

## **2. GENERAL FUND 2023/24 BUDGET AND MTFs**

### **Forecast 2022/23 Outturn**

- 2.1 The latest position on the General Fund, as at Quarter 3 shows a forecast underspend of £1.764m.
- 2.2 Most of the underspend has been generated within corporate finance, where a significant increase in the level of interest generated by the council's day to day cash investments continues to be seen. This is due to the increase in interest rates and the relatively high cash balances as capital expenditure has slipped; the capital receipt from the sale of Norwich airport industrial estate has been received and the externalisation of some debt which took place last year when interest rates were lower. Once the impact of the additional treasury management income is removed services overall are showing a broadly balanced position.
- 2.3 In the updates to the medium-term financial strategy in this report, it has not been assumed that the Q3 forecast underspend level is returned to general fund reserves, rather it is expected that any costs of implementing the council's change programme incurred in 2022/23 will have first call on the final underspend, with the remainder being allocated to the Business Change Earmarked Reserve to assist in the future funding of those costs. The final proposed approach will be set out for members once the outturn position is known.

### **Proposed 2023/24 Revenue Budget**

- 2.4 Appendix 2 (A) summaries the key movements in the base budget (i.e. from the 2022/23 approved budget) to arrive at the proposed 2023/24 budget. Appendix 2 (B) shows a subjective breakdown of the gross income and expenditure proposed.
- 2.5 Following the December budget report to Cabinet there are several areas where the proposed budget figures have been updated based on additional information being available and the refinement of budget options. The main areas of change are:
- An additional £0.389m of inflationary costs, including higher expected costs in relation to the waste and recycling contract and an allowance for any further emerging general inflationary pressures.
  - Additional business rates income £0.687m following confirmation from government on the council's business rates baseline level and updated analysis on forecast taxbase revenues.
  - A reduction in proposed savings of £0.131m reflecting minor amendments to the savings figures following review and refinement, in particular the final confirmation from the pension fund of the profile of costs savings resulting from pre-payment of the secondary element of the council's pension contribution.
  - A reduction in grants of £34k following the provisional local government finance settlement.
  - A reduction of £135k following the updates to internal recharges.

### **Savings, growth and investment**

- 2.6 Permanent savings or additional income of £5.5m have been identified. Overall, this is slightly lower than the savings target of £6.2m identified in the MTFS update presented to Cabinet in July 2022. However, other updates to the MTFS assumptions, such as the higher increase in council tax receipts and lower permanent growth, means that the provisional budget shows a balanced position, with no requirement to draw down on general reserves. A detailed summary of the proposed budget savings and growth is shown in Appendices 2 (F) and 2 (G).
- 2.7 Included within the savings figure are amounts relating to updated assumptions on the council's borrowing costs (£1.4m) and the income generated from the council's cash investments (£1.7m). The loan interest budget for 2023/24 assumes that maturing loans can be refinanced at lower rates based on the current borrowing rate forecasts, thereby reducing the overall costs to the council. As set out in paragraph 2.2 the council is also benefiting from the increases in interest rates on its cash balances and this is expected to continue to benefit the budget position in 2023/24. The improvements in these budgets are expected to reduce over the medium term as borrowing and interest rates stabilise and then fall, and this has been incorporated into the medium-term financial projections on a prudent basis.
- 2.8 The savings options for 2023/24 have been proposed from service areas and reviewed by the council's newly constituted Design Authority which includes representation from strategy and transformation, finance, HR, IT, procurement and legal. Proposals have then been reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team to assess the deliverability and impact against the corporate plan. Service leads have completed outline or full business cases as appropriate for each option which include deliverability assessments for savings items as well as setting out key milestones, resource requirements and risks.
- 2.9 In line with the approach used in previous years, the council has consulted the public on the proposed approach to setting the budget and on the proposals for a council tax rise. The consultation closed on 20 January 2023. An analysis of the results is given in Appendix 2 (I) and will provide useful feedback as the council shapes its future budget proposals. The consultation found that 50% of people agree or strongly agree with the proposed council tax increase, while 61% of people either agree or strongly agree with continuing to provide council tax relief at 100 per cent for those working age residents on low incomes.
- 2.10 The budget proposals include £0.401m of permanent budget growth (i.e. increases to the budget not arising from inflationary factors). The full list is shown in Appendix 2 (G). At this stage, the budget options are proposals, some of which will be subject to further consultation exercises before implementation.
- 2.11 The 2022/23 budget included a £1.2m allowance for the continuing impacts of Covid-19, around the council's car parking and rental income levels. These have been fully reversed in the provisional 2023/24 budget on the assumption that these budgets are able to recover to pre-pandemic levels.
- 2.12 There is investment of £0.955m from the business change, invest to save and commercial property earmarked reserves to support specific projects in 2023/24. The full detail is shown in Appendix 2 (H).

## **Inflation**

- 2.13 The increasing inflation levels have placed additional pressures on the council's finances. £4.9m of inflationary costs have been incorporated into the 2023/24 proposed budget across pay, utilities and other contract costs.
- 2.14 The council's pay structure is primarily based on national negotiating body pay spines and nationally negotiated settlements. The process has not concluded for the 2023/24 financial year and therefore an estimate of payroll inflation at 4% has been included within the proposed budget. Given that pay costs form a significant proportion of the council's budget and the uncertainty over future pay awards, this is a key budget risk.
- 2.15 Many of the council's contracts have inflationary increases incorporated within them and therefore the significant increases in CPI and RPI measures has created a clear pressure on the budget position. Inflationary increases have been applied across the council's main contracts based on relevant CPI levels, although there remains a risk that further cost pressures emerge as contracts come up for re-tender.

## **Council Tax & Business Rates**

- 2.16 Any increase in the level of council tax is limited by referendum principles, which for a district council have been set at a maximum of up to 3% for 2023/24.
- 2.17 A 2.99% increase to the Band D rate is proposed in the 2023/24 budget figures (£0.320m additional income). The proposed 2023/24 Band D rate is therefore £288.59 compared to the current year rate of £280.21 – an increase of £8.38. This is for the Norwich City Council share of total council tax only and does not include the amounts added from preceptors - Norfolk County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk. Appendix 2 (E) shows the proposed increases by each Council Tax band.
- 2.18 The figures shown will be reduced, for qualifying council taxpayers, by the council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). Currently the total cost of the CTR scheme is £14.4m, of which the Norwich share is around £1.9m.
- 2.19 The current estimate of the Council taxbase is 38,260 (Band D equivalent properties) which combined with the Band D rate above gives an expected income of £11.041m in 2023/24.
- 2.20 The 2023/24 amount of retained business rates has been budgeted at £7.613m along with a forecast deficit distribution from 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 of £0.132m after allowing for transfers to the S31 earmarked reserve. The transfers to the reserves are to offset the timing differences created as a result of changes in the relative proportions of income received as business rates payments or government S31 grant in 2021/22 and 2022/23 compared to the initial estimates. A breakdown of the business rates calculation is shown in Appendix 2 (E). On 22 September 2022, all Norfolk local authorities confirmed to MHCLG an intention to create a Norfolk business rates pool in 2023/24 – further detail on this was provided in the budget report to Cabinet in December.
- 2.21 There remains a financial risk on business rates income from the impact of valuation appeals and allowance for a contribution to an appeals provision is also included in the forecasts and reviewed annually.

### Council Tax Premiums

- 2.22 As a billing authority, the council must adopt policies for the application of discretionary Council Tax premiums.
- 2.23 In May 2022 the Government's 'The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill' put forward discretionary Council Tax premium options on empty properties and second homes. Through this Bill it is the Government's intention to: a) reduce the minimum period for the implementation of a Council Tax premium for empty premises from two years to one year; and b) allow Councils to introduce a Council Tax premium of up to 100% in respect of second homes.
- 2.24 The Government has confirmed that billing authorities that wish to adopt any changes arising from the Bill are required to make a Council resolution confirming their requirements at least 12 months prior to the financial year in which the changes will come into effect; meaning that the Bill will need to obtain Royal Assent prior to 1 April 2023 in order to adopt the changes for the year commencing 1 April 2024.
- 2.25 This report recommends an in-principle decision from Members to agree proposals in accordance with the Council Tax premium proposals set out within the Bill, subject to Royal Assent being obtained.
- 2.26 Initial, high-level analysis shows that the application of a 100% premium on second homes within Norwich could generate around £1.37m in additional Council Tax revenue, with circa £0.18m retained by Norwich City Council.

### **Grants**

- 2.27 The Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement was released on 19 December 2022 providing details on the grant funding levels for the council in 2023/24. The key elements of the settlement are outlined in Section 1 of the budget report, including details of a new 'guarantee' grant to ensure all councils have an increase of at least 3% to their core spending power.
- 2.28 Overall, as shown in the table below for the confirmed grants there is a £34k reduction. The new guarantee grant has been vital in offsetting the reduction in New Homes Bonus (NHB) allocation for 2023/24. The value of NHB has reduced by £0.5m from the prior year because Norwich's percentage growth in housing stock of 0.36% fell below the national baseline for the bonus of 0.4%. There is still uncertainty over the future of NHB beyond 2023/24, creating a clear risk to the council's future funding levels when the funding guarantee mechanism may also not be in place.
- 2.29 In previous versions of the MTFS, it had been assumed the council would see a reduction of one-third in its core un-ringfenced grants; this was based on the understanding future funding for the sector may be prioritised towards authorities with adult social care responsibilities when the resource need assessment was updated.

