

**Dundee City Council  
Budget Consultation Survey  
2024/2025**

**November 2023**

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## 1. Introduction

The budget consultation survey was made available via the Council's internet site during October 2023 this was publicised in the press and via Dundee City Council social media networks.

As with any exercise of this type, results are indicative and will be influenced by the demographic of those who choose to make a submission and cannot be considered representative of all DCC citizens.

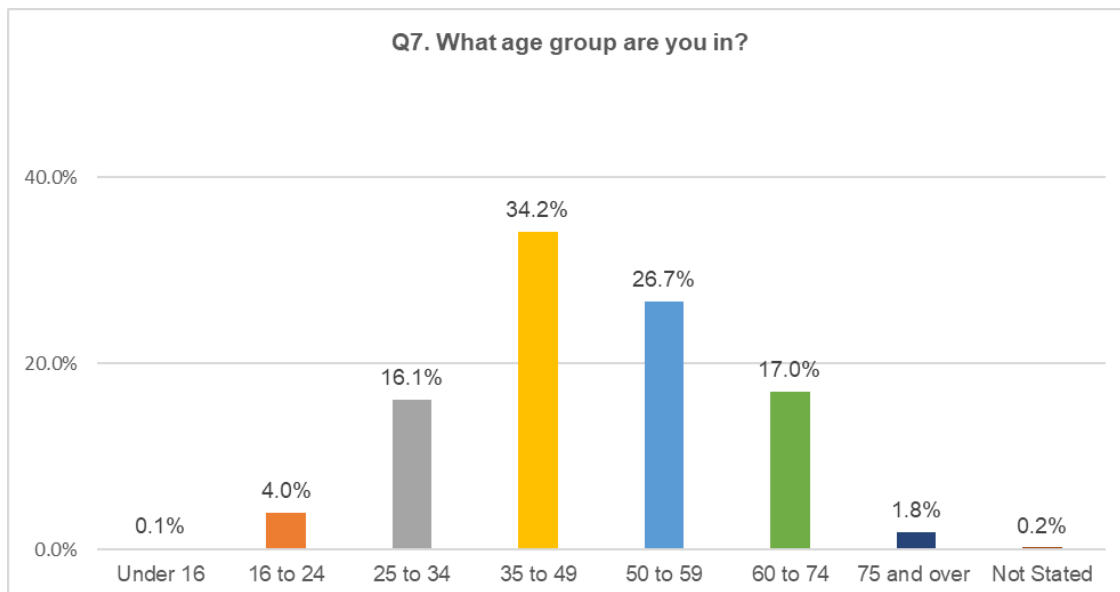
A total of 1,088 completed responses were received and these responses are analysed within this report.

Most respondents (89.5%) were residents of Dundee City and around 10% of respondents worked in Dundee City.

<b>Q6: We would like to know a little about you, are you?</b>	
Resident of Dundee	89.5%
Work in Dundee	9.9%
Other	0.6%

Respondents who stated that they lived and worked in Dundee have only been counted once in the resident of Dundee category, Work in Dundee are respondents who work in Dundee but are not residents of Dundee. Others are respondents who stated that they don't reside or work in Dundee.

The age distribution of respondents was fairly well balanced which is encouraging when using an open consultation with around 54% of respondents aged under 50 years and 46% of respondents aged 50 years and over. When looking at the breakdown of respondents in more detail, 0.1% were under 16 years, 4.0% were 16 to 24 years, 16.1% were 25 to 34 years, 34.2% were 35 to 49 years, 26.7% were 50 to 59 years, 17.0% were 60 to 74 years and 1.8% were aged 75 years and over.



Respondents were asked if this was the first time they had participated in one of the Councils consultations.

<b>Q8: Is this the first time that you have taken part in one of our consultations?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	68.4%
No	29.0%
N/A	2.6%

For 68.4% of respondents this was the first time they had taken part in a Dundee City Council (DCC) consultation whereas 29.0% of respondents stated that they had taken part in a consultation before and

2.6% stated not applicable. Those who had taken part in a DCC Consultation were asked to indicate the consultation which they had taken part in previously, the most common response was a previous budget consultation followed by Engage Dundee.

<b>Q9. If you answered "No" to the above, can you tell us what you have previously engaged in?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Previous budget consultation	65.5%
Engage Dundee	18.7%
Council house rent setting	7.3%
Other	5.7%
Not stated	2.8%

Responses from those who stated "other" included local consultation exercises on topics such as active travel, opens spaces, cost of living crisis, environmental grants, funding allocation, spending in local areas and the local development plan.

Most respondents (91.9%) stated that they did not access additional support to complete the survey. A small proportion of respondents stated that they accessed support at their local library to complete the survey (2.4%) or called customer services (1.7%). Responses from the small proportion of respondents who stated other included assistance from family members and Dundee Citizens Advice Bureau.

<b>Q10. Did you access additional support in completing this survey?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No	91.9%
Yes, at my local library	2.4%
Yes, I called customer services	1.7%
Yes, Other (Please specify)	0.8%
Prefer not to say	2.0%
Not stated	1.1%

## 2. Questions

The survey began by asking respondents about council services. A list of 10 council services were displayed and respondents were asked to rate the level of importance that they felt towards each of these on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least important and 10 being most important. The services respondents were asked to rate are shown in the table below:

<b>Services</b>
Education (nursery, primary and secondary school)
Older people's services
Housing and homelessness
Leisure and Culture (museums, sports centres etc.)
Services for people with disabilities
Roads maintenance and street lighting
Waste collection and recycling
Street cleaning
Parks and open spaces
Job creation and regeneration

Respondents were then asked to indicate if any of these services had become more important to them over the past year and if so, explain the reasons why they felt this way. The next question then asked respondents to indicate if any of these services had become less important to them over the past year and if so to explain the reasons why they felt this way.

The survey then asked respondents to select the percentage change in council tax they would like to see. Finally, respondents were presented with several statements and were asked to rate their level of agreement where 1 was totally disagree and 10 was completely agree.

