Research Report

Stakeholder Budget Consultation

Prepared for: Isle Of Wight Council

bmg research

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Prepared by: BMG Research

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1   Introduction

1.1   Background and method

This report summarises the results of the Isle of Wight Council [IOWC] Stakeholder Budget consultation exercise. The Isle of Wight Council wished to discuss with their stakeholders about their perceptions, expectations and suggestions about how the council allocates its budget spend to help influence decisions made around the 2010 budget.

On the evening of Tuesday 1st December eight groups of council stakeholders were invited to attend the council to discuss the budget for 2010/11. Stakeholders were recruited via telephone using a contact database provided to BMG by the council. The eight groups invited to the evening included the following stakeholders:

1.   Parish and Town Councillors

2.   Young People [formed from the IOW's Youth Council members]

3.   Older People [including Age Concern; Older People's Network]

4.   Voluntary Sector

5.   Bodies and organisations representing individuals with disabilities

6.   Bodies and organisations representing British Minority Ethnic [BME] groups

7.   Trade Unions

8.   Businesses on the Island

The groups were moderated by BMG trained moderators and IOWC officers were available to help assist stakeholders decision by providing information where required.

In addition, on the 9th December a separate focus group, following the same topic guide utilised in the workshop, was held with the Cowes Friendship Group and moderated by Claire Robertson from the IOWC. The findings for this group also presented within the main body of the report.

1.2   Format of Evening

The evening was organised in two halves. Primarily stakeholders remained in their groups in order to discuss their priorities and needs for the budget. They were asked to address allocation of budget to priority areas; consider efficiencies and cuts and suggest where improvements in partnership working may occur. The second half of the evening, stakeholder groups were mixed comprising of members from each group. Respondents were then asked the same questions as earlier but this time, they were required to compromise and evaluate their own stakeholder requirements against those of other groups. The aim of the workshop was to ascertain stakeholder needs within a reduced budget and for consensus to be worked towards in terms of budget allocation.

2   Executive Summary

This executive summary provides an overview of the main findings from the Stakeholder Budget Consultation held on Tuesday 1st December 2009.   Initially, respondents were split into their stakeholder group and were asked to discuss their key priorities, allocate budgetary spend and identify areas where efficiencies could be made (session A). Stakeholder groups were then mixed and respondents were asked the same questions as session A, however, they were required to evaluate their own stakeholder requirements against those of other groups (Session B).

Session A

The main priority for councillors was a need for economic development (and strategies) on the Island. Consequently, they increased the budgetary spend on economic development and planning more so than the current distribution and felt that a strategy for providing a better quality holiday offering was required. They felt that there should be no cuts in adult social care and most felt that few would back an increase of spending or allocation to highways due to PFI funds. Councillors felt that income generation could be achieved by increasing parking charges, fines and crematorium fees but adult social care should be cost neutral.

Respondents in the young people group were either elected or standing to be elected on the youth council. They felt that they should work more closely with the main council and described a current lack of communication between them. Of most focus for the youth council was the student rider scheme and as such, a new category 'Public Transport' was needed to be added to the service priority list. The group prioritised people with learning disabilities, children's social care and public transport. Highways and traffic management were agreed to be a low priority by all. They felt that parking permit costs, library charges and homecare charges could be increased.

The 'older people' stakeholder group had several key priorities for improving the lives of older people. The Older People's Network would like to network and attract members. Others would like to establish an effective working relationship with the council. For budget allocation, the group prioritised older people, people with learning disabilities, children's social care, waste management and highways. Amongst other suggestions for efficiency, they felt that service offerings should stop when a service is no longer required and community groups should be empowered with funds. They also suggested that the council should be charged by number of stops taken on a journey on the bus and not by a flat rate when travelling between two points that have been predetermined by the bus company.

For the voluntary sector group, a key priority was funding to effectively work towards a 'preventative agenda'. Funding would be helped if IOWC contracted new initiatives out to the sector and improved partnership working (in various aspects). For both to happen, communications between them need to be improved. The group prioritised services for older people, people with learning disabilities and children's social care as top priority. They felt that increasing crematorium and library fees and museums and car parking charges would generate income.

The key priority for organisations representing individuals with disabilities was 'day services'. The group felt that disability groups should work together (encouraged by IOWC) in order to be in a stronger position to initiate their work. The vast majority wanted the budget to be equally distributed between older people, people with learning disabilities and children's social care. Respondents identified ways in which the council could be more efficient, for example, running buses more efficiently, not funding buses and use library resources effectively.

The key priorities of the bodies and organisations representing the British Minority Ethnic stakeholder group were children's social care and tourism and economic regeneration. Of less priority was planning and building control and waste management. The increases to generate income that would be 'most acceptable' were to crematorium charges, homecare charges, car parking tickets and museum, theatre and arts charges (amongst others identified).

Respondents in the Trade Union group identified a number of key concerns/priority areas including, amongst others, more local authority involvement in care homes, the 'expensive' public transport system and the perceived large amount of consultations outsourced to organisations on the main land. The view of the Trade Union group was that the council should run all services. The group could not prioritise services as they concern vulnerable groups and services that impact on people's health (although all felt that tourism should not be prioritised). They felt the council should adopt a business-like model of operation that runs at a profit to provide services and services for children with special needs should be provided on the Island.

The business group's key priority was tourism. In terms of priorities, the group felt that there were moral obligations to support services and that investment was needed in the Island's infrastructure for tourism. It was suggested that the council could allocate as much as 80% of the budget to tourism and economic regeneration. The business group also suggested several other income generators including; school sport and leisure facilities available to all to use and utilise the land available on the Island.

A separate element from the workshop was a focus group with members of the Cowes Friendship group. The main priorities of the group were investment in youth centres, reducing bus fares, more funding for the group itself and 'problem' parking charges in Newport and Ryde. Services for older people, services for people with learning difficulties, children's social care and leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches were prioritised. The group felt that library charges, museum, theatre and arts charges and crematorium charges could be increased to generate income.

Session B

Further to receiving a presentation of the council finances and current situation all respondents were asked to come to a consensus on the IOWC budget priorities for 2010/11. The vast majority felt that the services that provide for human need and quality of life should be prioritised, namely, services for older people, those with learning disabilities. However, prioritisation of these was divided into two distinct opinions: tourism and regeneration should be fist as it would help fund other service areas versus all other services should be prioritised before tourism in order to ensure that the Island has an infrastructure for residents and one that encourages tourism. Those who felt that tourism should be prioritised felt that IOWC should identify a

strategy that would aim to make the Island economically viable for businesses to flourish in the future, they also support the 'Eco Island' brand and feel there is room to further the success of the Island using the brand. Interestingly, the majority attributed similar percentages of budgetary spend as the council, despite the divide of where tourism should be prioritised.

In order to make savings and efficiencies many felt that organisations should be housed together in 'hubs' for community services. Also buildings owned by the council (i.e. schools, government buildings) and facilities, resources and staff should be utilised in order to cut costs and encourage community. Further to those already stated, respondents made more suggestions to make cuts and efficiencies, for example, train staff to save money and work efficiently, encourage volunteering in third sector, regenerate empty hotels, operate and regain control and ownership of the bus company.

