Budget Consultation 2017/2018

Exploring Residents’ Views on the KCC Budget

A Qualitative Study

Research Report
MMRI
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**OBJECTIVES**
- Explore residents’ views on Council Tax increases anticipated by central government and being considered by KCC.
- Explore how communications about the financial challenge to local authorities are viewed.
- Explore responses to a range of strategic options available to KCC to address the challenge of rising spending demands, reductions in central government funding and limitations on the ability to raise Council Tax.

**METHODOLOGY**
- MMRI conducted a series of five qualitative deliberative events across Kent.
- Three events were conducted with a representative mix of Kent residents aged 18+.
- Two further events were held specifically for young people: one with younger people aged 16-24 and one in a Kent school with pupils aged 16-18.

**FINDINGS**
- This research indicates there is an absence in awareness amongst some Kent residents of KCC, the services it provides to residents and the budget challenges it faces. This is especially prevalent amongst younger people.
- Opinions were split on the different strategic options available, with there being no one clear solution agreed upon by participants.

**CONCLUSIONS**
- Increased communications are needed: receiving information about the services KCC provides, the budget challenges it faces, why Council Tax was needed and what it paid for impacted positively upon people’s views of KCC providing value for money as well as their willingness to pay increased Council Tax. Once informed many participants felt empathy and a willingness to play a part in bridging the KCC budget gap, but being provided with this information in the first place was key to this mindset.
Methodology

A qualitative approach

A qualitative approach involving a series of deliberative events across Kent was undertaken. Previous budget research conducted by KCC has incorporated a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. For the 2017/2018 budget research it was agreed a qualitative approach alone would fulfill the research objectives.

- MMRI conducted a series of five qualitative deliberative events across Kent.
- Three main events were held with a representative mix of Kent residents aged 18+ (for further information on the demographic profiles please see Appendix B).
- Each of these main events were three hours long, with two being held in the evening (6.00pm – 9.00pm) and one at the weekend (9.30am – 12.30pm).
- The three main events were held in Maidstone, Canterbury and Tonbridge.
- 30 respondents per main event (90 in total) were recruited to attend, with a 90% turn out rate. This was significantly higher than the 80% turn out rate anticipated. Each respondent was screened prior to attendance via a recruitment screener.
- At the events, residents were split into three groups, with each group being a mix of ages and gender. An experienced moderator worked with each group.
- An agenda was used to structure the events (this can be found in Appendix C). This involved a presentation from KCC, open discussions and some closed voting questions.
- In addition to the three events outlined above, two further events were held specifically for young people. Each event was exclusively for those aged 16-24. Slightly smaller in scale, these sessions included an overall total of 35 young people. One of these events was hosted in a Kent school amongst 16-18 year old sixth formers (The Maplesden Noakes, Maidstone), the other in a neutral location in Ashford. Both of these events were shorter in length (two hours) and involved a revised agenda (see Appendix D).

The research was conducted by MMRI a medium-sized market research agency with offices in Surrey, London and Kent. The agency has a long standing history, having been established for over 30 years.

MMRI are part of the Market Research Society’s Company Partnership scheme which is underpinned by the MRS Code of Conduct, a recognised badge of credibility, fairness and transparency.
Research objectives:

Kent County Council (KCC) required the undertaking of an annual consultation in relation to the development of its budget for the next financial year. The objectives of the budget research were to:

• Explore residents' views on Council Tax increases anticipated by central government and being considered by KCC.

• Explore how communications about the financial challenge to local authorities are viewed and what residents take from it.

• Explore response to broad strategy in relation to how KCC should face the challenge of rising spending demands, reductions in central government funding and limitations on the ability to raise Council Tax.

Methodology:

A qualitative approach involving a series of deliberative events across Kent was undertaken. Previous budget research conducted by KCC has incorporated a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. For the 2017/2018 budget consultation it was agreed qualitative research alone would fulfill the research objectives.

• MMRI conducted a series of five qualitative deliberative events across Kent. Three main events were conducted with a representative mix of Kent residents aged 18+. The events were held in Maidstone, Canterbury and Tonbridge.

• Two further events were held specifically for young people: one with young people aged 16-24 was held in Ashford and one was held in a Maidstone school with sixth-form pupils aged 16-18.

Participants’ perceptions of KCC:

Many participants found it difficult to identify the services provided to residents by KCC and some were surprised by their own lack of knowledge. The view amongst some was that maybe they should know and understand more about what KCC does and KCC should be informing them.

Understanding of the social care services KCC provides was limited, but evident amongst a small group of participants (typically these had some form of personal experience with them).

During the discussions regarding KCC and the services it provides, many felt their relationship with KCC was distant, with there not being enough visibility of KCC services in their local area.
Executive Summary

The informed view:

Prior to attending the budget events many participants had limited knowledge about KCC, the services it provides and its budget priorities. The absence of awareness made it challenging for some to make spontaneous decisions relating to Council Tax, KCC’s spending priorities and the services that should be protected from cuts.

At each event participants were asked a series of six questions (five at the youth events where the Council Tax question was excluded). These were asked at the beginning and then repeated at the end (following a video and an information presentation on the budget challenges, delivered by a member of the KCC Financial Strategy team), the findings included:

- Once participants were more aware of the services provided by KCC many reflected that they were using KCC services more frequently than they had initially acknowledged.
- Most participants judged KCC service to be of ‘sufficient quality’ with there only being slight movement after additional information was provided.
- After being informed about the services KCC provided and the budget challenges it faced, many participants viewed more positively the value for money delivered by KCC.
- Participants were asked to make a hard choice and choose one service to be the most protected and one the least protected; a choice many found challenging. The majority wanted to see social care for elderly and vulnerable adults protected from budget cuts, closely followed by social care services for children.
- KCC management and support was the area the majority of participants felt should be the least protected from budget cuts, followed by a lesser extent by libraries. However, many participants did not think libraries should be shut completely but potentially scaled back.

Communicating with residents:

Many participants, across all demographics including young people, expressed a desire for further information about the services KCC provided and how their Council Tax was allocated.

One way of encouraging resident engagement in these complex issues is through the use of promotional materials including videos. In each event participants were shown the recently developed KCC budget consultation video. The purpose of the video was to inform residents about the budget challenges faced by KCC and to encourage them to find out more about the KCC budget. Participants liked the concept of a video being used to share information with them and most viewed this as informative, providing them with interesting facts of which they were previously unaware. However, the video did not work as a call to action as participants did not feel that watching this video would encourage them to go and find out more.
Executive Summary

Balancing the budget:
Participants were asked to consider four strategic ways in which KCC could balance the budget.

**Option one:** KCC provides fewer universal services to all residents.

**Option two:** KCC only provides services to those most in need, regardless of income.

**Option three:** KCC means tests access to services so that people with the lowest income receive the most service.

**Option four:** KCC encourages communities to take responsibility for undertaking some services in their local neighbourhood, rather than relying on publicly funded services.

Participants were split on the relative appeal of these. Some were more comfortable with options where there was an element of means/needs-testing of service users: either by testing the level of need or income. Many could not clearly make a choice between the two and some called for a combination of both types of testing.

Participants who opposed limiting access to services by means-testing preferred the option of ‘fewer universal services to everyone’ as they considered it to be more fair that everyone took a ‘hit’ instead of many being denied access to services because they did not meet the ‘highest need’ or ‘lower income’ thresholds.

At each of the events participants were asked:
- What they felt was the best way to pay for local public services?
- Whether they would rather pay more Council Tax in order to protect services or pay the same/less Council Tax and see a reduction in services?
- Whether they would prefer to pay more individual charges for services provided by KCC as and when they used them?
- Whether KCC should impose more penalties/fines for service abusers?

Participants failed to identify one single best way for KCC to increase contributions towards its services. Many felt KCC needed to implement multiple approaches.

**Conclusions:**
There is a clear need for increased communications amongst residents; many participants were surprised and previously unaware of the financial challenges faced by KCC.

