

Southampton City Vision, our new Local Plan.

Stage one consultation: Results.

Executive summary

The first consultation on Southampton City Vision, our new Local Plan, commenced on 10 February 2020. It was due to run for 10 weeks to 19 April 2020 but was extended to 31 May 2020 due to disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The objective of the consultation was to start understanding priorities, ideas and aspirations for the city centre and local neighbourhoods from residents, businesses and anyone with an interest in the future of Southampton. It was also important that the consultation enabled wide engagement with a representative sample of the city's population and businesses by being accessible and relevant with supporting communication and promotion across a range of channels.

The consultation was predominantly carried out through an online survey and supported by a series of community drop-in sessions and workshops with a range of community, school and business groups. However, two of the community events and all workshops planned with schools and businesses were cancelled due to Covid-19.

Over 3,000 responses were received across all channels, the vast majority (2,670) being made via the on-line survey and over 270 attended the community events that took place. Of those who responded there is an under representation of young adults, in particular those aged 18-24 years. There is also a low number of responses from those representing a business or organisation.

The consultation was framed around six key challenges/themes. Of these 'environment and climate change' was considered to be the most important, closely followed by 'growth and investment' and 'getting around'. Respondents were also asked to identify priorities both in their local area and the city centre. The same three came out as most important locally and for the city centre:

- Parks, open spaces, nature and conservation
- Reducing air pollution and improving air quality
- Access to frequent and reliable public transport

Over 3,100 individual comments were received through the on-line survey, with further comments received by email. In general, the comments support and help us to understand the results of the structured questions.

In addition to the survey a 'Call for Sites' was conducted, a process whereby members of the public and businesses can submit development sites to be considered for allocation within the plan. 25 sites were submitted as part of this process, all of which are now being assessed for development potential as part of our Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). A draft version SLAA will be published at the next stage of consultation.

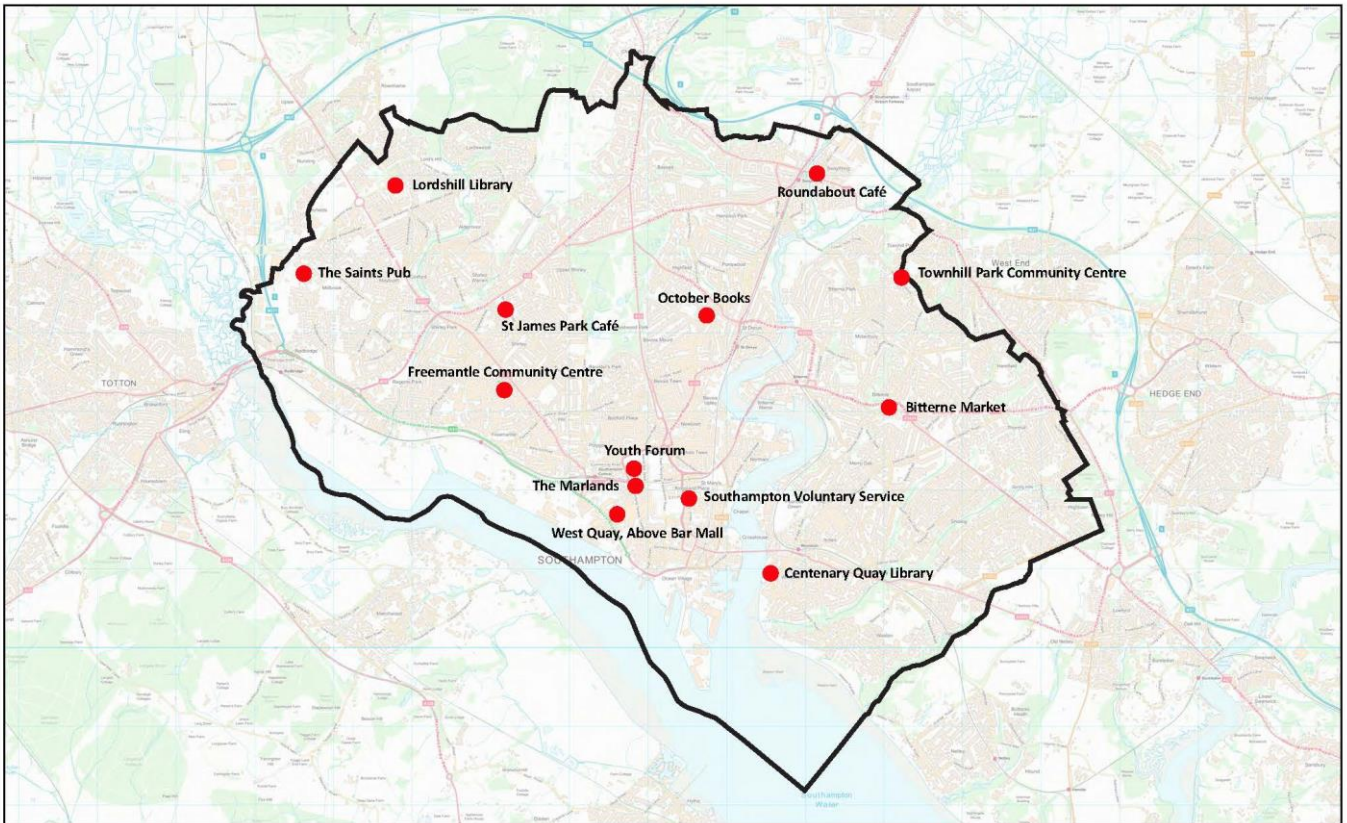
The information gathered through this consultation will be used, together with other evidence, to help shape potential options for the allocation of land, including where growth will be best accommodated, and the planning policies which will be used to manage development throughout the city. These options will be subject to further consultation.

