

Shaping Bridgend's Future 2019

Consultation report

Date of issue: 20 November 2019

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1. Overview

A public consultation reviewing Bridgend County Borough Council’s proposed budget reductions to 2021/22 was undertaken over an eight week period from 09 September to 03 November 2019. The consultation received 7,437 interactions from a combination of survey completions, engagement at stands held across the county borough, workshops held with comprehensive pupils, engagement at various meetings with different local groups, social media engagement and via the authority’s Citizens’ Panel. This paper details the analysis associated with the consultation.

2. Introduction

The public survey was available to complete online through a link on the consultation page of the council’s website or by visiting www.bridgend.gov.uk/future. Paper copies of the consultation were also made available in community groups or engagement events or alternatively, they could be sent directly to residents upon request. Surveys were available in several formats, including easy-read, large print, standard and a youth version. All were available in English and Welsh. The content of the page remains available online.

In total, there were 31 questions (within all survey formats) that required a reply from respondents. These were made up of questions about budget reduction proposals as well as ways in which the council could generate income and long term priorities. All survey responses offered the option of anonymity. The council’s standard set of equalities monitoring questions were also included with the survey in line with recommended good practice for all public-facing surveys carried out by the council.

A programme of engagement events/sessions were held across the county borough and took the form of engagement stands in libraries, attendance at town and community council meetings, presenting to different groups, attending other group’s events, meetings and workshops and holding sessions in comprehensive schools.

Comments regarding the consultation were also invited via social media (including a dedicated social media Q&A), letter, email and phone call.

3. Promotional tools and engagement methods

Details of the consultation were promoted to/shared with the following stakeholders: general public/residents, Citizens’ Panel members, elected members, BCBC employees, Bridgend businesses, town and community councils, school governors, Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF) members, local interest/community groups, BAVO, Bridgend College, partners, secondary schools (including head teachers) and media outlets.

3.1 Promotional tools

This section details the methods used to raise the profile of the consultation and encourage participation.

3.1.1 Free prize draw

To encourage participation, respondents (aged over 13) were able to opt-in to a free prize draw for a one year Halo Leisure membership, a family of four pantomime ticket for The Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl, or two tickets to 'It's a wonderful life' at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall. Respondents were asked to select their prize of choice and provide their email address in order to opt-in.

3.1.2 Social media

In December 2017 the council committed to managing its social media accounts bilingually. In addition to introducing Welsh language corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts at that time, it started posting bilingually across the remainder of its social media channels.

Budget consultation information was posted bilingually to the council's corporate Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn channels throughout the consultation period to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage citizens to share their views on the proposals.

The council currently has 12,092 followers on its corporate Twitter accounts, 12,263 'Likes' on Facebook pages, 1,848 followers on Instagram and 3,308 followers on LinkedIn. While content is most likely to be seen by these users, it is also displayed to users who are not connected to the accounts.

In addition to general social media content, 3 polls were created on Twitter which generated 497 votes to key questions within the budget consultation survey.

- Would you support a move to less face to face interactions and more online interactions in order to save £130k per year? **74% yes, 23% no and 3% unsure**
- Our face to face customer service department in Civic Offices is currently run as a drop in. Do you think the council should switch to an appointment based system? **32% yes, 60% no and 8% unsure**
- We will receive £35 million less funding to run our services by 2023. In order to reduce our budget, should we stop providing a CCTV service across the borough? **24% Yes, 76% No**

Paid Facebook and Instagram advertising was used to reach a wider audience within the county borough between 23 September and 4 November and again between 29 October and 2 November. The adverts were seen 166,301 times by people living in Bridgend County Borough and generated 338 comments and 1,471 clicks through to the budget consultation website page.

During the period, the authority 'tweeted' 82 times (41 English, 41 Welsh), posted to Facebook 22 times (11 English, 11 Welsh), made eight LinkedIn updates (8 bilingual), and one Instagram post about the consultation. This content was seen 59,619, 99,675, 5,269

and 439 times respectively. In total 2679 individuals who viewed the social media content went on to click through to the budget consultation page on the local authority website.

Across all social media platforms throughout the budget consultation there were 2009 interactions, including 497 poll votes and 1512 comments.

3.1.3 Media and publicity

The screenshot shows two news articles side-by-side. On the left is a BBC News article titled "Porthcawl Elvis festival could suffer £20k council budget cut" dated 10 September 2019. It includes a photo of three people dressed as Elvis Presley. On the right is an article from "The Bridgend & Porthcawl GEM" titled "BCBC invites residents to aim axe for potential cuts" dated Monday, 16 September 2019. The article text states: "BRIDGEND County Borough Council (BCBC) is considering cutbacks to services including street cleaning, CCTV, pest control, town centre events, adult learning, education support services, as well as closing one of its three recycling centres. During the last four years, BCBC has saved £27 million by cutting some services and reducing council staff numbers by 400, which has included making cutbacks in senior". It also includes a photo of several coins.

Public views wanted on possible cutbacks in Bridgend County

Lisa Baker, Editor, Welsh Business News & News from Wales



Two media releases were issued to coincide with the start and middle of the consultation to raise awareness and encourage participation. These were issued on 9 September and 9 October.

Prior media work was carried out to prepare residents and the media for the scale of the budget challenges and encourage their participation. This work ranged from media statements and features to interviews with the Leader and Deputy Leader.

It resulted in related coverage in publications such as the Glamorgan Gazette and Wales Online on 11 August.

Further coverage took place in the BBC News on 10 September, in the Glamorgan Gazette, Wales Online and South Wales Echo on 13 September, in the Bridgend Gem and Bridge FM on 16 September, and in News from Wales on 15 October.

The media releases were included at the media centre of the council's website where they were hyperlinked with associated social media publicity.

Information was also included in Cabinet member announcements for meetings of full Council dated 18 September, and in columns for Seaside News on 1 September and 1 October.

3.1.4 Internal communications

The consultation was promoted internally with a feature at the staff intranet homepage.

It was also promoted via Bridgend's all-staff emails issued on 05 September.

3.1.5 Promotional materials

Posters, business cards and flyers promoting the consultation and engagement events were circulated to the library service for use in their branches across the county borough, to town and community councils and schools. Organisations including Bridgend Carers' café, the Stroke Association, Evergreen Hall and the Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People also received promotional materials. When attending schools all pupils were given promotional materials to take home to their parents and carers, including pencils which stated 'I helped shape Bridgend's future'

A BCBC budget explainer video was produced which went live early in the consultation period. The English video received 1.9k views on social media and 92 views on YouTube. The Welsh video received 49 views on social media and 11 views on YouTube.

A QR code was added to business cards this year to encourage people to use their smart phones to scan directly to the budget consultation landing page. The QR code generated 54 hits to the English budget consultation page and 15 hits to the Welsh budget consultation page.

An awareness campaign was run on Bridge FM for the first week of the consultation to launch the campaign and the last but one week of the consultation as a reminder/final push for the consultation. In addition to the radio advert Bridge FM placed a banner advert on their website which resulted in 28 clicks through to the consultation page and 3766 impressions.

A full page advert on the budget consultation in was placed in the November edition of the Seaside News which distributes 27,000 copies to various outlets and households in the Bridgend County Borough.

An email was sent to 1,278 businesses on Bridgend business directory.

A digital screen within Civic Offices reception displayed messages about the consultation throughout the live period.

Pop-up banners were used at events and a window display was developed for Civic Offices. Posters were also displayed in council offices.

3.1.6 Other promotional activities

The council's website was updated to promote the consultation with a link through to the survey.

Content was secured in BAVO's e-bulletins and membership circulars sent to members during September October and November.

Targeted letters and emails were sent to school governing bodies, town and community councils and BCCEF members.

Awen and Halo helped to raise the profile through their own social media channels.

3.2 Engagement methods

This section details the mechanisms available for stakeholders to engage with the council and share their views.

3.2.1 The budget survey

The survey was made available in a variety of formats to ensure inclusion across community groups. A standard survey, easy-read, large print and youth version of the survey were all made available in Welsh and English. All were available in paper format and online. The same survey was replicated for Citizens' Panel members and sent to them in the format of their choice.

3.2.2 Community meetings/events

An email about the consultation proposals and how to share views was sent to local community, equality and diversity groups. As part of this email, we offered to attend their meetings to encourage and aid participation.

The consultation and engagement team attended nine community group meetings including Bridgend Shout, Bridgend Carers Community Café, Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People and the Stroke Association to inform people about the consultation and assist attendees to complete paper surveys (where requested) or to share their views via the clicker-pad version of the survey. The consultation team engaged with a total of **213 residents** from across the County Borough in the community groups.

3.2.3 Community engagement stands

10 public engagement stands were held in libraries throughout the county borough. Event dates and times were published online at the beginning of the consultation and shared through promotional activities. Events took place in the following libraries:

- Sarn Library;
- Pencoed Library;
- Betws Library;
- Pyle Library;
- Bridgend Library;
- Maesteg Library;
- Aberkenfig Library;
- Pontycymmer Library;
- Porthcawl Library;
- Ogmores Vale Life Centre.

The Consultation Team engaged with **152 residents** from across the county borough in these events.

3.2.4 School engagement sessions

In order to gather the views of young people the consultation team attended an all-Bridgend head-teachers' event to promote the survey as well to ask individual schools to take part in interactive sessions in order to gather feedback.

As a result, comprehensive schools across the county borough took part in clicker-pad sessions. The consultation team engaged with **1218 young people** in the following comprehensive schools:

- Pencoed Comprehensive;
- Bryntirion Comprehensive;
- Porthcawl Comprehensive;
- Maesteg School;
- Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen;
- Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd;
- Cynffig Comprehensive;
- Archbishop McGrath RC Comprehensive School;

3.2.5 Elected Member's workshop

Two interactive workshops took place for elected members on 18 September 2019. A total of **20 members** attended across the two sessions. Members were given the opportunity to complete the survey using clicker-pads. The sessions were also attended by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities to feedback on any questions or comments. Comments are added to the themes in section 7.2.24.

3.2.6 Town and Community Council meetings

All Town and Community Councils were asked if the Consultation and Engagement Team could attend their regular meeting during the live period. The purpose was to inform each TCC of the consultation and enable their local residents to take part. The Consultation and Engagement team attended 19 Town and Community Council meetings and a total of **225 community councillors and members of the public** attended these events. Comments from attendees were noted and are themed in section 9.

3.2.7 Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF)

The quarterly meeting of BCCEF took place during the live period of the budget consultation on 14 October 2019. Members of the meeting (**11 attendees**) were invited to take part in an interactive clicker-pad session. The meeting consisted of members representing community based organisations including the police, Bridgend People First, BCDP, faith organisations and Mental Health Matters Wales. All organisations were provided with promotional materials to promote the consultation within their individual community groups.

3.2.8 Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO)

BAVO organised an event for their members to share their views on the MTFs proposals. This was advertised on their website and on social media. The event was held in the St. Johns' Centre on Minerva Street on 24 October. The event was attended by the Cabinet Member for Communities, who answered questions and queries raised by attendees. **Eight people** attended the event. Comments made during the event were recorded and are themed in section 7.2.24.

3.2.9 Citizens' Panel events

The Consultation Team invited all members of the Citizens' Panel to community events during the live period. Events took place in:

- Bridgend Civic Offices;
- Maesteg Town Hall;
- The Pavilion Porthcawl;
- Ogmore Vale Life Centre;
- Garw Valley Life Centre.

The events enabled Citizens' Panel members to give their feedback on the consultation, ask questions and interact with officers and Cabinet members. The consultation team engaged with **52 residents** from across the county borough in these events. Comments made during these events were recorded and are themed in section 7.2.24.

4. Response rate

In total, there were **7,437** interactions during the consultation. The response rate has been segregated into several areas: consultation survey responses, engagement event attendees and social media interactions.

Interactions	Number
Survey completions	3417
Events/meetings/workshops	1987
Emails	9
Letters	0
Telephone calls	7
Webpage feedback	8
Social media comments	1365
Social media Q&A	147

Social media polls	497
Total interactions	7437

We received **3417** survey responses in total (1,982 online submissions, 1153 clicker-pad submissions and 282 paper versions).

