

Isle of Wight Council Budget Simulator Analysis Report

Introduction

Between December 12th 2009 and January 4th 2010, the Isle of Wight Council used an online Budget Simulator to consult local residents on their spending and budgetary priorities for the forthcoming year.

This simulator was available through a link from the council website and allowed residents to indicate how they would allocate the council's budget.

At the request of the council, the Isle of Wight Budget Simulator was designed to specifically focus on making savings in their budget. The public would be able to do this by making savings, either by reducing service budgets in some discretionary areas, or increasing income through fees and charges.

There were 19 different spending areas that respondents could express their views on, split into areas of reducing spend, reduction in budget and increase in income. The public were able to increase or decrease spend in each area by their respective increments: reducing spend (-25% to +25%), reduction in budget (-100% to +100%) and increase in income (-100% to +100%).

Respondents were able to read background information on each spending area before raising, lowering or leaving unchanged spending.

As they did so, they were able to see the impact of these changes on the savings target (£5m) and council tax levels. Concurrent to this, respondents were then presented with information on the consequences of their spending decisions, and were free to change their prioritisations, or go forward and enter a free text comment and demographic information before submitting their response.

This report examines the responses made by respondents in terms of top-line results for each budget area. This report also displays the different spending preferences for each budget area by age and the type of respondent. In addition, this report lays out some free text analysis on comments submitted to the simulator.

Key findings

- In terms of demographics, many respondents did not give information about themselves. Of those that did, the demographic was reasonably evenly split on gender, slightly weighted towards older respondents (35 and above) and heavily weighted towards the employed and those of white ethnicity.
- A majority of respondents wanted to see a reduction in spending on libraries, museums, theatres & arts (64%), planning & building control (55%) and leisure, sport facilities, parks, gardens & beaches (50%).
- A majority of respondents wanted to see no change in spending on services for children's social care (55%), services for people with learning difficulties (52%) and services for older people (51%).
- A majority of respondents wanted to see either no change or a reduction in spending on tourism and economic regeneration (no change 37%, reduction 47%), waste management (no change 49%, reduction 43%) and highways and traffic management (no change 44%, reduction 44%).
- A majority of respondents wanted to see a reduction in subsidy for buses (53%).
- A similar number of respondents wanted to see no change or a reduction in the subsidy for the Student Rider scheme (no change 48%, reduction 43%).
- A majority of respondents wanted to see an increase in the income generated by museums, theatre and arts charges (49%), parking permits (47%), car parking tickets (47%) and crematorium charges (46%).
- A majority of respondents wanted to see no change in the income generated by leisure and sports facilities charges (51%), library charges (51%), public transport and Cowes ferry charges (59%), crematorium (51%) and home care charges (63%).
- The most frequently mentioned issues in free text responses were making savings by cutting council staff costs, primarily at senior management level, as well as comments relating to transport. Comments around the consultation itself and the areas it consulted upon were also popular.
- 79 of the 283 (28%) respondents managed to save £5.1 million or more, compared to 204 (72%) respondents who spent more than the savings target. (This was calculated by the amount of respondents who had final total spends of £76.12 million which equated to the desired £5.1 million saving and the target 2.5% council tax increase)

(% rounded for key findings)

Budget Areas

The budget areas consulted on were based upon making savings either by reducing service spend or budget in discretionary areas, or increasing income through fees and charges.

Below is a summary of the budget areas consulted on:

Reducing Spend

Libraries, museums, theatres and arts
Leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches
Tourism and economic regeneration
Waste management
Highways and traffic management
Planning and building control
Services for older people
Services for people with learning disabilities
Children's social care

Reducing Budget

Student rider
Subsidised buses

Increasing Income

Residents parking permits
Car parking ticket charges
Leisure and sports facilities charges
Library charges
Museum, theatre and arts charges
Public transport and Cowes ferry charges
Crematorium charges
Home care charges

Who responded?

In terms of the overall simulator consultation, 283 individuals submitted a full or partial response to the process.

To keep the barriers to entry as low as possible, Budget Simulator does not require any demographic information before participation – rather, demographic questions are asked at the end of the process when the user's budget priorities have already been stored. This means that not every consultation response has accompanying demographic data.

Demographic questions asked

- What age are you?
- What gender are you?
- Postcode
- Name
- Email
- Mobile number
- What is your working status
- Which of these groups do you belong to?

All the demographics responses are presented below in table form.

Age - What age are you?

Over 65% of respondents did not choose an age demographic (65.72%). 97 respondents (34.27%) did state their age in the demographics section, with the majority of those in the 35-44 age group (11.66%), followed by the 55-65 age group (7.77%) and then 45-54 (6.71%), 25-34 (3.89%), 65+ (2.47%), 18-24 (1.77%). There were no responses from people in the Under 18 age group (0%).

Age category	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
Under 18	0	0.00
18-24	5	1.77
25-34	11	3.89
35-44	33	11.66
45-54	19	6.71
55-65	22	7.77
65 +	7	2.47
Not stated	186	65.72
Total	283	100.00

Gender - What gender are you?

Over 60% of respondents did not state their gender (66.78%). Of those who did state their gender, there were marginally more male respondents (18.73%) than female respondents (14.49%).

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
Male	53	18.73
Female	41	14.49
Not Stated	189	66.78
Total	283	100.00

Respondents by working status - What is your working status?

The majority of people preferred not to state their working status (67.14%). However, of those that did divulge their status, the largest majority by far were those who stated that they were employed (25.80%).

Working status	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
Employed	73	25.80
Self-Employed	9	3.18
Unemployed	1	0.35
Retired	7	2.47
Student	2	0.71
Rather not say	1	0.35
Not stated	190	67.14
Total	283	100.00

Respondents by ethnicity - Which of these groups do you belong to?

Again, most respondents did not specify an ethnicity (68.20%). Nearly 30% of respondents stated that they were White, with very few other respondents stating whether they were from a different ethnic group.