Information gathered will also be shared across Southampton City Council and with relevant partners to help inform other priorities and decisions, as appropriate.

- Solent and Southampton University students via student unions

Face to face: Series of events held in neighbourhoods across the city

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Roundabout Café | Swaythling |
| October Books | Portswood |
| St James Park Café | Shirley |
| Freemantle Community Centre | Milbrook |
| Townhill Park Community Centre | Bitterne Park |
| The Saints Pub | Redbridge |
| West Quay, Above Bar Mall | Bargate |
| Centenary Quay Library | Woolston |
| Lordshill Library | Coxford |
| The Marlands | Bargate |
| Bitterne Market | Bitterne |



Location of Community Events across the City

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Scale: NTS | Date: August 2020



These aimed to provide an opportunity for residents to get more information, including details about how to respond on-line as well as a chance to feedback about their priorities and what they feel needs improving.

In addition to these open sessions a number of workshops were scheduled with specific groups:

Revision date: 13 05 2020

The consultation was carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which was adopted in July 2019. However, in light on likely on-going restrictions, minor amendments will be made to the SCI to ensure it is fit for purpose for all subsequent consultations in the preparation of this plan.

Due to the disruption outlined above, the consultation period was extended to 31 May 2020.

Who responded to the survey?

In total 3,018 responses have been received. The vast majority (2670) were made via our online survey, 272 attended community events across the city and responded to key questions. Thirty responses were received by email, mainly from businesses and organisations who provided more detailed responses and feedback about specific issues or sites. Forty-five paper copies of the survey were completed as well as one easy read version. We cannot rule out the possibility that people could have responded online or via and paper form as well as attending an event, however the extent of potential double counting is minimal.

