

Communications and Engagement Report

Our Funded Future

Aug 2022



Phase 0 & 1



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Introduction

At its meeting on 28 June 2022 Council committed to having a conversation with the community about our financial situation and a range of potential options to address the projected \$80M shortfall over the next 10 years.

A comprehensive communications and engagement plan was developed to meet the following primary objectives:

- Increase community awareness of Council's financial situation and its journey to date
- Inform the community about Council's financial sustainability options
- Seek community feedback on options for Council's financial sustainability
- Identify the community's view on options for financial sustainability

A three-phased engagement approach named 'Our funded future' commenced on 29 July 2022.

- Phase 0 – Community education
To inform the community on Council's financial situation and the current and short-term mitigation strategies that have been implemented to date.
- Phase 1 – Financial sustainability options
To provide non-rate increase and rate increase options to the community that creates a financially sustainable Council.
- Phase 2 – Public exhibition
To publically exhibit preferred options within the Integrated Planning & Reporting documents (This phase is dependent on the outcome of Phase 1).

This report provides a summary of the community conversation including key findings and an analysis of the engagement at the end of Phase 1.

Communication and Engagement Methodology

Two of the key objectives for the Communications and Engagement Plan guided Phase 0 and Phase 1 Our funded future communication program design.

- Increase community awareness of Council’s financial situation and its journey to date
- Inform the community about Council’s financial sustainability options

The communication program was designed based on the demographic analysis or audience profile for the Port Stephens community.

Phase 0 – Community education (29 June to 17 July)

A diverse range of communication methods were used throughout Phase 0 to achieve raise community awareness of Council’s financial position. Table 1 outlines a description and the reach for each method used. Further details and examples of all methods are included in Appendix A.

Table 1: Phase 0 Communication methods

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Project webpage	Our funded future dedicated website page www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/our-funded-future Site includes various information including FAQ’s.	538 visits
Print or Online Media	<p>Media releases</p> <p>29 June 2022: Port Stephens Council commits to driving long term financial sustainability</p> <p>7 July 2022: Independent experts say it’s time for change</p> <p>12 July 2022: Local experts needed to guide Port Stephens funded future</p> <p>Media related via Media Monitors</p> <p>7 July 2022 The Mirage ‘Independent experts say it’s time for change’</p> <p>7 July 2022 The National Tribune ‘Independent experts say it’s time for change’</p> <p>8 July 2022 Port Stephens Examiner ‘Consultation aims to strike a balance’,</p> <p>12 July 2022 Intouch Magazine ‘ Independent experts say it’s time for change’</p> <p>13 July 2022 News of the Area ‘Independent experts say it’s time for change’</p>	<p>25,000 distribution</p> <p>10,000 circulation</p>

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Paid print advertising	14 July 2022 Port Stephens Examiner, 1 x paid printed advert	25,000 distribution
Radio	13 July 2022 ABC 6:35 am 'Port Stephens Council to look at bottom line'	
Social Media	Three Social posts (organic)	
	29 June 2022: Port Stephens Council commits to driving long term financial sustainability	3538 reach; 370 clicks
	7 July 2022: Independent experts say it's time for change	4478 reach; 114 clicks
	12 July 2022: Local experts needed to guide Port Stephens funded future	8199 reach; 376 clicks
	One Social post (paid Facebook ad)	
	13 July 2022: Save the date!	4,546
	One Instagram post	
	29 June 2022 '...securing long term financial sustainability'	207
Direct email	7 July 2022 group email to key community groups to introduce the project and offer special briefing sessions	10 groups
Newsletter printed 'Your Port'	July 2022 information for rate payers (26,000 copies printed the remainder sent as a pdf)	35,478 with rates notice
Key stakeholder meetings	8 July 2022 Tomaree Ratepayers & Residents Association Inc. (TRRA)	1 group

Phase 1 – Financial sustainability options (18 July to 8 August)

Communication methods were expanded throughout Phase 1 to maximise community awareness of Councils non-rate income and rate income options and the opportunities for the community to have their say. Table 2 outlines a description and the reach for each method used. Further details and examples of all methods are included in Appendix B.

Table 2: Phase 1 Communication methods

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Project webpage	Our funded future dedicated website page www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/our-funded-future Site included the link to Ethelo survey tool; various information including increased FAQ's; videos; webinar from independent experts and a rates calculator.	3,794 visits
	Rates calculator usage (download requests only)	43
Print Media	Media releases 18 July 2022 'Have your say on Port Stephens funded future'	
	Media related via Media Monitors 21 July 2022 'Rate hike back on the table', Port Stephens Examiner (front page)	25,000 distribution 10,000 circulation
	26 July 2022 'Heading Towards Another SRV', News of the area, (letter to the editor)	25,000 distribution
	28 July 2022 'Villages should pay fair share', Port Stephens Examiner (letter to the editor)	
Paid print advertising	2 print advertisements 28 July 2022 Council notices, Port Stephens Examiner Paid printed advert	25,000 distribution
	11 August 2022 Council notices, Port Stephens Examiner Paid printed advert	25,000 distribution
Radio	Six radio stories 2HD 2 July 2022 NewFM 8am 22 July 2022 2EL 8:39am 27 July 2022 2SM 8:40am 27 July 2022 2PM Radio 531 8:36am 27 July 2022 2HD 8:36am 27 July 2022	
	Social Media	
	14 Facebook posts (organic) [REDACTED]	
	20 July 2022 'Join us this evening for a <u>LIVE Q&A</u> session on Our Funded Future...'	627 reach; 16 clicks

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Social Media Cont.	20 July 2022 'Facebook Live Q&A community information session' 5pm-6:30pm	2900 reach; 826 clicks
	21 July 2022 'Be part of the discussion and help us decide...'. Video included	1756 reach; 135 clicks
	26 July 2022 'Tomorrow, we'll be hanging out at the Medowie community hall ..'	907 reach; 17 clicks
	29 July 2022 'What would reducing our services look like?' <u>Video</u> response to community question	1001 reach; 112 clicks
	30 July 2022 'Would a rate increase be an increase on my total rates bill?' <u>Video</u> response to community question	1277 reach; 176 clicks
	31 July 2022 'Why isn't Council considered 'fit for the future' anymore?' <u>Video</u> response to community question	1910 reach; 291 clicks
	1 August 2022 'What is the difference between Council's capital budget and maintenance budget?' <u>Video</u> response to community question	1100 reach; 116 clicks
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	2 August 2022: Has Council undertaken an independent review of its finances? <u>Video</u> response to community question	746 reach; 112 clicks
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
4 August 2022: Does Council get more money when my land value increase? <u>Video</u> response to community question	816 reach; 72 clicks	
5 August 2022: 'What do you think of the rate income and non rate income options we've proposed?'	1164 reach; 19 clicks	
Three Facebook posts (paid ads)		
	Posts focusing on 'Save the date!', non-rate income and rate income option and community information sessions.	20,352
Seven Instagram posts		
	20 July 2022 'Facebook live event'	123 reach
	20 July 2022 'Options'	94 reach
	20 July 2022 'Learn more here!'	86 reach
	26 July 2022 'Medowie community session'	91 reach
	26 July 2022 'Online community sessions'	78 reach

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Social Media Cont.	26 July 2022 'Video explainer'	74 reach
	5 August 2022 'Last weekend to have your say'	164 reach
	One Google video ads (paid)	
	'Learn more about Our Funded Future includes primary video'	15, 300
Static displays	Project information provided at 15 sites including council sites and key sporting venues across the LGA	
Direct emails	19 July 2022 emails to key stakeholder groups to advise of community information sessions	20 groups
	19 July 2022 emails to local schools including poster	30 schools
	Various follow up emails/calls to special interest groups regarding special presentation offers	12 groups
Bulk e-newsletters	5 e-newsletters distributions	
	22 July 2022 Destination Port Stephens	379
	2 August 2022 Bizlink	839
	4 August 2022 Your community sector	239
	4 August 2022 Your Port (formerly PSToday)	2346

Phase 1 – Financial sustainability options (18 July to 8 August)

Two key objectives of the Communications and Engagement Plan guided the design of the engagement methods.

- Seek community feedback on options for Council's financial sustainability
- Identify the community's view on options for financial sustainability

Engagement methods used considered place, diversity and accessibility of the community as well as a combination of both online and traditional methods to ensure these objectives were met.

Table 3 outlines a description of each engagement method and participation levels. Further details and examples of all methods are included in Appendix B.

Table 3: Phase 1 Engagement methods

DATE	METHOD	PARTICIPATION
Online Survey Open 18 July – 8 Aug 2022	Specialised survey via Ethelo specifically designed to be a ‘learn as you go’ survey tool.	404 surveys complete 2,405 comments
Q&A Live Facebook event	20 July 2022 Facebook live event held from 5pm to 7pm See: https://www.facebook.com/PortStephensCouncil/videos/767871081018296	Stats included under social media (table 2)
Community information sessions	27 July 2022 Central face to face 27 July 2022 online 1 August 2022 West face to face 1 August 2022 online 3 August 2022 East face to face 3 August 2022 online Total	11 attended 4 attended 10 attended 3 attended 22 attended 5 attended 55 people
	Pre and post presentation support poll completed by 30 people	Already included in attendance
Key stakeholder meetings	18 July 2022 [REDACTED] 19 July 2022 [REDACTED] 21 July 2022 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1 August 2022 [REDACTED] 4 August 2022 Breakfast [REDACTED] 4 August 2022 [REDACTED] 8 August 2022 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	7 groups
Interactions	Interactions include counter enquiries, phone calls, emails and letters.	39

Key findings

The Our funded future community engagement program had a community awareness reach of 116,313 and participation of 7948*. Participation is any time people have actively done something to be part of the engagement. This can be completing the online survey, visiting the website for more information, clicking or liking a social media post, attending a community information session or contacting Council to ask questions or find out more.

A number of key themes came out of community input across all engagement opportunities including the online survey comments, Facebook live event, community information sessions, special interest group presentations and Council interactions. These themes include:

- 1. Level of understanding of complex local government financial matters**
This included understanding rates in general, rating inequities, rate valuations and the 'rate pie', developer contributions and how that differs from rating income, and state legislation requirements.
- 2. Efficiency and cost containment**
This included cutting costs and looking at internal savings and the lack of trust in council financial management and modelling.
- 3. Affordability**
This included financial hardship and economic factors, especially for fixed income rate payers.
- 4. Service levels**
This included opposing service level priorities for example people want more services but are unwilling to pay for more.

Online survey

The online survey tool used for Our funded future is Ethelo. The online survey had a series of Likert scale questions asking participants to outline how supportive they were of various statements on a 5-point scale. Different from other more generic survey tools, the Ethelo tool considers participants' views that are both in support and in conflict to a question or key statement and these are weighed against each other to create a consensus level.

The survey had a total of 1183 visits. Of those that visited, 404 were completed with 2405 comments provided. Of those that completed the survey, 49.29% were male and 45.04% were female. The majority of participants were ratepayers living in Port Stephens (88.27%), 5.03% worked in Port Stephens but lived outside the LGA and 4.75% were ratepayers living outside the LGA.

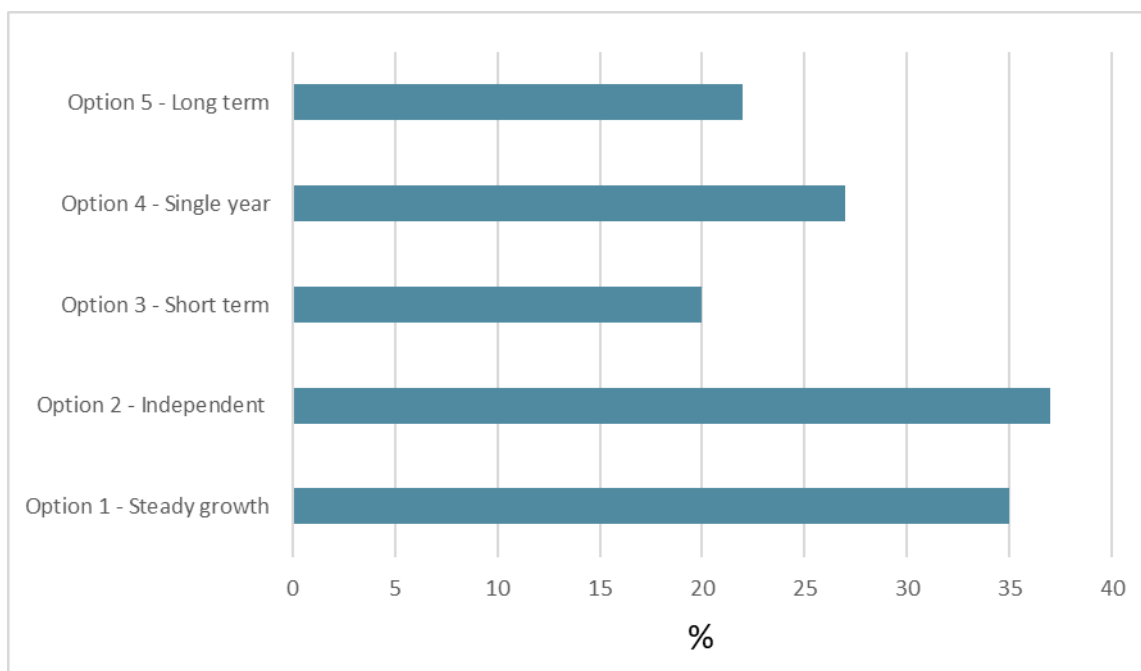
**Total reach and participation have been reclassified in accordance with updated definitions such as updated newspaper readership figures when collating all phases.

The survey sought participants' views relating to financial sustainability and whether Council should look to obtain additional funds to enhance services. Of those that completed the survey, there was an 86% (321 participants) consensus of Council being financially sustainable and a 63% (275 participants) consensus for enhancement to services.

A number of non-rate income options were presented seeking participants' level of support to enhance non-rate income. Of the options presented, the highest consensus was given to continuing to seek additional grant funding at 94%, followed by consensus for selling underperforming assets at 59% and increasing fees and charges by 10% at 52%. The options to remove the exemption on smart parking received the least consensus of all non-rate income options, at 36%.

Five rate income options were put forward to participants to determine their level of consensus for each. Option 2 – Independent received the highest consensus (37%), followed by Option 1 – Steady growth (35%) and Option 4 – Single year (27%). Figure 1 below presents the results for these options.

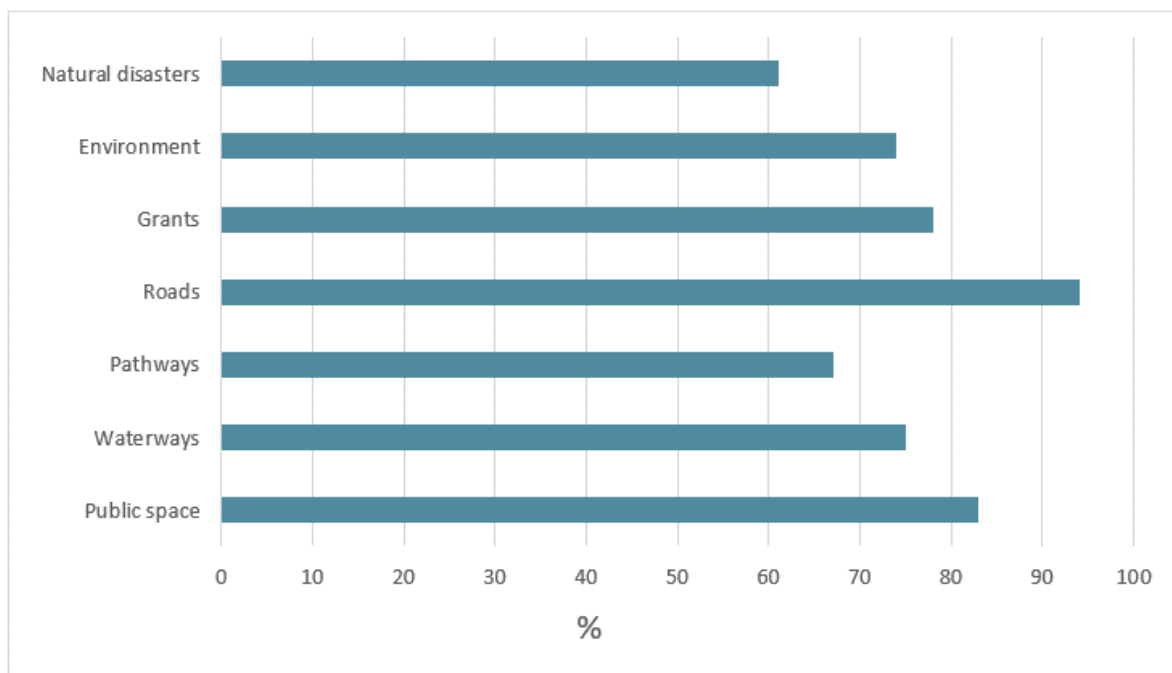
Figure 1: Rate income options consensus



Given Council's financial position and the consideration of five rate income options, it was necessary to understand participant consensus for a reduction of services moving forward. Of those that completed the survey 39% (317 responses) had a consensus for reduced service levels and to move forward with a standard rate increase only in line with the rate cap of 2.5%. Interestingly, this did not correlate with the high level of consensus for people seeking an enhancement of services earlier in the survey.

In case an option that provided additional rate income to enhance services was considered a preferred path forward, priorities were examined as part of the online survey. Participants were asked about their level of support for key focus areas identified in previous community engagement opportunities over the past 18 months. Consensus on c priorities areas is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Your priorities



The survey also sought feedback from participants about the survey tool used. The tool was well received with the majority of participants supporting the process as a way to help build trust and transparency of decision making. Around 80% of participants found the process informative, allowing for a more educated and considered responses and that they would like to see a similar process replicated for other projects. There was also 77% support that participants were more likely to support future decisions if they knew the result was based on a similar process.

The full survey report can be viewed in Appendix C.

Face to Face and online community information sessions

Three face to face community information sessions were held, one in each ward area, along with three online sessions. The combination of dual daytime (face to face) and evening sessions (online) helped to provide equitable access for participation.

Only 55 people attended across the 6 separate information sessions. The sessions commenced with an information presentation to generate an understanding of Councils financial position and the non-rate and rate income options available. This was followed by Q&A's with Council' Executive Team and the Chief Financial Officer

Of those that attended the community information sessions, the following comments were raised.

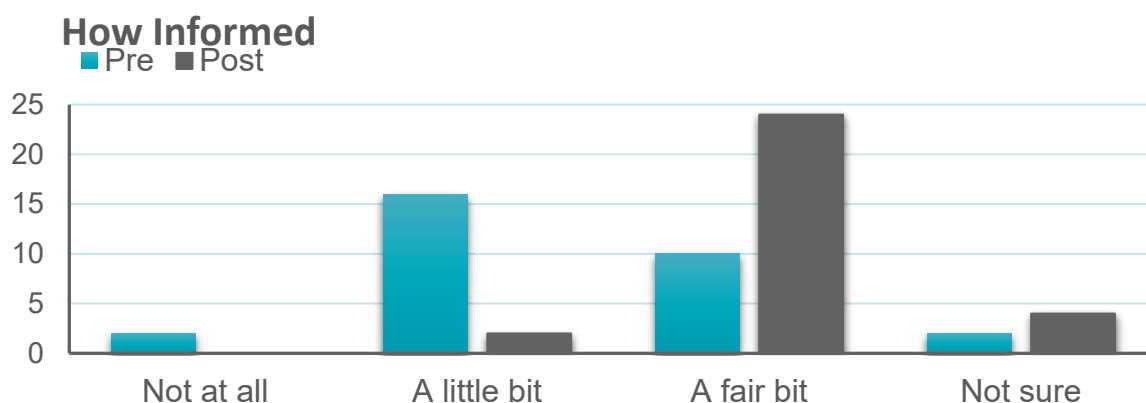
- Drainage and maintenance issues at Medowie
- Development contributions
- Operational costs and capital cost discussion
- Over 55's rating inequities
- Discussion around the impact of the rate valuation and 'rate pie'
- Distrust in financial modelling
- Criteria needed around reduction of service levels
- Staffing levels indoor vs outdoor
- Performance and efficiency

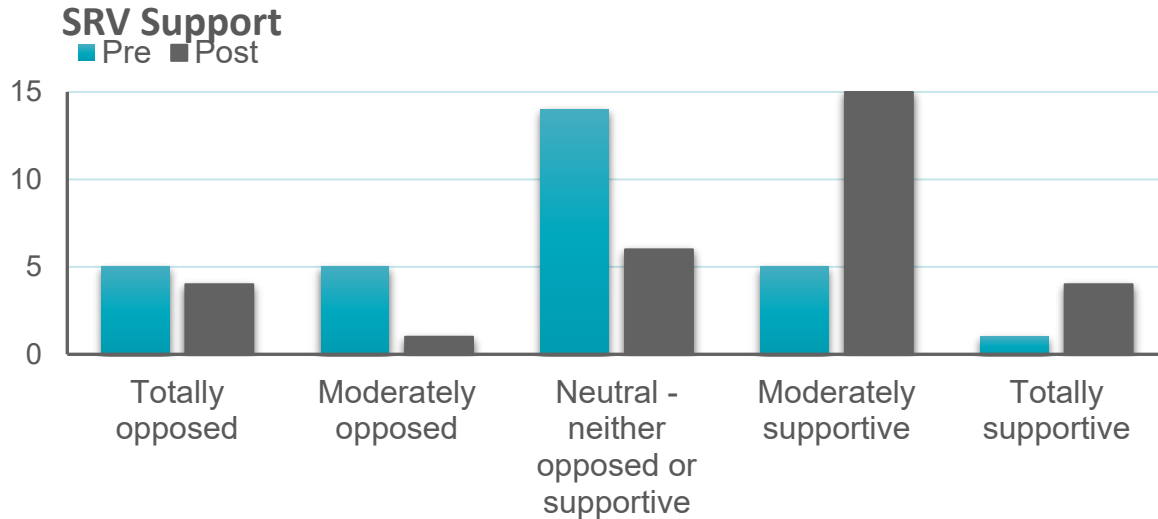
A digital copy of the online presentation was also made available on Council's website after the majority of the presentations were completed to allow people to view the presentation at any time.

To help capture how effective the Our funded future communications approach and community information sessions were, a snap poll was implemented. This involved two questions asked of attendees pre and post the session to gauge any movement in the level of support for Our funded future from the sessions.

Although only a small sample size of 30 people completed the snap poll, the results outlined in Figure 3 shows both a higher level of being informed and being supportive of a Special Rate Variation (SRV) post session. The communications work completed in phase 0 and phase 1 can be seen through the 53% of attendees being 'a little bit' informed prior to the session. Given the post-session level of support for a special rate variation, the context of the discussion and layout of the presentation was received well. These results are encouraging and support the effectiveness of the Phase 0 and 1 communications and engagement that were delivered.

Figure 3: Pre and post snap polls





Facebook live Q&A event

The Facebook live Q&A event included the Executive Team and the Chief Financial Officer online live answering questions from the community in real-time. The event was scheduled early in Phase 1 to help increase the community awareness of the project and to launch the beginning of the engagement period. This event reached over 2900 people had 826 post clicks and received 124 reactions, comments and shares. Of those that attended during the session, questions and comments related to the previously identified key themes and included:

- Engagement program timeframes
- Employee cost savings
- Reducing internal costs
- What income increases will fund
- Funding relief from natural disasters
- Whether Capital works expenditure is fit for purpose
- Developer contributions and future growth assumptions

Positive feedback was received during and at the conclusion of the event thanking executive members for being available and answering questions transparently.

Special interest group presentation

Individual presentations were offered to a number of special interest groups outside the general engagement opportunities via direct email. Eight special interest groups were provided with an individual presentation. The attendance at these presentations ranged from 1 on 1, 5-20, to up to 90. The questions and feedback received at these presentations aligned with the key themes outlined in this report.

For those that did not respond, follow-up emails were distributed that included an information statement of on Our funded future and links to the website and survey. Some special interest groups advised that they did not need an individual

presentation and encouraged members to attend a face to face session as part of the broader community engagement program.

Based on feedback received, the direct invite, personal follow up and individual presentations to special interest groups have helped gain support from these groups around the need for financial change at Council. These presentations have also helped to prevent the circulation of misinformation or community outrage around the Our funded future conversation and the income options available, including a special rate variation options under consideration.

Interactions

Council received 39 interactions representing every instance a community member contacted Council, regarding Our Funded Future. This includes interactions such as phone calls acknowledging the receipt of the Our Funded Future rate notice insert, emails and letters with questions and comments put forward to Professor Drew or council staff as well as simple information requests regarding the engagement methods.

It is important to note that the Our funded future communications and engagement program remained agile and responsive to community needs throughout phase 0 and phase 1. Comments and questions raised in the community information sessions, Facebook live event and online survey comments were monitored and responded to publically by our Executive team through a series of 6 videos, These videos were provided on our YouTube channel, Facebook page and website.

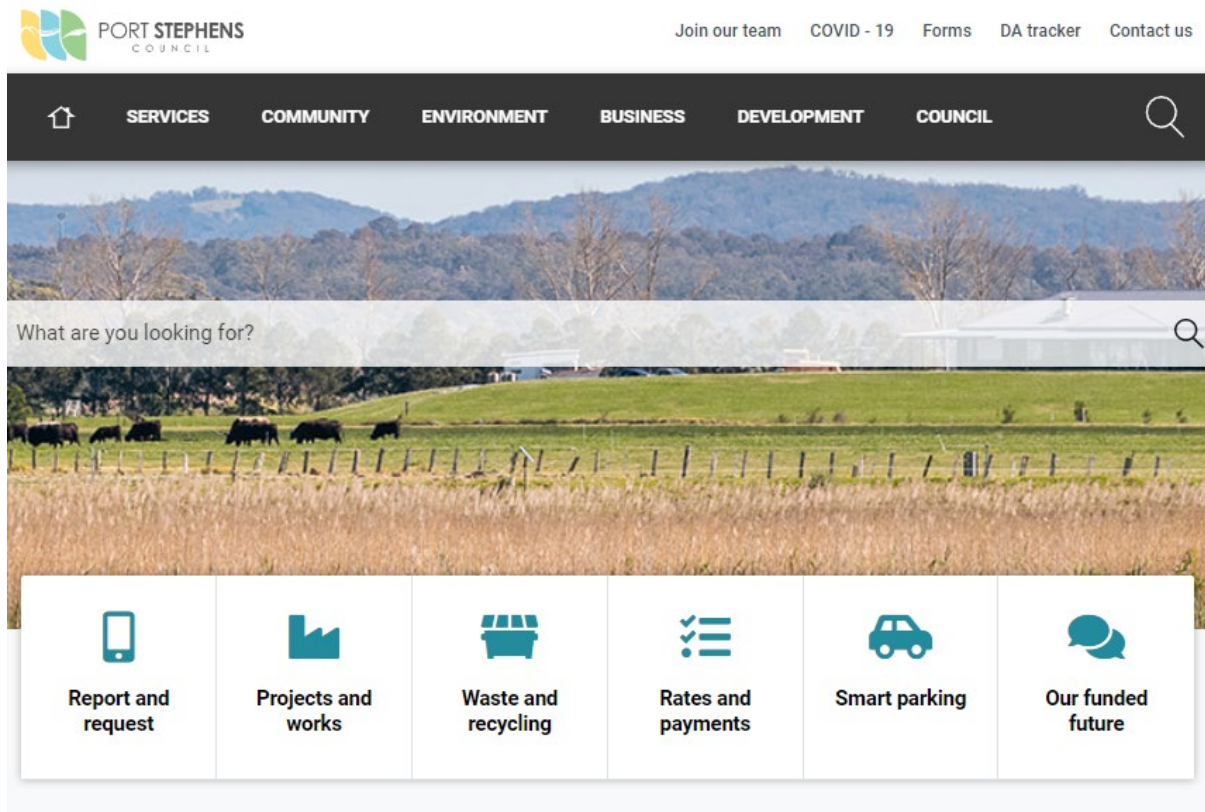
Appendix A: Phase 0

Communication methods

Project webpage







www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/our-funded-future

Our funded future page promoted to home page via quick access bar



Website page included

Introduction, general information, media release, webinar from independent experts, FAQs, details of community information sessions and links to online sessions

 <p>Have your say</p> <p>Find out when is our next drop-in session and how you can have your say on Our funded future.</p> <p>→</p>	 <p>What has Council done to save money?</p> <p>In 2021, Council endorsed a number of key directions to improve financial sustainability for the next 10 years.</p> <p>→</p>	 <p>Independent expert advice</p> <p>Independent experts have advised Council to take urgent steps now to ensure long term financial sustainability.</p> <p>→</p>
 <p>FAQs</p> <p>Frequently asked questions about financial sustainability and Our funded future.</p> <p>→</p>	 <p>Council decisions</p> <p>Since 2021, Council has endorsed a number of key decisions and directions have been endorsed to improve the ongoing impacts of financial sustainability.</p> <p>→</p>	 <p>Latest updates</p> <p>Read the latest updates about Our funded future.</p> <p>→</p>

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Paid advertisement

14 July 2022, Port Stephens Examiner, p. 9



Our funded future
Striking a balance between the needs of our community and Council's funded future.

