

Budget 2021/22: consultation feedback summary



This paper summarises the 32 budget consultation responses received by 14 January 2021. The consultation ends on 31 January, when a further update will be provided. All feedback is from individual citizens unless marked.

1. Common themes

Council Tax / general finances

- In favour of a greater increase in Council Tax (x3)
- Against any increase in Council Tax (x3)
- In favour of proportional tax that accounts for individual circumstances
- The ratio of tax to services in MK is good compared with other areas
- In favour of the use of reserves to balance the budget and prevent severe cuts (even more could be used)
- Rent rise should be 2-3% or higher to fund housing repairs
- Several comments acknowledging difficult times and thanking the council for its response to COVID-19

Booking system at tips

- Should be removed (x3)
- Should be permanent
- Should be permanent only for trade waste

2. Additional points

In favour of greater investment/action

- Activity that supports the most vulnerable, supports jobs and green economic recovery, or enables action on climate change and sustainability
- Pothole repair
- Investment in Planning and Development Control, to improve reputation
- Flood alleviation
- Free car parking in CMK for at least 2 hours
- Assigning leases to make a clear profit from freeholds in council ownership
- More structured support for Adults with Aspergers
- Additional financial support for people aged over 65
- Training the community to own and tackle issues such as graffiti, crime, homelessness
- Disposal of non-household waste at tips should be chargeable
- Solutions in green spaces to encourage people to take their rubbish home with them

Against

- Cuts to budget for concessionary bus fares and bus routes
- COVID-19 financial support for individuals
- Prioritising graffiti and fly tipping at the expense of homelessness and crime
- Investment in MK Future 2050 project
- Size of internal insurance fund to meet future liabilities based on recommendations from current insurers (second opinion needed?)
- Council pension scheme, which should be closed
- 'Golden Handshakes' for new starters in council roles
- Investment in schemes relating to period poverty
- Closing libraries

Other comments

- Why is there is no SEN (capital) funding to schools after this year?
- Why CAHMS ext and LD Centre are in 22/23 and 23/24 respectively?
- Can parking surplus be used elsewhere other than transport and highways?
- Would appreciate greater transparency on outcomes around investment in decarbonising and environmental impact
- Greater transparency needed around efficiency targets across council services

3. Summarised comments from organisations

Stony Stratford Town Council

The draft budget is missing the often-promised allocation of monies to renovate and refurbish the Galley Hill Community Centre (Small Meeting Place and former Arts Centre) so it can be renovated and brought back into community use. This was part of the 2017 Stony Stratford Local Plan and the European Capital of Culture bid, and the 2019 Fullers Slade Estate Regeneration Ballot. Over the past 10 years MKC has received around £400,000 in lease payments but has not carried out any improvement or maintenance, hence a recent estimated renovation cost of £300,000.

Bletchley Pre-School Committee

This and previous budgets have failed to invest in replacing the heating system in the Bletchley Pre-School Building (WRAC building) which was condemned over 12 years ago. This has been Bletchley Pre-School's home for over 50 years with rent paid. The Pre-School has only had temporary, unsuitable fixed and portable electric heating since then.