

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
REPORT TO:	CORPORATE SCRUTINY
DATE:	10.2.15
SUBJECT:	Meeting The Challenges - Budget Consultation 2015 - 2016
PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S):	COUNCILLOR HYWEL EIFION JONES
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A - Recommendation/s and reason/s
<p>1. The Committee is requested to consider the responses and outcome of the Budget Consultation exercise, <b><i>"Meeting the Challenges" Our Initial Budget Proposals for 2015-16</i></b> which occurred between 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015.</p> <p>1.1 Anglesey County Council has a budget of approximately £126m and we estimate we will need to save around £15 million over the next three years</p> <p>1.2 This autumn, we launched the <b><i>"Making a Difference" debate</i></b>, where we asked for the public's views on where we should focus our efforts over the next three years in order to deliver modern public services which are fit for purpose. We undertook an online consultation and visited town markets, libraries and supermarkets to gain the views of the public.</p> <p>1.3 In order to present options to put before the citizens of Anglesey as part of this year's consultation exercise, ideas and efficiency proposals were drafted following extensive discussions with councillors, managers and staff. The underlying principles that guided the proposals were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make sure the way we work across the whole council ensures good value in the way we spend money</li> <li>• To reduce the cost of management, democracy and bureaucracy to what is necessary to deliver good services.</li> <li>• To work with others where this can save us money or keep a small, important</li> </ul>

service working

- To make sure we get the best out of our staff
- To increase income to the council
- To transform services which we are legally bound to deliver to ensure that they are modern, effective and efficient.
- To challenge whether we should continue to fund non-essential, non-statutory services where others also provide these or where others could provide these.
- To understand the impact of our proposals on Ynys Mon and its residents, in particular those in most need of our services.

1.4 This survey returned **433 responses** online, by letters and through face to face questionnaires administered across the island. In considering the majority of proposals/ideas presented as part of this consultation exercise, as well as the previous exercise undertaken in 2013, **the overall response indicates that the Council have presented options that the citizens of Anglesey are in broad agreement with.** (see Appendix 1)

1.5 One **notable exception** was highlighted in the report to the Executive Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and that was the proposal to **increase council Tax by 5%** annually over the next 3 years.

**2. The Budget for 2015/16 is the first phase in delivering this strategy.**

2.1 In setting the budget for 2015/16, we consulted on **“Meeting the Challenges”** our 2015-2016 Budget Consultation exercise which started following the Executives endorsement of the Efficiency Strategy on 15th December, 2014. **The consultation ran for 6 weeks until 23rd January 2015**, and included an opportunity to respond online, through letters or at drop-in sessions arranged by the Leader of the Council.

2.2 Engagement and participation in this discussion was promoted via different means, including; local / regional press briefing, press releases and coverage in local/ regional press, targeted push via social media, and word of mouth promotion by Councillors at various community meetings.

2.3 The drop-in session by the Leader of the Council visited a number of different venues across the island (Holyhead, Beaumaris, Amlwch, Rhosneigr and Llangefni), and a summary of the topics raised by individuals at these sessions are also included in the analysis.

2.4 Appendix 2 includes the responses received to this consultation and represents comments from bodies/organisations and individuals.

2.5 A total of **73 responses** were received to the **“Meeting the Challenges”** consultation exercise. 6 from organisations such as Town & Community Councils, 13 through Leader Drop-in sessions and 55 anonymous individual online responses.

2.6 Whilst this represents a small number of respondents in comparison with a

population of in excess of 69,000 it provides the possible assurance that on the whole the Council is aligning its budget proposals in line with citizen expectation.

**2.7 In all therefore over 500 responses** have been received either through the initial consultation on our Efficiency Strategy 2014-2017 or thereafter on our proposed Budget consultation 2015-2016.

2.8 During the consultation on the initial Budget proposals, the council received a number of requests for additional information from Anglesey residents via our on-line survey. In order to ensure the consultation process was as effective and transparent as possible, we shared the information requested and our answers via our website and social media channels. **The additional information requested / responses can be found at Appendix 2.**

2.9 Responses from Town Councils such as Beaumaris and Amlwch highlighted concerns re: the tourism sector and impact of proposed changes on the tourist industry, the need for greater detail on the budget proposals for consultation purpose, and questioning the rate of Council tax rise.

2.10 Further challenge of the proposed rise in Council Tax was presented through letter by Malltraeth Ymlaen and Llanfaelog / Cwm Cadnant Community Councils would prefer a rate rise of approx. 4-4.5%.

2.11 Cyngor Cymuned Pentraeth on the other hand, noted that they were almost unanimous in their opinion that the efficiencies proposed were reasonable bearing in mind the financial climate within which the Council operates.

2.12 At the Town & Community Council meeting held by the Council mid-January to discuss the initial budget proposals;

- further questioning of the council tax rise was evident,
- the implications for tourism falling out of the proposals was queried
- reviewing the proposal of charging for replacement bins lost
- requesting that closure of recycling centres didn't happen at weekends

2.13 In addition, concern of increasing fees and charges for post 16 travel and potential implications of decreasing investment into the JPPU was evident together with the charging for breakfast on non-free school meal pupils.

2.14 This last point was also evident in the individual responses (Appendix 3), but it is noted on analysis that these provide a balanced view on the majority of proposals with only the following bearing challenging responses by 2 or 3 individuals –

- Termination of current CAHMS arrangement
- Service efficiencies within the Planning Service
- Reduction in Street Cleaning & Dyslexia budget

<b>B - What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?</b>		
n/a		
<b>C - Why is this a decision for the Executive?</b>		
<b>CH - Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?</b>		
Yes		
<b>D - Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?</b>		
This paper is associated with the protocol required to develop and propose a full budget to Council		
<b>DD - Who did you consult?</b>		<b>What did they say?</b>
1	Chief Executive / Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) (mandatory)	
2	Finance / Section 151 (mandatory)	
3	Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory)	
4	Human Resources (HR)	
5	Property	
6	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	
7	Scrutiny	
8	Local Members	
9	Any external bodies / other/s	Bodies as listed in Appendix A
<b>E - Risks and any mitigation (if relevant)</b>		
1	Economic	
2	Anti-poverty	
3	Crime and Disorder	
4	Environmental	
5	Equalities	
6	Outcome Agreements	
7	Other	
<b>F - Appendices:</b>		
Appendix 1: Making a Difference – Efficiency Strategy Survey Results 2014 Appendix 2: Meeting The Challenges – Council Response to the Budget Proposals Queries during consultation exercise Appendix 3: Meeting the Challenges – Replies to consultation		
<b>FF - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):</b>		
Making a Difference: Our Efficiency Strategy 2014-17 Meeting the Challenges – Our Initial Budget Proposals 2015/16		

## EFFICIENCY STRATEGY – “MAKING A DIFFERENCE” SURVEY RESULTS 2014

- 1.1 Anglesey County Council has a budget of £126m and we estimate we will need to save around £15 million over the next three years
- 1.2 The Efficiency Strategy is required to provide a clear direction over the coming years and to ensure an understanding amongst the public, staff and councillors as to how we aim to meet our financial challenges.
- 1.3 The 2014 consultation exercise follows on from a similar exercise undertaken in 2013 where we undertook a consultation that led to over 900 responses
- 1.4 As part of the 2013 survey we asked where would our residents make savings and if they agreed with some of the proposed ways of making/saving money going into the future. These included:
  - Increasing parking and leisure charges
  - Stopping free services or services delivered lower than cost
  - Transferring some council functions to the private sector, community or voluntary organisations
  - Working with private, community and voluntary organisations to create a cooperative or mutual organisation to run a service
  - Joint working with other Councils to bring major cost savings
  - Reviewing the number of buildings and facilities we run
  - Stop delivering some services altogether, and if so which ones

[illegible]

5

discussion with councillors, managers and staff. The underlying principles that guided the proposals were:-

- To make sure the way we work across the whole council ensures good value in the way we spend money
- To reduce the cost of management, democracy and bureaucracy to what is necessary to deliver good services.
- To work with others where this can save us money or keep a small, important service working
- To make sure we get the best out of our staff
- To increase income to the council
- To transform services which we are legally bound to deliver to ensure that they are modern, effective and efficient.
- To challenge whether we should continue to fund non-essential, non-statutory services where others also provide these or where others could provide these.
- To understand the impact of our proposals on Ynys Mon and its residents, in particular those in most need of our services.

