



London Borough of Newham Budget Challenge Consultation

December 2015

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1. Executive Summary

Background to the consultation

- 1.1 In 2016/17 Newham Council has to make savings or generate income due to a combination of cuts by the Government and uncontrollable cost pressures. At the time of consultation the savings required was expected to be £50m. There is also a need to save more money in future years: by 2019 LBN needs to save £91 million from the amount it spends every year. The Council commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a budget challenge consultation in order to help it understand opinions on how these savings should be achieved.
- 1.2 The Budget consultation involved a number of different activities including:
 - » A survey that is representative of Newham's population carried out on residents' doorsteps. This representative survey is a useful guide to overall public opinion in the borough. 1,256 surveys were completed.
 - » A main consultation questionnaire open to all residents of the borough, as well as residents living outside the borough and other stakeholders. The consultation was widely publicised and respondents that had a particular interest in participating could choose to complete online or via paper questionnaires. 640 paper questionnaires were returned by post and 756 questionnaires were completed online. 36 respondents said that they were representing the views of a community group/organisation in Newham.
 - » A very short consultation questionnaire, again open to all respondents, but mainly administered to respondents in on-street scenarios and promoted via social media. 1,002 paper questionnaires were returned by post and 16 questionnaires were completed online.
- 1.3 This report focuses on the two consultation questionnaires (the main version and the short version) which were open to all respondents. It also focuses on the responses of Newham residents alongside overall responses to aid the consideration of the issues that matter most to Newham residents. Responses from non-residents can be found in Appendix B.
- 1.4 The questionnaires asked for views on how LBN should approach and prioritise its budget. The objectives of the questionnaires were to:
 - » understand opinion on the approach LBN should take to its budget challenge;
 - » understand the breadth and depth of opinion on broad spending cut and income generation areas; and
 - » understand preferences when asked to prioritise spending cut and income generation options.
- 1.5 The open consultation questionnaires were widely publicised and respondents that had a particular interest in participating could choose to complete online or via paper questionnaires.
- 1.6 The responses to the consultation questionnaires can provide considerable information about the views of particular groups and individuals who chose to respond; but they are not appropriate as a guide to overall resident opinion because – unlike the representative face-to-face survey – the questionnaires' response profile does not match the population of Newham.

- 1.7 It is also worth noting that 16% of respondents to the main questionnaire were non-residents of Newham. This sub-group includes people who live outside of Newham but use some services in Newham, people who are responding on behalf of a community organisation or interest group, representatives of a business which is either inside Newham or that has interests in Newham, and members of Newham council staff.
- 1.8 The various results that follow should therefore be considered within these specific contexts. Unless stated otherwise, the results are based on the findings from the longer main questionnaire (the findings from the shorter questionnaire are introduced where appropriate).

Council Satisfaction and Mayor's Promises

- 1.9 Just over half (52%) of open questionnaire respondents are satisfied with the way that the Council runs things. An identical proportion of respondents who are Newham residents are satisfied.
- 1.10 The themes proposed for the Mayor's Promises were listed, and respondents were invited to select their top three in order of preference. A rank analysis was then carried out to identify the highest ranked promises.
- 1.11 The top three ranked promises were as follows: 'making this a place where people feel safe' was ranked highest, followed by 'creating a clean and pleasant area' and 'quality housing that local people can afford' respectively. When the analysis was repeated to understand the priorities of those respondents who are Newham residents, the same three promises were ranked highest and the order was the same.

The Council's approach

- 1.12 Respondents were provided with four possible approaches that the Council could take to make savings and generate income, and were asked to rank their first, second and third preferences.
- 1.13 There was most support for 'investing in businesses that could make a profit to fund services'.
- 1.14 The next most well supported approaches were 'raising more income through fees and taxes, like increasing the Council Tax you pay' and 'reducing services that everyone uses, like street cleaning, bin collections and street lighting'. These were also the top three preferences of respondents who are Newham residents.
- 1.15 Respondents were also asked to identify which three priorities the Council should consider when setting its budget, by selecting their first, second and third preferences from a list of seven possible options.
- 1.16 The analysis showed that the following three options were ranked most highly by open questionnaire respondents: 'protecting people who are vulnerable, like older people and children at risk of abuse', followed by 'providing good basic services that everyone uses' and 'investing in preventative work, to stop problems arising later'.
- 1.17 When the analysis was repeated just for those respondents who are residents of Newham, the same three options were ranked first, second and third.

Spending priorities

- 1.18 Respondents were provided with a list of possible approaches for saving money and generating income, and asked about the extent to which they would support or oppose each one. Table 1 summarises the levels of support for each option in the open consultation questionnaire, at both the overall level and for residents of Newham only.
- 1.19 At the overall level, there was most support for ‘reducing spending on free events such as the Mayor’s Show and the fireworks display’ (69%) and ‘increasing Council tax by 1.99% next year’ (56%). These were the only two approaches which more than half of respondents supported.
- 1.20 When looking at the views of residents only, the results are largely consistent with the overall, and the same two approaches received most support overall (albeit the proportion of residents that supported ‘increasing council tax’ (53%) was three percentage points lower than the overall result).

Table 1: Summary of levels of support for the proposed approaches to save and generate income – Open consultation questionnaire

Approach	% of respondents in support	
	Overall	Residents
Reduce spending on supporting people to get into work, like the Council’s Workplace employment service	42%	42%
Increase Council Tax by 1.99% next year, for an average property in Newham (Council Tax Band C) this would mean a £16.72 increase in the annual bill	56%	53%
Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour like dumped rubbish, graffiti, street drinking, and food safety	17%	17%
Reduce spending on street cleaning, like picking up litter and sweeping the streets	19%	17%
Reduce spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people, like home-care and residential care for the elderly and disabled, and support for people with mental health problems.	15%	15%
Reduce spending on supporting people with housing needs, like finding temporary housing and helping people find a home to rent	35%	35%
Reduce spending on opportunities for our young people like free school meals, free music lessons, the chance to try different sports, and theatre trips	42%	41%
Reduce spending on arts and community groups and venues, like the Theatre Royal and Newham City Farm	44%	43%
Reduce spending on looking after vulnerable children, like child protection and support for disabled children	14%	14%
Introduce charges for environmental services which are currently free like bulky waste and garden waste collection	45%	42%

