well as damage the reputation of Council, at a time when it needs to focus on responding to its challenging financial position.

This report:

1. Outlines the **consultation approach** and the different consultation methods deployed;
2. Describes the **demographic characteristics** of those who took part
3. Summarises the **key findings**;
4. Details the **specific consultation findings** in relation to each of the 14 proposals; and
5. Collates **minutes of meeting** in which the budget was discussed

1) OUTLINE OF APPROACH AND CONSULTATION METHODS

Whilst the settlement provided by Welsh Government was much more favourable than expected, inflation, rising costs, demographic pressures and increased statutory obligations have challenged the Council to make significant cost reductions. In response, Council departments identified proposals for making savings and a consultation exercise was undertaken to elicit views on levels of agreement, possible impacts and ways the impacts could be minimised (mitigation).

Councillor involvement

A series of departmental seminars for all county councillors took place over a two-day period: 7th January 2020 and 9th January 2020.² All efficiencies across each department were considered in detail and feedback sought. Bullet points below provide an outlook of their views and further suggestions on efficiencies. Councillor

¹ The 2010 Equality Act and the Council's Strategic Equality Plan require that 'due regard' be given to the views of designated groups in making decisions. In terms of consultation, a body of case law points to the need for public authorities to properly gather and consider the views of the public in reaching decisions.

² As democratically elected representatives, councillor views are of central importance. This is of course in addition to their decision making role, as Council, in deciding the budget.

feedback regarding the public consultation can be found against the relevant proposals.

Alongside councillor engagement, public consultation took place in the following ways:

Survey

The survey provided financial and service information on each of the 14 policy proposals and asked respondents to express a view on the degree to which they supported the proposal.³ Views were also sought regarding the potential impact of implementing the proposal on people and communities.⁴

The survey was administered in two principal ways:

- 1) Electronically via the Council's online consultation page on the website
- 2) Hard copies were available on request in order to maximise the response rate.

A total of **2006 responses** were received from various sections of the community, including individuals, businesses, town and community councils and groups and organisations. A demographic breakdown is provided in section 2.

Insight

The Insight session took place on 21st November 2019 at Yr Egin, Carmarthen which involved year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students from Ysgol Bro Dinefwr; Ysgol Bro Myrddin; QE High; Ysgol Dyffryn Amman; Maes y Gwendraeth; Ysgol Glanymor; Coedcae a Ysgol Gyfun y Strade attended.

Each school had around 10 attendees. In all, around 80 young people participated in the event. Students were allocated two themes/topics within the remit of the council to discuss and given an introductory briefing. Within their topic area, pupils then discussed the challenges that face the council on a day-to-day basis, whilst managing ongoing financial cuts and increasing public demand. Pupils were required to identify strategies and potential ways to save money, before presenting their recommendations in the afternoon to their fellow pupils and officers of the council. Three groups from the eight schools attended the full council session 8th January 2020 to deliver their insight into their topic area.

The results are outlined in Chapter 5.

Other [Email responses received]

13 emails and letters were submitted to the Council during the budget consultation period. Of these, 11 representations were specific to the Whitland Household Waste Recycling Centre and these are summarised under the aforementioned proposal.

Comments were also made on the following themes:

- Council structure and remuneration – a view that staff could be deployed more efficiently
- Opposition to council tax increases above the rate of inflation
- A reduction in the Council's library catalogue and increased use of automation to ensure the library service can be sustained in future years

Social Media Responses:

³ The format of the survey was identical to the previous budget survey, to ensure comparability of results for all 27 proposals.

⁴ The responses are important in establishing the impact of Council proposals on people – a key consideration in undertaking good decision making based on evidence, and a requirement of the 2010 Equality Act.

A summary of social media comments received on Facebook and Twitter can be seen below:

- More public toilets need to be made available at a better standard.
- Whitland Household Waste Recycling Centre should not be closed. Some expressed that the recycling centre is reaching its targets.
- School transport needs to be reviewed and prioritised by the council.
- Some expressed that the consultation is just 'another tick box exercise'.
- Stop making cuts to services which matter. A recognition needs to be made that cutting school budgets are false savings. Pupils and staff will pay for these cuts in reduced opportunities, larger class sizes, increased workloads and lack of support for the most vulnerable pupils.
- To charge an extra £1000 for residential placements is yet another tax on older people.
- Highways department need to review and be transparent as to when and why they are resurfacing roads. Seems to be a number of unnecessary road works in a number of different areas in Carmarthenshire whilst others are in need of repair.
- Isolation and loneliness needs to be addressed in the county. Need to ensure rural communities are better connected with towns whilst also making sure that there are social clubs and activities to do for all.
- Overstaffed in recycling centres. Some suggested that since the introduction of checks, there has been an increase in fly-tipping.
- Reduce wages for senior officers and councillors instead of increasing council tax and reduce their large pensions.
- Stop spending public money on sculptures and unnecessary 'vanity projects' and look to invest money into the community.
- Too many empty council houses and new properties being built. Council houses need to be improved to a better standard and occupied before building more.
- Some noted that they pay taxes to be provided with services, many expressed that they are paying increased council tax for less services.

The consultation also included a Schools Strategy and Budget Forum meeting on the 13th January 2020 and Trade Union Consultation Session on the 17th January 2020.

Publicity

Local and regional press and local radio advertisements were used to inform the public how to become involved and obtain further information on the budget consultation. Carmarthenshire County council staff were also encouraged to take part in the Budget consultation via internal newsletter. Information was also highlighted on the council website via a pop-up, and on the newsroom throughout the consultation period and generated 3,128 'click throughs' (number of people who showed an interest in the budget consultation from the home page). On 8th December the Leader's Blog included information about the Budget consultation, whilst relevant information was also provided for dissemination via social media on 7th January and 27th January 2020. The total Twitter reach was estimated at 256,000, with 1,700 'click throughs'; compared with a reach of 52,000 for Facebook. The public also had the opportunity to attend a number of drop-in sessions which were held at the following destinations and also included Saturday drop-in sessions in town centre locations:

- Llandeilo, 10th January 2020

- St Clears, 14th January 2020
- Ammanford, 15th January 2020 and 18th January 2020
- Newcastle Emlyn, 16th January 2020
- Llandovery, 20th January 2020
- Llanelli, 18th January 2020 and 23rd January 2020
- Carmarthen. 18th January 2020 and 27th January 2020

In addition, the consultation was publicised through relevant equality groups, including Equality Carmarthenshire, 50+ Forum and the Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition for Action. The Carmarthenshire Community and Town Council Liaison Forum held a specific meeting to discuss the budget on the 8th January 2020 with the consultation information also circulated to all clerks in the Community and Town Council newsletter. All Town and Community Councils were asked to take part using the online consultation.

The public consultation phase ran from 6th January 2020 to 28th January 2020. In total, 2,006 responses were received, only 21 were paper based.

About Average Index Score (AIS). Sometimes known as a 'weighted average', the AIS is a way of distilling the 'balance and strength of opinion' down into one number. Useful for questions with options to 'strongly agree', 'disagree', etc., the technique is used throughout the report. Values range from 2 (*everyone* strongly agrees) to minus 2 (*everyone* strongly disagrees).

Example

10 people are asked whether they 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'have no opinion', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that Wales will win the six nations.

Results...

3 strongly agree (each response worth 2, so=**6**)

3 agree (each response worth 1, so=**3**)

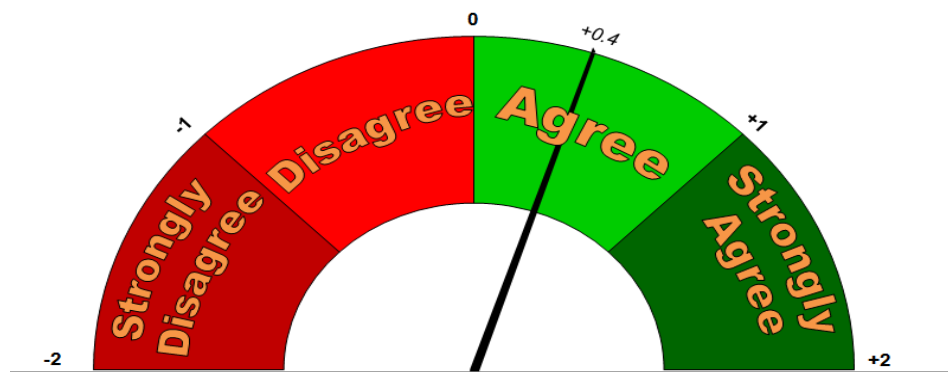
1 no opinion (each response worth 0, so=**0**)

1 disagree (each response worth -1, so= **-1**)

2 strongly disagree (each response worth -2, so=**-4**)

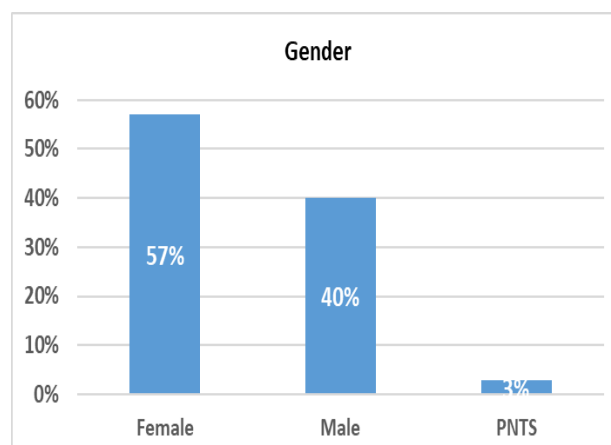
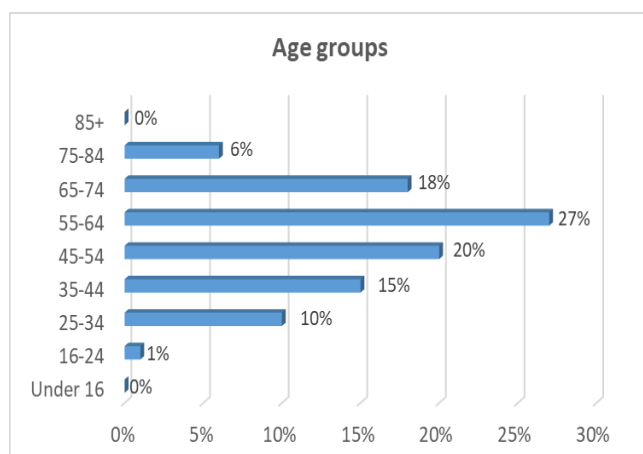
The AIS is calculated by adding all the numbers in bold: so, $6+3+0-1-4=4$;

Then dividing by the number of responses (10 in this case). The average index score is: $4 \div 10 = \underline{\underline{0.4}}$ (shown graphically below)



2) RESPONDENT PROFILE

Of the 1983 respondents who gave completed answers to demographic questions: 98% were from individuals and 2% from Town and Community Councils, organisations or businesses.⁵



Demographic Characteristic	Overall %
Transgender	0.3%
PNTS	3.6%
Relationship status	
Single	12%
Married	61%
Separated	2%
Divorced	6%
Widowed	5%
Civil partnership	1%
Co-habiting	10%
Other	0.4%
PNTS	4%
Sexual orientation	
Straight	86%
LGB	3%
PNTS	11%
Religion	
Yes	39%
PNTS	10%
Caring responsibilities	
Yes	15%
PNTS	4%

Demographic Characteristic	Overall %
Ethnicity	
White	95%
BME	1%
Other	0%
PNTS	4%
Disability	
Yes	11%
No	85%
PNTS	4%
Preferred language	
Welsh	15%
English	85%
Other	1%
Income	
<£10,000	7%
£10,000 – £19,999	18%
£20,000 – £29,999	18%
£30,000 – £39,999	11%
£40,000 – £49,999	11%
£50,000 – £59,999	7%
> £60,000	8%
PNTS	21%

⁵ Whitland Town Council; Laugharne Town & Community Council; Llanwinio Community Council; Llangynin Community Council; St Clears Town Council; Simon Hart MP; 50+ Forum; Ysgol Hafodwenog; Llywodraethwyr Ysgol Penboyr; Ty Gwyn Church; Henllanfallteg Community Association Trustee; Meddwl Coed; Whitland Memorial Hall; The Friends of Llanelli Museum; Gwasanaeth Amgylchedd Williams Environment Service; Gerald R Vaughan Estate Agents; Pink Peppercorn Food Co; Evan-Evans Brewery; Jones Motors (Login) Ltd.; Jonathan's Business Services. Comments were also received via email/letter from Henllanfallteg Community Council and David Harries & Co. Email and letter responses from individuals have also been considered in the analysis.

A total of 1,390 respondents included their post codes. These have been grouped into six community areas for analytical purposes. AISs for community areas have been recorded for five proposals which are specific to a location, such as Whitland. Appendix 1 maps out the community area boundaries and their constituent postcodes.

	Community Area 1	Community Area 2	Community Area 3	Community Area 4	Community Area 5	Community Area 6
Number of Responses	672	187	540	103	161	161
% Responses	48%	14%	39%	7%	12%	12%

3) SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Headline results – all 14 proposals

The table below shows the results from the budget consultation survey. It shows details of the proposal, then gives results for the question: *'how strongly do you agree, or disagree, with this proposal'*.⁶ The table is ranked in order by AIS score. Those proposals with higher levels of support, reflected in higher AIS scores, appear first.⁷

Ranking	3 Year Saving (£'000)	% who selected proposal	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Average Index Score
Commercial opportunity - Income from Japanese Knotweed treatment (net)	10,000	23%	46%	34%	11%	4%	6%	1.12
Reduction in Age Cymru Costs	20,000	22%	29%	35%	14%	12%	11%	0.59
Y Gât - St Clears	45,000	16%	21%	31%	14%	17%	17%	0.22
All sport facilities	73,000	38%	17%	33%	13%	18%	20%	0.09
Across education services	300,000	34%	16%	31%	15%	17%	22%	0.01
Park keeping at Parc Howard	10,000	21%	20%	24%	14%	20%	22%	0.00
Primary school delegated budget	250,000	29%	20%	26%	12%	15%	27%	-0.03
Public conveniences - increase charge	23,000	34%	18%	26%	13%	20%	23%	-0.05
Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	100,000	28%	16%	29%	12%	18%	26%	-0.09
Cemetery charges increase	1,500	19%	14%	23%	22%	20%	21%	-0.11
Youth support services	50,000	26%	13%	25%	15%	24%	23%	-0.19
Residential placements - self funding administration fee	60,000	23%	14%	20%	20%	20%	26%	-0.24
Closure toilet facilities	100,000	44%	10%	18%	11%	29%	32%	-0.54
Whitland Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)	80,000	40%	8%	6%	3%	9%	74%	-1.36

⁶ The survey itself gave summary information about each proposal to inform the decisions of respondents.

⁷ Values near to zero may indicate no clear consensus, or may reflect apathy in relation to the proposal.

4) CONSULTATION FINDINGS – ALL PROPOSALS

Below, all 14 proposals are considered individually, in turn, in order to lay out a *comprehensive summary* of relevant consultation information.

Each summary begins by detailing relevant facts and figures, including the value of the proposal, its average index score (AIS), and its AIS rank against other proposals. It also gives an AIS for selected categories of respondent, for comparative purposes, and also to help meet our Equality Duty of demonstrating ‘due regard’ to equality. It is important to recognise that some proposals will be of specific relevance to people in certain categories. This must be taken in account in reaching decisions.

Views expressed through the public consultation have been considered together and themes identified.

The ‘other relevant information’ section includes information from *specific* sources, such as representations and organisational responses.

The views of councillors, (as expressed through budget seminars or scrutiny committees) are included under the ‘councillor engagement’ heading.

In the AIS charts that follow for each proposal, negative values are highlighted to show where results are, on balance, in opposition.

In order to strengthen the decision-making process, where a proposal has formed part of a previous budget consultation, these results are also included, for comparative purposes.

1. Additional Learning Needs

Total Budget: £650,000

3 Year Savings: £100,000

2020 – 21	2021- 22	2022- 23
100	0	0

Description:

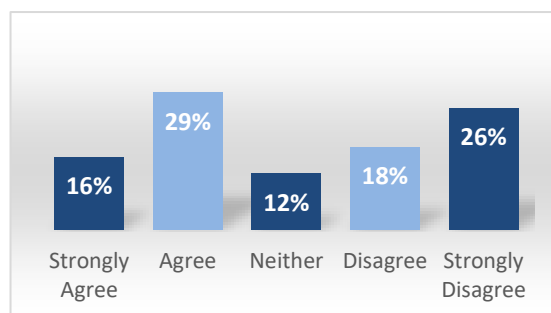
Maintain the Teaching complement to work on an outreach basis so that the pupils attend their local school and benefit from the additional support which could therefore become more widespread. It is expected that the Teaching Assistants (TA) could be redeployed as part of the development of the centrally coordinated special educational needs (SEN) support pool releasing part of this specific budget area.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.11% (£1.35 a year)

Average Index Score: -0.09

Overall Rank (of 14): 9

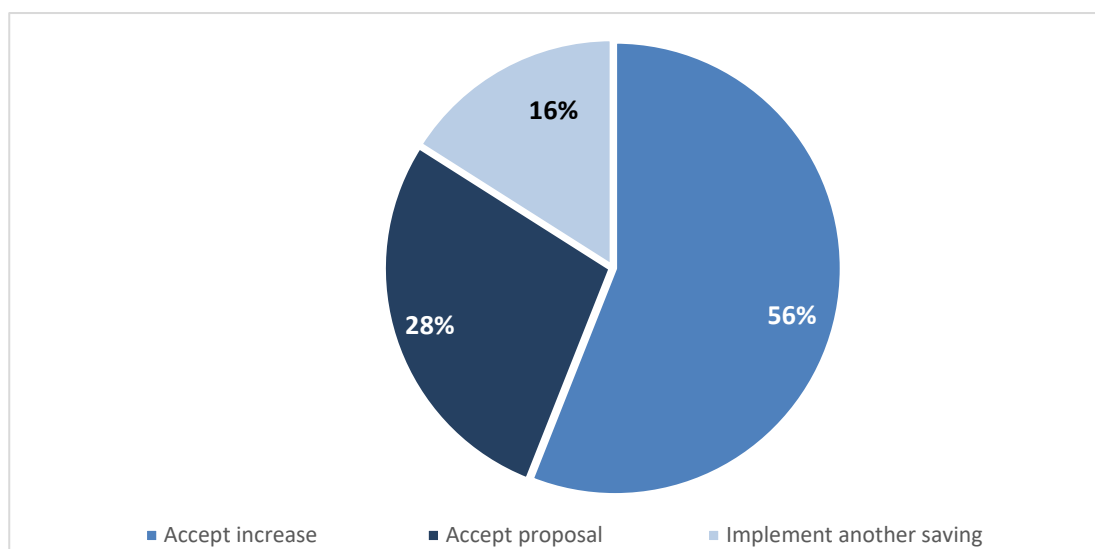
Sample Size: 529



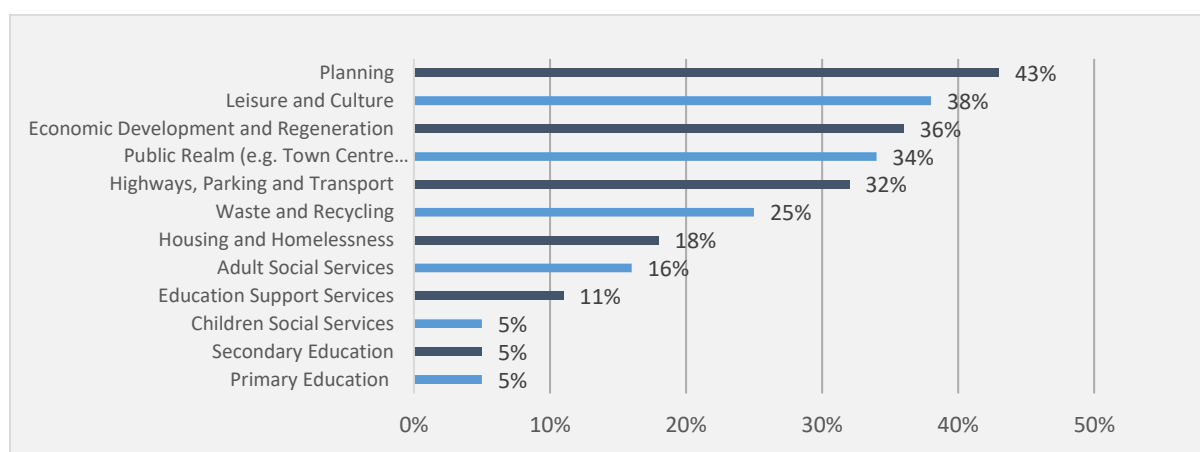
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	-0.03	-0.67	0.57	-0.13	-0.03	-0.16	0.01
Sample	124	3	7	404	88	331	160

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.12	-0.21	0.30	-0.09	-0.10	-0.32	0.12
Sample	52	231	20	88	118	149	163

Response to accepting a 0.11% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 76 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 176 comments

- Many noted that schools, and more specifically teachers, are under increased pressure and are stretched beyond capacity due to increased workload and reduced budgets. This is causing a significant impact on teacher's well-being and reducing the level of support to all learners.
- A large number of respondents noted that this efficiency proposal will have a significant impact on ALN pupils who require specialist help.
- Some expressed that the proposal would have an impact on budgets in the future due to the lack of support provided to children with ALN.
- Some respondents indicated that the proposal would have an impact on families as the reduced support would have a negative impact on the learner's well-being.
- Many respondents stressed that there should be an increase in the budget rather than an efficiency. Some noted that due to the increase in ALN pupils, staff and schools are unable to provide the necessary level of support.

