

Draft Budget Proposals 2026-27

Analysis of stakeholder consultation

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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Introduction

The Council delivers around 200 services – from keeping our streets clean and maintaining open spaces to providing vital services such as adult and children’s social care and homeless prevention. Each year, we are legally required to set a balanced budget, ensuring that the money we spend does not exceed the income we receive from government grants, Council Tax, business rates, and charges for services we provide.

Between now and 2030, we expect to lose around £82 million in Government funding due to the Government’s Fair Funding Review, which proposes changes to the way each council’s grant funding is calculated in the future. On top of the funding we expect to lose from government, costs of delivering our services continues to go up from growing need and rising inflation. If the government’s position doesn’t change it will mean that we will need to find around £130 million in savings over the next four years.

This year’s budget has been developed to support the priorities set out in our Council Plan 2023–2027, creating a Greener, Safer, and Fairer borough for all residents. However, the national financial situation continues to place significant pressure on local government finances. We must therefore scrutinise all areas of spending and ensure the sustainability of our services, with a focus on protecting essential services, operating efficiently, and continuing to support our most vulnerable residents.

We therefore sought resident and stakeholders' views. Feedback gathered will help shape our financial priorities and ensure we continue to deliver value for money for residents, businesses, and communities across Kensington and Chelsea.

The proposals were split between the revenue and capital budgets. The revenue budget refers to day-to-day expenditure and income for the Council, such as service delivery and staff costs, whereas capital budgets refer to expenditure used to acquire or improve assets for the long-term functionality of the Council.

All savings and growth proposals have been assessed through an Equalities Impact Assessment, which considers the potential effects on residents and communities to ensure our approach remains fair and inclusive.



Introduction

Consultation methodology

An online survey was promoted via various avenues, including the Council's Consultation and Engagement Hub, social media and e-newsletters. In total, 433 responded to the survey.

In addition, 97 residents from our Citizens' Panel attended an event to feedback their views on future budget priorities and feedback was also received at 'The Council Comes to You' events that took place during the consultation period. A summary of these activities is also included in this report.

Analysis approach and demographic differences

The results in this report show overall percentages for each survey question.

A section of the report highlights demographic differences. Where results are broken down, the results show breakdowns based on a range of demographic factors (sex, age and whether the respondent has a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more). Unfortunately, there isn't enough data to breakdown results by other demographic factors (i.e. there are less than 30 respondents with particular demographic characteristics).

Commentary is only included below where there is a difference of support of at least five per cent between characteristics.

A form of AI called large language models (LLM) was used to assist theming comments made in the survey. All comments received have been read by a Council officer who also reviewed and amended themes where needed. The LLM is accessed through Azure Open AI - no data is shared with external entities and no data is used for future training of large language models (LLM)

Appendix

An appendix document is also available on request, containing data tables and all comments made by respondents to the survey.

Acknowledgements

The Council would like to thank all residents and stakeholders who took the time to provide feedback.



Results at a glance

Summary of stakeholder survey findings and events



Results at a glance

Stakeholder Survey

Below is a summary of feedback from the stakeholder survey which was responded to by 433 stakeholders.

Financial context

- The majority of respondents (84 per cent) indicated they understood why the Council are having to look at reducing services, making savings and increasing fees and taxes.

Council Tax proposals

Proposed increase in Council Tax

- Almost half (48 per cent) agreed with the proposed five per cent increase to Council Tax. However, a third (33 per cent) disagreed.
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *opposition to Council Tax increase due to affordability and fairness concerns*

Second home premium

- Six in ten (60 per cent) agreed with the proposed 100 per cent Council Tax premium for people with second homes in the borough. However, over a quarter (26 per cent) disagreed with this proposal.
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *opposition to 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes*

Revenue growth proposals

Maintaining existing service levels

- Almost half (47 per cent) supported, the growth proposals put forward to maintain existing service levels.
- However, over a quarter (29 per cent) opposed the proposals. The most common theme in relation to opposition was *concerns about temporary accommodation spending, management and welfare support*.

Providing new or better services

- Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) supported the growth proposals put forward to provide new or better services.
- However, 15 per cent opposed the proposals. The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *environmental and street improvements with community involvement and cost efficiency*.



Results at a glance

Revenue savings proposals

Staffing

- Almost three-quarters (74 per cent) supported savings proposals put forward related to changes to staff levels and conditions. The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *support for staffing cost reduction measures and efficiency improvements*.

Simplifying and improving processes

- Over three-quarters (76 per cent) supported the savings proposals put forward to simplify and improve processes. The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *Digital transformation and service quality*.

Level and range of services

- Over half (54 per cent) supported the savings proposals put forward to review services.
- However, over a fifth (21 per cent) opposed the proposals. The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *protecting vulnerable groups*.

Changing service models

- Almost three-quarters (73 per cent) supported the savings proposals put forward to change service models to meet need earlier or in new ways to avoid higher costs later
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *support for housing, early intervention, and vulnerable residents with safeguards and transparency*

Reviewing our property portfolio

- More than nine in ten (91 per cent) supported the savings proposals put forward to review our property portfolio.
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *Council property and energy efficiency optimisation*

Income generation

- Almost three-quarters (71 per cent) supported the savings proposals put forward related to income generation.
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *opposition to fee and tax increases*

Fees and charges

- Over half (59 per cent) supported the proposals put forward to raise fees and charges.
- However, 13 per cent opposed the proposals. The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *opposition to fee and tax increases*



Results at a glance

Alternative funding

- Over two-thirds (67 per cent) supported the savings proposals put forward to make use of alternative funding streams.
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *alternative funding and parking enforcement with concerns on fairness and policy impact*

Capital investment proposals

- Over half (55 per cent) supported the capital programme proposals put forward.
- However, 16 per cent opposed the proposals.
- The most common theme in comments made was in relation to *concerns and opposition to specific capital projects and increased spending*

Savings and investment

Investment ideas

- The most common theme made in relation to areas the Council should invest more in related to *enhance community safety and enforcement and increase street cleanliness, environmental maintenance, and green space enhancement*

Further savings

- More than seven in ten (71 per cent) felt that the Council should look at finding more efficiency savings to make further savings.
- Almost as many (69 per cent) felt the Council should generate more commercial income.

Equality implications

- When asked to detail anything the Council should be aware of in terms of how the proposed budget might impact adversely on people and how to reduce the impact, the most common theme was *protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and promoting equality*.
- If the impact of the changes to funding is not as severe, almost two-thirds (65 per cent) supported, the suggested approach of limiting the direct impact on vulnerable residents.



Results at a glance

Citizens' Panel event

Summary of feedback from the event attended by 97 residents.

Priorities: What Success Looks Like (Next 5–10 Years)

Panel members want Kensington and Chelsea to be a safe, inclusive borough with high-quality, accessible services. They emphasise prioritising social care, housing, and community safety, especially for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children, and those living in poverty. Education, youth services, libraries, green spaces, and cultural activities are seen as essential for community wellbeing.

Concerns include wasteful spending, poor contractor performance, disruption from roadworks, cuts to youth services and libraries, housing inefficiencies, and fears that vulnerable residents may be excluded. Panel members call for fair resource distribution, stronger oversight, and collaboration with neighbouring councils.

Digitalisation:

Panel members are cautiously supportive of greater digitalisation, recognising its potential to save money, improve efficiency, and modernise services. Many welcome online forms, digital communications, and even AI, provided these tools enhance rather than reduce service quality. Digital systems are seen as faster and more convenient, but residents stress that changes must not compromise fairness or human interaction.

Concerns focus on digital exclusion for older people, those with disabilities, and residents without access to technology. There are also worries about job losses, data security, and the reliability of automated systems. Trust in chatbots and AI is low, and Panel members call for a gradual, well-communicated transition.

Income Generation Ideas

Popular proposals included increasing Council Tax for second homes and empty properties, introducing tourist levies, and raising business rates for large companies. Many recommended monetising Council assets by renting out buildings, libraries, and parks for events, and hosting cultural festivals and ticketed attractions to draw visitors. There was strong support for partnerships with private organisations, sponsorships for major events, and benefactor schemes to fund libraries and cultural initiatives. Panel members also emphasised the need to secure additional funding from central government and the Mayor of London.



Results at a glance

Feedback from Your Council Comes to You events

'Your Council comes to you' events have been organised across the borough to give residents the opportunity to meet members of the Council Leadership Team and Senior Officers, ask questions and provide feedback. A programme of events covering the whole borough are taking place across the year. During the budget consultation period two events took place in Abingdon and Queen's Gate (attended by 45 residents) and Earl's Court (attended by 44 residents).

Feedback came from individual residents, a summary can be seen below:

- A resident recognised that we pay less Council Tax than most other boroughs so was happy to contribute if local services are maintained
- A resident indicated that they were happy to apply increased second homes tax, as they felt if you own a second home they can afford the extra tax
- A resident felt the Council needs to look at staffing on a top-down basis as often there are too many managers in major organisations
- A resident felt statutory services need to be the priority, making sure we help those who need it the most

Feedback from the Youth Council

Summary of feedback from the 16 Youth Council members attending the 15 December meeting of the Youth Council.

Council Services most valued

- Youth Council members value **schools, youth services and youth participation opportunities**. They identified schools, teachers, free education, youth clubs and opportunities for youth voice and participation as important.
- They also indicated they value services in relation to **community safety**. This included Police services, street wardens, CCTV, services in relation to serious youth violence and good lighting to increase safety.
- **Environmental services** were also important to Youth Council members. This included refuse collection, clean streets, parks and trees.
- Youth Council members also identified **Housing and housing services** as important. This included free social housing, caretakers and repairs.



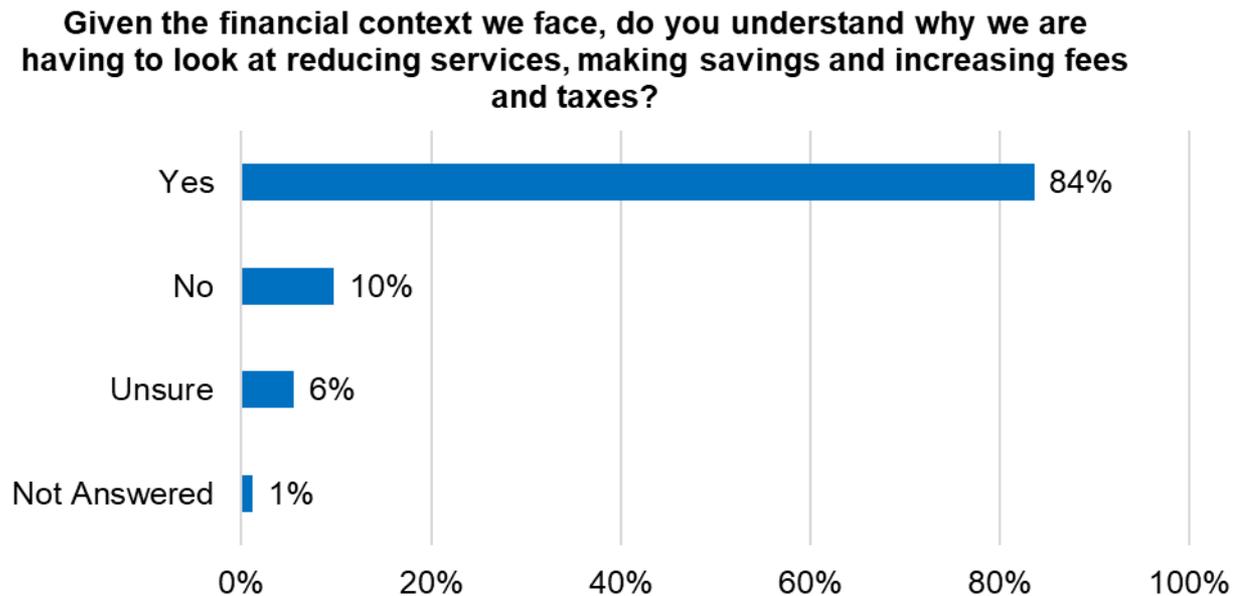
Analysis of survey responses



Financial context

Given the financial context the Council is facing, respondents were asked if they understood why we are having to look at reducing services, making savings and increasing fees and taxes..

- **The majority** of respondents (84 per cent) indicated they understood why the Council are having to look at reducing services, making savings and increasing fees and taxes.
- However, **one in ten** (10 per cent) **did not agree**.



Base: All respondents (433)



Financial context

Respondents that did not understand why the Council is having to look at reducing services, making savings and increasing fees and taxes were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and are summarised in the table below.

The most common themes were: **Opposition to tax increases and service cuts** (21 comments) and **efficiency and service delivery improvements** (18 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Opposition to tax increases and service cuts: Expresses concerns about the fairness and economic impact of tax increases and service reductions, opposing any increases in taxes or reductions in services to protect vulnerable groups and maintain community support.	21
Efficiency and service delivery improvements: Calls for improved efficiency in Council service delivery and internal operations, reduction of waste, and maintaining or enhancing service quality without unnecessary cuts. Focuses on optimising resource use to achieve better outcomes for the community.	18
Concerns about budget impacts, uncertainties, and comparisons: Highlights worries and uncertainties regarding Council Tax increases, Council reserves, enforcement of anti-social behaviour policies, and comparisons with tax levels of other councils. Reflects community apprehensions about financial management and policy effectiveness.	13
Transparency, accountability, and fairness in Council budgeting: Emphasises the need for clear, detailed information on Council spending and budget allocations, ensuring transparency and accountability. Highlights the importance of fairness in tax increases and budget management, targeting tax policies that do not disproportionately impact vulnerable groups, and building trust through informed understanding of government funding cuts and Council financial decisions.	12



Financial context – Comment examples

Opposition to tax increases and service cuts:

“No, I do not believe a tax increase is justified. Spending on construction projects could be significantly reduced, given the large amounts invested in recent years across all local areas. In addition, some services such as paying external agents to monitor bin collection times are far from essential and should not be prioritised.”

“It is already almost impossible for most low income households and small businesses to make ends meet. I myself have had to dispose/sell almost everything of any value I own just to keep my roof over my head.”

“People chose to live here due to level of service, cutting it and rising the taxes makes it less fair. We pay crazy money to live here and prices of housing won't go fairer so why service will go down? Doesn't make sense.”

Concerns about budget impacts, uncertainties, and comparisons:

“It appears that the council has been wasting money in non essential projects regardless of the government funding.”

Efficiency and service delivery improvements:

“Do not see logic in both raising taxes and reducing services. Pick one or reduce and gain internal efficiencies and use supplier tenders more actively. Do not passively renew contracts.”

“It is too easy to increase fees and taxes, You should work to reduce and rationalise costs.”

“I understand why services need to be reduced and fees increased, however, it is not clear to me how the money is currently spent and where. Security is a MUST and shouldn't suffer any cuts. Additional services and or benefits, should be reviewed and be the first thing to suffer cuts.”

Transparency, accountability, and fairness in Council budgeting:

“It's not clear how the £82.25m Government funding reduction has been arrived at.”



Revenue Growth Proposals

There are areas that require additional investment to keep up with rising demand and areas where we want to continue to invest to improve the local area. Where we are proposing to increase spend in any areas we have split this into whether it is additional spend to maintain existing service levels or whether it is to improve service areas.

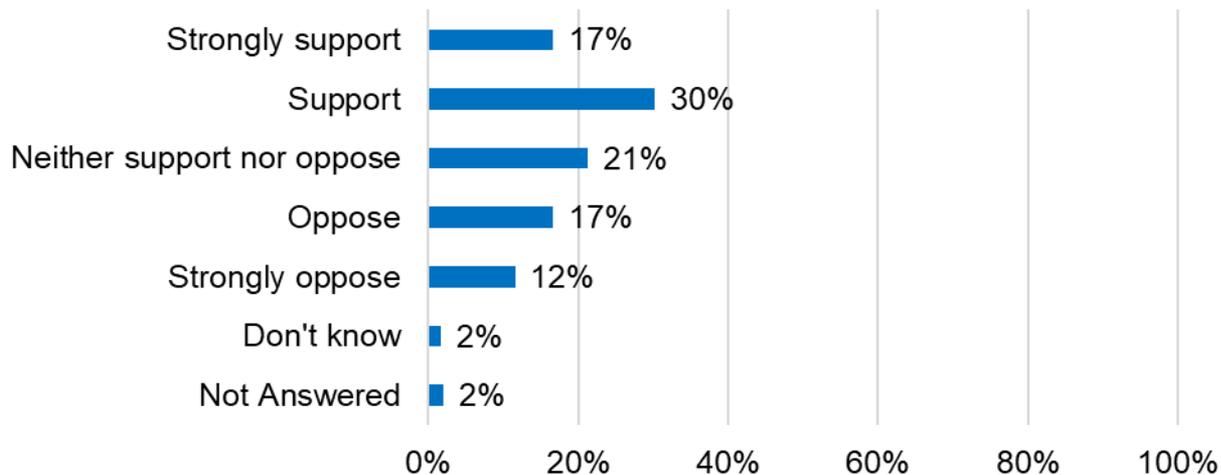


Maintaining existing services

Respondents were asked about proposals that require additional investment to keep up with rising demand and areas where we want to invest to improve the local area. The proposals included spend of £8.1 million to maintain existing services in 2026/27. This included: Adult Social Care (£1.5m extra), Children's Services (£1m extra) and Temporary Accommodation (£5m extra).