Ethnicity	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
White	84	29.68
Black - Caribbean	0	0.00
Black - African	0	0.00
Black - British	0	0.00
Black - Other	0	0.00
Indian	0	0.00
Pakistani	0	0.00
Bangladeshi	0	0.00
Chinese	0	0.00
Any other ethnic group	1	0.35
Rather not say	5	1.77
Not stated	193	68.20
Total	283	100.00

Reducing Spend

This spending theme focused on which services respondents thought that the Isle of Wight Council should spend less upon. By clicking on a service name, the public could find out the gross budget allowance for that service and what that allowance of money provided. They were then able to increase or decrease spending by up to +25% or -25%, or keep spending at the same level.

services in order to achieve the savings target.

The public had the option to increase or decrease income in these areas by up to +100% or -100%, or keep the charges at the same level.

Reducing Subsidies

The Isle of Wight Council provides subsidies to certain services provided on the Island. This spending theme allowed respondents to allocate more or less funds to subsidise those services. Again, by clicking on a service name the public could find out the gross budget previously provided to subsidise that service and read what that money provided. They were then able to increase or decrease subsidies by up to +100% or -100%, or keep spending at the same level.

Increasing Income

In some of its spending areas, the Isle of Wight Council generates income from fees and charges. By increasing the charges made for those services, the council can create extra budget to spend in other areas. However, these extra charges would come at a cost to the people or businesses on the Isle of Wight. By increasing the charges paid for services such as car parking tickets or library fees, the public would contribute to achieving the overall savings target. Although, if they voted to reduce charges in this spending theme, they would have to reduce spending and/or subsidies to other

Reducing Spend

Libraries, museums, theatres and arts

For this spending area the most respondents wanted to see no change in spending (26.50%), but this was followed extremely closely with 24.03% who wished to see a -5% reduction in spend in this area. Most tellingly nearly two-thirds of respondents (63.96%) wanted an overall decrease in spending in this area, compared to a very small 9.54% who wanted to see an increase clearly denoting this area as potentially an area for savings. This budget area has one of the largest frequency of people choosing the most extreme cut of -25%.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	10	3.53
20%	1	0.35
15%	1	0.35
10%	2	0.71
5%	13	4.59
0%	75	26.50
-5%	68	24.03
-10%	49	17.31
-15%	19	6.71
-20%	8	2.83
-25%	37	13.07
Total	283	100.00

Leisure and sports facilities, parks, gardens and beaches

For this spending area, most respondents wanted to see no change to spending (36.40%), however this is one of the smallest 0% allocations throughout the reduction in spend section. For those taking part who wanted to see a change most people wanted to see some form of decrease in spending in this area (49.82%), with only 13.28% wanting to see an increase. In this budget area opinion was less extreme as 189 of the 283 respondents (66.27%) suggested a +5%, 0% or -5% change.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	4	1.41
20%	1	0.35
15%	1	0.35
10%	5	1.77
5%	28	9.89
0%	103	36.40
-5%	58	20.49
-10%	41	14.49
-15%	17	6.01
-20%	3	1.06
-25%	22	7.77
Total	283	100.00

Tourism and economic regeneration

Most respondents stated they would prefer no change in spend (36.75%), however this is another one of the smallest 0% allocations throughout the reduction in spend section. Almost half of all respondents voted for a decrease in spending (47%) making it a favoured area to reduce spending on. 16.25% chose an overall increase, but 11.31% suggested only a marginal increase of 5% showing that of those who did want an increase, most felt only a small one was necessary.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	4	1.41
20%	2	0.71
15%	3	1.06
10%	5	1.77
5%	32	11.31
0%	104	36.75
-5%	58	20.49
-10%	21	7.42
-15%	21	7.42
-20%	9	3.18
-25%	24	8.48
Total	283	100.00

Waste management

As with the previous spending area most respondents voted to maintain current levels of spending (49.47%). Most individuals who did want to see a change clearly wanted to see a decrease in spending in this area (42.76%) compared to a very small amount of participants who wished to see an increase (7.77%). The most popular decrease chosen was -5%, but all other budget allocations including the most extreme of -25% did get votes.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	1	0.35
20%	0	0.00
15%	1	0.35
10%	2	0.71
5%	18	6.36
0%	140	49.47
-5%	68	24.03
-10%	24	8.48
-15%	8	2.83
-20%	3	1.06
-25%	18	6.36
Total	283	100.00

Highways and traffic management

As repeated in earlier budget areas just under half of respondents wanted to see no change in spending in this budget area (44.17%). However with only a few percent difference 43.82% of people suggested an overall decrease in spending on this area. Of those who suggested an increase, the majority felt that a marginal increase of 5% was necessary (9.54% of respondents), with other increase suggestions merely accounting for 2.47% all respondents.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	0	0.00
20%	0	0.00
15%	2	0.71
10%	5	1.77
5%	27	9.54
0%	125	44.17
-5%	63	22.26
-10%	22	7.77
-15%	10	3.53
-20%	5	1.77
-25%	24	8.48
Total	283	100.00

Planning and building control

As with most of the other areas the most popular allocation was 0% with 40.64% choosing this no change. A large 55.12% of all respondents requested an overall decrease. For those who requested a change, a change of -5% was most favourable (27.21%)², followed by -10% receiving the next highest vote (12.72%) and then -25% (8.83%). Again, very few respondents felt that more should be spent in this area, 4.24% of respondents suggested either a 5% or 10% increase in spend.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	0	0.00
20%	0	0.00
15%	0	0.00
10%	1	0.35
5%	11	3.89
0%	115	40.64
-5%	77	27.21
-10%	36	12.72
-15%	11	3.89
-20%	7	2.47
-25%	25	8.83
Total	283	100.00

Services for older people

50.88% of all responses nominated to retain spending at current levels for this service area. This was one of the most popular areas to increase spending on (12.72%), where the smaller percentage allocations were preferred with 10.95% of individuals suggesting a 5% increase to spending, and 1.77% suggesting a 10% increase. With 36.40% of people suggesting any decrease in spending to this area, this was the second most favourable spending area to maintain or raise current levels of spending within.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	0	0.00
20%	0	0.00
15%	0	0.00
10%	5	1.77
5%	31	10.95
0%	144	50.88
-5%	59	20.85
-10%	12	4.24
-15%	7	2.47
-20%	3	1.06
-25%	22	7.77
Total	283	100.00

Services for people with learning difficulties

The most favoured response was to maintain current levels of spending the same (51.59%). However, over half of the remaining respondents (25.09% of all respondents) suggested a -5% decrease to spending in this area. There was more support for decreasing spending (39.93%) than for increasing spending (8.48%.)

