

Histon & Impington Parish Council

REPORT TO:	Council	19 January 2016
AUTHOR/S:	Denis Payne	

Council Tax consultation 2016-2017 results

Background

November's meeting approved (<http://is.gd/w25Yi6>) both the principle of consultation, and also the detail of a questionnaire to be used.

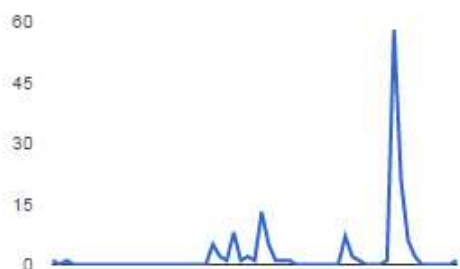
This was not only an online questionnaire (via Google Docs, at no charge) but was also published in HI News. Paper copies of the questionnaire were also printed and distributed by the office team.

The consultation was launched electronically as soon as HI News was out. It was posted to the Council website, announced on Facebook, via Twitter and via "HisImp-Chat". Subsequently, further posts were made to Facebook, and some groups of individuals were individually targeted.

Responses

The questionnaire went live on 2nd December, and was shut down around 12:45am on January 1st. This graph shows the rate of the responses. We had just three responses from HI News, and one on the paper form.

Number of daily responses



We had had just under 60 responses by 28th December when a post on Facebook (by my wife) prompted a rush of completions. The final number completed was 143 (including those few in on paper - these were manually entered into the online form).

Thanks also to Nick Wood, and others who also supported the process by posting to FB etc.

That's 143 out of a total population of approximately 9,000 (latest (2013) County Council Research Group figures - <http://is.gd/lZezwm>) - 1.5% (or out of 3680 dwellings, 3.9%). The County Council had recently completed a consultation on Council Tax and spending with an overall County response of just under 700 (a response rate of around 0.1%), 22 of which were from Histon & Impington.

The map (final page) shows the distribution of respondents (based on postcode) - we have good coverage except for Kings Meadows.

Further analysis

We had 46 comments under the heading "*Is there anything else that the Parish Council should be looking to spend on?*" and a similar number under the heading "*Do you have any comments on this consultation?*"

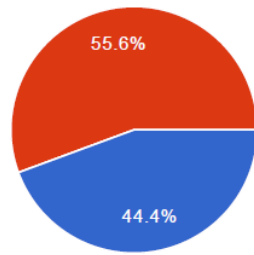
Recommendations

Council should:

1. Note:
 - a. The positive support for the Parish Council to do more, and for spending increases on young people, older people, environment and highways.
 - b. The position on recreation, where there is an indication for a spending reduction
 - c. The support for Council Tax increases, with 60% supporting “up to £6 per year” or “whatever it takes”; but recognising also that 15% were against any increase
 - d. That 42 of the respondents were interested in helping the Parish Council either on an ad-hoc basis, as a committee member or as a Councillor
2. Commit to an annual consultation of this nature. We got useful feedback, we’ve set a precedent, we have a community that is more aware of the issues, *“no taxation without representation”*
3. Ensure that the results (in the form of this paper) are published on the website
4. Follow up with those who offered to assist the Council, and specifically those interested in standing for Council
5. Complete the analysis of the comments/feedback, and respond as appropriate

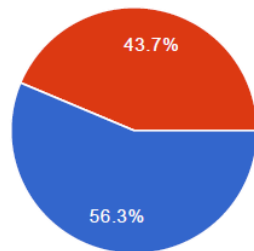
Appendix - Summary of Responses

Do you agree with the County Council that volunteering is part of the solution to budget cuts?



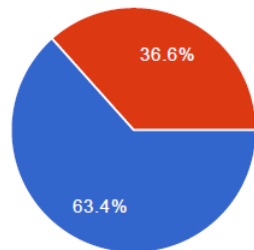
Yes **63** 44.4%
No **79** 55.6%

Do you already do volunteer work in the community?



Yes **80** 56.3%
No **62** 43.7%

Should (as suggested by the County Council) the Parish Council do more?



Yes **90** 63.4%
No **52** 36.6%

Young people [How should the Parish Council spend on:]



More **52** 36.6%
About the same **79** 55.6%
Less **11** 7.7%

Older people [How should the Parish Council spend on:]



More	71	50%
About the same	62	43.7%
Less	9	6.3%

Environment [How should the Parish Council spend on:]



More	49	34.5%
About the same	77	54.2%
Less	16	11.3%

Highways [How should the Parish Council spend on:]



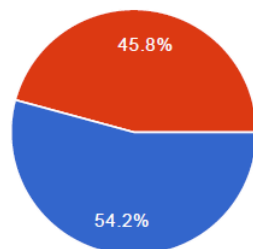
More	54	38%
About the same	65	45.8%
Less	23	16.2%

Recreation [How should the Parish Council spend on:]



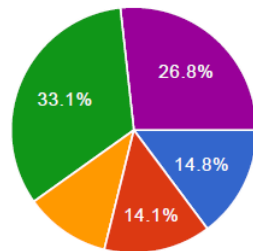
More	27	19%
About the same	70	49.3%
Less	45	31.7%

Should the Parish Council be spending on additional PCSO time?



Yes	77	54.2%
No	65	45.8%

Would you be prepared to see the Parish Council Tax rise to meet local service needs



No	21	14.8%
Yes - by up to £2 a year	20	14.1%
Yes - by up to £4 a year	16	11.3%
Year - by up to £6 per year	47	33.1%
Yes - by whatever it takes	38	26.8%

Would you be interested in helping the Parish Council?



On an ad hoc basis	34	81%
On a working party looking at a specific area of work	18	42.9%
By becoming a Parish Councillor	3	7.1%

H&I Budget Consultation - responses

