

Proposal No.	Key Issues	Number of responses
1	3 year pay freeze	6
2	3 days unpaid leave	7
3	Debt Repayment	2
4	Reduce support to involve young people in production of the CYPP (Children and Young People's Plan)	0
5	Review of support and consultation with older adults	3
6	Fundamental review of Social Capital and Equalities budgets	0
7	Review of Carers Service contracts	2
8	Cease rent support to DAD	1
9	Planning fees increase	0
10	Household Waste Recycling Centre	2
11	Cancel Terrorism Insurance	0
12	Financial Protection Service – charging	1
13	Review of People Workforce Development and Training offer	0
14	Welfare Rights service	7
15	Parish Council Grants	1
16	Withdraw LGA subscription	0
17	Reduction in Children's Centre Funding	0
18	Stop post 16 free transport	1
19	Review of transport of pupils to Greenfield/Woodham Schools	5
20	Review of Early Years / Childcare Development Service	0
21	Parenting Programmes	0
22	Reduction in services to 12-19s (Youth & Connexions Service)	32
23	Secondary School Home to School Transport	1645
24	Review of Adults Transport	7
25	Rationalise Business Engagement & Town Centre Management Team	0
26	Review of LA21 Grant Funds	0
27	Cease Shopmobility Funding	7
28	Review of Supported Bus Service	313
29	Review Parking Charges	5
30	Rationalise Strategy & Commissioning Team	0
31	Darlington Indoor Bowls Club Funding	0
32	Cease provision of CCTV in outlying areas	9
33	Close East Row Toilets	18
34	Close Dolphin Centre on Bank Holidays	1
35	Review of Library Service	325
36	Review of Events Team	0
37	Restructure of Cemeteries Team	0
38	Bowling Green Maintenance	2
39	Review of Environmental Crime Team	1
40	South Park Budget Reduction	4
41	Reduce floral displays across Borough	2
42	Cease Verge hardening programme	0
43	Reduce highway & footway maintenance budgets, replacement & carriageway works	0
44	Reduction in night scouting on street lighting	0
45	Reduce Traffic Management regulation & maintenance budgets	0
46	Decommission Real time Variable Message Parking Guidance	0
47	School Crossing Patrol Service	3515
48	Reduce Road Safety Education, Training & Publicity (ETP) budget	0
49	Childcare Sufficiency Audit	0
50	Re-use of commissioning budget	0
51	Convert School Crossing Patrol sites to Traffic Signal controlled sites	1
52	Street Lighting Replacement Programme	1
53	CRB checks	2
54	Restructure of Revenue and Benefits	0
55	Rationalisation of Customer Access Points	0
56	Review of Town Crier	9
57	Complaints Team restructure	1

<b>Proposal No.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
58	Review of Information Services in People Group:	11
59	Adult Social Care Assessment Process	5
60	Adult Social Care Efficiencies	5
61	Reduce PAT testing to biennial test	0
62	Policy and Regeneration, delete lease car budget	0
63	Reduced costs in Emergency Planning	0
64	Building Control	0
65	Civic Theatre VAT exemption	0
66	Head of Steam (HOS) VAT Exemption	1
67	Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) Projected Outturn Costs	0
68	Capital Projects fees increase	0
69	Review Local Authority Education Services	0
70	Overtime allocation – People Group	0
71	Strategy and Improvement – deletion of ICT post	0
72	Directorate Support Restructure	4
73	People Business Admin Restructure	0
74	Estates Management	0
75	Additional income from use of Council land and premises	0
76	Income and payments restructure	0
77	Reduce all risks insurance	0
78	Cancel engineering insurance	0
79	Cancel personal accident insurance	0
80	Register of Electors	0
81	Corporate Management Advertising	0
82	Corporate Subscriptions	0
83	Secretarial Support Stationery	0
84	Efficiencies of PA Review	0
85	Shared Head of HR Savings	0
86	Restructure of HR Services	0
87	Reduction in Equal Pay Team	0
88	Review of commissioning arrangements for 11-19 year	0
89	Review of the Youth Offending Service	0
90	Who delivers Services	2
91	Leisure/Cultural Trust	105
92	Council Tax	19
General	General comments on the budget proposals	87

## Schedule of Consultation Responses

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
1	Email	07/12/2011	I note from the Town Crier that you are seeking to negotiate a 3 year pay freeze for all council employees, I assume this is in addition to the 2 years already in place or is it another further year. If indeed this equates to 5 years in total I feel this most unfair. You propose a rise in council tax, energy bills are rising together with the cost of living, just how do you expect people to live. The government has capped rises to 1% nothing really but better than no rise at all and I feel that this is the least rise employees should be given. I await your reply with interest.
1	Email	10/01/2012	Thank you for your response regarding the pay freeze or other options, am I right in assuming this is for all council employees from the top down.
1	Event	12/12/2011	Wage Freeze – biggest single saving you are trying to make. You can either freeze pay or lose staff. With inflation compounded over 5 years, it results in 30% pay cut. What other things are you planning to do if this is not accepted.
1	Event	05/12/2012	The Council has 56 staff earning more than £50,000 per annum. Suggestion to cut salaries by one third for all executives. Not cuts for those under £50,000. How can the Council justify staff earning the same as the Prime Minister.
1	Forum	20/11/2011	Large savings could be made by reviewing the salaries of senior council officers, with an object to reduce them to more reasonable levels. It would be interesting to know what the all up hourly cost rate is for a Director or senior officer of a department
1	Phone	16/12/2011	Councillors should also be subject to the pay freeze.
2	Forum	24/11/2011	A three year pay freeze on top of the two year pay freeze council employers have already had then a 1% wage reduction then to have to pay more in pension contributions (if the government get their way) I would have thought the employees are the most valuable asset the council have, moral must be at an all time low, this must have a very detrimental effect on the way services are delivered, a poor service cost more in the long term so would the council save as much as the pen pushers say they will. Are wages not set by national agreements so how could DBC break these agreements even if the unions agree.
2	Forum	09/12/2011	Employees are not getting a pay rise for the next 3 years. They haven't had one for the last 2 years. Three days unpaid leave is equivalent to a pay cut of 1.2%. So employees will in effect have a pay cut of at least 2.2%. With the rising costs of petrol, gas, electricity and food, employees are really going to struggling. Factor in the proposed increase in pension contributions and things get even worse. Yes, people are glad they have a job but bearing in mind that many of the lower paid workers are already stretched to the limit, this could be the straw that breaks the camel's back. Add to this the concerns that workers have trying to tell people that they can't have services due to budget cuts, and we will end up with a depleted workforce as staff go off sick with stress. Staff that are left will be over worked and residents of Darlington will have to wait longer for the services that they are able to have. Its going to have a knock on effect that will affect all the residents of Darlington
2	Forum	17/01/2012	Perhaps three to four months unpaid leave for the directorate would be appropriate, we are all in this together were PM's words. This saving would go a long way to eliminate the proposed minor cuts that would cause the greatest impact to the residents of the town.
2	Phone	30/11/2011	How can people be expected to take a pay cut of three days leave, this is totally unfair and is an insult to hard working tax payers, especially low paid workers.
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2	Phone	30/11/2011	How are these cuts impacting on senior staff, there seems to be more staff than before
3	Email	01/12/2011	The council will allocate land for sale and, if sold, use the receipts to repay debt. Who wants to buy land in this economic climate
3	Email	01/12/2011	Is there any financial gain to be had by the Council by selling off Mowden Hall and relocating the staff to one of the empty buildings in the town? Again, that's always assuming someone wants to buy it.
5	Email	08/12/2011	Partner has had a massive stroke and was a prisoner in his own home as I have to go out to work to earn a wage. He started using the bus service to get to Dimensions once a week and has made considerable progress attending their sessions which stimulate and improve his confidence. He is a changed man in just a few weeks. On hearing that the bus service is part of the cuts he is devastated. This is an amazing service which gives people a reason to get up in the mornings! I understand cuts have to be made but why spend money on flowers for the town centre and entertainment in the market square and then cut vital services like this? Please consider the impact that reducing these services will have.

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5	Forum	30/12/2011	Charge pensioners £20 a year for their free bus passes and reinstate the Arriva services to such as Brafferton and the outer villages.
5	Letter	25/01/2012	Review GOLD and other support for older people to target the work more closely, develop community and social networks in a more streamlined way. Evidence suggests that this information provides longer term savings as fewer adults needing care at an early stage as a result. GOLD should be transferred to Age UK with a minimum of one year's fund raising support. Age UK would be able to build GOLD into a stronger entity.
7	Email	01/12/2011	I read through the recent issue of town crier at the council's proposed budget cut back and I couldn't help but notice that the vast majority of the proposals referred to cutting amenities and services such as the dolphin centre closing on bank holidays and less road maintenance etc. These will mildly inconvenience people at best but what struck me was that only the disabled group are actually getting hit directly in the pocket, an attack on their actual income, by the proposal to take 100% of their severe disability premium. No other parts on the benefits system are getting hit according to your proposals, where is the clamp down on child benefit etc? why is it the disabled always get hit? Is it because we are a small minority, a small group whose votes won't affect an election outcome but hit something popular and there will be uproar. I recently stopped having my socks put on a morning by a carer as it was costing me nearly £100 per month just to have socks put on, does that sound just and fair to you? When someone has to weigh up whether to get fully dressed or heat the house and now you're proposing to slam us for a huge amount more. I honestly don't know how you can come up with such a notion in all good conscience and if you lived one day in the life of a severely disabled person I am sure you would see what a harsh and cruel cut this is. Disgusted at this council and its anti disabled agenda.
7	Email	14/12/2011	I am writing about the proposed cut to funding for the disabled, i.e. DAD Carers Support Service. I am full time carer for a gentleman of 42 years old who suffers from Downs Syndrome he attends Tec works day centre. I understand the items up for consultation include reduction of welfare rights. review of supported bus service. and of dad itself. If these services were closed down it would be just about the end of him as it is his only way of feeling like he means something to society, it is his life and end all to everything. I can't drive so the bus service for him to get to his work would be the end of his happiness, it might seem over the top to you but not to him. And DAD has been a great help if we run into any problems. Welfare rights are a big help to in helping you through all the red tape of benefits and entitlements regards.
8	Event	09/12/2012	I work at DAD – with Children and Young People services to co-ordinate Play schemes which are very popular. Parents and carers who value services such as DASH, School Holidays – young leaders group every Wednesday. Very valued service providing respite for carers. Concerned that DAD will lose some of their projects. How do we solve this in society and cut backs which will affect these people.
10	Phone	01/12/2011	Will resident still be able to drop off garden waste?
10	Phone	16/12/2011	not accepting non household waste is not going to save any money as fly tipping will increase and only get worse. The cost of clearing up fly tipping will be more.
12	Letter	26/01/2012	Age UK would have serious concerns about introducing a charging policy for a service designed to support vulnerable people particularly where income is mostly derived from the benefit system. If charging reduces an individual's income below the minimum income for anyone age 70 or over they can ask for the charges to be reviewed. The cost of implementing and charging and review service could be greater than the income generated unless there are a higher number of people with income above the minimum. The way forward could be to look at other ways to enable and empower people to manage their own finances eg through supporting people services, financial advocacy or opportunities presented by the personalisation agenda.
14	Comment Box		I want to express how important this welfare service is as only people like us can appreciate it. The Government spends millions on bombs why can't it spare a few thousand on needy people. This service has been invaluable to us. Look at your priorities - you waste too much money on unnecessary jobs which are not important. Please keep this welfare service going as we wouldn't know what to do without these ladies. We had to go to a panel and they helped us prepare our case and we did well. They have helped us fill forms in, given us advice on the phone not just for me but also to my friends who needed help. How much more do you want us to write - we can't praise them enough.
14	Comment Box		The proposal to reduce the welfare rights service must not be allowed to go ahead. To reduce staff would mean longer waiting time to see a member of staff for help, also this will make their work much harder. As the basic group, my money will not cover this, the welfare rights service help is most important. Without their help I would have gone under. Form filling in is not easy for me, so given their help I know I have someone who understands and can help. without their help the powers that be would have put me on the scrap heap. Welfare rights service have shown them that I am a person not a number. I have to eat well, to keep warm and be able to get out and about so I can keep my independence longer

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14	Comment Box		The proposal to reduce the Welfare rights Service is a disaster. The Welfare Rights Officer helps me to sort out my benefits after they have been stopped after I have been in hospital. She helps so much more than Citizens Advice. She knows everything and sorts it out asap. This helps me as there are times I am so vulnerable and can't do it myself.
14	Email	02/12/2011	I am currently an open case with the Welfare Rights Unit and understand (via my daughter), that the Welfare Rights Officer that is currently supporting me is under threat of redundancy next year. Without the service of this officer and the unit I would not be making any progress myself in applying and appealing for benefits, I am physically disabled and am experiencing mental health problems. I feel that the Welfare Rights Unit provides a valuable service for vulnerable people in Darlington and should be saved from cuts.
14	Email	14/12/2011	I am writing about the proposed cut to funding for the disabled, i.e. DAD Carers Support Service. I am full time carer for a gentleman of 42 years old who suffers from Downs Syndrome he attends Tec works day centre. I understand the items up for consultation include reduction of welfare rights. review of supported bus service. and of dad itself. If these services were closed down it would be just about the end of him as it is his only way of feeling like he means something to society, it is his be all and end all to everything. I can't drive so the bus service for him to get to his work would be the end of his happiness, it might seem over the top to you but not to him. And DAD has been a great help if we run into any problems. Welfare rights are a big help to in helping you through all the red tape of benefits and entitlements regards.
14	Letter	27/01/2012	The saving to the Council is small. Welfare Rights service performance will reduce by around 35% meaning almost £400,000 of income lost to vulnerable Darlington residents and therefore to the local economy. The loss of this post is highly likely to result in longer term costs for the Council and other partners, particularly in relation to Health and Well Being. We understand that this service may be a 'cost pressure' but we would recommend that the council does all it can to support the continuation of the service.
14	Letter		Received a lot of help and support from the Welfare Rights Officer. Has become very anxious since receiving a letter about the possible loss of the Welfare Rights Service and the possible loss of this support. Losing this support would have a highly detrimental effect.
15	Email	02/12/2011	I am also urging you not to cut the grants to the parish councils. These are vital to the communities. Thank you.
18	Phone	02/12/2011	Agree with the proposal it is the parents responsibility to get them to school
19	Forum	24/11/2011	Would this not put parents off from sending their pupils to schools in Aycliffe and choosing to send them to the nearest school within the borough of Darlington, as you state they would qualify for free transport then, this to me would be defeating the object of the change, so how have the council come up with these figures
19	Phone	02/12/2011	Agree with the proposal it is the parents responsibility to get them to school
19	Phone	16/12/2011	This proposal causes a great deal of concern and will severely reduce the likelihood of my children going to their preferred school (Hummersknot). I feel rural communities are being penalised. I don't mind paying. The proposal is ill-conceived.
19	Phone	16/12/2011	What are the council doing about informing existing students and families re the proposed cuts to school Transport?
19	Phone	16/12/2011	What is the nearest school to Heighington, if school Transport is cut?
58	Email	15/11/2011	I have just received an email updating us to the proposed future of the PPS. I have to say that I am saddened and dismayed that we are to lose such an experienced and effective manager of our Parent Partnership Service. She has worked extremely closely with myself in supporting our parents who often find the SEN system to be bewildering. She has never turned down a request for help and more telling I have never had a parent not wish to be introduced to her. The PPS service in Darlington is a strength of our LA. I would help my parents to access support asap and I have been delighted with the quality of service provided by this service. The Manager's passion and commitment have made the PPS very effective and I am in the process of contacting her again as I have another parent who would like support. I will do this with utter confidence that the parent will be dealt with in a professional and caring manner and that the Manager's experience, which is vast, will assist them in ensuring that their child's needs are met according to their wishes.
58	Email	15/11/2011	I have just heard the news about the possible loss of the Manager's post at the Parent Partnership service. This would be a huge loss to schools in Darlington. My own school has used the service lots in the past and presently to support our parents of children with SEN. She has supported them in writing their parental views for moderation panel, she has attended annual reviews. She has organised visits to secondary schools and attended with vulnerable parents. She has signposted us to appropriate services for our families and much much more. Many of our parents rely on her support to help them through the minefield of bureaucracy. Lots of our parents just need someone who will listen and who is impartial. It is such a pity that this invaluable support will not be available to our school and our families.
58	Email	16/11/2011	I am just writing to express my dismay at the recent decision to terminate the post of the Manager, who has served this college so well over so many years in terms of her excellent and highly professional work with parents / carers. Her in depth knowledge of people and practice (including the Code of Practice) makes her a valuable asset to the positive progression of key home-school collaboration in areas that are known to be quite difficult within the area of SEN. It is hard to imagine at this point how anyone with less experience and/or qualifications will be able to pick up this work in any meaningful way.

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58	Email	17/11/2011	I am responding to express my sadness and despair that yet another vital and hugely successful service is being cut. We have relied on this service to form the precious link with parents because we often do not have the time to sit and listen to parents and talk through the SEN processes from a neutral point of view. It seems that the powers that be are now completely disregarding children who have special educational needs and stripping these services, leaving schools adrift and without support for these, often extremely vulnerable children and parents. Please pass on my views if you are able.
58	Email	18/11/2011	I am very disappointed to hear that the work done in Darlington by the Parent Partnership Service, is being downgraded. As Principal of Dyslexia Action in Darlington I am aware of the parents who contact us in need of advice and guidance. One of the major recommendations we at Dyslexia Action make is that parents contact PPS as we know that the Parent Partnership Manager will make every effort to help parents to understand the situation from all angles and to come to a mutually-agreeable solution with their child's school and/or the Local Authority. Parents who have been accompanied to meetings have reported feeling so much more confident and comfortable than in previous meetings because the atmosphere becomes quieter and less stressful with the emphasis on arbitration when She is present. A friend at the other end of the telephone is all some people need and this they get, and in a very short time despite her workload. The low numbers of cases going to arbitration bear witness to the service effective over several years. As a member of the Parent Partnership Steering Group I am aware of and appreciate all the hard work the Manager has done to raise the Service's standards to such a high level and her plans to maintain or indeed improve these standards. She has immense experience, which as a specialist in dyslexia for over 20 years, I understand and value. In conclusion, although I understand the need to cut costs in the Local Authority, I feel strongly that a great asset would be lost if she does not continue in her role. I also feel that without her skills and experience the cost to the Local Authority will ultimately be far greater than the <del>short-term savings made by down-grading the position</del> . Thank you for considering my views.
58	Email	21/11/2011	I was horrified to hear that as part of the review of information services, that the present role of Parent Partnership under the guidance of this Manager is under threat and change. I have worked very closely with her in supporting parents of children with special needs in ensuring they receive the best support and guidance they can have. Her support and knowledge in many of these cases has assisted us in helping these children in our school and then through the process of transition. I have also witnessed how her support, care and advice has helped support many of these families with issues at home and how through her development of the PPS network, she is able to sign post families to the correct support groups who can help. Her knowledge and dedication have also been invaluable to me as a SENCO when I have required help in locating the best support or advice on how to support families or how to arrange visits to different educational settings if required. Without her, I would not have had the successes I have had in placing children in the correct secondary setting for their needs. I fully appreciate that these are extremely difficult financial times and that cuts sadly do need to be made. However already, the SEN section has been extremely cut back to what feels like the very bare bones. This group of vulnerable children and their families should not have to have a lower grade service of support. Already there are fewer services readily available for schools and parents to contact I would think it essential we have a strong parental support service ran by a highly qualified person with the Educational Law Training the DFE want and a wealth of knowledge to support families in a much smaller, restricted service. In addition with the new white paper for SEN and the importance of parental power and rights, surely we require PPS to run as it presently does to show that as an authority we are meeting the needs of all of our children. Please can I urge you to look again very closely at the proposed changes to PPS.
58	Email	25/11/2011	I am writing to express unhappiness and dismay at the recent proposals to finish the Manager at the Parent Partnership Service Manager despite her workload more than tripling in referrals during the month of October(2011) in comparison to the same time last year. (My understanding is that there have been 50 referrals compared to 14) It appears that the proposals are to replace the existing service manager with a much lower grade officer who will not need to have a professional qualification, degree or knowledge of the SEN Code of Practice. Having recently accessed the service regarding a current pupil the support, advice and guidance provided by the Manager has been invaluable. Her knowledge and expertise have given both the parents and ourselves confidence and direction in meeting the needs of our pupil. I am writing to stress the importance of having an experienced and appropriately qualified person in the position of Service Manager. Her advice, guidance, input, knowledge and expertise to those accessing the service would be a great loss and if the proposals go ahead it would diminish the quality and value of the service that you currently offer to parents, pupils and schools.

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58	Email	29/11/2011	<p>I have recently learnt important information that the Parent Partnership Manager may be leave Darlington Parent Partnership and be replaced with a much less qualified person. I would appreciate if you could read my concerns and take them in to consideration when evaluating your decisions with regards to this.</p> <p>Parent Partnership Manager is a well respected "partner" to many families with disabled children and has been a strong influence as well as strength to the families themselves. I don't expect people who make such decisions to about government cut backs in Darlington to understand as it seems to be common practise that they never seem to meet the families and see the needs, stresses and struggles unlike her. I have had several experiences of this with PCT and other local authorities. Just recently there has been a re-shuffle in the SEN team in Darlington which has been a complete joke and has resulted in many children with additional needs not getting into schools including Harriette my own child. Why? Because someone decided to replace the main person with an employee from the housing department. This resulted in statements not being filed in time, schools not being ready and able to offer the provisions straight away. My daughter's case included!!!! Parent Partnership Manager was the only person to offer support, knew the right people to speak to, what meetings should take place, who should be there, and offering my family the support we needed. If it was not for Parent Partnership Manager the situation could have been a lot worse.</p> <p>People comment how doctors and consultants work such very long hours, well let me share with you that parents of disabled children work even longer hours. We are the consultant, the nurse, the stock taker and orderer, pharmacist and physio therapist, the speech and language therapist, the health and safety officer, the employer of carers, the dietician as well as being a parent to our children. I speak on behalf of all the parents in Darlington that we need the support of Parent Partnership Manager. The support and advice she gives in crucial we as parents have a lot to do on a day to day basis. Would you expect a doctor not to have a receptionist? Why? Because a receptionist helps the doctor attend to his/her patients. We need Parent Partnership Manager, without her along side her experience, knowledge and expertise you will find parents depressed, suicidal or on a brink of a nervous breakdown with this "merry go round" of trying to get the correct provision for our children in the schools. There will be a lack of communication which Parent Partnership Manager always makes sure there is plenty of. I feel that if such a decision is made to let Parent Partnership Manager go from her role really the person making the decision does not understand the word "partner" in parent partnership. Parent Partnership Manager is our Partner to all of the families she deals with on a day to day basis. I understand fully about cut backs and reorganising teams, but if the decision is made to let such a pillar of strength go from such an important organisation I really do feel that the management should be also looked at. I say this as it shows extreme poor management and lack of understanding of disabled children and their families.</p>
58	Email	29/11/2011	<p>The recent cut-backs have been very sad in Darlington seeing many valuable colleagues lose their jobs. The sad news recently received is the proposal for Darlington to lose the Parent Partnership Manager, a colleague who has been immensely supportive of Dodmire and our parents. This position requires a highly skilled person who is able to meet difficult situations with confidence and knowledge. I do hope it is not necessary for this proposal to go ahead as not only will she be missed, but expecting her replacement, (who apparently will be a much lower grade officer) to have the same responsibilities for this vital and valuable service is very concerning.</p>
58	Email	16/01/2012	<p>As a parent of a child with a disability I sought information, advice and guidance from Parent Partnership some years ago. I was extremely grateful for the professional and impartial service I received from the manager. I have since been on training organised by the manager and found this invaluable. I would be very concerned if the changes made mean the manager would not be there anymore. The manager is experienced and personally I would be happy speaking to the manager only during a crisis or concern I might have. I do not feel to broaden the people who would be dealing with someone to be a good thing. Darlington is a small borough and the parent partnership manager has built up trust with parents. I would be extremely concerned if this serviced was disrupted or changed.</p>
22	Comment Box		<p>Connexions shouldn't be cut as a ex school pupil I think connexions really helped through school &amp; college. Connexions is a place we can all go that we can trust and get help on anything. There isn't enough help as it is!!</p>
22	Comment Box		<p>I want Connexions to stay open, it gives young people somewhere to go on a Saturday night</p>
22	Comment Box		<p>Keep the One Stop Shop open to youth to keep us out of trouble</p>
22	Comment Box		<p>Keep the One Stop Shop Open</p>
22	Comment Box		<p>Connexions has help me sort my life out and if I didn't have them, I don't know where I would be. I want Connexions in the town so I have somewhere to go to get help and advice. YOS and Social Services did not help me, so they don't understand.</p>
22	Comment Box		<p>Connexions is mint and I would be lost without connexions.</p>

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22	Comment Box		One Stop Shop with agencies all together to provide one big service for young people. We don't want to go to Social Services if we need support. Connexions are a good service we don't want to lose it.
22	Comment Box		Because of the budget , our connexions doesn't have changing facilities. SO my child had to wait to be changed because I was applying for a job and had to wait for an advisor for help because there was not enough staff. My child leaked through and got a sore bum.
22	Comment Box		Things like Connexions and lolly-pop ladies/men are always need to help the people. And by cutting them will not help because people need them to help them.
22	Comment Box		You really need to keep providing the Saturday drop-in at Connexions because the staff are helpful and nice to us and help us with stuff. I think the council are making too many cuts which will affect people's opinions of them as well as affects people who may require access to these services. I know the country's financial situation is a mess but truthfully, you should continue to provide services if not then be providing more especially for young people as there is nothing for us to do then we end up in trouble for being in public places which is ridiculous when we have done nothing wrong and haven't been provided with services / places for recreation /socialising at an affordable price
22	Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open because it keeps me off the streets doing bad stuff and because we can speak to lovely people.
22	Comment Box		Keep the Connexions drop-in open on Saturdays, as it is a place that keeps people off the street corners and out of trouble.
22	Comment Box		Saturday drop-in is useful for the people in town because they help a lot of people when they need it. Please do not close it.
22	Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open, because its good banter.
22	Comment Box		Keep Saturday sessions open.
22	Comment Box		Please allow the Saturday drop-in sessions as they keep youngsters who may cause mischief in a safe environment
22	Comment Box		The drop-in is informative and helpful. It gives me a place to go, get off the street etc.
22	Comment Box		Keep the drop-in open it gives us somewhere to go and helps us meet new people.
22	Comment Box		Keep the Saturday sessions open, it's good for somewhere to go.
22	Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open because if it closed we won't have anywhere to go
22	Comment Box		Defiantly keep the Saturday drop-in open because it gives us something to do and keep keeps us off the streets. It is also a really good place to talk to the youth workers if we have any problems.
22	Comment Box		Saturday drop-in must stay open because it gives us somewhere to go. The current staff are great.
22	Comment Box		Keep Saturday sessions open.
22	Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in, otherwise we would have no where to go, plus it's a good place to go.
22	Comment Box		The youth workers are lovely and without them a lot of us would be a lot more troublesome and in a lot of bother. It helps us a lot coming here and keeps us off the streets.
22	Comment Box		The Saturday night drop-in sessions are really good because we really need it, please don't stop it because it keeps the kids off the streets.
22	Comment Box		The Saturday night drop-in is really good, we need it don't stop it. It gets young people off the streets and keeps them out of trouble.
22	Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open. Nothing to do otherwise. The workers have helped me with some difficult issues and it seems like there is less anti-social behaviour.
22	Comment Box		Keep the Saturday drop-in because it helps keep us off the streets and stops us from getting into trouble.
22	Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open the staff are MINT!
22	Comment Box		Please don't close the drop-in sessions, I like coming here
23	Comment Box		I will be affected by the extra time and money involved in having to transport my child to school. I need comprehensive details as to how this will affect my family & children
23	Comment Box		if school transport stops, my 2 children are going to find it hard to get to school. We live too far away from Carmel to walk, I do not want to consider another school. I want a Catholic school as this is our faith. Thank you.
23	Comment Box		Losing the home to school transport may mean my children losing their right to go to the only faith school in Darlington. I have a right for my children to be educated in the faith I believe in
23	Comment Box		If the highest earners of Darlington Borough Council - Ada Burns for example - were to take a pay cut, substantial savings could be made
23	Comment Box		The possible cuts in home to school transport mean the children in the extended family will be unable to attend secondary catholic school
23	Comment Box		Losing the home to school transport may mean my children lose their right to attend the only faith school in the town. If my children were to go to a 'closer school' they are being deprived of their right to have a faith and to be educated in that faith
23	Comment Box		Comments as above



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Comment Box		I find it quite awful that we will have to pay £10 per week for transport to and from school (Hurworth). Not only is this quite a lot of money but it is very unfair that the children who are already on the buses now will continue to get it free therefore our children will be subsidising the other children's travel. I do feel that most parents will opt to take their children in the car not very good for the village of Hurworth, I have written 3 emails to the Council and have still not received an answer. If Hurworth was not as expensive as it is we would have moved there as our family are from there.
23	Comment Box		Its not possible to stop the bus service from Middleton St George to Hurworth School. How can parents expect to work for a living and get on child to St George's School and another child to Hurworth School? You tell me? I suggest the council stop paying fat salaries and concentrate on the children of our future!
23	Comment Box		I disagree with cutting school transport from St Georges to Hurworth Comp. St Georges is a feeder school to Hurworth. Use the money that would use to be used in providing transport to St Aidans Academy. If all pupils from St Georges went there and off set it against providing transport to Hurworth Comp. I understands that its not just the cost that at issue but also you propose to not even provide transport even it its paid for. The result will be more cars on the road , with more environmental impact. This goes against government policy of reducing carbon footprint. Also what is the point of having a local motion campaign if you are going force parents into using private transport ie cars to get children to school?
23	Comment Box		As my daughter will be going to Hurworth in a couple of years I think I would really struggle getting her and my son to school he is 3 years younger and I wouldn't dream of sending her on her that would mean her having to get 2 buses, well I'm sorry but that is just not going to happen.
23	Comment Box		Stopping the school bus service from Middleton St George to Hurworth is unacceptable! How are parents supposed to get 1 child to Hurworth and 1 child to St Georges? I feel it would unsafe for my eldest daughter to get on public transport to get to Hurworth when she would only be 11 years old. You could cut back some of the bus services in the Darlington area to save money?
23	Email	08/12/2011	I would like to lodge my objections to the proposed cut in free transport to faith based schools. I live near to Carmel RC College, at the moment the school traffic in this area is bad enough without creating more. The Headlands, Treelands and Chilton Close have over the years seen a build up of cars dropping off pupils to the college. Some days it is gridlock and most residents try to avoid these times but sometimes its necessary to venture out. Emergency vehicles, delivery vans etc. have difficulty getting through at the moment, so more cars would make it impossible. I understand that buses will still bring pupils from poorer families, therefore half empty buses will still be in the school area. What kind of logic is that. I would plead with the council will seriously re-think this proposal.
23	Email	13/12/2011	I received a letter from Hummersknott School today regarding the proposed changes to home-school transport for children in the Heighington/Redworth. I have one child already in Hummersknott and another in year 5 at Heighington. Under these proposals my daughter in year 5 will not have access to transport to school. Her school will be Hummersknott due to the sibling links. At present my older child travels to school via the LA bus service which will continue I believe. However my younger child is not an independent traveller and her accessing public transport would, to my mind, present safeguarding issues. As I am a working parent and make use of after school provision, this proposal will have a significant impact on my family. In essence I will probably have to give up my job. I would therefore like lodge my objection to this proposal. I would also like you, as my Councillor to query, on my behalf, the logic of this action. Surely the LA must know what the impact will be on working parents? Creating barriers for children and families to be able to access education - not to mention the potential safeguarding issues with some children having to travel long distances, changing buses etc when they are 11, beggars belief. How is this in line with Every Child Matters? What impact assessments have been done? If the LA asked for a financial contribution as has happened in neighbouring areas, that would be fine - make it means tested so families on low income were not affected. But to stop it altogether is shameful. What about parents who do not have access to a car to drive their children to school? Do the children take their chances on a series of buses or just not go to school? This proposal is not good for children, it is not good for families and it is not good for our community. I would be interested in your views as I suspect you will be hearing from a lot of parents in the Heighington area on this subject over the foreseeable future. However the impact on my family will be significant, and I feel very strongly that this is wrong on so many levels. I would appreciate it if you could make my representations to whomever you feel relevant and I would appreciate any support you can offer in this area.
23	Email	13/12/2011	have a child at Heighington Primary who is in class 2 and this along with a lot of other families will be affected by these changes. What schools will be available? Greenfields and Woodham come under Sedgfield Borough Council I don't have transport and the transport links to Ayclife and Darlington are very poor It will deter families living in Heighington and drive away families that already live here Why there is no option for transport to be funded by the parents Children's education will suffer if you can't send your child to school Mr Howarth Principal of Hummersknott is to organise a meeting in the new year and I think we need representation from our local councillor and as much support from all residents with children who may not be aware of this.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	13/12/2011	received a letter from Hummersknott Academy with reference to the above changes that will come into effect for admissions in Sept 2013 are as follows: Families with siblings at the school will be considered entry but school transport will no longer be available. Families with no siblings attending the school who live in Heighington will almost certainly not be able to attend Hummersknott school. I have a child at Heighington Primary who is in class 2 and this along with a lot of other families will be affected by these changes. What schools will be available? Greenfields and Woodham come under Sedgefield Borough Council don't have transport and the transport links to Aycliffe and Darlington are very poor. It will deter families living in Heighington and drive away families that already live here Why there is no option for transport to be funded by the parents Children's education will suffer if you can't send your child to school Mr Howarth Principal of Hummersknott is to organise a meeting in the new year and I think we need representation from our local councillor and as much support from all residents with children who may not be aware of this. I look forward to hearing from you
23	Email	15/12/2011	As a resident of Hummersknott Avenue, I would like to lodge my objections to the above proposed cuts for the following reasons. The quantity of traffic already using Hummersknott Avenue is heavy at all times of the day. and is more like a main road or a 'rat run' during peak school times, especially since the speed bumps were put in at Hummersknott Academy and at night, now that the Academy has opened for out of school hours and weekend activities ( which wasn't discussed with local residents). Also, traffic speeds are worrying as they go up and down the road at these times. Residents have problems getting out of their own drives and have now taken to parking on the grass verges, I'm concerned that, one day, there may be a serious accident. Parents from both schools already park in Hummersknott Avenue to pick up their children, meaning the road can be extremely tight for other traffic to get through, especially the local bus. The junction at Carmel Road is already a very busy one and I feel the increase in cars, if approx 300 students from Carmel College will have to find alternative transport to the college twice a day, will make this junction even worse, especially for the students of both schools and the Primary school if there are also no crossing patrols. Residents in all of Hummersknott Avenue already put up with a great deal of traffic and I feel that the prospect of even more cars using this route due to the proposed cuts, will result in an unacceptable level of traffic in what is supposed to be a residential area.
23	Email	16/12/2011	I email to seek some clarification on your revised home to school transport policy. Currently I have a 6 year old son who attends Bishopton CoE Primary School. We live at School Aycliffe and he is transported by taxi on a daily basis and is obviously over the 3 mile radius for transport to be provided. We have another son who will be due to start school in September 2014. Should we apply to this Bishopton School under the sibling link and gain a place, please can you confirm the same transport arrangement from School Aycliffe to Bishopton will be available.
23	Email	20/12/2011	hope you are well, and expect you are winding down for Christmas. The reason for my e-mail is to bring your attention to a recent letter I have been given (attached). In a nutshell, it states that 'Hummersknott School' will longer be the chosen School for School Aycliffe! I am very dissatisfied at the proposals, as my family researched the comprehensive school options before moving to School Aycliffe, in addition, both myself and Claire (my wife) attended Branksome (one of the closer schools in the Darlington Borough), somewhere I am not willing to send my children! The proposals indicate adjustment in transport from 2-3 miles, yet all schools in Darlington are at least 6.5 miles away. My issue is not with transport, it is about access to the right school, best facilities, suitable education and a broad mix of students.....Hummersknott! Rather than blathering on in an e-mail, I wonder if you could give me a call to discuss, or even pop round for a mince pie and a coffee.
23	Email	22/12/2011	I am making an initial inquiry to ascertain the facts regarding the proposed changes to the current transport and admissions arrangements for filter into Hummersknott from Heighington Primary. With regards to the initial information I have received I find the proposal unacceptable and I have a strong appetite to contest and fight these proposals. I am aware that the current economic challenges that the Local Authority face require radical changes to make the financial savings subject on them from CLG. Could you inform me of the general feelings of our community and any arrangements that have been proposed to launch coordinate opposition to the proposals. I am disheartened and annoyed at the proposals as my wife and I have worked very hard to purchase our home in the catchment area of good schools.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	03/01/2012	<p>We moved to Heighington 8 years ago. One of the reasons we moved was because of the good links to decent schools. We love living here. We were very dismayed to hear shortly before Christmas that Darlington Borough Council are planning changes to Home-school transport therefore no longer placing us in the catchment area for Hummersknott School. We were also disappointed to find this out through a mother rather than receiving a letter directly from our school as it will affect us in the long run. We understand that in the times that we live that changes have to be made and likewise the council has to make cuts...However....To make cuts like these without even giving us a chance to find an alternative...Unlike the majority of the country we live in I do not expect to get something for nothing. Both my husband and I work full time in order to support our children in the best way possible. If I drove my children to school (which would be impossible because of the shifts I work) I would have to pay for the diesel to go in my car and therefore I would be happy to contribute towards the cost (providing it was reasonable) of the coach to school.</p> <p>Whichever school our children go to from the village they are not able to walk to. Greenfield is at least a half hour walk along a very busy road which you have to cross twice in order to get to the bottom and there is only 1 official crossing (by The Chestnuts) and if I am correct Branksome is impossible to get to on public transport (as is Hummersknott). I am assuming these are counted as being our closest schools. Along the route to Hummersknott there must be a large number of children collected. If they contributed towards the cost of the coach surely this must be a solution without cutting our links to a decent school. We would be interested in finding out when the meetings are going to be held so that we can attend. Thank you for your time</p>
23	Email	03/01/2012	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the budget proposal on school transport. Just before Christmas I was told about the proposed changes being made to school transport by Darlington Borough Council. I managed to get hold of a copy of the Town Crier over the Christmas holidays from a relative (we have not had a copy delivered for over a year). There was very little information in there and at first glance would appear not to affect people living in Heighington or the Chestnuts. However I conducted a search of the council website but couldn't find any information so I spoke to staff in Democratic Services and School Transport. The staff could not have been more helpful and have provided me with the background information to the proposals. As a result of the information they gave me I am very concerned about the school transport proposal. The Town Crier made no mention of the abolition of the associated transport scheme despite the fact that this has major implications for the children attending schools such as Heighington Primary School. The reference to the change of a 2-mile radius to 3-mile radius would be dismissed by many parents as not relevant as Heighington is more than three miles away.</p> <p>Along with other parents I received a letter about the proposals at the end of last week. However the initial proposal was submitted to cabinet on the 22nd November 2011 and the LA is well over half way through the consultation process. Surely this is not genuine consultation! From the information I have been given it would seem that the savings to be gained from withdrawing associated transport to Hummersknott from this area is negligible yet the impact on the well being of the children is huge, so on what grounds has this decision been made? I look forward to hearing from you.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>With reference to the correspondence informing us of the future transport plans from Hummersknott school to the Chestnut estate by Darlington borough council 9th December 2011. We are very concerned the effect this will have on our children as we have already submitted an application to the school for our daughter to start next September and we have a son at Heighington school who is in year 3 at present. From reading the letter from the council it states that not only will my second child not be able to get transportation to the school also they are potentially looking to scrap the sibling rule, if this stands it will mean that my two children will have to attend separate secondary schools which is totally unacceptable in every way. I would strongly contest these plans as they are not suitable for all concerned. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further to resolve the situation in favour of the children as they are the most important issues in all this.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>We are once again being discriminated against as a rural area. Heighington Primary School has a strong tradition of sending its children to Hummersknott School and filling (and the bus is indeed full every day) the associated transport link, making it extremely cost effective for the council to provide this service and enhancing the diverse culture at Hummersknott school. Surely the obvious solution is that Hummersknott Academy invoke their powers as an Academy to stipulate that Heighington School is a feeder school for Hummersknott Academy. The proposal to send our children to other schools such as Longfield or Branksome, which is only 0..2 miles closer and currently does not offer a bus service without having to first go into town and then back out, is wholly unacceptable, even if they were in the same league as Hummersknott or Carmel which clearly they are not. And our other options of the nearest schools being Greenfield and Woodham are Durham County Council, not Darlington Borough Council to whom we pay our taxes and once again I would contend are not in the same league as Hummersknott and Carmel. We currently have 2 children attending Hummersknott Academy, who have exceptional academic and sporting reports and it is our intention to send our youngest child to Hummersknott, but as we will have no sibling link by the time he is due to commence senior school because his sister will have left in July before he is due to commence in September, we are very upset about the current proposals and the appalling lack of communication or consultation. I understand that you hope to meet with Pat Howarth, Head of Hummersknott Academy, at a School Governors' meeting at Hummersknott today, so I would ask for our objections on behalf of many parents, who have no knowledge or understanding of the real implications of such measures being rushed through, to be taken into consideration.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>I understand that Darlington Borough Council are considering alterations to home to school transport from September 2013 and I would like to register my objection to the proposals. I live on the Chestnuts estate in School Aycliffe and have a child who currently attends Hummersknot School and there uses transport provided by the local authority to get to and from school. I also have a child currently attending Heighington Primary School who is due to move to secondary school in September 2013. I understand that children from this estate and also from the village of Heighington are currently given places at Hummersknott due to the transport link however from 2013 the transport link will not form part of the criteria for the allocation of places and distance from the school will be the main criteria. I presume therefore that on this basis children from our estate will be allocated places at Branksome as this appears to be the nearest school within the Borough.</p> <p>The Principle of Hummersknott has advised that our second child should still qualify for a place at the school on sibling links however, if we take up such a place we will be deemed to have chosen not to send our child to the nearest school and therefore our second child will not qualify for free transport to the school even though we live in excess of 3 miles away. So if we were to "choose" to send our second child to Hummersknott then we would be in the position of having 2 children attending the same school with the eldest child being able to use the free local authority transport but having to make separate travel arrangements for the second child.</p> <p>The distance to the nearest secondary school within the Borough is however in excess of 3 miles so presumably the Local Authority would then need to provide transport for the children from our estate and those in Heighington whilst still providing transport for those already attending Hummersknott.</p> <p>I presume that the main driver behind these proposals is to reduce costs as I understand that the minimum distance for free transport is to be increased from 2 miles to 3 miles.</p> <p>However this does not have any relevance to our location as it is approximately 7.5 miles to Hummersknott and 6.5 miles to Branksome. So the Local Authority will still be providing free transport for the children from this area just to a different destination. So for a period of 4 years the Local Authority would need to provide 2 school transport links from this area which would presumably duplicate costs rather than provide savings.</p> <p>I would be grateful if you could look in to this matter on my behalf as I feel that these proposals do not provide any significant benefits,</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>I was informed of the proposed transport policy for the children of Heighington Primary prior to the Christmas break. I was shown a letter sent out to the children currently attending Hummersknott school informing their parents of the proposed changes. However, the children of Heighington Primary have never had any communication regarding this informed change. As a concerned parent I feel this would have a massive impact on the whole of the village. Hummersknott School provides a good level of education with a good standard of examination results, far higher than those currently achieved by Branksome School which I believe is the school they are proposing to provide transport to for the village children. Even if they were prepared to offer places on a basis of parents transporting the children to school themselves this would cause difficulty to many parents who due to work commitments would not be able to get their child to the school.</p> <p>I cannot believe that the cost of the transport is the motivation behind this as the difference in distance between Hummersknott and Branksome is negligible. I believe it is more about trying to ensure that a school with poorer academic results can try to improve their overall results by feeding in high achieving primary schools. It is not only the education that concerns me but the knock on effect on other aspects i.e. parents wanting their children to go to Heighington Primary School if they know their child will then go on to Branksome School and this may stop young families either staying or wanting to move to the village. I know you will do your very best to represent us and fight our corner and thank you for this in advance. Should you receive any further information regarding the proposed policy I would be extremely grateful if you would forward this to me. Many thanks for your support in this matter.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Please can you add myself and my wife's names (cc'd into this email) to your parents contact list for the proposed changes in the School Transport Plans by the DBC for Heighington have kindly been provided with an email this morning, from a fellow Heighington Primary School parent, and this is the first I have known about it. I can guarantee you 95% of other parents will also not be aware of the changes, and if they were, they would be in contact. I suggest you contact the Head teacher at Heighington, Neil Parker, so he can make parents aware of this via a Newsletter from the School. The changes proposed are terrible news for Heighington, as the nearest Schools are not top performing at all, and are very poor. This will of course affect house prices in Heighington and the Chestnuts as they no longer have the ticket to the better secondary schools in the area. Please raise our concerns to your list.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Thank you for the copy of your email, I would definitely like my details adding to any opposing list. I think the reason you have not received any names is exactly the point you have made in that there is no information available to parents about these changes and it is only discussions at the school gate. I'm sure you will be aware there are lots of parents who are opposed but have only been made aware of this situation from the letter sent to current parents attending Hummersknott. No other information has been sent to anyone else as far as I am aware. I am very happy to get involved in this and can start by collecting names and contact details if that's what you would like me to do? Or anything else you think is needed at this time Look forward to hearing from you</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Over the holidays I have started to hear many rumours regarding Heighington as the normal feeder school to Hummersknott changing to Branksome and about transportation to school. I have 2 girls who attend Heighington Primary and we live on the Chestnuts so as I am sure you can appreciate I am very concerned about this issue. I have heard that there is going to be a meeting and would be very grateful if you could let me know when this will be so that I can attend.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>We would like to voice our objection to the changes to school transport. We have read your email and have looked on the Hummersknott website and read the following extract from their newsletter:-Darlington Borough Council are consulting with the public on changes to School Transport. These will only affect students admitted to the Academy from September 2013. The main changes are:1. An increase in the distance students need to live from Hummersknott Academy to qualify for free transport, from 2 to 3 miles. Anyone living less than 3 miles will have to arrange their own transport.2. An end to Associated Transport. Meaning that students living in Skerne Park, High Coniscliffe, Piercebridge, the Teesdale approaches, Heighington area and "The Chestnuts Estate" would no longer be guaranteed a place at Hummersknott. The only criteria would be distance from the Academy, with those living nearest gaining a place. These are major changes which will affect parents ability to choose Hummersknott for their child.</p> <p>The reduction in school buses will also have a major impact upon traffic in the Hummersknott area with more parents driving their children to school. We are asking parents to contact their local councillors to object to these changes and we will be holding some public meetings in the New Year. Hopefully you will now have been contacted by more parents. If not we hope you will be able to put forward the point that not many parents actually know about the plans and how they will affect them in the future. Why have the parents of Heighington School and other feeder schools not been informed? To me it sounds like parents with children at Hummersknott were informed, and it is down to these parents and other proactive parents that more of us have been told.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>I have three children aged 9, 6 and 2, the oldest two already attending the village primary school. I and my wife had believed that they would in due course attend secondary school in Darlington at Hummersknott. Over Christmas, in conversation with friends we were told that this is unlikely to remain the case as Darlington B.C. are about to change its travel policy, and therefore our children will be filtered into Branksome School as the closest school to the Village to which transport will be provided. Is this true? We have not seen any official announcement on this quite significant change in policy, and if we, who do get involved with things in the village have not heard about this, then I suspect most other parents will have no knowledge. What is the correct story, and if this worrying change is broadly true, why have DBC not consulted, and why has our Headmaster at the Village school not advised parents?</p> <p>The distance between Branksome and Hummersknott is relatively short when you have a bus already on the road, therefore is there such a huge saving to DBC by cutting off an extra mile or so, particularly when taking into account the higher Council Tax take that benefits DBC from Heighington as a whole?</p> <p>Or is this simply politics, to improve the academic Branksome intake? Is Hummersknott, wanting to move away from taking Heighington children?</p> <p>I am most concerned that rather than pulling all children in the Borough up it will drag our children down.</p> <p>Looking at a comparison of league tables you can see the disparity between the two Secondary Schools. If parents are properly consulted, all but the apathetic will be very worried, and I suspect you will have a lot of fire fighting to do. DBC Education dept will also be in for a hard time! If this apparent change goes ahead, parent will not allow their children to be sent to Branksome, and I predict that they will vote with their feet. Staindrop School, other Durham CC schools and the private schools will have a significant influx fro Heighington!! I would appreciate your understanding of the situation and what if anything we can do.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>I wish to express my concern regarding DBC removing transport to Hummersknott School and therefore, I have been informed children within Heighington will no longer be eligible to attend Hummersknott school. This, to me sounds a most ridiculous proposal. I was not too concerned, as I thought it was so ridiculous that it was probably just rumours. However I was given a copy of an email today which set the record the straight. For one, it was mentioned that not many parents had contacted the council. I assure you they soon will, as up until this morning it was the first a lot of parents had heard of the situation. How were parents supposed to know? Apparently, the only people that did know, were those who have children already at Hummersknott. I have a child at Heighington Primary and I have not been informed from the Headmaster and I am assuming he must know of the proposed changes. If the changes are to be made to save money, then fair enough, I understand in the current climate. Having spoken to parents this morning, if it means our children get to attend our first choice of school (Hummersknott) we would be willing to pay transport costs.</p> <p>There are a number of issues that the change would bring about. There is the possibly that it could effect the house prices within the village. People have chosen our village due to the fact that we are linked to Hummersknott. Without this link it is possible that people would look to move elsewhere. I would like to be kept informed within any updates regarding the proposed change, either via e-mail or meetings.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Today at school I was given a copy of an email from yourself to another parent stating that you were meeting with the Officer of School Transport Planning on Thursdays - and that he might be ignorant of the strength of feeling against these changes amongst the parents of Heighington due to the fact that only 4 parents have contacted you about this to object. I urge you to make it clear to him that the lack of response is not due to strength of feeling, but rather due to the total lack of communication and consultation between DBC and parents affected by the change. As yet - there has been no official announcement or consultation paper, and most parents who will be directly affected are still ignorant of the proposals and their implications because they do not currently have children who attend Hummersknott and therefore have not received any correspondence about it. Apparently Mr Parker and the School Governors have known about this proposal for some time - but have not seemed it necessary to disseminate the information amongst the parents of the school - all of whom will be affected.</p> <p>I cannot fathom out why he has chosen this - as ultimately it will affect the primary school in the village and their intake is surely made up of children from families who have moved into the area with the purpose of sending their children to the excellent village primary school, which has associated transport links to an excellent secondary school - Hummersknott. To think this does not affect him is short-sighted. I do not understand how the Council plan to show how cutting the transport links will save money when they cannot supply information about either how much the associated transport currently costs, nor how much will be 'saved' once they have to establish a transport link to a school that is merely 0.2miles closer to us than Hummersknott. I can only conclude that this lack of information is a deliberate ploy to cover the fact that there will actually be little or no saving to this proposal, This would also explain the total lack of communication on the part of DBC who obviously hoped to make these changes, quietly, under cover of the Christmas period. I thank you for taking the time to investigate this matter on our behalf - and again - urge you to point out to DBC that there is a great deal of feeling about these changes and a great deal of confusion as to their purpose and implications. If they could clarify their intentions and the thinking behind the proposed changes in an open and honest manner to those affected - I think they would find that there is in fact a huge opposition to these proposals and we would welcome the opportunity to voice it to them through the correct channels. Please feel free to pass my contact details to anyone who is unsure of how much strength of feeling there is against this proposal. And please let me know if there is anything we can do to help put a stop to this preposterous proposition.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Please accept my apologies for contacting you at this late juncture but I only heard today that you are meeting with a DBC Council Officer tomorrow morning to discuss proposed changes to the school transport arrangements, affecting children from Heighington, which would result from implementation of a new DBC Transport Plan. I would like to express my concern (as a parent of two) at the lack of information and absence of any consultation process/period regarding these changes and would greatly appreciate it if you would convey these concerns to the relevant DBC officers? I wonder if you could also possibly clarify a rumour which is passing among parents in the village that if these proposed changes were introduced it would mean that, in future, no child from Heighington would be able to attend Hummersknott School? If that were the case I am again very concerned at the lack of information given by DBC on this significant change and the absence of any consultation with the parents of children whose education would be affected.</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Can you please note that I have only just received information about Dab's proposed school transport plan which, it seems, will prevent children from Heighington Primary from admission to Hummersknott. I am not at all happy about this, and would like you to raise it with Murray Rose as soon as possible. many thanks,</p>
23	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Further to the recent, limited correspondence we have received about the proposed changes to the current school transport. I don't agree with the proposal and I struggle to understand the reasoning behind the changes. I would be interested to see the cost / benefit calculations to see any savings, if any, that would be made by the proposal. I fail to understand how this will help our children's education, something that appears to have been overlooked in this exercise. Given the lack of information currently received, I hope as a minimum there is a meeting set up before the proposal is agreed.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	04/01/2012	I write to you with regard the recent situation I have been made aware of regarding the secondary schooling for children from the village of Heighington. My oldest daughter is due to go to secondary schooling in Sept '13 and having reviewed the local secondary school results we had comfort in knowing she will be attending Hummersknott. To now find that the local authority is changing the schooling is not acceptable particularly when you consider that the proposed school Branksome, is no material distance nearer Heighington than Hummersknott and has considerably poorer results according to the published Ofsted reports (These results can be accessed on the website if required). We love living in the village of Heighington and would be disappointed if we were forced out due to inadequate schooling. Please could you let me know what action you feel is most appropriate to address this matter or would I be better writing to the Local Authority directly.
23	Email	05/01/2012	I don't know the full details as haven't read the proposal, but I hear the proposal is that Heighington school children may now possibly feed into Branksome school as opposed to Hummersknott school. Also that there are also transport issues proposed? . I would be very grateful if you would forward any information that you have on these issues. Me and my husband would also like to express our grave concerns over these proposals and will gladly sign any petition to oppose this. Any further information at this stage would be greatly appreciated.
23	Email	06/01/2012	As parents of two daughters who currently attend Heighington primary school we are deeply saddened and annoyed about the prospect of our girls feeding into a different secondary school to what we planning. We have lived in Heighington for many years and prior to the present time we have always been excited about the prospect of our children moving on to the impressive and exciting school of Hummersknott. To hear 'on the grapevine' that this may be changing in order to save an uncertain and perhaps insignificant amount of money (in the grant scheme of things) is so very disappointing. It is bad enough to hear of all the other local cutbacks ie the potential closure of the brilliant Arts centre, but now hearing this news that directly affects us, our children, our morale, and our village is so frustrating. Heighington village not so long back won the national 'perfect village' competition .... Surely now not only will residents be sad that our children are being let down but also surely house prices will potentially drop as will the excitement of new young families coming to the village if the schooling options change. We will be attending the scheduled meeting at Heighington school but wish to air our extreme concerns regarding your proposals.
23	Email	06/01/2012	My daughter is a pupil at Heighington Primary and my son is at the Pre-School. I know that many parents have emailed you this week regarding the transport to Hummersknott. I just wanted to add my name to the list of those who are concerned and who oppose the new transport plan.
23	Email	06/01/2012	I am writing to you as a former pupil of both Heighington Primary School and Hummersknott Academy to express my concern about the proposed cancellation of the Heighington-Hummersknott bus route. This minor budget cut will have a major impact on many people, most important of them being the children whose very education is at risk. My time at Hummersknott was absolutely critical to both my academic and personal development and I believe that my time in secondary education could have not been better spent at any other institution. The transition between Heighington and Hummersknott was made easy thanks to their close connection, and of course the provided bus transport meant one less worry for me at an otherwise stressful time. Is it not a breach of equal opportunities for students from Heighington to be denied an education from such a reputable establishment just because of a poorly considered budget cut? I also believe that my education at Hummersknott was vital in carrying over to College education at, in my case, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College. Hummersknott has a very close relationship with QE College, and had it not I may not have considered an education there. Application to QE College was made easy through the guidance and supervision of Hummersknott, something very important to myself and other students in the stressful exam period. I now plan on continuing my education to University next year, and thanks to my education at QE College this process has also been made much easier. If it were not for the easy move from Heighington to Hummersknott, I may have never gone to QE College and may have never considered a University education. It is plain how the step from primary to secondary education is so important and I believe that this highly illogical budget cut needs to be reconsidered by the council, as the futures of many young students should not be in jeopardy for the sake of a single bus route.



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	07/01/2012	I am writing in reference to the letter received with regards to the changes to the Home School Transport from September 2013. My husband and I understand you are opposing this and we want to give you our full backing. We presently have one of our two daughters at Heighington School and our younger daughter will attend in due course. We are very concerned about the changes to this service and the impact this will have on our daughters future education. We do not want our daughters attending the schools listed in the letter as alternative options due to transport issues. One of the reasons we chose to live in Heighington Village was for the schooling as we understood that all Heighington children were eligible to attend Hummersknott. We believe that attending the alternative schools listed will put our daughters education in jeopardy. We would like to formally complain about these changes to the DBC and Hummersknott school as we do not see the proposed options feasible for our family. We are also unsure, as you are, how much the council propose to save by providing transport to these alternative schools?? Please let us know of any developments and of any action we can take to help to oppose this unacceptable proposal.
23	Email	09/01/2012	A friend has given me your name as someone who may be able to advise on the issue of the future association between Heighington primary and Hummersknott Academy. I understand the proposals to remove free transport to Hummersknott, which is not ideal but understandable given budget cuts, but can you advise on the issue of whether my children will be able to choose to attend Hummersknott when they leave Heighington, transport issues notwithstanding? Am I right to think that we will not even be able to consider Hummersknott as the secondary school for our children, or is it correct to say that we could consider Hummersknott and if we want the children to go there then we will have to arrange transport / pay transport costs?
23	Email	09/01/2012	I'd like to express our concerns regarding the change in transport provision for our children to secondary education. It seems that despite the notion of promoting choice with regards to schools the council has decided that this should be compromised and as a result the offer is being restricted to schools which we would find unacceptable due to current education attainment they achieve. Could you please include us in any updates.
23	Email	10/01/2012	Just to inform you that I will be putting a complaint in re the change of transport and school. I am unable to attend the meeting but wish you to put mine and robs name on any list of complaints you have.
23	Email	11/01/2012	I am writing to register my objection to the budget proposal on school transport. Just before Christmas I was told about the proposed changes being made to school transport by Darlington Borough Council. I managed to get hold of a copy of the Town Crier over the Christmas holidays from a relative (we have not had a copy delivered for over a year). There was very little information in there and at first glance would appear not to affect people living in Heighington or the Chestnuts. However I conducted a search of the council website but couldn't find any information so I spoke to staff in Democratic Services and School Transport. The staff could not have been more helpful and have provided me with the background information to the proposals. As a result of the information they gave me I am very concerned about the school transport proposal. The Town Crier made no mention of the abolition of the associated transport scheme despite the fact that this has major implications for the children attending schools such as Heighington Primary School. The reference to the change of a 2-mile radius to 3-mile radius would be dismissed by many parents as not relevant as Heighington is more than three miles away. Along with other parents I received a letter about the proposals at the end of last week. However the initial proposal was submitted to cabinet on the 22nd November 2011 and the LA is well over half way through the consultation process. Surely this is not genuine consultation! From the information I have been given it would seem that the savings to be gained from withdrawing associated transport to Hummersknott from this area is negligible yet the impact on the well being of the children is huge, so on what grounds has this decision been made?
23	Email	11/01/2012	My son goes to Heighington school. I would like to express my objection against the proposal to end link between Heighington and Hummersknott schools.
23	Email	12/01/2012	I've received a letter via my Son's school, St George's Primary, regarding the changes to Hurworth School transport. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the meeting at St Georges on 16th January due to work commitments. Please can you clarify one point for me? We've calculated via Google Maps the Home to Hurworth route is 4.1 miles, therefore over the 3 mile proposed change to policy. Is this proposed change via road or 'as the crow flies'? I am fairly confident the proposed changes will not affect us when they are implemented, but would respectfully request that you clarify this.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	14/01/2012	<p>I have been reading with interest the emails going back and forth about the school transport issue and before writing to the council wanted to run a couple of issues past you. My intention was to write to the council along the following lines, and advise that these are the questions that I intend to ask at the open meeting in Heighington, so could they come with answers. The bus issue is clearly an attempt, by the council, to reduce it's budget by using a stealth tax against the most vulnerable of tax payers, the ones who would accept it ( the middle classes). It is already worrying that parents are talking of accepting this, at a time when we are being hardest hit by the recession. With regard to its reduction in budget, I think it reasonable to ask what other areas of the budget / services were considered for cutting and why these were ruled out / in. I think it also wise to ask, at what point was the council considering this, when did they raise it with the schools and the general public, as there appears to have been an agenda to keep this information quiet and without you, the head teachers and subsequent parent emails, this could have worked. I would also like to see the potential saving projected on this, and the costs associated with running 2 buses, presumably one to Branksome and Hummersknott, for children still entitled to use it. In fact one could argue that a bus going to Hummersknott via the dog inn, avoids Darlington congestion, is not idle in standing traffic and is therefore a safer, greener and more cost effective solution.</p>
23	Email	15/01/2012	<p>This is a formal objection to the proposal to end the provision of 'associated transport' within the identified budget cuts given for consultation. Through the 'associated transport' link children from Heighington Primary School have received their secondary education at Hummersknott Academy, a situation the vast majority of parents in the area are satisfied with. The school provides a well established and proven educational experience, with good academic results and a sense of community with the Heighington area. The removal of the 'associated transport' link for children moving into secondary education from 2013 is to be replaced with 'provision to the nearest school only' and would effectively destroy that community link with a good school and replace it with two poorer performing schools by providing transport to either Darlington School of Mathematics and Science (DSMS) or Longfield Academy. Both DSMS and Longfield are considered 'improving' schools but both as yet provide significantly lower results at GCSE level than Hummersknott Academy. Indeed, at DSMS, only 35% of their pupils achieved grade "C" or above in their GCSE exams in 2010, compared with 62% of Hummersknott pupils.</p> <p>As a result of the above the children from the Heighington area will be effectively penalised and have their future prospects put at risk in order for Darlington Borough Council to make alleged savings of £14000 per year.</p> <p>Our children are the future and Darlington Borough Council must recognise the need to invest in the future. In addition, Longfield Academy and DSMS are both smaller schools than Hummersknott Academy and therefore there is the potential that one school may not be able to take all the pupils from Heighington Primary School.</p> <p>This may result in children being scattered between one or more schools, possibly including Hummersknott Academy, thereby exaggerating the effect of different educational provision and also the destruction of the community link as friendships are torn apart at a time when children already feel vulnerable.</p> <p>We have been given no rational arguments as to how the Council will decide which of the Heighington children will benefit from attending Longfield and which children will be sent to DSMS - a school recently made an "Academy", to avoid special measures, rather than because of academic excellence. A number of children across the Darlington area from different schools, but significantly the issues are likely to be greater for those children from the more rural communities.</p> <p>These children should not be disadvantaged by effectively being offered places at schools which the Council cannot fill, because parents do not wish to send their children there. These cuts appear to us to be fundamentally flawed and likely to lead to an increase in costs Heighington is situated some 5 to 6 miles from all schools and has no other link to the schools other than by road, there will still be a requirement to provide 'free' transport, so a school bus will still run.</p> <p>Due to the distances involved for children from the Heighington area there appears to be no impact when in fact the exact opposite is the case. why has there not been an alternative proposal of placing a levy on 'associated transport' links in order to maintain the service whilst trying to reduce costs?</p> <p>If this proposal goes ahead and Heighington Primary School essentially feeds into an inferior secondary school, then the Heighington area will cease to provide an attractive base for family life. Finally, one of the foundation principles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which underpins all other children's rights is that a child's "best interests must be a primary consideration" in all actions and decisions concerning him or her and must be used to resolve conflicts.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	15/01/2012	Hope you are well. Thank you for delivering the newsletter today. Along with many others we concerned with the recent development of school catchment areas. At present we are determined our children will not be attending the proposed options of Longfield or Branksome and wonder if this proposal by DBC is only to ensure that as a unitary authority the exercise is purely to maintain the existence of the 7 secondary schools currently open with the LA. Being an advisor and head teacher for North Yorkshire I am all too aware of the changes necessary given the current economic climate however like many, circumstances should not jeopardise pupil/parent right and the education our children deserve. Perhaps DBC should look long and hard and the proposals and question why parents feel so strongly against this.
23	Email	15/01/2012	Thank you for your newsletter regarding parish information. We are a family who have recently moved onto 'The chestnuts' estate and although our children are several years away from beginning secondary school we are particularly interested in the proposed changes that could effect their education. Due to work commitments we are unable to attend the meeting on 25th January, however would like to be further informed on the issue. If you could forward the minutes of the meeting and any additional information we would be very grateful. In addition we would appreciate it if you could please explain (or if you are unclear at present ask the following questions at the meeting on our behalf) how such changes would effect Catholic children living in 'The chestnuts' School Aycliffe. Will Catholic children still be admitted to Carmel school? Will Catholic children be provided with free transport? Will transport be available for Catholic children but parents will be required to pay for this? Will parents be responsible for transporting their children to and from school? Thank you for your help on this matter.
23	Email	16/01/2012	I am concerned about letters I have received from school regarding home to school transport. I always thought that my children, would always attend Hummersknott Secondary School after High Coniscliffe School however recent letters seem to point to the conclusion that they may not. I appreciate that there are cut backs, however in order for my children to gain access to Hummersknott I would be quite happy to pay a contribution for associated transport. It is of the utmost importance to me that my children go to Hummersknott School and think it is quite unfair that if my children were 2 years older they would be judged under different criteria, ie my eldest would already be in the school and the sibling link would exist, meaning my other child would also gain access. I am attending a meeting at the town hall on 19th January at 5pm to discuss this, but I wanted to make you aware of my views prior to the meeting.
23	Email	18/01/2012	I am a resident of the Chestnuts estate in School Aycliffe and I have a child who currently attends Hummersknott school, my youngest son will hopefully start there in September (2012). I read with great dismay and concern your proposed changes to home to school transport. Although it appears at this time that my children will continue to have transport to school, I am concerned that in due course, if these proposals are allowed to go ahead it be stopped. You will be aware that we live more than 3 miles from all the secondary schools in Darlington therefore children will need transport to whichever school they attend. I fail to see therefore how you can justify the proposed changes. Parents are supposed to be able to choose which school their children attend. Removing transport will remove freedom to choose. I have no idea how I will continue to work fulltime and manage to transport my children to and from school. These proposals are a source of great concern. Please consider this email as a formal objection to the proposed changes. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.
23	Email	19/01/2012	We would like to show our support against the proposed changes being made for School Aycliffe & Heighington school bus travelling. This does not effect us personally as our 3 children already attend Hummersknott Academy, but our reasons for moving to this area in 2004 were solely based on schooling and a property we could afford within the catchment area. We cannot imagine how we would feel if we had made this move, then have the choices we made as responsible parents taken away. I'm sure you can appreciate almost every parents worries with this current climate the world is experiencing, the EDUCATION of this generation is paramount