Interestingly, 83.75% of all respondents suggested that they would prefer to raise or lower spending by 5%, or keep it the same. This shows that the citizens of the Isle of Wight are largely satisfied with the current spending in services for people with learning disabilities

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	2	0.71
20%	0	0.00
15%	0	0.00
10%	2	0.71
5%	20	7.07
0%	146	51.59
-5%	71	25.09
-10%	10	3.53
-15%	10	3.53
-20%	4	1.41
-25%	18	6.36
Total	283	100.00

Children's social care

A large percentage of respondents wished to keep children's social care spending exactly the same as last year with 54.77% choosing this option, the largest "no change" percentage in the survey. However, of those that did wish to change spending 34.63% decided to decrease spending; decreasing by the most extreme amount (-25%) was the second most favoured nomination with 6.71% of all respondents voting this way. The most popular being a -5% decrease indicated by 18.02% of participants.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
25%	0	0.00
20%	0	0.00
15%	2	0.71
10%	3	1.06
5%	25	8.83
0%	155	54.77
-5%	51	18.02
-10%	17	6.01
-15%	8	2.83
-20%	3	1.06
-25%	19	6.71
Total	283	100.00

Reducing Subsidies

Subsidised buses

4.59% of respondents suggested increasing this subsidy by 20%. Of all other possible increases available, nobody suggested increasing spending by a higher amount than this.

Cumulatively, over half of all respondents suggested removing some budget to this subsidy (52.65%). The most popular decrease in budgetary allowance was by -20% (17.67%), with the second most popular being to decrease the budget by 100% (13.78%).

The remaining 42.76% of people said that they would like to keep this subsidy's budget the same.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	0	0.00
80%	0	0.00
60%	0	0.00
40%	0	0.00
20%	13	4.59
0%	121	42.76
-20%	50	17.67
-40%	36	12.72
-60%	21	7.42
-80%	3	1.06
-100%	39	13.78
Total	283	45.21

Student Rider

Keeping this subsidy's spending at the same levels was considered more important than keeping subsidised buses at the same level. 48.06% of people said they'd want to keep the budget for this area at current levels compared to 42.76% of the former. Only 5.65% of respondents suggested increasing budget allowance to this spending area, which might be attributed to the low number of (identifiable) students and young people who participated in this survey. So overall of those who did wish to see a change in budget, people wanted to see a decrease with quite a large 46.29% of respondents supporting this.

It is notable that in comparison to the previous subsidy consulted upon, respondents were more willing to cut budget in subsidised buses (52.65%) than the student rider (46.29%).

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	0	0.00
80%	0	0.00
60%	1	0.35
40%	3	1.06
20%	12	4.24
0%	136	48.06
-20%	50	17.67
-40%	31	10.95
-60%	17	6.01
-80%	2	0.71
-100%	31	10.95
Total	283	100.00

Increasing income

These budget areas were income-generating which meant that it could help reduce the overall spend in the simulator by earning the council money.

Parking permits

47.70% of all people felt that the fees currently charged for parking permits should remain the same. However, 29.92% of respondents nominated that parking permit fees should be increased by 20% to help ease the budgetary pressure in other council services. This was concurrent with the overall theme, which saw almost as many people (47.35%) vote to increase charges in this area than compared with those who voted to keep them the same, showing clear support for parking permits. There is virtually non-existent support for decreasing the cost of parking permits (4.59%).

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	19	6.71
80%	0	0.00
60%	9	3.18
40%	23	8.13
20%	83	29.33
0%	136	48.06
-20%	10	3.53
-40%	0	0.00
-60%	0	0.00
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	3	1.06
Total	283	100.00

Car parking ticket charges

As with parking permit charges, the number of people who were happy to see an increase in car parking ticket charges (46.65%) was close to matching those who wished for it to remain the same (47.70%). This was largely supported by 27.92% of all respondents suggesting that car parking charges should be increased by 20%. Interestingly, 6.36% of people stated that they'd be happy to see their charges increase by 100% in this area, similar to the 6.71% in 100% increase denoted in parking permits.

Once again there was very little overall support for decreasing car parking ticket charges (5.65%).

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	18	6.36
80%	0	0.00
60%	12	4.24
40%	23	8.13
20%	79	27.92
0%	135	47.70
-20%	10	3.53
-40%	3	1.06
-60%	1	0.35
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	2	0.71
Total	283	45.21

Leisure and sports facilities charges

Over half of respondents (50.53%) decided that current levels of charge in leisure and sports facilities should remain the same. Furthermore, a very small amount of the public (7.07%) felt that smaller charges should be levied in this service.

The public that voted for a change to charges overwhelmingly stated that they'd like to see a marginal increase of 20% (29.33% of all respondents). The next most popular response was to increase it by 40% (6.71%)

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	14	4.95
80%	0	0.00
60%	5	1.77
40%	19	6.71
20%	82	28.98
0%	143	50.53
-20%	18	6.36
-40%	1	0.35
-60%	1	0.35
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	0	0.00
Total	283	100.00

Library charges

Very few respondents felt that lower fees should be levied relating to library charges (3.53%). Of the public that remained, 45.23% stated that charges should be increased to ease the budgetary pressure in other council services. The most popular of these was to increase it by just 20%, with 29.33% of all respondents voting this way.

It is notable that 50.88% of all respondents nominated to keep charges at current levels.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	14	4.95
80%	2	0.71
60%	8	2.83
40%	21	7.42
20%	83	29.33
0%	144	50.88
-20%	6	2.12
-40%	3	1.06
-60%	1	0.35
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	1	0.35
Total	283	100.00

Museum, theatre and arts charges

Out of all areas in the 'increasing income' section to the Isle of Wight Budget Simulator, the museum, theatre and arts charges were those that respondents most strongly nominated to increase. 48.76% of all responses suggested an increase, with 5.65% of respondents suggesting to double charges in this area. Only 10 respondents felt the need to decrease charges at all in this income generating area (3.53%).

