



Joanne Roney OBE  
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M60 2LA

**Friday, 24 February 2023**

Dear Councillor / Honorary Alderman,

**Meeting of the Council – Friday, 3rd March, 2023**

A summons was issued on 23 February 2023 for meeting of the Council which will be held at 10.00 am on Friday, 3rd March, 2023, in The Council Chamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension.

The following item marked as 'to follow' on the summons is now enclosed.

**5r Budget consultation results 2023/24**

3 - 54

The report of the Head of Strategic Communications Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer is enclosed.

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Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joanne Roney', written in a cursive style.

**Joanne Roney OBE  
Chief Executive**

**Councillors:-**

Ludford (Chair), Y Dar (Deputy Chair), Abdullatif, Akbar, Azra Ali, Ahmed Ali, Nasrin Ali, Shaukat Ali, Alijah, Amin, Andrews, Appleby, Baker-Smith, Bano, Bayunu, Bell, Benham, Bridges, Butt, Chambers, Chohan, Collins, Connolly, Cooley, Craig, Curley, M Dar, Davies, Doswell, Douglas, Evans, Flanagan, Foley, Gartside, Good, Green, Grimshaw, Hacking, Hassan, Hewitson, Hilal, Hitchen, Holt, Hughes, Hussain, Igbon, Ilyas, Iqbal, Jeavons, Johns, Johnson, T Judge, Kamal, Karney, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, Leech, J Lovecy, Lynch, Lyons, McHale, Midgley, Moran, Newman, Noor, Nunney, Ogunbambo, B Priest, H Priest, Rahman, Raikes, Rawlins, Rawson, Razaq, Reeves, Reid, Riasat, Richards, I Robinson, T Robinson, Rowles, Russell, Sadler, M Sharif Mahamed, Sheikh, Shilton Godwin, Simcock, Stanton, Stogia, Taylor, Wheeler, Whiston, White, Wills, Wilson and Wright

## **Further Information**

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For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

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This agenda was issued on **Friday, 24 February 2023** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension (Library Walk Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 27 February 2023

**Subject:** 2023/2024 Budget Consultation Results

**Report of:** Head of Strategic Communications  
Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer

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**Summary**

A summary of the results of the 2023/2024 budget and council tax consultations.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- (1) To consider and comment on the results of the 2023/24 budget consultation and council tax consultation, detailed in the report.
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**Wards Affected:** All

<p><b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>
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<p>The Council's budget supports all the corporate priorities including the zero-carbon target for the city.</p>
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<p><b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</p>
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<p>The Council's budget supports all residents. Different, protected or disadvantaged groups are considered as part of the budget consultation and budget setting process.</p>
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<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The Council's budget, including the monies generated by council tax, supports the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy outcomes and all of Our Corporate Priorities.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

**Contact Officers:**

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):** N/A

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council consulted with residents on the proposed budget savings options and a proposed 2.99% increase in council tax for the 2023/2024 financial year for an eight-week period from 7 November 2022 to 7 January 2023.
- 1.2 Following the Government's Autumn Statement in December 2022, a second consultation took place with residents on a proposed 4.99% increase in council tax and increases in council tax on empty homes. The second consultation ran for a four-week period from 10 January 2023 to 7 February 2023.
- 1.3 This report provides the full results of both consultations, including a summary of coded free text responses and comments.
- 1.4 The results of the January 2023 council tax consultation can be found in sections 2-6.
- 1.5 The results of the December budget consultation can be found in sections 6-10.
- 1.6 Demographic analysis and equality data for both consultations can be found in the Appendices in section 12.

## **2.0 Council tax consultation January 2023 to 7 February 2023**

- 2.1 A second consultation on further council tax increases was conducted following publication of the Government's Autumn Statement in late December 2022, seeking feedback from residents and businesses on:
  - A proposed 2.99% increase in council tax.
  - A proposed 2% Adult Social Care (ASC) precept.
  - Increases in council tax on empty properties.
- 2.2 The consultation asked residents for their comments on the potential increases, which together would be a 4.99% increase to invest in priority services and protect Adult Social Care.
- 2.3 The consultation also included questions about resident's views on applying council tax premiums to unfurnished properties that were kept empty for periods longer than one year; and whether to also apply such premiums to furnished properties as soon as they become empty.

## **3.0 Channels and engagement**

- 3.1 Communications channels comprised an online questionnaire supported by web content, e-bulletins and a social media campaign across a range of platforms using a mix of organic, boosted and paid-for posts, supported by engaging digital content.

- 3.2 Responses were gathered via an online questionnaire on the Council's website. Paper copies of the questionnaire were not available for this consultation phase due to the tight deadlines and length of the consultation. It was also noted that only 3 paper copies were returned during the eight-week budget consultation leading to a lot of wastage.
- 3.3 Activity was supported by proactive media releases and reactive media statements and inclusion in the Council's various e-bulletins and via internal staff channels.
- 3.4 Four standalone budget e-bulletins were issued during the consultation period. These performed highly, reaching an average of 27,214 each time which resulted in 89,647 combined opens and 2,595 click throughs to the council tax consultation web pages. A message was also included in the monthly resident news bulletin on 27 January 2022, resulting in 43 click throughs.
- 3.5 The consultation was promoted widely on Council social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn signposting people to the online survey. Across social media channels budget messages were posted organically resulting in 273 combined click throughs to the consultation pages, 18 retweets/shares, 38 likes and 57 comments.
- 3.6 Paid Facebook posts and geo-targeted digital mobile adverts were used to target specific ethnic communities in Manchester who have historically been underrepresented in the budget consultations. Facebook adverts resulted in 421 click throughs to the consultation web pages, 46 likes, 51 comments and 10 shares.
- 3.7 Mobile adverts were targeted to Geolocation data, ring fencing to Manchester wards with the highest density of people from Southern Asian, African/African-Caribbean and Chinese ethnic groups, resulting in 465k impressions and 2,380 clicks through to website.
- 3.8 A total of 2,157 people completed the online consultation survey. Two organisations returned letters in response to the consultation, the North-West Landlords Association and the National Residential Landlords Association.
- 3.9 A further 522 people partially completed the survey, without answering all questions or submitting their response. Participation is generally higher when consultation surveys comprise multiple choice/tick box questions. Those that comprise free text boxes require more thought and consideration and generally see higher levels of drop off and partial completion but do result in a greater quality of result.
- 4.0 Council tax consultation survey**
- 4.1 The consultation survey comprised five closed questions to understand levels of agreement/disagreement and three open text questions which allowed residents to express their views freely.

Question 1a. Do you agree or disagree that we should protect adult social care by increasing council tax by a precept of 2%?

Question 1b. Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 2% increase you think we should consider.

Question 2a. Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 2.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis and enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?

Question 2b. Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 2.99% increase you think we should consider.

Question 2c. When we asked Manchester people what matters most to them, we listened, and we've used their priorities to help set our budget. Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services that residents told us matter most?

Questions 3a. Currently owners and landlords of unfurnished homes that have been empty for over two years pay double council tax. Do you agree or disagree that we should charge owners and landlords of unfurnished homes the extra council tax after one year?

Question 3b. Do you agree or disagree that we should charge owners and landlords with empty furnished properties (second homes and rental properties between tenants) double council tax from the moment the property becomes empty, if we are allowed?

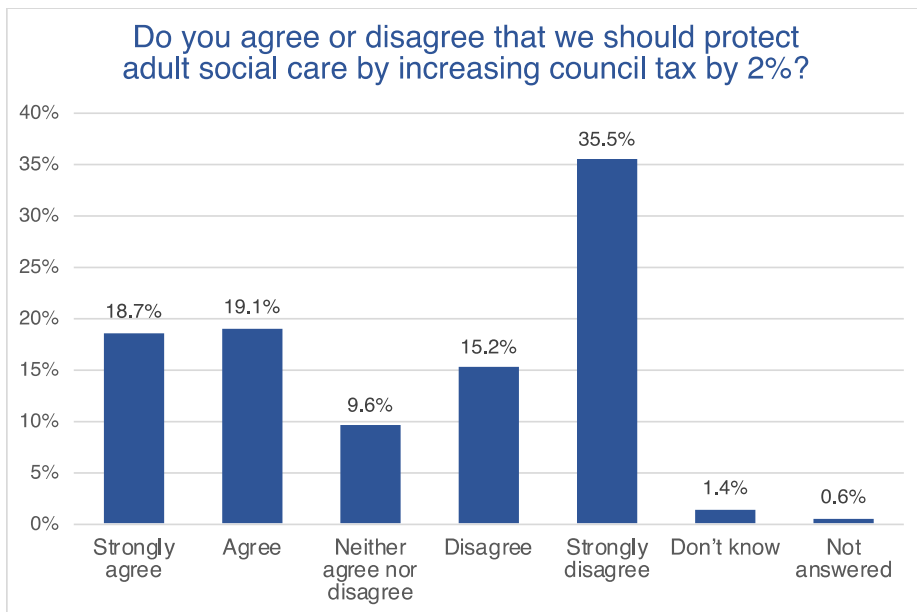
Question 3c. Please share any comments on or the impacts of this potential increase you think we should consider.

## **5.0 Consultation survey analysis**

### **5.1 Question 1a - Do you agree or disagree that we should protect adult social care by increasing council tax by a precept of 2%?**

5.2 In question 1a, members of the public were asked in a closed question whether they 'agree or disagree' that we should protect adult social care by increasing Council tax by 2%. Overall, the consultation generated 2,157 responses. Of these, 38% agreed or strongly agreed that adult social care should be protected by increasing council tax by 2%. This compares to 51% of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the suggestion. Finally, 11% are undecided or say they don't know.

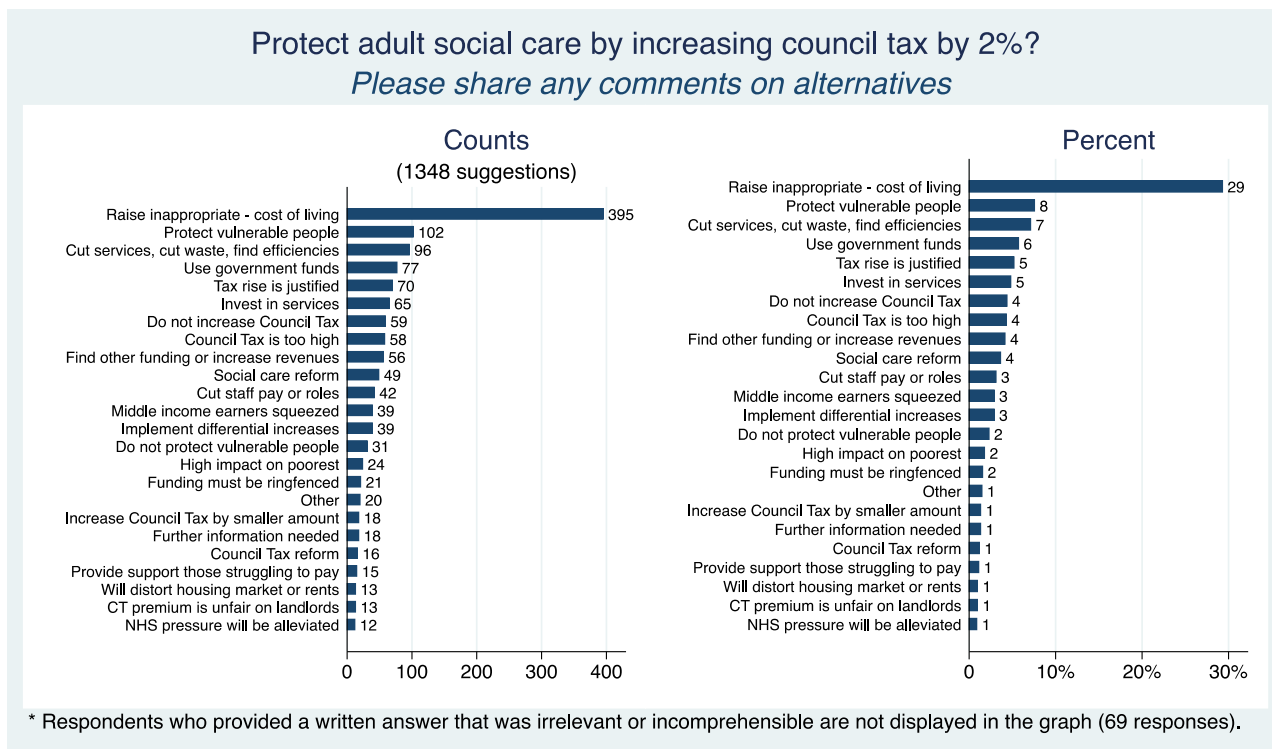
*Graph 1 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with the 2% increase to protect adult social care*



**5.3 Question 1b - Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 2% increase you think we should consider.**

5.4 In question 1b, respondents were also asked to share any comments or alternatives on the impacts of the 2% increase that they thought we should consider. 998 respondents provided such a comment about the proposed 2% increase. Based on these answers we extracted 1,417 suggestions, displayed in Graph 2.

*Graph 2 - Coded responses expressing views pertaining to the proposed increase to Council tax of 2%*



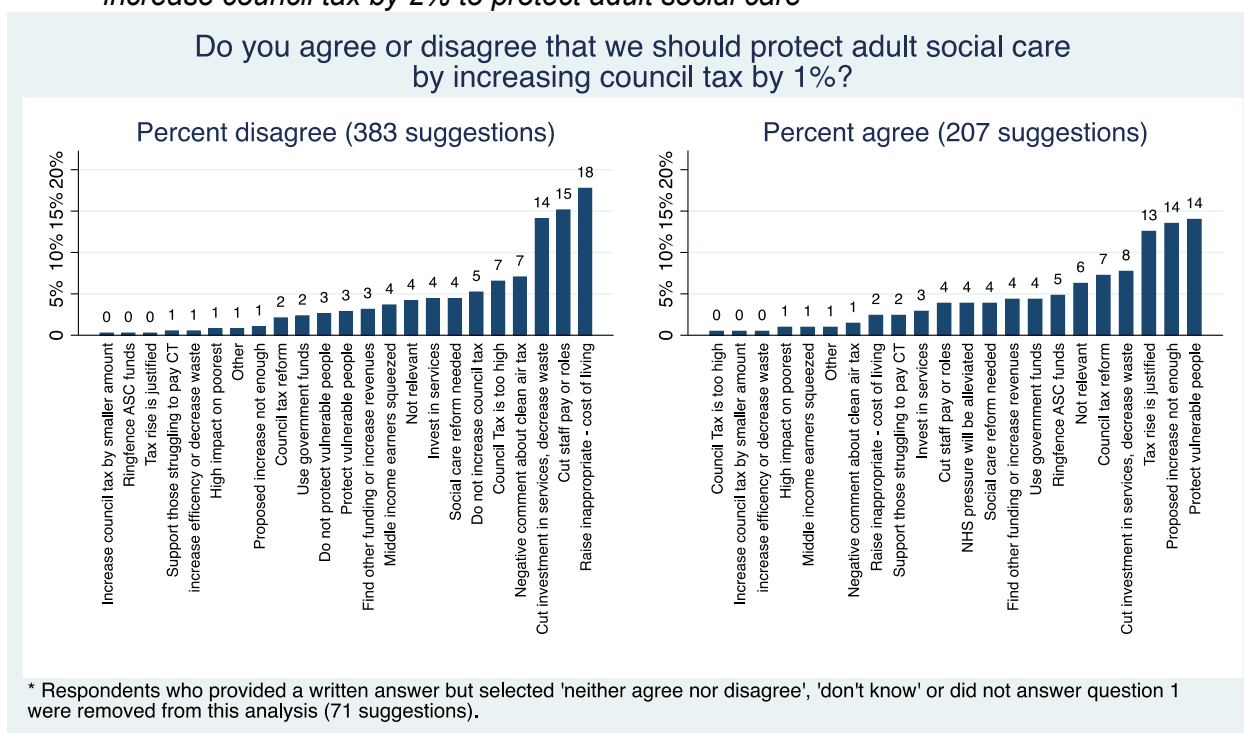


5.5 Graph 2 shows that:

- A prominent suggestion across all open-ended responses was that it would be inappropriate to increase council tax by 2% given the **current cost of living crisis** (29% respondents, 395 suggestions), with concerns about the rising cost of energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation, as well as the impact on people's livelihoods. This included some respondents suggesting that they might be pushed into homelessness.
- It should be noted that while 8% (102 suggestions) did agree that **protecting vulnerable people** was worthwhile, but not all agreed that raising council tax was the answer.
- 7% of respondents (96 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- Instead of raising council tax, 6% (77 suggestions) called for the Council to **use government funds**. 4% (56 suggestions) stated the Council should **find other funding or increase revenues** by other means.
- 5% (65 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs, as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- 4% (58 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 4% (59 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 4% (49 suggestions) argued that council tax increase would not resolve issues with the social care system and that **social care reform** was needed.
- Only 5% (70 suggestions) of suggestion specifically mentioned that the **tax rise was justified**.
- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

5.6 Graph 3 displays the suggestions by whether respondents agreed or disagreed that we should protect adult social care by increasing council tax by 2%. Overall, 26% (339 suggestions) were given by individuals who were in favour of the proposal.

