

2018/19 Budget Consultation Feedback

This document is supplementary to [Annex A] and sets out budget consultation feedback received between 19 and 31 January 2018.

During this period MKC received 10 responses via the MKC website and five emails. Seven people attended a budget roadshow held in Central MK, and 200 young people filled out a questionnaire facilitated by the Youth Cabinet.

Summary of responses

From individuals

In support of:

- Council Tax rises for people who own multiple properties
- Greater spending to assist rough sleepers
- Retired people receiving a greater share of the funding they contribute
- Protection for CMK shoppers against aggressive beggars
- More opportunities for supported work for people with autism and learning difficulties
- Removing traffic lights from roundabouts (making savings on maintenance) and putting roundabouts in place of traffic lights elsewhere.
- Funding protection for child services, SEND and adult services.
- Removing CCG joint commissioners
- Expansion of the voluntary sector to deliver certain services

Against:

- Removing the financial support for the voluntary sector
- Any pay increases for staff
- Charges for residential permit parking
- Removal of grit bins

From parish councils and other groups

Two providers of adult social care raised issues around funding shortfalls because increases in cost pressures they are experiencing are not met by MKC's 1% inflationary fee increases.

Olney Town Council

- R64 Potholes – we are concerned about the cut in budget for this service. Also, removing the 28 day timescale for 50mm potholes could lead to potholes not getting repaired within any acceptable timescale. This seems to be a way of reducing the service delivered without affecting KPIs or other measurement of service.
- R142 Capital Budget – There are many roads in Olney that need capital investment as opposed to piecemeal reactive repairs.
- R72 Grit bins – Removal of grit bin filling is not supported.
- Evening bus service – Part of the extra 1% council tax increase being proposed, part of this should be allocated to fund an evening bus service for Olney.

Sherington Parish

It was understood there is a need to cut budget across all areas to be able to meet the shortfall and that some services will become the responsibility of the Parish moving forward. However with the current state of the roads, already poor in many areas with pot holes and resurfacing repairs not being forthcoming. It was deemed counterproductive to reduce highway maintenance in this way, especially with so much development within all areas of Milton Keynes Borough.

Old Woughton Parish Council

In support of: removal of Service Level Agreement with BMKALC.

Against:

- Removal of all grit bins (yet more taxation burden via parishes)
- The ending of the Community Assets Transfer programme and withdrawal of subsidies for community facilities (yet more taxation burden via parishes)
- Income from Planning Services to be driven up, together with some parking charges (these measures will result in increased costs such as planning enforcement and reduced retail growth)
- The payments to parishes for devolved landscape to be reduced by roughly a quarter, and 50k in 2018/19 for a Programme Manager to devolve services to town & parish councils (parishes will have to raise their taxes and participate in a fragmented and inefficient procurement system)

Additional comments.

Whilst OWPC recognises the scale of reductions needing to be implemented over demanding timescales, we wish to register our particular concern at the effect this is having on funds available for the public realm. Further, if the assistance of TPCs is to be sought in ameliorating the effects for parishioners, then detailed material needs to be provided by the Principal Authority in order for evaluations to be made at the local level and clear timescales need to be published for any taper arrangements for on-going support. There is an expectation that the drive for efficiencies underpins all MKC's activities both in the proposed 'service redesigns' and continuing provision.

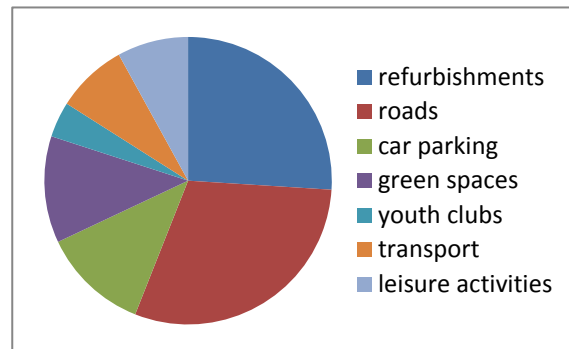
We would wish to see a 'blow by blow' account of MKC savings and efficiency plans in support of the budget proposals. In particular tackling its culture of litigation and

the expenditure of large sums on legal fees, the need to carry out detailed process reviews to eradicate duplication and introduce smarter working practices which must include introducing paperless working for Councillors.

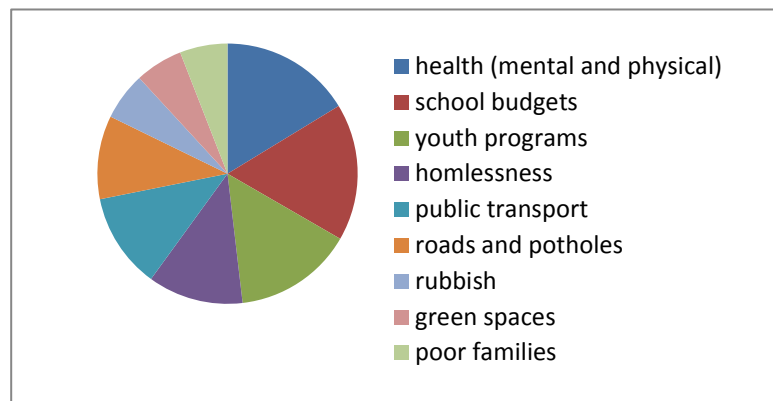
Summary of feedback from the MK Youth Cabinet questionnaire (full questionnaire available on request)

The Youth Cabinet had two broad recommendations - greater education for young people on what the budget is and how MKC spends it, and that MKC should not cut wider use funding that affects youth programs and activities such as youth clubs, scouts/cubs etc.

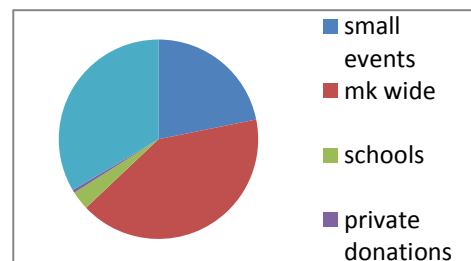
Q What could MKC spend less on?
(Refurbishments = work being done at the council offices and to the shopping centre.)



Q Is there anything MKC should spend more money on?



Q What ideas do you have for MKC to raise money?
MK wide events such as sponsored runs or walks and smaller community events such as bake sales were suggested.



Q Is there anything else you would like to say about the budget?
178 / 200 young people had nothing to add.

