

**Do you have suggestions on things the Council could do differently, or potential savings we could make? Are there options for doing less of some of the things we do now, or doing them differently?**

(The top 5 themes of response are listed below)

You said	We did
Review service delivery models	The Council continues to adopt ways of modernising its services including through the increased use of technology and through a more efficient property and asset portfolio. The Council aims to realise savings through property rationalisation whilst also generating additional income from capital receipts to support the Capital Plan. The Council's transformation programme supports ongoing service reviews to ensure Services are operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.
Improve Waste & Recycling Services	The Council is working with Zero Waste Scotland to identify opportunities to improve kerbside collection services. Feedback from this survey will help shape future service provision and bid applications. The Council's waste service continues to perform well achieving a recycling rate of 54.8% in 2021 moving the Scottish Borders up to 4th place in the national league table. In addition we are the top performing Council in Scotland in relation to landfill diversion sending less than 1% of waste to landfill. The Council has listened to feedback from residents and in response a one year trial of a new web based tool and smartphone app will be launched. This will enable residents to quickly identify what materials can be recycled and will also provide reminders of bin collection days. The new service will go live in the second quarter of 2023.
Review staffing arrangements	The Council is continuing to develop and progress its digital transformation strategy which aims to automate business processes. Hand-held technology will also be provided to our frontline staff, allowing them to reduce routine administration tasks, capture useful real-time data and focus their time on more value added work within communities. The Council is a living wage employer, we pay the living wage to all our employees, including our modern apprentices and encourage all our contractors and suppliers to also pay the Scottish living wage to all their staff.

**Do you have suggestions on things the Council could do differently, or potential savings we could make? Are there options for doing less of some of the things we do now, or doing them differently? (cont.)**

Improvements to Public Transport

The Council has commissioned a review of the local transport network. The review will look at a number of areas including cost of travel, frequency of bus services, operating hours and improved connectivity between services including bus to bus and bus to rail.

Improvements in Road Network

The Council is investing £93m over the 5 year revenue and 10 year capital investment plan to improve roads and bridges. Our increased focus on first time fixes will continue to reduce temporary patching and improve conditions across the road network. In particular the service has made significant investment through purchasing a JCB Pothole Pro and providing a dedicated squad of personnel to ensure that it is fully utilised in providing first-time permanent repairs. Since its arrival in mid-May the Pothole Pro has been employed predominantly on the rural A Class road network but also within some towns. During that period it has delivered 1117 separate repairs using 637 tonnes of material and covering an area equivalent of 4665 sq. m over a length of some 190km of the roads network.

**Would you be supportive of an increase in Council Tax if the money this raised was ringfenced for a specific purpose/project?**

● Yes	164
● No	239
● Maybe, depending on the purpose	456



## What purpose/projects would you wish any Council Tax increase to support?

(The top 5 themes of response are listed below)

### You said

Health & Social Care

Education

Roads Network

Public Transport

### We did

Significant additional recurring funding is being provided to Social Work and Social Care services in 2023/24 to deliver increased pay for staff as well as increased investment in care homes and home care services. Further funding made available by Scottish Government to provide for Carers Act requirements to support carers as well as specific Council funding deployed in 2023/24 to provide respite care for Older People and Children & Families. A new Extra Care Housing development is due to be opened in Kelso in June 2023 providing care and accommodation needs for 30 individuals / couples. Advanced planning and design work will progress in 2023-24 for care village developments in Tweedbank and Hawick.

The Council has made a commitment to maintain teacher numbers, pupil support assistants and pupil learning hours at their current level. Curricular charges to pupils in areas such as music tuition, home economics and technical subjects have been removed. Additional investment has been made in school transport including the provision of new routes. Increased investment is being provided through Pupil Equity Fund to prioritise work in reducing poverty related attainment gap with the Council also providing funding to support neurodiversity in schools.

The Council is investing £93m over the 5 year revenue and 10 year capital investment plan to improve our roads, bridges pavements and paths. An additional £3m of investment funded by Specific Scottish Government Grant to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling, especially to schools and to connect communities is included within the 10 years capital investment plan.

The Council was delighted to support the opening of the Reston Station on the East Coast mainline during 2022. The Council continues to support the extension of the Borders railway through Hawick and onto Carlisle. We are working with Borderlands Partners, the UK and Scottish Governments to unlock £10m investment in feasibility works through the Borderlands Growth Deal. The Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) pilot in Berwickshire has shown positive trends and has been funded for a further year to March 2024, results from the pilot will inform future strategy in the Borders. A review of the local transport network has been commissioned to look at public transport in the Borders including connectivity between services including bus to bus and bus to rail.