Mitigation – 134 comments

- Several respondents could not come up with any suggestions on how the impact of the proposal could be lessened. These respondents expressed that the proposal should not be implemented.
- Many respondents indicated that by upskilling staff, this may lessen the impact of the proposal. Furthermore, by providing teacher training and educating families and parents, this may reduce the impact of the proposal.
- Some expressed that identification and assessment of pupils should be conducted earlier. A number of individuals noted that by identifying ALN pupils earlier, this will provide the best opportunity to be fully supported.

Councillor Engagement:

- It was generally felt that children are better supported in their own schools and as such, the aspiration of reducing the number of children in specialist

settings was agreed with Need to take into the account the additional needs transformation agenda

- There was some concern over the consistency and quality of this support if carried out on an out-reach basis. ALN support is specialist in its nature and the question was raised as to whether this would be false economy as good quality support from properly trained and experienced staff would still cost the same.
- Some members questioned where this proposal sits in the context of the wider ALN reform currently taking place. There was some concern that reducing the number of places in specialist settings might overburden schools with additional workload without additional resource at a time when they are already under considerable pressure.
- Councillors noted that savings on buildings can't be made to the detriment of both/either mainstream or specialist setting pupils
- Upskilling staff will take time

Equality Impact Assessment summary:	
<i>Description of impact:</i>	
This proposal applies to both secondary and primary provision	
<i>Affected groups:</i>	
Potential impact on pupils of school age, disabled children and young people and those who require behavioural and social support	
<i>Mitigation:</i>	
<p>Tailored Learning and Development opportunities for staff to improve skills and knowledge, in order to develop a specialised pool of staff and to ensure that skills are transferred and not lost</p> <p>Centrally employed TAs will be highly skilled and be appropriately deployed across primary and secondary schools</p> <p>Centrally pooled staff will also ensure that the Local Authority will be able to deploy staff to schools at a quicker pace, this ensuring pupils' needs are met.</p>	
<i>Assessment undertaken:</i> A Thomas – 31.01.2020	

2. Youth Support Services

Total Budget: £860,000

3 Year Savings: £50,000

2020- 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
50	0	0

Description:

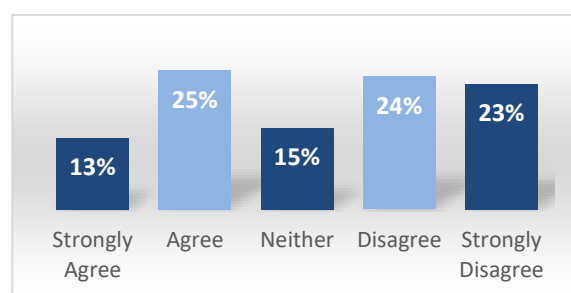
On the assumption that the additional grant funding awarded in 2019/20 will continue, services would not be reduced in achieving this efficiency. If the grant funding is reduced, a number of smaller reductions to minimise the impact on beneficiaries will be implemented such as challenging need before filling vacant posts, reducing D of E support, less frequent provision of activities. This is in addition to the £50k existing policy that was deferred from 2019/20.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.05% (£0.68 a year)

Average Index Score: -0.19

Overall Rank (of 14): 10

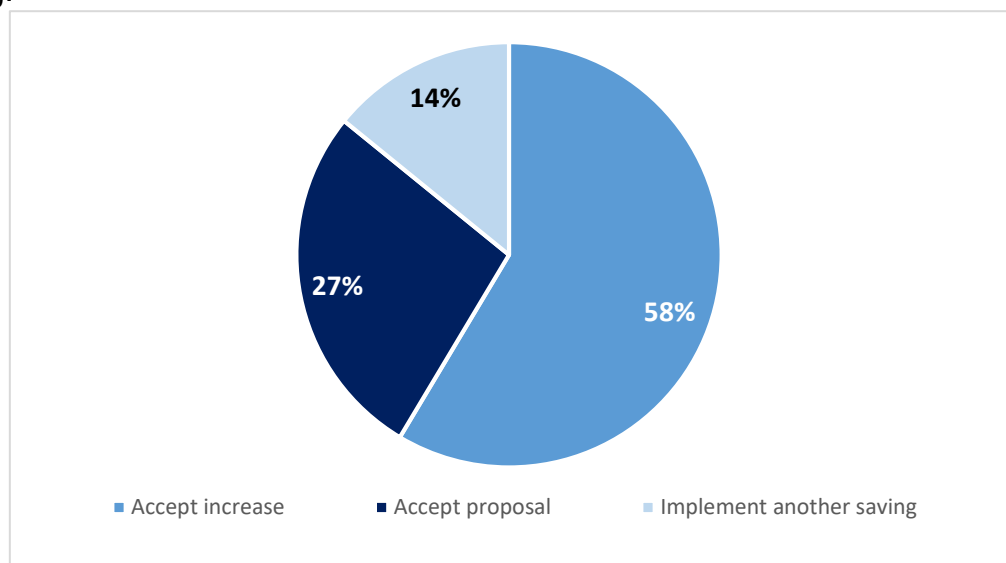
Sample Size: 486



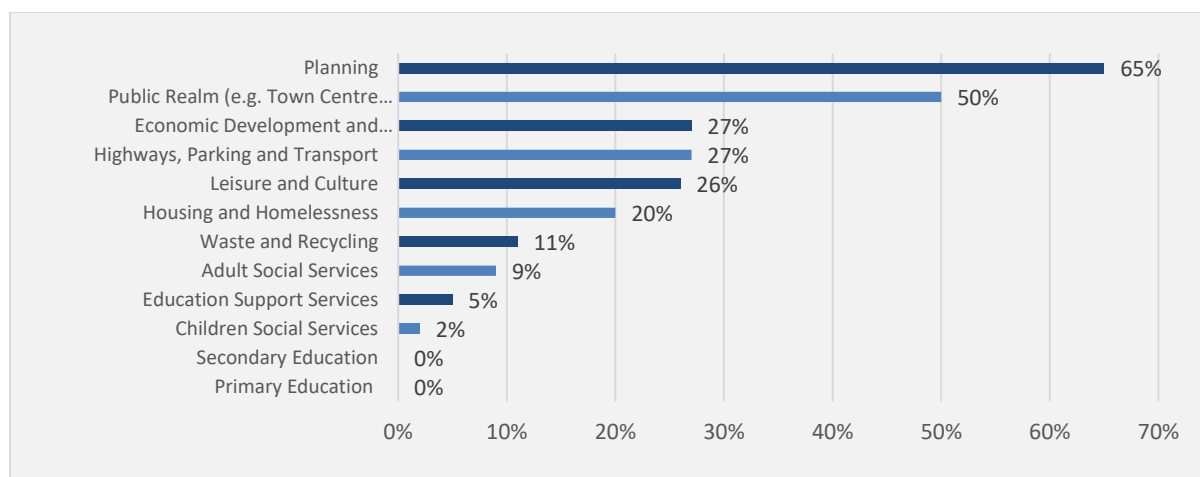
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	-0.13	0.13	1.13	-0.18	-0.28	-0.20	-0.18
Sample	100	8	8	367	86	290	170

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.06	-0.22	0.04	-0.07	-0.13	-0.34	0.00
Sample	47	173	24	80	109	134	149

Response to accepting a 0.05% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 66 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 138 comments

- The majority of comments made by respondents expressed the lack of support services and activities to participate in for young people. A large number of respondents indicated that by implementing the proposal, it is likely that there will be an increase in anti-social behaviour which would have a significant impact on families, communities and the local authority.
- Some respondents noted that there is an increasing pressure on young people to succeed and to be successful in schools. The service provides an opportunity to learn and develop outside of the traditional classroom. Respondents indicated that this proposal may have an impact on youth development.
- A number of respondents suggested that the proposal may have a longer-term impact on the community due to the increased chance of anti-social behaviour. Moreover, suggestions were made regarding the longer-term cost implications for the local authority.

Mitigation – 94 comments

- Many comments received emphasised the importance of recruiting volunteers to assist in the delivery of activities.
- A large number of respondents suggested raising funds for activities through other means. Third sector organisations, asking for a small fee and fund raising from young people using facilities were all popular suggestions.
- Some respondents suggested that other opportunities within the county should be better communicated to parents and young people.

Councillor Engagement:

- Members supported the proposal and stated that the work of the Youth Service was extremely valuable, particularly in deprived areas.
- There was concern, however, over the sustainability of the service should grant funding be removed or reduced.

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

- 1) This proposal makes the service more prone to the vagaries of grant funding and potentially poses a challenge to job security for staff of working age. Any cuts to grant funding in the future will generate some risk across the 4 pillars of YSS service delivery.
- 2) The ending of funding for Welsh Language Youth Clubs could have an effect on Welsh language speakers

Affected groups:

- 1) Young people aged 11-25.
- 2) Welsh Language speakers

Mitigation:

- 1) It is anticipated that the recent announcement relating to the strengthening of the Youth Support Grant by Welsh Government in 2019/20 will provide funding to mitigate any reduction against core funding and would be used to continue to provide the necessary staffing for youth clubs.
- 2) It is anticipated that the recent announcement relating to the strengthening of the Youth Support Grant by Welsh Government in 2019/20 will provide funding to mitigate any reduction against core funding and would be used to continue to provide the necessary staffing for Welsh Language youth clubs in the county.

Assessment undertaken: A Rees 20/12/2019

3. Across education services

Total Budget: £14,561,000

3 Year Savings: £300,000

2020-21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
0	0	300

Description:

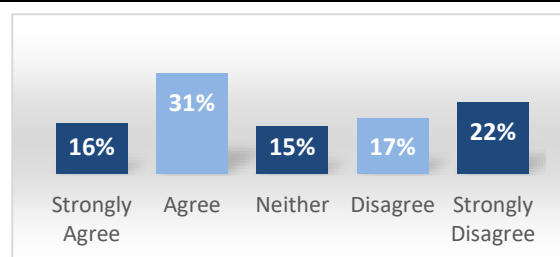
Rationalising of Primary Schools will enable a reduced level of support to function appropriately with fewer sites. The savings would actually be managerial as service provision would not be reduced, however it is a policy decision that would enable this efficiency to be delivered.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.32% (£4.05 a year)

Average Index Score: 0.01

Overall Rank (of 14): 5

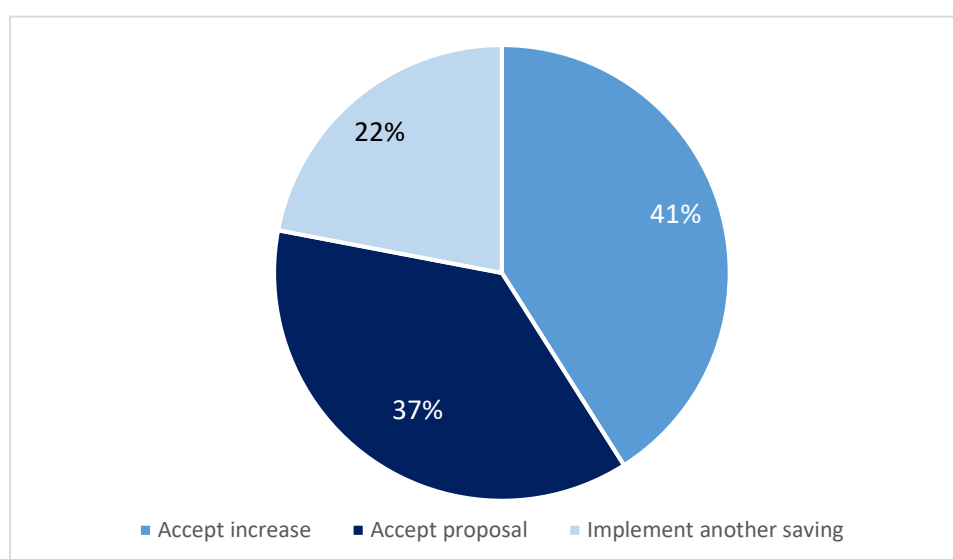
Sample Size: 631



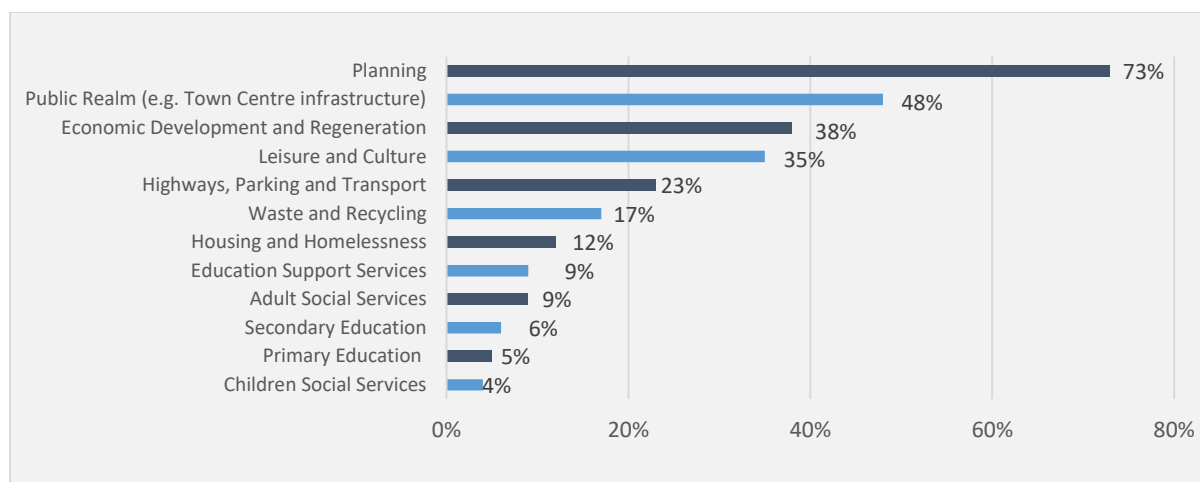
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	0.02	-0.60	1.00	-0.02	0.17	-0.12	0.20
Sample	132	5	6	480	114	373	226

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	0.04	-0.02	0.30	-0.05	-0.02	-0.10	0.23
Sample	67	249	27	98	133	172	201

Response to accepting a 0.32% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 127 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 175 comments

- Several respondents felt that if this proposal was implemented it could have an impact on small, rural communities.
- Some comments indicated that this may have an impact on the Welsh language.
- Some respondents commented that it would increase the pressure put on parents/carers to ensure their children are attending school due to the potential of increased travel.
- Some respondents felt that this could impact teachers' ability to properly educate learners. Some noted that it would increase classroom sizes which would increase pressure on teachers and therefore impact pupils learning.
- A number of individuals felt that if efficiencies were made at a managerial level, this would be acceptable. However, it was noted that the efficiencies cannot impact teaching staff.

Mitigation – 124 comments

- Some respondents suggested that managers/head teachers, data officers and administration functions could be shared in a cluster of local schools.
- A number of respondents felt that if the proposal is implemented, adequate public transport should be made available to pupils.
- Some felt that the wording of the proposal was too confusing and were unable to comment.

Councillor Engagement:

- It was recognised that there were long term benefits
- Councillors questioned whether schools should be responsible for finance management, building management, admin etc
- Need to look at things centrally to support school staff
- Need to make sure that all SLA's are fit for purpose
- School governors need more training on finance management etc.
- Needs to fit in with the 10-year vision

- Proper consultation is required on school rationalisation proposals

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:
The majority of the Services' budgets are for the support, administration and management of the schools - School improvement, Grant support, Data, Admissions.
Affected groups:
Age
Disability
Mitigation:
The LA must be able to provide services for both the primary and secondary sector to meet the needs of every pupil
The LA must be able to provide specialist services to support pupils across a range of disabilities
The quality and breadth of support provided to local schools must continue to be of the highest standard.
Assessment undertaken: A Thomas – 31.01.2020

4. Primary school delegated budget

Total Budget: £56,252,000

3 Year Savings: £250,000

2020- 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
0	0	250

Description: Rationalise primary schools that are disproportionately expensive to operate and unable to sustain educationally effective teaching and learning structures due to low pupil numbers. Through carefully selected decommissioning and strategically driven school federations the primary school estate will be reduced. Rationalising the number of schools will improve the financial stability of the remaining schools.

