

2020-21 Budget Amendment Public Consultation

July 2020

	Table no's	Page
Summary: "How to address the budget gap?"		2
Appendix: tables		
Respondents by type	1	4
How respondents heard about the consultation	2	4
Options that respondents ticked	3	5
Top ten 'Other Options' – respondents' suggestions	4	5
'People'-based service areas – respondents' top 3 choices	5	6
Reasons for 'people' choices	6	8
'Community/place'-based service areas – respondents' top 3 choices	7	10
Reasons for 'Community/place' choices	8	12
Spending priorities – "If you had an extra £1, where would you spend it?"	9	13
Option responses – by age, ethnicity, disabled	10	17

Cabinet Members	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services – Peter Oakford Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement and People – Shellina Prendergast
Relevant Director	Corporate Director Finance – Zena Cooke
Report author(s)	Revenue and Tax Strategy Manager – Simon Pleace
Circulated to	County Council
Classification	Unrestricted

Contact details

Corporate Director Finance	Zena Cooke	03000 419 205	zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk
Revenue and Tax Strategy Manager	Simon Pleace	03000 416 947	simon.pleace@kent.gov.uk

Summary: “How to address the budget gap?”

		Table
We carried out a public consultation and 1,921 people responded	There were almost 1,500 KCC residents, plus about 380 KCC employees, and a few others (e.g. business owners, etc). This reply rate is up 40% on last year’s autumn consultation. Over 50% of respondents heard about the consultation via Facebook.	1 2
Respondents ticked as many as they wanted of five options for addressing the budget gap, plus could add an ‘other’ option too	On average, respondents ticked just over two of the six. The six are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase other income sources, such as charging for some services, to cover the additional spending and loss of income. 2. Identify further savings in the budget, even if that means a reduction to service levels and/or loss of services. 3. Use some of our general reserves (this is our ‘rainy day’ fund for emergencies and can only be used once). Any use of general reserves would need to be paid back in future years. 4. Continue lobbying government to ask them to provide KCC with additional funds to cover the costs we have incurred and the income we have lost due to the impact of the pandemic. 5. Continue lobbying government to allow councils to cover additional costs and loss of income by borrowing money. 6. Other (please specify). 	3
Easily the most popular was Option 4 – Lobby Government For Funds	Over 70% of replies ticked this Option 4. Next most popular was Option 3: Use General Reserves (48% ticked it).	3
Respondents who chose the “Other” option and those who made free text comments said to reduce member allowances	Option 6 was ‘other’, and 7% of all replies suggested reducing allowances (which is 30% of all those that suggested an ‘other’). And 5.4% of all replies said to reduce senior staff pay. These choices were also reflected in the free text comments made by respondents.	4
The most prioritised people-based services are Older People Social Care, albeit Public Protection has risen sharply	Respondents were asked to tick three from seven services; Older People is top (19% - 21% last autumn). Public Protection is the biggest riser - it was second with 16%, up from 12% in autumn.	5, 6

Summary: “How to address the budget gap?”

The two most prioritised community/ place-based service areas are Highways and Waste	Again, respondents were asked to tick three from seven. The two most ticked areas are materially ahead of the other five – Highways scored 21%, Waste Services 20%.	7, 8
Spend on the Young and Old, if there was an extra £1 to spend	Respondents had to choose just one option of fourteen on offer. The top two were Educational & Youth Services, and Older People Social Care. Public Protection was third.	9

The rest of this report is mostly tables giving more detail. See also Table 10 that analyses respondents by age, ethnicity, etc. The front page of this report lists all these tables.

How the consultation was undertaken

- It ran from 13 July to 9 August 2020 and was primarily delivered through the Council’s website. There were 13,908 page views made by 12,559 users. A press release was issued on 13 July. It achieved coverage in the following: BBC South East Today, Radio Kent, Isle of Thanet News, Canterbury Journal, Times of Tunbridge Wells, and Academy FM.
- Emails to promote the consultation went to a range of voluntary and community sector organisations, Kent Association for Local Councils, and over 3,000 people that have signed up to KCC’s consultation directory to hear about new consultations.
- It was also kindly promoted by Healthwatch Kent on their channels and with their forums for older people, mental health, physical disability, and Food Bank.
- Hard copies and alternative formats were also publicised through the press release, with a telephone number, Text Relay facility and email address.
- An easy read version of the consultation document and questionnaire was available. We received two submissions in this format.

