"How would you save £25 million?"

Redbridge's toolkit for community engagement

Councillor Keith Prince
Leader

London Borough of Redbridge

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Being open about the problem

- Our problem: how to save £25 million
- Many consultations ask: "What do you want?"
- We asked: "What would you do?"

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Introducing YouChoose

- Budget consultation tool built in-house
- 'Incredibly innovative' – Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP
- Users have to cut £25 million, and see the consequences
- Invest more in a service, but must make bigger savings elsewhere

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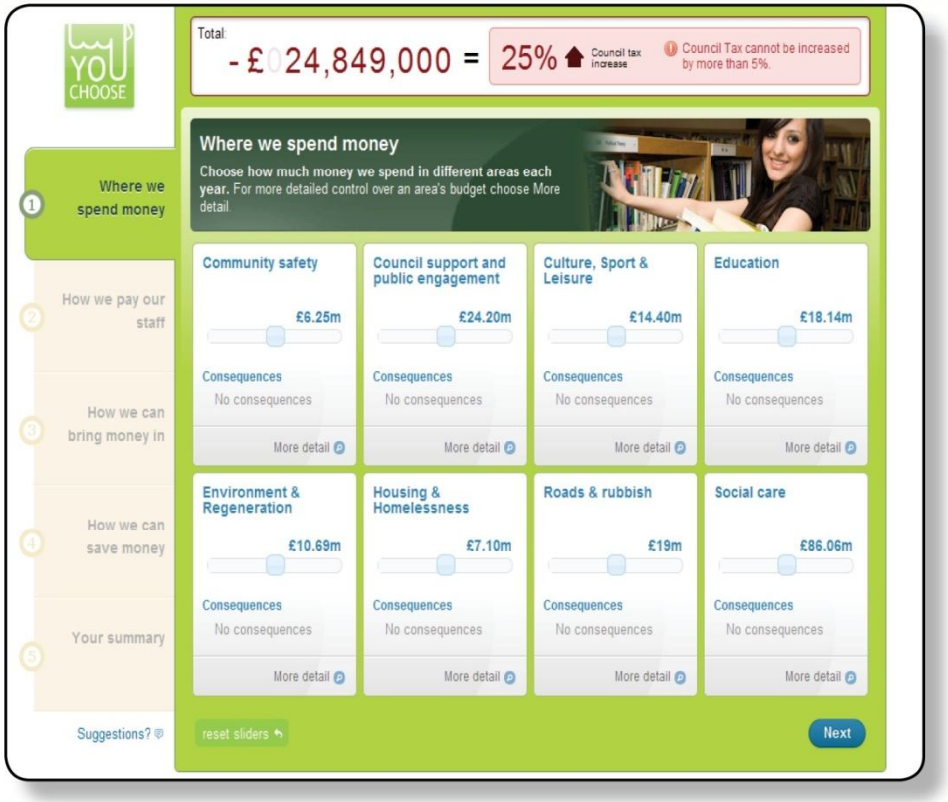

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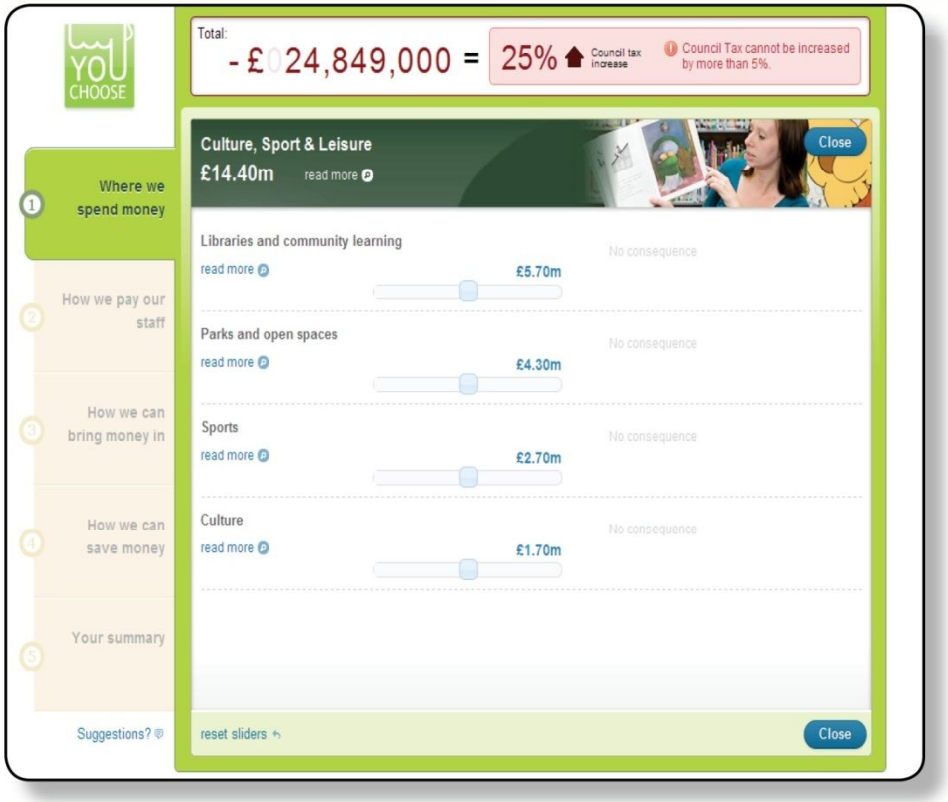