Receiving information about the services KCC provided, the budget challenges it faced, why Council Tax was needed and what it paid for, impacted positively upon people’s views of KCC providing value for money as well as their willingness to pay increased Council Tax. Once participants were informed there was a sense of empathy and a willingness to play a part in bridging the KCC budget gap, but being provided with this information in the first place was key to this mindset.
Participants could not clearly define the services provided by KCC, with an absence of awareness of what was provided by the local District/Borough Council vs. County Council vs. central government.

Many participants found it difficult to identify the services provided to residents by KCC and some were surprised by their own lack of knowledge. Some felt that maybe they should know and understand more about what KCC did and that KCC should be actively informing them of this.

The most commonly cited (spontaneously) KCC services were:

- Highways (with a particular focus on potholes)
- Refuse collection
- Libraries
- Emergency services (with the majority stating policing)
- Schools

Understanding of the social care services provided by KCC was limited, but evident among a small group of participants (these typically had some form of personal experience with them).

Many participants had grumbles in relation to those top of mind services: bins not being collected; confusion over recycling; lack of a visible police presence; potholes remaining unrepaired and traffic disruption caused by lengthy road maintenance/improvement schemes.

Despite the grumbles, when asked, the majority did not acknowledge any awareness of changes in the level of services provided by KCC. The minority who did feel impacted by changes to services were those also aware of KCC’s social care obligations. Many of these participants perceived that there had been a significant reduction in services in terms of care homes, community based care staff and specialised care services.
The Spontaneous View
Participants’ attitudes towards Council Tax

Participants mostly had a basic knowledge of Council Tax; they knew how much they paid but did not have an understanding of where it was spent (aside from the top level breakdown provided with the annual Council Tax statement which some had read).

“You know you’ve got to pay it so you do.”

• Council Tax was very much viewed as a “necessary evil”, which residents had: “no choice but to pay.” For many participants it was an essential bill they paid with little engagement and thought. Many were not aware of and did not feel they had been significantly impacted by any previous Council Tax rises (partly due to the lack of consideration it received). However, a few participants were aware of rises and resented them.

• There was a view amongst a small proportion of participants that Council Tax was too high, some who had more recently become Kent residents believed it was considerably more expensive than areas of London for example. Others felt it was: “not extortionate” but did not have a sense of whether it offered value for money or not.

• However, despite the current lack of awareness and the sentiment “you have to pay it so you do”, many were interested to find out more about where their Council Tax went. The KCC website was cited as the most appropriate place for this information: “there’s no point printing it all, direct people online so they can access it if they want it.”

• When discussing Council Tax charges and KCC services, only a few participants spontaneously raised the cuts in central government funding, highlighting that there was low awareness regarding the impact of government funding reductions on KCC’s public purse.

• Those who did refer to government spending cuts made these in light of the bigger national picture and did not link these with local services. Only one participant questioned whether cuts in public spending would continue in the light of Brexit; Brexit was not a spontaneous topic of discussion among residents.

The spontaneous discussions surrounding both KCC services and Council Tax highlight the need to engage with and inform residents; the majority were open to being informed more.
The Local Issues
Current issues impacting participants

When discussing KCC services and the Kent community, a small proportion of participants wanted to share the issues impacting their everyday lives, with there being a perception that these issues were linked to KCC and that KCC should be addressing them.

The sharing of local issues and feelings towards their local area indicated some clear differences between participants in the East side of the county and those in the West of Kent. Many West Kent participants, whilst unhappy with traffic problems, were generally more positive about their local area. Overall, participants in East Kent were less positive, with a view amongst a minority that they were an overlooked region of Kent. A small minority held the belief that West Kent received higher levels of investment (for roads, schools, community areas) than East Kent.

Traffic in Tonbridge high street, the A21 and its surrounding areas was frustrating many West Kent participants; making it hard to travel in the area.

But they felt the area had quality parks and green spaces which they valued.

Street lighting was mentioned negatively by a small minority of participants from Thanet. Also, participants in East Kent more commonly complained about potholes and perceived poor quality of roads. However, transport links to London were praised for boosting the area.

The chance to discuss local issues highlighted for many participants that they did not have sufficient opportunities to share their views and experiences; they wanted the voice of residents to be heard and acted upon.
During the discussions regarding KCC and its services, many expressed the view that the relationship was distant with there not being enough visibility of KCC services in their local area.

“They sit up in Kings Hill keeping their distance”

• Some participants shared their experiences of coming into contact with KCC, these had been occasions when they have needed to communicate with a ‘council’ regarding an issue (examples provided were parking, refuse and planning related). Many had been confused as to whether they should have contacted the borough/district council or KCC in order to deal with these issues, causing frustration for some.

• A small proportion made reference to the KCC website, citing they had found it difficult to use and that it didn’t clearly display information to residents: “have you seen the website, it’s awful, so confusing.”

• Many participants felt that they would like to have a more engaged relationship with KCC and would welcome more opportunities to voice their opinions: “you only hear from KCC when they want money from you.”

• Some participants felt that KCC should inform residents more about the services it provided and the reasons behind its decision-making.

• Some participants also voiced their mistrust of KCC. They did not believe that KCC was providing certain services in their area as they had not seen the evidence of this: “I cannot see any evidence of road maintenance in my area, the potholes are so bad, they aren’t doing anything.”

• However, while some participants wanted more “evidence” of what was being done by KCC, others had no desire for this additional information: “I trust them to get on with it, the more time they spend telling us what they are doing the less time they have for actually doing it.”

Message to the KCC Council Leader from a main event participant (Maidstone)
The Voice of the Young
The spontaneous views of young people

Awareness of public services overall was low amongst young people and awareness of KCC even lower (with some having not heard of KCC before the budget research event). Identifying the services that KCC provides was a challenge for many, especially those at the school event.

The lack of awareness and understanding of public services amongst young people could impact on KCC in the future as it has the potential to increase the existing disconnect between KCC and its tax paying residents.

Although few young participants felt they had an understanding of KCC and the services KCC provides, many did associate Council Tax with the County Council. However, while they had heard of it: “my dad always moans Council Tax is too high”, only a minority knew any further details:

- “It’s only £30 a month isn’t it and it comes out of your wages?”
- “I have my own flat and have to pay, I didn’t know much about it before that.”

The view amongst several young people was that the current Council Tax system was unfair and that it should be based on income as opposed to size of house. The reasoning behind this was young people felt some people may have a large house but low income (requiring a large house due to their size of family for example).

The younger participants generally had fewer grumbles about their local area than those identified by the older people in the main events. When exploring the future of KCC services and their expectations in relation to this, the majority of young people expressed a feeling of hope and positivity: “I think it will be better in the future”. It may be that once they become Council Tax payers these participants will have high expectations of KCC services.

Message to the KCC Council Leader from a participant at a youth event (school).

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Message to the KCC Council Leader from a participant at a youth event (Ashford).

Awareness of public services overall and KCC was low amongst young people; KCC should look to engage and inform young people about its role in the school setting.
Participants’ views changed after they had received more information about KCC and after they had been given the opportunity to deliberate on the challenges KCC faced.

At each of the three hour events, participants were asked a series of six questions twice (five questions at the youth events where the Council Tax question was excluded). These were asked at the beginning and then repeated at the end (following a video and an informative presentation on the budget challenges, delivered by members of the KCC Financial Strategy team (see Appendix E for questions).

- Once participants were more aware of what services KCC provided, many people reflected and stated that they were using KCC services more frequently than had initially acknowledged.

“Basically, if you go outside your house, go on the road or use a bus, you are using a KCC funded service aren’t you?”

Figure 1: How often do you or a member of your household use KCC services?

Base: Main events round one (77); round two (74)

- A smaller shift was evident amongst participants at the youth events.
Most participants felt the services delivered by KCC were of ‘sufficient quality’ with there only being slight movement after additional information was provided. For a very small minority, the quality was deemed very poor and their stance did not change during the post information questioning round (and in fact a very small proportion of those at the youth events moved from poor to very poor following the information provided).