Council is looking to take steps to ensure its long term financial sustainability. We've developed a number of options to help shape our funded future. Options focus on reducing service delivery, increasing fees and charges, a rate increase or investigating in new income streams – it's all on the table.

We need our community to get involved. A number of drop in sessions have been set up across Port Stephens – save the date.

Date	Time	Detail	Where
Wed 20 Jul 2022	5 to 7pm	PS Live Facebook Live event	Online
Wed 27 Jul 2022	10am to 12pm	Community face to face drop in information session	Medowie Community Hall, Medowie
Wed 27 Jul 2022	5 to 6:30pm	Community information session	Online
Mon 1 Aug 2022	10am to 12pm	Community face to face drop in information session	King Park Function Centre, Raymond Terrace
Mon 1 Aug 2022	5 to 6:30pm	Community information session	Online
Wed 3 Aug 2022	10am to 12pm	Community face to face drop in information session	Bruce Scott Pavilion, Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay
Wed 3 Aug 2022	5 to 6:30pm	Community information session	Online

How do I have a say?

-  portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future
-  Visit your local library or Council administration building
-  02 4988 0255
-  ourfundedfuture@portstephens.nsw.gov.au



Facebook posts (organic)

29 June 2022



Port Stephens Council
Published by Lauren Hawke · 29 June · 🌐

...

Council's ongoing commitment to securing long term financial sustainability was supported at last night's Council meeting.

Councillors endorsed commencing the conversation with our community to strike a balance between the needs of our community and Council's financial future.

We want to work with the community to find the best solution.

Read the full media release at pscouncil.info/FinancialSustainability



Performance for your post

3538 People reached

48 Likes, comments and shares

370 Post clicks

11	51	308
Photo views	Link clicks	Other Clicks

Distribution summary

-2.1x lower than your other posts within 21+ days of being published.

↓ 2.1x less	↓ 1.8x less	↓ 2.3x less
Post impressions	Post clicks	Reactions

[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

1 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

48 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

3538	3538	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
3588	3588	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions

7 July 2022



Port Stephens Council

Published by Meltwater Engage · 7 July ·

Independent experts, Emeritus Professor Brian Dollery and Professor Joseph Drew undertook a review of Council's long term financial strategy. They let us know that it's crucial for us to take steps to ensure our long term financial sustainability.

Find out more about these findings on our website. We have a simplified webinar that provides a summary of what you need to know or you can read the full reports at pscouncil.info/OurFundedFutureIndependentExperts

If you have any questions for Professor Drew, email ourfundedfuture@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

It's been good to hear from experts that are internationally recognised, but now we want feedback from our local experts – our community – you. The community conversation opens on 18 July.



Performance for your post

4478 People reached

32 Likes, comments and shares

114 Post clicks

9 Photo views	27 Link clicks	78 Other Clicks
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Distribution summary

-1.6x lower than your other posts within 21+ days of being published.

↓ 1.6x less Post impressions	↓ 3.1x less Post clicks	↓ 3.5x less Reactions
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[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

32 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

4478 Total reach	4478 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
4652 Total impressions	4652 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

12 July 2022



Port Stephens Council

Published by Lauren Hawke · 12 July at 17:41 · 🌐

Save the date! 🗓️

Council are encouraging those that live, work and visit Port Stephens to get involved and have their say on Our Funded Future.

Over the next few weeks, we want you to share your thoughts on a number of options available to help shape our financial future, like reducing service delivery, increasing fees and charges, a rate increase or investigating new income streams – it's all on the table.

Next Wednesday, we're starting off with a Facebook Live where you can ask questions and have them answered by council staff who are experts in their field. You can pre-submit questions via email to: ourfundedfuture@portstephens.nsw.gov.au, or join us on Facebook to ask your questions in real time. 🗨️

Other dates to chat to us face to face or online are shared below, and in the comments! 🗨️

For further information visit: pscouncil.info/LocalExpertsNeeded

Community engagement sessions

- Wednesday 20 July 2022, 5pm to 7pm
Facebook Live event
- Wednesday 27 July 2022, 10am to 12pm
Community face to face drop in information session (Central Ward)
Medowie Community Hall, Medowie
- Wednesday 27 July 2022, 5pm to 6:30pm
Community information session
Online
- Monday 1 August 2022, 10am to 12pm
Community face to face drop in information session (West Ward)
King Park Function Centre, Raymond Terrace
- Monday 1 August 2022, 5pm to 6:30pm
Community information session
Online
- Wednesday 3 August 2022, 10am to 12pm
Community face to face drop in information session (East Ward)
Bruce Scott Pavilion, Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay
- Wednesday 3 August 2022, 5pm to 6:30pm
Community information session
Online

Our Funded Future



...

Performance for your post

8199 People reached

58 Likes, comments and shares

376 Post clicks

18	12	346
Photo views	Link clicks	Other Clicks

Distribution summary

average performance as your other posts within 21+ days of being published.

↑ 1.2x more	↓ 3.7x less	↓ 2.0x less
Post impressions	Post clicks	Reactions

[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

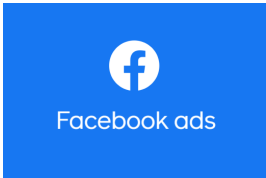
58 Likes, comments and shares




BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION


[View Breakdown](#)

8199	8199	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
8927	8927	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions


Facebook posts (paid)
'Save the date'
13 July 2022



 **Port Stephens Council** Sponsored ·  ... 

Save the date! 


Council are encouraging those that ...see more






Our Funded Future

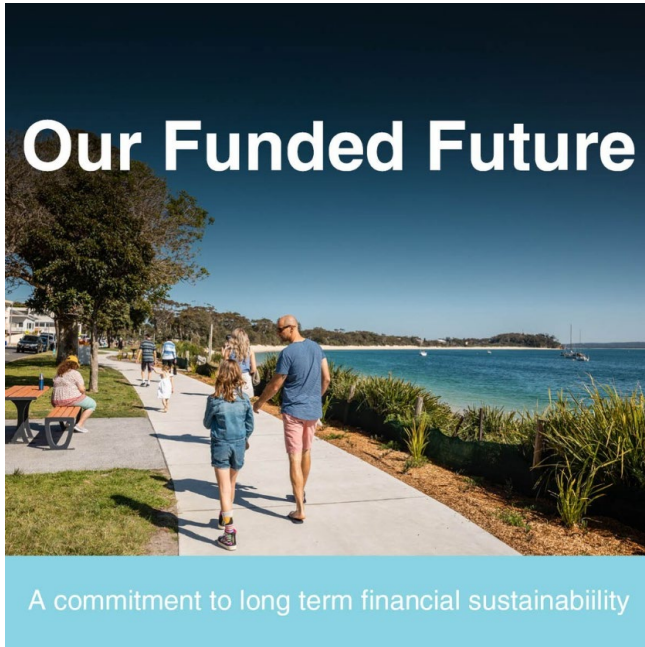
Community engagement sessions

portstephens.nsw.gov.au
Save the date to have your say on Our Funded Future [Learn More](#)

 Daph Moller and 5 others 2 shares

 Like  Comment  Share

Instagram posts
29 June 2022



Post Insights



Messaging-related insights, such as shares and replies, may be lower than expected due to privacy rules in some regions.
[Learn More](#)

3

0

0

1

Interactions ⓘ

5

Actions taken from this post

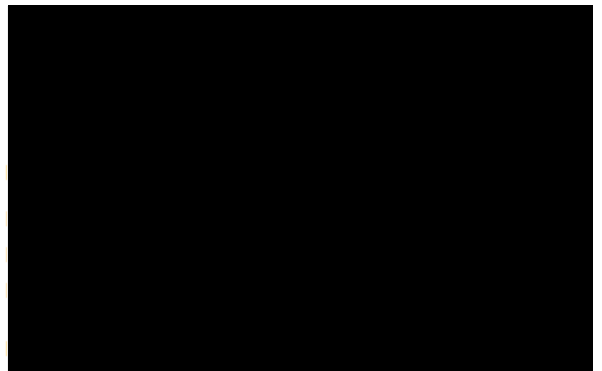
Profile Visits

3

Website taps

2

Discovery ⓘ



pscouncil Council's ongoing commitment to securing long term financial sustainability was supported at last night's Council meeting.

Councillors endorsed commencing the conversation with our community to strike a balance between the needs of our community and Council's financial future.

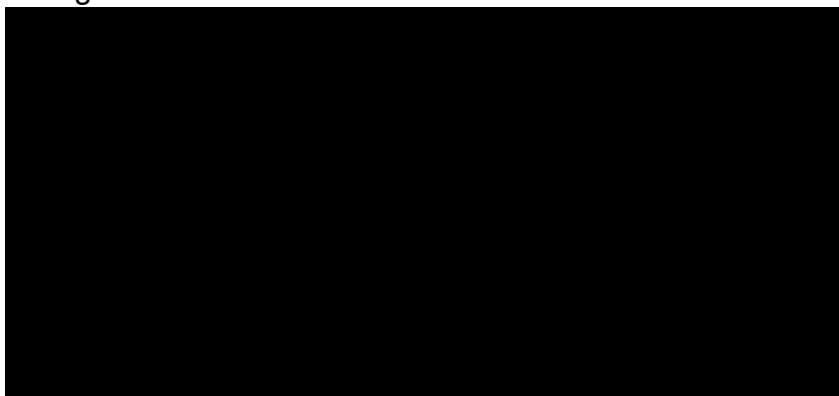
We want to work with the community to find the best solution.

Read the full media release at the link in our bio. [🔗](#)

5w

Direct email

On 7 July 2022 Email sent to 10 key community groups offering a special briefing including:



Dear all

At the Council meeting on the 28 June 2022, Council agreed to move forward with an engagement program to discuss financial sustainability with the community and seek feedback on a number of options to turn around our financial position. This includes reducing service delivery, increasing fees and charges, a special rate variation or investigating new revenue streams – it's all on the table.

You may have already read the media release sent out on Wednesday, 29 June 2022 but if not you can view it [here](#).

This is a really important decision for our community and as you're part of a key community interest group we wanted to reach out to you and offer a **special briefing** to enable you and your members to learn more about the project. Please contact us as soon as possible via reply email to arrange a special briefing. We're happy to join an existing scheduled meeting or arrange a new meeting either face to face or online.

Alternatively, you're welcome to join any of the community information events (dates below) where you can learn more and provide feedback.

Date	Time	Detail	Where
Wednesday, 20 July 2022	5 to 7pm	PS Live Facebook Live event	Online
Wednesday, 27 July 2022	10 to 12am	Community face to face drop in information session (Central Ward)	Medowie Community Hall, 44 Ferodale Road, Medowie
Wednesday, 27 July 2022	5 to 6:30pm	Community information session	Online
Monday, 1 August 2022	10 to 12am	Community face to face drop in information session (West Ward)	Raymond Terrace location to be confirmed
Monday, 1 August 2022	5 to 6:30pm	Community information session	Online
Wednesday, 3 August 2022	10am to 12pm	Community face to face drop in information session (East Ward)	Bruce Scott Pavilion, Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay
Wednesday, 3 August 2022	5 to 6:30pm	Community information session	Online

Please keep up to date via our website portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future as the project progresses.

Yours sincerely,

Bulk newsletter printed 'Your Port'

The following was provided with the July 2022 rates notices.

The majority of these advices were received early July by residents.



Our funded future

Striking a balance between the needs of our community and Council's funded future

Message from the acting GM

Over the past 10 years, Council has maintained a strong and stable financial position achieving an annual budget surplus of 1%. This has allowed Council to deliver a broad range of services, invest in local infrastructure, grow our economy and make Port Stephens a great place to live, work and visit.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is the tool used to effectively plan for and deliver long term sustainability. For some time, the LTFP has identified this year and next as being tough with operational costs associated with insurance, workers compensation and legislated changes in superannuation negatively impacting the budget.

Like many other businesses around the world, the last two years have also impacted Council's budget. Income from our holiday parks, childcare centres and Newcastle Airport have been reduced while at the same time costs associated with construction and transport have significantly increased. Major storm events have increased our maintenance costs, insurance prices and diverted funds away from planned projects.

Last year, Council predicted an underlying deficit of \$4.4 million however, with careful planning and a commitment to further reducing expenditure, we saw a surplus of \$583,000. To achieve this, we've focused

on improving our productivity, streamlining services, containing our costs and increasing revenue.

Despite these efforts, our financial forecast has shown that if we keep going this way, we'll spend more on our services than we can afford unless we make real change.

We know COVID-19 isn't over and other economic factors such as inflation continue to have flow-on effects, so it's important we take steps now to ensure Council is financially sustainable in the long term.

This may include reducing service delivery, increasing fees and charges, a rate increase or investigating new revenue streams – it's all on the table.

Port Stephens has one of the lowest rate bases in the region. A special rate variation is an option but if our community wants to keep rates low, we need to understand what services you're prepared to see reduced into the future.

With a new Council in place, it's time to look at how we do business – where can we increase our income, find savings and strike a balance between the needs of our community and Council's funded future.

Tim Crosdale
Acting General Manager



Council saved
\$1 million
on employment
costs



Dividend from
Newcastle
Airport
reduced by
\$2 million
per year



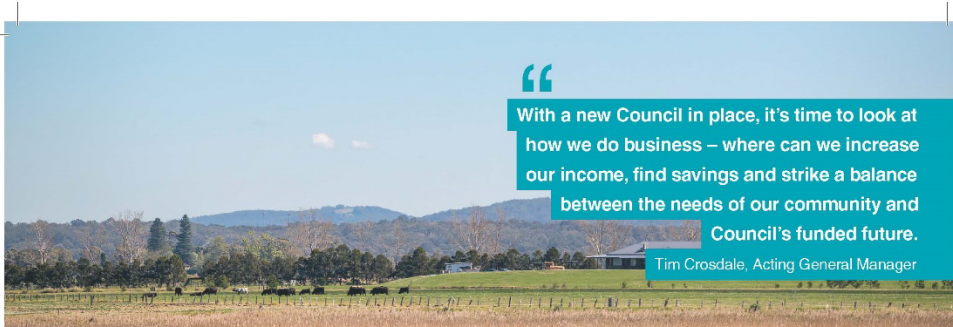
CPI increase
is 5.1%
for the next
3 years



Insurance costs
from 2019
increased by
85%



Rate Cap
2.5%



With a new Council in place, it's time to look at how we do business – where can we increase our income, find savings and strike a balance between the needs of our community and Council's funded future.

Tim Crosdale, Acting General Manager

What is Council doing to ensure financial sustainability?

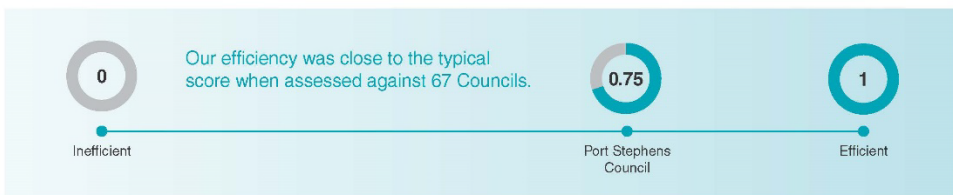
At its meeting on 26 October 2021, Council acknowledged the ongoing impacts of financial sustainability and endorsed a number of key directions to improve this over time, including creating strong cash reserve to help Council avoid shocks from natural disasters or economic downturns, creating the Port Stephens Prosperity Fund to future proof investment in important infrastructure, seeking grant funding and reducing operational costs.

To support this, Council appointed independent experts to analyse our overall long term financial position. These reports and recommendations were presented to Councillors in March 2022. Since then, wages have been reduced by \$1,053,000, a one-off 10% increase to fees and charges was implemented and agreement has been made for a further rollout of paid parking. Council has also identified a number of assets which may be in excess of our community needs.

What we know is that we need to make real change. With a rate increase of only 2.5% and Consumer Price Index (CPI) expected to increase by at least 5.1%, our long term budget is showing an \$80 million shortfall over 10 years. It's clear that we can't keep doing things the same way.

We're now starting the conversation. We want our community to have a complete understanding of our financial position and the ability to participate in the decision making for our funded future.

Is Council running efficiently?



How do I have a say?

Let us know your thoughts on a number of options to shape our financial future.



- portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future
- Visit your local library
- 02 4988 0255
- Visit the Council administration building
- ourfundedfuture@portstephens.nsw.gov.au



Appendix B: Phase 1

Communication methods

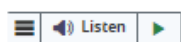
Project webpage

www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/our-funded-future

3,794 visits (total for Phase 0 and Phase 1 = 4332 visits)

Website page major update at the beginning of Phase 1 to include link to survey, video and additional information around the various options.

Our funded future



Have your say

Fill out the survey, find out when is the next drop-in session and how to get in touch if you have any questions.

[Learn more](#)



What are Our funded future options?

We have put together a number of rate income and non-rate income options to turn our financial position around and we want to explore these with the community.

Non-rate income options include:

- increasing fees and charges,
- continuing to seek grant funding,
- selling underperforming assets and
- removing the exemption for local residents from smart parking.

The rate income options include our current scenario and 5 options for a Special rate variation:

Project webpage continued

Base Option – Current Scenario	+
Option 1 – Steady Growth	+
Option 2 – Independent	+
Option 3 – Short Term	+
Option 4 – Single Year	+
Option 5 – Long Term	+

The purpose of Council applying for a Special Rate Variation is to be financial sustainable.

It is unsustainable for Council to operate year after year with budget shortfalls. The additional income raised by an Special Rate Variation would be used to eliminate forecasted shortfalls, covering the rising costs associated with delivering planned services to our community.

We understand that it will be difficult for some of our community to pay for an increase in rates. We have a range of policies in place to assist ratepayers experiencing hardship, whether it be for a short or long time. Visit our [Financial hardship page](#) → for more information.

Rates calculator

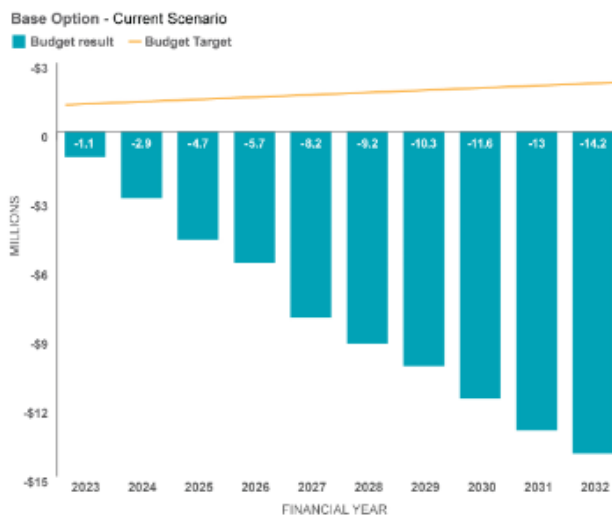
If you want to know how the above options impact you, use our [Rates calculator*](#) → . **Make sure you have your rate notice ready!**

*The rates calculations are an estimate only using the best information currently available to Council. Rates levied may vary from the estimate depending upon changes in your land value compared to your Rate Category average.

Project webpage continued

Base Option – Current Scenario

Under the base option, Council will not be financially sustainable. The income we get will not cover what we need to spend to deliver services as they currently are. Our assets will deteriorate and we will look at reducing or ceasing services. This might mean we only mow our parks once per six weeks instead of once per month, it could mean we postpone the resurfacing of a road, we push back the renovation of a sports facility or not replace older playground equipment. Other services which could be impacted is opening times of our community libraries, our Visitor Information Centre or other facilities. If this is the path forward we would have lengthy community conversations to understand what services you're prepared to see reduced or stopped in the future.



[Base Option – Average Impact on Individual Rating Categories \(PDF 79 KB\)](#)

Project webpage continued

Option 1 – Steady Growth

Under Option 1 Council achieves our target budget in 2026 and stays there for seven (7) of the ten (10) years of our financial plan. Between 2023 and 2026 Council will be vulnerable to external shocks such as natural disasters and will need to continue operating on a tight budget whilst we wait for additional funds to become available to put back into the community.

38.56%
CUMULATIVE

\$443 OR **\$9** PER WEEK
AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL

YEAR 1 **7%**

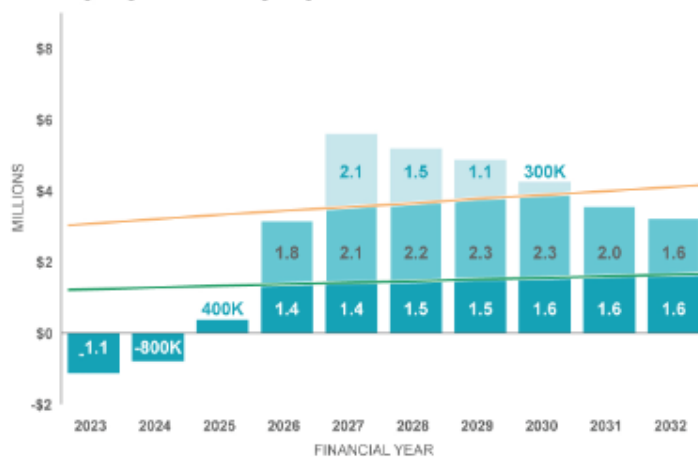
YEAR 2 **8%**

YEAR 3 **9%**

YEAR 4 **10%**

Option 1 - Steady Growth

■ 1% Reached ■ 2.5% Reached ■ Additional funds
— 1% Budget target — 2.5% Budget target



All figures are inclusive of the 2.5% rate cap and are permanent in nature

[Option 1 – Steady Growth – Average Impact on Individual Rating Categories \(PDF 85 KB\)](#)

Project webpage continued

Option 2 – Independent

Under Option 2, Council achieves our target budget in 2025 and stays there for nine (9) of the ten (10) years of our financial plan. From 2025, additional funds above the balanced budget will become available to put back into the community and Council would maintain a strong financial position long term. This option is recommended by independent experts Professor Brian Dollery and Professor Joseph Drew.

34.92%

CUMULATIVE

YEAR 1 **10.5%**

YEAR 2 **10.5%**

YEAR 3 **10.5%**

\$401 OR **\$8** PER WEEK

AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL

Option 2 - Independent Recommendation

■ 1% Reached
 ■ 2.5% Reached
 ■ Additional funds
— 1% Budget target
 — 2.5% Budget target



All figures are inclusive of the 2.5% rate cap and are permanent in nature

[Option 2 – Independent Recommendation – Average Impact on Individual Rating Categories](#)
(PDF 85 KB)

Project webpage continued

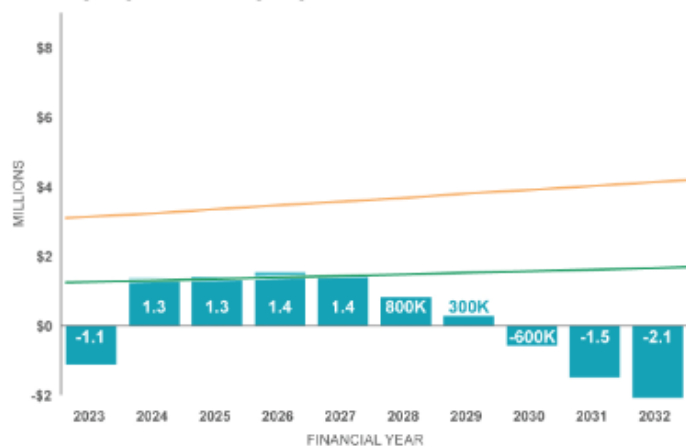
Option 3 – Short Term

Under Option 3, Council returns to a positive financial position for four (4) of the ten (10) years of our financial plan. From 2028 our financial position would deteriorate, returning to budget shortfalls in 2030. Council will be highly vulnerable to external shocks such as natural disasters and would not be financially sustainable in the long term. It's anticipated that a further special rate variation would need to be considered in 2028 to be implemented by 2030.



Option 3 - Short Term Solution

■ 1% Reached
 ■ 2.5% Reached
 ■ Additional funds
— 1% Budget target
 — 2.5% Budget target



All figures are inclusive of the 2.5% rate cap and are permanent in nature

[Option 3 – Short Term Solution – Average Impact on Individual Rating Categories](#) (PDF 85 KB)

Project webpage continued

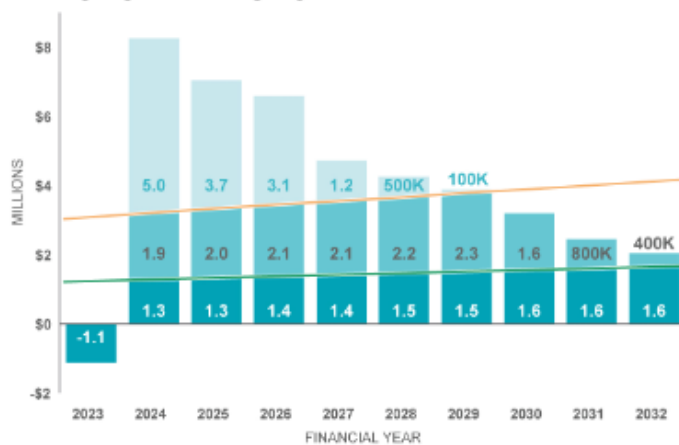
Option 4 – Single Year

Under Option 4, Council returns to a positive financial position for nine (9) of the ten (10) years of our financial plan, eliminating budget shortfalls from when the SRV commences. Council will be in a secure position to absorb external shocks such as natural disasters and maintain this position long-term. Council will have additional funds from 2024 which can be directed back into the community. Whilst the annual increase is higher than any other option the cumulative increase is much less.



Option 4 - Single Year

■ 1% Reached
 ■ 2.5% Reached
 ■ Additional funds
— 1% Budget target
 — 2.5% Budget target



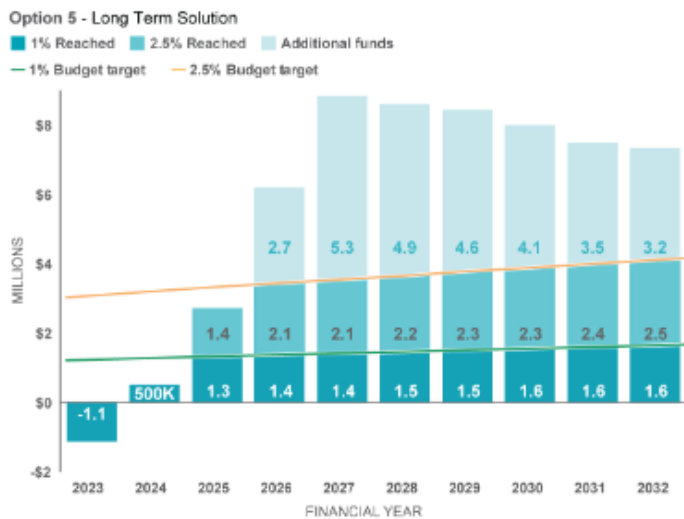
All figures are inclusive of the 2.5% rate cap and are permanent in nature

[Option 4 – Single Year – Average Impact on Individual Rating Categories](#) (PDF 81 KB)

Project webpage continued

Option 5 – Long Term

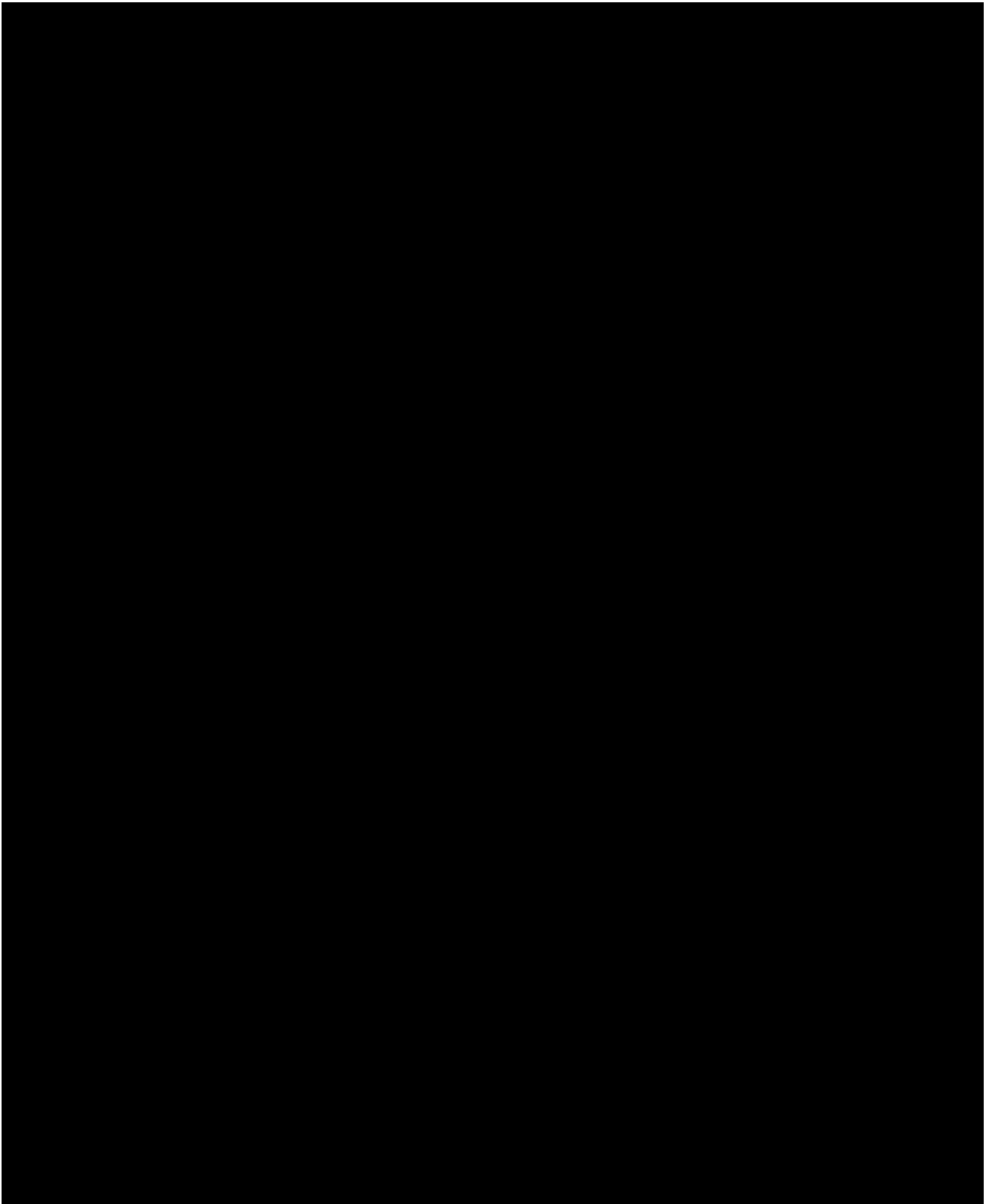
Under Option 5, Council returns to a balanced budget in 2024 and remains in a positive position for eight (8) of the ten (10) years of our financial plan. We will be in a secure position to absorb external shocks such as natural disasters and maintain this position long term. From 2025, additional funds above the balanced budget will become available to put back into the community. This option is the largest cumulative increase which would see the most additional funds available.

