



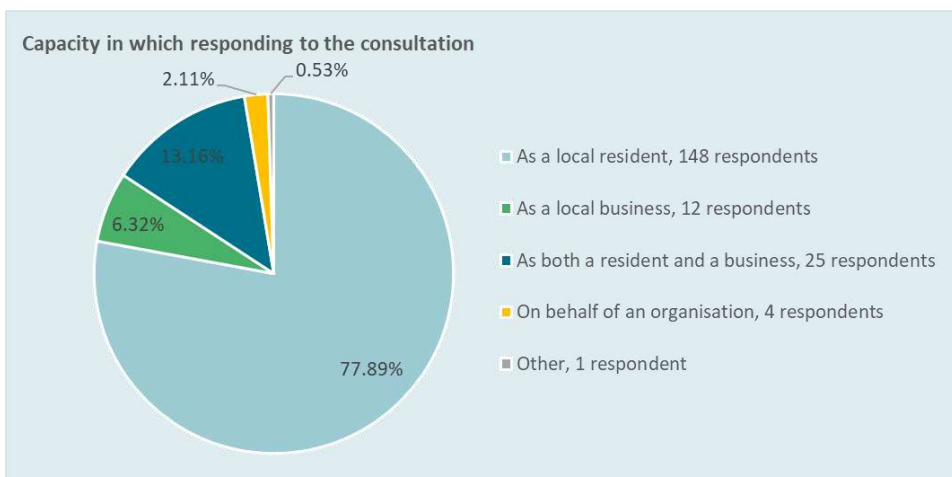
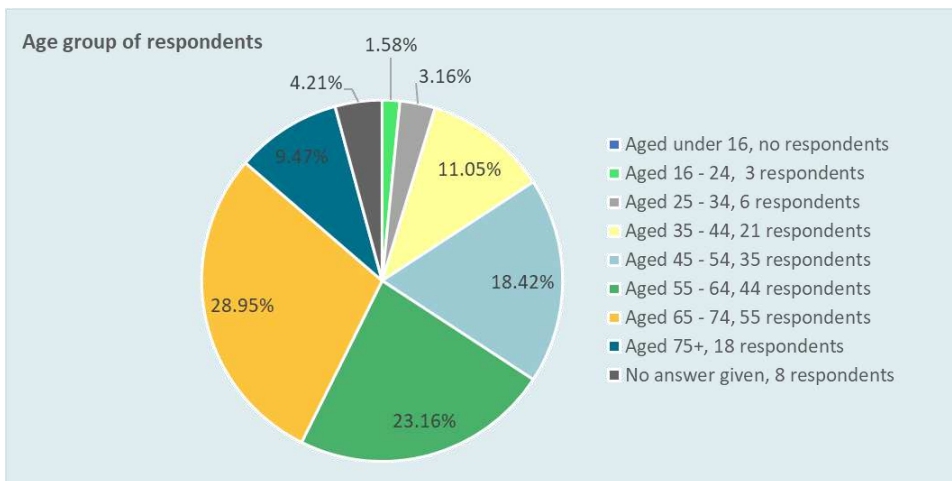
BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A short Budget Consultation survey was run on the Council’s website from 4 January to 22 January 2021. The launch of the survey was accompanied by a press release and links to the survey were e-mailed directly to representatives of the business community and town and parish councils. The survey focussed on the future financial sustainability as a key theme of the East Suffolk Strategic Plan rather than on specific budget measures for next year. The survey sought feedback on some possible approaches to achieving and maintaining financial sustainability and featured two open ended questions asking for comments on this theme and on the specific subject of support to the business community in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. This Appendix provides a summary of responses and feedback.