### **What purpose/projects would you wish any Council Tax increase to support? (cont.)**

Responding to Climate Change

The Council declared a Climate Emergency in September 2020 and as such has committed to reaching net-zero by 2045. We have begun measuring the carbon emissions both of SBC as an organisation and the Scottish Borders as a region allowing us to monitor our net-zero objectives and ensure we stay on track. Key areas identified for carbon emission reduction are how we heat our buildings and how we travel. Through the 10 year capital plan the Council is investing over £10m in Energy Efficiency works within our existing built estate, and our new build school and care village projects will also include energy efficient measures included within the designs. £20m is being invested in plant and vehicle replacement, we are committed to reducing our fleet size, and CO2 emissions by maximising the usage of vehicles, reducing the requirement for spare vehicle capacity and using alternative fuel vehicles, including electric and hybrid, where appropriate.

### **How do you think we can improve public transport in the Borders?**

(The top 3 themes of response are listed below)

#### **You said**

#### **We did**

Improve service timetabling

Further analysis of timetables will be carried out to help establish how we can better serve key places along the network such as the Borders General hospital as well as other employers and services in the region. Work is ongoing with local transport operators and attractions across the region, to establish partnerships which could positively impact the local economy through the introduction of later evening journeys across some strategic corridors.

Ensure public transport is affordable

The Council continues to work with communities, partners and local transport operators to aim for the most affordable public transport for all Borderers within resources available. All children and young people under 22 years are eligible for free bus travel, making it more affordable for families to use public transport.

Reduce vehicle sizes

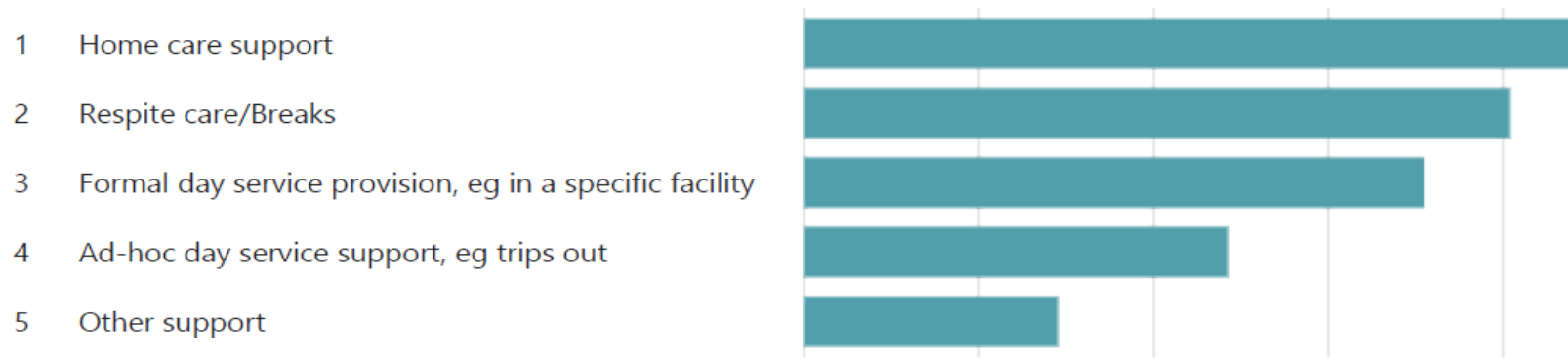
Route modelling which will be undertaken as part of the review of the local transport network will help define the best size of bus for a route. The Council will work with local providers to ensure that from the fleet available, the most appropriate vehicles are used for each journey.

**What would encourage or enable you to make more journeys by public bus transport?**

(The top 3 themes of response are listed below)

You said	We did
Improved service provision	The Council have commissioned a review of the local transport network . The review will look at a number of areas including cost of travel, frequency of bus services, operating hours and improved connectivity between services including bus to bus and bus to rail. Increased funding has been provided for the Service 101/102 bus contract to sustain the re-tendered service which provides a direct link between Dumfries and Galloway and Edinburgh.
Better connections between transport provisions	The Council continues to support the extension of the Borders Railway through Hawick and on to Carlisle. Further analysis of bus timetables in the coming weeks will help establish how to better interconnect buses and trains.
Better Rural Transport Provision	The DRT pilot in Berwickshire has shown positive trends and has been funded for a further year to March 2024 allowing the Council to work with partners to further enhance the service, considering how it can be run more efficiently and creating more journey opportunities. The pilot is helping the Council understand how DRT can provide opportunities for people in other areas of the Borders who currently have no access to public transport.