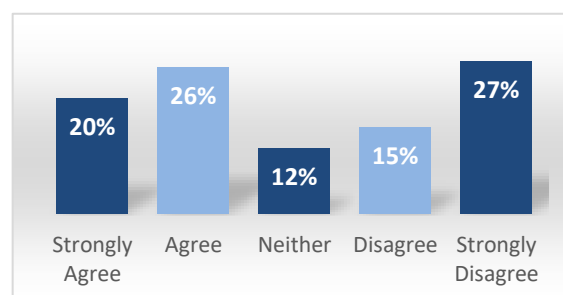
Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.27% (£3.38 a year)

Average Index Score: -0.03

Overall Rank (of 14): 7

Sample Size: 550

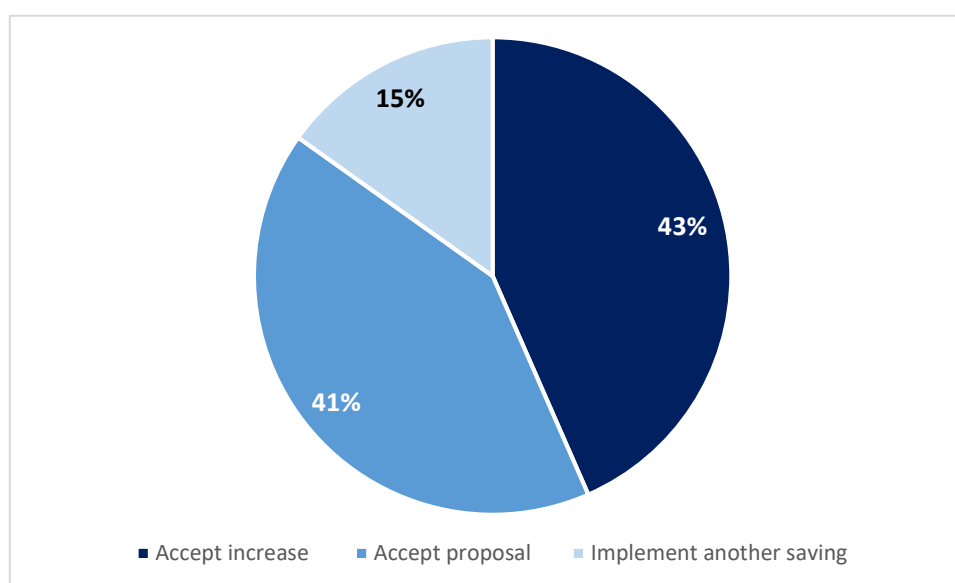
Previous AIS: -0.37 (2017)



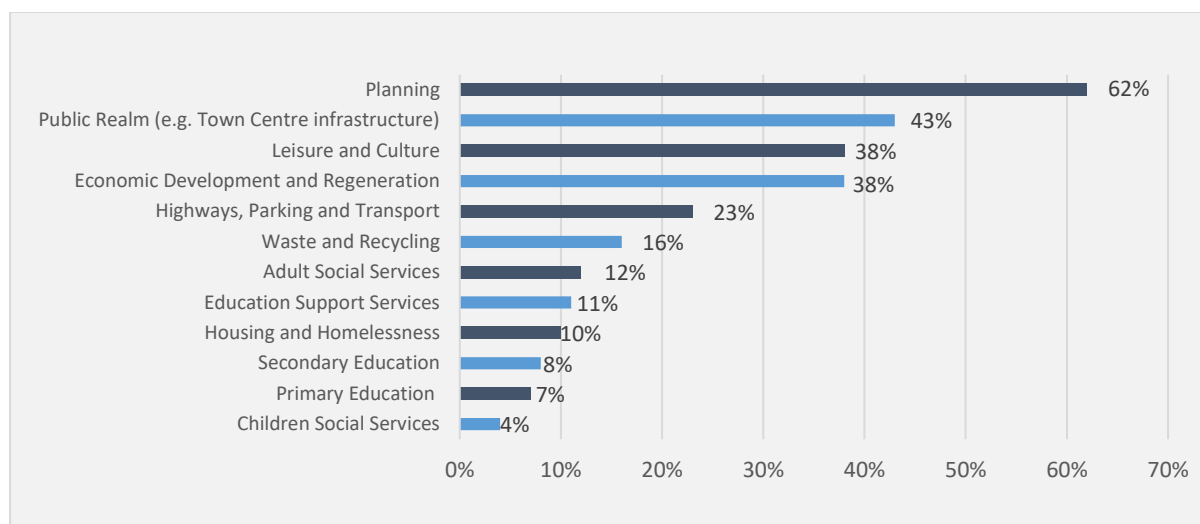
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	0.13	0.25	0.00	-0.02	0.00	-0.13	0.13
Sample	102	4	5	443	78	324	198

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.37	-0.08	-0.21	-0.13	-0.16	-0.20	0.17
Sample	49	219	19	79	102	147	198

Response to accepting a 0.27% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 74 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 175 comments

- Most respondents felt that if this proposal was implemented it would have a negative impact on small and rural communities. Many suggested that if smaller schools are removed from small communities, this would be detrimental. A number of respondents expressed that if school closures happened, families would not want to live in these areas which would impact the community.
- Respondents also noted that it would increase pressure on families due to transportation issues. Some also indicated that due to increased travel distances, this would have a negative impact on the environment and traffic.
- Many suggested that by merging schools, this would increase classroom sizes. Respondents felt that this would have an impact on pupils' education negatively and increase teaching staff pressure. Furthermore, some respondents indicated that this would have a greater impact on children with ALN.

Mitigation – 119 comments

- The majority suggested that the impact could be lessened by ensuring that there are sufficient amount of teaching staff and support staff to provide a good level of education.
- Many comments disagreed with the proposal noting that efficiencies should be made elsewhere.
- Many suggested that transport needs to be ensured to pupils who are affected by this proposal.
- Some respondents suggested that support for financial management within schools needs to be improved.
- Other suggestions included; sharing management between schools and utilising smaller schools as ALN centres.

Councillor Engagement:

- The financial reasons for reducing the primary footprint were understood and noted.
- There was some concern over the conflict between this policy and wider Council initiatives to support sustainable rural communities across the county. It was felt that school closures would have a detrimental effect on rural areas and community cohesion.
- However, members felt that, if this were to move forward, the quality of consultation with communities is a crucial aspect. Community councils, parents, governors should be included in this. There must be a focus on the positives and advantages to children of rationalisation of school buildings. It was suggested that the Media Dept be involved in publicising (creating a publicity film?) successful projects such as Carreg Hirfaen to reassure stakeholders that children will not be disadvantaged and that the essence of living in a rural community is maintained.
- It was felt strongly that any review of the primary footprint must be carried out closely in tandem with the MEP review and the aspirations of the 10-year plan for education in Carmarthenshire.
- It was suggested and accepted by all that there cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach and that the needs and contexts of different rural communities must be considered with different models employed in each, whether this leads to school closure with children moved to existing local schools, the construction of new larger 'area' schools with resultant closure of existing buildings or federation of small schools within a geographical cluster of rural communities. The above point in relation to consultation is also relevant here.

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:
This proposal affects the primary sector rather than secondary sector
Affected groups:
Age Disability Welsh language Rural Communities
Mitigation:
If this proposal is agreed, a full impact assessment its effect on rural communities will be carried out Pupils will benefit from additional socialisation and engagement with peers We foresee that primary schools' pupils will benefit from an increased and more specialist provision with a reduction in the age range being taught Provision will need to be made for pupils with disabilities to ensure access to the primary sector and their local schools Any further consideration will have to ensure improved accessibility and provision for any pupil with a disability.
Assessment undertaken: A Thomas 31.01.2020

5. Y Gât (St Clears)

Total Budget: £40,000

3 Year Savings: £45,000

2020-21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
10	35	0

Description: Review of business purpose of Y Gat (St. Clears) with community partners (EIA). The continued operation of the facility in house has been reviewed and the conclusion is that the facility is unlikely to be viable in its current operational format as income growth has not been realised.

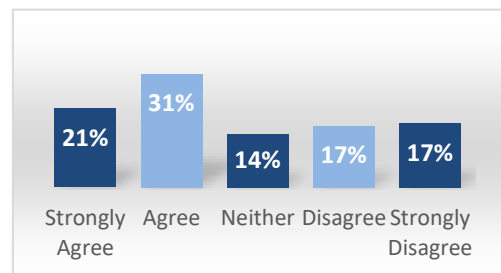
Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.05% (£0.61 a year)

Average Index Score: 0.22

Overall Rank (of 14): 3

Sample Size: 307

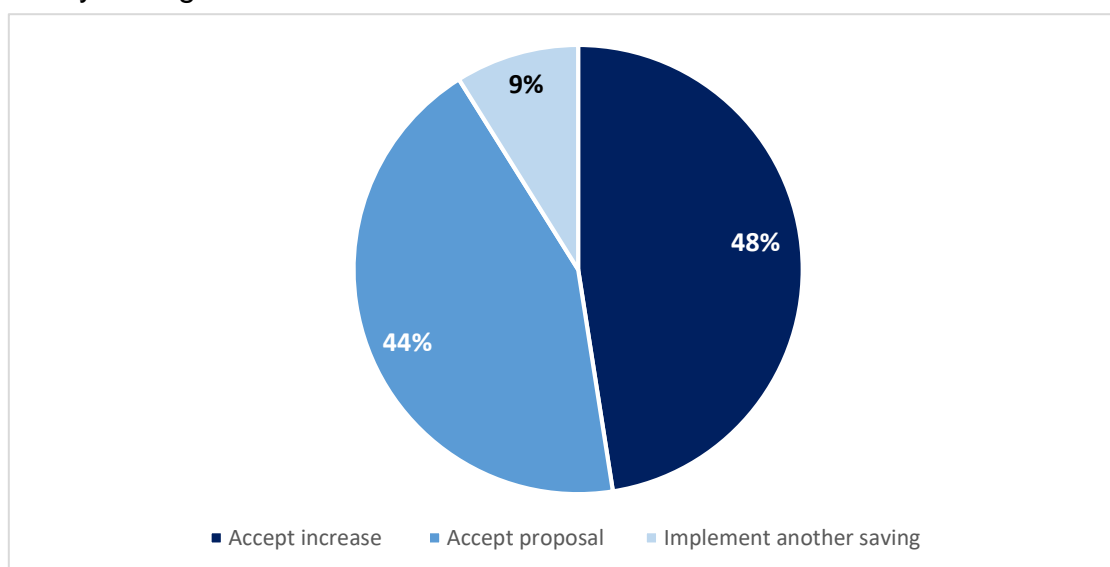
Previous AIS: 0.75 (2018)



	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M	CA1 ⁸
AIS	0.36	0.67	1.00	0.35	-0.21	0.17	0.31	0.07
Sample	56	3	5	219	63	156	126	157

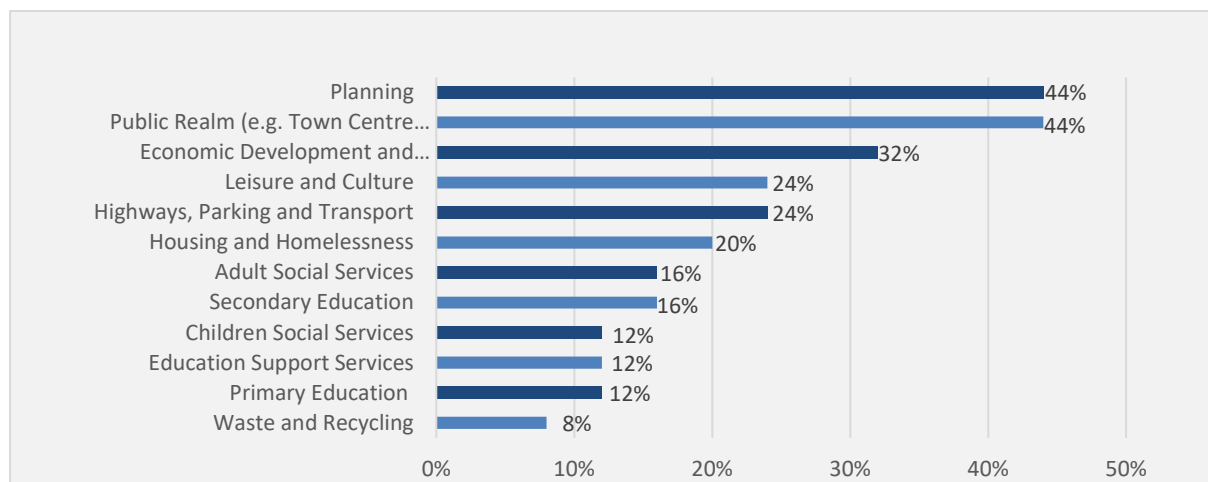
	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	0.44	0.31	0.63	0.04	0.02	0.08	0.54
Sample	32	107	8	46	54	90	91

Response to accepting a 0.05% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



⁸ Community Area 1 is inclusive of the St Clears area

Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 37 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 96 comments

- Many respondents felt that this proposal would have an impact on the residents of St Clears noting that individuals use the facilities to meet and socialise. Respondents also noted that this would have an impact on those who use the facilities and are unable to travel to other destinations.
- Some indicated that the facility attracts people to the area and therefore tourism would decrease if the proposal is actioned.
- Some respondents noted that St Clears is a part of the Rural Regeneration strategy and suggested that due to closures, the area is suffering.

Mitigation – 66 comments

- Some respondents noted that it would be beneficial if current events and activities were better promoted and advertised to a wider audience.
- Some noted that if the current activities and events are not generating income and interest, the Gât should be used for other activities.
- A number of respondents suggested that a community asset transfer or a private company could be a mitigation.

Councillor Engagement:

- Councillors requested further clarity on the option to asset transfer to the local community

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

Existing Centre users may have to travel between 5 and 11 miles to participate in similar arts activities in Carmarthen and library activities in Whitland. Furthermore, not all arts activities are available in Carmarthen. However, there are more diverse library facilities available to those travelling to Carmarthen. Moreover, there are arts and gallery facilities are also available in Carmarthen.

A further description of impact for specific groups can be seen below:

- 1) Older customers may have mobility issues that could impact on their ability to travel further to take part in artistic activity.
- 2) Disabled customers may have mobility issues that could impact on their ability to travel further to take part in artistic activity. The gallery in Carmarthen is not fully access compliant although there are proposals for improvement which are being considered as part of a capital program review in the 2020 capital budget setting.
- 3) There will be a need to ensure that service users are able to access services in the language of their choice. Welsh language requirements will need to be met and the service delivery model adopted will need to deliver Welsh Government policy requirements.

Affected groups:

- 1) Older people
- 2) Users/staff with disabilities
- 3) Welsh Language

Mitigation:

- 1) The consultation will identify whether staff/users with protected characteristics are disproportionately affected. This EIA will be updated accordingly, and any necessary mitigating actions will be identified
- 2) The consultation will identify whether staff/users with protected characteristics are disproportionately affected. This EIA will be updated accordingly, and any necessary mitigating actions will be identified
- 3) Any alternative service delivery model developed will need to ensure that Welsh language provision is catered for.

Assessment undertaken: J Davies December 2019

6. All sport facilities

Total Budget: £611,000

3 Year Savings: £73,000

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
25	19	29

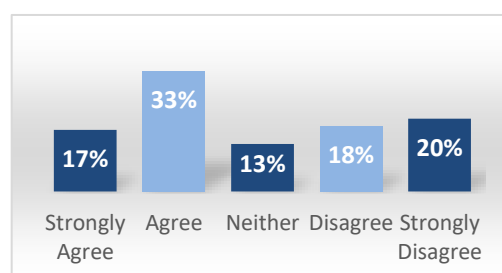
Description: There are 6 Leisure Centres in Carmarthenshire. Llanelli, Carmarthen, Ammanford, Llandovery, St Clears and Newcastle Emlyn. A variety of activities at your local leisure centre such as; Swimming, Diving, Canoeing, Fitness, Cycling, Badminton, Tennis, Table Tennis, Squash, Hockey, Netball, Basketball, Football, Rugby, Cricket, Gymnastics, Birthday Parties, Holiday programmes. There were over a million visits to the Leisure facilities in the last 12 months. The proposal is to increase charges for all sport facilities.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.08% (£0.99 a year)

Average Index Score: 0.09

Rank (of 14): 4

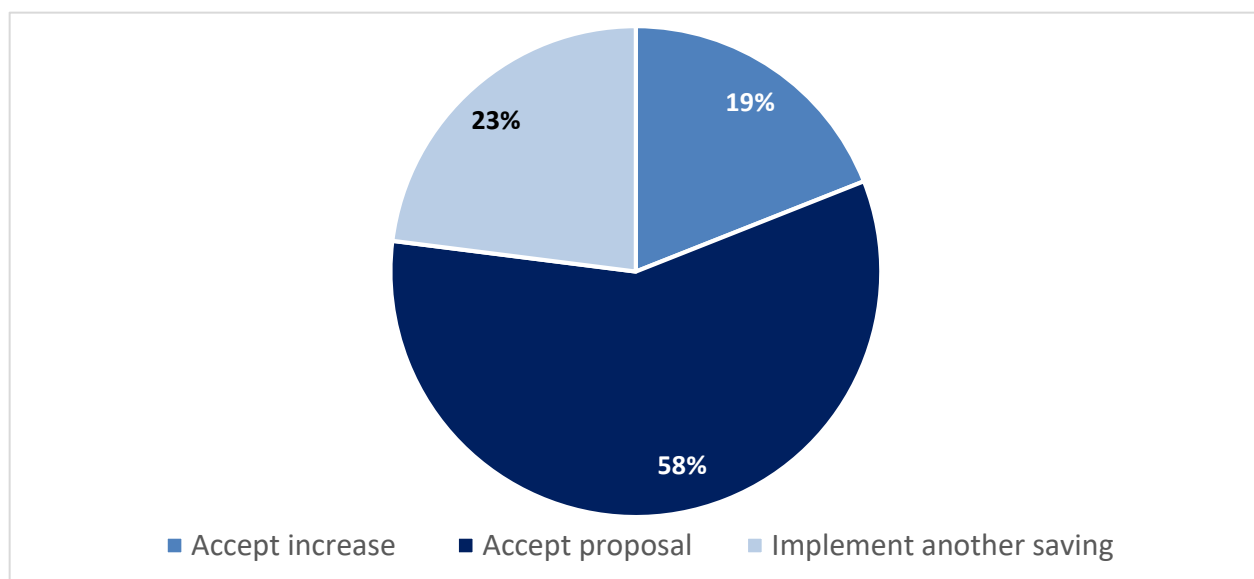
Sample Size: 731



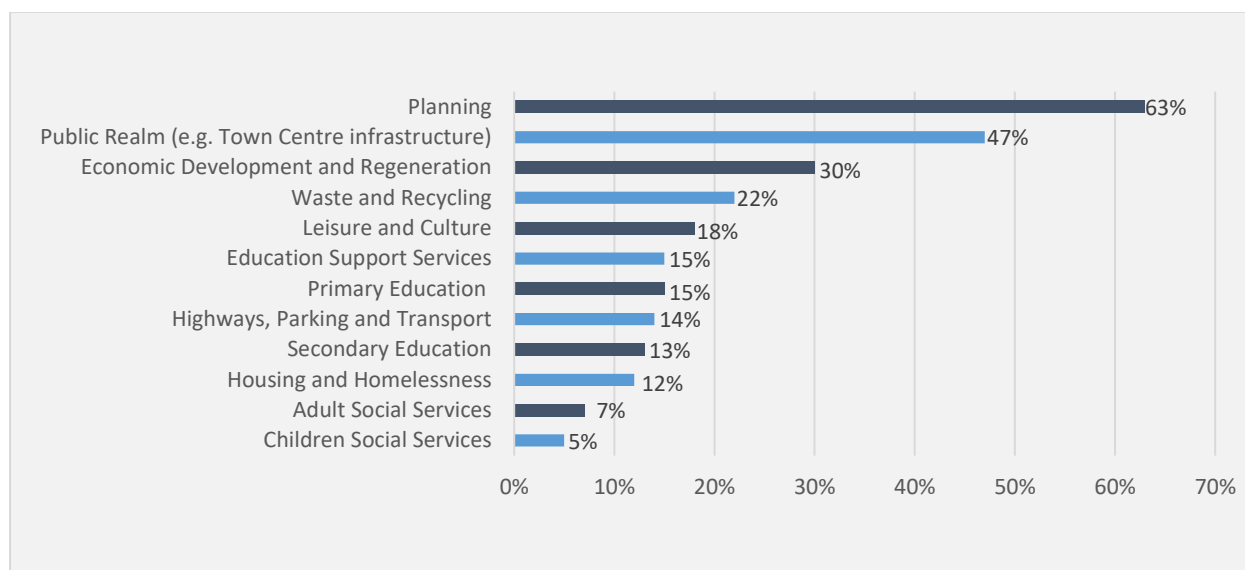
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	-0.03	-0.20	0.13	0.03	0.28	-0.01	0.17
Sample	160	5	8	544	144	380	308

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20-£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.15	0.12	-0.27	0.09	0.10	0.08	0.10
Sample	65	249	26	102	153	204	224

Response to accepting a 0.08% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 94 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 231 comments

- Many respondents noted that the implementation of this proposal would have a significant impact on citizens health and wellbeing. Many noted that due to an increase in charges, this would dissuade people from using the facilities. Many expressed that this would have significant impact on other public services in the future.
- A number of respondents indicated that this proposal would have an impact on lower income families.
- Some respondents indicated that this would reduce the number of visits as many private sport facilities offer their facilities cheaper. Furthermore, a number of comments suggested that the facilities are not up to standard and are already too expensive.
- Some comments indicated that if facilities were improved, this would merit an increase in charges and would then pay an increased price.
- Respondents also felt that this would have an impact on families, creating a barrier to exercise. Some expressed that the increase in charges would have an impact on the range of activities available to children.

