



Corporate Plan Consultation Results

2019-2023

Achieving Excellence in the delivery of high quality services that meet the needs and aspirations of our communities

Delivering on our Priorities for 2023

How much do you agree or disagree with the following spending priorities?

26 Responses received (1 organisation(4%) 25 residents(96%))

Aim 1: Planned net expenditure for 2020/2021 is £1.2m. We aim to create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work through....

- **An increased supply of good quality affordable homes**
 - 69% agree (23% Strongly agree, 46% agree)
- **Developing a positive relationship with communities**
 - 93% agree (58% Strongly agree, 35% agree)
- **Effective relationships with strategic partners**
 - 61% agree (19% Strongly agree, 42% agree)
- **Effective support of community safety arrangements including CCTV**
 - 73% agree (38% Strongly agree, 35% agree)
- **Provision of sports facilities and leisure opportunities focused upon improving health**
 - 81% agree (35% Strongly agree, 46% agree)

Comments

- Increasing supply of housing the planning dept can't keep up with present demand. Will there be more planning officers?
- This is area sensitive as the type of homes vary by area
- Allotments provide both a health and environmental benefit to communities. Criminal damage and theft from allotments is increasing, with no preventive measures being taken. Effective surveillance, using solar powered cameras connected to 3G/4G mobile phone networks, or local WiFi hotspots are simple and inexpensive to install and maintain, please consider these as part of the future plan.
- Re Aim 1 Point 1: Affordable Housing. Affordable housing is an ambiguous term 'affordable' means 'reasonably priced' but 'affordable housing' may mean at subsidized market value (e.g. 80%). So the question is not clear. In the majority, residents are likely to support the concept that all houses should be affordable but less would support the concept of subsidized housing with an unfair market opportunity when it is only available to a small group. What residents are more surely unlikely to support is large scale un-affordable housing, to secure a fractional affordable element. The questionnaire does not

detail/question any trade of affordable housing, versus unaffordable housing including the impacts on the environment and infrastructure.

- Re Aim 1 Point 2 Relationships with Communities. SMDC have in the past conducted studies (e.g. The Big Debate) and have over 5,500 responses to development plans which largely object to large scale developments. While the Corporate plan steers away from implying significant development, over 6000 houses are currently being considered (typically 25% growth for the major towns over the next 15 years). There is a clear disconnect between issues not raised in this questionnaire and the aspirations of the majority of SMDC residents. Developing a positive relationship with communities requires a plan that accommodates local aspirations. An example of how to build a better relationship with communities would be a 50 year plan that shows how the long term community interests are being addressed with a defined target shape and size of towns villages etc. The current Local plan swell of 25% over 15 years would translate into a doubling of the community in less than 50 years if repeated in 2034 and 2049. This does not align with all the data SMDC have to hand and with a sustainable plan for the environment. Residents for example would no longer live in a small rural market town with easy access to the countryside and their chosen way of life.
- Re Aim 1 Point 3 Strategic Partners Not possible to comment on without knowing who those strategic partners are. Are they the Campaign to protect rural England or a pro development partner looking to concrete over green fields?
- Combatting Climate Change and the sixth mass extinction of species should be the highest priority and considered against EVERY decision the council makes. You've got 11 years to become carbon neutral. Don't mess it up.
- Having declared a climate emergency; surely that should be on this list; and should be an integral part of all decisions and spending
- Affordable housing for local people should be a priority
- More funding needed for mental health

Aim 2: Planned net expenditure in 2020/2021 is £2.65m. We aim to use resources effectively and provide value for money through....

- **Effective use of financial and other resources to ensure value for money**
 - 81% agree (46% Strongly agree, 35% agree)
- **Ensuring our services are easily available to all our residents in the appropriate channels and provided “right first time”**
 - 92% agree (54% Strongly agree, 38% agree)
- **A high performing and well motivated workforce**
 - 89% agree (62% Strongly agree, 27% agree)
- **More effective use of council assets**
 - 92% agree (65% Strongly agree, 27% agree)
- **Effective procurement with a focus on local businesses**
 - 93% agree (62% Strongly agree, 31% agree)
- **Effective use of ICT**
 - 84% agree (38% Strongly agree, 46% agree)