Key message: Kent residents are 76% of respondents**1****Respondents by type**

Nos	%	
1,458	75.9	As a Kent Resident
341	17.8	As a KCC employee (Kent Resident)
36	1.9	As a KCC employee (non-Kent Resident)
21	1.1	As a Parish/District or County Councillor
19	1.0	On behalf of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS)
12	0.6	As a resident from somewhere else, e.g. Medway
9	0.5	Other
8	0.4	As a Kent business owner
6	0.3	On behalf of an educational establishment, such as a school or college
6	0.3	On behalf of a Parish/Town/Borough/District Council in an official capacity
5	0.2	As a representative of a local community group or resident's association
1,921	100	Total

Key message: Facebook dominant**2****How respondents heard about the Consultation**

	Nos	%
Facebook	1,095	55
An email from KCC	291	15
Kent.gov.uk website	220	11
From a friend or relative	115	5.8
Other	90	4.5
Twitter	46	2.3
Newspaper	39	2.0
Voluntary or community sector organisation	34	1.7
District Council/Councillor	25	1.3
LinkedIn	14	0.7
Local KCC Councillor	14	0.7
Instagram	4	0.2
Total	1,905	100

Key message - 'Lobby Government for additional funds'

3

Options that respondents ticked

	Total	
	Nos that ticked it	% all respondents ⁽¹⁾
	Nos	%
Lobby Government for additional funds	1,399	73
Use General Reserves	917	48
Lobby Government to allow borrowing	629	33
Increase income sources	545	28
Identify savings	382	20
Other	220	11
Total	4,092	na
Average 'ticks' per respondent	2.1	

Note 1: the % is of all respondents, i.e. the total 1,921. So, for instance, 1,399/1,921 = 73%

Key message - 'Reduce your Member allowances and senior staff pay'

4

Top ten 'Other Options' - respondents' suggestions

We have grouped comments into themes		% age of	
	Nos	Total replies	Replies that gave 'Other options'
Reduce Member allowances	134	7.0	30
Reduce senior staff pay	103	5.4	23
Make efficiency savings (same service at lower cost)	92	4.8	21
Property savings e.g. from home working	32	1.7	7
Reduce capital spend (abort certain projects)	16	0.8	4
Better commissioning	16	0.8	4
Restructuring of local government	15	0.8	3
Council Tax increases	15	0.8	3
Introduce or raise fees and charges	15	0.8	3
Seek full reimbursement from government for costs relating to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	10	0.5	2
Total	448	na	na

Note re Key Message: Following consultation feedback, Member allowances will be considered at the County Council meeting on 10 September. Our senior staff, as with all KCC staff are employed under formal contracts of employment, the terms of which include an annual review of salary which is next due in April 2021. Our pay levels are reviewed annually to maintain an appropriate position in the employment market so that we are able to recruit and retain the best possible individuals for all of our roles. All staff receive the same terms and conditions irrespective of their grade, there are no bonus schemes. The details of all those earning over £50k are transparently reported on our website.

Key message - Public Protection up a lot from before

'People'-based service areas - respondents' top 3 choices

5

	Now	Autumn 2019	Change
	%	%	%
Older People Social Care (65+)	19	21	-2.6
Public Protection	16	12	3.7
Children's Social Care	16	18	-2.4
Educational and Youth Services	16	16	-0.2
Adult Social Care (18-64)	13	11	2.1
Early Help	11	9	1.4
Social Support	9	11	-2.1

The People service areas (for info)

Adult Social Care (18-64): We support 12,900 adults to live independently at home and access services in their community, including helping people with learning disabilities, mental health, sensory (deaf/blind) and physical disability. We also provide placements in residential and nursing care homes for people with long term, complex needs.

Social Support: We help people with issues such as homelessness, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse or those going through a crisis. We provide advice for 152,000 carers to help families and carers find the support they need. We provide help to people who may feel lonely or isolated. We support people to do more for themselves at home, by learning or re-learning skills to make them feel safe, happy and live a fulfilled life.

Older People Social Care (65+): We help 20,700 older people. This includes support to help older people live safely and independently at home (e.g. help with daily tasks) and provide day care services to help older people enjoy a good quality life. When people need more support or end of life care, we provide 5,300 placements in residential and nursing care homes.