Graph 3 - Responses split by whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to increase council tax by 2% to protect adult social care



5.7 Of those respondents who **agreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions were made (339 suggestions):

- 21% (70 suggestions) emphasised that **vulnerable people should be protected** while 19% (65 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.
- The potential **reduction of pressures on the NHS** were also highlighted by 4% of respondents (12 suggestions).
- While agreeing with the increase, 8% (27 suggestions) emphasised that the increase would worsen the impact of the **cost-of-living crisis** on residents, including the impact on people's livelihoods.
- 6% (21 suggestions) argued that council tax increase would not resolve issues with the social care system and that **social care reform** was needed.
- 5% (18 suggestions) mentioned that the Council **ring-fenced adult social care funds**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 4% of respondents (14 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**.
- Alternatively, 4% (13 suggestions) called for the Council to **implement differential increase** to council tax which would see higher income earners paying more council tax,
- 4% (13 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- Graph 3 displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

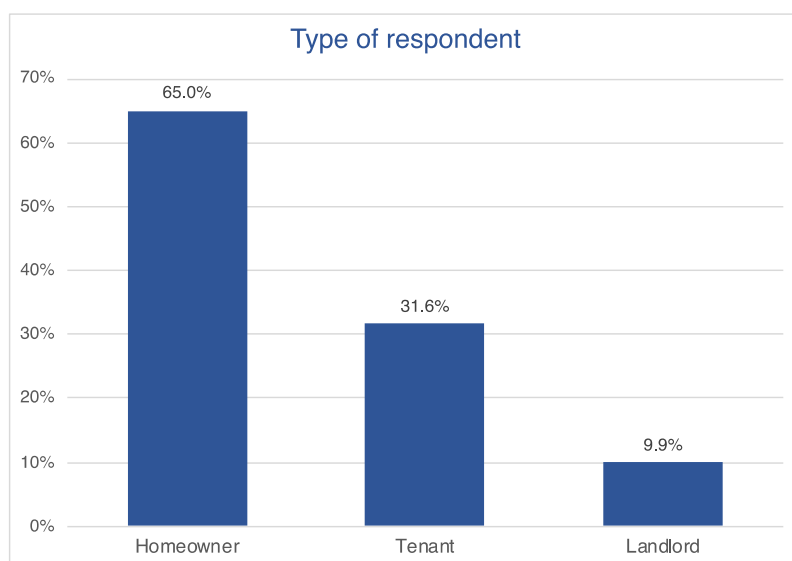
5.8 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following main suggestions (950) were made:

- 35% (331 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**, notably the rise in energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation, as well as the impact on people's livelihoods.
- 9% of respondents (83 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 6% of respondents (59 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds** or to **find other funding or increase revenues** by other means (5% / 45 suggestions).
- 6% (51 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 6% (54 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 5% (45 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- Graph 3 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

5.9 To understand the context in which respondents were answering the questions, they were asked to state whether they were responding as a homeowners, tenants or landlords.

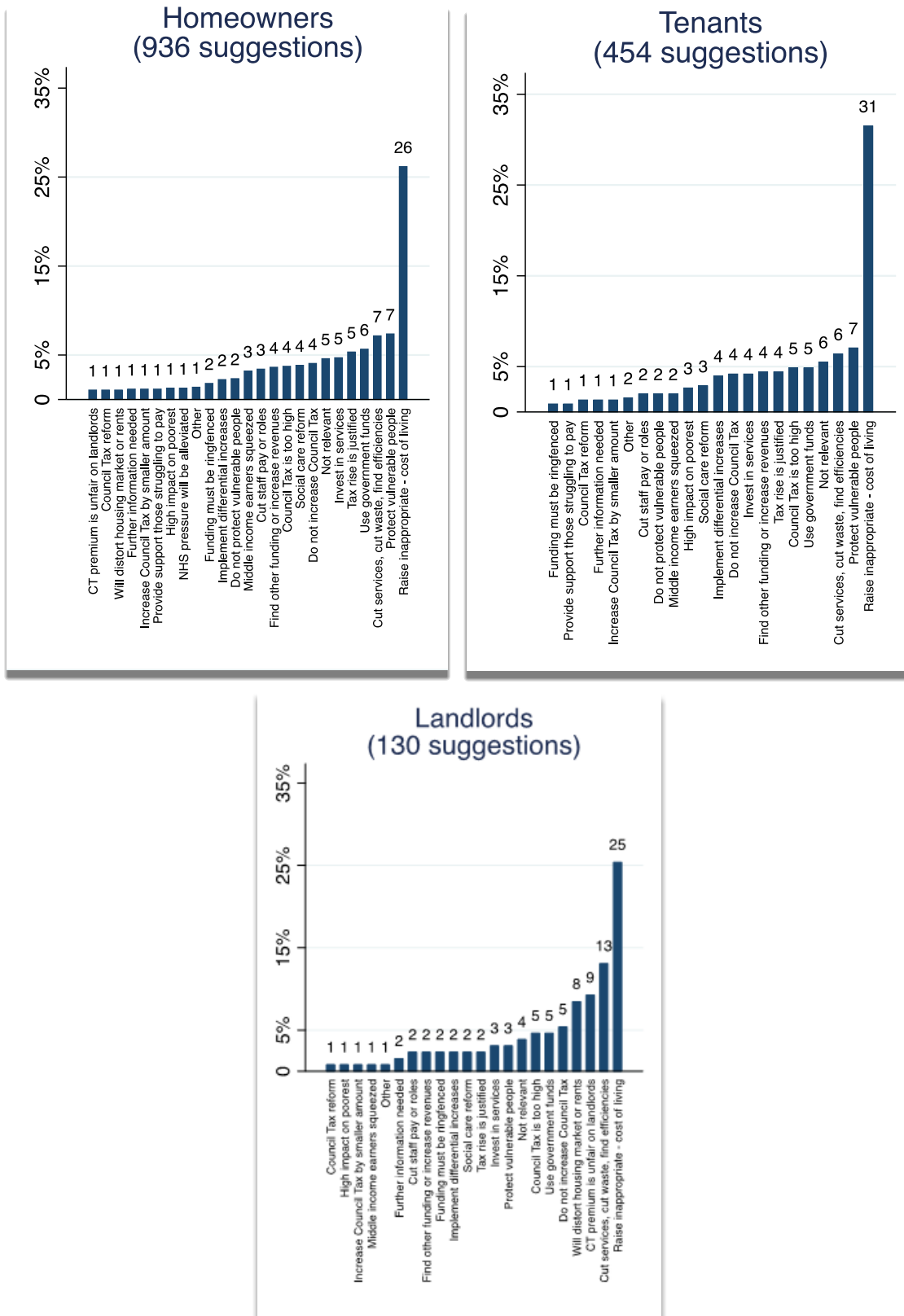
5.10 The vast majority of respondents (65%) were homeowners, 32% were tenants and 10% were landlords. The question allowed a respondent to place themselves into several categories.

*Graph 4 – The type of respondent*



5.11 Overall, 62% (936 suggestions) were given by individuals who were homeowners. A further 30% (454 suggestions) were provided by tenants and 9% originated from landlords (130 suggestions).

Graph 5 – Responses split by the type of respondent (homeowner, tenant, landlord)



5.12 **Homeowners** made the following suggestions (936 suggestions):

- 26% (245 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- 7% (69 suggestions) emphasised that **vulnerable people should be protected** while 5% (50 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.
- 7% of respondents (67 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies** (without specifying).
- Rather than increase council tax, 6% of respondents (53 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds** or to **find other funding or increase revenues** by other means (4% / 34 suggestions).
- 5% (44 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- 4% (35 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 4% (38 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 4% / 36 suggestions argued that council tax increase would not resolve issues with the social care system and that **social care reform** was needed.

5.13 **Tenants** made the following suggestions (454 suggestions):

- 31% (143 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- 7% (32 suggestions) emphasised that **vulnerable people should be protected** while 4% (20 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.
- 6% of respondents (29 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 5% of respondents (22 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds** or to **find other funding or increase revenues** by other means (4% / 20 suggestions).
- 5% (22 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 4% (19 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 4% (19 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- 4% (18 suggestions) called for the Council to **implement differential increases** to council tax which would see higher income earners paying more council tax.

5.14 **Landlords** made the following suggestions (130 suggestions):

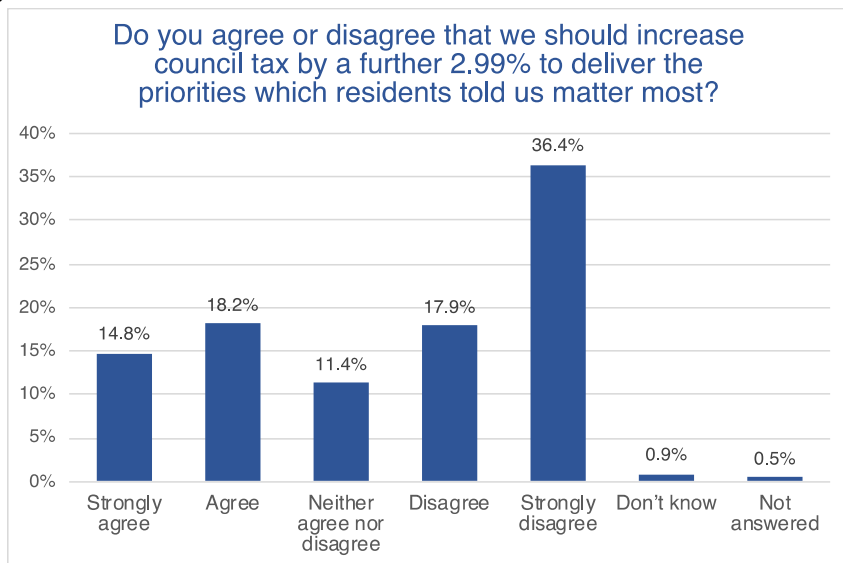
- 25% (33 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- 13% of respondents (17 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- 9% (12 suggestions) took the opportunity to complain that the **council tax premium on empty homes is unfair**, and that it would **distort the housing market or rents** (8% / 11 suggestions).
- 5% (6 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 5% (7 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 5% of respondents (6 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**

5.15 Across all three groups, Graph 5 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

5.16 **Question 2a. Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 2.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis and enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?**

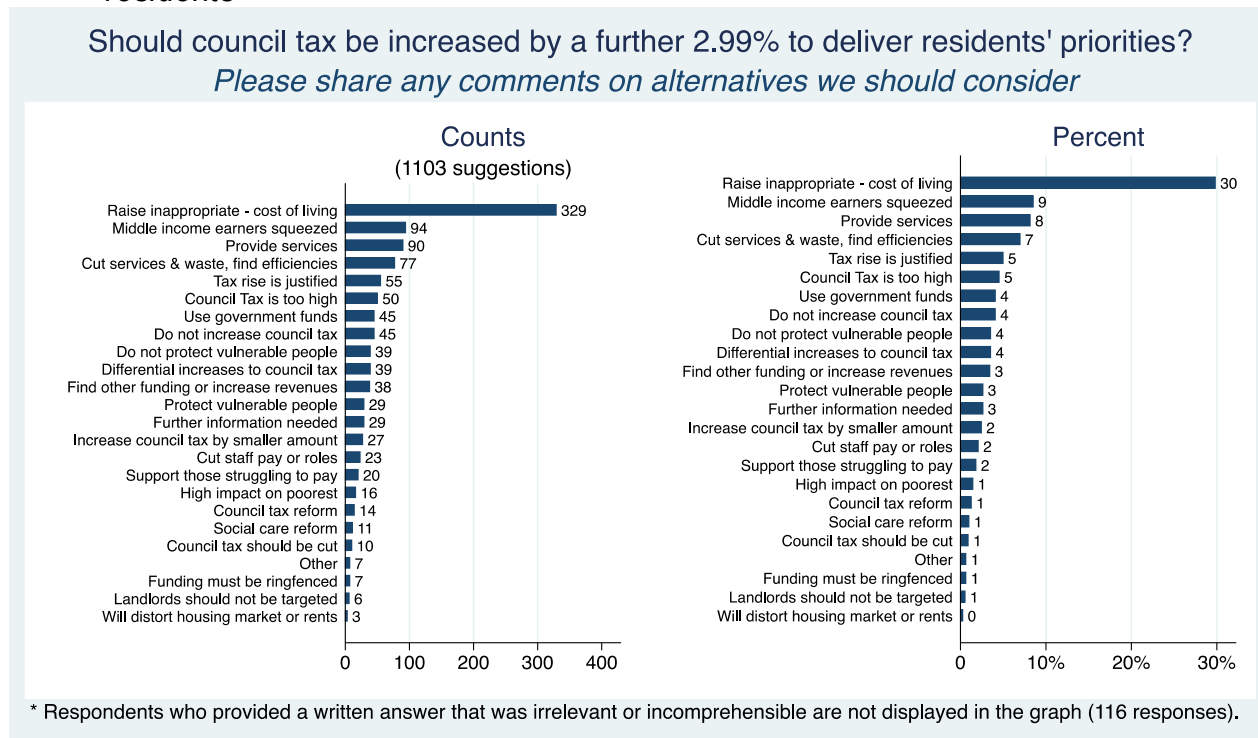
5.17 In question 2a, members of the public were asked in a closed question whether they 'agree or disagree' that we should increase council tax by 2.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis and services that are a priority for residents. Out of the 2,157 responses generated by the consultation, 54% disagreed or strongly disagreed that council tax should be increased by a further 2.99% to continue to invest in services that are of priority to residents. This compares to 33% who agreed or strongly agreed with this suggestion. 12% are undecided or say they don't know.

**Graph 6 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with the proposal to increase council tax by a further 2.99% to protect services that matter most to residents**



5.18 In addition to indicating whether they agreed or not, 941 respondents also provided an answer to the open-ended question asking for comments about the suggestion to increase council tax by a further 2.99%. Based on these answers we extracted 1,219 suggestions.

**Graph 7 – Coded responses expressing views pertaining to the proposed increases by a further 2.99% to deliver the priorities which matter most to residents**



5.19 Graph 7 shows that:

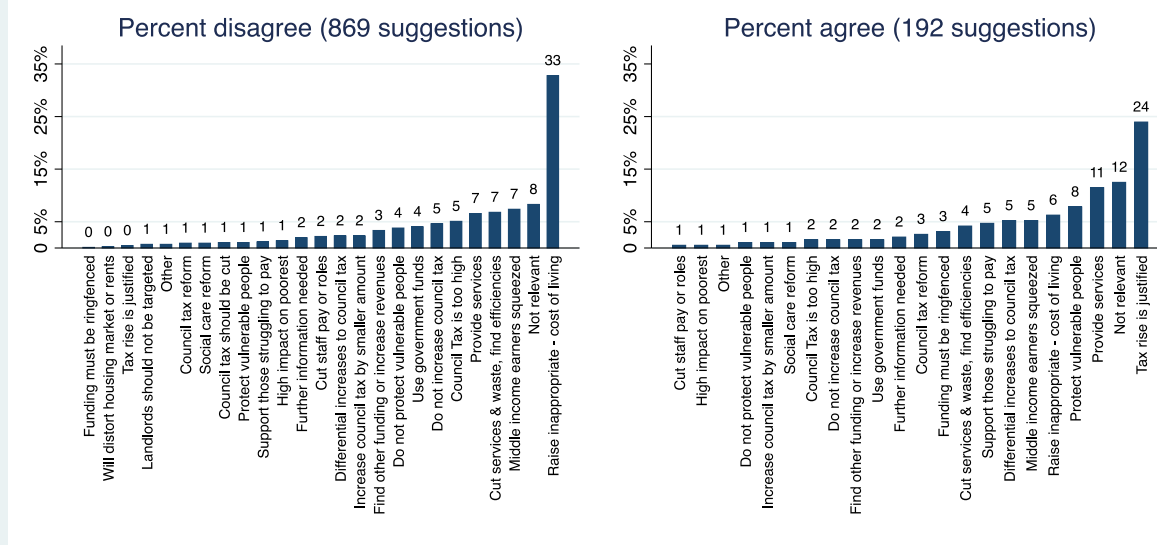
- The most prominent suggestion across all open-ended responses was the perception that it would be inappropriate to increase council tax by a further 2.99% to deliver residents' priorities given the **current cost of living crisis** (30% respondents, 329 suggestions), with particular concerns about the rising cost of energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation, as well as the impact on people's livelihoods.
- Related to this, 9% / 94 suggestions raised concerns regarding the **impact on working middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 8% (90 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- 7% of respondents (77 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- 5% (55 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.
- 5% (50 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 4% (45 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 4% of respondents (45 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**.
- 4% (39 suggestions) called for a **differential increase on council tax** which would see higher income earners paying more council tax.
- 4% (39 suggestions) argued that **protecting vulnerable people should not be a priority**.
- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

5.20 Overall, 18% (192) of suggestions were given by individuals who were in favour of the proposal.

*Graph 8 – Responses split by whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposal to increase council tax by a further 2.99% to invest in residents' priorities*



Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 2.99% to enable us to deliver the priorities which residents told us matter most?



\* Respondents who provided a written answer but selected 'neither agree nor disagree', 'don't know' or did not answer question 3 were removed from this analysis (145 suggestions).