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Email	19/01/2012	<p>I am e-mailing you regarding the council's proposals to alter the school admissions policy. My husband and I are parents of six year old twins. We are both serving police officers in Darlington and bought a house on the Chestnuts in 2003 as we were planning to start a family within a couple of years and knew that the schools we were likely to be offered were Heighington Primary and Hummersknott or Carmel Comprehensive schools. We did not take the decision to move out of Darlington lightly but felt that owing to our profession we wanted to put a little distance between our family and work life. The twins were accepted into Heighington Primary in September 2009 and we had hoped that they would move onto one of the two excellent secondary schools. I am sure you can appreciate our utter horror when we heard the proposals. My husband was once the Beat Officer for Branksome and I was the Beat Officer for Longfield Road / Harrogate Hill. We never imagined that one day we would be faced with the prospect of sending our children to those schools.</p> <p>I am appalled that having bought a house in a nice area with good schools it appears that we are to be cast aside and expected to send our children elsewhere. I grew up in the Hummersknott area, indeed our family home backed onto Carmel school, and I attended Hummersknott along with my brother.</p> <p>I am extremely concerned that my children are now about to lose out on an excellent education and will be forced to mix with children from families we deliberately moved away from. Moving children from a well-performing and well-run school to a poorer performing school in a less affluent area will badly affect our children's' education and social skills. Some parents may easily be dissuaded from this line of thought, however we are experienced police officers and know that as with placing criminals in nice areas, putting well-educated happy children into a poorer environment does not improve performance of others, it merely pulls the good pupils down to a lower level.</p> <p>I feel so strongly regarding this matter that I am prepared to move to another area, but feel aggrieved that I may be forced to take such action. We do not want to leave the lovely environment and life we have built for our family in the Heighington Ward, but we would leave rather than see our children deprived of the education we had planned for them. I also question what the proposals will mean for house prices within our ward?</p> <p>It would be naive for the council to think that good schools are not the prime reason for decent, law abiding citizens to purchase a house in a particular area. If this proposal goes ahead, it will kill the village and local economy as I have spoken to many other parents who feel the same and would be willing to leave the area rather than allow their children to be sent to other less desirable schools. My husband and I are more than prepared to pay for transport costs although I understand that this is not really the issue as with the transport link removed we would fall further down the list of criteria for Carmel and Hummersknott. I understand from other parents I have spoken to, that you are very supportive of parents at the school. Please take my comments forward! We will be attending the meeting at school on January 25th.</p>
23	Email	16/12/2012	<p>Recently received a letter from Hummersknott Academy that indicates the council are proposing changes to the Home School Transport scheme. The result of the proposals will mean from September 2013 children from Heighington Primary School will have virtually no chance of accessing Hummersknott Academy. For most people in Heighington and the surrounding area (this includes ourselves at Houghton-le-Side) Hummersknott is their preferred choice of school, as it performs to a consistent high standard and the alternative 'closer' schools offer a significantly less attractive educational experience! I appreciate the need to make savings and am only too well aware of the financial stresses being exerted on the local authority, however I believe the proposal regarding transport may have a far wider impact on the future prospects of a generation of children that is extremely unfair and so ill conceived.</p> <p>I believe parents of pupils in Heighington Primary School will have a lot to say on the matter and need the opportunity to discuss the impact of the proposals in order that their representations can be fully and accurately reflected in the council's decision making process.</p> <p>I would appreciate your earliest thoughts on the matter as I understand the council will make a decision on this proposal in February 2012.</p>
23	Event	05/12/2012	<p>School Transport: Appreciate predicament, it is an impossible job. Move from 2-3 miles however concerns parents:• Large numbers of pupils just above the Free School Meals/ Working Family Tax Credits threshold who won't be able to afford transport costs. Decision on schools will be based on transport availability rather than pupil and parental choice. • Reduction in service buses will this be able to replace school buses. • Impact assessment done? On poor families and increased traffic. • In Town Crier no reference to Associated Transport. How will we engage with the communities affected by that. If distance decides school then outlying villages will lose out as they live too far away to gain a place. Resulting in having to bus children to further schools. All schools will become Academies by January 2012. Want to keep admissions policies. <u>All schools will have to revisit admissions policies.</u></p>
23	Event	05/12/2012	<p>Children from St Bede's will have to get two buses. Parents will not be able to put their children into Carmel. Children will lose out on faith education. Make up of Carmel School will change considerably. Important to remember we need to invest in children. How do the Council <u>intend to work with communities to enable pupils to have a faith education?</u></p>
23	Letter	28/11/2011	<p>No Direct route to Carmel College. Already have children in St Teresa's all children have to be at school the same time, can't see how that is possible if I was expected to provide transport to Carmel.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Letter	30/11/2011	The standardised letter [objections to the proposed cut in home to school transport to Carmel College] has my full support. Has current traffic flow been comprehensively studied, particularly at college closing time and especially on Friday afternoons when workers take advantage of an early drive homeward, coincident with college and school traffic? Has note been taken of the drive to and from Carmel College from Carmel Road North via Headlands, Which translates into a virtual cul de sac? Additionally there is the hazard of the manned pedestrian crossing on Carmel Road North, hazardous but necessary for walkers to and from college. Yes existing school bus services experience their own difficulties in existing dense traffic. But bus drivers are more aware of traffic hazards than many a 'convenience' car driver.
23	Letter	01/12/2011	Object to the proposal to stop all faith transport and would ask you to consider the following:1 The Potential Savings which seem to be very small2 Carmel College is fully comprehensive in nature and admits over 30% of students from the most deprived wards. It is these students who will be most adversely affected by the proposals.3 Carmel College accepts children from all faiths and over 30% of students are non-catholic.4 The present proposal is discriminatory as some children will qualify for transport beyond 3 miles while Catholic children will not.
33	Letter	09/01/2012	I am appalled to read your proposal in the town crier re the closure of the toilets in the town, I'm sure many people like me who are disabled and pensioners have to use these in-between bus transfers in Tubwell Row or maybe using the market for daily shopping. I have no problem paying for this facility.
23	Letter	09/01/2012	We have a daughter who is currently in year five at Heighington Primary School. And it has always been our intention for her to complete her secondary education at Hummersknott Secondary School. This was one of the primary factors we considered when purchasing our house in the Chestnuts 8 years ago. As I'm sure you will understand our children's education is of the utmost importance to us and this was a planned and considered move on our part. Our primary concern is that your proposed changes to the secondary home to school transport would mean that children without siblings already at Hummersknott moving on from Heighington to secondary education would no longer move onto Hummersknott School as their first choice/ preferred school, as has always previously been the case.
23	Letter	09/01/2012	I am, like many other parents whose children will be affected by the proposed changes to school transport, disturbed by the implications of these changes upon my children's education. I understand that if the 'associated link' is removed my children will be offered a place at the closest school. This would be either Branksome or Longfield. ... If Branksome this causes a problem: All children have the right to, and should expect, an excellent standard of education. From reading its recent Ofsted report, Branksome does not offer such a standard. There is also the issue of finance ... has the Council performed a cost analysis to show that there will be overall savings made under your proposed changes?
23	Letter	09/01/2012	... The announcement that children from Heighington will now be required to attend Branksome or Longfield school will result in children from the village being split between three potential schools in the short term due to the policy that siblings can attend Hummersknott while the remaining children will be divided between Longfield and Branksome. Our main concern is the disruption to the children of the village as they will no longer be schooled together and this will damage the social element within Heighington, we also feel that over the last ten years Hummersknott has shown its ability to adapt to the requirements of children from rural backgrounds. In terms of cost savings which is clearly the driving force behind these rapid changes, we cannot see where there will be any clear benefit, you will have to continue with the current bus to Hummersknott for those children who will already be attending and also for the siblings of the above mentioned and in addition you will incur the cost of another bus to Branksome or Longfield or both.
23	Letter	17/01/2012	On behalf of Hurworth Parish Council we wish to express our opposition to the proposed cuts to the secondary school associated transport provision as stated in MTFP - Appendix 15/24. The current transport arrangements ensure that pupils from across the Borough can receive the highest quality of education and deliver a diverse pupil intake for the school. We believe that these changes will impact unfairly on the rural communities in general and Hurworth School. In particular, with the result that educational choice, diversity and quality in the wider Borough will suffer. Hurworth Parish Council therefore fully supports Hurworth School in its stance on this matter and we urge that these proposals be reconsidered.
32	Letter	23/01/2012	I am also concerned that lack of CCTV outside the town centre will lead to more criminal offences and police will have a hard time bringing justice to victims.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Letter	25/01/2012	... Although the proposal to increase the distance criteria for transport from two miles to three was outlined in the budget article, there was no reference to the removal of associated transport. As the children attending Heighington Primary School live around 7-8 miles from the secondary school, many parents would assume that this proposal would not affect their children. It is only through the actions of a number of parents..... that the true extent of the cuts along with the wider implications have now become known. This can hardly be classed as community engagement and meaningful consultation. I would also like my objection to the proposals to be officially recorded. From the information I have been given it would seem that the savings to be gained from withdrawing transport to Hummersknott from this area is negligible yet the impact on the well-being of the children is huge, so on what grounds has the decision been made?
23	Letter	14/12/2012	I would like to lodge my objections to the proposed cut in home to school transport to Carmel College. Entrance to the college is through a built up residential area and managing the current traffic flow is difficult. It creates problems for both residents and the College alike. However, the prospect of over 300 students having to find alternative means of transport, many of whom are likely to be brought by car, will result in an unacceptable level of traffic. It will put at risk the safety of residents, students at the college and visitors to the area. At a time when we all should be looking to improve the quality of the environment, this proposal will do untold damage and is contrary to the action we should be taking to safeguard the environment.
23	Letter	19/12/2012	The present situation in the [Carmel College] area is bad enough and we are frequently unable to either get off or access our drive because of waiting or parked vehicles. Refuse and recycling vehicles have trouble accessing the street because of badly parked vehicles. Many of us have had to listen to bad language when asking people to park somewhere more reasonable but the big problem is that public transport is not an option for students when there is only one bus per hour in this area. ... is it not possible to make a charge for the transport as it would appear that transport is still being provided for children from low income families.
23	Letter		We are writing to express our concerns and opposition to the proposals for school transport. Proposal is unjust, unsubstantiated and discriminatory to rural communities. Communication and consultation process has been very low key and underhand. Available information is sketchy and uncertain. Had to undertake further research to gain more factual information from our local Councillor and the headmasters of Hummersknott, Carmel and Heighington Schools. There is little or no information coming from the Council with several people having to refer to the Freedom of Information Act in order to prise the necessary information out of DBC which is unacceptable. The link between Heighington Primary and Hummersknott and Carmel Secondary Schools have produced a constant flow of highly educated children well prepared to either continue with Higher/Further Education or enter society and the working community. This is now in jeopardy. We strongly urge DBC to reconsider these proposals.
23	Letter		I like many other parents will be affected by the proposed changes to school transport am disturbed by the implications of these changes upon my children's education. I understand that if the 'associated link' is removed my children will be offered a place at the closest school. This would be either Branksome or Longfield. I would like to know which one it will be. If Branksome, this causes a problem: All children have the right to, and should expect, an excellent standard of education. From reading its recent Ofsted report, Branksome does not offer such a standard. Has the Council performed a cost analysis to show that there will be overall savings made under your proposed changes? It is in no way fulfilling the Council's obligation to those children to waste a fantastic primary education at Heighington Academy by providing, in my opinion, an inadequate secondary one. I propose that the current system is left as it is. I also object to the limited consultation on this matter. The Town Crier did not mention associated transport and I suspect this was a deliberate omission. Parents have not been informed directly and there has been much unnecessary confusion amongst parents which the Council should, and could, have avoided.
23	Letter (circular)	09/01/2012	I would like to register my opposition to the proposed changes to the Local Authority's home school transport arrangements, as I believe that they discriminate disproportionately against parents on both religious and socio-economic grounds, neither do they give due regard to the safety of children.  I am concerned that a judgement on what is regarded as having due regard for children's safety has the potential of being an arbitrary judgement based on a cost cutting exercise rather than adhering to paragraph 26 of the home to school transport guidance which states that....."personal safety should take account of perceptions of pupils, parents in relation to traffic speed on roads near schools, lack of safe crossing points, unlit footpaths, lack of cycle routes, bus routes that fail to pass within a reasonable distance of schools, the lack of affordable public transport options".  To implement this proposal will result in the denial of access to children from across the town, particularly those from low income families. Parental choice will therefore be denied on the grounds of affordability. <b>[circular individually signed and sent in by 1,557 residents]</b>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Phone	06/12/2011	Thinks its ridiculous that over the next five years free transport would exclude new bodies/siblings
23	Phone	21/12/2011	Last night I was contacted by an acquaintance from Heighington about the impact changes to school transport would potentially have on his family. He currently has 1 son at Hummersknott Y8, a daughter at Heighington Primary in Y6 and a son at Heighington Primary in Y1. He is most concerned about his youngest son as he has a level of special need (School Action Plus). He is an accountant and has carried out "some rough calculations" (his words) to say that he would only expect any savings to be in the order of £30000pa. I didn't comment on this. He also said that the proposed changes to transport arrangements were making a de facto change to the LA admission policy without proper consultation. I advised him to attend the talking together event in the Dolphin Centre on 7th Jan to hear a range of options and opinions.
23	Phone	23/12/2011	Would like to speak to someone regarding school transport.
23	Phone	05/01/2012	Gentleman ang for clarification about a letter he has received from Hurworth School to all parents regarding the council's 23. Home to School transport proposal to be increased from 2 miles to 3 miles. The letter from the school seems to contradict or give misinformation regarding the Council's budget proposals.
23	Phone	05/01/2012	It's horrendous and it's unfair. I can't afford to pay for transport to Hurworth. I'm against this proposal.
23	Phone	11/01/2012	Parents should pay for the children's transport to school.
24	Email	10/12/2011	I went to the meeting to support Shopmobility because I was so worried about loosing the facility but I was even more worried to learn that I was going to loose my bus pass. I have mobility problems and for years lived as a hermit, not seeing anyone from one day to the next. With help I moved house and started to become very active. My bus pass was a Godsend; I have difficulties using the buses but with determination and the help and consideration of other passengers I go out every day to town and I cannot overestimate the importance of that to me. I have people who can give me a lift when they see me at the weekend but normally I make five return journeys a week (I say 'normally' because I lost the use of my right foot about eight weeks ago but I hope to get back to my routine wearing a sort of leg brace). I go to the Dolphin Centre gym to help with my mobility supported by my DR. twice a week and I attend two AA meetings a week so four of those journeys are vital to my physical and mental health. Vital. I meet people at Age UK for lunch and social contact one day (I'm 53) , I usually just have coffee to save money, which is also important to me. While I am out I can 'mingle' and/or take a scooter out. I usually do my shopping on a Monday. Each return journey would cost me £2.80, six journeys £19.60 a week. Four of those six journeys are extremely important to my health and the other two are important to my independence and social contact, my feeling of belonging, being included. I simply cannot afford this. I struggle but I go to my hospital appointments on the bus, I don't book an ambulance or outpatients transport, I am not looking to have everything done for me, I am asking for help to help myself, help to just do what 'normal' people do under my own steam, in my own time. Is that too much to ask? My energy bills are over 12% of my income and I now have to pay someone to help me a little bit each week because of my foot and Shopmobility is at best going to be much dearer. I absolutely DREAD going back to the isolation I once knew. I was going to say 'my prison' but prisoners have company don't they? Can peoples' cases be evaluated to see how much they need a bus pass, how often they use it and then issued on merit? If it comes to no more free bus passes could Arriva be persuaded to let disabled people, the elderly etc buy a bus pass at GREATLY reduced prices---- no way can I afford anywhere near the £80 a month it would cost me at present. I was very impressed at DBC thoroughness and I know everyone will be up in arms but all I am asking for is help to be just like you.
24	Event	09/12/2012	Main issue is that I cannot walk following a stroke. My main difficulty is getting to and from places. Specialist Dimensions Transport gets me out of the house and I am feeling better. I am told that my transport will be stopped. Impact will be – isolation, depression, stuck in the house, lack of social life. Unable to get out shopping. Everything is being taken away.
24	Event	09/12/2012	Limited mobility, no speech, dyslexia. My life relies on Dimensions Transport. I have no means of holding on to prevent falling. I would be stuck at home – isolated, watching TV. Not a future I want for the next 20 years. Carer - I would have to give up work if services were reduced. I am disappointed by a Council who will fund the social lives of the able bodied e.g. Arts Centre, Civic Theatre. We are not criminals.
24	Event	09/12/2012	The way Arriva drivers treat disabled people is disgusting. Not enough wheelchair accessible buses. Without the help of Dimensions I would not have been able to take a case for discrimination against the bus company. I rely on taxis or friends with cars. If Dimensions was to close and I had no transport. I would be isolated, no social life like able bodied people do.
24	Event	09/12/2012	Previously totally isolated at home. Unpaid carer (daughter) – only respite when I am at Dimensions. Alternative transport – it took me a long time to trust the service and feel safe in the transport. If transport goes I will be isolated at home like so many people. We don't want other things. Without the transport and trust I would be at home, locked away and wouldn't go anywhere.
24	Event	09/12/2012	Used to use Ring-a-Ride now taxi of which there is only two local accessible taxis. £18 each way on taxi. Costs going up and cannot use buses. Financially squeezed – may consider suicide. If someone is seriously considering suicide. People don't shout for help – asking carers to keep an eye out for this. You may lose some people.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
24	Phone	01/12/2011	Carer in Middleton St George just been told bus service on night time is going to be stopped so that means she won't be able to get into work so she's going to end up losing the job.
27	Comment Box		Changes to DAD will cause a huge hole for the disabled in the town by stopping the subsidising mobility service will undo what has made Darlington Labour Party so good. Cherie Blair is the president of the Durham Branch. I find the idea of saving £32,000 at the expense of once again 'lets NOT help disabled' - this is what we would expect of a Conservative Council not a Labour one - further comments see hyperlink
27	Email	12/01/2012	I wish to express in the most strongest terms my disappointment at the decision to stop funding for the Shopmobility scheme. I live in Richmond and travel to Darlington for the variety of shops and facilities on offer. The Shopmobility scheme is a vital service for me and others like me to enable us to bring our custom into the town, something which I would of thought the council would wish to encourage. It seems to me that yet again cuts are being made targeting the most vulnerable and in so doing disregarding a niche trade, it really does not make economic sense. Would it not make more sense to spend your efforts clamping down on the people that abuse the system ,the whole system that is ,those who claim disabilities that seem to miraculously disappear once inside their own front door. It beggars belief the number of people that seem to get away with it. Thousands of pounds of council money would be saved leaving the genuine disabled like myself with those vital services so needed to make our lives that much easier. I urge you to reconsider your decision and keep the Shopmobility going, do not let the people who need these services suffer when cuts could be made in a more efficient and indeed more profitable way.
27	Email	26/01/2012	This service enables individuals to maintain independence within their local community. This may include shopping for daily provisions, enabling choice, social inclusion, use of banking facilitates and a whole host of daily tasks/ activities. It will have an enormous impact on a huge amount of already vulnerable individuals and a dramatic effect on their daily function and well-being. Often service users are older people who already suffer from social isolation and are empowered by the use of the equipment provided. With the increased ageing <u>population surely we should be encouraging independent living rather than dependency.</u>
27	Event	09/12/2012	Impact on disabled people – what about the impact on shop mobility with the closure of the project. Unable to shop or socialise.
27	Event	09/12/2012	Direct Payments will probably affected – how will this be affected. Also shop mobility, rely on it to get around town.
27	Letter	07/12/2011	When I learned that you were considering cutting the funding for Shopmobility I was dismayed because I rely on that service for a number of reasons, as do many other disabled people and I wonder if full consideration has been given to this matter. I am asking you to continue your financial support of Shopmobility because I and many others greatly need it. Please consider the feelings of loneliness and isolation not being able to get out and about and feel that you are not able to join in like everyone else. Being able to take a mobility scooter around town is liberating; just mingling with people, going round the shops, simply being out and seeing what is going on gives a feeling of inclusion rather than feeling excluded from everything and feeling left out and completely sidelined. Shopmobility allows me to do what the vast majority of people do without a second thought. Shopmobility gives me and many other people equality with people who are not disabled, freedom of choice, a feeling of inclusiveness, social contact, a chat, company, stimulation, a feeling of independence, a feeling of achievement that we have done our own shopping and jobs. Did anyone really think how much being able to simply get around means to some people? Shopmobility provides us with legs - please don't cut them off and condemn us.
27	Letter	28/01/2012	This proposal may cause DAD to consider increasing charges or seek support elsewhere. Access to publicly funded transport is a lifeline for many older people. For those without access to a car reliable public transport, whether it is a bus or community transport is essential to be able to keep active and independent. Shopmobility schemes allow many older people to access parts of the town that are increasingly difficult to access if you have a mobility impairment. Older people's spending is around 15% of the overall household expenditure and this is set to grow. Age UK believes that the high street would miss out on the spending power of older consumers should these cuts take place <u>because they will not be able to access the local centre independently.</u>
28	Comment Box		I use the No. 3 bus daily and I feel it is most unfair that another bus is being taken off this route just leaving us with one half hourly. Also, the first one we can use on a morning with our concessionary pass will be 9.45am which is not very convenient. If we are losing a bus the other routes should also be the same
28	Comment Box		I and my family strongly object to this action No No No!!
28	Comment Box		May I suggest that you preserve free bus travel. Those without access to a car wouldn't get around nearly as much, even within Darlington itself, if it weren't for the concessionary travel.
60	Comment Box		May I suggest that you preserve meals, care within the home. Anything which will improve the lives of the elderly/less independent.



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
28	Email	21/12/2011	Page 15 stop funding on bus services. Take this to mean concession passes???? Sample grass pole with fellow users, all accept a small fare 50p @ journey makes common sense. Page 17 9 million to be used to improve transport, where does the money come from???? surely the need to improve these services rest wholly with the providers??? Comment Why are Councillors not showing their personal commitment by placing a hold on the costs incurred by themselves. Why a council, based on Quakers prudence, not foreseen any shortfall and taken an action like saving.
28	Email	11/01/2012	With me being disabled the bus is the only means of seeing family and friends, otherwise it's relying on friends with cars. My daughter lives in Darlington and being a divorced mum with 3 children the bus is all she can afford. The loss of the bus means a big loss of independence and I feel it is the usual discrimination against rural areas biting here. My disability is so bad I rarely feel able to leave the house but now, on the rare occasions I feel good enough, I am locked in the village. We also have the problem of early morning workers going to Darlington. There is no-where near enough work around this village so people often take whatever they can get. If the bus is taken away there will be many that have to give up their job and become a part of the millions seeking help from the government in order to live. Methinks it is time to de-privatise the bus services. There are too many 'investors' with no feelings apart from their joy when they count their cash.
28	Email	11/01/2012	I have walking difficulties and rely on the bus service to be independent. The closure of this bus route would impact on my life greatly. I would be reliant on friends with a car to take me shopping, that alone would cause me to be depressed and eventually housebound. I am disabled and this to my mind would amount to discrimination. Why can't Stockton and Darlington council liaise together and maybe share the subsidy to the bus company. Stillington is after all just on the borderline. We pay the same rates and taxes as city dwellers who have a choice of buses and rail, but once again the rural areas are stripped of any basic amenities and take the brunt of cuts. Any children wanting to go to schools or colleges in Darlington would have a limited choice because of the travel situation, not to mention workers and peoples livelihoods being in jeopardy. I would put to you to try an organise the bus route that would go through Houghton, Sadberge, Great Stainton, Bishopton, Stillington passing through Hardwick, Roseworth Norton Grange and various estates via Stockton, this would increase the footfall in both Stockton and Darlington, enhancing traders business in these areas. As a disabled person, I feel the needs of vulnerable persons in rural areas should be considered, likewise hard working people who haven't, or can not afford to run car.
28	Email	17/01/2012	I asked why my council did not have a contingency fund in my previous message. being prudent Quakers. Surely such a fund exists. You did not answer This point.??? Purely out of interest, my bus service no 12) times have been changed without notice.
28	Email	17/01/2012	The residents of Mowden must have one of the worst bus services for the size of the estate in the town. We have lost the Number 77 service and the Number 3 service is now every half hour with the Number 16 Scarlet Band once an hour. We have no Sunday or evening service at all so people who need to visit patients at the Hospital or need to go into town for any reason would need to use a taxi or car. Not a lot of older people have cars and not all who have like to drive in the dark at this time of the year. I read an article in the paper last week where the junction at Whessoe road and North road is to be upgraded so the buses will keep to there timetable hoping to encourage people to use the bus service instead of their cars which would prevent polluting the atmosphere. With the withdrawal of the Sunday service and the night service on Mowden people will have to use their cars or taxis, what about the pollution of the atmosphere now? It would seem to me you have double standards. If you live on one of the council estates like Branksome the buses run every ten minutes during the day and every half hour on a night. That is a far far better service than what Mowden have. Can you tell me why?. Surely to be fair could the Branksome timetable be amended to run every 15 or 20 minutes which would subsidise an evening and Sunday service for Mowden residents.
28	Event	12/12/2011	Transport – cuts to supported bus services. A lot of talk about Civic and Arts. If you live in the rural areas you need a car. Unable to attend events. Not many use them – what it boils down to is the young people and older people who are affected by the bus cuts. Middleton St George – no bus service on an evening and very limited service on a Sunday. I would have to walk a mile for a bus. Also raising car parking charges in town on a Sunday. Recently ran Local Motion survey to get people to use public transport and now they are going to be cut. These cuts are very quick, no time for anyone to protest very much. January 2012 – services being cut. Concessionary bus passes are not a lot of use if the services are being cut. I know people would be prepared to pay to keep services e.g. before 0930. Virginia Estate – none on a Sunday and hourly during the week. Won't be a bus after 6pm
28	Event	05/12/2012	Supported Transport – reduced bus routes. List of which services will be discontinued. Have you considered potential for drunk drivers if driving as no buses.
28	Forum	17/01/2012	Please explain the massive differences in projected savings of approx. £192,000 between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, 2014/2015, and 2015/2016. A few things don't add up here! But to withdraw supported bus services, as you know, would cause enormous inconvenience and disruption to communities, particularly the rural residents and to the overall economic detriment of the town. This is a negative step that doesn't save anything.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
28	Forum	22/01/2012	When the Harrogate Hill loop bus was withdrawn last year there was an uproar that people would have to walk 200 yards to a bus stop we at Brafferton have had all services stopped and have a mile to walk on unlit roads with crumbling paths we have no shops or doctors in the village and the bus was a lifeline to the young and elderly. It would cost no more for Arriva to divert into the village twice a day can we have the proportion of poll tax that goes to subsidising buses in short I believe the cut to our bus will one way or another cost lives
28	Letter	21/12/2011	As two over eighty year olds living in Sadberge we rely on our bus service for many reasons. 1. We have no other means of getting into Darlington. 2 Shopping - there are no shops in Sadberge. 3 Post Office, 4. Doctors. 5. Hospital appointments. We have no bus services after 5pm and no buses on a Sunday. If you remove our present bus service we will become virtual prisoners in the village. When we first came to live in Sadberge we had a School, two shops, Post Office and a reliable bus service. Now we have no school, no shops, no Post Office, no medical services and a limited bus service that is under threat and yet we still have to pay full Council Tax. Will you please consider the above matters at your Cabinet meeting on 22 February 2012.
28	Letter	01/01/2012	The reduction in supported buses has already severely curtailed some of what is not now available to me. If I want to go out it has to be day time only and not Sundays at all. At the same time I note that certain areas of the Borough have very frequent services which continue until almost midnight - might there not be scope for sending one of these buses out to the Mowden area now and again to restore the fairness of provision and reduce the enforced isolation of people like myself?
28	Letter	04/01/2012	I am writing to protest about the possible withdrawal of bus services from the village of Sadberge. The service has over the past few years been subject to severe cuts which have already greatly affected the residents of Sadberge and their families. The complete withdrawal of the present limited service will lead to severe hardship to those residents who do not drive or own a vehicle and rely on the bus service in every area of their lives.
28	Letter	04/01/2012	.. You are going to make it extremely difficult for us to get anywhere if you take our (Sadberge) bus service away. I find it hard to understand why four miles down the road (for example Haughton and Brampton lane and others) have an excellent bus service so why not us, we are not exactly out on the wilds. ...You have taken the evening and bank holiday transport away please leave us with our daytime buses. Are we in the rural area not entitled to the same privileges as the residents who live in town. We would not be able to use the Dolphin Centre and any other facilities which we pay our Council tax for. Please do not leave us destitute.
28	Letter	08/01/2012	... We are very aware that a significant minority of Sadberge residents - including many elderly people - do rely on the bus service, and that they would find it very difficult to continue to live in Sadberge if that service was withdrawn. These people are an important part of our village community, and it would be a tragedy if they were forced out of the village because of lack of accessible transport. ... A strong sense of community is one of Sadberge's most important assets. Please do not create a situation in which Sadberge becomes a bland commuter dormitory village.
28	Letter	12/01/2012	Re: Scarlet Band Bus services 17 and 18 - As a resident of Sadberge village I write to express my concerns. I currently enjoy the excellent service we receive and use it on a regular basis, typically twice a week. Many people rely on the bus service as they do not have an alternative means of transport. As a regular passenger, I am aware how important this is for a significant number of elderly residents as well as younger people who need to look for work or stay in employment. At present I drive a car, however in future when I am no longer able to drive I will be directly affected by the loss of this service and will have to consider whether I could remain a resident of Sadberge without any means of accessing shops and essential services.
28	Letter	12/01/2012	...I rely on the bus as my husband has rheumatoid arthritis. We both have to attend the hospital quite regularly and Dr Piper House. We are both diabetic and I have glaucoma. When we go on these appointments my husband can't drive at all. So we depend on the bus. We had to use a taxi last week from Haughton to Sadberge it cost £7.20. It is a lot of money when you are pensioners. So they are our reasons for keeping the bus. I would hate to leave this lovely village.
28	Letter	16/01/2012	We feel this will be detrimental to Sadberge, as we no longer have a shop or a post office and residents rely on the bus service for shopping, visiting Doctors surgeries both in Whinfield and Middleton St George. Hospital appointments too. Students getting to College will be affected and people who work in town. We have non car families and elderly people who no longer drive, or who have never driven, and these people can not rely on the village car users, as the majority work each day. It is all very well saying we should not live in a village, but most of Sadberge residents were born and bred here. We feel that we will be isolated from Darlington altogether.
28	Letter	20/01/2012	I would like to draw your attention to the effect of withdrawing all subsidies for all bus services to Sadberge i.e. Services 17 & 18. Our village is made up of quite a few people who do not have their own transport or are quite elderly and cannot drive themselves for various reasons., so a bus service is a vital link between our village and the various amenities in and around Darlington Centre. The bus service is required to take people from our village to Middleton St George to the GP Surgery. There is also the problem of travelling to Darlington Memorial Hospital for treatment and visiting family and friends who maybe patients in the hospital. Providing a bus service also provides a link with shopping in Darlington centre and the local supermarkets in Darlington. This move by Darlington Borough Council proposals to cut bus services to Sadberge could mean that some Sadberge residents may have to relocate to a local town which will break up a close knit community...

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
28	Letter	23/01/2012	The Parish Council appreciates that the number 17 service is not heavily used but it is of major importance to the people from the rural areas who do use the service to access work and education in Darlington. The Parish Council has heard from people who fear they will lose their jobs if the bus service is withdrawn as they will not be able to get to work. The bus service also provides a great link to Darlington Town Centre for people from the villages to access shops and other services. The parish Council has heard from people with restricted mobility who use the number 17 bus service to come to Darlington as they find Darlington much easier to manage than other local town centres. The bus service is also used by people to access Darlington railway station for travel further afield - the alternative , if people don't have family or friends who can drive them to darlington, is an expensive taxi journey. ... If the decision is made to withdraw the subsidy from the rural bus services then could Darlington Borough Council make some commitment towards supporting a Community Transport scheme of some description or looking into alternative bus services? ...
28	Letter	18/12/2012	I live in Sadberge with my wife, we are both 78 years old and we depend on the bus for our shopping, hospital visits, post office, Doctors visits etc. As it now stands, we cannot use any of the town's evening facilities because our bus does not run on evenings, bank holidays or Sundays. Without a bus we would have to ask younger people in the village to either take us into town or pick up shopping for us. A town bus from Haughton is 2 miles away but we would have to carry our shopping back. On a nice summer day it maybe ok but on an icy snowy winter day - no good. I think a basic bus service is important and a must to maintain basic life in Sadberge for us older people. A taxi is another alternative but on our pension is too expensive. We are prepared to pay for a bus pass as we did in the past. Sadberge will be a dead village if this goes ahead. Could some of the subsidised services which help to run parts of Darlington early morning and late evenings be reorganised to give us a basic service? After all there are a lot of young people who need to get to work and school who live in Sadberge.
28	Petition	09/01/2012	We the under signed present this petition. In respect of the cut backs made by the local Council (Darlington Borough Council), to bus services in and around Harrowgate Hill area and Winfield (Asda). <b>[petition signed by 282 individual residents]</b>
28	Phone	30/11/2011	requested more info regarding bus services in proposal
28	Phone	01/12/2011	Mr Hall is shocked about cutting funding for the disabled to use the buses unfortunately he's classed as disabled and is blind he need buses to get around town if he loses that he will lose his independence. He regularly has to go to Middlesbrough for hospital treatment and he will have to pay for himself and carer to go to Middlesbrough.
28	Phone	02/12/2011	I would like a bus service on an evening. Won't be able to go out in town. We would rather pay more than the service finish. Rather pay more council tax. Will affect the pubs and clubs, Civic and cinema (town centre economy). What is the proposed cut off time?
29	Comment Box		Parking charges are already quite expensive, more so than for Middlesboro for example. I will not go into town much at all if the parking charges increase or I will walk or go in on a Sunday
29	Email	20/11/2011	Further to our conversation on Friday, I would like to express my concern over the councils decision to charge full parking rates on a Sunday. This would have a detrimental effect on local retailers and restaurants and could possibly result in an exodus to Teesside park where parking charges do not apply or Middlesbrough where parking is charged at £1 all day. I would respectfully ask that you consult the council and ask them to reconsider their decision. I look forward to hearing from you.
29	Email	01/12/2011	Review of car parking charges. Turn the old John Neasham / Skippers site into another car park and REDUCE COSTS. I shop in Northallerton and Richmond because car parking is free.
29	Email	07/12/2011	The Fees & Charges appendix does not appear to include residents parking although there is a proposal to increase the cost from £25 to £50, albeit phased over a 3 year period. I assume that the residents parking scheme will be extended to include a Sunday because of the proposed introduction of Sunday parking charges. I do feel that it is unfair to increase the burden on residents because the Council wants to increase its town centre car parking income. Are you proposing to contact existing users of resident parking schemes direct about the proposal to ensure all are fully aware of the potential impact? If you are considering a review of residents parking I would like to propose an extension beyond the 8am – 6pm limit. Often I arrive home from work after the 6pm limit so at the moment my £25 payment only allows me the benefit of the possibility of parking near my home on a Saturday or on holidays I notice that there is no proposal to increase the costs of car parking elsewhere, for example, staff and member permit prices are remaining the same. At £173 this is much lower than in Redcar & Cleveland, for example. What is the rationale for this?
29	Phone	30/11/2011	Not happy with the proposed increase in parking charges, counter productive in terms of attracting people in Darlington town centre
32	Comment Box		As a family we use the parks daily a lot of funding has been secured to make these parks nicer and safer, once public funds are reduced vandalism and anti social behaviour will rise and decline the parks, making the money spent being wasted.
32	Email	15/12/2011	I have just read through the list of budget cuts in the town crier, as we all know cuts need to be made and for the most part they seem pretty reasonable, however removing the CCTV cameras from places outside of the town centre does concern me. I do feel that they make people feel safer and would deter criminals and I worry about them being taken away, personally I would rather that we had no budget what so ever for flowers as this does not compromise safety which I think is important.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
32	Email	12/01/2012	Could you please confirm to me whether the Council is intending to cut the CCTV cameras on Firthmoor as part of the budget?
32	Letter	17/01/2011	I believe that you should not be appointing a parent Partnership Officer to replace the parent partnership Manager. I can see no advantage except saving the Council money to this decision.... Children with special needs are vulnerable and often parents have little knowledge of the system. They need the best support which they can get which I believe comes from an experienced manager...
32	Letter	30/11/2011	... also I'm concerned that lack of CCTV outside the town will lead to more criminal offences and police will have a hard time bringing justice to victims
32	Phone	30/11/2011	Would like to know if the residents at Sandringham Court will continue to pay, as part of their service charge, maintenance on the CCTV camera at Mowden Shops
32	Phone	16/12/2011	Turning off CCTV is not going to be a saving as the costs that will occur through damage to play areas and the community will cost more.
33	Comment Box		East Row Toilets - Are you really going to leave us without this fundamental facility? The Cornmill loos are often closed, in my experience, or there's a queue! It will be terrible for visitor/commuters - it's bad enough already. If you must do this - please provide all council tax payers with a list of places whose proprietors agree to let the public use their facilities without obligation, including opening hours and whereabouts. Darlington doesn't even have a bus station to offer facilities for visitors. <u>We don't all have barrage balloon bladders!</u>
33	Comment Box		People come into Darlington to spend money and they should have decent toilet facilities to go to for free. The toilets in the market place are a disgrace to Darlington, nobody's are as bad as that.
33	Comment Box		The toilets in the town are a disgrace. Nowhere I go do I see toilets as bad as ours.
33	Comment Box		The high street is in decline and Darlington is no exception, public toilets are essential. Easy access for elderly and disabled people is needed when visiting town centre.
33	Comment Box		Not everyone has the confidence or money to go into cafes or public houses to use their toilets - DBC should provide a public toilet in the town centre
33	Comment Box		I won't pay for the use of a public toilet
33	Email	01/12/2011	I was reading about the Council's proposed cuts in the latest Town Crier and saw to my horror that there are thoughts of closing the public toilets in the town centre. I had hoped that the introduction of a 20p charge would do away with this idea, but apparently not. All I can hope is that the Council will have another think as I am sure it will inconvenience (no pun intended!) stall holders and shoppers, but also those going on coach excursions, or even a fairly long bus journey. Please do reconsider this idea. If you are thinking this is my only suggestion, the majority of my ideas were included in a letter which was put into the box in Crown Street library! Thank you for your attention.
33	Email	02/12/2011	I am writing to urge you not to close the public toilets under the market as these are the only public toilets in the town centre.
33	Email	05/12/2011	I recently read in the local paper that it is the councils intention to close the public toilets in the market place. I wish to complain bitterly about this decision as it will, in my opinion, cause problems for many people. I am a pensioner and unfortunately in keeping with many older people, the human bladder does not function in the same way it did when I was younger. Hence the phrase "hang on a bit longer" has no meaning and the new phrase "if you gotta go-you gotta go" is all enveloping and panic ensues (trust me-it does). I live rurally 10 miles from Darlington and if I use the local bus service (which is in danger of being cut, but that's another issue) I have to wait a minimum of 2 hours for the next one. In the past the market place toilet has proved to be a gift from God as I don't possess a 2 hour bladder. Local shops don't like you using their toilets unless you're a customer, and this will soon be stopped once hordes of people start trying that alternative. Apart from older people suffering, what about people coming in by coach or car from further afield or pregnant women? You are in effect encouraging visitors to the town to go elsewhere as if enough inconveniences (no pun intended) are put in their way due to lack of facilities within the town. I can't believe that a central toilet in a main market place, which is the one area you would seek one out is being closed. Yes it may save money in the short term, but it is an essential to the human body as is food and drink which are readily available throughout the town. What are people supposed to do, stand and wet themselves or worse? Sometimes non-profit making facilities have to be supplied for the general good of the people. I therefore implore you to reconsider what I believe is a calamitous decision.
33	Email	19/12/2011	Much as I appreciate the financial bind the council is in, a town without public toilets really has taken a step backwards, especially given the increasing numbers of elderly people. The recesses of my mind recall an obscure French law making cafe toilets compulsorily available to anyone (or is this a folk myth?). Either way, there must be alternative provision in place either in the form of self-cleaning automatic loos (rather intimidating for some) or a well-publicised arrangement with local places of refreshment. The latter is of course fraught with pitfalls including the vision of coach loads of old ladies piling into the Pennyweight. Or maybe the lack of a Tourist Bureau has already discouraged many potential tourists? Best of luck.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
33	Email	04/01/2012	Whilst I appreciate that the financial decisions made by Central Government have a direct impact upon Darlington Borough Council and that you have no alternative to finding savings I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed closure of these facilities. If this closure goes ahead then the only public toilets available will be those inside the Cornmill Centre which would provide much fewer facilities to the public. Access to the public toilets is of major importance to many people and particularly to the older amongst us as well as parents with young children. In addition, visitors to the town (who I assume are important to the Council) may not be aware of the Cornmill facilities. I would ask you to reconsider this proposal. PS A potential source of added revenue would be to ensure that people who put out several bags of garden waste with the weekly domestic waste are charged for its removal. If I can be bothered to compost and /or use the civic amenity site why shouldn't they?
33	Forum	20/11/2011	There are hardly any public toilet facilities in the town already without closing the toilets at East Row. So this idea could only cause more problems at the Dolphin Centre toilets. But why should the savings for the year 2013/2014 be double that of 2012/2013 same toilets or are there other plans not yet disclosed? Keep them open for the good of the shoppers!
33	Letter	01/12/2011	I am appalled to read your proposal in the Town Crier re the closure of the toilets in the town, I'm sure many people like me who are disabled and pensioners have to use these in between bus transfers in Tubwell Row or maybe using the market for almost daily shopping. I have no problem paying for this facility.
33	Letter	20/01/2012	I think it is appalling for you to consider closing the public toilets in the town, even though you introduced a charge.
33	Letter	25/01/2012	Age UK Darlington would like to stress that it is absolutely vital that the council understand the important role that public toilets play in enabling many older people to get out and about in their neighbourhood. Evidence shows that lack of public toilets is a significant factor in the isolation of some older people as they would stop going out as often as they would like. Where local businesses offer their facilities in return for a financial incentive) can be a workable alternative, provided that they meet the needs of older people. Community toilet schemes (where local businesses offer their facilities in return for a financial incentive) can be a workable alternative, provided that they meet the needs of older people.
33	Letter	25/01/2012	... I also think it is appalling for you to consider closing the public toilets in the town, even though you introduced a charge.
33	Phone	01/12/2011	I feel these are a necessity for older members of the community
34	Forum	20/11/2011	Dolphin Centre should remain open on bank holidays for the reason that it is a holiday and there are usually more people in the town.
35	Comment Box		I cannot see the logic of closing the Cockerton Library when it provides a service to the people of Cockerton, Faverdale, Mowden & the Brinkburn area. A reduction in opening days and times maybe a better answer
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an essential service. All libraries provide access to information & education and this one is at an end of town which is a good distance from the town library. This should be provided by the local council employing trained librarians who can do the job - NOT volunteers who may be well-meaning but who do not have the skills
35	Comment Box		The options forced upon the council are regrettable. The cuts to arts & library services are more than that. It would be a sad reflection on the town if the Arts Centre were not to provide the range of activities it does. More specifically, as a user of Cockerton library for more than 30 years it would be a great loss to the local community if it closed.
35	Comment Box		Keep Cockerton Library Open - Ideal for Residents - Even Better for Children
35	Comment Box		The Cockerton Library must be kept open. It is well situated for the area and many elderly people use it as well as the local schools. The staff are always friendly & helpful and if it is closed it will be a travesty.
35	Comment Box		We visit Cockerton Library nearly every other day. Once the library is closed it will be lost forever, sadly. We do not want this to happen at all
35	Comment Box		Many facilities are provided at Cockerton Library including provision for school children and PC access. PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE DOWN THESE OUTLETS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THIS PART OF THE TOWN.
35	Comment Box		Education & Cockerton Library services which benefit all ages of the community are needed
35	Comment Box		I cannot see the logic of closing the Cockerton Library when it provides a service to the people of Cockerton, Faverdale, Mowden & the Brinkburn area. A reduction in opening days and times maybe a better answer
35	Comment Box		Stop killing the town by closing or threatening to close the public library at Cockerton.
35	Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will be detrimental to the most vulnerable sections of the populace - the old & schoolchildren. The aged & the disabled cannot easily access the town library. At present children from nearby primary schools spend time in the library forming reading habits which last a lifetime. At present I use Cockerton Library at least once a week and its closure will affect the lifestyle of both my disabled wife and I
35	Comment Box		I find it totally unacceptable that the Cockerton Library and Arts Centre face closure when resources are used for other unnecessary ventures

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		Although we realise that realistic cuts have to be made, we would be very sorry to see Cockerton Library close. It is in the centre of a thriving area and would be a sad loss not only for books but as a learning centre. We have used this branch since we moved to the area in 1974 and still come here although we now live in School Aycliffe area. It's a lovely, well-run facility with very helpful staff.
35	Comment Box		The libraries are essential for all age groups of the area. To avoid any thought of closure I think adult readers would probably be willing to pay an annual subscription or a small tally per book borrowed. I would certainly be willing to contribute - I could not afford to buy (even second hand) all the books I read.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an essential service to the local community, its closure would be a social injustice and deprive the community of much pleasure. It is also a source of vital information and should be maintained and even improved.
35	Comment Box		I would like very much to keep the library as we use this a lot its good for people who want books and for internet access. I would be shocked if this went.
35	Comment Box		I would very much like to keep the library
35	Comment Box		To take away the provision of local libraries is nothing less than an act of public criminality. So many groups, the old, the young, the vulnerable & everyone else wishing to read for pleasure or learning. Not everyone can afford to be online or to visit Waterstone's or even access the town library with ease. <b>Think Again</b>
35	Comment Box		We need Cockerton library especially the lack of parking facilities in the town near the big library, Savings could be made in lots of unnecessary venues eg. sand in the market place for children's day and tea dances and lots of other functions - just keep the necessities!
35	Comment Box		Keep Cockerton Library open, this is false economy. They give a valuable service to the local community (tax payers!) and there is free parking. The library is also used by the schools & nurseries in the area which I consider to be a service to children - many of which do not have parents who read to them.
35	Comment Box		Having read on the website plans to close Cockerton Library and reasons submitted for this I would like to know how you think it is going to cost £412K to £530K to move books from Crown Street Library to on of the 2 proposed locations. These figures to me seem to have been dreamt up out of the blue. No wonder these Councils are in such a sorry state if they spend as much as this to do a job like that. Surely in the public's eye common sense would say to leave Cockerton open therefore not annoying Cockerton readers and anyone in the Crown Street Library would already be in town anyway so a walk to Town Hall or Central Hall is not even another bus journey. Heating costs there would be saved as Crown Street must be a large building to maintain whereas Cockerton is only a small one level building. A very annoyed reader.
35	Comment Box		I was dumbfounded to learn that the Council are proposing to close a wonderful local branch library. The closure of which I do not believe will produce any significant saving. Because there is a large concentration of flats for the elderly in Cockerton many elderly and retired people live there. People in this age group tend to read more and require such facilities on their doorstep. Cockerton is probably the most important neighbourhood retail centre in Darlington outside the town centre. So I would each the Council to strongly reconsider their decision. The branch library is a valuable asset having served the community for over 40 years. Not everyone will be able to access Priestgate. Despite what the government says libraries are not redundant because of the internet. You just need to see the foot fall across Cockerton - over a quarter of the 400,000 library visitors. Following last year's consultation you must have been in receipt of hundreds of suggestions you could consider. Surely it would be more valuable to formulate a business plan for volunteers to run the library rather than close it - and for what. Another building to be vandalised and spoil the look of the village. Please rethink the proposal as the savings will be minimal and the impact great to all ages of people in the community.
35	Comment Box		You need to think again about closing Cockerton Library as a constant user I was appalled to read about this. Can you tell me how, as a disabled driver with health problems, I can use Crown Street library when there is only a few disabled places which are always Full!!
35	Comment Box		Providing entertainment subsidised by those who cannot afford to use it is hardly fair to low income groups. All subsidies to leisure centre, arts centre, theatre, municipal golf club etc should be removed
35	Comment Box		May I suggest that you preserve the library. Not everyone wants, or can afford a Kindle, even second hand books seem to be at least £2. <u>Crown Street seems to be a sociable place with events for small children, visits from authors, and computer-use.</u>
35	Comment Box		Firstly I warmly compliment whoever is responsible for staff selection for your libraries - I don't think they could be bettered. They are helpful, friendly and informative so thank you for that. Without Cockerton Library the village will lose its focal point entirely.
35	Comment Box		1. First the library & its services MUST be maintained and protected - the intellectual health of the town cannot be set against budget cuts. Volunteer workers is not the answer
35	Comment Box		You have already crippled our family, destroyed my terms and conditions at work, moved us closer to poverty so please don't take away my child's resources at this library

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		Cut the waste and greed of the TOP people within the Council - BE IT WAGES, EXPENSES, PERKS etc This would no doubt secure the required savings Let the LIBRARY/ARTS CENTRE remain open
35	Comment Box		NEED Library & Civic Theatre
35	Comment Box		Save Cockerton Library, for the local elderly people as well as the young school children. Cockerton Library is an easy option, which does not affect the Councillors lives. How about a hard option of reducing the senior managers at the Council and get the rest to earn their very high wages by working harder and longer, by taking on more staff to manage.
35	Comment Box		KEEP Cockerton Library - essential service. Introduces children to reading books, serves a wide area of population. Consider shorter opening hours, voluntary help and charging a hire charge per book of say 5/10p - this could be done via computer scanning which is done already and would not incur any additional work. People who use this library would prefer to fit into the opening hours available rather than have to use the town centre building. Do not remove any help given to disabled associates or persons
35	Comment Box		The library at Cockerton provides an essential service to so many people. So many things to offer - with helpfulness, politeness and knowledge. The best branch library I've ever used and a vital and much loved part of the community. PLEASE DON'T SHUT THIS - SO MANY PEOPLE WILL REALLY SUFFER
35	Comment Box		We hope that Cockerton Library will remain open. It has a very pleasant ambiance. The staff are always pleased & helpful. It supports the local schools, giving children a good experience. My husband & I are elderly, often taking 4-6 books at a time. Reading is our greatest pleasure and we can not carry this number of books from town.
35	Comment Box		Libraries are a valuable and essential part of community life. Cockerton is a thriving, expanding area which revolves around it's schools, shops & to a great extent for many, it's library. For those who can drive or use public transport, access to the Central Library is possible but by virtue of the necessity to park or use buses is no longer free! For the elderly or families, Cockerton Library is a valuable facility. It is essential that this library which is at the heart of a thriving community must remain open
35	Comment Box		My main concern is the proposed closure of Cockerton library which is well used in a thriving community ie Cockerton village. Surely it would be possible to provide a reduced opening hours at least. The main library is not easily accessible, especially to older and disabled people and the comments apply to the mobile library. I am also concerned about loss of facilities for younger people
35	Comment Box		I AM UTTERLY APPALLED AT YOUR PROPOSAL TO CLOSE COCKERTON LIBRARY. IT IS VERY WELL SUPPORTED AND MAYBE THE COUNCIL SHOULD LOOK ELSEWHERE TO MAKE SAVINGS
35	Comment Box		About Cockerton Library closing - why can't you make a nominal charge per book say 5 or 10p. It's a lovely place, airy and friendly staff, seeing the school classes coming in meeting people you know and having a chat Come on you surely can come up with something to keep this treasure open!
35	Comment Box		Library at Cockerton must be kept open
35	Comment Box		If you really must close Cockerton Library (at great non-financial cost to the community) I believe that attempts should be made to lease the building (on a short-term lease) so that the library could be re-instated without major rebuilding expenditure when the government move to Plan B Once demolished the library will not be rebuilt
35	Comment Box		I would prefer you to keep Cockerton Library open at lease half time. It is a venue which serves a much wider area than Cockerton. I have been on a computer course there, as well as regularly borrowing books. The premises are far better than a mobile service, the local school children visit in groups and I feel for staff losing their jobs. Volunteers could not cope without backup. This is definitely a backward step
35	Comment Box		I use Cockerton Library on a regular basis - at least once a fortnight, sometimes more. I combine the visit with shopping at the local shops. Without the library the shops will also lose custom
35	Comment Box		I think it would be terrible if Cockerton Library and the Arts Centre were to close - I use both places regularly and they are an important part of out community. It would cause a loss of jobs, isolation for elderly people, transport problems and a lack of cultural and entertainment opportunities for people - no way it should happen!
35	Comment Box		For the benefit of the local community I think the following are essential services 1. local library at Cockerton 2. Dolphin Centre swimming baths 3. Weekly bin collections but fortnightly collections are acceptable if it means retaining local libraries
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library - has a review been conducted to consider private enterprise to run the library? Have volunteers under the guidance of library staff been considered? Cockerton library provides a much needed service to the west and north west areas of town. To readers, IT users, schools and young families. How do the Council intend to ensure those interested parties are catered for? What are the views of the councillors within the 6 council wards from which residents come from who also use the library, think of the decision to close it? Have noted the listings of closures and cutbacks proposed but have never seen any mention of councillors cutting back on their expenses or other remuneration.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library - rather than close this thriving facility, could the opening hours be cut, still allowing school children & workers access on early evenings?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		I have been a library member for 77 years and now my Council want to take that commodity away. Shame on you. Cockerton has a lot of pensioners and three schools & a nursery who all use the library. A small charge could be made for adults maybe. Please, please consider your people you represent and who pay council tax.
35	Comment Box		I am appalled at the suggestion that Cockerton Library should be closed. This is a fantastic resource for local people, supports unemployed people in providing internet access to look for jobs and will be a loss to the town if it is closed.
35	Comment Box		The library is the 'hub' of Cockerton village especially for the elderly who would struggle accessing the main library in the town centre. Suggest making a small contribution for lending books of 50p - £1 to help make savings
35	Comment Box		I do not agree with the closure of Cockerton Library. According to your feasibility study nearly 1/3rd of lending is from Cockerton. Many sections of the population can use its facilities and the fact there is free car parking is a bonus - plus the bus stops outside it. The Central Library will cost me - bus fares/petrol/car parking providing the Mowden bus route is not scrapped. Carrying up to 15 books around town is no mean feat and many disabled/pensioners & young families will find this difficult. Are you going to extend the mobile service or will that go <u>once the leasing agreement is up? Literacy is a priority for education</u>
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library provides a wonderful service to the local community. The elderly and the very young, together with all those school children who visit as part of their curriculum, will all benefit if the library remains open. It should not close. Reduce the hours of opening, it could close on Tues & Weds without any difficulty. The cost could be met by the 20 top paid council officials taking home a realistic salary which pays them for what they do. Darlington people cannot afford to pay them top salaries for <u>not</u> balancing the books, get real and take a pay cut. How can they justify their high pay when we are all having to cut back?
35	Comment Box		I am very upset to hear Cockerton Library is on the list to close, there are a lot of old people like myself who rely on this library for books. The mobile library is hard for people who are arthritic and not very stable on their feet. /the staff at Cockerton are very helpful to us and they help us to reach books that are too high for us to reach. There is also the schools in Cockerton whose children all go to the library.
35	Comment Box		I don't agree with the closure of the Cockerton Library. It is a well used facility by all ages and social groups. I suggest the Council reduces the bloated welfare Budget by at least 10% and stop fiddling with small amounts
35	Comment Box		Whilst realising that some cuts have to be made, closing Cockerton Library is ludicrous. It is a much used & much loved facility and Crown Street and mobiles are not a viable option for a lot of people.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library should <u>NOT</u> be closed neither should the mobile library. Both are vital if you wish to save money. Close the railway museum. The one at Sheldon is far superior and is free. Then get rid of the Mayor, the Mayor's car and chauffer. If Darlington had not <u>overpriced</u> its projects by a vast amount the situation would never arise. They made massive losses on the town hall, the Dolphin Centre & the town redevelopment. If Cockerton library closes it will cost me a fortune to park in town. also the town clerk and assistant are paid far too much. Council expenditure should be investigated
35	Comment Box		Closing the library would be a disaster for this community. It is very popular with both young and old and is much more accessible than Crown Street, especially the elderly. Why not introduce a small charge say £1 for books?
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library provides a very important service and will be sorely missed - surely other ways could be found to make savings - I could provide suggestions!
35	Comment Box		I, like a lot of people in the Cockerton area would be very sorry to see this branch library closed. It serves a lot of people in this district. A lot of elderly people like myself would find having to go into town very hard. Many people would not be able to. <b>Please keep it open</b>
35	Comment Box		I object <u>MOST</u> strongly to the closure of Cockerton Library. As a Darlingtonian, born & bred, I feel that this is an appalling, retrograde step. I have used the libraries all my life and patronise Cockerton every week. It was purpose built and serves the community admirably Has the Council forgotten that it is also used & valued on a regular basis by the <u>children in the local schools?</u> I can think of nothing more worth while than encouraging the children in their love of literature
35	Comment Box		I consider it a very retrograde step to close Cockerton Library. It is a GODSEND to elderly people & also our younger generation who need to develop the reading habit. The library in the town centre is difficult for access when attempting to carry heavy books when trying to use buses as well. Darlington needs to retain the library in Cockerton for the welfare of the many elderly and or deprived families who cannot carry books for long distances and cannot afford transport to the town centre.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is always well used & busy including computers & toddlers groups. Can we not pay a small charge for books? If the building is closed & demolished it will never re-open and many pensioners find it difficult to get into town
35	Comment Box		Please do not close our Cockerton Library. It is a busy welcoming place used by lots of members of the public. People like me who read several books a week, and would find it very difficult to carry my usual load of 6 - 8 books on the bus. Staff are well known, liked and very helpful.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library is the hub of the village. Vital for young & old alike. The internet is vital & free.
35	Comment Box		We need the library for young and old alike. Cockerton wouldn't be the same without it



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		Closing Cockerton Library and the Arts Centre is a short-sighted decision. Both are well used resources that enhance the town. The group trying to save the Arts Centre should be given the chance to do so with reduced backing from the Council (a stepped retreat). The library opening hours could be reduced but not closed entirely
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library <u>MUST remain open - it is very well used and performs an essential community function as a public building.</u> Proximity to a free car park and shops also generates traffic. Please investigate reducing opening hours, using volunteers etc. There is also <u>no alternative use for this building</u>
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library should remain open - it provides an essential service for local elderly and disabled residents for whom the town centre library is inconvenient. It also adds to the quality of Cockerton as a local shopping and social centre
35	Comment Box		Aged 6 years - can we keep this library open?
35	Comment Box		Aged 4 years - "I will feel so sad if my library closes"
35	Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open. Cockerton School children really love coming. It is part of their reading development. The children would be so sad if it were to close. It is part of our community
35	Comment Box		As a mother and childcare practitioner, I use the library in Cockerton on a weekly basis and can access it by walking. Encouraging people to read is so important and therefore it should be one of the places to stay open. Maybe a small charge for the books and a higher charge for the internet use could be an option.
35	Comment Box		I am appalled to hear of the proposed closure of Cockerton Library. This is a local amenity which many people use and is easily accessible by foot, public transport of car, with a car park adjacent to the library. Having to travel into town by car will cause even more congestion. Older people may well be put off having to go into town and also parents who visit the library with young children. A library is an essential part of the education process and reading should be encouraged. For the older generation reading is an important part of their lives. Revenue could be raised by charging a minimal fee of perhaps 10p per book. Money could be directed from other sources such as charging a fee for disabled parking. I have a concessionary pass and would be happy to pay a minimal amount per bus journey, so that could also be directed towards funding the library. I look forward to receiving your response.
35	Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library would be detrimental to all those who use it, particularly the most vulnerable in our society, leading to possible isolation and lack of social contact.
35	Comment Box		The closure of the Cockerton Library will be a great loss to all ages. Older people find it very convenient and many children attend meetings there to encourage reading. Travelling to the Crown St Library can be difficult and costly
35	Comment Box		Save Cockerton Library
35	Comment Box		To close Cockerton Library is not the thing to do, it is well used. Cockerton is a separate community.
35	Comment Box		I feel extremely passionate about the plight of Darlington People to lose an essential facility of the Library Service. The possible loss of Cockerton library would create a "death" of a village and offer no alternative centre for people.
35	Comment Box		Recent media coverage has stated that in the case of libraries, litter picking etc. They are proposing asking volunteers - maybe some of the outrageously higher salaries should give their services free - they have earned enough as well as their gold plated pension pot.
35	Comment Box		Closing libraries is a retrograde step, a step too far in the wrong direction. Victorian philanthropy was far-sighted as the provision of library services enables individuals to improve themselves and their job circumstances. We all know cuts have to be made but please retain Cockerton Library, its a small candle of excellence in an ever-darkening world. Help individuals who do not have books and computers.
35	Comment Box		Please do not close Cockerton Library - Thank You
35	Comment Box		Start a <u>GOOD</u> café in the library - don't close the library. Provide leisure facilities that have to close because of the Arts Centre cuts. These things are important to people who are elderly disabled or somewhat isolated from their families
35	Comment Box		Libraries should stay open if Cockerton closes - older people will be totally lost
35	Comment Box		Books should be top priority. Perhaps a small annual charge could be levied to help pay the way for Cockerton Library in particular, is well worth keeping open as it is very much a community library
35	Comment Box		Crown Street Library. Of these, there is a question mark regarding the future of 3 of the above could go, which appears a disgrace. When the waste and greed within the council is considered. Try and get your priorities right!
35	Comment Box		Having lived in Cockerton for many years, I have come to look upon Cockerton library as a haven. Isn't it possible to open and staff the library on reduced days or hours? I notice that the computer terminals are always in use and also the schools regularly use the facilities. To close this facility in our community would affect many residents
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library seems well used and is very popular. Any alternatives to shutting it would be well received
35	Comment Box		Cockerton branch of the library is very well used, schools, students, pensioners and under fives. The closure would mean that many people, particularly the elderly, would miss out on a social event and would not be able to carry books etc to the main library. A library user for several years in Darlington

