

Spending Challenge report on what people said at Borough, Bankside and Walworth Community Council on 2 October 2013

Consultation events took place from 10 August - 11 October 2013, with some 516 people taking part, which is a lot of people, who each took a lot of time over their allocations and choices. 27 people took part in the event at Borough, Bankside and Walworth community council.

The Spending Challenge methodology involved providing residents with information on departmental budgets and functions and inviting them to decide how to make £27m in funding decisions. This replicates – in a user-friendly, accessible format – the decision-making process the council will actually be undertaking in the coming months.

In order to take part in the challenge, participants were provided with a number of “cheques”, worth £1m to allocate to relevant services:

- **25 red savings cheques** (to allocate to the service/s where they would make savings if they were the council)
- **2 green increase cheques** (to allocate to the service/s where they would make increases if they were the council)
- **1 blue protect cheque** (to allocate to the one service they would spare from savings if they were the council)

There have been 17 Spending Challenge events to date, with some 516 people from all age groups, ethnicities, income groups and neighbourhoods involved. We compared who took part against the census to check the extent to which the sample was representative, and we found that for ethnicity, age and disability we had included a balanced sample of the population, with one exception. Women made up 66% of participants and men 34%, although from the analysis, there is no appreciable gender difference in the responses made. Overall, the significant sample size and close correlation between the demographic breakdown of those taking part and that of the whole population of the borough gives us confidence that the consultation data can be regarded as representative.

The table overleaf shows a breakdown of the results of the Spending Challenge at Borough, Bankside and Walworth community council, where 27 people took part. As you can see both Adults Services (30% and Children’s Services (26%) were considered the priority services to Protect from budget reductions. Very similarly Adult Services (26%) and Children’s Services (24%) were the top priorities for Increase “cheques”. For Savings cheques the most were allocated to Central Support Services (43%), with no other service getting more than the average. These results are very similar to the results seen in all other consultation events in the borough, with one exception in that Borough, Bankside and Walworth community council allocated significantly more Protect and Increase “cheques” to Adult Services than the average for the whole borough.