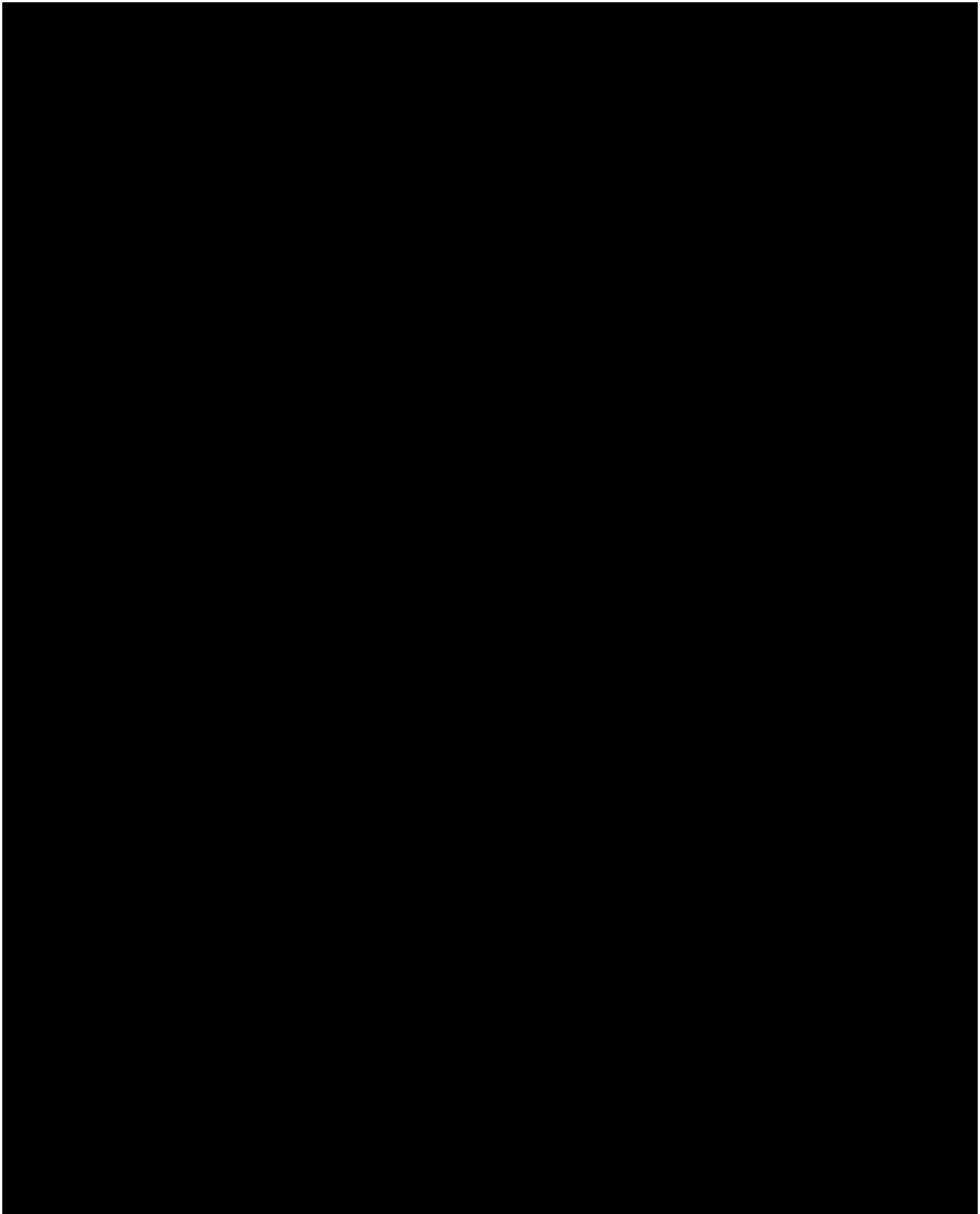


All figures are inclusive of the 2.5% rate cap and are permanent in nature

[Option 5 – Long Term Solution – Average Impact on Individual Rating Categories \(PDF 85 KB\)](#)

Media releases





Paid advertisements

28 July 2022, Port Stephens Examiner, Council Notices



Subscribe to our community e-newsletters
Visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/newsletters

OUR FUNDED FUTURE COMMUNITY INFO SESSIONS

Council is working on a new plan for our long term financial sustainability. We need your feedback on our funded future. It's an important time to make your voice heard and help us decide how we move forward. Let's work together to strike a balance. Have your say and tell us what you think about options like reducing service delivery, increasing fees and charges, a rate increase (Special Rate Variation) or investigating new income streams – it's all on the table.

We can't wait to hear from you and work together for our funded future. A number of drop in sessions have been set up across Port Stephens.

- **Mon 1 Aug 2022 – 5 to 7pm**
King Park Function Centre, Raymond Terrace
- **Mon 1 Aug 2022 – 5 to 6:30pm**
Online session
- **Wed 3 Aug 2022 – 10am to 12pm**
Bruce Scott Pavilion, Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay
- **Wed 3 Aug 2022 – 5 to 6:30pm**
Online session

Find more info at:
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2022

EcoNetwork Port Stephens' Sustainable Futures Festival celebrates environmental innovation, sustainable living and the way nature enriches our lives.

Engage in family activities, explore the workshops and demonstrations, hear inspiring speakers and enjoy local music and tastes.

Held at St Philip's Christian College, Salamander Bay. A gold coin donation entry is appreciated.

Find out more at: ecops.au/sff

GET ACTIVE WITH IT'S ON! FREE BOOTCAMP AND ZUMBA IN APEX PARK, NELSON BAY

Tuesdays at 7am – Bootcamp

Looking for a great reason to get out of bed early? Get that body moving at a free bootcamp session.

Wednesdays at 9:30am – Zumba

Free Zumba sessions for everybody and every BODY. Bookings essential.

More info at: portstephens.org.au/its-on

COUNCIL NOTICES | 02 4988 0255 | council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au | portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Please Note: Any submission or other correspondence received by Council may be released to any person making application to Council under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. For further enquiries, please contact Council.

11 August 2022, Port Stephens Examiner, Council notices



Subscribe to our community e-newsletters
Visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/newsletters

OUR FUNDED FUTURE THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

Council is working on a new plan for our long term financial sustainability. We've recently completed our community information sessions and online survey to gather your feedback on our funded future. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us decide how we move forward. Keep up to date with this important project and where we'll go from here at:

portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future

KARUAH KONNECT KARUAH'S NEW ON-DEMAND BUS SERVICE

Need a lift into town to do your shopping, attend an appointment or just connect with your community?

The Karuah Konnect runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am to 2pm. It's only a gold coin donation to ride. To book call **4987 0002**.

The service is funded by a Transport for NSW grant and an initiative of the Karuah Place Plan. It's possible thanks to the Karuah Progress Association, Karuah Working Together, Karuah Aboriginal Land Council and Karuah RSL.

COMMUNITY E-NEWSLETTERS THE LATEST NEWS DIRECT TO YOU

Did you know we have a range of different e-newsletters that you can subscribe to? From community news and events, to environmental issues and business – we've got you covered.

Your Port

A monthly update on events, projects and works, opportunities to get involved and more.

Library news

Be the first to know about upcoming events, regular programs and special author visits.

Your Engagement

Learn about upcoming projects and how you can have your say.

Your Business

Join the BizLink network and keep your finger on the pulse of your local economy.

Your Environment

A quarterly update on events, workshops, sustainability, ecology, weed alerts and more.

Your Community Sector

A bi-monthly update for local service providers on highlights, happenings and opportunities.

Sign up to a newsletter that interests you at:
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/newsletters

COUNCIL NOTICES | 02 4988 0255 | council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au | portstephens.nsw.gov.au

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Social media



18 July 2022 - 'Have your say on Port Stephens Funded future ...'



Port Stephens Council

Published by Lauren Hawke · 18 July at 13:35 ·

Have your say on Port Stephens' funded future!

Council is opening up the conversation on Our Funded Future, encouraging those that live, work and visit Port Stephens to have their say.

We've put together a number of rate income and non-rate income options to turn our financial position around and we want to explore these with the community.

Non-rate income options include:

- Increasing fees and charges
- Continuing to seek grant funding
- Selling underperforming assets
- Looking at other options for revenue

Rate increase options range from a 26% to 45% overall rate increase, either in a single year or over a number of years. Council could also continue under the current scenario where income continues to increase each year by the 2.5% rate peg – but this option would mean reduced services in the future.

Tell us your thoughts by:

📄 Taking the survey: our-funded-future.ethelo.net/page/welcome

🗣️ Attending an information session (in person or online): <http://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/.../our.../have-your-say>

Or, learn more at: www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/our-funded-future



PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU

Our funded future

It's time to look at how we do business, where Council can improve revenue, find savings and ...

Performance for your post

1943 People reached

14 Likes, comments and shares

105 Post clicks

0 Photo views	46 Link clicks	59 Other Clicks
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Distribution summary

-3.7x lower than your other posts within 21+ days of being published.

↓ 3.7x less Post impressions	↓ 2.4x less Post clicks	↓ 14.0x less Reactions
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[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

14 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1943 Total reach	1943 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
2009 Total impressions	2009 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

20 July 2022 'Join us this evening for a LIVE Q&A session on Our Funded Future.'



Port Stephens Council

Published by Lauren Hawke · 20 July at 10:00 ·

Join us this evening for a LIVE Q&A session on Our Funded Future.

We want Port Stephens locals to share their thoughts on a number of options available to help shape our financial future, like reducing service delivery, increasing fees and charges, a rate increase or investigating new income streams – it's all on the table.

You can pre-submit questions via email to: ourfundedfuture@portstephens.nsw.gov.au, or join us here at 5pm to ask your questions in real time, and get answers from Council's Executive Team.

What is Our Funded Future? Learn more at pscouncil.info/OurFundedFuture

Busy tonight? Find other info sessions here fb.me/e/2vjeL7dhA



Facebook Live event

WED, 20 JUL

Our Funded Future: Facebook Live Community Q&A Session

5 went · 10 interested

[Set Up Live Video](#)

Performance for your post

627 People reached

2 Likes, comments and shares

16 Post clicks

0 Photo views	12 Link clicks	4 Other Clicks
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Distribution summary

-3.2x lower than your other posts within 21 days of being published.

↓ 3.2x less Post impressions	↓ 6.4x less Post clicks	↓ 6.8x less Reactions
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[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts **1** Hide post

0 Report as spam **0** Unlike Page

2 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

627 Total reach	627 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
---------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------

683 Total impressions	683 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions
---------------------------------	-----------------------------------	------------------------------

20 July 2022
 'Facebook Live Q&A community information session' 5pm-6:30pm



Performance for your post

2900 People reached

124 Likes, comments and shares

826 Post clicks

105 Clicks to Play | 1 Link clicks | 720 Other Clicks

VIDEO PERFORMANCE

1.6K 3-second video views
261 1-minute video views
1:25 Average minutes viewed

Audience retention



[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts | 0 Hide post
 0 Report as spam | 0 Unlike Page

124 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

2900 Total reach	2900 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
3161 Total impressions	3161 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions



21 July 2022

'Be part of the discussion and help us decide ..'



Port Stephens Council

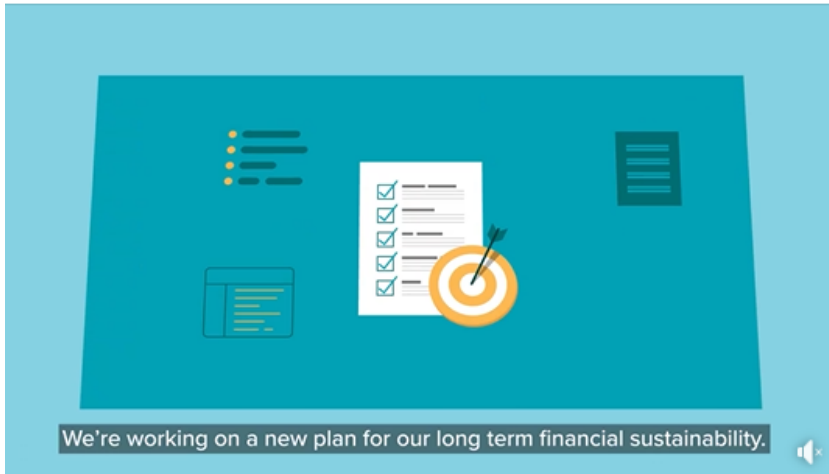
Published by Lauren Hawke · 21 July at 09:39 · 🌐

The conversation about Our Funded Future is happening now! 🗨️

We started off with an interactive Q&A session (watch here if you missed it pscouncil.info/OFFfacebookLive), and we have other info sessions coming soon.

Be part of the discussion and help us decide how we move forward!

Learn more or find a session at pscouncil.info/OurFundedFuture



Performance for your post

1756 People reached

14 Likes, comments and shares

135 Post clicks

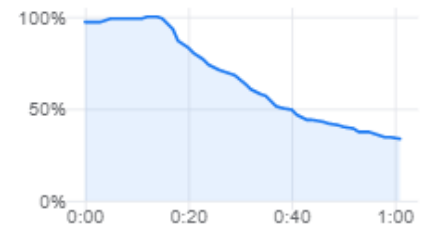
51	10	74
Clicks to Play	Link clicks	Other Clicks

VIDEO PERFORMANCE

548	34	0:06
3-second video views	1-minute video views	Average minutes viewed

Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 0:18 mark.



*Only including views over 15 seconds

[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0	0
Hide all posts	Hide post
0	0
Report as spam	Unlike Page

14 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1756	1756	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach

1875	1875	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions



26 July 2022

'Tomorrow, we'll be hanging out at the Medowie community hall ...'



Port Stephens Council

Published by Lauren Hawke · 26 July at 15:44 ·

Have you had your say on Our Funded Future?

TOMORROW we'll be hanging out at the Medowie Community Hall from 10am to 12pm to run an information session and answer any questions the community may have.

For those who can't make it, there'll also be an evening session (online) at 5pm. Register here pscouncil.info/OFFHaveYourSay

To see all other information sessions, visit the event page below



Community information sessions

WED, 20 JUL

Community information sessions: Our Funded Future

Port Stephens and Online

5 went · 21 interested

Performance for your post

907 People reached

2 Likes, comments and shares

17 Post clicks

0	15	2
Photo views	Link clicks	Other Clicks

Distribution summary

-2.3x lower than your other posts within 14 days of being published.

↓ 2.3x less	↓ 4.6x less	↓ 6.1x less
Post impressions	Post clicks	Reactions

[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	1 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

2 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

907	907	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
941	941	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions

29 July 2022

'What would reducing our services look like?' - Video response to community question



Port Stephens Council

Published by Meltwater Engage · 29 July at 14:19 · 🌐

Our funded future – What would reducing our services look like?

Over the next few days we'll be answering some of the most frequently asked questions we've heard during our community conversations.

Today, Acting General Manager Tim Crosdale explains what it might look like if we reduced our services to assist with financial sustainability. Take a look at the video below 📺

For more information about Our funded future visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future



Performance for your post

1001 People reached

5 Likes, comments and shares

112 Post clicks

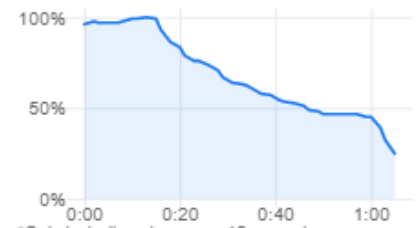
36 Clicks to Play	3 Link clicks	73 Other Clicks
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VIDEO PERFORMANCE

381 3-second video views	53 1-minute video views	0:10 Average minutes viewed
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Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 1:05 mark.



*Only including views over 15 seconds

[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

5 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1001 Total reach	1001 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
1091 Total impressions	1091 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

30 July 2022

'Would a rate increase to be an increase on my total rates bill' - Video response to community question



Port Stephens Council

Published by Meltwater Engage · 30 July at 10:01 · 🌐

Our funded future – your questions answered.

Question: Would a rate increase be an increase on my total rates bill?

In this video, Chief Financial Officer Tim Hazell explains what a rate increase would look like on a rates notice. Check it out 📺

For more information about Our funded future visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future



Performance for your post

1277 People reached

13 Likes, comments and shares

176 Post clicks

41	12	123
Clicks to Play	Link clicks	Other Clicks

VIDEO PERFORMANCE

465	53	0:09
3-second video views	1-minute video views	Average minutes viewed

Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 0:18 mark.



[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

1	0
Hide all posts	Hide post
0	0
Report as spam	Unlike Page

13 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1277	1277	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
1374	1374	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions

31 July 2022

'Why isn't Council considered 'fit for the future' anymore? - Video response to community question



Port Stephens Council
Published by Meltwater Engage · 31 July at 10:01 · 🌐

Our funded future – your questions answered.
Question: Why isn't Council considered 'fit for the future' anymore?
In this video, Acting General Manager Tim Crosdale explains why Council isn't considered 'fit for the future' anymore. Check it out 📺... See more

Performance for your post

1910 People reached

41 Likes, comments and shares

291 Post clicks

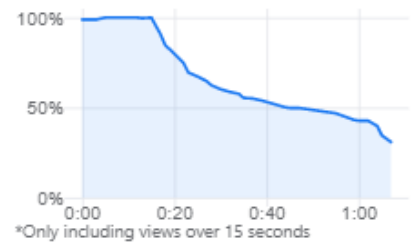
55 Clicks to Play	8 Link clicks	228 Other Clicks
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VIDEO PERFORMANCE

902 3-second video views	114 1-minute video views	0:10 Average minutes viewed
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Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 0:17 mark.



[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	1 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

41 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1910 Total reach	1910 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
2042 Total impressions	2042 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

1 August 2022

'What is the difference between Council's capital budget and maintenance budget?' - Video response to community question



Port Stephens Council
Published by Emily Livens · 1 August at 13:00 · 🌐

Our funded future – your questions answered.

Question: What is the difference between Council's capital budget and maintenance budget? In this video, Group Manager Facilities and Services Greg Kable explains the difference between the two. Watch below 📺 ... See more



Performance for your post

1100 People reached

13 Likes, comments and shares

116 Post clicks

41 Clicks to Play	6 Link clicks	69 Other Clicks
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VIDEO PERFORMANCE

448 3-second video views	52 1-minute video views	0:09 Average minutes viewed
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Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 0:18 mark.



*Only including views over 15 seconds

[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	1 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

13 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1100 Total reach	1100 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
1156 Total impressions	1156 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

1 August 2022

'Have you had your say on Our Funded Future?'



Port Stephens Council

Published by Lauren Hawke · 1 August at 13:47 · 🌐

Have you had your say on Our Funded Future?

This evening at 5pm, we'll be hosting an online information session to answer any questions the community may have. Register here to participate: pscouncil.info/3Q5t5Yg

If tonight doesn't suit, check out other upcoming information sessions below 📅 We have face to face and online sessions available!



PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU

Have your say

Find out when is our next drop-in session and how you can have your say on Our funded f...

Performance for your post

1514 People reached

4 Likes, comments and shares

37 Post clicks

0 Photo views	27 Link clicks	10 Other Clicks
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Distribution summary

-1.4x lower than your other posts within 8 days of being published.

↓ 1.4x less Post impressions	↓ 2.3x less Post clicks	↓ 3.8x less Reactions
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[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

4 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1514 Total reach	1514 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
1531 Total impressions	1531 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

2 August 2022

'Has Council undertaken an independent review of its finances?' Video response to community question



Port Stephens Council

Published by Gemma PS · 2 August at 09:40 · 🌐

Our funded future – your questions answered.

Question: Has Council undertaken an independent review of its finances?

In this video, Acting Group Manager Corporate Services Zoë Pattison let's us know about the independent review Council had undertaken by two experts. Watch below 📺 ... See more



⋮

Performance for your post

746 People reached

5 Likes, comments and shares

112 Post clicks

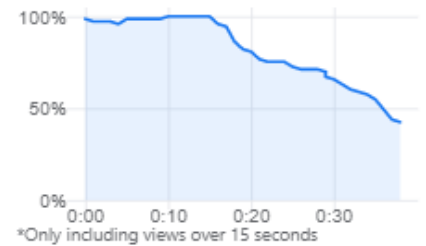
40	1	71
Clicks to Play	Link clicks	Other Clicks

VIDEO PERFORMANCE

256	0	0:07
3-second video views	1-minute video views	Average minutes viewed

Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 0:18 mark.



[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0	0
Hide all posts	Hide post
0	0
Report as spam	Unlike Page

5 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

746	746	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
799	799	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions

2 August 2022 'Have you had your say on Our Funded Future?'



Port Stephens Council

Published by Lauren Hawke · 2 August at 16:59 · 🌐

Have you had your say on Our Funded Future?

Our two final information sessions are being held tomorrow!

- In Person - 10am to 12pm - Bruce Scott Pavilion, Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay
- Online - 5pm to 6.30pm - Online - Register here: pscouncil.info/3zMX0zd

Come along and make sure your voice is heard! 🗣️



PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU

Have your say

Find out when is our next drop-in session and how you can have your say on Our funded f...

Performance for your post

762 People reached

3 Likes, comments and shares

24 Post clicks

0 Photo views	5 Link clicks	19 Other Clicks
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Distribution summary

-2.7x lower than your other posts within 7 days of being published.

↓ 2.7x less Post impressions	↓ 12.3x less Post clicks	↓ 5.6x less Reactions
--	------------------------------------	---------------------------------

[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

3 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

762 Total reach	762 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
792 Total impressions	792 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

4 August 2022
 'Does Council get more money when my land value increase?'
 Video response to community question



Port Stephens Council

Published by Emily Livens · 4 August at 16:28 · 🌐

Our funded future – your questions answered.

Question: Does Council get more money when my land value increase?

In this video, Chief Financial Officer, Tim Hazell let's us know about the increase in land values and the impact it has on Council's rate pie. Check it out 📺

For more information about Our funded future visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-funded-future



Performance for your post

816 People reached

15 Likes, comments and shares

72 Post clicks

20 Clicks to Play	2 Link clicks	50 Other Clicks
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VIDEO PERFORMANCE

259 3-second video views	0 1-minute video views	0:08 Average minutes viewed
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Audience retention

Most of your audience dropped off at the 0:17 mark.



*Only including views over 15 seconds

[View More Video Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

15 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

816 Total reach	816 Organic reach	0 Paid reach
853 Total impressions	853 Organic impressions	0 Paid impressions

5 August 2022

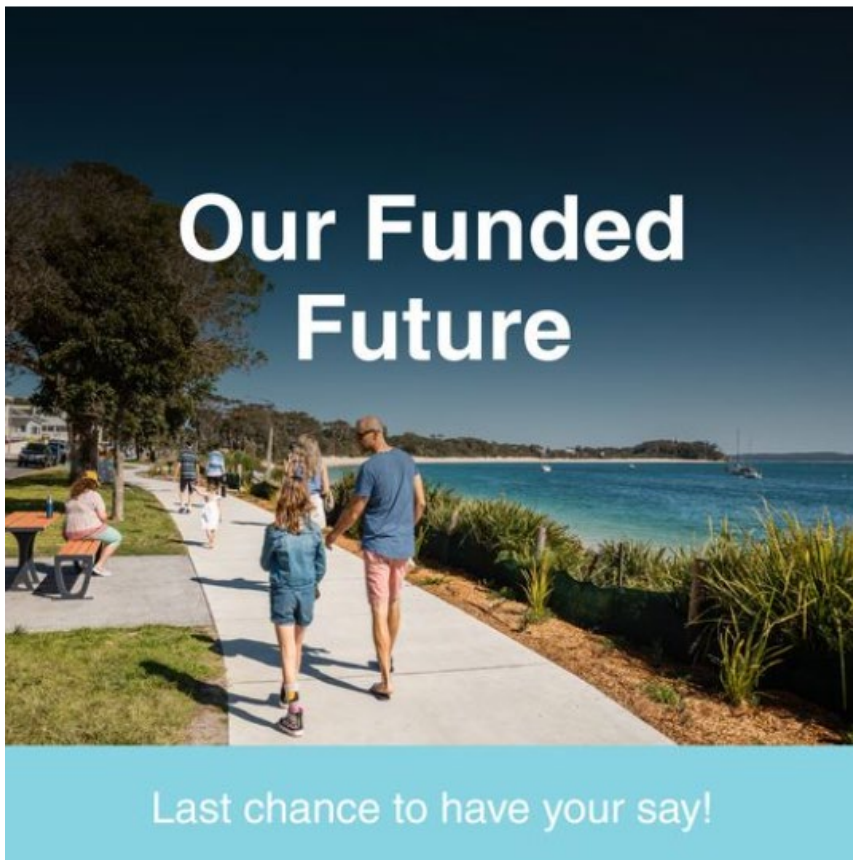
'What do you think of the rate income and non rate income options we've proposed?'



Port Stephens Council

Published by Meltwater Engage · 5 August at 18:00 · 🌐

What do you think of the rate income and non-rate income options we've proposed?
 This weekend is your last chance to join the conversation about Our Funded Future! 🗣️
 The survey closes on Monday 8 August and we need your help to decide how we move forward.
 Tell us your thoughts by 🗳️ taking the survey before Monday 8 August: our-funded-future.ethelo.net/page/welcome



Performance for your post

1164 People reached

3 Likes, comments and shares

19 Post clicks

3	15	1
Photo views	Link clicks	Other Clicks

Distribution summary

-5.8x lower than your other posts within 3 days and 18 hours of being published.

↓ 5.8x less	↓ 5.8x less	↓ 52.1x less
Post impressions	Post clicks	Reactions

[View More Details](#)

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide all posts	0 Hide post
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

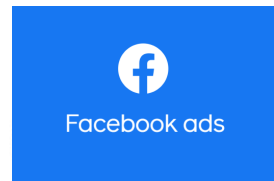
3 Likes, comments and shares

BRANDED CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

[View Breakdown](#)

1164	1164	0
Total reach	Organic reach	Paid reach
1169	1169	0
Total impressions	Organic impressions	Paid impressions

Facebook posts (paid)




Port Stephens Council
 Sponsored · 
... X

Save the date! 📅

Council are encouraging those that ...see more







Our Funded Future

Community engagement sessions

portstephens.nsw.gov.au
Save the date to have your say on Our Funded Future


[Learn More](#)

 Daph Moller and 5 others 2 shares

 Like
  Comment
  Share


Port Stephens Council
 Sponsored · 
... X

Have a look at the rate and non-rate income options to turn our financial position around and have your say!




