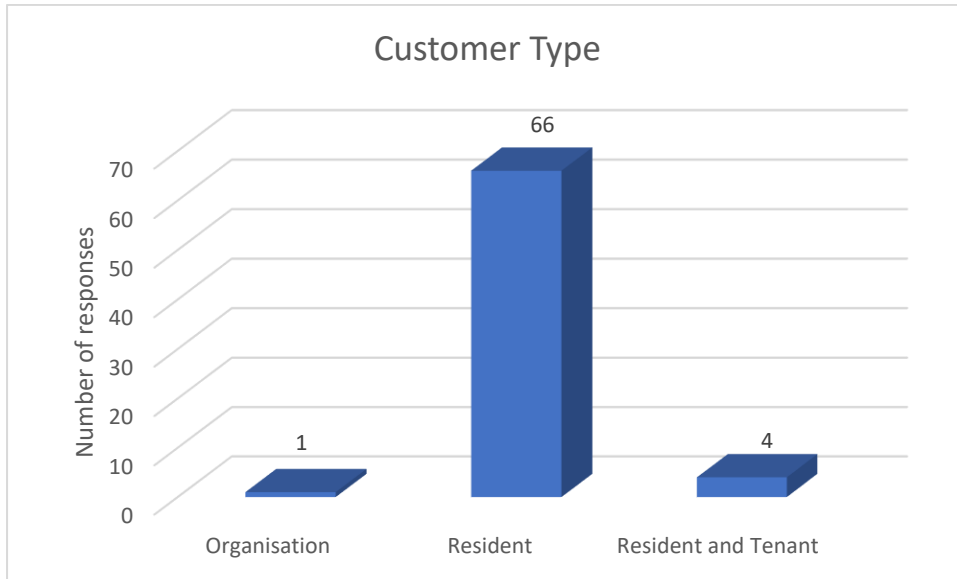
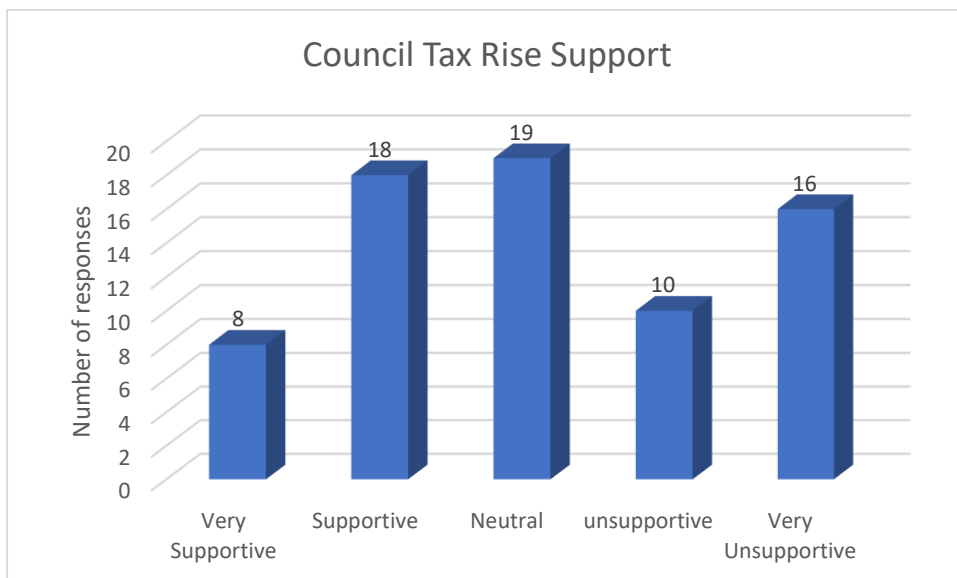