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		There must be alternative ways to save money than penalising the staff, members and community of Cockerton Library <u>ie</u> Council leaders stop wasting money & claiming ridiculous wages and expenses
35	Comment Box		The closing of Cockerton Library will be very sad. I travel from Haughton to use the facilities, the library is always busy. I think it will have a knock-on effect on local shops who may go out of business, as I always shop while visiting here. Parking is good - perhaps if the Council did not spend money on posting copies of the 'Town Crier' to residents that would save money!! Please think again!!!
35	Comment Box		We object to the proposed closure of Cockerton library for a number of reasons: 1. It would remove a valuable service which caters for all ages - in fact we thought that it was a legal requirement for the Council to provide such a library service for the local community. 2. The library acts as a focal point for residents - a place where people meet on a regular basis as part of their daily shopping routine. This applies particularly to the elderly in our locality. Losing the library would have a serious impact on trade in Cockerton. 3. With central government wanting to encourage senior citizens to become computer literate, removing access to the internet at the library would clearly be a retrograde step 4. Why the obsession with cuts in services? Since you say that Darlington has the lowest council tax in the NE, why not propose a <u>modest increase in tax</u> to bring it more in line with the rest and to provide revenue to minimise the cuts needed. Shouldn't the electorate of <u>Darlington be offered the chance to choose?</u>
35	Comment Box		Closing Cockerton Library is not a good plan. You could save money by selling the Civic Theatre & keep the Arts Centre & Library open. Why not develop Cockerton Library to have a good coffee and cake shop. It would encourage more people in & be a great meeting place for the community
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library & all libraries provide a very valuable service in terms of books being available to all - from young to old as well as a range of other services. It is a <u>short-sighted move just to close it &amp; will deprive many in the community of a safe and useful facility</u>
35	Comment Box		Lets get rid of the services that are used by the elite - Stressholme Golf Club, Arts Centre & Civic Theatre. Keep services used by the needy - library, social services and home helps. Please save Cockerton Library - ease of access for the elderly, open Saturdays & evenings. I work fulltime & use Cockerton Library on a Saturday - how am I supposed to get to the town library with no transport & carry books around town?? Please rethink this crazy plan, a lot of shops in Cockerton rely on business from library users. Do we want another empty building in Cockerton? I know there is a mobile library but this does not work on a weekend
35	Comment Box		I think it is important to keep Cockerton Library open - it is a well-used facility & not everyone would be able to go to Crown Street or mobile
35	Comment Box		Savings are necessary but closing this library should not be necessary as it is a vital resource for the local community - especially for the elderly - real books are very important. Cockerton will be nothing other than a dormitory
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library has been a vital amenity for the people of all ages who live in Cockerton and beyond. Even though I live across town I still use the library and the Cockerton shops. I believe that the businesses will suffer if the library closes. Please reconsider and find other ways of cutting back, possibly within the Town Hall
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an <u>essential</u> part of the 'village' community in this area. It serves as a lending facility obviously, but also as a valuable educational source for schools, internet, reading service for older citizens, and would be greatly missed if closed. The increased pressure on shops and other facilities in Cockerton, through new housing developments, must also apply to the library. It is vital to the community
35	Comment Box		If Cockerton Library has to close, could it be a home for the Arts Centre, pending a new replacement facility in Feethams? It may boost the adjacent shopping centre as well?
35	Comment Box		Arrangements for the services we receive in respect of police & waste disposal are adequate and virtually all we have benefit from. However the provisions relating to library services are not acceptable. Library services were bestowed on the people by altruistically wealthy many ages ago as I am sure you are aware. The closure of any library ranks in my mind with the 'burning of the books' by Nazi Germany in the 1930's. The local library provides a refuge, forum and meeting point invaluable to all ages in the community. Children who learn to read are <u>known to progress and mature more quickly. Please think again!!</u>
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library: the closure of this library would be a great loss to the community. It is well-used, the young use the computers, school groups too. It is a lifeline to the elderly like myself. I can take a bus from Heighington to a bus stop in opposite and return by bus outside the library with no distance to walk. Using Crown Street library is a difficult journey
35	Comment Box		Savings are necessary but closing Cockerton Library should not be one of them. This is a vital resources for the local community, particularly the elderly, for whom <u>real</u> books are very important. If library users are forced to go into town they will do their other shopping there and <u>Cockerton will be nothing other than a dormitory village with no life left.</u>
35	Comment Box		I am an 87 year old disabled pensioner, who has one pleasure and that is reading. I manage to get to Cockerton Library by car. If this library was to close I could not park near the Crown Street Library. Please do not close the Cockerton library.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library should not be closed - the library is very well used, therefore will be hugely missed. Many people would not object to paying I am sure . The library is an information hub for the community - there are very few in town. What will happen to the books? Many people <b>do not have</b> or make regular use of computers for information. PLEASE REMEMBER THIS
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is a vital asset in the community. I have lived in Cockerton for 41 years and have enjoyed using the facility. 4 generations of our family currently use this library. Libraries are a must for all ages to keep open access to books, especially in hard times. I have grown up around books in my house, my granny ran one of the 1st lending libraries from her house. I don't want my grandchildren to grow up without books. Children that grow up around books are more likely to be successful in education and life - and value books as a vital resource to learning. Removing local libraries will make books only for the privileged
35	Comment Box		I think Cockerton Library is a vital community resource that should be accessible for all ages. The library computers are used by all ages for family history and homework. This will be a huge loss to the community
35	Comment Box		The parking situation will be a great inconvenience as I don't want to have to go to the town to use the computers
35	Comment Box		Why close the library? It will mean more hardship and longer journey to the nearest library
35	Comment Box		Why close the library? It's going to cost more to the Cockerton & District community and mean from a free car park to a charging one
35	Comment Box		It's difficult for me to get to the main library, as I'm not a car owner and can only walk a short distance with the weight of books I can carry ie. To gain access to a bus. Cockerton library is a lifeline to me for ALL THE SERVICES it offers, plus the helpfulness of the staff is great. Cockerton to me is a village and has availability for every walk of life therefore I do not need to go to town. If the library closes that will not be the case and once lost, will be very hard to get back in the future. Schools in the area will also lose out
35	Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will mean older residents having to carry books, which can be heavy, much further to get transport (buses) Also a lot of children are taken there, and enjoy the experience. It is an important facility for everyone.
35	Comment Box		This ludicrous talk of closing libraries and Arts Centres smacks of labour controlled councils trying to say 'we'll show you Tory Types!' Access to knowledge is a human right and the safety & prosperity of libraries should be enshrined in law. As should the provision of lollipop ladies/men - make 'cuts' elsewhere
35	Comment Box		Expenditure - preserve the library services at Cockerton. Savings - Amalgamate the duplicated services across the voluntary & statutory sector
35	Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open - It's a gem, well-loved, well-used & precisely the sort of service the Council should continue to provide.
35	Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open. Cockerton School children really love coming. It is part of their reading development. The children would be so sad if it were to close. It is part of our community
35	Comment Box		With reference to the proposed closing of the Cockerton Library. I strongly object to the proposals. Being elderly, my wife and I can park nearby, during our weekend shopping in Cockerton, and visit weekly the library there. Saving 4 subsidised bus tickets and an uphill return from the Crown Street library.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is a facility which is much needed. Elderly people find the on-site parking a boon as it is within walking distance of the car and also shopping can be done at the same time which benefits the shops. Plus, if the Arts Centre is sold, surely an existing building could replace it rather than the venture to build new as other efforts in that direction have been a disaster!
35	Comment Box		Please do not close Cockerton Library - It is a hub of the community and provides pleasure and learning to many
35	Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open it is a lifeline for old and young.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an essential local service that I and many family associates, friends and neighbours rely on to broaden our education. Access to books and especially PCs is something that everyone is able to do here. Removing this library is a social crime!
35	Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open my children use this library every time they get a book. I believe closing it will also affect the local shops in Cockerton as people will go elsewhere to shop.
35	Comment Box		My wife and I consider Cockerton Library to be an important service for all ages.
35	Comment Box		I have used Cockerton library for many years elderly and school children use this facility. I find it more relaxing than the town library which for elderly in this vicinity harder to reach. The Branksome resource centre closed- Branksome Social club closed- Cockerton Village toilets closed, what else is there in this area can you use, nothing is left.
35	Comment Box		keep the library open in Cockerton. If this closes the community will die as the library is a social lifeline.
35	Comment Box		As an older person I would like Cockerton Library to stay open.
35	Comment Box		If you close this library you will deprive hundreds of people in Cockerton, especially the elderly and infirm. I myself visit this library one or twice a week.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library is a essential to our community - a huge loss if closed down.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library is a essential to our community - a huge loss if closed down.
35	Comment Box		I use both Libraries, but Cockerton has a different choice and I come here for variety.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		I use Cockerton Library as it has the best access I have a buggy and I can't use lifts. This library has been a part of my life for years and for generations my gran even uses it and we have all brought our children along to use it. there will be nothing to pass on to family if it goes.
35	Comment Box		Re Cockerton Library closure proposal - I am 86 years old with a disabled sticker and can get into Cockerton Library from anywhere in the car park, but if there are no disabled bays free at Crown Street then I have too far to walk. I have no wheelchair and I read more than 15 books in 3 weeks so the mobile library would not suffice - besides I can't carry 15 books. I feel I have some independence when using Cockerton Library - I would have to rely on others to access Crown Street or the mobile library - which has fewer large print books that I need and less frequency of availability anyway. The population is aging and I can only presume these types of difficulties will increase in time. I hope you will <u>reconsider closing Cockerton Library as I will feel lost without it.</u>
35	Comment Box		Disabled bays for parking are very limited at Crown Street Library. If you close the library at Cockerton you will restrict access to the internet for aged/infirm and disabled who have no access in their homes. When this government is trying to encourage the use of technology by 'silver surfers' and the less well-off in society, it seems illogical to reduce internet access in this part of the town
35	Comment Box		I would like to express my disappointment at hearing the proposals to close Cockerton Library. My son & I visit every week I feel it is important to make it easy for people to get into reading. To have to go all the way into town with the 6 books we borrow each week does put me off taking my son to the library at all
35	Comment Box		My priorities are: Essential 1) Library - local as well as in town centre 2) Rubbish Collection 3) Elderly Care Services
35	Comment Box		I have used Cockerton Library for many years and like many people, find the service invaluable. The Internet is a really good thing to offer the elderly as it often can be a way of keeping in touch with relatives and friends alike.
35	Comment Box		I am <b>96 years old</b> & have been using the Cockerton Library for many years. My Drs surgery is close by and I can do my shopping also. Undoubtedly many retired people are in the same position as me. Many other activities take place and the library is well-used. It would be very difficult to use the town library owing to parking difficulties & my limited mobility. The staff are very helpful and in my opinion it serves a lot of people - I would estimate hundreds
35	Comment Box		I think you should keep Cockerton Library open. It provides a very useful service. You could save money by getting people who use the computers at both libraries by paying for the first 30 minutes instead of getting it free
35	Comment Box		Two Schools in Cockerton use the library and we use it all the time, Cockerton is a great place to shop if the library is to close, that could be the start of a decline in Cockerton...more unused shops in Darlington.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library is accessible with friendly helpful staff. My son and I go there weekly for tapes and books. One of the most amazing thing about a library is the access to books, that you can't buy. For me just walking down the rows of books is a way of relaxation. Books open up a world of possibility for me. so please don't close Cockerton library.
35	Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will have a huge impact on our family, given that we are working parents and time is limited. Cockerton is accessible for us. We prefer not to allow our children to have internet access and encourage them to research using the library. closing the library will prevent children from being able to use bookstand be a factor in exposing them into online dangers and childhood obesity.
35	Comment Box		Closure of Cockerton library will mean my children will not access a library as I couldn't afford to take 3 children on a bus. Also rhymetime is the only free activity for children in Cockerton. Such rhymes and singing has been proven to help children's confidence and ability to learn at school - would mean my children are deprived of the tools to learn
35	Comment Box		I feel that the proposed closure of Cockerton Library is wrong & misguided. It is widely used, within a community that, as its accessible, would use it, but otherwise would not travel into the main library. It is also easy to park there. The computers are also widely used. The Council has a responsibility to encourage literature in this area of the town.
35	Comment Box		The library should not close as the local schools & playgroup use it as a resource and an outing as well as members of the public. The closure of the library would impact on other local businesses that would lead to reduced revenue for the Council in the future for business rates. As a library user I would miss the library an enormous amount. I would find the distance to Crown Street too great when carrying books and I'm able bodied. The library at Cockerton is not only an asset it's an essential. While sitting to fill this form out, a local school class has come in to the library to take books out
35	Comment Box		I do not think the library should close. I bring my daughter (aged 4) after I finish work and pick her up after school. If it closes then we will be unable to use the library in town as too far to travel and too late at night. We are unable to go at the weekends
35	Comment Box		KEEP IT OPEN - closing the library is overall NOT A GOOD IDEA. Will take longer, force me into town centre and cost at parking meter. SAVE MONEY ON NEEDLESS ROAD & PATH WORKS

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35	Comment Box		The library shouldn't close - 27% of library usage in town is via Cockerton. Closure will have a significant commercial impact on the village. The building if not used will be left to fall apart be vandalised & become an eyesore. Local children being encouraged to read won't have a lending outlet locally. Cockerton has a predominantly elderly population who will be greatly inconvenienced if made to travel to main branch (where less friendly) Won't be able to borrow books at a convenient and very friendly outlet that has easy access by car or more especially on foot. Will have to come into town centre which I dislike and causing more congestion & car emissions - it's a more expensive journey and further to drive. We shouldn't be discussing the closure (of the library) its a disgrace.
35	Comment Box		I believe the library in Cockerton offers an unparalleled service in terms of access and opening hours - it is a part of the local community and a lifeline to many of Darlington's citizens who if polled, I am sure, would in these times of austerity prefer to lose the Christmas lighting/floral displays etc in the town to preserve basic well-used services such as the library.
35	Comment Box		It's disgraceful that closing Cockerton Library is even being suggested. Closing yet another local resource for kids - if this goes we will want to move out of the area!
35	Comment Box		I will be unable to use library services if Cockerton closes as Crown Street is too far. For local school children, members of the public & local business would be devastating for Cockerton library to close - the impact could have long-term effects - especially to schools and business
35	Comment Box		Easy parking at Cockerton Library - not so at town library, so can collect shopping too and ladies are really helpful. It's closure will spoil a lovely experience selecting and collecting books. Clearly those who want library shut do not use a library!
35	Comment Box		I have breathing difficulties and using this library is a lifeline and easier than the town for me. The town library is lovely but most times I am unable to manage to go
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library is convenient and a pleasure to visit. It's part of the Cockerton community. I can also drop my wife off there and then pick her up later which would be more difficult to attend with my wife - see above
35	Comment Box		No parking problems at Cockerton library and if it closes it would be losing the centre of the community. Children would lose invaluable access to literature and it would be a cultural loss to the community
35	Comment Box		My whole access to read and learn will be affected and I will not be able to spend quality time with my grandchildren as my grand-daughters do their studying in the library. We all would be greatly disappointed if it ever closed. We wouldn't know what to do - KEEP IT OPEN for everybody's sake please
35	Comment Box		I am disabled so the easy parking near Cockerton Library and the shops is important for me. I think more of the local community will be impacted on - the library encourages reading amongst young and old
35	Comment Box		The local library (at Cockerton) has an impact far in excess of cost. It is a vital part of the community and encourages children to read. Going to Crown Street with children & the elderly is difficult. Could voluntary contributions be asked for as in the BALTIC CENTRE and museums in USA? People also use the local shops at the same time. Children use the computers - not everyone has a home computer
35	Comment Box		Closing Cockerton Library would impact on my grandchildren. There is peace and quiet for studying. Going to town for the library means parking - but this way we do our shopping and our friends live nearby, so we see them also
35	Comment Box		This library is an important amenity for residents of the area of all ages. My view is that it cannot be expensive to run a small branch like this one, and it provides so much to the area, that it is <b>vital that this library is kept open, as a service &amp; information provider</b> . If this library is closed I will not be able to use the lending section or the internet, which I do now regularly. I also access local events & services information on display. This library is a lifeline of information. The impact of this idea is cutting off services to all the residents of this part of Darlington - how much does it cost to run this small branch library? Surely the benefits provided outweigh its running costs.
35	Comment Box		As a childminder, I and the children I care for would miss the library terribly. Not only rhyme time on a Thursday and the book lending but the fact that we meet friends there and attend holiday fun things for the children and use the reference section for homework and projects. I would not be able to attend Crown Street most days as I cannot walk small children that far and am unable to get a double buggy on the bus most days. The children would miss out on the social aspect of the library and <b>Ofsted</b> is always interested in childminders being part of and using the wider community - so this would be a great miss for all.
35	Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library in my area will affect the whole family
35	Comment Box		Mount pleasant School will lose out as Cockerton library is closer and we can only really use that one

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		This library provides an easily accessible facility with parking behind and gives a great service to those in Cockerton 7 Faverdale and surrounding villages without people having to pay bus fares or parking fees to access Crown Street library. It affects everyone in the community but the council have been given little choice but to make cuts due to Government cutbacks. Our community must pull together to save facilities which have served us well for many years. I still have to drive into the town centre (extra mileage from my village) and also pay car parking fees if I use Crown Street library. Making a leisurely visit to a public library much more stressful and expensive
35	Comment Box		Much has been written by Darlington Borough council about closing venues, but no one on this Council has suggested that the money that the many extremely highly paid staff eg. Ada Burns, could take a pay cut. The money generated from this would save Cockerton Library which is enjoyed by thousands
35	Comment Box		I will have to travel to town if the library closes which is very unfair
35	Comment Box		It will be very inconvenient if Cockerton library closes as I will have to travel into the town
35	Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will mean we are unable to access any library. I am unable to pay for us all on the bus to access the town library. Also rhyme time that the library provides is a free activity that encourages children to help them become more confident. My children will not access a library and be deprived of the tools to educate them
35	Comment Box		If Cockerton Library was to be closed I would not be able to take my child there, therefore he would miss out, as would my family having a great service close to where we live. If the library closed it would not just be a case of people could go to the main one, as a lot of old people go there and perhaps going into town would deter them & it might be too far to travel (they might not be very mobile). Plus there is the social side as people meet there to catch up as we make use of the facilities, books, pc's, cd's etc. The closure I believe would have a <u>big impact</u> on the whole local community and this would/could have negative effects. The library is an important resource which I believe should be <u>protected and kept open</u>
35	Comment Box		To reduce or close access to Cockerton library affects my whole family we use the library a lot for school project research, encouraging children to read. Socially, we use rhyme time on a Thursday morning
35	Comment Box		This would mean it was difficult to get to the main library and then less access to books
35	Comment Box		Should Cockerton Library close my children will be affected most by not having a library facility within easy walking distance. Also the social activities in place for my youngest son will not have a centre that will bring him into contact with books and learning outside of the home. This will have a negative impact on us - libraries have always been a social hub and they should remain a permanent fixture
35	Comment Box		Why does Cockerton Library have to be closed? It is always busy when I visit with people using the internet, choosing books and I have also seen a lot of mothers with children. The library is a lifeline especially to the elderly. If the library is closed I cannot get to Darlington by car - If I did use the bus, which is very infrequent, I could not carry my books. I read a lot and use the library at the very least once a week, more often 2-3 times
35	Comment Box		I couldn't find much detail on this proposal but I use the library regularly. If Cockerton library closes then I won't use the town service much for my son and I as I don't go into town much.
35	Comment Box		My son goes to the library every 3 weeks with school to get library books. Cockerton library is within walking distance so the children get fresh air and exercise as well as access to many more books than at their school. I doubt any alternative provision would be made available and this would lead to limited reading material for my son
35	Comment Box		If I need library services I always use Cockerton as it is convenient and not as difficult as it is for us to go into town - /I would be less likely to use library services as there is more traffic in town if I have to drive there.
35	Comment Box		As a family we use the library on a weekly basis I take my son to rhyme time and my daughter takes books out with Cockerton Primary School and with her dad. The library is close to our home address and doesn't require the use of a car. Using the library encourages children to explore books they wouldn't normally have access to. It is a disgrace that it will be closing. This will not help the future generation to grow up with books.
35	Comment Box		Don't close Cockerton Library
35	Comment Box		Don't close Cockerton Library
35	Comment Box		Don't close Cockerton Library
35	Comment Box		My son goes to Cockerton Library with his school and gets 3 different books every 3 weeks. I also use the library particularly the computers It would be inconvenient to have to use the town centre library. What has led to this proposal when there are only two libraries in the town? My son won't have access to a variety of books if the library closes. It is a very valuable resource for Cockerton
35	Comment Box		In the library I would like more books and genres eg. physical exercise & diet and nutrition. Also I've noticed only a few books on martial arts, kung-fu and self defence. Also I want to draw attention to the library and its help for people who are ex-hospital & prison eg. mentally ill, or drug users who need the books and information to get well
35	Comment Box		We use the library for internet access and consider it a valuable part of the community

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		I will be very sad if the library closes. I like all the books to help me with my homework and would be lost for learning without it
35	Comment Box		I really like to draw while my man uses the internet and chooses books and I would be lost without it
35	Comment Box		I would have no internet access or be able to regularly choose books as I'm on a low income and can't afford to buy. Closing the library would be the loss of an integral part of the community facilities
35	Comment Box		I have 3 children aged 6, 4 & 2 all of whom have a real love of books. The library is the main source of reading material for our 5 year old and my 4 year old daughter and they go at least twice a week to get out of the house and to drop off books. In addition to this, the library provides an important facility in its music rhyme time for my wife and our 2 year old. As more services get cut back it seems to be community centered projects that are losing out and the library at Cockerton is a facility which provides an important meeting place for community and learning to be developed. with one car in the family, going to Crown Street is not a realistic option at the same frequency, so the closure of Cockerton would mean that our main library usage would be greatly reduced. The overall impact of this proposal would be to further marginalise those in the community who don't have internet access - especially when so much of education/employment benefit info is now web-based. This removes an important facility for building community - particularly for mums with young families and it reduces opportunities for families to engage in developing their children's reading and research skills
35	Comment Box		We would miss Cockerton Library if it closed. It is very convenient and a valuable amenity.
35	Comment Box		We would not be able to get to the library as frequently if Cockerton library closed - and would really miss going with school
35	Comment Box		I find the library in Cockerton is easy to get to and enjoy having it within easy walking distance of my home
35	Comment Box		I use Cockerton Library at least twice a week with my 3 children. My son is an advanced reader and reads 4 or 5 library books per week. Without Cockerton library we will struggle to provide enough reading material for him (his school advised us to use the library) Both elder children benefit from visits to the library with school - books and reading are a very normal part of their lives. My youngest daughter loves the weekly rhymetime sessions developing her listening, speaking and social skills. The overall impact of this proposal will be: a loss of internet access for those without home access, the loss of important focal point for community, an impact on literacy skills and loss of early familiarity with enjoyment of books and reading and an overall reduced library usage - families like ours without access to a car through the week will not make the journey as often to the town centre library.
35	Comment Box		As I walk to my local library I will be unable to borrow books. I use public transport and due to my age I am not able to attend the Crown Street library or to carry books home. This will make life very difficult, therefore my future of a lending library looks to be ended
35	Comment Box		Unable to take children to library if it closes. Provides essential services o local people especially elderly and young, Gives me and my children a couple of enjoyable afternoons during school holidays, children get to choose new books or story CDs and I get to choose same for myself. Allows me access to other adults with children during rhymetime sessions. I don't get to meet many people. Daughter goes to library every 3 weeks with school if this is taken away her access to free choice of books and materials will impact greatly on an educational level. I can't drive and buses are expensive so it would limit my access to library facilities if Cockerton closed.
35	Comment Box		Child at Cockerton school so weekly visits maybe curtailed. However Cockerton library is limited stock anyway. Difficult but unavoidable.
35	Comment Box		Not only would a closure of Cockerton library be a loss of a local venue for many, it is a significant part of Cockerton village for all ages
35	Comment Box		The Cockerton Library and all the village is very valuable to older residents. Free Parking and the ability to do all one's business in a small area is necessary for older people
35	Comment Box		Cockerton library provides a service per capita or based on floor space far in excess of other areas of the library service. Darlington itself is the worst served BC in the North East. We have 2 of the most deprived wards services by Cockerton. To use Crown Street citizens will have to pay for parking, public transport or walk. You thereby reduce an already sparse service to nil.
35	Comment Box		End the Town Crier and negotiate advertising space in free papers/Northern Echo. Save Cockerton Library.
35	Comment Box		Cockerton Library excellent services and staff helpful and know their job. Used extensively - not to be closed.
35	Comment Box		My mother-in-law is blind and disabled. I cannot get a number 2 bus into Darlington as they are not wheelchair friendly. This is her only pleasure Cockerton library and the talking books. Please don't close this library.
35	Comment Box		That this library should remain open it is a place of learning, social centre for all in the community . I will not be able to carry books to and from a bus stop in town. My enjoyment of my social life of my visiting Cockerton Library will be diminished . Since 1971 has won by hard work by staff it's own special place in the heart of Cockerton residents of all ages.
35	Comment Box		Unable to walk to town, cannot afford to catch bus 3 times a week. I use the shops when in Cockerton, my house is up for sale at the moment and I hope to retire to Cockerton as my Doctors is there. I believe Robineaux (Cake Shop) was opening a coffee shop. This will have such an impact on people I would use the computers also when I retire. Also hoped to take grandchildren there. It would be such a loss for the children of the area, not everyone has cars and do you realise how much the bus fares are? What could be better than coming out of school and going for books in library?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Comment Box		Cut the number of councillors by half - save approx £200,000 or cut the allowance of councillors by half - save £200,000 cut the salary of council leader - save £20,000 open Cockerton on only 3 days - save £50,000 open Cockerton Library as normal but man with a mix of paid staff and volunteers save 350,000
35	Comment Box		I use the library 2 or 3 times a week at least. I call with my granddaughter on way home from school which she enjoys very much. I will miss the friendliness of the staff and meeting people in the village. The library is easily accessed and staff are extremely helpful at all times. It is not easy to access town library. I cannot carry as many books from town along with shopping. It is convenient for shopping at the same time. The buses from my area only run every half hour where I can reach Cockerton very easily.
35	Comment Box		As I have a serious heart problem and angina and lot or arthritis I will no longer be able to walk to my library. I am not always able to get to town and therefore will not be able to change books as frequently, also find the library is a good place to chat to other people . I will miss interacting with others. Please don't close our library and make it even harder for the elderly.
35	Comment Box		Closure of Cockerton library will be a massive loss to the Cockerton community, it is used by all members of the community from the young to the elderly. Having the town centre library as the only library in Darlington will create difficult for some people accessing not only books but a focal point of social contact.
35	Email	19/11/2011	I wish to register my concern and dismay on learning today about the proposed closure of Cockerton library. This library is a great asset to the local community and would be greatly missed. It is also staffed by excellent staff who I also understand are to lose their jobs. PLEASE THINK AGAIN and reconsider the impact of this proposed closure. I realise that there is still the main library in town but this is far from convenient who wants to pay for bus fares or car parking. Please do not close this excellent library. I would also like to complain about hotmail addresses being excluded from being allowed to send emails through your on line messaging services via your web site.
35	Email	03/12/2011	feel that the proposed closure of Cockerton library would not serve the needs of the elderly, those with physical disadvantages, and blue badge holders, as well as a considerable number of children. If the Council compares access with access to Crown Street, I believe they must agree that Cockerton has a decided advantage. There is a large free car park close behind with good facilities for blue badge holders within a few yards of the doors. There is a convenient bus stop only a few yards away, and the area has much lighter traffic. In contrast, Crown Street now has a constant stream of traffic, as almost every bus service passes along it. It is not easy for the elderly and the infirm to get to the library, and there are steps at each entrance. Cockerton library is well stocked with books and magazines, and a high proportion of its readers are elderly. It would be laughable to claim that it could be adequately replaced by mobile services. I fully accept that the service should be curtailed, but this could as well be done by closing both libraries for certain hours or certain days, because complete closure would be a real blow to the elderly, like myself, who constitute a large proportion of library users .
35	Email	07/12/2011	I am most disappointed to hear of the proposal to close the above, I am sure everyone recognises the need to save money in the present climate, however, this to say the least appears somewhat of a drastic step. If the library does close it is more than a safe bet that it will not open again even in happier times. Can I ask you therefore to reconsider your proposals, perhaps the library could open only open two days a week thereby reducing costs but still offering the facility to Cockerton resident and beyond, also a 50pence per book charge could also offset the cost.



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Email	16/12/2011	<p>Referring to the Article in the Town Crier I would like to comment as follows:-Looking at the size of the Budget , why is Arts Culture and Leisure a very small part of the Budget apparently taking such a massive hit ? Is it the easy option ?I'm against in particular the Closure of Cockerton Library and The Arts Centre. Cockerton Library is a purpose built building light , friendly atmosphere but functional. A large percentage of the users of Cockerton Village are Elderly and the Library is a very important place and serves a social need and meeting place as well as its Library use. I doubt the building could be used for any other purpose and would be demolished. I once read in a National Sunday Newspaper that the Darlington Arts Centre was one of the best Art Venues outside London ! Does it really have to close ? Once these places are gone they never return and are gone forever. The Art Centre is a vibrant place used by college students nearby, many Groups and Societies across the spectrum of the Arts. Is the space used to it's full capacity or could it be made smaller ? Is there land at the rear that could be sold for development ?</p> <p>Could more be made of the Restaurant facilities. It will be a great loss to the Town to close it. The idea of building a new one from the proceeds fills me with Horror. Every Town of any size has it's mediocre New Arts Centre, Darlington has something special already - make better use of it. It's very difficult as a Layman to suggest where the axe should fall but have all the Savings really been made that can be from the 'Back Office'. Is everybody working to full capacity and potential - can job sharing be part of the answer . I hope there are no 'Politically Correct' jobs in the Back Room !One suggestion - do we really need a Golf Club ?</p> <p>Whether it's partly subsidised or not. Darlington is surrounded by many golf Clubs all offering reduced Membership offers and short of Members. Sell it and fund the Art Centre which is of use to a far larger spectrum of Darlington's Residents. It would also probably remain a Golf Club by it's purchasers.</p>
35	Email	17/12/2011	<p>I am a retired librarian and a regular user of Cockerton Library. The Library not only provides a book lending service but access to the Internet for people of all ages. In these difficult economic times there must be many people unable to purchase books or have access to the Internet in their home. The staff provide an excellent service and are always very helpful. If the library closes will the staff be made redundant or employed at Crown Street Library? Access to the library is very easy with free car parking very close by. To access Crown Street Library I would either have to pay to park my car (perhaps the Council could consider providing free parking for library users?) or walk some distance to and from a bus stop which would mean that I could only carry a very limited number of books. The closure of the Library would also have a detrimental effect on the shopping facilities in Cockerton and possibly loss of jobs. I'm sure I would not be the only person who would not use the local shops if I did not visit the Library. I sincerely hope that the Council will reconsider the proposal to close Cockerton Library.</p>
35	Email	20/12/2011	<p>As part time residents of Cockerton Green and 90% council tax payer (we own a second home on the green) we deplore the proposal to close the library. The council's own website described Cockerton Library as "very much part of the local community" and remarks that "regular visits from local schools encourage use and involvement with the library and foster a lifelong love of reading" We can only agree. Frequently while in residence at Cockerton we hear the animated sound of local primary school children on their way too or from the library. This is an excellent thing and it is only a shame that it cannot be repeated throughout the borough. Mobile libraries can never replace the experience of sitting in a room full of books. We use the library and the internet access. During our visits there are usually a number of people in the library and in the evenings several school children seemingly doing homework tasks. This again is not possible in mobile units. Crown Street at present never open beyond 6pm is probably out of reach.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Email	19/01/2012	<p>I wish to register my objection to the proposed closure of Cockerton Library. The Library is very much valued by those who use it. The staff are very dedicated and the service provided is excellent. It is the 'jewel in the crown' of Library provision in the Town. It is a Community facility which is used by all ages from the very young to the elderly. Its closure will particularly create hardship for the elderly residents who use it. In your proposals it is stated that Crown Street Library is easily accessed by all, either by public transport, car or bicycle. The only realistic way for most elderly people to access Crown Street Library is by car. How are they going to carry several books from the Library to their nearest bus stop? Some of the bus stops in the Town Centre are quite a way from the Library, together with fact that not all areas of the Town have particular good bus services. To go to the Crown Street Library by car would mean parking in one of the car parks adjacent to the Library, thus incurring car parking charges. Users of Cockerton Library can park free next to the Library thus enabling the borrowing of several books at a time as they do not have far to walk to their car or bus stop.</p> <p>I also know that Cockerton School use the Library facilities and it is lovely to see the children enjoying their Library visits as part of their education. Having said the above, I do realise the pressures being put on Council budgets not only in Darlington but countrywide. I think, however, that with some creative thinking the Library provision at Cockerton could continue. Has any thought been given to whether Crown Street Library is the right location. It is a wonderful historic building, but it must be very costly to run. Cockerton Library occupies a very small site and surely if it closed the building and land could not easily be used for other purposes. Its closure could also have an impact on the businesses in Cockerton village as the Library facilities do bring people into the Village. Has any consideration been given to reducing opening hours at Crown Street and Cockerton Library and reducing the use of Mobile Library to spread the cost of the savings required, so that all 3 facilities could be kept open. This I feel would be a much better option and fairer to all concerned. If Cockerton Library closes it will be a great loss to the Community as a whole and also the Council will lose some excellent members of staff.</p>
35	Email	02/12/2012	<p>I feel that Cockerton library has some important advantages for the elderly and the young, as well as the physically disadvantaged. It backs on to a large free car park with close access for blue badge holders, is easily accessible by bus, and is well stocked. It does not have the bus traffic constantly that Crown Street has, and could not possibly be adequately replaced by mobile services. Whilst I agree that restrictions in days or hours would be feasible, closure would be a major blow to the elderly and infirm, who constitute a large proportion of library users.</p>
35	Email	13.12.2011	<p>If the council chooses to close Cockerton Library it will be a very bad move. I personally will be devastated because I, and many others like me, are frequent and regular users of this glorious facility. It is the lifeblood of Cockerton and a great source of culture, education and leisure. We pay our Council Taxes and fully expect to have the earned right to have this invaluable facility readily available. If you close the library you will create great hardship for so many of us, especially people like me; I am disabled and am able to manage the journey to Cockerton with reasonable ease. The journey to Crown Street, on the other hand, would be impossible and regrettable. Cockerton Library is the centre of culture in a village which has nothing but shops. The village has nothing else to offer people if this facility is removed. It affords invaluable education to all who use it, and mothers and their children enjoy the warmth and shelter of its irreplaceable contents. Do not take away our critical heritage and demean the name of Darlington Borough Council. I believe that so many of us would be prepared to pay more in council tax to retain our birthright.</p>
35	Event	12/12/2011	<p>Cockerton Library – well used for more than one reason. Unemployment means people need something more to do. Seems a waste, what other options are there? Computer facilities – well used. Not everyone has a PC. Using the town library, no parking near by, bus is expensive to come to town. Mausoleum of a building, close Crown Street rather than Cockerton.</p>
35	Event	12/12/2011	<p>Cockerton Library – A well used facility, what do you propose to do with the building and do you think volunteers could run it?</p>
35	Forum	17/11/2011	<p>Well I haven't got the full details of the judgement yet but can I ask how the proposal covers the issues raised by the Somerset and Gloucestershire Library closure judgement which states that the library closures do not comply with "public sector equality duties" owed to vulnerable social groups.</p>
35	Forum	21/11/2011	<p>Put simply the business case behind the closure of Cockerton does not make sense. 10000 people use the library it accounts for 27% of usage of all library services in town. It brings footfall and business to the local traders. The library computers are always in use, the wards surrounding the library have some of the worst digital inclusion rates for the whole town. Local Authority and Government Services are more and more being put online but this puts at least 26% of the population in Darlington who do not have internet access at a social and economic disadvantage. The rationale mentions bus services from the area into town, but these are being cut back elsewhere in the budget proposal. Also users at Cockerton come from ALL parts of town, people use the specialist shops e.g. the only toy shop in town, butchers, pet shop, bakers etc. Cockerton Library is an essential part of the community hub and should be treated as an asset, a jewel in the crown.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
35	Forum	21/11/2011	Crazy proposals. Darlington clearly undervalues its libraries. For a town of 100,000 people the current provision of Crown Street, Cockerton and a mobile library compares badly with places of a similar size. If it's all about saving money why not also close down Crown Street and replace it with a portacabin parked up somewhere? No doubt Cockerton Library (just like the Civic Theatre) will be saved and we will all be grateful to our Labour Group.
35	Forum	26/11/2011	Cockerton Library is a valued resource, used by many people thanks to its excellent location and dedicated staff. It is very easy to park nearby, and it attracts people to use the local shops too. The Crown Street Library is not at all convenient, especially for older residents, who may not be able to carry heavy books to a bus stop where the service is reduced anyway. The statistics that 95% of the population could access the Crown Street Library in 30 minutes is not helpful. 95% could probably also go to Stockton in about the same time. Be realistic - keep a great resource that is usable.
35	Forum	02/12/2011	The proposed closure of Cockerton Library would be a great loss to the old, the disabled and many children who find access to Crown Street difficult and dangerous. Cockerton is easily accessible by car, with a large free car park and places for blue badge holders just behind, and is much safer for pedestrians and for bus stops than the interminable bus traffic in Crown Street. It is used by many young children because of the safety features and has a good stock of books and magazines which no mobile library can rival. I believe that restricted days or hours would be acceptable, but complete closure would be a major deprivation for the elderly and infirm, who comprise a large proportion of readers and library users.
35	Forum	16/12/2011	Cockerton Library is a valuable local resource - it's frequently used by local schools such as Cockerton Primary School. Is the council seriously expecting the schools to walk (or bus) their pupils to Crown Street Library? You need to be more creative in your proposals - why not look at different opening hours for Cockerton and Crown Street Library?
35	Letter	20/11/2011	It is appalling that you are shutting down Cockerton Library. It has a lot of use and is a lovely place. I prefer it to Darlington Library because of the staff. So if you do shut down Cockerton Library do not make the lovely librarians redundant. They are very helpful, kind and willing to talk to you every time I visit. If you close Cockerton Library lots of people will be upset and cross.
35	Letter	28/11/2011	I urge you to reconsider the decision to close Cockerton Library. Another measure designed to provide a kick in the teeth to those who support arts in all their forms. Darlington council has a commendable reputation for supporting the arts - please do not throw it away now for the sake of making easy short-term decisions.
35	Letter	26/01/2012	I wish strongly to oppose your intention to close Cockerton Library. It is well attended by pensioners and classes of small children.
35	Petition	20/12/2011	We the undersigned residents, and families of residents, of Squires Court, Woodland Road, Darlington urge Darlington Borough Council to reconsider its decision to close the Cockerton Public Library. <b>[Signed by 60 residents]</b> .
35	Petition	26/01/2012	Re: Proposed Closure of Cockerton Library. "We are opposed to the proposal to close Cockerton Library. Any such closure will have a severe impact on the many library users in the Cockerton area and from further afield. In addition the contribution that this busy library makes to the local economy is substantial. If implemented the closure will have a substantial negative impact on a large number of retail and other businesses in the area." <b>[Signed by 36 members of the local business community]</b>
35	Phone	02/11/2011	I think it is outrageous to propose closure of Cockerton library. Go back from the main library it is up a bank to the bus and with heavy books it is very difficult if you have asthma and are over 70. I read over 5/6 books a week. Also bus fares for families will mean it is unaffordable for them.
35	Phone	17/11/2011	Commented that she was clearly not in favour of the proposal
35	Phone	28/11/2011	This is a service that a lot of people require and rely on.
35	Phone	01/12/2011	Have they considered charging a fee form membership or book hire
35	Phone	08/12/2011	I'm disabled and I've spoke to other older people - we rely on Cockerton Library. The mobile library isn't convenient. For me to get into the town would be practically impossible.
35	Phone	09/12/2011	Myself and my children are regular users of the library. Not only for borrowing books but also the craft activities in the school holidays. It would be a great loss for people of all ages living in this area.
38	Comment Box		Keep the bowling greens which are one of the only forms of exercise for the older generation
38	Event	05/12/2012	Are the Council not interested in minority groups – Bowling has already taken a cut last year. Impact on elderly people. Not able to maintain and cut greens as they are too old. Most have commitments to family at home. Why cutting bowling again? My understanding is that the greens are to be cut by Members. All sport in Darlington has gone downhill. Council not interested in sport at all.
39	Email	01/12/2011	569 PENALTY NOTICES If it continues; increase the fines and make the culprits tidy up in public!
40	Comment Box		STOP spending money on expensive and needless iron work gates at Sugar Hill which is just a heap of grass with no amenities, as well as in the Denes. Do we really need such ornate gates?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
40	Email	21/12/2011	Hello, after reading the Town Crier about the proposing cuts I'd like to make the following suggestions. The South Park is a major focal point in Darlington, how many parks have their own aviary? It was with much sadness to read that it's the council's intention to close the aviary to save funds, why can't the council think of a way that the aviary could bring in money, why not offer people to adopt a parrot, cockatiel, canary, duck etc. That would be great fun for children and very helpful to parents who don't want to buy a pet. Why not have a firm like Pets at Home sponsoring the aviary, a large sign could be put up advertising that company, or have these ideas already been thought through and are not practical or cost cutting for some reason. It would be a crying shame to reduce the parks attractions, we don't want to see the park go back into decline again. I look forward to hearing your comments. Best regards, Tracey Chad. Street Champion.
40	Event	09/12/2012	Council invested a substantial amount of money in South Park – very clear that due to the isolation of the building (day care centre) that CCTV was required. The proposal to withdraw CCTV monitoring would result in buildings becoming targets of crime.
40	Phone	30/11/2011	Can't see how the LA can afford to invest £130 Million in Central Park, when they aim to save £30,000 in South Park, doesn't make sense - "What are they playing at."
41	Email	01/12/2011	Reduce floral displays... Let people plant their own. Again, no negativity about safety please. Find places where the public can put plants and flowers away from traffic; e.g., instead of St Cuthbert's Way. Name and shame anyone that is proven to have damaged anything!
41	Phone	01/12/2011	Shocked that DBC are cutting funding for flower displays as this brings a lot of people into Darlington.
47	Comment Box		They are there on the roads for the safety of out children in all weather! Would volunteers do that! Also who would monitor the volunteers and who they are?
47	Comment Box		Losing the lollipop man on West Auckland Road junction will mean I can't cross the road safely on the way to and from school (Holy Family)
47	Comment Box		Losing the lollipop man on our dangerous road to school (West Auckland Road - opposite Brown Trout) will affect us all. I will not be able to safely cross my children to go to school. We have a right to get our children to school safely. Parents will drive and cause further parking problems on Prior Street. also, this will not encourage children to be active by walking or taking scooters, as it will be too dangerous
47	Comment Box		Removal of school crossing patrols will affect my 3 children, the community of Cockerton and the whole of the Borough. This is a serious safety risk
47	Email	05/12/2011	I am most concerned regarding the possible withdrawal of School crossing patrols, I note they are not required by law therefore more vulnerable to budget reductions, however, surely the council has a fundamental obligation for school children May I point out the article in the town crier which states quite clearly that child protection will be maintained and children are safe from harm it is a nonsense therefore to withdraw crossing patrols as this will inevitably place them in danger, I'm certain you don't want Darlington Council to suffer a child's injury or even a fatality as a consequence of money. I note also in the echo that you are looking at the possibility of volunteers operating the patrols in the future, I believe this is a non starter as it has proved difficult to fill vacancies even when paid. I believe this is a scrooge like attitude on behalf of the council as the amount of wages the lollipop men and woman is a mere pittance in the broad scheme of things, surely the interest you earn from banking abroad would meet the wage bill without making a dent. Can I ask you therefore to shelve these proposals as I believe not do so will have dire consequences and you are not merely paying lip service to children's safety.
47	Email	08/12/2011	Save the lollipop men and ladies, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN THIS SERVICE BE ABOLISHED - it just wont work with volunteers.
47	Email	16/01/2012	Thank you for your E-mail and I note the contents therein, I note also you continue to stress there is no legal requirement, however surely the council has a moral obligation to provide a service to ensure the safety of children. You state that at the moment the council has no plans at the moment to withdraw the service and are looking at a feasibility study for alternatives. I am in no doubt that this will involve volunteers operating patrols, as I stated in my original E-mail it has proved difficult filling posts in the past even when paid therefore it seems most unlikely that volunteers will come forward, may I suggest therefore that Councillors Nixon and Winstanley don the appropriate gear and man a school crossing patrol on a cold and windy day and experience first hand the problems involved. After such an experience would they honestly expect someone to volunteer. Unfortunately it is my experience that all decisions have been made and consultation etc will make no difference whatsoever, finally may I say that money should have no bearing on children's safety.
47	Forum	01/12/2011	This absolutely can not happen! I live on West Auckland Rd, close to the junction with Brinkburn Rd, and the crossing patrol there is vital for the safety of young people. An older couple living three doors below us lost their daughter when she crossed this road. The draft proposal states that this is a feasibility study and yet are budgeting savings of £100K p.a. from f/y 2013. Given that the attendants earn very little, this must encompass many if not all job cuts.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
47	Forum	22/01/2012	West Auckland Road is very busy and numerous school children have to cross it each day, I have seen the crossing patrols narrowly missed by blind drivers in a hurry to get to wherever they are going NOT see a crossing patrol with high viz etc. What chance does a child have and as there are primary schools in the area there are a lot of young children who rely on crossing patrols to get to and from school safely, the children also learn from the crossing patrols. How can this council put any price on a child not being injured or even worse. Surely the cost saved will be offset the first time a child is injured and the council have to pay out thousands in compensation as they will be liable for any injuries.
47	Petition	26/01/2012	We would like to protest about the Medium term Financial Plan (MTFP) proposals to cut the School Crossing Patrol Service by £100,000 per year from the financial year 2013/14 onwards. This petition is not a self serving petition but one brought about by the concern of parents, carers and indeed whole communities. <b>[Signed by 3,502 residents]</b>
47	Phone	28/11/2011	Objects to the comment by Councillor Lyonette as safety will be affected by the loss of school crossing patrols. Removal will lead to congestion around schools and increases in injury rates from the current %. Appreciate this is not a statutory service but safety is a high concern. Volunteers would not turn up in bad weather.
47	Phone	30/11/2011	Who will take responsibility if a child is knocked over when there is no crossing patrol, it's a cheek asking volunteers to take up this role for nothing?
47	Phone	02/12/2011	Agree with the proposal it is the teachers/pupils/ parents responsibility. Maybe put in more lights and crossings in
47	Phone	06/12/2011	Number of school crossing patrols should not be cut
51	Letter	13/01/2012	I understand that it is your intention to replace the existing staff by recruiting volunteers to undertake this important function, presumably in an unsupervised capacity. I would like to say that the use of volunteers needs to be undertaken with extreme caution from the point of view of reliability and safeguarding the welfare of the client, in this case children - probably the most vulnerable group in our society. Also with a requirement to undertake a CRB check, training and medical clearance, views are being echoed that such a change to the scheme from the very onset is likely to be fraught with difficulties notwithstanding the increase in costs of potential litigation resulting from the engagement of an unrepresented workforce. Although unsure of the level of savings likely to be achieved I am sure they will be small when compared with your overall target objective. I would ask therefore to seriously reconsider your earlier decision, by allowing the scheme in its present form to be retained, thus reassuring parents and members of the public alike that a tried and trusted service of long standing will continue to function.
52	Letter	26/01/2012	The provision of better street-lighting, investment in street-cleaning and dealing with low-level nuisance all help older people to continue getting out of their homes. This in turn may well help deal with some issues as the presence of older people on the streets may provide a disincentive to disruptive behaviour by others.
53	Email	01/12/2011	We will maintain child protection and safeguarding services for the borough. Why do you need to do this when the ISA is located in Darlington?
53	Letter	25/01/2012	Age UK Darlington would be gravely concerned with cuts to CRB checks which may affect the safeguarding of service users. In our experience some older people are particularly vulnerable as they age and it is essential that they are safeguarded properly, particularly around the personalisation agenda. We would like to be reassured that the commissioning process is actually requiring improvements in safeguarding through its contracts. Furthermore, that all round recruitment processes and managerial supervision are being continually improved to ensure best safeguarding practice is being followed.
56	Email	01/12/2011	Re-launch a new magazine to replace the Town Crier. How do you re-launch something "new"? Why don't you cut costs even more by making it by request only, or put it on your web site.
56	Email	02/12/2011	More money could be saved if a much reduced, condensed Town Crier replacement was published on Darlington council's website for downloading and printed copies made available to pick up at the town hall by interested parties, or delivered on request. Too many copies are being discarded within minutes of being delivered under the present system.
56	Forum	16/11/2011	Or get rid of it entirely? Print on black and white paper and reduce it to four sides
56	Forum	17/11/2011	The only useful thing in the Town Crier are the contact numbers, rubbish collection dates, up-coming events and the like, all of which can be found elsewhere (online etc). In my opinion it should be got rid of entirely. If it has to be kept, print it black and white on as few pages as possible - there is no need for it to be a glossy magazine.
56	Forum	17/11/2011	Perhaps you should actually meet what the law says which is: "The publicity code states that they should not publish more frequently than quarterly and should only include material directly related to local services."
56	Forum	20/11/2011	There are many sources of information that advertise the same services thus making Town Crier superfluous and a waste of taxpayers money. In the past it has been said that Town Crier is mainly a politically motivated periodical
56	Forum	21/11/2011	The Town Crier is a total waste of money, four publications a year = one every 13 weeks. Its content is already dated by the time it is published and could be put on the council's website where necessary.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
56	Forum	16/12/2011	The Town Crier is a complete waste of money. It duplicates the information that is on the website. Digital is the way of the future. If you need to communicate with people who do not have access to the website, you could put occasional adverts in the free newspaper.
56	Forum	29/12/2011	If the council thinks that it is vital to publish Town Crier then put it in all the local newsagents for those who want to buy it instead of all of the residents being compelled to pay for it through council tax. It would then provide a small income to recover the cost of it.
57	Forum	29/12/2011	Perhaps the system would be more efficient if those others (legal, highways etc) who provide the detailed answers to the CIG Team would deal directly with those who complain and request information. It would omit a layer of admin and save taxpayers money.
59	Event	09/12/2012	Learning Disability services cut last year. Care removed and taken away. I have felt suicidal over the past year. Care managers causing the problems. In 1948 National Assistance Act amendments over the years, once care has been assessed and agreed upon, the Council cannot remove services. The needs of the chronically sick and disabled people must be put first.
59	Event	09/12/2012	Streamlining of adult social care – we don't know what it means. It could mean less staff, cutting of packages of care. Until we know the ins and outs we don't know how it will impact on me.
59	Event	09/12/2012	Eligibility Criteria Issue - people who receive services that will lose out to new system.
59	Event	09/12/2012	We have been talking about how much the Council needs to save money. We haven't spoken about how much the Personal Carers save the Council - I work 40-70 hours a week and get paid for 21. If I lose my job – it will cost a lot more. I hope the council takes into account how much Personal Care Assistants save the Council.
59	Letter	26/01/2012	Age UK Darlington finds it difficult to see how Reablement will reduce assessments. Is the Council planning to carry out a limited assessment aimed at establishing need for Reablement, on the basis that it makes more sense to do a fuller assessment afterwards? This will only reduce demand if, following Reablement, people decide they don't need or want a further assessment. Also at the initial stage assessment must be sufficient to identify FACs banding and eligibility so must be more than a screening process. More clarification on what you mean by "Reablement" and how this will actually improve the "Adult Social Care Assessment Process" in real terms would be useful.
60	Email	01/12/2011	I note that, out of a net budget of 80.5 million pounds, 33million is expected to be spent on "adult services". This amount is 41% of the total net budget and 80% of the amount to be raised by Council Tax. Although in The Budget Special you list what you will continue to provide it does not seem to be able to add up to such a large part of the budget as 33 million pounds. I and some of my friends are interested to know a breakdown of where the bulk of this part of the budget is spent.
60	Event	09/12/2012	You are removing my services. The assessment has put me into the low or medium bracket. Can't walk, can't cook. I am also an attempted suicide you know nothing about the personal impacts
60	Letter	27/01/2012	Age UK Darlington believes that if you are looking for less expensive ways to meet people's needs this will involve reassessment. Services should not be withdrawn without a proper assessment first. A point to watch is that you should not fetter the discretion of assessors by telling them in advance of the assessment that they must find cost savings. This exercise would not generate savings if carried out properly because you will inevitably find that the needs of some people will have increased since their last assessment so the review process is likely to generate increased demand. Once more, discretion of assessors must not be fettered by telling them they are not allowed to find increased need. A number of local authorities have been successfully taken to court recently due to failure to carry out a proper disability impact assessment.
66	Email	01/12/2011	The Head of Steam Railway Museum will continue to celebrate Darlington's railway heritage ... Why doesn't DBC obtain some of the surplus stock from the National Railway Museum at York? Shildon has Mallard. The brick locomotive doesn't attract anyone, so why not try to get something for the people of the town to look at, instead of people always having to travel elsewhere to see things?
72	Forum	20/11/2011	Saving of £0k would be worth making however it is to be made
72	Forum	21/11/2011	Why are we being asked to discuss people's jobs directly. How the council deploy staff within the council is not a concern of the general public
72	Forum	23/11/2011	All service teams should be restructured with no Council Employee being paid in excess of £75k per year. Then some of the cut backs would be unnecessary and the town would retain some of the things that people value.
72	Forum	29/11/2011	A sensible review of the Directorate structure itself would naturally restructure the PA team to make a massive saving i.e. a 50% cut in the salaries of the directorate personnel would free up a lot of cash for the front line services. It would appear that minor cuts in costs at the front line will cause maximum impact on the residents, East Row toilets as an example.
90	Forum	16/11/2011	Apprehensive about sharing services with other councils, as long as we don't go down the same road as Central, now that was and is a complete waste of time/money/resources, hopefully lessons will be learned from that (I very much doubt that though) maybe we can then actually provide a service to the residents of Darlington. One thing puzzles me though, why Hartlepool and not Stockton or Middlesbrough or even County Durham!!! Was that because they didn't want to be associated with some of the particular departments that were to be shared?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
90	Forum	22/12/2011	I have heard council bus staff have been given notice because the council will not be running any adult services from March despite what has been said regarding keeping the likes of foundations groups open
91	Comment Box		I believe that this is a measure of a civilised society on facilities for the arts. The Arts Centre needs to stay open, I notice there is no mention of salary cuts or redundancies at the very top of DBC, the DBC chief Exc is overpaid, just compare with the Prime Minister.
91	Comment Box		I don't think that the Art Centre should be closed down because they need it for places like the QE who use it for dance performances classes. It is going to make services for teenagers worse and there's not enough as it is.
91	Comment Box		Stop killing the town by threatening to close the Arts Centre & the Civic Theatre
91	Comment Box		Arts Centre - if this wonderful facility has to go PLEASE make it a priority to build a suitable new one centrally. For me it's the most important amenity in the town!
91	Comment Box		The Arts Centre - sell it to the QE 6th Form, they will use it in many good ways. We don't need any more blocks of flats. It is part of Darlington's past and shouldn't be knocked down.
91	Comment Box		Neither can I understand how selling of the Arts Centre to build a new facility makes economic sense - why not make more use of library buildings for the Arts?
91	Comment Box		The Arts Centre must be kept open and all venues looked at to increase revenue and reduce costs at that point
91	Comment Box		The proposed cuts are too much, this town will become a place no-one cares to visit. Arts Centre is vital, as is toilets in town. A town this size with no public toilets? Even Bishop Auckland has one! All cultural assets should be ring fenced.
91	Comment Box		You should close social services building and move all workers to the Arts Centre, so it can be multi-used by the council for social services and the Arts. Once it's gone, you can't bring it back.
91	Comment Box		The council should (and must) provide an Arts Centre for community involvement in its current location. At present we directly provide a commercial theatre, which could be outsourced or a golf course , when there is plentiful private provision in the Town.
91	Comment Box		No sense to close a building of character housing the Arts Centre, Why build a new one? Money misspent in D'ton millions deployed in destroying unique buildings and on the High Row and replaying the 1960's anywhere scheme. NO to the Art Centre Closure.
91	Comment Box		The Arts Centre is invaluable of particular note is that the residents who use it are predominantly also, there who are paying the higher council tax, hence funding it. We were attracted to live in Darlington as a result of the Arts Provision within walking distance of the West End. Please don't sacrifice it!
91	Comment Box		Every step MUST be taken to avoid closure of Darlington Arts Centre. If this proves impossible, however, then relocating and supporting displaced organisations like DMG is essential as they, not arts bureaucrats, use the arts in Darlington
91	Comment Box		Why is Stressholme golf course a priority over the Arts Centre? As a service to the community, the golf course caters for a <b>MINORITY</b> . Furthermore, there is already so much provision for golfers in the town with 3 golf clubs. How many people will be disenfranchised and disadvantaged when the Arts Centre closes? All of them - GET YOUR PRIORITIES RIGHT
91	Comment Box		Please don't close the Arts Centre. It is one of the strongest things Darlington has going for it and brings people (and money) in from surroundings. This government won't be in power for ever and if the Arts Centre is closed it will be gone for good. I simply don't believe a replacement will get built. You could save money by a) fortnightly bin collections while the crisis lasts (tell those who complain to confront those who have caused the mess) b) no flowers in the parks c) no Christmas lights d) slightly less heating in the Council buildings e) investigate open source software for Council computers (Bristol City Council has done this) f) delay replacement of Council vehicles and computers for longer than normal (open source software r- check it out) Services should be provided by the Council!
91	Comment Box		As a family we use the Arts Centre regularly, school holiday activities, dance class and guitar classes, how will we access these things in the future
91	Comment Box		Loss of what the Arts Centre offers - loss of Arts Centre entertainment
91	Comment Box		Closure of Arts Centre leading to community loss to the whole family - its accessible for family activities, we will need to go further afield to a different town. Where is Darlington community heart/festivals/family fun going to be - it's a loss to the whole town - means no heart for the town!!
91	Comment Box		This would mean not being able to attend Artspark or theatre workshops
91	Comment Box		Closing the arts centre? What happened to the project that was going forward until the sudden recently revealed about face? Full explanation please? Looking back, why was money spent on a fancy new bar area and one set of loos instead of on improving windows and over energetic heating system?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	22/11/2011	I shall be obliged if you will forward this email to all members of the Cabinet before this evenings meeting. Dear Sir, Whilst it is possible that the building of a new Arts centre is possibly feasible. To expect the people of Darlington to approve of the sale of the Art Centre before any discussions have taken on the design, location, function of the new replacement building is an insult to the intelligence of the people. A point which also does not seem to be specified is the time scale to build the building and fit it out. What also seems to have been totally ignored is what happens to the numerous groups who meet regularly and store their equipment at the Art Centre. Suitable alternative accommodation is nonexistent. On past experience of Darlington Councils promises the new building will either not be built or will come in so grossly over budget that it would have been more economic to keep the Art Centre as it is now. Please scrap this proposal and leave a well loved and well used building for the use of the people of Darlington.
91	Email	22/11/2011	I write to you today to express my deep dismay at the proposed sale of the Arts Centre. The Arts Centre is the Art hub that this town needs, and the plans to build a new Arts Hub are vague to say the least. Closing the Arts Centre would be a tragedy for the town, it is an irreplaceable resource. The Arts Centre belongs to the people of this town and Darlington For Culture are prepared for un it. It is NOT the Council's to sell. I intend to fight this all the way.
91	Email	29/11/2011	It is with sadness I have learned of the proposal to close the Arts Centre. I confess am not a local resident, but have enjoyed and supported many events there (and so in the surrounding hotels and businesses). It has gathered a tremendous pool of talent and I have been glad to witness the transmission of so many skills from one generation to the next in the fields of music, art, theatre and dance. It would be a shame to lose such a venue so I would encourage you to foster a replacement in a way that avoids breaking these chains of community life and capital. Thank you for your kind attention.
91	Email	29/11/2011	I am emailing to add my voice to those opposing the sale of Darlington Arts Centre. It is the Arts and Culture Hub of the area and alongside the Theatre and Airport a main reason for my moving to the town 26 years ago. Like many other people I am attracted to an area by the facilities and experiences it has to offer. As a tax payer I want my money to go into this invaluable cultural resource.
91	Email	29/11/2011	I am working with Darlington for Culture trying to save the Arts Centre - I am not convinced a new arts centre is actually what is needed - first this arts centre needs to prove it can run more commercially. I don't believe the promotion strategies work properly and events are marketed enough to targeted audiences. Not enough people know about what is going on - more interaction between care homes, older people need to know what is going on and also school are a prime target audience - letting people know about holiday workshops and also evening classes through mini assemblies or fliers home would be useful. One theatre company came into our school and did a mini performance of part of the show to sell tickets to their target audience. It would also be courteous or helpful to work as a team - when all the arts centre marketing stuff is posted out - why aren't they putting Darlington 4 Culture events in the brochure too our dates could have been added into the programme for next season? The working together doesn't seem to be working properly - D4C want to make it work I do question whether some arts centre staff actually want things to change and improve. They will always give the answer that is wanted - but is their actually correct? The more people know the more people will use the centre. To save on marketing costs and target the whole of Darlington why not have the Darlington Advertiser wraparound detailing all events that are up and coming then it reaches those hard to reach people rather than paying for selective mail shots. Instead of paying for postage of events that possibly need more ticket sales - events could be advertised by fliers being handed out in town and advertised on the Dolphin Centre TV - school sometimes have web pages that could add this information. I think more pressure should be put on the person organising the event to ensure it is full. Family ticket deals, better prices (Middlesbrough do this) - slightly lower prices but full events to make the same profit gives a better energy to events and also brings performers back. really wonder how much the staff efficiency and productivity has been investigated as it seems that as volunteers we have been able to pull in the people to make the venue busy like it should be. There is a team of volunteers who would potentially run the events for you and organise them bringing in much needed business with enthusiasm and drive. My suggestion would be run the Arts Centre, rent out small offices upstairs to small businesses, develop hot desk seats like in Barnard Castle's hub, more conferencing facilities and maybe renovate the Blanche Pease building into high quality offices or flats that could be built to tie into the arts centre ethos to develop a vibrant and busy hub. The projectors that were running at the weekend should be fixed in the centre permanently like many other arts centre around the UK detailing various information along with artworks and paid for advertising from businesses around the region. More interaction with all residents of Darlington. I am willing to help along with all the other volunteers. It's not our jobs at stake but we could help save some peoples jobs by making the Arts Centre work.



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	30/11/2011	I was at the opening of the centre way back when. Since then I have attended craft fairs, lectures, folk clubs, concerts, exhibitions and music weekends although my postcode is DH9. I know people who have travelled even further. I can't imagine why there is a proposal to close it instead of a sensible (cheaper) plan to use it more effectively. A great deal of effort, time and money has already been spent to make it the usable, friendly space it now is - also, it is already there, with all the loyalty and goodwill that it has taken years to build up. This loyalty, goodwill and sense of ownership is the foundation of any Arts Centre and should be taken into account in costing any new building. While proposals for a new venue are being expensively consulted on; while expensive construction is happening, it will disappear. In my experience a community does not readily embrace an anonymous new space. The Sage, Gateshead is suffering from just this effect. On its opening day it was heralded as 'belonging to the community' - most of the community groups that used to meet there have left for other, less anonymous venues. Darlington Arts Centre is a particularly fine venue it would be tragedy if it closed.
91	Email	30/11/2011	I am Darlington born and bred and Darlington Arts Centre in Vane Terrace has figured large in my life for a very long time now. I am dismayed at the prospect of the arts losing that wonderful building, which does have its shortcomings I know, but its history, architecture, location and individuality in my opinion far outweigh arguments for a new centre which may not be all encompassing to host the many groups which enjoy and love it. Its standing at the edge of town centre makes it accessible to all and the outlook over Stanhope Park is envious -how many other towns or communities can boast such a splendid centre of the arts? I have attended yoga classes, t'ai chi, writing classes, loved jazz and folk nights in the Garden Bar, seen many performances in the theatre, exhibitions in the fab galleries, loved the film nights and taken advantage of the Media Centre. The Community Carnival and Spring Thing spilling out into the park are also delightful events. What makes this all so unique and special is that all of these activities are housed in one very outstanding building which is loved by many. As a member of Vane Women, I have performed in the Garden Bar myself on many occasions and all of us are very proud to say that the Arts Centre in Vane Terrace is our spiritual home, nowhere else comes close to offering that special atmosphere and feeling of community and belonging. I ask please that you take into consideration the views of the arts community and the patrons of the centre who rely on it before you reach any decision on its future. Many thanks for listening.
91	Email	01/12/2011	The Arts Centre. Who is going to buy it? Why not co-operate with DFC in the meantime? Please; no negative comments about the location. <b>DBC gave planning permission for the stadium. You can't have it both ways!</b>
91	Email	01/12/2011	<b>A brand new performance venue ... As well as a new Arts Centre? Duplication surely!</b>
91	Email	02/12/2011	I have just recently read the budget proposals that were printed in the Town Crier and I must say I am horrified that there are plans to close the Arts Centre! The Arts Centre provides an excellent service to many varieties of people. Including: Elderly; Youth and Children. This is a place where people from all over travel to take part in numerous workshops, see plays, watch films in the cinema and much more. I have taken an active interest in the Arts Centre because I have completed my 'Arts Award' at Bronze and Silver level there, such as lots of other people have. I have also helped to supervise workshops there and the amount of people who travel from all over the north east is outstanding! The staff they have working there are helpful in every way and really do help make the Arts Centre such a special place. It made up a lot of my childhood as well, because as a child I took part in lots of workshops there and got a first-hand experience into how entertaining and value for money they were. They keep people entertained through a wide range of media's and help maintain Darlington's Arts reputation, which I believe we have a large one for the Arts, mainly because of this Centre and the benefits they provide to the community. This 'new' idea that has been mentioned about building some facility near the town centre is utterly awful, in my opinion, because it will just be providing the services that the Arts Centre offers at the moment, except this takes an 'out-of-the-way' approach by not being in the town centre, but is within walking distance. Also, the high reputation that this Centre currently upholds cannot be replaced by something else because it is part of Darlington's culture and services, providing people enjoyment and entertainment. I really do hope that you can clearly see my views and opinions here in this email and decide to take action against this proposal because if you do close the Arts Centre then Darlington will be losing a valuable asset. I would very much appreciate a reply to reassure myself that my email has been taken into account because I feel strongly that the Arts Centre must stay.
91	Email	03/12/2011	I realise that cuts have to be made, but fail to see how building a new Arts Centre would save money. As a frequent user of the Arts centre I think it would be a disaster to see it go. A few years ago you wasted a large sum of money on totally inappropriate modernisation of the ground floor and forecourt, while leaving large parts of the building in need of renovation. Now you propose to dispose of it all together. How do you justify; 1. wasting all the money already spent on the arts Centre 2. proposing to 'save' by constructing a new building? I suggest that you leave the Arts centre as it is, and if there is any money to spare, renovate the upper rooms. If you could sell the water feature it would be even better.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	07/12/2011	I note from the Town Crier the plans to close the Arts Centre and relocate to a new facility in the town centre. At Polam Hall School we have a 230 seat theatre which I am sure you are probably aware of. If we could be of assistance during any transition period by renting out our theatre we would be delighted to discuss this with a Council or Arts Centre representative.
91	Email	07/12/2011	I am disappointed to hear of the proposal to close the Arts Centre. I am a frequent user of the Centre as, in comparison to the Civic Theatre, it offers a varied entertainment programme at a much lower cost. The ticket prices charged by the Civic are high – the Arts Centre is more affordable. Removing the Arts Centre facility is likely to mean that a lot more people will miss out on the enjoyment of live entertainment, particularly as it seems that the reduced cost of running the Civic Theatre will not be passed on through lower ticket prices. I am not entirely certain of the reasons for the Council wanting to invest in the Civic Theatre at the expense of the Arts Centre, particularly as not so long ago the Arts Centre was refurbished. It does seem a little short sighted to have invested in the Arts Centre building if now we are being told that the high running costs do not give it a sustainable future. To get a clearer idea of how well used Council run facilities are it would be interesting to know the number of users and the comparator cost per user for the Arts Centre, Civic Theatre, Golf Club, Head of Steam, etc., to see what share of value people are getting in terms of the Council's investment in these individual facilities. One of the options proposed seems to focus on restricting future Arts provision to children & young people. This does not seem right - children should already have access to any number of arts facilities as part of their school education. Having said that, as school facilities are publicly funded, has there been any thought given to the potential for the wider public to benefit from use of facilities available in schools. It seems a waste that facilities (sports, IT, libraries, music) are limited to children and cannot be accessed by local people – particularly as schools may not be fully utilised on evenings and during school holidays. The Council is recommending the sale of the Arts Centre. Can you confirm what the Council expects will happen to the building should it be sold and what restrictions will be placed on any future buyer? Is the Arts Centre building a listed building? And also, what are the proposals in the interim if the Arts Centre is to close before a new facility is built? The recommended options for Arts provision seem to be based on a lot of uncertainties, i.e. future funding/ investment requirements. How can the Council make a decision when there is no certainty that the recommended option will be realised? What will be the contingency to ensure continued arts provision if funding cannot be secured and what commitment can be given that proceeds from any sale will be ring-fenced for the provision of Arts in Darlington town centre?
91	Email	08/12/2011	Would you please give me a breakdown of the £4 million Arts, Culture & Leisure budget into; Civic Theatre, Dolphin Centre, Funding for Arts, Events programme, Stressholme Golf Club, Libraries, Railways Museum
91	Email	08/12/2011	1. I believe the Art Centre should be saved at all costs and remain where it is. The building of a new Art Centre next to the Town Hall will just not happen and the facilities will be lost forever. 2. The temporary car park next to the Town Hall should not be used for a new Art Centre but a new Bus Station should be built, it does not have to be lavish in fact it could be mainly open air unlike the old one. A station similar to Middlesbrough would suffice. Darlington is the only town in the North East that does not have a Bus Station, how much longer must the side of the Dolphin Centre be used for pick-up and drop-off of national coaches ? The bus station could also house all town buses and in doing so get rid of all the buses out of the town centre which is supposed to be traffic free. Parts of Darlington town centre remind me of a formula one racing circuit, what with the buses bombing along Northgate into Crown Street and then gaining speed as they shoot up Priestgate its a wonder nobody has been killed. Just stand outside the Post Office in Crown Street for awhile and witness the sheer madness of the buses - what happened to the pedestrian town centre we were promised. All those old people who use the Post Office, Wilkinsons, Marks & Spencers etc take their life into their own hands every time they go shopping - that cant be right !!

