

Appendix 3 – Summary of feedback received

Core offer proposals		
Ref.	Proposal [# of comments]	Summary of comments and alternative suggestions
AH1	Adult social care staffing [5]	<p>There were five responses to this proposal. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one objected to having to pay the Adult Social Care precept on their council tax bill • one suggested the council only provide reablement to those likely to improve, and provide chargeable care to those who won't • one pointed out that if admin staff were reduced it would add workload to social workers • one was concerned about the levels of agency staff • one suggested that reducing support would lead to increased costs later
AH2	Adult social care – other commitments [5]	<p>There were five responses to this proposal. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the comments objecting to having to pay the Adult Social Care precept, regarding admin work and creating further costs later were also made to this proposal • One person suggested outsourcing social services to a private business • There were a selection of comments from a supporting people questionnaire, points raised included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human life is more important than buildings 2. Cuts are taking away people's future 3. Cuts should not be made to services that help people 4. Reductions in service, especially to young people, would lead to increased costs later
AH3	Adult Packages [5]	<p>There were five responses to this proposal. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one suggested that the council charge those able to pay for services that are currently free • one stated that replacing visits with telecare will have a negative impact on service users • one said that cuts must not impact on the quality of life of vulnerable adults • one requested the service be kept the way it currently is, and more funding be given to voluntary organisations • the people's parliament discussed changes and expressed concern

AH5	Adult Direct Payments to Personal Budget Costs [2]	There were two comments to this proposal, one from a service user in opposition to this proposal. They claim that the proposal will lead to social isolation, mental health problems and burden on the NHS. The other response was from DAD who claim that this will have an impact on disabled people across Darlington.
CYP2	Looked After Children [2]	There were two comments in response to this proposal. Both pointed out the expense of looking after children who are in care, and claim that cuts to services in other areas will lead to more children coming into care. Examples of services mentioned are short breaks for disabled children, mental health services, children's centres and preventative services.
CYP3	Disabled Children [6]	There were six responses to this proposal; one was from a group who have set up a Facebook page to ensure parents are able to have their voices heard. They would like to be in dialogue with the council. Key points from the other responses included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the suggestion Harewood House be closed on the basis that it's a lot of money on a select few children 2. current disabled children services are an asset and should not be cut 3. the 0-25 team, who will pick up the work, already have high case loads and extensive waiting lists 4. Using the 0-25 team will be less effective and cost more 5. cuts to areas like short breaks for parents of disabled children will lead to more children in care, and short breaks are cost effective 6. praise for the 0-3 service, the commenter claims it is a shame it will not exist any more
CYP4	Early Help Model Revised [11]	There were eleven responses to the revised early help model. Key points included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the fact that the early support model is describing work already carried out by the Early Support Team in partnership with other organisations • there were proposals to continue the service in alternate ways with partners • the fact that the service is extremely important and valuable to parents and the community • research has shown that early intervention is of enormous benefit • In light of the Ofsted the service should be retained
CYP5	Youth Offending [1]	The response claimed there would be an increase in the number of young first time entrants into the criminal justice system, and consequent likely increase in reoffending and reduced life chances because of this proposal.

EFFR5	Members Allowances [20]	<p>There were twenty comments on members allowances, all of which made suggestions on how the costs could be reduced.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One person suggested councillors give up their expenses entirely 2. ten people suggested members be given reduced allowances 3. seven people suggested cutting the number of councillors 4. two people commented that the amount of money spent on expenses is too high <p>The services people suggested using the money saved included the library, Christmas lights and Citizens Advice grant.</p>
EFFR9	Registrars [3]	<p>There were three responses to this proposal, all suggested alternate locations for the registrars office;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 suggested Crown Street Library – more appropriate and attractive and will help save the library building • 1 suggested the Head of Steam – more appropriate, attractive and will raise the profile of the museum
EFFR10	Local taxation [6]	<p>There were six responses to this proposal. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three people said council tax should not be raised • One person said council tax has been too low for too long • One person said the council was not doing enough to get business rates and this was affecting council tax • One person asked whether there had been any advance warning <p>Key points made included the rising costs of living, and the amount of money spend per year on council tax</p>