- **Almost half** (47 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the growth proposals put forward to maintain existing service levels. This included **17 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- **Over a quarter** (29 per cent) **opposed**, to some extent, the proposals. This included **12 per cent** that **strongly opposed the proposals**.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the growth proposals put forward to maintain existing service levels?



Base: All respondents (433)



Maintaining existing services

Respondents that did not support the proposals to maintain existing service levels were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and themes with 26 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Concerns about temporary accommodation spending, management, and welfare support** (75 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Concerns about temporary accommodation spending, management, and welfare support: Widespread concern about high costs, inefficiency, lack of transparency, and justification of temporary accommodation spending, coupled with opposition to increased welfare and migrant support spending, with calls for cost reviews, alternative solutions, regulation, and prioritisation of UK citizens.	75
Concerns about fairness, service abuse, and Central Government funding responsibility: Issues raised about fairness in funding allocation, perceived abuse of social services, and belief that central government should bear responsibility for funding certain services to ensure equity and avoid duplication.	31
Opposition to Council Tax increases and advocacy for efficiency savings and cost control: Strong opposition to council tax increases with advocacy for efficiency savings, cost reductions, waste elimination, and use of technology to control spending rather than expanding budgets or raising taxes.	31
Support for maintaining and enhancing essential Social Services and Public Safety: Strong support exists for maintaining and increasing investment in key social services including children's services, adult social care, environmental health, public safety, and community environmental amenities, emphasising effectiveness, value for money, and community well-being.	28
Demand for transparency, accountability, clear budget justification, and understanding: Criticism focuses on lack of transparency, clear prioritisation, measurable outcomes, detailed cost justifications, and general budget understanding, leading to reliance on councillors and concerns about unallocated funds and service responsibility.	26



Maintaining existing services – Comment examples

Concerns about Temporary Accommodation spending, management, and welfare support:

“I am opposed to spending so much on temporary accommodation. We are a unique borough in central London. Temporary accommodation should be provided elsewhere in cheaper locations.”

“I don’t know who gets temporary accommodation so can’t support this expenditure at the moment.”

“I support the ambition to maintain existing service levels but I oppose spending £5m on temporary accommodation. If this figure is due to real estate costs within the borough, alternative temporary accommodation should be sourced elsewhere where costs are lower.”

Opposition to Council Tax increases and advocacy for efficiency savings and cost control:

“The Council Tax is too high as it is. We should live within our means. Spending should be cut back across the board.”



Concerns about fairness, service abuse, and Central Government funding responsibility:

“Central Government is already paying too much for welfare and related items. The borough should spend the minimum amount that is consistent with its legal obligations.”

“Service levels have always been exceptional at K&C but there are also a great many people ready to exploit them in the borough and I’d like to see measures to address this. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme is completely unfair to those of us who work hard to pay our full Council Tax.”

“I have a flat as a second home for work reasons and having to pay a premium would make this unaffordable. I would either have to sell the flat or rent it out and travel into work.”

Support for maintaining and enhancing essential Social Services and Public Safety:

“Why is the lion share of the extra spending going to temporary accommodation? I agree with the other 2 areas of spending on adult social care and children services.”



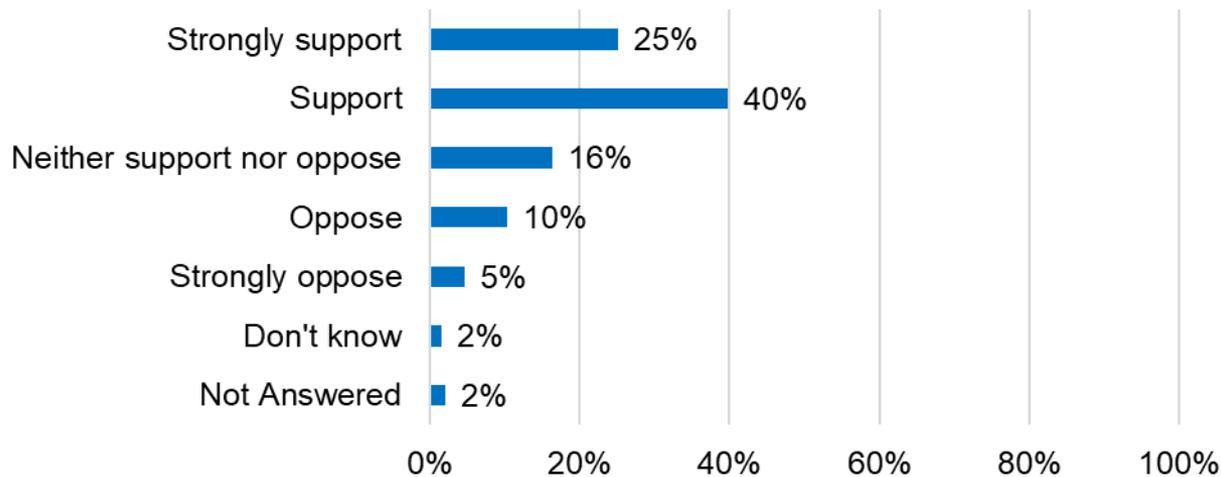
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Providing new or better services

Respondents were asked about proposals to provide new or better services. The proposals included spend of £1.6 million to provide new or better service in 2026/27. This included: Improving our streets (£1m extra), maintaining new trees (£88k extra), maintaining Cremorne Wharf Park (£100k extra) and protecting against cyber and other security threats (£175k extra).

- **Almost two-thirds** (65 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the growth proposals put forward to provide new or better services. This included **25 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- A total of **15 per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the growth proposals put forward to provide new or better services?



Base: All respondents (433)



Providing new or better services

Respondents that did not support the proposals to provide new or better services were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and themes with 23 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was, **environmental and street improvements with community involvement and cost efficiency** (53 comments) .

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Environmental and street improvements with community involvement and cost efficiency: Support for spending on street cleaning, tree planting, parks, and road improvements that enhance the local environment and economy, emphasising cost-effectiveness, community involvement, and exploring alternative funding such as charitable donations and tax-efficient methods.	53
Opposition to Council Tax increases and demand for budget cuts and efficiency: Strong opposition to Council Tax increases and overall budget growth due to financial burdens on residents, especially those on fixed incomes, with calls for budget cuts, leaner operations, and better resource use.	32
Cyber security and public safety prioritisation: Importance of cyber security investment to protect the Council and community, balanced with prioritising street safety, crime prevention, and public safety measures over aesthetic or discretionary spending.	31
Maintaining existing services and fair prioritisation of spending: Emphasis on maintaining existing services, housing repairs, and core public safety measures, prioritising essential services and vulnerable residents over discretionary projects like parks and street beautification to ensure fairness in allocation.	24
Transparency, justification, and detailed information in spending: Calls for clearer evidence, measurable outcomes, cost-benefit analysis, and detailed information about budget proposals including financial impacts, project specifics, service quality, and delivery effectiveness to build trust and understanding.	23



Providing new or better services – Comment examples

Environmental and street improvements with community involvement and cost efficiency:

“I am always supportive of more funding for parks and trees as it has a clear noticeable improvement to everyone's day to day.”

“I support the overall proposal but wonder if it is possible to trim some of the street improvement costs e.g. by changing contractors.”

“Please consider more tree planting and green space improvement for those who cannot access private squares not just maintaining trees.”

“Streets could manage with maintenance rather than improvement, half the budget. Trees can be maintained at longer intervals, half the budget. Cremorne Wharf Park could be maintained at longer intervals, half the budget.”

Cyber Security and Public Safety Prioritisation:

“Cyber security yes - it is very needed.”

Opposition to Council Tax increases and demand for budget cuts and efficiency:

“I don't think we should be increasing council tax for all in order to do some of improvements above (like roads and trees) in the next few years. People are crunched with day to day inflation and cost of living - focus on steady state for now.”

“The money is not spent effectively - far too much waste and bureaucracy; it is very inefficient.”

“Need to cut some extra services. Maintain current expenditure. Locals have more rights they are paying the revenue.”

Maintaining existing services and fair prioritisation of spending:

“RBKC Council would send absolutely the wrong message to Central Govt /the Mayor of London if it simply carries on with non essential proposals of this kind. It should concentrate rather on funding existing services and containing expenditure which is not essential.”



Revenue Savings Proposals

In order to set a balanced budget we are putting forward £22m of savings proposals in 2026/27 rising to £31m by 2029/30. Any savings not taken forward will need to be replaced with alternatives on a £ for £ basis as the Council is required to set a balanced budget.

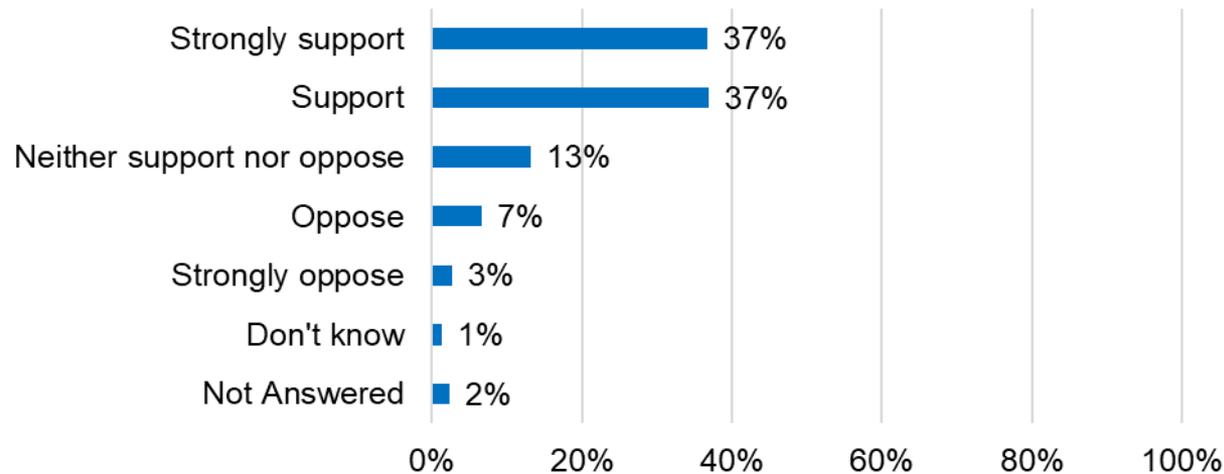


Staffing

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to changes to staff levels and conditions. The proposals included: Launching a voluntary redundancy scheme (saving £4.5m), restricting staff travel card use (saving £750k) and other salary controls (saving £500k)

- **Almost three-quarters** (74 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward related to changes to staff levels and conditions. This included **37 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **one in ten** (10 per cent) **opposed**, to some extent, the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals related to staffing that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



Staffing

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to staffing were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and themes with 16 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Support for staffing cost reduction measures and efficiency improvements** (57) comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Support for staffing cost reduction measures and efficiency improvements: This theme encompasses agreement with strategies such as voluntary redundancies, limiting staff travel card benefits, digitisation and automation for efficiency, salary controls, broader cost-cutting efforts emphasising transparency and fairness, and better staff utilisation and training to optimise resources.	57
Opposition to cuts in essential and vulnerable services: Strong disagreement with reductions affecting frontline, critical, and vulnerable services, highlighting concerns about fairness for low-wage workers, the need to maintain service quality, staff morale, and safeguarding vulnerable populations.	25
Demand for transparency, clarity, and accountability in budget proposals: Emphasises the need for detailed, transparent, and accountable budgeting processes, including clear explanations of specific proposals, thorough efficiency analysis before implementation, and addressing concerns about political motivations behind budget cuts.	22
Advocacy for alternative budget solutions and revenue sources: Support for alternative revenue sources like wealth taxes and commercial activities, opposition to redundancies, and calls for exploring diverse financial strategies to balance the budget without compromising essential services.	16

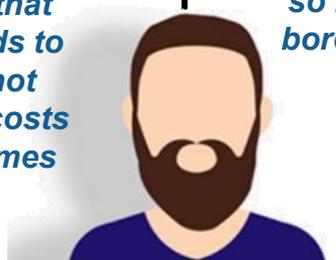


Staffing – Comment examples

Support for staffing cost reduction measures and efficiency improvements:

“I highly support both the voluntary reduction scheme and restricting staff travel card use.”

“I support these staffing-related savings. The Council needs to prioritise core functions and reduce spending tied up in low-value initiatives and niche projects that offer little benefit to most residents. Resource needs to be concentrated on services with broad impact, not discretionary or ideological programmes. Staffing costs should reflect those priorities, and voluntary schemes and tighter controls are reasonable steps.”



“The numbers of people employed is ridiculously high. The numbers must be reduced.”

Demand for transparency, clarity, and accountability in budget proposals:

“Not enough information provided. What would be the impact of this on services? What roles would be eliminated? Would some of them be outsourced?”

Opposition to cuts in essential and vulnerable services:

“Changing staffing to AI will just worsen things or make things more unsafe. You can vastly increase council tax on properties worth over £5 million and more for those over £10 million and even more for those over £20 million. Can also tax people whose properties are empty and who own more than one home. Vulnerable residents shouldn't suffer when so much money invested in empty houses in the borough (and for that matter houses shouldn't be left empty it's awful!).”

Advocacy for alternative budget solutions and revenue sources:

“Redundancy is expensive and does not utilise the skills that staff bring to the local area.

It would be better to use this money for training and upskilling.”



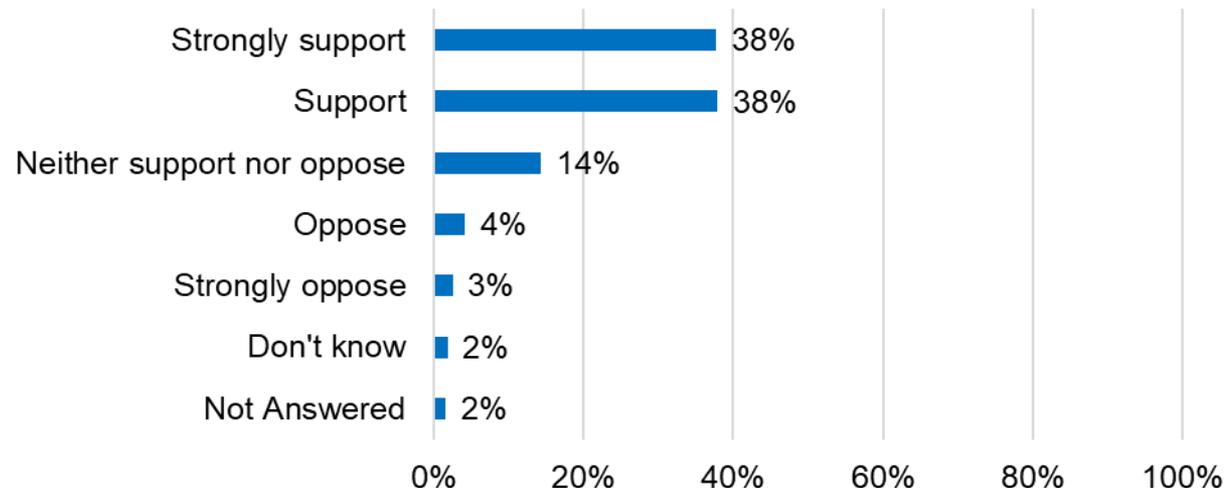
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Simplifying and improving processes

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to simplifying and improving processes. The proposals included: Introduction of more self service portals (saving £450k), Adult Social Care digital transformation (saving £265k) and new financial management and HR system (saving £150k)

- **Over three-quarters** (76 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward to simplify and improve processes. This included **38 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **seven per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals related to simplifying and improving our processes put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



Simplifying and improving processes

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to simplifying and improving processes were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and themes with four or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Digital transformation and service quality** (55 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Digital transformation and service quality: Support for digital transformation and process simplification to improve efficiency and reduce costs, with emphasis on maintaining quality customer service, reducing reliance on costly agency staff, and ensuring digital inclusion by providing human support to prevent exclusion of vulnerable groups and maintain accessibility and inclusivity. Some scepticism exists about the effectiveness and benefits of digital transformation, citing past challenges and doubts about cost savings and demand reduction.	55
Community responsibility and financial efficiency: Suggestions to encourage community responsibility, improve financial efficiency through cost-effective payment methods, and better utilisation or sale of Council assets to generate funds.	6
Information clarity and proposal understanding: Insufficient information and detail about the proposals leading to unclear understanding, conditional support, or reservations about certain aspects.	5
Outsourcing and user cost responsibility concerns: Opposition to outsourcing Council services due to concerns about increased costs and reduced quality, alongside views that users should bear responsibility for costs related to missed appointments.	4



Processes – Comment examples

Digital transformation and service quality:

“Fine if its works – it’s all about the implementation and the track record here isn’t great.”