	<b>December Report £000</b>	<b>Provisional Settlement £000</b>
Revenue Support Grant	(225)	(491)
New Homes Bonus	(491)	(45)
Lower Tier Services	(268)	-

Services Grant	(272)	(233)
Local Council Tax Support Admin	(250)	-
Housing Benefit Admin Grant	(491)	(546)
Funding Guarantee Grant	-	(653)
Business Rates cost of collection allowance	(268)	(264)
	<b>(2,266)</b>	<b>(2,232)</b>

## Budget Risks

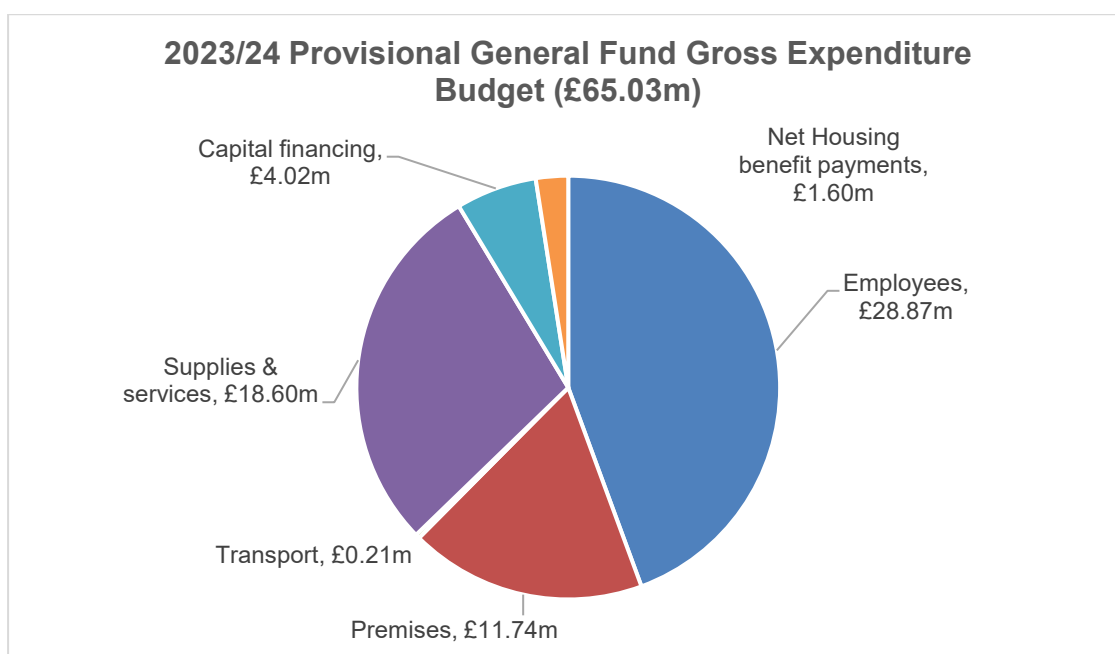
- 2.30 At this stage, the combination of uncertainty over the government financial settlement, wider economic conditions, service pressures and the level of savings to be delivered, means the level of risk associated with the provisional budget is higher than usual. Some of the key risks are outlined below which will continue to be closely monitored. The council holds a budget risk reserve (current balance £2.4m) to provide resilience against emerging pressures and delays in the delivery of savings.
- Savings delivery & cost of change.** The budget includes £5.5m of savings and income proposals for delivery in 2023/24. This is a significant undertaking and will require resources (e.g. project management, backfill, redundancy costs) to implement successfully. Delays in the implementation timelines will impact on the deliverability of savings in next financial year. To facilitate delivery a corporate change team has been set up to co-ordinate and programme manage the full range of projects. Close monitoring of delivery will be undertaken, and any financial risks managed within year or through the strategic use of reserves.
  - Inflation.** The scale of volatility in inflation, including the scale of increases in gas and electric costs, means forecasts are subject to change. The Office for Budget Responsibility in its November 2022 update noted that, given the number of recent changes in fiscal policy and the volatility in financial and energy markets, the range of external forecasts for CPI and GDP is wide. There is also uncertainty over the level of pay award and the impact of an additional 1% above our budget assumption would add around £0.240m of additional cost.
  - Housing Benefit.** In recent years the council has seen reducing levels of subsidy recovery against its housing benefit expenditure, attributable to continuing growth in rent levels against fixed subsidy caps. The projection is this will continue to worsen over the life of the MTFS. Whilst every council is seeing increased natural migration to Universal Credit, Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) rules mean cases that attract 100% subsidy return are lost to councils, whilst DWP's strategy is to continue to leave temporary, exempt and supported accommodation cases with councils and it is these cases subject to punitive subsidy rules. Along with increased demand and rental market pressures, councils are therefore seeing increased subsidy loss.
  - Service Pressures.** The economic situation is putting huge financial pressures on local businesses and residents, particularly the most vulnerable. It is likely that service demand pressures will emerge in the coming months for example through the council's homelessness service. It may also impact on

council income streams and the levels of council tax and business rates collected, coming on top of the previous Covid-19 challenges.

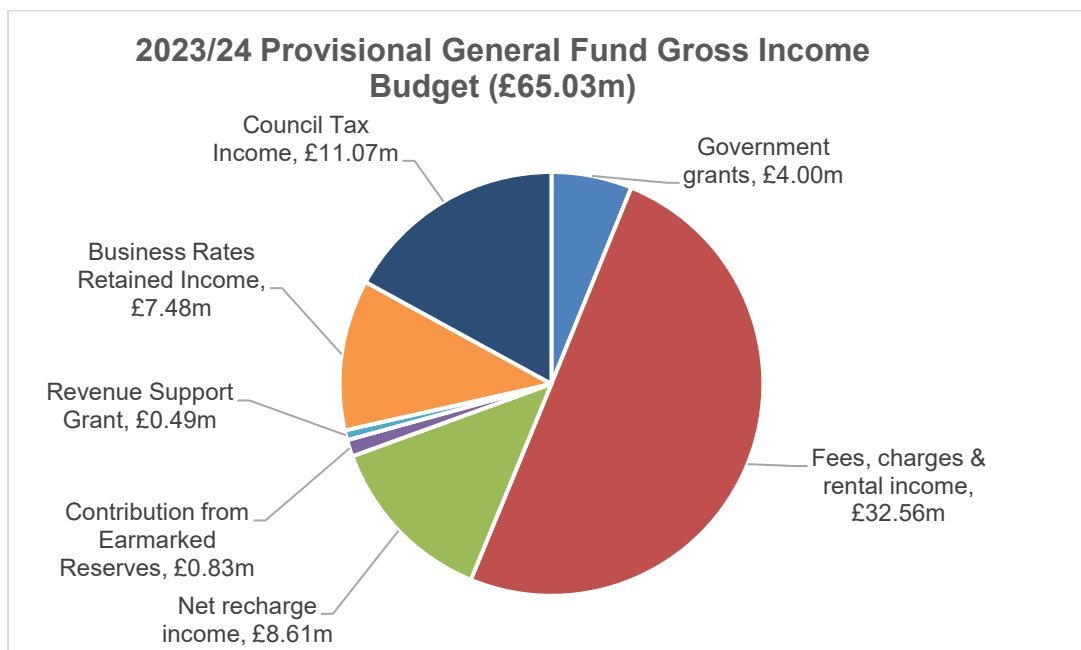
- **Parking Agreement.** Under an agreement with Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council delivers a range of parking services on city roads including permit parking, controlled parking extensions, tariffs and enforcement activity for on-street parking and bus lanes. The County Council has been undertaking an options appraisal for the future delivery arrangements for on-street parking and enforcement.

A proportion of costs are charged to the County Council as part of the agreement. This includes the direct costs of the enforcement team as well as corporate overheads to reflect the roles of support services (primarily customer contact) in delivering the requirements of the agreement. When a decision is notified to us from the County Council about the future operating model and timeline for implementation, the full cost implications on the council will need to be assessed.

**Chart 2.1: 2023/24 provisional gross expenditure budget by type of spend**



**Chart 2.2: 2022/23 provisional gross income budget by type of income**



## Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 2.31 The MTFS is a forecast of the estimated cost of delivering current services over the next five years, compared to the anticipated funding streams to support council services. This results in a projected budget gap from which the future savings requirements are estimated.
- 2.32 The July MTFS update identified a savings requirement of £10.953m over the four-year period to 2026/27 (Table 2.1). The updated MTFS is showing a savings requirement over the same period of £11.1m, of which £5.5m has been identified and incorporated into the 2023/24 budget proposals. This leaves a forecast requirement to deliver a further £5.6m of savings by 2026/27 (Table 2.2). The full MTFS by subjective group is shown in Appendix 2 (D).
- 2.33 Detail on the key assumptions in the MTFS was provided in the Budget Update Report to Cabinet in December 2022.

**Table 2.1: July 2022 Medium Term Financial Position – Figures are in £000s**

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Budget base	23,684	19,589	21,090	21,131
Resources	(17,484)	(18,458)	(19,024)	(19,575)
<b>Savings required (in-year)</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>1,131</b>	<b>2,066</b>	<b>1,556</b>
<b>Savings required (cumulative)</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>7,331</b>	<b>9,397</b>	<b>10,953</b>

**Table 2.2: Updated Medium Term Financial Position – Figures are in £000s**

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
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Budget base	19,041*	22,565	21,641	22,641
Resources	(19,041)*	(19,851)	(20,410)	(20,991)
Contribution from reserves	0			
<b>Savings required (in-year)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,713</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>1,650</b>
<b>Savings required (cumulative)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,713</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>5,593</b>

\* Includes £5.527m of savings – see Appendix F

- 2.34 The council has identified a range of potential future savings of £6.692m against the revised cumulative target of £5.593m. These are provisional options and are still subject to a full budget validation process. All options will continue to be refined as part of future corporate business planning processes.
- 2.35 It is important at this stage that the provisional options identified exceed the target for several reasons. Firstly, it allows for options to be reviewed and feedback from the public consultation to shape the future budget direction. Secondly, as the options are still subject to a full validation process it is likely that the savings figures may evolve and change as this work is completed. Lastly, there is a high degree of risk associated with the MTFS projections especially around government funding from 2025/26 onwards considering the fiscal challenges outlined in the Autumn Statement. It is therefore important the council has plans that can flex to the financial position as a clearer view emerges.

