

Monmouthshire County Council Budget 17/18 Engagement Process and overview.

Monmouthshire County Council 17/18 budget engagement process was conducted from December 16th – January 31st.

This year's engagement involved a mixture of Face to face, digital, colleague and press engagement to share information and capture feedback from the Monmouthshire community.

2017/18 Engagement

Whilst 17/18 budget settlement provided Monmouthshire County Council with a positive position there were many budget savings that had to be made.

Many of the savings were internal ideas and affected staff and internal buildings, it was decided to inform the public of the key messages of ideas that would directly affect them.

Whilst remaining transparent, **all** the ideas available on our website and via cabinet papers.

The approach was as follows:

Film

A short film was produced and featured on the Monmouthshire CC You Tube page and shared via Face book and Twitter from December 22nd. The film featured a call to action encouraging residents to either visit the MCC website for more information or to join a public meeting (in person or online) to discuss the key elements of the proposals.

The clip has generated 845 views and reached 2,843 people. From insights on Face book the top demographic that watched the clip were aged 35 – 44. By posting the clip we reached a demographic that we have unsuccessfully engaged via face to face meetings.

PR & Digital

A press release was issued to all local titles and good coverage was achieved. The event was also shared on social media (via a countdown and reminder posts) and on the MCC website.

The sessions were promoted via:

- Press Release – which was printed in local press
- Face book – An integrated approach was conducted, the film, information about the engagement session and a link to all of the savings proposals on the website.
- Twitter - Information about the engagement session and a link to all of the savings proposals on the website were promoted.

All social media was scheduled from 22nd December.

Public Meeting

The public were invited to County Hall – January 5th. Two sessions were held 3.30pm – 5.00pm and 5.30pm – 7.00pm. Residents were provided with the opportunity to either meet with us face to face or online via the live stream on YouTube where residents could post any questions/queries in real time.

In the week leading up to the public meeting - 5th January social media was used as a call to action for residents. Provide an opportunity to ask us questions via social media. This proved ineffective and there was little interest.

Response from the public was low. Those who did attend the public meeting asked interesting questions and were keen to understand and learn how the 2017/18 budget would affect them.

Some of the themes and areas of discussion:

- Council Tax
- Vanity Projects – City Deal, Circuit of Wales
- Proposed changes to Homemakers
- Monmouth Swimming Pool
- Street Lighting

Cllr Murphy's budget presentation was recorded and shared via social media.

Since 5th January the presentation has had 149 views.

This relatively low level of feedback from the public is probably the result of the fact that the majority of mandates will not have a significant impact on residents. We will continue to adapt engagement to the needs of our residents to ensure they are informed and have opportunity to feedback.