Survey type	Online English	Online Welsh	Paper English	Paper Welsh	Clicker-pad	Total
Standard	1423	4	50	0	42	1519
Easy read	118	1	65	0	0	184
Large print	12	0	21	0	0	33
Citizens' Panel	350	1	139	4	0	494
Youth	71	2	3	0	1111	1187
Total	1974	8	278	4	1153	3417

There were **1987** attendees at the various events, meetings and workshops.

During the consultation period, there were **2009** interactions on our social media channels. This includes the social media Q&A session, where 147 interactions were recorded on Twitter and Facebook and Twitter polls where 497 votes were received.

Comments that were received by letter, email or telephone call have been themed and are included in section 7.2.24.

5. How effective was the consultation?

The budget consultation was conducted over an eight week period in which a range of marketing methods were used to create awareness of the consultation as well as reach and encourage stakeholders to engage with the council.

The data collection methods, which include the online survey, a paper survey, the Citizens' Panel and a youth survey (aimed at 11-24 year olds) were all developed using plain English to maximise understanding.

The four versions of the survey: standard; large print; easy read and youth were developed to maximise accessibility and to encourage participation with all members of the community.

6. Headline figures

- 6.1 63% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fully fund street cleaning, and not move to a reactive service;
- 6.2 70% of respondents stated that the council should keep all three recycling centres open but close each of them for one day each per week;
- 6.3 70% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund CCTV;
- 6.4 58% of respondents stated that they did not think that the council was best placed to deliver pest control services;
- 6.5 54% of respondents said that the council should remove funding for town centre events;

- 6.6 40% of respondents stated that funding should be removed from all strategic events, a further 32% stated remove funding for the Elvis Festival;
- 6.7 58% of respondents said that funding for the Pop-up Business School should continue;
- 6.8 72% of respondents said that funding for the Bridgend Business Forum should be removed;
- 6.9 54% of respondents said that the council should not reconfigure the homelessness service in order to make savings;
- 6.10 58% of respondents said that the council should reduce the funding for Adult Community Learning to save £65k per year;
- 6.11 57% of respondents felt that telecare services should be available to purchase by anyone within the county borough;
- 6.12 69% of respondents supported a model of more localised day services through the development of Community Hubs;
- 6.13 When asked if the council should make a saving of £35k by removing escorts from vehicles where there were eight pupils or less, 56% of respondents agreed with this proposal;
- 6.14 57% of respondents supported the council saving money by delegating funding for pupils with additional learning needs directly to primary schools;
- 6.15 52% of respondents disagreed with the proposal to save £61k per year by training staff in school to provide some cognition and learning services;
- 6.16 70% of respondents stated that they would support the council moving to less face to face interactions and providing more services online;
- 6.17 59% of respondents agreed with the proposal to move to an appointment based system (instead of drop in) in the Customer Services Contact Centre within Civic Offices;
- 6.18 When asked about council tax increases 64% of respondents stated that they were prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax (this was the minimum increase that respondents could choose);
- 6.19 When respondents were asked if they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax in order to protect all services 83% of respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay this additional amount;
- 6.20 When asked to prioritise the areas for capital expenditure the most popular responses were roads (25%) followed by schools (24%) and then regeneration projects (17%);

- 6.21 61% of respondents agreed that the council should consider commercial ventures to fund and protect front line services;
- 6.22 47% of respondents stated that the council should consider the possibility of hotel investments to generate income;
- 6.23 60% of respondents stated that the council should consider the possibility of providing energy to its residents to generate income;
- 6.24 When asked to give their views on prioritisation of long term budgets respondents stated that the council should make efficiencies in house (20%) followed by encourage citizens to take more responsibility (18%) and use online facilities where possible (18%).

7. Question and analysis - consultation survey

The consultation contained 31 questions related to current proposals to make savings across a range of services as well as opportunities to increase revenue. All questions were optional, so participants could chose to answer all or some of the questions.

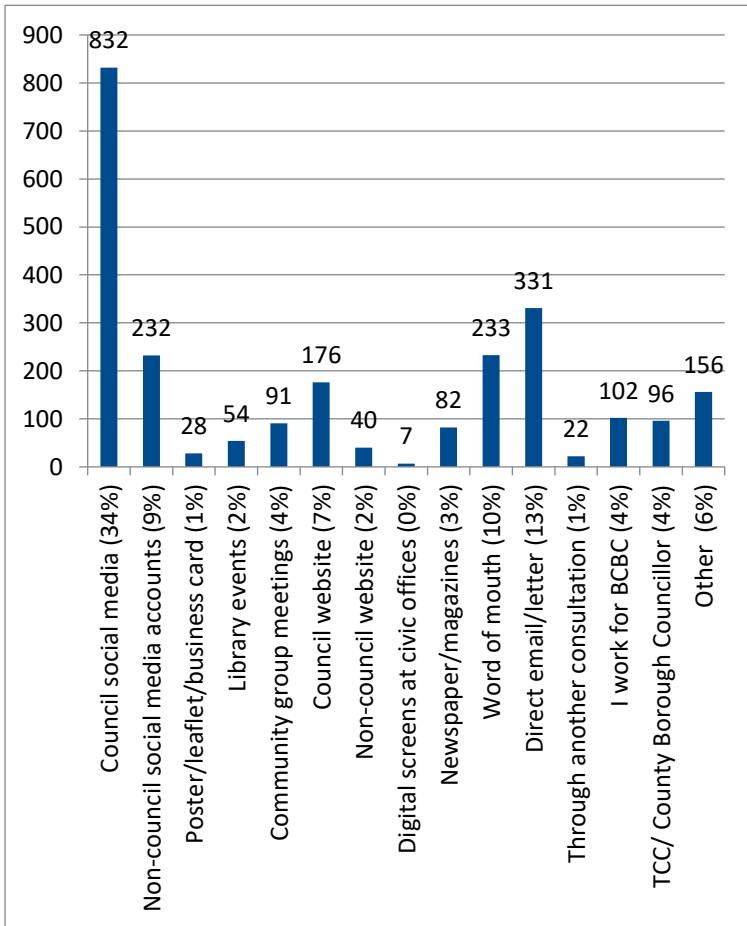
Respondents were also asked to tell us where they would prioritise capital expenditure and give their opinions on generating income.

In the final two question respondents could tell us anything they thought we had missed or ideas on what we should focus on for our long term budget make any other comments or recommendations about the budget for the coming year.

7.1 About you

The questions in this section were not available in the clicker-pad version of the survey. The easy read survey did not include the question about employment status.

Respondents were asked how they **heard about the consultation**.

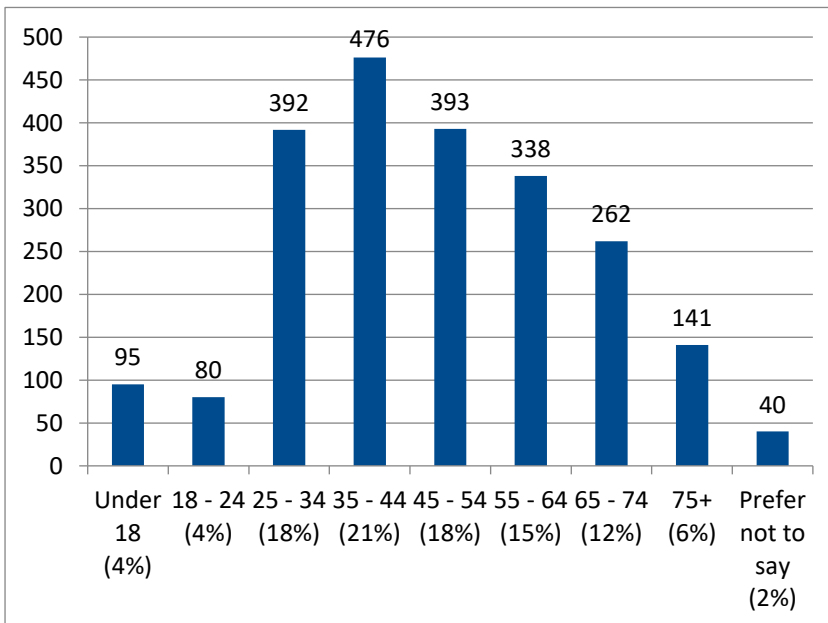


2482 respondents provided this information.

The most popular responses were:

- Council social media (34%);
- Direct email or letter (13%);
- Word of mouth (10%).

Respondents were then asked for their **age**.



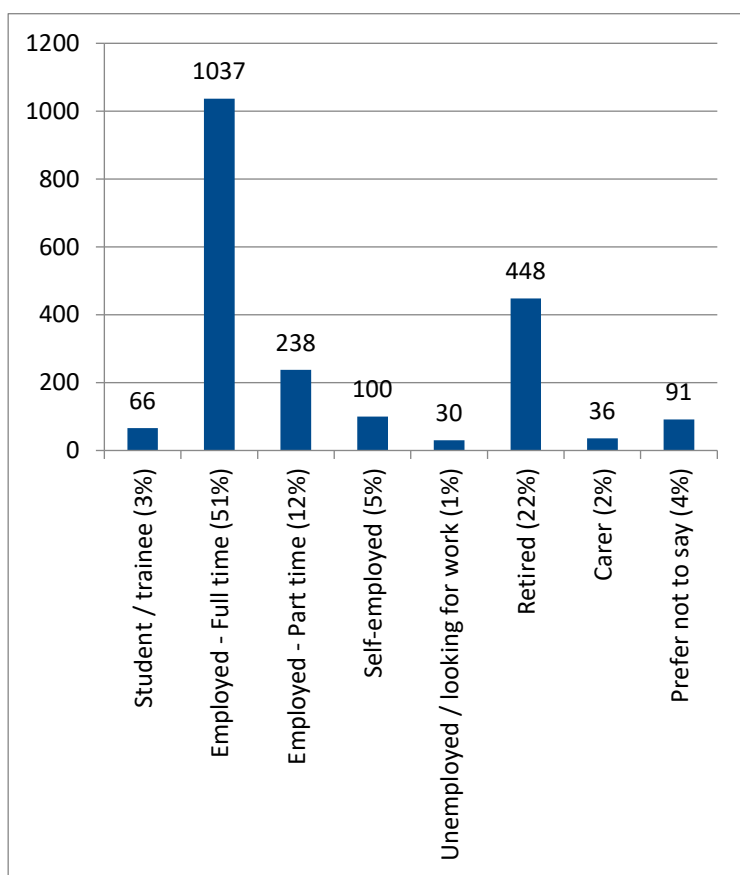
2217 respondents provided their age group:

21% of respondents were aged 35-44;

18% of respondents were aged 25-34;

18% of respondents were aged 45-54.

Respondents were then asked for their **employment status**.



2046 respondents provided their employment status;

51% of respondents informed us that they were in full time employment;

22% of respondents informed us that they were retired;

12% of respondents informed us that they were employed part time.

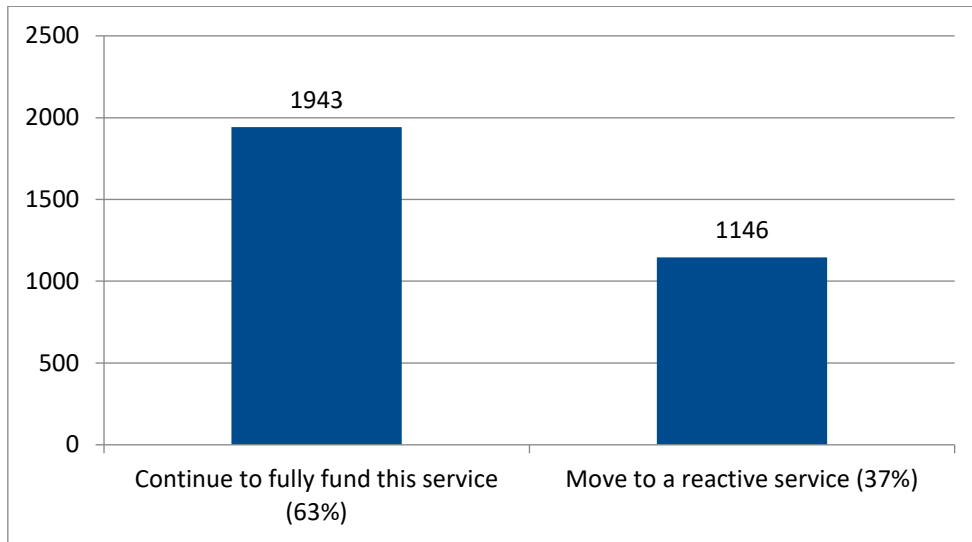
7.2 Survey questions

7.2.1 Street cleaning

Respondents were informed that street cleaning currently costs £1.3 million per year and that moving to a reactive service could save £270k per year.

