

Calderdale MBC

Wards affected: all

Cabinet: 12 February 2024

Budget consultation 2024/2025 to 2026/2027

Report of the Director of Resources and Transformation.

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To report on feedback received as part of the budget consultation to date.

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 To consider feedback on the budget proposals when finalising the budget.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet consider comments made by the public during the budget consultation period and take the feedback into account when making the budget recommendation to Full Council.

4. Background and / or details

- 4.1 Each year, when the Cabinet publishes its draft budget, we open a period of consultation. This year the draft budget was published on 15 January 2024. Responses are considered at Cabinet on 12 February 2024. Any further comments after this date are provided to Cabinet for full Council on 26 February 2024, where final decisions will be taken.
- 4.2 The draft funding settlement for Local Govt for 2024/25 was announced by the Chancellor on 18th December 2023, with no guarantees about Government funding beyond that time. This is considered as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The Council is legally required to set a balanced budget each year. Based on the Council's current financial forecasts, the local authority presented in the consultation budget report, budget deficits of £7.5 million in 2024/25, £6.2 million in 2025/26 and £4.8 million in 2026/27. The proposals focussed on the steps needed to deliver a balanced and robust budget for the next three years, from 2024/25 to 2026/27 and to find some small scope for investment in key areas of the Council.
- 4.3 Methods of consultation on the proposed Council budget for 2024/25 to 2026/27, included:
 - A dedicated webpage, with an online survey running from 15 January 2024 to 11 February 2024:
<https://new.calderdale.gov.uk/council/budgets-and-spending/cabinets-budget-proposals>

- A general feedback form that could be completed online from 15 January 2024 to 7 February 2024. This could also be printed off and posted or handed in.
- A dedicated budget email and postal address for general comments or feedback open from 15 January 2024 to 26 February 2024.
- Live online Question and Answer session for Calderdale Council staff on 24 January 2024 at 12pm. This was led by the Chief Executive, the Director of Resources and Transformation and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- Live YouTube and Facebook Question and Answer session for residents and businesses held on 1 February 2024 at 7pm. This was led by the Leader of the Council, Jane Scullion, with the Director of Resources and Transformation and the Cabinet Member for Resources.
- BSL translations of the proposals were recorded through FaceTime sessions for people who utilise sign language services.
- Drop-in sessions were delivered at Halifax Customer First to support deaf service users to participate in the consultation.
- Content was also made available and recorded via SignVideo.

4.4 Information was shared with the following communication networks:

- Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Alliance (VSIA) via their Chief Officers Forum and weekly member bulletins
- Calderdale Council Talkback Citizens' Panel (355 members).
- Businesses via the Place Team
- Inclusive Economy Digest Newsletter
- Upper Valley Blog
- Upper Valley Ward Forum mailing list
- Halifax Central Initiative Blog, feeding into its Twitter and Facebook accounts
- Facebook pages (50 Shades of Halifax, HAPPYFAX, Halifax Chit Chat, Pellon Community, Wheatley Residents, Calderdale Environmental Forum, Mums of Halifax, North Halifax Improved Streets for People, Friends of Beechwood Park, Halifax Community UK)
- Lower Valley and North East Friday Flyer newsletter
- Lower Valley Blog
- Calderdale Involving People Network
- Calderdale Over 50's Forum
- Calderdale Council Ecall newsletter
- Youth Council
- Deaf service users on the Council database who use the Council's sign language services

4.5 Links and information about the consultation was shared by the Neighbourhood teams with local groups, schools, shops and businesses. A full list is included in **Appendix one**.

4.6 The consultation has been considered at the Town and Parish Liaison meeting and shared at the following ward forums:

- 16/01/24: Ryburn
 - 17/01/24: Luddendenfoot
 - 31/01/24: Elland
 - 24/01/24: Calder
 - 05/02/24: Park
 - 08/02/24: Skircoat
- 4.7 Consultation has been carried out with the Council's Trade Unions to brief them on the budget proposals and they have been invited to comment.
- 4.8 Consultation was also shared electronically with representatives of 120 Business Rate payers in Calderdale to allow them to review the changes in the budget and give them the opportunity to make any comments.
- 4.9 Information was shared on the Council's social media pages (X / Twitter, Facebook) and on the home page of the Council website. It was shared via a poster (**see Appendix two**).

