

## ANNUAL BUDGET SURVEY 2023 – FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

For consistency, all percentages included below have been presented as whole numbers, with decimals rounded where appropriate.

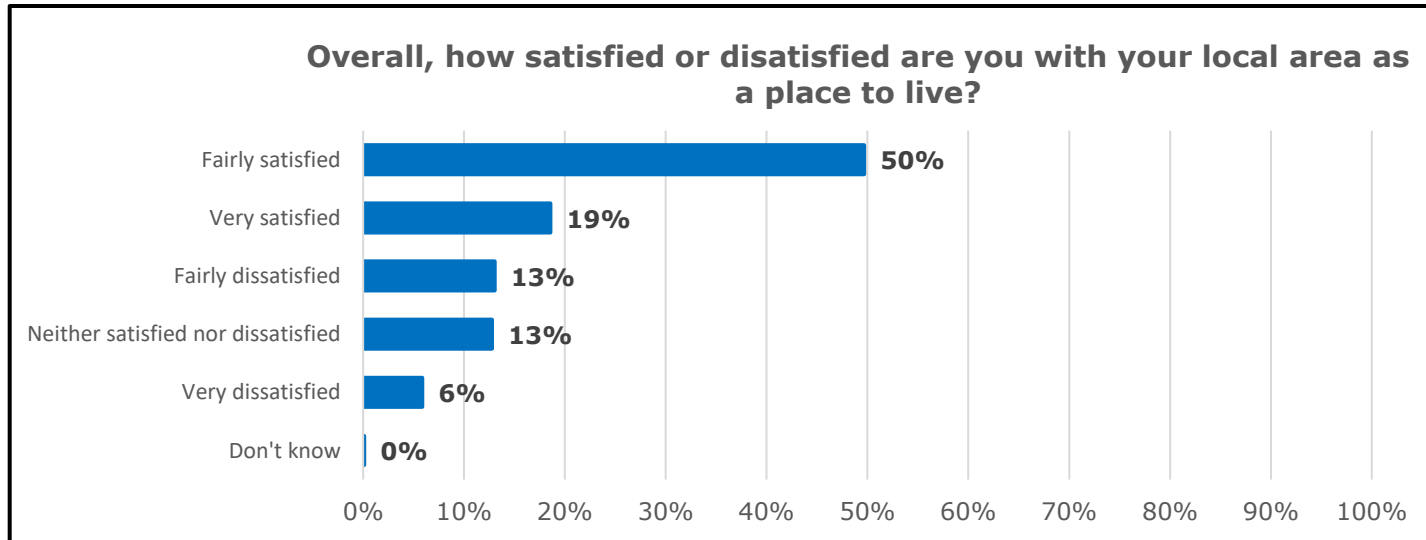
**Total number of responses:** 3,911

### Satisfaction Questions <sup>1</sup>

The first three questions were designed to help the Council understand residents’ feelings about living in Nottinghamshire and how the Council supports people. When referring to ‘local area’, this meant anywhere that is within 15-20minutes walking distance from the respondent’s home.

