

Appendix B

Budget 2025-26 consultation survey responses

About the consultation

The Budget 2025-26 consultation related to proposals which if implemented could generate additional income and savings of approximately £3.5 million. The proposals consisted primarily of increases in fees and charges for council services and, as a last resort, making changes to some of the discretionary services we offer.

The council consulted with people that live in, work in and visit Cambridge to see what matters to them most.

- The consultation was open for comments from Wednesday 23 October to Wednesday 4 December 2024.
- The consultation was hosted on our consultation and engagement platform: [Budget 2025-26](#) (although participants could contact us if another survey format was needed throughout the consultation).
- The consultation was publicised through a number of digital and offline channels, including coverage in local papers, outward facing artwork at Mandela House, promotion on the council's website, and social media including paid-for posts.
- 1,095 responses to the survey were received.

Responses to the survey questions are set out on the following pages, including summary analysis of the free text responses.

Participant demographics

Business or community group

29 respondents said that they responded on behalf of a business or community group.

- 15 respondents on behalf of a business
- 14 respondents on behalf of a community group

Sex as registered at birth

76% respondents provided information on sex as registered at birth:

- 37% were female
- 35% were male
- 4% preferred not to say
- 24% unknown

Ethnicity

72% of respondents provided information on their ethnicity (28% did not provide a response):

Ethnicity	Number of respondents	% respondents providing information	% Cambridge population
White: British	623	78.6%	52.9%
White: Irish	16	2.0%	1.3%
White: Other	106	13.4%	20.2%
Asian or British Asian: Indian	6	0.7%	4.1%
Asian or British Asian: Pakistani	1	0.1%	1%
Asian or British Asian: Bangladeshi	2	0.3%	4.4%
Asian or British Asian: Chinese	8	1.0%	2%
Asian or British Asian: Other	6	0.8%	3.4%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	1	0.1%	0.4%
Black or Black British: African	1	0.1%	1.7%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	1	0.1%	0.8%
Mixed: White and Black African	2	0.3%	0.7%
Mixed: White and Asian	7	0.9%	2.1%
Mixed: Other	9	1.1%	1.6%
Arab	1	0.1%	0.8%
Any other ethnic group	3	0.4%	2.3%

Age

50% (545) respondents provided information on their age (50% did not provide a response):

Age groups	Number of respondents	% respondents providing information	Cambridge population	% Cambridge population
16 to 19	4	0.7%	10,345	8.3%
20 to 24	23	4.2%	20,252	16.2%
25 to 34	101	18.5%	29,869	23.9%
35 to 49	133	24.4%	27,683	22.1%
50 to 64	132	24.2%	20,107	16.1%
65 to 74	97	17.8%	8,742	7.0%
75 to 84	50	9.2%	5,537	4.4%
85 plus	5	0.9%	2,477	2.0%

Annual household income

45% (495) respondents provided information on their annual household income (55% did not provide a response):

Annual household income	Number of respondents	% respondents providing information	Households in Cambridge	% households in Cambridge
Less than £10,000	7	1.4%	1,198	2.6%
£10,000 to £19,999	28	5.6%	4,537	10.0%
£20,000 to £29,999	66	13.3%	5,959	13.1%
£30,000 to £39,999	53	10.7%	5,771	12.7%
£40,000 to £49,999	41	8.3%	5,715	12.6%
£50,000 to £59,999	44	8.9%	5,222	11.5%
£60,000 to £69,999	36	7.3%	4,133	9.1%
£70,000 to £79,999	29	5.7%	3,289	7.3%
£80,000 to £89,999	32	6.5%	3,087	6.8%
£90,000 to £99,999	28	5.6%	2,647	5.8%
Over £100,000	131	26.5%	3,875	8.5%

Survey responses

What do you think are the three most important priorities for the city council to work on?

Multiple choice (participants could choose any many as required).



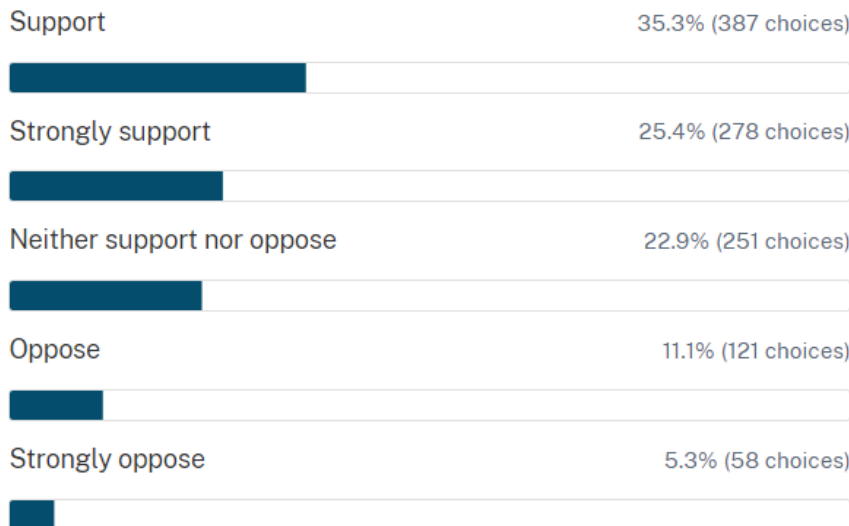
Where members of the public indicated 'something else' the following themes emerged from the 132 free text responses:

- **Urban Spaces and Cleanliness (29 mentions):** Comments emphasise maintaining and improving urban spaces, focusing on cleanliness, reducing litter, and creating welcoming environments, including enhancing green spaces for public use and well-being.

- **Cycling and Transport (21 mentions):** Respondents highlight the importance of cycling infrastructure and transport improvements, including safer cycling paths, prioritising active travel and reducing hazards for cyclists and improving road conditions.
- **Growth and Infrastructure (16 mentions):** Feedback focuses on managing urban growth and the infrastructure needed to support it, including planning sustainably for increased housing and population growth, and ensuring adequate infrastructure.
- **Environmental Concerns (9 mentions):** Environmental issues, particularly around sustainability and biodiversity, including protecting green spaces, tackling climate change through city-wide initiatives and investing in renewable energy and sustainable practices.
- **Community and Safety (8 mentions):** A smaller but significant number of comments focus on fostering community and ensuring safety, including promoting community well-being through local programmes and events, and suggestions for building community cohesion.

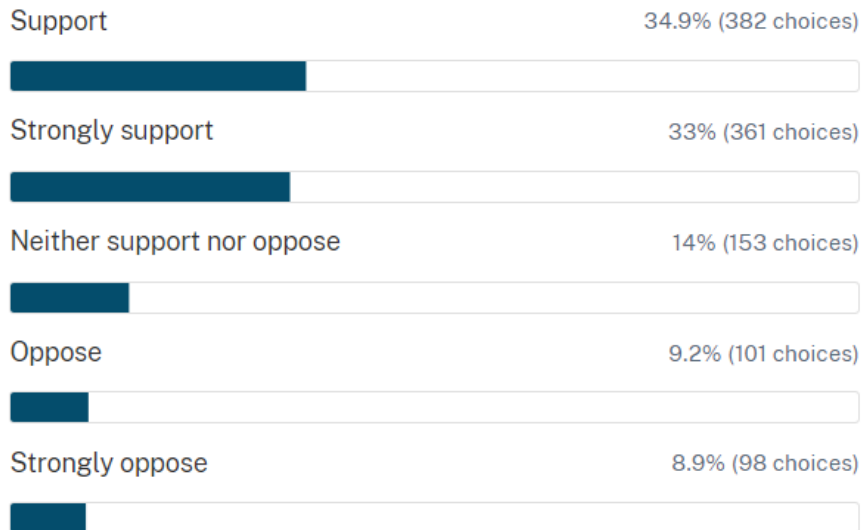
Should the council invest in using technology and data more, to find savings and improve efficiency in streets and open spaces?

- **60.7% (665 respondents) support or strongly support**
- 22.9% (251 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- 16.4% (179 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose



Should the council reduce the frequency of mowing and leaf collection in some areas?

- **67.9% (743 respondents) support or strongly support**
- 14.0% (153 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- 18.1% (199 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose



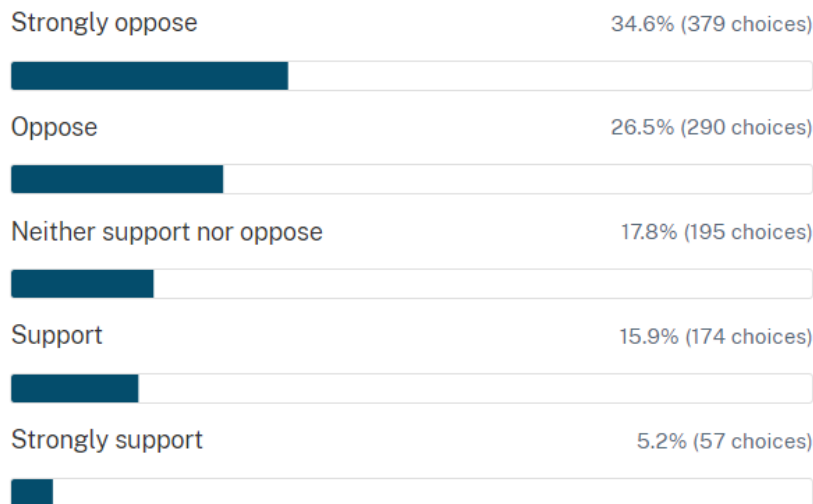
Should the council pass responsibility for funding the out of hours grazing management service to those who are allowed to graze their cattle on the city's commons?