5. Responses

- 5.1 The online survey was divided into eight sections, defined by the different service areas or directorates the proposals related to. The majority of responses signalled whether people supported or did not support a particular proposal. At the end of each section, a free text box invited people to add further comments about the proposals. At the end of the survey, there was a text box for people to add any further, general comments about the proposals. People could choose to answer questions about all the proposals or just a selection. The survey was opened on 15 January 2024 and will close at 11.59pm 11 February 2024.
- 5.2 Data from the survey was extracted on 07 February 2024. Up to this date, 1510 responses had been received. Due to the volume of responses and time required to analyse the data, this is the most current figure possible. Further extractions and analysis will be conducted after the survey closes on 11 February, with a final update to this report completed by 12 February 2024.
- 5.3 8 responses have been received via the general feedback form that could be submitted via email or post, as of 08 February 2024.
- 5.4 32 comments have been received via email up to 08 February 2024.
- 5.5 69 responses were received from Unique Ways and Family Voice, in response to proposals for D-Catch Funding. They conducted a survey of members and produced a report of findings. This feedback is against proposed savings to be made in this service. The survey responses and summary of members' feedback has been incorporated into the information for consideration by Cabinet.

- 5.6 Any further comments received after the final report is completed on 9 February 2024 will be compiled into a Word document and passed on to Cabinet, in advance of the full Budget Council meeting on 26 February 2024.
- 5.7 A full record of response comments received through the online survey has been collated, grouped according to the service area they relate to and further sorted to align with individual proposals. To date there have been over 1390 individual comments received. In addition, feedback received via feedback form and email to the budget@calderdale.gov.uk email account has also been incorporated for cabinet consideration.
- 5.8 A summary of the 1510 contributions received via the online survey to date regarding supporting or not supporting the proposals are recorded in the tables below. Figures are presented as counts and percentages, based on the total number of survey responses received. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not always equal 100%. Comments on each proposal have been sorted and coded according to the proposals they refer to. Some comments refer to more than one proposal; some are generic and apply to all the proposals. The summaries are a general overview of the main themes and sentiments.

Proposals for the Medium-term Financial Plan and Funding

Increase in Council Tax	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	541	638	331
Percentages	36%	42%	22%

Increase in fees and charges across venues and services	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	574	605	331
Percentages	38%	40%	22%

Use of Council reserves	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	891	255	364
Percentages	59%	17%	24%

A total of 191 comments were received about proposals for the Medium-term Financial Plan and Funding. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

Most of the comments were about increases in Council Tax and fees and charges for services. Most people who commented were against these proposals. Some people supported use of reserves, but some wanted more detail in order to form an opinion.

Comments relating to proposals for the Medium-term Financial Plan and Funding. Total number of comments: 191 Main topics and themes.	Number of references	As a percentage of the 191 comments	As percentage of total number of survey respondents (1510)
Increase in fees and charges – mostly against	72	38%	5%
Other (general comments about the budget, ideas for other savings or comments that apply to different proposals)	67	35%	4%
Council Tax increase – mostly against	65	34%	4%
Use of reserves – some in favour, some wanting more information	26	14%	2%
General comments that apply to all these proposals – some supportive of MTFP and some wanting more information	11	6%	1%

Proposals about Adult Services and Wellbeing

Charging for care services within Heatherstones	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	658	302	550
Percentages	44%	20%	36%

Reducing funding for Recovery College	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	653	308	549
Percentages	43%	20%	36%

Continuing health care – Decision Support Tool optimisation	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	865	110	535
Percentages	57%	7%	35%

Removing vacant social care posts in the Mental Health Core Pathway	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	500	470	540
Percentages	33%	31%	36%

