## Cherwell District Council budget and business plan consultation results 2025/26

This report sets out key findings from Cherwell District Council's budget consultation, conducted between 22 November 2024 and 23 December 2024, to support the 2025/26 budget and business planning setting processes, and procedures.

### Executive summary

Responses and respondent profile
• The final counted score accumulated 165 participant responses (with a **18.31%** decrease in comparison to the previous year engagement from our targeted audience), with a final less than **1%** difference from last update provided to Financial Services, in 2024.
• In terms of year-on-year progressions, however, engagement increased to **134%,** in average, enabled by the new consultation tool, strategic planning and partnership with our communications service team.
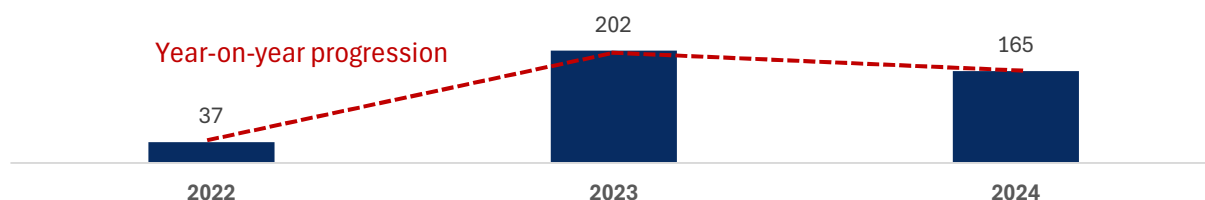
Promotional activities
The communications team issued numerous callouts to inform people of the budget consultation and encouraged them to participate. This included press releases of media covers, posters, e-flyers to different audiences, emails, Cherwell Link, e-newsletter stories and social media posts, on all available council channels.

• For better understanding of the extent of reach and effort in recruiting engagement, here you can see an example of results of one social media post:
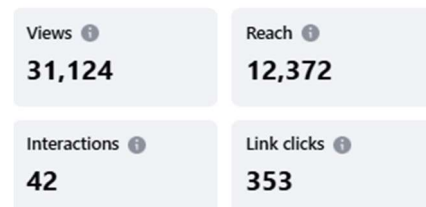
Approach to savings results
This year, 8 proposals were offered to residents opposed to the 9 proposals from our last survey, and we note an overall tendency to positive feedback from survey respondents, which suggests the affirmation that 'efficiency proposals are contributing year-on-year to the council's savings, and reflect a positively among residents as overall outcome response, enabled because:

• of how healthy the budget management has been set year-on-year,
• how it is reflected by the numbers of participation in engagement for this survey and,
• the outcomes reflected in the figures shown in this document.

After gathering this survey's results, we can confirm that respondents accumulated an average of **83.79%** acceptance, or in other words, more than **83%** approval rate to efficiencies proposed for 2025/26.

It can also be mentioned that the most recognized or highest scoring proposal in respondent's views was related to the:
•   "Increase by £10 per unit (25%) the fee we charge to developers for assigning postal addresses to their newly built properties" and
•   "Increase the fees, we charge for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs). The increase would cover inflation and increased running costs by generating £0.050m. PPAs are usually put in place with larger developers when submitting planning applications to assist the process".

Both, accumulating a **91.52%** approval rate and average, however, at the opposite side of the range acknowledging the lowest scoring proposal or least acceptance proposal was set to the increase in garden waste subscriptions, considering:
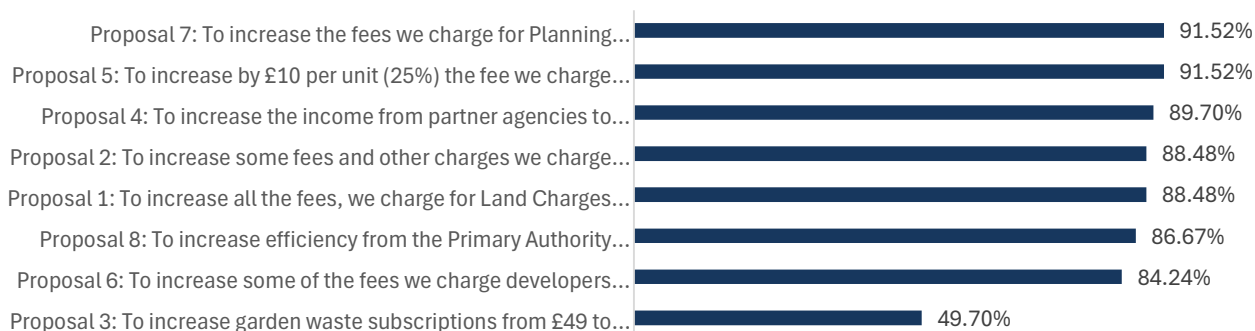
• "Increase in garden waste subscriptions from £49 to mitigate rising cost pressures due to fuel, staff and vehicle costs increasing beyond inflation. We have compared our service with neighbouring areas across Oxfordshire, which charge an average of £65 for 2024/25". With an overall approval rate of **49.70%** (or less than half of respondent's acceptance to the proposal), divided by:
− The option to selecting £55, as the value to be charged, with approval rate of **41.82%**, or
− The option to selecting £59 as the value to be charged, with approval rate of **7.88%,**