Respondents were asked if the council should make this saving.

A total of 3089 people responded to this question.

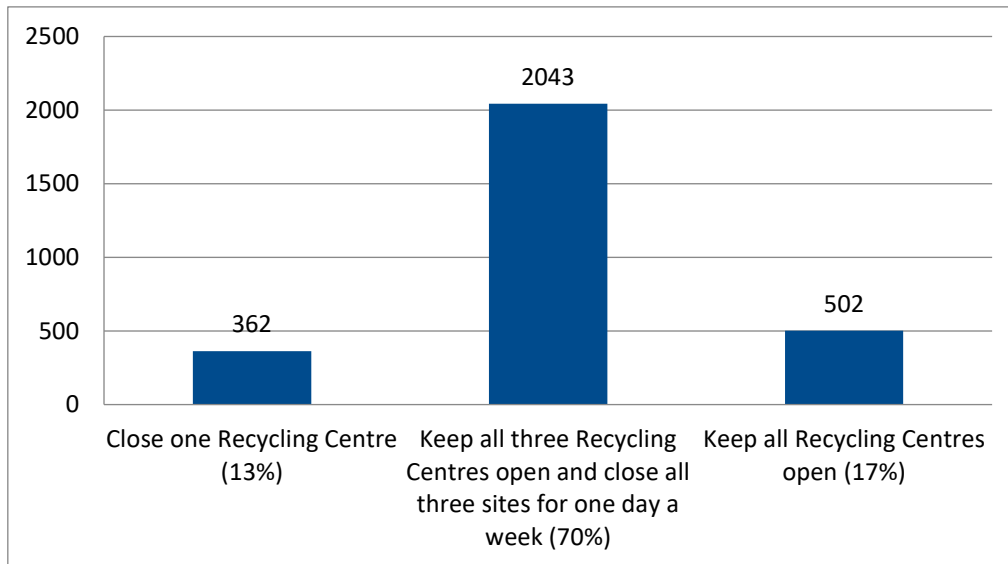


63% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fully fund this service. 37% of respondents stated that the council should move to a reactive service.

7.2.2 Community Recycling Centres

Respondents were asked to select from three options in relation to the three Community Recycling Centres across the county borough.

A total of 2907 people responded to this question.

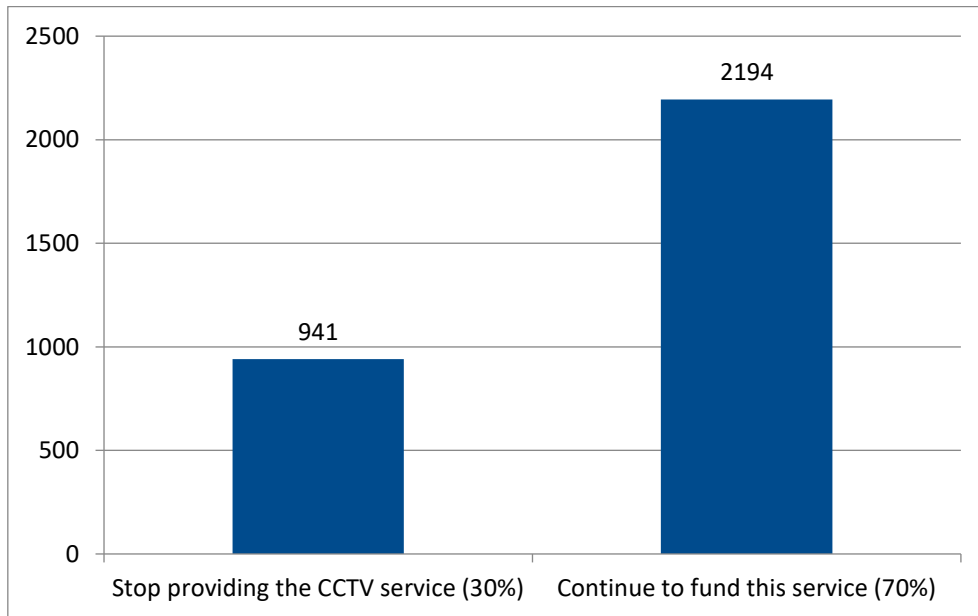


The majority of respondents (70%) selected that the council should keep all Community Recycling Centres open but close each of them for one days a week this was followed by keep all Recycling Centres open (17%) and then close one Recycling Centre (13%).

7.2.3 CCTV

Respondents were asked if the council should continue to fund CCTV across the county borough or stop providing this service which would save £327k per year.

A total of 3135 people responded to this question.

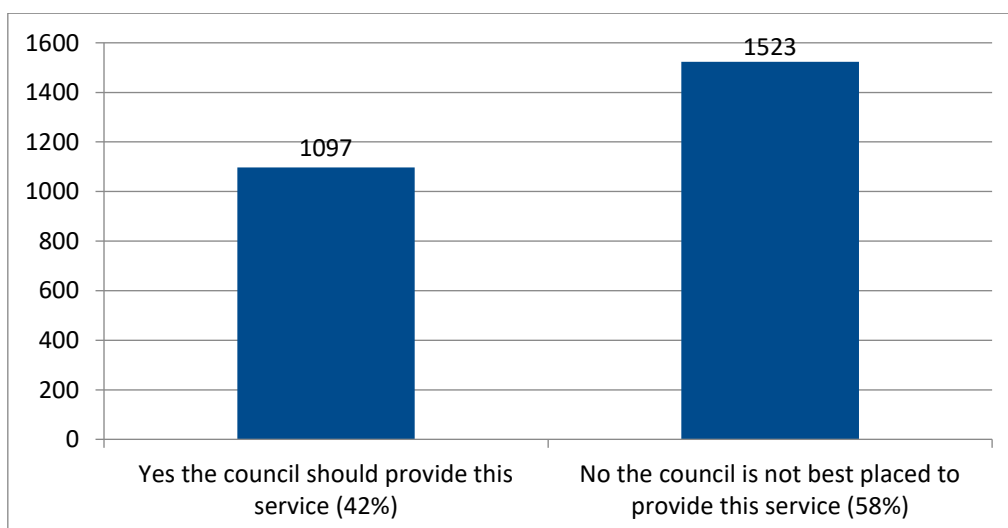


70% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund this service. 30% of respondents stated that the council should stop providing this service.

7.2.4 Pest control

Respondents were asked if they thought the council were best placed to deliver the pest control service.

2620 people responded to this question.

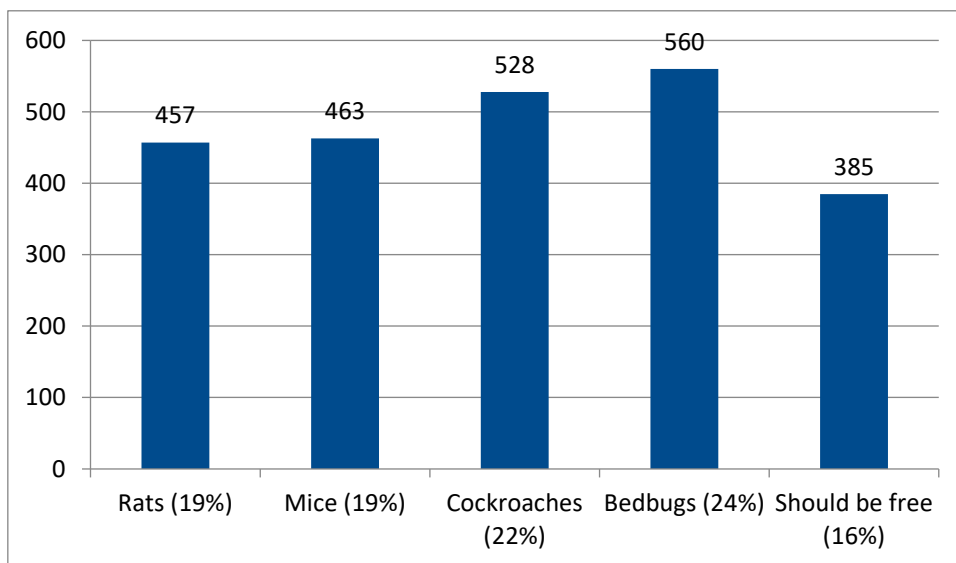


58% of respondents stated that they did not think the council were best placed to deliver pest control services. However 42% of respondents did think that the council should deliver pest control services.

Respondents were then asked a supplementary question about generating income.

Respondents were asked which of the current free services the council should consider charging for if they did continue to provide post control services.

2393 people responded to this question.
Respondents were able to select multiple 'pests'.



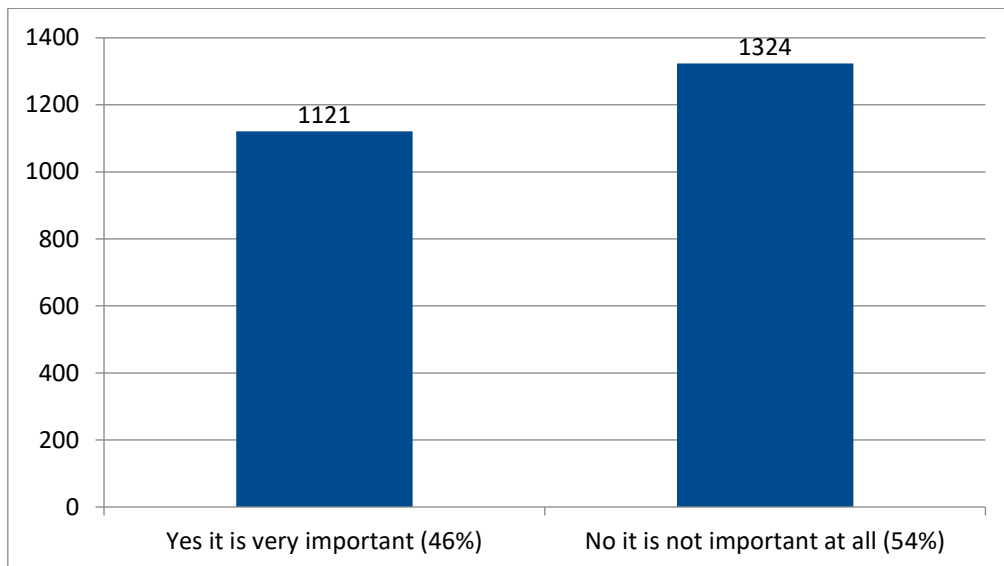
The most popular response was charge for bedbugs (24%) followed by cockroaches (22%) and the mice and rats equally (19%).

16% of those who responded to this question stated that the service should continue to be free to residents.

7.2.5 Town Centre events

Respondents were informed of the support provided for Town Centre events as part of the special regeneration fund. Respondents were asked if the council should continue to fund these events or save the money (£23k)

A total of 2445 people responded to this question.

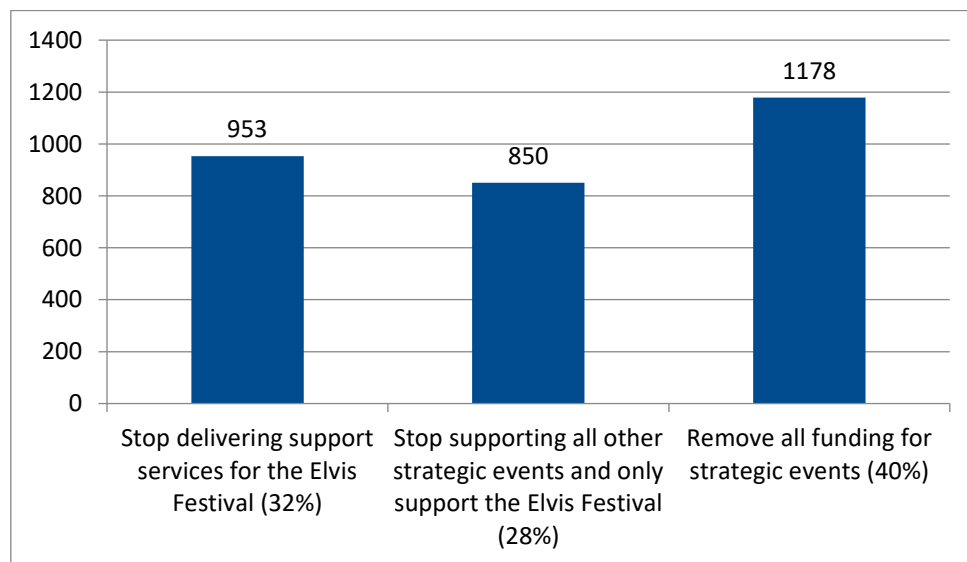


54% of respondents stated that these events are not important and should not be funded. 46% of respondents stated that the councils should continue to fund these events.