Mitigation – 165 comments

- The majority of respondents suggested that discounted prices should apply for different groups of people. For example, Older people, people with low income, children under 5 and council staff were all noted as options.
- Some respondents noted that leisure centres should be more accessible by increasing opening times and providing a wider range of activities. Furthermore, some indicated that there is a need to publicise these activities and facilities more often.
- Some respondents stated that package deals would help increase footfall in sport facilities.

-
- Some respondents felt that the council should link in with GPs and hospitals so that the sport facilities can be used as venues for exercise prescription. .
-

Councillor Engagement:

- Councillors generally opposed to increased charges to all sports facilities given the importance of leisure and physical activity to the wellbeing agenda

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

<i>Description of impact:</i>
Users may not continue coming to our facilities which could affect their general health and well-being.
<i>Affected groups:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Disability
<i>Mitigation:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various social charging offers are in place to mitigate risk and to support such groups • The consultation will identify whether staff/users with protected characteristics are disproportionately affected. This EIA will be updated accordingly, and any necessary mitigating actions will be identified.
<i>Assessment undertaken:</i> C Daniels 17/2/2020

7. Residential placements - self funding administration fee

Total Budget: £0

3 Year Savings: £60,000

2020- 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
0	20	40

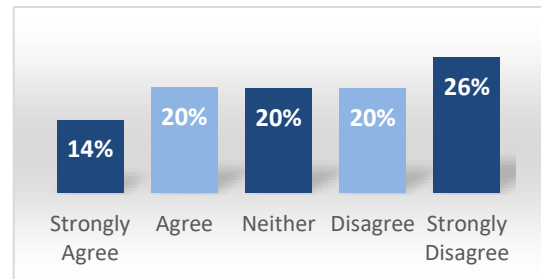
Description: To make a charge of £1,000 to individuals who are self-funding their placement, per annum. The proposal would need to be approved by Council.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.06% (£0.81 a year)

Average Index Score: -0.24

Overall Rank (of 14): 12

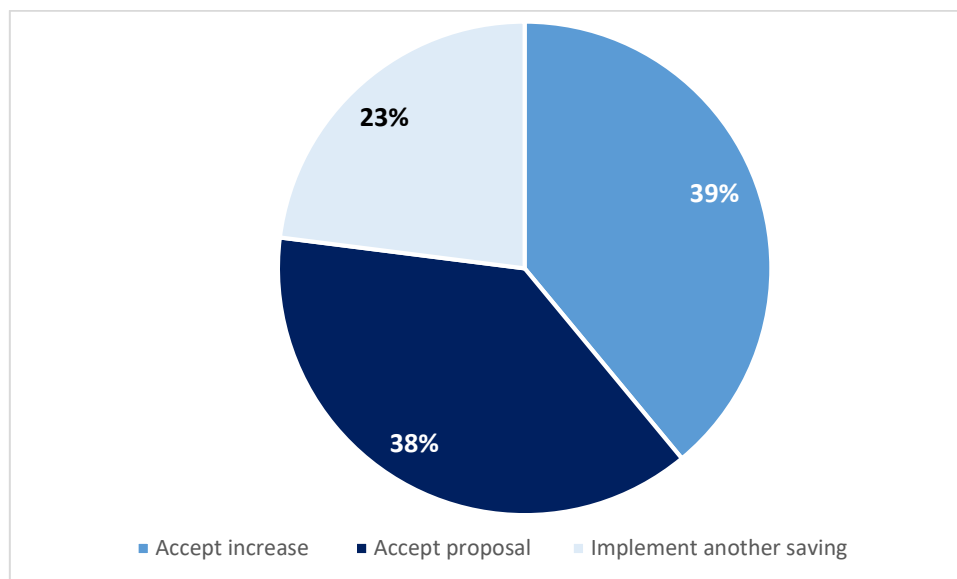
Sample Size: 436



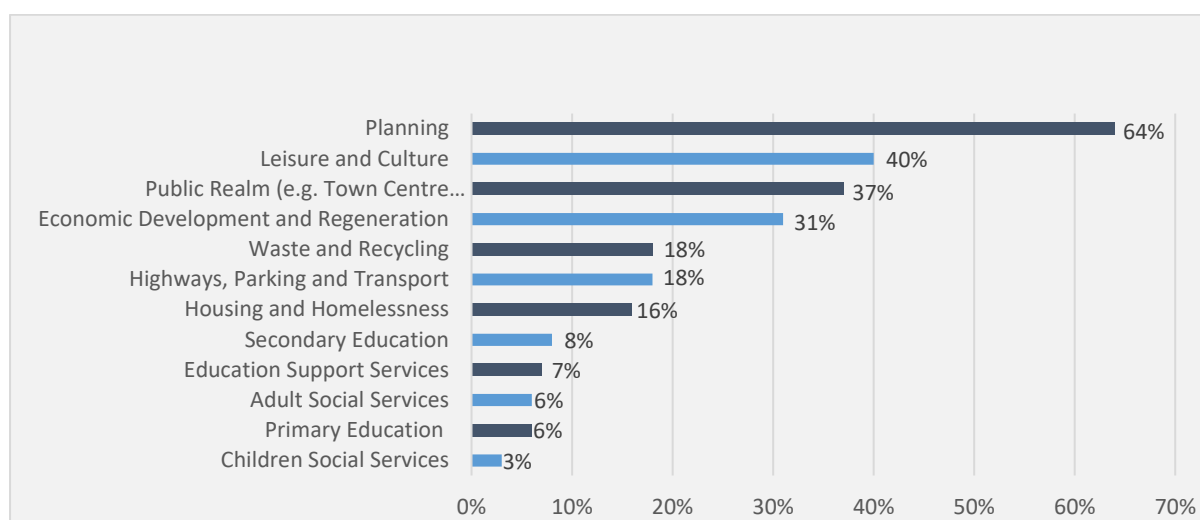
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	-0.24	0.25	0.13	-0.25	-0.29	-0.46	0.01
Sample	107	4	8	294	109	254	153

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.23	-0.24	-0.47	-0.41	-0.39	-0.32	-0.23
Sample	62	178	17	81	90	134	108

Response to accepting a 0.06% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 88 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 115 comments

- The majority of respondents expressed concerns about the impact this proposal would have on vulnerable and older people in the county. Some noted that with an ever-increasing older population, more people will not be able to afford this cost.
- Some respondents felt that if this proposal was implemented it may have a negative impact on individuals who have worked hard and saved to afford residential care. Some suggested that this is punishing those who have planned for later life.
- A few respondents were concerned that this would increase pressure on lower income families.

Mitigation – 65 comments

- The majority of comments suggested that this charge should be means tested and not the proposed blanket cost.
- Most respondents suggested reducing the cost annually or changing the proposal to a 'one-off' payment.
- A lot of respondents who left a comment disagreed with the proposal.

Councillor Engagement:

- N/A

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

Older people are likely to fall into this charging area.

Affected groups:

Older people

Mitigation:

N/A

Assessment undertaken: R Page 7/2/2020

8. Closure toilet facilities

Total Budget: £559,000

3-Year Saving: £100,000

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022- 23
0	75	25

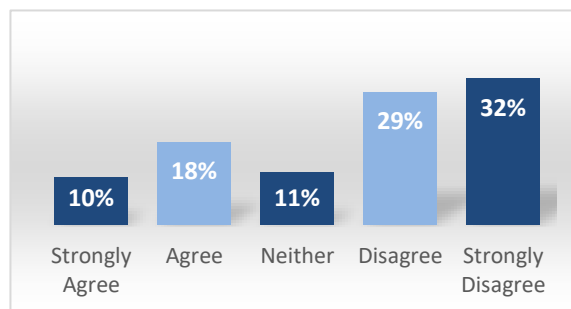
Description: £75k is for closure of 3 units; St Clears, Town Hall (Llanelli) and Ammanford. Llanelli Bus Station site is a 4th option @£25k on the basis that these are the least used out of the 9 super-loos.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.11% (£1.35 a year)

Average Index Score: -0.54

Overall Rank (of 14): 13

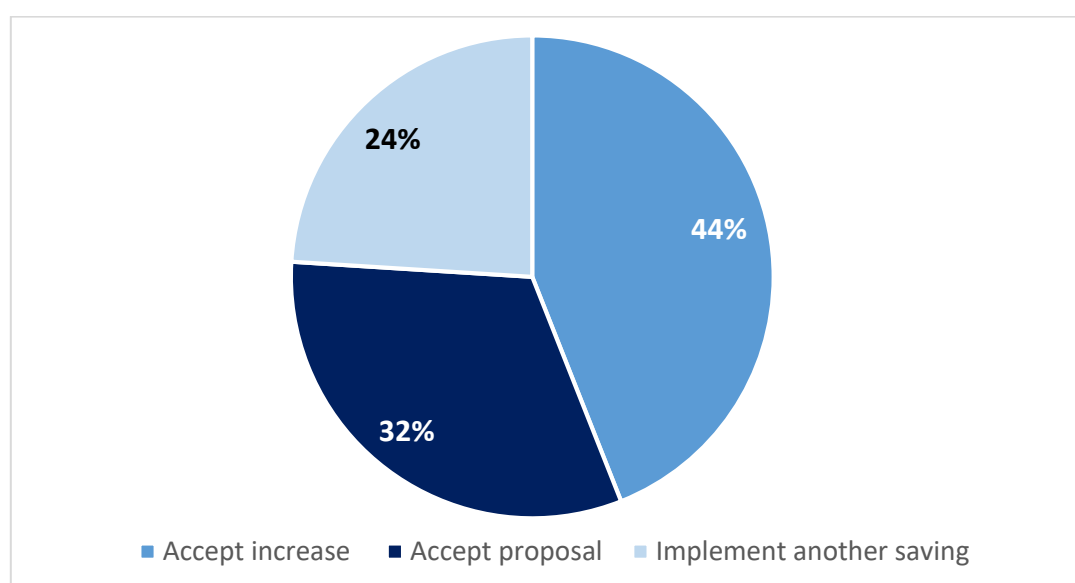
Sample Size: 839



	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M	CA1 ⁹	CA3 ⁸	CA6 ⁸
AIS	-0.58	-0.50	0.25	-0.43	-0.81	-0.60	-0.46	-0.59	-0.62	-0.37
Sample	184	10	4	577	216	440	343	255	219	93

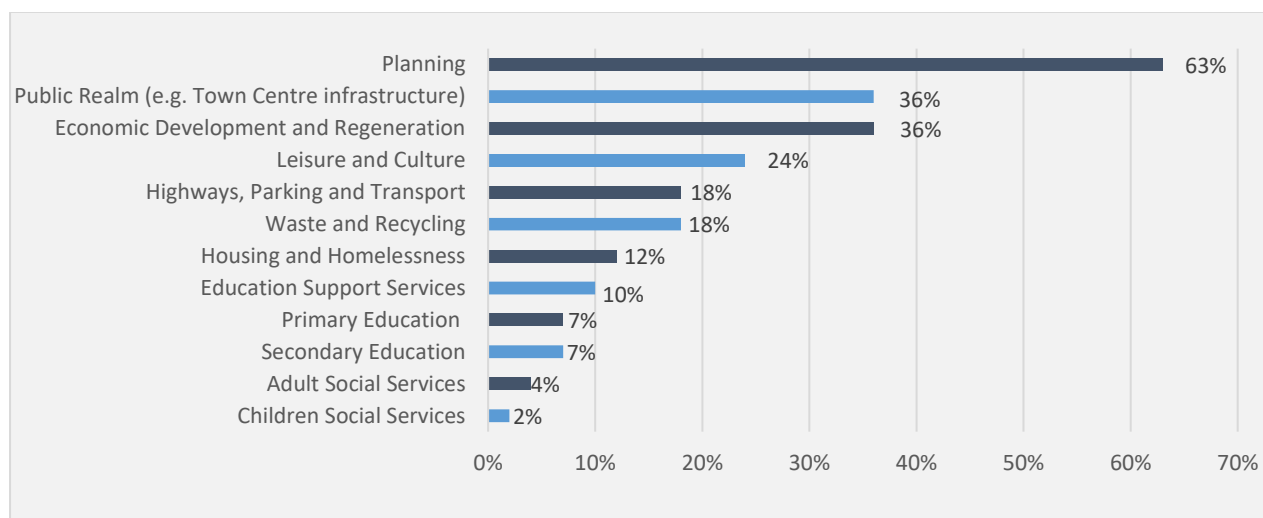
	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.61	-0.60	-0.31	-0.61	-0.58	-0.70	-0.20
Sample	107	315	32	137	197	260	208

Response to accepting a 0.11% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



⁹ Community Area 1 is inclusive of St Clears; Community Area 3 is inclusive of Ammanford and Community Area 6 covers the Llanelli town centre and its immediate localities

Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 177 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 341 comments

- Majority of individuals specified that this proposal would have a substantial adverse effect on older people, individuals with disabilities and conditions, female population and families with young children. Several respondents emphasised the necessity of having public conveniences in the county as Carmarthenshire has an aging population.
- Many comments suggested that by implementing this proposal, this would have a devastating impact on footfall in town centres. Moreover, rural areas (e.g. St Clears) would be negatively impacted as there are no other alternatives.
- Some suggested that tourism would be negatively impacted by this proposal.
- Many respondents suggested that the communities would be impacted due to people finding other alternatives (e.g. street, parks, etc.)
- Many noted that it would have a negative impact on people with disabilities, conditions and the older populations' wellbeing as they will refrain from going to any areas which do not have public toilets and therefore would be isolated.

Mitigation – 241 comments

- Respondents suggested private businesses and local shops should be encouraged and incentivised to offer their facilities. Furthermore, toilets should be clearly signposted and published.
- Some respondents suggested that town and community councils should take a responsibility in keeping the toilets open.
- Some suggested that different payment options should be available as many people no longer carry change.
- Some comments suggested that volunteers should be recruited to ensure that toilets are maintained.
- Some respondents suggested that council owned buildings should allow the public to use facilities.

- Many disagreed with the proposal and noted that they would be willing to pay an increase charge to keep open.

Councillor Engagement:

- Councillors expressed the view that most people would pay more to keep them open. Facilities should be available if there is demand. Councillors requested further information on why these sites were selected. Also need to ensure that tourist locations are catered for.
- Some members were concerned on the impact on towns and suggested that these should be under the remit of the Town and Community councils. Early consultation needed so that they can include within their precept. Concern on impact on rural regeneration.
- Some Members agreed in principle.
- Accessibility –inclusivity and wellbeing through access to facilities was referenced. Noted that older people are less likely to go out if they don't have access to toilet facilities.

Equality Impact Assessment summary:
<i>Description of impact:</i>
1) Facilities will no longer be available. 2) As above.
<i>Affected groups:</i>
1) Older people 2) Individuals with disabilities
<i>Mitigation:</i>
1) Promote the community toilet scheme where appropriate and signpost to existing shops/establishments that willingly make toilet facilities available to the public. 2) As above.
<i>Assessment undertaken:</i> R Davies 22/10/2019

9. Public conveniences - increase charge

Total Budget: £559,000

3-Year Saving: £23,000

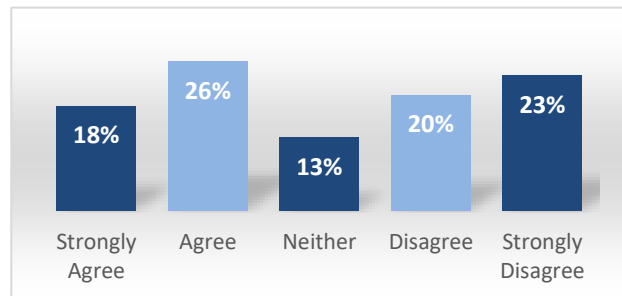
2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
0	23	0

Description:

Increase charge from 20p to 40p for Super-loos.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.02% (£0.31 a year).