Making £55 the most accepted charge option chosen, but still below 50% of the overall acceptance of respondents within the results of this survey.

Popularity of saving proposals in ranking
The top three saving proposals with the highest respondents' support rate, were respectively:

1. Proposal 7: To increase the fees, we charge for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs). The increase would cover inflation and increased running costs by generating £0.050m. PPAs are usually put in place with larger developers when submitting planning applications to assist the process. – **supported by 151 respondents.**

2. Proposal 5: To increase by £10 per unit (25%) the fee we charge to developers for assigning postal addresses to their newly built properties. – **supported by 151 respondents**.

3. Proposal 4: To increase the income from partner agencies to increase capacity for delivering the Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management Agency Agreement that we undertake on their behalf. This does not impact the cost of services to residents and would allow the council to better resource responses to flood impacts. It would bring in a potential new income of £0.008m during 2025/26. – **supported by 148 respondents.**

Proposal	Approval
Proposal 7: To increase the fees we charge for Planning…	91.52%
Proposal 5: To increase by £10 per unit (25%) the fee we charge…	91.52%
Proposal 4: To increase the income from partner agencies to…	89.70%
Proposal 2: To increase some fees and other charges we charge…	88.48%
Proposal 1: To increase all the fees, we charge for Land Charges…	88.48%
Proposal 8: To increase efficiency from the Primary Authority…	86.67%
Proposal 6: To increase some of the fees we charge developers…	84.24%
Proposal 3: To increase garden waste subscriptions from £49 to…	49.70%

Taking that the median value was **83.78%**, for all proposals recorded, we can safely suggest that all but one of proposals offered were accepted positively by participating respondents.

Council tax
• Overall, **65.45%** of the respondents (108) supported to the proposed £5 increase, while about a third of respondents or **33.94%**, rejected it.
• 100% Council Tax Premium on "Second Homes" will be applied and payable. The 100% Council Tax Premium for "Second Homes", which would mean that owners of these properties would pay double the standard Council Tax if:
−   The property is not anyone's main or sole residence, and
−   The property is substantially furnished, with over **88%** overall approval and.

•   Long-Term Empty Properties' Premium that was applied for properties unfurnished and unoccupied for two years, which would have the premium applied at the one-year mark instead, with over **92%** overall approval.

Fees and Charges

72.02% was recorded for support and/or approval of proposed increment of proposed fees and charges, aligning with costs, inflation impact and government directives. Taking that the median value for those reached the **82.01%** mark, we can safely suggest that most proposals have been well accepted.
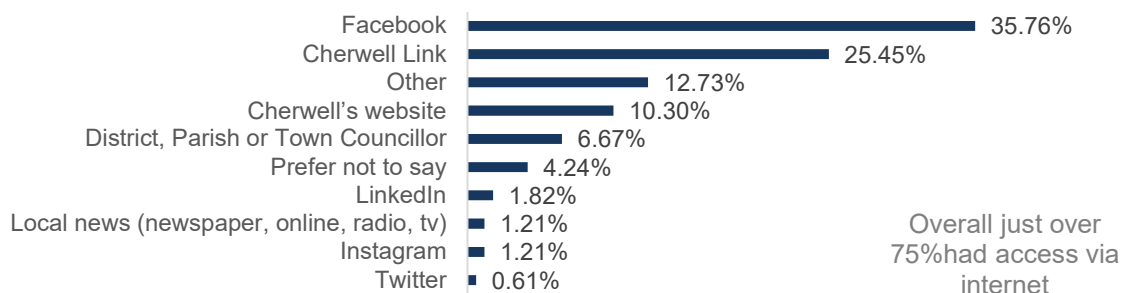
Report Details

1. Approach

1.1   Between 22 November 2024 and 23 December 2024, the council invited comments on its budget proposals for 2025/26, including its council tax, fees and charges increases, with residents and stakeholders signposted to supporting documents for detailed information on proposed increment to fees and charges.

