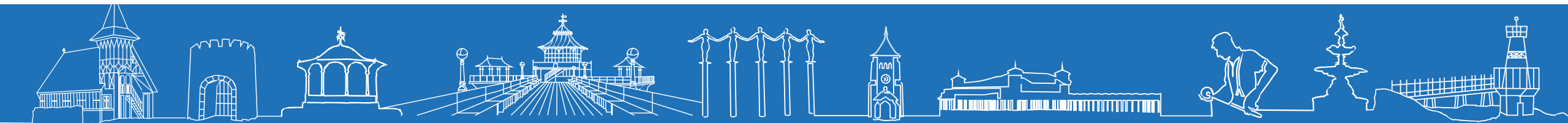


# **Corporate Plan and budget development Engagement and consultation programme**



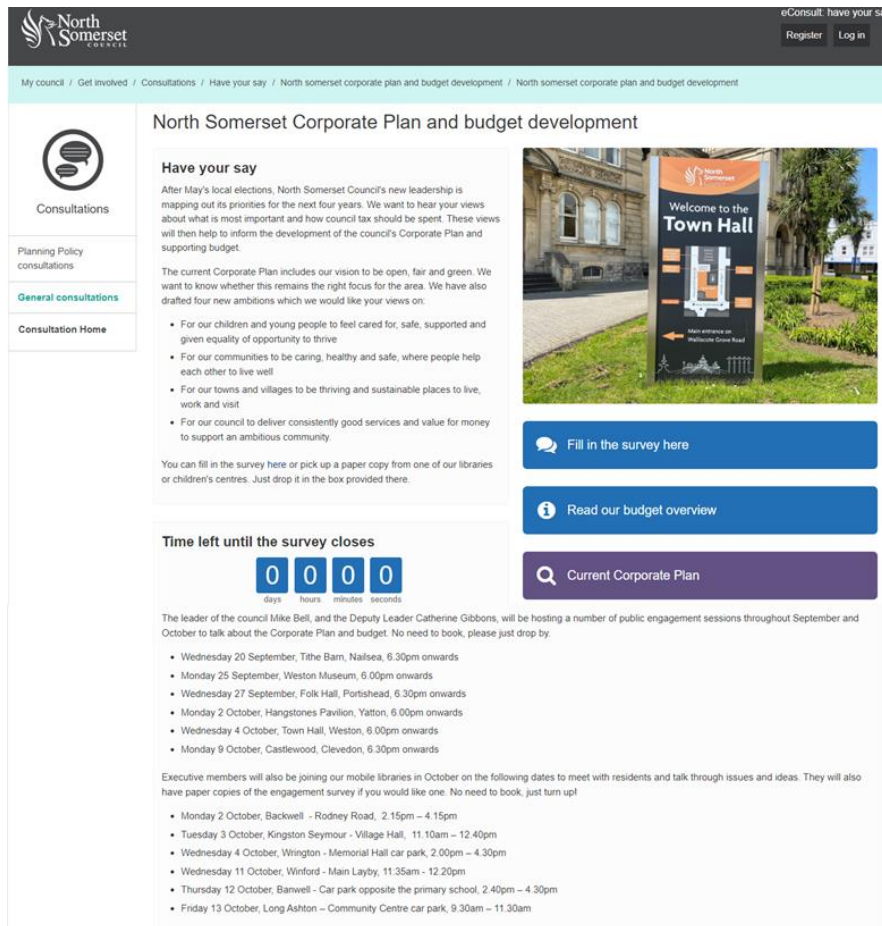
# Background

- As part of the Corporate Plan and budget development process we undertook an engagement and consultation programme with local people and partners, including Town and Parish Councils.
- This programme aimed to gather views to inform the development of the Corporate Plan ambitions and budget development including priorities and suggestions for saving and transformation options.
- The engagement programme ran from end-August through to mid-October as follows:
  - A survey hosted on our [consultation hub](#), live for six weeks, with a bespoke version for Town and Parish Councils. Paper copies of this survey were available in our libraries and children's centres, and we added a short, focused social media survey aimed at encouraging more responses from young people aged 16-30.
  - A number of public engagement sessions across the towns along with a series of face-to-face sessions via the mobile libraries for rural residents to attend.
  - Meetings with various stakeholder groups either virtually or face-to-face.

The information gathered from this engagement was used to develop the DRAFT Corporate Plan and DRAFT budget, with final comments requested on our [consultation hub](#) which ran November through to early January, and a series of follow-up public engagement sessions held.

# Background

The engagement programme:



North Somerset Council website screenshot showing the 'Have your say' survey page for the Corporate Plan and budget development. The page includes a navigation menu, a 'Have your say' section with a list of bullet points, a 'Time left until the survey closes' countdown timer, and a list of public engagement sessions.

**Have your say**

After May's local elections, North Somerset Council's new leadership is mapping out its priorities for the next four years. We want to hear your views about what is most important and how council tax should be spent. These views will then help to inform the development of the council's Corporate Plan and supporting budget.