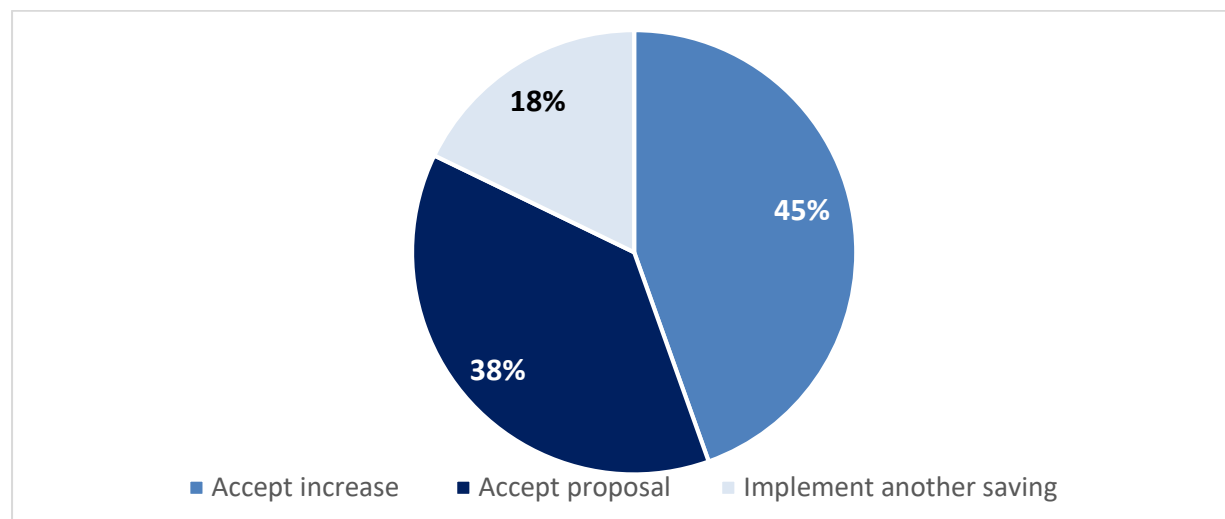
Average Index Score: -0.05
Overall Rank (of 14): 8
Sample Size: 636



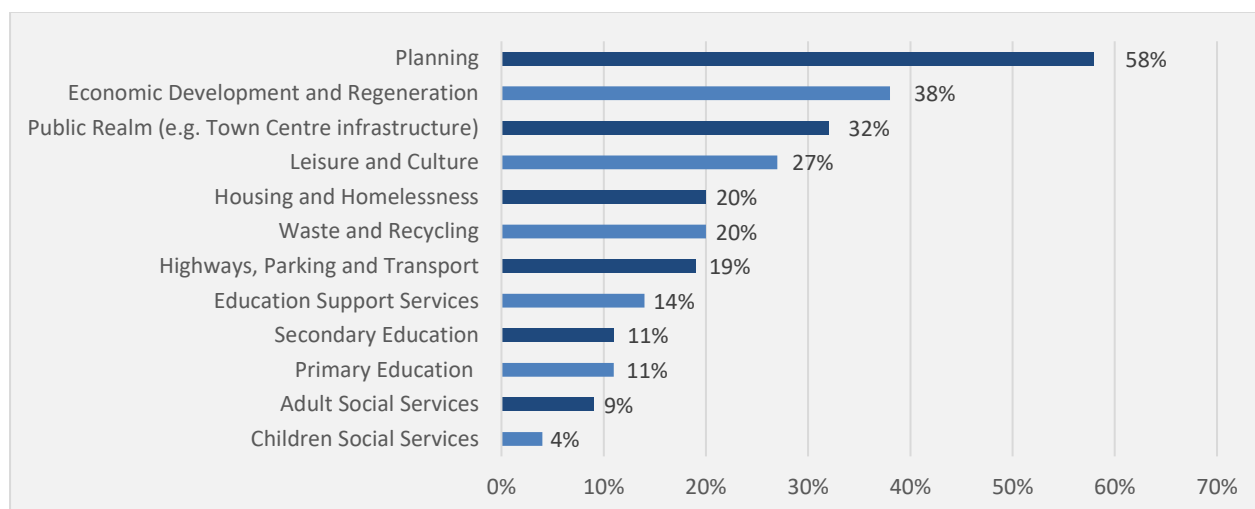
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	-0.13	-0.57	1.5	0.04	-0.32	-0.04	-0.05
Sample	140	7	4	456	145	351	246

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.30	0.04	0.58	0.12	-0.17	-0.15	0.22
Sample	74	245	26	94	146	182	172

Response to accepting a 0.02% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 92 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 170 comments

- Majority of respondents indicated that this proposal would have a significant negative impact on older people, individuals with disabilities and conditions, female population and low-income population. A number of respondents highlighted the need for public conveniences as Carmarthenshire has an aging population.
- A large proportion of respondents suggested that the communities and cleanliness of streets would be impacted due to people finding other alternatives (e.g. street, parks, etc.)
- Many noted that it would have a negative impact on people with disabilities, conditions and the older populations' wellbeing as they will refrain from going to any areas which do not have public toilets and therefore be isolated.

Mitigation – 107 comments

- Many respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay an increase for the super-loos if they are maintained to a standard. Furthermore, respondents noted that they would prefer to pay an increased cost to keep the toilets open.
- Many comments were made regarding payment method. Respondents suggested providing a wider range of payment options as it will be difficult to find loose change.
- Some respondents suggested that town and Community Council should subsidise super-loos in their area.
- Some suggested that the local authority should review how and why the running costs of the public conveniences is so high.
- Respondents suggested private businesses and local shops should be encouraged and incentivised to offer their facilities. Furthermore, toilets should be clearly signposted and published.

Councillor Engagement:

- Noted that the Council is already losing money here as people hold the door open to the next person, so they do not have to pay.
- Early consultation and publicity is needed in this to inform the public.
- Concern that lack of or expensive public conveniences may reduce attractiveness of towns in comparison with other towns.
- Some Members noted that they did not have any real objections to the increase in charges.

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:	
1)	Facilities will no longer be available.
2)	As above.
Affected groups:	
1)	Older people
2)	Individuals with disabilities
Mitigation:	
1)	Promote the community toilet scheme where appropriate and signpost to existing shops/establishments that willingly make toilet facilities available to the public.
2)	As above.
Assessment undertaken: R Davies 29/10/2019	

10. Cemetery charges increase

Total Budget: £17,000

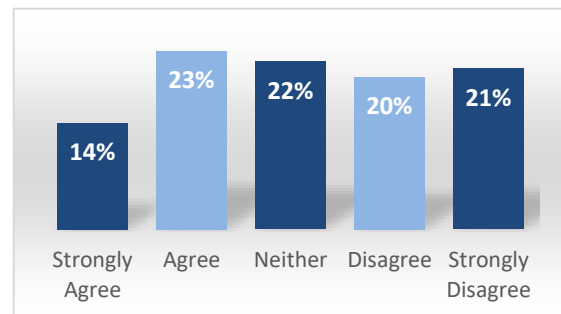
3-Year Saving: £1500

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
1.5	0	0

Description: The Council is responsible for the administration, management, and maintenance of the operational cemetery at Dyffryn Road, Ammanford. The proposal is to raise charges for burials, memorial plaques and administrative charges by about 10 to 25%.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.00% (£0.02 a year)

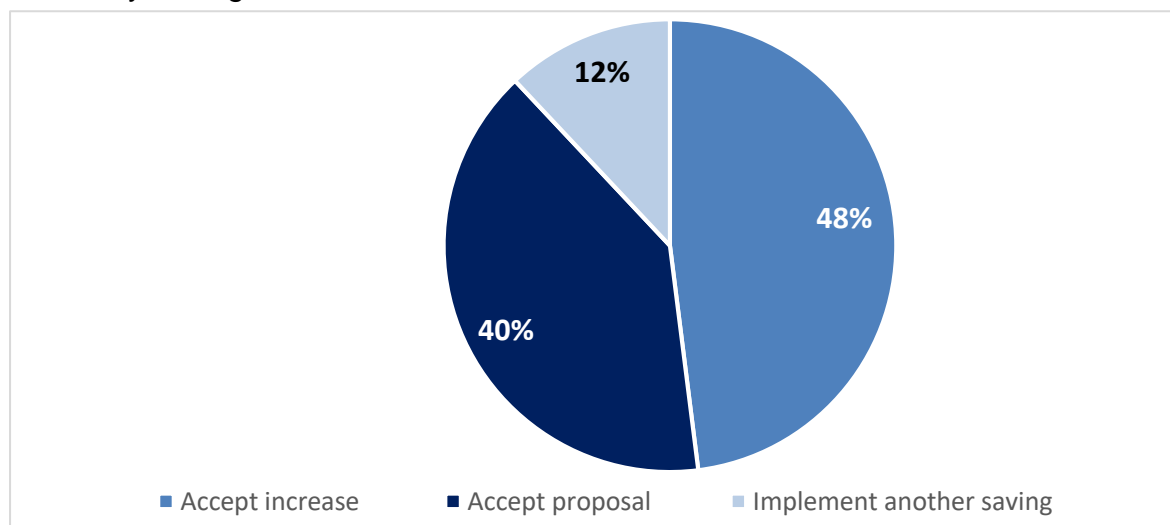
Average Index Score: -0.11
Overall Rank (of 14): 10
Sample Size: 352



	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M	CA3 ¹⁰
AIS	-0.39	-1.50	0	-0.11	-0.11	-0.23	0.11	0.00
Sample	82	2	2	261	71	197	131	87

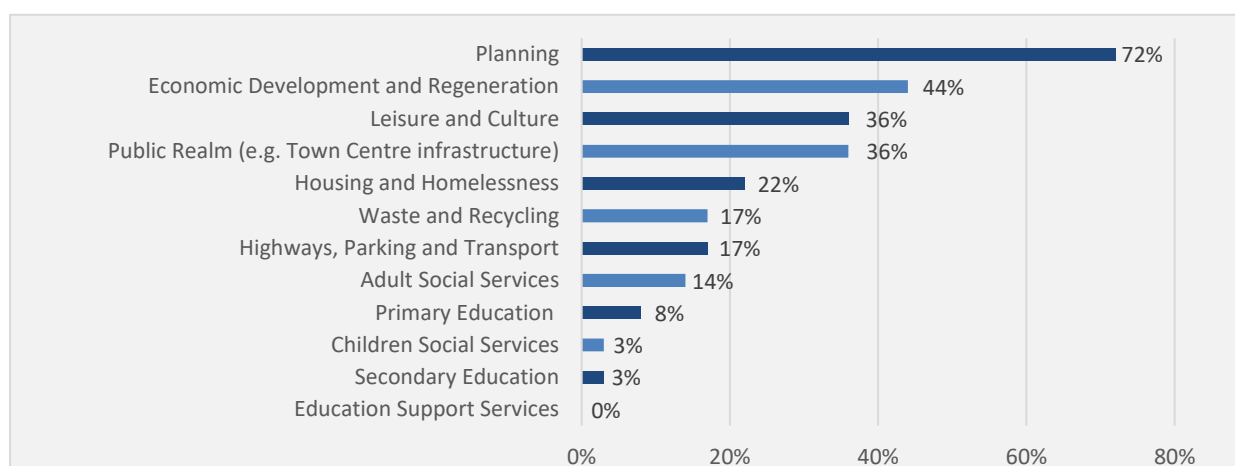
	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20-£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-0.10	-0.08	-0.18	-0.31	-0.46	-0.13	0.14
Sample	41	142	17	51	84	99	91

Response to accepting a 0.00% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



¹⁰ Community Area 3 is inclusive of Ammanford

Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 36 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 70 comments

- A large portion of the comments indicated that the proposal would impact those who are grieving and bereaved families. Many suggested that costs for these services are already high and that an increase would not be acceptable.
- Some noted that the minimal increase in council tax is not worth the projected 3 year saving.

Mitigation – 43 comments

- A number of respondents felt that the proposed increases should be kept at the lower percentage of 10%.
- Some respondents noted that the increase in council tax and projected 3 year saving is negligible and would like to keep the service.

Councillor Engagement:

- Noted that 10 – 25% represented a large increase.
- Councillors felt it would be useful to have comparative costs with other cemeteries in the County.
- General discussion regarding why the council maintains this cemetery and not any others?

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

Not Applicable.

Affected groups:

Not Applicable

Mitigation:

Not Applicable

Assessment undertaken: D John 23/10/2019

11. Reduction in Age Cymru Costs

Total Budget: £363,000

3-Year Saving: £20,000

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
20	0	0

Description:

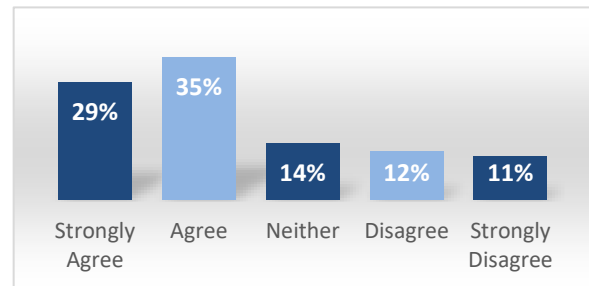
Cessation of Age Cymru support for glass collections in the community serving 57 clients. Service is very limited and expensive at £350 per client per annum.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.02% (£0.27 a year)

Average Index Score: 0.59

Overall Rank (of 14): 2

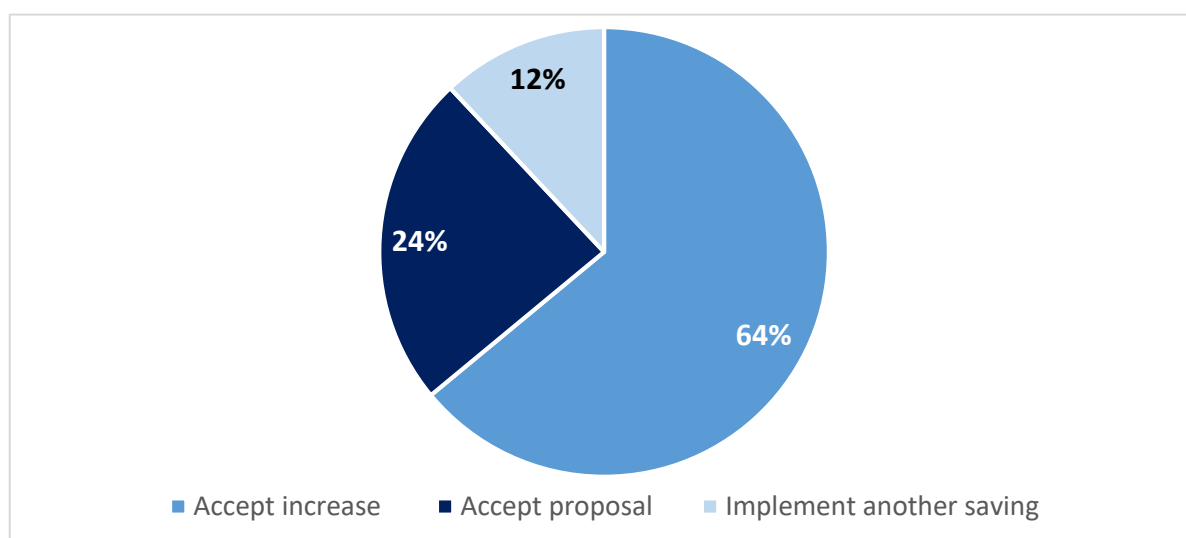
Sample Size: 407



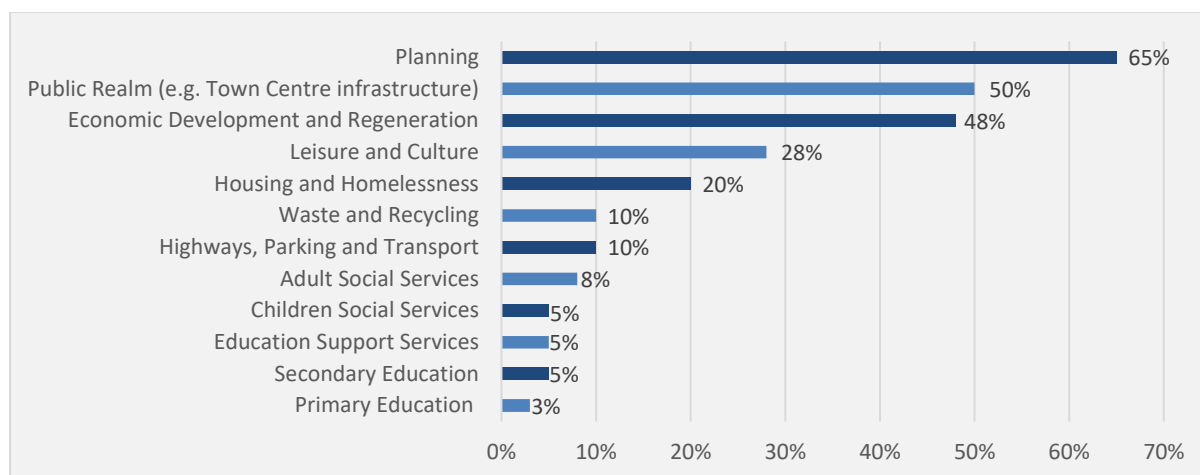
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	0.58	0.33	0.5	0.62	0.56	0.57	0.65
Sample	93	6	4	287	95	247	134

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	0.33	0.45	0.39	0.38	0.55	0.52	0.68
Sample	58	180	18	66	98	106	107

Response to accepting a 0.02% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 40 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 102 comments

- The majority of respondents who commented noted that this would directly affect the 57 families involved in this scheme.
- Respondents suggested that this may have an impact on the environment.

Mitigation – 112 comments

- The majority of respondents suggested that the council should introduce glass roadside collections as part of their refuse collection service. Many reported that this is already happening in a number of neighbouring authorities.
- Some respondents suggested that others could assist the 57 families with their glass recycling such as; neighbours, volunteers, friends, family or community.

Councillor Engagement:

- It was noted that considering the small number of clients that use the service, the cost per client is too expensive.
- Councillors asked whether glass would be picked up in domestic waste arrangements going forward
- Members agreed with the proposal as it appears an inefficient use of resources and based on alternative arrangements being made. Councillors asked if the community take a more proactive role in glass recycling

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

The removal of this service reduces the opportunity for the elderly clients supported in undertaking glass recycling due to their inability to travel to bring sites unless aided by other support networks.

Affected groups:

Older people

Mitigation:

Not provided.