1.2   Feedback was primarily collated using an online survey from the council's digital consultation and engagement platform, Citizen Space, with participants able to give comments by email or paper copies, if necessary, and on request.

1.3   The budget consultation was actively promoted to a wide range of audiences using multiple channels (of media, social media, digital platforms, our website, and advertising) with staff and councillors helping 'spread the word'. Also, posters were distributed and placed across the district.

Channel	Percentage
Facebook	35.76%
Cherwell Link	25.45%
Other	12.73%
Cherwell's website	10.30%
District, Parish or Town Councillor	6.67%
Prefer not to say	4.24%
LinkedIn	1.82%
Local news (newspaper, online, radio, tv)	1.21%
Instagram	1.21%
Twitter	0.61%

Overall just over 75% had access via internet

In terms of point of access: for the question 'How did you find out about this consultation?', internet interactions dominated the way in which people accessed the consultation, at 75.01% combined.

2. Respondent's Profile

2.1   Of the **165** online survey responses received, with no emails or paper copies

2.2   Of those, **148** named themselves as 'Cherwell' residents, with:

Category	Count
As a Cherwell resident	148
As a District, Parish or Town Councillor	4
As a Cherwell District Council employee	4
Prefer not to say	3
As a representative of a business	3
As a member of the public living elsewhere	2
As a representative of a group or partner organisation	1

- Four identified as 'a District, Parish or Town Councillor', and
- Four as 'a Cherwell District Council employee' with
- Three as 'Prefer not to say
- Three as 'a representative of a business
- Two as 'a member of the public living elsewhere'
- One 'as a representative of a business'

- One 'as a representative of a group or partner organisation'.

2.3 In terms of respondent's demographic profile (where information was provided), to most significant aspects, were:

- **Age**: with respondents age range from 16 to 75 or over, as the highest engagement rate, congregating between the 55 to 74-years old, and accumulating nearly 51% of participants. A mention here to very little participation from young adults (here in the range of 16 to 34-years of age), with only over 5% participation, whilst overall, a 'mature' audience (aged 35 and over) had more to say, accumulating nearly 95% of respondents who participated in this survey.

- **Sexual identity**: with most respondents being men (88), representing over 53% of participation, whilst women (61), represented nearly 37% in participation, with the remainder responding as 'preferred not to say' (15 people or only over 9%) and 'non-binary' (1 person or 0.61%).

- **Sexual orientation**: with most respondents being Straight/Heterosexual (111), representing over 67% of participation, followed by Gay or Lesbian (7 or 4.24%), Bisexual (3 or 1.82%), with the remainder (37 or nearly 23%), responding as 'prefer not to say', 'other' or simply did not answer the question.

- **Descent or ethnic group**: with most respondents being white or of white mixed background, accounting for 129 entries (just over 78%), followed by those not willing to share this information with (27), responding 'prefer not to say' (at over 16%), with another 2 responding 'other or not answered', (or just over 1.2%).

- **Religion**: with most respondents (83) willing to share their religion, at over 50% self-designated as 'Christian' in some way, followed by those who are 'Buddhist' (2 or 1.21%), however, those not willing to share such information (nearly 49% or 80 of them), selected 'other' or 'prefer not to say', or simply not answering the question.

- **Consent to publish responses**: When asked whether respondents were "happy for their responses to be made public", most of them (over 95%) consented, however, 44 respondents (26.67%) made it clear that only part of their information can be made public, and details must comply with such specification, whilst eight respondents (4.85%), did not want their responses made public in any way.

- **Regular updates sign up**: were accepted by 53 respondents (32.12%)

3. Approach to savings

3.1 Survey respondents were informed that "Like many councils across the country, Cherwell faced significant challenges in planning its 2025–2026 budget, having to navigate uncertainties in government funding, rising costs, and growing services demands, resulting in the need to find savings of £1.020m.