5.21 Of those respondents who **agreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions (192) were made:

- 24% (46 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal, while 8% (15 suggestions) emphasised that **vulnerable people should be protected**.
- 11% (22 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs, as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- While agreeing with the increase, 6% (12 suggestions) emphasised that the increase would worsen the impact of the **cost of living crisis** on residents (including the impact on people's livelihoods), and it would **squeeze middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits (5% / 10 suggestions).
- 5% (10 suggestions) called for the implementation of **differential increases to council tax** which would see higher income earners paying more council tax, with 5% (9 suggestions) also asking for **support for those struggling to pay** council tax.
- 4% of respondents (8 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies** (without specifying).
- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

5.22 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions (869) were made:

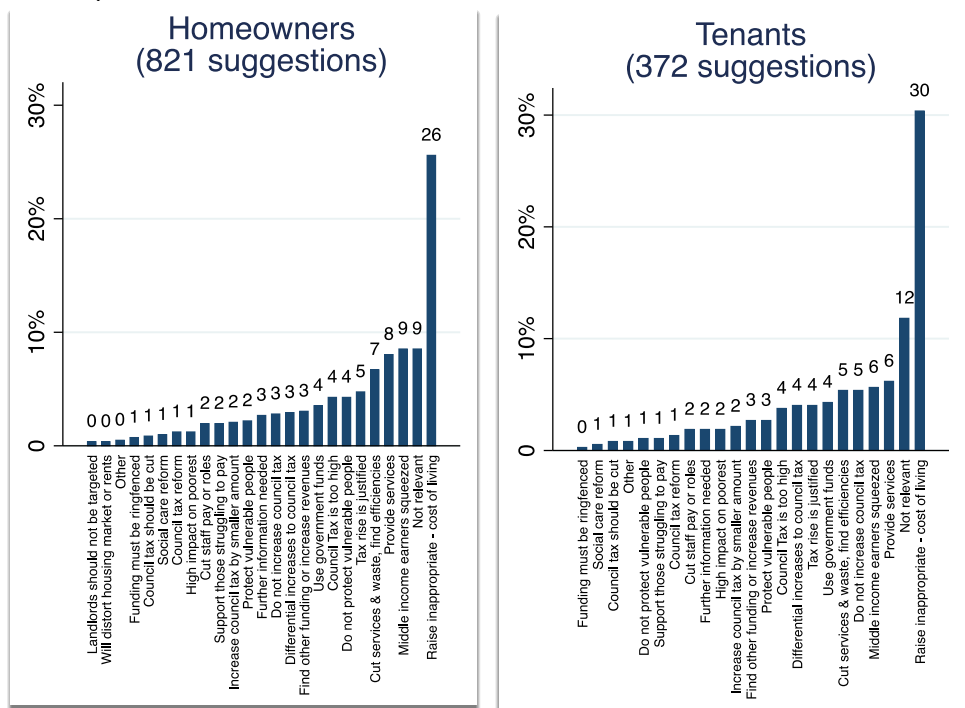
- 33% (285 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**, notably the rise in energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not

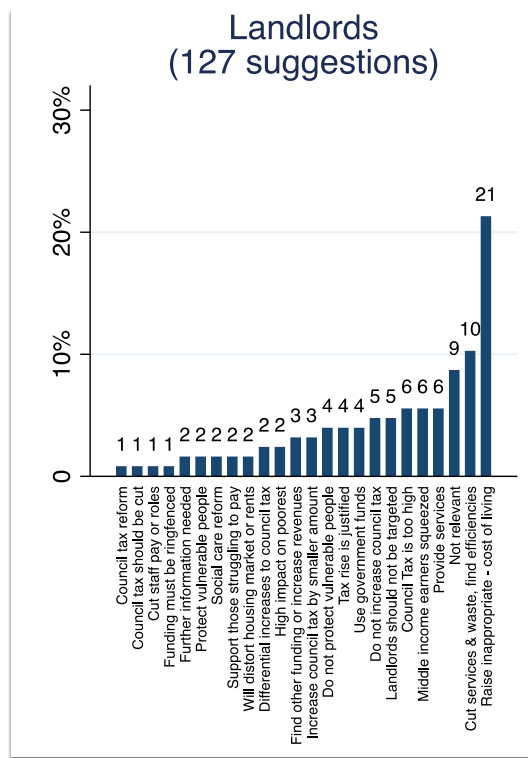
increasing in line with inflation, as well as the impact on people’s livelihoods.

- Related to this, 7% (64 suggestions) raised concerns regarding the **impact on working middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 7% of respondents (59 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- 7% (57 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs.
- 5% (44 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 5% (40 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 4% of respondents (35 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**.
- 4% (33 suggestions) argued that **protecting vulnerable people should not be a priority**.
- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

5.23 Overall, 62% (821 suggestions) were given by individuals who were homeowners. A further 28% (372 suggestions) were provided by tenants and 10% originated from landlords (127 suggestions).

Graph 9 – Responses split by the type of respondent (homeowner, tenant, landlord)





5.24 **Homeowners** made the following suggestions (821 suggestions):

- 26% (210 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- Related to this, 9% (70 suggestions) raised concerns regarding the **impact on middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 8% (66 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs.
- 7% of respondents (55 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies**.
- 5% (39 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.
- 4% (35 suggestions) argued that **protecting vulnerable people should not be a priority**.
- 4% (35 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year.
- Rather than increase council tax, 4% of respondents (29 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**.

5.25 **Tenants** made the following suggestions (372 suggestions):

- 30% (113 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- Related to this, 6% (21 suggestions) raised concerns regarding the **impact on middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 6% (23 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs.

- 4% (14 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 5% (20 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 5% of respondents (20 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies** (without specifying).
- Rather than increase council tax, 4% of respondents (16 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**.
- 4% (15 suggestions) called for the implementation of **differential increases to council tax** which would see higher income earners paying more council tax.
- 4% (15 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.

5.26 **Landlords** made the following suggestions (127 suggestions):

- 21% (27 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- Related to this, 6% (7 suggestions) raised concerns regarding the **impact on middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 10% of respondents (13 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut services and waste** or should generally **find efficiencies** (without specifying).
- 6% (7 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need to **provide better services** such as waste collection and road repairs.
- 6% (7 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 5% (6 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 5% (6 suggestions) took the opportunity to argue that it was **unfair that landlords were being targeted**.
- 4% (5 suggestions) argued that **protecting vulnerable people should not be a priority**.
- Rather than increase council tax, 4% of respondents (5 suggestions) wanted the Council to **use government funds**.
- 4% (5 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.

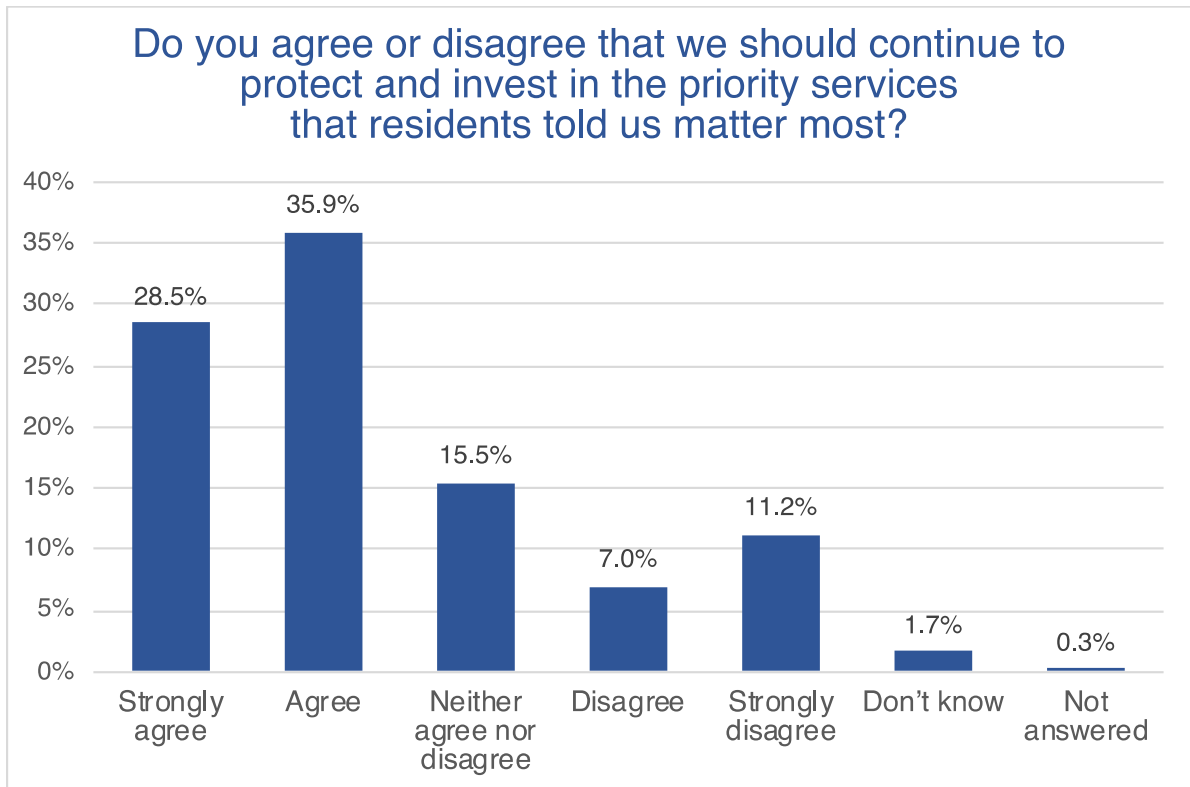
5.27 Across all three groups, Graph 8 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

**5.28 Question 2c. When we asked Manchester people what matters most to them, we listened, and we've used their priorities to help set our budget. Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services that residents told us matter most?**

5.29 In question 2c, residents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that services that matter most to them should be protected and invested in.

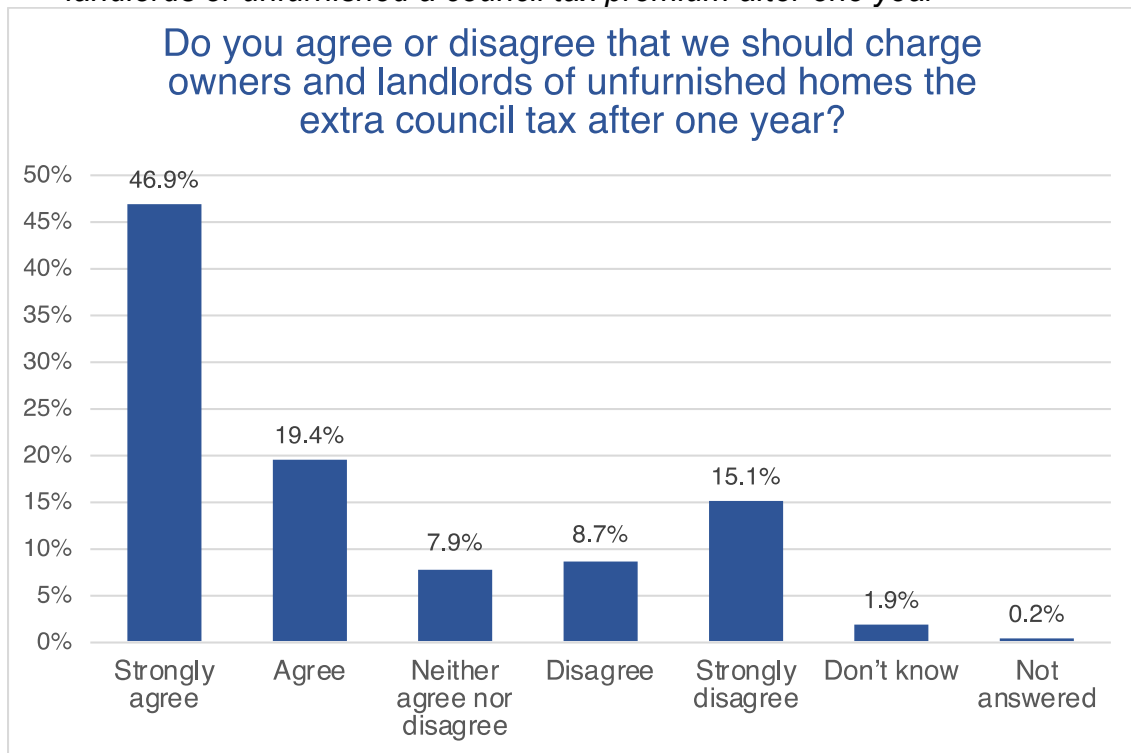
5.30 The vast majority of respondents (64%) agreed or strongly agreed with the suggestion to protect and invest in services. 17% are undecided or don't know and a further 18% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

*Graph 10 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with the need to protect services that matter most to residents*



- 5.31 Questions 3a. Currently owners and landlords of unfurnished homes that have been empty for over two years pay double council tax. Do you agree or disagree that we should charge owners and landlords of unfurnished homes the extra council tax after one year?**
- 5.32 In question 3a, respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed that Manchester City Council should charge owners and landlords of unfurnished homes a council tax premium after one year (rather than two years, which is current practice).
- 5.33 The vast majority of respondents (66%) agree or strongly agree with the suggestion to protect and invest in services. 10% are undecided or don't know and a further 24% disagree or strongly disagree.

*Graph 11 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with charging owners and landlords or unfurnished a council tax premium after one year*

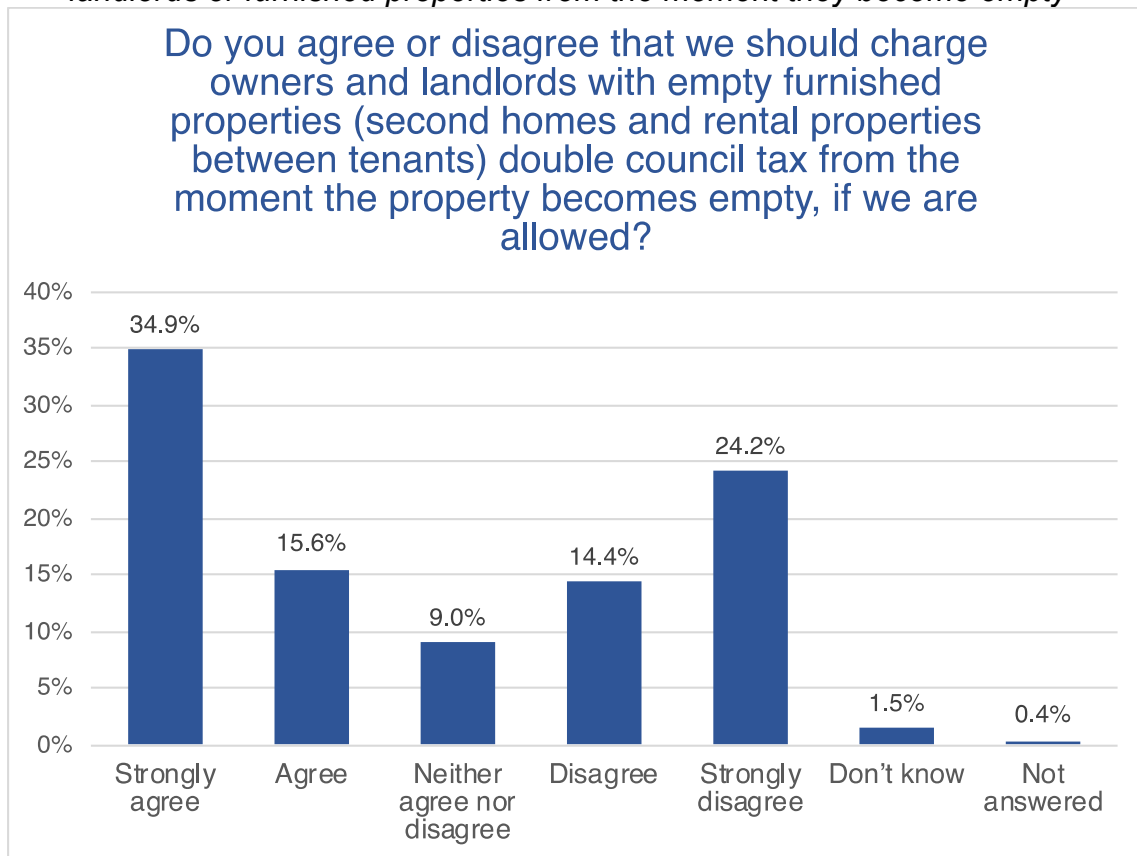


**5.34 Question 3b. Do you agree or disagree that we should charge owners and landlords with empty furnished properties (second homes and rental properties between tenants) double council tax from the moment the property becomes empty, if we are allowed?**

5.35 In questions 3b, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that Manchester City Council should charge owners and landlords of empty furnished properties double council tax from the moment the property is empty.

5.36 Out of the 2,157 responses generated by the consultation, 39% disagreed or strongly disagreed that owners and landlords of furnished properties should be charged a 100% council tax premium immediately when their property becomes empty (if the Council are allowed to do this). This compares to 51% of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with this suggestion. 12% are undecided or say they don't know.