- 32.1% (351 respondents) support or strongly support
- 16.3% (179 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **51.6% (565 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



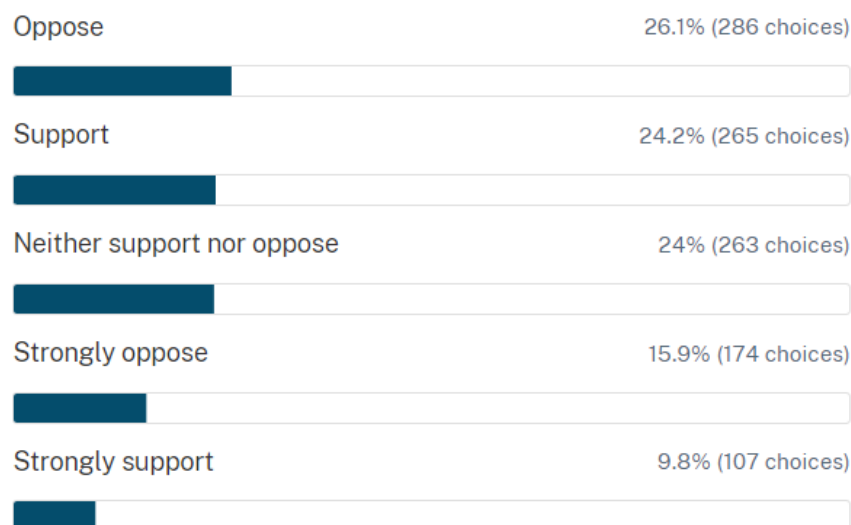
Should the council reduce the overall number of public toilets it manages?

- 21.1% (231 respondents) support or strongly support
- 17.8% (195 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **61.1% (669 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



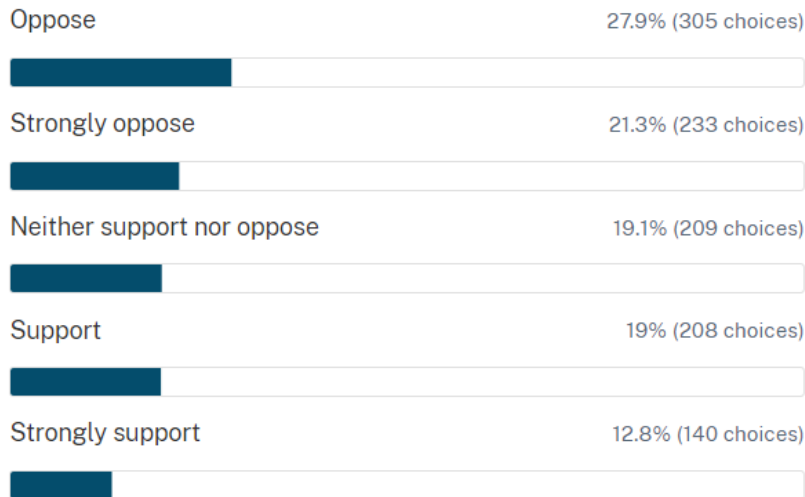
Should the council consider actively developing local community groups and transferring ownership of community centres?

- 34.0% (372 respondents) support or strongly support
- 24.0% (263 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **42.0% (460 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



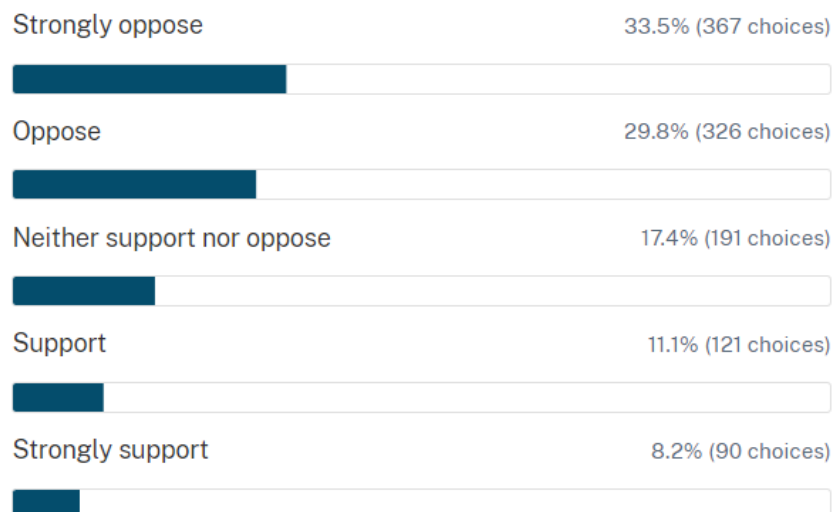
Should the council consider reducing the amount spent on CCTV cameras?