**1.7** The draft proposals were formed into a questionnaire that was then administered online, through the County's Libraries and administered face to face at locations across the county (Holyhead, Llangefni, Amlwch, Menai Bridge and Beaumaris).

**1.8** The results constitute 433 responses as follows:-

- Online/Letters = 146 (34%)
- Libraries = 150 (35%)
- Face to Face = 137 (32%)

**1.9** According to acknowledged survey sources (Fluid Surveys and SurveySystem.com) this is a statistically valid sample to be representative of Anglesey's overall population. The figure of 433 responses would provide a 95% confidence level in the results with a (+/-5% variance).

**1.10** The spread of age ranges responded to the survey is as follows –

Age Range	Number	%
-16	1	0.2
16-24	14	3.2
25-44	80	18.4
45-64	114	26.3
65+	107	24.7
Prefer not to say	117	27

With 40% males respondents and  
38% female respondents.  
12% of respondents preferred not to say

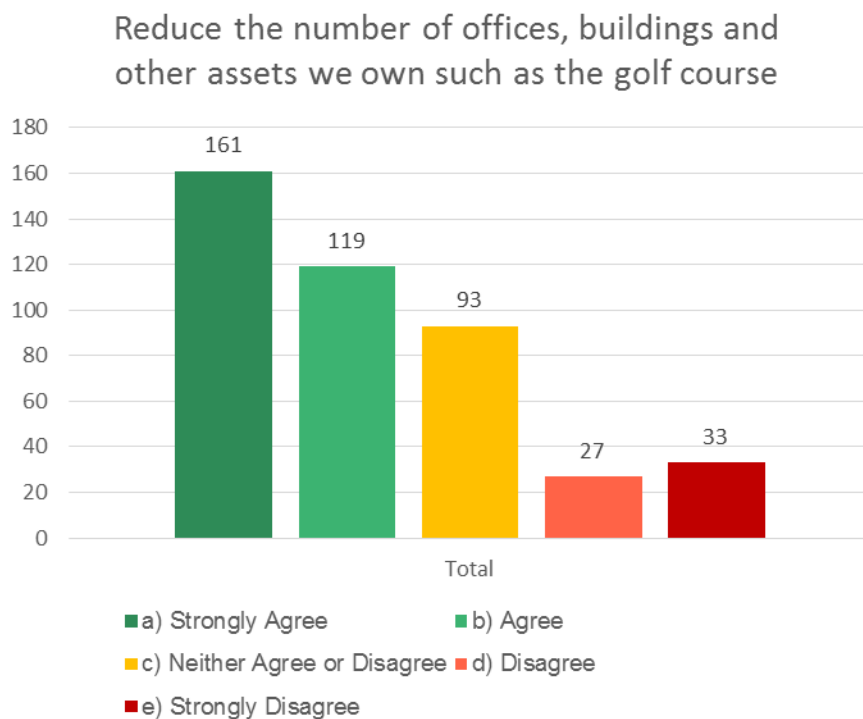
**1.11** The split between those who indicated that they were Welsh, English, British or any other nationality also corresponds broadly with the Island's demographic make-up. Most respondents were also residents of the island (over 70%, with 27% not stating their status)

## 2. SURVEY RESULTS

2.1 The Survey questions consisted of 16 proposals as indicated below, and gave respondents a range of responses from 5-1 according to the following categorisation

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

2.2 The 1st proposal was to “Reduce the number of offices, buildings and other assets we own such as the golf course and, over 62% agreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal as opposed to just over 13% who disagreed or strongly disagreed



### Respondents Comments:

*“Concerns relating to vacant buildings on the Island - why are these not sold? The Smallholdings - how many are empty at this present time?”*

*“Selling un-needed buildings and becoming more efficient would be better, in highways I suspect acres of space would be made available should shelving, cabinets and documents (some from 1996) be stored or removed”*

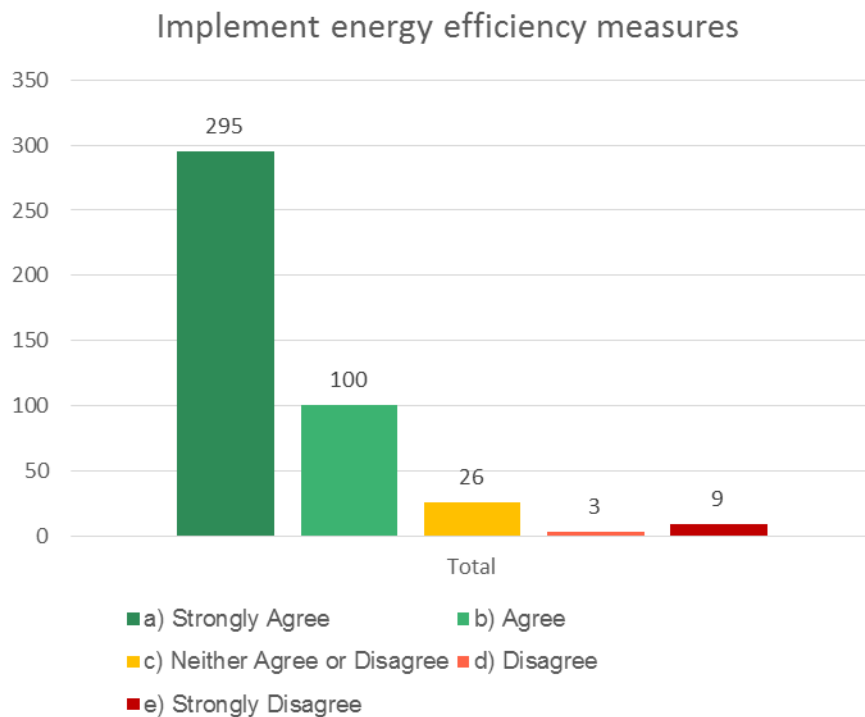
*, ...“there does seem to be a considerable number of underutilised buildings owned by the council that could be sold to raise funds”*

*." The council should look to dispose of some of its assets which are not seen and appreciated by the public such as Art. The Council should look to restructure and as a consequence reduce its office space occupancy and sell or let any surplus"*

*" I agree with reducing number of assets but not necessarily the golf courses - consider that a review of the assets is necessary"*

*"Sell empty schools"*

2.3. Similarly over 91% agreed or strongly agreed with the 2nd proposal to ... "Implement energy efficiency measures"



Respondents Comments:

*"Very few of the council's buildings make use of renewable energy. Other than general lack of making an effort, there is no ready understanding as to why"*

*"How much in reality is the Council going to save by the energy efficiency strategy? Staff education e.g. to turn off lights when leaving their offices etc should save money. Has the Council looked at real savings from working with energy providers e.g. New biomass plant?"*

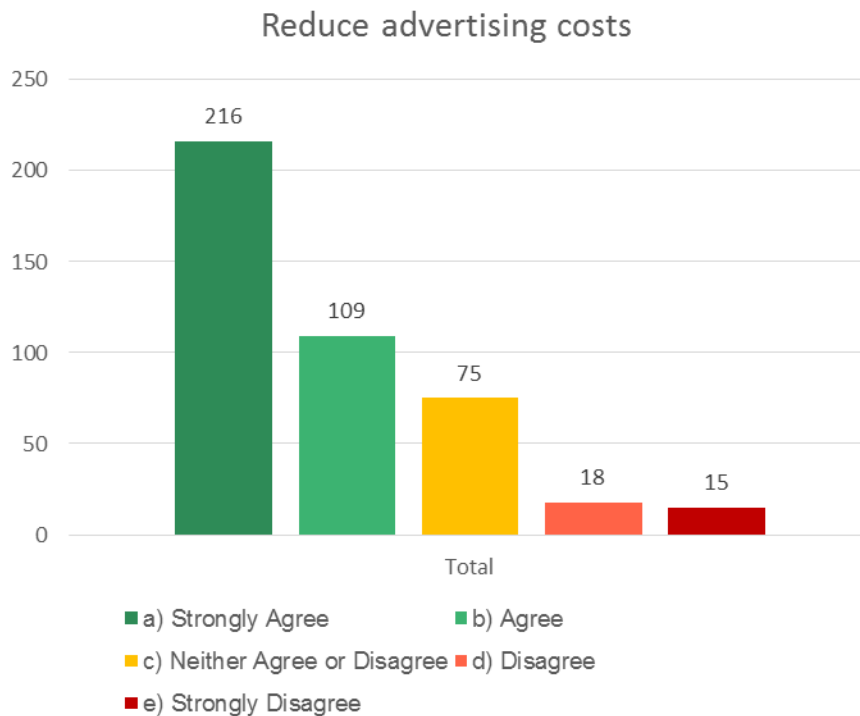
*"Why can't you have less street lighting in towns and on the main roads?"*

*"Turn off street lighting from 11pm to 7am"*

*"Caretaker of all main buildings should be tasked with "lights discipline" and managing the heating systems for out of hours, end of day and weekends – potentially very big savings available here"*



- 2.4 The proposal to ...”Reduce advertising costs” had 75% agreeing or strongly agreeing, as opposed to the 7% who disagreed or strongly disagreed, with 17% neither agreeing or disagreeing.