The current Corporate Plan includes our vision to be open, fair and green. We want to know whether this remains the right focus for the area. We have also drafted four new ambitions which we would like your views on.

- For our children and young people to feel cared for, safe, supported and given equality of opportunity to thrive
- For our communities to be caring, healthy and safe, where people help each other to live well
- For our towns and villages to be thriving and sustainable places to live, work and visit
- For our council to deliver consistently good services and value for money to support an ambitious community.

You can fill in the survey here or pick up a paper copy from one of our libraries or children's centres. Just drop it in the box provided there.

**Time left until the survey closes**

0000  
days hours minutes seconds

The leader of the council Mike Bell, and the Deputy Leader Catherine Gibbons, will be hosting a number of public engagement sessions throughout September and October to talk about the Corporate Plan and budget. No need to book, please just drop by.

- Wednesday 20 September, Tite Barn, Nailsea, 6.30pm onwards
- Monday 25 September, Weston Museum, 6.00pm onwards
- Wednesday 27 September, Folk Hall, Portishead, 6.30pm onwards
- Monday 2 October, Hangstones Pavilion, Yatton, 6.00pm onwards
- Wednesday 4 October, Town Hall, Weston, 6.00pm onwards
- Monday 9 October, Castlewood, Clevedon, 6.30pm onwards

Executive members will also be joining our mobile libraries in October on the following dates to meet with residents and talk through issues and ideas. They will also have paper copies of the engagement survey if you would like one. No need to book, just turn up!

- Monday 2 October, Backwell - Rodney Road, 2.15pm - 4.15pm
- Tuesday 3 October, Kingston Seymour - Village Hall, 11.10am - 12.40pm
- Wednesday 4 October, Wington - Memorial Hall car park, 2.00pm - 4.30pm
- Wednesday 11 October, Winford - Main Layby, 11.35am - 12.20pm
- Thursday 12 October, Banwell - Car park opposite the primary school, 2.40pm - 4.30pm
- Friday 13 October, Long Ashton - Community Centre car park, 9.30am - 11.30am



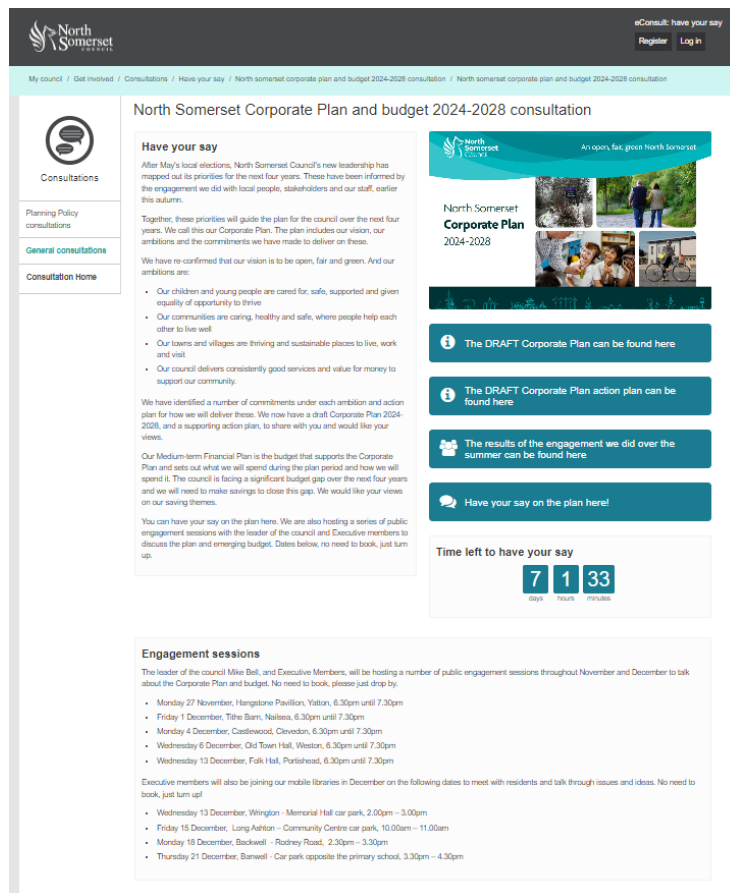
Graphic with a speech bubble saying "Have your say". Text: "We would like your views on the development of the North Somerset corporate plan and our budget for the coming year." URL: <https://n-somerset.inconsult.uk/corporateplan/consultationHome>. QR code and text: "Complete your survey by Monday 16 October 2023".



Collage of survey posters for different locations. Top poster: "Have your say" "Council four year plan and budget" "Survey closes Mon 16 Oct". Middle poster: "Portishead" "Council four year plan and budget" "Wed 27 September from 6.30pm". Bottom poster: "WED, 27 SEP 2023" "Have your say Portishead".

