



Budget Proposals 2009/10 Consultation

Listening to local people!

Boston Borough Council is committed to involving the residents of Boston in decisions about the area. People are at the very heart of what we do, and your views are vital in providing the right services for Boston.

This year Boston Borough Council undertook an extensive public consultation, and received over 1,100 surveys and views from a number of focus groups and interviews. Findings from the budget consultation combined with other information were then used to inform and agree a budget for 2009/10.

A summary of the findings from the budget consultation is included here. Full details of the budget consultation results are available on our web-site: www.boston.gov.uk - Have your say.

We asked you about Party in the Park, and whether or not you would be prepared to pay a minimum of £10 adult entry and £7.50 child entry to see it continue.

You said: over 68% of respondents indicated that they would not be prepared to pay this much for entry to Party in the Park. However, many of you wanted to see Party in the Park continue, and offered alternative solutions:

We listened to what you said, and while Party in the Park has been suspended, we are looking at other providers who may be able to make it a viable option; as yet no private sector organisations have shown that they could significantly reduce the cost. The Council recognises the importance of Party in the Park to the people of Boston and is committed to looking at other options for its continuation in 2010; however, the cost of the event led to the decision not to fund Party in the Park through the Council's budget, resulting in a substantial saving of £82,000. We will continue to explore other options, including those raised by the students of Boston College and other members of the public during the consultation process.

We asked you about the opening hours at the Guildhall and the Haven, and about relocating the Tourist Information Centre.

You said: 61% of you were happy with the proposal overall, however many of you expressed concern over moving the Tourist Information Centre to The Guildhall.

We listened and The Guildhall and The Haven will both open four days a week throughout the year, apart from four to six weeks in February when the Guildhall will close for maintenance. The Tourist Information Centre will remain in the Haven, and the Council is working with St Botolph's Church to make printed tourist information available at the Church. Printed tourist information will also be available at the Council's reception area in West Street.



We asked what options you preferred for CCTV.

You said: 63% of all respondents said they thought there should be joint funding between the police, local business and the Council. 9% supported single staffing, and only 3% felt that CCTV should be stopped altogether. An overwhelming number of comments were received in support of the continuation of CCTV.

We listened and while local business and the police were approached about CCTV no offers for funding were forthcoming. The Council recognises the importance of CCTV to the community, however having limited resources the decision was made to continue to provide CCTV 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, but with single staffing. While we appreciate that this was not the preferred option, it ensures the continuation of CCTV which the public indicated was their priority.



We asked whether you supported an increase in parking season tickets from £280 to £320 a year.

You said: 55% of you supported the proposal in full, while only 26% of you were against the proposal.

We listened and parking season tickets will increase from £280 to £320 a year from April 2009.

We asked about developing high quality public conveniences at Park Gate, and closing the Cattle Market toilets.

You said: 53% of respondents supported the proposal; however during face-to-face consultation we found out that those who were against the closure of the Cattle Market toilets felt very strongly about this, and that many were users.

We listened and the Park Gates Toilets will be improved, and the Council is currently looking at tenders for this work. Entry to the toilets will be from outside of the park gates, and the toilets will be attended whenever open. This is likely to result in a small charge for their use. The Cattle Market toilets will not be closing this year; however their future will be reviewed when the Park Gate toilets are built.

We asked about investing a substantial amount of money into the Geoff Moulder Leisure Complex in order to make both short-term and long-term savings.

You said: 50% of people said that the refurbishments would encourage them to participate in regular sport, with 45% of people saying it wouldn't. There were concerns expressed about the closure of the training pool during the consultation process.

We listened to what you said and your feedback, in conjunction with other important factors, was used in the decision-making process. Works costing an estimated £2.2million are scheduled to take place on the site this year. As part of the works programme we are looking to close the training pool from 31 of May. When work starts on the main pool the training pool will re-open temporarily. Once all the works are complete there will be one modern swimming pool which will be efficient to run in terms of heating costs and offer improved facilities for all swimmers in the borough. We do understand that there are a number of people who would like to see the training pool stay open, however this option is not financially viable. Overall, the public are supportive of having one modern, efficient facility.



We asked what alternatives you preferred to Boston Matters.

You said: over 50% of people said they would prefer information about the Council to be put into the press once a fortnight on a specific page.

We listened to your views and we will now be looking at a range of alternative options to provide Council news and information to households across the Borough.

We asked about continuing support for the voluntary sector using external funding.

You said: There was overwhelming support for the voluntary sector, and the majority of people supported the idea of external funding.

We listened and the decision was made that South Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service and the Citizen's Advice Bureau will continue to receive funding, and this funding will come from an external source for the next two years, after which time the Council will consider future funding as part of the normal core grant scheme. The CVS and CAB are key organisations in delivering services within our community, and the Council continues to support their work.

We asked you whether you would support the leasing of the Assembly Rooms as a nightclub.

You said: 50% of respondents did not want to see the Assembly Rooms used as a nightclub, and 44% of people did. Many other suggestions were put forward.

We listened to your views and while the way in which the Assembly Rooms are managed and operated remains to be decided, we note the balance of opinion on this issue.



We also asked you how you would like to be involved in having your say. The results highlight the need to use a variety of methods to involve Boston residents in decision-making. If you would like further information on how you can get involved, and have your say on a number of issues affecting Boston and the people of Boston please complete the form on the back of this booklet.

Feedback from other consultations

Business regulation services:

Overwhelmingly, people who had been in contact with regulatory services felt that it had been a positive experience. Regulatory services have received the results and will use this to continually improve their service.

Draft Policy for the Determination of Applications for a Reduction in Council Tax Liability Consultation:

The Council's Residents' Panel were asked to comment on this policy, and the responses were very constructive. We have listened to the comments and suggestions made by consultees and have amended the policy to reflect the feedback received.

Allotments Survey:

64% of respondents were satisfied, overall, with the way Boston Borough Council runs its allotment service while 14% were dissatisfied. This information is being fed back into the allotment service and feedback will be available shortly.

The results of these consultations will be available on the Council web-site by 30 April 2009. You can request a paper copy by contacting Communications on (01205) 314263.

Upcoming consultations

If you would like to be involved in decision-making at the Council or have any comments about the budget feedback please fill in the form overleaf and return it to:

Communications
Boston Borough Council
Municipal Buildings
West Street
BOSTON
Lincolnshire PE21 8QR

or call Hiedi Wilkinson on (01205) 314263, or e-mail communications@boston.gov.uk.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

I would like to be involved in having my say on: (please tick all that apply)

Sports and Cultural Services (March-June)

Equalities and Diversity (May-June)

Council Tax and Business Rates service (April-June)

Council Tax and Housing Benefits service (April-June)

Democratic Services (April-June)

I would like to receive more information about becoming a member of the Boston Borough Council Resident's Panel

Do you have any comments about the budget feedback? Please give more details here.

We can provide this information in other languages and formats, for example in large print, Braille or on audio cassette.

For more information please contact Communications on (01205) 314263 or communications@boston.gov.uk