Our Funded Future

A commitment to long term financial sustainability


Complete the survey
This is a real...

[Learn More](#)




Community information
This is a real...




[Learn More](#)



Our funded future options
This is a real...


[Learn More](#)

 🤔 Katherine Grah... 11 comments 2 shares

 Like
  Comment
  Share


Port Stephens Council
 Sponsored · 
...

If you live, work or visit Port Stephens, we need you to help us decide how we move forward. Come along to one of our ...see more




Our Funded Future

A commitment to long term financial sustainability

portstephens.nsw.gov.au/our-...
Have your say on Our funded future

[Learn More](#)

 Nancy Glen and 2... 38 comments 5 shares

 Like
  Comment
  Share

Instagram posts

20 July 2022



pscouncil 3w

Our Funded Future



A commitment to long term financial sustainability

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK THIS EVENING FOR A LIVE Q&A SESSION ON OUR FUNDED FUTURE.

WE WANT PORT STEPHENS LOCALS TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON A NUMBER OF OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO HELP SHAPE OUR FINANCIAL FUTURE!

[SEE FACEBOOK EVENT](#)

Share to... Boost More

pscouncil 3w

Our Funded Future



A commitment to long term financial sustainability

OPTIONS FOR OUR FUNDED FUTURE INCLUDE:


- REDUCING SERVICE DELIVERY
- INCREASING FEES AND CHARGES
- A RATE INCREASE
- INVESTIGATING NEW INCOME STREAMS

IT'S ALL ON THE TABLE!

Share to... Boost More

pscouncil 3w

Our Funded Future



A commitment to long term financial sustainability

SO, WHAT IS OUR FUNDED FUTURE?

[LEARN MORE HERE!](#)

Share to... Boost More

Instagram posts

26 July 2022



pscouncil 2w



Our Funded Future

A commitment to long term financial sustainability


HAVE YOU HAD YOUR SAY ON OUR FUNDED FUTURE?

TOMORROW WE'LL BE HANGING OUT AT THE MEDOWIE COMMUNITY HALL FROM 10AM TO 12PM TO RUN AN INFORMATION SESSION AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THE COMMUNITY MAY HAVE!

see you there


Share to... Boost More

pscouncil 2w



Our Funded Future

A commitment to long term financial sustainability

FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T MAKE IT, THERE'LL ALSO BE AN EVENING SESSION (ONLINE) AT 5PM. 

TO REGISTER FOR THE ONLINE SESSION, OR SEE ALL OTHER SESSION TIMES, TAP HERE:

[REGISTER + SESSION TIMES](#)


Share to... Boost More

pscouncil 2w

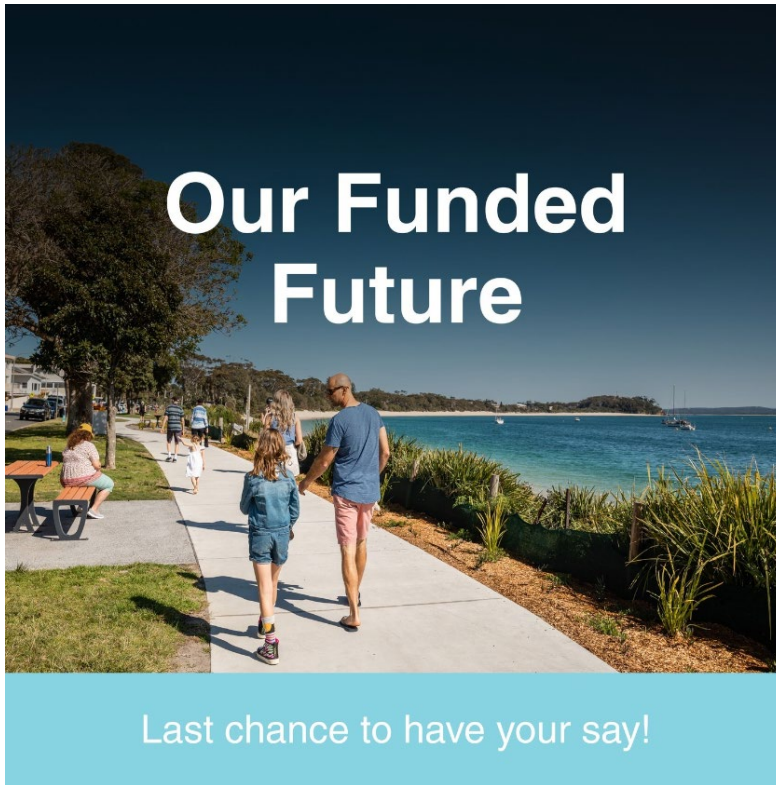
NOT SURE WHAT 'OUR FUNDED FUTURE' IS?

Watch This

[OUR FUNDED FUTURE VIDEO](#)



Share to... Boost More



Post Insights

Messaging-related insights, such as shares and replies, may be lower than expected due to privacy rules in some regions. [Learn More](#)

1 0 0 0

Interactions ⓘ

2
Actions taken from this post

Profile Visits 1

Website taps 1

Discovery ⓘ

164
Accounts reached
0% weren't following pscouncil

Impressions 172

From Home 169

From Profile 1

From Other 2

Follows 0



pscouncil What do you think of the rate income and non-rate income options we've proposed?

This weekend is your last chance to join the conversation about Our Funded Future! 🗨️

The survey closes on Monday 8 August and we need your help to decide how we move forward.

Tell us your thoughts by 📄 taking the survey before Monday 8. Click the link in our bio 📍

3d

Google paid video ads



Impressions ▾ 150K	Views ▾ 15.3K	Avg. CPV \$0.10	View rate 10.14%
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Video ads ⋮

● Our Funded Future



Our Funded Future
 Learn more
 OurFundedFuture
 Have your say about Council's finan

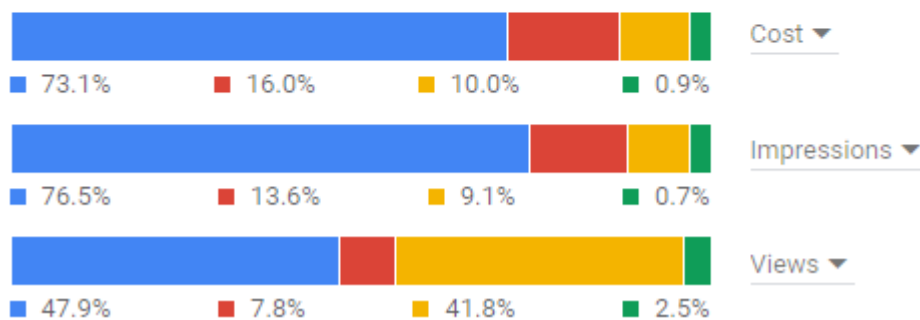
Attend a community information session where you can learn more.

Ad	Impressions	Cost ▾	Avg. CPV ▾
● Enabled	150,389	A\$1,500.48	A\$0.10

Devices ⋮

Summary of how your ads are performing on these devices

■ Mobile phones
 ■ Tablets
 ■ Computers
 ■ TV screens



Static displays

Posters and pamphlets were supplied to a number of key council sites such as libraries and key sporting sites across the LGA.

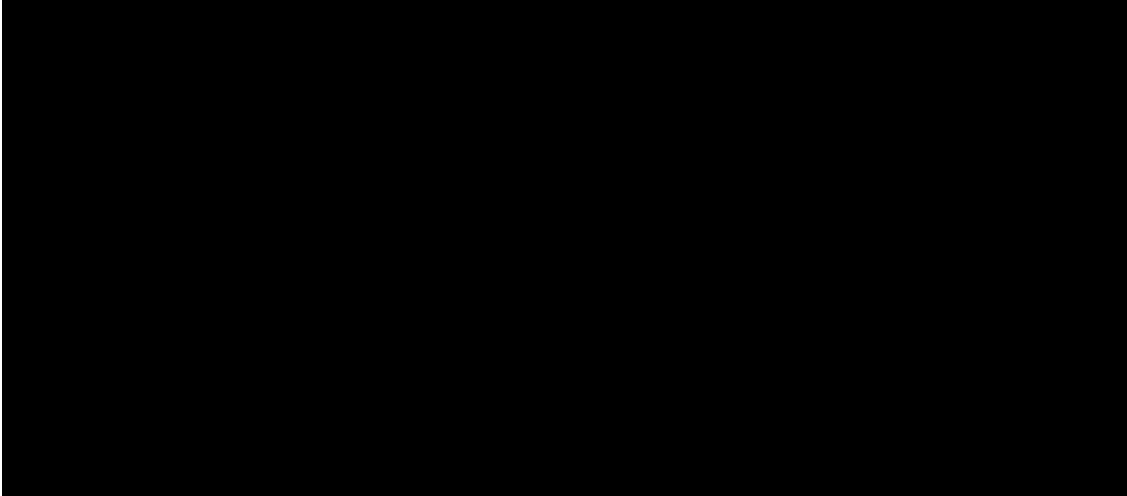
Copies of the poster were also sent to 30 local schools.

Example below at Raymond Terrace Library

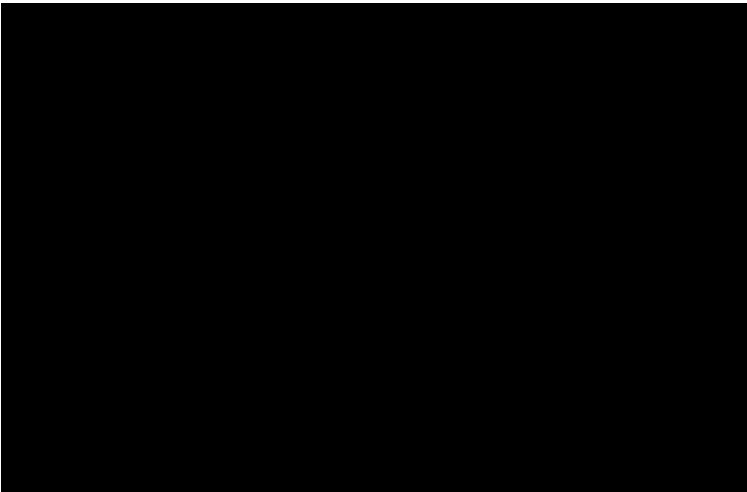


Community information sessions

Face to Face Central ward information session – 27 July 2022



Central ward whiteboard key issues/areas of concern/ideas

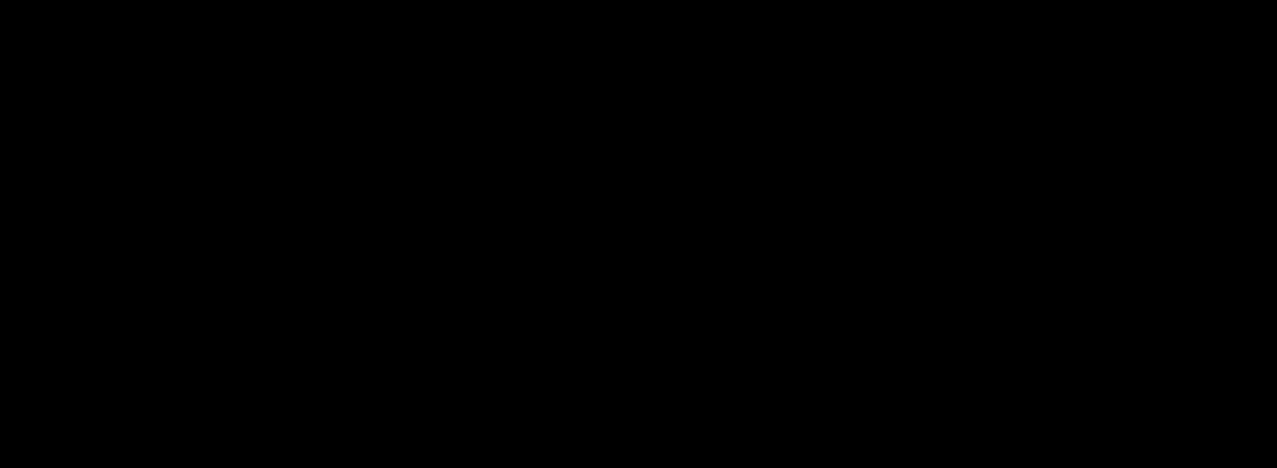


Online information session 27 July 2022

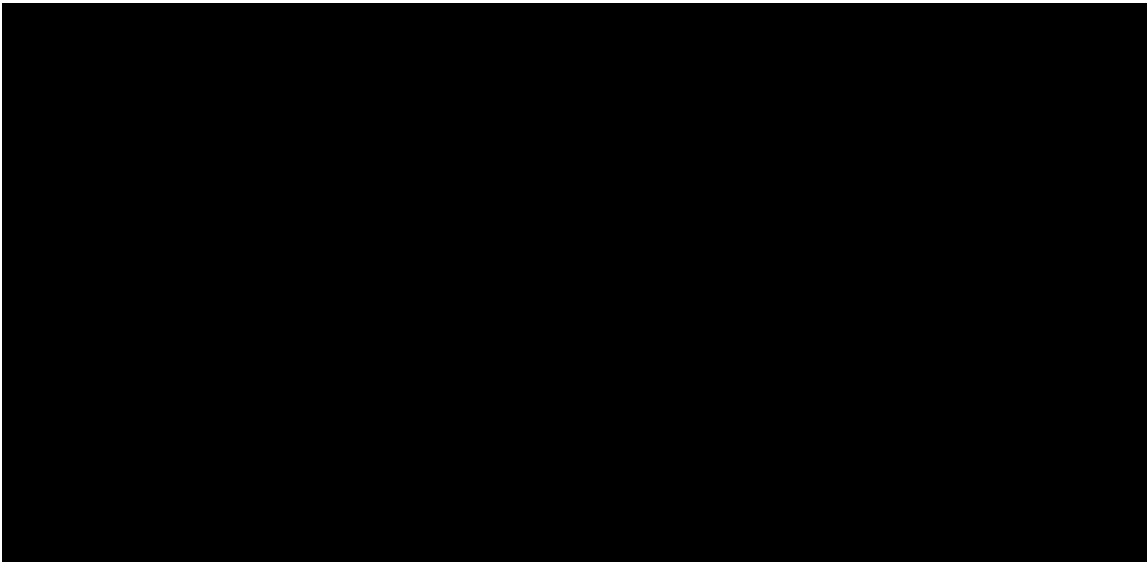
Community questions in the text chat:

1. Does Council recommend a particular option from those being presented?
What is the likelihood of success with IPART after following this process?
2. Has the community's capacity to pay been included in the analysis of these options?
3. In respect to the comment about putting \$'s aside for natural disasters Are you saying that up until now PSC has not had a "rainy day" fund?
4. In this context it appears as though the concept of financial sustainability focuses on getting Council out of a deficit. With a SRV how can we ensure that planning is refocused toward sustained cashflow, and not reliant on SRVS In the future?

West ward face to face information session – 1 August 2022



West ward whiteboard key issues/areas of concern/ideas

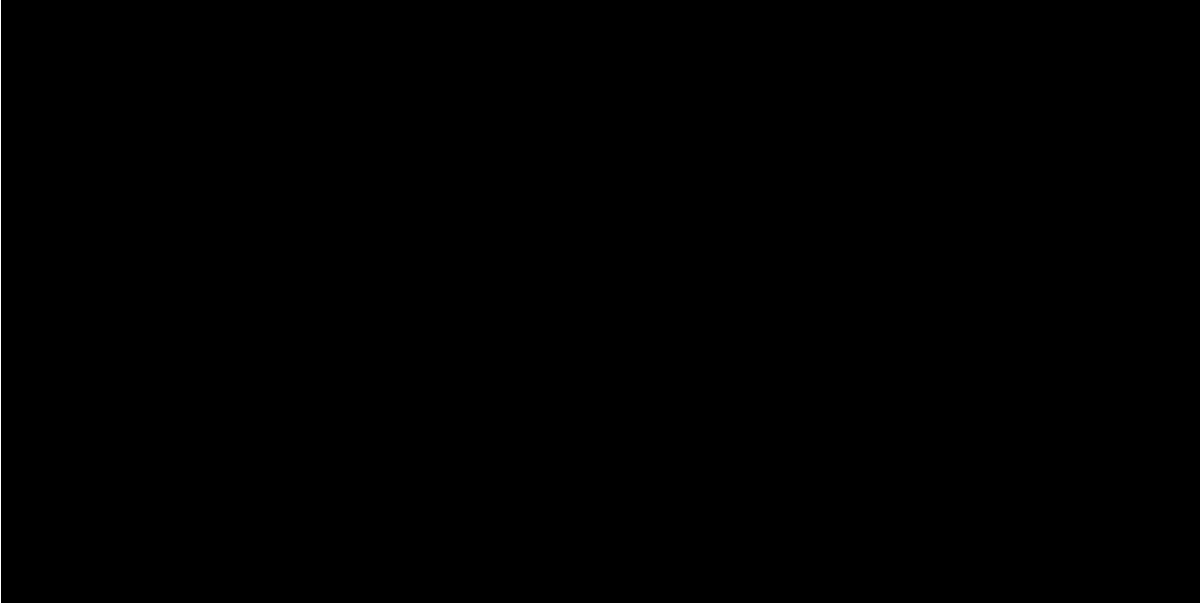


Online information session #2 – 1 August 2022

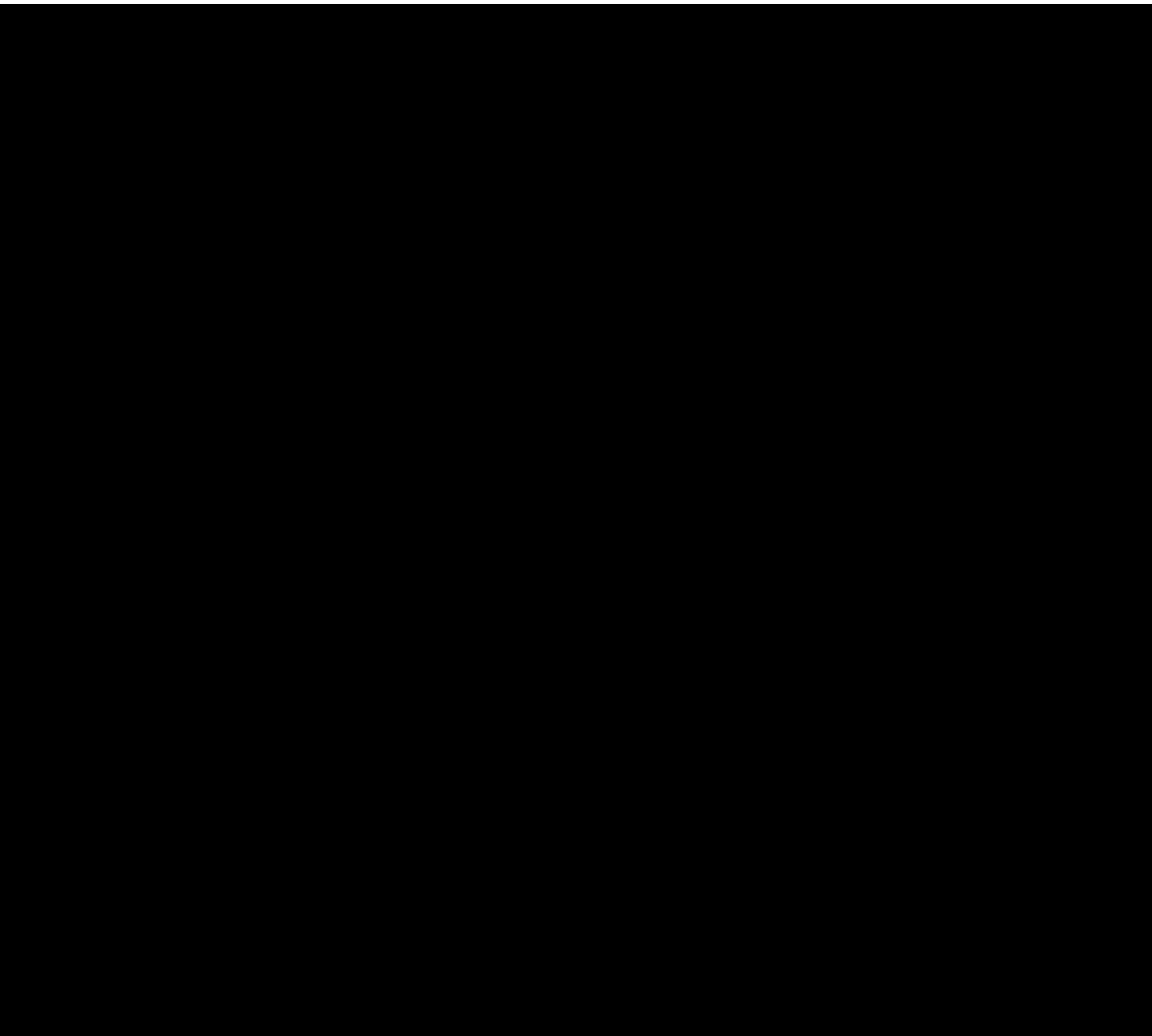
Community questions in the text chat:

1. When was the last SRV implemented in Port Stephens and what was the increase?

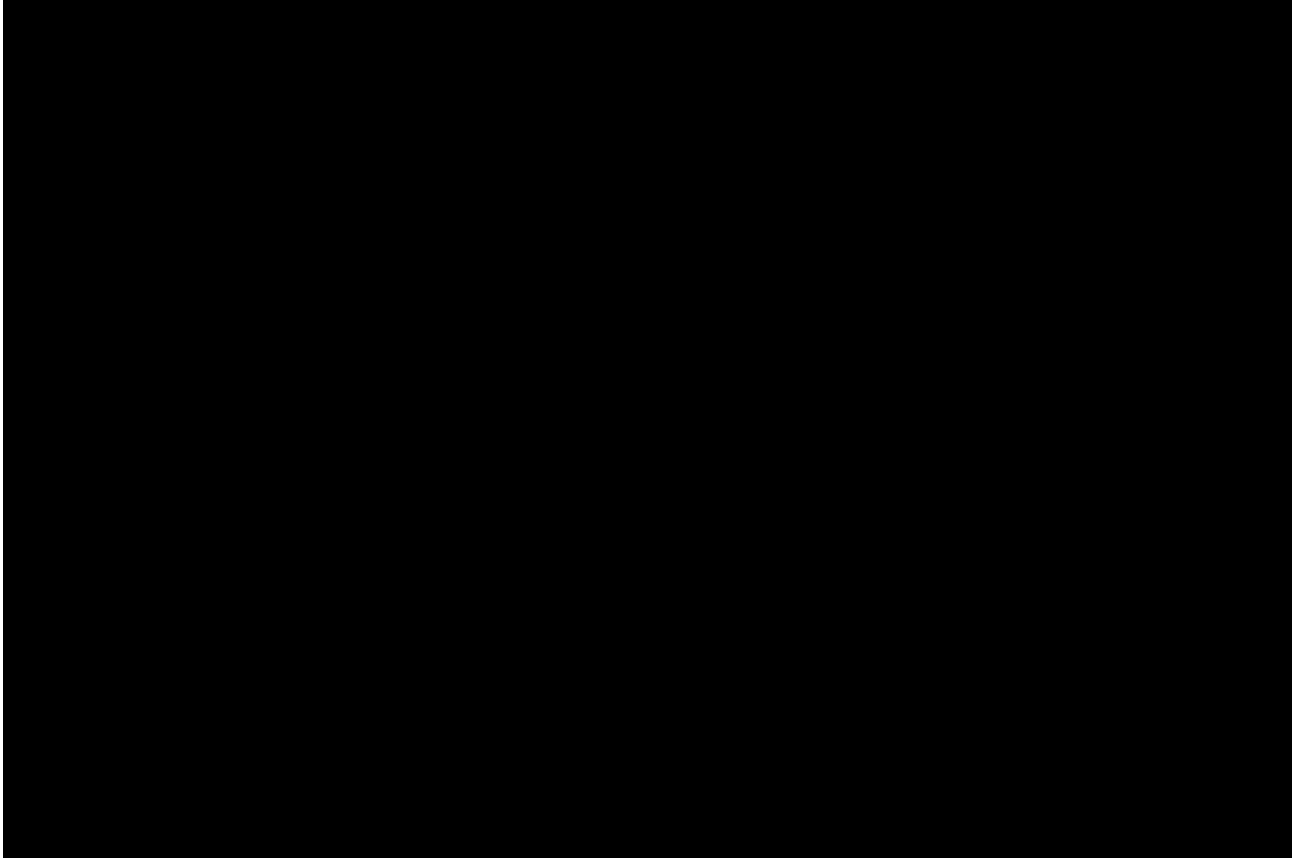
East ward face to face information session – 3 August 2022



East ward whiteboard key issues/areas of concern/ideas



Online information session #3 – 3 August 2022
Community questions in the text chat:



Community information sessions

A digital copy of the online presentation was made available on Council's website after the first couple of presentations were completed see here under <https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/our-funded-future/have-your-say>



Engagement Activity - Special interest group meetings

Special interest groups presentations included:

1. 8 July 2022
2. 18 July 2022
3. 19 July 2022
4. 21 July 2022
5. 1 August 2022
6. 4 August 2022
7. 4 August 2022
8. 8 August 2022

Two further sessions have been scheduled with Karuah Progress association and Tilligerry Community Association during the next phase of engagement (Phase 2).

Appendix C: Survey report

To be provided through a supplementary report.



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL



OUR FUNDED FUTURE

We are starting the conversation with our community about Our Funded Future.

POWERED BY **ETHELO**

Table of content

- 05 Financial Sustainability
- 09 Non-rate income options
- 18 Rate increase options
- 04 Your priorities
- 33 About participants
- 39 Survey Feedback



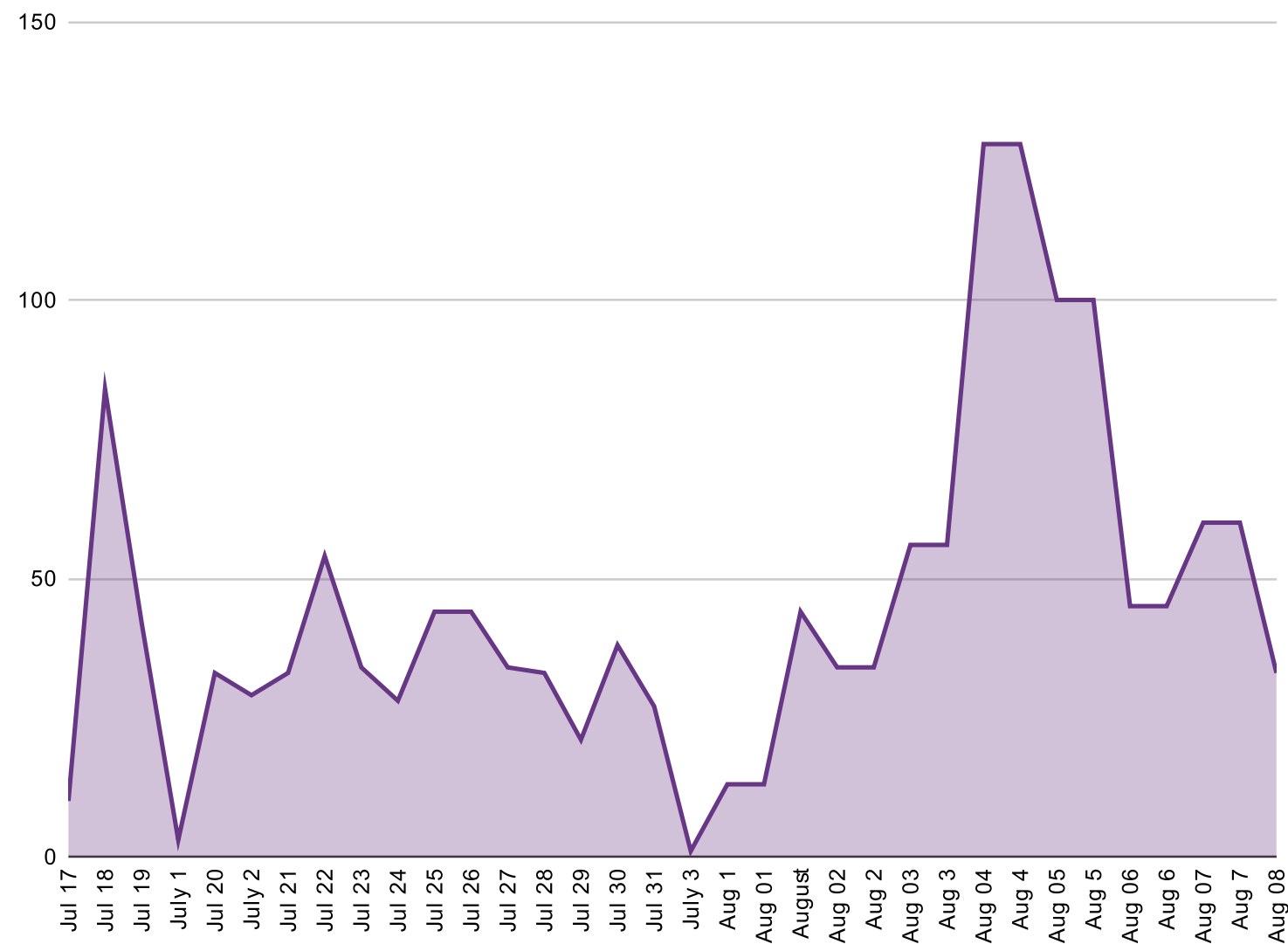
INTRODUCTION

The City of Port Stephens conducted a public survey to gain input on the budget priorities of residents. The engagement objective was to get the community to understand Council's current financial position and be involved in how we move forward to a financially sustainable future.