## MTFS Risks & Uncertainties

- 2.36 There are number of significant financial risks and uncertainties over the period of the medium-term financial strategy. These include:
- Future funding levels given the clear message in the Autumn Statement about the need to reduce public spending and the prioritisation of local government funding to address challenges in adult social care.
  - Uncertainty over future inflationary levels and impacts on council expenditure.
  - The quantum of the savings to be delivered and the associated costs to enable the required changes.
  - Capital requirements arising from the ongoing strategic review of the council's asset portfolio.
  - Uncertainty over the cost implications of delivering the council's net zero carbon objective.
  - Impacts of future government policies e.g. National Waste Strategy, Planning White Paper, Levelling up and local government reorganisation.

## General Fund Reserves Position

### The General Fund reserve

- 2.37 The prudent minimum level for the general fund reserve has been reviewed for 2023/24 by the Chief Finance Officer and has been set at £5.4m; an increase over the 2022/23 level of £5.1m and reflecting the overall rise in the council budget requirement and other relevant factors.

**Table 2.3: Estimated General Fund reserves position (Figures are in £000s)**

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
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<b>Brought forward</b>	<b>(10,336)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>
Transfers (to)/from	2,100	0	0	0	0
<b>Carried forward</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>	<b>(8,236)</b>

\* Note the opening 2022/23 reserve balance is still subject to the finalisation of the 2021/22 external audit process.

- 2.38 The forecast reserves position incorporates the budget contribution from reserves for 2022/23 (£2.1m) and assumes a balanced budget in 2023/24. This would leave general reserves at £8.2m which is above the prudent minimum level of £5.4m.
- 2.39 On the basis that provisional options have been identified to close the budgetary shortfall in the years 2024/25 to 2026/27 no further drawn downs from general reserves are currently forecast. If the timetable for savings delivery changes to mean identified amounts cannot be delivered until later in the MTFS period, there is capacity to utilise up to £2.8m of additional reserves (down to the prudent minimum level) in the short term to support the budget position. Reserves are however a one-off source of funding and therefore this is not sustainable in the long term but could be considered where there is a clear and robust plan to address the budget shortfall.

### **Earmarked Reserves**

- 2.40 The General Fund holds several earmarked reserves which are held for specific purposes. The balances held in earmarked reserves are regularly reviewed to assess whether the funds are held at an appropriate level. The key reserves are summarised in Table 2.4.

**Table 2.4: General Fund earmarked reserves (Figures are in £000s)**

	<b>Actual 31 March 2022</b>	<b>Forecast 31 March 2023</b>	<b>Forecast 31 March 2024</b>
<b>Invest to Save Reserve</b> To support the delivery of savings and efficiencies through the Future Shape Norwich Programme.	2,011	1,513	1,097
<b>Budget Risk Reserve</b> To manage the financial risks associated the delivery of the budget savings identified.	2,391	2,391	2,391

	Actual 31 March 2022	Forecast 31 March 2023	Forecast 31 March 2024
<b>Business Change Reserve</b> To fund costs linked to the council's change programme which are not delivering specific savings, for example project management, benchmarking and potential redundancies. It will also support training and development of our workforce to ensure we have the skills required to deliver the ambitions of the Council.	1,577	986	234
<b>Commercial Property Reserve</b> Established to reduce the risks associated with holding commercial property by providing funding for any future void and rent-free periods as well as repairs and upgrades to the investment portfolio.	2,490	1,480	1,353
<b>Insurance Reserve</b> This is to cover the excesses carried in respect of claims under various insurance policies and is subject to annual actuarial review.	1,133	1,133	1,133
<b>Norwich Regeneration Ltd Reserve</b> Originally established to smooth any fluctuations in net income received by the Council from lending to NRL. The reserve level was increased in 2019/20 to mitigate against any potential future Minimum Revenue Provision charges required to cover for estimated non-recovery of the loan balance.  The recoverability of the loan will continue to be reviewed and should any element of the reserve not be required it can be returned to general reserves.	2,700	2,050	1,400

	Actual 31 March 2022	Forecast 31 March 2023	Forecast 31 March 2024
<b>S31 Grant Reserve</b> Unutilised balance of S31 grant monies received in prior years from Central Government to fund Business Rates reliefs.  The reserve was increased in 2021/22 due the additional grant income received to compensate the council for additional business rates reliefs announced by HM Treasury as part of the Covid-19 response. This will be returned to the general fund over the following years to match the timing of the related collection fund deficits.	11,645	629	2,277
<b>Revenue Grants Unapplied</b> Holds grants and contributions received which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure. The use of the balance is restricted and can only be used to fund the specific service area awarded the grant income. The majority of the balance is made up of Section 106 contributions which are released each year to support the maintenance costs on specific assets.	4,477	3,674	3,374
<b>General Fund Repairs Reserve</b> To provide future funding for required maintenance on general fund properties. £0.2m budgeted to be used in 2021/22 to fund required property maintenance.	600	475	475
<b>Business Rates Pool Reserve</b> The council received a distribution of £0.675m from the Norfolk Business Rates Pool as agreed by Norfolk Leaders. It is set aside in this reserve to support future spend in line with the economic development objectives of the fund.	675	110	110

	Actual 31 March 2022	Forecast 31 March 2023	Forecast 31 March 2024
Other minor reserves	150	150	150
Total	29,849	14,591	13,994

## Appendix 2 (A): Movements from the approved 2022/23 base budget

	<b>£000</b>
<b>2022/23 Budget Resources</b>	<b>(17,713)</b>
<b>Budget movements:</b>	
Increase in business rates income	(582)
Increase in council tax income	(481)
Movement in revenue support grant	(266)
<b>2023/24 Budget Resources</b>	<b>(19,041)</b>

<b>2022/23 Budget Requirement</b>	<b>17,713</b>
<b>Budget movements</b>	
Reverse prior year contribution from reserves	2,100
Reversal of one-off items in the 2022/23 budget	(528)
MTFS movements	87
Inflation	4,893
Reduction in grant income	563
Other movements and recharges	(679)
Permanent growth Appendix 2 (G)	401
Permanent savings & additional income Appendix 2 (F)	(5,527)
Short term growth	18
New service investment from earmarked reserves	999
Earmarked reserve transfers to meet service investment	(999)
<b>Revised 2023/24 Budget Requirement</b>	<b>19,041</b>

## Appendix 2 (B): 2023/24 provisional budget by subjective group

Subjective group	Budget 2022/23 £000	Budget 2023/24 £000	Movement £000
Employees	30,224	28,865	(1,359)
Premises	10,489	11,744	1,255
Transport	249	209	(40)
Supplies & services	17,779	18,598	819
Housing benefit payments	41,492	41,639	147
Capital financing	4,377	4,016	(361)
<b>Gross expenditure</b>	<b>104,610</b>	<b>105,071</b>	<b>461</b>
Government grants	(44,845)	(44,037)	808
Fees, charges & rental income	(27,683)	(32,558)	(4,875)
Net recharge income	(10,051)	(8,606)	1,445
<b>Gross income</b>	<b>(82,579)</b>	<b>(85,201)</b>	<b>(2,622)</b>
Contribution from General Reserves	(2,100)	0	2,100
Contribution to/from Earmarked Reserves	(2,218)	(829)	1,389
<b>Total Budgetary Requirement</b>	<b>17,713</b>	<b>19,041</b>	<b>1,328</b>

### Explanation of key variances:

- Employee costs have decreased by £1.359m. Although the 2023/24 employee budget includes inflationary adjustments for salaries and on-costs (£2.0m), the transfer of some property services employees directly into the Housing Revenue Account (£1.7m which would previously have been a recharge) combined with other service review impacts and reductions in pension deficit costs has resulted in an overall net decrease in costs.
- The premises increase in costs is primarily due to significant inflationary increases, in particular in relation to gas, electric and insurance costs.
- Fees, charges and rental income has increased mainly as a result of the prior year Covid-19 growth being reversed (£1.2m) and additional interest of cash investments (£3.8m). A share of the additional interest is recharged to the Housing Revenue Account (£2.1m) which can be seen in the reduction in net recharge income line.
- The reduction in the contributions from reserves is due to being able to balance the 2023/24 budget without support from general reserves. The contribution from earmarked reserves reflects the current allocations as detailed in Appendix 2(H).