7.2.6 Strategic events

Respondents were informed of the current funding provided to support strategic events such as the Elvis Festival and Senior Open Golf Championships. Respondents were given three options to choose from in relation to these events and the potential reduction in funding of £40k.

2981 people responded to this question.

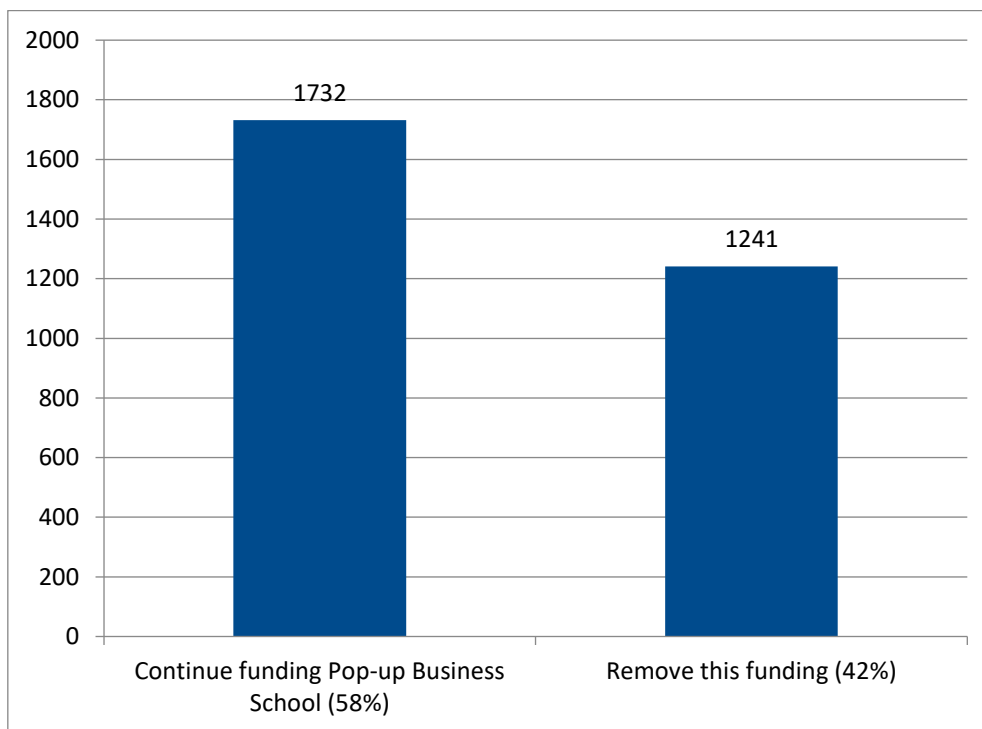


The majority of respondents (40%) stated that all funding should be removed for strategic events. 32% stated that the council should stop delivering support for the Elvis festival and 28% stated that the council should stop providing funding for all other strategic events and only fund the Elvis Festival.

7.2.7 Pop-up Business School

Respondents were informed of the current funding provided for the Pop-up Business School. Respondents were asked if the council should continue to provide this funding (£12.5k).

A total of 2973 people responded to this question.

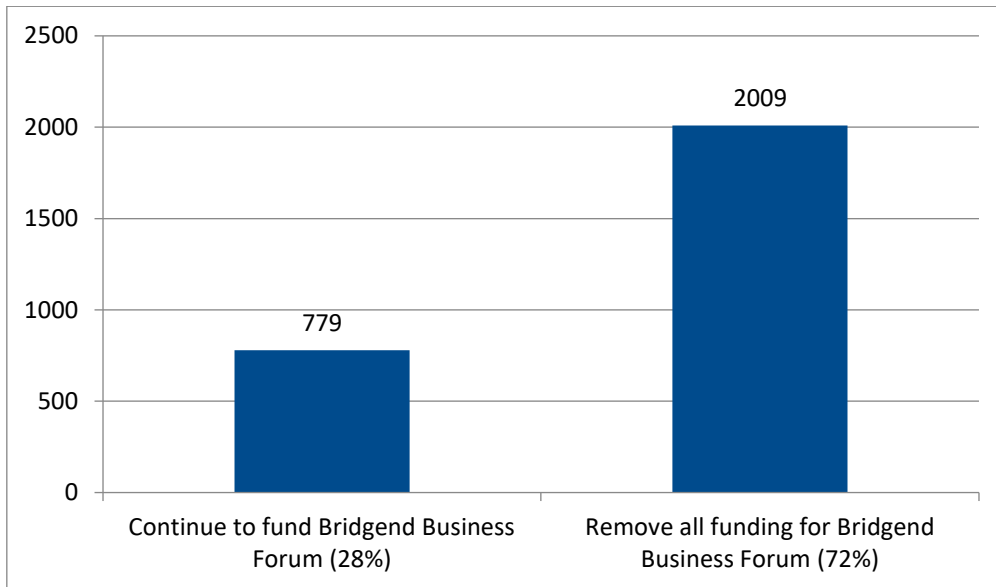


58% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund the Pop-up Business School. 42% stated that the funding should be removed.

7.2.8 Bridgend Business Forum

Respondents were given information in relation to Bridgend Business Forum and were asked if the council should continue to provide £35k per year towards BBF.

2788 people provided a response to this question.

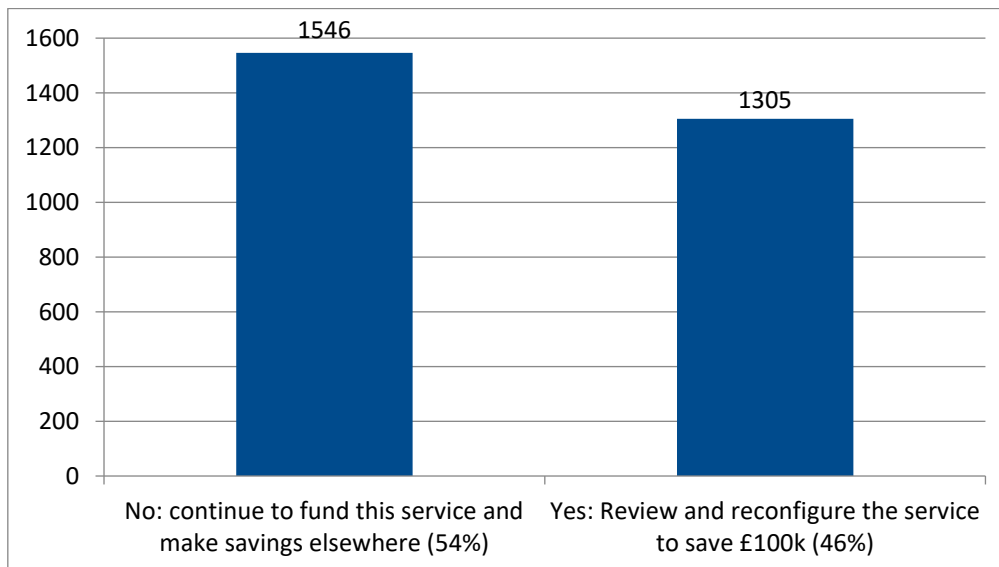


The majority of respondents (72%) stated that the council should save £35k per year by removing the funding for Bridgend Business Forum. 28% of respondents stated that this funding should continue.

7.2.9 Homelessness

Respondents were informed about the current homelessness provision in Bridgend County Borough, and were asked if, in order to make savings of £100k the service should be reconfigured.

2851 people provided a response to this question.



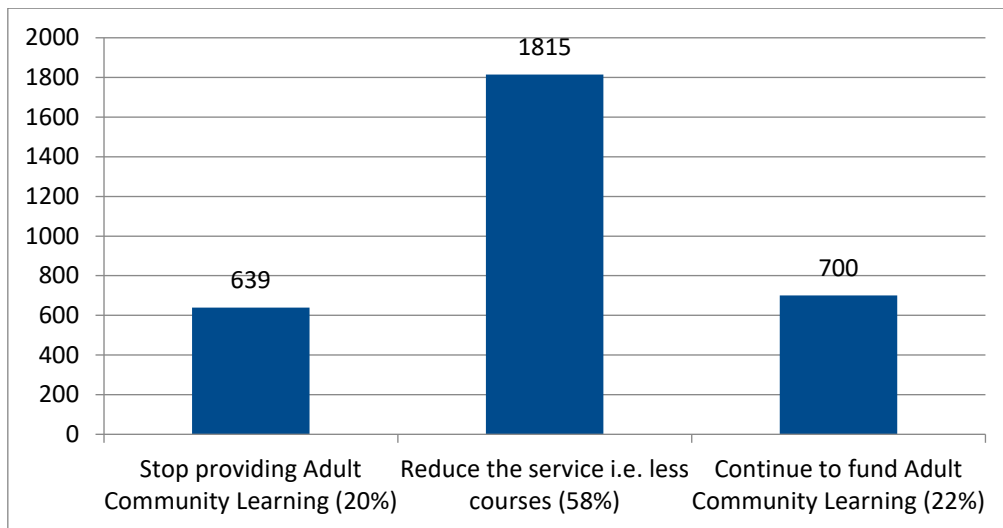
54% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund this service. 46% of respondents stated that the council should review and reconfigure this service in order to save £100k per year.

7.2.10 Adult community learning

Bridgend County Borough Council currently provide £133k per year to Adult Community Learning.

Respondents were asked to if the council should continue to provide this funding, reduce the funding to save £65k per year or remove all funding.

A total of 3154 people provided a response to this question.

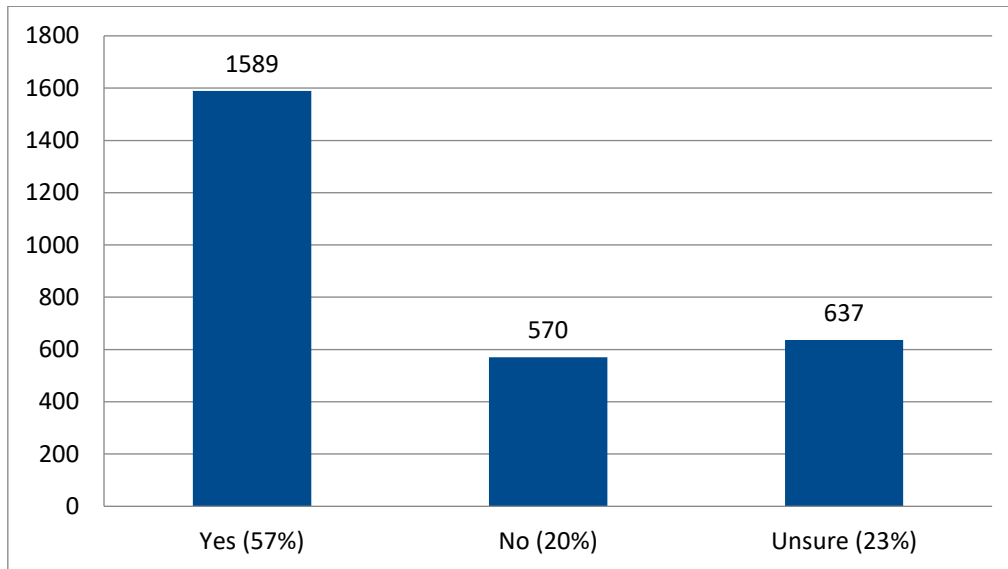


58% of respondents stated that the council should reduce the service to save £65k per year, this was followed by 22% of respondents who stated that the council should continue to fund adult community learning. 20% of respondents stated that the council should remove all funding to adult community learning.

7.2.11 Telecare and mobile response services

Respondents were given a description of telecare and mobile response services and asked if this should be available to all residents to purchase. Respondents were informed that the average monthly cost for the service would be approximately £40.