EFFR19	Senior Management costs [31]	<p>There were 31 responses to this proposal, the majority were in response to other specific proposals and mentioned the cost of senior management as a way of saving another service. The comments and suggestions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight general comments that cost of senior management is too high • Twelve suggesting the number of senior managers be reduced • Eight suggesting senior managers have their wages cut • One suggestion that Darlington share a chief executive with Stockton • One suggestion that a robust review of costs be carried out <p>Key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If costs are benchmarked why are ours higher 2. People who are paid so much should have more ideas 3. Services are more important
HP1	Public Health Sexual Health Services [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, one from Public Health England and one from the Clinical Commissioning Group. Both of these responses can be found in full an Appendix 1.
HP2	Public Health 0-19 Years [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, one from Public Health England and one from the Clinical Commissioning Group. Both of these responses can be found in full an Appendix 1.
HP3	Public Health Substance Misuse [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, one from Public Health England which can be found in full in Appendix 1. The other response suggests that the people in receipt of this support need it more than people in the council on high wages.
HP4	Public Health Stop Smoking Service [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, one of which suggested the service be cut, and one from Public Health England which can be found in full in Appendix 1.
HP5	Public Health Advice NHS Core Offer [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, one from Public Health England and one from the Clinical Commissioning Group. Both of these responses can be found in full an Appendix 1.
HP6	Public Health NHS Checks [1]	There was one response to this proposal from Public Health England which can be found in full in Appendix 1.
HP7	Public Health Prescribing and Pharmacology [3]	There were three responses to this proposal, one from Public Health England which can be found in full in Appendix 1. Of the other two responses one was from a service user who claimed that they would no longer be able to afford tablets, and the other in opposition to council tax being used to fund prescriptions to help people stop smoking and drinking.

LLE1	Head of Steam [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, one in favour of keeping the Head of Steam to protect Darlington's heritage, and one claiming that keeping the Head of Steam open because of heritage is hypocritical if the council chooses to close the library and the market.
LLE2	Libraries Service [20]	Note: The majority of feedback was captured through the library services consultation (see separate report). Feedback received via the MTFP feedback channels has been included in the library services consultation.
LLE3	The Hullaballoon [1]	There was one response to this proposal which suggests the Hullaballoon Theatre be used for performances for adults on an evening, as there are not enough suitable spaces in Darlington currently.
LLE4	Civic Theatre [6]	There were six responses to this proposal. These can be broken down as such: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three say that the money should be spent on the library instead of the Civic 2. One suggests we shut the theatre down 3. One suggests that we allow a theatre company to take over
LLE5	Eastbourne Sports Complex [3]	There were three responses to this proposal of these one was concerned about the loss of the outdoor track and football facilities, and one requesting that we also cut around the pitches.
LLE6	Indoor Bowls Club [1]	There was one response to this proposal which claimed that the agreement with the bowls club can't be justified and the money should be spent on the Bridge or library.
LLE8	Allotments [4]	There were four responses to this proposal three of which disagree with the increase in costs. Key points were: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintenance of sites needs to be improved 2. The proposal penalises low income elderly people 3. Plots should be cheap as they are so good for people's health 4. No one will want to have allotments anymore so money won't be raised

LLE12	Indoor and Outdoor Markets [38]	<p>There were 38 responses to the Indoor and Outdoor market core offer. These can be broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 people requested that the indoor market not be closed • 10 people expressed concern about selling the market • 1 person requested that the outdoor market not be closed • 4 people agreed that selling the covered market on would be a good idea <p>Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market is part of the history and heritage of the town • The covered market is a landmark in Darlington • Not having a market would have a negative impact on the town centre • Questions over why repairs haven't been carried out over the years • Suggestion of having more frequent outdoor markets to create revenue
LLE13	Refuse and Recycling Collection and Waste Disposal [1]	There was one comment in response to this proposal which suggests that the costs of waste disposal be reduced so that fly tipping is reduced.
LLE14	Street Cleansing [3]	There were three responses to this proposal; one suggesting that street cleansing is reorganised so that streets aren't being cleansed while cars are parked, one claiming that street cleansing is too important to cut, and that street scene managers should be cut instead of front line workers, and one suggesting remodelling the town centre has taken priority over street cleaning.
LLE15	Ground Maintenance [2]	There were two responses to this proposal, both in regard to playing pitches. The comments requested that the area around playing pitches also be maintained as they are necessary to protect the pitches and for warming up and running off.
LLE16	Winter Maintenance [1]	There was one response to this proposal which suggests the council over grits certain roads and could cut down on costs by reducing gritting to once per night.
LLE18	Concessionary Fares [8]	<p>There were eight responses in opposition to the proposal to cut bus passes for carers, including responses from the People's Parliament, DAD young leaders, and DAD. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that it will have severe negative impacts on disabled people • The fact that carer's are vital on public transport • The fact that it will lead to increased costs in other services as people become isolated • The suggestion that bus passes should be screened as a cost saving exercise

LLE19	Highways Design and Works [1]	There was one response to this proposal which suggested that newly designed roads in Darlington are poorly planned and confusing for people.
LLE20	Street Lighting [3]	There were three responses to this proposal, one suggesting that we invest in energy efficient street lighting, one suggesting we turn off street lights at midnight to save costs on the basis that crime and road accidents will not increase and one claiming the lights are on outside their flat all of the time which is unnecessary and they could be worked on a timer.

We were unable to identify any comments relating to the following core offer proposals.