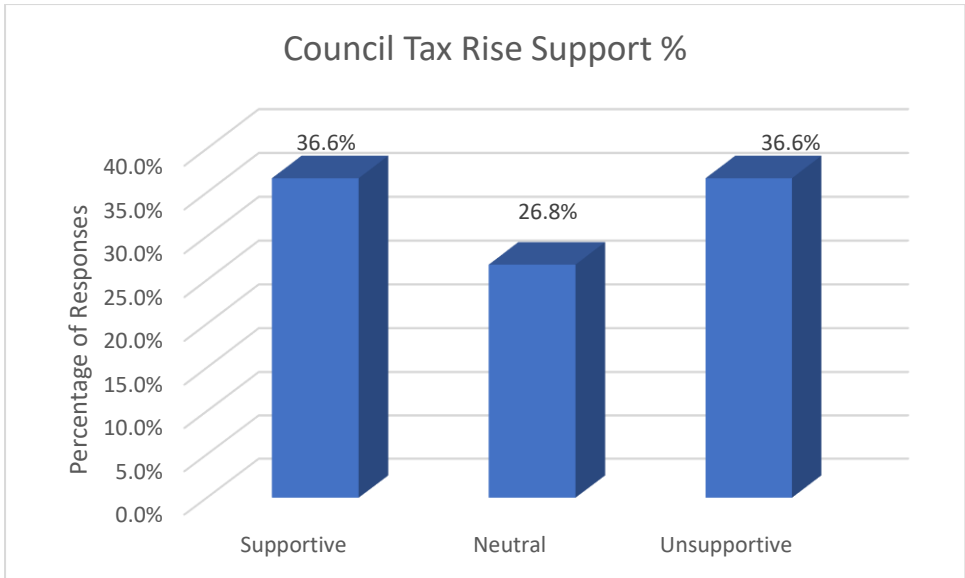
Budget 2023/24 Consultation Responses as at 3 Jan 2023

71 responses received in total:



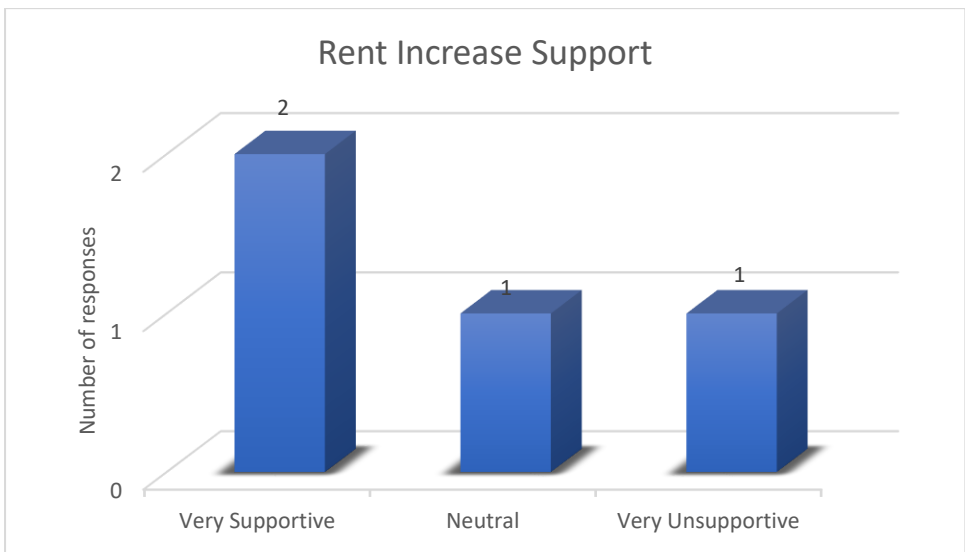
Q - How supportive are you of this Council Tax rise?