“I support, as long as any service user access issues are fully addressed.”

“I’ve contacted Noise Nuisance out-of-hours online recently, and it’s a much better service than when I last contacted them by switchboard years ago so I strongly support your proposals here.”

“There are definitely more opportunities to save by implementing digitalisation and AI”

“Because some services (like the ones mentioned) and some residents require human interaction.”

“Alot of residents are not on line, nor have a computer. Don’t make technical things too difficult for those who find technical things hard to understand.”



Community responsibility and financial efficiency:

“I believe we need to stop being such a nanny state and we need to make our communities work at becoming a community, by contributing whether it's in keeping our streets clean or in not wasting resources by missing appointments. It's not only about benefits and rights. It's about responsibilities.”

“Why not sell off the site of the town hall . It's enormous and always empty when I visit .

The library is good to keep but it's far too big and a smaller building with some houses in prime area in keeping with the area built and sold off.”

Information clarity and proposal understanding:

“We don’t have enough info to analyse this. What is the current situation? How does it compare to best in class borough?”

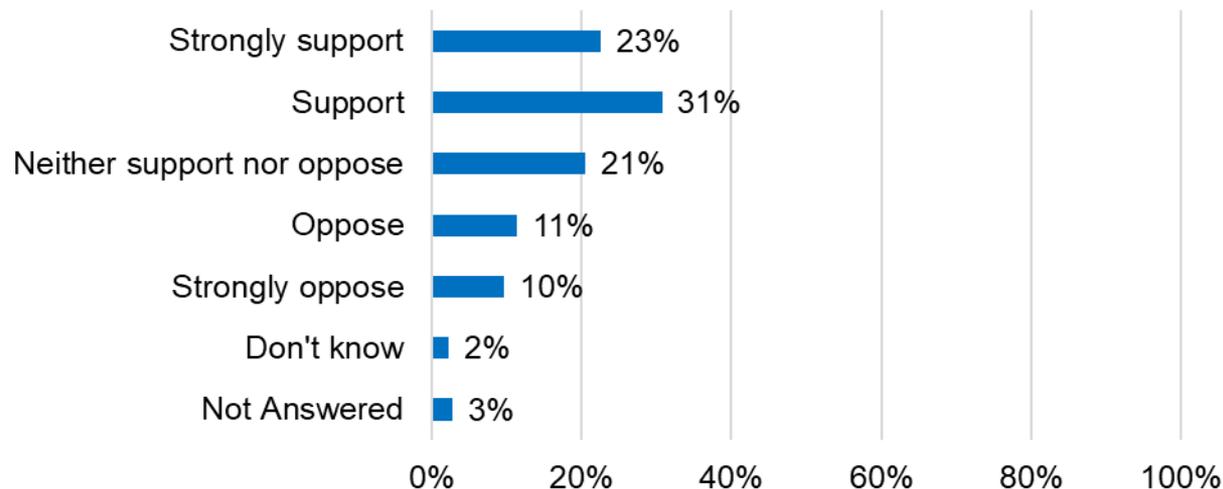


Level and range of services

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to reviewing the level and range of services. The proposals included: Reducing funding to the Voluntary and Community Sector (separate consultation taking place), opportunities to streamline services for young people (saving £100k), stopping delivery of victim advocacy service, redirecting some public health funding and acquisitions and development of properties to support service needs in temporary accommodation and adult's and children's supported living.

- **Over half** (54 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward to review the level and range of services. This included **23 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- **Over a fifth** (21 per cent) **opposed**, to some extent, the proposals. This included **10 per cent** that **strongly opposed the proposals**.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals relating to reviewing the level and range of services we provide that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



Level and range of services

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to reviewing the level and range of services were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and themes with 16 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Protect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups** (79 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Protect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups: Emphasise safeguarding services for vulnerable populations including children, youth, victims, and disadvantaged residents, with a focus on funding voluntary and community sectors and youth services to prevent future social inequalities and costs. Oppose cuts to public health funding, community wellbeing activities, and non-statutory services due to their long-term health benefits, cost savings, and importance for community life and cultural events.	79
Housing strategy and property asset management debate: Address mixed views on housing acquisition and development strategies, including calls for central funding, sustainable income approaches, and decisions on council property ownership versus leasing or selling assets to reduce costs.	19
Support efficient delivery of core statutory Council services: Prioritise Council efforts on core statutory services, improve efficiency, reduce non-essential programs, and explore alternative savings and revenue options to manage budget pressures without harming frontline services.	19
Demand clear information, community involvement, and robust alternatives: Require detailed information on budget proposals, increased community engagement, and ensure alternatives like signposting and community organisation support are available to mitigate service reductions.	16



Level and range of services – Comment examples

Protect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups:

“By reducing the VSA support this will most definitely have a negative impact on community projects.”

“Community wellbeing is essential as it prevents further expense where there has been neglect in this area.”

“Ensure you do a gap analysis with the services you intend to stop funding, to ensure you do not create gaps in provision. We are an obscenely rich borough, cutting services to the most disadvantaged is cruel and will create more social ills, e.g. lure of gang like to disadvantaged kids. Let’s not make more poverty, but re distribute better.”

Demand clear information, community involvement, and robust alternatives:

“This sounds worrying. Not clear what you really want to chop.”

Housing strategy and property asset management debate:

“I support these initiatives as they are nice to have as opposed to must have. If any real estate acquisitions and development in relation to temporary accommodation are required, please consider cheaper areas to keep acquisition costs down.”

“Youth clubs other services you provide don’t cut but look at your assets to sell. No need now for such a large town hall. Look and see if other council owned buildings can be sold off or amalgamated.”



Support efficient delivery of core statutory Council services:

“Youth and community services are urgently needed and must be protected and invested in as need increases, that is why it's vital to reduce spending on RBKC staff.”

“Obviously these are all items we generally support, but do not have the money and a bit of realism must prevail.”



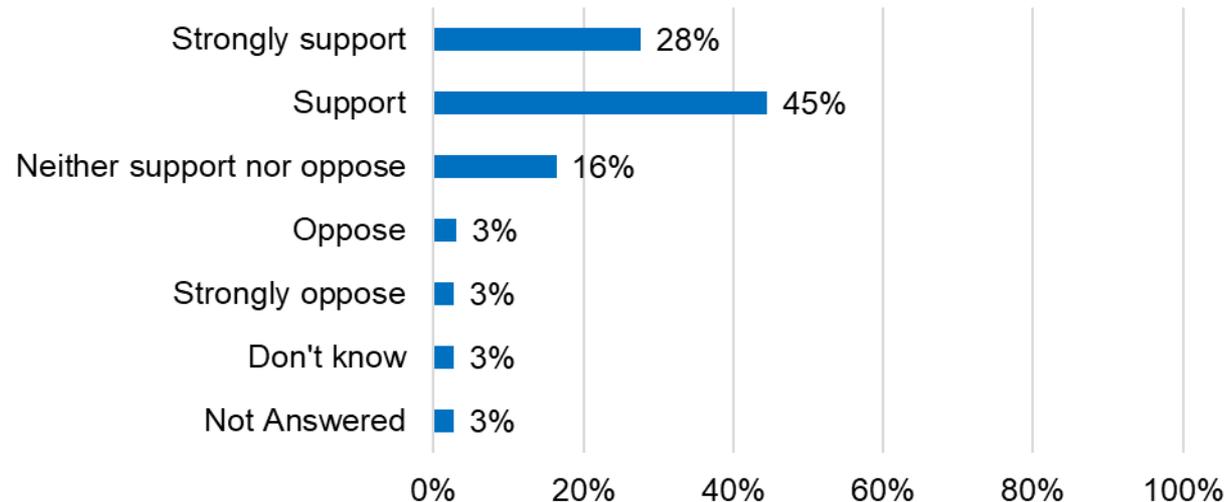
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Changing service models

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to changing service models to meet need earlier or in new ways to avoid higher costs later. The proposals included: Aligning housing and social care practices to help care leavers (saving £104k), helping adults live more independently for longer (saving £783k), reviewing pathways for people with disabilities (saving £540k) and saving on temporary accommodation costs (saving £1m)

- **Almost three-quarters** (73 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward to change service models to meet need earlier or in new ways to avoid higher costs later. This included **28 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- A total of **six per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals relating to trying to meet need earlier or in new ways that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



Changing service models

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to changing service models were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Support for housing, early intervention, and vulnerable residents with safeguards and transparency** (26 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Support for housing, early intervention, and vulnerable residents with safeguards and transparency: Agreement on investing in housing solutions, early intervention, and services supporting independence, contingent on careful implementation and safeguards to protect vulnerable residents. Includes concerns about proposal effectiveness, transparency, timing, and social impact, emphasising the need for clear communication and consultation to understand impacts on vulnerable groups.	26
Opposition to pension fund use and cuts to Housing and Social Support Services: Disagreement with using the Pension Fund for temporary accommodation and with cuts to housing and social support services due to risks to vulnerable populations and the fund's intended purpose.	11
Calls for alternative funding and prioritisation of local needs: Advocacy for alternative funding sources such as property taxes and prioritising support for local vulnerable citizens over other groups.	10
Need for more information: Reflects the lack of adequate information to form a clear opinion on the budget proposals.	6
Support for housing, early intervention, and vulnerable residents with safeguards and transparency: Agreement on investing in housing solutions, early intervention, and services supporting independence, contingent on careful implementation and safeguards	3



Changing service models – Comment examples

Support for housing, early intervention, and vulnerable residents with safeguards and transparency:

“Housing needs are not currently being met so it's hard to see how reducing funding for these area will pan out.”

“I agree with the notion of helping the elderly to live more independently. We need more developments for the elderly, offering sheltered independent accommodation, but with easy access to communal services.”

“I am ok with the £1m saving in buying properties but all the other savings are signs that the council does not care about the most vulnerable in society.”

“I support these proposals. Shifting to service models that reduce long-term dependency and avoid higher future costs is sensible. Supporting people to live more independently, improving transition pathways and reducing expensive temporary accommodation pressures all help control structural costs. These approaches are practical, targeted and reduce the need for broader tax rises or continued expansion of high-cost services.”



Opposition to pension fund use and cuts to Housing and Social Support Services:

“I question whether RBKC Pension Fund should be used for this purpose even if it is extremely well funded. There may, on the other hand, be plenty of scope to cease pension contributions for the time being.”

“I support most of the above apart from the last section concerning TA and the use of RBKC Pension Fund investment. Maybe I don't know enough about the LG pension pots etc. but if there is a risk in using the LGP for this then I strongly oppose it as investments can obviously go up and down and I wouldn't like to see a situation where your pension pot is compromised. However if there is no risk to the above I would support it.”

Calls for alternative funding and prioritisation of local needs:

“See my earlier comment about applying the 100% premium to council tax for second homes being much preferable to cutting important services for the vulnerable.”

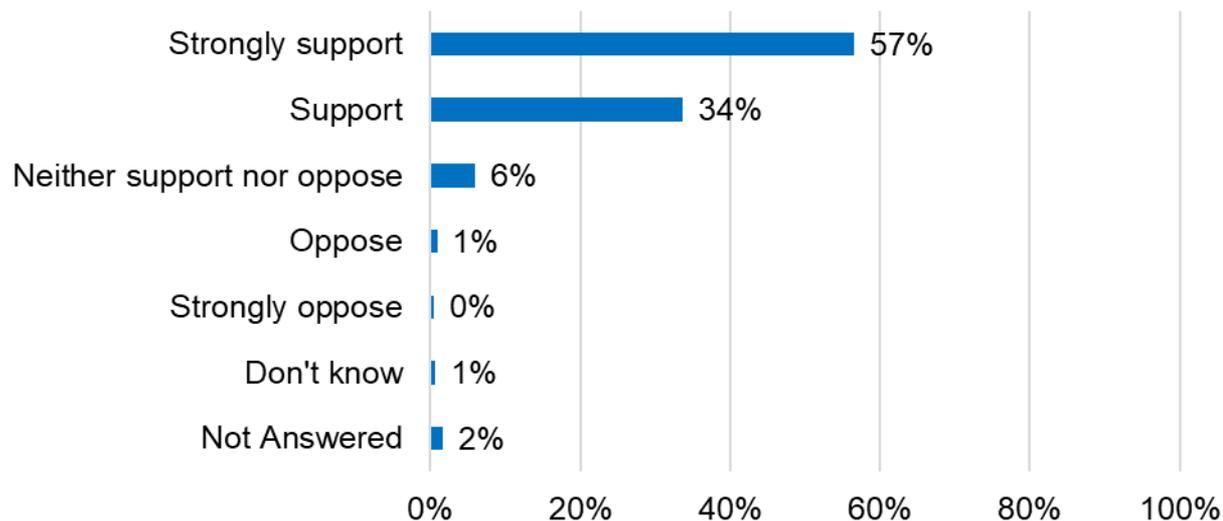


Reviewing our property portfolio

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to reviewing our property portfolio, optimising use of our buildings and minimising costs. The proposals included: Making better and more efficient use of office space (saving over £1m) and saving over £800k through a more efficient contract to maintain our buildings and replacing lighting in the Town Hall.

- **More than nine in ten** (91 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward to review our property portfolio, optimising use of our buildings and minimising costs. This included **57 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- Just **one per cent opposed** the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals relating to reviewing our property portfolio that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



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Reviewing our property portfolio

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to reviewing our property portfolio were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Council property and energy efficiency optimisation** (30 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Council property and energy efficiency optimisation: Support for reviewing and optimising the Council's property portfolio through better office space use, energy-efficient upgrades, improved maintenance contracts, flexible working arrangements, and calls for clearer information and more creative, effective energy solutions beyond current proposals.	30
Concerns about inefficiency, waste, and poor project planning: Issues raised include inefficient office space use, wasteful practices, scepticism about cost-effectiveness, poor contractor management, and immature budgeting and planning for projects.	13



Reviewing our property portfolio – Comment examples

Council property and energy efficiency optimisation:

“As previously mentioned there should be substantial opportunities for savings on Council properties given the appetite council employees have for flexible working, and the voluntary redundancy packages proposed.”

“Change the bulbs. Why wasn't this done ages ago. Everybody knows you can save money through lighting costs. What about other green and cost savings in all your buildings.”

“I support these proposals. Maximising the use of Council buildings and driving down running costs is basic financial discipline. More efficient office space, better maintenance contracts without reducing core services for the majority. These measures should be prioritised ahead of any additional charges to tax paying residents.”

“Excellent proposals. Please investigate if possible to do on a larger scale / in other areas to increase savings.”

Concerns about inefficiency, waste, and poor project planning:

“Efficiency is to be supported. The council is probably currently guilty of wastage of resources and inefficiency.”

“This should have been done years ago. The Town Hall lights are on day and night; the building is heated far too much compared to individual homes in this cold weather - easy when other people are paying of course.”

“I don't understand this. Why are you using office space inefficiently? Why are you not already using LED lights?”