AH4 Adult Financial Assessment Protection - Staff	EFFR20 Financing Costs
AH6 Adult Commissioning and Contracts Staff Costs	EFFR21 Contingencies
AH7 Adult Workforce Development Statutory Training	ER1 Development control planning policy
AH8 Performance and Project Management	ER2 Flood and water management
CYP1 Social Work and Independent Review	ER3 Trading standards and animal health
CYP6 Education full statutory obligations	ER4 Building control
CYP7 Education School Transport	ER5 Private sector housing
CYP8 Safeguarding	ER6 Environmental health
CYP9 Performance and Project Management	ER7 Civil contingencies
EFFR1 Estates and Property Management	ER8 Licensing
EFFR2 Corporate Landlord	ER9 Tees Valley Unlimited
EFFR3 Elections & Electoral Registration	ER10 CCTV
EFFR4 Democratic and Members Support	HP8 Health Watch Contract and complaints advocacy
EFFR6 Scrutiny	LLE7 Coroners
EFFR7 Corporate Running Costs	LLE9 Arboriculture
EFFR8 Land Charges	LLE10 Maintenance of Council Cemeteries
EFFR11 Housing Benefits Admin	LLE11 Dog Warden Service
EFFR12 Other GF Housing Services	LLE17 Highway Authority Role
EFFR13 Health and Safety	
EFFR14 Procurement	
EFFR15 Financial Services	
EFFR16 Human Resources	
EFFR17 Complaints and Information Governance	
EFFR18 Xentrall ICT	

Proposals to cut or reduce services

Ref.	Proposal [# of comments]	Summary of comments and alternative suggestions
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C2	Review of Statutory Minimum Service Costs [1]	There was one comment in response to this cut from someone who works in supported living, claiming that money that could be spent on service costs for people is being misspent on being given directly to landlords and could be used to better support people
C3	Cease Floating Support for Domestic Violence Victims [3]	There were three responses to this proposal, all of which were against cuts to the service. One was from a previous service user and one was from Family Help. Their points include – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statistics on the cost of domestic violence to society, for example it's the single most quoted reason for becoming homeless 2. Generic services not having the in depth knowledge of how to support victims 3. Detrimental outcome to victims, including children 4. Early intervention being more cost effective in the long run 5. The service is essential 6. Domestic abuse affects 1 in 4 people The service user stated that the service had been vital for them and their child.
C4	Cease Key Points of Access [2]	There were two comments against this cut, both were from service users who rely on the DISC service and do not want to see it end.

C5	Cease Vulnerable Adults Floating Support [19]	<p>There were 19 responses to this proposal.</p> <p>The responses largely highlighted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The positive feedback DISC receive from service users 2. The many and various types of issues DISC deals with 3. Potential additional costs to the Council, including increases in arrears and court/eviction costs, as well as higher demand for public services, questioning the actual level of savings likely to be achieved. 4. The potential impact to current and future service users, including not being signposted to alternative support services, financial exclusion, a deterioration in mental health, increased crime and homelessness, and higher likelihood of substance misuse and emergency admissions etc. 5. Why split £160,000 between three different organisations when DISC has already won a tender and is delivering a good service? <p>Comments received from DISC service users often stressed how their situation would be vastly different had they not had access to the service – ranging from being socially isolated, to losing their tenancy and struggling to manage their money, to failing to be able to manage their mental health. The comment received from a related service highlighted the potential impact on statutory services that often rely on DISC to support their service users.</p> <p>Finally, general responses from residents again highlighted potential increases to the Council and other public services down the line from reducing this service and the impact on the wider community, as well as questions around the morality of cutting services for vulnerable people in the context of other proposals.</p>
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C6	Cease Drug and Alcohol Floating Support [3]	<p>There were 3 responses in opposition to this cut. Of these one is from the 700 club, and one from the Alcohol Health Alliance. Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darlington will be morally poorer if it doesn't provide support for its most vulnerable citizens - those with drug and alcohol problems • consider very carefully before ending all funding for an approach which I firmly believe will become increasingly important in helping to reduce the demand on the NHS and other public services • this service means people don't need to be put in B&B, it helps landlords and people with chaotic lifestyles • There are wider implications, including potentially more homelessness • People with drug and alcohol issues will become more visible in the town, making it less pleasant
C7	Reduce Some elements of Young Person's Pathway [1]	<p>There was one response to this proposal which was in opposition to the proposal. The reason included the fact that the service is unique and that young people estranged from family will have nowhere else to turn in times of crisis or homelessness. It asks what the alternative will be if the service ends.</p>
C8	Cease funding to Aspire Service [1]	<p>There was one comment in opposition to this cut from the Clinical Commissioning Group, the full response can be found in Appendix 1.</p>
C9	Cease Funding to Gay Advice Darlington and for DAD Information Post [10]	<p>There were ten responses to this proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three of these agreed with the proposal to cut this service. • Three were against the cut to the DAD information post. Key points included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is a key port of call for disabled people who require information ○ This cut will cost more money in the long run ○ One response seemed to have confused this proposal with more general cuts to DAD. • Four responses were in opposition to cutting funding to Gay Advice Darlington(GADD). Key points included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this service was the only LGBT service currently funded by the Council and hence the impact to the LGBT community would be particularly significant as there is little to no alternative provision ○ GADD is a place where people feel safe and means a lot to service users
C12	Healthwatch [1]	<p>Healthwatch responded to this proposal.</p>

