

Appendix 1

1.0 Considerations around representativeness and reporting of the data

- 1.1 In line with best practice issued by Government (The Government's Consultation Principles July 2016), the consultation particularly focused on involving the range of stakeholders affected by the proposals, as well as enabling the general public to comment through the online survey, social media and public meetings. The findings from the stakeholder meetings and other qualitative correspondence, is by its very nature, indicative only and not necessarily representative of the wider population.
- 1.2 It is recognised that the public, community groups and key stakeholders may not always be aware of the budgetary and technical financial constraints that local authorities operate under. This document does not attempt to unpick this, but simply reports the views of the various consultees in their broadest perspective.
- 1.3 The qualitative findings are a source of information derived from concepts that are included in the budget proposals. These have been drawn from comments from the survey, emails received from members of the public and social media where available. It should be noted that individual views received are not necessarily representative; however, the inclusion of many of these comments forms an important part of the Council's Equality Assessment of the budget proposals – a process that is legally required.

2.0 Key Findings

- 2.1 The main themes that respondents had the opportunity to comment on were:
- Services that are most important to them;
 - Protecting services from further cuts;
 - Supporting the Budget Reduction and Income Generation proposals;
 - Generating income to help make less cuts to service provision;
 - Proposals to charge a premium to Council Tax on unoccupied properties;
 - Raising Council Tax;
 - Additional flexibility to levy increases to the Adult Social Care precept;
 - Volunteer Scheme;
 - Alternative services and new ways of working;
 - Council's suggested draft five City priorities.

2.2 Services that are most important

The Council provides many services to the public. Respondents were asked that of the services they were personally aware of, which three are the most important to them and to state if they think the services have improved, stayed

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the same or got worse in recent years. Their responses are recorded in the following charts:

Chart 1: Top three services most important to respondents (ranked)

Overall, there were a total of 2,104 responses for this question, commenting on 28 services. Of which, 363 (17%) respondents indicated that Waste and Recycling Services was the most important service, followed by 319 (15%) for Adult Services and 257 (12%) for Highways Maintenance and Transport Services.

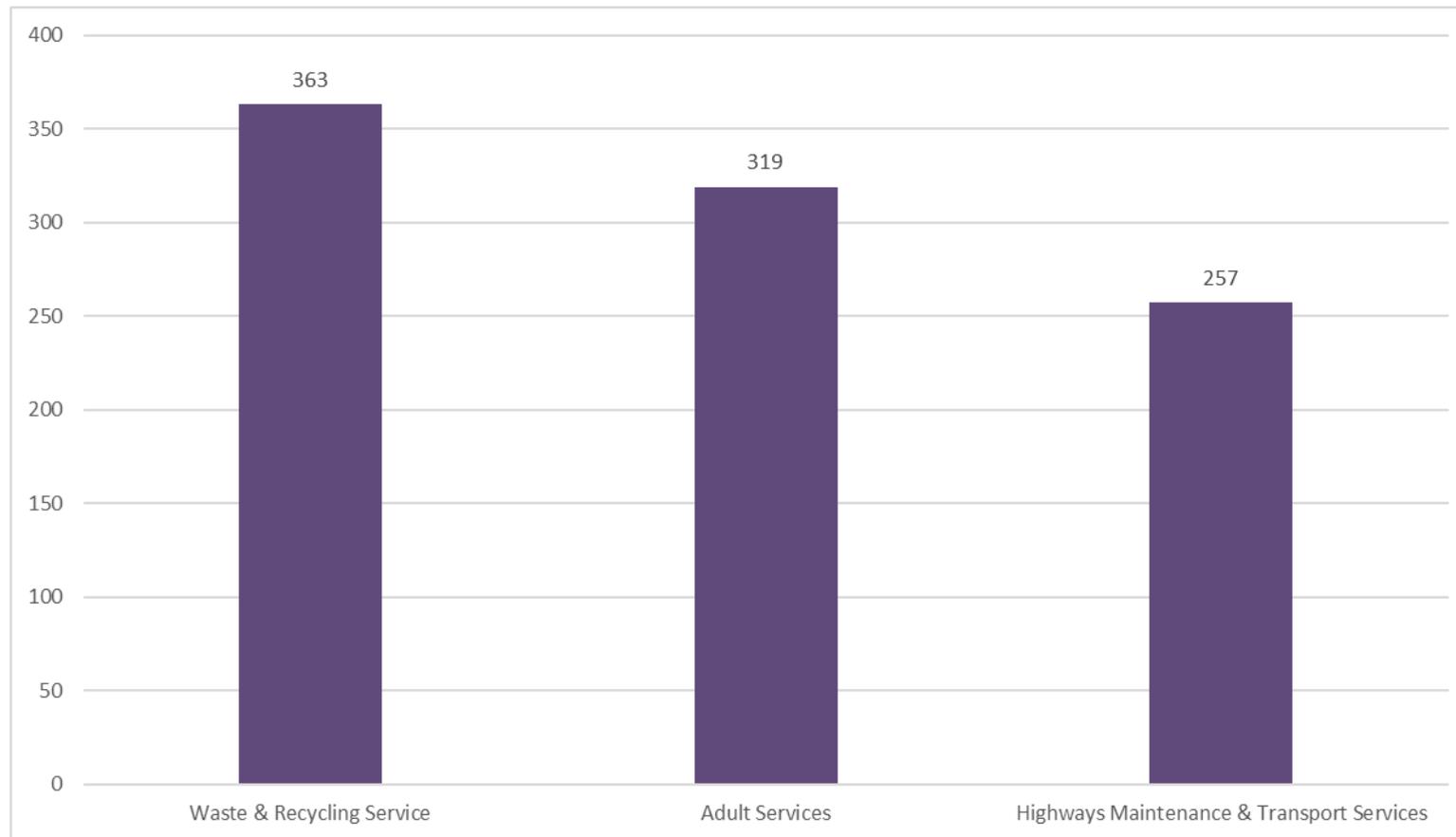
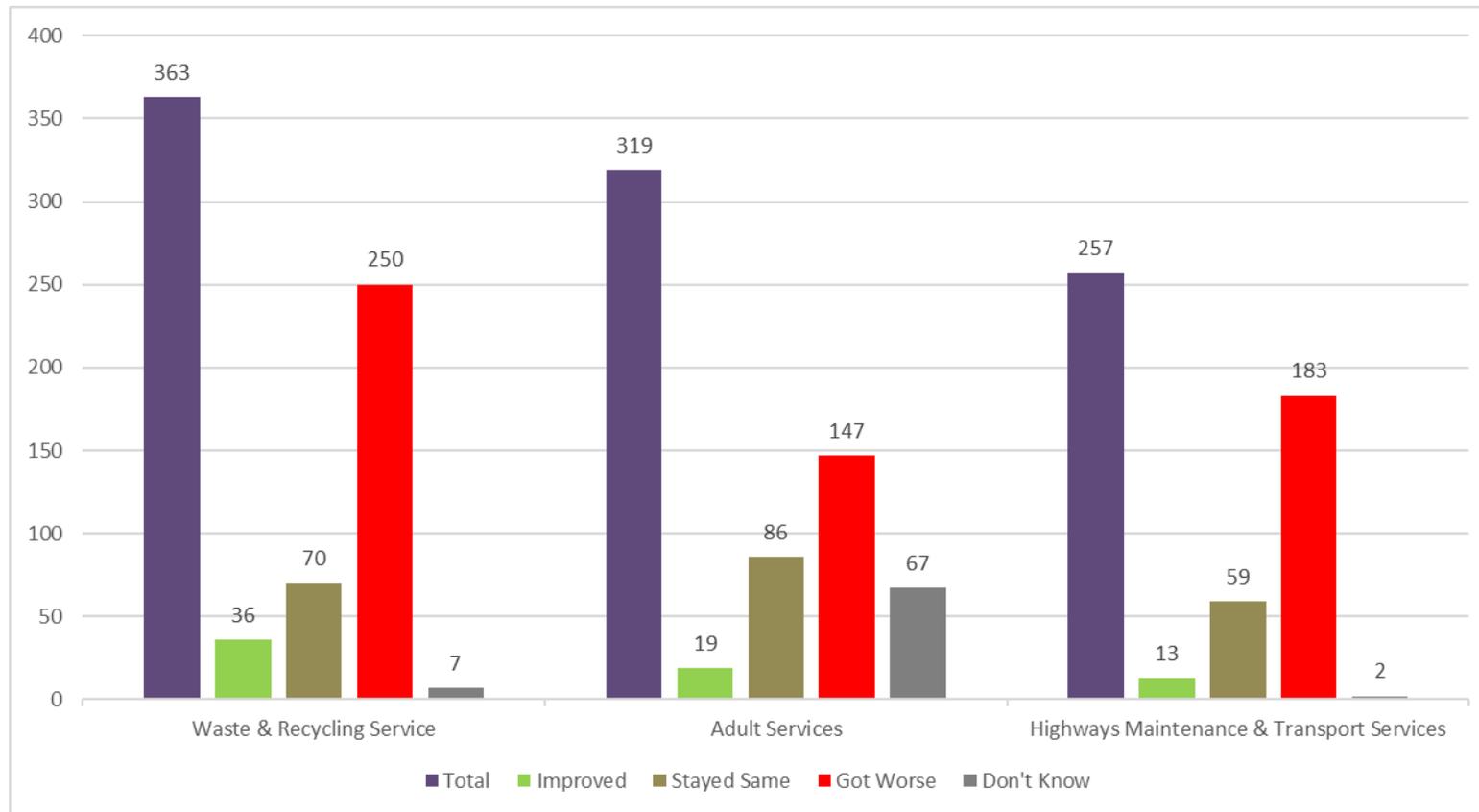


Chart 2: Analysis of the top three services most important to respondents (ranked)

Of the three Council Services that respondents had selected, they were asked to state whether they thought the service had improved, stayed the same or got worse in recent years.