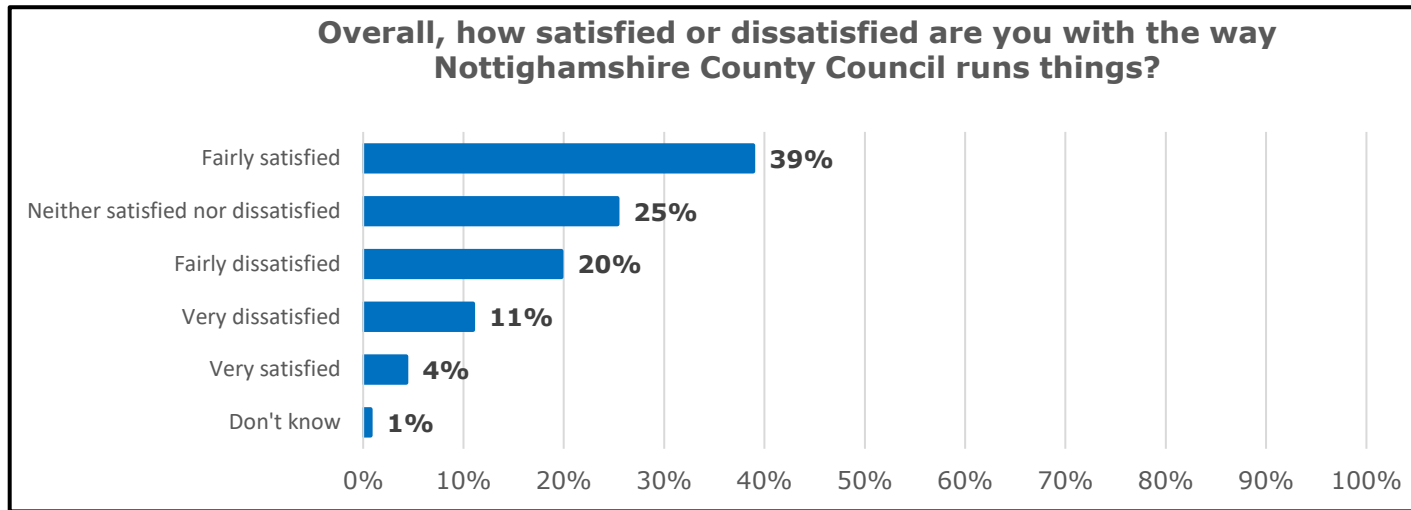
**Question 1** – Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

69% of respondents were positive about their local area as a place to live, 13% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, whilst 19% viewed it negatively.

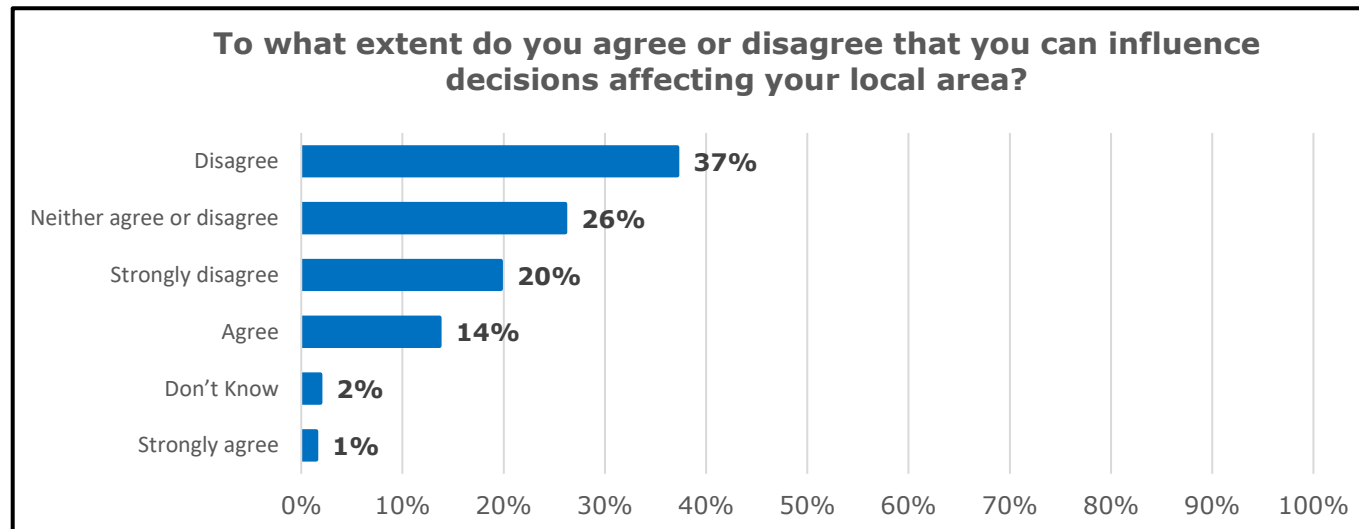


<sup>1</sup> Responses were grouped as positive (when answered as very satisfied or satisfied), neutral (when answered as neither satisfied or dissatisfied) or negative (when answered fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied).

**Question 2** – Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Nottinghamshire County Council runs things?  
43% were positive, 25% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 31% gave a negative response and 1% didn't know.