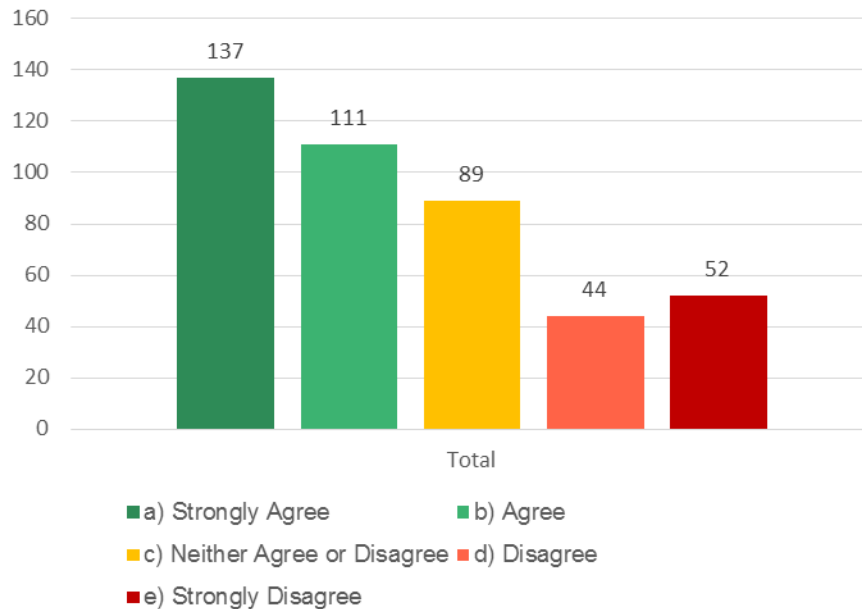
**Respondents Comments:**

*“Reducing advertising’ ought not to translate into ‘reduced notification’ to the public on matters that may affect them. This could undermine democracy if taken too far in the name of cost reduction”*

*“Businesses succeed through Marketing and Innovation, If you reduce advertising, will you still get the message across and maintain development on the Island?”*

- 2.5 The proposal to..”Encourage the public to access services and contact the Council by email & website” produced a response where there was general agreement with 284 (57%) people agreeing or strongly agreeing but 96 people (22%) also disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal and 89 people neither agreeing or disagreeing

## Encourage the public to access services and contact the Council by email & website



### Respondents Comments:

*"While acknowledging the need to save costs communicating with people encouraging email use for correspondence together with web pages for information care must be taken to ensure that those people (and there are many) without internet access are given adequate access to information and correspondence from and to the council by letter is equally well managed"*

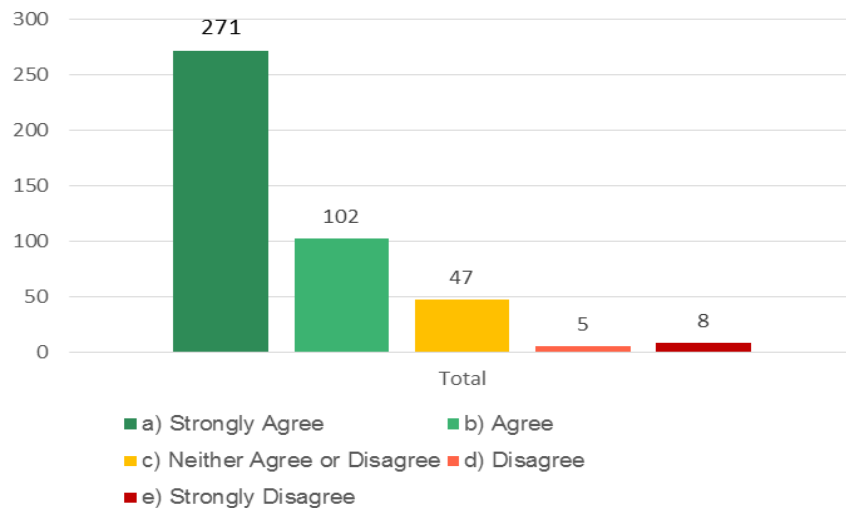
*"When improving access to Council services and democracy it is imperative to note that no website or online communication can be accessible to every disabled person simultaneously. Even websites that meet the highest accessibility standards will not be accessible to everyone"*

*"improve the corporate website - make it more interactive and approachable for people to use"*

*"the impact of poverty on access to the internet at home it becomes clear that whilst improving online access and services to people is a vital element of accessibility of council services and access to democracy and involvement in scrutiny, there is also a need to ensure that community notices, newsletter or newspapers, direct letters to householders"*

2.6 An overwhelming majority agreed with the proposal to.."Review existing contracts on a regular basis with a view of negotiating efficiency requirements in large long term contracts" with a total of only 13 disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Review existing contracts on a regular basis with a view of negotiating efficiency requirements in large long term contracts



Respondents Comments:

“The outsourcing of contracts to long term 3yr contracts when it means that non local people are brought in needs looking at”

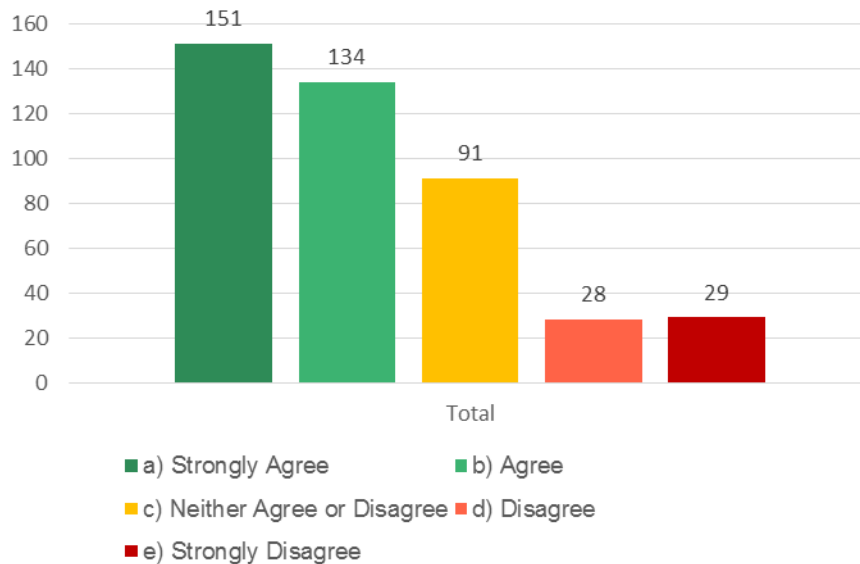
“contracts could support and enhance the local community”

“It is not clear to me why regular reviews of large, high value contracts has not been happening from the outset. There seems little excuse for not doing so”

“ The contracts that local authorities currently award are in my experience closely monitored and more consideration needs to be given to how the councils own services measure up to the requirements it has placed on others”

2.7. The proposal to “Explore if Anglesey communities (inclusive of Town & Community Councils) might be able to take over responsibility for some of the more local types of services such as sports fields, country parks and public toilets” produced a response where almost 66% agreed/ strongly agreed with the proposal with only 13% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing.