From Chart 1, 363 of respondents indicated that Waste and Recycling Services was the most important service. Chart 2 above indicates that 36 (10%) stated that the service had improved, 70 (19%) stated that the service had stayed the same, 250 (69%) stated that the service had got worse and 7 (2%) stated they did not know.

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Appendix 1

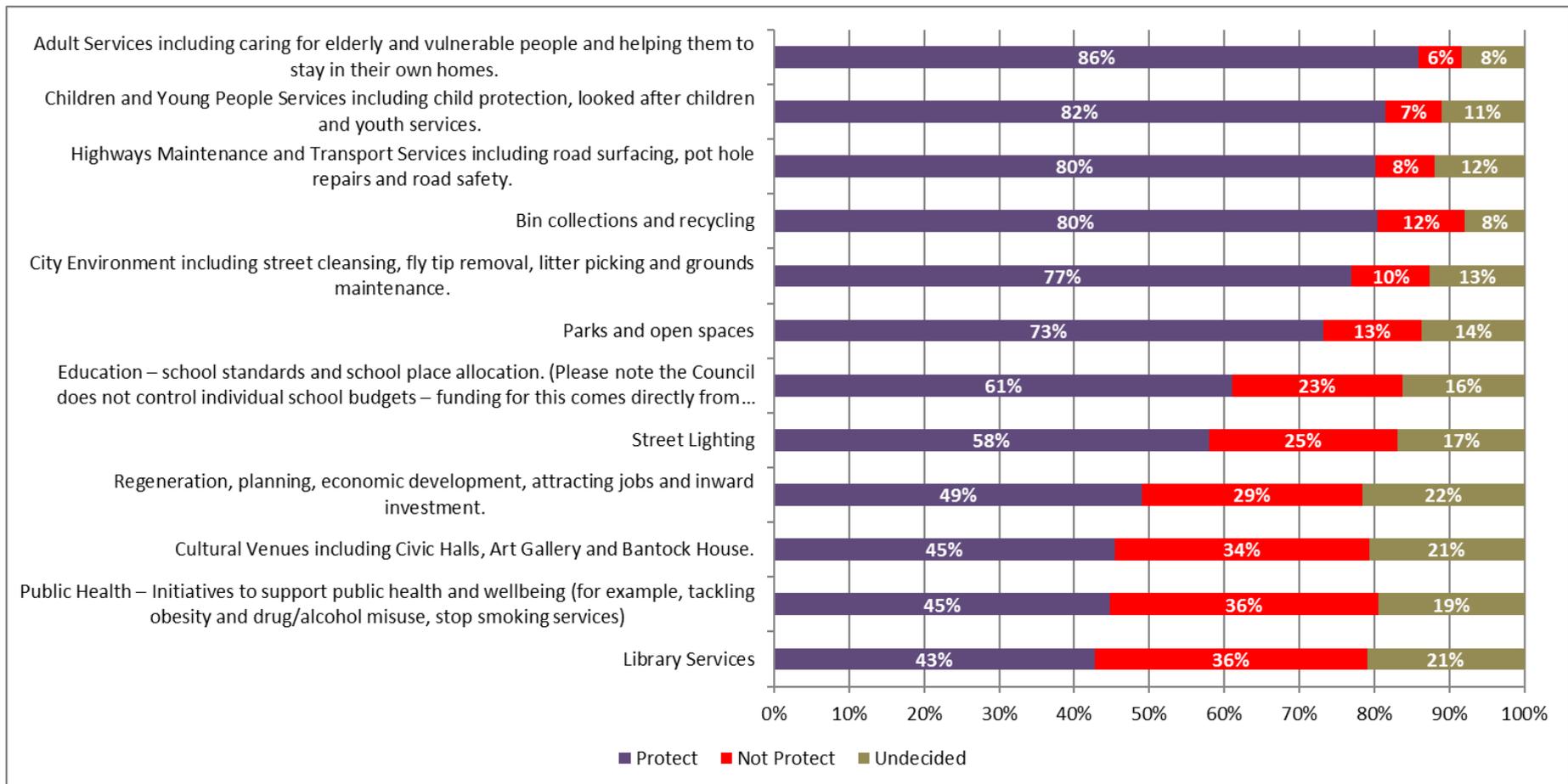
Other important services that did not fall in the top three include Childrens Services, Education including Schools and City Environment, which ranked as the fourth, fifth and sixth most important services to respondents respectively.

Of all responses, respondents felt that Regeneration in the city centre improved the most, whilst Waste and Recycling Services was deemed to be the area that had got worse.

2.3 Protecting services from further cuts

The Council has been faced with significantly reduced funding since 2010-2011 and budget cuts have had to be made. Respondents were asked to review a list of services that the Council provides and to choose if they think the services should or should not be protected from further cuts. All 730 respondents responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

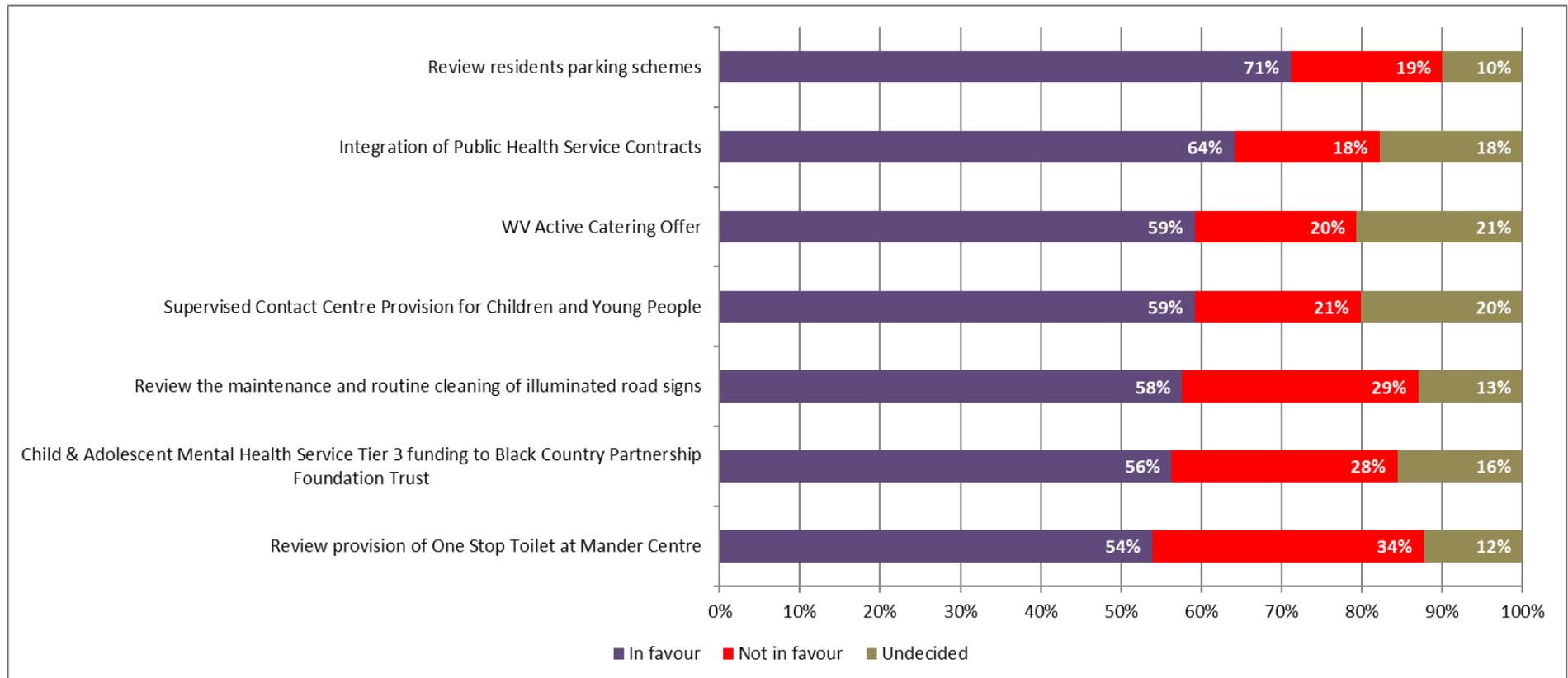
Chart 3: Which services should be protected from future cuts



2.4 Supporting the Budget Reduction and Income Generation proposals

Respondents were asked to state whether they were in favour, not in favour or were undecided in supporting the Budget Reduction and Income Generation proposals which the Council was consulting on. Of the total number of respondents (730), 700 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 4: Level of support on the proposals consulted on