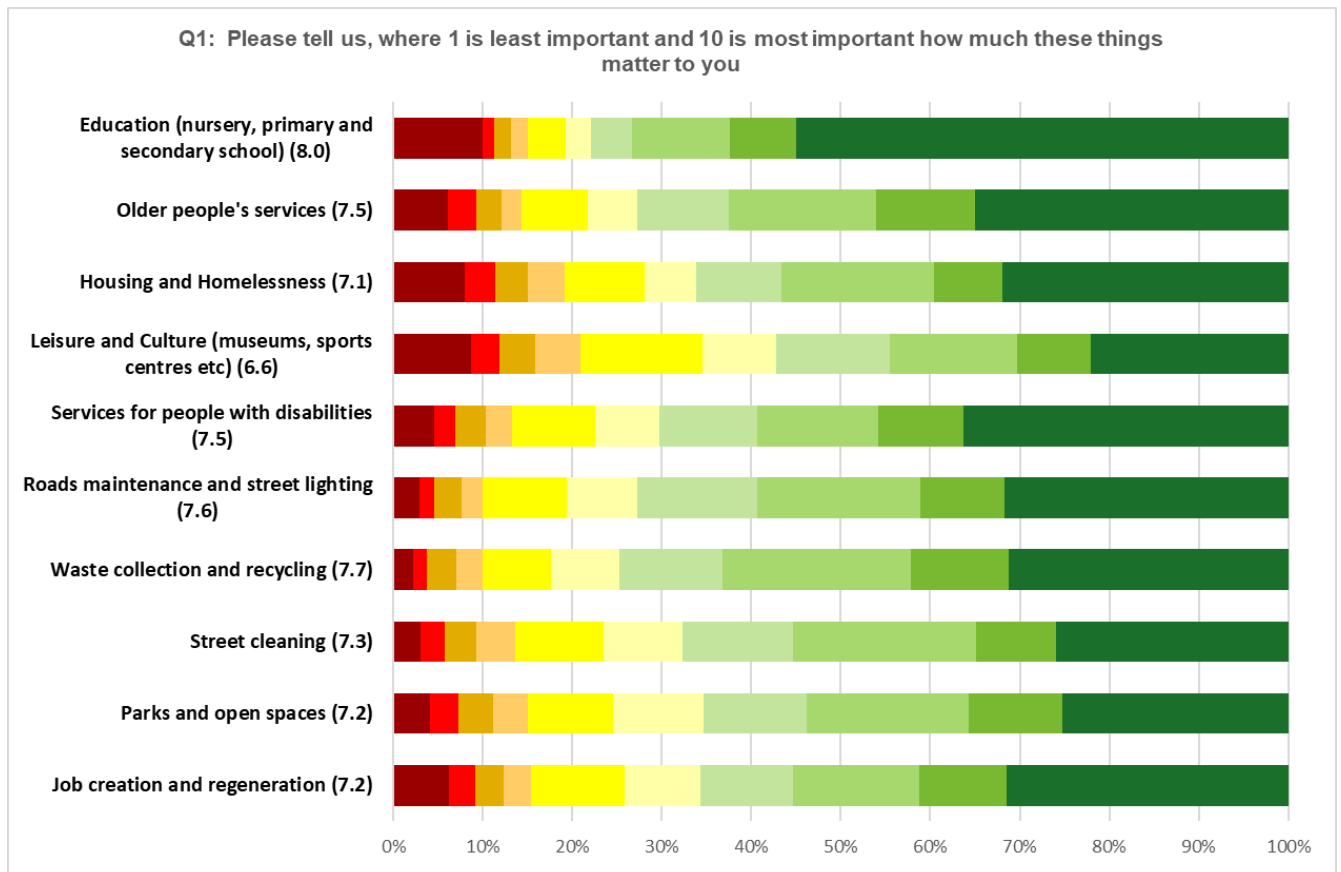
### 3.Results

#### 3.1 Question 1

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate the level of importance that they felt towards the council services listed in the survey.

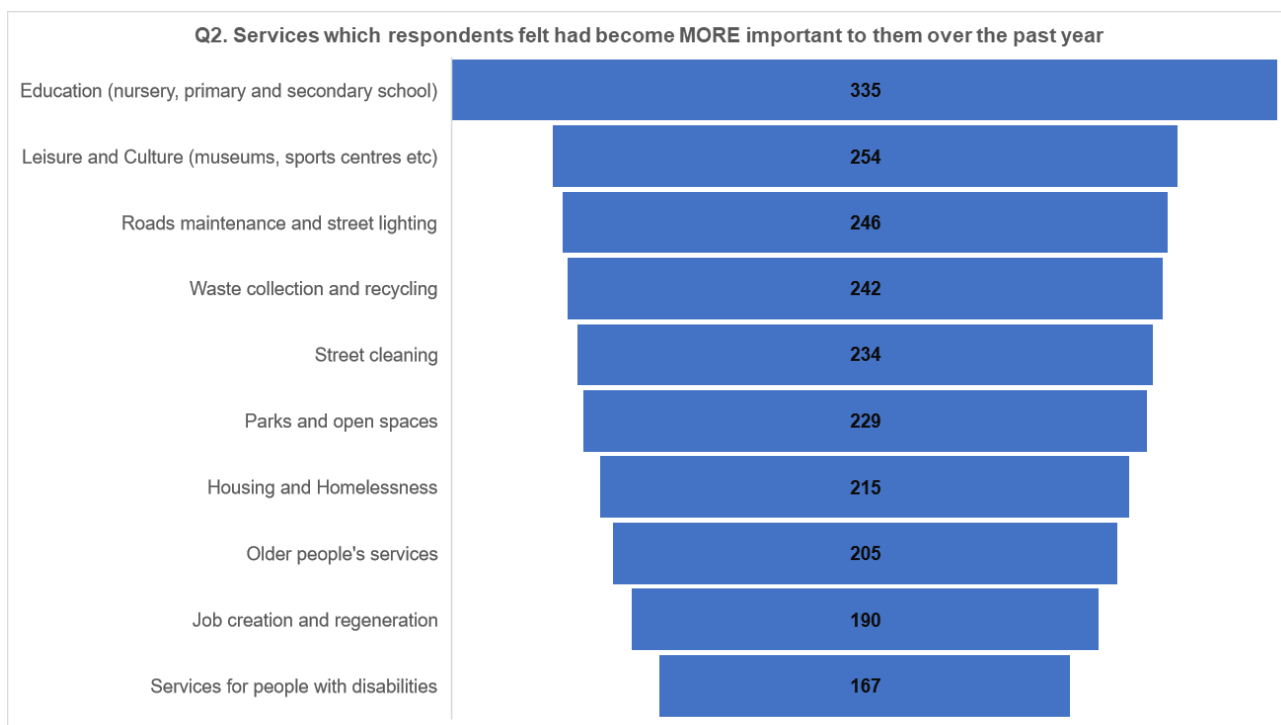
Education (nursery, primary and secondary school) was the service which had the highest importance average score with 8.0, this was followed by Waste collection and recycling (7.7), Roads maintenance and street lighting (7.6) and then Services for people with disabilities and Older People’s Services which both had an average score of 7.5.

Leisure and Culture (museums, sports centres etc) had the lowest average score at 6.6. The average score for each service is shown in brackets in the chart below:

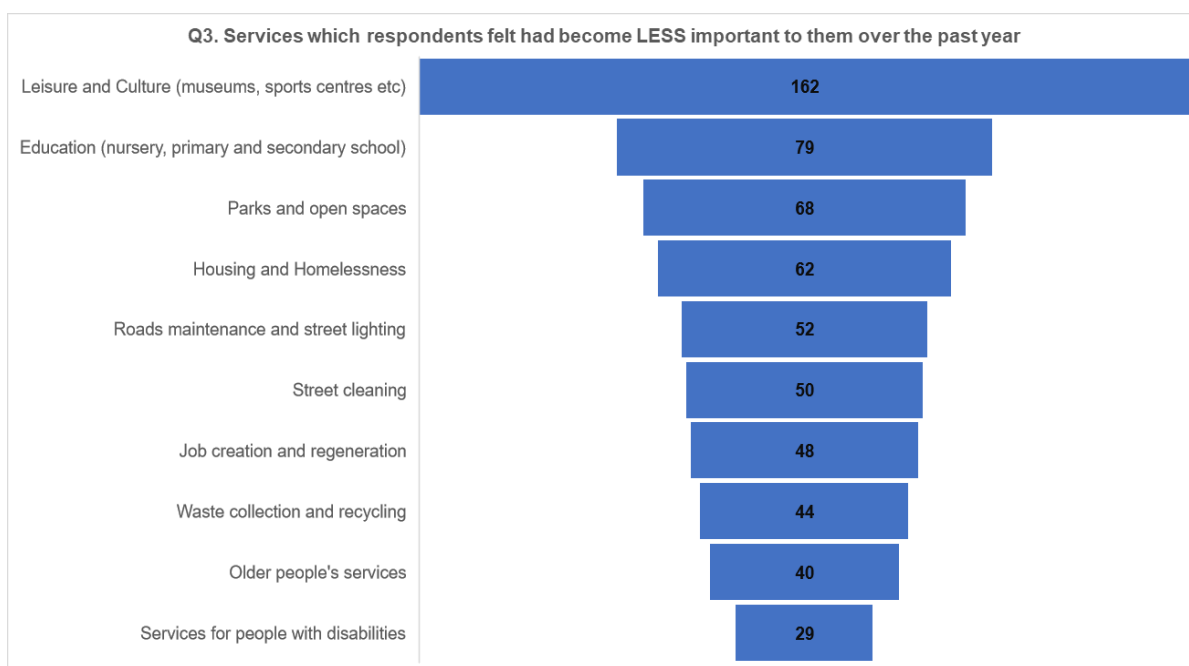


### 3.2 Question 2 and Question 3 Tickbox Responses

Question 2 asked respondents if any of the services listed in question 1 had become **More** important to them over the past year. The chart below shows the number of respondents who stated that a particular service had become more important to them over the past year. Please note respondents were able to choose multiple services.



Question 3 asked respondents if any of the services listed in question 1 had become **Less** important to them over the past year. The chart below shows the number of respondents who stated that a particular service had become less important to them over the past year. Please note respondents were able to choose multiple services.



### 3.3 Questions 2 and 3 Contextual Responses

Part of questions two and three asked respondents to explain their reasons why they felt a service had become more or less important to them over the past year. The following paragraphs summarises the contextual responses for each of the services listed in the questions.

#### **Education (nursery, primary and secondary school)**

Those who had children/grandchildren in education and those who worked within the education sector gave this as reason for this service becoming more important to them.