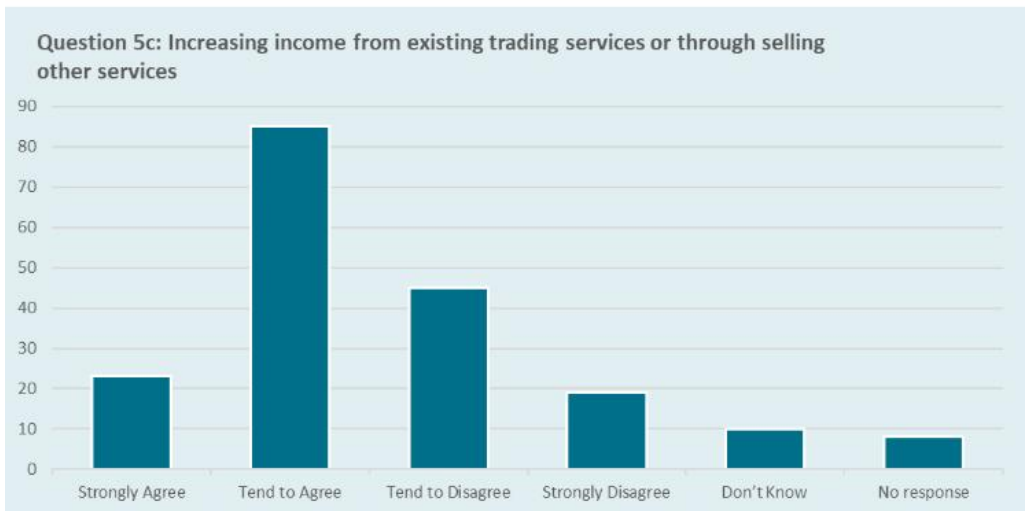
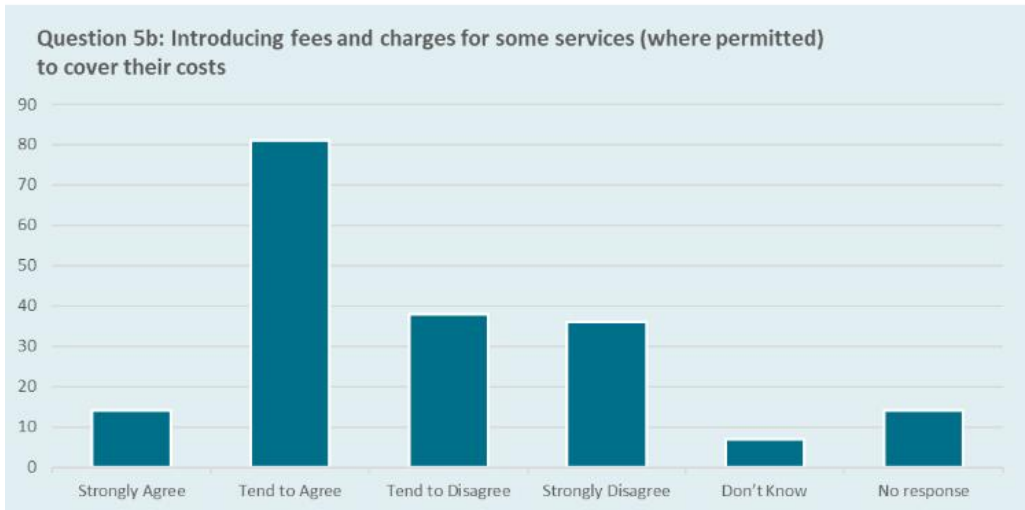
2 RESPONSE

2.1 190 responses were received to the survey in total. The charts below show the composition of respondents by age and type.