- 31.8% (348 respondents) support or strongly support
- 19.1% (209 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **49.1% (538 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



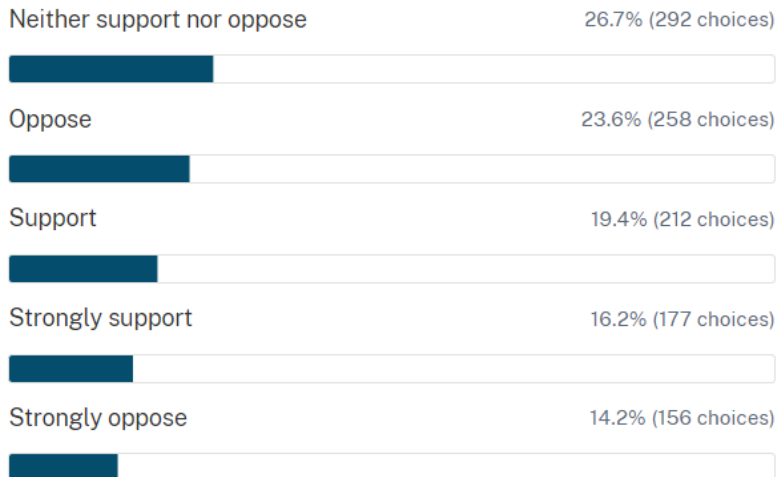
Should the council consider reducing its arts and cultural development programme?

- 19.3% (211 respondents) support or strongly support
- 17.4% (191 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **63.3% (693 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



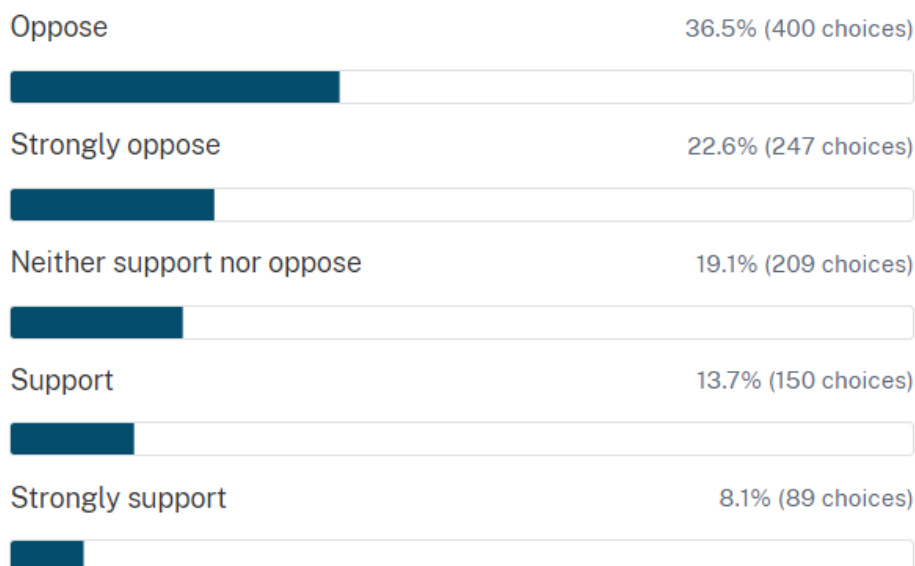
Do you support the council reducing its equalities and cohesion work in the wider community?

- 35.6% (389 respondents) support or strongly support
- 26.6% (292 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **37.8% (414 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



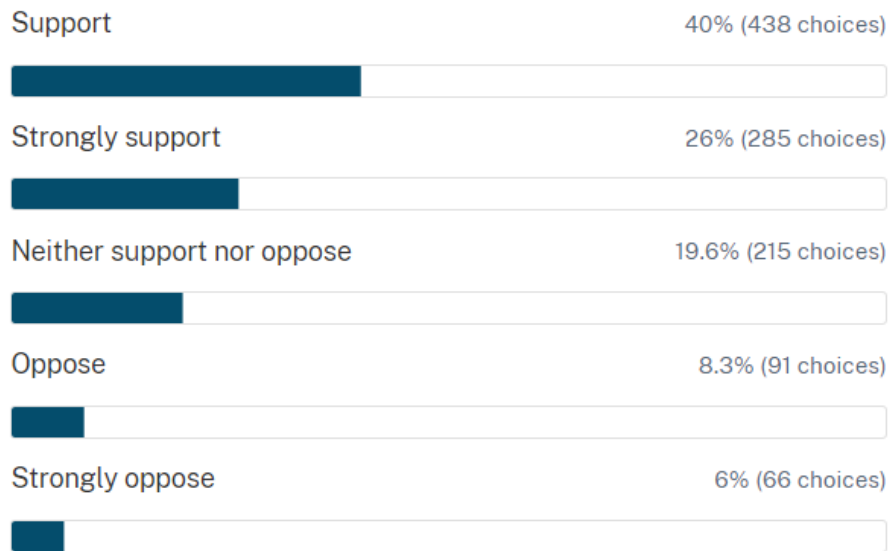
Should the council reduce its work to support residents to stay healthy and well?