D2	Local Government Association Annual Contribution [1]	There was one response in favour of this cut. Key points included lack of value from the subscription, and the fact that key information can be accessed for free on digital platforms.
D3	Mayor and mayoral support [2]	There were two comments in support of cutting the mayoral service. One stated that we could use the money to fund charities, and one that it should be used towards a service that benefits the public.
H2	Subscriptions (NEREO) [1]	There was one comment in favour of this cut. Key points included the fact that the expertise should be in the remit of council officers.
H3	Unison contribution [6]	There were six responses to this cut, three in favour and three against. Points in favour included the fact that private companies don't pay for full time officials, that the position should be funded by the Union or member's Direct Debit. Points against included a response from Unison. Key points included the fact that the cut may lead to more cost in the long run as volunteer representatives may take more time off, the operational convenience of having a full time member of staff will no longer be there for the council, and that the council is currently receiving a very good union service.
H4	Parish council – council tax support [2]	There were two responses in opposition to this cut. One was from a resident of MSG who felt they paid enough in council tax already, and one which claimed the money was no the council's to keep.

Hu1	Children's Centres, Early Help & Intervention / Specialist Family Support [9]	<p>There were nine responses received in relation to this proposal. Three of these were from parents with direct experience of using these services, one was from a parent with indirect experience, two were from individuals who have worked for the service and the remainder reported no direct link. All the responses received opposed the proposed cuts. Users tended to highlight:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The positive impacts they and their children had benefitted from as a direct result, including the opportunities for both parents and children to socialise, receive advice and support on a wide range of issues, including breastfeeding, providing volunteering opportunities, and supporting children with disabilities to attend mainstream schooling 2. Whether this measure would actually save money in the long-term 3. The cumulative impact on families of closing other services such as libraries <p>Responses received from individuals who had experience working for these services pointed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The complex needs of service users means that many would likely fall into statutory care services, costing DBC more money elsewhere. 2. The importance of the service for parents, not just children, be it in building confidence, reducing isolation or acting as a liaison for different public services. <p>General comments from residents outlined:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The theory behind the prevention agenda - cutting the early intervention service would likely only lead to savings in the short term. 2. The Council's recent Ofsted rating mean this proposal is counterintuitive 3. High profile cases elsewhere such as Baby P show how important these service are and the authority would be putting itself at risk of failing to safeguard vulnerable children 4. That VCS would not be able to fill this gap in provision due to the specialist knowledge and one-on-one support provided.
Hu2	Youth Offending ASB [1]	There was one response to this cut from Durham and Darlington constabulary, the full response can be found in Appendix 1.
Hu4	Children's Legal Fees [1]	There was one response to this proposal which suggested we use the qualified legal team as opposed to spending money on Barristers.

Hu5	Removal of Discretionary early support service [12]	<p>There were twelve responses in opposition to this proposal.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise of the current service • Pointing out that the service is a vital lifeline for families, and is necessary for them • The fact that the service is cost effective, and does a lot of good for relatively little money • The fact that not providing the service could lead to risk or neglect of vulnerable children
Mc2	Economic Initiative and Regeneration [1]	There was one comment in response to this proposal which claimed that Darlington is being regenerated in the wrong ways, an example given is the Multi Storey Car Park and empty shops.
Mc5	Building Control Officer [1]	There was one comment in response to this proposal. Key points included the fact that ensuring works are undertaken to regulation is important, and also points out that outsourcing won't be as cheap as using council officers.
Mc6	Civil Enforcement Officer [1]	There was one response to this proposal. The resident commented on the fact that CEOs bring in more revenue than they cost.
Mc7	Environmental Health Officer [1]	There was one response in relation to this proposal which suggested enforcement officers could be saved from redundancy if a layer of middle management were taken out
Mc8	Private Sector Housing [1]	There was one comment in opposition to this cut. The comment states that removing an Empty Homes officer will mean there will be more empty homes in Darlington
Mc10	Christmas Lights [13]	<p>There were 13 comments received in respect of Christmas lights, all but one of which opposed the proposed cut.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suggestions for cutting the budget whilst still having the lights, such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. No big turning on event b. Turning them on closer to Christmas c. Turning them off straight after New Years d. Operating them for fewer hours each night e. Utilising the Colleges to get art/construction/electrical/carpentry students to make cheaper decorations and give them valuable experience 2. That relative to the overall budget it doesn't actually cost very much 3. That it would negatively affect community spirit and potentially increase crime 4. That it would reduce footfall into the town and potentially put off retailers 5. That £35K is a lot for lights and it could be done more cheaply