Explore if Anglesey communities (inclusive of Town & Community Councils) might be able to take over responsibility for some of the more local types of services such as sports fields, country parks and public toilets



#### Respondents Comments:

*"Getting community council to manage and run facilities is a very good idea as it gives ownership and responsibility back to the communities"*

*"responsibilities for local services should only be transferred to Town & Community Councils where there is an overall financial benefit for that community"*

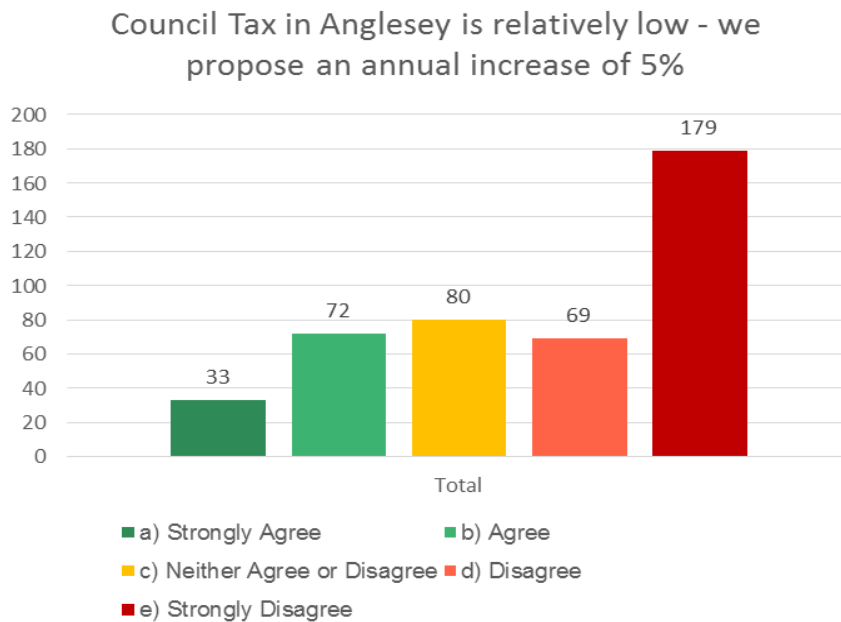
*"I am not sure about getting local town councils to take over amenities - this may look like a reasonable option but in the long-term these will have to be maintained"*

*"YMCC to stop relying on the Town Councils to cover the rapidly increasing shortfalls.... i.e. Toilets, Leisure Centres"*

*"Make more uses of Towns and community councils they are stale and are not effective in some areas"*

*"Analysis must include any additional costs incurred by Town & Community Councils - including administrative and staffing costs"*

2.8 Not unexpectedly the proposal that ...”Council Tax in Anglesey is relatively low - we propose an annual increase of 5%” led to a response where 57% disagreed/strongly disagreed whilst 24% agreed/strongly agreed with the proposal. 18% however neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal.



#### Respondents Comments:

“I am pleased there is a review going on and the only negative I have is that hitting the working family and homeowners again with a 5% rise in council tax is the easy option”

“Council tax increases should be relative to services provided, and council efficiency, and not automatic year on year”

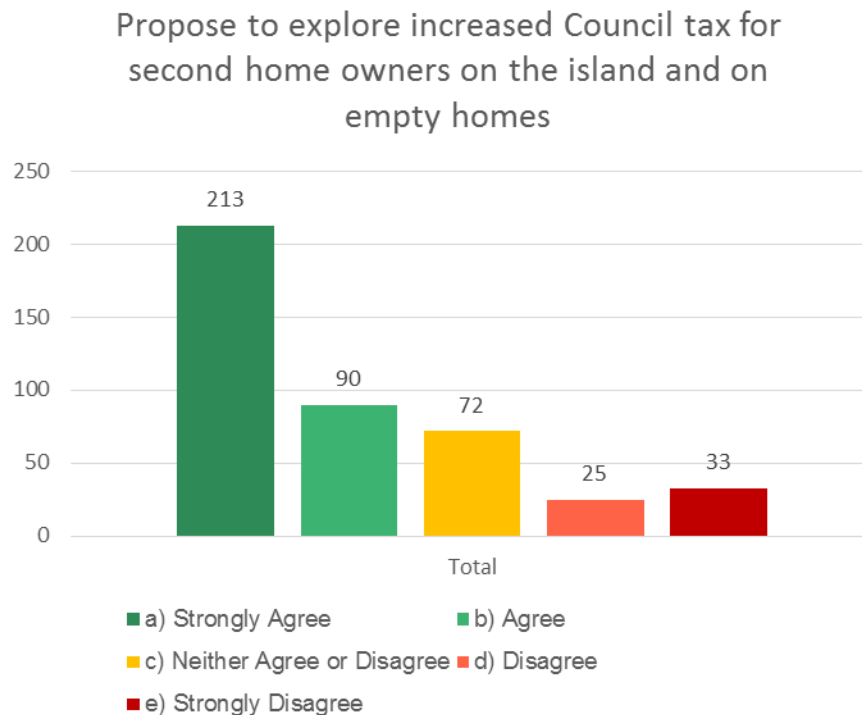
“Now is not the time to increase Council Tax by more than inflation when most people do not even get inflationary increases”

“You cannot keep increasing council tax over and above inflation. We are due a period of below inflation rises. If the Council is unable to meet its statutory obligations with below inflation increases this needs to be known at the earliest opportunity”

“I accept the council's predicament, but increasing council tax by 5% means, in practical terms, a pay cut for essentially all of Anglesey's generally low-paid workforce”

“Whilst increasing the council tax for home owners there is no suggestion that council rent should also be increased by the same 5%. This would be a fair suggestion as everyone uses the council facilities whether they be home owners or rent payers”

- 2.9 Almost 70% agreed/strongly agreed with the proposal.. “to explore increased Council tax for second home owners on the island and on empty homes” with a further 16% neither agreeing or disagreeing and only 13% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing



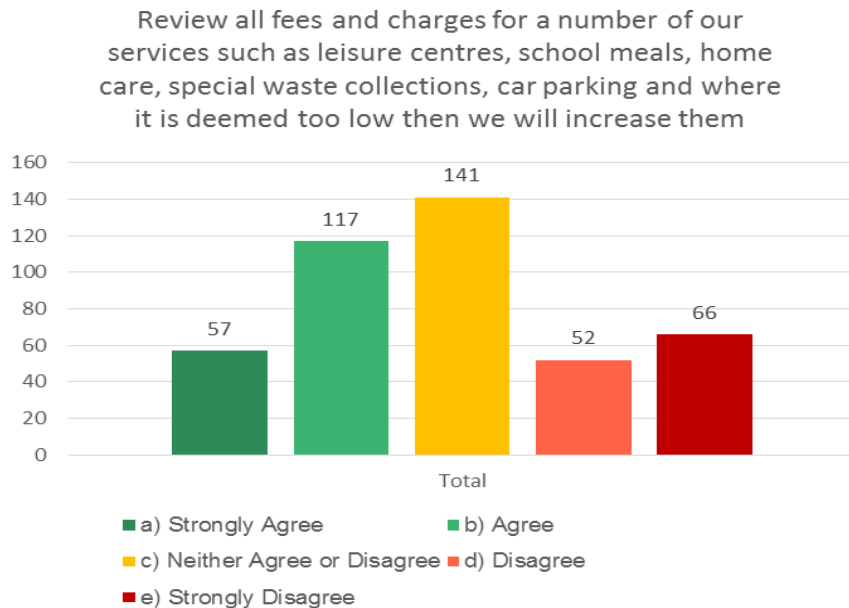
#### Respondents Comments:

- “I do agree that second home council tax needs to be reviewed as these are a nice to have not a necessity and don't not think the people Anglesey who live full time and work full time would complain”
- “I disagreed with the policy of increasing council tax increases for second homes on Anglesey primarily because of being currently unable to sell my former marital home on Anglesey because of the present stagnation of the property market outside of London”
- “Second home owners might simplistically appear to be an easy funding target based on political dogma. Increasing the council tax for second home owners would, in my opinion, be not only inequitable and unlikely to provide a sustainable income source but also detrimental to the long term interests of the island and susceptible to judicial review”
- “Council tax is supposed to be raised to provide local services. When a property is not occupied on a full time basis there is no demand on some facilities such as schools and social services support and a reduced demand on services such as police and fire. There is a strong moral argument for such properties to receive a rebate. A surcharge is not only morally wrong but is likely to be counterproductive. A more suitable strategy would be to encourage second home ownership”
- “I would like to see some form of engagement between second home owners and officers together with local councillors to try and see what additional attractions could be added to the recreational offer in order to increase the dwell time in Anglesey”

"I think you should really hit second homes that are empty most of the time really hard. With so many homeless it is disgusting, and it kills little villages"

