

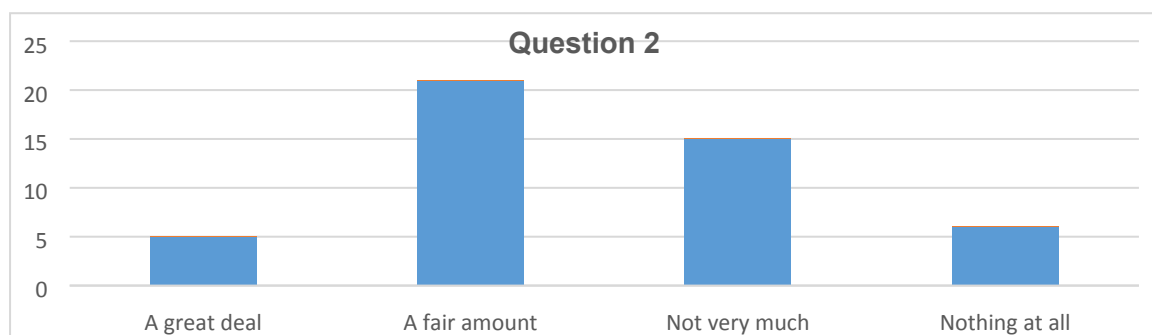
Budget Consultation- Summary of findings and key themes

The Budget 2020/21 - 2022/23 online consultation opened on 12 November 2019 and is due to close on 31 January 2020.

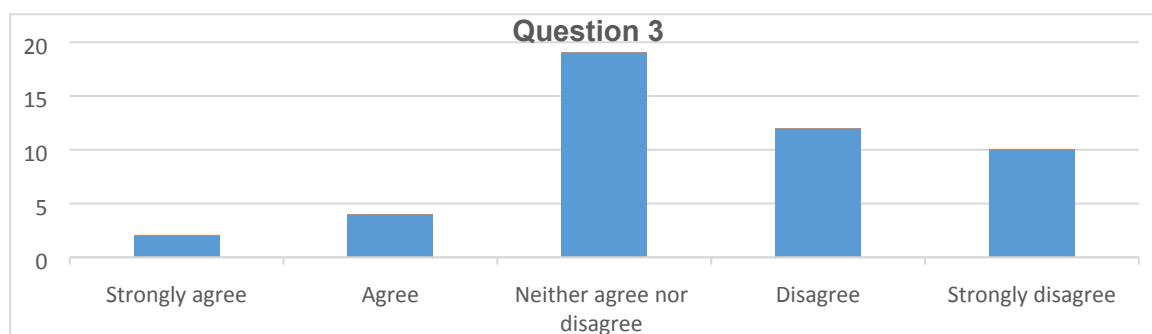
The online consultation asked Brent residents to read the Draft Budget 2020/21 – 2022/23, including appendices, and answer the following questions:

1. Do you have any comments about our draft budget strategy?
2. Having read the draft budget proposals for the next three years, how much do you now feel you understand the Council’s overall financial position and the need to both increase council tax and deliver savings between 2020/21 and 2022/23 in order to deliver a balanced budget?
3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the budget proposals?
4. If you have any specific ideas about how the council can save money or generate additional income to protect services, please state these here:

For **Question 2** 64% of respondents answered that they had ‘a fair amount’ or ‘a great deal’ of understanding of the Council’s overall financial position and the need to both increase council tax and deliver savings between 2020/21 and 2022/23 in order to deliver a balanced budget. 36% responded that they had ‘nothing at all’ or ‘not very much’ understanding of the Council’s overall financial position.



For **Question 3** 42% of respondents answered that they ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ with the budget proposals. Whilst 18% answered that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the proposals. The final 40% answered that they ‘neither agree nor disagree’.



The key themes collected from the comments to **Question 1** 'Do you have any comments about our draft budget strategy?' include:

- Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour, in particular street crime and fly tipping
- Protecting Children's services
- Repairing potholes
- Increasing CCTV
- Protecting green spaces
- Planting more trees

The most popular theme, was protecting green spaces and planting more trees (40%). Improvements to highways (7%) and Anti-social behaviour (7%) were also common themes.

In regards to protecting green spaces and planting more trees, one respondent stated:

'I would like to see Highways and Infrastructure to commit the 100k saving in 21/22 - to be shared between better maintenance of trees, and replacement of removed trees and better cycling provision. I understand there is a 215k saving in Environment, please use this to fulfil the councils obligations under the Climate Emergency Declaration, by making maintenance of the borough's tree stock a priority.'

Another respondent stated:

'I'd like to see the council using savings in areas such as highways to invest in the maintenance and upkeep of existing tree stock and to plant more new trees. The latter need to have funds allocated to them so that they can be protected - cages built around vulnerable ones, an effort made to ask specific households to water them - and inspected regularly to make sure the saplings do not die and waste resources.'

The most popular theme to **Question 4** 'If you have any specific ideas about how the council can save money or generate additional income to protect services, please state these here:' was to protect Council staff (7%) and investment in trees (21%).

Another respondent stated:

'Need more social service staff allocation for elderly living at home.'

In regards to Improvements to highstreets, one respondent stated:

'Please pass on savings from the highways and infrastructure budget on to protecting the councils trees. As well as improving local pollution and the health of Brent residents, this will also help the council to fulfill its pledge to tackle the climate emergency.'

Comments and feedback on the budget consultation demonstrates a wide range of views, many common viewpoints and emphasises the fact that Brent residents are concerned over what the expenditure reductions mean not only for them but also for the wider community.