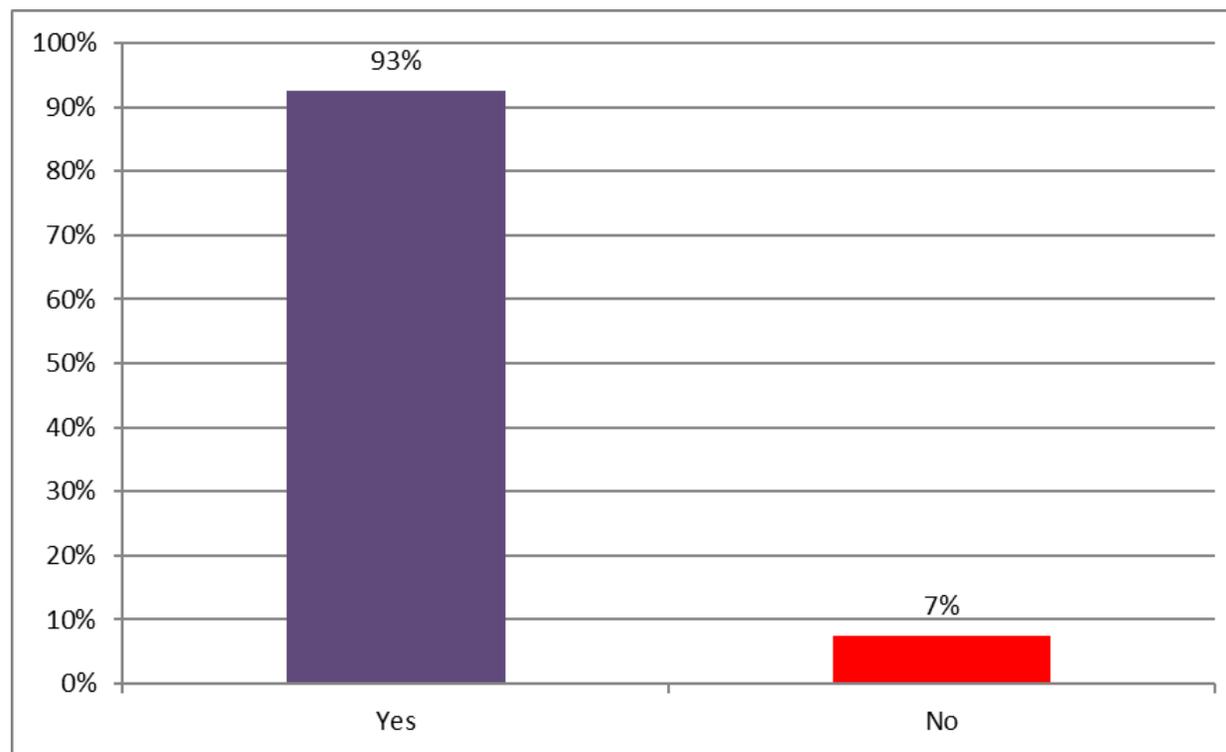


2.5 Generating income to help make less cuts to service provision

In recent years the Council has identified ways of generating income in order to reduce cuts in service. An example of this is building new office accommodation in the City centre called the i10 building, which has brought new businesses to the City resulting in job creation as well as generating additional income for the Council through rent and business rates.

Respondents were asked to state whether they would be in favour of the Council exploring new ways of generating income in order to reduce cuts. Of the total number of respondents (730), 700 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 5: Those in favour of exploring new ways of generating income in order to reduce cuts

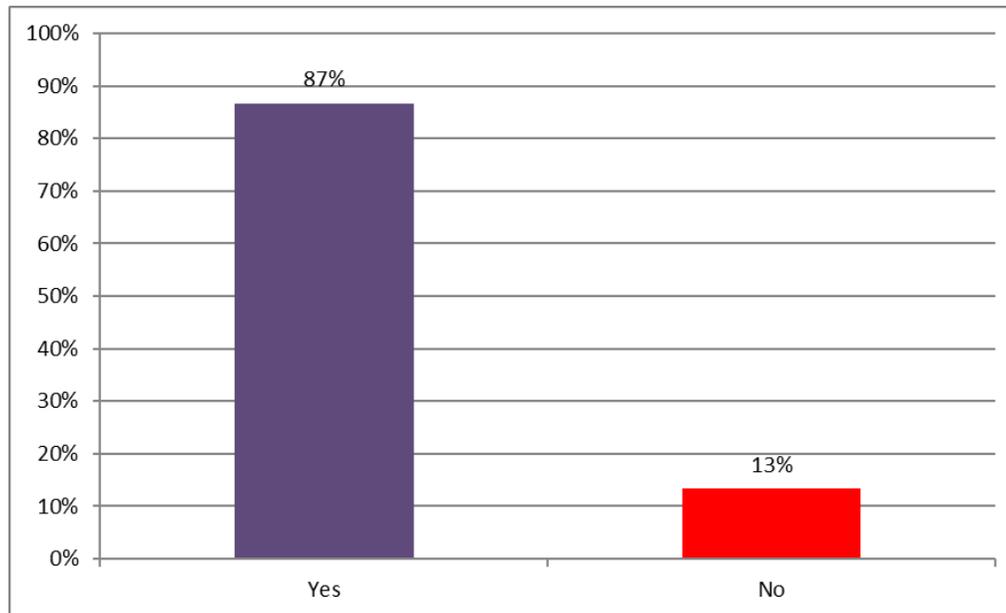


2.6 Proposals to charge a premium to Council Tax on unoccupied properties

There is a national shortage of homes. When a property has been empty for 2 years or more, the Council currently add a 50% premium to the council tax. This means that owners have to pay 150% of the council tax charge for an unoccupied property to discourage homes being left empty. A new law is likely to allow councils to charge more from 1 April 2019. This is to encourage owners to sell or rent their properties to ease the national shortage of homes.

Respondents were asked to state whether they agreed with the Council charging the proposed premium to council tax for properties that have been unoccupied for 2 or more years. Of the total number of respondents (730), 700 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 6: Those in favour of charging the proposed premium to council tax for properties that have been unoccupied for 2 or more years



Premium to be added	Current 2018-2019	Proposed 2019-2020	Proposed 2020-2021	Proposed 2021-2022
Empty up to 2 years	0%	0%	0%	0%
Empty for 2 -5 years	50%	100%	100%	100%
Empty for 5-10 years	50%	100%	200%	200%
Empty 10 years or more	50%	100%	200%	300%

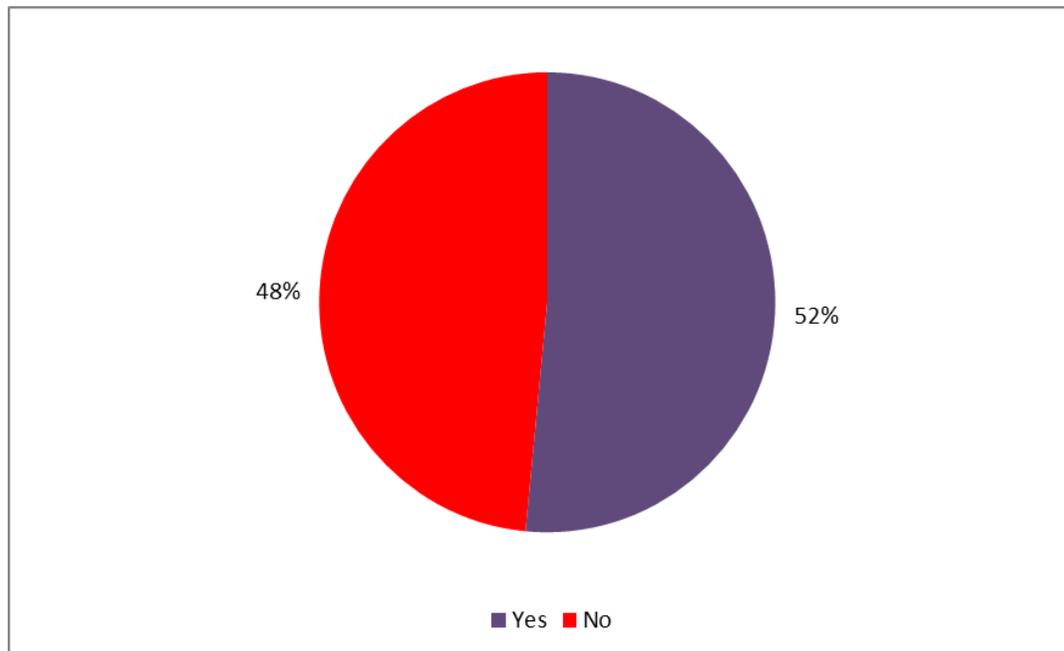
2.7 Raising the Council Tax

The Government recently announced a change to the referendum limit on Council Tax increases from 1.99% to 2.99%. The Council is therefore proposing a Council Tax increase of 2.99% for 2019-2020, and in line with Government policy, an additional 2% charge specifically to help fund adult social care.

The proposed total 4.99% increase would be an extra £51.24 per year (99 pence per week) for the majority of properties in Wolverhampton (Valuation Band A) or if a single person discount is applicable for the property the increase for 2019-2020 would be an extra £38.43 per year (74 pence per week).