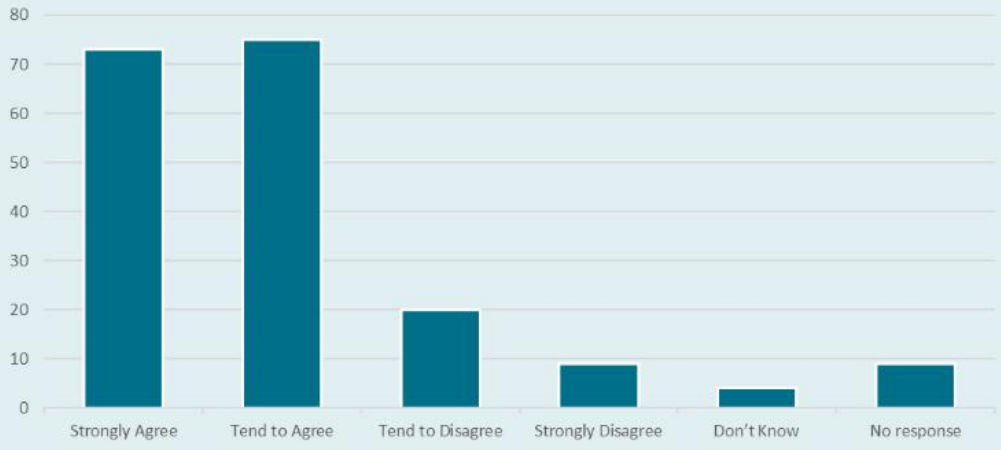


3 FEEDBACK

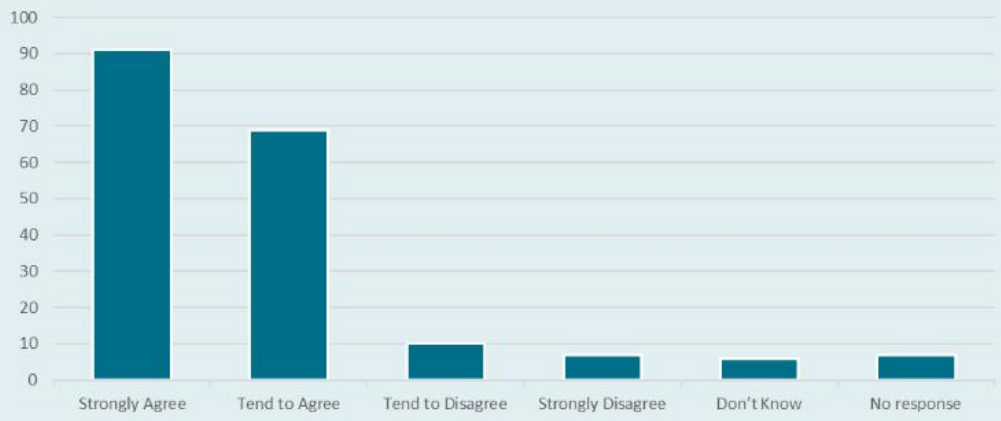
3.1 Question 5 in the survey focussed on a range of possible approaches that the Council could adopt to financial sustainability. The charts below summarise the response to this question.



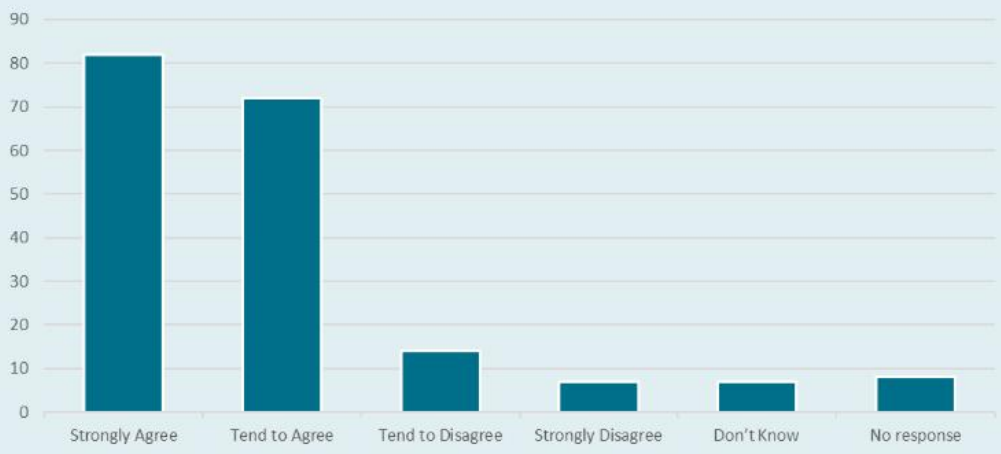
Question 5d: Making more services available online



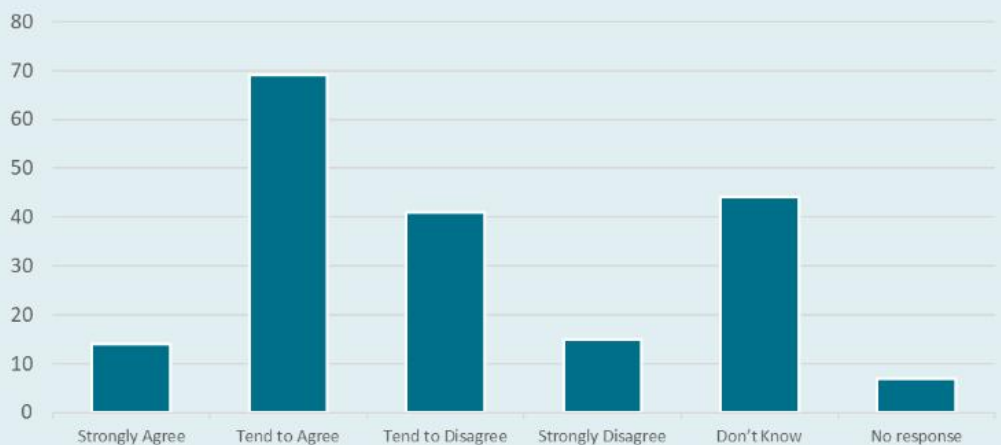
Question 5e: Making more efficient use of council assets such as land and property