"Double the Tax Band for second homes"

2.10 The proposal to .."Review all fees and charges for a number of our services such as leisure centres, school meals, home care, special waste collections, car parking and where it is deemed too low then we will increase them" had 40% agreeing/strongly agreeing and 27% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing with 32% neither agreeing or disagreeing



Respondents Comments:

*"the increase in parking restrictions through time limits and fees are putting people off High Street shopping"*

*"What's your plan for non-statutory services to raise fees? Surely they have already explored this avenue?"*

*"Increase in fees and council tax must be in line with inflation , but focus also on fees charged in areas where it is proving counterproductive in terms of revenue generated against the cost of collection . Abolition of some fees particularly in tourist areas may encourage increased usage and allow revenue to be raised in other ways such as facility concessions being offered to private providers"*

*Making sure your communities have access to ways of getting healthy, especially in a family setting, should be encouraged by lowering entrance fees and seeking to raise funds through additional events"*

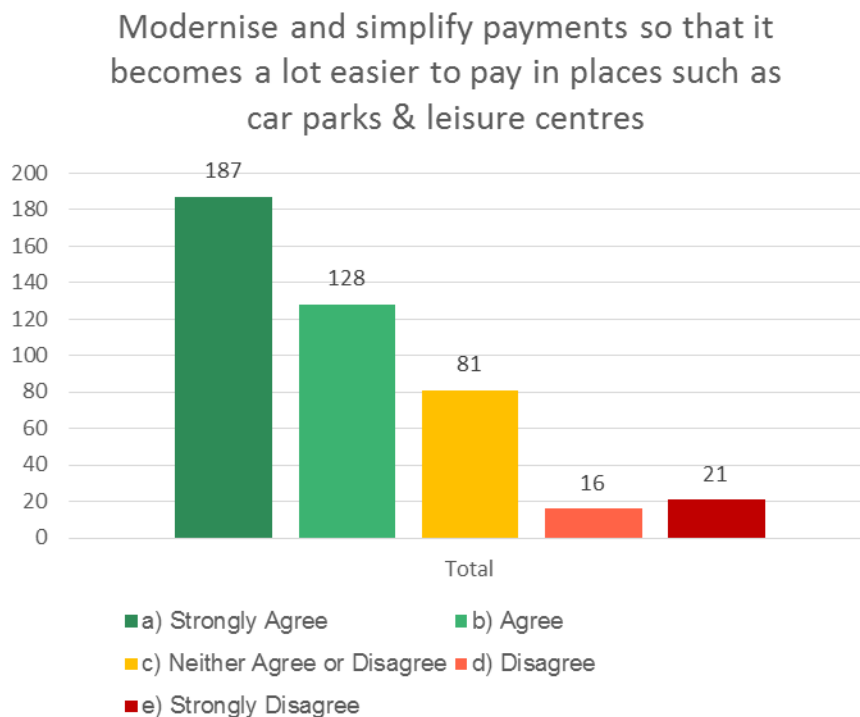
*" Any plans to increase charges must be balanced against the pressures on individuals and families at the moment"*

*“Higher charges for planning applications etc. based on cost of development and if for holiday home/ 2nd homes (stipulate local person or not use for holiday home for say % years)”*

*“Privatise Leisure Centres”*

*“The 4 Llangefni staff car parks together hold around 500 cars. At a minimal charge of £2 per day that would raise £1,000 per week. If you are serious about this consultation, you will consider it.”*

2.11 The proposal to ..“Modernise and simplify payments so that it becomes a lot easier to pay in places such as car parks & leisure centres” was supported by 72% of respondents with only 8% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing.



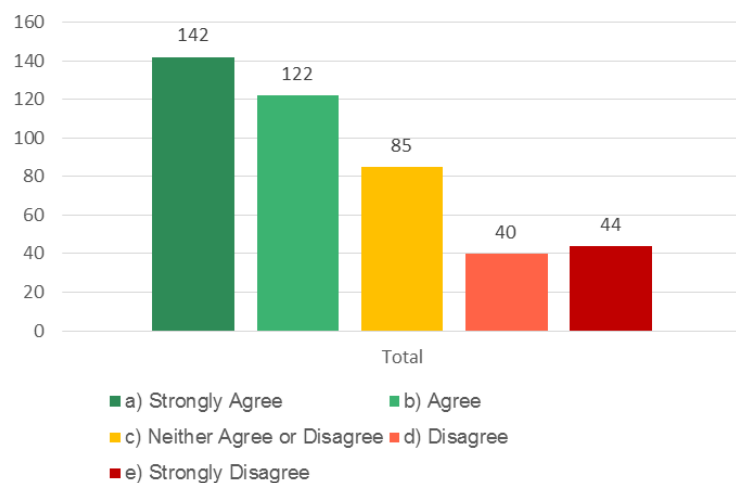
Respondents Comments:

*“Install barriers on car parks so people can't park without paying”*

2.12 Almost 61% agreed/strongly agreed that we should..“Develop extra care housing for older people and thereafter reducing the number of Council run care homes” and a further 19% neither agreeing or disagreeing with 19% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing



Develop extra care housing for older people  
and thereafter reducing the number of Council  
run care homes



Respondents Comments:

*"I don't know enough about extra care housing hence a neutral response. Overall it looks a good plan"*

*"Increase extra care but do not close council run care homes"*

*"Transfer residential care to public health"*

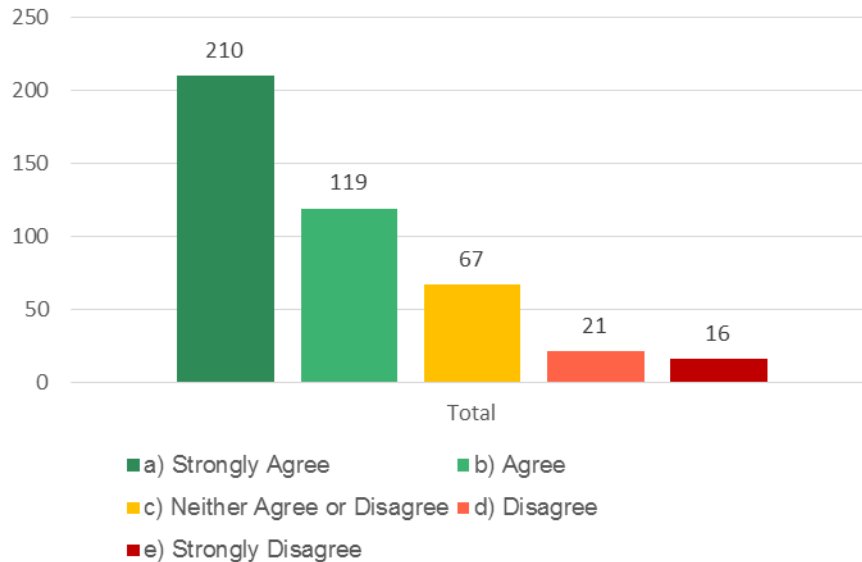
*"The Council have a responsibility for the provision of quality care for the elderly people"*

*"The priority for Elderly Care should always be the provision of quality care to meet people's needs. The Council have a responsibility to regulate standards regardless of ownership"*

*The elderly are better cared for in well run, efficient Care Homes, rather than spending many hours alone in their homes when at these times they need help and someone to alleviate loneliness*

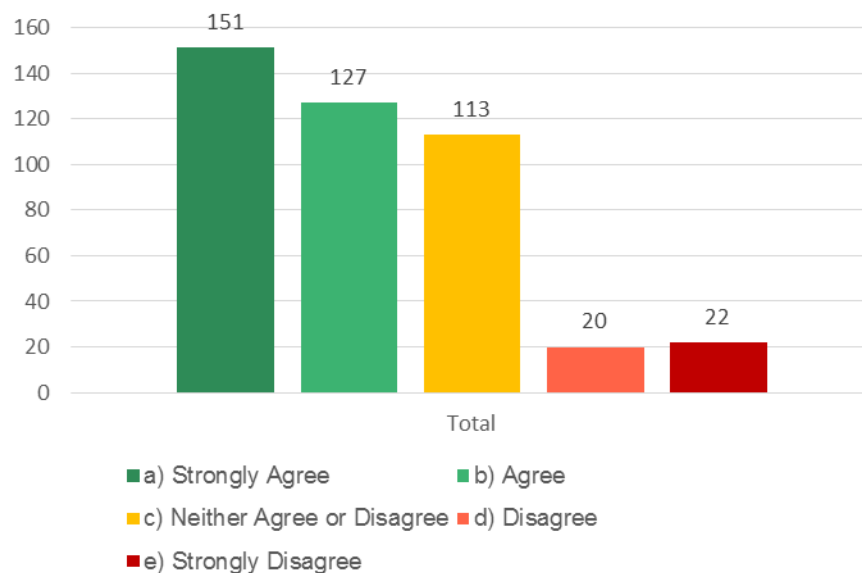
2.13 an overwhelming majority (almost 76%) of respondents also agreed with the proposal to ...  
 "...Increase the use of technology in homes so that people can remain independent for longer"