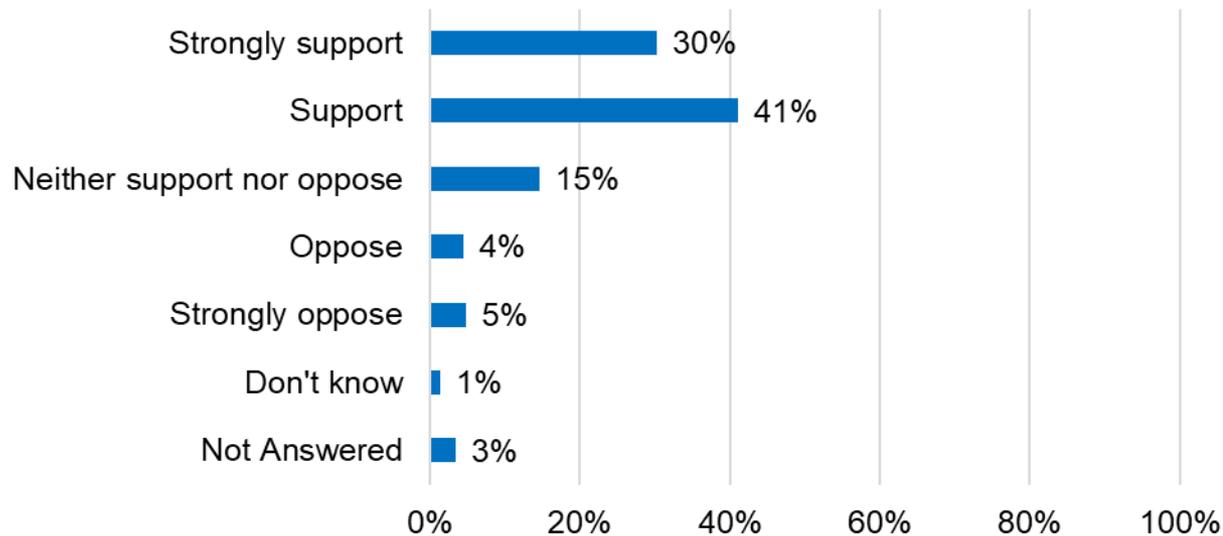


Income generation

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to income generation through being more commercial. The proposals included: Generating more income through advertising (additional £750k), generating additional income through commercial property (additional £300k) and raising fees and charges by five per cent

- **Almost three-quarters** (71 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward related to income generation through being more commercial. This included **30 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **nine per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals relating to income generation that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



Income generation

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to income generation were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Opposition to fee and tax increases** (43 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Opposition to fee and tax increases: Concerns about affordability, negative impacts on low-income residents and local businesses, and specific objections to certain fees and advertising expansion, reflecting resistance to raising fees or taxes.	43
Ethical and transparent income generation: Support for generating income through advertising, commercial activities, vehicle charges, fines, and innovative ideas, emphasising ethical management, transparency, and sensitivity to vulnerable groups, while considering alternative methods and addressing mixed opinions and concerns about local access and specific fees.	29
Cost cutting and efficiency improvements: Preference for prioritising cost cutting, improving efficiency, and better management within the council before considering any increases in fees or taxes.	12



Income generation – Comment examples

Opposition to fee and tax increases:

“Five percent increase in fees and charges is unacceptable, with current state of the council and crime rate. We have to pay more for insurance and security in our buildings due to continuous robberies, so to pay you 5% more when because of your lack of focus on security we have to invest more to protect our homes is ridiculous.”

“Do not increase advertising - it downgrades the borough and the gain is not worth the damage.”

“I am against the increase, as there are other ways to find the necessary funding, such as reducing expenses and services.”

“Some of the suggestions are sensible and I agree with charging higher commercial rates for advertising and for commercial providers. But for the charges that have direct impact on local people when cost of living is already so high and when we pay council tax, I oppose. E.g. there should be some free access to the local museums for local people.”



Ethical and transparent income generation:

“Charge cars on size and weight. Charge tourists that impact on the quality of the day to day life of residents.”

“Excellent initiatives especially expansion of advertising. Please investigate if there are other similar areas in which the borough can generate more income.”

Cost cutting and efficiency improvements:

“First, improve the council's efficiency. The working from home idea hasn't worked in the residents' favour or the Council's efficiency. Then perhaps there'd be no need to raise fees?”

“Proposing increases of 5% and more is inappropriate. It's beyond inflation and would lead to higher inflation. The council needs to address its inefficiencies and staff performance to become a leaner, high performing org.”

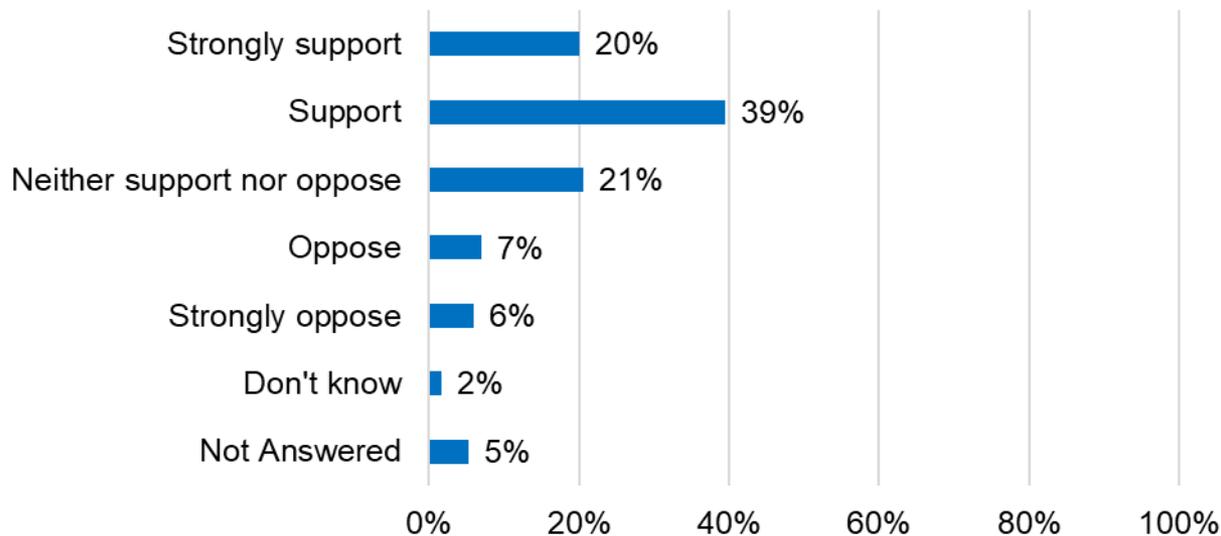


Fees and charges

Respondents were asked about proposals related to raising fees and charges by five per cent

- **Over half** (59 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the proposals put forward to raise fees and charges. This included **20 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **13 per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals. This included **six per cent** that **strongly opposed the proposals**.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the fees and charges proposals put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



Fees and charges

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to fees and charges were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Balanced approach to fee increases and financial burden** (45 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Balanced approach to fee increases and financial burden: Includes support for modest, targeted fee increases aligned with inflation and user-pays principles, opposition to broad fee and tax hikes due to financial strain especially during the cost of living crisis, and concerns about fairness to vulnerable groups to avoid undue hardship.	45
Concerns about Council spending and resource management: Encompasses scepticism about Council spending efficiency, calls for better resource management instead of fee hikes, and some trust in appropriate fee setting.	15
Support for maintaining community services and considering consequential costs: Emphasises the importance of sustaining services like libraries and accounting for consequential costs such as increased fly-tipping when setting fees and charges.	7
Need for more information: Reflects the lack of adequate information to form a clear opinion on the budget proposals.	3



Fees and charges – Comment examples

Balanced approach to fee increases and financial burden:

“A 16% increase in residents parking permits is too much. For most people this is not a nice to have but a necessity, unlike most of the other items which are getting smaller increases.”

“Everyone is finding it difficult to manage the rising costs. Please don't make it worse.”

“I believe those are reasonable given the stretch. Nevertheless the Council should think very carefully about this. A large percentage of our residents, particularly elderly will already be significantly burdened by the new property tax proposals.”

“I think that fees for parking permits for SUVs should be much higher than cars to reflect the additional burden to the streets.”

“This is already one of the most expensive boroughs to live in. The super rich won't feel the pressure at all, but everyone else will and the wealth gap already hugely visible here will widen.”



Concerns about Council spending and resource management:

“I think the money should come from savings and no extra taxes. The tax burden for those who pay them is at a multi decade high.”

“We strongly oppose RBKC's intentions to raise the prices on fees and charges by 5 per cent for next year. From what we can see every day RBKC's spending is often wasteful and is not done in the interest of the residents. One example being an ultra costly redevelopment of the playground in Holland Park that turned a previously excellent playground into a hazardous, non-functioning, unsustainable place.”

Support for maintaining community services and considering consequential costs:

“I understand the necessity to raise prices. However please consider a lower increase on activities which support health and wellbeing. Access to sport and other activities is a long-term investment and will reduce health related costs in the years to come.”

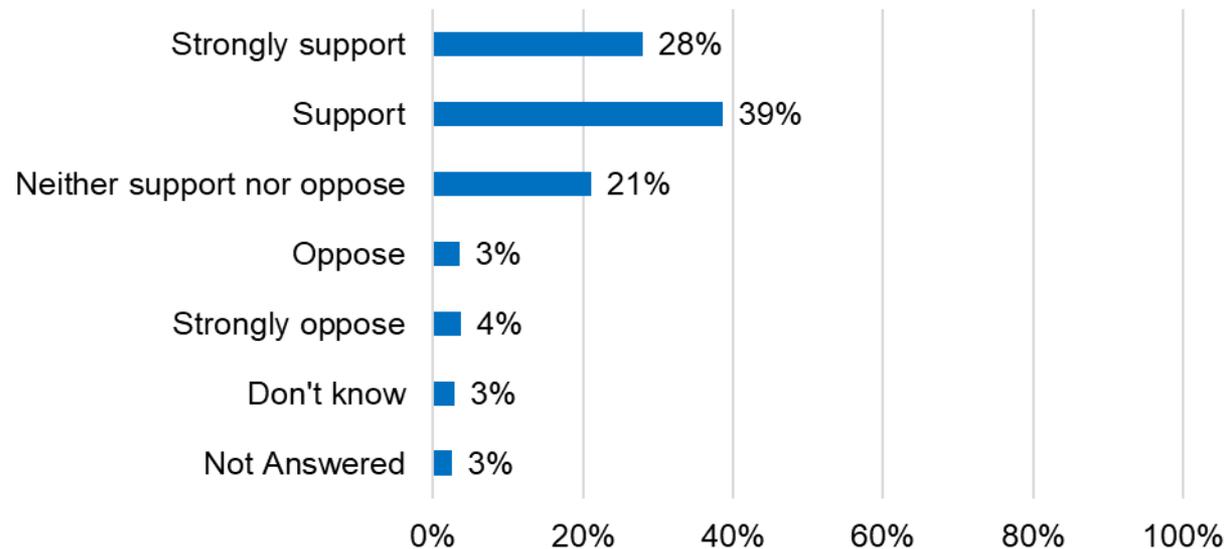


Alternative funding

Respondents were asked about savings proposals related to making use of alternative funding streams. The proposals included: Increasing income from fixed penalty notices (increased income of £2m), redirecting Public Health funding (additional £1.3m) and reviewing how we fund our capital programme (saving £900k)

- **Over two-thirds** (67 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the savings proposals put forward to make use of alternative funding streams. This included **28 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **seven per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals.

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, the savings proposals relating to us making use of alternative funding streams that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)



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Alternative funding

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to alternative funding were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Alternative funding and parking enforcement with concerns on fairness and policy impact** (36 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Alternative funding and parking enforcement with concerns on fairness and policy impact: This theme covers support for exploring alternative funding streams such as increased parking fines and capital financing, while expressing concerns about fairness, excessive fines, opposition to using fines primarily as revenue sources, criticism of Council enforcement practices, scepticism about the viability of alternative financing, concerns about complicated parking zoning, and negative views on central government policies impacting local finances.	36
Public Health funding, opposition to cuts with conditional support for maintaining outcomes: This theme reflects opposition and concern about redirecting or cutting public health funding due to potential harm to essential services, alongside conditional support if public health outcomes are maintained.	20
Transparency, governance, and safeguards in budget proposals: This theme emphasises the need for transparency, detailed information, strong governance, and safeguards to ensure alternative funding streams and budget changes are clear, fair, and effective.	12
More information needed	2



Alternative funding – Comment examples

Alternative funding and parking enforcement with concerns on fairness and policy impact:

“Do not believe in the exploitation of motorists for financial gain by local government. Parking fines are already high.”

“I strongly oppose the increase in the level of fixed penalty notice fines for vehicle parking violations. This a dishonest and deceitful way of raising revenue.”

“Parking enforcement is already very strict. If you make it any worse there is a danger that it will discourage car visits from neighbouring boroughs with a knock on effect for local businesses. Remember how the extension of the Congestion Charge under Mayor Livingstone crippled businesses on Holland Park/Notting Hill Gate?”

“FPNs are already excessive.”

Public Health funding, opposition to cuts with conditional support for maintaining outcomes:

“Again, redirecting public health funding is fine if it doesn’t result in a reduction of vital services.”

“Depends what redirecting public health funding to ‘different cross council programmes actually means in a practical sense.”

Transparency, governance, and safeguards in budget proposals:

“Without any evidence of specifics or detail of what and how, this is impossible to judge. “Achieving health outcomes” for instance, is careful phrasing, omitting words such as ‘better’, ‘quicker’, ‘at least as good’ or ‘slightly slower’, ‘less effective’ and so on. Similarly, what is the capital programme? What alternative source of financing is available and how much would it cost?”



Capital Investment

The consultation also focuses on new capital proposals recommended for inclusion in the Council's ongoing Capital Programme

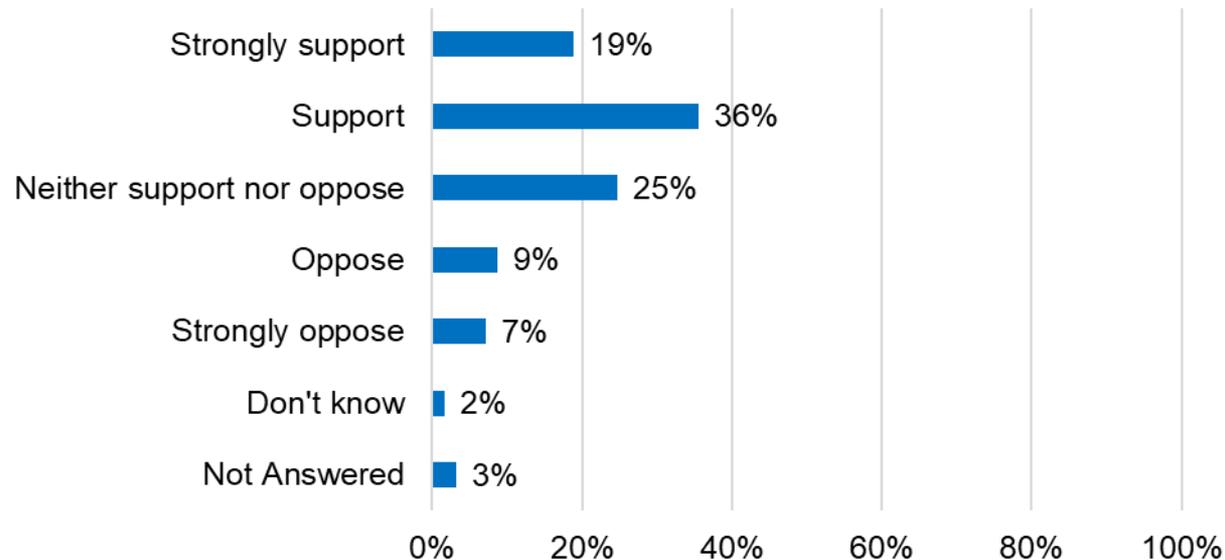


Capital investment

Respondents were asked about new capital proposals recommended for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme. The proposals included: £2.2m investment in street lighting which will improve road safety, reduce crime and aid the nighttime economy.

- **Over half** (55 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the capital programme proposals put forward. This included **19 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **16 per cent opposed**, to some extent, the proposals. This included **seven per cent** that **strongly opposed the proposals**.
- In addition **a quarter** (25 per cent) responded neutrally

Overall, how strongly do you support, or oppose, capital programme proposals that are being put forward?