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	16/12/2011	Referring to the Article in the Town Crier I would like to comment as follows:-Looking at the size of the Budget , why is Arts Culture and Leisure a very small part of the Budget apparently taking such a massive hit ? Is it the easy option ?I am against in particular the Closure of Cockerton Library and The Arts Centre. Cockerton Library is a purpose built building light , friendly atmosphere but functional. A large percentage of the users of Cockerton Village are Elderly and the Library is a very important place and serves a social need and meeting place as well as its Library use. I doubt the building could be used for any other purpose and would be demolished. I once read in a National Sunday Newspaper that the Darlington Arts Centre was one of the best Art Venues outside London ! Does it really have to close ? Once these places are gone they never return and are gone forever. The Art Centre is a vibrant place used by college students nearby, many Groups and Societies across the spectrum of the Arts. Is the space used to it's full capacity or could it be made smaller ? Is there land at the rear that could be sold for development ? Could more be made of the Restaurant facilities. It will be a great loss to the Town to close it. The idea of building a new one from the proceeds fills me with Horror. Every Town of any size has it's mediocre New Arts Centre, Darlington has something special already - make better use of it. It's very difficult as a Layman to suggest where the axe should fall but have all the Savings really been made that can be from the 'Back Office'. Is everybody working to full capacity and potential - can job sharing be part of the answer . I hope there are no 'Politically Correct' jobs in the Back Room !One suggestion - do we really need a Golf Club ? Whether it's partly subsidised or not. Darlington is surrounded by many golf Clubs all offering reduced Membership offers and short of Members. Sell it and fund the Art Centre which is of use to a far larger spectrum of Darlington's Residents. It would also probably remain a Golf Club by it's purchasers.
91	Email	23/12/2011	I have followed the debate about subsidies by Darlington Council for the arts and leisure with interest. I am, however, confused, after having seen various (and different) sums of money mentioned in the local press for the level of subsidy for the major items of outlay. Could you please, therefore: 1. specify separately the current level of financial support for the Civic Theatre, Arts Centre and the Dolphin Centre, and 2. Indicate the projected level of support for each of these venues (with the new Arts Centre included) If the current proposed changes were implemented. Thank you in anticipation.
91	Email	27/12/2011	I want to register my objection to the proposal to close the arts centre, withdraw subsidy from the civic theatre and build something new. Without its cultural offer, Darlington would not be the attractive and vibrant small town it currently is. Many people moved here in preference to surrounding towns because of the cultural facilities, including me. The atmosphere of the town is very much influenced by these venues and the type of people they attract here. There is a thriving 'scene' and many young people are being encouraged to sing, dance, paint, play in bands etc as a result. Art and culture have played a huge role in the development and regeneration of the north east – angel of the north, the Baltic, Sage, MIMA etc etc. To cut and diminish an existing and successful cultural offer, the sort of thing that many other towns have been trying to develop for years, would be hugely short-sighted. Art and cultural offerings will be part of what we need in the longer term to boost the town's economy when we have finally paid off the banker's debts. This should be an opportunity for the council to think more creatively about how it could improve what it does, join together with other local authorities to develop the cultural offer, get more people from the town involved in supporting local facilities – and yes, if we have to, paying more for them. Cutting a line off a budget is easy, actually doing something that would enrich the life of the people of darlington is so much more difficult but really should be the council's primary objective. Please think long and hard before you condemn this town to becoming an endless parade of pound shops and flats that no one wants or can afford. If the down goes downhill, many people who can leave here will and your problems will only just start.
91	Email	31/12/2011	I believe that if Darlington is going to have a future it must not underestimate the value of culture in terms of economic development providing the hook to make companies and individuals move to Darlington over other areas where there is a cultural offer. Skills development and as a tool for encouraging return to education. You must not devastate the arts and culture in Darlington or recovery will be slower than in areas where this has not happened and other services will also suffer because of this. Providing a quality of life through use as a tool to engage the public with there wider community. Etc. You cannot build an arts centre in town for the money you propose will not happen and to be honest with the right signage the existing facility is in the centre of town just has never been marketed as such it is also next to the college so ideal for engaging young people (there was just never the strategic vision to do so or develop its outreach enough. Closing the old arts centre rather than mothballing the back of house parts is a loss that will never be recovered.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	02/01/2012	<p>I should start by saying that I no longer live in the borough, but do work there and was brought up in Darlington. We now live in Newton Aycliffe. My family are sad to hear that you are intending to close the Arts Centre. We travel to Darlington regularly to see shows and attends events at the Arts Centre. I would say we go to the Arts Centre at least 6 times a year. The nearest places to see the types of smaller shows that the Arts Centre puts on would be Stockton Arc and Durham Gala. I understand that the building may be costly to maintain and heat and I hope that you might want to locate to a cheaper site, if you do have no option but to close the current site. It is easy to underestimate the value of the arts. Before having my son and taking him to see some of the shows such as Five last year and Snowplay last month, I wouldn't have felt so strongly about this.</p> <p>However the joy on his face and the excitement about seeing another show after each one, couldn't be replaced. We've taken him to panto and bigger venues to see shows but they are not usually as interactive as the shows we've taken him to see at the Arts Centre. Plus the cost of the bigger shows excludes those on lower incomes, the cost of the Arts Centre shows have been a fraction of that cost, and so are more accessible to all.</p> <p>Please please, if you do decide that the only option is to close the Arts Centre, but that you could invest in another site, please consider including a performance space like the studio at the back of the Arts Centre. The shows that we have seen there have been magical, it breaks my heart to think that this kind of theatre won't be available to children in future. Thanks for reading this.</p> <p>#</p>
91	Email	04/01/2012	<p>I attended the meeting on 12th December 2011 to discuss the budget. After the main meeting I raised the following queries with your staff who said that they would respond but to date I have not received a reply. In the document that was presented to the cabinet the figures indicated that it would cost £306591 per year to keep the Arts Centre open by transferring to an arms-length organisation but only £132526 for a new build hub. If you examine the figures in detail there are several anomalies; Staff – One would expect the staff costs to be less not more for an arms length organisation. Admin/Office costs – These would also likely to be less. Water - £15000 compared to £2500 – Why not install a water meter. From 1/4/11 community organisations can have their sewerage services charges capped at band 1 - £109.30. Waste disposal - £5940 compared to £990 – I cannot see how the Arts Centre can produce over 6 times the amount of rubbish than the new Hub would. ICT /Finance/ Admin – Again these are unlikely to be more than if it was run by the Council. I look forward to receiving your reply.</p>
91	Email	15/01/2012	<p>I am writing to you to express my disappointment that you plan to close Darlington Art Centre. It is a wonderful resource for the town and the surrounding areas. It provides a beautiful venue for a wide variety of events geared towards almost every sector of our community. Sports, dance, paintings, photography, music groups, sculptures, craft events, plays, comedians, family events, events for children , bars, a cafe, exhibition space. Whilst I am aware that money has to be found from somewhere, I believe that closing the Art Centre will be a short term gain, but we will lose out in the longer term. To maybe buy/build a new unspecified venue in the future is little commiseration. The Art Centre is something to be proud of. I hope you find an alternative to closing it as it will be a great loss to Darlington and the surrounding region. I <u>hope that together with Darlington for Culture you find the time to explore other options.</u></p>
91	Email	15/01/2012	<p>I would just like to register my concern about the Councils ill thought out plans to replace the current Arts Centre. The chances of an Arts Council grant are slim and the proposed building only fit for a small percentage of the Art and Culture activity. The Council argues that we need a town centre site but many people are saying they will not feel safe accessing a centre here and they are concerned that children will not be able to attend unaccompanied. The concentration on Arts and Culture for young people failed to tell the wider public about the excellent facilities already available in local schools and colleges. The absence of any consideration of making the facility attractive to the older resident has been completely absent. The current location of the Arts Centre would be considered central in any other town! The concentration on Theatre Hullabaloo is short sighted as they will not remain in the town for four years while a new centre is being built (if ever it is). They will have taken up the offers to go elsewhere and will not return. The council should be concentrating on how the current Arts Centre can be saved by making it viable, not on what they will do with the money from the sale.</p> <p>If the council wants to avoid any liability it should pass the building onto a organisation prepared to make a thriving Arts and Culture community and attract people to the town.</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	16/01/2012	I would like to register my concern at the closure of the Arts Centre. I run a dancing school in Darlington The Arts Centre provides us with fantastic facilities in which to produce our annual show. We have in excess of 150 pupils who take part and we normally hire the venue for 7 nights – selling out 1400 seats! There is no other venue in the area which we could use – this is a fabulous facility for local families to use. I am dismayed at the fact that the council is relying on a funding bid to rebuild – what if the bid is unsuccessful? I am also dismayed as a tax payer that the council has spent such a vast amount of money already on the arts centre – particularly the forecourt and bar area! Surely this is not all going to go to waste!?? Who will be accountable for making such bad financial decisions? I am unable to attend the meeting on Tuesday night as I am teaching dancing, but I would like to register my concern. Please reply to this email – I haven't received a reply from the last letter which I sent to the council.
91	Email	16/01/2012	I am amazed to discover that Darlington Borough Council do not have any alternative plans to finance a new arts centre if Art Council money is not forthcoming. Surely it is only right and proper to use money from the sale of the Arts centre to fund a new centre for the arts if indeed the sale goes ahead.
91	Email	16/01/2012	I write to express my deep concern at the Darlington Borough Council's intention to close the Arts Centre. I have been a regular attendee since the Centre opened, first joining the community theatre company which operated there, later being a regular visitor to the garden bar folk, poetry nights, the art exhibitions, and currently a regular attendee at the film nights and many of the live performances in the theatre. I am about to become President of the Darlington & Teesdale Naturalists and Field Club, which uses the club room every Tuesday night during the winter. I travel 15 miles into Darlington to attend these events, as do many others, and support other businesses while there. The lounge area provides one of the best community meeting places in the town. It is an instructive, educational, useful and safe place for young people to gather and be involved. For many year's this has been recognised as one of the best facilities of its type in the country. There are very few fields in which Darlington can claim to be 'in the top ten' and yet the Council wish to close it. Apart from the Civic, what else has Darlington got to offer? Very little indeed, so seems doomed to become a 21st century backwater due to the progressive dumbing down - the museum, the Arts Centre, next the Libraries????I am aware that cuts have to be made, but destroying one's real assets is a sure way for any enterprise to start on a slippery downward path to oblivion. I hope that the Councillors show some guts for once and do what is best for the town and reject the poor advice of box-tickers and bean-counters.
91	Email	17/01/2012	Pierremont School of Dance. The above dance school have held a show every 18 months in the Arts Centre and if it closes it will be greatly missed by our students and teachers. We book the theatre for 8 nights; 1 dress rehearsal and 7 performances. It is absolutely loved by all the children. The theatre is just the right size for us with a big stage. We prefer to give it seven times in a small theatre at a cost that we can afford (approx 3,700 pounds) as such a lot of work goes into the show. There is no where else in Darlington with the same facilities and we were hoping to give our next show January 2012. The children and parents are very disappointed and we support 100% the efforts people are making to keep the Arts Centre open. Teachers:
91	Email	17/01/2012	I am writing to express my sadness at the proposed closure of the Arts Centre and to ask you to reconsider whether funding can be found for it. I appreciate that the council has to make very difficult budgetary decisions at the moment, but the Arts Centre is such an asset to Darlington, that I think it would be a terrible loss to the town and the community. And once it is closed, I don't see how you will ever be able to revive it. As a Darlington resident I go to the cinema and to children's shows at the centre. I attend a playgroup there. I use the cafe / bar. I have bought crafts and a print there. All in all, I think it is an absolutely brilliant place. Please please reconsider the Council's decision, even if you are just giving the centre another year to try and identify other sources of funding. Please do this for Darlington.
91	Email	20/01/2012	would like to add my name to the petition against closing Darlington Arts Centre in Vane Terrace. I have not spoken to a single person who thinks that this is a good idea. Darlington Arts Centre is well loved & well attended & Darlington will be a culturally poorer town without it. How short sighted to sell off this wonderful building !!!Regards,
91	Email	21/01/2012	I would like to add my name to the petition against closing Darlington Arts Centre. The council of a small town like Darlington should cherish and support it's own Arts Centre, or it will be all the smaller without it.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Email	22/01/2012	<p>We recognise the value of the diverse Arts offer currently delivered through the Arts Centre and will be working closely with partners, stakeholders and user groups to ensure that a vibrant arts offer is maintained for Darlington. Unfortunately ticket prices for performances at the Civic Theatre are dictated in the main part by visiting companies and are fairly standard for all touring venues. We do however try to ensure there is a wide range of ticket prices including discounted performances. Through our ArtsSpark membership scheme for young people there are further discounts and special offers to help young people under 26 to access performances. The cultural exemption on VAT to be claimed by DBC, which will help to reduce the subsidy required to operate the theatre cannot legally be used to bring down ticket prices. The intention of the Council is not to invest in the Civic Theatre at the expense of the Arts Centre. In public consultation carried out following the announcement of DBC's budget proposals, the work of both venues was shown to be highly valued not only by residents of Darlington but also by people in the wider region and nationally.</p> <p>However given the location, nature and cost of operating the Arts Centre retaining the existing Arts Centre is unlikely to provide the best value for money, would restrict opportunities to seek external investment or grant funding and it is difficult to envisage how, without a substantial subsidy or capital investment management of the building could be sustained over the long term. Provided sufficient capital funding can be found, a new Arts venue offers the best opportunity to deliver a sustainable Arts programme out of a modern 'fit for purpose' building with substantially lower operating costs than the existing Arts Centre building. Unfortunately at the time of the refurbishment of the Arts Centre in 2006 unprecedented budget pressures on the Borough Council as a result of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review could not have been foreseen and mean that former levels of subsidy can no longer be maintained.</p>
91	Email	23/01/2012	<p>The Arts Centre is too valuable to the community to close. Darlington needs to be attracting people, not losing them. Richmond Station is an outstanding example of how this can be done. There is huge potential to develop other interests – there are three newly formed singing groups at Richmond for example – hundreds of people. There were a great many people attended yoga for many years, with regional classes held monthly. All this custom has been scattered to the four winds. There is too much of value going on already ... Surely some of the buildings could be let or sold off still keeping most of the rooms which are well used. A significant amount of Lottery money has been spent relatively recently – this will be a scandalous waste. Scrapping the architectural features will also be a scandal. I understand that funding is difficult, but I have seen very little hard information about the possibilities and I attended the public consultations. The Council MUST provide <u>people with the hard evidence before a decision is made.</u></p>
91	Email	23/01/2012	<p>I grew up in Darlington and was a frequent visitor to and performer at the Arts Centre. I'm appalled to think that the inspiration and enjoyment I drew from it will not be available to future generations if it's sold off. Don't sell it off! I'd be interested to hear the rationale behind the sell-off.</p>
91	Event	12/12/2011	<p>The demolition of the Arts Centre cannot be reversed. Is the Council aware that there are several Arts Centres in the north east operating without council subsidy. You are not allowing Darlington For Culture to run the Arts Centre. If selling it off the Localism Act offers rights for communities to take over the Arts Centre.</p>
91	Event	12/12/2011	<p>Arts Centre – regular user since it was set up. I wholly agree it would be a good idea to build a new facility if it could be set up quickly. To build a new facility however would be ten times as much. How long would it be before you could set up a new facility? An example of how long it takes would be the technical college. DCOT stood inappropriately for years. Time span for DCOT was long and we would be facing the same thing with the Arts Centre.</p>
91	Event	05/12/2012	<p>Arts Centre proposals – how far has the Council progressed with the proposed replacement for the Arts Centre. Could it possibly offer same range of facilities? Why do you expect new centre to cost less to run. e.g. the ARC at Stockton. What are you going to get for £2M? Is a survey been conducted about keeping main building open and extend range of activities. Bar and food takings – breakdown of figures for how much is being spent. Its all been lumped together. Need more details of accounts for Arts Centre. What measures will be taken to ensure we don't get a block of flats with a TESCO Local attached.</p>
91	Event	05/12/2012	<p>Darlington for Culture: I believe other figures have been suggested that the costs of £270k maintenance – also cover buildings at the back and failings of the heating system. Closing back section would be instant cost saving.</p>
91	Event	05/12/2012	<p>Darlington for Culture: Interested why decisions about discretionary budget are made the way they are. Looking at why disproportionate cuts in arts and culture as opposed to sports and leisure. Continuing to spend high proportion of budget on sport and leisure rather than arts and culture.</p>
91	Event	05/12/2012	<p>It seems the decisions have already been made?</p>
91	Event	05/12/2012	<p>Recognise huge challenges. Settlement is a disgrace for Darlington. Recognise huge contribution of sport to health but also arts contribute to mental health and well-being. Disproportional cuts - £0.75M for arts and £40K for sport. How does Council feel about this?</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Event	05/12/2012	Arts Centre – What can be done with Community and Voluntary Sector? Work with the group of people who are volunteers and to work with them to look at partnership of Darlington for Culture. Rather than pin hopes on bid outcomes. Darlington College not a good example. Proposal is to close Arts Centre – decision already made to close it and move it to the centre of town.
91	Event	05/12/2012	Darlington for Culture – two questions: Why is Council so involved with Arts – no statutory duty. Why not let the community decide? £530K subsidy – figures have been produced that with a £210K subsidy the Arts Centre could be kept open.
91	Event	09/12/2012	If the Arts Centre shuts what assurances can the Council give that this service will continue elsewhere? Carers are concerned about the loss of a project specifically for people with learning disability.
91	Event	09/12/2012	I work with children with learning disability and feel that everyone should have their say. Consider the Arts Centre staying and working at the Centre. Important to social interaction and quality of life. Please keep the Arts Centre open.
91	Event	09/12/2012	A lot of young people meet in the Arts Centre – where would Deaf Awareness be taught. Vital service and employment for access to communications. Very good relaxing place for people to meet.
91	Forum	16/11/2011	Truly sad news. It appears that we can no longer afford culture in Darlington, not to mention the associated job losses that this will bring about. The Art Centre is a social hub and hosts a huge variety of classes from dance to martial arts who will need to find alternative accommodation or fold-up too. Its shameful.
91	Forum	16/11/2011	Why close the centre then seek capital funding for a new venue? Surely a capital build would cost more than maintaining the existing facilities?
91	Forum	16/11/2011	This Council should hang its head in shame. There appears to have been a deliberate policy of running the place into the ground. Several years back, you could go into the bar on an evening and there would be customers and atmosphere. Now, nothing. Think about all the groups involved. Where are they going to go? Photography, etching, video production and tuition, Open Arts. Many, many more groups of local people supporting a fantastic building and now being badly let down. I truly hope that at the next Local Elections, the people of this Town make their feelings known and vote in the appropriate manner. Time for a change. Too late it appears for the Arts Centre though.
91	Forum	16/11/2011	The closure of the Arts Centre is terrible news. Its another down turn for the whole town. Another reason for people not to visit Darlington and spend money. I understand there is talk of replacing the facility, but there will be not one venture that will be able to house everything that is contained, and that which goes on in the current building. I really hope the closure is somehow prevented.
91	Forum	17/11/2011	This is like selling the family silver, once it has gone there is no way it could be brought back. The Arts Centre provides a focal point for the community, puts Darlington on the map as a venue for smaller events (i.e. ones that don't use the Civic Theatre) and provides a meeting place for many clubs etc. Surely the Arts Centre brings some cash back into the council budget through the bar etc. Can the council look at more ways to manage the Arts Centre as a business, if the Centre can be made to make a profit surely that will be a feather in the councils cap. Please back away from this huge mistake.
91	Forum	17/11/2011	The council should publish the figures that suggest a new build is both more economical and more sustainable. Darlington for Culture have been in negotiations for weeks with the local authority about running the Arts Centre. Simple maths shows that giving a long lease to DfC on a peppercorn rent absolves the council of further running costs, and gives the artists and volunteers that are already running some of the arts programme a fighting chance to raise funds and keep the centre going. Or is a practitioner-led solution simply too alien for our corporatist leaders?
91	Forum	17/11/2011	How many other towns can boast a town centre facility with a cinema, theatre, 4 separate galleries, including a dedicated photographic gallery plus a creative community encompassing everything from dance to every type of music imaginable, stained glass to felting, watercolour to film-making! If a new, purpose built centre on a brown field site in the centre of town will be a more viable option, given the money that the council could generate selling off the current site for housing, is there any guarantee that similar facilities will exist? Will the current users of the centre find a home there?
91	Forum	18/11/2011	"The Council should publish the figures that suggest a new build is both more economical and more sustainable" - Agreed Let us see the math! Let us also have the details of the proposed venue - of what exactly will it comprise if it is intended to truly replace the Arts Centre?
91	Forum	18/11/2011	Could you explain why the budget figures in Appendix 8 don't seem to match with the ones provided by Darlington for Culture in Appendix 8 annex B part 2?
91	Forum	20/11/2011	It is deeply sad that the decision is predicated on half-truths and wishful thinking. It is far from clear how the proceeds from the sale of the Arts Centre could, in any way, be sufficient to support the build and running costs of an 'arts hub' which will be, inevitably, a poky, soulless shoe box building in the middle of municipal car park. The logic employed to support the decision is partial and flawed. Why is Vane Terrace so inaccessible from the 'town centre' that attendance would be improved by relocating the service approximately 400m to the east? Also the comparative budgets for the options outlined in the Cabinet Paper are deliberately opaque and lacking in detail. Why, for instance, does Option2 require 3/4 of the marketing budget of Option 1 to deliver on 1/4 of the admissions income?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Forum	20/11/2011	I can't see the economic sense in the council's plan to close the Arts Centre and sell the land for as yet an undetermined price and then blindly enter into a project for a new Arts Centre. It doesn't seem to cover all of the implications. And there doesn't seem to be a viable financial plan in place, unless the council can demonstrate otherwise?
91	Forum	21/11/2011	Why do the figures in Option1 seem to differ from the figures provided by Darlington for Culture and seem screwed towards proving that Option 1 is unviable? Were the proposals for Cockerton Library and the Arts Centre generated in a hurry? They both seem to either not reflect information provided by others or make a brief hidden comment that large amounts of required investigatory work have been intentionally skipped.
91	Forum	21/11/2011	Shut the Arts Centre if that's economically necessary. Let it be vandalised (or turned into yet more flats as happens to all disused buildings) Then spend twice the amount that it would cost to save it on a new building in the town centre. It all seems to remind me of the Oval Development and the building of a cinema in 1999 wonderful in practice but more likely Castles in the Air.
91	Forum	21/11/2011	A few years ago the council were preparing to sell off a large part of the Art Centre to the sixth form college and this only fell through because the college could not find the funding for this. However the Art Centre seems to have more or less been taken over by the college so I presume they are paying some kind of rent to DBC for this. Could DBC use this income for maintenance of the building?
91	Forum	22/11/2011	I've had a look through the document and can see no plans in existence for a replacement facility. Are we to trust the Council to do what they wish with the Art Centre and have nothing in place to take over. How many years, if ever, will it take to build the proposed replacement. We'll just be fobbed off as usual.
91	Forum	22/11/2011	Looking at the council's financial plan for the Arts Centre there would seem to be a strong bias in the figures for closing the centre and moving to a much smaller new centre. That's if the figures for running the arts centre as is now can be accepted.
91	Forum	23/11/2011	Give Darlington For Culture a chance to run their business plan. The west end doesn't need more residential development, it needs a hub to bring Darlington citizens together and strengthen the community.
91	Forum	28/11/2011	Unfortunately it is a case of use it or lose it and the Arts Centre has not been used to it's best. To be honest though there is much room for improvement in the way it is currently marketed and run! Come on DBC be up front and let us have details of the new Arts Hub that you keep talking about before you close this local institution!
91	Forum	01/12/2011	I am a resident in North Yorkshire some 17 miles from Darlington. We visit the Arts Centre 2/3 times a year to see events. As a result we actually pay money into the Darlington Borough Council coffers directly to fund the Arts Centre. The proposed closure therefore seems nonsensical as you will not only lose the direct revenue stream but also the spin-offs to the whole of Darlington in tourism spend and visits. As far as I can see there is no specific plan for a back to back replacement and therefore for people like me with a choice of where to go for events, Darlington will go off the list so the revenue will be lost on a continuing basis.
91	Forum	02/12/2011	Having read through much of the budget material it looks like pretty much a foregone conclusion that the centre will close. We shouldn't forget that this is because of swingeing cuts in local authority budgets imposed by the government - tougher and earlier than in most of the rest of the public sector. However, there might be a silver lining if Darlington were able to open a sparkling, imaginatively designed arts centre in, say 2015. My fear, like several others, is that this simply will not happen. The centre will be sold, some cobbled together halfway-house will be found for existing users who will struggle to keep going. The council will be under even more pressure as the credit squeeze is prolonged and the funds will be raided for more urgent needs. Can the council give us some hope that this depressing scenario wont happen? How about: a) All party commitment to ring fence the funds raised from the Arts Centre sale for a dedicated new building) That the proposed site(s) are identified and a broad outline of expected facilities given c) That a dedicated team be et to raise the extra funds needed from the Arts Council, Lottery, buy-a-brick schemes etc so that we are a centre to be proud of d) That a timetable is set for the new build with regular reports back e) Real efforts are made to give workable venues for existing users to see them through the next few years



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Forum	09/12/2011	We have the second largest Arts Centre in England - isn't this something to be proud of? And yet we cant make it pay its way. I am a frequent visitor Arts Centre and it's always busy - why does it need such a large subsidy and how has it been coasted out? Couldn't it be run more efficiently? Is it in fact subsidising some of the sport provision within the same budget area - why do we need a Council-run golf course? My concern is that if the Council can't afford to subsidise the existing Arts Centre, will it be able to subsidise a new replacement? There seems to be an obsession with 'new' but new is not always better. Councillor Wallis keeps stressing the cost of staffing and utilities - surely staffing costs are the same wherever the Centre is based and while a new build may well be more energy-efficient, there is a risk inherent in any major new build. This is NOT a cheap dig at the Council, my point is that these things happen everywhere, but the Dolphin Centre needed considerable repair work very soon after completion, the new Education Village leaks badly and the new Pedestrian Heart, much though I like parts of it, its not wearing very well. Most shiny new constructions massively overspend on their original budgets and I do feel that if we are committed to an Arts Centre then the existing building if run on more efficient lines could be more self-sufficient and a more cost-effective solution. In most work environments the existing order is often overturned for the sake of efficiency, only for it to be realised a couple of years down the line that the old system, while far from perfect, was more practical than the new and there is a gradual drift back.
91	Forum	16/12/2011	Based on past performance from this council I seriously doubt that a suitable new venue will be funded and built. I think the existing building should be retained, it is well positioned and full of character - I agreed that maintenance is a problem as it is with many old buildings but there is a premium on having character and culture together. A new build would not be an arts centre - modern building methods and a town centre location are not the way to go unless of course DBC can produce another Sage but I fear DBC don't think in this way - we will end up with a community centre.
91	Forum	16/12/2011	Interesting to note that the council is happy to close down the Arts Centre - which is widely used by a cross section of society - especially young people and senior citizens, but seems happy to continue subsidising Stressholme Golf Club.
91	Forum	19/12/2011	I don't think the Art Centre should be closed. Money was invested to refurbish this quite recently and provides an excellent variety of attractions. The catering facilities could be greatly expanded to make a great deal of money providing pre and post show meals etc. <u>Correctly marketed and priced this could work really well.</u>
91	Forum	29/12/2011	I am aware that the Arts Centre is to close, where does that put Vane House the resource centre for visually impaired, Vane House is a very worthwhile centre and has helped a lot of people, there was a lot of work and dedication involved in creating this safe and supportive centre it has given a lot of support to visually impaired in Darlington.
91	Forum	17/01/2012	The decision to sell the Arts Centre appears to have been already confirmed with the sale advertisement recently appearing in the Northern Echo. So what's the point of this thread? Will DBC answer please?
91	Forum	23/01/2012	It would appear that the decision to sell the Arts Centre at the earliest legal date [April 2011] was made long before the cuts because the 6th form college must have been told 3 years ago that the building would be closed in 2012 & therefore £1.8 million of tax & ratepayers money has been spent on building new facilities that were being provided to them in the Arts Centre. It now looks very unlikely that an Arts Council grant for the 'Hub' will be received & therefore plan B should be to sell off the Blanche Pease building & other areas at the back to assist in funding a continuation of the Arts Centre.
91	Letter	18/11/2011	I am most sorry to hear of the forthcoming closure of the Darlington Arts Centre. Cannot the Council consider that the Darlington Teacher's Training College gave the building to the town for the town's own use. In view of this cannot the interior of the building be updated and keep the outside as it is. This would surely be somewhat cheaper than a complete rebuild.
91	Letter	28/11/2011	I must protest at your proposal to close Darlington Arts Centre. Main objection being closing is the easy option. It is much more difficult to explore ways to increase its revenue but does not appear to have been fully considered, if at all. I am disappointed that the decision to close the Arts Centre comes just a few months after an expensive enquiry into the role that arts and culture play in the town. The enquiry's findings stressed the economic importance of the arts and emphasised the need for there to be a cultural 'hub' for Darlington. My view is that the town has a cultural hub. It's called Darlington Arts Centre. The new centre, based upon youth drama, as I understand it, although laudable in its aims, can only reflect a small part of the town's artistic community and remains a vague promise at best. There is little guarantee that a new centre will cater for the many thousands of people who use the Arts Centre. So much more could have been done to engage the local artistic community and increase revenue. The lazy decision is to close, sacrificing it on the altar of developers who would appear to have been already negotiating before any 'consultation' was announced.
91	Phone	23/11/2011	Objection to the proposal for the Arts Centre. I am against the closure and any sale of the building. It is valuable to the town because of the space it provides, the history of it, space for groups, concerts, films, crafts and dance and everything it does for the community. I don't want to see the building closed or demolished, as it is part of Darlington's community and heritage. It is now an ordinary town and could be seen anywhere. Darlington has lost too much of its old heritage, the town centre has been cleared of its Victorian heritage. This is to be added to the list of objections.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
91	Phone	28/11/2011	Disagrees with closing the Arts Centre.
91	Phone	05/12/2011	Why do different Councillors say different things? One says the Arts Centre won't be sold and now Cllr Wallis says it will be sold. Who are the Council's financial advisors? If DBC has been so prudent how come so much money has been lost on past projects? Why wasn't this money used to save the Arts Centre?
91	Phone	12/12/2011	Arts Centre - it would take a long time to sell and then would probably not cover the refurbishment costs and new building. Where would all the people who currently use the Arts Centre go in the meantime?
91	Phone	16/12/2011	Closing the Arts centre to save half a million is ludicrous, new buildings never come in on budget. The Arts centre has an excellent reputation, people visit the town just to attend the Arts Centre.
91	Phone	11/01/2012	Agree with closing Arts Centre - had a look round the building and parts of it are terrible. Can make use of other venues in Darlington.
91	Phone	05.12.2011	The Town Crier says the Arts Centre is to close. I object to this in no uncertain terms. This is a retrograde step. I have left a message for Councillor Heather Scott. To sell it is ridiculous.
92	Comment Box		The cut I <u>do not</u> want to see involves Darlington rates increasing. I feel there is no choice about this and would find it difficult to manage my retirement budget
92	Comment Box		I am appalled at the audacity of the Council to put up Council Tax by 3.5% when it could have £1 million grant from Central Govt for NOT doing so. Has our Council lost the plot! Those of us that do not qualify for any subsidies but are on fixed incomes will be forced to tighten our belts further - Why can't the council do the same? Stop playing politics with my income!
92	Comment Box		I do not agree with a Council Tax increase. Effectively most people are on fixed incomes. Darlington Borough Council should however accept the government contribution of £1 million why should citizens of Darlington pay £1 additional tax just because of Council Budget games?
92	Email	17/11/2011	Why is it that whenever you consider budget proposals every year you always target the elderly and the disabled. Is it because they are the easiest to target and you think you won't get too much hassle from them. You say you intend to increase council tax by 3.5%. Where do pensions get that increase from. There is no one they can go to get an increase in their pension. I pay £108 per month for refuse collection. I never see anything else from it and don't tell me that Policing is part of it because crime in my area is increasing and the Police never come around even when there is a crime reported. Street clean never clean my street, and last but not least if you take round even when there is a crime reported. Street clean never clean my street, and last but not least if you take the bus subsidy away I will just be another prisoner in my home. But then again perhaps that is what you want.
92	Email	02/12/2011	Having read about your proposed budget for 2012/13, I wish to voice my opposition. You will know about the erosion of living standards due to austerity, pension cost increases, 5% inflation, job cuts, redundancies, credit crunches, the Euro zone crisis, etc. Everyone is feeling the pinch. How can you possibly ask us to pay an increased council tax of 3.5% when it could be 1% if you accept the Government's 2.5%? The words insensitive, uncaring, wasteful, thoughtless, spring to mind. It seems to me you are transferring the austerity the Council should be undergoing, onto us the taxpayer. I suggest you cancel some of your capital projects until later, improve your efficiency, sack the people who don't want to work hard and hire replacements that do, and reduce the salaries of the Council staff which are known to be very generous. It is ridiculous to expect us, the taxpayer to pay more. I am a pensioner on a fixed income which is being eroded away by inflation, and can't pay more. I hope my friends, who also disagrees with your proposals, are also going to write in to you.
92	Forum	22/11/2011	If we are going to make most of these savings, why do we need an increase council tax? Please would you justify this with some plausible explanation and figures.
92	Forum	23/11/2011	When most people have no increase in salary (including the Council's own staff) can you really justify an increase of 3.5% in Council Tax? Yes I know that you will trot out the usual Darlington has the lowest council tax in known civilisation but when these cuts go ahead we won't have much left that's worth paying for.
92	Forum	27/11/2011	Seems a little daft to increase council tax by 1% over what the government have said that they will give the council as a grant. More money that the public will have to pay to the council which is not going to be able to spent in the shops in town. Also the cost of collecting the tax will increase as more people default on the cost and will bring in less revenue as a result.
92	Forum	16/12/2011	As many others have commented, it's outrageous for the Council to propose to increase Council Tax by 3.5% when the Government is offering an additional 2.5%>. Given that this will impact on so many people, the Council should put this question to the people of Darlington and hold a referendum
92	Forum	29/12/2011	Removing some senior council officers would save £1.4m and thus avoid any increase in Council Tax. Why not do this.
92	Forum	10/01/2012	It appears that Darlington can manage very effectively with one Member of Parliament but that it needs 53 councillors @ £8,027 basic allowance racking up £425,431 before additional allowances and expenses are added. If it was my private business, I would be giving this expenditure a very hard examination in terms of value for money.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
92	Forum	17/01/2012	No increase in council tax would be needed if council was to cancel some of the cosmetic type of jobs in capital projects and would save thousands of pounds. Example! The upgrading of the junction of Yarm Road/Geneva Road is seen by the local residents as a complete waste of their council tax and no benefit to traffic or pedestrians.
92	Forum	22/01/2012	Have not had a pay rise for 5 years, I need to cut my household budget, how would I stand if I reduced my council tax payments by 10% due to a budget deficit, I need to plug a black hole in my household budget and after a house meeting have decided that the council tax increase is unacceptable, so I have but forward a budget proposal to reduce my council tax payments by 10%, if I went ahead with this I would be in court before the ink was dry on the direct debit, we all need to save money, why is the council expecting me to pay more. Also it is not necessary due to the government being prepared to give the council a 2.5% increase. I am sure if the council squeezed the taxpayers enough eventually we will scream !!!
92	Forum	23/01/2012	Seems to me that a lot of councils are getting rid of the chief execs at circa 180k a year can we afford to keep one ?
92	Phone	29/11/2011	Not satisfied with 'piece of cake' diagram shown in Town Crier as it does not show enough detail. Wants a breakdown of how much each service costs plus a breakdown of salaries, pensions and expenses. Who gets paid what, and what it is costing.
92	Phone	30/11/2011	3% rise is an insult as no one has had a pay rise-how can this happen?
92	Phone	11/01/2012	Don't agree with increase. The council tax should be frozen, out pensions haven't gone up.
General	Comment Box		The Gamerholics group should survive as we are the most consistent group that the youth service provide. We already fund ourselves to help improve the environment and attract a bigger variety of people, some of the groups thrive on this two hour session a week if it goes.
General	Comment Box		The youth service is considered to be necessary in order to keep services and much needed activities going. Local external sources should be considered for short spurts of time.
General	Comment Box		Darlington BC, spends a fortune on questionnaires and meetings but ultimately doesn't listen to the publics views
General	Comment Box		More activities for children & activities for older kids needed from 9am - 5pm for the school holidays. There is nothing for them to do unless parents have money for those sorts of things
General	Comment Box		More needed for kids to do aged 3 - 12 yrs during the school holidays as there is nothing to do
General	Comment Box		Adult services such as adult learning, family learning & apprenticeships should be provided by DBC
General	Comment Box		Reduce the number of Councillors for the Borough, the current level is unnecessary in times of deep economic pressures such as now. Personal computers, workstations, expenses ethically & economically should be removed when frontline services are being rationalised. Senior manager positions & Councillor numbers appear to be immune. It's time for redressing the balance if their times are as bad as being made out. Do I think these views will change any of the aforementioned, NO, but am willing to be proved wrong!
General	Comment Box		Substantiation of the meagre martial arts & kung fu schools (discipline) in the Borough district being my only bone to pick as they're too few schools to Tao & practice of such a strict & rewarding practice!
General	Comment Box		Save money on unnecessary fripperies such as xmas lighting/public events in the park etc - citizens can amuse themselves. Eliminate expense accounts for councillors
General	Comment Box		I feel that you are doing the best you can in trying conditions. I feel that the library is important. Toilet facilities - try the continental approach. Clean the pavements outside of the take away food premises of the grease etc and have a 20 mph speed limit in the town centre
General	Comment Box		There are far too many highly paid employees working within the town hall. Every employee costing more than £50,000 should have their contract reviewed. Also councillors expense claims should be reviewed by an independent body
General	Comment Box		I have written in the Northern Echo before that Darlington is missing out on an indoor tennis centre. The leisure facility at Feethams should include a tennis/cricket indoor facility - this would be a legacy of sport which is what Feethams is recognised by Darlington people for.
General	Comment Box		I Certainly think the school crossing patrols are a very important part of everyday life as far as road safety is concerned and any proposals to either scale down the service or indeed axe it completely should defiantly be resisted. Also, the towns libraries ( particularly Cockerton) should be maintained at their present levels; they are a very important source of enjoyment etc for many people.
General	Comment Box		Library, Council, Arts, Refuse collection, Not the water feature
General	Comment Box		Strongly discourage the sale of chewing gum in local shops. This would save a lot of unnecessary street cleaning. At present many people disregard any signs regarding putting used gum in bins
General	Comment Box		Do not close the public toilets, A town this size need at least one. Leave the library open, stop wasting money on Surveys.
General	Comment Box		Keep the Arts Centre Open, Keep the library open, Keep sports facilities open
General	Comment Box		I do not agree with any of the cuts you are planning. I feel they will greatly reduce the quality of life in Darlington. However, I realise the decisions are being forced on you by Government. Could the Civic Theatre have been sold? It doesn't need to be run by the Council. Could Disabled drivers pay either full or nominal charges for parking in car parks. I don't believe it is law to give mandatory free parking.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Comment Box		Libraries, Public toilets, better use of bus services, to name but a few. These would help if reductions were made to the excessive council's chief executive and assistants salaries because of the above cuts council tax should be reduced and not raised.
General	Comment Box		There are some significant and very important things in Darlington, the most significant being:- Connection to the railway industry, the theatre, the Arts Centre, the market & its clock - mainly the clock, the Quaker name but not the football,
General	Comment Box		I acknowledge that given the reduction in Central government funding, balancing the budget is a high on impossible task. But we need not throw the baby out with the bathwater, leisure and green nature of Darlington are the key areas that make the difference when developers are making their increasingly difficult investment decisions so I have the following suggestions:
General	Comment Box		As a disabled person I am very worried about the negative impact that the loss of these services would have on me. The services I use are: Shopmobility & DAD Information Service for help & advice. I use them for getting around and the information service is excellent help and the staff are really helpful and pleasant. Being able to talk face to face with an individual instead of over the phone. the loss of these services would mean that they would have a dramatic effect on the support and information and also the use of the mobility equipment. If lost this would limit my mobility. As a disabled person I will also be affected by several other proposals including: review of Adults Transport, Bus Services, reduce Highways & Footpaths Maintenance. Please take my views into account when making your final decisions.
General	Comment Box		My comments on the budget are: Town Crier - not necessary - use the press. Agree to stop school transport for over 16 year olds. Arts Centre - to pull down these buildings is terrible. Cockerton Library must not close - it is an essential service. Raise fines for litter dropping and parking on all pavements and verges. Floral displays - get more sponsors and involve amateur gardening clubs. Hold fire on 'Housing for the Future' - update town houses
General	Comment Box		We would like to save Cockerton Library as it is so convenient for us
General	Comment Box		This would mean general worsening of the environment and further lack of cleanliness
General	Comment Box		If the Arts Centre were to close there will not be a family friendly place for people to meet who are not necessarily interested in going into the town centre and its (at times) alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour. There has always been a high quality range of events and entertainment that will not have an easy replacement within the same area of town. It's loss will be unacceptable. It will be a negative impact leading to people boosting the economy of other areas outside the borough
General	Comment Box		Better use of voluntary funds TOO MUCH is too easily given and spent on admin. i.e. DAD Christmas party had more staff almost than carers. Also SAME attendees who take up offers.
General	Email	29/11/2011	How much money is in the emergency fund? What would constitute an emergency? In the event of a national emergency the home office has that all emergency funds would be requested to a central fund so all the money you are hanging on to will end up in London and you know how much will come back to Darlington? nil. In reading the proposals I notice that all groups are being targeted for reductions. I say all groups with one glaring exception, councillors allowances. Why are they not being reduced?
General	Email	29/11/2011	I have read the proposals to the 2012/13 budget and note some interesting cuts and proposals. One thing that has never ever been mentioned is Council Management wages. A large proportion of savings could be made by cutting the pay of some of the highest paid officials. There has been a huge increase in 'middle managers' throughout all departments and Execs earning upwards of £100,000 gold plated salaries. Reduce the number of middle managers and cut the pay of the Execs for starters. Then perhaps reduce the budget for Adult services and put more money into the appalling state of the pot holed roads. Remove the traffic lights from the disastrous through-about on Haughton Road. The only time I've seen that used efficiently without causing massive congestion, was when the traffic lights broke once and it was turned into a roundabout. Remove the Bus lanes, this will free up congestion in the town centre, we are a small town not a big city. We need to put more money into Leisure promoting health and fitness for local youths. Cut the expensive drug and alcohol drop in centres. We always cut services to the hard working tax payers who actually pay council tax. Yet you ignore these people and put all your efforts into people on benefits who do nothing. Lets get things into perspective please.
General	Email	30/11/2011	see article 12th November 2010 by Paul Cook Northern Echo, council states reserve fund then 12 million pounds government has an emergency fund to deal with disasters it sent 20 million pounds to Haiti. If we had a disaster do you think it would leave your reserve fund alone? The budget proposal are doing away with lollipop people, toilets, libraries, remove funding at George dent nursery, sell the arts centre (gone for good) no CCTV out of town, and on and on, not being done away with, not being FROZEN but done away with, prove we are all in it together and halve councillors allowances, halve, not do away with, or maybe they could do what they asking the lollipop people and do it as a civic duty.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Email	30/11/2011	With regard to budget cuts please consider the following suggestions: 1. Closure of the Dolphin centre on weekends. 2. Closure of the Eastbourne Sports complex at weekends. 3. Sale of the Eastbourne Sports complex to private developers. 4. Closure of all Town Libraries at weekends. 5. The following charges for use of the Recycling centre on Whessoe road; a) £2 per car b) £3 per car with trailer or small van c) £4 per large van d) £5 per flat bed truck 6. Fixed penalty for fly tipping within the Borough of £2,000 plus the crushing of the vehicle used in the offence. 7. Termination of all flower beds in parks, public areas, and roundabouts. Flowers to be replaced with low maintenance, medium height, flowering shrubs or small flowering trees. 8. Allowance of areas of council owned grass land not used for sporting activities to be allowed to grow naturally and wild meadow flowers sown which will self propagate and also encourage the increase in wild birds such as Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Yellowhammer, Bullfinch, etc. This will reduce time spent grass cutting. 9. A charge of £20 per year for a fishing permit to allow angling at the council owned stretch of the river Tees at Blackwell 10. a 25% increase in town centre car park tariffs. 11. The sale of the civic theatre to private enterprises.
General	Email	01/12/2011	And finally: I know there's no pleasant river, or a castle, but more effort in things like Lumiere (people will bring their ideas to show them off): more music festivals; get a good food show / food festival on (the football stadium is big enough - its not rocket science); get people into the town who'll spend money (think car parking charges!!!). Have a flower festival. I know people who exhibit all over the north of England and there's nothing like that in Darlington. I'm going to Whitehaven Festival in June - from Darlington. <u>If you build it, people will come.</u> Put yourselves in the position of someone that lives outside of Darlington. Would you come here? Be honest! Also, I think you'll be making a mistake if you watch the football club go down, because it keeps the name of the town in the public eye; at least once a week.
General	Email	02/12/2011	your first point, see northern echo November 12 2010, council states that the reserve fund stands at 12 million pounds. Our government has a disaster and emergency fund which lately has helped Haiti, Pakistan etc. It follows that if we had an emergency at home that all reserves would be put to use! Lastly our services are not being froze, they are being done away with altogether! by all means freeze our services.
General	Email	09/12/2011	Lots of disabled people turned up to this meeting in the Dolphin Centre, the questions started with a disabled person telling the meeting that all disabled people are suffering with the council cut and some have and are thinking of committing suicide and have nothing to live for. Councillor Copeland say's that the council are not aware of this problem s and she would get the care team managers to look into this problem she is passing the buck on to some one else. Member of the public asking that a lot of the disabled services are run by charities, not the council and are suffering to. To this councillor Copeland again passed the buck on to some one else. Member of the public ask about the Art centre and all the groups the are using the centre including disabled groups like the blind, deaf groups and children groups. Councillor Wallis told the meeting that all groups will be helped to move to ether buildings. A blind man ask about the care managers are not trained in helping people with suicide problems, he ask about highways doing repairs on road and footpaths, as he is always falling down pot-holes and over broken slabs Councillor Copeland told the man she would take is notes on the highways department. Member of the public ask about the Shopmobility and trying to get information on the facts but are getting nothing back from the council. Member of the public ask about lots of disabled people lost there taxi tokens and bus passes and need help with transport. No help or information was given from the councillor on the front table. Member of the public in a wheelchair ask about buses not stopping for wheelchair at the bus stops and the drivers not ever giving a helping hand ,and some times driving of with out the wheelchair person get on the bus. Councillors telling the meeting that the council will be having talks with the bus and taxi companies to give training to there drivers on handling disabled people. It was put to the meeting that a lot of people that care for a disabled person at home are young persons and young adult do a lot of the work look after the disabled person at home for nothing saving the council thousands, and still the disabled person gets penalised. The comments from lots of people at this meeting was that the councillors on the front table they must have know that lots of people would be coming in wheelchair and disabled but everything that was put to the councillors was passed to someone else or they passed the buck not one question was given a TRUE FACT.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Email	11/12/2011	<p>Having read the Town Crier and some of the proposals for the budget and the town I am somewhat bemused!! How many hotels is Darlington going to have and who is to stay in them? The suggestion of putting a hotel into Feethams is surely a suggestion from some-one who has not been to Darlington!! What Darlington desperately needs is a Bus Station where all Bus Services stop. Local and National. The town should be totally free of all vehicles. As I live locally and pay my council tax I believe there should be a perk for the locals. Free car parking for one hour so I can pop into the Bank or shop! Yes, I know there is Sainsbury or Halfords, but often all I need is to go to the bank. Similar to most UK cities and towns Darlington needs social housing that local people can afford to rent. Not £500 or more a month, but £350 per month for a 2 bedroom house. The tenant signs a contract that they accept responsibility for keeping the house and its outside area up to and including the middle of the road clean. There should be no gardens.</p> <p>If people want a garden they should be offered an allotment. If housing associations can do it why can't the Council? Green verges should be removed and made into car park areas. This will save money on maintenance and should enhance the estate. Where there is grass people tend to park on it and leave deep ruts and mud. The children and young adults need somewhere to congregate and cause controlled mischief! If I remember my childhood we had something called parks where you could play football, hide and seek, rounders and other such things. Today, all the young one's seem to be chased and not encouraged. Most of our young people are excellent citizens and just their energy harnessing for the good and benefit of others and themselves. I understand it is difficult to please everyone. But another hotel. you have go to be kidding!! Especially when Darlington could do with a Bus station with it being mandatory for it to be used by all Services.</p>
General	Email	13/12/2011	<p>I am writing to express my deep concerns at proposals to cut the budget of carers services in Darlington. I care for my daughter who has a learning disability and is on the autistic spectrum. The physical and emotional strain this puts on my husband and I is enormous. We deal with lots of challenging behaviour, and are constantly worn out. In addition, my husband is sole carer to his 93 year old Mother, which again impacts greatly upon his time. Statistics show that informal carers such as us save the country an estimated 119 billion pounds annually. In Darlington there are an estimated 10,000+ informal carers. Many struggle on regardless until they reach breaking point. Others, such as ourselves have received great benefit from being put in touch with our local carers organisation, DAD. They are a source of great help and information, as well as providing a listening ear when things get really tough. They have been able to signpost us to other services and have been able to provide some real practical help which has enabled us to get some relation therapy and to look after ourselves so we can continue in our role. Without such services people simply would not know where to turn.</p> <p>The informal caring would be likely to break down sooner rather than later, having an impact on the person cared for as well as on the local authority who may well be required to provide the care that was previously provided. Carers are an easy target but there are significant numbers of us. If we all stopped caring (which is very hard to do), then what would happen? Please think again. The service does not cost a lot to run but is invaluable to the many people who rely upon it.</p>
General	Email	14/12/2011	<p>I am writing about the proposed cut to funding for the disabled, i.e. DAD Carers Support Service. I am full time carer for a gentleman of 42 years old who suffers from Downs Syndrome he attends Tec works day centre. I understand the items up for consultation include reduction of welfare rights, review of supported bus service and of DAD itself. If these services were closed down it would be just about the end of him as it is his only way of feeling like he means something to society, it is his be all and end all to everything. I can't drive so the bus service for him to get to his work would be the end of his happiness, it might seem over the top to you but not to him. And DAD has been a great help if we run into any problems. Welfare Rights are a big help to in helping you through all the red tape of benefits and entitlements regards.</p>
General	Email	20/12/2011	<p>I read today in the Northern Echo that Darlington Council will not accept the government grant and that the Council will increase the Council tax by 3.5% in 2012, is this statement true. Will the rise be 3.5% or greater! I understand that the CEO of the Council is in receipt of a salary that is approximately £157k pa whilst the PM who resides over 61 million people achieves £146k pa. Could you kindly confirm the figures or kindly be more accurate. I also understand that there at least 4 or maybe more managers that are under receipt of salaries above £100k pa. could you kindly confirm these figures both personnel levels and salaries. In response to 2 and 3 above what is the actual salaries for these personnel including, pensions, expenses and any other monies pa. My concern is that as pensioner paying tax, that if the above is true then I feel that is unacceptable and would wish to see a public debate on these matter.</p>
General	Email	04/01/2012	<p>Could I please make a small comment on the budget proposals. I appreciate the view that the offered government subsidy equivalent to 2.5% appears as a one year only option. What efforts or discussions have been had with central government to establish a longer term position which would enable Darlington Council to take a longer term view? It appears to me that the largest single area of expenditure - £33m on Adult Social Care - has not been rigorously targeted and should be capable of at least a further £0.5m saving per year for the next few years. This could be used to offset some of the peripheral 'fiddling at the edges' cuts £&lt;£10k) as well as reducing the overall increase to below 2% per annum which should be the maximum long term target in line with Bank of England inflation targets. Regards</p>

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Email	11/01/2012	To whom this may concern, I am emailing you in regards to the information that was given to me during a Health Session meeting at Darlington Deaf Club this week. I feel extremely anxious at the proposed cuts to transport, cuts to CCTV in surrounding areas of Darlington, cuts to D.A.D, cuts to care support hours and such like. I am a Deaf man who also is a wheel chair user because I have Cerebral Palsy. Most of your proposed cuts will effect me in some way. My security and many other peoples security comes from knowing and trusting that there is a CCTV also knowing and trusting that I/we will be able to go to the Day Centre and not have to worry about whether a Carer can be paid for taking me. I can undoubtedly say that not only my self but a huge proportion of disabled peoples quality of life can and will be affected if some of your proposals go through. These proposals do feel unfair and targeted slightly. Thank you for your time taken in reading my email
General	Facebook	12/12/2011	Arts Centre - going?, Cockerton Library - going? Darlington Football Club - strong possibility of going? Council Tax reductions for services, amenities etc being taken away by DBC - NOT LIKELY!!! (would find it interesting to see councillors expenses sheets though)
General	Facebook	12/12/2011	Middleton St George/One Row and Hurworth Daytime Will be served by revised service 12/12a every 30 minutes. This service will no longer serve the airport Evening and Sunday Service 12/12a will also operate on Sunday every 60 minutes but there will be no evening service
General	Forum	21/11/2011	I would also like to register my disappointment in the Council's decision to close down the aviary in South Park. I feel that the money spent on the care of the birds is just a drop in the ocean compared to how much is wasted in other areas. I have placed this comment here as there is not a topic open for this subject. I am sure that all the comments which can be read from the 2009 Budget Proposal still stand true today.
General	Letter	06/12/2011	I am concerned about the loss of funding to the Shopmobility Service, it is a very good service as it gives you a chance to get around the town to access shops and services and without the service I would be stuck at home and I would lose some of my independence. I am worried that I will lose my Blue Badge parking or I will be charged to park, this will limit the places I am able to go. I am concerned about the proposals for Adult Social Care as my PAs are essential eg make meals, making my bed and housework to keep my house clean. I am worried about potential closures to DAD services as I attend Dimensions Disability Initiative and I use Direct Payment Services. Both services support me to retain my independence and support me in many different ways. Currently I attend Dimensions and receive transport to and from the service. If the transport was withdrawn I would not be able to attend. I find the footpaths bumpy and uneven and I find going along the pavements in my wheelchair very uncomfortable. It puts me off using footpaths which deters me going out and about. I would like you ton consider the cuts carefully before making any decisions especially ones that directly affect disabled people. We are carrying the brunt of the cutbacks and I feel this is unfair.
General	Letter	12/12/2011	A pay freeze affecting all council employees is in force yet no mention is made of payments to Councillors. The 2010-11 Budget estimates this total figure to be £738,646 so it is a significant amount. It is also interesting that the total cost of employees for the years 2000 - 2010 has increased by 50% and for the same period, payments to councillors has increased by 146%. I find this surprising especially as all major discussions and decisions seem to be made by the Cabinet and not by committees formed by Councillors and drawn from all political parties. In addition, this is also an argument that perhaps the time has come to consider a reduction in the number of councillors resulting in subsequent savings. To sum up, in my opinion it is only equitable that the cost of Councillors be at least frozen in line with the treatment of council employees and, in addition, action taken to reduce the present level of expenses and/or remuneration.
General	Phone	16/11/2011	Request for cabinet papers in word format without tables
General	Phone	25/11/2011	Would like additional information re proposal
General	Phone	28/11/2011	Arts culture and leisure disagree with the quote attributed to Councillor Wallis that Darlington wants the arts to thrive. If close the arts centre does not believe that all costs of a new build will be covered by the sale income. The tax payer will need to pick up additional costs. The closure of Cockerton library will impact on older people who are unable to get into town.
General	Phone	28/11/2011	How can the Chief Executive (and some co-horts) earn more than the Prime Minister? These are the savings that need to be addressed. He would like someone to get back to him with the justification for their salaries. There are too many councillors. Over 50 councillors for a small town.
General	Phone	28/11/2011	Darlington has 53 councillors, reduce to 26. In additions the Chief Executive costs £200,000 and one or two others get over £100,000. That's where we should start with the cost cutting. Supposed to be a Labour Council and look after the working man. In the Town Crier there is no mention of looking at cutting these costs.
General	Phone	29/11/2011	25 years ago councillors got out-of-pocket expenses and worked for the good of the community, now they all get a pensionable salary. Would like to know how much each councillor gets. He would do it for expenses.
General	Phone	29/11/2011	Used to inspect buildings as part of his job before he retired 2 years ago. Has seen an increase in staffing levels over the years despite the fact that Council has got rid of a lot of services and are supposed to be more efficient with the use of computers etc. If Council has fewer services and is more efficient, how come it has more staff?

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Phone	29/11/2011	Believes salary levels have rocketed despite there being less work. Cited case at Darlington Memorial Hospital where boiler work has been contracted out but there are now more managers than when work was done in-house.
General	Phone	29/11/2011	Is council going ahead with solar panels scheme? His view is that they don't work.
General	Phone	29/11/2011	Asked if it was still open as he had heard rumours over the years that it would be closed.
General	Phone	01/12/2011	Would like to know when the consultation ends
General	Phone	06/12/2011	Why should the Chief Executive be paid more than the prime minister - there are more than 1,000 in the country who are paid more than the prime minister?
General	Phone	06/12/2011	Why have we got in excess of 50 councillors? Presumably they all get paid and they all have expenses?
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Could traffic lights be switched off between 11pm and 6am when there is no need for them? Pedestrian crossings could be timed a little later.
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Street lights in West Park area very bright - could lower power bulbs be used to save money?
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Civic Theatre - why not sell it (if there are people wanting to buy it) and use the money to help with the budget?
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Traffic Wardens - why are the Council employing more at evening time when there is less traffic (probably paying double time)?
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Sunday Parking - Surely the raise in parking charges on Sundays will drive shoppers out of town and lead to shop closures. More revenue - but at what cost?
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Grass Verges - the Council is spending lots of money replacing with tarmac and fencing round trees - this is an unnecessary expense. The money would be better spent repairing pot holes in roads.
General	Phone	12/12/2011	Royal Oak site at Bank Top - is currently fenced off, but could be used for car parking for the station instead of people parking roadside in the nearby streets.
General	Event	12/12/2011	I've read through all the reductions, are the Councillors going to take reductions, e.g. less committee meetings.
General	Event	12/12/2011	What would the budget be if it was statutory minimum? What elements are statutory and discretionary. Can you give me the zero based budget figures for the next four years. In the information provided – there is no guidance on what is discretionary. I may support the need for the Dolphin or East Row toilets. What I don't know is which bits are discretionary or not? I don't know what to support.
General	Event	12/12/2011	Also I am concerned about expenditure on the Town development – the Pedestrian Heart. Construction faults in the steps, the handrails. Is it the Council insurance who will pay for a claim or is it the construction company.
General	Event	12/12/2011	Do you think being a unitary authority puts you at a disadvantage. Darlington against the big metropolitan councils.
General	Event	12/12/2011	What is the council's relationship with the Forum Music Centre? It is a very good centre for young people. Do you plan to invest any further in the Forum as a Community Interest Company. I think it is good to support the Forum.
General	Event	05/12/2012	There are 25 impacts on disabled people out of 92 proposals. There are another 23 which he feels indirectly impact on disabled people. This is disproportionate. What does the Council intend to do about this. Where is the impact assessment?. The Social Model of disability was adopted as part of the Disability Equality Scheme adopted in 2008 this seems to have been set aside e.g. re-ablement is not mitigation.
General	Event	09/12/2012	I fully believe that disabled people are getting hit twice over. Figures are coming out nationally now about the impacts of suicide and attempted suicide of disabled. The reality on people's lives is only now coming to them. The impact assessments did not pick up the real impacts of the budget changes. Mitigation is not happening on the ground. When people talk to you about their individual impacts, listen to them, it is their lives and you must listen to it all. Some things are obvious but other things are less obvious. Please take it seriously and listen. The reality is obvious and what is happening is real. The impact assessments were not taken seriously.
General	Event	09/12/2012	No point in arguing the minimum statutory minimums. Cannot turn back on how and who. Care providers affect people's real lives. DBC cannot just handover responsibility for services to other providers e.g. Selby Model. Much wider than adult social care but highways, school transport, maintenance, welfare rights etc. You will build up a democratic deficit. Public money not accountable as it is filtered into the private purse. Still responsible under equalities legislation.
General	Event	09/12/2012	Lots of disabled people have been coming to meetings and explaining their difficulties. People have been telling the Council for years the same things. It's not good enough. Asking for the same information again.
General	Event	09/12/2012	Well aware of a lot disabled people talking about a lot issues. Deaf people have a lot of issues about access to information – health, employment and information in general. Learning how to become independent and confident. Youth Services – where does the independence have to rely on parents? It's all about access to information for deaf people.



Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Letter	17/12/2011	I am a 55 year old disabled woman who suffers from clinical depression as well as being a wheelchair user. Therefore, as you can imagine the proposals you have put forward concerning cutting services were shocking and scary to me. There are quite a few of the proposals that will have a negative impact on my life. A few of these are; cease Shopmobility funding (27), cease rent support of DAD (8), savings to adult social care (60), review of adult transport (24), review of supported bus service (28), closing of east row toilets (33) and reduction to highway and footpath maintenance budgets (23). I believe these proposals the Council have put forward have attacked the most vulnerable in society, being the disabled and the elderly. Some of these cuts are going to leave people isolated and lonely and therefore a potential rise in depression and suicide rates. The people that will suffer the most are those who are unable to stand up for themselves....
General	Letter	26/01/2012	The Council will allocate land for sale, which they own. Not bothered about private landowners who want building permission but are just ignored by the planners which would help the unemployed and bring in revenue plus other benefits like roads and help communities and organisations with leisure facilities which the Council have taken away with playing fields sold. Its all one-sided with an increase in Council Tax while people suffer from cuts and no hope of getting building permission.
General	Letter	26/01/2012	You persistently bring up that Darlington has the lowest Council Tax in the region. Surely this was what was promised when Darlington wanted to be a unitary Council. With the catchment area this should always be the case. You never mention that the rates have gone up over 130% in a short space of time. Councils are well known for waste and over manning. Darlington is no exception to this. For years the Council have decided what they wanted to spend and then fixed the rates accordingly. Only after government intervention has this been stopped and not before time... The Council should accept the Government's 2.5% and cancel plans for a 3.5% increase in the rates. The council should reduce the budget accordingly...
General	Email	20/11/2011	There is massive scope in this element for making savings. Talking Together may be seen on the face of it as being OK but is sometimes poorly attended by the public. After that many public comments based on common sense are ignored in favour of politically motivated cabinet decisions.
General	Email	21/11/2011	Councillors are effectively employees of the council. Their allowance should be halved to £100 per week (or £5,000 per year) There are too many of them (52?) and they actually achieve little as most decisions are taken by the (so called) Cabinet. Also let's get rid (or share with Stockton) a Chief Executive as the present incumbent is just not worth what she is paid (of course I am not stupid as I realise that she would not get a similar paid job elsewhere. But when the Council pleads poverty getting rid of highly paid posts would show it means business. I doubt whether this suggestion will reach Cabinet as it decides to get rid of more widely used facilities such as Cockerton Library
58	Event	07/01/2012	Where is the impact assessment for Parent Partnership proposal. The document distributed lists the functions that the partnership does but I don't recognise this. It says the changes are about the management of services not taking services away. The officer losing her role has a lot of expertise and is used by regional group and to sort out blockages within the Council and schools acting as a critical friend. Claiming that the new post will be an integral part of the information services but this was not what the role was for, it was about getting departments working together. No mention of independent training for parents which helped. Talks about Contact a Family but how will that work?
22	Event	07/01/2012	Is it right that Connexions is going and schools will be responsible for their own careers advice? If schools go for academy status can the Council ensure the needs of young people are put first above the needs of the business of running the academy?
23	Event	07/01/2012	I have two children at St Bedes currently and I am concerned about school transport and getting them to Carmel in the future
23	Event	07/01/2012	I too am concerned at the safety of getting my children to Carmel as they would need two buses.
General	Event	07/01/2012	I have two children and myself and my husband are both deaf. My two children are currently at St Theresa's. We will have the same difficulty in accessing Carmel but it is harder for us to access information from schools. Before cut backs the Council had an interpreting agency and if needed I could access an interpreter to go to the school with me. Now schools are saying they don't want to pay for this. It is also hard to get information on the budget cuts as we don't have the same access.  Concerned that I have to rely on my 8 year old as an interpreter. This makes her old before her time and I want independence too and I need to care for my children and get support to do so.
23	Event	07/01/2012	I am head teacher from Hummersknott and concerned that information is not getting to parents. Associated transport is a big issue as this links to admission policies. I have spoken to a Councillor in one ward who was not aware of the proposal. Skerne Park will face particular issues and there will be costs for a number of low income families.
23	Event	07/01/2012	Need to write to each parent so that they understand the issues.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
23	Event	07/01/2012	I am a parent of a child at Heighington and I had no knowledge of this event or others meeting with parents other than through Hummersknott. You talk about choice but there is a significant difference in attainment between schools If not able to go to Hummersknott my children would have to go to a poorer school. This is little saving – writing off schools. Consultation is very poor as not everyone able to get here.
23	Event	07/01/2012	There is a lot of concern about transport and children in rural areas. Can you consult in those areas?
23	Event	07/01/2012	Meeting with the lady with a hearing impairment – it is good you are meeting with her but she should not be a special case. You are still not sending information out prior to the events and the standard of information in accessible format is not good enough. Don't put a gloss on things none of us would want to do.
General	Event	07/01/2012	Accept this is an open discussion but how do we know about it as young people. Have you taken steps to go into schools, Facebook, allow people to write questions down if they are not willing to ask them?
28	Event	07/01/2012	I am a member of the Carers Steering Group and a community Partnership volunteer and devastated at the thought of bus service cuts. How are carers going to get to relatives to feed and care for them? Not political but why are a Labour council making these proposals, people will be neglected?
28	Event	17/01/2012	I am a Sadberge resident reflecting on Darlington and the future financial crisis such as not seen before. Echo the need to keep culture but how will changes to buses affect the economy of Darlington? People use the bus to go to the delicatessen, market and to go to work. For some in rural areas it is principle form of transport.
28	Event	17/01/2012	Hurworth resident – It is important that the Borough does not turn into a town disconnected from rural areas. Someone in Hurworth could not attend tonight if they have no car or afford taxis. Other changes to school and associated transport are also happening. I appreciate the financial stresses but there is a responsibility for everyone even if only a statutory minimum.
28	Event	17/01/2012	I am clerk to Sadberge Parish Council and transport is a very important issue hence about 25 residents from Sadberge are here tonight. The majority of people in the village do have cars but for others the only service is the supported bus. There is no shop, school or other facilities in the village and this change will have an impact on our community and families. If there is no transport it will not necessarily be a desert but will certainly be a commuter dormitory. There is real community spirit, please find a way to find an answer and save our mixed community.
32	Event	17/01/2012	I have a question about CCTV. I understand cameras in residential areas are to be switched off. I am a member of Firthmoor Community Partnership and I remember the days before they were put in. Is it possible to keep those in residential areas?
92	Event	17/01/2012	I want to complain about the proposed increase in Council Tax. Christmas lights are turned off at midnight – couldn't you turn traffic lights off at this time?
23	Event	17/01/2012	I am a parent of three catholic children and I think the proposed changes are discriminatory to those of the catholic faith and those on a low income. There may be safer routes now but what if there are no 'lollipops' and more cars.
23	Event	17/01/2012	Carmel college does not want to be a cost to the town. Danger that everything is stopping and would like to think that could be a compromise. Have been generous in the past and happy to work to resolve this for all children. Do not get rid of faith and keep associated transport. Happy to talk to Councillor Hughes but don't want a solution for one at the expense of others.
23	Event	17/01/2012	I am head teacher of St Bedes and very aware of families that are affected by cuts as many of my parents work at the Council. But no-one has come to the school to discuss this. You have been generous but parents do pay Council Tax. A lot of children travel from the far end of North Road to Carmel. If walk from St Bedes to Carmel would need two buses or a long walk with potentially no lollipops to help cross busy roads. I have asked Arriva and they couldn't tell me how you could get from North Road to Carmel.
91	Event	17/01/2012	What is the rationale for selling the Arts Centre and building an new arts hub. Why not have an independent trust? The plans seem vague.
60	Event	17/01/2012	I understand that lower bands of care will not be funded, if someone is moderate or low. In terms of mental health I do not think this is enough. Have you thought about how this keeps people well as health fluctuates. Effectively, if you improve you lose the service and have no low level support and then deteriorate. This will not help people stay well, what support will be put in place?
23	Event	17/01/2012	My daughter lives in Middleton St George and it is difficult for her dropping off children as she works, she needs to get some help.
91	Event	17/01/2012	It would be horrendous if we lost transport. I feel we are going down a blind alley. People in various areas use and develop the Arts Centre. We have a beautiful structure there and we would not afford a similar beautiful structure like the one we have now. Also will the new build happen? There are currently 2 exhibitions which because of their size could not be housed elsewhere. One is by a young lady from Darlington doing her MA. This had no advertising in the Northern Echo. If private sector they would reduce staff and close the inefficient areas but keep the main building.