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	16	5.65
80%	0	0.00
60%	8	2.83
40%	23	8.13
20%	91	32.16
0%	135	47.70
-20%	6	2.12
-40%	2	0.71
-60%	1	0.35
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	1	0.35
Total	283	100.00

Public transport and Cowes ferry charges

With a slightly higher percentage than others in the increasing income section 58.66% of people voted to have no change in spending, indicating that of all the budget areas in this section public transport and ferry charges is the area the respondents would most like to see no increase in charges. As with the other sections far more people wished to see an increase in charges overall (32.86%) compared to those who would like to see the charges decrease (8.48%). To support the assertion that this is the area the least increase would like to be seen in, the 8.48% support for decreasing charges is much higher than any support for decreases in the other areas.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	11	3.89
80%	0	0.00
60%	6	2.12
40%	17	6.01
20%	59	20.85
0%	166	58.66
-20%	18	6.36
-40%	2	0.71
-60%	3	1.06
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	1	0.35
Total	283	100.00

Crematorium

Once again over half of participants (51.24%) chose to not affect spending in this area this year. Similar to many other budget areas in the increasing income section of the simulator the overwhelming choice of those who did wish to see a change in spending voted for increasing charges (45.58%), and only a tiny 3.18% wanted to see any decrease in charges regarding the crematorium. There is clearly a trend to use charges such as these budget areas to find extra money for the council.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	12	4.24
80%	1	0.35
60%	12	4.24
40%	27	9.54
20%	77	27.21
0%	145	51.24
-20%	8	2.83
-40%	1	0.35
-60%	0	0.00
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	0	0.00
Total	283	100.00

Home care charges

With by far the largest percentage of people indicating a 0% change in spending with 62.90%, home care charges is clearly a charge that respondents would not like to see change compared to other budget areas. Of those who did want to see a change 32.16% wished to see an increase in charges with the most popular being less drastic increase of 20% (19.79%) and 40% (4.95%). Few people actually wanted to see a decrease in costs in home care charges with 4.94% of respondents choosing a decrease.

Percentage change	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents (%)
100%	16	5.65
80%	0	0.00
60%	5	1.77
40%	14	4.95
20%	56	19.79
0%	178	62.90
-20%	13	4.59
-40%	1	0.35
-60%	0	0.00
-80%	0	0.00
-100%	0	0.00
Total	283	100.00

Free text analysis

As part of the consultation process, respondents were also able to submit free text commentary alongside their consultation response. Free text analysis is at its heart quite a subjective assessment of the text of responses. Delib has chosen to highlight core themes and the frequency in which they were mentioned throughout all the comments in the simulator (in the table opposite). There was an overall total of 45 comments submitted to the simulator.

All following comments are taken verbatim from the simulator.

Comment Theme	Frequency of times mentioned in comments
Savings through council staff	12
More detail in Simulator (consult on more)	9
Transport	9
PFI / Roads/ Highways /Traffic	7
Difficulty balancing budget/ economic reality	6
Save money in leisure	3
Saving energy	3
Utilise and engage local business	3
Coastal defences	2
Demographics	2
No cuts in social services	2
Reduce Council Tax rises	2

Savings through council staff

The most frequently occurring theme in all the comments was that savings should be found primarily through cutting council staff costs. The most popular comment was to freeze or cut the salary of senior managers in the council. Also popular was reducing work given to consultants by the council. Finding efficiencies with current staffing, for example by increasing working hours is also mentioned.

Comments:

This is too biased to departmental spend. The issue is not less services but over manning/in effective staff. You need to achieve all the savings via the payroll. Starting with increasing hours up to 42 per week, increase employee pension contribution, There should be no early retirement or compensation payments. Staff should buy a parking permit for cars.

I would like to have cut expenditure on interims, agency staff, consultants and lengthy staff suspensions instead in some cases.

No option provided to freeze the salary of the Chief Exec & First Line managers, nor vary the level of balances held, nor fund the 'get well' programme after the school reorganisation.

No mention here about capping or reducing salaries, reducing staff numbers, reducing external consultants, council staff expenses, pensions etc etc. THAT is where the REAL savings would be made. This consultation is asking the WRONG questions.

In these times council tax will have to rise. Would want to reduce consultancy costs and short term cover for senior managers which cost huge amounts of money. A stable management team will be able to put some long term plans in place to improve quality and

drive efficiencies AND also be around to deliver them!

Cut the number of consultants. Cut senior managers pay by 10%.

One of the main ways to free up the budget would be to cut top dogs wages as many are paid far to much at the expense of public services and an increase in cost to the public.

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Libraries should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours. Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the isle of wight. Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money

Reduce subsidies and cut back on waste, roads, and invest in the community and businesses reducing the affect of unemployment promote regeneration of the island with encouragement for growth review higher level management job specifications and cut back on salary, use island businesses for contracts if too big make break the

contracts into smaller ones and reduce island unemployment that's the way to grow the island economy.

Abolish town councils Reduce property portfolio by 50% Reduce administration costs by 10% Reduce salaries for senior managers

A big way to save money would be to make massive cuts in management. Do we really need 6 men in suits to WATCH one man in a yellow jacket do the work. Also we need something like the double red lines on the major commuter routes with automatic and immediate tow away for people who abandon their vehicles on these routes. Has anybody else noticed how much better Coppins bridge works when the traffic lights aren't working? Turn them off permanently to save electricity. The police need to recover their traffic cones and charge the people who are using them to 'reserve' parking spaces with theft and fine them.