Respondents stated several key reasons as to why education had been become more important to them. Many stated that they felt the pandemic continues to have a significant negative effect on children meaning education is more critical than ever for their development. It was also felt that disruption due to recent strike action had led to further disruption for children therefore education should be seen as key to provide children with a consistent, quality education and to develop a future skilled workforce. Many stated that this was only possible if support staff and teachers are recognised as crucial for children's wellbeing and development.

Concerns were raised about increasing behavioural issues in schools and the need for a safer environment for both pupils and staff, those who had children with special needs highlighted that they felt more funding was required to ensure enhanced provision and support was available.

Those who worked within this sector stated that they felt cuts to funding was impacting the quality, safety and support for children and more funding was required to provide additional resources including more support staff and material resources, concern was shown for the impacts on children of lower budgets and for the motivation of those working within the sector.

Those who said that Education had become less important to them were respondents who had no children, or their children were no longer in education.

#### **Older people's services**

Those who felt this was more important to them had family members who were getting older or were reaching older age themselves, others stated that the growing elderly population gave increasing importance to this service.

Many respondents felt that there was an increasing lack of social care staff to provide the necessary services particularly to those at home and that lengthy waiting times for appointments or care packages is resulting in the elderly becoming more vulnerable. The issue of low wages in the care sector was felt to contribute to many of the issues. Some stated concern around the privatisation of care and the potential negative impact on affordability.

The availability and quality of appropriate housing for older people was shown as a concern and that it was felt critical to invest in this and to maintain and improve services for the elderly population to ensure their well-being and quality of life.

Social isolation was highlighted as an ongoing concern particularly during the cost of living crisis and that it was vital that older people were aware of available support. The increasing provision of many services online was mentioned by respondents as being an increasing issue which contributed to isolation. The role of community centres and libraries in providing support and engagement to older people was mentioned as being of high importance.

Of those who felt this had become less important reasons given were that the third sector provided more opportunities for this age group than younger age groups or they had no older persons in their family.

## **Housing and Homelessness**

Many respondents who stated that this had become more important were on the housing waiting list or had a family member or friend requiring housing.

Homelessness was indicated by many respondents as being perceived to be an issue across the city alongside the increasing number of beggars visible on the streets. It was stated that there are long waiting lists for those requiring housing and an inability to afford private rent costs contributed to these issues.

Many respondents mentioned lack of availability of social housing in general and difficulties with the allocation of what was available, single people, larger families and those with disabilities mentioned this being a particular issue, respondents felt that building affordable housing for all sectors of the population should be of high priority.

The cost of private rent was highlighted by respondents as an increasingly urgent issue in the housing market, some felt that young people in particular who previously would have used this sector of the market were now competing for social housing but they were not of a high priority in the allocation process. The cost-of-living crisis was mentioned as being another factor in the inability to afford rental costs.

Those who were currently in social housing mentioned that this should be a key priority due to deteriorating condition of housing and the level of repairs required, quality housing was required to cope with rising living costs.

Those who felt this was less important indicated that they were homeowners, others mentioned that they felt housing matters should be dealt with at a national and not a local level.

## **Leisure and Culture (museums, sports centres etc.)**

Many respondents who felt that this had become more important stated that due to the cost of living crisis it was more important than ever to have access to leisure and culture services which often provide affordable and free activities for residents to engage in. Some expressed a desire for a larger variety of activities available as well as longer opening hours to meet the needs of the community who are using them. The importance of these services for children and young people and the opportunities for cultural, physical and social engagement was given.

Respondents highlighted the role that such facilities provide in promoting mental health and wellbeing to many people across the city, the importance of this was given particularly in context of post Covid 19 challenges and the vital role facilities provide in people continuing to keep well, respondents stated that they had a better quality of life due to services being available and easily accessible.

The importance of libraries and community centres was given as being vital for providing access to information, social support and education particularly for those who may be vulnerable or lacking resources. Some expressed that particularly over the last year these spaces had provided a lifeline during times of difficulty and hardship. Concern was given around potential cuts to funding resulting in the closure of facilities.

Concerns around the ongoing closure of the Olympia Leisure Centre were given as a reason of importance and the lack of access to swimming elsewhere.

Many respondents highlighted that these facilities are vital for Dundee's reputation and appeal to create a strong economy, it was felt that there was an appreciation in the city for the positive impact that culture and creativity had in the community.

Those who felt this was of less importance stated that when budgets are limited other services should be funded as a higher priority. It was also stated that facilities in the city were already of good quality therefore spending more money on these during a cost of living crisis wasn't important.



### **Services for people with disabilities**

Many of those who felt that this had become more important had a disability or a disabled family member others stated that they worked with those with disabilities therefore were aware of the importance of services available.

Concerns were expressed about the reducing availability of services and support required for people with disabilities, it was felt there was a need for services to cater for various types of disability particularly those with hidden or complex needs. The mental health needs of individuals and the impact of social isolation was given as a reason for the importance of timely mental health services.

Respondents stated the importance of equality and opportunities for those with a disability, particularly support for young adults with disabilities as they transition from school to adult services.

It was felt that people with disabilities were increasing at a disadvantage in the cost of living crisis due to facing higher living costs on a regular day to day basis and more support was required.

Respondents who felt this was less important stated that it was not applicable to them, some felt that more services should be funded by the NHS.

### **Road maintenance and street lighting**

Those who stated that this had become more important felt that, in general, well-lit streets and safe roads and pavements are essential in the city as this has an impact on daily living which can lead to difficulties. The importance of safe streets for all residents, including safe crossing and walkable pavements was given particularly for older people.

Potholes was given as a key reason for this being more important by respondents, many stated that they felt frequency and quality of road repairs was an issue which led to costs being incurred due to damage to vehicles.

Street lighting was stated as being a priority particularly in the winter months as inadequate lighting has an impact on public safety for pedestrians and cyclists. It was stated that due to climate change alternative methods of transport were of increasing importance therefore investment in these was crucial. Some respondents showed concern regarding the introduction of low emission zones and the impact on those who could not afford newer vehicles.

Respondents who felt it was less important stated that they felt that due the pressures on budgets those services which helped the vulnerable should be a priority.

### **Waste collection and recycling**

Many respondents stated that this had become more important to them as they were dissatisfied with the current waste collection services in the city, others cited importance of effects to the environment as being a priority.

It was felt that more frequent or consistent collections are required to alleviate issues such as overflowing bins, insufficient bin capacity and infestation risks. Eurobins were given as a particular area of concern with respondents stating that they were inefficient and leading to problems such as fly tipping. It was stated that uncollected waste is leading to dirty streets which impacts negatively on the image of the city, concerns were shown that charging for brown bin collection was leading to increased illegal dumping due to the burden of the cost.

Several respondents felt it was important to have more accessible recycling and waste management options in their area to address climate change issues and reduce carbon emissions.

Reasons given for this being less important to respondents included respondents feeling the current systems in place worked well and that more recycling was resulting in less waste.

## **Street cleaning**

Reasons given for this becoming more important included the view of many respondents that street cleanliness had declined significantly over recent years which was causing health and safety issues in communities and negatively impacting on the image of the city.

Respondents stated that immediate investment is required to address the deterioration in cleanliness of streets, concerns were given on levels of litter, dog waste and broken infrastructure such as pipes and drains across the city. It was felt that increased staffing levels were required to ensure a better environment, some felt that numbers of visible street cleaners had reduced in recent years, others felt that particular areas of the city were affected by this more than others.

Many respondents felt that a clean and tidy environment was important to preserve a positive image of the city to residents, visitors, and investors. It was felt that individuals and businesses needed to be encouraged for maintaining their immediate surroundings and that communities need to have a sense of pride in the areas they live, it was suggested that creative solutions could be developed with partner organisations.

It was stated by some that overgrown trees and weeds were an increasing issue which resulted in other issues such as the streetlights being affected.

Respondents who felt this was less important stated that residents should take more responsibility for keeping their own community area tidy which would alleviate budget pressure on the council.

## **Parks and open spaces**

Most respondents who stated that this area had become more important to them indicated that these facilities are a valuable space for people across the city which contribute to good mental health and wellbeing.

Access to well-maintained parks and open spaces was felt to be of increasing importance due to the rise in costs of organised activities due to the cost of living crisis, particularly to those on a low income and those who did not have garden space. Respondents expressed concern about incidents of vandalism, overgrown areas and inadequate maintenance stating that it was important to ensure these areas continued to be invested in as this encouraged community engagement and positivity in communities. Some respondents felt that some areas were underutilised and that there was a need for more activities and initiatives to make better use of spaces including potential for job creation through training and apprenticeship courses.