3   Findings: Session A

3.1   Introduction

This section provides the findings from the individual stakeholder groups. It discusses each group's key priorities and concerns; their suggestions for efficiencies/cuts and income generation and also any views on improved ways of working between their organisations and the council.

Please note, that not all groups were able to make suggestions to all questions. By the nature of qualitative research, respondents will discuss issues of importance to them and as such, not all information is comparable across groups and not all groups were able to complete all exercises.

Please also note, all suggestions below are verbatim, i.e. reported as said.

3.2   Parish and Town Councillors

3.2.1   Stakeholder Priorities

The focus for councillors was the need for economic development. They did not feel that there was a strategy in place for this and commented how there were no conference or 'decent' hotel facilities on the Island and that these would be required in order to concentrate on tourism. Their perception was that there is no clear economic strategy and no inward investment strategy. They suggested that many graduates who grew up on the Island do not return because there are no appropriate jobs for their skills. If people are unaware of strategies and opportunities how can an appropriate infrastructure be built?

The councillors listed a number of issues in regards to planning which they felt were hindering the development of the Island:

1. That planning needed to consider the requirements and applications of high end tourism offerings for families away from the current budget provision;

2. That a planning strategy needed to address the listed buildings going into states of disrepair, particularly in Ryde as this was not assisting the provision of an environment suitable for sustainability or tourism:

   'Royal York Hotel…an art deco building which is a listed building, falling down, it's derelict almost internally and that is a deliberate strategy, as it is with other buildings of architectural significance… the issues are not being addressed effectively by the planning department. What that leads to is deterioration in that built environment.'

3. The current strategy has not taken into account any potential expansion plans of current large businesses on the Island. An example cited was the application for a cash and carry on the BAE site:

   'So that limits their expansion, the next thing they want to do…suddenly decide that there's an upturn in their order book, they're going to find that they

can't expand on their site because they've got another planning application for a supermarket.'

The group felt there was a tension between the need to grow 'a vibrant strong economy' and keeping the 'Island for the Islanders'. The low paid jobs and low skilled workforce were not allowing the economy of the Island to develop on its own.

They also expressed concerns at the level of debt they perceived the council to have and questioned how this would be addressed and paid off. Consequently they felt the council needed to adopt a more prudent approach:

'You can't constantly keep blaming the money you've got to pay back, when some people are wanting something built or something done.'

'To be more specific, we need to know whether debt's going up or whether it's coming down.'

3.2.2 Prioritising Service areas

The councillors prioritised the service areas generally to be in line with the current distribution of budgetary spend and priority that IOWC attributes [please refer to appendices and showcard A]. However, they increased the spend on economic development and planning.

In regards to economic generation, the group felt that the tourism offering for families was centred around the 'budget' end of the market and that there was not enough variety for various budgets and that high end facilities were not available for families on the Island:

'The facilities aren't particularly good that would attract families. We have…a first world environment in Cowes, in terms of yachting…then you to go to some of the shanty towns on the south of the Island, those holiday villages and then the stuff down at the Needles…we're not utilising that space…so that people would want to come here for what you might call a quality holiday, rather than a cheap holiday.'

The group felt a strategy that focused on providing a better quality holiday offering was required.

Councillors insisted that there should be no cuts in Adult Social Care and it was felt that few would back an increase of spending or any allocation at all to Highways due to the PFI, even though they acknowledged that the PFI funds might not commence until 2013.

3.2.3 Income Generation

The councillors had a strong appetite for income generation, especially in regards to increasing parking charges and fines and crematorium fees. They felt that Adult Social Care should be cost neutral.

They could not identify cuts or efficiencies but recognised the growing demand on a fixed budget is the equivalent to a cut and so they focused on income generation [tourism, economic regeneration, parking fees increased].

3.3 Young People [formed from the IOW's Youth Council members]

3.3.1 Priority areas and issues

All respondents in this group were either elected as members of IOW youth council or in the process of getting elected. Some will be re-elected while others are being elected for the first time. The electorate consists of pupils from schools on the Island. The group meets at least once a month. Sometimes adult councillors attend the meetings and take notes, but do not participate in the main debate.

Generally, the youth council consults the main council on issues that affect the youth on the Island. Some recent projects include:

- Rock the Island: A talent show for young people designed to keep kids of the streets which was deemed a success.
- Student rider: This is a £1 fee for buses and trains. Bus/train trips cost a minimum of £2.50 and the student rider scheme has been put in place to allow more affordable travel for young people. This was the biggest issue for the Youth Council, and they are determined to keep this scheme in place (or even lower the fare). Some longer journeys on the Island can cost £4 one-way which is very expensive for students. The adult fare applies as soon as people hit the age of 14.
- Discounts for young people on ferries.
- Island's Got Talent: the youth council are going to work together to produce this show sometime in the near future.

The youth council do get involved with the main council, but it is felt that they are not really listened to and have to 'bug' the main council to get results. The main council often attends youth council meetings, but just listen and take notes. The respondents didn't think that there was much of a relationship with the main council, and it was therefore suggested that it may be more efficient if both organisations worked closer together, rather than as separate groups. It was agreed that the youth council should be more involved at top level.

It was noted however, that youth council members can attend council meetings if they so wished, although no respondents were aware of this. There is also an opportunity to shadow a councillor, but no respondents knew of this. Youth council members would like as much power as the main council.

It is felt that there is a lack of communication from the main council. There have been occasions where dates for projects have been poorly communicated meaning projects have not been completed to the best standard.

It was felt that there are lot of members of the council that do not appreciate the existence of a youth council. Several snide remarks have been overheard relating to the lack of importance of the youth council. Remarks like "How many votes did you get?" in a sarcastic and snooty tone and a couple of councillors were muttering outside

the town hall with one saying "I can't believe they think they are adults." It is felt that the council do not respect their opinions.

The group agreed that a new category entitled 'Public Transport' needed to be added to the service priority list, mainly due to their focus on the issues surrounding the Student Rider. The youth council are determined to keep this despite talk of it being abolished and it is their main priority.

3.3.2 Prioritising service areas [showcard A exercise]

The stakeholders in the youth group did not assign budget percentages to all service areas. They were most likely to prioritise 'human need' areas such as social care.

This group felt that priority should be given to: people with learning disabilities; children's social care and public transport, with the group allocating 20% of the budget to each. Learning disabilities are of a high priority in the area because there are perceived current issues of under funding, and increasing the funding into this area will allow more people to become educated meaning that these people will be more equipped to get jobs. Children in social care is also another top priority as there are many children on the Island that need support so they get the same opportunities as other young people on the Island.

It was agreed that tourism is not a priority area as this industry is going well as it is, therefore the funding can be better spent in other categories and the group assigned 4% of the budget to this area. Some respondents felt that the industry needed more financial support however.

Highways and traffic management was agreed to be a low priority as the current infrastructure is good enough for the Island.

Older people were seen of as a medium priority because they have incomes (albeit small) and there are other groups of people without incomes or with other issues such as disabilities.

Waste management was seen as a medium priority as it is seen as a necessity.

Theatres were seen to be struggling on the Island.

3.3.3 Income generation

Whilst the group were unable to complete this exercise in the time given, they were able to suggest areas where they felt charges/fees could be increased:

- Residents parking permits – It was agreed that they are quite cheap and older people get cheaper permits even though they get free bus travel. This means there is scope for increases here.
- Library charges.
- Homecare charges can go up a bit.