3.2 Through 'careful planning', over £1 million in new back-office savings was managed, maintaining vital frontline services and keeping cost increases to a minimum."
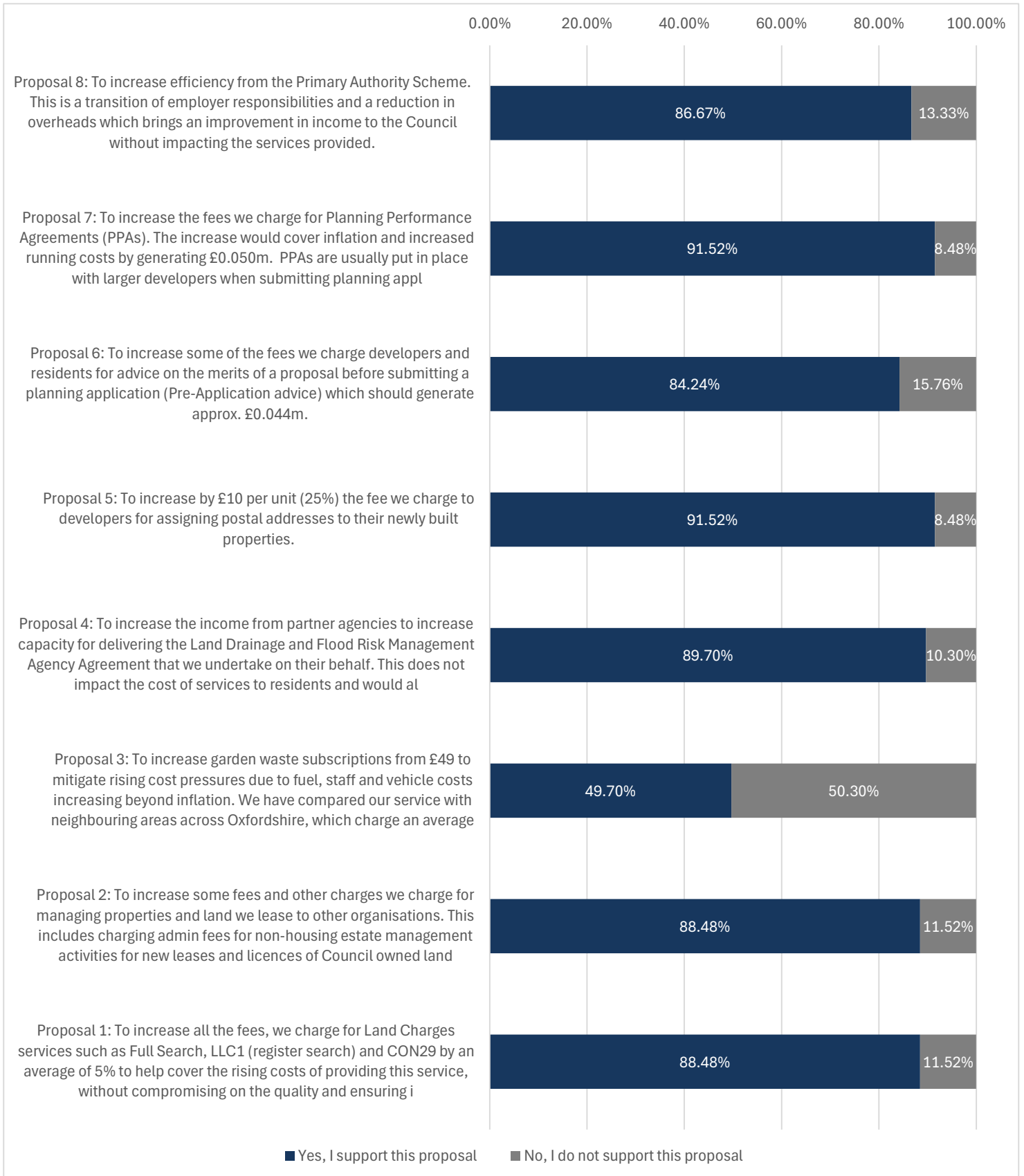
3.3 Consequently, respondents were presented with a further eight proposed approaches to savings and asked if they supported, each, or should they not support those proposals, which alternatives could they provide (If you do not support this proposal, please can you explain why, and do you have an alternative proposal?).

3.4 To demonstrate these alternative responses across those eight proposals, a comprehensive chart, listing the most significant mentions, was set up in this document to demonstrate impact regarding view of respondents while offering their reasons and/or suggestions.

3.5 The highest scoring proposal was proposal seven, related to Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs), to increase fees and charges, to cover inflation and increased running costs, able to generate up to £0.050m. The support or approval rate reaching 91.52%, a score also shared with the proposal to increase by

£10 per unit (25%) the fee we charge to developers for assigning postal addresses to their newly built properties.

3.6   The lowest scoring proposal, related to the increase of garden waste subscriptions from £49 to mitigate rising cost pressures due to fuel, staff and vehicle costs increasing beyond inflation. Only achieve an overall support of 49.70%, less than half of the overall participation, and, historically, the most common item to encounter engagement resistance towards support or acceptance.