S1	Sexual Health Services [8]	<p>There were eight responses to this proposal, including three from GP practices, one from primary care and one from a resident.</p> <p>Key points from the health service included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Triage will see a fall in attendance by young people 2. STI's and teenage pregnancies will increase 3. GP practices will lose money and may stop providing other services <p>The other comment stated that any cuts in the service will lead to people not getting a quick response when it is needed.</p>
S2	DAAT & Substance Misuse [4]daat	<p>There were four comments in response to this proposal, one was from the union and one from First Stop.</p> <p>Key points include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Negative impact on service users 2. Overburden on members of staff from other teams and organisations 3. Loss to the community 4. The fact that the service currently provided is essential 5. Work that needs to be done may be made impossible without the support of the DAAT team <p>A suggestion is made that the DAAT team be given extra time to come up with a plan B</p>
S4	Stop Smoking and Tobacco Control [8]	<p>There were eight responses to this proposal, two in favour of the cut and six opposed. One comment in favour claimed that stopping smoking is down to will power alone.</p> <p>Key points in the responses opposed to the cut include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Negative impact on service users 2. Overburden on members of staff from other teams 3. Loss to the community 4. Negative impacts on health of smoking <p>There was also a letter from Fresh and Balance which highlighted the benefits of the service on the people of Darlington.</p>

S5	Public Mental Health [6]	<p>There were six responses in opposition this this cut.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive impact of the Open art and the Bridge for mental health resilience • suggestion to save the Open Art service by scaling it down, and the Bridge by getting it to raise rents • concern that suicide rates would rise • concern about decreasing support to a vulnerable group
S7	Sanctuary Scheme [3]	<p>There were three comments in opposition to this cut. Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting the sanctuary scheme will increase domestic violence and homelessness • Sanctuary has enabled vulnerable people to remain in their homes • The cut will have a negative impact on families, children, schooling and health and wellbeing <p>One GP commented that all public health reductions will have a negative impact.</p>
S8	Public Health other [2]	<p>There were two comments in opposition to this cut, one from a GP who commented that all public health reductions will have a negative impact and one stated that there would be a significant impact on vulnerable families.</p>
S9	Obesity Management [8]	<p>There were eight responses in opposition to this proposal. Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opposition to cutting the budget to the schools partnership programme, on the basis that it is vital for changing behaviour and tackling obesity • Concern for children as they are unable to take themselves to a GP, and even if they were medicalising the issue is not effective so it would be better to have community support • The negative impacts on health, including a response from cancer research • Increased pressure on schools • There were a couple of personal stories of people who have lost weight with the help of the Healthy Hub
S10	MARAC [4]	<p>There were four responses in opposition to removing the public health contribution to MARAC.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The importance and success rate of MARAC 2. The fact that domestic violence does not only affect women 3. The fact that if the service is forced to cease the outcome could be loss of life 4. The fact that pressure will be added to other services

S12	Discretionary Rate Relief [2]	There were two responses in opposition to the cut to discretionary rate relief. Both were from charities who have benefitted from rate relief in the past. The charities claim having to pay rates will have a negative impact on them, and will lead to them having to increase costs to community groups, and potentially closure.
S13	Social Fund Budget [3]	There were three comments made in regard to the proposed cuts to Social Fund, none of which were in opposition. Two of these comments were by the same individual who supported the proposal to combine crisis support and financial inclusion and recommended considering a housing-related support organisation to provide this service due to the crossovers in the type of work being undertaken. The remaining response supported the idea of having a local VCS organisation provide the Community Care element of the fund as the individuals using it may well already be known to them.
S14	Strategic Grant Budget [14]	There were fourteen responses received directly relating to this proposal; including responses from First Stop, Age UK, Citizens Advice Darlington, a petition in support of Citizens Advice Darlington and from a GP relating to Groundwork. The first of these highlights the cumulative impact of multiple MTFP cuts to First Stop, which total £110,000, and have historically been used to fund core costs which they cannot get elsewhere and therefore they are unable to provide any assurance they will be able to keep providing services to the 900 individuals they currently support each year. The increase in demand on other public services, including police, the homelessness team, A&E, mental health services, was also raised. The response received opposing the cut to Groundwork's funding highlighted the importance of the work they do to help resident's mental health by getting them to work on an allotment and cited recent cuts to funding for mental health support as a reason why it was particularly important. The letters from each of the organisations affected by the cut in strategic grant highlighted the positive work carried out by the organisations which would be at risk if the grant were to be ceased.
W1	Civic Theatre – Break Even [4]	There were four responses to this proposed cut. Key points included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact the council should not be investing in a loss making venture • The fact that it's not fair to fund the civic over the library as the library is a free service and some people can't afford the theatre • The renovations must include enlarging the performing area or it won't be worth it