Changes to the Vocational Service delivered by SWYPFT	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	723	231	556
Percentages	48%	15%	37%

Savings related to housing-related support – Extra Care (Mytholm Meadows refurbishment)	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	805	146	559
Percentages	53%	10%	37%

Transformation of Day Services	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	732	208	570
Percentages	48%	14%	38%

A total of 99 comments were received about proposals for Adult Services and Wellbeing. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic and applied to all the proposals or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

Transformation of Day Services attracted the greatest number of specific comments, with more information being required about what the service would look like in the future. A proportion of the comments were generic or applied to all the proposals.

Comments relating to proposals for Adult Services and Wellbeing. Total number of comments: 99	Number of references	As percentage of the 99 comments	As percentage of survey respondents (1510)
Main topics and themes.			
Transformation of Day Services – concerns, questions about the detail, comments about the need for safe places in the community for people with complex needs.	37	37%	2%
General comments (applies to all) – wanting more detail or information, impact on vulnerable people, capacity of NHS to absorb work.	35	35%	2%
Vacant Social Care posts in Mental Health / concerns and questions about cuts to Mental Health services, workload of existing staff	15	15%	1%
Reduction of funding for Recovery College / questions and concerns about cuts to Mental Health services	13	13%	1%
Changes to the Vocational Service / questions and concerns about cuts to Mental Health services	8	8%	1%

Proposals about Public Services

Investment in managing Ash Dieback	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	672	628	210
Percentages	44%	42%	14%

Disposal of the Shay Stadium	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	837	513	160
Percentages	55%	34%	11%

Reconfiguration of Sign Language and Translation service	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	914	354	242
Percentages	61%	23%	16%

Household Waste Recycling Centres: Introduction of permit scheme / reduction in operational hours	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	870	473	167
Percentages	58%	31%	11%

Closure of Elland Household Waste Recycling Centre	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	343	1005	162
Percentages	23%	67%	11%

Pest control – ending the in-house traded service	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	678	630	202
Percentages	45%	42%	13%

Camera- based traffic enforcement for moving traffic violations and bus land monitoring	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	741	587	182
Percentages	49%	39%	12%

Reduction to the library book fund	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	744	580	186
Percentages	49%	38%	12%

Restructure of the Neighbourhoods and Cohesion team	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	915	358	237
Percentages	61%	24%	16%

A total of 448 comments were received about proposals for Public Services. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic and applied to all proposals or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

The proposals that had the most comments were the closure of Elland Household Waste and Recycling Centre and the disposal of the Shay Stadium. Most comments were against the closure of the Recycling Centre. Most comments about the Shay were against the proposals, though some included preferences for other options.

Comments relating to proposals for Public Services. Total number of comments: 448 Main topics and themes.	Number of mentions	As a percentage of the 448 comments	As percentage of total number of survey respondents (1510)
Closure of Elland HWRC – most against. Lots believe it will increase fly tipping	228	51%	15%
Disposal of Shay Stadium – most against it or suggesting alternative ideas	142	32%	9%
HWRC – introduction of permits and reduced hours. Some against, some in favour. Some confused about whether the permits are charged for?	78	17%	5%
General comments that apply across these proposals - mixed feedback. Some wanting more information, some against cuts, some in favour of reviewing services, some with ideas for other savings	27	6%	2%
Camera-based traffic enforcement – most against. Some think it will negatively impact tourists and visitors. Some see it as more about raising money than improving safety.	24	5%	2%
Reduction to Library Book Fund – most against.	20	4%	1%
Restructure of Neighbourhoods and Cohesion team - most against reduction in service, some with ideas for savings.	16	4%	1%

Proposals about Regeneration and Strategy

Investment in a strategic approach to land management	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	505	437	558
Percentages	33%	29%	37%

Investment in No Recourse to Public Funds – Domestic Abuse	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	825	139	546
Percentages	55%	9%	36%

Investment to cover increased costs of repairs and maintenance to Council's property portfolio	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	672	275	563
Percentages	45%	18%	37%