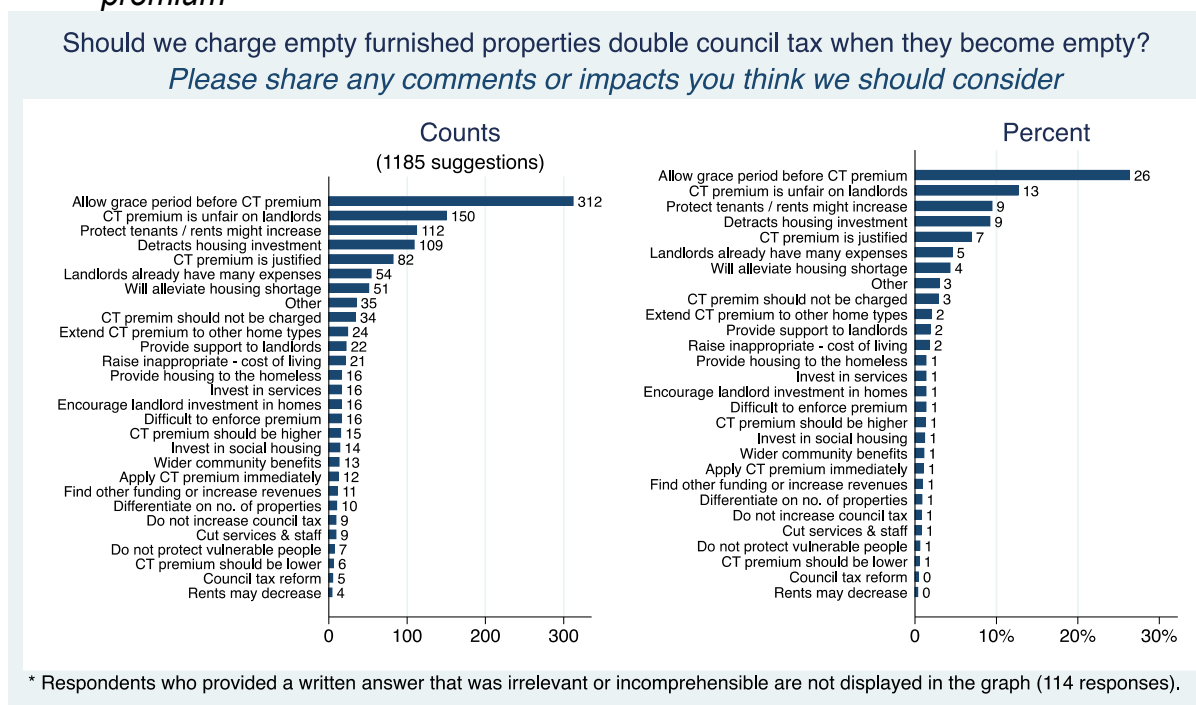
*Graph 12 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with charging owners and landlords or furnished properties from the moment they become empty*



**5.37 Question 3c. Please share any comments on or the impacts of this potential increase you think we should consider.**

5.38 In addition to indicating whether they agreed or not, 858 respondents also provided an answer to the open-ended question asking for comments. Based on these answers we extracted 1,299 suggestions.

*Graph 13 – Coded responses expressing views pertaining to charging landlords and owners of unfurnished or furnished properties a council tax premium*



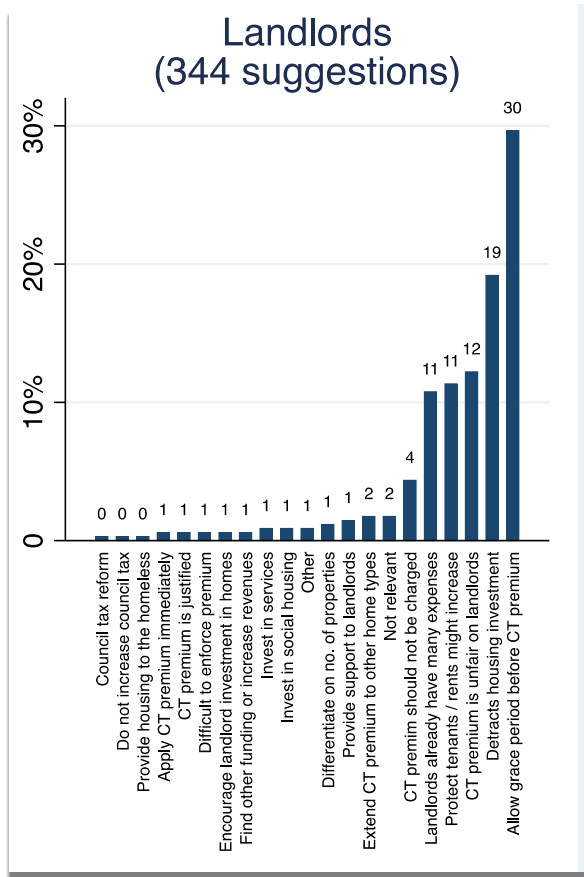
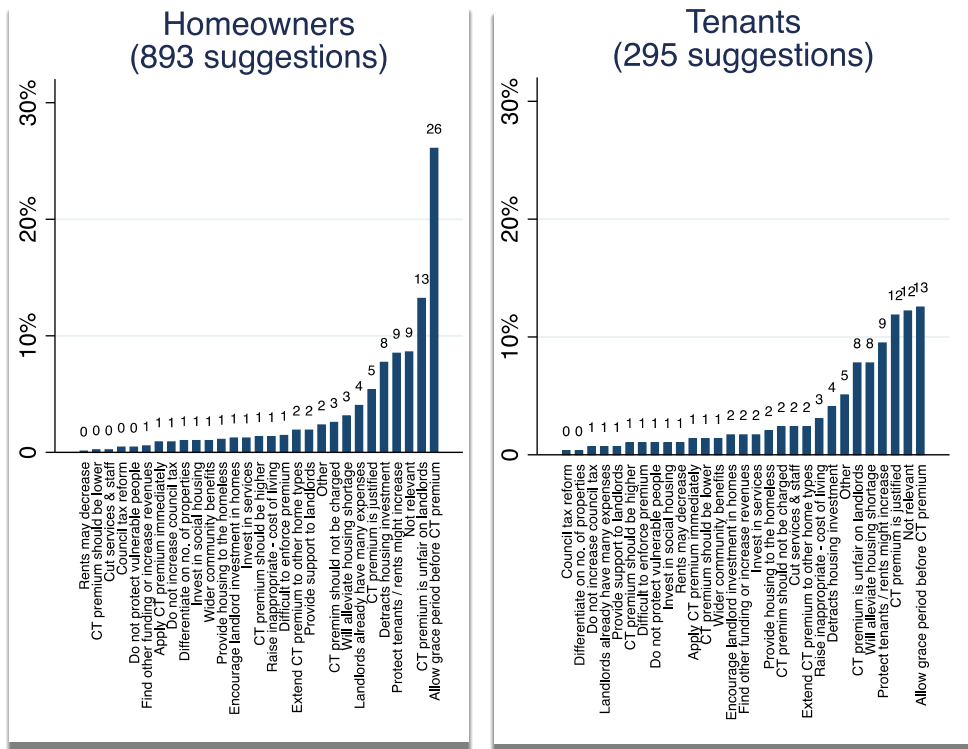
### 5.39 Graph 13 shows that:

- The most prominent suggestion across all open-ended responses was that there should be a **grace period before the council tax premium is charged** (26% respondents, 312 suggestions), to allow for legitimate delays in getting a property occupied, such as renovations, finding new tenants or being granted a probate. There was a variety of suggestions as to what would be suitable as a grace period.
- 13% (150 suggestions) complained that the council tax premium on would be **unfair on landlords**.
- 9% (112 suggestions) highlighted that the change could cause **rents to increase** and that **tenants would need protection**, or **deter investment in housing** in the form of landlords not renovating their properties or to sell their property and leave the housing market altogether (9% / 109 suggestions).
- 5% (54 suggestions) stated that landlords **already have many expenses** such as mortgage repayments and costs arising from the cladding scandal. Some answers also suggested that landlords would not be able to cover this additional fee on account of existing costs and changes to how rental income is taxed.
- 4% (51 suggestions) felt that the premium would **alleviate both the rental and for sale housing shortage**, by prompting landlords to let or sell their empty properties. Some extreme answers suggested the use compulsory purchase orders against owners of empty properties.
- 7% (82 suggestions) reiterated their **agreement** that the council tax premium is justified.



- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.
- 5.40 Overall, 34% (406) of suggestions were given by individuals who were in favour of the proposal.
- 5.41 Suggestions (406) were made:
- 19% (76 suggestions) reiterated their **agreement** that the council tax premium is justified.
  - 11% (44 suggestions) felt that the premium would **alleviate both the rental and for sale housing shortage**, by prompting landlords to let or sell their empty properties.
  - 11% (44 suggestions) proposed that there could be a **grace period before the council tax premium is charged**, to allow for legitimate delays in getting a property occupied, such as renovations, finding new tenants or being granted a probate.
  - While in agreement with the proposal, 6% (26 suggestions) raised concerns that the change could cause **rents to increase and / or that tenants needed to be protected against such increases**.
  - Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.
- 5.42 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions (n=784) were made:
- 30% (235 suggestions) proposed that there should be a **grace period before the council tax premium is charged** to allow for legitimate delays in getting a property occupied, such as renovations, finding new tenants or being granted a probate.
  - 17% (137 suggestions) complained that the council tax premium on empty homes **is unfair on landlords**.
  - 10% (77 suggestions) highlighted that the change could cause **rents to increase**, or **deter investment in housing** in the form of landlords not renovating their properties or to sell their property and leave the housing market altogether (12% / 98 suggestions).
  - 7% (51 suggestions) stated that landlords **already have many expenses** such as mortgage repayments and costs arising from the cladding scandal.
  - 4% (32 suggestions) reiterated their **disagreement** towards the council tax premium being charged.
  - Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.
- 5.43 Overall, 58% (893 suggestions) were given by individuals who were homeowners. A further 19% (295 suggestions) were provided by tenants and 22% originated from landlords (344 suggestions).

Graph 14 – Responses split by the type of respondent (homeowner, tenant, landlord)



5.44 **Homeowners** made the following suggestions (893 suggestions):

- 26% (233 suggestions) proposed that there should be a **grace period before the council tax premium is charged** to allow for legitimate delays in getting a property occupied, such as renovations, finding new tenants or being granted a probate.
- 13% (118 suggestions) complained that the council tax premium on empty homes **is unfair on landlords**.
- 9% (76 suggestions) highlighted that the change could cause **rents to increase**, or **deter investment in housing** in the form of landlords not renovating their properties or to sell their property and leave the housing market altogether (8% / 69 suggestions).
- 5% (48 suggestions) reiterated their **agreement** that the council tax premium is justified.
- 4% (36 suggestions) stated that landlords **already have many expenses** such as mortgage repayments and costs arising from the cladding scandal.

5.45 **Tenants** made the following suggestions (295 suggestions):

- 13% (37 suggestions) proposed that there could be a **grace period before the council tax premium is charged**, to allow for legitimate delays in getting a property occupied, such as renovations, finding new tenants or being granted a probate.
- 12% (35 suggestions) reiterated their **agreement** that the council tax premium is justified.
- While in agreement with the proposal, 9% (28 suggestions) raised concerns that the change could cause **rents to increase and / or that tenants needed to be protected against such increases**.
- In addition, it may **deter investment in housing** in the form of landlords not renovating their properties or to sell their property and leave the housing market altogether (4% / 12 suggestions).
- 8% (23 suggestions) felt that the premium would **alleviate both the rental and for sale housing shortage**, by prompting landlords to let or sell their empty properties.
- 8% (23 suggestions) complained that the council tax premium on empty homes **is unfair on landlords**.

5.46 **Landlords** made the following suggestions (344 suggestions):

- 30% (102 suggestions) proposed that there should be a **grace period before the council tax premium is charged** to allow for legitimate delays in getting a property occupied, such as renovations, finding new tenants or being granted a probate.
- 11% (39 suggestions) highlighted that the change could cause **rents to increase**, or **deter investment in housing** in the form of landlords not renovating their properties or to sell their property and leave the housing market altogether (19% / 66 suggestions).
- 12% (42 suggestions) complained that the council tax premium on empty homes **is unfair on landlords**.

- 11% (37 suggestions) stated that landlords **already have many expenses** such as mortgage repayments and costs arising from the cladding scandal.
- 4% (15 suggestions) reiterated their **disagreement** towards the council tax premium being charged.

5.47 Across all three groups, Graph 14 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

## **6.0 Budget consultation – November 2022 to 7 January 2023**

6.1 A standard budget consultation on proposed budget savings and council tax increases was conducted seeking feedback from residents and businesses on:

- A proposed 1.99% increase in council tax.
- A proposed 1% Adult Social Care (ASC) precept.
- The nine Council priorities.
- General feedback and views on the budget proposals.

6.2 The consultation asked residents for their comments on the potential increases, which together would be a 2.99% increase to invest in priority services and protect Adult Social Care.

6.3 Residents were also asked for their views on whether we should continue to invest in the services that residents told us mattered most to them given the opportunity to provide any further comments or general views they had pertaining to the proposed budget.

## **7.0 Channels and engagement**

7.1 Communications channels comprised an online questionnaire supported by web content, e-bulletins and a social media campaign across a range of platforms using a mix of organic, boosted and paid-for posts, supported by engaging digital content.

7.2 Responses were gathered via an online questionnaire on the Council's website and paper copies of the questionnaire were available in libraries across the city. Residents were also signposted to the library digital support text service for help getting online, getting access to a computer at a library or to fill in the consultation survey over the phone.

7.3 Activity was supported by proactive media releases and reactive media statements and inclusion in the Council's various e-bulletins and via internal staff channels.

7.4 Three standalone budget e-bulletins were issued during the consultation period. These performed highly, reaching an average of 27,109 each time and resulting in 67,744 combined opens and 2,314 click throughs to the budget consultation web pages. A message was also included in the monthly resident

news bulletin in November and December 2022, resulting in 162 click throughs.

- 7.5 The consultation was promoted widely on Council social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn signposting people to the online survey. Across social media channels budget messages were posted organically resulting in 1,579 combined click throughs to the consultation pages, 91 retweets/shares and 150 likes and 98 comments. 1,200 of the click throughs were driven from Facebook.
- 7.6 Paid Facebook posts and geo-targeted digital mobile adverts were used to target specific ethnic communities in Manchester who have historically been underrepresented in the budget consultations. Facebook adverts resulted in 1,641 click throughs to the consultation web pages, 43 likes, 60 comments and 4 shares. Mobile adverts resulted in 1254 clicks through to website.
- 7.7 In addition, a tailored advert promoting the budget consultation was published in the Asian Leader publication, which has a distribution of approximately 10,500 copies via pick up points across Manchester (supermarkets, news agents, local shops etc...).
- 7.8 A total of 1,522 people completed the consultation survey, 1519 online and three returned paper copies.
- 7.9 A further 524 people partially completed the survey, without answering all questions or submitting their response. Participation is generally higher when consultation surveys comprise multiple choice/tick box questions. Those that comprise free text boxes require more thought and consideration and generally see higher levels of drop off and partial completion but do result in a greater quality of result.

## **8.0 Consultation survey**

- 8.1 The consultation survey comprised three closed questions to understand levels of agreement/disagreement and three open text questions which allowed residents to express their views freely and a question asking residents to tick the priorities they felt were important to them.

Question 1a. Do you agree or disagree that we should protect adult social care by increasing council tax by a precept of 1%?

Question 1b. Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 1% increase you think we should consider.

Question 2a. When we asked Manchester people what matters most to them, we listened, and we've used their priorities to help set our budget. Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services that residents told us matter most?

Question 2b. Please tick the priorities that are important to you.

**Question 2c.** Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 1.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis and enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?

**Question 3.** Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 1.99% increase you think we should consider.

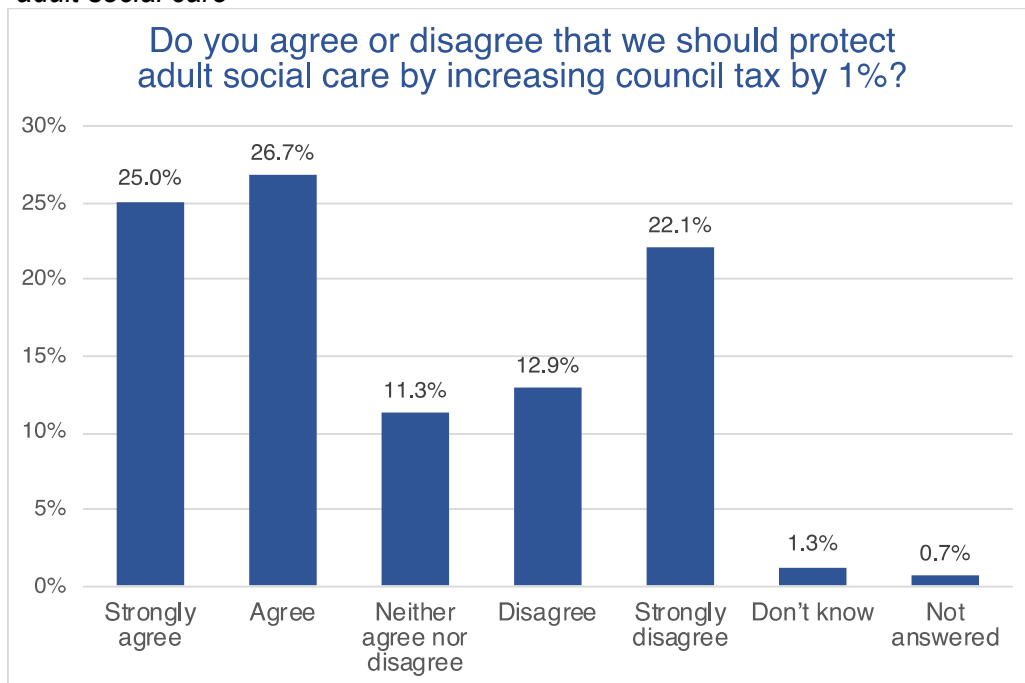
**Question 4.** Please give any general views and comments on the proposed budget.