A total of 2796 people responded to this question.



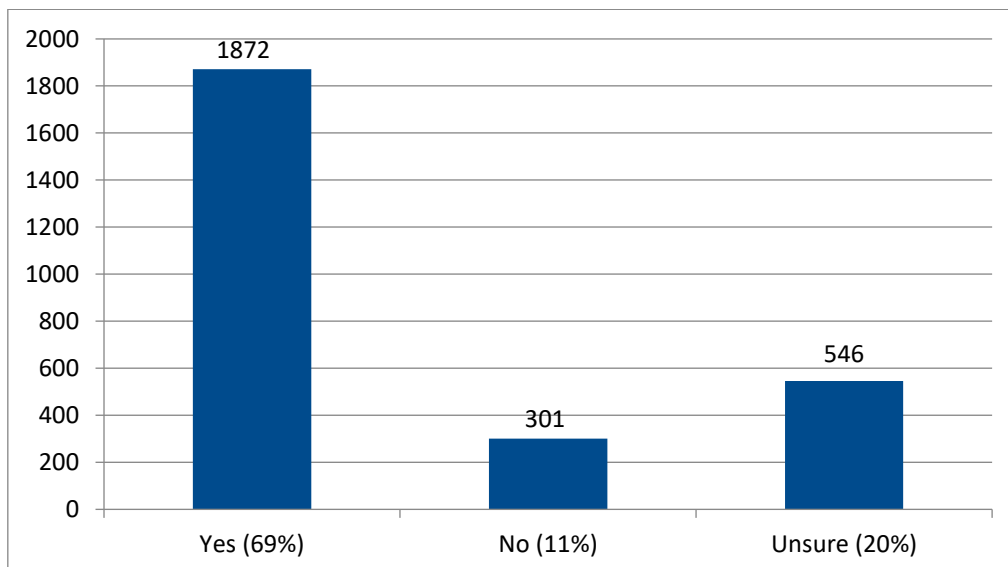
57% of respondents stated that this service should be available to purchase. 20% said no and 23% were unsure.

7.2.12 Community hubs

Respondents were provided with information about Community Hubs and the development of the day services model.

Respondents were asked if they would support the model of more localised day services through the development of Community Hubs in four areas across the county borough.

A total of 2719 people responded to this question.



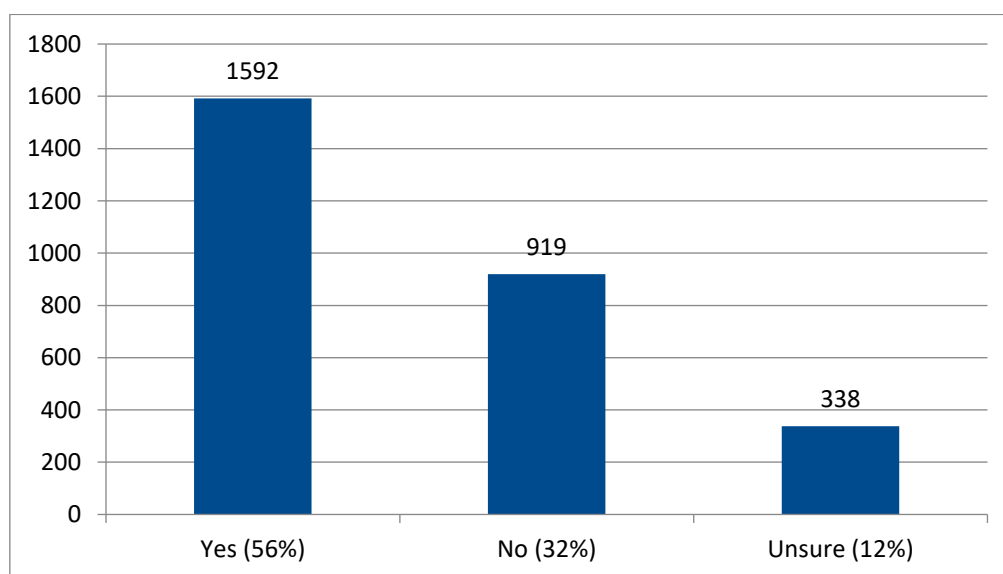
69% of respondents stated that they supported the model of more localised day services. 11% said that they did not support this and 20% were unsure.

7.2.13 Escorts on school taxis or minibuses

Respondents were informed that Bridgend County Borough Council provides school and college transport for more than 6,000 pupils and students across the borough costing £5.145 million.

Respondents were asked for their views on the provision of pupils who are taken to school in taxis and minibuses. Currently taxis and minibuses have an escort as well as the driver. Respondents were asked if they agreed with the proposal to remove the escort on vehicles where there are less than eight pupils. This would save around £35k per year.

A total of 2849 people provided a response to this question.



56% of respondents stated 'yes' the council should make this saving. 32% stated that they did not agree with the proposal and 12% were unsure.

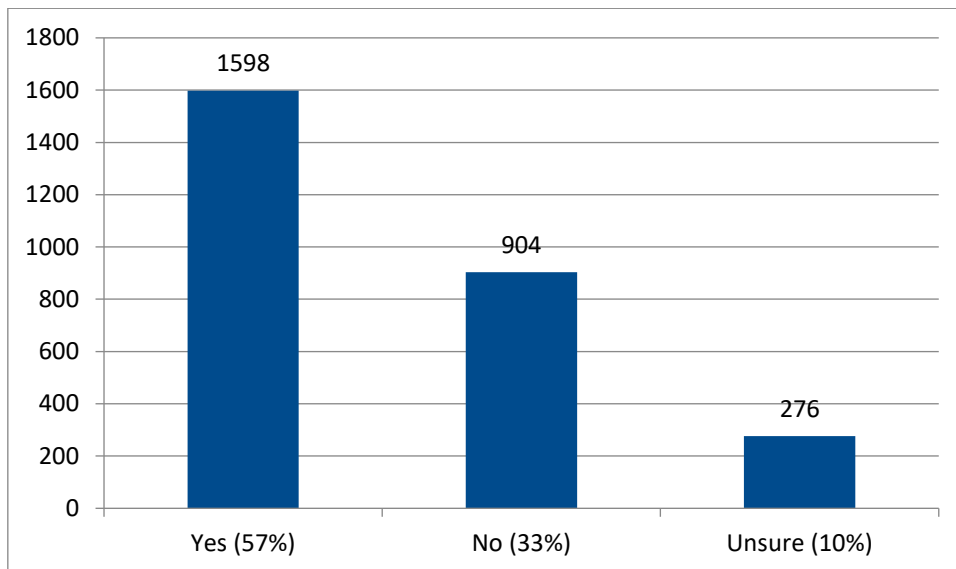
7.2.14 Pupils with additional learning needs

Respondents were given information how the council provide support to children with additional learning needs to access the curriculum.

In order to save £144k per year the council could assign the funding directly to primary schools.

Respondents were asked if the council should reduce the budget and delegate funding to primary schools to appoint their own support staff.

A total of 2778 people responded to this question.

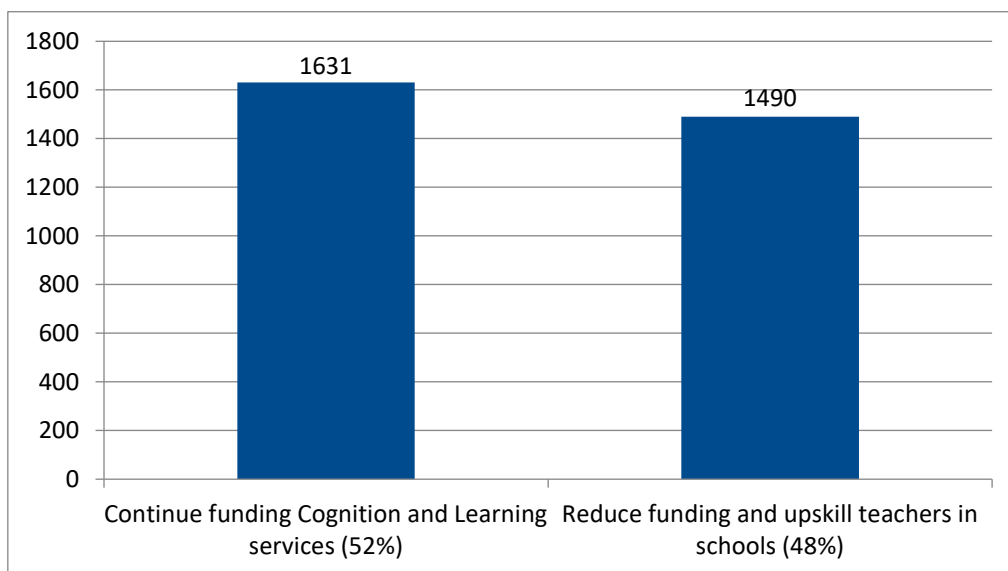


57% of respondents agrees with this proposal. 33% did not agree with the proposal and 10% stated that they were unsure.

7.2.15 Cognition and learning services

Respondents were given information on the cognition and learning services, and asked if they agreed with the proposal to review the funding and save £61k per year by training staff in schools to provide some of these services.

A total of 3121 people responded to this question.



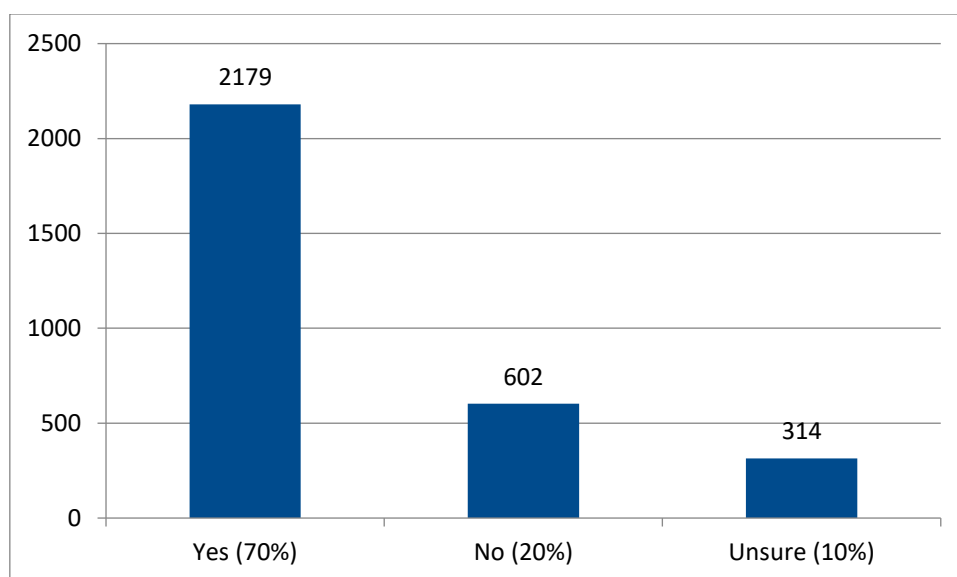
52% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund the cognition and learning service. 48% of respondents stated that the council should save £61k per year by training staff in schools to provide some of these services.

7.2.16 Digital services / contacting the council

Respondents were given information about how the council have already saved money though digitalising some of its services. Respondents were provided with the current costs of supporting residents face to face, by telephone and online.

Respondents were asked if they would support a move to less face to face interactions and more online interactions in order to save approximately £130k per year.

A total of 3095 people responded to this question.



70% of respondents stated that in order to save £130k per year they would support a move to less face to face interactions. 20% stated that they would not and 10% were unsure.

Respondents were then asked:

To build on the success of the digitalisation of services, what services or information would you like to see available online.

