



LOCALIS snapshot

20 May 2009

all politics is local

Local Government's response to the Budget 2009

Localis carried out a survey of 50 Local Authority Leaders, Directors and Chief Executives from the 6th to the 19th May 2009 to find out opinions and responses from leading figures of local government to the Budget 2009. The respondents were made up of 65% District Councils, 12% Metropolitan Borough, 8% Unitary, 6% County and 8% Other. The respondents reflect Councils from across the England and Wales and with a balance of political control. The following document represents as truly as we can represent, the findings of the survey.

68% of respondents thought that the Budget was bad for the country, while 19% thought it was good, and 13% were unsure.

Should the budget have recognised a greater role for Councils in dealing with the recession

Councils obviously felt strongly that they should have had a much greater role in dealing with the recession, with 80% agreeing. See graph on the next page.

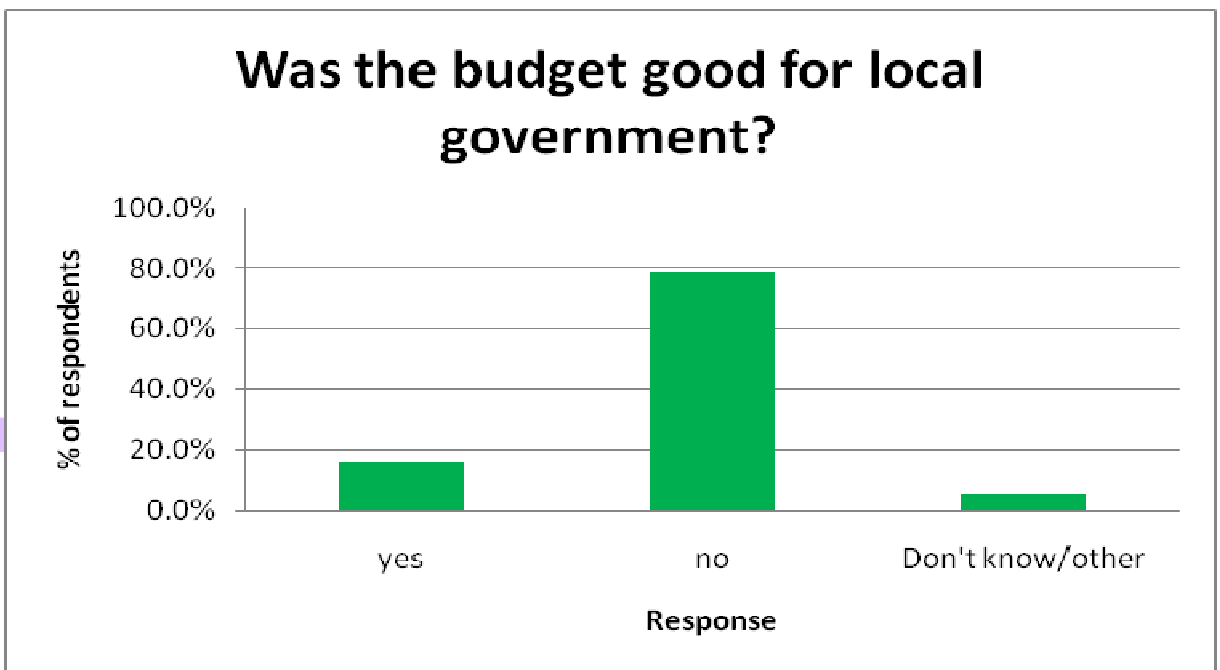
Was the budget good for local government?

78% of Councils think that the budget was bad for local government, while only 16% thought it was good, and 5% were unsure. See graph below.

How achievable are the efficiency saving targets for Councils?

Efficiency saving targets are £5.5bn by 2011. 60.5% thought that the efficiency savings were achievable, and 42.1% thought that they weren't. Only one person was unsure. However, District Councils felt that efficiency savings were more difficult to achieve than for other Councils – with almost 60% believing that

Was the Budget Good for the Country?



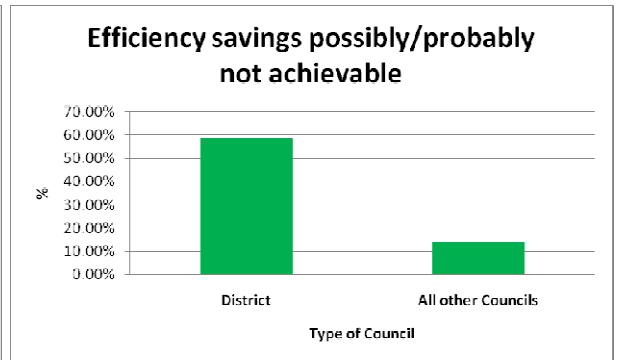
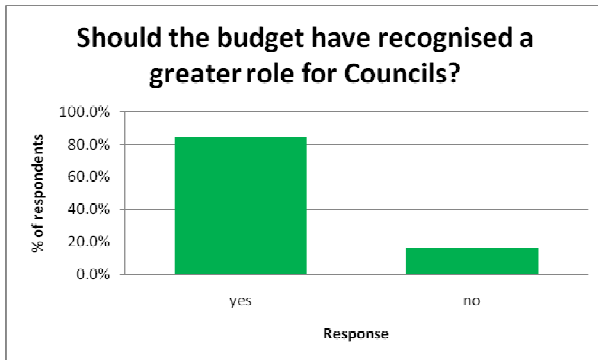