## 9.0 Consultation survey analysis

### 9.1 Question 1a - Do you agree or disagree that we should protect adult social care by increasing council tax by a precept of 1%?

9.2 In question 1a, members of the public were asked in a closed question whether they 'agree or disagree' that we should protect adult social care by increasing Council tax by 1%. Overall, the consultation generated 1,522 responses. Of these, 52% agreed or strongly agreed that adult social care should be protected by increasing council tax by 1%. This compares to 35% of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the suggestion. Finally, 13% were undecided or said they didn't know.

*Graph 15 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with the 1% increase to protect adult social care*

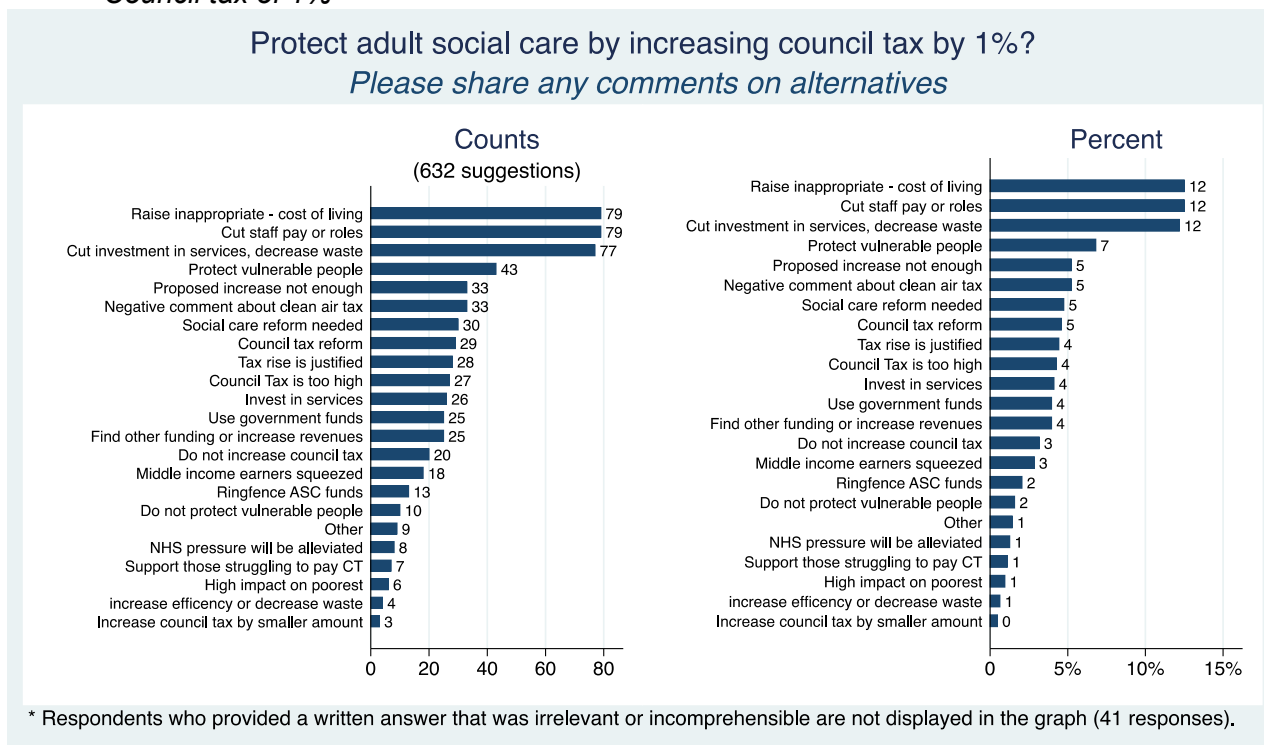


### 9.3 Question 1b - Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 1% increase you think we should consider.

9.4 In question 1b, respondents were also asked to share any comments or alternatives on the impacts of the 1% increase that they thought we should

consider. 505 respondents provided such a comment about the proposed 1% increase. Based on these answers we extracted 673 suggestions, displayed in Graph 16.

Graph 16 - Coded responses expressing views pertaining to the proposed increase to Council tax of 1%



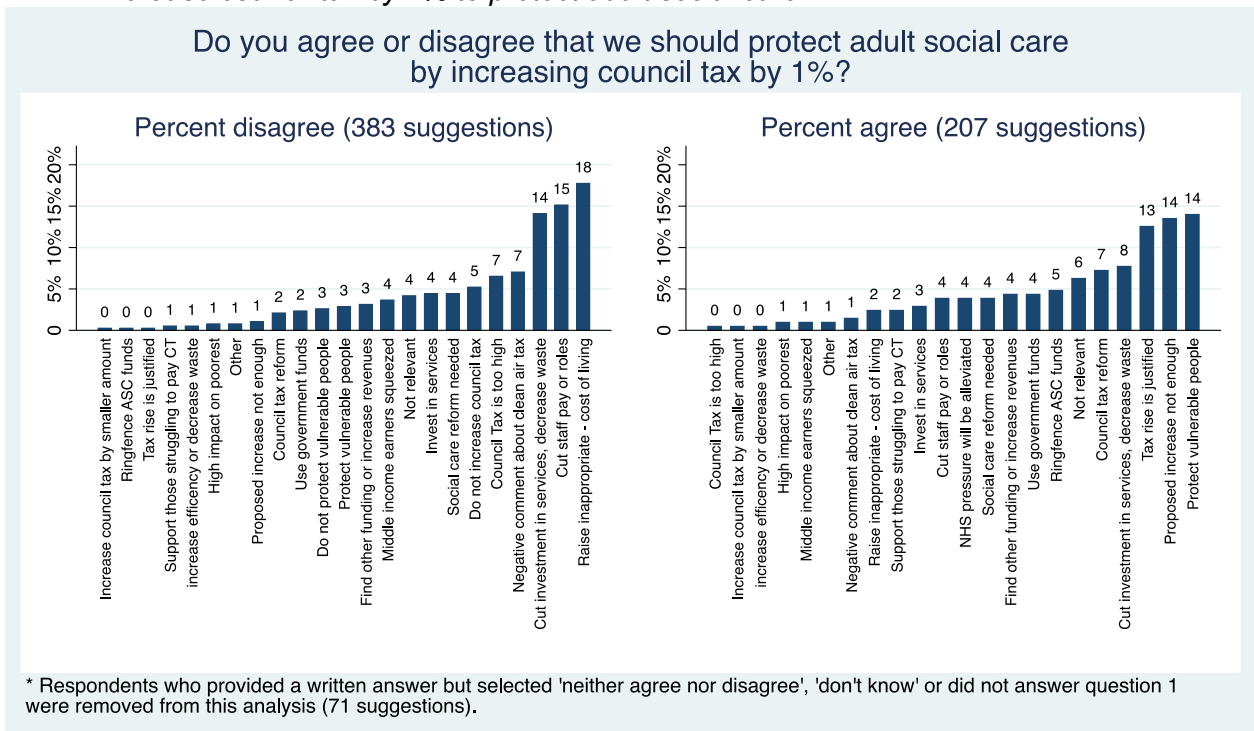
### 9.5 Graph 16 shows that:

- A prominent suggestion across all open-ended responses was that it would be inappropriate to increase council tax by 1% given the **current cost of living crisis** (12%, 79 suggestions), with concerns about the rising cost of energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation.
- An additional 4% (27 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high**, or that it already increases every year. Moreover, an additional 3% (20 suggestions) restated their view that council tax should not be increased.
- 12% (79 suggestions) argued for the Council to **cut staff pay or roles**.
- A similar proportion of suggestions (12%, 77 suggestions) also proposed for the Council to **cut investment in areas** such as **cycle lanes**, or should generally reduce inefficiency and wasteful spending (including references to the Greater Manchester Mayor).
- 5% (33 suggestions) made a **negative comment about the proposed Clean Air Zone (CAZ)**.
- 4% (28 suggestions) felt that the **council tax rise was justified**, with some (5%, 33 suggestions) going further and calling for an even greater increase in council tax as the **proposed increased was not enough**.
- 7% (43 suggestions) did agree that **protecting vulnerable people** was worthwhile, but not all agreed that raising council tax was the answer.

- 5% (30 suggestions) argued that council tax increase would not resolve issues with the social care system and that **social care reform** was needed.
- 5% (29 suggestions) called for **council tax reform**, such as re-evaluating property bandings or removing exemptions for certain groups such as students.
- Instead of raising council tax, 4% (25 suggestions) called for the Council to **use government funds**. 4% (25 suggestions) stated the Council should **find other funding or increase revenues** by other means.
- 4% (26 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need for **greater investment in services** such as waste collection and road repairs, as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

9.6 Graph 17 displays the suggestions by whether respondents agreed or disagreed that we should protect adult social care by increasing council tax by 1%. Overall, 35% (207 suggestions) were given by individuals who were in favour of the proposal.

Graph 17 - Responses split by whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to increase council tax by 1% to protect adult social care



9.7 Of those respondents who **agreed** the following suggestions were made (207 suggestions):

- 14% (29 suggestions) emphasised that **vulnerable people should be protected** while 13% (26 suggestions) restated their **agreement** to the proposal.



- 14% (28 suggestions) went further and called for an even greater increase in council tax as the **proposed increase was not enough**.
- The potential **reduction of pressures on the NHS** were also highlighted in 4% of suggestions (8 suggestions).
- Rather than increase council tax, 8% (16 suggestions) commented that the Council should **cut investment in services** such as cycle lanes or reduce inefficiency and waste more generally.
- 4% (8 suggestions) also called for the Council to **cut staff roles or pay**.
- Alternatively, the Council should **use government funds** (4%, 9 suggestions), or **find other funding or increase revenue in another way** (4%, 9 suggestions).
- 7% (15 suggestions) wanted the **council tax system to be reformed** such as re-evaluating property bandings or removing exemptions for certain groups such as students.
- While agreeing with the increase, 5% (10 suggestions) emphasised that the Council needed to **ring-fence adult social care funds**.
- 4% (8 suggestions) argued that council tax increase would not resolve issues with the social care system and that **social care reform** was needed.
- Graph 3 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

9.8 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following main suggestions (383) were made:

- 18% (68 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**, notably the rise in energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation.
- Related to this, 4% (14 suggestions) expressed concerns on **pressures on middle income earners** who do not qualify for benefits.
- 15% (58 suggestions) stated the Council should **cut staff roles or pay**.
- 14% (54 suggestions) wanted the Council to **cut investment in services** such as cycle lanes or reduce inefficiency and wasteful spending more generally (without specifying).
- 7% (27 suggestions) made a **negative comment about the Clean Air Zone (CAZ)**.
- 7% (25 suggestions) stated that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year, and 5% (20 suggestions) reiterated their stance that **council tax should not be increased**.
- 4% (17 suggestions) felt that increasing council tax would not resolve the issues in social care and that there needed to be **social care reform**.
- 4% (17 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need for **greater investment in services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- Graph 17 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

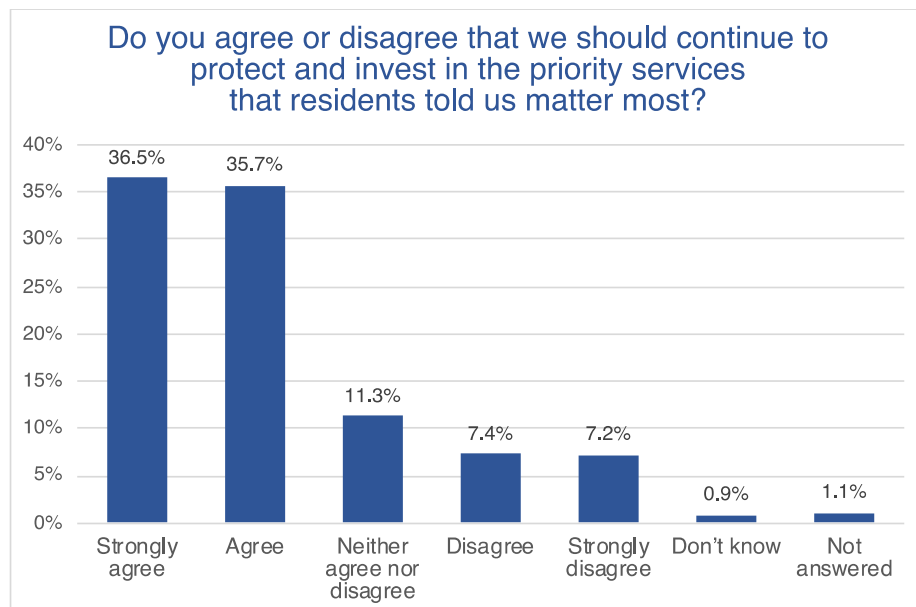
**9.9 Question 2a - When we asked Manchester people what matters most to them, we listened, and we've used their priorities to help set our budget. Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services that residents told us matter most?**

9.10 In Question 2a residents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that services that matter most to them should be protected and invested in. In asking this question the consultation reminded residents that the following services were the ones that past consultations indicated mattered most:

- Care and support for vulnerable people
- Action on family poverty and giving young people the best start in life
- Tackling homelessness and creating better housing
- Supporting people into jobs and training
- Keeping our roads in good shape and supporting walking and cycling
- Keeping our neighbourhoods clean, including tackling fly-tipping and litter
- Maintaining parks, leisure facilities and libraries to keep people active and happy
- Becoming a zero-carbon city and improving air quality
- Addressing inequalities to improve life chances and celebrate diversity

9.11 The vast majority of respondents (72%) agreed or strongly agreed with the suggestion to protect and invest in services. 13% were undecided or didn't know and a further 15% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

*Graph 18 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with the need to protect services that matter most to residents*



**9.12 Question 2b - Please tick the priorities that are important to you**

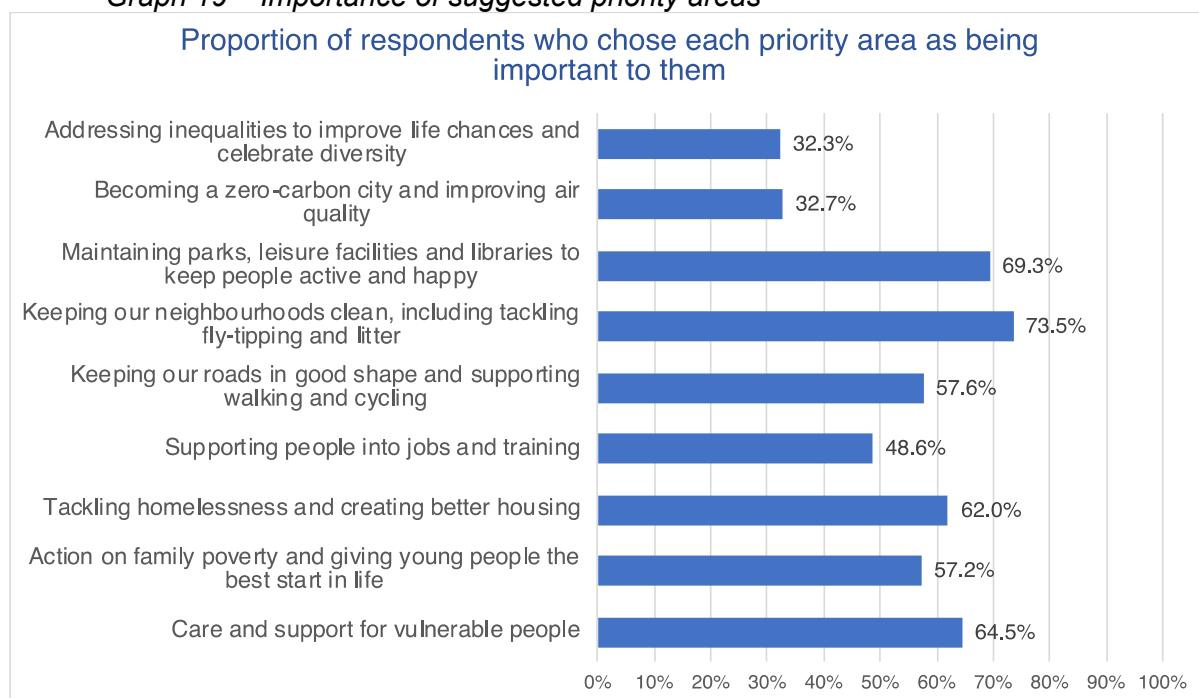
9.13 In questions 2b, residents were also asked to indicate which priority areas are important to them. Overall, among the issues that were selected by a higher number of respondents were:

- Keeping our neighbourhoods clean, including tackling fly-tipping and litter (74%)
- Maintaining parks, leisure facilities and libraries to keep people active and happy (69%)
- Care and support for vulnerable people (65%)
- Tackling homelessness and creating better housing (62%)

9.14 At the opposite end of the ranking, the issues seen as least important were:

- Addressing inequalities to improve life chances and celebrate diversity (32%)
- Becoming a zero-carbon city and improving air quality (33%)

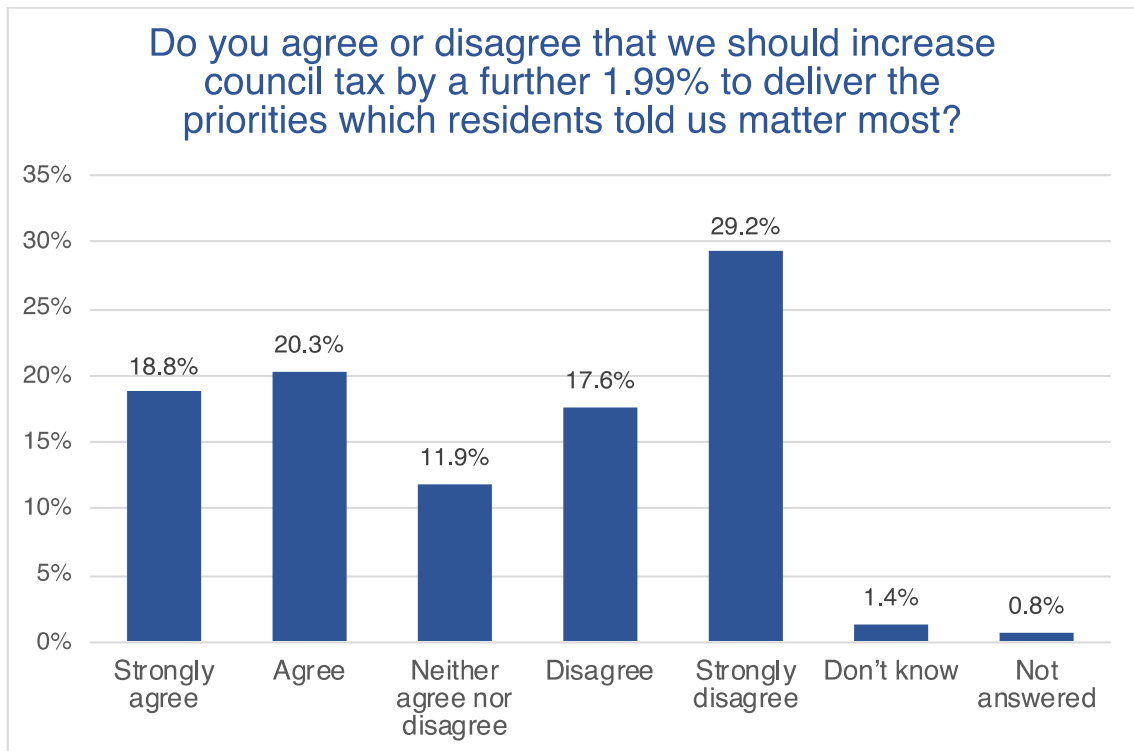
*Graph 19 – Importance of suggested priority areas*



**9.15 Question 2c - Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 1.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis and enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?**

9.16 In question 2c residents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that we should increase council tax by a further 1.99% to enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most. Out of the 1,522 responses generated by the consultation, 47% disagreed or strongly disagreed that council tax should be increased by a further 1.99% to continue to invest in services. This compares to 39% who agreed or strongly agreed with this suggestion. 13% were undecided or said they didn't know.

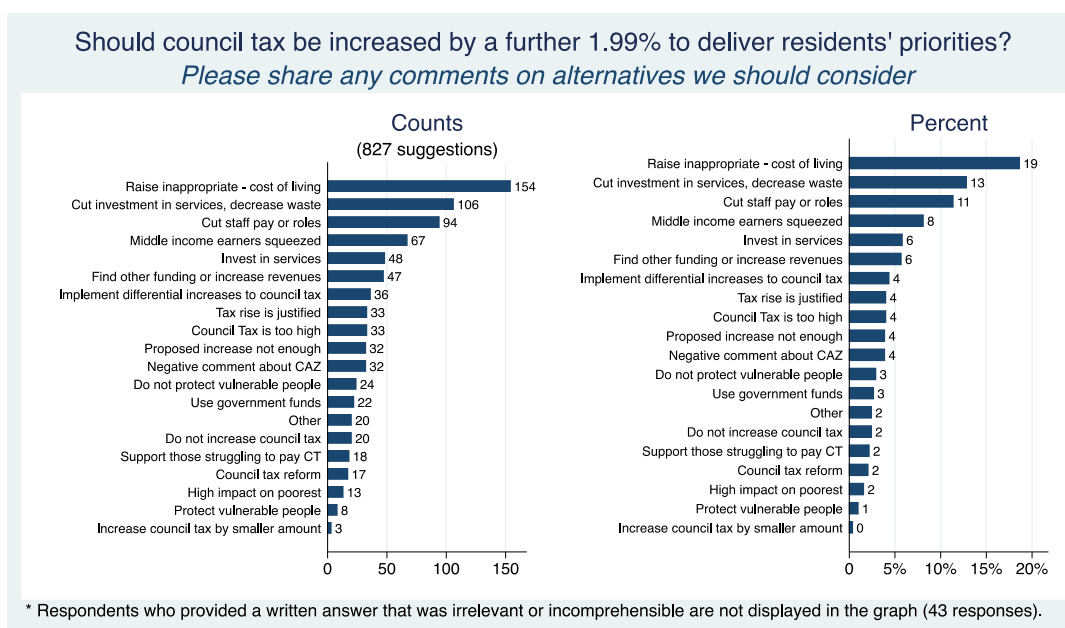
*Graph 20 – Levels of agreement and disagreement with the need to protect services that matter most to residents*



**9.17 Question 3 - Please share any comments on alternatives or the impacts of the 1.99% increase you think we should consider.**

9.18 In addition to indicating whether they agreed or not, 663 respondents also provided an answer to the open-ended question asking for comments about the suggestion to increase council tax by a further 1.99%. Based on these answers we extracted 870 suggestions.

*Graph 21 – Coded responses expressing views pertaining to the proposed increases by a further 1.99% to deliver the priorities which matter most to residents*



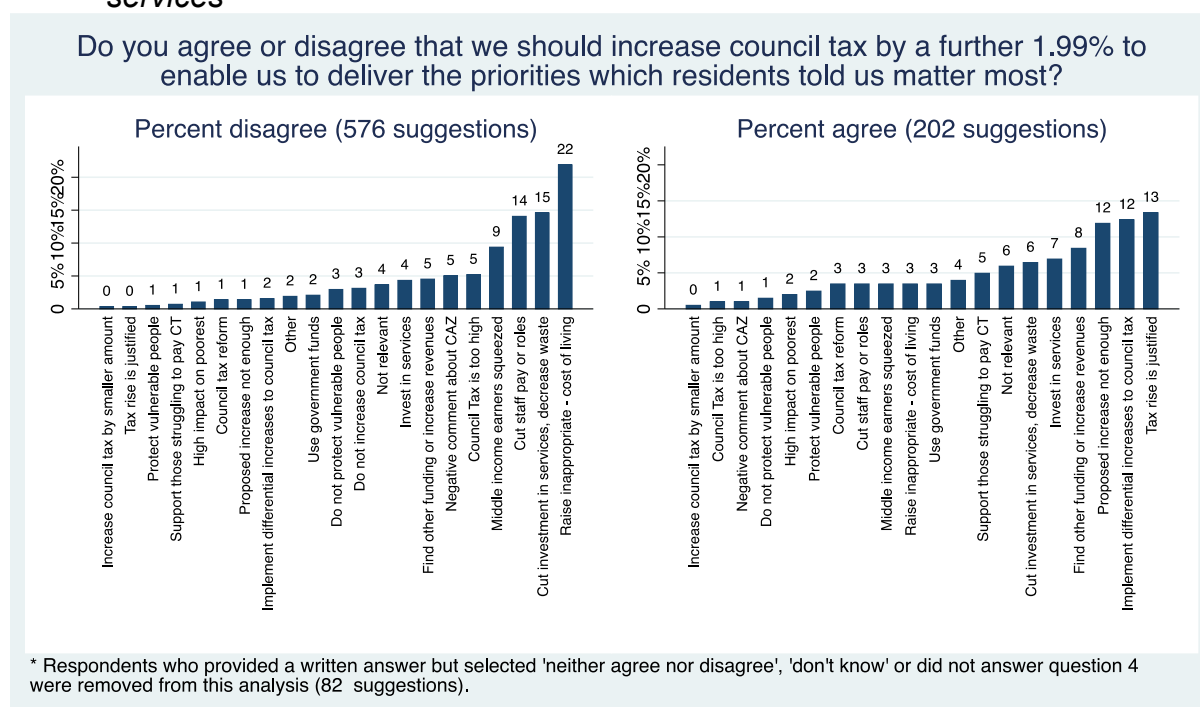
9.19 Graph 21 shows that:

- The most prominent suggestion across all open-ended responses was the perception that it would be inappropriate to increase council tax by a further 1.99% given the **current cost of living crisis** (19%, 154 suggestions), with concerns about the rising cost of energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation.
- 4% (33 suggestions) mentioned that **council tax was too high** or already increases every year.
- 2% (20 suggestions) expressed their view that **council tax should not be increased**.
- Related to this, 8% (67 suggestions) raised concerns regarding the **impact on middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 4% (36 suggestions) called for a **differential increase on council tax** which would see higher income earners paying more council tax.
- A large proportion of responses also argued for the Council to make cuts instead of raising council tax:
  - 13% (106 suggestions) wanted the Council to **cut investment in areas** such as cycle lanes or generally reduce inefficiency and wasteful spending.
  - or to **cut staff roles or pay** (11%, 94 suggestions).
  - Alternatively, 6% (47 suggestions) stated that the Council should **find other funding or increase revenues** another way.
- 6% (48 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need for **greater investment in services** such as waste collection and road repairs as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- 4% (32 suggestions) made a **negative comment about the Clean Air Zone (CAZ)**.
- 4% (33 suggestions) agreed that the **council tax increase was justified**, with 4% (32 suggestions) going further and calling for an **even greater increase in council tax**.

- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

9.20 Overall, 26% (202) of suggestions were given by individuals who were in favour of the proposal.

*Graph 22 – Responses split by whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposal to increase council tax by a further 1.99% to continue to invest in services*



9.21 Of those respondents who **agreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions (202) were made:

- 13% (27 suggestions) restated their **agreement**. It is noticeable that 12% (24 suggestions) called for an even greater increase in council tax as the **proposed increase was not enough**.
- 12% (25 suggestions) called for the implementation of **differential increases to council tax** which would see higher income earners paying more council tax, with 5% (10 suggestions) also asking for **support for those struggling to pay** council tax.
- 8% (17 suggestions) wanted the Council to **find other funding or increase revenue in another way**.
- 7% (14 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need for **greater investment in services** such as waste collection and road repairs, as they did not feel they were getting value for money from their existing council tax.
- 6% (13 suggestions) advised that the Council should **cut investment in services** such as cycle lanes or reduce inefficiency and waste more generally (without specifying).
- Graph 8 also displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

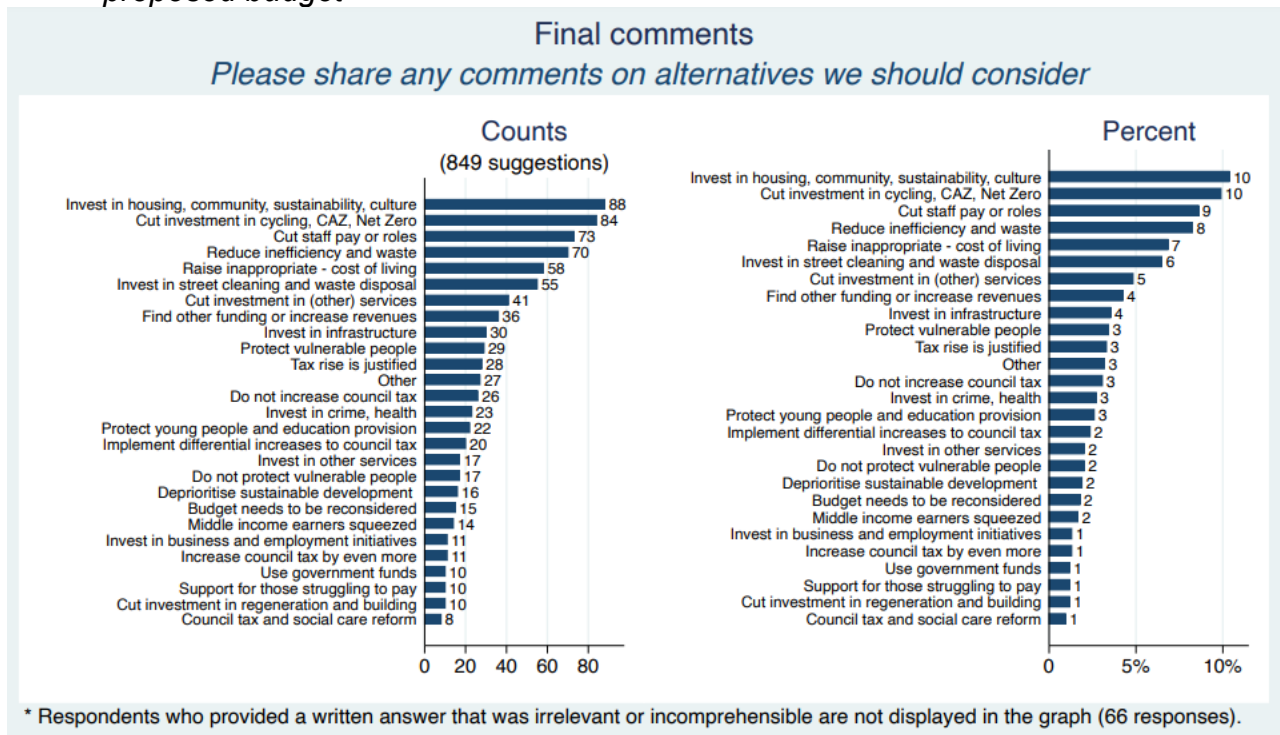
9.22 Of those respondents who **disagreed** with the proposal, the following suggestions (576) were made:

- 22% (126 suggestions) commented that it was inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**, notably the rise in energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation.
- Related to this, 9% (54 suggestions) raised concerns regarding the **impact on middle income earners** who are not eligible for benefits.
- 5% (30 suggestions) perceived that their **council tax was too high** or already increases every year.
- 15% (84 suggestions) stated the Council **should cut investment in services** such as cycle lanes or reduce inefficiency and wasteful spending more generally (without specifying).
- 14% (81 suggestions) stated that the Council should **cut staff roles or pay**
- 5% (29 suggestions) made a **negative comment about the Clean Air Zone (CAZ)**.
- 5% (26 suggestions) stated that the Council should **find other funding or increase revenues** by other means
- 4% (25 suggestions) complained of **poor council services** and the need for **greater investment in services** such as waste collection and road repairs.
- Graph 8 displays additional answers that drew fewer responses and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

**9.23 Question 4 - Please give any general views and comments on the proposed budget.**

9.24 The consultation also provided the opportunity for respondents to provide any further comments or general views they had pertaining to the proposed budget. Out of the 1,522 responses generated by the consultation, 651 respondents provided such a comment. Based on these answers we extracted 915 suggestions.

Graph 23 – Coded responses expressing general views pertaining to the proposed budget



9.25 Graph 23 shows that:

- The most prominent suggestion across all open-ended responses was a request for the Council to **invest more in housing, community, sustainability and culture-related areas** (10%, 88 suggestions).
- A similar proportion of suggestions argued for the Council to make cuts:
  - 10% (84 suggestions) wanted the Council to **cut investment in areas related to cycling, the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) or other measures related to achieving net-zero emissions**.
  - 9% (73 suggestions) also proposed for the Council to **cut staff roles or pay** (responses also referred to the Greater Manchester Mayor).
- 5% (41 suggestions) called for the Council to **cut investment in other services**.
- A further 8% (70 suggestions) called for the Council to **reduce inefficiency and waste wastefulness in general** (responses also referred to the Greater Manchester Mayor).
- Alternatively, 4% (36 suggestions) stated that the Council should **find other funding or increase revenues** another way.
- 7% (58 suggestions) commented it would be inappropriate to increase council tax given the **current cost of living crisis**, with particular concerns about the rising cost of energy bills and other household expenses while wages were not increasing in line with inflation.
- A number of responses complained of poor council services and the need for greater investment in services:
  - 6% (55 suggestions) wanted more **investment in street cleaning and waste collection**.



- 4% (30 suggestions) wanted **more investment in infrastructure** such as road repairs.
- Other suggestions were provided but with lower frequency and there were also a number of responses which were not relevant.