- 21.8% (239 respondents) support or strongly support
- 19.1% (209 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- **59.1% (647 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose**



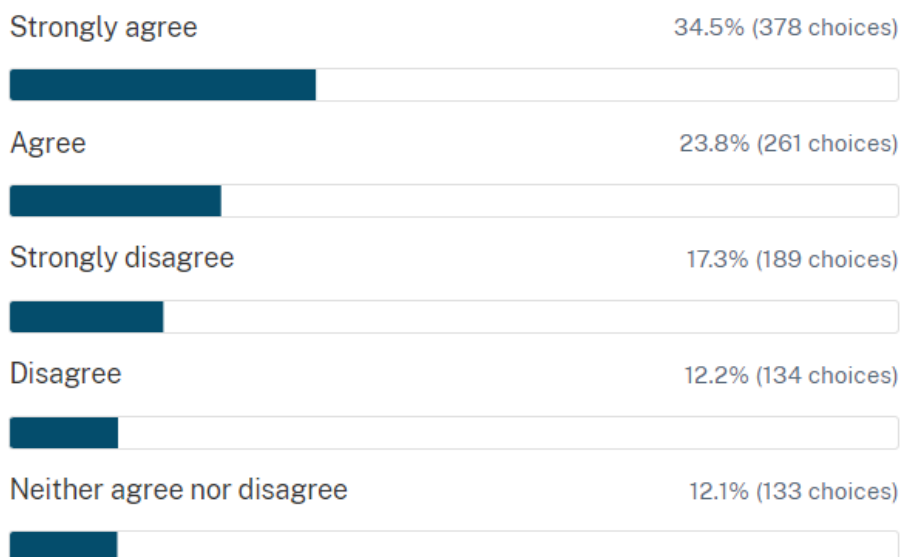
Should the council consider redeveloping or selling commercial properties that generate the least income?

- **66.0% (723 respondents) support or strongly support**
- 19.6% (215 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- 14.4% (157 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose



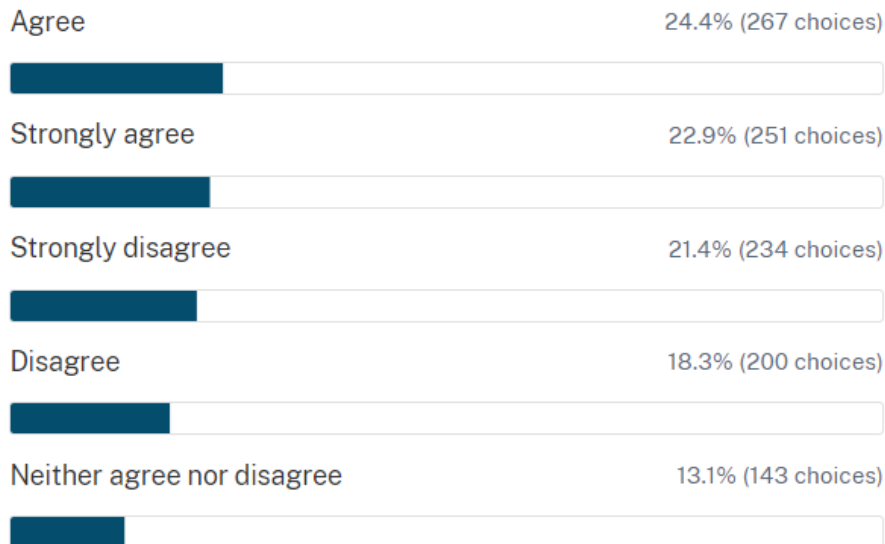
Should the council consider increasing its car park charges to make a higher contribution to other council services?

