

Consultation and Engagement



Bristol's Budget

transport
adult social care
air quality
street cleaning
housing
waste
electoral services
children's services
libraries
climate change
museums
planning

2020-21

Budget 2020/21 Consultation

Consultation Report v1.3

13 January 2019

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Executive Summary

ES1 Bristol City Council Budget 2020/21

The council's budget proposals will be considered by Cabinet on 21 January 2020 for recommendation to Full Council to consider and agree on 25 February 2020.

The budget sets out how much money the council will be able to spend on each service area. As part of the budget, Full Council will decide on the level of Council Tax and Social Care Precept¹ for 2020/21.

Bristol City Council currently spends around £1 billion each year providing services to the people of Bristol. In 2019/20, a third of the revenue budget was raised locally through Council Tax (£215 million; 20%) and Business Rates (£134 million; 13%). The remaining 67% (£705 million) funding came in grants from the government (such as schools funding) and other income such as fees and charges we make for some of the services we provide.

As part of the council's budget planning, the council agreed in February 2018 that Council Tax increases would be reviewed annually and only charged where necessary and justifiable.

The decision on the council's budget will be made in the context of uncertainty over the level of funding the council will receive in the future, owing to government-led funding reform (the [Fair Funding Review](#)² and reform of business rates for 2021/22 and beyond) and uncertainties around the future level of grant funding we currently receive from central government and the EU.

At the same time, we face budget pressures (due to inflation and increasing demand from a growing and aging population). This could mean that any costs that cannot be covered by grants might have to be paid for through Council Tax.

ES2 The Budget 2020/21 Consultation

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation took place between 23 October and 4 December 2019. The consultation sought views from the public (including businesses and organisations which represent non-domestic rate payers³) about options for the level of Council Tax increase and Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21, in order to inform decisions to be made by Full Council in February 2020.

The consultation also asked respondents to say which service areas they think are most important to fund to help shape the future of the city.

We have previously consulted in 2016 and 2017 on the amount of the savings which are already included in the council's financial plans and work continues across the council to further develop and deliver the agreed savings. The Budget 2020/21 Consultation therefore focussed on Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept options and did not include new savings proposals. Should assumptions change or new plans be identified that require consultation, we will consult on specific service proposals before making a decision about changes to services.

¹ Adult Social Care Precept is a levy on top of core Council Tax, which is dedicated to help pay for adult social care.

² The [Fair Funding Review](#) aims to set the amount of funding for each council based on its spending needs and ability to raise money.

³ The council has a statutory duty to consult each year with representatives of non-domestic rate payers about the authority's proposals for expenditure in the forthcoming year.

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation sought feedback on:

- The level of core Council Tax in 2020/21 to support the delivery of services, with options of no increase, a 1% increase or a 2% increase⁴;
- An Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced to support the delivery of adult social care, with options of no precept, a 1% precept or a 2% precept⁵;
- Which service areas respondents think are most important to fund in the longer term to help shape the future of the city;
- Respondents' reasons for the Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept options they selected and their reasons for selecting particular services as priorities for future funding.

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation comprised information about the council's financial position and an [online survey](#). Downloadable print and [Easy Read](#) formats were also available online on the Consultation Hub. Paper copies of the survey and alternative accessible formats, including language translations, were available on request. Paper copies of the survey were also available in all libraries and the Citizen Service Point.

To boost response rates and to target low-responding parts of Bristol, 11,700 paper surveys and 11,700 A6 flyers were delivered direct to addresses in five areas (parts of seven wards) which have historically low response rates to consultations and high levels of deprivation. 11% of responses were generated from this activity.

8% of survey responses were garnered through face-to-face interviews in seven areas of the city which have historically low response rates, high deprivation and/or high proportions of black, Asian & minority ethnic (BAME) citizens.

The consultation was widely publicised through media, social media and communications with the public, including partner organisations, non-domestic rate payers and other stakeholders, as described in section 2.4.

ES3 Scope and use of this report

This report describes the methodology and presents the outcome of the Budget 2020/21 Consultation. It includes quantitative data and analysis of free text comments from the consultation survey responses.

This consultation report does not contain the council's recommendations for the level of Council Tax increase or Adult Social Care Precept (if any) in 2020/21, nor an assessment of the feasibility of any of the suggestions received or officers' proposals for the delivery of future services, having considered the consultation feedback.

The consultation feedback in this report will be taken into account by officers as final proposals for the 2020/21 budget, including the level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept, are developed. The final proposals will be included in a separate recommendations report which, together with this consultation report, will be considered by Cabinet on 21 January. Full Council will also consider this consultation report in making its decisions about the 2020/21 budget at the Full Council meeting on 25 February 2020.

Budget decisions will be published through normal procedures for Full Council and Cabinet decisions at democracy.bristol.gov.uk.

⁴ 2% is the maximum amount the council can raise Council Tax in 2020/21 without holding a local referendum. This limit is set by government. There was not enough time to hold a local referendum before Full Council decides on its 2020/21 budget in February 2020 so we did not ask if citizens would prefer an increase of more than 2%.

⁵ The council is allowed to add an Adult Social Care Precept of up to 2% to Council Tax in 2020/21. This is in addition to the permitted increase of up to 2% for core Council Tax.

ES4 Budget 2020/21 Consultation - Key findings

ES4.1 Response rate

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation survey received 3,448 responses of which 2,766 (80%) were self-completed online, 261 (8%) were completed online as interview surveys and 421 (12%) were self-completed using paper surveys.

2,599 responses (75%) were received from postcodes within the Bristol City Council area, 33 (1%) responses were from South Gloucestershire, 10 (0.3%) were from North Somerset, and 5 (0.1%) were from Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES). A further 19 (0.6%) were from unspecified locations within the four West of England authorities⁶ and 3 (0.1%) responses were from further afield. 779 (23%) did not provide a postcode.

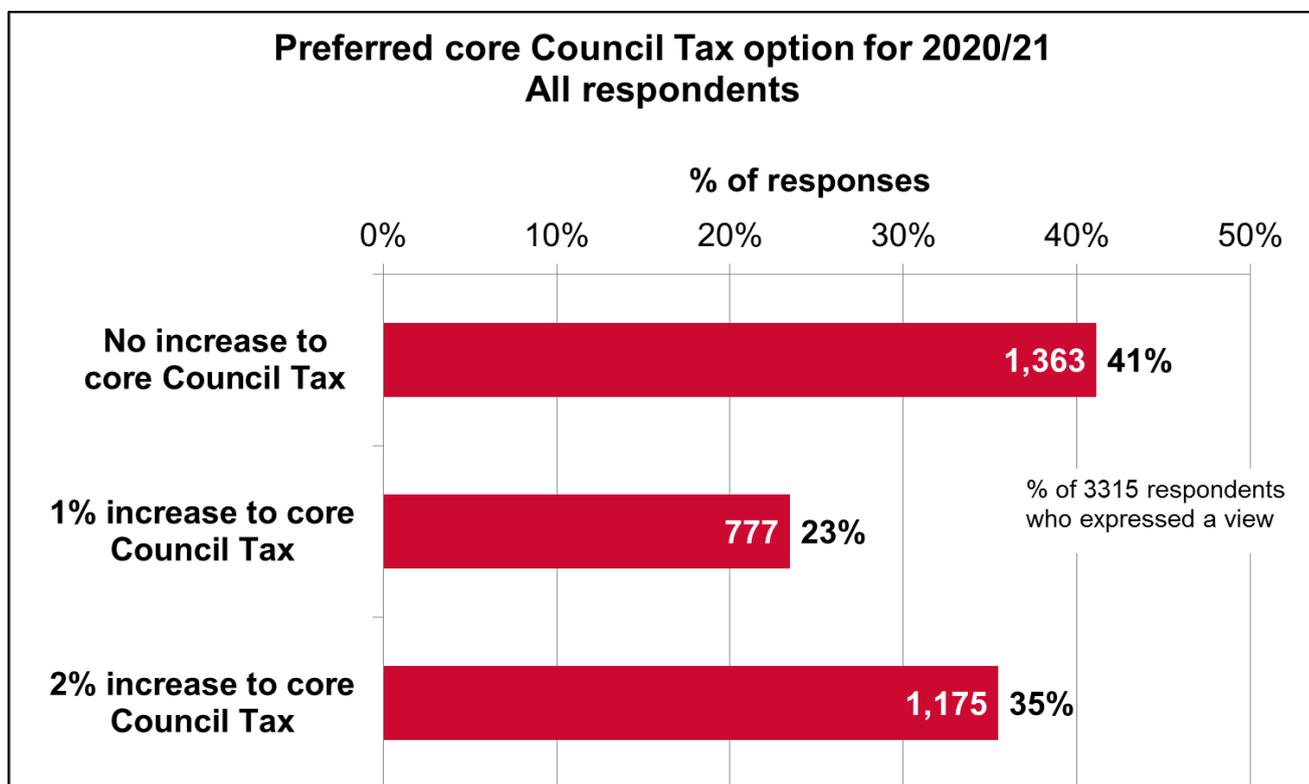
Analysis of respondents' postcodes indicate that there was a broadly representative response rate from areas of high, medium and low deprivation in Bristol.

Response rates from young people (aged 24 and younger), black, Asian & minority ethnic (BAME) citizens, and from people of faith were under-represented compared to these groups' proportion of Bristol's population. However, response rates for young people increased slightly compared to the 2019/20 budget consultation and response rates for BAME citizens matched the 2019/20 rates which were up significantly from previous years. A map of response rate by ward for the Bristol respondents is presented in chapter 3 along with the details of age profile, sex and other respondent characteristics.

ES4.2 Council Tax 2020/21

3,315 (96%) of the 3,448 people who responded to the budget consultation, stated the level core Council Tax increase they would support in 2020/21, from the three options provided (Figure ES1). 133 people did not answer this question.

Figure ES1: Preferred level of core Council Tax increase in 2020/21



⁶ Incomplete postcodes identified the home location as within the WOE authorities area (Bristol, B&NES, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire), but not which authority.

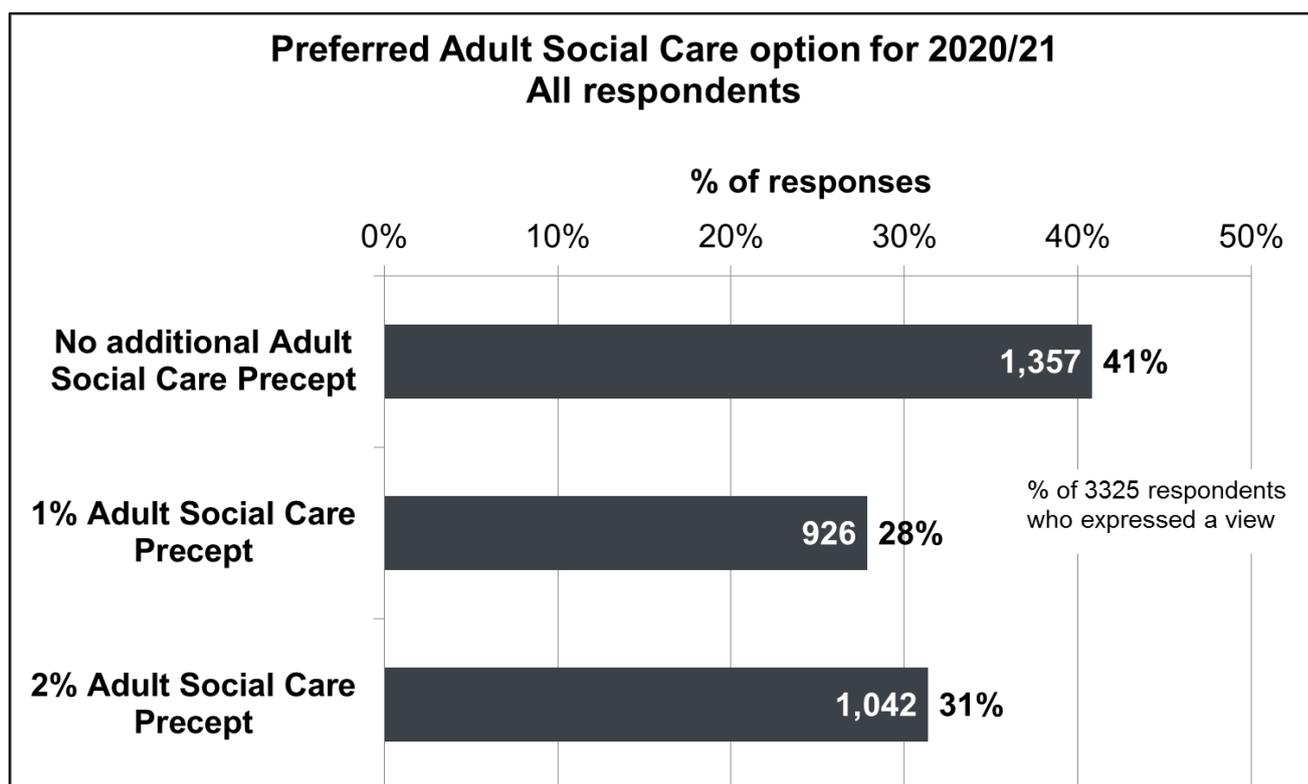
A majority of respondents (59%) favour an increase in core Council Tax to support general services. Of these, 1,175 (35% of all 3,315 respondents) favour a 2% increase⁷ and 777 (23%) would prefer a 1% increase in core Council Tax.

1,363 (41%) respondents would prefer ‘no increase to Council Tax’ in 2020/21.

ES4.3 Adult Social Care Precept 2020/21

3,325 (96%) of the 3,448 respondents to the consultation, expressed a preference for a particular level of Adult Social Care Precept. Figure ES2 shows the numbers who support each option. 123 people did not answer this question.

Figure ES2: Preferred level of Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21



A majority of respondents (59%) favour an additional Adult Social Care Precept (on top of core Council Tax) to support the delivery of adult social care.

Of these, 1,042 (31% of all 3,325 respondents) favour a 2% Adult Social Care Precept⁸ and 926 (28%) would prefer a 1% Adult Social Care Precept.

1,357 (41%) respondents would prefer no increase to Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21.

Comparison of Figures ES1 and ES2 shows that the same proportion of respondents (41%) want no increase to either core Council Tax or Adult Social Care Precept. Similarly, 59% would support some increase to both Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept. However, there is more support for the **maximum 2%** increase in core Council Tax (35%) than would support the maximum 2% Adult Social Care Precept (31%).

⁷ A 2% increase in core Council Tax is the maximum increase permitted without requiring a local referendum

⁸ 2% Adult Social Care Precept is the maximum increase permitted by government in 2020/21.

ES4.4 Differences in views on the level of Council Tax in areas of high and low deprivation

Views on the preferred level of core Council Tax were compared for respondents from areas with different levels of deprivation.

Support for a 2% increase in Council Tax is highest among respondents from areas of low deprivation (Figure ES3). Conversely, there is more support for no increase in Council Tax in the more deprived areas than in less deprived areas (Figure ES4).

Figure ES3: Preference in each deprivation decile for a 2% increase in core Council Tax

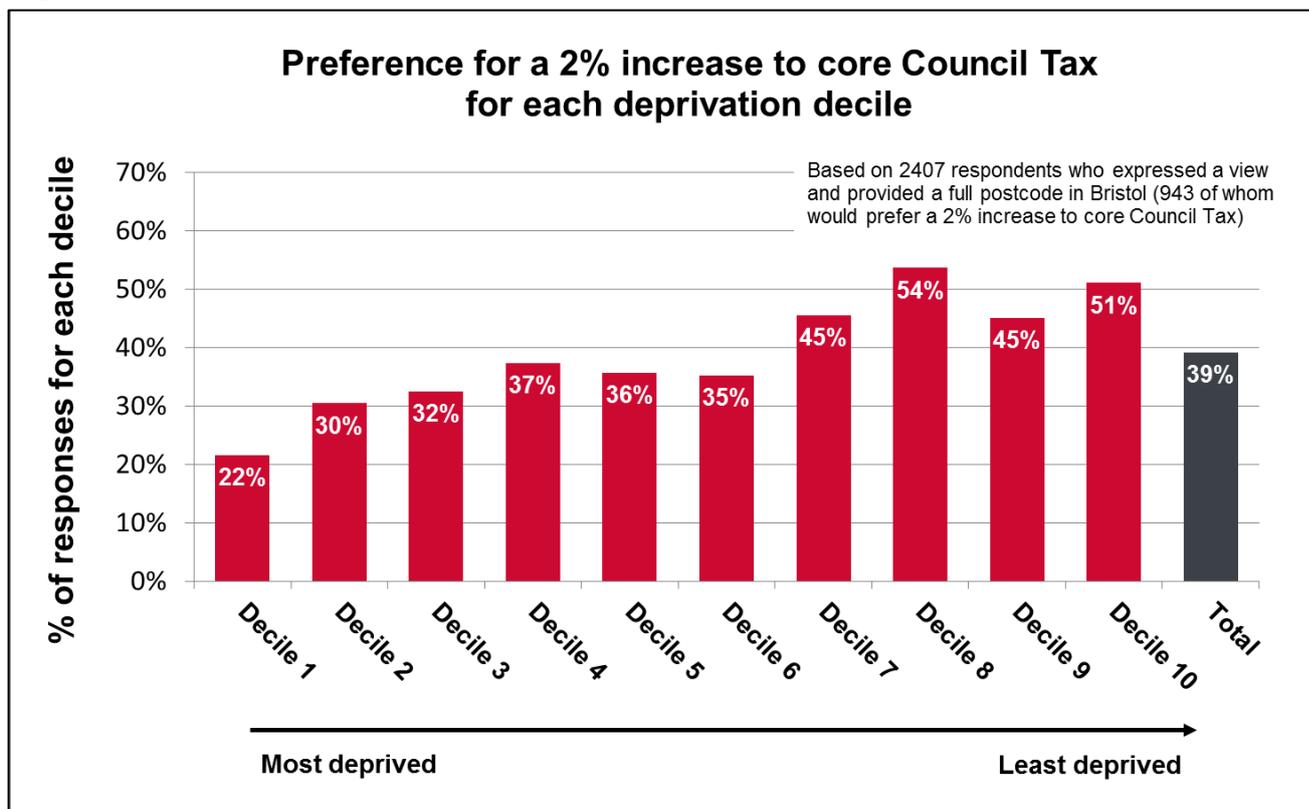
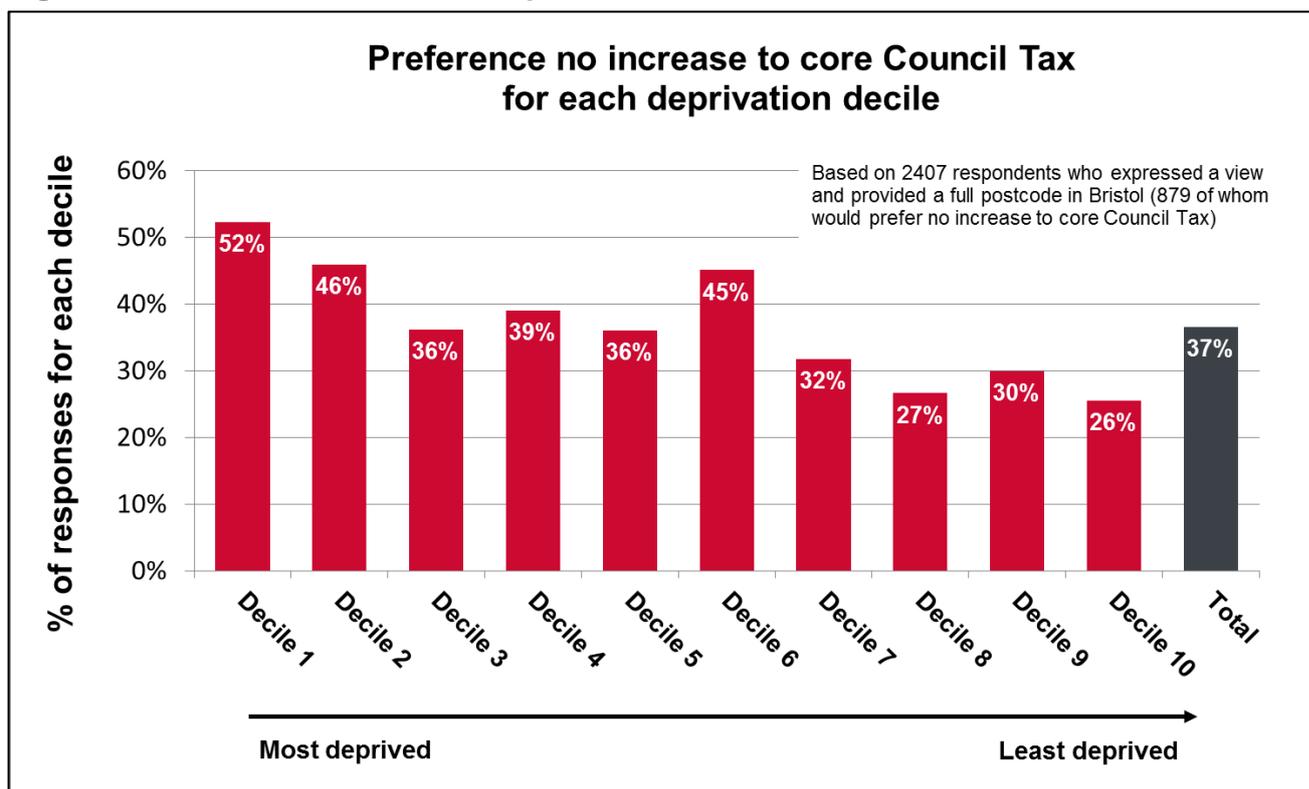


Figure ES4: Preference in each deprivation decile for no increase in core Council Tax



More than 22% of respondents in all deprivation deciles favour a 2% increase in core Council Tax (Figure ES3). More than a quarter of respondents in all deprivation deciles favour no increase in core Council Tax (Figure ES4).

Support for 1% increase in core Council Tax is more evenly balanced in all deprivation deciles. Slightly more people in the more deprived half of the city support a 1% increase than in the less deprived half.

ES4.5 Views on the level of Adult Social Care Precept in areas of high and low deprivation

As with core Council Tax, support for an Adult Social Care Precept follows inverse trends with deprivation. Support for a 2% Adult Social Care Precept is higher among respondents from areas of low deprivation (Figure ES5) and there is higher support for no Adult Social Care Precept in more deprived areas than in less deprived areas (Figure ES6)

However, the differences in support between high and low deprivation areas are smaller for Adult Social Care Precept than for core Council Tax. For example, support for a 2% increase in core Council Tax (Figure ES3) ranges from 22% in decile 1 to 54% in decile 8, whereas the support for a 2% Adult Social Care Precept (Figure ES5) ranges from 24% in decile 1 to 43% in decile 8.

There is no clear trend in support for 1% Adult Social Care Precept between areas of high and low deprivation.