Council tax is seriously disproportionate compared to income and should be substantially reduced across the board. Look at what Barnet Council are proposing. Also why are not Council staff/ councillors salaries, expenses, pensions included in the survey? Not to mention staff numbers which should be reduced by at least 25%

More detail in Simulator (consult on more)

This theme consists of the general feeling that the council needed to consult on a wider range of possible savings in the Simulator. There was a clear indication that areas where participants would have liked to make savings were not included in the Simulator, the Communications department was specifically named twice. The focus on making savings in departments was thought to be too narrow, with more generic council wide savings though general efficiencies advocated. For example saving on bottled water spend, making council staff pay for parking permits, and more effective staffing.

Comments

It would be better to break down the sections as I would agree an increase/decrease on some of the items you have lumped together. We need to look to save money not simply add on money every year, there is a recession on & too many people get rebates resulting in those not eligible paying a darn site more.

This is a very limited list of areas where budget savings could be made. What about agency staff, space planners and other consultants.

This simulator is entirely dishonest. Where can I cut the overblown Communications budget or the ridiculously unnecessary ENO spend ?

The services selected are too limited too make an informed opinion. The only way, from the services selected, to reduce the increase is too cut services for old people and children which, obviously, is not acceptable. Generally, considered to be a poor survey.

Whilst the above is an academic exercise, it fails to address the many parameters known to be available to affect budgets. 2008/09 saw £40K spent on bottled water, with 277K paid out on claims for bad roads. Tackling such inefficiencies as these would be more appropriate than the options supplied. Obsession with ethnic stereotyping doesn't help. People on the Island want a system which embraces all. There's no need to divide people into groups, it only serves to create division and envy - accept we are all British and proud to be so - One Island? - not with this consultation!

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Librabries should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours. Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the isle of wight. Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money

This is too biased to departmental spend. The issue is not less services but over manning/in effective staff. You need to achieve all the savings via the payroll. Starting with increasing hours up to 42 per week, increase employee pension contribution, There should be

no early retirement or compensation payments. Staff should buy a parking permit for cars.

No mention here about capping or reducing salaries, reducing staff numbers, reducing external consultants, council staff expenses, pensions etc etc. THAT is where the REAL savings would be made. This consultation is asking the WRONG questions.

This simulator is rather silly, there are far more instances where money can be saved and income increased. Perhaps Councillors with business sense and a Chief Executive from the public sector who has worked in industry is what is needed for the Isle of Wight. Certainly things have got worse during the last 2 years due to inexperience by the decision makers.

Transport

There is clear support in the comments for reducing peak time subsidized bus travel, and in some cases removing subsidized bus travel entirely. There are two comments specifically against removing free bus travel for the over 60s, and think the council would be mistaken to make savings through such action. Some comments support a Residents parking scheme as a revenue raising idea. Other comments stated that chain ferry charges should be increased especially during busy periods such as Cowes festival. One comment thought reducing the Floating Bridge Fares was important because it was an essential link for all those on the Island.

Comments

I agree with removing the subsidy for peak free travel. Most of the people with bus passes have no need to travel during peak periods. In this day and age is a mobile library necessary. Why does the roadsweeper need a 2 man crew?

I've increased the public transport charges on the chain ferry because foot passenger always used to pay plus were missing out on a good revenue scheme in Cowes week, festival etc. it only has to be 20p per journey and it will add up quickly. I think that the reducing spend of 5% can be made with looking at the current processes and saving on admin, having too many managers etc. I know the crem charges will create an emotional issue but not replacing the facilities will cause a bigger problem, plus most people have insurance or have made some kind of provision for their send off. Resident parking permits are really good value for money currently and with a small increase will still be good value. Our parking charges are much lower than Soton or Portsmouth so a small increase should be promoted in such a fashion. I've cut

subsidised bus routes due to them not always being used fully and it would probably be cheaper to pay local taxi firm to bring in the people who need a lift from rural areas now and then(ad hoc) than pay southern Vectis for a continuous service. I think we need to invest in the economic development having so many men out of work and people on benefits on the IOW plus the IOW being made up of a high percentage of older people it would be good to encourage new blood to the IOW, rather than us becoming a huge retirement village.

Rather than tweaking round the edges and causing extra cuts to already depleted departments, it seems most of the savings could be achieved by cutting subsidised bus travel by 100%

In order to achieve a balanced budget and a tax increase of 2.5% there needs to be a package of measures put in place including reducing spending in some areas and increasing charges in others. In particular the cost of a resident's parking permit on the Island is low compared to other areas therefore it can reasonably be increased by a significant amount and still provide value for money when compared to the cost of purchasing a ticket on a day by day basis.

In recessionary times, leisure services become very sensitive to price increases as it becomes a luxury item in the home budget. Peak travel bus subsidies are a definitely extravagance as pensioners should have time to travel later in the day if not working.

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Libraries should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours.

Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the isle of wight. Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money

Theatres & museums cost a lot and hardly anyone uses them (I know the few who do are very vocal, but ignor them). Its not very green to have loads of empty buses constantly driving around roads that are too narrow for them, so stop running Wight Buses & cut the subsidies (including OAP bus passes). I cut the Highways budget because we can wait until 2013 for PFI to sort out all but the most urgent road problems. There are many older people on the Island who could afford to pay more for the services they enjoy. Why is there only £245,000 income for home care when we spend 27m on older people?

Do not remove the free bus travel for people over 60, it is a false economy in the short and long term. Support green initiatives, currently eco island is an embarrassment. What happened to the tidal plans for Wootton Creek?

Do not introduce speculative savings such as limiting the hours of concessionary travel for the elderly - you will cause arguments and distress, but because most will trade their times the actual saving will be very small.

PFI / Roads/ Highways /Traffic

The comments mentioned highways and traffic issues which were best themed together. Comments varied from increasing to decreasing the road maintenance budget. But several comments pointed out currently the Highways department work is carried out inefficiently and this should be improved. Comments indicated specific traffic issues and identified potential improvements themselves for example: "double red lines on the major commuter routes with automatic and immediate tow away"

Comments

"Please include for sorting out the appalling mess that is traffic flow in Newport! Install a mini roundabout at the Hare and Hounds, get rid of the bus lanes, remove the traffic lights at MacDonalds, make Trafalgar Road two way for light vehicles and make Church Litten two way as it used to be."