Base: All respondents (433)

Capital investment

Respondents that did not support the proposals related to capital investment were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and themes 18 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Concerns and opposition to specific capital projects and increased spending** (61 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following pages, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Concerns and opposition to specific capital projects and increased spending: There is disagreement and concern about the high cost, necessity, location, and value for money of the Pembroke Road depot future-proofing project, with calls for more clarity. Opposition exists to large capital expenditures and council tax increases during economic uncertainty, with preference for delayed or cautious spending focused on essential needs.	61
Uncertainty and questions about capital programme priorities and management: Questions exist about the prioritisation of capital programmes, project management, depot consolidation, and materials used, indicating a need for clearer strategic direction.	23
Support for prudent and justified capital investments with transparency: Support exists for capital investments that are prudent, cost-effective, and deliver long-term value, including energy-efficient lighting, community assets like libraries, and essential infrastructure. There is a strong demand for clearer communication, detailed explanations, and transparency regarding capital spending proposals, including project benefits, prioritisation, and supporting data, with caution urged on borrowing and large projects.	19
Mixed views on street lighting proposals and safety measures: Opinions are mixed on street lighting upgrades, with support for safety benefits contrasted by concerns about effectiveness, environmental impact, fairness in prioritisation, and calls for alternative safety measures.	18



Capital investment – Comment examples

Concerns and opposition to specific capital projects and increased spending:

“Do not support £17.5m on “future proofing” the depot. Seems a lot. What are the benefits?”

“Given fiscal constraints, now is not the time to spend these sums.”

“Half a million on CCTV and 17 million on a depot - where do these Monopoly money numbers come from? We build temporary villages for 60,000 people for 2 million total.”

“Not in favour of work at Pembroke Road depot - is this necessary?”

“Spending on the depot at Pembroke Road is way too high! If it cannot be managed by the Council at much lower levels of outgoings, it needs to be privatised. I am not sure where you want to invest into street lighting as everywhere there is plenty of lighting. This needs to be dropped, until at last the economy improves.”



Support for prudent and justified capital investments with transparency

“I support these capital proposals. Investment in street lighting is a practical use of capital funding with clear benefits for safety, crime reduction and the evening economy. Future-proofing operational sites like the Pembroke Road depot is also sensible asset management that avoids higher replacement or emergency costs later. Capital spending should continue to prioritise essential infrastructure rather than discretionary estate projects.”

“I am concerned about the amount of borrowing involved but I do support the proposals.”

Uncertainty and questions about capital programme priorities and management:

“The Pembroke Road proposal is difficult to assess without a link to the expected benefits.”

“Suggest Pembroke Road future proofing costs could be phased over a longer period. Proposal references savings by reducing need for alternative temporary depots. Would be helpful to see net cost after savings.”



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Council Tax

The Council has always been proud of maintaining one of the lowest Council Tax levels in the country, but the Government's funding proposals have forced us to consider some extremely difficult decisions for 2026/27. Although the government has indicated these funding reductions will be phased over the next four years it has suggested this offer is dependent on us increasing Council Tax by five per cent each year.

We have therefore reluctantly included this assumption in our financial plans. Alongside this, we are now reluctantly considering charging a 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes within the borough as well as potential reductions to our Council Tax Reduction Scheme

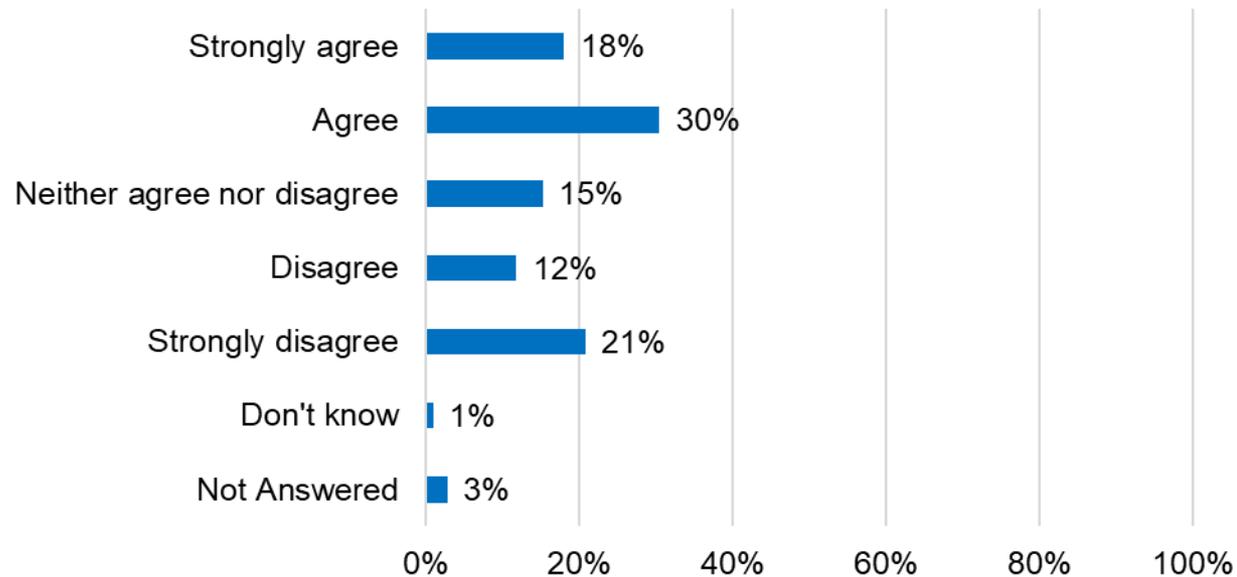


Council Tax

Respondents were asked given the financial challenges the Council is facing, how strongly they agreed with the proposed five per cent increase to Council Tax.

- **Almost half** (48 per cent) **agreed**, to some extent, with the proposed five per cent increase to Council Tax. This included **18 per cent** that **strongly agreed to this**.
- However, **a third** (33 per cent) **disagreed**, to some extent, with this proposal. This included **21 per cent** that **strongly disagreed**.

Given the financial challenges the Council is facing, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed five per cent increase to Council Tax?



Base: All respondents (433)



Council Tax

Respondents were asked to explain their response to the proposed five per cent increase in Council Tax.. Comments made have been themed and themes with 16 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: (66 comments). **Opposition to Council Tax increase due to affordability and fairness concerns**

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Opposition to Council Tax increase due to affordability and fairness concerns: The five per cent Council Tax increase is unaffordable and unfair, especially for vulnerable, low-income households, and working families facing financial strain amid a cost of living crisis, necessitating a more graduated or targeted taxation approach based on property value and income.	66
Conditional support for Council Tax increase with protections and cost-cutting: Support for a five per cent Council Tax increase is acceptable if it maintains essential services, protects vulnerable residents including pensioners and low-income households, ensures fairness in taxing second homes and high-value properties, includes Council cost-cutting measures, and avoids cuts to Council Tax Reduction Schemes that aid vulnerable groups.	46
Divided views on taxing second homes and empty properties: Increasing Council Tax on second homes and empty properties is seen as either a fair measure or an unfair penalty to long-term residents, reflecting a split opinion.	33
Opposition to tax increase without spending cuts and demand for efficiency: Council Tax should not be increased without first implementing spending cuts, improving efficiency, and exploring alternative revenue sources to ensure better value for money.	28
Need for fairer Council Tax system and property revaluation: A fairer Council Tax system requires property revaluation and equitable tax apportionment based on property size, value, and ownership to ensure just tax burdens.	16



Council Tax – Comment examples

Opposition to Council Tax increase due to affordability and fairness concerns:

“Council tax is already too high in my opinion and raising it further would certainly hit me hard as a pensioner.”

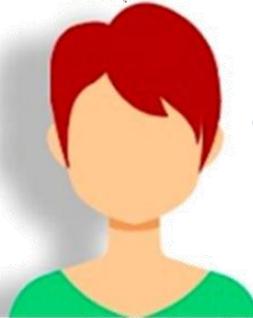
“For those living in relatively small flats and low incomes the council tax is a huge sum.”

“I strongly disagree. A further 5% rise adds to an already heavy burden on working households. Core services should be prioritised and cost pressures controlled before turning to higher taxation. Spending growth in non-essential areas is driving avoidable budget pressure, and residents should not be expected to absorb continual increases.”

Opposition to tax increase without spending cuts and demand for efficiency:

“I am against the increase, as there are other ways to find the necessary funding, such as reducing expenses and services.”

“More efficiency savings should be sought first.”



Conditional support for Council Tax increase with protections and cost-cutting:

“I am accepting of the proposed five per cent increase in Council Tax, given the financial constraints imposed by central government and the need to maintain core statutory services. While regrettable, this increase is preferable to further erosion of frontline provision.”

Overall, I support an approach that prioritises fairness, protects vulnerable residents, and ensures that those who choose to hold additional properties in the borough contribute proportionately to its costs.”

Divided views on taxing second homes and empty properties:

“I do not support doubling council tax on 2nd homes.”

“I would support an even bigger Council tax premium on second homes and on empty property. At least. 200%.”

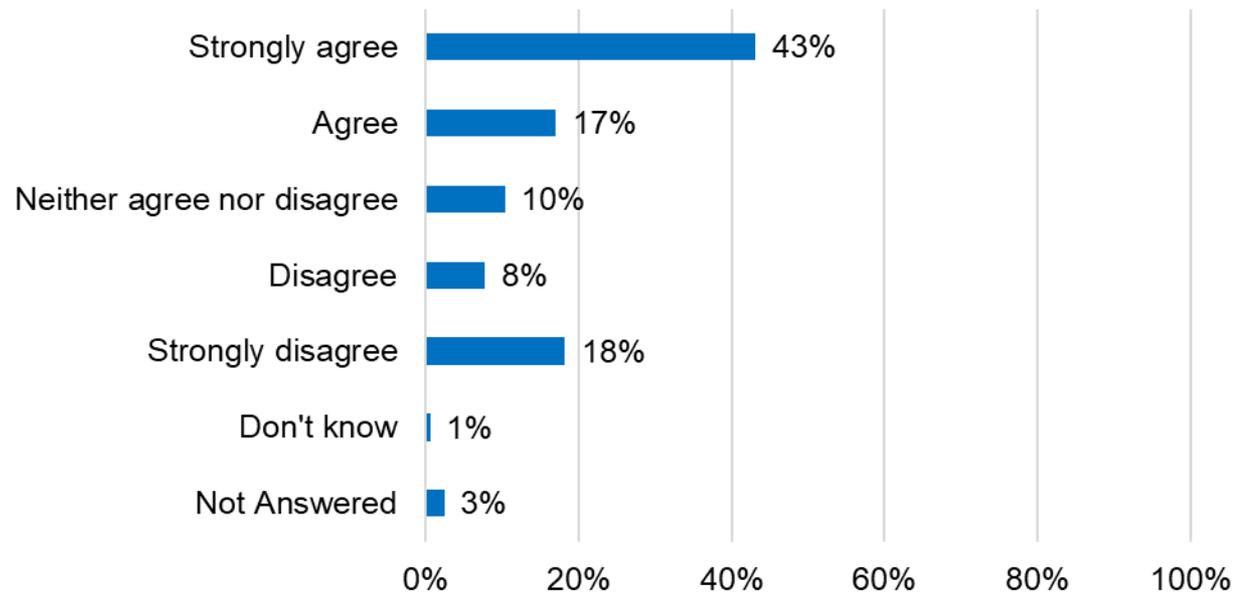


Second homes

Respondents were asked given the financial challenges the Council is facing, how strongly they agreed with the proposed 100 per cent Council Tax premium for people with second homes in the borough.

- **Six in ten** (60 per cent) **agreed**, to some extent, with the proposed 100 per cent Council Tax premium for people with second homes in the borough. This included **43 per cent** that **strongly agreed to this**.
- However, **over a quarter** (26 per cent) **disagreed**, to some extent, with this proposal. This included **18 per cent** that **strongly disagreed**.

Given the financial challenges the Council is facing, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed 100 per cent Council Tax premium for people with second homes in the borough?



Base: All respondents (433)



Second homes

Respondents were asked to explain their response to the proposed 100 per cent premium for second homes in the borough. Comments made have been themed and summarised in the table below.

The most common themes were: **Opposition to 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes** (88 comments) and **support for 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes** (55 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Opposition to 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes: Critics argue the premium is excessively high, unfairly punitive, difficult to enforce, risks harming the local economy and housing market, and unjustly penalises legitimate second home uses and essential workers. Concerns include economic impact and fairness.	88
Support for 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes: Advocates endorse a premium on second homes to alleviate housing shortages, encourage renting or selling of these properties, and generate funds for social services. Suggestions include even higher premiums and targeted policies for empty or investment properties to maximise impact.	55
Need for nuanced implementation of Council Tax premium: Calls for refined approaches such as exemptions, variable premiums based on property usage, alternative taxation methods, and clear enforcement mechanisms to ensure fairness and effectiveness of the policy.	33



Second homes – Comment examples

Opposition to 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes:

“Agree that it should be higher but 100% seems steep.”

“Council tax is levied to meet the cost of services which will not be used more by virtue of a property being a second home and are likely to be used less. The burden should not exceed the benefit and individuals should not be penalised for owning homes elsewhere in order to subsidise those who don't. It is plain wrong - a fine for owning another home..”

“Full time residents in the borough should be given significantly better treatment. Nevertheless; it does seem quite draconian. Perhaps a fixed charge may be appropriate as residents of high value properties will already be paying so much more.”

“I do not have a second home but disagree with such policing by the Government. They want to dictate how people live. If someone wants to live, for example, in a small flat in Kensington and Chelsea and a small flat in the country, why should they be penalised?”



Support for 100 per cent Council Tax premium on second homes:

“A second home is a luxury. There are too many empty expensive homes in the borough, there are areas where you never see the lights on in the houses! It's like a ghost town in the winter! The amount should be calculated against the amount of people you have registered as homeless!”

“If people can afford a second home, they should be able to afford the council tax for their second home.”

“Such people able to afford a second home in RBKC are likely to be wealthy, well able to afford this premium, and its imposition alone is unlikely to deter them from continuing to maintain the second home here.”

Need for nuanced implementation of Council Tax premium:

“There are more pressures being put on second homes through the changes in rental laws and taxes so it might be mean even more people considering seeking and might lead to a sudden hike in properties for sale. A more gradual increase might be preferable.”



Savings and investment ideas



Investment

Respondents were asked to detail any areas they thought the Council needs to invest more day to day spending in, keeping in mind the financial challenges. Comments made have been themed and themes with 31 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common themes were: **Enhance community safety and enforcement** and **increase street cleanliness, environmental maintenance, and green space enhancement** (both 56 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Enhance community safety and enforcement: Investment in community policing, crime reduction, pedestrian and traffic safety, enforcement of public order fines, street lighting, and CCTV to improve overall community safety and security.	56
Increase street cleanliness, environmental maintenance, and green space enhancement: More street bins, better rubbish collection, stricter penalties for dog fouling and fly tipping, maintenance of parks and green spaces, tree planting, and pollution control to improve environmental quality and community wellbeing.	56
Improve Council efficiency, financial transparency, and spending accountability: Reduce waste, cut administrative costs, impose financial controls, outsource services, enhance transparency, publish spending reviews, combat corruption, and clearly communicate investment priorities and impact measurement to ensure responsible use of funds and public trust.	40
Fund community facilities, social inclusion, and recreational programmes: Support community centres, libraries, local festivals, social inclusion projects, youth and children's clubs, recreational facilities, and education programmes to promote community wellbeing and engagement.	31



Investment – Comment examples

Enhance community safety and enforcement:

“Community policing especially for anti social behaviour.”

“Crime reduction, penalise fly tippers; improve health and wellbeing outcomes.”

“Public safety. Crime is disregarded, people do not feel like their safety or belongings matter. But on the flip side, the road cameras and traffic wardens are keen to dole out parking tickets left and right.”

“The fly tipping situation is terrible and more cameras are needed in hotspots especially in North Kensington. Also more fines for dog walkers who do not clean up after themselves.”

Improve Council efficiency, financial transparency, and spending accountability:

“Department should merge, become leaner, train staff to be flexible and share the department budget and stop waste. This also means that they shouldn’t unnecessarily dig up the road in order for them to get the money next year. Money should be used where it is necessary and sustainable projects and goals should be a focus for the council.”



Increase street cleanliness, environmental maintenance, and green space enhancement:

“Cleanliness in our streets should be a top priority - rubbish collections, road sweepers etc. to keep health hazards down to a minimum.”

“Environmental issues such as community gardens are important and should receive adequate funding as they promote health, help the environment and prevent burdens on social and care services.”