Figure ES5: Preference in each deprivation decile for a 2% Adult Social Care Precept

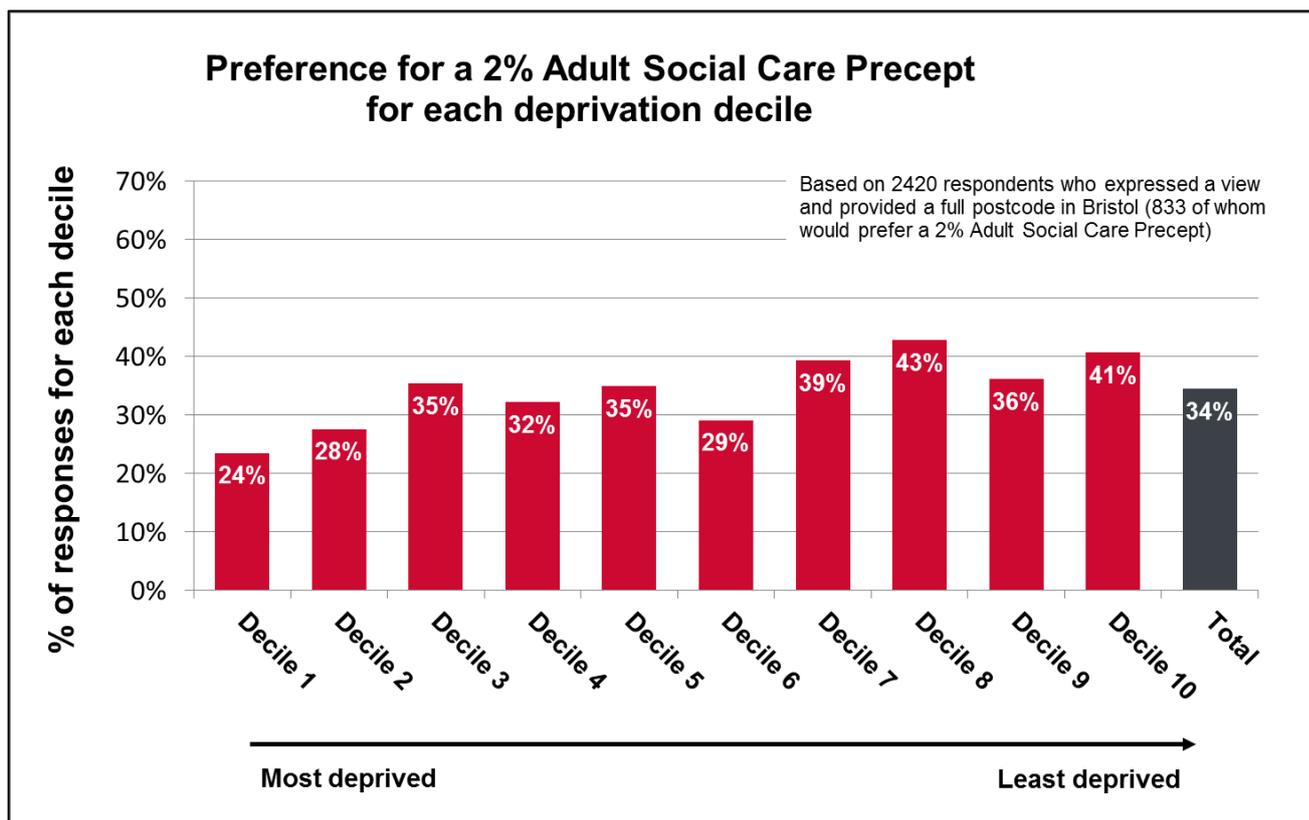
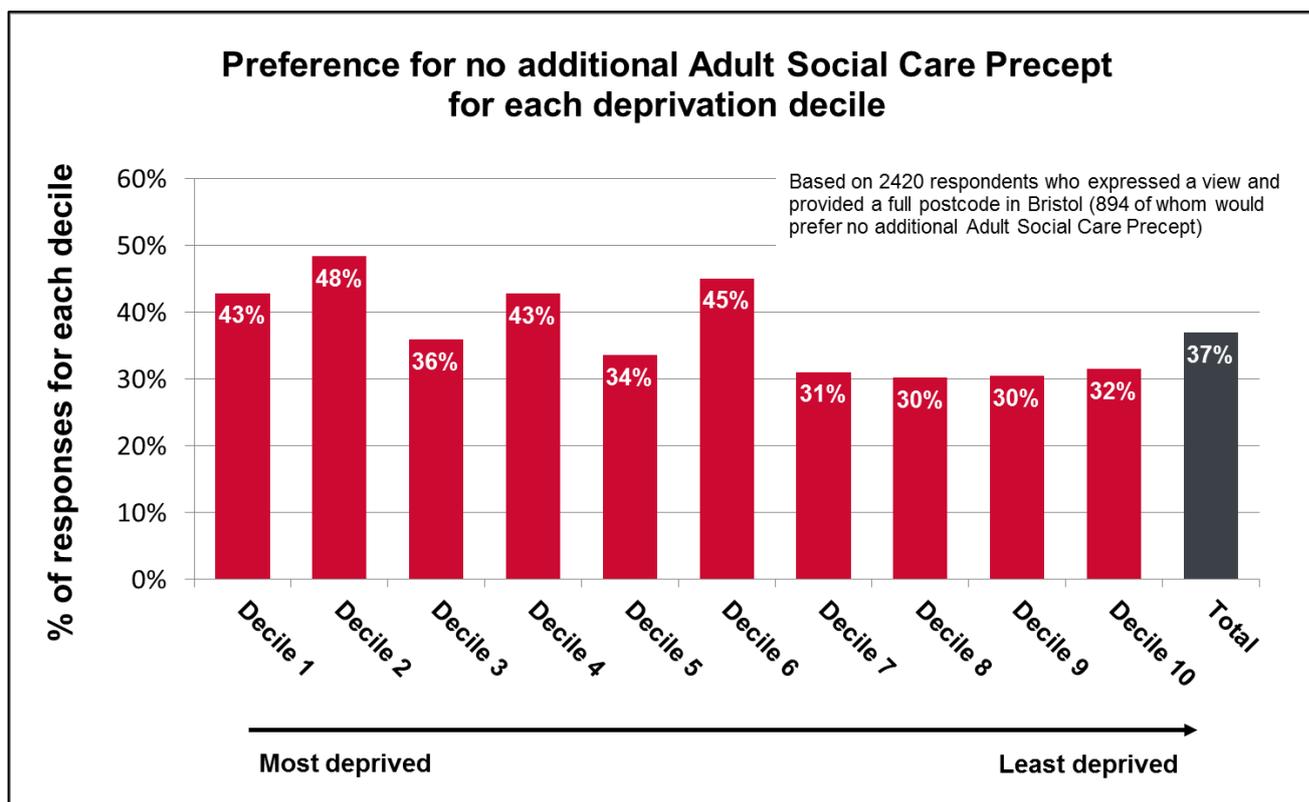


Figure ES6: Preference in each deprivation decile for no Adult Social Care Precept



ES4.6 Respondents’ priorities for longer term funding

3,422 (99%) respondents stated which service areas (from a list of 19) they think are most important to fund in the longer term to help shape the future of the city.

Figure ES7 summarises the percentage of respondents who think each service area is of high importance, medium importance and low importance. The services are shown in order of the percentage of respondents who think the service is of high importance (grey bars).

The services which respondents think are most important are **children’s services and social care** and **schools**, both of which are rated as high importance by at least 63% of respondents and of low importance by less than 10%.

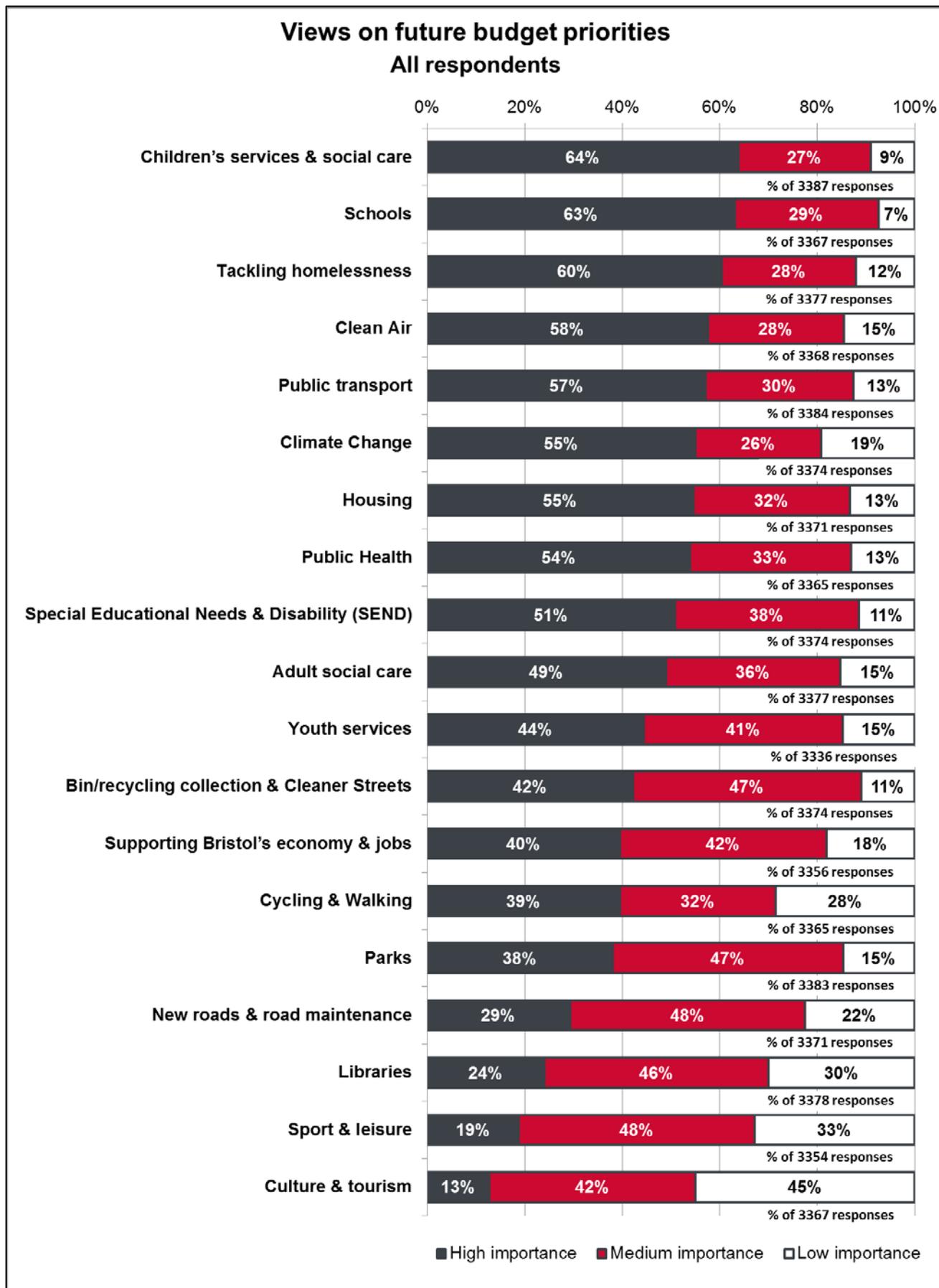
The next seven priorities (tackling homelessness, clean air, public transport, climate change, housing, public health, special educational needs & disability) are all rated as high importance by more than half of respondents.

Adult social care is rated as a mid-ranking priority (tenth out of 19 services), with 49% of respondents placing it as high importance and 36% as medium importance.

The three services which are rated as least important for funding by the council are **libraries, sport and leisure**, and **culture and tourism** each of which are seen as high importance by less than a quarter of respondents and low importance by at least 30% of respondents.

Climate change and cycling and walking divide opinions for and against (i.e. there is a small percentage who think the service is of medium importance).

Figure ES7: Priorities for longer term funding – all respondents



Views on the future spending priorities were compared for respondents from the most deprived 20% of Bristol (deprivation deciles 1 and 2) and the least deprived 20% (deciles 9 and 10) to understand if priorities differ for people in different circumstances.

Respondents in the most deprived areas (deciles 1 and 2) and the least deprived areas (deciles 9 and 10) share similar views on the importance of the following services:

- Children’s services and social care
- Schools
- Tackling homelessness
- Special educational needs & disability (SEND)
- Youth services
- Bin/recycling collection & cleaner streets
- New roads & road maintenance
- Sport and leisure

Respondents in the most deprived areas (deciles 1 and 2) place higher importance on the following services compared to respondents in the least deprived areas (deciles 9 and 10):

- Housing
- Public health
- Supporting Bristol’s economy & jobs.

Respondents in the least deprived areas (deciles 9 and 10) place higher importance on the following services compared to respondents in the most deprived areas (deciles 1 and 2):

- Clean air
- Public transport
- Climate change
- Adult social care
- Cycling and walking
- Parks
- Libraries
- Culture and tourism.

The scale of differences is shown in section 5.2.

1 Introduction

1.1 Context

On 25 February 2020, Full Council will set the council's budget for the 2020/21 financial year. The budget sets out how much money the council will be able to spend on each service area. As part of the budget, Full Council will decide on the level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept⁹ for 2020/21.

The council is currently able to increase Council Tax by up to 2% to help fund general services, without a local referendum. An Adult Social Care Precept of up to 2% can be added to support the delivery of adult social care (this is in addition to the permitted increase of up to 2% in core Council Tax for general services). These limits are set by government¹⁰.

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation took place between 23 October 2019 and 4 December 2019 and sought views from the public (including businesses and organisations which represent non-domestic rate payers¹¹) about options for the level of Council Tax increase and Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21. The consultation also asked respondents to say which service areas they think are most important to fund to help shape the future of the city.

This consultation report describes the consultation methodology and the feedback received, which will be considered by Cabinet and Full Council before decisions on the 2020/21 budget are made by Full Council in February 2020.

1.2 Funding pressures and uncertainty

Bristol City Council spends around £1 billion each year providing a range of services to the people of Bristol. The money the council has to spend on delivering day-to-day services to citizens is called the revenue budget. A third of this budget is raised locally through Council Tax (£215 million; 20%) and Business Rates (£134 million; 13%). The remaining 67% (£705 million) funding comes from grants from the government (e.g. schools funding) and other income such as fees and charges we make for some of the services we provide.

The council faces uncertainty over the level of funding it will receive in the future:

- The government is looking to reform how future funding is allocated via the [Fair Funding Review](#)¹² and business rates for 2021/22 and beyond;
- There are uncertainties around the level of grant funding that will be available to the council in the future. The grant funding we receive from central government and the EU helps to pay for services such as schools, early years & child care, high needs including special educational needs and disability (SEND), public health and homelessness.

⁹ Adult Social Care Precept is a levy on top of core Council Tax, which is dedicated to help pay for adult social care.

¹⁰ There was not enough time to hold a local referendum before Full Council decides on its 2020/21 budget in February 2020 so we did not ask if citizens would prefer an increase of more than 2% for Council Tax and 2% for Adult Social Care Precept. Where we refer to a 2% increase in Council Tax, we are using 2% as shorthand for an increase of 1.99%.

¹¹ The council has a statutory duty to consult each year with representatives of non-domestic rate payers about the authority's proposals for expenditure in the forthcoming year. The activities undertaken to consult representatives of non-domestic rate payers are described in section 2.4.4

¹² The [Fair Funding Review](#) aims to set the amount of funding for each council based on its spending needs and ability to raise money.

In addition, prices are increasing, Bristol's population is growing and there is increasing demand for our services. Services such as adult social care, children's services (including services for children with SEND) and homelessness support are under immense pressure. Funding these services properly is important to safeguard our most vulnerable citizens.

We are continuing to work to ensure we are able to provide sustainable funding for Bristol and to make sure services are good value for money. We will explore all of the funding options available to us to ensure we have sufficient funding to meet our budget requirement for 2020/21 and beyond.

1.3 Budget 2020/21 Consultation

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation sought citizens' views on the level of Council Tax with options of no increase, a 1% increase or a 2% increase, each of which would have different implications for the amount of money the council could spend on general council services.

The consultation also asked citizens what level of Adult Social Care Precept they would prefer next year to support the delivery of adult social care, in addition to the increase in Council Tax for general services. Options for the level of Adult Social Care Precept were no increase, a 1% increase or a 2% increase.

The consultation asked respondents to say which service areas, from a list of 19, they think are most important to fund in the longer term to help shape the future of the city.

We have previously consulted in 2016 and 2017 on the amount of the savings which are already included in the council's financial plans and work continues across the council to further develop and deliver the agreed savings. The Budget 2020/21 Consultation therefore focussed on Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept options and did not include new savings proposals. Should assumptions change or new plans be identified that require consultation, we will consult on specific service proposals before making a decision about changes to services.

The consultation information and questions are summarised in section 2.1.1 and the full [consultation survey](#) can be viewed online.

1.4 Structure of this report

Chapter 2 of this report describes the Budget 2020/21 Consultation methodology.

Chapters 3 to 6 present the Budget 2020/21 Consultation survey results:

- Chapter 3 presents the survey response rate and respondent characteristics;
- Chapter 4 describes the survey feedback on the level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept;
- Chapter 5 reports respondents' priorities for longer term funding to help shape the future of the city;
- Chapter 6 summarises respondents' reasons for their preferences and other comments provided as free text.

Chapter 7 describes feedback received in other correspondence (emails and letters).

Chapter 8 describes how this report will be used and how to keep updated on the decision-making process.

2 Methodology

2.1 Survey

2.1.1 Online survey

The [Budget 2020/21 survey](https://bristol.gov.uk/consultationhub) was available on the council's Consultation & Engagement Hub (bristol.gov.uk/consultationhub) between 23 October 2019 and 4 December 2019.

Downloadable print and [Easy Read](#) formats were also available on the Consultation Hub.

Survey information

The survey contained the following information as context for the survey questions:

- Details of the council's revenue budget (the money available to spend on delivering day-to-day services). This included an overview of where the money comes from, a breakdown of how Council Tax revenue is spent (based on 2019/20 expenditure) and details of three other budgets (the Dedicated Schools Grant, the public health budget, and the Housing Revenue Account), which the council must keep separate from its main day-to-day spending;
- An outline of the council's five-year capital investment programme to 2023;
- An explanation of council reserves.
- The context of increasing costs and future funding uncertainties, which could mean that any costs that cannot be covered by grants might have to be paid for through Council Tax.
- Forecasts of how much additional revenue would be raised in 2020/21 by each of the proposed core Council Tax options (increases of 0%, 1% or 2%) and each of the options for the level of Adult Social Care Precept (0%, 1% or 2%)¹³;
- The weekly and annual cost increases that would be payable by households in each Council Tax band for each Council Tax plus Adult Social Care Precept option (0%, 1%, 2%, 3% and 4% for Council Tax plus Adult Social Care Precept).

Survey questions

The survey questions sought respondents' views on the following:

- The level of core Council Tax to support the delivery of general council services in 2020/21, with options of no increase, a 1% increase or a 2% increase;
- The level of Adult Social Care Precept in addition to the increase in core Council Tax, with options of no precept, a 1% precept or a 2% precept;
- Which service areas they think are most important to fund in the longer term to help shape the future of the city. Respondents were asked to rate each of 19 service areas as high importance, medium importance or low importance. The service areas were: adult social care, children's services and social care, youth services, special educational needs and disability (SEND), schools, public health, bin/recycling collection and cleaner streets, culture & tourism, libraries, parks, sport and leisure, supporting Bristol's economy and jobs, housing, tackling homelessness, climate change, clean air, new roads and road maintenance, public transport, and cycling and walking;
- Respondents' reasons for their views on the preferred level of Council Tax, the level of Adult Social Care Precept and the priorities for long-term funding.

¹³ The council is allowed to increase core Council Tax by up to 2% in 2020/21 without a local referendum. An Adult Social Care Precept of up to 2% can be added to support the delivery of adult social care (this is in addition to the permitted increase of up to 2% in core Council Tax for general services). These limits are set by government. There was not enough time to hold a local referendum before Full Council decides on its 2020/21 budget in February 2020 so we did not ask if citizens would prefer larger increases.

The ‘About you’ section requested information which helps the council to check if the responses are representative of people across the city who may have different needs.

- Respondents’ postcode – this identifies if any parts of the city are under-represented in responding to the consultation and it can show if people from more deprived areas of the city have different views compared to people living in less deprived areas;
- Equalities monitoring information – this enables the council to check if we receive responses from people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010;
- Other information about respondents; for example whether they are a council employee, a councillor, or represent a local business;
- How respondents found out about the consultation – to help the council publicise future consultations effectively.

Respondents could choose to answer some or all of the questions in any order and save and return to the survey later.

2.1.2 Paper surveys

Paper copies of the survey with Freepost return envelopes were available in all libraries, the Citizen Service Point and on request by email and telephone from the council’s consultation and engagement team.

Paper copies were also delivered to residential addresses in five areas which have historically low response rates to consultations. Details are described in section 2.1.5.

2.1.3 Alternative formats

The consultation was available in Easy Read format on the Consultation Hub. Easy Read and other alternative formats (braille, large print, audio, British Sign Language (BSL) and translation to other languages) were available on request.

2.1.4 Interview surveys

A programme of interview surveys was developed in order to increase the number of responses overall and response rates from wards and groups which are often under-represented in providing feedback to consultations; specifically areas with high deprivation¹⁴ and black, Asian & minority ethnic (BAME) citizens.

Seven locations were selected in wards which provided low response rates to city-wide consultations during 2017, 2018 and 2019 and which are also areas with high deprivation and/or high populations of BAME citizens.

The interview survey locations and the number of responses are summarised in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Interviewers talked each respondent through the consultation information and recorded their verbal responses to each question via the online survey using 4G-enabled tablets.

All interview survey responses are included within the overall survey results.

¹⁴ The measure of deprivation was ‘Indices of Multiple Deprivation’ (IMD), which takes into account 37 local indicators that cover income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services, and living environment. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) publishes IMD scores for 263 Census Lower Super Output Areas in Bristol.

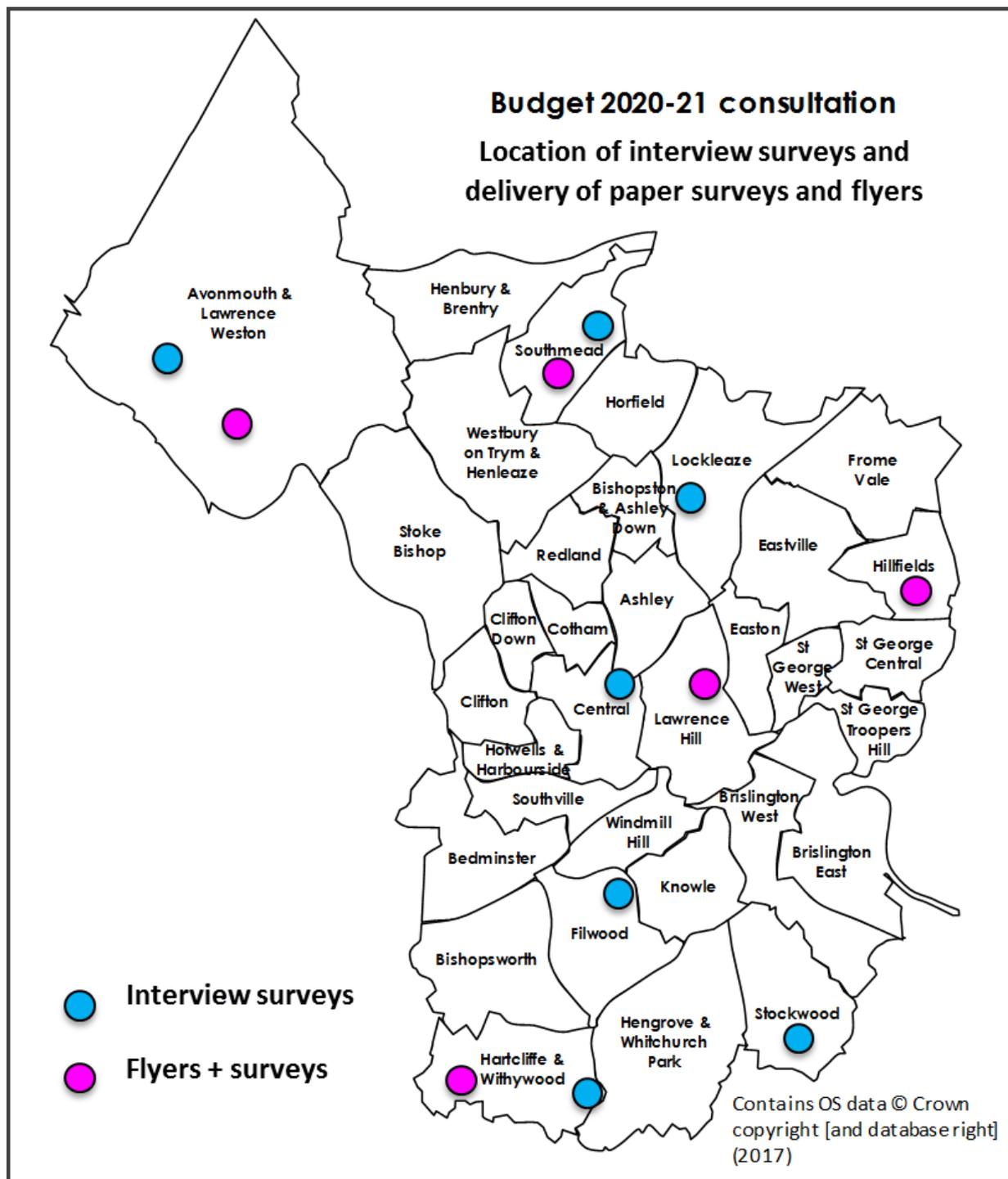
Table 1: schedule of budget consultation interview surveys

Ward	Location	Date	Reason for targeted surveys	Number of responses ¹⁵
Avonmouth	Avonmouth Coop	19 Nov	Low historic response rate ¹⁶ High deprivation	26
Southmead	Lidl, Southmead Road	21 Nov	Very low historic response rate Very high deprivation	25
Central	The Galleries, Broadmead Session 1	24 Nov	Very low historic response rate High deprivation 30% BAME Draws diverse citizens from inner wards	28
Lockleaze	Lidl, Muller Road	25 Nov	Low historic response rate High deprivation 30% BAME	26
Stockwood	Hollway Road	25 Nov	Very low historic response rate	11
Central	The Galleries, Broadmead Session 2	28 Nov	Very low historic response rate High deprivation 30% BAME Draws diverse citizens from inner wards	51
Filwood	The Park and other locations on Daventry Road	2 Dec	Very low historic response rate Very high deprivation	50
Central	The Galleries, Broadmead Session 3	3 Dec	Very low historic response rate High deprivation 30% BAME Draws diverse citizens from inner wards	19
Hartcliffe & Witherwood	Morrisons, Hartcliffe	3 Dec	Very low historic response rate Very high deprivation	25
Total				261

¹⁵ Number of responses to 2020/21 consultation obtained through interview surveys in each area.