Reduce spending by closing libraries and community centres	17%	16%
Reduce spending on maintaining parks and green spaces	22%	21%
Reduce spending on centres which provide part-time day and evening adult education courses	39%	40%
Reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display	69%	68%

- 1.21 Respondents were then asked to think about the proposed approaches in relation to one another, by identifying their top three preferences for areas the Council should consider when making savings or increasing income to meet its budget challenge, and ranking them from 1 to 3 in order of preference. This question was also asked in the shorter version of the questionnaire, and as the rank analysis on these responses yielded the same outcome, the results for both strands have been combined in the table below.
- 1.22 The most widely preferred approach overall was again 'reducing spending on free events such as the Mayor's Show and the fireworks display'. (Table 2)
- 1.23 The second and third most widely preferred approaches based on the results of the rank analysis were 'increasing council tax by 1.99%' and 'reducing spending on young people, including free music lessons, sports and theatre for children in Newham' respectively.
- 1.24 The same results were obtained when the rank analysis was repeated to find out the top three approaches for respondents who are Newham residents.

Table 2: Areas the Council should focus on when looking to make savings or increase its income: rank analysis results

RANK	Overall (long and short questionnaires combined)	Residents only (long questionnaire only)
1	Reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display	Reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display
2	Increase Council Tax by 1.99%	Increase Council Tax by 1.99%
3	Reduce spending on young people including free music lessons, sports and theatre for children in Newham	Reduce spending on young people including free music lessons, sports and theatre for children in Newham

- 1.25 The question was then repeated, but on this occasion respondents were asked to rank the top three areas the Council should **not** focus on when identifying savings. (Table 3).
- 1.26 When rank analyses are run separately for the short and long open questionnaires the top three results were different to the overall and to each other. 'Reducing spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour' was the top ranked result for the short and long questionnaires combined. However, it was ranked second for the short questionnaire respondents only.

- 1.27 'Increasing council tax by 1.99%' came out as the top ranked area that should the council should **not** focus on for the short questionnaire, whereas this was the third ranked option for the short and long questionnaires combined and it did not come out in the top three results for the long questionnaire.
- 1.28 The main difference between the short and long questionnaire results was that 'Reducing spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people' was in the top three results for the long questionnaire, whereas it was not in the top three ranked results for the short questionnaire; and 'Increasing council tax by 1.99%' was in the top three results for the short questionnaire but it was not in the top three results for the long questionnaire.
- 1.29 The top three areas identified by respondents who are residents of Newham were consistent with the overall results for the long questionnaire.

Table 3: Areas the Council should **not** focus on when looking to make savings or increase its income: rank analysis results

RANK	Open questionnaire (short and long combined)	Open Questionnaire (long) Overall	Open Questionnaire (long) Residents only	Open Questionnaire (short)
1	Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	Increase Council Tax by 1.99%
2	Reduce spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people	Reduce spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people	Reduce spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people	Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
3	Increase Council Tax by 1.99%	Reduce spending on looking after vulnerable children	Reduce spending on looking after vulnerable children	Reduce spending on looking after vulnerable children

- 1.30 There was also an opportunity for participants to suggest any alternative areas that the Council could focus on to reduce its spending or increase its income. While the comments which were provided covered a very diverse range of areas, some themes emerged more consistently than others, for example: reducing spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display¹; reducing spending on high salaries, expenses etc. for councillors and/or the Mayor; parking (e.g. reduce free parking, charging for permits, introducing more fines etc.); and ceasing to produce the Newham Magazine, or making it an online-only publication.

¹ Although the 'Reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display' responses overlaps with other questions, it is not possible to include these comments in the results to these other questions as this is a separate question.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This chapter details the methodologies and response to the activities undertaken by ORS as part of the budget challenge consultation.

Background to the consultation

- 2.2 Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned by the London Borough of Newham (LBN) to undertake their budget challenge consultation to ensure independent analysis and reporting. LBN needs to make £50 million savings to their budget next year. This is more than the council currently spends on cleaning and lighting streets, collecting the bins and running libraries combined. There is also a need to save more money in future years; by 2019 LBN needs to save £91 million from the amount it spends every year.
- 2.3 The objectives of the questionnaires were to:
- understand opinion on the approach LBN should take to its budget challenge
 - understand the breadth and depth of opinion on broad spending cut and income generation areas
 - understand preferences when asked to prioritise spending cut and income generation options

Methodology

- 2.4 The consultation included an online and paper questionnaire (a short version and a long version), open to all residents in the borough, as well as residents living outside the borough and other stakeholders, and a representative survey (face to face interviews) undertaken with 1,256 randomly selected residents across Newham.
- 2.5 This report focuses on the two open questionnaires (short and long versions) which were available to all residents, inside and outside of the borough.
- 2.6 The open questionnaires were publicised to residents through: notices in the council's magazine, the Newham Mag, (distributed to every business and residential address in the borough); posters in key locations including local libraries and community centres and train stations, social media updates, promotion of the consultation at street stalls throughout the borough (in areas with high footfall), Community Neighbourhood Meetings led by Lead Councillors and information on the Newham.gov.uk website.
- 2.7 Paper copies of the open consultation questionnaire were available from libraries and community centres across the borough. Freepost envelopes were provided for residents to return the questionnaire to ORS. The online questionnaire was hosted via ORS.
- 2.8 The paper and online questionnaires were available from week commencing 17th August 2015. The cut-off date for these questionnaires was 11th October 2015. The main questionnaire, which was available in paper and online formats, yielded 1,396 responses in total (640 paper forms and 756

online completions). A shortened version of the questionnaire with only two core consultation questions yielded 1,018 responses (1,002 paper forms and 16 online completions).

- 2.9 Of the 1,380 responses to the 'Are you completing this form as...?' question on the open main questionnaire, a total of 36 respondents said they were representing the views of a community group/organisation in Newham (some of these organisation names were repeated).
- 2.10 The shorter questionnaire did not collect any profiling information or ask respondents to specify their connection to Newham. Therefore, any results in this report which refer to the views of Newham residents are based only on the relevant responses to the longer questionnaire.