Figure 2: What do you think about the quality of KCC services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Level</th>
<th>Round One</th>
<th>Round Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Main events round one (78); round two (75)

Base: Youth events round one (33); round two (35)

As identified when spontaneously exploring participants awareness of KCC and the services it provides, few had an extensive need for services (with only a small minority having any experience with social care services). With this in mind some could only judge the quality of services based on those they were aware of (highways maintenance, libraries, public transport and education). These scores tie in with those shared in the spontaneous exploration; they had some grumbles but were generally satisfied and in relation to these scores the view here was the quality is not very high but is still sufficient.
Informed Decisions
How attitudes change when more information is known

After being informed about the services KCC provided and the budget challenges it faced, many participants viewed more positively the value for money provided by KCC.

Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that KCC provides value for money for its services?

- Over double the number of people in the main events agreed that KCC provided value for money once they had seen the video, had listened to the presentation and had a chance to discuss these in their groups.

- Some participants wanted further information to allow them to make a more informed judgement on value for money.

- The change in perception was much less evident amongst participants at the youth events where there was also less polarisation. No participants at the youth events strongly agreed or strongly disagreed that KCC provided value for money for its services.
When uninformed about the budget challenges faced by KCC and the services it provided, the majority of participants opted to pay less Council Tax. However, there was a significant shift in attitude once they had been informed about the budget gap, with significantly lower proportions stating they wanted to pay substantially or marginally less Council Tax and higher proportions wanting to pay the same or marginally more Council Tax.

Despite the evident attitudinal shift there remained a significant proportion who would like to pay the same or less Council Tax.

At the second round of questioning the proportion of participants who said they would most like to pay marginally more Council Tax rose to over two fifths, the proportion wanting to pay the same rose to just under a third and the proportion wanting to pay less decreased to just over a fifth.

Participants did not feel a referendum on rising Council Tax above this threshold would make sense. Several felt that when asked cold, without the additional information provided during the events, the immediate response was to prefer to pay less. This view was supported by the answers to the Council Tax question where almost three quarters of participants initially said they would like to pay less. With this in mind along with the costs associated with holding a referendum, they did not consider a referendum to be a viable option.

Messages to the KCC Council Leader from main event participants (Maidstone & Canterbury)
Participants were asked to make a hard choice and choose one service to be the most protected and one the least protected from spending reductions; a choice many found challenging. The majority of participants wanted to see social care for elderly and vulnerable adults protected from spending reductions, closely followed by social care services for children.

This position was strengthened once their awareness of KCC and the services it provided increased. Support for protecting most of the other services in comparison with social care lessened, with the exception of highways and public transport where there were small increases.

**Figure 5: KCC has to make spending reductions, which ONE of the following areas should be protected?**

- Social care for elderly and vulnerable adults
- Social care services for children
- School support
- Management & support
- Environmental services
- Highways
- Prevention & welfare services
- Libraries
- Public transport

**Base:** Main events round one (73); round two (75)

**Base:** Youth events round one (33); round two (35)

- Attitudes amongst participants at the youth events shifted much more dramatically towards protecting social care after receiving the additional information. In round one a third wanted libraries to be protected but this was reduced to nobody selecting this as a protected service in the second round.

- Many participants were shocked at the social care demands KCC faced, especially as several had failed to acknowledge social care services when they had spontaneously discussed the services they perceived KCC as providing. While the scale of social care funding was larger than expected, there was no negativity expressed in relation to this, participants were just surprised at the scale.
Informed Decisions
The choices made when more information is known

KCC management and support was the area the majority of participants felt should be the least protected from spending reductions, followed by libraries (but to a lesser extent). Ensuring social care services were protected for the elderly and vulnerable was a priority and just a very small minority didn’t want to see social care services for children protected.

Figure 6: And which ONE of the following areas should be the LEAST protected?

- Whilst libraries was the second service chosen to be least protected, discussions in the groups showed that many participants did not think libraries should be shut completely. Many felt libraries served an important purpose in the community, especially for older adults and those with young children. However, the view amongst younger people was less supportive of libraries all together. Many young participants questioned the future of libraries and whether they were needed in a digital era.

- Many participants expressed the view that KCC should continually review and challenge its own processes, ensuring it was operating efficiently. Some perceived that there were several levels of KCC management which were unnecessary and that cost savings could be made reducing these.
Communicating Information
Engaging with residents of Kent

One way of encouraging participation and inviting residents to be involved is via the use of information materials including videos. Participants were shown the KCC budget consultation video. The purpose of the video was to inform residents about the budget challenges KCC faces and to encourage them to find out more.

Participants liked the concept of information about KCC being shared with them and many felt a video could be an effective format. The KCC video was considered by most participants to be informative, providing interesting facts which they had not previously known. However, participants did not feel that watching this would encourage them to go and find out more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>“I don’t really understand the point of it, is it an information piece?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call-to-action not strong enough.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not clear that KCC wants your opinion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, it did provide information and raise awareness, participants were just unsure what to do next.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>“Is this a video for children?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It looks like it is for five year olds.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some found the style of the animation a little childish (including some of the younger participants).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some felt the narrator’s voice was patronising.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The view amongst a small proportion was “made for council people by council people”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>“The facts and figures are what capture my attention, I didn’t realise the size of KCC.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants responded positively to the facts provided, to an extent that they would have liked to have seen more.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The facts engaged participants, making the scale of the situation more real.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing</td>
<td>“Probably something you’d see in the doctors, not something I would take much notice of.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many would expect to see a video such as this being shown in council buildings, schools and GP surgeries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, many felt it would reach more Kent residents if used on social media (via advertising as well as shared on the KCC page). This included Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communicating Information
Engaging with residents of Kent

Participants viewed the video as an information piece as opposed to a call to action. Many participants welcomed the concept of KCC reaching out to provide them with additional information. However, some felt changes could be made to make the video capture their attention more and to provide a stronger call to action.

Participants suggested some tweaks that could be used to enhance the video (still using the video format but styling and sharing this differently):

- Featuring real people instead of an animation, which would bring the issues to life more and enhance engagement and empathy.
- Relate it more strongly to Kent residents, “maybe they need to position it as: this is why your Council Tax is important.”
- Explain in more detail what KCC was doing; some felt it was a bit gloomy and were left feeling depressed at the bleak prospect presented. However knowing more about what KCC was doing to make savings and what residents could potentially do to help, would add positivity.
- Some felt it should be shorter, a stronger view amongst younger participants.
- Younger participants would find it more engaging if it used music they liked and more dynamic editing techniques to capture and hold their attention. Many of those at the school event referred to it as “boring”.
- Many participants felt KCC should be sharing content such as this via social media, with the younger participants focusing on YouTube and Twitter while some of the older participants focused on Facebook. Young participants felt YouTube would be especially effective as in some instances you were forced to watch the ad before watching your chosen content, so they would have no choice but watch it.
- Some felt local borough councils were using social media effectively to communicate with residents and could recall activity they had seen on their social media channels.
- A view among several was that social media engagement would be cost-effective for KCC and would reach the masses (but recognised not everyone). There was some discussion about having something such as this on TV, however many felt this would be an expensive option.
Balancing the Budget
Participant responses to four strategic options

Participants were split on the relative appeal of the different strategic options. Some were more comfortable with options where there was an element of means/needs-testing of service users: either by testing level of need or income. Many could not clearly make a choice between the two and some called for a combination of both types of testing.

Participants who opposed limiting access to services by means-testing preferred the option of ‘fewer universal services to everyone’ as they considered it to be more fair that everyone took a “hit” instead of many being denied access to services because they did not meet the ‘highest need’ or ‘lower income’ thresholds.

Participants were asked to consider four strategic ways in which KCC could bridge the budget gap. Facilitators shared examples to help ensure residents understood the implications of the options (please find in Appendix F).

• **Option one:** KCC provides fewer universal services to all residents.
• **Option two:** KCC only provides services to those most in need, regardless of income.
• **Option three:** KCC means tests access to services so that people with the lowest income receive most service.
• **Option four:** KCC encourages communities to take responsibility for undertaking some services in their local neighbourhood, rather than relying on publicly funded services.