Finally, there were two mentions of PFI funding road maintenance in the future, one indicating reducing the spend now would be appropriate because PFI will pay for it later, and one expressing confusion over the PFI funding.

Comments

I thought PFI would be paying for the island roads. If it is then why are we continuing to spend on it?

Theatres & museums cost a lot and hardly anyone uses them (I know the few who do are very vocal, but ignore them). Its not very green to have loads of empty buses constantly driving around roads that are too narrow for them, so stop running Wight Buses & cut the subsidies (including OAP bus passes). I cut the Highways budget because we can wait until 2013 for PFI to sort out all but the most urgent road problems. There are many older people on the Island

who could afford to pay more for the services they enjoy. Why is there only £245,000 income for home care when we spend 27m on older people?

Please include for sorting out the appalling mess that is traffic flow in Newport! Install a mini roundabout at the Hare and Hounds, get rid of the bus lanes, remove the traffic lights at MacDonalds, make Trafalgar Road two way for light vehicles and make Church Litten two way as it used to be. Whilst doing that there is also room to squeeze in another lane southbound on the dual carriageway! There all the traffic problems in Newport solved!!! DO SOMETHING!

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Librabbies should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours. Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the isle of wight. Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money

Reduce subsidies and cut back on waste, roads, and invest in the community and businesses reducing the affect of unemployment promote regeneration of the island with encouragement for growth review higher level management job specifications and cut back on salary, use island businesses for contracts if too big make break the contracts into smaller ones and reduce island unemployment thats the way to grow the island economy.

A big way to save money would be to make massive cuts in management. Do we really need 6 men in suits to WATCH one man in a yellow jacket do the work. Also we need something like the double red lines on the major commuter routes with automatic and immediate tow away for people who abandon their vehicles on these routes. Has anybody else noticed how much better Coppins bridge works when the traffic lights aren't working? Turn them off permanently to save electricity. The police need to recover their traffic cones and charge the people who are using them to 'reserve' parking spaces with theft and fine them.

Most Libraries have free parking or near bus stop, too many children are dropped off by parents in large vehicles people carriers or 4 x 4's, with petrol going up so should the charges. Highways are always spending money, and redo same road surfaces at least 2 x a year along with gas board and electric, gas mainly - why don't they co-ordinate more to save this continual digging up of our roads. If the Arts side of things on the Island was run at an effective level then they would not need to be subsidies so much and how many people visit the Island for the Arts?

Difficulty balancing budget/ economic reality

The difficulty of the current financial climate and the affect on council spending and saving were acknowledged by some comments. Mostly they were short sentences expressing the difficult choices that have to be made in order to decide a fair budget.

Comments:

I was just playing around with this. It does show to me however how little lee way there is to do anything!

This exercise demonstrates that the big savings are only in the most unpopular areas and I suspect therefore unpalatable for the council

No Winners!!

I realise that in order to maintain the present level of services I need to pay more

It's very hard - some difficult choices have to be made.

In these times council tax will have to rise. Would want to reduce consultancy costs and short term cover for senior managers which cost huge amounts of money. A stable management team will be able to put some long term plans in place to improve quality and drive efficiencies AND also be around to deliver them!

Save money in leisure

A few comments dealt with the issue that in these tough economic times that the preferred service to reduce were leisure services. They are seen as more of a “nice to have” and more the money could be spent in more useful ways.

Comments:

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Libraries should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours. Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the Isle of Wight. Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money.

In recessionary times, leisure services become very sensitive to price increases as it becomes a luxury item in the home budget. Peak travel bus subsidies are a definitely extravagance as pensioners should have time to travel later in the day if not working.

Theatres & museums cost a lot and hardly anyone uses them (I know the few who do are very vocal, but ignore them). It's not very green to have loads of empty buses constantly driving around roads that are too narrow for them, so stop running Wight Buses & cut the subsidies (including OAP bus passes). I cut the Highways budget because we can wait until 2013 for PFI to sort out all but the most urgent road problems. There are many older people on the Island who could afford to pay more for the services they enjoy. Why is there only £245,000 income for home care when we spend 27m on older people?

Saving energy

A general theme was that the council put more emphasis on climate change and supporting more green initiatives. Specific mention was made about Eco - Island being disappointing. In addition one comment called on the council to reduce the energy used in council buildings.

Comments:

Perhaps energy costs in council buildings could be reduced eg encourage staff to think - Would I need this light on if I were at home? Also the cost of energy used by microwaves kettles toasters etc in offices could surely be saved if a catering service was provided in house. Officers' time could be used more effectively than providing refreshments for meetings.

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Libraries should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours. Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the isle of wight.

Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money

Do not remove the free bus travel for people over 60, it is a false economy in the short and long term. Support green initiatives, currently eco island is an embarrassment. What happened to the tidal plans for Wootton Creek?

Utilise and engage local business

Some comments raised the point that in order to help the local economy that increasing investment and engaging with local business is important. In order to help create a stable workforce and combat unemployment a specific suggestion mentioned it to, "use (sic) island businesses for contracts if too big make break the contracts into smaller ones".

Comments:

the council ought to do far more to generate income by promoting business and tourism. making small cuts to marginal areas is all very well but if the council cuts so much that all it leaves itself with doing is administering itself that seems a little pointless. I see no evidence at all of the council engaging with the wealth creators, who are our local businesses

Reduce subsidies and cut back on waste, roads, and invest in the community and businesses reducing the affect of unemployment promote regeneration of the island with encouragement for growth review higher level management job specifications and cut back on salary, use island businesses for contracts if too big make break the contracts into smaller ones and reduce island unemployment that's the way to grow the island economy.

Increasing the budget for tourism and investment in business helps create more jobs and provides a more stable and contented workforce.

Coastal defences

See short comments below.

Comments:

The coastal defence budget needs to be increased

Do not remove the free bus travel for people over 60, it is a false economy in the short and long term. Support green initiatives, currently eco island is an embarrassment. What happened to the tidal plans for Wootton Creek?

Demographics

One comment noted a missing demographic, and one comment registered annoyance that there was the inclusion of an ethnicity question in the demographics.