### Increasing the use of technology in homes so that people can remain independent for longer



- 2.14 Only 10% of respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed with the proposal to .."Review the number of school places we have against the number of places that we actually need" with 64% agreeing or strongly agreeing

### Review the number of school places we have against the number of places that we actually need



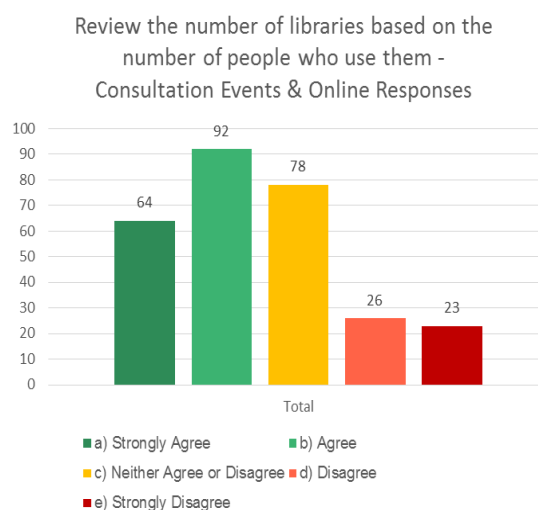
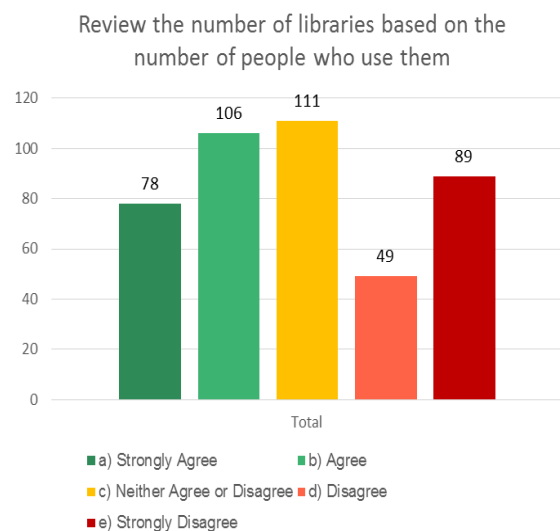
Respondents Comments:

*"The requirement for school places fluctuates from year to year"*

*"I also feel that the council should keep the smaller schools and not force people to take their children long distances to school and I think the children are better educated where there is more time spent on them i.e. smaller classes"*

*"Consider using the empty spaces in schools for centrally employed staff, allowing there to be less sites to manage"*

2.15 The proposal to .."Review the number of libraries based on the number of people who use them" led to an interesting response considering that Libraries were one of the main consultation locations. 42% agreed/strongly agreed with the proposal whilst 31% disagreed/strongly disagreed, whilst 25% neither agreed or disagreed. However, and if we remove the questionnaires that were administered in libraries from the equation, the figures are 55% agreeing/strongly agreeing, 27% neither agreeing or disagreeing and only 17% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing



#### Respondents Comments:

*"Libraries should be more than books and internet. They should be community cafes for people to meet"*

*"Close ALL out of Towns Libraries"*

*"I believe that the libraries will be more important than ever for local communities and that their opening hours should be extended to accommodate their needs. The libraries are not just used for the borrowing of books - they are an important amenity for community groups, information about Council services, support services and information for visitors. I think that libraries are far more important than owning a golf course"*

*"There is a lack of premises to offer services and libraries could be the solution. Also, the travelling library could be remodelled to host access to the internet to allow citizens who do not have access for whatever reason the opportunity to do so"*

*“ I have agreed with the review of the number of libraries however there's a possibility of re-housing some of these facilities in a one-stop shop style amenity which could incorporate leisure facilities etc. under one roof”*

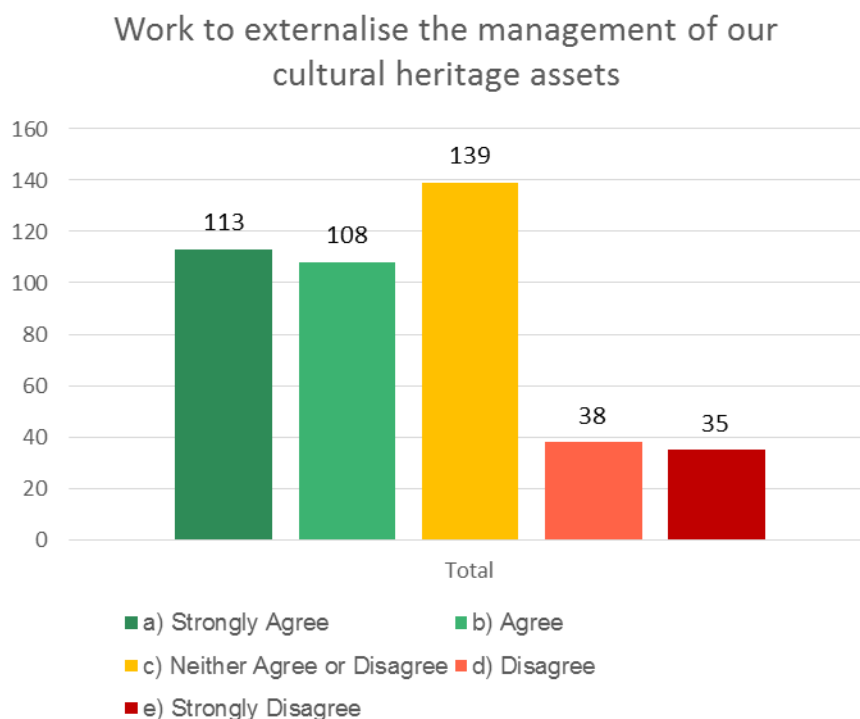
*“Charging for Oriel Mon, cuts never seem to effect here, only libraries. Libraries are more use than an art gallery”*

*““I do wish you every success in your efforts but sincerely hope that our library (Beaumaris) continues to flourish”*

*“Introduce a small annual fee for the use of libraries - to exclude use by children & students. Introduce a fee for the use of computers in libraries - same caveats as above*

*“I think that Libraries are a vital asset to the community and need to be remodelled into community hub type facilities”*

2.16 Over 51% agreed with the proposal to ..”Work to externalise the management of our cultural heritage assets” with a further 32% neither agreeing or disagreeing with the proposal and just over 16% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing

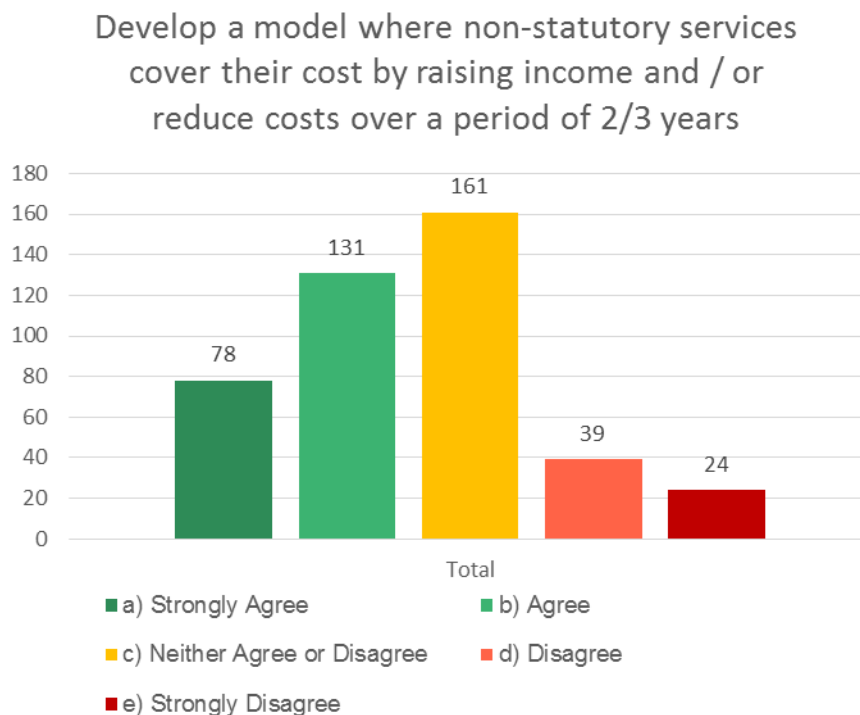


#### Respondents Comments:

*“ The management of our cultural heritage assets should be considered case by case. There may well be some areas where management could be delegated to suitable organisations. Sound fiscal management should always be Council practice. Any review of current services should targeted on areas of highest spending and based on sound management methods”*