**Question 3** – To what extent do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?  
15% had a positive view in their ability to influence decisions affecting their local area, 26% were neutral, 57% had a negative response to this question, whilst 2% didn't know.



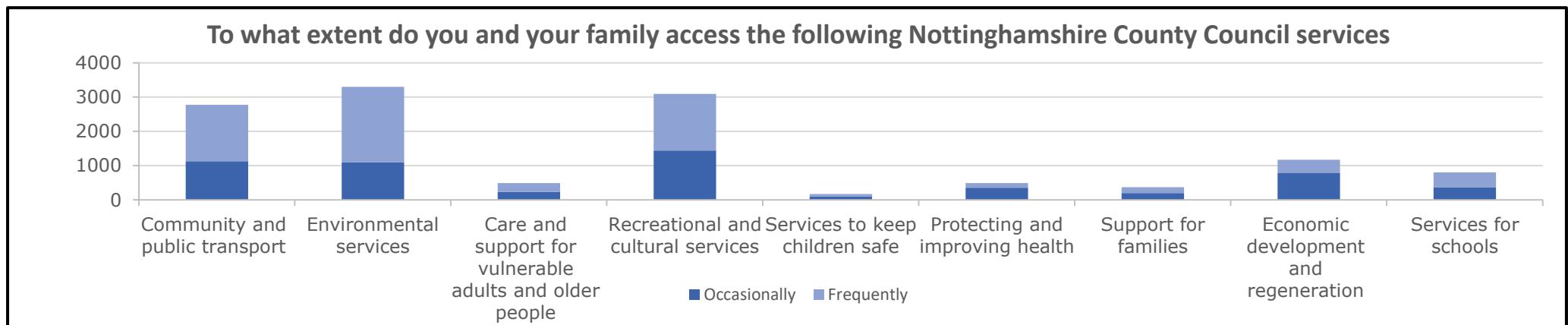
## a) Budget Priorities

**Question 4** - To what extent do you and your family access the following Nottinghamshire County Council services (frequently, occasionally, rarely, never, don't know). The service options were:

- care and support for vulnerable adults and older people (this includes services such as residential placements, day care, respite care, homecare, supported housing)
- services to keep children safe (including fostering, adoption, safeguarding and child protection, residential care, short breaks)
- support for families (including children centres, youth services, early years and childcare services)
- protecting and improving health (including helping to give children the best start, supporting people wanting to make healthy changes related to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, nutrition and exercise, mental wellbeing and suicide prevention, and giving particular attention to people living with the harmful impacts of homelessness and domestic violence)
- community and public transport (including planning and improvements, highway maintenance, bus travel including schools)
- environmental services (waste and recycling, flooding & climate change)
- economic development (including employment and skills, broadband, tourism)
- recreational and cultural services (including library services, arts, trails & country parks)
- services for school (including school admissions).

The services most frequently used by people who completed the survey were<sup>2</sup>:

- Environmental services, with 84% of respondents identifying that they make use of this either 'frequently', or 'occasionally'.
- Recreational and cultural services, with 79% of respondents identifying that they make use of this either 'frequently', or 'occasionally'.
- Community and public transport, with 71% of respondents identifying that they make use of this either 'frequently', or 'occasionally'.