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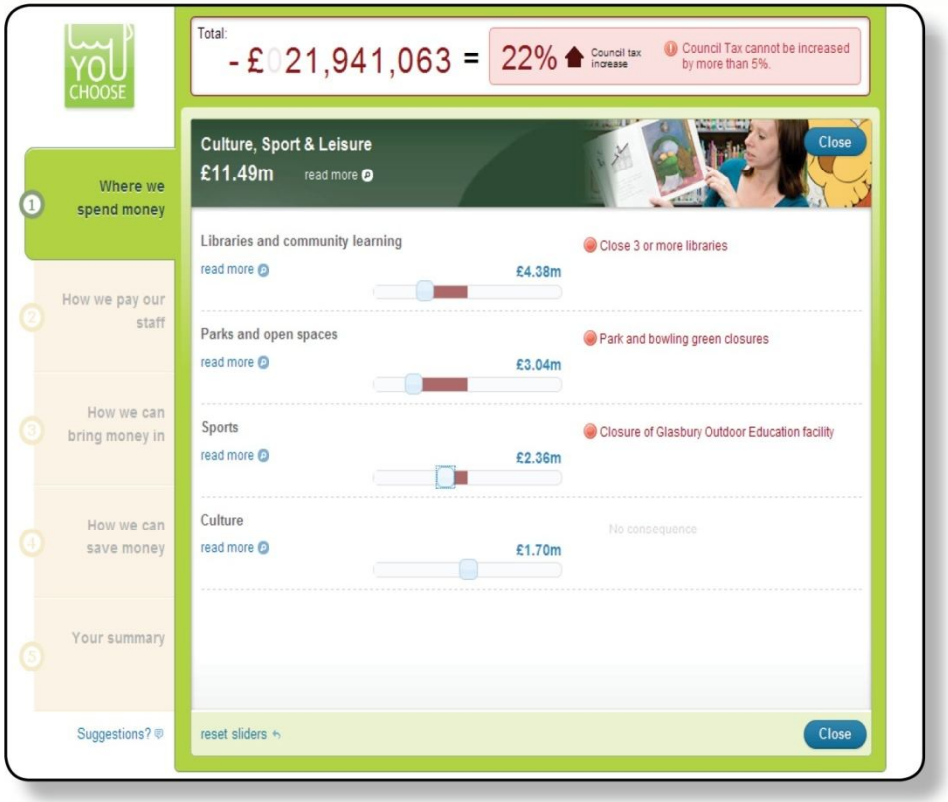