## Appendix 2 (C): 2023/24 provisional General Fund budget by service

	Gross Expenditure £000	Gross Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>267</b>
<b>Corporate Financing</b>	<b>2,517</b>	<b>(6,828)</b>	<b>(4,311)</b>
Corp & Commercial Services Management	476	0	476
Finance, Audit & Risk	2,005	(1,139)	866
HR & Organisational Development	1,241	(504)	737
Legal & Procurement	3,153	(1,371)	1,782
Revenues & Benefits	44,659	(41,381)	3,278
<b>Total Corporate &amp; Commercial Services</b>	<b>51,534</b>	<b>(44,395)</b>	<b>7,139</b>
Community Services Management	407	0	407
Customers, IT & Digital	8,396	(3,026)	5,370
Strategy, Engagement & Culture	3,990	(1,297)	2,693
Housing & Community Safety	6,868	(5,663)	1,205
<b>Total Community Services</b>	<b>19,661</b>	<b>(9,986)</b>	<b>9,675</b>
Development & City Services Management	556	0	556
Environment Services	18,553	(14,324)	4,229
Planning & Regulatory Services	4,439	(2,041)	2,398
Property & Economic Development	7,543	(7,626)	(83)
<b>Total Development &amp; City Services</b>	<b>31,091</b>	<b>(23,991)</b>	<b>7,100</b>
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>105,070</b>	<b>(85,200)</b>	<b>19,870</b>
Contribution from General Reserves	0	0	0
Contribution from Earmarked reserves	0	(829)	(829)
Contribution to Earmarked reserves	0	0	0
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>105,070</b>	<b>(86,029)</b>	<b>19,041</b>
Revenue Support Grant		(491)	(491)
Business Rates Retained Income		(7,480)	(7,480)
Council Tax Income		(11,070)	(11,070)
<b>Budget Resources</b>		<b>(19,041)</b>	<b>(19,041)</b>

**Note:** Corporate financing includes interest costs, minimum revenue provision, New Homes Bonus, Council Tax Support Admin Subsidy Grants and contingency.

## Appendix 2 (D): Breakdown of MTFS by subjective group

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employees	28,865	29,239	29,591	30,523
Premises	11,744	12,271	12,362	12,447
Transport	209	210	210	211
Supplies & Services	18,597	18,814	18,955	19,097
Capital Charges	4,016	3,404	2,991	2,866
Housing Benefit Payments	41,639	40,466	39,589	39,024
Benefit Subsidy	(40,036)	(38,358)	(37,148)	(36,186)
Net recharge income	(8,605)	(8,215)	(8,215)	(8,215)
Contribution to Capital	0	0	0	0
Fee, charges, rental income	(32,558)	(31,892)	(31,209)	(30,966)
New Homes Bonus	(45)	(45)	(45)	(45)
Benefit/CTS Admin grant	(665)	(599)	(539)	(485)
Other Government Grants	(3,291)	(3,186)	(3,187)	(3,186)
Earmarked reserves transfer	(829)	(44)	0	0
Assumed growth cumulative	0	500	1,000	1,500
<b>Subtotal budgets (no savings)</b>	<b>19,042</b>	<b>22,565</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>26,585</b>

Business Rates	(7,480)	(7,772)	(7,839)	(7,906)
Formula Funding (RSG)	(491)	(491)	(491)	(491)
Council Tax	(11,070)	(11,589)	(12,081)	(12,595)
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>(19,041)</b>	<b>(19,852)</b>	<b>(20,411)</b>	<b>(20,992)</b>

<b>Budget Gap</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,713</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>5,593</b>
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## Appendix 2 (E): Calculation of retained Business Rates income and Council Tax

### A. Business Rates Retained Income

	£000
Retained Income (including S31 grants for reliefs)	(7,893)
Less: Levy to the Norfolk Pool for economic development & pooled growth	279
Plus: Net surplus distribution 2020/21 – 2022/23	(4,351)
Less: Transfer to S31 grant from earmarked reserves	4,483
<b>Total Business Rates Income 2023/24</b>	<b>(7,481)</b>

### B. Council Tax Calculation 2023/24

	No.	£
<b>Budgetary requirement</b>		<b>19,041,562</b>
- Revenue Support Grant		(490,604)
- Business Rates Distribution		(7,481,452)
<b>= Council tax requirement</b>		<b>11,069,506</b>
- Surplus on collection fund 2022/23		(28,053)
<b>=Total Council tax income</b>		<b>11,041,453</b>
Band D Equivalent properties		38,260
<b>Council tax (Band D)</b>		<b>288.59</b>

### C. Norwich City Council tax increase 2022/23 to 2023/24, Bands A to H

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<b>2022/23</b>	<b>£186.81</b>	<b>£217.94</b>	<b>£249.08</b>	<b>£280.21</b>	<b>£342.48</b>	<b>£404.75</b>	<b>£467.02</b>	<b>£560.42</b>
Increase	£5.58	£6.52	£7.44	£8.38	£10.24	£12.10	£13.96	£16.76
<b>2023/24</b>	<b>£192.39</b>	<b>£224.46</b>	<b>£256.52</b>	<b>£288.59</b>	<b>£352.72</b>	<b>£416.85</b>	<b>£480.98</b>	<b>£577.18</b>

**Appendix 2 (F): 2023/24 list of proposed budget savings/increased income**

Theme	Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25* £000	2025/26* £000	2026/27* £000	TOTAL
Efficiencies, funding changes and budget rebasing	Community	Detailed line-by-line review of budgets	182	9	4		195
	Community	Review of shared amenities recharge to the HRA for maintenance on communal areas.	120				120
	Community	Additional grant income to support private sector leasing team for its role in housing refugees.	24				24
	Community	Reduction in the costs of the Citizen magazine through a review of frequency and combining with tenant magazine.	25				25
	Community	Move Community Enabling team to (50:50) HRA/GF split, supporting delivery of tenant engagement requirements of Housing White Paper		135			135
	Corp & Commercial	Detailed line-by-line review of budgets Key items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£83k reduction in added-years pension payments</li> <li>£100k Reduction in insurance settlements budget in line with historic trends</li> </ul>	293	25	95	15	428
	Corp & Commercial	Assumed future reduction in the general fund contingency level (currently £400k)			25	25	50

Theme	Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25* £000	2025/26* £000	2026/27* £000	TOTAL
	Development & City	Detailed line-by-line of utilised budgets and rebasing of income budgets based on historic levels. Significant items are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycling credits income rebasing</li> <li>Garden waste income rebasing</li> </ul>	468	27	2	2	499
Service Reviews	Community	Efficiencies from the implementation of the customer and digital strategy from improved processes and channel shift.	112	160			272
	Community	Community Services – service reviews	85	284	45		414
	Community	Removal of Big Boom fireworks from the events calendar.	33				33
	Cross-cutting	Enabling services – to assess how we can generate efficiencies through sharing of administrative functions and delivering of benefits from investment in corporate systems.	25	44	35	35	139
	Corp & Commercial	Corporate & Commercial Services – service reviews	95	241	128	43	507
	Development & City	Development & City Services – service reviews	293	37	157	120	607
Fees & Charges	Community	The Halls – increased income assumptions after market analysis		10	138		148
	Community	Additional income through external hire of open spaces and sponsorship opportunities	30	20			50

Theme	Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25* £000	2025/26* £000	2026/27* £000	TOTAL
	Corp & Commercial	Income generation through operation of an assessment centre and selling learning and development places to other local authorities.		7	5	5	17
	Development & City	HMO licence fee increase based on 5yr licences	20				20
	Development & City	Expansion of charges for Parking in parks – charges for parking in parks to be extended to car parks that have suitable infrastructure and space	10	10			20
	Development & City	Review of Car Parking charges – charges will be reviewed to reflect the current market		480	360	120	960
	Development & City	Review of markets income in line with lease terms	61	38			99
	Development & City	Migrate all Garden Waste customers to Direct Debit payment	21				21
	Development & City	Align Allotment Rents to ensure that service is cost neutral		10			10
	Development & City	Street Traders' Licences. This proposal would seek to increase the number of licences issued and review the tariff based on independent benchmarking.		49	49		98
	Development & City	Planning fee increase (legislatively set fees)		140			140

Theme	Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25* £000	2025/26* £000	2026/27* £000	TOTAL
	Development & City	Increase in cost recovery position of service through improvements in working practices and refocus of staff time.			30	100	130
	Development & City	Introduction of food safety pre-inspection audits	10	20	24	26	80
	Development & City	Introduction of additional HMO licensing scheme			60		60
Contracts & External grants	Community	IT contract saving through reduce reliance on NDL middleware and rationalisation of licences.		65	81	4	150
	Community	The council funds a commissioned countywide service - Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS). Revised approach reviews other contract costs.	38	23			61
	Community	Review of external grant levels.	57	23			80
	Corp & Commercial	Reduction in external costs by HR guidance on a like-for-like in house solution.		14			14
	Development & City	Review of NCSL environment contract specification.	198	198	396	419	1,211
	Development & City	Review of waste and recycling collections – savings to be delivered through increased efficiencies of collection service and options for back-office efficiencies.		256	164		420

Theme	Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25* £000	2025/26* £000	2026/27* £000	TOTAL
Asset Management	Development & City	Commercial approach to generate electrical energy which can be sold back to the grid.		100			100
	Development & City	Estimated longer term savings from move to community centre leases		16	49		65
	Development & City	Rental income from Old Carrow House following refurbishment as part of the Towns Fund project – income following associated capital expenditure to bring the building back into use.	50	50			100
	Development & City	Advertising - Roll out of advertising on vacant land in prominent locations to generate income. £50k a target estimate for year 1 but would require more research to firm up options and target.		50			50
	Development & City	Gypsy and Traveller Site Management – resulting from a change in provider of site management		50			50
	Development & City	Review use of corporate buildings.			1,000		1,000
	Development & City	Upgrade of district light network to LED thereby reducing energy and repair costs.		70			70
	Development & City	A review of commercial opportunities within environment services.		72	156	156	384
Taxation	Corp & Commercial	Additional Council Tax income from introducing a premium of 100% on second homes.		185			185

Theme	Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25* £000	2025/26* £000	2026/27* £000	TOTAL
Treasury & debt management	Corporate financing	Improved income returns on council cash investments.	1,773				1,773
	Corporate financing	Reduction in interest costs as borrowing refinanced at maturity at lower interest rates.	1,423				1,423
	Corporate financing	Prepayment of the council's pension deficit payment - all three years paid over to the pension fund in 2023/24 realising a cash reduction in overall contributions.	81				81
		Estimated HRA recharge impact		(227)	(108)	36	(299)
			<b>5,527</b>	<b>2,691</b>	<b>2,895</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>12,219</b>

\* The council has identified potential future savings of £6.692m against the cumulative target of £5.593m. These provisional options are shown the table above and will continue to be subject to validation work and potential savings values refined as part of the 2024/25 corporate business planning cycle.

