

Executive summary

Targeted consultation and engagement has taken place throughout the year, related to the proposals put forward in the 2014/15 budget report. Specific proposals in the 2015/16 budget report will be subject to consultation and engagement where appropriate.

As in previous years, communicating and engaging with the community on our future plans is a key part of the budget process. Consultation began on 5 January 2015 and ended on 8 February 2015. Our approach was made up of 3 key elements:

1. Demonstrate what has been achieved since 2011, linking with a major consultation.

Three years ago we asked over 2,800 local people, including children and young people, to tell us their priorities. Their biggest concerns were jobs and the economy, environmental issues such as cleanliness, roads and graffiti and the level of crime and anti-social behaviour. We are able to strongly evidence what has changed.

We proposed to go back to local people to help make further plans for the next five years, 'Together we care about the future', asking:

1. What's the best thing about the borough of Telford and Wrekin?
2. What's your biggest concern/problem in the borough/
3. If you could do one thing to improve the borough what would it be?

These questions were published in the December 2014 edition of Your Voice with a response form. There was also an opportunity to complete the short survey online and the questions formed part of the budget road show in January 2015.

2. Highlighting some simple ways that residents can help the Council to save more money.

This will be an ongoing promotion simply challenging local people to try any of a number of simple ways that they can support local services and help to save the Council money.

Examples include:

- Recycling more and right
- Tackling fly tipping and litter
- Using more online Council services
- Using Council leisure facilities more frequently
- Going to Oakengates Theatre more often
- Helping older people to live independently at home

3. Communication of key budget messages including the growth agenda.

Messages included:

- Council investments
- Our vision and focus and priorities
- Winning and supporting jobs and investment
- Savings delivered since 2010/11
- Council Tax – frozen in 15/16 with a commitment to freeze Council Tax again in 16/17 – subject to no major changes in funding by Government

To encourage people to find out more about the budget, hear about the Council proposed investments, engage with the 'Together we care about the future' key questions and find out ways they can help save money we went around the Borough with a road show in January. The road show was a portable informative 'mini exhibition' which demonstrated the above three key elements. We make the road show as participatory as possible, including offering local people an opportunity to have conversations with the Lead Member for Finance and Enterprise, other Cabinet Members and senior managers.

Our communication and engagement plan included at Appendix 11 provides full details:

- Your Voice which was distributed to homes in the Borough to include a cut out consultation 'together we care about the future' questions to be returned freepost or signposted to complete online.
- Signposting opportunities for people to get involved and give their views on the budget strategy including Facebook, Twitter, write in, ring in or text.
- A survey of the Community Panel.
- An online budget survey on the budget page of the Council website – www.telford.gov.uk/budget
- A road show in January visiting a number of areas across the Borough giving local people an opportunity to hear about the budget and future plans and speak with Cabinet members and senior managers.
- Visits to present the budget strategy at a number of organisations and forums including The Parish Forum, the Senior Citizens Forum and the Young People's Forum.

In total **2,594 contacts** were involved with this consultation programme.

The Cabinet Member of Finance and Enterprise, the Chief Finance Officer and relevant senior managers, between them attended a number of local groups and forums including:

Group/Forum	Number attending
Telford Business Board	30
Parents with disabilities (PODS)	7
Taking Part Committee	24
Senior Citizens Forum	91
Telford and Wrekin Parish Forum	20
Union meeting	3
Sutton Hill Resident's Group	23
Young People's Forum	11
Listen not Label	14
Total in attendance at local groups and forums	223

This year we delivered an interactive road show, visiting a number of areas across the Borough giving local people an opportunity to hear about the budget and future plans and speak with Cabinet members and senior managers.

Road Show Event	Number attending
Hadley Library	9
Newport Library	44
Southwater Library (x2)	17 & 19
Wellington Library	47
Dawley House (x2)	12 & 73
Woodside Park Lane	8
Madeley Library	24
Oakengates The Place	16
Total number in attendance at the road show events	269

The Community Participation Team went out and about in local buildings across the Borough in the following areas:

Local community meetings	Number attending
Sutton Hill Community Centre	20
Donnington Community Centre	0
Arleston Community Centre	2
TCAT (x2)	172
Overdale Children's Centre	9
Hadley Children's Centre	9
Brookside Children's Centre	14
Total in attendance at local community meetings	226

The 'Together we care about the future' consultation questions were completed as follows:

Consultation method	n	%
Following face to face engagement with a Member or Officer	557	34.6%
Community Panel survey	486	30.2%
Online survey	282	17.5%
Drop box form	135	8.4%
Email	81	5.0%
Your Voice tear out slip	62	3.9%
Method not recorded	3	0.2%
Telephone or letter	2	0.1%
Total respondents	1608	100%

- With regard to the proposed Council investments a total of 103 completed the questionnaire.
- Opportunities for people to get involved and give their views on the budget strategy via social media, including Facebook and Twitter attracted a total of 113 comments.
- We also received 65 'other comments' i.e. specific budget savings.
- We received 27 submissions online which we were unable to read the comments due to compatibility issues for the Chrome web browser version 30 and 37.

Communication activity to encourage people to get involved in the budget consultation includes the following:

Online and Social Media

- 57,515 total reach for Facebook, Twitter and Streetlife
- 231 Advocacy (similar to likes and retweets)
- 3,634 unique page views (individuals viewing pages) of clicks on the link to our budget web pages with a total number of page views 4,849 (total number of views including repeat views). This excludes views of number of web forms.
- Two live Twitter discussions with Cllr Bill McClements

Direct targeting of people

- Article and 'tear out' for comments in Your Voice which aims to be delivered in every household in the Borough
- 25,699 emails to those people signed up through News for You
- Email from Cllr Sahota to Council partners launching the budget consultation
- First Point, Leisure Centre and Library reception staff handing over budget consultation response forms to customers
- Internal communication messages to staff

General information to people

- Six press releases around the Council's budget and promoting involvement in participation in the budget consultation
- Social media campaign throughout the consultation to gather views on key investment proposals
- Two radio interviews involving Cllr McClements the Cabinet lead for Finance and Enterprise

The key findings of the 'Together we care about the future' consultation, the demographic profile of respondents and the outcome of the Investment Proposals survey are set out in the following section.

All of the comments received in relation to the consultation can viewed online at <http://www.telford.gov.uk/budget>.

Consultation findings

Summary of findings

Reach



Social Media 57,515



3,634 unique web page views



25,699 emails to News for You subscribers



Your Voice delivered to every household in the borough

Total contacts 2,594

Total respondents 1,608

Face to face (35%)

Community Panel (30%)

Online/Email (23%)

Drop box forms/Your Voice (12%)



What is the best thing about the borough?



Shopping & recreation



Parks, play areas & open spaces



Heritage & local identity

What is your biggest concern or problem in the borough?



Highways & pavements



Environmental cleanliness & maintenance



Crime & safety

If you could do one thing to improve the borough what would it be?



Highways & pavements



Shopping & recreation



Environmental cleanliness & maintenance

Consultation findings

Question 1: What is the best thing about the borough of Telford and Wrekin?

Category	Panel	Online survey/ email	Your Voice/ drop boxes	Face to face	Total (n)	Total (%)
Shopping & recreation (range of shops, nightlife & activities)	123	111	37	246	517	36.5%
Parks, play areas & open spaces (town & local parks, open & green spaces)	182	135	72	93	482	34.0%
Heritage & local identity (museums, preservation, rural issues, borough towns)	38	71	45	57	211	14.9%
Transport (transport network, public transport, access to motorway)	58	29	15	15	117	8.3%
Environment (street cleanliness, grounds maintenance, street lighting)	56	11	23	21	111	7.8%
Highways & pavements (condition of roads & paths, traffic lights, roundabouts)	40	33	16	11	100	7.1%
Community buildings (libraries, community centres)	10	8	22	46	86	6.1%
Council budgets & value for money (Council tax, investment, salaries)	28	33	6	13	80	5.6%
Education & skills (schools, colleges, adult education, training courses)	12	18	2	48	80	5.6%
Wellbeing & health (access to GPs, dentists & hospital, exercise/sport facilities)	12	19	15	27	73	5.2%
Jobs/employment/economy (businesses, apprenticeships, job creation, tourism)	36	10	2	14	62	4.4%
Communication (Council consultations, feedback & providing information)	25	18	5	6	54	3.8%
Equality, diversity & community cohesion (community diversity, cohesion & access)	20	8	4	15	47	3.3%
Housing (quality of housing, affordable housing, social housing)	20	9	5	6	40	2.8%
Children & young people (services & facilities for young people & families)	4	9	3	19	35	2.5%
Safety (crime & ASB levels, policing, road safety)	21	6	2	4	33	2.3%
Older people & vulnerable adults (services for disabled, social services and care)	1	3	6	8	18	1.3%
Housing development (new housing developments)	1	8	2	4	15	1.1%
Total respondents	421	347	174	474	1416	-

Consultation findings

Comments received for this question included:

"It's a great place to live - Telford now has a heart with Southwater and I visit library on a regular basis. It's still so much green and good to see market towns are not ignored"

"Excellent town centre and bus services, which has meant that I have only covered 1,500 miles in my car since moving here 15 months ago! The new Southwater development is excellent, including the Library and Park; it is nice to see money spent on things that everybody has a chance of using."

"Easy to get around the area so access to all local centres is quick. Also the town park and Southwater are impressive facilities."

"Telford is a lovely area to live. Ironbridge with its history and the new Southwater complex is superb. The re-vamp of libraries and leisure centres is money well spent The new Social Housing builds are superb and have helped many local families secure their children's own future."

"Love my house, love the history of the area. Close proximity to amenities yet not far from countryside"

"Clean and tidy town centre (ignore work going on) Fresh ideas seem to be taking shape in many areas."

"In general it is a very pleasant place to live. The council try to do their best in what are difficult circumstances"

"It has a great variety of shops and places to eat. Telford Town Park is a great asset as is Ironbridge and Southwater."

"I feel the council is working for me. Many lovely green spaces to walk in. Council working for young jobless"

"The mixture of industrial and commercial areas surrounded by rural settings including lovely villages and Hamlets offering a wide range of experiences to residents."

Consultation findings

Question 2: What is your biggest concern/problem in the borough?

Category	Panel	Online survey/ email	Your Voice/ drop boxes	Face to face	Total (n)	Total (%)
Highways & pavements (condition of roads & paths, traffic lights, roundabouts)	114	74	30	80	298	20.6%
Environment (street cleanliness, grounds maintenance, street lighting)	67	40	34	112	253	17.4%
Safety (crime & ASB levels, policing, road safety)	74	35	19	119	247	17.0%
Housing development (new housing developments)	99	64	44	26	233	16.1%
Transport (transport network, public transport, access to motorway)	40	25	26	57	148	10.2%
Heritage & local identity (museums, preservation, rural issues, borough towns)	36	43	28	27	134	9.2%
Jobs/employment/economy (businesses, apprenticeships, job creation, tourism)	34	43	13	43	133	9.2%
Shopping & recreation (range of shops, nightlife & activities)	41	22	32	39	134	9.2%
Parks, play areas & open spaces (town & local parks, open & green spaces)	42	29	16	31	118	8.1%
Council budgets & value for money (Council tax, investment, salaries)	30	33	23	17	103	7.1%
Wellbeing & health (access to GPs, dentists & hospital, exercise/sport facilities)	35	19	17	20	91	6.3%
Children & young people (services & facilities for young people & families)	18	16	9	35	78	5.4%
Older people & vulnerable adults (services for disabled, social services and care)	26	22	7	15	70	4.8%
Housing (quality of housing, affordable housing, social housing)	22	20	7	17	66	4.6%
Communication (Council consultations, feedback & providing information)	15	7	7	5	34	2.3%
Equality, diversity & community cohesion (community diversity, cohesion & access)	14	4	7	7	32	2.2%
Education & skills (schools, colleges, adult education, training courses)	6	14	1	6	27	1.9%
Community buildings (libraries, community centres)	6	3	12	3	24	1.7%
Total respondents	450	346	188	466	1450	-

Consultation findings

Comments received for this question included:

"The building of more and more tightly packed housing/development which will end up with all our local infrastructure being overloaded and our quality of life compromised by overcrowding. Our medical and Police services are already at full stretch."

"Not enough AFFORDABLE housing for people trying to get on the property ladder."

"That development will erode the rural areas The amount of litter That the level and quality of services will deteriorate as austerity measures continue to affect us all"

"They seem to spend or should I say treat Telford centre and a 3-4 mile radius of the centre better than the old market town and rural parts of the district"

"Very unsatisfactory public transport. Far too much money wasted on new roundabouts and the Southwater project. Terrible state of our real high streets i.e. Wellington and Oakengates. Lack of any decent cultural facilities. Too much reliance on cars. Too much development on our green fields i.e. housing"

"Since we moved here 18 months ago, the amount of litter on the main roads has increased significantly. Either the refuse service isn't sufficient or education is lacking"

"Traffic management - far too many traffic lights that people become blasé to and ignore/jump/speed through. Islands becoming more complicated and congested, slowing traffic and creating large jams. Junctions where the road opens to two lanes then immediately closes back to one, encouraging 'boy racers'; and accidents."

"Some areas have gained a poor reputation; some residents don't have any pride or expectation of their areas and the living conditions aren't desirable. i.e. fly tipping hotspots, drug paraphernalia, bikes and quads ripping up turf etc."

"Highways congestion due to increasing population and lack of infrastructure, in combination with a mania for traffic light controlled roundabouts which used to operate perfectly well and ease traffic flow before control lights were introduced, together with an overabundance of lane markings which positively encourage drivers to switch lanes across one another's path."

"Lack of police on streets. Response times for Emergency Services need improving. Lack of punishment/community service for criminal offenders"

Consultation findings

Question 3: if you could do one thing to improve the borough what would it be?

Category	Panel	Online survey email	Your Voice/ drop boxes	Face to face	Total (n)	Total (%)
Highways & pavements (condition of roads & paths, traffic lights, roundabouts)	75	50	26	54	205	14.4%
Shops & recreation (range of shops, nightlife & activities)	19	44	28	90	181	12.7%
Environment (street cleanliness, grounds maintenance, street lighting)	49	39	20	61	169	11.9%
Transport (transport network, public transport, access to motorway)	38	39	23	47	147	10.3%
Council budgets & value for money (Council tax, investment, salaries)	24	34	27	19	104	7.3%
Housing development (new housing developments)	41	26	18	18	103	7.2%
Children & young people (services & facilities for young people & families)	11	21	4	64	100	7.0%
Heritage & local identity (museums, preservation, rural issues, borough towns)	23	28	22	27	100	7.0%
Safety (crime & ASB levels, policing, road safety)	27	15	8	49	99	6.9%
Jobs/employment/economy (businesses, apprenticeships, job creation, tourism)	27	24	10	24	85	6.0%
Wellbeing & health (access to GPs, dentists & hospital, exercise/sport facilities)	13	17	22	29	81	5.7%
Parks, play areas & open spaces (town & local parks, open & green spaces)	8	20	13	37	78	5.5%
Communication (Council consultations, feedback & providing information)	23	8	13	15	59	4.1%
Older people & vulnerable adults (services for disabled, social services and care)	12	13	8	16	49	3.4%
Housing (quality of housing, affordable housing, social housing)	6	14	4	19	43	3.0%
Community buildings (libraries, community centres)	6	0	18	11	35	2.5%
Education & skills (schools, colleges, adult education, training courses)	2	16	2	14	34	2.4%
Equality, diversity & community cohesion (community diversity, cohesion & access)	12	8	4	8	32	2.2%
Total respondents	425	347	183	471	1426	-

Consultation findings

Comments received for this question included:

"Preserve more of the fields & green areas. Build houses elsewhere."

"Develop a comprehensive project to regenerate our market towns (and fully involve the communities)."

"I suppose the centre has been refurbished its about continuing to market the area to bring in business and therefore business owners and workers to our fair town. Apparently young professionals are leaving London in droves, Birmingham being a prime destination. With a 'cooler' nightlife including non - chain restaurants, bars and maybe clubs, why not Telford??"

"More community projects to tidy and reduce crime e.g. Unemployed/volunteers etc."

"1. Definitely retain vital A&E services at PRH. Please. 2. Reduce significant amount of dog waste/litter about/on pavements. 3. Improve pedestrianisation (throughout the town centre) to vital transport links/hubs etc. 4. Enforce traffic calming around Telford please"

"We have some great restaurants now but lacking adult night life but also some activities for young people"

"There needs to be a serious attempt to regenerate and revitalise our historic market towns - the present policy of only developing/supporting the Telford Shopping Centre/Southwater is creating a huge problem by drawing shoppers and footfall away from our local high streets, creating unnecessary extra car journeys and leaving the areas in which most people live with empty shops/rundown streets. There are for example: 16 empty shops in the centre of Wellington, many which have been empty for a long time. This works completely against developing any 'pride in the community'. The Â£1 million proposed support for our market towns is just tokenism, compared to the Â£40 million council resources which have been poured into Southwater. There needs to be serious regeneration and real investment in our market towns."

"Remove the traffic lights from the major traffic roundabouts, or at least turn them off after the evening rush hour"

"make sure that the infrastructure of roads keeps up with the growth to the town and that bus services are supportive to ensure that those less able are able to get around the town in the evening as well as the day time."

"I'd make every single resident look at the whole Telford and Wrekin area and show people how it would look if nobody cared about making it the place it is. I'd show them a vision of it covered in the waste and dumped stuff that people discard then of it clean and tidy, then tell them that this is our home and we all should make it a cleaner, better place to live our lives. Some people need to see that it could be a tip but with the love of all of us, it could be the nicest place in England"

Respondent Profiles

Community Panel Survey

The three consultation questions were included in the January Community Panel survey sent to 1,164 panel members (736 by post and 428 by email). The survey was completed by 486 panel members (a total response rate of 42%). A total of 207 were from the email survey (response rate of 48%) and 279 from the postal survey (response rate 38%).

Demographic profile of Community Panel respondents

Age	n	%
18-24	2	0.5%
25-34	6	1.4%
35-44	31	7.1%
45-54	81	18.5%
55-64	103	23.6%
65-74	149	34.1%
75-84	60	13.7%
85+	5	1.1%
Total responses	437	100%
Not known	49	-
Total	486	-

Gender	n	%
Male	259	54%
Female	221	46%
Total responses	480	100%
Not known	6	-
Total	486	-

Index of Multiple Deprivation: National Decile	n	%
10 (among 10% most deprived communities nationally)	35	7.2%
20	37	7.7%
30	47	9.7%
40	43	8.9%
50	48	9.9%
60	44	9.1%
70	65	13.5%
80	61	12.6%
90	51	10.6%
100 (among 10% least deprived nationally)	52	10.8%
Total responses	483	100.0%
Not known	3	-
Total	486	-

Respondent Profiles

Ward	n	%
Apley Castle	12	2.5%
Arleston	6	1.2%
Brookside	22	4.6%
Church Aston and Lilleshall	10	2.1%
College	17	3.5%
Cuckoo Oak	20	4.1%
Dawley Magna	23	4.8%
Donnington	7	1.4%
Dothill	5	1.0%
Edgmond	13	2.7%
Ercall	6	1.2%
Ercall Magna	8	1.7%
Hadley and Leegomery	24	5.0%
Haygate	12	2.5%
Horsehay and Lightmoor	8	1.7%
Ironbridge Gorge	14	2.9%
Ketley and Oakengates	28	5.8%
Lawley and Overdale	12	2.5%
Madeley	16	3.3%
Malinslee	11	2.3%
Muxton	19	3.9%
Newport East	10	2.1%
Newport North	16	3.3%
Newport South	19	3.9%
Newport West	3	0.6%
Park	11	2.3%
Priorslee	25	5.2%
Shawbirch	15	3.1%
St Georges	14	2.9%
The Nedge	21	4.3%
Woodside	8	1.7%
Wrockwardine	25	5.2%
Wrockwardine Wood and Trench	23	4.8%
Total responses	483	100.0%
Not known	3	-
Total	486	-

Locality	n	%
Hadley Castle	211	43.7%
Lakeside South	112	23.2%
The Wrekin	160	33.1%
Total responses	483	100.0%
Not known	3	-
Total	486	-

Respondent Profiles

Online survey/email

A total of 282 responses were received via the online survey at www.telford.gov.uk/budget. A further 81 were received directly via email.

Demographic profile of online survey/email respondents

Gender	n	%
Male	147	41.5%
Female	207	58.5%
Total responses	354	100%
Not known	9	-
Total	363	-

Age	n	%
12-18	2	0.6%
19-25	13	4.1%
26-39	66	20.6%
40-64	187	58.3%
65+	53	16.5%
Total responses	321	100%
Not known	42	-
Total	363	-

Your Voice/drop box forms

A total of 62 tear out forms were received from the December 2014 edition of Your Voice, along with 135 forms from drop boxes in Council premises.

Demographic profile of Your Voice respondents¹

Gender	n	%
Male	25	42.4%
Female	34	57.6%
Total responses	59	100%
Not known	3	-
Total	62	-

Age	n	%
19-25	2	3.2%
26-39	5	8.1%
40-64	25	40.3%
65+	30	48.4%
Total responses	62	100%
Not known	0	-
Total	62	-

¹ Demographic questions were not included in the drop box forms

Respondent Profiles

Face to face

A total of 557 responses were received as a result of face to face engagement with Members and/or Officers at a range of forums, road shows and events across the borough.

Demographic profile of face to face respondents

Gender	n	%
Male	24	53.3%
Female	21	46.7%
Total responses	45	100%
Not known	512	-
Total	557	-

Age	n	%
0-11	147	40.6%
12-18	39	10.8%
19-25	135	37.3%
26-39	18	5.0%
40-64	4	1.1%
65+	19	5.2%
Total responses	362	100%
Not known	195	-
Total	557	-

Investment Proposals

Investment Proposal	% Agree	% Neutral	% Disagree
£1 million for high streets and local centres	71.2%	11.5%	17.3%
£250,000 (over 3 years) to attract more visitors to the borough	80.6%	16.7%	2.8%
Almost £4 million to roll out superfast broadband across the borough	62.9%	22.9%	14.3%
A further £650,000 for youth unemployment initiatives	89.2%	5.4%	5.4%
£6 million (over 3 years) to maintain and improve our roads	80.0%	10.0%	10.0%
£1 million for a second round of Community Pride Fund in 2017/18	82.1%	3.6%	14.3%
£750,000 (over 2 years) to address residents' key environmental issues	80.8%	19.2%	0.0%
£650,000 for St. Georges regeneration (including Gower Street youth centre)	61.5%	28.2%	10.3%
£200,000 (over 4 years) for free swimming for over 50's	55.6%	17.5%	27.0%
£30,000 for the local food bank	82.4%	11.8%	5.9%
£240,000 for crisis support and cheap loans	82.1%	7.1%	10.7%
What do you think of this package overall?	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%