# Background

## The consultation programme:



North Somerset Corporate Plan and budget 2024-2028 consultation

**Have your say**

After May's local elections, North Somerset Council's new leadership has mapped out its priorities for the next four years. These have been informed by the engagement we did with local people, stakeholders and our staff, earlier this autumn.

Together, these priorities will guide the plan for the council over the next four years. We call this our Corporate Plan. The plan includes our vision, our ambitions and the commitments we have made to deliver on these.

We have re-confirmed that our vision is to be open, fair and green. And our ambitions are:

- Our children and young people are cared for, safe, supported and given equality of opportunity to thrive
- Our communities are caring, healthy and safe, where people help each other to live well
- Our towns and villages are thriving and sustainable places to live, work and visit
- Our council delivers consistently good services and value for money to support our community.

We have identified a number of commitments under each ambition and action plan for how we will deliver these. We now have a draft Corporate Plan 2024-2028, and a supporting action plan, to share with you and would like your views.

Our Medium-term Financial Plan is the budget that supports the Corporate Plan and sets out what we will spend during the plan period and how we will spend it. The council is facing a significant budget gap over the next four years and we will need to make savings to close this gap. We would like your views on our saving themes.

You can have your say on the plan here. We are also hosting a series of public engagement sessions with the leader of the council and Executive members to discuss the plan and emerging budget. Dates below, no need to book, just turn up.

**Time left to have your say**

7 1 33  
days hours minutes

**Engagement sessions**

The leader of the council Mike Bell, and Executive Members, will be hosting a number of public engagement sessions throughout November and December to talk about the Corporate Plan and budget. No need to book, please just drop by:

- Monday 27 November, Hangstone Pavilion, Yatton, 6.30pm until 7.30pm
- Friday 1 December, The Barn, Nailsea, 6.30pm until 7.30pm
- Monday 4 December, Castlewood, Clevedon, 6.30pm until 7.30pm
- Wednesday 6 December, Old Town Hall, Weston, 6.30pm until 7.30pm
- Wednesday 13 December, Folk Hall, Porlished, 6.30pm until 7.30pm

Executive members will also be joining our mobile libraries in December on the following dates to meet with residents and talk through issues and ideas. No need to book, just turn up!

- Wednesday 13 December, Wington - Memorial Hall car park, 2.00pm - 3.00pm
- Friday 15 December, Long Ashton - Community Centre car park, 10.00am - 11.00am
- Monday 18 December, Backwell - Rodney Road, 2.30pm - 3.30pm
- Thursday 21 December, Barwell - Car park opposite the primary school, 3.30pm - 4.30pm

## Have your say

### Council four-year plan and budget



Closes **Wednesday 10 January at 5pm**

<https://n-somerset.inconsult.uk/planandbudget2024/consultationHome>



## Have your say

What should our priorities be for the next four years?

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planandbudget2024](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planandbudget2024)

**North Somerset Council**  
5 December 2023

Weston-super-Mare! What are you saying?

Come along to our drop-in event tomorrow (Wednesday 6 December) and help shape our priorities and budget!

6.30pm to 7.30pm  
Town Hall

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planandbudget2024](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planandbudget2024)

Weston-super-Mare Town Council SuperWeston Super Culture

## Have your say

Help shape our priorities and budget

Wednesday 6 December  
6.30pm to 7.30pm  
Town Hall, Weston

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planandbudget2024](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planandbudget2024)

# Background

Responses across the engagement and consultation programme were as follows:

Engagement method	Type	Number of responses or people reached
Online survey/paper surveys	Online	517
Public engagement sessions in towns	In person	124
Mobile library sessions in rural areas	In person	72
Town and parish council survey and forums	Online	21
Stakeholder group sessions	In person / online	195
		929

- Responses to engagement survey questions have been analysed and number/percentage responses provided overall.
- Where qualitative data was gathered (questions, comments), they have been grouped thematically from the notes taken by officers.

# Survey results

## Our vision



56% of responses to the survey agreed with the vision to be open, fair and green



### You said, we did

You told us what you thought being open, fair and green should mean. This has been included in the DRAFT Corporate Plan as part of our vision statement.



#### Open

You told us open means being honest and transparent. It means listening to you and your views on the decisions we make. It means being accountable for how we spend your money and ensuring we provide the very best value we can.



#### Fair

You told us fair means being accessible and inclusive in how we work. It means listening to the views of all groups and acting on local issues. It means ensuring equity in access to services.



