

Cabinet

3 February 2016

Time 5.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Executive

Venue Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Membership

Chair Cllr Roger Lawrence (Lab)

Vice-chair Cllr Peter Bilson (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Claire Darke

Cllr Steve Evans

Cllr Val Gibson

Cllr Andrew Johnson

Cllr Elias Mattu

Cllr John Reynolds

Cllr Sandra Samuels

Cllr Paul Sweet

Quorum for this meeting is five Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

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Tel 01902 555043

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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declaration of interests**
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting (13 January 2016)** (Pages 3 - 8)
[For approval]
- 4 **Matters arising**
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting]

DECISION ITEMS (AMBER - DELEGATED TO THE CABINET)

- 5 **Budget 2016/17 - outcome of consultation** (Pages 9 - 54)
[To approve the initial response to the budget consultation]
- 6 **Scrutiny Board comments - 2016/17 draft budget** (Pages 55 - 62)
[To consider the comments from the Scrutiny Board in relation to the 2016/17 draft budget]
- 7 **Preventing gang involvement and youth violence strategy** (Pages 63 - 84)
[To endorse the strategy]
- 8 **Exclusion of press and public**
[To pass the following resolution:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below.]

Part 2 - exempt items, closed to the public and press

<i>Item No</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Grounds for Exemption</i>
9	Improving the city housing offer - housing company outline business case (Pages 85 - 120) [To present the outline business case for the establishment of a Council owned housing company and to approve the development of the full detailed business case to establish the company]	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para (3)

Meeting of the Cabinet

Minutes - 13 January 2016

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Roger Lawrence (Chair)
Cllr Peter Bilson (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Val Gibson
Cllr Andrew Johnson
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Sandra Samuels
Cllr Paul Sweet

Employees

Dereck Francis	Democratic Support Officer
Tim Johnson	Strategic Director - Place
Claire Nye	Chief Accountant
Kevin O'Keefe	Director of Governance
Linda Sanders	Strategic Director – People

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 | Apologies for absence
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Elias Mattu. |
| 2 | Declaration of interests
No declarations of interests were made. |
| 3 | Minutes of the previous meeting (9 December 2015)
Resolved:
That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. |
| 4 | Matters arising
There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. |
| 5 | Housing Revenue Account business plan (including 2016/17 budget rents and service charges)
Cllr Peter Bilson presented an updated Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan for recommendation to Full Council for approval. The report also provided, as an integral part of that business plan, a proposed HRA budget for 2016/17, including proposed rents and service charges to take effect from 4 April 2016, and a proposed |

HRA capital programme for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 also for recommendation to full Council.

In presenting the report Cllr Bilson pointed to a missing figure on Appendix A4. The figure '200' (£200,000) for 'Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund' should be included in the 'total column' and the grand total for Appendix A4 should be corrected to '225,434' (£225,434,000).

Resolved:

1. That Full Council be recommended to:
 - a. Implement the 1% reduction in social housing rents in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Bill and to give 28 days' notice to all secure and introductory tenants of the rent reduction from 4 April 2016.
 - b. Adopt the business plan set out at appendix A to the report as the approved Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan including:
 - i. The revenue budget for 2016/17 at Appendix A3
 - ii. The capital programme for 2015/16 to 2019/20 at Appendix A4 (as now amended).
 - c. Agree the increases to garage rents and service charges set out in appendices B1-B3 and formally notify tenants.
2. That it be noted that all Council dwelling rents would reduce by 1% in line with the proposals contained in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill.
3. That the housing rents and service charges consultation responses as outlined at Appendix C to the report be noted.
4. That proposals to meet the requirements of the Heat Network regulations 2014 for the district heating schemes at Heath Town and New Park Village be noted.
5. That the potential impact of the current Housing and Planning Bill on the HRA business Plan be noted.

6 **2016/17 budget and medium term financial strategy 2016/17 - 2018/19 - provisional local government finance settlement update**

Cllr Andrew Johnson presented a report on the main headlines from the 2016/17 provisional local government finance settlement, which the Government announced on 17 December 2015; and on an analysis of the impact of the announcement on the assumptions included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Resolved:

1. That the Director of Finance notifies the Secretary of State that the Council intends to take up the 2% option to increase council tax to support Social Care.
2. That the outcome of the 2016/17 provisional local government finance settlement be noted.

3. That it be noted that the report to Cabinet on 24 February 2016 would reflect the outcome of the budget consultation, which is due to be complete on 18 January 2016. This report would also include the outcome of the scrutiny process and the detailed budget work for 2016/17 including a review of all savings and the risks associated with their delivery.

7 **Council taxbase and business rates (NDR) net rate yield 2016/17**

Cllr Andrew Johnson asked Cabinet to set the estimates for the Wolverhampton Collection Fund for 2016/17, which the Council managed on behalf of local precepting bodies and central government.

Resolved:

1. That the Collection Fund Council Tax Base for 2016/17 be set at 60,405.94 Band D equivalents.
2. That the Collection Fund Business Rates, also referred to as Non-Domestic Rates (NDR), Net Rate Yield for 2016/17 be set at £78.6 million.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve amendments to:
 - a. the final Business Rates net rate yield as required as a result of changes to the NNDR1 form (National Non-Domestic Rates return) by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) or data revisions and changes in projections;
 - b. the Council Tax Base as a result of any data revisions and changes in projections.

8 **Collection Fund estimated outturn 2015/16**

Cllr Andrew Johnson presented the report on the estimated outturn for Council Tax and Business Rates, also referred to as Non-Domestic Rates (NDR), transactions on the Collection Fund in 2015/16.

Resolved:

1. That the payments to the precepting authorities of their share of the Council Tax surplus in equal instalments be approved.

The estimated outturn in 2015/16 is a cumulative surplus of £2.6 million. Based on their proportion of the 2015/16 council tax bill, as approved by Council in March 2015 the amounts are as follows:

- City of Wolverhampton Council £2.3 million
 - West Midlands Police £179,000
 - West Midlands Fire Service £92,000
2. That the payments to central government and the precepting authority of their share of the Business Rates, also referred to as Non-Domestic Rates (NDR), deficit in equal instalments be approved.

The estimated outturn in 2015/16 is a cumulative deficit of £8.3 million. As prescribed by legislation the amounts are as follows:

- City of Wolverhampton Council £4.1 million
- Central Government £4.1 million
- West Midlands Fire Service £83,000

3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to confirm any final changes to the forecast outturn reflecting any further information received ahead of the statutory deadline of 31 January 2016.

9 **Local council tax reduction scheme**

Cllr Andrew Johnson asked Cabinet to approve that the Council maintain its existing local Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme for 2016/17 onwards. There was no longer any financial reason for the Council to make a revision to its local CTR scheme following the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the proposed changes to Tax Credits would not proceed in 2016/17.

Resolved:

That the Council maintain the existing local Council Tax Reduction scheme for 2016/17 onwards.

10 **Universal Credit delivery partnership**

Cllr John Reynolds introduced the report on an overview of the Universal Credit Delivery Partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver Universal Support – delivered locally in preparation for the rollout of Universal Credit.

Resolved:

1. That the Council; enter into the Universal Credit Delivery Partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver Universal Support – delivered locally.
2. That a budget of £59,000 funded through DWP grant to deliver universal support services be approved.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy to commission Universal Support – delivered locally.
4. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy for ongoing negotiations should demand for Universal Support – delivered locally exceed that anticipated by the DWP.

11 **Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy**

Cllr Roger Lawrence congratulated Cllr Sandra Samuels on being awarded the OBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. In response Cllr Samuels thanked him for his kind remarks and indicated that the award had been achieved with the support of her Cabinet colleagues.

Cllr Sandra Samuels asked Cabinet to endorse the city's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) 2016-19. The refreshed strategy built upon significant progress achieved from the 2012-15 strategy through close city-wide partnership working and developed work across three strands (processes, policy developments and partnership working).

Cllr Val Gibson welcomed the report and strategy which focused on developing a more systematic approach to identifying victims of violence at a much earlier point through work with schools and specialist support organisations; ensuring services are in place to respond to lower risk cases, avoiding escalation of risk; it would also raise awareness across frontline practitioners and targeted work with communities to challenge a culture of violence against women and girls.

Resolved:

1. That the city's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-19 be endorsed.
2. That it be noted that the strategy document would also be subject to formal approval by the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board.

12 **Playing pitch strategy and assessment report**

Cllr Sandra Samuels asked Cabinet to approve a playing pitch strategy (PPS) for the city. The strategy provided a strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities in the city area between 2015 and 2020. The vision was to 'provide a network of good quality outdoor sports provision to increase participation and promote a healthier lifestyle for all'.

Cllr Roger Lawrence reported that the Building Schools for the Future Programme led to investment in schools and investment in playing facilities for schools to use. However, where these schools have subsequently become academies, the Council's opportunities to ensure that the playing pitches are available for community use had diminished. The Council would therefore need to encourage academies to allow community use of these facilities.

Resolved:

1. That the Playing Pitch Strategy be approved.
2. That the Playing Pitch Assessment report be received and noted.

13 **Active travel strategy**

Cllr Peter Bilson presented the report on the development of an Active Travel Strategy for Wolverhampton, and asked Cabinet to adoption the strategy.

In addition to providing direction for decisions on active travel issues, the strategy would support the case for future bids to funding opportunities. Resources for this project had been secured from the Public Health Transformation Fund and supplemented by contribution from the Local Sustainable Travel Fund.

Resolved:

1. That the adoption and implementation of the Active Travel Strategy be approved.
2. That it be noted that implementation of the Active Travel Strategy had wide-ranging implications for future deployment of resources and decision-making.

Cabinet Meeting

3 February 2016

Report title	Budget 2016/17 – Outcome of Consultation	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Keith Ireland, Managing Director	
Originating service	Finance	
Accountable employee(s)	Mark Taylor	Director of Finance
	Tel	01902 554410
	Email	Mark.Taylor@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by		

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

Cabinet is recommended to consider the responses to the 2016/17 Budget Consultation as detailed in this report and take these responses into account for the 2016/17 Final Budget to be presented to Cabinet on 24 February 2016.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the consultation process undertaken to support the 2016/17 budget setting decisions, allowing for Councillors' consideration of the responses to the consultation.
- 1.2 The completed set of responses to the consultation will be taken into account in the final budget that Cabinet recommends to Council to approve on 2 March 2016.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At the time the 2015/16 budget was set (March 2015) it was projected that the Council would be faced with finding further estimated savings totalling £46.3 million by 2018/19. The budget challenge over the period 2014/15 to 2018/19 was £134 million. Savings totalling £87.7 million had been identified to date. The projected budget deficit for 2016/17 stood at £14.8 million. A £20 million savings target was set for 2016/17.
- 2.2 An additional £2.0 million savings target for Adult Services was incorporated into 2016/17 (July 2015) taking the target to £22 million. Government's Summer Budget 2015 announcement indicated there would be some additional cost pressures and likely further cuts to grant. As a result, additional pressures totalling £2.1 million were projected for 2016/17 including a cut of 15% in Revenue Support Grant for 2016/17, based on 2015/16 grant income (SIGOMA projections). If all assumptions were to be realised the budget challenge for 2016/17 was estimated to be in the region of £24.1 million.
- 2.3 On 21 October 2015, Cabinet approved that 45 Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals totalling to £14.1 million proceed to the formal budget consultation and scrutiny stages of the budget process, whilst 21 Financial Transactions and Base Budget Revisions totalling £7.1 million in 2016/17 be incorporated into the 2016/17 draft budget and did not form part of the public consultation.
- 2.4 Details of the Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals totalling £14.1 million in 2016/17 were made available on the Council's website and are the subject of this report.
- 2.5 The Council's budget consultation took place from 27 October 2015 to 18 January 2016 in order to inform the budget setting process for 2016/17. All of the consultation and analysis was conducted in-house and this was a major factor in keeping the cost of delivery to a minimum.
- 2.6 The consultation was branded as 'Building our Future: Despite the Cuts'. Details of the Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals were posted on the Council's website from 22 October 2015. For the purpose of the online budget consultation survey, the Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals were grouped, where appropriate, into themes to streamline the feedback process.

- 2.7 It is important to note that two of the 45 proposals (Restructuring of the Library Service and Children’s Services Redesign) are subject to separate reports to Cabinet and are subject to separate consultation arrangements. The 43 remaining Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals are the main focus of this report.
- 2.6 During the consultation period, stakeholder engagement meetings were held with Trade Unions, the local community, the Business Community and the Voluntary and Community Sector. The public and the Council’s employee’s views were also obtained through social media and by an on-line survey. A copy of the survey can be found by following this [link](#).
- 2.7 When identifying savings proposals key focus continues to be placed upon the Council’s strategic approach to addressing the projected budget deficit, which is to:
- Manage demand for core services by using early intervention to help families in trouble live unsupported and independent lives
 - Improve educational attainment and skills
 - Encourage enterprise and business and private sector employment and to stimulate economic activity through capital investment.
- 2.8 Taking this strategic approach into account, the Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals that have been identified at this stage are summarised by service area in the table below:

Table 1 – Savings, Redesign and Income Generation Proposal Summary

Service Area	No.	2016/17 £000
Adult Services	3	(1,355)
Children and Young People	2	(4,500)
City Assets	3	(192)
City Economy	6	(330)
City Environment	21	(1,678)
Education	1	(4,200)
Resources	7	(1,690)
Governance	2	(165)
Total	45	(14,110)

The two proposals regarding the Restructuring of the Library Service and Children’s Services Redesign, which are included in the figures above, are scheduled to be considered by Cabinet separately and are subject to separate consultation arrangements.

3.0 Key Findings

3.1 Between 27 October 2015 and 18 January 2016, the Council undertook and made available a range of consultation mechanisms to gather views on the 43 proposed Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals. These included both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

The following is a summary of the participants in the stakeholder and community group meetings, plus details of other groups and interested parties that provided their views and opinions, including letters from members of the community.

3.2 Stakeholder engagement meetings

- 4 Community meetings;
- 1 Trade Union meeting;
- 1 Business Community meeting;
- 1 Voluntary and Community Sector meeting; and
- 1 Wolverhampton Over 50s Forum.

3.3 67 members of the public/representatives attended the stakeholder meetings. The breakdown is:

- 1 attendee at Low Hill Community Centre;
- 0 attendees at Bob Jones Centre, Blakenhall;
- 2 attendees at Bantock Tractor Shed;
- 9 attendees at Bilston Town Hall;
- 24 attendees at a Voluntary and Community Sector meeting;
- 8 attendees at Business Breakfast;
- 6 attendees at Trade Union meeting; and
- 17 attendees at Wolverhampton Over 50s Forum.

3.4 The Council used a range of methods including face to face, online survey and written communications to gather responses during the consultation. This was publicised via a range of different medias; the Council website, the Facebook page “Wolverhampton Today”, Twitter and the Express and Star Newspaper.

3.5 In total 1,030 individuals (591 last year, an increase of 73%) took part in the budget consultation survey and offered 32,460 responses to individual concepts.

3.6 A more detailed analysis of the consultation findings can be found in Appendix A.

3.7 The themes that respondents had the opportunity to comment on were:

- Redesigning services to deliver savings;

- Generating income to help balance the books;
- Reduce funding to help balance the books;
- Supporting ideas to maintain an existing service;
- Raising Council Tax;
- Public volunteering to maintain an existing service;
- Supporting income generation ideas;
- Supporting the Council's general approach to delivering the budget; and
- How else could the Council generate income.

3.8 Within each theme, respondents were asked to provide responses to a number of concepts posed. These are shown in full in the charts at Appendix A. Responses to the themes from the budget consultation are ranked in order of support in Table 2 below:

Table 2 – Responses to Themes

Theme	Appendix A Reference	Total Overall Responses In favour		Total Overall Responses Not in favour		Total Overall Responses Undecided		Total Responses	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Supporting income generation ideas	Chart 6	1,878	72%	307	12%	408	16%	2,593	100%
Supporting ideas to maintain an existing service	Chart 4	2,565	69%	575	16%	567	15%	3,707	100%
Generating income to help balance the books	Chart 2	3,951	67%	875	15%	1,033	18%	5,859	100%
Redesigning services to deliver savings	Chart 1	5,455	54%	3,044	30%	1,626	16%	10,125	100%
Reduce funding to help balance the books	Chart 3	2,816	49%	1,947	34%	962	17%	5,725	100%
Supporting the Council's general approach to delivering the budget	Chart 10	1,257	48%	594	23%	745	29%	2,596	100%
Raising Council Tax	Chart 5	471	51%	459	49%	-	-	930	100%
Public volunteering to maintain an existing service	Chart 7	262	28%	663	72%	-	-	925	100%
Total		18,655	-	8,464	-	5,341	-	32,460	-

- 3.9 A high number of respondents were supportive of the income generation ideas, the proposals to maintain existing services and the importance of balancing the books.
- 3.10 One in three respondents were not in favour of the theme to reduce funding proposals to help balance the books (reduction in service provision).
- 3.11 51% (471 out of 930) of respondents were prepared to pay more than a 1.99% increase in Council Tax to reduce the level of cuts to services. Of the 471 who responded in favour:
- 65.9% would be willing to pay an extra 1% taking the increase to 2.99%
 - 26.6% would be willing to pay an extra 2% taking the increase to 3.99%
 - 7.5% would be willing to pay an extra 3+% taking the increase to 4.99+%.

- 3.12 71% (663 of 925 respondents) were not prepared to volunteer to maintain an existing service.
- 3.13 Greater detail of the responses received to individual questions within the themes is shown at Appendix A.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 This report summarises the headline findings from a range of consultation exercises run by the City of Wolverhampton Council on its budget proposals for 2016/17. It includes an analysis of qualitative presentations and meetings with key stakeholder and community groups designed to gather views and opinions on the 43 Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals. It also includes the outline findings from the survey. Stakeholder engagement meetings were held with Trade Unions, various local public communities, the Business Community and the Voluntary and Community Sector.
- 4.2 The final budget will take into account the completed set of responses to the consultation to be reported to Cabinet on 24 February 2016 before recommending to Council on 2 March 2016 to approve.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 The final outcome of budget consultation will be taken into account in the Cabinet's final budget recommendations to Council on 2 March 2016.
- 5.2 Should any changes be made to the 2016/17 Draft Budget as a result of the findings of the budget consultation exercise, which results in an increased net budget requirement, new proposals of an equivalent value will have to be urgently identified to address the projected budget deficit.

[RP/25012016/V]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 The legal duty for a council's finances falls within S151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Arrangements for the proper administration of their affairs is secured by the S151 Officer (the Director of Finance).
- 6.2 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 placed a general duty on every local authority in England to take such steps as it considers appropriate to secure that representatives of local persons (or of local persons of a particular description) are involved in the exercise of any of its functions, among other things by being consulted about the exercise of the function. The 2010 Equality Act whilst not imposing a specific duty to consult, lays a requirement to have due regard to the equality impact when exercising its function. Failure to meet the requirements in the

Public Sector Equality Duty may result in the Council being exposed to costly, time-consuming and reputation-damaging legal challenges.

- 6.3 A detailed report on consultation feedback from all phases of consultation is, therefore, presented to Cabinet.

[RB/25012016/W]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a statutory duty to pay due regard to the impact of how it carries out its business on different groups of people. This is designed to help the Council identify the particular needs of different groups and reduce the likelihood of discrimination. The nine equality strands covered in the legislation are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (this strand only applies to employment and not to service delivery)
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

- 7.2 In relation to determining the overall revenue budget for the Council there is always a difficult balance to be struck in deciding the levels at which to invest, reduce expenditure and raise income set against the often competing needs of different groups within the Wolverhampton community.

- 7.3 In order to address these complex issues, the Council operates an open and consultative approach to budget and Council Tax determination. Year-on-year and medium term spending forecasts are provided to every household and business ratepayer within the City as part of the documentation which accompanies the Council Tax demand.

- 7.4 Budget consultation meetings have been held with the business community, the voluntary sector, communities of interest and trade unions. The Council's budget consultation approach has also included an online survey in order to gain feedback on budget and service priorities.

- 7.5 In determining the budget for 2016/17, considerable focus has been placed on the development of savings proposals. All of these proposals will be subject to an equality analysis screening and where necessary a full equality analysis will be conducted.

- 7.6 The Council is facing a particularly challenging short and medium term financial environment in which savings must be generated and a tight control on spending maintained. This means that greater focus than ever is necessary to ensure that core equalities commitments is met.
- 7.7 In summary, the Council's annual budget and medium term financial strategy supports a range of services designed to meet key equalities objectives. A cumulative equalities analysis will be conducted on the overall budget proposals, including the overall impact of job losses. This is will be made available on the Council's website.
- 7.8 Councillors should also be aware that under the Equality Act 2010, they must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) when making budget decisions. What this means in practice is that Councillors must consciously think about the three aims of the PSED as part of the decision making process. The three aims are to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
 - Advance equality of opportunity by removing or minimising disadvantages, meet differing needs and encouraging participation,
 - Foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 7.9 The Act does not require the Council to treat everyone in the same way; sometimes different treatment is required, for example, be making reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled people.
- 7.10 Consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies including:
- How they act as employers,
 - How they develop, evaluate and review policy,
 - How they design, deliver and evaluate services,
 - How they commission and procure from others.
- 7.11 The Brown Principles, established as a result of a legal case concerning Post Office closures in 2008, provide an important checklist that should be considered when making decisions:
- Decision makers must be made aware of their duty to have due regard to the identified goals;
 - Due regard must be fulfilled before and at the time that a particular decision is being considered, not afterwards;
 - The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind. It is not a question of ticking boxes;

- The duty cannot be delegated; it must be fulfilled by the organisation in question rather than through the use of an external body;
- The duty is a continuing one; and
- It is good practice to keep an adequate record showing that it has considered the identified needs.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 Environmental implications will be addressed on a case by case basis as part of individual proposals.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 Any reductions in employee numbers will be achieved in line with the Council's HR voluntary redundancies in the first instance, and through access to redeployment. Given the volume and range of the proposals, there will be reductions in services and employee numbers which will require fair and due process to be followed regarding consultation, selection and implementation of any compulsory redundancies.

9.2 The Council will ensure that appropriate support is made available to employees who are at risk of and selected for redundancy, and will work with partner and external agencies to provide support. Proposals to move service delivery from direct Council management to private, community or third sector providers may have implications under the TUPE regulations.

9.3 There is on-going consultation with the trade unions on the impact of the Council's budgetary position and the proposals being made to meet the challenges posed by it.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 Corporate landlord implications will be addressed on a case by case basis as part of individual proposals.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 Draft Budget 2016/17, reported to Cabinet on 21 October 2015.

Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 – 2018/19, reported to Cabinet on 22 July 2015.

Budget 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 to 2018/19, reported to Cabinet on 25 February 2015

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 2012), 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

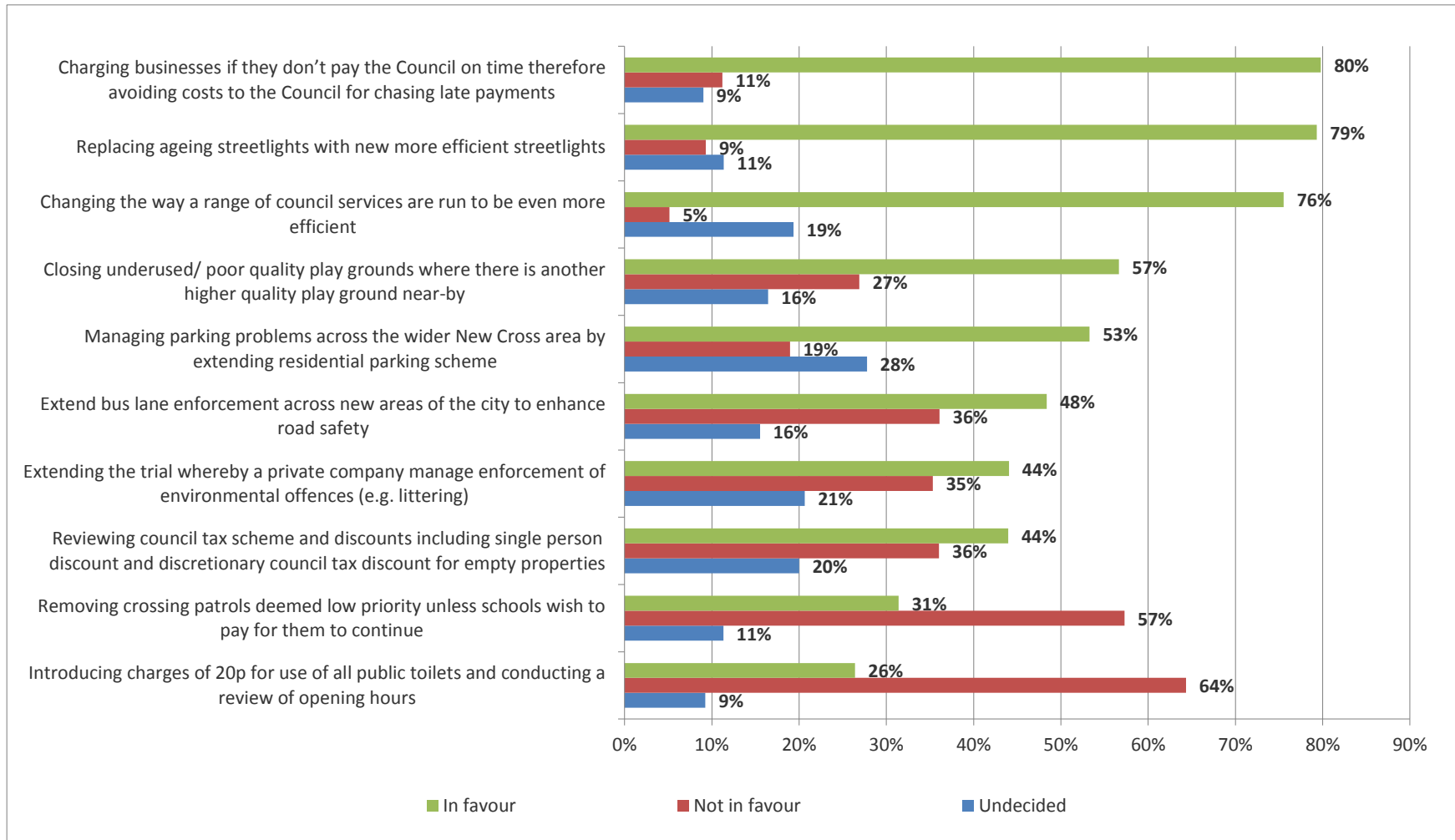
- 2.1 The main themes that respondents had the opportunity to comment on were:
- Redesigning services to deliver savings;
 - Generating income to help balance the books;
 - Reduce funding to help balance the books;

- Supporting ideas to maintain an existing service;
- Raising Council Tax;
- Public volunteering to maintain an existing service;
- Supporting income generation ideas;
- Supporting the Council's general approach to delivering the budget; and
- How else could the Council generate income.

2.2 **Redesigning services to deliver savings**

To help balance the books it is proposed to redesign certain services. Respondents were asked to choose if they were in favour, not in favour or undecided in each of the 10 savings concepts. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 1 - To help balance the books it is proposed to redesign services to deliver savings by:



The top **three** service redesign ideas respondents were **in favour** of were:

- Charging businesses if they don't pay the Council on time therefore avoiding costs to the Council for chasing late payments (80%)
- Replacing ageing streetlights with new more efficient streetlights (79%)
- Changing the way a range of council services are run to be even more efficient (76%)

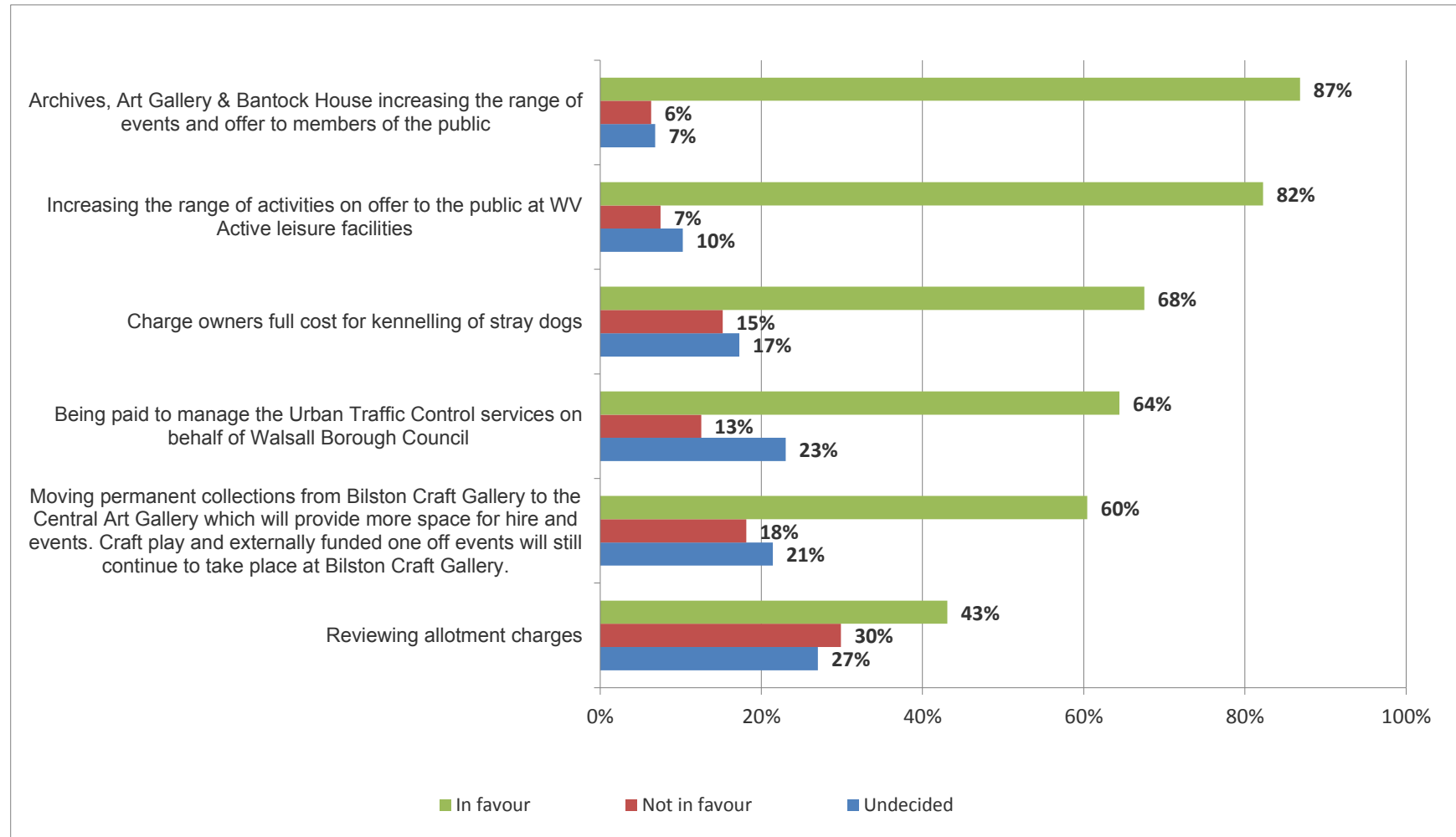
The **two** service redesign ideas respondents were **not in favour** of were:

- Introducing charges of 20p for use of all public toilets and conducting a review of opening hours (64%)
- Removing crossing patrols deemed low priority unless schools wish to pay for them to continue (57%)

2.3 **Generating income to help balance the books**

To help balance the books it is proposed to generate additional income. Respondents were asked to choose if they were in favour, not in favour or undecided in each of the six savings concepts. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 2 - To help balance the books it is proposed to generate income by:



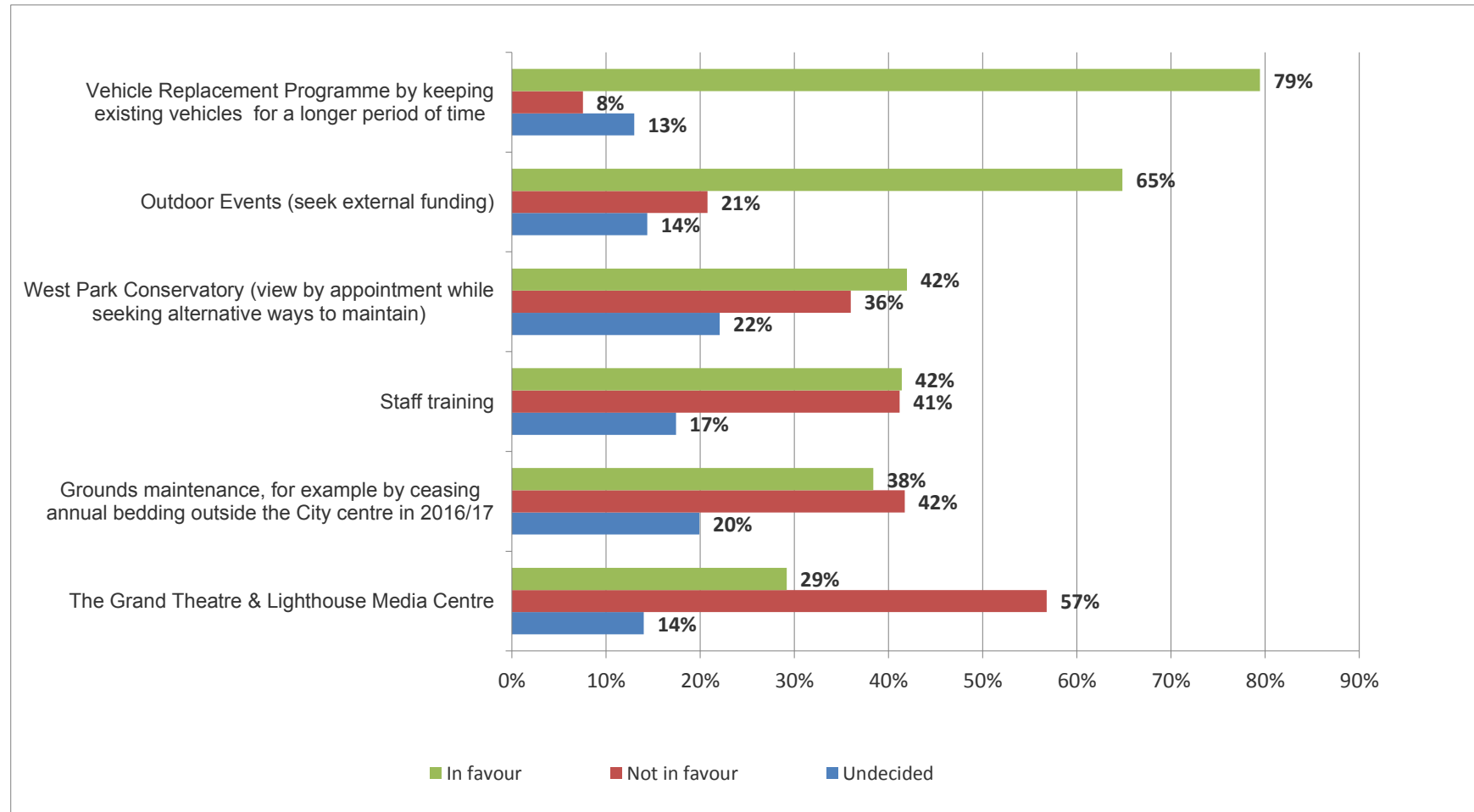
The top **three** income generation ideas respondents were **in favour** of were:

- Archives, Art Gallery & Bantock House increasing the range of events and offer to members of the public (87%)
- Increasing the range of activities on offer to the public at WV Active leisure facilities (82%)
- Charge owners full cost for kennelling of stray dogs (68%)

2.4 **Reduce funding to help balance the books**

To help balance the books it is proposed to reduce the funding available for certain areas. Respondents were asked to choose if they were in favour, not in favour or undecided in each of the six savings concepts. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 3 - To help balance the books it is proposed to reduce funding for:



The top **three** areas where it was proposed to reduce funding respondents were **in favour** of were:

- Vehicle Replacement Programme by keeping existing vehicles for a longer period of time (79%)
- Outdoor Events (seek external funding) (65%)
- West Park Conservatory (view by appointment while seeking alternative ways to maintain) (42%)

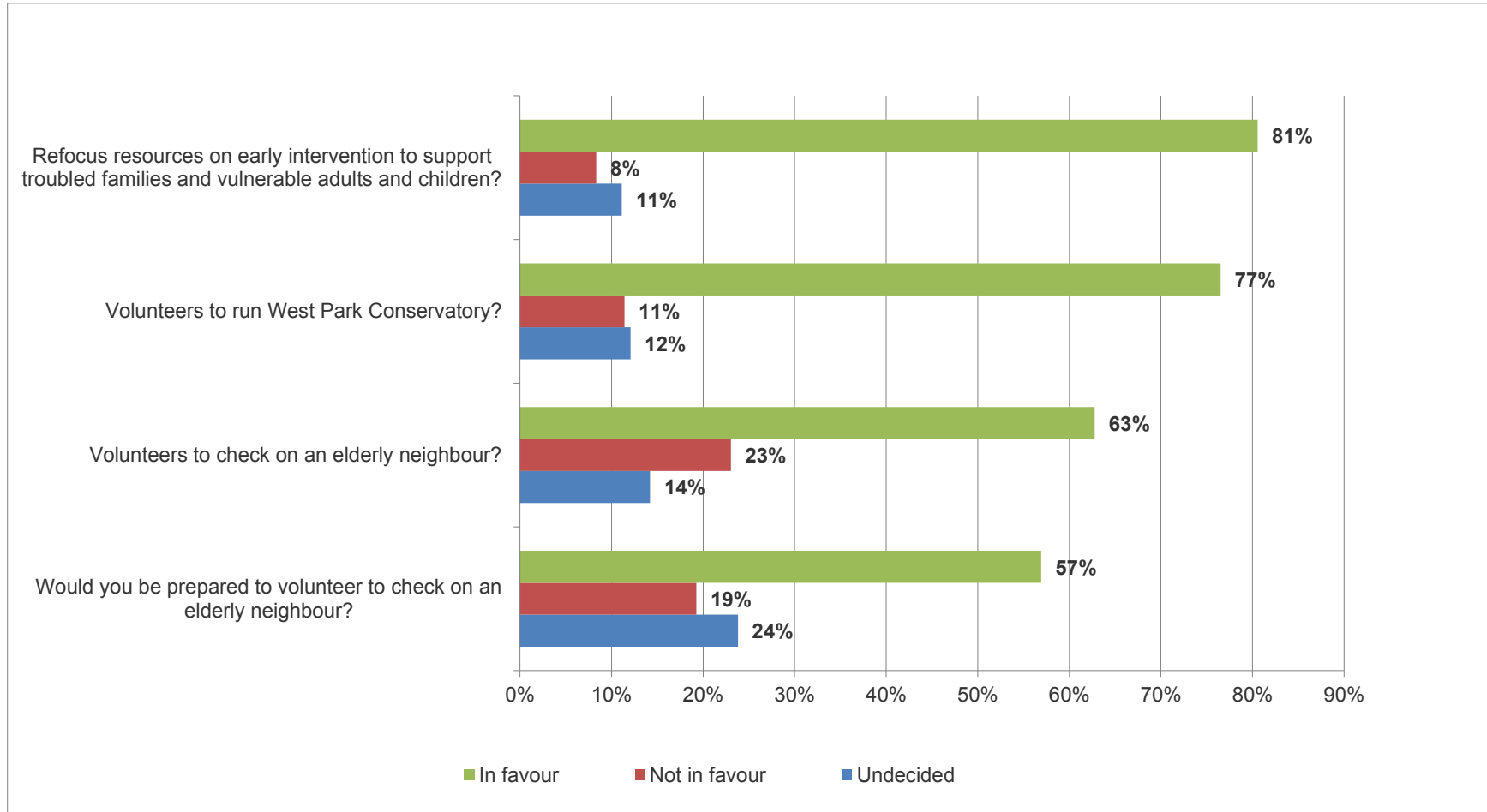
The **two** areas where it was proposed to reduce funding respondents were **not in favour** of were:

- The Grand Theatre & Lighthouse Media Centre (57%)
- Grounds maintenance, for example by ceasing annual bedding outside the City centre in 2016/17 (42%)

2.5 **Supporting ideas to maintain an existing service**

To help maintain existing services, respondents were asked to choose if they were in favour, not in favour or undecided in each of the four service areas. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 4 - Would you support the following ideas to maintain an existing service?



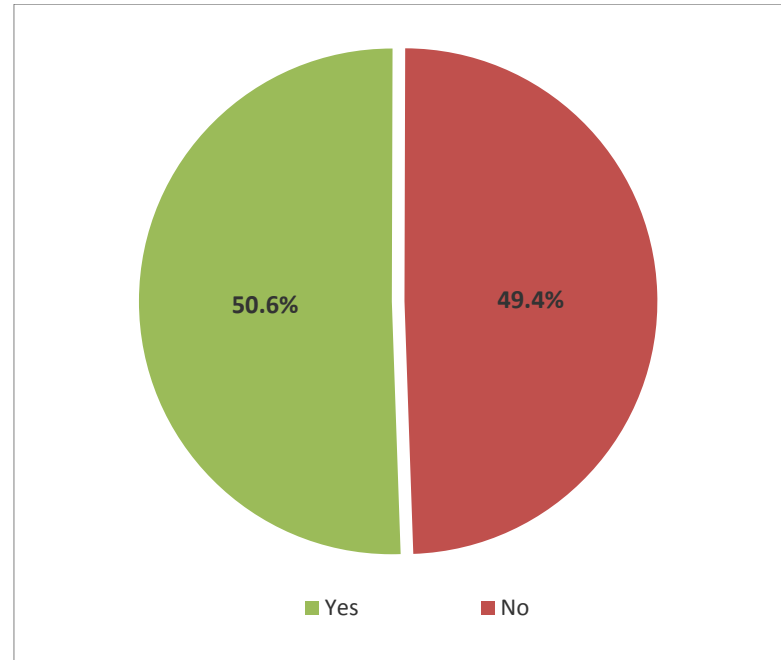
Overall, over two thirds of the respondents were **in favour** of **all four** concepts with 81% in favour of refocusing resources on early intervention to support troubled families and vulnerable adults and children.

2.6 **Raising Council Tax**

The Council is proposing a 1.99% rise in Council Tax for 2016/17; this would be an extra £21.20 per year for the average property value in Wolverhampton (Valuation Band B). Each **additional 1% increase** would be £10.65 per year based on the average property value (Band B). It should be noted that this question in the budget consultation predates the Chancellor's announcement of the 2% Social Care precept.

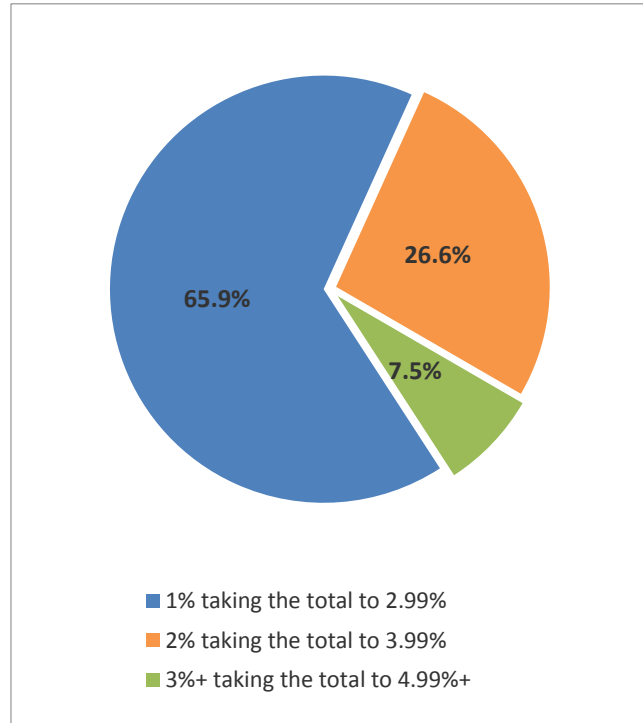
Respondents were asked if they would be prepared to pay more (than the currently proposed Council Tax increase of 1.99%) to reduce the level of cuts to services. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 5 – Would you be prepared to pay more Council Tax to reduce the level of cuts to services?



471 of 930 respondents (50.6%) stated that they would be willing to pay more than the proposed 1.99% increase in Council Tax if that rise reduced the level of cuts to services. To quantify the proposed increase, the impact of each 1% increase would be the equivalent of an additional £10.65 per year based on the average property value (Valuation Band B) in Wolverhampton. Of those 471, the following chart shows how much more the respondents would be willing to pay:

Chart 6 – If yes, how much more would you be willing to pay?



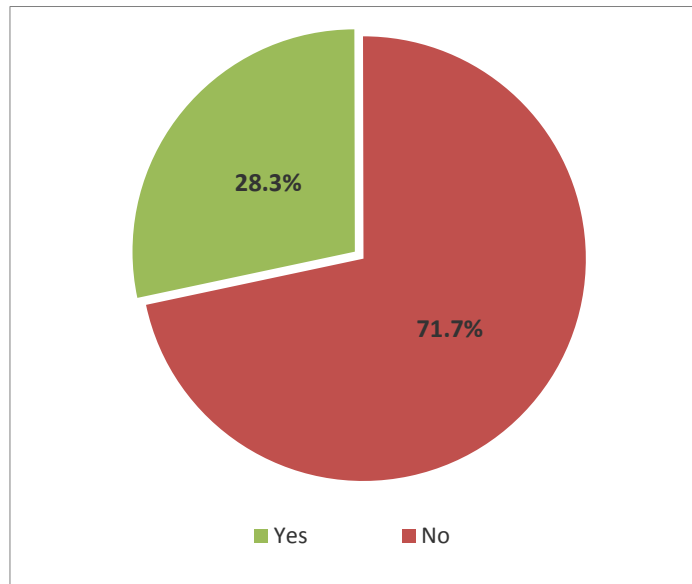
Of the 471 respondents:

- 65.9% would be willing to pay an extra 1% taking the increase to 2.99%
- 26.6% would be willing to pay an extra 2% taking the increase to 3.99%
- 7.5% would be willing to pay an extra 3%+ taking the increase to 4.99%+.

2.7 Public volunteering to maintain an existing service

Respondents were asked whether they would be willing to volunteer to maintain an existing service. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 7 – Would you be prepared to volunteer to maintain an existing service?



663 of 925 respondents (72%) stated that they would **not** be willing to donate their time to help maintain an existing service, which is comparable to last year's budget survey (75%). 25-34 year olds were most likely to say they would be willing to volunteer (31%).

Appendix A

A number of respondents asked for more information about volunteering and/or made other related comments, notably:

Comments	Respondents
It would depend on what it was/ number of hours etc.	7
Already volunteering	6
Unsure	3

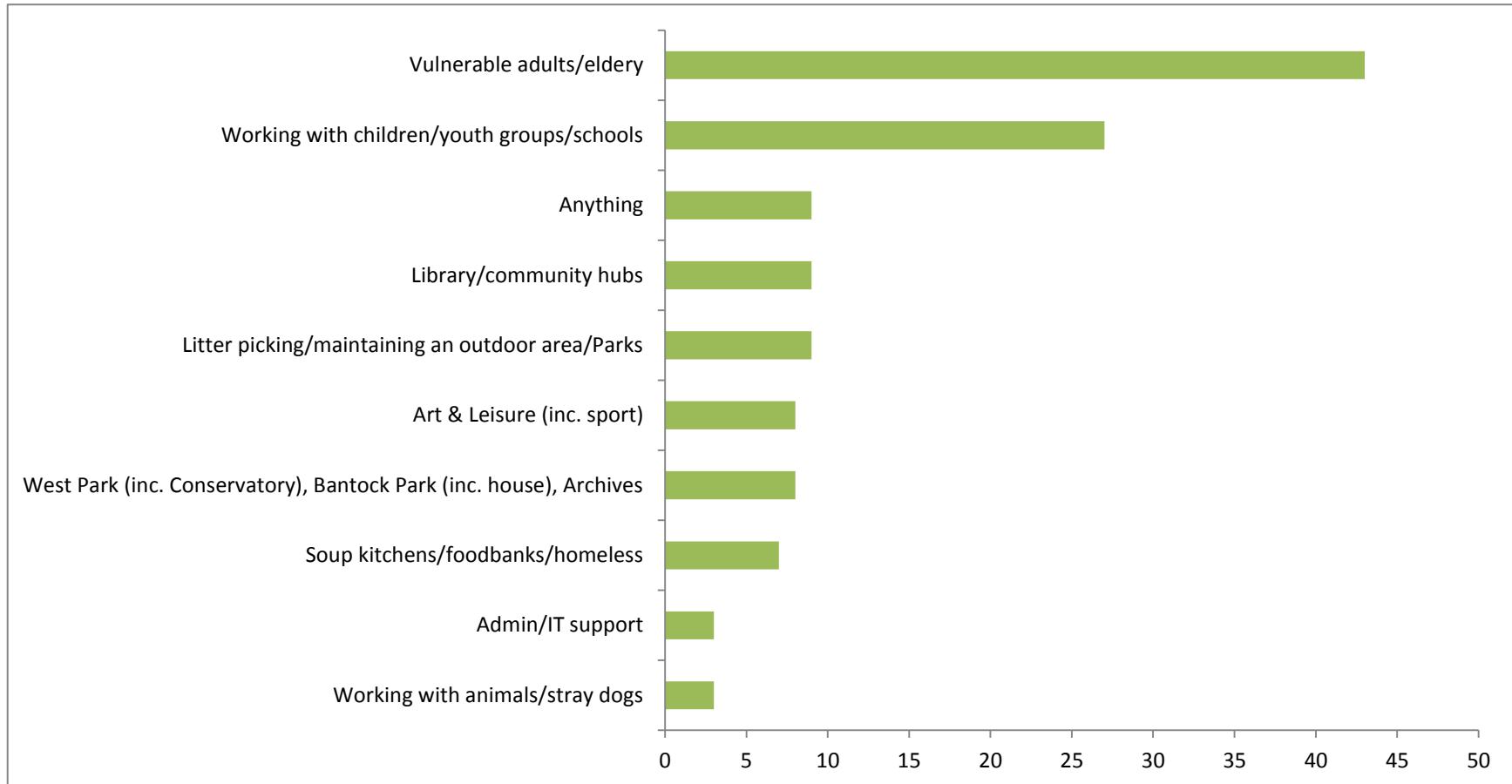
Last year's budget consultation findings included eight responses disagreeing with Council services being run by volunteers. There were no similar responses this year and of the six who stated that they were already volunteering a number were doing so at Bantock House, Ashmore Park Hub and Bilston Community Centre.

Although the numbers are too small to be conclusive this may suggest an acknowledgement of an increasing role for volunteers in order to keep valued local services running. For example one respondent commented:

"I already do [volunteer] since cuts to mental health services [have been] made"

All other comments received have been grouped thematically and are presented in the following chart:

Chart 8 – Are there any particular areas in which you would be willing to volunteer?



In addition, 20 respondents said they would be willing to volunteer either within their local community, an area easy to travel to or a specific geographic area. Accessibility and the ability to fit volunteering around other commitments were expressed by a number of people as being key factors as to whether they would be willing to volunteer.

“Check on an elderly neighbour (outside of full time working hours 7.30am-6pm)”

“Children's activities around my working hours and childcare arrangements”

In contrast to last year when nine people said they would be willing to volunteer with the elderly and/or vulnerable adults, 43 people indicated that they would be willing to do so this year, with 20 specifically stating that they would check on an elderly neighbour or an elderly person in their area.

This was no doubt prompted by the suggestion in question 4 (Would you support the following ideas to maintain an existing service?) of the survey, however, it may also suggest that when provided with specific examples of volunteering opportunities people make a more informed choice about what they are able to commit to or would like to do.

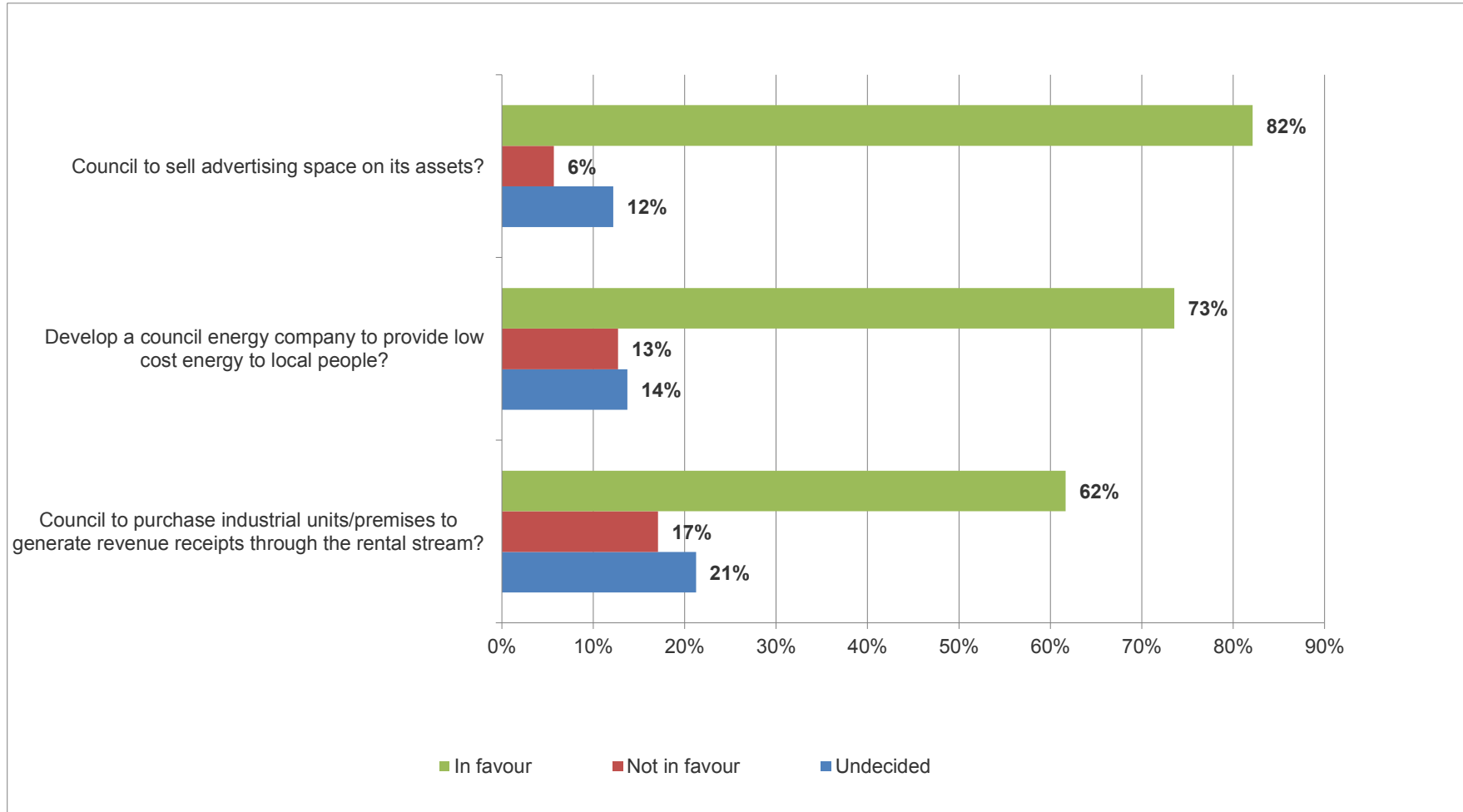
Question 4 of the survey also asked respondents if they thought volunteers should run West Park conservatory of which 77% were in favour, despite this only two people specifically said they would like to volunteer at West Park conservatory.

Working with ‘young people/ children/ schools’ had a much higher level of response than last year, whereas fewer people stated that they would be willing to volunteer at a library/community hub or litter pick/ keep an area clean than last year.

2.8 Supporting income generation ideas

Respondents were asked whether they would support three specific income generation ideas. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 9 - Would you support the following income generation ideas?

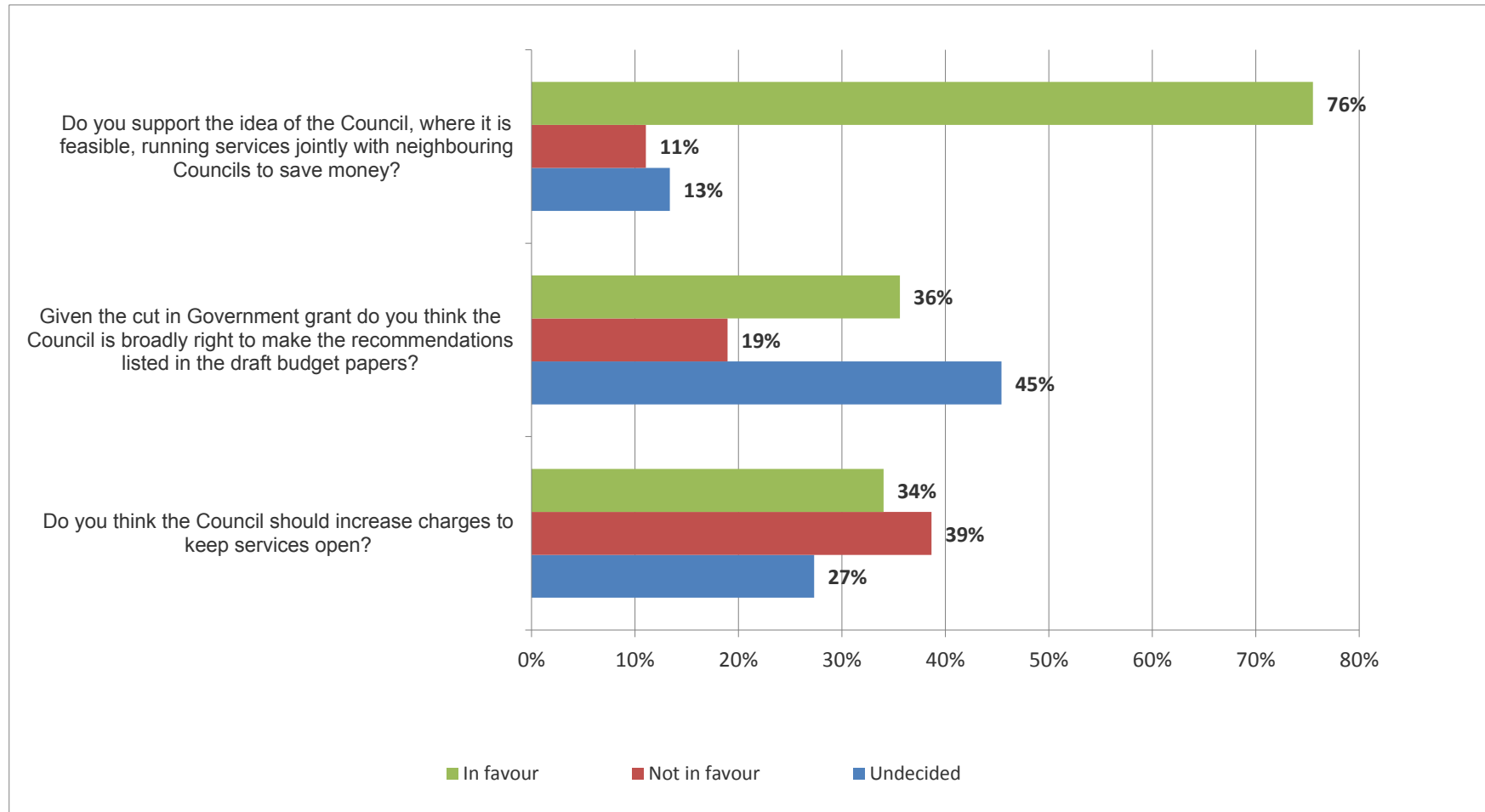


Overall, the income generation ideas were supported with over 70% of respondents indicating that they would support the specific income generation ideas.

2.9 Supporting the Council's general approach to delivering the budget

Respondents were asked whether they supported the Council's general approach to delivering the budget across three specific areas. Their responses are recorded in the following chart:

Chart 10 - Do you support the Council's general approach to delivering the budget?



Over 76% of respondents were **supportive** of the idea the Council, where feasible, to run services jointly with neighbouring Councils to save money.

2.10 How else could the Council generate income?

321 people responded to the invitation to suggest how the Council could generate income. Comments such as “*undecided*” and “*more information required*” could not be considered as a full response, and have therefore been removed from consideration, as were those that fall outside of the Council’s remit, e.g. “*cut MPs wages*” and “*cut benefits*”.

A number of comments related to efficiency savings rather than income generation, such as “*stopping waste*”, “*reducing bureaucracy or cutting senior manger’s salaries/ councillor’s allowances*”. These have been considered as part of the overall budget consultation and not specific to this question.

There were also a number of suggestions that the council already implements, for example, “*A small charge for removing items from domestic properties, Fridges, beds etc*”. and “*make employees pay for car parking*”.

All other comments have been grouped thematically.

Car parking

Respondents fell into two groups - those advocating reduced or free car parking to attract people into the city centre (9), and those advocating an increase or extension of car parking charges in the city centre, around West Park and at cultural venues such as Bantock House (7).

There was also the suggestion that people should pay to park bicycles and that there should be an increase in parking available in the city centre.

City centre

A minority of respondents felt money was wasted when spent on the city centre (4); the majority, however, advocated further investment including work to promote the city (19). This was seen as a way to enhance prosperity generally, not just generate income for the council.

“Provide modern city centre based facilities for national conferences, events and exhibitions. ..”

“Develop places of interest to bring in tourism ...”

“Promote and upgrade city centre hotels to offer theatre packages to get people to stay over and spend in the centre, create an eating/drinking/entertainment quarter next to canal near the lock keepers cottage, create a town centre park round the Cleveland Street area where we've emptied buildings - get families into the centre to play and spend!”

A number of respondents also suggested cutting business rates or lowering rents for shops in the city centre and undertaking specific work to tackle empty shops (12). There was one suggestion that the market should be moved closer to the city centre.

Events

22 respondents suggested income could be generated by holding more events, particularly for families. Suggestions included:

Make better use of the market space it could be used on a Sunday for a car boot all the money could then go to the Council.

“A sponsored activity such as a track and field event at West Park where locals can test their athletic skills”

“Competitions with people who grow in allotments”

“Events at places like the rec. on Bushbury lane, it's such a big space and could be used to its full potential!”

It was also suggested that charges could be introduced at some cultural venues, Art Gallery, Bantock House etc. (3) or funding should be stopped altogether for certain events (2).

11 respondents suggested creating a revenue stream by hiring out council facilities for venues:

“Hosting private functions at some of our venues - Birthday parties, receptions, civil marriage ceremonies, naming ceremonies at Bantock, Art gallery, Archives, West Park, Grand theatre?”

Nine respondents suggested events and council services more generally should be promoted/ advertised more widely, for example on council assets, council uniforms and the council website. It was suggested this could also be extended to selling advertising. Four respondents also suggested getting private business to sponsor cultural venues, events or planting on traffic islands etc.

Improving the cultural offer and number of events offered was also regarded as a way to promote the city and increase footfall to the city centre.

Selling council expertise, selling council assets and outsourcing

11 respondents saw income opportunities for the council by selling expertise:

“Sell our expertise wherever possible e.g. legal services, training skills etc. This could be done by hosting workshops and training events for external companies.”

Three respondents specifically mentioned extending the handyman scheme or deriving income by the council endorsing local trusted work people:

“Extend the handyman service so that anyone can use it but have a different rate for different criteria. We have jobs that we would like doing by a trustworthy affordable professional but they are hard to find these days so if the Council could offer this to more people then it could also avoid people getting hoodwinked.”

Alternatively, outsourcing services (9) or sharing services with other councils (3) was suggested, as was more co-working with the NHS. Four respondents also thought more money could be saved by keeping or bringing services back in-house.

18 respondents thought the council should sell assets to raise income, mainly through building rationalisation but also ideas like house clearances and reclamation.

Five respondents suggested ideas for setting up companies:

“Set up its own private sector lettings agency to manage good quality private stock, raise landlord standards, and generate revenue.”

“Set up a training company similar to Yoo Recruit. Reduce outgoings paid to external companies and income generate by charging other LA's/business etc. for training. I would also purchase premises to conduct training in and also rent out the facility as an income stream.”

“Sell the furniture recovered via Voids. This would work well with Council House Removal service.”

It was also suggested that setting up a charity may give access to additional funding streams; setting up a social enterprise was also suggested and two respondents suggested more should be done to try and secure external grants.

Increasing or introducing fines

26 respondents felt that the council should be tougher at chasing debt, detecting and punishing fraud and issuing fines for poor parking, fly-tipping, dog-fouling, bus lane infringements, late payment of council tax etc.

Two respondents thought there should be no council tax reduction scheme and four thought council tenants should pay full market rent.

Charges were also suggested for taking out library books and one respondent suggested libraries should be closed, while two respondents suggested that the council should offer fewer services.

Waste, recycling and energy

Measures to promote recycling and/ or reduce bin collections were suggested (8), including fines for non-recycling of food waste and weighing bins. Turning off street-lights was also suggested (2) as was an increased use of solar panels (2).

Other comments

Four respondents thought the council should be more active in seeking volunteers to run council services and three respondents suggested more use of community payback.

Improving procurement was suggested by two respondents.

There were two suggestions that the council should organise specific fundraising events and one suggestion that the council should set up a local council weekly lottery with half of the profits going to winners and half to the council.

Other comments include:

“Use our soon to be empty old people homes e.g. Nelson Mandela/ Merry Hill House to offer low cost single rooms for those 18-25 who need housing but cannot afford standard rents. Once they have shown they can look after to room etc. they are renting and keep their rent account up to date they can join our main housing register.”

“Create mobile applications and games that generate income through advertisements or in-app purchases.”

“Reduce the levy paid to Centro.”

Appendix A

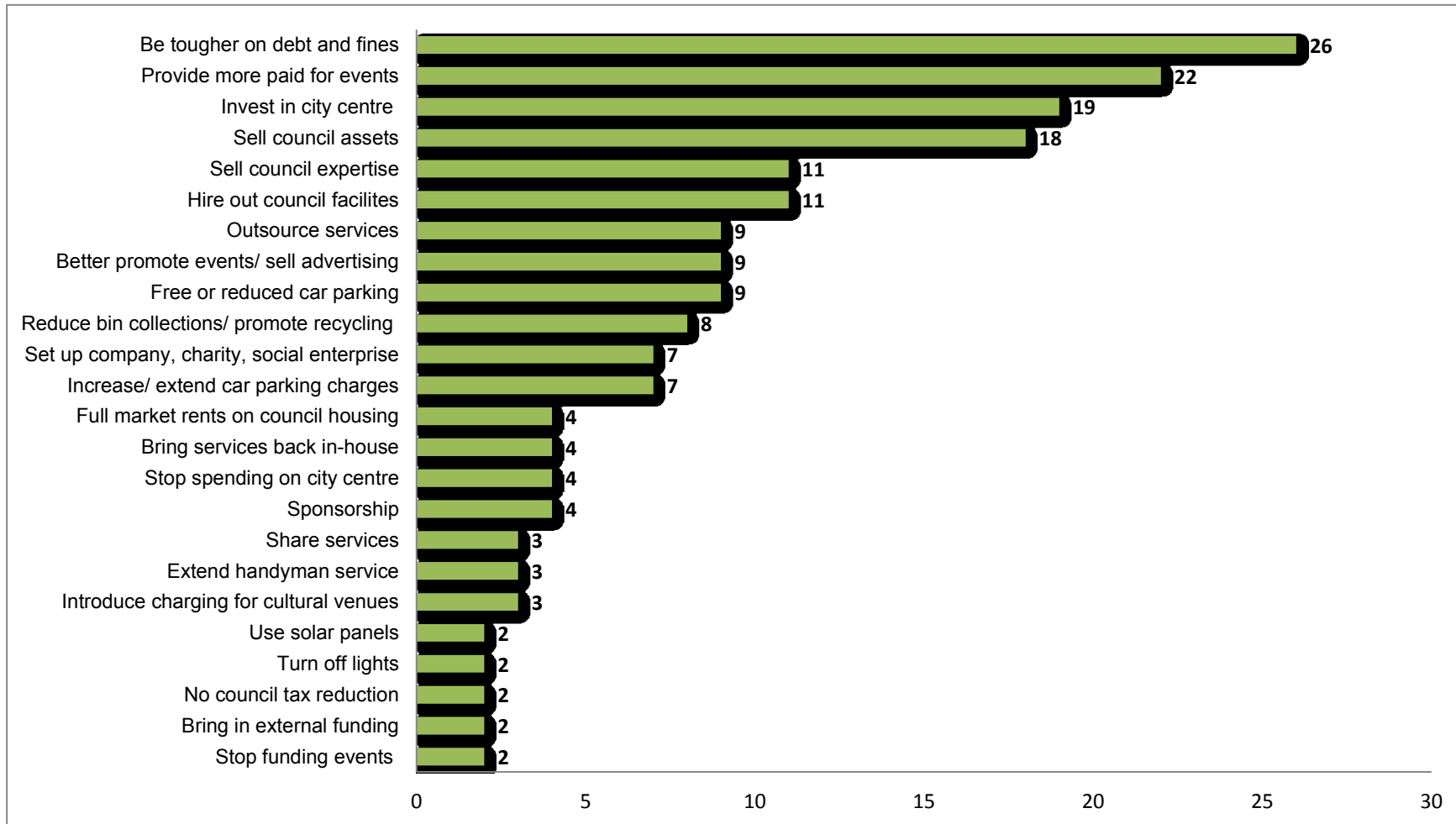
“Taking back garages and renting out. Lots lie empty. Households now have several car owners and limited spaces to park so renting out the garages would generate income stop fly tipping in the shut off ones (make them gated) and only rent to those who live with-in the immediate area.”

“Take a long term view with social care budgets.”

“Hire out transport e.g. minibuses.”

The chart below summarises the responses received regarding income generation:

Chart 11 – How else could the council generate income?



3.0 Feedback from Wolverhampton Over 50s Consultation

The Wolverhampton Over 50s Forum was invited to attend an event at the Civic Centre on 20 January 2016. At this event, City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2016/17 budget plans and discussed a number of themes arising as a result.

Amongst the themes discussed were:

- The Council's investment in the i10 building.
- Future funding settlements for the Council.
- The new West Midlands Combined Authority.
- The reason for and impact of cuts to Council funding.
- The ratio of Councillors to Wards
- Safety in the City.
- The use of grants to fund expenditure.
- City Centre development, private sector investment in the area and the Mander Centre.
- Preventative services for older people and support for Carers.
- Use of technology to support independent living, use of Telecare and Carelink.
- Far less resources for Adult Care and other services so have to spend even more effectively and efficiently.
- Effective citizen led procurement.

4.0 Feedback from Trade Union (Joint Consultative Panel) Consultation

City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2016/17 budget proposals to the Joint Consultative Panel on 13 January 2016 and discussed a number of themes.

Amongst the themes discussed were:

- The new West Midlands Combined Authority.
- The impact of Looked After Children on the Council's budget.
- The Council's investment in the i10 building and the transport interchange.
- Council Tax for 2016/17.
- Adult and Social Care expenditure.
- Education Services grant.
- Social housing provision and demand.

Councillor Johnson asked all members for any further feedback in reference to the budget. Queries can be put in writing to Councillor Johnson or Councillor Sweet.

5.0 Feedback from Business Consultation

Local business representatives/champions were invited to attend an event at the Civic Centre on 7 January 2016. At this event, City of Wolverhampton Council Councillors and Officers presented the Council's 2016/17 budget plans and discussed a number of themes arising as a result.

Amongst the themes discussed were:

- The impact of non-domestic rates on businesses.
- Joint Council working and the new West Midlands Combined Authority.
- City Council working with business to promote economic development.
- Releasing land for housing development.
- Helping businesses to apply for European funding and other loans.
- City Centre investment, maintenance and car parking.
- Council strategy for the retention and attraction of businesses to the area.

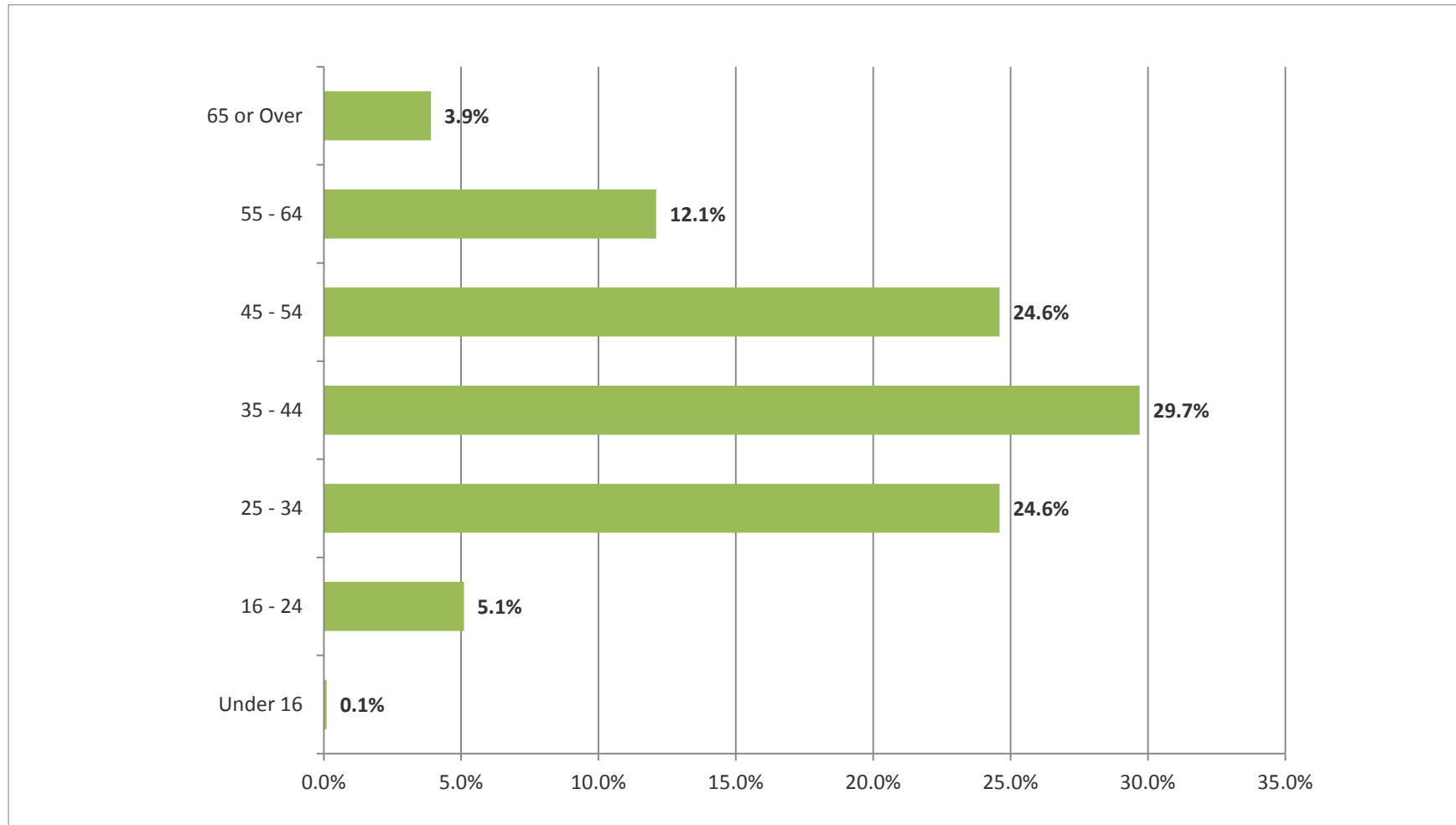
- Skills availability within the area.
- Developing the 'confidence' of the City.
- Ensuring that budget cuts do not impact on favourable perceptions of the City to potential investors (e.g. street scene)
- Business community are part of the solution and the budget consultation and resulting discussions are welcomed.

There was a general recognition that the Council has improved and is more proactive than ever, but also there is still much work to do.

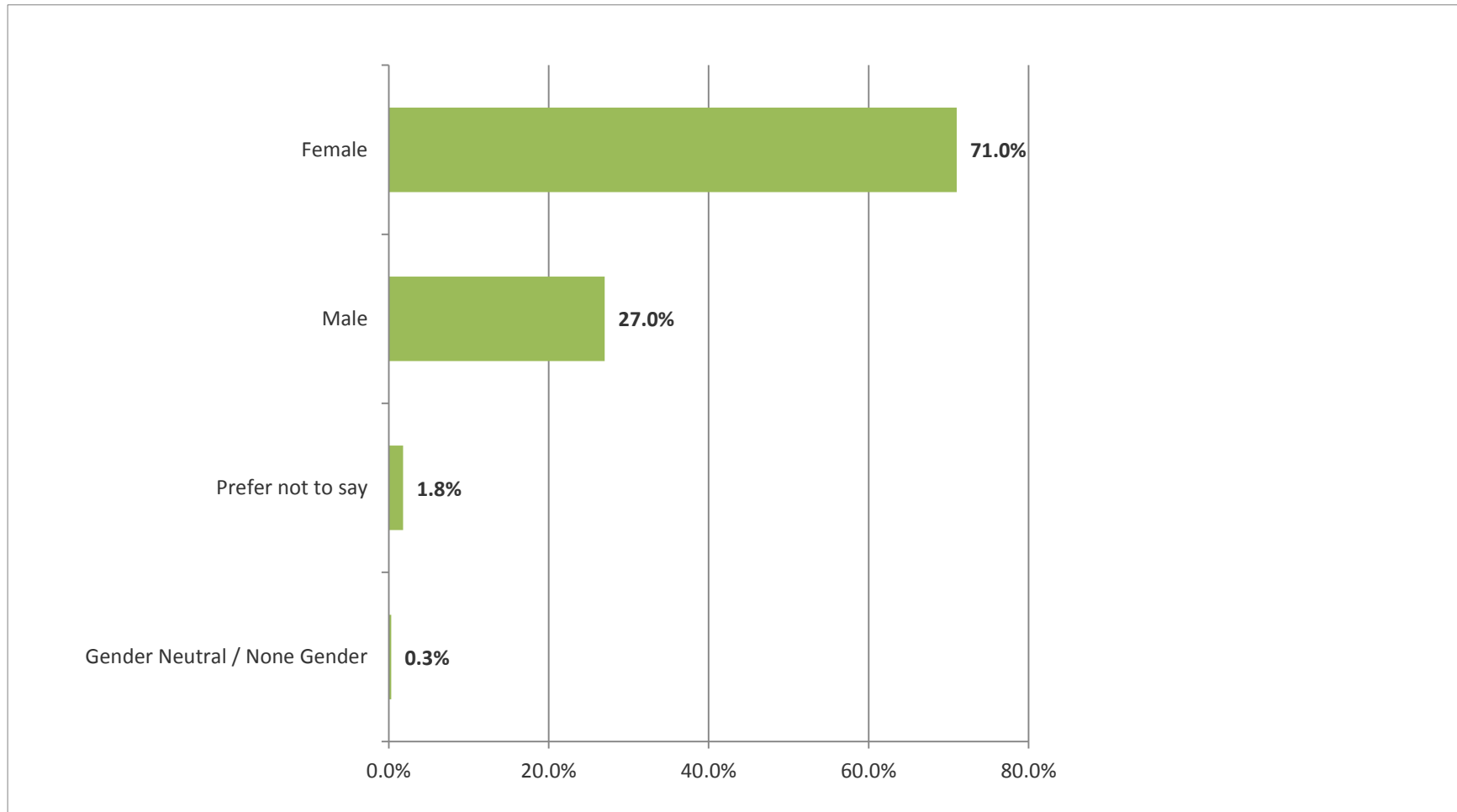
6.0 General comments unrelated to specific Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals

- 6.1 To help the Council assess how its Equal Opportunities policy is working, we asked respondents, under no obligation, to provide information about themselves when completing the budget consultation booklet 'Building our future: despite the cuts' and the online survey. For illustrative statistical purposes only this information is shown graphically below.

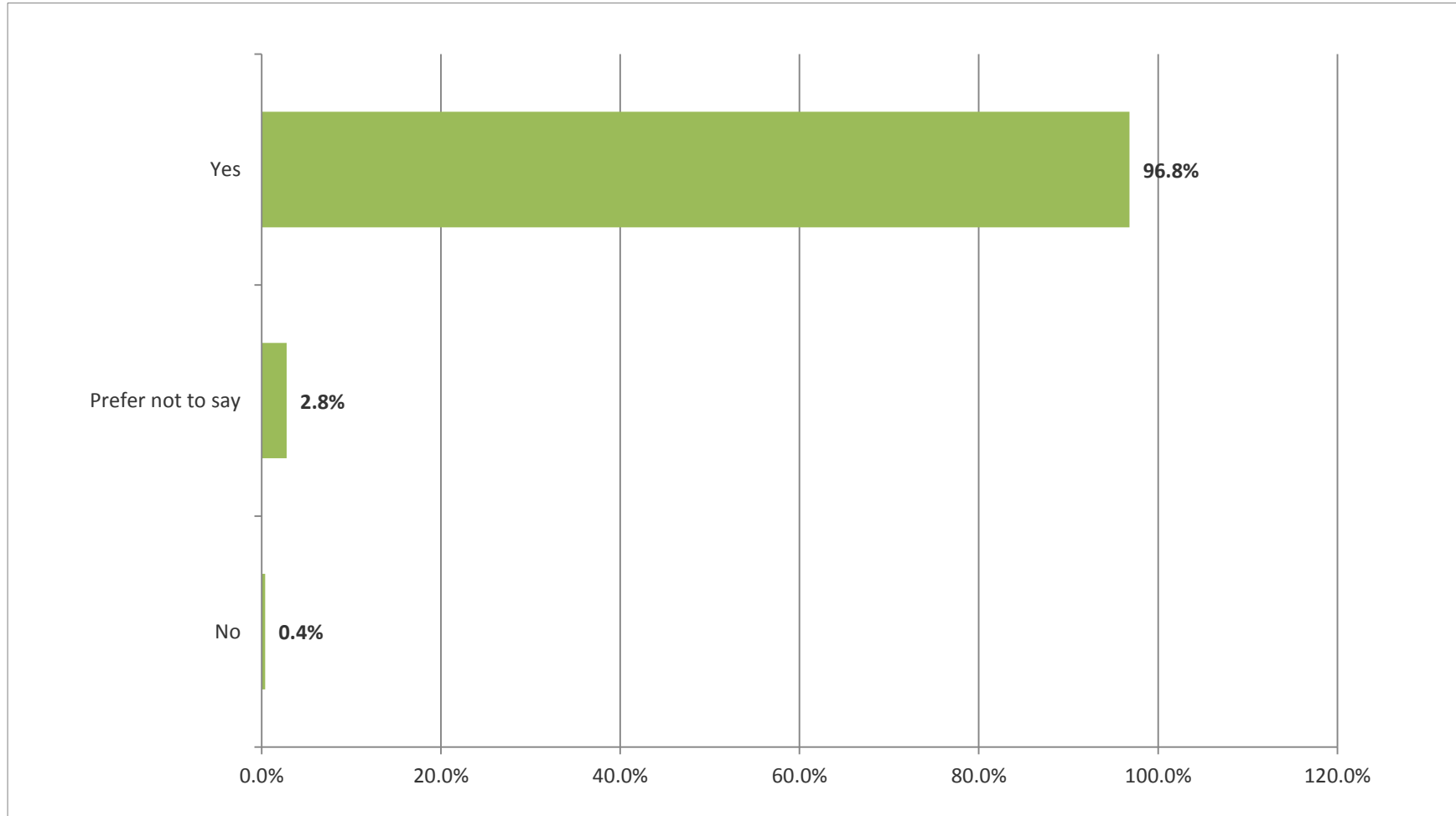
6.2 Respondents Age Group



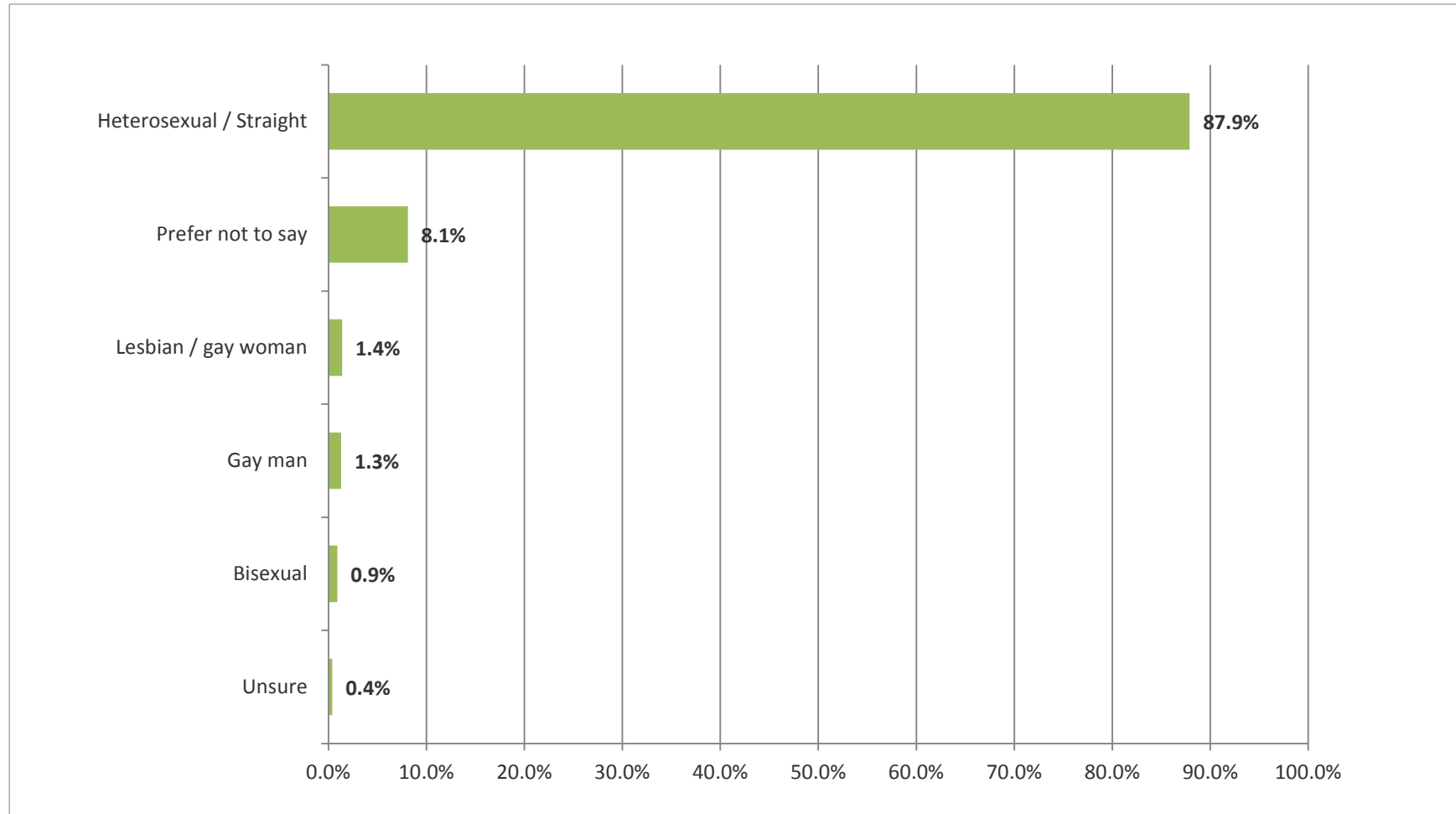
6.3 Respondents gender



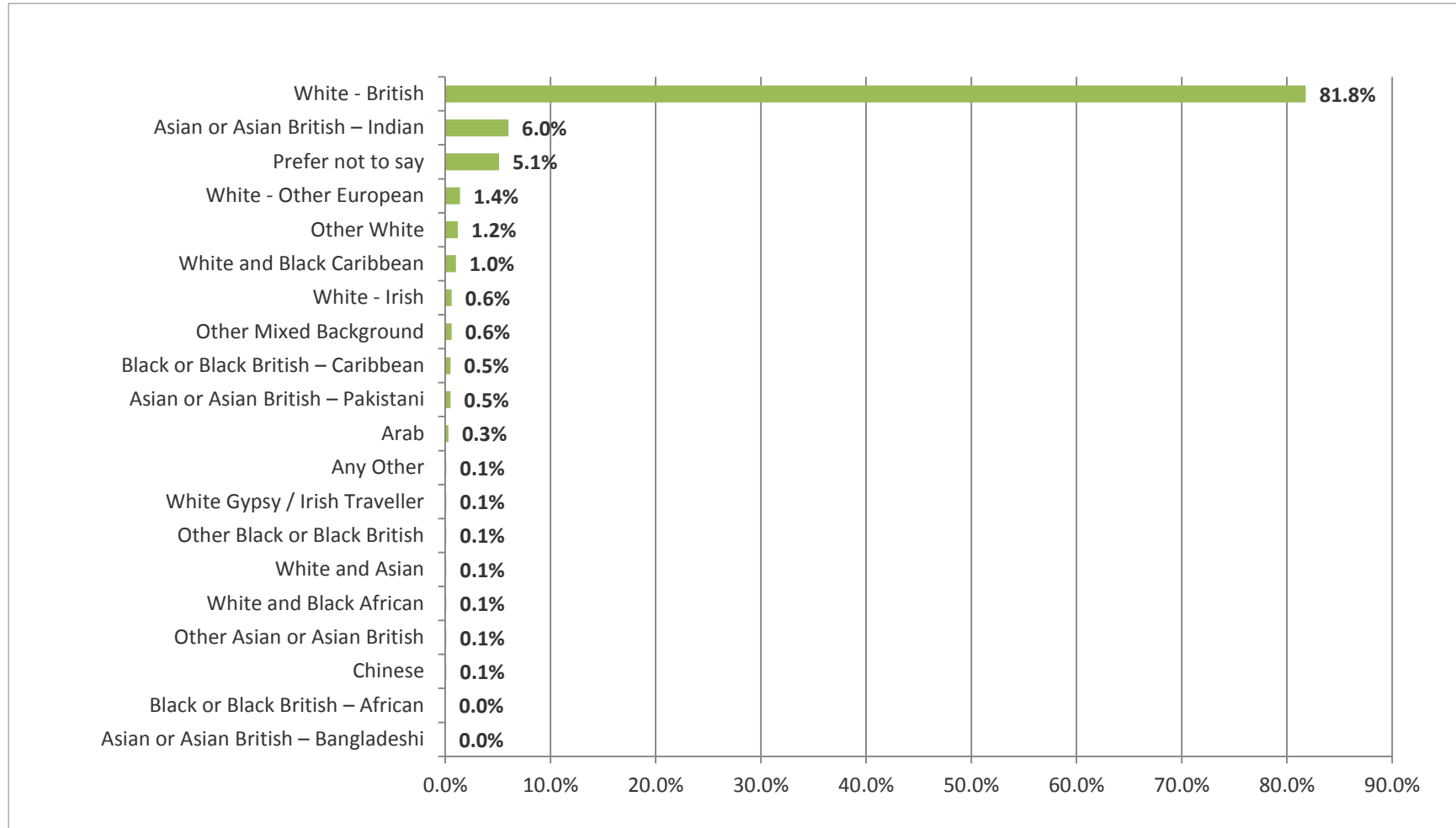
6.4 Is respondents gender identity the same as the gender they were assigned at birth?



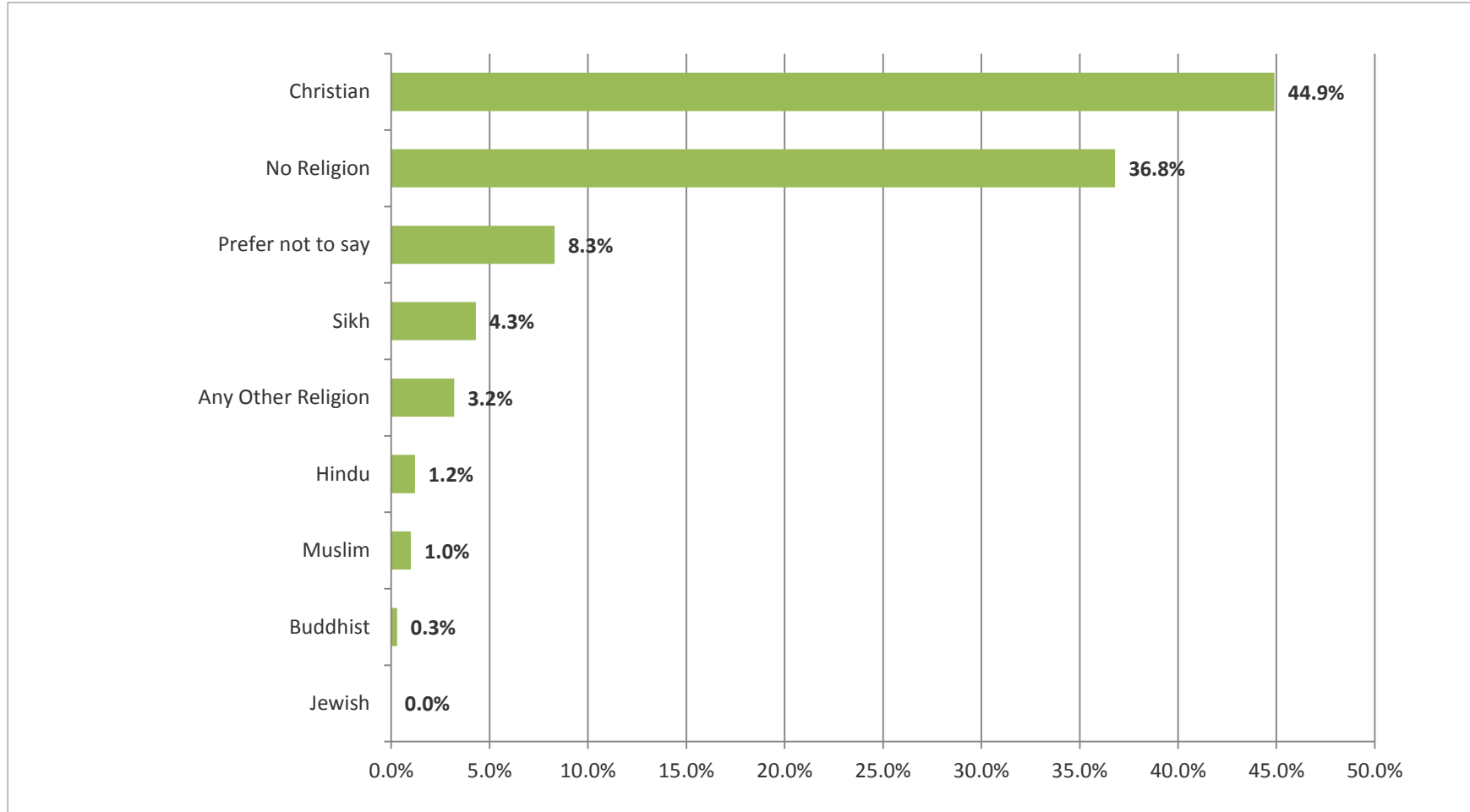
6.5 Respondents sexual orientation?



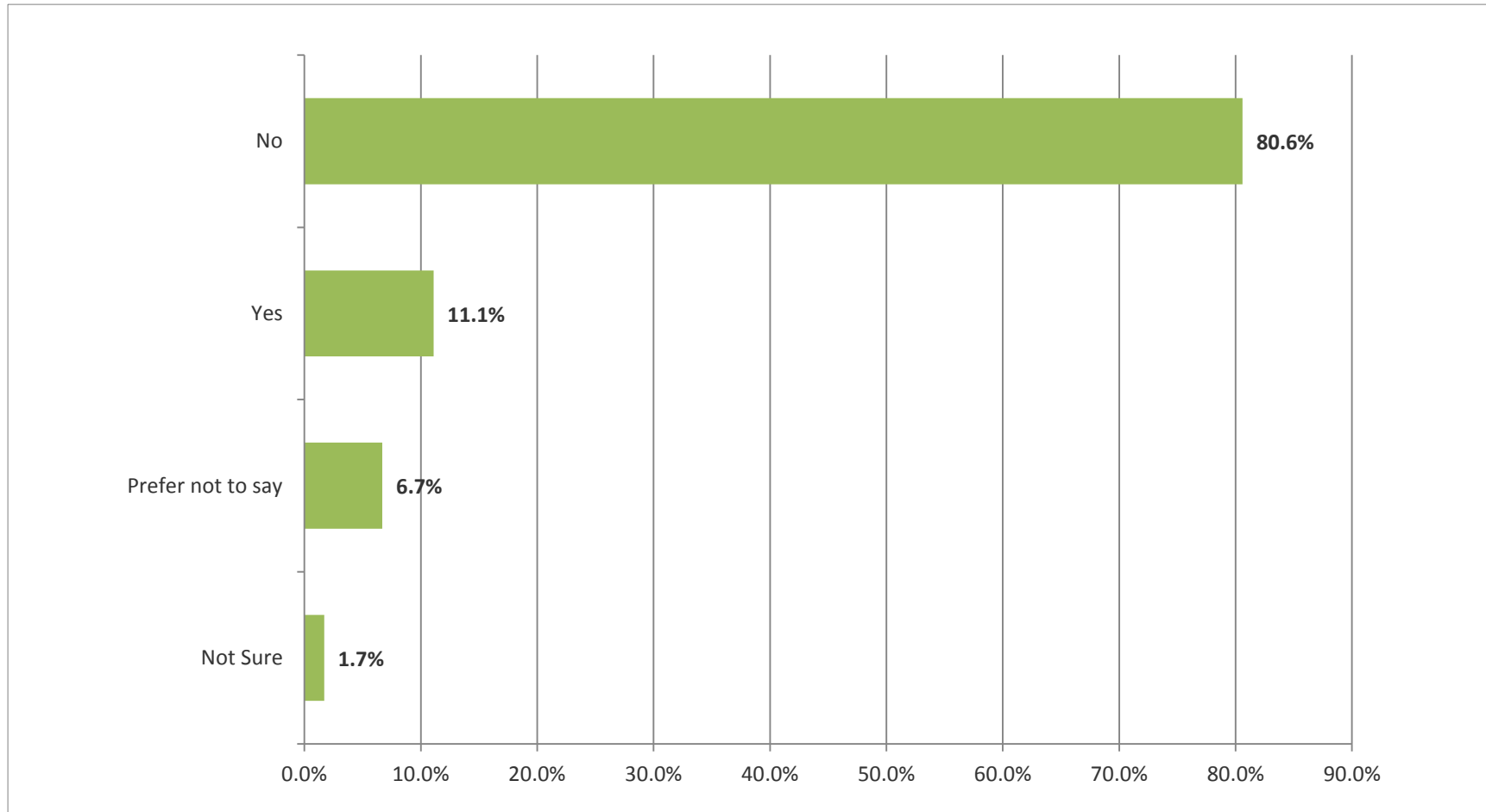
6.6 Respondents ethnic origin?



6.7 Respondents religion



6.8 Do you have a disability which affects your day to day activities, which has lasted, or you expect to last, at least a year?



Cabinet Meeting

3 February 2016

Report title	Scrutiny Board Comments – 2016/17 Draft Budget	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Keith Ireland, Managing Director	
Originating service	Strategic Finance	
Accountable employee(s)	Mark Taylor	Director of Finance
	Tel	01902 554410
	Email	mark.taylor@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	24 November 2015
	Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel	25 November 2015
	Health Scrutiny Panel	26 November 2015
	Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel	1 December 2015
	Confident, Capable Council Scrutiny Panel	2 December 2015
	Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel	3 December 2015
	Scrutiny Board	15 December 2015

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Consider the comments from the Scrutiny Board in relation to the 2016/17 Draft Budget.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with:

- Scrutiny Board's feedback on the 2016/17 Draft Budget following its meeting on 15 December 2015.

2.0 Background and Summary

2.1 At its meeting on 21 October 2015, as part of the 2016/17 Budget setting process, Cabinet approved that Savings, Redesign and Income Generation proposals totalling £14.1 million in 2016/17 proceed to the formal consultation and scrutiny stages of the budget and that Financial Transactions and Base Budget Revisions of £7.1 million and other adjustments to the 2016/17 July budget projections totalling £2.0 million be incorporated into the 2016/17 Draft Budget.

2.2 These proposals were subsequently scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Panel(s) during October and November and each Panel's comments were reviewed by the Council's Scrutiny Board on 15 December for subsequent feedback to Cabinet. The purpose of this report is to consider that feedback.

3.0 2016/17 Draft Budget

3.1 An extract from the minutes of the Scrutiny Board meeting on 15 December 2015, detailing the resolutions arising from its consideration of individual Scrutiny Panel comments on the 2016/17 Draft Budget, is shown at Appendix A.

3.2 The reports to Scrutiny Board and individual Scrutiny Panels are listed at section 9.0 below.

3.3 More detailed information regarding the Council's latest budget and savings proposals can be found on the Council's website [via this link](#).

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The financial implications are discussed in the body of the report and in the detailed reports to Scrutiny Board and the individual Scrutiny Panels. Should any of the savings proposals considered by Scrutiny Panels not be delivered, alternative savings will have to be identified.

[MH/22012016/N]

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. Cabinet's consideration of the items presented in this report is consistent with the Financial Procedural Rules outlined in the Council's Constitution.

[RB/20012016/N]

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Environmental Implications

7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

8.0 Human resources implications

8.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

9.0 Schedule of Background Papers

Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Scrutiny Board, 15 December 2015 ([link to report](#))

Budget Review - Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel, 3 December 2015 ([link to report](#))

Budget Review - Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Confident, Capable Council Scrutiny Panel, 2 December 2015 ([link to report](#))

Budget Review - Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel, 1 December 2015 ([link to report](#))

Budget Review - Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Health Scrutiny Panel, 26 November 2015 ([link to report](#))

Budget Review - Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel 25 November 2015 ([link to report](#))

Budget Review - Draft Budget 2016/17, Report to Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel, 24 November 2015 ([link to report](#))

Relevant Extract from Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 15 December 2015

Attendance

Members of the Scrutiny Board

Cllr Philip Bateman
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Barry Findlay (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Peter O'Neill
Cllr Arun Photay
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Stephen Simkins (Chair)
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Andrew Johnson

Employees

Mark Taylor	Director of Finance
Abby Vella	Graduate Management Trainee
Adrian McCormick	Head of Transformation
Sue Handy	Head of Customer Service
Sarah Campbell	Complaints Manager
Anna Zollino-Biscotti	Senior Information Governance Officer
Gareth Payne	Policy Officer
Penny Williams	Interim Democratic Services Manager

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. Title

- 1 Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Angus who was represented by Cllr Hodgkiss.
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest
- 5. Draft Budget 2016/17**
Councillor Andrew Johnson, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report. He advised that although the provisional local government finance settlement was to be announced in due course, an additional £4.1 billion of expenditure cuts for local government was expected. The Cabinet Member for Resources outlined the Council's saving proposals and progress and reported that

it was working with a revised savings target of £24 million. These projections were to be confirmed once central government had released the local government finance settlement.

The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted that seven million pounds had been saved through treasury management and financial transaction arrangements, without which, the impact of cuts on the Council would be much greater. He thanked the officers involved in making these savings.

Councillors discussed the need for additional funding to pay for the reshaping of Older People Services outlined on page 13 and the impact of this on savings proposals. The Cabinet Member for Resources and the Director of Finance advised that this was a subject of consideration in the budget process and further details would be reported to scrutiny once the settlement was announced.

A discussion took place between the Board and the Cabinet Member for Resources about the new funding formula for Public Health. Councillor O'Neill advised that these questions were asked at Health Scrutiny Panel and officers were going to investigate these details.

Referring to page 25 of the report, the Cabinet Member for Resources outlined proposals to ensure that City venues such as the Art Gallery, Bantock House and Bilston Art Gallery were generating considerable income. Councillor Collingswood was concerned about the length of time this was taking, since these City Venues formed part of Wolverhampton's cultural heritage. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resources advised that development proposals were being driven forward by officers. Councillors requested that these proposals come back to the relevant scrutiny panel.

Councillor Brookfield announced that she was unable to comment on the recommendations of other panels. Since these had already been scrutinised once, she was happy to accept the recommendations of other panels but felt unable to comment without all the details. The Chair requested that future budget reports have details of figures appended to the report.

A discussion took place about grounds maintenance reductions and efficiencies in service, in particular, ceasing annual bedding outside the City centre outlined on page 42 of the appendix. Following debate around the positive, visual impact the bedding had, Councillor Bateman was concerned that the reputation of the Council could potentially be compromised by this small saving. The Director of Finance advised that £22,000 would be saved over two years, with bedding converted into shrubbery or lawn. The Cabinet Member for Resources advised that this service was faced with financial saving necessity but would welcome the option of the relevant scrutiny panel re-visiting this. The Chair requested that the Chair of Vibrant and Sustainable City be informed.

Councillors suggested that the development of City sites, such as West Park, should be collated as a business proposition either by the appropriate officer, relevant scrutiny panel or particular champion. The Chair recommended that the

possibility of utilising the City's assets across the City, starting with West Park, be looked into.

A discussion took place between Councillors about the review of stray dog procedures outlined on page 45-46. Councillors requested that this come back to Scrutiny Board with further cost details of this procedure, that alternative provision be investigated and scoping of other local authorities be considered.

Councillors discussed the review of school crossing patrols on page 47 and whether schools could be charged to maintain this service. Cllr Johnson advised that advice would need to be sought regarding the statutory requirement for school patrols. Moreover, this would continue to be reviewed in light of schools moving out of local authority control.

Cllr Bolshaw enquired about the review of allotment costs outlined on page 47. Cllr Johnson advised that a mechanism needed to be implemented to charge residents realistically and incrementally.

In response to a question regarding the review of the council tax scheme and discount, the Cabinet Member for Resources clarified that the 21 day discretionary discount was to be removed following consultation.

The Board discussed corporate savings proposals, including charges for late payment of invoices and the review of staff training. The Director of Finance advised that the performance of paying invoices had greatly improved since the introduction of Agresso. He reported that there had been a reduction in escalated queries and it was being monitored closely. In response to the review of staff training, Councillors discussed the role of interim positions within the Council. The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted that interim officers were highly beneficial and allowed time for the authority to find a suitable, permanent replacement.

The Chair requested an additional meeting to address the recommendations set out below once Cabinet had considered all consultation and scrutiny responses.

Resolved:

1. That the details of savings proposals on Older Peoples Services be reported back to scrutiny.
2. That Health scrutiny panel look into the implications of a new funding formula for Public Health.
3. That development proposals for City venues come back to Vibrant and Sustainable City scrutiny panel.
4. That future budget reports have details of figures appended to the report.

Appendix A

5. That the proposed cessation of annual bedding be revisited by Vibrant and Sustainable City and the Chair be informed.
6. That the possibility of utilising the City's assets across the City, starting with West Park be looked into.
7. That cost details of the review of stray dogs be reported, alternative provision be investigated and scoping of other local authorities take place.
8. That legal advice be sought regarding the statutory requirement for school patrols, in light of proposals to move schools out of local authority control.

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Cabinet Meeting

3 February 2016

Report title	Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Sandra Samuels Public Health and Well Being Cllr Val Gibson Children and Young People	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Linda Sanders Strategic Director People Ros Jervis Service Director Public Health & Wellbeing	
Originating service	Community Safety	
Accountable employee(s)	Karen Samuels Tel Email	Head of Community Safety 01902 551341 Karen.samuels@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	22 September 2015

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the city's Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy 2016-19.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To endorse the city's Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy 2016-19.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Tackling gangs and youth violence has been a strategic priority for Safer Wolverhampton Partnership since 2011 and has been progressed through the Reducing Gang Harm Strategic Framework until 2015.
- 2.2 Wolverhampton remains one of fifty two identified Ending Gang and Youth Violence (EGYV) areas in the country and one of three within the West Midlands; this enables sharing of good and emerging practice across areas, with the city called upon to provide support to newly identified areas.
- 2.3 The Home Office launched its cross-government approach for EGYV and Exploitation in January 2016; its priorities, detailed below, are well aligned with Wolverhampton's refreshed strategy.
- Tackle county lines – the exploitation of vulnerable people by a hard core of gang members to sell drugs
 - Protect vulnerable locations – places where vulnerable people can be targeted
 - Reduce violence and knife crime
 - Safeguard gang-associated women and girls
 - Promote early intervention
 - Promote meaningful alternatives to gangs such as education, training and employment
- 2.4 Whilst the strategy will make provision for all-age victims, offenders and those with gang affiliation, there is a particular focus on children, young people and young adults up to the age of 24 years. This is in line with the national programme and reflects the local profile of gang association.

3.0 Progress against Reducing Gang Harm Strategy 2012-15.

- 3.1 Key successes have been achieved over the period of the previous strategy including effective offender management of active gang members involved in criminality; nationally renowned Gangs One Day One Conversation (ODOC) enables partnership case management of offenders. For those involved in low-level offending, which have gang associations, disruption tactics have been adopted to reduce risk and deter offending.
- 3.2 Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) commissioned services have provided responsive and effective interventions for medium/high risk gang members, gang injunctions have been used to restrict behaviour and critical incident interventions have been deployed at times of heightened tensions.
- 3.3 As gang-related crimes require the use of a Police marker during crime recording, and there is no specific 'gang crime' that can be used for recording purposes, SWP has used a range of performance indicators including knife/gun crime, violence with injury and

personal robbery and drug related offences as indicators or progress. During the three year period January 2012 - December 2015, for the 10-24 age range, Violence with Injury (offender) reduced by 5.7%, whilst victims within this age range increased by 6.8%, both knife and gun crime over the period for victims reduced by 38% and 27% respectively, whilst and reduced for offenders by 4.8% and 12.5% respectively, with levels of recorded gun and knife crime falling over the period overall.

4.0 Rationale for a Change in Focus

- 4.1 Whilst provision around the management of medium/ high risk gang members will remain, their management is sufficiently effective and well established through this partnership approach to enable the scope of the new strategy to be extended.
- 4.2 Although successes are evident, gang-related harm it is still a key risk to the health and wellbeing of those at risk of gang involvement. A refreshed Gangs Problem Profile developed in 2015 has identified good progress, whilst highlighting remaining risks to the City and the need for gang related harm to be a priority. The evidence base from the problem profile and successes of recent years have enabled us to now adopt a shift in focus from harm reduction to prevention.
- 4.3 There is now a better understanding of the city's gang issues with evidence suggesting that the face and operational activity of gangs are changing. Key highlights from the problem profile show:
- Street gangs are becoming less visible to the public, and more fluid in the way they organise themselves;
 - There is an emergence of younger, more chaotic groups as elder members of Urban Street Gangs (USGs) have been removed due to police operations or had their activities curtailed.
 - There is a hard core of gang members who are becoming more organised and sophisticated in their criminality, and they are exploiting vulnerable young people and adults in order to sell drugs.
 - Communities highlight young people succumbing to negative peer pressure to become gang members.

5.0 Delivering a city-Wide Response in Partnership

- 5.1 Gang association amongst young people is not always easily defined; whilst there are specific crimes that are often linked to gang activity (such as robbery, drug dealing etc) there is no specific crime around gang involvement; consequently, police are reliant on the use of 'gang markers' in identifying young people associated with gangs, which is often based upon intelligence.
- 5.2 The strategy advocates continued joint working across a range of partners including probation providers, Youth Offending Team, Anti-social behaviour team and Police. There is a commitment to strengthen working practices with schools, the health sector, Early Help, Troubled Families and specialist third sector partners to deliver a coordinated response for children and young people, adults, families and communities impacted negatively by gang and youth violence activity and to improve the transition between

children's and adults services. Standard safeguarding risk factors will be applied when assessing the risks around a young person's behaviour with safeguarding concerns reported through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

- 5.3 The City of Wolverhampton Council as a core funder of The Way youth zone in the city centre, has supported proposals for both preventative and targeted services to be provided from this new facility to support delivery of this strategy. Importantly, its city centre location provides neutral ground for the effective engagement of young people impacted by gangs and youth violence.
- 5.4 A continuation of the work to safeguard vulnerable gang-associated girls and young women will be a continuing theme of the revised strategy. Earlier targeted intervention is still needed to challenge the attitudes and behaviours of young men which can fuel violence and lead to women and girls being exploited. This will be aligned with perpetrator programmes within the city's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-19.
- 5.5 There is a commitment to develop an extended role for specialist third sector organisations, which are best placed to identify individuals at risk and deliver targeted interventions. The establishment of a Gangs Community Reference Group in 2015 has enabled a frank dialogue between statutory and third sector agencies operating in this field of work. This provides a useful feedback loop for what works, up to date information about the nature of gang activity on the ground, an insight into community perceptions and, in some instances, a trusted vehicle for delivery.
- 5.6 The strategy will also be closely aligned to the police-led approach to addressing serious and organised crime; the gangs ODOC arrangements currently in place allow for early identification of individuals who are at risk of being drawn into organised criminal networks.
- 6.0** The strategy's overarching objectives are the key drivers and principles for delivery of the strategy over the next three years.
- 6.1 Strategy Objectives:
- i. Preventing young people becoming involved in violence with a new emphasis on early intervention and prevention
 - ii. Support Pathways out of violence and gangs
 - iii. Robust enforcement and offender management to control those individuals involved in gangs and or youth violence, and are refusing the opportunity to exit this life style
 - iv. Partnership working together to prevent harm to families and communities
 - v. Preventing gang related harm and youth-related violence through improved information flow between agencies and communities
 - vi. Keep up to date with the city's gangs profile and improve intelligence flow
- 6.2 Strategy Delivery:
Delivery will follow the nationally established model of Prevent, Prepare, Pursue and Protect; outcomes have been set against each of these strands.

Delivery Strand	Outcomes
Prevent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earlier identification of individuals at risk/vulnerable to gang association • Improved targeting of youth diversion • Reduced risk of offending • Reduced harm to families • Improved prevention interventions • A shared definition of gangs adopted across the city
Protect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced reoffending • Improved understanding of the risk to prevent offending/harm • Strengthened community response to critical incidents • Enhanced intelligence gathering through use of social media • Improved community reassurance
Pursue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective management of threat and risk • Fewer knife crime incidents • Fewer gun crime incidents • Less youth-related violence • Wider use of legislative powers
Prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community trust and confidence • Improved joint response to critical incidents • Greater understanding of gang issues • A stronger evidence base for what works

6.3 There is already a well-established performance framework in place to monitor progress and performance of gang and youth violence delivery. This will be revised to reflect the shift in emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

7.0 Consultation

7.1 The draft strategy has been subject to consultation over a period of 12 weeks. The consultation was promoted through partnership and community networks, third sector organisations and city websites. A total of 40 partial and 11 full responses were received, three of which were from groups. As part of this process, young people from the local community were asked to design the art work for the strategy. A summary of consultation responses is provided below:

- Various responses indicated the strategy was easy to read
- There was general support for the enhanced focus on prevention
- A request for more work to engage schools and raise awareness of needs
- Better use of social media to communicate progress and counter negative use by gangs
- Workshops needed with parents and carers around dangers of gangs and youth violence
- Improved employment offer needed for those at risk or already involved with gangs
- Community-based mediation needed
- Use of ex-gang members to steer young people away from gang association
- More localised youth services needed

7.2 The consultation process also included a presentation at Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel on 22 September 2015; the strategy was well-received with comments regarding aspects of delivery fed into strategy revisions; Councillors sought reassurance that work with schools and efforts to restrict young people's access to weapons would feature within the prevention work. Practical methods of securing the flow of community intelligence were raised and reassurance provided that the strong partnership arrangements in place would mitigate organisational budgetary constraints around delivery of the strategy. To illicit the engagement of young people within the strategy development, an artwork competition was held for young people from the community to have input into the design of the strategy.

8.0 Early Challenges

8.1 The following challenges will provide an early steer for areas of development:

- Knowledge of the established referral pathway across agencies to access specialist support is limited; wider promotion of the specialist services available is needed to extend their use and effectiveness.
- Whilst joint working between statutory and third sector agencies is collaborative, further development allowing for discussion of confidential issues around key gang individuals, is needed. The development of a Gangs Community Reference Group is positive step towards achieving this.
- There is a requirement for specialist third sector providers to work more collaboratively to avoid competition for funding and duplication of effort.
- The strategy must make better use of the internet and social media to extend the traditional control methods of capable guardian; many young people have knowledge of technology that surpasses that of their families.
- Development of a model for community mediation is underway to enable community members to mediate between groups at times of heightened tension. Effective deployment will require the systematic use of risk assessments and delivery within an agreed operating protocol.
- There is an identified intelligence gap in identifying risks around the city's changing demographics and the need to develop an improved understanding of our communities.

9.0 Financial implications

9.1 Implementation of the Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy is dependent on multi-agency delivery. SWP commissions specialist services from its annual allocation of Community Safety Fund, issued by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Resource allocations from these funding streams will be finalised early in 2016 for both 2016/17 and 2017/18. Delivery of this strategy will be within the advised allocation of Community Safety Fund. [GS/13012016/D]

10.0 Legal implications

- 10.1 Sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 require the Council and other responsible authorities to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder in the area; Section 17 places a duty on the Council to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in the area. Implementation of the strategy contributes towards the Council's duties in this regard. [RB/14012016/Z]

11.0 Equalities implications

- 11.1 A full equalities analysis has been completed which highlights that the strategy will impact positively on victims, offenders and communities. Historically, disproportionate gang membership was seen from young black males, but more recent analysis has shown mixed racial membership across USGs. Young women and girls are recognised as being more vulnerable from gang-associations.

12.0 Environmental implications

- 12.1 There are no environmental implications.

13.0 Human resources implications

- 13.1 There are no human resources implications.

14.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 14.1 There are no corporate landlord implications.

15.0 Schedule of background papers

- 15.1 Presentation to Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel – 22 September 2015.

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Artwork Competition
 Winner - by Connor Smith, aged 13

City Express & Star
 65p Friday 18, 2020
 4°C (39°F) 9°C (48°F)
 Britain's best selling regional newspaper

YOUTH UNEMPLOYEEMENT DROPS FOR THE 5TH YEAR IN A ROW... See pages 24-25
 Questionnaire reveals that Wolverhampton has the lowest crime rate in the West Midlands and rates 6th lowest in the UK. Wolverhampton leads the way.....

CRY PEACE' FOOTBALL EVENT CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF SUCCESS
 A football event created by youths for youths to unite areas of Wolverhampton has celebrated 10 years of success..... Cry Peace.....

REDESIGN OF HEATH TOWN COMPLETE... Residents feel happy and secure in new homes.....

GUNS & GANGS ISSUES ARE A THING OF THE PAST SAY FORMER GANG MEMBERS!!!
 A former member of the Heath Town Crew said that he can finally live life without looking over his shoulder. From a former life of crime he is now working at Jaguar Land Rover and has a promising career ahead of him. He also volunteers to help other young people like he was

Property prices rise for the 3rd year in a row in the City.... Find the property of your dreams on pages 32 - 42

THE WAY YOUTH ZONE CELEBRATES 5 YEARS OF WORKING IN THE CITY... READ MORE ON PAGE 52

Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy 2016-2019

Committed to preventing gang related harm and youth violence, together.



Foreword

The Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) recognise the impact that gang related harm and youth related violence have on our communities. This has been a key focus for the city; our revised Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy 2016 - 2019 will ensure that this focus continues. The partnership has been keen to ensure that there is strong local leadership and collaborative working between statutory partners and communities to reduce associated harm and vulnerability.

Our previous strategy has delivered successes such as reduction in gun crime by 15.6% and a reduction in knife crime by 13.6%, which has led to reduced harm in our communities. However despite these achievements the nature of gang activity has changed and the prevalence of youth violence remains a concern. An enhanced focus must therefore be on identifying and targeting young people at an earlier point to manage behaviour before escalation to criminality and to divert them from gang involvement.

This strategy has been developed through consulting with a broad range of partners and communities; the responses acknowledged the successes to date and fully supported the move towards an enhanced focus on prevention.

The experiences of young people will continue to shape our local delivery. 'I had to learn to walk tall on my own' is a phrase voiced by a young person negatively affected by youth violence; it acts both as a reminder of the impact violence can have on individuals and

on family life and also of the need to ensure this strategy has strengthened links to mainstream safeguarding and to the diverse support services already operating across the city. New developments such as the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) will aid this approach.

The partnership recognises that challenges and vulnerabilities are evolving; reducing the impact of violence on young people and families, the grooming of younger people, understanding and tackling the impact on women and girls, better use of social media, increasing our focus on mental health and promotion of existing pathways to support gang exit are all areas of early development.

We will continue to drive our response in partnership through a well-established Gangs Steering Group; utilising the skills and knowledge of partner agencies and communities. The partnership response will work across sectors and align with other approaches such as Families in Focus, Violence Against Women and Girls, Safeguarding Business Plan and the Youth Justice Plan.

Whilst the primary focus is on prevention, SWP will continue to take robust action against the few who persist in their offending behaviour using the full range of tools and powers at our disposal. Wolverhampton's acclaimed approach to the management of gang offenders using proven pathways to exit the cycle of offending will remain a continuing and critical element of local delivery.

SWP will work hard to make this strategy real and relevant for our communities. It will be considered a success if it prevents young people and families from being harmed through gang involvement and youth related

violence. The mobilisation of our communities to play an enhanced role along with systematic and critical evaluation of our delivery will be an underpinning feature.



**Councillor
Sandra Samuels**
City of Wolverhampton Council



Keith Fraser
*Superintendent Operations
and Crime (Wolverhampton)
West Midlands Police*



Linda Sanders
*Chair, Safer
Wolverhampton Partnership*



Councillor Val Gibson
City of Wolverhampton Council

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Introduction

As a result of Wolverhampton’s successes to date, SWP are confident that it is now in a position to progress to the development of earlier, sustainable interventions to drive down youth violence.

Although our approach to date has seen successes, challenges remain which reaffirm the need for strong partnership working. The Home Office’s annual report 2014-15 from the Ending Gang and Youth Violence Programme reflects Wolverhampton as a priority area for the country, additionally the recently updated problem profile recognises the progress made, but also highlights existing risks to the city and the need for reducing gang-related harm and youth violence to remain a priority for SWP.

As a partnership there is a clear rationale for us to focus on young people; although key aspects of crime are reducing across the city, young people are still disproportionately impacted upon in relation to violence.

Our current approach is based on the definition of gangs set out in the Centre for Social Justices’ report, ‘Dying to Belong’. A street gang is:

“A relatively durable, predominantly street based group of young people who:

1. See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group;
2. Engage in criminal activity and violence;
3. Lay claim over territory (this is not geographical territory but can include an illegal economy territory);

4. Have some form of identifying structural feature; and
5. Are in conflict with other similar gangs”.

A particular concern is that by using the ‘gangs’ label rather than youth violence, particularly when commissioning services, young people that require support, but do not overtly meet the gangs threshold may not receive the appropriate intervention. In light of these concerns the partnership is in early discussions to ensure the adopted gang’s definition does not prevent SWP from tackling identified vulnerabilities.

Consequently the shift in focus is from reducing gang-related harm to an enhanced focus on preventing gang involvement and youth violence. The partnership is able to make this bold step due to a far broader and in-depth understanding of the issues and how to tackle them. We have much better knowledge of the challenges, and how better to target action and prevent harm through early intervention. The considerable progress we have made needs to be sustained; this will be achieved through support for local communities who are empowered to take a more active role within the partnership response.

The strategy was informed by consultation responses received over a 12 week period. Feedback was received through various channels, using electronic means as well as meeting with key stakeholders and groups, enabling us to reach a wider audience.

Previous Strategy Successes

Wolverhampton's Reducing Gang Related Harm Strategy 2012-15 has helped to greatly improve the lives of those communities blighted by gang activity in the city. Key indicators such as knife crime and gun crime have reduced; there are less visible signs of gang tension in our communities and the partnership approach to tackling issues has been strengthened. The strategy has also paved the way for greater community and third sector involvement. SWP is committed to its approach; strong partnership working together with robust intervention tiered at appropriate levels has delivered commendable outcomes. The further development of sustainable interventions will continue to drive down youth violence and reduce gang related harm.

Key successes have been achieved over the period of the previous strategy including effective offender management of active gang members involved in criminality through the nationally renowned Gangs One Day One Conversation (ODOC), which enables coordinated multi-agency case management of offenders. For those involved in low-level offending, which have gang associations, disruption tactics have been adopted to reduce risk and deter offending.

SWP commissioned services have provided responsive and effective interventions for medium/high risk gang members, gang injunctions have been used to restrict behaviour and critical incident interventions have been deployed at times of heightened tensions.

The partnership landscape was significantly strengthened over the period of the previous strategy. The Gangs Steering Group which provides strategic direction and drive to achieve outcomes has grown in membership and includes a range of specialist third sector providers and statutory services; notably, the group has recently secured representation from the secure estates sector.

As the strategic driving force, the partnership has embarked on integrating gangs and youth violence within a number of key initiatives and areas of work, for example, Safeguarding now recognise that young people engaging in gang related activity meet the threshold for early help.

SWP reviewed its commissioning arrangements to be more effective and targeted through the introduction of a case management model where specialist providers were commissioned to support individuals in most need and at risk of gang-related harm. Support was commissioned on a case by case basis, and tiered payments awarded based on outcomes achieved.

National Context

Reviewing the bigger picture and how it impacts on Wolverhampton is an important part of determining our local response to preventing gangs and youth violence in the city.

Wolverhampton was one of twenty nine priority areas identified by the Home Office as part of the national Ending Gang and Youth Violence (EGYV) programme that commenced in 2012; the programme has since been extended, with the total number of areas now receiving support increased to fifty two, allowing learning from initial EGYV areas to be applied.

There is now national recognition that tackling gangs and youth violence is not singularly about ensuring the right sanctions are in place to punish criminal behaviour. Since the inception of EGYV, on-going reviews and learning from practice across England and Wales has highlighted the need to address underlying root causes to sustain reductions in youth violence and curb gang activity. Underlying issues such as undiagnosed mental health issues amongst gang members, substance misuse and chaotic family environment significantly impact on the behaviour of a young person.

Managing the impact of gang and youth violence is just as important as managing those who commit such offences. Impact is felt within the community, individuals and within the family. Nationally, there is direction for areas to safeguard vulnerable people who can become victims of gangs and youth violence, and in some cases be at risk of

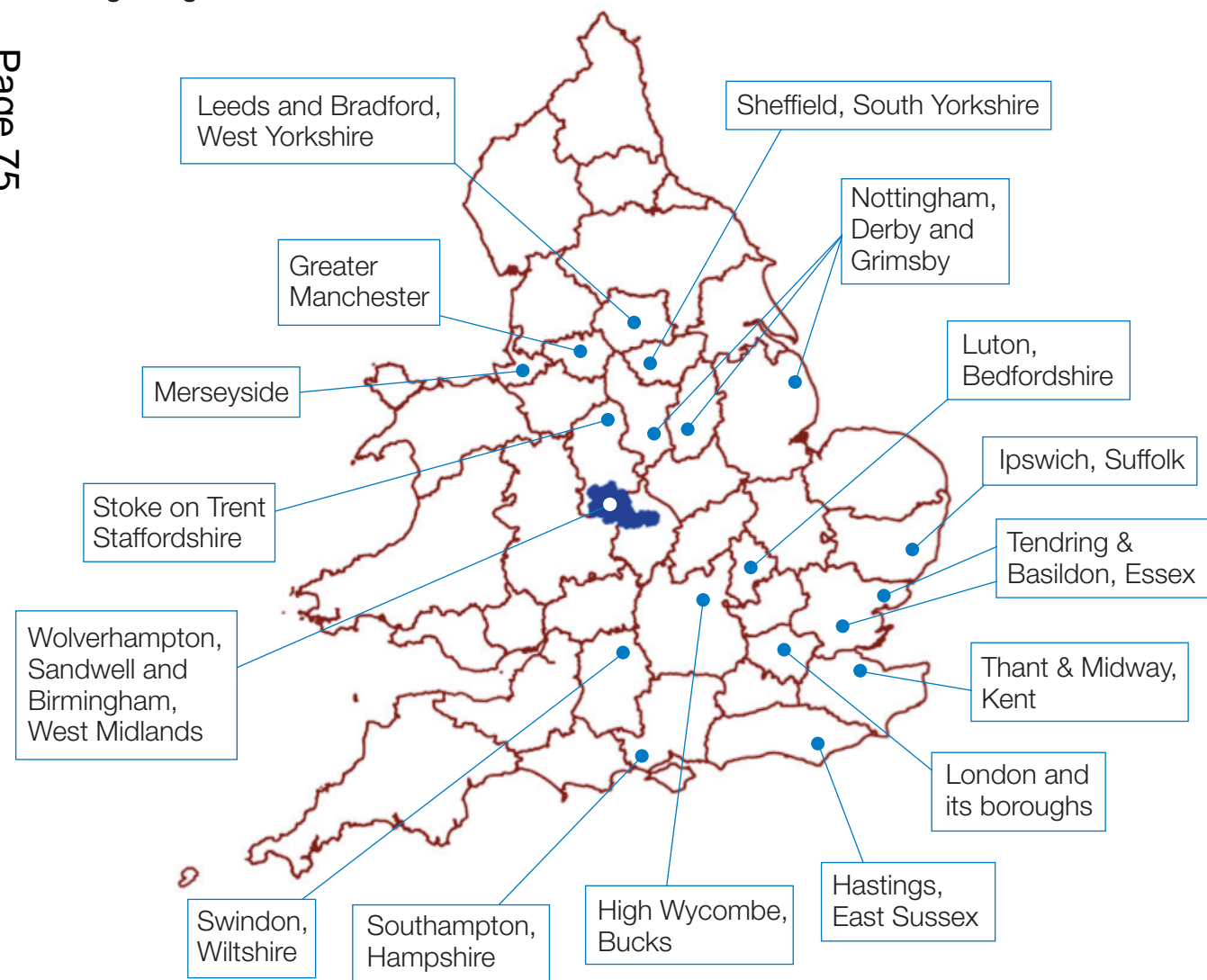
being coerced into similar behaviour, causing a cycle of offending.

A refreshed cross-government approach to EGYV and exploitation launched in January 2016 has identified the need to respond and focus on gang-related exploitation of the vulnerable, with the following priorities communicated to the EGYV areas for local consideration:

1. Tackle county lines - address the exploitation of vulnerable people by a hard core of gang members to sell drugs
2. Protect vulnerable locations - places where vulnerable young people can be targeted, including pupil referral units and residential children's care homes
3. Reduce violence and knife crime - including improving the way national and local partners use tools and powers
4. Safeguard gang-associated women and girls - including strengthening local practices
5. Promote early intervention - using evidence from the Early Intervention Foundation to identify and support vulnerable children and young people (including identifying mental health problems)
6. Promote meaningful alternatives to gangs such as education, training and employment

Many of the priorities identified at national level are also local priorities for Wolverhampton and reflected in this refreshed strategy; the knowledge, skills and expertise across the range of partners working together locally will enable us to focus our effort and address these challenges.

Ending Gang Youth Violence areas:



Gang and Youth Violence Profile in Wolverhampton - Summary

The landscape regarding Urban Street Gangs (USGs) in Wolverhampton has changed in recent years. Through targeted delivery and intelligence-led enforcement action, a number of key individuals within the identified USGs have been removed from their organisations. Criminality and disputes, although still occurring, are not as overt and communities have reported less tension and issues within their neighbourhoods.

A Gangs Profile was recently produced which identifies how as the elder members of USGs have been removed, or had their activities reduced, a younger cohort of members has begun to fill the void and come to note - see appendix 1. While still operating around drug and weapon criminality, a number of violent disorders with rival gangs and street robberies have shown that this younger group have a more chaotic outlook and a propensity for violence. Territorial factors still feature, however there is more geographic fluidity and less association with postcodes evident with the younger cohort.

New USGs have emerged and are on occasion affiliated to the established USGs in Wolverhampton. The use of social media appears to play a key role in their associations and activities. Three quarters of victims of youth violence are male, the majority of youth violence is committed against young people by young people and 12.9% of violent offences were recorded as involving a weapon.

Whilst success in Wolverhampton regarding USGs has meant no gang-related loss of life in recent years, threat continues to exist around

the emerging young people who are either already affiliated to a USG, or are at risk of joining. As a result, early intervention and engagement with young people is a key component in the reduction of those risks. The incidences of both gun and knife related crime have reduced, as have drug offences.

Since 2012 it has been reported that:

- Violence with Injury offending has increased
- The number of youth victims of violence has increased
- The number of youth offenders for violence has decreased
- Three quarters of victims of youth violence are male
- The majority of youth violence is committed against young people by young people

Within the West Midlands area, Sandwell and Birmingham are included in the Home Office EGYV programme alongside Wolverhampton. Consequently there have been opportunities for collaborative working across these areas of the West Midlands in recent years. There is a commitment for this to continue as part of the new strategy where there are opportunities to do so and where there are efficiencies to be gained.

The City of Wolverhampton - *Violent Gun Crime*

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total	99	62	36	35	29
% Committed Against Under 25's	28.3	30.6	30.6	34.3	34.5
% Committed by Under 25's	19.2	12.9	25.0	14.3	24.1

The City of Wolverhampton - *Violent Knife Crime*

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total	358	225	127	152	140
% Committed Against Under 25's	50.8	49.3	51.2	42.8	43.6
% Committed by Under 25's	16.8	20.4	16.5	19.1	15.0

The City of Wolverhampton - *Public Place Violence with Injury*

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total	1375	1032	783	989	1099
% Committed Against Under 25's	47.0	45.5	40.1	40.6	40.4
% Committed by Under 25's	22.5	23.8	21.6	16.6	18.9

Challenges and our Partnership Response

The partnership understands the importance of recognising specific challenges, whether that is at operational or strategic level, which will need to be addressed to achieve successful delivery.

A whole family approach needs to be embedded in our delivery as issues around gangs and youth violence do not start or end with an individual; there is also an impact on families, siblings, children and the wider community which needs to be at the core of how we align our approach.

Those at risk of gang harm have acute needs which are not always addressed through universal services. Whilst there is a requirement to ensure universal services are accessible to our diverse communities to meet support needs, the provision of specialist intervention services will also be required on occasion.

Communication with partners and the third sector has significantly improved over the last

twelve months; a Community Reference Group has been established which engages with key community members, which has influence and experience of working within affected communities, and has the skills and importantly, the trust to engage individuals at risk. This dialogue must be continued and the trust strengthened between statutory and third sector agencies to facilitate more open information sharing between partners and the community.

The changing demographics in the city raises challenges and highlights potential gaps in our knowledge and understanding around this agenda, both in terms of community needs and vulnerabilities.

Whilst this is not an exhaustive list of challenges and the journey ahead is clearly complex, the commitment of partners to work collaboratively will make inroads in addressing these.

Focus on those families most affected and provide whole family solutions



Sustainment of targeted engagement to support identified local need



Building the capacity and capability of partners to deliver effective interventions

Improve collaborative working across third sector partners to maximise use of reducing resources.

Support and embed practice of the cross agency forum to manage confidential issues around key gang individuals

Continue to improve channels of communication and relationships between voluntary and statutory sector partners

Extend awareness of the case management model amongst partners to increase effective use and align with MASH and Early Help

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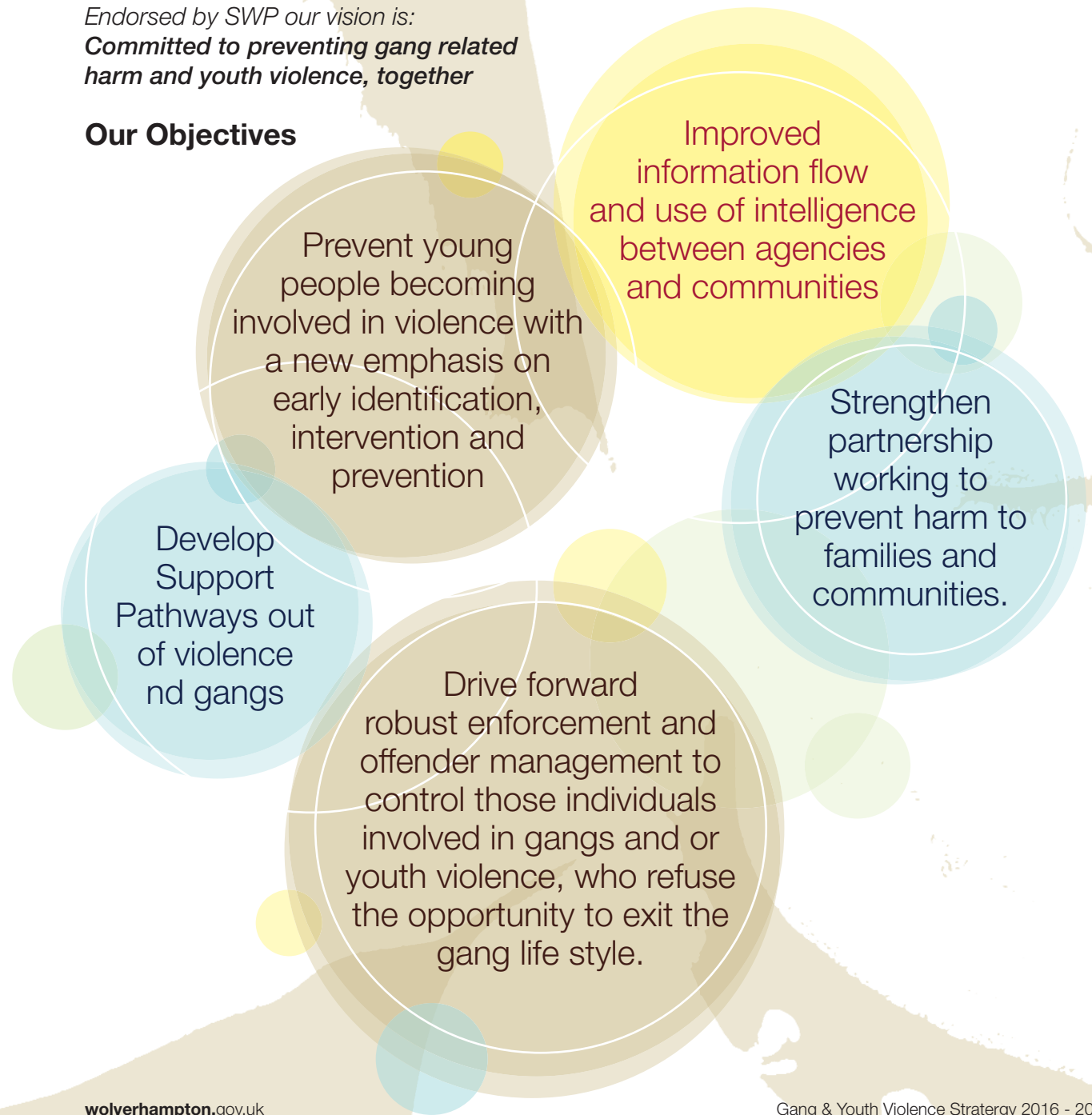
Vision and Objectives

Wolverhampton Gangs Steering Group agreed a shared vision is paramount in taking forward this agenda as a partnership.

Endorsed by SWP our vision is:

Committed to preventing gang related harm and youth violence, together

Our Objectives



Our Approach

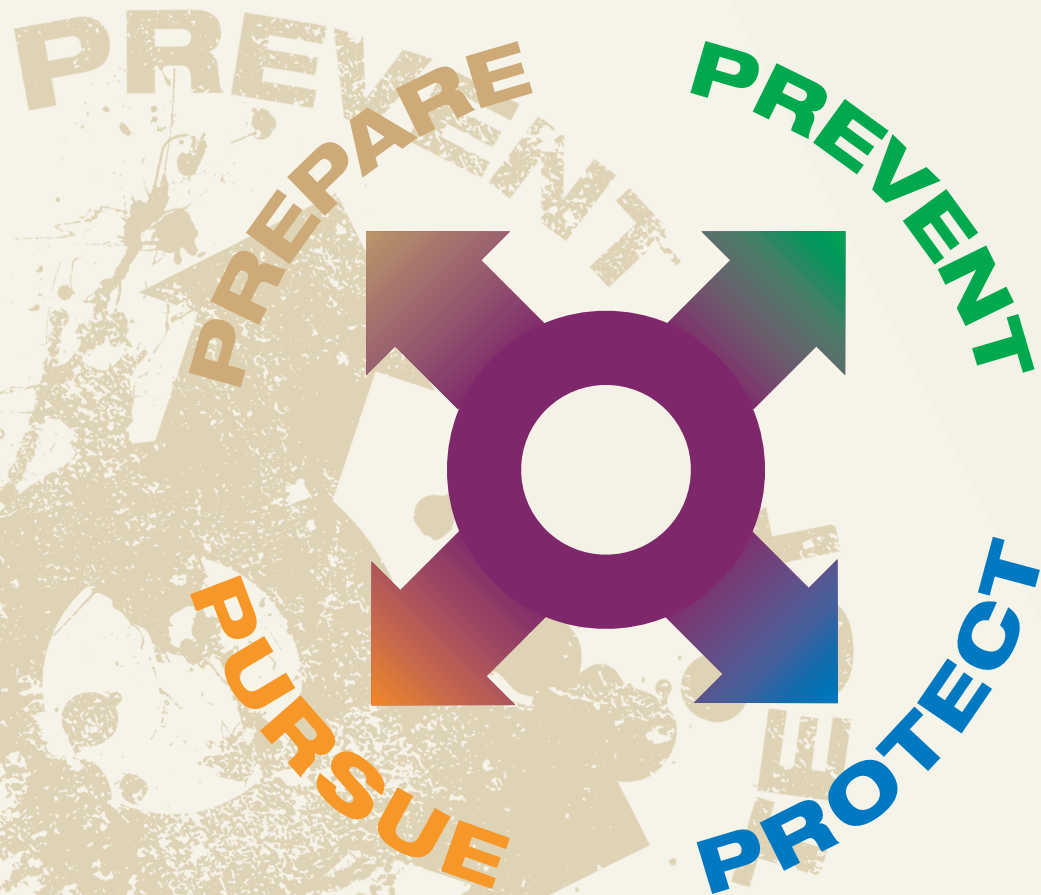
The model which has been adopted is a well-established tried and tested approach in achieving key objectives, particularly across the crime and community safety world.

Wrapped around this approach will be robust governance and delivery structures made up of a range of statutory and third sector

partners, and importantly members of the community who play a key role in addressing this agenda.

Delivery of objectives will be via adopted model of:

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Delivery Outcomes

Prevent

The prevention strand will identify individuals at risk of becoming gang members or those vulnerable as a result of gang involvement. It will seek to identify those at risk of being harmed by gangs or youth related violence. The approach will work with these individuals and their families to prevent further harm by identifying longer term solutions to reducing this behaviour. Success can be gained by partners working together to tackle some of the underlying causes. Individuals are often known to a range of services, therefore there are significant opportunities for intervention and prevention. The strand will aim to prevent vulnerability and harm to communities and victims who are affected by gang involvement.

Early areas of focus will be centred on raising awareness and knowledge of risk across agencies, target support to families at risk, integrate the approach more directly into safeguarding practice, strengthen links to the city's employment and training partners and grow capacity and capability of third sector partners to support delivery.

Outcomes

- Earlier identification of individuals at risk/vulnerable to gang association
- Improved targeting of youth diversion
- Reduced risk of offending
- Reduced harm to families
- Improved prevention interventions
- A shared definition of gangs adopted across the city

Delivery Outcomes

Protect

The aim of this theme is to protect the community against gang related activity, reduce the fear of crime and protect those who are most vulnerable. Communities working together to address concerns, issues and providing support will have a significant role in tackling gang related crime and violence. Local residents need to believe that concerns can be raised confidentially and that issues will be addressed.

Early delivery will include revised arrangements for critical incident response, strengthened systems for information exchange, widened promotion of referral pathways and development of a targeted communications plan.

Outcomes

- Reduced reoffending
- Improved understanding of the risk to prevent offending/harm
- Strengthened community response to critical incidents
- Enhanced intelligence gathering through use of social media
- Improved community reassurance

Delivery Outcomes

Pursue

Pursue will work to identify risk and progress enforcement action against those involved in the most serious violence; it will manage those that are involved in medium-high risk offending, and deter those involved in lower level criminality or anti-social behaviour (ASB) with use of civil powers to aid desistance.

Early delivery will include revised arrangement for critical incident response, strengthened systems for information exchange, widened promotion of referral pathways and extend use of ASB legislation.

Outcomes

- More effective management of threat and risk
- Fewer knife crime incidents
- Fewer gun crime incidents
- Less youth-related violence
- Wider use of legislative powers

Prepare

The prepare strand will strengthen resilience of victims and communities to mitigate the harm caused by gangs and youth violence.

Early focus will include delivery of mediation training for specialist third sector organisations, development of a critical incident protocol and the application of best practice to local approaches.

Outcomes

- Increased community trust and confidence
- Improved joint response to critical incidents
- Greater understanding of gang issues
- A stronger evidence base for what works



Safeguarding

The landscape of gangs in Wolverhampton is changing. The number of active gangs across the city remains small in number; in some cases street gangs are becoming less visible to the public, and more fluid in the way they organise themselves. There is the emergence of younger, more chaotic and violent groups.

Partnership work has shown that young people, who are drawn into gangs, whether as victims, perpetrators or both, are subject to a wide range of risk factors that need a bespoke partnership response - see appendix 2. This response to risk will ensure that young people are appropriately safeguarded. Evidence shows that gangs look and operate differently in each area of Wolverhampton, there is no single universal approach that will work in all cases - see appendix 3 for tiered approaches.

Another risk relates to the safeguarding of vulnerable gang-associated girls and young women; work is needed to change the attitudes amongst young men which can fuel violence and lead to women and girls being exploited. We must ensure that the city's approach to reducing violence against women and girls plays its part in our plan.

There is an improved understanding of the underlying causes of gang violence which demonstrates the need for safeguarding, and requires an increased involvement from health and education agencies. Health services recognise this and view their role in reducing violence with increasing importance. Public Health's commitment to the West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance demonstrates this.

Risk factors do not usually exist in isolation, local multi-agency work on prevention and early intervention must address complex need and coordinate the local offer. Practitioners from all agencies who come into contact with young people from early years onwards need to be alive to these risk factors for risk and threat to be effectively reduced; agencies need to be signed up to the plan and ensure alignment with other city-wide strategies.

Gang related harm is a complex issue and the impact on affected families and communities is not consistently part of a co-ordinated and focused response. Further work is needed to dovetail specialist gangs and youth violence responses with universal services and programmes such as Early Help and Troubled Families. The city's Children, Young People and Families Plan 2015-2025 supports the need for this co-ordinated and focused approach in relation to young people and families and its aims align with this strategy.

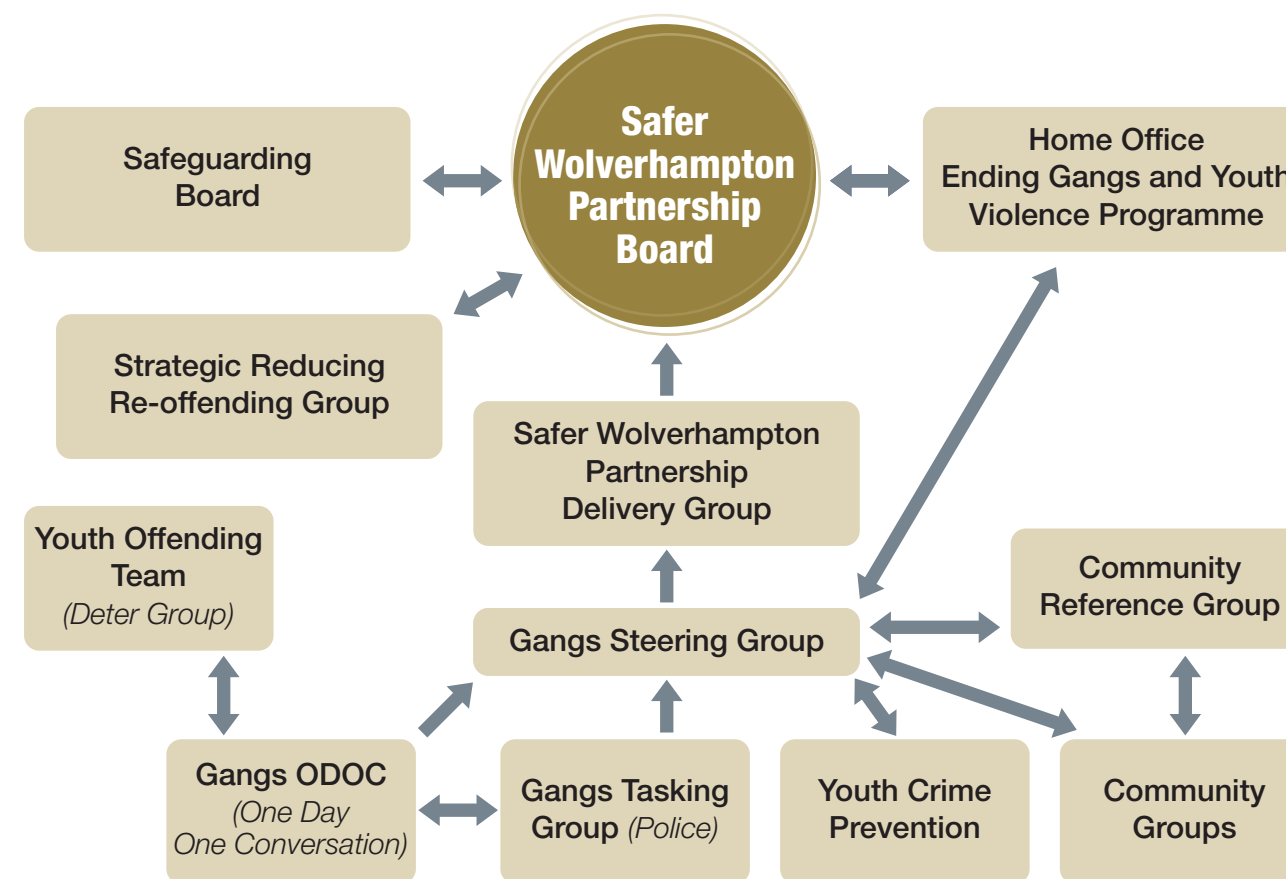
Finally tackling the links between serious and organised crime and street gangs is crucial in preventing gang violence and crime and in stopping street gang members from being drawn into more serious organised criminal activity. The local and regional approach to address organised crime supports the aims of this strategy.

Governance

SWP governance structures are robust, providing a clear thread from strategic to operational arenas. Community links and information sharing forms an integral part in governance and delivery structures; the

structure chart below outlines relationships with key groups contributing to the prevention of gang harm and youth violence.

See appendix 4 for a list of key partners.



Governance

Links to key strategies and programmes

**Preventing
Gang Involvement
and Youth
Violence Strategy
2016 -2019**

**West Midlands Police
and Crime Commissioner
Police and Crime Plan**

Wolverhampton Police Local Policing Plan

Youth Justice Plan

**Wolverhampton Children, Young People
and Families Plan**

Violence Against Women and Girls

Safeguarding Business Plan

Families in Focus

Strengthening Families

Police and Schools Panels

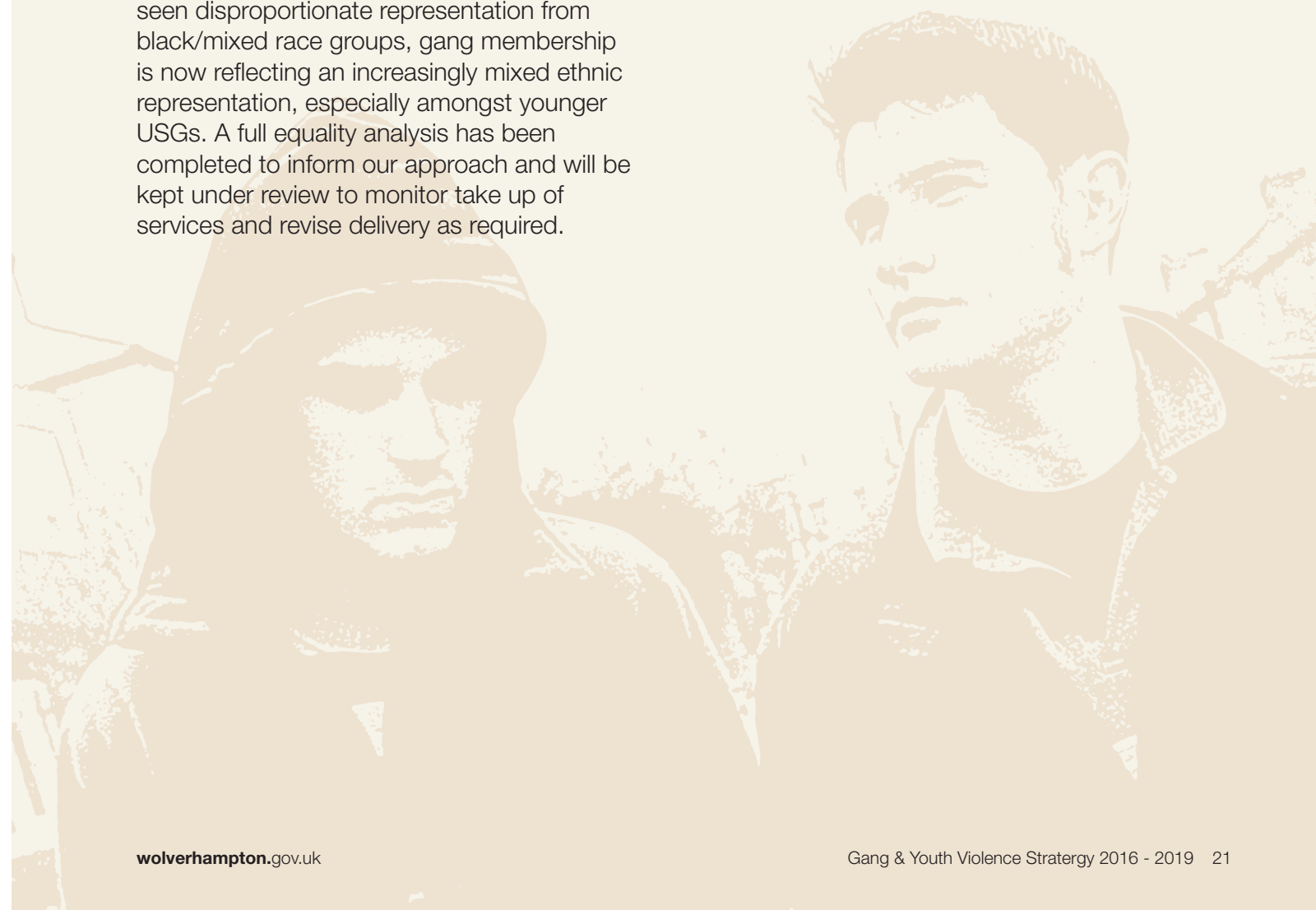
Targeted Youth Support Panels

Equalities

The strategy aims to identify those in need of support at an earlier point, progress enforcement action against offenders, and direct services at those who are known to be active gang members or those at risk of gang membership.

The gangs and youth violence profile undertaken highlights the strategy will impact predominantly on males spanning a wide age range, and females, due to their vulnerability from associations with gang members. Whilst historically, established gang membership has seen disproportionate representation from black/mixed race groups, gang membership is now reflecting an increasingly mixed ethnic representation, especially amongst younger USGs. A full equality analysis has been completed to inform our approach and will be kept under review to monitor take up of services and revise delivery as required.

When considering the development of the strategy, consultations were held with a wide cross section of the community, those included in the consultation process were; members of the general public, community leaders, voluntary and community sectors groups including prominent youth groups as well as statutory services. A number of structured questions were asked to ensure that the process captured a comprehensive response from those consulted.



Appendix 1 - Target Age Group

Children & Young People have been described as persons under the age of 18 years. It is recognised that the 18 to 24 year age range is a key stage of young people's development. The brain is still developing, this period is key for gaining independence, socialising, experimenting with drink, drugs and sexual relationships and a time in a person's life when they are most likely to come into contact with the Police through offending or as a victim/witness.

For these reasons, for the purposes of this strategy, Children & Young People should be defined as everyone up to and including the age of 24 years. This can be divided into three distinct groups:

- Under 10 years of age - Children below the age of criminal responsibility
- 10 to 17 years of age - Children & Young People above the age of criminal responsibility
- 18 to 24 years old - Young adult

Appendix 2 - Risk factors for a person becoming involved in gangs

Child Development

HIGH RISK FACTORS

- Early problems with antisocial and criminal behaviour
- Persistent offending
- Unable to regulate own emotions and behaviour
- Physical violence and aggression
- Permanent exclusion from school
- Friends condoning or involved in antisocial and aggressive behaviour
- Alcohol and drug misuse

MEDIUM RISK FACTORS

- Mental health problems
- Aggression, behavioural problems
- Depression
- Truancy and unauthorised absence from school
- Bullied or bullying others
- Medical history of repeated injuries or accidents
- Child in local authority care or leaving care

LOW RISK FACTORS

- Aggressive bullying by siblings
- Lack of ethnic identity
- Peer rejection
- Not involved in positive activities
- Few social ties
- Exposure to violent media

(Source: Home Office)



Risk factors for a person becoming involved in gangs

Parenting Capacity

HIGH RISK FACTORS

- Historically involved with or known to social services
- Lax parental supervision
- Lack of parental attachment to child
- Conflict and violence in the home
- Parental abuse
- Parents aggressive towards or unwilling to engage with statutory agencies
- Child is not protected from significant harm or danger, including contact with unsafe adults

MEDIUM RISK FACTORS

- Lack of emotional care
- Allowing child to associate with known troublemakers
- Violent discipline
- Lack of parental discipline
- Inconsistent or minimal boundaries

LOW RISK FACTORS

- Parents don't model positive and responsible behaviour
- Absent parent
- Unstable family environment
- Child left with multiple or unsuitable carers
- Parents unable to communicate effectively with children
- Parent-child separation

Family & Environment

HIGH RISK FACTORS

- Family members involved with or associated with gangs
- Wider family involved with gangs
- Community norms that tolerate crime
- Local tensions between ethnic/cultural/religious gangs
- Known gang recruitment at school
- Presence of gangs in community
- High level of local crime including drugs market

MEDIUM RISK FACTORS

- Availability and use of drugs
- Criminal conviction of parents or siblings
- Witness or victim of domestic violence

LOW RISK FACTORS

- Lack of positive role models in the community
- Transient families
- Lack of age-appropriate, safe play facilities or diversionary activities for young people in the area
- Financial difficulties affecting child Little interaction with neighbours and community
- High unemployment
- Sustained poverty
- Lack of reliable support from wider family
- Limited access to conventional careers

(Source: Home Office)

Appendix 3 - Intervention linked in response to risk and vulnerability

4 tiers of need and intervention based on Hardiker, Exton & Barker 1991



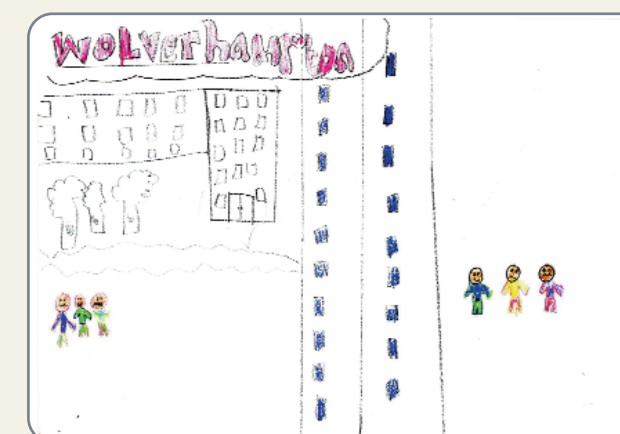
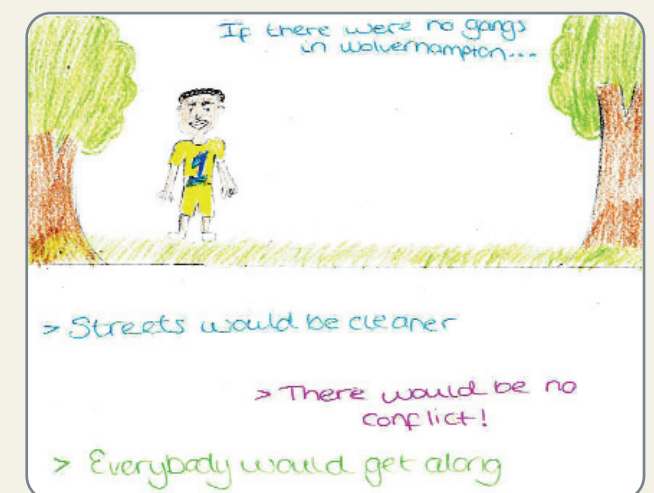
Appendix 4 - Preventing Gang and Youth Violence Partners

- Base 25
- Believe to Achieve
- Catch 22
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- Community Safety Team - City of Wolverhampton Council
- Connexions
- C3
- EYEs
- Hope Centre Project
- HM Prison Service
- Lime Productions
- National Probation Service
- Office for Policing & Crime
- Public Health - City of Wolverhampton Council
- Recovery Near You
- Safeguarding - City of Wolverhampton Council
- Square Pegs Round Holes
- Victim Support
- West Midlands Fire Service
- West Midlands Police
- Wolverhampton Citizens for Change
- Wolverhampton Homes
- Youth Offending Team - City of Wolverhampton Council
- Youth of Wolverhampton

Artwork Competition

Runners up

Pictures submitted by children attending The Hope Centre, Heath Town, Wolverhampton.



*what would
Wolverhampton look like
if the strategy delivered
successfully and
Gangs/Youth Violence
was addressed...*

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