Only once they were informed about KCC’s services and the extent of its budget challenge were participants comfortable discussing the pros and cons of each of the outlined strategic options.

There were two options which had the strongest appeal (albeit with significant caveats):

• **Option one:** This option ‘spread the pain’ more than the needs/means testing options and was considered easier to implement. It was chosen by those who comprehensively rejected options two and three.

• **Combination of option two and option three:** These options could potentially deliver large savings but would need complex systems to ensure they were fair and did not disadvantage people just above the need/income thresholds. A larger proportion of younger people preferred these options over option one.

• **Option four:** This option was overwhelmingly rejected as being unrealistic and unworkable. Whilst there may be pockets of Kent where this could potentially be feasible, many participants felt they did not live in these areas.
Option one: “KCC provides fewer universal services to all residents.”

The preferred option for approximately a third of participants attending the main events, but preferred by significantly less at the youth events. It was viewed as potentially less challenging than the means testing options, however there were concerns regarding the services that could potentially be affected.

- “Everyone taking a bit of a hit” rather than whole sections of society losing out.
- At its most positive, option one involved slicing aspects of services rather than making substantial cuts to services having a less dramatic impact on residents.
- Assumption KCC would still provide essential services; just on a smaller scale.

Successful implementation
- KCC would need to evaluate services, understand the volumes of residents using them and then scale back or offer alternatives where there was not a high usage. There would need to be transparency and sharing of the rationale behind the decisions made.
- Some felt KCC could make savings by improving ways in which services were run such as combining services into one location or running more services in partnership with the voluntary or private sectors.

Services affected
- KCC could make substantial savings by reducing library provision: minimal impact on most residents (especially young people). However, many older participants and some with young children were concerned about the service being under threat, as they considered them an essential community resource.

Reasons for rejecting this strategic option
- Negative impact on more residents overall, and would particularly disadvantage some elderly and vulnerable groups who rely on specific universal services.
- All residents would end up getting less services despite paying more Council Tax.
- Some felt services had already been reduced (e.g. road maintenance, care in the community, libraries) so envisaged that further reductions would have a substantial negative impact.
- Short-term savings might actually lead to additional long-term expenditure e.g. more expensive to repair roads which have not been maintained.
Balancing the Budget
Participant responses to strategic option two

Option two: “KCC only provides services to those most in need, regardless of income.”

Strategic option two split opinion in both the main and youth events. Many considered it to be fair that those with the greatest need received the most support, however the opposing view was that evaluating need was too complicated and costly and there would be those who were not quite needy enough who would miss out.

- In principle, everyone would be treated equally regardless of income which meant that in contrast to strategic option three, residents who had worked hard (and who were taxed more as a result), would not be penalised for having more income than others.
- Focusing on only the neediest would be more likely to deliver greater cost savings compared to strategic options one and four.

Successful implementation
- Challenging to evaluate who was ‘most in need’; KCC would need to develop a complex infrastructure to manage access to services.

Reasons for rejecting this option
- Potentially divisive because most households pay Council Tax but only a limited number would receive services. Many participants considered that there were key services which should remain universal e.g. children’s centres.
- The majority expressed concerns that genuinely needy people would ‘slip through the net’ because they were unable or unwilling to ask for help. And many were concerned that those designated as just below the threshold of ‘need’ would be denied services.
- Some felt that by reducing service provision to only the neediest, the problems amongst the ‘less needy’ might escalate and they would develop greater needs which would be more expensive to resolve. They advocated greater investment in prevention services to reduce development of greater need in the long term.
- Some felt that this option would further entrench inequality, because the less needy who had the income/funds to pay for services privately would be fine whereas an equally needy person who could not fund private help would be further disadvantaged.
- Some participants were also concerned that ‘needs’ testing could be open to exploitation.
Balancing the Budget
Participants responses to strategic option three

Option three: “KCC means tests access to services so that people with the lowest income receive most service.”

Many preferred option three either as a standalone approach or in combination with strategic option two. This approach was especially preferred by participants at the youth events. As with option two, many believed it was a fair option and in fact one they were already familiar with (e.g. concept of means-testing access to benefits). However, some participants felt it unfairly penalised those who were more affluent who had worked hard for their money.

- Some felt it was the fairest option, helping those on low income access services that they could not afford to pay for themselves.
- Already a standard mechanism for managing access to services e.g. residential care, student loans, housing benefit etc so familiar to some.
- People who have higher incomes have alternative ways of getting/paying for services. Some participants felt reassured at the idea that people could possibly pay to access KCC services if they did not qualify for free help.

Successful implementation

- Challenging to set fair income/savings thresholds to qualify for services: as with option two (need testing), KCC would need to develop a complex infrastructure to manage access to services and they would need to ‘police’ this so that people would not cheat the system.
- KCC would need to communicate this well so that residents understood the rationale behind the approach.

Reasons for rejecting this option

- Several rejected this as their least preferred option because they felt it was unfair: penalising residents who had worked hard for their money; denying services to residents who had paid into the system. Whilst many acknowledged this was how the system worked at present, they resented this (e.g. family member paying for care from savings).
- Many were concerned about how KCC would define the qualifying threshold and suspected that residents in the middle tier who can ‘just afford it’, i.e. people like them, would be the hardest hit by being denied services they really needed.
- They also thought it would be open to abuse, with ‘cheats’ claiming for services and not declaring income, as was perceived to be endemic within the benefits system.
- Some participants felt that it would further support those who choose a benefits lifestyle rather than trying to help themselves by working “I’m sick and tired of working all hours, and yet there are people who don’t bother working and they get everything given to them”.
Option four: “KCC encourages communities to take responsibility for undertaking some services in their local neighbourhood, rather than relying on publicly funded services”

Option four was strongly rejected by all groups and age-groups as many felt it would not work on a scale that would compensate for the lack of KCC services. Some liked the idea of the concept in an ideal world but did not believe that in today’s society this could be a practical reality.

- Most participants would not be willing to take responsibility; many said that they did not feel there was much of a community where they lived.

- This option would only have some success in wealthier communities where residents would have the time and resource to undertake voluntary service, and where there was a considerable proportion of younger elderly people who were able and willing to give their time and energy. It would therefore disadvantage those living in poorer communities and areas where most residents worked full time.

- Implementation would create conflict within communities as only a few would contribute and therefore service provision would be inconsistent and unreliable (many voluntary organisations struggle to attract enough volunteers at the moment).

- Residents would be put at risk because services would not be provided and there would be no accountability for this.

- To work effectively KCC would need to implement support structures, but many felt that KCC did not do enough currently to support the voluntary sector so were doubtful that support would be forthcoming. Therefore how could KCC ensure that services were provided and were provided well? How would public liability issues be addressed?

Limited appeal

- Some participants acknowledged the appeal of this concept because in an ideal world they would like this to happen. They liked the principle but believed that in reality it would not work for the reasons outlined above.

- Some participants had experience of this in their local communities e.g. residents gritting their own road in bad weather when the council did not provide this service. However, no participants wanted to feel that KCC expected them to provide services for free.

- Some participants suggested that unemployed people could be given the opportunity to take on some roles in the community, thereby helping them gain experience and useful skills. But it was not envisaged that this would be sufficient to replace KCC service provision.
Participants failed to identify one single best way for KCC to manage residents’ contributions towards its services. Many felt KCC needed to implement multiple approaches: increasing Council Tax, introducing more individual charges for services and introducing penalties/fines for service abuses.

At each of the events participants were asked:

• What they felt was the best way to pay for local public services?

• Whether they would rather pay more Council Tax in order to protect services or pay the same/less Council Tax and see a reduction in services?

• Whether they would prefer to pay more individual charges for services provided by KCC as and when they used them?

• Whether KCC should impose more penalties/fines for service abusers?

Each break-out group’s facilitator shared examples of how these options might work, to help participants understand the concept better. The full list is included in Appendix G.

Summary: deliberative conclusions

No clear conclusions were reached by most groups on which approach to funding should prevail. Most participants considered that the likely approach would be a combination of all three, but they did not particularly welcome this.