¹⁶ Historical response rates are based on responses to city-wide consultations in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Figure 1: Location of interview surveys and delivery of paper surveys and flyers



2.1.5 Direct delivery of paper surveys and information postcards

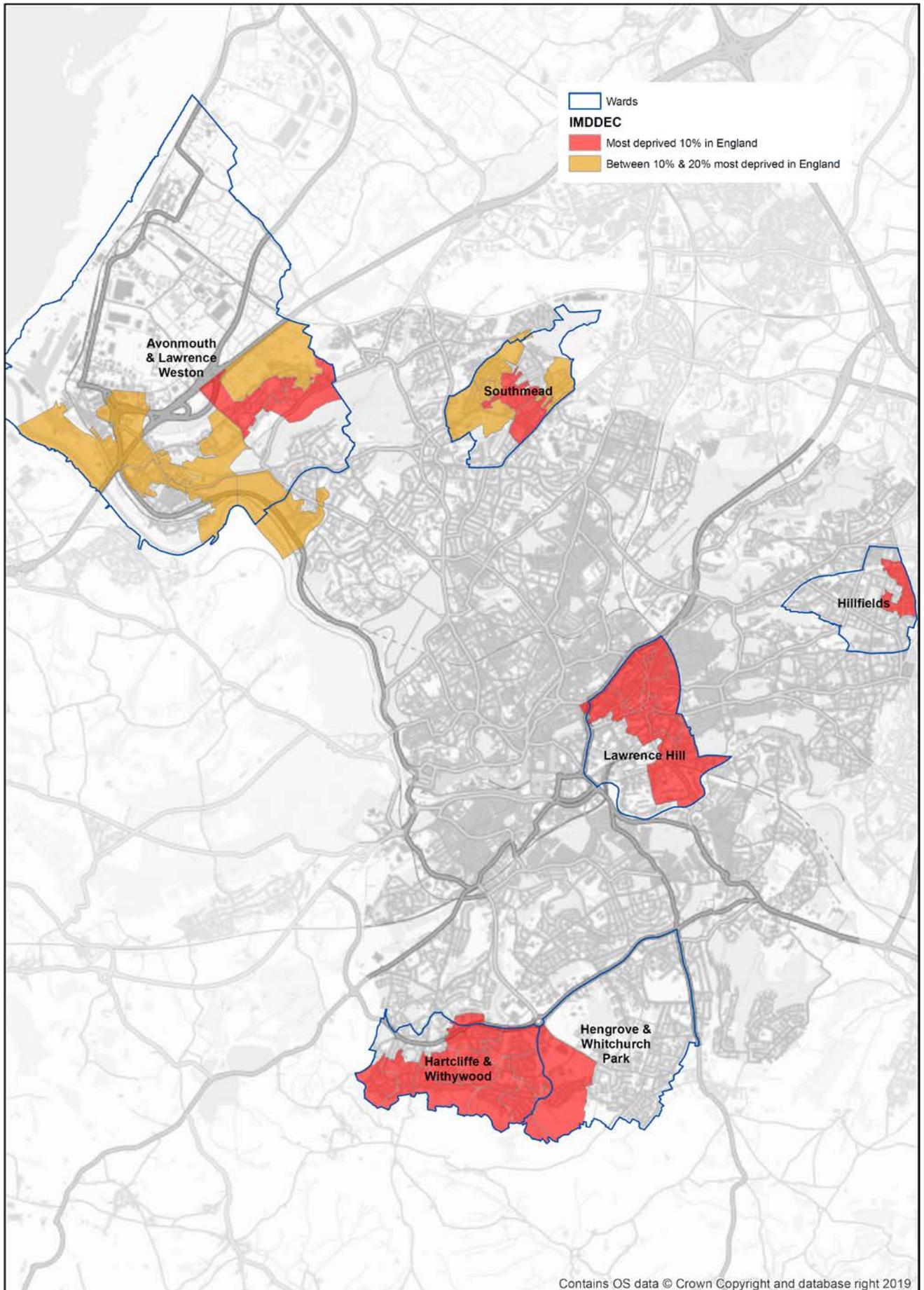
Paper surveys and A6 flyers were delivered direct to addresses in five areas (parts of seven wards) which have historically low response rates to consultations (Figure 1).

2,500 flyers and 2,500 paper surveys were distributed in each of four areas: Lawrence Hill, Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston (and part of Stoke Bishop), Southmead, and Hartcliffe and Witherwood / Hengrove and Whitchurch Park.

1,700 flyers and 1,700 paper surveys were distributed in Hillfields.

Because response rates from more deprived parts of Bristol tend to be lower than from less deprived areas, the distribution areas targeted the more deprived parts of each ward, as shown in Figure 2. The delivery company distributed some surveys and flyers beyond the planned areas, resulting in additional responses from Horfield and Easton.

Figure 2 Distribution areas for paper surveys and flyers



The flyers included a URL to the online survey. The paper surveys included a URL to the online survey for recipients who wished to complete the survey online. A Freepost return envelope was also provided for use by respondents who preferred to complete the survey on paper.

Table 2 summarises the number of survey responses to the flyers and paper surveys distributed in each area.

Table 2: Survey responses from flyers and paper surveys delivered to households

Area	Reponses to distribution of flyers and paper surveys		
	Paper	Online	Total
Lawrence Hill	143	24	167
Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston and part of Stoke Bishop	96	13	109
Southmead	40	5	45
Hartcliffe and Withywood / Hengrove and Whitchurch Park	22	0	22
Hillfields	26	0	26
Total	327	42	369

Note, additional responses were received from these wards in response to the range of other publicity described in section 2.4

2.2 Public meetings

Council officers presented details of the Budget 2020/21 Consultation, answered questions and invited survey responses at the following public meetings:

- Voice and Influence Partnership on 14 November 2019;
- Bristol Older Peoples' Forum on 28 November 2019.

All responses received at these meetings were via the online or paper surveys and are included within the overall survey results.

2.3 Other correspondence

Five emails were received in response to the consultation. These are reported separately to the survey responses in chapter 7.

2.4 Publicity and briefings

2.4.1 Objective

The following programme of activity was carried out to publicise and explain the Budget 2020/21 Consultation. The primary objective was to involve residents and stakeholders across the city in decisions on the level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept by ensuring that information was shared across a wide range of channels, reaching as broad a range of audiences as possible in order to maximise response rates. Areas of the city which tend to respond to surveys in low numbers were specifically targeted.

2.4.2 Bristol City Council channels

Copy and electronic materials were shared via the following council and partner channels and networks:

- Bristol City Council's website;
- Our City e-newsletter – 1,759 recipients;
- Ask Bristol e-bulletin - 3,100 recipients;
- All Members / Councillors;
- Invitation emails sent to 8,329 users of the online Council Tax account system. Initial emails were sent on 24 October, with follow-up emails sent to those who had not yet responded to the survey on 7 November, 26 November and 3 December;
- Email to 1,300 members of the Citizen's Panel;
- Messages to notify staff and visitors of the consultation were posted on digital screens in City Hall and 100 Temple Street and the consultation was advertised through the council's internal newsletter.
- Digital advertisement posted in libraries which have digital screens;
- Postcards and posters were placed in libraries across the city, along with paper copies of the survey and Freepost return envelopes

2.4.3 Members

A digital engagement pack including assets for social media and digital advertisement of the consultation was sent directly to members.

2.4.4 Bristol City Council Partners, Businesses and Voluntary Sector Organisations

The council has a statutory duty to consult each year with representatives of non-domestic rate payers about the authority's proposals for expenditure in the forthcoming year.

Details of the consultation were shared with over 300 businesses, voluntary sector organisations, equalities groups and faith groups with a request for information to be circulated through their networks.

2.4.5 Media engagement

Press releases were distributed to media contacts and local community newsletters on 23 October detailing the options for the level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept from April 2020 which resulted in media coverage in Bristol Post and local community newsletters.

2.4.6 Social Media – posts, outreach and advertising

Regular posts on Bristol City Council’s social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Next Door and Instagram) were made for the duration of the consultation, with increased posts at launch, ‘two weeks left’ and in the final days.

Paid for Facebook advertising was employed to engage targeted areas of the city and encourage responses to the budget consultation. The target areas were selected by analysing the responses received after three weeks and prioritising wards with low response rates. In addition posts through Next Door were specifically targeted to 19 areas showing a lower response rate. Social media accounted for the following number of responses¹⁷:

- Facebook 9.5% (312 respondents)
- Twitter 2.9% (96 respondents)
- Next Door 8.4% (276 respondents)
- Instagram 0.2% (8 respondents)

2.4.7 Targeted Direct Mail

Direct mail in the form of A6 flyers and paper surveys (see section 2.1.5 for details) were distributed to five areas which have historically low response rates. These were Lawrence Hill, Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston (and part of Stoke Bishop), Southmead, Hartcliffe and Withywood / Hengrove and Whitchurch Park, and Hillfields.

¹⁷ Based on responses to the survey question ‘How did you hear about this consultation?’

3 Survey response rate and respondent characteristics

3.1 Response rate to the survey

The Budget 2020/21 Consultation survey received 3,448 responses of which 2,766 (80%) were self-completed online, 261 (8%) were completed online as interview surveys and 421 (12%) were self-completed using paper surveys.

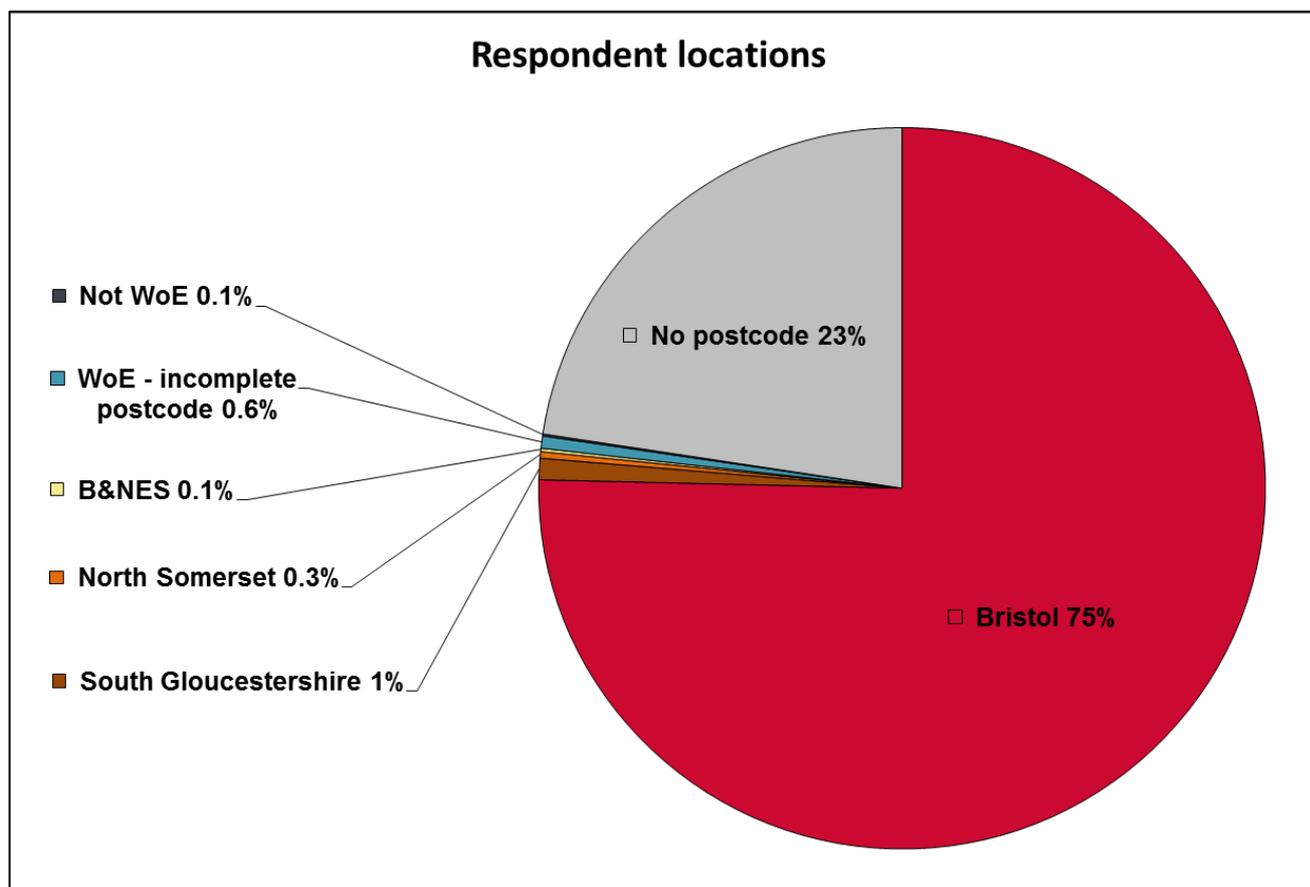
3.2 Geographic distribution of responses

2,599 responses (75%) were received from postcodes within the Bristol City Council area, 33 (1%) responses were from South Gloucestershire, 10 (0.3%) were from North Somerset, and 5 (0.1%) were from Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES). A further 19 (0.6%) were from unspecified locations within the four West of England authorities¹⁸ and 3 (0.1%) responses were from further afield (Figure 3).

779 (23%) did not provide a postcode.

Of the 2,599 responses from within the Bristol City Council area, 2,489 provided full or partial postcodes from which the ward of origin could be identified¹⁹ (Figure 4).

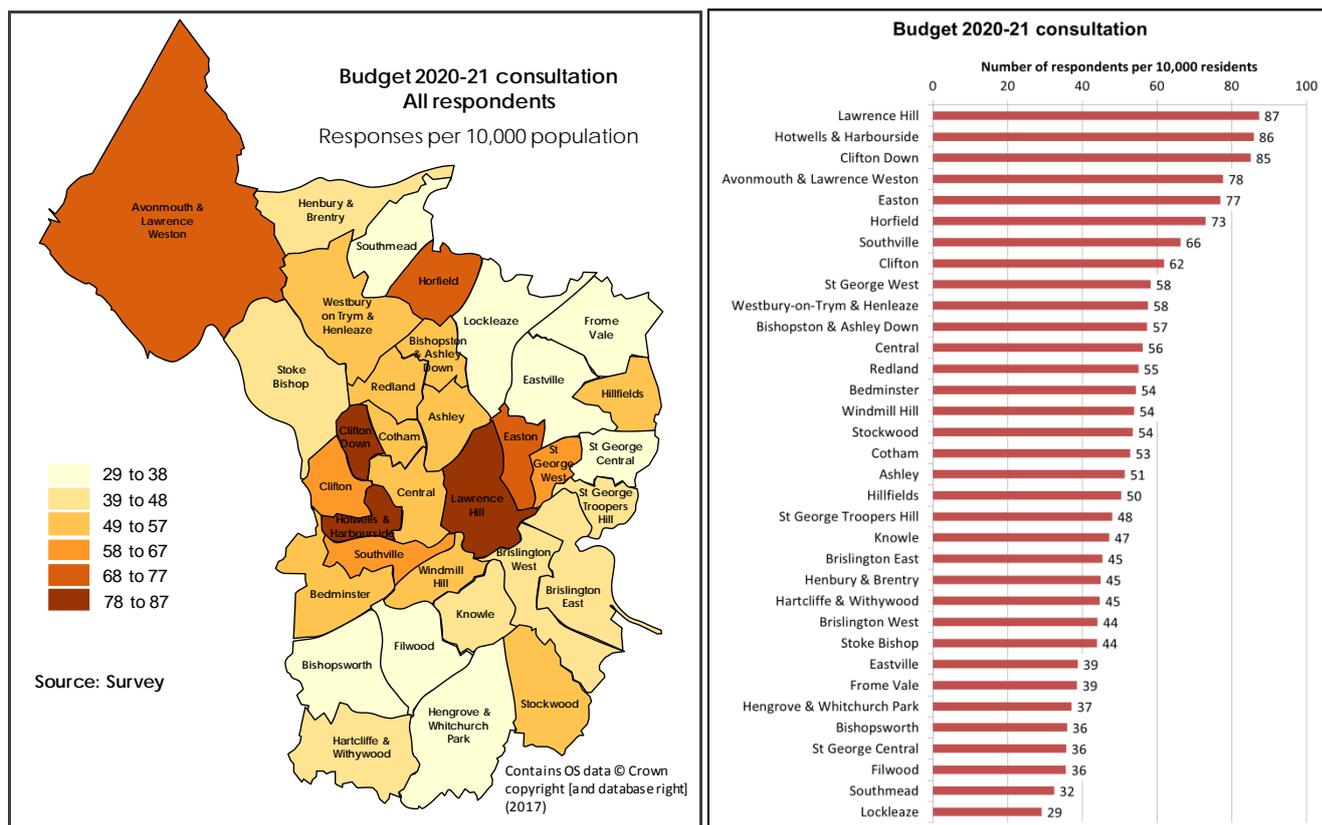
Figure 3: geographic distribution of responses



¹⁸ Incomplete postcodes identified the home location as within the WOE authorities area (Bristol, B&NES, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire), but not which authority.

¹⁹ The other 110 responses included incomplete postcodes which are within Bristol but do not include enough information to identify a specific ward.

Figure 4: geographic distribution of responses in Bristol



3.3 Response rate from areas of high and low deprivation

The home location of respondents in Bristol was compared with nationally published information on levels of deprivation across the city²⁰ to review if the responses received include a cross-section of people living in more deprived and less deprived areas. This helps the council to know if the views of citizens in more deprived areas differ from people living in less deprived areas.

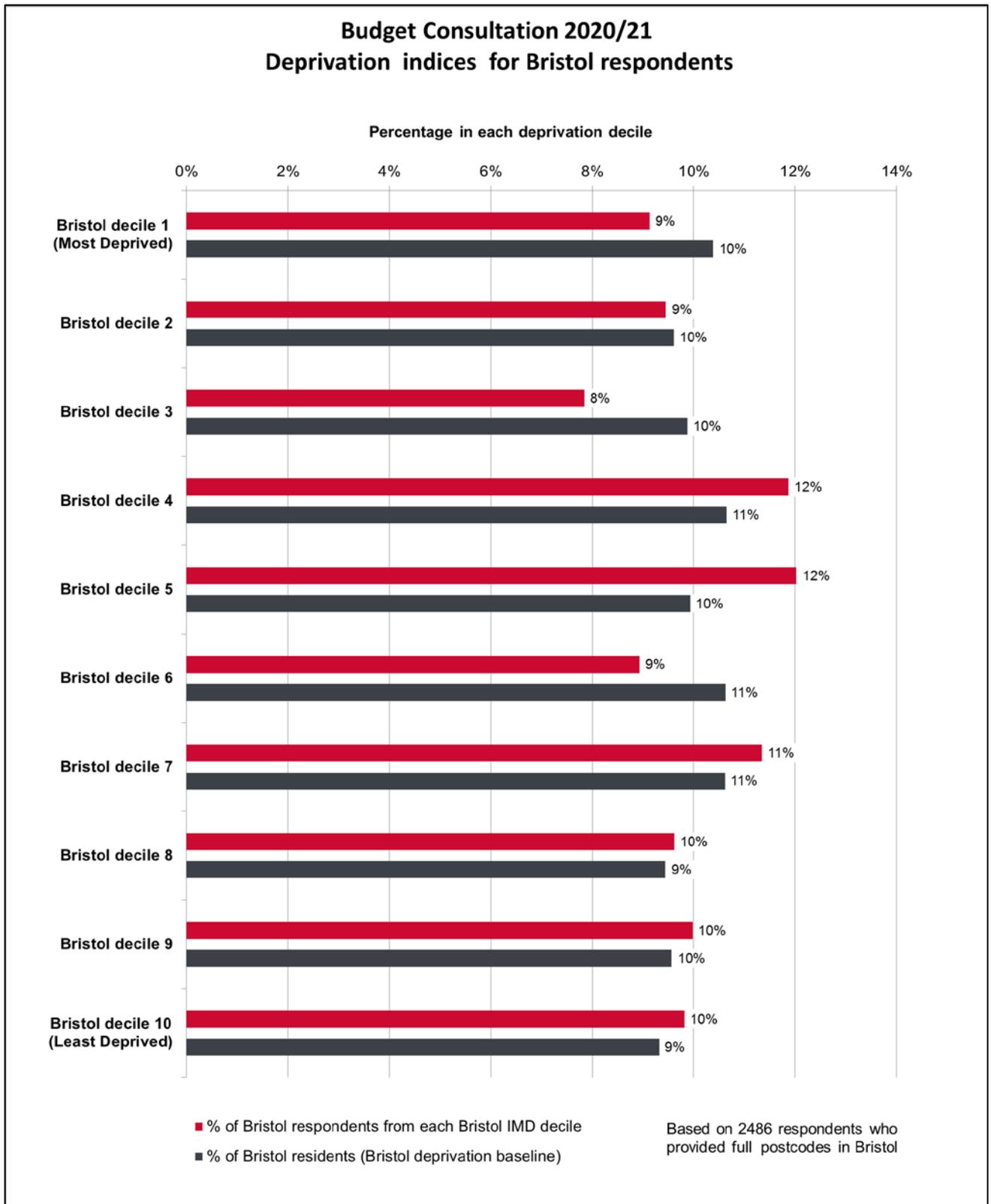
The comparison looked at levels of deprivation in 10 bands (known as ‘deciles’) from decile 1 (most deprived) to decile 10 (least deprived). Figure 5 compares the percentage of Bristol respondents²¹ living in each of the deprivation deciles to the percentage of all Bristol citizens who live in each decile.

Figure 5 shows that there was a good response rate from people in all deprivation deciles (red bars) and that this approximately matches the proportion of Bristol citizens living in each deprivation decile (grey bars). Response rates from deciles 3 and 6 are slightly lower and response rates from deciles 4 and 5 are slightly higher than the proportion of Bristol citizens living in each decile.