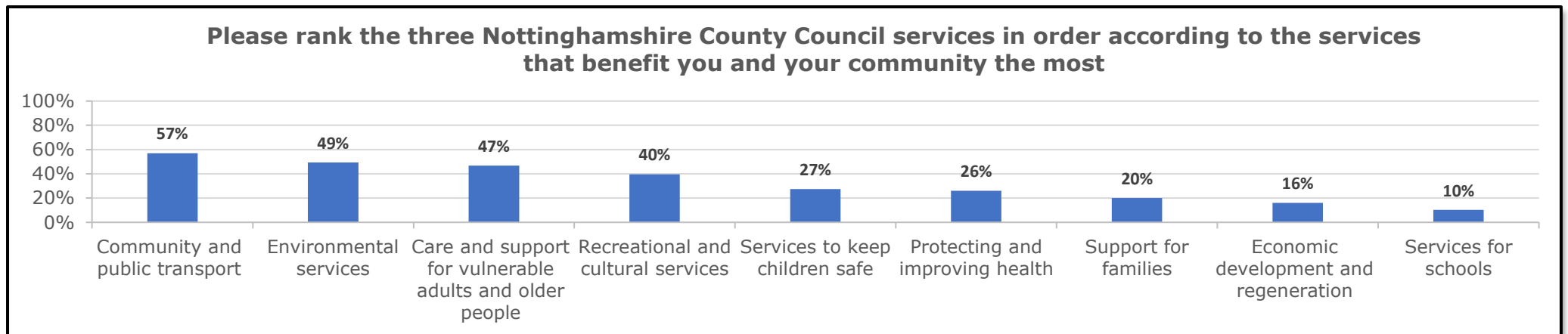


<sup>2</sup> Service usage (question 4) has been arranged in service priority order, to correspond with question 5.

**Question 5** – Please rank the three Nottinghamshire County Council services in order according to the services that benefit you and your community the most (with 1 being highest priority and 3 being lowest priority).

The three services most often identified by respondents as benefitting them and their communities were<sup>3</sup>:

- Community and public transport, with 57% of respondents identifying this as one of their top three services.
- Environmental services, with 49% of respondents identifying this as one of their top three services.
- Care and support for vulnerable adults and older people, with 47% of respondents identifying this as one of their top three services.



Both environmental services and community and public transport featured among the top three services most frequently accessed by respondents, and were also included in the top three identified as benefitting respondents and their communities.

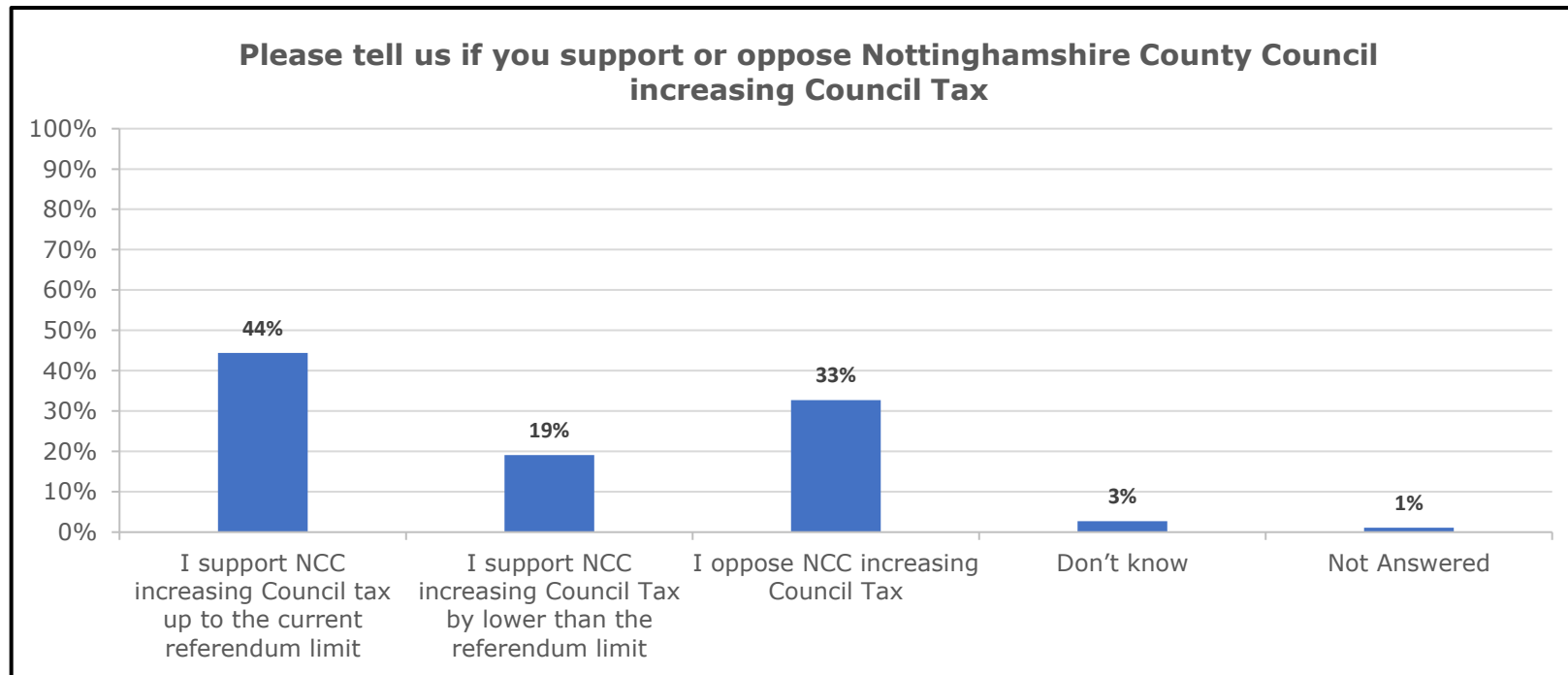
Services which were considered to benefit respondents and their communities, did not always mean that these were the frequently used services. For example, high priority was given to care and support for vulnerable adults and older people (47%), despite relatively low usage among respondents (13%).