• Council Tax increases: split opinions on this – most recognised this would be inevitable as it was needed to address the ongoing lack of government funding for KCC whilst demand for services rose, but whilst some participants accepted the need to pay more and were comfortable with doing so. Many participants opposed this as they did not/could not afford to pay more and they resented the continual increase in their taxes.

• More individual charges for services: whilst this appeared to make sense on first consideration as only those using certain services would have to pay, when participants deliberated on it further many were concerned that this would discriminate against people on lower incomes. Some felt this could lead to considerable hardship and longer term costs for KCC as people did not receive the essential services they needed.

• More penalties/fines for service abusers: this was less divisive – most groups agreed that people who misused services should rightly be penalised, but many were uncomfortable with KCC using this primarily to generate revenue. They also questioned whether service abusers would pay and the extent to which KCC could enforce this. However most felt that KCC should receive revenue from fines at a local level.
Balancing the Budget
Attitudes towards Council Tax

“Would you rather pay more Council Tax in order to protect services or pay the same/less Council Tax and see a reduction in services?”

Views on increases to Council Tax changed dramatically after the presentation which outlined the extent of KCC’s budget challenge; as mentioned earlier in the report significantly more participants were willing to pay more Council Tax once they had received more information about how it was spent and why it was needed.

- Concept of increases to Council Tax was divisive: some felt it was necessary to increase it marginally to help reduce the budget shortfall and were comfortable with being asked to pay slightly more, while others felt that even a minimal increase would be hard to afford, personally and for others in the community.

- They wanted KCC to work harder to reduce waste and be more efficient so that Council Tax rises were not necessary.

- Many felt that holding a referendum to raise Council Tax above the permitted increase would be pointless as residents would reject greater increases. A few people who were willing to pay more than the permitted increase thought that a referendum on Council Tax should take place as they would like the opportunity to pay more.

- If Council Tax were to increase, participants expected that KCC should become more accountable and transparent about its expenditure: KCC needed to communicate better where the money was spent.

- Some participants questioned how sustainable it was for residents to be continually asked to pay more Council Tax without an accompanying growth of the economy.

- Some felt that if KCC was increasingly relying on raising Council Tax rates annually, it had a corresponding responsibility to help more people into employment and contributing to the system overall.

Message to the KCC Council Leader from a participant at a main event (Canterbury).
Balancing the Budget
Participant responses to individual charges

“Would you prefer to pay more individual charges for services provided by KCC as and when you used them?”

Overall this was not a popular option. Many participants felt uncomfortable at the prospect of access to services being determined by whether residents had the ability to pay.

- Participants also found it difficult to imagine how KCC could decide what services should be individually charged for and what should be automatically included within your Council Tax.
- Participants could only see this working partially because it would not be suitable for everyone to pay a charge for certain services as it would discriminate against those on lower incomes.
- Participants felt that as some people have greater needs than others, through no fault of their own, it would not be right that they should be penalised by having to pay to access services.
- Many felt that it could be risky as people could be discouraged from accessing services they need, and this would have a negative impact for all of society if these people didn’t receive the right support and their situation worsened.
- Some highlighted that the concept of taxation meant that contributions are spread over time and people can access services as and when they need them, and in comparison this was more fair than being asked to pay a charge for services at the point of use. They felt that introducing this was a “slippery slope” that could lead to increased charges and inequality of access to services.
- Some participants felt that this would be open to abuse as residents could fraudulently claim they didn’t use a service to avoid having to pay extra charges.
- Some participants felt that it would be more acceptable if the charges were a small/nominal amount, and if the ability to pay was taken into consideration.

Make the system fairer for all members of the community. Don’t penalise the quality of services that make a difference to daily life in this country.

Please take into account those who need extra help but don’t necessarily have the extra money to pay for it!

Messages to the KCC Council Leader from participants at main events (both Canterbury).
Balancing the Budget
Participant responses to penalties/fines

“Should KCC impose more penalties/fines for service abusers?”

Many participants were comfortable with this option: potentially a good way of stopping people from abusing a service and comparatively fairer than Council Tax increases or individual charges as it was within the individual’s control to avoid abusing services.

“You don’t get fined if you don’t do something wrong, it’s pretty simple”

- They felt that it would work for some offences such as simple traffic violations, but would not work for others such as putting the wrong waste in the wrong bins as it might lead to more costly and negative consequences for KCC, such as an increase in fly-tipping.
- Some felt it would need to be communicated clearly what behaviour would incur penalties and also that KCC would need to be transparent about how it was spending the revenue from these fines.
- However, some felt that some service abusers would simply refuse to pay or be unable to pay and it could be costly to implement a system of fines and to chase those who refused to pay.
- Some participants disagreed with KCC introducing more penalties primarily as a revenue-generating exercise because they thought they should be used to enforce the law.
- Upon greater reflection some participants were less comfortable with this concept. They disliked the idea of KCC monitoring and punishing residents for misdemeanours as being “a bit Big Brother.”
- Some participants were concerned about a growth in the ‘penalty industry’ and an increase in measures designed to make people pay more fines. They felt that it would be a difficult ‘sell’ to Kent residents.

Message to the KCC Council Leader from a participant at a main event (Maidstone).
In addition to the three types of contribution discussed, participants expressed their own ideas and thoughts. There was a view that KCC should be pushing back on central government and not accepting its reduced budget; some felt the more KCC filled the gap, the more central government might cut their funding in future.

- KCC needs to ask the government for more funding.
- KCC should be challenging its own internal processes and costs before implementing changes which would have a negative impact on residents.
- Government legislation needs to change so that properties can be reclassified and there should possibly be greater differentiation between the different Council Tax bands.
- KCC needs to scrutinise service use against revenue allocated to it to reduce costs e.g. physical space of a library increasingly less relevant to many residents.
- KCC should consider drawing on its reserves, putting less of the budget into its reserves. Despite any explanations as to why this would not tackle the problem it is perceived as a solution.
- Raise age for qualifying for older person’s bus pass; those who are younger could pay a contribution towards it.
- Encourage (but don’t rely) on residents doing more for themselves.

Messages to the KCC Council Leader from participants at main events (Maidstone and Canterbury).
Conclusions

Insights drawn from the research

• This research indicates that there is an absence of awareness amongst Kent residents of what KCC does, the services it provides to residents and the budget challenges it faces. This lack of awareness was most prevalent amongst younger participants (aged 16-24), many of whom were also unaware of public services more generally.

• Additional proactive communication with residents (such as the video developed by KCC) was welcomed and offers several benefits to KCC:
  - Once informed about KCC services and the budget challenges it faces, there are improvements in perception of value for money which impact on the willingness to pay Council Tax.
  - Two way communications and transparency surrounding budget decisions would potentially encourage more residents to be engaged and share their opinions.
  - Increasing awareness of services amongst younger people will reduce a potential future disconnect between KCC and its residents.

• Opinions were split on the different strategic options available, with there being no one clear solution agreed upon by participants. Being clear about exactly how service provision will have to change, sharing this information with the public and being open to further debate is key for KCC.

• Encouraging communities to take responsibility and undertaking some services themselves is unlikely to be viewed positively among the wider Kent public. Participants in the research felt this concept was idealistic and did not feel that in today’s society it could ever be a practical reality. Most participants would not be willing to take on such a responsibility and many participants said that they did not feel there was much of a community where they lived, prohibiting the successful implementation of such a scheme.

• Views on increases to Council Tax changed dramatically after participants were provided with additional information about how it was spent and why it was needed, again highlighting the importance of informative communications from KCC to its residents. Once informed of KCC’s budget challenges, c.40% were willing to pay marginally more Council Tax (no more than the permissible increase). Very few were open to paying significantly more, c.20% wanted to pay less and their stance did not change regardless of the information provided.

• Residents may be open to more penalties and fines being enforced, as these have the potential to be comparatively more fair than Council Tax increases or individual charges as it is within the individual’s control to avoid such penalties/fines.