²⁰ The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes information about deprivation for 32,844 small areas - known as ‘Lower Super Output Areas’ (LSOAs) - throughout England. For each of these areas, a measure of deprivation is published called ‘Indices of Multiple Deprivation’ (IMD), which takes into account 37 aspects of each area that cover income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services, and living environment. The postcodes provided by respondents to the consultation enabled each respondent to be matched to one of the 263 Lower Super Output Areas that cover the Bristol City Council area and thus to one of the deprivation deciles. Note that postcodes provide approximate locations; they are not used to identify individuals or specific addresses.

²¹ Based on 2,486 respondents who provided full postcodes in the Bristol administrative area from which deprivation decile can be identified.

Figure 5: Comparison of response rate from areas of high and low deprivation



(Percentages in Figure 5 are given to the nearest integer. The length of bars in the chart reflects the unrounded percentage; hence bars shown as 10% may be slightly different in length.)

3.4 Characteristics of respondents

3,372 (98%) people answered one or more of the equalities monitoring questions. Respondent characteristics are summarised below. The charts compare:

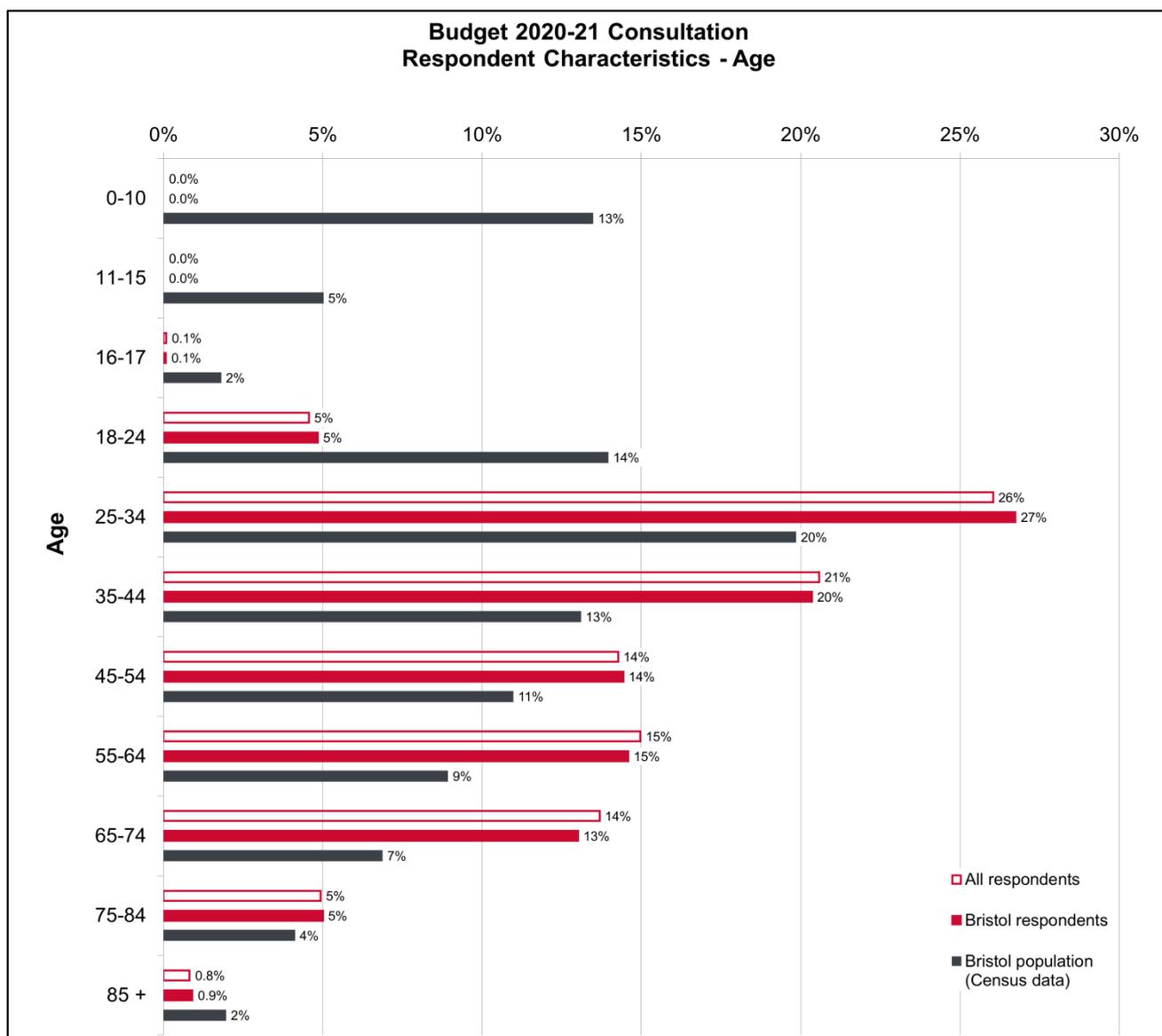
- Characteristics for all respondents who answered the equalities questions;
- Characteristics of respondents who provided a Bristol postcode;
- Characteristics of all Bristol citizens. This is available for five protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, ethnicity and religion/faith) for which population data are available from the 2011 Census and subsequent updates.

Note that many of the respondents who did not provide postcodes may also live in the Bristol administrative area, but are not included in figures for ‘Bristol respondents’

Age

The most common age of respondents was 25-34 years (26%), followed by 35-44 (21%). The proportion of responses in the age categories 25-34 years, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74 and 75-84 was higher than these age groups’ proportion of the population in Bristol. Survey responses from children (under 18), young people aged 18-24 and people aged 85 and older were under-represented. In each age category, the proportions of ‘all respondents’ and ‘Bristol respondents’ were very similar.

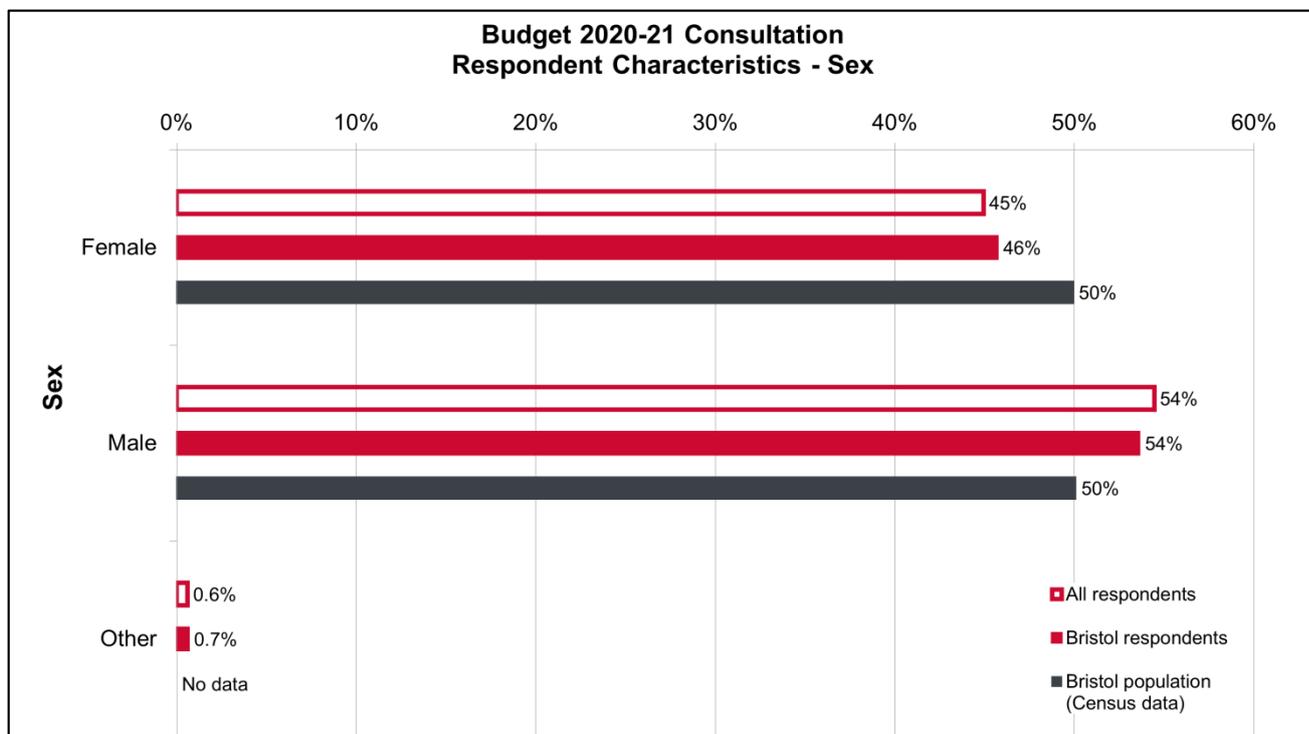
Figure 6: Age of respondents



Sex

45% of all responses were from women and 54% were from men. 0.6% were from people who identified as ‘other’. These percentages exclude the 7% of respondents (6% of Bristol respondents) who answered ‘prefer not to say’)

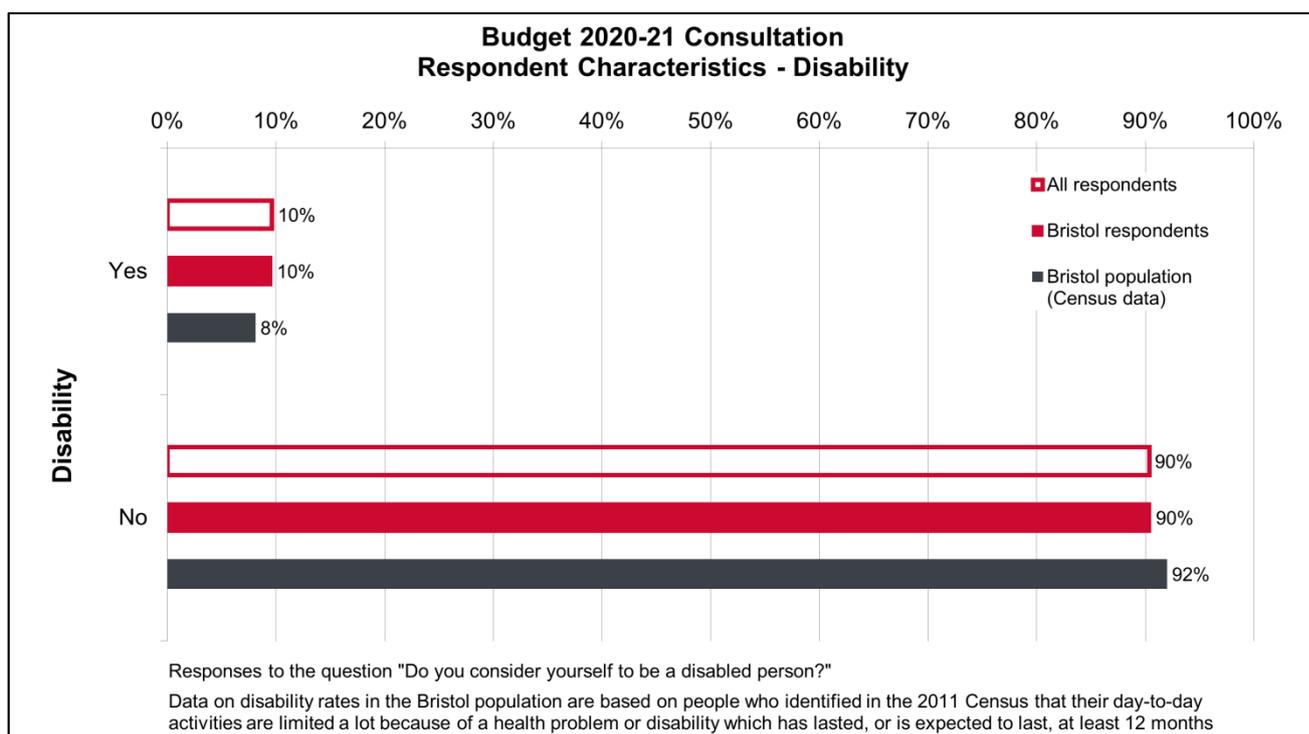
Figure 7: Sex of respondents



Disability

The proportion of disabled respondents (10%) is higher than the proportion of disabled people living in Bristol. These percentages exclude the 6% of respondents (5% of Bristol respondents) who answered ‘prefer not to say’)

Figure 8: Disability



Ethnicity

The proportions of White British respondents (78%), White Irish respondents (1%) and Gypsy / Roma / Traveller people (0.1%) matches the proportion of these citizens in the Bristol population.

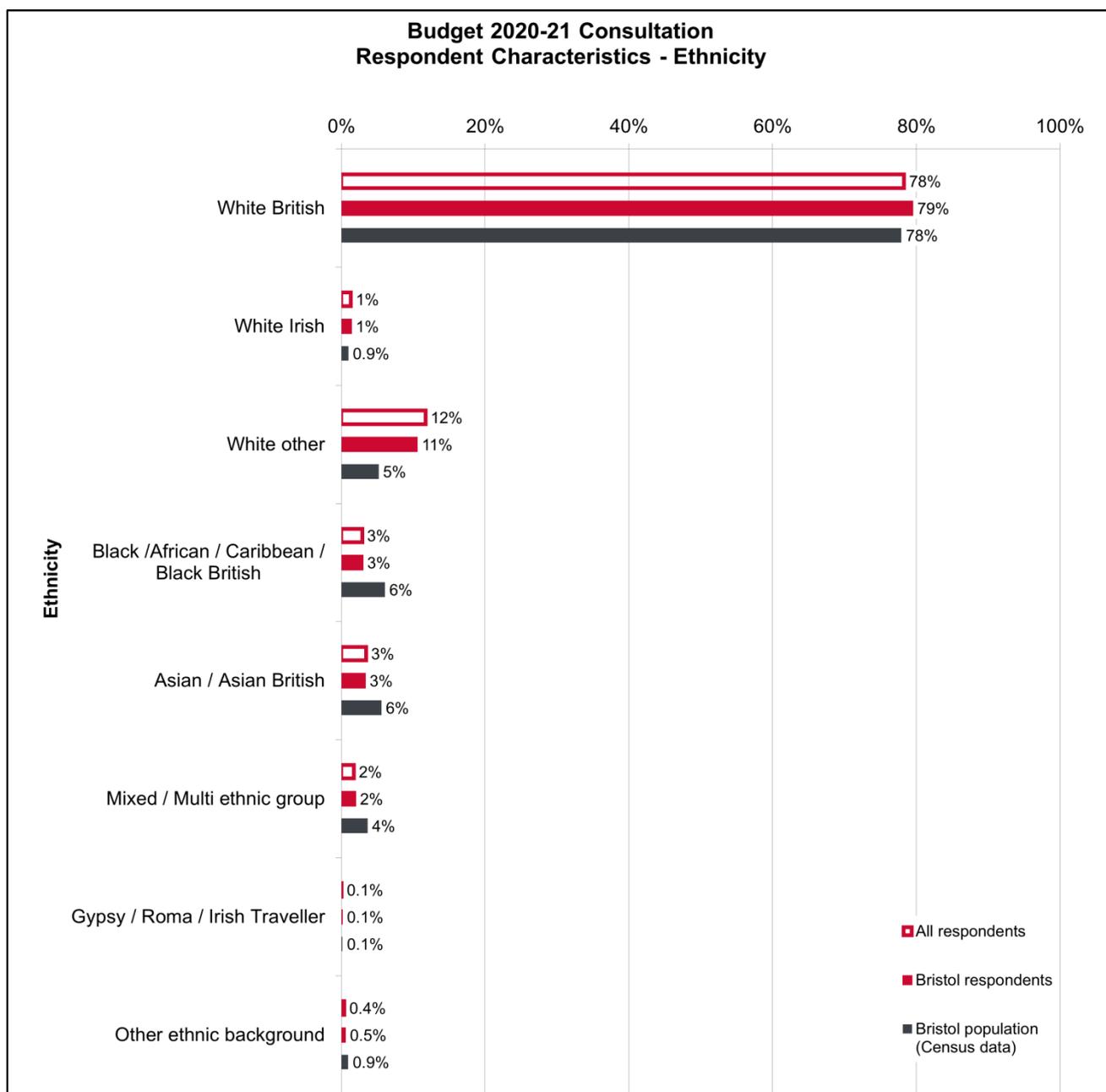
The response rate from Other White respondents (12%) is higher than the proportion of Other White people (5%) living in Bristol.

All other Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic respondents were under-represented in the response rates compared to the proportion of BAME citizens living in Bristol, despite targeted efforts to increase participation in areas with high BAME populations.

These percentages exclude the 9% of respondents (7% of Bristol respondents) who answered ‘prefer not to say’

The proportion of each ethnicity for all respondents closely matches Bristol respondents.

Figure 9: Ethnicity of respondents



Religion/Faith

People with no religion (61% of respondents) responded in higher proportions than people of no religion in Bristol’s population (41%).

Christians (34%), Muslims (1.5%), Hindus (0.5%) and Sikhs (0.2%) were under-represented compared to the proportions of these faiths living in Bristol.

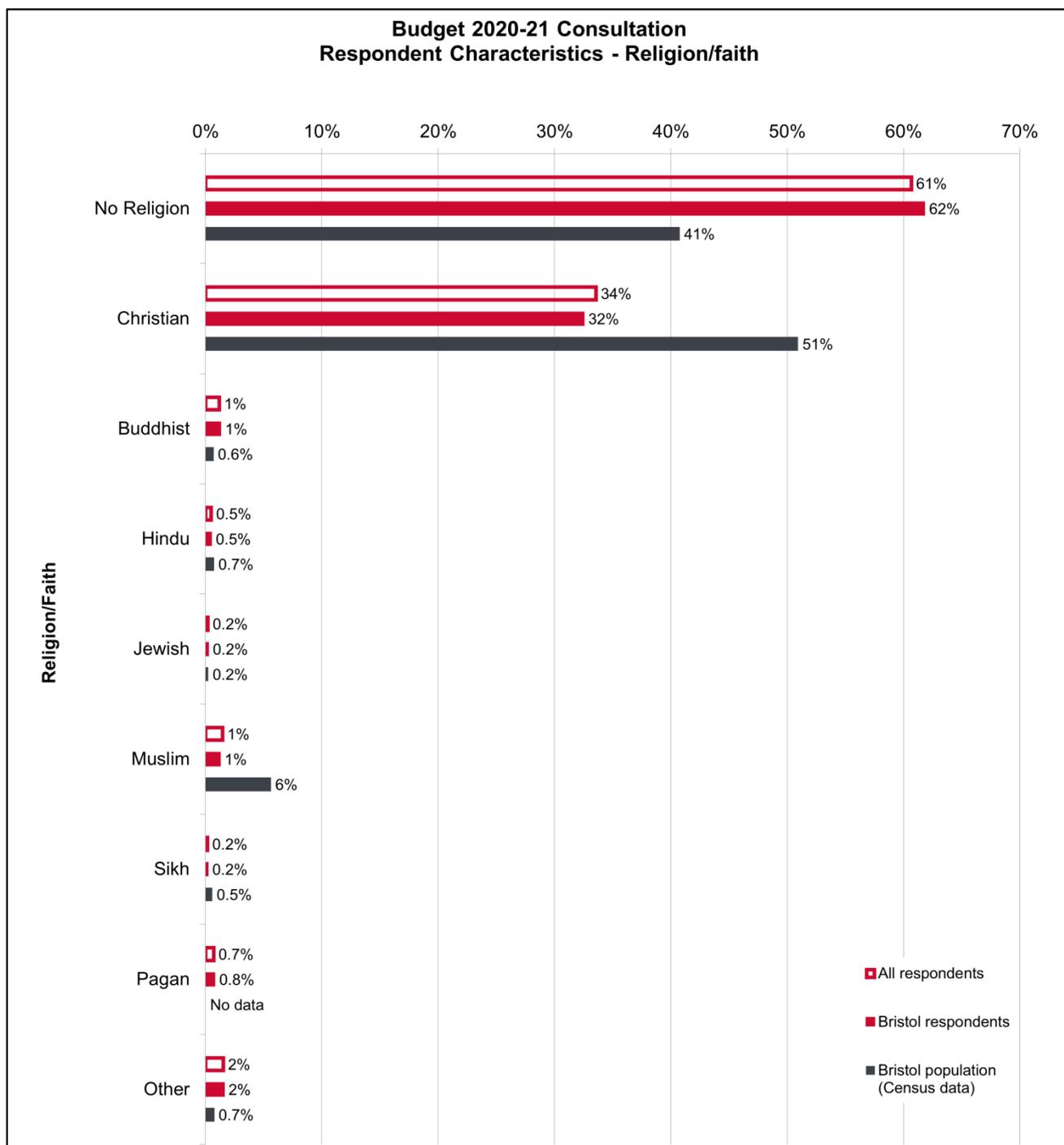
The proportion of Jewish respondents (0.2%) closely matches the Bristol population.

Buddhists (1%) and people of other faith (2%) responded in greater numbers than the proportions of these faiths in the Bristol population.

These percentages exclude the 10% of respondents (8% of Bristol respondents) who answered ‘prefer not to say’.

The proportion of each religion/faith for all respondents closely matches Bristol respondents.

Figure 10: Religion/faith of respondents



Other protected characteristics and refugee/asylum status

The survey also asked respondents about three other protected characteristics (sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and recent maternity) and if they are a refugee or asylum seeker.

Census data are not available for the proportion of people with these characteristics living in Bristol. Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14 show the proportions of all respondents and Bristol respondents for each of these characteristics. The proportion of each characteristic for all respondents closely matches the proportion for Bristol respondents.

