

## **Annex 4g: Written responses/e-mail responses**

### **Written response from Community Councillor**

CCBC have no shame at all to propose increase of 7.9%% for 2023/24 which is double what the Vale of Glamorgan are proposing.

It is public knowledge how much CCBC have in reserves due to underspends having received money from WAG. They say this is for a rainy day, well it's tsunami time now. How offensive that they have created 3 new unnecessary posts. Perhaps the Leader and all the councillors should take a 5% reduction in salary. Council tax includes highways, police and leisure. What a laugh. Highways maintenance is disgraceful. Police, never see any. Leisure, we don't have any facilities.

Roll on a general election to get this lot out

Agree with

Infrastructure withdrawal of subsidy for Blackwood/Ystrad Mynach rail link has been badly used since its introduction, put this money into community bus services

Disagree with

ELL7 Reduction in music services

ELL16 reduction in library services

ELL15 temporary reduction in youth services

SS1 any reduction in services for children with disabilities

EE14 any increase in leisure fees

CS10 deletion of community empowerment fund

Farcical running of this from the beginning

I would support a lower increase in council tax

## **E-mail responses from resident**

**From:** Resident

**Date:** 19 January 2023 at 11:56:17 GMT

**To:** Kevin Etheridge

**Subject:** Council tax increase objection

Hi Cllr Etheridge, Please could you forward my objections to what I consider to be an unnecessary and unjustified increase in Council tax, particularly during cost of living crisis when people are struggling to pay bills etc

Council tax has increased every year and I feel

That there should be headroom in your budgets to reduce Council tax, particularly when you have received monies from Senedd to help with your finances, which should prevent Council tax increases.

During austerity we seen services reduced and less monies spent on same, but this has not been reflected in your reductions in Council tax.

Kind regard

**E-mail response from residents**

**Re: Children With Disabilities - Budget realignment to reflect demand**

From: Resident

Sent: 24 January 2023 08:30

To: WWW: Public Engagement

Subject: Re:

Almost £1.5 million unspent when the wait for a children's social worker is huge!

When respite services are notoriously difficult to access and when the school wraparound services for disabled children are non-existent!

Doesn't sound like a good move to me. I'll be writing to my councillor.

Thanks

## E-mail response from resident (Blackwood) 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Hi both,

Thank you again for your informative overview and conversations discussing the latest 'Caerphilly conversation' drop in at Bargoed Library and the budget setting for 2023/ 24.

Following our positive conversation with yourselves and Cllr Heron, I would like to address the concerns that were highlighted to you both below, with particular attention on Social Services that could impact our most vulnerable along with our community networks and access to many services.

- Childrens Services – cut of 18% of £58,867.
- Childrens Services – cut of 48.5% of 61,810
- Over provision for contribution to delivering transformation projects – cut of 9% of £199,000.
- Non-residential care income from service users to reflect increased demand for care – cut of 3.4% of £1.993,722.
- Children with Disabilities – to reflect demand – cut of 4.8% of £1,450,822.
- Short term placements to reflect historic spending levels – cut of 11.1% of £442,464.
- Shared lives placements to reflect historic spending levels – cut of 15.7% of £1,428,717
- Connunity Empowerment Fund – Complete cut from budget – cut of 100% total £358,000.
- Removal of the sustainable development / well-being budget – cut of 100% total £21,000.

As previously discussed with yourselves, I highlighted to you both the significant concerns on how these budget proposals could and will impact our communities. I scrutinised the rapid impact assessments that highlighted minor and moderate impacts with very little detail or no detail at all in all of them, with due consideration to 100% cuts, this was quite distressing to find that there were no forward planning how these 100% cuts would be passed on to other providers or no idea how these cuts were going to impact the service users.

I am fully aware of how impact assessments should be carried out including draft at this stage but there appears to be little or no thought to the service users when considering these cuts currently shown in these impact assessments to date.

During our conversations to discuss the above concerns you both addressed the additional funding that was going to be allocated in this budget and that the cuts did not show the additional spends to the service user groups, especially our most vulnerable amongst us. Your proposed budget setting, I believe, should offer the positive transparency of the additional funding to these user groups in order to appease anxiety and distress that the budget cuts highlight.

We discussed the unprecedented times during covid and now the cost of living crisis. Your highlighted budget cuts appear to focus on our most vulnerable that is upsetting for our

communities and service users who have found it difficult to access some of these services. It would be good to provide at least 5 years of evidence of any underspends and the reasons for these underspends, there is no reports or performance requirements to satisfy any of the funding criteria that has led to your decisions to cut these services.

Community Empower Fund – The total removal of the community empowerment fund has been a big shock as it's a fairly new service provision to access. I understand that many communities across the borough have used this funding within wards to its capacity and has been a huge success in some wards for community empowerment, inclusion, health and well being and community engagement.

I note that £407,000 has been allocated from reserves to support community engagement – service improvement and partnership unit, transformation. It would be good to find out the positives and negatives of the community empowerment fund considering it's a new service provision with very little timeframe to promote and get individual ward councillors engagement of lack thereof. There is also a small window allocate and spend this money that could make many positive impacts within our communities.

The Welsh Government funding uplift has increased by 6.9% during this projected budget year with their priorities focusing on Health, Social care and Education. This focus highlights Social Value.

The budget cuts for Caerphilly appear not to include Social value as a priority and this is deeply disappointing.

Addressing alternative funding options to provide any shortfalls for intended cuts: There are funding avenues to access that could lead to significant uplift in capital budgets that could then be transferred from other capital reserves allocated for the services impacted by these cuts.

1.3 billion land assembly fund is one. Similar to levelling up but focusing on key strategies. Garden communities programme funding. The Welsh Government have recently turned down the land allocation which fell short of their intended strategies and infrastructure criterias. More forward planning is required. This just gives you an idea of whats out there and how it can be achieved.

I am not happy with the 7.9 % rise but would rather see it slightly lower especially for families who are really struggling and don't meet the criteria for any reductions or uplifts during this cost of living crisis.

Thank you both again for your time and patience and look forward to hearing from you. Please see this as my input to be included in the caerphilly conversation.

Kind Regards

Resident, Blackwood