

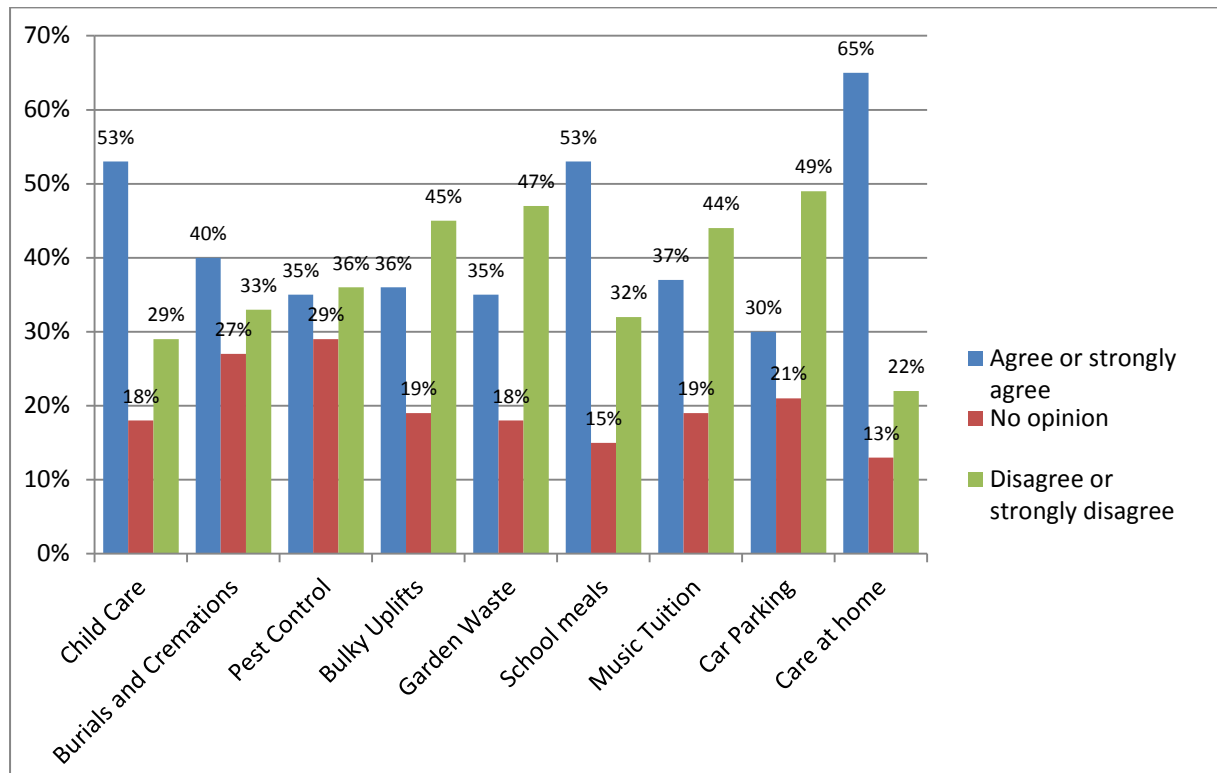
Choices & Challenges: Budget Consultation 2018 Results

We ran a survey, between 15th October 2018 and 12th November 2018, to ask the public for their opinions on potential budget cuts and savings. The survey received 2028 responses and the results will be used to inform decisions made by the Council's spending for 2019/20 and beyond. The results are presented below.

Services

We asked respondents a number of questions about the cost and provision of Council services. We asked if they would be prepared to pay new or increased charges to maintain and protect a range of services. As can be seen in Figure 1, 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would be prepared to pay new or increased charges to maintain and protect the provision of care at home. While this suggests that the public would be in favour of increasing charges for care at home, we should be mindful that just 2% of the respondents were aged over 65, and just 12% had a physical or mental health condition or illness or learning disability (see Appendix 2). These groups are most likely to use care at home services.

FIGURE 1: I WOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY NEW OR INCREASED CHARGES TO MAINTAIN AND PROTECT THE FOLLOWING SERVICES.

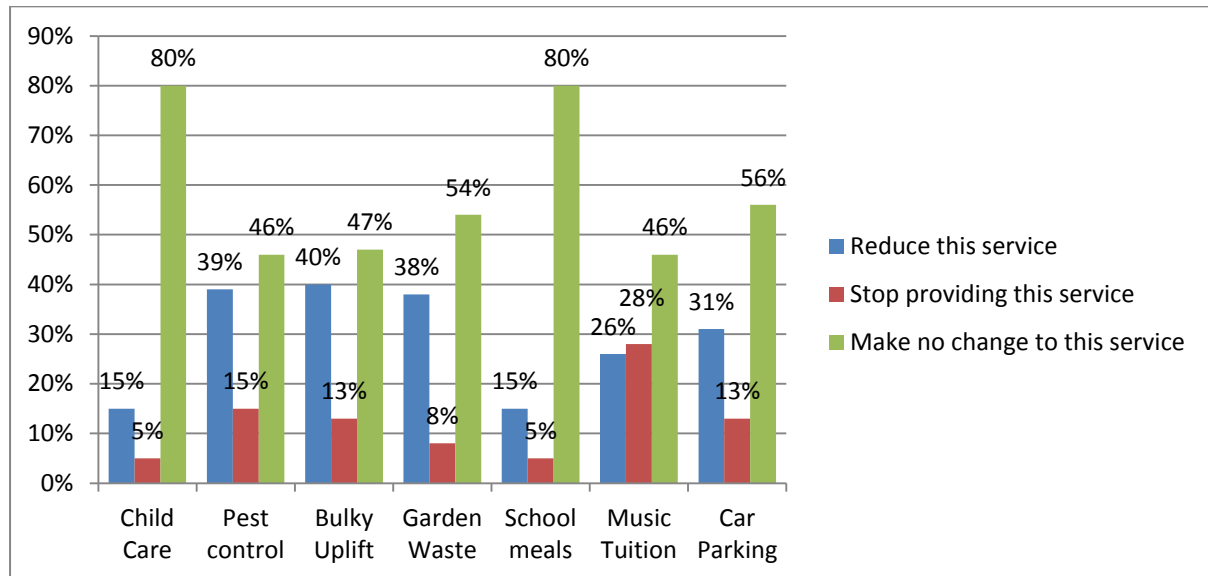


As can be seen in Figure 1, 53% of respondents also agree or strongly agree that they would be prepared to pay new or increased charges to maintain and protect schools meals and child care. The services that respondents were least prepared to pay new or increased charges for were: car parking (49%); garden waste (47%); bulky uplifts (45%); and music tuition (44%).

We asked respondents whether the Council should reduce or stop providing certain services rather than increasing charges. As can be seen in Figure 2, there was little support for ending the provision of services. Support increased for the reduction of services. 40% of respondents supported reducing bulky uplifts; 39% supported reducing pest control; and 38% supported reducing garden waste. Most respondents, however, indicated that they would prefer no changes to be made to

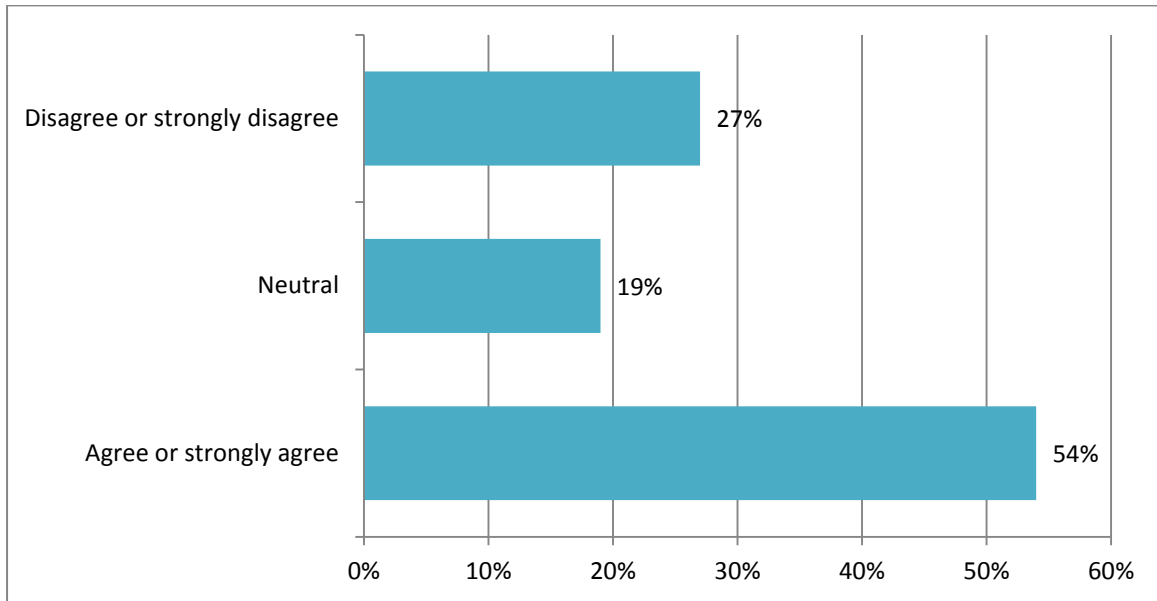
the provision of services, particularly in the case of child care (80%), school meals (80%) and car parking (56%).