Nature of Consultation

- 2.11 Consultation should promote accountability and assist decision making: public bodies should give an account of their plans or proposals and they should ensure that all responses are taken into account in order to:
- Be informed of any issues, viewpoints, implications or options that might have been overlooked;
 - Re-evaluate matters already known; and
 - Review priorities and principles.
- 2.12 Nevertheless, a consultation is not a vote; and influencing public policy through consultation is not simply a 'numbers game' in which the loudest voices or the greatest numbers automatically determine the outcome, for all of the various consultation methods have to be assessed.
- 2.13 All types of consultation responses are important – for example, as part of the consultation on the future of the Budget Challenge we received a range of different responses from individuals and organisations as a result of the following activities:
- The open consultation questionnaire (paper and online);
 - The representative face to face survey with residents.
- 2.14 This report identifies where strength of feeling may be particularly intense while recognising that interpreting consultation is not simply a matter of counting responses.

Need for Interpretation

- 2.15 Although the open questionnaire is an important and accessible consultation route that is open to everyone, it was self-selecting rather than being distributed in a systematic way. Therefore, it is not representative of Newham's residents. On the other hand, the face-to-face representative survey is representative of Newham at 95% confidence which is standard for social surveys.
- 2.16 Because the former's respondent profile is an imperfect reflection of the population, the results of the open questionnaire have to be interpreted carefully and compared with the representative survey findings.

- 2.17 Table 4 (overleaf and on p. 12) illustrates how the response profile of those who responded to the open questionnaire differs from the resident population of Newham (based on Census 2011). The overall response profile and the profile for residents of Newham are shown separately.
- 2.18 It can be seen that certain groups are particularly under-represented relative to the wider population, for example:
- » Only 43% of respondents overall and 42% of resident respondents are male, compared with 52% of the Newham population;
 - » Only 23% of respondents (both at overall level and residents only) are aged under 35, compared with 51% of the Newham population;
 - » Only 20% of respondents overall and 22% of resident respondents are neither working nor retired, compared with 35% of the Newham population;
 - » Only 22% of respondents (both at overall level and residents only) are of Asian ethnicity, compared with 43% of the Newham population.
- 2.19 It can be seen that certain groups are particularly over-represented in the questionnaire response profile relative to the population; for example:
- » 48% of respondents overall and 47% of resident respondents are of a White British ethnic group, compared with 19% of the Newham population.
- 2.20 Older age groups are also over-represented in the response profile, relative to the population:
- » 58% of respondents (both at overall level and residents only) are above the age of 45, but this is only true of 30% of the Newham population;
 - » 23% of respondents overall and 25% of resident respondents are retired, compared with only 9% of the Newham population.

Table 4: Response profile of the open questionnaire, compared with the resident population (Source: Census 2011)²

Characteristic	Open Questionnaire respondents		Resident Population %
	Overall (Valid %)	Residents only (Valid %)	
BY GENDER			
Male	43%	42%	52%
Female	57%	58%	48%
Total valid	100%	100%	100%
BY AGE			
16 to 24	7%	7%	21%
25 to 34	16%	16%	30%
35 to 44	19%	19%	19%
45 to 54	22%	21%	14%
55 to 64	16%	15%	8%
65 or over	20%	21%	9%
Total valid	100%	100%	100%
BY WORKING STATUS			
Working	57%	53%	56%
Retired	23%	25%	9%
Otherwise not working	20%	22%	35%
Total valid	100%	100%	100%
BY ETHNIC GROUP			
Asian	22%	22%	43%
Black	17%	17%	18%
Mixed and Other	4%	4%	7%
White British	48%	47%	19%
White Other	9%	9%	13%
Total valid	100%	100%	100%
BY DISABILITY			
Yes	16%	16%	17%
No	84%	84%	83%
Total valid	100%	100%	100%

² (Please note that the profiling questions were not asked of respondents to the short questionnaire, and this explains the high number of respondents overall whose characteristics are 'not known')

Table 4 (Continued): Response profile of the open questionnaire, compared with the resident population (Source: Census 2011)

Characteristic	Open Questionnaire respondents		Resident Population %
	Overall (Valid %)	Residents only (Valid %)	
BY COMMUNITY FORUM AREA			
Beckton	10%	10%	5%
Custom House & Canning Town	10%	10%	14%
East Ham	16%	16%	15%
Forest Gate	14%	14%	11%
Green Street	12%	12%	15%
Manor Park	10%	10%	15%
Plaistow	12%	12%	10%
Royal Docks	3%	3%	4%
Stratford & West Ham	14%	14%	11%
Total valid	100%	100%	100%
BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
Heterosexual	90%	90%	-
Lesbian/gay/bisexual/other	10%	10%	-
Total valid	100%	100%	-

Rank Analysis

2.21 In this report reference has been made to 'rank analysis'. This occurs when respondents have been asked to rank or prioritise a selection of different options. For rank analysis each priority is given a score (e.g. 1st priority is given one point, 2nd priority 2 points, and 3rd priority 3 points). A total score for each response option is then calculated. This total score is then divided by the number of respondents to give an average score. The response options are then ranked according to their average score, the lowest score being the highest priority.

Interpretation of the data

2.22 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple answers.

2.23 Graphics are used extensively in this report to make it as user friendly as possible. The pie charts and other graphics show the proportions (percentages) of residents making relevant responses. Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with a 'traffic light' system in which:

- Green shades represent positive responses
- Beige and purple shades represent neither positive nor negative responses
- Red shades represent negative responses
- The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the 'extremes', for example, very satisfied or very dissatisfied.