564 comments were received. All comments were themed and these are detailed in the table below:

Theme	No.
As many services as possible/all services	123
Not everyone can access or understand online services	61
Waste, recycling and street cleaning to include information, contacts and online reporting for issues and complaints	54
What services are provided by the council and how the council works	41
Live online chat	36
Income/expenditure information including salaries of councillors and staff	33
Improve current online services	32
Events, community groups, community information	29

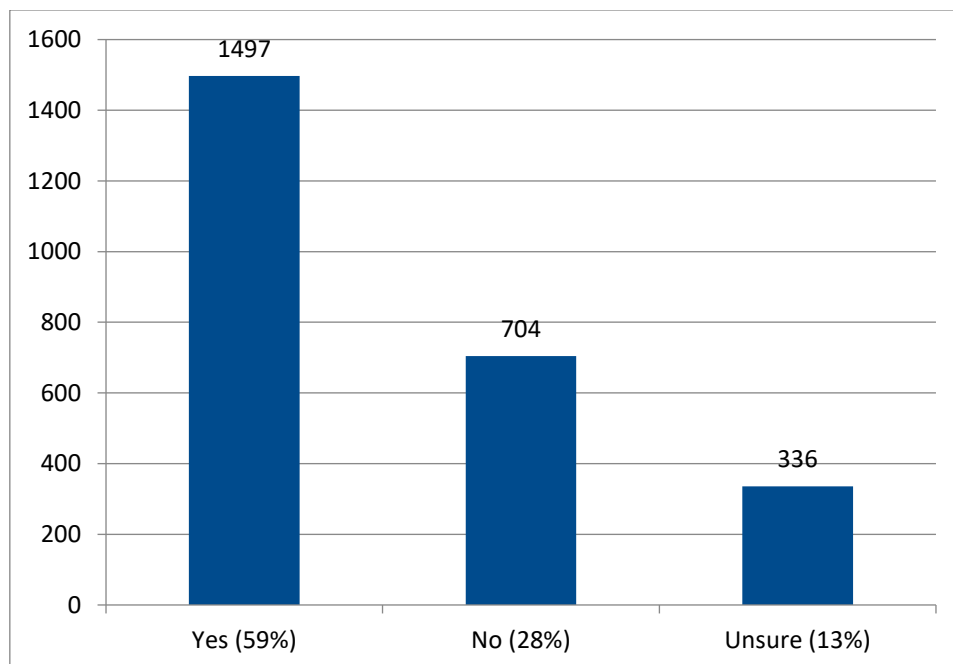
Council tax information/payments/email rather than post	25
More automated payments, online reporting tools and appointment booking	25
Housing options/information/contacts	17
Schools - contacts, admission, school meals	17
Contact details of departments/services	16
Blue badge applications/renewals	10
Better response is needed to emails and messages	9
Pest control service	8
Planning applications information/appointments/payments	8
Roads/highways information and online reporting function	7
Registry services	4
Complaints	4
Social services contacts and referral	3
Licensing information and applications	2

The most common responses were as many services as possible/all services (123) followed by not everyone can access or understand online services (61) and then waste, recycling and street cleaning to include information, contacts and online reporting for issues and complaints (54).

7.2.17 Civic Office appointments

Respondents were asked whether the Customer Services Department in Civic Offices (which is currently run as a drop in) should move to an appointment based system.

A total of 2537 people responded to this question.



59% of respondents stated that they agreed with this proposal, 28% did not agree with the proposal and 13% were unsure.

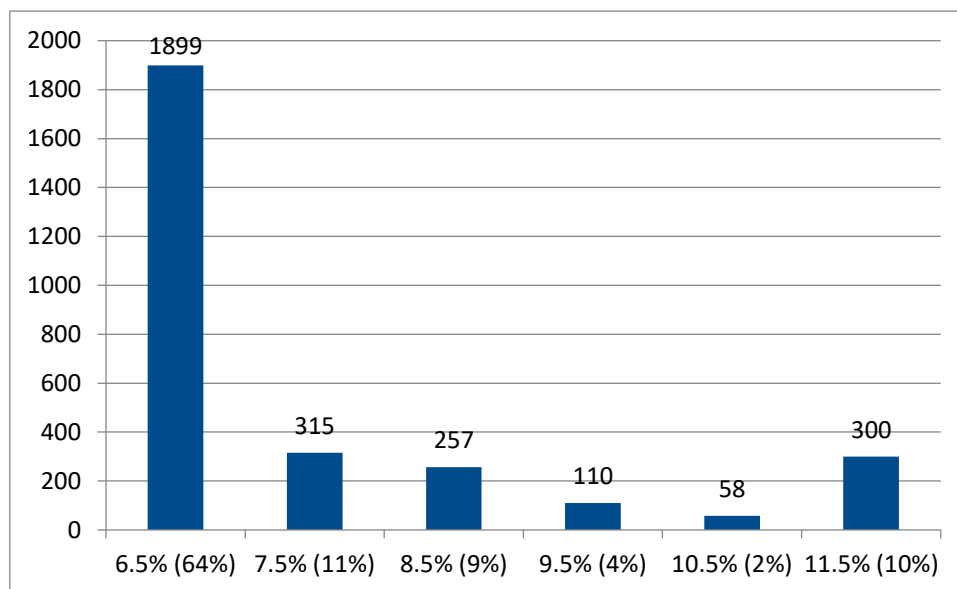
7.2.18 Council tax increases

Respondents were provided with information on the current funding generated through council tax and were asked to select the amount that they would be prepared to pay in addition to their current charge.

Respondents were asked to select from the following amounts (based on an average band D property):

- 6.5% (£1.84);
- 7.5% (£2.12);
- 8.5% (£2.40);
- 9.5% (£2.69);
- 10.5% (£2.97);
- 11.5% (£3.25).

2939 people provided a response to this question.



- 64% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax;
- 11% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 7.5% council tax;
- 9% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 8.5% council tax;
- 4% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 9.5% council tax;
- 2% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 10.5% council tax;
- 10% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 11.5% council tax.

The responses to the question about council tax increases also have been analysed by demographic information (age and employment status).

Council tax and age

When comparing age with response to the amount of council tax a respondent was prepared to pay we found:

- All ages groups chose 6.5% as their most popular response;
- Under 18 year olds chose 6.5% and then 8.5% and 9.5% equally;
- 75+ chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then 9.5% and 11.5 equally;
- All other age groups chose 6.5%, followed by 7.5% and then 8.5%;
- There was not a significant difference in the responses to this question by age.

Council tax and employment status

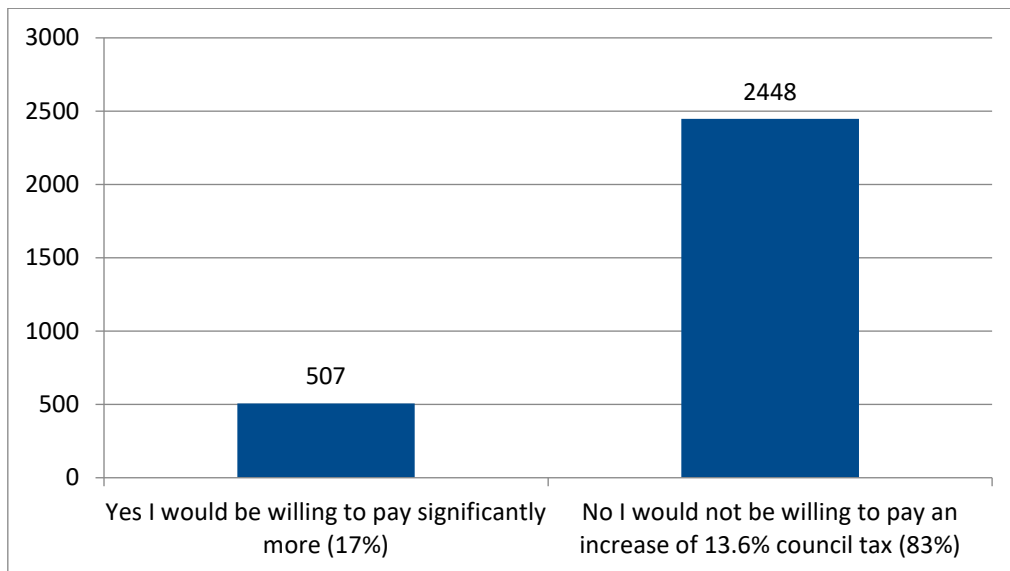
When comparing employment status with response to the amount of council tax a respondent was prepared to pay we found:

- All respondents chose 6.5% as their most popular response;
- Respondents who identified themselves as full time employed chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then 8.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as part time employed chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then £11.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as self-employed chose 6.5% followed by 8.5% and then 7.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as unemployed/looking for work chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then 8.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as full time employed chose 6.5% followed by £7.5% and then 8.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as a carer chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then £8.5%;
- There was not a significant difference in the responses to this question by employment status.

In addition to the question about council tax increases respondents were also informed that if council tax went up by an additional 13.6% council tax this would increase the council's annual budget by £10.7 million and no savings would need to be made to any council services for the next financial year.

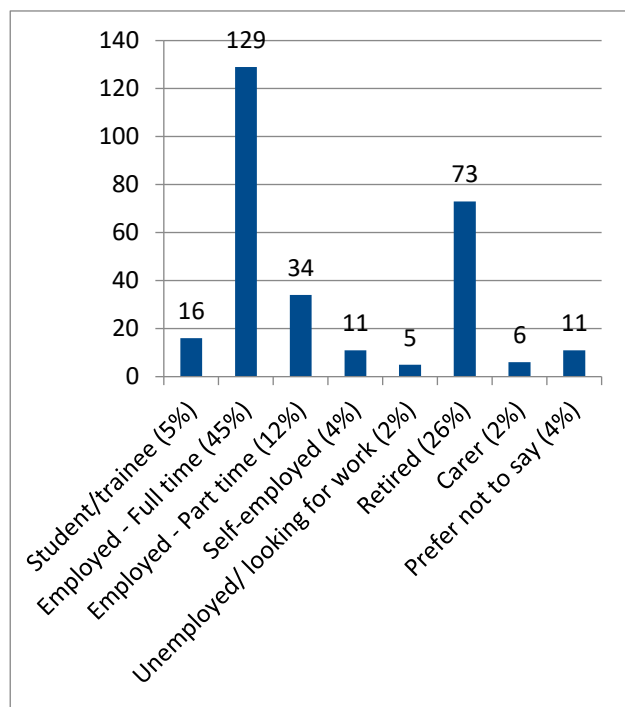
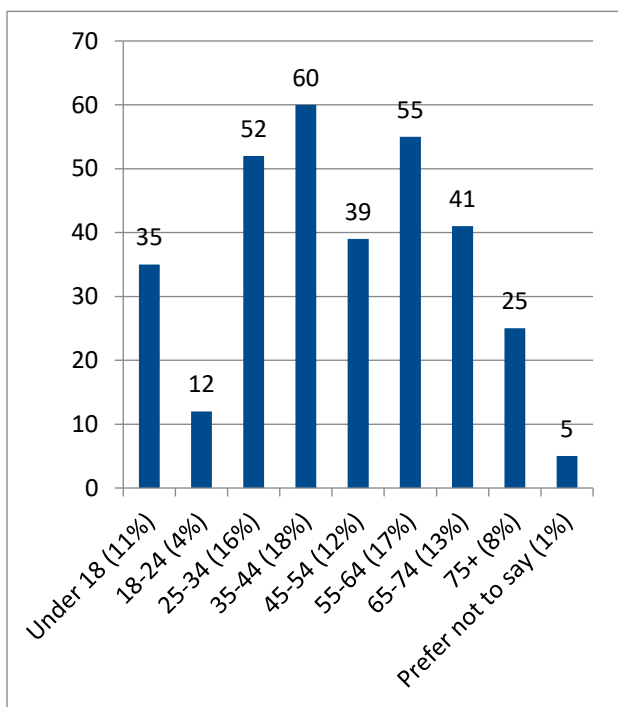
Respondents were asked if they would be willing to pay **an increase in council tax of 13.6%** so that no council services would need to be cut in 2020/21.

2955 people provided a response to this question.



17% of respondents stated that they would be willing to pay the additional council tax to protect all services. 83% of respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay the additional 13.6% council tax.

The responses to those who stated that they **would be willing** to pay an additional 13.6% council tax have been analysed by demographics information (age and employment status).



324 respondents said that they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax and gave their age.

The three most popular age groups to have said yes are 35-44, followed by 55-64 and then 25-34.

285 respondents said that they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax and gave their employment status.

The most common groups to say that they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax were full time employed, followed by retired and then part time employed.