• Receiving information about the services KCC provided, the budget challenges it faced, why Council Tax was needed and what it paid for impacted positively upon people’s views of KCC providing value for money as well as their willingness to pay increased Council Tax. Once participants were informed there was a sense of empathy and a willingness to play a part in balancing the KCC budget, but being provided with this information in the first place is key to this mindset.
Appendix A
Summary of the messages for the Council Leader from participants

Equality
- Fair treatment for everyone
- Equality for low and high incomes
- Services available for everyone

Roads and Transport
- Fixing potholes
- Switch street lighting off at certain times
- Cheaper public transport

Protecting Vulnerable People
- Disabled people
- The elderly
- Schools
- Social services
- The less fortunate
- Young people

Council Tax
- No more than 2% increase
- Pay marginally more
- Based on income, not house size
- Reduce council tax/keep it the same

Service Cuts
- Cuts to least used services e.g. libraries
- Protect vital services e.g. public transport and social care
Appendix A
Messages for the Council Leader from participants in Canterbury

At each event when leaving, participants were asked to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Educate and encourage/give incentive for people to care for their own elderly relatives.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Don’t put up Council Tax more than 2%.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Please look after my amazing disabled daughter’s future.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Our elected members must learn better communication within their constituents.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Equality should be available and considered for all. Individual safety should always be priority e.g. street lighting.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Try to treat everyone fair.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Benefits should be cut or earnt through community service and projects.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“More support to schools please.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You are no friend of Thanet’s! Use the reserves.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Good luck! I could cope with a pay rise.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Spend more money on pot holes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Try and make decisions as fair as possible.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Spend less on top employees and less on foreigners.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Spend less on top employees.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Increase Council Tax by a max of 1.99% but also use our opinions to increase facilities but without making people suffer unnecessarily.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Try to keep everything fair.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Please bear in mind that cuts to services will limit life chances of young people, be kind.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If necessary use the reserves.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Make the system fairer for all members of the communities. Don’t penalise the quality of services that make a different to the daily life in this country.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Please take into account those who need the extra help but don’t necessarily have the extra money to pay for it!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Use the reserve, it is what it is.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Why can’t you get more from central government?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

Messages for the Council Leader from participants in Tonbridge

At each event when leaving, participants were asked to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I think that KCC should consider and prioritise the least fortunate.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I want to know how it would effect the least fortunate, keep tax affordable.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Reduce Council Tax, provide services for the less fortunate.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Please attempt to develop a community pulling together and the volunteer initiative across the county. So many are able to give a little time to take on some appropriate tasks to lighten the loads. Keep taxes lower, could be an incentive here and publicising how much could be saved through volunteering in the region could to.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Increase in rates justified to fill the increasing gap between cuts and income. No referendum necessary as £2m cost is unjustified (should this be Justified), the Council are doing a great job in difficult times.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“More education towards explaining how the ‘business works’ so that the public is better educated. Perhaps talking in schools explaining to children how vandalism (for example) would effect them. More community encouragement.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Need to save more money.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sort out the road systems and the traffic flow and everything will run much more smoothly from there e.g. public transport, services, individual’s income increased by availability, safety and efficiency.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“When you consider the budget just remember all the tyres I am going through, I would highly appreciate it... As would the whole of Kent, fix the potholes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Please consider alternative ways of supporting the elderly and young people within our community to decrease the KCC spending in this area.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Fines for companies who dig up newly laid roads to repair water/gas/electric and spoil tarmac which causes potholes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Cut down on services that don’t get used that much/are not vital. Don’t put money into services that are not needed as much.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Don’t make the choices of what to do either or consider combining actions - we kept saying all of them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Not an easy task for the council but hopefully keep as many of the services we now received even though getting less money from central government.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Continue to protect the vulnerable young and old. Protect our countryside as we are concerned about flooding from excess buildings around Tonbridge town centre”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“To keep the open spaces which are rapidly disappearing. Also to look at the street lights being left on all night.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel the budget is a difficult position to be in, try to take time and not miss those who may fall in between policies that exist. Every persons needs are individual not general. Though I see it's a very difficult job and perhaps a bigger mix of the political parties may reflect these views from today.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I have nothing to say about the budget, but being 17 and not having and idea about KCC etc. I feel that young people should be more informed/aware.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I now understand the difficulties and restraints of how to spend the budget. Whilst caring for people from all walks of life. I don't envy your job. I would be happy to pay a marginal increase if it was to help in accommodating all the areas specified in today’s discussion.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A
Messages for the Council Leader from participants in Maidstone

At each event when leaving, participants were asked to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“More scrutiny of benefits. Find more efficiency savings.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Make it fairer across the board - For those with low/high income.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Investigate and tighten up on unemployment benefit cheats.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Less money to child services i.e. foster parents.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Charge council tax to the unemployed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If you were to raise council tax ensure the Government do not take advantage of this.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I found this meeting very informative and I feel that better communication to the public would be very beneficial for the KCC.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We don’t mind paying a bit more council tax.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Stop wasting money on &quot;service&quot; that serves no purpose e.g. residents parking. Must cost a lot to police it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Try and force central Government not to keep penalising you when you do a good job at budgeting.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“More penalties for misuse of services, i.e. disabled parking/parent child bays.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel that possibly how the council spend their money is a constant battle against change. As long as the council can re-assure residents that their money is being spent wisely, then there is nothing else that matters. You can’t please everyone.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Cut down on services that are not needed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Make it fair for all.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Reduce spending on services that are not so vital so that more money can be put into vital services such as public transport and social care.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

Messages for the Council Leader from participants in Maidstone (youth event)

At each event when leaving, participants were asked to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget.

| “People who put more in should get more. Make sure everyone’s equal, if someone puts less in they should get less service and should only get the ones they need, don’t offer services to people if they don't need them. So you don’t waste services if they’re not needed.” |
| “I think public services should be improved and looked at in terms of prices and availability. Also social care should still have a massive impact therefore should be focused on.” |
| “I believe that people who don't contribute as much shouldn’t receive more than people who do contribute at all.” |
| “I think you should focus more on social services. You need to make sure that children and young people in care need more support but people like elderly and vulnerable people need more support throughout.” |
| “Take tax relevant to income and not the size of their house. Consider someone’s income and focus on how you can get the money you need without robbing the money that the public needs.” |
| “You should assess more who needs services and how much you’re spending on these people compared to how much they are putting in.” |
| “What do you think should have the less money spent on it?” |
| “To council man, continue to improve public transport and roads.” |
| “Make council tax based on income not house sizes.” |
| “Reduce travel costs please. Please they are extremely overpriced.” |
| “Tax on income, not house size.” |
Appendix A
Messages for the Council Leader from participants in Ashford (youth event)