<sup>3</sup> The number of times a service was ranked as either priority 1, 2 or 3 was counted to calculate the percentage of respondents who had ranked that service as a priority from the overall number of respondents. Service priority was ranked by these percentages.

**Question 6** - In February 2024, Full Council will consider the council tax rate will be from April 2024. In line with the maximum permissible Council Tax increase at the time, we asked respondents if they would support an increase in council tax, either up to the current referendum limit of 2.99%, or by a lower limit.

The majority of respondents (63%) would support an increase in council tax, either by the current level permitted by Government, or by a lower percentile increase.

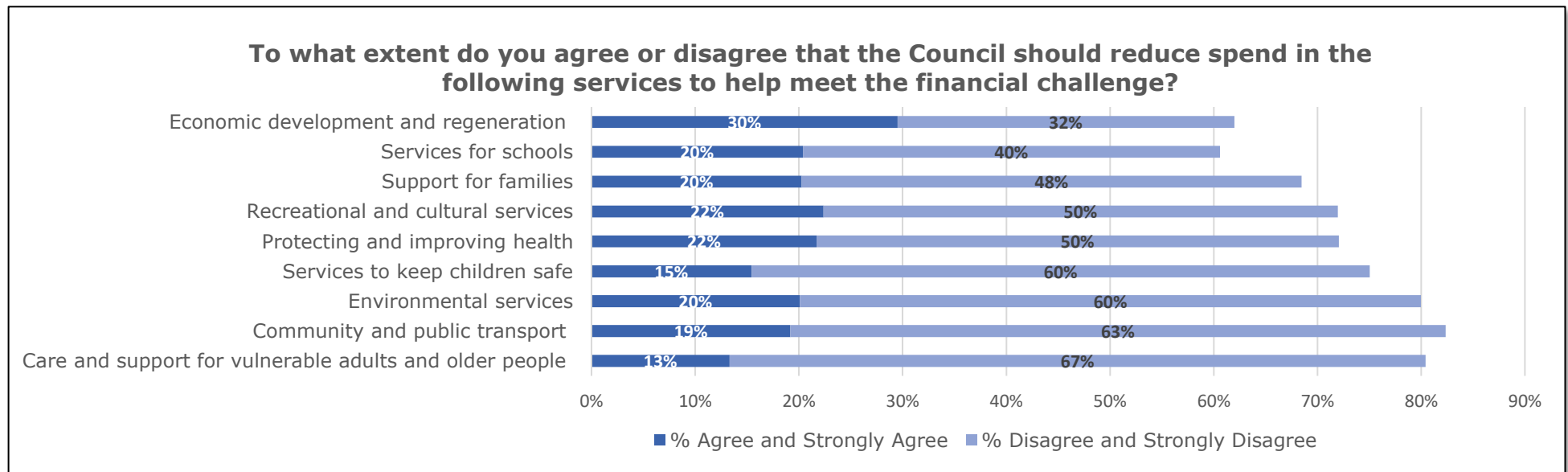
Specifically, results showed 44% of respondents would support an increase in council tax up to the current referendum limit, 19% would support an increase by lower than the referendum limit, 33% oppose the Council increasing council tax and 3% did not know. A small number (1%) of respondents did not answer this question.