9.26 In addition to the insights obtained through the survey-based consultation (that were presented in the previous sections), Manchester City Council also received extensive feedback from the University of Manchester Students' Union. To summarise, this feedback:

- Called for the Council to **use Government funds** to protect social care.
- Agreed with all the priorities set out in question 2a and 2b.
- Highlighted the certain sub-groups of students who would be required to pay council tax, and summarised students' concerns that were raised in a student survey, in particular that students were most concerned about the **cost-of-living crisis**.
- The **vulnerability** of students during the cost-of-living crisis is emphasised and there is a perception that any increase in council tax would worsen hardships experienced by students given the **current cost of living crisis**.
- Noted that there is no student-specific support scheme available from either the Government or the Council and calls for the provision of **support for students who are struggling to pay**.
- Commented that the Students' Union has had to provide support to students during the cost-of-living crisis and complained of **poor Council services** in funding or supporting this initiative.
- Called for more **investment in street cleaning and waste disposal**.
- Requested **further information** from the Council on support for its student residents.

## 10.0 Recommendations

10.1 Members are asked to note the results of the consultation provided in the report.

## 11.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Demographic analysis and equality data – council tax consultation January 2023 to 7 February 2022

Appendix 2 - Demographic analysis and equality data – Budget consultation November 2022 to 7 January 2023

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## Appendix 1 - Demographic analysis and equality data – council tax consultation January 2023 to 7 February 2022

A range of residents across the city of Manchester participated in the consultation. The demographic characteristics of the respondents to the survey were compared to those of the resident population in Manchester, with a specific focus on the following characteristics:

- Gender & Gender Identity
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Carers
- Armed Forces
- Geography
- Relative deprivation

The questions around changes to council tax for furnished empty properties also include a breakdown by household ownership type.

As well as checking the responses for their reach across our communities, the responses to the four main questions in the survey were reviewed to understand if the views of residents differ depending on their demographic and personal situation. Where people live; whether that is an area of high deprivation; what their age, gender, ethnicity & sexual orientation is; and if they are disabled and/or have caring responsibilities were all looked at and compared to how they responded.

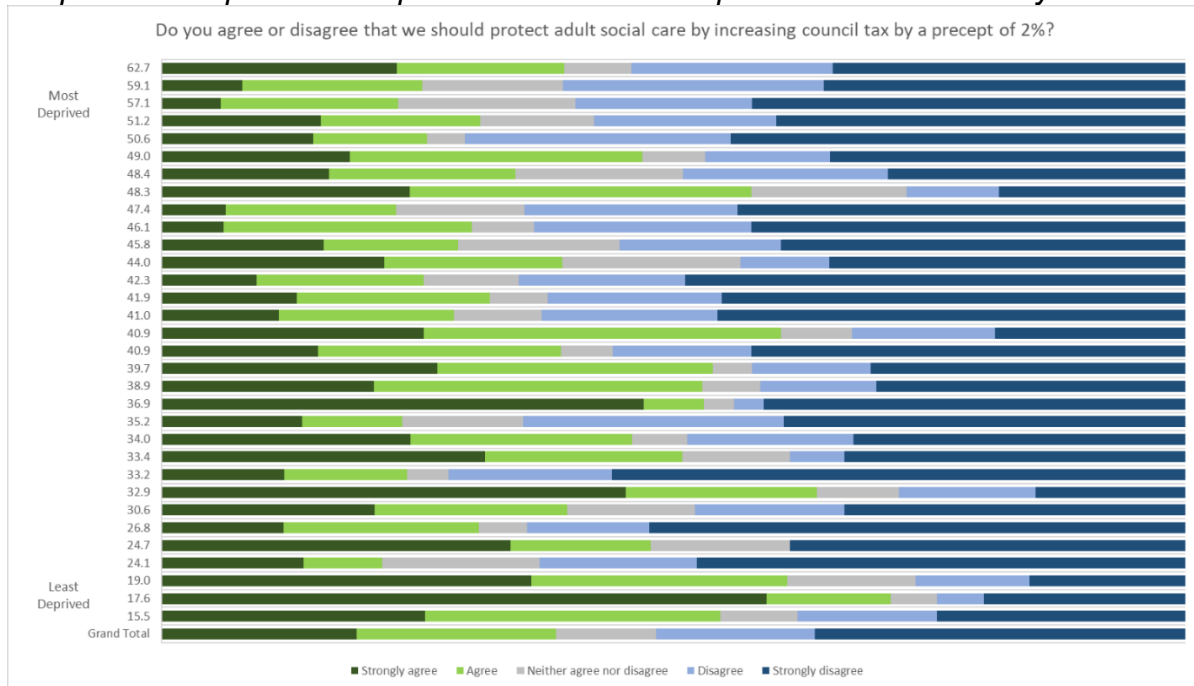
In relation to the question “Do you agree or disagree that we should protect Adult Social Care by increasing council tax by a precept of 2%?” overall 37.8% of respondents agreed.

Whilst we cannot directly assume that agreement or disagreement with the statement means that someone or a group will be disproportionately affected, the responses show us that some groups feel differently. Those who are least supportive include:

- Those who identify as male (53.9%) or non-binary (55% - note small number of responses) versus 42.9% of females.
- Younger residents at 67.3%, with support increasing with 75.6% of over 75s agreeing, 61.3% of those aged 65-74 and 43% of those aged 50-64.
- Non-White respondents (65.9%) disagreed more than those who identified as White (41.5%), with those from Asian/Asian British (72.3%) and Other Ethnic group backgrounds (68.9%) being most likely to disagree.
- Respondents who identified with an LGBTQ+ sexual orientation were more likely to disagree (50.2%). Versus 46% of those who identified as Heterosexual/straight.
- Those who live in the North locality were more likely to disagree (54.9%) versus 47.5% of those who live in Central areas and 40.9% of those who live in the South.

- Respondents who identify with a different gender than assigned at birth (64%), were most likely to disagree. Those with a disability/long terms illness were most likely to agree (50.6%).
- When comparing response with ward level average deprivation data, there is no clear pattern or trend in the responses, however, there were differences in the proportions that agree and disagree across the city.

*Graph 24 - Responses compared with levels of deprivation across the city.*



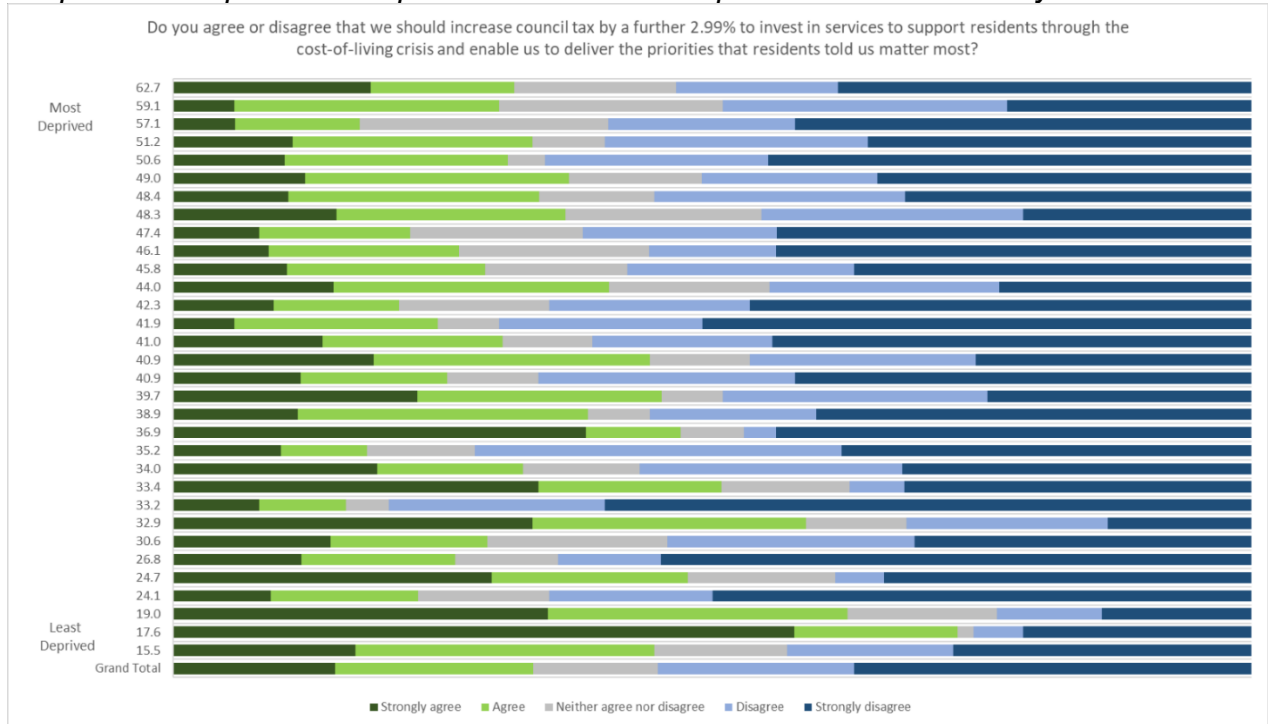
In relation to the question “Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 2.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis and enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?” overall 33.0% of respondents agreed.

Whilst we cannot directly assume that agreement or disagreement with the statement means that someone or a group will be disproportionately affected, the responses show us that some groups feel differently. Those who are least supportive include:

- Residents who identify with as non-binary (60%) versus 54.7% of those who identify as male and 49.6% of those who identify as female.
- Younger residents with 67.3% disagreeing, versus just 23.3% of over 75s, with support increasing by age band.
- Non-White respondents (67.3%) disagreed more that those who identified as White (46%), with those from Asian/Asian British (73.8%), Black, African, Caribbean and black British (62.9%) and Other Ethnic group backgrounds (62.1%) being most likely to disagree.
- Respondents who identified with an LGBTQ+ sexual orientation were more likely to disagree (54.3%). Versus 50.3% of those who identified as Heterosexual/straight.
- Those who live in the North locality were more likely to disagree (58.1%) versus 50.3% of those who live in Central areas and 44.9% of those who live in the South.

- Respondents who identify with a different gender than assigned at birth (64%), were most likely to disagree. Those with a disability/long terms illness were most likely to agree (42.8%).
- When comparing response with ward level average deprivation data, there is no clear pattern or trend in the responses, however, there were differences in the proportions that agree and disagree across the city.

*Graph 25 - Responses compared with levels of deprivation across the city.*



In relation to the question “Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services that residents told us matter most?” overall 64.3% of respondents agreed.

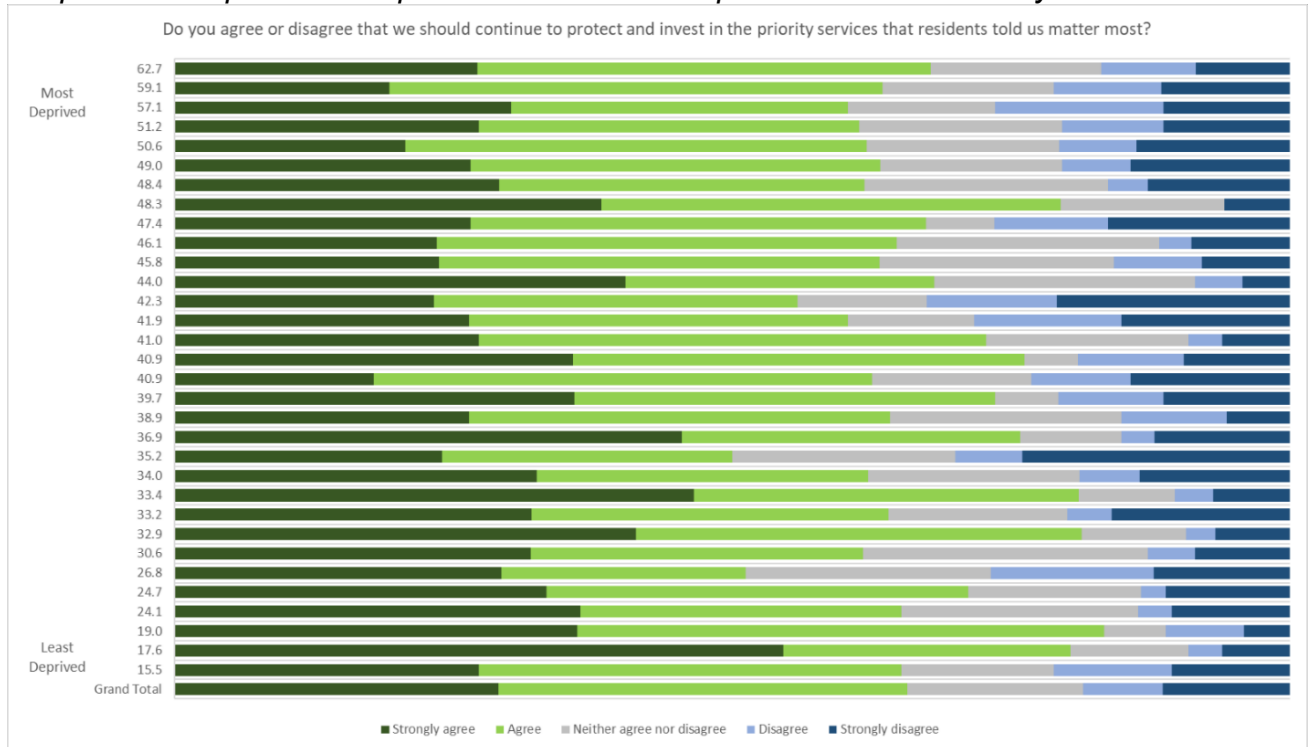
Overall, respondents are much more positive about this statement than the previous questions, with almost two-thirds agreeing we should protect and invest in priority areas, compared to only 33.0% who agreed we should increase council tax by 2.99% to do it.

Whilst we cannot directly assume that agreement or disagreement with statement means that someone or a group will be disproportionately affected, the responses show us that some groups feel differently. Those who are least supportive include:

- Respondents who identify as non-binary (30% disagreed) versus 19.2% of those who identify as male and 11.8% of those who identify as female.
- Younger residents (30.6%) versus 12% of 65-74 year olds, with support increasing by age band from 51% of 16-24 year olds agreeing versus 79.8% of those aged over 75.
- Those who live in the North locality were more likely to disagree (21.2%) versus 15.4% of those who live in Central areas and 14.8% of those who live in the South.

- When comparing response with ward level average deprivation data, there is no clear pattern or trend in the responses, however, there were differences in the proportions that agree and disagree across the city.

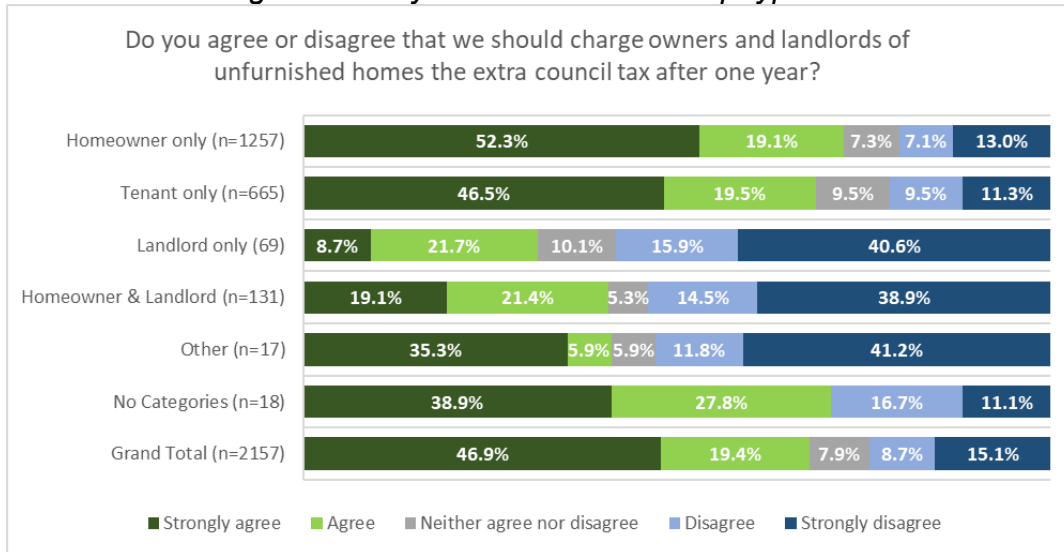
**Graph 26 - Responses compared with levels of deprivation across the city.**



In relation to the question “Do you agree or disagree that we should charge owners and landlords of unfurnished homes the extra council tax after one year?” overall 66.3% of respondents agreed. Whilst we cannot directly assume that agreement or disagreement with statement means that someone or a group will be disproportionately affected, the responses show us that some groups feel differently. Those who are least supportive included:

- Respondents who identify as non-binary (45%) versus 25.5% of those who identify as male and 17.8% of those who identify as female.
- Residents aged 40-49 years of age (28.5%) compared with 23.6% of those aged 50-64, 25% of those aged 26-39 and 14.3% of 16-24 year olds.
- Those with carer roles (26.5%) and those with a gender different to that assigned at birth (28%).
- Landlords (56.5%) and homeowners and landlords (53.4%) versus tenants (20.1%) and homeowners only (20.1%).