- **58.4% (639 respondents) agree or strongly agree**
- 12.1% (133 respondents) neither agree nor disagree
- 29.5% (323 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree



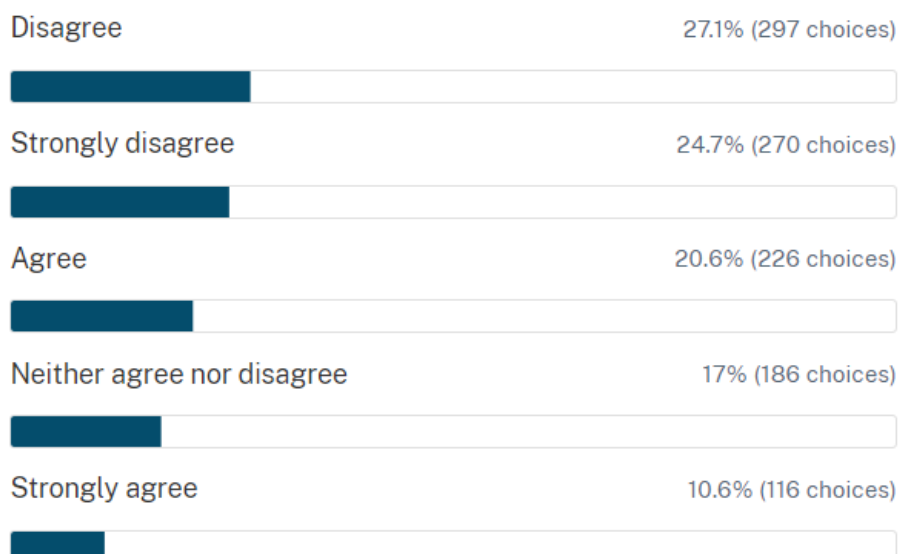
Should the council consider reintroducing charging for parking after 6pm?

- **47.3% (518 respondents) agree or strongly agree**
- 13.1% (143 respondents) neither agree nor disagree
- 39.6% (434 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree



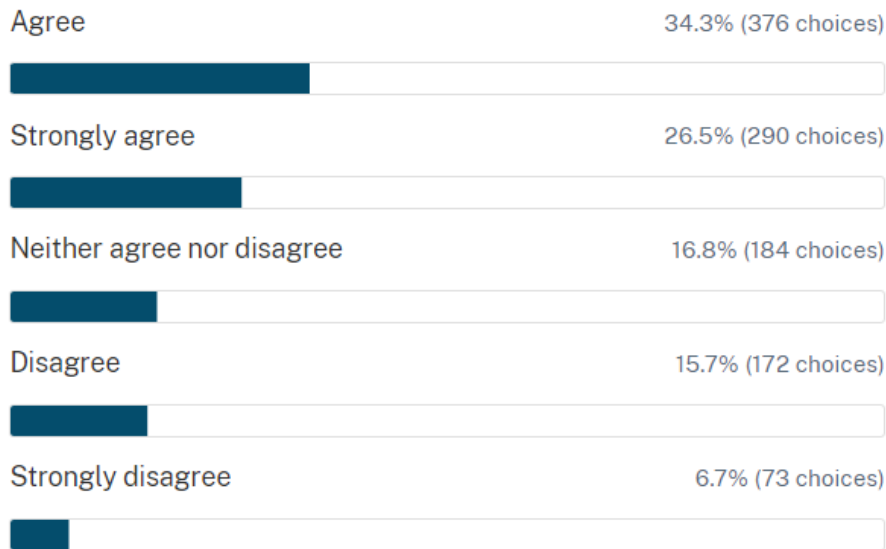
Should the council stop subsidising the use of its swimming pools, so the costs of maintaining and running the pools are covered by those who use them?

- 31.2% (342 respondents) agree or strongly agree
- 17.0% (186 respondents) neither agree nor disagree
- **51.8% (567 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree**



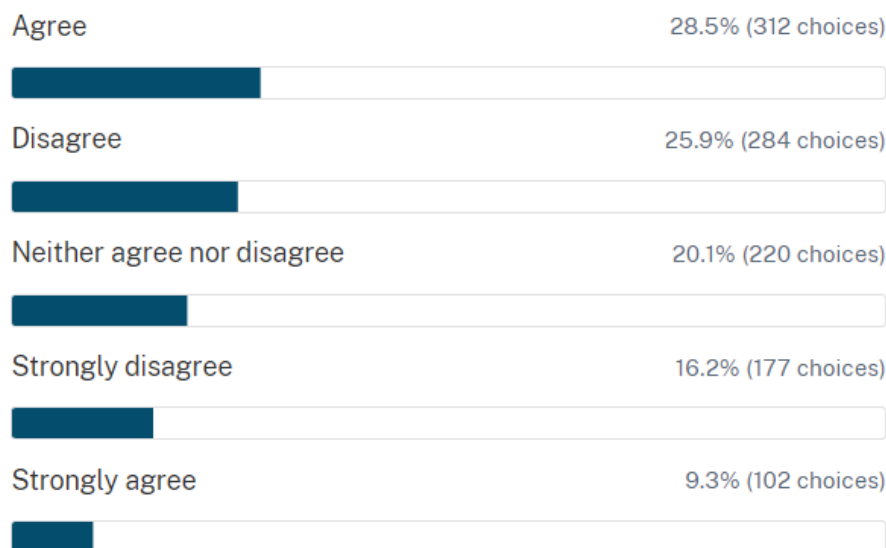
Should the council charge higher prices for non-Cambridge residents who use the council swimming pools?