	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%	60.00%	80.00%	100.00%

Proposal 8: To increase efficiency from the Primary Authority Scheme. This is a transition of employer responsibilities and a reduction in overheads which brings an improvement in income to the Council without impacting the services provided. — 86.67% / 13.33%

Proposal 7: To increase the fees we charge for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs). The increase would cover inflation and increased running costs by generating £0.050m. PPAs are usually put in place with larger developers when submitting planning appl — 91.52% / 8.48%

Proposal 6: To increase some of the fees we charge developers and residents for advice on the merits of a proposal before submitting a planning application (Pre-Application advice) which should generate approx. £0.044m. — 84.24% / 15.76%

Proposal 5: To increase by £10 per unit (25%) the fee we charge to developers for assigning postal addresses to their newly built properties. — 91.52% / 8.48%

Proposal 4: To increase the income from partner agencies to increase capacity for delivering the Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management Agency Agreement that we undertake on their behalf. This does not impact the cost of services to residents and would al — 89.70% / 10.30%

Proposal 3: To increase garden waste subscriptions from £49 to mitigate rising cost pressures due to fuel, staff and vehicle costs increasing beyond inflation. We have compared our service with neighbouring areas across Oxfordshire, which charge an average — 49.70% / 50.30%

Proposal 2: To increase some fees and other charges we charge for managing properties and land we lease to other organisations. This includes charging admin fees for non-housing estate management activities for new leases and licences of Council owned land — 88.48% / 11.52%

Proposal 1: To increase all the fees, we charge for Land Charges services such as Full Search, LLC1 (register search) and CON29 by an average of 5% to help cover the rising costs of providing this service, without compromising on the quality and ensuring i — 88.48% / 11.52%

■ Yes, I support this proposal   ■ No, I do not support this proposal

As mentioned in item 3.4, respondents who answered "no, I do not support this proposal" were able to disclose their reasons for each proposal, and/or an alternative solution to the proposals given, and these have been summarised below:

Proposal 1:
'To increase all the fees, we charge for Land Charges services such as Full Search, LLC1 (register search) and CON29 by an average of 5% to help cover the rising costs of providing this service, without compromising on the quality and ensuring it remains financially viable over time'.

Comments (with 17 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Too much/too expensive	9
Simply no	2
Compromises other aspects	4
Affects production or effectiveness	2
Must follow inflation	3
Unclear/ unsure/ not enough details	1

With expenses and compromising other areas of service as the main drivers of disapproval.

Proposal 2:
'To increase some fees and other charges we charge for managing properties and land we lease to other organisations. This includes charging admin fees for non-housing estate management activities for new leases and licences of Council owned land and property leased to other organisations, along with licences to assign, licences for alterations and disposals following industry best practice. Providing a potential income stream of £0.05m for 2025/26'.

Comment (with 16 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Too much/Too expensive	4
Simply no	2
Needs more incentives	2
Unclear/ unknown/ not detailed	5
Must follow inflation	2
As long as it does not affect something else	4

With lack of clarity, expenses and fear to affect something else within the service as the main drivers of disapproval.

Proposal 3:
'To increase garden waste subscriptions from £49 to mitigate rising cost pressures due to fuel, staff and vehicle costs increasing beyond inflation. We have compared our service with neighbouring areas across Oxfordshire, which charge an average of £65 for 2024/25. We would like your views on what would be a reasonable increase to support the running of the service". With choices at £55, £59, or "Do not Support".

Comment (with 74 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Too much/too expensive/ less people will pay/pull out	31
Simply no	6
Unclear/ unknown/ not detailed	3
Must follow inflation	6
Affects other aspects	24
Mismanagement	5
Why should I pay	19

With expenses and compromising other areas of service as the main drivers of disapproval.

Proposal 4:

'To increase the income from partner agencies to increase capacity for delivering the Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management Agency Agreement that we undertake on their behalf. This does not impact the cost of services to residents and would allow the council to better resource responses to flood impacts. It would bring in a potential new income of £0.008m during 2025/26.)'.

Comment (with 20 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Simply no	2
Unclear/ unknown/ not detailed	2
As long as it does not affect something else	1
Mismanagement	13

With mismanagement concerns as the main driver of disapproval.

Proposal 5:

'To increase by £10 per unit (25%) the fee we charge to developers for assigning postal addresses to their newly built properties'.

Comment (with 17 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Too much/too expensive/ less people will pay	2
Simply no	2
Must follow inflation	1
Will be passed on	2

With costs concerns as the main driver of disapproval.

Proposal 6:

'To increase some of the fees we charge developers and residents for advice on the merits of a proposal before submitting a planning application (Pre-Application advice) which should generate approx. £0.044m'.