It was agreed overall however, that it be better if charges stayed the same as it is hard on the public if these charges go up and they were against any increase in public transport fares.

3.4 Older People [including Age Concern; Older People's Network]

3.4.1 Stakeholder Priorities

The key priorities for this group were to provide older people with a voice in democracy; abolish isolation by providing companionship and enabling older people to reside in their own homes by assisting them to do so with services such as home shopping; befriending and providing social networks. The group summarised their priorities as follows:

- Improving well being.
- Provision of socializing/entertainment/camaraderie.
- Improving quality of life.
- Allowing people to 'stand up and be counted'.

The Older Voices Network [OVN] has strong support from the council but struggles to get members. They have access to the government but not the people and would like to have assistance by creating OVN circles in every town. For them, being introduced to other voluntary sector organisations and assistance with networking would be invaluable.

The other stakeholders would like to be in touch with someone in the council who is regarded highly enough that they will listen to their concerns and be able to provide an effective working relationship. Currently, as lone organisations, the sector does not feel strong enough to assist as best it can:

> *'We are insufficiently strong to be completely interventionist'*

> *'The council is a big boulder, all organisations are in its path or way down. The council has its own momentum regardless of intervention.'*

The group feel they are caught in an ethical dilemma, insofar as they are being relied on to assist further and further with services due to the economic downturn but are run by unpaid volunteers:

> *'People feel they are being used because they are being used to provide services that wouldn't be provided otherwise. So they feel 'what happens if we stop'. Sometimes a contract is underpinned by money from the council but Social Services would've done it. So we are a cheaper way of doing it. It is statutory functions carried out by third sector organisations via volunteers.'*

However, it was noted that the sector has moved forward a lot with the compact and some said that they would prefer to deliver services because they felt that the council would deliver unsatisfactory service or contractors would deliver it by wasting money and not being accountable. For these individuals, they saw the benefits of 'knitting voluntary work in with the public good' and not allowing financial decisions to override rational and ethical ones.

3.4.2 Prioritising service areas

The group prioritised older people, people with learning disabilities and children's social care as they viewed these as 'human needs' and 'quality of life'. They felt it was the council's and community's responsibilities to provide for these.

Following on from prioritising 'human need' services, the group felt waste management and highways were a priority. It was thought that a 'clean society' was needed before you could concentrate on leisure and culture. These would be prioritised afterwards and lastly tourism. The group felt that you needed to provide a good offering to tourists to encourage them to visit so cleanliness and leisure and culture needed to be addressed first. However, one respondent felt tourism had to be number one priority after human need, as they felt this was the only way to generate income to address the other priority requirements.

Most respondents did not like the current approach to tourism as they felt that the Island had been 're-branded' too many times and it was a waste of resources. They cited: 'The Garden Isle'; 'The Cocktail Glass'; 'The Island Flag' and now 'The Eco Island'.

In regards to Planning Control, they felt that it should be focused on Island residents and not tourists. They felt that too often it was trying to attract 'millionaires' to the Island but that they never came and that there were costly developments that were uninhabited but no developments that were affordable for residents.

In regards to assigning money to each service area, they felt that the demographics of the population should be considered on a per capita basis. The group agreed the following allocation in the figure below.

Figure 1: Dividing budget amongst service areas as decided by stakeholders representing Older People
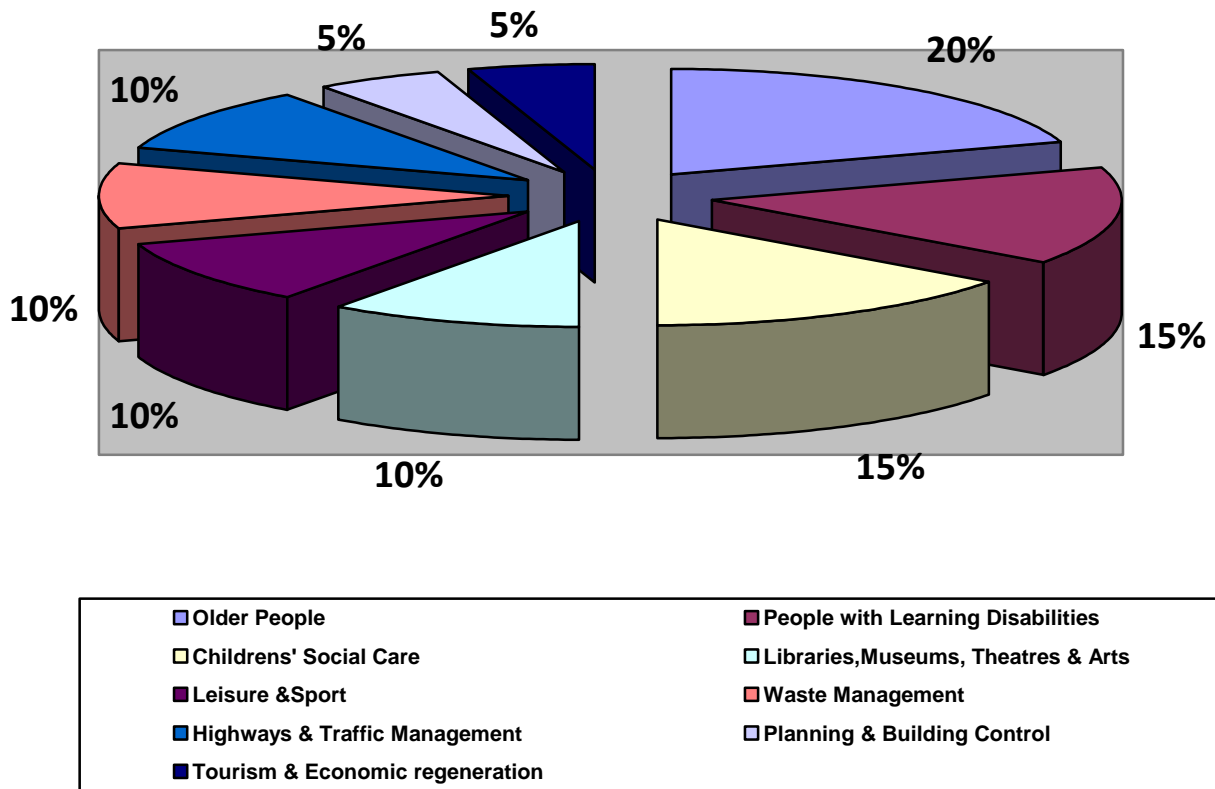
3.4.3   Being more efficient/making savings

Generally, the group felt that the council should provide people with what they need BUT, be flexible enough that once people were 'on their feet' that they no longer needed to assist them but refer them to the voluntary sector. It was felt that sometimes everything was offered when only a little was needed and that such assistance could be more efficient by spreading the resource across the community. For example, someone might only need home care assistance for a month whilst a partner was ill, or home shopping for a short term due to bereavement. Although this is offered, the group commented that the assistance can often continue when it is no longer required.

> *'A lot could have a little bit of help…but once in place, it continues and it's more than they need.'*

> *'When you say service…it becomes service user…it becomes assessed in terms of money.'*

> *'It takes time, people listening, it can be done with not a lot of money…sometimes all people need is a little money.'*

For the group, it was felt that empowering community groups and providing them with access to funding that could be applied in a 'household management' style [i.e. sharing

a little around as many places as it would go] would be an efficient use of monetary spend and allow the council to save money.