“There is so much rubbish on the streets across the council. I sometimes cannot believe we are supposed to be one of the richest countries in the world. I beg you to improve the cleanliness of the council and overall up keeping some parts seems so ran down.”

Fund community facilities, social inclusion, and recreational programs:

“I would just like to see the current level of spending on libraries, recreation facilities and community centres maintained.”

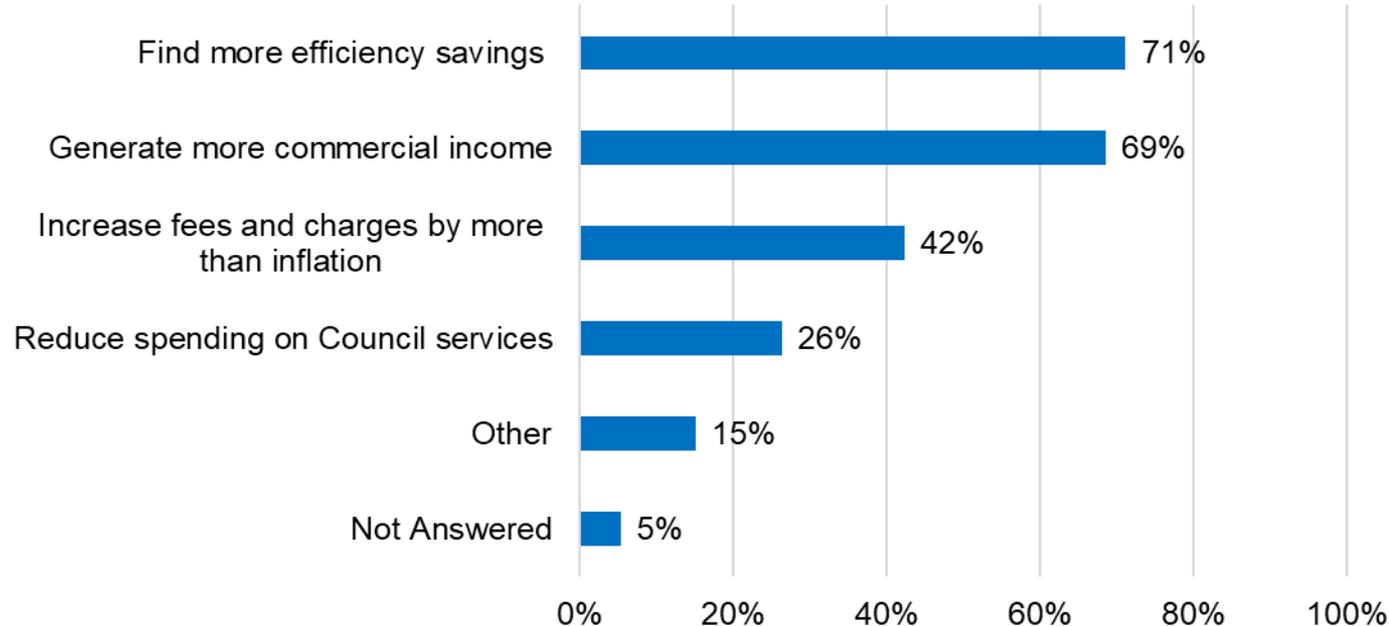


Further savings

Respondents were asked given the further funding reductions expected over the next four years, which areas the Council should look to for further savings.

- **More than seven in ten** (71 per cent) felt that the Council should look at **finding more efficiency savings** to make further savings.
- **Almost as many** (69 per cent) felt the Council should **generate more commercial income**.
- A total of **42 per cent** felt the Council should **increase fees and charges by more than inflation**.
- A total of **15 per cent** suggested **other** ideas, these are explored on subsequent pages.

Given the further funding reductions we are expecting to face over the next four years, which are the areas where you think the Council should look at to make further savings?



Further savings

Respondents that gave an 'other' answer were asked to explain further. Comments made have been themed and themes with 14 or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Reducing spending on non-essential services, events, vanity projects, and internal inefficiencies (50 comments)**

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Reducing spending on non-essential services, events, vanity projects, and internal inefficiencies: Suggestion to cut funding for non-essential programmes, fringe groups, costly events, vanity projects, reduce inefficiencies from high staff turnover, eliminate middle management layers, cut overly generous wages and pensions, and pay better salaries to fewer managers.	50
Revenue generation through enforcement, fines, penalties, and tax reforms: Advocacy for stricter enforcement and higher fines for anti-social behaviours and offences, raising fees and taxes on luxury vehicles, second homes, Airbnb rentals, non-resident properties, parking permits, business licenses, council tax reform for equity, exploring new revenue streams like tourist taxes, and auditing councillor expenses.	46
Technology, automation, and digital solutions for efficiency and cost reduction: Support for using AI, automation, and digital self-service to reduce administrative costs and improve productivity, while acknowledging concerns about digital access, fraud risks, and scepticism due to past ineffective spending.	15
Community engagement, volunteer support, resident responsibility, and spending priorities on cleanliness, safety, and social housing: Emphasis on encouraging residents to take responsibility for cleanliness and safety, increasing volunteer involvement, engaging the community in wellbeing and environmental programmes, and prioritising cleanliness, safety, and social housing in budget considerations.	14



Further savings – Comment examples

Reducing spending on non-essential services, events, vanity projects, and internal inefficiencies:

“Cut all support for fringe groups and council tax subsidies and focus on basic day to day services to the residents.”

“Cut the high management wages.”

“No more wasting money on bicycle lanes road improvements i.e. road measures to stop traffic wasteful pavement constructions and wasteful lights!”

“Remove Notting Hill Carnival, move it to a ticketed and safe location.”

Technology, automation, and digital solutions for efficiency and cost reduction:

“Council needs to move forward with the times and leverage technology to cut costs.”

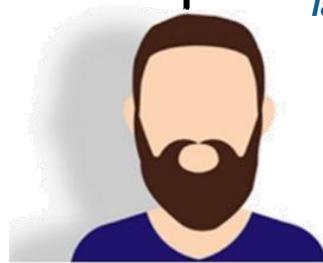
“More self service options as more people are digital literate. Examine how to use AI to replace back office staff.”

Revenue generation through enforcement, fines, penalties, and tax reforms:

“Charge larger vehicles way more and 100% doubling on second home council tax.”

“Definitely greater parking fees, licensing fees etc for SUV and luxury cars. They need to pay way more - they can afford it and the large SUVs take up way too much space and pollute more.”

“Increase fee for business at portobello market.”



Community engagement, volunteer support, resident responsibility, and spending priorities on cleanliness, safety, and social housing:

“Look for more volunteers - not that I'm advocating sacking people.”

“Start a dynamic voluntary programme that supports health and wellbeing, social support, green spaces, litter clearance. INVOLVE residents, don't just think about the delivery of services. Look at visionary projects in the UK and abroad.”



Equality implications



Equality implications

Respondents were asked to detail anything they thought the Council should be aware of in terms of how the proposed budget might adversely/unfairly impact on people and how to reduce the impact. Comments made have been themed and themes with seven or more comments are summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and promoting equality** (31 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and promoting equality: Emphasises safeguarding disabled, elderly, low-income, ethnic minority populations, and youth services from budget cuts, while recognising education's role in addressing inequalities and promoting opportunity.	31
Ensuring fairness, equity, and transparency in taxation, services, and budgeting: Advocates for non-discriminatory service delivery, fair taxation targeting wealthy individuals and businesses, transparency in budget savings and plans, improved partnerships, and effective communication for informed decision-making.	25
None/don't know or more information needed	17
Protecting core public services and Council spending priorities: Supports maintaining statutory services, scrutinising discretionary spending to avoid waste, implementing innovative cost-saving measures, and addressing concerns over staff pay, morale, recruitment, and perceived overpayment on non-essential projects.	17
Addressing risks of digital exclusion and proposals for additional revenue generation: Warns against digital exclusion due to increased digitisation and reduced printed materials, and includes ideas for additional revenue like extending parking permit hours, restricting travel card perks, charging foreign visitors, and increasing bike parking fees.	7



Equality implications – Comment examples

Protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and promoting equality:

“Given significant savings it is difficult not to adversely impact certain groups of people. There will be some negative impact but try to minimise it.”

“Keep children and school services please. This is the only reason we live here and pay crazy rent.”

“Ring fence prioritise and improve services for children from disadvantaged homes or the care system so they make constructive use of their time, are able to do well at school, are given a wide range of opportunities for different jobs, apprenticeships careers and interests, and are encouraged to take part in sports and fitness and taught about healthy eating and food preparation.”

Protecting core public services and Council spending priorities:

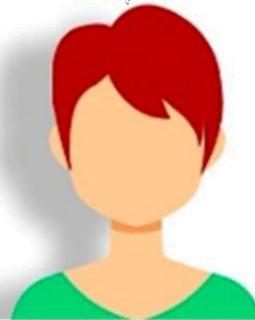
“Stop vanity projects.”

“Don’t sabotage the quality of your staff by paying them less, recipe for disaster. Tax second homes and everything that gravitates around that.”

Ensuring fairness, equity, and transparency in taxation, services, and budgeting:

“Council tax reduction is a big help to single people and any changes should be thought through carefully.”

“The borough is full of very rich people. Don’t target these people with unreasonably high and punitive penalties or they will go and then we will suffer financially.”



Addressing risks of digital exclusion and proposals for additional revenue generation:

“You could make life easier for residents and raise extra revenue by increasing the hours when local resident parking permits apply. For example, on a Saturday and Sunday.”

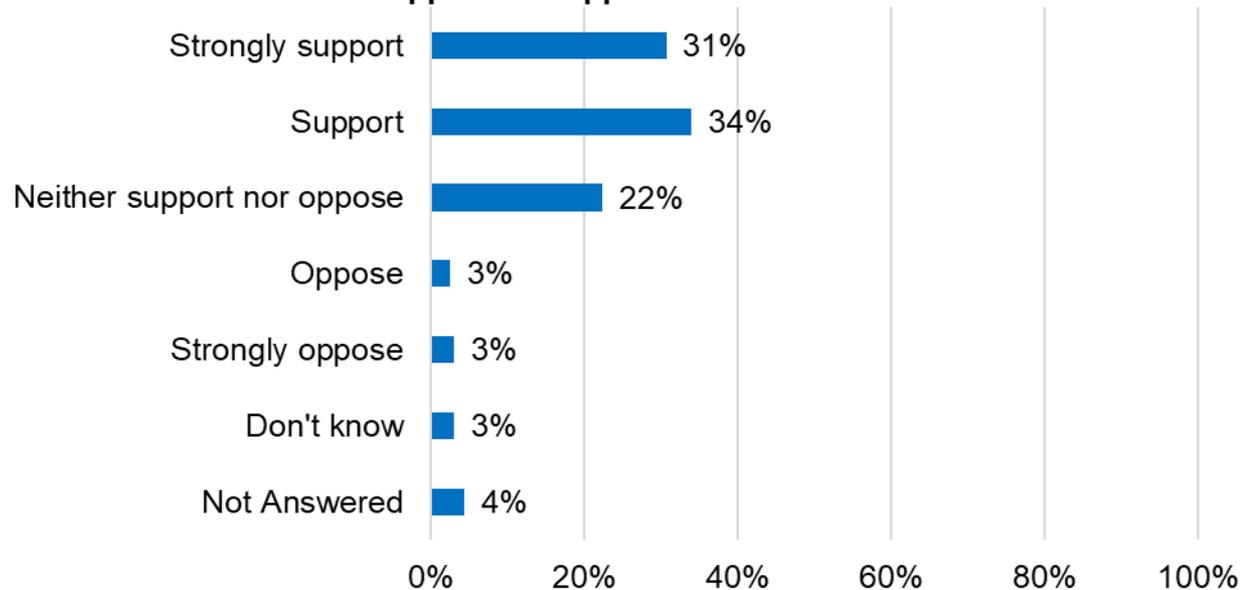


Vulnerable residents

Respondents were asked, if the impact of the changes to local government funding in Kensington and Chelsea are not as severe as anticipated, the Council intends to limit the direct impact on vulnerable residents, if they supported this approach.

- **Almost two-thirds** (65 per cent) **supported**, to some extent, the suggested approach of limiting the direct impact on vulnerable residents. This included **31 per cent** that **strongly supported this**.
- However, **six per cent opposed**, to some extent, this proposed approach.

If the impact of the changes to local government funding on Kensington and Chelsea are not as severe as we are currently anticipating, our intention is to limit the direct impact on vulnerable residents. Do you support this approach?



Base: All respondents (433)

Vulnerable residents

Respondents were asked to explain their answer. Comments made have been themed and summarised in the table below.

The most common theme was: **Support for targeted protection of vulnerable residents** (42 comments).

Examples of comments can be seen on the following page, with the full list of themes and comments found in the appendices.

Theme	Count
Support for targeted protection of vulnerable residents: Prioritise support for vulnerable groups such as children, elderly, and disabled with means testing to ensure fairness and prevent abuse or undue burden on other residents, while ensuring clarity and ongoing review of vulnerability criteria to address social polarization and adapt policies as needed.	42
Opposition to broad vulnerability definitions and targeted support: Question the fairness and efficiency of prioritising vulnerable residents, criticise welfare systems, and emphasise shared responsibility among all residents.	32
Other	6
More information needed	1



Vulnerable residents – Comment examples

Support for targeted protection of vulnerable residents:

“Clearly they need more help than others.”

“Especially children and the elderly.”

“If funding pressures ease, focusing protection on genuinely vulnerable residents is reasonable. This must not become a route for expanding discretionary projects or duplicating services already provided by national systems. Any improved position should stabilise essential statutory functions only, while keeping firm control of wider spending.”

“It's most important to look after and protect the most vulnerable.”

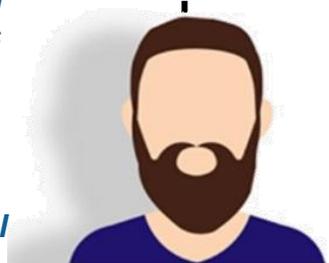
“Vulnerable individuals need support and often reducing it below the level they are deemed to need will not only impact them but everyone around them.”

Opposition to broad vulnerability definitions and targeted support:

“All residents need to be supported, not the same few constantly.”

“Everyone should be treated in the same way.”

“It depends on what is your definition of vulnerable? Those who have always worked hard, contributed to the society and the borough, and now are struggling to make ends meet, OR random people who never contributed to anything in the borough?”



“The term vulnerable is used too widely and indiscriminately. Each group needs to be considered in isolation and decided upon separately. We all get old, some are born with disabilities or have an accident and are deserving. Others are just bone idle, make deliberate poor decisions on a daily basis and just want to scrounge and so are less deserving.”



Demographic differences



Demographic differences

This section of the report highlights demographic differences to each of the questions. Where results are broken down, the results show breakdowns based on sex, age and whether the respondent has a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Unfortunately, there isn't enough data to breakdown results by other demographic factors (i.e. there are less than 30 respondents with particular demographic characteristic).

Commentary is only included below where there is a difference of support of at least five per cent between characteristics.

Council Tax

Council Tax

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to agree, or strongly agree, to the proposal to increase Council Tax by five per cent:**

- **Male respondents** (57 per cent) compared to female respondents (45 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (62 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (35 per cent) and those aged 45-64 (48 per cent)
- **Respondents without a physical or mental health condition or illness** (52 per cent) compared to those with a physical or mental health condition or illness (46 per cent).

Second Homes

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to agree, or strongly agree, to the proposed 100 per cent Council Tax premium for people with second homes in the borough.**

- **Female respondents** (65 per cent) compared to male respondents (59 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (67 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (62 per cent) and those aged 45-64 (57 per cent)
- **Respondents with a physical or mental health condition or illness** (73 per cent) compared to those without a physical or mental health condition or illness (59 per cent).



Demographic differences

Revenue growth proposals

Maintaining existing services

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, proposals that require additional investment to keep up with rising demand and areas where we want to invest to improve the local area:**

- **Female respondents** (54 per cent) compared to male respondents (45 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (63 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (39 per cent) and those aged 45-64 (42 per cent)
- **Respondents with a physical or mental health condition or illness** (66 per cent) compared to those without a physical or mental health condition or illness (48 per cent).

Providing new or better services

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, proposals to provide new or better services:**

- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (78 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (65 per cent) and those aged 45-64 (64 per cent)
- **Respondents without a physical or mental health condition or illness** (71 per cent) compared to those with a physical or mental health condition or illness (61 per cent).