W2	Eastbourne Sports Complex - Break Even [4]	There were four responses to this proposal, of these one claimed that it isn't fair to maintain another sports facility when the library is closing, one pointed out that there was insufficient detail on how the complex could be self-sufficient to comment, one suggested closing the facility to save money and one said that the facility has been of great use to them in their weight loss.
W3	Library Service - Mobile Library [9]	Note: The majority of feedback was captured through the library services consultation (see separate report). Feedback received via the MTFP feedback channels has been included in the library services consultation.
W4	Library - Local Studies [16]	Note: The majority of feedback was captured through the library services consultation (see separate report). Feedback received via the MTFP feedback channels has been included in the library services consultation.
W5	Cockerton Library [17]	Note: The majority of feedback was captured through the library services consultation (see separate report). Feedback received via the MTFP feedback channels has been included in the library services consultation.
W6	Dolphin Centre [5]	There were five responses in strong opposition to closing the Dolphin Centre. Key points included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Dolphin Centre is a jewel in the crown 2. It is a first rate facility 3. A lot of money has been spent on the facility in the past 4. It is in a useful location for people to use on their lunch times 5. Suggestions for raising additional income include increasing fees and reducing availability of services
W7	Events [2]	There were two comments in response to this proposed cut. One suggested the council should have fought harder to keep the Festival of Thrift, and one suggesting that the Events Team should be funded less as there are now fewer events in Darlington.
W9	Creative Darlington [2]	There were two responses to this proposal. One suggested that the way to keep cultural and recreational services is to have greater community involvement and one asked that the visual arts continue to be represented in Darlington.

W10	Cemetery and Allotment Charges [6]	<p>There were six responses received for this proposal, one of which was about the proposed increased charges for burial and five in response to allotment fee hikes. Four responses came from individuals who rent an allotment.</p> <p>Specific points raised include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whether the Council actually incurred any costs from allotments 2. The relative cost of plots in other authority areas – apparently much less 3. The total amount to be made from the proposal insignificant relative to the wider budget 4. Predicted many will give up their plot as a result, meaning total savings will be minimal 5. Accusing the Council of trying to ensure plots are vacated and then selling off the land for housing development 6. The health benefits of allotments 7. Accusing the Council of seeking to profit from allotments, rather than break even 8. Similar case elsewhere where a rent hikes of 300% were proposed and it was judged that “the Council cannot by law raise rents of allotment holders in isolation of other recreational amenities” (Mr Harwood vs Reigate & Banstead Borough Council) 9. It is unfair to charge plot holders a premium for land they have made productive and invested significant amounts of time and resource into 10. Three respondents argued that their plots had a number of issues - including rubbish, accessibility and no sewerage - which meant they would object to having to pay more without these getting acknowledged or improved.
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W12	Grounds Maintenance, Horticulture, Parks and Countryside Management [19]	<p>There were 19 responses submitted for this proposal. Of these, 3 were criticising the Council's current service in maintaining the Denes, 5 were suggestions, and 10 were in opposition to the proposals.</p> <p>Of the suggestions, one was an offer from Groundwork to discuss potentially working together to manage South Park but acknowledging this would require an initial endowment. One was to retain the existing team, two were to remove trees from roadsides and one was to prioritise keeping the town clean over school crossing patrols.</p> <p>Of the comments opposing the proposals, key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ceasing grass cutting in parks will render them unusable and we may as well sell them off 2. It will stop people moving into and investing in the town 3. Negative impact on mental health of residents, which may increase demand for ASC 4. There aren't enough volunteers to step in and fill the gap 5. Suggesting to reduce grass cutting to once a month or three weekly rather than 10-15 days 6. Sports organisations including the FA require that sports <i>fields</i> be cut, not just pitches, to allow for moving pitches, access, warm up and run off areas etc. 7. Important to cut grass so people can exercise and socialise outdoors 8. Long grass leads to more dog fouling, litter and animals and isn't safe or hygienic for people to be in contact with 9. Will stop people using the parks 10. Street Scene do not have the required knowledge or skills to take over parks 11. Insulting to voluntary groups – see them as the soft option to carry on doing the Council's work for free
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W13	Street Cleansing & Environmental Crime [19]	<p>There were 19 responses received regarding this proposal, all of which were in opposition to the suggested cuts.</p> <p>Key points made include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Darlington is already dirty, this will just make it worse 2. It's a false economy- enforcement can actually bring in income 3. Cutting management rather than low-paid workers who have a visible impact would be a better way of making savings 4. Less regular but more effective street cleaning would be better e.g. not doing it at rush hour when the gutters can't be properly accessed 5. Fly tipping has increased since bulky waste collection charges were introduced and the Environmental Crime Officer does a valuable job in chasing up incidents – police not interested 6. You can't stop people from dropping litter in reality 7. Couldn't we lobby government to increase the amount we keep from successfully prosecuting fly tippers to help pay for this service? 8. Will stop people coming to the town and investing in it 9. Many responses said this proposal would turn Darlington into a "fly tipper's paradise" 10. Suggestion to devolving the street cleaning budget to a social enterprise or tendering the service out to a commercial or not-for-profit company
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W15	Concessionary Fares [4]	<p>There were four responses received relating to the proposal concerning concessionary fares, all of which came from individuals who currently receive companion passes. Issues highlighted include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The risk of increased isolation of those who need support to access the community 2. Potential increase in demand for domiciliary or residential care – not an actual saving 3. Impact on local businesses from reduced spend 4. Increased anxiety to all 11 members of DAD young group, 9 of whom need a carer with them when using buses 5. May not be able to afford the extra charge 6. Could better screening to ensure only those who really need them get companion passes help? 7. This group of people should be of people should be a priority when making tough decisions 8. People potentially not being able to have support for appointments which might lead to needing to increase the number of appointments 9. It's a relatively small saving for a huge impact
W17	Child Pedestrian Training [2]	<p>There were two responses in favour of this cut. Both argued that it should be the responsibility of the parent and/or teacher to teach children how to cross the road.</p>