The Ethelo survey was open for engagement from July 18 to August 8, 2022. Participants had the opportunity to provide input on a number of rate income and non-rate income options to turn City's financial position around as well as several other funding options.



PLATFORM VISITORS



PARTICIPATION

Over the 4 weeks that the engagement was live, the online platform garnered...

1215 visitors

425 participants (answered at least 1 question)

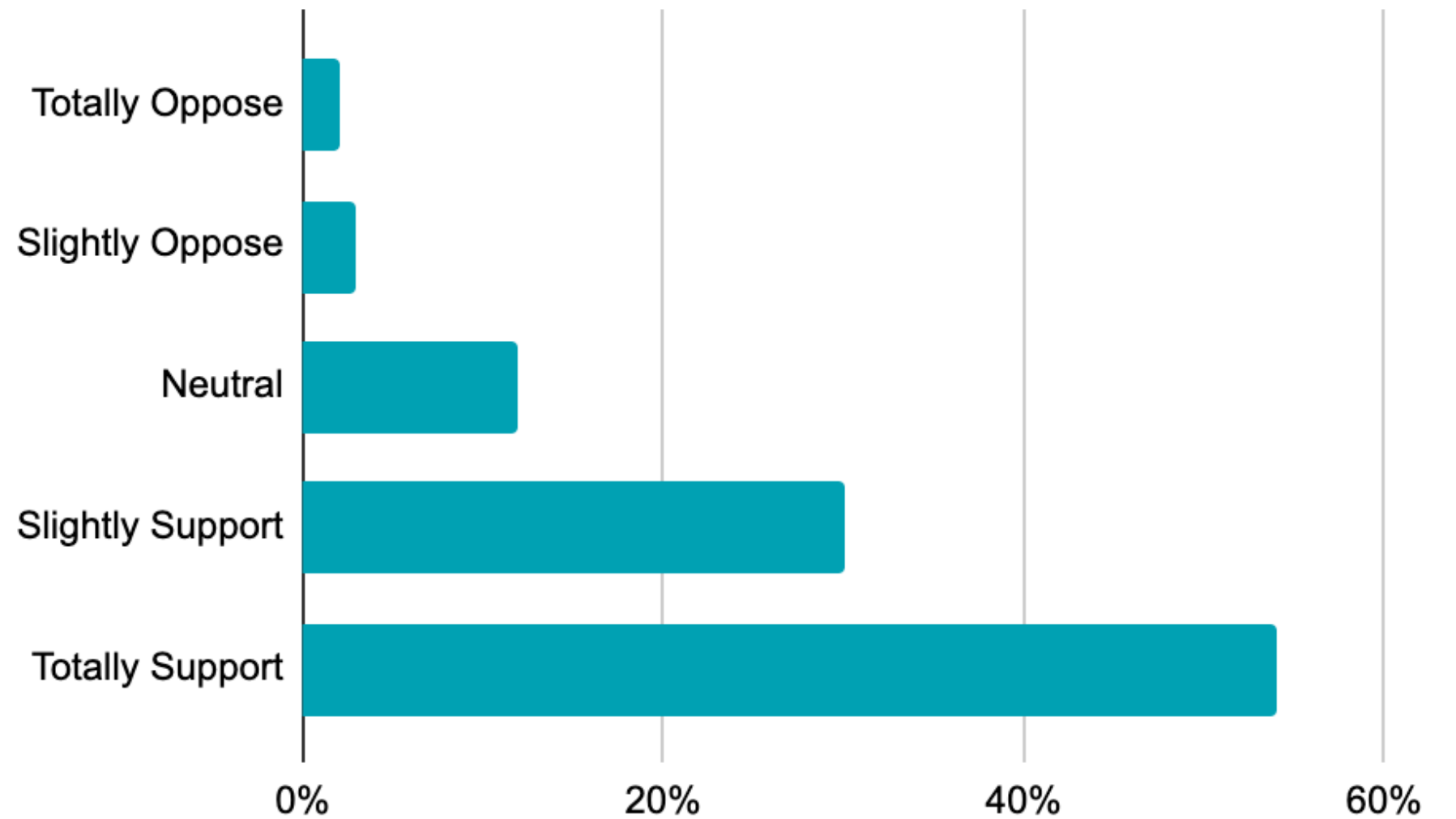
- 290 participants (68.2%) with at least 25% completed
- 240 participants (56.5%) with at least at least 50% completed
- 195 participants (45.9%) with at least 75% completed
- 88 participants (30.3%) with at least 95% completed

2405 Comments

898 Comment Likes

Financial Sustainability

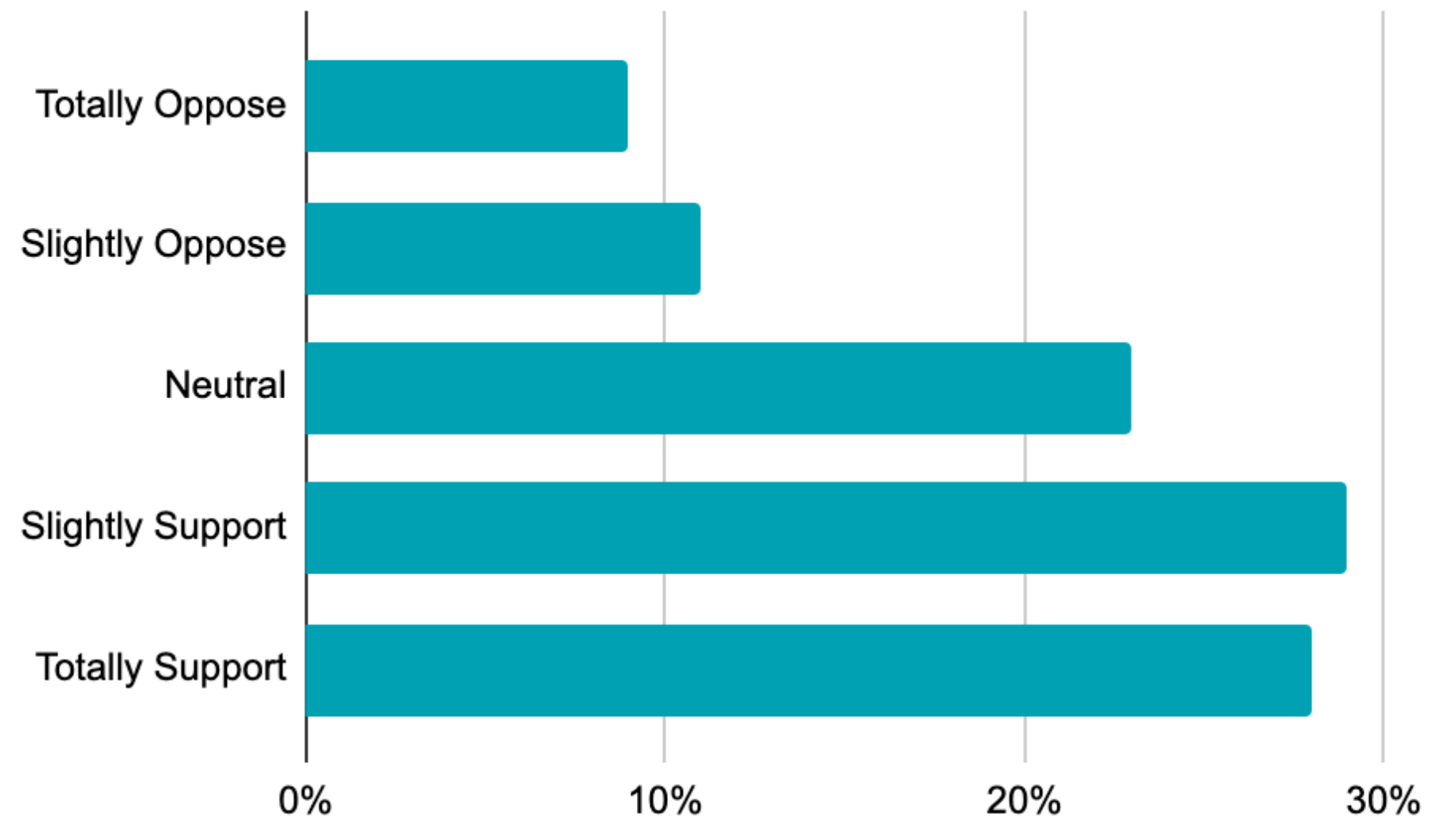
It is important to me that Port Stephens Council is financially sustainable.



n=312. Over all Support: 83% Comments: 372

Enhance Current Services

It is important to me that Port Stephens Council has additional budget available, above what is required to balance our books, to enhance current services and maintenance levels."



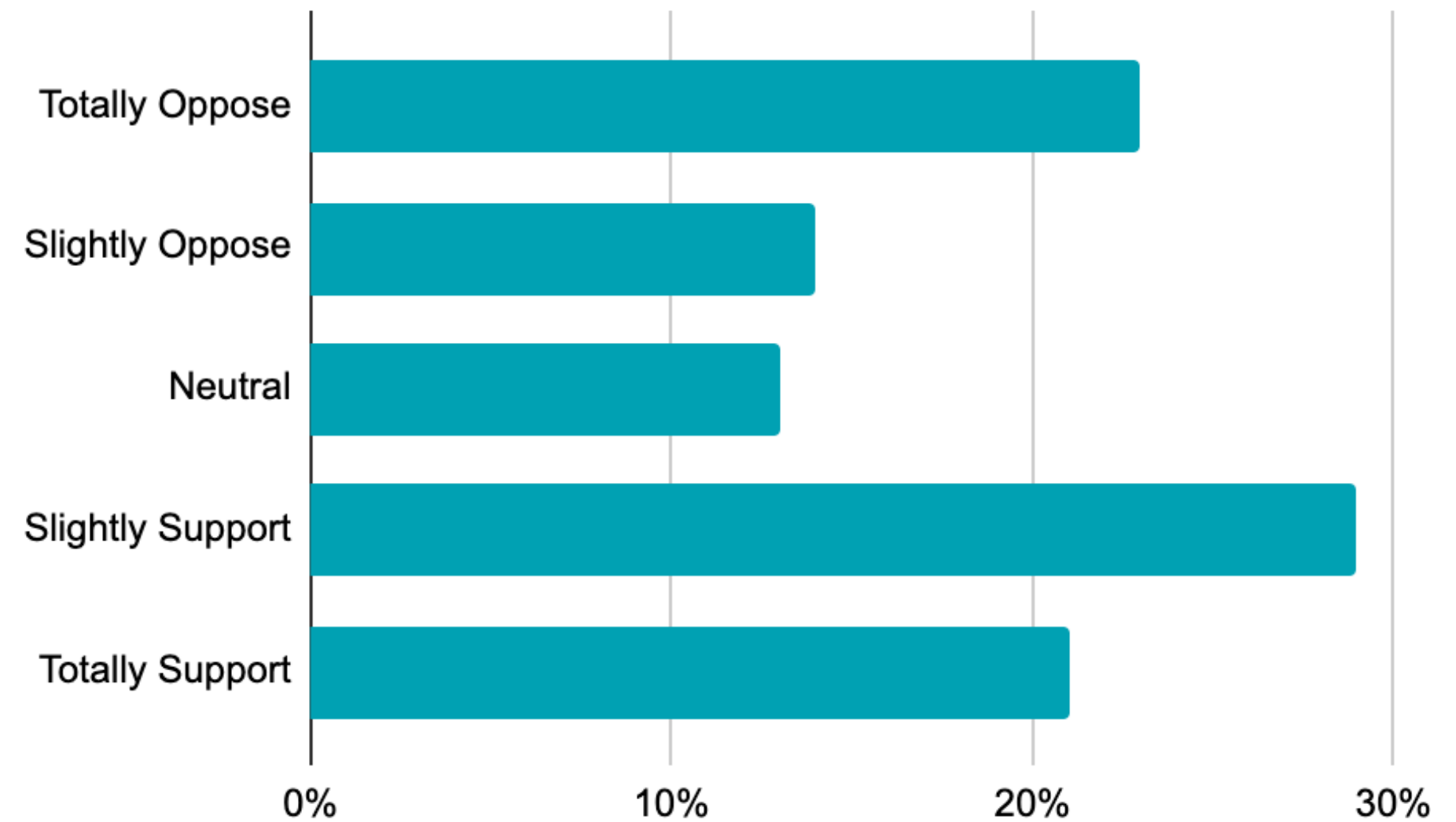
n=275. Over all Support: 64% Comments: 301

Non-rate income options



Increase fees & charges by 10%

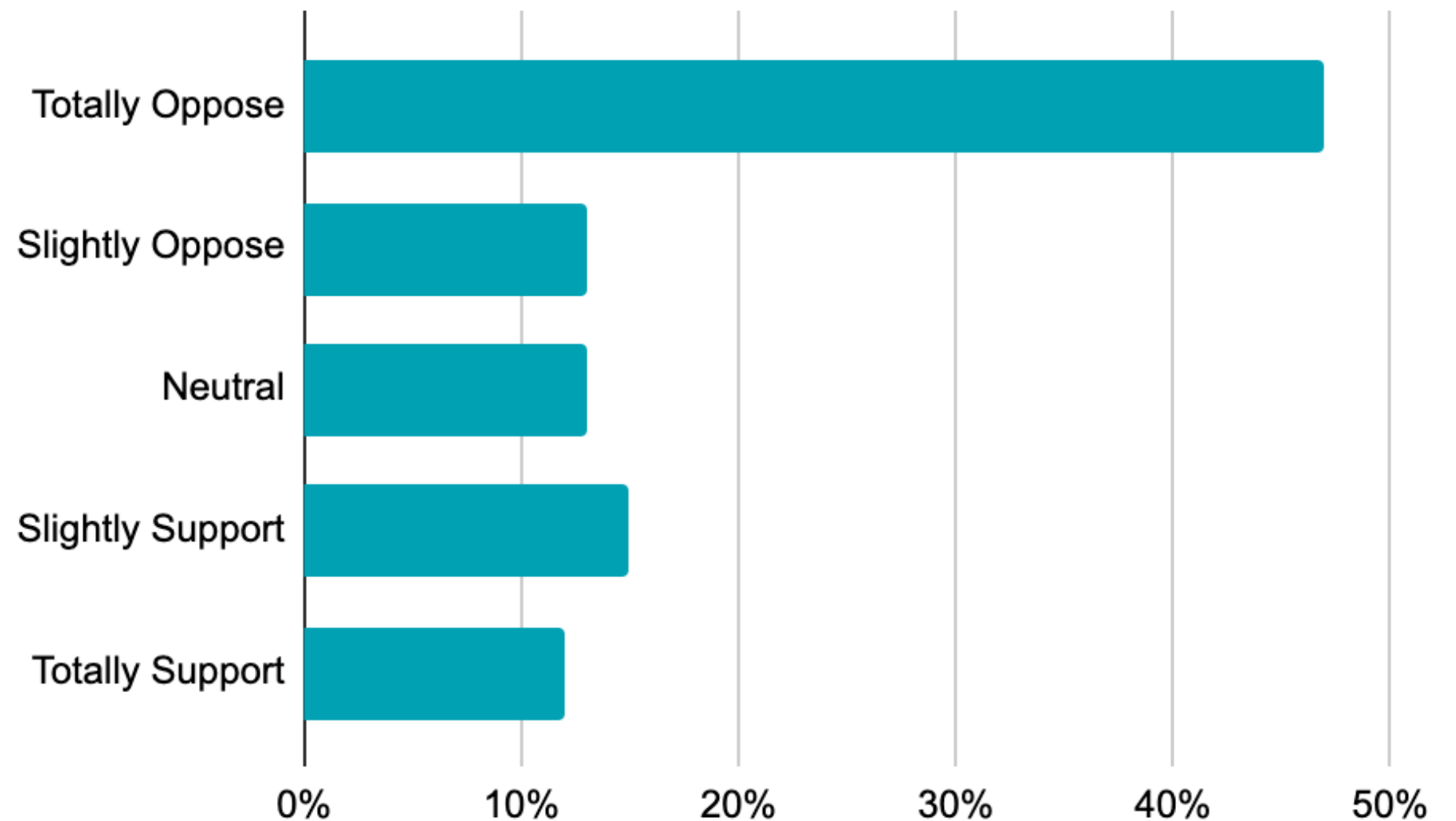
Increase fees & charges by 10% for the 2023-2024 financial year. This is estimated to bring in an additional \$400,000



n=285. Over all Support: 53% Comments: 166

Remove exemption on smart parking

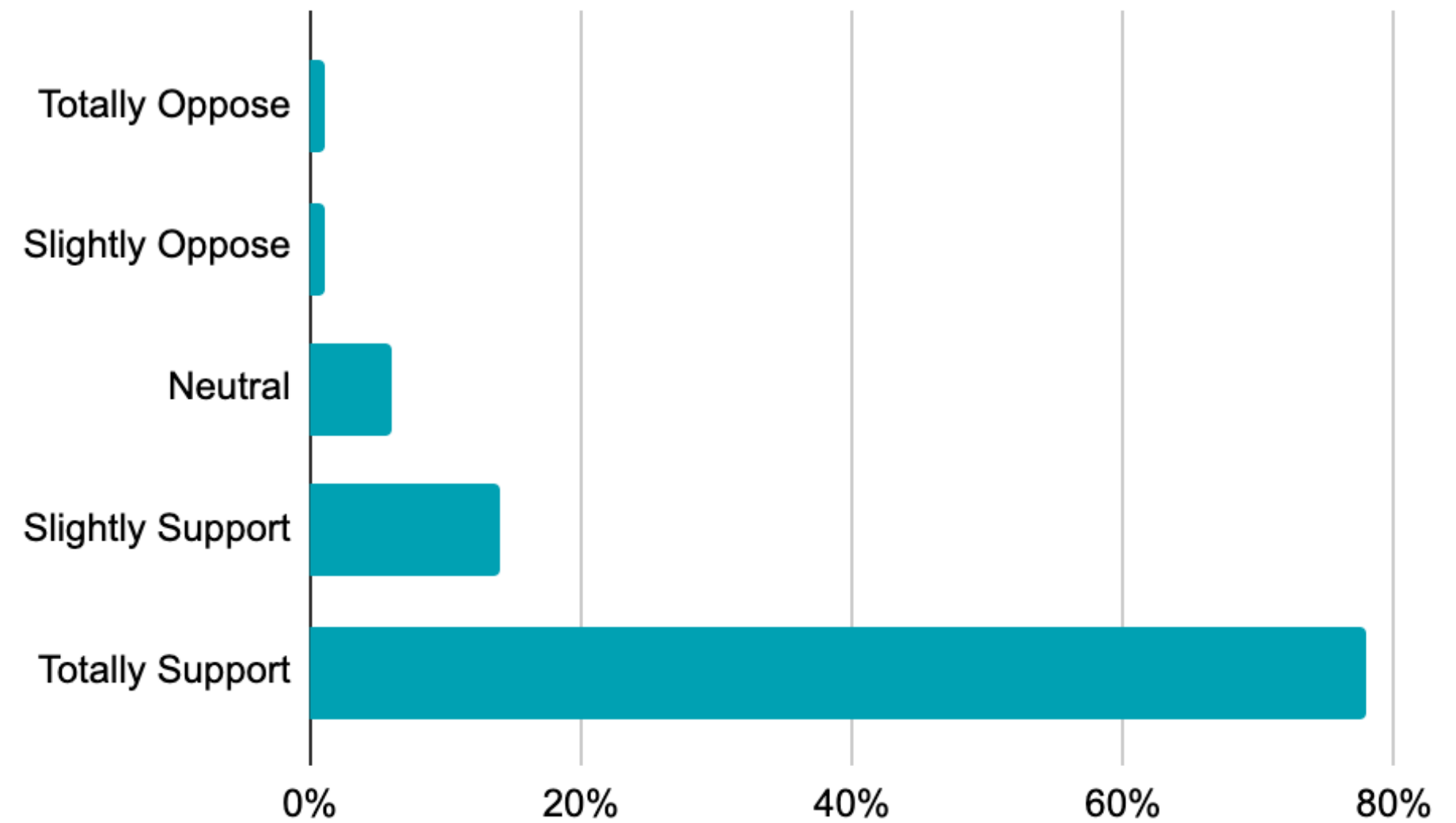
Remove the exemption for local residents from smart parking in their towns and centres. This is estimated to bring in an additional \$1 million dollars per year.



n=270. Over all Support: 33% Comments: 151

Continue to seek additional grant funding

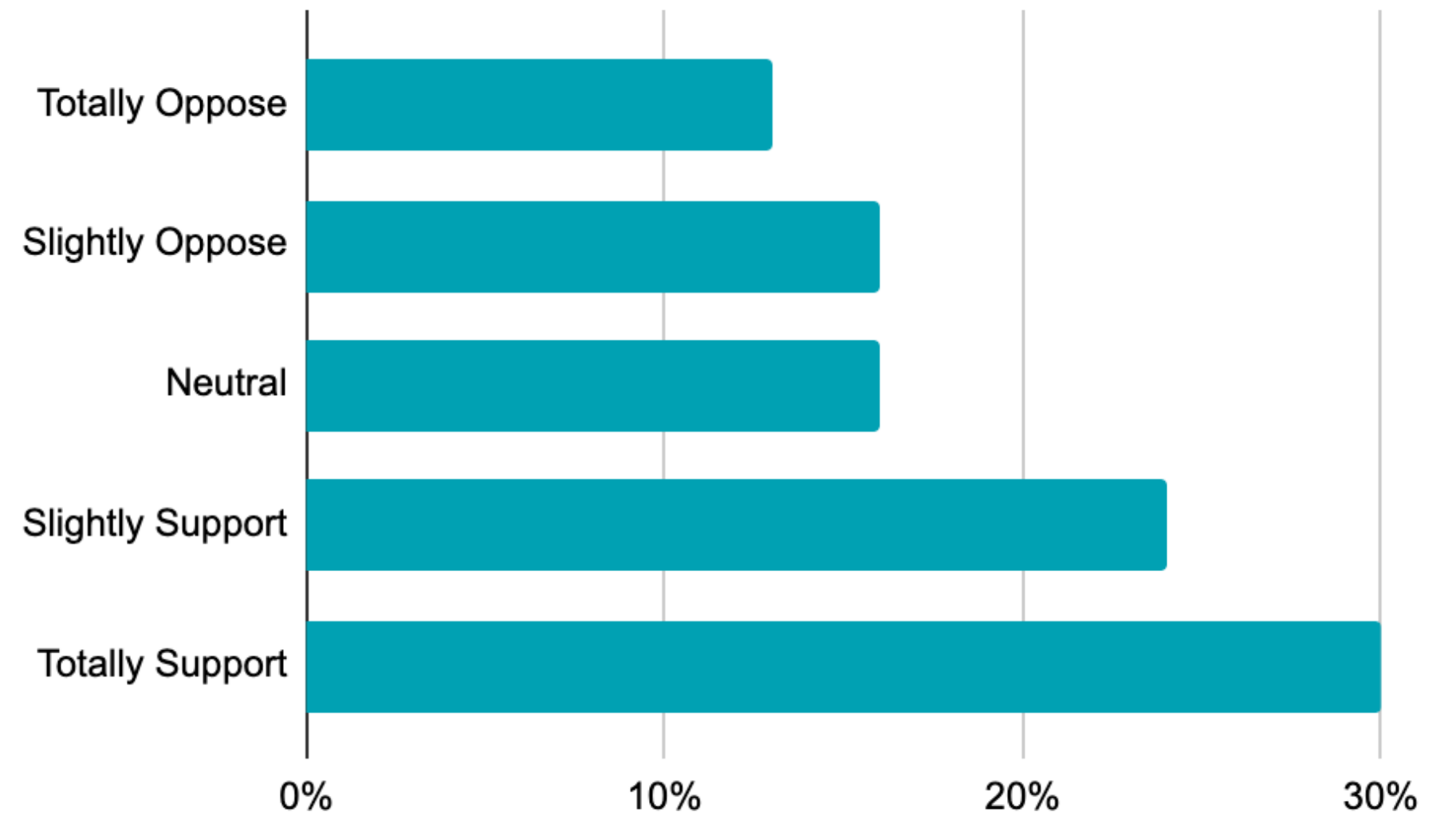
Continue to seek additional grant funding via our dedicated Grants Officer. Our success in obtaining grants has increased by 62% since appointing a dedicated Grants Officer in 2016.



n=279. Over all Support: 92% Comments:131

Sell Underperforming Assets

Sell underperforming assets. We have identified potential land sites that may be in excess of our needs. Selling our assets can take approximately up to 5 years and could bring in up to \$5 million.



n=276. Over all Support: 61% Comments: 168

Rate increase options



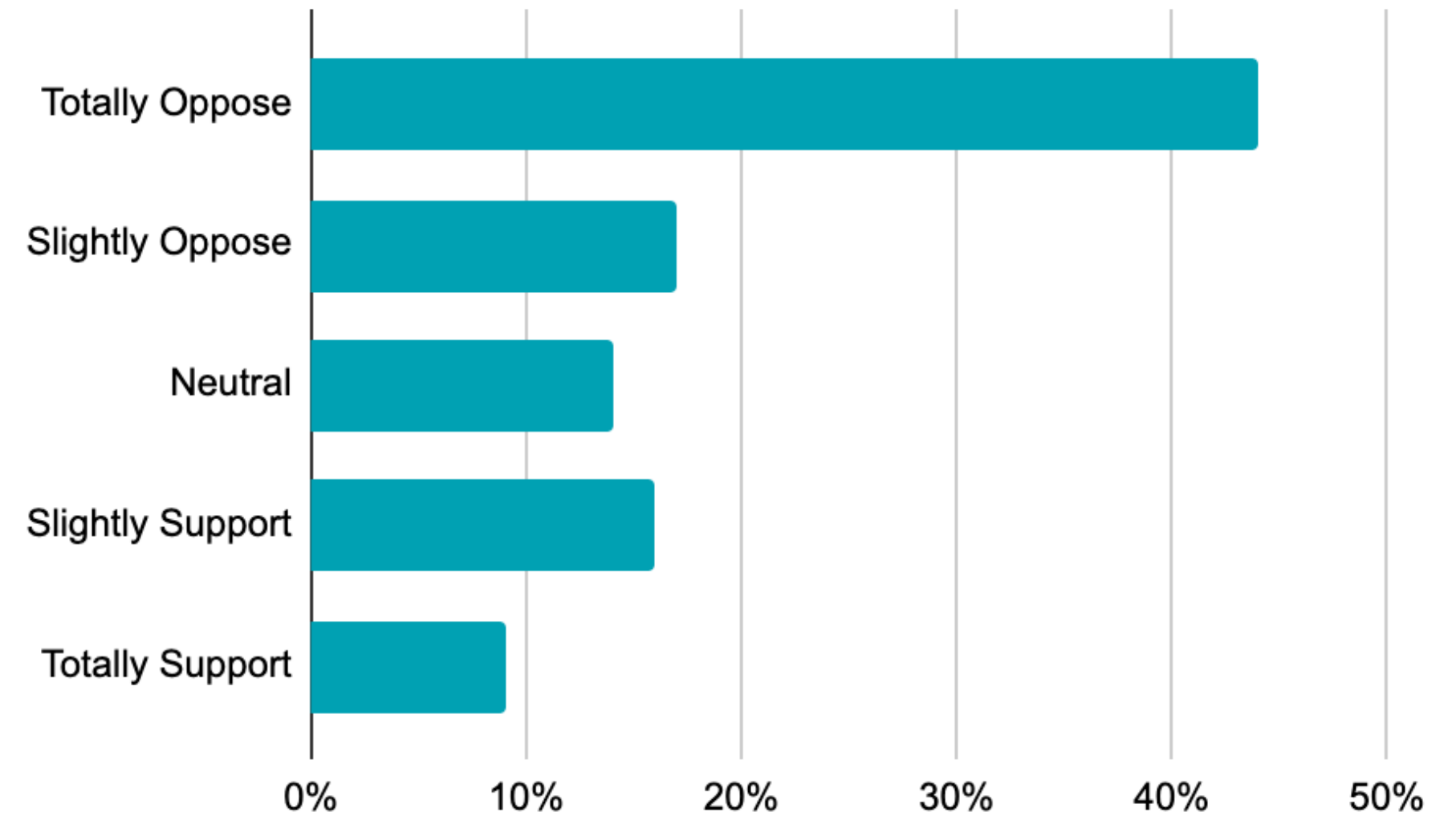
Summary

- 37% Support** - Reduce Service Levels (Current Path)
- 34% Support** - Option 2 Independent Recommendation (34.92% increase)
- 32% Support** - Option 1 - Steady Growth (38.56% increase)
- 25% Support** - Option 4 Single Year (26% increase)
- 21% Support** - Option 5 Long Term Solution (45.08% increase)
- 20% Support** - Option 3 Short Term Solution (29.68% increase)