3. Findings from the open questionnaires

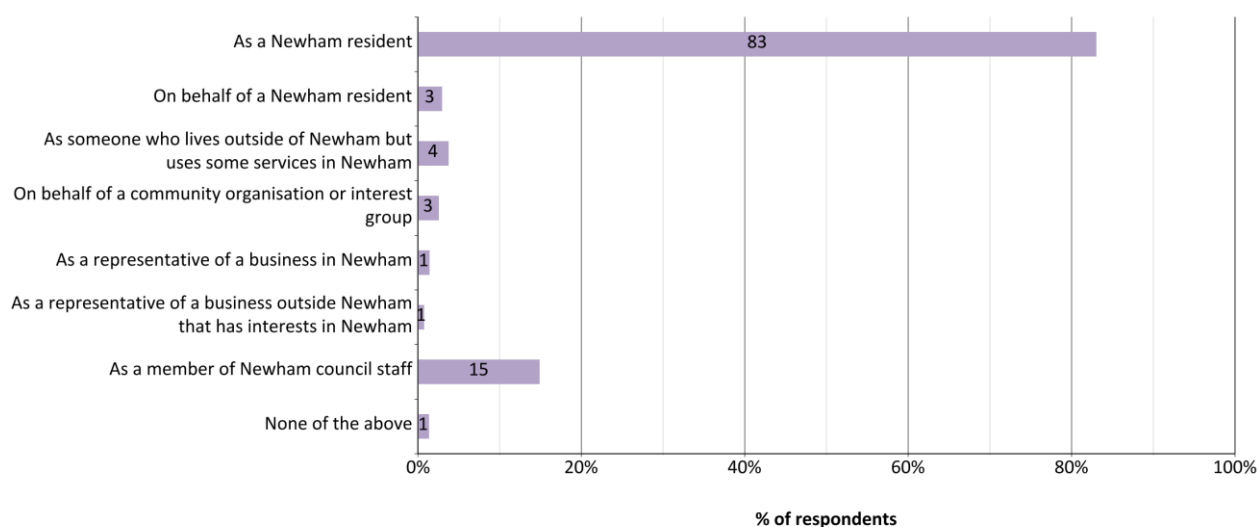
- 3.1 All of the questions in the open questionnaire were asked in the full length questionnaire but there were two questions (in the Spending Priorities section) that were also asked in the short version of the questionnaire. These will be indicated at the appropriate place in this chapter. All other results are based on responses to the longer main questionnaire only.
- 3.2 This report focuses on the responses of Newham residents alongside overall responses to aid the consideration of the issues that matter most to Newham residents. Responses from non-residents can be found in Appendix B.

About You

- 3.3 Respondents to the longer questionnaire were asked how they were responding. The majority (83%) were responding as a Newham resident. 15% were responding as a member of Newham council staff. It should be noted though that this was a multiple choice question, so respondents could have responded as both residents and staff, for example. 9% of respondents to these questions (123 respondents) chose more than 1 option.
- 3.4 As they are representing the views of a resident, anyone responding on behalf of a Newham resident has been treated as a 'resident' for analysis purposes in this report.
- 3.5 The views of non-residents and other sub-groups can be seen by referring to the detailed breakdowns in Appendix B.

Figure 1: Please tell us how you are responding to the questionnaire.

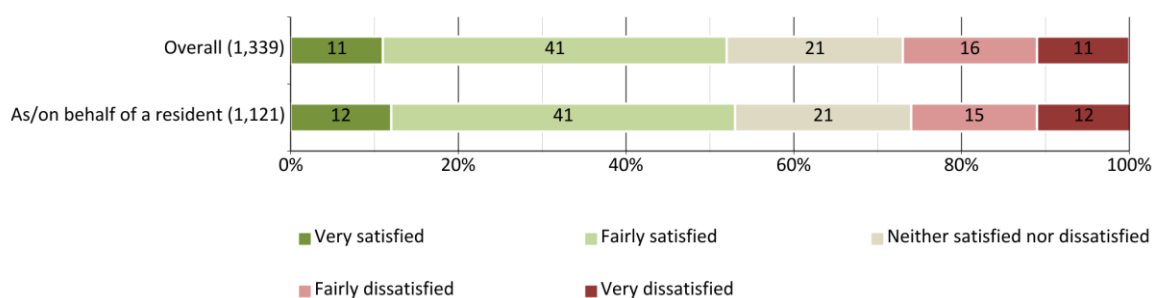
Base: All Respondents who specified (1,380)



Council Satisfaction

- 3.6 Overall, just over half (52%) of respondents are satisfied with the way the council runs things with around a tenth (11%) being very satisfied. However over a quarter (27%) are dissatisfied with the way the council runs things with around 1 in 10 (11%) respondents reporting that they are very dissatisfied.
- 3.7 When looking only at the views of Newham residents, the results are almost identical: 52% of respondents are satisfied and 27% are dissatisfied. 12% of these respondents are very satisfied; the same proportion are very dissatisfied.
- 3.8 The similarity between the overall result and the residents' result is perhaps to be expected given the substantial overlap between the two groups.

Figure 2: Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the council runs things?
Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