Public Protection: We work with partners such as District Councils and Kent Police on community safety issues (e.g. crime, gangs, domestic abuse). Our Community Wardens cover 128 communities, tackling antisocial behaviour and encouraging communities to work together. We also have responsibilities to support communities to be prepared for emergency and planned events such as disasters, floods and Brexit and Trading Standards work to tackle rogue traders, scams, promote trusted traders and keep goods safe. We also deliver the coroners' services to investigate deaths and hold inquests.

Early Help: We have 84 children's centres which are open to all children and families to access activities, support and advice (e.g. weigh clinics, parenting classes). We want to provide the right support for families at an early stage, to prevent problems getting worse and to stop children going into social care.

Children's Social Care: We support children and families in communities find the right fostering and adoption placements and currently look after 1,600 children in care. We help 1,700 care leavers find the right education, training and housing opportunities up to the age of 25. We help children with complex social care needs, such as physical and learning disabilities and mental health, with additional support to live at home, in their community or in residential placements.

Educational and Youth Services We support children to be ready for school, working with nurseries and pre-schools to provide quality childcare places. We work with 583 primary, secondary and special schools, so that all children can access a school place that meets their needs. We work with schools to ensure they deliver quality education and improve standards. We help children who need support with complex issues such as special educational needs and disability, emotional wellbeing, attendance and behaviour services and young offenders. We provide activities for young people including youth groups and youth workers.

Key message - please safeguard the elderly / vulnerable

Reasons for 'People' choices

6

(We have grouped similar comments into themes)

	No's	%
Safeguard elderly/vulnerable adults	612	27
Maintain and invest in Child/Youth Services & Family support	389	17
Improve and maintain public safety, including policing, trading standards and community wellbeing	329	14
Education & the need to support future generations in the wake of COVID-19	319	14
Early Intervention - "Invest to save". Invest resources in early intervention and prevention to avoid more expensive costs in the future	283	12
Concern of COVID-19 impact on future service offer	68	3
Already underfunded services so need to be a future priority	51	2
Maintain and increase support for the homeless and those with addictions	48	2
Improving the provision and funding in support of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	39	2
Improve, empower and safeguard vulnerable lives going through crises and hardship via provision of Social Support services	38	2
Utilise the voluntary and community sector to provide services and alleviate KCC budget pressure	36	2
Social Care budgets are too high - some families could do more to support their elderly/young	24	1
Concerns around capacity to serve an aging population	22	1
Relieve NHS burden	17	1
Maintain/ increase Community Warden presence	17	1
Anticipate future demand and collaborate between services to streamline costs	8	0.3
Maintain and increase support for fostering system	7	0.3
TOTAL	2,307	100

What respondents said – examples

“It is very important that we support the vulnerable members of society as well as the wider community as we recover from the impact of COVID-19”

“Early Years is THE most important for life. Young people cannot help themselves so are next most in need of support. We all deserve to stay safe.”

“It's a really difficult choice. I tried to think of who would be most in need and who would be most vulnerable but in reality, they're all vital services”

“Educational and Youth services are so vital to our local communities as they give safe spaces to youth and also help provide with counselling services and helps youth express themselves.”

“Public protection issues have been magnified during the pandemic and many people had been facing issues relating to scams and financial abuse. Also, much of the new regulations that was put forward by central government, was down to the public protection team and Trading Standards to go out and enforce. They have been at the fore front of this pandemic crisis.”

“If we ‘invest’ in our children, we are likely to reduce the bill on a longer- term basis. If we work with our families as an early intervention, we will reduce the bill for the future. If we do all of these, it will ‘free up’ funding for social care and adult services as well.”

Key message - Highways, waste and recycling matter

'Community/Place' service areas - respondents' top 3 choices

7

	Now	Autumn 2019	Change
	%	%	%
Highways	21	22	-1.1
Waste Services	20	18	2.3
Environment Services	16	18	-1.3
Transport Services	13	16	-2.5
Regeneration & Economic Development	12	11	1.6
Community Services	9	7	1.5
Libraries, Registration & Archives	9	9	-0.6

The Community/ Place service areas (for info)

Environment Services: We enhance and protect Kent's natural environment for everyone to enjoy. This includes our 9 Country Parks, over 6,000km of public rights of way, areas of outstanding natural beauty and natural habitats such as woodlands, coastline and wetlands. We also look to the future, tackling issues such as climate change, green energy opportunities and protecting heritage conservation. We deliver flood protection and defend coastal erosion.