Whilst there was support for nature and rewilding efforts some concerns were given that this shouldn't compromise maintenance and lead to overgrown areas.

Respondents who stated that they felt this was less important to them said this was due to Dundee having many parks and open spaces which were well maintained and accessible, it was also indicated that whilst great for the health and well-being of the city public it seems more of a priority to divert funds to help vulnerable people in need of basics.

## **Jobs creation and regeneration**

Many respondents who were looking for employment or had a family member looking for employment felt that this had become more important to them, others felt that unemployment levels were a concern and that there was a strong connection between job creation, poverty reduction and tackling of social issues.

Investment in the city was stated to be of high importance to encourage generation of income, supporting infrastructure and attracting visitors to the city to boost the economy and improve quality of life in Dundee.

The importance of the creation of a variety of jobs was mentioned by many respondents including apprenticeships to address the diverse skill sets of the population, education and training were seen to

be crucial for the future workforce, some concern was shown for the lack of well paid jobs available, also for the decline of the High Street and potential impact of the Low Emissions Zone on businesses.

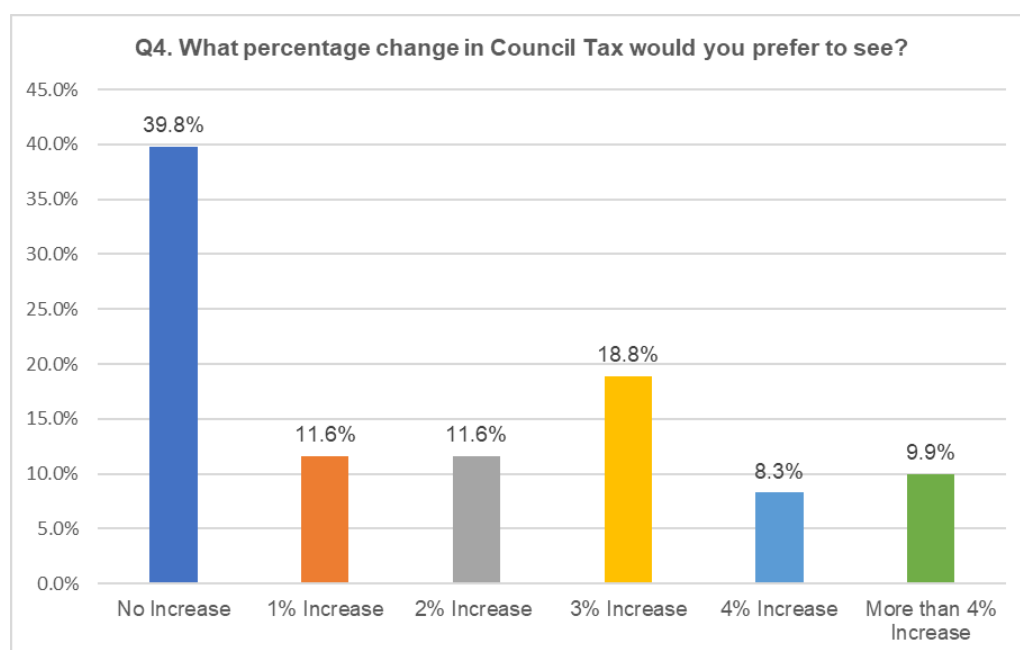
It was stated also that for those seeking employment many jobs available are unskilled and low paid, it was felt that better quality jobs are required for those who live within the city but also for the graduates to avoid them leaving the city to work elsewhere.

Those who felt that this area had become less important stated that they felt that the private sector should take more responsibility in this area, others stated that they felt adequate job opportunities were available in the city at the moment.

### 3.4 Question 4

Question 4 asked respondents what percentage change in Council Tax was preferable. The survey stated that Council Tax is about 18% of the council's budget. For context, respondents were advised that each percentage point of increase equated to approximately £700,000 towards the Council's budget.

The chart below shows that around 40% of respondents stated that they would prefer to see no increase in Council Tax. This was followed by 18.8% of respondents who stated that they would prefer to see a 3% increase and the options 1% increase and 2% increase received the same proportion of responses with 11.6% each. Around 10% of respondents stated that they would prefer more than a 4% increase with the remaining 8.3% of respondents stating that they would prefer a 4% increase.



### 3.5 Question 5

Question 5 asked respondents to rate their opinion on a number of statements in relation to how the council could save money by reducing or stopping some of the services it currently provides. Respondents were asked to rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is totally disagree and 10 is completely agree. The statements were:

- The council should review its service standards even if that means the service becoming reduced or delivery of that service taking longer
- The council should reduce or stop some non-essential services to protect other services
- The council should reduce or stop the grants that it gives to other organisations
- The council should change or reduce opening hours for some public services and buildings

- The council should continue to sell the property it no longer has a use for

The statement “The council should continue to sell the property it no longer has a use for” had the highest average score on the scale of agreement with 8.1. The statement, “The council should reduce or stop some non-essential services to protect other services” had second highest average score (6.1).

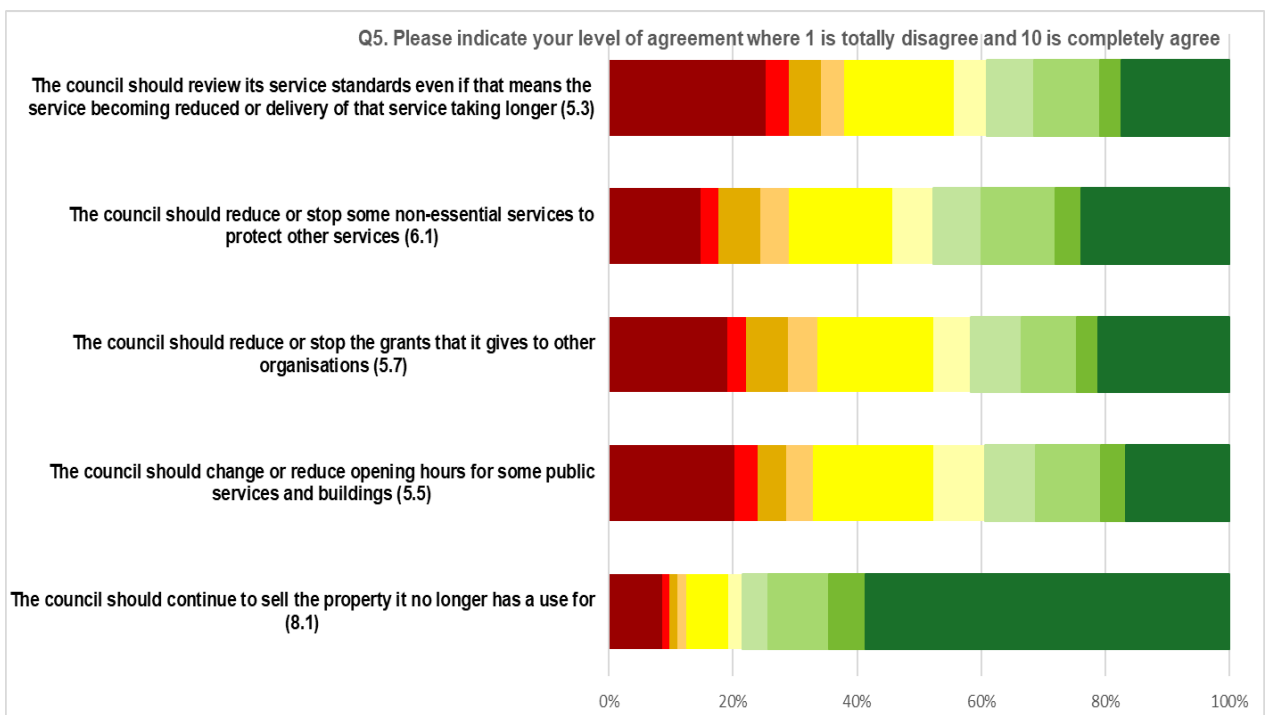
This was followed by the statements:

“The council should reduce or stop the grants that it gives to other organisations (5.7)

“The council should change or reduce opening hours for some public services and buildings (5.5)

“The council should review its service standards even if that means the service becoming reduced or delivery of that service taking longer” (5.3).