**Question 7 - To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council should reduce spend in the following services to help meet the financial challenge?**

Overall, the majority of respondents did not agree or strongly agree with reductions to any of the services outlined in the survey document. The closest to a majority was economic development and regeneration, with 30% of respondents selecting that they either agreed or strongly agreed. More respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with reductions to:

- Care and support for vulnerable adults and older people, with 67% of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with reductions to these services.
- Community and public transport, with 63% of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with reductions to these services.
- Services to keep children safe, and environmental services, both of which received 60% of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with reductions to these services.

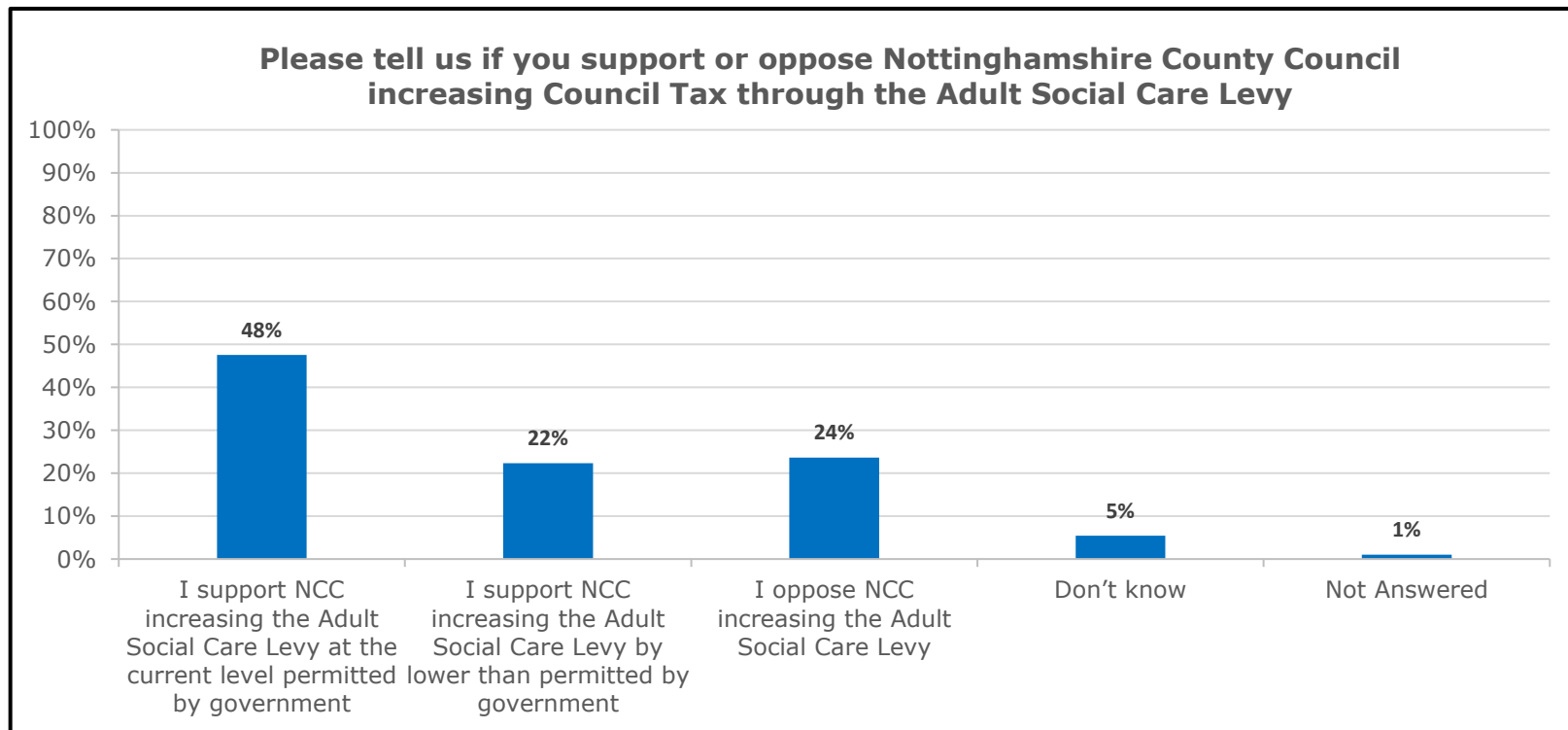


The areas identified to be least suitable for budget reduction broadly align with the services identified by respondents to be of most benefit to them and their communities.

