

Council Tax Consultation – Discussion Group Feedback

Group 1 – Feedback from Jim Biggin

Item	Group Feedback	Explanatory Info
Shared Services	<p>Consolidate the good progress that has been made and explore all possibilities. Sharing with others e.g. North Dorset not a priority</p>	
Fees and Charges	<p>Council should be aiming to achieve cost neutrality with fees and charges for amenities.</p> <p>Planning Service should be cost neutral</p> <p>Parking Fees – Should charge residents a lump sum to park “free” for the whole year</p>	<p>Government have allowed Councils to increase fees by 15% but Councils thus far not allowed to make charges to cover the cost of the service</p> <p>In place partially via residents parking passes for specific car parks. Lump sum idea for all car parks may be worth exploring</p>
Outsourcing	Use as much as possible.	
Accommodation	<p>Yes, sell property and Lease back</p> <p>Consider selling off Council Offices and setting up smaller one stop shops more locally</p>	<p>Council has a Property Strategy group which meets regularly to review assets and initiate disposal</p> <p>Feasibility work on Civic Offices being presented to Resources Committee on April 3rd 2013</p>
Staff Terms and Conditions	<p>Perception is that the T&C's are good compared to other sectors</p> <p>Pension fund final salary scheme may not be affordable so consider</p>	<p>Currently being reviewed as part of the shared service work</p> <p>Scheme is being amended in 2014 to a career</p>

	getting rid of it	average scheme with increased contributions in many salary bands
Local pay	Yes negotiate locally. Gives an opportunity to be more flexible e.g. pay bonus for good performance	
Partnership Procurement	Why not if it makes good business sense Buy local only if there is a business case to do so	
Invest to save	Linked to outsourcing and rationalising accommodation. Explore franchise model	
Borrow to Save	Does the Council currently possess the skills ?	
Liberalise Planning	Liberalise decision making where you can and have greater community involvement The change of use criteria for shops are currently too clumsy	
Council Tax	Don't increase if you can avoid it	
Stop some services	By using outsourcing and the principles of making as much as possible cost neutral you may not have to stop anything	

Group 2 – Feedback from Terry Atkinson

Item	Group Feedback	Explanatory Info
Fees and Charges	More flexible approach is needed; this applies to locations and client groups	
Invest to Save	Need to be more creative e.g. Look at Car Parks and their uses Does the Council have a proper understanding about an acceptable level of risk	
Borrow to Save	Future opportunities do exist – employ the Community Infrastructure Levy	
Liberalise Planning	Balance is about right atm. Need to think about the financial benefits to the local economy when making decisions	
Council Tax	Freezing is problematic in the present financial climate. Freezing creates an expectation of not having increases in future which is not realistic	