#### Green

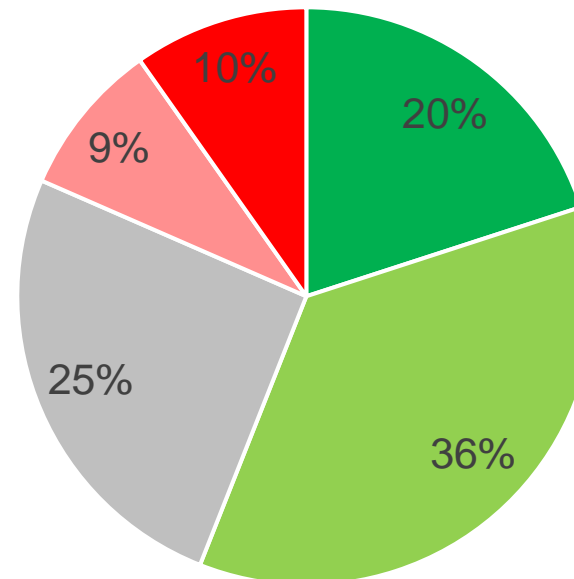
You told us green means we take our responsibility to respond to the climate emergency seriously. It means we do all we can to understand the impact our actions have on the environment and mitigate them where possible.

## The vision: open, fair and green

Where there was disagreement with the vision, there were a number of reasons given including disagreement with some elements of the vision, concerns about the effectiveness of action, and concerns about the value for money provided.

Do you agree that this vision is right for North Somerset?  
(450 responses)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree



### You said, we did

You told us you wanted to see the action plan that will deliver this vision. We have published the DRAFT Corporate Plan action plan for comment.



## Our ambitions

Our children and young people are cared for, safe, supported, and are given equality of opportunity to thrive



82% of survey responses agreed with the ambition for children and young people

Our communities are caring, healthy and safe, where people help each other to live well



80% of survey responses agreed with the ambition for adults and communities

Our towns and villages are thriving and sustainable places to live, work and visit



81% of survey responses agreed with the ambition for North Somerset as a place

Our council delivers consistently good services and value for money to support ~~an ambitious~~ our community



68% of survey responses agreed with the ambition for how we work as a council

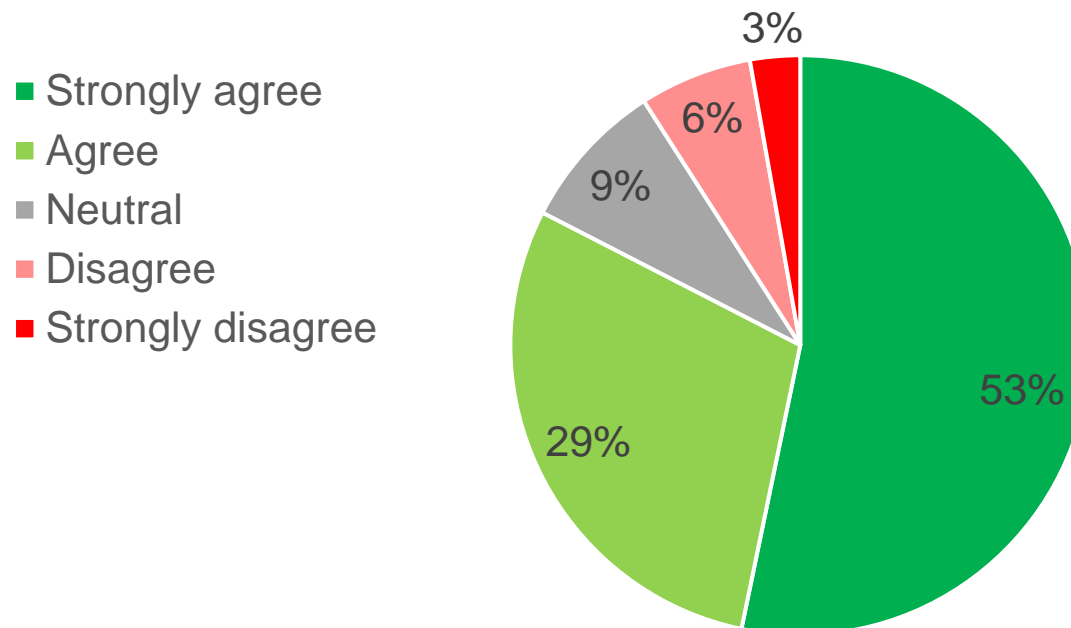
**You said, we did**

You told us did not like the word 'ambitious' in this ambition as it was not clear what was meant by it. We have removed it.

## The ambition for children and young people

Where there was disagreement with the ambition, generally it was because there was concern about how effective actions might be to achieve this ambition and a request for actions to be clear and specific.

Do you agree this is the right ambition for children and young people in North Somerset? (445 responses)