Proposal Number	Method	Date	Comment
General	Event	17/01/2012	I have been listening with interest but I am disappointed. Politicians should not make cuts and if Government send people in to run Darlington let them. Darlington could be a desert as there is no interim if we lose the Arts Centre. There will be no-one in town as there are no buses and maintenance of parks has been reduced. Politicians should fight for the town and tell Government –no. They should help keep Darlington and the trades union would support them.
91	Event	17/01/2012	It is an abysmal settlement from Government and unfair in terms of the north/south divide. The arts centre is a centre for well-being, civil society. There is only one plan and that's bidding to the Arts Council but this is a competitive process, no guarantees and could get claw back money. Also what happens if you cannot sell the building. Need more time to think of options and how a sustainable centre can be found. Not explored letting it out and I believe this would bring in £200,000. Officers are not putting time into doing this and this is causing more money to be lost.
91	Event	17/01/2012	There will be extra costs next year as 6th form not using the building as they were told to go. Since Council took the Arts Centre on it was a good place and workers have done a good job. Lately this has tailed off and good quality acts have dropped off. It is a jewel although it is not fit for purpose, not as accessible for all disabled people. However others such as my brother with Downs syndrome use it a lot. 1600 sq metres is not big, would need at least £1m to build a new hub would it not be better to use this on the current building to give lots of rooms to rent out to arts groups. You stated Darlington can't have a Barbican but the people of Darlington deserve it.  Could rent it out?
General	Event	17/01/2012	Saddened by the Arts Centre proposal and reduction in Adult Social care transport. It would be irresponsible to spend 5% to save the Arts centre when cutting adult social care and transport. If the union believes the Council can set an illegal budget and the government would change its view he is very naïve.
28	Event	17/01/2012	Moved to Sadberge recently. All I need is to see a diabetic nurse twice a month, I can't drive for four hours after my eyes are tested. What alternative transport is available? I would be willing to pay a nominal sum of £1 if it meant we kept the buses.
92	Event	15/12/2011	How will the government changes to rules about ballots and Council Tax affect Darlington?
General	Event	15/12/2011	Has consideration been given to selling assets or manage them differently?
General	Event	06/01/2012	Thanks for your honesty in giving us a clear understanding of the position. As you clearly stated as the council faces a funding issue will impact on third sector organisations. Many third sector organisations deliver services for the Council. We need to know the situation relating to these contracts as soon as possible and we have a particular problem with short-term one year contracts. Will there be funding in the short-term from March onwards or do we have to give staff notice?
General	Event	06/01/2012	The budget has a lot of cuts. Where will you need most support from the voluntary and community sector?

Proposal: 1	3 year pay freeze
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	07/12/2011	I note from the Town Crier that you are seeking to negotiate a 3 year pay freeze for all council employees, I assume this is in addition to the 2 years already in place or is it another further year. If indeed this equates to 5 years in total I feel this most unfair. You propose a rise in council tax, energy bills are rising together with the cost of living, just how do you expect people to live. The government has capped rises to 1% nothing really but better than no rise at all and I feel that this is the least rise employees should be given. I await your reply with interest.
Email	10/01/2012	Thank you for your response regarding the pay freeze or other options, am I right in assuming this is for all council employees from the top down.
Event	12/12/2011	Wage Freeze – biggest single saving you are trying to make. You can either freeze pay or lose staff. With inflation compounded over 5 years, it results in 30% pay cut. What other things are you planning to do if this is not accepted.
Event	05/12/2012	The Council has 56 staff earning more than £50,000 per annum. Suggestion to cut salaries by one third for all executives. Not cuts for those under £50,000. How can the Council justify staff earning the same as the Prime Minister.
Forum	20/11/2011	Large savings could be made by reviewing the salaries of senior council officers, with an object to reduce them to more reasonable levels. It would be interesting to know what the all up hourly cost rate is for a Director or senior officer of a department
Phone	16/12/2011	Councillors should also be subject to the pay freeze.

Proposal: 2	3 days unpaid leave
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Method	Date	Comment
Forum	24/11/2011	A three year pay freeze on top of the two year pay freeze council employers have already had then a 1% wage reduction then to have to pay more in pension contributions (if the government get their way) I would have thought the employees are the most valuable asset the council have, moral must be at an all time low, this must have a very detrimental effect on the way services are delivered, a poor service cost more in the long term so would the council save as much as the pen pushers say they will. Are wages not set by national agreements so how could DBC break these agreements even if the unions agree.
Forum	09/12/2011	Employees are not getting a pay rise for the next 3 years. They haven't had one for the last 2 years. Three days unpaid leave is equivalent to a pay cut of 1.2%. So employees will in effect have a pay cut of at least 2.2%. With the rising costs of petrol, gas, electricity and food, employees are really going to struggling. Factor in the proposed increase in pension contributions and things get even worse. Yes, people are glad they have a job but bearing in mind that many of the lower paid workers are already stretched to the limit, this could be the straw that breaks the camel's back. Add to this the concerns that workers have trying to tell people that they can't have services due to budget cuts, and we will end up with a depleted workforce as staff go off sick with stress. Staff that are left will be over worked and residents of Darlington will have to wait longer for the services that they are able to have. Its going to have a knock on effect that will affect all the residents of Darlington
Forum	17/01/2012	Perhaps three to four months unpaid leave for the directorate would be appropriate, we are all in this together were PM's words. This saving would go a long way to eliminate the proposed minor cuts that would cause the greatest impact to the residents of the town.
Phone	30/11/2011	How can people be expected to take a pay cut of three days leave, this is totally unfair and is an insult to hard working tax payers, especially low paid workers.
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Phone	30/11/2011	How can people be expected to take a pay cut of three days leave, this is totally unfair and is an insult to hard working tax payers, especially low paid workers.
Phone	30/11/2011	How are these cuts impacting on senior staff, there seems to be more staff than before

Proposal: 3	Debt Repayment
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	The council will allocate land for sale and, if sold, use the receipts to repay debt. Who wants to buy land in this economic climate
Email	01/12/2011	Is there any financial gain to be had by the Council by selling off Mowden Hall and relocating the staff to one of the empty buildings in the town? Again, that's always assuming someone wants to buy it.

Proposal: 5	Review of support and consultation with older adults
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	08/12/2011	Partner has had a massive stroke and was a prisoner in his own home as I have to go out to work to earn a wage. He started using the bus service to get to Dimensions once a week and has made considerable progress attending their sessions which stimulate and improve his confidence. He is a changed man in just a few weeks. On hearing that the bus service is part of the cuts he is devastated. This is an amazing service which gives people a reason to get up in the mornings! I understand cuts have to be made but why spend money on flowers for the town centre and entertainment in the market square and then cut vital services like this? Please consider the impact that reducing these services will have.
Forum	30/12/2011	Charge pensioners £20 a year for their free bus passes and reinstate the Arriva services to such as Brafferton and the outer villages.
Letter	25/01/2012	Review GOLD and other support for older people to target the work more closely, develop community and social networks in a more streamlined way. Evidence suggests that this information provides longer term savings as fewer adults needing care at an early stage as a result. GOLD should be transferred to Age UK with a minimum of one year's fund raising support. Age UK would be able to build GOLD into a stronger entity.

Proposal: 7	Review of Carers Service contracts
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	<p>I read through the recent issue of town crier at the council's proposed budget cut back and I couldn't help but notice that the vast majority of the proposals referred to cutting amenities and services such as the dolphin centre closing on bank holidays and less road maintenance etc. These will mildly inconvenience people at best but what struck me was that only the disabled group are actually getting hit directly in the pocket, an attack on their actual income, by the proposal to take 100% of their severe disability premium. No other parts on the benefits system are getting hit according to your proposals, where is the clamp down on child benefit etc? why is it the disabled always get hit? Is it because we are a small minority, a small group whose votes won't affect an election outcome but hit something popular and there will be uproar. I recently stopped having my socks put on a morning by a carer as it was costing me nearly £100 per month just to have socks put on, does that sound just and fair to you? When someone has to weigh up whether to get fully dressed or heat the house and now you're proposing to slam us for a huge amount more.</p> <p>I honestly don't know how you can come up with such a notion in all good conscience and if you lived one day in the life of a severely disabled person I am sure you would see what a harsh and cruel cut this is. Disgusted at this council and its anti disabled agenda.</p>
Email	14/12/2011	<p>I am writing about the proposed cut to funding for the disabled, i.e. DAD Carers Support Service. I am full time carer for a gentleman of 42 years old who suffers from Downs Syndrome he attends Tec works day centre. I understand the items up for consultation include reduction of welfare rights. review of supported bus service. and of dad itself. If these services were closed down it would be just about the end of him as it is his only way of feeling like he means something to society, it is his life and end all to everything. I can't drive so the bus service for him to get to his work would be the end of his happiness, it might seem over the top to you but not to him. And DAD has been a great help if we run into any problems. Welfare rights are a big help to in helping you through all the red tape of benefits and entitlements regards.</p>



Proposal: 8	Cease rent support to DAD
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Method	Date	Comment
Event	09/12/2012	I work at DAD – with Children and Young People services to co-ordinate Play schemes which are very popular. Parents and carers who value services such as DASH, School Holidays – young leaders group every Wednesday. Very valued service providing respite for carers. Concerned that DAD will lose some of their projects. How do we solve this in society and cut backs which will affect these people.

Proposal: 10	Household Waste Recycling Centre
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Method	Date	Comment
Phone	01/12/2011	Will resident still be able to drop off garden waste?
Phone	16/12/2011	not accepting non household waste is not going to save any money as fly tipping will increase and only get worse. The cost of clearing up fly tipping will be more.

Proposal: 12	Financial Protection Service – charging
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Method	Date	Comment
Letter	26/01/2012	Age UK would have serious concerns about introducing a charging policy for a service designed to support vulnerable people particularly where income is mostly derived from the benefit system. If charging reduces an individuals income below the minimum income for anyone age 70 or over they can ask for the charges to be reviewed. The cost of implementing and charging and review service could be greater than the income generated unless there are a higher number of people with income above the minimum. The way forward could be to look at other ways to enable and empower people to manage their own finances eg through supporting people services, financial advocacy or opportunities presented by the personalisation agenda.

Proposal: 14	Welfare Rights service
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I want to express how important this welfare service is as only people like us can appreciate it. The Government spends millions on bombs why can't it spare a few thousand on needy people. This service has been invaluable to us. Look at your priorities - you waste too much money on unnecessary jobs which are not important. Please keep this welfare service going as we wouldn't know what to do without these ladies. We had to go to a panel and they helped us prepare our case and we did well. They have helped us fill forms in, given us advice on the phone not just for me but also to my friends who needed help. How much more do you want us to write - we can't praise them enough.
Comment Box		The proposal to reduce the welfare rights service must not be allowed to go ahead. To reduce staff would mean longer waiting time to see a member of staff for help, also this will make their work much harder. As the basic group, my money will not cover this, the welfare rights service help is most important. Without their help I would have gone under. Form filling in is not easy for me, so given their help I know I have someone who understands and can help. without their help the powers that be would have put me on the scrap heap. Welfare rights service have shown them that I am a person not a number. I have to eat well, to keep warm and be able to get out and about so I can keep my independence longer
Comment Box		The proposal to reduce the Welfare rights Service is a disaster. The Welfare Rights Officer helps me to sort out my benefits after they have been stopped after I have been in hospital. She helps so much more than Citizens Advice. She knows everything and sorts it out asap. This helps me as there are times I am so vulnerable and can't do it myself.
Email	02/12/2011	I am currently an open case with the Welfare Rights Unit and understand (via my daughter), that the Welfare Rights Officer that is currently supporting me is under threat of redundancy next year. Without the service of this officer and the unit I would not be making any progress myself in applying and appealing for benefits, I am physically disabled and am experiencing mental health problems. I feel that the Welfare Rights Unit provides a valuable service for vulnerable people in Darlington and should be saved from cuts.
Email	14/12/2011	I am writing about the proposed cut to funding for the disabled, i.e. DAD Carers Support Service. I am full time carer for a gentleman of 42 years old who suffers from Downs Syndrome he attends Tec works day centre. I understand the items up for consultation include reduction of welfare rights. review of supported bus service. and of dad itself. If these services were closed down it would be just about the end of him as it is his only way of feeling like he means something to society, it is his be all and end all to everything. I can't drive so the bus service for him to get to his work would be the end of his happiness, it might seem over the top to you but not to him. And DAD has been a great help if we run into any problems. Welfare rights are a big help to in helping you through all the red tape of benefits and entitlements regards.
Letter	27/01/2012	The saving to the Council is small. Welfare Rights service performance will reduce by around 35% meaning almost £400,000 of income lost to vulnerable Darlington residents and therefore to the local economy. The loss of this post is highly likely to result in longer term costs for the Council and other partners, particularly in relation to Health and Well Being. We understand that this service may be a 'cost pressure' but we would recommend that the council does all it can to support the continuation of the service.
Letter		Received a lot of help and support from the Welfare Rights Officer. Has become very anxious since receiving a letter about the possible loss of the Welfare Rights Service and the possible loss of this support. Losing this support would have a highly detrimental effect.

Proposal: 15	Parish Council Grants
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	02/12/2011	I am also urging you not to cut the grants to the parish councils. These are vital to the communities. Thank you.

Proposal: 18	Stop post 16 free transport
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Method	Date	Comment
Phone	02/12/2011	Agree with the proposal it is the parents responsibility to get them to school

Proposal: 19	Review of transport of pupils to Greenfield/Woodham Schools
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Method	Date	Comment
Forum	24/11/2011	Would this not put parents off from sending their pupils to schools in Aycliffe and choosing to send them to the nearest school within the borough of Darlington, as you state they would qualify for free transport then, this to me would be defeating the object of the change, so how have the council come up with these figures
Phone	02/12/2011	Agree with the proposal it is the parents responsibility to get them to school
Phone	16/12/2011	This proposal causes a great deal of concern and will severely reduce the likelihood of my children going to their preferred school (Hummersknot). I feel rural communities are being penalised. I don't mind paying. The proposal is ill-conceived.
Phone	16/12/2011	What are the council doing about informing existing students and families re the proposed cuts to school Transport?
Phone	16/12/2011	What is the nearest school to Heighington, if school Transport is cut?

Proposal: 22	Reduction in services to 12-19s (Youth & Connexions Service)
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Connexions shouldn't be cut as a ex school pupil I think connexions really helped through school & college. Connexions is a place we can all go that we can trust and get help on anything. There isn't enough help as it is!!
Comment Box		I want Connexions to stay open, it gives young people somewhere to go on a Saturday night
Comment Box		Keep the One Stop Shop open to youth to keep us out of trouble
Comment Box		Keep the One Stop Shop Open
Comment Box		Connexions has help me sort my life out and if I didn't have them, I don't know where I would be. I want Connexions in the town so I have somewhere to go to get help and advice. YOS and Social Services did not help me, so they don't understand.
Comment Box		Connexions is mint and I would be lost without connexions.
Comment Box		One Stop Shop with agencies all together to provide one big service for young people. We don't want to go to Social Services if we need support. Connexions are a good service we don't want to lose it.
Comment Box		Because of the budget , our connexions doesn't have changing facilities. SO my child had to wait to be changed because I was applying for a job and had to wait for an advisor for help because there was not enough staff. My child leaked through and got a sore bum.
Comment Box		Things like Connexions and lolly-pop ladies/men are always need to help the people. And by cutting them will not help because people need them to help them.
Comment Box		You really need to keep providing the Saturday drop-in at Connexions because the staff are helpful and nice to us and help us with stuff. I think the council are making too many cuts which will affect people's opinions of them as well as affects people who may require access to these services. I know the country's financial situation is a mess but truthfully, you should continue to provide services if not then be providing more especially for young people as there is nothing for us to do then we end up in trouble for being in public places which is ridiculous when we have done nothing wrong and haven't been provided with services / places for recreation /socialising at an affordable price
Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open because it keeps me off the streets doing bad stuff and because we can speak to lovely people.
Comment Box		Keep the Connexions drop-in open on Saturdays, as it is a place that keeps people off the street corners and out of trouble.
Comment Box		Saturday drop-in is useful for the people in town because they help a lot of people when they need it. Please do not close it.
Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open, because its good banter.
Comment Box		Keep Saturday sessions open.
Comment Box		Please allow the Saturday drop-in sessions as they keep youngsters who may cause mischief in a safe environment
Comment Box		The drop-in is informative and helpful. It gives me a place to go, get off the street etc.



Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Keep the drop-in open it gives us somewhere to go and helps us meet new people.
Comment Box		Keep the Saturday sessions open, it's good for somewhere to go.
Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open because if it closed we won't have anywhere to go
Comment Box		Defiantly keep the Saturday drop-in open because it gives us something to do and keep keeps us off the streets. It is also a really good place to talk to the youth workers if we have any problems.
Comment Box		Saturday drop-in must stay open because it gives us somewhere to go. The current staff are great.
Comment Box		Keep Saturday sessions open.
Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in, otherwise we would have no where to go, plus it's a good place to go.
Comment Box		The youth workers are lovely and without them a lot of us would be a lot more troublesome and in a lot of bother. It helps us a lot coming here and keeps us off the streets.
Comment Box		The Saturday night drop-in sessions are really good because we really need it, please don't stop it because it keeps the kids off the streets.
Comment Box		The Saturday night drop-in is really good, we need it don't stop it. It gets young people off the streets and keeps them out of trouble.
Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open. Nothing to do otherwise. The workers have helped me with some difficult issues and it seems like there is less anti-social behaviour.
Comment Box		Keep the Saturday drop-in because it helps keep us off the streets and stops us from getting into trouble.
Comment Box		Please keep the Saturday drop-in open the staff are MINT!
Comment Box		Please don't close the drop-in sessions, I like coming here

Event 07/01/2012 Is it right that Connexions is going and schools will be responsible for their own careers advice? If schools go for academy status can the Council ensure the needs of young people are put first above the needs of the business of running the academy?

Proposal: 23	Secondary School Home to School Transport
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I will be affected by the extra time and money involved in having to transport my child to school. I need comprehensive details as to how this will affect my family & children
Comment Box		if school transport stops, my 2 children are going to find it hard to get to school. We live too far away from Carmel to walk, I do not want to consider another school. I want a Catholic school as this is our faith. Thank you.
Comment Box		Losing the home to school transport may mean my children losing their right to go to the only faith school in Darlington. I have a right for my children to be educated in the faith I believe in
Comment Box		If the highest earners of Darlington Borough Council - Ada Burns for example - were to take a pay cut, substantial savings could be made
Comment Box		The possible cuts in home to school transport mean the children in the extended family will be unable to attend secondary catholic school
Comment Box		Losing the home to school transport may mean my children lose their right to attend the only faith school in the town. If my children were to go to a 'closer school' they are being deprived of their right to have a faith and to be educated in that faith
Comment Box		Comments as above
Comment Box		I find it quite awful that we will have to pay £10 per week for transport to and from school (Hurworth). Not only is this quite a lot of money but it is very unfair that the children who are already on the buses now will continue to get it free therefore our children will be subsidising the other children's travel. I do feel that most parents will opt to take their children in the car not very good for the village of Hurworth, I have written 3 emails to the Council and have still not received an answer. If Hurworth was not as expensive as it is we would have moved there as our family are from there.
Comment Box		Its not possible to stop the bus service from Middleton St George to Hurworth School. How can parents expect to work for a living and get on child to St George's School and another child to Hurworth School? You tell me? I suggest the council stop paying fat salaries and concentrate on the children of our future!
Comment Box		I disagree with cutting school transport from St Georges to Hurworth Comp. St Georges is a feeder school to Hurworth. Use the money that would use to be used in providing transport to St Aidans Academy. If all pupils from St Georges went there and off set it against providing transport to Hurworth Comp. I understands that its not just the cost that at issue but also you propose to not even provide transport even it its paid for. The result will be more cars on the road , with more environmental impact. This goes against government policy of reducing carbon footprint. Also what is the point of having a local motion campaign if you are going force parents into using private transport ie cars to get children to school?
Comment Box		As my daughter will be going to Hurworth in a couple of years I think I would really struggle getting her and my son to school he is 3 years younger and I wouldn't dream of sending her on her that would mean her having to get 2 buses, well I'm sorry but that is just not going to happen.
Comment Box		Stopping the school bus service from Middleton St George to Hurworth is unacceptable! How are parents supposed to get 1 child to Hurworth and 1 child to St Georges? I feel it would unsafe for my eldest daughter to get on public transport to get to Hurworth when she would only be 11 years old. You could cut back some of the bus services in the Darlington area to save money?
Email	08/12/2011	I would like to lodge my objections to the proposed cut in free transport to faith based schools. I live near to Carmel RC College, at the moment the school traffic in this area is bad enough without creating more. The Headlands, Treelands and Chilton Close have over the years seen a build up of cars dropping off pupils to the college. Some days it is gridlock and most residents try to avoid these times but sometimes its necessary to venture out. Emergency vehicles, delivery vans etc. have difficulty getting through at the moment, so more cars would make it impossible. I understand that buses will still bring pupils from poorer families, therefore half empty buses will still be in the school area. What kind of logic is that. I would plead with the council will seriously re-think this proposal.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	13/12/2011	<p>I received a letter from Hummersknott School today regarding the proposed changes to home-school transport for children in the Heighington/Redworth. I have one child already in Hummersknott and another in year 5 at Heighington. Under these proposals my daughter in year 5 will not have access to transport to school. Her school will be Hummersknott due to the sibling links. At present my older child travels to school via the LA bus service which will continue I believe. However my younger child is not an independent traveller and her accessing public transport would, to my mind, present safeguarding issues. As I am a working parent and make use of after school provision, this proposal will have a significant impact on my family. In essence I will probably have to give up my job. I would therefore like lodge my objection to this proposal. I would also like you, as my Councillor to query, on my behalf, the logic of this action. Surely the LA must know what the impact will be on working parents?</p> <p>Creating barriers for children and families to be able to access education - not to mention the potential safeguarding issues with some children having to travel long distances, changing buses etc when they are 11, beggars belief. How is this in line with Every Child Matters? What impact assessments have been done? If the LA asked for a financial contribution as has happened in neighbouring areas, that would be fine - make it means tested so families on low income were not affected. But to stop it altogether is shameful. What about parents who do not have access to a car to drive their children to school? Do the children take their chances on a series of buses or just not go to school?</p> <p>This proposal is not good for children, it is not good for families and it is not good for our community. I would be interested in your views as I suspect you will be hearing from a lot of parents in the Heighington area on this subject over the foreseeable future. However the impact on my family will be significant, and I feel very strongly that this is wrong on so many levels. I would appreciate it if you could make my representations to whomever you feel relevant and I would appreciate any support you can offer in this area.</p>
Email	13/12/2011	<p>have a child at Heighington Primary who is in class 2 and this along with a lot of other families will be affected by these changes. What schools will be available? Greenfields and Woodham come under Sedgefield Borough Council I don't have transport and the transport links to Aycliffe and Darlington are very poor It will deter families living in Heighington and drive away families that already live here Why there is no option for transport to be funded by the parents Children's education will suffer if you can't send your child to school Mr Howarth Principal of Hummersknott is to organise a meeting in the new year and I think we need representation from our local councillor and as much support from all residents with children who may not be aware of this.</p>
Email	13/12/2011	<p>received a letter from Hummersknott Academy with reference to the above changes that will come into effect for admissions in Sept 2013 are as follows: Families with siblings at the school will be considered entry but school transport will no longer be available. Families with no siblings attending the school who live in Heighington will almost certainly not be able to attend Hummersknott school. I have a child at Heighington Primary who is in class 2 and this along with a lot of other families will be affected by these changes. What schools will be available? Greenfields and Woodham come under Sedgefield Borough Council don't have transport and the transport links to Aycliffe and Darlington are very poor. It will deter families living in Heighington and drive away families that already live here Why there is no option for transport to be funded by the parents Children's education will suffer if you can't send your child to school</p> <p>Mr Howarth Principal of Hummersknott is to organise a meeting in the new year and I think we need representation from our local councillor and as much support from all residents with children who may not be aware of this. I look forward to hearing from you</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	15/12/2011	As a resident of Hummersknott Avenue, I would like to lodge my objections to the above proposed cuts for the following reasons. The quantity of traffic already using Hummersknott Avenue is heavy at all times of the day. and is more like a main road or a 'rat run' during peak school times, especially since the speed bumps were put in at Hummersknott Academy and at night, now that the Academy has opened for out of school hours and weekend activities ( which wasn't discussed with local residents). Also, traffic speeds are worrying as they go up and down the road at these times. Residents have problems getting out of their own drives and have now taken to parking on the grass verges, I'm concerned that, one day, there may be a serious accident. Parents from both schools already park in Hummersknott Avenue to pick up their children, meaning the road can be extremely tight for other traffic to get through, especially the local bus. The junction at Carmel Road is already a very busy one and I feel the increase in cars, if approx 300 students from Carmel College will have to find alternative transport to the college twice a day, will make this junction even worse, especially for the students of both schools and the Primary school if there are also no crossing patrols. Residents in all of Hummersknott Avenue already put up with a great deal of traffic and I feel that the prospect of even more cars using this route due to the proposed cuts, will result in an unacceptable level of traffic in what is supposed to be a residential area.
Email	16/12/2011	I email to seek some clarification on your revised home to school transport policy. Currently I have a 6 year old son who attends Bishopton CoE Primary School. We live at School Aycliffe and he is transported by taxi on a daily basis and is obviously over the 3 mile radius for transport to be provided. We have another son who will be due to start school in September 2014. Should we apply to this Bishopton School under the sibling link and gain a place, please can you confirm the same transport arrangement from School Aycliffe to Bishopton will be available.
Email	20/12/2011	hope you are well, and expect you are winding down for Christmas. The reason for my e-mail is to bring your attention to a recent letter I have been given (attached). In a nutshell, it states that 'Hummersknott School' will longer be the chosen School for School Aycliffe!! am very dissatisfied at the proposals, as my family researched the comprehensive school options before moving to School Aycliffe, in addition, both myself and Claire (my wife) attended Branksome (one of the closer schools in the Darlington Borough), somewhere I am not willing to send my children! The proposals indicate adjustment in transport from 2-3 miles, yet all schools in Darlington are at least 6.5 miles away. My issue is not with transport, it is about access to the right school, best facilities, suitable education and a broad mix of students.....Hummersknott! Rather than blathering on in an e-mail, I wonder if you could give me a call to discuss, or even pop round for a mince pie and a coffee.
Email	22/12/2011	I am making an initial inquiry to ascertain the facts regarding the proposed changes to the current transport and admissions arrangements for filter into Hummersknott from Heighington Primary. With regards to the initial information I have received I find the proposal unacceptable and I have a strong appetite to contest and fight these proposals. I am aware that the current economic challenges that the Local Authority face require radical changes to make the financial savings subject on them from CLG. Could you inform me of the general feelings of our community and any arrangements that have been proposed to launch coordinate opposition to the proposals. I am disheartened and annoyed at the proposals as my wife and I have worked very hard to purchase our home in the catchment area of good schools.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	03/01/2012	<p>We moved to Heighington 8 years ago. One of the reasons we moved was because of the good links to decent schools. We love living here. We were very dismayed to hear shortly before Christmas that Darlington Borough Council are planning changes to Home-school transport therefore no longer placing us in the catchment area for Hummersknott School. We were also disappointed to find this out through a mother rather than receiving a letter directly from our school as it will affect us in the long run. We understand that in the times that we live that changes have to be made and likewise the council has to make cuts...However....To make cuts like these without even giving us a chance to find an alternative...Unlike the majority of the country we live in I do not expect to get something for nothing. Both my husband and I work full time in order to support our children in the best way possible. If I drove my children to school (which would be impossible because of the shifts I work) I would have to pay for the diesel to go in my car and therefore I would be happy to contribute towards the cost (providing it was reasonable) of the coach to school.</p> <p>Whichever school our children go to from the village they are not able to walk to. Greenfield is at least a half hour walk along a very busy road which you have to cross twice in order to get to the bottom and there is only 1 official crossing (by The Chestnuts) and if I am correct Branksome is impossible to get to on public transport (as is Hummersknott). I am assuming these are counted as being our closest schools. Along the route to Hummersknott there must be a large number of children collected. If they contributed towards the cost of the coach surely this must be a solution without cutting our links to a decent school. We would be interested in finding out when the meetings are going to be held so that we can attend. Thank you for your time</p>
Email	03/01/2012	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the budget proposal on school transport. Just before Christmas I was told about the proposed changes being made to school transport by Darlington Borough Council. I managed to get hold of a copy of the Town Crier over the Christmas holidays from a relative (we have not had a copy delivered for over a year). There was very little information in there and at first glance would appear not to affect people living in Heighington or the Chestnuts. However I conducted a search of the council website but couldn't find any information so I spoke to staff in Democratic Services and School Transport. The staff could not have been more helpful and have provided me with the background information to the proposals. As a result of the information they gave me I am very concerned about the school transport proposal. The Town Crier made no mention of the abolition of the associated transport scheme despite the fact that this has major implications for the children attending schools such as Heighington Primary School. The reference to the change of a 2-mile radius to 3-mile radius would be dismissed by many parents as not relevant as Heighington is more than three miles away.</p> <p>Along with other parents I received a letter about the proposals at the end of last week. However the initial proposal was submitted to cabinet on the 22nd November 2011 and the LA is well over half way through the consultation process. Surely this is not genuine consultation! From the information I have been given it would seem that the savings to be gained from withdrawing associated transport to Hummersknott from this area is negligible yet the impact on the well being of the children is huge, so on what grounds has this decision been made? I look forward to hearing from you.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>With reference to the correspondence informing us of the future transport plans from Hummersknott school to the Chestnut estate by Darlington borough council 9th December 2011. We are very concerned the effect this will have on our children as we have already submitted an application to the school for our daughter to start next September and we have a son at Heighington school who is in year 3 at present. From reading the letter from the council it states that not only will my second child not be able to get transportation to the school also they are potentially looking to scrap the sibling rule, if this stands it will mean that my two children will have to attend separate secondary schools which is totally unacceptable in every way. I would strongly contest these plans as they are not suitable for all concerned. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further to resolve the situation in favour of the children as they are the most important issues in all this.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	04/01/2012	<p>We are once again being discriminated against as a rural area. Heighington Primary School has a strong tradition of sending its children to Hummersknott School and filling (and the bus is indeed full every day) the associated transport link, making it extremely cost effective for the council to provide this service and enhancing the diverse culture at Hummersknott school. Surely the obvious solution is that Hummersknott Academy invoke their powers as an Academy to stipulate that Heighington School is a feeder school for Hummersknott Academy. The proposal to send our children to other schools such as Longfield or Branksome, which is only 0..2 miles closer and currently does not offer a bus service without having to first go into town and then back out, is wholly unacceptable, even if they were in the same league as Hummersknott or Carmel which clearly they are not. And our other options of the nearest schools being Greenfield and Woodham are Durham County Council, not Darlington Borough Council to whom we pay our taxes and once again I would contend are not in the same league as Hummersknott and Carmel. We currently have 2 children attending Hummersknott Academy, who have exceptional academic and sporting reports and it is our intention to send our youngest child to Hummersknott, but as we will have no sibling link by the time he is due to commence senior school because his sister will have left in July before he is due to commence in September, we are very upset about the current proposals and the appalling lack of communication or consultation. I understand that you hope to meet with Pat Howarth, Head of Hummersknott Academy, at a School Governors' meeting at Hummersknott today, so I would ask for our objections on behalf of many parents, who have no knowledge or understanding of the real implications of such measures being rushed through, to be taken into consideration.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>I understand that Darlington Borough Council are considering alterations to home to school transport from September 2013 and I would like to register my objection to the proposals. I live on the Chestnuts estate in School Aycliffe and have a child who currently attends Hummersknott School and there uses transport provided by the local authority to get to and from school. I also have a child currently attending Heighington Primary School who is due to move to secondary school in September 2013. I understand that children from this estate and also from the village of Heighington are currently given places at Hummersknott due to the transport link however from 2013 the transport link will not form part of the criteria for the allocation of places and distance from the school will be the main criteria. I presume therefore that on this basis children from our estate will be allocated places at Branksome as this appears to be the nearest school within the Borough. The Principle of Hummersknott has advised that our second child should still qualify for a place at the school on sibling links however, if we take up such a place we will be deemed to have chosen not to send our child to the nearest school and therefore our second child will not qualify for free transport to the school even though we live in excess of 3 miles away. So if we were to "choose" to send our second child to Hummersknott then we would be in the position of having 2 children attending the same school with the eldest child being able to use the free local authority transport but having to make separate travel arrangements for the second child. The distance to the nearest secondary school within the Borough is however in excess of 3 miles so presumably the Local Authority would then need to provide transport for the children from our estate and those in Heighington whilst still providing transport for those already attending Hummersknott. I presume that the main driver behind these proposals is to reduce costs as I understand that the minimum distance for free transport is to be increased from 2 miles to 3 miles. However this does not have any relevance to our location as it is approximately 7.5 miles to Hummersknott and 6.5 miles to Branksome. So the Local Authority will still be providing free transport for the children from this area just to a different destination. So for a period of 4 years the Local Authority would need to provide 2 school transport links from this area which would presumably duplicate costs rather than provide savings. I would be grateful if you could look in to this matter on my behalf as I feel that these proposals do not provide any significant benefits, only disruption and additional costs to the residents of The Chestnuts, Heighington and the surrounding areas. I look forward to hearing</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	04/01/2012	<p>I was informed of the proposed transport policy for the children of Heighington Primary prior to the Christmas break. I was shown a letter sent out to the children currently attending Hummersknott school informing their parents of the proposed changes. However, the children of Heighington Primary have never had any communication regarding this informed change. As a concerned parent I feel this would have a massive impact on the whole of the village. Hummersknott School provides a good level of education with a good standard of examination results, far higher than those currently achieved by Branksome School which I believe is the school they are proposing to provide transport to for the village children. Even if they were prepared to offer places on a basis of parents transporting the children to school themselves this would cause difficulty to many parents who due to work commitments would not be able to get their child to the school.</p> <p>I cannot believe that the cost of the transport is the motivation behind this as the difference in distance between Hummersknott and Branksome is negligible. I believe it is more about trying to ensure that a school with poorer academic results can try to improve their overall results by feeding in high achieving primary schools. It is not only the education that concerns me but the knock on effect on other aspects i.e. parents wanting their children to go to Heighington Primary School if they know their child will then go on to Branksome School and this may stop young families either staying or wanting to move to the village. I know you will do your very best to represent us and fight our corner and thank you for this in advance. Should you receive any further information regarding the proposed policy I would be extremely grateful if you would forward this to me. Many thanks for your support in this matter.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Please can you add myself and my wife's names (cc'd into this email) to your parents contact list for the proposed changes in the School Transport Plans by the DBC for Heighington have kindly been provided with an email this morning, from a fellow Heighington Primary School parent, and this is the first I have known about it. I can guarantee you 95% of other parents will also not be aware of the changes, and if they were, they would be in contact. I suggest you contact the Head teacher at Heighington, Neil Parker, so he can make parents aware of this via a Newsletter from the School. The changes proposed are terrible news for Heighington, as the nearest Schools are not top performing at all, and are very poor. This will of course affect house prices in Heighington and the Chestnuts as they no longer have the ticket to the better secondary schools in the area. Please raise our concerns to your list.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Thank you for the copy of your email, I would definitely like my details adding to any opposing list. I think the reason you have not received any names is exactly the point you have made in that there is no information available to parents about these changes and it is only discussions at the school gate. I'm sure you will be aware there are lots of parents who are opposed but have only been made aware of this situation from the letter sent to current parents attending Hummersknott. No other information has been sent to anyone else as far as I am aware. I am very happy to get involved in this and can start by collecting names and contact details if that's what you would like me to do? Or anything else you think is needed at this time Look forward to hearing from you</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Over the holidays I have started to hear many rumours regarding Heighington as the normal feeder school to Hummersknott changing to Branksome and about transportation to school. I have 2 girls who attend Heighington Primary and we live on the Chestnuts so as I am sure you can appreciate I am very concerned about this issue. I have heard that there is going to be a meeting and would be very grateful if you could let me know when this will be so that I can attend.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	04/01/2012	<p>We would like to voice our objection to the changes to school transport. We have read your email and have looked on the Hummersknott website and read the following extract from their newsletter:-Darlington Borough Council are consulting with the public on changes to School Transport. These will only affect students admitted to the Academy from September 2013. The main changes are:1. An increase in the distance students need to live from Hummersknott Academy to qualify for free transport, from 2 to 3 miles. Anyone living less than 3 miles will have to arrange their own transport.2. An end to Associated Transport. Meaning that students living in Skerne Park, High Coniscliffe, Piercebridge, the Teesdale approaches, Heighington area and "The Chestnuts Estate" would no longer be guaranteed a place at Hummersknott. The only criteria would be distance from the Academy, with those living nearest gaining a place. These are major changes which will affect parents ability to choose Hummersknott for their child.</p> <p>The reduction in school buses will also have a major impact upon traffic in the Hummersknott area with more parents driving their children to school. We are asking parents to contact their local councillors to object to these changes and we will be holding some public meetings in the New Year. Hopefully you will now have been contacted by more parents. If not we hope you will be able to put forward the point that not many parents actually know about the plans and how they will affect them in the future. Why have the parents of Heighington School and other feeder schools not been informed? To me it sounds like parents with children at Hummersknott were informed, and it is down to these parents and other proactive parents that more of us have been told.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>I have three children aged 9, 6 and 2, the oldest two already attending the village primary school. I and my wife had believed that they would in due course attend secondary school in Darlington at Hummersknott. Over Christmas, in conversation with friends we were told that this is unlikely to remain the case as Darlington B.C. are about to change its travel policy, and therefore our children will be filtered into Branksome School as the closest school to the Village to which transport will be provided. Is this true? We have not seen any official announcement on this quite significant change in policy, and if we, who do get involved with things in the village have not heard about this, then I suspect most other parents will have no knowledge. What is the correct story, and if this worrying change is broadly true, why have DBC not consulted, and why has our Headmaster at the Village school not advised parents?</p> <p>The distance between Branksome and Hummersknott is relatively short when you have a bus already on the road, therefore is there such a huge saving to DBC by cutting off an extra mile or so, particularly when taking into account the higher Council Tax take that benefits DBC from Heighington as a whole?</p> <p>Or is this simply politics, to improve the academic Branksome intake? Is Hummersknott, wanting to move away from taking Heighington children?</p> <p>I am most concerned that rather than pulling all children in the Borough up it will drag our children down.</p> <p>Looking at a comparison of league tables you can see the disparity between the two Secondary Schools. If parents are properly consulted, all but the apathetic will be very worried, and I suspect you will have a lot of fire fighting to do. DBC Education dept will also be in for a hard time! If this apparent change goes ahead, parent will not allow their children to be sent to Branksome, and I predict that they will vote with their feet. Staindrop School, other Durham CC schools and the private schools will have a significant influx fro Heighington!! I would appreciate your understanding of the situation and what if anything we can do.</p>



Method	Date	Comment
Email	04/01/2012	<p>I wish to express my concern regarding DBC removing transport to Hummersknott School and therefore, I have been informed children within Heighington will no longer be eligible to attend Hummersknott school. This, to me sounds a most ridiculous proposal. I was not too concerned, as I thought it was so ridiculous that it was probably just rumours. However I was given a copy of an email today which set the record the straight. For one, it was mentioned that not many parents had contacted the council. I assure you they soon will, as up until this morning it was the first a lot of parents had heard of the situation. How were parents supposed to know? Apparently, the only people that did know, were those who have children already at Hummersknott. I have a child at Heighington Primary and I have not been informed from the Headmaster and I am assuming he must know of the proposed changes. If the changes are to be made to save money, then fair enough, I understand in the current climate. Having spoken to parents this morning, if it means our children get to attend our first choice of school (Hummersknott) we would be willing to pay transport costs.</p> <p>There are a number of issues that the change would bring about. There is the possibly that it could effect the house prices within the village. People have chosen our village due to the fact that we are linked to Hummersknott. Without this link it is possible that people would look to move elsewhere. I would like to be kept informed within any updates regarding the proposed change, either via e-mail or meetings.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Today at school I was given a copy of an email from yourself to another parent stating that you were meeting with the Officer of School Transport Planning on Thursdays - and that he might be ignorant of the strength of feeling against these changes amongst the parents of Heighington due to the fact that only 4 parents have contacted you about this to object. I urge you to make it clear to him that the lack of response is not due to strength of feeling, but rather due to the total lack of communication and consultation between DBC and parents affected by the change. As yet - there has been no official announcement or consultation paper, and most parents who will be directly affected are still ignorant of the proposals and their implications because they do not currently have children who attend Hummersknott and therefore have not received any correspondence about it. Apparently Mr Parker and the School Governors have known about this proposal for some time - but have not seemed it necessary to disseminate the information amongst the parents of the school - all of whom will be affected.</p> <p>I cannot fathom out why he has chosen this - as ultimately it will affect the primary school in the village and their intake is surely made up of children from families who have moved into the area with the purpose of sending their children to the excellent village primary school, which has associated transport links to an excellent secondary school - Hummersknott. To think this does not affect him is short-sighted. I do not understand how the Council plan to show how cutting the transport links will save money when they cannot supply information about either how much the associated transport currently costs, nor how much will be 'saved' once they have to establish a transport link to a school that is merely 0.2miles closer to us than Hummersknott. I can only conclude that this lack of information is a deliberate ploy to cover the fact that there will actually be little or no saving to this proposal, This would also explain the total lack of communication on the part of DBC who obviously hoped to make these changes, quietly, under cover of the Christmas period. I thank you for taking the time to investigate this matter on our behalf - and again - urge you to point out to DBC that there is a great deal of feeling about these changes and a great deal of confusion as to their purpose and implications. If they could clarify their intentions and the thinking behind the proposed changes in an open and honest manner to those affected - I think they would find that there is in fact a huge opposition to these proposals and we would welcome the opportunity to voice it to them through the correct channels. Please feel free to pass my contact details to anyone who is unsure of how much strength of feeling there is against this proposal. And please let me know if there is anything we can do to help put a stop to this preposterous proposition.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Please accept my apologies for contacting you at this late juncture but I only heard today that you are meeting with a DBC Council Officer tomorrow morning to discuss proposed changes to the school transport arrangements, affecting children from Heighington, which would result from implementation of a new DBC Transport Plan. I would like to express my concern (as a parent of two) at the lack of information and absence of any consultation process/period regarding these changes and would greatly appreciate it if you would convey these concerns to the relevant DBC officers? I wonder if you could also possibly clarify a rumour which is passing among parents in the village that if these proposed changes were introduced it would mean that, in future, no child from Heighington would be able to attend Hummersknott School? If that were the case I am again very concerned at the lack of information given by DBC on this significant change and the absence of any consultation with the parents of children whose education would be affected.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Can you please note that I have only just received information about Dab's proposed school transport plan which, it seems, will prevent children from Heighington Primary from admission to Hummersknott. I am not at all happy about this, and would like you to raise it with Murray Rose as soon as possible. many thanks,</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	04/01/2012	Further to the recent, limited correspondence we have received about the proposed changes to the current school transport. I don't agree with the proposal and I struggle to understand the reasoning behind the changes. I would be interested to see the cost / benefit calculations to see any savings, if any, that would be made by the proposal. I fail to understand how this will help our children's education, something that appears to have been overlooked in this exercise. Given the lack of information currently received, I hope as a minimum there is a meeting set up before the proposal is agreed.
Email	04/01/2012	I write to you with regard the recent situation I have been made aware of regarding the secondary schooling for children from the village of Heighington. My oldest daughter is due to go to secondary schooling in Sept '13 and having reviewed the local secondary school results we had comfort in knowing she will be attending Hummersknott. To now find that the local authority is changing the schooling is not acceptable particularly when you consider that the proposed school Branksome, is no material distance nearer Heighington than Hummersknott and has considerably poorer results according to the published Ofsted reports (These results can be accessed on the website if required). We love living in the village of Heighington and would be disappointed if we were forced out due to inadequate schooling. Please could you let me know what action you feel is most appropriate to address this matter or would I be better writing to the Local Authority directly.
Email	05/01/2012	I don't know the full details as haven't read the proposal, but I hear the proposal is that Heighington school children may now possibly feed into Branksome school as opposed to Hummersknott school. Also that there are also transport issues proposed? . I would be very grateful if you would forward any information that you have on these issues. Me and my husband would also like to express our grave concerns over these proposals and will gladly sign any petition to oppose this. Any further information at this stage would be greatly appreciated.
Email	06/01/2012	As parents of two daughters who currently attend Heighington primary school we are deeply saddened and annoyed about the prospect of our girls feeding into a different secondary school to what we planning. We have lived in Heighington for many years and prior to the present time we have always been excited about the prospect of our children moving on to the impressive and exciting school of Hummersknott. To hear 'on the grapevine' that this may be changing in order to save an uncertain and perhaps insignificant amount of money (in the grant scheme of things) is so very disappointing. It is bad enough to hear of all the other local cutbacks ie the potential closure of the brilliant Arts centre, but now hearing this news that directly affects us, our children, our morale, and our village is so frustrating. Heighington village not so long back won the national 'perfect village' competition .... Surely now not only will residents be sad that our children are being let down but also surely house prices will potentially drop as will the excitement of new young families coming to the village if the schooling options change. We will be attending the scheduled meeting at Heighington school but wish to air our extreme concerns regarding your proposals.
Email	06/01/2012	My daughter is a pupil at Heighington Primary and my son is at the Pre-School. I know that many parents have emailed you this week regarding the transport to Hummersknott. I just wanted to add my name to the list of those who are concerned and who oppose the new transport plan.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	06/01/2012	<p>I am writing to you as a former pupil of both Heighington Primary School and Hummersknott Academy to express my concern about the proposed cancellation of the Heighington-Hummersknott bus route. This minor budget cut will have a major impact on many people, most important of them being the children whose very education is at risk. My time at Hummersknott was absolutely critical to both my academic and personal development and I believe that my time in secondary education could have not been better spent at any other institution. The transition between Heighington and Hummersknott was made easy thanks to their close connection, and of course the provided bus transport meant one less worry for me at an otherwise stressful time. Is it not a breach of equal opportunities for students from Heighington to be denied an education from such a reputable establishment just because of a poorly considered budget cut? I also believe that my education at Hummersknott was vital in carrying over to College education at, in my case, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College. Hummersknott has a very close relationship with QE College, and had it not I may not have considered an education there.</p> <p>Application to QE College was made easy through the guidance and supervision of Hummersknott, something very important to myself and other students in the stressful exam period. I now plan on continuing my education to University next year, and thanks to my education at QE College this process has also been made much easier. If it were not for the easy move from Heighington to Hummersknott, I may have never gone to QE College and may have never considered a University education. It is plain how the step from primary to secondary education is so important and I believe that this highly illogical budget cut needs to be reconsidered by the council, as the futures of many young students should not be in jeopardy for the sake of a single bus route.</p>
Email	07/01/2012	<p>I am writing in reference to the letter received with regards to the changes to the Home School Transport from September 2013. My husband and I understand you are opposing this and we want to give you our full backing. We presently have one of our two daughters at Heighington School and our younger daughter will attend in due course. We are very concerned about the changes to this service and the impact this will have on our daughters future education. We do not want our daughters attending the schools listed in the letter as alternative options due to transport issues. One of the reasons we chose to live in Heighington Village was for the schooling as we understood that all Heighington children were eligible to attend Hummersknott. We believe that attending the alternative schools listed will put our daughters education in jeopardy. We would like to formally complain about these changes to the DBC and Hummersknott school as we do not see the proposed options feasible for our family. We are also unsure, as you are, how much the council propose to save by providing transport to these alternative schools??</p> <p>Please let us know of any developments and of any action we can take to help to oppose this unacceptable proposal.</p>
Email	09/01/2012	<p>A friend has given me your name as someone who may be able to advise on the issue of the future association between Heighington primary and Hummersknott Academy. I understand the proposals to remove free transport to Hummersknott, which is not ideal but understandable given budget cuts, but can you advise on the issue of whether my children will be able to choose to attend Hummersknott when they leave Heighington, transport issues notwithstanding? Am I right to think that we will not even be able to consider Hummersknott as the secondary school for our children, or is it correct to say that we could consider Hummersknott and if we want the children to go there then we will have to arrange transport / pay transport costs?</p>
Email	09/01/2012	<p>I'd like to express our concerns regarding the change in transport provision for our children to secondary education. It seems that despite the notion of promoting choice with regards to schools the council has decided that this should be compromised and as a result the offer is being restricted to schools which we would find unacceptable due to current education attainment they achieve. Could you please include us in any updates.</p>
Email	10/01/2012	<p>Just to inform you that I will be putting a complaint in re the change of transport and school. I am unable to attend the meeting but wish you to put mine and robs name on any list of complaints you have.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	11/01/2012	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the budget proposal on school transport. Just before Christmas I was told about the proposed changes being made to school transport by Darlington Borough Council. I managed to get hold of a copy of the Town Crier over the Christmas holidays from a relative (we have not had a copy delivered for over a year). There was very little information in there and at first glance would appear not to affect people living in Heighington or the Chestnuts. However I conducted a search of the council website but couldn't find any information so I spoke to staff in Democratic Services and School Transport. The staff could not have been more helpful and have provided me with the background information to the proposals. As a result of the information they gave me I am very concerned about the school transport proposal. The Town Crier made no mention of the abolition of the associated transport scheme despite the fact that this has major implications for the children attending schools such as Heighington Primary School. The reference to the change of a 2-mile radius to 3-mile radius would be dismissed by many parents as not relevant as Heighington is more than three miles away. Along with other parents I received a letter about the proposals at the end of last week. However the initial proposal was submitted to cabinet on the 22nd November 2011 and the LA is well over half way through the consultation process. Surely this is not genuine consultation!</p> <p>From the information I have been given it would seem that the savings to be gained from withdrawing associated transport to Hummersknott from this area is negligible yet the impact on the well being of the children is huge, so on what grounds has this decision been made?</p>
Email	11/01/2012	<p>My son goes to Heighington school. I would like to express my objection against the proposal to end link between Heighington and Hummersknott schools.</p>
Email	12/01/2012	<p>I've received a letter via my Son's school, St George's Primary, regarding the changes to Hurworth School transport. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the meeting at St Georges on 16th January due to work commitments. Please can you clarify one point for me? We've calculated via Google Maps the Home to Hurworth route is 4.1 miles, therefore over the 3 mile proposed change to policy. Is this proposed change via road or 'as the crow flies'? I am fairly confident the proposed changes will not affect us when they are implemented, but would respectfully request that you clarify this.</p>
Email	14/01/2012	<p>I have been reading with interest the emails going back and forth about the school transport issue and before writing to the council wanted to run a couple of issues past you. My intention was to write to the council along the following lines, and advise that these are the questions that I intend to ask at the open meeting in Heighington, so could they come with answers. The bus issue is clearly an attempt, by the council, to reduce it's budget by using a stealth tax against the most vulnerable of tax payers, the ones who would accept it ( the middle classes). It is already worrying that parents are talking of accepting this, at a time when we are being hardest hit by the recession. With regard to its reduction in budget, I think it reasonable to ask what other areas of the budget / services were considered for cutting and why these were ruled out / in. I think it also wise to ask, at what point was the council considering this, when did they raise it with the schools and the general public, as there appears to have been an agenda to keep this information quiet and without you, the head teachers and subsequent parent emails, this could have worked. I would also like to see the potential saving projected on this, and the costs associated with running 2 buses, presumably one to Branksome and Hummersknott, for children still entitled to use it. In fact one could argue that a bus going to Hummersknott via the dog inn, avoids Darlington congestion, is not idle in standing traffic and is therefore a safer, greener and more cost effective solution.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	15/01/2012	<p>This is a formal objection to the proposal to end the provision of 'associated transport' within the identified budget cuts given for consultation. Through the 'associated transport' link children from Heighington Primary School have received their secondary education at Hummersknott Academy, a situation the vast majority of parents in the area are satisfied with. The school provides a well established and proven educational experience, with good academic results and a sense of community with the Heighington area. The removal of the 'associated transport' link for children moving into secondary education from 2013 is to be replaced with 'provision to the nearest school only' and would effectively destroy that community link with a good school and replace it with two poorer performing schools by providing transport to either Darlington School of Mathematics and Science (DSMS) or Longfield Academy. Both DSMS and Longfield are considered 'improving' schools but both as yet provide significantly lower results at GCSE level than Hummersknott Academy. Indeed, at DSMS, only 35% of their pupils achieved grade "C" or above in their GCSE exams in 2010, compared with 62% of Hummersknott pupils.</p> <p>As a result of the above the children from the Heighington area will be effectively penalised and have their future prospects put at risk in order for Darlington Borough Council to make alleged savings of £14000 per year.</p> <p>Our children are the future and Darlington Borough Council must recognise the need to invest in the future. In addition, Longfield Academy and DSMS are both smaller schools than Hummersknott Academy and therefore there is the potential that one school may not be able to take all the pupils from Heighington Primary School.</p> <p>This may result in children being scattered between one or more schools, possibly including Hummersknott Academy, thereby exaggerating the effect of different educational provision and also the destruction of the community link as friendships are torn apart at a time when children already feel vulnerable.</p> <p>We have been given no rational arguments as to how the Council will decide which of the Heighington children will benefit from attending Longfield and which children will be sent to DSMS - a school recently made an "Academy", to avoid special measures, rather than because of academic excellence. A number of children across the Darlington area from different schools, but significantly the issues are likely to be greater for those children from the more rural communities.</p> <p>These children should not be disadvantaged by effectively being offered places at schools which the Council cannot fill, because parents do not wish to send their children there. These cuts appear to us to be fundamentally flawed and likely to lead to an increase in costs Heighington is situated some 5 to 6 miles from all schools and has no other link to the schools other than by road, there will still be a requirement to provide 'free' transport, so a school bus will still run.</p> <p>Due to the distances involved for children from the Heighington area there appears to be no impact when in fact the exact opposite is the case. why has there not been an alternative proposal of placing a levy on 'associated transport' links in order to maintain the service whilst trying to reduce costs?</p> <p>If this proposal goes ahead and Heighington Primary School essentially feeds into an inferior secondary school, then the Heighington area will cease to provide an attractive base for family life. Finally, one of the foundation principles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which underpins all other children's rights is that a child's "best interests must be a primary consideration" in all actions and decisions concerning him or her and must be used to resolve conflicts.</p>
Email	15/01/2012	<p>Hope you are well. Thank you for delivering the newsletter today. Along with many others we concerned with the recent development of school catchment areas. At present we are determined our children will not be attending the proposed options of Longfield or Branksome and wonder if this proposal by DBC is only to ensure that as a unitary authority the exercise is purely to maintain the existence of the 7 secondary schools currently open with the LA. Being an advisor and head teacher for North Yorkshire I am all too aware of the changes necessary given the current economic climate however like many, circumstances should not jeopardise pupil/parent right and the education our children deserve. Perhaps DBC should look long and hard and the proposals and question why parents feel so strongly against this.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	15/01/2012	Thank you for your newsletter regarding parish information. We are a family who have recently moved onto 'The chestnuts' estate and although our children are several years away from beginning secondary school we are particularly interested in the proposed changes that could effect their education. Due to work commitments we are unable to attend the meeting on 25th January, however would like to be further informed on the issue. If you could forward the minutes of the meeting and any additional information we would be very grateful. In addition we would appreciate it if you could please explain (or if you are unclear at present ask the following questions at the meeting on our behalf) how such changes would effect Catholic children living in 'The chestnuts' School Aycliffe. Will Catholic children still be admitted to Carmel school? Will Catholic children be provided with free transport? Will transport be available for Catholic children but parents will be required to pay for this? Will parents be responsible for transporting their children to and from school? Thank you for your help on this matter.
Email	16/01/2012	I am concerned about letters I have received from school regarding home to school transport. I always thought that my children, would always attend Hummersknott Secondary School after High Coniscliffe School however recent letters seem to point to the conclusion that they may not. I appreciate that there are cut backs, however in order for my children to gain access to Hummersknott I would be quite happy to pay a contribution for associated transport. It is of the utmost importance to me that my children go to Hummersknott School and think it is quite unfair that if my children were 2 years older they would be judged under different criteria, ie my eldest would already be in the school and the sibling link would exist, meaning my other child would also gain access. I am attending a meeting at the town hall on 19th January at 5pm to discuss this, but I wanted to make you aware of my views prior to the meeting.
Email	18/01/2012	I am a resident of the Chestnuts estate in School Aycliffe and I have a child who currently attends Hummersknott school, my youngest son will hopefully start there in September (2012). I read with great dismay and concern your proposed changes to home to school transport. Although it appears at this time that my children will continue to have transport to school, I am concerned that in due course, if these proposals are allowed to go ahead it be stopped. You will be aware that we live more than 3 miles from all the secondary schools in Darlington therefore children will need transport to whichever school they attend. I fail to see therefore how you can justify the proposed changes. Parents are supposed to be able to choose which school their children attend. Removing transport will remove freedom to choose. I have no idea how I will continue to work fulltime and manage to transport my children to and from school. These proposals are a source of great concern. Please consider this email as a formal objection to the proposed changes. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.
Email	19/01/2012	We would like to show our support against the proposed changes being made for School Aycliffe & Heighington school bus travelling. This does not effect us personally as our 3 children already attend Hummersknott Academy, but our reasons for moving to this area in 2004 were solely based on schooling and a property we could afford within the catchment area. We cannot imagine how we would feel if we had made this move, then have the choices we made as responsible parents taken away. I'm sure you can appreciate almost every parents worries with this current climate the world is experiencing, the EDUCATION of this generation is paramount

Method	Date	Comment
Email	19/01/2012	<p>I am e-mailing you regarding the council's proposals to alter the school admissions policy. My husband and I are parents of six year old twins. We are both serving police officers in Darlington and bought a house on the Chestnuts in 2003 as we were planning to start a family within a couple of years and knew that the schools we were likely to be offered were Heighington Primary and Hummersknott or Carmel Comprehensive schools. We did not take the decision to move out of Darlington lightly but felt that owing to our profession we wanted to put a little distance between our family and work life. The twins were accepted into Heighington Primary in September 2009 and we had hoped that they would move onto one of the two excellent secondary schools. I am sure you can appreciate our utter horror when we heard the proposals. My husband was once the Beat Officer for Branksome and I was the Beat Officer for Longfield Road / Harrogate Hill. We never imagined that one day we would be faced with the prospect of sending our children to those schools.</p> <p>I am appalled that having bought a house in a nice area with good schools it appears that we are to be cast aside and expected to send our children elsewhere. I grew up in the Hummersknott area, indeed our family home backed onto Carmel school, and I attended Hummersknott along with my brother.</p> <p>I am extremely concerned that my children are now about to lose out on an excellent education and will be forced to mix with children from families we deliberately moved away from. Moving children from a well-performing and well-run school to a poorer performing school in a less affluent area will badly affect our children's' education and social skills. Some parents may easily be dissuaded from this line of thought, however we are experienced police officers and know that as with placing criminals in nice areas, putting well-educated happy children into a poorer environment does not improve performance of others, it merely pulls the good pupils down to a lower level.</p> <p>I feel so strongly regarding this matter that I am prepared to move to another area, but feel aggrieved that I may be forced to take such action. We do not want to leave the lovely environment and life we have built for our family in the Heighington Ward, but we would leave rather than see our children deprived of the education we had planned for them. I also question what the proposals will mean for house prices within our ward?</p> <p>It would be naive for the council to think that good schools are not the prime reason for decent, law abiding citizens to purchase a house in a particular area. If this proposal goes ahead, it will kill the village and local economy as I have spoken to many other parents who feel the same and would be willing to leave the area rather than allow their children to be sent to other less desirable schools. My husband and I are more than prepared to pay for transport costs although I understand that this is not really the issue as with the transport link removed we would fall further down the list of criteria for Carmel and Hummersknott. I understand from other parents I have spoken to, that you are very supportive of parents at the school. Please take my comments forward! We will be attending the meeting at school on January 25th.</p>
Email	16/12/2012	<p>Recently received a letter from Hummersknott Academy that indicates the council are proposing changes to the Home School Transport scheme. The result of the proposals will mean from September 2013 children from Heighington Primary School will have virtually no chance of accessing Hummersknott Academy. For most people in Heighington and the surrounding area (this includes ourselves at Houghton-le-Side) Hummersknott is their preferred choice of school, as it performs to a consistent high standard and the alternative 'closer' schools offer a significantly less attractive educational experience! I appreciate the need to make savings and am only too well aware of the financial stresses being exerted on the local authority, however I believe the proposal regarding transport may have a far wider impact on the future prospects of a generation of children that is extremely unfair and so ill conceived.</p> <p>I believe parents of pupils in Heighington Primary School will have a lot to say on the matter and need the opportunity to discuss the impact of the proposals in order that their representations can be fully and accurately reflected in the council's decision making process.</p> <p>I would appreciate your earliest thoughts on the matter as I understand the council will make a decision on this proposal in February 2012.</p>



Method	Date	Comment
Event	05/12/2012	School Transport: Appreciate predicament, it is an impossible job. Move from 2-3 miles however concerns parents:• Large numbers of pupils just above the Free School Meals/ Working Family Tax Credits threshold who won't be able to afford transport costs. Decision on schools will be based on transport availability rather than pupil and parental choice.• Reduction in service buses will this be able to replace school buses.• Impact assessment done? On poor families and increased traffic.• In Town Crier no reference to Associated Transport. How will we engage with the communities affected by that. If distance decides school then outlying villages will lose out as they live too far away to gain a place. Resulting in having to bus children to further schools. All schools will become Academies by January 2012. Want to keep admissions policies. All schools will have to revisit admissions policies.
Event	05/12/2012	Children from St Bede's will have to get two buses. Parents will not be able to put their children into Carmel. Children will lose out on faith education. Make up of Carmel School will change considerably. Important to remember we need to invest in children. How do the Council intend to work with communities to enable pupils to have a faith education?
Letter	28/11/2011	No Direct route to Carmel College. Already have children in St Teresa's all children have to be at school the same time, can't see how that is possible if I was expected to provide transport to Carmel.
Letter	30/11/2011	The standardised letter [objections to the proposed cut in home to school transport to Carmel College] has my full support. Has current traffic flow been comprehensively studied, particularly at college closing time and especially on Friday afternoons when workers take advantage of an early drive homeward, coincident with college and school traffic? Has note been taken of the drive to and from Carmel College from Carmel Road North via Headlands, Which translates into a virtual cul de sac? Additionally there is the hazard of the manned pedestrian crossing on Carmel Road North, hazardous but necessary for walkers to and from college. Yes existing school bus services experience their own difficulties in existing dense traffic. But bus drivers are more aware of traffic hazards than many a 'convenience' car driver.
Letter	01/12/2011	Object to the proposal to stop all faith transport and would ask you to consider the following:1 The Potential Savings which seem to be very small2 Carmel College is fully comprehensive in nature and admits over 30% of students from the most deprived wards. It is these students who will be most adversely affected by the proposals.3 Carmel College accepts children from all faiths and over 30% of students are non-catholic.4 The present proposal is discriminatory as some children will qualify for transport beyond 3 miles while Catholic children will not.
Letter	09/01/2012	We have a daughter who is currently in year five at Heighington Primary School. And it has always been our intention for her to complete her secondary education at Hummersknott Secondary School. This was one of the primary factors we considered when purchasing our house in the Chestnuts 8 years ago. As I'm sure you will understand our children's education is of the utmost importance to us and this was a planned and considered move on our part. Our primary concern is that your proposed changes to the secondary home to school transport would mean that children without siblings already at Hummersknott moving on from Heighington to secondary education would no longer move onto Hummersknott School as their first choice/ preferred school, as has always previously been the case.
Letter	09/01/2012	I am, like many other parents whose children will be affected by the proposed changes to school transport, disturbed by the implications of these changes upon my children's education. I understand that if the 'associated link' is removed my children will be offered a place at the closest school. This would be either Branksome or Longfield. ... If Branksome this causes a problem: All children have the right to, and should expect, an excellent standard of education. From reading its recent Ofsted report, Branksome does not offer such a standard. There is also the issue of finance ... has the Council performed a cost analysis to show that there will be overall savings made under your proposed changes?
Letter	09/01/2012	... The announcement that children from Heighington will now be required to attend Branksome or Longfield school will result in children from the village being split between three potential schools in the short term due to the policy that siblings can attend Hummersknott while the remaining children will be divided between Longfield and Branksome. Our main concern is the disruption to the children of the village as they will no longer be schooled together and this will damage the social element within Heighington, we also feel that over the last ten years Hummersknott has shown its ability to adapt to the requirements of children from rural backgrounds. In terms of cost savings which is clearly the driving force behind these rapid changes, we cannot see where there will be any clear benefit, you will have to continue with the current bus to Hummersknott for those children who will already be attending and also for the siblings of the above mentioned and in addition you will incur the cost of another bus to Branksome or Longfield or both.

Method	Date	Comment
Letter	17/01/2012	On behalf of Hurworth Parish Council we wish to express our opposition to the proposed cuts to the secondary school associated transport provision as stated in MTFP - Appendix 15/24. The current transport arrangements ensure that pupils from across the Borough can receive the highest quality of education and deliver a diverse pupil intake for the school. We believe that these changes will impact unfairly on the rural communities in general and Hurworth School. In particular, with the result that educational choice, diversity and quality in the wider Borough will suffer. Hurworth Parish Council therefore fully supports Hurworth School in its stance on this matter and we urge that these proposals be reconsidered.
Letter	25/01/2012	... Although the proposal to increase the distance criteria for transport from two miles to three was outlined in the budget article, there was no reference to the removal of associated transport. As the children attending Heighington Primary School live around 7-8 miles from the secondary school, many parents would assume that this proposal would not affect their children. It is only through the actions of a number of parents..... that the true extent of the cuts along with the wider implications have now become known. This can hardly be classed as community engagement and meaningful consultation. I would also like my objection to the proposals to be officially recorded. From the information I have been given it would seem that the savings to be gained from withdrawing transport to Hummersknott from this area is negligible yet the impact on the well-being of the children is huge, so on what grounds has the decision been made?
Letter	14/12/2012	I would like to lodge my objections to the proposed cut in home to school transport to Carmel College. Entrance to the college is through a built up residential area and managing the current traffic flow is difficult. It creates problems for both residents and the College alike. However, the prospect of over 300 students having to find alternative means of transport, many of whom are likely to be brought by car, will result in an unacceptable level of traffic. It will put at risk the safety of residents, students at the college and visitors to the area. At a time when we all should be looking to improve the quality of the environment, this proposal will do untold damage and is contrary to the action we should be taking to safeguard the environment.
Letter	19/12/2012	The present situation in the [Carmel College] area is bad enough and we are frequently unable to either get off or access our drive because of waiting or parked vehicles. Refuse and recycling vehicles have trouble accessing the street because of badly parked vehicles. Many of us have had to listen to bad language when asking people to park somewhere more reasonable but the big problem is that public transport is not an option for students when there is only one bus per hour in this area. ... is it not possible to make a charge for the transport as it would appear that transport is still being provided for children from low income families.
Letter		We are writing to express our concerns and opposition to the proposals for school transport. Proposal is unjust, unsubstantiated and discriminatory to rural communities. Communication and consultation process has been very low key and underhand. Available information is sketchy and uncertain. Had to undertake further research to gain more factual information from our local Councillor and the headmasters of Hummersknot, Carmel and Heighington Schools. There is little or no information coming from the Council with several people having to refer to the Freedom of Information Act in order to prise the necessary information out of DBC which is unacceptable. The link between Heighington Primary and Hummersknot and Carmel Secondary Schools have produced a constant flow of highly educated children well prepared to either continue with Higher/Further Education or enter society and the working community. This is now in jeopardy. We strongly urge DBC to reconsider these proposals.
Letter		I like many other parents will be affected by the proposed changes to school transport am disturbed by the implications of these changes upon my children's education. I understand that if the 'associated link' is removed my children will be offered a place at the closest school. This would be either Branksome or Longfield. I would like to know which one it will be. If Branksome, this causes a problem: All children have the right to, and should expect, an excellent standard of education. From reading its recent Ofsted report, Branksome does not offer such a standard. Has the Council performed a cost analysis to show that there will be overall savings made under your proposed changes? It is in no way fulfilling the Council's obligation to those children to waste a fantastic primary education at Heighington Academy by providing, in my opinion, an inadequate secondary one. I propose that the current system is left as it is. I also object to the limited consultation on this matter. The Town Crier did not mention associated transport and I suspect this was a deliberate omission. Parents have not been informed directly and there has been much unnecessary confusion amongst parents which the Council should, and could, have avoided.