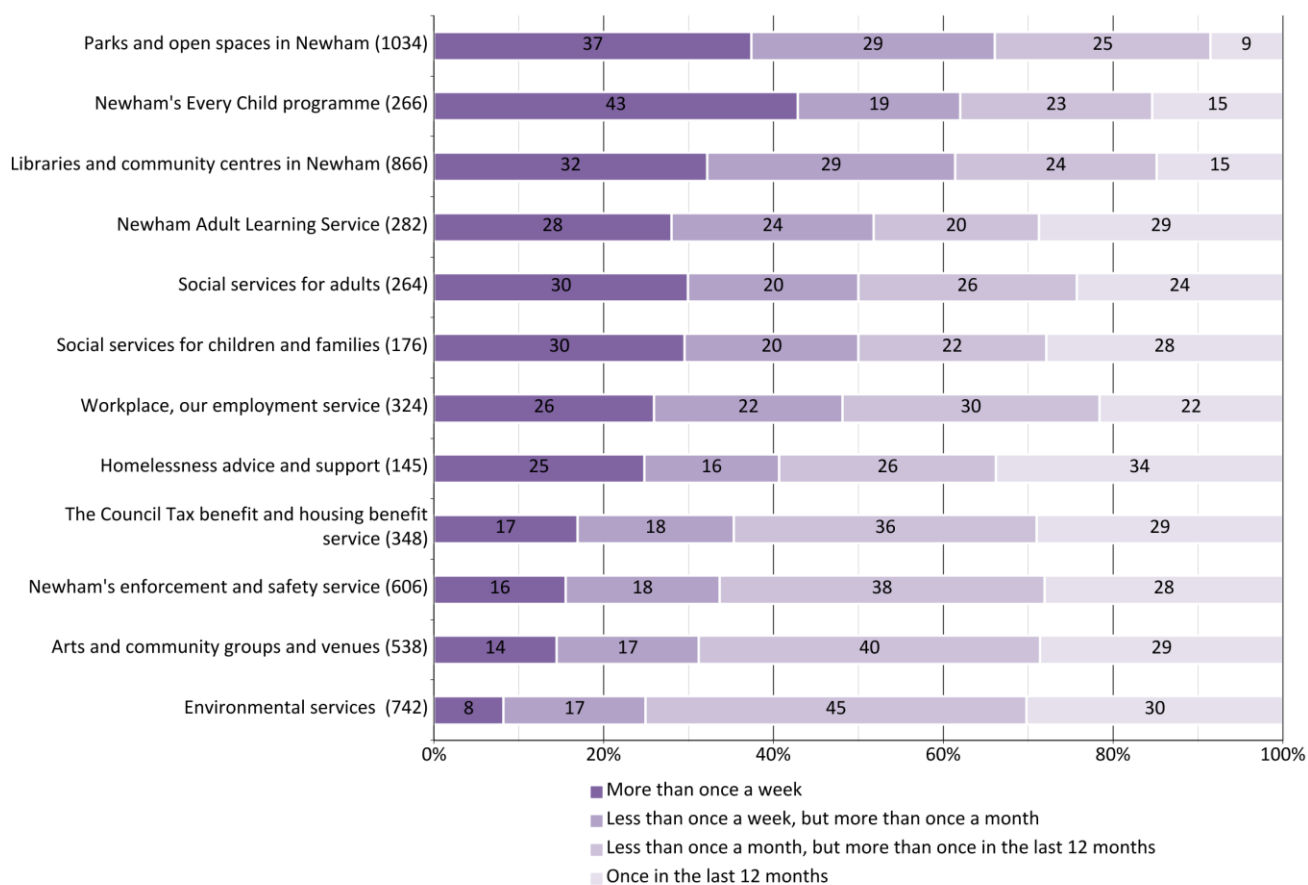
Use of Services

3.9 Respondents were asked how often they or someone in their household used various services in Newham in the last year. Figure 3 shows the frequency of use among those respondents who have used each service in the last 12 months (the base sizes show the total numbers of respondents who claim to have used each service in this period).

3.10 At the overall level, the service used most frequently was parks and open spaces with around two thirds (66%) using them at least once a month and a quarter (25%) using them less than once a month, but more than once in the last 12 months. The next most frequently used service was Newham’s Every Child programme with just over three fifths (62%) using this service at least once a month and nearly a quarter (23%) using it less than once a month, but more than once in the last 12 months. The services used most infrequently by open questionnaire respondents were Environmental services and arts and community groups with only a quarter (25%) and almost a third (31%) using these service at least once a month respectively.

3.11 Please see Appendix B for a breakdown of these results by different sub-groups.

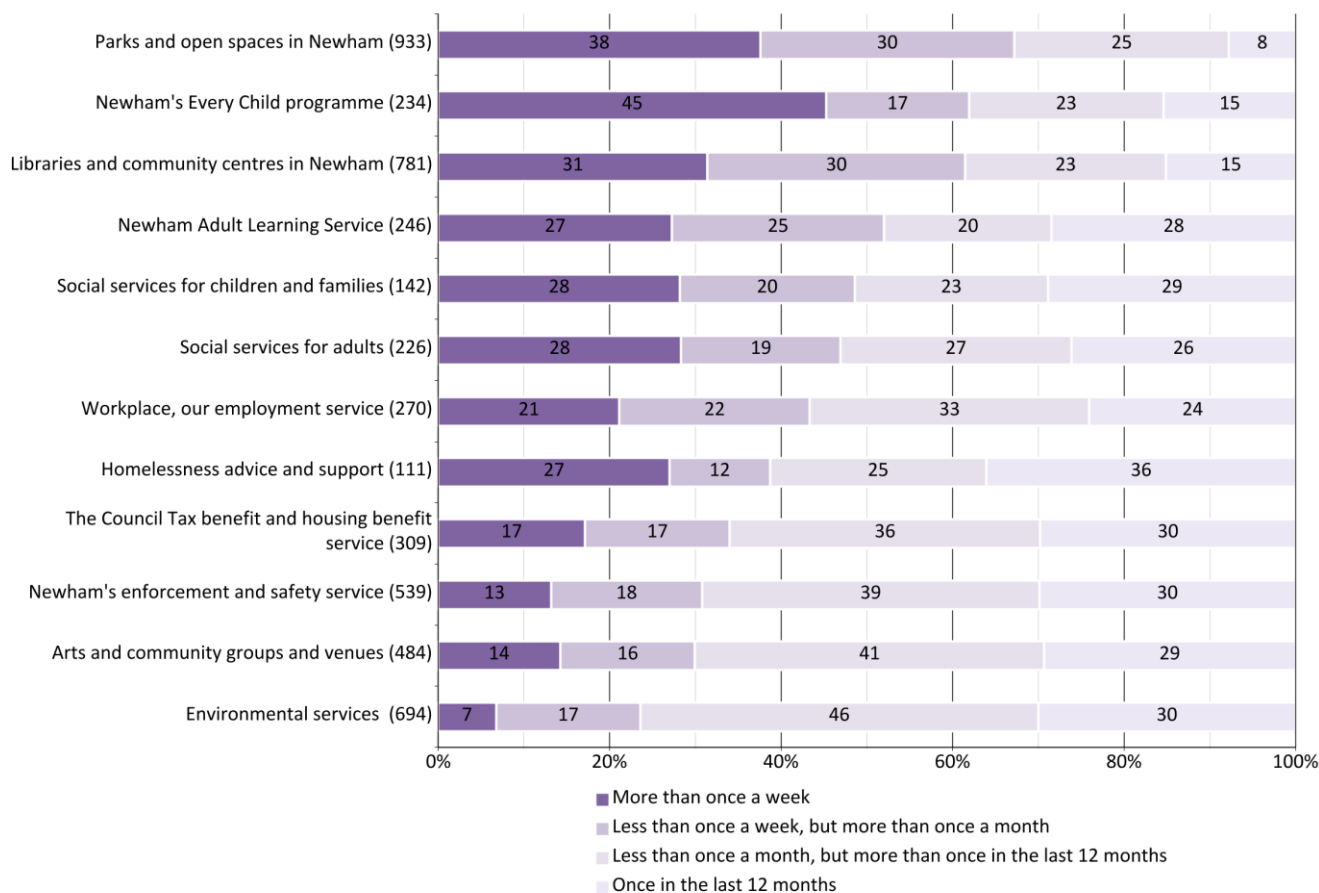
Figure 3: Overall: How often have you or someone in your household used the following services in Newham in the last year?
 Base: Respondents who had used any of the following services in the last 12 months (number of respondents shown in brackets)



3.12 When looking only at the responses of residents who have used the services (Figure 4), it is the same services which are used most frequently: 67% use parks and open spaces at least once a month, and 62% use Newham’s Every Child programme this often. The same services are also used least frequently: 25% use Environmental services and 31% use arts and community groups and venues at least once every month.