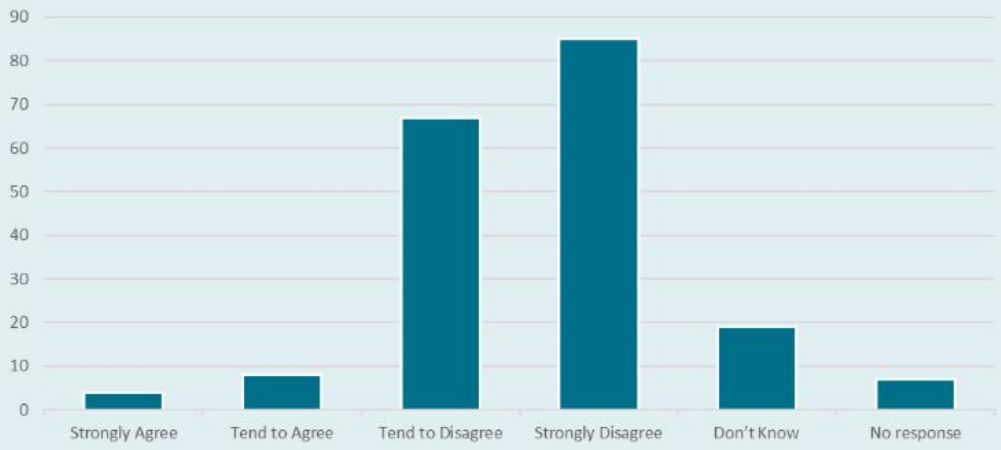
Question 5f: Using our land and buildings to generate income



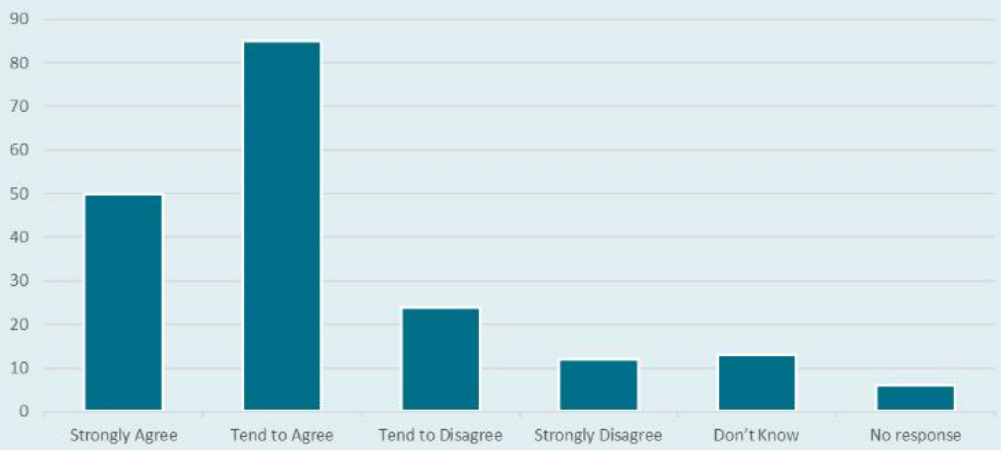
Question 5g: Changing the way some discretionary services are delivered



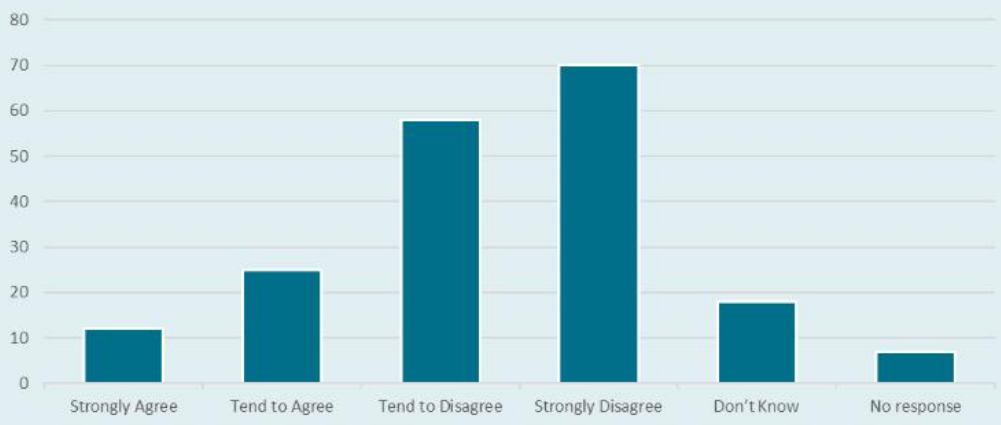
Question 5h: Reducing the quality of some services