Comments:

on the employment section of the demographics you don't have an option for 'homemaker' which means that I have had to incorrectly put myself down as either employed or unemployed.

Whilst the above is an academic exercise, it fails to address the many parameters known to be available to affect budgets. 2008/09 saw £40K spent on bottled water, with 277K paid out on claims for bad roads. Tackling such inefficiencies as these would be more appropriate than the options supplied. Obsession with ethnic stereotyping doesn't help. People on the Island want a system which embraces all. There's no need to divide people into groups, it only serves to create division and envy - accept we are all British and proud to be so - One Island? - not with this consultation!

No cuts in social services

Social services were highlighted as being important not to make cuts to, with it being deemed “unacceptable”.

Comments:

I would be very unhappy to see cuts in social services provision for children or the elderly.

The services selected are too limited to make an informed opinion. The only way, from the services selected, to reduce the increase is to cut services for old people and children which, obviously, is not acceptable. Generally, considered to be a poor survey.

Reduce Council Tax rises

These comments suggest that a year on year increase in Council Tax is not the solution we should be looking to, and that making drastic cuts (like Barnet are proposing) should be the way forward.

Comments:

It would be better to break down the sections as I would agree an increase/decrease on some of the items you have lumped together. We need to look to save money not simply add on money every year, there is a recession on & too many people get rebates resulting in those not eligible paying a darn site more.

Council tax is seriously disproportionate compared to income and should be substantially reduced across the board. Look at what Barnet Council are proposing. Also why are not Council staff/ councillors salaries, expenses, pensions included in the survey? Not to mention staff numbers which should be reduced by at least 25%

Miscellaneous comments

Comments:

Focussed on the services I actually receive. I do not use libraries or museums, sports or leisure facilities or any form of social care.

Hi - I would save money by reducing the amount of pointless adverts in the County Press - last week you had two of the same adverts - this week you have a whole page telling us flashing blue means they've caught you - how much did that cost. Also instead of have pointless adverts in your bus shelters why not sell the advertising space. Do we really need so many enforcers in our towns - we have police, PCO's, dog wardens, and about 50 car parking enforcers walking around at any one time - lets all chill and be nice to each other - not be too ready to catch each other out.

I believe that the minor tinkering I have submitted demonstrates that public submissions can be constructive. Remember, the public (of whom you are one) view things reasonably objectively if it is explained, but only if it does not affect them personally or Politically.

Abolish town councils Reduce property portfolio by 50% Reduce administration costs by 10% Reduce salaries for senior managers

Annex 1: All Budget Simulator comments

A big way to save money would be to make massive cuts in management. Do we really need 6 men in suits to WATCH one man in a yellow jacket do the work. Also we need something like the double red lines on the major commuter routes with automatic and immediate tow away for people who abandon their vehicles on these routes. Has anybody else noticed how much better Coppins bridge works when the traffic lights aren't working? Turn them off permanently to save electricity. The police need to recover their traffic cones and charge the people who are using them to 'reserve' parking spaces with theft and fine them.

the council ought to do far more to generate income by promoting business and tourism. making small cuts to marginal areas is all very well but if the council costs so much that all it leaves itself with doing is administering itself that seems a little pointless. I see no evidence at all of the council engaging with the wealth creators, who are our local businesses

I agree with removing the subsidy for peak free travel. Most of the people with bus passes have no need to travel during peak periods. In this day and age is a mobile library necessary. Why does the roadsweeper need a 2 man crew?

It would be better to break down the sections as I would agree an increase/decrease on some of the items you have lumped together. We need to look to save money not simply add on money every year, there is a recession on & too many people get rebates resulting in those not eligible paying a darn site more.

I was just playing around with this. It does show to me however how little lee way there is to do anything!

Reduce subsidies and cut back on waste, roads, and invest in the community and businesses reducing the affect of unemployment promote regeneration of the island with encouragement for growth review higher level management job specifications and cut back on salary, use island businesses for contracts if too big make break the contracts into smaller ones and reduce island unemployment thats the way to grow the island economy.

This is too biased to departmental spend. The issue is not less services but over manning/in effective staff. You need to achieve all the savings via the payroll. Starting with increasing hours up to 42 per week, increase employee pension contribution, There should be no early retirement or compensation payments. Staff should buy a parking permit for cars.

This exercise demonstrates that the big savings are only in the most unpopular areas and I suspect therefore unpalatable for the council

on the employment section of the demographics you don't have an option for 'homemaker' which means that I have had to incorrectly put myself down as either employed or unemployed.

Abolish town councils Reduce property portfolio by 50% Reduce administration costs by 10% Reduce salaries for senior managers

This simulator is rather silly, there are far more instances where money can be saved and income increased. Perhaps Councillors with business sense and a Chief Executive from the public sector who has worked in industry is what is needed for the Isle of Wight. Certainly things have got worse during the last 2 years due to inexperience by the decision makers.

I've increased the public transport charges on the chain ferry because foot passenger always used to pay plus were missing out on a good revenue scheme in Cowes week, festival etc. it only has to be 20p per journey and it will add up quickly. I think that the reducing spend of 5% can be made with looking at the current processes and saving on admin, having too many managers etc. I know the crem charges will create an emotional issue but not replacing the facilities will cause a bigger problem, plus most people have insurance or have made some kind of provision for their send off. Resident parking permits are really good value for money currently and with a small increase will still be good value. Our parking charges are much lower than soton or portsmouth so a small increase should be promoted in such as fashion. I've cut subsidised bus routes due to them not always being used fully and it would probably be cheaper to pay local taxi firm to bring in the people who need a lift from rural areas now and then(ad hoc) than pay southern vectis for a continuous service. I think we need to invest in the economic development having so many men out of work and people on benefits on the iow plus the iow being made up of a high percentage of older people it would be good to encourage new blood to the IOW, rather than us becoming a huge retirement village.

No Winners!!

I would be very unhappy to see cuts in social services provision for children or the elderly.

I would like to have cut expenditure on interims, agency staff, consultants and lengthy staff suspensions instead in some cases.