Figure 4: Newham residents only: How often have you or someone in your household used the following services in Newham over the last 12 months?

Base: Respondents who are residents of Newham who had used any of the following services in the last 12 months (number of respondents shown in brackets)



Mayor's Promises

- 3.13 Respondents were shown a list of themes (See Appendix A) that have been proposed for the Mayor's promises that will help shape the council's approach to how it spends its budget. They were asked to rank them in order of importance from 1 to 3, based on which they consider to be the most preferable. When a rank analysis was run, the overall results showed that 'making this a place where people feel safe' was the most important proposed promise to respondents. This was followed by 'creating a clean and pleasant area' and 'quality housing that local people can afford'. (Table 5).
- 3.14 The analysis was then repeated, but only with those respondents who are residents of Newham. The same three promises were viewed as being most important, and in identical order.

Table 5: Rank order: Most important 'Mayor's Promises'.

	Rank Order: <u>Overall</u> (Base: 1,103)	Rank order: <u>Residents only</u> (Base: 943)
Making this a place where people feel safe	1	1
Creating a clean and pleasant area	2	2
Quality housing that local people can afford	3	3

- 3.15 Respondents were asked if they had any alternative priorities that they would like to propose. The 418 respondents (including 364 residents) who provided comments suggested the following: support elderly people (7% overall; 7% residents only), increased police presence/reduce crime rate (5% overall; 6% residents only), tackling antisocial behaviour (5% overall; 6% residents only), support for disabled people (5% overall; 6% residents only), making Newham cleaner/street cleaning (5% overall; 5% residents only) and more activities and facilities for young people (5% overall; 4% residents only).
- 3.16 Although some of these answers³ overlap with other questions in the questionnaire, it is not possible to include these comments in the ranking questions as this is a separate question.

³ All of the options that have been commented on overlap with other questions except for 'increased police presence/reduce crime rate'

The council's approach

- 3.17 Respondents were shown a list of four approaches for the council to take when making savings or generating income (See Appendix A) and were asked to rank them in order of preference from 1 to 3 for their top 3 choices. When a rank analysis was run, the results showed that respondents' most preferred approach was 'investing in businesses that could make a profit to fund services'. This was followed by 'raising more income through fees and taxes' and 'reducing services that everyone uses'. (Table 6).
- 3.18 The rank analysis was then repeated with only those respondents who are residents of Newham and the same three approaches were identified in identical order.

Table 6: Rank order: Which approaches should the council take when making savings or generating income?

	Rank Order: <u>Overall</u> (Base: 1,103)	Rank order: <u>Residents only</u> (Base: 954)
Investing in businesses that could make a profit to fund services	1	1
Raise more income through fees and taxes, like increasing the Council Tax you pay	2	2
Reducing services that everyone uses, like street cleaning, bin collections, and street lighting	3	3

- 3.19 Respondents were then shown a list of priorities and were asked to select their first, second and third preferences that they thought should be the Council's priorities when deciding how to set the budget. A rank analysis was run, and the top area that respondent's felt the council should focus on was: 'protecting people who are vulnerable, like older people and children at risk of abuse'. This was followed by 'providing good basic services that everyone uses' and 'investing in preventative work, to stop problems arising later'. (Table 7).
- 3.20 The same results were seen when the analysis was repeated with the responses of Newham residents only.

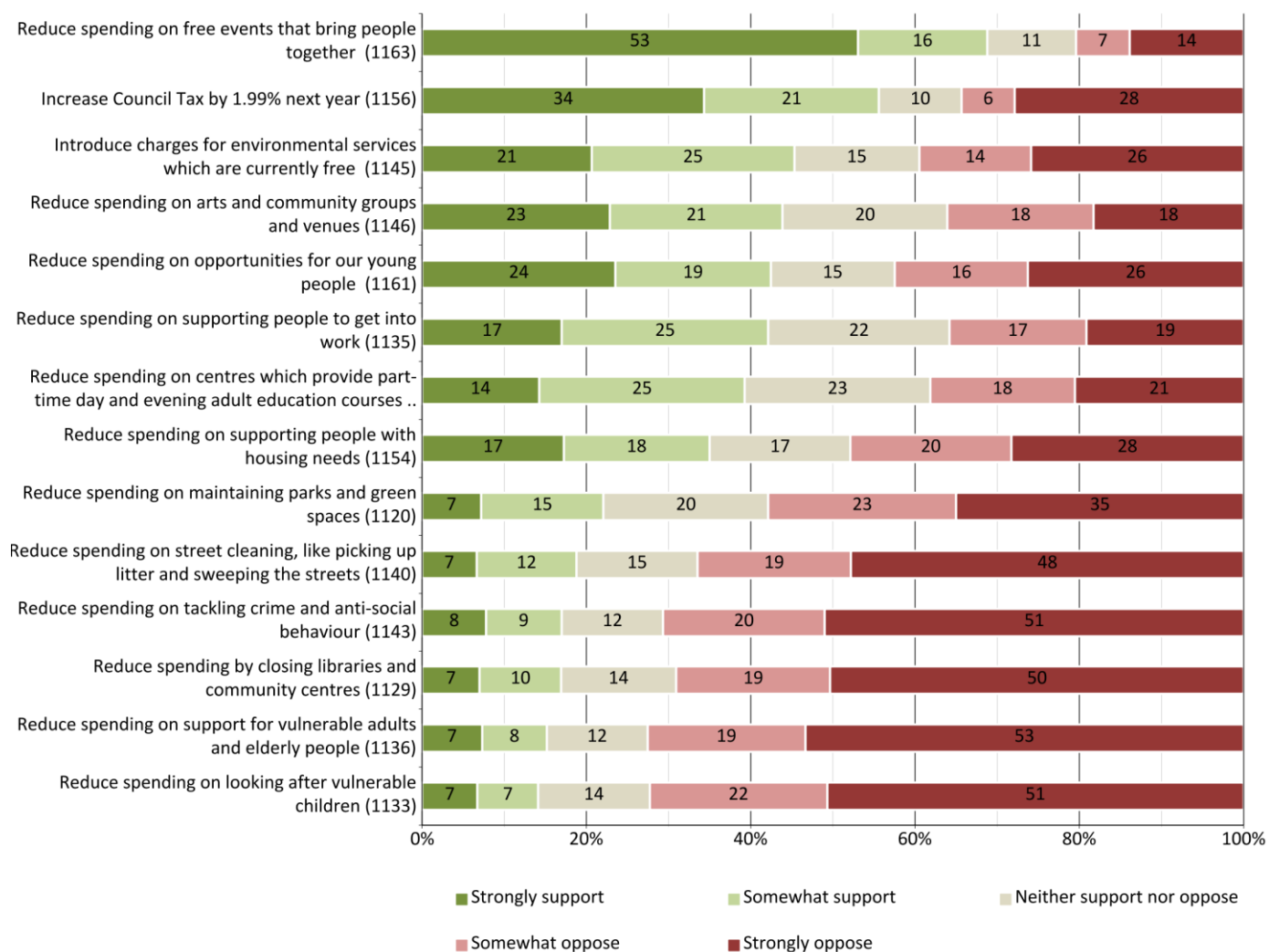
Table 7: Overall rank order: Which of these should be the council's priorities when deciding how to set the budget?

