

Arolwg Cyllideb Cyngor Sir Powys

Powys County Council Budget Survey



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What are we doing?

Powys County Council provides a wide range of services to our communities, spending over £545m every year, mainly on statutory services, which we must provide by law.

The Council will face severe financial pressures in the coming financial year and for the foreseeable future, pressures that will dominate the way council services are delivered for many years to come.

To balance the budget next year, we will have to take out more than £20m of costs and we would like your input into how best we can do this. It will have an impact on the services we offer but by doing things differently we can reduce our costs.

Why are we doing it?

We will use the data and feedback from this engagement to help us shape what the council could look like. It will be a smaller council, but it is essential that we prioritise the services to those that need our support most. Doing things differently can help us use the money we have more effectively.

When did it happen?

The Budget survey was published on Monday 11th December 2023 and closed at midnight on Sunday 7th January 2024.

How was it promoted?

A variety of communication channels were used including:

- A media releases to local and national press and published on the council's website: [11 December 2023 - Budget Survey Launched](#)
- Hosted on the Powys online engagement platform: www.haveyoursaypowys.wales and advertised on the homepage and Powys County Council hub
- Animated videos (which had 65 views in total)
- Regular social media posts via the corporate council social media pages on Facebook and Twitter (now known as X) and partner/service specific social media pages

How many people responded?

In total, 988 responses were received during the engagement period.

There were 1,649 visits to the online project pages, with 60% of visitors completing the survey.

In line with our Public Participation Strategy and to ensure survey results are representative of the Powys population, we aim to receive 384 responses to have a confidence level of 95% (with a margin of error of +/-5%).

The final response number of 988 gives us a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of +/- 3.1%.

What did people say? Survey results

Please note: Not all questions have been answered by all respondents and all the responses received in Welsh are included with the below for ease of analysis. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number and the highest and lowest response numbers are highlighted in each table.

Q1. Help us decide what the council will look like. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each one.

Reduce overall service to reduce costs

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	71	7%
Agree	158	16%
Neutral	154	16%
Disagree	384	39%
Strongly disagree	221	22%

Reduce the number of buildings from which we operate to reduce cost. Using the sales proceeds to improve the buildings we need

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	458	46%
Agree	391	40%
Neutral	86	9%
Disagree	33	3%
Strongly disagree	20	2%

Protect some services by reducing the locations from which we deliver them, which could mean that you would need to travel further to access the services you need

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	84	8%
Agree	292	30%
Neutral	207	21%
Disagree	292	30%
Strongly disagree	113	11%

Look to deliver more of our services through online interaction rather than face to face

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	183	18%
Agree	371	38%
Neutral	170	17%
Disagree	195	20%
Strongly disagree	69	7%

Increase Council Tax by less than 5% (if lower it would mean there would be more service reductions)

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	215	22%
Agree	275	28%
Neutral	198	20%
Disagree	191	19%
Strongly disagree	109	11%

Increase Council Tax by more than 5%. (A higher increase would limit the need for some service reductions)

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	69	7%
Agree	174	18%
Neutral	115	12%
Disagree	269	27%
Strongly disagree	361	36%

Reduce the council's energy usage by implementing further energy efficiency measures

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	538	54%
Agree	360	36%
Neutral	58	6%
Disagree	17	2%
Strongly disagree	16	2%

Increase charges for some services so those who use the facilities pay more, e.g. Green waste, car parking, transport

Option	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	101	10%
Agree	273	28%
Neutral	174	18%
Disagree	299	30%
Strongly disagree	141	14%

Q2. Any further comments:

This was an open question with 493 responses. Full verbatim responses can be found in Appendix A and have had any personal information removed to enable them to be included in this report. Themes that were identified within the responses (in no particular order) included:

Council Tax:

- Don't increase Council Tax
- Due to the cost of living crises – can't afford increases
- Difficult to see/know what Council Tax is spent on
- Look internally before asking the public for more money

Services:

- Be efficient/reduce unnecessary spend and waste
- Keep face-to face services
- Prioritise statutory services and reduce/stop spend on non-statutory
- Means test services – those that 'can' afford to pay more, should
- Rural communities don't benefit from Council Services
- Instead of reducing services run them more efficiently
- Protect the most vulnerable
- If locations are reduced public transport needs improving
- Protect the environment/combat climate change
- Leisure centres/libraries are vital for well-being/reducing social isolation
- Cut car parking charges – they are hurting town centres
- Spend money on infrastructure
- Work together/share resources with other councils
- Use Town and Community councils more
- Ask Welsh/UK Government for more money

People:

- Reduce the number of Councillors/Councillor expenses
- Cut Senior Manager roles/salaries
- Reduce number of staff/staff salaries
- PCC staff should work from home
- Improve staff sickness/reduce sick pay expenditure

Survey:

- Survey questions are too vague
- Difficult to answer without specific information on each service
- Answers would differ depending on which service you are asking about

What happens next?

We will use the data and feedback from this engagement to help us shape what the council could look like. The results of the survey will be shared with Cabinet as part of the Budget setting process.