The chart below shows the responses to each of the statements, the average score for each statement is shown in brackets.



## Appendix – Full Results for Questions 1 and 5

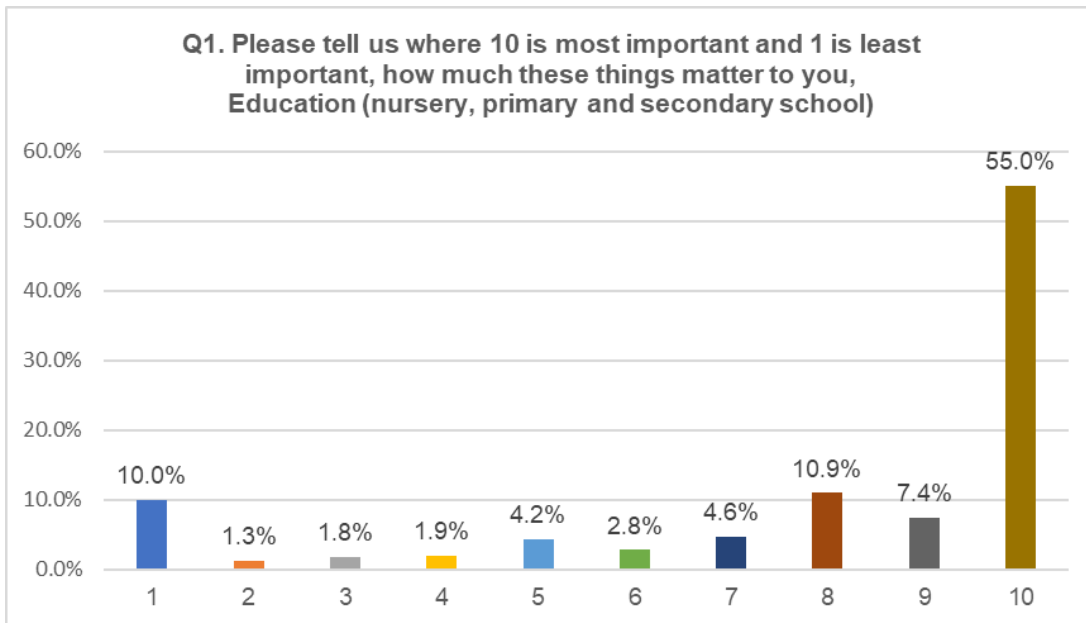
### Q1. Percentage of respondents who indicated that these services were most important to them (number 10 option on the scale of importance)

Service	%
Education (nursery, primary and secondary school)	55.0%
Services for people with disabilities	36.3%
Older people's services	35.0%
Housing and Homelessness	31.9%
Roads maintenance and street lighting	31.7%
Job creation and regeneration	31.4%
Waste collection and recycling	31.3%
Street cleaning	25.9%
Parks and open spaces	25.3%
Leisure and Culture (museums, sports centres etc.)	22.1%

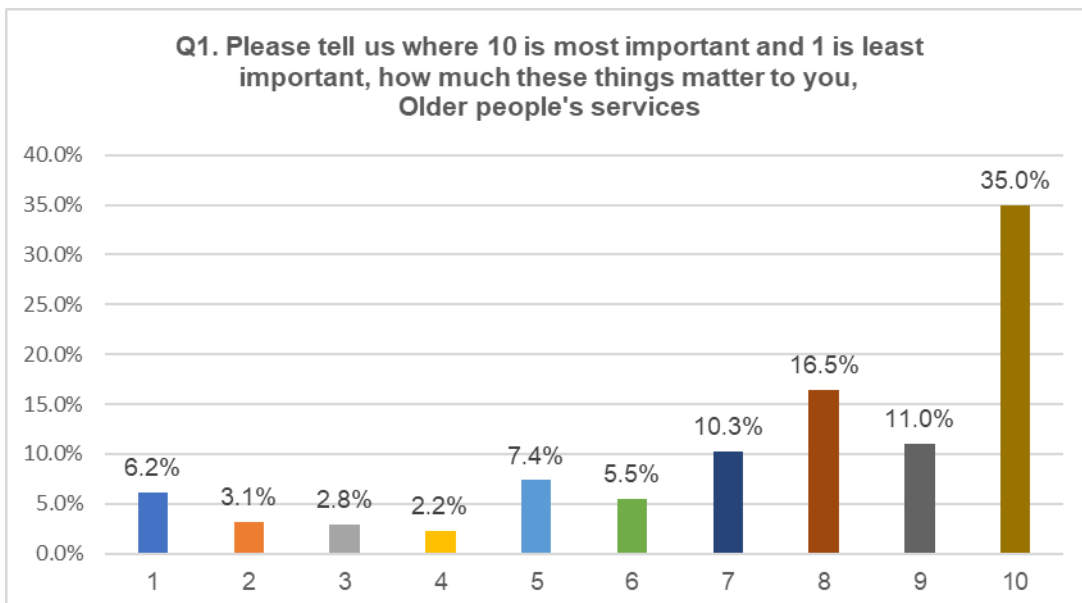
### Q1. Percentage of respondents who indicated that these services were least important to them (number 1 option on the scale of importance)

Service	%
Education (nursery, primary and secondary school)	10.0%
Leisure and Culture (museums, sports centres etc)	8.7%
Housing and Homelessness	8.0%
Job creation and regeneration	6.3%
Older people's services	6.2%
Services for people with disabilities	4.6%
Parks and open spaces	4.1%
Street cleaning	3.0%
Roads maintenance and street lighting	2.9%
Waste collection and recycling	2.2%

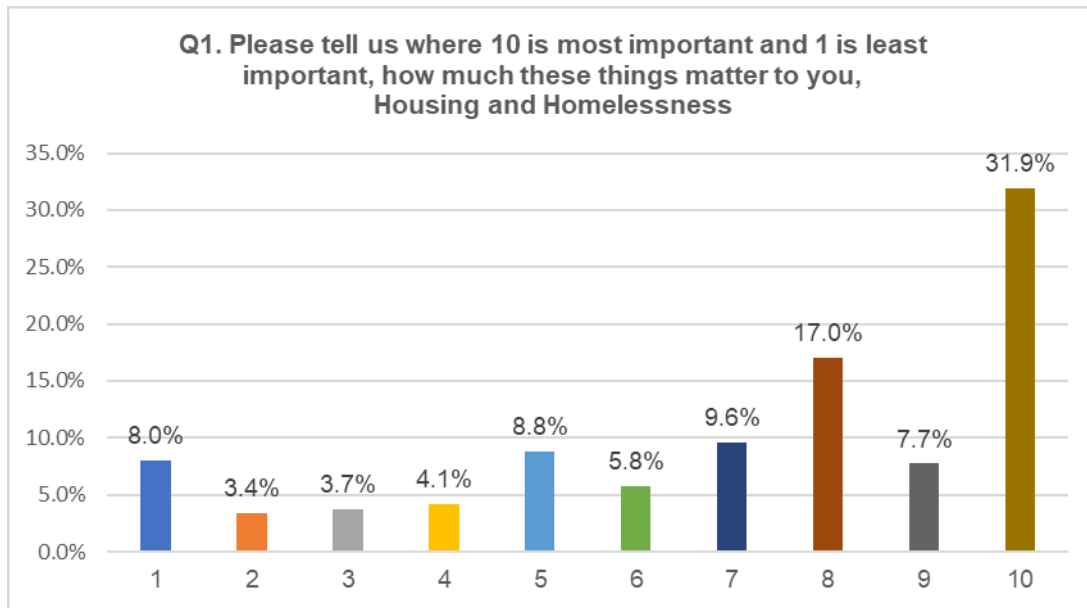
**Question 1 - Education (nursery, primary and secondary school) - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