	Rank Order: <u>Overall</u> (Base: 1,146)	Rank order: <u>Residents only</u> (Base: 995)
Protecting people who are vulnerable, like older people and children at risk of abuse	1	1
Providing good basic services that everyone uses	2	2
Investing in preventative work, to stop problems arising later	3	3

Spending Priorities

- 3.21 Respondents were shown a list of possible approaches to saving money and generating income, and asked about whether they would support or oppose each of them. The overall results are summarised in Figure 5 below.
- 3.22 Further breakdowns of the results by area and by demographic sub-groups are provided in Appendix B.

Figure 5: Overall: Please tell us how much you support or oppose the following approaches to saving and generating income?
 Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 3.23 There was most support overall for reducing spending on free events that bring people together, like the Mayor’s Newham Show and the fireworks display (69%). This was followed by increasing council tax by 1.99% (56%).
- 3.24 Less than a fifth supported a reduction in spending on the following: street cleaning, like picking up litter and sweeping the streets (19%); tackling crime and anti-social behaviour like dumped rubbish, graffiti, street drinking, and food safety (17%); closing libraries and community centres (17%); support for vulnerable adults and elderly people, like home-care and residential care, and support

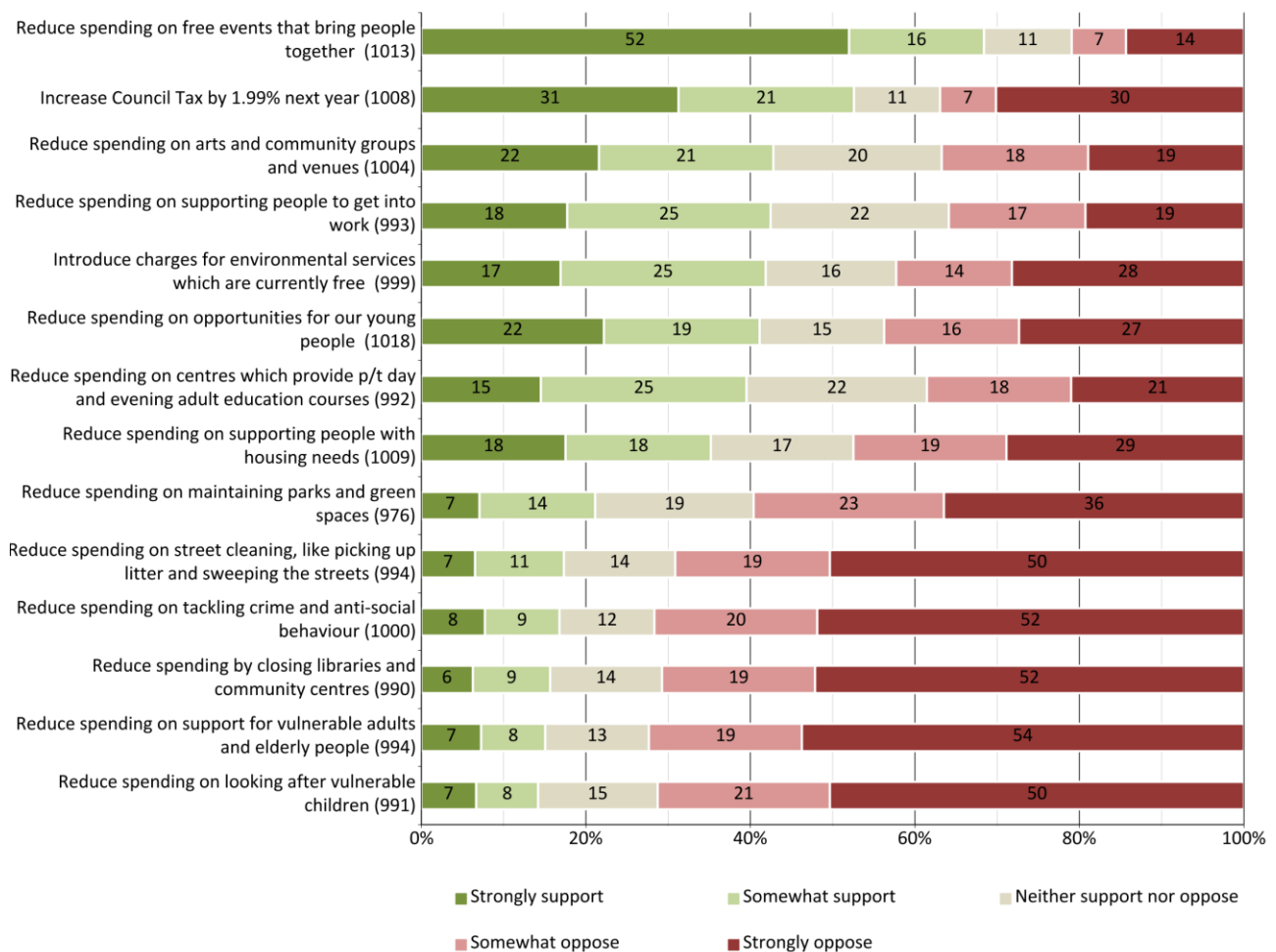
for people with mental health problems (15%); and looking after vulnerable children, like child protection and support for disabled children (14%).