Revenue savings proposals

Staffing

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, savings proposals related to changes to staff levels and conditions:**

- **Male respondents** (81 per cent) compared to female respondents (72 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (80 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (65 per cent) and those aged 45-64 (75 per cent)



Demographic differences

Simplifying and improving processes

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, savings proposals related to simplifying and improving processes:**

- **Male respondents** (88 per cent) compared to female respondents (72 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (81 per cent) and **those aged 45 to 64** (80 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (73 per cent).

Level and range of services

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, savings proposals related to reviewing the level and range of services:**

- **Male respondents** (65 per cent) compared to female respondents (45 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (58 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (48 per cent) and those aged 45-64 (53 per cent)
- **Respondents without a physical or mental health condition or illness** (57 per cent) compared to those with a physical or mental health condition or illness (45 per cent).

Changing service models

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, savings proposals related to changing service models to meet need earlier or in new ways to avoid higher costs later:**

- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (78 per cent) and those **aged 45 to 64** (75 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (68 per cent).

Property portfolio

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, savings proposals related to reviewing our property portfolio:**

- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (95 per cent) and those aged under 45 (95 per cent) compared to respondents aged 45 to 64 (88 per cent).



Demographic differences

Income generation

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, savings proposals related to income generation:**

- **Male respondents** (80 per cent) compared to female respondents (71 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (79 per cent) and those **aged 45 to 64** (77 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (64 per cent).

Fees and charges

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, proposals to raise fees and charges by five per cent:**

- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (67 per cent) and those aged **45 to 64** (65 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (42 per cent).
- **Respondents with a physical or mental health condition or illness** (66 per cent) compared to those without a physical or mental health condition or illness (61 per cent).

Alternative funding

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, proposals to make use of alternative funding streams:**

- **Male respondents** (74 per cent) compared to female respondents (67 per cent).

Capital investment

Capital programme

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, proposals about new capital proposals recommended for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme:**

- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (60 per cent) and those aged **45 to 64** (57 per cent) compared to respondents aged under 45 (53 per cent).
- **Respondents without a physical or mental health condition or illness** (59 per cent) compared to those with a physical or mental health condition or illness (54 per cent).



Demographic differences

Equality implications

Vulnerable residents

The following groups of respondents **were more likely to support, or strongly support, the proposals to limit the direct impact on vulnerable residents**, if the impact of changes to local government funding is not as severe.

- **Female respondents** (70 per cent) compared to male respondents (65 per cent).
- **Respondents aged 65 or older** (75 per cent) compared to respondents aged 45 to 64 (65 per cent) and respondents aged under 45 (56 per cent).



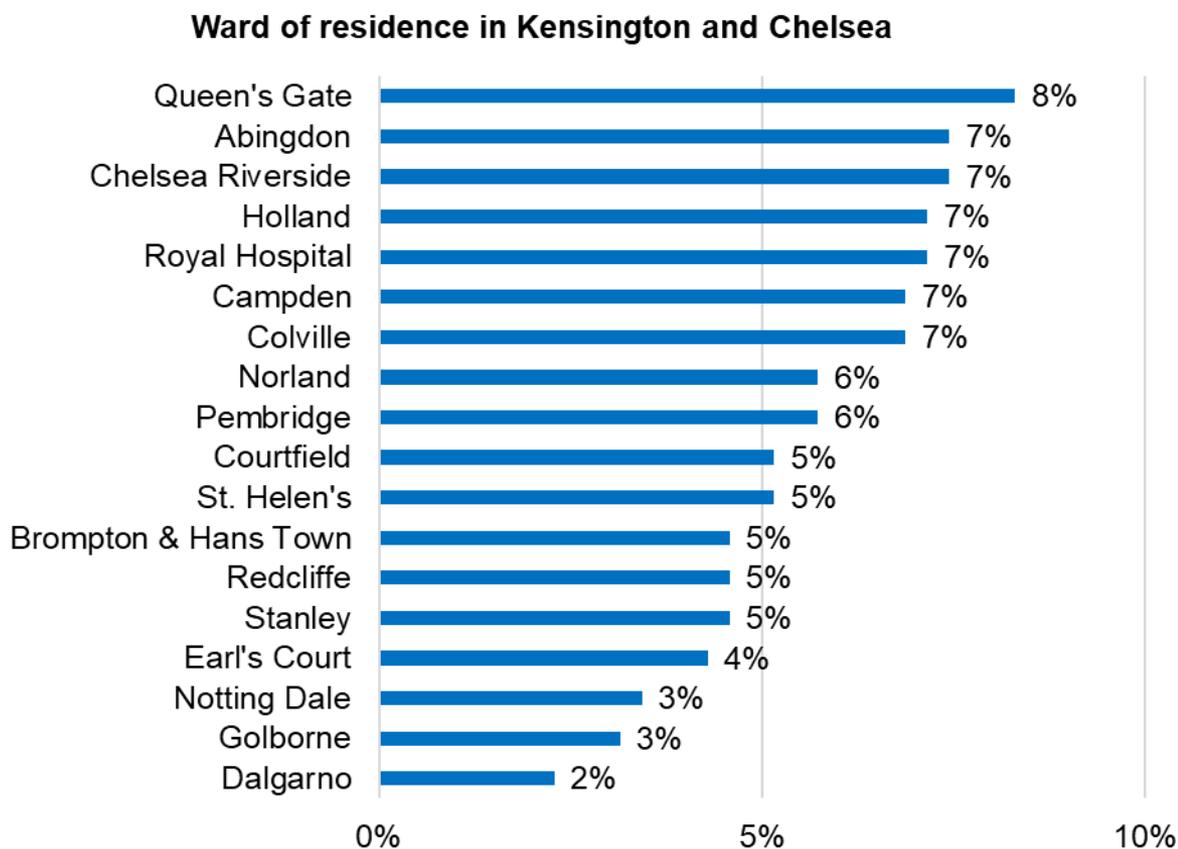
Profile of respondents



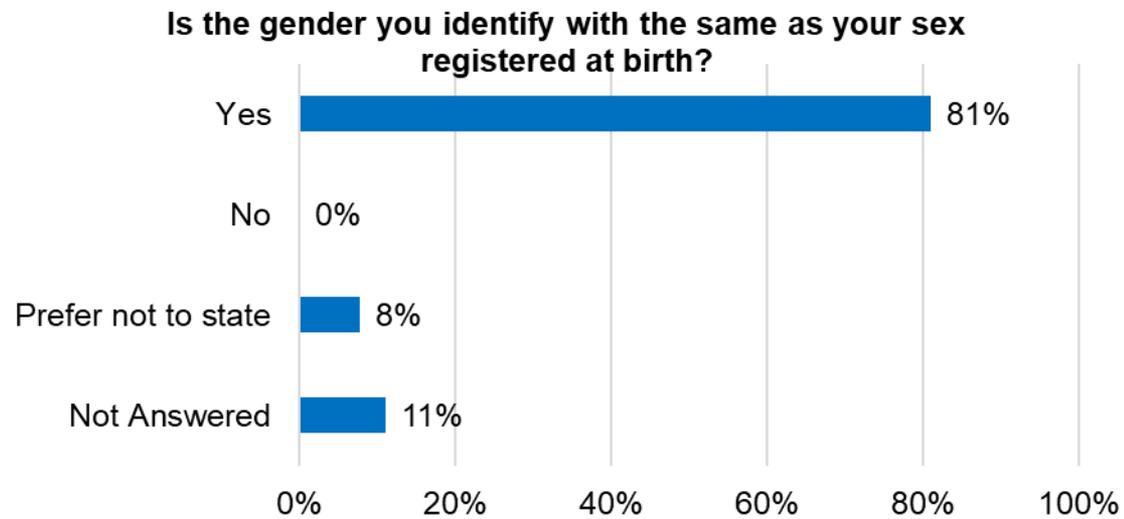
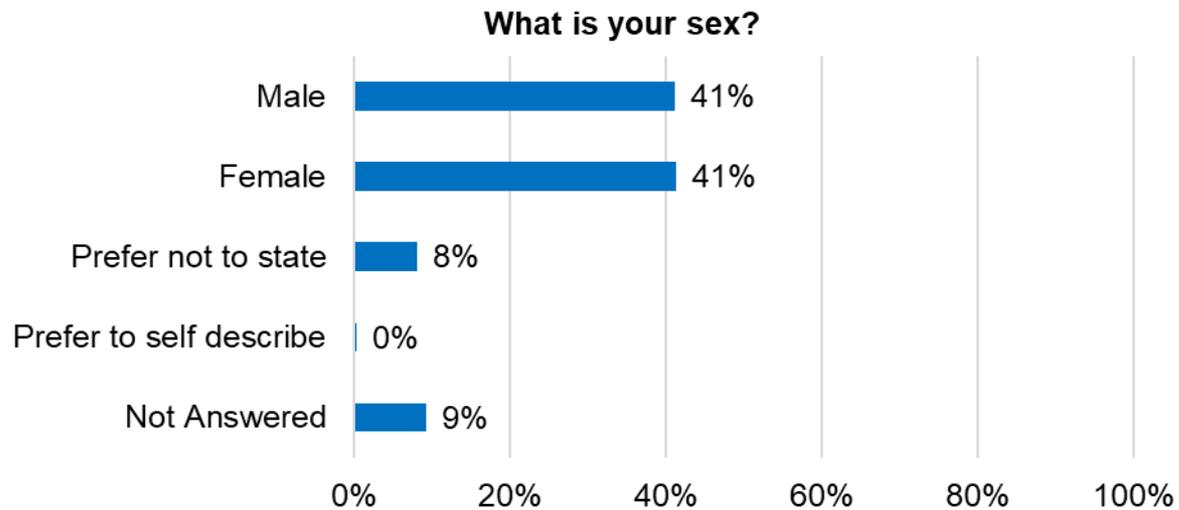
Profile of respondents

Respondents were asked a series of questions about themselves, to understand who had responded to the consultation.

A total of 357 respondents provided a valid postcode, 349 of these were from within Kensington and Chelsea (eight were from other London boroughs).



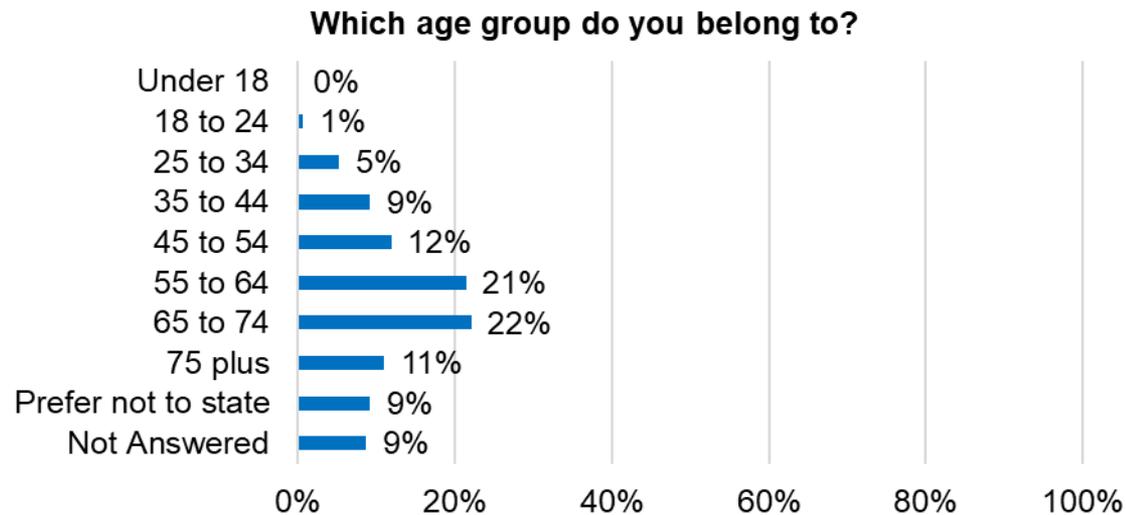
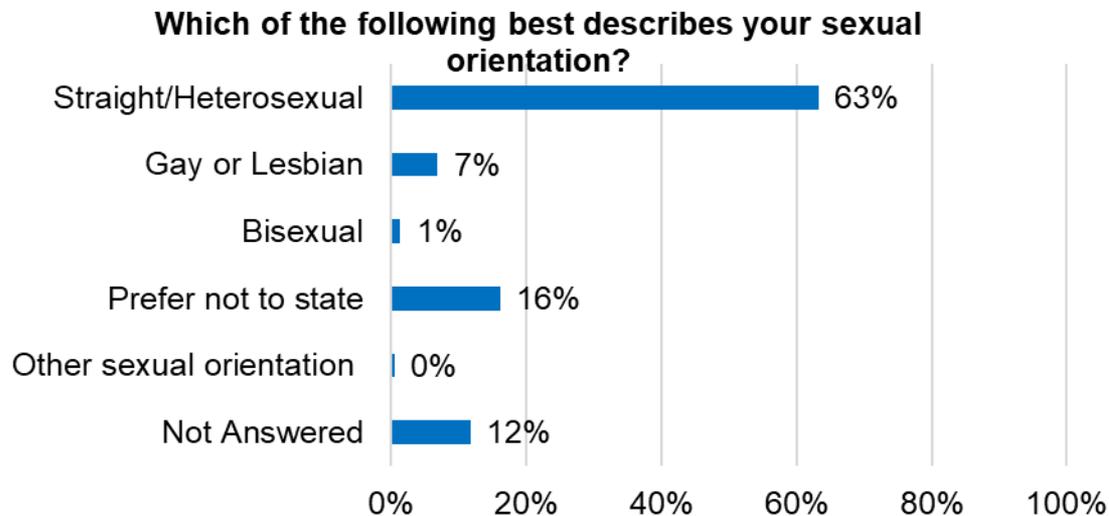
Profile of respondents



Base: All respondents (433)



Profile of respondents

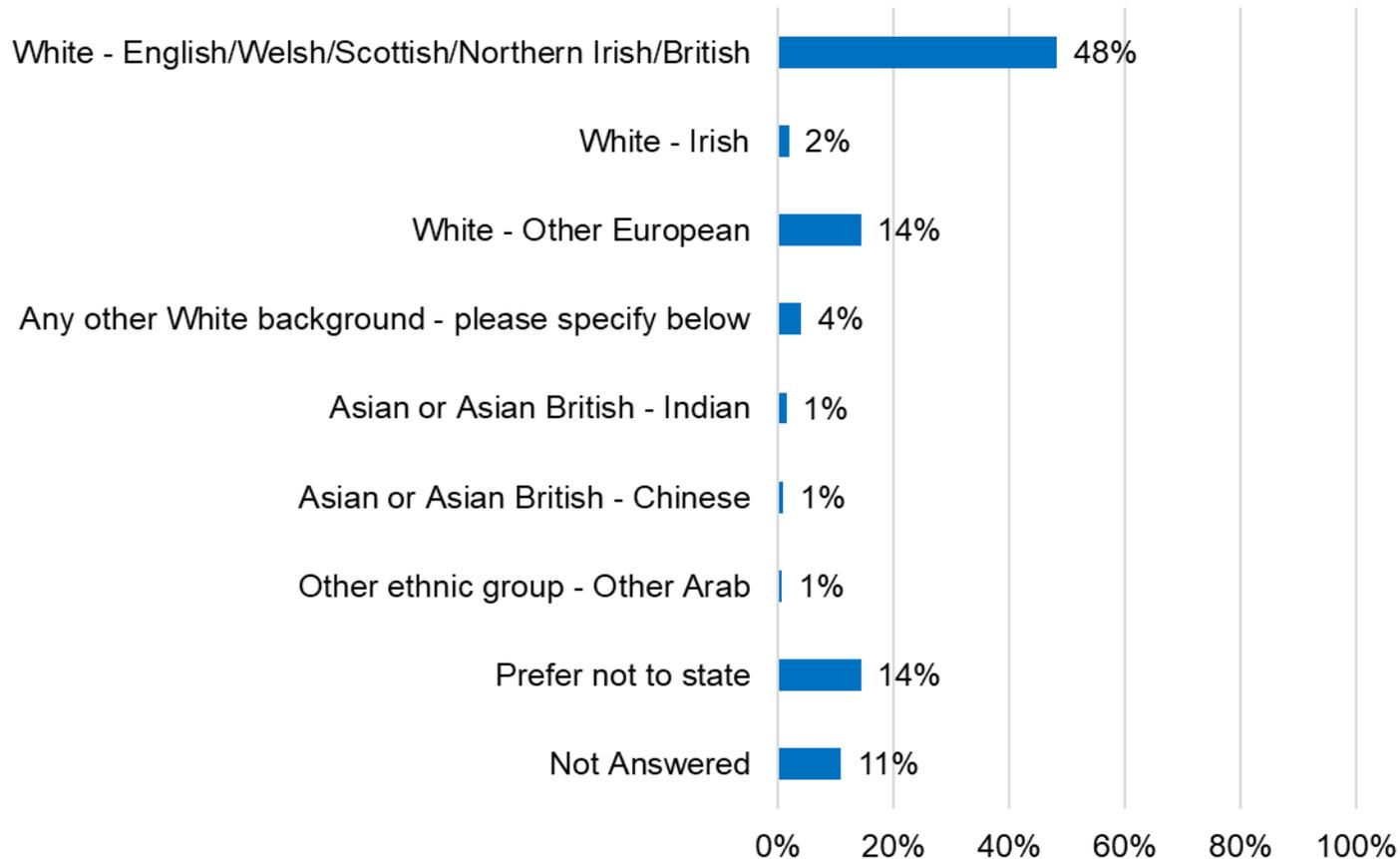


Base: All respondents (433)



Profile of respondents

How do you describe your ethnic origin?