Figure 11: Sexual orientation

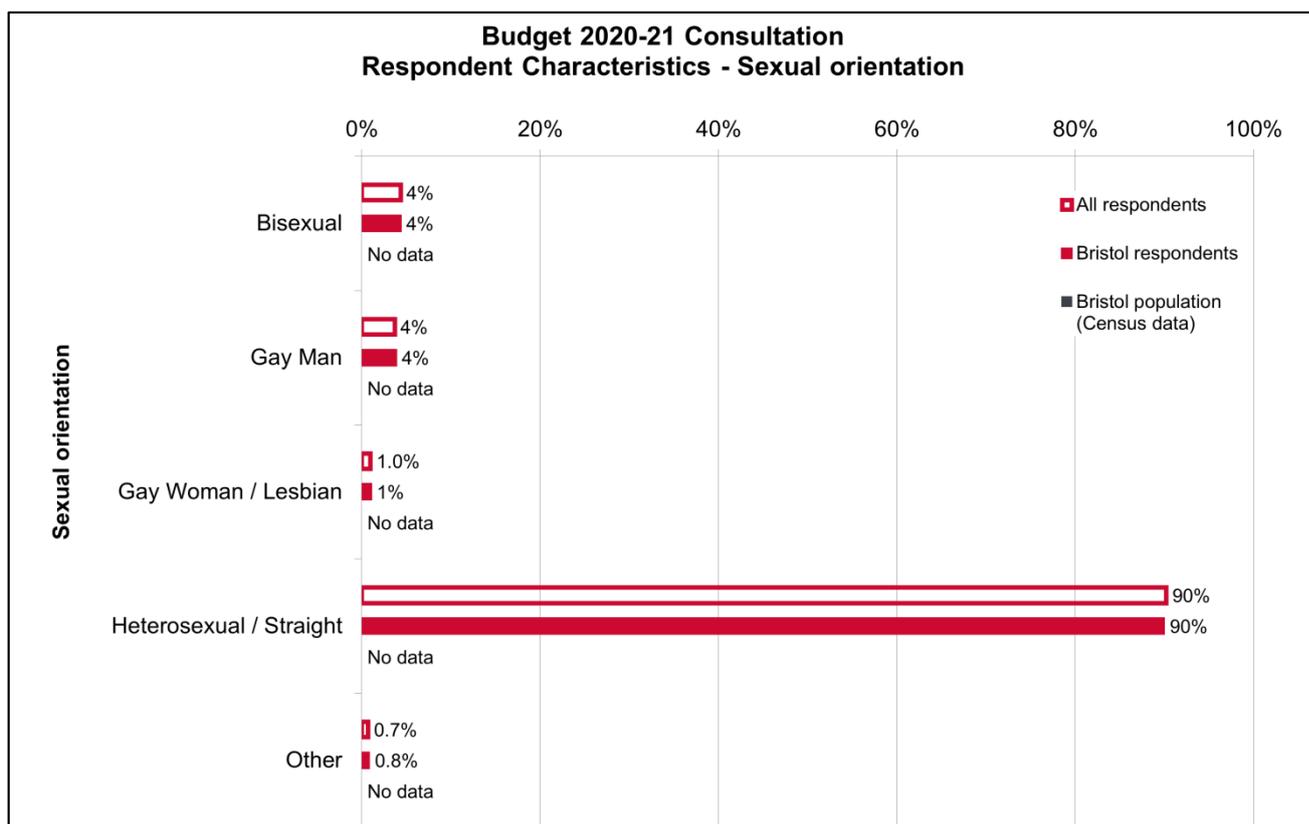


Figure 12: Gender reassignment

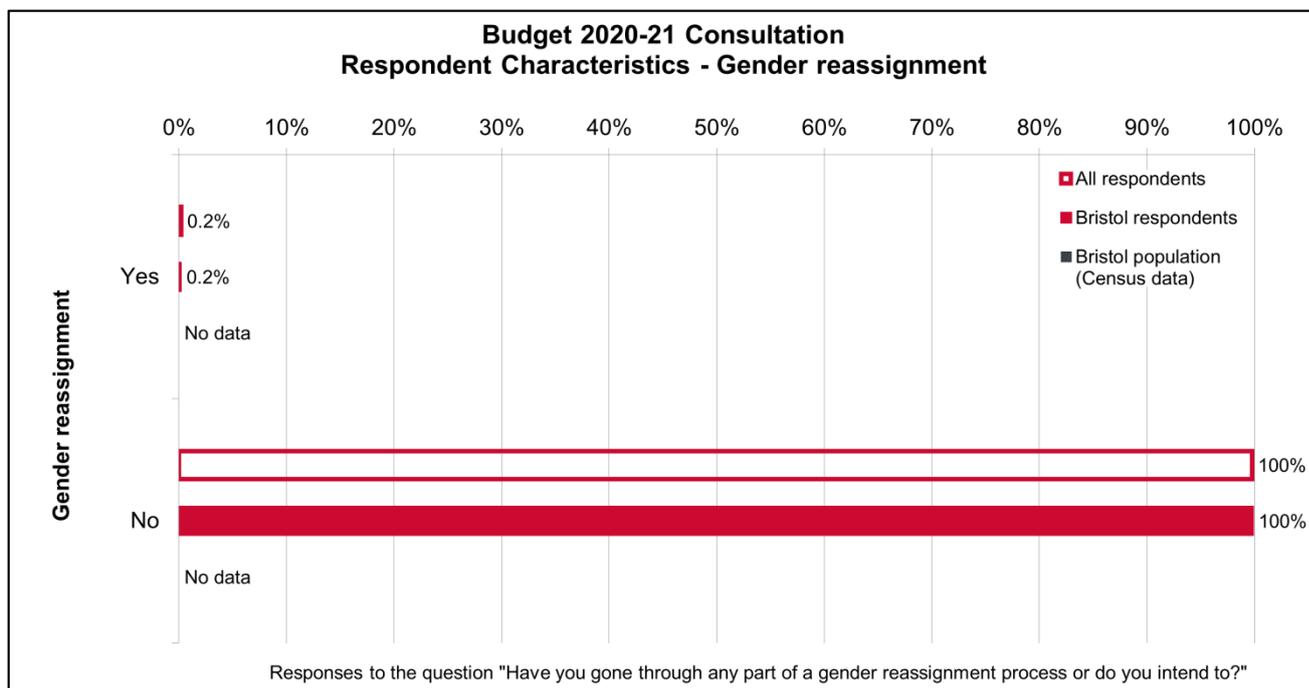


Figure 13: Pregnancy/Maternity

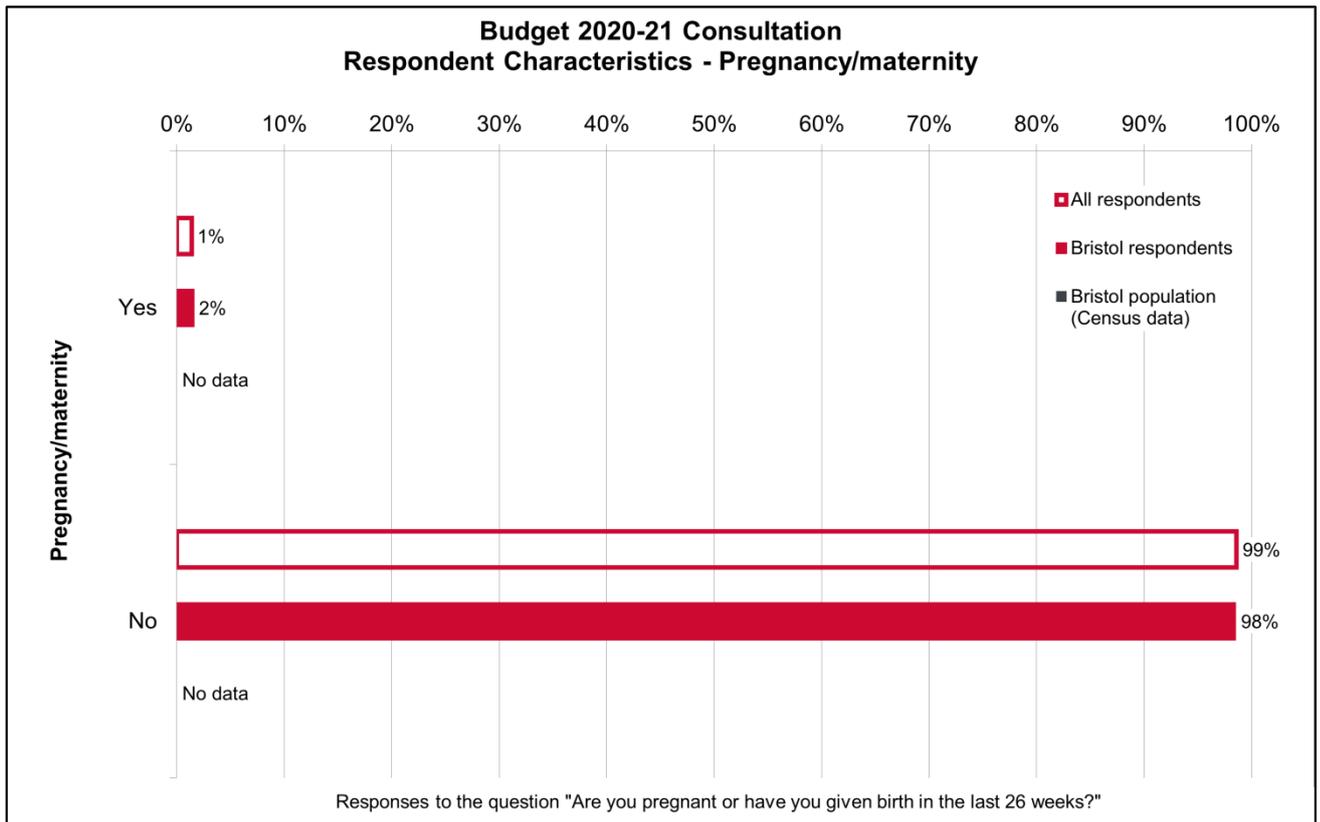
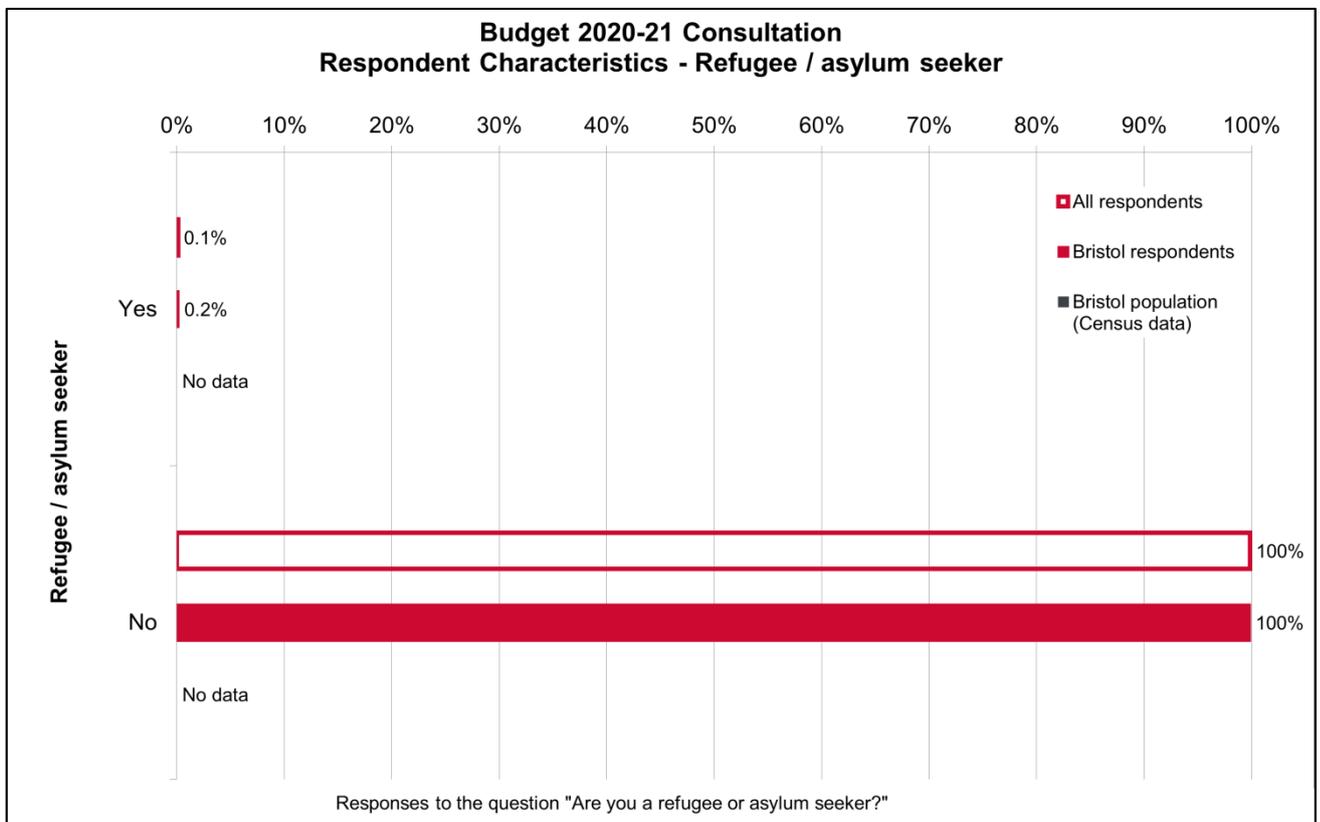


Figure 14: Refugee or asylum seeker



Other respondent characteristics

3,355 (97%) respondents provided other details of their personal situation, selecting from the following list of 11 options²²:

- 3,303 (98% of the 3,355 respondents who answered the question) are Bristol residents;
- 78 (2%) represent and/or own a local business;
- 62 (2%) are Bristol City Council employees;
- 31 (1%) work in Bristol but live elsewhere;
- 6 (0.2%) were responses on behalf of a Housing Association;
- 5 (0.1%) were responses on behalf of a Voluntary/Community/Social Enterprise;
- 4 (0.1%) were responses on behalf of a Health/social care provider;
- 4 (0.1%) respondents stated they are MPs, but for some or all of these, aspects of their responses suggest otherwise;
- 2 (0.1%) are Councillors;
- 2 (0.1%) were responses on behalf of a Public Transport provider;
- 43 (1%) selected 'other'.

Of the 43 respondents who selected 'other':

- 9 selected 'other' but did not specify details
- 5 provided information about their employment role
- 4 stated that they are retired
- 3 are students
- 3 stated that they are tax payers
- 2 stated that they live in Bristol but work elsewhere
- 2 live outside Bristol and 1 lives in Bristol during weekdays only
- 2 own and/or let property in Bristol but live elsewhere
- 2 are investors in Bristol
- 1 is a frequent visitor to Bristol
- 1 stated they are a foster carer
- 1 is homeless
- 7 provided other details.

²² Because respondents could select more than one option, the total percentages exceed 100%

4 Survey results: level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept

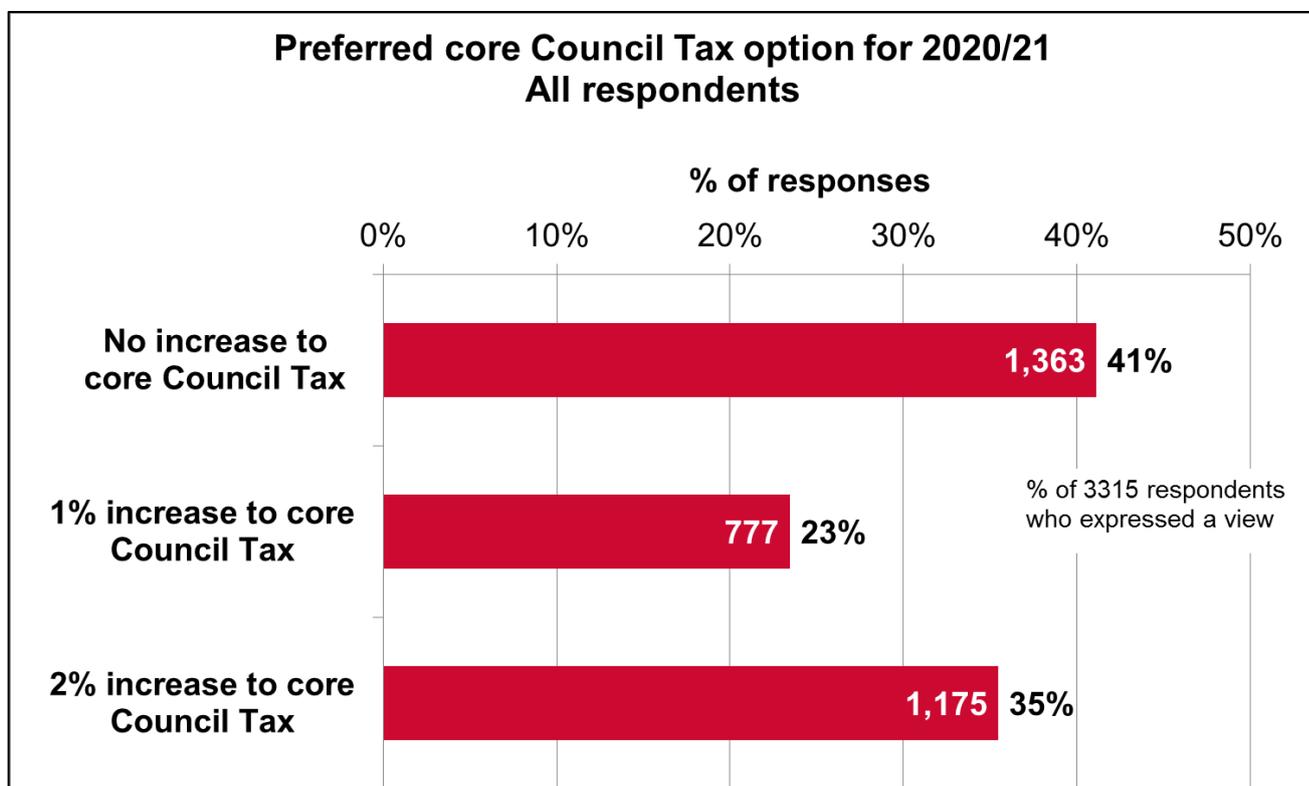
4.1 Level of core Council Tax increase in 2020/21 – all respondents

Respondents were asked to state which level of Council Tax increase they would prefer in 2020/21, choosing from the following three options:

- No increase to Council Tax;
- An increase of 1% to Council Tax. This option would raise £2.2 million to support the delivery of services;
- An increase of 2% to Council Tax. This option would raise £4.4 million to support the delivery of services.

Of the 3,448 people who responded to the budget consultation, 3,315 (96%) expressed a preference for the level of Council Tax increase. Figure 15 shows the numbers who support each option. 133 people did not answer this question.

Figure 15: Preferred level of core Council Tax increase in 2020/21



A majority of respondents (59%) favour an increase in core Council Tax to support general services. Of these, 1,175 (35% of all 3,315 respondents) favour a 2% increase²³ and 777 (23%) would prefer a 1% increase in core Council Tax.

1,363 (41%) respondents would prefer ‘no increase to Council Tax’ in 2020/21.

²³ A 2% increase in core Council Tax is the maximum increase permitted without requiring a local referendum

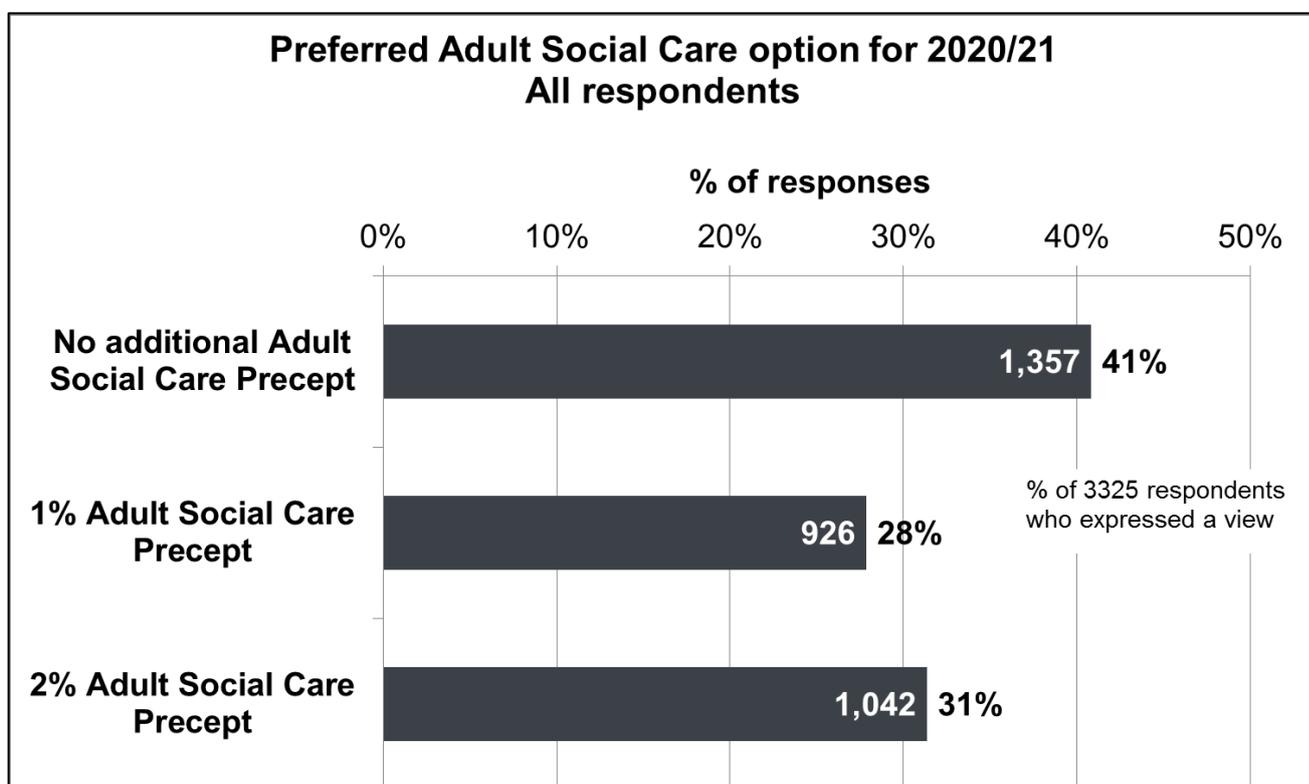
4.2 Level of Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21 – all respondents

Respondents were asked to state which level of Adult Social Care Precept they would prefer in 2020/21, choosing from the following three options:

- No additional Adult Social Care Precept.
- An additional 1% Adult Social Care Precept. This would be an extra 1% increase to Council Tax bills in addition to the increase in core Council Tax. This option would raise £2.2 million to support the delivery of adult social care.
- An additional 2% Adult Social Care Precept. This would be an extra 2% increase to Council Tax bills in addition to the increase in core Council Tax. This option would raise £4.4 million to support the delivery of adult social care.

Of the 3,448 people who responded to the budget consultation, 3,325 (96%) expressed a preference for the level of Adult Social Care Precept. Figure 16 shows the numbers who support each option. 123 people did not answer this question.

Figure 16: Preferred level of Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21



A majority of respondents (59%) favour an additional Adult Social Care Precept (on top of core Council Tax) to support the delivery of adult social care.

Of these, 1,042 (31% of all 3,325 respondents) favour a 2% Adult Social Care Precept²⁴ and 926 (28%) would prefer a 1% Adult Social Care Precept.

1,357 (41%) respondents would prefer no increase to Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21.

Comparison of Figures 15 and 16 shows that the same proportion of respondents (41%) want no increase to either core Council Tax or Adult Social Care Precept. Similarly, 59% would support some increase to both Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept. However, there is more support for the **maximum 2%** increase in core Council Tax (35%) than would support the maximum 2% Adult Social Care Precept (31%).

²⁴ 2% Adult Social Care Precept is the maximum increase permitted by government in 2020/21.

4.3 Differences in views on Council Tax in areas with different levels of deprivation

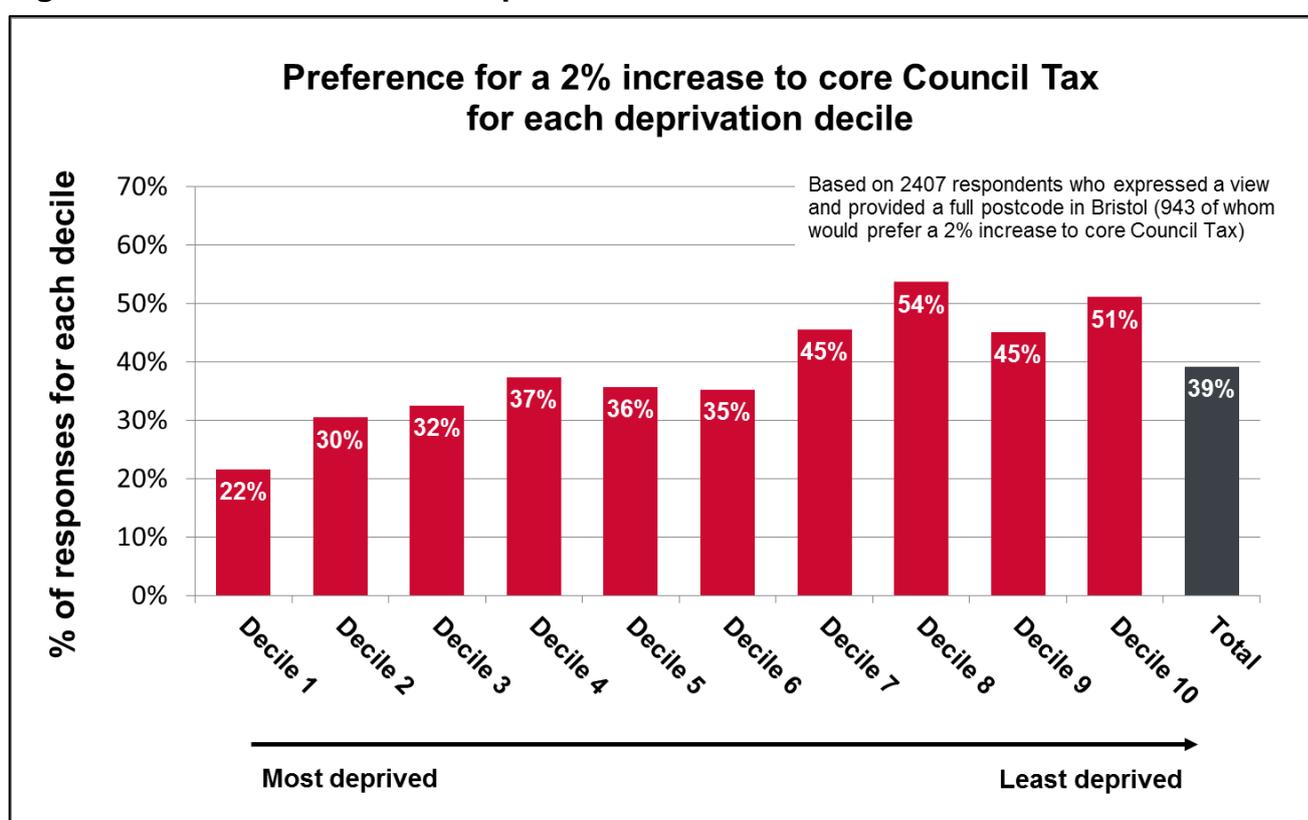
Views on the preferred level of core Council Tax were compared for respondents from areas with different levels of deprivation. The comparison used the postcodes provided by respondents in Bristol to match each response to one of 10 deprivation bands (deciles) as described in section 3.3.