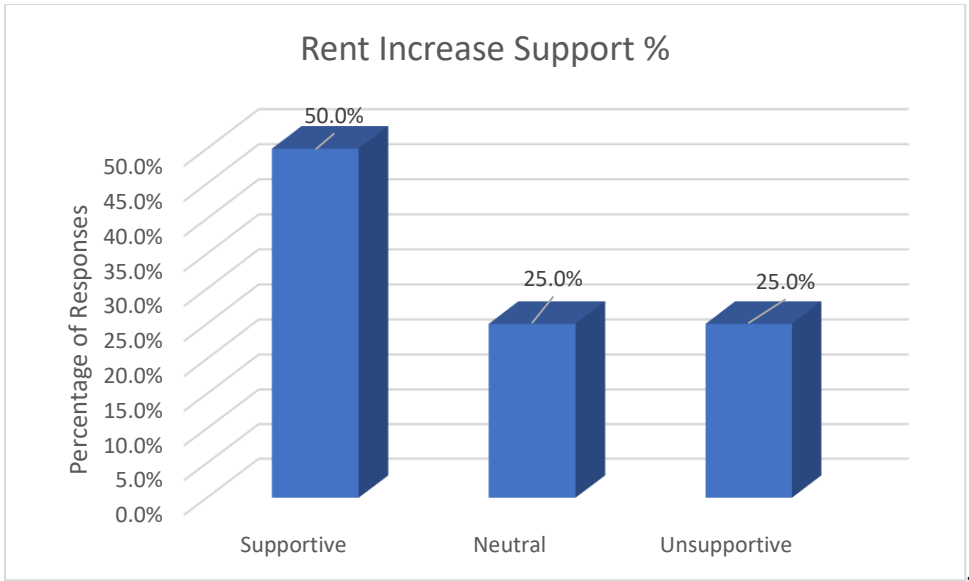




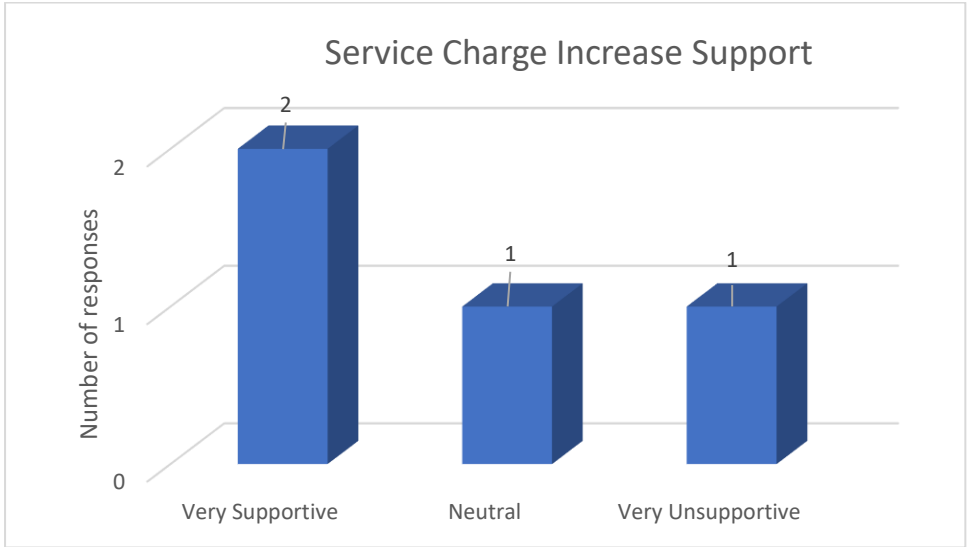
4 responses are from Tenants, who answered the rent and service charge increase questions:

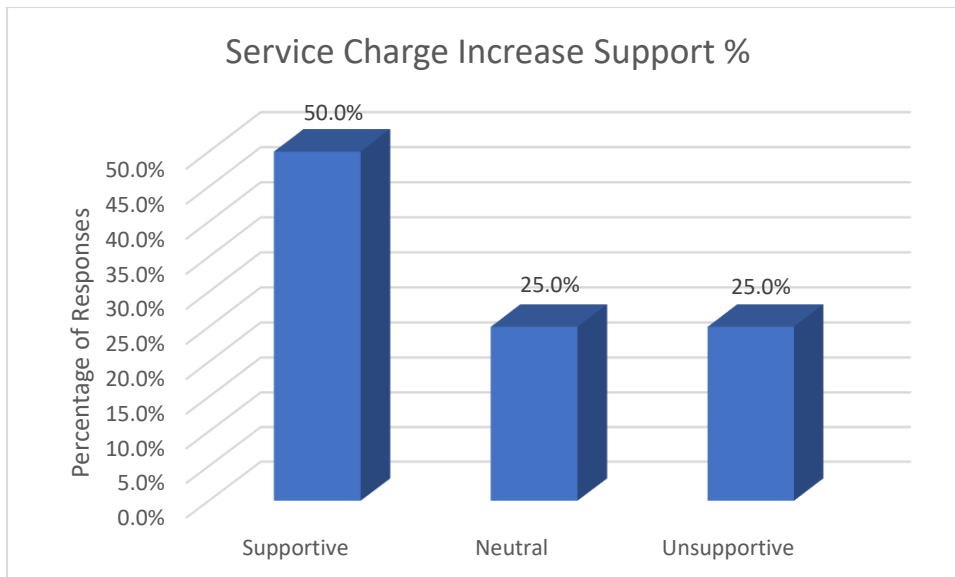
Q - How supportive are you of this rent increase?