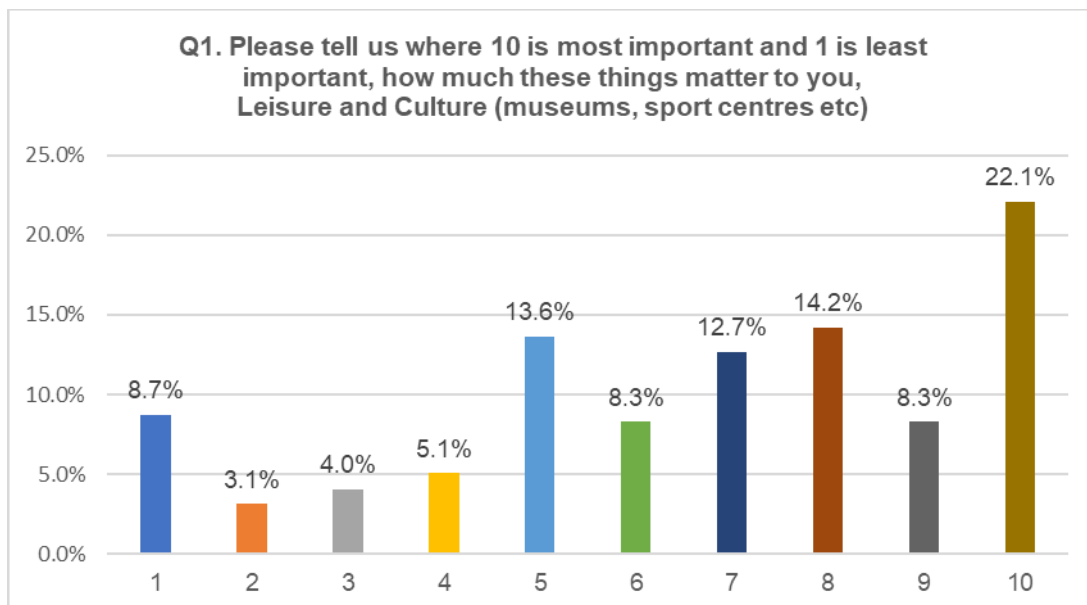
**Question 1 - Older people's services - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



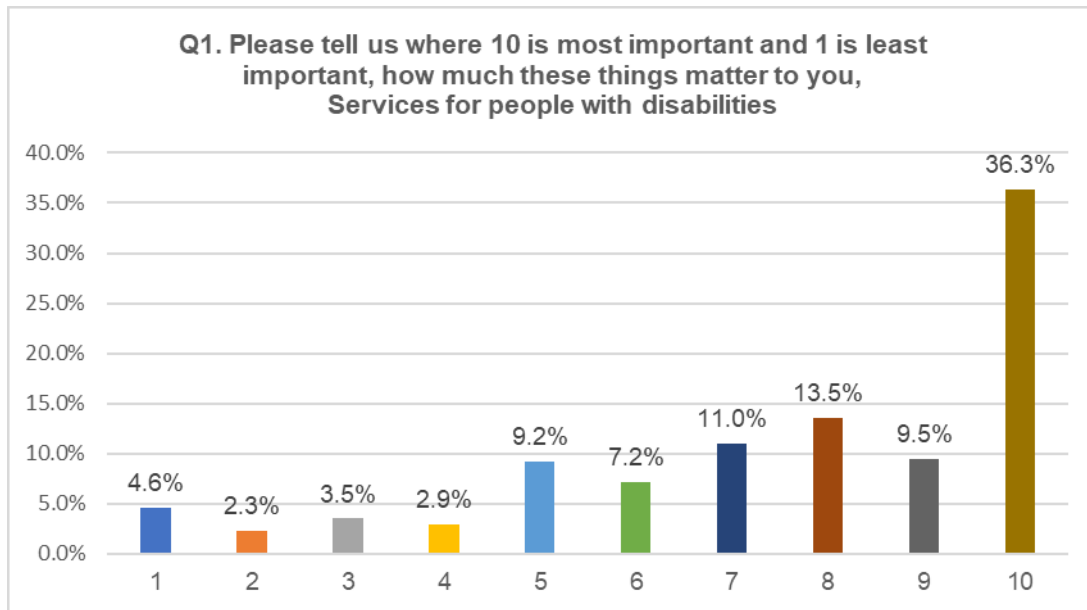
**Question 1 - Housing and Homelessness - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



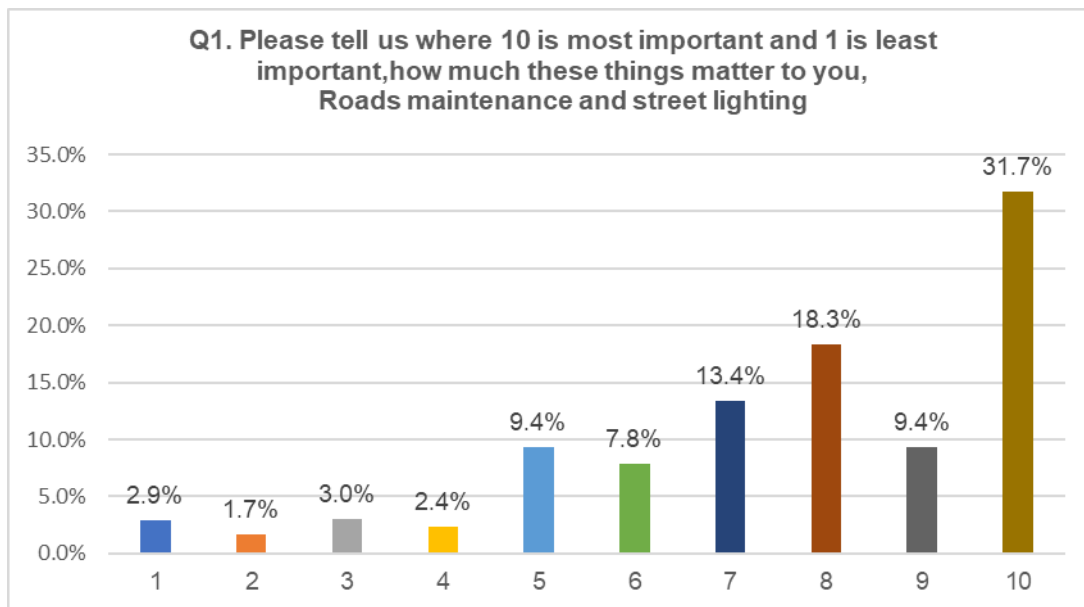
**Question 1 - Leisure and Culture (museums, sports centres etc) - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