2% increase in core Council Tax

Figure 17 shows the percentage of respondents from each deprivation decile who want a 2% increase in core Council Tax in 2020/21. This is based on the 943 Bristol respondents who support a 2% increase and provided a full postcode²⁵.

Figure 17 shows that support for a 2% increase in core Council Tax is highest in the least deprived areas and is lower in the more deprived areas. The lowest support for a 2% increase is in the most deprived three deciles (22% in decile 1, 30% in decile 2, 32% in decile 3) and rises to 54% in decile 8 and 51% in decile 10.

Figure 17: Preference in each deprivation decile for a 2% increase in core Council Tax



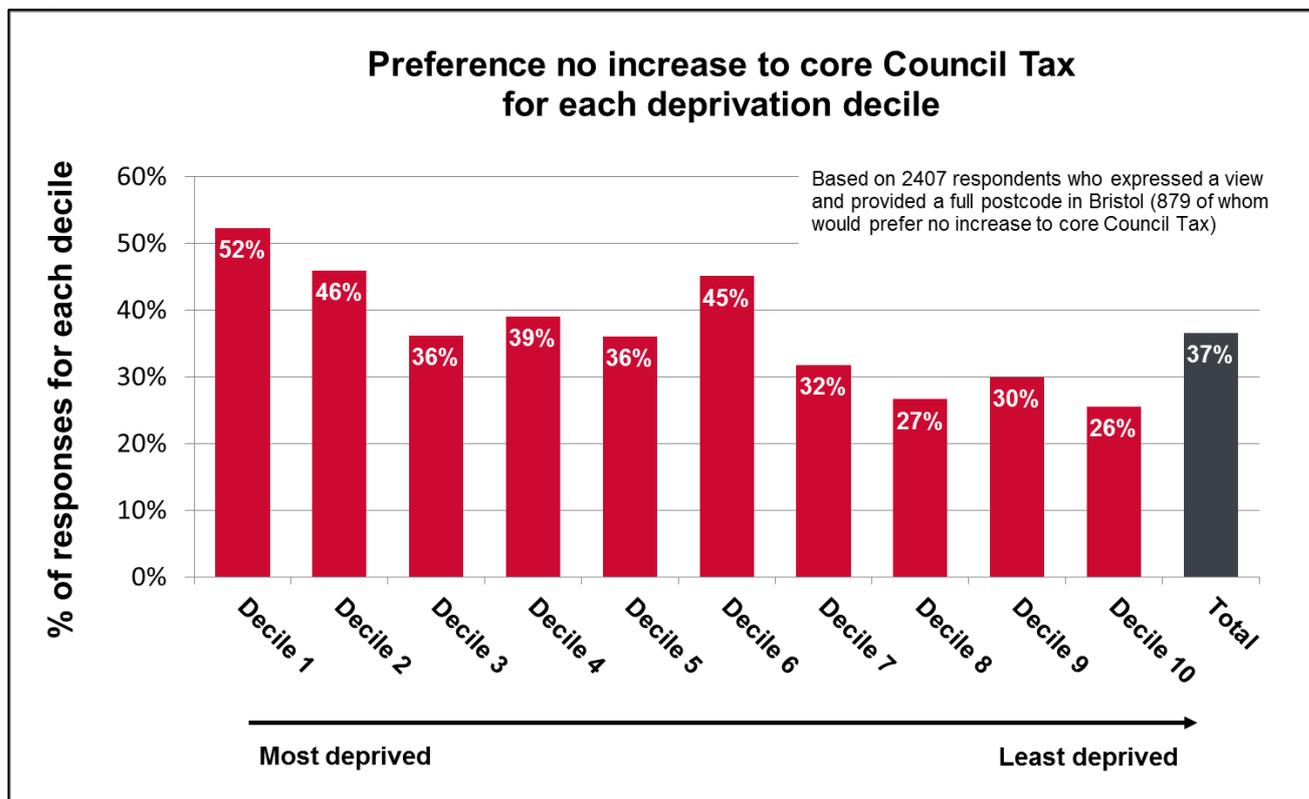
No increase in core Council Tax

Figure 18 shows the percentage of respondents from each deprivation decile who stated they would prefer no increase in Council Tax in 2020/21. This is based on the 879 Bristol respondents who support no increase and provided a full postcode.

Figure 18 (no increase) shows the opposite trend to Figure 17 (2% increase); there is higher support for no increase to core Council Tax in more deprived areas than in less deprived areas. More than a quarter of respondents in all deprivation deciles favour no increase in core Council Tax. The highest preference for no increase is in the most deprived 20% of the city (52% in decile 1 and 46% in decile 2) and the lowest support is in the three least deprived deciles (26% in decile 10, 30% in decile 9 and 27% in decile 8).

²⁵ Incomplete postcodes cannot be matched to the deprivation data.

Figure 18: Preference in each deprivation decile for no Council Tax increase



1% increase in core Council Tax

Figure 19 shows the support for a 1% increase in core Council Tax for each deprivation decile (based on 585 Bristol respondents who provided a full postcode).

Figure 19: Preference in each deprivation decile for a 1% increase in core Council Tax

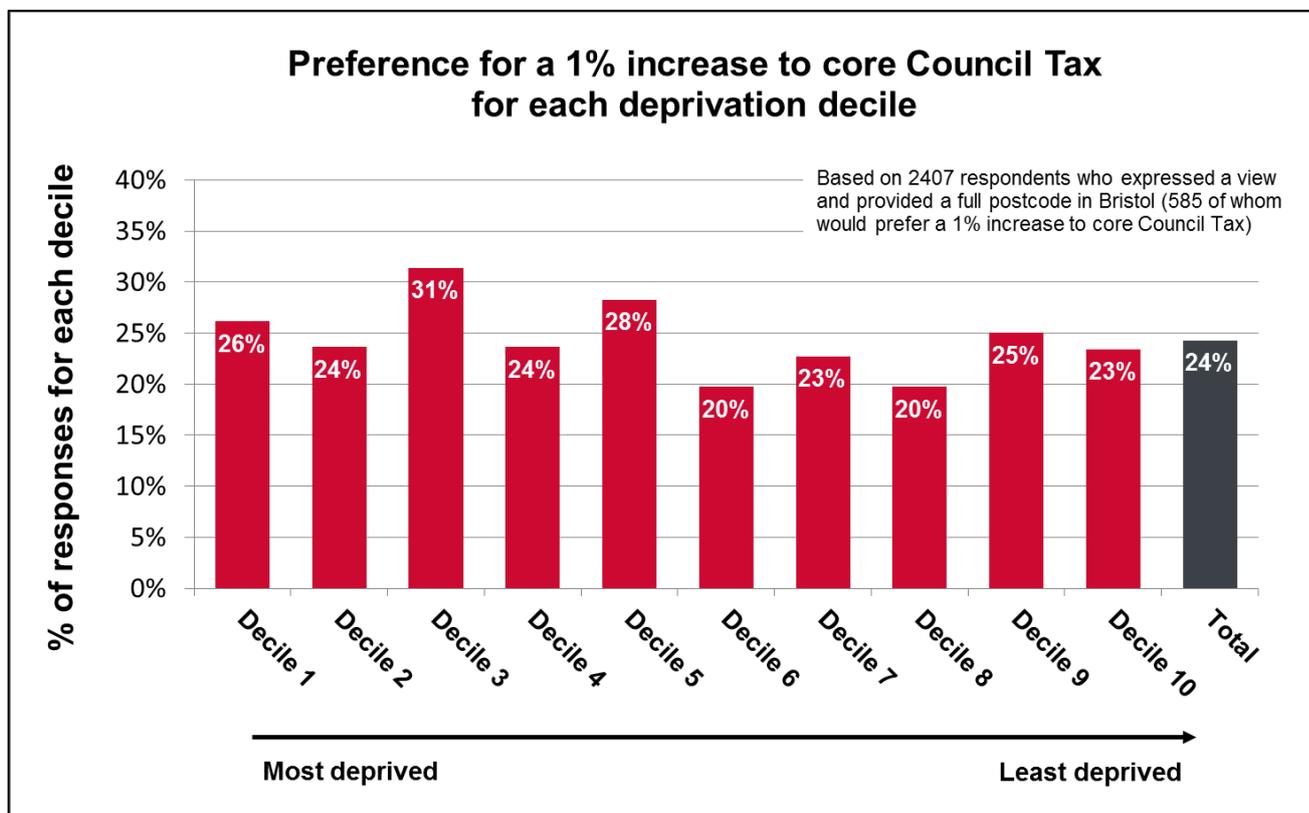


Figure 19 shows support for 1% increase in core Council Tax is slightly higher in the more deprived half of the city (particularly deciles 3 and 5) than in the less deprived half.

Note that the percentages for the ‘Total’ columns in Figures 17, 18 and 19 differ slightly from the values in Figure 15. This is because Figure 15 shows the views of all 3,315 respondents who answered question 1 whereas Figures 17, 18 and 19 show the views of 2,407 Bristol residents who also provided a full postcode. (The full postcode is needed to match against deprivation data.) A smaller proportion of respondents who prefer no increase in core Council Tax provided a full postcode than respondents who support a 2% increase.

4.4 Views on Adult Social Care Precept in areas with different levels of deprivation

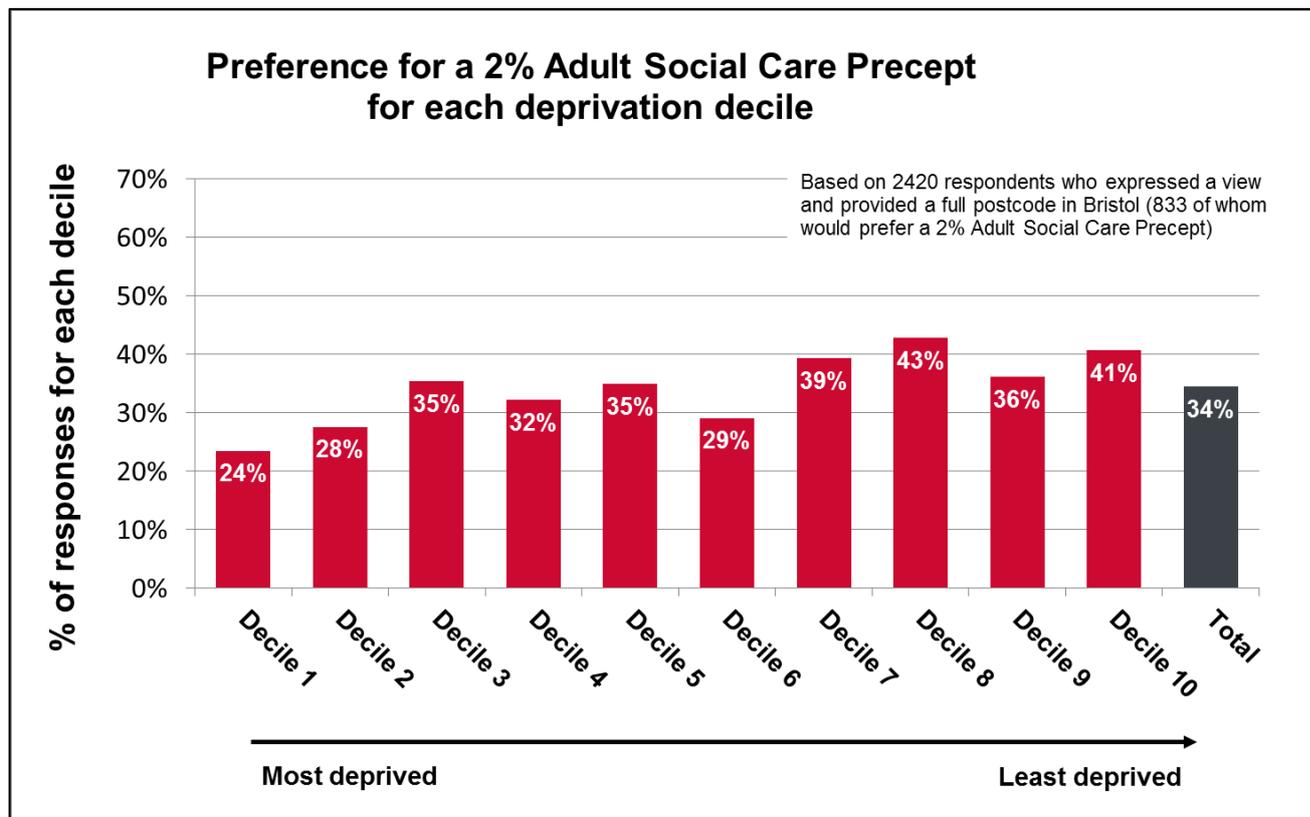
Views on the preferred level of Adult Social Care Precept were also compared for respondents from areas with different levels of deprivation. The comparison used the postcodes provided by respondents in Bristol to match each response to one of 10 deprivation bands (deciles) as described in section 3.3.

2% Adult Social Care Precept

Figure 20 shows the percentage of respondents from each deprivation decile who favour a 2% Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21. This is based on the 833 Bristol respondents who support a 2% Adult Social Care Precept and provided a full postcode.

Figure 20 shows that support for a 2% Adult Social Care Precept is higher in the less deprived areas and is lower in the more deprived areas. The lowest support for a 2% precept is in the most deprived two deciles (24% in decile 1 and 28% in decile 2) and rises to 43% in decile 8 and 41% in decile 10.

Figure 20: Preference in each deprivation decile for a 2% Adult Social Care Precept



No additional Adult Social Care Precept

Figure 21 shows the percentage of respondents from each deprivation decile who stated they would prefer no additional Adult Social Care Precept in 2020/21. This is based on the 894 Bristol respondents who support no Adult Social Care Precept and provided a full postcode.

Figure 21: Preference in each deprivation decile for no Adult Social Care Precept

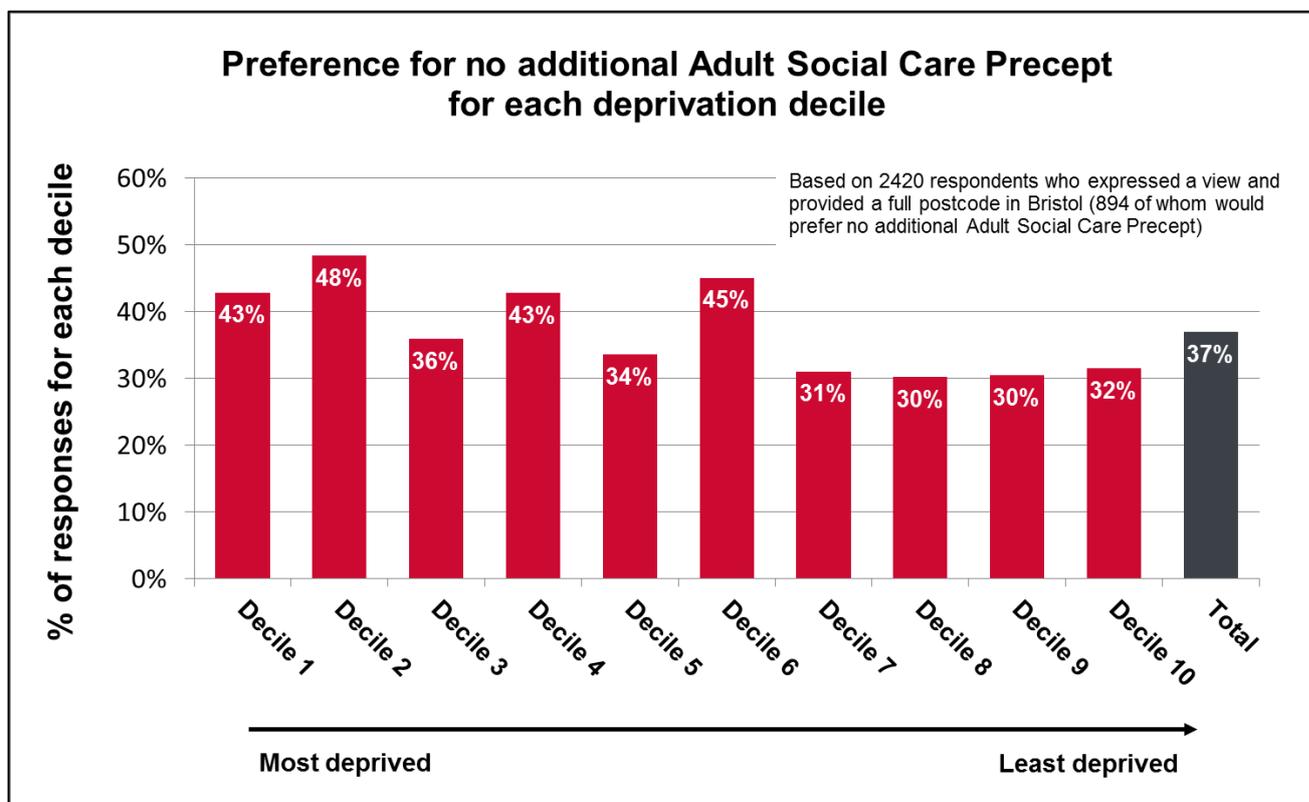


Figure 21 (no precept) shows the opposite trend to Figure 20 (2% precept); there is higher support for no increase to core Council Tax in the more deprived areas than in less deprived areas.

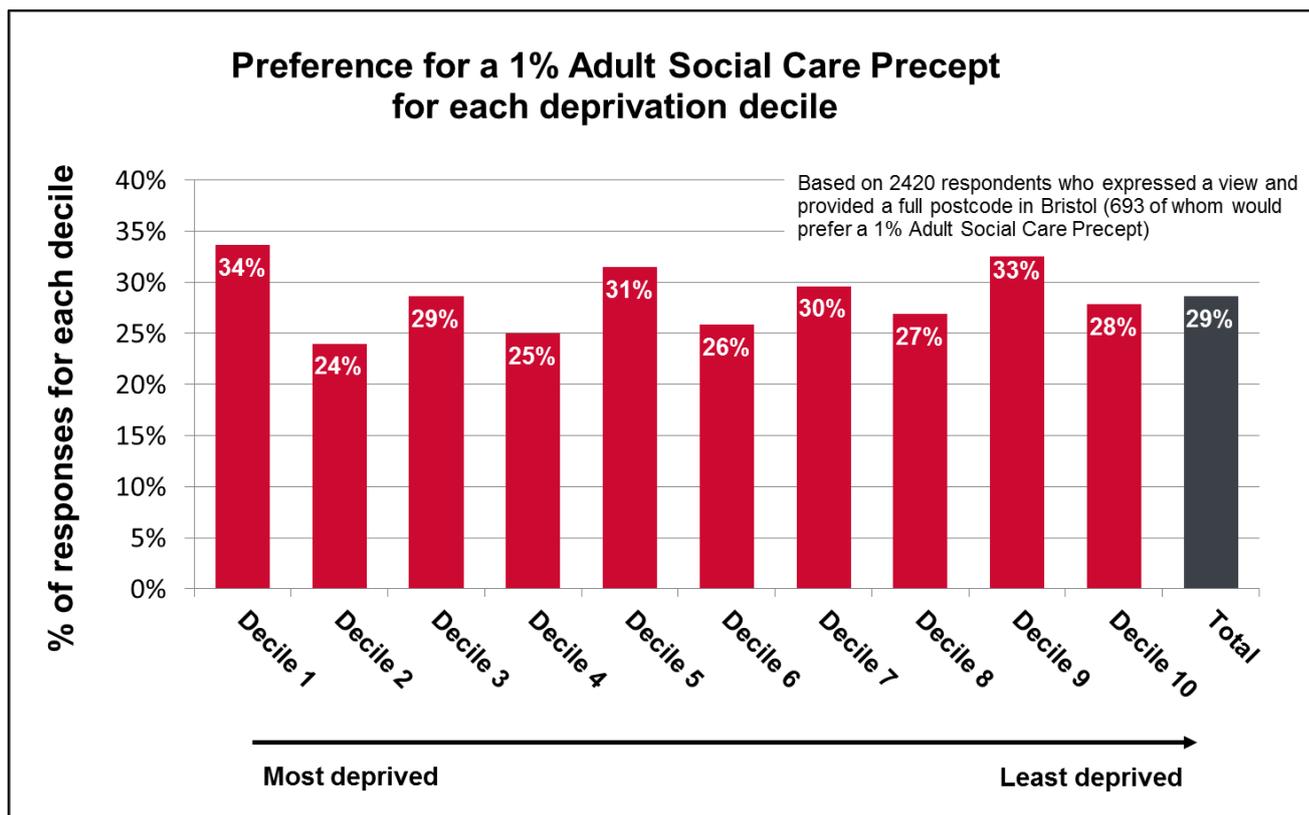
At least 30% of respondents in all deprivation deciles favour no Adult Social Care Precept. The highest preference for no increase is in decile 2 (48%) and the lowest support is in the four least deprived deciles (32% in decile 10, 30% in deciles 9 and 8, and 31% in decile 7).

1% Adult Social Care Precept

Figure 22 shows the support for a 1% Adult Social Care Precept for each deprivation decile (based on 693 Bristol respondents who provided a full postcode).

Figure 22 shows no clear trend in support for 1% Adult Social Care Precept between areas of different deprivation. The highest support is in decile 1 (34%) and the second highest is decile 9 (33%).

Figure 22: Preference in each deprivation decile for a 1% Adult Social Care Precept



Note that the percentages for the ‘Total’ columns in Figures 20, 21 and 22 differ slightly from the values in Figure 16. This is because Figure 16 shows the views of all 3,325 respondents who answered question 2 whereas Figures 20, 21 and 22 show the views of 2,420 Bristol residents who also provided a full postcode. (The full postcode is needed to match against deprivation data.) A smaller proportion of respondents who prefer no Adult Social Care Precept provided a full postcode than respondents who support a 2% precept.

5 Survey results: priorities for longer-term funding

5.1 All respondents

Respondents were asked which service areas they think are most important to fund in the longer term to help shape the future of the city. Respondents were asked to rate each of 19 service areas as high importance, medium importance or low importance.

The service areas were: adult social care, children's services and social care, youth services, special educational needs and disability (SEND), schools, public health, bin/recycling collection and cleaner streets, culture & tourism, libraries, parks, sport and leisure, supporting Bristol's economy and jobs, housing, tackling homelessness, climate change, clean air, new roads and road maintenance, public transport, and cycling and walking.

Of 3448 respondents to the survey, 3,422 (99%) answered the question for at least one of the 19 service areas. 3,106 (90%) answered the question for all 19 service areas.

Figure 23 summarises the percentage of respondents who think each service area is of high importance, medium importance and low importance. The services are shown in order of the percentage of respondents who think the service is of high importance (grey bars). This order is broadly the inverse of the percentage who think the service is of low importance (white bars), but with some exceptions; notably climate change and cycling and walking which divide strong opinions for and against (i.e. there is an atypically small percentage who think the service is of medium importance).

The services which respondents think are most important are **children's services and social care** and **schools**, both of which are rated as high importance by at least 63% of respondents and of low importance by less than 10%.