Option 1 - Steady Growth (Steady rate increases for four years)

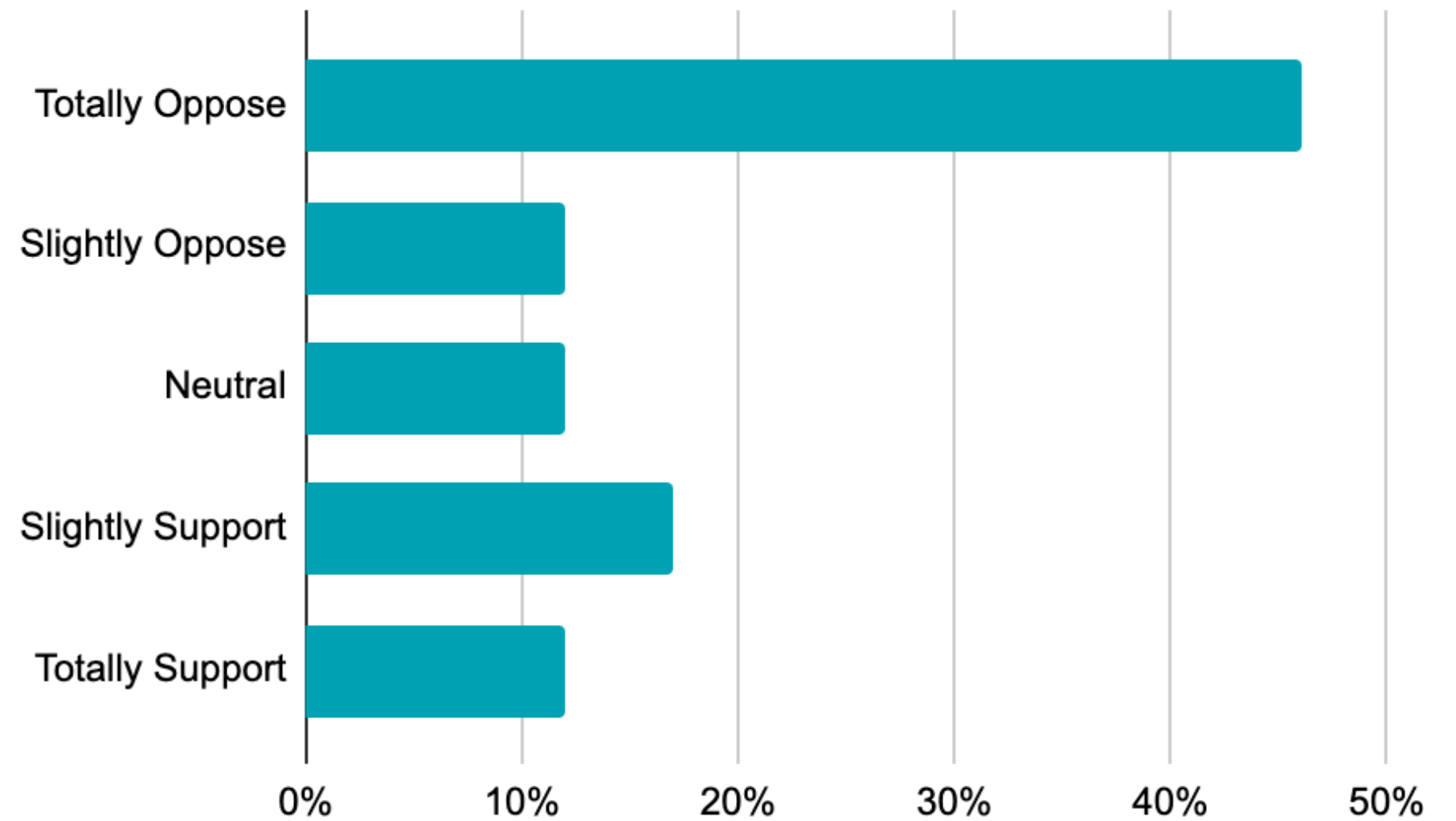
How supportive are you of this option as the path forward for Council?



n=337 Over all Support: 32% Comments: 155

Option 2 – Independent Recommendation (Fixed increase each year for 3 years)

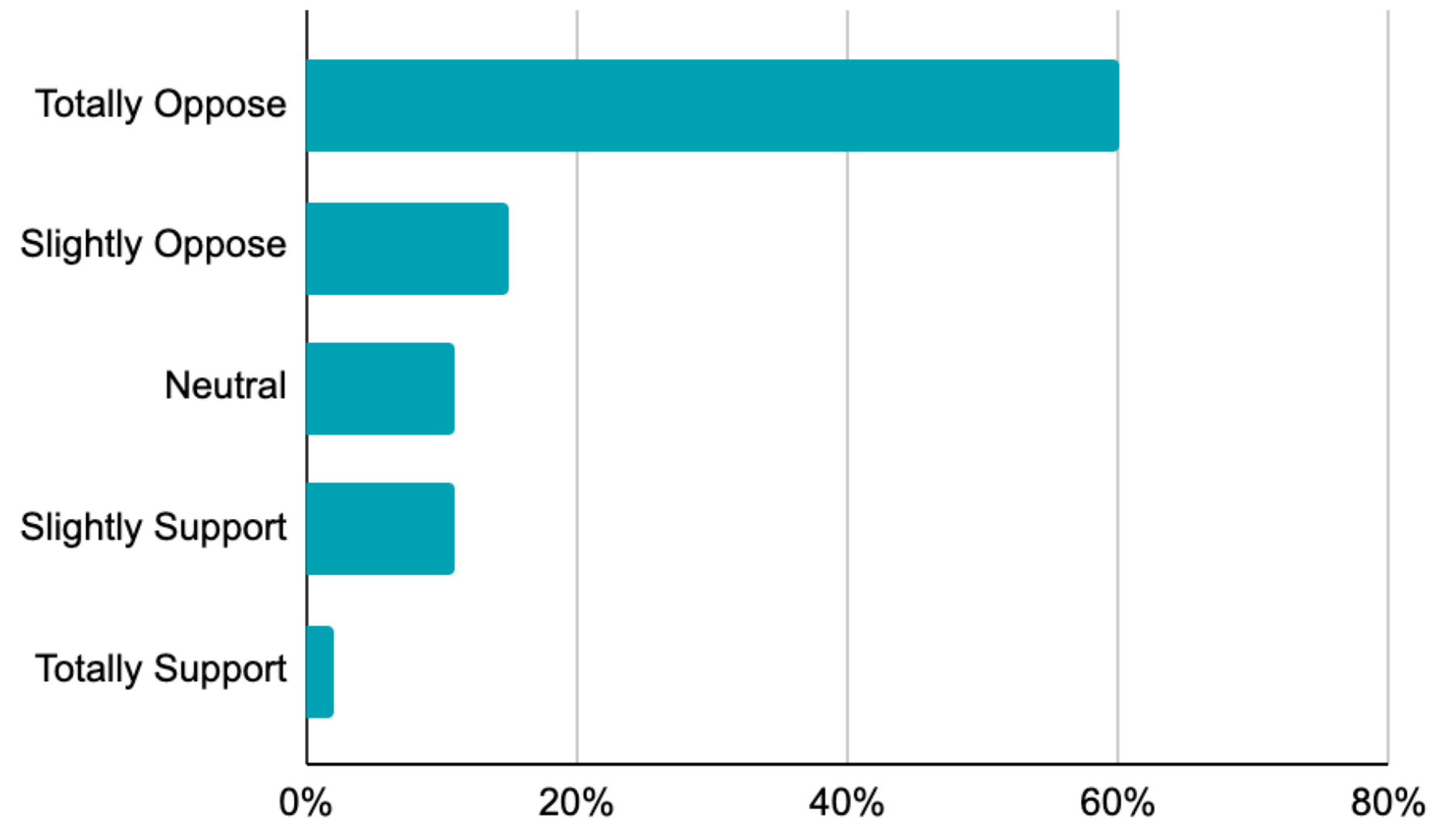
How supportive are you of this option as the path forward for Council?



n=325. Over all Support: 34% Comments: 103

Option 3 – Short Term Solution (Varying increases each year for four years)

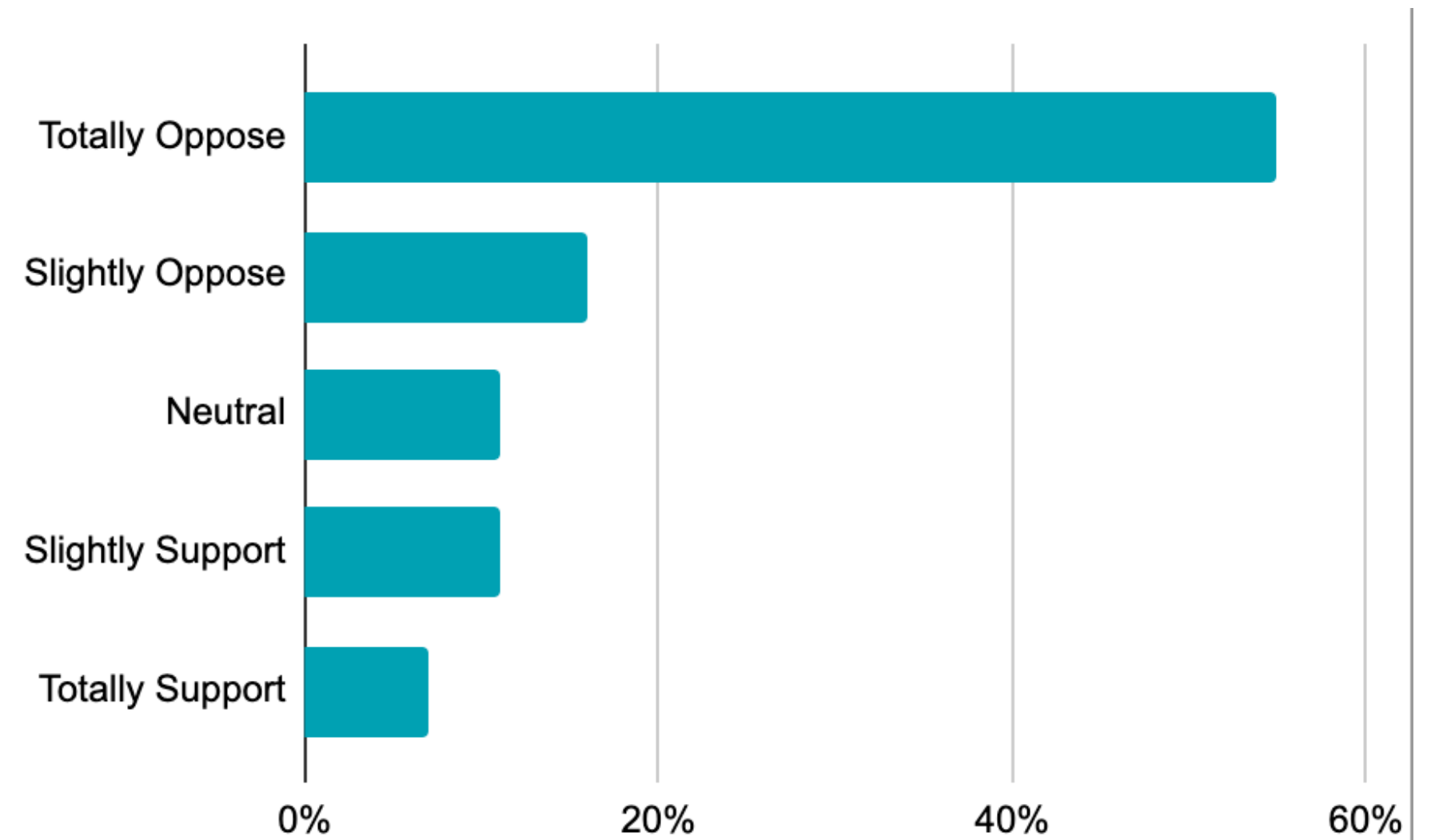
How supportive are you of this option as the path forward for Council?



n=317. Over all Support: 20% Comments: 85

Option 4 – Single Year (A larger increase for a single year)

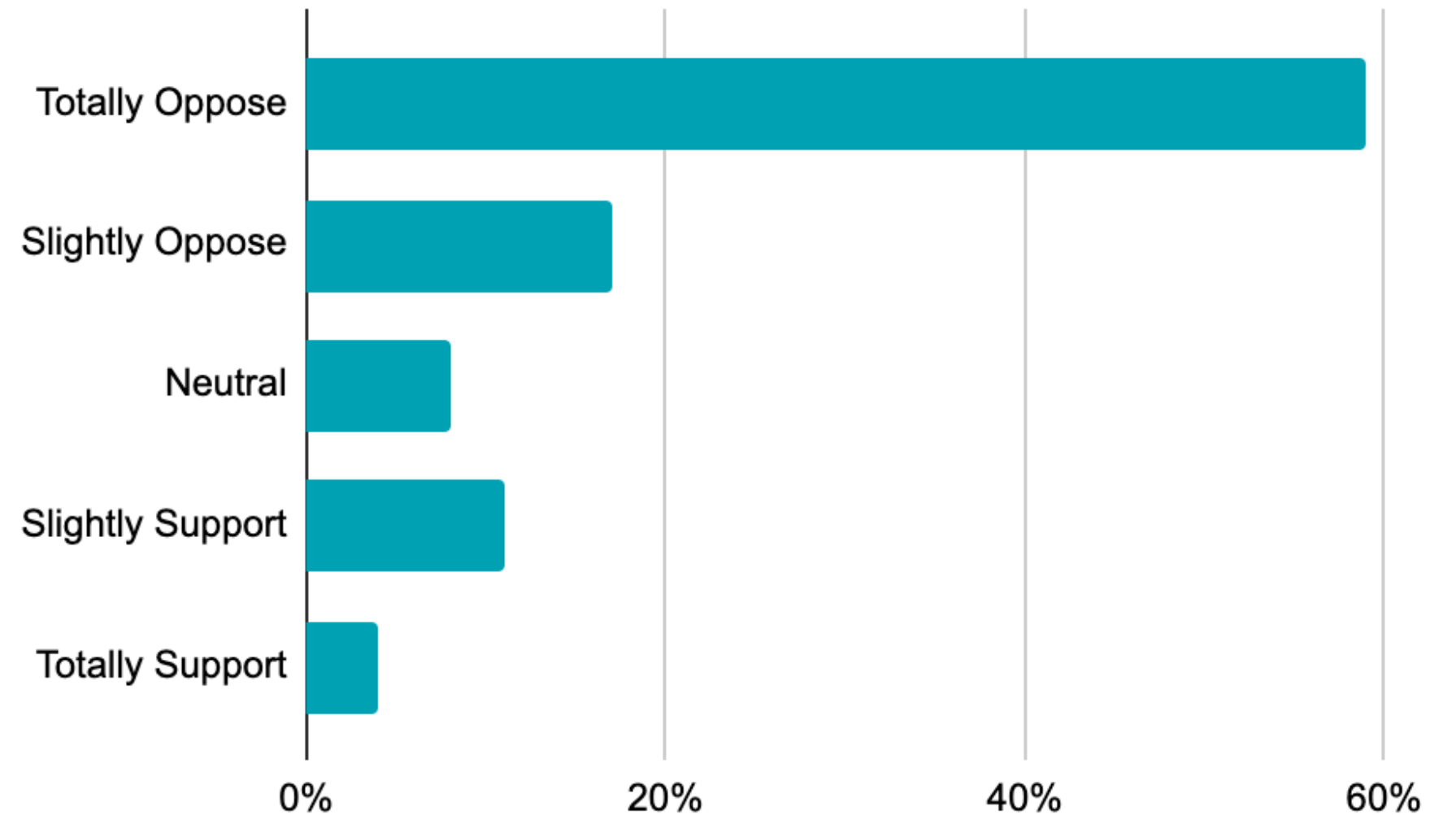
How supportive are you of this option as the path forward for Council?



n=318. Over all Support: 25% Comments: 97

Option 5 – Long Term Solution (Fixed increase each year for four years).

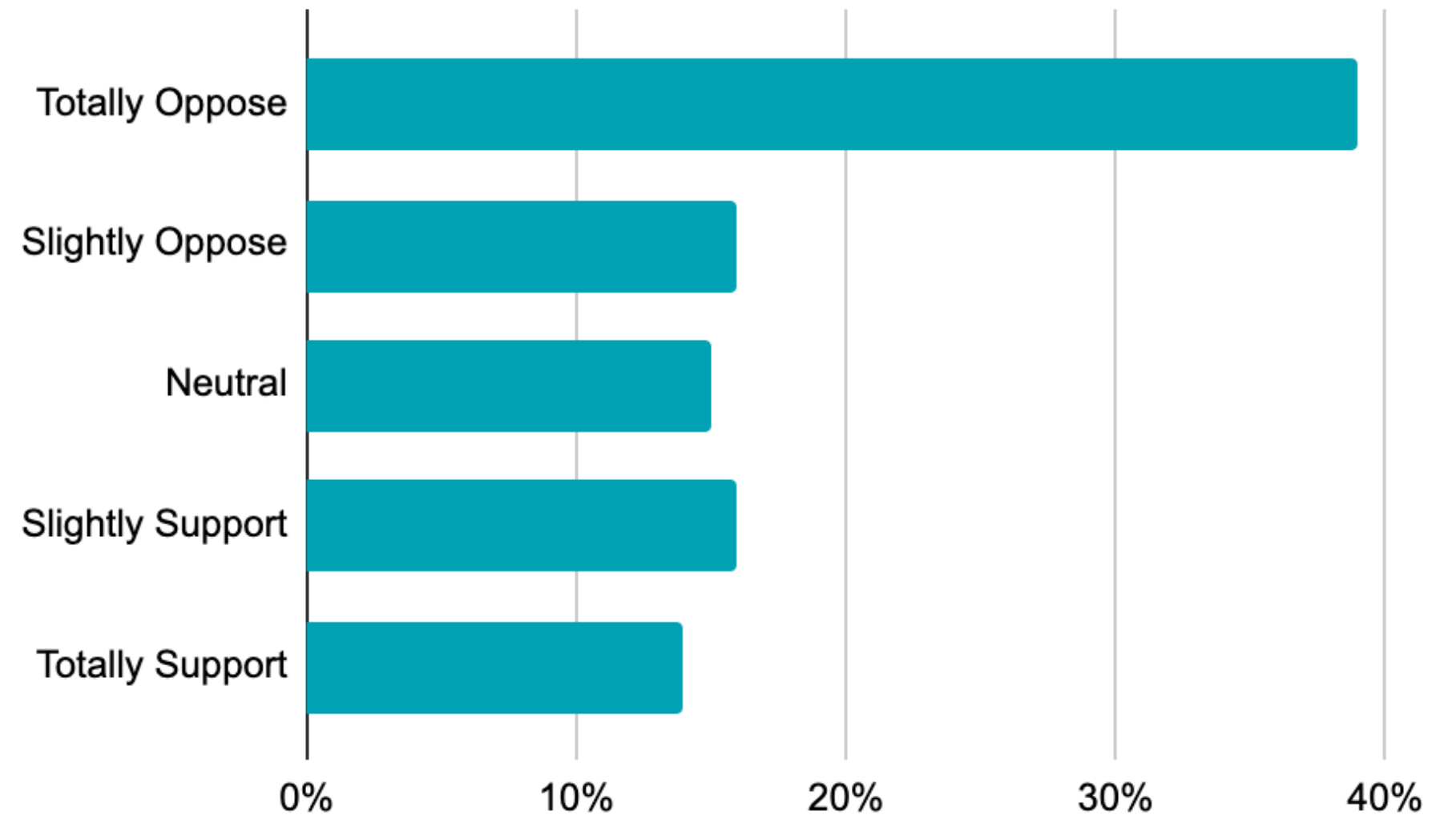
How supportive are you of this option as the path forward for Council?



n=319. Over all Support: 21% Comments: 89

Reduce service levels (current path)

How supportive are you of this option as the path forward for Council?



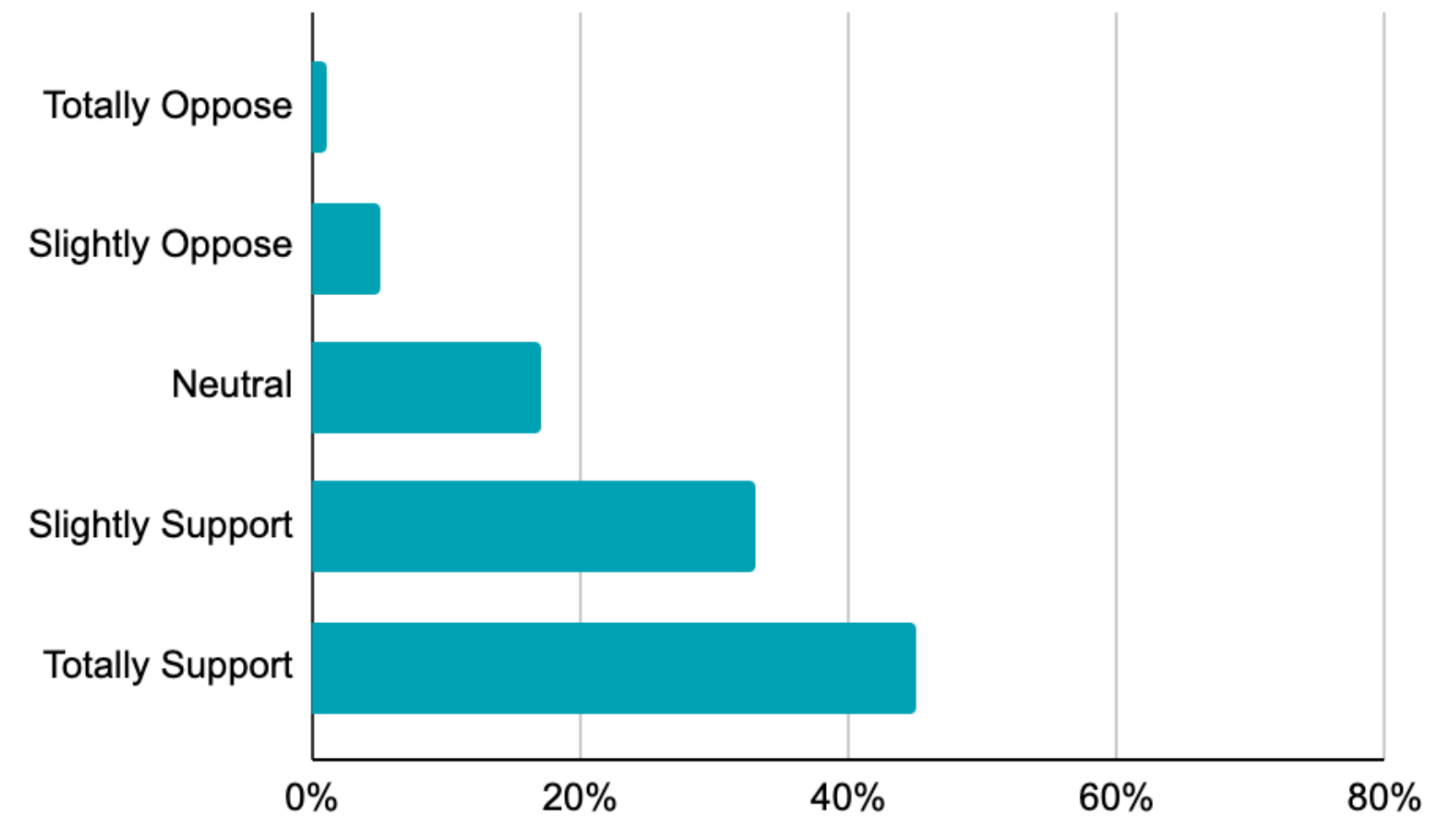
n=317. Over all Support: 37% Comments: 98