Assessment undertaken: A Williams 23/10/2019

12. Whitland Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)

Total budget: £80,000

3 Year Savings: £80,000

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
0	80	0

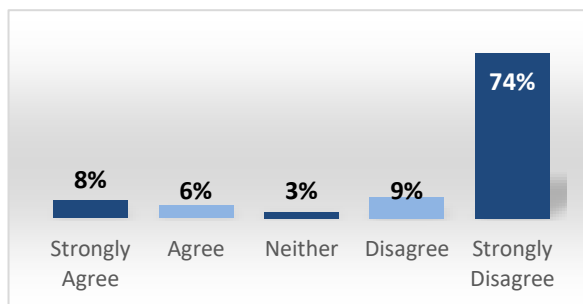
Description: Closure of the Whitland HWRC facility on the basis that it is the smallest of the four facilities that we have and makes the least contribution to our waste recycling targets.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.09% (£1.08 a year)

Average index score: -1.36

Overall Rank (of 14): 14

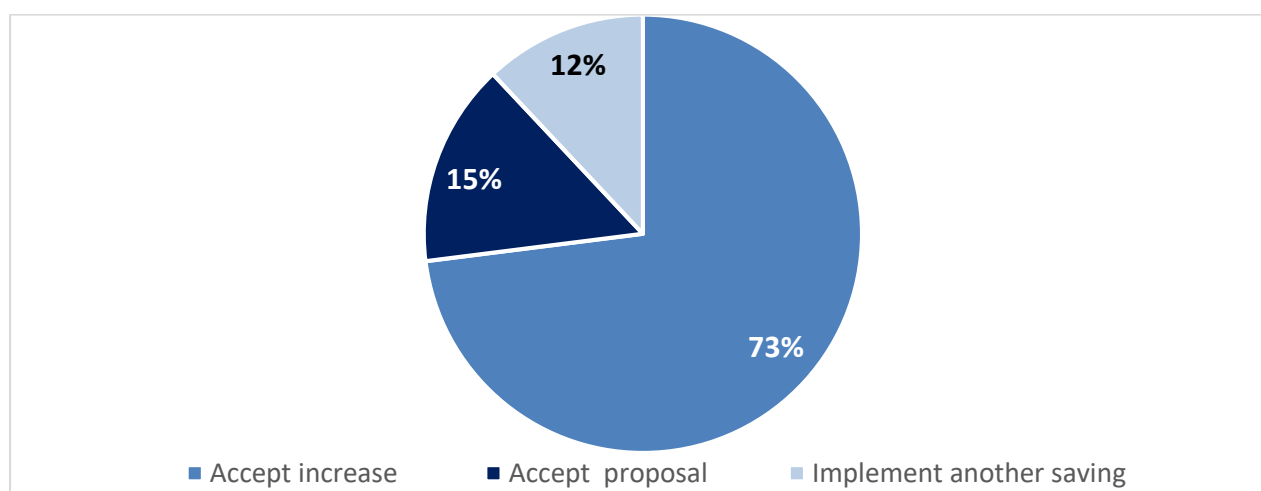
Sample Size: 784



	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M	CA1 ¹¹
AIS	-1.22	-0.86	-0.63	-1.27	-1.59	-1.45	-1.22	-1.63
Sample	152	7	8	562	193	411	306	461

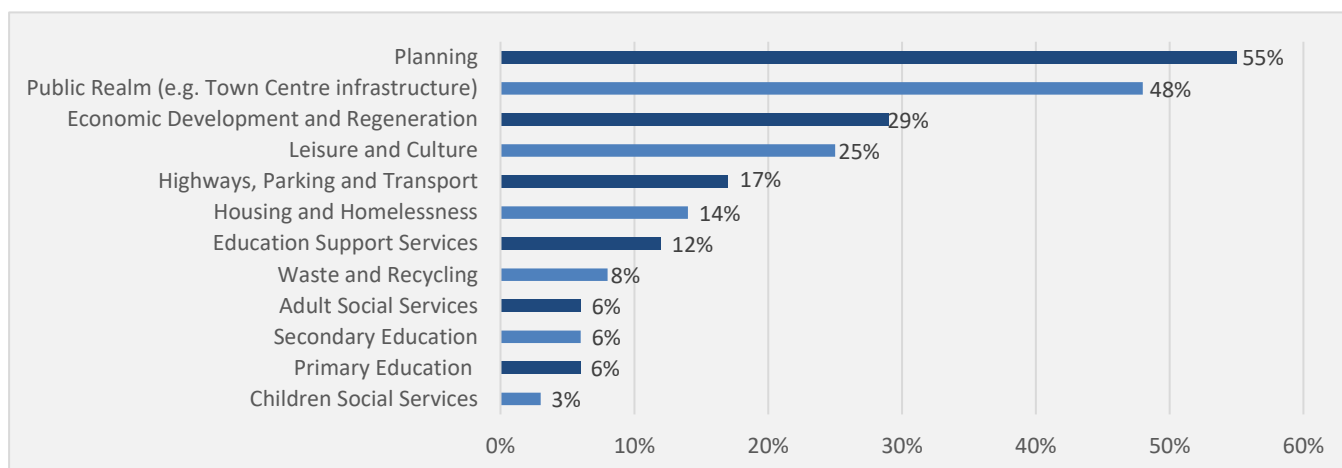
	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	-1.19	-1.31	-0.71	-1.35	-1.32	-1.39	-1.23
Sample	68	262	17	110	164	221	180

Response to accepting a 0.09% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



¹¹ Community Area 1 is inclusive of Whitland

Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 104 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 566 comments

- The majority of respondents agree with the proposal to close Whitland HWRC would have a significant impact on residents living in West Carmarthenshire. Specifically, the majority of comments indicated that there would be an increase in fly-tipping as the nearest recycling centre is 20+ miles away.
- Many suggested that by implementing this proposal, the authority would have to clear waste which has been disposed of inappropriately. This would cost the local authority significantly more than the projected three-year saving.
- A large number of respondents also reported that the proposal is counterintuitive. The majority of respondents indicated that the increased travel would have significant harm to the environment.
- A number of respondents indicated that the closest recycling centre (Carmarthen) would not be able to cope with the demand. Furthermore, the traffic in this area would become unmanageable.
- Some respondents suggested that there will be a reduction in recycling as many residents in Whitland and surrounding areas would use black bags instead of disposing their household waste properly.
- A number of comments indicated that access to Nantycaws from Whitland is dangerous (i.e. having to cross dual carriage way) which may be a barrier for individuals to travel to recycle.
- Some respondents indicated that rural towns and surrounding areas would be significantly impacted by this proposal.
- Some suggested that Whitland would be impacted significantly as it will reduce the number of visitors.

Mitigation – 438 comments

- The majority of respondents strongly disagreed with the proposal.
- Majority of respondents indicated that they would like to keep the recycling centre open but suggested that changing opening hours (e.g. open for longer hours during the weekend and less hours in the week due to work commitments) and reducing the number of days it is open may be beneficial.

-
- A large number of respondents indicated that residence checks should be disregarded as this may be an influencing factor in its contribution.
 - A number of respondents suggested that Carmarthenshire County Council should work closely with Pembrokeshire County Council to arrange an agreement regarding the use of the facility. For example, some respondents suggested that Pembrokeshire residents could buy an annual permit to use the Whitland recycling centre.
-

Councillor Engagement:

- Members requested more details of the proposal before making a final decision
- Members would rather there was a charge to use as people in the catchment area would rather pay a small amount than drive to Nant y Caws.
- Concern expressed that it will have the same impact as when the Llangadog site was closed. If approved, it will need effective communications and clear messages as to why the decision has been made.
- Some Members raised objections to the closure as it sends a mixed message to the public – promoting recycling but making it more difficult to recycle.

Other relevant information (email and letter responses):

In total, 11 email and letter responses were received from individuals, organisations and businesses, all expressing their opposition to the proposed closure. All representations upheld the facility as an important community asset for Whitland and its hinterlands.

Amongst the reasons conveyed were:

- Geography/Demography: the site serves a significant rural population to the west of the county, many of whom are seen to be older users. It was argued that the existing road infrastructure, in particular the A40 and Nantycaws junction, would discourage use of other facilities owing to perceived safety concerns
- Environmental impact: the proposal runs counter to local and national targets to maximise waste recycling, whilst the longer travelling distances will also increase pollution / carbon footprint. Moreover, it was argued that any savings generated would be offset by an increase in both black bag usage and fly tipping, with concern expressed for the local ecosystem
- Economic impact: it was noted that the facility supports the retail environment of Whitland by increasing footfall. Furthermore, the Council was asked to consider the increased time and travelling costs, especially for residents that use the site on a daily/weekly basis to recycle a wide range of items, from garden waste to electrical goods
- Public perception: a majority view that implementing the proposal would send out the wrong message about the Council's commitment to climate change

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:
1) Individuals with the characteristics below are likely to be more affected by having to travel to alternative provision. Furthermore, this will have further implications on the wider population who use the refuse centre. 2) Individuals with physical/mobility issues will require tailored support.
Affected groups:
1) Older people 2) Individuals with a disability
Mitigation:
Not Applicable
Assessment undertaken: A Williams 23/10/19

13. Park keeping at Parc Howard

Total Budget: £1,210,000

3-Year Saving: £10,000

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
10	0	0

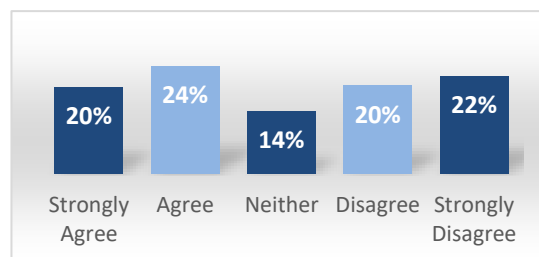
Description: Cease formal evening presence at Parc Howard resulting in main gate being left open at all times.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.01% (£0.14 a year)

Average index score: 0.00

Overall Rank (of 14): 6

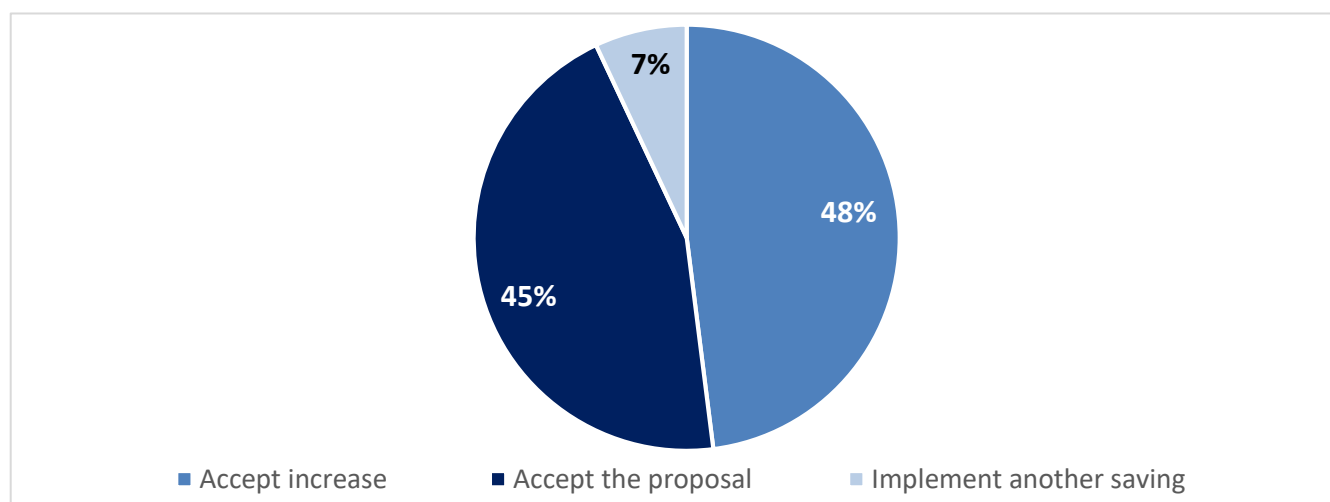
Sample Size: 382



	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M	CA6 ¹²
AIS	0.23	-0.5	-1.33	0.03	-0.14	-0.01	0.02	-0.26
Sample	79	4	3	288	65	196	160	77

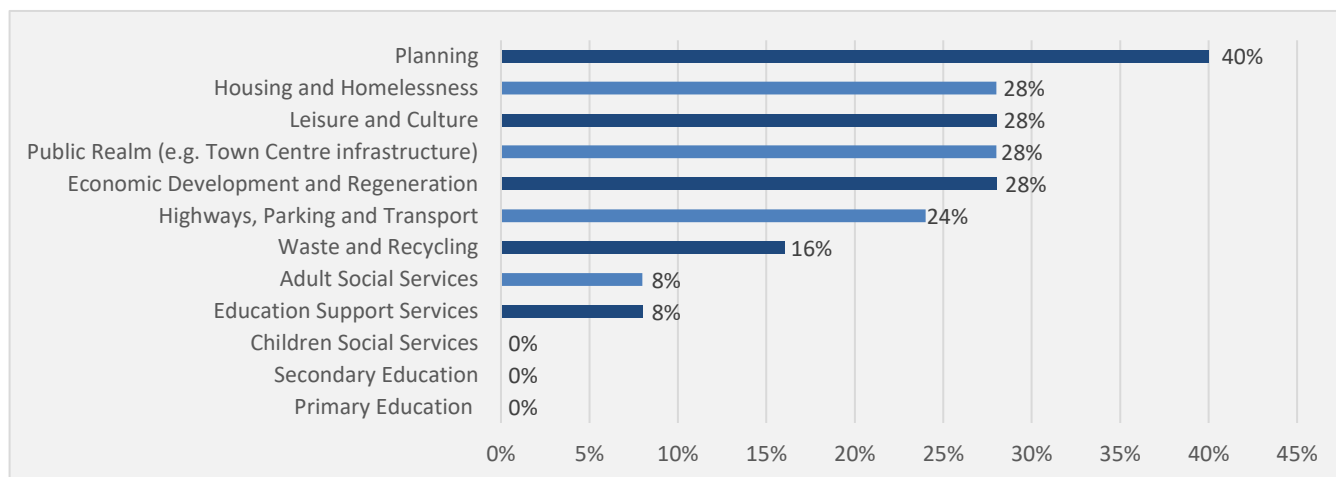
	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20–£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	0.19	-0.11	0.53	0.13	0.29	-0.11	0.09
Sample	43	132	17	52	65	109	122

Response to accepting a 0.01% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



¹² Community Area 6 covers the Llanelli town centre and its immediate localities

Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 25 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 105 comments

- The majority of respondents who left a comment suggested that if the proposal is implemented, there would be a rise in vandalism and crime on the grounds. Many suggested that the cleaning of vandalism would cost the council more money than the proposed £10,000 of savings.

Mitigation – 63 comments

- A number of suggestions were made on how to mitigate against the proposal, such as; asking local volunteers to close the gate in evenings, installing CCTV, increasing police patrols in the park and using existing staff in the museum to close the gate following their shift.

Councillor Engagement:

- Concerns were raised that this will lead to increased anti-social behaviour and theft from the mansion as there have been previous issues with anti-social behaviour (lead being taken from roof)
- It was noted that Ammanford park is kept open and believe CCTV installed seems to work.
- Councillors were generally in agreement with the proposal.

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

Not applicable

Affected Groups:

Not applicable

Mitigation:

Not applicable

Assessment undertaken: N French 22/10/19

14. Commercial opportunity - Income from Japanese Knotweed treatment (net)

Total Budget: £3,000

3-Year Saving: £10,000

2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
0	10	0

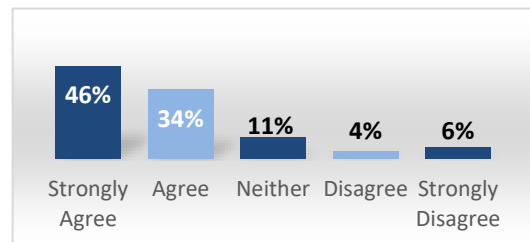
Description: Potential to treat knotweed for external clients, subject to wider corporate consideration on commercial activity that service departments can undertake.

Increase in Council Tax if not adopted: 0.01% (£0.14 a year)

Average index score: 1.12

Overall Rank (of 14): 1

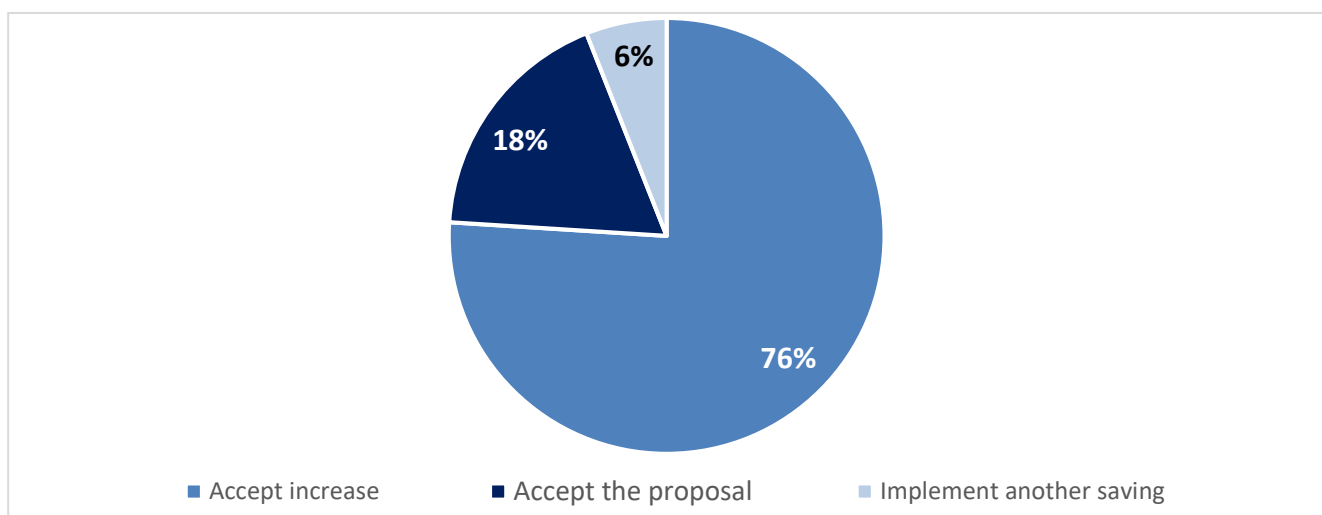
Sample Size: 421



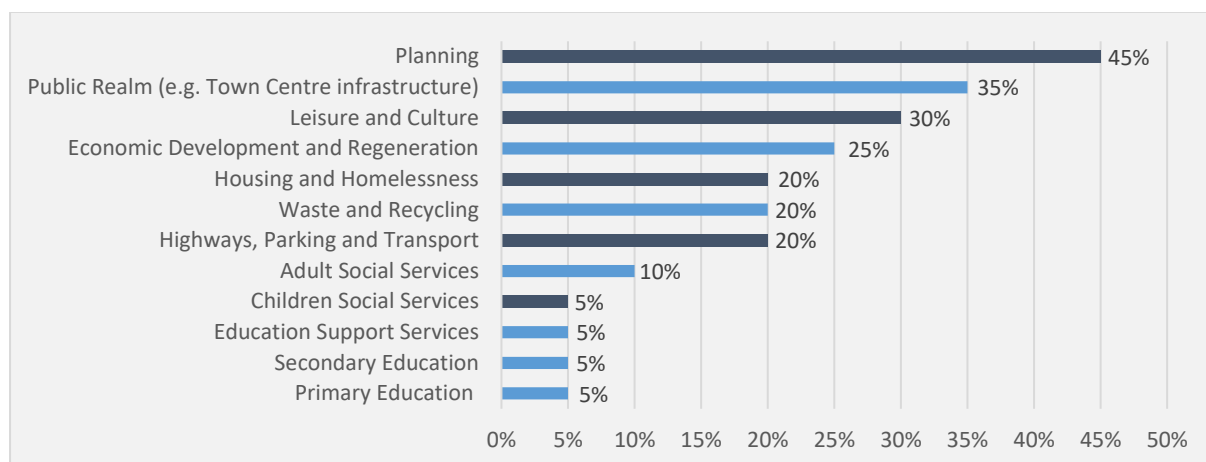
	Single	BME	16-24	25-64	65+	F	M
AIS	1.13	0	1.5	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.15
Sample	96	4	2	310	86	218	173

	Disabled	Religion	LGB	Carer	Income <£20k	Income £20-£39k	Income >£40k
AIS	0.88	1.05	1.52	0.89	1.09	1.05	1.33
Sample	48	137	21	57	96	115	117

Response to accepting a 0.01% increase in the Council Tax in order to avoid efficiency saving.



