

Easy Read



Our plans to raise and spend money on services in Rhondda Cynon Taf

Please tell us what you think by 12 February 2021



This document was written by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. It is an easy read version of '**Budget Consultation 2021/22**'.

January 2021

How to fill in this response form



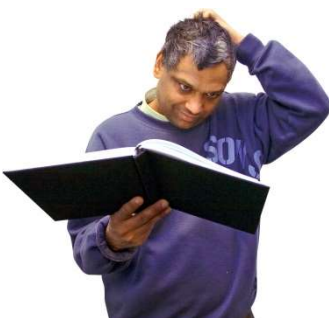
These questions are about our plan to raise and spend money on services in Rhondda Cynon Taf.



We want to know what you think. Please try to explain your answers. And give your own thoughts and ideas too.



You may need support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **blue writing** may be hard to understand. They are explained in a box underneath.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**.



Please send this form back to us by
12th February 2021.



Address:

Freepost RSBH-HJUK-LSS
Research & Consultation
The Pavillions
Clydach Vale
Tonypandy
CF40 2XX



consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk

Introduction



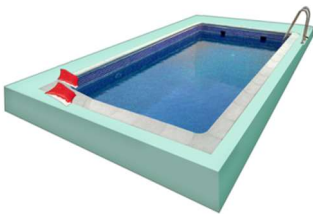
At the end of 2020 we asked people living in Rhondda Cynon Taf what they thought about:

- How much **Council Tax** they pay

Council Tax is money that people have to give to their local authority to help to pay for things like schools, social services, recycling and parks.



- How much we spend on services like social services and recycling.



- What services are most important to people.

- How much we charge people for things like going to the swimming pool or meals on wheels.



- How we help people pay their **Council Tax**.

- How much money we give to schools.

We are now asking you to help us make some decisions about these things.

Increasing Council Tax



We would like to increase **Council Tax** by 2.65% next year.

This means that if your Council Tax was £1,000 this year you would have to pay £26.50p more next year. Or 51p more per week.

Do you think this is a fair increase to **Council Tax**?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Spending money carefully



We have been working more **efficiently** over the last 10 years and have saved over £100 million.

Efficiently means being better at what we do and spending money carefully so we can spend less money and still provide services that people need.

We are going to save £4.6 million next year by working even more **efficiently**.

Do you think we should carry on being more **efficient?**



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

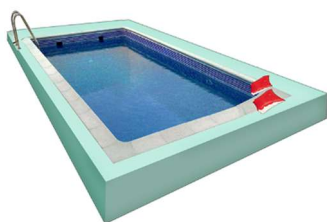
Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Paying for other things



We charge you for some of the services we provide. A **standard increase of 1.7% (CPI) is proposed** for fees and charges and there are some that we propose to not increase (see below).

CPI stands for consumer price index, an average of several consumer goods and services that are used to give an indication of inflation



Next year the cost of using leisure centres (if you are a member), car parks, the Pontypridd Lido entry and Rhondda Heritage Park entry, school meals, playing fields and bereavement fees **will not go up**.

Bereavement fees are bills that people pay the Council when someone dies. The fees go towards the cost of paying for funeral expenses like burials and cremations.

Do you think it is fair to increase some charges by 1.7%?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Helping local businesses



The Council started a local **Business Rate** Reduction Scheme for 2020/21. This helped by giving more money (£300 per qualifying business) together with Welsh Government grants.

Business Rates are fees that business owners have to pay. The Council collects the money on behalf of Welsh Government.

We want to give businesses more this year (£350) and spend £50,000 (50 thousand pounds) to make this happen.

Do you think we should spend £50,000 more on helping businesses?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Car park charges



In order to encourage visitors to our town centres and to help the recovery of local businesses, we want to make car parking free after 3pm on Monday to Friday and free all day (after 10am) on Saturdays in Aberdare and Pontypridd.

(note: In all other town centres across Rhondda Cynon Taf parking is already free)

We want to spend £160,000 (160 thousand pounds) to make this happen.

Do you think we should spend £160,000 on car park charges to make parking free more often for people?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Helping the Environment



The Council has a duty to respond to the impact of climate change and carbon reduction. We need to lead the way and help residents, businesses and partners to tackle this.

Reducing your **Carbon** footprint means using less energy.

A Climate Change budget is needed so we can plan and carry out the work along with other organisations who can support us in this.

We want to spend £100,000 (100 thousand pounds) to help us do this.

Do you think we should spend £100,000 to help the environment?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

**Is there anything you would like to say
about this?**

Graduates



Our graduate programme has already given job opportunities to over 100 graduates to join the Council.



We would like to provide funding to create a further 6 graduates jobs next year.

We want to spend £200,000 (200 thousand pounds) to help us do this.

Do you think we should spend £200,000 to take on new graduates?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

**Is there anything you would like to say
about this?**

Helping our staff



Our staff are valuable – they are the front face of the Council and uphold our key values.

We recognise the challenges faced by staff and we continue to support their welfare and **wellbeing**.

Wellbeing here means that our staff would be happy and healthy in work, so that they can continue to provide the services you need

We want to spend £50,000 (50 thousand pounds) to help provide more support.

Do you think we should spend £50,000 to help our staff and their wellbeing?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

**Is there anything you would like to say
about this?**

Public Health and Protection Services



The Public Health and Protection service has played a key role this year in ensuring the public health and wellbeing of our communities, providing advice and guidance and leading on things such as the Test Trace Protect programme.

More money will help us employ more people, strengthening the team and making it ready for future challenges we face.

We want to spend £200,000 (200 thousand pounds) to help us do this.

Do you think we should spend £200,000 on this service?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

**Is there anything you would like to say
about this?**

Flood Prevention Support



Our communities are still recovering from storm events during last winter, including Storm Dennis.

Recovery work continues in those damaged areas.

Over 1,000 homes and 400 businesses were flooded during Storm Dennis.

We would like to offer more support by spending £50,000 (50 thousand pounds) to help us do this.

Do you think we should spend £50,000 to help with flood support?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?



Keeping our area tidy

Our local environment is a key priority of the Council, keeping the areas we live in clean, removing eyesores and making sure that we cut grass and maintain trees.



We already have teams who carry out this work and we think having another team would help us improve our outdoor spaces even more.

We want to spend £75,000 (75 thousand pounds) to make this happen.

Do you think we should spend £75,000 to help keep our area tidy?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Spending our savings



We get money from the **Welsh Government** and from **Council Tax** to spend on the things we need to do. This money is called our **income**.

Income is the amount of money we have to spend.



We have some money saved just for when we do not have enough **income** to spend on the things we want to do each year.

Next year we want to spend £709,000 (709 thousand pounds) of our savings. We would still have £3,621,000 (just over 3 and a half million pounds) left in our savings.

**Do you think we should spend
£709,000 of our savings?**



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

**Is there anything you would like to say
about this?**

Equality



We want to make sure that everything we do is fair to people. This is called **Equality**.

Equality means treating people fairly and making sure they have the same chances in life.



We want to make sure that people have equality because of:

- Their age.
- Whether they are a woman or man or describe themselves in another way.
- Their disability.
- Their race or background. For example black, white or Asian.
- Whether they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight.
- Their religion.
- If they are married, single or in a civil partnership.
- If they are pregnant.
- The language they prefer to use.

Do you think our plans will treat people fairly and make sure they have the same chances in life?



Yes

☐

No

☐

Not sure

☐

Is there anything you would like to say about this?

Welsh language



We want to make sure that people can use Welsh when they want to and more people get the chance to use Welsh.

We want to make sure that our plans don't make it harder for people to use Welsh if they want to.

Do you think our plans could make it harder for people to use Welsh if they want to?



Yes

☐

No

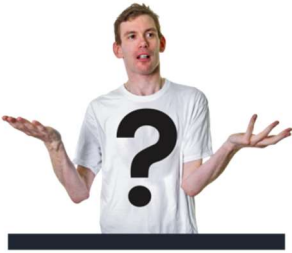
☐

Not sure

☐

How do you think we could change our plans to make it easier for people to use the Welsh language?

Use the box below to tell us what you think:



Anything else

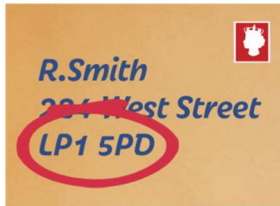
Is there anything more you want to tell us about how our plans could affect the Welsh language?

Use the box below to tell us what you think:



Tell us about yourself

We need to know a little bit about you so we can understand your answers better.



What is your postcode?

Why did you fill out this form?

I live in Rhondda Cynon Taf

☐

I run a business in Rhondda Cynon Taf

☐

I work for Rhondda Cynon Taf
County Borough Council

☐

I belong to a community group in
Rhondda Cynon Taf

☐

Other

Thank you

Thank you for filling out this form



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