Your priorities



Looking after our public space

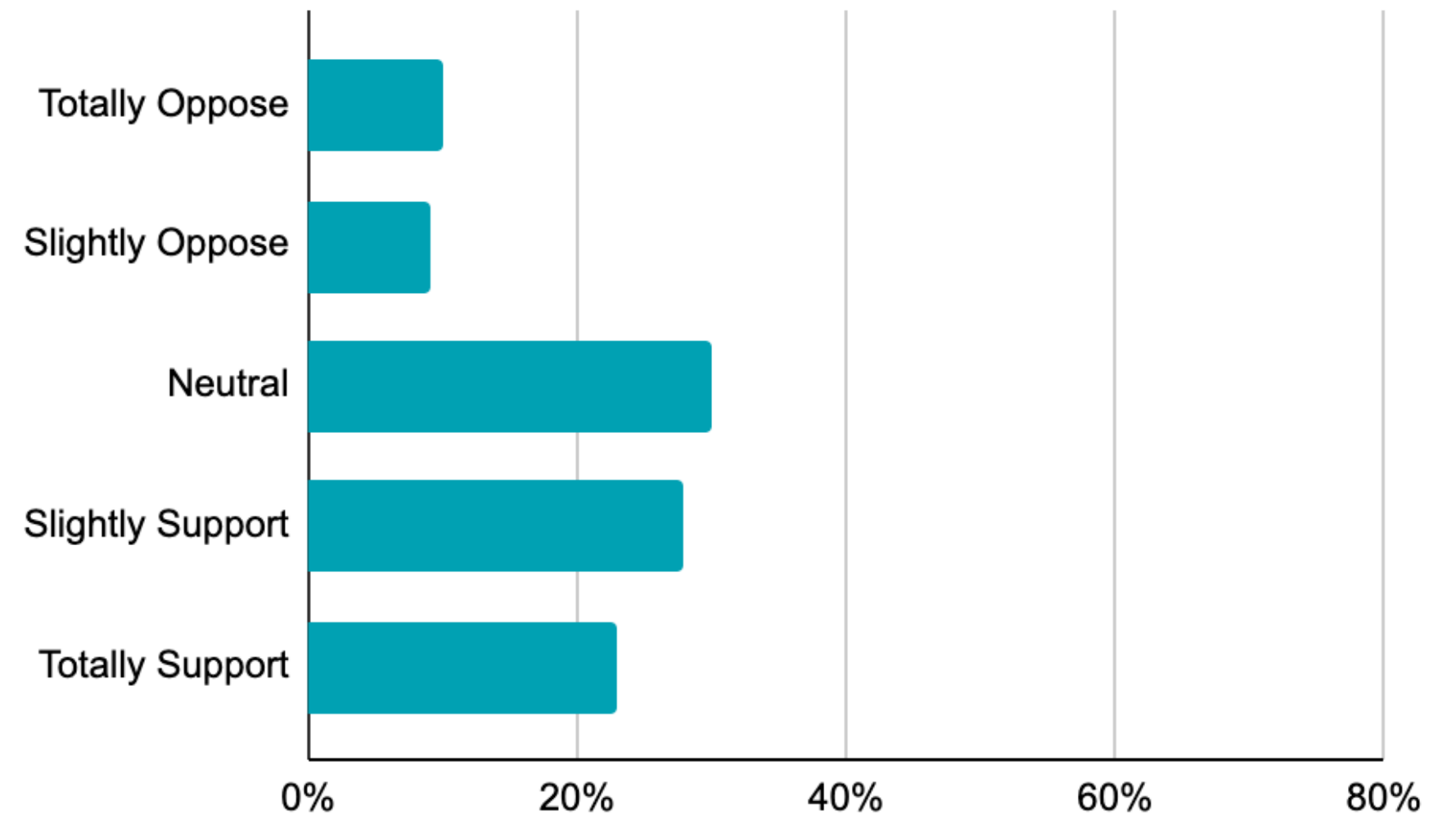
Looking after our public space
(for example public place
cleaning & park maintenance)



n=287. Overall Support: 74% Comments: 92

Protecting us from natural disasters

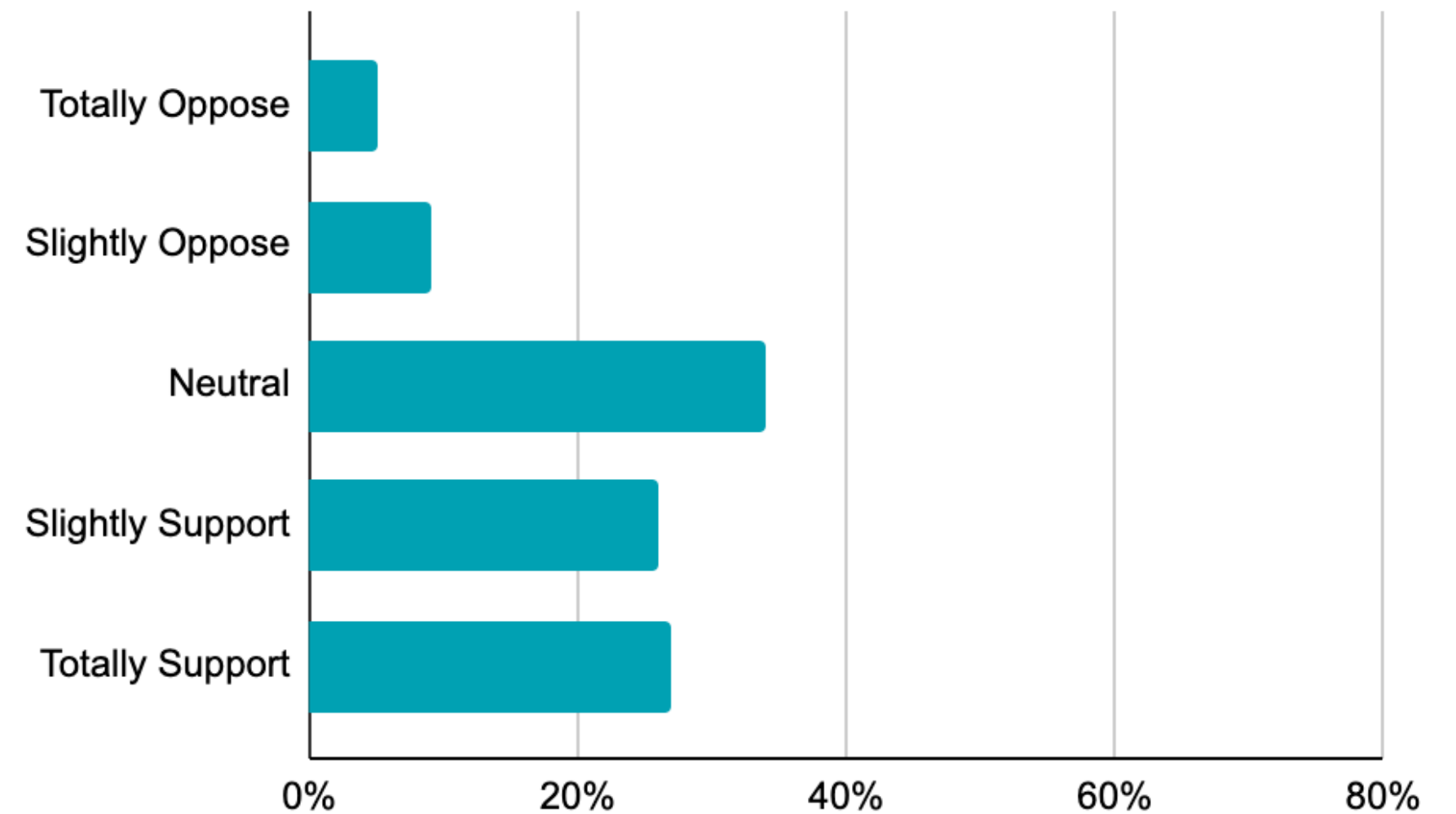
Protecting us from natural disasters (for example putting money away to be used to repair damage to our community by natural disasters that are not covered by the State Government)



n=285. Over all Support: 61% Comments: 75

Fixing our roads

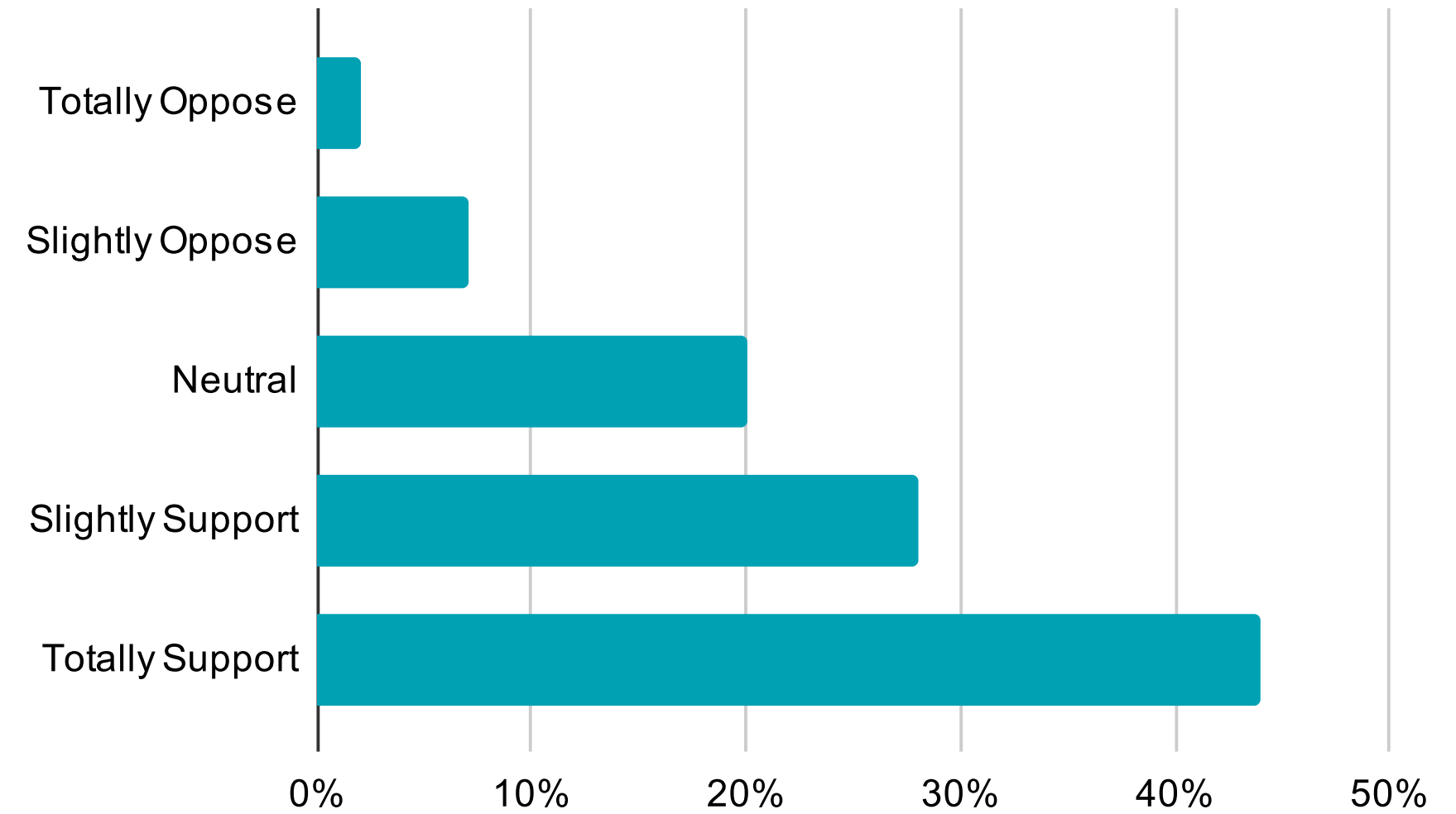
Fixing our roads (for example pot holes and road reseals)



n=293. Over all Support: 91% Comments: 112

Improving our chances for grant funding

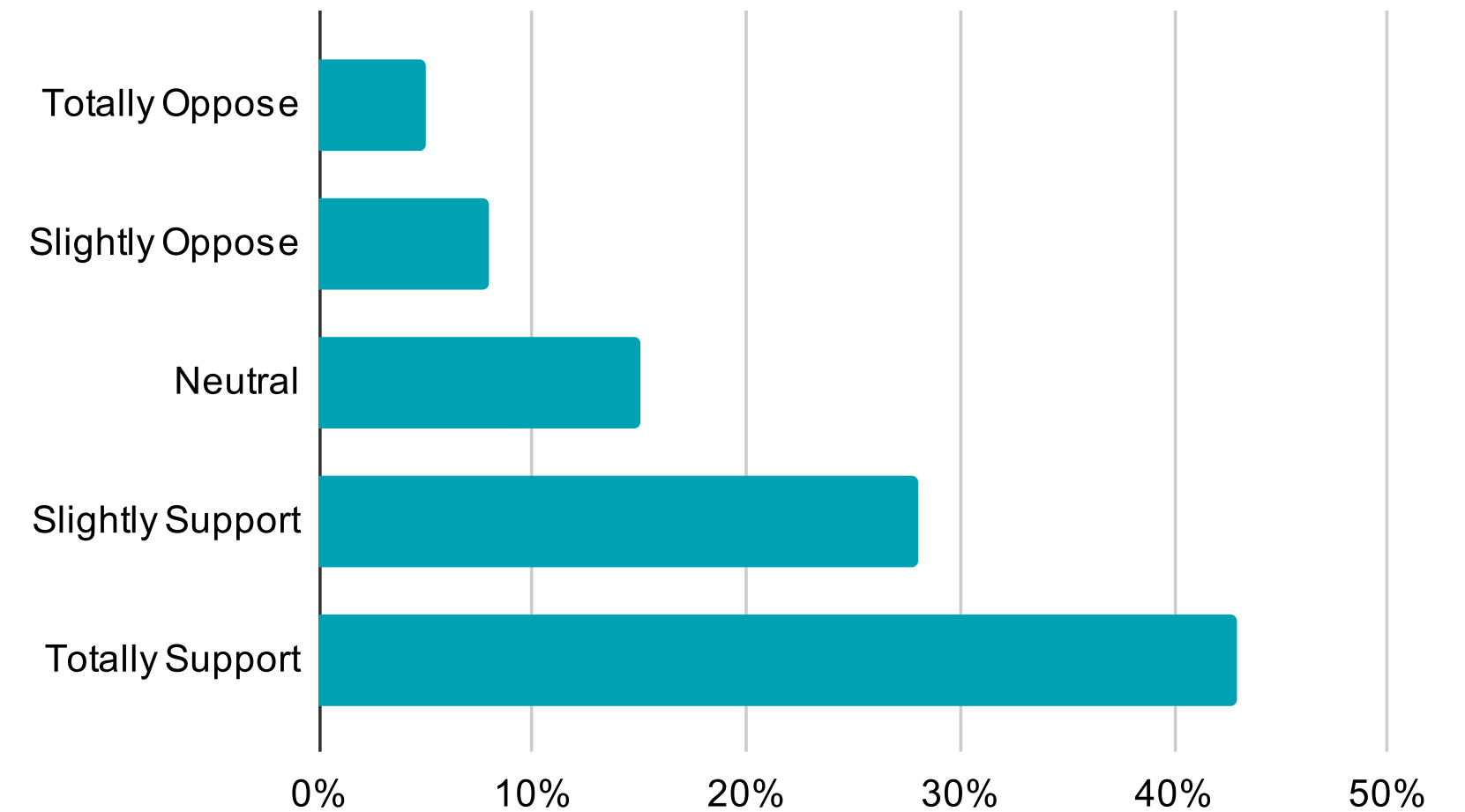
Improving our chances for grant funding (for example putting money aside to be used as required co-contribution funds when applying for grants)



n=285. Overall Support: 76% Comments: 60

Protecting our natural environment

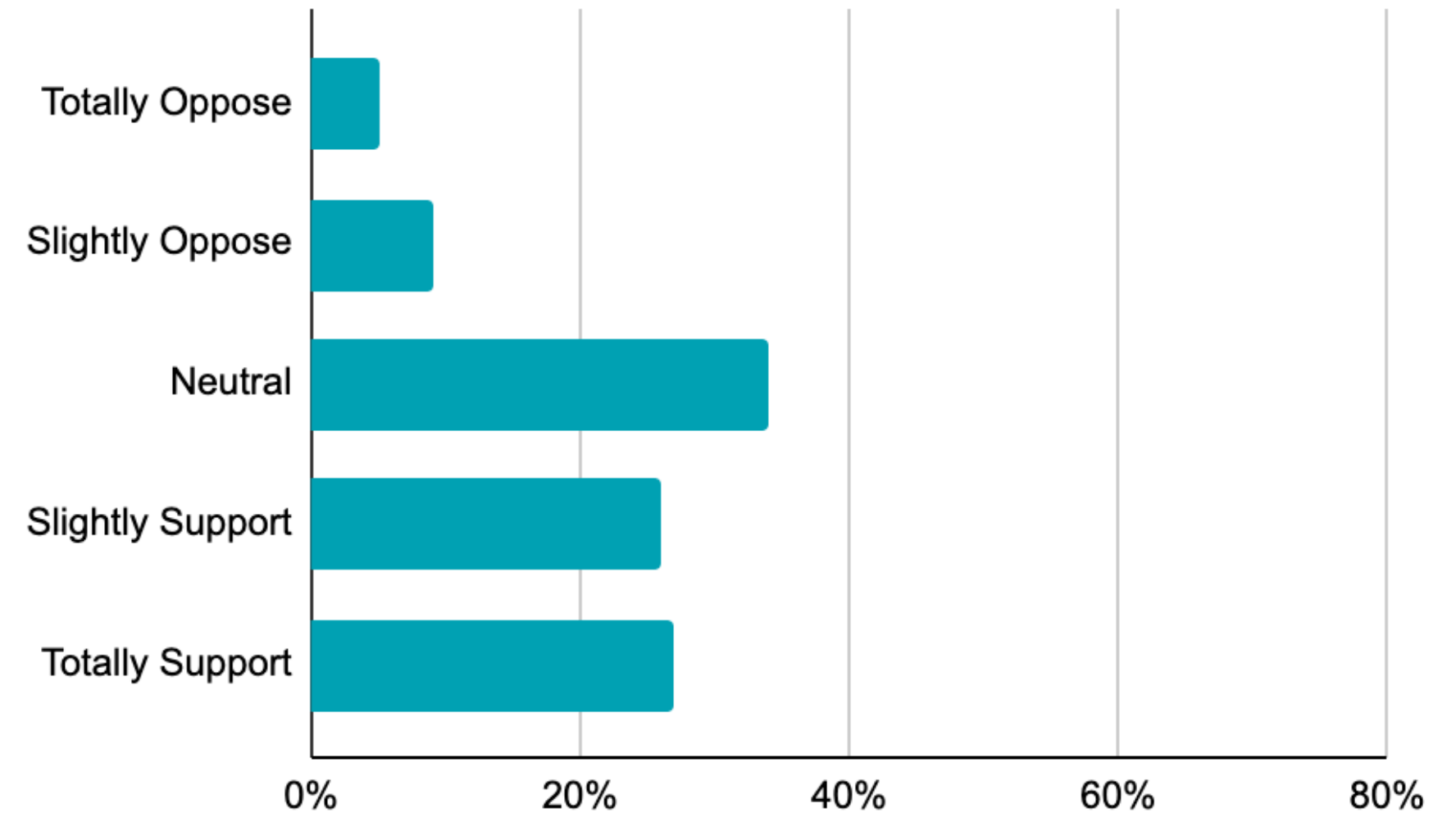
Protecting our natural environment (for example environmental programs and enhancing biodiversity)



n=286. Overall Support: 74% Comments: 80

Improving access and safety to existing pathway connections

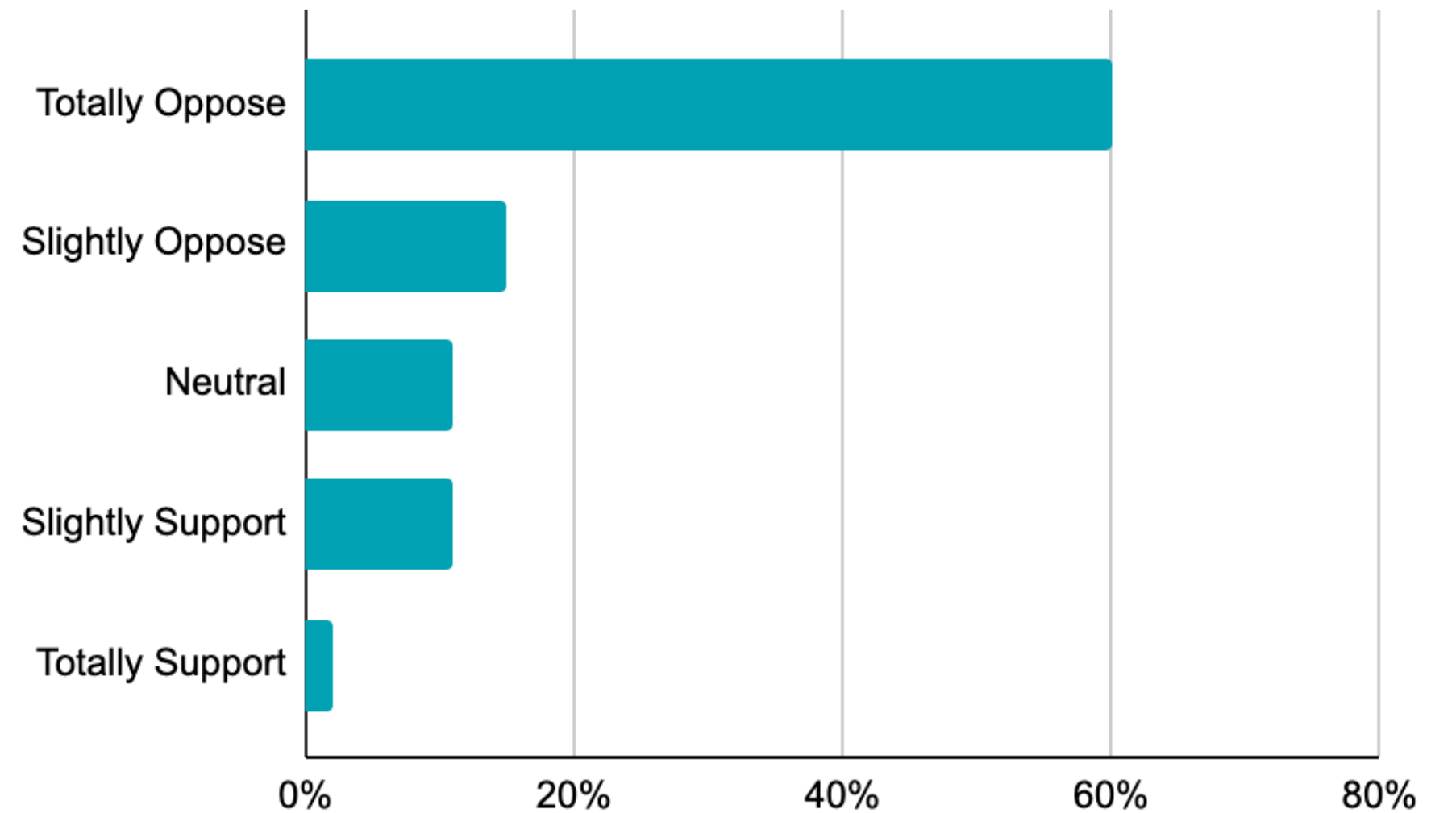
Improving access and safety to existing pathway connections (for example connections around schools)



n=279. Over all Support: 66% Comments: 70

Looking after our foreshores & waterways

Looking after our foreshores & waterways (for example sand nourishment projects and improving access to and around local waterways)



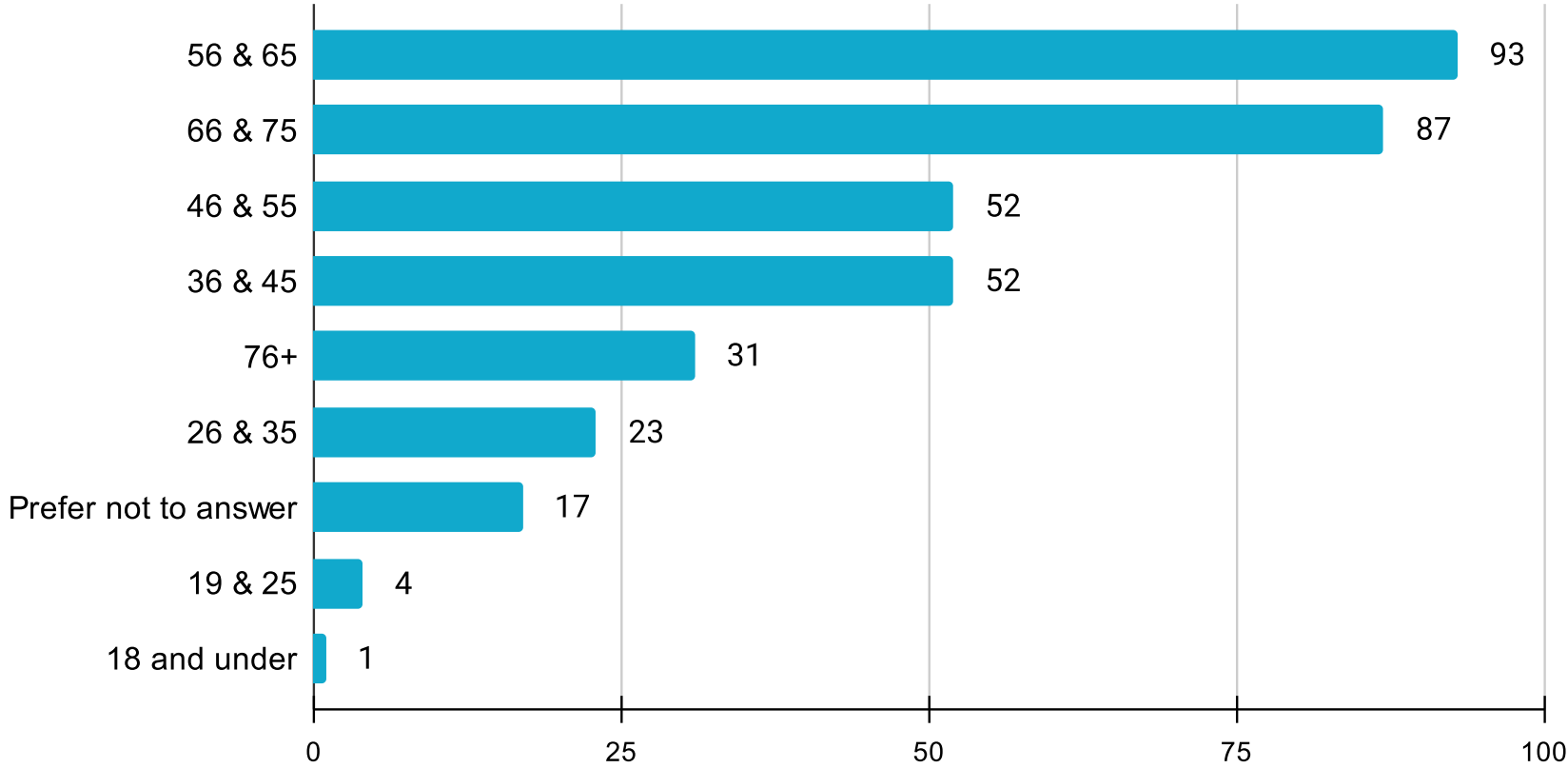
n=287. Overall Support: 79% Comments: 71