Winter service – policy review	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	475	470	565
Percentages	31%	31%	37%

Street lighting – policy review	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	738	216	566
Percentages	49%	14%	37%

Festive lighting – reduced provision	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	565	411	534
Percentages	37%	27%	35%

Use of WYCA Gainshare funding to pay for some Council services	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	784	149	577
Percentages	52%	10%	38%

Ending Business Engagement service	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	736	188	586
Percentages	49%	12%	39%

Reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector commissioning and volunteer support	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	458	472	580
Percentages	30%	31%	38%

A total of 125 comments were received about proposals for Regeneration and Strategy. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic and applied to all proposals or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

Most of the comments were about cuts to the Voluntary and Community Commissioning budget and grants and / or festive lighting. Some people felt that with cuts to services, the voluntary sector would be needed even more to plug the gap. Of the people who commented about festive lighting, most were against reducing it, however some suggested alternative ways of funding it.

Comments relating to proposals for Regeneration and Strategy. Total number of comments: 125 Main topics and themes.	Number of references	As percentage of the 125 comments	As percentage of total survey respondents (1510)
Reduction in Voluntary and Community services and grants. Most against the proposals. Some saying this sector will be required to plug the gaps if services diminish.	36	29%	2%
Reduction in Festive lighting – most against it. Some asking if it can be funded via sponsorship or within communities.	27	22%	2%
Winter service policy review – most against cutbacks to gritting and managing potholes, some wanting more detail. Safety issues highlighted.	19	15%	1%
Gainshare Funding – some concerned this is a cut to film and events team and environment work. A few in favour who see this as non-essential.	17	14%	1%
Streetlighting policy review – some in favour, some against. Around a third highlighted safety concerns.	17	14%	1%
General comments – apply to all these proposals or non-specific. Ideas for other ways to save money. Questions or wanting more detail.	16	13%	1%
Land management review – mixed feedback but some critical of use of consultants	13	10%	1%
Ending Business Engagement - most against. Impact on Adult Care services, tourism, community wealth-building highlighted.	13	10%	1%
Increased costs of repairs and maintenance – mixed feedback	11	9%	1%

Proposals for the Chief Executive's Office

Reduced budget for communications campaign and operational costs	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	983	40	487
Percentages	65%	3%	32%

Temporary reduction and targeting of some Public Health funded services / maximising NHS investment	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	642	360	508
Percentages	43%	24%	34%

Public Health Commissioning Plan contract savings and efficiencies	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	762	208	540
Percentages	50%	14%	36%

A total of 64 comments were received about proposals for the Chief Executive's Office. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic and applied to all the proposals or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

Most comments were about the proposals for Public Health. Most were against cuts to health services.

Comments relating to proposals for the Chief Executive's Office. Total number of comments: 64 Main topics and themes.	Number of references	As percentage of the 64 comments	As percentage of total survey respondents (1510)
General comments that apply to all these proposals or are non-specific. Includes questions about salaries or wanting more detail on proposals.	21	33%	1%
Reduction in Public Health funded services (eg: Better Living). Most were against cuts to Public Health and saw these as preventative services.	20	31%	1%
Savings and efficiencies in Public Health commissioning. Some thought this was linked to privatisation. Others questioned the savings or were against cuts to health services.	20	31%	1%

Proposals for Children and Young People's Services

Reducing targeted youth delivery in Calderdale	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	356	666	488
Percentages	24%	44%	32%

Reduction in level of preventative work of the Youth Justice service	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	331	697	482
Percentages	22%	46%	32%

Savings to Young Person's Supported Housing Project (care leavers) (Invest to Save)	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	843	177	490
Percentages	56%	12%	32%

Inclusion funding (D-Catch) – revision of non-statutory offer	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	454	547	509
Percentages	30%	36%	34%

A total of 128 comments were received about proposals for Children and Young People's services. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic and applied to all the proposals or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

The majority of comments were generally against cuts to Children and Young People's services.