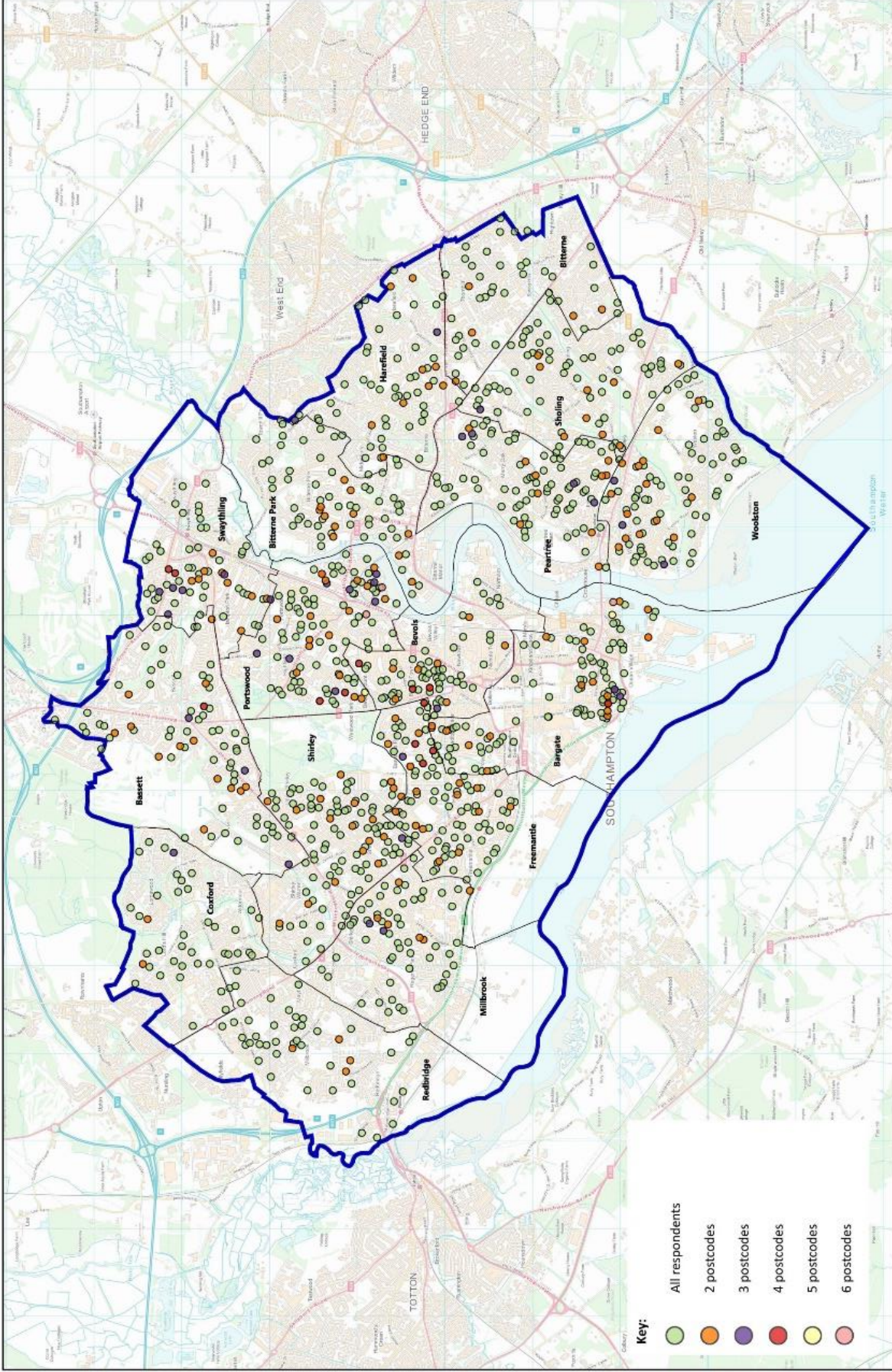
The majority of responses were received within the first six weeks of the consultation, before the country went into lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with a dramatic decrease in responses seen from late March. The consultation was extended by a further six weeks to allow more time to respond, however only around 250 further responses were made during this time.

A number of questions were included in the online survey to help us to monitor respondents so we could establish if they represent the population as a whole, these were age, gender, ethnic group and postcode. Respondents were also asked if they were responding as an individual or if they represent a business or organisation.

The vast majority of online responses were made by individuals with just 86 stating that they represented a business or organisation. A further 30 email responses were received, the majority from organisations (15) and business (13).

Gender is broadly representative of the population as a whole, whilst for ethnic group, all but 'white British', appear to be under-represented. However there a couple of notes of caution:

1. We can only compare with data from the 2011 Census, which is quite outdated now, and
2. The consultation gave the option 'prefer not to say' whilst some just left this blank, these responses account for over 8% of the total. Of these we do not know if they represent all ethnic groups or if this was a more common response for a particular group.



All respondents with multiple postcodes

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Respondents were invited to answer further questions under each of these themes and given the opportunity to make comments. Analysis below is by theme:

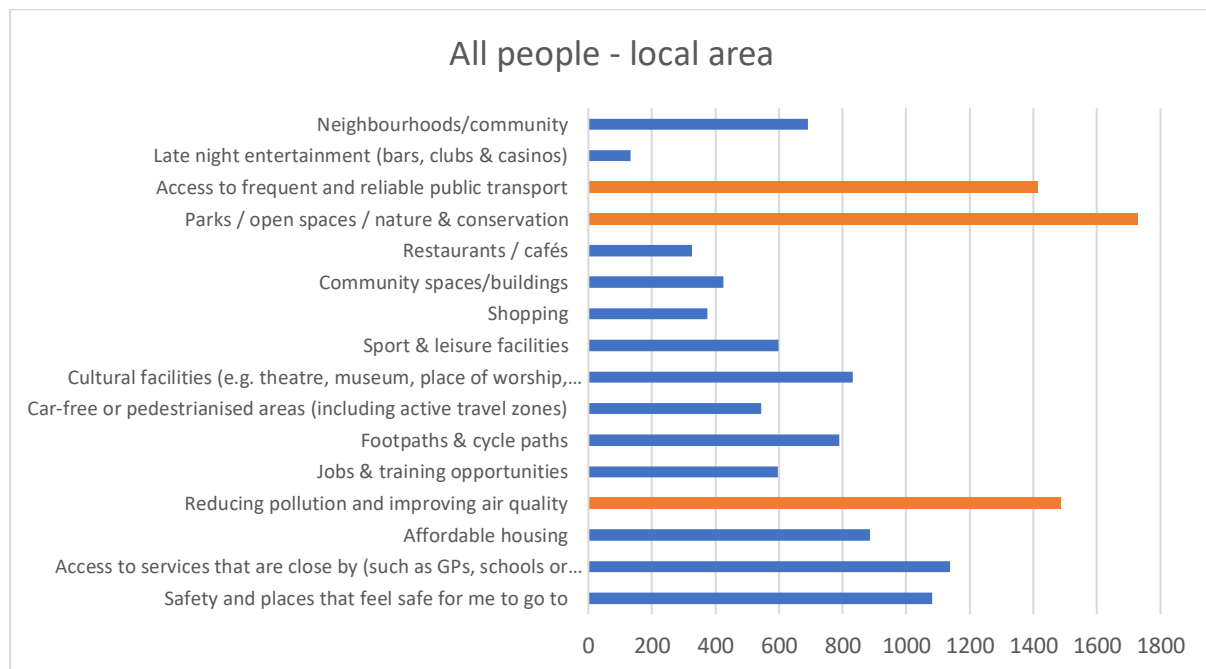
Analysis by theme:

Neighbourhood and city pride, a sense of community

Local area:

An important part of this consultation was to establish what local facilities are being used and which of these are most important to people, but what actually matters most to people both in the local area and in the city centre? The consultation presented a list of 16 different facilities/services and asked respondents to choose the top 5 that they felt were most important, firstly in their local area/neighbourhood and secondly in the city centre. The results below are for all respondents.

Chart 4: Local area priorities



By far the most important things identified by respondents were 'parks/open spaces/nature and conservation'; 'reducing pollution and improving air quality' and 'access to reliable public transport' (all highlighted in orange on the chart above). Also important was access to essential services such as GPs and schools.

As well as these physical things people also said that feeling safe and having safe places to go and a sense of community was relatively important to them.

Late night entertainment, restaurants and shopping were considered less important in local neighbourhoods.

Differences by age group are as we would expect with 'late night entertainment', 'restaurants & cafés' and 'sport and leisure facilities' all rated as more important by the younger age groups. Although there are some differences by age, gender and ethnic group, the top three priorities remain the same.

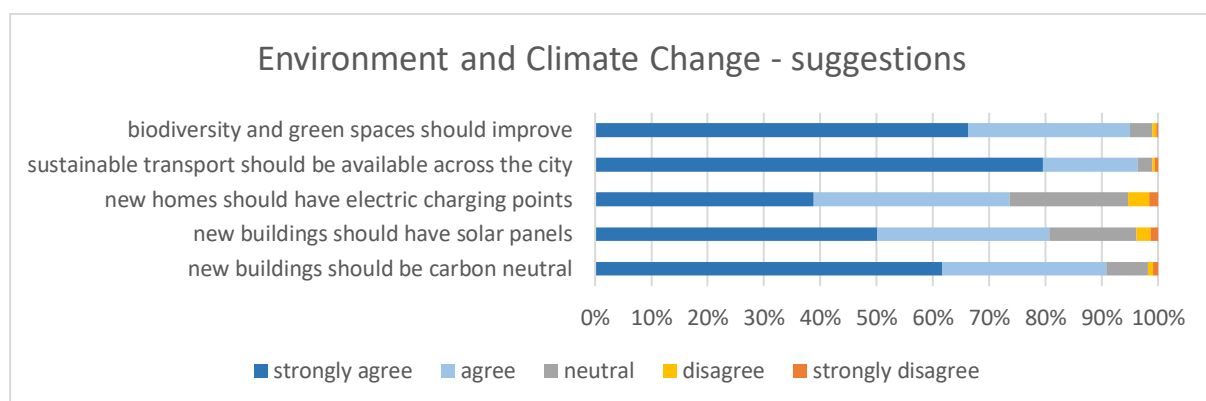
The data has been divided by ward area to see if priorities vary across the city. Whilst there are some differences the top three highlighted above are fairly consistent. 'Cultural facilities' is in the

