

## **Cambridge Matters Autumn 2010 Survey Results – Budget Consultation**

### **Introduction**

A survey asking residents to prioritise council services in terms of their importance was published in the autumn edition of Cambridge Matters. The preamble to the survey introduced the context of government grant reductions and the fact the council is looking for ways to provide services more efficiently. Readers were also made aware that some services are statutory while others are discretionary but they were not told which was which. Cambridge Matters was delivered between September 17 and October 1. Residents had until October 22 to return their questionnaire. A total of 449 households responded to the questionnaire. 36 of these responses were received through the council's website where the survey was also made available.

The survey listed a number of council services and asked residents to put a tick against the three they considered most important and the three they considered least important. 165 households returned questionnaires with many more than three ticks in either column. The results of all the returned questionnaires have been included in the analysis. The ticks given for each service have been added together and shown as a percentage of the total number of questionnaires returned in Table 1 below.

Statistically, a sample size of 450 gives a 'confidence interval' of around 4.5 at a 'confidence level' of 95%. This means that we can be 95% sure that if the whole population of Cambridge had responded to the questions, their answer would have been within + or – 4.5% of the survey result.

In other words, we can take these results as a useful guide as to the relative importance that people place on each service area.

### **Summary of the results**

In broad terms the results reflect previous surveys. Respondents placed greatest importance on our core services: collecting rubbish, recycling, cleaning the streets and maintaining our parks and open spaces. They also placed high importance on working with the police to tackle crime and anti social behaviour.

Respondents placed least importance on managing ticketed events and free events.

Respondents were split over some services. For example:

- 17% said CCTV was of high importance and 35% said CCTV was less important.
- 28% said 'Planning for new housing, including affordable housing and designing attractive new neighbourhoods' was of high importance whilst 19% said it was less important.
- 28% said 'Providing and maintaining sports and leisure services such as swimming pools' was of high importance whilst 16% said it was less important.

**Table 1**

The table shows the percentage of respondents that ticked each service area in answer to the two following questions:

1. Please select three services that are very important to you and that you think the Council should provide to the highest possible standard.
2. Then select three services that are less important and that could be provided at a lower standard.

Service Area	High Importance	Less Importance
	%	%
Collecting rubbish and giving advice on recycling	68	4
Working with the police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour	52	6
Cleaning the streets	51	6
Managing and maintaining the city's parks and open spaces	43	7
Preventing air water noise and land pollution	37	10
Conserving the city's buildings and trees	35	9
Running community centres, supporting community groups and activities for older people, young people, disabled people and people from ethnic minorities	35	13
Managing and maintaining public toilets	34	10
Providing and maintaining sports and leisure services such as swimming pools	28	16
Planning for new housing, including affordable housing and designing attractive new neighbourhoods	28	19
Paying benefits and preventing benefit fraud	28	13
Helping homeless people	27	14
Protecting the environment and tackling climate change	27	18
Managing and maintaining council houses and involving tenants	27	18
Giving grants to voluntary groups to help them run services	21	21
Managing and maintaining the city's CCTV system	17	32
Managing commercial premises for local business e.g. market and neighbourhood shops	13	29
Managing and maintaining city car parks	12	30
Enforcing food safety, health and safety and standards in private rented housing	12	33
Running the tourist information centre and services for visitors	11	34
Managing events with free entry like bonfire night and the big weekend	10	60
Managing events that you would buy a ticket for, like a concert at the Corn Exchange or the Folk Festival	6	66

*Note: Many respondents ticked more than three service areas*