Comment (with 24 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Simply no	3
Affects other aspects	8
Mismanagement	9

With mismanagement concerns and fear to affect something else within the service as the main drivers of disapproval.

Proposal 7:

'To increase the fees, we charge for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs). The increase would cover inflation and increased running costs by generating £0.050m. PPAs are usually put in place with larger developers when submitting planning applications to assist the process'.

Comment (with 13 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
unclear/ unknown/ not detailed	2
Affects other aspects	2
mismanagement	3
why should I pay	1

With mismanagement concerns and fear to affect something else within the service, and lack of clarity as the main drivers of disapproval.

Proposal 8:

'To increase efficiency from the Primary Authority Scheme. This is a transition of employer responsibilities

and a reduction in overheads which brings an improvement in income to the Council without impacting the services provided'.

Comment (with 20 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Simply no	1
Unclear/ unknown/ not detailed	14
Affects other aspects	2
Mismanagement	1

With lack of clarity as the main driver of disapproval, and all comments are available on request.

4. Proposed council tax increase

4.1 In this section of the survey, respondents were informed that, in 2025/26, Cherwell District Council proposed £5 increase which would work at less than 10p per week for an average band D property, remaining in line with the maximum increase the government will currently allow. Respondents answered whether they would be prepared to support this proposed increase or not and, if not, to provide with an alternative proposal.

4.2 Of the total **165** respondents, where over 65% (108) said yes, they were prepared to support the proposed council tax increase, whilst over 34% (57 respondents) said no.

4.3 The chart below, shows the approval proportion (responding yes) higher than the disapproval proportion (responding no), to the council tax increase:

Chart 5: Would you be prepared to support the proposed council tax increase? (All respondents)
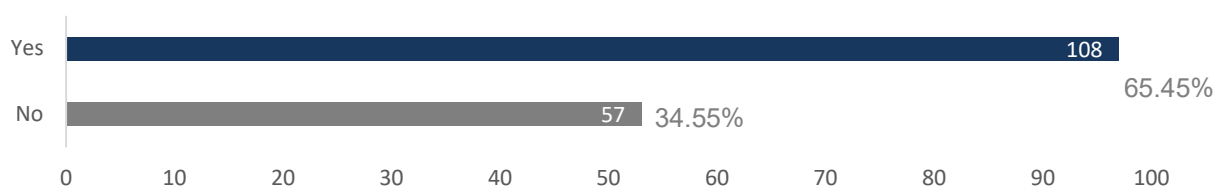
4.4 Focusing specifically on Cherwell residents which responded 'no' to the council tax increase, just over 34% (57 respondents), saying they were not prepared to support the proposal, alternatively, offering their reasons for not supporting the proposal as:

Comment (with 46 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Too much/too expensive/ less people will pay/pull out	17
Simply no	7
Unclear/ unknown/ not detailed	2
Must follow inflation	4
Affects other aspects	2
Mismanagement	14
Why should I pay	5

With cost, simply no agreement of the proposal, the sense that charges need to follow inflation and lack of clarity as the main drivers of disapproval.

5. Proposed Fees and Charges increase.

5.1 Respondents were informed, that "to ensure and maintain a balanced budget while continuing to provide and improve services, we need to review our fees and charges. Most fees will increase by 2% to match inflation; however, we are considering higher increases in some fees. We are also reviewing our

income sources where there's potential to generate more funding".

5.2 Of the total 165 survey respondents, **78.79%** (130) said yes, they were prepared to support the proposed efficiencies, whereas **21.21%** (35) of respondents said no.

5.3 The chart below, shows the approval proportion (responding yes) higher than the disapproval proportion (responding no), to the proposed increases:

Chart 6: Would you be prepared to support the proposed efficiencies? (All respondents)
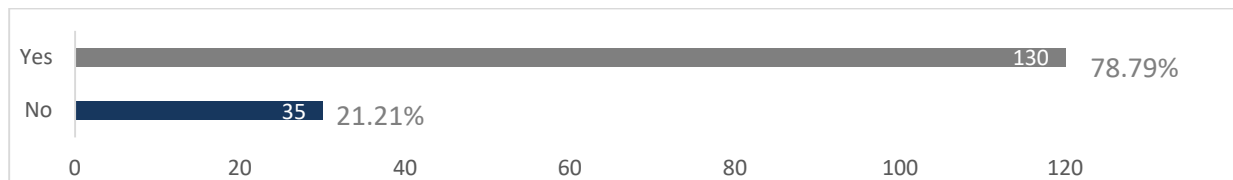
5.4 Focusing specifically on Cherwell residents which responded 'no', just over 21% (35) respondents), to the proposed efficiencies, and having a closer look at the reasons given by them:

Comment (with 9 valid entries, of which)	Mentions
Electric cars cost	3
Why or how would it improve?	3
Curb glass collection	1
Contractors	1
Computer upgrades	1
Housing	1

With electric cars cost, and lack of clarity as the main drivers of disapproval.