**The availability of support for family and unpaid carers was an issue raised as part of the Health and Social Care Partnership's recent community engagement. If you are a family or unpaid carer, what type of support would you like the Partnership to prioritise investment in locally to support you and the person/people you care for?**



**If you prioritised 'Other support' in the previous question, please provide more detail on what you would wish this to be?**

(The top 3 themes of response are listed below)

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
Carer support and network	Increased investment in Carers Act provision in 2023-24 will provide wide ranging support to carers through third sector providers such as the Borders Carers centre as well as direct payments to carers and families. New contract arrangements to be made with other third sector providers in relation to maximising the provision of social centres in the Scottish Borders. Funding to resource care workers to support in social hubs to provide personal care will assist people to use the social hubs for respite. There will also be funding to provide respite for children and young people.
Financial support	We have dedicated pages on our website which give information on available financial assistance and support services.
More Care Homes	<a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20000/benefits_and_grants/1240/cost_of_living_crisis_support">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20000/benefits_and_grants/1240/cost_of_living_crisis_support</a> The Council has invested further in Extra Care Housing through a new development in Kelso which is due to open in 2023; proposals are being developed for Extra Care Housing provision in Eyemouth and Hawick. Investment has also been made in additional staffing to provide enhanced care provision at Council care homes. A significant capital budget is in place to provide care village accommodation in Tweedbank and Hawick.

**What services, support or signposting would you like to see in your locality, or offered digitally, that would help you access the right health and social care advice or support?**

(The top 3 themes of response are listed below)

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
Improved access to health services	The feedback received regarding health and social care services as part of this survey will be considered by the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership as part of the ongoing development of the new Strategic Framework.
Access/signposting to information	Work underway to expand "What Matters Hubs" in the Borders to even more locations as part of a planned refresh of Community Led Support model. The Council is looking to modernise its website and is looking for alternative methods of communicating including Yammer and Citizen space as a way of encouraging active dialogue and participation with communities.
Home Care Support	The Council is increasing reviews of homecare packages so that older adults are able to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. A recruitment drive within Council Adult Social Care services is ongoing to ensure homecare provision requirements can be resourced. The Council is modernising care provision through the increasing use of Technology Enabled Care, e.g. alarm, digital medication prompts. Additional funding is being provided to resource care workers to support in social hubs enabling people to use hubs for respite.

## What would be your top priority for improving the community in which you live?

(The top 4 themes of response are listed below)

### You said

### We did

Ensure the public voice is heard

The Council continues to develop Community Choices approaches to involving communities in how budgets are prioritised and spent. We are using citizen space to gather views from the public (including this consultation and a recent consultation on the draft Council plan) to be more responsive to local needs. The community conversations and place making discussions held with local communities during 2022 will be developed further during 2023/24 to ensure community views are gathered. The Council is looking to modernise its website and is looking for alternative methods of communicating including Yammer and Citizen space as a way of encouraging active dialogue and participation with communities.

Improving the Roads Network and Cycleways

Over the next 10 years the Council is investing in improving roads, bridges, pavements and paths. An active travel network is also being developed in Hawick as part of the Flood Protection works. The destination Tweed project is seeking to join up the paths network across the Borders to encourage cycling and walking. Funding from Sustrans and South of Scotland Enterprise has helped support our recent delivery of a multi-use active travel path for walkers, cyclists, wheelers and horse riders between Peebles and Eddleston. It forms part of a strategic plan to encourage more active travel in the region.

Investment in communities and facilities

The Council has committed to a feasibility study into fixed CCTV provision in town centres as well as an increased budget allocation in the Community Enhancement (Small Schemes) Fund to support priority local issues not funded through other budgets. The Council's capital programme for 2023/24 includes £2.7m investment in play areas and outdoor community spaces. The investment programme is in place to improve and modernise outdoor Community Spaces. A Synthetic Pitch Replacement fund for the upkeep and replacement of synthetic sports surfaces is included within the capital investment plan.

Public Transport

The Council, in partnership with the Workforce Mobility Project, have commissioned a review of the local transport network which will build on the feedback gathered as part of this survey. The review will look at a number of areas including cost of travel, frequency of bus services, operating hours and improved connectivity between services including bus to bus and bus to rail. The Council remains committed to the extension of the Borders Railway through Hawick and on to Carlisle. The Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) pilot in Berwickshire has shown positive trends and has been funded for a further year to March 2024.