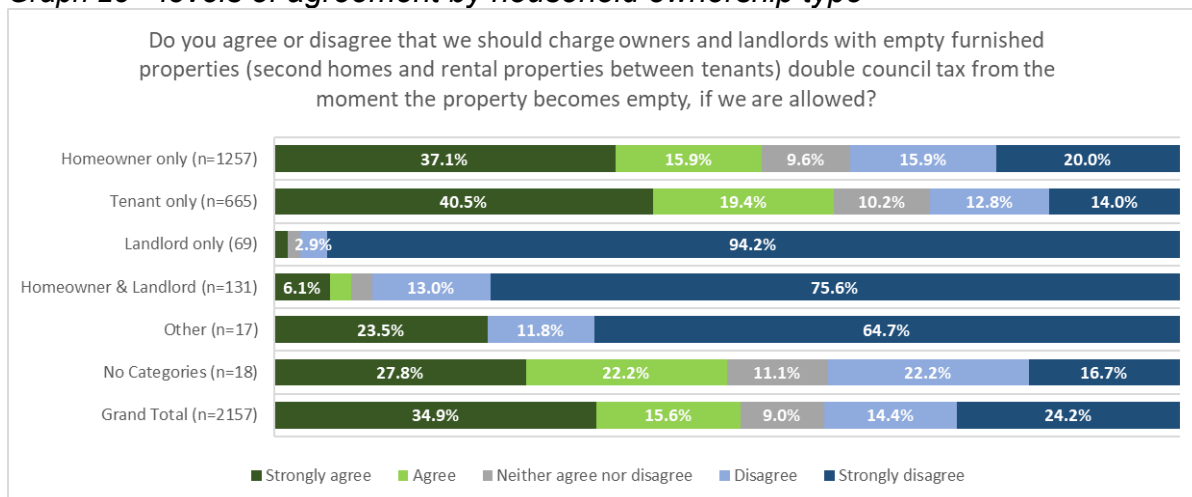
**Graph 27 – levels of agreement by household ownership type**



In relation to the question “Do you agree or disagree that we should charge owners and landlords with empty furnished properties (second homes and rental properties between tenants) double council tax from the moment the property becomes empty, if we are allowed?” overall 50.5% of respondents agreed. Whilst we cannot directly assume that agreement or disagreement with statement means that someone or a group will be disproportionately affected, the responses show us that some groups feel differently. Those who are least supportive include:

- Respondents who identify as non-binary (55%) versus those who identify as male (39.8%) and those who identify as female (31.7%)
- Residents aged 26-39 years of age (41.4%) and those aged 40-49 (40.9%) versus 28.6% of 16-25 year olds and 20.3% of over 75s.
- Respondents who identify as Asian/Asian British (48.5%) and Black, African, Caribbean and Black British (39.4%) versus 32.5% of those who identify as White.
- Landlords (97.1%) and homeowners and landlords (88.6%) versus homeowner only (35.9%) and tenant only (26.8%).

**Graph 28 – levels of agreement by household ownership type**



Of the 2,157 respondents who complete the consultation survey:

Gender & Gender identity:

- 917 (48.5%) were female.
- 972 (51.2%) were male.
- 28 identified with another gender.
- 25 identify with a different gender than assigned at birth.

Age:

- 50 (2.6%) were aged 16-25.
- 435 (22.4%) aged 26-39.
- 431 (22.1%) aged 40-49.
- 628 (32.3%) aged 50-64.
- 308 (15.8%) aged 65-74.
- 94 (4.8%) aged 75+.

Ethnicity:

- 1,415 (77.9%) identified as white
- 62 (3.4%) identified as Mixed/Multiple Ethnic.
- 202 (11.1%) identified as Asian/Asian British.
- 108 (5.9%) identified as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British.
- 29 (1.6%) identified as Other Ethnic Groups.

Sexual orientation:

- 1,373 (83.7%) identify as Heterosexual/Straight.
- 267 (16.3%) as LGBT+.

Disability:

- 400 (21.9%) identify as living with a disability and/or long-term condition.
- 339 (18.0%) identify as have a caring responsibility/role.

Armed Forces:

- 230 (12.1%) identify as themselves or an immediate family member being currently or previously part of the armed forces.

Geography:

- 584 (36.8%) from Wards in the North locality.
- 455 (28.7%) from Wards in the Central locality.
- 548 (34.5%) from Wards in the South locality.



## Appendix 2 - Demographic analysis and equality data – Budget consultation November 2022 to 7 January 2023

A range of residents across the city of Manchester participated in the consultation. The demographic characteristics of the respondents to the survey were compared to those of the resident population in Manchester, with a specific focus on the following characteristics:

- Gender & Gender Identity
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Carers
- Armed Forces
- Geography
- Relative deprivation

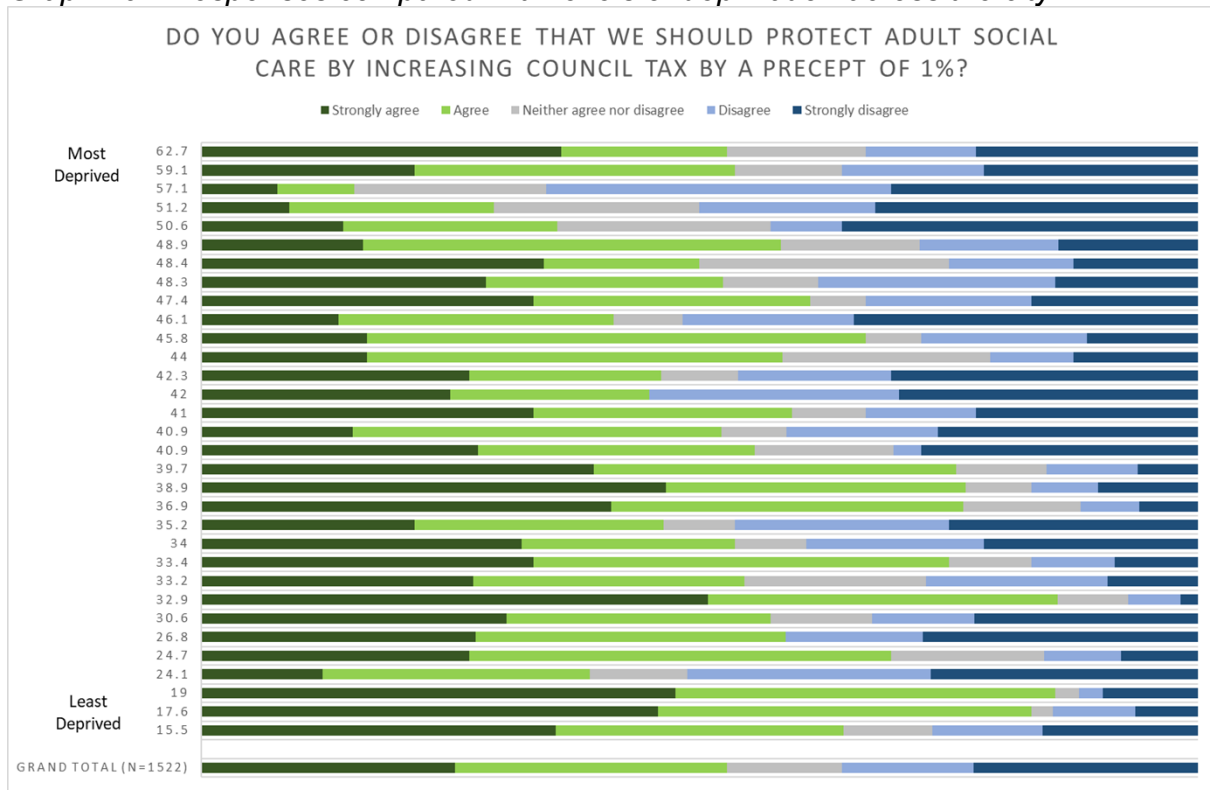
As well as checking the responses for their reach across our communities, the responses to the four main questions in the survey were reviewed to understand if the views of residents differ depending on their demographic and personal situation. Where people live; whether that is an area of high deprivation; what their age, gender, ethnicity & sexual orientation is; and if they are disabled and/or have caring responsibilities were all looked at and compared to how they responded.

In relation to question 1a “Do you agree or disagree that we should protect Adult Social Care by increasing council tax by a precept of 1%?” overall 51.7% of respondents agreed.

- Male respondents were far less positive than females and those with another gender (48.8% agreed versus 60.4% & 58.4% respectively).
- Support for the proposal increased by age, with those aged over 65 being the most positive (58.8% of those aged 65-74 and 70.5% of those aged over 75 agreed).
- Non-White respondents disagreed more than those who identified as White, with those from Asian/Asian British and Other Ethnic group backgrounds being most likely to disagree.
- Respondents who identified with an LGBTQ+ sexual orientation were more likely to agree (63.6%).
- Those who live in Central (63.7%) or South localities (63.9%) were much more likely to agree with the increase than those who live in North (48.1%).
- Respondents who identify with a different gender than assigned at birth (66.6%), those living with disabilities and/or long term conditions (55.5%), and those who identified as having carer role (55.5%) were generally more supportive than the overall average (51.7%). However, respondents with a personal or close family connection to the Armed Forces were more likely to disagree.

- When comparing response with ward level average deprivation data, there is no clear pattern or trend in the responses, however, there were differences in the proportions that agree and disagree across the city.

**Graph 29 - Responses compared with levels of deprivation across the city.**



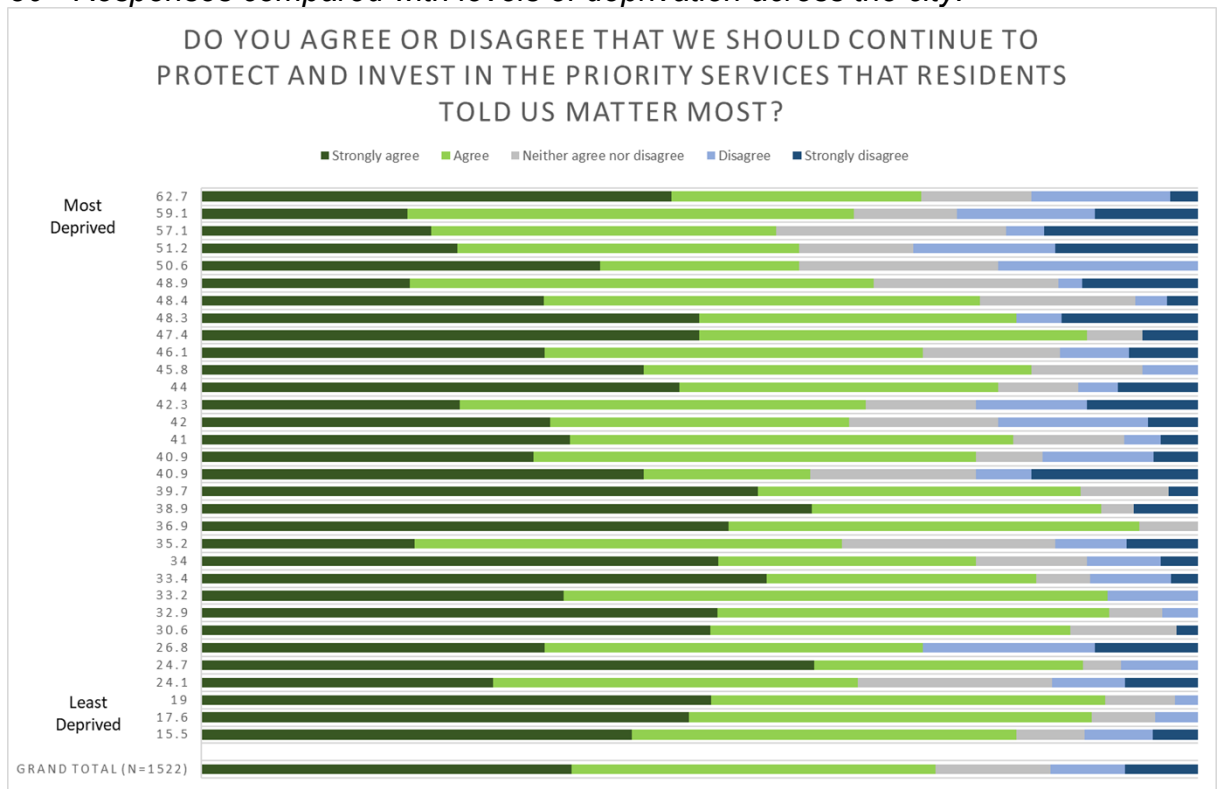
Whilst we cannot directly assume that agreement or disagreement with Question 1a means that someone or a group will be disproportionately affected, the responses show us that some groups feel differently about the proposed 1% increase.

Looking at the response to question 2a “Do you agree or disagree that we should continue to protect and invest in the priority services that residents told us matter most?” overall 72.2% of respondents agreed.

- Whilst much more in agreement with this statement than the previous question, male respondents (70.7%) were still less positive than females (77.6%) and those with another gender (75.0%).
- Support for protecting and investing in priority services was greatest with those aged under 40 (84.6%) and over 75s (78.2%) agreeing, compared to lower levels of approval for those aged 40-49 (73.3%), 50-64 (38.1%) and 65-74 (69.0%).
- On average White and Non-White respondents agreed at similar levels (74.3% and 75.1% agreed respectively).
- However, respondents from Asian/Asian British & Other Ethnic group backgrounds were more likely to disagree.
- Respondents who identified with an LGBTQ+ sexual orientation were more likely to agree at 78.7%.

- Those who live in Central (82.7%), or South (80.6%) localities were much more likely to agree than those who live in North (66.9%).
- Respondents who identify with a different gender than assigned at birth (76.2%), and those who identified as having carer role (72.7%) were generally more than those living with disabilities and/or long term conditions (68.6%), or those with a personal or close family connection the Armed Forces (68.9%).
- When comparing response with ward level average deprivation data there is no clear pattern or trend in the responses, however rates of agreement tend to be high in all but a few locations.

Graph 30 - Responses compared with levels of deprivation across the city.



Overall, there is significant agreement with the question 2a (71.8% agreeing). This is similar for all groups, however with some differences by age, gender and in North Manchester.

In relation to the question 2c "Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 1.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis & enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?" overall 39.1% of respondents agreed.

- Whilst the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was much lower than the previous questions, male respondents (39.5%) were still less positive than females (34%) and those with another gender (50.0%).
- Similar to the response to question 2a, support was greatest with youngest and oldest respondents, 16-25 (53.9%), 65-74 (46.5%) and 75+ (66.7%)

agreed, compared to lower levels of approval for those aged between 26 and 64, 26-39 (38.9%), 40-49 (37.8%) and 50-64 (39.6%).

- Non-White respondents (34.5%) were less likely to agree than White respondents (43.3%).
- Respondents who identified with an LGBTQ+ sexual orientation were more likely to agree (50.6%) compared to those not identifying as LGBTQ+ (40.5%).
- Respondents who live in the South were the most likely to agree (56.0%), followed by those in Central (50.6%). Those who live in North were least likely to agree (31.3%).
- Respondents who identify with a different gender than assigned at birth were generally more supportive (52.4%) than the overall average.
- Those living with disabilities and/or long term conditions (39.5%) or those with carer roles (36.7%) were about the same as the average, and those with a personal or close family connection the Armed Forces were much less likely to agree (32.2%).
- When comparing response with ward level average deprivation data whilst there isn't a consistent trend in the responses, the chart below does show that in general those is less deprived areas of the city are more likely to agree with the proposal.

Graph 31 – Responses compared with levels of deprivation across the city.



- Overall, there is far less agreement with question 2c “Do you agree or disagree that we should increase council tax by a further 1.99% to invest in services to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis & enable us to deliver the priorities that residents told us matter most?” with 39.1% of respondents agreeing. However, there are some demographic groups and

localities who are far more supportive (under 25s and over 75s; LGBTQ+; and respondents living in Central & South localities) and some that are slightly less supportive (Non-White: Armed Forces; and respondents living in North locality).

Of the 1,522 respondents who complete the consultation survey:

#### Gender & Gender identity:

- 639 (47.8%) were female.
- 699 (52.2%) were male.
- 24 identified with another gender.
- 21 identify with a different gender than assigned at birth

#### Age:

- 27 (2.0%) were aged 16-25.
- 378 (27.6%) aged 26-39.
- 270 (19.7%) aged 40-49.
- 460 (33.6%) aged 50-64.
- 187 (13.6%) aged 65-74.
- 48 (3.5%) aged 75+.

#### Ethnicity:

- 1,179 (89.9%) identified as White.
- 35 (2.7%) identified as Mixed/Multiple Ethnic.
- 58 (4.4%) identified as Asian/Asian British.
- 29 (2.2%) identified as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British.
- 11 (0.8%) identified as Other Ethnic Groups.

#### Sexual orientation

- 913 (79.5%) identify as Heterosexual/Straight.
- 239 (15.7%) as LGBTQ+.

#### Disability:

- 357 (26.8%) identify as living with a disability and/or long-term condition.
- 256 (19.1%) identify as have a caring responsibility/role.

#### Armed Forces:

- 202 (15.1%) identify as themselves or an immediate family member being currently or previously part of the armed forces.

#### Geography:

- 357 (26.8%) 368 (36.3%) from Wards in the North locality.
- 295 (29.1%) from Wards in the Central locality.
- 352 (34.7%) from Wards in the South locality.

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