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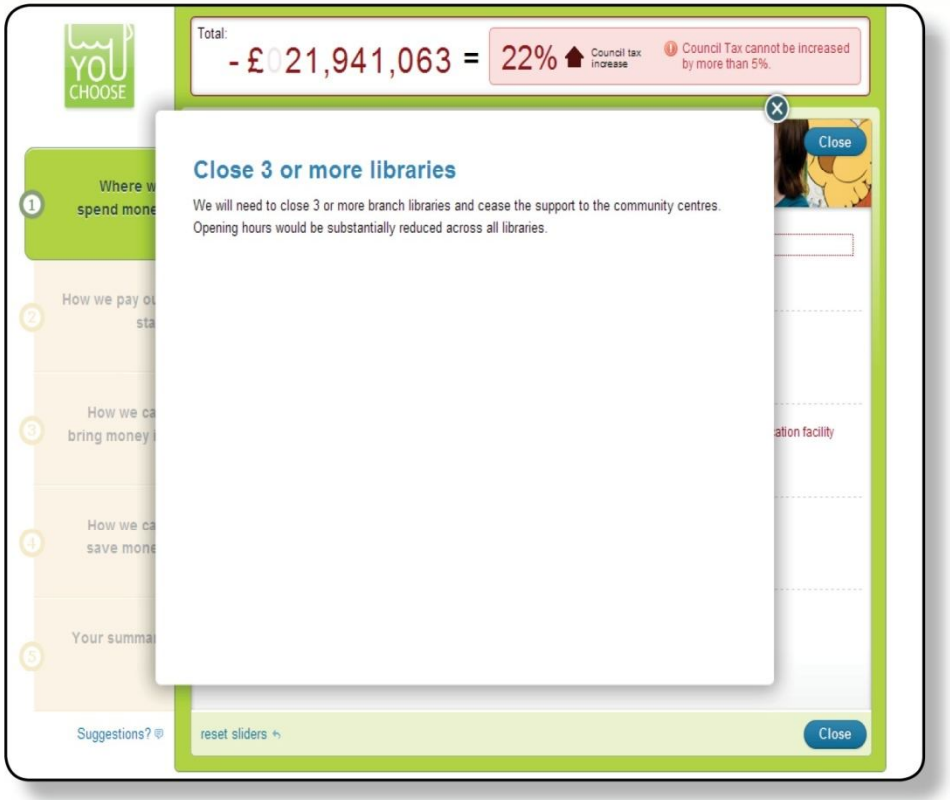

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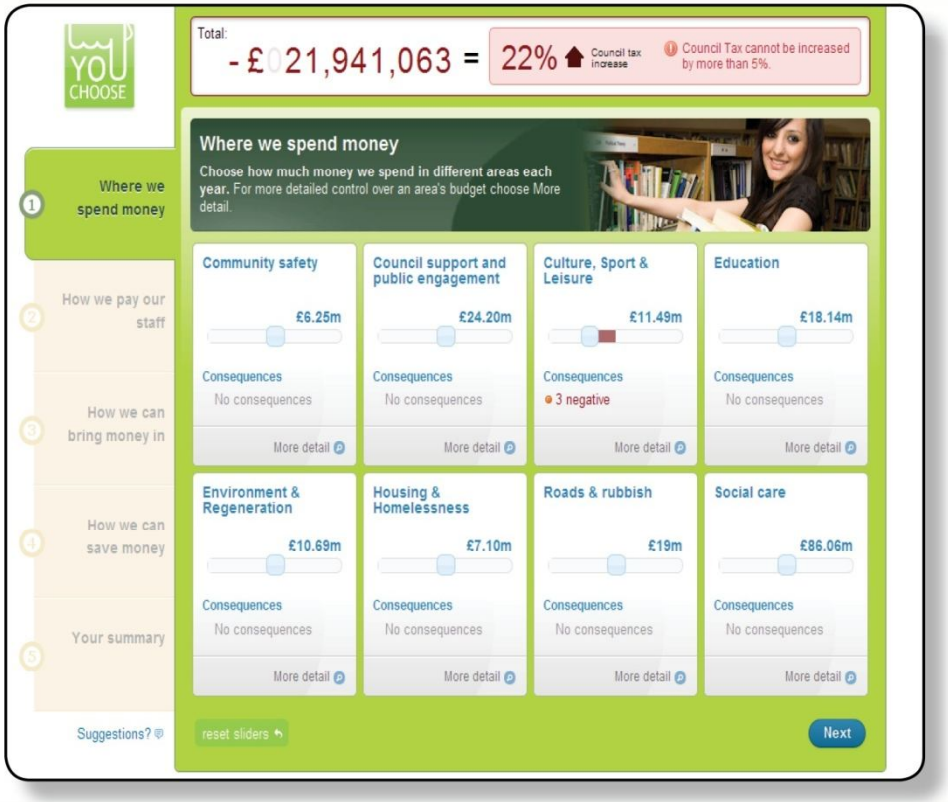