At each event when leaving, participants were asked to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Good luck! Rather it was your job than mine!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If you have to make cuts don’t always go for the easy choice. Take individual reports and help keep communities together.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Keep on trucking. Working in the Government sounds boring. I’m impressed you’ve survived this long.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Hope you make the right decision my friend.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I think that there aren’t enough police around now so don’t cut anymore.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Be fair and treat everyone equal.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“As a young person please remember we are the future. Please take our views into account.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Thanks for making me understand more.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Make sure the cuts are beneficial for everyone.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I don't think if richer people earn more money they shouldn't get what they pay taxes on.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Please close more libraries to fund more money for more important things i.e. elderly and roads etc.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Kent needs to change for the young generation and listen to the young of today.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B
The demographics of those attending the events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Maidstone</th>
<th>Canterbury</th>
<th>Tonbridge</th>
<th>Ashford</th>
<th>Maidstone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-45</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At each of the main events 30 participants were recruited with a 20% no-show rate anticipated. Tonbridge was the only weekend event and achieved a higher no-show rate of 27% (Ashford had a 0% no show rate, Maidstone and Canterbury 3%). There is no clear indication of why the Tonbridge no show-rate was higher than at the other events but it may be because the event was on a Saturday morning and the weather was particularly cold that day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Maidstone</th>
<th>Canterbury</th>
<th>Tonbridge</th>
<th>Ashford</th>
<th>Maidstone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working status</th>
<th>Maidstone</th>
<th>Canterbury</th>
<th>Tonbridge</th>
<th>Ashford</th>
<th>Maidstone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working in full or part time employment or self employed</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of work, student, home maker of carer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C
Agenda used for the main events (1 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Requirements/ stimulus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 15 mins before start | 1. Arrival and registration  
|                 | • Refreshments available                                  | Tea, coffee and sandwich buffet  
|                 |                                                           | Room set up: three round tables, 10 seats to a table. Front table with screen and data projector. Large TV / speaker for showing film.  
|                 |                                                           | Voting key pads for every participant. Extra chairs for observers.  |
| 5 mins          | 2. PLENARY: Welcome and thanks for attending from MMRI Research  
|                 | • What today is about: to have input from public on your views on how KCC should spend public money for 2017/18 and beyond, and to shape important decisions KCC need to make about the services you value most  
|                 | • We are running five events and there is also an online survey where Kent residents can share their views  
|                 | • Explain who is in the room and why they are all here – here to listen only (not get involved)  
|                 | • Role of facilitators  
|                 | • Role of observers  
|                 | • Ground rules  
|                 | • Toilets, health and safety regulations  
|                 | • Mobiles off  
|                 | • Timings  |
| 15 mins         | 3. TABLE DISCUSSION: Initial discussion and spontaneous priorities  
|                 | **Objectives:** To warm up the groups and to gain an overview of people’s feelings about living in Kent and key priorities for Kent County Council  
|                 | **FACILITATED DISCUSSION:**  
|                 | • Introductions by participants – each person to say name, where they live, any family and working situation.  
|                 | • What do they like about living in Kent?  
|                 | • General discussion about views and attitudes regarding |

1
## Appendix C

Agenda used for the main events (2 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td><strong>4. PLENARY: Voting buttons</strong>&lt;br&gt;Six questions asked about frequency of use of services; perceived value of KCC services; perceived quality of KCC services; attitude towards Council Tax; services which should be protected most and least.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td><strong>5. PLENARY, then TABLE DISCUSSION: Show short 1 minute video about the budget challenge</strong>&lt;br&gt;Introduce video: the purpose of it is to be a ‘hook’ to capture people’s attention and encourage them to take part in the consultation/seek more information about KCC tax and spending decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td><strong>7. PLENARY: Presentation scene setting the budget challenge</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Objective:</strong> To provide the necessary background information to give scope for a meaningful discussion on the budget. Presentation – scene setting (20-25 mins)&lt;br&gt;• Background to Kent including county and district functions&lt;br&gt;• National picture&lt;br&gt;• Current KCC budget and funding&lt;br&gt;• How council tax works&lt;br&gt;• Future fiscal outlook including spending demands and funding projections&lt;br&gt;• 2017/18 budget proposals&lt;br&gt;• Consultation and next steps&lt;br&gt;Plenary Q&amp;A opportunity (5 – 10 mins)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Voting buttons for every participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Questions projected onto screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Video on big screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>Presentation projected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kent County Council services**<br>• What are the things that Kent County Council does that are most important at the moment?<br>**Council tax**<br>• How much do you feel you know about Council Tax?<br>• Do you know approx. how much you pay monthly/annually?<br>• Initial reactions to the amount of CT they pay:<br>  - Too much/ too little?<br>  - Fair / not fair?
### Appendix C

Agenda used for the main events (3 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td><strong>8. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Reaction to learning</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Objective:</strong> To gather reaction to information</td>
<td><strong>Facilitated Discussion:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- What do they think of how the budget is currently spent?&lt;br&gt;- What was most surprising about what you learned?&lt;br&gt;- What do you think about the scale of the issue?&lt;br&gt;- Were people aware of the size of the budget challenge?&lt;br&gt;- What do you think about what KCC has done so far? Did you know? Have you noticed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 mins</td>
<td><strong>9. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: addressing the strategic challenge faced by KCC</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Objective:</strong> To understand participants’ views on 4 strategic options</td>
<td><strong>Facilitator explains:</strong> KCC wants to understand your views on the different ways in which savings could be made. I’d like us to look at each in turn:&lt;br&gt;- Option 1: KCC provides fewer universal services to all residents&lt;br&gt;- Option 2: KCC only provides services to those most in need regardless of income (i.e. focus services to those most in need. The less needy may not get the same level of service they have been used to)&lt;br&gt;- Option 3: KCC means tests access to services so that people with the lowest income receive most service (e.g. free or reduced costs for services. The means testing mechanism would be applied so that service provision would be limited to those who can’t afford to pay for it themselves)&lt;br&gt;- Option 4: KCC encourages communities to take responsibility for undertaking some services in their local neighbourhood, rather than relying on publicly funded services&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Group discusses each in turn:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- What impact would these options have on themselves, their family, the wider community?&lt;br&gt;- Which option has the greatest appeal and why?&lt;br&gt;- Which option has the least appeal and why?&lt;br&gt;- Are there any alternative options/approaches that KCC should take that have not been suggested? If so, what and why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C

Agenda used for the main events (4 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 20 mins | 10. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Residents’ contribution towards services  
Objective: To understand participants’ views on the best way of contributing towards KCC services  
- What do they feel is the best way to pay for local public services?  
- On balance would they rather pay more Council Tax in order to protect services or pay the same/less tax and see further reductions in services?  
- Or would they prefer to pay more individual charges for services provided by KCC as and when they use them?  
- What impact would these two alternatives have on themselves, their family, the wider community? | Handout explaining the 3 ways of raising income to fund public services, including examples  
(1. Taxation, 2. Service users pay/contribute, 3. Penalties/fines for service abusers) |
| 5 mins | 11. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Preparation of Plenary feedback  
Objective: Facilitator to help the group prepare feedback during plenary session. Feedback structured on flipchart to cover:  
- The preferred strategic option around service delivery (if there is not a single preference then make 1 key point from their discussion)  
- The preferred way of funding for KCC services (if there is not a single preference then a key point from their discussion)  
Feedback should take 2 minutes max per table. The moderator will feedback | Flipcharts |
| 10 mins | 12. PLENARY: Feedback session  
- Moderator from each group feedback the preferred strategic option around service delivery (if there is not a single preference then make 1 key point from their discussion)  
- Also feedback the preferred way of funding for KCC services (if there is not a single preference then a key point from their discussion) | Flipcharts |
| 10 mins | 13. PLENARY: Voting buttons  
Repeat earlier questions. Show answers for each question comparing the first and second time these were answered.  
- Final Q&A | Voting buttons for every participant, questions projected onto screen. Answers shown on screen |
| 10 mins | 14. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Thanks and close  
- Facilitator thanks group for their hard work and feedback  
- Participants to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget  
- Ask participants to complete evaluation questionnaire  
- Distribute £50 incentives and ask for signature of receipt | Postcards  
Evaluation questionnaires  
Incentive receipt forms |
## Appendix D

**Agenda used for the youth events (1 of 4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Requirements/stimulus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 mins</td>
<td>1. Arrival and registration (n/a for school event)</td>
<td>Tea, coffee and sandwich buffet (not school event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Refreshments available</td>
<td>Room set up: for YP event two round tables, 9 seats to a table. Front table with screen and data projector. Large TV/speaker for showing film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School event – depends on numbers of pupils attending and room layout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Extra chairs for observers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. PLENARY: Welcome and thanks for attending from MMRI Research</td>
<td>Presentation projected – a few slides outlining these points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What today is about: to have input from public on your views on how KCC should spend its money for 2017/18 and beyond, and to shape important decisions KCC need to make about the services you value most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We are running five events and there is also an online survey where Kent residents can share their views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Explain who is in the room and why they are all here – here to listen only (not get involved)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Role of facilitators</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Role of observers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ground rules</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Toilets, health and safety regulations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobiles off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Timings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>3. TABLE DISCUSSION: Initial discussion and spontaneous priorities</td>
<td>Flipcharts / notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> To warm up the groups and to gain an overview of people’s feelings about living in Kent, their experience/knowledge of KCC services and their expectations about the future of public services <strong>FACILITATED DISCUSSION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Agenda used for the youth events (2 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 mins</th>
<th>4. PLENARY: Voting buttons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 questions asked about frequency of use of services; perceived value of KCC services; perceived quality of KCC services; services which should be protected most and least.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voting buttons for every participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questions projected onto screen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20 mins</th>
<th>5. PLENARY, then TABLE DISCUSSION: Show short 1 minute video about the budget challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce video: the purpose of it is to be a ‘hook’ to capture people’s attention and encourage them to take part in the consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. TABLE DISCUSSION: Responses to video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective: To get feedback on the video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Did the video capture your attention?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Would the video have encouraged you to go on KCC’s website to find out more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is it the right length?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have you ever clicked on a video like this before? If so what and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where would you expect to see this video – what channels?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How could KCC encourage people to watch the video in the first place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How can KCC engage people more to take part in the budget consultation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video on big screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flipchart/notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D