Q - How supportive are you of this service charge increase?





Comments received

Revenue Expenditure Comments (Residents)

Although there is a deficit of £520,000, I believe the use of car parking charges to get some money is a bad move as the centre is struggling to attract shoppers already and this will only make it worse. Can't we charge more to all the new house builders to build houses in the area as they do not increase facilities in the area, no shops, schools etc
They should contribute to the area as they make good profits

Build more properties for those who have been waiting a long time.

Check those who the council are supporting still need supporting. As there are people playing the system while others are not being supported

Do we need a fund-raising think-tank?

I would rather pay more council tax than see services reduced or cut.

Don't put council tax up.

How exactly is the Council planning to spend £7.48 million next year?

What are the Council's specific spending priorities?

I am happy that waste disposal has been weekly and would like this to continue. I am happy with garden waste as it is.

I can see nothing in the budget to deal with the ongoing issue of the old Oadby swimming pool. Sadly, due to poor advice (if any was given) by external professional advisers, Architects or Planners, and poor decision making by Council employees and Councillors, the Borough is saddled with this headache. I asked a simple question about reinstatement of the site on Ellis Park some years ago only to uncover a can of worms!

What is the current plan and what is happening to the site now ?

if this question/ comment is more applicable to a different area of the budget, then please redirect it.

Many thanks.

An open reply that can be read and understood by all residents would be appreciated.

I have moved from the city to Wigston & council tax is higher which I can't understand

<p>It would be good to see transparency on what the council is spending. I personally would be happy with less bus services as they are always empty as they go past my home on ridgeway. Also going to 2 weeks bin collection would be okay for us. And bring back a free garden service collection for 6 months instead. If you are wanting to build on services, then offer a gardening service fee or pathway and driveways service. I'm sure people would pay for the extra service. The council now need to modernise and think like a business.</p>
<p>Members allowances and expenses should be reconsidered. Additional allowances for roles such as chair, champion and leader are excessive for the ratio of work input and attendance.</p>
<p>more funding from government is required to enable the Council to balance its books.</p>
<p>None</p>
<p>Please keep the weekly refuse collection. Shame the car parking charge was introduced. The centre of Wigston is really suffering. More and more people are living in the borough no more amenities though.</p>
<p>Please remember to support voluntary organisations since they contribute so much to the residents of the Borough</p>
<p>provide a high-level breakdown of expenditure, would be good to understand the overheads are and justification for spending that amount. is there a finance meeting where the public can join? or a report that can be shared for review? (Asking as I have never seen a breakdown or justification survey on where funding should be spent. more communication needs to be done around this view)</p>
<p>stop squeezing the living daylights out of your residents the charges are already too high we do not have a bottomless pit of money to keep our head above water.</p>
<p>The Council spent an extraordinarily large amount of money on a staffing dispute, which benefitted no-one and provided no services. Because of this, it is essential that the Council provides a full breakdown of where the money is being spent.</p>
<p>The current planning application (22/00448/OUT) for a new housing estate in Oadby, highlights the additional issues that the council will have to cover, including expansion to schools, a lack of doctors and dentists, as well as refuse. I appreciate that you may need to allow more homes to be built, but the infrastructure is slowly breaking down and therefore, I would suggest putting a hold on new builds in "Countryside" spaces and instead, concentrating on existing brownfield sites. The alternative is to ensure that any new development includes a huge investment from the builders to enable money to be available to the council to make suitable improvements to infrastructure. The people want to see that they get value for their money, not more houses being built with fewer facilities!</p>
<p>The lack of transparency here makes it impossible to critically comment. Issues such as statutory expenditure versus elective need to be highlighted. The change in expenditure forecasts for the last 5 years should be provided to make a comparison, along with where it ranks for other English councils generally and then within Leicestershire.</p>
<p>We are all suffering but unlike you we have to keep within our budget and have no options but to make it work. We have to cut back not just keep everything going. Care costs need to be borne by individuals or their families.</p>

Revenue Expenditure Comments (Organisations) – None received

Council Tax Comments (Residents)

A breakdown on this rise would be good to see. correct me if I'm wrong but with public funding we should provide a more detail view of why there is a 2.99% increase and what has been done in this control period for efficiency and cost savings
Another taxation increase caused by the government.