Environment and Climate Change

Around 56% of respondents answered the additional questions on environment and climate change. We asked people to tell us to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a number of options regarding parks and open spaces, sustainable transport and making new homes more environmentally friendly and sustainable.

All are positive suggestions so there are very low levels of disagreement. Respondents felt very strongly that sustainable transport should be available across the city and also felt that green spaces should be improved. Whilst there were strong levels of agreement with the suggestions for new homes, these were not considered as important. In particular, the suggestion that all new homes should have electric charging points had strong agreement from just under 40% of respondents, the chart below illustrates.

Chart 6: Environment and Climate Change



Almost 400 individual comments were received on this theme and these broadly support what is shown by the chart. The largest number of comments were about sustainable transport; people want to use their car less but feel that it is not easy to or possible to get across and around the city by other means at present. A large number also made comments about parks and green spaces, which are clearly valued, and people want these to be protected and improved. There were also a number of comments about increasing green space in the city, and that this should be an important part of any new development.

A number of comments were made regarding the suggestions for new homes and these were quite mixed. Whilst some felt that it was important to have electric charging points others felt that this was not practical with flats, on-street parking and the current cost of electric cars. Some also felt that this was not the answer as ultimately we should be reducing the number of cars on our roads, even if electric. Others also felt that there was a need to look at existing homes, not just new developments, as these make up the majority of housing in the city. Overall it seems that people think that any new buildings should be environmentally friendly. However, one big issue raised is the pollution caused by cruise ships, people feel that no matter what they do to contribute it pales into insignificance compared with pollution created at the port.

Homes for a growing and ageing population

Just over 42% of all respondents answered the additional questions about new homes. A key requirement of any local plan is to demonstrate that sufficient land is available to build the number of homes needed, which is based on a formula set by central government. The target for

with live updates and a single contactless ticketing system. Wi-Fi, broadband and 5G across the city; consistent coverage, and greater Wi-Fi availability in the city centre. Some felt that technology could be better utilised for providing information and entertainment in the city. There was also a strong feeling that technology could be used to support people, but the prime objective should be on the person and not to introduce things 'just because we can'.

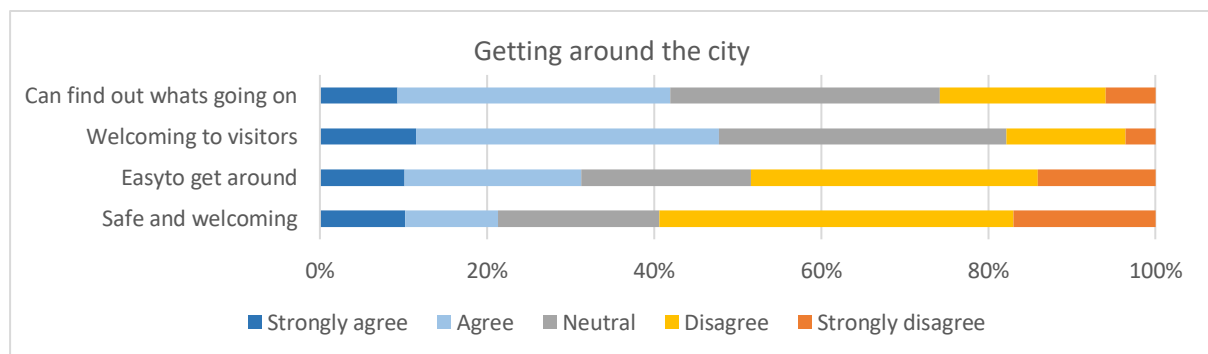
Whilst the use of technology will play an important part in the future of the city, it is clear that this means many different things to different people. There is a need to develop more specific examples of applications. In terms of the local plan, we need to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is planned for to enable the improvements that are needed.