Comments relating to proposals for Children and Young People's services. Total number of comments: 128. Main topics and themes.	Number of references	As percentage of the 128 comments	As percentage of total survey respondents (1510)
General comments that applied to all the proposals or were non-specific. Most were against cutting services.	43	34%	3%
Reduction in Youth Services delivery – most against this proposal. Some see this work as preventative. Concerns the work will be pushed on to other services.	40	31%	3%
Reduction in Youth Justice service – most against “prevention is better than cure”, important to protect young people	36	28%	2%
Revision of D-Catch. Most against it.	25	20%	1%

Proposals for Resource and Transformation Services

Resource and Transformation – service reduction	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	780	107	623
Percentages	52%	7%	41%

Savings to schools' insurance premium	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	781	121	608
Percentages	52%	8%	40%

A total of 38 comments were received about proposals for Resource and Transformation services. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments were generic and applied to all the proposals or referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

There was mixed feedback for these proposals. Some wanted more detail on what the service is or does.

For the schools' insurance scheme, almost two thirds were against the changes. Some were concerned about pressures on school budgets, however others were in favour of the changes.

Comments relating to proposals for Resource and Transformation services. Total number of comments: 38	Number of references	As percentage of the 38 comments	As percentage of total survey respondents (1510)
Main topics and themes.			
Service reduction – mixed feedback. Some support reviewing the service, some want more detail.	16	42%	1%
Schools' insurance premium changes – some in favour, almost two thirds against	15	39%	1%

Proposals for cross-Council services

Reduced budget for commissioned services and contracts	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	753	177	580
Percentages	50%	12%	38%

Council Tax – introducing a 100% premium for second homes	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	772	190	548
Percentages	51%	13%	36%

Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Support	Don't Support	No vote
Counts	560	384	566
Percentages	37%	25%	37%

A total of 57 comments were received about proposals for cross-Council services. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

There was mixed feedback. Slightly more were in favour of increased Council Tax charges for second homes. Some said it should extend to Air BnB properties. Some felt it penalised people who “were doing well” or “working hard”. A few thought it could negatively impact renters.

Comments relating to proposals for cross-Council services. Total number of comments: 57	Number of references	As percentage of all 57 comments	As percentage of total survey respondents (1510)
Main topics and themes.			
Changes to Council Tax charges for second homes. Most were in favour of this. A few felt it would negatively impact renters, with landlords passing on the costs. A few felt it was penalising those who “work hard”.	22	39%	1%
Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Mixed feedback – some in favour, some concerned it would impact the most vulnerable people.	19	33%	1%
Reviewing commissioned services and contracts – mixed feedback. Some in favour, some wanted more information on process and savings	13	23%	1%

General feedback about the budget proposals

At the end of the survey, people were invited to provide general feedback about the budget proposals. A total of 244 comments were received. The comments were sorted and coded to extract the main themes and topics. These are summarised in the table below. Some comments referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

The highest number of comments referenced the disposal of the Shay Stadium. Most were against this proposal, though some expressed a preference for one option over another or suggested new solutions.

General comments about the proposals (open question inviting feedback). Total number of comments: 244. Main topics and themes.	Number of references	As percentage of the 244 comments	As percentage of total survey respondents (1510)
Disposal of Shay Stadium – most against. Some had ideas for other solutions or expressed a preference for one option over another.	62	25%	4%
Queries about staff salaries or Councillor's expenses. Review to streamline teams. Cut spend on senior roles. Do not create a new Council ward. Elected officers should do more. Review efficiencies in all departments. Why cut some teams and not others? More detail wanted on job cuts.	41	17%	3%
Suggestions for other savings and efficiencies. Varied suggestions.	31	13%	2%
Appreciative or accepting that cuts and savings must be made: "tough choices", "hard decisions".	27	11%	2%
Council Tax. Most against the increase, 2 in favour. Paying more for less services. Not getting value for money. Big houses should pay more. Review Council Tax bands. Some against reviewing the Council Tax Reduction scheme. Some in support of taxing second homes.	26	11%	2%
Elland HWRC. Most against this. Concerns it will lead to fly tipping.	24	10%	2%
Consultations process. Some felt they did not have enough information to make decisions. Process should be more inclusive – not accessible enough. Need to listen to people, consult front-line staff.	21	9%	1%
Projects: too much reliance on consultants. More supervision required of projects and signing off work. Need to see more value for money. Need procurement team with private sector experience. Some against spending on area development projects big and small. Are projects wanted by the community?	21	9%	1%