W20	Blue Badge Parking [30]	<p>There were 30 responses received regarding the proposal to charge for Blue Badge parking. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 were in opposition to the proposal • 4 were in support of the proposal <p>Of the comments received opposing the proposal to charge, the key points made were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are additional difficulties inherent in paying for parking for disabled people with mobility issues, including dropping money/ticket and then having to get back to their car to display it which could mean an additional transfer between their chair and car 2. The Council has a duty under the 2010 Equality Duty to promote equality of opportunity in allowing disabled people to partake in public life. It take disabled people longer to do the same things as none-disabled individuals – by charging for this additional time this is discrimination 3. That it is a charge on disability 4. It will stop disabled people coming into Darlington, and make the town inaccessible to disabled people 5. Disabled people already have to pay £10 for the badge 6. Unfair as many disabled people do not have the option of using cheaper means of transport to get into town, such as buses 7. That there need to be more blue badge spaces 8. That a better proposal would be to better police current users of blue badges to crack down on fraudulent use by friends and family of holders. <p>Responses received in favour of the proposal largely argued that the service is currently often abused by friends and family of blue badge holders</p>
W21	Town Twinning [2]	<p>There were two responses in favour of the cut to the Town Twinning budget. One suggested the council put it on hold until better times.</p>

We were unable to identify any comments relating to the following proposals to cut or reduce services.

C1 Adult Social Care Review of Management Arrangements	Mc3 Management Restructure
C10 Reducing Commissioning and Contracts Staff	Mc4 Trading Standards
C11 Reducing Workforce Development and Related Support for Offenders	Mc9 Flood & Water Management
D1 Local strategic partnership contribution	S3 Core Offer and Tees Valley Public Health Shared Service
H1 Reduction in senior management capacity	S6 Contribution to Community Safety, Violence Prevention and Social Exclusion
H5 Corporate landlord	S11 Engagement Team
H6 Estates	W11 Refuse Collection - Removal of subsidy to charities
H7 Support services	W16 Cycle Training Level 3
H8 Communications Team	W18 Local Motion Sustainable Transport Promotion
H9 Specific overheads – business support	W19 Local Motion School Initiatives
Hu2 Youth Offending ASB	
Hu3 Looked After Children	
Mc1 Core Planning Team	

Futures Fund Proposals

Ref.	Proposal [# of comments]	Summary of comments and alternative suggestions
FF52a	Economic Regeneration team [5]	<p>There were five responses to this proposal.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 new jobs is good but jobs have still been lost • One commenter claimed that the investment has gone into things they didn't want and not things they did • The suggestion that free parking would improve regeneration • The fact that there are still empty shops and the multi storey went over budget

FF52b	A remodelled Dolphin Centre including the central library [157]	<p>Note: The majority of feedback was captured through the library services consultation (see separate report). Feedback received via the MTFP feedback channels has been included in the library services consultation.</p> <p>One commenter suggests selling the Dolphin Centre. Comments in favour of the move included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library in the Dolphin Centre will be good for people with children • The Dolphin Centre is more accessible to disabled people, including the toilets, lifts, floors and shelving • A more diverse cross section of people will start to use the library • This solution is better than closing both the library and the Dolphin Centre • The location of the Dolphin Centre is better, the move would lead to more use and will benefit both services
FF52c	Funding to Maintain Open Space and Parks to Allow Standards to be Introduced at 50% of Current Levels [5]	<p>There were five responses to this proposal. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Park, North Park and the Denes should be maintained as near to the present schedule as possible • Any less maintenance will stop people using parks • Green spaces are very important for quality of life
FF52d	Maintain South Park to Existing Standards [1]	<p>There was one response in relation to this proposal requesting that we continue to maintain parks and green spaces. Key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 91% of people in UK believe public parks and open spaces improve quality of life 2. 94% felt having green space close to where they live was important <p>Don't let them overgrow into rough pastures filling with litter/dog faeces/fly tipping</p>
FF52e	School Crossing Patrols Provided to Existing Standards [1]	<p>There was one response to this proposal which suggested replacing some school crossing staff with volunteers to help fund the library</p>