Getting around the city

Almost 57% of respondents answered the additional questions on this theme, higher than for any other theme, it also received the highest number of comments at 560. This is a broad topic covering public transport, walking and cycle networks, accessibility for all as well as feeling welcome and knowing what's going on in the city.

Around 45-50% agreed that it is easy to find out what is going on in the city and that it is a welcoming place for visitors. In contrast, 50-60% disagreed with the statements that it was easy to get around the city and that the city felt safe and welcoming, the chart illustrates these details.

Chart 8: Getting around the city.



A significant number of comments on this theme relate to public transport, the cost, connectivity and the role it plays for people visiting the city and the first impression it gives. Some feel that some of our public spaces do not allow all people to move around the city safely and with ease, with others saying that the city looks tired and run down and therefore it is not a welcoming place. In terms of what is going on in the city, some feel that not enough is done to promote events and the city as a destination. This was also mentioned under the 'technology' theme, how big screens and information could help.

There are mixed views on cycle routes, some feel that more needs to be done whilst others have been quite critical of cycle routes that have been introduced. The Avenue was mentioned numerous times with perspectives from both cyclists and motorists, both feeling that it is confusing and unsafe.

The Council's Transport Plan has only recently been adopted with a great deal to be implemented over the coming years. Comments received through this consultation will be shared with transport colleagues so they can consider them.

Growth and investment in the city

This theme was second highest in terms of people's priorities, and around half of all respondents answered the additional questions on this theme. There were three sets of questions, one on local highstreets, aimed to establish the frequency of use of a range of shops and services locally. The second set of questions was about cultural and leisure facilities and the final set was about businesses in the city and whether standards/requirements should be set for businesses and organisations looking to locate to Southampton.

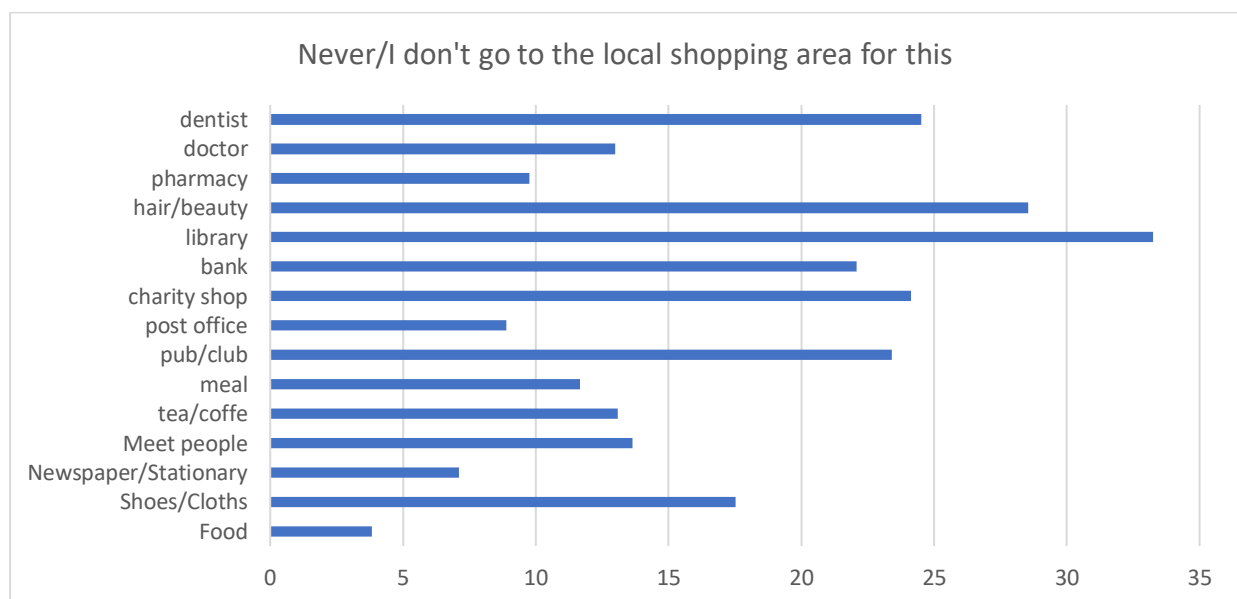
Local high streets

In 2016 Southampton City Council commenced an initial consultation on a new Local Plan, and whilst the response rate was low there was a clear message regarding local neighbourhoods. Respondents felt that investment in the city was focussed on the city centre and there was a need to improve local facilities. With this in mind we needed to establish what local facilities are being used and which of these are most important to people.