The group felt, that for many things, most people could afford to subsidise certain services, such as chiropody. If the council would provide a room say once a fortnight, and allow a chiropodist to attend and people booked to go, they could cover the cost of the chiropodist together. The chiropodist would have increased business; the council would save money on service provision and residents would also be able to network and save money. This idea expanded, similar to that mentioned in the 'bodies and organisations representing people with disabilities' group, that community hubs be created where services and facilities can be shared, schools were suggested as the location for these.

Additionally, it was thought that money was wasted on assessing people's need for money. It was suggested that the council adopt the Swiss model of providing people with 'entitlements' where they receive a basic package at the start. Then, as needs change, so does entitlement, a system they cited that the Australians use also. For this group, in situations where there will be no change, they felt too much money was wasted and that IOWC should provide a service to help the individual with minimal help. They also felt assistance should be provided on the Island and not on the mainland.

Similarly to other groups, public transport fees were a considerable issue for these stakeholders. They did not understand why transport for the over 60's could not have a bar code like Oyster cards so they are recorded where the pass is issued rather than to the council where it is used. It was felt IOWC would save money as most would not be travelling extensively away from the Island. They disliked the fact that many lived at the top of a big hill in Cowes and that they used the bus to get from the shops to their homes but were charged the full Island fare for a number of stops. They felt the council should be charged by stops and not a flat rate.

3.4.4 Income generation

The group found it hard to agree on amounts or where increases should be made across chargeable services. However, they did agree that a small increase on each paid by everyone could make a substantial difference to the council's income generation. As such, they felt:

'Up to a 10% increase we might be able to stomach.'

They did however, caveat that, by stating the council would need to weigh the net income gained after it had implemented the administration required to make those increases.

3.5 Voluntary Sector

3.5.1 Priorities/issues for the voluntary sector and suggestions for improved partnership working

For this stakeholder group, the focus and priority was to work towards a 'preventative agenda'. It was felt that the voluntary sector plays a large role in prevention but that it has not enough funding in order to be its most effective. The recession has clearly led to the sector taking up services but cuts have also been made within their services such as CAB being cut.

In rural areas of the Island, the group felt that affordable housing should be a priority. Also, the community transport scheme funds come to an end in March and an alternative/replacement was going to have to be considered.

Funding is clearly an issue/priority for the sector and it was felt that this could be helped if IOWC contracted out to the sector more instead of recruiting more staff with the authority. New initiatives could be outsourced to the sector as much as possible and immediate suggestions for where improved partnership working could be made included:

- The youth service restructuring;
- Assistance with the 'Eco Island' agenda which was felt to be stalling currently;
- Allowing the sector to further assist with disadvantaged children, victims of domestic violence and other highly vulnerable groups that were felt to be lacking in co-ordinated support at the moment;
- Improving the attitude of state agencies to the voluntary sector and making full use of the compact;
- The council could assist with more financial sustainability plans for sector services particularly in regards to health and education;
- Woodland conservation and tree preservation was a priority for some but it was felt that involving the council currently slowed the process down – a more efficient method of working together that allowed for expedient results was required;
- Council assistance with publicity on the street pastor scheme would be appreciated, especially as it was stated that violent crime had reduced by 19% since the scheme commenced. The scheme is expanding outside of Ryde over the next 4-5 years and ideally they would like 200 pastors on the Island – they currently have 22.

In order for the above suggestions to be realised, the group felt that communications between the voluntary sector and IOWC need to be improved. They currently feel the approach is too slow and official. It was noted that council officers and councillors receive many emails a day and do not have enough time to answer them so there is a back-log of communication. There was also concern about the number of part time roles within the council which many felt were not enabling the communications to process smoothly and efficiently. The sector would prefer less paperwork and more communication via the telephone to a named contact.

Improved communications were seen to allow more balanced views to be presented in many areas; especially as some noted that there had been issues in the past through

contract management and re-structuring issues. Some steps had been made towards improved communications with the mention of the pilot of a new approach to grants being positive. However, it was felt that ideas could be more outcome focussed and that councillors need a greater awareness of voluntary activities that take place in their wards in order to be more pro-active. Particular areas cited as needing further communications/more information were: the requirement for more effective translation on modernising social services and an explanation on how the transition to personal budgets will be managed.

3.5.2   Service area prioritisation

The group felt that it was difficult to separate the services from each other and thought that there was not enough detailed information to make completely informed decisions. However they prioritised the services in the following order:

- 1-3: Services for older people; people with learning disabilities and children's social care;
- 4: Regeneration – economic and social. The group felt that tourism was different to regeneration;
- 5 and 6: Leisure and sports and libraries and museums The group felt these were equal;
- 7: Waste management;
- 8: Planning and building control;
- 9: Highways and traffic management.

The figure below illustrates how this group would divide the percentage amongst the service priority areas.

Figure 2: Dividing budget amongst service areas as decided by Voluntary Sector respondents
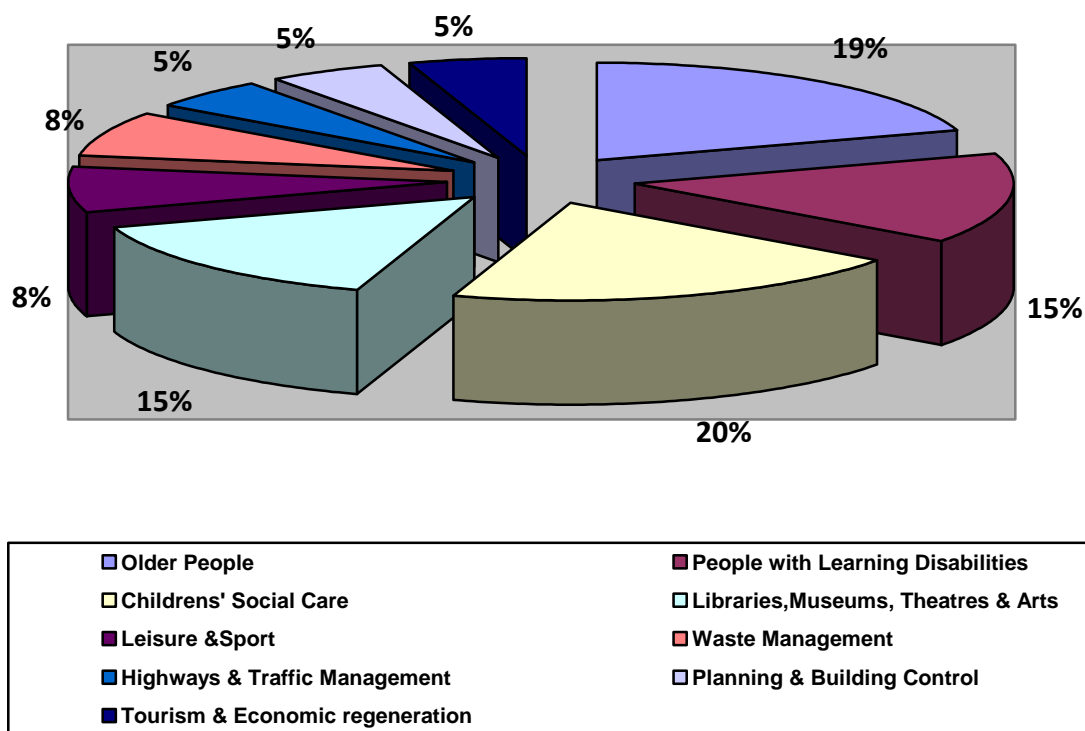
3.5.3 Income generation prioritisation

The list below displays the voluntary sector group's decisions on increases to charges and fees to generate additional income:

1. Crematorium charges – an idea was suggested to move this service to privatisation – increase

2. Library charges – increase

3. Museums, theatres – increase

4. Car parking charges – small increase

5. Resident parking permit – stay same

6. Leisure and sport facilities – stay same

7. Public transport charges – decrease

8. Home care charges (means tested)

People who receive a concessionary pass would be prepared to pay 50p for bus journeys in order to assist in terms of small contributions.[1]

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[1] This point was raised in the focus group session and then was reiterated in the plenary session where it was explained by the Chief Executive that it would in fact be illegal.