FF52f	Libraries – Local Studies [3]	<p>There were three responses to this proposal.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current system has low overheads and meets the needs of users 2. Appointment system will lead to a reduction in the use of the service and make work more difficult for users 3. The Dolphin Centre is not suitable 4. The suggestion that the Local Studies Centre relocate to the Head of Steam to tie up with the Ken Hoole Study Centre
FF52h	Festivals and Events [2]	<p>There were two responses to this proposal. Both said the budget should be reduced, one because Darlington doesn't have as many events as it used to, and one because the Festival of Thrift has moved.</p>
FF52i	To maintain the Head of Steam Museum [2]	<p>There were two responses to this proposal which were in opposition to maintaining the Head of Steam.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining the HoS takes up a vast amount of the Futures Fund 2. Questioning why the HoS is deemed more important than charities and children's centres 3. Questioning why options to reduce costs weren't considered 4. Shildon is better for residents as it isn't far away and it's free
FF52j	Crisis Support and Community Care Fund [2]	<p>There were two responses to this proposal. One suggested that the crisis support should sit alongside financial advice. The other argued that pensioners with small pensions should not be made to pay towards those who have not saved for a pension.</p>
FF52k	Financial and debt advice and welfare rights services [7]	<p>There were seven responses made to this proposal. Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suggestion that financial advice should be paired with crisis support, as this would maximise income and help people avoid needing high level specialist advice • The fact that if advice is centralised a lot of people won't be able to access it • The suggestion that services come together under one umbrella <p>There was also a letter in response to this proposal from Citizens Advice Darlington.</p>

FF52I	Housing Related and Outreach Support for Vulnerable Adults [9]	<p>There were 9 responses to this proposal. The responses highlighted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The positive feedback DISC receive from service users 2. The many and various types of issues DISC deals with 3. Potential additional costs to the Council, including increases in arrears and court/eviction costs, as well as higher demand for public services, questioning the actual level of savings likely to be achieved. 4. The potential impact to current and future service users, including not being signposted to alternative support services, financial exclusion, a deterioration in mental health, increased crime and homelessness, and higher likelihood of substance misuse and emergency admissions etc. 5. Why split £160,000 between three different organisations when DISC has already won a tender and is delivering a good service? The pot needs to be increased not decreased. <p>The comments from the public highlighted the fact that the DISC service is already good value for money for the people it reaches and the fact that caring for the most vulnerable is the most important thing the council does and should be prioritised.</p>
FF52m	Community Development and Engagement [2]	<p>There were two responses to this proposal, one was a petition to from Darlington Citizens Advice which has been signed by more than 4135 currently. It reads:</p> <p>To Darlington Borough Council, We appreciate that the council has an unenviable task of having to implement budget savings of £12.5 million in 2016-17, however, we are compelled to highlight the devastating impact which these cuts will have for Citizens Advice Darlington, town residents, the voluntary sector at large and the council itself. The current proposals include a 100% cut to the annual grant for Citizens Advice Darlington. We ask that you sign this petition to support our work and ask that Darlington Borough Council helps ensure this vital service survives for the benefit of all who live and work in the town and borough. Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>The other stated that this money could be better spent as charities in the community don't benefit from current levels of engagement.</p>

FF52o	Local Government Association Annual Subscription [1]	There was one response in opposition to this spend. Key points included lack of value from the subscription, and the fact that key information can be accessed for free on digital platforms.
FF52p	Mayoral Allowance and Officer Support [2]	There were two responses in opposition to the proposal to retain the Mayor. Both responses argued that the money could be better spent on other services that more directly benefit the public.
FF52r	Voluntary Sector Development Fund [5]	There were five responses to this proposal. Key points included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving the money to support innovative ideas that will raise more than the £100K invested, and using the voluntary sector to support services that are being cut • One suggested a new movement for collective responsibility to be supported by the fund • The fact that it's a small amount of money to split between all of the charities in Darlington
FF52t	Fund to promote public sector volunteering [1]	There was one comment which supported more partnerships with businesses to enable them to do something tangible for the community.
FF52u	Wildflower Meadows Invest to Save Fund [1]	There was one response in support of this proposal.
We were unable to identify any comments relating to the following futures fund proposals.		
FF52g Heritage and Cultural Development FF52n Public Health – Sports Development Team FF52q Local Strategic Partnership Contribution FF52s Match Fund for Bids to the County Durham Charity Foundation		