

Herefordshire Public Services

**Public consultation on strategic
budget options for the Council
and PCT using SIMALTO
modelling**

Research For Today Ltd

November 2008

Objectives

Herefordshire Council and PCT wanted to know resident priorities about the allocation of resources between various services.

- Which of current service levels/benefits could be reduced and cause least 'distress' among residents?
- Which improvements, if any, on other services should take priority?
- In reference to council issues, would residents be willing to pay more council tax, above inflation, to fund net improvements in services?

Interviews Conducted

Interviews were conducted in every ward, proportional to their populations.

	Interviewed
City	132
North	105
South	88
East	79
<hr/>	
TOTAL	404

Sex		Male	50%	Female	50%		
Age		18 - 40	34%	41 - 59	34%	60+	32%
Ethnicity		'White'	99%	Other	1%		

Sample continued

In addition 3 SIMALTO seminars were held with attendance by :-

24 'older' residents

13 school children

10 voluntary services personnel

Services shown – council issues

1. Libraries
2. Museums
3. Leisure facilities
4. Arts, Courtyard
5. Roads, footways
6. Car parking charges
7. Litter, graffiti, fly tipping
8. Anti social behaviour
9. Bus subsidies
10. Traffic congestion
11. Children's services
12. Youth services
13. Carers' support
14. Home support
15. Care charges
16. Dementia help

Services shown – PCT issues

1. Obesity control
2. Smoking cessation
3. Alcoholism
4. Falls
5. Stroke
6. Long term health conditions
7. End of life care
8. High cost drugs
9. Cosmetic surgery
10. Dental access

Current Position

1	Libraries	Close of 3 libraries 0	As now – the council runs 10 libraries, plus 2 mobile libraries 2		
2	Museums	Possible closure of all council facilities 0	As now – the council operates five museums/ heritage centres, plus a mobile museum service. It also provides financial support for a further 16 museums 1	Revamp the museum displays in the heritage centres to attract more visitors 2	Plus longer opening hours to attract more visitors 3
3	Leisure Facilities	Closure of up to 2 least used facilities 0	Or reduce the number of concessionary entrance fees for pensioners, the disabled and unemployed 0	As now – the council provides funding for 11 leisure facilities which have some 1.5 million customer visits a year 1	
4	Arts, Including the Courtyard	Reduced courtyard opening hours/ performance time/ high quality performances, including reduced access for vulnerable residents 0	As now, the council supports a range of arts and artists. The courtyard generates in excess of £4 million to the county's economy. A further unknown amount is generated by arts events such as H-art week and the Contemporary Craft Fair 1	Courtyard to be open for longer and include more performances. More specialist projects. More participation for a greater number of residents 2	
5	Maintenance of Roads and Footways	The 30% of unclassified roads and footways currently in poor condition would increase to 50% 0	As now – the council maintains all roads (except principal 'A' roads) and many footways. They are currently deteriorating 5	Some improvement in minor roads and footways 10	Significant improvement in minor roads over a 3-year period 15
6	Car Parking Charges	20% increase in off-street parking charges 0	10% increase in off-street parking charges 2	Or introduction of on-street charges 2	As now 5
7	Local environmental quality – graffiti, fly posters, dog mess	Reduction in local environment quality, less frequent cleaning and litter collection 0	As now 1	Villages to be cleaned every 3 months, instead of every 6. The cleaning of graffiti from private property, increased patrols, improved local environmental quality 2	

Unacceptable



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- ◆ **Each resident asked to 'spend' 4 sets of points totalling 40 points.**
- ◆ **One point = £100,000**
- ◆ **Left hand side of grid = approx. £2.5 m saving.**

 **Cost Constrained (14) First Priorities**

1	Libraries	Close of 3 libraries 0	As now – the council runs 10 libraries, plus 2 mobile libraries 2		
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7	Local environmental quality – graffiti, fly posters, dog mess	Reduction in local environment quality, less frequent cleaning and litter collection 0	As now 1	Villages to be cleaned every 3 months, instead of every 6. The cleaning of graffiti from private property, increased patrols, improved local environmental quality 2	