FIGURE 2: SHOULD THE COUNCIL REDUCE OR STOP PROVIDING CERTAIN SERVICES RATHER THAN INCREASING CHARGES?



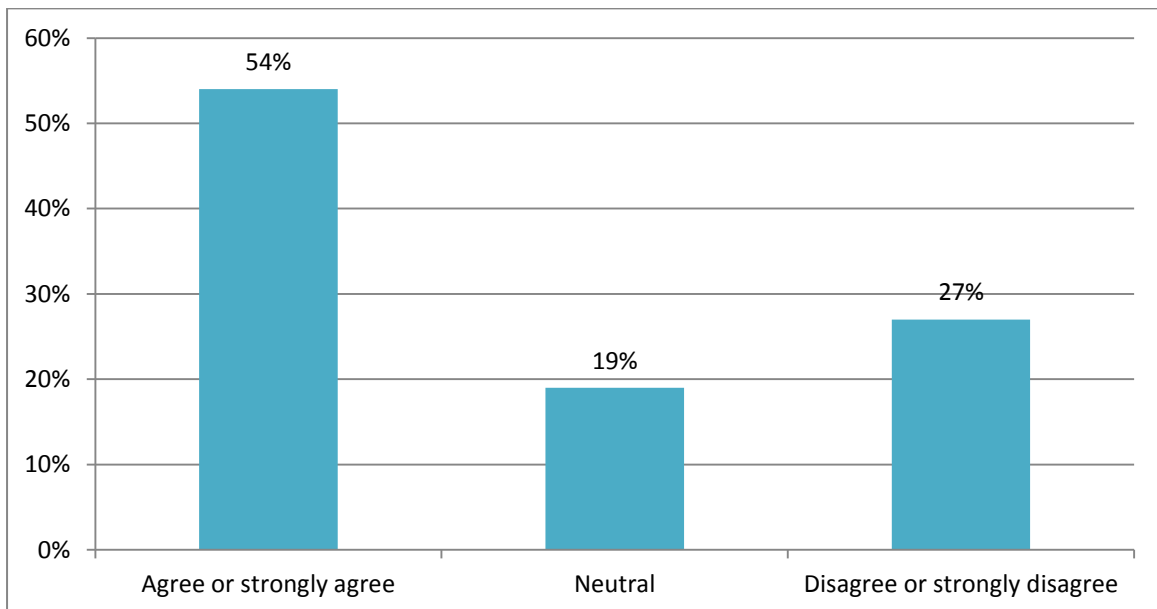
We asked respondents whether the Council should offer a discount on service charges for low income households. As Figure 3 shows, 54% of respondents agree or strongly agree that a discount should be offered.

FIGURE 3: SHOULD THE COUNCIL OFFER A DISCOUNT ON SERVICE CHARGES FOR LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS?



We asked respondents whether the Council should introduce charges for the Garden Aid Service. As Figure 4 shows, 54% of respondents agree or strongly agree that charges should be introduced.

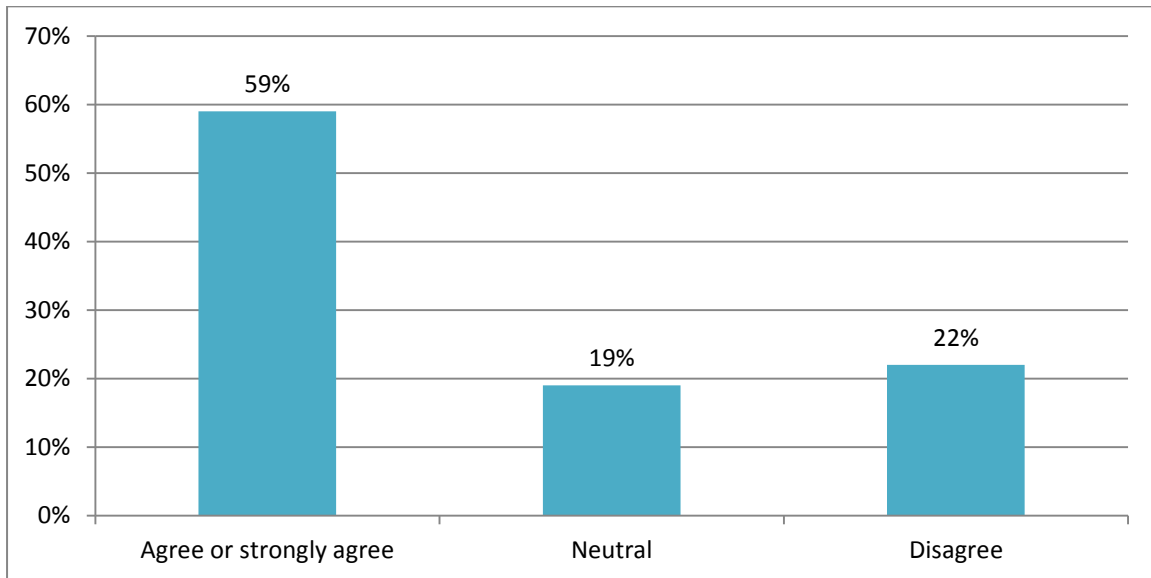
FIGURE 4: SHOULD CHARGES BE MADE FOR THE GARDEN AID SERVICE?



We told respondents that the Council will have less resources in future years and asked, with this in mind, whether the community should have more responsibility for managing and maintaining services. As can be seen in Figure 5, 59% of respondents

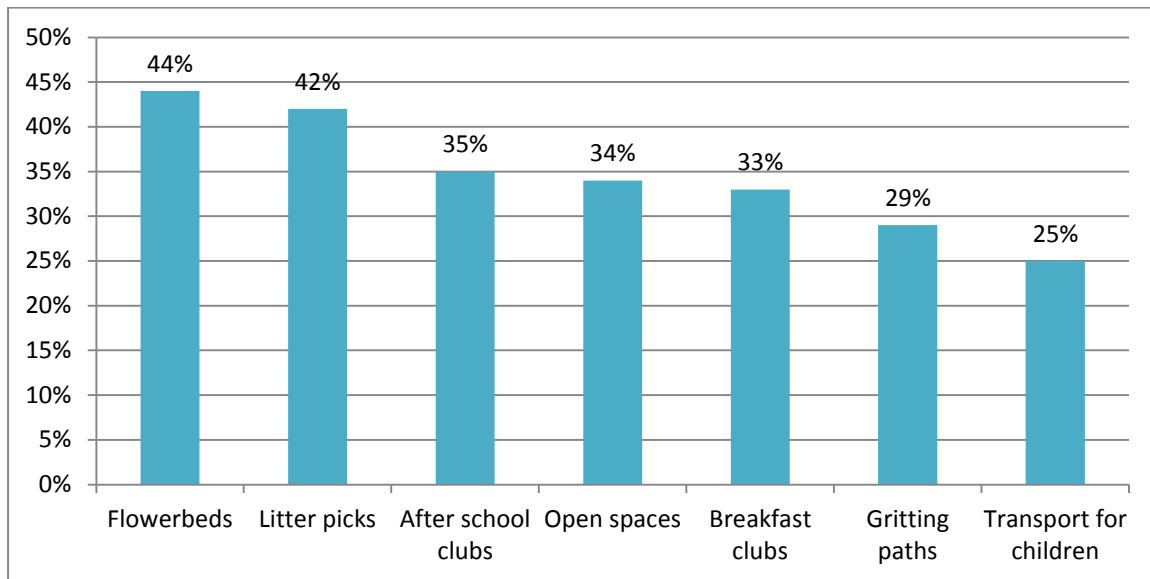
agree or strongly agree that the community should have more responsibility for managing and maintaining services.

FIGURE 5: SHOULD THE COMMUNITY HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING AND MAINTAINING SERVICES?



We asked respondents which services the community should manage and maintain. As can be seen in Figure 6, flowerbeds (44%) and litter picks (42%) were the most popular choices. Gritting paths (29%) and transport for children (25%) were the least popular options.

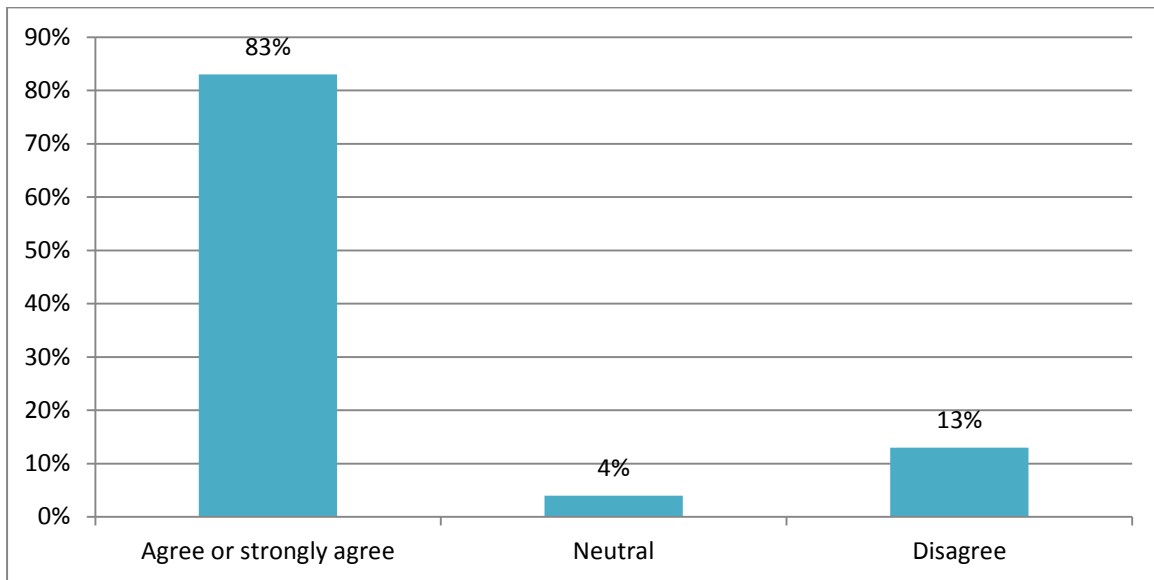
FIGURE 6: IF SO, WHAT SERVICES?



Online Services

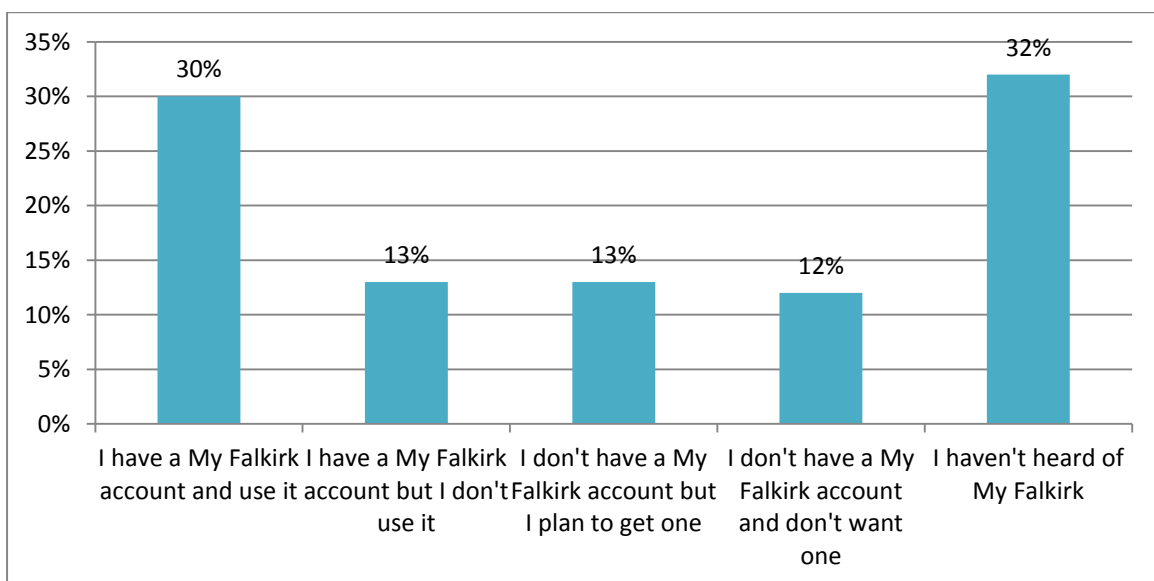
We asked respondents a number of questions about existing and potential online services. We told respondents that it is cheaper to provide services online rather than in person or by phone. We asked whether more services should be made available online. This would include services, such as: requesting repairs to Council homes; applying for Council housing; applying for nursery places; reporting fly tipping; and applying for a parking permit. As Figure 7 shows, 83% of respondents agree or strongly agree that more services should be provided online.

FIGURE 7: IT IS CHEAPER TO PROVIDE SERVICES ONLINE RATHER THAN IN PERSON OR BY PHONE. SHOULD MORE SERVICES BE MADE AVAILABLE ONLINE TO REDUCE COSTS?



We asked respondents whether they already use online services provided through My Falkirk. As Figure 8 shows, 30% of respondents have a My Falkirk account and use it and a further 13% have a My Falkirk account but don't use it. 13% of respondents who do not currently have a My Falkirk account plan to get one and 12% who do not currently have an account stated they do not want one. 32% of respondents have not heard of My Falkirk.

FIGURE 8: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES YOU?

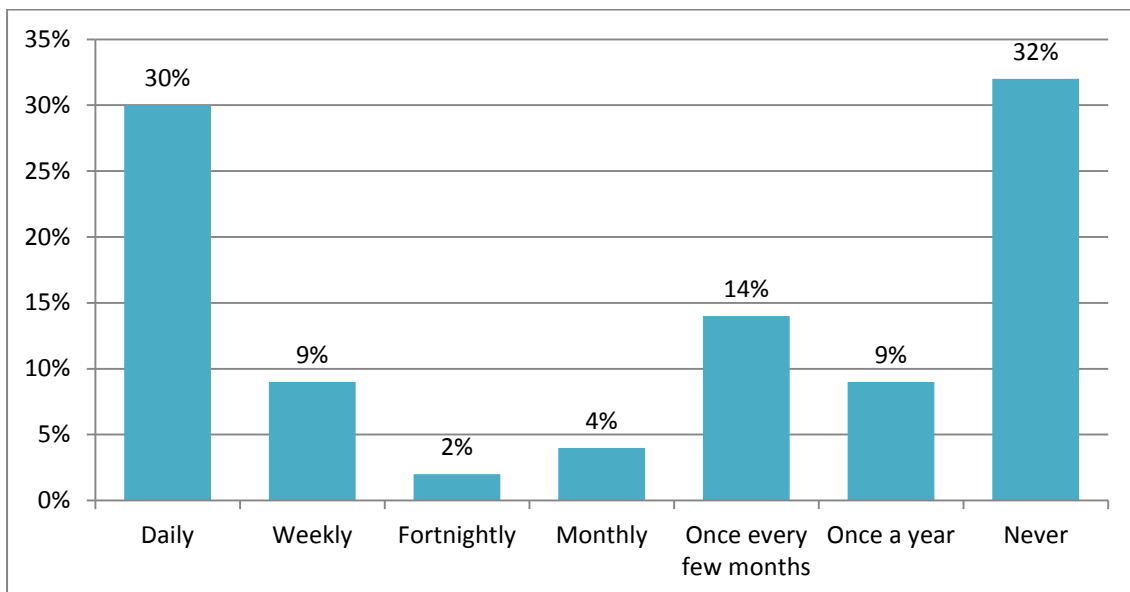


The data suggests that women between the ages of 25-44 are most likely to have not heard of My Falkirk. Work is currently ongoing to better promote My Falkirk and increase the number of sign ups. The data will be analysed further to better target this promotion.

Buildings

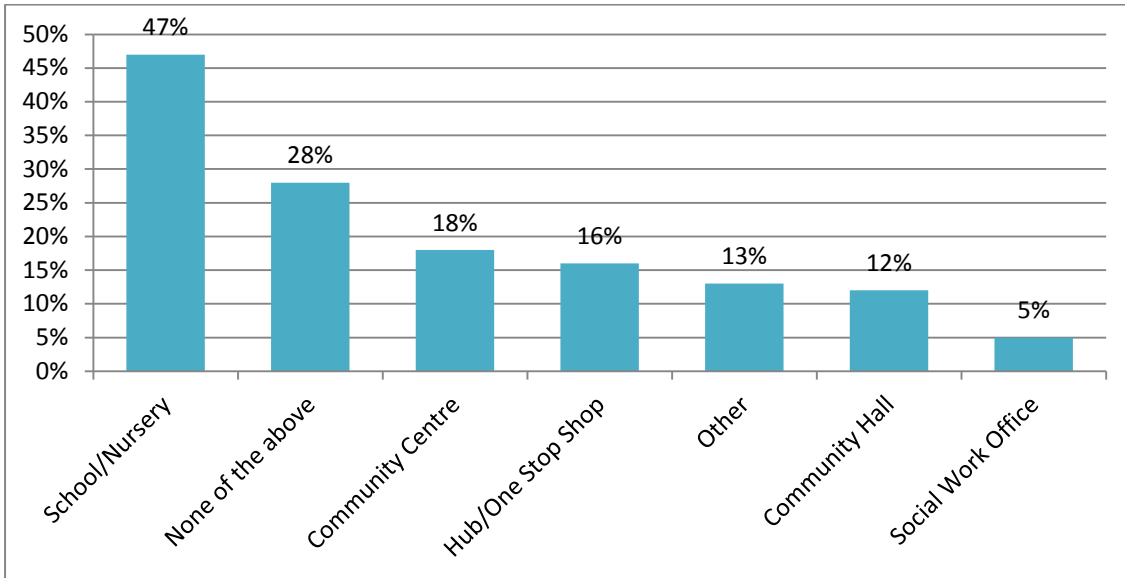
We asked respondents a range of questions about their use of Council buildings and potential cuts to Council buildings. We asked respondents how often they visit a Council building. As Figure 9 shows, 30% of respondents visit a Council building daily and 32% never visit a Council building at all.

FIGURE 9: HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT A COUNCIL BUILDING?



We asked respondents which Council buildings they visit. As Figure 10 shows, the most visited Council buildings are schools and nurseries (47%) and the least visited are social work offices (5%).

FIGURE 10: WHICH COUNCIL BUILDINGS DO YOU VISIT?



In Figure 11 and Table 1, we can see that the frequency of visit differs for different types of Council buildings. Daily visits are highest for social work offices (61%), schools and nurseries (50%) and other (43%). It is possible that “other” may include Council work places.

FIGURE 11: FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO COUNCIL BUILDING TYPE

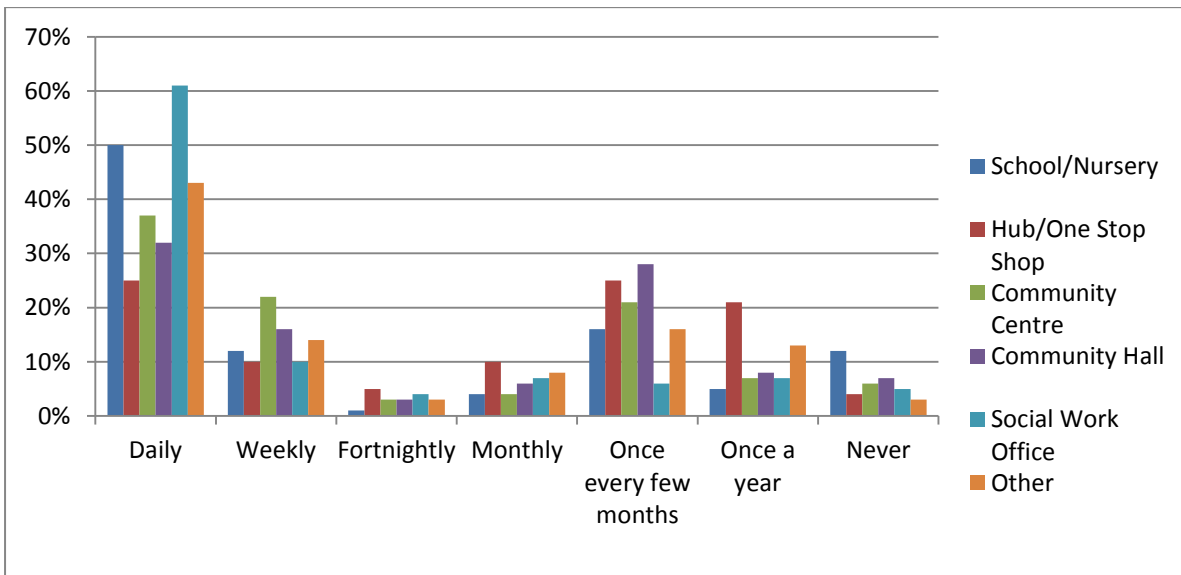
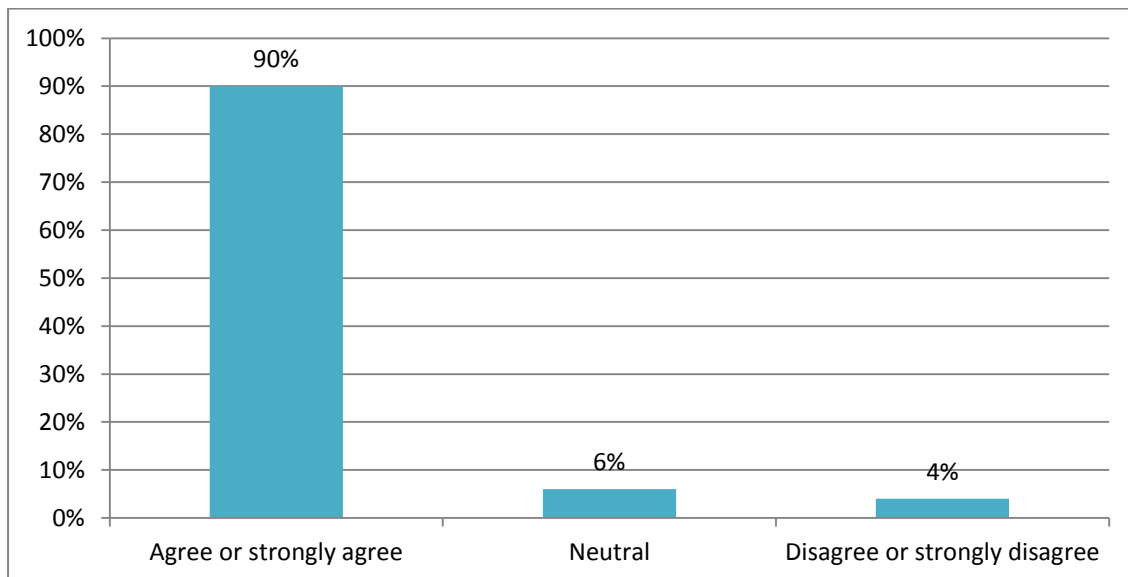


TABLE 1: FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO COUNCIL BUILDING TYPE

	Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Once every few months	Once a year	Never
School/Nursery	50%	12%	1%	4%	16%	5%	12%
Hub/One Stop Shop	25%	10%	5%	10%	25%	21%	4%
Community Centre	37%	22%	3%	4%	21%	7%	6%
Community Hall	32%	16%	3%	6%	28%	8%	7%
Social Work Office	61%	10%	4%	7%	6%	7%	5%
Other	43%	14%	3%	8%	16%	13%	3%

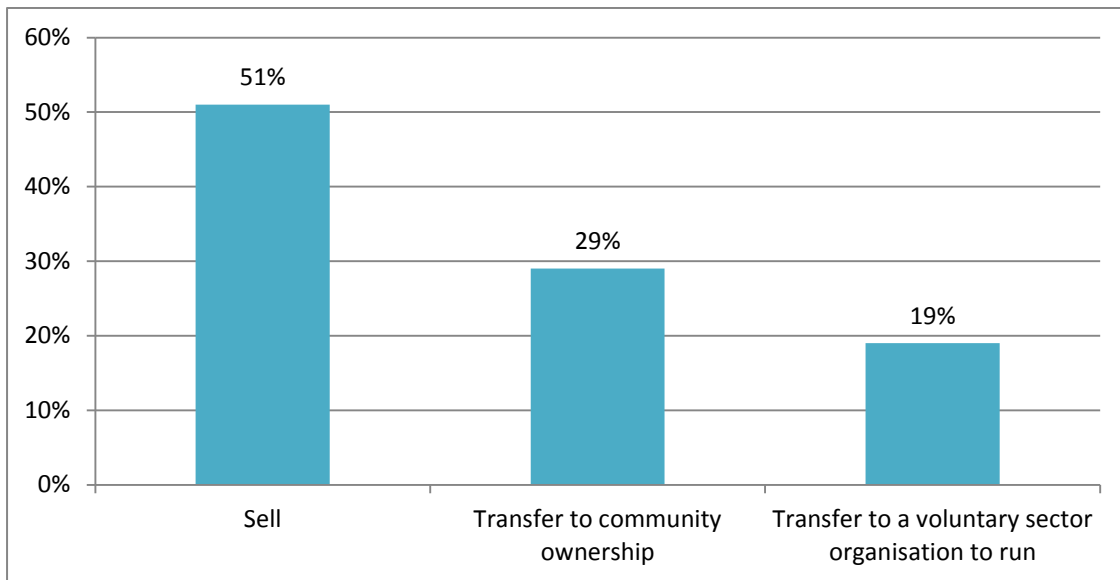
We asked respondents whether the Council should look at how savings can be made by better use of its public buildings. This may involve reviewing opening hours, moving some services, or sharing properties with public sector partners. As Figure 12 shows, 90% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the Council should review how it uses buildings.

FIGURE 12: DO YOU THINK THE COUNCIL SHOULD LOOK AT HOW SAVINGS CAN BE MADE BY BETTER USE OF ITS PUBLIC BUILDINGS?



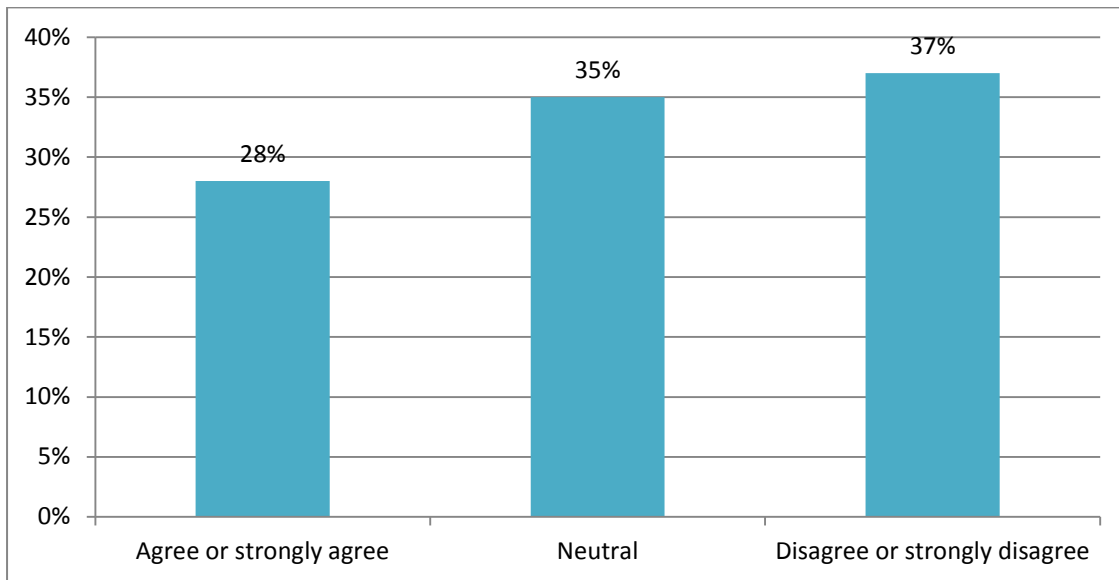
We asked respondents what we should do with buildings the Council is unable to afford to operate and upkeep. As Figure 13 shows, 51% of respondents think the Council should sell these buildings.

FIGURE 13: WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH BUILDINGS THE COUNCIL IS UNABLE TO AFFORD TO OPERATE AND UPKEEP?



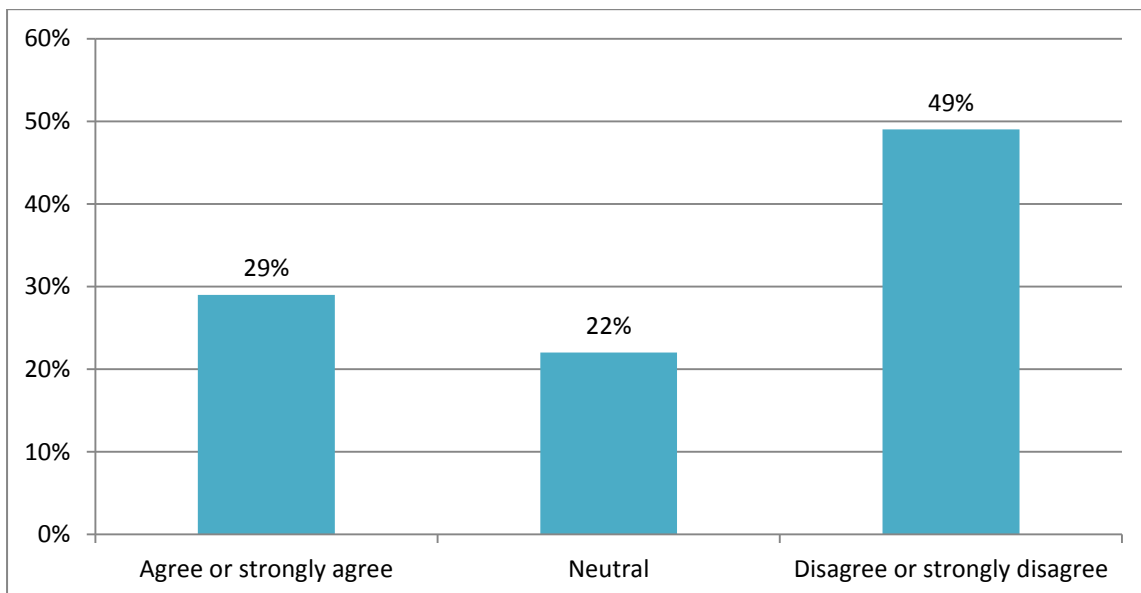
We asked respondents whether they would be willing to volunteer with their community to manage and run Council buildings that are facing closure. As Figure 14 shows, just 28% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they are willing to do so.

FIGURE 14: IF A COUNCIL OWNED BUILDING IN YOUR AREA WAS FACING CLOSURE, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO VOLUNTEER WITH YOUR COMMUNITY TO MANAGE AND RUN THE BUILDING?



We told respondents that it costs £283,000 a year to run 20 community centres. We asked respondents whether this funding should be reduced. As Figure 15 shows, 49% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that funding should be reduced.

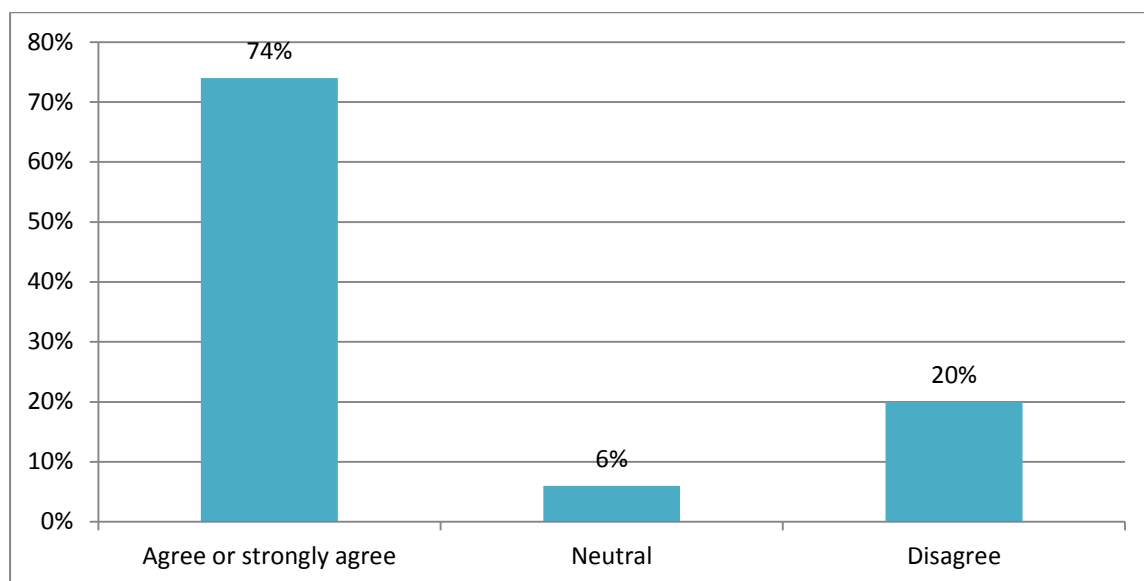
FIGURE 15: THE COUNCIL RUNS 20 COMMUNITY CENTRES AT AN ANNUAL COST OF £283,800. DO YOU THINK THIS SHOULD BE REDUCED?



Schools

We told respondents that a number of local schools – Avonbridge Primary, Bothkennar Primary, Drumbowie Primary and Limerigg Primary – are less than 50% full. We asked respondents whether these schools should be merged with other local schools to reduce money spent on school buildings. As Figure 16 shows, 74% of respondents agree or strongly agree that these schools should be merged.

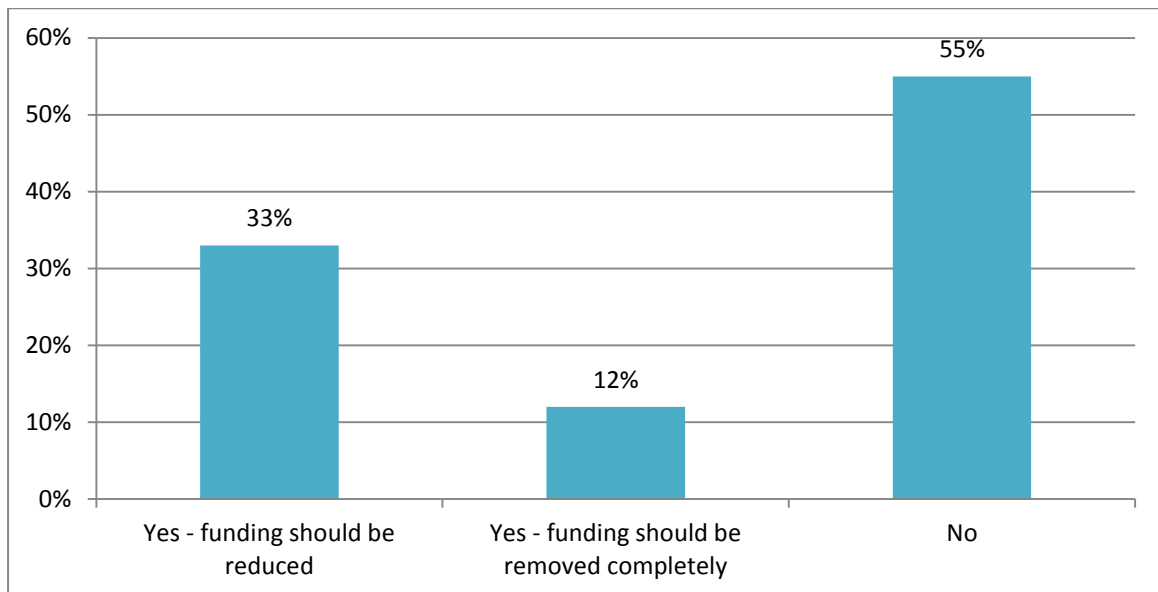
FIGURE 16: A SMALL NUMBER OF LOCAL SCHOOLS ARE LESS THAN 50% FULL. SHOULD THESE BE MERGED WITH OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS TO REDUCE THE MONEY SPENT ON SCHOOL BUILDINGS?



Transport

We told respondents that the Council subsidises less popular bus services that are not commercially viable. We asked respondents whether this funding should be reduced or removed. As Figure 17 shows, 50% of respondents want this funding to be protected; 33% think it should be reduced and just 12% think funding should be removed completely.

FIGURE 17: THE COUNCIL SUBSIDISES LESS POPULAR BUS SERVICES THAT ARE NOT COMMERCIALY VIABLE. THIS MEANS THESE SERVICES CAN CONTINUE TO RUN. SHOULD THIS FUNDING BE REDUCED OR REMOVED?

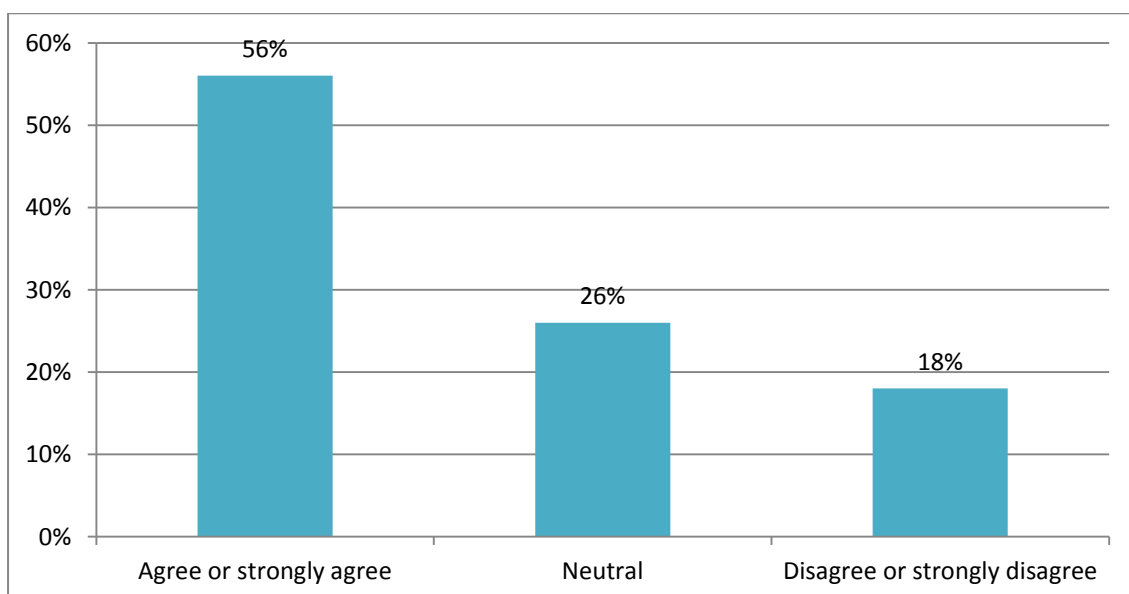


Housing

We asked respondents whether the Council should introduce and charge for a factoring system for properties in an area with a mix of Council and private owners.

As Figure 18 shows, 56% of respondents agree or strongly agree.

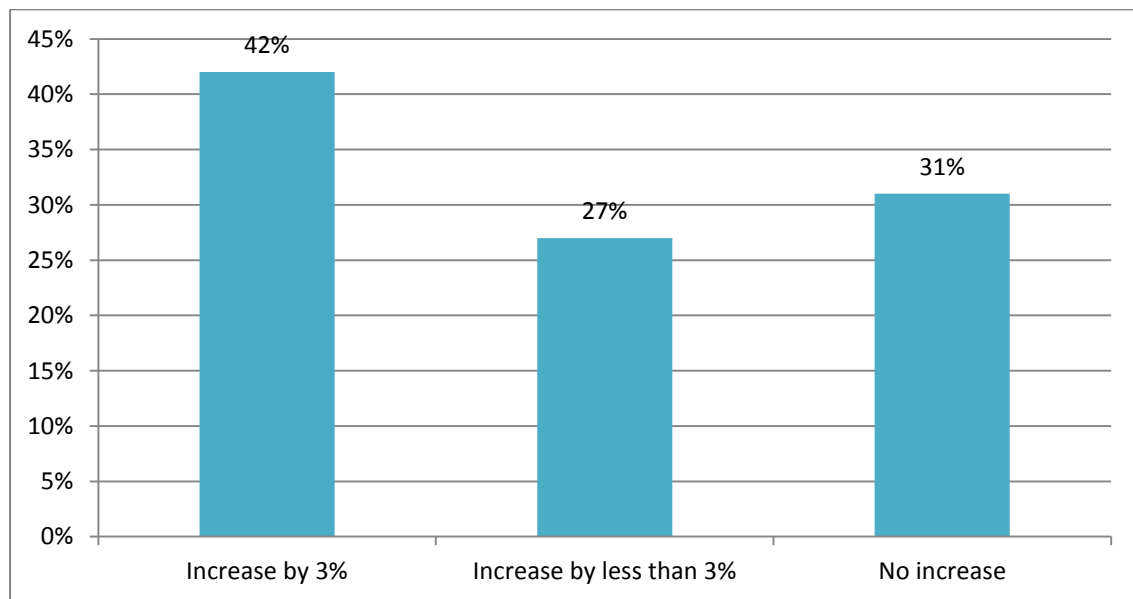
FIGURE 18: SHOULD THE COUNCIL CONSIDER INTRODUCING AND CHARGING FOR A FACTORING SYSTEM FOR PROPERTIES IN AN AREA WITH A MIX OF COUNCIL AND PRIVATE OWNERS?



Council Tax

We asked respondents whether the Council should apply the 3% maximum increase in Council Tax. As Figure 19 shows, 42% of respondents think Council Tax should be increased by the maximum 3%; 27% think it should be increased by less than 3%; and 31% think there should be no increase at all.

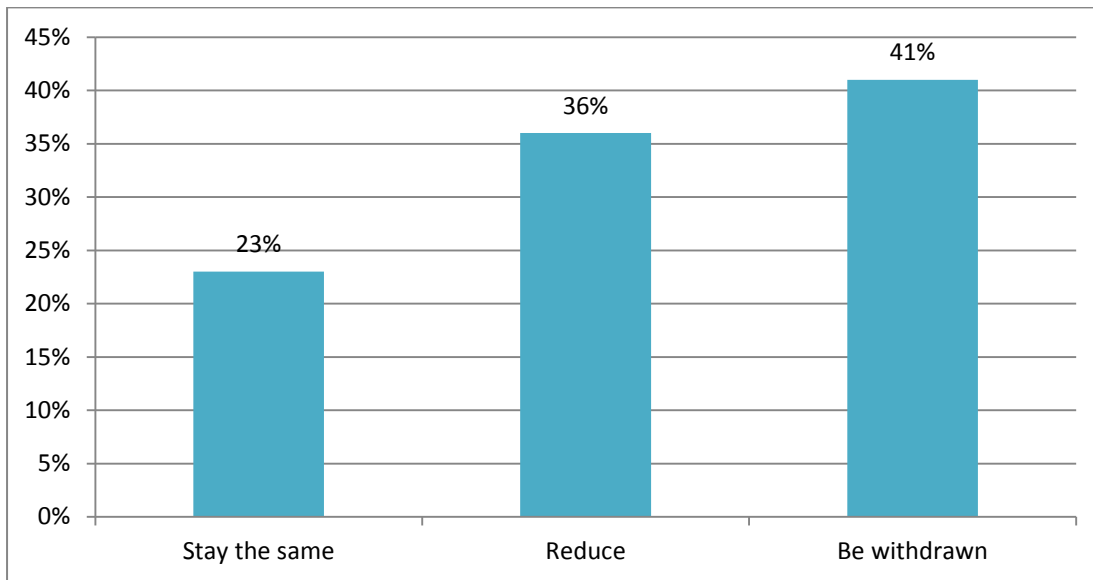
FIGURE 19: SHOULD THE COUNCIL APPLY THE MAXIMUM INCREASE IN COUNCIL TAX (3%)?



Gala Days and Community Events

We told respondents that the Council spends around £30,000 each year on gala days and other community events, including £21,000 on the Bo'ness Children's Fair Festival. We asked respondents whether this funding should stay the same, reduce or be withdrawn. As Figure 20 shows, 41% of respondents believe this funding should be withdrawn and 36% think it should be reduced.

FIGURE 20: THE COUNCIL PROVIDES FUNDING FOR GALA DAYS AND OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS. SHOULD FUNDING STAY THE SAME, REDUCE OR BE WITHDRAWN?



For more information on this survey, please contact emily.webb@falkirk.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Sample

A statistically significant sample size¹ of 1061 was calculated using a confidence level of 95%² and margin of error of 3%³. The survey received 2028 responses. The actual margin of error is, therefore, 2%. This means that if 40% of respondents, for example, pick an answer, we can be sure that, if we have asked the question to the entire Falkirk Council population, between 38% and 42% would have picked that answer 95% of the time. In other words, this is an *extremely good* sample size.

We asked respondents to complete a number of Equality Monitoring questions at the end of the survey. This was voluntary and around 82% of respondents completed these questions. This gives us an indication of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Figure 21, for example, shows the number of respondents in each age group. This is compared to the Falkirk Council population as a whole. We can see from this that each age group is either over or underrepresented to some degree.

¹ This is the number of people we needed to respond to the survey in order for the results to be representative of the wider population.

² **Confidence Level** — This tells you how sure you can be of the margin of error. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer lies within the margin of error. If you want 95% confidence, this means that 5 out of 100 responses would lie outside of your margin of error.

³ **Margin of Error** — Margin of error tells you how much you can expect your survey results to reflect the views from the overall population. The smaller the margin of error, the more confidence you may have in your results. The bigger the margin of error, the farther they can stray from the views of the total population. For example, a 60% “yes” response with a margin of error of 4% means that between 56% and 64% of the general population think that the answer is “yes.”

FIGURE 21: AGE OF RESPONDENTS COMPARED TO FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA POPULATION

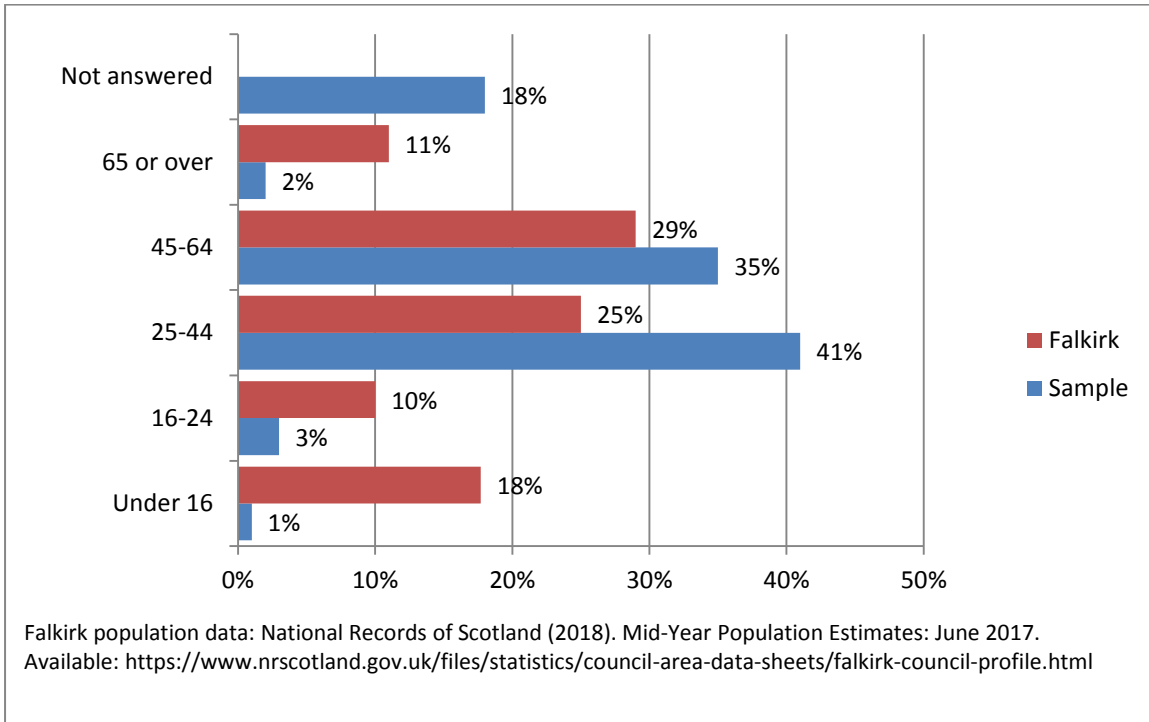


Figure 22 shows the gender of the respondents compared to the Falkirk Council area population as a whole. It indicates that men are underrepresented in this study; however this may be because men were less likely to complete the Equality Monitoring questions.

FIGURE 22: GENDER OF RESPONDENTS COMPARED TO FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA POPULATION

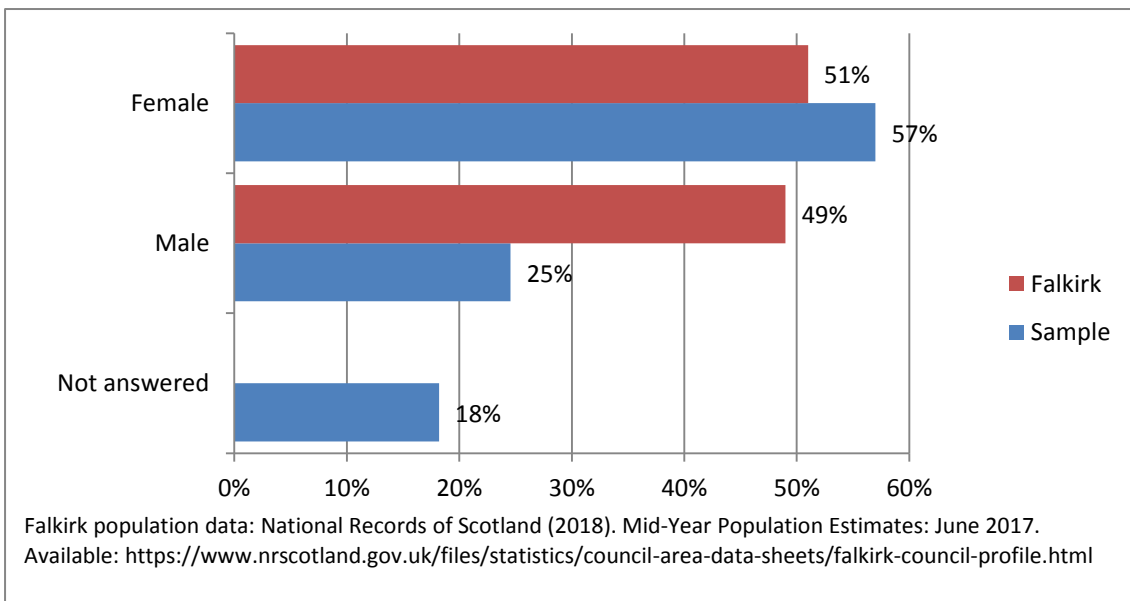


Table 2 shows the ethnicity of the respondents compared to the Falkirk Council area population as a whole. It indicates that the sample is largely representative of the ethnic makeup of the Falkirk Council population.

TABLE 2: ETHNICITY OF RESPONDENTS COMPARED TO FALKIRK COUNCIL POPULATION AS A WHOLE

Ethnicity	Sample	Falkirk
White Scottish	64.94%	91.30%
White British	12.36%	4.50%
White Irish	0.84%	0.60%
White other	1.33%	0.90%
Gypsy and Traveller	0%	0.10%
Polish	0.10%	0.70%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	0.40%	0.20%
Pakistani	0.10%	0.70%
Indian	0%	0.30%
Bangladeshi	0%	0%
Chinese	0.10%	0.20%
Other Asian	0%	0.10%
African	0.05%	0.10%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0%	0.10%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0.10%	0%
Other Black	0%	0%
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0.05%	0.10%
Other	0.45%	0.10%
Not Answered	19.18%	

Falkirk population data: Falkirk Council (2016. Equalities Profile Falkirk 2016. Available <http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/statistics-census/area-settlement-profiles.aspx>)

Additional Equality Monitoring data, including nationality, employment status, and disability, is included in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2: Equality Monitoring Data

TABLE 1: AGE OF RESPONDENTS (RESPONSE RATE: 82%)

	Sample	Falkirk
Under 16	1%	17.70%
16-24	3%	10%
25-44	41%	25.00%
45-64	35%	29%
65 or over	2%	11%
Not answered	18%	

TABLE 2: AGE OF RESPONDENTS (RESPONSE RATE: 82%)

	Sample	Falkirk
Other	0.30%	
Not answered	18%	
Male	25%	49%
Female	57%	51%

TABLE 3: SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF RESPONDENTS (RESPONSE RATE: 80%)

	Sample	Falkirk
Heterosexual or Straight	76%	97.50%
Gay or Lesbian	2%	1.20%
Bisexual	1%	1.10%
Other (please specify)	1%	0%
Not answered	20%	

TABLE 4: ETHNICITY OF RESPONDENTS (RESPONSE RATE: 81%)

Ethnicity	Sample	Falkirk
White Scottish	64.94%	91.30%
White British	12.36%	4.50%
White Irish	0.84%	0.60%
White other	1.33%	0.90%
Gypsy and Traveller	0%	0.10%
Polish	0.10%	0.70%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	0.40%	0.20%
Pakistani	0.10%	0.70%
Indian	0%	0.30%
Bangladeshi	0%	0%
Chinese	0.10%	0.20%
Other Asian	0%	0.10%
African	0.05%	0.10%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0%	0.10%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0.10%	0%
Other Black	0%	0%
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0.05%	0.10%
Other	0.45%	0.10%
Not Answered	19.18%	

TABLE 5: ARE YOU A BRITISH/ UNITED KINGDOM NATIONAL? (RESPONSE RATE: 82%)

Yes	81%
No	1%
Not answered	18%

TABLE 6: ARE YOU A NATIONAL OF ANOTHER COUNTRY? (RESPONSE RATE: 16%)

EU national	15%
Refugee	0%
Asylum seeker	0%
Other (please specify)	1%
Not Answered	84%

TABLE 7: RELIGION OF RESPONDENTS (RESPONSE RATE: 80%)

	Sample	Falkirk
None	46%	36%
Church of Scotland	19%	36.50%
Roman Catholic	8%	12.30%
Other Christian	5%	4.10%
Muslim	0.05%	0.90%
Buddhist	1%	
Sikh	0%	
Jewish	0.20%	
Hindu	0.05%	
Pagan	0.39%	
Other (please specify)	0.79%	
Not Answered	20.00%	

TABLE 8: EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RESPONDENTS (RESPONSE RATE: 82%)

Student	2.22%
Employed / self-employed	71.15%
Not employed and looking for work	0.94%
Not employed and not looking for work	1.92%
Apprentice/ training	0.35%
Retired	3.10%
Other (please specify)	1.78%
Not Answered	18.54%

TABLE 9: ARE YOU A CARER? (RESPONSE RATE: 81%)

Yes	11%
No	70%
Not answered	19%

TABLE 10: DO YOU HAVE A PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR ILLNESS, OR A LEARNING DISABILITY, WHICH YOU EXPECT TO LAST FOR 12 MONTHS OR MORE? (RESPONSE RATE: 82%)

Yes	12%
No	68%
Don't know	1%
Not answered	19%

Appendix 3: Data

Q1: I WOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY NEW OR INCREASED CHARGES TO MAINTAIN AND PROTECT THE FOLLOWING SERVICES.

	Child Care	Burials and Cremations	Pest Control	Bulky Uplifts	Garden Waste	School meals	Music Tuition	Car Parking	Care at home
Agree or strongly agree	53%	40%	35%	36%	35%	53%	37%	30%	65%
No opinion	18%	27%	29%	19%	18%	15%	19%	21%	13%
Disagree or strongly disagree	29%	33%	36%	45%	47%	32%	44%	49%	22%

Q2: SHOULD THE COUNCIL REDUCE OR STOP PROVIDING CERTAIN SERVICES RATHER THAN INCREASING CHARGES?

	Child Care	Pest control	Bulky Uplift	Garden Waste	School meals	Music Tuition	Car Parking
Reduce this service	15%	39%	40%	38%	15%	26%	31%
Stop providing this service	5%	15%	13%	8%	5%	28%	13%
Make no change to this service	80%	46%	47%	54%	80%	46%	56%

Q3: SHOULD THE COUNCIL OFFER A DISCOUNT ON SERVICE CHARGES FOR LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS?

Agree or strongly agree	54%
Neutral	19%
Disagree or strongly disagree	27%

Q4: HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT A COUNCIL BUILDING?

Daily	30%
Weekly	9%
Fortnightly	2%
Monthly	4%
Once every few months	14%
Once a year	9%
Never	32%

Q5: WHICH COUNCIL BUILDINGS DO YOU VISIT?

School/Nursery	47%
None of the above	28%
Community Centre	18%
Hub/One Stop Shop	16%
Other	13%
Community Hall	12%
Social Work Office	5%

Q6: DO YOU THINK THE COUNCIL SHOULD LOOK AT HOW SAVINGS CAN BE MADE BY BETTER USE OF ITS PUBLIC BUILDINGS?

Agree or strongly agree	90%
Neutral	6%
Disagree or strongly disagree	4%

Q7: WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH BUILDINGS THE COUNCIL IS UNABLE TO AFFORD TO OPERATE AND UPKEEP?

Sell	51%
Transfer to community ownership	29%
Transfer to a voluntary sector organisation to run	19%

Q8: IF A COUNCIL OWNED BUILDING IN YOUR AREA WAS FACING CLOSURE, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO VOLUNTEER WITH YOUR COMMUNITY TO MANAGE AND RUN THE BUILDING?

Agree or strongly agree	28%
Neutral	35%
Disagree or strongly disagree	37%

Q9: THE COUNCIL RUNS 20 COMMUNITY CENTRES AT AN ANNUAL COST OF £283,800. DO YOU THINK THIS SHOULD BE REDUCED?

Agree or strongly agree	29%
Neutral	22%
Disagree or strongly disagree	49%

Q10: A SMALL NUMBER OF LOCAL SCHOOLS ARE LESS THAN 50% FULL. SHOULD THESE BE MERGED WITH OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS TO REDUCE THE MONEY SPENT ON SCHOOL BUILDINGS?

Agree or strongly agree	74%
Neutral	6%
Disagree	20%

Q11: IT IS CHEAPER TO PROVIDE SERVICES ONLINE RATHER THAN IN PERSON OR BY PHONE. SHOULD MORE SERVICES BE MADE AVAILABLE ONLINE TO REDUCE COSTS?

Agree or strongly agree	83%
Neutral	4%
Disagree	13%

Q12: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES YOU?

I have a My Falkirk account and use it	30%
I have a My Falkirk account but I don't use it	13%
I don't have a My Falkirk account but I plan to get one	13%
I don't have a My Falkirk account and don't want one	12%
I haven't heard of My Falkirk	32%

Q13: THE COUNCIL SUBSIDISES LESS POPULAR BUS SERVICES THAT ARE NOT COMMERCIALY VIABLE. THIS MEANS THESE SERVICES CAN CONTINUE TO RUN. SHOULD THIS FUNDING BE REDUCED OR REMOVED?

Yes - funding should be reduced	33%
Yes - funding should be removed completely	12%
No	55%

Q14: SHOULD THE COUNCIL CONSIDER INTRODUCING AND CHARGING FOR A FACTORING SYSTEM FOR PROPERTIES IN THE AREA WITH A MIX OF COUNCIL AND PRIVATE OWNERS?

Agree or strongly agree	56%
Neutral	26%
Disagree or strongly disagree	18%

Q15: SHOULD CHARGES BE MADE FOR THE GARDEN AID SERVICE?

Agree or strongly agree	54%
Neutral	19%
Disagree or strongly disagree	27%

Q16: SHOULD THE COUNCIL APPLY THE MAXIMUM INCREASE IN COUNCIL TAX (3%)?

Increase by 3%	42%
Increase by less than 3%	27%
No increase	31%

Q17 (A): SHOULD THE COMMUNITY HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING AND MAINTAINING SERVICES?

Agree or strongly agree	59%
Neutral	19%
Disagree	22%

Q17 (B): IF SO, WHAT SERVICES?

Flowerbeds	44%
Litter picks	42%
After school clubs	35%
Open spaces	34%
Breakfast clubs	33%
Gritting paths	29%
Transport for children	25%

Q18: THE COUNCIL PROVIDES FUNDING FOR GALA DAYS AND OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS. WITH REDUCING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE COUNCIL, SHOULD FUNDING STAY THE SAME, REDUCE OR BE WITHDRAWN?

Stay the same	23%
Reduce	36%
Be withdrawn	41%