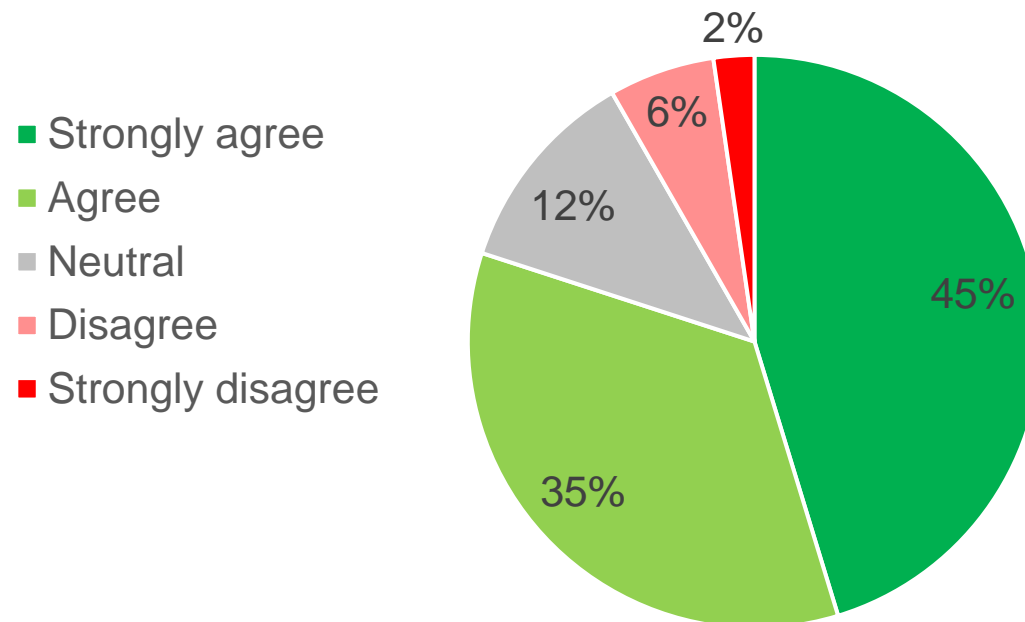
### You said, we did

You told us you wanted to see the action plan that will deliver this ambition with clear outcomes that you could hold us to account on. We have published the DRAFT Corporate Plan action plan for comment.

## The ambition for adults and communities

Where there was disagreement with the ambition, generally it was because there was concern about how realistic the ambition is, the level of actual vs perceived commitment, the level of focus against it, and area specific concerns.

Do you agree this is the right ambition for adults and communities in North Somerset? (435 responses)



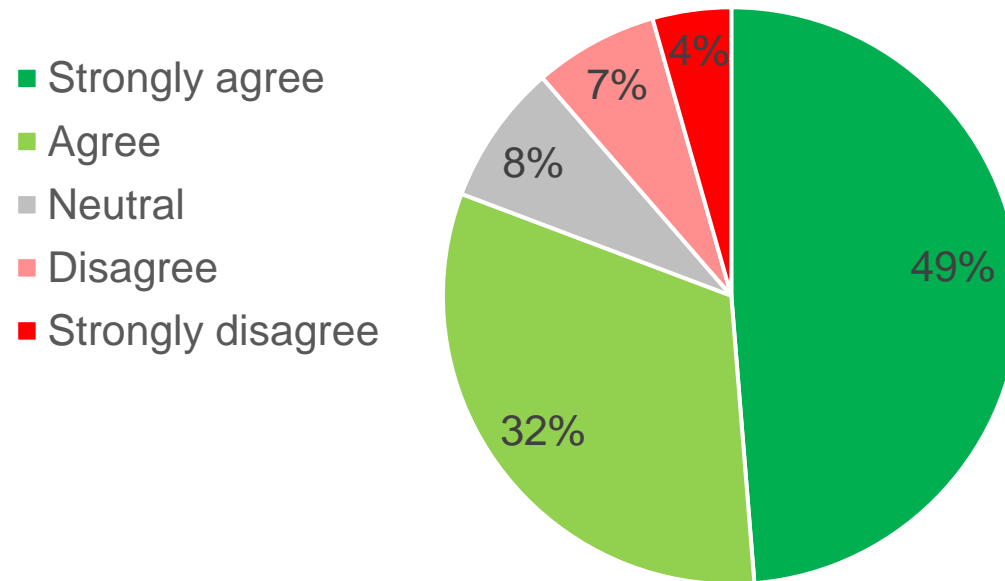
### You said, we did

You told us you wanted to see the action plan that will deliver this ambition with clear outcomes that you could hold us to account on. We have published the DRAFT Corporate Plan action plan for comment.

## The ambition for North Somerset as a place

Where there was disagreement with the ambition, there was concern about how realistic the ambition is and some specific concerns about the condition of the town centres, employment opportunities, and safety.

Do you agree this is the right ambition for North Somerset as a place? (429 responses)