Council tax rises every year, but we keep getting reduced services. How can you justify raises council tax when everything else is getting more expensive, the only thing not going up is my wages!

Every effort should be made to chase and collect debt.

For elderly care should not be funded by rate payers. We pay the government national insurance so where is that money going.

Government is inefficient. The Police do not appear to do a good job and crime is still increasing. I would rather see an elected Sheriff like the US who can then be held accountable.

Having a rise now is not the answer especially when the services are terrible already.

I do not understand why O & W, which was a low tax, Borough is now a high tax Borough.

I don't think it's right to increase the council tax in this cost-of-living crisis.

I don't want to pay it, but I think it may have to increase

I live in a block of flats of 8 each flat pays over a £100 a month which is way too much for the service we get. The garden is left overgrown, and the cleaning of the outside does not exist, the residents do it.

I must move to a band D property that is a lot less than I am paying now for a band B property are your figures right. we are too highly taxed it is not just council tax it is income tax vat etc etc.

I observe the huge amount of properties that have been extended (some considerably) over recent years and wonder if you are aware and alter the tax band accordingly?

Can you publish a more detailed account of what you spend the money on? This could help people realise the bigger picture, rather than concentrating on local issues. Your "Borough" newsletter or email could be used for this.

It is necessary.

Just be careful that although it looks like a small increase to you, everything is going up in price and its families who are footing the bill

Just resigned everything mid going up.

Lots of new houses and no increase in services must mean more money for the council and no need to raise taxes.

Not sure depends on how much the Police, Fire Service and LCC put up their costs. The Police have ripped us all off. The OWBC has increased the tax through parking and green bin collections on top of the increases

O&W's Council Tax is higher than many councils, but the services do not reflect this!

Obviously, no one wants a council tax rise but if I can be confident that the money is being spent wisely then I am prepared to pay my way. My general impression is that the borough council does spend wisely - I hope I am right?!

On balance the increase in council tax is quite small; I would rather pay the increase than see services cut or reduced, especially for the vulnerable.

Our money is not being put to good use. Grass verges not cut as often etc. How about you use the money you have from charging for parking and not put up our bills during a cost-of-living crisis. Also why not look to reduce your over inflated wage bill?

Proposed increase is well below current rate of inflation

Rise for what? Have to pay for grass bins. Roads are resurfaced for no reason other than to spend money. Parks are never updated to new equipment for older children.

Since the government is so mean and unfair to local councils, I understand why you have to do it

Tax has already been raised last year by big margin. I am a family of 4 and only have a small bin. You've already cut garden waste by 3 months. Everything is going council tax raise won't help with struggling families

The authority should be more careful in its capital expenditure. Unnecessary works like creating customer contact centres in Bell Street that were generally not supported have

wasted much need funds. The capital fund raised from the sale of Bushloe House should be used to cover the additional funds needed.

The cost-of-living crisis will affect ability to pay bills, including council tax. The council tax should be frozen in order to help families survive the next year.

I am unconvinced that we need a police and crime commissioner. That element of the council tax should not be increased.

This rise will have a huge impact on individuals already struggling with the cost of living.

I suspect thought this 'consultation' will be ignored by the Council and the Council will rise Council Tax, anyway, resulting in spending more in other areas

This will not mean the removal of parking charges in your car parks.

While people are struggling to hear or feed, the council need to support its residents. Hold off of any council increase as people cannot afford it. People already have mental health issues and increasing, help and support is taking too long.

With the cost of living, such as gas and electric prices, and cost of petrol and food rising, it's almost like you want your share of people's money. Bit of a stinker when you could keep it the same price or lower it to help your residents out in these hard times. People are struggling to heat their homes and eat, now you want more money too. Bir distasteful to be honest.

Worrying but accepting in the current climate

Yes, moved from the city to Wigston & council tax bill is a lot higher why

Council Tax Comments (Organisation)

Any additional Council Tax raised and retained must be spent on visible improvements to the borough for both residents and businesses. For too long I believe the council have not spent the money wisely.