Method	Date	Comment
Letter (circular)	09/01/2012	<p>I would like to register my opposition to the proposed changes to the Local Authority's home school transport arrangements, as I believe that they discriminate disproportionately against parents on both religious and socio-economic grounds, neither do they give due regard to the safety of children.</p> <p>I am concerned that a judgement on what is regarded as having due regard for children's safety has the potential of being an arbitrary judgement based on a cost cutting exercise rather than adhering to paragraph 26 of the home to school transport guidance which states that....."personal safety should take account of perceptions of pupils, parents in relation to traffic speed on roads near schools, lack of safe crossing points, unlit footpaths, lack of cycle routes, bus routes that fail to pass within a reasonable distance of schools, the lack of affordable public transport options".</p> <p>To implement this proposal will result in the denial of access to children from across the town, particularly those from low income families. Parental choice will therefore be denied on the grounds of affordability.  <b>[circular individually signed and sent in by 1,557 residents]</b></p>
Phone	06/12/2011	Thinks its ridiculous that over the next five years free transport would exclude new bodies/siblings
Phone	21/12/2011	Last night I was contacted by an acquaintance from Heighington about the impact changes to school transport would potentially have on his family. He currently has 1 son at Hummersknott Y8, a daughter at Heighington Primary in Y6 and a son at Heighington Primary in Y1. He is most concerned about his youngest son as he has a level of special need (School Action Plus). He is an accountant and has carried out "some rough calculations" (his words) to say that he would only expect any savings to be in the order of £30000pa. I didn't comment on this. He also said that the proposed changes to transport arrangements were making a de facto change to the LA admission policy without proper consultation. I advised him to attend the talking together event in the Dolphin Centre on 7th Jan to hear a range of options and opinions.
Phone	23/12/2011	Would like to speak to someone regarding school transport.
Phone	05/01/2012	Gentleman ang for clarification about a letter he has received from Hurworth School to all parents regarding the council's 23. Home to School transport proposal to be increased from 2 miles to 3 miles. The letter from the school seems to contradict or give misinformation regarding the Council's budget proposals.
Phone	05/01/2012	It's horrendous and it's unfair. I can't afford to pay for transport to Hurworth. I'm against this proposal.
Phone	11/01/2012	Parents should pay for the children's transport to school.
Event	07/01/2012	I have two children at St Bedes currently and I am concerned about school transport and getting them to Carmel in the future
Event	07/01/2012	I too am concerned at the safety of getting my children to Carmel as they would need two buses.
Event	07/01/2012	I am head teacher from Hummersknott and concerned that information is not getting to parents. Associated transport is a big issue as this links to admission policies. I have spoken to a Councillor in one ward who was not aware of the proposal. Skerne Park will face particular issues and there will be costs for a number of low income families.
Event	07/01/2012	Need to write to each parent so that they understand the issues.
Event	07/01/2012	I am a parent of a child at Heighington and I had no knowledge of this event or others meeting with parents other than through Hummersknott. You talk about choice but there is a significant difference in attainment between schools If not able to go to Hummersknott my children would have to go to a poorer school. This is little saving – writing off schools. Consultation is very poor as not everyone able to get here.
Event	07/01/2012	There is a lot of concern about transport and children in rural areas. Can you consult in those areas?
Event	07/01/2012	Meeting with the lady with a hearing impairment – it is good you are meeting with her but she should not be a special case. You are still not sending information out prior to the events and the standard of information in accessible format is not good enough. Don't put a gloss on things none of us would want to do.
Event	17/01/2012	I am a parent of three catholic children and I think the proposed changes are discriminatory to those of the catholic faith and those on a low income. There may be safer routes now but what if there are no 'lollipops' and more cars.

Method	Date	Comment
Event	17/01/2012	Carmel college does not want to be a cost to the town. Danger that everything is stopping and would like to think that could be a compromise. Have been generous in the past and happy to work to resolve this for all children. Do not get rid of faith and keep associated transport. Happy to talk to Councillor Hughes but don't want a solution for one at the expense of others.
Event	17/01/2012	I am head teacher of St Bedes and very aware of families that are affected by cuts as many of my parents work at the Council. But no-one has come to the school to discuss this. You have been generous but parents do pay Council Tax. A lot of children travel from the far end of North Road to Carmel. If walk from St Bedes to Carmel would need two buses or a long walk with potentially no lollipops to help cross busy roads. I have asked Arriva and they couldn't tell me how you could get from North Road to Carmel.
Event	17/01/2012	My daughter lives in Middleton St George and it is difficult for her dropping off children as she works, she needs to get some help.

Proposal: 24	Review of Adults Transport
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	10/12/2011	I went to the meeting to support Shopmobility because I was so worried about loosing the facility but I was even more worried to learn that I was going to loose my bus pass. I have mobility problems and for years lived as a hermit, not seeing anyone from one day to the next. With help I moved house and started to become very active. My bus pass was a Godsend; I have difficulties using the buses but with determination and the help and consideration of other passengers I go out every day to town and I cannot overestimate the importance of that to me. I have people who can give me a lift when they see me at the weekend but normally I make five return journeys a week (I say 'normally' because I lost the use of my right foot about eight weeks ago but I hope to get back to my routine wearing a sort of leg brace). I go to the Dolphin Centre gym to help with my mobility supported by my DR. twice a week and I attend two AA meetings a week so four of those journeys are vital to my physical and mental health. Vital. I meet people at Age UK for lunch and social contact one day (I'm 53) , I usually just have coffee to save money, which is also important to me. While I am out I can 'mingle' and/or take a scooter out. I usually do my shopping on a Monday. Each return journey would cost me £2.80, six journeys £19.60 a week. Four of those six journeys are extremely important to my health and the other two are important to my independence and social contact, my feeling of belonging, being included. I simply cannot afford this. I struggle but I go to my hospital appointments on the bus, I don't book an ambulance or outpatients transport, I am not looking to have everything done for me, I am asking for help to help myself, help to just do what 'normal' people do under my own steam, in my own time. Is that too much to ask? My energy bills are over 12% of my income and I now have to pay someone to help me a little bit each week because of my foot and Shopmobility is at best going to be much dearer. I absolutely DREAD going back to the isolation I once knew. I was going to say 'my prison' but prisoners have company don't they? Can peoples' cases be evaluated to see how much they need a bus pass, how often they use it and then issued on merit? If it comes to no more free bus passes could Arriva be persuaded to let disabled people, the elderly etc buy a bus pass at GREATLY reduced prices---- no way can I afford anywhere near the £80 a month it would cost me at present. I was very impressed at DBC thoroughness and I know everyone will be up in arms but all I am asking for is help to be just like you.
Event	09/12/2012	Main issue is that I cannot walk following a stroke. My main difficulty is getting to and from places. Specialist Dimensions Transport gets me out of the house and I am feeling better. I am told that my transport will be stopped. Impact will be – isolation, depression, stuck in the house, lack of social life. Unable to get out shopping. Everything is being taken away.
Event	09/12/2012	Limited mobility, no speech, dyslexia. My life relies on Dimensions Transport. I have no means of holding on to prevent falling. I would be stuck at home – isolated, watching TV. Not a future I want for the next 20 years. Carer - I would have to give up work if services were reduced. I am disappointed by a Council who will fund the social lives of the able bodied e.g. Arts Centre, Civic Theatre. We are not criminals.
Event	09/12/2012	The way Arriva drivers treat disabled people is disgusting. Not enough wheelchair accessible buses. Without the help of Dimensions I would not have been able to take a case for discrimination against the bus company. I rely on taxis or friends with cars. If Dimensions was to close and I had no transport. I would be isolated, no social life like able bodied people do.
Event	09/12/2012	Previously totally isolated at home. Unpaid carer (daughter) – only respite when I am at Dimensions. Alternative transport – it took me a long time to trust the service and feel safe in the transport. If transport goes I will be isolated at home like so many people. We don't want other things. Without the transport and trust I would be at home, locked away and wouldn't go anywhere.
Event	09/12/2012	Used to use Ring-a-Ride now taxi of which there is only two local accessible taxis. £18 each way on taxis. Costs going up and cannot use buses. Financially squeezed – may consider suicide. If someone is seriously considering suicide. People don't shout for help – asking carers to keep an eye out for this. You may lose some people.
Phone	01/12/2011	Carer in Middleton St George just been told bus service on night time is going to be stopped so that means she won't be able to get into work so she's going to end up losing the job.

Proposal: 27	Cease Shopmobility Funding
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Changes to DAD will cause a huge hole for the disabled in the town by stopping the subsidising mobility service will undo what has made Darlington Labour Party so good. Cherie Blair is the president of the Durham Branch. I find the idea of saving £32,000 at the expense of once again 'lets NOT help disabled' - this is what we would expect of a Conservative Council not a Labour one - further comments see hyperlink
Email	12/01/2012	I wish to express in the most strongest terms my disappointment at the decision to stop funding for the Shopmobility scheme. I live in Richmond and travel to Darlington for the variety of shops and facilities on offer. The Shopmobility scheme is a vital service for me and others like me to enable us to bring our custom into the town, something which I would of thought the council would wish to encourage. It seems to me that yet again cuts are being made targeting the most vulnerable and in so doing disregarding a niche trade, it really does not make economic sense. Would it not make more sense to spend your efforts clamping down on the people that abuse the system ,the whole system that is ,those who claim disabilities that seem to miraculously disappear once inside their own front door. It beggars belief the number of people that seem to get away with it. Thousands of pounds of council money would be saved leaving the genuine disabled like myself with those vital services so needed to make our lives that much easier. I urge you to reconsider your decision and keep the Shopmobility going, do not let the people who need these services suffer when cuts could be made in a more efficient and indeed more profitable way.
Email	26/01/2012	This service enables individuals to maintain independence within their local community. This may include shopping for daily provisions, enabling choice, social inclusion, use of banking facilitates and a whole host of daily tasks/ activities. It will have an enormous impact on a huge amount of already vulnerable individuals and a dramatic effect on their daily function and well-being. Often service users are older people who already suffer from social isolation and are empowered by the use of the equipment provided. With the increased ageing population surely we should be encouraging independent living rather than dependency.
Event	09/12/2012	Impact on disabled people – what about the impact on shop mobility with the closure of the project. Unable to shop or socialise.
Event	09/12/2012	Direct Payments will probably affected – how will this be affected. Also shop mobility, rely on it to get around town.
Letter	07/12/2011	When I learned that you were considering cutting the funding for Shopmobility I was dismayed because I rely on that service for a number of reasons, as do many other disabled people and I wonder if full consideration has been given to this matter. I am asking you to continue your financial support of Shopmobility because I and many others greatly need it. Please consider the feelings of loneliness and isolation not being able to get out and about and feel that you are not able to join in like everyone else. Being able to take a mobility scooter around town is liberating; just mingling with people, going round the shops, simply being out and seeing what is going on gives a feeling of inclusion rather than feeling excluded from everything and feeling left out and completely sidelined. Shopmobility allows me to do what the vast majority of people do without a second thought. Shopmobility gives me and many other people equality with people who are not disabled, freedom of choice, a feeling of inclusiveness, social contact, a chat, company, stimulation, a feeling of independence, a feeling of achievement that we have done our own shopping and jobs. Did anyone really think how much being able to simply get around means to some people? Shopmobility provides us with legs - please don't cut them off and condemn us.
Letter	28/01/2012	This proposal may cause DAD to consider increasing charges or seek support elsewhere. Access to publicly funded transport is a lifeline for many older people. For those without access to a car reliable public transport, whether it is a bus or community transport is essential to be able to keep active and independent. Shopmobility schemes allow many older people to access parts of the town that are increasingly difficult to access if you have a mobility impairment. Older people's spending is around 15% of the overall household expenditure and this is set to grow. Age UK believes that the high street would miss out on the spending power of older consumers should these cuts take place because they will not be able to access the local centre independently.

Proposal: 28	Review of Supported Bus Service
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I use the No. 3 bus daily and I feel it is most unfair that another bus is being taken off this route just leaving us with one half hourly. Also, the first one we can use on a morning with our concessionary pass will be 9.45am which is not very convenient. If we are losing a bus the other routes should also be the same
Comment Box		I and my family strongly object to this action No No No!!
Comment Box		May I suggest that you preserve free bus travel. Those without access to a car wouldn't get around nearly as much, even within Darlington itself, if it weren't for the concessionary travel.
Email	21/12/2011	Page 15 stop funding on bus services. Take this to mean concession passes???? Sample grass pole with fellow users, all accept a small fare 50p @ journey makes common sense. Page 17 9 million to be used to improve transport, where does the money come from???? surely the need to improve these services rest wholly with the providers??? Comment Why are Councillors not showing their personal commitment by placing a hold on the costs incurred by themselves. Why a council, based on Quakers prudence, not foreseen any shortfall and taken an action like saving.
Email	11/01/2012	With me being disabled the bus is the only means of seeing family and friends, otherwise it's relying on friends with cars. My daughter lives in Darlington and being a divorced mum with 3 children the bus is all she can afford. The loss of the bus means a big loss of independence and I feel it is the usual discrimination against rural areas biting here. My disability is so bad I rarely feel able to leave the house but now, on the rare occasions I feel good enough, I am locked in the village. We also have the problem of early morning workers going to Darlington. There is no-where near enough work around this village so people often take whatever they can get. If the bus is taken away there will be many that have to give up their job and become a part of the millions seeking help from the government in order to live. Methinks it is time to de-privatise the bus services. There are too many 'investors' with no feelings apart from their joy when they count their cash.
Email	11/01/2012	I have walking difficulties and rely on the bus service to be independent. The closure of this bus route would impact on my life greatly. I would be reliant on friends with a car to take me shopping, that alone would cause me to be depressed and eventually housebound. I am disabled and this to my mind would amount to discrimination. Why can't Stockton and Darlington council liaise together and maybe share the subsidy to the bus company. Stillington is after all just on the borderline. We pay the same rates and taxes as city dwellers who have a choice of buses and rail, but once again the rural areas are stripped of any basic amenities and take the brunt of cuts. Any children wanting to go to schools or colleges in Darlington would have a limited choice because of the travel situation, not to mention workers and peoples livelihoods being in jeopardy. I would put to you to try an organise the bus route that would go through Houghton, Sadberge, Great Stainton, Bishopton, Stillington passing through Hardwick, Roseworth Norton Grange and various estates via Stockton, this would increase the footfall in both Stockton and Darlington, enhancing traders business in these areas. As a disabled person, I feel the needs of vulnerable persons in rural areas should be considered, likewise hard working people who haven't, or can not afford to run car.
Email	17/01/2012	I asked why my council did not have a contingency fund in my previous message. being prudent Quakers. Surely such a fund exists. You did not answer This point.??? Purely out of interest, my bus service no 12) times have been changed without notice.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	17/01/2012	The residents of Mowden must have one of the worst bus services for the size of the estate in the town. We have lost the Number 77 service and the Number 3 service is now every half hour with the Number 16 Scarlet Band once an hour. We have no Sunday or evening service at all so people who need to visit patients at the Hospital or need to go into town for any reason would need to use a taxi or car. Not a lot of older people have cars and not all who have like to drive in the dark at this time of the year. I read an article in the paper last week where the junction at Whessoe road and North road is to be upgraded so the buses will keep to there timetable hoping to encourage people to use the bus service instead of their cars which would prevent polluting the atmosphere. With the withdrawal of the Sunday service and the night service on Mowden people will have to use their cars or taxis, what about the pollution of the atmosphere now? It would seem to me you have double standards. If you live on one of the council estates like Branksome the buses run every ten minutes during the day and every half hour on a night. That is a far far better service than what Mowden have. Can you tell me why?. Surely to be fair could the Branksome timetable be amended to run every 15 or 20 minutes which would subsidise an evening and Sunday service for Mowden residents.
Event	12/12/2011	Transport – cuts to supported bus services. A lot of talk about Civic and Arts. If you live in the rural areas you need a car. Unable to attend events. Not many use them – what it boils down to is the young people and older people who are affected by the bus cuts. Middleton St George – no bus service on an evening and very limited service on a Sunday. I would have to walk a mile for a bus. Also raising car parking charges in town on a Sunday. Recently ran Local Motion survey to get people to use public transport and now they are going to be cut. These cuts are very quick, no time for anyone to protest very much. January 2012 – services being cut. Concessionary bus passes are not a lot of use if the services are being cut. I know people would be prepared to pay to keep services e.g. before 0930. Virginia Estate – none on a Sunday and hourly during the week. Won't be a bus after 6pm
Event	05/12/2012	Supported Transport – reduced bus routes. List of which services will be discontinued. Have you considered potential for drunk drivers if driving as no buses.
Forum	17/01/2012	Please explain the massive differences in projected savings of approx. £192,000 between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, 2014/2015, and 2015/2016. A few things don't add up here! But to withdraw supported bus services, as you know, would cause enormous inconvenience and disruption to communities, particularly the rural residents and to the overall economic detriment of the town. This is a negative step that doesn't save anything.
Forum	22/01/2012	When the Harrogate Hill loop bus was withdrawn last year there was an uproar that people would have to walk 200 yards to a bus stop we at Brafferton have had all services stopped and have a mile to walk on unlit roads with crumbling paths we have no shops or doctors in the village and the bus was a lifeline to the young and elderly. It would cost no more for Arriva to divert into the village twice a day can we have the proportion of poll tax that goes to subsidising buses in short I believe the cut to our bus will one way or another cost lives
Letter	21/12/2011	As two over eighty year olds living in Sadberge we rely on our bus service for many reasons. 1. We have no other means of getting into Darlington. 2 Shopping - there are no shops in Sadberge. 3 Post Office, 4. Doctors. 5. Hospital appointments. We have no bus services after 5pm and no buses on a Sunday. If you remove our present bus service we will become virtual prisoners in the village. When we first came to live in Sadberge we had a School, two shops, Post Office and a reliable bus service. Now we have no school, no shops, no Post Office, no medical services and a limited bus service that is under threat and yet we still have to pay full Council Tax. Will you please consider the above matters at your Cabinet meeting on 22 February 2012.
Letter	01/01/2012	The reduction in supported buses has already severely curtailed some of what is not now available to me. If I want to go out it has to be day time only and not Sundays at all. At the same time I note that certain areas of the Borough have very frequent services which continue until almost midnight - might there not be scope for sending one of these buses out to the Mowden area now and again to restore the fairness of provision and reduce the enforced isolation of people like myself?
Letter	04/01/2012	I am writing to protest about the possible withdrawal of bus services from the village of Sadberge. The service has over the past few years been subject to severe cuts which have already greatly affected the residents of Sadberge and their families. The complete withdrawal of the present limited service will lead to severe hardship to those residents who do not drive or own a vehicle and rely on the bus service in every area of their lives.



Method	Date	Comment
Letter	04/01/2012	.. You are going to make it extremely difficult for us to get anywhere if you take our (Sadberge) bus service away. I find it hard to understand why four miles down the road (for example Haughton and Brampton lane and others) have an excellent bus service so why not us, we are not exactly out on the wilds. ...You have taken the evening and bank holiday transport away please leave us with our daytime buses. Are we in the rural area not entitled to the same privileges as the residents who live in town. We would not be able to use the Dolphin Centre and any other facilities which we pay our Council tax for. Please do not leave us destitute.
Letter	08/01/2012	... We are very aware that a significant minority of Sadberge residents - including many elderly people - do rely on the bus service, and that they would find it very difficult to continue to live in Sadberge if that service was withdrawn. These people are an important part of our village community, and it would be a tragedy if they were forced out of the village because of lack of accessible transport. ... A strong sense of community is one of Sadberge's most important assets. Please do not create a situation in which Sadberge becomes a bland commuter dormitory village.
Letter	12/01/2012	Re: Scarlet Band Bus services 17 and 18 - As a resident of Sadberge village I write to express my concerns. I currently enjoy the excellent service we receive and use it on a regular basis, typically twice a week. Many people rely on the bus service as they do not have an alternative means of transport. As a regular passenger, I am aware how important this is for a significant number of elderly residents as well as younger people who need to look for work or stay in employment. At present I drive a car, however in future when I am no longer able to drive I will be directly affected by the loss of this service and will have to consider whether I could remain a resident of Sadberge without any means of accessing shops and essential services.
Letter	12/01/2012	...I rely on the bus as my husband has rheumatoid arthritis. We both have to attend the hospital quite regularly and Dr Piper House. We are both diabetic and I have glaucoma. When we go on these appointments my husband can't drive at all. So we depend on the bus. We had to use a taxi last week from Haughton to Sadberge it cost £7.20. It is a lot of money when you are pensioners. So they are our reasons for keeping the bus. I would hate to leave this lovely village.
Letter	16/01/2012	We feel this will be detrimental to Sadberge, as we no longer have a shop or a post office and residents rely on the bus service for shopping, visiting Doctors surgeries both in Whinfield and Middleton St George. Hospital appointments too. Students getting to College will be affected and people who work in town. We have non car families and elderly people who no longer drive, or who have never driven, and these people can not rely on the village car users, as the majority work each day. It is all very well saying we should not live in a village, but most of Sadberge residents were born and bred here. We feel that we will be isolated from Darlington altogether.
Letter	20/01/2012	I would like to draw your attention to the effect of withdrawing all subsidies for all bus services to Sadberge i.e. Services 17 & 18. Our village is made up of quite a few people who do not have their own transport or are quite elderly and cannot drive themselves for various reasons., so a bus service is a vital link between our village and the various amenities in and around Darlington Centre. The bus service is required to take people from our village to Middleton St George to the GP Surgery. There is also the problem of travelling to Darlington Memorial Hospital for treatment and visiting family and friends who maybe patients in the hospital. Providing a bus service also provides a link with shopping in Darlington centre and the local supermarkets in Darlington. This move by Darlington Borough Council proposals to cut bus services to Sadberge could mean that some Sadberge residents may have to relocate to a local town which will break up a close knit community....
Letter	23/01/2012	The Parish Council appreciates that the number 17 service is not heavily used but it is of major importance to the people from the rural areas who do use the service to access work and education in Darlington. The Parish Council has heard from people who fear they will lose their jobs if the bus service is withdrawn as they will not be able to get to work. The bus service also provides a great link to Darlington Town Centre for people from the villages to access shops and other services. The parish Council has heard from people with restricted mobility who use the number 17 bus service to come to Darlington as they find Darlington much easier to manage than other local town centres. The bus service is also used by people to access Darlington railway station for travel further afield - the alternative, if people don't have family or friends who can drive them to darlington, is an expensive taxi journey. ... If the decision is made to withdraw the subsidy from the rural bus services then could Darlington Borough Council make some commitment towards supporting a Community Transport scheme of some description or looking into alternative bus services? ...

Method	Date	Comment
Letter	18/12/2012	I live in Sadberge with my wife, we are both 78 years old and we depend on the bus for our shopping, hospital visits, post office, Doctors visits etc. As it now stands, we cannot use any of the town's evening facilities because our bus does not run on evenings, bank holidays or Sundays. Without a bus we would have to ask younger people in the village to either take us into town or pick up shopping for us. A town bus from Haughton is 2 miles away but we would have to carry our shopping back. On a nice summer day it maybe ok but on an icy snowy winter day - no good. I think a basic bus service is important and a must to maintain basic life in Sadberge for us older people. A taxi is another alternative but on our pension is too expensive. We are prepared to pay for a bus pass as we did in the past. Sadberge will be a dead village if this goes ahead. Could some of the subsidised services which help to run parts of Darlington early morning and late evenings be reorganised to give us a basic service? After all there are a lot of young people who need to get to work and school who live in Sadberge.
Petition	09/01/2012	We the under signed present this petition. In respect of the cut backs made by the local Council (Darlington Borough Council), to bus services in and around Harrowgate Hill area and Winfield (Asda). <b>[petition signed by 282 individual residents]</b>
Phone	30/11/2011	requested more info regarding bus services in proposal
Phone	01/12/2011	Mr Hall is shocked about cutting funding for the disabled to use the buses unfortunately he's classed as disabled and is blind he need buses to get around town if he loses that he will lose his independence. He regularly has to go to Middlesbrough for hospital treatment and he will have to pay for himself and carer to go to Middlesbrough.
Phone	02/12/2011	I would like a bus service on an evening. Won't be able to go out in town. We would rather pay more than the service finish. Rather pay more council tax. Will affect the pubs and clubs, Civic and cinema (town centre economy). What is the proposed cut off time?
Event	07/01/2012	I am a member of the Carers Steering Group and a community Partnership volunteer and devastated at the thought of bus service cuts. How are carers going to get to relatives to feed and care for them? Not political but why are a Labour council making these proposals, people will be neglected?
Event	17/01/2012	I am a Sadberge resident reflecting on Darlington and the future financial crisis such as not seen before. Echo the need to keep culture but how will changes to buses affect the economy of Darlington? People use the bus to go to the delicatessen, market and to go to work. For some in rural areas it is principle form of transport.
Event	17/01/2012	Hurworth resident – It is important that the Borough does not turn into a town disconnected from rural areas. Someone in Hurworth could not attend tonight if they have no car or afford taxis. Other changes to school and associated transport are also happening. I appreciate the financial stresses but there is a responsibility for everyone even if only a statutory minimum.
Event	17/01/2012	I am clerk to Sadberge Parish Council and transport is a very important issue hence about 25 residents from Sadberge are here tonight. The majority of people in the village do have cars but for others the only service is the supported bus. There is no shop, school or other facilities in the village and this change will have an impact on our community and families. If there is no transport it will not necessarily be a desert but will certainly be a commuter dormitory. There is real community spirit, please find a way to find an answer and save our mixed community.
Event	17/01/2012	Moved to Sadberge recently. All I need is to see a diabetic nurse twice a month, I can't drive for four hours after my eyes are tested. What alternative transport is available? I would be willing to pay a nominal sum of £1 if it meant we kept the buses.

Proposal: 29	Review Parking Charges
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Parking charges are already quite expensive, more so than for Middlesboro for example. I will not go into town much at all if the parking charges increase or I will walk or go in on a Sunday
Email	20/11/2011	Further to our conversation on Friday, I would like to express my concern over the councils decision to charge full parking rates on a Sunday. This would have a detrimental effect on local retailers and restaurants and could possibly result in an exodus to Teesside park where parking charges do not apply or Middlesbrough where parking is charged at £1 all day. I would respectfully ask that you consult the council and ask them to reconsider their decision. I look forward to hearing from you.
Email	01/12/2011	Review of car parking charges. Turn the old John Neasham / Skippers site into another car park and REDUCE COSTS. I shop in Northallerton and Richmond because car parking is free.
Email	07/12/2011	The Fees & Charges appendix does not appear to include residents parking although there is a proposal to increase the cost from £25 to £50, albeit phased over a 3 year period. I assume that the residents parking scheme will be extended to include a Sunday because of the proposed introduction of Sunday parking charges. I do feel that it is unfair to increase the burden on residents because the Council wants to increase its town centre car parking income. Are you proposing to contact existing users of resident parking schemes direct about the proposal to ensure all are fully aware of the potential impact? If you are considering a review of residents parking I would like to propose an extension beyond the 8am – 6pm limit. Often I arrive home from work after the 6pm limit so at the moment my £25 payment only allows me the benefit of the possibility of parking near my home on a Saturday or on holidays I notice that there is no proposal to increase the costs of car parking elsewhere, for example, staff and member permit prices are remaining the same. At £173 this is much lower than in Redcar & Cleveland, for example. What is the rationale for this?
Phone	30/11/2011	Not happy with the proposed increase in parking charges, counter productive in terms of attracting people in Darlington town centre

Proposal: 32	Cease provision of CCTV in outlying areas
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Method	Date	Comment
Letter	23/01/2012	I am also concerned that lack of CCTV outside the town centre will lead to more criminal offences and police will have a hard time bringing justice to victims.
Comment Box		As a family we use the parks daily a lot of funding has been secured to make these parks nicer and safer, once public funds are reduced vandalism and anti social behaviour will rise and decline the parks, making the money spent being wasted.
Email	15/12/2011	I have just read through the list of budget cuts in the town crier, as we all know cuts need to be made and for the most part they seem pretty reasonable, however removing the CCTV cameras from places outside of the town centre does concern me. I do feel that they make people feel safer and would deter criminals and I worry about them being taken away, personally I would rather that we had no budget what so ever for flowers as this does not compromise safety which I think is important.
Email	12/01/2012	Could you please confirm to me whether the Council is intending to cut the CCTV cameras on Firthmoor as part of the budget?
Letter	17/01/2011	I believe that you should not be appointing a parent Partnership Officer to replace the parent partnership Manager. I can see no advantage except saving the Council money to this decision.... Children with special needs are vulnerable and often parents have little knowledge of the system. They need the best support which they can get which I believe comes from an experienced manager...
Letter	30/11/2011	... also I'm concerned that lack of CCTV outside the town will lead to more criminal offences and police will have a hard time bringing justice to victims
Phone	30/11/2011	Would like to know if the residents at Sandringham Court will continue to pay, as part of their service charge, maintenance on the CCTV camera at Mowden Shops
Phone	16/12/2011	Turning off CCTV is not going to be a saving as the costs that will occur through damage to play areas and the community will cost more.
Event	17/01/2012	I have a question about CCTV. I understand cameras in residential areas are to be switched off. I am a member of Firthmoor Community Partnership and I remember the days before they were put in. Is it possible to keep those in residential areas?

Proposal: 33	Close East Row Toilets
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Method	Date	Comment
Letter	09/01/2012	I am appalled to read your proposal in the town crier re the closure of the toilets in the town, I'm sure many people like me who are disabled and pensioners have to use these in-between bus transfers in Tubwell Row or maybe using the market for daily shopping. I have no problem paying for this facility.
Comment Box		East Row Toilets - Are you really going to leave us without this fundamental facility? The Cornmill loos are often closed, in my experience, or there's a queue! It will be terrible for visitor/commuters - it's bad enough already. If you must do this - please provide all council tax payers with a list of places whose proprietors agree to let the public use their facilities without obligation, including opening hours and whereabouts. Darlington doesn't even have a bus station to offer facilities for visitors. <u>We don't all have barrage balloon bladders!</u>
Comment Box		People come into Darlington to spend money and they should have decent toilet facilities to go to for free. The toilets in the market place are a disgrace to Darlington, nobody's are as bad as that.
Comment Box		The toilets in the town are a disgrace. Nowhere I go do I see toilets as bad as ours.
Comment Box		The high street is in decline and Darlington is no exception, public toilets are essential. Easy access for elderly and disabled people is needed when visiting town centre.
Comment Box		Not everyone has the confidence or money to go into cafes or public houses to use their toilets - DBC should provide a public toilet in the town centre
Comment Box		I won't pay for the use of a public toilet
Email	01/12/2011	I was reading about the Council's proposed cuts in the latest Town Crier and saw to my horror that there are thoughts of closing the public toilets in the town centre. I had hoped that the introduction of a 20p charge would do away with this idea, but apparently not. All I can hope is that the Council will have another think as I am sure it will inconvenience  (no pun intended!) stall holders and shoppers, but also those going on coach excursions, or even a fairly long bus journey. Please do reconsider this idea. If you are thinking this is my only suggestion, the majority of my ideas were included in a letter which was put into the box in Crown Street library! Thank you for your attention.
Email	02/12/2011	I am writing to urge you not to close the public toilets under the market as these are the only public toilets in the town centre.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	05/12/2011	I recently read in the local paper that it is the councils intention to close the public toilets in the market place. I wish to complain bitterly about this decision as it will, in my opinion, cause problems for many people. I am a pensioner and unfortunately in keeping with many older people, the human bladder does not function in the same way it did when I was younger. Hence the phrase "hang on a bit longer" has no meaning and the new phrase "if you gotta go-you gotta go" is all enveloping and panic ensues (trust me-it does). I live rurally 10 miles from Darlington and if I use the local bus service (which is in danger of being cut, but that's another issue) I have to wait a minimum of 2 hours for the next one. In the past the market place toilet has proved to be a gift from God as I don't possess a 2 hour bladder. Local shops don't like you using their toilets unless you're a customer, and this will soon be stopped once hordes of people start trying that alternative. Apart from older people suffering, what about people coming in by coach or car from further afield or pregnant women? You are in effect encouraging visitors to the town to go elsewhere as if enough inconveniences (no pun intended) are put in their way due to lack of facilities within the town. I can't believe that a central toilet in a main market place, which is the one area you would seek one out is being closed. Yes it may save money in the short term, but it is an essential to the human body as is food and drink which are readily available throughout the town. What are people supposed to do, stand and wet themselves or worse? Sometimes non-profit making facilities have to be supplied for the general good of the people. I therefore implore you to reconsider what I believe is a calamitous decision.
Email	19/12/2011	Much as I appreciate the financial bind the council is in, a town without public toilets really has taken a step backwards, especially given the increasing numbers of elderly people. The recesses of my mind recall an obscure French law making cafe toilets compulsorily available to anyone (or is this a folk myth?). Either way, there must be alternative provision in place either in the form of self-cleaning automatic loos (rather intimidating for some) or a well-publicised arrangement with local places of refreshment. The latter is of course fraught with pitfalls including the vision of coach loads of old ladies piling into the Pennyweight. Or maybe the lack of a Tourist Bureau has already discouraged many potential tourists? Best of luck,
Email	04/01/2012	Whilst I appreciate that the financial decisions made by Central Government have a direct impact upon Darlington Borough Council and that you have no alternative to finding savings I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed closure of these facilities. If this closure goes ahead then the only public toilets available will be those inside the Cornmill Centre which would provide much fewer facilities to the public. Access to the public toilets is of major importance to many people and particularly to the older amongst us as well as parents with young children. In addition, visitors to the town (who I assume are important to the Council) may not be aware of the Cornmill facilities. I would ask you to reconsider this proposal. PS A potential source of added revenue would be to ensure that people who put out several bags of garden waste with the weekly domestic waste are charged for its removal. If I can be bothered to compost and /or use the civic amenity site why shouldn't they?
Forum	20/11/2011	There are hardly any public toilet facilities in the town already without closing the toilets at East Row. So this idea could only cause more problems at the Dolphin Centre toilets. But why should the savings for the year 2013/2014 be double that of 2012/2013 same toilets or are there other plans no yet disclosed? Keep them open for the good of the shoppers!
Letter	01/12/2011	I am appalled to read your proposal in the Town Crier re the closure of the toilets in the town, I'm sure many people like me who are disabled and pensioners have to use these in between bus transfers in Tubwell Row or maybe using the market for almost daily shopping. I have no problem paying for this facility.
Letter	20/01/2012	I think it is appalling for you to consider closing the public toilets in the town, even though you introduced a charge.
Letter	25/01/2012	Age UK Darlington would like to stress that it is absolutely vital that the council understand the import roll that public toilets play in enabling many older people to get out and about in their neighbourhood. Evidence shows that lack of public toilets is a significant factor in the isolation of some older people as they would stop going out as often as they would like. where local businesses offer their facilities in return for a financial incentive) can be a workable alternative, provided that they meet the needs of older people. Community toilet schemes (where local businesses offer their facilities in return for a financial incentive) can be a workable alternative, provided that they meet the needs of older people.
Letter	25/01/2012	... I also think it is appalling for you to consider closing the public toilets in the town, even though you introduced a charge.
Phone	01/12/2011	I feel these are a necessity for older members of the community

Proposal: 34	Close Dolphin Centre on Bank Holidays
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Method	Date	Comment
Forum	20/11/2011	Dolphin Centre should remain open on bank holidays for the reason that it is a holiday and they are usually more people in the town.

Proposal: 35	Review of Library Service
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I cannot see the logic of closing the Cockerton Library when it provides a service to the people of Cockerton, Faverdale, Mowden & the Brinkburn area. A reduction in opening days and times maybe a better answer
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an essential service. All libraries provide access to information & education and this one is at an end of town which is a good distance from the town library. This should be provided by the local council employing trained librarians who can do the job - NOT volunteers who may be well-meaning but who do not have the skills
Comment Box		The options forced upon the council are regrettable. The cuts to arts & library services are more than that. It would be a sad reflection on the town if the Arts Centre were not to provide the range of activities it does. More specifically, as a user of Cockerton library for more than 30 years it would be a great loss to the local community if it closed.
Comment Box		Keep Cockerton Library Open - Ideal for Residents - Even Better for Children
Comment Box		The Cockerton Library must be kept open. It is well situated for the area and many elderly people use it as well as the local schools. The staff are always friendly & helpful and if it is closed it will be a travesty.
Comment Box		We visit Cockerton Library nearly every other day. Once the library is closed it will be lost forever, sadly. We do not want this to happen at all
Comment Box		Many facilities are provided at Cockerton Library including provision for school children and PC access. PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE DOWN THESE OUTLETS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THIS PART OF THE TOWN.
Comment Box		Education & Cockerton Library services which benefit all ages of the community are needed
Comment Box		I cannot see the logic of closing the Cockerton Library when it provides a service to the people of Cockerton, Faverdale, Mowden & the Brinkburn area. A reduction in opening days and times maybe a better answer
Comment Box		Stop killing the town by closing or threatening to close the public library at Cockerton.
Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will be detrimental to the most vulnerable sections of the populace - the old & schoolchildren. The aged & the disabled cannot easily access the town library. At present children from nearby primary schools spend time in the library forming reading habits which last a lifetime. At present I use Cockerton Library at least once a week and its closure will affect the lifestyle of both my disabled wife and I
Comment Box		I find it totally unacceptable that the Cockerton Library and Arts Centre face closure when resources are used for other unnecessary ventures
Comment Box		Although we realise that realistic cuts have to be made, we would be very sorry to see Cockerton Library close. It is in the centre of a thriving area and would be a sad loss not only for books but as a learning centre. We have used this branch since we moved to the area in 1974 and still come here although we now live in School Aycliffe area. It's a lovely, well-run facility with very helpful staff.
Comment Box		The libraries are essential for all age groups of the area. To avoid any thought of closure I think adult readers would probably be willing to pay an annual subscription or a small tally per book borrowed. I would certainly be willing to contribute - I could not afford to buy (even second hand) all the books I read.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an essential service to the local community, its closure would be a social injustice and deprive the community of much pleasure. It is also a source of vital information and should be maintained and even improved.
Comment Box		I would like very much to keep the library as we use this a lot its good for people who want books and for internet access. I would be shocked if this went.
Comment Box		I would very much like to keep the library



Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		To take away the provision of local libraries is nothing less than an act of public criminality. So many groups, the old, the young, the vulnerable & everyone else wishing to read for pleasure or learning. Not everyone can afford to be online or to visit Waterstone's or even access the town library with ease. <b>Think Again</b>
Comment Box		We need Cockerton library especially the lack of parking facilities in the town near the big library, Savings could be made in lots of unnecessary venues eg. sand in the market place for children's day and tea dances and lots of other functions - just keep the necessities!
Comment Box		Keep Cockerton Library open, this is false economy. They give a valuable service to the local community (tax payers!) and there is free parking. The library is also used by the schools & nurseries in the area which I consider to be a service to children - many of which do not have parents who read to them.
Comment Box		Having read on the website plans to close Cockerton Library and reasons submitted for this I would like to know how you think it is going to cost £412K to £530K to move books from Crown Street Library to on of the 2 proposed locations. These figures to me seem to have been dreamt up out of the blue. No wonder these Councils are in such a sorry state if they spend as much as this to do a job like that. Surely in the public's eye common sense would say to leave Cockerton open therefore not annoying Cockerton readers and anyone in the Crown Street Library would already be in town anyway so a walk to Town Hall or Central Hall is not even another bus journey. Heating costs there would be saved as Crown Street must be a large building to maintain whereas Cockerton is only a small one level building. A very annoyed reader.
Comment Box		I was dumbfounded to learn that the Council are proposing to close a wonderful local branch library. The closure of which I do not believe will produce any significant saving. Because there is a large concentration of flats for the elderly in Cockerton many elderly and retired people live there. People in this age group tend to read more and require such facilities on their doorstep. Cockerton is probably the most important neighbourhood retail centre in Darlington outside the town centre. So I would each the Council to strongly reconsider their decision. The branch library is a valuable asset having served the community for over 40 years. Not everyone will be able to access Priestgate. Despite what the government says libraries are not redundant because of the internet. You just need to see the foot fall across Cockerton - over a quarter of the 400,000 library visitors. Following last year's consultation you must have been in receipt of hundreds of suggestions you could consider. Surely it would be more valuable to formulate a business plan for volunteers to run the library rather than close it - and for what. Another building to be vandalised and spoil the look of the village. Please rethink the proposal as the savings will be minimal and the impact great to all ages of people in the community.
Comment Box		You need to think again about closing Cockerton Library as a constant user I was appalled to read about this. Can you tell me how, as a disabled driver with health problems, I can use Crown Street library when there is only a few disabled places which are always Full!!
Comment Box		Providing entertainment subsidised by those who cannot afford to use it is hardly fair to low income groups. All subsidies to leisure centre, arts centre, theatre, municipal golf club etc should be removed
Comment Box		May I suggest that you preserve the library. Not everyone wants, or can afford a Kindle, even second hand books seem to be at least £2. Crown Street seems to be a sociable place with events for small children, visits from authors, and computer-use.
Comment Box		Firstly I warmly compliment whoever is responsible for staff selection for your libraries - I don't think they could be bettered. They are helpful, friendly and informative so thank you for that. Without Cockerton Library the village will lose its focal point entirely.
Comment Box		1. First the library & its services MUST be maintained and protected - the intellectual health of the town cannot be set against budget cuts. Volunteer workers is not the answer
Comment Box		You have already crippled our family, destroyed my terms and conditions at work, moved us closer to poverty so please don't take away my child's resources at this library
Comment Box		Cut the waste and greed of the TOP people within the Council - BE IT WAGES, EXPENSES, PERKS etc This would no doubt secure the required savings Let the LIBRARY/ARTS CENTRE remain open
Comment Box		NEED Library & Civic Theatre
Comment Box		Save Cockerton Library, for the local elderly people as well as the young school children. Cockerton Library is an easy option, which does not affect the Councillors lives. How about a hard option of reducing the senior managers at the Council and get the rest to earn their very high wages by working harder and longer, by taking on more staff to manage.

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		KEEP Cockerton Library - essential service. Introduces children to reading books, serves a wide area of population. Consider shorter opening hours, voluntary help and charging a hire charge per book of say 5/10p - this could be done via computer scanning which is done already and would not incur any additional work. People who use this library would prefer to fit into the opening hours available rather than have to use the town centre building. Do not remove any help given to disabled associates or persons
Comment Box		The library at Cockerton provides an essential service to so many people. So many things to offer - with helpfulness, politeness and knowledge. The best branch library I've ever used and a vital and much loved part of the community. PLEASE DON'T SHUT THIS - SO MANY PEOPLE WILL REALLY SUFFER
Comment Box		We hope that Cockerton Library will remain open. It has a very pleasant ambiance. The staff are always pleased & helpful. It supports the local schools, giving children a good experience. My husband & I are elderly, often taking 4-6 books at a time. Reading is our greatest pleasure and we can not carry this number of books from town.
Comment Box		Libraries are a valuable and essential part of community life. Cockerton is a thriving, expanding area which revolves around it's schools, shops & to a great extent for many, it's library. For those who can drive or use public transport, access to the Central Library is possible but by virtue of the necessity to park or use buses is no longer free! For the elderly or families, Cockerton Library is a valuable facility. It is essential that this library which is at the heart of a thriving community must remain open
Comment Box		My main concern is the proposed closure of Cockerton library which is well used in a thriving community ie Cockerton village. Surely it would be possible to provide a reduced opening hours at least. The main library is not easily accessible, especially to older and disabled people and the comments apply to the mobile library. I am also concerned about loss of facilities for younger people
Comment Box		I am utterly appalled at your proposal to close cockerton library. It is very well supported and maybe the council should look elsewhere to make savings
Comment Box		About Cockerton Library closing - why can't you make a nominal charge per book say 5 or 10p. It's a lovely place, airy and friendly staff, seeing the school classes coming in meeting people you know and having a chat Come on you surely can come up with something to keep this treasure open!
Comment Box		Library at Cockerton must be kept open
Comment Box		If you really must close Cockerton Library (at great non-financial cost to the community) I believe that attempts should be made to lease the building (on a short-term lease) so that the library could be re-instated without major rebuilding expenditure when the government move to Plan B Once demolished the library will not be rebuilt
Comment Box		I would prefer you to keep Cockerton Library open at lease half time. It is a venue which serves a much wider area than Cockerton. I have been on a computer course there, as well as regularly borrowing books. The premises are far better than a mobile service, the local school children visit in groups and I feel for staff losing their jobs. Volunteers could not cope without backup. This is definitely a backward step
Comment Box		I use Cockerton Library on a regular basis - at least once a fortnight, sometimes more. I combine the visit with shopping at the local shops. Without the library the shops will also lose custom
Comment Box		I think it would be terrible if Cockerton Library and the Arts Centre were to close - I use both places regularly and they are an important part of out community. It would cause a loss of jobs, isolation for elderly people, transport problems and a lack of cultural and entertainment opportunities for people - no way it should happen!
Comment Box		For the benefit of the local community I think the following are essential services 1. local library at Cockerton 2. Dolphin Centre swimming baths 3. Weekly bin collections but fortnightly collections are acceptable if it means retaining local libraries
Comment Box		Cockerton Library - has a review been conducted to consider private enterprise to run the library? Have volunteers under the guidance of library staff been considered? Cockerton library provides a much needed service to the west and north west areas of town. To readers, IT users, schools and young families. How do the Council intend to ensure those interested parties are catered for? What are the views of the councillors within the 6 council wards from which residents come from who also use the library, think of the decision to close it? Have noted the listings of closures and cutbacks proposed but have never seen any mention of councillors cutting back on their expenses or other remuneration.

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Cockerton Library - rather than close this thriving facility, could the opening hours be cut, still allowing school children & workers access on early evenings?
Comment Box		I have been a library member for 77 years and now my Council want to take that commodity away. Shame on you. Cockerton has a lot of pensioners and three schools & a nursery who all use the library. A small charge could be made for adults maybe. Please, please consider your people you represent and who pay council tax.
Comment Box		I am appalled at the suggestion that Cockerton Library should be closed. This is a fantastic resource for local people, supports unemployed people in providing internet access to look for jobs and will be a loss to the town if it is closed.
Comment Box		The library is the 'hub' of Cockerton village especially for the elderly who would struggle accessing the main library in the town centre. Suggest making a small contribution for lending books of 50p - £1 to help make savings
Comment Box		I do not agree with the closure of Cockerton Library. According to your feasibility study nearly 1/3rd of lending is from Cockerton. Many sections of the population can use its facilities and the fact there is free car parking is a bonus - plus the bus stops outside it. The Central Library will cost me - bus fares/petrol/car parking providing the Mowden bus route is not scrapped. Carrying up to 15 books around town is no mean feat and many disabled/pensioners & young families will find this difficult. Are you going to extend the mobile service or will that go once the leasing agreement is up? Literacy is a priority for education
Comment Box		Cockerton Library provides a wonderful service to the local community. The elderly and the very young, together with all those school children who visit as part of their curriculum, will all benefit if the library remains open. It should not close. Reduce the hours of opening, it could close on Tues & Weds without any difficulty. The cost could be met by the 20 top paid council officials taking home a realistic salary which pays them for what they do. Darlington people cannot afford to pay them top salaries for <u>not</u> balancing the books, get real and take a pay cut. How can they justify their high pay when we are all having to cut back?
Comment Box		I am very upset to hear Cockerton Library is on the list to close, there are a lot of old people like myself who rely on this library for books. The mobile library is hard for people who are arthritic and not very stable on their feet. /the staff at Cockerton are very helpful to us and they help us to reach books that are too high for us to reach. There is also the schools in Cockerton whose children all go to the library.
Comment Box		I don't agree with the closure of the Cockerton Library. It is a well used facility by all ages and social groups. I suggest the Council reduces the bloated welfare Budget by at least 10% and stop fiddling with small amounts
Comment Box		Whilst realising that some cuts have to be made, closing Cockerton Library is ludicrous. It is a much used & much loved facility and Crown Street and mobiles are not a viable option for a lot of people.
Comment Box		Cockerton library should <u>NOT</u> be closed neither should the mobile library. Both are vital if you wish to save money. Close the railway museum. The one at Sheldon is far superior and is free. Then get rid of the Mayor, the Mayor's car and chauffer. If Darlington had not <u>overpriced</u> its projects by a vast amount the situation would never arise. They made massive losses on the town hall, the Dolphin Centre & the town redevelopment. If Cockerton library closes it will cost me a fortune to park in town. also the town clerk and assistant are paid far too much. Council expenditure should be investigated
Comment Box		Closing the library would be a disaster for this community. It is very popular with both young and old and is much more accessible than Crown Street, especially the elderly. Why not introduce a small charge say £1 for books?
Comment Box		Cockerton library provides a very important service and will be sorely missed - surely other ways could be found to make savings - I could provide suggestions!
Comment Box		I, like a lot of people in the Cockerton area would be very sorry to see this branch library closed. It serves a lot of people in this district. A lot of elderly people like myself would find having to go into town very hard. Many people would not be able to. <b>Please keep it open</b>
Comment Box		I object <u>MOST</u> strongly to the closure of Cockerton Library. As a Darlingtonian, born & bred, I feel that this is an appalling, retrograde step. I have used the libraries all my life and patronise Cockerton every week. It was purpose built and serves the community admirably Has the Council forgotten that it is also used & valued on a regular basis by the <u>children in the local schools?</u> I can think of nothing more worth while than encouraging the children in their love of literature

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I consider it a very retrograde step to close Cockerton Library. It is a GODSEND to elderly people & also our younger generation who need to develop the reading habit. The library in the town centre is difficult for access when attempting to carry heavy books when trying to use buses as well. Darlington needs to retain the library in Cockerton for the welfare of the many elderly and or deprived families who cannot carry books for long distances and cannot afford transport to the town centre.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is always well used & busy including computers & toddlers groups. Can we not pay a small charge for books? If the building is closed & demolished it will never re-open and many pensioners find it difficult to get into town
Comment Box		Please do not close our Cockerton Library. It is a busy welcoming place used by lots of members of the public. People like me who read several books a week, and would find it very difficult to carry my usual load of 6 - 8 books on the bus. Staff are well known, liked and very helpful.
Comment Box		COCKERTON LIBRARY IS THE HUB OF THE VILLAGE. VITAL FOR YOUNG & OLD ALIKE. THE INTERNET IS VITAL & FREE
Comment Box		We need the library for young and old alike. Cockerton wouldn't be the same without it
Comment Box		Closing Cockerton Library and the Arts Centre is a short-sighted decision. Both are well used resources that enhance the town. The group trying to save the Arts Centre should be given the chance to do so with reduced backing from the Council (a stepped retreat). The library opening hours could be reduced but not closed entirely
Comment Box		Cockerton Library <u>MUST remain open</u> - it is very well used and performs an essential community function as a public building. Proximity to a free car park and shops also generates traffic. Please investigate reducing opening hours, using volunteers etc. There is also <u>no alternative use</u> for this building
Comment Box		Cockerton Library should remain open - it provides an essential service for local elderly and disabled residents for whom the town centre library is inconvenient. It also adds to the quality of Cockerton as a local shopping and social centre
Comment Box		Aged 6 years - can we keep this library open?
Comment Box		Aged 4 years - "I will feel so sad if my library closes"
Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open. Cockerton School children really love coming. It is part of their reading development. The children would be so sad if it were to close. It is part of our community
Comment Box		As a mother and childcare practitioner, I use the library in Cockerton on a weekly basis and can access it by walking. Encouraging people to read is so important and therefore it should be one of the places to stay open. Maybe a small charge for the books and a higher charge for the internet use could be an option.
Comment Box		I am appalled to hear of the proposed closure of Cockerton Library. This is a local amenity which many people use and is easily accessible by foot, public transport or car, with a car park adjacent to the library. Having to travel into town by car will cause even more congestion. Older people may well be put off having to go into town and also parents who visit the library with young children. A library is an essential part of the education process and reading should be encouraged. For the older generation reading is an important part of their lives. Revenue could be raised by charging a minimal fee of perhaps 10p per book. Money could be directed from other sources such as charging a fee for disabled parking. I have a concessionary pass and would be happy to pay a minimal amount per bus journey, so that could also be directed towards funding the library. I look forward to receiving your response.
Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library would be detrimental to all those who use it, particularly the most vulnerable in our society, leading to possible isolation and lack of social contact.
Comment Box		The closure of the Cockerton Library will be a great loss to all ages. Older people find it very convenient and many children attend meetings there to encourage reading. Travelling to the Crown St Library can be difficult and costly
Comment Box		Save Cockerton Library
Comment Box		To close Cockerton Library is not the thing to do, it is well used. Cockerton is a separate community.

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I feel extremely passionate about the plight of Darlington People to lose an essential facility of the Library Service. The possible loss of Cockerton library would create a "death" of a village and offer no alternative centre for people.
Comment Box		Recent media coverage has stated that in the case of libraries, litter picking etc. They are proposing asking volunteers - maybe some of the outrageously higher salaries should give their services free - they have earned enough as well as their gold plated pension pot.
Comment Box		Closing libraries is a retrograde step, a step too far in the wrong direction. Victorian philanthropy was far-sighted as the provision of library services enables individuals to improve themselves and their job circumstances. We all know cuts have to be made but please retain Cockerton Library, its a small candle of excellence in an ever-darkening world. Help individuals who do not have books and computers.
Comment Box		Please do not close Cockerton Library - Thank You
Comment Box		Start a <u>GOOD</u> café in the library - don't close the library. Provide leisure facilities that have to close because of the Arts Centre cuts. These things are important to people who are elderly disabled or somewhat isolated from their families
Comment Box		Libraries should stay open if Cockerton closes - older people will be totally lost
Comment Box		Books should be top priority. Perhaps a small annual charge could be levied to help pay the way for Cockerton Library in particular, is well worth keeping open as it is very much a community library
Comment Box		Crown Street Library. Of these, there is a question mark regarding the future of 3 of the above could go, which appears a disgrace. When the waste and greed within the council is considered. Try and get your priorities right!
Comment Box		Having lived in Cockerton for many years, I have come to look upon Cockerton library as a haven. Isn't it possible to open and staff the library on reduced days or hours? I notice that the computer terminals are always in use and also the schools regularly use the facilities. To close this facility in our community would affect many residents
Comment Box		Cockerton Library seems well used and is very popular. Any alternatives to shutting it would be well received
Comment Box		Cockerton branch of the library is very well used, schools, students, pensioners and under fives. The closure would mean that many people, particularly the elderly, would miss out on a social event and would not be able to carry books etc to the main library. A library user for several years in Darlington
Comment Box		There must be alternative ways to save money than penalising the staff, members and community of Cockerton Library <u>ie</u> Council leaders stop wasting money & claiming ridiculous wages and expenses
Comment Box		The closing of Cockerton Library will be very sad. I travel from Haughton to use the facilities, the library is always busy. I think it will have a knock-on effect on local shops who may go out of business, as I always shop while visiting here. Parking is good - perhaps if the Council did not spend money on posting copies of the 'Town Crier' to residents that would save money!! Please think again!!!
Comment Box		We object to the proposed closure of Cockerton library for a number of reasons: 1. It would remove a valuable service which caters for all ages - in fact we thought that it was a legal requirement for the Council to provide such a library service for the local community. 2. The library acts as a focal point for residents - a place where people meet on a regular basis as part of their daily shopping routine. This applies particularly to the elderly in our locality. Losing the library would have a serious impact on trade in Cockerton. 3. With central government wanting to encourage senior citizens to become computer literate, removing access to the internet at the library would clearly be a retrograde step 4. Why the obsession with cuts in services? Since you say that Darlington has the lowest council tax in the NE, why not propose a <u>modest increase in tax</u> to bring it more in line with the rest and to provide revenue to minimise the cuts needed. Shouldn't the electorate of Darlington be offered the chance to choose?
Comment Box		Closing Cockerton Library is not a good plan. You could save money by selling the Civic Theatre & keep the Arts Centre & Library open. Why not develop Cockerton Library to have a good coffee and cake shop. It would encourage more people in & be a great meeting place for the community
Comment Box		Cockerton Library & all libraries provide a very valuable service in terms of books being available to all - from young to old as well as a range of other services. It is a short-sighted move just to close it & will deprive many in the community of a safe and useful facility

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Lets get rid of the services that are used by the elite - Stressholme Golf Club, Arts Centre & Civic Theatre. Keep services used by the needy - library, social services and home helps. Please save Cockerton Library - ease of access for the elderly, open Saturdays & evenings. I work fulltime & use Cockerton Library on a Saturday - how am I supposed to get to the town library with no transport & carry books around town?? Please rethink this crazy plan, a lot of shops in Cockerton rely on business from library users. Do we want another empty building in Cockerton? I know there is a mobile library but this does not work on a weekend
Comment Box		I think it is important to keep Cockerton Library open - it is a well-used facility & not everyone would be able to go to Crown Street or mobile
Comment Box		Savings are necessary but closing this library should not be necessary as it is a vital resource for the local community - especially for the elderly - real books are very important. Cockerton will be nothing other than a dormitory
Comment Box		Cockerton Library has been a vital amenity for the people of all ages who live in Cockerton and beyond. Even though I live across town I still use the library and the Cockerton shops. I believe that the businesses will suffer if the library closes. Please reconsider and find other ways of cutting back, possibly within the Town Hall.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an <u>essential</u> part of the 'village' community in this area. It serves as a lending facility obviously, but also as a valuable educational source for schools, internet, reading service for older citizens, and would be greatly missed if closed. The increased pressure on shops and other facilities in Cockerton, through new housing developments, must also apply to the library. It is vital to the community
Comment Box		If Cockerton Library has to close, could it be a home for the Arts Centre, pending a new replacement facility in Feethams? It may boost the adjacent shopping centre as well?
Comment Box		Arrangements for the services we receive in respect of police & waste disposal are adequate and virtually all we have benefit from. However the provisions relating to library services are not acceptable. Library services were bestowed on the people by altruistically wealthy many ages ago as I am sure you are aware. The closure of any library ranks in my mind with the 'burning of the books' by Nazi Germany in the 1930's. The local library provides a refuge, forum and meeting point invaluable to all ages in the community. Children who learn to read are known to <u>progress and mature more quickly</u> . Please think again!!
Comment Box		Cockerton Library: the closure of this library would be a great loss to the community. It is well-used, the young use the computers, school groups too. It is a lifeline to the elderly like myself. I can take a bus from Heighington to a bus stop in opposite and return by bus outside the library with no distance to walk. Using Crown Street library is a difficult journey
Comment Box		Savings are necessary but closing Cockerton Library should not be one of them. This is a vital resources for the local community, particularly the elderly, for whom <u>real books</u> are very important. If library users are forced to go into town they will do their other shopping there and Cockerton will be nothing other than a dormitory village with no life left.
Comment Box		I am an 87 year old disabled pensioner, who has one pleasure and that is reading. I manage to get to Cockerton Library by car. If this library was to close I could not park near the Crown Street Library. Please do not close the Cockerton library.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library should not be closed - the library is very well used, therefore will be hugely missed. Many people would not object to paying I am sure . The library is an information hub for the community - there are very few in town. What will happen to the books? Many people <u>do not have</u> or make regular use of computers for information. PLEASE REMEMBER THIS
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is a vital asset in the community. I have lived in Cockerton for 41 years and have enjoyed using the facility. 4 generations of our family currently use this library. Libraries are a must for all ages to keep open access to books, especially in hard times. I have grown up around books in my house, my granny ran one of the 1st lending libraries from her house. I don't want my grandchildren to grow up without books. Children that grow up around books are more likely to be successful in education and life - and value books as a vital resource to learning. Removing local libraries will make books only for the privileged
Comment Box		I think Cockerton Library is a vital community resource that should be accessible for all ages. The library computers are used by all ages for family history and homework. This will be a huge loss to the community
Comment Box		The parking situation will be a great inconvenience as I don't want to have to go to the town to use the computers
Comment Box		Why close the library? It will mean more hardship and longer journey to the nearest library

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Why close the library? It's going to cost more to the Cockerton & District community and mean from a free car park to a charging one
Comment Box		It's difficult for me to get to the main library, as I'm not a car owner and can only walk a short distance with the weight of books I can carry ie. To gain access to a bus. Cockerton library is a lifeline to me for ALL THE SERVICES it offers, plus the helpfulness of the staff is great. Cockerton to me is a village and has availability for every walk of life therefore I do not need to go to town. If the library closes that will not be the case and once lost, will be very hard to get back in the future. Schools in the area will also lose out
Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will mean older residents having to carry books, which can be heavy, much further to get transport (buses) Also a lot of children are taken there, and enjoy the experience. It is an important facility for everyone.
Comment Box		This ludicrous talk of closing libraries and Arts Centres smacks of labour controlled councils trying to say 'we'll show you Tory Types!' Access to knowledge is a human right and the safety & prosperity of libraries should be enshrined in law. As should the provision of lollipop ladies/men - make 'cuts' elsewhere
Comment Box		Expenditure - preserve the library services at Cockerton. Savings - Amalgamate the duplicated services across the voluntary & statutory sector
Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open - It's a gem, well-loved, well-used & precisely the sort of service the Council should continue to provide.
Comment Box		PLEASE KEEP COCKERTON LIBRARY OPEN
Comment Box		With reference to the proposed closing of the Cockerton Library. I strongly object to the proposals. Being elderly, my wife and I can park nearby, during our weekend shopping in Cockerton, and visit weekly the library there. Saving 4 subsidised bus tickets and an uphill return from the Crown Street library.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is a facility which is much needed. Elderly people find the on-site parking a boon as it is within walking distance of the car and also shopping can be done at the same time which benefits the shops. Plus, if the Arts Centre is sold, surely an existing building could replace it rather than the venture to build new as other efforts in that direction have been a disaster!
Comment Box		Please do not close Cockerton Library - It is a hub of the community and provides pleasure and learning to many
Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open it is a lifeline for old and young.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is an essential local service that I and many family associates, friends and neighbours rely on to broaden our education. Access to books and especially PCs is something that everyone is able to do here. Removing this library is a social crime!
Comment Box		Please keep Cockerton Library open my children use this library every time they get a book. I believe closing it will also affect the local shops in Cockerton as people will go elsewhere to shop.
Comment Box		My wife and I consider Cockerton Library to be an important service for all ages.
Comment Box		I have used Cockerton library for many years elderly and school children use this facility. I find it more relaxing than the town library which for elderly in this vicinity harder to reach. The Branksome resource centre closed- Branksome Social club closed- Cockerton Village toilets closed, what else is there in this area can you use, nothing is left.
Comment Box		keep the library open in Cockerton. If this closes the community will die as the library is a social lifeline.
Comment Box		As an older person I would like Cockerton Library to stay open.
Comment Box		If you close this library you will deprive hundreds of people in Cockerton, especially the elderly and infirm. I myself visit this library one or twice a week.
Comment Box		Cockerton library is a essential to our community - a huge loss if closed down.

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Cockerton library is a essential to our community - a huge loss if closed down.
Comment Box		I use both Libraries, but Cockerton has a different choice and I come here for variety.
Comment Box		I use Cockerton Library as it has the best access I have a buggy and I can't use lifts. This library has been a part of my life for years and for generations my gran even uses it and we have all brought our children along to use it. there will be nothing to pass on to family if it goes.
Comment Box		Re Cockerton Library closure proposal - I am 86 years old with a disabled sticker and can get into Cockerton Library from anywhere in the car park, but if there are no disabled bays free at Crown Street then I have too far to walk. I have no wheelchair and I read more than 15 books in 3 weeks so the mobile library would not suffice - besides I can't carry 15 books. I feel I have some independence when using Cockerton Library - I would have to rely on others to access Crown Street or the mobile library - which has fewer large print books that I need and less frequency of availability anyway. The population is aging and I can only presume these types of difficulties will increase in time. I hope you will reconsider closing Cockerton Library as I will feel lost without it.
Comment Box		Disabled bays for parking are very limited at Crown Street Library. If you close the library at Cockerton you will restrict access to the internet for aged/infirm and disabled who have no access in their homes. When this government is trying to encourage the use of technology by 'silver surfers' and the less well-off in society, it seems illogical to reduce internet access in this part of the town
Comment Box		I would like to express my disappointment at hearing the proposals to close Cockerton Library. My son & I visit every week I feel it is important to make it easy for people to get into reading. To have to go all the way into town with the 6 books we borrow each week does put me off taking my son to the library at all
Comment Box		My priorities are: Essential 1) Library - local as well as in town centre 2) Rubbish Collection 3) Elderly Care Services
Comment Box		I have used Cockerton Library for many years and like many people, find the service invaluable. The Internet is a really good thing to offer the elderly as it often can be a way of keeping in touch with relatives and friends alike.
Comment Box		I am <b>96 years old</b> & have been using the Cockerton Library for many years. My Drs surgery is close by and I can do my shopping also. Undoubtedly many retired people are in the same position as me. Many other activities take place and the library is well-used. It would be very difficult to use the town library owing to parking difficulties & my limited mobility. The staff are very helpful and in my opinion it serves a lot of people - I would estimate hundreds
Comment Box		I think you should keep Cockerton Library open. It provides a very useful service. You could save money by getting people who use the computers at both libraries by paying for the first 30 minutes instead of getting it free
Comment Box		Two Schools in Cockerton use the library and we use it all the time, Cockerton is a great place to shop if the library is to close, that could be the start of a decline in Cockerton...more unused shops in Darlington.
Comment Box		Cockerton library is accessible with friendly helpful staff. My son and I go there weekly for tapes and books. One of the most amazing thing about a library is the access to books, that you can't buy. For me just walking down the rows of books is a way of relaxation. Books open up a world of possibility for me. so please don't close Cockerton library.
Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will have a huge impact on our family, given that we are working parents and time is limited. Cockerton is accessible for us. We prefer not to allow our children to have internet access and encourage them to research using the library. closing the library will prevent children from being able to use bookstand be a factor in exposing them into online dangers and childhood obesity.
Comment Box		Closure of Cockerton library will mean my children will not access a library as I couldn't afford to take 3 children on a bus. Also rhymetime is the only free activity for children in Cockerton. Such rhymes and singing has been proven to help children's confidence and ability to learn at school - would mean my children are deprived of the tools to learn
Comment Box		I feel that the proposed closure of Cockerton Library is wrong & misguided. It is widely used, within a community that, as its accessible, would use it, but otherwise would not travel into the main library. It is also easy to park there. The computers are also widely used. The Council has a responsibility to encourage literature in this area of the town.



Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		The library should not close as the local schools & playgroup use it as a resource and an outing as well as members of the public. The closure of the library would impact on other local businesses that would lead to reduced revenue for the Council in the future for business rates. As a library user I would miss the library an enormous amount. I would find the distance to Crown Street too great when carrying books and I'm able bodied. The library at Cockerton is not only an asset it's an essential. While sitting to fill this form out, a local school class has come in to the library to take books out
Comment Box		I do not think the library should close. I bring my daughter (aged 4) after I finish work and pick her up after school. If it closes then we will be unable to use the library in town as too far to travel and too late at night. We are unable to go at the weekends
Comment Box		KEEP IT OPEN - closing the library is overall NOT A GOOD IDEA. Will take longer, force me into town centre and cost at parking meter. SAVE MONEY ON NEEDLESS ROAD & PATH WORKS
Comment Box		The library shouldn't close - 27% of library usage in town is via Cockerton. Closure will have a significant commercial impact on the village. The building if not used will be left to fall apart be vandalised & become an eyesore. Local children being encouraged to read won't have a lending outlet locally. Cockerton has a predominantly elderly population who will be greatly inconvenienced if made to travel to main branch (where less friendly) Won't be able to borrow books at a convenient and very friendly outlet that has easy access by car or more especially on foot. Will have to come into town centre which I dislike and causing more congestion & car emissions - it's a more expensive journey and further to drive. We shouldn't be discussing the closure (of the library) its a disgrace.
Comment Box		I believe the library in Cockerton offers an unparalleled service in terms of access and opening hours - it is a part of the local community and a lifeline to many of Darlington's citizens who if polled, I am sure, would in these times of austerity prefer to lose the Christmas lighting/floral displays etc in the town to preserve basic well-used services such as the library.
Comment Box		It's disgraceful that closing Cockerton Library is even being suggested. Closing yet another local resource for kids - if this goes we will want to move out of the area!
Comment Box		I will be unable to use library services if Cockerton closes as Crown Street is too far. For local school children, members of the public & local business would be devastating for Cockerton library to close - the impact could have long-term effects - especially to schools and business
Comment Box		Easy parking at Cockerton Library - not so at town library, so can collect shopping too and ladies are really helpful. It's closure will spoil a lovely experience selecting and collecting books. Clearly those who want library shut do not use a library!
Comment Box		I have breathing difficulties and using this library is a lifeline and easier than the town for me. The town library is lovely but most times I am unable to manage to go
Comment Box		Cockerton Library is convenient and a pleasure to visit. It's part of the Cockerton community. I can also drop my wife off there and then pick her up later which would be more difficult to attend with my wife - see above
Comment Box		No parking problems at Cockerton library and if it closes it would be losing the centre of the community. Children would lose invaluable access to literature and it would be a cultural loss to the community
Comment Box		My whole access to read and learn will be affected and I will not be able to spend quality time with my grandchildren as my grand-daughters do their studying in the library. We all would be greatly disappointed if it ever closed. We wouldn't know what to do - KEEP IT OPEN for everybody's sake please
Comment Box		I am disabled so the easy parking near Cockerton Library and the shops is important for me. I think more of the local community will be impacted on - the library encourages reading amongst young and old
Comment Box		The local library (at Cockerton) has an impact far in excess of cost. It is a vital part of the community and encourages children to read. Going to Crown Street with children & the elderly is difficult. Could voluntary contributions be asked for as in the BALTIC CENTRE and museums in USA? People also use the local shops at the same time. Children use the computers - not everyone has a home computer
Comment Box		Closing Cockerton Library would impact on my grandchildren. There is peace and quiet for studying. Going to town for the library means parking - but this way we do our shopping and our friends live nearby, so we see them also

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		This library is an important amenity for residents of the area of all ages. My view is that it cannot be expensive to run a small branch like this one, and it provides so much to the area, that it is <b>vital that this library is kept open, as a service &amp; information provider</b> . If this library is closed I will not be able to use the lending section or the internet, which I do now regularly. I also access local events & services information on display. This library is a lifeline of information. The impact of this idea is cutting off services to all the residents of this part of Darlington - how much does it cost to run this small branch library? Surely the benefits provided outweigh its running costs.
Comment Box		As a childminder, I and the children I care for would miss the library terribly. Not only rhyme time on a Thursday and the book lending but the fact that we meet friends there and attend holiday fun things for the children and use the reference section for homework and projects. I would not be able to attend Crown Street most days as I cannot walk small children that far and am unable to get a double buggy on the bus most days. The children would miss out on the social aspect of the library and <b>Ofsted</b> is always interested in childminders being part of and <b>using the wider community - so this would be a great miss for all.</b>
Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library in my area will affect the whole family
Comment Box		Mount pleasant School will lose out as Cockerton library is closer and we can only really use that one
Comment Box		This library provides an easily accessible facility with parking behind and gives a great service to those in Cockerton 7 Faverdale and surrounding villages without people having to pay bus fares or parking fees to access Crown Street library. It affects everyone in the community but the council have been given little choice but to make cuts due to Government cutbacks. Our community must pull together to save facilities which have served us well for many years. I still have to drive into the town centre (extra mileage from my village) and also pay car parking fees if I use Crown Street library. Making a leisurely visit to a public library much more stressful and expensive
Comment Box		Much has been written by Darlington Borough council about closing venues, but no one on this Council has suggested that the money that the many extremely highly paid staff eg. Ada Burns, could take a pay cut. The money generated from this would save Cockerton Library which is enjoyed by thousands
Comment Box		I will have to travel to town if the library closes which is very unfair
Comment Box		It will be very inconvenient if Cockerton library closes as I will have to travel into the town
Comment Box		The closure of Cockerton Library will mean we are unable to access any library. I am unable to pay for us all on the bus to access the town library. Also rhyme time that the library provides is a free activity that encourages children to help them become more confident. My children will not access a library and be deprived of the tools to educate them
Comment Box		If Cockerton Library was to be closed I would not be able to take my child there, therefore he would miss out, as would my family having a great service close to where we live. If the library closed it would not just be a case of people could go to the main one, as a lot of old people go there and perhaps going into town would deter them & it might be too far to travel (they might not be very mobile). Plus there is the social side as people meet there to catch up as we make use of the facilities, books, pc's, cd's etc. The closure I believe would have <u>a big impact</u> on the whole local community and this would/could have negative effects. The library is an important resource which I believe should be protected and kept open
Comment Box		To reduce or close access to Cockerton library affects my whole family we use the library a lot for school project research, encouraging children to read. Socially, we use rhyme time on a Thursday morning
Comment Box		This would mean it was difficult to get to the main library and then less access to books
Comment Box		Should Cockerton Library close my children will be affected most by not having a library facility within easy walking distance. Also the social activities in place for my youngest son will not have a centre that will bring him into contact with books and learning outside of the home. This will have a negative impact on us - libraries have always been a social hub and they should remain a permanent fixture

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Why does Cockerton Library have to be closed? It is always busy when I visit with people using the internet, choosing books and I have also seen a lot of mothers with children. The library is a lifeline especially to the elderly. If the library is closed I cannot get to Darlington by car - If I did use the bus, which is very infrequent, I could not carry my books. I read a lot and use the library at the very least once a week, more often 2-3 times
Comment Box		I couldn't find much detail on this proposal but I use the library regularly. If Cockerton library closes then I won't use the town service much for my son and I as I don't go into town much.
Comment Box		My son goes to the library every 3 weeks with school to get library books. Cockerton library is within walking distance so the children get fresh air and exercise as well as access to many more books than at their school. I doubt any alternative provision would be made available and this would lead to limited reading material for my son
Comment Box		If I need library services I always use Cockerton as it is convenient and not as difficult as it is for us to go into town - /I would be less likely to use library services as there is more traffic in town if I have to drive there.
Comment Box		As a family we use the library on a weekly basis I take my son to rhyme time and my daughter takes books out with Cockerton Primary School and with her dad. The library is close to our home address and doesn't require the use of a car. Using the library encourages children to explore books they wouldn't normally have access to. It is a disgrace that it will be closing. This will not help the future generation to grow up with books.
Comment Box		Don't close Cockerton Library
Comment Box		Don't close Cockerton Library
Comment Box		Don't close Cockerton Library
Comment Box		My son goes to Cockerton Library with his school and gets 3 different books every 3 weeks. I also use the library particularly the computers It would be inconvenient to have to use the town centre library. What has led to this proposal when there are only two libraries in the town? My son won't have access to a variety of books if the library closes. It is a very valuable resource for Cockerton
Comment Box		In the library I would like more books and genres eg. physical exercise & diet and nutrition. Also I've noticed only a few books on martial arts, kung-fu and self defence. Also I want to draw attention to the library and its help for people who are ex-hospital & prison eg. mentally ill, or drug users who need the books and information to get well
Comment Box		We use the library for internet access and consider it a valuable part of the community
Comment Box		I will be very sad if the library closes. I like all the books to help me with my homework and would be lost for learning without it
Comment Box		I really like to draw while my man uses the internet and chooses books and I would be lost without it
Comment Box		I would have no internet access or be able to regularly choose books as I'm on a low income and can't afford to buy. Closing the library would be the loss of an integral part of the community facilities
Comment Box		I have 3 children aged 6, 4 & 2 all of whom have a real love of books. The library is the main source of reading material for our 5 year old and my 4 year old daughter and they go at least twice a week to get out of the house and to drop off books. In addition to this, the library provides an important facility in its music rhyme time for my wife and our 2 year old. As more services get cut back it seems to be community cantered projects that are losing out and the library at Cockerton is a facility which provides an important meeting place for community and learning to be developed. with one car in the family, going to Crown Street is not a realistic option at the same frequency, so the closure of Cockerton would mean that our main library usage would be greatly reduced. The overall impact of this proposal would be to further marginalise those in the community who don't have internet access - especially when so much of education/employment benefit info is now web-based. This removes an important facility for building community - particularly for mums with young families and it reduces opportunities for families to engage in developing their children's reading and research skills

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		We would miss Cockerton Library if it closed. It is very convenient and a valuable amenity.
Comment Box		We would not be able to get to the library as frequently if Cockerton library closed - and would really miss going with school
Comment Box		I find the library in Cockerton is easy to get to and enjoy having it within easy walking distance of my home
Comment Box		I use Cockerton Library at least twice a week with my 3 children. My son is an advanced reader and reads 4 or 5 library books per week. Without Cockerton library we will struggle to provide enough reading material for him (his school advised us to use the library) Both elder children benefit from visits to the library with school - books and reading are a very normal part of their lives. My youngest daughter loves the weekly rhymetime sessions developing her listening, speaking and social skills. The overall impact of this proposal will be: a loss of internet access for those without home access, the loss of important focal point for community, an impact on literacy skills and loss of early familiarity with enjoyment of books and reading and an overall reduced library usage - families like ours without access to a car through the week will not make the journey as often to the town centre library.
Comment Box		As I walk to my local library I will be unable to borrow books. I use public transport and due to my age I am not able to attend the Crown Street library or to carry books home. This will make life very difficult, therefore my future of a lending library looks to be ended
Comment Box		Unable to take children to library if it closes. Provides essential services o local people especially elderly and young, Gives me and my children a couple of enjoyable afternoons during school holidays, children get to choose new books or story CDs and I get to choose same for myself. Allows me access to other adults with children during rhymetime sessions. I don't get to meet many people. Daughter goes to library every 3 weeks with school if this is taken away her access to free choice of books and materials will impact greatly on an educational level. I can't drive and buses are expensive so it would limit my access to library facilities if Cockerton closed.
Comment Box		Child at Cockerton school so weekly visits maybe curtailed. However Cockerton library is limited stock anyway. Difficult but unavoidable.
Comment Box		Not only would a closure of Cockerton library be a loss of a local venue for many, it is a significant part of Cockerton village for all ages
Comment Box		The Cockerton Library and all the village is very valuable to older residents. Free Parking and the ability to do all one's business in a small area is necessary for older people
Comment Box		Cockerton library provides a service per capita or based on floor space far in excess of other areas of the library service. Darlington itself is the worst served BC in the North East. We have 2 of the most deprived wards services by Cockerton. To use Crown Street citizens will have to pay for parking, public transport or walk. You thereby reduce an already sparse service to nil.
Comment Box		End the Town Crier and negotiate advertising space in free papers/Northern Echo. Save Cockerton Library.
Comment Box		Cockerton Library excellent services and staff helpful and know their job. Used extensively - not to be closed.
Comment Box		My mother-in-law is blind and disabled. I cannot get a number 2 bus into Darlington as they are not wheelchair friendly. This is her only pleasure Cockerton library and the talking books. Please don't close this library.
Comment Box		That this library should remain open it is a place of learning, social centre for all in the community . I will not be able to carry books to and from a bus stop in town. My enjoyment of my social life of my visiting Cockerton Library will be diminished . Since 1971 has won by hard work by staff it's own special place in the heart of Cockerton residents of all ages.
Comment Box		Unable to walk to town, cannot afford to catch bus 3 times a week. I use the shops when in Cockerton, my house is up for sale at the moment and I hope to retire to Cockerton as my Doctors is there. I believe Robineaux (Cake Shop) was opening a coffee shop. This will have such an impact on people I would use the computers also when I retire. Also hoped to take grandchildren there. It would be such a loss for the children of the area, not everyone has cars and do you realise how much the bus fares are? What could be better than coming out of school and going for books in library?

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Cut the number of councillors by half - save approx £200,000 or cut the allowance of councillors by half - save £200,000 cut the salary of council leader - save £20,000 open Cockerton on only 3 days - save £50,000 open Cockerton Library as normal but man with a mix of paid staff and volunteers save 350,000
Comment Box		I use the library 2 or 3 times a week at least. I call with my granddaughter on way home from school which she enjoys very much. I will miss the friendliness of the staff and meeting people in the village. The library is easily accessed and staff are extremely helpful at all times. It is not easy to access town library. I cannot carry as many books from town along with shopping. It is convenient for shopping at the same time. The buses from my area only run every half hour where I can reach Cockerton very easily.
Comment Box		As I have a serious heart problem and angina and lot or arthritis I will no longer be able to walk to my library. I am not always able to get to town and therefore will not be able to change books as frequently, also find the library is a good place to chat to other people . I will miss interacting with others. Please don't close our library and make it even harder for the elderly.
Comment Box		Closure of Cockerton library will be a massive loss to the Cockerton community, it is used by all members of the community from the young to the elderly. Having the town centre library as the only library in Darlington will create difficult for some people accessing not only books but a focal point of social contact.
Email	19/11/2011	I wish to register my concern and dismay on learning today about the proposed closure of Cockerton library. This library is a great asset to the local community and would be greatly missed. It is also staffed by excellent staff who I also understand are to lose their jobs. PLEASE THINK AGAIN and reconsider the impact of this proposed closure. I realise that there is still the main library in town but this is far from convenient who wants to pay for bus fares or car parking. Please do not close this excellent library. I would also like to complain about hotmail addresses being excluded from being allowed to send emails through your on line messaging services via your web site.
Email	03/12/2011	feel that the proposed closure of Cockerton library would not serve the needs of the elderly, those with physical disadvantages, and blue badge holders, as well as a considerable number of children. If the Council compares access with access to Crown Street, I believe they must agree that Cockerton has a decided advantage. There is a large free car park close behind with good facilities for blue badge holders within a few yards of the doors. There is a convenient bus stop only a few yards away, and the area has much lighter traffic. In contrast, Crown Street now has a constant stream of traffic, as almost every bus service passes along it. It is not easy for the elderly and the infirm to get to the library, and there are steps at each entrance. Cockerton library is well stocked with books and magazines, and a high proportion of its readers are elderly. It would be laughable to claim that it could be adequately replaced by mobile services. I fully accept that the service should be curtailed, but this could as well be done by closing both libraries for certain hours or certain days, because complete closure would be a real blow to the elderly, like myself, who constitute a large proportion of library users .
Email	07/12/2011	I am most disappointed to hear of the proposal to close the above, I am sure everyone recognises the need to save money in the present climate, however, this to say the least appears somewhat of a drastic step. If the library does close it is more than a safe bet that it will not open again even in happier times. Can I ask you therefore to reconsider your proposals, perhaps the library could open only open two days a week thereby reducing costs but still offering the facility to Cockerton resident and beyond, also a 50pence per book charge could also offset the cost.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	16/12/2011	<p>Referring to the Article in the Town Crier I would like to comment as follows:-Looking at the size of the Budget , why is Arts Culture and Leisure a very small part of the Budget apparently taking such a massive hit ? Is it the easy option ?I'm against in particular the Closure of Cockerton Library and The Arts Centre. Cockerton Library is a purpose built building light , friendly atmosphere but functional. A large percentage of the users of Cockerton Village are Elderly and the Library is a very important place and serves a social need and meeting place as well as its Library use. I doubt the building could be used for any other purpose and would be demolished. I once read in a National Sunday Newspaper that the Darlington Arts Centre was one of the best Art Venues outside London ! Does it really have to close ? Once these places are gone they never return and are gone forever. The Art Centre is a vibrant place used by college students nearby, many Groups and Societies across the spectrum of the Arts. Is the space used to it's full capacity or could it be made smaller ? Is there land at the rear that could be sold for development ?</p> <p>Could more be made of the Restaurant facilities. It will be a great loss to the Town to close it. The idea of building a new one from the proceeds fills me with Horror. Every Town of any size has it's mediocre New Arts Centre, Darlington has something special already - make better use of it. It's very difficult as a Layman to suggest where the axe should fall but have all the Savings really been made that can be from the 'Back Office'. Is everybody working to full capacity and potential - can job sharing be part of the answer . I hope there are no 'Politically Correct' jobs in the Back Room !One suggestion - do we really need a Golf Club ?</p> <p>Whether it's partly subsidised or not. Darlington is surrounded by many golf Clubs all offering reduced Membership offers and short of Members. Sell it and fund the Art Centre which is of use to a far larger spectrum of Darlington's Residents. It would also probably remain a Golf Club by it's purchasers.</p>
Email	17/12/2011	<p>I am a retired librarian and a regular user of Cockerton Library. The Library not only provides a book lending service but access to the Internet for people of all ages. In these difficult economic times there must be many people unable to purchase books or have access to the Internet in their home. The staff provide an excellent service and are always very helpful. If the library closes will the staff be made redundant or employed at Crown Street Library? Access to the library is very easy with free car parking very close by. To access Crown Street Library I would either have to pay to park my car (perhaps the Council could consider providing free parking for library users?) or walk some distance to and from a bus stop which would mean that I could only carry a very limited number of books. The closure of the Library would also have a detrimental effect on the shopping facilities in Cockerton and possibly loss of jobs. I'm sure I would not be the only person who would not use the local shops if I did not visit the Library. I sincerely hope that the Council will reconsider the proposal to close Cockerton Library.</p>
Email	20/12/2011	<p>As part time residents of Cockerton Green and 90% council tax payer (we own a second home on the green) we deplore the proposal to close the library. The council's own website described Cockerton Library as "very much part of the local community" and remarks that "regular visits from local schools encourage use and involvement with the library and foster a lifelong love of reading" We can only agree. Frequently while in residence at Cockerton we hear the animated sound of local primary school children on their way too or from the library. This is an excellent thing and it is only a shame that it cannot be repeated throughout the borough. Mobile libraries can never replace the experience of sitting in a room full of books. We use the library and the internet access. During our visits there are usually a number of people in the library and in the evenings several school children seemingly doing homework tasks. This again is not possible in mobile units. Crown Street at present never open beyond 6pm is probably out of reach.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	19/01/2012	<p>I wish to register my objection to the proposed closure of Cockerton Library. The Library is very much valued by those who use it. The staff are very dedicated and the service provided is excellent. It is the 'jewel in the crown' of Library provision in the Town. It is a Community facility which is used by all ages from the very young to the elderly. Its closure will particularly create hardship for the elderly residents who use it. In your proposals it is stated that Crown Street Library is easily accessed by all, either by public transport, car or bicycle. The only realistic way for most elderly people to access Crown Street Library is by car. How are they going to carry several books from the Library to their nearest bus stop? Some of the bus stops in the Town Centre are quite a way from the Library, together with fact that not all areas of the Town have particular good bus services. To go to the Crown Street Library by car would mean parking in one of the car parks adjacent to the Library, thus incurring car parking charges. Users of Cockerton Library can park free next to the Library thus enabling the borrowing of several books at a time as they do not have far to walk to their car or bus stop.</p> <p>I also know that Cockerton School use the Library facilities and it is lovely to see the children enjoying their Library visits as part of their education. Having said the above, I do realise the pressures being put on Council budgets not only in Darlington but countrywide. I think, however, that with some creative thinking the Library provision at Cockerton could continue. Has any thought been given to whether Crown Street Library is the right location. It is a wonderful historic building, but it must be very costly to run. Cockerton Library occupies a very small site and surely if it closed the building and land could not easily be used for other purposes. Its closure could also have an impact on the businesses in Cockerton village as the Library facilities do bring people into the Village. Has any consideration been given to reducing opening hours at Crown Street and Cockerton Library and reducing the use of Mobile Library to spread the cost of the savings required, so that all 3 facilities could be kept open. This I feel would be a much better option and fairer to all concerned. If Cockerton Library closes it will be a great loss to the Community as a whole and also the Council will lose some excellent members of staff.</p>
Email	02/12/2012	<p>I feel that Cockerton library has some important advantages for the elderly and the young, as well as the physically disadvantaged. It backs on to a large free car park with close access for blue badge holders, is easily accessible by bus, and is well stocked. It does not have the bus traffic constantly that Crown Street has, and could not possibly be adequately replaced by mobile services. Whilst I agree that restrictions in days or hours would be feasible, closure would be a major blow to the elderly and infirm, who constitute a large proportion of library users.</p>
Email	13.12.2911	<p>If the council chooses to close Cockerton Library it will be a very bad move. I personally will be devastated because I, and many others like me, are frequent and regular users of this glorious facility. It is the lifeblood of Cockerton and a great source of culture, education and leisure. We pay our Council Taxes and fully expect to have the earned right to have this invaluable facility readily available. If you close the library you will create great hardship for so many of us, especially people like me; I am disabled and am able to manage the journey to Cockerton with reasonable ease. The journey to Crown Street, on the other hand, would be impossible and regrettable. Cockerton Library is the centre of culture in a village which has nothing but shops. The village has nothing else to offer people if this facility is removed. It affords invaluable education to all who use it, and mothers and their children enjoy the warmth and shelter of its irreplaceable contents. Do not take away our critical heritage and demean the name of Darlington Borough Council. I believe that so many of us would be prepared to pay more in council tax to retain our birthright.</p>
Event	12/12/2011	<p>Cockerton Library – well used for more than one reason. Unemployment means people need something more to do. Seems a waste, what other options are there? Computer facilities – well used. Not everyone has a PC. Using the town library, no parking near by, bus is expensive to come to town. Mausoleum of a building, close Crown Street rather than Cockerton.</p>
Event	12/12/2011	<p>Cockerton Library – A well used facility, what do you propose to do with the building and do you think volunteers could run it?</p>
Forum	17/11/2011	<p>Well I haven't got the full details of the judgement yet but can I ask how the proposal covers the issues raised by the Somerset and Gloucestershire Library closure judgement which states that the library closures do not comply with "public sector equality duties" owed to vulnerable social groups.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Forum	21/11/2011	Put simply the business case behind the closure of Cockerton does not make sense. 10000 people use the library it accounts for 27% of usage of all library services in town. It brings footfall and business to the local traders. The library computers are always in use, the wards surrounding the library have some of the worst digital inclusion rates for the whole town. Local Authority and Government Services are more and more being put online but this puts at least 26% of the population in Darlington who do not have internet access at a social and economic disadvantage. The rationale mentions bus services from the area into town, but these are being cut back elsewhere in the budget proposal. Also users at Cockerton come from ALL parts of town, people use the specialist shops e.g. the only toy shop in town, butchers, pet shop, bakers etc. Cockerton Library is an essential part of the community hub and should be treated as an asset, a jewel in the crown.
Forum	21/11/2011	Crazy proposals. Darlington clearly undervalues its libraries. For a town of 100,000 people the current provision of Crown Street, Cockerton and a mobile library compares badly with places of a similar size. If it's all about saving money why not also close down Crown Street and replace it with a portacabin parked up somewhere? No doubt Cockerton Library (just like the Civic Theatre) will be saved and we will all be grateful to our Labour Group.
Forum	26/11/2011	Cockerton Library is a valued resource, used by many people thanks to its excellent location and dedicated staff. It is very easy to park nearby, and it attracts people to use the local shops too. The Crown Street Library is not at all convenient, especially for older residents, who may not be able to carry heavy books to a bus stop where the service is reduced anyway. The statistics that 95% of the population could access the Crown Street Library in 30 minutes is not helpful. 95% could probably also go to Stockton in about the same time. Be realistic - keep a great resource that is usable.
Forum	02/12/2011	The proposed closure of Cockerton Library would be a great loss to the old, the disabled and many children who find access to Crown Street difficult and dangerous. Cockerton is easily accessible by car, with a large free car park and places for blue badge holders just behind, and is much safer for pedestrians and for bus stops than the interminable bus traffic in Crown Street. It is used by many young children because of the safety features and has a good stock of books and magazines which no mobile library can rival. I believe that restricted days or hours would be acceptable, but complete closure would be a major deprivation for the elderly and infirm, who comprise a large proportion of readers and library users.
Forum	16/12/2011	Cockerton Library is a valuable local resource - it's frequently used by local schools such as Cockerton Primary School. Is the council seriously expecting the schools to walk (or bus) their pupils to Crown Street Library? You need to be more creative in your proposals - why not look at different opening hours for Cockerton and Crown Street Library?
Letter	20/11/2011	It is appalling that you are shutting down Cockerton Library. It has a lot of use and is a lovely place. I prefer it to Darlington Library because of the staff. So if you do shut down Cockerton Library do not make the lovely librarians redundant. They are very helpful, kind and willing to talk to you every time I visit. If you close Cockerton Library lots of people will be upset and cross.
Letter	28/11/2011	I urge you to reconsider the decision to close Cockerton Library. Another measure designed to provide a kick in the teeth to those who support arts in all their forms. Darlington council has a commendable reputation for supporting the arts - please do not throw it away now for the sake of making easy short-term decisions.
Letter	26/01/2012	I wish strongly to oppose your intention to close Cockerton Library. It is well attended by pensioners and classes of small children.
Petition	20/12/2011	We the undersigned residents, and families of residents, of Squires Court, Woodland Road, Darlington urge Darlington Borough Council to reconsider its decision to close the Cockerton Public Library. <b>[Signed by 60 residents]</b> .
Petition	26/01/2012	Re: Proposed Closure of Cockerton Library. "We are opposed to the proposal to close Cockerton Library. Any such closure will have a severe impact on the many library users in the Cockerton area and from further afield. In addition the contribution that this busy library makes to the local economy is substantial. If implemented the closure will have a substantial negative impact on a large number of retail and other businesses in the area." <b>[Signed by 36 members of the local business community]</b>
Phone	02/11/2011	I think it is outrageous to propose closure of Cockerton library. Go back from the main library it is up a bank to the bus and with heavy books it is very difficult if you have asthma and are over 70. I read over 5/6 books a week. Also bus fares for families will mean it is unaffordable for them.
Phone	17/11/2011	Commented that she was clearly not in favour of the proposal
Phone	28/11/2011	This is a service that a lot of people require and rely on.
Phone	01/12/2011	Have they considered charging a fee form membership or book hire
Phone	08/12/2011	I'm disabled and I've spoke to other older people - we rely on Cockerton Library. The mobile library isn't convenient. For me to get into the town would be practically impossible.



Method	Date	Comment
Phone	09/12/2011	Myself and my children are regular users of the library. Not only for borrowing books but also the craft activities in the school holidays. It would be a great loss for people of all ages living in this area.

Proposal: 38	Bowling Green Maintenance
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Keep the bowling greens which are one of the only forms of exercise for the older generation
Event	05/12/2012	Are the Council not interested in minority groups – Bowling has already taken a cut last year. Impact on elderly people. Not able to maintain and cut greens as they are too old. Most have commitments to family at home. Why cutting bowling again? My understanding is that the greens are to be cut by Members. All sport in Darlington has gone downhill. Council not interested in sport at all.

Proposal: 39	Review of Environmental Crime Team
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	569 PENALTY NOTICES If it continues; increase the fines and make the culprits tidy up in public!

Proposal: 40	South Park Budget Reduction
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		STOP spending money on expensive and needless iron work gates at Sugar Hill which is just a heap of grass with no amenities, as well as in the Denes. Do we really need such ornate gates?
Email	21/12/2011	Hello, after reading the Town Crier about the proposing cuts I'd like to make the following suggestions. The South Park is a major focal point in Darlington, how many parks have their own aviary? It was with much sadness to read that it's the council's intention to close the aviary to save funds, why can't the council think of a way that the aviary could bring in money, why not offer people to adopt a parrot, cockatiel, canary, duck etc. That would be great fun for children and very helpful to parents who don't want to buy a pet. Why not have a firm like Pets at Home sponsoring the aviary, a large sign could be put up advertising that company, or have these ideas already been thought through and are not practical or cost cutting for some reason. It would be a crying shame to reduce the parks attractions, we don't want to see the park go back into decline again. I look forward to hearing your comments. Best regards, Tracey Chad. Street Champion.
Event	09/12/2012	Council invested a substantial amount of money in South Park – very clear that due to the isolation of the building (day care centre) that CCTV was required. The proposal to withdraw CCTV monitoring would result in buildings becoming targets of crime.
Phone	30/11/2011	Can't see how the LA can afford to invest £130 Million in Central Park, when they aim to save £30,000 in South Park, doesn't make sense - "What are they playing at."

Proposal: 41	Reduce floral displays across Borough
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	Reduce floral displays... Let people plant their own. Again, no negativity about safety please. Find places where the public can put plants and flowers away from traffic; e.g., instead of St Cuthbert's Way. Name and shame anyone that is proven to have damaged anything!
Phone	01/12/2011	Shocked that DBC are cutting funding for flower displays as this brings a lot of people into Darlington.

Proposal: 47	School Crossing Patrol Service
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		They are there on the roads for the safety of out children in all weather! Would volunteers do that! Also who would monitor the volunteers and who they are?
Comment Box		Losing the lollipop man on West Auckland Road junction will mean I can't cross the road safely on the way to and from school (Holy Family)
Comment Box		Losing the lollipop man on our dangerous road to school (West Auckland Road - opposite Brown Trout) will affect us all. I will not be able to safely cross my children to go to school. We have a right to get our children to school safely. Parents will drive and cause further parking problems on Prior Street. also, this will not encourage children to be active by walking or taking scooters, as it will be too dangerous
Comment Box		Removal of school crossing patrols will affect my 3 children, the community of Cockerton and the whole of the Borough. This is a serious safety risk
Email	05/12/2011	I am most concerned regarding the possible withdrawal of School crossing patrols, I note they are not required by law therefore more vulnerable to budget reductions, however, surely the council has a fundamental obligation for school children May I point out the article in the town crier which states quite clearly that child protection will be maintained and children are safe from harm it is a nonsense therefore to withdraw crossing patrols as this will inevitably place them in danger, I'm certain you don't want Darlington Council to suffer a child's injury or even a fatality as a consequence of money. I note also in the echo that you are looking at the possibility of volunteers operating the patrols in the future, I believe this is a non starter as it has proved difficult to fill vacancies even when paid. I believe this is a scrooge like attitude on behalf of the council as the amount of wages the lollipop men and woman is a mere pittance in the broad scheme of things, surely the interest you earn from banking abroad would meet the wage bill without making a dent. Can I ask you therefore to shelve these proposals as I believe not do so will have dire consequences and you are not merely paying lip service to children's safety.
Email	08/12/2011	Save the lollipop men and ladies, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN THIS SERVICE BE ABOLISHED - it just wont work with volunteers.
Email	16/01/2012	Thank you for your E-mail and I note the contents therein, I note also you continue to stress there is no legal requirement, however surely the council has a moral obligation to provide a service to ensure the safety of children. You state that at the moment the council has no plans at the moment to withdraw the service and are looking at a feasibility study for alternatives. I am in no doubt that this will involve volunteers operating patrols, as I stated in my original E-mail it has proved difficult filling posts in the past even when paid therefore it seems most unlikely that volunteers will come forward, may I suggest therefore that Councillors Nixon and Winstanley don the appropriate gear and man a school crossing patrol on a cold and windy day and experience first hand the problems involved. After such an experience would they honestly expect someone to volunteer. Unfortunately it is my experience that all decisions have been made and consultation etc will make no difference whatsoever, finally may I say that money should have no bearing on children's safety.
Forum	01/12/2011	This absolutely can not happen! I live on West Auckland Rd, close to the junction with Brinkburn Rd, and the crossing patrol there is vital for the safety of young people. An older couple living three doors below us lost their daughter when she crossed this road. The draft proposal states that this is a feasibility study and yet are budgeting savings of £100K p.a. from f/y 2013. Given that the attendants earn very little, this must encompass many if not all job cuts.

Method	Date	Comment
Forum	22/01/2012	West Auckland Road is very busy and numerous school children have to cross it each day, I have seen the crossing patrols narrowly missed by blind drivers in a hurry to get to wherever they are going NOT see a crossing patrol with high viz etc. What chance does a child have and as there are primary schools in the area there are a lot of young children who rely on crossing patrols to get to and from school safely, the children also learn from the crossing patrols. How can this council put any price on a child not being injured or even worse. Surely the cost saved will be offset the first time a child is injured and the council have to pay out thousands in compensation as they will be liable for any injuries.
Petition	26/01/2012	We would like to protest about the Medium term Financial Plan (MTFP) proposals to cut the School Crossing Patrol Service by £100,000 per year from the financial year 2013/14 onwards. This petition is not a self serving petition but one brought about by the concern of parents, carers and indeed whole communities. <b>[Signed by 3,502 residents]</b>
Phone	28/11/2011	Objects to the comment by Councillor Lyonette as safety will be affected by the loss of school crossing patrols. Removal will lead to congestion around schools and increases in injury rates from the current %. Appreciate this is not a statutory service but safety is a high concern. Volunteers would not turn up in bad weather.
Phone	30/11/2011	Who will take responsibility if a child is knocked over when there is no crossing patrol, it's a cheek asking volunteers to take up this role for nothing?
Phone	02/12/2011	Agree with the proposal it is the teachers/pupils/ parents responsibility. Maybe put in more lights and crossings in
Phone	06/12/2011	Number of school crossing patrols should not be cut

Proposal: 51	Convert School Crossing Patrol sites to Traffic Signal controlled sites
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Method	Date	Comment
Letter	13/01/2012	I understand that it is your intention to replace the existing staff by recruiting volunteers to undertake this important function, presumably in an unsupervised capacity. I would like to say that the use of volunteers needs to be undertaken with extreme caution from the point of view of reliability and safeguarding the welfare of the client, in this case children - probably the most vulnerable group in our society. Also with a requirement to undertake a CRB check, training and medical clearance, views are being echoed that such a change to the scheme from the very onset is likely to be fraught with difficulties notwithstanding the increase in costs of potential litigation resulting from the engagement of an unrepresented workforce. Although unsure of the level of savings likely to be achieved I am sure they will be small when compared with your overall target objective. I would ask therefore to seriously reconsider your earlier decision, by allowing the scheme in its present form to be retained, thus reassuring parents and members of the public alike that a tried and trusted service of long standing will continue to function.



Proposal: 52	Street Lighting Replacement Programme
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Method	Date	Comment
Letter	26/01/2012	The provision of better street-lighting, investment in street-cleaning and dealing with low-level nuisance all help older people to continue getting out of their homes. This in turn may well help deal with some issues as the presence of older people on the streets may provide a disincentive to disruptive behaviour by others.

Proposal: 53	CRB checks
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	We will maintain child protection and safeguarding services for the borough. Why do you need to do this when the ISA is located in Darlington?
Letter	25/01/2012	Age UK Darlington would be gravely concerned with cuts to CRB checks which may affect the safeguarding of service users. In our experience some older people are particularly vulnerable as they age and it is essential that they are safeguarded properly, particularly around the personalisation agenda. We would like to be reassured that the commissioning process is actually requiring improvements in safeguarding through its contracts. Furthermore, that all round recruitment processes and managerial supervision are being continually improved to ensure best safeguarding practice is being followed.

Proposal: 56	Review of Town Crier
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	Re-launch a new magazine to replace the Town Crier. How do you re-launch something "new"? Why don't you cut costs even more by making it by request only, or put it on your web site.
Email	02/12/2011	More money could be saved if a much reduced, condensed Town Crier replacement was published on Darlington council's website for downloading and printed copies made available to pick up at the town hall by interested parties, or delivered on request. Too many copies are being discarded within minutes of being delivered under the present system. Greta Coates
Forum	16/11/2011	Or get rid of it entirely? Print on black and white paper and reduce it to four sides
Forum	17/11/2011	The only useful thing in the Town Crier are the contact numbers, rubbish collection dates, up-coming events and the like, all of which can be found elsewhere (online etc). In my opinion it should be got rid of entirely. If it has to be kept, print it black and white on as few pages as possible - there is no need for it to be a glossy magazine.
Forum	17/11/2011	Perhaps you should actually meet what the law says which is: "The publicity code states that they should not publish more frequently than quarterly and should only include material directly related to local services."
Forum	20/11/2011	There are many sources of information that advertise the same services thus making Town Crier superfluous and a waste of taxpayers money. In the past it has been said that Town Crier is mainly a politically motivated periodical
Forum	21/11/2011	The Town Crier is a total waste of money, four publications a year = one every 13 weeks. Its content is already dated by the time it is published and could be put on the council's website where necessary.
Forum	16/12/2011	The Town Crier is a complete waste of money. It duplicates the information that is on the website. Digital is the way of the future. If you need to communicate with people who do not have access to the website, you could put occasional adverts in the free newspaper.
Forum	29/12/2011	If the council thinks that it is vital to publish Town Crier then put it in all the local newsagents for those who want to buy it instead of all of the residents being compelled to pay for it through council tax. It would then provide a small income to recover the cost of it.

Proposal: 57	Complaints Team restructure
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Method	Date	Comment
Forum	29/12/2011	Perhaps the system would be more efficient if those others (legal, highways etc) who provide the detailed answers to the CIG Team would deal directly with those who complain and request information. It would omit a layer of admin and save taxpayers money.

Proposal: 58	Review of Information Services in People Group:
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	15/11/2011	I have just received an email updating us to the proposed future of the PPS. I have to say that I am saddened and dismayed that we are to lose such an experienced and effective manager of our Parent Partnership Service. She has worked extremely closely with myself in supporting our parents who often find the SEN system to be bewildering. She has never turned down a request for help and more telling I have never had a parent not wish to be introduced to her. The PPS service in Darlington is a strength of our LA. I would help my parents to access support asap and I have been delighted with the quality of service provided by this service. The Manager's passion and commitment have made the PPS very effective and I am in the process of contacting her again as I have another parent who would like support. I will do this with utter confidence that the parent will be dealt with in a professional and caring manner and that the Manager's experience, which is vast, will assist them in ensuring that their child's needs are met according to their wishes.
Email	15/11/2011	I have just heard the news about the possible loss of the Manager's post at the Parent Partnership service. This would be a huge loss to schools in Darlington. My own school has used the service lots in the past and presently to support our parents of children with SEN. She has supported them in writing their parental views for moderation panel, she has attended annual reviews. She has organised visits to secondary schools and attended with vulnerable parents. She has signposted us to appropriate services for our families and much much more. Many of our parents rely on her support to help them through the minefield of bureaucracy. Lots of our parents just need someone who will listen and who is impartial. It is such a pity that this invaluable support will not be available to our school and our families.
Email	16/11/2011	I am just writing to express my dismay at the recent decision to terminate the post of the Manager, who has served this college so well over so many years in terms of her excellent and highly professional work with parents / carers. Her in depth knowledge of people and practice (including the Code of Practice) makes her a valuable asset to the positive progression of key home-school collaboration in areas that are known to be quite difficult within the area of SEN. It is hard to imagine at this point how anyone with less experience and/or qualifications will be able to pick up this work in any meaningful way.
Email	17/11/2011	I am responding to express my sadness and despair that yet another vital and hugely successful service is being cut. We have relied on this service to form the precious link with parents because we often do not have the time to sit and listen to parents and talk through the SEN processes from a neutral point of view. It seems that the powers that be are now completely disregarding children who have special educational needs and stripping these services, leaving schools adrift and without support for these, often extremely vulnerable children and parents. Please pass on my views if you are able.
Email	18/11/2011	I am very disappointed to hear that the work done in Darlington by the Parent Partnership Service, is being downgraded. As Principal of Dyslexia Action in Darlington I am aware of the parents who contact us in need of advice and guidance. One of the major recommendations we at Dyslexia Action make is that parents contact PPS as we know that the Parent Partnership Manager will make every effort to help parents to understand the situation from all angles and to come to a mutually-agreeable solution with their child's school and/or the Local Authority. Parents who have been accompanied to meetings have reported feeling so much more confident and comfortable than in previous meetings because the atmosphere becomes quieter and less stressful with the emphasis on arbitration when She is present. A friend at the other end of the telephone is all some people need and this they get, and in a very short time despite her workload. The low numbers of cases going to arbitration bear witness to the service effective over several years. As a member of the Parent Partnership Steering Group I am aware of and appreciate all the hard work the Manager has done to raise the Service's standards to such a high level and her plans to maintain or indeed improve these standards. She has immense experience, which as a specialist in dyslexia for over 20 years, I understand and value. In conclusion, although I understand the need to cut costs in the Local Authority, I feel strongly that a great asset would be lost if she does not continue in her role. I also feel that without her skills and experience the cost to the Local Authority will ultimately be far greater than the short-term savings made by down-grading the position. Thank you for considering my views.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	21/11/2011	<p>I was horrified to hear that as part of the review of information services, that the present role of Parent Partnership under the guidance of this Manager is under threat and change. I have worked very closely with her in supporting parents of children with special needs in ensuring they receive the best support and guidance they can have. Her support and knowledge in many of these cases has assisted us in helping these children in our school and then through the process of transition. I have also witnessed how her support, care and advice has helped support many of these families with issues at home and how through her development of the PPS network, she is able to sign post families to the correct support groups who can help. Her knowledge and dedication have also been invaluable to me as a SENCO when I have required help in locating the best support or advice on how to support families or how to arrange visits to different educational settings if required. Without her, I would not have had the successes I have had in placing children in the correct secondary setting for their needs. I fully appreciate that these are extremely difficult financial times and that cuts sadly do need to be made.</p> <p>However already, the SEN section has been extremely cut back to what feels like the very bare bones. This group of vulnerable children and their families should not have to have a lower grade service of support. Already there are fewer services readily available for schools and parents to contact I would think it essential we have a strong parental support service ran by a highly qualified person with the Educational Law Training the DFE want and a wealth of knowledge to support families in a much smaller, restricted service. In addition with the new white paper for SEN and the importance of parental power and rights, surely we require PPS to run as it presently does to show that as an authority we are meeting the needs of all of our children.</p> <p><del>Please see I urge you to look again very closely at the proposed changes to PPS</del></p>
Email	25/11/2011	<p>I am writing to express unhappiness and dismay at the recent proposals to finish the Manager at the Parent Partnership Service Manager despite her workload more than tripling in referrals during the month of October(2011) in comparison to the same time last year. (My understanding is that there have been 50 referrals compared to 14) It appears that the proposals are to replace the existing service manager with a much lower grade officer who will not need to have a professional qualification, degree or knowledge of the SEN Code of Practice. Having recently accessed the service regarding a current pupil the support, advice and guidance provided by the Manager has been invaluable. Her knowledge and expertise have given both the parents and ourselves confidence and direction in meeting the needs of our pupil. I am writing to stress the importance of having an experienced and appropriately qualified person in the position of Service Manager. Her advice, guidance, input, knowledge and expertise to those accessing the service would be a great loss and if the proposals go ahead it would diminish the quality and value of the service that you currently offer to parents, pupils and schools.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	29/11/2011	<p>I have recently learnt important information that the Parent Partnership Manager may be leave Darlington Parent Partnership and be replaced with a much less qualified person. I would appreciate if you could read my concerns and take them in to consideration when evaluating your decisions with regards to this.</p> <p>Parent Partnership Manager is a well respected "partner" to many families with disabled children and has been a strong influence as well as strength to the families themselves. I don't expect people who make such decisions to about government cut backs in Darlington to understand as it seems to be common practise that they never seem to meet the families and see the needs, stresses and struggles unlike her. I have had several experiences of this with PCT and other local authorities. Just recently there has been a re-shuffle in the SEN team in Darlington which has been a complete joke and has resulted in many children with additional needs not getting into schools including Harriette my own child. Why? Because someone decided to replace the main person with an employee from the housing department. This resulted in statements not being filed in time, schools not being ready and able to offer the provisions straight away. My daughter's case included!!!! Parent Partnership Manager was the only person to offer support, knew the right people to speak to, what meetings should take place, who should be there, and offering my family the support we needed. If it was not for Parent Partnership Manager the situation could have been a lot worse.</p> <p>People comment how doctors and consultants work such very long hours, well let me share with you that parents of disabled children work even longer hours. We are the consultant, the nurse, the stock taker and orderer, pharmacist and physio therapist, the speech and language therapist, the health and safety officer, the employer of carers, the dietician as well as being a parent to our children. I speak on behalf of all the parents in Darlington that we need the support of Parent Partnership Manager. The support and advice she gives in crucial we as parents have a lot to do on a day to day basis. Would you expect a doctor not to have a receptionist? Why? Because a receptionist helps the doctor attend to his/her patients. We need Parent Partnership Manager, without her along side her experience, knowledge and expertise you will find parents depressed, suicidal or on a brink of a nervous breakdown with this "merry go round" of trying to get the correct provision for our children in the schools. There will be a lack of communication which Parent Partnership Manager always makes sure there is plenty of. I feel that if such a decision is made to let Parent Partnership Manager go from her role really the person making the decision does not understand the word "partner" in parent partnership. Parent Partnership Manager is our Partner to all of the families she deals with on a day to day basis. I understand fully about cut backs and reorganising teams, but if the decision is made to let such a pillar of strength go from such an important organisation I really do feel that the management should be also looked at. I say this as it shows extreme poor management and lack of understanding of disabled children and their families. I am sorry not to offer solutions as a parent / carer which I normally I do but, how can we make solutions when you take the most</p>
Email	29/11/2011	<p>The recent cut-backs have been very sad in Darlington seeing many valuable colleagues lose their jobs. The sad news recently received is the proposal for Darlington to lose the Parent Partnership Manager, a colleague who has been immensely supportive of Dodmire and our parents. This position requires a highly skilled person who is able to meet difficult situations with confidence and knowledge. I do hope it is not necessary for this proposal to go ahead as not only will she be missed, but expecting her replacement, (who apparently will be a much lower grade officer) to have the same responsibilities for this vital and valuable service is very concerning.</p>
Email	16/01/2012	<p>As a parent of a child with a disability I sought information, advice and guidance from Parent Partnership some years ago. I was extremely grateful for the professional and impartial service I received from the manager. I have since been on training organised by the manager and found this invaluable. I would be very concerned if the changes made mean the manager would not be there anymore. The manager is experienced and personally I would be happy speaking to the manager only during a crisis or concern I might have. I do not feel to broaden the people who would be dealing with someone to be a good thing. Darlington is a small borough and the parent partnership manager has built up trust with parents. I would be extremely concerned if this serviced was disrupted or changed.</p>
Event	07/01/2012	<p>Where is the impact assessment for Parent Partnership proposal. The document distributed lists the functions that the partnership does but I don't recognise this. It says the changes are about the management of services not taking services away. The officer losing her role has a lot of expertise and is used by regional group and to sort out blockages within the Council and schools acting as a critical friend. Claiming that the new post will be an integral part of the information services but this was not what the role was for, it was about getting departments working together. No mention of independent training for parents which helped. Talks about Contact a Family but how will that work?</p>

Proposal: 59	Adult Social Care Assessment Process
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Method	Date	Comment
Event	09/12/2012	Learning Disability services cut last year. Care removed and taken away. I have felt suicidal over the past year. Care managers causing the problems. In 1948 National Assistance Act amendments over the years, once care has been assessed and agreed upon, the Council cannot remove services. The needs of the chronically sick and disabled people must be put first.
Event	09/12/2012	Streamlining of adult social care – we don't know what it means. It could mean less staff, cutting of packages of care. Until we know the ins and outs we don't know how it will impact on me.
Event	09/12/2012	Eligibility Criteria Issue - people who receive services that will lose out to new system.
Event	09/12/2012	We have been talking about how much the Council needs to save money. We haven't spoken about how much the Personal Carers save the Council - I work 40-70 hours a week and get paid for 21. If I lose my job – it will cost a lot more. I hope the council takes into account how much Personal Care Assistants save the Council.
Letter	26/01/2012	Age UK Darlington finds it difficult to see how Reablement will reduce assessments. Is the Council planning to carry out a limited assessment aimed at establishing need for Reablement, on the basis that it makes more sense to do a fuller assessment afterwards? This will only reduce demand if, following Reablement, people decide they don't need or want a further assessment. Also at the initial stage assessment must be sufficient to identify FACs banding and eligibility so must be more than a screening process. More clarification on what you mean by "Reablement" and how this will actually improve the "Adult Social Care Assessment Process" in real terms would be useful.



Proposal: 60	Adult Social Care Efficiencies
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		May I suggest that you preserve meals, care within the home. Anything which will improve the lives of the elderly/less independent.
Email	01/12/2011	I note that, out of a net budget of 80.5 million pounds, 33million is expected to be spent on "adult services". This amount is 41% of the total net budget and 80% of the amount to be raised by Council Tax. Although in The Budget Special you list what you will continue to provide it does not seem to be able to add up to such a large part of the budget as 33 million pounds. I and some of my friends are interested to know a breakdown of where the bulk of this part of the budget is spent.
Event	09/12/2012	You are removing my services. The assessment has put me into the low or medium bracket. Can't walk, can't cook. I am also an attempted suicide you know nothing about the personal impacts
Letter	27/01/2012	Age UK Darlington believes that if you are looking for less expensive ways to meet people's needs this will involve reassessment. Services should not be withdrawn without a proper assessment first. A point to watch is that you should not fetter the discretion of assessors by telling them in advance of the assessment that they must find cost savings. This exercise would not generate savings if carried out properly because you will inevitably find that the needs of some people will have increased since their last assessment so the review process is likely to generate increased demand. Once more, discretion of assessors must not be fettered by telling them they are not allowed to find increased need. A number of local authorities have been successfully taken to court recently due to failure to carry out a proper disability impact assessment.
Event	17/01/2012	I understand that lower bands of care will not be funded, if someone is moderate or low. In terms of mental health I do not think this is enough. Have you thought about how this keeps people well as health fluctuates. Effectively, if you improve you lose the service and have no low level support and then deteriorate. This will not help people stay well, what support will be put in place?

Proposal: 66	Head of Steam (HOS) VAT Exemption
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Method	Date	Comment
Email	01/12/2011	The Head of Steam Railway Museum will continue to celebrate Darlington's railway heritage ... Why doesn't DBC obtain some of the surplus stock from the National Railway Museum at York? Shildon has Mallard. The brick locomotive doesn't attract anyone, so why not try to get something for the people of the town to look at, instead of people always having to travel elsewhere to see things?

Proposal: 72	Directorate Support Restructure
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Method	Date	Comment
Forum	20/11/2011	Saving of £0k would be worth making however it is to be made
Forum	21/11/2011	Why are we being asked to discuss people's jobs directly. How the council deploy staff within the council is not a concern of the general public
Forum	23/11/2011	All service teams should be restructured with no Council Employee being paid in excess of £75k per year. Then some of the cut backs would be unnecessary and the town would retain some of the things that people value.
Forum	29/11/2011	A sensible review of the Directorate structure itself would naturally restructure the PA team to make a massive saving i.e. a 50% cut in the salaries of the directorate personnel would free up a lot of cash for the front line services. It would appear that minor cuts in costs at the front line will cause maximum impact on the residents, East Row toilets as an example.

Proposal: 90	Who delivers Services
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Method	Date	Comment
Forum	16/11/2011	Apprehensive about sharing services with other councils, as long as we don't go down the same road as Central, now that was and is a complete waste of time/money/resources, hopefully lessons will be learned from that (I very much doubt that though) maybe we can then actually provide a service to the residents of Darlington. One thing puzzles me though, why Hartlepool and not Stockton or Middlesbrough or even County Durham!!! Was that because they didn't want to be associated with some of the particular departments that were to be shared?
Forum	22/12/2011	I have heard council bus staff have been given notice because the council will not be running any adult services from March despite what has been said regarding keeping the likes of foundations groups open

Proposal: 91	Leisure/Cultural Trust
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I believe that this is a measure of a civilised society on facilities for the arts. The Arts Centre needs to stay open, I notice there is no mention of salary cuts or redundancies at the very top of DBC, the DBC chief Exc is overpaid, just compare with the Prime Minister.
Comment Box		I don't think that the Art Centre should be closed down because they need it for places like the QE who use it for dance performances classes. It is going to make services for teenagers worse and there's not enough as it is.
Comment Box		Stop killing the town by threatening to close the Arts Centre & the Civic Theatre
Comment Box		Arts Centre - if this wonderful facility has to go PLEASE make it a priority to build a suitable new one centrally. For me it's the most important amenity in the town!
Comment Box		The Arts Centre - sell it to the QE 6th Form, they will use it in many good ways. We don't need any more blocks of flats. It is part of Darlington's past and shouldn't be knocked down.
Comment Box		Neither can I understand how selling of the Arts Centre to build a new facility makes economic sense - why not make more use of library buildings for the Arts?
Comment Box		The Arts Centre must be kept open and all venues looked at to increase revenue and reduce costs at that point
Comment Box		The proposed cuts are too much, this town will become a place no-one cares to visit. Arts Centre is vital, as is toilets in town. A town this size with no public toilets? Even Bishop Auckland has one! All cultural assets should be ring fenced.
Comment Box		You should close social services building and move all workers to the Arts Centre, so it can be multi-used by the council for social services and the Arts. Once it's gone, you can't bring it back.
Comment Box		The council should (and must) provide an Arts Centre for community involvement in its current location. At present we directly provide a commercial theatre, which could be outsourced or a golf course, when there is plentiful private provision in the Town.
Comment Box		No sense to close a building of character housing the Arts Centre, Why build a new one? Money misspent in D'ton millions deployed in destroying unique buildings and on the High Row and replaying the 1960's anywhere scheme. NO to the Art Centre Closure.
Comment Box		The Arts Centre is invaluable of particular note is that the residents who use it are predominantly also, there who are paying the higher council tax, hence funding it. We were attracted to live in Darlington as a result of the Arts Provision within walking distance of the West End. Please don't sacrifice it!
Comment Box		Every step MUST be taken to avoid closure of Darlington Arts Centre. If this proves impossible, however, then relocating and supporting displaced organisations like DMG is essential as they, not arts bureaucrats, use the arts in Darlington
Comment Box		Why is Stressholme golf course a priority over the Arts Centre? As a service to the community, the golf course caters for a <b>MINORITY</b> Furthermore, there is already so much provision for golfers in the town with 3 golf clubs. How many people will be disenfranchised and disadvantaged when the Arts Centre closes? All of them - GET YOUR PRIORITIES RIGHT
Comment Box		Please don't close the Arts Centre. It is one of the strongest things Darlington has going for it and brings people (and money) in from surroundings. This government won't be in power for ever and if the Arts Centre is closed it will be gone for good. I simply don't believe a replacement will get built. You could save money by a) fortnightly bin collections while the crisis lasts (tell those who complain to confront those who have caused the mess) b) no flowers in the parks c) no Christmas lights d) slightly less heating in the Council buildings e) investigate open source software for Council computers (Bristol City Council has done this) f) delay replacement of Council vehicles and computers for longer than normal (open source software r- check it out) Services should be provided by the Council!
Comment Box		As a family we use the Arts Centre regularly, school holiday activities, dance class and guitar classes, how will we access these things in the future
Comment Box		Loss of what the Arts Centre offers - loss of Arts Centre entertainment

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		Closure of Arts Centre leading to community loss to the whole family - its accessible for family activities, we will need to go further afield to a different town. Where is Darlington community heart/festivals/family fun going to be - it's a loss to the whole town - means no heart for the town!!
Comment Box		This would mean not being able to attend Artspark or theatre workshops
Comment Box		Closing the arts centre? What happened to the project that was going forward until the sudden recently revealed about face? Full explanation please? Looking back, why was money spent on a fancy new bar area and one set of loos instead of on improving windows and over energetic heating system?
Email	22/11/2011	I shall be obliged if you will forward this email to all members of the Cabinet before this evenings meeting. Dear Sir, Whilst it is possible that the building of a new Arts centre is possibly feasible. To expect the people of Darlington to approve of the sale of the Art Centre before any discussions have taken on the design, location, function of the new replacement building is an insult to the intelligence of the people. A point which also does not seem to be specified is the time scale to build the building and fit it out. What also seems to have been totally ignored is what happens to the numerous groups who meet regularly and store their equipment at the Art Centre. Suitable alternative accommodation is nonexistent. On past experience of Darlington Councils promises the new building will either not be built or will come in so grossly over budget that it would have been more economic to keep the Art Centre as it is now. Please scrap this proposal and leave a well loved and well used building for the use of the people of Darlington.
Email	22/11/2011	I write to you today to express my deep dismay at the proposed sale of the Arts Centre. The Arts Centre is the Art hub that this town needs, and the plans to build a new Arts Hub are vague to say the least. Closing the Arts Centre would be a tragedy for the town, it is an irreplaceable resource. The Arts Centre belongs to the people of this town and Darlington For Culture are prepared to buy it. It is NOT the Council's to sell. I intend to fight this all the way.
Email	29/11/2011	It is with sadness I have learned of the proposal to close the Arts Centre. I confess am not a local resident, but have enjoyed and supported many events there (and so in the surrounding hotels and businesses). It has gathered a tremendous pool of talent and I have been glad to witness the transmission of so many skills from one generation to the next in the fields of music, art, theatre and dance. It would be a shame to lose such a venue so I would encourage you to foster a replacement in a way that avoids breaking these chains of community life and capital. Thank you for your kind attention.
Email	29/11/2011	I am emailing to add my voice to those opposing the sale of Darlington Arts Centre. It is the Arts and Culture Hub of the area and alongside the Theatre and Airport a main reason for my moving to the town 26 years ago. Like many other people I am attracted to an area by the facilities and experiences it has to offer. As a tax payer I want my money to go into this invaluable cultural resource.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	29/11/2011	<p>I am working with Darlington for Culture trying to save the Arts Centre - I am not convinced a new arts centre is actually what is needed - first this arts centre needs to prove it can run more commercially. I don't believe the promotion strategies work properly and events are marketed enough to targeted audiences. Not enough people know about what is going on - more interaction between care homes, older people need to know what is going on and also school are a prime target audience - letting people know about holiday workshops and also evening classes through mini assemblies or fliers home would be useful. One theatre company came into our school and did a mini performance of part of the show to sell tickets to their target audience. It would also be courteous or helpful to work as a team - when all the arts centre marketing stuff is posted out - why aren't they putting Darlington 4 Culture events in the brochure too our dates could have been added into the programme for next season? The working together doesn't seem to be working properly - D4C want to make it work I do question whether some arts centre staff actually want things to change and improve. They will always give the answer that is wanted - but is their actually correct?</p> <p>The more people know the more people will use the centre. To save on marketing costs and target the whole of Darlington why not have the Darlington Advertiser wraparound detailing all events that are up and coming then it reaches those hard to reach people rather than paying for selective mail shots. Instead of paying for postage of events that possibly need more ticket sales - events could be advertised by fliers being handed out in town and advertised on the Dolphin Centre TV - school sometimes have web pages that could add this information. I think more pressure should be put on the person organising the event to ensure it is full. Family ticket deals, better prices (Middlesbrough do this) - slightly lower prices but full events to make the same profit gives a better energy to events and also brings performers back. really wonder how much the staff efficiency and productivity has been investigated as it seems that as volunteers we have been able to pull in the people to make the venue busy like it should be.</p> <p>There is a team of volunteers who would potentially run the events for you and organise them bringing in much needed business with enthusiasm and drive. My suggestion would be run the Arts Centre, rent out small offices upstairs to small businesses, develop hot desk seats like in Barnard Castle's hub, more conferencing facilities and maybe renovate the Blanche Pease building into high quality offices or flats that could be built to tie into the arts centre ethos to develop a vibrant and busy hub.</p> <p>The projectors that were running at the weekend should be fixed in the centre permanently like many other arts centre around the UK detailing various information along with artworks and paid for advertising from businesses around the region. More interaction with all residents of Darlington. I am willing to help along with all the other volunteers. It's not our jobs at stake but we could help save some peoples jobs by making the Arts Centre work.</p>
Email	30/11/2011	<p>I was at the opening of the centre way back when. Since then I have attended craft fairs, lectures, folk clubs, concerts, exhibitions and music weekends although my postcode is DH9. I know people who have travelled even further. I can't imagine why there is a proposal to close it instead of a sensible (cheaper) plan to use it more effectively. A great deal of effort, time and money has already been spent to make it the usable, friendly space it now is - also, it is already there, with all the loyalty and goodwill that it has taken years to build up. This loyalty, goodwill and sense of ownership is the foundation of any Arts Centre and should be taken into account in costing any new building. While proposals for a new venue are being expensively consulted on; while expensive construction is happening, it will disappear. In my experience a community does not readily embrace an anonymous new space. The Sage, Gateshead is suffering from just this effect. On its opening day it was heralded as 'belonging to the community' - most of the community groups that used to meet there have left for other, less anonymous venues. Darlington Arts Centre is a particularly fine venue it would be tragedy if it closed.</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	30/11/2011	<p>I am Darlington born and bred and Darlington Arts Centre in Vane Terrace has figured large in my life for a very long time now. I am dismayed at the prospect of the arts losing that wonderful building, which does have its shortcomings I know, but its history, architecture, location and individuality in my opinion far outweigh arguments for a new centre which may not be all encompassing to host the many groups which enjoy and love it. Its standing at the edge of town centre makes it accessible to all and the outlook over Stanhope Park is envious -how many other towns or communities can boast such a splendid centre of the arts? I have attended yoga classes, t'ai chi, writing classes, loved jazz and folk nights in the Garden Bar, seen many performances in the theatre, exhibitions in the fab galleries, loved the film nights and taken advantage of the Media Centre.</p> <p>The Community Carnival and Spring Thing spilling out into the park are also delightful events. What makes this all so unique and special is that all of these activities are housed in one very outstanding building which is loved by many. As a member of Vane Women, I have performed in the Garden Bar myself on many occasions and all of us are very proud to say that the Arts Centre in Vane Terrace is our spiritual home, nowhere else comes close to offering that special atmosphere and feeling of community and belonging.</p> <p>I ask please that you take into consideration the views of the arts community and the patrons of the centre who rely on it before you reach any decision on its future. Many thanks for listening.</p>
Email	01/12/2011	The Arts Centre. Who is going to buy it? Why not co-operate with DFC in the meantime? Please; no negative comments about the location. DBC gave planning permission for the stadium. You can't have it both ways!
Email	01/12/2011	A brand new performance venue ... As well as a new Arts Centre? Duplication surely!
Email	02/12/2011	<p>I have just recently read the budget proposals that were printed in the Town Crier and I must say I am horrified that there are plans to close the Arts Centre! The Arts Centre provides an excellent service to many varieties of people. Including: Elderly; Youth and Children. This is a place where people from all over travel to take part in numerous workshops, see plays, watch films in the cinema and much more. I have taken an active interest in the Arts Centre because I have completed my 'Arts Award' at Bronze and Silver level there, such as lots of other people have. I have also helped to supervise workshops there and the amount of people who travel from all over the north east is outstanding! The staff they have working there are helpful in every way and really do help make the Arts Centre such a special place. It made up a lot of my childhood as well, because as a child I took part in lots of workshops there and got a first-hand experience into how entertaining and value for money they were.</p> <p>They keep people entertained through a wide range of media's and help maintain Darlington's Arts reputation, which I believe we have a large one for the Arts, mainly because of this Centre and the benefits they provide to the community. This 'new' idea that has been mentioned about building some facility near the town centre is utterly awful, in my opinion, because it will just be providing the services that the Arts Centre offers at the moment, except this takes an 'out-of-the-way' approach by not being in the town centre, but is within walking distance. Also, the high reputation that this Centre currently upholds cannot be replaced by something else because it is part of Darlington's culture and services, providing people enjoyment and entertainment. I really do hope that you can clearly see my views and opinions here in this email and decide to take action against this proposal because if you do close the Arts Centre then Darlington will be losing a valuable asset. I would very much appreciate a reply to reassure myself that my email has been taken into account because I feel strongly that the Arts Centre must stay.</p>
Email	03/12/2011	<p>I realise that cuts have to be made, but fail to see how building a new Arts Centre would save money. As a frequent user of the Arts centre I think it would be a disaster to see it go. A few years ago you wasted a large sum of money on totally inappropriate modernisation of the ground floor and forecourt, while leaving large parts of the building in need of renovation. Now you propose to dispose of it all together. How do you justify; 1. wasting all the money already spent on the arts Centre 2. proposing to 'save' by constructing a new building? I suggest that you leave the Arts centre as it is, and if there is any money to spare, renovate the upper rooms. If you could sell the water feature it would be even better.</p>
Email	07/12/2011	<p>I note from the Town Crier the plans to close the Arts Centre and relocate to a new facility in the town centre. At Polam Hall School we have a 230 seat theatre which I am sure you are probably aware of. If we could be of assistance during any transition period by renting out our theatre we would be delighted to discuss this with a Council or Arts Centre representative.</p>



Method	Date	Comment
Email	07/12/2011	<p>I am disappointed to hear of the proposal to close the Arts Centre. I am a frequent user of the Centre as, in comparison to the Civic Theatre, it offers a varied entertainment programme at a much lower cost. The ticket prices charged by the Civic are high – the Arts Centre is more affordable. Removing the Arts Centre facility is likely to mean that a lot more people will miss out on the enjoyment of live entertainment, particularly as it seems that the reduced cost of running the Civic Theatre will not be passed on through lower ticket prices. I am not entirely certain of the reasons for the Council wanting to invest in the Civic Theatre at the expense of the Arts Centre, particularly as not so long ago the Arts Centre was refurbished. It does seem a little short sighted to have invested in the Arts Centre building if now we are being told that the high running costs do not give it a sustainable future. To get a clearer idea of how well used Council run facilities are it would be interesting to know the number of users and the comparator cost per user for the Arts Centre, Civic Theatre, Golf Club, Head of Steam, etc., to see what share of value people are getting in terms of the Council's investment in these individual facilities.</p> <p>One of the options proposed seems to focus on restricting future Arts provision to children &amp; young people. This does not seem right - children should already have access to any number of arts facilities as part of their school education. Having said that, as school facilities are publicly funded, has there been any thought given to the potential for the wider public to benefit from use of facilities available in schools. It seems a waste that facilities (sports, IT, libraries, music) are limited to children and cannot be accessed by local people – particularly as schools may not be fully utilised on evenings and during school holidays. The Council is recommending the sale of the Arts Centre. Can you confirm what the Council expects will happen to the building should it be sold and what restrictions will be placed on any future buyer? Is the Arts Centre building a listed building? And also, what are the proposals in the interim if the Arts Centre is to close before a new facility is built? The recommended options for Arts provision seem to be based on a lot of uncertainties, i.e. future funding/ investment requirements. How can the Council make a decision when there is no certainty that the recommended option will be realised? What will be the contingency to ensure continued arts provision if funding cannot be secured and what commitment can be given that proceeds from any sale will be ring-fenced for the provision of Arts in Darlington town centre?</p>
Email	08/12/2011	<p>Would you please give me a breakdown of the £4 million Arts, Culture &amp; Leisure budget into; Civic Theatre, Dolphin Centre, Funding for Arts, Events programme, Stressholme Golf Club, Libraries, Railways Museum</p>
Email	08/12/2011	<p>1. I believe the Art Centre should be saved at all costs and remain where it is. The building of a new Art Centre next to the Town Hall will just not happen and the facilities will be lost forever. 2. The temporary car park next to the Town Hall should not be used for a new Art Centre but a new Bus Station should be built, it does not have to be lavish in fact it could be mainly open air unlike the old one. A station similar to Middlesbrough would suffice. Darlington is the only town in the North East that does not have a Bus Station, how much longer must the side of the Dolphin Centre be used for pick-up and drop-off of national coaches ? The bus station could also house all town buses and in doing so get rid of all the buses out of the town centre which is supposed to be traffic free. Parts of Darlington town centre remind me of a formula one racing circuit, what with the buses bombing along Northgate into Crown Street and then gaining speed as they shoot up Priestgate its a wonder nobody has been killed. Just stand outside the Post Office in Crown Street for awhile and witness the sheer madness of the buses - what happened to the pedestrian town centre we were promised. All those old people who use the Post Office, Wilkinsons, Marks &amp; Spencers etc take their life into their own hands every time they go shopping - that cant be right !!</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Email	16/12/2011	Referring to the Article in the Town Crier I would like to comment as follows:-Looking at the size of the Budget , why is Arts Culture and Leisure a very small part of the Budget apparently taking such a massive hit ? Is it the easy option ?I am against in particular the Closure of Cockerton Library and The Arts Centre. Cockerton Library is a purpose built building light , friendly atmosphere but functional. A large percentage of the users of Cockerton Village are Elderly and the Library is a very important place and serves a social need and meeting place as well as its Library use. I doubt the building could be used for any other purpose and would be demolished. I once read in a National Sunday Newspaper that the Darlington Arts Centre was one of the best Art Venues outside London ! Does it really have to close ? Once these places are gone they never return and are gone forever. The Art Centre is a vibrant place used by college students nearby, many Groups and Societies across the spectrum of the Arts. Is the space used to it's full capacity or could it be made smaller ? Is there land at the rear that could be sold for development ? Could more be made of the Restaurant facilities. It will be a great loss to the Town to close it. The idea of building a new one from the proceeds fills me with Horror. Every Town of any size has it's mediocre New Arts Centre, Darlington has something special already - make better use of it. It's very difficult as a Layman to suggest where the axe should fall but have all the Savings really been made that can be from the 'Back Office'. Is everybody working to full capacity and potential - can job sharing be part of the answer . I hope there are no 'Politically Correct' jobs in the Back Room !One suggestion - do we really need a Golf Club ? Whether it's partly subsidised or not. Darlington is surrounded by many golf Clubs all offering reduced Membership offers and short of Members. Sell it and fund the Art Centre which is of use to a far larger spectrum of Darlington's Residents. It would also probably remain a Golf Club by it's purchasers.
Email	23/12/2011	I have followed the debate about subsidies by Darlington Council for the arts and leisure with interest. I am, however, confused, after having seen various (and different) sums of money mentioned in the local press for the level of subsidy for the major items of outlay. Could you please, therefore: 1. specify separately the current level of financial support for the Civic Theatre, Arts Centre and the Dolphin Centre, and 2. Indicate the projected level of support for each of these venues (with the new Arts Centre included) If the current proposed changes were implemented. Thank you in anticipation.
Email	27/12/2011	I want to register my objection to the proposal to close the arts centre, withdraw subsidy from the civic theatre and build something new. Without its cultural offer, Darlington would not be the attractive and vibrant small town it currently is. Many people moved here in preference to surrounding towns because of the cultural facilities, including me. The atmosphere of the town is very much influenced by these venues and the type of people they attract here. There is a thriving 'scene' and many young people are being encouraged to sing, dance, paint, play in bands etc as a result. Art and culture have played a huge role in the development and regeneration of the north east – angel of the north, the Baltic, Sage, MIMA etc etc. To cut and diminish an existing and successful cultural offer, the sort of thing that many other towns have been trying to develop for years, would be hugely short-sighted. Art and cultural offerings will be part of what we need in the longer term to boost the town's economy when we have finally paid off the banker's debts. This should be an opportunity for the council to think more creatively about how it could improve what it does, join together with other local authorities to develop the cultural offer, get more people from the town involved in supporting local facilities – and yes, if we have to, paying more for them. Cutting a line off a budget is easy, actually doing something that would enrich the life of the people of darlington is so much more difficult but really should be the council's primary objective. Please think long and hard before you condemn this town to becoming an endless parade of pound shops and flats that no one wants or can afford. If the down goes downhill, many people who can leave here will and your problems will only just start.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	31/12/2011	I believe that if Darlington is going to have a future it must not underestimate the value of culture in terms of economic development providing the hook to make companies and individuals move to Darlington over other areas where there is a cultural offer. Skills development and as a tool for encouraging return to education. You must not devastate the arts and culture in Darlington or recovery will be slower than in areas where this has not happened and other services will also suffer because of this. Providing a quality of life through use as a tool to engage the public with their wider community. Etc. You cannot build an arts centre in town for the money you propose will not happen and to be honest with the right signage the existing facility is in the centre of town just has never been marketed as such it is also next to the college so ideal for engaging young people (there was just never the strategic vision to do so or develop its outreach enough. Closing the old arts centre rather than mothballing the back of house parts is a loss that will never be recovered.
Email	02/01/2012	I should start by saying that I no longer live in the borough, but do work there and was brought up in Darlington. We now live in Newton Aycliffe. My family are sad to hear that you are intending to close the Arts Centre. We travel to Darlington regularly to see shows and attend events at the Arts Centre. I would say we go to the Arts Centre at least 6 times a year. The nearest places to see the types of smaller shows that the Arts Centre puts on would be Stockton Arc and Durham Gala. I understand that the building may be costly to maintain and heat and I hope that you might want to locate to a cheaper site, if you do have no option but to close the current site. It is easy to underestimate the value of the arts. Before having my son and taking him to see some of the shows such as Five last year and Snowplay last month, I wouldn't have felt so strongly about this. However the joy on his face and the excitement about seeing another show after each one, couldn't be replaced. We've taken him to panto and bigger venues to see shows but they are not usually as interactive as the shows we've taken him to see at the Arts Centre. Plus the cost of the bigger shows excludes those on lower incomes, the cost of the Arts Centre shows have been a fraction of that cost, and so are more accessible to all. Please please, if you do decide that the only option is to close the Arts Centre, but that you could invest in another site, please consider including a performance space like the studio at the back of the Arts Centre. The shows that we have seen there have been magical, it breaks my heart to think that this kind of theatre won't be available to children in future. Thanks for reading this.
Email	04/01/2012	I attended the meeting on 12th December 2011 to discuss the budget. After the main meeting I raised the following queries with your staff who said that they would respond but to date I have not received a reply. In the document that was presented to the cabinet the figures indicated that it would cost £306591 per year to keep the Arts Centre open by transferring to an arms-length organisation but only £132526 for a new build hub. If you examine the figures in detail there are several anomalies; Staff – One would expect the staff costs to be less not more for an arms length organisation. Admin/Office costs – These would also likely to be less. Water - £15000 compared to £2500 – Why not install a water meter. From 1/4/11 community organisations can have their sewerage services charges capped at band 1 - £109.30. Waste disposal - £5940 compared to £990 – I cannot see how the Arts Centre can produce over 6 times the amount of rubbish than the new Hub would. ICT /Finance/ Admin – Again these are unlikely to be more than if it was run by the Council. I look forward to receiving your reply.
Email	15/01/2012	I am writing to you to express my disappointment that you plan to close Darlington Art Centre. It is a wonderful resource for the town and the surrounding areas. It provides a beautiful venue for a wide variety of events geared towards almost every sector of our community. Sports, dance, paintings, photography, music groups, sculptures, craft events, plays, comedians, family events, events for children, bars, a cafe, exhibition space. Whilst I am aware that money has to be found from somewhere, I believe that closing the Art Centre will be a short term gain, but we will lose out in the longer term. To maybe buy/build a new unspecified venue in the future is little commiseration. The Art Centre is something to be proud of. I hope you find an alternative to closing it as it will be a great loss to Darlington and the surrounding region. I hope that together with Darlington for Culture you find the time to explore other options.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	15/01/2012	I would just like to register my concern about the Councils ill thought out plans to replace the current Arts Centre. The chances of an Arts Council grant are slim and the proposed building only fit for a small percentage of the Art and Culture activity. The Council argues that we need a town centre site but many people are saying they will not feel safe accessing a centre here and they are concerned that children will not be able to attend unaccompanied. The concentration on Arts and Culture for young people failed to tell the wider public about the excellent facilities already available in local schools and colleges. The absence of any consideration of making the facility attractive to the older resident has been completely absent. The current location of the Arts Centre would be considered central in any other town! The concentration on Theatre Hullabaloo is short sighted as they will not remain in the town for four years while a new centre is being built (if ever it is). They will have taken up the offers to go elsewhere and will not return. The council should be concentrating on how the current Arts Centre can be saved by making it viable, not on what they will do with the money from the sale. If the council wants to avoid any liability it should pass the building onto a organisation prepared to make a thriving Arts and Culture community and attract people to the town.
Email	16/01/2012	I would like to register my concern at the closure of the Arts Centre. I run a dancing school in Darlington The Arts Centre provides us with fantastic facilities in which to produce our annual show. We have in excess of 150 pupils who take part and we normally hire the venue for 7 nights – selling out 1400 seats! There is no other venue in the area which we could use – this is a fabulous facility for local families to use. I am dismayed at the fact that the council is relying on a funding bid to rebuild – what if the bid is unsuccessful? I am also dismayed as a tax payer that the council has spent such a vast amount of money already on the arts centre – particularly the forecourt and bar area! Surely this is not all going to go to waste!?? Who will be accountable for making such bad financial decisions? I am unable to attend the meeting on Tuesday night as I am teaching dancing, but I would like to register my concern. Please reply to this email – I haven't received a reply from the last letter which I sent to the council.
Email	16/01/2012	I am amazed to discover that Darlington Borough Council do not have any alternative plans to finance a new arts centre if Art Council money is not forthcoming. Surely it is only right and proper to use money from the sale of the Arts centre to fund a new centre for the arts if indeed the sale goes ahead.
Email	16/01/2012	I write to express my deep concern at the Darlington Borough Council's intention to close the Arts Centre. I have been a regular attendee since the Centre opened, first joining the community theatre company which operated there, later being a regular visitor to the garden bar folk, poetry nights, the art exhibitions, and currently a regular attendee at the film nights and many of the live performances in the theatre. I am about to become President of the Darlington & Teesdale Naturalists and Field Club, which uses the club room every Tuesday night during the winter. I travel 15 miles into Darlington to attend these events, as do many others, and support other businesses while there. The lounge area provides one of the best community meeting places in the town. It is an instructive, educational, useful and safe place for young people to gather and be involved. For many year's this has been recognised as one of the best facilities of its type in the country. There are very few fields in which Darlington can claim to be 'in the top ten' and yet the Council wish to close it. Apart from the Civic, what else has Darlington got to offer? Very little indeed, so seems doomed to become a 21st century backwater due to the progressive dumbing down - the museum, the Arts Centre, next the Libraries?????I am aware that cuts have to be made, but destroying one's real assets is a sure way for any enterprise to start on a slippery downward path to oblivion. I hope that the Councillors show some guts for once and do what is best for the town and reject the poor advice of box-tickers and bean-counters.
Email	17/01/2012	Pierremont School of Dance. The above dance school have held a show every 18 months in the Arts Centre and if it closes it will be greatly missed by our students and teachers. We book the theatre for 8 nights; 1 dress rehearsal and 7 performances. It is absolutely loved by all the children. The theatre is just the right size for us with a big stage. We prefer to give it seven times in a small theatre at a cost that we can afford (approx 3,700 pounds) as such a lot of work goes into the show. There is no where else in Darlington with the same facilities and we were hoping to give our next show January 2012. The children and parents are very disappointed and we support 100% the efforts people are making to keep the Arts Centre open. Teachers:

Method	Date	Comment
Email	17/01/2012	I am writing to express my sadness at the proposed closure of the Arts Centre and to ask you to reconsider whether funding can be found for it. I appreciate that the council has to make very difficult budgetary decisions at the moment, but the Arts Centre is such an asset to Darlington, that I think it would be a terrible loss to the town and the community. And once it is closed, I don't see how you will ever be able to revive it. As a Darlington resident I go to the cinema and to children's shows at the centre. I attend a playgroup there. I use the cafe / bar. I have bought crafts and a print there. All in all, I think it is an absolutely brilliant place. Please please reconsider the Council's decision, even if you are just giving the centre another year to try and identify other sources of funding. Please do this for Darlington.
Email	20/01/2012	would like to add my name to the petition against closing Darlington Arts Centre in Vane Terrace. I have not spoken to a single person who thinks that this is a good idea. Darlington Arts Centre is well loved & well attended & Darlington will be a culturally poorer town without it. How short sighted to sell off this wonderful building !!!Regards,
Email	21/01/2012	I would like to add my name to the petition against closing Darlington Arts Centre. The council of a small town like Darlington should cherish and support it's own Arts Centre, or it will be all the smaller without it.
Email	22/01/2012	We recognise the value of the diverse Arts offer currently delivered through the Arts Centre and will be working closely with partners, stakeholders and user groups to ensure that a vibrant arts offer is maintained for Darlington. Unfortunately ticket prices for performances at the Civic Theatre are dictated in the main part by visiting companies and are fairly standard for all touring venues. We do however try to ensure there is a wide range of ticket prices including discounted performances. Through our ArtsSpark membership scheme for young people there are further discounts and special offers to help young people under 26 to access performances. The cultural exemption on VAT to be claimed by DBC, which will help to reduce the subsidy required to operate the theatre cannot legally be used to bring down ticket prices. The intention of the Council is not to invest in the Civic Theatre at the expense of the Arts Centre. In public consultation carried out following the announcement of DBC's budget proposals, the work of both venues was shown to be highly valued not only by residents of Darlington but also by people in the wider region and nationally. However given the location, nature and cost of operating the Arts Centre retaining the existing Arts Centre is unlikely to provide the best value for money, would restrict opportunities to seek external investment or grant funding and it is difficult to envisage how, without a substantial subsidy or capital investment management of the building could be sustained over the long term. Provided sufficient capital funding can be found, a new Arts venue offers the best opportunity to deliver a sustainable Arts programme out of a modern 'fit for purpose' building with substantially lower operating costs than the existing Arts Centre building. Unfortunately at the time of the refurbishment of the Arts Centre in 2006 unprecedented budget pressures on the Borough Council as a result of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review could not have been foreseen and mean that former levels of subsidy can no longer be maintained.
Email	23/01/2012	The Arts Centre is too valuable to the community to close. Darlington needs to be attracting people, not losing them. Richmond Station is an outstanding example of how this can be done. There is huge potential to develop other interests – there are three newly formed singing groups at Richmond for example – hundreds of people. There were a great many people attended yoga for many years, with regional classes held monthly. All this custom has been scattered to the four winds. There is too much of value going on already ...Surely some of the buildings could be let or sold off still keeping most of the rooms which are well used. A significant amount of Lottery money has been spent relatively recently – this will be a scandalous waste. Scrapping the architectural features will also be a scandal. I understand that funding is difficult, but I have seen very little hard information about the possibilities and I attended the public consultations. The Council MUST provide people with the hard evidence before a decision is made.
Email	23/01/2012	I grew up in Darlington and was a frequent visitor to and performer at the Arts Centre. I'm appalled to think that the inspiration and enjoyment I drew from it will not be available to future generations if it's sold off. Don't sell it off! I'd be interested to hear the rationale behind the sell-off.
Event	12/12/2011	The demolition of the Arts Centre cannot be reversed. Is the Council aware that there are several Arts Centres in the north east operating without council subsidy. You are not allowing Darlington For Culture to run the Arts Centre. If selling it off the Localism Act offers rights for communities to take over the Arts Centre.

Method	Date	Comment
Event	12/12/2011	Arts Centre – regular user since it was set up. I wholly agree it would be a good idea to build a new facility if it could be set up quickly. To build a new facility however would be ten times as much. How long would it be before you could set up a new facility? An example of how long it takes would be the technical college. DCOT stood inappropriately for years. Time span for DCOT was long and we would be facing the same thing with the Arts Centre.
Event	05/12/2012	Arts Centre proposals – how far has the Council progressed with the proposed replacement for the Arts Centre. Could it possibly offer same range of facilities? Why do you expect new centre to cost less to run. e.g. the ARC at Stockton. What are you going to get for £2M? Is a survey been conducted about keeping main building open and extend range of activities. Bar and food takings – breakdown of figures for how much is being spent. Its all been lumped together. Need more details of accounts for Arts Centre. What measures will be taken to ensure we don't get a block of flats with a TESCO Local attached.
Event	05/12/2012	Darlington for Culture: I believe other figures have been suggested that the costs of £270k maintenance – also cover buildings at the back and failings of the heating system. Closing back section would be instant cost saving.
Event	05/12/2012	Darlington for Culture: Interested why decisions about discretionary budget are made the way they are. Looking at why disproportionate cuts in arts and culture as opposed to sports and leisure. Continuing to spend high proportion of budget on sport and leisure rather than arts and culture.
Event	05/12/2012	It seems the decisions have already been made?
Event	05/12/2012	Recognise huge challenges. Settlement is a disgrace for Darlington. Recognise huge contribution of sport to health but also arts contribute to mental health and well-being. Disproportional cuts - £0.75M for arts and £40K for sport. How does Council feel about this?
Event	05/12/2012	Arts Centre – What can be done with Community and Voluntary Sector? Work with the group of people who are volunteers and to work with them to look at partnership of Darlington for Culture. Rather than pin hopes on bid outcomes. Darlington College not a good example. Proposal is to close Arts Centre – decision already made to close it and move it to the centre of town.
Event	05/12/2012	Darlington for Culture – two questions: Why is Council so involved with Arts – no statutory duty. Why not let the community decide? £530K subsidy – figures have been produced that with a £210K subsidy the Arts Centre could be kept open.
Event	09/12/2012	If the Arts Centre shuts what assurances can the Council give that this service will continue elsewhere? Carers are concerned about the loss of a project specifically for people with learning disability.
Event	09/12/2012	I work with children with learning disability and feel that everyone should have their say. Consider the Arts Centre staying and working at the Centre. Important to social interaction and quality of life. Please keep the Arts Centre open.
Event	09/12/2012	A lot of young people meet in the Arts Centre – where would Deaf Awareness be taught. Vital service and employment for access to communications. Very good relaxing place for people to meet.
Forum	16/11/2011	Truly sad news. It appears that we can no longer afford culture in Darlington, not to mention the associated job losses that this will bring about. The Art Centre is a social hub and hosts a huge variety of classes from dance to martial arts who will need to find alternative accommodation or fold-up too. Its shameful.
Forum	16/11/2011	Why close the centre then seek capital funding for a new venue? Surely a capital build would cost more than maintaining the existing facilities?
Forum	16/11/2011	This Council should hang its head in shame. There appears to have been a deliberate policy of running the place into the ground. Several years back, you could go into the bar on an evening and there would be customers and atmosphere. Now, nothing. Think about all the groups involved. Where are they going to go? Photography, etching, video production and tuition, Open Arts. Many, many more groups of local people supporting a fantastic building and now being badly let down. I truly hope that at the next Local Elections, the people of this Town make their feelings known and vote in the appropriate manner. Time for a change. Too late it appears for the Arts Centre though.
Forum	16/11/2011	The closure of the Arts Centre is terrible news. Its another down turn for the whole town. Another reason for people not to visit Darlington and spend money. I understand there is talk of replacing the facility, but there will be not one venture that will be able to house everything that is contained, and that which goes on in the current building. I really hope the closure is somehow prevented.

Method	Date	Comment
Forum	17/11/2011	This is like selling the family silver, once it has gone there is no way it could be brought back. The Arts Centre provides a focal point for the community, puts Darlington on the map as a venue for smaller events (i.e. ones that don't use the Civic Theatre) and provides a meeting place for many clubs etc. Surely the Arts Centre brings some cash back into the council budget through the bar etc. Can the council look at more ways to manage the Arts Centre as a business, if the Centre can be made to make a profit surely that will be a feather in the councils cap. Please back away from this huge mistake.
Forum	17/11/2011	The council should publish the figures that suggest a new build is both more economical and more sustainable. Darlington for Culture have been in negotiations for weeks with the local authority about running the Arts Centre. Simple maths shows that giving a long lease to DfC on a peppercorn rent absolves the council of further running costs, and gives the artists and volunteers that are already running some of the arts programme a fighting chance to raise funds and keep the centre going. Or is a practitioner-led solution simply too alien for our corporatist leaders?
Forum	17/11/2011	How many other towns can boast a town centre facility with a cinema, theatre, 4 separate galleries, including a dedicated photographic gallery plus a creative community encompassing everything from dance to every type of music imaginable, stained glass to felting, watercolour to film-making! If a new, purpose built centre on a brown field site in the centre of town will be a more viable option, given the money that the council could generate selling off the current site for housing, is there any guarantee that similar facilities will exist? Will the current users of the centre find a home there?
Forum	18/11/2011	"The Council should publish the figures that suggest a new build is both more economical and more sustainable" - Agreed Let us see the math! Let us also have the details of the proposed venue - of what exactly will it comprise if it is intended to truly replace the Arts Centre?
Forum	18/11/2011	Could you explain why the budget figures in Appendix 8 don't seem to match with the ones provided by Darlington for Culture in Appendix 8 annex B part 2?
Forum	20/11/2011	It is deeply sad that the decision is predicated on half-truths and wishful thinking. It is far from clear how the proceeds from the sale of the Arts Centre could, in any way, be sufficient to support the build and running costs of an 'arts hub' which will be, inevitably, a poky, soulless shoe box building in the middle of municipal car park. The logic employed to support the decision is partial and flawed. Why is Vane Terrace so inaccessible from the 'town centre' that attendance would be improved by relocating the service approximately 400m to the east? Also the comparative budgets for the options outlined in the Cabinet Paper are deliberately opaque and lacking in detail. Why, for instance, does Option2 require 3/4 of the marketing budget of Option 1 to deliver on 1/4 of the admissions income?
Forum	20/11/2011	I can't see the economic sense in the council's plan to close the Arts Centre and sell the land for as yet an undetermined price and then blindly enter into a project for a new Arts Centre. It doesn't seem to cover all of the implications. And there doesn't seem to be a viable financial plan in place, unless the council can demonstrate otherwise?
Forum	21/11/2011	Why do the figures in Option1 seem to differ from the figures provided by Darlington for Culture and seem screwed towards proving that Option 1 is unviable? Were the proposals for Cockerton Library and the Arts Centre generated in a hurry? They both seem to either not reflect information provided by others or make a brief hidden comment that large amounts of required investigatory work have been intentionally skipped.
Forum	21/11/2011	Shut the Arts Centre if that's economically necessary. Let it be vandalised (or turned into yet more flats as happens to all disused buildings) Then spend twice the amount that it would cost to save it on a new building in the town centre. It all seems to remind me of the Oval Development and the building of a cinema in 1999 wonderful in practice but more likely Castles in the Air.
Forum	21/11/2011	A few years ago the council were preparing to sell off a large part of the Art Centre to the sixth form college and this only fell through because the college could not find the funding for this. However the Art Centre seems to have more or less been taken over by the college so I presume they are paying some kind of rent to DBC for this. Could DBC use this income for maintenance of the building?
Forum	22/11/2011	I've had a look through the document and can see no plans in existence for a replacement facility. Are we to trust the Council to do what they wish with the Art Centre and have nothing in place to take over. How many years, if ever, will it take to build the proposed replacement. We'll just be fobbed off as usual.
Forum	22/11/2011	Looking at the council's financial plan for the Arts Centre there would seem to be a strong bias in the figures for closing the centre and moving to a much smaller new centre. That's if the figures for running the arts centre as is now can be accepted.
Forum	23/11/2011	Give Darlington For Culture a chance to run their business plan. The west end doesn't need more residential development, it needs a hub to bring Darlington citizens together and strengthen the community.

Method	Date	Comment
Forum	28/11/2011	Unfortunately it is a case of use it or lose it and the Arts Centre has not been used to its best. To be honest though there is much room for improvement in the way it is currently marketed and run! Come on DBC be up front and let us have details of the new Arts Hub that you keep talking about before you close this local institution!
Forum	01/12/2011	I am a resident in North Yorkshire some 17 miles from Darlington. We visit the Arts Centre 2/3 times a year to see events. As a result we actually pay money into the Darlington Borough Council coffers directly to fund the Arts Centre. The proposed closure therefore seems nonsensical as you will not only lose the direct revenue stream but also the spin-offs to the whole of Darlington in tourism spend and visits. As far as I can see there is no specific plan for a back to back replacement and therefore for people like me with a choice of where to go for events, Darlington will go off the list so the revenue will be lost on a continuing basis.
Forum	02/12/2011	Having read through much of the budget material it looks like pretty much a foregone conclusion that the centre will close. We shouldn't forget that this is because of swingeing cuts in local authority budgets imposed by the government - tougher and earlier than in most of the rest of the public sector. However, there might be a silver lining if Darlington were able to open a sparkling, imaginatively designed arts centre in, say 2015. My fear, like several others, is that this simply will not happen. The centre will be sold, some cobbled together halfway-house will be found for existing users who will struggle to keep going. The council will be under even more pressure as the credit squeeze is prolonged and the funds will be raided for more urgent needs. Can the council give us some hope that this depressing scenario won't happen? How about: a) All party commitment to ring fence the funds raised from the Arts Centre sale for a dedicated new building) That the proposed site(s) are identified and a broad outline of expected facilities given c) That a dedicated team be set to raise the extra funds needed from the Arts Council, Lottery, buy-a-brick schemes etc so that we are a centre to be proud of d) That a timetable is set for the new build with regular reports back e) Real efforts are made to give workable venues for existing users to see them through the next few years
Forum	09/12/2011	We have the second largest Arts Centre in England - isn't this something to be proud of? And yet we can't make it pay its way. I am a frequent visitor Arts Centre and it's always busy - why does it need such a large subsidy and how has it been coasted out? Couldn't it be run more efficiently? Is it in fact subsidising some of the sport provision within the same budget area - why do we need a Council-run golf course? My concern is that if the Council can't afford to subsidise the existing Arts Centre, will it be able to subsidise a new replacement? There seems to be an obsession with 'new' but new is not always better. Councillor Wallis keeps stressing the cost of staffing and utilities - surely staffing costs are the same wherever the Centre is based and while a new build may well be more energy-efficient, there is a risk inherent in any major new build. This is NOT a cheap dig at the Council, my point is that these things happen everywhere, but the Dolphin Centre needed considerable repair work very soon after completion, the new Education Village leaks badly and the new Pedestrian Heart, much though I like parts of it, its not wearing very well. Most shiny new constructions massively overspend on their original budgets and I do feel that if we are committed to an Arts Centre then the existing building if run on more efficient lines could be more self-sufficient and a more cost-effective solution. In most work environments the existing order is often overturned for the sake of efficiency, only for it to be realised a couple of years down the line that the old system, while far from perfect, was more practical than the new and there is a gradual drift back.
Forum	16/12/2011	Based on past performance from this council I seriously doubt that a suitable new venue will be funded and built. I think the existing building should be retained, it is well positioned and full of character - I agreed that maintenance is a problem as it is with many old buildings but there is a premium on having character and culture together. A new build would not be an arts centre - modern building methods and a town centre location are not the way to go unless of course DBC can produce another Sage but I fear DBC don't think in this way - we will end up with a community centre.
Forum	16/12/2011	Interesting to note that the council is happy to close down the Arts Centre - which is widely used by a cross section of society - especially young people and senior citizens, but seems happy to continue subsidising Stressholme Golf Club.
Forum	19/12/2011	I don't think the Art Centre should be closed. Money was invested to refurbish this quite recently and provides an excellent variety of attractions. The catering facilities could be greatly expanded to make a great deal of money providing pre and post show meals etc. Correctly marketed and priced this could work really well.
Forum	29/12/2011	I am aware that the Arts Centre is to close, where does that put Vane House the resource centre for visually impaired, Vane House is a very worthwhile centre and has helped a lot of people, there was a lot of work and dedication involved in creating this safe and supportive centre it has given a lot of support to visually impaired in Darlington.



Method	Date	Comment
Forum	17/01/2012	The decision to sell the Arts Centre appears to have been already confirmed with the sale advertisement recently appearing in the Northern Echo. So what's the point of this thread? Will DBC answer please?
Forum	23/01/2012	It would appear that the decision to sell the Arts Centre at the earliest legal date [April 2011] was made long before the cuts because the 6th form college must have been told 3 years ago that the building would be closed in 2012 & therefore £1.8 million of tax & ratepayers money has been spent on building new facilities that were being provided to them in the Arts Centre. It now looks very unlikely that an Arts Council grant for the 'Hub' will be received & therefore plan B should be to sell off the Blanche Pease building & other areas at the back to assist in funding a continuation of the Arts Centre.
Letter	18/11/2011	I am most sorry to hear of the forthcoming closure of the Darlington Arts Centre. Cannot the Council consider that the Darlington Teacher's Training College gave the building to the town for the town's own use. In view of this cannot the interior of the building be updated and keep the outside as it is. This would surely be somewhat cheaper than a complete rebuild.
Letter	28/11/2011	I must protest at your proposal to close Darlington Arts Centre. Main objection being closing is the easy option. It is much more difficult to explore ways to increase its revenue but does not appear to have been fully considered, if at all. I am disappointed that the decision to close the Arts Centre comes just a few months after an expensive enquiry into the role that arts and culture play in the town. The enquiry's findings stressed the economic importance of the arts and emphasised the need for there to be a cultural 'hub' for Darlington. My view is that the town has a cultural hub. It's called Darlington Arts Centre. The new centre, based upon youth drama, as I understand it, although laudable in its aims, can only reflect a small part of the town's artistic community and remains a vague promise at best. There is little guarantee that a new centre will cater for the many thousands of people who use the Arts Centre. So much more could have been done to engage the local artistic community and increase revenue. The lazy decision is to close, sacrificing it on the alter of developers who would appear to have been already negotiating before any 'consultation' was announced.
Phone	23/11/2011	Objection to the proposal for the Arts Centre. I am against the closure and any sale of the building. It is valuable to the town because of the space it provides, the history of it, space for groups, concerts, films, crafts and dance and everything it does for the community. I don't want to see the building closed or demolished, as it is part of Darlington's community and heritage. It is now an ordinary town and could be seen anywhere. Darlington has lost too much of its old heritage, the town centre has been cleared of its Victorian heritage. This is to be added to the list of objections.
Phone	28/11/2011	Disagrees with closing the Arts Centre.
Phone	05/12/2011	Why do different Councillors say different things? One says the Arts Centre won't be sold and now Cllr Wallis says it will be sold. Who are the Council's financial advisors? If DBC has been so prudent how come so much money has been lost on past projects? Why wasn't this money used to save the Arts Centre?
Phone	12/12/2011	Arts Centre - it would take a long time to sell and then would probably not cover the refurbishment costs and new building. Where would all the people who currently use the Arts Centre go in the meantime?
Phone	16/12/2011	Closing the Arts centre to save half a million is ludicrous, new buildings never come in on budget. The Arts centre has an excellent reputation, people visit the town just to attend the Arts Centre.
Phone	11/01/2012	Agree with closing Arts Centre - had a look round the building and parts of it are terrible. Can make use of other venues in Darlington.
Phone	05.12.2011	The Town Crier says the Arts Centre is to close. I object to this in no uncertain terms. This is a retrograde step. I have left a message for Councillor Heather Scott. To sell it is ridiculous.
Event	17/01/2012	What is the rationale for selling the Arts Centre and building an new arts hub. Why not have an independent trust? The plans seem vague.
Event	17/01/2012	It would be horrendous if we lost transport. I feel we are going down a blind alley. People in various areas use and develop the Arts Centre. We have a beautiful structure there and we would not afford a similar beautiful structure like the one we have now. Also will the new build happen? There are currently 2 exhibitions which because of their size could not be housed elsewhere. One is by a young lady from Darlington doing her MA. This had no advertising in the Northern Echo. If private sector they would reduce staff and close the inefficient areas but keep the main building.

Method	Date	Comment
Event	17/01/2012	It is an abysmal settlement from Government and unfair in terms of the north/south divide. The arts centre is a centre for well-being, civil society. There is only one plan and that's bidding to the Arts Council but this is a competitive process, no guarantees and could get claw back money. Also what happens if you cannot sell the building. Need more time to think of options and how a sustainable centre can be found. Not explored letting it out and I believe this would bring in £200,000. Officers are not putting time into doing this and this is causing more money to be lost.
Event	17/01/2012	<p>There will be extra costs next year as 6th form not using the building as they were told to go. Since Council took the Arts Centre on it was a good place and workers have done a good job. Lately this has tailed off and good quality acts have dropped off. It is a jewel although it is not fit for purpose, not as accessible for all disabled people. However others such as my brother with Downs syndrome use it a lot. 1600 sq metres is not big, would need at least £1m to build a new hub would it not be better to use this on the current building to give lots of rooms to rent out to arts groups. You stated Darlington can't have a Barbican but the people of Darlington deserve it.</p> <p>Could rent it out?</p>

Proposal: 92	Council Tax
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		The cut I <u>do not</u> want to see involves Darlington rates increasing. I feel there is no choice about this and would find it difficult to manage my retirement budget
Comment Box		I am appalled at the audacity of the Council to put up Council Tax by 3.5% when it could have £1 million grant from Central Govt for NOT doing so. Has our Council lost the plot! Those of us that do not qualify for any subsidies but are on fixed incomes will be forced to tighten our belts further - Why can't the council do the same? Stop playing politics with my income!
Comment Box		I do not agree with a Council Tax increase. Effectively most people are on fixed incomes. Darlington Borough Council should however accept the government contribution of £1 million why should citizens of Darlington pay £1 additional tax just because of Council Budget games?
Email	17/11/2011	Why is it that whenever you consider budget proposals every year you always target the elderly and the disabled. Is it because they are the easiest to target and you think you won't get too much hassle from them. You say you intend to increase council tax by 3.5%. Where do pensions get that increase from. There is no one they can go to get an increase in their pension. I pay £108 per month for refuse collection. I never see anything else from it and don't tell me that Policing is part of it because crime in my area is increasing and the Police never come around even when there is a crime reported. Street clean never clean my street, and last but not least if you take round even when there is a crime reported. Street clean never clean my street, and last but not least if you take the bus subsidy away I will just be another prisoner in my home. But then again perhaps that is what you want.
Email	02/12/2011	Having read about your proposed budget for 2012/13, I wish to voice my opposition. You will know about the erosion of living standards due to austerity, pension cost increases, 5% inflation, job cuts, redundancies, credit crunches, the Euro zone crisis, etc. Everyone is feeling the pinch. How can you possibly ask us to pay an increased council tax of 3.5% when it could be 1% if you accept the Government's 2.5%? The words insensitive, uncaring, wasteful, thoughtless, spring to mind. It seems to me you are transferring the austerity the Council should be undergoing, onto us the taxpayer. I suggest you cancel some of your capital projects until later, improve your efficiency, sack the people who don't want to work hard and hire replacements that do, and reduce the salaries of the Council staff which are known to be very generous. It is ridiculous to expect us, the taxpayer to pay more. I am a pensioner on a fixed income which is being eroded away by inflation, and can't pay more. I hope my friends, who also disagrees with your proposals, are also going to write in to you.
Forum	22/11/2011	If we are going to make most of these savings, why do we need an increase council tax? Please would you justify this with some plausible explanation and figures.
Forum	23/11/2011	When most people have no increase in salary (including the Council's own staff) can you really justify an increase of 3.5% in Council Tax? Yes I know that you will trot out the usual Darlington has the lowest council tax in known civilisation but when these cuts go ahead we won't have much left that's worth paying for.
Forum	27/11/2011	Seems a little daft to increase council tax by 1% over what the government have said that they will give the council as a grant. More money that the public will have to pay to the council which is not going to be able to spent in the shops in town. Also the cost of collecting the tax will increase as more people default on the cost and will bring in less revenue as a result.
Forum	16/12/2011	As many others have commented, it's outrageous for the Council to propose to increase Council Tax by 3.5% when the Government is offering an additional 2.5%>. Given that this will impact on so many people, the Council should put this question to the people of Darlington and hold a referendum
Forum	29/12/2011	Removing some senior council officers would save £1.4m and thus avoid any increase in Council Tax. Why not do this.
Forum	10/01/2012	It appears that Darlington can manage very effectively with one Member of Parliament but that it needs 53 councillors @ £8,027 basic allowance racking up £425,431 before additional allowances and expenses are added. If it was my private business, I would be giving this expenditure a very hard examination in terms of value for money.

Method	Date	Comment
Forum	17/01/2012	No increase in council tax would be needed if council was to cancel some of the cosmetic type of jobs in capital projects and would save thousands of pounds. Example! The upgrading of the junction of Yarm Road/Geneva Road is seen by the local residents as a complete waste of their council tax and no benefit to traffic or pedestrians.
Forum	22/01/2012	Have not had a pay rise for 5 years, I need to cut my household budget, how would I stand if I reduced my council tax payments by 10% due to a budget deficit, I need to plug a black hole in my household budget and after a house meeting have decided that the council tax increase is unacceptable, so I have but forward a budget proposal to reduce my council tax payments by 10%, if I went ahead with this I would be in court before the ink was dry on the direct debit, we all need to save money, why is the council expecting me to pay more. Also it is not necessary due to the government being prepared to give the council a 2.5% increase. I am sure if the council squeezed the taxpayers enough eventually we will scream !!!
Forum	23/01/2012	Seems to me that a lot of councils are getting rid of the chief execs at circa 180k a year can we afford to keep one ?
Phone	29/11/2011	Not satisfied with 'piece of cake' diagram shown in Town Crier as it does not show enough detail. Wants a breakdown of how much each service costs plus a breakdown of salaries, pensions and expenses. Who gets paid what, and what it is costing.
Phone	30/11/2011	3% rise is an insult as no one has had a pay rise-how can this happen?
Phone	11/01/2012	Don't agree with increase. The council tax should be frozen, out pensions haven't gone up.
Event	17/01/2012	I want to complain about the proposed increase in Council Tax. Christmas lights are turned off at midnight – couldn't you turn traffic lights off at this time?
Event	15/12/2011	How will the government changes to rules about ballots and Council Tax affect Darlington?

Proposal: General Comments
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Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		The Gamerholics group should survive as we are the most consistent group that the youth service provide. We already fund ourselves to help improve the environment and attract a bigger variety of people, some of the groups thrive on this two hour session a week if it goes.
Comment Box		The youth service is considered to be necessary in order to keep services and much needed activities going. Local external sources should be considered for short spurts of time.
Comment Box		Darlington BC, spends a fortune on questionnaires and meetings but ultimately doesn't listen to the publics views
Comment Box		More activities for children & activities for older kids needed from 9am - 5pm for the school holidays. There is nothing for them to do unless parents have money for those sorts of things
Comment Box		More needed for kids to do aged 3 - 12 yrs during the school holidays as there is nothing to do
Comment Box		Adult services such as adult learning, family learning & apprenticeships should be provided by DBC
Comment Box		Reduce the number of Councillors for the Borough, the current level is unnecessary in times of deep economic pressures such as now. Personal computers, workstations, expenses ethically & economically should be removed when frontline services are being rationalised. Senior manager positions & Councillor numbers appear to be immune. It's time for redressing the balance if their times are as bad as being made out. Do I think these views will change any of the aforementioned, NO, but am willing to be proved wrong!
Comment Box		Substantiation of the meagre martial arts & kung fu schools (discipline) in the Borough district being my only bone to pick as they're too few schools to Tao & practice of such a strict & rewarding practice!
Comment Box		Save money on unnecessary fripperies such as xmas lighting/public events in the park etc - citizens can amuse themselves. Eliminate expense accounts for councillors
Comment Box		I feel that you are doing the best you can in trying conditions. I feel that the library is important. Toilet facilities - try the continental approach. Clean the pavements outside of the take away food premises of the grease etc and have a 20 mph speed limit in the town centre
Comment Box		There are far too many highly paid employees working within the town hall. Every employee costing more than £50,000 should have their contract reviewed. Also councillors expense claims should be reviewed by an independent body
Comment Box		I have written in the Northern Echo before that Darlington is missing out on an indoor tennis centre. The leisure facility at Feethams should include a tennis/cricket indoor facility - this would be a legacy of sport which is what Feethams is recognised by Darlington people for.
Comment Box		I Certainly think the school crossing patrols are a very important part of everyday life as far as road safety is concerned and any proposals to either scale down the service or indeed axe it completely should defiantly be resisted. Also, the towns libraries ( particularly Cockerton) should be maintained at their present levels; they are a very important source of enjoyment etc for many people.
Comment Box		Library, Council, Arts, Refuse collection, Not the water feature
Comment Box		Strongly discourage the sale of chewing gum in local shops. This would save a lot of unnecessary street cleaning. At present many people disregard any signs regarding putting used gum in bins
Comment Box		Do not close the public toilets, A town this size need at least one. Leave the library open, stop wasting money on Surveys.
Comment Box		Keep the Arts Centre Open, Keep the library open, Keep sports facilities open

Method	Date	Comment
Comment Box		I do not agree with any of the cuts you are planning. I feel they will greatly reduce the quality of life in Darlington. However, I realise the decisions are being forced on you by Government. Could the Civic Theatre have been sold? It doesn't need to be run by the Council. Could Disabled drivers pay either full or nominal charges for parking in car parks. I don't believe it is law to give mandatory free parking.
Comment Box		Libraries, Public toilets, better use of bus services, to name but a few. These would help if reductions were made to the excessive council's chief executive and assistants salaries because of the above cuts council tax should be reduced and not raised.
Comment Box		There are some significant and very important things in Darlington, the most significant being:- Connection to the railway industry, the theatre, the Arts Centre, the market & its clock - mainly the clock, the Quaker name but not the football,
Comment Box		I acknowledge that given the reduction in Central government funding, balancing the budget is a nigh on impossible task. But we need not throw the baby out with the bathwater, leisure and green nature of Darlington are the key areas that make the difference when developers are making their increasingly difficult investment decisions so I have the following suggestions:
Comment Box		As a disabled person I am very worried about the negative impact that the loss of these services would have on me. The services I use are: Shopmobility & DAD Information Service for help & advice. I use them for getting around and the information service is excellent help and the staff are really helpful and pleasant. Being able to talk face to face with an individual instead of over the phone. the loss of these services would mean that they would have a dramatic effect on the support and information and also the use of the mobility equipment. If lost this would limit my mobility. As a disabled person I will also be affected by several other proposals including: review of Adults Transport, Bus Services, reduce Highways & Footpaths Maintenance. Please take my views into account when making your final decisions.
Comment Box		My comments on the budget are: Town Crier - not necessary - use the press. Agree to stop school transport for over 16 year olds. Arts Centre - to pull down these buildings is terrible. Cockerton Library must not close - it is an essential service. Raise fines for litter dropping and parking on all pavements and verges. Floral displays - get more sponsors and involve amateur gardening clubs. Hold fire on 'Housing for the Future' - update town houses
Comment Box		We would like to save Cockerton Library as it is so convenient for us
Comment Box		This would mean general worsening of the environment and further lack of cleanliness
Comment Box		If the Arts Centre were to close there will not be a family friendly place for people to meet who are not necessarily interested in going into the town centre and its (at times) alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour. There has always been a high quality range of events and entertainment that will not have an easy replacement within the same area of town. It's loss will be unacceptable. It will be a negative impact leading to <u>people boosting the economy of other areas outside the borough</u>
Comment Box		Better use of voluntary funds TOO MUCH is too easily given and spent on admin. i.e. DAD Christmas party had more staff almost than carers. Also SAME attendees who take up offers.
Email	29/11/2011	How much money is in the emergency fund? What would constitute an emergency? In the event of a national emergency the home office has that all emergency funds would be requested to a central fund so all the money you are hanging on to will end up in London and you know how much will come back to Darlington? nil. In reading the proposals I notice that all groups are being targeted for reductions. I say all groups with one glaring exception, councillors allowances. Why are they not being reduced?
Email	29/11/2011	I have read the proposals to the 2012/13 budget and note some interesting cuts and proposals. One thing that has never ever been mentioned is Council Management wages. A large proportion of savings could be made by cutting the pay of some of the highest paid officials. There has been a huge increase in 'middle managers' throughout all departments and Execs earning upwards of £100,000 gold plated salaries. Reduce the number of middle managers and cut the pay of the Execs for starters. Then perhaps reduce the budget for Adult services and put more money into the appalling state of the pot holed roads. Remove the traffic lights from the disastrous through-about on Haughton Road. The only time I've seen that used efficiently without causing massive congestion, was when the traffic lights broke once and it was turned into a roundabout. Remove the Bus lanes, this will free up congestion in the town centre, we are a small town not a big city. We need to put more money into Leisure promoting health and fitness for local youths. Cut the expensive drug and alcohol drop in centres. We always cut services to the hard working tax payers who actually pay council tax. Yet you ignore these people and put all your efforts into people on benefits who do nothing. Lets get things into perspective please.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	30/11/2011	see article 12th November 2010 by Paul Cook Northern Echo, council states reserve fund then 12 million pounds government has an emergency fund to deal with disasters it sent 20 million pounds to Haiti. If we had a disaster do you think it would leave your reserve fund alone? The budget proposal are doing away with lollipop people, toilets, libraries, remove funding at George dent nursery, sell the arts centre (gone for good) no CCTV out of town, and on and on, not being done away with, not being FROZEN but done away with, prove we are all in it together and halve councillors allowances, halve, not do away with, or maybe they could do what they asking the lollipop people and do it as a civic duty.
Email	30/11/2011	With regard to budget cuts please consider the following suggestions: 1. Closure of the Dolphin centre on weekends. 2. Closure of the Eastbourne Sports complex at weekends. 3. Sale of the Eastbourne Sports complex to private developers. 4. Closure of all Town Libraries at weekends. 5. The following charges for use of the Recycling centre on Whessoe road; a) £2 per car b) £3 per car with trailer or small van c) £4 per large van d) £5 per flat bed truck 6. Fixed penalty for fly tipping within the Borough of £2,000 plus the crushing of the vehicle used in the offence. 7. Termination of all flower beds in parks, public areas, and roundabouts. Flowers to be replaced with low maintenance, medium height, flowering shrubs or small flowering trees. 8. Allowance of areas of council owned grass land not used for sporting activities to be allowed to grow naturally and wild meadow flowers sown which will self propagate and also encourage the increase in wild birds such as Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Yellowhammer, Bullfinch, etc. This will reduce time spent grass cutting. 9. A charge of £20 per year for a fishing permit to allow angling at the council owned stretch of the river Tees at Blackwell 10. a 25% increase in town centre car park tariffs. 11. The sale of the civic theatre to private enterprises.
Email	01/12/2011	And finally: I know there's no pleasant river, or a castle, but more effort in things like Lumiere (people will bring their ideas to show them off): more music festivals; get a good food show / food festival on (the football stadium is big enough - its not rocket science); get people into the town who'll spend money (think car parking charges!!!). Have a flower festival. I know people who exhibit all over the north of England and there's nothing like that in Darlington. I'm going to Whitehaven Festival in June - from Darlington. <u>If you build it, people will come.</u> Put yourselves in the position of someone that lives outside of Darlington. Would you come here? Be honest! Also, I think you'll be making a mistake if you watch the football club go down, because it keeps the name of the town in the public eye; at least once a week.
Email	02/12/2011	your first point, see northern echo November 12 2010, council states that the reserve fund stands at 12 million pounds. Our government has a disaster and emergency fund which lately has helped Haiti, Pakistan etc. It follows that if we had an emergency at home that all reserves would be put to use! Lastly our services are not being froze, they are being done away with altogether! by all means freeze our services.

Method	Date	Comment
Email	09/12/2011	<p>Lots of disabled people turned up to this meeting in the Dolphin Centre, the questions started with a disabled person telling the meeting that all disabled people are suffering with the council cut and some have and are thinking of committing suicide and have nothing to live for. Councillor Copeland say's that the council are not aware of this problem s and she would get the care team managers to look into this problem she is passing the buck on to some one else. Member of the public asking that a lot of the disabled services are run by charities, not the council and are suffering to. To this councillor Copeland again passed the buck on to some one else. Member of the public ask about the Art centre and all the groups the are using the centre including disabled groups like the blind, deaf groups and children groups. Councillor Wallis told the meeting that all groups will be helped to move to ether buildings. A blind man ask about the care managers are not trained in helping people with suicide problems, he ask about highways doing repairs on road and footpaths, as he is always falling down pot-holes and over broken slabs</p> <p>Councillor Copeland told the man she would take is notes on the highways department. Member of the public ask about the Shopmobility and trying to get information on the facts but are getting nothing back from the council. Member of the public ask about lots of disabled people lost there taxi tokens and bus passes and need help with transport. No help or information was given from the councillor on the front table. Member of the public in a wheelchair ask about buses not stopping for wheelchair at the bus stops and the drivers not ever giving a helping hand ,and some times driving of with out the wheelchair person get on the bus. Councillors telling the meeting that the council will be having talks with the bus and taxi companies to give training to there drivers on handling disabled people. It was put to the meeting that a lot of people that care for a disabled person at home are young persons and young adult do a lot of the work look after the disabled person at home for nothing saving the council thousands, and still the disabled person gets penalised. The comments from lots of people at this meeting was that the councillors on the front table they must have know that lots of people would be coming in wheelchair and disabled but everything that was put to the councillors was passed to someone else or they passed the buck not one question was given a TRUE FACT.</p>
Email	11/12/2011	<p>Having read the Town Crier and some of the proposals for the budget and the town I am somewhat bemused!! How many hotels is Darlington going to have and who is to stay in them? The suggestion of putting a hotel into Feethams is surely a suggestion from some-one who has not been to Darlington!! What Darlington desperately needs is a Bus Station where all Bus Services stop. Local and National. The town should be totally free of all vehicles. As I live locally and pay my council tax I believe there should be a perk for the locals. Free car parking for one hour so I can pop into the Bank or shop! Yes, I know there is Sainsbury or Halfords, but often all I need is to go to the bank. Similar to most UK cities and towns Darlington needs social housing that local people can afford to rent. Not £500 or more a month, but £350 per month for a 2 bedroom house. The tenant signs a contract that they accept responsibility for keeping the house and its outside area up to and including the middle of the road clean. There should be no gardens.</p> <p>If people want a garden they should be offered an allotment. If housing associations can do it why can't the Council? Green verges should be removed and made into car park areas. This will save money on maintenance and should enhance the estate. Where there is grass people tend to park on it and leave deep ruts and mud. The children and young adults need somewhere to congregate and cause controlled mischief! If I remember my childhood we had something called parks where you could play football, hide and seek, rounders and other such things. Today, all the young one's seem to be chased and not encouraged. Most of our young people are excellent citizens and just their energy harnessing for the good and benefit of others and themselves. I understand it is difficult to please everyone. But another hotel. you have go to be kidding!! Especially when Darlington could do with a Bus station with it being mandatory for it to be used by all Services.</p>



Method	Date	Comment
Email	13/12/2011	<p>I am writing to express my deep concerns at proposals to cut the budget of carers services in Darlington. I care for my daughter who has a learning disability and is on the autistic spectrum. The physical and emotional strain this puts on my husband and I is enormous. We deal with lots of challenging behaviour, and are constantly worn out. In addition, my husband is sole carer to his 93 year old Mother, which again impacts greatly upon his time. Statistics show that informal carers such as us save the country an estimated 119 billion pounds annually. In Darlington there are an estimated 10,000+ informal carers. Many struggle on regardless until they reach breaking point. Others, such as ourselves have received great benefit from being put in touch with our local carers organisation, DAD. They are a source of great help and information, as well as providing a listening ear when things get really tough. They have been able to signpost us to other services and have been able to provide some real practical help which has enabled us to get some relation therapy and to look after ourselves so we can continue in our role. Without such services people simply would not know where to turn.</p> <p>The informal caring would be likely to break down sooner rather than later, having an impact on the person cared for as well as on the local authority who may well be required to provide the care that was previously provided. Carers are an easy target but there are significant numbers of us. If we all stopped caring (which is very hard to do), then what would happen? Please think again. The service does not cost a lot to run but is invaluable to the many people who rely upon it.</p>
Email	14/12/2011	<p>I am writing about the proposed cut to funding for the disabled, i.e. DAD Carers Support Service. I am full time carer for a gentleman of 42 years old who suffers from Downs Syndrome he attends Tec works day centre. I understand the items up for consultation include reduction of welfare rights, review of supported bus service and of DAD itself. If these services were closed down it would be just about the end of him as it is his only way of feeling like he means something to society, it is his be all and end all to everything. I can't drive so the bus service for him to get to his work would be the end of his happiness, it might seem over the top to you but not to him. And DAD has been a great help if we run into any problems. Welfare Rights are a big help to in helping you through all the red tape of benefits and entitlements regards.</p>
Email	20/12/2011	<p>I read today in the Northern Echo that Darlington Council will not accept the government grant and that the Council will increase the Council tax by 3.5% in 2012, is this statement true. Will the rise be 3.5% or greater! I understand that the CEO of the Council is in receipt of a salary that is approximately £157k pa whilst the PM who resides over 61 million people achieves £146k pa. Could you kindly confirm the figures or kindly be more accurate. I also understand that there at least 4 or maybe more managers that are under receipt of salaries above £100k pa. could you kindly confirm these figures both personnel levels and salaries. In response to 2 and 3 above what is the actual salaries for these personnel including, pensions, expenses and any other monies pa. My concern is that as pensioner paying tax, that if the above is true then I feel that is unacceptable and would wish to see a public debate on these matter.</p>
Email	04/01/2012	<p>Could I please make a small comment on the budget proposals. I appreciate the view that the offered government subsidy equivalent to 2.5% appears as a one year only option. What efforts or discussions have been had with central government to establish a longer term position which would enable Darlington Council to take a longer term view? It appears to me that the largest single area of expenditure - £33m on Adult Social Care - has not been rigorously targeted and should be capable of at least a further £0.5m saving per year for the next few years. This could be used to offset some of the peripheral 'fiddling at the edges' cuts £&lt;£10k) as well as reducing the overall increase to below 2% per annum which should be the maximum long term target in line with Bank of England inflation targets. Regards</p>
Email	11/01/2012	<p>To whom this may concern, I am emailing you in regards to the information that was given to me during a Health Session meeting at Darlington Deaf Club this week. I feel extremely anxious at the proposed cuts to transport, cuts to CCTV in surrounding areas of Darlington, cuts to D.A.D, cuts to care support hours and such like. I am a Deaf man who also is a wheel chair user because I have Cerebral Palsy. Most of your proposed cuts will effect me in some way. My security and many other peoples security comes from knowing and trusting that there is a CCTV also knowing and trusting that I/we will be able to go to the Day Centre and not have to worry about whether a Carer can be paid for taking me. I can undoubtedly say that not only my self but a huge proportion of disabled peoples quality of life can and will be affected if some of your proposals go through. These proposals do feel unfair and targeted slightly. Thank you for your time taken in reading my email</p>
Facebook	12/12/2011	<p>Arts Centre - going?, Cockerton Library - going? Darlington Football Club - strong possibility of going? Council Tax reductions for services, amenities etc being taken away by DBC - NOT LIKELY!!! (would find it interesting to see councillors expenses sheets though)</p>

Method	Date	Comment
Facebook	12/12/2011	Middleton St George/One Row and Hurworth Daytime Will be served by revised service 12/12a every 30 minutes. This service will no longer serve the airport Evening and Sunday Service 12/12a will also operate on Sunday every 60 minutes but there will be no evening service
Forum	21/11/2011	I would also like to register my disappointment in the Council's decision to close down the aviary in South Park. I feel that the money spent on the care of the birds is just a drop in the ocean compared to how much is wasted in other areas. I have placed this comment here as there is not a topic open for this subject. I am sure that all the comments which can be read from the 2009 Budget Proposal still stand true today.
Letter	06/12/2011	I am concerned about the loss of funding to the Shopmobility Service, it is a very good service as it gives you a chance to get around the town to access shops and services and without the service I would be stuck at home and I would lose some of my independence. I am worried that I will lose my Blue Badge parking or I will be charged to park, this will limit the places I am able to go. I am concerned about the proposals for Adult Social Care as my PAs are essential eg make meals, making my bed and housework to keep my house clean. I am worried about potential closures to DAD services as I attend Dimensions Disability Initiative and I use Direct Payment Services. Both services support me to retain my independence and support me in many different ways. Currently I attend Dimensions and receive transport to and from the service. If the transport was withdrawn I would not be able to attend. I find the footpaths bumpy and uneven and I find going along the pavements in my wheelchair very uncomfortable. It puts me off using footpaths which deters me going out and about. I would like you to consider the cuts carefully before making any decisions especially ones that directly affect disabled people. We are carrying the brunt of the cutbacks and I feel this is unfair.
Letter	12/12/2011	A pay freeze affecting all council employees is in force yet no mention is made of payments to Councillors. The 2010-11 Budget estimates this total figure to be £738,646 so it is a significant amount. It is also interesting that the total cost of employees for the years 2000 - 2010 has increased by 50% and for the same period, payments to councillors has increased by 146%. I find this surprising especially as all major discussions and decisions seem to be made by the Cabinet and not by committees formed by Councillors and drawn from all political parties. In addition, this is also an argument that perhaps the time has come to consider a reduction in the number of councillors resulting in subsequent savings. To sum up, in my opinion it is only equitable that the cost of Councillors be at least frozen in line with the treatment of council employees and, in addition, action taken to reduce the present level of expenses and/or remuneration.
Phone	16/11/2011	Request for cabinet papers in word format without tables
Phone	25/11/2011	Would like additional information re proposal
Phone	28/11/2011	Arts culture and leisure disagree with the quote attributed to Councillor Wallis that Darlington wants the arts to thrive. If close the arts centre does not believe that all costs of a new build will be covered by the sale income. The tax payer will need to pick up additional costs. The closure of Cockerton library will impact on older people who are unable to get into town.
Phone	28/11/2011	How can the Chief Executive (and some co-horts) earn more than the Prime Minister? These are the savings that need to be addressed. He would like someone to get back to him with the justification for their salaries. There are too many councillors. Over 50 councillors for a small town.
Phone	28/11/2011	Darlington has 53 councillors, reduce to 26. In additions the Chief Executive costs £200,000 and one or two others get over £100,000. That's where we should start with the cost cutting. Supposed to be a Labour Council and look after the working man. In the Town Crier there is no mention of looking at cutting these costs.
Phone	29/11/2011	25 years ago councillors got out-of-pocket expenses and worked for the good of the community, now they all get a pensionable salary. Would like to know how much each councillor gets. He would do it for expenses.
Phone	29/11/2011	Used to inspect buildings as part of his job before he retired 2 years ago. Has seen an increase in staffing levels over the years despite the fact that Council has got rid of a lot of services and are supposed to be more efficient with the use of computers etc. If Council has fewer services and is more efficient, how come it has more staff?
Phone	29/11/2011	Believes salary levels have rocketed despite there being less work. Cited case at Darlington Memorial Hospital where boiler work has been contracted out but there are now more managers than when work was done in-house.
Phone	29/11/2011	Is council going ahead with solar panels scheme? His view is that they don't work.
Phone	29/11/2011	Asked if it was still open as he had heard rumours over the years that it would be closed.
Phone	01/12/2011	Would like to know when the consultation ends

Method	Date	Comment
Phone	06/12/2011	Why should the Chief Executive be paid more than the prime minister - there are more than 1,000 in the country who are paid more than the prime minister?
Phone	06/12/2011	Why have we got in excess of 50 councillors? Presumably they all get paid and they all have expenses?
Phone	12/12/2011	Could traffic lights be switched off between 11pm and 6am when there is no need for them? Pedestrian crossings could be timed a little later.
Phone	12/12/2011	Street lights in West Park area very bright - could lower power bulbs be used to save money?
Phone	12/12/2011	Civic Theatre - why not sell it (if there are people wanting to buy it) and use the money to help with the budget?
Phone	12/12/2011	Traffic Wardens - why are the Council employing more at evening time when there is less traffic (probably paying double time)?
Phone	12/12/2011	Sunday Parking - Surely the raise in parking charges on Sundays will drive shoppers out of town and lead to shop closures. More revenue - but at what cost?
Phone	12/12/2011	Grass Verges - the Council is spending lots of money replacing with tarmac and fencing round trees - this is an unnecessary expense. The money would be better spent repairing pot holes in roads.
Phone	12/12/2011	Royal Oak site at Bank Top - is currently fenced off, but could be used for car parking for the station instead of people parking roadside in the nearby streets.
Event	12/12/2011	I've read through all the reductions, are the Councillors going to take reductions, e.g. less committee meetings.
Event	12/12/2011	What would the budget be if it was statutory minimum? What elements are statutory and discretionary. Can you give me the zero based budget figures for the next four years. In the information provided – there is no guidance on what is discretionary. I may support the need for the Dolphin or East Row toilets. What I don't know is which bits are discretionary or not? I don't know what to support.
Event	12/12/2011	Also I am concerned about expenditure on the Town development – the Pedestrian Heart. Construction faults in the steps, the handrails. Is it the Council insurance who will pay for a claim or is it the construction company.
Event	12/12/2011	Do you think being a unitary authority puts you at a disadvantage. Darlington against the big metropolitan councils.
Event	12/12/2011	What is the council's relationship with the Forum Music Centre? It is a very good centre for young people. Do you plan to invest any further in the Forum as a Community Interest Company. I think it is good to support the Forum.
Event	05/12/2012	There are 25 impacts on disabled people out of 92 proposals. There are another 23 which he feels indirectly impact on disabled people. This is disproportionate. What does the Council intend to do about this. Where is the impact assessment?. The Social Model of disability was adopted as part of the Disability Equality Scheme adopted in 2008 this seems to have been set aside e.g. re-ablement is not mitigation.
Event	09/12/2012	I fully believe that disabled people are getting hit twice over. Figures are coming out nationally now about the impacts of suicide and attempted suicide of disabled. The reality on people's lives is only now coming to them. The impact assessments did not pick up the real impacts of the budget changes. Mitigation is not happening on the ground. When people talk to you about their individual impacts, listen to them, it is their lives and you must listen to it all. Some things are obvious but other things are less obvious. Please take it seriously and listen. The reality is obvious and what is happening is real. The impact assessments were not taken seriously.
Event	09/12/2012	No point in arguing the minimum statutory minimums. Cannot turn back on how and who. Care providers affect people's real lives. DBC cannot just handover responsibility for services to other providers e.g. Selby Model. Much wider than adult social care but highways, school transport, maintenance, welfare rights etc. You will build up a democratic deficit. Public money not accountable as it is filtered into the private purse. Still responsible under equalities legislation.
Event	09/12/2012	Lots of disabled people have been coming to meetings and explaining their difficulties. People have been telling the Council for years the same things. It's not good enough. Asking for the same information again.
Event	09/12/2012	Well aware of a lot disabled people talking about a lot issues. Deaf people have a lot of issues about access to information – health, employment and information in general. Learning how to become independent and confident. Youth Services – where does the independence have to rely on parents? It's all about access to information for deaf people.

Method	Date	Comment
Letter	17/12/2011	I am a 55 year old disabled woman who suffers from clinical depression as well as being a wheelchair user. Therefore, as you can imagine the proposals you have put forward concerning cutting services were shocking and scary to me. There are quite a few of the proposals that will have a negative impact on my life. A few of these are; cease Shopmobility funding (27), cease rent support of DAD (8), savings to adult social care (60), review of adult transport (24), review of supported bus service (28), closing of east row toilets (33) and reduction to highway and footpath maintenance budgets (23). I believe these proposals the Council have put forward have attacked the most vulnerable in society, being the disabled and the elderly. Some of these cuts are going to leave people isolated and lonely and therefore a potential rise in depression and suicide rates. The people that will suffer the most are those who are unable to stand up for themselves....
Letter	26/01/2012	The Council will allocate land for sale, which they own. Not bothered about private landowners who want building permission but are just ignored by the planners which would help the unemployed and bring in revenue plus other benefits like roads and help communities and organisations with leisure facilities which the Council have taken away with playing fields sold. Its all one-sided with an increase in Council Tax while people suffer from cuts and no hope of getting building permission.
Letter	26/01/2012	You persistently bring up that Darlington has the lowest Council Tax in the region. Surely this was what was promised when Darlington wanted to be a unitary Council. With the catchment area this should always be the case. You never mention that the rates have gone up over 130% in a short space of time. Councils are well known for waste and over manning. Darlington is no exception to this. For years the Council have decided what they wanted to spend and then fixed the rates accordingly. Only after government intervention has this been stopped and not before time... The Council should accept the Government's 2.5% and cancel plans for a 3.5% increase in the rates. The council should reduce the budget accordingly...
Email	20/11/2011	There is massive scope in this element for making savings. Talking Together may be seen on the face of it as being OK but is sometimes poorly attended by the public. After that many public comments based on common sense are ignored in favour of politically motivated cabinet decisions.
Email	21/11/2011	Councillors are effectively employees of the council. Their allowance should be halved to £100 per week (or £5,000 per year) There are too many of them (52?) and they actually achieve little as most decisions are taken by the (so called) Cabinet. Also let's get rid (or share with Stockton) a Chief Executive as the present incumbent is just not worth what she is paid (of course I am not stupid as I realise that she would not get a similar paid job elsewhere. But when the Council pleads poverty getting rid of highly paid posts would show it means business. I doubt whether this suggestion will reach Cabinet as it decides to get rid of more widely used facilities such as Cockerton Library
Event	07/01/2012	I have two children and myself and my husband are both deaf. My two children are currently at St Theresa's. We will have the same difficulty in accessing Carmel but it is harder for us to access information from schools. Before cut backs the Council had an interpreting agency and if needed I could access an interpreter to go to the school with me. Now schools are saying they don't want to pay for this. It is also hard to get information on the budget cuts as we don't have the same access.  Concerned that I have to rely on my 8 year old as an interpreter. This makes her old before her time and I want independence too and I need to care for my children and get support to do so.
Event	07/01/2012	Accept this is an open discussion but how do we know about it as young people. Have you taken steps to go into schools, Facebook, allow people to write questions down if they are not willing to ask them?
Event	17/01/2012	I have been listening with interest but I am disappointed. Politicians should not make cuts and if Government send people in to run Darlington let them. Darlington could be a desert as there is no interim if we lose the Arts Centre. There will be no-one in town as there are no buses and maintenance of parks has been reduced. Politicians should fight for the town and tell Government –no. They should help keep Darlington and the trades union would support them.
Event	17/01/2012	Saddened by the Arts Centre proposal and reduction in Adult Social care transport. It would be irresponsible to spend 5% to save the Arts centre when cutting adult social care and transport. If the union believes the Council can set an illegal budget and the government would change its view he is very naïve.
Event	15/12/2011	Has consideration been given to selling assets or manage them differently?

<b>Method</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Event	06/01/2012	Thanks for your honesty in giving us a clear understanding of the position. As you clearly stated as the council faces a funding issue will impact on third sector organisations. Many third sector organisations deliver services for the Council. We need to know the situation relating to these contracts as soon as possible and we have a particular problem with short-term one year contracts. Will there be funding in the short-term from March onwards or do we have to give staff notice?
Event	06/01/2012	The budget has a lot of cuts. Where will you need most support from the voluntary and community sector?