Focussed on the services I actually receive. I do not use libraries or museums, sports or leisure facilities or any form of social care.

This is a very limited list of areas where budget savings could be made. What about agency staff, space planners and other consultants.

No option provided to freeze the salary of the Chief Exec & First Line managers, nor vary the level of balances held, nor fund the 'get well' programme after the school reorganisation.

Rather than tweaking round the edges and causing extra cuts to already depleted departments, it seems most of the savings could be achieved by cutting subsidised bus travel by 100%

In order to achieve a balanced budget and a tax increase of 2.5% there needs to be a package of measures put in place including reducing spending in some areas and increasing charges in others. In particular the cost of a resident's parking permit on the Island is low compared to other areas therefore it can reasonably be increased by a significant amount and still provide value for money when compared to the cost of purchasing a ticket on a day by day basis.

This simulator is entirely dishonest. Where can I cut the overblown Communications budget or the ridiculously unnecessary ENO spend ?

Do not introduce speculative savings such as limiting the hours of concessionary travel for the elderly - you will cause arguments and distress, but because most will trade their times the actual saving will be very small.

The services selected are too limited to make an informed opinion. The only way, from the services selected, to reduce the increase is to cut services for old people and children which, obviously, is not acceptable. Generally, considered to be a poor survey.

No mention here about capping or reducing salaries, reducing staff numbers, reducing external consultants, council staff expenses, pensions etc etc. THAT is where the REAL savings would be made. This consultation is asking the WRONG questions.

I realise that in order to maintain the present level of services I need to pay more

Sort it!

It's very hard - some difficult choices have to be made.

Council tax is seriously disproportionate compared to income and should be substantially reduced across the board. Look at what Barnet Council are proposing. Also why are not Council staff/ councillors salaries, expenses, pensions included in the survey? Not to mention staff numbers which should be reduced by at least 25%

Hi - I would save money by reducing the amount of pointless adverts in the County Press - last week you had two of the same adverts - this week you have a whole page telling us flashing blue means they've caught you - how much did that cost. Also instead of have pointless adverts in your bus shelters why not sell the advertising space. Do we really need so many enforcers in our towns - we have police, PCO's, dog wardens, and about 50 car parking enforcers walking around at any one time - lets all chill and be nice to each other - not be too ready to catch each other out.

Im recessionary times, leisure services become very sensitive to price increases as it becomes a luxury item in the home budget. Peak travel bus subsidies are a definitely extravagance as pensioners should have time to travel later in the day if not working.

Most Libraries have free parking or near bus stop, too many children are dropped off by parents in large vehicles people carriers or 4 x 4's, with petrol going up so should the charges. Highways are always spending money, and redo same road surfaces at least 2 x a year along with gas board and electric, gas mainly - why don't they co-ordinate more to save this continual digging up of our roads. If the Arts side of things on the Island was run at an effective level then they would not need to be subsidised so much and how many people visit the Island for the Arts?

Whilst the above is an academic exercise, it fails to address the many parameters known to be available to affect budgets. 2008/09 saw £40K spent on bottled water, with 277K paid out on claims for bad roads. Tackling such inefficiencies as these would be more appropriate than the options supplied. Obsession with ethnic stereotyping doesn't help. People on the Island want a system which embraces all. There's no need to divide people into groups, it only serves to create division and envy - accept we are all British and proud to be so - One Island? - not with this consultation!

I believe that the minor tinkering I have submitted demonstrates that public submissions can be constructive. Remember, the public (of whom you are one) view things reasonably objectively if it is explained, but only if it does not affect them personally or Politically.

Increasing the budget for tourism and investment in business helps create more jobs and provides a more stable and contented workforce.

Theatres & museums cost a lot and hardly anyone uses them (I know the few who do are very vocal, but ignore them). Its not very green to have loads of empty buses constantly driving around roads that are too narrow for them, so stop running Wight Buses & cut the

subsidies (including OAP bus passes). I cut the Highways budget because we can wait until 2013 for PFI to sort out all but the most urgent road problems. There are many older people on the Island who could afford to pay more for the services they enjoy. Why is there only £245,000 income for home care when we spend 27m on older people?

The coastal defence budget needs to be increased

I thought PFI would be paying for the island roads. If it is then why are we continuing to spend on it?

I think services such as leisure should be ditched as it is more important to people's skills that libraries have better funding and private facilities are or would be available. Libraries should also house public toilets (saving money) and other services such as post offices and community facilities and be open much longer hours. Too much money is spent on services in the council such as communication and transformation but there was no box to decrease spending in those areas. I don't want my council tax to pay for subsidies on buses but I do think the Floating Bridge fares should be reduced as it is an essential link for everyone on the Island. I would like to see a reduction in spend on things such as flowerbeds and I think a lot of money is wasted in highways and planning. Essential road maintenance should be increased but (for example) the amount of staff time and money spent on the Island Plan which has now been thrown out and has to be redone is an unacceptable waste of my council tax. I would like to see more focus on climate change and the future impact on the isle of wight. Why is so much spent on top managers in the IWC? They should get a huge pay cut to save money.

Please include for sorting out the appalling mess that is traffic flow in Newport! Install a mini roundabout at the Hare and Hounds, get

rid of the bus lanes, remove the traffic lights at MacDonalds, make Trafalgar Road two way for light vehicles and make Church Litten two way as it used to be. Whilst doing that there is also room to squeeze in another lane southbound on the dual carriage-way! There all the traffic problems in Newport solved!!! DO SOMETHING!

Perhaps energy costs in council buildings could be reduced eg encourage staff to think - Would I need this light on if I were at home? Also the cost of energy used by microwaves kettles toasters etc in offices could surely be saved if a catering service was provided in house. Officers' time could be used more effectively than providing refreshments for meetings.

One of the main ways to free up the budget would be to cut top dogs wages as many are paid far to much at the expense of public services and an increase in cost to the public.

Do not remove the free bus travel for people over 60, it is a false economy in the short and long term. Support green initiatives, currently eco island is an embarrassment. What happened to the tidal plans for Wootton Creek?