**Question 8** – In line with the maximum permissible increase at the time, respondents were also asked if they would support an increase in the Adult Social Care levy, either by the level currently permitted by Government (2%), or by a lower limit.

The majority of respondents would support an increase, either by the current level permitted by Government, or by a lower percentile increase (70% of total respondents).

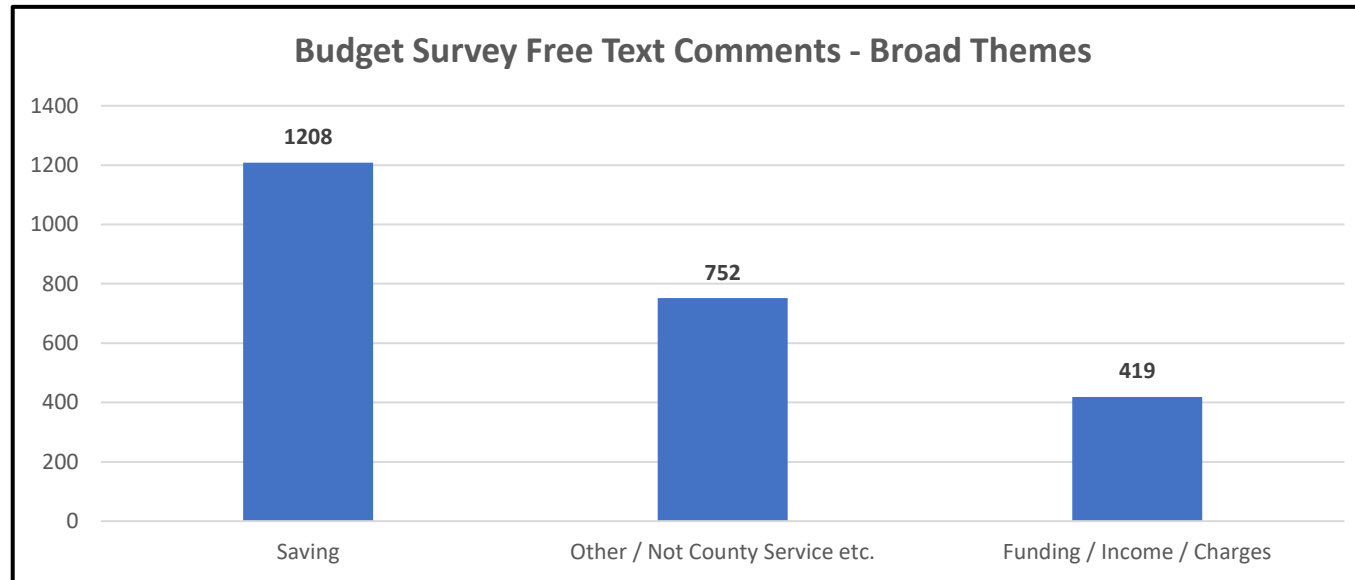
Specifically, 48% of people completing the survey would support an increase in the Adult Social Care Levy by the maximum level currently permitted, whilst 22% would support an increase by a lower level permitted. 24% opposed an increase, whilst 5% did not know. Only 1% of respondents did not answer this question.



**Question 9** - The survey also offered respondents with an opportunity to give suggestions about how the council could save money or raise additional revenue, as a free text box option.

1,885 free text comments were received - representing 48% of respondents. Themes arising from these comments have been captured and analysed, with the three primary category of theme/s being "savings", "income", and "other".

1,208 comment themes (51%) related to savings, 752 (32%) to "other", and 419 (18%) to "income". "Other" included comments that did not relate to savings or income, and also comments that clearly did not relate to County Council functions.