Capital Expenditure Comments (Residents)

£1.9m for 6-8 houses on land that is free is Robbery, someone is taking the Micky!

£1.9 million seems a great deal to pay for only 6-8 new council homes which will not bring any money into the area

£510,000 to replace end-of-life fleet vehicles

Why are they end of life. Surely if cars and vans are serviced properly, they will carry on working. I drive a 13-year-old car do fine.

35,000 for a new sports court in which will probably only become a harbour for anti-social behaviour. They already gather in south Wigston park so it will be another after dark hot spot for youths to get up to no good. And 15000 for tree work seems very high too. Would that be council workers doing it, or could it be done cheaper through an outside company.

Are fleet vehicles purchased or leased! - Leasing offers improved control of budget going forwards.

Spending £1.9 million on 6 to 8 homes being built appears excessive. Have you considered purchasing houses on the market?

Are the vehicles been leased or purchased? I see no reason why the council should buy new vehicles when the majority of the depreciation is front loaded. Do you get any meaningful discounts? Also, all of the churchyard items should be paid for by the church if they own the property.

Are these 'new' projects that crucial for Oadby and Wigston residents as a whole, could this money be used more effectively on projects that help residents during the cost-of-living crisis, help small businesses to survive, help more local employment initiatives that support green jobs, help support disabled people live in their own homes

Building of new council houses is essential. Do more if you can

could vehicles wait a little longer for replacement?

Council housing schemes are a waste of money which has been proven historically.

Delay end of life vehicles for 12 months where safe to do so.

Do we need more housing? Is the impact of spending that money better than the impact of not spending it?

Christmas lights are nice, but are they essential?

Is there a real need for an additional sports court? As a community user and league secretary, I don't recall being canvassed about the need for this

do you have a waiting list for an old people's bungalow, and I will trade you for my house as I can no longer manage its upkeep and gardens because you take all my cash in council tax.

Housing Revenue

Excellent to build new council houses on Horsewell lane hopefully for local people.

How urgent are items 2, 4 and 5? Would it be detrimental to defer for a year or so.

I don't think you should replace end-of-life fleet vehicles or replace the Christmas lights. This would save the council £517,500.

I query why tree works in the Wigston churchyards are the responsibility of the Borough Council. Were recent tree works at St Peter's, Oadby carried out at the expense of the Council?

I seem to recollect that the Council spent about £900,000 on Brockshill Visitor Centre to make it suitable for use by Everyone Active as an extension to their sports facilities, which was to be on a "shared profit" basis. It was never significantly used for that purpose, and now the Council proposes major new capital expenditure to transform it once again to use as the main council offices. I do not think this has been properly thought through; once employees realise how expensive it is to provide their own workspace at home, they may not be prepared to work from home. I anticipate that within a couple of years, the Council will be having to spend yet more money to provide additional operational space.

Which end-of-life fleet vehicles are being replaced? This is a large expenditure and residents are entitled to have more detail to determine whether these vehicles have provided good value for money.

I would like to have a breakdown of the £1.9 million to build 6-8 new council homes, and to know for whom they are intended.

Works on churches are not "public services". The money would be better spent on the borough's parks and green spaces.

I support the increase in council house stock.

I don't support the other expenditure. The Christmas lights upgrade, the sports court and the roll of honour repairs should be postponed. The fleet vehicle proposal should also be reviewed and trimmed. Pushing ahead with these projects at a time of financial hardship for many people is unreasonable.

I think more schools are needed - or present schools extended. School places are worryingly in short supply.

I think things like trees and play area could wait, do all the fleet need updating now, can this not be done over a period of time.

When quoting for work, do you get more than three quotes, outside of council contracts?

I very much like the idea of a new multi-use sports court at Freer Park if it includes a badminton court as 4 badminton courts were lost at Parklands when the children's play area was introduced.

Not so fussed about expenditure on Christmas lights as it's all light pollution anyway.

I have to trust your judgement on the other items as I have no idea!

I would like to know why the Council are paying to maintain the church yards, surely this is the responsibility of the Diocese and not funded by the public purse.

Is it possible to obtain surplus vehicles from other councils or make do and mend existing vehicles especially in this inflationary time.

Is OWBC able to use any unused or derelict properties for upgrading and potential use instead of building on green sites?