About You



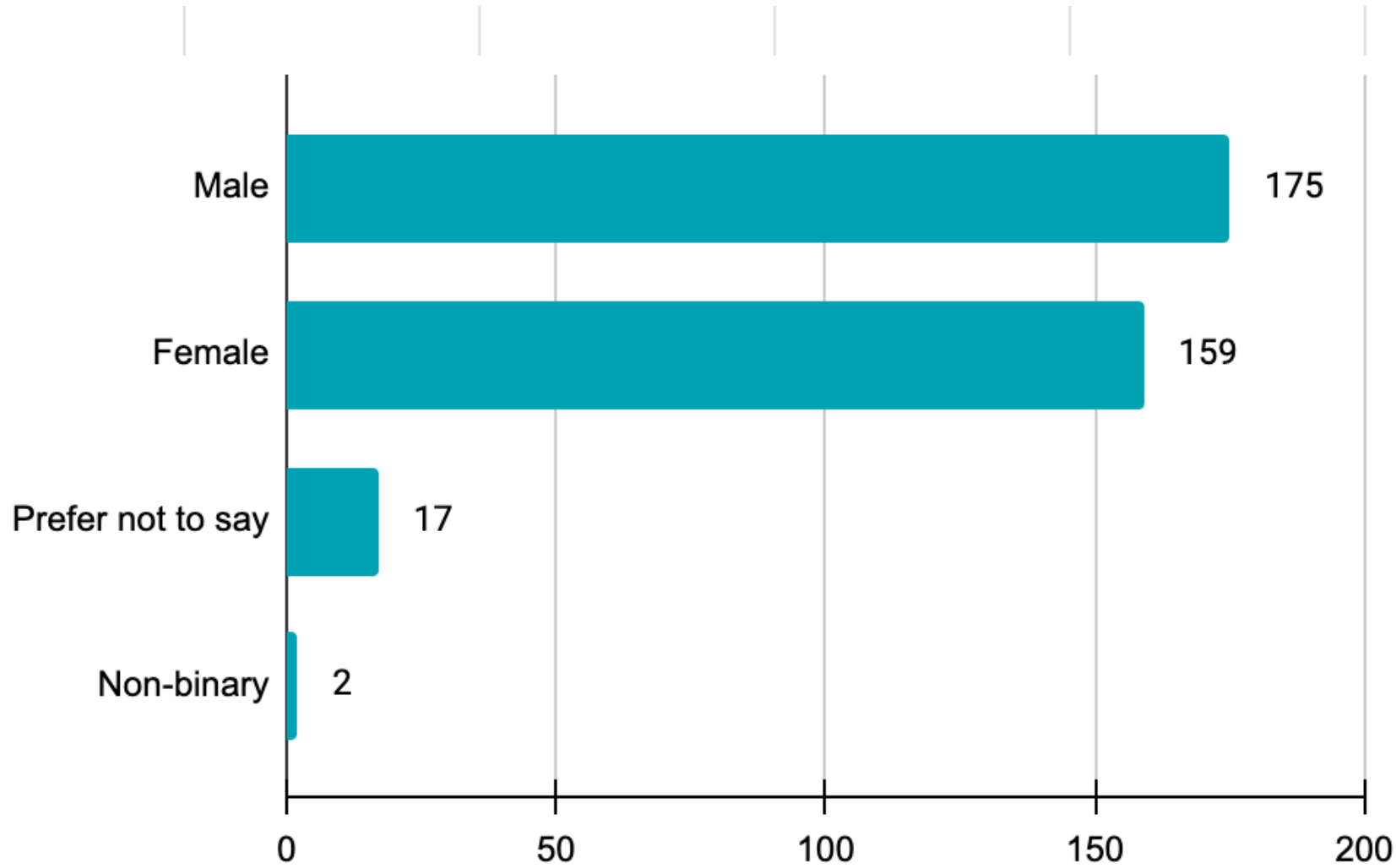
About You

Age



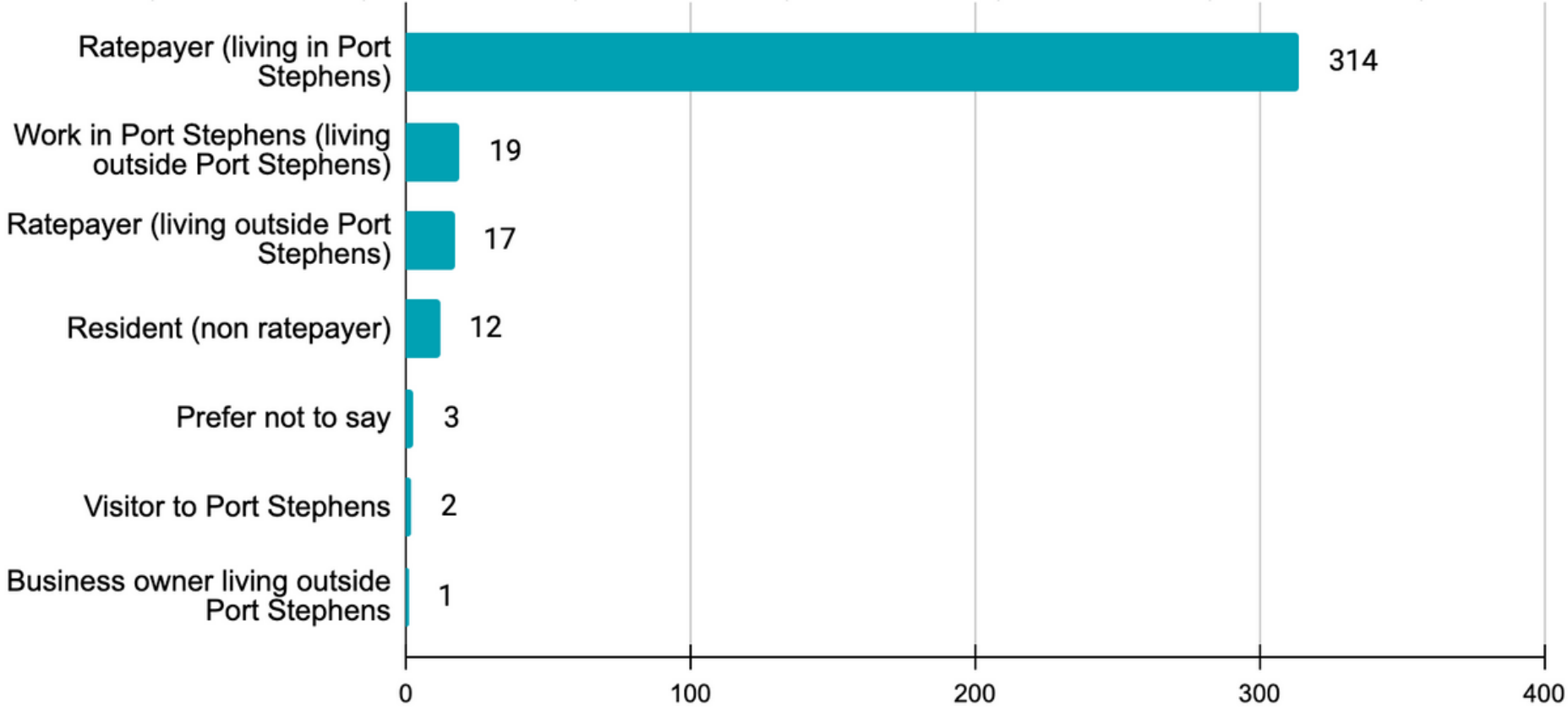
About You

Gender



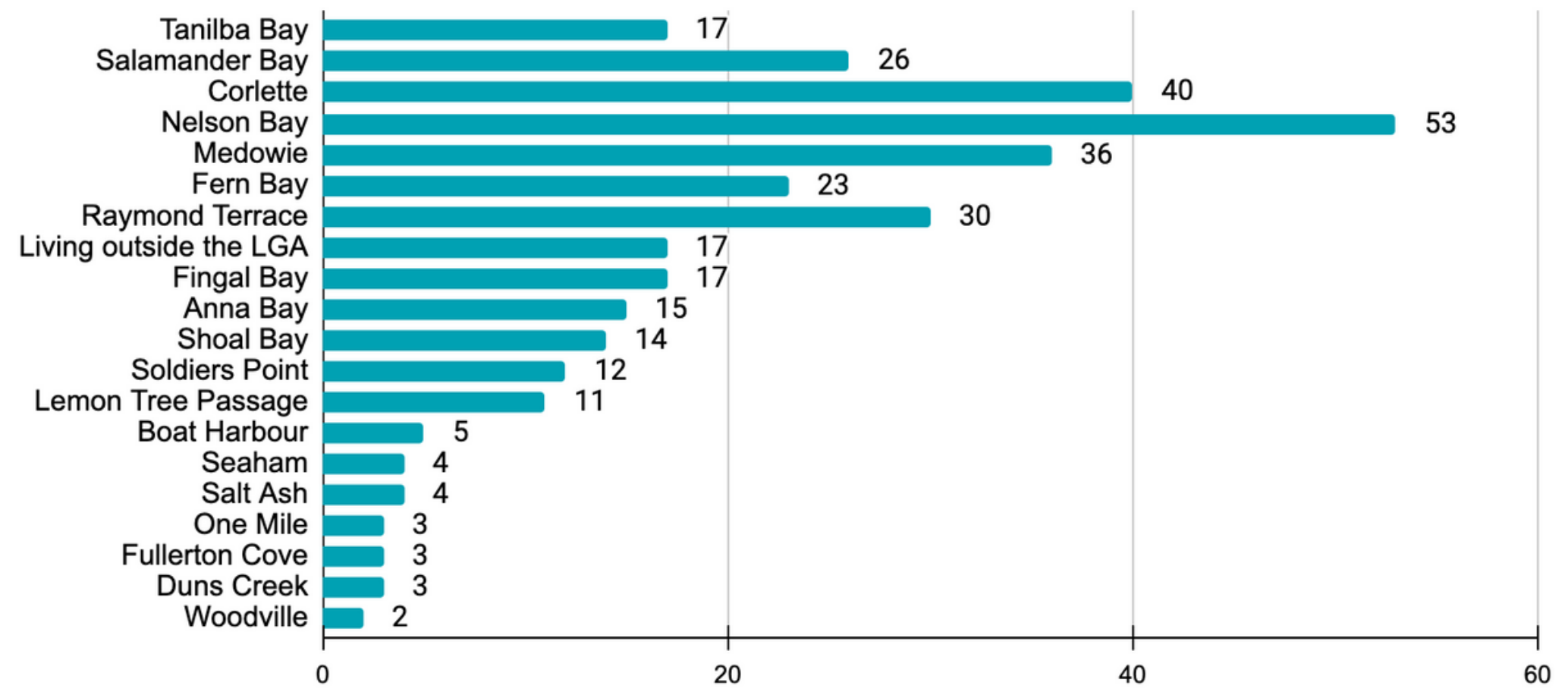
About You

I am a



About You

Suburb

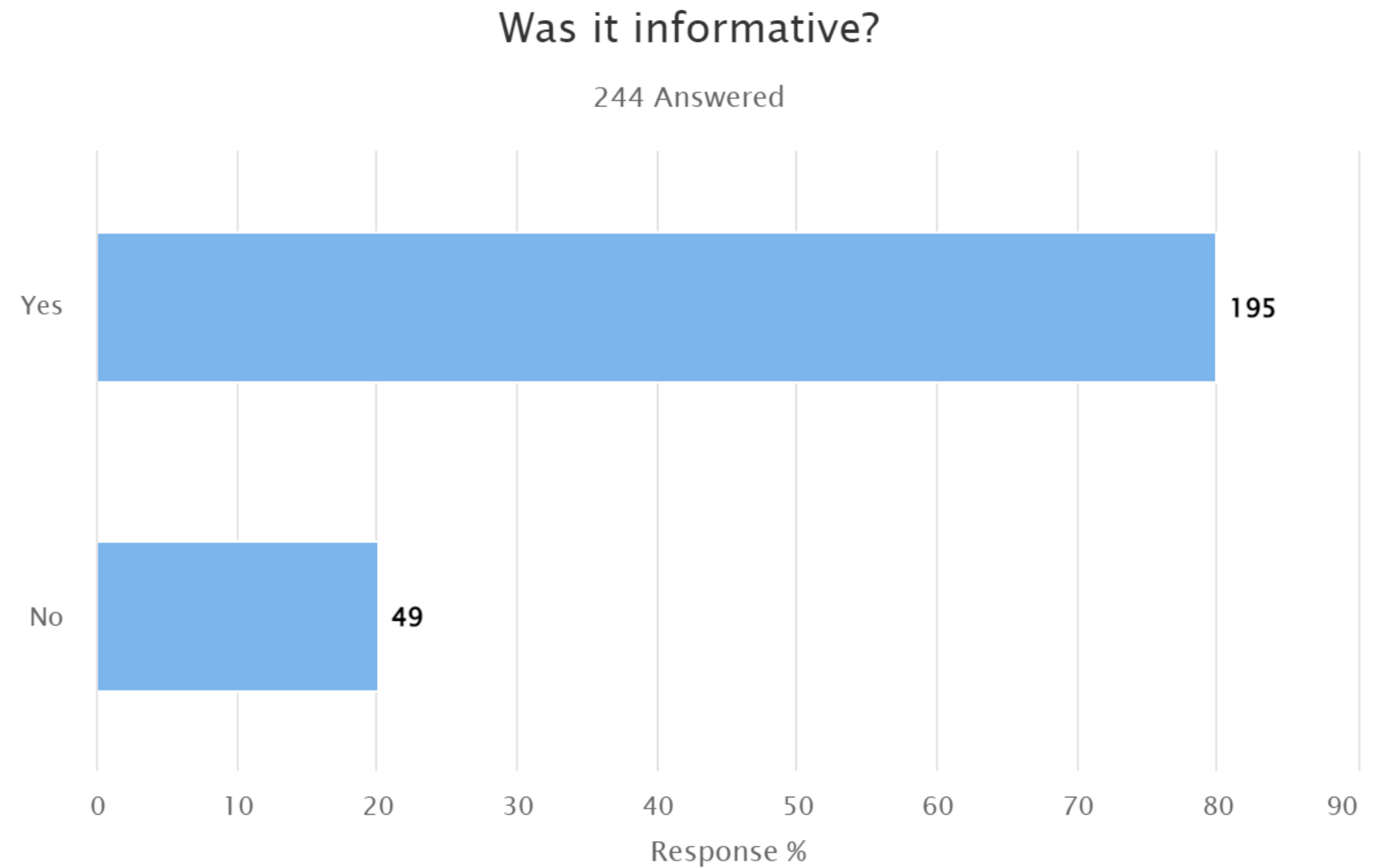


Survey Feedback



Was it informative?

Was this process informative enough for you to provide good feedback?



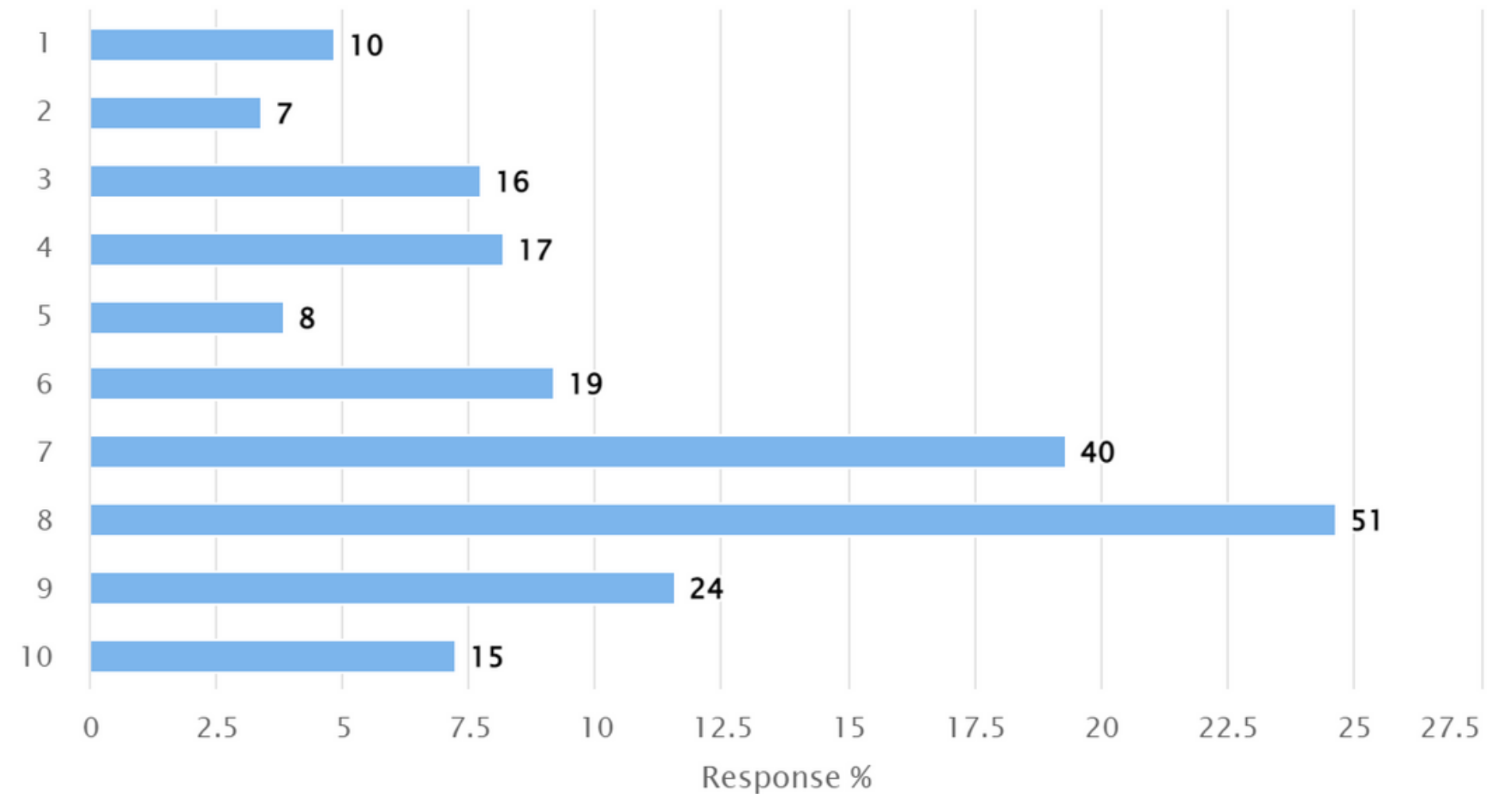
Process Evaluation

How high would you rate this process, on a scale of 1 - 10?

(1=awful, 10=excellent)

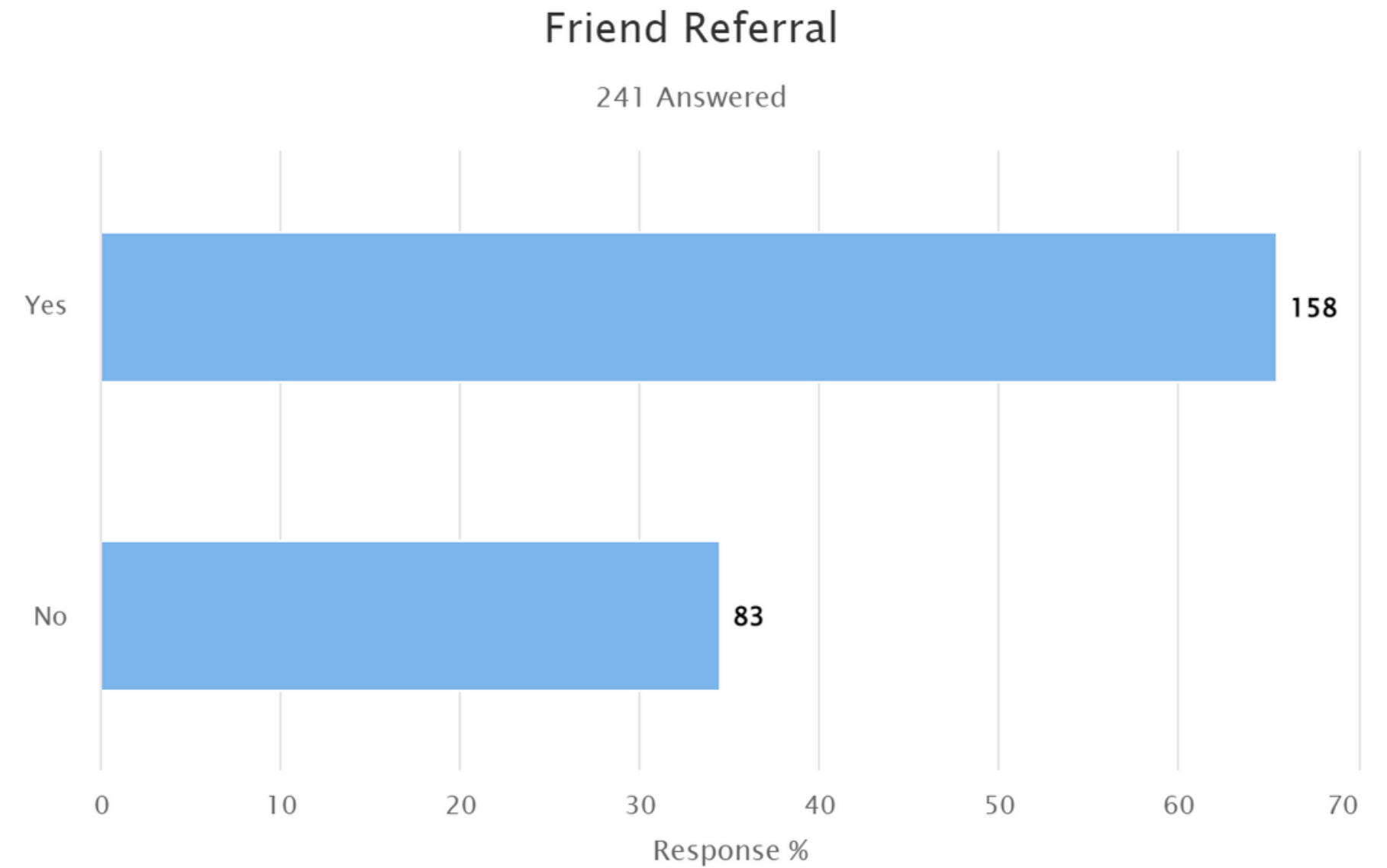
Process Evaluation

207 Answered



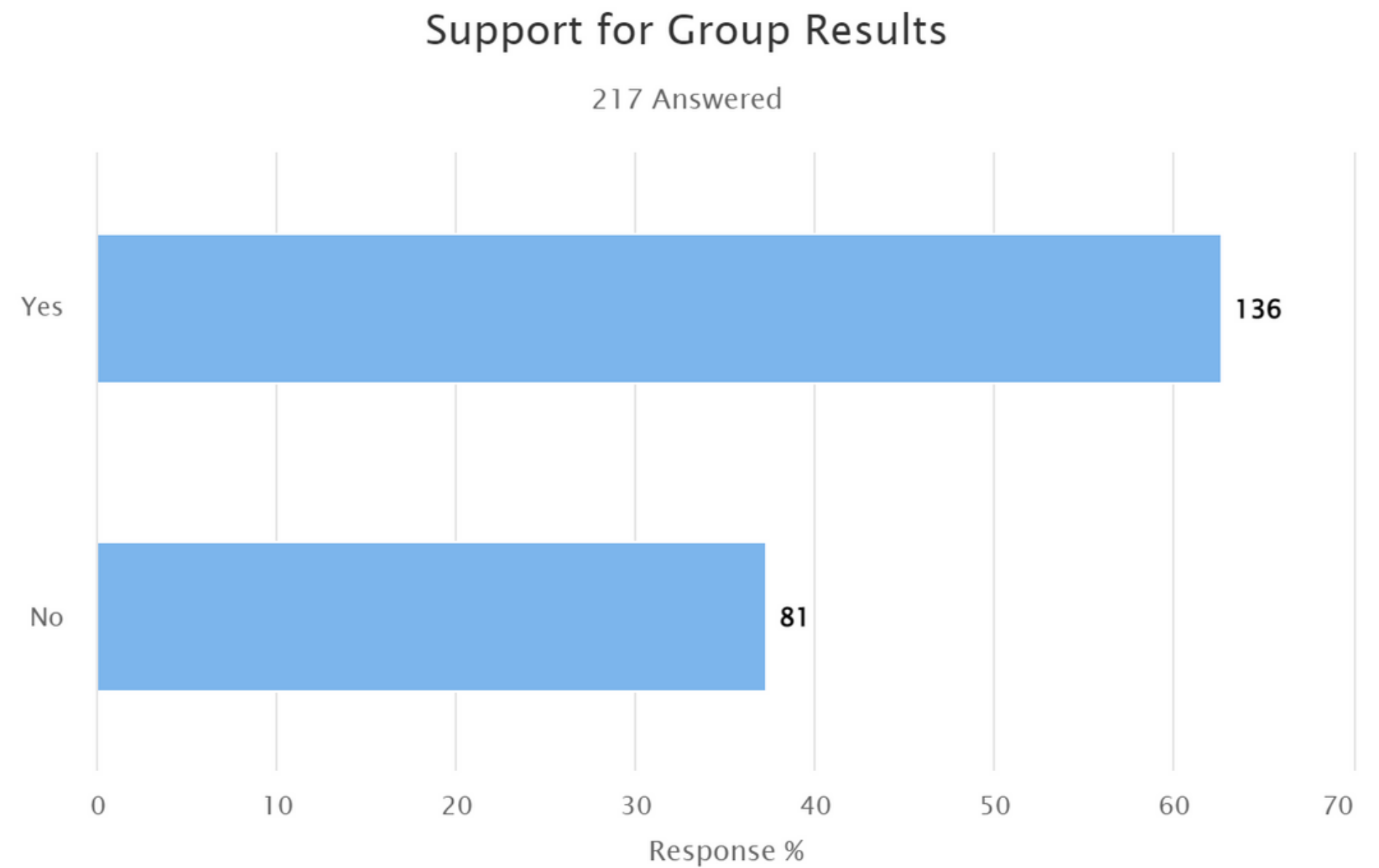
Friend Referral

Would you refer this process to a friend?



Support for Group Results

Would you support the collective outcome that is described on the group results page? If you like, you can also come back and answer this question at the end of the engagement when all inputs are collected.

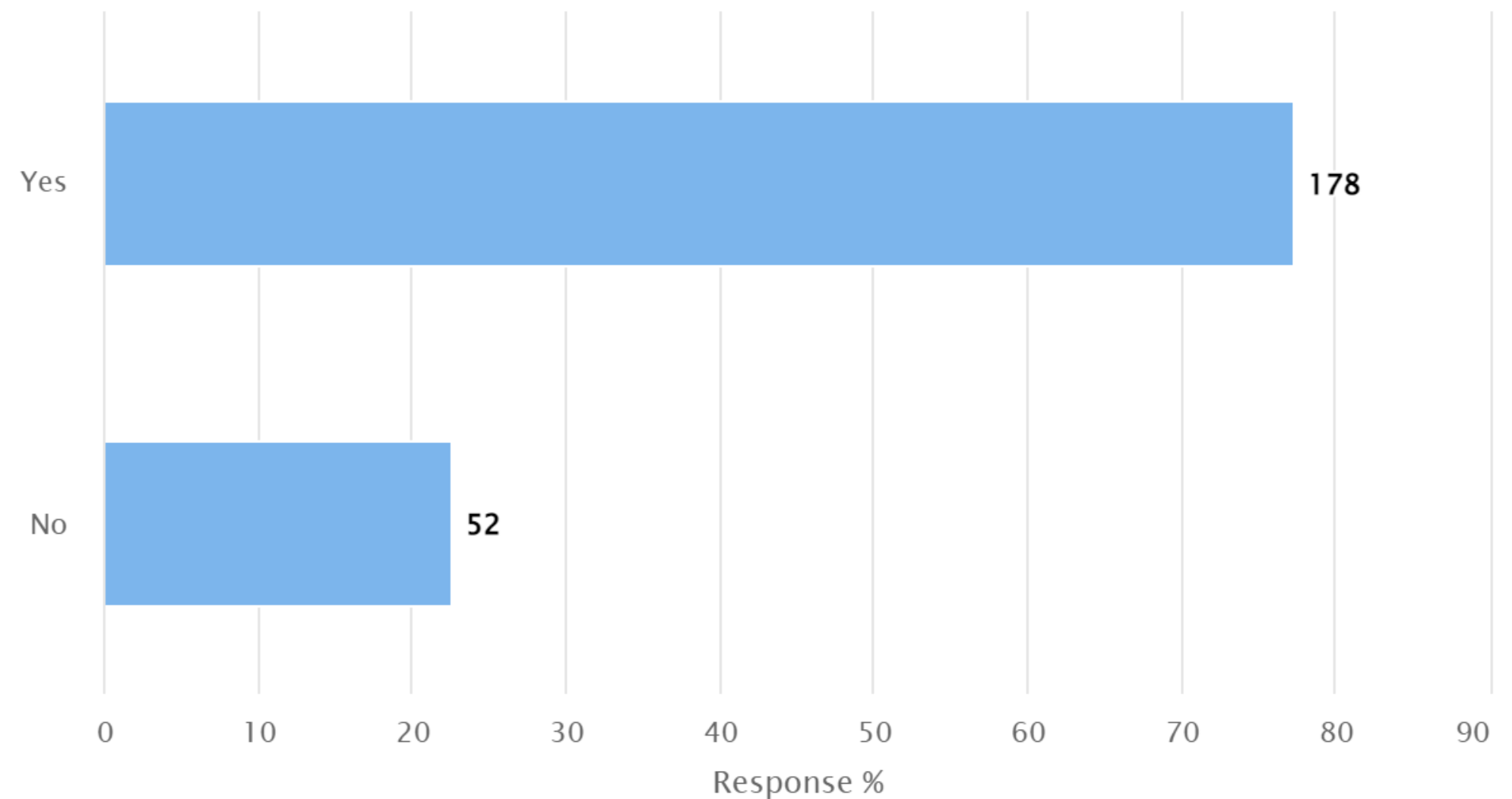


Support for this kind of Decision-Making Process

Would you be more likely to support future decisions if you knew it was based on the results of a process like this?

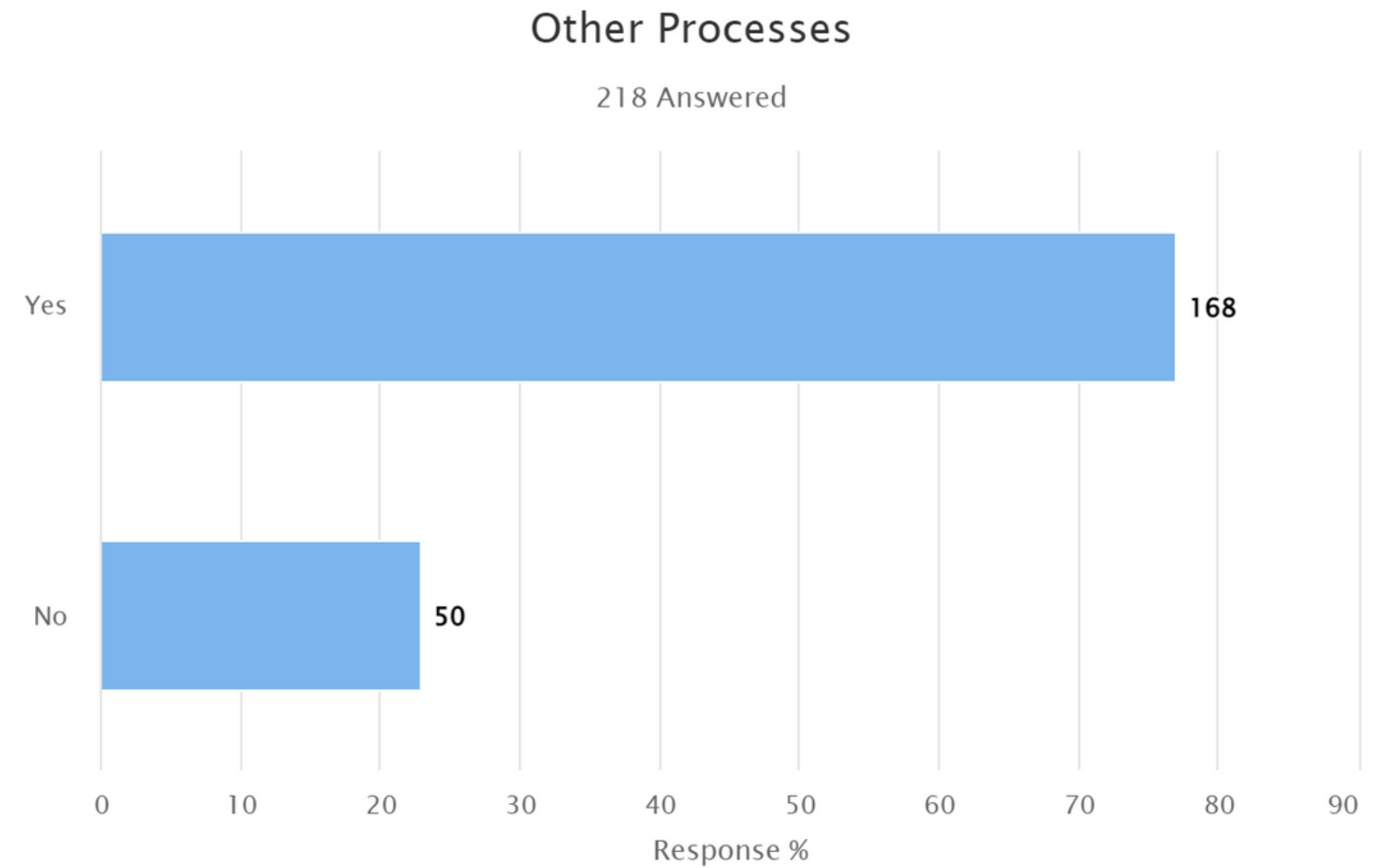
Support for this kind of Decision-Making Process

230 Answered



Other Processes

Would you like to see Ethelo (this platform) be used for other processes in your community?





THANK YOU

POWERED BY **ETHELO**