14 more detailed themes were derived from the comments, with some comments containing multiple themes.

Efficiency / Performance was the most common theme with 491 mentions (occurring in 21% of comments). This is followed by Funding / Income / Charges, which had 419 mentions (18%).

Certain themes could be seen to overlap. For example, closer scrutiny of external contracts and bringing more outsourced / contracted functions inhouse were sometimes seen as ways of increasing efficiency.

Overall, 2379 mentions of different themes were logged and broken down by category. The below provides an explanation covering each theme.



Theme	Explanation
Efficiency / Performance	Ensuring all services are operating as efficiently as possible and getting things right first time.
Funding / Income / Charges	Increasing income from a range of streams including lobbying central government for more funding, increasing council tax, encouraging business sponsorship, holding more paid events, charging for services that are currently free, increasing enforcement income, having a local lottery.
Roads / Transport	Making sure roads are properly maintained / improved, to save money, and to support economic development
Essential Services / Prioritise	Focusing only on essential services (getting back to basics), properly targeting services to those who need them most.
Salaries / Expenses (Staff / Members)	Considering the salaries / expenses for elected members and / or staff.
Staffing / Members (Number / Layers)	Considering the number of elected members and / or staff needed to fulfil the Councils core duties.
Estate / Assets	Selling or renting out under-used NCC buildings to save money and/or generate revenue.
Contracts / In-house delivery / Procurement	Considering how services are best delivered to (in-house or external to the Council) and reviewing all external contracts and procurement to maximise value for money.
Prevention - Early Intervention	Moving more towards prevention and early in areas like adults and children's social care and highway maintenance, to avoid escalation of needs and costs
Combine Councils / Share Services	Combining services, premises and councils where possible to ensure efficiency and avoid duplication.
Energy / Recycling / Environment	Ensuring the energy efficiency and recycling is maximised, for example by turning off street-lights at night where safe to do so, and reducing heating and lighting in council buildings
Economic Development / Tourism	Encouraging more businesses and tourism, exploiting and promoting local attractions more, getting more local people back into employment
Volunteers / Offenders / Community	Encouraging more community involvement and volunteering in providing services such as maintenance of green spaces.
Technology	Making more use of new technology to increase efficiency and cut costs in areas like adult social care
Other / Not County Service etc.	Covers a wide range of topics and functions not directly related to Nottinghamshire County Council but provided by the City Council, Districts, Police, central government and other agencies

## b) Demographics

- The most common age range of respondents was between 65-74 years of age (27%), closely followed by those aged 55-64 (26%).
- Respondents, aged 45 and over, represented 83% of respondents. This is significantly higher than the Office of National Statistics 2021 mid-year estimate of Nottinghamshire's 45+ population, which was estimated to be only 49%.
- 45% of respondents were Male, 50% of respondents were Female, which is similar to the population split for Nottinghamshire (Office of National Statistics 2021 mid-year estimates: 49% Males / 51% Females).
- Responders who identified their ethnicity as White/British stood at 89%. Again, this is similar to the proportion of Nottinghamshire residents who identify their ethnicity as White/British according to Office of National Statistics 2021 mid-year estimates (88%).
- The district of Gedling was the most common locality respondents identified as residing in (20%), followed by Rushcliffe (18%).
- 91% of respondents did not consider themselves to be a care experienced person, 4% did identify, 4% preferred not to say and 1% did not answer.
- 7% of respondents had served in the Armed Forces
- The most common employment status of respondents was 'wholly retired from work', which represented 39%. This was followed by 'employed in full-time job (30 years plus per week)', which had 31%. The lowest was 'unemployed and unable to work' (less than 1%).
- With regards to how respondents heard about the survey, the most popular route was via email from the County Council (78%), the next nearest was social media, which accounted for 7%, whilst the MyNotts app represented 5%. Less than 1% of respondents heard about the survey via the printed material from libraries.
- 27% of respondents identified as having a long-term health need or disability, 64% said no, 7% preferred not to say and 2% didn't answer. The most common issue reported was mobility (14%), followed by hearing (7%), and mental health (6%).