

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Cabinet (Huntingdonshire District Council, the Council)

FROM: Head of Resources (and Section 151 Officer)

DATE: 8th February 2018

TITLE: Budget Consultation – Business Community

As you will be aware, all Councils are required to undertake a statutory consultation with the business committee in respect of their budget. It is usual practice that the results are announced by the Executive Member for Strategic Resources (Cllr Jonathan Gray) at the Cabinet meeting where the 'Final Budget' is reported.

Background on Consultation

Following discussions with Cllr Gray, it was agreed that the consultation for the 2018/19 budget should also include the voluntary sector. Further, to ensure that both the business and voluntary sector get a coherent communication from the Council, it was also agreed that the consultation would be included in the [December Business Newsletter](#), which was circulated on 12th December 2017. The Newsletter was circulated to 970 contacts – and it is known that 259 organisations opened the newsletter.

The Results

However, only 3 contacts opened the Budget consultation (see second row links in the Newsletter) – and of those, none have completed the survey.

This is reflective of a steady decline in responses over preceding years.

Some background on access

The link included in the Newsletter initially takes the reader to [Cllr Gray's narrative](#) on the Consultation within the '[Invest Huntingdonshire](#)' website. Included within the narrative is the link to the [survey](#). With the narrative and survey being hosted in the 'InvestHuntingdonshire' website, this actually means that there were at least two independent means of seeing (and contributing) to the survey:

1. Via the Newsletter.
2. By those who have independently looked at the 'InvestHuntingdonshire' website.

Conclusions

- HDC has meet its obligation to 'consult'.