## Appendix 2 (G): 2023/24 list of proposed budget growth

### Permanent Growth

Directorate	Description	2023/24 £000
Community	Upgrade of current corporate contact system to a cloud-based version. Moving to the cloud solution allows for additional levels of resilience for service delivery and provides call handling opportunities that are not available with the current solution.	70
Community	Rebasing of budget for grants the council awards externally.	30
Corporate & Commercial	Additional costs of the external audit contract arising from the re-tender exercise completed by Public Sector Appointments Limited. This approach was approved by Full Council in January 2022.	71
Corporate & Commercial	Growth relating to a reducing level of subsidy recovery against its housing benefit expenditure, more than previously estimated in the MTFS. This is attributable to continuing growth in rent levels against fixed subsidy caps. Whilst every council is seeing increased natural migration to Universal Credit, Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) rules mean cases that attract 100% subsidy return are lost to councils, whilst DWP's strategy is to continue to leave temporary, exempt and supported accommodation cases with councils and it is these cases subject to punitive subsidy rules. Along with increased demand and rental market pressures, councils are therefore seeing increased subsidy loss.	230
		<b>401</b>



## Appendix 2 (H): Earmarked Reserve Allocations 2023/24

Invest to Save Reserve allocations		2023/24
		<b>£000</b>
1	To fund the cost of additional technical IT resources to support the delivery of the customer & digital strategy.	416
		<b>416</b>

Business Change Reserve allocations		2023/24
		<b>£000</b>
2	Transformation resource including change manager, graduate scheme members, programme manager and project accountant	368
		<b>368</b>

Commercial Property Reserve allocations		2023/24
		<b>£000</b>
3	Estimated use of reserve to fund any loss of income arising from void or rent-free periods.	170
		<b>170</b>

Revenue Grants Unapplied		2023/24
		<b>£000</b>
4	Use of unutilised grant allocations to support income recovery within revenues and benefits.	44
		<b>44</b>

At this stage the figures are estimates of the required funding and other projects are expected to be identified during the year as part of the service reviews and as business cases are brought forward. Updates to the use of the Invest-to-Save and Business Changes reserves will be made through the budget monitoring reports taken to Cabinet throughout 2023/24.

## **Appendix 2 (I): Consultation responses on the proposed budget for 2023/24**

This appendix summarises the responses to Norwich City Council's budget consultation for the financial year 2023/24.

### **Summary**

- Feedback from the consultation indicated stakeholders, businesses and residents broadly support the council's approach to how it intends to manage its budget and meet the forecasted budget gap in 2023-24.
- The majority supported the council's proposal to increase the city council's share of council tax to just under 3 per cent (50% strongly support or somewhat support), compared to 38% who strongly or somewhat oppose.
- There was strong support (61%) for the council to retain its scheme to provide up to 100 per cent council tax relief to those on low incomes, despite only 17% of respondents receiving this support at present.
- The top-rated services were as follows: housing services, waste and recycling collections and the provision of parks and open spaces.

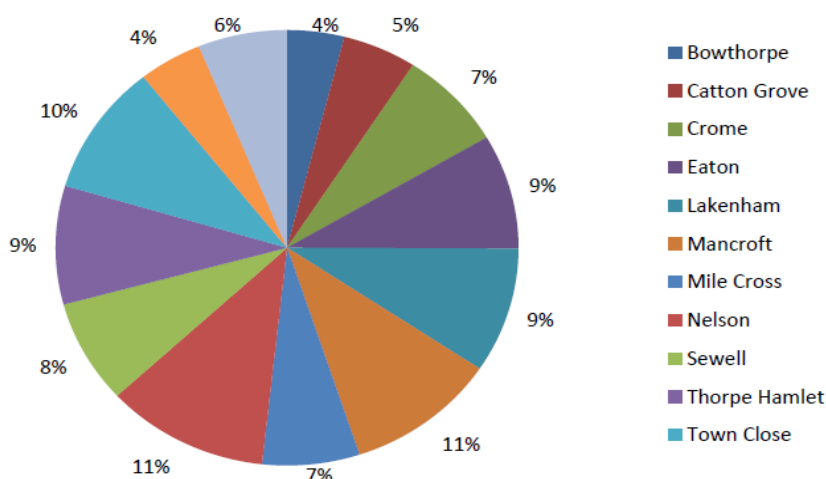
### **Part 1: Consultation and engagement approach**

- The consultation, which ran from 15 December 2022 to 20 January 2023, was hosted on the council's new consultation and engagement website 'Get Talking Norwich'. To help inform people's views, a number of key documents were made available on Get Talking Norwich – the council's provisional budget and financial strategy 2023-24; its corporate plan for 2022-26 and the Norwich 2040 City Vision.
- The 2023-24 survey was hosted online via the Get Talking Norwich website, with a total of 2,654 responses.
- This year's engagement focused on two main sections – one seeking quantitative data, the other seeking qualitative data. Direct engagement was sought from residents, partners/key stakeholders, local businesses and wider service users.
- 10 community groups were also approached with an offer of funding to host community conversations with their user groups and community members regarding our proposed budget for 2023/24. Two of these groups responded to our invitation and hosted face-to-face sessions with their client base to gather their feedback on behalf of Norwich City Council. Their feedback from these sessions is included in the analysis presented below.
- The budget consultation was promoted widely throughout the 37 days it was live via a number of channels and methods, including text messages, emails to local businesses, social media promotion and engagement through the community enabling team's networks.

## Part 2: detailed analysis

### Respondents' profile

The following section of the report outlines demographic data about the respondents who completed the budget consultation survey via Get Talking Norwich.



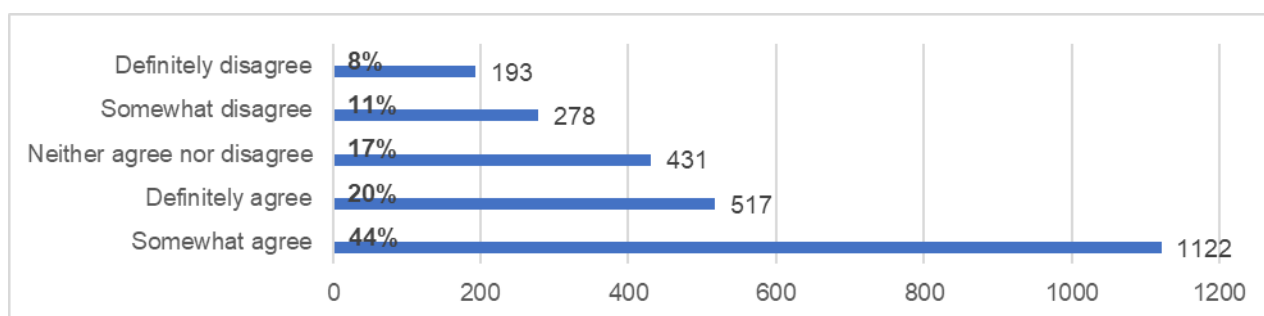
- 20% of respondents identified as having a disability, while 74% did not. 6% of respondents preferred not to say.
- 79% of respondents do not receive council tax relief, while 17% of respondents do. 4% of respondents were not sure whether they received this support.
- 61% (1,591) of the respondents own their own home (with or without a mortgage), while many rent from the council (17%), from a private landlord (14%) or from a housing association (6%).
- The majority (51%) of those who responded work full time, with 14% also working part-time and 18% wholly retired from work. Only 1% (8) of the respondents are in full-time education.

### Quantitative survey results:

The following section of the report breaks down the quantitative survey responses by question. Supplementary commentary is only presented alongside the graphs to draw out trends where this provides additional value to the figures provided.