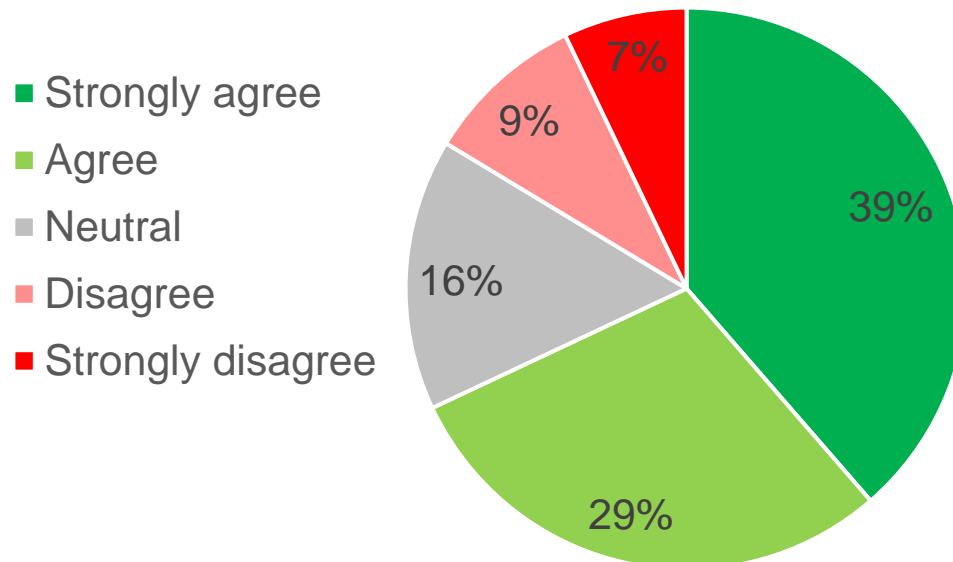
### You said, we did

You told us you wanted to see the action plan that will deliver this ambition with clear outcomes that you could hold us to account on. We have published the DRAFT Corporate Plan action plan for comment.

## The ambition for how we work as a council

Where there was disagreement with the ambition, as well as concerns about what is meant by value for money and some specific areas of concern, there was a strong theme around what is meant by an 'ambitious community'.

Do you agree this is the right ambition for how we work as a council? (420 responses)



### You said, we did

You told us you wanted to see the action plan that will deliver this ambition with clear outcomes that you could hold us to account on. We have published the DRAFT Corporate Plan action plan for comment.

## Issues

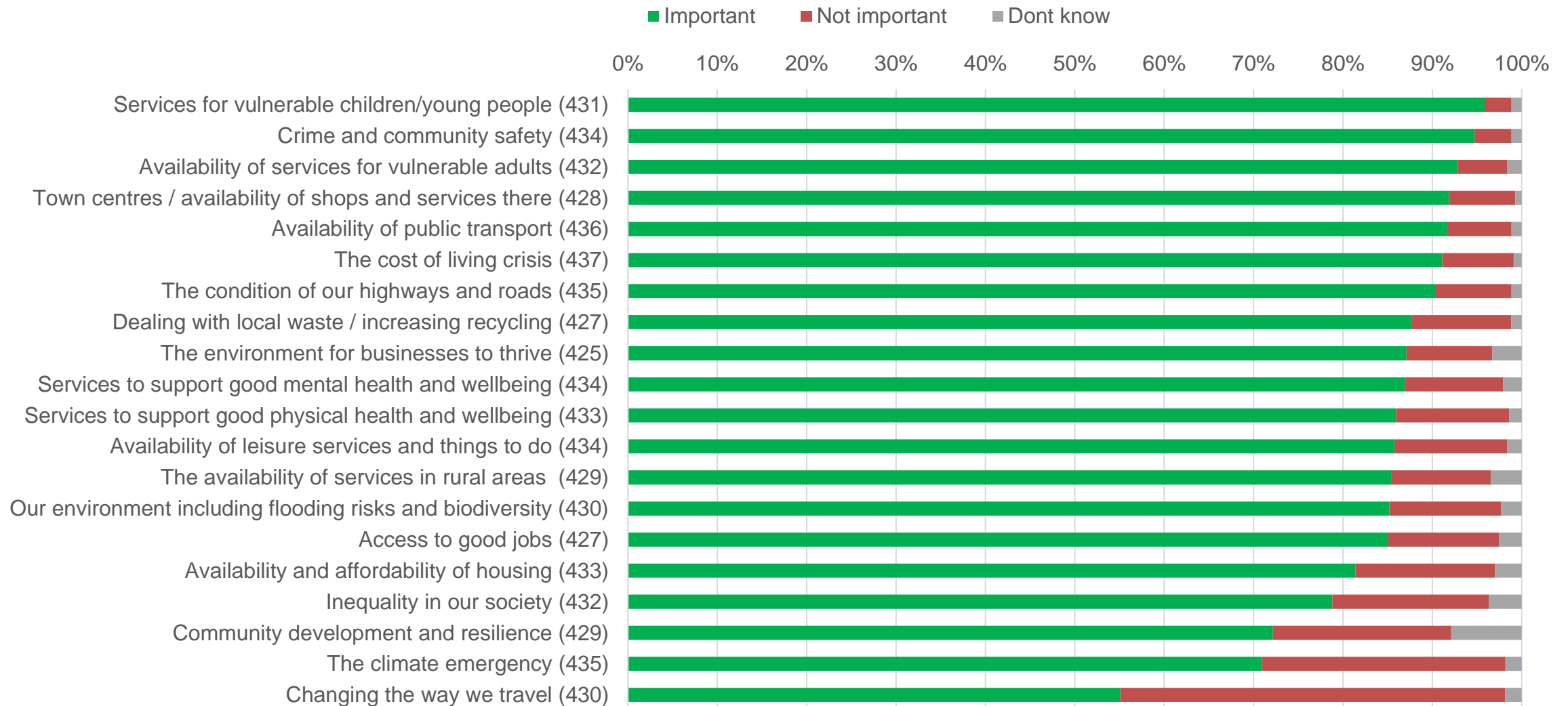
The issues identified as being the most important in North Somerset in the coming year were the availability of services for vulnerable children and young people, crime and community safety, and the availability of services for vulnerable adults. The issues given as the least important were changing the way we travel, the climate emergency and community development and resilience.