*“get rid of Oriel Ynys mon and sell pictures of value i.e. Tunicliffe”*

2.17 51% of respondents also agreed/strongly agreed with the proposal to .. “Develop a model where non-statutory services cover their cost by raising income and / or reduce costs over a period of 2/3 years” with 31% neither agreeing or disagreeing and 16% disagreeing/strongly disagreeing



Respondents Comments:

*“work in partnership with the third sector to reduce costs and share costs”*

2.18 Additional Comments

As indicated in the introduction, a number of qualitative comments were received through the consultation exercise – some through email or letter communication and some through face to face interaction with respondents. Some of the comments that correspond directly with the proposals have been included in the report (above), and the additional comments below are included as they represent a cross-section of the type of responses received which were either a). recurring themes or b). responses which were not directly related to the proposals but worthy of consideration .....

- Reduce Senior Management, Too top heavy
- Reduce sickness absenteeism
- Less councillors. Reduce number of Councillors. Have meetings online.
- Close electoral register office in Llangefni industrial estate and combine with council offices in town
- *Green bin for garden refuse could be discontinued from Nov. to March when generally they are not used.*

- *I believe that the Council should consider voluntarily merging with Gwynedd Council. This could offer huge savings through the centralization of services, particularly in regard to procurement, management and administration, finance and recruitment*
- *Concerns relating to vacant buildings on the Island - why are these not sold? The Smallholdings - how many are empty at this present time*
- *The green bin collection in winter, this could be changed to once a month? Household waste such items that the bins don't normally collect (bulky items), could take it's place for three of the winter months.. this could save money on the free service of two collections per year that is currently available.*
- *The target for cutting staff costs is very unambitious, only £1M saving out of a total staff cost of c. £75M (60% of council budget), i.e. just 1.3 percent. I am sure that more savings could be made here*
- *An average 10% cut in staff costs would save about £7.5M. This could be made more palatable by giving staff say Friday afternoons off or the equivalent in unpaid leave over the course of the year.*
- *I believe it would be a good idea, that everyone who works in the council should pay an annual fee to park their cars. This would bring in income and also could provide more parking spaces*
- *Review Top Tier Management - Do we need so many managers?*
- *Council should reduce subsidy of bus routes – they are paying for buses full of air to be carried around the island”*
- *Train staff to be more generic workers - so that its an organisation not a department!*
- *The strategy covers basic efficiencies but there is no mention of improving staff performance or reviewing the cost of senior management, most authorities are carrying our significant back office reviews. What about making better use of technology within the council, digital, channel shift etc.*
- *Send out paperwork in one language; ask the rate payer which language they want*
- *I believe if some (not all) employees of the council understood the pressures of small businesses with regards to cashflow, getting things done quickly, efficiently and properly, then implemented that into their everyday worklife (like most SME employees do) then I believe that would help the efficiency targets*
- *Something you do not appear to have greatly is "demand challenge" - reducing the demand for services, although increasing costs will have this effect*
- *Medrwn Mon welcomes the efficiency strategy with its clear vision for facing the financial challenges it presents. The Council acknowledges the need to work with others to provide services and to consider carefully what's statutory and non-statutory. Lessons should be learnt from the transfer of services such as Canolfan Beaumaris and the careful planning and community support that was offered.*
- *There was a generally a broad consensus as to pertinent measures that could be taken ...(Anglesey Branch CPRW) but individuals should also write separately*

#### Town & Community Council Initial Response (From Liaison Forum 23/10/14)

- Joint working arrangements - More should be done to work with the private sector to achieve savings (Trearddur).
- Reducing the cost of democracy - the importance of strengthening democracy and promoting diversity in local government (Llanfairpwll).
- **Getting the best out of our staff – need to be mindful of the potential impact of redundancies and not filling vacant posts on staff sickness levels (Llanfairpwll).**

- Consultation – need to ensure that the Council’s consultation methods are robust (Llanfairpwll).
- Challenging the delivery of non-statutory services – need to engage with all stakeholders as early as possible on any major cuts to non-statutory services (Cwm Cadnant)

Reforming Local Government in Wales – Whilst acknowledging that the timescale went beyond the three years covered by the draft efficiency strategy, the importance of researching the potential implications of Council mergers was emphasised (Cwm Cadnant).

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1** In considering the majority of proposals/ideas presented as part of the 2014 Efficiency Strategy consultation exercise, as well as the previous exercise undertaken in 2013, the overall response would seem to indicate that the Council have presented options that the citizens of Anglesey are in broad agreement with.
- 3.2** With the exception of the proposal to increase council Tax by 5% annually, the proposals are largely supported by a majority of the residents of Anglesey, and as such provide a clear mandate for the Council to proceed to implement and action the proposals associated with the strategy.

## **Responding to requests for additional information from residents during consultation**

During the course of the 'Meeting the Challenges: Budget Proposals 2015/16' consultation, we've received a number of requests for additional information from Anglesey residents.

In order to ensure the consultation process is as effective as possible, we're happy to share the information requested via our website and social media channels.

The additional information requested will, we hope, clarify certain aspects of the consultation document and help residents make a more informed response to the Budget proposals.

## **Good Value for Money Proposals**

### **What are the various proposed savings in relation to Children's Services (Item 14)?**

The proposed savings include:

- reviewing the contribution the County Council makes to the Youth Justice Partnership;
- ending the use of an Independent Chair for the Fostering Panel and providing internally;
- introducing other efficiencies within the Third Sector.

***These equate to 0.49% of the total proposed savings***

### **What are the various proposed savings were in relation to Planning Services (Item 17)?**

The proposed savings include:

- reducing general supplies and services
- efficiencies in Open Spaces, Country Side and Coast
- reduction in delivery of Coed Cymru provision
- reduction in Seasonal and Community Warden Hours

***These equate to 0.42% of the total proposed savings***

### **What are the various proposed savings were in relation to Culture Services (Item 18)?**

The proposed savings include:

- relocating the Family Information Service office
- reduction in general supplies and services budget lines (Culture)
- budget rationalisation within Archives
- rationalisation of cleaning contract within Archives
- budget reductions for Museums (Heritage)
- reduction in Community Arts Budget (Heritage)

***These equate to 0.33% of the total proposed savings***

## **Challenge for the continuation of services proposals**

### **What are the various proposed savings in relation to Economic and Community Regeneration (Item 6)?**



The proposed savings include:

- reductions in Leisure Service General Operational Budget
- reduction in Sports Development's Island Games Contribution
- removal of Sports Development Post
- reduction in National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) Co-ordinator Grant Funding Contribution
- rationalisation of Amlwch café staff
- reduction in Holyhead Leisure Centre casual staff Budget
- reduction in Operational Budget (Marketing)
- reduction in Operational Budget (European Unit)

***These equate to 1.06% of the total proposed savings***

**What are the various proposed savings in relation to Education and Culture (Item 7)?**

The proposed savings include:

- reduction in Arts Grants
- reduction Childcare Sufficiency Budget
- reduction of contribution to Counselling Service
- reduction in budget lines at Llynnon Mill
- reduction in Administration Hours at Family Information Service

***These equate to 0.73% of the total proposed savings***

**Reducing the cost of Management, Democracy and Bureaucracy proposals.**

**What are the various proposed savings in relation to the Smarter Working Project (Item 3)?**

Over the last 18 months, a great deal of work has gone into developing a business case and introducing Smarter Working within the Council.