Responses for top **THREE** services that the public would prefer to see efficiency savings being made. (Total of 20 responses received).



Key themes from the public consultation:

Impact – 78 comments

- The majority of respondents noted that this is a positive move by the council however some noted that the treatment of Japanese Knotweed should be done with caution.

Mitigation – 33 comments

- The majority of comments reiterated the comments above. Also, some respondents felt that the public should be made aware of Japanese knotweed and appropriate ways to tackle the issue.

Councillor Engagement:

- Councillors felt that the proposal was a good idea as people generally look to the Council to treat Japanese Knotweed
- Councillors implied that there are not enough private contractors in place to deal with the issue.

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

Description of impact:

Not applicable

Affected groups:

Not applicable

Mitigation:

Not applicable

Assessment undertaken: D. John 23/10/2019

5) INSIGHT 2019

As the 2019 Insight session was undertaken in advance of the budget settlement, each Group was asked to consider broad 'themes' within the remit of the Council. Each of the themes discussed are presented below together with a summary of the key points raised.

1) How can we encourage more Welsh speakers in Carmarthenshire as part of the national campaign to get 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050?

- Increase the number of Welsh nurseries in Carmarthenshire.
- Ensure that Welsh nurseries are easily accessible for families, especially those in areas with a low population of Welsh speakers.
- The pupils of Maes y Gwendraeth felt that the language is being lost as pupils are likely to speak English to friends. Furthermore, pupils noted that there are not enough Welsh courses in higher education. Pupils noted that by hosting Welsh music gigs and sport events, this may increase the number of Welsh speakers. Also, they suggested that Welsh language societies and clubs need to be promoted in universities across the UK.

2) Household Waste

- Pupils of Coedcae School understood the importance of recycling and that it is a climate emergency. They suggested that the issue is that residents are unsure what can be recycled and what can't be.
- Pupils suggested that an app could aid this ensuring that all information is displayed clearly. Furthermore, students also noted that there should be a reduction in black bags and an increase in different recycling bags (i.e. plastic, paper etc.).

3) We are now living in an increasing digital age. What impact will this have over the next 10 years?

- Bro Dinefwr suggested a number of strategies and developments which need to be considered to continue to grow in a digital age such as;
 - Improving network speed across Carmarthenshire;
 - Ensuring both pupils and teachers know how to use technology - in an engaging way;
 - Encouraging ICT for GCSE – especially with regards to jobs;
 - Providing classes for older generations to improve their ICT skills
 - Providing better technology (faster laptops/computers) for classwork
 - Wi-Fi boosters & faster Wi-Fi – feed back into rural regeneration,
 - More awareness on safety when using technology

4) How can we become a NetZero Carbon County Council within the next 10 years?

- Pupils from Dyffryn Aman noted a number of barriers which may impede the Council's ambition to become NetZero Carbon Council in the next 10 years. The following barriers were identified;
 - Lack of public transport usage
 - School emissions

- Landfill sites
- Plastic usage
- A number of strategies were suggested by the students such as;
 - Plant more trees in order to Carbon offset
 - Determine efficiency management (i.e. Energy efficient air conditioning alternatives)
 - “Green” implementation (e.g. “Green Wall”)
 - Use of the Internet. For example, if individuals use the “Ecosia” as a search engine, for every search made, a tree is planted.
 - Increase communication between schools to share facilities
 - Alternative energy sources (i.e. Solar Panels, Wind Turbines, Hydro-electric)
 - Encourage public transport

5) How do we meet the challenge of becoming a plastic free Council/County thereby helping to improve the quality of our local built and natural environment?

- Bro Myrddin students highlighted a number of issues associated with plastic waste on the environment. Following this, students suggested that an additional charge should be made on products with single use plastic. Furthermore, students also indicated that technology should be utilised to enhance recycling.

6) How important is it that the council supports people’s wellbeing by offering leisure and cultural service?

- Pupils of Coedcae School understood the importance of the Council’s role in facilitating the public’s wellbeing by providing leisure and cultural services.
- Students suggested the following efficiencies in order to ensure the service is maintained whilst also saving money;
 - Invest more in outdoor activities for children
 - Open school libraries to the public
 - Increase the use of digital services in libraries to reduce the space required for books
 - Reduce staff in gyms as they are not a necessity
 - Points system should be put in place to encourage individuals to use the facilities more often
 - Bundle packs were suggested as a way to increase footfall in leisure and cultural facilities

7) How should the Delegated Schools’ budget be used?

- Pupils identified that there is an issue with small classroom sizes as they cost as much as larger classroom sizes.
- Pupils from Queen Elizabeth High School and Maes Y Gwendraeth suggested a number of areas where schools can make efficiencies. A list is provided below:
 - Classrooms with a low number of pupils should be combined to increase efficiency
 - Encouraging cluster school connections
 - Blended Learning

- Video call classes
- University style learning
- Giving pupils a voice and providing more responsibilities throughout KS3, KS4 and Sixth Form. This is suggested to give pupils more sense of pride for their school.
- By increasing the pupil's ownership and a sense of pride in their school, students are more likely to respect their surroundings which may reduce budget spent on cleaning.
- Increasing income generation by; Gardening, selling reusable water bottles, renting out facilities and selling recycled, cheaper ties; offering their facilities to the public

8) What can we do to make Carmarthenshire a major tourism cycling destination?

- Pupils from Ysgol Dyffryn Aman highlighted a number of benefits of increasing tourism in Carmarthenshire. They also highlighted some advancements which could be made to ensure Carmarthenshire is a major tourism cycling destination which are listed below:
 - Promotions and advertisement
 - Promote school cycling activities
 - Increase number of cycling events (e.g. Charity competitions, etc.)
 - Link cycle paths to attractions - Further increasing tourism
 - Achieve safe cycling paths

9) How aware are you of the services the Council provides for its residents?

- Pupils were not certain of what services the Council provides to their residents. Students were able to say for certain that the Council collects waste and provides social services.
- Glan y Môr pupils suggested a number of strategies which could be implemented to increase younger people's awareness of the services the Council provides such as;
 - Increase awareness and activity on social media such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.
 - Increase collaboration between schools, the Council and the Welsh Baccalaureate

10) Regenerating our town centres – Who's responsible?

- Students from QE high identified a number of positive influences a vibrant town centre has on the wider community. Furthermore, a number of barriers were identified as to why town centres are deteriorating.
- Pupils suggested a number of strategies which could increase footfall to regenerate Carmarthenshire's town centres. The strategies are outlined below:
 - Locating youth clubs in town centres to increase student footfall
 - Allowing independent business to use vacant buildings as popup stores
 - Cheaper rent for smaller businesses
 - Large TV display (e.g. Swansea) Which would attract people for sports and theatre events
 - 24-hour libraries and cafés

- Technology workshops in town centres for the elderly run by student volunteers
- Increased public transport into town centres

11) Do you see the Council as a career option?

- Pupils from Bro Myrddin highlighted a number of benefits for working in the local authority. However, a number of barriers were identified as to why students did not see the council as a career option. A number of barriers are highlighted below:
 - Not as many highly paid jobs in Carmarthenshire in comparison to cities.
 - Wanting experiences in different environments (i.e. university)
 - Cities are perceived to be for younger people whereas many older people retire in Carmarthenshire.
- Pupils from Ysgol y Strade suggested that the Council need to increase their visibility in schools and raise awareness of the different careers available.

12) Why is it important that the young people of Carmarthenshire are integral to the Rural Regeneration Strategy?

- Pupils from Bro Dinefwr School identified a number of issues associated with younger people leaving rural Wales. A number of barriers are seen below:
 - Abundance of job opportunities in urban areas.
 - Lack of knowledge about work in rural areas.
 - Higher education with better facilities and experiences.
 - Greater job prospects post-graduation.
 - Social life/Entertainment/Cultural Events.
 - Lack of transport in certain rural areas – difficult to travel without a car.
 - Healthcare access – Distance from hospitals etc.
- Pupils suggested a variety of areas which the Council could invest in to ensure younger people stay in rural Wales:
 - More jobs that allow people to work from home- work for companies based in cities whilst living in rural areas.
 - Ensure fast Wi-Fi to allow people to work from home.
 - Improved transport for people commuting to work – this could also help reduce carbon footprint.
 - Better advertisement for young people about job opportunities in rural areas.
 - Talks delivered to students about work in the area and the opportunities available.
 - Contracts to ensure people return to Carmarthenshire – e.g. if part of your degree is paid for, you must return to Carmarthenshire for a certain amount of time (e.g. 42 law firms in London offer to sponsor their trainees through a grant).
 - Create more scholarships and work experience opportunities.
- Glan y Môr pupils highlighted the specific example of Kidwelly as this town is included in the Rural Regeneration Strategy. The students highlighted that the issue in this area is that there is not enough student accommodation. By increasing the availability of student accommodation, an increased number of younger people will be attracted to the area.

6) NOTES FROM BUDGET CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Schools Strategy Budget Forum – 13th January 2020

Following a presentation to the meeting by the Head of Financial Services (HoFS) the following comments were made by Forum members:

It is a positive budget for Education this year, and the Executive Board were very keen to support schools.

Of the £11.5 increase in the settlement £7m will address the Pension and Pay costs. An additional 2.5m will be for inflation and validation and 560k for an increase in pupil numbers which equates to 9.8m increase to the Schools' Delegated Budget.

	£'000	
Dilysu Prisiau a Chyflogau	2,593	Pay & Price Validation
Pensiynau Athrawon - blwyddyn lawn	4,443	Teachers Pensions – full year
Trosglwyddo'r grant blaenorol i gyllidebau craidd	922	Transfer previous grant into core budgets
Dyfarniad cyflog ychwanegol (2.75%)	1,279	Additional Pay award (2.75%)
Disgyblion Ychwanegol	560	Additional Pupil Numbers
CYFANSWM	9,797	TOTAL

Headteacher colleagues welcomed the knowledge that Elected Members are aware of the pressures that schools are under and thanked them for the consideration shown in respect of the budget.

The Council needs to find around £5.2million in efficiencies across Departments. The Education and Children Services department will need to find £860k.

Amongst the draft proposals are:

- A vacant post in School Improvement amounting to £50,000 is not to be re-filled.
- £100,000 efficiency in Youth Support Services to be achieved by using grant funding to meet core costs.
- A vacancy in the Welsh Support Teachers Division not to be re-filled- this could realise £25k.
- EOTAS- increasing charge on schools for this provision. Roughly worked out at around £300 per pupil.
- ECPS- not replacing a psychologist who has recently retired.
- Catering- efficiencies realised by introducing Parent-pay, reduction in Management costs and asking for a voluntary contribution towards the care element of the breakfast club.
- ALN- review of specialist provision and finding a way to realise £100k efficiencies.
- Children's Services to find £100,000 efficiencies.
- £200,000 efficiencies needed across departments- travelling, supplies, systems.

Elected Members were consulted on these efficiencies last week. Some were welcomed and supported.

Secondary Headteachers have also been consulted and a session for Primary Headteachers planned for January 29th.

There will also be a public consultation on these proposals which ends on 28th January 2020.

Each department were requested and encouraged to put in growth bids for extra monies. The Department submitted bids for additional funding for ALN classes (330k), ALN Staffing (400k) and additional pupils (560k).

School pupils who attended the INSIGHT Session were also asked to participate in the budget consultation and encourage fellow pupils to take part on the budget. Pupils who took part in the INSIGHT session were in County Council last Wednesday to present their findings.

Schools will have an indicative budget a little earlier this year. Possibly following the next Schools Budget Forum on 26th February.

Colleagues felt that this forum had been very useful.

Corporate Employee Relations Forum (CERF) Meeting 17th JANUARY 2020

The Head of Financial Services attended the meeting to present information on the efficiency proposals for each department. RH notified that the public consultation is a shorter consultation period and is currently live and would be running until the 28th of January 2020 whereby is mitigated with the Marketing and Media Division.

ME referred to the consultation as being yet another “sham” public consultation whereby the word “cuts” has been substituted with the words efficiencies / savings e.g. the word efficiencies has been mentioned 18 times and savings 49 times within the report. ME expressed that lessons have not been learned whereby the Authority were deluding themselves through not being honest and respectful with the public and therefore that is why the TU representatives considered the consultation worthless.

ME also gave an explanation on income generation recommendations e.g. in previous years, the TUs have provided proposals and if the proposals had been implemented when first highlighted, there would now be significant increases in savings.

RH notified the TUs, that on this occasion the Authority’s approach has been to acknowledge ongoing service pressures which are beyond the control of the service and fully fund those increases in budget.

RH referred to the background of the Forward Financial Plan 2020-2023 and stated that over the last decade the Authority have met a funding shortfall within £90 million in savings and £30 million in Council Tax and an overall shortfall of £120 million.

The TU representatives, also raised the following proposals for income generation:

- Y Gât, St. Clears

ME referred to the Craft Centre and confirmed that it would not be viable in its operational format due to the lack of staff within the centre due to an Unison representative witnessing 6 people requesting breakfast but departed as soon as they were notified of having to wait a substantial length of time for their breakfast due to lack of staff.

- Ash Die Back

Due to the ash die back being a national issue and in order to proactively manage the diseased trees within the County, MP referred to an Ash Die Back Officer's post which had been previously advertised. MP felt that an opportunity had been overlooked to generate income e.g. as a result of the department not replacing employee(s) within the grounds maintenance team, they now do not have the opportunity of illustrating what the team could do i.e. taking advantage of removing the affected trees and also the treating of Japanese Knotweed where necessary.

PH stated that he previously had a meeting with the Leader of Swansea City Council and informed as a Council they were not in a position to implement cuts.

RH confirmed that the budget development process had been realistic and honest in meeting the criteria of the true pressures that departments have got to fund e.g. Communities Department.

MP stated that the proposed savings are brought back year on year and why it has not been achieved previously and were being proposed again and Managers are offering savings that are unachievable. RH referred and explained that the Corporate Standby savings related to Hydrology and as this function was now outside the Authority, the standby saving could not be met.

PH enquired if Domiciliary Care was commissioned. RH confirmed that the Communities Department had a combination of inhouse and commissioned care.

RH to provide feedback to Chris Moore regarding ME's suggestion of arranging a meeting between the Authority and a representative from APSE in order to receive the possibility of suggestions on how to generate income due to the Authority being cheaper than the private sector e.g. funeral services.

RH also referred to Thurrock Council which equates to a 1/3 the size of our Authority by revenue expenditure and that their borrowing is short term and as an example had to obtain £10 million for next year due to increase in PWLB rates.

ME informed that due to the consequences of these cuts there's massive pressure on members due to the workforce not being present any longer and would welcome a no cuts budget and expressed that ordinary members who are paying the cost e.g. Council Tax.

RH notified the TU representatives that the Outcome Agreement Grant from the Welsh Government had been transferred into the settlement around 4 years ago.

A Summary of Unison's Budget Consultation Response:

Unison consider that the Authority should implement a "No Cuts Budget" in order to maintain services rather than passing on cuts to employees who suffer a double whammy of job losses or increased pressure in work and cuts and increased council tax as a resident of Carmarthenshire.

Unison noted that the Council should rephrase 'efficiencies' and 'savings' to cuts as this is what they are. By using such phrases Unison indicated that this is deceiving the public into agreeing to cuts.

Unison is in favour of increased income generation but that depends on what is proposed and from whom the income is generated. We are opposed to any increase to the council tax above inflation that is simply passing on the burden of cuts to the public and council employees.

Unison have opposed and campaigned against the setting up of a trust for Leisure Services or privatising these services we have always argued they could generate more income, which has proven to be the case. We have always advocated that the Local Authority could generate more income from having more in-house food outlets. Unison disagree with the conclusion that Y Gat (St Clears) is unlikely to be viable in its current operational format. They state that due to cuts in staff, Y Gat have not been putting on new promotions, workshops and marketing etc. which would lead to greater profits.

They also noted that the Communities department appears to have made good progress in raising income through Leisure services, Pembrey County Park and food outlets. On the other hand, Environmental Services have cut staff numbers to an extent that they are not in a good position to generate income.

Unison are opposed to increasing the charges for car parking, increased charges for public conveniences, increased cemetery charges, asking for voluntary £1 donations for breakfast clubs and are opposed to higher charges for sports facilities. By increasing charges to the public that is simply passing the burden of cuts onto the residents of the county.

Unison are opposed to the proposed closure of Whitland Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC), which they noted as the council passing on the cost of the cuts to the public as is the closure of toilet facilities. Furthermore, they also oppose to the cessation of glass collection for Age Cymru.

Unison has advocated for many years that instead of schools making a Teaching Assistant (TA) redundant when a child they are working with leaves the school that a pool of TA's could be set up and TA's redeployed at other schools. If this had been done when we first advocated it the local authority would have spent far less on redundancy payments and retaining skilled and experienced TA's many of whom were lost to the profession.

With relation to the school delegated budget, Unison noted that a standstill 2019 budget amounted to cuts as this did not meet the full costs of the schools. It was noted that many schools had reserves. The current figures for schools in deficit in the Revenue Budget Strategy confirm our prognosis that the schools are not well. Unison

noted that their members are getting fed up with making sacrifices, increased workloads, doing the work of teachers or working for nothing and the mood for fighting cuts is increasing as schools are cutting staff as this is by far their biggest cost.

As regards rationalising primary schools we would only agree this where the decision is made in the interests of the children, the wider community and staff, and where there is evidence to demonstrate that a small school is unviable. We would expect to be consulted about these decisions before they are made.

Unison is advocating a 'no cuts' alternative budget in order to 'defend remaining jobs and services. An outline of how Unison propose to achieve this is provided below:

- **General Fund Borrowing** - Unison appreciate that this proposal does not specify the items of current and projected General Fund expenditure which involve a capital element which could be properly supported by the Capital programme through prudential borrowing (without needing government permission). Or alternatively, any other elements of General Fund expenditure for which a 'capitalisation direction' (government permission to capitalise revenue expenditure) could be sought. Unison are calling for an officers' review of General Fund expenditure.
- **Assets** - The council still owns assets in land and buildings that can be sold (that are surplus to requirements) some of which have been sold or are for sale. We advocate that where selling these assets would not adversely impact on services and jobs then considerable sums could be raised by selling these assets of land and buildings contributing significantly to meeting the funding gap.
- **Reserves** – Unison suggest that there is significant scope to use these substantial funds the council holds – these reserves could be transferred to revenue again significantly contributing towards the shortfall of £16m for three years or £6m for 2020/21.
- **CWM Environmental** - CWM Environmental Ltd. should be immediately taken back in-house not the half-way house of making Cwm a Teckal company. Profits or part thereof that CWM has accrued could be taken to mitigate against some of the cuts.
- **Outcome Agreement Grant from Welsh Government** - The Local Authority gets significant sums annually for hitting Welsh Government targets the amount that has been accumulated this money could be put into revenue spending to support and protect services.
- **Income Generation** – Unison noted that while the amount the council can generate will not prevent all cuts nevertheless substantial sums with effort can be raised that would ameliorate against some cuts.

7) MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH JANUARY 2020

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 (Appendix A) which had been endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting on 6th January 2020. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2020/2021 together with indicative figures for the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years. The report was based on officers' projections of spending need and took into account the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on 16th December 2019.