3.25 Furthermore, more than 7 in 10 respondents opposed reducing spending on: support for vulnerable adults and elderly people (73%), looking after vulnerable children (72%) and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (71%).

The results for residents only are shown in Figure 6 below. These were generally very similar to the overall result. For example, the most widely supported approaches were reducing spending on free events that bring people together, like the Mayor’s Newham Show and the fireworks display (69%), and increasing council tax by 1.99% (53%).

Figure 6: Newham residents only: Please tell us how much you support or oppose the following approaches to saving and generating income?

Base: Respondents who are residents of Newham (number of respondents shown in brackets)



Spending Priorities – areas the council should focus on when looking to make savings or increase income

- 3.1 The questions discussed in the ‘Spending Priorities’ section were asked on both the main long questionnaire and the shorter version.
- 3.2 Respondents were asked to think about the various options in relation to one another, and were asked to select their top three areas that they felt the council should focus on when making savings or increasing income. When rank analyses were run separately for this question, the top three results for the short and long open questionnaires came out the same. Therefore, the results for both versions of the open questionnaire have been discussed together. (Table 8).
- 3.3 The top area that respondents felt the council should focus on was ‘reducing spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor’s Newham Show and the fireworks display’. This was followed by ‘increasing council tax by 1.99%’ and ‘reducing spending on young people including free music lessons, sports and theatre for children in Newham’.
- 3.4 As with the previous question where ‘reducing spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor’s Newham Show and the fireworks display’ came out as the option that most people supported in order to make savings and generate income, this also came out at the top area that the council should focus on when making savings or increasing income to meet their budget challenge.
- 3.5 The rank analysis was repeated using the responses of Newham residents only and the same top three priorities were identified first, second and third.

Table 8: Rank order: Areas the council should focus on when looking to make savings or increase income

	Rank Order: <u>Overall (short and long)</u> (Base: 1,866)	Rank order: <u>Residents only (long)</u> (Base: 945)
Reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display	1	1
Increase council tax by 1.99%	2	2
Reduce spending on young people including free music lessons, sports and theatre for children in Newham	3	3

Spending Priorities – areas the council should not focus on when looking to make savings or increase income

- 3.6 Respondents were shown the same list of different areas for making savings or generating income to meet the budget challenge (See Appendix A) and were asked to rank their top three for the council **not** to focus on.
- 3.7 It is worth noting that when rank analyses were run separately for the short and long open questionnaires the top three results were different to the overall and they were also different to each other. 'Reducing spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour' was the top ranked result for both the short and long questionnaires combined and the long questionnaire. However, it was ranked second by the short questionnaire respondents.
- 3.8 'Increasing council tax by 1.99%' came out as the top ranked area that should the council should not focus on for the short questionnaire, whereas this was the third ranked option for the short and long questionnaires combined and it did not come out in the top three results for the long questionnaire.
- 3.9 The main difference between the short and long questionnaire results was that 'reducing spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people' was in the top three results for the long questionnaire, whereas it was not in the top three ranked results for the short questionnaire; and 'Increasing council tax by 1.99%' was in the top three results for the short questionnaire but it was not in the top three results for the long questionnaire.
- 3.10 There are no differences between the top three preferences of long questionnaire respondents overall, and the top three preferences when looking at the responses of Newham residents only.

Table 9: Rank order for short and long questionnaires combined: Areas the council should not focus on when looking to make savings or increase income

Short and long questionnaires combined	Rank Order (Base: 1,840)
Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	1
Reduce spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people	2
Increase council tax by 1.99%	3

Table 10: Rank order for long questionnaire only: Areas the council should not focus on when looking to make savings or increase income

Long questionnaire	Rank Order: <u>Overall</u> (Base: 1,066)	Rank order: <u>Residents only</u> (Base: 930)
Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	1	1
Reduce spending on support for vulnerable adults and elderly people	2	2
Reduce spending on looking after vulnerable children	3	3

Table 11: Rank order for short questionnaire only: Areas the council should not focus on when looking to make savings or increase income

Short questionnaire	Rank Order (Base: 774)
Increase council tax by 1.99%	1
Reduce spending on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	2
Reduce spending on looking after vulnerable children	3

- 3.11 Respondents to the long questionnaire were also given the opportunity to provide any alternative suggestions for areas the council should consider to reduce its spending or increase its income, other than those that had previously been mentioned.
- 3.12 The 551 respondents (including 489 Newham residents) who provided comments covered a very broad and diverse range of areas. However, the most common suggestion (mentioned by 18% of valid respondents overall, including 19% of residents) was to stop producing the Newham magazine, or to put it online.
- 3.13 This was followed by: Reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display (17% overall; 17% residents only); reduce high salaries for councillors/reduce councillor expenses (9% overall; 10% residents only); reduce the Mayor's salary/expenses allowance/pension (7% overall; 8% residents only); get out of expensive loan agreements⁴ (including comments about the redevelopment of the Olympic Stadium/West Ham United) (6% overall; 6% residents only); and parking (e.g. reduce free parking/charge for parking permits/more parking fines/dealing with illegally parked cars etc.) (6% overall; 5% residents only).
- 3.14 Although the 'reduce spending on free events that bring people together like the Mayor's Newham Show and the fireworks display' responses overlap with previous questions, it is not possible to include these comments in the results to previous questions as this is a separate question.

⁴ Between 2002 and 2009 LBN refinanced their debts to take advantage of lower interest rates available through a series of Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans from banks. As a result the council saved £65 million on their borrowing portfolio. LBN have ensured that their borrowing protects their finances from a variety of different interest rates expected over the lifetime of the loans. Going forward the council is required to borrow to fund its capital programme and will endeavour to secure the best available rates as the need arises.



This project was carried out in compliance with ISO 20252:2012.