Highways: We manage over 8,500km of highways, 5,000km of pavements, 120,000 streetlights and maintain other assets like bridges, road signs and drains. We work with districts/parishes to manage grass, trees and weeds next to our highways. We fix potholes and deliver a winter service to keep roads gritted and safe in bad weather. We're also responsible for road safety, working with partners to prevent accidents and deaths on Kent's roads. We're not responsible for motorways and major A roads which are the responsibility of Highways England.

Community Services: We provide services which are important for the wellbeing of our communities and residents. Our culture, arts and sports services work with many schools, a range of providers including Turner Contemporary, local sports and arts groups and we support festivals and work with partners to bring major events to the county such as Open Golf in 2021. We deliver adult education, supporting people to develop new skills. Our Gateways and contact centres help people get in touch with the council, and work with other partners to provide advice or support to resolve queries or issues online, on the phone or face to face.

Libraries: Registration and Archives We have 99 libraries, a mobile library service and support for older and vulnerable people to access library services at home. In addition to reading and learning opportunities, libraries also provide community activities such as baby bounce and rhyme, dementia friendly libraries and summer reading challenges. We also host archives and history projects to protect Kent's cultural heritage and deliver registration of births, deaths and marriages.

Regeneration and Economic Development:

These services focus on regeneration of local areas and creating the right conditions for the economy to grow. We work with different types of businesses, colleges, universities and other partners to ensure we have the right skills, infrastructure and job opportunities for the future. We also promote apprenticeships to provide new training and work opportunities. We work with international, national and regional partners to attract funding to support key projects that will support growth, support our tourism sector as well as local food producers, provide loans for new businesses and tackle empty properties.

Waste Services: We are responsible for disposing of waste and providing the Household Waste Recycling Centres. District Councils are responsible for on-street collections. We work closely with districts on issues such as recycling, composting and fly tipping.

Transport Services: These services are about travel, not physical roads and highways. We have responsibility for transport planning to ensure the right networks are there to support growing communities. This includes active travel options such as walking and cycling. We subsidise bus travel and concessionary fares (discount rates for older people and people who need support with travel costs) and maintain bus routes for isolated and rural communities which older, younger and vulnerable people may depend on. We assist young people to travel to school with the Kent Travel Saver card and help pupils with special educational needs to travel to and from school

Key message - Highways, waste and recycling matter

8

Reasons for Community/Place choices

(We have grouped similar comments into themes)

	No's	%
Improve quality & safety of highways network	420	18
Fund waste & increase recycling	388	17
Improve the environment	324	14
Improve mobility/reduce car use via public transport services	297	13
Invest in regeneration - "sow seeds for a healthy economy"	247	11
Maintain library services	198	9
Improve Kent health and lifestyle via public open spaces	168	7
Promote & invest in community & cultural services & support	141	6
Increase, improve and promote alternative, healthier and greener travel options	77	3
Reduce/ review library services	23	1
Utilise voluntary and community sector to provide services and alleviate KCC budget pressure	17	1
Increase charges for some services, such as Libraries and Transport	11	0.5
Concerns around increased housing and lack of infrastructure to cope with it	9	0.4
Invest in apprenticeships	8	0.3
Alternative freight entry points to Kent (i.e. further north) to reduce traffic	1	0.04
TOTAL	2,329	100

What respondents said – some examples

“Highways are vital to maintain for the infrastructure of Kent to ensure that we can re-build our economy following this pandemic.”

“Far too much money is spent on the road network. We're on the brink of environmental catastrophe; we need to invest in green stuff now!”

“Waste - A public health issue. Important that we seek to minimise landfill and maximise the potential income that waste can provide.”

“We should all be encouraged to use forms of transport other than cars and the environment is in danger - if we don't look after it, it won't be there for future generations. we have an opportunity now to do things differently”

“Libraries are important community hubs and visited by many, many people regularly. They are both meeting points and sources of lifelong, life-changing learning. They enable access to essential online services to those who don't have access to the internet, either due to poverty, fear, or being homeless.”

“KCC have to ensure the land management woodlands, parks, public rights of way are accessible to all for mental health and wellbeing but also for the long-term sustainability of our beautiful county.”

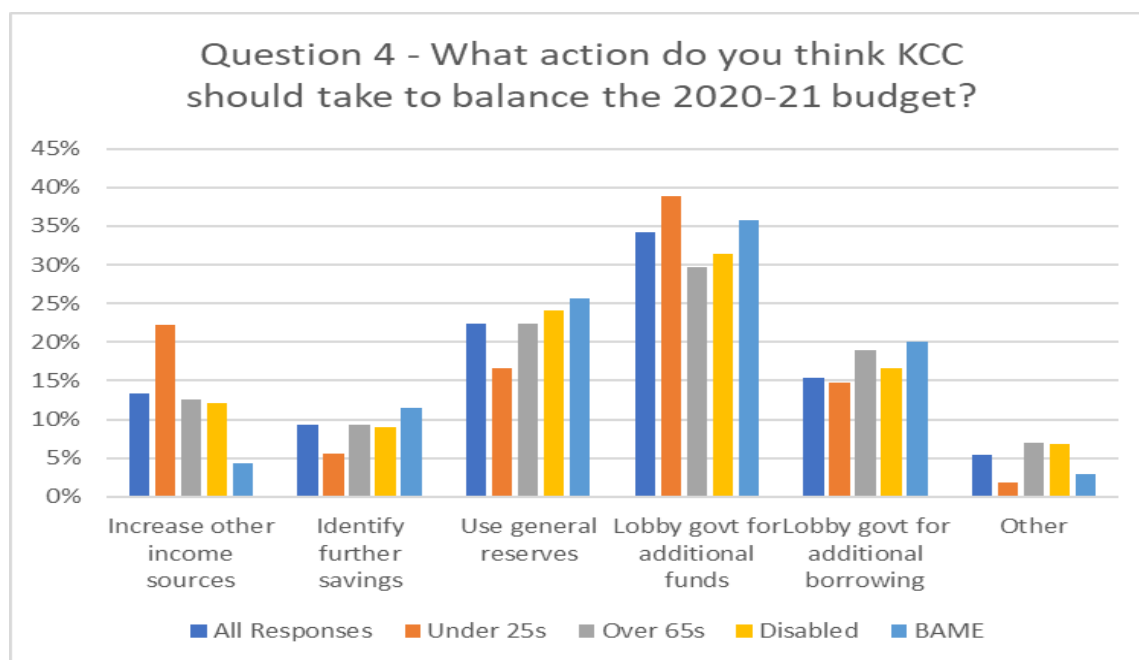
'Support the young and old'

9

Spending priorities of respondents - "If you had an extra £1, where would you spend it?"

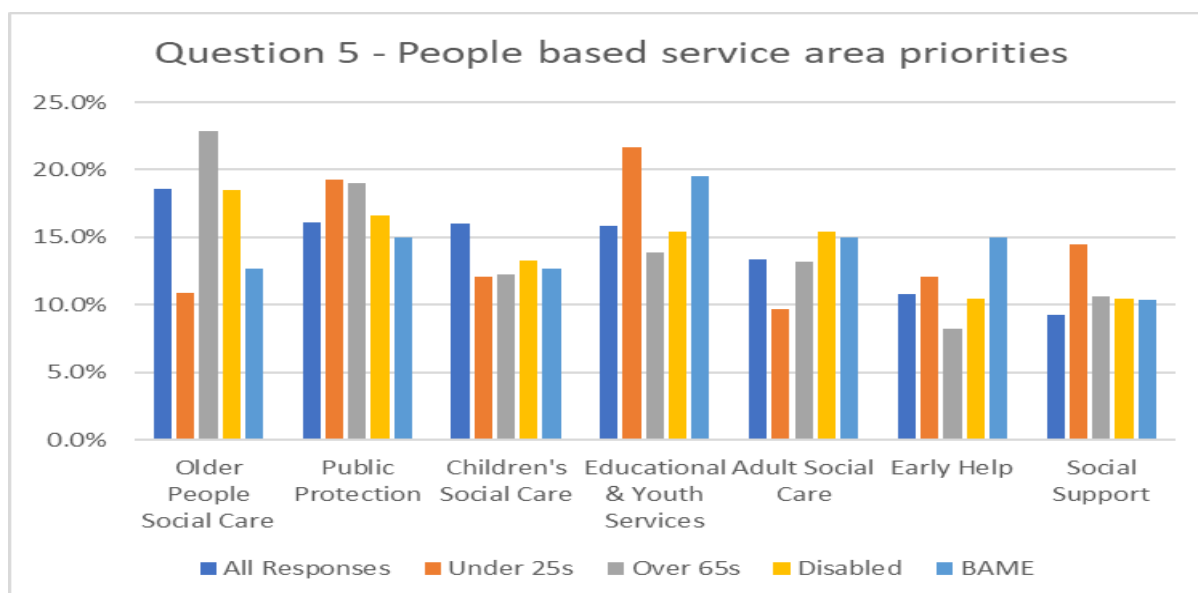
	%
Education & Youth Services	14
Older People Social Care	13
Public Protection	12
Children's Social Care	10
Early Help	10
Environment Services	7.8
Regeneration and Economic Development	7.5
Adult Social Care	6.5
Highways	5.5
Transport Services	3.3
Libraries, Registration and Archives	3.1
Community Services	2.9
Social Support	2.7
Waste Services	2.5
TOTAL	100

How people answered – split by Under 25, Over 65, disable and BAME (BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups)



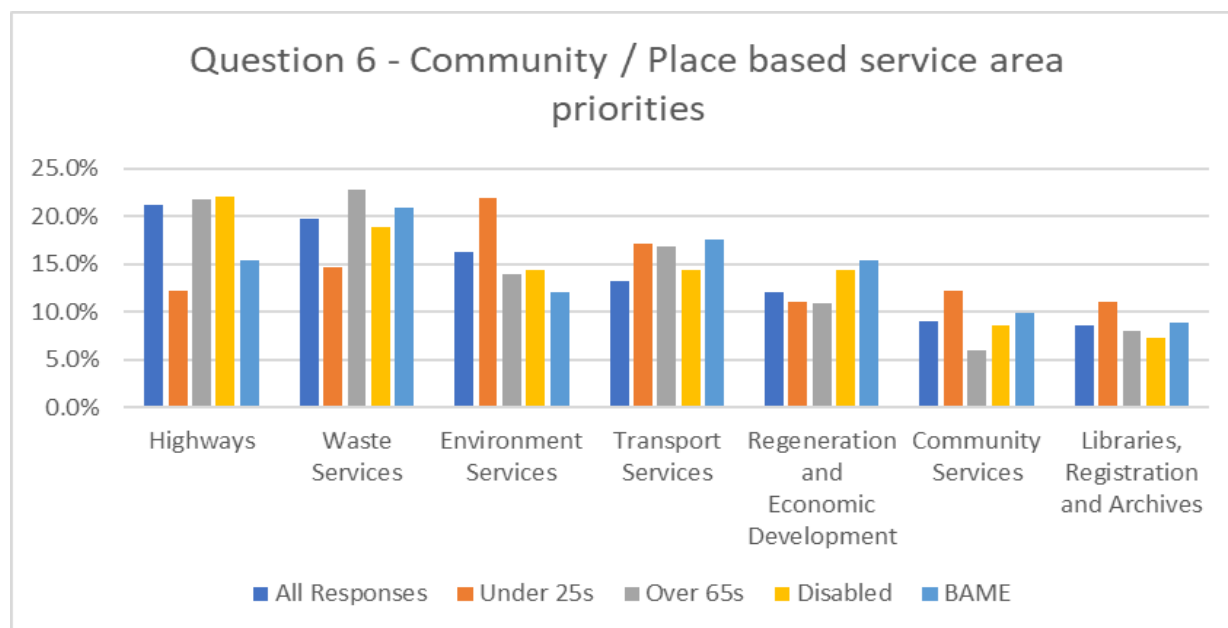
Action to balance the budget

The responses from the different protected groups are broadly similar to all responses. The only noticeable exceptions are from the under 25's who are more supportive of increases to fees and charges to generate additional income, and less supportive of identifying further savings and using general reserves.



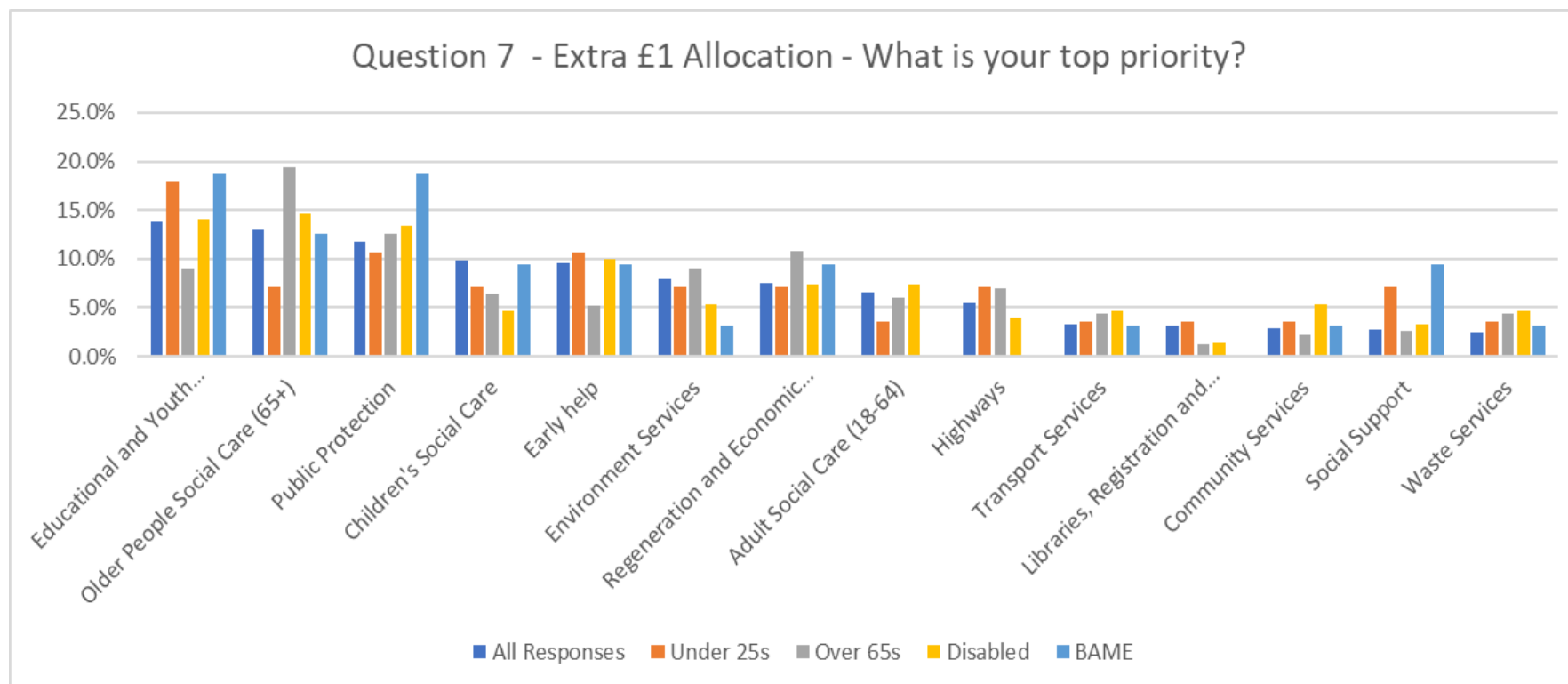
People-based priorities

A higher percentage of Over 65's included Older People Social Care in their top three, although this was less of a priority for those under 25 and the BAME group. Educational and Youth Services were most popular with the Under 25's and the BAME group. Early Help was most popular with the BAME group.



Community/place-based service area priorities

Environment Services were most popular with Under 25's. Both the Disabled and the BAME responses were higher than all responses for Regeneration and Economic Development, whilst Highways was most popular with Over 65's and the Disabled group. Waste Services were most popular with Over 65's.



£1 extra spend

A higher percentage of the BAME group selected Public Protection as their top priority compared with the other groups.

How people answered - split by Under 25s, Over 65s, Disabled, BAME

Question 4 – What action do you think KCC should take to balance the 2020-21 budget?

All Responses	%	Under 25s	%	Over 65s	%	Disabled	%	BAME	%
Lobby govt for additional funds	34	Lobby govt for additional funds	39	Lobby govt for additional funds	30	Lobby govt for additional funds	31	Lobby govt for additional funds	36
Use general reserves	22	Increase other income sources	22	Use general reserves	22	Use general reserves	24	Use general reserves	26
Lobby govt – additional borrowing	15	Use general reserves	17	Lobby govt - additional borrowing	19	Lobby govt - additional borrowing	17	Lobby govt - additional borrowing	20
Increase other income sources	13	Lobby govt - additional borrowing	15	Increase other income sources	13	Increase other income sources	12	Identify further savings	11
Identify further savings	9	Identify further savings	6	Identify further savings	9	Identify further savings	9	Increase other income sources	4
Other	5	Other	2	Other	7	Other	7	Other	3

Question 5 – People based service area priorities

All Responses	%	Under 25s	%	Over 65s	%	Disabled	%	BAME	%
Older people Social Care	19	Educational & Youth	22	Older people Social Care	23	Older people Social Care	18	Educational & Youth	20
Children's Social Care	16	Public Protection	19	Public Protection	19	Public Protection	17	Adult Social Care	15
Educational & Youth	16	Social Support	14	Educational & Youth	14	Adult Social Care	15	Early Help	15
Public Protection	16	Children's Social Care	12	Adult Social Care	13	Educational & Youth	15	Public Protection	15
Adult Social Care	13	Early Help	12	Children's Social Care	12	Children's Social Care	13	Children's Social Care	13
Early Help	11	Older people Social Care	11	Social Support	11	Early Help	10	Older people Social Care	13
Social Support	9	Adult Social Care	10	Early Help	8	Social Support	10	Social Support	10

Question 6 – Community / Place based service area priorities

All Responses	%	Under 25s	%	Over 65s	%	Disabled	%	BAME	%
Highways	21	Environment Services	22	Waste Services	23	Highways	22	Waste Services	21
Waste Services	20	Transport Services	17	Highways	22	Waste Services	19	Transport Services	18
Environment Services	16	Waste Services	15	Transport Services	17	Environment Services	14	Highways	15
Transport Services	13	Highways	12	Environment Services	14	Regeneration and Economic Development	14	Regeneration and Economic Development	15
Regeneration and Economic Development	12	Community Services	12	Regeneration and Economic Development	11	Transport Services	14	Environment Services	12
Community Services	9	Regeneration and Economic Development	11	Libraries, Registration and Archives	8	Community Services	9	Community Services	10
Libraries, Registration and Archives	9	Libraries, Registration and Archives	11	Community Services	6	Libraries, Registration and Archives	7	Libraries, Registration and Archives	9

Question 7 – Extra £1 Allocation – What is your top priority?

All Responses	%	Under 25s	%	Over 65s	%	Disabled	%	BAME	%
Educational and Youth Services	14	Educational and Youth Services	18	Older People Social Care (65+)	19	Older People Social Care (65+)	15	Educational and Youth Services	19
Older People Social Care (65+)	13	Early help	11	Public Protection	13	Educational and Youth Services	14	Public Protection	19
Public Protection	12	Public Protection	11	Regeneration and Economic Development	11	Public Protection	13	Older People Social Care (65+)	13
Children's Social Care	10	Older People Social Care (65+)	7	Educational and Youth Services	9	Early help	10	Social Support	9
Early help	10	Social Support	7	Environment Services	9	Adult Social Care (18-64)	7	Children's Social Care	9
Environment Services	8	Children's Social Care	7	Highways	7	Regeneration and Economic Development	7	Early help	9
Regeneration and Economic Development	8	Environment Services	7	Children's Social Care	6	Environment Services	5	Regeneration and Economic Development	9
Adult Social Care (18-64)	7	Highways	7	Adult Social Care (18-64)	6	Community Services	5	Environment Services	3
Highways	6	Regeneration and Economic Development	7	Early help	5	Children's Social Care	5	Waste Services	3
Transport Services	3	Adult Social Care (18-64)	4	Waste Services	4	Waste Services	5	Community Services	3
Libraries, Registration and Archives	3	Waste Services	4	Transport Services	4	Transport Services	5	Transport Services	3
Community Services	3	Community Services	4	Social Support	3	Highways	4	Adult Social Care (18-64)	-
Social Support	3	Libraries, Registration and Archives	4	Community Services	2	Social Support	3	Highways	-
Waste Services	3	Transport Services	4	Libraries, Registration and Archives	1	Libraries, Registration and Archives	1	Libraries, Registration and Archives	-

BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is **defined** as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups