

## Budget consultation 2019-2021: have your say

### Background

We are seeking your views on the financial challenge Bolton Council faces during the coming years. Significant reductions in funding from central government mean we have to make budget reductions over the next two years. This comes after £155m of savings over the last eight years.

The way the council gets money has changed - we've lost £107m of government grants, we have to meet inflation costs of £34m, and we need an extra £44m to meet increasing demands for our services (particularly for the most vulnerable in our society). This means we are increasingly reliant on income from council tax and business rates.

The report put forward to Cabinet recommends that the council use £8 million from its reserves to balance its 2019-21 budget, meaning directorates will have to find savings of **£23.5** million. A further £8 million will also be used from reserves to allow savings to be phased in.

We are now consulting on these proposals. It is important that residents and other stakeholders express their views to help guide and shape decisions. Please go to: [www.bolton.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/consultations) to read the full proposals and then complete the questions below.

### Our approach

Whilst achieving the necessary cuts is very difficult, the council continues to have a clear strategy for the delivery of its budget, as detailed below.

**Q1 Please state how strongly you agree or disagree with each:** [tick one box per row]

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Ensure the most vulnerable are impacted least by the budget reductions as far as possible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximise economic prosperity in Bolton to support economic growth, development and regeneration and job creation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
While putting the needs of local people and council taxpayers first, seek to minimise the impact on staff and avoid compulsory redundancies where possible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximise proposals that improve efficiency and make savings from management and administration where possible before frontline services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Council tax

The proposals put forward assume a 1.5% increase in council tax and an additional further 1% for Adult Social Care. A lower increase in council tax would mean even further cuts to services than those proposed.

**Q2 Please state how strongly you agree or disagree that the council should raise council tax to balance the budget and avoid further cuts to services.**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*As an indication this would add around £25 per year to a band **A** property and around £32 per year to a band **C** property

## Proposals

In order to protect the most vulnerable children and adults, and to avoid deeper cuts to directly delivered services, the council has had to make some very difficult decisions. Some of the proposals that have been put forward are detailed below.

**Q3 Please state how strongly you agree or disagree with each** [tick one box per row]

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Smarter use of management and leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased charges for council services such as the use of our land and facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce demand for council services by doing things differently e.g. early help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce the winter gritting service to bring Bolton in line with other Greater Manchester Authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investment in new developments to increase the level of income via council tax / business rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working in a more modern way, for example by providing information in digital formats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review what buildings (assets) we can sell or transfer to community ownership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greater partnership working - to deliver services in partnership with the community and our partners e.g. intermediate care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charge a bit extra for services such as school meals and community meals, in order to protect services for those in most need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review every penny we spend - e.g. look at care and support packages and review service contracts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Managing change

The council is going through a period of unprecedented change. As described above, in making decisions about what to change, the council's priority is to maintain support for vulnerable children and adults in the borough while ensuring that we balance the books.

**Q4 With this in mind, please state how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.** [tick one box per row]

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I accept that budget reductions have to be made	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware of the need for the council to change the way it delivers its services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe the council is doing its best under difficult circumstances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Impacts of the proposals

**Q5** Please describe how you / your family / your organisation will be affected by the proposals

## Alternative solutions

**Q6** Can you think of any other ways Bolton Council can make the savings whilst still delivering statutory services?

## About you

So that we can understand how our proposals affect different residents, we would be grateful if you could answer the following questions.

**Q7 Please tick the box that most closely describes your interest in this issue** [tick one box]

- A resident in the borough of Bolton
- A Bolton Council member of staff
- An interested partner organisation (please state below)
- From a community or voluntary group (please state below)
- A business in the borough of Bolton (please state below)
- Other (please state below)

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, group or business you do not need to complete the rest of this section

**Q8 Please tell us your postcode?**

**Q9 What is your age?**

**Q10 What is your ethnic origin?**

- |                                                         |                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Black / African / Caribbean / Black British |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other white                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ethnic group                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed / multiple ethnic groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian / Asian British          |                                                                      |

**Q11 Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted or expected to last, at least 12 months?**

- Yes, limited a lot  No
- Yes, limited a little

**Q12 Do you look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either a long term physical or mental ill health / disability or problems due to old age?** (do not count anything you do as part of your paid employment)

- No  Yes, 20-49 hours a week
- Yes, 1-19 hours a week  Yes, 50 hours or more a week

**Thank you. Please return your completed questionnaire to:  
Freepost RTTT-YTEL-YSXS  
Consultation and Research Team  
2nd floor, Town Hall, Victoria Square, Bolton, BL1 1RU  
before Monday 14 January 2019. YOU DO NOT NEED A STAMP**