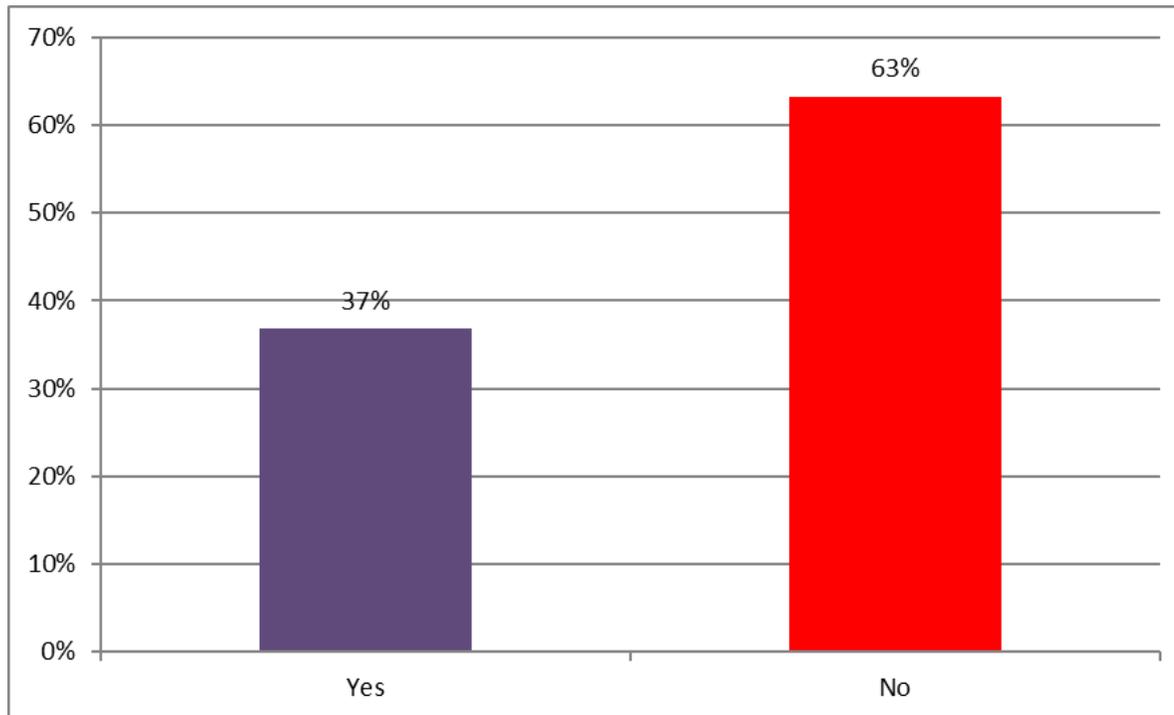
Respondents were asked if they would be prepared to pay the proposed increase to Council Tax of 2.99% (4.99% total increase including the additional 2% charge specifically to help fund adult social care). The funds generated would support the delivery of key services. Of the total number of respondents (730), 658 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 7: Would you be prepared to pay the proposed 2019-2020 increase to Council Tax



In the event that the Council Tax referendum limit were to be removed, respondents were asked to state whether they would be prepared to pay more Council Tax to reduce the level of cuts to services over and above the 2.99% increase in this or future years. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

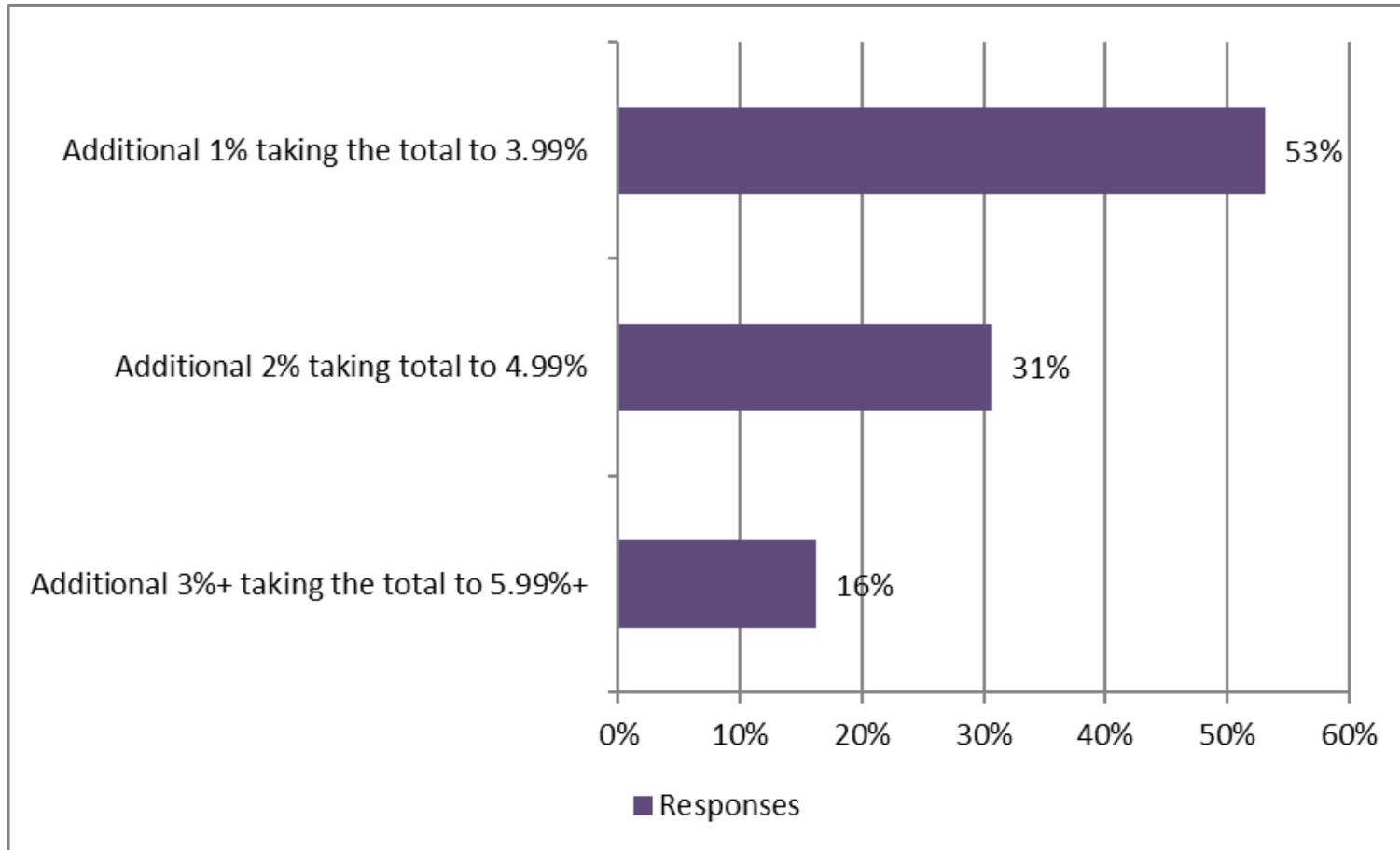
Chart 8: Would you be prepared to pay more Council Tax to protect key services from further cuts?



242 of 658 respondents (37%) who answered this question stated that they would be willing to pay more than the proposed 2.99% increase in Council Tax to protect key services from further cuts. 416 respondents (63%) stated that they would not be willing to pay more Council Tax.

Of the 242 respondents from Chart 8 who said that they would be prepared to pay more Council Tax, the following chart analyses how much more they would be prepared to pay.

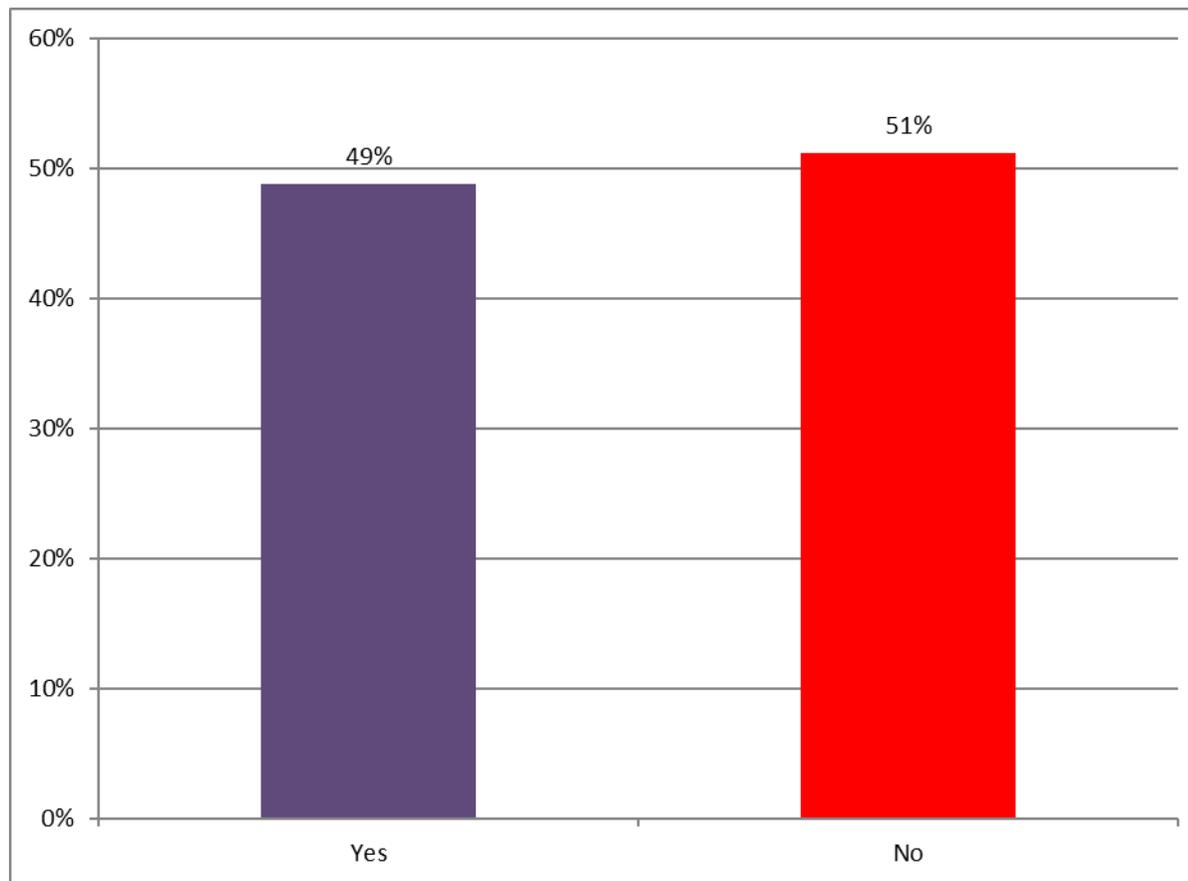
Chart 9: If yes, how much more:



2.8 Additional flexibility to levy increases to the Adult Social Care precept

Respondents were asked whether they were in favour of increasing charges to support adult social care expenditure if the Government were to provide councils with the additional flexibility to levy increases to the Adult Social Care precept. Of the total number of respondents (730), 658 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

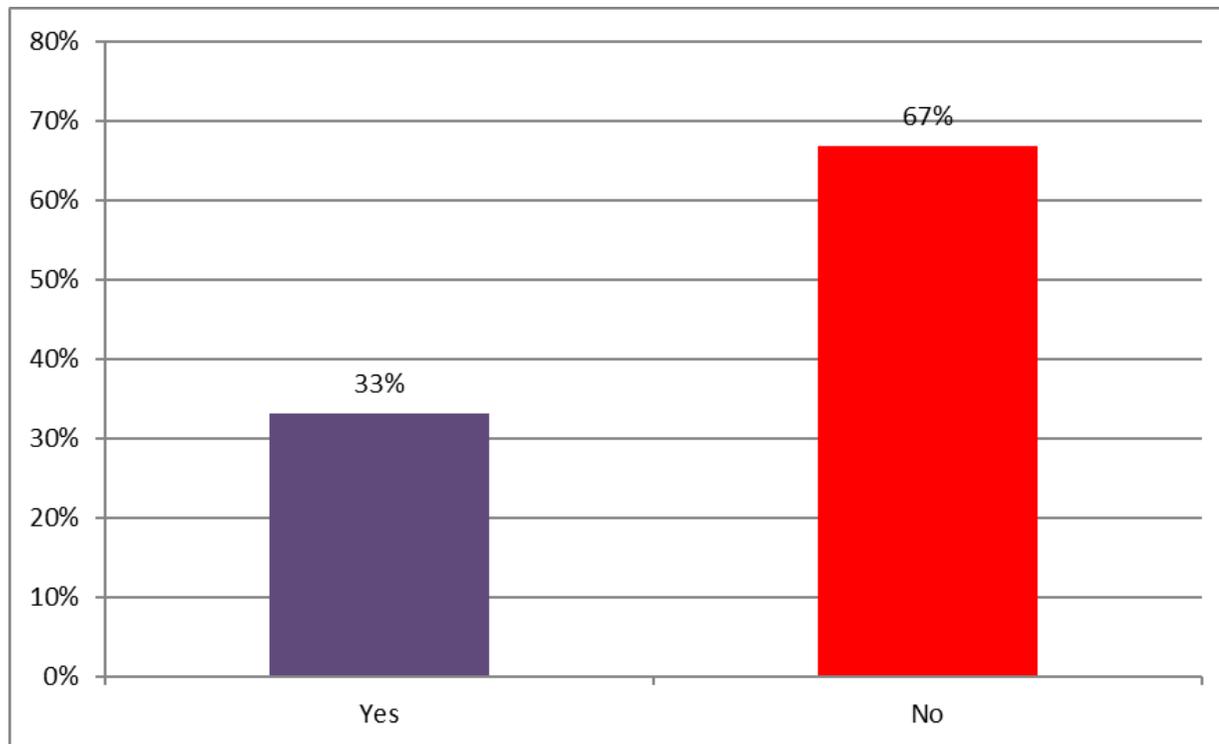
Chart 10: Would you be in favour of increasing charges to support adult social care expenditure?



2.9 Volunteer Scheme

As part of working smarter together, voluntary sector partners are working with the Council to review its existing Volunteers Scheme to ensure that volunteers are supported and benefit from their time with the Council. Respondents were asked whether they would be willing to volunteer to support an existing service or new service. Of the total number of respondents (730), 700 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 11: Respondents willing to volunteer to support an existing service or new service



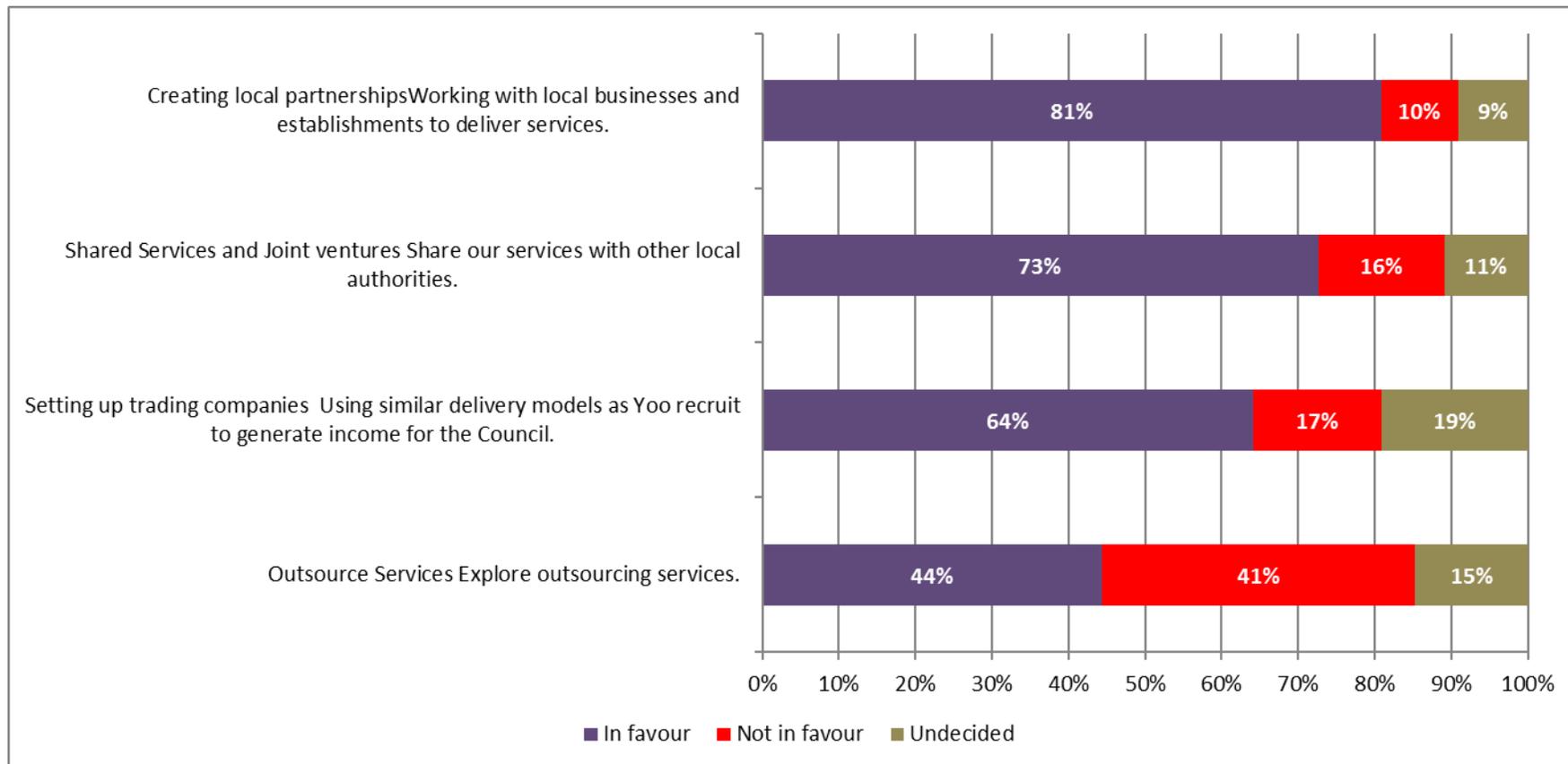
Some of the services the respondents would be willing to volunteer in are:

- Adult Services
- Education
- Library Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Street Cleaning
- Social Care

2.10 Alternative services and new ways of working

Respondents were asked whether they were in favour for the Council to engage in alternative services and new ways of working to meet budget challenges. Of the total number of respondents (730), 658 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 12: To meet budget challenges, would you like the Council to engage in alternative services and new ways of working, such as:

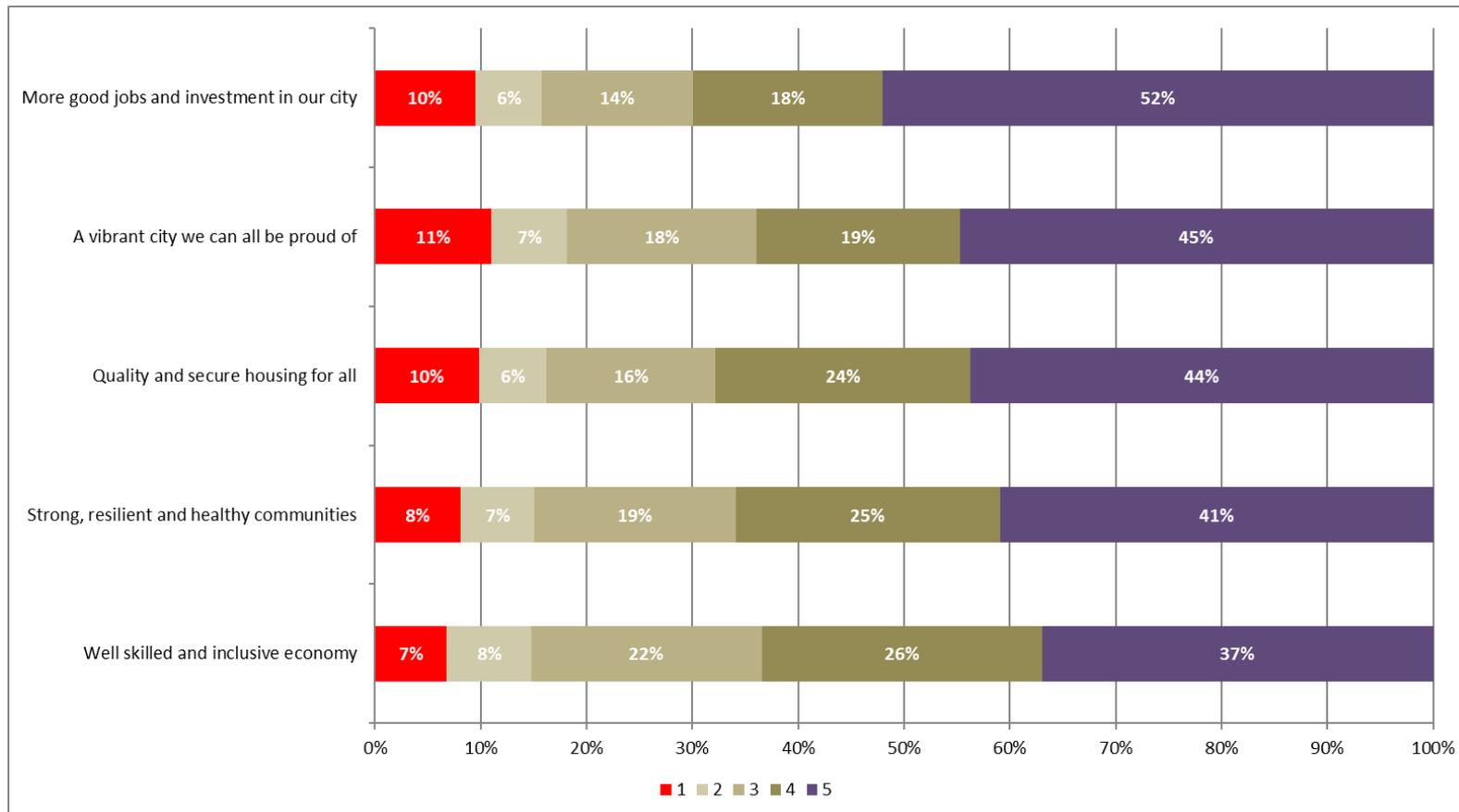


2.11 Council's suggested draft 5 draft City priorities

Subject to extensive consultation the Council has suggested five city priorities to enable Wulfrunians to live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives.

Respondents were asked to score each of the five draft priorities between 1 (being not at all a priority) to 5 (being definitely a priority). Of the total number of respondents (730), 658 responded to this question. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 13: Draft priorities and their importance (ranked)



3.0 Feedback from the Wolverhampton Equalities and Diversity Forum Meeting

Representatives from the City's Wolverhampton Equalities and Diversity Forum were invited to attend a meeting on 23 October 2018 to have their say in the consultation. At this meeting, City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2019-2020 budget plans and discussed a number of themes arising as a result.

3.1 Amongst the themes discussed were:

Consultation and Engagement

- The group welcomed more regular engagement, either quarterly or six monthly updates. They also asked for an update on the outcome of the Budget Reduction proposals out for consultation.

Priorities

- Members of this group mentioned that the following council services are important to them and should be protected:
 - Adult Social Care – particularly for the Elderly. Residential and Nursing homes do not always cater for the needs of deaf people and they are often lonely and isolated because no one can sign BSL.
 - Mental health – address issue of mental health amongst older and younger deaf and non-deaf people.
 - Social work – have a specialist deaf/non-deaf Social Worker who is qualified in signing BSL so can communicate with the deaf community.

General comments

- A question was raised about whether Bradmore Centre would be affected by future budget reduction proposals as if it was, then the group would consider making a financial contribution if the centre was at risk of closure.
- Concerns were raised about British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and how they experienced problems when they visited the Civic Centre and Wolverhampton Homes as they were not always available even when appointments had been made in advance.
- The Group also raised concerns around the lack of availability of BSL when visiting doctors and hospitals.

4.0 Feedback from Business Consultation

Local business representatives/champions were invited to attend an event at the Black Country Growth Hub on 30 October 2018. At this event, City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2019-2020 budget plans and discussed a number of themes arising as a result.

4.1 Amongst the themes discussed were:

Consultation and Engagement

- Businesses noted that they wanted to be more involved with the Council and to help with the Council's issues/concerns. It was noted that businesses found the interaction with the Council very useful and that they felt connected and part of something, this is something they would be happy to share with their business neighbours and would be happy and good quality advocates of the work we have done with them to-date.
- They also noted that there should be focus groups where a small number of businesses are consulted with Council on issues/concerns or even City issues and that the businesses could help the Council to find solutions. Smaller focus groups could look at a number of areas at the same time.

General Comments

- The Growth Hub requires a higher profile, and together with the AIM Programme, will help businesses of different sizes, to connect and communicate with each other and build local relationships. Better collaboration can put local businesses in touch with each other, using this city brand to promote the City internally and also importantly externally, helping to promote the profile Wolverhampton and making it a 'go to' place. Using the City brand will bring pride to the residents, empowerment for business and economic growth for all. All this will help raise the profile of the City thus being more attractive to businesses looking to relocate to the City of Wolverhampton and encourage existing companies to stay here and invest, again growing the economy.
- Discussions were held around the local education system, from schools to University. Attendees felt that students should be encouraged to work in local businesses. Important to link with the education system to ensure that the skills required from students, so they can gain employment.

5.0 Feedback from the Youth Council Meeting

Members of the Youth Council were invited to attend a meeting on 26 November 2018 to have their say in the consultation. At this meeting, City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet Portfolio Holder and Director of Finance presented the Council's 2019-2020 budget plans and there were discussions around a number of themes.

5.1 Amongst the themes discussed were:

Consultation and Engagement

- Discussions were held around how young people would like to be engaged in the future. Attendees felt that whilst the Youth Council was a great forum it didn't represent everyone, and that better engagement could be achieved by going directly into schools.

Education

- Education was primarily identified as the main priority for the Youth Council and the City. A discussion took place about education funding and how this impacted on teachers and extra training.

Mental Health

- Discussions were held around mental health support in schools. Attendees felt that more emphasis was needed on earlier intervention, especially around exam times. Attendees also felt that teachers needed more training and greater awareness when dealing with depression and anxiety.

Library Service

- A high number of participants would not like to see libraries closed as they enjoyed going to the library. A focus on libraries is required as it was recognised that libraries do not bring in a lot of income.

Crime

- A discussion took place about knife crime and how it could be tackled by working actively with partners, including the Police.

City Environment

- Reference was made around how the waste service impacted the citizens of Wolverhampton where they have faced reductions in service but pay more. However, it was felt that more recycling options are required in towns.
- Discussions around transport and how good public transport was essential to enable for young people to travel around the City. Attendees also felt that good highways and street lighting were important.

Wolverhampton

- Considerable support was given for the City's Regeneration projects. It was felt that such projects would encourage young people to stay in Wolverhampton and would also bring other young people into Wolverhampton. More work needed to be done in establishing the identity of Wolverhampton as a city for young people

6.0 Feedback from the four Public Meeting Consultations

Members of the public were invited to attend four public meetings held around the City of Wolverhampton in October and November 2018 to have their say in the consultation. At these meetings, City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2019-2020 budget plans and discussed a number of themes arising as a result.

6.1 Amongst the themes discussed were:

Funding

- A discussion took place about how funding has been reduced and that this is primarily due to Government policy.

Consultation and Engagement

- Discussions took place about how attendees would like to be engaged / consulted on the budget in the future.
- Attendees said they would prefer ongoing conversations with the council throughout the year.
- Earlier consultation was also welcomed. Concerns were raised that it was felt the decisions had already been made.
- Attendees also welcomed more opportunity to talk about general council policy
- A mixed response was received when members of the public were asked if they would attend a meeting in the Civic Centre
- Comments were made that the previous LNPs helped foster local community engagement
- Discussions were held on how consultation events could be publicised and that a wide range of communication channels should be used.
- Attendees recognised that people have different issues / concerns and communications will need to reflect this.
- A comment was made that more direct dialogue with staff that deliver the service would be welcomed, not just with Directors and Councillors, for example, Headteachers.
- Discussions were held around providing a wider context, explain how the council is funded, what services are provided.

Priorities

- Attendees were asked what their priorities were. The general consensus was around:
 - Maintaining roads;
 - Fly tipping and waste collection
 - Adults and Childrens social care services
 - Street lighting

- Education
- Emergency services

Regeneration, Highways and Transport

- Concerns were posed about how the Council was able to spend money on the Civic Centre and Civic Halls when funding has been reduced. A discussion took place about how essential repairs are required to buildings where they needed restoring.
- Further to this, the Council was asked where the money comes from to fund these projects and the debt it takes on.
- Comments were raised about whether the Westside development is still going ahead.
- Questions were raised about how the bus lane enforcement fines that is collected is spent. It was acknowledged that it is ringfenced to highways improvement.
- It was felt that the Council was not using a superior material for pot holes. It was acknowledged that sometimes due to quick repair to make the road safe and without closing roads. However, the Council is trialling new technology to do quick repairs that lasts longer
- Information was sought on why the metro is being extended to the train station rather than the city centre.
- Comments were made about how free parking in the city centre is no longer available and this is an issue.
- Comments were also made about how shops are closing in the City Centre

Waste and Recycling Services

- Comments were made about how unhappy people were with the Waste Collection service and how it could lead to more fly tipping.
- A discussion took place about not being able to take household rubbish to the tip in vans. People would like to see the tip open all week and being more flexible in allowing access to vans for household rubbish.
- Discussions were held around the fortnightly collections and the charge in relation to the collection of green waste.
- Enquiries were raised about whether the Super-Tip is still going ahead

Events

- Questions were raised about whether the spend on the darts and the Christmas markets events are necessary. To work better, more partnership working is required. For example, where there are cuts in Pride of Wolverhampton, can neighbours look after their neighbourhood, and community initiatives.

Council Tax

- Comments were made about having to pay more council tax but getting less for the money.
- Further to this, comments were also made about how happy they would be with reduction in waste collection if council tax had not gone up.
- Discussion took place on how much the Council collects in Council Tax.

Children's Services

- A comment was raised about whether families of children who go into care lose their benefits.
- A question was raised around the Budget Reduction proposal for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Tier 3 to Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust. Discussions were held around the need to support parents when it came to mental health, so they are better prepared to support their children.

General Comments

- Concerns were raised about the biggest areas and types of spend. It was acknowledged that Adults and Children Social Care, staffing and contracted spend were the main areas of spend.
- Attendees asked what other councils were doing to bridge the funding gap
- It was suggested that to raise additional income, the council could enter into traded services. However, there were concerns that government could cut grants more.
- Concerns were raised over the how cost-effective some services were, in particular those delivered by external contractors and the quality of the service provided.

7.0 Feedback from the Trade Union Consultation

The City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2018-2019 budget plans to the Joint Consultative Panel on 17 December 2018 and discussed a number of themes.

7.1 Amongst the themes discussed were:

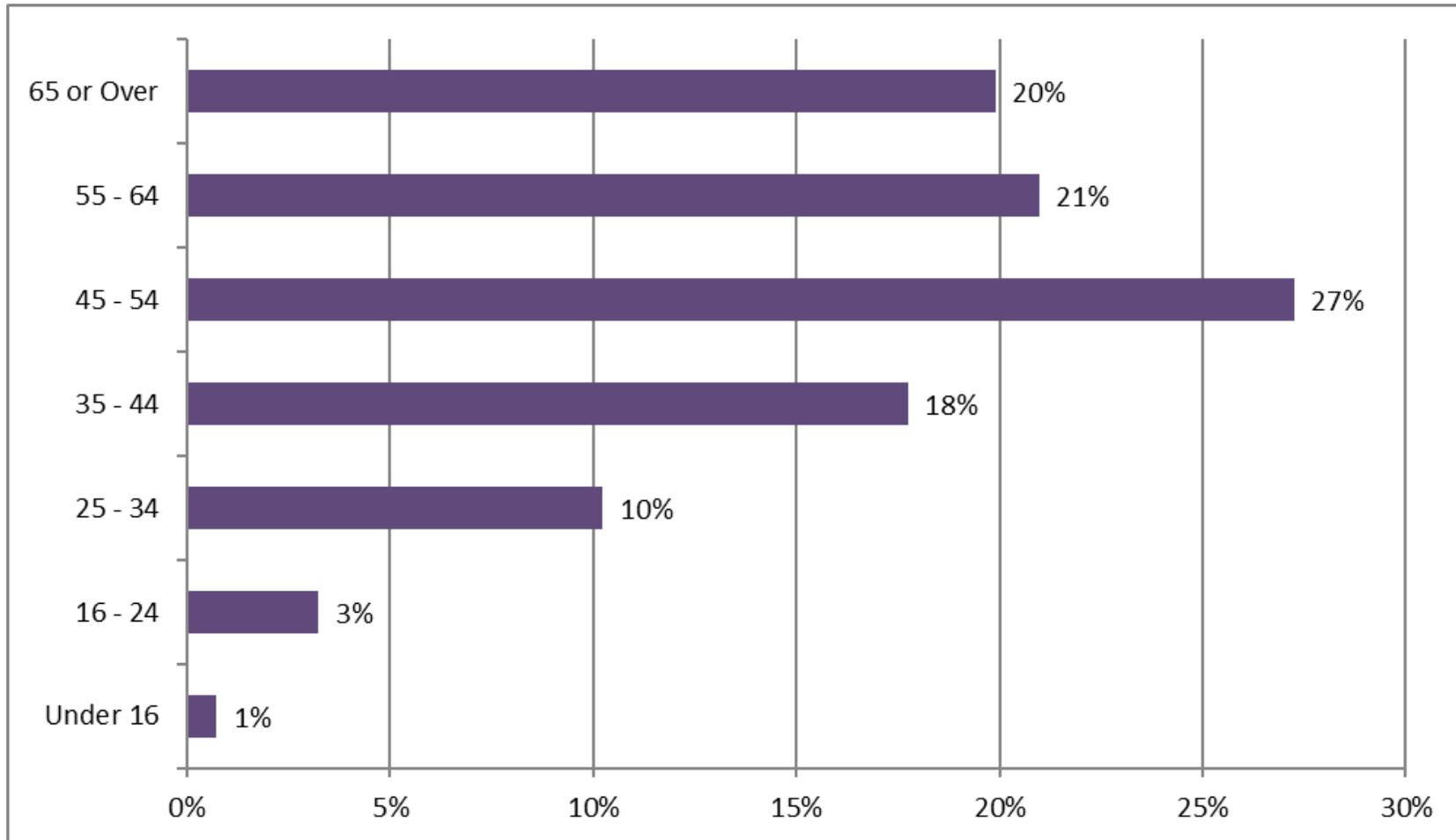
- Concerns around social care and how we can shape the delivery of services when the majority of provision is delivered by the private sector.
- Concerns were also raised that the cost pressures on social care services delivered by the private sector was having an impact on other services provided by the council.
- Councils need to work together to lobby government of issues affecting local government.
- Need to be more commercial, look at what services the private sector provides and see if we can enter these markets and generate income.
- Concerns on how much work is involved in monitoring external contracts, particularly around social care, and whether it would be more cost effective overall to deliver the services in-house and provide more flexibility in changing service delivery.
- Need better communication with the public, people only become aware of services delivered by the council when they have concerns. Be more proactive in promoting what services the council delivers.
- Also, be clearer with communications, in particular when explaining the difference between how services and projects are funded (capital and revenue).

8.0 Feedback from other correspondence

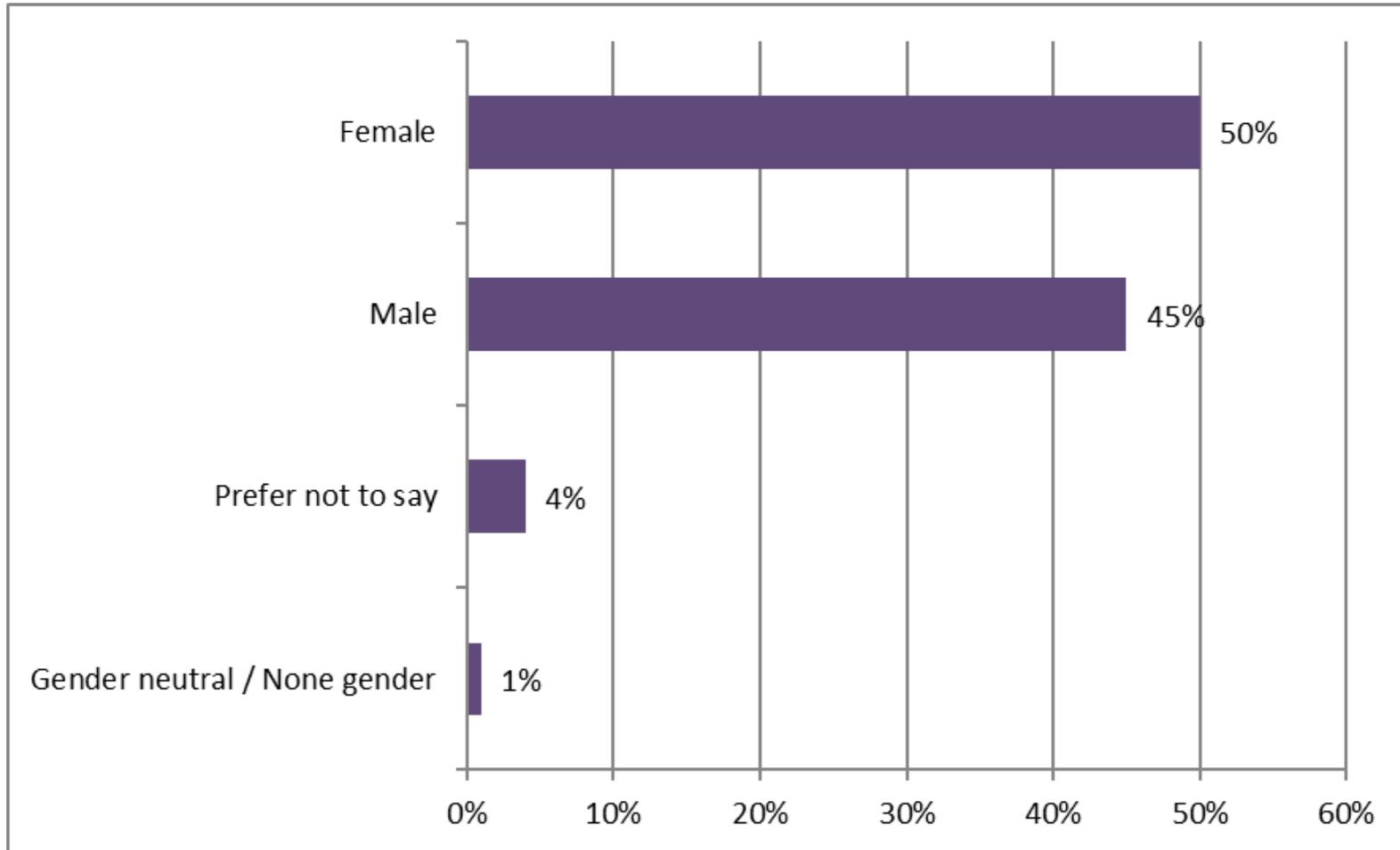
8.1 A number of comments were received via email, which included:

- A concern was raised around the Budget Reduction proposal for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Tier 3 to Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust and whether it could result in a reduction to Tier 3 provision within the City.
- Clarity was asked around general Council budgets and services.
- A comment was made about having to pay more council tax but with a decrease in public services.
- A comment was made about parking and the number of empty buildings in the city centre.

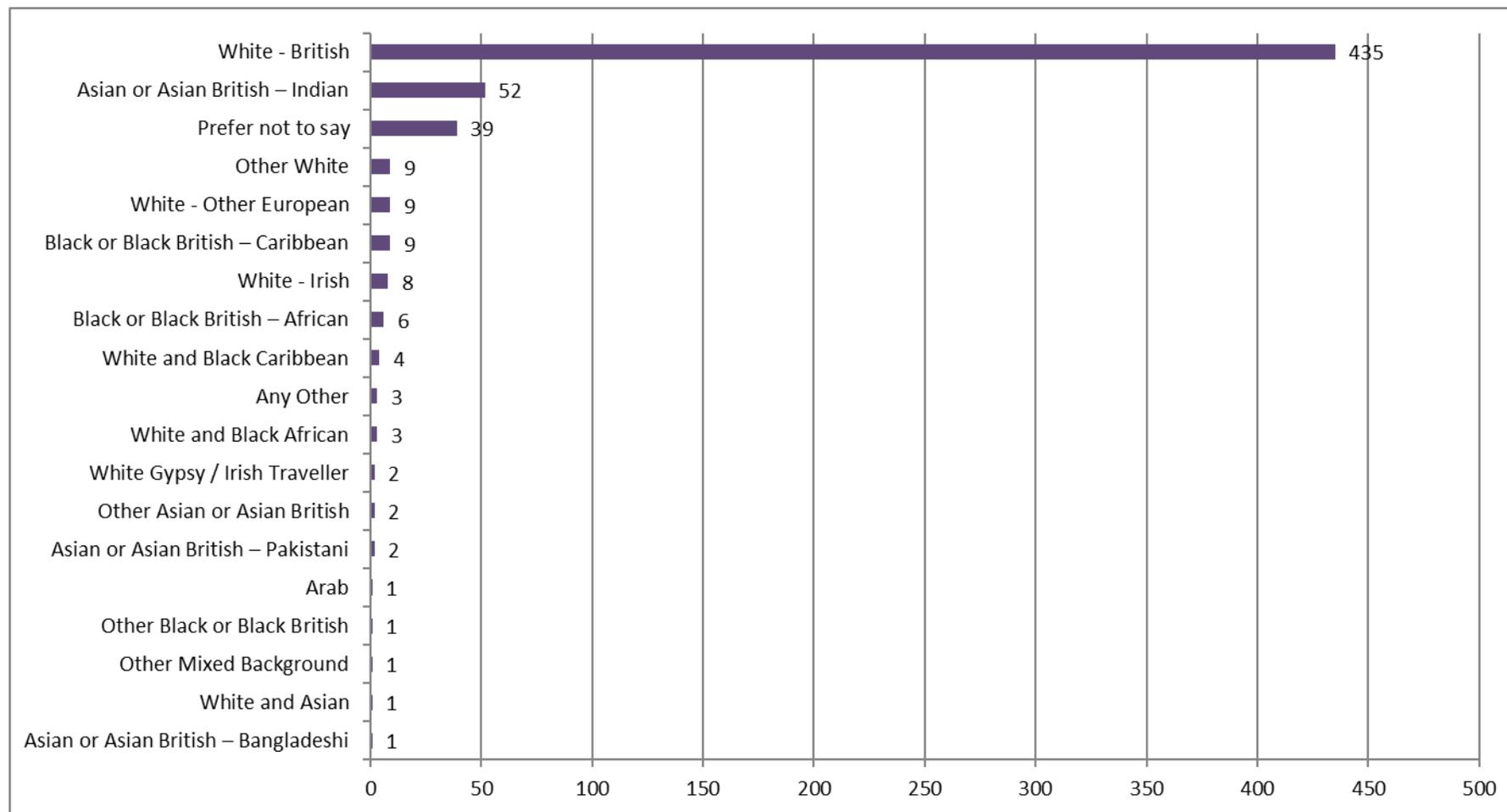
9.0 Respondents Age Group (Of the total number of respondents (730), 558 responded to this question).



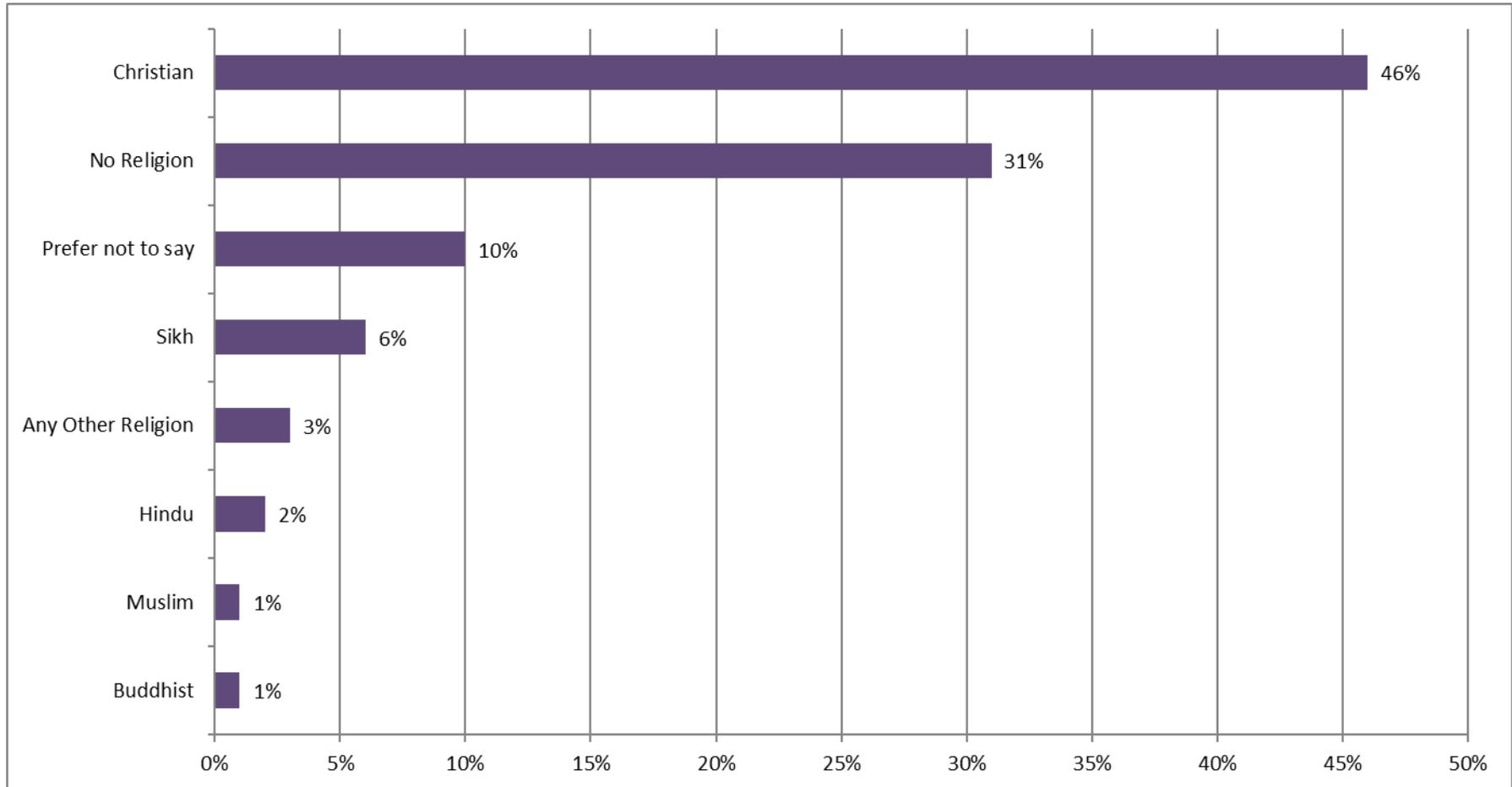
9.1 Respondents Gender (Of the total number of respondents (730), 592 responded to this question).



9.2 Respondents Ethnic Origin (Of the total number of respondents (730), 588 responded to this question).



9.3 Respondents Religion (Of the total number of respondents (730), 583 responded to this question).



9.4 Do you have a disability which affects your day to day activities, which has lasted, or you expect to last, at least a year? (Of the total number of respondents (730), 588 responded to this question).