Cost Constrained (8) Second Priorities

1	Libraries	Close of 3 libraries 0	As now – the council runs 10 libraries, plus 2 mobile libraries 2		
2	Museums	Possible closure of all council facilities 0	As now – the council operates five museums/ heritage centres, plus a mobile museum service. It also provides financial support for a further 16 museums 1	Revamp the museum displays in the heritage centres to attract more visitors 2	Plus longer opening hours to attract more visitors 3
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Satisfaction with Specification

	Base Position	1st Priority improves	2nd Priority improves	3rd Priority improves	4th Priority Improves
Extremely Pleased					
Very Pleased					✓
Quite Pleased			✓	✓	
Uncertain		✓			
Slightly Unhappy					
Very Unhappy	✓				

Satisfaction with Personal Council Scenarios

	Very Unhappy	Slightly Unhappy	Uncertain	Quite Pleased	Very Pleased	Extremely Pleased
Base	76%	20%	5%	0%	0%	0%
+14 Points	9%	26%	25%	38%	2%	0%
+22 Points	2%	7%	22%	53%	15%	1%
+30 Points	1%	3%	10%	52%	30%	3%
+40 Points	0%	2%	4%	34%	46%	15%
Current	8%	12%	22%	45%	12%	1%

Current council expenditure is 25 points.

Very few 'unhappy' with their choices at less than this cost, (22 points).

Satisfaction with Personal PCT Scenarios

	Very Unhappy	Slightly Unhappy	Uncertain	Quite Pleased	Very Pleased	Extremely Pleased
Base	64%	27%	8%	0%	0%	0%
+16 Points	5%	23%	25%	40%	6%	0%
+24 Points	2%	10%	20%	54%	13%	0%
+32 Points	1%	6%	11%	51%	28%	2%
+40 Points	1%	3%	6%	38%	42%	10%
Current PCT performance on these 10 services	6%	18%	26%	36%	12%	1%

Current PCT expenditure is 28 points.

Very few 'unhappy' with their choices at less than this cost, (24 points).

“Service Benefits/Tax Level” Trade Off Choice

Black circles PLUS red arrows, with a £18/year tax <u>saving</u>	1
Black circles PLUS red arrows and black arrows, with a £6/year tax <u>saving</u>	2
Black circles PLUS red, black, green arrows, with a £6/year tax <u>increase</u>	3
Black circles PLUS all arrowed improvements, with a £20/year tax <u>increase</u>	4

An equivalent hypothetical cost-benefit trade-off choice was set for the PCT issues

Scenarios Chosen When Informed of Council Tax Impact – council issues

Scenario:	+14 Points	+22 Points	+30Points	+40 Points
Budget Equivalent	-£1.1m	-£300k	+£500k	+£1.5m
Approx. Tax Impact,	£18 Decrease	£6 Decrease	£6 Increase	£20 Increase
Under 40	11%	19%	37%	33%
40 – 59	7%	16%	32%	45%
60 +	8%	16%	40%	37%
Total	9%	17%	36%	38%

Scenarios Chosen When Informed of Council Tax Impact – council issues

Scenario:	+14 Points	+22 Points	+30Points	+40 Points
Budget Equivalent	-£1.1m	-£300k	+£500k	+£1.5m
Approx. Tax Impact,	£18 Decrease	£6 Decrease	£6 Increase	£20 Increase
City	4%	9%	40%	47%
North	10%	18%	28%	44%
South	8%	20%	38%	34%
East	15%	23%	41%	22%
Total	9%	17%	36%	38%

Scenarios Chosen When Informed of Council Tax Impact – council issues

Scenario:	+14 Points	+22 Points	+30Points	+40 Points
Budget Equivalent	-£1.1m	-£300k	+£500k	+£1.5m
Approx. Tax Impact,	£18 Decrease	£6 Decrease	£6 Increase	£20 Increase
Male	8%	13%	36%	42%
Female	9%	20%	36%	34%
‘Older’ group	13%	29%	50%	8%
Voluntary group	10%	20%	30%	40%
Student group	0%	33%	67%	0%

Example Summary Data – PCT issues

Attribute 10) Dental access

	As now	20% capacity increase in Hereford city	20% capacity increase in Herefordshire
	0	2	5
Priority 40	14%	24%	62%
Priority 32	22%	25%	53%
Priority 24	31%	26%	43%
Priority 16	45%	21%	34%
Unacceptable	40%	1%	0%

Example Summary Data – council issues

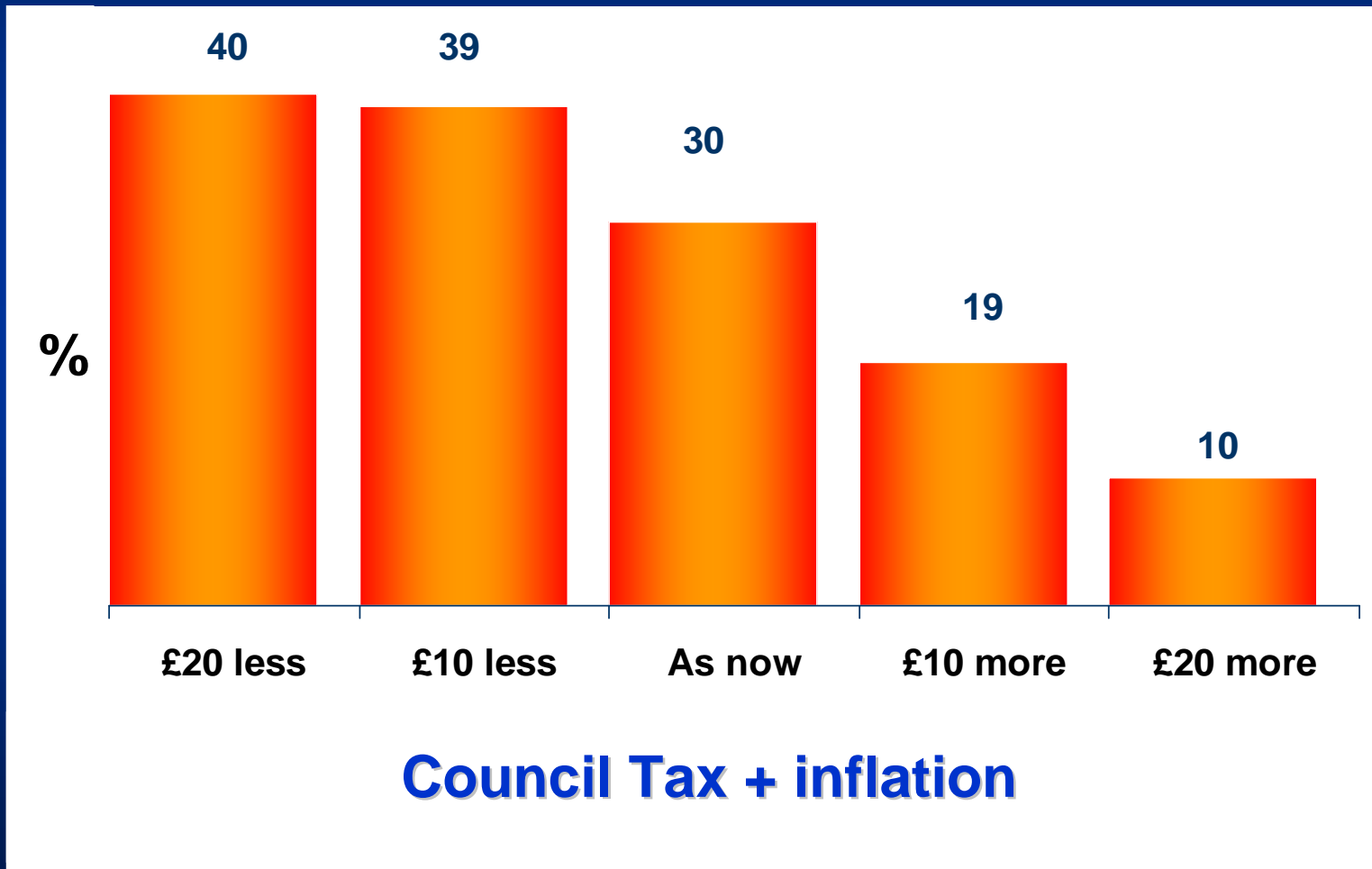
Attribute 8) Anti social behaviour

	Reduced service 0	As now 2	Increased patrols and investigations 3
Priority 40	12%	12%	76%
Priority 30	26%	12%	62%
Priority 22	41%	13%	46%
Priority 14	59%	11%	30%
Unacceptable	39%	0%	0%

	Service level	Budget Difference
1 Libraries	Close 3 libraries	-£200k
2 Museums	As now	-
3 Leisure facilities	Close up to 2 least used facilities	-£100k
4 Arts, Courtyard	Reduce opening hours/ performance time/ reduced access for vulnerable residents	-£100k
5 Roads, footways	As now	-
6 Car parking charges	10% increase in off-street parking	-£300k
7 Graffiti, fly posters, dog mess etc	As now	-
8 Anti social behaviour	Increased patrols, investigations, persecutions and enforcement	+£100k
9 Bus subsidies	As now	-
10 Traffic congestion	2 park and ride schemes	+£100k
11 Children's services	14 extra support workers	+£300k
12 Youth services	As now	-
13 Support carers	100 more carers supported	+£100k
14 Community care	80 more remain independent	+£100k
15 Care charges	12.5% increase in discretionary charges	-£100k
16 Dementia care	Advice, signposting, support at earlier stage	+£100k

	Service level	Budget Difference
1 Obesity control	As now	-
2 Smoking cessation	As now	-
3 Alcoholism	Education targeting children and teenagers	+£100k
4 Falls	Early interventions, target people at risk	+£100k
5 Stroke	Education, target people at risk PLUS 100% get MRI scan	+£300k
6 Long term health	Self management, 24 hour hotline PLUS 100% get home visits by specialist nurses	+£400k
7 End of life care	10% more patients get home support/therapies	+£300k
8 High cost drugs	10% fewer patients receive	-£800k
9 Cosmetic surgery	20% fewer patients receive	-£600k
10 Dental access	20% increase in capacity located centrally in Hereford City	+£200k

Predicted Dissatisfaction with Alternative “Consensus” Council Budgets



% Choice Prediction Between Consensus Optimum Council Budgets

Approx. Budget Change	-£1.2m	-£600k	As now	+£600k	+£1.2m
Total	13	15	18	24	31
Under 40	11	16	18	25	29
40 – 59	13	14	19	22	32
60 +	14	12	18	24	31

No age differences between preferences

% Choice Prediction Between Consensus Optimum Council Budgets

Approx. Budget Change	-£1.2m	-£600k	As now	+£600k	+£1.2m
Total	13	15	18	24	31
City	12	13	22	24	28
North	12	13	17	24	34
South	15	17	16	23	29
East	15	17	16	22	29

Virtually no area differences in priorities

% Choice Prediction Between Consensus Optimum Council Budgets

Approx. Budget Change	-£1.2m	-£600k	As now	+£600k	+£1.2m
Male	14	16	17	26	29
Female	12	14	19	22	32
'Older' group	20	14	31	18	16
Voluntary group	19	10	20	15	36
Student group	13	22	30	10	26

'Older' group less keen on paying for better services

% Choice Prediction Between Consensus Optimum Hypothetical PCT Budgets

Approx. Budget Change	-£1.2m	-£600k	As now	+£600k	+£1.2m
Total	13	15	19	21	31
Under 40	14	16	18	20	32
40 – 59	12	14	19	22	33
60 +	14	16	18	22	30

As for council issues, no age differences between preferences

% Choice Prediction Between Consensus Optimum Hypothetical PCT Budgets

Approx. Budget Change	-£1.2m	-£600k	As now	+£600k	+£1.2m
Total	13	15	19	21	31
City	14	15	19	23	29
North	12	15	17	24	32
South	15	15	19	18	34
East	15	18	18	18	31

As for council issues, no area differences between preferences

% Choice Prediction Between Consensus Optimum Hypothetical PCT Budgets

Approx. Budget Change	-£1.2m	-£600k	As now	+£600k	+£1.2m
Male	13	16	17	22	32
Female	14	15	20	21	31
'Older' group	14	14	29	15	27
Voluntary group	6	14	25	20	35

'Older' group almost as willing to pay for better services as others; see council issues where they were not as willing.

Most Preferred Individual Improvements – council issues

Service Attribute	Change	Index	Cost
Roads, footways (5)	50% poor → <u>as now</u> 30% poor	85	5
Carer support (13)	100 fewer → <u>as now</u>	76	1
Short term therapy (14)	Less → <u>as now</u>	74	1
Anti social behaviour (8)	Reduced service → <u>as now</u>	72	1
Dementia help (16)	Reduced service → <u>as now</u>	71	1
Short term therapy (14)	<u>As now</u> → 80 more	69	1

Most Preferred Individual Improvements – PCT issues

Service Attribute	Change	Index	Cost
Stroke (5)	Withdraw → <u>as now</u>	89	1
Stroke (5)	<u>As now</u> → targeting, screening	84	1
End of life care (7)	Only 10% receive → <u>as now</u> , 20% receive	80	3
Dental access (10)	<u>As now</u> → 20% increase in Hereford city	79	2
Long term health (6)	<u>As now</u> → DIY, 24 hour helpline	78	1
High cost drugs (8)	20% fewer receive → 10% fewer receive	72	8

Comparison of Current allocation with PCT Issues Consensus at same cost

	Current	Consensus
3 Alcoholism	As now	Educate young
4 Falls	As now	Targeting
5 Stroke	As now	Educate + 100% MRI
6 Long term health	As now	24 hour helpline
7 End of life care	As now	10% more patients
8 High cost drugs	As now	10% fewer receive
9 Cosmetic surgery	As now	20% fewer receive
10 Dental access	As now	20% more in City
Preference	24%	76%
Satisfaction Prediction		
% Unhappy	13%	9%

Residents, on balance, would like to make 8 changes to the current allocation, at the same budget cost.

This would result in an overall reduction of 4% on the 'unhappy' section of the 'dissatisfied/satisfied' scale.

Comparison of Current allocation with '25' Council Issues Consensus

	Current	Consensus
1 Libraries	As now	Close 3
3 Leisure facilities	As now	Close 2
4 Arts, Courtyard	As now	Reduce hours
6 Car parking charges	As now	10% increase
8 Anti social behaviour	As now	Increase patrols
10 Traffic congestion	As now	2 park & rides
11 Children's services	As now	14 extra workers
13 Carer support	As now	100 extra supported
14 Community care	As now	80 more independent
15 Care charges	As now	12.5% increase
16 Dementia care	As now	Early stage help
Preference	37%	63%
Satisfaction Prediction		
% Unhappy	16%	12%

Residents, on balance, would like to make 11 changes to the current allocation, at the same budget cost.

This would result in an overall reduction of 4% on the 'unhappy' section of the 'dissatisfied/satisfied' scale.

Summary 1

On balance, the research suggests the council tax change from the residents perspective should be about a £5 per year increase, plus inflation, to provide an increased optimum allocation of £300k.

Summary 2 – Benefit Reductions Causing Least Displeasure – council issues.

Car parking charges – 10% increase

Arts, Courtyard – reduced hours and access for vulnerable

Non residential discretionary care charges – 12.5% increase

Libraries – close 3

Leisure facilities – reduce number of concessionary reduced fees

Bus subsidies – 92,000 fewer passenger journeys

Museums – Possible closure of all council facilities

Non residential discretionary care charges – 25% increase

Car parking charges – 20% increase

Summary 3 – Enhancements causing most Satisfaction – council issues

Traffic congestion – 2 park and ride schemes

Short term therapy – 80 more persons helped to stay independently at home

Children's services – 14 extra support workers

Roads maintenance – Some improvement in minor roads and footways

Support for carers – 100 extra carers supported

Dementia health problems – support at an earlier stage

Anti social behaviour – Increased patrols, investigations, enforcement

Youth services – more positive/targeted work

Summary 4 – Services which should not be reduced – council issues

Roads / footways maintenance

Youth services

Short term therapy and support

Support for carers

Dementia, other mental health problems

Summary 5 – Benefit Reductions Causing Least Displeasure – PCT issues.

High cost drugs – 10% fewer receive them

Cosmetic surgery – 20% fewer receive it

Smoking cessation – Withdraw NRT service

Summary 6 – Enhancements causing most Satisfaction – PCT issues

Stroke – Targeting + 100% get MRI

**Dental access – 20% capacity increase in city
(shire)**

**Long term health conditions – 100% get home
visits**

Falls – Target people at risk

End of life care – 10% more receive home support

Alcoholism – Education programme for children/teenagers

Summary 7 – Services which should not be reduced – PCT issues

Stroke

End of life care

Obesity control

Smoking cessation