The Head of Financial Services advised whilst the announced provisional settlement represented an increase of 4.3% as an average across Wales on the 19/20 settlement, Carmarthenshire had received an increase in WG grant of 4.4% (£11.5m) taking the Aggregate External Finance to £274.159m for 2020/21. This increase was after certain transfers into the funding for Teachers Pensions and Pay, which were only partially funded within the settlement and accounted for some £5.8m of the overall funding increase.

The Committee noted that the current projection for the Revenue Outturn for 2019/20 and that the main reasons for the Environmental Department overspends were primarily due to an increase in ALN pupil transport numbers and a shortfall in planning application income.

The report included details of the Welsh Government Service Specific Grants which were provided alongside the provisional settlement at an all Wales level. Whilst many remained at a broadly similar level, the Committee noted the all-Wales reduction of £1.8m to the Sustainable Waste Management Grant, which would reduce the support for Carmarthenshire's core waste budgets by around £110k.

In summary, the budget proposals assume the full delivery of all savings proposals, together with the identification and delivery of the shortfall in savings proposals 2021/22, and 2022/23. Further cost reductions would need to be identified and/or larger council tax increases be agreed to deliver a balanced budget for the latter two years. Furthermore, given the scale of the pressures and forecasted budget gap, Council Tax increases have been maintained at the previous MTFP levels of 4.89% in each of the three financial years which offers some mitigation to the savings proposals.

Furthermore, it was reported that due to the delay in receiving the provisional settlement, the consequential impact on Welsh Government's budget finalisation and publication had been equally delayed. Therefore, the final settlement was due to be published on 25th February 2020 and the County Council would set the final budget on 3rd March 2020.

The Committee thereupon considered the following detailed budget information appended to the Strategy relevant to its remit:

- **Appendix A(i)** – Efficiency summary for the Environment and Public Protections Services;
- **Appendix A(ii)** – Growth Pressures summary for Environment Service;

- **Appendix B** – Budget monitoring report for the Environment and Public Protection Services;
- **Appendix C** – Charging Digest for the Environment and Public Protection Services.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:

- Reference was made to Appendix A(ii)-Growth Pressures. It was asked if the annual £230k spend on food waste bin liners was a necessary cost? The Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained, a recent analysis of the content of black bags observed that 25.8% of the black bag content in Carmarthenshire was made up of food waste and prior to the introduction of the liners it was observed from the monitoring of kerbside collection, that household food waste recycling participation did not exceed 50%.

Furthermore, feedback from a Household Waste and Recycling Service Consultation had identified that of the respondents who said that they did not partake in recycling their food waste, 64% said that they would be more likely to do so, if they were provided with free liners. Therefore, in order to support the transition of food waste from black bags into the food waste recycling scheme, food waste liners were introduced to all householders in Carmarthenshire in October 2019.

In terms of treatment costs, an increase in food waste would result in an approximate decrease in the overall annual treatment spend, whilst enabling the Authority with the ability to meet statutory targets thus avoiding the risk of a fine. It was therefore reported, that the annual cost of the liners was necessary as it outweighed the costs associated with the method of extracting food waste placed in black bags and the financial impact on the operational vehicles, improving the efficiency of the collection and reducing vehicle breakdowns attributed to the collection of loose food.

Members reported that since the introduction of food waste bin liners, positive feedback had been received from residents particularly in relation to hygiene and in deterring vermin.

- With reference to Appendix C - Charging Digest, concern was expressed that the income generated from providing MOT testing to the general public at a rate lower than the maximum rate set by the DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) was providing an unfair platform for the local private sector. It was asked, if the Authority had considered the impact of this on its competitors?

The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that whilst the maximum possible charge for Class 4 was £54.85 as set by DVSA, the price set by the Authority was deemed to be competitive for the local market with competitors also decreasing their prices. Furthermore, the Authority did not carry out any repairs on vehicles, only providing an independent MOT testing service, ensuring an objective test with unbiased results.

In response to a further query, the Head of Transportation and Highways stated that maintenance on hire/lease vehicles was charged on an hourly basis and only carried out as part of the suppliers hire/lease contract arrangements.

- Concern was expressed regarding the draft proposal to close the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Whitland. It was commented that the recycling centre was a much needed provision in the area with the next closest located in Nantycaws, Carmarthen. The Head of Waste and Environmental Services explained that the closure of the HWRC facility proposal was purely a financial consideration on the basis that the Whitland facility was the smallest out of the four HWRC facilities in Carmarthenshire which made the least contribution to the Councils overall waste recycling targets. The proposal was not related to the performance of the facility. It was also reported that the closure would also achieve a saving of £80k from year 2 in 2021/22.

In response to a further comment in relation to the performance targets, the Head of Waste and Environmental Services acknowledged that whilst the HWRC at Whitland had been meeting its recycling targets, it only served 7% of the County thus making the least contribution to the Councils waste recycling targets.

It was emphasised that a full consultation on this proposal would be undertaken in due course.

- Reference was made to School Crossing Patrols. Whilst it was noted in the comment that 'the school crossing patrols section has reviewed all patrols to identify where there is no requirement to provide them according to the National Safety criteria', it was asked if any surveys had been undertaken in relation to the proposal to not fill future vacancies that arise in the sites that do not require school crossing patrols? Concern was expressed that School crossing patrols were an area of safety for all ages and residents.

The Head of Transportation and Highways explained that School Crossing Patrols were provided where the National Safety Criteria required them, and that the Council funded around 50% of crossings located at other locations where the criteria had not indicated a Patrol was required. The draft proposal was to retain the Patrols where they were required but phase out patrols where there was no requirement according to the criteria. Members were assured that each site would be subject to its own review.

- The Head of Transportation and Highways, in response to a request for an update on the Road Safety Manager vacancy, stated that a Road Safety Manager was currently being recruited. Furthermore, a temporary vacancy had arisen within the Road Safety Unit which had also been advertised.
- A query was raised regarding the different pricing structure for car parks throughout the County, the Head of Transportation and Highways explained that the car parking charges applied were banded primarily on the level of activity and social demographics of the surrounding area.

RESOLVED that:

- 4.1 The 2019/20 – 2021/22 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received;**
- 4.2 The Charging Digest for the Environment and Public Protection Services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report be endorsed.**

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting held on the 6th January 2020. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2020/2021 together with indicative figures for the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years based on officers' projections of spending need taking into account the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government (WG) on 16th December 2019.

The Head of Financial Services advised that whilst the announced provisional settlement represented an average increase of 4.3% across Wales on the 2019/20 settlement, Carmarthenshire's increase been 4.4% (£11.548m) taking the Aggregate External Finance to £274.159m for 2020/21. However, new responsibilities and transfers into the settlement, including Teachers Pensions and Pay which were only partially funded within the settlement, accounted for some £5.8m or half the overall funding increase.

The report included details of the Welsh Government's Service Specific Grants being provided alongside the provisional settlement at an all Wales level, with many remaining at a broadly similar level to 2018/19.

The Head of Financial Services referred to the increased spending pressures on the budget, as identified in 3.4 of the report, and advised that whilst those pressures totalled £13m, the total value for growth, based on current information was only £7.4m. A number of those pressures fell within the remit of the Community Scrutiny Committee and included decarbonisation proposals, Local Development Plan and the Ash Tree die back programme. A sum of £325k had also been built back into the programme to address the historic shortfall against budgeted forecast and actual income within the planning division.

In summary, the budget proposals assumed the full delivery of all savings proposals, together with the identification and delivery of the shortfall in savings proposals for the 2021/22, and 2022/23 financial years. Further cost reductions would need to be identified and/or larger council tax increases agreed to deliver a balanced budget for the latter two years. Furthermore, given the scale of the pressures and forecasted budget gap, proposed Council Tax increases had been maintained at the previous Medium-Term Financial Plan levels of 4.89% in each of the three financial years, which offered some mitigation to the savings proposals.

In conclusion, the Committee was advised that due to the delay in receiving the provisional settlement and the Welsh Government's final settlement not due to be published until the 25th February 2020 the County Council would set its final budget on 3rd March 2020.

The Committee thereupon considered the following detailed budget information appended to the Strategy relevant to its remit:

Appendix A(i) – Efficiency summary for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;

Appendix A(ii) – Growth Pressures summary for the Regeneration and Planning Services (none for the Leisure and Non HRA Services);

Appendix B – Budget monitoring report for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;

Appendix C – Charging Digest for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:

Reference was made to the provisional 4.4% settlement and its positive impact on the Council's cost reduction programme resulting in the level of reductions to be made over the next three years falling by £8.697m from £25,115m to £16,418m. Clarification was sought on the potential impact future reducing WG settlements could have on the programme.

The Head of Financial Services confirmed the Welsh Government had not provided any indication of future settlement figures beyond the 2020/21 financial year making it difficult to construct multi-year budgets. Over recent years local government had witnessed a relaxation of public sector pay restraint, whilst receiving better than anticipated settlements. The authority was forecasting increased budgetary pressures over future years and if those persisted, for example, increased pay settlements and increases in the living wage, it would need to revisit and adjust its cost reduction programme in response.

The Head of Financial Services in response to questions on the £10m increase in the budget strategy for education, confirmed that comprised part transfers in from the Welsh Government for pay and pensions and part from the improved settlement. He also confirmed that in relation to the existing £3m deficit in the Schools Delegated Budget, officers were working with the affected schools on addressing their deficits.

In response to a question on inherent risks built into the budget strategy e.g. inflation, the Head of Financial Services confirmed the strategy reflected an inflationary rate of 2%, in line with the Bank of England Projections. However, as the largest proportion of the Council's expenditure related to staff costs as well as commission care costs, which were linked to the living wage, pay growth posed more of a risk than inflation. For example, the budget strategy published on the 30th December assumed an increase in the living wage to £8.63. However, on the 31st December, the U.K. Government announced it would increase to £8.72, an increase of .9p per hour or over £400k more than the budget estimate

Reference was made to appendix A(i) and the managerial efficiencies identified in relation to the Pendine Outdoor Education Centre, St Clears Leisure Centre and Y Gât, St Clears. Clarification was sought on the current position in relation to their potential future development arising from the Committee's recent site visits.

The Head of Leisure advised that discussions were continuing in relation to those facilities and reports thereon would be presented through the Council's political process in due course.

The Committee made reference to the council's library and museums service and to its previous site visits thereto. Views were expressed, that due to the level of re-development undertaken / proposed for the service, it would be advantageous for those visits to be repeated.

The Head of Leisure in response to a comment on the absence of a Tourist Information Centre in Llanelli advised that staff within Yr Hwb had been upskilled and could provide

tourist advice. However, he could examine the need for signposting that provision with colleagues from the Tourism Team within Regeneration.

The Economic Development Manager advised that the Council had recently entered into a new tourist Project with Ireland called 'Celtic Route', funded via an ERDF Grant, aimed at encouraging people to visit parts of the County not normally visited and a web site advertising that project had recently been launched.

Reference was made to the reduction in the Welsh Government's free swim grant and the potential impact that could have on children's health and ability to swim. A suggestion was made that the Council fund the grant reduction.

The Head of Leisure confirmed that in recent years the authority had received a reduction in the grant from the Welsh Government to participate in the free swim programme for the under 16's and over 65's. The recent reductions to that grant had resulted in the authority having to correspondingly reduce the number of public swimming times available for free swimming.

He also referred to the Committee's previous debates on the cost to primary schools in having to take children swimming as part of the current Key Stage 2 curriculum. Whereas previously, that swimming had been free, a circa £2.10 charge per pupil had now been levied with the schools also having to pay transport costs. Although the new curriculum, to be introduced in 2021, did not explicitly require schools to provide swimming lessons, any reduction in that provision would not only impact on attendance levels at the Council's swimming pools, and its pay swimming lessons.

The Committee having regard to the above referred to the £293k unallocated contingency sum within the budget strategy and expressed the view the Executive Board should consider utilising a portion of that sum to fund the estimated £150k cost to primary schools of providing swimming as part of the current KS2 curriculum.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 4.1 The 2020/21 – 2022/23 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received.**
- 4.2 The Charging Digest for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report be endorsed.**
- 4.3 The Executive Board, as part of the budgetary consultation, be recommended to fund the estimated £150k cost to primary schools of providing swimming lessons as part of the Key Stage 2 Curriculum, with the cost thereof being met from the £293k unallocated contingency within the budget strategy.**
- 4.4 The Committee undertake site visits to the Council's libraries and museums.**

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND JANUARY 2020

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 (Appendix A) which had been endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting on the 6th January 2020. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2020/21 together with indicative figures for the 2022/23 financial years. The report was based on officers' projections of spending requirements taking into account the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on 16th December 2019.

The Committee also considered the following detailed budget information appended to the Strategy relevant to its remit:

- **Appendix A(i)** – Efficiency summary for the Social Care & Health Service
- **Appendix A(ii)** – Growth Pressures summary for the Social Care & Health Service
- **Appendix B** – Budget monitoring report for the Social Care & Health Service
- **Appendix C** – Charging Digest for the Social Care & Health Service

The Head of Financial Services provided an overview of the report. Key points covered included:

The announced provisional settlement represented an increase of 4.3% as an average across Wales on the 19/20 settlement, Carmarthenshire had received an increase in Welsh Government grant of 4.4% (£11.5m) taking the Aggregate External Finance to £274.159m for 2020/21. New responsibilities and transfers into the settlement included funding for Teachers Pensions and Pay, which were only partially funded within the settlement and accounted for £5.8m or 2.2% of the overall funding increase.

Details of the Welsh Government Service Specific Grants were also provided with many remaining at a similar level. The Committee was advised that the social care workforce grant had been increased from £30m to £40m across Wales (c £600K for Carmarthenshire). Further clarification was being sought to understand whether the increase could be used in full towards unavoidable service pressures.

There was a forecast variance of £3.5m overspend for the Authority with £1m overspend for the Communities Department against the budget areas of Older People, Physical Disabilities and Learning Disabilities.

The budget proposals assumed the full delivery of all savings proposals, together with the identification and delivery of the shortfall in savings proposals for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years. Additional cost reduction would need to be identified and/or larger council tax increases agreed to deliver a balanced budget for the latter two years. Given the scale of the pressures and forecasted budget gap, proposed council tax increases had been maintained at the previous Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) levels of 4.89% in each of the three financial years which offered some mitigation to the savings proposals.

The Head of Financial Services advised that due to delays in receiving the provisional settlement, the consequential impact on Welsh Government's budget finalisation and publication had been equally delayed. Therefore, the final settlement was due to be published on 25th February 2020 and the County Council would set the final budget on 3rd March 2020.

It was also noted that members of the Committee had recently attended budget consultation events which had provided them with an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on various aspects of the budget.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:

- It was asked if the validation figure of 5% cost increase in gas and electricity was realistic.

The Committee was advised that this was an estimate based on trends and the fact the Authority was part of a national procured contract.

- Clarification was sought regarding the workforce grant and when the authority would know if the grant could be used in full.

The Head of Financial Services advised that the Authority was waiting for clarification from Welsh Government and informed the Committee that it was not uncommon to receive specific grants after the start of the financial year.

- To avoid duplication of queries it was suggested by the Committee that it would be useful to be provided with a summary of comments / feedback provided by members during the budget consultation seminars.

The Head of Financial Services advised that he would consider how this could be done for future consultations.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 4.1 The 2020/21 – 2022/23 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received;**
- 4.2 The Charging Digest for the Social Care & Health Service, as detailed in Appendix C to the report, be endorsed.**

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23RD JANUARY 2020

The Head of Financial Services gave an overview of the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 and drew Members' attention to the main points of the Provisional Settlement detailed at 2.3 within the report and advised that the Final Settlement was not due to be published until the 25th February 2020. Members were also asked to note the updates at 2.5 in relation to Welsh Government Service Specific Grants and the impact of the Teachers Pensions Employer Contribution noted at 3.2.4.

Members raised the following matters/questions in relation to the report:

In response to a question relating to the budget monitoring for the current financial year (page 132) and the School Delegated Budget overspend, the Head of Education and Inclusion noted that there had been a series of meetings over the last few months with Primary and Secondary Schools. In relation to Primary Schools, he advised that because of the meetings Governing Bodies were more aware of the level of budget cuts required, and in some cases whether their provision was sustainable in the longer term. Additional support had been given to schools facing a significant deficit. Meetings with Secondary Schools had also been very constructive and financial plans were currently being reviewed by the Group Accountant to identify further efficiencies.

Members raised concerns regarding the funding of smaller rural schools and the disadvantages faced in relation to the funding formula and Additional Learning Needs funding. The Director of Education and Children's Services advised that there were opportunities for Governing Bodies to respond to this matter as part of the current Budget Consultation should they wish to do so. However, the reality of the current situation was that funding for all schools was tight and there wasn't enough funding available to sustain 110 schools. In relation to the formula for ALN funding, the Director advised that there were significant changes ahead in the way ALN provision would be funded and that there would be challenging times for all schools in relation to the transition.

Further to the previous point, Members noted that the term 'rationalisation' appeared several times within the report and referenced relative savings. Clarification was sought on the number of schools facing possible closure in relation to rationalisation. The Head of Access to Education advised that at present a reduction of between 15 and 20 schools was being considered with 10 proposals currently under review. To realise these efficiencies, the rationalisation would need to begin in 2020/21 for the budget saving to be realised in 2021/22.

Members referenced Education and Child Psychology and the proposed reduction in the number of Education and Child Psychologists. The Head of Education and Inclusion advised that future changes to ALN provision would transfer some of the work from this department to Inclusion Services. There was no expectation that the reduction would impact on the ongoing work of the department, and grant funding would be utilised where possible to maintain enough support.

RESOLVED to receive the report and the Charging Digest contained within.

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27TH JANUARY 2020

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 which had been endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting on 6th January 2020. The report, which provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2020/2021 together with indicative figures for the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years, was based on officers' projections of spending requirements and took account of the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on 16 December 2019. It also reflected the current departmental submissions for savings proposals. The impact on departmental spending would be dependent upon the final settlement from Welsh Government and the resultant final Budget adopted by County Council.

The budget proposals, as presented in the report, assumed the full delivery of all of the savings proposals submitted, together with the identification and delivery of the shortfall in savings proposals 2021-22 and 2022-23. Further cost reductions would need to be identified and/or larger council tax increases would need to be agreed to deliver a balanced budget for the latter two years.

Given the scale of the pressures and forecasted budget gap, Council Tax increases had been maintained at the previous MTFP levels of 4.89% in each of the three financial years which, it was considered, provided at least some mitigation to the savings proposals which the council needed to consider.

Amongst the issues raised during consideration of the report were the following:

- following the announcement of a new Additional Learning Needs grant of £7.2m across Wales details were awaited of the amount likely to be allocated to CCC;
- in terms of the forecasted increase in school deficit balances (£3m) the Committee was advised that individual deficit plans were being developed and agreed were being had been agreed with some schools with a view to achieving financial stability. The budget settlement for schools however was considered to be more favourable than that for Council departments.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to accept the report and endorse the Charging Digest.

8) APPENDIX 1 – MAP OF COMMUNITY AREAS