LOCALIS snapshot

20 May 2009

all politics is local

Local Government's response to the Budget 2009



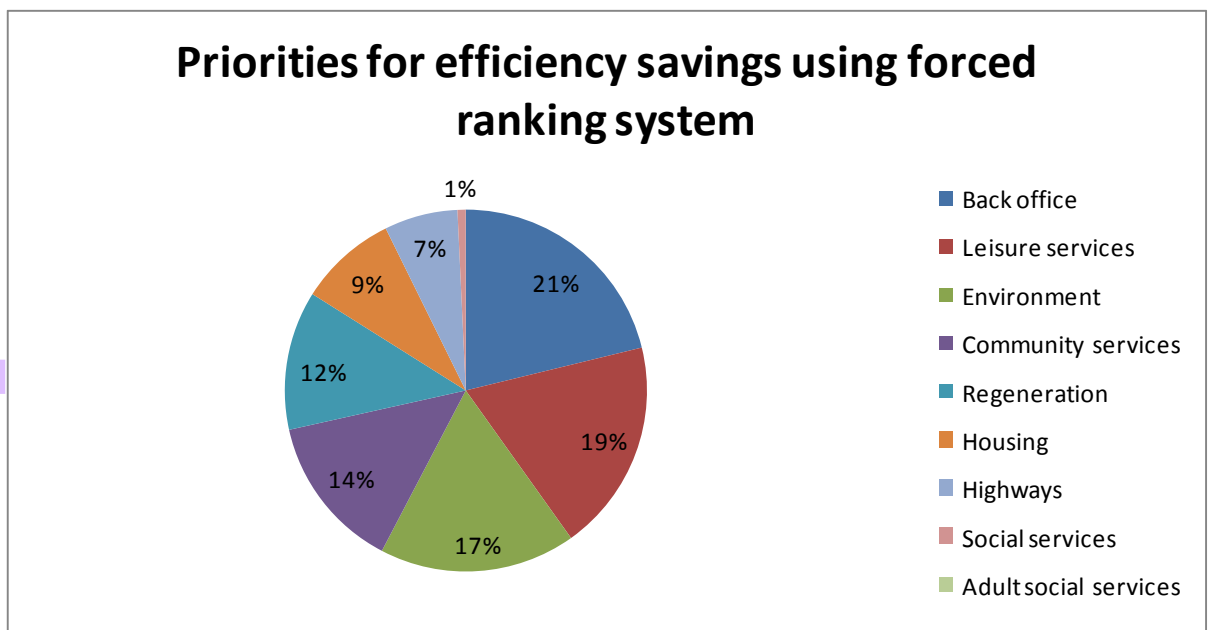
savings were not achievable compared to 12% from other Council types. When asked to elaborate on their responses, the tone was less optimistic, even for those Councils who felt they could achieve efficiency savings, as it was felt that on the whole it would have a significant impact on other areas.

as top priority for where most money will be saved. Leisure services are the second highest priority for efficiency savings with 58% of Councils believing that money will be saved here. The environment and community services are next, with 48% of Councils putting these as combined third priority for savings. When each area was prioritised according the top 6 priorities (out of 13) as a percentage of total responses,

Which Budgets are likely to be affected by calls for savings

The biggest area for efficiency savings to be made is in back office functions, with 77% of Councils putting this

Other extra areas highlighted by respondents for efficiency savings included planning, transport related services and building control.





20 May 2009

all politics is local

Local Government's response to the Budget 2009

What impact will increased income taxes have on your local economy?

40.5% believed that the effect would be negligible, while 38% believed that the effect would be detrimental to the local economy. 5% believed that the effect would be slightly beneficial, while 16% were unsure about the effect. All written responses were slightly against the tax.

Did the budget go far enough in supporting local government to create a low carbon economy?

54% of respondents believed that it did not go far enough, 16% thought that it did, and almost 30% did not know.

How do you rate the idea of statutory city regions in Leeds and Manchester?

Only 35% of respondents were positive about city regions, while over 40% were negative and 25% were unsure.

How do you perceive Job Centre Plus to be performing in the current climate?

There are clearly very mixed opinions on how well Job Centre Plus is performing in the current climate. 46% of respondents thought that it was performing quite well, and 19% thought that it was performing quite include:

How achievable do you think it is that everyone under the age of 25 who has been jobless for 12 months

Almost 65% of respondents thought that this target was probably or definitely not achievable, and 30% thought it was possibly achievable. Nobody thought it was definitely achievable. The range of written responses were unanimous in their belief that it was probably not achievable.

For more information

Localis is an independent think-tank, based in Westminster, dedicated to issues related to local government and localism. We aim to influence the debate on localism, providing innovative and fresh thinking on all areas which local government is concerned with.

For more information on our research, events and membership, please visit www.localis.org.uk or call **0207 340 2660**.