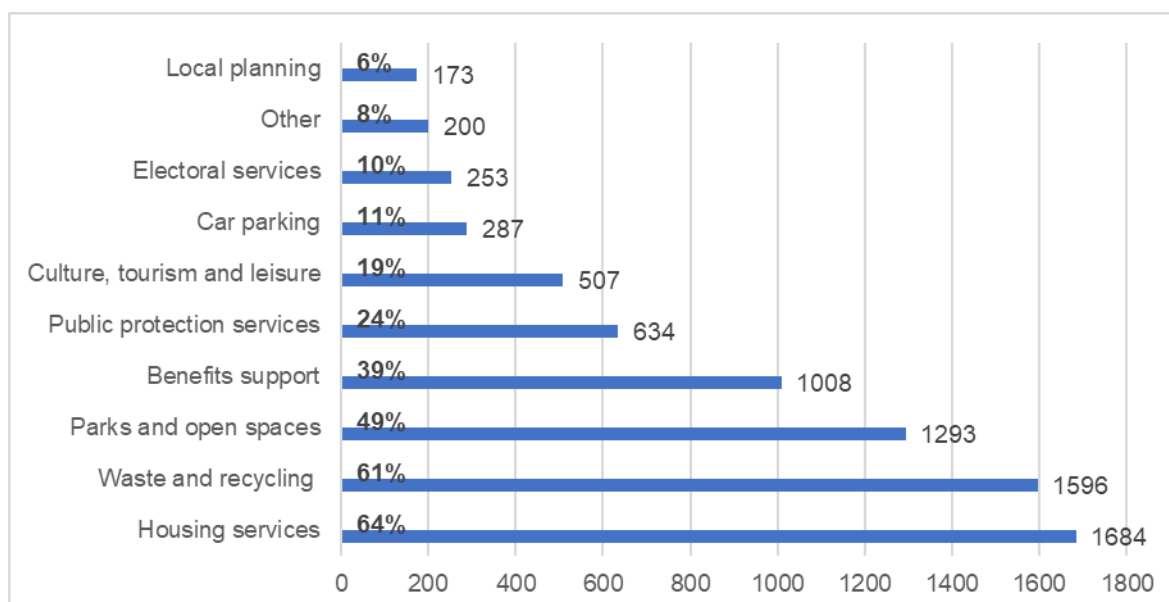
To note, percentages will not add up to 100 where respondents are asked to provide their top three choices (Q2, Q5, Q6 and Q11).

**Q1. Looking at the above themes and examples of what they do, to what extent do you agree with our approach to help us bridge our budget gap?**

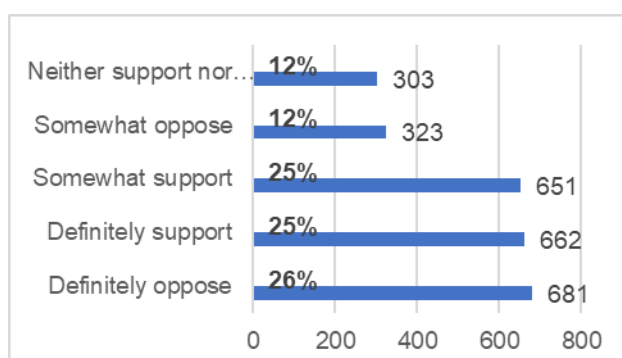


A strong majority of respondents support the council's approach to bridging its budget gap. 64% of respondents somewhat/definitely agree and 19% of respondents somewhat/definitely disagree.

**Q2. Please take a look at some of the core council services we provide and choose the top three that you value most.**



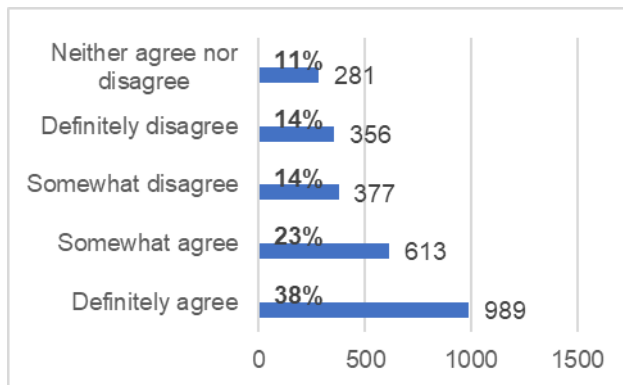
**Q3. To what extent do you support the council increasing its share of council tax by up to 3 per cent in 2023-24 to help towards paying for council services?**



The majority of respondents support the council increasing its share of council tax by up to 3 per cent:

- 50% of residents either strongly support or somewhat support
- 38% of residents either strongly oppose or somewhat oppose

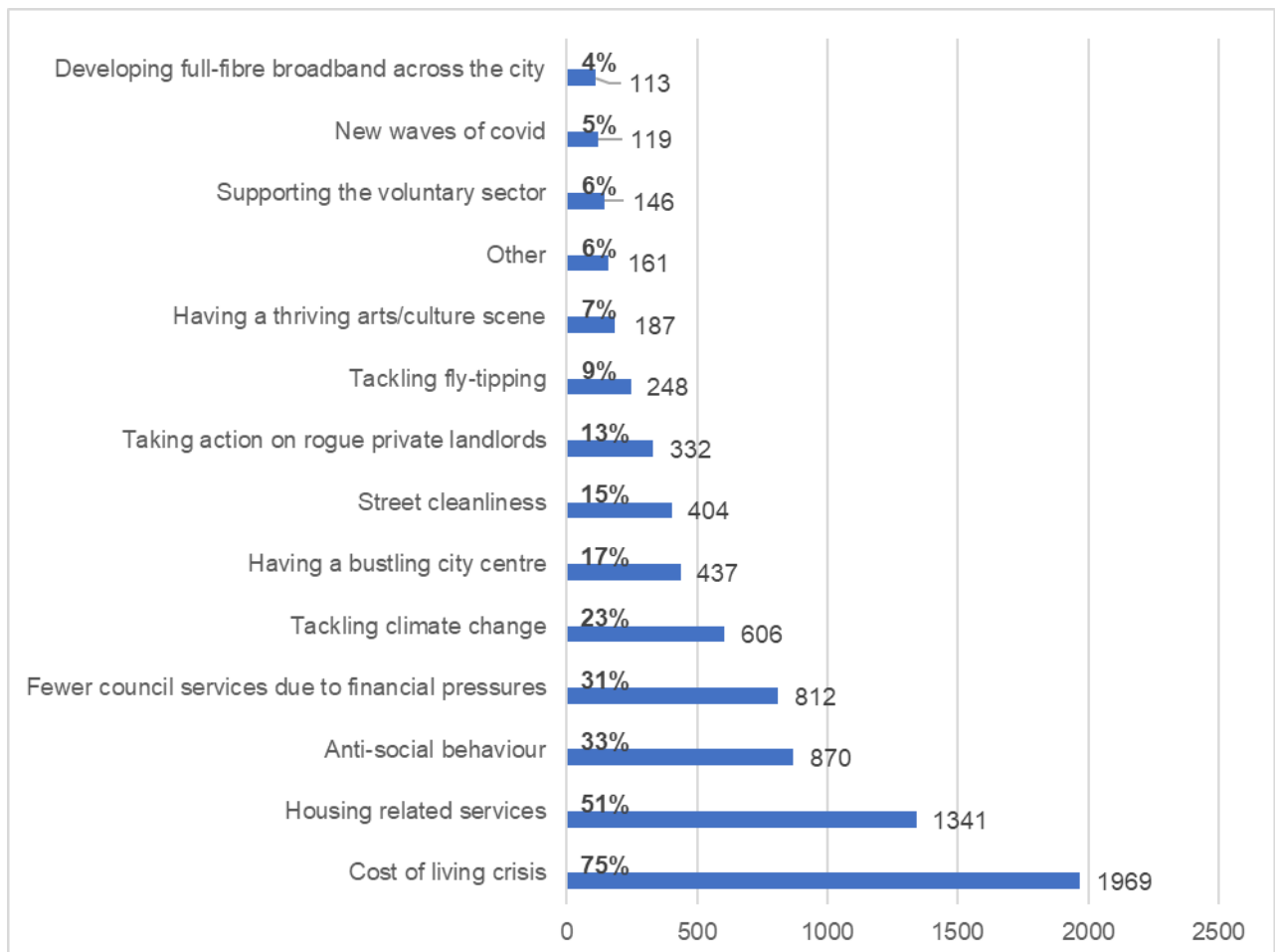
**Q4. To what extent do you agree with providing up to 100 per cent to those who qualify for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme?**



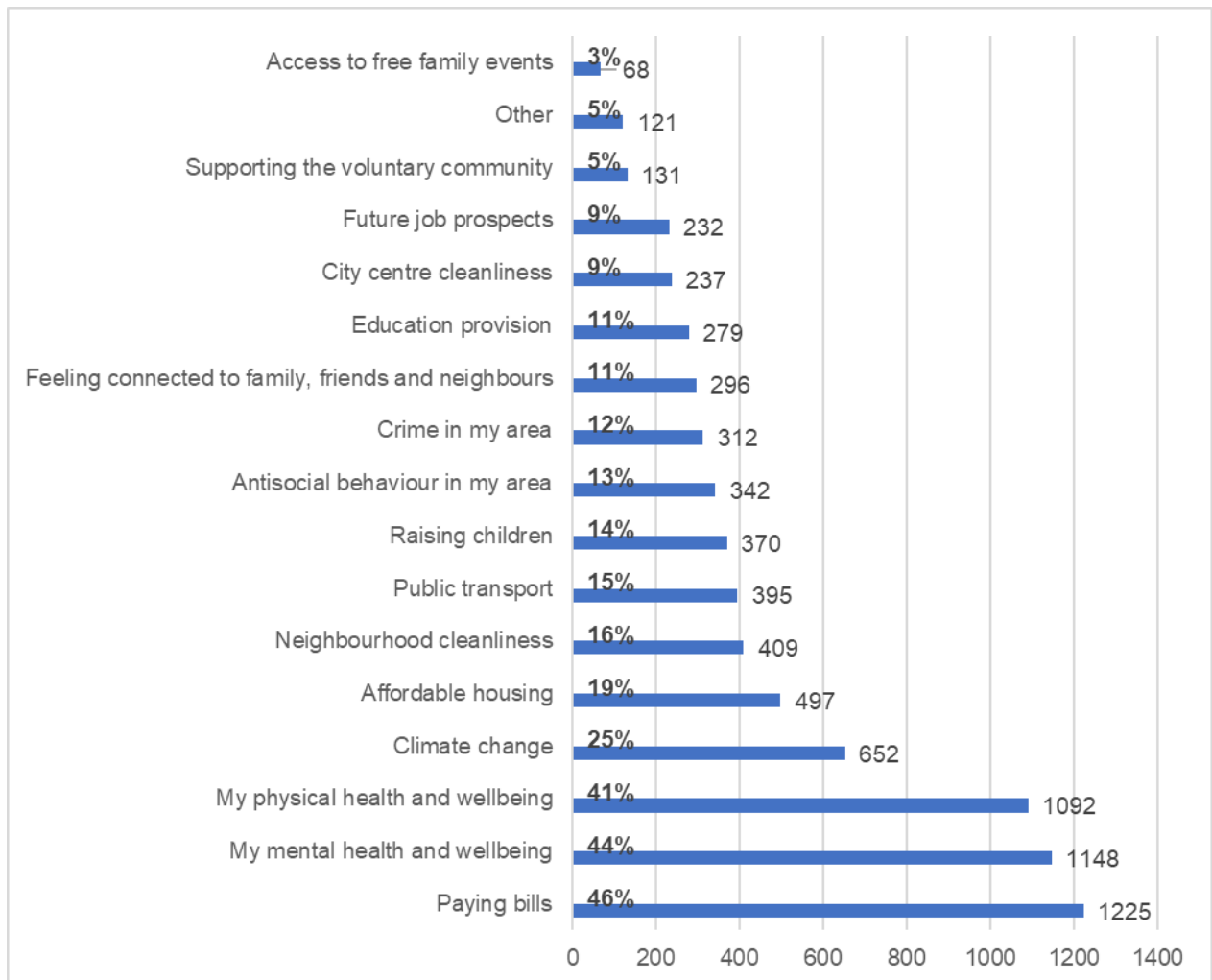
A strong majority of respondents **support** the council retaining its scheme to provide up to 100 per cent council tax relief to those on low incomes.