6.   Final comments on the council's budget proposals

6.1   All survey respondents had the opportunity to add final comments, on our budget proposals. Some respondents used this opportunity to make general comments.

6.2   From all respondents **only 10.9%** (18), added valid final comments to their survey regarding budget, with below summary of most common themes that emerged:

Comment	Mentions
Suggestion does not justify increase	2
Services need to change approach	2
Time elapsed for charges does not reflect real life problems	4
Proposed increases are not affordable	6
Charges should be set up earlier	3
Not enough information	1
Other	3

With affordability, time set up not aligning with real life problems, and lack of clarity as the main drivers of disapproval.

7.   Overall take aways:

Based on the comments, we can offer a breakdown of main concerns raised within respondent's overall comments:

- Services do not justify increases, within the concerns expressed, some attention was given to new housing not contributing to better services and actual inefficiency of existing services (e.g., waste collection, traffic management), and several comments focus on the ineffectiveness of services versus costs (e.g., citing poor road conditions and waste collection, as main points of contention).

- Respondents feel they are taxed enough already, with many, feeling overtaxed without a corresponding service improvement, or is delivered satisfactorily, particularly regarding housing with numerous references found citing the heavy tax burden, especially considering rising housing density, and the real-life struggles such as probates time elapsed to resolve empty houses or simply time taken to sell an empty house, currently.

- Respondents do consider proposed increases not affordable, expressing real concern regarding new taxes or fees associated with service improvements, and many comments express doubt about the feasibility of some if not all proposed budget increases.

- Suggestions have been made to reduce wasteful spending, but there is no clear path to what that would intel, however, suggestions have been made particularly on management, traffic schemes, and administrative costs, with recommendations emphasizing cutting costs and eliminating inefficient practices, which is already part of the proposal, but not within the level of acceptance of some respondents.

- Respondents instead suggested on calls for increased transparency regarding budget allocations and operational efficiencies, particularly for clearer financial reporting and accountability.

- There is a considerable frustration with traffic Management and infrastructure, such as traffic schemes, road maintenance, and the strain on local infrastructure due to new housing. Many residents argue for more effective solutions instead of temporary fixes.

- And there is a strong overall sense that the council need to reduce business rates and support local businesses, particularly local retailers and hospitality entities facing hardships.

- Regarding waste management and recycling, most residents are pushing for improved recycling options, particularly pavement glass collection, reflecting an increased concern about waste management effectiveness, lack of satisfactory standard and costs.

- Respondents frequently mention perceived council inefficiencies in operations and call for review of staffing, especially regarding interim managers and administrative roles.

- And, finally, respondents emphasise the necessity for support in traffic management, waste collection, and healthcare services, indicating that these essential services are declining while costs are rising.

8. Proposed vision and strategy feedback

The new vision, "A modern council inspiring and enabling positive, lasting change," received approval from two-thirds (66%) of respondents. Among the priorities, "Environmental Stewardship" garnered the highest support at 86%, while "Economic Prosperity" received the lowest support at 71%.

A table summarises the feedback from 165 participants, detailing support levels, rejections, and comments for each priority.