The issues identified as being the most important personally in the coming year were the condition of our highways and roads, crime and community safety, and the condition of the town centres and the availability of shops and services there. The issues given as the least important were changing the way we travel, availability and affordability of housing, and the climate emergency.

### **You said, we did**

We have agreed a number of commitments that will help us to achieve each ambition. The feedback given as part of this engagement was used to develop these commitments and the DRAFT action plan.

## Which of these issues will be most important in North Somerset in the coming year?



## Approaches to how we should work

The approaches for how we work in the future most strongly agreed with were making more efficient use of council assets land and buildings and changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working.

The approaches least agreed with were reducing the quality of services and out-sourcing to commercial companies.

### **You said, we did**

You have reviewed our saving proposals against these approaches and grouped them ready for comments as part of the consultation phase.



## Updated budget proposals – savings themes

### **Adult's transformation**

Initiatives designed to support adults within the community to maximise their independence and to manage demand through focusing on those who need services the most, expanding reablement and preventative services, and also increasing alternative types of provision. Review how we deliver services and ensure that they are efficient and fit for purpose and make the best use of resources.

### **Children's transformation**

Implementation of a transformation programme designed to improve outcomes for children and young people and manage the increasing demand for council services by reviewing our approach to service delivery and focusing resources on those who need them most. This will include changes to how we deliver services in the future, working with partners, being more efficient, and considering alternative provision where appropriate.

## Updated budget proposals – savings themes

### **Waste services transformation**

Implementation of a transformation programme that supports the council's Waste Strategy which will firstly ensure that services are efficient and deliver value for money. The programme will also review policies and service delivery models that help us to deliver carbon reduction targets through initiatives that support increased recycling and reduced waste.

### **The way we work**

Looking at how we work in the future to deliver services to local communities, making more efficient use of council assets land and buildings, and changing working practices to make better use of technology and more efficient ways of working.

## Updated budget proposals – savings themes

### **Services we provide to the community**

These proposals will focus on areas of the council's spending where there is some choice or discretion in terms of providing the service at all, or in the scope, scale and delivery model involved, any of which could be reviewed or changed in the future.