- 61% of residents either strongly agree or somewhat agree
- 28% of residents either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree

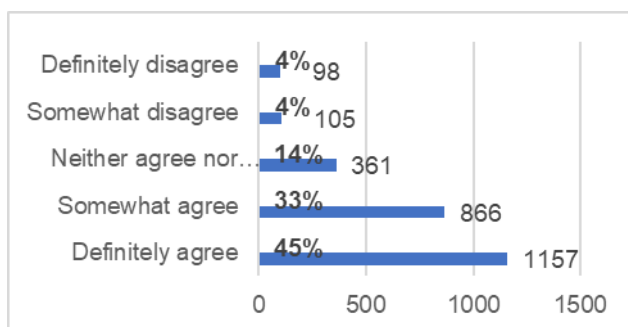
**Q5. What do you think will be the three most important issues facing Norwich in the next year?**



## Q6. Which three things are the most important to you at the moment?



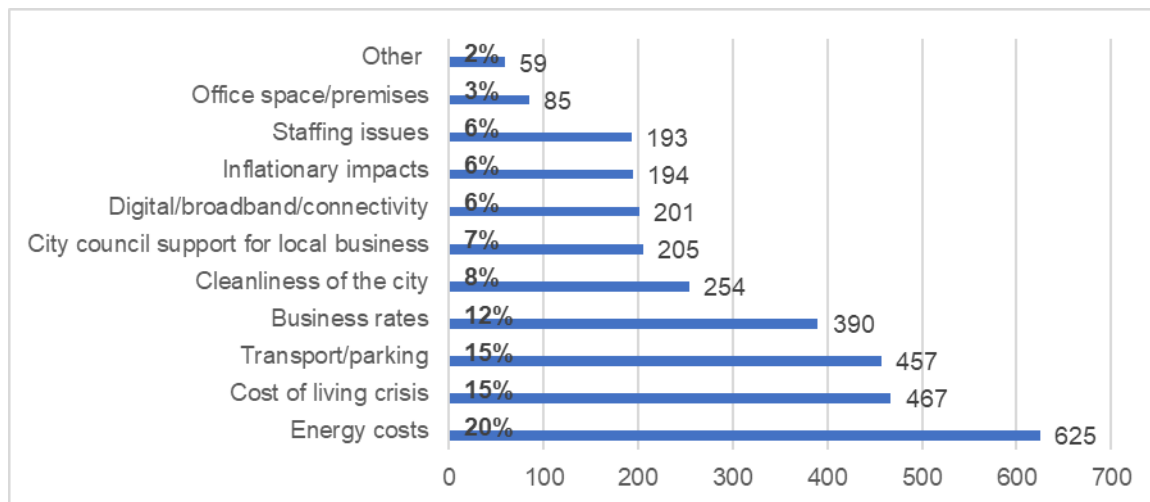
## Q8. To what extent do you agree that we should continue to review our assets by assessing which ones to sell or finding ways of generating additional income from letting out our assets?



A strong majority of residents **support** the council's approach to asset management:

- 78% of residents strongly/somewhat agree
- Only 8% of residents strongly/somewhat disagree

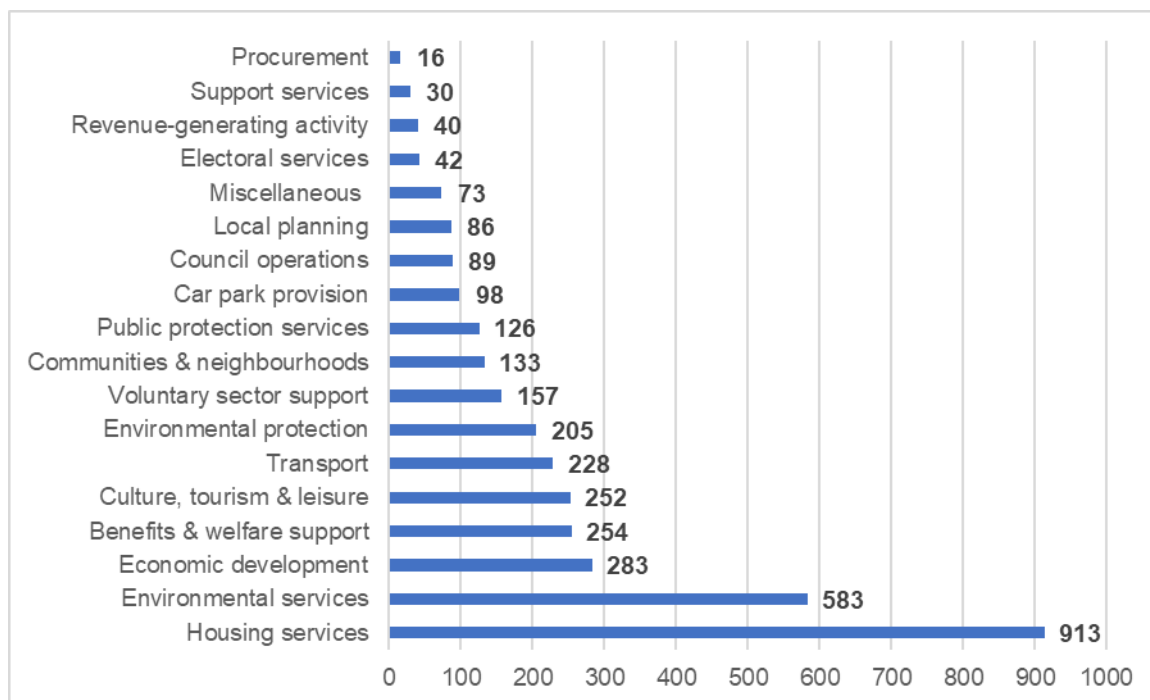
**Q11. If you own or run a business in Norwich what are three things that most concern you from a business perspective?**



**Qualitative survey results**

**Q7. With these key aims and services in mind, if you had £1m to invest in Norwich, what would your spending priorities be?**

Question 7 provided an open-ended text box for residents to provide additional detail in response to the above question. Out of the 2121 responses received, 2072 of these provided additional comments. Resident responses have been grouped into the below key themes are shown in the graph below. To note, comments often touched upon various themes, so the percentages for each theme will not equate to 100. Further analysis and example comments are provided for the top themes.



44% (913) of responses focused on **housing services**, including increasing and improving council housing stock as well as promoting the development of affordable housing through planning policies. Comments included:

- *“Ensuring housing can deliver the service required to residents through support to sustain tenancies and providing high quality repairs and maintenance”*
- *“Social rent housing and quality temporary accommodation stock would save money going forward on hotels and bed and breakfasts”*
- *“Providing accessible, safe, long-term housing for the homeless and other vulnerable or low-income communities”*
- *“Building quality homes like the ones at Goldsmith Street and Trinity Gardens in Bowthorpe”*
- *“Housing is the most important to city, keeping in mind many can’t and won’t be able to pay for the high price of private houses rent”*
- *“Housing services, the number of people homeless and insecure tenancies needs to be addressed”*

28% (583) of comments mentioned investing in **environmental services** such as waste collections and recycling. The comments below reflect the wider tone of responses captured by this theme:

- *“Make the streets cleaner, over the last 12 months the bins are overflowing with rubbish”*
- *“Keeping streets and parks clean from litter, to protect wildlife and make them safe places for children and adults. Recycling is very important and something that is done well here in Norwich I think. Our parks and open spaces are lovely, make Norwich special, and we should carry on investing in making them wildlife friendly and nice places for everyone to be in”*
- *“More recycling bin options and collections including food waste”*

The maintenance of green spaces featured as a prominent response type within this theme. Many residents highlighted their importance in providing free leisure options for families with children, as well as the mental and physical health benefits of being outside in nature. A selection of these comments included:

- *“Norwich is outstandingly attractive and these green spaces help inhabitants enjoy a good quality of life with no charge at the point of use. Good for fitness and mental health support.”*
- *“Keeping parks and such areas clean and inviting. Everyone needs somewhere cheap and safe for their days out at the moment and places to entertain children when money is tight. People need open safe spaces to walk and breathe and escape for while”*

14% (283) of responses focused on **economic development**. This theme captured comments including supporting local business, job creation, regeneration projects, workforce upskilling and attracting inward investment. A selection of these comments are detailed below:

- *“Creating more jobs or more assistance/opportunities for people to find work”*
- *Supporting local, independent businesses, especially when redevelopment of areas is being considered (e.g. Anglia Square)”*



- *“Building the economy to attract inward investment, through new businesses, new employment opportunities, and new shops/attractions so that the council tax base is funded more through commercial activities than residents”*

A subsection of comments within this theme put forward ideas for the city centre to be redeveloped with a view to providing a space for community engagement and leisure, as opposed to being predominantly geared towards retail.

12% (254) of responses focused on providing **benefits and welfare support**. As demonstrated by the data from questions 5 and 6, the cost of living crisis and the ability to pay bills are regarded as the most important issues affecting the city and its residents. Comments included:

- *“The cost of living crisis is the most immediate pressure and difficulty facing Norwich residents, so I would invest most of the money in supporting the most vulnerable through housing services and benefits”*
- *“Council Tax Benefit as cost of living has increased and people are struggling”*
- *“Investing in early intervention support to prevent people getting into debt or more serious problems”*

A subsection of comments within this theme also touched upon improving benefits administration with regards to means testing, as well as expanding benefits eligibility criteria to account for low-middle earners. Comments included:

- *“Ensure council tax benefits are appropriate- not everyone in a certain ‘group’ needs the same benefits or reductions”*
- *“Support for middle earners who are above threshold help and don’t earn enough”*
- *“Investigating benefit fraud”*
- *“Council tax should be means tested. It would be well worth surveying communities as to income of households so that council tax could be implemented on a sliding scale. Those on the highest incomes would be taxed the most. A blanket rise in each tax band will annoy those on low incomes when wages have not risen in line with inflation”*

12% (252) of responses mentioned investing in **culture, tourism and leisure** including council-run events, with the vast majority of these highlighting their place-making value and importance in promoting a sense of community. Comments included:

- *“The more you can invest in tourism the more money will be spent in the city and more money will be able to be spent on the above services”*
- *“Promotion of our city to encourage both tourism and people moving to our city. Both will increase revenues for the city, businesses and make our city even more desirable. Yes, it’s an expenditure but one that will be recouped many times over. Let’s make Norwich a destination”*
- *“Retaining the amazing feeling of civic pride the council has created via events such as art trails, Christmas lights etc”*

With the budget shortfall in mind, it is worth noting that a small minority of responses within this theme opposed council budgets being used to fund these services instead of funding core, statutory services.

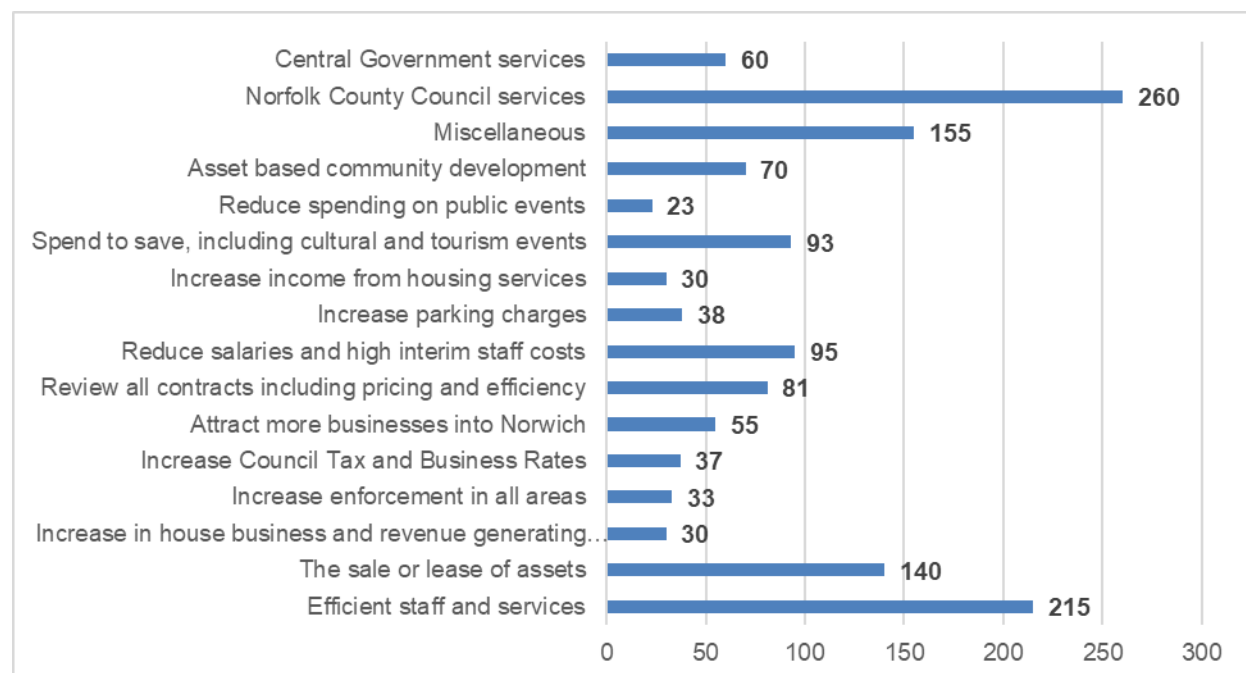
11% (228) of the survey responses focused on **transport** investments. Although Norfolk County Council is predominantly responsible for this, Norwich City Council has a role in influencing plans and policies for local transport and associated infrastructure through partnerships such as Transport for Norwich.

A significant proportion of comments within this theme supported initiatives to pedestrianise the city and prioritise greener forms of travel such as cycling and walking over car access to the city. However, recent road closures, increased traffic congestion and reduced public transport services were highlighted as negatively impacting respondents' access to the city centre.

10% (205) of the consultation responses focused on **environmental protection** across a broad range of issues such as sustainability, carbon reduction, and biodiversity. A subsection of comments within this theme specifically highlighted investing in initiatives to improve the energy efficiency of the city's housing stock as a means of reducing cost of living pressures for residents.

### **Q9. Do you have any other ideas about how we can balance our budget by doing things differently, finding additional ways to bring in more money or make savings?**

Question 9 provided respondents with the opportunity to express their own ideas about how Norwich City Council might balance its budget via an open text box. Out of the 1509 responses received, 963 provided additional comments in response to question 9. These responses have been grouped into key themes to facilitate effective analysis, as shown in the graph below.



The following section provides an overview of responses across each of the above themes. To note, comments often touched upon various themes, so the percentages for each theme will not equate to 100. Further analysis and example comments are provided for the top themes.

27% (260) responses mentioned **Norfolk County Council services**. Comments included:

- *“Be more careful with money spent on road repairs”*
- *“Introduce a congestion charge”*
- *“Build a light railway network (similar to DLR) - this would reduce traffic congestion - it's impossible to travel outside of the city centre without a car - and earn ongoing revenue”*
- *“Invest in young people. Their education and their wellbeing - they have done nothing to deserve this misery you put them through”*

22% (215) of the responses mentioned **efficient services and council staff**. Comments included:

- *“Use technology to allow your teams to work more efficiently together rather than duplicating work”*
- *“Make sure jobs on council properties are done efficiently so no one has to have a job redone. Employ people who work properly and quickly so work is not dragged out costing more money”*
- *“Improve networking between departments therefore improve time constraints on projects”*
- *“Looking at efficiency in each department and eliminating duplication”*

15% (140) of the responses mentioned **the sale or lease of council assets**. Comments included:

- *“Enable more staff to work from home so office space can be sold off”*
- *“A better use of city hall, if less office space is needed these spaces could be used for other income generating or charitable purposes”*
- *“Let out rooms in city hall for other agencies to work in or for private functions”*
- *“Further rationalising the number of office buildings you own and renting out surplus space to other organisations”*

10% (95) of the responses mentioned **reducing salaries** and high interim staffing costs. Comments included:

- *“Have less high paid managers and red tape would be a good start”*
- *“Less wastage on agency staff salaries”*
- *“Make temporary senior positions permanent and pay a fair salary. Too many senior management staff are receiving unrealistic wages. This money could be saved or put back into services by employing more officers for teams that are short staffed”*
- *“Look at staff costs and aim to reduce these and get people back into city hall to increase their spending in local services”*

10% (93) of the responses mentioned **spending to save** including cultural and tourism events. Comments included:

- *“Solar farms on council properties to generate income”*
- *“Make more of opportunities to bring more cultural investment to the city by collaborating with educational & cultural institutions”*
- *“Leverage the incredible tourist potential of our medieval city”*
- *“Increase city events. Make more revenue from tourism”*

**Q10. Do you have any other ideas about which capital expenditure projects would make a difference to our residents or businesses?**

Question 10 provided respondents the opportunity to express their own ideas about possible capital expenditure projects that would make a difference to residents and businesses across the city. Out of the 986 responses received, 818 provided additional comments.

The findings from this data conclude that the majority of responses did not directly relate to capital expenditure projects. Instead, responses put forward suggestions that included broad themes related to the sale/use of assets, cutting services and reducing spending on all services that are non-statutory.