Comments

- ICT must accommodate the elderly, those with special needs and others who are not computer literate
- Re Aim 2 Point 1 Effective Use of Financial and other Resources to ensure value for Money Would suggest it's obvious we want value for money, but only if the service is not seriously impacted and driven into the ground. The local Library has been pushed into a voluntary service, front line services at SMDC , the highways agency and medical staff have been cut by more than to the bone. So the question should be do we need to invest more in our infrastructure. You could for example reduce excessive salaries at the top of SMDC and redistribute these to front line service staff e.g. libraries and more planning offices focused on supporting the community instead of developers.
- Re Aim 2 Point 2 Ensure our services are available to all our residents Yes sounds good, but you have withdrawn support for the local library (<1% of Council Tax) and now rely on volunteers. So again a great disconnect between an implied question of support and reality.
- Re Aim 2 Point 3 A high performing and motivated workforce. Yes ,that would be reflected in an organisation that constraints internal pay differentials between front line staff and executive and restricts top pay to a level significantly lower than the PM in a public sector role. Also one that ensures staffing levels are adequate to meet the demands of their role with a flexible working policy and a plan that sits clearly aligned with local communities and are not constantly facing staff cuts

- Re Aim 2 Point 4 More Effective Use of Council Assets Ambiguous if this includes wider use of assets yes if it's a precursor to asset stripping communities NO.
- Re Aim 2 Point 5 Effective Procurement with a focus on local businesses Very ambiguous. If this means allowing businesses to procure sites for businesses that may not fit with local aspirations then NO
- Re Aim 2 Point 6 Effective use of ICT Not if Effective Use of Information Computing and Technology includes exclusion of the elderly or any special needs groups or if it invades privacy or steers / typecast communities. E.g Mash up technology and target marketing.
- Very poor that you have not stated what ICT is ... some people may not know
- Workforce should be employed by the council not outsourced
- SMDC needs to have a councillor-led review of Morale and work within SMDC itself, anecdotal evidence suggests that the staff are undervalued, underpaid and would leave given the opportunity, this is not cost effective as replacing staff is more expensive than keeping them. SMDC needs to become a 21st century employer not be stuck in the 1950's.
- Local Procurement is essential and a priority!
- A high performing well motivated workforce" will not be achievable if staff are cut any more
- The planning application site is often going down and currently it is extremely difficult to speak or communicate with officers. There has to be improvement and it should not cost a lot.
- More investment needed in Cheadle desperately. Leek is fine, so is biddulph bit Cheadle needs more.

Aim 3: Planned net expenditure in 2020/2021 is £1m. We aim to help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages through....

- **Encouraging business start-ups and enterprises**
 - 84% agree (65% Strongly agree, 19% agree)
- **Working to create flourishing town centres that support the local economy**
 - 96% agree (65% Strongly agree, 31% agree)
- **Encouraging and developing tourism**
 - 77% agree (42% Strongly agree, 35% agree)
- **High quality development and building control with an “open for business” approach**
 - 73% agree (54% Strongly agree, 19% agree)

Comments

- This area needs changes to make it more approachable and amenable and to include professional expertise in the decision making process. Also the current time scale (21 days response) is sometimes unreasonable.
- Planning and Building Control must not be ignored in order to secure investment and development. Planning rules and conditions must be enforced, Sainsbury's must not be allowed to happen again. That was built on the promise of houses, where are they?
- All these statements should be laudable, however they do not present balanced options or ask by what means they should be achieved For example Aim 3 Point 1 Encouraging Business start-ups and enterprises and Point 2 flourishing town centres. This should be achievable by re-purposing town centre upper floors for residential / business use, with strategies for encouraging over 12,000 residents to make better use of the town and focused regeneration of brownfields sites and vacant properties. Also to encourage unique and individual shops and businesses. It should not be a justified argument for excessive build housing dump. The promotion of a commuter/service town with a modern trend for internet shopping does not provide a clear link to greater use of the town and has the potential to make it less accessible with increased road traffic. Aim 3 Point 3 details developing tourism. Local tourism will be damaged if towns such as Cheadle face excessive development, and are encouraged to become another clone high street with the same shops.
- The 5 Page Corporate Plan document Aim 3 mentions 'Growth Strategy to bring about regeneration of towns and rural communities'. You have not asked any questions about level of growth or clarified the type of growth, (fiscal, building etc). Support of the above should be targeted within the aspirations of the town not a disconnected corporate vision.
- Agree with high quality development and building control - but do not like an 'open for business approach – our Moorlands area must be protected before just allowing building to take place
- Climate emergency was declared approx 6 months ago; very little has happened in the district to suggest that it's really being treated as an emergency. Surely the nature of an emergency means it requires immediate and substantial action. 'Recycling' had been going on for years; if it was going to save us from climate disaster that probably would have happened by now
- Development / Planning department is a joke and needs starting again from scratch. Not convinced Moorlands requires much more tourism as it's questionable whether they spend much in the vicinity for the trouble they create.
- More should be done to encourage the use of "Brownfield" sites and infilling
- Business rates are the problem. Look at those.
- This should hopefully include Cheadle and new businesses opening should not be told by planning they should open elsewhere in the Moorlands.

Aim 4: Planned net expenditure in 2020/2021 is £4.74m. We aim to protect and improve the environment and respond to the climate emergency through....

- **Effective recycling and waste management**
 - 96% agree (77% Strongly agree, 19% agree)
- **Providing quality parks and open spaces**
 - 85% agree (58% Strongly agree, 27% agree)
- **Meeting the challenges of climate change**
 - 93% agree (81% Strongly agree, 12% agree)
- **Providing high quality public amenities, clean streets and environmental health**
 - 97% agree (62% Strongly agree, 35% agree)
- **Car parking arrangements that meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors**
 - 88% agree (65% Strongly agree, 23% agree)

Comments

- The climate emergency must also be met by improved public transport - which I realise is not your direct responsibility. Better provision for safer cycling would also help.
- Meeting the challenges of climate change and sustainability to be a priority across all sectors. We are not performing well currently and with new partnerships and positive council and community planning to take the region forward to be carbon neutral by 2025. To include public health and wellbeing measures, education and young people, as well as positive incentives across the business, housing, transport, energy, farming sectors. Enhancing links with organisations for promoting alternative land use for Moorland, farming, forestry and urban sites, focussing in protection and enhancement of natural habitats to increase nature and biodiversity.
- Local village parking a major issue especially where schools are involved

- Waste and Recycling services are a Government / Council responsibility, paid for by Taxes and Council Tax. It is unacceptable and unethical that Residents then have to pay an additional fee to dispose of DIY waste. DIY which they are doing to save money due to Government austerity and cuts.
- Less focus on car parks and more on public transport. More information and options for recycling – Terracycle drop off points at council offices? What do you mean by quality parks? we need more wildlife refuges not acres of cut grass. You need to fund dedicated staff to address climate change projects / renewable energy / tree planting etc
- Again these points should be laudable. However in addition to Aim 4 Point 3 Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change the most important question has not been asked. I.e. Sustainability. SMDC have historically used the term ‘Sustainable Growth’ . The two words are a contradiction to each other. This has been pointed out for a decade now. In light of the clear Climate Change that is going on, the focal point should be on sustainability. It is already clear that population growth is the greatest threat to our future and that the term sustainable can no longer be added to growth. Given that, the whole of this questionnaire should start addressing the need for ‘Sustainability’ and place all references and plans within that context. Growth should become growth of quality of life, health and opportunity and business potential within regeneration of brown field sites repurposed building and not growth in population, excessive housing expansion, increased road traffic as a commuter town and long term declining quality of life (pollution etc).
- I do not want the council spending vital money and limited budgets on climate change and initiatives for this. You must protect our Moorlands and Peak District countryside landscapes from the industrialization of our special landscapes from wind turbines blight and companies that want to come in and destroy our area for money and greed and then walk away leaving local communities to pay the price and the health issues that are associated with them and already there are people in the Moorlands living near to those already up which are suffering from noise and health issues. The current guidelines to NOT protect local communities from this and it is up to our local council to protect them and our landscape - as I was once told - "we are not putting this wind turbine up for the environment but to keep us in the lifestyle we are accustomed to" - and the same for large scale solar industrial sites which could have a visual detrimental impact on our special landscapes. Other initiatives should be looked at for the Staffordshire Moorlands, especially areas visible to the Peak District National Park. Extra strong policies need to be put in place to protect our Moorlands from companies that want to come in and blight our landscapes and care very little about our local communities and our local area - please do this as a priority
- Please , Please invest more money in street cleaning, bins, and sort out the department that deals with that including adapting the policies to allow councillors to request new bins at known sites without all of the 'admin' that comes with that where the councillors already know there's problems.
- Farming and rural activities need to be a focus and need support to introduce best practice in waste recycling. Financial support and education is essential if this is to be achieved.
- Your recycling policy is a credit to the Council

- Car parking charges are an issue e.g Cheadle. Charges seriously affect high street footfall and new businesses
- Climate change get a new Chairman Joe Porter is useless. Environment please employee more people to monitor litter dropping and dog mess across the area Cheadle is atrocious. And more free parking in the town centres
- Cheadle car park charges need looking at again. People are parking outside Cheadle residents houses so they dont have to pay for car park.

Demographic Information

Male 62% Female 35%

Age

16-24 4% 25-34 8% 35-44 8% 45-54 12% 55-59 19% 60-64 15% 65-74 15%

Employment Status

Employed full time 27% Employed part time 4% Retired 27% Self employed 19% Something else 8% Government scheme 4%

Disability

Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? Yes 12% No 85%

Does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way? Yes 0% (of people who answered yes to disability)

Ethnicity

British 92%

Area

Biddulph 8% Cheadle 31% Leek 38% Other 19%