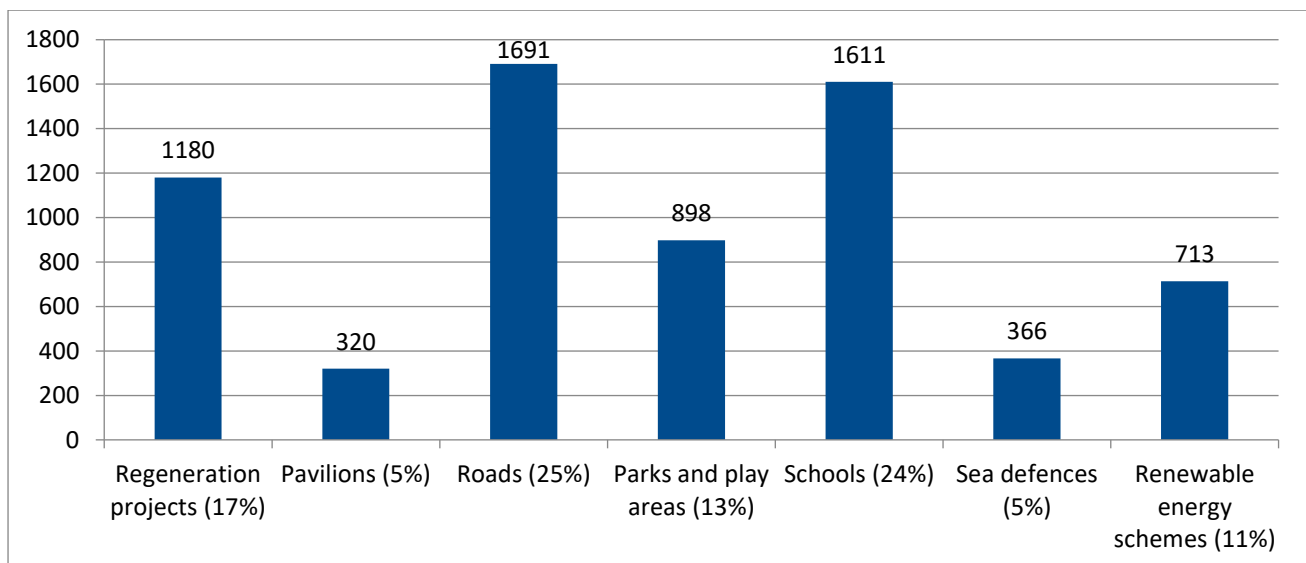
7.2.19 Capital expenditure

Respondents were informed that as part of identifying the council budget, funds are allocated for capital expenditure.

Respondents were informed that the 2019-20 capital budget is currently £54.5 million, which is made up of BCBC, Welsh Government and external grant funding.

Respondents were asked where they would choose to prioritise spending. They were able to select three from the following:

- Regeneration projects;
- Pavilions;
- Roads;
- Parks and play areas;
- Schools;
- Sea defences;
- Renewable energy schemes.



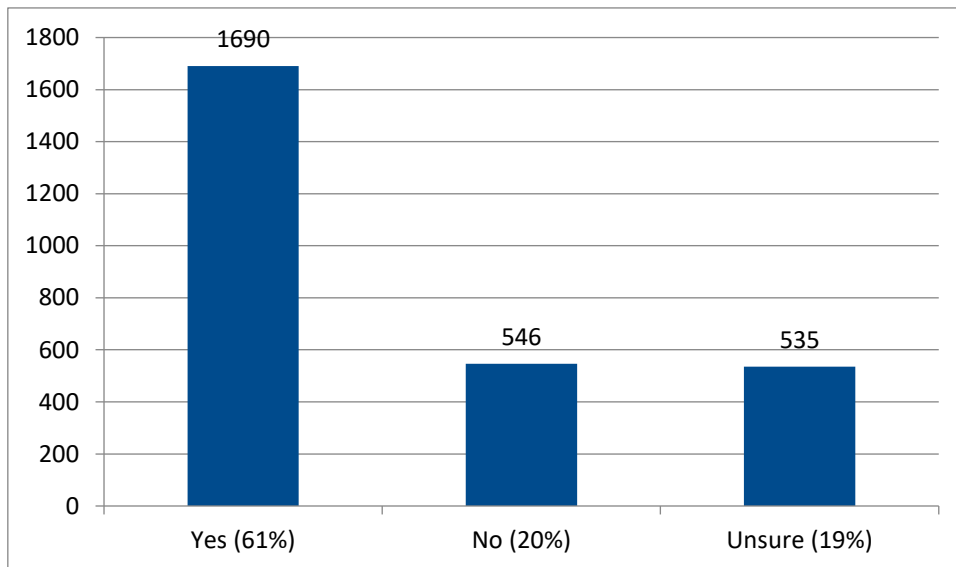
The most popular areas for capital expenditure were roads (25%) followed by schools (24%) and then regeneration projects (17%).

7.2.20 Generating income

Respondents were given details of how the council currently generate income, including charging for green waste collection, car parking and rental income.

Respondents were given details of how other local authorities have found ways to generate income and were asked if they thought commercial ventures should be considered by BCBC in order to fund and protect front line services.

2771 people provided a response to this question.



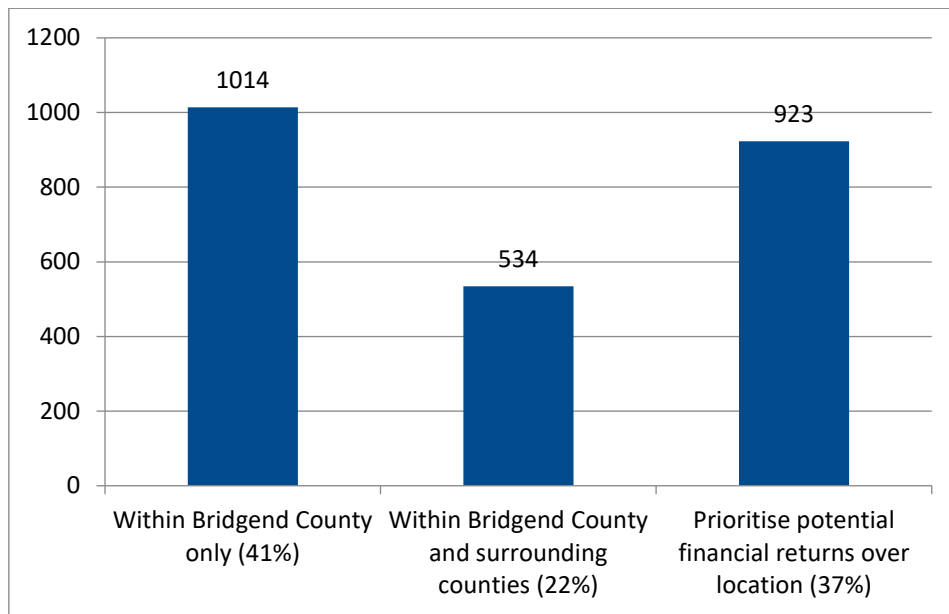
61% of respondents stated that the council should look at commercial investments to fund and protect front line services. 20% of respondents stated no to this question and 19% were unsure.

Respondents were subsequently asked:

If the council did decide to invest in commercial ventures, where do you think we should focus our investments? Respondents could choose:

- Within Bridgend County only;
- Within Bridgend County and surrounding areas;
- Prioritise potential financial returns over location.

2471 people provided a response to this question.



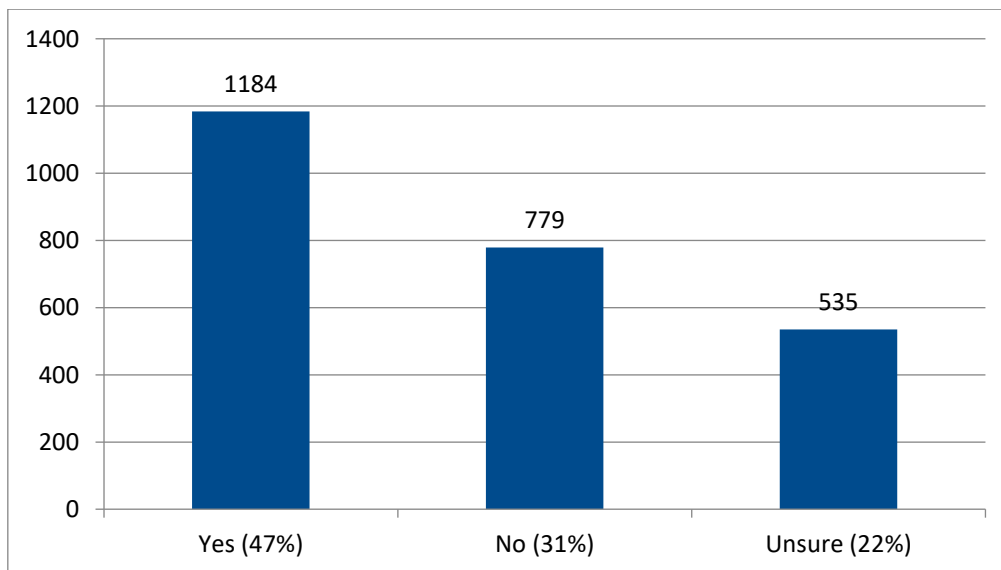
41% of respondents stated that investments should be within Bridgend County only, 37% stated that the councils should prioritise financial returns over location and 22% stated that investments should be within Bridgend County and surrounding areas.

7.2.21 Commercial investments

Information was provided on how other local authorities have started to make commercial investments.

Respondents were asked if they thought Bridgend County Borough Council should investigate the possibility of hotel investments to generate income.

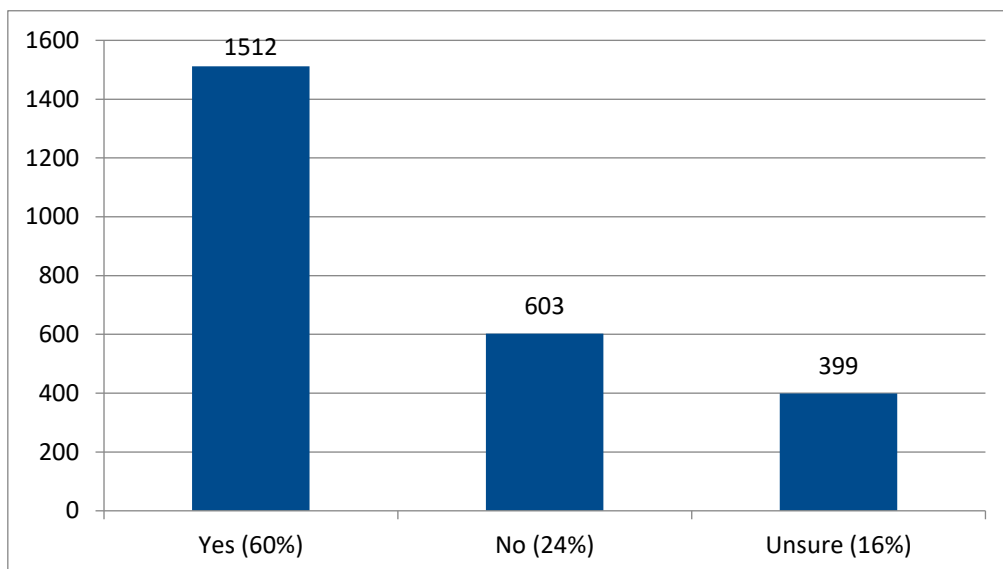
2498 people provided a response to this question.



47% of respondents stated that the council should investigate the possibility of hotel investments. 31% stated no and 22% were unsure.

Respondents were also asked if they thought Bridgend County Borough Council should investigate the possibility of generating income by providing energy to its residents.

2514 people provided a response to this question.



60% of respondents stated that the council should investigate the possibility of generating income by providing energy to its residents. 24% said no to this question and 16% were unsure.

7.2.22 Long term priorities

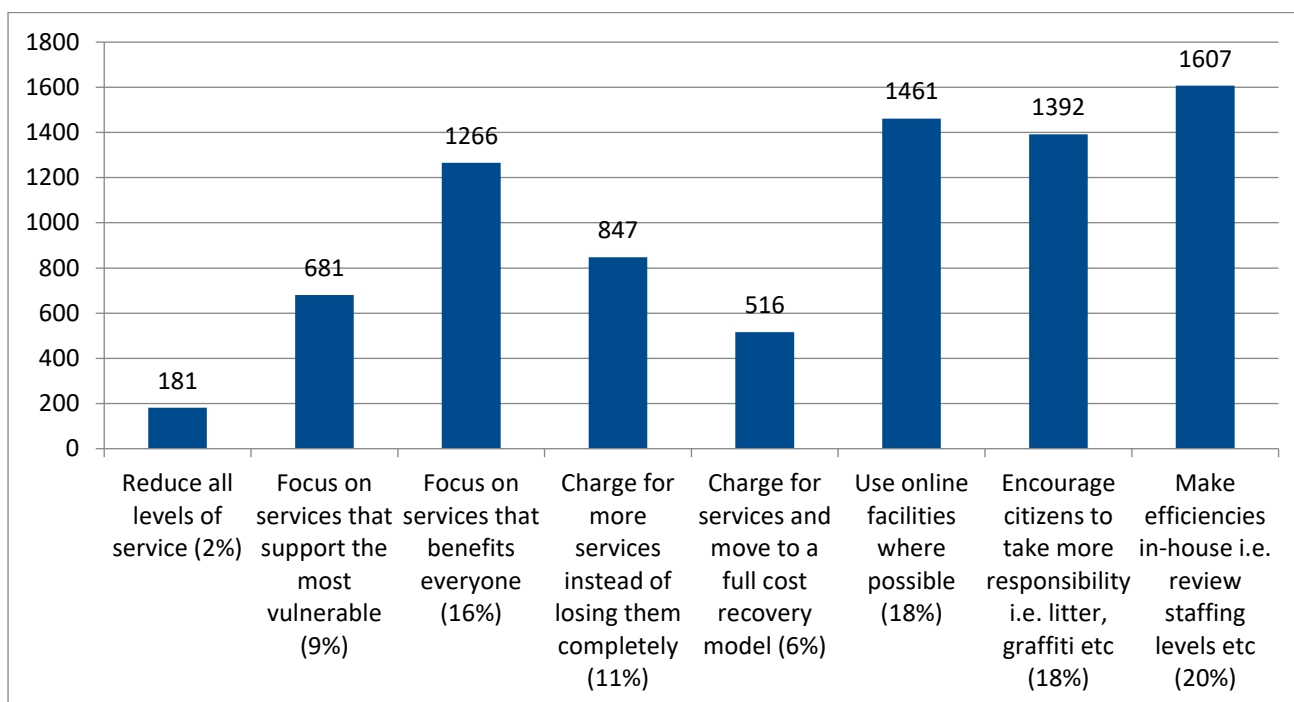
Respondents were informed that the council has experienced year and year reductions in funding while there is an increased demand on services.

Respondents were asked to give their views on when looking at the longer term at the delivery of council services and making the best use of resources how would they prioritise long term budget decisions.

Respondents were asked to select from the following options:

- Reduce all levels of service;
- Only focus on services that support the most vulnerable in communities;
- Focus on services that benefits everyone in the borough;
- Charge residents for more services instead of losing them completely;
- Wherever we are able, charge for services and move to a full cost recovery model;
- Use online facilities where possible;
- Encourage citizens to take more responsibility i.e. litter, graffiti etc.;
- Make efficiencies in-house i.e. review staffing levels, mileage allowances etc.;

They could select all that they felt were relevant.



The options most commonly selected were make efficiencies in house (20%) followed by encourage citizens to take more responsibility and use online facilities where possible (both 18%) and then focus on services that benefits everyone (16%).

7.2.23 Please tell us anything we have missed and your ideas on what we should focus on when thinking about our long-term budgets.

Respondents were asked if they felt that there was anything that had been missed and to give ideas on what the council should focus on when thinking about long term budgets.

894 comments were received. These comments were themed and are presented in the table below:

Theme	No.
Reduce councillors/staff/expenses	165
Stop increasing council tax	90
Make 'in-house' efficiencies (in services, productivity, contracts etc.)	80
Focus support on vulnerable people	59
Focus on visible services (i.e. street cleaning, grass cutting, roads)	56
Better engagement with TCCs/other authorities/communities	52
Invest in schools/ school transport	42
Invest in town centres/ support businesses	40
Generate income (i.e. sell land, increase fines, tourism)	38
Provide services that benefit everyone	35

Focus on environmental impacts	27
Stop supporting non tax payers/unemployed/homeless/prisoners	24
Charge residents for more services	24
Better communication with residents on budget/services	22
Invest in sports/Pitches/CAT transfers	19
Reduce empty properties/ new build houses	19
Support residents to take more responsibility	17
CCTV/ Community safety is important	16
Stop funding Cardiff city deal	15
Invest in play parks	12
More/better transport for residents	12
Reduce grass cutting/ Develop 'meadows'	10
Do not undertake commercial ventures	9
Ask Welsh Government for more funding	4
Invest in Welsh language services/schools	4
Undertake commercial ventures	3

The majority of the responses related to reduce councillors/staff/expenses (165) followed by stop increasing council tax (90) and then make 'in-house' efficiencies (80).

7.2.24 Do you have any further comments that you would like to make on the budget proposals for 2020/21?

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any further comments that they would like to make on the budget proposals. These comments as well as comments received in events such as the BAVO event, Citizens' Panel events and the elected member's workshop were themed. Overall 612 comments were received and are presented in the table below:

Theme	No.
Do not increase council tax/keep rates low	126
Reduce councillors/staff/expenses	81
Make 'in-house' efficiencies (in services, productivity, contracts etc)	61
Focus on visible services (i.e. street cleaning, grass cutting, roads)	47
Focus support on vulnerable people	35
Try and work differently/ creatively/ with partners	33
Better communication with residents on budget/services	32
Generate more income	28
Invest in schools	22
Consultation feedback/process (questions about)	20
Stop supporting non tax payers/unemployed/homeless/prisoners	17
Involve residents in decisions	16
Focus on statutory services	14
Ask Welsh Government for more money	12
Invest in town centres/ support businesses	12
Charge for more services	10

These are difficult decisions to make	9
Focus on environmental impacts	9
Stop the Cardiff City Deal funding	8
CCTV and community safety is important	8
Invest sports/pitches	6
Support residents to take more responsibility	6

The majority of the comments related to do not increase council tax/keep rates low (126) followed by reduce councillors/staff/expenses (81) and then make 'in-house' efficiencies (61).

8. Social media responses

During the consultation period there were 1517 interactions on our social media channels, 147 of which were in response to the social media Q&A.

The comments have been themed and are detailed in the table below, some comments contained multiple themes:

Theme	No.
Don't increase council tax by 13.6%	242
We pay more council tax yet receive less services	203
Cut council staff/wages/expenses/pensions	200
Requests for more information on annual accounts and budget reductions	116
Cut councillors/wages/expenses	99
Council should challenge central government funding cuts	88
Issues with recycling and waste service	73
Unhappy with proposals	65
Don't listen to the public /survey won't make a difference	61
Question regarding the consultation questions/ process	54
Close down / merge the council	52
Don't pay into the Cardiff City deal	48
Don't use contractors / consultants	47
Provide more funding for street cleaning	40
Make more internal efficiencies	38
Stop building new houses	36
Comments and questions about Q&A	35
Cuts could cause future problems	29
CCTV shouldn't be a priority	21
More funding for CCTV	18
Highways issues	16
Don't increase sports pitch fees	16
Make savings elsewhere / council wasting money	14
Pay homeless or get prisoners to do jobs	14
Sharing consultation with others	26
Ideas for generating money	13
Need for independent review	11

Stop maintaining council offices / bridge outside Civic	11
Blaming Brexit for cuts	10
Only increase tax of those on higher wages	10
Town council wasting money (flower watering)	9
Don't fund Waterton cycle / foot path	9
Don't have a Prize draw	8
Cost of Welsh Language Standards	7
School transport issues	6
Review staff sickness policy	5
Where does the money from business rates go?	4
Cuts mean families using Food banks	3
Praise for recent council projects	3
Provide more funding for schools	3
Agree with less funding for street cleaning	3
Don't cut grass to save money	2
Adult learning not a priority	1
CF31 Bid question	1
Will vulnerable groups be protected from funding cuts?	1

The majority of the comments related to do not increase council tax by 13.6% (242) followed by we pay more council tax yet receive less services (203) and then cut council staff/wages/expenses/pensions (200).

9. Town and Community Council meetings

The Consultation and Engagement Team attended 19 Town and Community Council meetings. Comments that were made during the meetings were noted and are detailed in the table below:

Theme	No.
Question regarding the consultation questions/ process	25
Continual rises in council tax and cuts	19
Working differently i.e. reconfiguring services, working with community volunteers etc.	18
TCC will actively share/promote consultation	18
Cuts have already had negative impact on people/communities	17
TCC face additional pressures from BCBC budget cuts	14
Bridgend town centre needs improvements	11
More information on BCBC fund/spend	10
Education and social services should be protected	8
Communities do/should fund their own events/festivals	8
Focus on quality of service not quantity	8
Community recycling centres and cleanliness of public areas is important	6
Public doesn't know difference between the role of TCCs and BCBC	5
People would prefer to pay than lose a service	2

The most common comments were about a specific question within the consultation or the consultation process (25) followed by comments about continual rises in council tax and cuts (19) and then about working differently (18).

10. Conclusion

10.1 Budget proposals – savings

The proposals to make savings that were **supported** by respondents were:

- Close Community Recycling Centres for one day per week each (70%);
- The council is not best placed to provide pest control services (58%);
- Remove funding for town centre events (54%);
- Remove funding for all strategic events (40%) and removed funding for Elvis Festival (32%);
- Remove funding for Bridgend Business Forum (72%);
- Reduce the funding for Adult Community Learning to save £65k (58%);
- Support for a model of localised day services through the development of Community Hubs (69%);
- Remove escorts from school transport where there are less than eight pupils (56%);
- Delegate funding to primary schools for pupils with additional learning needs (57%);
- Move to less face to face interactions within the Customer Services Contact Centre within Civic Offices (70%);
- Move to an appointment based system in the Customer Services Contact Centre (59%).

The proposals that were **not supported** by respondents were:

- Move to a reactive street cleaning service (63%);
- Removal of funding for CCTV (70%);
- Removal of funding for Pop-up Business School (58%);
- Reconfiguration of the homelessness service (54%);
- Delegation of money for cognition and learning services to schools (52%).

10.2 Budget proposals - increasing revenue

When asked about increasing revenue respondents supported:

- The purchase of telecare services by residents across the county borough (57%);
- The council considering commercial ventures to fund and protect front line services (61%);
- The council should consider the possibility of hotel investments to generate income (47%);
- The council should consider the possibility of providing energy to its residents to generate income (60%).

10.3 Budget proposals - council tax increases

- 64% of respondents stated that they would be prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax (this was the lowest amount that could be chosen);
- 83% of respondents were not willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax in order to protect all services for 12 months.

10.4 Summary

A sample of 3,417 survey completions is robust and is subject to a maximum standard error of +1.66% at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by the total adult population, to within $\pm 1.66\%$ of the percentages reported.

This means that if the total adult population of Bridgend had taken part in the survey and a statistic of 50% was observed, we can be 95% confident that the actual figure lies between 48.34% and 51.66%.

The consultation document was available in a variety of formats: standard; easy-read; large print and youth in Welsh and English. Respondents were able to select online or paper surveys in all formats.

The response to the consultation demonstrated a significant increase on previous years, with engagement across a range of community groups, schools and organisations.

A total of 3417 survey responses were received. 1982 online surveys were received, 282 paper surveys and 1153 surveys were completed during interactive sessions. This demonstrates an 18% increase on last year's survey completions.

A particular increase can be noted in youth survey completions, where there is a 50% increase compared to last year.

The number of paper surveys received decreased by 44% (282 paper surveys in 2019 compared to 507 in 2018).

Online survey completions have increased by 32% (1982 online completions in 2019 compared to 1491 in 2018).

The consultation and engagement team attended 58 events, meetings and workshops during the live period resulting in 1987 face to face interactions with people in events.

After completion of the consultation 972 people told us that they wanted to be kept up to date with the consultation outcome.

1036 people provided their details to enter the prize draw.

In previous years we have asked respondents to provide their details if they wanted to sign up to the Citizens' Panel after completion of the survey. This year respondents were taken to the Citizens' Panel landing page on the BCBC website after completion of the survey. During the live period 94 people signed up to become a Citizens' Panel member.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out in order to assess the impact of these proposals.

This report is to be shared with Cabinet in order to inform the MTFS for 2020/21 and further into 2020-2023.