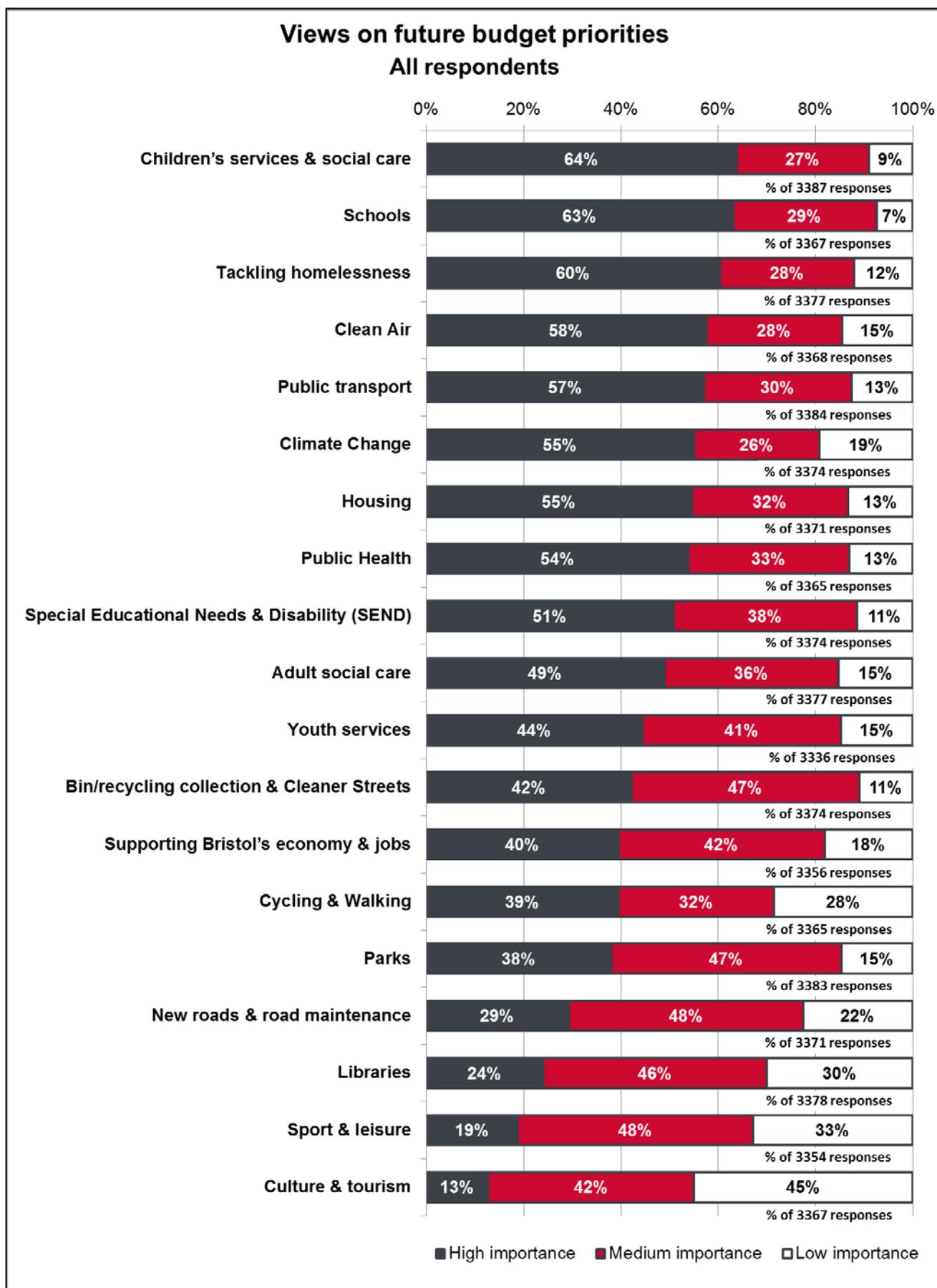
The next seven priorities which are all rated as high importance by more than half of respondents are:

- Tackling homelessness
- Clean air
- Public transport
- Climate change
- Housing
- Public health
- Special educational needs & disability (SEND).

Adult social care is rated as a mid-ranking priority (tenth out of 19 services), with 49% of respondents placing it as high importance and 36% as medium importance.

The three services which are rated as least important for funding by the council are **libraries**, **sport and leisure**, and **culture and tourism** each of which are seen as high importance by less than a quarter of respondents and low importance by at least 30% of respondents.

Figure 23: Priorities for longer term funding – all respondents



5.2 Views on spending priorities from areas with different levels of deprivation

Views on the future spending priorities were compared for respondents from the most deprived 20% of Bristol (deprivation deciles 1 and 2) and the least deprived 20% (deciles 9 and 10) to understand if priorities differ for people in different circumstances.

Figure 24 compares the priorities of respondents in deciles 1 and 2 with the priorities of respondents in deciles 9 and 10 for the ten services rated as highest priorities by all respondents. The ‘top 10’ priority services are shown in Figure 24 in the same order as in Figure 23.

Figure 24: Top 10 spending priorities - comparison of high and low deprivation areas

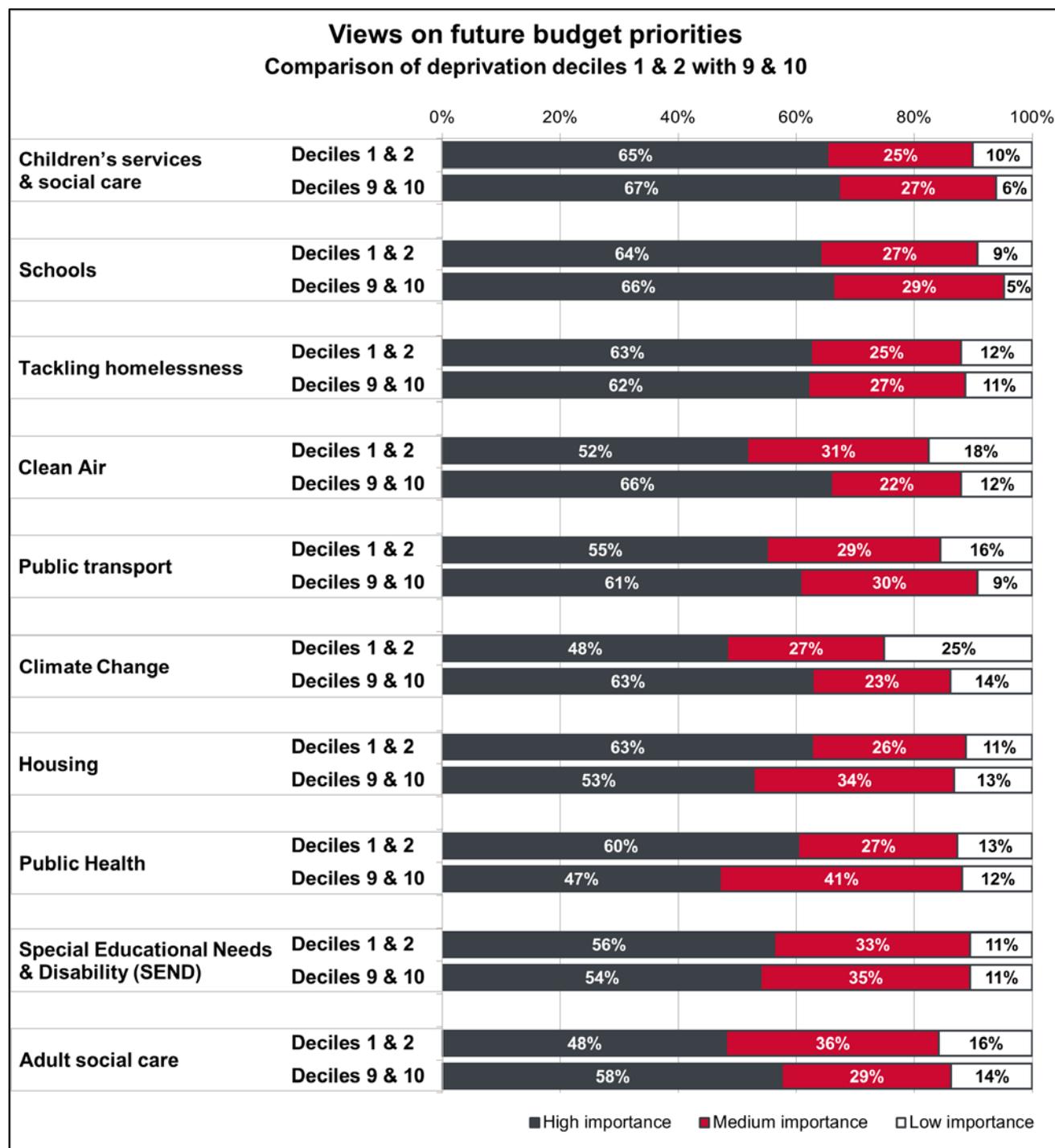
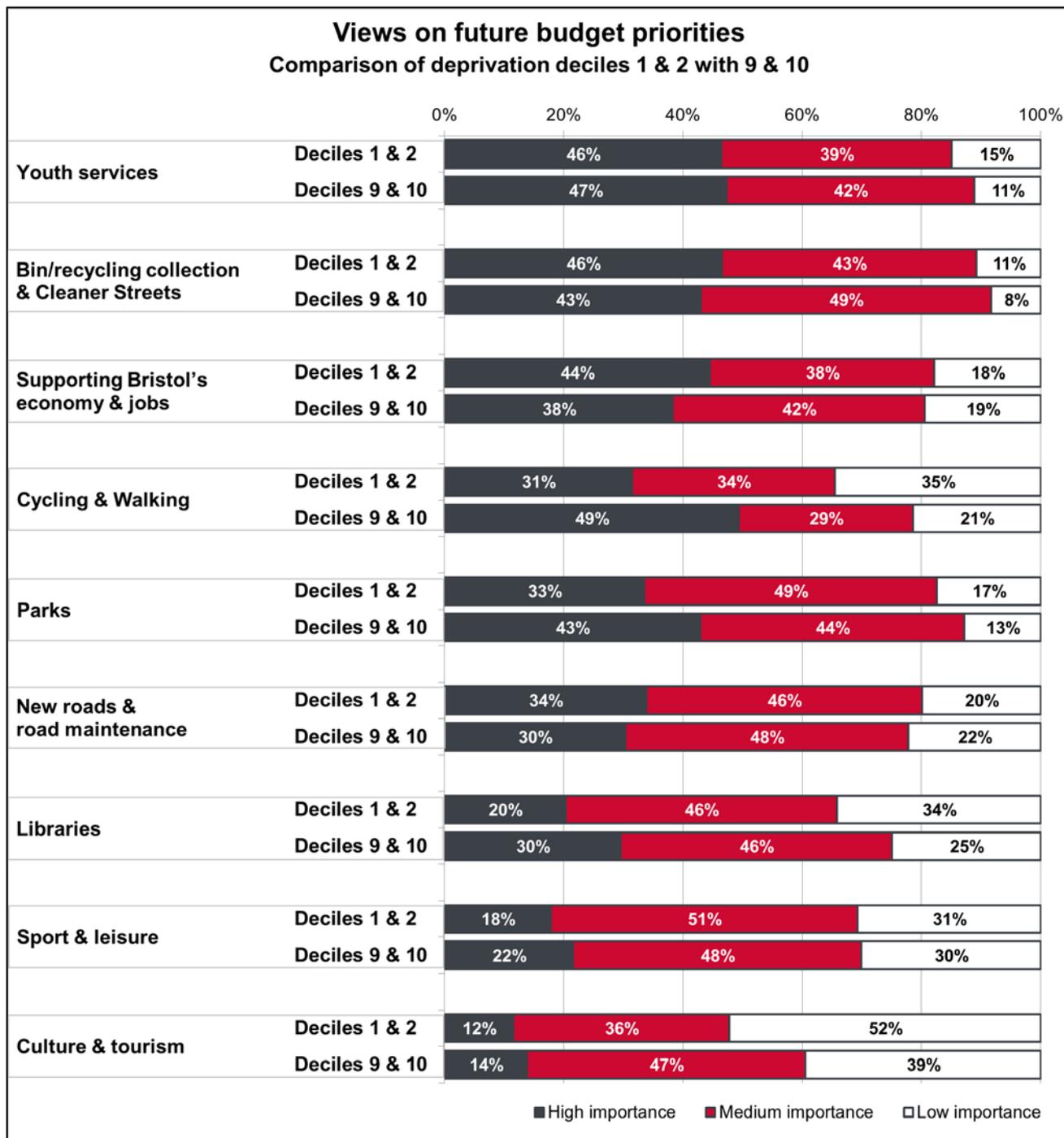


Figure 25 compares the priorities of respondents in deciles 1 and 2 with the priorities of respondents in deciles 9 and 10 for the nine services rated as priorities 11 to 19 by all respondents. The services listed as priorities 11 to 19 are shown in Figure 25 in the same order as in Figure 23.

Figure 25: Spending priorities 11 to 19 - comparison of high and low deprivation areas



Figures 24 and 25 show that respondents in the most deprived areas (deciles 1 and 2) and the least deprived areas (deciles 9 and 10) share similar views on the importance of the following services (priorities in parentheses are based on the percentage of all respondents who think the service is of high importance (see Figure 23):

- Children’s services and social care (priority 1 of 19)
- Schools (priority 2 of 19)
- Tackling homelessness(priority 3 of 19)
- Special educational needs & disability (SEND) (priority 9 of 19)
- Youth services (priority 11 of 19)
- Bin/recycling collection & cleaner streets (priority 12 of 19)
- New roads & road maintenance (priority 16 of 19)
- Sport and leisure (priority 18 of 19).

Respondents in the most deprived areas (deciles 1 and 2) place higher importance on the following services compared to respondents in the least deprived areas (deciles 9 and 10):

- Housing (priority 7 of 19)
- Public health (priority 8 of 19)
- Supporting Bristol's economy & jobs (priority 13 of 19).

Respondents in the least deprived areas (deciles 9 and 10) place higher importance on the following services compared to respondents in the most deprived areas (deciles 1 and 2):

- Clean air (priority 4 of 19)
- Public transport (priority 5 of 19)
- Climate change (priority 6 of 19)
- Adult social care (priority 10 of 19)
- Cycling and walking (priority 14 of 19)
- Parks (priority 15 of 19)
- Libraries (priority 17 of 19)
- Culture and tourism (priority 19 of 19)

6 Reasons for respondents’ preferred level of Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept and priorities for future funding of services

6.1 Overview

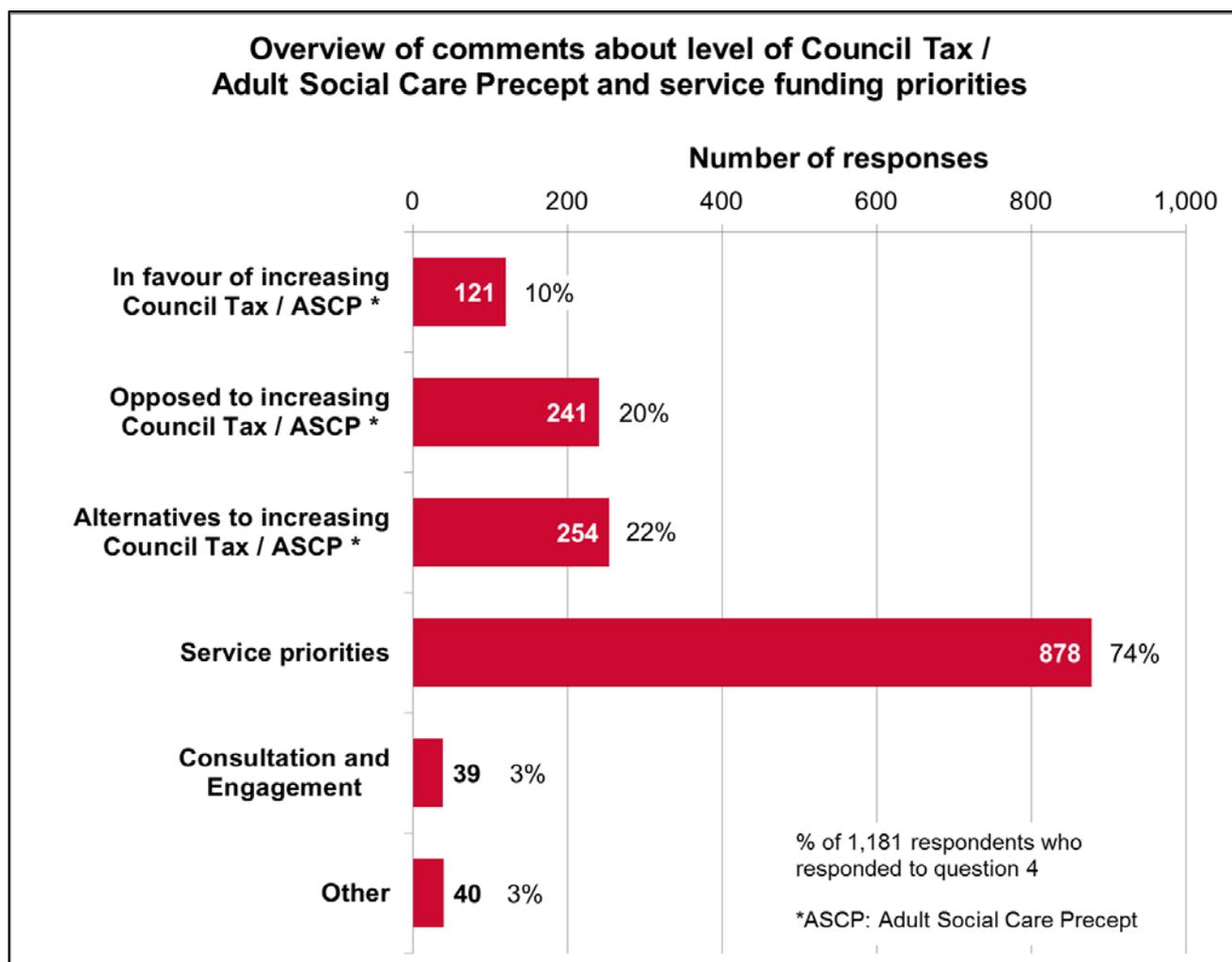
In question 4, respondents were invited to explain why they had chosen their preferred option for the level of Council Tax increase (question 1), their preferred option for the level of Adult Social Care Precept (question 2) and the reasons why they thought each service is of high, medium or low importance for future funding (question 3).

1,181 (34%) of the respondents provided free text feedback to this question. All comments were categorised into themes which are summarised below and in Figure 26.

- 121 (10% of respondents to question 4) stated why they support an increase in Council Tax and/or Adult Social Care precept. A breakdown is provided in section 6.2.
- 241 (20%) stated why they oppose an increase in Council Tax and/or Adult Social Care precept (section 6.3).
- 254 (22%) suggested alternatives to increasing Council Tax and/or Adult Social Care precept (section 6.4).
- 878 (74%) commented on their priorities for funding future services (section 6.5).
- 39 (3%) provided comments about the consultation.
- There were 40 (3%) comments on other themes.

The total number of comments for the above themes exceeds 1,181 because some respondents addressed several themes.

Figure 26: Overview of comments about Council Tax / ASCP and spending priorities

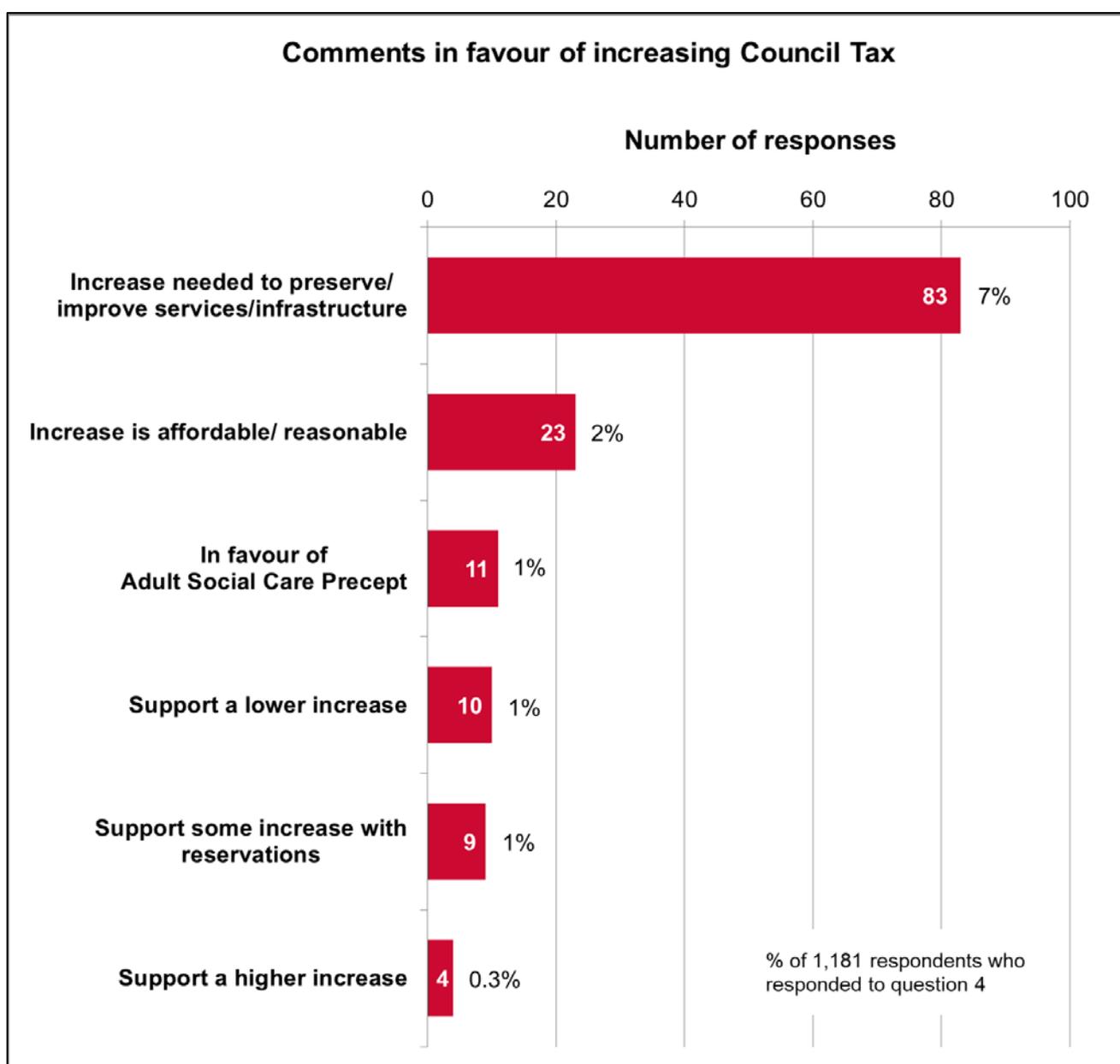


6.2 Comments in favour of increasing Council Tax

121 (10%) respondents provided their reasons for supporting an increase in Council Tax and/or Adult Social Care Precept (Figure 27).

- 83 (7%) said that an increase in Council Tax is necessary to preserve or improve services provided by the council.
- 23 (2%) said that the increase they chose was affordable.
- 11 (1%) specified their support for the Adult Social Care Precept.
- 10 (1%) would support a lower increase.
- 9 (1%) support an increase with some reservations
- 4 (0.3%) would support a higher increase in Council Tax / Adult Social Care Precept.