- 5.9 40 comments were received via email and feedback form. Some of the comments were very long and detailed. This number includes feedback from ten people who use the Council's BSL and translation services. In addition, 69 people provided feedback on the proposals for D-Catch funding via support from Family Voice and Unique Ways. The comments were sorted and coded to extract the main themes. The results are summarised in the table. Some comments referenced more than one theme; all were counted.

The highest proportion of comments (65%) were mainly from the Family Voice group supported by Unique Ways. They were against cuts to D-Catch funding. Disposal of the Shay Stadium and cuts to the BSL and translation service were also mentioned by ten or more people.

Comments received via email or feedback form. Total number of comments: 109 Main topics and themes.	Number of mentions	As percentage of 109 comments
Against proposed savings to D-Catch funding	71	65%
Against disposal of Shay Stadium or suggestions of other solutions	11	10%
Against cuts to the BSL and translation service	10	9%
Against cuts to other services – mostly one or two pieces of feedback. These were named as: Winter Service, Business Engagement, Festive Lighting, Film and Events team, Climate and Environment team	6	6%
Against closure of tips and changes to the Household Waste Recycling sites. One in favour of reduced hours. Some unclear about charges for permits. Concerns about fly tipping.	6	6%
Savings in Children and Young People's Services. Most against, one in favour of reviewing costs	6	6%

- 5.10 A live Q&A session was held for Calderdale Council employees on 24 January 2024 from 12pm to 1pm. This was led by Chief Executive, Robin Tuddenham and member of the Council Leadership team. Employees were invited to ask questions about the proposals and to provide their feedback via the consultation channels available.
- 5.11 The YouTube live Question and Answer session was held on 1 February 2024 from 7pm to 8pm. It was led by Leader of the Council, Councillor Jane Scullion. Calderdale Council Director of Resources and Transformation, Becky McIntyre and Councillor Silvia Dacre, also attended. Recordings of the event, along with public comments are now available to view. The recordings have received 262 views on YouTube and 345 views on Facebook. There were three people who commented in the live chat on YouTube and five people who left comments on the Facebook video. These included questions for the panel and comments about different proposals.

- 5.12 Comments from Calderdale Council's social media channels have been collated and collated in the information considered by Cabinet.
- 5.13 The feedback and comments provided as part of the consultation provides insight beyond the budget and can be used to inform future strategies, service development across the council. There was also welcome feedback that will inform how we engagement with stakeholders in the future on the council's finances.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no known financial implications as a result of the consultation. Cabinet will need to consider whether to make any changes to their recommendations to Budget Council on 26 February 2024 as a result of the responses received.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The proposed consultation does not present any legal implications and is part of a wider budget setting process.

8. Human resources & organisational development implications

- 8.1 Consultation on the budget proposals has taken place with the workforce and specific groups of staff directly affected by the proposals. This has been done in accordance with the Council's HR policies and with recognised Trades Unions with feedback received considered as part of ongoing consultation processes.

9. Equality and diversity

- 9.1 In the consultation, we have sought to engage groups who are less likely to respond to generic consultations. These include people who have one or more protected characteristics:

- Young people
- Older people
- Women, including women from ethnic minority backgrounds
- People with disabilities
- People of different faiths
- People of different sexual orientation

We have encouraged the voluntary and community sector to engage and give their views. Many of these organisations and groups work with vulnerable people. Gaining the widest range of views will contribute to the Cabinet's decision-making process.

For further information on this report contact:

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