Around half of all respondents answered the additional questions on frequency of use of high street facilities. The results show that a good range of local facilities are being used on a regular basis. The regularity of use is as expected with most people shopping for food on a weekly basis, other shopping (newspapers, stationary etc.), meeting friends or going for tea/coffee are most likely done every 2 weeks or monthly whilst services such as doctor and dentists tend to be visited every six months. It is also important to look at those local facilities and services which people state they never use or don't use in their local area.

On average, across all services and facilities 17% are never visited/not used in local area, which is encouraging as there is clearly a demand from the majority. Least used are libraries with 34% of respondents never using or not using locally. We must consider that this may also be partly a reflection of the availability of various shops and services. The chart illustrates.

Chart 9: Percentage of people never using local facilities



Whilst some analysis has been carried out by ward, these areas don't necessarily reflect the local district centres and their catchment areas. Therefore, more detailed work on each of the district centres will be carried out through the development of the plan. This will include these initial

consultation results, together with profiles of centres showing the shops and facilities that are available. This will help us better understand local needs and shape any further engagement with residents. This will also support the emerging Economic & Green Growth Strategy that has identified the challenges faced by the city centre and district centres and their interrelationship as a key issue to be addressed.

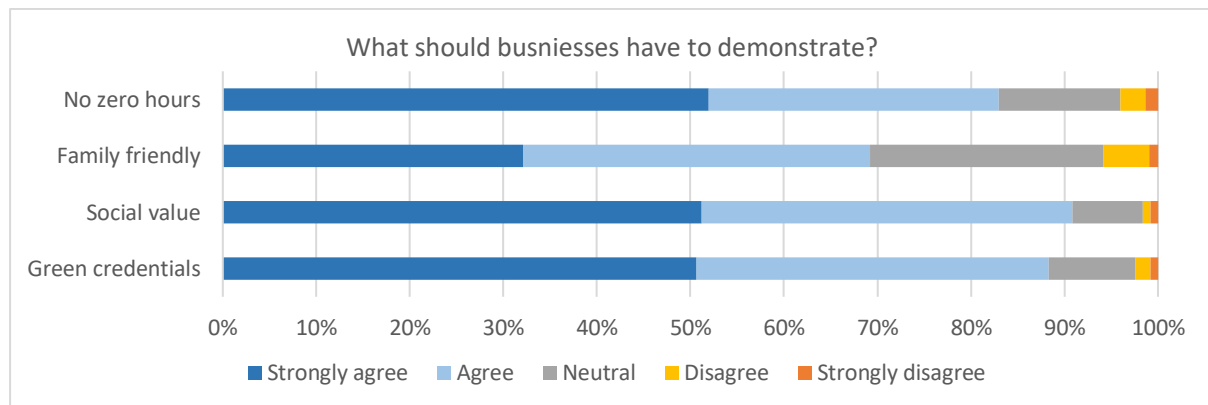
Culture and leisure

Almost half of all respondents answered the additional question on culture and leisure which asked if people felt that the city had good cultural, creative, sport and leisure provision. Over 40% agreed, with almost 45% agreeing that there were good sport and leisure facilities. Around a third neither agreed nor disagreed. It is important to consider the comments made in the section on 'getting around', where some said not enough was done to promote things going on in the city and they often found out about them after the event.

Businesses and organisations

Southampton has benefited from around £3bn of investment since 2012 with several major city centre projects being completed. Good facilities, workspaces and homes all make the city a more attractive place for businesses to locate to and people to move to, which in turn brings further investment. However, should we be discerning about what businesses and organisations operate in the city by setting standards about how they contribute to tackling climate change, add value to the local community and look after their employees? The consultation asked people to say if they agreed or disagreed with a number of suggestions.

Chart 10: Suggestions of standards for businesses and organisations.



These were all positive suggestions and with a high level of agreement. Demonstrating family-friendly policies was not seen to be as important as the other suggestions. This could be because this is not a new idea and many businesses and organisations already practise this approach.

This is a broad theme and over 300 individual comments were made through the on-line survey. A range of issues were raised including support for businesses, in particular start-ups and small independent traders. Lots of suggestions and comments were made about the state of sport, leisure, cultural, arts and entertainment facilities and how these could be improved. There was also a range of comments about businesses in the city and the promotion of environmentally friendly practices, support for local communities and improved conditions for employees. Some also felt that many jobs in the city are low skilled, and therefore lower paid, and that more could be done through working with the universities and improving skills.