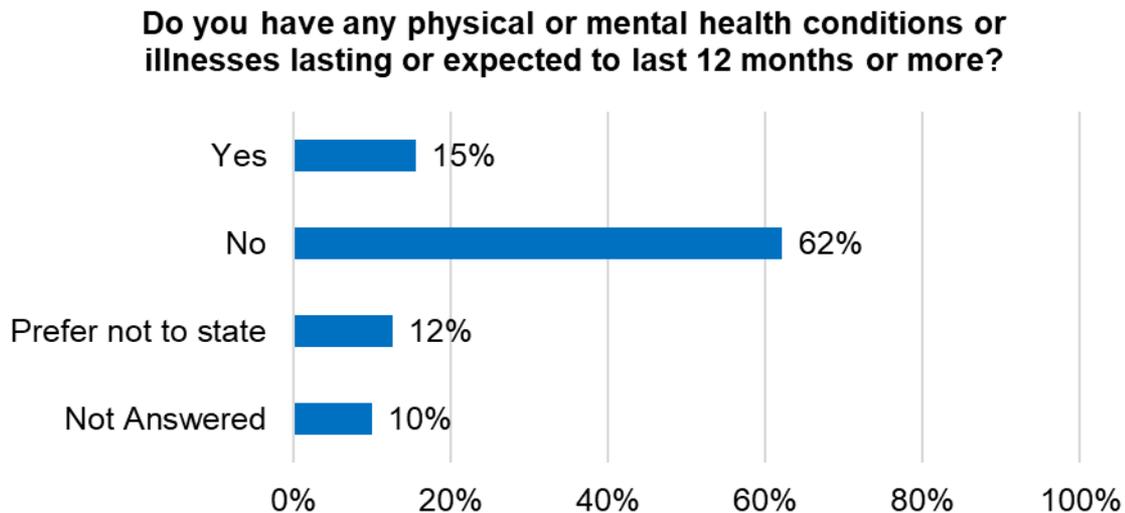
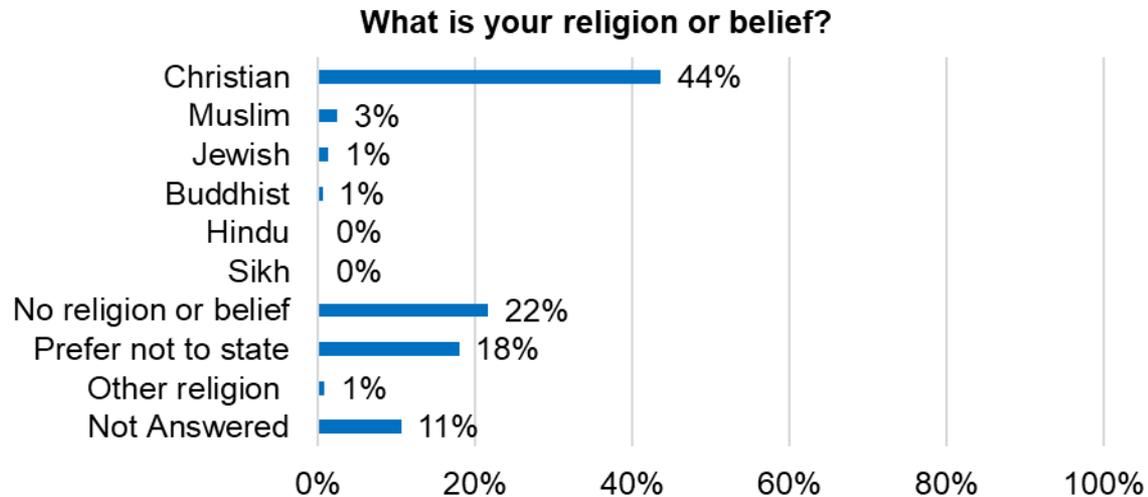
Base: All respondents (433)

Graph shows ethnicities with one per cent or more



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

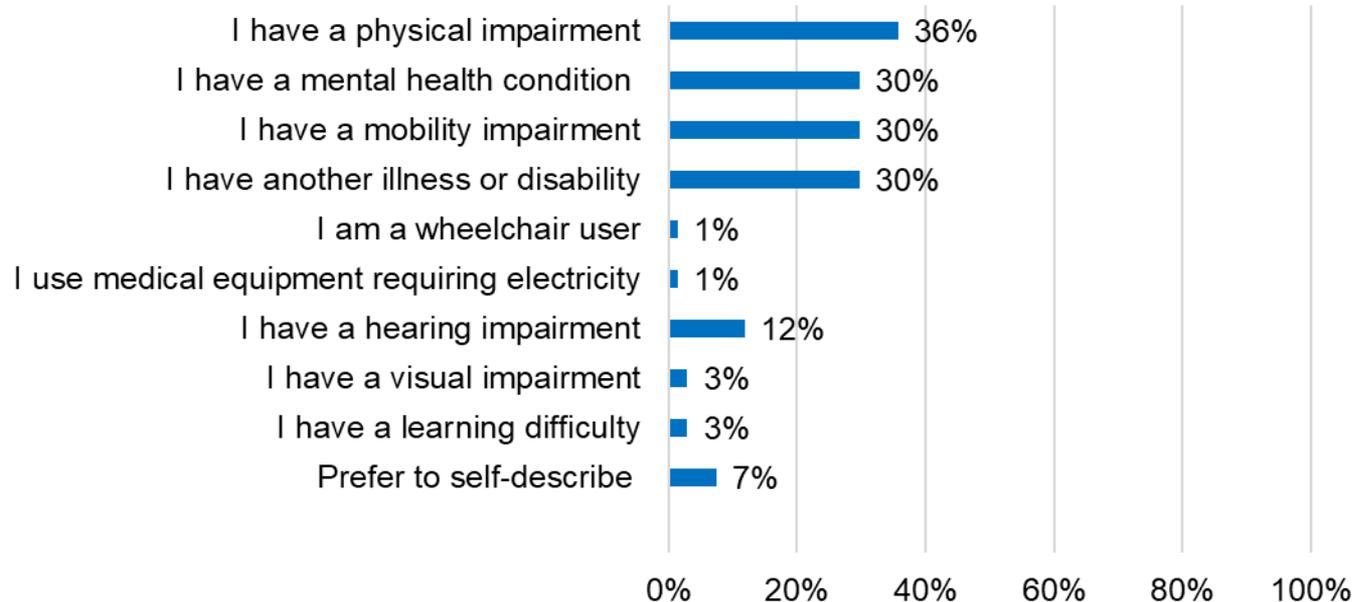
Profile of respondents



Base: All respondents (433)

Profile of respondents

If yes, what is the nature of your physical or mental health condition or illness?



Base: Respondents that indicated they a physical or mental health condition (67)



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Citizens' Panel event



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Citizens' Panel event 19 November 2025

Attendees: 97 residents from the Citizens' Panel with representation from across the borough

The event began with a short presentation outlining the Council's current financial challenges, followed by table-top discussions facilitated by Council Officers. These discussions provided residents with an opportunity to share their views on future priorities, digitalisation and income generation.

Q1 Priorities: What Success Looks Like (Next 5–10 Years)

Panel members want Kensington and Chelsea to be a safe, inclusive borough with high-quality, accessible services. They emphasise prioritising social care, housing, and community safety, especially for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children, and those living in poverty. Education, youth services, libraries, green spaces, and cultural activities are seen as essential for community wellbeing.

Transparency, accountability, and genuine consultation are considered critical, alongside building a thriving local economy and sustainable sources of income.

Concerns include wasteful spending, poor contractor performance, disruption from roadworks, cuts to youth services and libraries, housing inefficiencies, and fears that vulnerable residents may be excluded. Panel members call for fair resource distribution, stronger oversight, and collaboration with neighbouring councils.

Positive Priorities	Key Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social care for elderly, children, and vulnerable groups.• Community safety and better policing.• Education, lifelong learning, and youth services.• Green spaces, leisure, and cultural events.• Digitalisation for efficiency and improved services.• Transparency, accountability, and resident engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wasteful spending and poor contractor performance.• Roadworks disruption and housing inefficiencies.• Cuts to youth services and libraries.• Inequality and neglect of certain areas.• Distrust over financial management (e.g., Grenfell).• Risk of excluding vulnerable residents.



Citizens' Panel event 19 November 2025

Q2 Digitalisation:

Panel members are cautiously supportive of greater digitalisation, recognising its potential to save money, improve efficiency, and modernise services. Many welcome online forms, digital communications, and even AI, provided these tools enhance rather than reduce service quality. Digital systems are seen as faster and more convenient, but residents stress that changes must not compromise fairness or human interaction.

Concerns focus on digital exclusion for older people, those with disabilities, and residents without access to technology. There are also worries about job losses, data security, and the reliability of automated systems. Trust in chatbots and AI is low, and Panel members call for a gradual, well-communicated transition.

To make digital changes inclusive, Panel members suggest a hybrid approach that retains physical options alongside digital services. They recommend local hubs in libraries and community centres, training for vulnerable groups, and partnerships to support digital literacy. Strong data protection, user-friendly design, and consultation with residents are considered essential.

Overall, while digitalisation is seen as a better way to save money than cutting services, Panel members emphasise the need to maintain transparency, protect personal data, and preserve the human side of service delivery.

Themes in Favour of Digitalisation

- Digital services are faster, more convenient, and can streamline processes.
- Seen as a better way to save money compared to cutting services.
- Support for AI, automation, and improved technology.
- Potential for better record-keeping, progress tracking, and responsiveness.
- Reduced paper use and more sustainable operations.
- Ability to offer online profiles and personalised digital experiences.

Themes Against Digitalisation

- Risk of isolating residents without access to technology.
- Concerns about reduced face-to-face contact and personal support.
- Fear that staff roles will be cut significantly.
- Low confidence in chatbots and AI, as well as worries about system failures.
- GDPR compliance, hacking, and privacy concerns.
- Suggestions made for user-friendly design and involving residents in this.
- Concerns about expensive in-house development and reliance on consultants.

Citizens' Panel event 19 November 2025

Q3 Income Generation Ideas

Panel members suggested a wide range of ways for the Council to generate income while protecting essential services. Popular proposals included increasing council tax for second homes and empty properties, introducing tourist levies, and raising business rates for large companies. Many recommended monetising Council assets by renting out buildings, libraries, and parks for events, and hosting cultural festivals and ticketed attractions to draw visitors. There was strong support for partnerships with private organisations, sponsorships for major events, and benefactor schemes to fund libraries and cultural initiatives. Panel members also emphasised the need to secure additional funding from central government and the Mayor of London.

In addition to these ideas, advertising emerged as a pragmatic and generally well-supported way to generate income for the Council without cutting essential services. Panel members suggested that the borough could make better use of advertising spaces, particularly digital billboards at bus stops, to raise revenue in a modern and sustainable way. There was also a sense that the Council could benefit from promoting its own cultural assets more effectively, as many residents felt that important places (e.g., Leighton House) were not widely known, representing a missed opportunity for both visibility and income. Panel members also supported a wider use of social media campaigns and corporate sponsorship, provided these remain tasteful and do not dominate community spaces or events. These ideas reflected a view that greater visibility, targeted advertising, and stronger promotional activity could help attract visitors, support cultural events, and create new income opportunities for the borough.

Alongside revenue generation, Panel members stressed the importance of reducing wasteful spending, improving procurement processes, and addressing housing voids to cut temporary accommodation costs. Innovative approaches such as digital advertising, social media activity, and investment in green energy were seen as ways to diversify and future-proof the Council's income strategy.

While some proposals involved reducing staff or outsourcing services, others focused on retraining employees and merging offices to optimise resources. Overall, Panel members believe a mix of targeted taxes, commercial ventures, cultural initiatives, advertising opportunities, and collaborative partnerships can help maintain vital services without disproportionately impacting vulnerable groups.

More details of the suggestions made can be found in the appendix document.

Your Council Comes to You meetings



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Your Council comes to you

As part of the Council's commitments from the Grenfell Inquiry, 'Your Council comes to you' events have been organised across the borough to give residents the opportunity to meet members of the Council Leadership Team and Senior Officers, ask questions and provide feedback. A programme of events covering the whole borough are taking place across the year.

During the budget consultation period two events took place:

- Abingdon and Queen's Gate, 13 November 2025 – attended by 45 residents
- Earl's Court, 25 November 2025 – attended by 44 residents

The following feedback was received from individuals in relation to budget proposals and savings:

- A resident recognised that we pay less Council Tax than most other boroughs so the resident was happy to contribute if local services are maintained
- A resident indicated that they were happy to apply increased second homes tax, as they felt if you own a second home they can afford the extra tax
- A resident felt the Council needs to look at staffing on a top-down basis as often there are too many managers in major organisations
- A resident felt one way of raising money is tackling illegally rented properties. They are not paying any tax on these earnings, and this money could help the budget deficit being faced
- A resident felt statutory services need to be the priority, making sure we help those who need it the most



Feedback from the Youth Council



The Youth Council

The Youth Council

The Youth Council is a group of young people from across the borough who work together to represent the views of their peers, influence local decision-making, and improve services for young people.

Feedback from the Youth Council

On Monday 15 December, at a meeting of the Youth Council, the 16 Youth Council Members in attendance provided the following feedback in relation to the budget proposals. This was gathered through discussion and by completing specially designed postcards to capture feedback.

Services

Members of the Youth Council identified the following Council Services as the ones they value most.

Youth Services, Schools and Youth Participation

- Youth Council participation (Full Council) and youth groups
- Youth clubs (Earl's Court Youth Club) and youth projects
- State school education and PSHE lessons
- Family services
- Free education for young people
- Teachers

Community Safety/Police

- Police services
- Community Safety
- Serious youth violence services (extremely important)
- Good lighting to increase safety
- Safety : Street wardens and cameras

Environmental and Transport Services

- Bin service (keeping our streets clean) and rubbish collectors
- Transport
- Green projects (planting trees) and local parks
- Environment

Housing

- Housing , Social housing and Grenfell Repair
- Free housing
- Care takers

Other areas

- Culture (Museums)
- Translation (customer services)
- Service workers
- Our Borough Magazine (transparency and understanding)



The Youth Council

Comments

Members of the youth Council made the following comments too, in relation to what they would like to see or valued:

"Subsidised/free classes for young people are very important, especially for young people from low income families. In general any opportunities/workshops for young people that are cost-friendly."

"Education in schools is a service I value and community service."

"Youth participation Team gives voice to the youth and enables change and growth."

"Lighting makes streets more visible/safer."

"Transport - longer opening times: stays open later e.g. closes at 12 not 10 help with safety of public."

"I value the provisions that go into youth clubs because they are a lot of young people's safe place. The funding that goes into youth clubs is very important and needed because it is where a lot of young people socialise and prevents them having anti-social behaviour."

"I highly value the Youth Participation Team in RBKC specifically the Youth Council is essential to our borough, and the services they provide to their youth to spread youth voice and their opportunities are necessary. Also, it is essential as they are minimal opportunities for young people to spread their voice and taking this away will result in a terrible lack of communication with the youth, excluding part of the community that needs an input."