3.6 Bodies and organisations representing individuals with disabilities

3.6.1 Stakeholder priorities

The key priority for this stakeholder group was 'day services'; a cut in the budget of social services was mentioned and that there were no resources provided by the council on the Island. A central resource base for all disability groups on the Island in Newport was suggested as something that could make a real difference to all groups. This developed into the suggestion of a pooling of resources between the different groups.

This group felt that a priority should be groups working together on the Island given the uniqueness of the community. It was felt that if all the groups worked together that they would be in a stronger position to initiate their work. This was mentioned particularly with regard to buildings for meetings/activities etc. It was felt that joined up thinking between the groups would mean the spaces that are available could be used more efficiently.

The council only came into the discussion when prompted. The respondents felt that IOWC should encourage and reward joined up thinking among different groups. As third sector workers, they would like acknowledgement from the council of the work that they do within the community. Any help towards expenses would be appreciated though they did not expect this to happen. The council were also mentioned with regard to the above point about buildings – in terms of providing them and facilitating the use of what is available.

There was a consensus that there is currently no working relationship between the groups and the council, so this could be improved by starting one.

3.6.2 Priority Service Areas

When asked to prioritise service areas and allocate the budget amongst them all but one respondent wanted the bulk of the money to be equally distributed between older people, people with learning disabilities and children's social care [A, B and C], giving between £20 and £30 for each [the other respondent wished to split the budget equally across service areas]. The general reasoning being that emotionally this is where they would like to see the money go, though they might be inclined to say something different were they to speak from a residents point of view, where they might be more inclined to focus on other services that directly affect them such as waste management.

Leisure and sports facilities divided opinion in that some thought it should be self funding, or that money should be given to it to improve their ability to cater for people with a disability.

All respondents agreed that they would like to give as much money as possible to A, B and C, they all agreed that there would be consequences in taking money away from the other services on the groups that they represent.

3.6.3 Income generation

On the subject of increasing costs rather than looking at where they would be happy for costs to be increased, respondents were more willing to talk about how the council

should be more efficient and save money that way rather then increasing costs in other areas. Suggestions included:

- Running buses more efficiently (with more than a handful of people on them).
- The council should not have to help to fund buses.
- Libraries should use their facilities more efficiently; maybe hiring out the space they have available where possible.

Regarding putting prices up there was a consensus that it should be equal across all the given areas. One respondent thought that transport costs should not increase.

One respondent was concerned that increasing car parking costs would hit tourism, and that home care costs should never be put up.

3.7 Bodies and organisations representing British Minority Ethnic [BME] groups

This stakeholder group were able to agree their service priority areas. The following table lists their priority order area and their rationale for their decisions.

Table 1: BME service priority areas

Service Area	Rationale
Children's Social Care	This group of stakeholders concentrates on young people, particularly in schools so this service is most important. Also, BME residents in the Island tend to be younger too.
Tourism and Economic Regeneration	There are many migrant workers in these lower paid jobs. If this area was a priority then people would have more money enabling them to provide not only for themselves but contribute more socially in taxes etc.
Libraries, Museums, Theatres and Arts	Needs improving as it would help with cohesion and help BME to fit in. For example have a day where Polish and other groups helped and were part of history of UK in war etc. Have arts, dance from Bengali community e.g. henna art classes which anyone from any background could take part in and therefore better integration and cohesion. Improve translation signage for foreign visitors in museums etc
Leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches	Used by everybody and BME use these facilities. However, BME more likely to be on lower income and less health aware. Need to raise awareness of facilities such as swimming for BME. Better translation and signage needed.
Services for people with learning disabilities	Many people from the BME community also have learning needs/difficulties. It was felt that these may already be picked up elsewhere hence why it was not placed higher on the priority list.

Services for Older People	It's an aging population for even BME and the group felt that new census data will better be able to give awareness of statistics and what needs doing. It was felt to be important to look after the elderly.
Planning and Building Control	Many migrant workers are in the construction trade but they do not understand why planning permission may get refused on housing etc or why locals may be against proposals. It was felt that there was a need to educate better and have information in an accessible format.
Waste Management	BME residents could contribute and be part of the community and eco-Island if they knew how the 'complicated' recycling worked, e.g. translate/picture of what goes into which bin.

3.7.1   Income generation

The BME stakeholders did not attribute percentages or amounts to where they felt additional income generation could occur. They did prioritise their preferences for where increases would be most acceptable, in their view, to their representatives. The preferential order was as follows:

1. Crematorium charges: it was viewed that 'people only die once' and so less of a worry that BMG groups would be affected too much, especially given their current younger demographic representation on the Island.

2. Home care charges: as above, their younger demographic meant it would affect them less.

3. Car parking tickets: as BME residents had a greater propensity to not own cars, this was not likely to affect them. However, the Polish representative said that many Polish residents have cars because signage is poor on other transport methods.

4. Museum, theatre and arts charges: these services were not used by BME residents much and it was viewed that because they could not benefit from accessing theses services as they could not afford them or access them in terms of language difficulties [refer to point made in table 1] then it was least likely to affect them. They felt that increasing charges might allow additional funds to be provided for this service to allow translations to occur in these service areas to improve access for their representatives.

5. Library charges: it was felt that libraries were important for education purposes and so the group was less likely to want charges or fees increased here. They felt that libraries could be used as a venue for anti-bullying workshops.

6. Leisure and sports facilities charges: the group believed these should be free in order to improve the health of young people from BME backgrounds.

7. Residents parking permits: one respondent in the group was adamant that this should be at the bottom as it affected her though her colleagues reluctantly agreed. It was felt that the permits were currently expensive as it is.

8. Public transport and Cowes ferry charges: this was important to this group as they were more likely to use public transport. It was their primary way to get about and not feel isolated, as well as being an economical way to currently travel to work and find work. Increasing charges would hinder the BME community's ability to travel around the Island.

The group felt that the council could be more efficient by utilising outreach/volunteer groups more as it was believed that currently IOWC did not do this enough. It was mentioned that some groups had offered their numbers to the council for BME residents to contact them for assistance but were told that IOWC would not take their number.

3.8 Trade Unions

Stakeholders within the Trade Unions group stated that they understood the financial pressure that the council is under but had a number of key concerns/priority areas.

1. They would welcome more local authority involvement in care homes, particularly given the aging population on the Island.