Priority/Goals	Support	Reject	Support %	Reject %	Open comments' summary
Priority 1 Economic prosperity – Reported an average approval rate of **83%**					
prosperity. To create vibrant economic centres and thriving rural villages.	132	33	80%	20%	1. Create small business supportive initiatives. 2. Ensure communities benefit from developments. 3. Streamlining processes, minimising planning bureaucracy. 4. Create and implement responsible housing density policies. 5. Better infrastructure for investment.
To build an inclusive and green economy.	117	48	71%	29%	1. The need for improved transport and transport system. 2. A renewed and sensible planning process. 3. Balance between environment and economy. 4. Enhanced community support and improved integration. 5. Stop bureaucracy that hinder timely decision-making.
Priority 2 Community Leadership – Reported an average approval rate of **78%**					
To strengthen community collaboration and resilience.	132	33	80%	20%	1. Clearer communication. 2. Balancing growth with support. 3. Defining responsibilities. 4. Focus on resident understandable council delivered outcomes. 5. Encouraging more community engagement
To promote health and wellbeing with a focus on inequality.	125	40	76%	24%	1. To have immediate attention to healthcare accessibility which is critical. 2. Ensure that all community members needs are considered. 3. Re-evaluation of Local Authority Roles. 4. Pragmatic solutions (realistic and achievable). 5. Promoting Community Cohesion.
Priority 3 Environmental Stewardship – Reported an average approval rate of **83%**					
To safeguard the environment and promote biodiversity.	131	34	79%	21%	1. Push for Sustainable Development 2. Community-centred focused housing. 3. Attention to Infrastructure. 4. Realistic recognition of agricultural land importance. 5. Avoid red tape
To promote the circular economy of reduce, reuse and recycle to minimise waste.	142	23	86%	14%	1. Make recycling cost-effective. 2. Enhance accessibility. 3. Create consistent recycling programs. 4. Evaluate Fee Structures. 5. Address broader environmental context.
Priority 4 Quality housing and Place Making – Reported an average approval rate of **83%**					
To deliver sustainable and strategic development that meets Cherwell's needs now, and in the future.	138	27	84%	16%	1. Prioritise infrastructure. 2. Ensure developer accountability. 3. Increase affordable housing options. 4. Emphasise sustainable practices. 5. Reinvigorate town centres.
To achieve more high-quality, secure, and affordable housing that caters for the diverse needs of our residents.	135	30	82%	18%	1. Limit overdevelopment. 2. Focus on council housing. 3. Re-think affordable housing definitions. 4. Protect green belts. 5. Balance environment and safety.

9. Vision and strategy take aways

The respondents who disagreed with the proposed aims were asked to offer an alternative suggestion. Several critical concerns and expectations were raised regarding local governance, particularly relating to housing, infrastructure, community engagement, and environmental sustainability, theses have been grouped in overarching themes and proposed actions as per below:

1. The need for a clearer and more effective council-resident communication, by:
   - Simplifying language in council communications to enhance understanding and foster trust.
   - Ensuring proposals are detailed, in a way common people can understand and asses, with specific, measurable outcomes that residents can evaluate.

2. Update the community-centered approach.
   - Residents expressed their desire for greater involvement in shaping policies that affect their lives, and this includes more workshops, public forums, and avenues for feedback to ensure that community voices influence decision-making, more recurrent and more often.
   - Addressing inequalities and ensure all community members feel represented and included.

3. Infrastructure and supporting services must be a Priority.
   - Ensuring infrastructure such as healthcare, transport, and education facilities are keeping up the pace with housing developments to prevent service strain and community dissatisfaction.
   - Encourage engagement in a meaningful, responsive, minded towards investment vs benefits to residents' way, to address current infrastructure deficits before approving further developments.

4. Sustainable development and environmental considerations.
   - Respondents expressed their desire to have the council incorporate clear sustainability standards into new housing projects to preserve green spaces and ensure ecological balance.
   - Address environmental policies with equal consideration to social needs, ensuring that ecological initiatives do not inadvertently marginalise community concerns.

5. Support for local businesses and create economic viability.
   - Develop initiatives to support small businesses, including tax breaks and reduced bureaucratic burdens to foster economic growth and community vitality.
   - Recognise the importance of businesses as partners in economic development rather than mere revenue sources.

6. Create a balanced approach to housing.
   - To ensure the construction of various housing types, including high-quality affordable and council housing, to meet diverse community needs.
   - Rethink definitions of "affordable housing" to align with residents' realities, making it more accessible for average earners.

7. Streamlining bureaucratic processes.
   - Simplifying planning and development procedures, by reducing red tape, enabling a more responsive and efficient governance model that supports local initiatives.
   - Regularly review and adjust regulatory measures to avoid unnecessary hindrances to community projects.

8. Enhanced social support systems.
   - The main interest here is to address pressing social challenges, including homelessness and community integration, through dedicated initiatives that offer tangible support.
   - And create an environment where is possible to foster a strong community spirit by promoting engagement and cohesion, especially amidst new developments.

9. Transparency and Accountability.
   - Also previously mentioned, but also related to establishing regular, systematic, and inclusive updates, with and having accountability mechanisms regarding how taxpayer money is spent and how proposed changes are implemented.
   - Create a way to involve residents into the monitoring progress, so they can also celebrate successes, build trust, and ensure alignment with community goals.

10. Encourage and act towards initiative-taking healthcare improvements.:
   - Focusing on enhancing the availability and quality of local healthcare services, including GP access, to meet growing community demands, especially with population increases.