Further work with businesses is needed due to the low number of responses from this group. It is important that we understand their changing needs, especially in light of Covid-19 and any potential long-term impacts to their businesses. Of particular importance to the Local Plan is the need to understand the amount and types of spaces that are required by businesses to enable strong local economic growth and the efficient use of land.

Summary

Responses:

There has been a good response to this first consultation, and overall the results can be relied upon as being statistically significant. The more detailed analysis by age, gender and ethnic group has shown that there are no significant differences between groups and overall priorities remain the same.

There are gaps in terms of who has responded which will need to be addressed through further engagement, this includes businesses and young adults.

Local Areas:

Analysis by ward has also shown little difference between areas, with top priorities remaining the same. More work will be carried out on each of the district centres which will include the range of local services available, understanding the priorities by area and the use of services.

Key messages:

- Environment and climate change is the top priority. The comments show that there is a strong will for people to have more sustainable and environmentally friendly options, particularly when it comes to transport, but there is a feeling that these options are not always the easiest for people to take, and they should be. Neither public transport nor cycle/walking routes are currently adequate to deter the use of cars.
- Some felt that more radical decisions should be made such as the city centre being completely car free.
- Many respondents expressed concerns that increased development could put pressure on the city's parks and green spaces. A Local Plan must protect these areas and we need to be clear in communicating this message to the public to address these concerns.
- Whilst there is a recognition of the importance of the port there are concerns about how this is contributing to air pollution. Many also commented on the limited access to the waterfront. This is a fundamental part of the city's identity and heritage, but Southampton doesn't feel like a waterfront city.
- With regards to future development there is a clear demand for local high streets, with most respondents accessing a number of their services on a regular basis. More detailed analysis by locality will help us further understand differing needs and priorities across the city.
- People feel it is important to support business start-ups and local independent businesses, with some feeling that Southampton has too many chains and needs to be more individual and ensure money is going back into the local economy.
- A large number of comments were made about the 'state' of the city; rubbish, poor pavements, homelessness and general upkeep and look of the city. People feel it is tired and run down and people lack pride in their local area. This is not the right impression to give to

visitors and there is potential to make Southampton a destination, particularly with the cruise ship passengers.

- Identifying enough space for new homes is a fundamental part of a local plan and most felt that adopting space standards was important, but this also extended to outside space.
- Whilst in general the population is ageing, Southampton still has a significant proportion of children and therefore a need for family housing. Many commented about the need to provide housing for older people which is attractive to them so they choose to downsize, making large homes available. That said, most felt that older people should not be segregated in the process and multi-generational communities were important.
- The issue of high-rise buildings needs to be investigated further. Whilst people understand the need, given the pressure on space, few are in favour of very high-rise blocks. However, lower rise of perhaps 4-6 storeys with good outdoor space seemed more acceptable.
- Many feel the city has great potential but there is a need to be bold and take a different approach, at present there is a slight feeling of despair and little faith that change will happen.

Next steps

1. Further specific reports to be prepared on the following:
 - Students
 - Children and young people
 - Local, district and town centres
 - Businesses, including report from Go! Southampton.
2. Publish results of the consultation to all who responded and to the wider public. It is important that we continue to be open and honest about the information we are gathering and how it is being used to develop options for delivering the development needs of Southampton over the next 20 years and beyond. Continued work with the Communications team to ensure appropriate channels are used to reach communities across the city.
3. This consultation was extended due to disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This has impacted on the overall timetable for the plan set out in the Local Development Scheme which was approved by Cabinet in December 2019. This timetable will need to be reviewed, updated and approved by Cabinet before publication.
4. Working with colleagues across the Council together with partners to understand the consultation results and develop options for a draft plan. This will include workshops with the Senior Leadership Team and Members, both of which will need to make decisions about these options.
5. Continue to work with colleagues to ensure a joined-up approach to the delivery of the 'Place Shaping' theme of the Corporate Plan, as well as its wider objective for Southampton to become a greener, healthier and fairer city.

6. Continue to work with colleagues to ensure that the results of this consultation feed into wider service delivery, where appropriate, that is outside of the planning systems and/or place shaping per se.