**Question 1 – Services for people with disabilities - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**

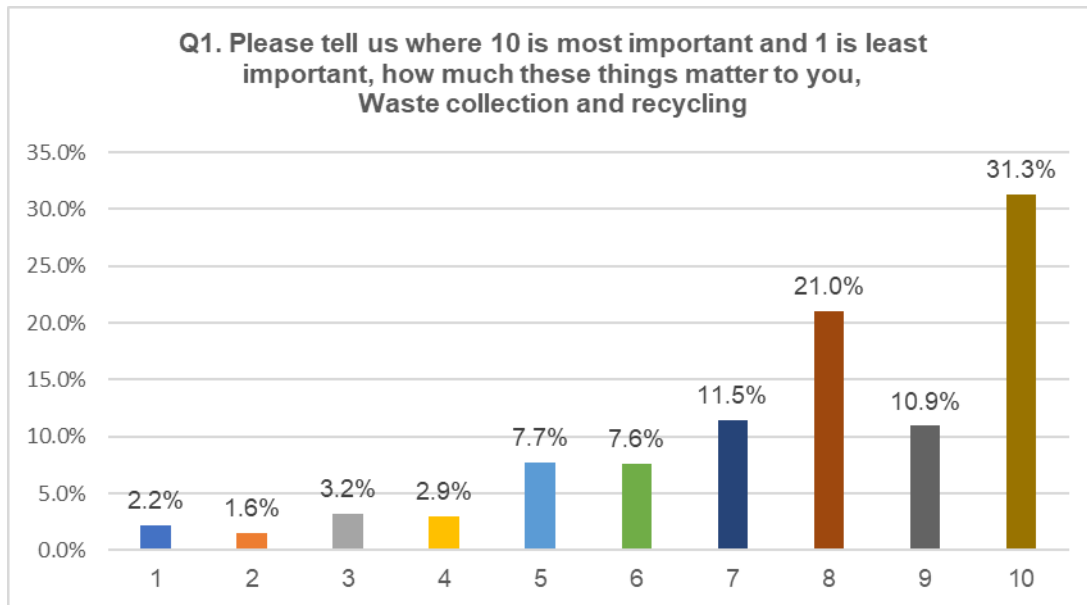


**Question 1 - Roads maintenance and street lighting - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**

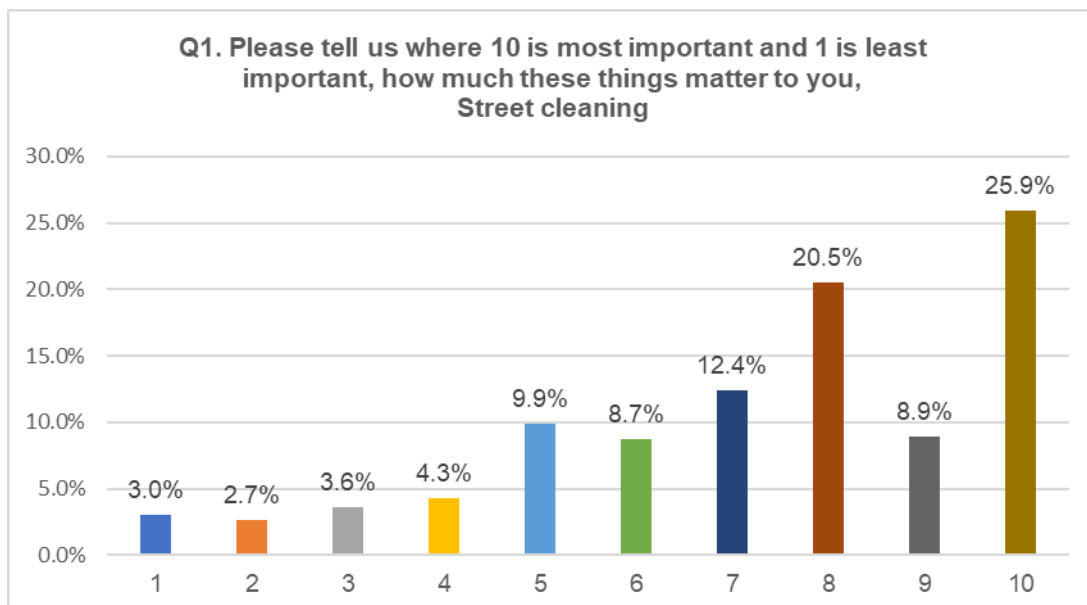




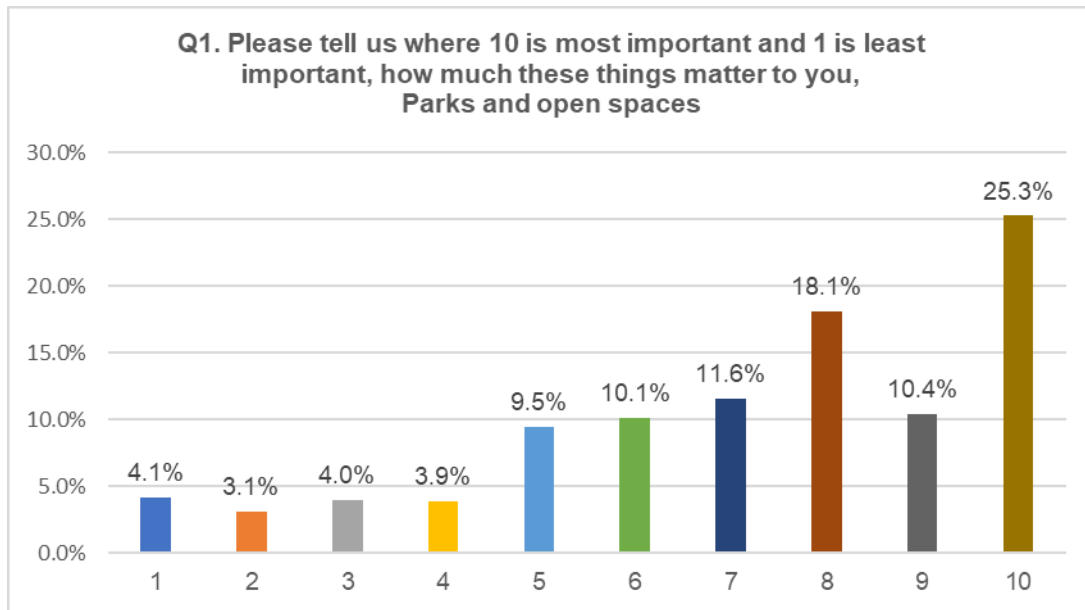
**Question 1 - Waste collection and recycling - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



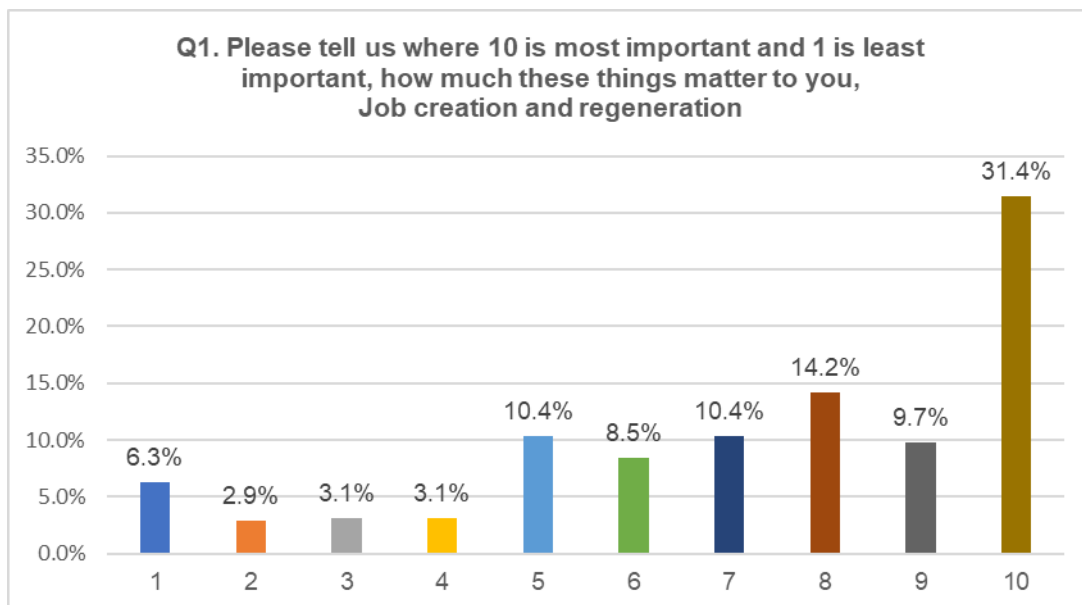
**Question 1 - Street cleaning - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



**Question 1 – Parks and open spaces - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**

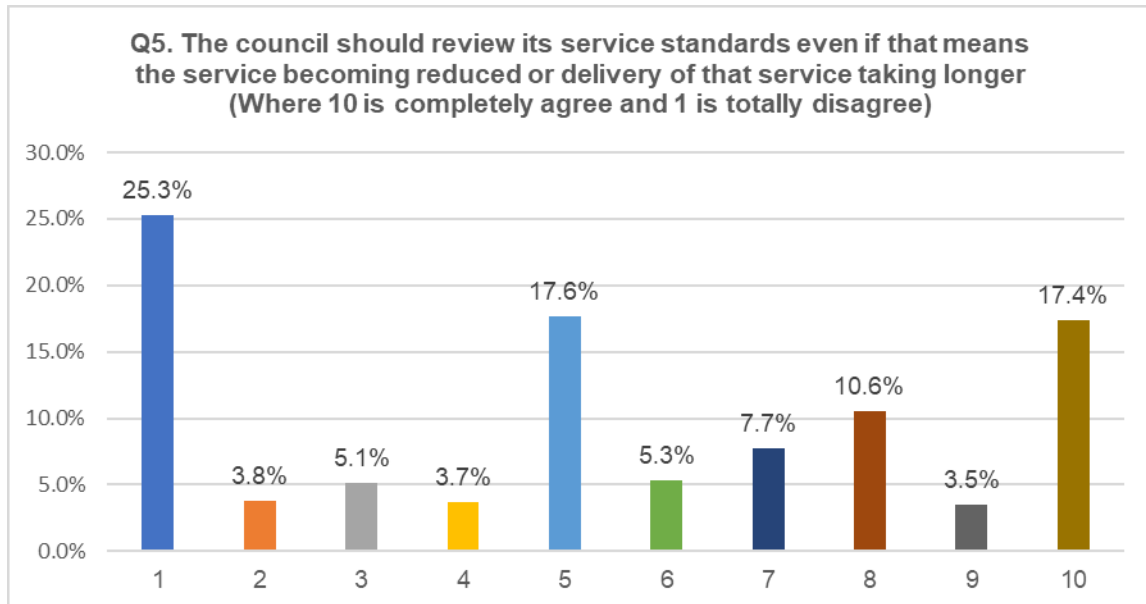


**Question 1 - Job creation and regeneration - Please tell us, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important how much these things matter to you**