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Cuts have consequences

- Impact of savings of 10-50% on service areas shown, including:
  - Libraries would close
  - Disabled children have care packages reduced or withdrawn
  - Fortnightly refuse collection
  - Reduce youth services, from Connexions to the Music Centre

Why we included staff pay

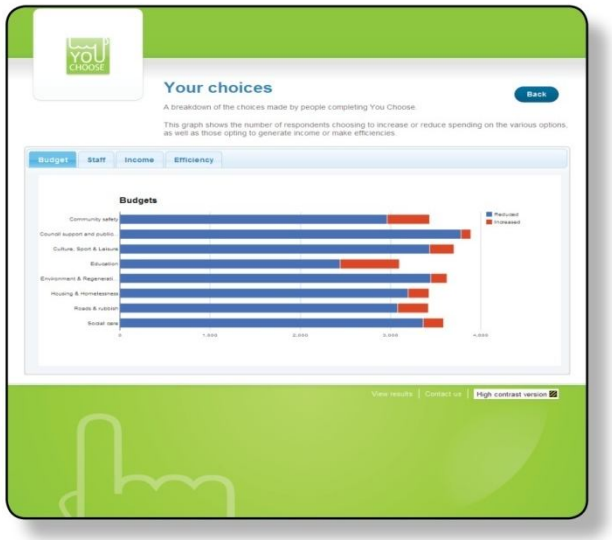
- YouChoose users could reduce staff pay by up to 5%
- Managers could be specifically targeted
- " YouChoose budget"- staff salaries bill down 16% and management costs down 44%

What about people who aren't online?

- No differences in attitude between people who use the internet and those who don't
- "Laptops to people, and people to laptops"
- Over 400 people completed YouChoose with personal support
- Trained library staff and mobile library

The people have spoken

- 4000 people already taken part
- 'Back office' functions targeted for biggest savings
- Education should be spared the cuts
- Council Tax should go down by 2.5%



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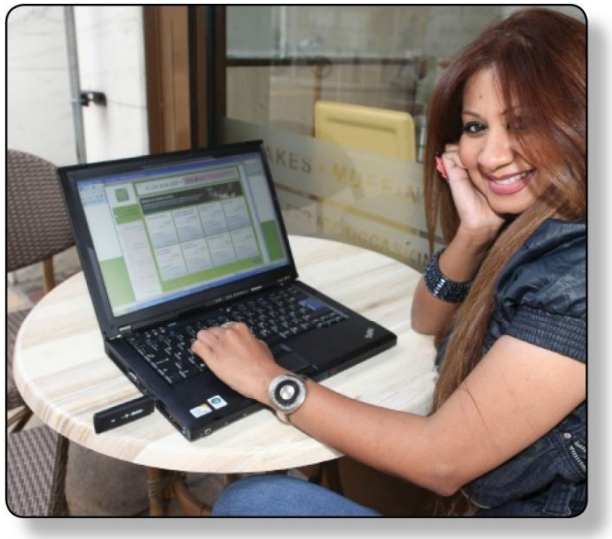
Different communities, different views

- "Raw data is a very good reflection of the local population" – YouGov
- Slight under representation of over 65s
- Slight over representation of White ethnic group
- Results 'weighted' so truly represent views of Borough



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Comparison with other areas

- 20 Councils running YouChoose, with more expected to go live soon
- 10,000 submissions across England
- Growing amount of data that allows comparison between areas

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Learning from the Redbridge Conversation

- Public has appetite to tackle difficult problems
- Council is making difficult choices clear to the public
- Decisions about cuts are no easier, but they are more legitimate

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Where next for transparency in Redbridge?

- See live planning applications by postcode with objections
- 'Report it' tool shows progress when people report faults like street lighting
- Developing open data tool to show staffing, service spending and performance data
- Public see we have nothing to hide and keeps Council officers focused on costs!

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Thank you

- Please visit the Redbridge Conversation pages and try YouChoose for yourself, or get in touch to find out more

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www.redbridge.gov.uk/conversation

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