More council houses are needed in the area, the new builds that are going up are far too expensive for first time buyers.

My previous comment is also relevant to this section.

No

None

Survey these capital expenditures with the public. I don't see how you need everything above. Modernise your systems and ways.

The expenses quoted seem reasonable to me.

There is nothing in these proposals specifically for the benefit of Oadby residents.

Where exactly on Horsewell lane are these houses going?

Why do you need so many fleet vehicles?

The church should be paying for the tree work in its churchyard.

There is nothing wrong with the current Christmas lights!

Why is the council responsible for church property.

Why isn't the church looking after its own grounds, why replace lights when energy costs so high,

Capital Expenditure Comments (Organisation)

How vital is the spend on vehicles? How efficiently are the vehicles used now? Does the spend need to be at this level?

The policy of building small numbers of houses on existing estate to improve your figures is a flawed strategy and will not attract residents to support the council in the future. There must be better options!

Fees and Charges Comments (Residents)

- Green waste charges are not frozen until 2024. that is a mis-leading statement.

- The green waste collections has been reduced, therefore the collection vs charges has increased

- where was the consultation for this reduction before implementing it? if it was communicated it was extremely poorly done.

Acceptable

Agree to holding costs for waste and car park. How much profit is the new car park charge generating. Could be used to put back in the public toilets near the East Street Car Park.

Agree with garden waste proposal. I think the parking charges have been detrimental to residents and businesses and should be scrapped.

Both of these fees should rise, and future commitments should not be guaranteed.

Businesses are suffering in Oadby. To charge £1 even in a Sunday is a joke. Parking in London is even free. Why would ppl come to Oadby. I stopped going to shops lost my business as I can't park. The first 15/20 mins should be free. I only want to pop in and grab stuff. Shame it lost my business.

Car parking charges are affecting local trade, people go elsewhere for free parking. Bins green, think the cost is high at the moment. This is why we see more fly tipping which is cost the council more money to collect.

CAR PARKING CHARGES DETER ME FROM GOING INTO WIGSTON

Car parking charges have negatively affected Oadby shopping. Oadby residents should have some form of charge rebate to encourage visits to local shops

Car parking charges to continue until the 2024/2025 budget.

Car parking charges. I see a lot less cars parked since the charge was introduced, has the council reviewed the impact (if any) on local businesses?

Car parking fees are killing Wigston and Oadby. No residents or businesses wanted them, but you took absolutely no notice. Many people have stopped using the local shops as there is more variety and no charges elsewhere.

It remains to be seen whether the charges for Garden Waste remain viable. You already increased the charge and reduced the number of collections.

What next?

Car parking fees need to be removed to try and stop the GENERAL DECLINE of Wigston Magna!

Car parking should be free for 30 mins in all car parking spaces to encourage footfall!

Charges are a joke. We pay enough in council tax!!

Charges for garden waste and parking should be frozen until the government increases the base level tax allowance on earning.

Charging for these services are pointless. Parking grounds have been terrible, and you are asking for a fee to park for an hour at silly prices when you can go to fosse park for free and offers more for customers. You need to rethink your garden services.

Councillors should bear in mind that any price increase for garden waste or car parking would be a complete disaster for the Lib Dems at the May elections. For the electorate to have any faith in this council, free car parking needs to be reintroduced, and garden waste collections restored to a 12-month service.

Disagree completely with Car Park charging - it had been free for my entire lifetime some 50 years. Will not support the Lib Dem council that unilaterally decided to implement.

Garden Waste - there needs to be more communication about this service and the benefits to the environment, community and individuals. However, cost is a crucial factor - many people simply cannot afford it.

Car Parking - Charges for car parking has and will continue to have an impact on the community. If charges really do need implementing, then make it more affordable

Garden waste collection fees recently up by almost 50% and the number of collections down by about 25%. This service will soon become unviable so will that save the council money, cost it money, or make no material difference?

Garden waste collection went from £35 to £50 AND then you reduced service by 25 % - enough is enough!

Garden waste hardly frozen when you already decided not to collect throughout winter
Garden waste more than other councils charge and this year a cut in collections.

Carpark charges shouldn't be in force. Oadby and Wigston shops do not have enough to offer to warrant charging to park.