Agenda used for the youth events (3 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 20 mins | 7. **PLENARY**: Presentation scene setting the budget challenge  
*Objective: To provide the necessary background information to give scope for a meaningful discussion on the budget.*  
Presentation from Kyle Taylor – scene setting (15 mins)  
- Background to Kent including county and district functions  
- National picture  
- Current KCC budget and funding  
- How council tax works  
- Future fiscal outlook including spending demands and funding projections  
- 2017/18 budget proposals  
- Consultation and next steps  
Plenary Q&A opportunity (5 mins) | Presentation projected |
| 2 mins | 8. **TABLE DISCUSSIONS**: Reaction to learning  
*Objective: To gather reaction to information*  
**FACILITATED DISCUSSION:**  
- What was most surprising about what you learned?  
- What do you think about the scale of the issue?  
- Were people aware of the size of the budget challenge? | Flipchart / notes |
| 20 mins | 9. **TABLE DISCUSSIONS**: addressing the strategic challenge faced by KCC  
*Objective: To understand participants’ views on 4 strategic options*  
Facilitator explains: KCC wants to understand your views on the different ways in which savings could be made. I’d like us to look at each in turn:  
- Option 1: KCC provides fewer universal services to all residents  
- Option 2: KCC only provides services to those most in need regardless of income (i.e. focus services to those most in need. The less needy may not get the same level of service they have been used to)  
- Option 3: KCC means tests access to services so that people with the lowest income receive most service (*e.g.* free or reduced costs for services. *The means testing mechanism would be applied so that service provision would be limited to those who can’t afford to pay for it themselves*)  
- Option 4: KCC encourages communities to take responsibility for undertaking some services in their local neighbourhood, rather than relying on publicly funded services | Handout showing all 4 options |
### Agenda used for the youth events (4 of 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5 mins | 10. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Preparation of Plenary feedback | Objective: Facilitator to help the group prepare to feedback during plenary session. Feedback structured on flipchart to cover:  
- The best way of engaging with/reaching people so they take part in future budget consultations for KCC  
- The preferred strategic option around service delivery (if there is not a single preference then make 1 key point from their discussion)  
Feedback should take 2-3 minutes per table.  
The moderator will feedback the key points from the group |
| 10 mins | 11. PLENARY: Feedback session | Moderator from each group feedback |
| 10 mins | 12. PLENARY: Voting buttons | Repeat earlier questions.
Show answers for each question comparing the first and second time these were answered.
- Final Q&A |
| 5 mins | 13. TABLE DISCUSSIONS: Thanks and close |  
- Facilitator thanks group for their hard work and feedback  
- Participants to complete a postcard to the Council Leader detailing one single recommendation when considering the budget  
- Ask participants to complete evaluation questionnaire  
- Distribute incentives if applicable and ask for signature of receipt  
THANK PARTICIPANTS AND CLOSE |

Flipcharts | Postcards  
Evaluation questionnaires  
Incentive receipt forms (not school pupils) |
Appendix E
The six polling questions asked.

How often do you or a member of your household use a service provided by Kent County Council?

A. Daily
B. Weekly or more often
C. Fortnightly
D. Monthly
E. Less often
F. Don’t know

What do you think about the quality of Kent County Council services?

A. Very high quality
B. Good quality
C. Sufficient quality
D. Poor quality
E. Very poor quality
F. Don’t know

To what extent do you agree or disagree that Kent County Council provides value for money for its services?

A. Strongly agree
B. Slightly agree
C. Neither agree nor disagree
D. Slightly disagree
E. Strongly disagree
F. Don’t know

Which of the following would you most like to see with regard to Council Tax?

A. Pay substantially less Council Tax
B. Pay marginally less Council Tax
C. Pay the same Council Tax
D. Pay marginally more Council Tax
E. Pay substantially more Council Tax
F. Don’t know

Kent County Council has to make spending reductions, which ONE of the following areas should be protected?

A. Social care for elderly & vulnerable adults
B. Social care services for children
C. Prevention & welfare services
D. School support
E. Highways
F. Public transport
G. Environmental services (waste, countryside etc.)
H. Libraries
I. Management & support (back office)

And which ONE should be the least protected?

A. Social care for elderly & vulnerable adults
B. Social care services for children
C. Prevention & welfare services
D. School support
E. Highways
F. Public transport
G. Environmental services (waste, countryside etc.)
H. Libraries
I. Management & support (back office)
Appendix F
The strategic option examples used by moderators (1 of 2)

Option 1: KCC provides fewer universal services to all residents:
- Libraries - open for shorter hours/fewer libraries
- Highways maintenance - safety critical only, gritting - only grit in the worst weather conditions, street lights - turned off for certain hours
- Trading standards
- Waste disposal facilities – restrict opening times
- Children’s centres – provide less centres/reduced opening hours
- Subsidised buses – reduce/cease some routes

Option 2: KCC only provides services to those most in need regardless of income (i.e. focus services to those most in need. The less needy may not get the same level of service they have been used to):
- Social care (Children, Adults with learning disabilities/Mental health, Older people)
- Young Persons Travel Pass/ 16+ travel card - e.g. limit to certain types of study
- Children’s centres – limit access to families with specific issues e.g. disabled children
- Public Health visiting services - currently universal to all new parents
- SEN Transport – limit access to full transport only to those who need specially adapted vehicles, other SEN children would receive some support but not free taxi service (would require legislation)
Appendix F
The strategic option examples used by moderators (2 of 2)

Option 3: KCC means tests access to services so that people with the lowest income receive most service (e.g. free or reduced costs for services. The means testing mechanism would be applied so that service provision would be limited to those who can’t afford to pay for it themselves):

- Young Persons Travel Pass/ 16+ travel card e.g. limit the card only to poorest families
- Adults with Learning Disabilities (wealthier families make a greater contribution as they already do for Older People services, social care assessment fees)
- Children’s centres
- Concessionary bus fares – limit access only to poorest pensioners (would require legislation but still fits the principle of income based rationing)
- Mainstream home to school transport - limit access to the poorest families i.e. families who chose to live in wealthier locations with poor access to schools should pay to get children to school (this would also require legislation)

Option 4: KCC encourages communities to take responsibility for undertaking some services in their local neighbourhood, rather than relying on publicly funded services:

- Community Wardens
- Gritting
- Soft Landscaping
- Community drop in centres (meals for elderly etc.)
- Home to School Transport (Lift sharing)
Appendix G
The revenue options used by moderators

Taxation:
- Council Tax
- Business Rates
- A share of other forms of tax such as: Income Tax and VAT are distributed to local government in the form of central government grants.

Service users pay/contribute more to the cost of services:
- Social care contributions
- Congestion charges/tolls
- Young Persons Travel Pass
- Adult Education
- Families make a contribution towards the cost of Children in Care (or in expensive Special Educational Needs provision if Looked after Children is too controversial.)

Penalties/fines for service abusers:
- Traffic Violations- Penalties for stopping in Yellow Box Junctions and running red lights
- Waste- Fines for putting the wrong waste in the wrong bins.
- Proceeds from prosecution to pay for public protection services e.g. trading standards/ community safety
- Planning- charge more for inappropriate planning requests i.e. those which get rejected
Prepared by MMRI

For further information please contact:

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