

Analysis of the responses to the 3 consultation questions

In total 1,979 responses were submitted. Generally the views expressed remained largely consistent throughout the 51 day consultation period

Question 1: Council Tax			
To preserve the most valued services (especially those we aren't required to provide by law) we are planning to raise additional income through council tax (note this would not entirely remove the need for savings as this would require a 19% increase in council tax). What would you prefer? Please select one option only:			
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
a) I don't want an increase in council tax and the council should make more savings to balance the budget.	484	24%	25%
b) I'd accept a minimal increase of 1.99% (1.99% would increase band C charge by £19 a year –the maximum increase allowed without a referendum).	876	44%	44%
c) I'd accept a rise between 2% to 5% rise in order to protect more services from the reductions in funding (this would require a referendum and each 1% would increase band C charge by £9.50 a year).	450	23%	23%
d) I'd accept an increase in excess of 5% to provide greater protection for council services.	159	8%	8%
Left blank / No response	10	1%	
Total	1979	100%	100%

Question 2: Savings over the next three years			
What approaches should we adopt to making these savings? Please tick one or more options:			
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
a) Find more efficient ways to deliver the same level of service at a lower cost e.g. by buying in more services from the private and voluntary sectors, sharing services with other public agencies, etc.	770	26%	26%
b) Transform services so they are delivered in a different way with the same or better outcomes at reduced cost e.g. rely more on digital services rather than telephone or face to face contact, support social care clients so they can avoid residential care.	998	34%	34%
c) Remove or stop services which are least valued by Kent residents as identified through evidence-based research.	759	26%	26%
d) Restrict access to services to only the most needy	254	9%	9%
e) None of the above	144	5%	5%
Left blank / No response	20	1%	
Total	2945	100%	100%

Note respondents could choose more than 1 option for this question hence the higher number of responses

Question 3: balance of savings for 2015/16			
We have yet to identify around £7.5m of the savings estimated to be needed to balance the 2015/16 budget. What approach do you think the council should take to close this gap? Please select one option only:			
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
a) Increase council tax by a further 1.5% (in addition to the 1.99% already mentioned). Note – this would require a formal and binding referendum which could cost in the region of £1.5m.	176	9%	9%
b) Use money held in the council's reserves. Note – our level of reserves is low compared with other similar councils.	167	8%	9%
c) Raise additional income from other sources e.g. charges for services, tackling council tax avoidance, etc.	842	43%	43%
d) Deliver more savings from the areas identified in question 2.	365	18%	19%
e) Introduce a pay / price freeze for KCC staff / suppliers.	236	12%	12%
f) Other (please specify)	175	9%	9%
Left Blank / No response	18	1%	
Total	1979	100%	100%