Figure 27: Comments in favour of increasing Council Tax

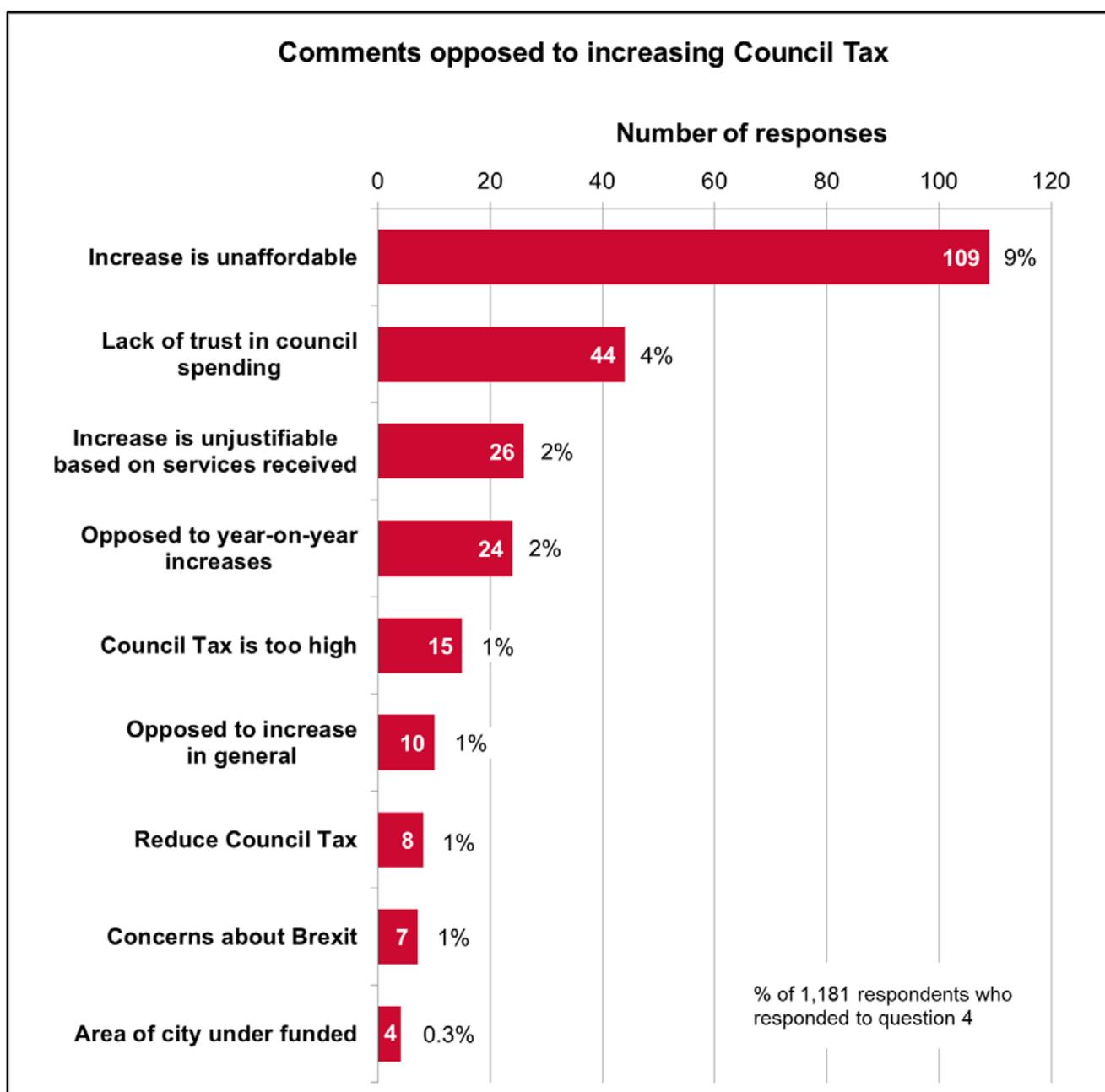


6.3 Comments opposed to increasing Council Tax

241 (20%) respondents provided their reasons for opposing an increase in Council Tax and/or Adult Social Care precept (Figure 28).

- 109 (9%) said that an increase would be unaffordable.
- 44 (4%) stated that they lacked trust in the council to spend the money effectively.
- 26 (2%) said that the increase was unjustifiable based on the services they received.
- 24 (2%) were opposed to year-on-year increases in Council Tax.
- 15 (1%) said that Council Tax was already too high.
- 10 (1%) were against an increase in general.
- 8(1%) said that Council Tax should be reduced.
- 7 (1%) stated that they were against an increase due to concerns about Brexit
- 4 (0.3%) opposed an increase because they think their area of the city is under-funded.

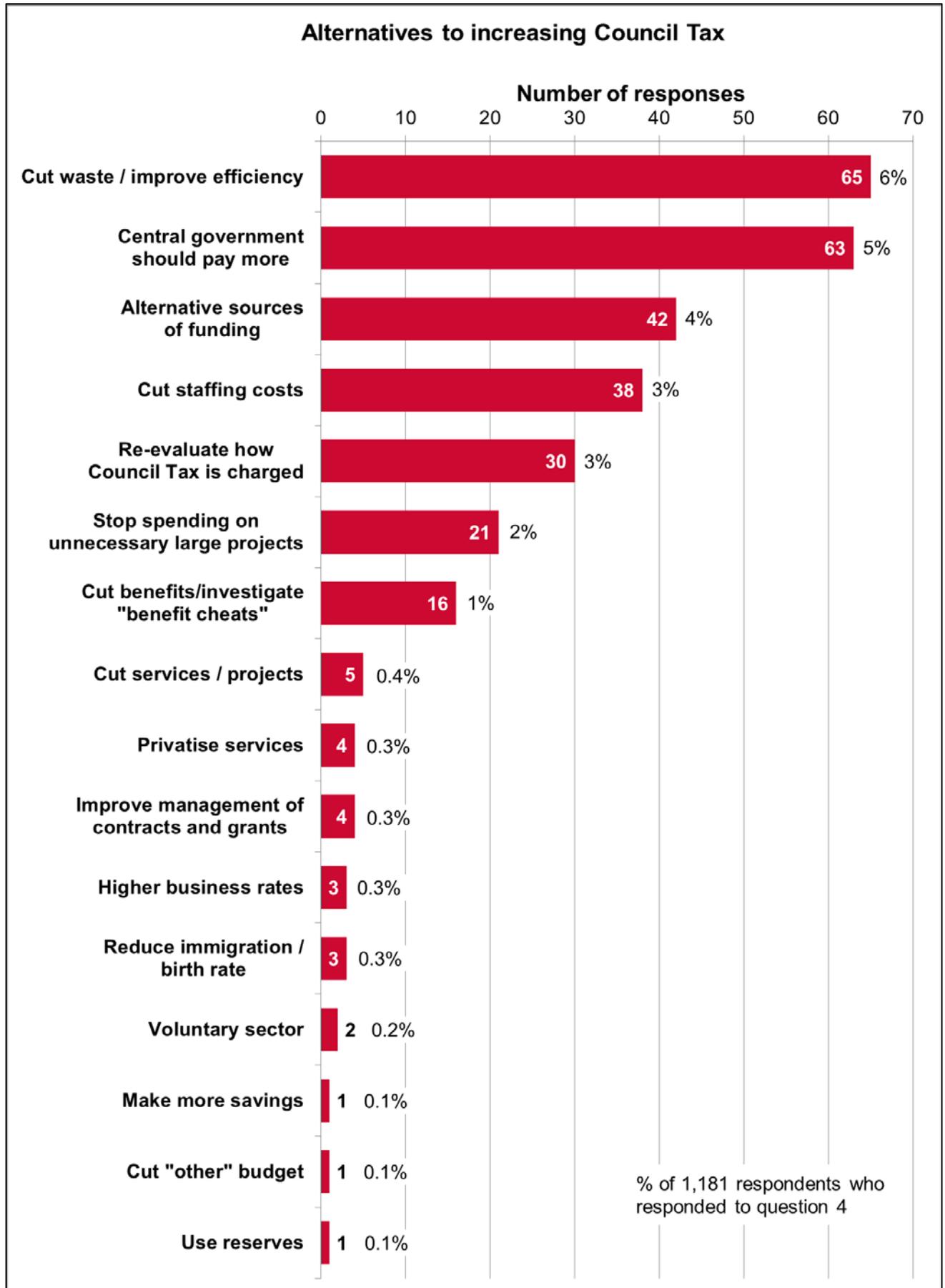
Figure 28: Comments opposed to increasing Council Tax



6.4 Alternatives to increasing Council Tax

254 (22%) respondents proposed alternatives to increasing Council Tax (Figure 29).

Figure 29: Alternatives to increasing Council Tax



Of the 254 comments proposing alternatives to increasing Council Tax:

- 65 (6%) suggested that the council should cut waste and increase its efficiency in order to save money.
- 63 (5%) said that Central Government should provide more funding.
- 42 (4%) suggested alternative sources of funding.
- 38 (3%) said that the council should reduce staffing costs.
- 30 (3%) proposed that the council should re-evaluate how Council Tax is charged.
- 21 (2%) suggested stopping spending money on “unnecessary” big projects.
- 16 (1%) said that the council should cut benefits and/or investigate benefits cheats.
- 5 (0.4%) proposed cutting services and/or projects.
- 4 (0.3%) suggested privatising services.
- 4 (0.3%) suggested improving the management of contracts and grants.
- 3 (0.3%) proposed raising business rates.
- 3 (0.3%) said immigration and/or birth rate should be reduced to lessen the demand on services.
- 2 (0.2%) proposed using the voluntary sector to deliver services.
- 1 (0.1%) proposed making more savings.
- 1 (0.1%) suggested cutting the ‘Other’ budget shown in the consultation information about how Council Tax is currently spent.
- 1 (0.1%) said that the council should use its reserves rather than raise Council Tax.

6.5 Suggested priorities for council spending

878 (74%) respondents commented on why they had rated specific services as high, medium or low importance for future funding, in their response to question 3. Their views are summarised in Figure 30.

In Figure 30, the services are listed in the same order as in Figure 23²⁶, with the following exceptions.

- In Figure 30, ‘children’s services and social care’ and ‘youth services’ are combined as children’s / youth services and social care. This is because many of the free text comments do not differentiate between these two services.
- In Figure 30, the service area ‘new roads and highway maintenance’ has been subdivided into two themes because respondents thought new roads were of different importance to highway maintenance and many of the comments refer to one or the other separately.
- In Figure 30, ‘cycling and walking’ has been subdivided into two themes because respondents differentiated between the two, and similarly ‘bins/recycling collection and cleaner streets’ has also been subdivided

²⁶ Figure 23 lists the services in descending order of the proportion of respondents who rated each service as high importance.

All services

61 (5%) commented that all services are a high priority. For example:

“All of [these] things are very important. If I had answered to say that any were medium importance I would be lying, they all have an important part in making our city the fantastic place it is to live.”

Children's/Youth services & Social Care

- 119 (10%) commented that children's/youth services & social care should be a higher priority.
- 9 (1%) said that children's/youth services & social care should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Children's services need to be a priority, we have seen large numbers of preventative services cut over the past ten years and we are starting to see the impact of [this] nationally in the way of higher rates of children in care and children in need, as well as issues such as knife crime.”

Schools

- 81 (7%) commented that schools should be a higher priority.
- 4 (0.3%) said that schools should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying schools should be a higher priority include:
“I think looking after are schools is most important as this is where children are the future and one day they will be making changes to the world. It's better to educate them more so they learn from others' mistakes”

Tackling Homelessness

- 76 (6%) commented that tackling homelessness should be a higher priority.
- 8 (1%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include: *“Caring for the people in our city is most important. As a city we should be ashamed of our lack of care for the homeless. People should be our priority. We don't have enough housing and the demand means landlords charge outrageous prices for rent and provide substandard accommodation.”*

Clean Air

- 87 (7%) commented that clean air should be a higher priority.
- 19 (2%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Personally speaking, my greatest concern about living in Bristol is the poor air quality, and the effect it may have on my health, and the health of other people, particularly children.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include: *“If "clean air" means getting rid of my diesel car then I'm not in favour as I simply cannot be forced to buy a new car and cannot financially accommodate.”*

Public transport

- 211 (18%) commented that public transport should be a higher priority.
- 26 (2%) said that public transport should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying public transport should be a higher priority include:
“Public transport is THE most important thing that needs sorting in Bristol. It is dire, far worse than for cities in other European countries and worse than most cities in Britain. It is also a service that affects everyone and helps combat climate change and poor air quality.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“No one wants to use the buses, they’re always empty, so stop making so many bus lanes”

Climate Change

- 90 (8%) commented that climate change should be a higher priority.
- 21 (2%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Obviously climate change is going to be the biggest challenge facing us in the future so we need to adapt faster”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“Firstly I don’t think it’s the council’s responsibility to address climate change. That is a much bigger issue to be addressed by much bigger budgets.”

Housing

- 57 (5%) commented that housing should be a higher priority.
- 6 (1%) said that housing should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Housing is a massive issue, it’s very difficult to buy or rent in this city at a fair affordable price and this is unsustainable. Salaries are not increasing at the same pace as housing prices. It needs to be regulated as this is creating a lot of pressure in people.”

Public Health

- 26 (2%) commented that Public Health should be a higher priority.
- 13 (1%) said that Public Health should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Public health and getting people into more active lifestyles is important for minimising other expenses and hopefully in the long run the social care bill for older adults.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“Public health should be paid for by NHS. Am unsure why this is the Council Tax payers’ responsibility.”

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

- 24 (2%) commented that SEND should be a higher priority.
- 1 (0.1%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Children with SEND are being failed. They are already disadvantaged and should be given accessible, consistent and secure support.”

Adult Social Care

- 114 (10%) commented that adult social care should be a higher priority.
- 47 (4%) said that adult social care should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Nationally, there is a looming crisis in adult social care - more of us are living longer, and needing more intensive nursing care at the end of life. At the same time, not enough of us are saving sufficiently for the future. With the widespread end of final salary pensions, what we are saving is generally not enough for us to live on into old age. Those of us of working age now will be working longer, and be retiring on much less, than our parents' generation. For this reason, adult social care does need additional funding.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“There should be more individual responsibility for adult social care. I was astonished that 45% of the council's budget is directed to this. We should provide a safety net in each area for the most vulnerable, not provide a lifestyle choice.”

Bin/recycling collection

- 33 (3%) commented that bin/recycling collection should be a higher priority.
- 9 (1%) said that it should be a lower priority.

Cleaner Streets

- 31 (3%) commented that Cleaner Streets should be a higher priority.
- 1 (0.1%) said that it should be a lower priority.

Supporting Bristol’s economy and jobs

- 27 (2%) commented that supporting Bristol’s economy and jobs should be a higher priority.
- 6 (1%) said that it should be a lower priority.

Cycling

- 129 (11%) commented that cycling should be a higher priority.
- 58 (5%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“Encouraging people to cycle, walk or use public transport would also improve air pollution in Bristol and help fight climate change.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“Bristol has wasted millions on cycle lanes and priorities for cycling. Enough is enough”

Walking

- 70 (6%) commented that walking should be a higher priority.
- 16 (1%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying walking should be a higher priority include:
“I have selected cycling/walking for opposing reasons and it is regrettable you have lumped them together: cycling is dangerously out of control and should be strictly regulated, while walking meets all the same aims - green, safety, etc, and so should be made as safe and enjoyable as possible.”
- Examples of comments saying walking should be a lower priority include:
“Cycling and walking provision is adequately covered by roads for the former and pavements and parks for the latter. People shouldn't need to be told how to do it via council-funded promotional campaigns.”

Parks

- 47 (4%) commented that parks should be a higher priority.
- 1 (0.1%) said that parks should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying parks should be a higher priority include:
“My particular interest has been parks and green spaces and the value they represent to health and social care. They have suffered some neglect from the recent rounds of cuts and they need the care and attention to encourage people to use them and derive the mental and physical benefits that such spaces offer.”

New roads

- 7 (1%) commented that new roads should be a higher priority.
- 46 (4%) said that new roads should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying new roads should be a higher priority include:
“Traffic is impossible. New roads would be a great improvement.”
- Examples of comments saying new roads should be a lower priority include:
“I do not think that road maintenance and new roads should be bundled together. I support maintenance but not new roads.”

Highways maintenance

- 70 (6%) commented that highways maintenance should be a higher priority.
- 7 (1%) said that highways maintenance should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority include:
“The state of the roads i.e. pot holes & surfacing, causing damage to cars. Not only are we paying towards the upkeep of public roads, we are unnecessarily paying out for repairs to our cars!!”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“I believe road maintenance isn't important as driving should be discouraged.”

In addition, there were 23 (2%) comments that said that roads in general should be a higher priority, and 12 (1%) that they should be a lower priority.

Libraries

- 20 (2%) commented that libraries should be a higher priority.
- 7 (1%) said that libraries should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying libraries should be a higher priority include:
“Libraries are important because they are used across the general population and encourage learning.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“Libraries are not worth investing in, the future is iPads and google for information”

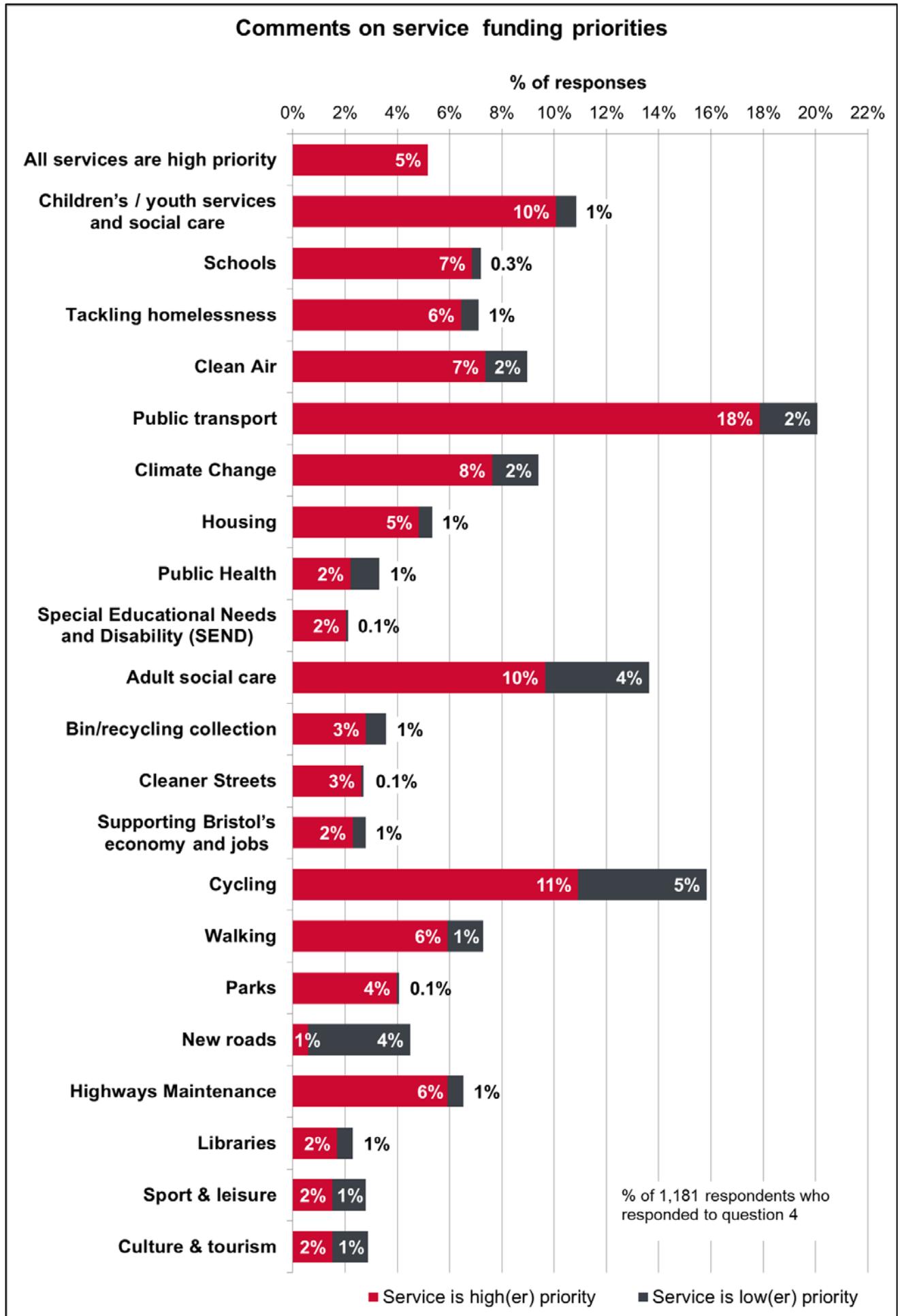
Sport & Leisure

- 18 (2%) commented that sport & leisure should be a higher priority.
- 15 (1%) said that sport & leisure should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority includes:
“We need to keep people healthy - sport and leisure - the signs of obesity are quite staggering and much worse in women than men. Compulsory improvements in physical education is vital.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“Sport and leisure can be provided privately.”

Culture & tourism

- 18 (2%) commented that culture & tourism should be a higher priority.
- 16 (1%) said that it should be a lower priority.
- Examples of comments saying it should be a higher priority includes:
“I feel that investment in culture and art should be a priority as this is what makes Bristol interesting, unique and a more enjoyable place to live.”
- Examples of comments saying it should be a lower priority include:
“We are in a state of emergency regarding vital services, so let’s focus on these, to lose cultural opportunities is tragic but please don’t spend Council Tax on low impact middle class orientated cultural institutions, e.g. Arnolfini, Architecture Centre. These major Arts Centres do not reach out to everyone; they have a low impact on the Bristol community. Our museums, M shed and the Museum, do and their funding is justified.”

Figure 30: Comments on service funding priorities



6.6 Comments about the consultation

39 (3%) made comments about the consultation. Of these:

- 28 (2%) requested additional information to help them understand the issues/trade-offs. 8 of these wanted a breakdown of the 'other' category in the chart of how Council Tax is spent.
- 10 (1%) criticised aspects of the consultation, including the costs of the survey, the space available for free text comments, omissions or aggregations of the services listed in question 3, the time available for completing the survey and the inclusion of equalities monitoring questions.
- 2 (0.2%) requested more engagement at an early stage to shape proposals.

6.7 Other comments

40 (3%) made others comments, including:

- 29 (2%) criticised the council for wasting money and managing projects poorly, particularly transport changes.
- 8 (1%) believe that the council will ignore the consultation feedback will do what it wants/raise local taxes.
- 2 (0.2%) were critical of progress on Clean Air plans;
- 1 (0.1%) highlighted the need for an integrated NHS and Social Care policy;
- 1 (0.1%) was complementary about the help they receive from the council.

7 Other correspondence on the Budget 2020/21 Consultation

Five emails were received from members of the public in response to the Budget 2020/21 Consultation. These were analysed separately from the survey responses and are summarised by theme below.

Comments in the five emails included stated opposition to an increase in Council Tax, support for increasing Council Tax and suggested alternatives to increasing Council Tax.

Opposed to an increase in Council Tax

- Two people said that Council Tax should not increase because their earnings have not increased.
- One respondent said they would much prefer a zero increase but added that only the council knows how much is needed to fund services
- One said that Council Tax should decrease for people on low incomes.
- One person said that Council Tax is already high.
- One said Council Tax should be 'banned'.

In favour of an increase in Council Tax

- One person said that it would be helpful if all households (whether on benefits or not) paid an extra £2 towards Council Tax.

Alternatives to increasing Council Tax

- One respondent said that the council should stop wasting money on redeveloping the city centre and Temple Meads.
- One said Bristol should stop wasting money trying to be the third best university city.

Other comments

- One respondent said that removing traffic lights would get the city moving and make Bristol a better cleaner place.

8 How will this report be used?

This report will be taken into account as final proposals are developed by officers to put to Cabinet to recommend to Full Council. The report will also be considered by Cabinet and Full Council in making its decisions about the 2020/21 budget at the Full Council meeting on 25 February 2020.

Budget decisions will be published through normal procedures for Full Council and Cabinet decisions at democracy.bristol.gov.uk.

How can I keep track?

You can always find the latest consultation and engagement surveys online at www.bristol.gov.uk/consultationhub where you can also sign up to receive automated email notifications about consultations and engagements.

All decisions related to the proposals in this consultation will be made publicly at the Full Council meeting on 25 February 2020.

You can find forthcoming meetings and their agendas at democracy.bristol.gov.uk.

Any decisions made by Full Council and Cabinet will also be shared at democracy.bristol.gov.uk.