Garden waste should be reduced slightly due to the fact it's no longer for twelve months
get rid of the car parking charge

Good that the garden waste service and parking charges are frozen for another year

I am firmly against having to pay for parking in Wigston, the amount of empty shops can only be due to the rents that you charge and the fact that people now have to pay to park.

I know lots of people who now shop at fosse park, Asda or Sainsbury because parking is free and convenient.

I don't agree with the parking charges. Must be affecting the local businesses

I think that it's a pity to charge for garden waste (because it encourages fly-tipping) and car parking (local businesses are having a tough time financially and this must surely make things worse for them owing to reduced footfall).

I think the no. of collections should be reduced, likewise with refuse collection. A lot of old people and live-alone don't require weekly collections. Save money!

I welcome the freeze in charges on both of these items.

I would prefer it if garden waste was taken free of charge and there was no car parking charge.

In practice, the garden waste charges have already increased by 25% because the collections have been suspended for three months in the winter. This is way above the rate of inflation. Garden waste is still produced in the winter, but, as it comprises leaves and woody pruning's, it is not home compostable. The green waste collections should be year-round.

Re car parking charges, £1 to park is not, in itself, that much, but the charges do appear to have increased car parking on streets and supermarket car parks. If the council is levying a charge to use council owned car parks, then the public conveniences should be open, particularly in Wigston, where there is no large supermarket with toilets (Oadby has Asda). It is not reasonable to assume that everyone is using cafes, hairdressers etc and can use their facilities. Personally, I never stop anywhere for coffee, I don't have time.

Also, as the parking charges were suspended while The Parade in Oadby was closed, a proportion should have been refunded to Oadby residents who had paid for a permit. Like everyone, I'm sad that charges were increased for these, but I will always need my garden waste bin. The car parking charges have not affected me this year as I continue to cycle everywhere (despite owning a car) even when doing my weekly shop. I would encourage others to do the same for both financial and environmental reasons.

No although I continue to object to parking charge.

No comment

Parking should be free to bring people into Wigston. I think you should look at a monthly charge for garden waste. I believe other county council work on a DD scheme for garden waste

Residents should have free parking in O&W, at least for some of the time. We're reduced leisure and retail spend since this was introduced

Should be free then we would support our local shops

The car parking charges in Oadby is a mistake and will destroy Oadby Parade. I have not shopped there now for over 6 months and will probably only visit 3 times a year rather than 3 times a month.

The garden waste charged were in effect an increase when the collections were reduced last year so should not go up again.

Car parking charges are doing no favours to businesses in the borough so should not be increased this year.

The new car parks that you have put in place, especially outside parklands school haven't really worked to be honest, another waste of money, people simply don't park in there, they use the surrounding streets. And I don't think I've ever seen the electric charge points used either. Waste of time and money. And the workers that did the work, destroyed a part of the road outside the school and it has been coned off and damaged for the past few months, which also causes parents to have to walk in the road around it at busy school times.

There shouldn't be car parking charges. It was said the money was needed for the upkeep of the car parks, but they don't seem to be maintained. The town is not as busy as it used to be.

These are increases and show that you are increasing taxes

Very reasonable at current rates

yes, you effectively increased the charge for garden waste by cutting the number of collections and stopped collections too early before all the leaves had fallen from the trees.

Your charges in both cases should at least raise a small profit. As an employer, it is great to be able to offer staff reduced parking charges but is unfair as the public are now being charged for using car parks.

Fees and Charges Comments (Organisation)

You state Garden Waste charges are frozen however you reduced the service by not providing the same number of collections. You therefore retain income and reduce the service
if you are going to do this then I believe you should be more visible about it.

Rent Increase Comments (Tenants)

With the current cost of utilities, a rent increase is just putting more pressure on people's finances, most people have their own energy saving projects. The council have never offered me any support on insulating my home. There should not be such a big increase.

Service Charge Increase Comments (Tenants)

The council is just trying to increase its income without considering the cost-of-living crises and lack of increase in the public's income.

Housing Expenditure Comments (Tenants)

I have a 30-year-old kitchen and I make do. Why is my council tax money going to improve others' homes. Surely it should only be done if absolutely needed
it sounds a necessary thing to do but the stock survey sounds a very expensive survey?

Put on hold until crisis is over stop spending money