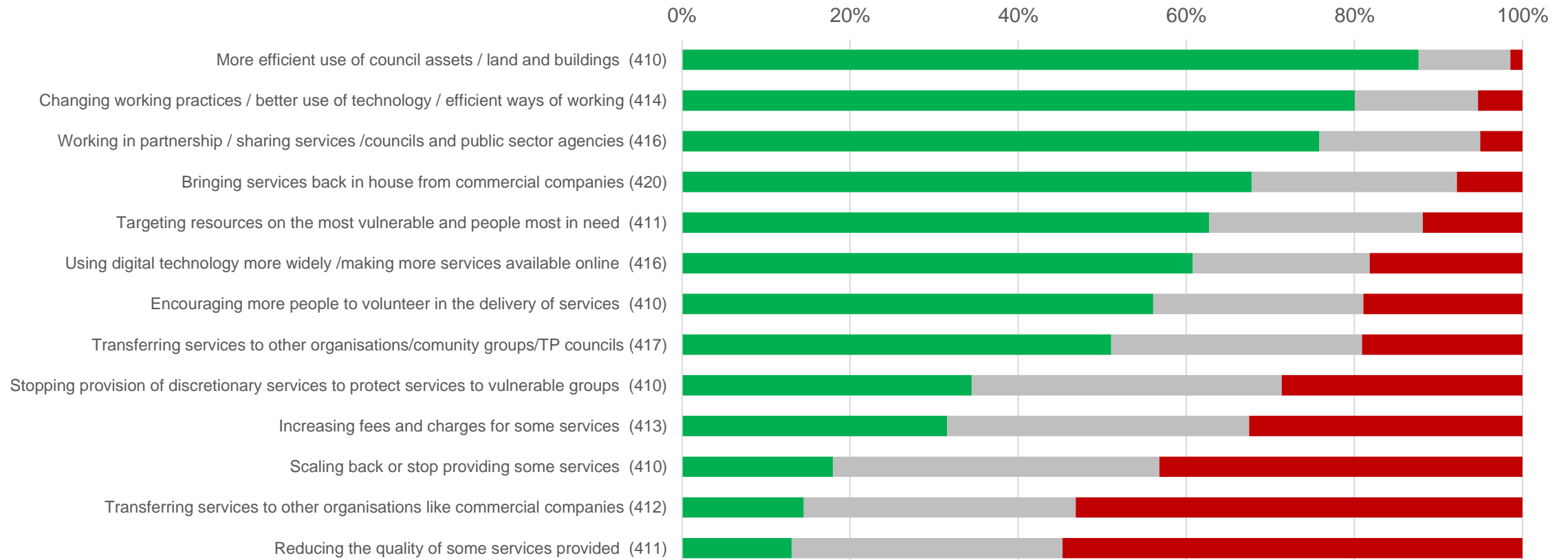
### **Income generation**

These proposals will ensure that customers contribute a realistic price through any fees and charges that they may be required to pay each year which recognises the costs that the council has had to absorb to deliver services or hold assets. It means that we do not subsidise discretionary services through the budget and resources can be focused on support for vulnerable people.

# Different approaches to how we work

How strongly do you agree or disagree with using the following approaches for future delivery of services?

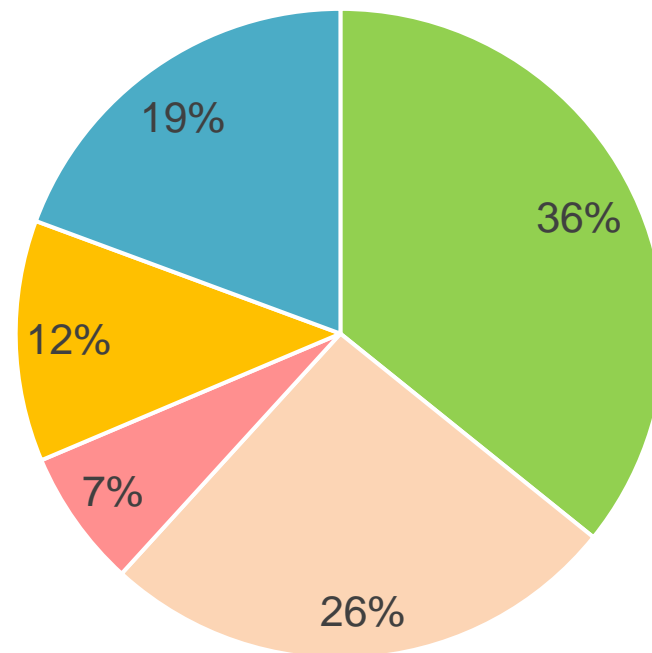
■ Agree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Disagree



## Council tax

What level of council tax increase would you support in the coming year? (408 responses)

- Up to 3%
- Between 3% and 5%
- More than 5%
- Aligned to the government limit
- Aligned to inflation



### You said, we did

In our budget papers we are assuming a council tax increase of 2.99% as well as an additional adult social care levy of 2% to balance our budget for 2024/25.

## Demographics of respondents

Neither the engagement or consultation surveys were sampled surveys meaning they were unlikely to return a response which would be a representative sample of the North Somerset population.

Analysis of respondents to the North Somerset population shows that:

- Responses are well matched to geographical areas based on postcode matched to wards and then grouped by the four towns and all other areas being rural.
- Responses are over-represented on females, residents aged over 55 years, non-white ethnicity, disabled and carers compared to Census 2021 data.
- Responses are **significantly** under-represented for the under 30s age group.

# **Public engagement sessions overview**

## Summary

- Across the public engagement, mobile libraries and stakeholder group sessions over 400 residents/ stakeholders were reached. Attendance at the different sessions was mixed.
- Feedback was received that more needed to be done to advertise the public engagement sessions to ensure better attendance.
- There was a general positive response to the mobile library engagement sessions given they combined more than one activity.
- Stakeholder group sessions were well received and there was a clear desire for more of this type of engagement in general.
- The budget slides received positive feedback due to the additional context they gave.

### **You said, we did**

You told us you wanted to see more of this type of engagement, so we have confirmed this as a commitment in the DRAFT Corporate Plan.

### **You said, we did**

You said the budget information we shared with you was helpful, so we have included that information in the DRAFT Corporate Plan along with some additional information on our spending proposals for 2024/25.



## Summary

- These sessions were not intended to give verbatim results back but to give themes from residents around issues and concerns and to provide an opportunity for engagement. The main themes across the sessions related to:
  - Poor communications, consultation and a lack of general engagement from the council and around specific projects.
  - How all partners, council, town and parish council and communities can work better together.
  - Accessibility of services linked to digital exclusion and customer services provision.
  - Public transport and access to services in rural areas.
  - Housing development / local plan.
  - Area specific topics such as road closures/changes and support for local services.
  - Stakeholder specific topics such as support for the voluntary and community sector.

### **You said, we did**

You told us in these sessions that you wanted to see clear actions that you could hold us to account on. We have published the DRAFT Corporate Plan action plan for comment.

For any questions on this engagement and consultation programme please contact [business.planning@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:business.planning@n-somerset.gov.uk)