The Full Smarter Working business case was approved by the Council's Executive on Monday, October 20th. Implementing the Smarter Working project is of significant importance to the Council's corporate objectives and other initiatives.

Smarter Working will play a key role in transforming our Authority into a modern, professional and well-run organisation which is focused on its customers. The project will also contribute towards efficiency savings through:

- Improving energy efficiency
- Selling surplus buildings and reducing related overheads
- Streamlining administrative process and reducing staff by around 27 (Whole Time Equivalent) over a period of two to three years

***These equate to 7.35% of the total proposed savings***

## BUDGET PROPOSALS 2015/16 – “MEETING THE CHALLENGES” - ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION

1. Budget Proposals – Responses were received to the consultation exercise which make up the 73 responses referred to in the above report from the following

- Organisations/Bodies – A number of Community & Town Councils, CPRW, Malltraeth Ymlaen and Voluntary Liaison Committee. (although of total number of responses here is 5, this is inclusive of the response from the Town & Community Council Liaison Forum meeting where the views of 10 individual councils were represented in a general response on behalf of the Forum – these views have been incorporated in the report )
- Individual Responses - received Online through Survey Monkey, through email/letters or through the Council Leader’s Drop-in sessions

### 1.1 Proposal to increase Council Tax by 5%

1.2. A number of observations were received from bodies and individuals as regards the proposal to increase the Council Tax. A total of 13 responses were received. Of the Ten bodies who responded a few expressed opposition

*“An increase of 5% in the Council Tax is unaffordable, unacceptable and insufferable”.*

Others stated that the Council Tax should be as low as possible and that the effects on individuals and households should be considered before coming to a final decision, the majority of responses however reflected the views as outlined below....

*“Community Council almost unanimously in favour of the cuts are proposed and see them as very reasonable to think of the current financial situation of the County Council”.*

*“Need to explain to ratepayers what services are safeguarded if a Council Tax increase of 5% is set. However, recognise that if essential services are to be safeguarded, there is a need to raise Council Tax by up to 5% to meet the funding gap”*

*“5% increase rather high but recognise the need to increase Council Tax up to this level in order to meet the funding gap”.*

*“Proposed increase of 5% acceptable, but services need to be more efficient and opportunity to maximise income should be pursued”.*

*“Support an increase of around 4 – 4.5% to recognise pressures on services.*

Three individuals opposed the proposed Tax increase, comments were as follows:-

*“Not happy with 5% Tax”*

*“I would also be concerned that many would not be able to afford this (especially with other economic and financial pressures on low income families”*

*“An easy way out of problems - Give the burden to the taxpayer. 5% rise is total nonsense. The tax has risen over the last four years, three times higher than inflation”*

## **2. Responses - Good Value for Money Proposals**

2.1 The majority of responses under this heading were by far the most numerous within the consultation, and are summarized through some of the comments below

2.2 Five people responded to the proposal to (Reduce the Highways & Lighting Work Budget (Highways) with 3 opposed and 2 in favor

2.3 The proposal to reduce opening days (to 5 days per site) and amended working (Waste) had 7 responses with 2 in favour and 5 opposed - but to the days/times of closing specifically as indicated in the comments below

*“Closing waste sites to 5 days may be a cost saving but could increase fly tipping However if it was to be reduced to 5 days I would suggest it is not Sat or Sunday or a Monday”*

2.4 Similarly, only 3 responses were received as regards the proposal for Reduction in Improve School Standards budget (Education) with two opposed and 1 in agreement

2.5 A specific issue was raised by CPRW as to the proposal for Reduction in contribution to the Joint Planning Policy Unit and Various service efficiencies (Planning) which they considered could weaken the council's statutory duties and responsibilities around planning matters

## **3. Individual Responses - Challenge for the continuation of services proposals**

3.1 Responses were received from bodies and individuals as regards the proposal for Reduction in street cleaning budget (Highways) with one body particularly concerned about the possible effects on tourism ...

*“visitors expect a clean environment. Reducing street cleaning will make our tourist destinations less attractive and therefore have a negative impact on local tourism businesses”*

3.2. Whilst one person agreed with the proposal cuts to Urdd, Young Farmers and William Mathias Music (Education) service two opposed this

3.3 Similarly one person supported and 2 people opposed the proposal for a Reduction in funding to management company running Llanfairpwll Tourist Information Centre (Econ & Comm Regen)

3.4 Two people opposed the proposal for Reduction in Primary Dyslexia budget (Education)...

*“I would challenge the reduction to supporting Dyslexic children in primary schools, this will impact on standards at secondary school level when it may be too difficult to address”*

## **4. Individual Responses - Reducing the cost of Management, Democracy and Bureaucracy proposals.**

4.1 Only two issues were highlighted under this section, namely Staffing rationalisation, reduction & removal of vacant posts (Highways, Leisure, E&CR, ICT, Transformation, Audit & Culture) and Rationalisation of Senior Leadership Teams (Council Business) – with three people in favour of the first and seven positive responses to the second proposal. Some views expressed were....

*“A complete top down review of the council's staff structure should be undertaken. All staff should be appraised and where necessary redeployed on the basis of their qualifications and*

competence. Any necessary redundancies or early retirement should be handled sensitively but should not be avoided. It is obviously undesirable to increase unemployment on the island but the council's priority must be efficiency.

## **5. Individual Responses - Working collaboratively with others to save money or maintain service levels proposals**

- 5.1 There were no specific comments as regards this heading but a number of general points as regards the Council's views on Local Government Reorganisation, again the views were mixed...

*"There is only one way to save money and that's to have two councils across North Wales".*

*"please, please, please do not merge Anglesey with another Council"*

## **6. Individual Responses - Maximise Income Generation proposals**

- 6.1 The proposal... Free School Breakfasts – introduce a £1.50 fee for breakfast for non-free-school-meal pupils to charge a fee for breakfasts in primary schools (Education) had a negative response from only 4 people

*This....seems to go against the statutory guidance for local authorities and governing bodies of maintained primary schools regarding the provision of free breakfast in maintained primary schools as defined in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.*

- 6.2 Some respondents agreed with the idea for Increased income generation across leisure centre activities indicating that they are non-statutory and should be self-financing

- 6.3 Similarly one person opposed and one person supported the proposal to Increase parking income through the introduction of parking fees at Rhoscolyn, Station House Llangefni, Porth Swtan & Stanley Crescent Holyhead (Highways)

- 6.4 3 negative responses were received as regards the proposal to levy a £25 charge for replacement black wheeled bins lost, damaged, stolen or requested at new-build house

*" the householder or 'victim' that has had their bin stolen or damaged by a third party (or the waste collection contractor as has happened to me in the past) should not be expected to pay for something that is not their fault."*

## **7. Individual Responses - Getting the best out of our staff proposals**

- 7.1 Under this proposal there were only two responses – both positive, as regards the proposal to reduce car allowance budgets. However, and although not a specific proposal, a number of people commented on staff sickness and annual leave arrangements....

*"Am happy with these suggestions-also suggest stronger consequences for sick absences"*

*"Presumably the amount of staff absence which was reported recently in the papers is to be addressed?"*

*"Staff should be encouraged (by managers) to maximise the use of the Purchase Additional Annual Leave Scheme. This will save money for the Council, and assist in a better work /life balance for staff, reducing stress etc."*

## 8. General Comments (not specific to Budget Consultation Headings)

- 8.1 Much more information is needed with NO jargon. we need to know exactly what's being cut not just ..... " various".
- 8.2 Why does not every Member hold a public meeting within their constituency in order to gauge the views of their electorates
- 8.3 More information is required, this needs to be sent out to households in an easy read version where people who have no internet , who need help with filling in questioners, where is the consultation with children and young pole taking place? consultation of people who have disabilities and learning difficulties? “
- 8.4 “Survey monkey is not the answer! you need to talk to people”
- 8.5 There were a few people who specifically raised the closure of Llangefni Golf Course–  
*“open for 32 years. Making money April to Sept – people come from afar (Germany). No real indicator that it was imminent closure”*
- 8.6 Similarly, there were a number of comments about the the Smarter Working project – basically opposing any additional expenditure and of the need for further information on the rationale for any additional expenditure to the Council Headquarters.
- 8.7 A few people also specifically referred to libraries as a possible saving –  
*“close libraries - as many people have computers therefore books can easily be obtained, also library vans can still visit people throughout the island”*