2. The privately run public transport system was not favoured and considered to be very expensive. They felt that ferry firms have the monopoly and that the Island does not have a decent rail network; buses did not run at night times and that these factors contributed to an increased volume and usage of cars on the Island. It was suggested that park and rides should be considered to ease congestion and that more frequent, but smaller buses be utilised in operation. However, concern was raised that if this occurred that consideration should not be to make Newport the centre of such a scheme.

3. It was felt that too many businesses on the Island were of a transient nature; respondents felt that businesses came but remained only short term and did not provide a long term view of investment of their operations on the Island.

4. Trade Union representatives felt that too much was outsourced to external consultations, particularly to organisations on the main land. It was felt that more effective jobs could be done through direct workers on the Island and that there are hidden costs associated with *not* using local labour, such as social services costs from local unemployment and under employment [they stated low average pay of under £15,000 p.a]. This issue was felt to be exacerbated by a number of points:

   a. The 'gateway projects' which they stated cost £1.5 million and were then perceived to be abandoned'.

   b. Tenders for small projects were seen to be ineffectual.

   c. Concerns were raised over the belief that the council was not proactive enough on the 'Vestas issue'.

   d. Respondents felt that the council has limited control over publicly owned land and it was felt that it was IOWC's role to stimulate investment on the land.

Generally, these stakeholders were of the view that the council should be running **all** services, including those currently purchased. Then IOWC would be in a position to subsidise services that they cannot pay for with profit. They felt the council should provide people with what they need and they could not prioritise services as they may concern vulnerable groups and essential services that impact on people's health.

It was felt that bureaucracy costs too much money and that the council needed to adopt a more business-like/private sector model of operation and run at a profit to provide services to residents. Further, this service should be delivered by direct workers and council workers were seen in particular, to have the integrity to 'do the job properly' without having to keep contractors accountable.

> *'They key is to provide: publicly owned, delivered services under public, democratic control and influence.'*

Although unable to prioritise service areas and budget cuts, this group were adamant that tourism should not be a priority. They saw economic generation as being the key priority and that it should be locally led and more focused on skilled jobs for the longer term providing a vested interest for businesses and the Island alike. This they felt would reduce unemployment, create more tax revenue, provide more skills and boost the local economy – even if this would not be the cheapest avenue to follow initially.

There were two suggestions to make the budget more efficient. These were:

1. Develop local services to provide for children with special needs on the Island rather than spending large amounts of money sending them to the mainland.

2. When private firms take on the more portable elements service, the council is left with the least economic. The public sector picks up what needs subsidising, why not allow the public to take bids too?

3.9 Businesses on the Island

3.9.1 Stakeholder Priorities

The key priority for the businesses on the Island was tourism; they felt it was the only way to generate enough income to provide the other services. They believe that the IOW brand needs developing and if it is not a co-ordinated offering, then the Island does not have anything. They discussed the Eco Island brand and the positives that it was due to bring but how it had not been carried forward and developed.

As such, it was felt that the council needed to make it a number one priority:

> *'You do need to be bold about it and it does need to sit at the top table, sit at the top of list, have the biggest heavyweight councillors doing a portfolio and have top seating cabinet. But it doesn't….I was told that tourism generates about £380 million worth of value to the Island and at the moment we spend about £250,000 promoting it….its that ratio…as a business, you would question given what the potential tax receipts are.'*

3.9.2   Prioritising Services

The group felt that there were moral obligations to support services and so the council needed to focus on 'back office bureaucracy' to save money and be more efficient.[2] They agreed that investment was needed in the Island's infrastructure to support tourism. However, they understood that highways could not be over-produced as the current structure contributed to the attractiveness of the Island.

They felt that theatres required money and that the planning approach for the Island was not correct. It was thought that too much went into planning homes and that it was not the right investment for the Island. In regards to Highways the group were aware of the Private Finance Initiative [PFI] and therefore felt highways needed less budget allocation.

In terms of allocating money, they assumed the council spent at least 50% of the budget on older people, people with learning disabilities and children's social care. However, it was suggested that the council allocate as much as 80% of the budget to tourism and economic regeneration because:

> *'You'll generate enough tax revenue and enough income stream to pay for all the rest.'*

They felt the income would be generated as it was the Island's biggest export industry and that would be where discretionary spend would come into the financial equation. As such, this group wanted to focus primarily on income generation:

> *'We should concentrate on how we should generate the income and work back from there. You know, how would we encourage businesses to come to the Island through regeneration? Because regeneration is very important.'*

3.9.3   Income generation

The business group had a number of suggestions for income generation:

- Utilise the schools sports and leisure facilities locally and generate income from them. Leisure facilities could have increased charges such as playing fields/gyms to generate income and the availability of facilities should be extended to ensure maximum usage and capacity for those with disposable incomes to access the schools after work;
- Improving infrastructure and cultural offerings to encourage tourism. They realised this requires an initial expenditure outlay but felt it was necessary to generate income in the longer term:

> *'Shanklin Theatre, Sandown Theatre and Ryde Theatre need money putting into them. And its how do you deal with things like that? That's council assets where they can actually make money out of them rather than losing money. So if you're getting more people coming to the Island, more inward investment, more investment from visitors and offering a better product, then*

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[2] Please note, the group were not aware that back office and administrative efficiencies were to be *in addition* to any other suggestions the workshop brought to the table UNTIL session B.

> *you as a council would actually get more pennies from it and your leisure centres as well.'*

- Encourage businesses to the Island to access business rates and increase revenue. The group illustrated this point by outlining the success of Milton Keynes utilising such a model to regenerate. It was suggested that IOWC capitalise on the available workforce the Island can offer businesses too;
- Utilise the land available on the Island more efficiently to increase tourism opportunities rather than building houses [as also suggested by Trade Unions];
- Sandown High could be open to the public;
- Promote the timeline that exists on the Island: the history available for tourism:

> *'You've got everything on this Island, going back from the dinosaurs to the space age…so promote it.'*

- Provide two tier pricing models: reduced tariffs for Islanders, higher ones for tourists;
- Increase car parking charges and charge for their use all year round. Additionally consider increasing parking fines but weigh the cost of policing such schemes against the potential revenue it might generate.

3.10 Cowes Friendship Group

3.10.1 Introduction

In addition to, but separate from the workshop, a focus group was run with members of the Cowes Friendship group on the 9th December and moderated by Claire Robertson from IOWC. This section presents the findings of that group.

The Cowes Friendship Group meets on a weekly basis at the Cowes Youth Club, Cowes. There are currently 14 registered members of all different nationalities and they meet for a chat, to make cards, jewellery, go swimming at UKSA, etc. Occasionally they all bring food to the meeting to mark a day of celebration and the day of our meeting was such a day.

There were 14 women in attendance including three members of Equals and the local PCSO. Claire Robertson outlined the reason for council officers attending the meeting; to talk to stakeholders about their views on what the council's spending priorities should be. The findings of the research along with other consultation exercises would help influence the 2010/11 decision-making process.

The group were assured that anything said would remain anonymous and that the information they gave would be put together with information obtained from other participants. No-one would be identified in any quotes in the report at the end of the study. The group were asked to speak up if there was anything they didn't understand about the exercises.