- **60.8% (666 respondents) agree or strongly agree**
- 16.8% (184 respondents) neither agree nor disagree
- 22.4% (245 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree



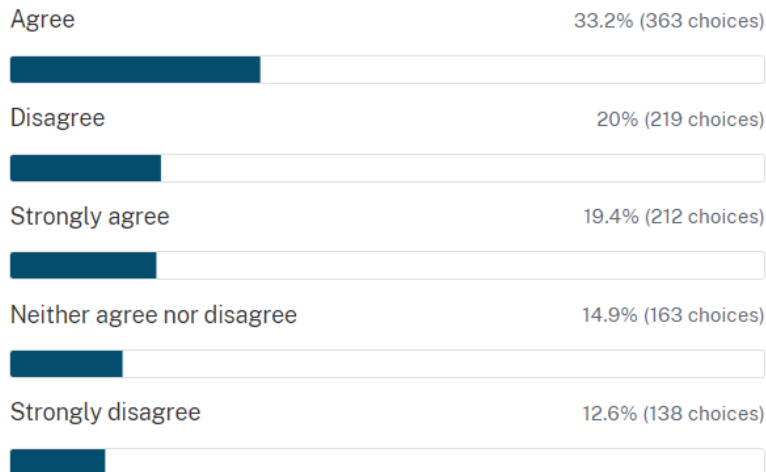
Should the council increase charges for people using sports and recreation facilities to better cover costs?

- 37.8% (414 respondents) agree or strongly agree
- 20.1% (220 respondents) neither agree nor disagree
- **42.1% (461 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree**

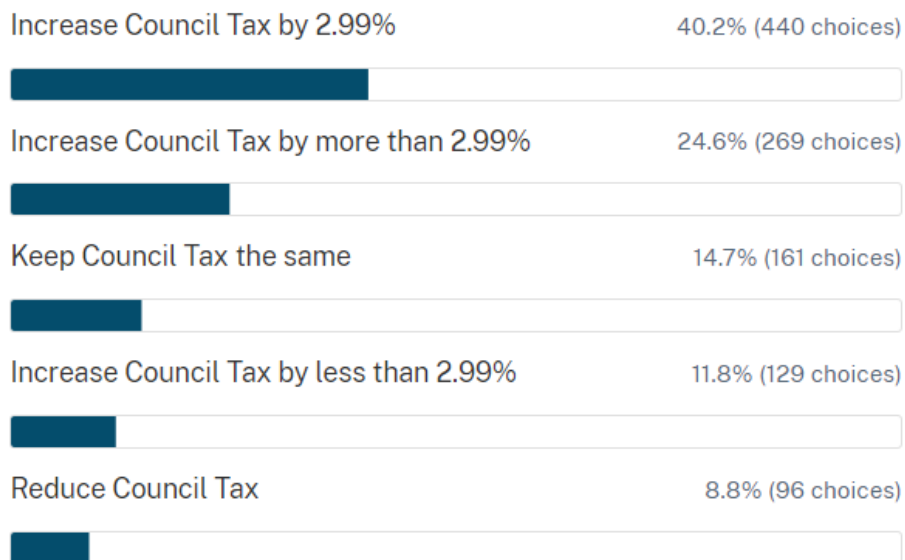


Should the council introduce charges for people using pest control services (with some exceptions for people on lower incomes)?

- **52.5% (575 respondents) agree or strongly agree**
- 14.9% (163 respondents) neither agree nor disagree
- 32.6% (357 respondents) disagree or strongly disagree



Bearing in mind the council's budget gap, which of the following options do you support?



Please explain why you chose this option.

Respondents expressed a variety of opinions on Council Tax and city council priorities.

A common theme was the desire to maintain or improve services without significantly increasing Council Tax, acknowledging the current cost of living crisis. More than two out of three indicated support for a modest Council Tax increase in line with inflation (2.99%) to avoid cuts in services, or greater increase.

Some respondents suggest that the council should find efficiencies and manage budgets better rather than increasing taxes. There are also calls for the council to lobby for reform of the Council Tax system, arguing that it is outdated and regressive.

Overall, while there is recognition of the need for adequate funding for city council services, there were also concerns raised about the financial burden on residents and a desire for fair and efficient use of council resources.

