

### High Level Consultation Summary

This document is a summary of the public consultation responses received through the online consultation software Survey Monkey which totalled 71, the 10 postal responses and 7 1-1 sessions held with organisations.

Total responses to the public consultation was 88

The table below combines all of the responses to the online survey, responses received by post and the 1-1 sessions held. It should be noted that not all respondents answered all of the questions which accounts for the range of responses received on each question.

Survey question	%yes	%no	% don't know	No of responses received	Comments
Is the commissioning framework clear on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed priorities</li> <li>• Reasons for change</li> <li>• Commissioning approach</li> </ul>	<b>79%(57)</b> <b>72.5%(50)</b> <b>70.5%(48)</b>	<b>21%(15)</b> <b>27.5%(19)</b> <b>29.5%(20)</b>	n/a n/a n/a	<b>72</b> <b>69</b> <b>68</b>	The majority of responders felt the framework was clear but helpful suggestions were made for clarification that have been incorporated into the latest version of the document.
Would you like further information or explanation included in the document?	<b>60.5%(40)</b>	<b>39.5%(26)</b>	n/a	<b>66</b>	Whilst a majority wanted additional information included a sizeable minority wanted a simpler version. Officers will ensure that an "Easy read" version of the document is produced once the document is in its final form
Do you agree that the priorities should continue to be supported	<b>50%(34)</b>	<b>38% (26)</b>	<b>12% (8)</b>	<b>68</b>	Although it appears only half of the respondents support the proposed priorities, the majority of those who answered 'no' to this question were not disputing the importance of them but wished for other priorities to be added. There was, therefore, general agreement

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Survey question	%yes	%no	% don't know	No of responses received	Comments
					to support the priorities but with some respondents expressing a view that services for the vulnerable should be prioritised over those for Arts and Culture.
Do you agree that the Council should continue to provide small grants to local community and charitable organisations to fund local projects	<b>93.3 (57)</b>	<b>1.7(1)</b>	<b>5.0 (3)</b>	<b>62</b>	The vast majority of respondents were in favour of retaining this funding stream.
If a small grants fund was to continue, what would you expect to see achieved through that funding	n/a	n/a	n/a	<b>47</b>	A range of suggestions were received which have been incorporated in the Cabinet report for members consideration.
Any other comments	n/a	n/a	n/a	<b>39</b>	A wide range of comments were received. A number of these related to a specific service area and endorsed current service delivery.

It should be noted that this was an open consultation process and so anyone was able to access the survey and comment. An analysis of the responses indicates that there was a disproportionately high response from individuals in support of one or two individual organisations. A disproportionate level of similar responses in favour of one area within a survey or in the number of comments relating to one area can indicate that respondents have been directed how to complete the survey. This has to be taken into account when analysing and interpreting survey results.

This high level summary combines the responses to the online survey, responses received by post and the 1-1 sessions held.

Question	Key Comments	Response
<p>Is the Commissioning Framework clear on the proposed priorities?</p> <p>Is the Commissioning Framework clear on the reasons for change</p> <p>Is the Commissioning Framework clear on the commissioning approach</p>	<p>The main themes identified included comments around available funding, provision of services to vulnerable groups and lack of clarity as to which community centres are being referred to.</p>	<p>Financial support for commissioning the priority services will be identified within the council's budget envelope for 2013/14 when approved.</p> <p>The district council does not have the primary commissioning responsibility to deliver services to the vulnerable groups highlighted from the consultation e.g. support services for the elderly, children at risk; youth etc. However when providing services that the council has a primary responsibility to provide or commission we will ensure through our service level agreements with service providers that they are sensitive to the needs of the most vulnerable within the community. In addition, we will continue to work in partnership with other agencies through our network of partnerships and forums to support the vulnerable through a multi-agency approach to tackling the issues.</p> <p>The Commissioning Framework will be updated to clarify that reference to community centres are those in council owned buildings.</p>

Question	Key Comments	Response
<p>Would you like further information or explanation included in the document?</p>	<p>The main themes identified included comments around the need for an equalities impact analysis and also clarity on how the priorities were identified. Specific detail commented upon has been taken account when re-drafting the document where possible.</p>	<p>Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a duty to complete an Equality Impact Analysis (EIA). This has been completed and is published on the council's website. We have given due consideration to those who fall within the protected characteristics and this is detailed in the EIA.</p> <p>The priorities identified were those that were existing priorities and are not the lead commissioning responsibility of another funder and were supported by clear evidence of need.</p>
<p>Do you agree that the priorities identified in section 7.0 of the draft Commissioning Framework should continue to be supported?</p>	<p>Overall the comments related to the proposed priorities were supportive but a significant number of comments were from those who felt strongly that the council should consider adding a priority relating to services that support vulnerable groups including women facing domestic abuse, children and young people, and those with health issues including mental health issues. Many of those who expressed these views also felt that arts and culture should not have such a prominence over the others.</p>	<p>The comments have raised questions about a possible gap in service provision to those women facing domestic abuse. The council has considered and examined evidence which supports the need for service provision and has been in contact with our partners in the Watford Community Safety Partnership and Herts County Council Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Unit to determine the commissioning responsibilities in this area. A separate analysis and recommendations have been included in the report to Cabinet</p>

Question	Key Comments	Response
		<p>Whilst the council acknowledge the importance of supporting children, young people and those with mental health issues, these are currently the primary lead responsibility of Herts County Council or the health service and not a commissioning responsibility of Watford Borough Council.</p> <p>As previously explained the council will continue to work in partnership with other agencies through our network of partnerships and forums to support these groups through a multi-agency approach to tackling the issues.</p> <p>All the proposed services commissioned including Arts and Culture will be expected to deliver services that meet the needs of the local community including those in vulnerable groups.</p> <p>There is a need to balance service provision for vulnerable people with the need to support arts and culture as a vehicle to deliver economic and other social benefits in line with the council's Cultural Plan and to fulfil the Council's vision. When reaching decisions through the budget setting process on how to deploy the funding available, members will need to make difficult choices. This</p>

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		relates not only to the funding to commission services through the VCS but to the cost and provision of existing council in-house services.

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If a small grants fund was to continue what would you expect to see achieved through that funding?	Continuation of a small grants fund was significantly supported. The key themes included the need to support vulnerable groups, small local community projects and support to transition VCS organisations to greater sustainability.	In the Commissioning Framework, the feedback has been incorporated into the views of the Scrutiny Task Group and they have highlighted a range of ideas that could be taken into account when creating the criteria. Given the small size of this fund, the challenge will be to select criteria which is specific enough to be meaningful, measurable and has tangible outcomes.

Question	Key Comments	Response
Do you have any other comments you would like to make?	<p data-bbox="819 1034 1417 1214">There were a range of comments around the level of detail within the document. Some views expressed that there was too much jargon whilst others considered that the document was not detailed enough.</p> <p data-bbox="819 1254 1417 1425">A couple of comments referred to supporting the continuation of the Non Discretionary Rate Relief and a request to ensure the VCS community are consulted when the guidelines are reviewed.</p>	<p data-bbox="1444 1034 2042 1174">We have noted this and it is our intention to produce an easy read version once the Commissioning Framework has been finalised.</p> <p data-bbox="1444 1254 2042 1425">Business Rates are currently subject to a change in Government Policy in the form of Local Business Rate Retention. This will impact on the income that Watford Borough Council receives through</p>

Question	Key Comments	Response
	<p>A large number of comments referred to the continuation of support to Watford Women's Centre to deliver services to women experiencing domestic abuse.</p>	<p>Business Rates. It is the council's intention that the guidelines on awarding Non Domestic Rate Relief are reviewed at a future date once the consequences of Local Business Rate Retention is fully realised. Finance Services have been advised of the request for consultation with the VCS when the guidelines are reviewed</p> <p>Officers have undertaken a further investigation into the commissioning responsibilities for domestic abuse services and obtained further understanding of the local evidence for service provision. The outcomes of this review have been incorporated into the report to Cabinet.</p>