3.10.2 Stakeholder Priorities

The following were the group's main priorities:

- Money spent on youth centres is important. More money should be spent on youth centres which would attract the young people to use them and keep them from hanging around the streets.
- Some youth clubs are to be shut down and the clubs will be taken in to schools. The youth clubs are not being used by the young people as they are too structured and they feel they are being run too much like at school.
- A drop-in centre is preferred like the Pavilion at East Cowes. Youth clubs need to be more relaxed and not too organised like schools.
- Bus fares are important. They are too expensive on the Island compared to the mainland. If the bus fares were cheaper they would use the buses more. Some women don't come to this group as the bus fares are too expensive and they can't afford it.
- They had heard that the Student Rider fare is to be increased to £1.50 and they are concerned about this as they will not be able to afford it. One woman said she had been decided to send her child to a school further away from where they lived as it was a better school. If the cost of the Student Rider is increased as stated then she would not be able to afford for her child to attend this school.
- Bus fares are high on the Island as there is only one bus company here.
- We would like funding for the Cowes Friendship Group so that we could do more things.
- Parking charges and parking spaces is a problem especially in Newport. Car parking charges are high and now it has been said that it is not going to be free anymore to park on the Esplanade in Ryde. No-one parks there when it is free so they are not going to park there when they have to pay.

3.10.3 Prioritising Service Areas

Overall the areas the group felt were most important were:

a. Services for older people

b. Services for people with learning difficulties

c. Children's social care & e) leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches

3.10.4 Income Generation

Overall the areas the group felt most comfortable with charges being increased were: library charges; museum, theatre and arts charges and crematorium charges.

4   Findings: Session B

4.1   Introduction

This section provides the findings of the combined stakeholder groups where respondents were asked to come to a consensus on IOWC budget priorities for 2010/11. Prior to session B commencing respondents were given a presentation on council finances and the current situation, in order to help inform their discussions further.

4.2   Agreeing Service Area priorities

Despite having additional information [and some feeling the need for further detail], respondents opinions remained remarkably similar to the initial session. The vast majority of stakeholders agree that the services that provide for 'human need'/ quality of life should be prioritised. These are services for older people; those with learning disabilities and children's social care. However, prioritisation following these is divided into two distinct areas of opinion:

1.   That tourism and economic regeneration should be prioritised in order to provide income that will help fund the other service areas.

2.   That all other service areas be prioritised before tourism in order to ensure that the Island has a) a decent infrastructure for Islanders and b) provides an offering that will encourage tourists to the Island.

An opinion best summarised within the councillors initial Session A when it was noted that there is a real tension between the need to grow 'a vibrant strong economy' and keeping the 'Island for the Islanders'.

Many who believe tourism should be prioritised feel that IOWC should focus on taking a longer term economic view that would address the need to make the Island an economically viable place for businesses to flourish. That such a strategy caters for students to return to the Island with skills acquired from mainland universities and colleges and that sectors are selected that the Island can develop. Respondents offered a number of suggestions for sector concentration: emerging technology; support IT systems and enter worldwide markets.

Those favouring tourism all favour the self-sufficiency idea support by the 'Eco Island' brand and believe that 'something very special could be done here'. Suggestions of electric vehicles; power through wind and waste management and solar panels were all considered viable. The key issue being the 'NIMBY'[3] attitude of many Islanders who do not want wind turbines in their local area.

Despite the divided approach as to where tourism should be prioritised the vast majority attribute similar percentages of spend to those already delivered by the council [as illustrated on showcard A]. Many feel 15-20% should be awarded to older people; people with learning disabilities and children's social services. Leisure,

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[3] 'Not in My Back Yard'.

museums, waste management and libraries invariably receive 10% and 5% to highways; planning and tourism.

4.3 Cuts; efficiencies and savings & income generation

Most groups felt the most expedient and useful way to make savings and efficiencies would be to house many organisations together in 'hubs' for community services, particularly third sector organisations. Schools and other council and government owned buildings could be utilised as venues to help save costs and encourage community. Facilities and staff experience could be shared as well as resources, for example minibuses, recreational equipment, office space etc

The following is a list of suggestions on how to make savings, efficiencies and income generation within the council provided in addition to those from Session A.

- Staff in the council are working on service delivery; they are not trained on how to save money and work efficiently. A 'top ten tips' to cut costs should be created and shared to see what money could be saved;
- Retain frontline/front facing staff and those in regulatory capacities and remove those creating 'bureaucracy';
- Making savings in the third sector by utilising the skilled workforce but encourage volunteering at the same time so that the pressure on those currently does not cause service delivery to suffer;
- The council could yield more finance from operating more berths on the Folly. There are parts of the river that are under-utilised and it was believed that a significant amount of revenue could come from this;
- Officers in the council could work from home more, as could employees generally across the Island. However the broadband infrastructure needs to be addressed first;
- Regenerate the two empty hotels on the Island to provide jobs and improve tourism;
- Have an IOW bank run by the council to raise revenue [similar to Birmingham City Council initiative];
- Run one off events and festivals to raise revenue and have volunteers staff them; and
- Regain control and ownership of the bus company.

5 Appendix 1: Topic Guide

Welcome and thank you for taking part in the group. I am X X an independent researcher from BMG Research.

Project commissioned by IOW Council. The aim is to talk to a cross-section of stakeholders about your views, as stakeholders on what the council's spending priorities should be. The findings of this research will help influence the 2010/11 decision-making process.

Confidentiality and anonymity: Assure group that they will remain anonymous and that the information they give will be put together with information obtained from other participants. No one will be identified in any quotes included in the report at the end of the study.

Permission to record the session: this is to make sure we capture what is said accurately and that we don't take up more of their time than is necessary by making notes.

Ground Rules: In order to ensure that everyone has a chance to talk and just as importantly a chance to be listened to we need to agree some ground rules for the session.

Prompt the following:

Not to talk over each other

Allow everyone a chance to speak

Confidentiality within the group – no repercussions

Feel free to say what you feel – (within reason – no abusive comments please)

There are no wrong or right answers – we are interested in a range of views and opinions

It is the moderators' job to make sure all the questions are asked and everybody gets a chance to give their views. There are lots of questions to get through so please don't be offended if I ask you to move to a new topic and to keep your answers to the point.

Do you have any questions?

5.1 Session A

This section will find out which stakeholder groups are represented and will explore their priorities, working relationship and suggestions as to how they can help the council deliver a restricted budget

5.1.1 Stakeholder priorities

Throughout the workshop we would like you to give us information from the perspective of the stakeholder group that you represent. If you would like to give your views from a resident's perspective, we are running a residents survey which we can

tell you about at the end of the group and there is also an online budget simulator (TBC) which can be accessed at www.iwight.com.

5.1.2 Warm Up [5minutes]

- First of all, perhaps you could each tell me a bit about yourself…?
  - Your first name
  - The stakeholder organisation/group that you represent and a brief description of the role/business undertaken

5.1.3 Stakeholder Priorities [20 minutes]

- What are the main priorities of the organisation/group that you represent?
  - Why are these priorities important?
- What, if anything, could be done to improve the relationship between your organisation and the IOW Council?
  - Probe: working relationships; level of contact; extent of partnership working; avoiding duplication of work conducted between organisations etc

5.1.4 Priority service areas and budget cuts/savings/efficiencies [30 minutes]

Moderator to introduce key service areas by reading them out individually and by presenting show card A to the respondents to sort in the order they would prioritise them. Please explain your reasoning.

Moderator to recognise that not all respondents may be able to read and ensure all take part in the exercise and that all decisions are verbalised.

Moderator to provide group with £100. The group are to divide that money amongst the prioritised areas until all the money is allocated.

- Please identify/suggest where budgetary cuts and/or efficiencies could be made in each of these areas. **Moderators to focus on efficiencies for top priorities and cuts for lowest priorities if short of time.**

a) Services for older people (e.g. homecare/personal care (help with washing, dressing, getting in/out of bed), residential care, day care, respite, mobile nights)

b) Services for people with learning disabilities (e.g. offers additional support (to people with learning disabilities) such as homecare/personal care, residential care, day services, employment support, respite, community support (e.g., accessing social activities, support when shopping, etc).

c) Children's social care (e.g. being, working with children with disabilities to ensure they receive high quality, family centred services, fostering & adoption and supporting families to help them look after their children).

d) Libraries, museums, theatres and arts

e) Leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches

f) Waste management

g) Highways and traffic management

h) Planning and building control

i) Tourism and economic regeneration

- Are there other areas where discretion can be made?

5.1.5 Income generation [30 minutes]

Using showcard B, please prioritise the list from 1-9 with 1 being the area where you would be most comfortable with charges being increased.

Please then indicate, with the use of showcard C, where you would like to see increases [or decreases]. The percentages must be balanced in order to achieve the savings target of £5 million. However, you can exceed 100% if you wish to suggest further income generation to off-set cuts.

Please explain your reasoning.

Are there any other income generation ideas you may have?

(In Budget Simulator document: parking permits, parking fees – ticket machines, library fees, museum, theatre and arts fees, leisure and sports facility fees (inc One Card), planning and building control fees, public transport and Cowes chain ferry, Student Rider (i.e. bus pass), crematorium charges, home care charges).

Moderator to also refer to 'consequences of a reduced spend' in the appendices if prompts are needed.

<p align="center">*** BREAK FOR BUFFET/REFRESHMENTS ***</p>

<p align="center">**BMG TO COLLATE RESULTS PRIOR TO SESSION B OF THE RESEARCH.**</p>

<p align="center">**THE KEY AREAS AS 'MOST IMPORTANT', 'FEES AND CHARGES' AND 'EFFICIENCIES/CUTS' WILL BE COLLATED FROM ALL STAKEHOLDER GROUPS.**</p>

5.2 Session B

The aim of the session is to debate priorities amongst all stakeholders and to establish the priorities in monetary terms.

Please note, we understand that we are asking the same questions again, this session is to encourage debate and agree a consensus amongst stakeholders. It may therefore be a relatively quick response, it may not.

5.2.1 Priority service areas and budget cuts/savings/efficiencies [30 minutes]

Moderator to introduce key service areas by reading them out individually and by presenting show card A to the respondents to sort in the order they would prioritise them. Please explain your reasoning.

Moderator to recognise that not all respondents may be able to read and ensure all take part in the exercise and that all decisions are verbalised.

Moderator to provide group with £100. The group are to divide that money amongst the prioritised areas until all the money is allocated.

- Please identify/suggest where budgetary cuts and/or efficiencies could be made in each of these areas. Moderators to focus on efficiencies for top priorities and cuts for lowest priorities if short of time.

a) Services for older people (e.g. homecare/personal care (help with washing, dressing, getting in/out of bed), residential care, day care, respite, mobile nights)

b) Services for people with learning disabilities (e.g. offers additional support (to people with learning disabilities) such as homecare/personal care, residential care, day services, employment support, respite, community support (e.g., accessing social activities, support when shopping, etc).

c) Children's social care (e.g. being, working with children with disabilities to ensure they receive high quality, family centred services, fostering & adoption and supporting families to help them look after their children).

d) Libraries, museums, theatres and arts

e) Leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches

f) Waste management

g) Highways and traffic management

h) Planning and building control

i) Tourism and economic regeneration

- Are there other areas where discretion can be made?

5.3 Income generation [30 minutes]

Using showcard B, please prioritise the list from 1-9 with 1 being the area where you would be most comfortable with charges being increased.

Please then indicate, with the use of showcard C, where you would like to see increases [or decreases]. The percentages must be balanced in order to achieve the savings target of £5 million. However, you can exceed 100% if you wish to suggest further income generation to off-set cuts.

Please explain your reasoning.

- Are there any other income generation ideas you may have?

(In Budget Simulator document: parking permits, parking fees – ticket machines, library fees, museum, theatre and arts fees, leisure and sports facility fees (inc One Card), planning and building control fees, public transport and Cowes chain ferry, Student Rider (i.e. bus pass), crematorium charges, home care charges).

Moderator to also refer to 'consequences of a reduced spend' in the appendices if prompts are needed.

5.4 Feedback

Respondents to present key findings from session B to remainder of the groups.

Feedback:

- Top priorities
- Areas for budget cuts
- Areas for income generation: what and how much
- Areas for efficiencies

6   Appendix 2: Showcards

6.1   Showcard A: Service Areas for prioritization

a) Services for Older People (e.g. homecare/personal care (help with washing, dressing, getting in/out of bed), residential care, day care, respite, mobile nights) 33.6%

b) Services for People with Learning Disabilities (e.g. Offer as additional support (to people with learning disabilities) such as homecare/personal care, residential care, day services, employment support, respite, community support (e.g., accessing social activities, support when shopping, etc). 11.4%

c) Children's Social Care (e.g. being, working with children with disabilities to ensure they receive high quality, family centred services, fostering & adoption and supporting families to help them look after their children). 16.7%

d) Libraries, Museums, Theatres and Arts 4.49%

e) Leisure and Sports Facilities, Parks, Gardens and Beaches 4.9%

f) Waste Management 14.5%

**g) Highways and Traffic Management 9.25%**

h) Planning and Building Control 3.8%

i) Tourism and Economic Regeneration 1.2%

6.2   Showcard B Areas where charges/fees/fines apply

a)   Residents parking permits 9.4%

b)   Car parking ticket charges 26.7%

c)   Leisure and Sports facilities charges 27%

d)   Library charges 3.8%

e)   Museum, theatre and arts charges 9.7%

f)   Public transport and Cowes ferry charges 9.7%

g)   Crematorium charges 10.7%

h)   Home care charges 2.9%
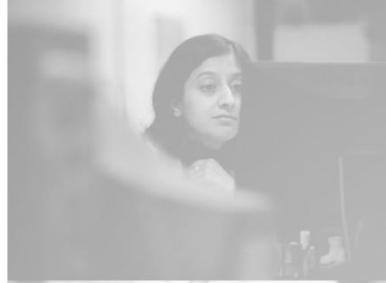
Because people matter, we listen.

With some 20 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

Our business is about understanding people; because they matter. Finding out what they really need; from the type of information they use to the type of services they require. In short, finding out about the kind of world people want to live in tomorrow.

BMG serves both the social public sector and the commercial private sector, providing market and customer insight which is vital in the development of plans, the support of campaigns and the evaluation of performance.

Innovation and development is very much at the heart of our business, and considerable attention is paid to the utilisation of technologies such as portals and information systems to ensure that market and customer intelligence is widely shared.

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