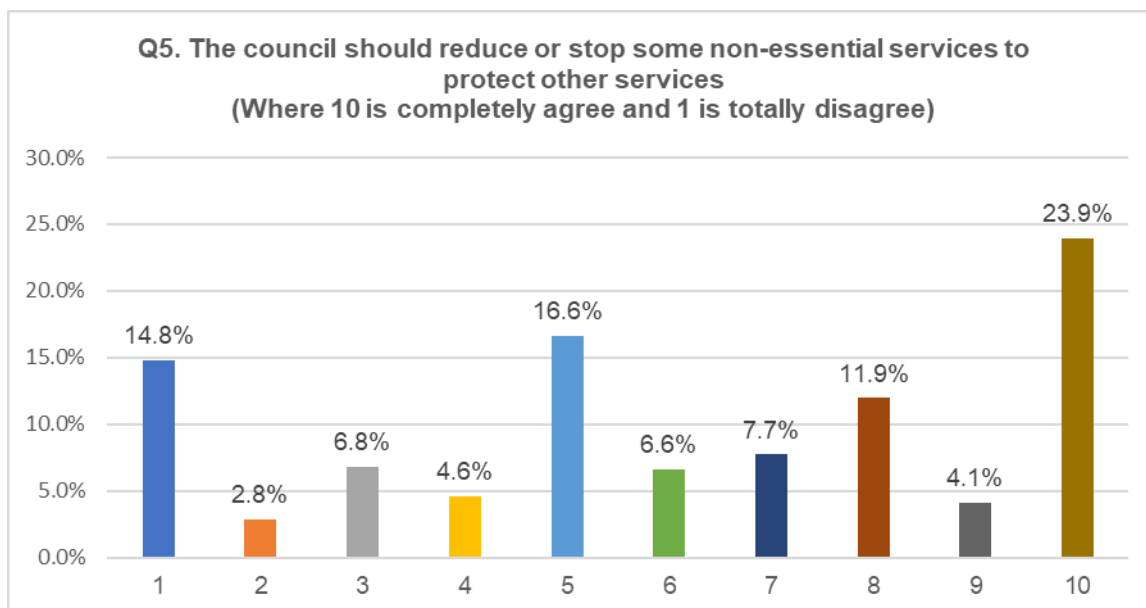
**Question 5: The council can also save money by reducing or even stopping some of the services it currently provides. Where 10 is completely agree and 1 is totally disagree, tell us how much you agree with the following statement:**

**“The council should review its service standards even if that means the service becoming reduced or delivery of that service taking longer”**



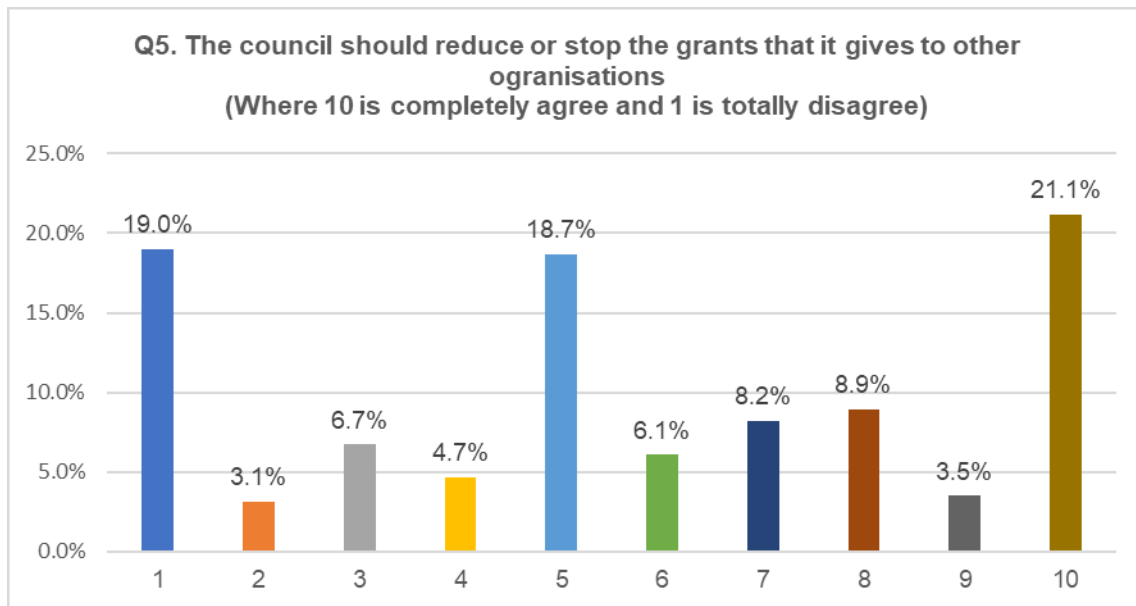
**Question 5: The council can also save money by reducing or even stopping some of the services it currently provides. Where 10 is completely agree and 1 is totally disagree, tell us how much you agree with the following statement:**

**“The council should reduce or stop some non-essential services to protect other services”**



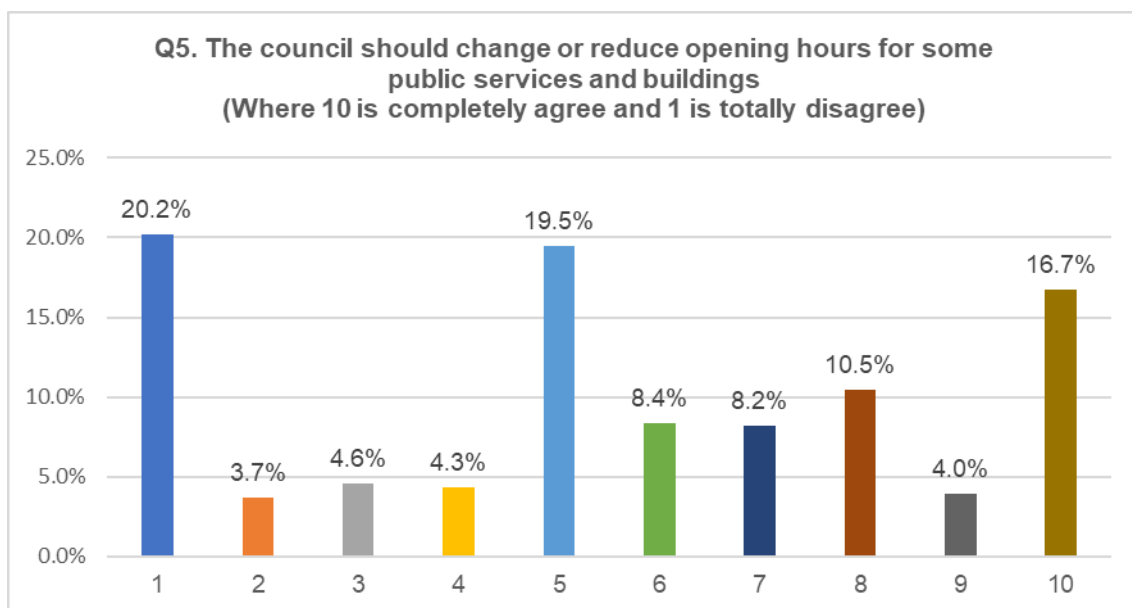
**Question 5: The council can also save money by reducing or even stopping some of the services it currently provides. Where 10 is completely agree and 1 is totally disagree, tell us how much you agree with the following statement:**

**“The council should reduce or stop the grants that it gives to other organisations”**



**Question 5: The council can also save money by reducing or even stopping some of the services it currently provides. Where 10 is completely agree and 1 is totally disagree, tell us how much you agree with the following statement:**

**“The council should change or reduce opening hours for some public services and buildings”**



**Question 5: The council can also save money by reducing or even stopping some of the services it currently provides. Where 10 is completely agree and 1 is totally disagree, tell us how much you agree with the following statement:**

**“The council should continue to sell the property it no longer has a use for”**