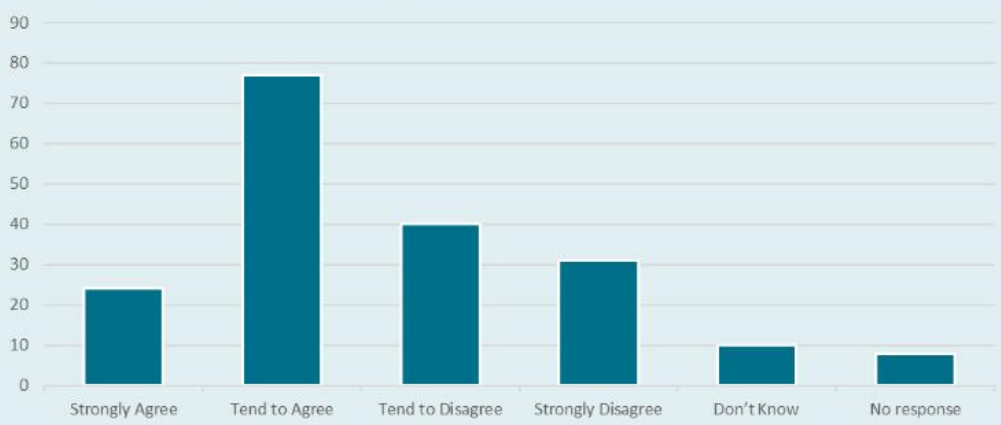
Question 5i: Sharing services with other councils and public agencies

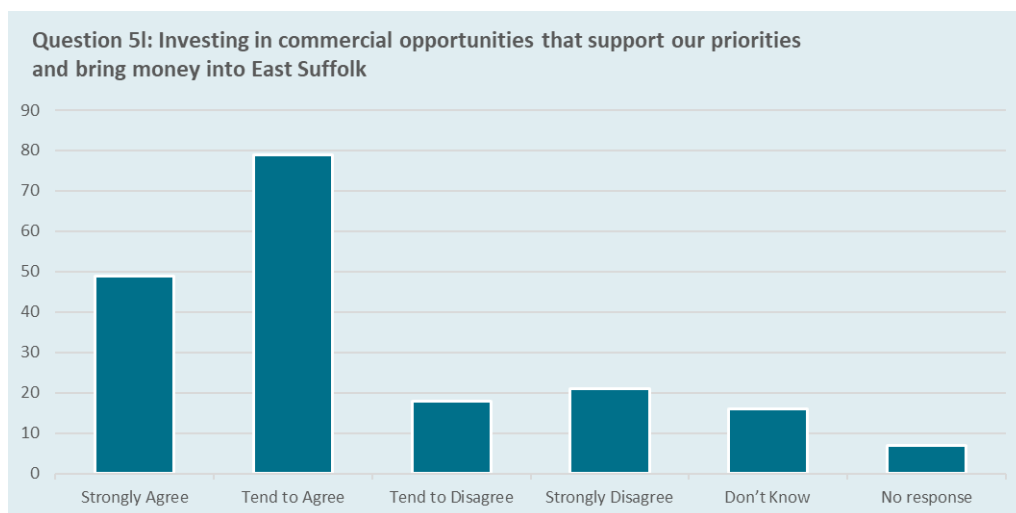


Question 5j: Transferring services to other organisations such as commercial companies



Question 5k: Transferring services to other organisations such as community groups, social enterprises or town and parish councils





3.2 Question 6 was an open-ended question seeking comments and suggestions on this theme. 100 respondents replied to this question and analysis of these responses indicates that the following were the most common areas referred to:

- Importance of Environmentally-friendly service provision and communications
- More joint working and closer liaison between tiers of local government, especially an enhanced, but funded, role for town and parish councils
- Greater support for community groups and charities
- Improved efficiency in the provision of council services
- Increased support to tourism and hospitality
- Greater service provision for young people and young families
- More consultation and listening to local concerns
- Concerns about parking charges
- Concerns about ensuring that residents are not excluded from the provision of online services

3.3 Question 7 was a specific question regarding how the Council might most efficiently use additional Government funding available to support businesses in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4 Respondents to this question overwhelmingly emphasised the importance of supporting small, independent, local businesses through the continued provision of grant funding, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Other areas of support referred to included:

- Increased rate reliefs
- Provision of free parking in towns
- Match funding for small businesses undertaking new projects, training, job creation, etc.
- Grants to ensure that local businesses are Covid secure.