It should be noted that Cambridgeshire County Council has proposed to increase Council Tax by 4.99%. This would have a much greater financial impact on households than the increase proposed by the city council.

Council Tax is divided between the county council, the police and crime commissioner, the fire authority and the city council. **In 2024/25 our share is 10.02%.**

| How Council Tax is split among authorities, based on a Band D property

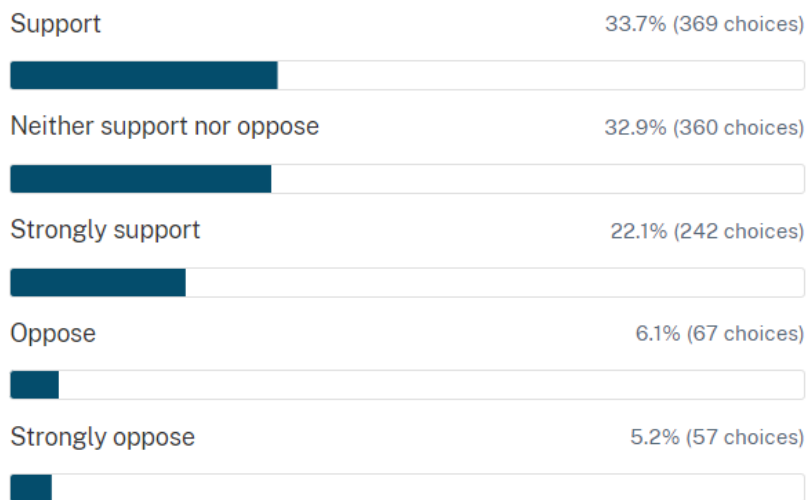
Authority	2023/24	2024/25	Share
County council	£1,542.87	£1,619.82	72.03%
Police and crime commissioner	£272.52	£285.48	12.69%
City council	£218.85	£225.39	10.02%
Fire authority	£79.92	£82.26	3.66%
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority	£12	£36	1.6%
Total	£2,126.16	£2,248.95	100%

A household living in a Band D property in Cambridge will pay £2,248.95 in Council Tax from April 2024, of which we will retain £225.39.

[What your Council Tax pays for - Cambridge City Council.](#)

To what extent would you support a voluntary Council Tax contribution scheme being introduced in Cambridge?

- **55.8% (611 respondents) support or strongly support**
- 32.9% (360 respondents) neither support nor oppose
- 11.3% (124 respondents) oppose or strongly oppose



If you have opposed taking some of the above measures, what other measures would you support instead, to achieve a balanced budget?

Respondents suggested a variety of alternative measures to achieve a balanced budget.

A common theme is the introduction of charges for road users, with suggestions including congestion charges, road charging and higher Council Tax for car owners.

Many support revising Council Tax bands to increase contributions from wealthier residents and implementing a tourist tax.

There are calls for the council to improve efficiency and cut costs, such as reducing management overheads. Some respondents suggest charging for currently free services like public toilets and increasing fees for non-residents using council facilities.

Several responses focus on the need to protect community services and oppose cuts that would impact public safety, such as reducing CCTV coverage. Others propose more radical fiscal measures, such as merging councils for administrative savings or introducing workplace parking levies.

The idea of a voluntary contribution scheme to supplement Council Tax was met with scepticism, with some preferring direct taxation methods. There is also a sentiment that the council should capitalise on Cambridge's status as a tourist destination by increasing fees for events and services that cater to visitors.

Overall, respondents are looking for creative and equitable ways to generate revenue without compromising essential services or the unique character of Cambridge, such as the grazing of cows on commons.

Do you have any other comments about the measures set out above or any other proposals? For example, are there any that you particularly support or oppose, and why?

Respondents expressed strong opposition to certain proposed cuts, particularly those that would negatively impact the tradition of cattle grazing on commons. Many are concerned that passing the costs of the pinder service onto farmers could lead to the loss of this iconic aspect of Cambridge's local identity.

There is also concern about potential increases in Council Tax, with many feeling it is a regressive tax that disproportionately affects those on lower incomes.

Some suggest again that the council should focus on improving efficiency and optimising processes to save money rather than cutting services.

Several respondents have suggested alternative revenue sources, such as introducing a tourist tax, increasing parking charges or implementing a voluntary Council Tax for those who can afford to contribute more.

The importance of maintaining public toilets is highlighted, with concerns about cleanliness and accessibility, especially during summer months. There is also a call for maintaining subsidies for leisure facilities like swimming pools and tennis courts to ensure they remain accessible to families and disadvantaged groups.

Overall, respondents emphasise the need to preserve community services and the unique character of Cambridge, while exploring more equitable ways to increase revenue and reduce costs without disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations.