

Public Document Pack

Cabinet

Tuesday, 16th January, 2024
at 4.30 pm

PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Council Chamber, Civic Centre

Members

Leader – Councillor Fielker

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and
Change – Councillor Letts

Cabinet Member for Economic Development – Councillor
Bogle

Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport -
Councillor Keogh

Cabinet Member for Children and Learning – Councillor
Winning

Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure–
Councillor Kataria

Cabinet Member for Safer City – Councillor Renyard

Cabinet Member for Housing – Councillor A Frampton

Cabinet Member for Adults and Health – Councillor Finn

(QUORUM – 3)

Contacts

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BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

The Role of the Executive

The Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members make executive decisions relating to services provided by the Council, except for those matters which are reserved for decision by the full Council and planning and licensing matters which are dealt with by specialist regulatory panels.

The Forward Plan

The Forward Plan is published on a monthly basis and provides details of all the key executive decisions to be made in the four month period following its publication. The Forward Plan is available on request or on the Southampton City Council website, www.southampton.gov.uk

Implementation of Decisions

Any Executive Decision may be “called-in” as part of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny function for review and scrutiny. The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel may ask the Executive to reconsider a decision, but does not have the power to change the decision themselves.

Mobile Telephones – Please switch your mobile telephones or other IT to silent whilst in the meeting.

Use of Social Media

The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair’s opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council’s Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting.

By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public. Any person or organisation filming, recording or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so. Details of the Council’s Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council’s website.

Municipal Year Dates (Tuesdays)

2023	2024
13 June	16 January
18 July	6 February
15 August	20 Feb (budget)
19 September	19 March
17 October	16 April
14 November	
19 December	

Executive Functions

The specific functions for which the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members are responsible are contained in Part 3 of the Council’s Constitution. Copies of the Constitution are available on request or from the City Council website, www.southampton.gov.uk

Key Decisions

A Key Decision is an Executive Decision that is likely to have a significant:

- financial impact (£500,000 or more)
- impact on two or more wards
- impact on an identifiable community

Procedure / Public Representations

At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest. Any member of the public wishing to address the meeting should advise the Democratic Support Officer (DSO) whose contact details are on the front sheet of the agenda.

Fire Procedure – In the event of a fire or other emergency, a continuous alarm will sound and you will be advised, by officers of the Council, of what action to take.

Smoking policy – The Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

Access – Access is available for disabled people. Please contact the Cabinet Administrator who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

Southampton: Corporate Plan 2022-2030 sets out the four key outcomes:

- Communities, culture & homes - Celebrating the diversity of cultures within Southampton; enhancing our cultural and historical offer and using these to help transform our communities.
- Green City - Providing a sustainable, clean, healthy and safe environment for everyone. Nurturing green spaces and embracing our waterfront.
- Place shaping - Delivering a city for future generations. Using data, insight and vision to meet the current and future needs of the city.
- Wellbeing - Start well, live well, age well, die well; working with other partners and other services to make sure that customers get the right help at the right time

CONDUCT OF MEETING

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference of the Cabinet, and its Executive Members, are set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

The meeting is governed by the Executive Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" or "Other Interest" they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

(i) Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

(iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which the you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

(iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.

(v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.

(vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.

(vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:

a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or

b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

QUORUM

The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 3.

Other Interests

A Member must regard himself or herself as having an, 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

Any body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Southampton City Council

Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature

Any body directed to charitable purposes

Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies.

2 **DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

3 **STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER**

4 **RECORD OF THE PREVIOUS DECISION MAKING** (Pages 1 - 4)

Record of the decision making held on 19th December, 2023 attached.

5 **MATTERS REFERRED BY THE COUNCIL OR BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR RECONSIDERATION (IF ANY)**

There are no matters referred for reconsideration.

6 **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (IF ANY)**

There are no items for consideration

7 **EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS**

To deal with any executive appointments, as required.

ITEMS FOR DECISION BY CABINET

8 **PORTSWOOD BROADWAY NEXT STEPS** □ (Pages 5 - 122)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport detailing the Portswood Broadway consultation and the next steps for the project.

9 **ITCHEN BRIDGE TOLL CHANGES** □ (Pages 123 - 192)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport seeking to amend the Itchen Bridge Toll Order to remove the off peak charging period for Class 2 vehicles and to increase the toll for Class 4 vehicles.

10 E-SCOOTER TRIAL EXTENSION □ (Pages 193 - 216)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport seeking approval to the extension of the E-Scooter trial following advice from the Department for Transport to extend the current trial.

11 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY AND BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY □
(Pages 217 - 264)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member on Environment and Transport. Seeking approval for adoption of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy.

12 ENERGY PROCUREMENT CONTRACT □ (Pages 265 - 274)

To consider the report of Cabinet Member for Economic Development seeking approval to procure energy contracts for the Council's gas and electricity supplies to cover the period October 2024 through to September 2028.

13 PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR OFFER POLICY □ (Pages 275 - 316)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing, seeking approval of the new Private Rented Sector Offer Policy.

14 CORPORATE RENT GUARANTOR POLICY FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE □ (Pages 317 - 406)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, seeking approval of the new Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy for Care Experienced Young People.

15 SACRE - APPROVAL OF CONSTITUTION 2023-24 □ (Pages 407 - 446)

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, outlining the proposed changes to the constitution of SACRE.

16 URGENT RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS TO SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION ACTIVITIES (Pages 447 - 458)

To note the report of the Chief Executive detailing an urgent decision taken to fund additional urgent resources to deliver the People Related Spend project, Strategic Procurement Programme and the Asset Development and Disposal Programme.

Monday, 8 January 2024

Director of Legal and Governance

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DECISION MAKING

RECORD OF THE DECISION MAKING HELD ON 19 DECEMBER 2023

Present:

Councillor Kaur	-	Leader
Councillor Fielker	-	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing
Councillor Bogle	-	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Councillor Letts	-	Cabinet Member for Finance and Change
Councillor Kataria	-	Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure
Councillor Keogh	-	Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Councillor Winning	-	Cabinet Member for Children and Learning
Councillor Renyard	-	Cabinet Member for Safer City

22. PROTECTION OF GREEN SPACES/AMENITY SPACE IN COUNCIL HOUSING ESTATES

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 41406)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To adopt a new policy that protects amenity land / green spaces in housing estates, and only enables the sale of such land in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances will relate to the provision of access needed or land required for adaptations for disabilities.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director, Wellbeing & Housing following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Adults & Health to make any minor changes to the policy during its life span.
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director Well-being & Housing following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Adults & Health, to take all necessary actions to give effect to the above recommendations.

23. MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN: PROPOSED SUBMISSION

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 41322)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To approve the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan: Partial Update – Proposed Submission Plan (Members Room Document 1);
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director Place, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, to make changes to the proposed submission plan prior to publication or submission, and to

propose 'main modifications' through the examination process for public consultation, provided these are minor changes, or major changes which do not affect Southampton.

24. FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 41408)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, Cabinet noted the latest forecast financial position as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

25. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2024-2029

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 39208)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Adults, Health and Housing, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To approve the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.
- (ii) To approve the changes made to the strategy based on feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on the 14 December 2023.

26. COURT LEET PRESENTMENTS 2023

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 41291)

On consideration of the report of the Leader of the Council, having received representations from Councillor Shields, the Sheriff, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) That the initial officer responses to the Presentments approved by the Court Leet Jury, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- (ii) That individual Cabinet Members ensure responses are made to Presenters regarding presentments within their portfolios as appropriate and as soon as practically possible.

27. MEMORIALS POLICY

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 39019)

On consideration of the report of the Leader, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To adopts the Memorials Policy (Appendix 1) amended following public consultation.
- (ii) To note a summary of the public consultation feedback identified below (and in Appendix 2) and the ESIA (Appendix 3).
- (iii) That the Head of Culture and Tourism has delegated authority to make minor amends to the policy, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Executive Director, Place.

- (iv) The Head of Culture and Tourism has delegated authority, where appropriate, to consult on substantial changes which, following review after a 12 month period of implementation of the policy, may be deemed necessary and, after consideration of any representations made, to implement these changes, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Executive Director, Place.

28. RESOLUTION TO TERMINATE PSP SOUTHAMPTON LLP

DECISION MADE: (CAB 23/24 41449)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) The resolution to terminate PSP Southampton Limited Liability Partnership by PSPF.
- (ii) To delegate authority to be provided to the Executive Director of Place, to sanction the administrative actions, through PSPF and Companies House required to strike-off the partnership and in the closure of the company accounts.

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DECISION-MAKER:	Cabinet
SUBJECT:	Portswood Broadway Next Steps
DATE OF DECISION:	16 January 2023
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR KEOGH CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Place	
	Name:	Adam Wilkinson	Tel: 023 80
	E-mail	Adam.wilkinson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Service Manager Integrated Transport	
	Name:	Wade Holmes	Tel: 023 80
	E-mail	Wade.holmes@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not Applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the Portswood Broadway Transforming Cities Fund scheme following the second phase public consultation carried out in August – October 2023 and the next steps for the project.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	To note that the Portswood Broadway Transforming Cities Fund scheme second phase of consultation has happened and is used as an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views on the proposal, supported by additional information provided.
	(ii)	To note that a “You Said / We Did” response has been prepared for the main themes in the consultation results to assist in shaping a recommendation for the scheme.
	(iii)	To note that there is support for the scheme to limit the amount of through route traffic using Portswood Broadway via the use of a bus gate / motor vehicle restriction, accompanied with measures to limit the impact on adjacent streets via an Active Travel Zone.
	(iv)	To progress the scheme with the approval for a trial of a part time bus gate / motor vehicle restriction on Portswood Broadway via an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, with measures to limit the impact on adjacent streets via an Active Travel Zone (ATZ) to be in place ahead of the trial.

		Delegation is given to Executive Director Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member Environment and Transport to progress associated detailed design and Traffic Regulation Orders to enable the scheme trial and Active Travel Zone to be delivered.
	(v)	To establish a co-design group to inform design decisions for Portswood Broadway to address issues raised from the consultation.
	(vi)	A budget allocation of £500k for the trial is made from the capital programme budget of £2.9M. This budget would be subject to confirmation from the DfT on remaining grant award for the TCF programme.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	To allow the opinions of relevant stakeholders and public to inform the decision making process for the scheme.
2.	Compliance with the Southampton City Council (SCC) Corporate Plan goals – Embed a culture of listening to our residents, community groups, partner organisations and businesses so their voices can shape our actions, and A prosperous city – Southampton will focus on growing our local economy and bringing investment into our city. The scheme will allow for improvements to be made to Portswood Broadway as a district centre improvement project.
3.	Compliance with the Southampton City Council Local Transport Plan Connected Southampton – A Connected City: Developing the Southampton Mass Transit System (Policy C1) – the introduction of a bus gate / motor vehicle restriction will assist with the implementation of the Mass Transit System.
4	Compliance with the Southampton Council Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) ambitions, including Ambition 2 Buses are an attractive alternative, Ambition 6 Buses support sustainable growth in the City and District Centres. The scheme will make bus travel along the corridor faster and more reliable.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5	<p>Not to proceed with a trial of the scheme – subject to discussions with the Department for Transport via a change control submission, this may allow some of the match funded Integrated Transport Block grant to be directed to other transport schemes, noting that s106 contributions are site specific and cannot be redirected. The majority of SCC match funding would still be required for schemes already completed / commenced under the Transforming Cities Fund programme.</p> <p>This would not align with the Southampton City Council Local Transport Plan Connected Southampton and associated policies, as bus priority is an essential component to a Mass Transit System, and with Bus Service Improvement Plan ambitions.</p>

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

6	<p>Background</p> <p>In 2020, the Southampton City Region was one of 12 cities that received funding through the Department for Transport's (DfT) Transforming Cities Fund (TCF).</p>
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	<p>This joint bid with Hampshire County Council (HCC) was awarded £57M of DfT funding towards a £68.5M programme to be delivered over four years to March 2024. The remainder of the funding is to come from local match funding contributions from SCC, HCC and partners including bus operator investment (such as new buses in 2024).</p>
7	<p>The TCF programme is delivering sustainable transport improvements on corridors linking Southampton City Centre with surrounding towns including Southampton to Eastleigh Corridor. This aims to better connect Fair Oak and Bishopstoke to Eastleigh, and onwards to Southampton Airport and Southampton City Centre by sustainable transport options. This is to support future sustainable development growth and improve productivity.</p>
8	<p>The focus for the Eastleigh Corridor is the provision of new cycle facilities, bus priority, better bus stops and access to them, access to the rail stations at Eastleigh, Southampton Airport Parkway, Swaythling and St Denys, improvements to St Denys Road, and providing alternatives such as e-scooter or cycle hire at a travel hub in Portswood. Projects are being developed and implemented by both SCC and HCC as part of the complete package for the corridor to achieve the aims of TCF.</p>
9	<p>As part of the strategy for the corridor, improvements to A335 Thomas Lewis Way were implemented with the aim of enhancing the strategic function of the A335 for the movement of through traffic in and out of the city. This additional capacity aims to reduce the demand and need for through traffic using Portswood Road. These works are complete with four junctions upgraded including Thomas Lewis Way/St Denys Road.</p>
10	<p>Portswood Broadway Project</p> <p>One of the key TCF projects is enhancements to the Portswood Broadway District Centre section of Portswood Road. This would contribute to the overall aims for the corridor for cycling and buses.</p> <p>This scheme has a capital programme budget of £2.9M, and includes the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To regenerate and make the District Centre a more vibrant, competitive economic destination; • Make the District Centre a more attractive and a more enjoyable place to spend time and money; • Provide greening, improve bio-diversity and more space for walking and wheeling within the District Centre; • Improve walking and cycling connectivity to and through the District Centre; • Provide safer crossing opportunities and better bus stops; and • Improved bus reliability and journey times via facilities (such as making part of Portswood Broadway bus, cycle & taxi only) and upgraded signal technology in the junctions at either end (St Denys Road and Brookvale Road).
11	<p>Alongside the main Portswood Broadway project there are complementary works that aim to widen travel choices through a Travel Hub. This is proposed to be located in St Denys Road 'stub' and would enable users access to micromobility (e-scooters, e-bikes), car clubs and EV charging, and localised greening.</p> <p>The Portswood Travel Hub, budgeted at £0.31m, has these objectives to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved transport mode options; • Increased disabled access and parking; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public realm and green spaces.
12	<p>As part of a package of mitigation for the works on Portswood Broadway that is likely to see some displacement of traffic, an Active Travel Zone in the Highfield area to the north-west is proposed. This would be developed through co-design with the local community to ensure buy-in and includes the following key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve road safety; • Reduce the amount of through route traffic on local roads; • Improve air quality; and • Encourage walking, wheeling and cycling as a mode of transport.
13	<p>Consultation</p> <p>To develop the Portswood Broadway scheme the Council undertook a first phase of consultation which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October-November 2020 – online Perceptions Survey to gain people’s experiences / thoughts on the current conditions and aspirations for the Portswood Broadway area; • September-October 2021 - On-street customer survey to gain insights into behaviours of people visiting the Portswood Broadway area; and • October / November 2022 – public consultation online and in-person events providing details of proposed schemes for Portswood. The consultation included drop in events and an online survey to collect feedback.
14	<p>As part of the October / November 2022 consultation, the Council received a petition “Say NO to Southampton City Council’s proposals to close part of Portswood Broadway to through traffic” and received 2,868 respondents.</p>
15	<p>The petition numbers meant that the item was referred to the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration on 2 February 2023 meeting. At this meeting the Committee recommended to the Executive the next phase of consultation is more neutral, that additional and updated traffic information is gathered and presented to the public and consideration is given on how that information is presented. The resolution is in Appendix 1.</p>
16	<p>A second phase public consultation with the additional requested information was carried out between 22nd August and 1st October 2023. This included an updated website https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/tcf/eastleigh-to-southampton-corridor/portswood-project/, an online survey, letter drop to 16,612 properties, email to stakeholder list gathered from previous consultations and drop in sessions (where information and materials were on display and members of the public were able to ask questions of the project team) during September 2023. These drop-in sessions were held at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portswood Broadway (x2 sessions); • Bashir Ahmed Mosque; • With the Highfield Residents Association; • With the Outer Avenue Residents Association; and • University of Southampton. <p>Businesses in and around Portswood Broadway were invited to a “Meet the Leader” event, with the Leader of the Council held in the Leader’s Civic Centre</p>

	<p>office in September 2023. A follow up business meeting was held in October 2023 at October Books meeting rooms.</p> <p>A special presentation was given to members of the Accessibility Forum online in September 2023.</p>
17	<p>The additional information and materials provided at the events and available online is in Appendix 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on local roads; • Impact on the local economy; • Maintaining access for people with mobility issues and people with disabilities; • Phased Implementation of the scheme; • Air Quality and Environmental Benefits; • Improving Public Transport Services; • Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour; • A335 Thomas Lewis Way Improvements; and • Emergency Strategy for A335 Thomas Lewis Way.
18	<p>The online survey ran concurrent to the public consultation events, created by the Southampton Data Observatory (SCC Insights team) – independent from the Integrated Transport team delivering the project. When closed, the survey received 1,371 responses.</p> <p>It is important to note that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for public and stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal.</p> <p>The survey asked questions about the where people lived, how, why, when and how often they used Portswood Broadway and how they travel to or through Portswood Broadway. Specific questions were asked about how people felt the impact would be on a range of issues via asking if they felt it would have a positive impact, no impact or negative impact.</p> <p>A copy of the survey questions is in Appendix 3.</p>
19	<p>The results of the survey questions are shown in Appendix 4.</p> <p>Key highlights from the results are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five of the nine aspects of the proposal asked about were rated as having a positive impact by more than 50% of respondents – being impacts on attractiveness, active / alternate modes, and bus passengers; • Views were even for impact on visitor numbers and impact on the local economy; and • The impact on car related questions was seen as having a negative impact. <p>A “You Said / We Did” style response to the points raised in the survey, and from other written submissions received, are shown in Appendix 5.</p>
20	<p>Business engagement included an option in the survey to indicate it was a business response (twelve received), a dedicated meeting with the Leader held 22 August 2023 (thirteen businesses attended), a dedicated business only survey (two completed) and a business engagement forum held on 22 September 2023 (thirteen businesses attended). An analysis of issues raised by businesses is in Appendix 6. The engagement has shown that there are mixed views from</p>

	businesses on the proposed scheme with some indicating it will be positive and some indicating it will be negative.
21	<p>Following the consultation, it is proposed to amend the Portswood Broadway scheme as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish detail design of a viable scheme trial for measures to limit through traffic in the area; • Limit the amount of through route traffic passing through Portswood Broadway via the use of a bus gate / motor vehicle restriction, accompanied with measures to limit the impact on adjacent streets via an Active Travel Zone. The bus gate / motor vehicle restriction should be part time to allow some access for delivery and some vehicle access at some times of day; • The part time bus gate / motor vehicle restriction is to be 7am to 10am, 4pm – 7pm to allow maximum benefit for bus journey times, during peak commuter hours, but still allow access to the Broadway outside of these times for other modes; • Access for loading HGVs will be retained through Portswood Broadway from south – north, with a loading bay proposed for St Denys Road spur road to allow for loading to happen from St Denys Road (details to be subject to co-design group); and • A co-design group is established to inform design decisions for Portswood Broadway (including trial) to address issues raised from the consultation. The co-design group is to be made up of representatives from resident associations, retailers / traders, representatives from lobby groups such as elderly / people with disabilities and mobility issues, and local residents.
22	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Following the completion of the review by officers the timeline for the project is anticipated to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Community Co-design options in Spring 2024 to inform the design and feasibility of the scheme trial; • Confirm any mitigation measures, if required in Summer 2024; • Formal consultation on any required Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) Summer 2024; and • Any construction of the scheme trial at Portswood Broadway in Winter 2024/25.
23	<p>A trial is proposed for the part time bus gate / motor vehicle restriction in accordance with Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders. The trial will have a review point of six months initially, and an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order can run for 18 months. The measures of a trial will include pre / post traffic flows on roads, the use of air quality monitors, resident / retail / visitor feedback. Measures will also be taken in relation to business activity – footfall counters, engagement with businesses on spend / profit, and spend profiles of visitors to the area.</p> <p>Following this cabinet decision, the final details of the trial including the design will be finalised with input from the co-design working group. The trial can proceed with delegation given to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member Environment and Transport to progress associated Traffic</p>

	<p>Regulation Orders to enable the implementation of the scheme trial and Active Travel Zone.</p> <p>The impacts would be monitored by SCC and reported back after 1 year and 5 years from completion if the scheme is made permanent, and as part of the DfT's National TCF Monitoring & Evaluation programme.</p>
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RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

24 The total budget allocation of the Portswood Broadway scheme is £2.9M with £400k set aside for the Highfield ATZ, the TCF programme is funded by the Department for Transport, SCC match from Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block grant, and S106 Developer Contributions. The Portswood Broadway scheme will utilise the remaining TCF programme budget which has been profiled so that the SCC match funding is the remaining budget, which is a commitment as per the original TCF bid and grant conditions.

It is included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2023/24 and (subject to DfT awarding the agreed final tranches of TCF grant payments to SCC) has sufficient funds to carry out the implementation of any agreed proposals, additional surveys, modelling and impact assessments. The deadline to spend the DfT conditional TCF funding is currently 31 March 2024. Whilst the Council are in negotiations with the DfT to extend this, as detailed below, there is currently a risk that funding may not be available in 2024/25. Funding for the scheme is made up from SCC match funding (Integrated Transport Block grant and S106) which does not have an expiry date in 2024/2025 and can be used to extend the delivery timeline.

In terms of the recommendation for this paper, a budget allocation for the trial aspect for Portswood Broadway / Active Travel Zone of £500k (to be funded out of the £2.9M allocation) and would include provision for signage, Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, bus stop upgrades, temporary trial infrastructure (slow points or planters) and any other elements that the co-design group may wish to trial. Some elements of this allocation may be abortive if the trial was not to progress to a permanent scheme, for example traffic signage, but it is expected that the trial will result in some permanent capital assets that contribute to the overall improvements to the TCF corridor.

	Capital allocation (£M)
Existing Capital programme sum	2.900
Consisting of:	
Trial of bus gate and associated measures	0.500
And if trial led to a permanent scheme:	
Active Travel Zone	0.400
Portswood Broadway	2.000
Total:	2.900

	Funded by:	
	Integrated Transport Block Grant 23/24 and S106	2.900
	Net	0
25	There are no direct revenue implications resulting from the consultation.	
<u>Property/Other</u>		
26	None	
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS		
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>		
27	The Council is able to make changes to the highway network through the introduction of Traffic Regulation Orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Highways Act 1985 together with associated Regulations and Orders relating to the form of Orders and the required signage etc required to implement and enforce such Orders	
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>		
28	The proposals have been subject to an equalities impact assessment carried out under the Equality Act 2010 and the design and implementation phase will be conducted having regard to this assessment which will be updated throughout the design phase to ensure Equality considerations are taken into account and mitigated against where appropriate.	
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS		
29	<p>There is a risk related to the delivery timeline for the project being delayed with further reviews. Timelines for the project have now been adjusted to allow for the gathering of further analysis and as such the risk has been mitigated. The TCF funding from the DfT stipulates that the funds must be spent by March 2024, and the Council is in negotiations with the DfT on the use of an additional year to complete the TCF programme particularly for Portswood. As a mitigation, funding for the scheme is made from SCC match funding towards the TCF funding which does not expire in 2024/25 and can be used to extend the delivery timeline.</p> <p>If a scheme, in line with the TCF programme bid, would not be taken forward, then the funding would need to either be reallocated to other TCF schemes in Southampton that provide a similar or better improvement for buses, or the monies would need to be returned to the DfT.</p> <p>The Council has not received the final tranche of funding from the DfT for the Transforming Cities Fund grant, and is required to submit quarterly claims for costs incurred. The Council has not received the final tranche which includes payments for Albion Place Bus Hub and the remaining of the Inner Ring Road Cumberland Place project. If the DfT were to withhold the final tranche due to a</p>	

	<p>revised TCF timeline because of an additional year, the SCC match funding would need to be prioritised to complete the already committed schemes (as above, Albion Place Bus Hub and Inner Ring Road) and as such there would be insufficient funding to proceed with any works at Portswood Broadway (including any trial) – this project would not proceed if this happened.</p> <p>Some aspects of the trial will produce infrastructure that may not be permanent and will require removing if the trial concludes that there is no viable scheme for Portswood Broadway. These elements will be minor (such as traffic signage) but it is expected that the majority of the trial will result in a capital asset being created that contribute to the overall objectives for the TCF corridor.</p>
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POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

30	<p>The Council’s Local Transport Plan (LTP4) - Connected Southampton 2040, sets out a vision for transport to make Southampton a modern, liveable and sustainable place to live, work and visit by investing in better and more innovative transport.</p> <p>The TCF Programme and Portswood Broadway project support this and the LTP has objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘A System for Everyone, making Southampton an attractive and liveable place to improve the people’s quality of life, so that everyone is safe, and has inclusive access to transport regardless of their circumstances.’ • A Connected City, with fast, efficient transport options available that effectively and reliably connect people with the places they want to go. As part of that, the Southampton Mass Transit System (SMTS) has been identified that will be a high-quality system comprising of various types of public transport – including bus and future other mass transit schemes (Policy C1).
31	<p>The Council’s Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) sets out the ambition for buses in Southampton has listed ambitions for buses as an attractive choice where the bus network is built on reliability, carbon-neutral, integration, value for money, inclusivity & partnership.</p> <p>The TCF Programme and Portswood Broadway project support his and specific ambitions within the BSIP, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambition 2 – Buses are an attractive alternative – fast, reliable and attractive – providing bus priority helps to improve attractiveness of buses, growing patronage, speed up journeys and foster further service enhancements and vehicle investment • Ambition 6 - The City and District Centres as hubs within the network served by buses to support their sustainable growth <p>Ambition 9 – development of the integrated SMTS with future aspirations for Mass Rapid Transit on the corridor.</p>
32	<p>The Council’s Cycle Strategy Cycling Southampton 2017-2027 sets out how Southampton can become a true cycling city, with the identification of the Southampton Cycle Network (SCN). The SCN has a series of corridors for cycling improvements including SCN6 on Portswood Road to Eastleigh</p>

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Portswood Ward

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	February 2023 OSMC recommendation
2.	Additional information gathered for consultation
3	Online consultation survey
4	Survey results
5	You Said / We Did response to free text survey responses
6	Analysis of Business responses
7	Equality and Safety Impact Assessment ESIA

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	
2.	

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	
2.	

Appendix 1 – 2 February 2023 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

1. That the Cabinet Member and officers commit to ensuring that the next iteration of the Portswood Corridor consultation survey is worded in such a way that it is neutral and does not appear to favour the proposed schemes.
2. That further traffic counts are undertaken along the Portswood Corridor to monitor changes to travel habits and to improve understanding of the journeys that are being undertaken and traffic trends.
3. That modelling for individual roads is undertaken to help develop understanding of the additional traffic that could be diverted to neighbouring residential streets as a result of the introduction of the proposed schemes.
4. That, reflecting concerns about the potential impact the closure of Thomas Lewis Way could have on the area if the proposed scheme is introduced, an emergency mitigation plan is developed that identifies the potential impact and models alternative routes to be followed to reduce the predicted impact.
5. That bus journey time and trend data for Portswood is provided to the Committee and is available for the second phase of public consultation.
6. That, for the second phase of public consultation, improvements are made to the clarity of the information about the proposed schemes to raise awareness of the actual proposals.
7. That the second phase of public consultation includes a wider geographical area reflecting the potential impact of the proposals.
8. That instead of procuring an independent assessment on the impact of the proposals on the prosperity of Portswood District Centre, traders are contacted individually, or through a Portswood Traders Association, and are asked about their views on the proposals.
9. That, if the Cabinet Member agrees to the independent assessment on the impact of the proposals on the prosperity of Portswood District Centre, the Cabinet Member and officers commit to separately engaging directly with Portswood traders about the proposals.

10. That the Cabinet Member and officers demonstrate how the proposals will impact on the city's net zero ambitions.

11. That the Cabinet Member recognises the strength of feeling and opposition to the proposed closure of Portswood Broadway to through traffic and goes back to the drawing board and scraps plans to close the road to through traffic and instead comes back with alternative proposals for Portswood Broadway that will make the district centre greener and more attractive.

Appendix 2 – Additional information for the Portswood Broadway consultation

<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/tcf/eastleigh-to-southampton-corridor/portswood-project/additional-information-and-assessments/>

- Impact on local roads – Additional traffic counts were taken in April 2023, with modelling carried out rerouting traffic locally to Thomas Lewis Way and to local streets in the area, with daily traffic levels shown for current, predicted with a proposed bus gate, predicted with bus gate + light touch Active Travel Zone, and bus gate + Active Travel Zone via traffic filters;
- Impact on the local economy – An independent Economic Impact Assessment Report was prepared and made available for the public to see the predicted impact of the scheme for economic activity in the area;
- Maintaining access for people with mobility issues and people with disabilities – a local access map was produced indicating how to access the Portswood Broadway if a bus gate restriction was to go ahead
- Phased Implementation of the scheme – information was provided on how a phased implementation of the scheme may be possible;
- Air Quality and Environmental Benefits – information was provided on the Green City Charter (2020) and air quality information as part of the Southampton Net Zero Strategy;
- Improving Public Transport Services – information was given on the level of delay for bus running times in the area and a link to the Council’s Bus Service Improvement Plan;
- Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour – information was provided on the work done in conjunction with advice from the Police on how to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour through several measures including a Portswood Business Engagement Forum;
- A335 Thomas Lewis Way Improvements – information about improved journey times along A335 Thomas Lewis following recently completed congestion reduction schemes; and
- Emergency Strategy for A335 Thomas Lewis Way – information about measures to retain access in the area if there is an emergency situation on A335 Thomas Lewis Way including messaging to drivers and use of Portswood Broadway.

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Portswood Broadway Transport Scheme Consultation

Consultation questionnaire

Background

Welcome to the Portswood Corridor Phase 2 Consultation

Welcome to phase 2 of the consultation for the proposals for the Portswood Corridor. This consultation will run from the 21st August 2023 until the 1st October 2023

On our website **HERE** you will be able to access all information related to the proposed Portswood Corridor schemes which include:

- Changes to Portswood Broadway
- A new Active Travel Zone (ATZ) for Highfield
- A Travel Hub, next to Trago Lounge

You can access information about the aims of these proposals, the impact they would have and background behind why they are being proposed.

You will also be able to access all the information and results related to phase 1 of the consultation which was conducted at the end of 2022, Council assessments and additional investigations to address concerns raised.

Once you have had time to read this information and have your questions answered, we ask that you complete this online survey and leave feedback below.

Should you have any further questions you do not feel is covered on these pages, please email us at portswoodcorridor@southampton.gov.uk

Proposals for Portswood Broadway

The Portswood Broadway proposals look to introduce a bus gate along Portswood Road from Highfield Lane to Westridge Road (approximately 150 metres in length).

The bus gate would restrict general traffic from passing through the 150m of bus gated road, however general traffic will continue to have access to the Broadway area and any existing parking areas will be retained albeit via adjusted routes. The bus gate would still allow buses, cycles, taxis and other authorised vehicles to pass fully along the Broadway.



By restricting general traffic through the Broadway but still allowing access to car parking spaces, we will improve bus journey times and deliver economic, social and environmental benefits, supporting Southampton Pound [link to: [Southampton Pound - Social Value and Community Wealth Building in Southampton](#)] locally, or as social value more widely, through:

- Creation of additional pedestrian space of over 550m2, equivalent of two tennis courts
- Attract more people to visit and spend at local businesses
- Installation of seven benches allowing elderly, disabled and families to sit and rest
- Two new zebra Crossings
- Improved bus journey time and reliability
- Addition green space such as planters and over ten trees
- Additional tables and chair for alfresco dining, with a potential for 50 tables and 100 seats
- Improvements to air quality
- Making our junctions safer for people who choose to walk or cycle

The proposals would improve the junction of Portswood Road and Highfield Lane to provide better walking and cycling access, upgrade the junction to smart signals to reduce waiting time and further improve bus journey time and reliability.

Q. If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?						
	Very positive impact	Fairly positive impact	No impact at all	A fairly negative impact	A very negative impact	Don't know
The attractiveness of Portswood District Centre						
Visitor numbers to Portswood District Centre						

The ease of travelling more sustainably (e.g. on foot, bicycle, or public transport)						
The experience for bus passengers traveling to and from the Portswood District Centre						
The ease of travelling by car to and from the Portswood District Centre (driver or passenger)						
Safety of those walking and crossing roads on the Portswood District Centre						
Safety of those cycling on the Portswood District Centre						
Overall experience of traveling across the city for all road users.						
Air quality						

Q. Please use the following space to tell us if there is anything else we should consider (e.g. what alternatives we could look at, or any other impacts there might be):

Free text

The following sections of the questionnaire will cover more detail on: impacts on the local economy, access for people with mobility issues; and impacts on crime and antisocial behaviour.

Phased Implementation

We are currently investigating the phased introduction of the bus gate should the proposals move forward. We would also be able to provide temporary additional paving along the Broadway to provide the extra pedestrian space the bus gate would allow us to install. It is important to know that during a phased approach of this scheme we would not be able to provide any of the additional green space initially and it would be added over a longer time frame.

Q. If plans were approved, which of the following would you prefer?

- Trial the proposals first
- Proceed straight to implementing the proposals
- Something else
- Don't know

Q. Please use the following space to tell us if there is anything else we should consider (e.g. what alternatives we could look at, or any other impacts there might be):

Free text

Impact on the local economy

One of the key concerns raised by residents in the consultation was about the economic impact on local businesses of a bus-only zone on a section of the Broadway. To address these concerns and measure the impact we commissioned an independent **Economic Impact Assessment** to look more specifically at the impact it would have on the Portswood Area ([link to report](#)). Key findings from the initial assessment include:

- **The Portswood Broadway scheme will generate around £8 for every £1 of investment.** The long-term economic benefits to the Southampton economy through uplift in sales and increased employment opportunities, supporting the Southampton Pound objective of community wealth building.
- **An additional 30 full-time equivalent jobs.** The proposals are predicted to generate additional jobs on the Broadway as the consumer benefits from increased trading space and longer opening hours to attract more people.
- **An additional £32,705,000 (GVA) Gross Value Added over 10 years to the local economy.** This is due to the increased footfall, compared with if the scheme was not implemented.
- **A 5% uplift in trade.** Businesses trading in retail, leisure, food services and other business services could expect a 5% uplift in trade from the additional footway space and improvements

We hope the Economic Impact Assessment provides residents and businesses with some supporting information to support informing their responses to the phase 2 consultation. We want to make sure that local businesses are fully supported as part of the second phase of consultation and we will focus on providing advice and guidance on how businesses can get the full benefit of the scheme should it go ahead and continue to work with them on the specific concerns raised.

Next Steps:

- Form Portswood Business Engagement Forum for local retailers;
- Ensuring servicing needs are designed into any future scheme; and
- Providing guidance on how to get the most benefits from these proposals.

If you are a local retailer and want to find out more about the Portswood Business Engagement Forum please email us [HERE](#).

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have adequately assessed and provided sufficient information on the potential economic impact of the proposals?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q. Please use the following space to explain your response please

Free text

Q. If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the local economy?

- Very positive impact
- Fairly positive impact

- No impact at all
- A fairly negative impact
- A very negative impact
- Don't know

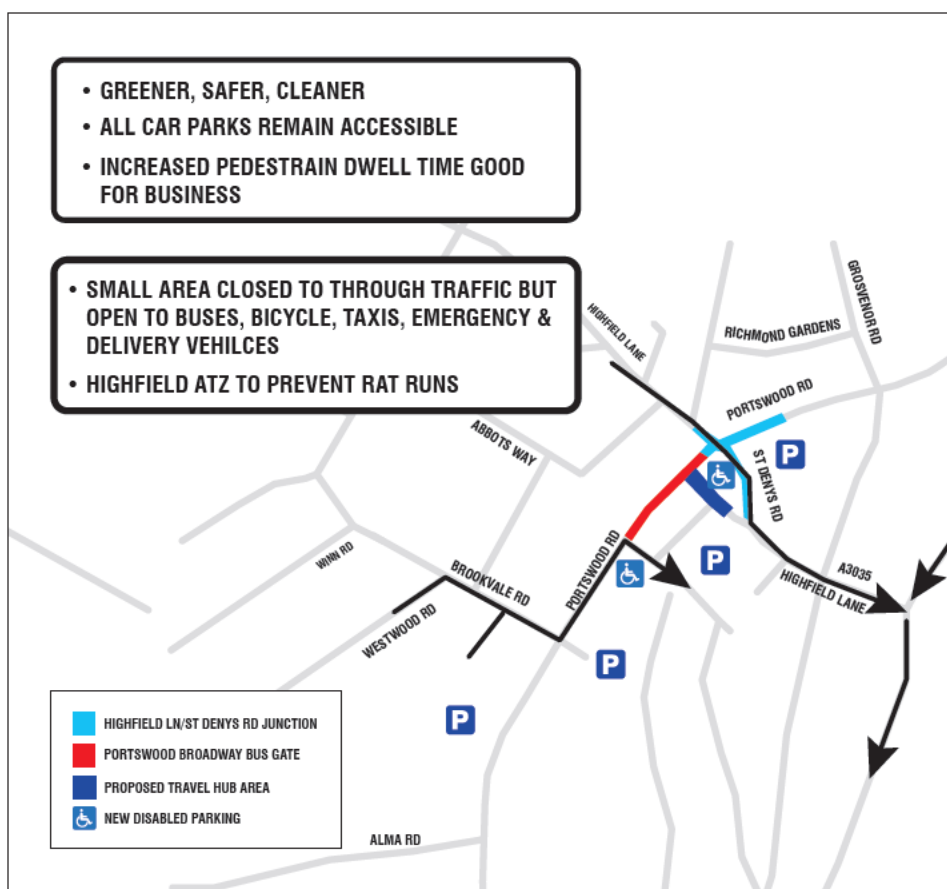
Q. Please use the following space to tell us if there is anything else we should consider (e.g. what alternatives we could look at, or any other impacts there might be):

Free text

Maintaining access for people with mobility issues and people with disabilities

Access for people with mobility issues, especially those that have no alternative but to use their car will also be improved with better pedestrian access into Westridge Road car park and more parking for people with disabilities around the area.

As part of the work on the Active Travel Zone we would also include additional disabled compliant crossings and improve the condition of our footways.



There will be at around seven additional benches along the Broadway for people to sit and rest, and hospitality businesses will be able to offer outdoor seating, where people can socialise with family and friends. The area will be improved with dementia friendly design principles being applied to the design of the future Broadway layout. Our new [The Accessibility Forum \(southampton.gov.uk\)](http://southampton.gov.uk) will play a crucial role in reviewing the scheme and the design detail.

While some people may need to make longer journeys around the bus gate, we commit to maintaining access to all car parks in the area and improving existing access.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have taken sufficient steps to maintain access for people with mobility issues and people with disabilities

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q. Please use the following space to tell us if there is anything else we should consider (e.g. what alternatives we could look at, or any other impacts there might be):

Free text

Impact on crime and anti-social behaviour

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour was a key concern raised in phase 1 of the consultation and one we share. Local street drinking, assaults, theft and other crimes are something we all take very seriously.

The Council, in partnership with our local Police Officers, are working to ensure these proposals would help address these problems and make the Portswood area safer for us all to enjoy. These proposals would allow us to:

- Provide additional CCTV along the Broadway, helping the police to gather evidence and monitor crimes;
- Design out blind spots and improve street lighting;
- Work with local businesses to form the Portswood Business Engagement Forum which will help the council and the police to work better together with local businesses; and
- Working on community schemes that allow people to better and more easily report crimes.

Q. What impact do you feel the proposals would have on the following?

	Very positive impact	Fairly positive impact	No impact at all	A fairly negative impact	A very negative impact	Don't know
Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour						
Making crime and antisocial behaviour easier to report						

Q. Please use the following space to tell us if there is anything else we should consider (e.g. what alternatives we could look at, or any other impacts there might be):

Free text

Proposals for Portswood Travel Hub

To improve access to the Broadway for all users we are proposing the installation of a Travel Hub on St Denys Road alongside Portswood Broadway, next to Trago Lounge. Adjacent to the Travel Hub, additional parking for people with disabilities will be provided.

The Travel Hub will provide people with access to a range of transport options including disabled parking bays, e-bike or scooter hire, secure cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points. It will link to improved bus stops on Portswood Broadway. On top of this, the Hub could include improvements to the public space such as art, greening and seating and additional facilities like parcel lockers, information boards and wayfinding, bringing more visitors to the Broadway and providing reasons for them to stay. Final elements of the Travel Hub will be refined as the project progresses based on the feedback received from this consultation.

Q. If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?						
	Very positive impact	Fairly positive impact	No impact at all	A fairly negative impact	A very negative impact	Don't know
The attractiveness of St Denys Road						
Air quality						
The ease of travelling more sustainably (e.g. on foot, bicycle, or public transport)						
Safety of those cycling						
Visitor numbers to Portswood District Centre						
The experience for bus passengers traveling to and from the Portswood District Centre						

Q. Listed below are some potential features of a Travel Hub. How likely would you be to use each element if included in the Portswood Travel Hub?					
	Very Likely	Fairly likely	Neither	Fairly unlikely	Very unlikely
Disabled parking spaces					
Bicycle hire					
E-bike hire					
Electric cargo bike hire					
E-scooter hire					
Electric car hire					
Electric van hire					
Electric vehicle charging points					
Secure, covered cycle parking					
E-bike charging points					
Taxi pick-up/drop-off point					
Parcel lockers					
Public bicycle pump & tools					
Digital boards with live bus timetables and information					
Green space and public seating					
Sheltered waiting area					

Public toilets					
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Proposals for Highfield Active Travel Zone

Traffic modelling in the area predicts that with the introduction of the bus gate around 8,000 vehicles would choose to use A335 Thomas Lewis Way (TLW) as a faster alternative, depending on the level of mitigation we adopt for the area to prevent rat running. This will be supported by the recent improvements along TLW such as the introduction of additional turning lanes and an upgrade to smarter junctions which has improved journey times along TLW to make it more reliable and increase capacity to ensure it is the preferred option for through traffic.

Some remaining through traffic is likely to choose to rat run through local roads though. To prevent this and protect local roads for those who live in the area, we could introduce an Active Travel Zone for Highfield to prevent this. The Council is committed to providing an Active Travel Zone for the Highfield area ahead of any improvements to the Portswood Broadway area.

Active Travel Zones (ATZs) are neighbourhoods that encourage active travel through a range of measures which calm or discourage traffic, reduce rat running and instead prioritise people walking and cycling while at the same time maintaining motor vehicle access for those who live there. Interventions for ATZs are scalable and can range from speed cushions, improved crossing points or road closure points which would be designed with local residents at co-design meetings.

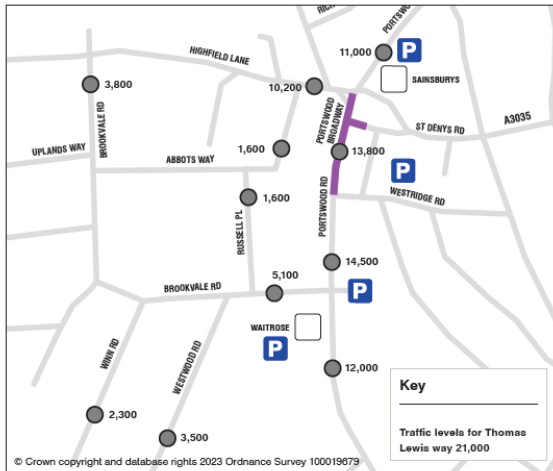
The Council has delivered an ATZ in the St Denys area in conjunction with local residents, and is now implementing ATZs in the Polygon, Woolston and Itchen areas.

New traffic data has been provided in this consultation to better inform residents of the impacts of various options for an Active Travel Zone for the area, but no decision will be made on the type of Active Travel Zone without community co-design with residents.

ATZ traffic modelling: vehicles per 24 hours (both directions)

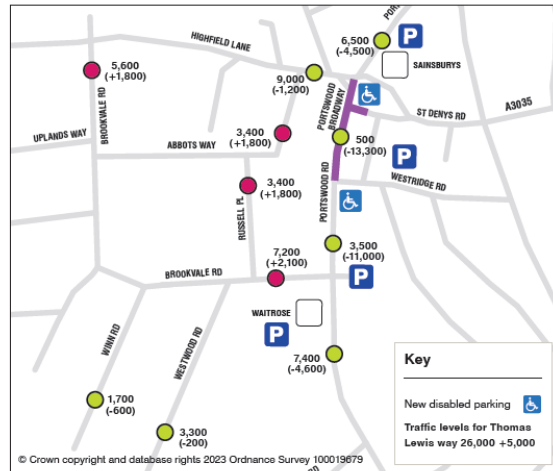
Existing Levels: April 2023:

This shows the existing levels of traffic flowing through the area on a normal weekday in April (figures are number of vehicles per day in a 24 hour period on the road).



Bus gate + no mitigation:

This shows the impact on traffic flows along the Broadway and local roads should a bus gate be installed with no mitigation measures included, with the majority of traffic diverted to A335 Thomas Lewis Way. This is not something that would be implemented and is purely for demonstration only.



Bus gate + Light-touch ATZ:

This shows the impact on traffic flows should a bus gate be installed with a light touch ATZ.

A light-touch ATZ for Highfield in the form of new pedestrian crossings, speed cushions, priority buildouts which will deter people driving through residential streets with the majority of traffic directed to A335 Thomas Lewis Way. This would help reduce overspill from the proposed bus gate and in most cases reduce traffic from existing levels.

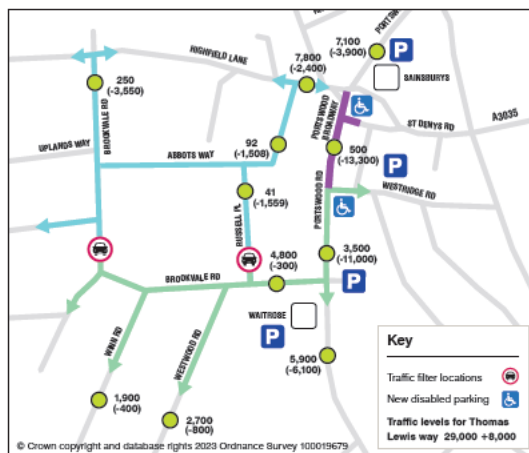
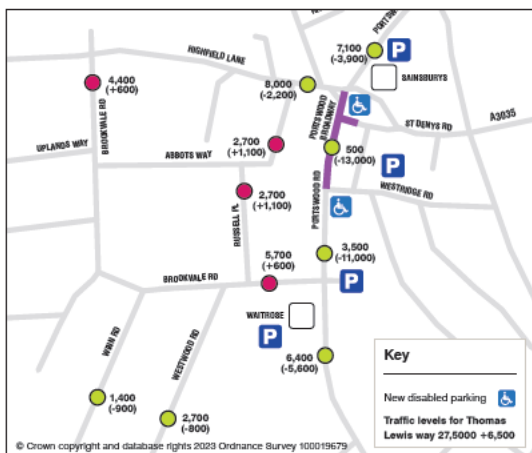
This would lead to increased level on some local streets, but a significant reduction of traffic in the area as a whole. The final mix of interventions to deter people driving through residential streets would be based on community co-design.

Bus gate + ATZ with Traffic Filter on Russell Place and Brookvale Road:

This shows the impact on traffic flows should a bus gate be installed with an ATZ, which would include a traffic filter on Russell Place and on Brookvale Road.

Traffic filters prevent motorised vehicles from passing through that area, without preventing people who walk and cycle. The predicted modelling shows that with the introduction of the ATZ and the traffic filters in these locations the roads around this area would be preserved for local residents only and deliveries access only and prevent all through traffic.

Similar arrangements already exist in Outer Avenue (filters at Alma Avenue and at Avenue Road) and have just been introduced in St Denys (Kent Road, North Road and the existing filter at Horseshoe Bridge).



Q. If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?

	Very positive impact	Fairly positive impact	No impact at all	A fairly negative impact	A very negative impact	Don't know
Safety of those walking and crossing roads within the Highfield area						
Safety of those cycling within the Highfield area						
Journey times by car through the Highfield area						
Access to properties within the Highfield area						
Reducing drivers using residential streets within the Highfield area as shortcuts						
Overall experience of traveling across the city for all road users.						
Air quality						

Q. Should these proposals be approved which ATZ option would you prefer?

***Please note that a detailed design phased would be conducted as a co-design process with local residents and this question is just to inform the co-design process.**

- Light-touch ATZ
- ATZ with Traffic Filter on Russell Place and Brookvale Road
- Something else
- Don't know

Q. Please use the following space to tell us if there is anything else we should consider(e.g. what alternatives we could look at, or any other impacts there might be):

Free text

About you

Q. Roughly, how often do you use these forms of transport in and around the area?

	Daily or most days	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Less often	Never
Walk					

Cycle					
Bus					
Car/Van (including Car Club or rental)					
Motorcycle/Moped					
Wheelchair/Mobility Scooter					
Taxi/Private Hire Car					
Community Transport (eg Dial-a-Ride, Volunteer car scheme)					
E-Scooter					

Q. Roughly, how often do you do the following?					
	Daily or most days	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Less often	Never
Visit Portswood Broadway (E.g. for food shops, work, the library, cafes, bars, faith based worship)					
Pass through Portswood Broadway without stopping to visit					

About you

Q. (Individuals only) What is your postcode? (This is used for geographical analysis only and will not be used to contact or identify you)

Q. (Individuals only) What is your sex?
--

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Q. (Individuals only) Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If no, please write in gender identity:

Q. (Individuals only) What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 +
- Prefer not to say

Q. (Individuals only) How would you describe your ethnic group?

- Asian / Asian British
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
- White British
- White Other
- Other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

Q. (Individuals only) Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If yes, do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

- Yes, a lot
- Yes, a little
- Not at all
- Prefer not to say

Businesses and organisations

Q. Are you responding on behalf of a business or organisation?

- No
- Yes, a private business
- Yes, a public sector organisation
- Yes, a third sector organisation (Voluntary groups, Community groups, Charities)
- Prefer not to say

Q. (Businesses and organisations only) Can the name of your business or organisation be attributed to your response?

- Yes
- No

Q. (Businesses and organisations only) Can we contact you about your response to this consultation and to find out more about the Council led Portswood Business Engagement Forum?

- Yes
- No

Q. (Businesses and organisations only) If yes, please provide us with the following details:

- Business or organisation name:
- Contact name:
- Contact email:

What happens next?

The consultation closes on 01 October 2023. After this date, all feedback will be analysed and considered before a final decision is made. Suggestions and concerns will be taken into account and further assessed as needed

Q. Would you like to be emailed a copy of your response to this consultation?

- Yes
- No

Q. If yes, please provide the following details. This will only be used to send you a copy of your response.

Name:
Email:

Thank you for your time, please click submit to complete the survey.

The information collected about you during this survey will only be used for the purposes of research. We may use it to contact you about this. We will only share your information with other organisations or council departments if we need to. We may also share it to prevent, investigate or prosecute criminal offences, or as the law otherwise allows. Please be aware that any comments given on this form may be published in the report. However, the council will endeavour to remove any references that could identify individuals or organisations. Our Privacy Policy (<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/privacy>) explains how we handle your personal data, and we can provide a copy if you are unable to access the Internet.

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Portswood Project Consultation Feedback report

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Southampton City Council undertook a public consultation on draft proposals for the Portswood Project including:

- Changes to Portswood Broadway;
- A new Active Travel Zone (ATZ) for Highfield
- A Travel Hub (next to Trago Lounge)

This consultation took place between **22/08/2023** – **01/10/2023** and received **1,371** responses.

The aim of this consultation was to:

- Communicate clearly to residents and stakeholders the proposals the projects in Portswood;
- Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder in Southampton that wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have, and;
- Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives of the strategy in a different way.

This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.

It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard and which are meaningful and comply with the *Gunning Principles*, considered to be the legal standard for consultations:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made);
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow ‘intelligent consideration’;
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response, and;
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.



New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

1. **proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
2. **there is sufficient information to give ‘intelligent consideration’**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
3. **there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
4. **‘conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the ‘Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²), which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, England and Wales Court of Appeal (Civil Division) Decisions, Accessed: 13 December 2016.

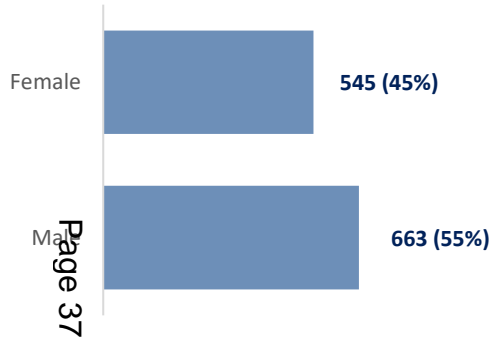
³ BAILII, United Kingdom Supreme Court, Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute

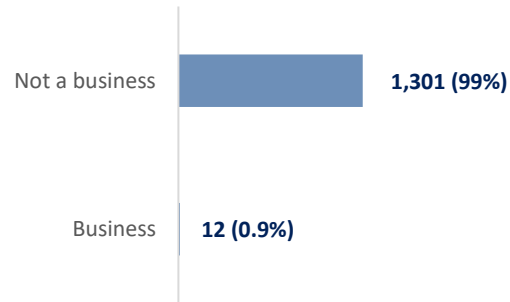
Total responses | **1,354 survey responses**
17 email responses
1,371 total

Graphs on this page are labelled as count (percentage).

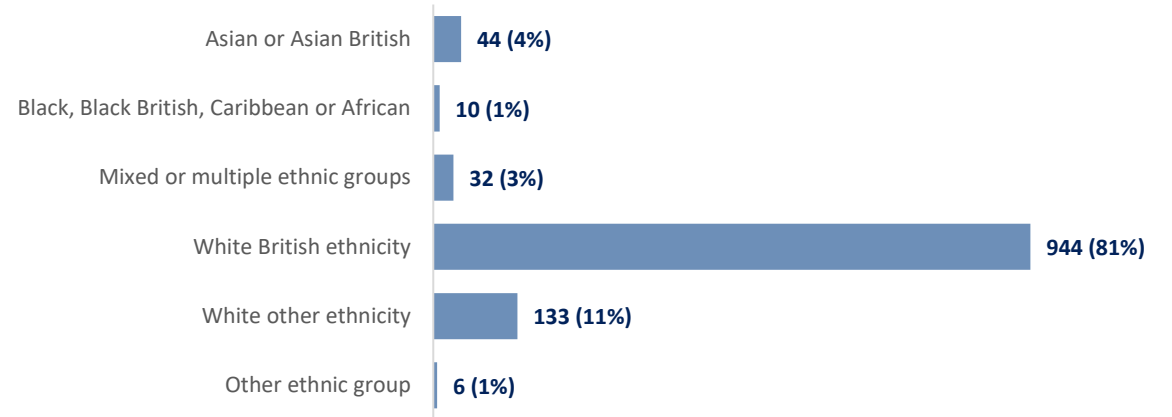
Sex



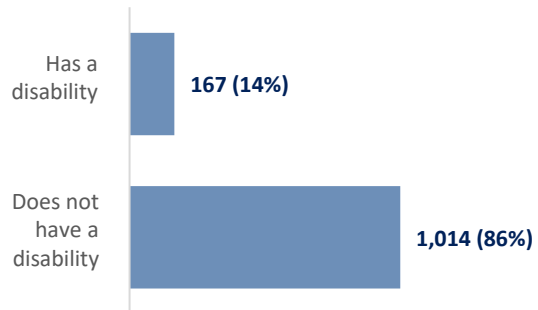
Business



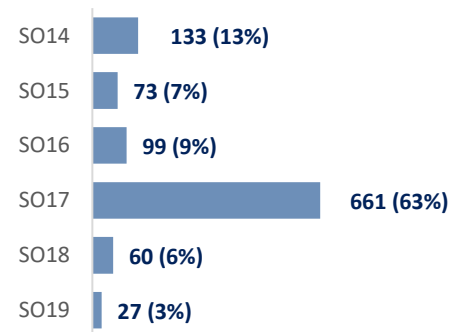
Ethnicity



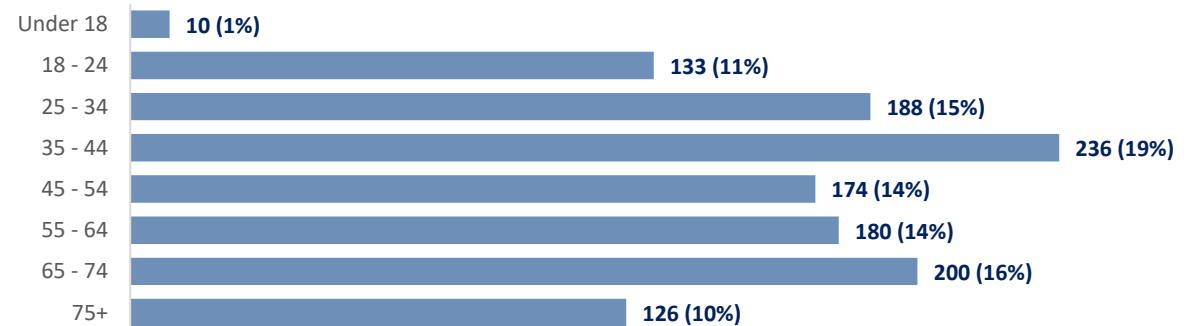
Disability



Postcode

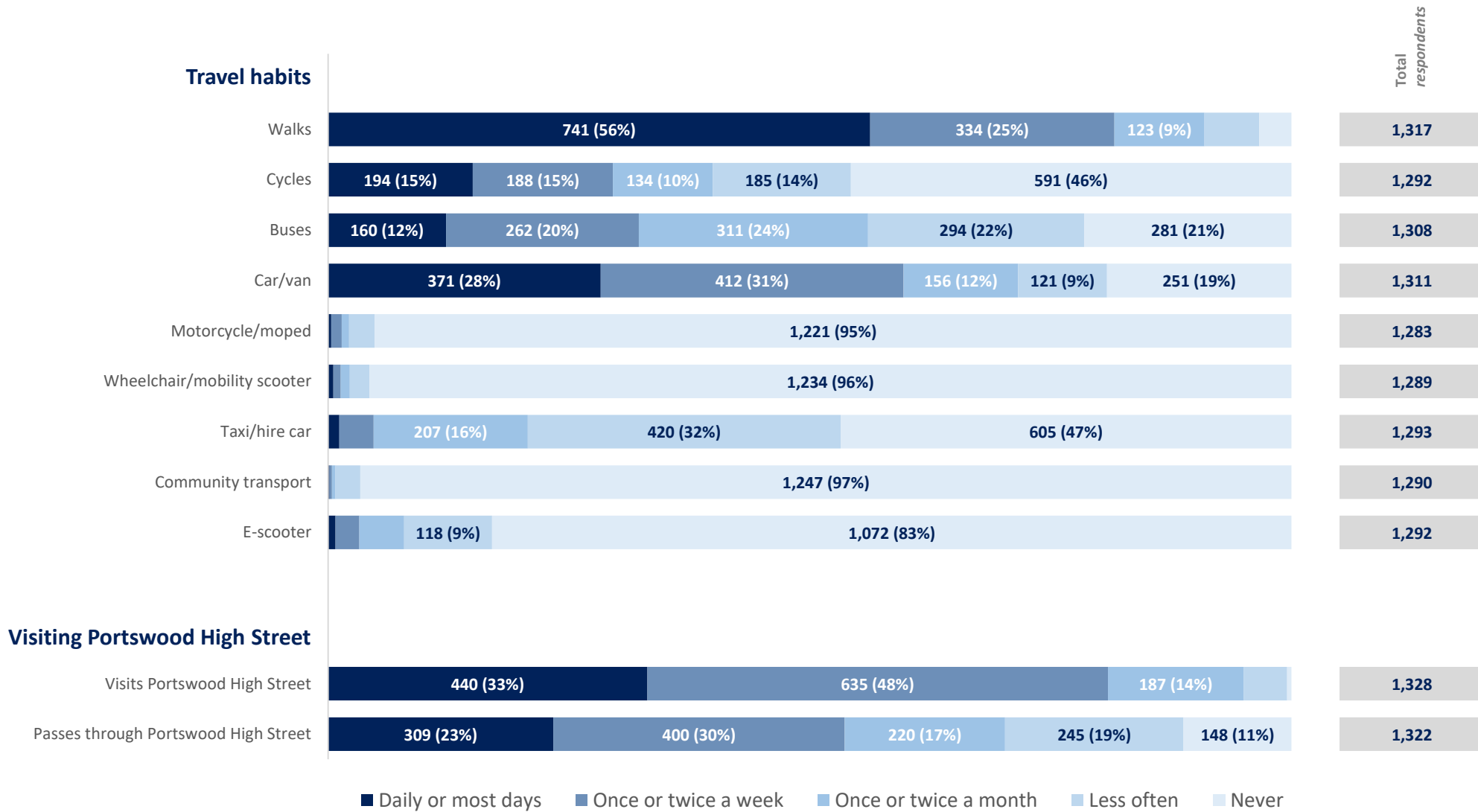


Age



Graphs on this page are labelled as count (percentage).

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Portswood Broadway





“The Portswood Broadway proposals look to introduce a bus gate along Portswood Road, from Highfield Lane to Westridge Road (approximately 150 metres in length).

The bus gate would restrict general traffic from passing through the 150m of bus-gated road: however, general traffic will continue to have access to the Broadway area and any existing parking areas will be retained via adjusted routes. The bus gate would still allow buses, cycles, taxis and other authorised vehicles to pass fully along the Broadway.

By restricting general traffic through the Broadway but still allowing access to car parking spaces, we will improve bus journey times and deliver economic, social and environmental benefits, supporting the Southampton Pound locally, or as social value more widely, through:

- The creation of additional pedestrian space of over 550 square metres, the equivalent of two tennis courts;
- Attracting more people to visit and spend at local businesses;
- Installation of seven benches allowing the elderly, disabled and families to sit and rest;
- Two new zebra crossings;
- Improved disabled access;
- Improved bus journey times and reliability;
- Addition green infrastructure such as planters and trees
- Additional tables and chairs for al fresco dining, with a potential for 50 tables and 100 seats;
- Improvements to air quality, and;
- Making our junctions safer for people who choose to walk or cycle.

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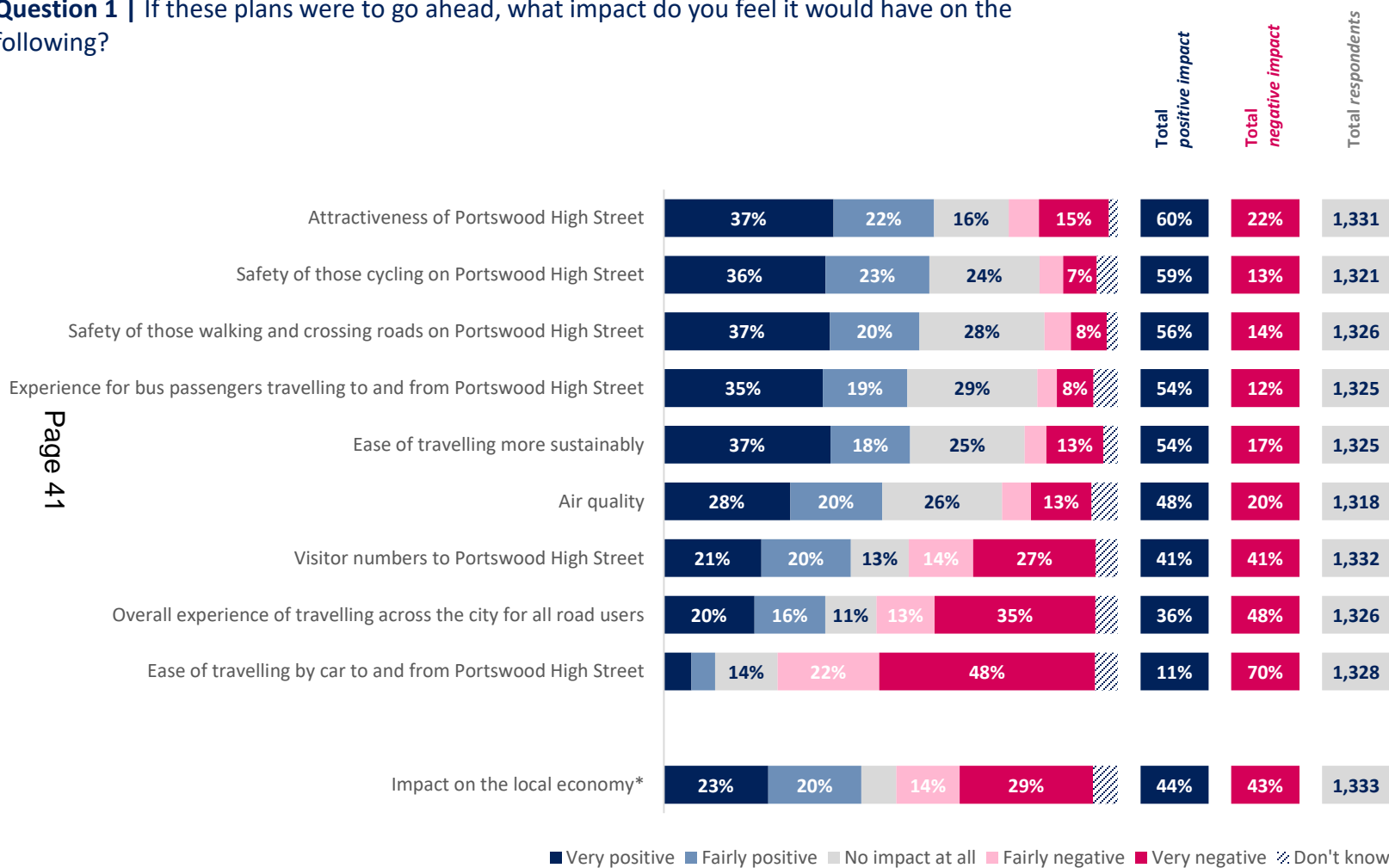
The proposals would improve the junction of Portswood Road and Highfield Lane to provide better walking and cycling access, upgrade the junction to smart signals to reduce waiting time and further improve bus journey time and reliability.“





Question 1 | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?

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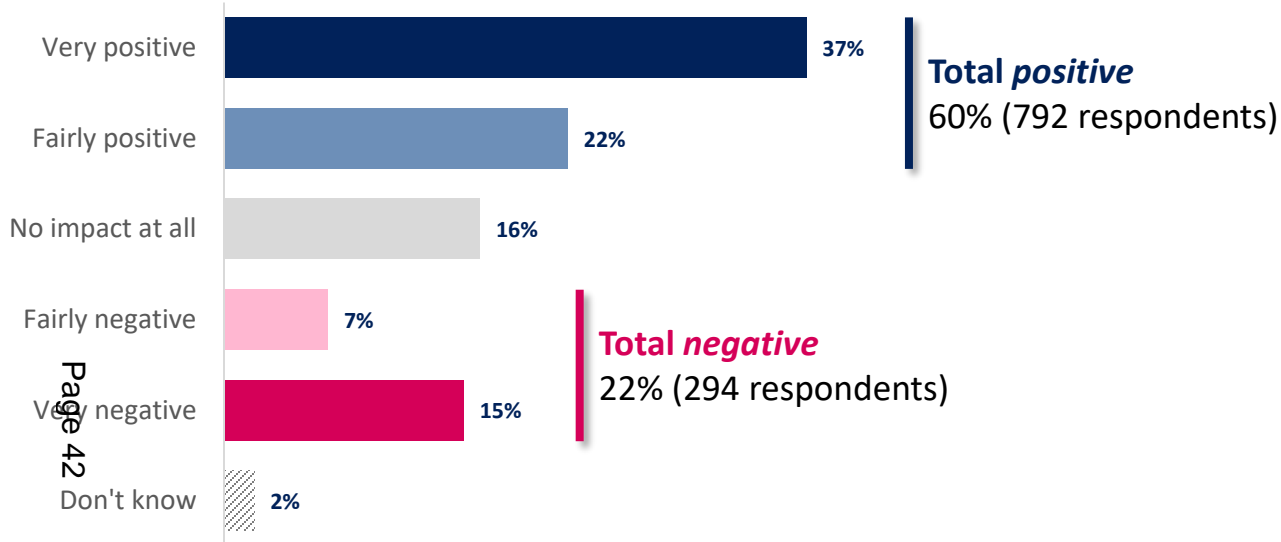
Key findings

- Five of the nine aspects of the proposals asked about were rated as having a *positive* impact by more than 50% of respondents
- The four aspects where the proposals were not rated as having a positive impact by more than 50% of respondents were air quality (48% *positive*), visitor numbers to Portswood High Street (41% for both positive and negative impact) and the overall experience of travelling across the city, with the latter being rated as *negative* impact by 48% of respondents, including 35% that responded *very negative*
- 70% said that the proposals would have a *negative impact* on the ease of travelling by car to and from Portswood, including 48% that said they would have a *very negative impact*
- In most cases where respondents responded positive by more than 50%, the next most popular response was *neither positive or negative* between 24% and 29%, apart from the attractiveness of Portswood High Street, where 22% responded *negative impact*

*Asked as a separate question [Question 6, If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the local economy?] but included here as it uses the same scale as question 1 [If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?]

Question 1a | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Attractiveness of Portswood High Street*

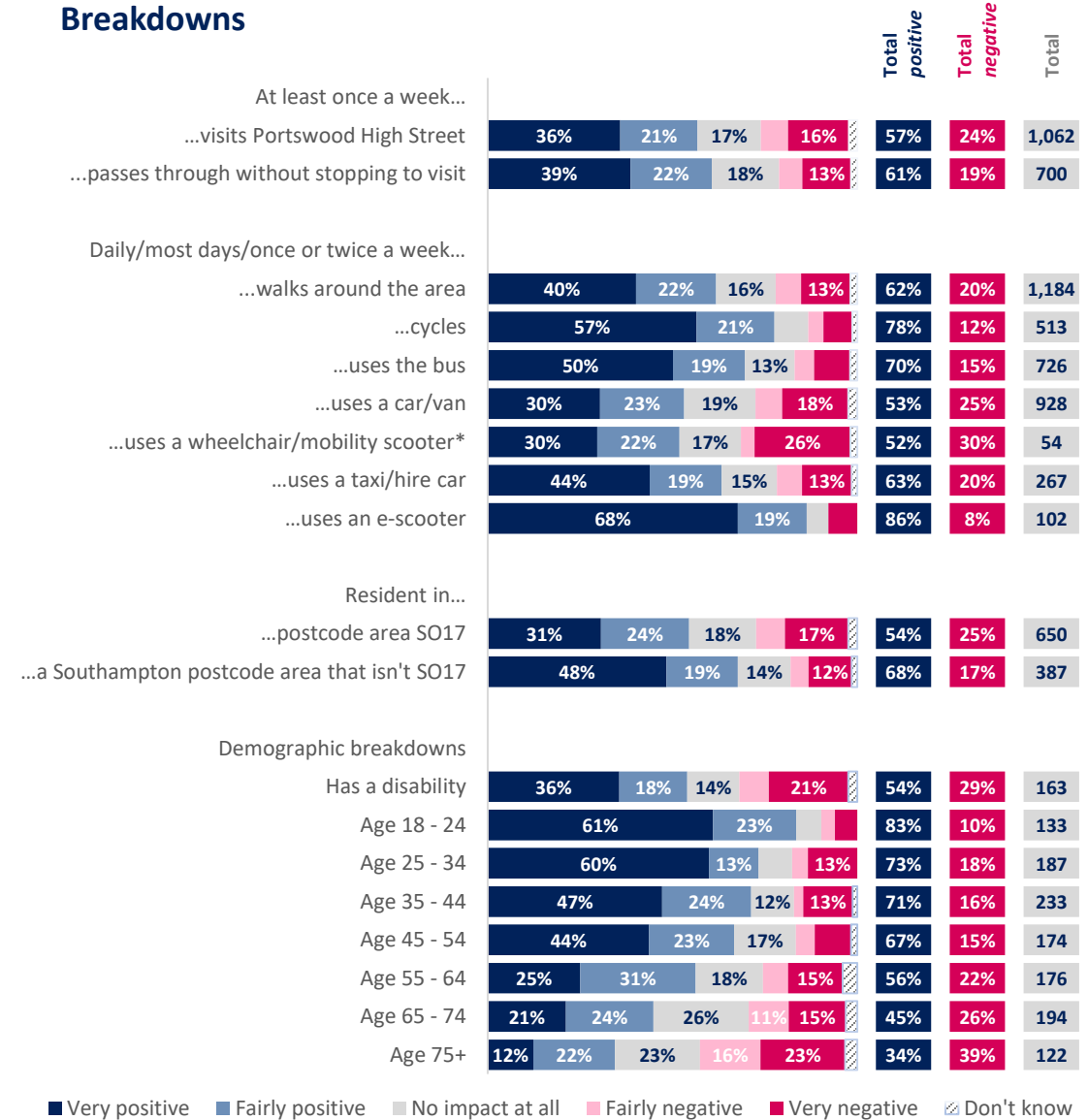
Responses | **1,331**



Key findings

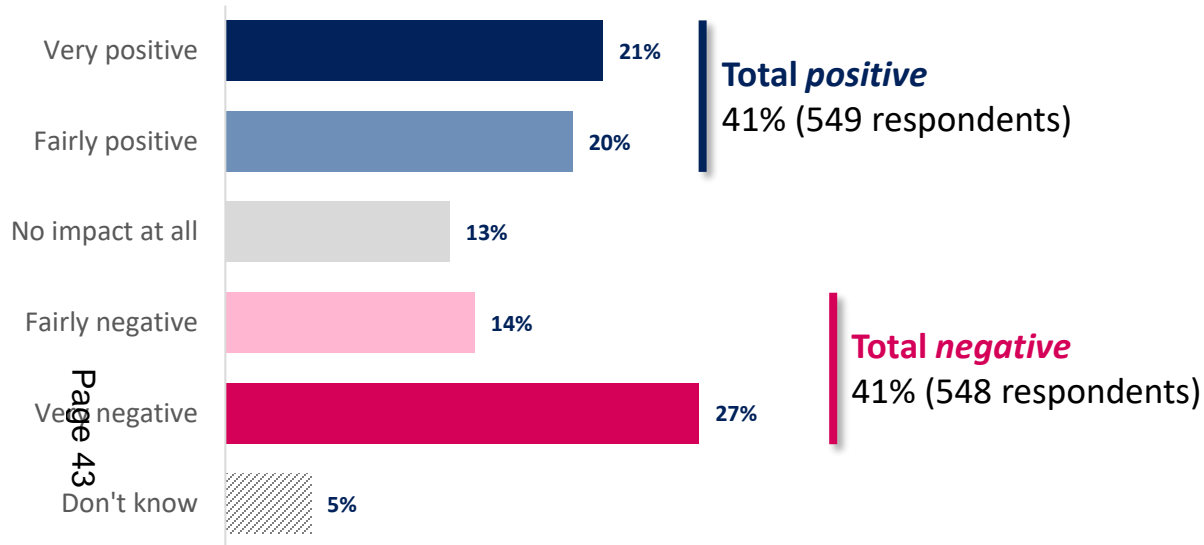
- 60% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on the attractiveness of Portswood High Street, with 22% saying that it will have a *negative* impact
- Respondents that use buses, cycles, and e-scooters responded *positive* impact between 70% and 86%, including more than 50% responding *very positive* impact in each breakdown
- Respondents aged 65 or older were the only breakdowns to respond *positive impact* at less than 50% (45% and 34% respectively), with those aged over 75 responding *negative impact* to a greater extent than *positive*
- The number of respondents responding *positive impact* decreases moving up the age brackets, from 83% of those aged 18 – 24 to 34% of those aged 75 or older

Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.

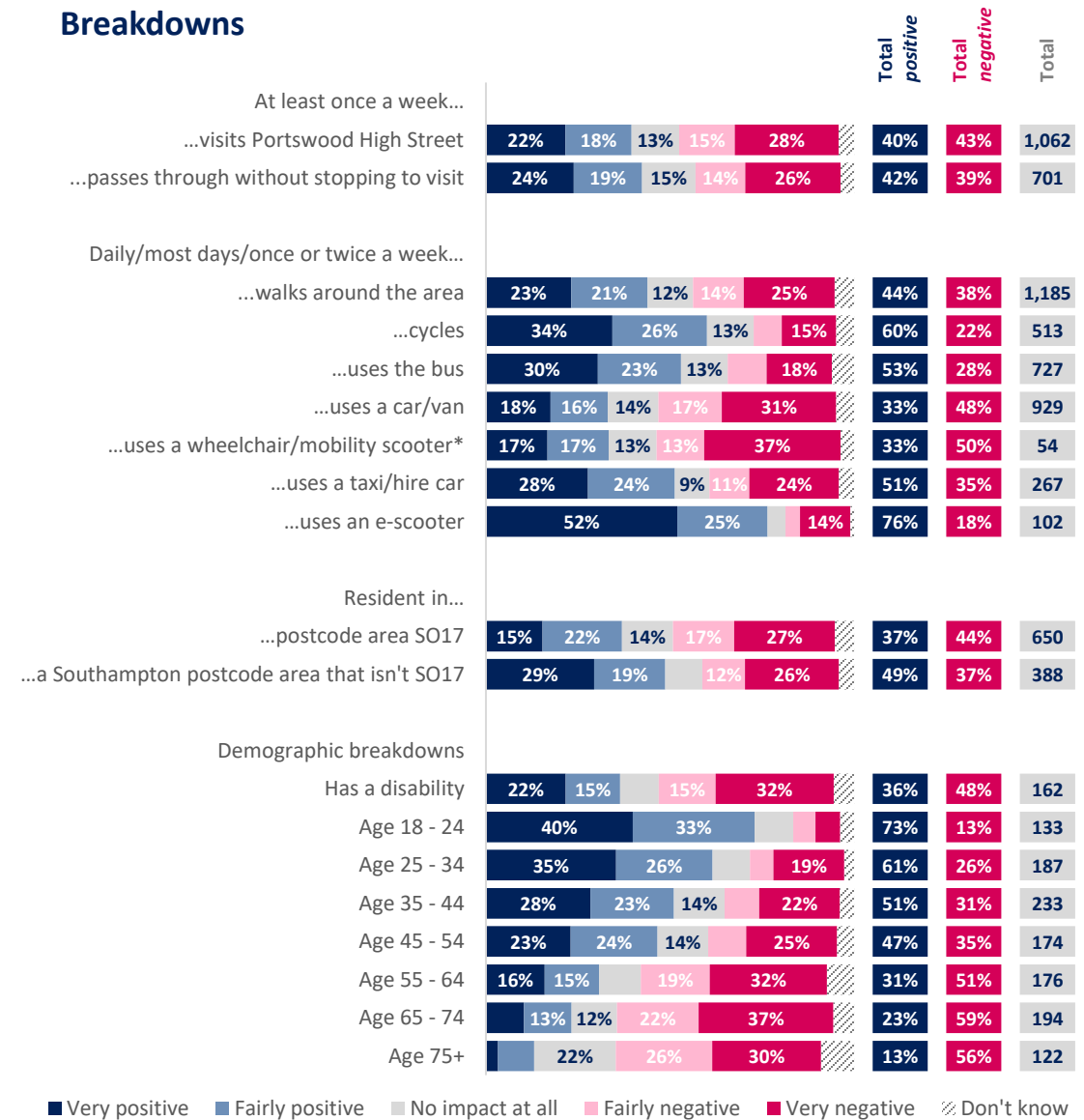
Question 1b | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Visitor numbers to Portswood High Street* **Responses | 1,332**



Key findings

- Responses overall were split evenly between *positive* and *negative* sentiment (41% each)
- As with the previous question, users of cycles, buses and e-scooters responded *positive* more than 50%, between 53% and 76%, with users of e-scooters also responding 52% *very positive*
- Car users and respondents that use wheelchairs or mobility scooters responded *negative impact* between 48% and 50%
- Residents of SO17 responded *negative impact* 7% points more than *positive impact* 44% to 37%; residents elsewhere in Southampton responded 49% *positive* and 37% *negative*
- Again, the percentage of respondents that responded *positive impact* decreases moving up the age brackets, from 73% of those aged 18 – 24 to 13% of those aged 75 or older

Breakdowns

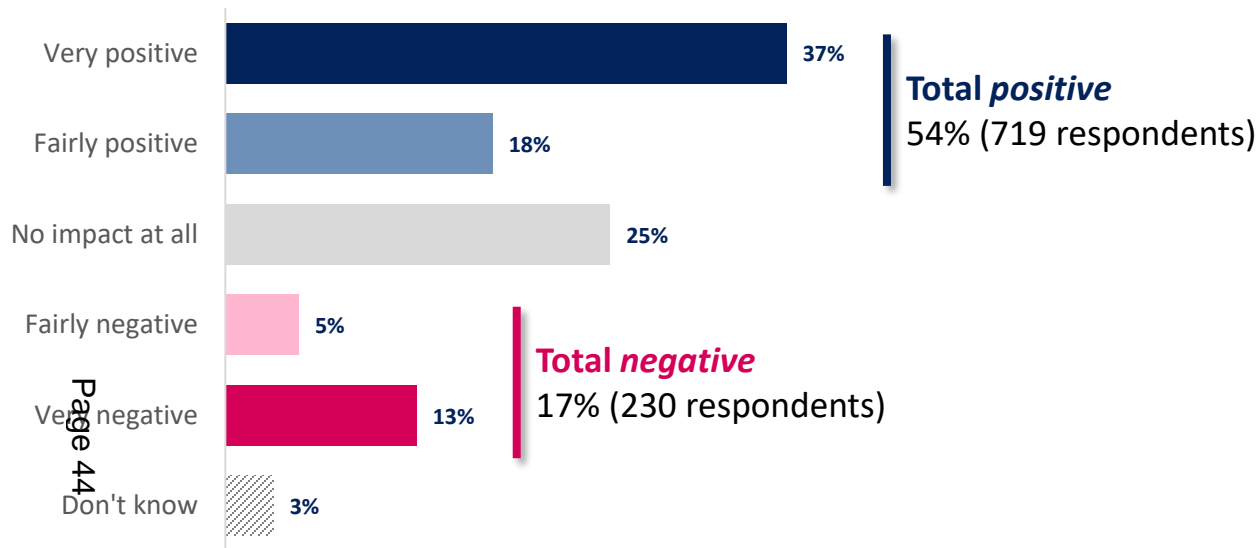


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 1c | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Ease of travelling more sustainably*

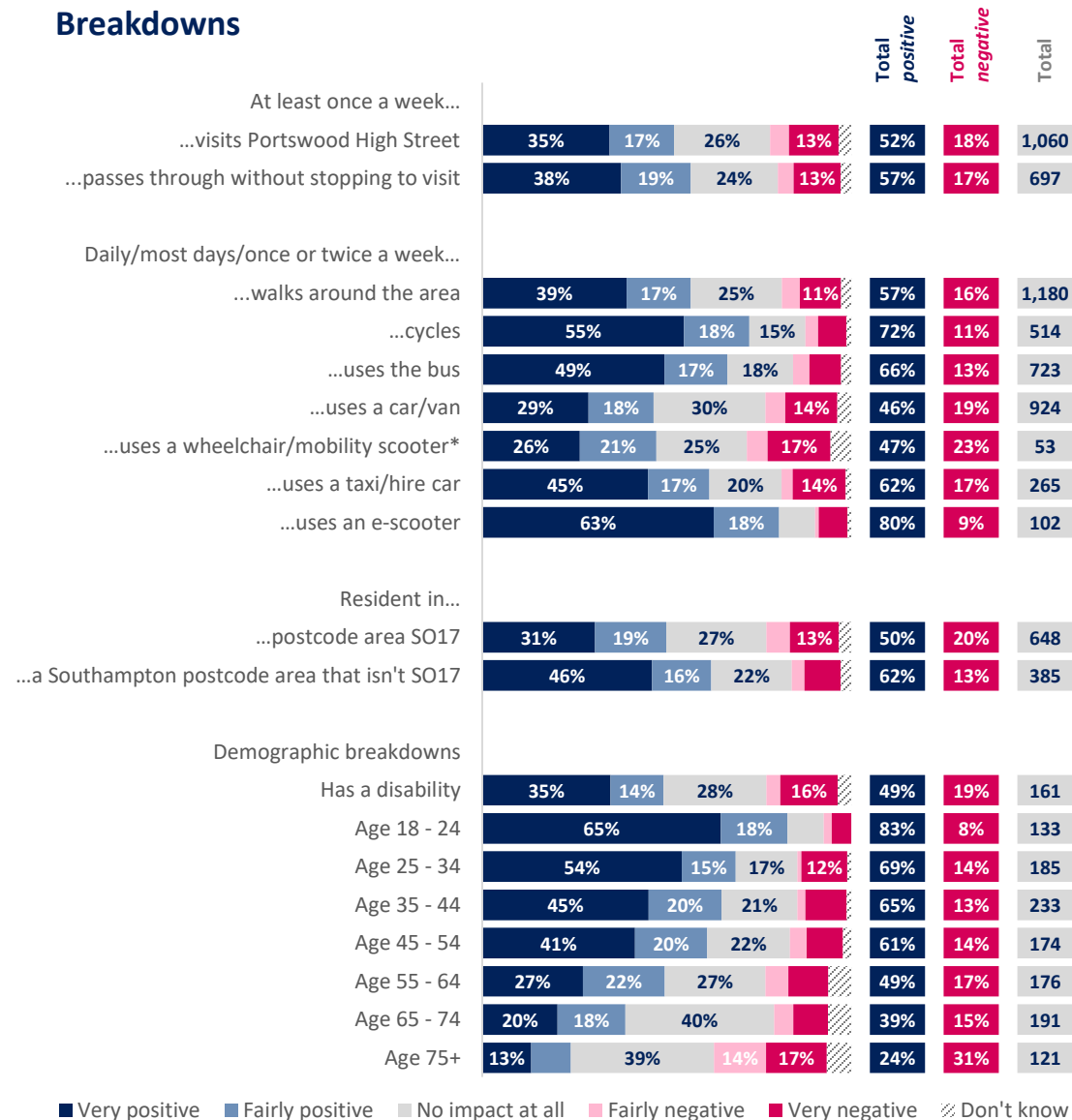
Responses | 1,325



Key findings

- Respondents overall responded *positive* at 54% and *negative* at 17%, with *no impact* selected to a greater extent than *negative impact* at 25%
- Of transport-related breakdowns, all said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on travelling more sustainably by 50% or more, apart from car users, who responded 46% *positive* and 19% *negative* impact, and wheelchair/mobility scooter users, who responded 47% *positive* and 23% *negative*
- Again, as with previous questions, *positive* responses decrease moving up the age brackets from 83% of those aged 18 – 24 to 24% of those aged 75 or older

Breakdowns

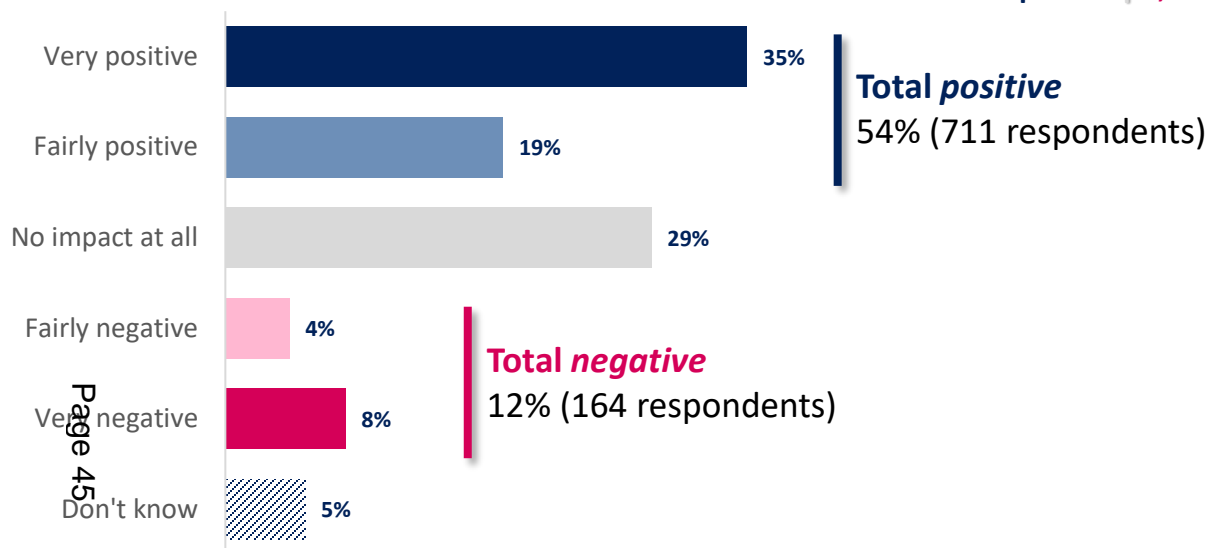


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 1d | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Experience for bus passengers travelling to and from Portswood High Street*

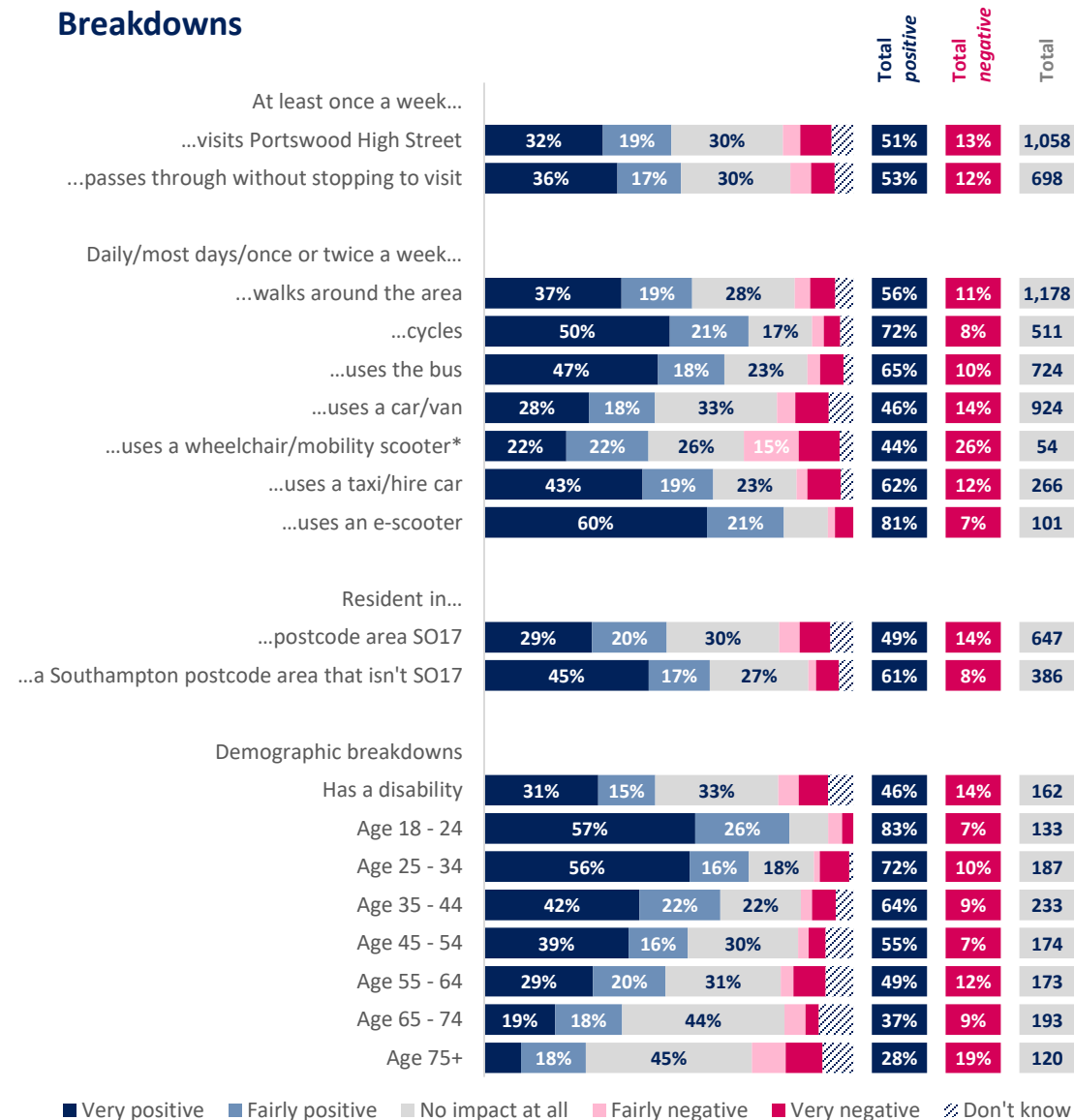
Responses | 1,325



Key findings

- Respondents overall responded *positive* at 54% and *negative* at 12%, with *no impact* selected to a greater extent than *negative impact* at 29%
- Of transport-related breakdowns, all said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on travelling more sustainably by 50% or more, apart from car users, who responded 46% *positive* and 14% *negative* impact, and wheelchair/mobility scooter users, who responded 44% *positive* and 26% *negative*
- Again, as with previous questions, *positive* responses decrease moving up the age brackets from 83% of those aged 18 – 24 to 28% of those aged 75 or older

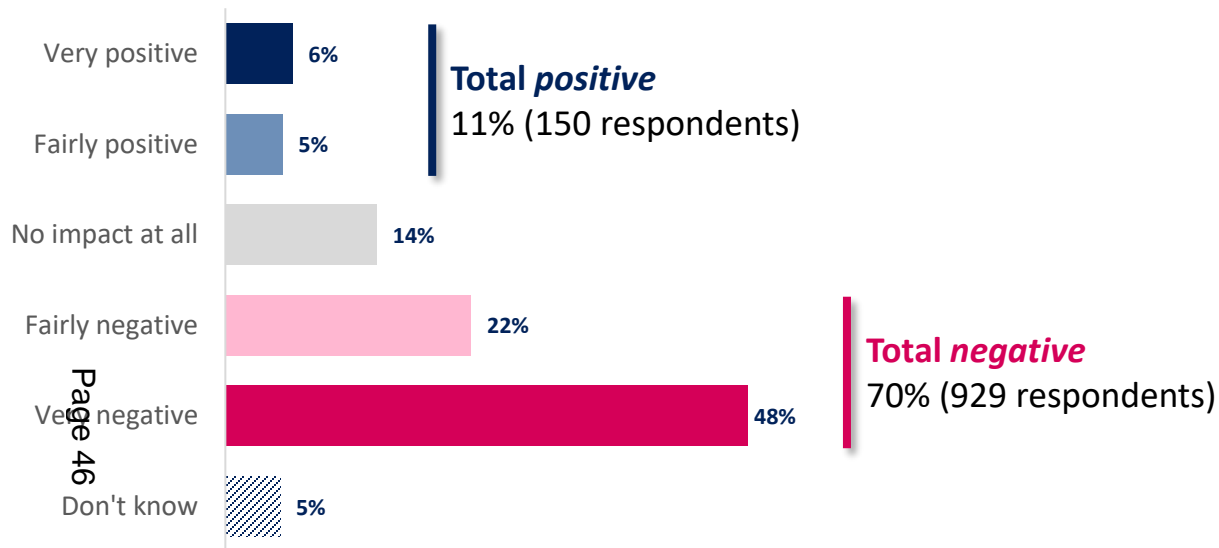
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



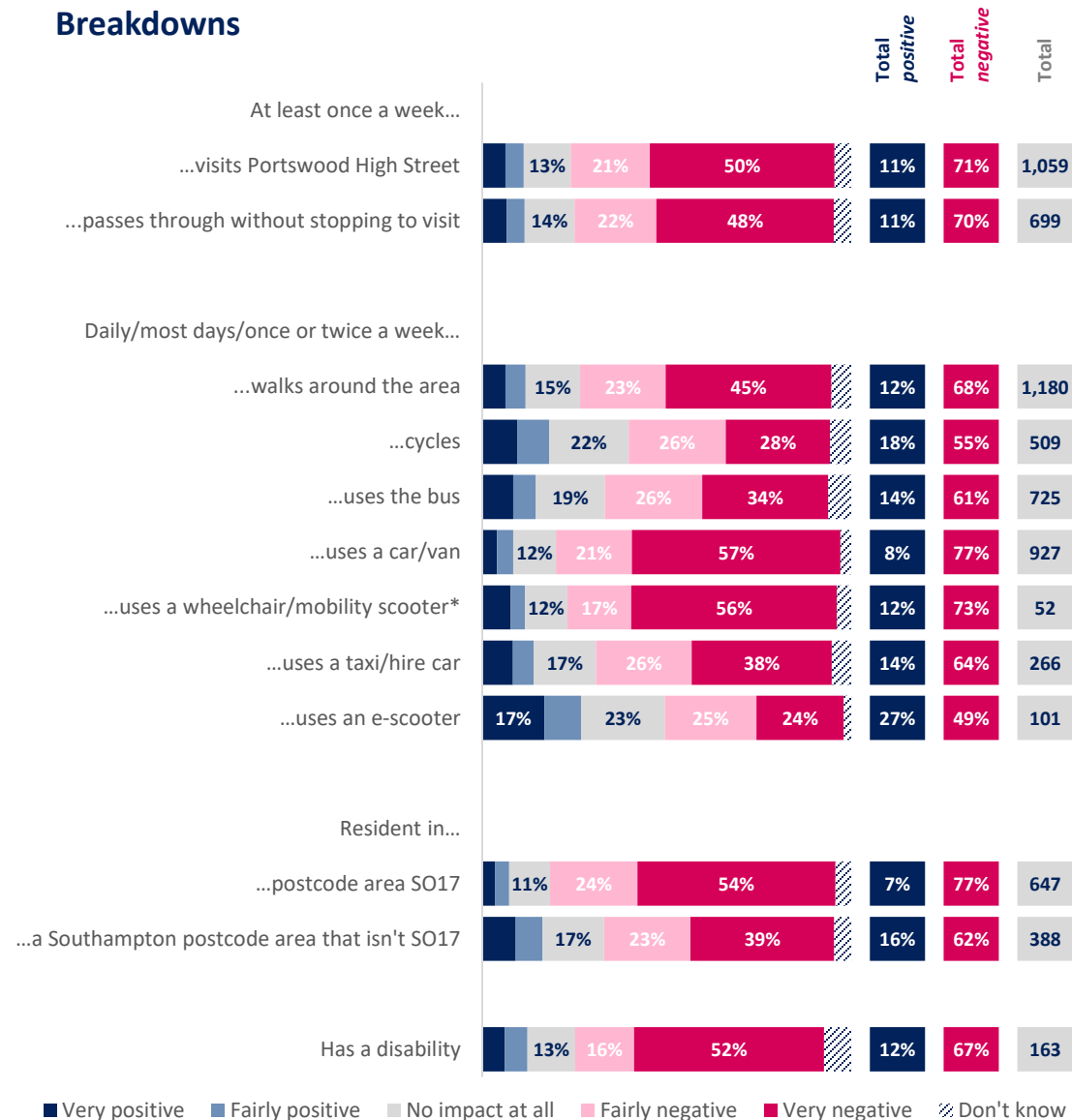
Question 1e | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Ease of travelling by car to and from Portswood High Street* Responses | 1,328



Key findings

- 70% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *negative impact* on travelling by car to and from Portswood High Street, including 48% that said it would have a *very negative impact*
- All breakdowns (apart from users of e-scooters) responded *negative impact* by more than 50%, with residents of SO17 responding *negative impact* at 77%; five breakdowns (visitors to Portswood, car users, mobility scooter/wheelchair users, SO17 residents and respondents with a disability) also responded *very negative impact* more than 50%

Breakdowns

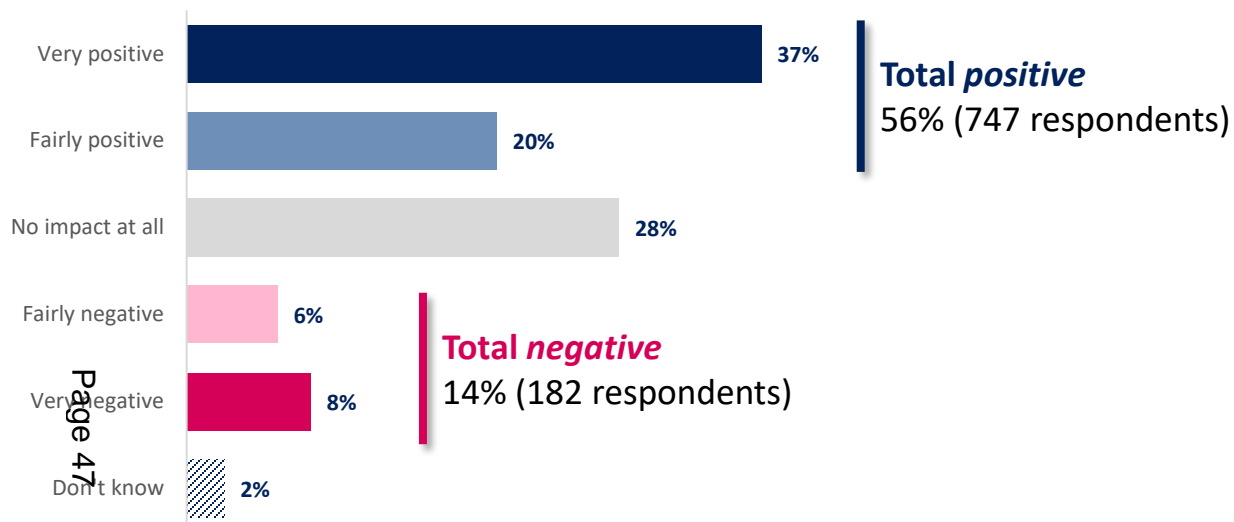


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 1f | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Safety of those walking and crossing roads on Portswood High Street*

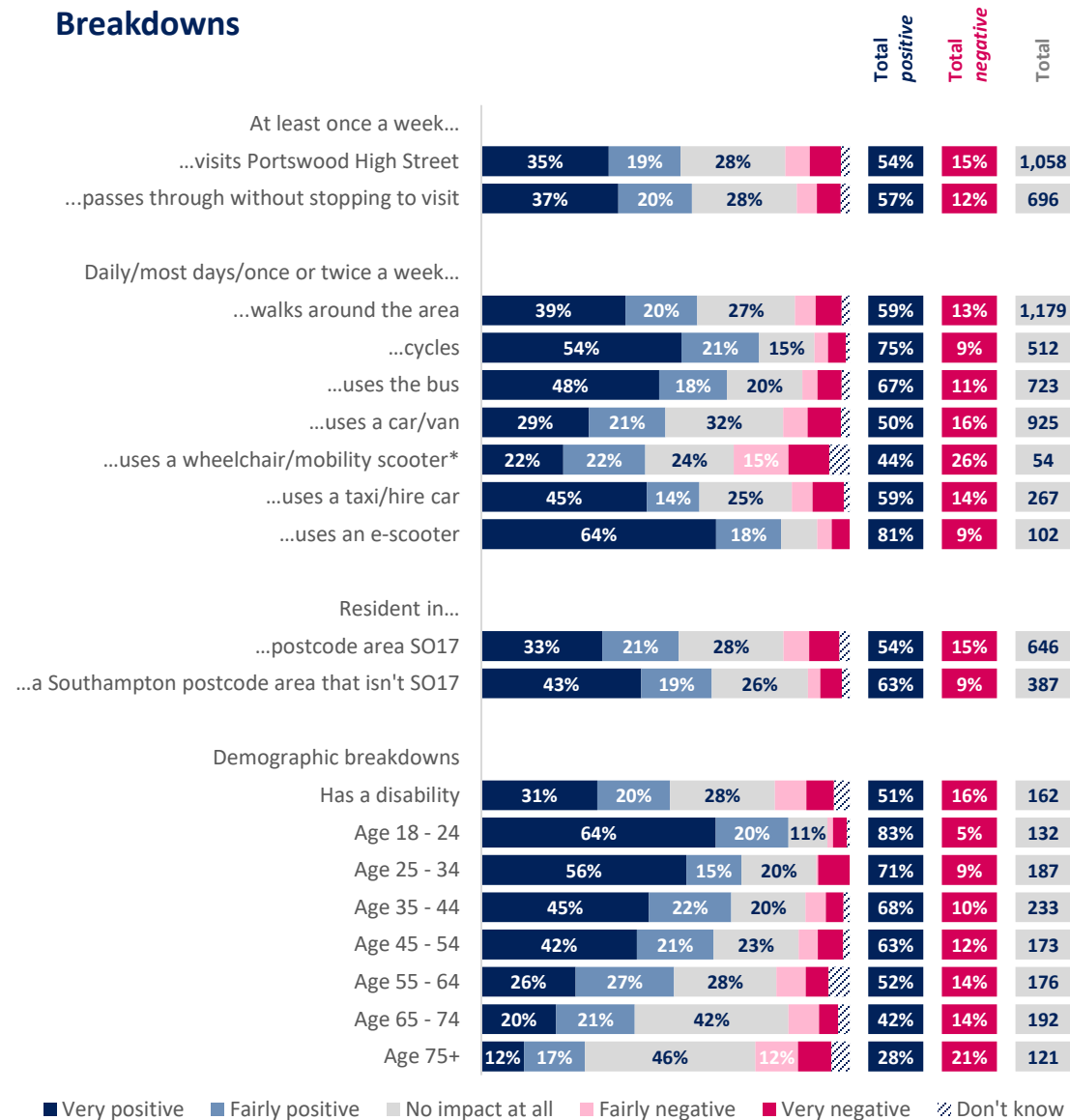
Responses | 1,326



Key findings

- 56% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive impact* on the safety of pedestrians on Portswood High Street, with 28% responding *no impact* and 14% responding *negative impact*
- All transport-related breakdowns responded *positive impact* by 50% or more, including cyclists and e-scooter users responding 50% or more *very positive*, apart from wheelchair and mobility scooter users, who responded 44% *positive impact*, 22% points more than those in the same breakdown that responded *negative impact* (26%)
- Again, as with previous questions, *positive* responses decrease moving up the age brackets from 83% of those aged 18 – 24 to 28% of those aged 75 or older

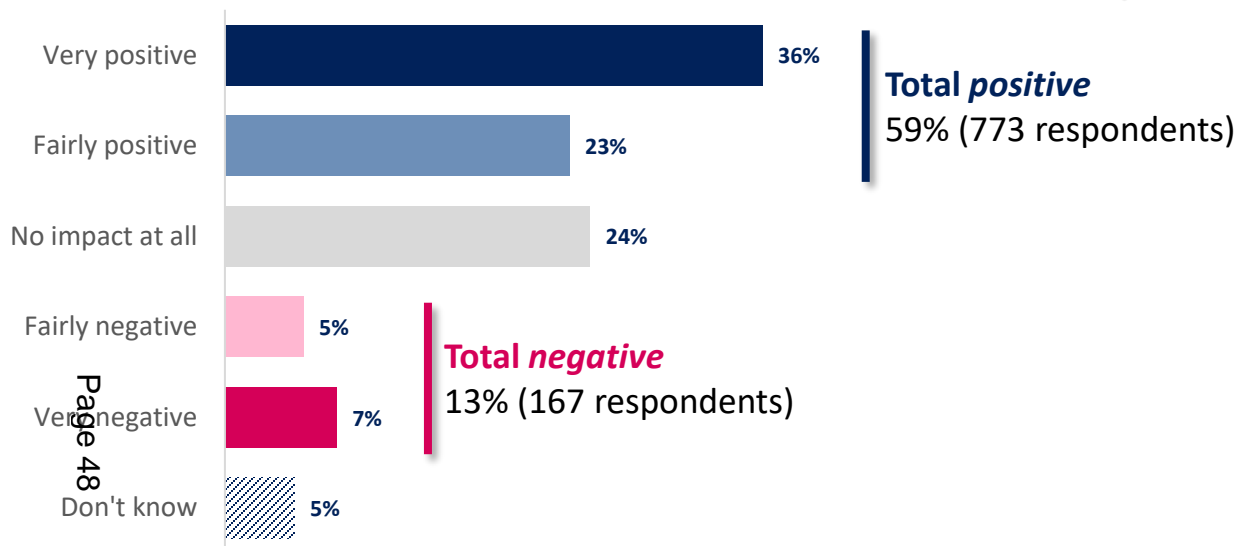
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.

Question 1g | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Safety of those walking and crossing roads on Portswood High Street*

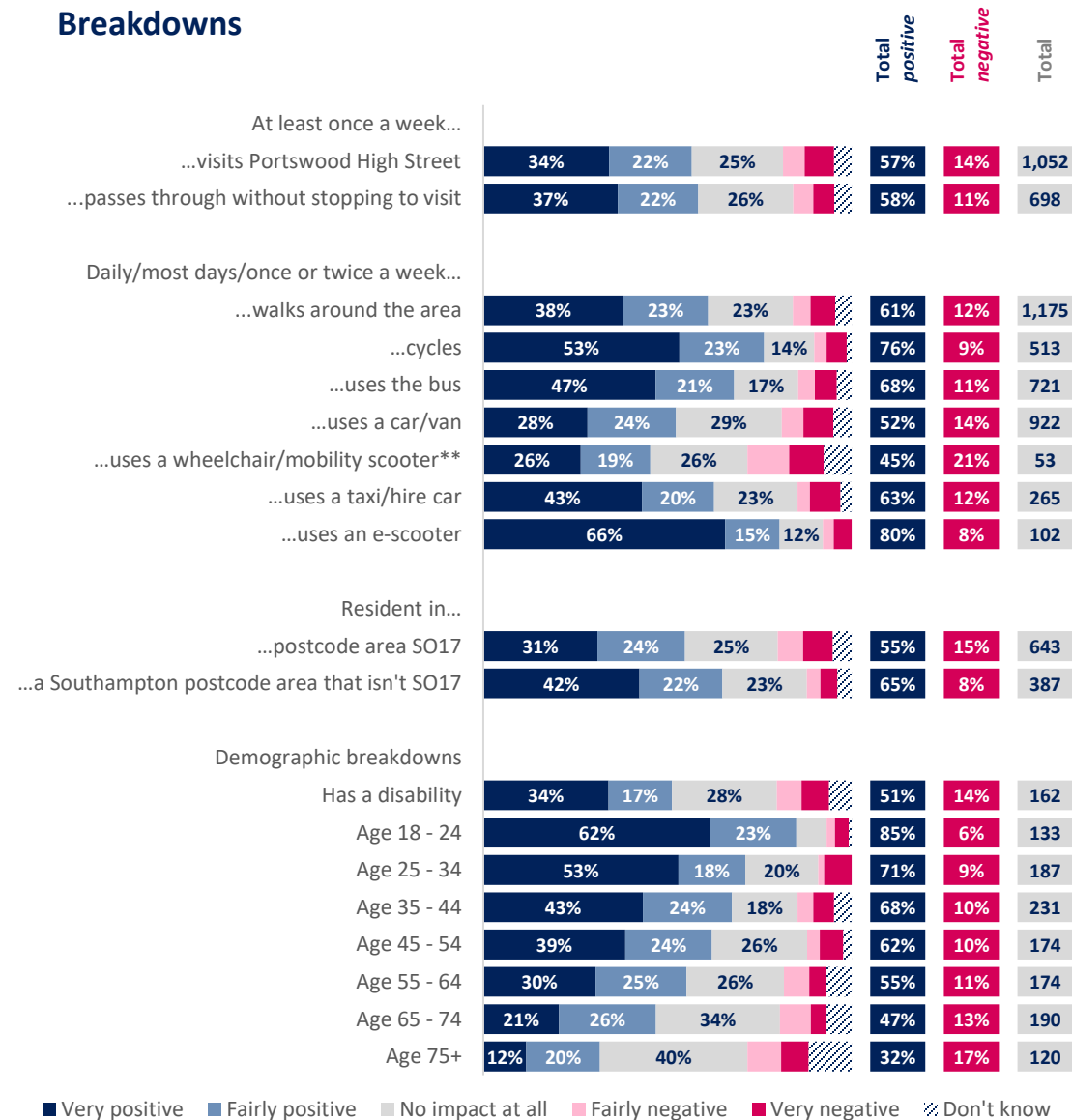
Responses | 1,321



Key findings

- 59% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive impact* on the safety of cyclists on Portswood High Street, with 24% responding *no impact* and 13% responding *negative impact*
- Again, all transport-related breakdowns responded *positive impact* by 50% or more, including cyclists and e-scooter users responding 50% or more *very positive*, apart from wheelchair and mobility scooter users, who responded 45% *positive impact*
- Again, as with previous questions, *positive* responses decrease moving up the age brackets from 85% of those aged 18 – 24 to 32% of those aged 75 or older

Breakdowns



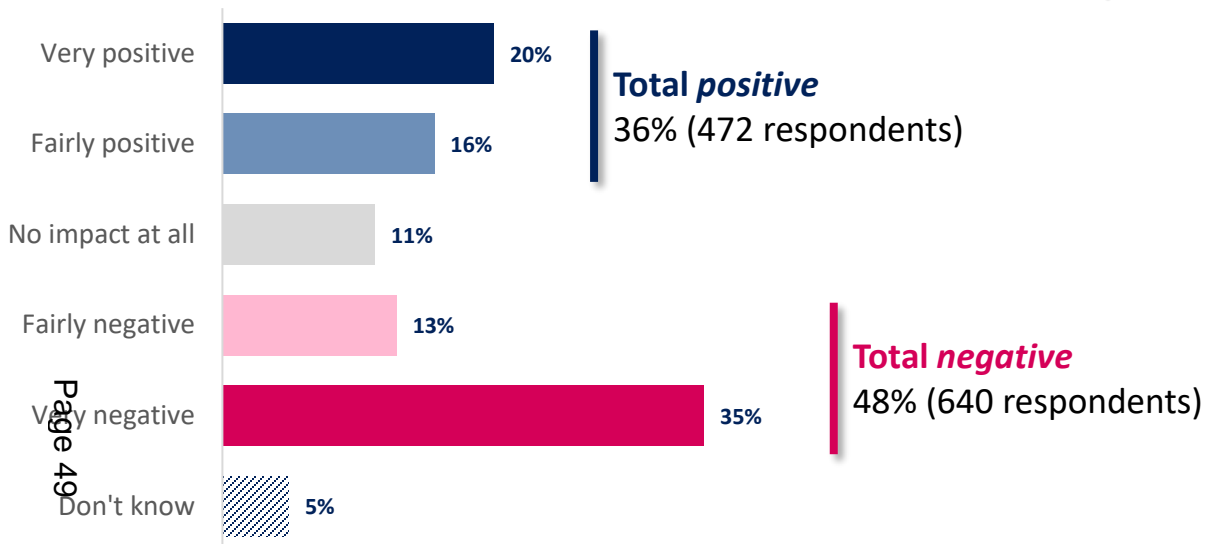
*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Overall experience of travelling across the city for all road users

Question 1h | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? Overall experience of travelling across the city for all road users

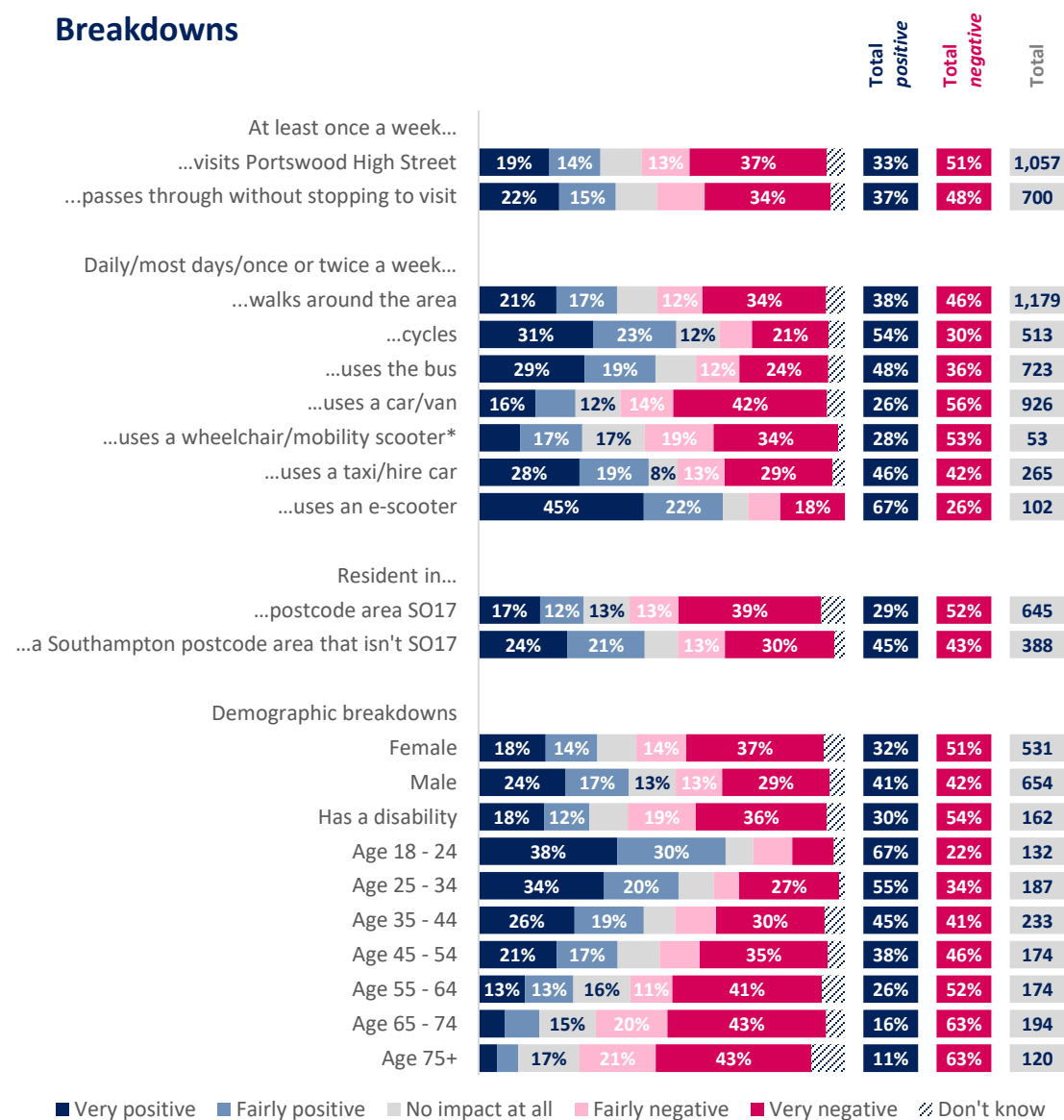
Responses | 1,326



Key findings

- 48% of respondents overall said that the proposals would negatively impact the experience of travelling across the city, compared to 36% that said they would have a positive impact
- Those that regularly cycle and use e-scooters responded positive impact by more than 50%, whereas car users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters responded negative impact by 50% or more
- Residents with an SO17 postcode responded negative impact at 52%, 9% points more than those in other areas of the city at 43% negative, who were also more evenly split between positive and negative responses 45% and 43%, compared to respondents in SO17 at 31% and 56%
- As with previous questions, positive responses decrease moving up the age brackets from 67% of those aged 18 – 24 to 11% of those aged 75 or older
- Female respondents responded negative impact at 51%, 9% points more than male respondents at 42%

Breakdowns

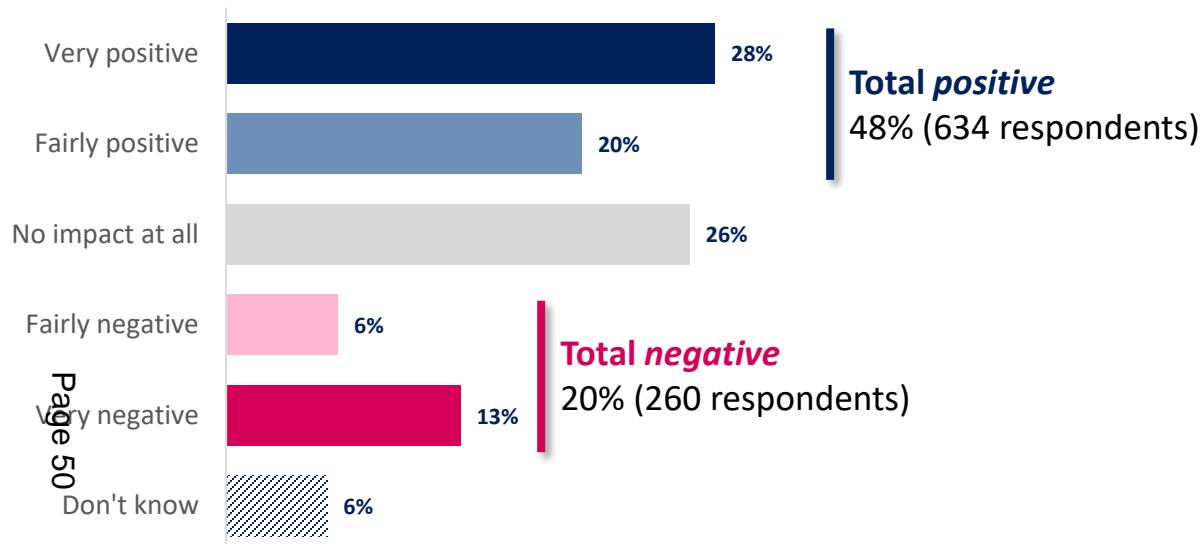


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 1i | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Air quality*

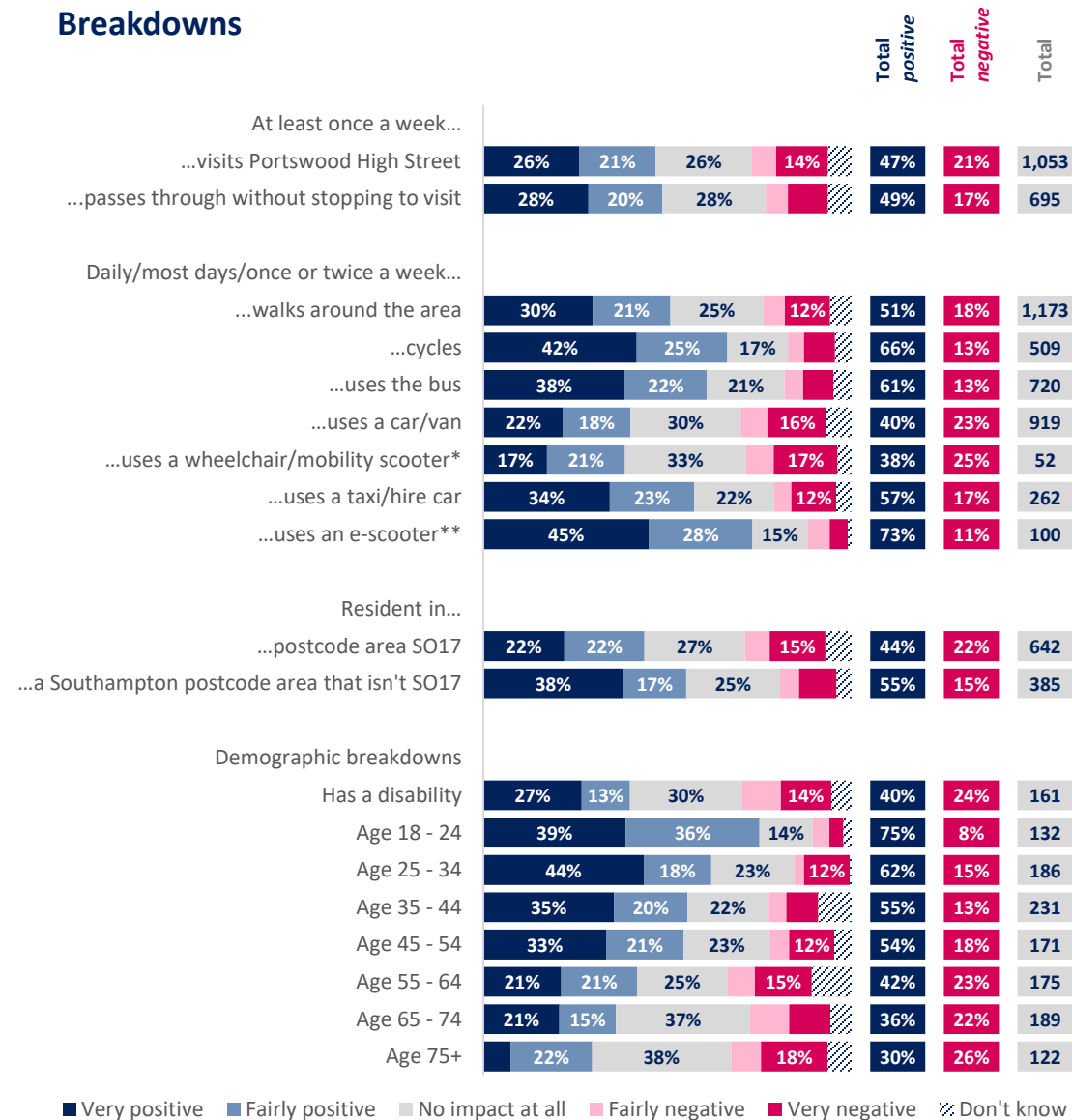
Responses | **1,318**



Key findings

- 48% of respondents overall said that the proposals would negatively impact air quality in the city, compared to 20% that said they would have a *positive* impact on air quality, with more respondents saying that the proposals would have no impact at all (26%) than said they would have a *negative* impact
- All transport-related breakdowns responded *positive impact* by more than 50% apart from car users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters, who both responded 38% - 40% *positive* and 23% - 25% *negative*
- Residents with an SO17 postcode responded *positive impact* 11% points less than residents elsewhere in the city 44% to 55%, although the former still responded positively to a greater extent than negatively, 44% to 22%
- As with previous questions, positive responses decrease moving up the age brackets from 75% of those aged 18 – 24 to 30% of those aged 75 or older

Breakdowns

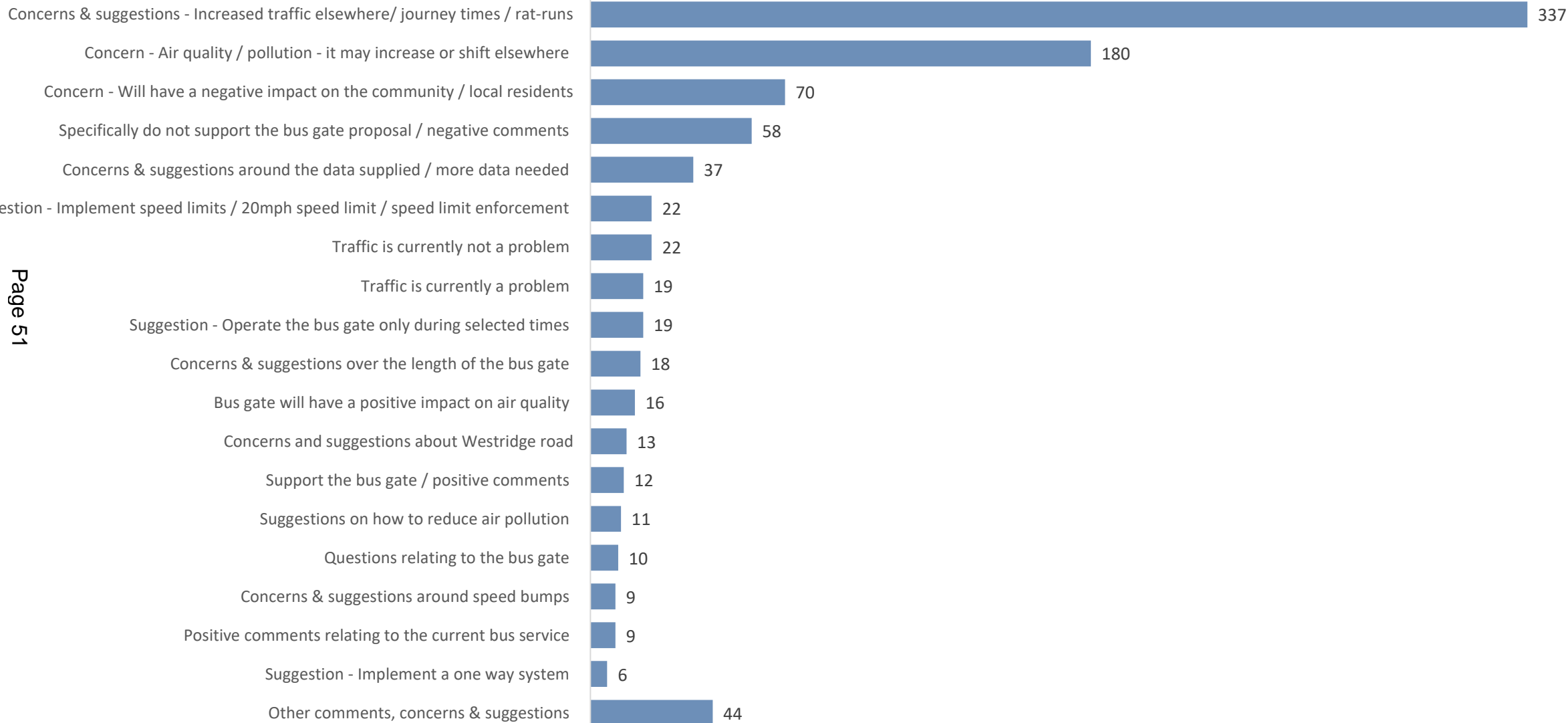


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Portswood Broadway – Specifically Bus gate

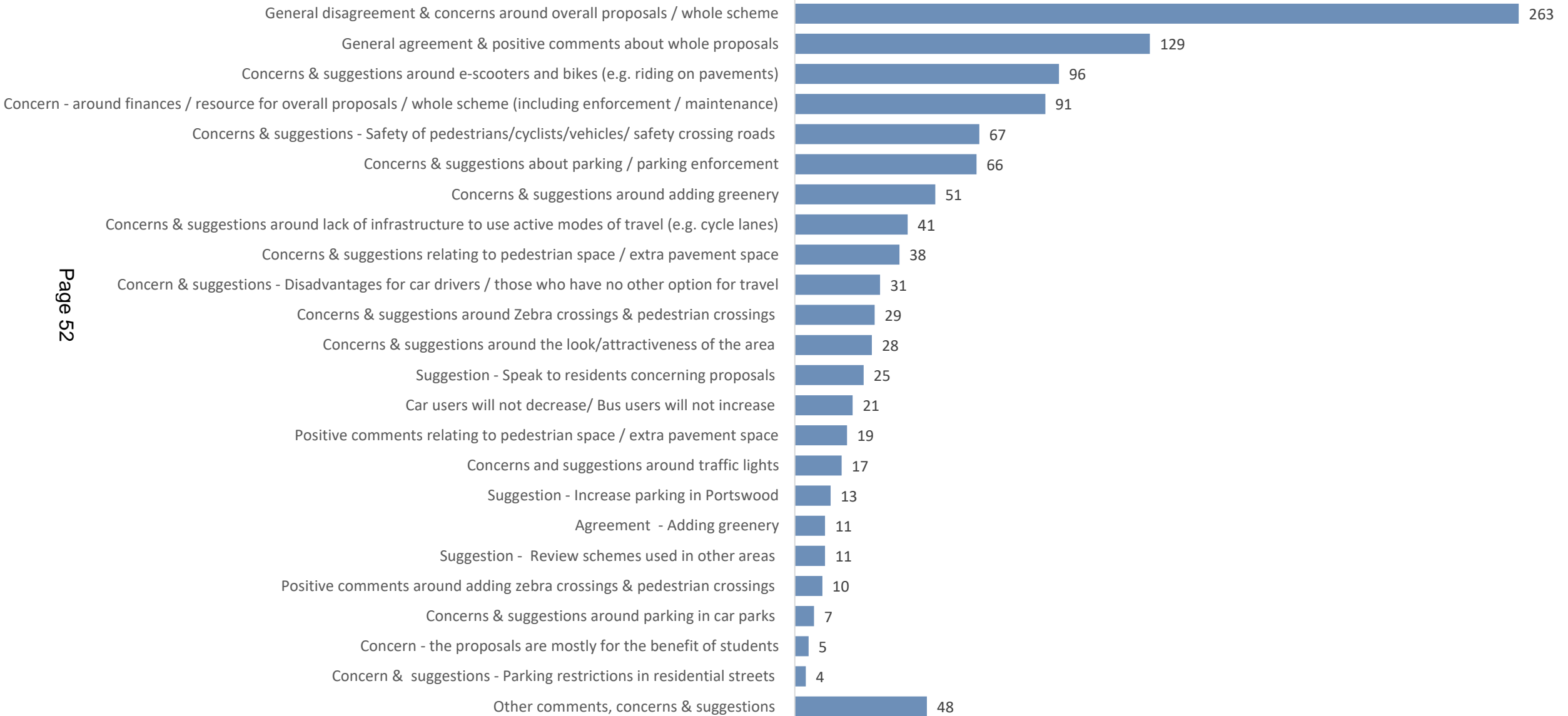
Total free text comments





Portswood Broadway proposals – more generally

Total free text comments





“We are currently investigating the phased introduction of the bus gate should the proposals move forward. We would also be able to provide temporary additional paving along the Broadway to provide the extra pedestrian space the bus gate would allow us to install.

It is important to know that during a phased approach of this scheme we would not be able to provide any of the additional green space initially and it would be added over a longer time frame.”

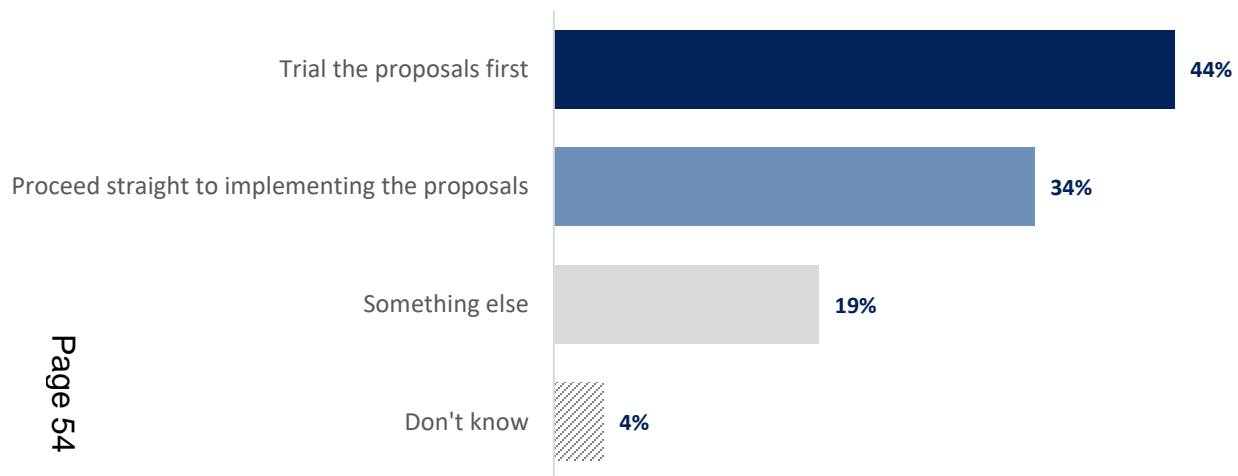
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Question 3 | If plans were approved, which of the following would you prefer?

Responses | 1,282

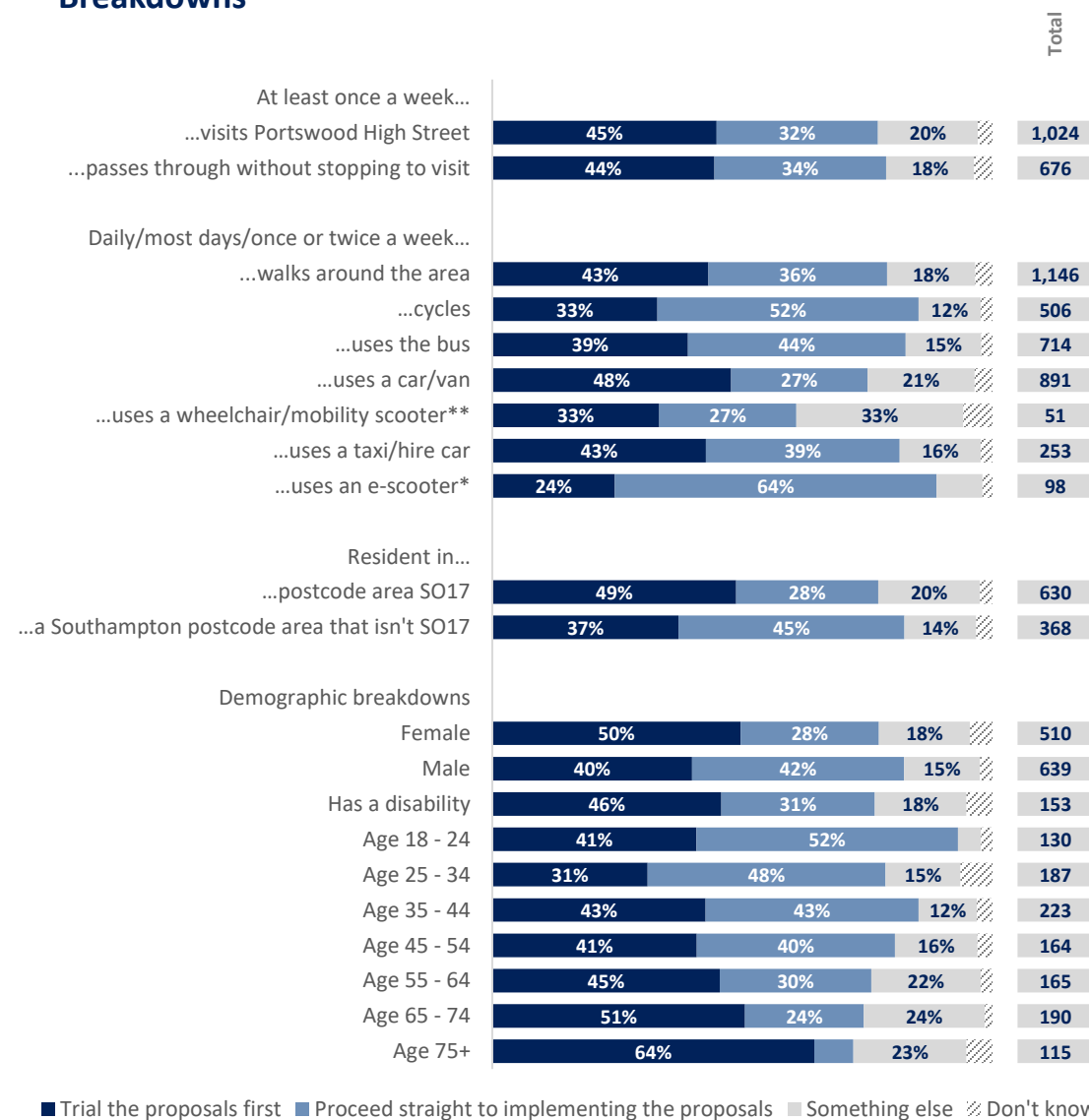


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Key findings

- 44% of respondents overall said that the proposals should be trialled first, including 49% of respondents with an SO17 postcode
- Similar to previous questions, responses change as you move up the age brackets: 41% of 18 – 24 year-olds said the proposals should be trialled first, up to 64% of over-75s: inversely, 52% of 18 – 24 year-olds said the proposals should be implemented straight away, down to 8% of those aged 75 or older
- Female respondents said the proposals should be trialled 10% points more than male, 50% to 40%, with men saying the proposals should be implemented straight away (if approved) to a greater extent than saying they should be trialled first (42% to 40%)
- Users of bicycles and e-scooters said the proposals should be implemented straight away if approved 52% and 64% respectively; car users said that the proposals should be trialled first to the greatest extent at 48%

Breakdowns

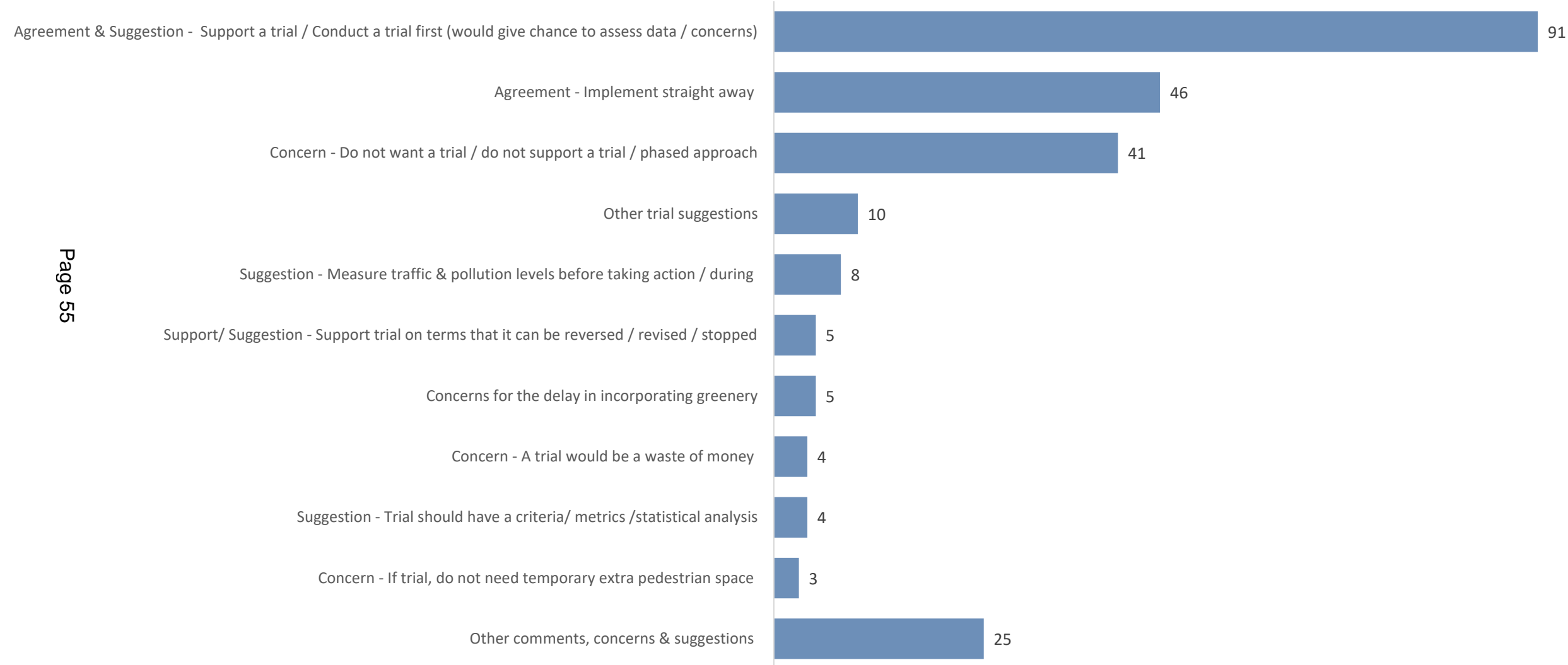


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Portswood Broadway - Phased implementation

Total free text comments



“One of the key concerns raised by residents was about the economic impact on local businesses of a bus-only zone on a section of [Portswood] Broadway. To address these concerns and measure their impact, we commissioned an independent Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) to look more specifically at the impact [a bus-only zone] would have on the Portswood area. The full report is available online at transport.southampton.gov.uk/portswood.

This assessment has been based on and follows the principles set out in the HM Treasury Green Book. Key findings from the initial assessment include:

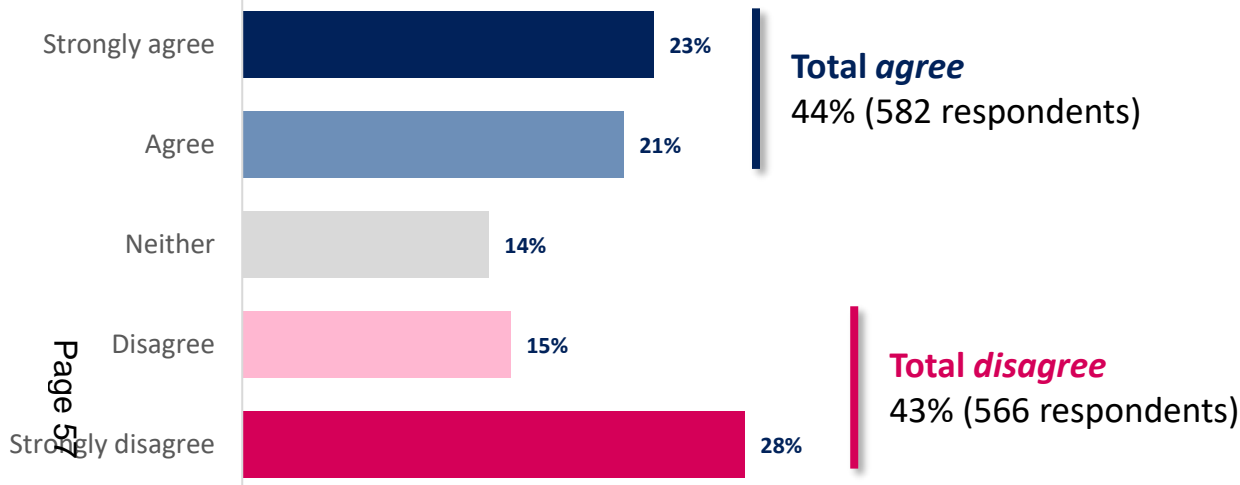
- **The Portswood Project scheme will generate around £8 for every £1 of investment.** The long-term economic benefits to the Southampton economy, through uplift in sales and increased employment opportunities, support the Southampton Pound objective of community wealth building.
- **An additional 30 full-time-equivalent (FTE) jobs.** The proposals are predicted to generate additional jobs on the Broadway as the consumer benefits from increased trading space and longer opening hours to attract more people.
- **An additional £32,705,000 Gross Value Added (GVA) to the local economy over 10 years.** This is due to the increased footfall compared with if the scheme was not implemented.
- **A 5% uplift in trade.** Businesses trading in retail, leisure, food services and other business services could expect a 5% uplift in trade from the additional footway space and improvements bringing more people to the area.

We hope the EIA provides residents and businesses with some supporting information to help inform their responses to the Phase 2 consultation. We want to make sure that local businesses are fully supported as part of the second phase of this consultation - we will therefore focus on providing advice and guidance on how businesses can get the full benefit of the scheme should it go ahead, and continue to work with them on the specific concerns raised.”



Question 5 | To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have adequately assessed and provided sufficient information on the potential economic impact of the proposals?

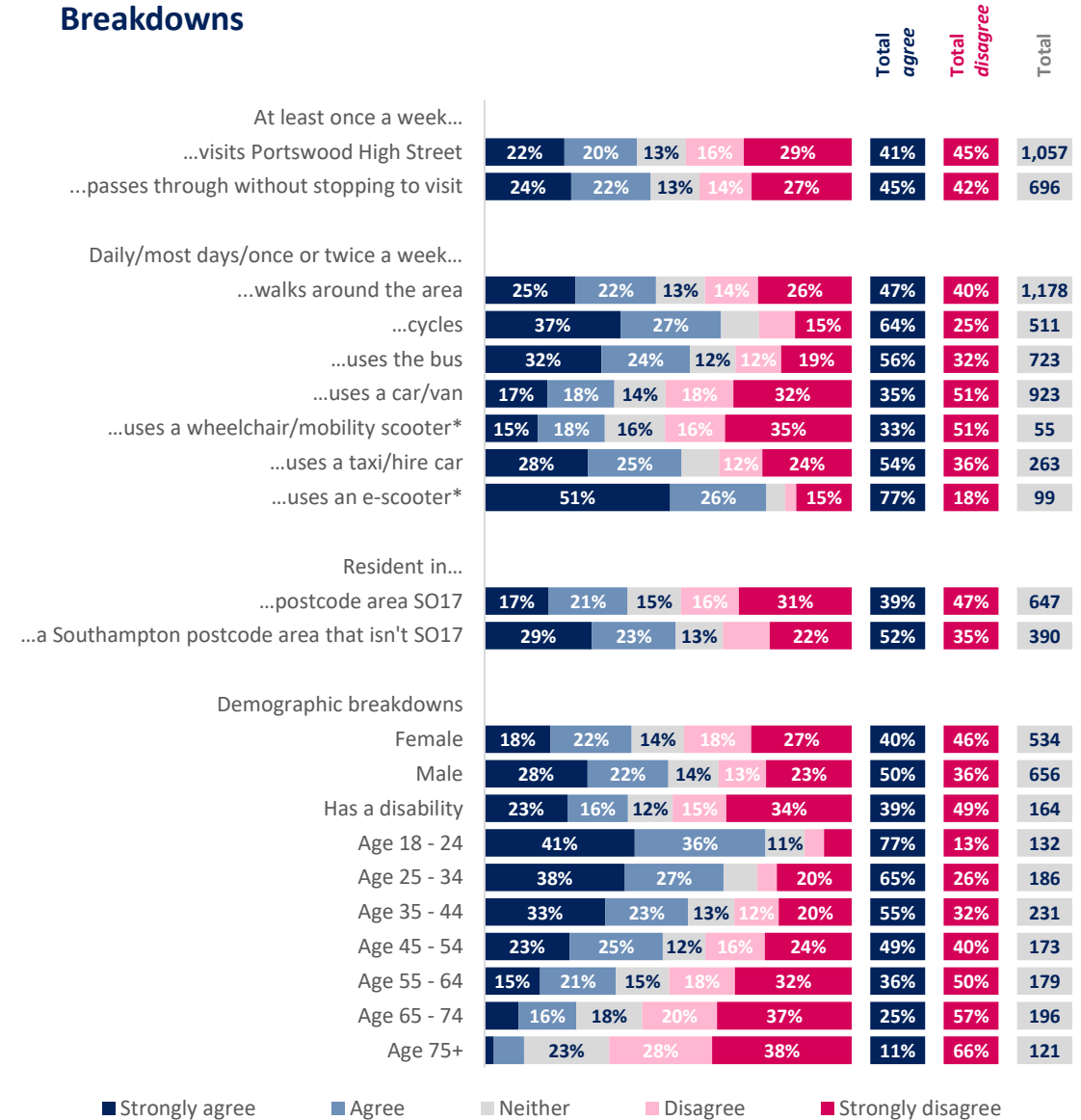
Responses | 1,329



Key findings

- Respondents were split on this question, with 44% saying that they *agreed* and 43% saying that they *disagreed*
- Cyclists, bus users, taxi users and respondents that use e-scooters responded *agree* by more than 50% each, where car users and those that use wheelchairs or mobility scooters *disagreed* at 51% each
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *agree* 13% points more than those in SO17, 52% to 39%
- Men responded *agree* 10% points more than women, 50% to 40% respectively, and disagreed 10% points less, 36% to 46%
- Again, respondents responded *agree* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 77% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *agree* and 11% of those aged 75 or older doing so (the inverse is also true: 13% of 18 – 24 year-olds *disagree*, 66% of those aged 75 or older *disagree*)

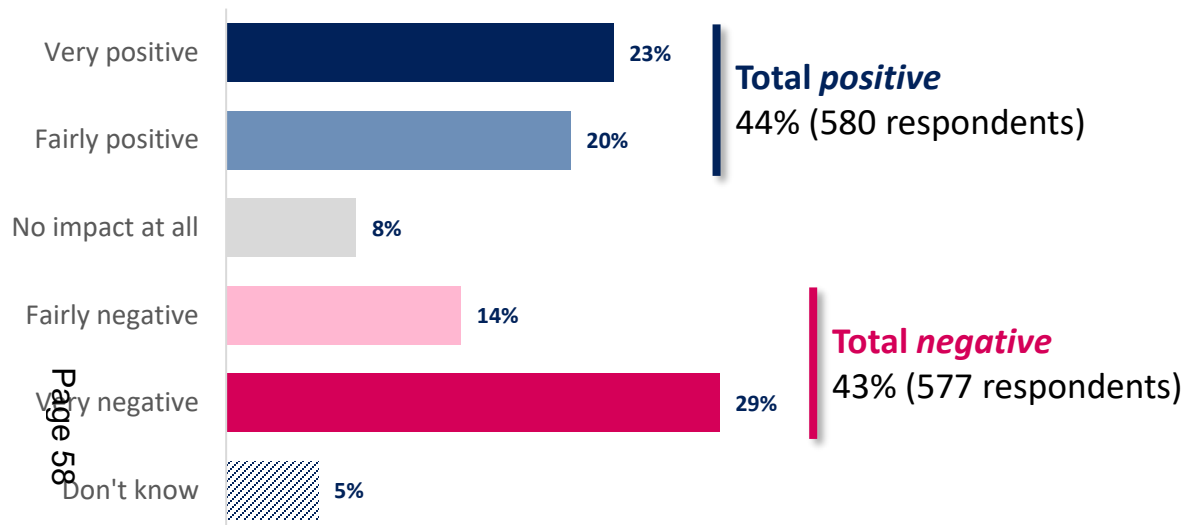
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



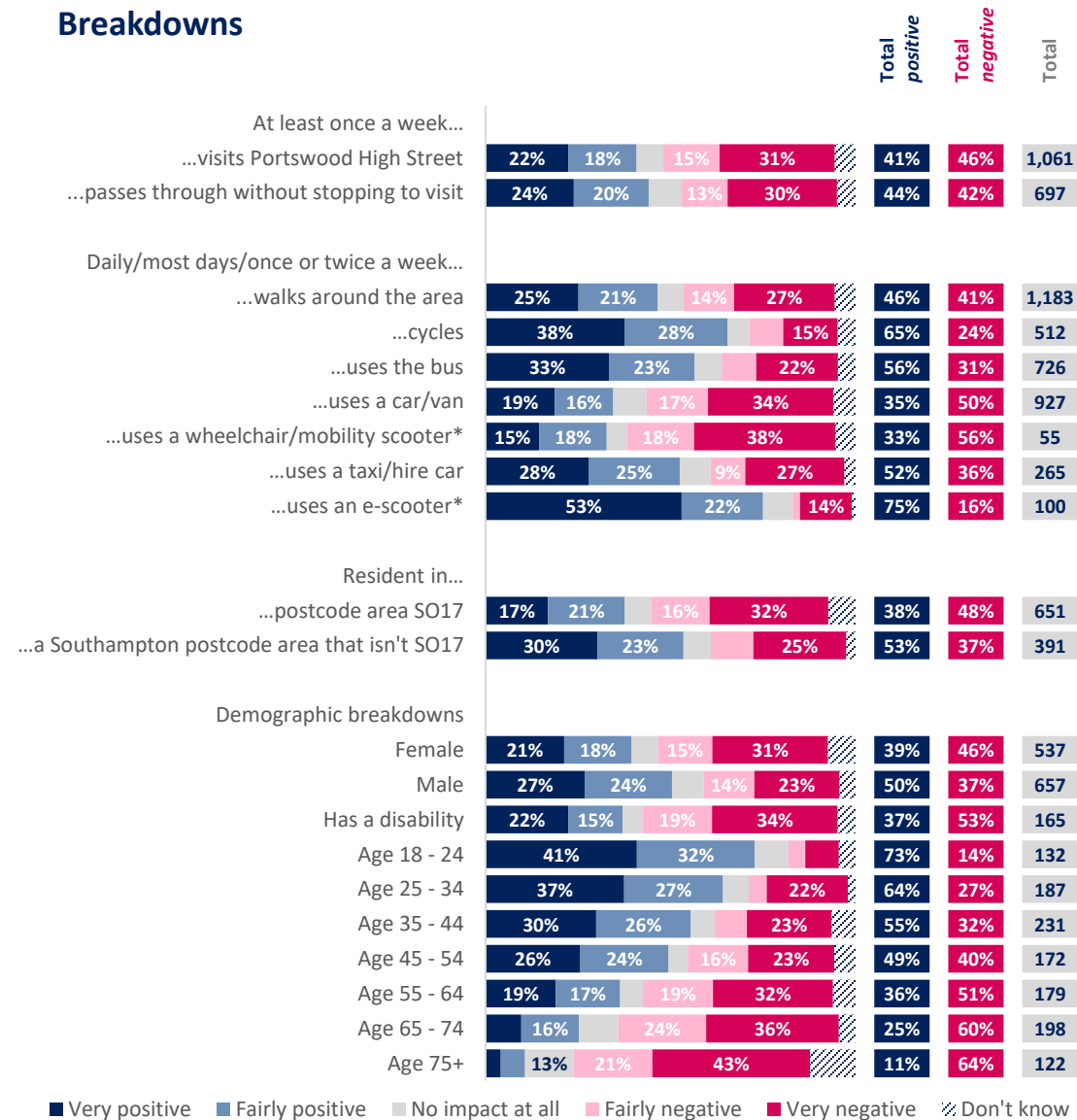
Question 6 | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the local economy? Responses | 1,333



Key findings

- Respondents said the proposals would have both a *positive* and a *negative* impact to a similar extent, at 44% and 43% of respondents overall respectively
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *positive* 15% points more than those in SO17, 53% to 38%, with the latter responding 52% *negative* impact
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 73% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 11% of those aged 75 or older doing so
- Men responded *positive* impact 11% points more than women, 50% to 39%, with female respondents responding 46% *negative* impact
- Cyclists, bus users, taxi and hire car users and respondents that use e-scooters all responded *positive* by more than 50%, with car users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters responding more than 50% *negative* impact

Breakdowns

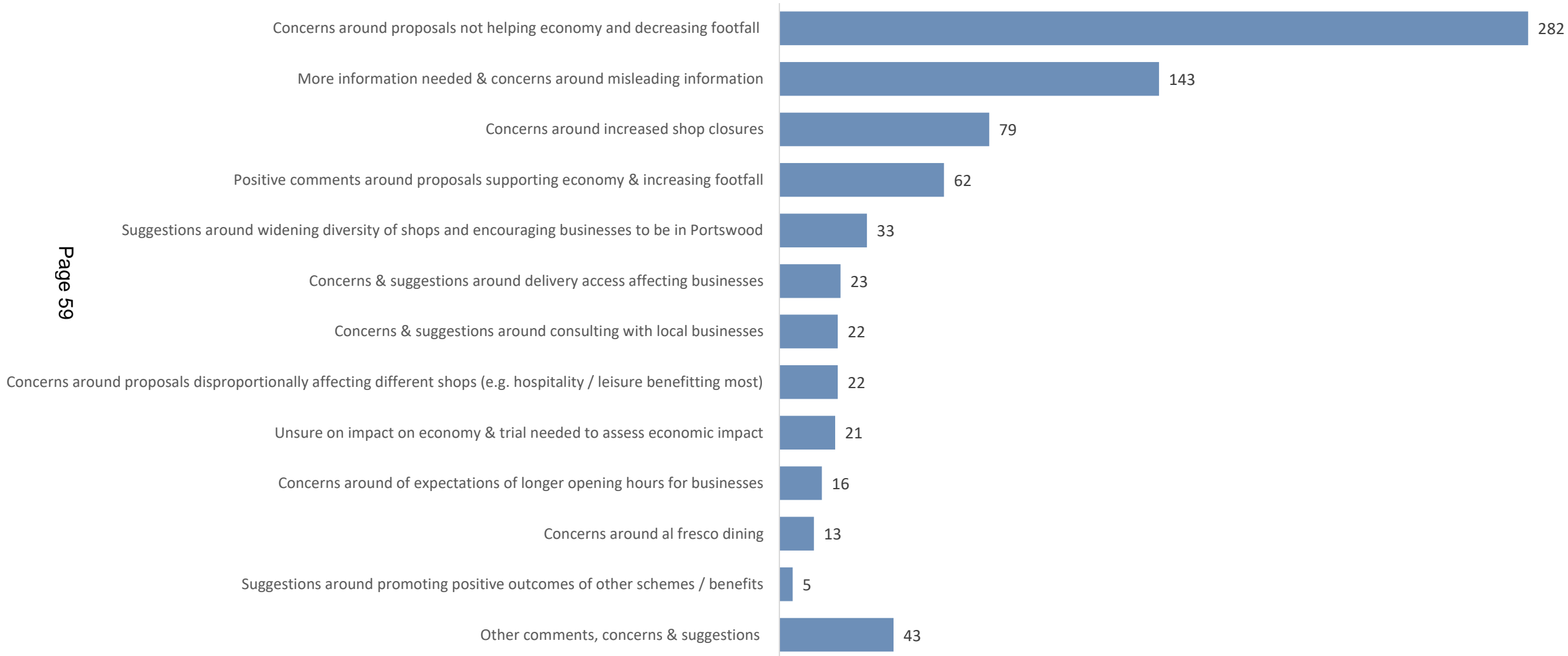


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Portswood Broadway - Economic impact

Total free text comments





“Access for people with mobility issues, especially those that have no alternative but to use their car, will also be improved with better pedestrian access into Westridge Road car park and more parking for people with disabilities around the area.

As part of the work on the Active Travel Zone, we would also include additional disabled compliant crossings and improve the condition of our footways.

There will be around seven additional benches along the Broadway for people to sit and rest, and hospitality businesses will be able to offer outdoor seating, where people can socialise with family and friends. The area will also be improved with dementia-friendly design principles being applied to the design of the future Broadway layout. Our new Accessibility Forum will play a crucial role in reviewing the scheme and the design detail.”

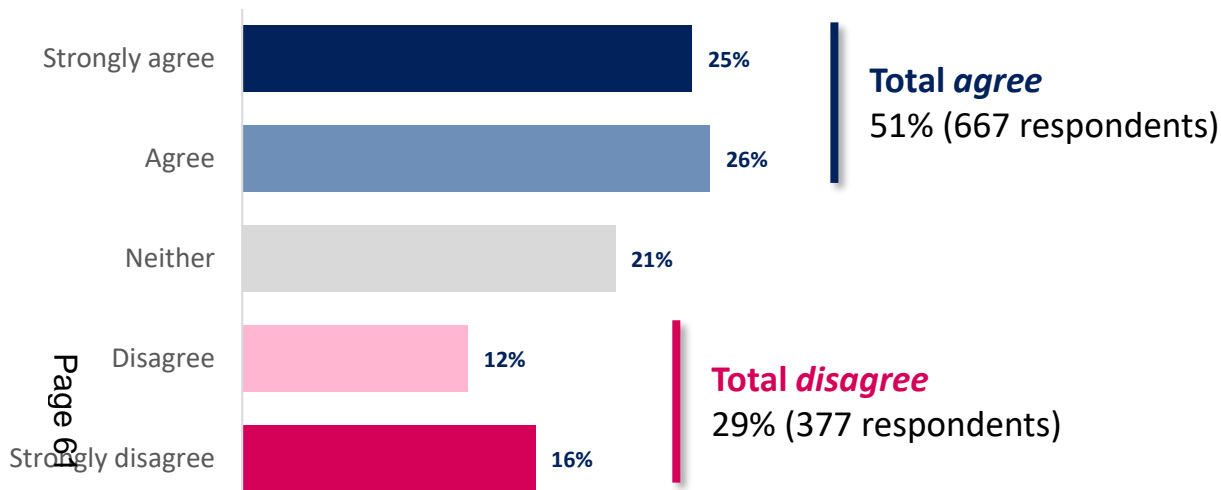
Page 60





Question 8 | To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have taken sufficient steps to maintain access for people with mobility issues and people with disabilities?

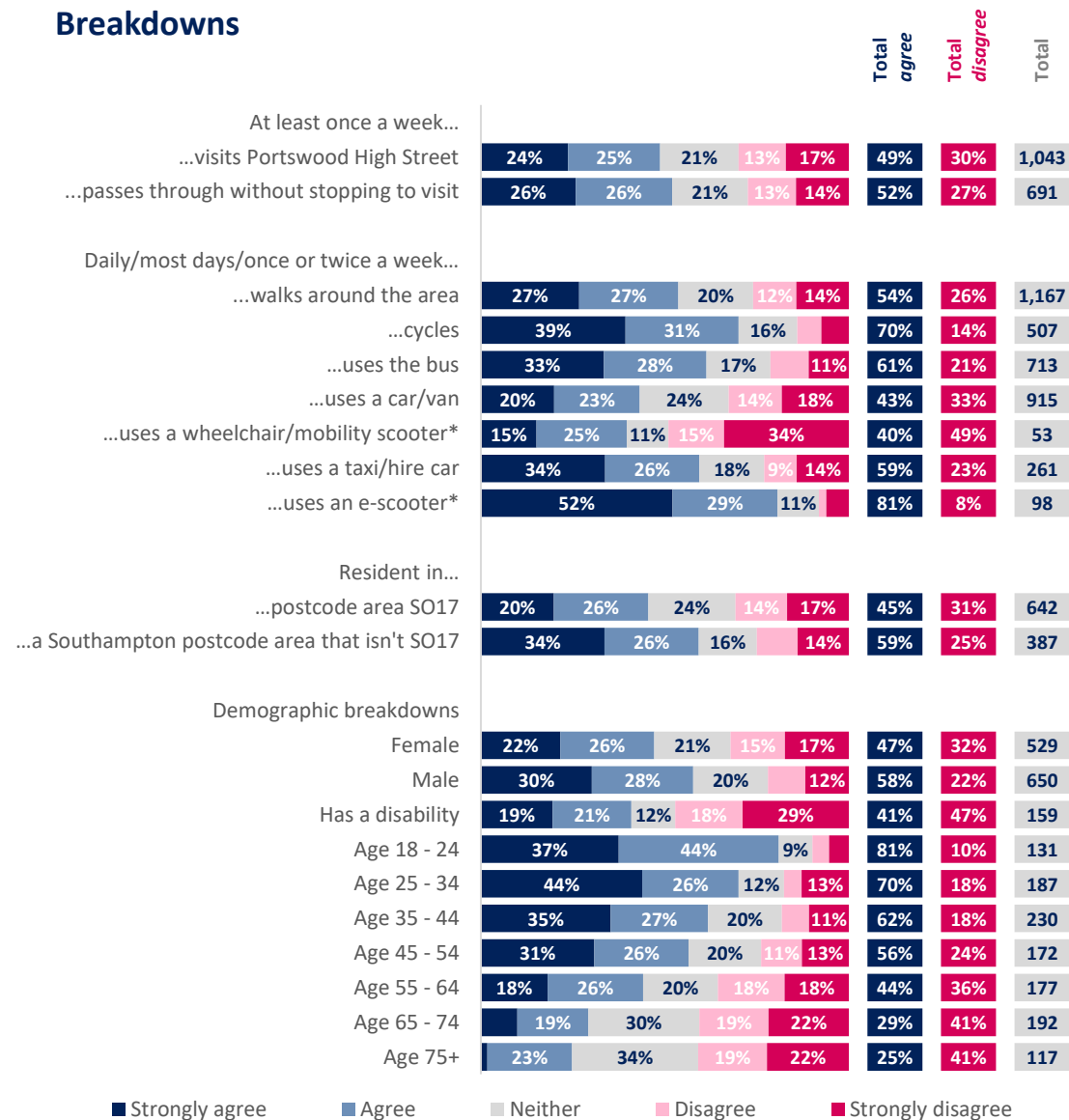
Responses | 1,315



Key findings

- 51% of respondents agreed that sufficient steps were taken to maintain access to Portswood High Street for people with mobility issues and/or disabilities
- Respondents that walk, cycle, bus, taxi or e-scooter *agreed* between 54% and 81%, whereas car/van users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters agreed between 40% and 43%, with the latter responding *disagree* to a greater extent than *agree*, 49% to 40%
- Residents of postcode SO17 *agreed* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 45% to 59%
- Men *agreed* to a greater extent than women 58% to 47%, and respondents with disabilities *disagreed* to a greater extent than *agreed*, 47% to 41%
- Respondents *agreed* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 81% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *agree* and 25% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

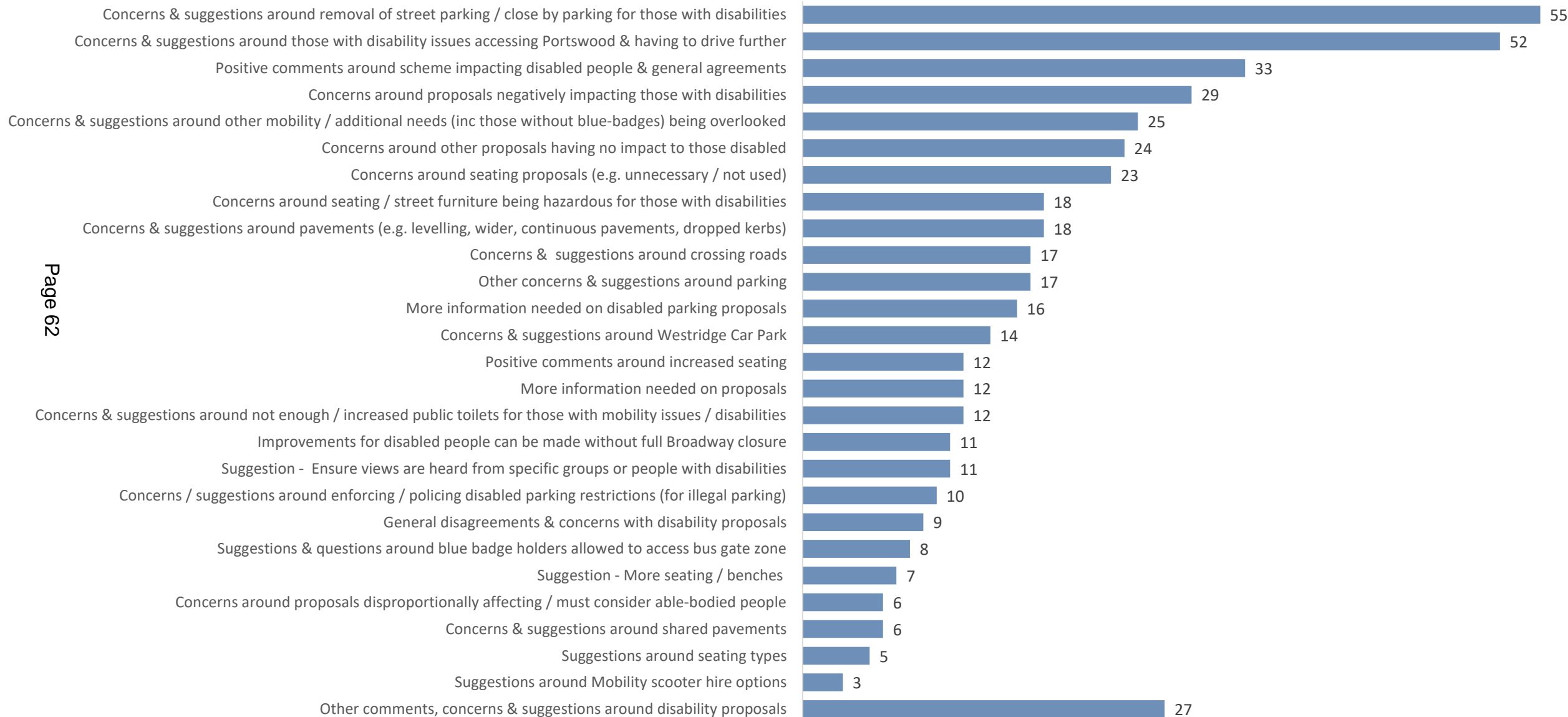


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Portswood Broadway - Mobility issues / disabilities

Total free text comments





“Crime and antisocial behaviour was a key concern raised in Phase 1 of the consultation and one we share. Local street drinking, assaults, theft and other crimes are something we all take very seriously.

The Council, in partnership with our local police officers, are working to ensure these proposals would help address these problems and make the Portswood area safer for us all to enjoy. These proposals would allow us to:

- Provide additional CCTV along the Broadway, helping the police to gather evidence and monitor crimes;
- Design out blind spots and improve street lighting;
- Work with local businesses to form the Portswood Business Engagement Forum, which will help the Council and the police to work better together with local businesses, and;
- Working on community schemes that allow people to better and more easily report crimes.”

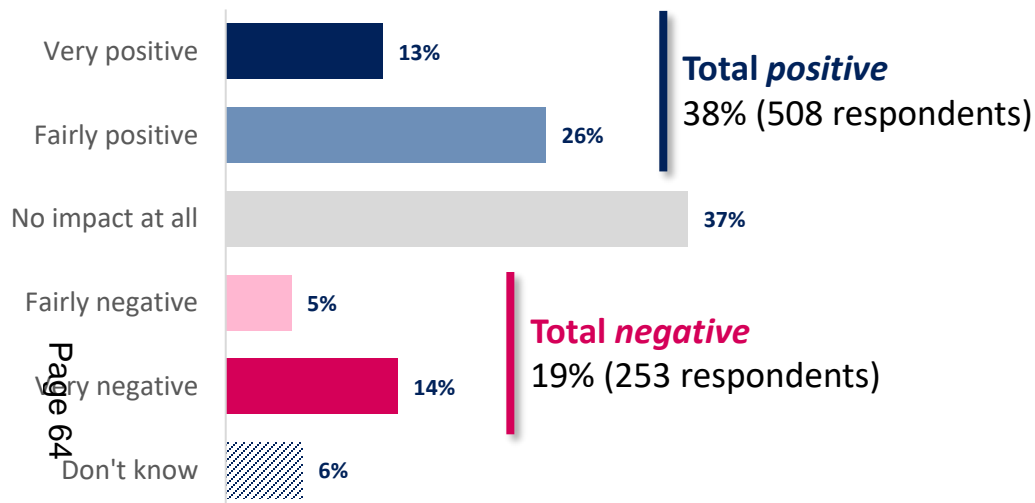
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Question 10a | What impact do you feel the proposals would have on the following? *Reducing crime and antisocial behaviour*

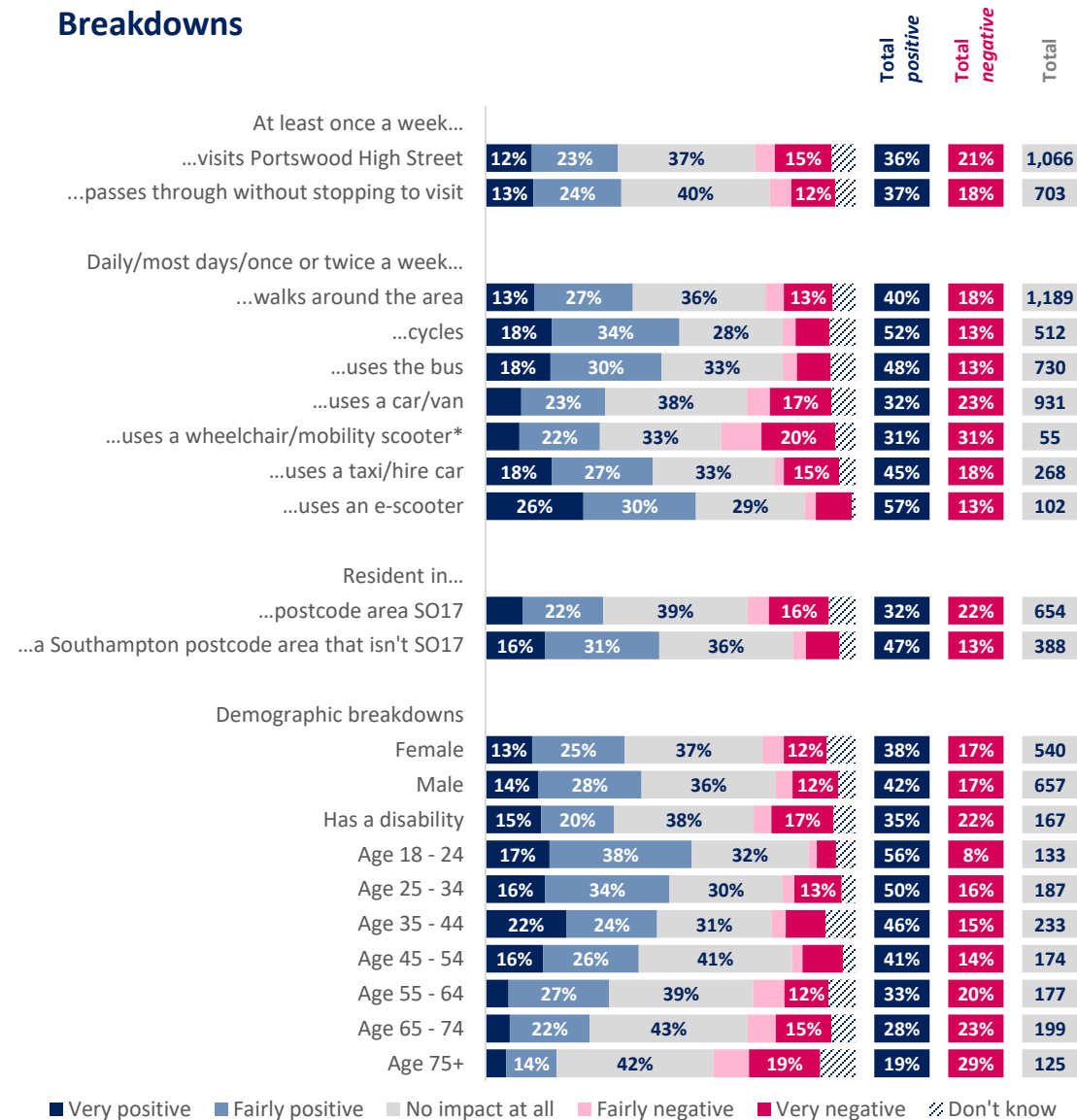
Responses | 1,335



Key findings

- 38% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on efforts to combat crime and anti-social behaviour, with a similar amount saying that they would have no impact at all (37%)
- Cyclists and e-scooter users responded *positive* by more than 50% each, with walkers, bus users, car/van users, mobility and wheelchair users and people using taxis and hire cars responding *positive* less than 50%: additionally, wheelchair/mobility scooter users responded *positive*, *negative*, and *no impact* equally between 31% and 33% - car users also responded *no impact* to a greater extent than *positive* impact, 38% to 32%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 32% to 47%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 56% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 19% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

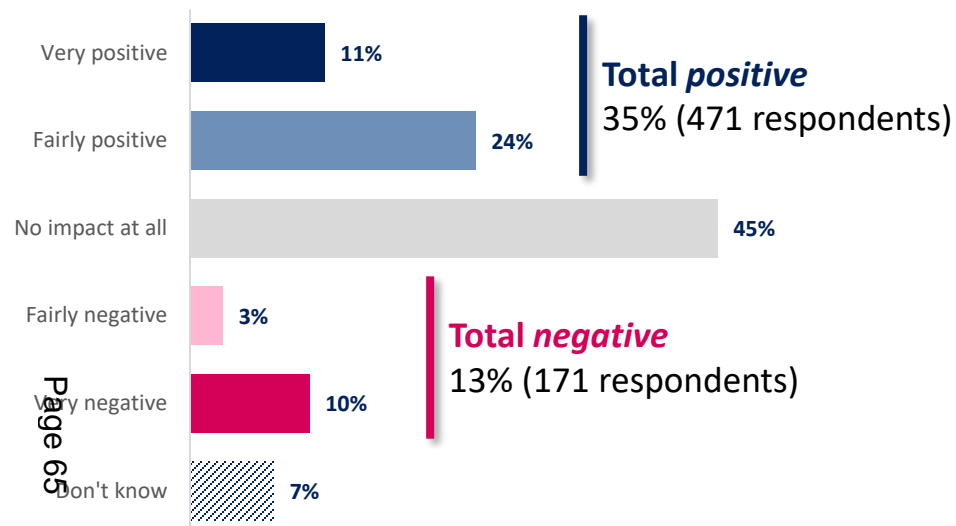


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 10b | What impact do you feel the proposals would have on the following? *Making crime and antisocial behaviour easier to report*

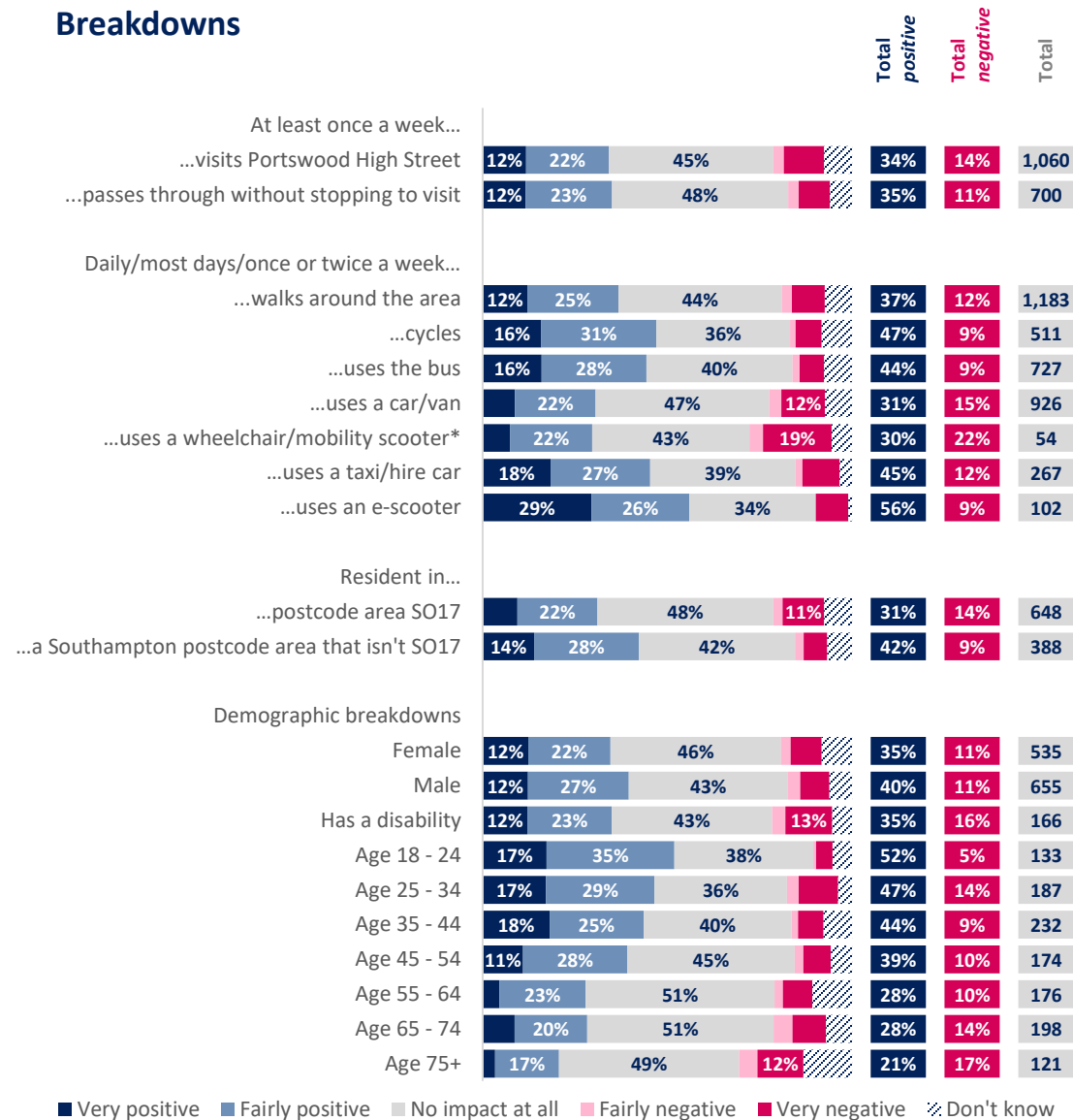
Responses | 1,327



Key findings

- 35% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on making crime easier to report, with 45% saying that they would not have an impact in this area
- E-scooter users responded *positive* by more than 50%, with walkers, cyclists, bus users, car/van users, mobility and wheelchair users and people using taxis and hire cars responding *positive* less than 50%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 31% to 42%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 52% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 21% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

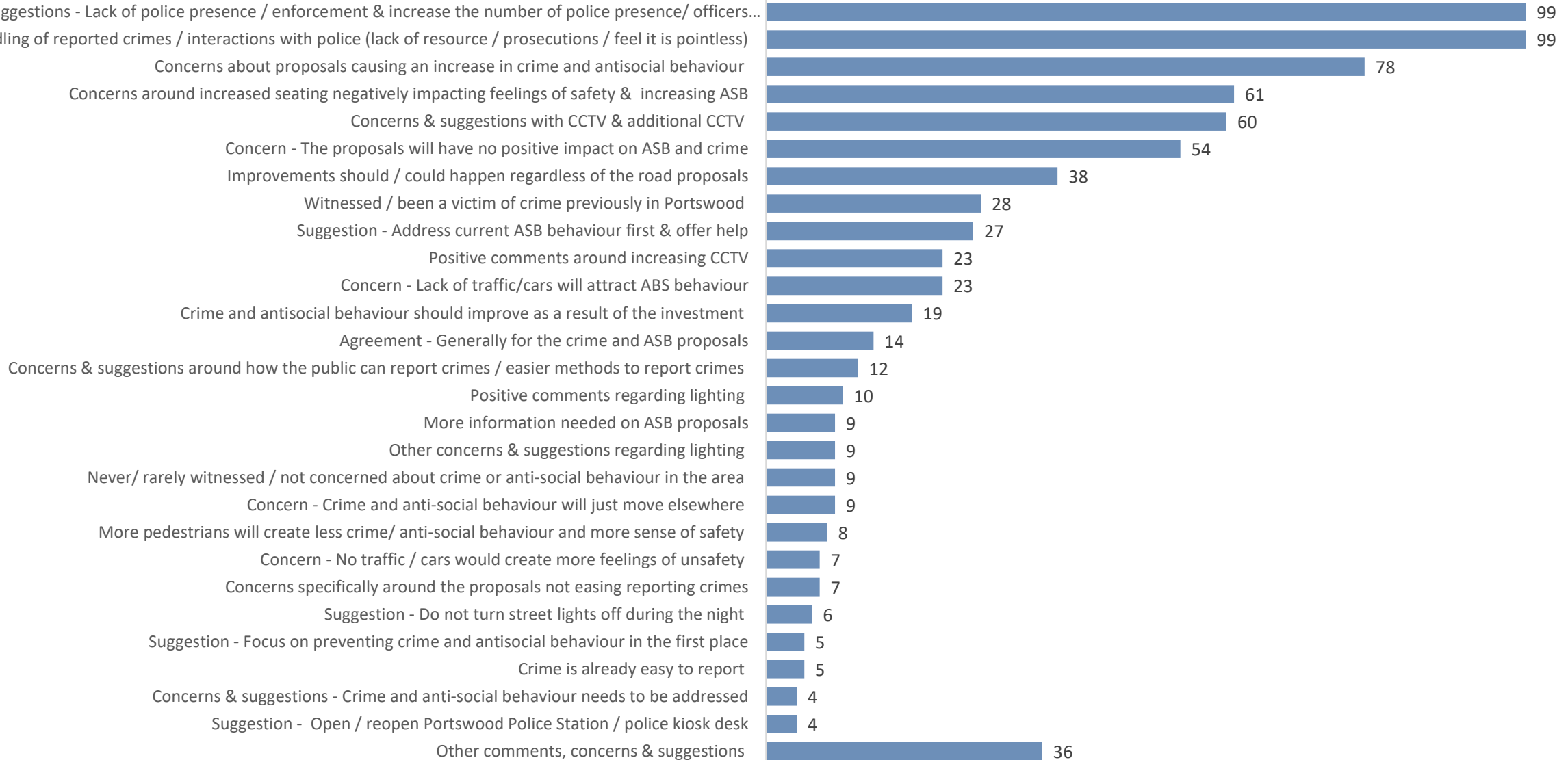


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Portswood Broadway - Crime and antisocial behaviour

Total free text comments





Portswood Travel Hub





“To improve access to the Broadway for all users, we are proposing the installation of a Travel Hub on St Denys Road alongside Portswood Broadway, next to Trago Lounge. Adjacent to the Travel Hub, additional parking for people with disabilities will be provided.

The Travel Hub will provide people with access to a range of transport options including disabled parking bays, e-bike or scooter hire, secure cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points; it will also link to improved bus stops on Portswood Broadway. On top of this, the Hub could include improvements to the public space such as art, greening and seating, and additional facilities like parcel lockers, information boards and wayfinding, bringing more visitors to Portswood High Street and providing reasons for them to stay. Final elements of the Travel Hub will be refined as the project progresses based on the feedback received from this consultation.”

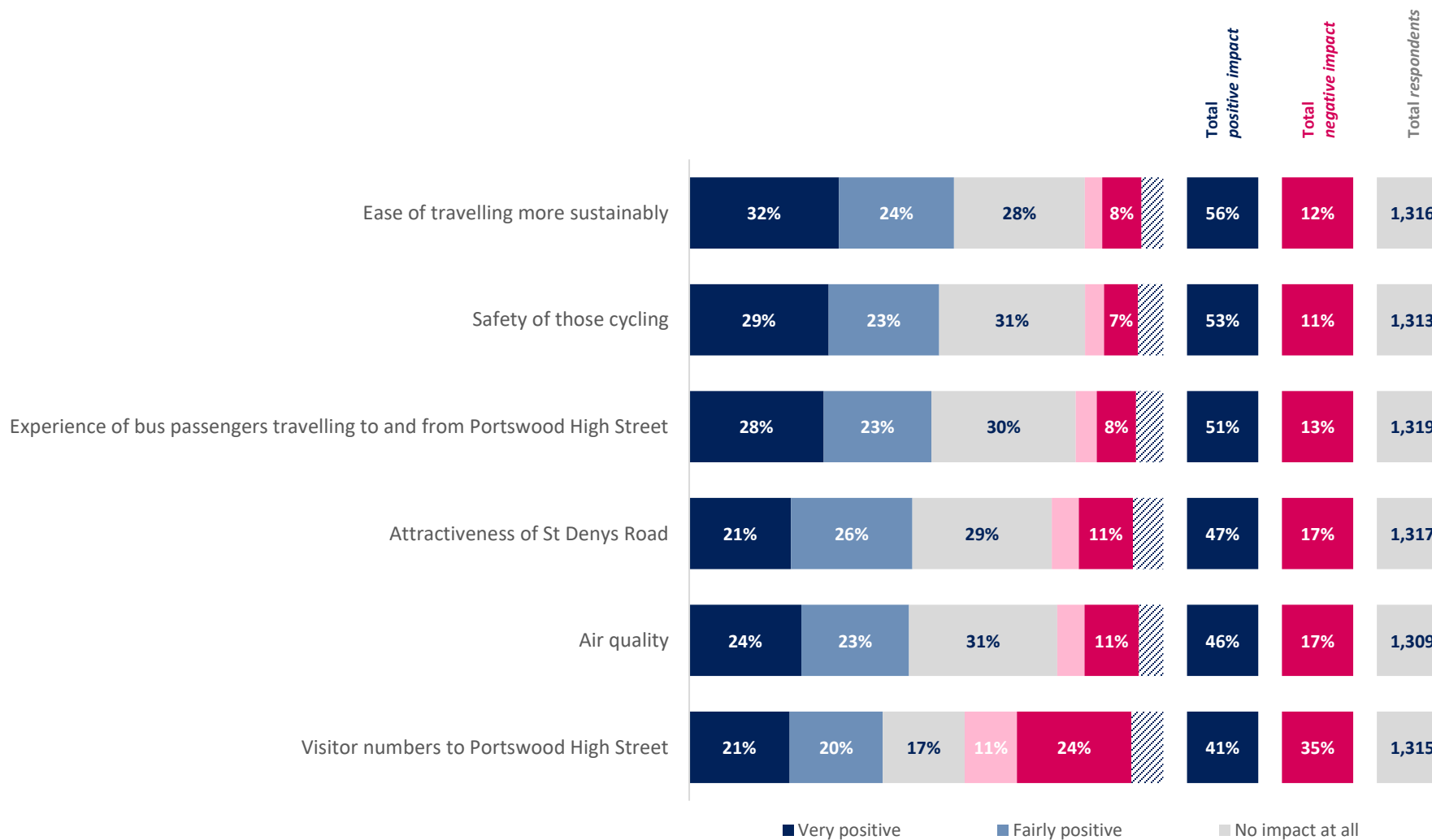
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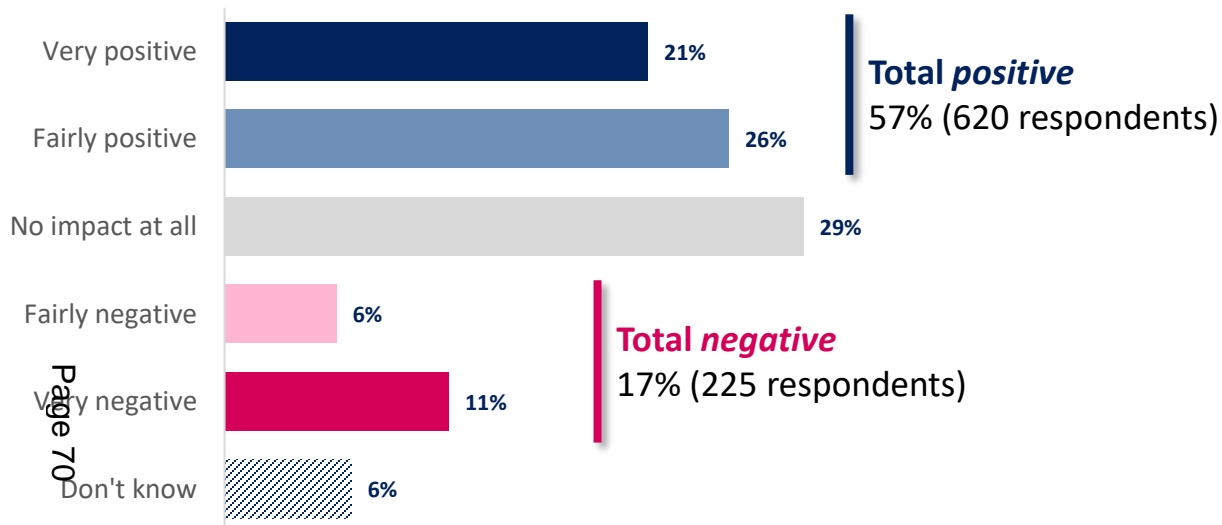
Question 12 | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?

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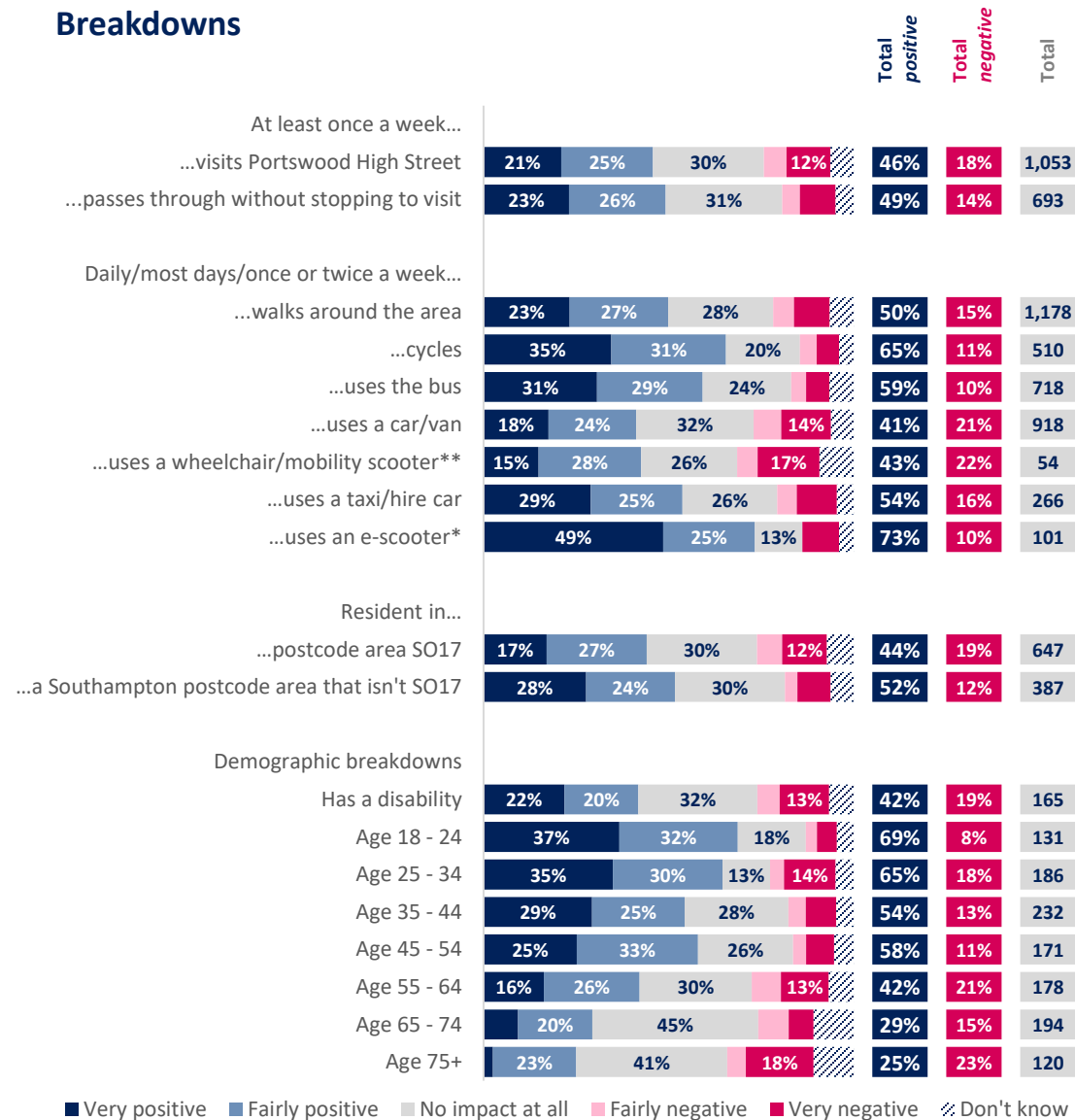
Question 12a | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Attractiveness of St Denys Road* Responses | **1,317**



Key findings

- 57% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on the attractiveness of St Denys Road, with 29% saying that they would have no impact at all and 17% saying they would have a *negative* impact
- Walkers, cyclists, bus users, taxi and hire car users, and users of e-scooters responded *positive* by 50% or more, with car users and wheelchair and mobility scooter users responding *positive* between 41% and 43%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 44% to 52%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 69% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 25% of those aged 75 or older doing so

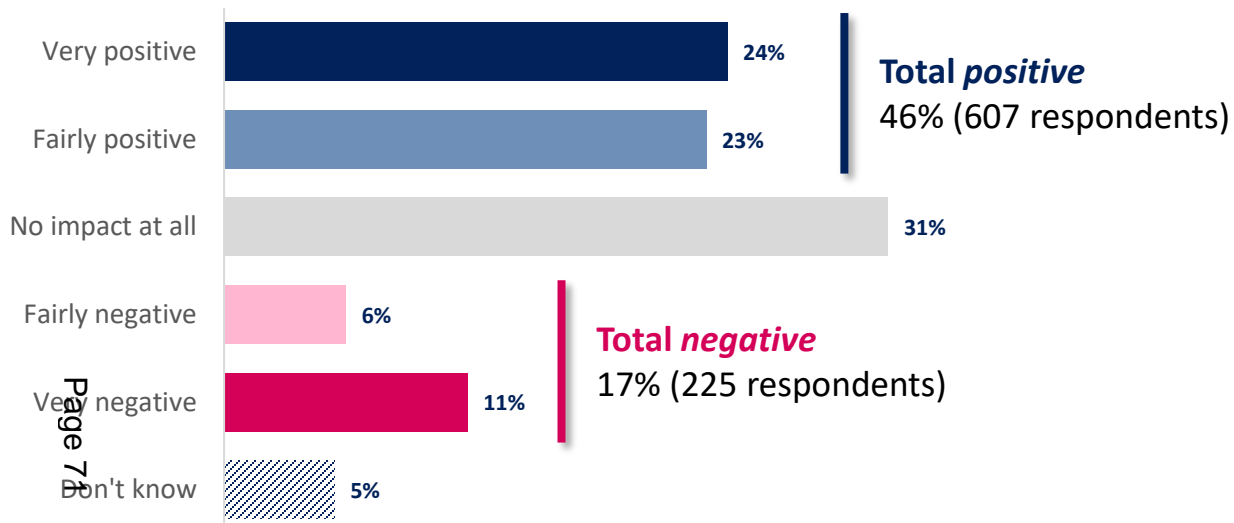
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



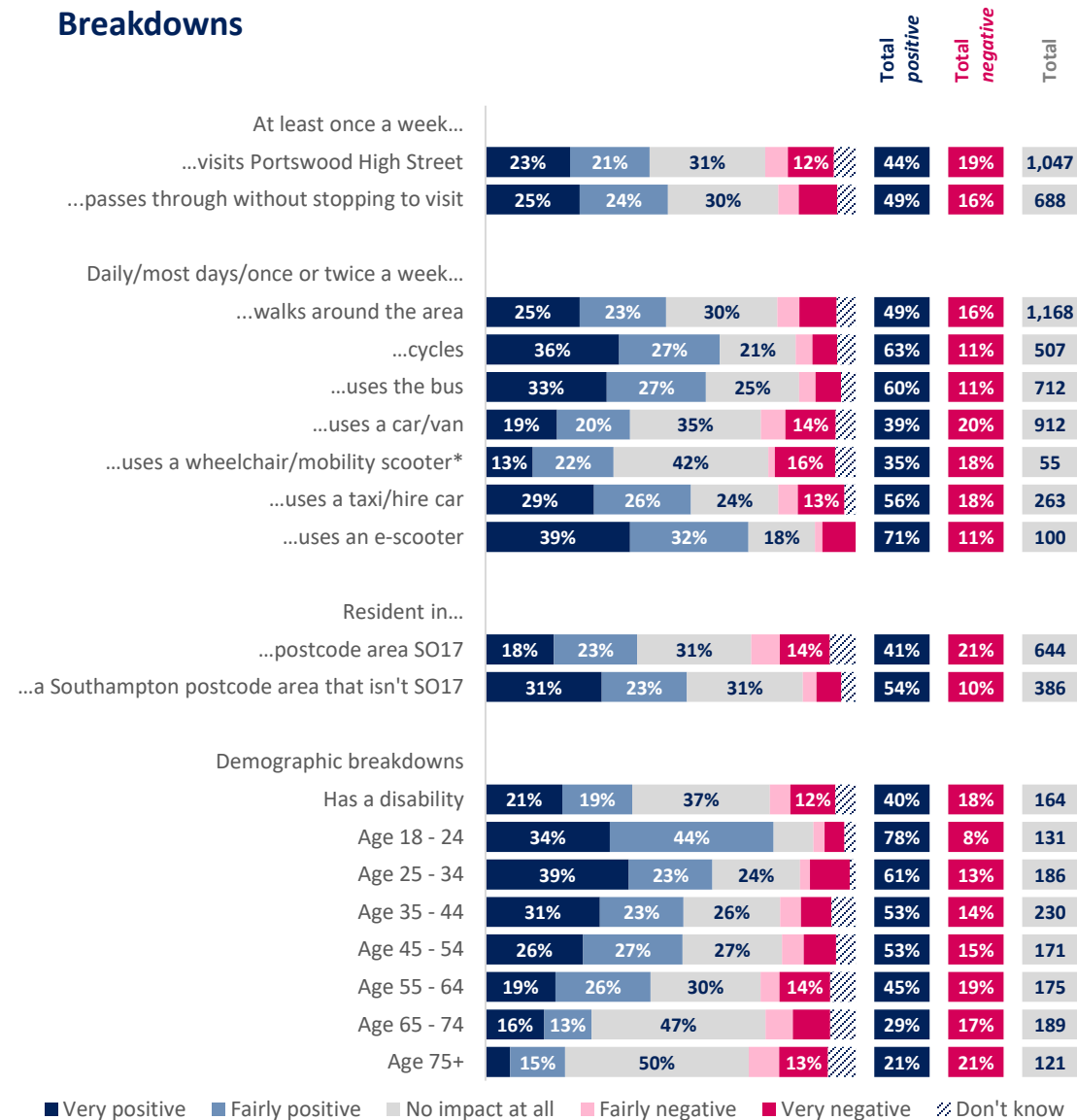
Question 12b | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Air quality*
Responses | **1,309**



Key findings

- 46% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on air quality in Portswood, with 31% saying that they would have no impact at all and 17% saying they would have a *negative* impact
- Cyclists, bus users, taxi and hire car users, and users of e-scooters responded *positive* by 50% or more, with walkers, car users and wheelchair and mobility scooter users responded *positive* between 49% and 39%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 41% to 54%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 78% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 21% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

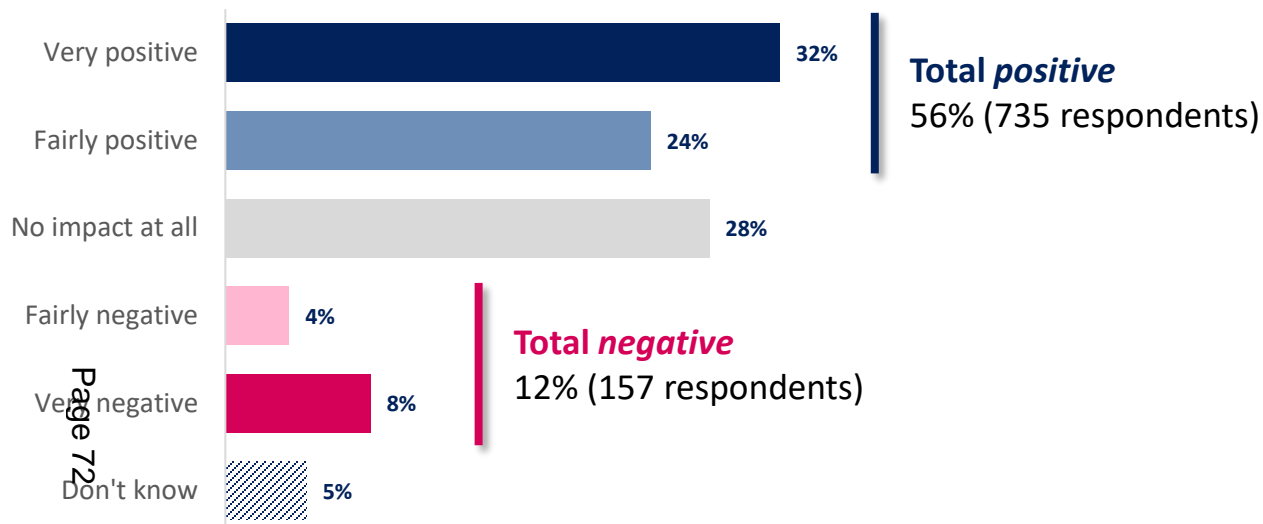


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 12c | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Ease of travelling more sustainably*

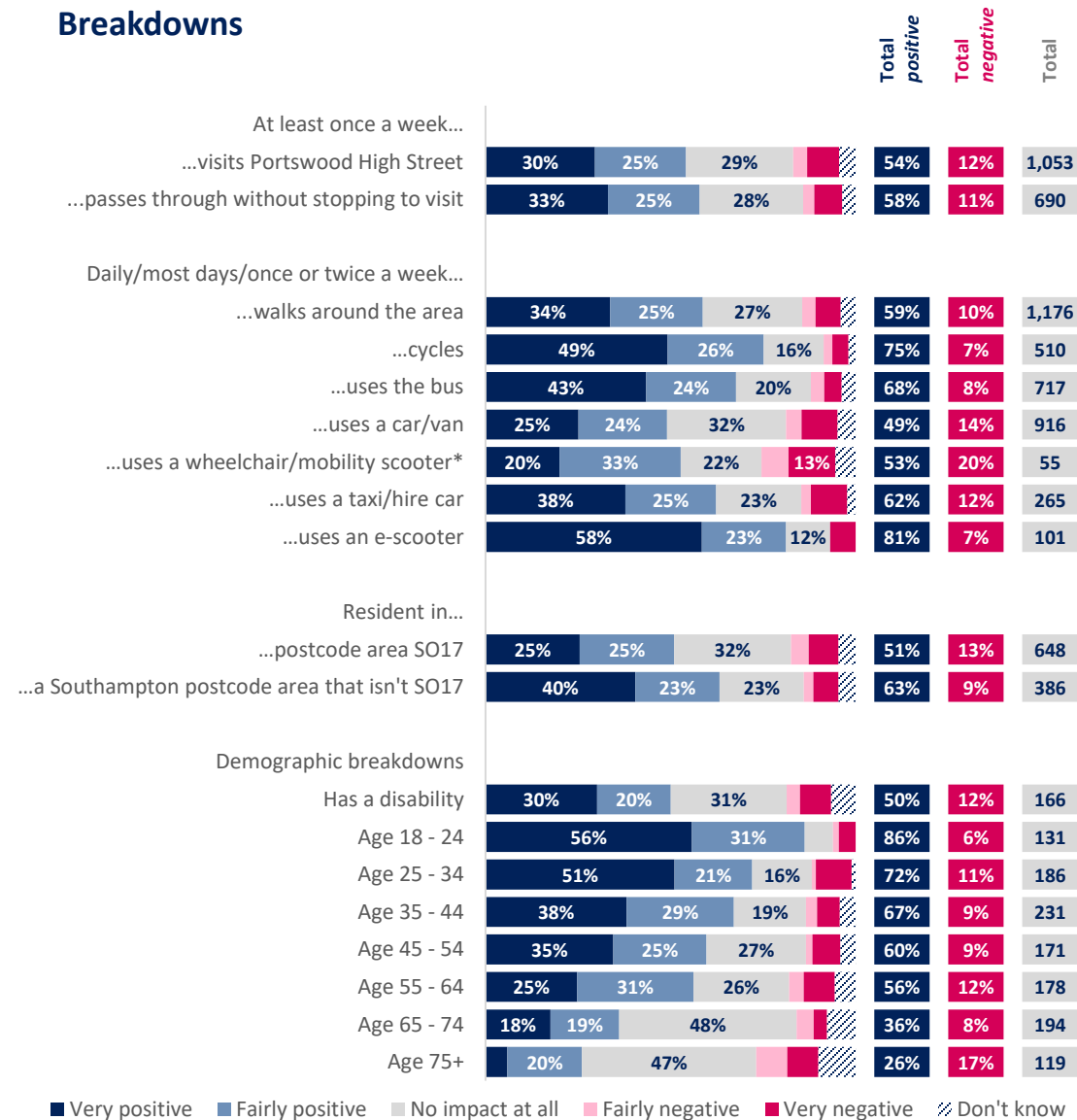
Responses | **1,316**



Key findings

- 56% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on the ease of travelling sustainably, with 28% saying that they would have no impact at all and 12% saying they would have a *negative* impact
- Walkers, cyclists, bus users, taxi and hire car users, users of e-scooters and people that use wheelchairs and mobility scooters responded *positive* by 50% or more, with car users responding *positive* at 49%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 51% to 63%, with both responding positive more than *negative* overall
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 86% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 26% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

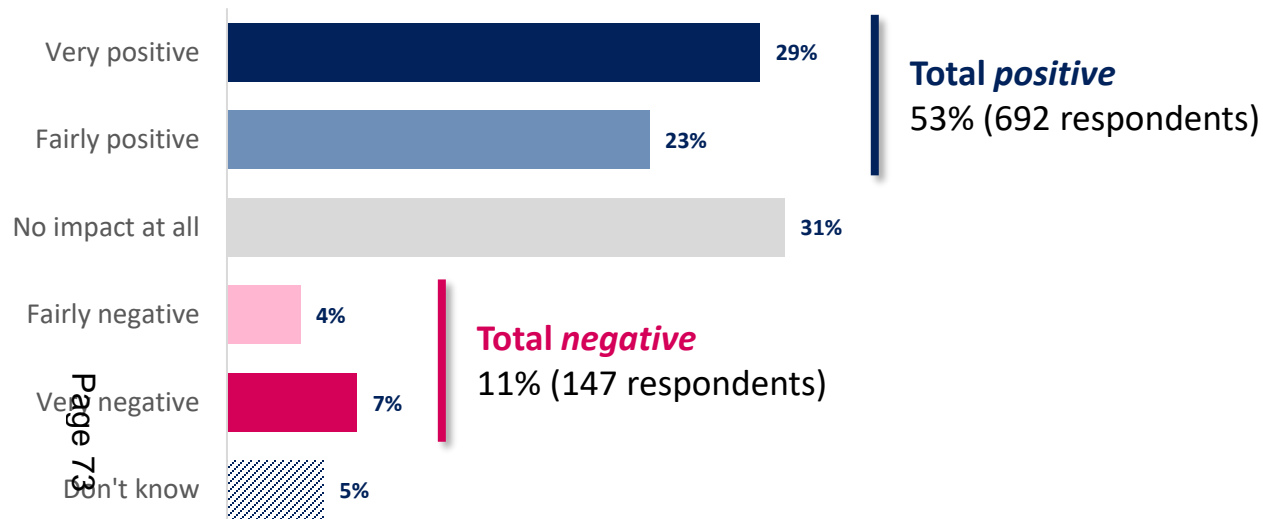


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 12d | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Safety of those cycling*

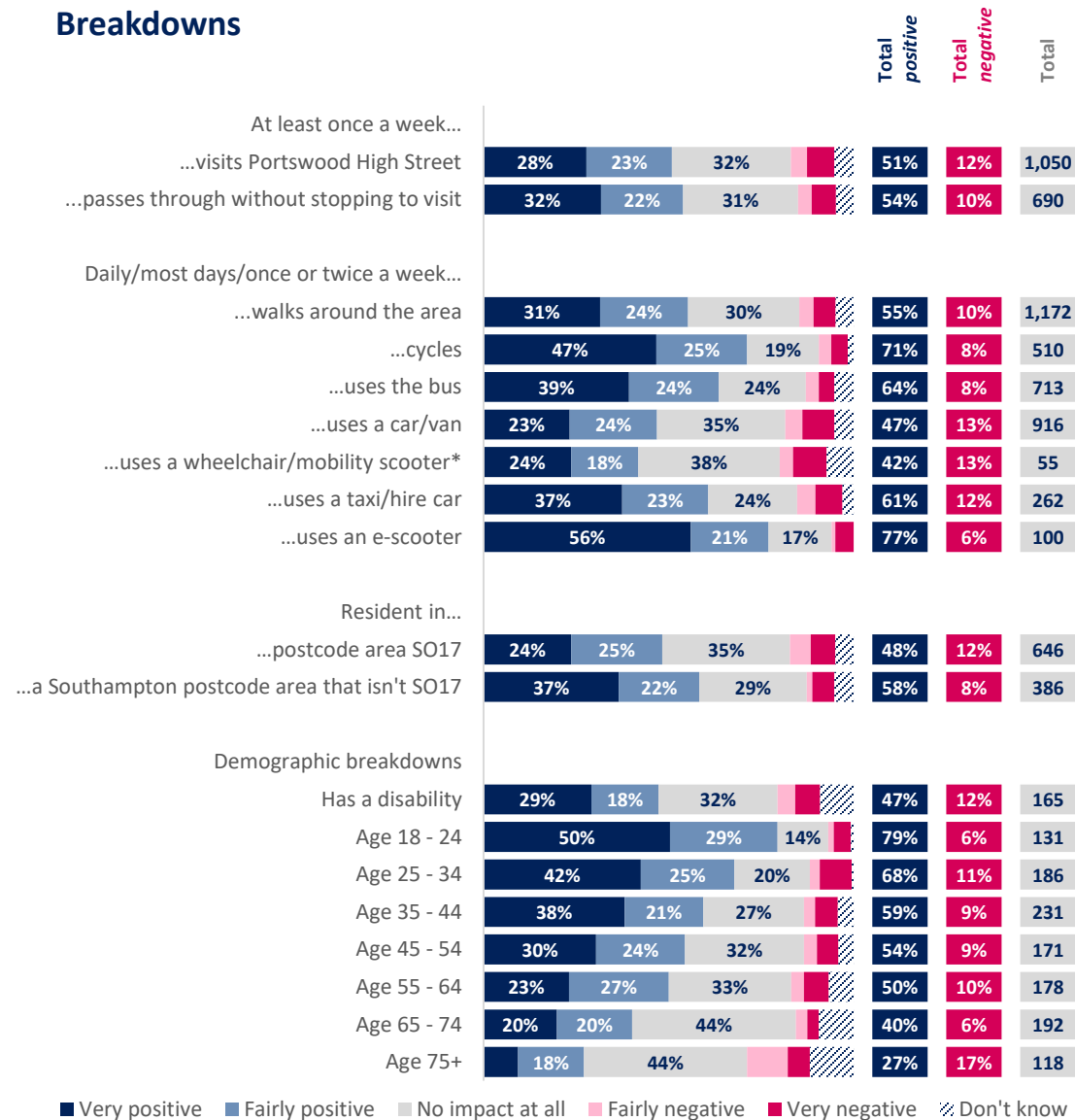
Responses | **1,313**



Key findings

- 53% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on the safety of cyclists, with 31% saying that they would have no impact at all and 11% saying they would have a *negative* impact
- Walkers, cyclists, bus users, taxi and hire car users and users of e-scooters *positive* by 50% or more, with car users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters responding *positive* between 42% and 47%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 48% to 58%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 79% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 27% of those aged 75 or older doing so

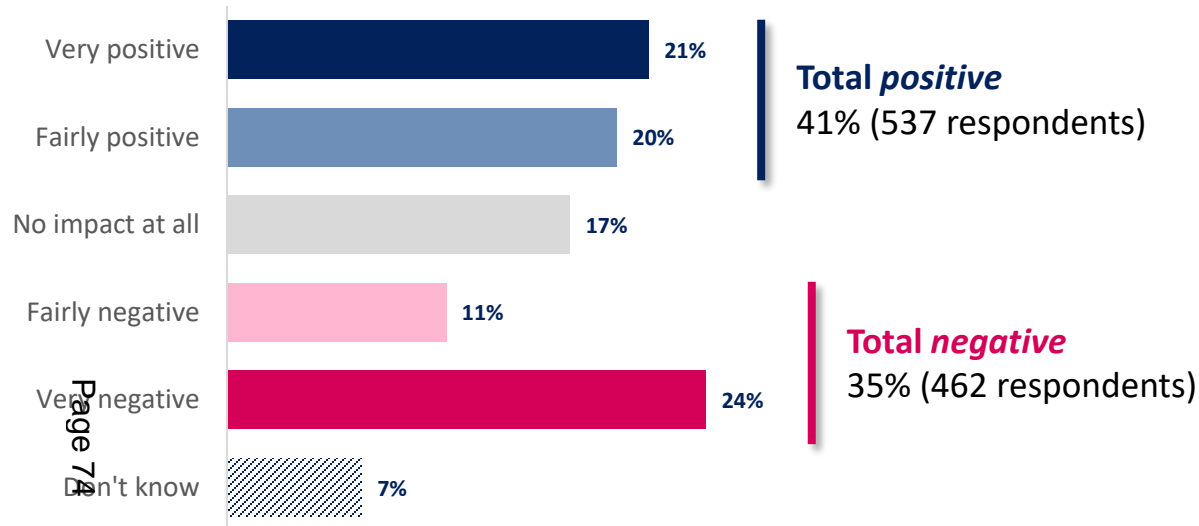
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.

Question 12e | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Visitor numbers to Portswood High Street*

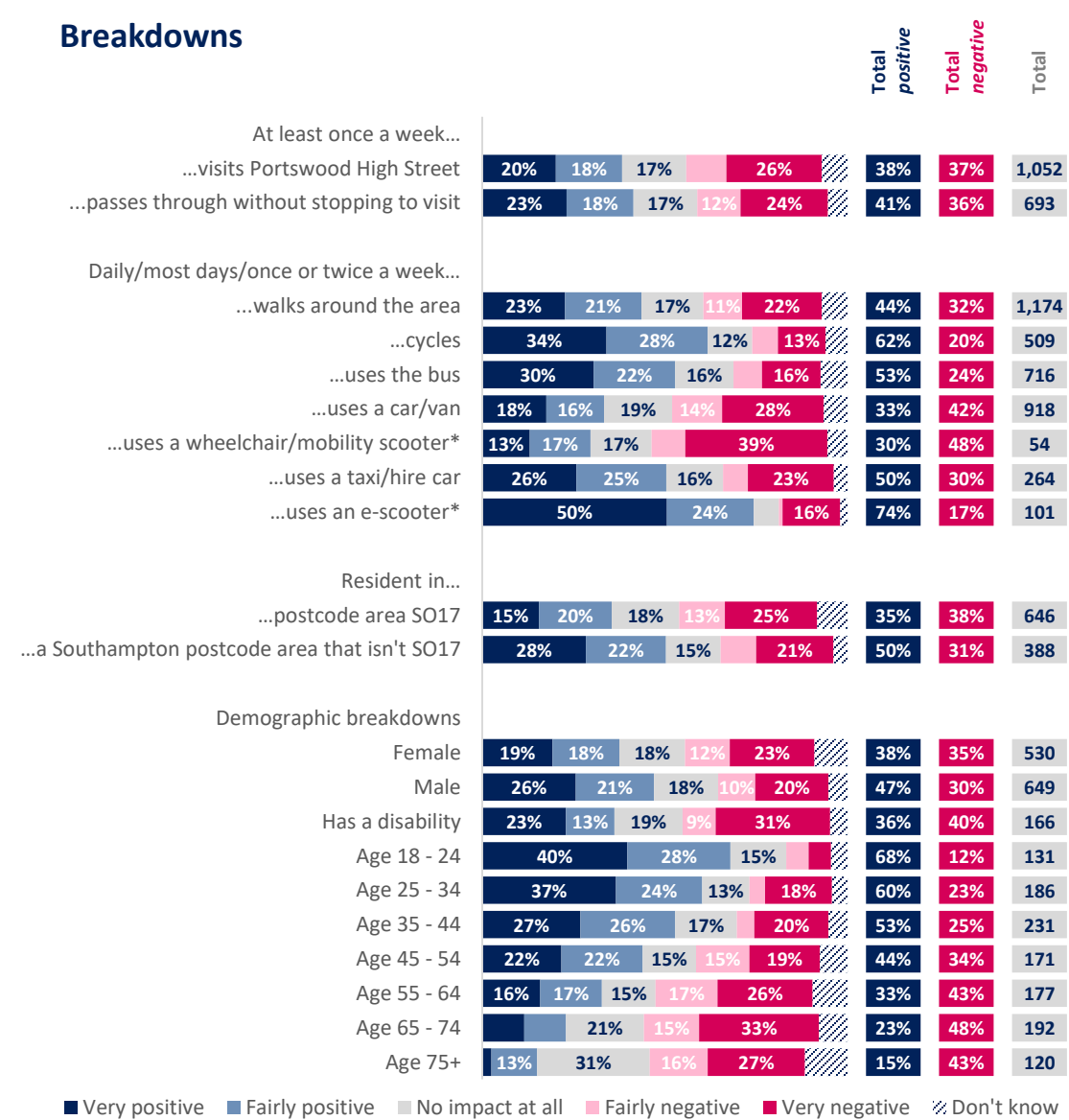
Responses | **1,315**



Key findings

- 41% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on visitor numbers to Portswood High Street, with 35% saying they would have a *negative* impact, including 24% that responded *very negative*
- Cyclists, bus users, taxi users and people that use e-scooters responded *positive* by 50% or more, compared to walkers, car users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters, who responded *positive* between 30% and 44% - the latter two groups also responded *negative* to a greater extent than *positive* 42% to 33% and 48% to 30% respectively
- Again, residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 35% to 50%, with SO17 residents responding *negative* to a greater extent than *positive* 38% to 35%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 68% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 15% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

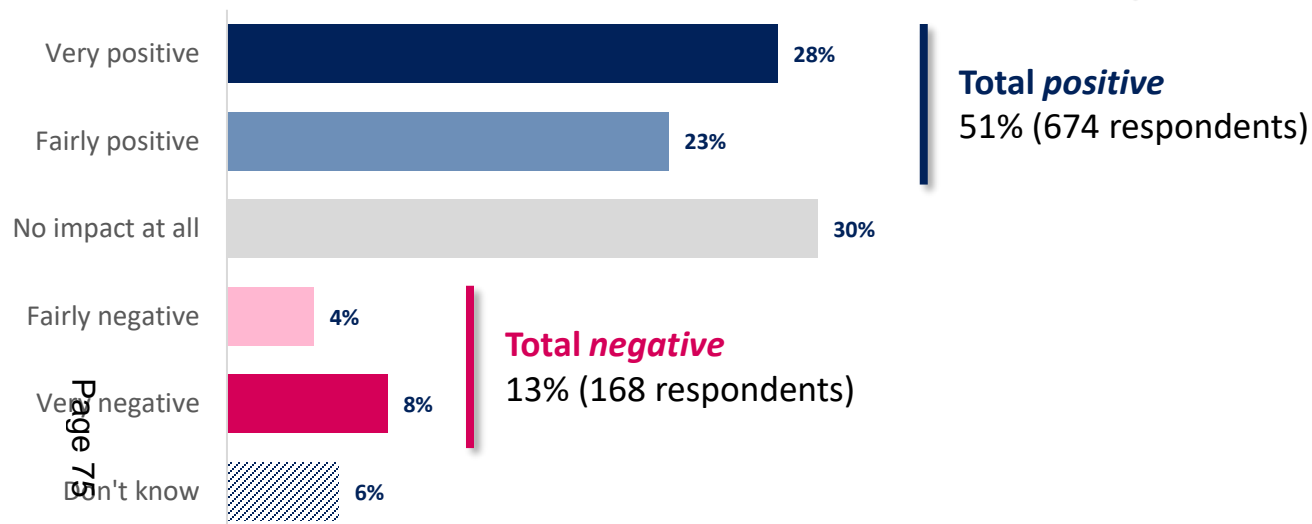


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 12f | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Experience of bus passengers travelling to and from Portswood High Street*

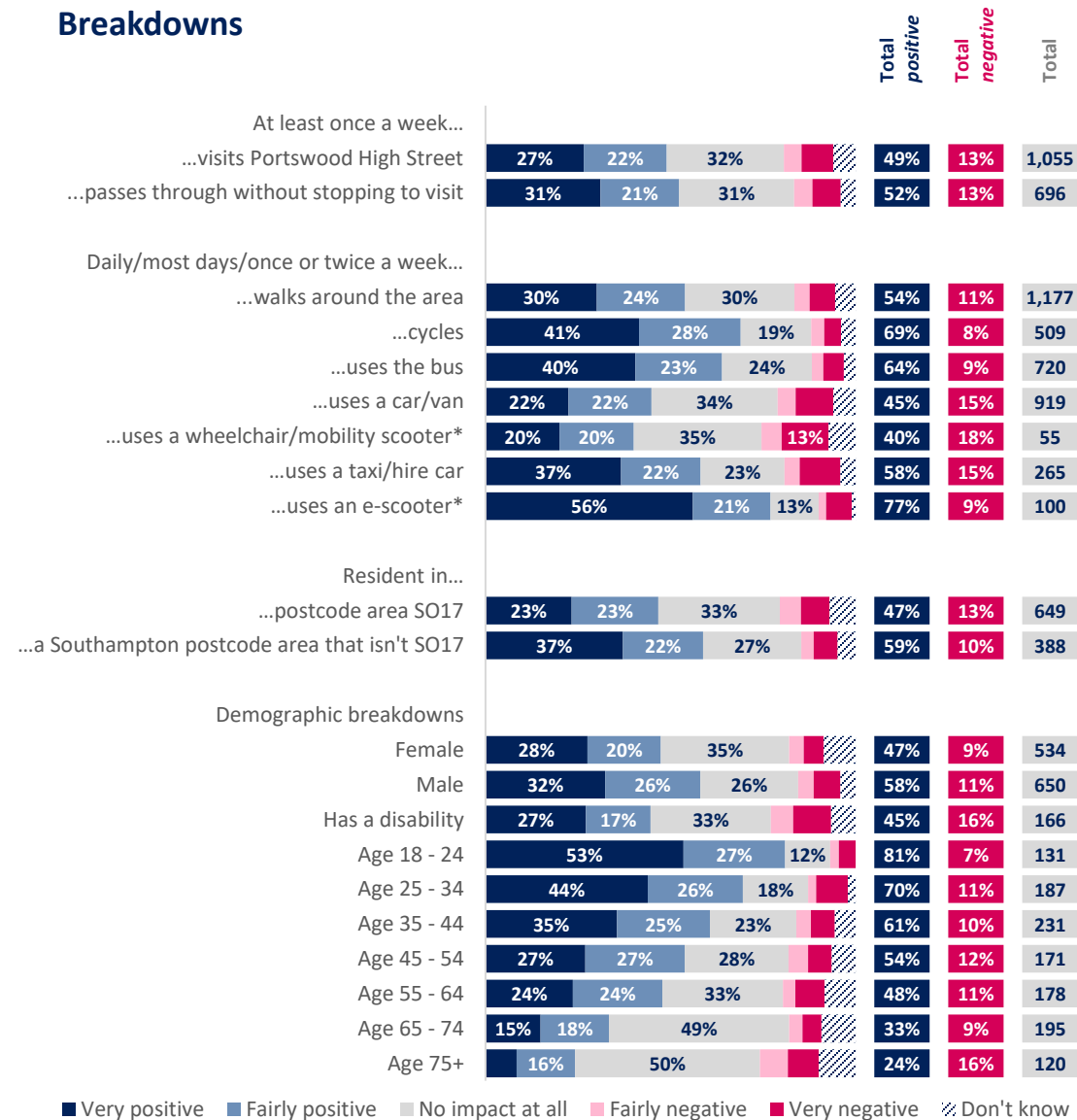
Responses | 1,319



Key findings

- 51% of respondents said that the proposals would have a *positive* impact on the experience of bus passengers in Portswood, with 30% saying that they would have no impact at all and 13% saying they would have a *negative* impact
- Walkers, cyclists, bus users, taxi and hire car users and users of e-scooters *positive* by 50% or more, with car users and users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters responding *positive* between 40% and 45% - bus users responded *positive* at 64%
- Residents of postcode SO17 responded *positive* to a lesser extent than Southampton residents of other postcodes, 47% to 59%
- Respondents were more *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 81% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 24% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

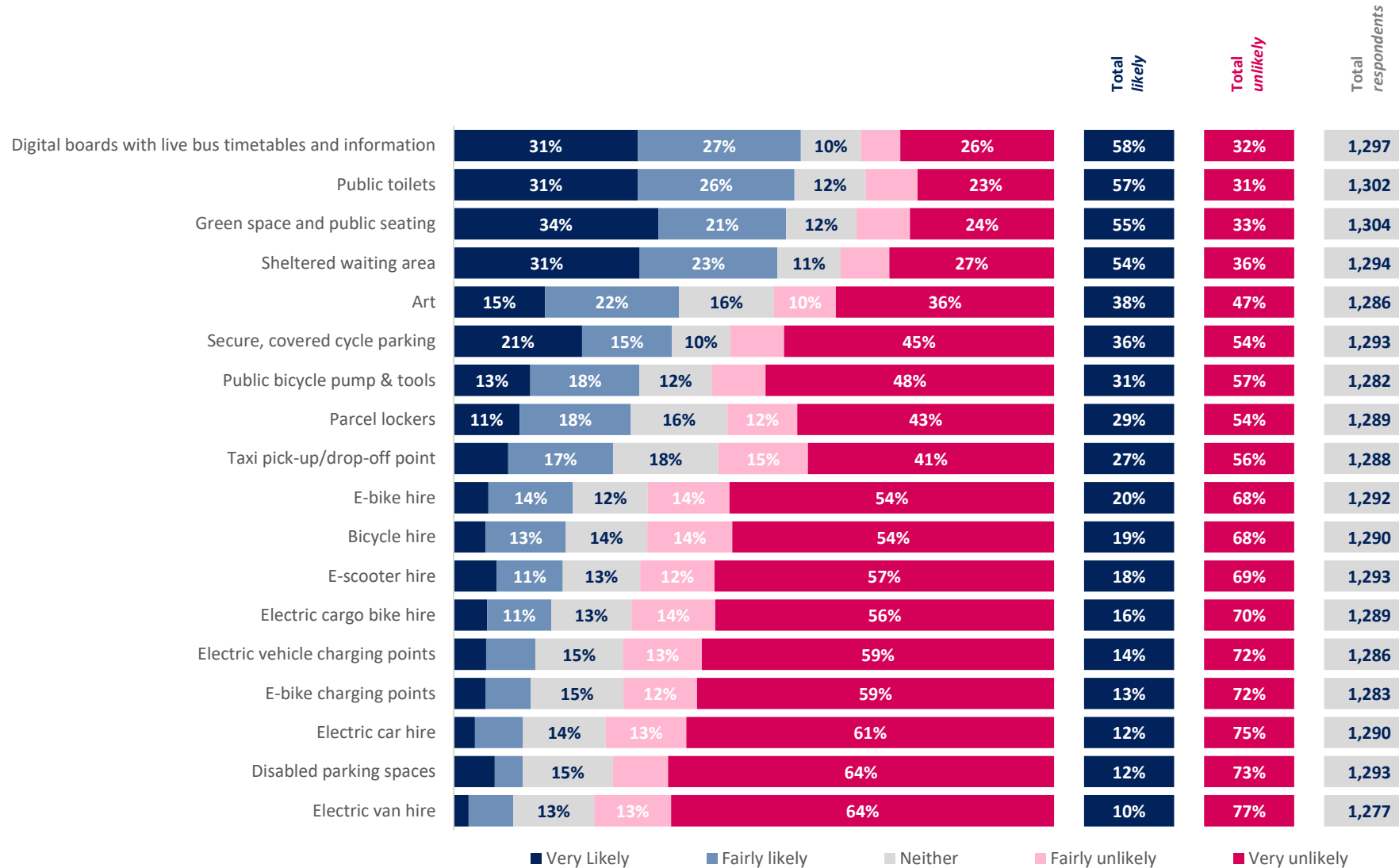


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 13 | How likely would you be to use each element if included in the Portswood Travel Hub?

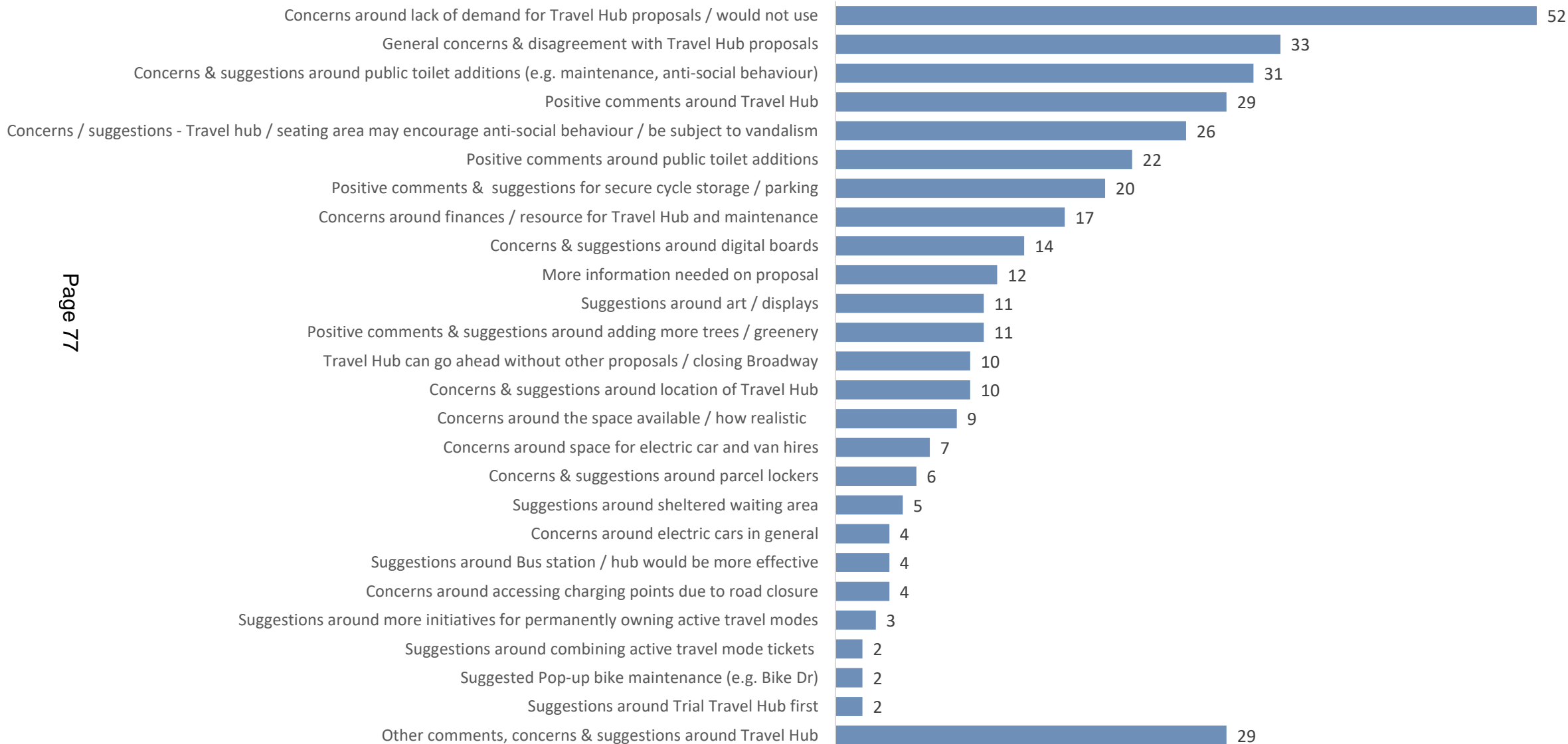
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Portswood Travel Hub

Total free text comments





Highfield Active Travel Zone





“Traffic modelling in the area predicts that with the introduction of the bus gate, up to 8,000 vehicles would choose to use the A335 (Thomas Lewis Way - TLW) as a faster alternative, depending on the level of mitigation we adopt for the area to prevent rat running. This will be supported by the recent improvements along TLW, such as the introduction of additional turning lanes and an upgrade to smarter junctions, which has improved journey times along TLW to make it more reliable and to increase capacity to ensure it is the preferred option for through-traffic.

Some remaining through-traffic is still likely to choose to rat run through local roads however. To prevent this and protect local roads for those who live in the area, we could introduce an Active Travel Zone (ATZ) for Highfield. The Council is committed to providing an ATZ for the Highfield area ahead of any improvements to Portswood Broadway.

Active Travel Zones (ATZs) are neighbourhoods that encourage active travel through a range of measures which calm or discourage traffic, reduce rat running, and instead prioritise people walking and cycling while at the same time maintaining motor vehicle access for those who live there. Interventions for ATZs are scalable and can range from speed cushions, improved crossing points or road closure points which would be designed with local residents at co-design meetings.

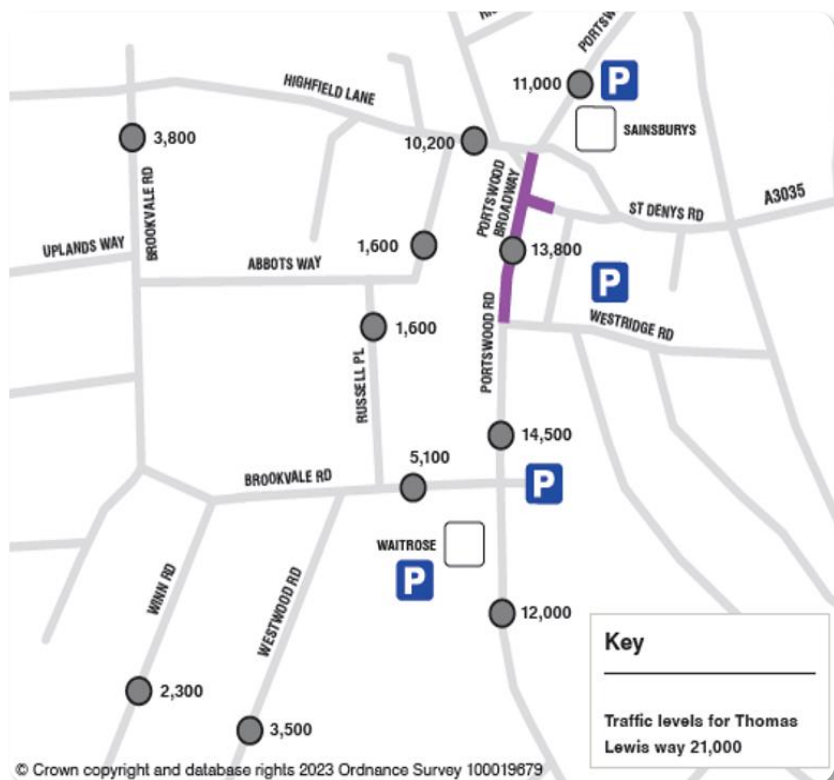
The Council has delivered an ATZ in the St Denys area in conjunction with local residents, and is now implementing ATZs in the Polygon, Woolston and Itchen areas.

New traffic data has been provided in this consultation to better inform residents of the impacts of various options for an Active Travel Zone for the area, but no decision will be made on the type of Active Travel Zone implemented without community co-design with residents.”



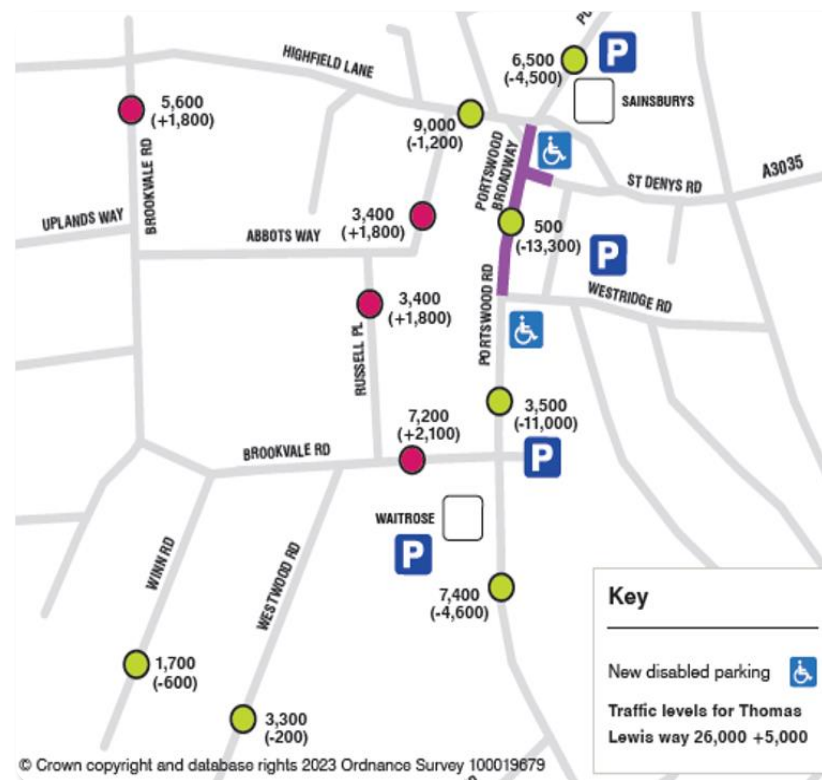
Existing levels, April 2023

This shows the existing levels of traffic flowing through the area on a normal weekday in April (figures are number of vehicles per day in a 24-hour period on the road)



Bus gate w/ no mitigation

This shows the impact on traffic flows along the Broadway and local roads should a bus gate be installed with no mitigation measures included, with the majority of traffic diverted to the A335 (Thomas Lewis Way). This is not something that would be implemented and is purely for demonstration only.





Bus gate w/ light-touch ATZ

This shows the impact on traffic flows should a bus gate be installed with a light-touch ATZ.

A light-touch ATZ for Highfield in the form of new pedestrian crossings, speed cushions and priority buildouts will deter people driving through residential streets, with the majority of traffic directed to the A335 (Thomas Lewis Way). This would help reduce overspill from the proposed bus gate and in most cases reduce traffic from existing levels.

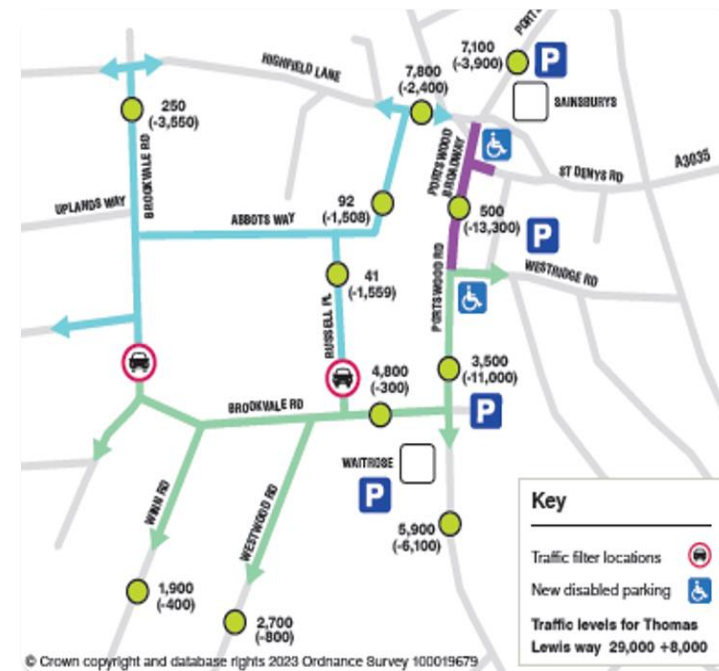
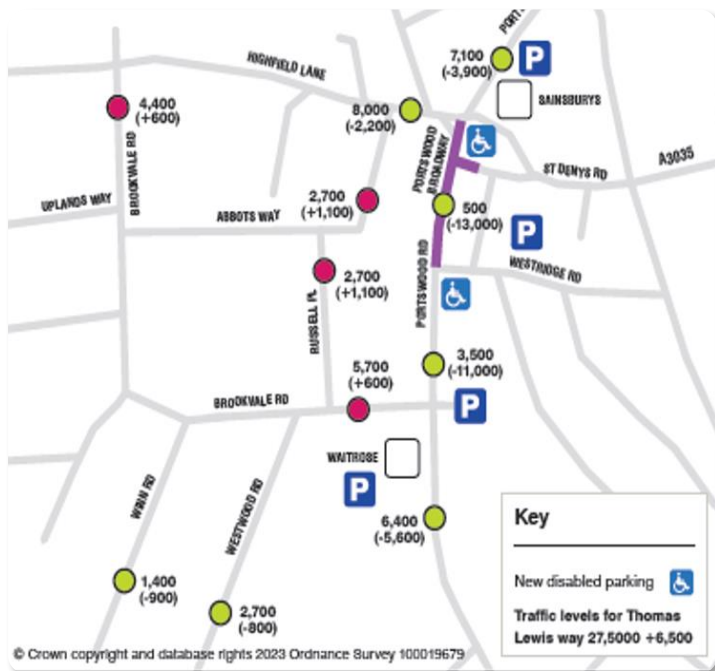
This would lead to increased traffic levels on some local streets, but a significant reduction in traffic in the area as a whole. The final mix of interventions to deter people driving through residential streets would be based on community co-design.

Bus gate w/ ATZ and traffic filters on Russell Place and Brookvale Road

This shows the impact on traffic flows should a bus gate be installed with an ATZ, which would include traffic filters on Russell Place and Brookvale Road.

Traffic filters prevent motorised vehicles from passing through that area, without preventing people who walk and cycle. The predicated modelling shows that with the introduction of the ATZ and the traffic filters in these locations, the roads around this area would be preserved for local residents and deliveries access only and prevent all through-traffic.

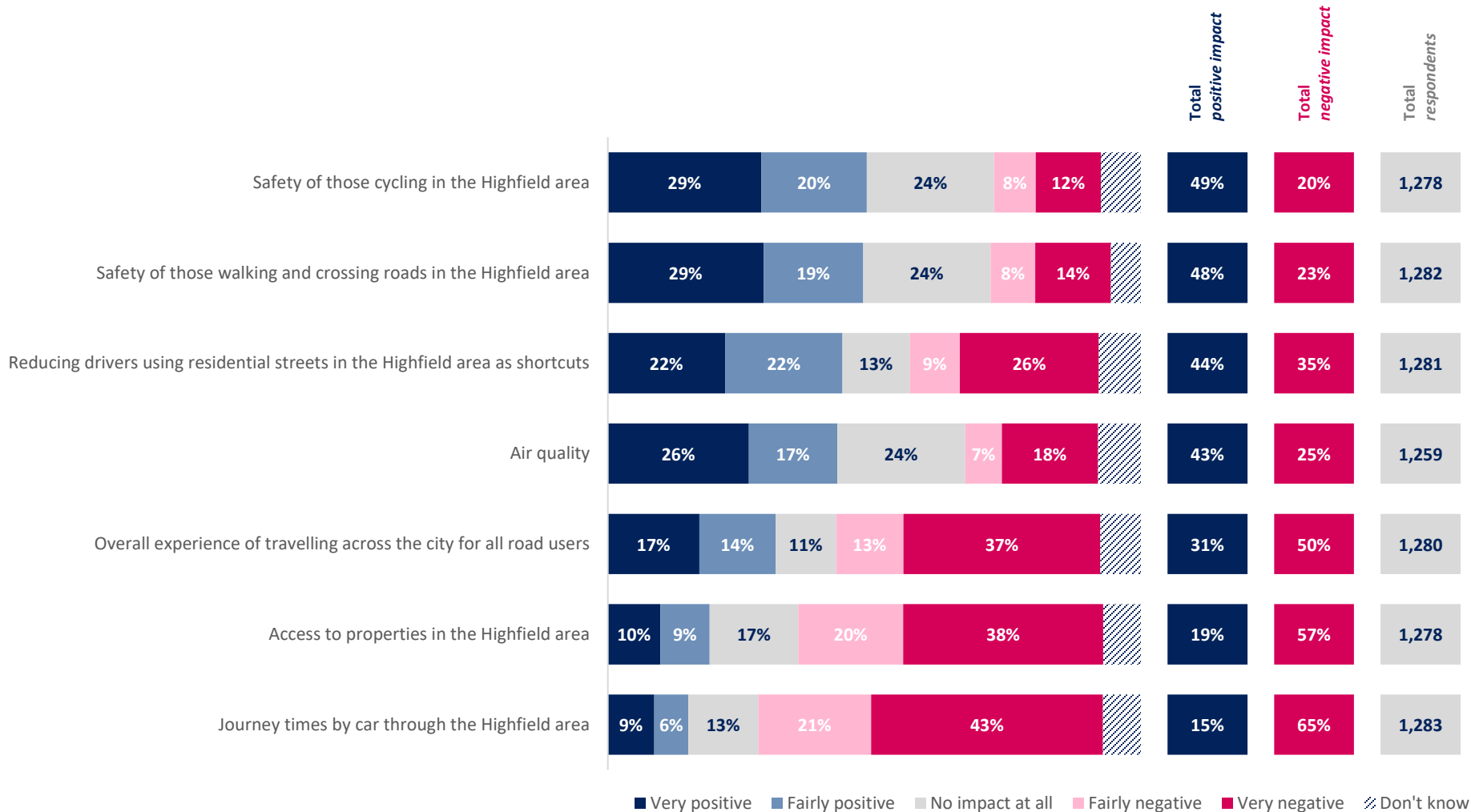
Similar arrangements already exist in Outer Avenue (filters at Alma Avenue and Avenue Road) and have just been introduced in St Denys (Kent Road, North Road and the existing filter at Horseshoe Bridge).





Question 16 | If these plans go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following?

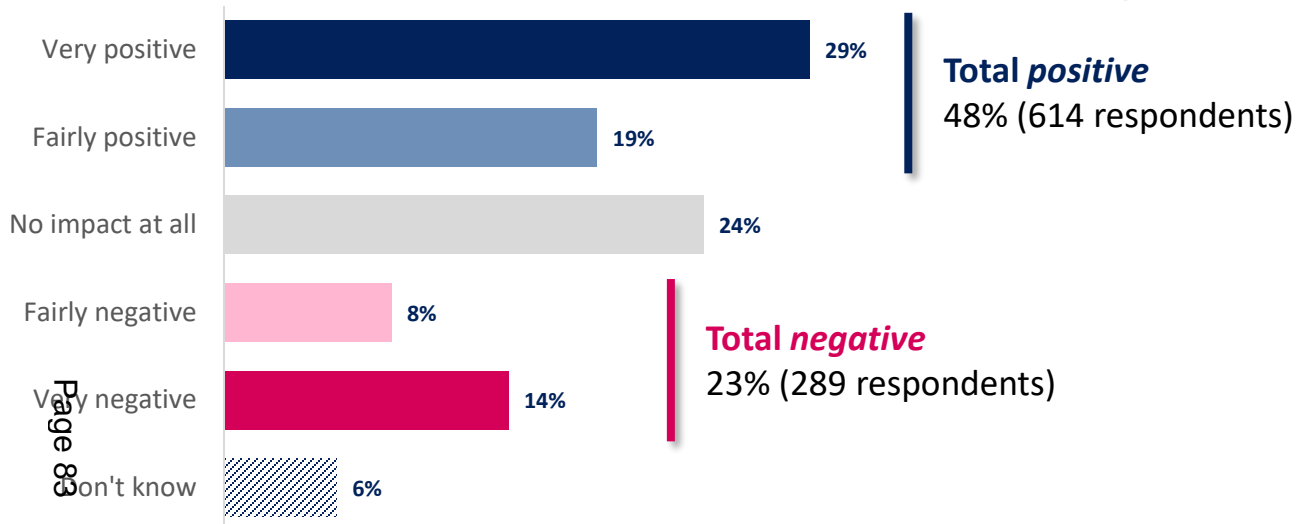
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Question 16a | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Safety of those walking and crossing roads in the Highfield area*

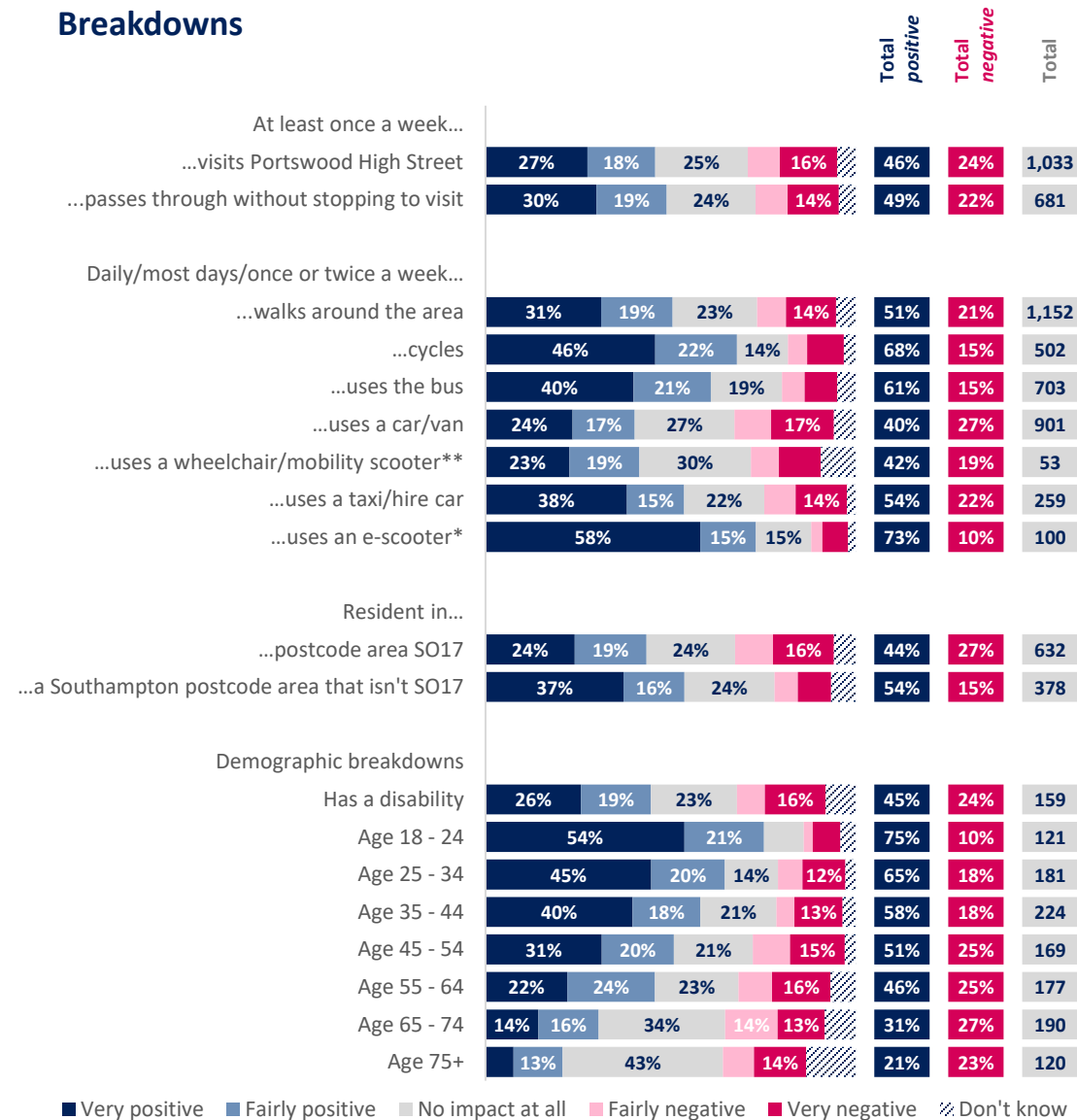
Responses | **1,282**



Key findings

- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *positive* impact (48%), compared to having a *negative* impact (23%)
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *positive* 10% points more than those in SO17, 54% to 44%
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 75% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 21% of those aged 75 or older doing so

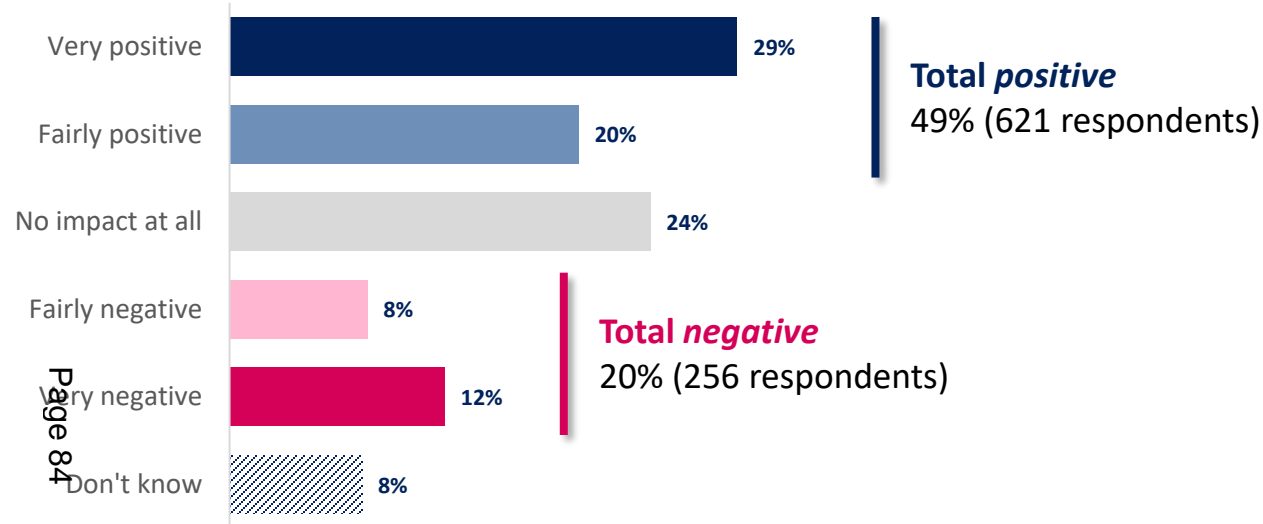
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



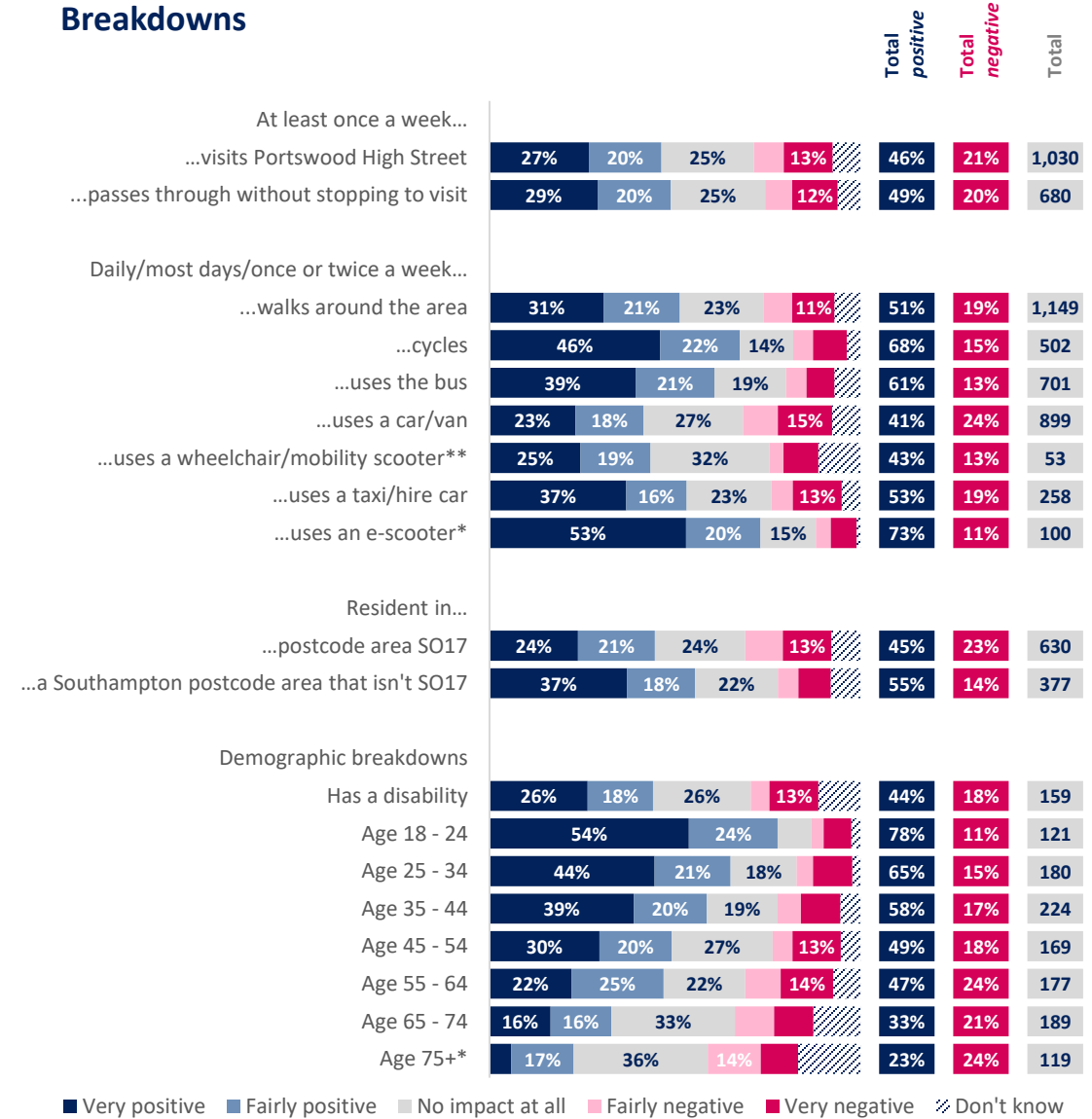
Question 16b | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Safety of those cycling in the Highfield area* Responses | **1,278**



Key findings

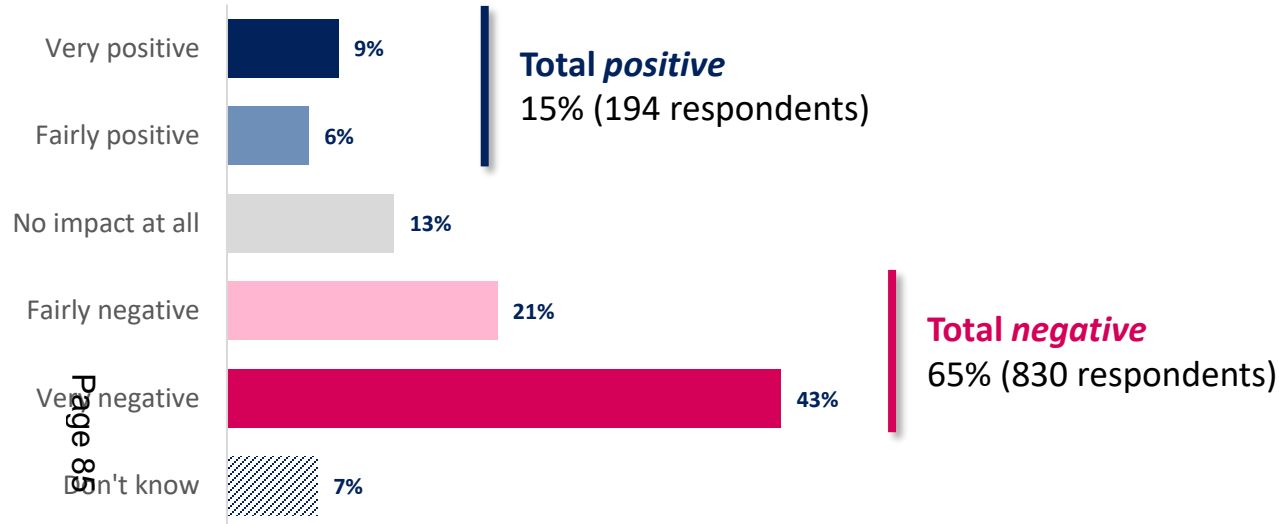
- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *positive* impact (49%), compared to having a *negative* impact (20%)
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *positive* 10% points more than those in SO17, 55% to 45%
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 78% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 23% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.

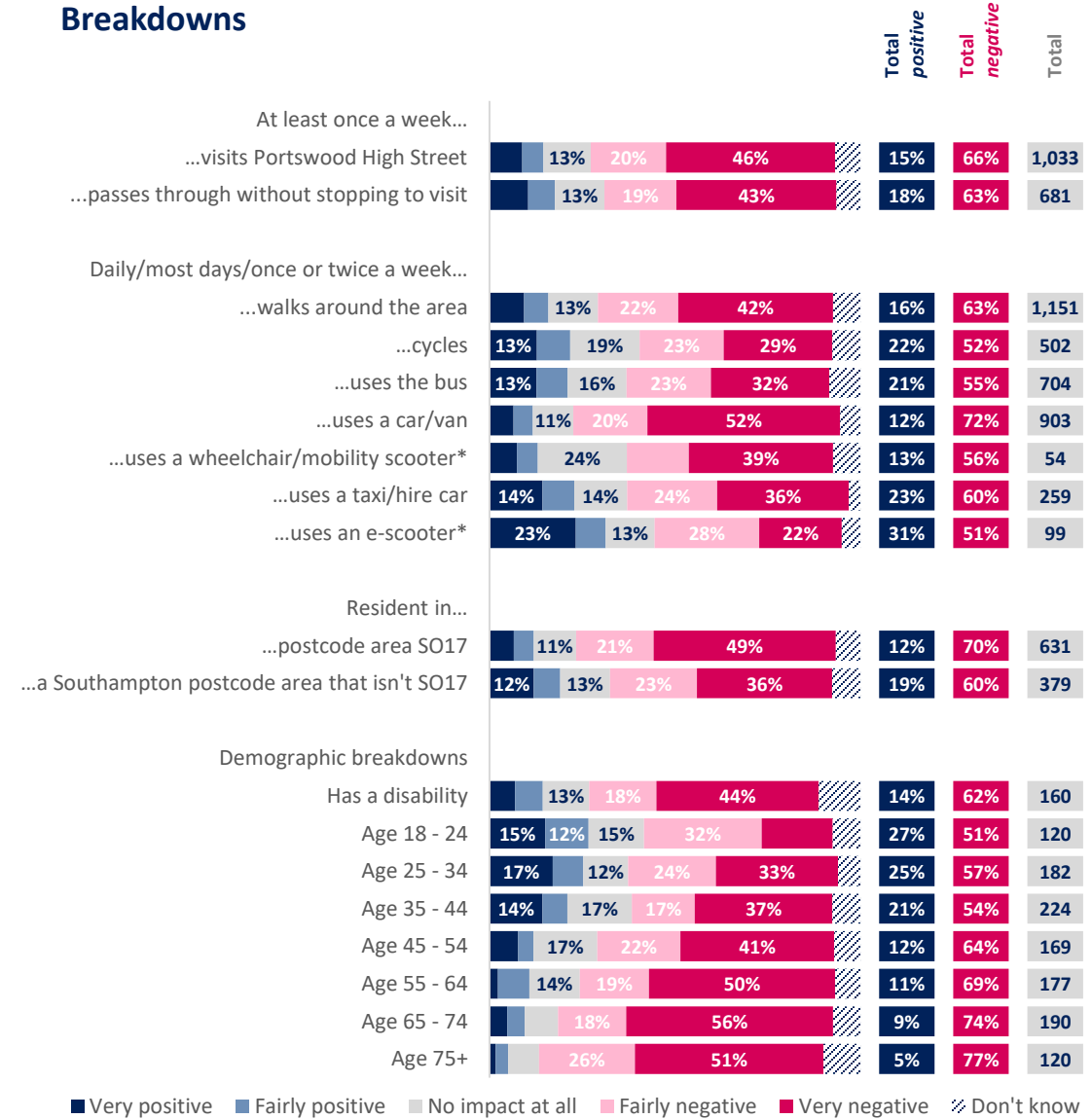
Question 16c | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Journey times by car through the Highfield area* Responses | **1,283**



Key findings

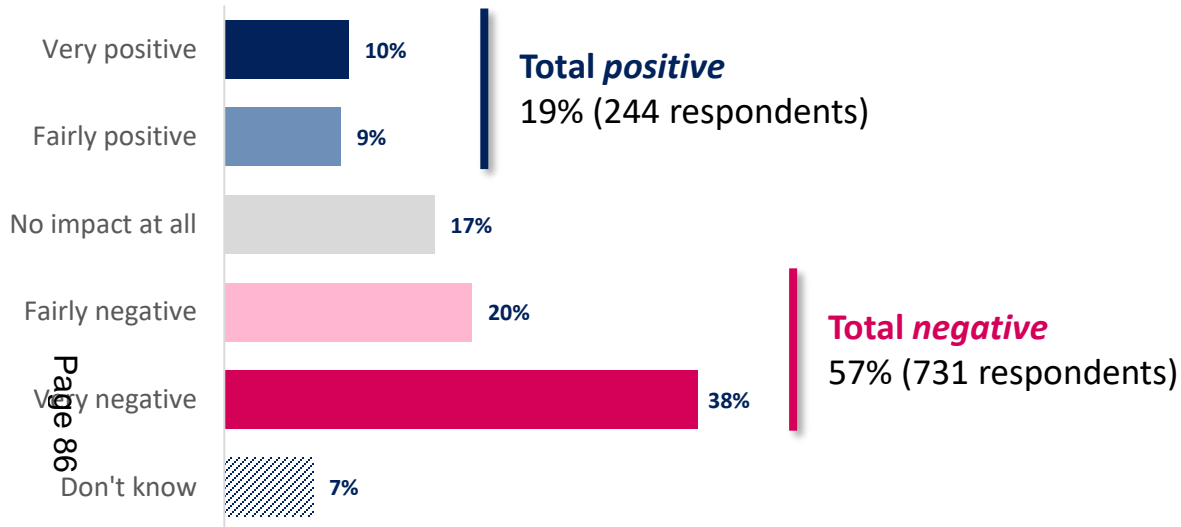
- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *negative* impact (65%), compared to having a *positive* impact (15%)
- Respondents using an e-scooter as mode of transport had the highest *positive* impact response (31%), compared with car/van users with 12% *positive*
- Respondents responded *negative* to a greater extent in the higher age brackets, with 77% of 75 or older responding *negative* and 51% for those aged between 18-24 years old

Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.

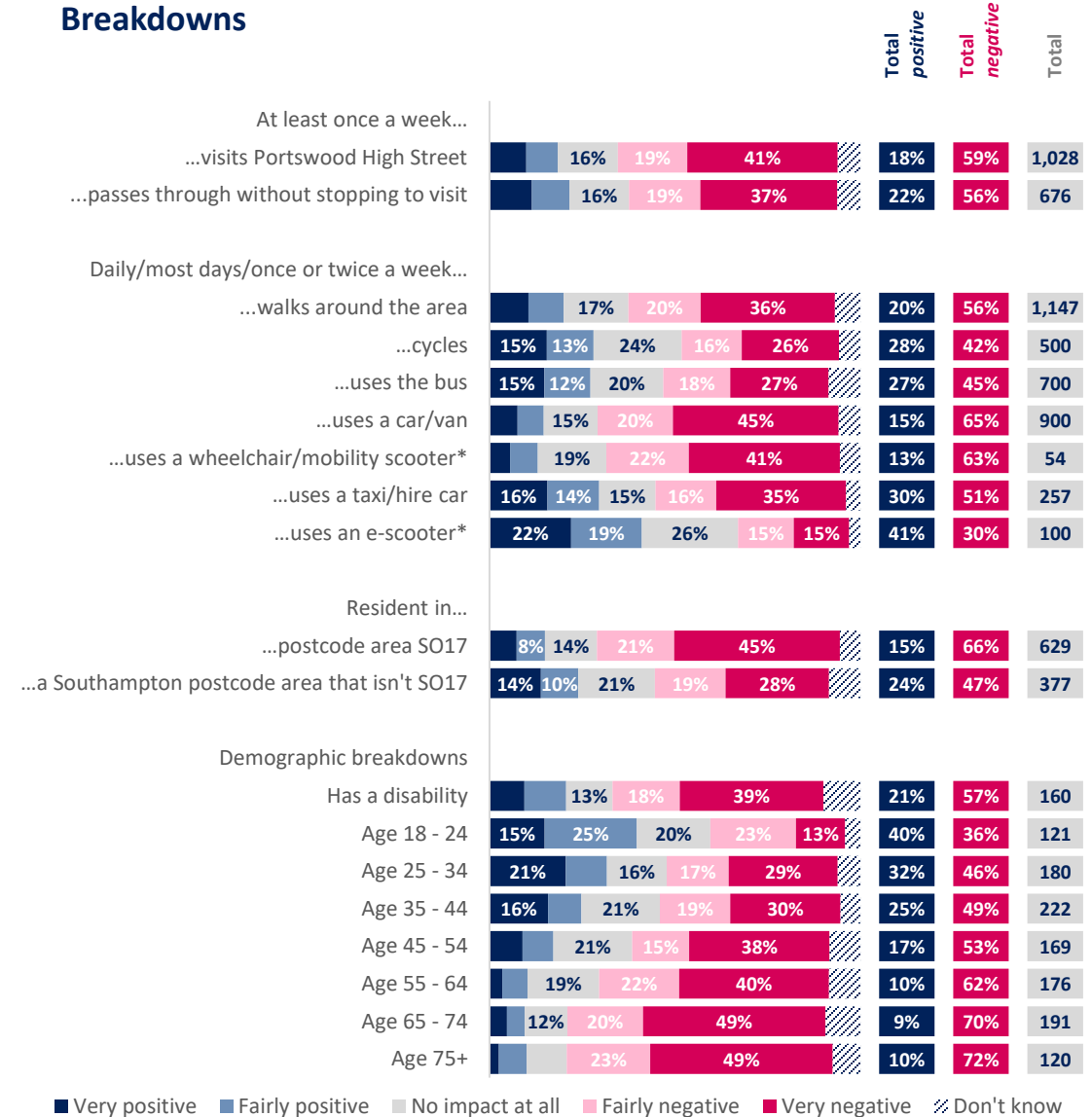
Question 16d | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Access to properties in the Highfield area* Responses | 1,278



Key findings

- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *negative* impact (57%), compared to having a *positive* impact (19%)
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *positive* 9% points more than those in SO17, 24% to 15%
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 40% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 9% of those aged between 65-74

Breakdowns

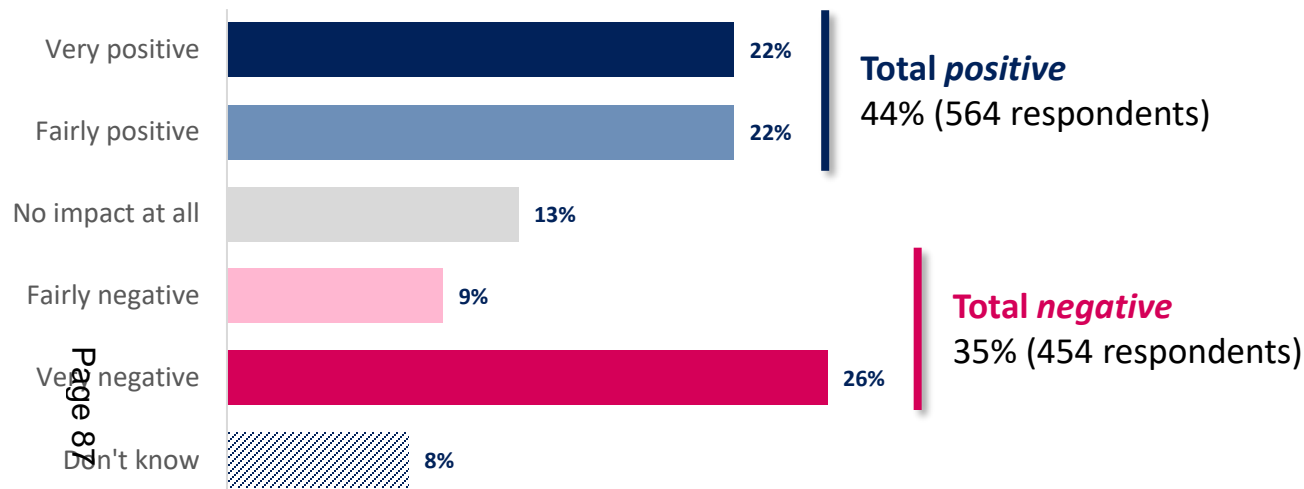


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 16e | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Reducing drivers using residential streets in the Highfield area as shortcuts*

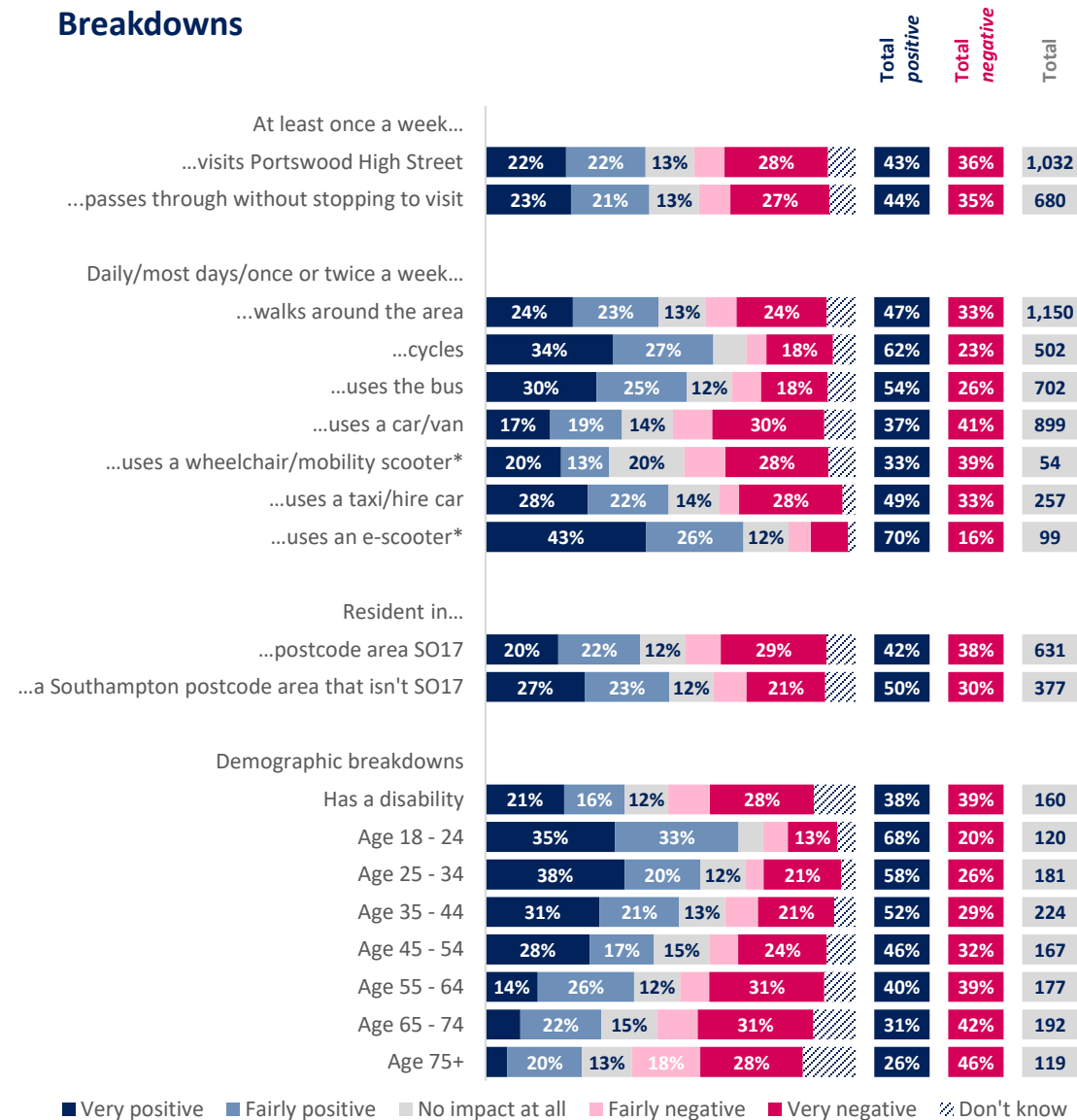
Responses | **1,281**



Key findings

- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *positive* impact (44%), however, closely followed by having a *negative* impact (35%)
- Respondents who cycle or use an e-scooter responded the highest for *positive* impact compared to other modes of transport with 62% & 70%
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 68% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 26% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

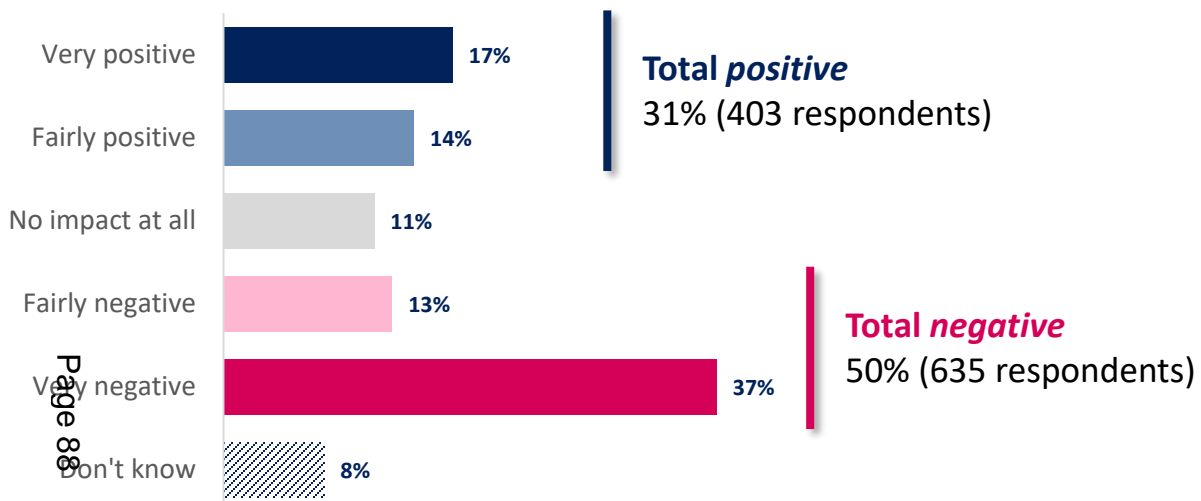


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 16f | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Overall experience of travelling across the city for all road users*

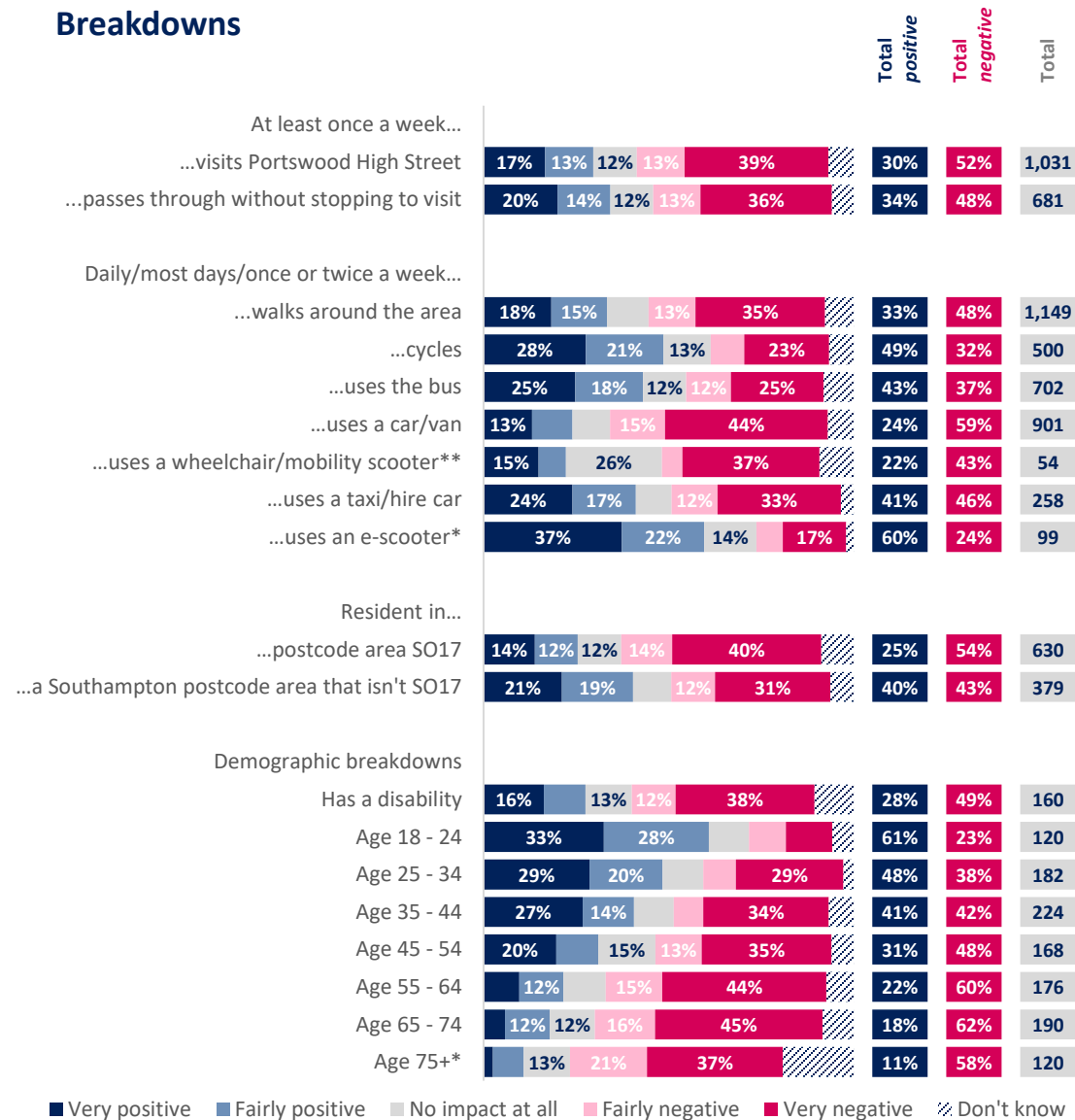
Responses | **1,280**



Key findings

- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *negative* impact (50%), compared to having a *positive* impact (31%)
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *positive* 15% points more than those in SO17, 40% to 25%
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 61% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 11% of those aged 75 or older doing so

Breakdowns

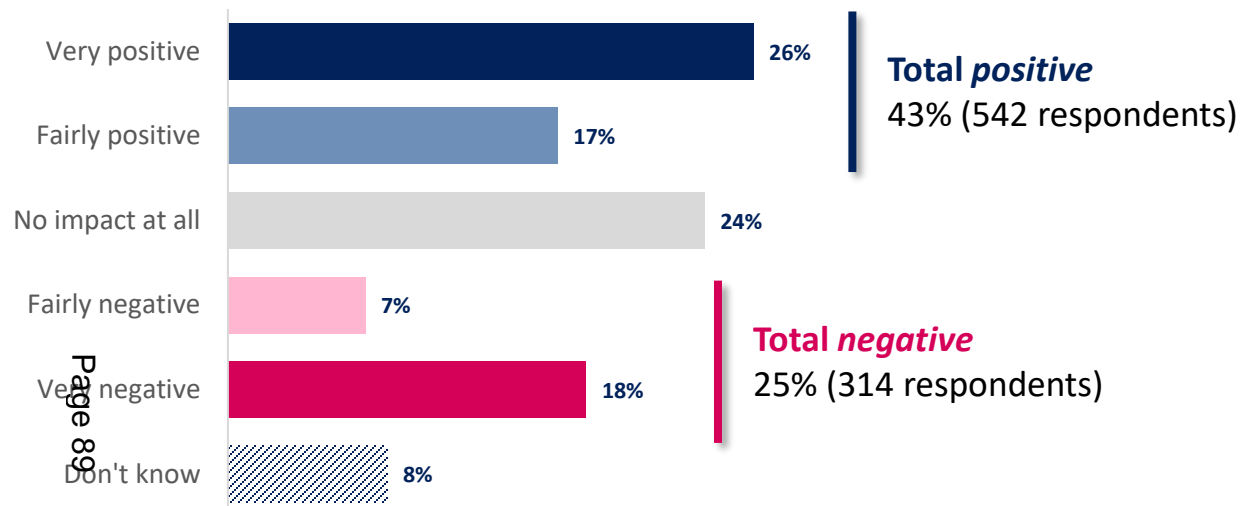


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Question 16g | If these plans were to go ahead, what impact do you feel it would have on the following? *Air quality*

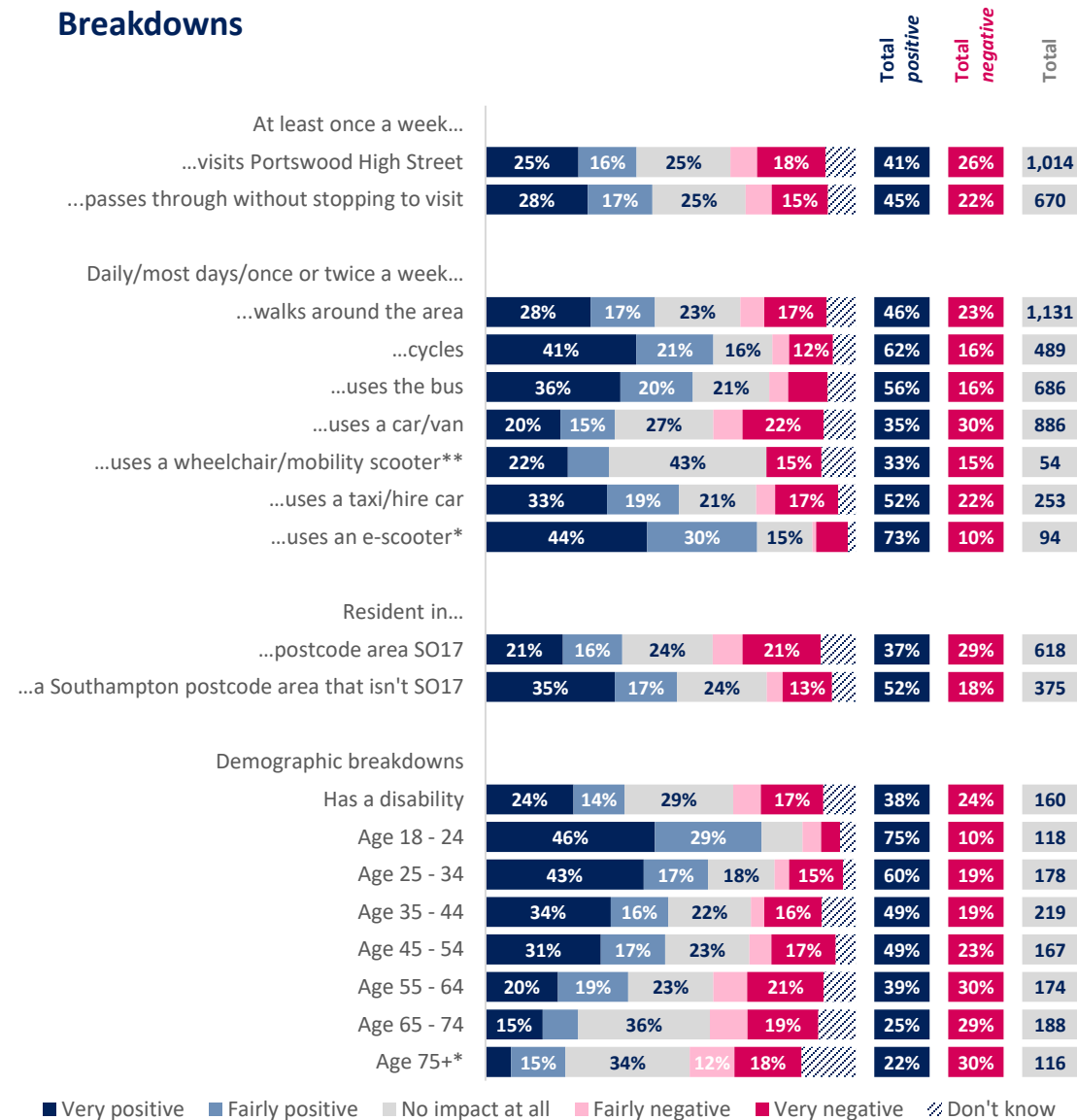
Responses | **1,259**



Key findings

- Respondents said the proposals would have more of a *positive* impact (43%), compared to having a *negative* impact (25%)
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded *positive* 15% points more than those in SO17, 52% to 37%
- Respondents responded *positive* to a greater extent in lower age brackets, with 75% of 18 – 24 year-olds responding *positive* and 22% of those aged 75 or older doing so

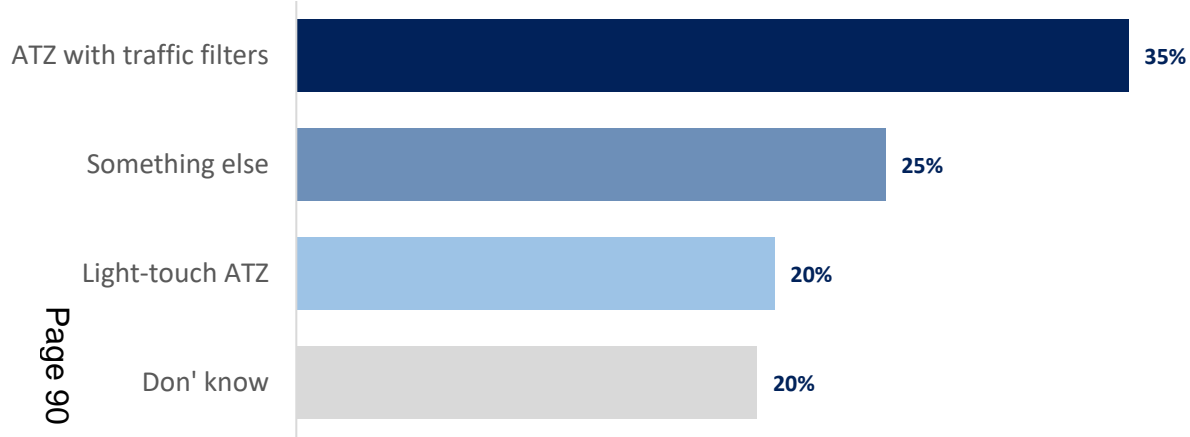
Breakdowns



*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.

Question 17 | Should these proposals be approved, which ATZ option would you prefer?

Responses | 977

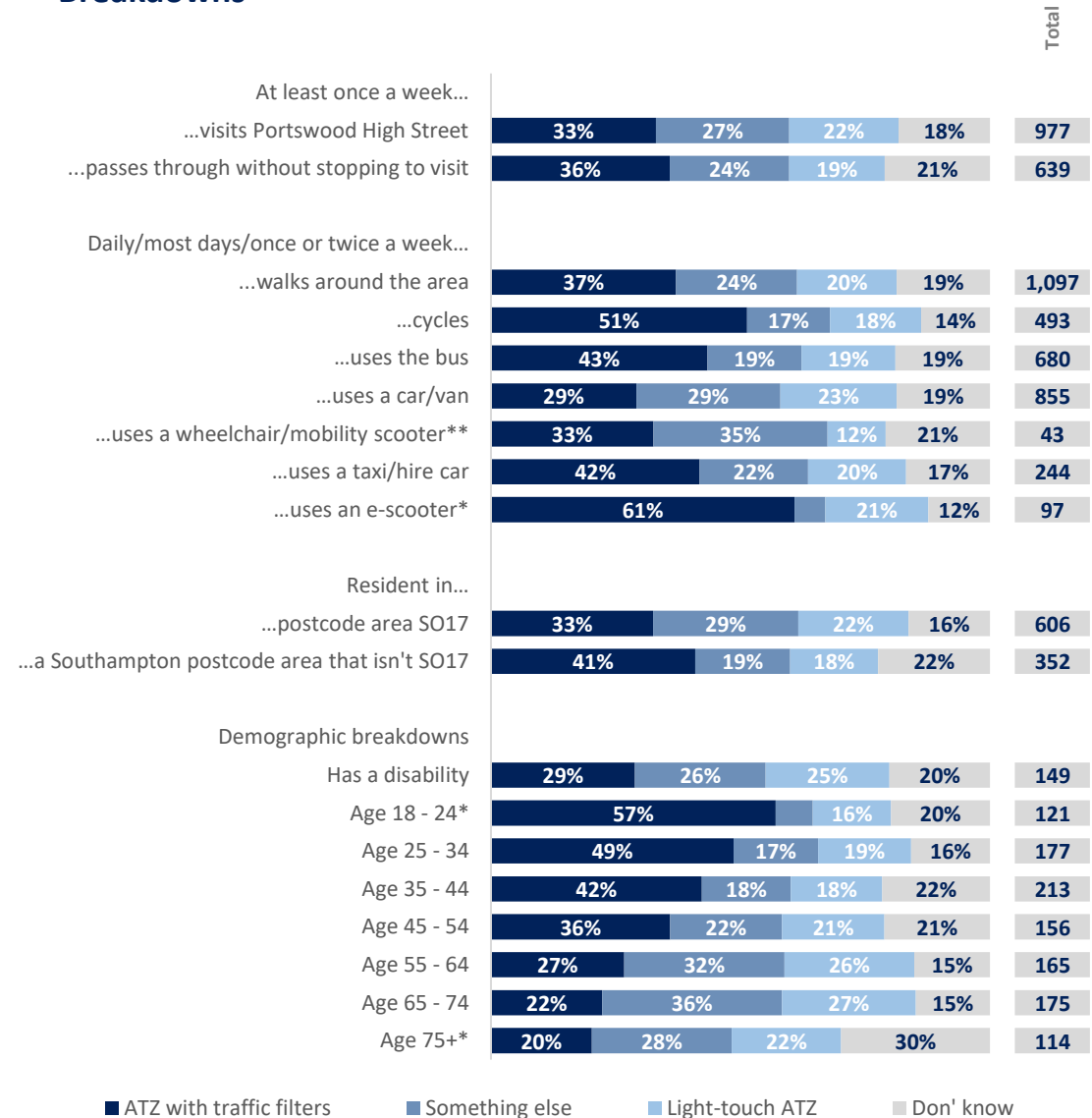


Page 90

Key findings

- 35% of respondents said they would prefer the ATZ with traffic filters option. The most unpopular ATZ option respondents would prefer is the Light – touch ATZ (20%).
- Those aged 18-24 had the highest response for the ATZ with traffic filters (57%), compared to 20% of those aged 75+ wanting this option.
- Those who use a car/van were torn between which option they would prefer. With 29% for both ATZ with traffic filters and something else.
- Respondents in the city outside postcode SO17 responded more favourable to the ATZ with traffic filters compared to those with a postcode area of SO17 – 41% to 33%.

Breakdowns

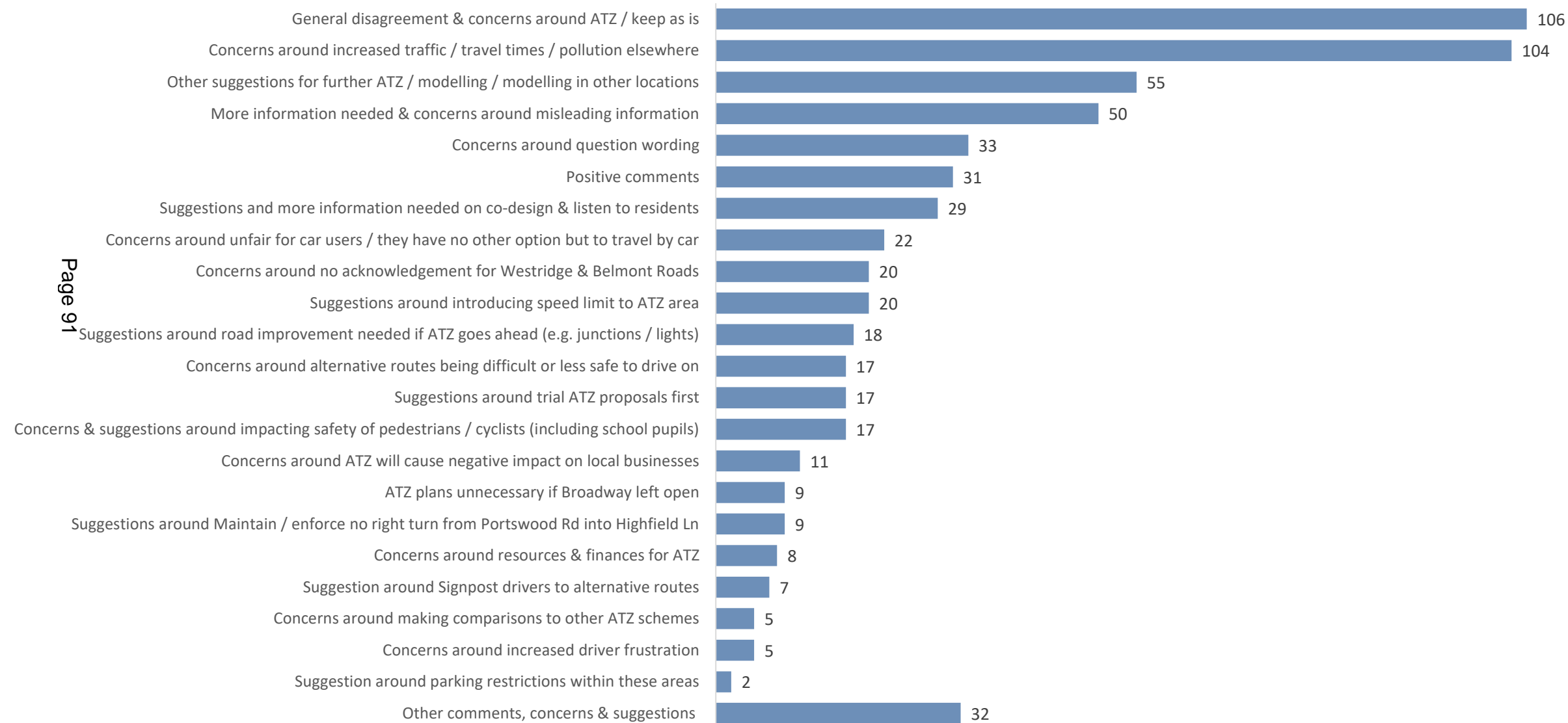


*Less than 100 respondents; **less than 50 respondents. Wheelchair/mobility scooter breakdown includes 'Once or twice a month' and 'Less often'.



Highfield Active Travel Zone

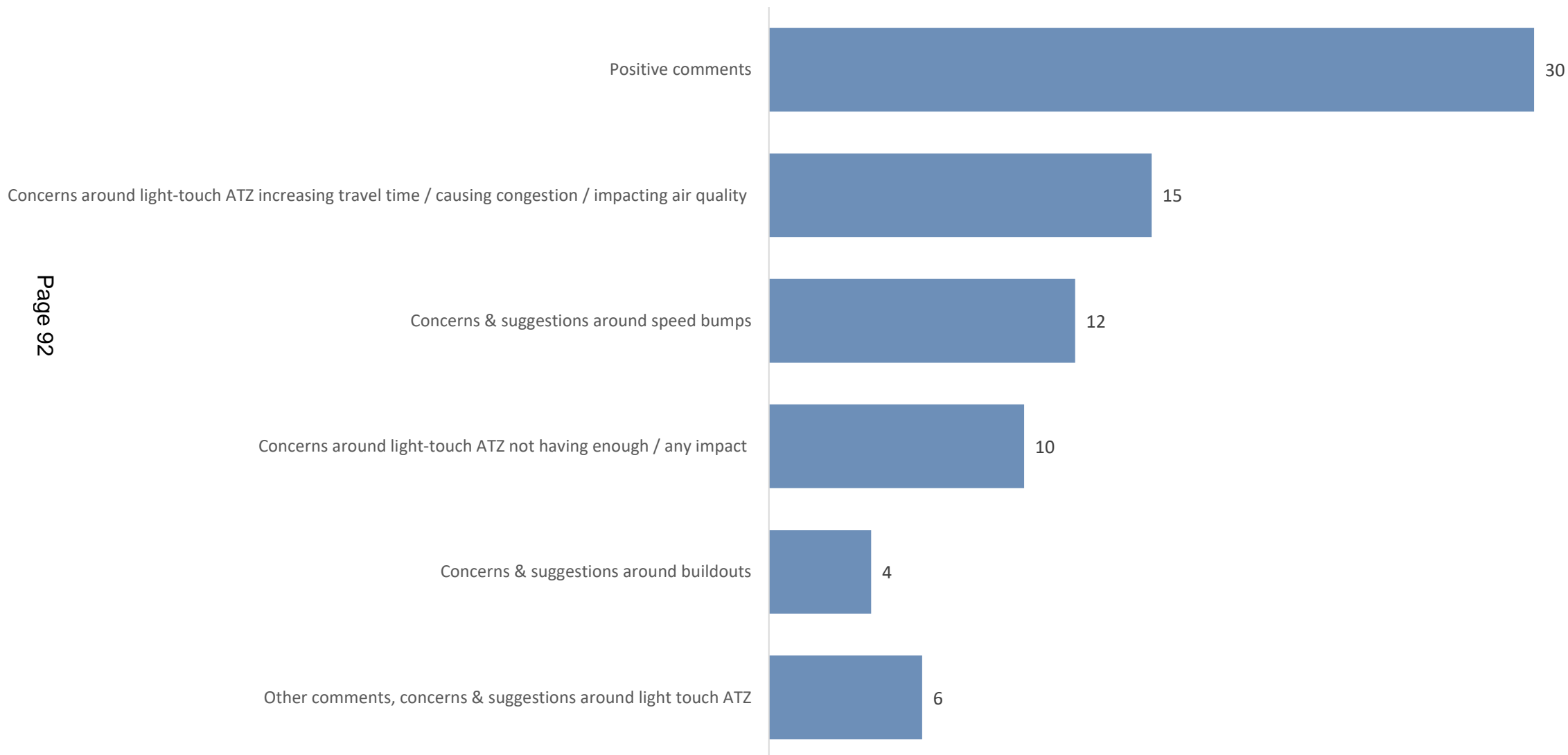
Total free text comments





Specifically light touch ATZ option

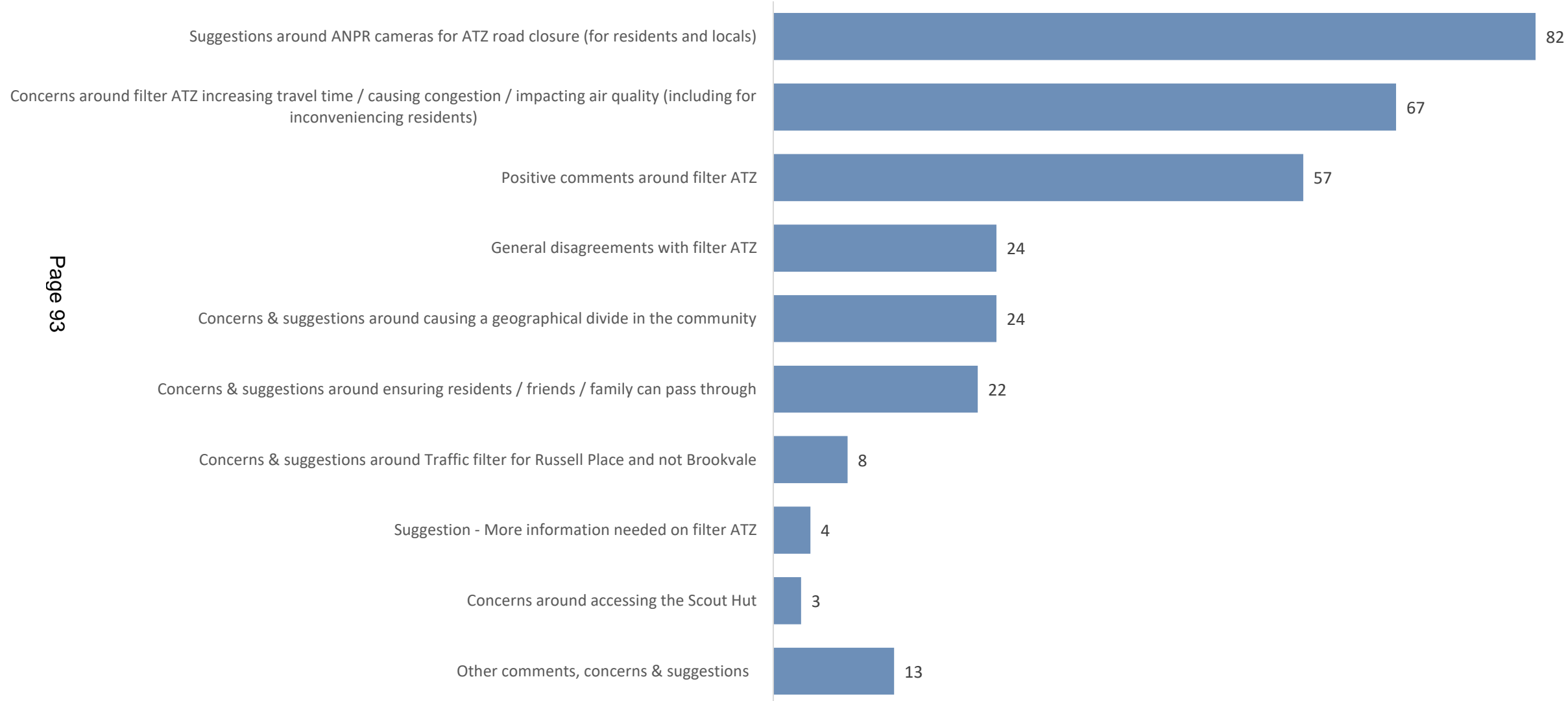
Total free text comments





Specifically Russell Place and Brookvale Road ATZ option

Total free text comments



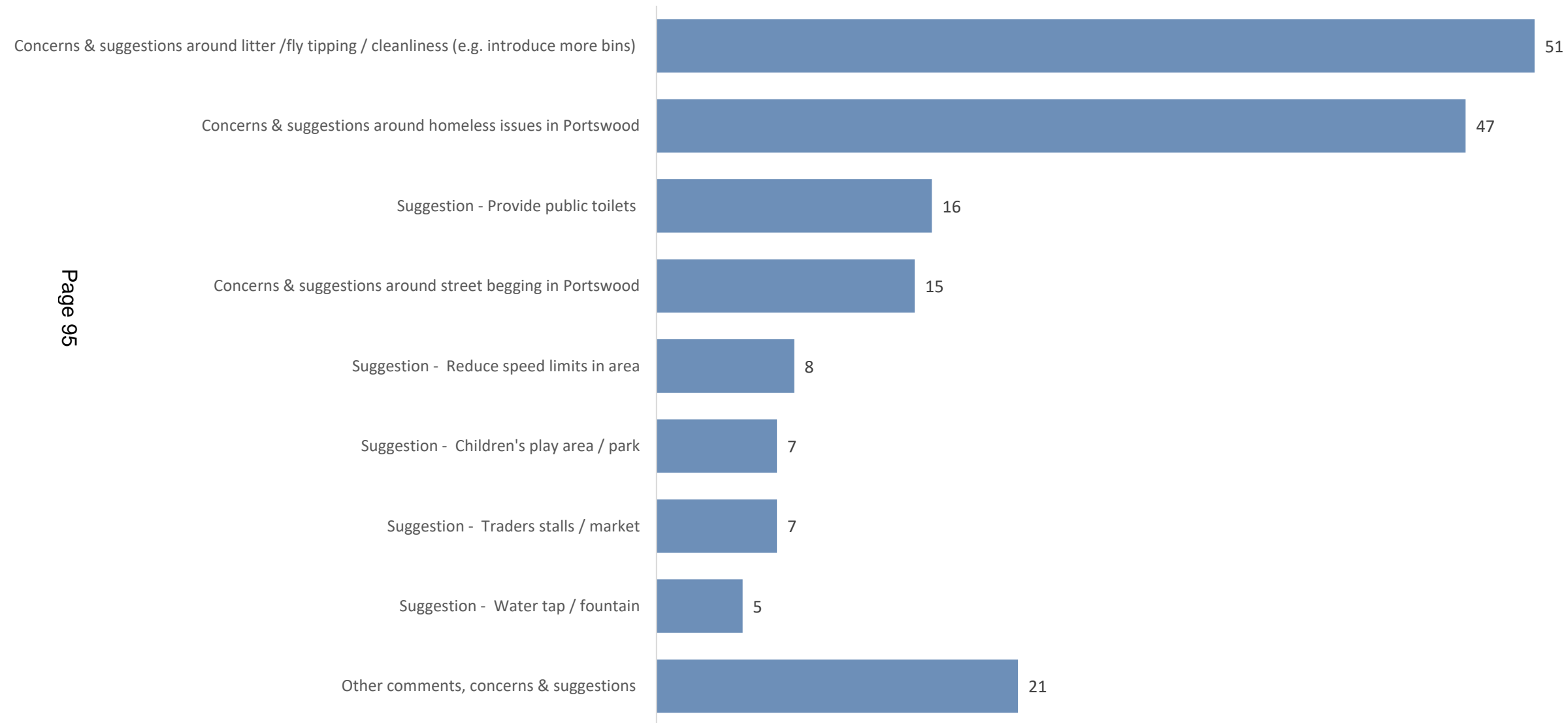


Additional free text comment analysis



Additional suggested areas of focus in the Portswood area

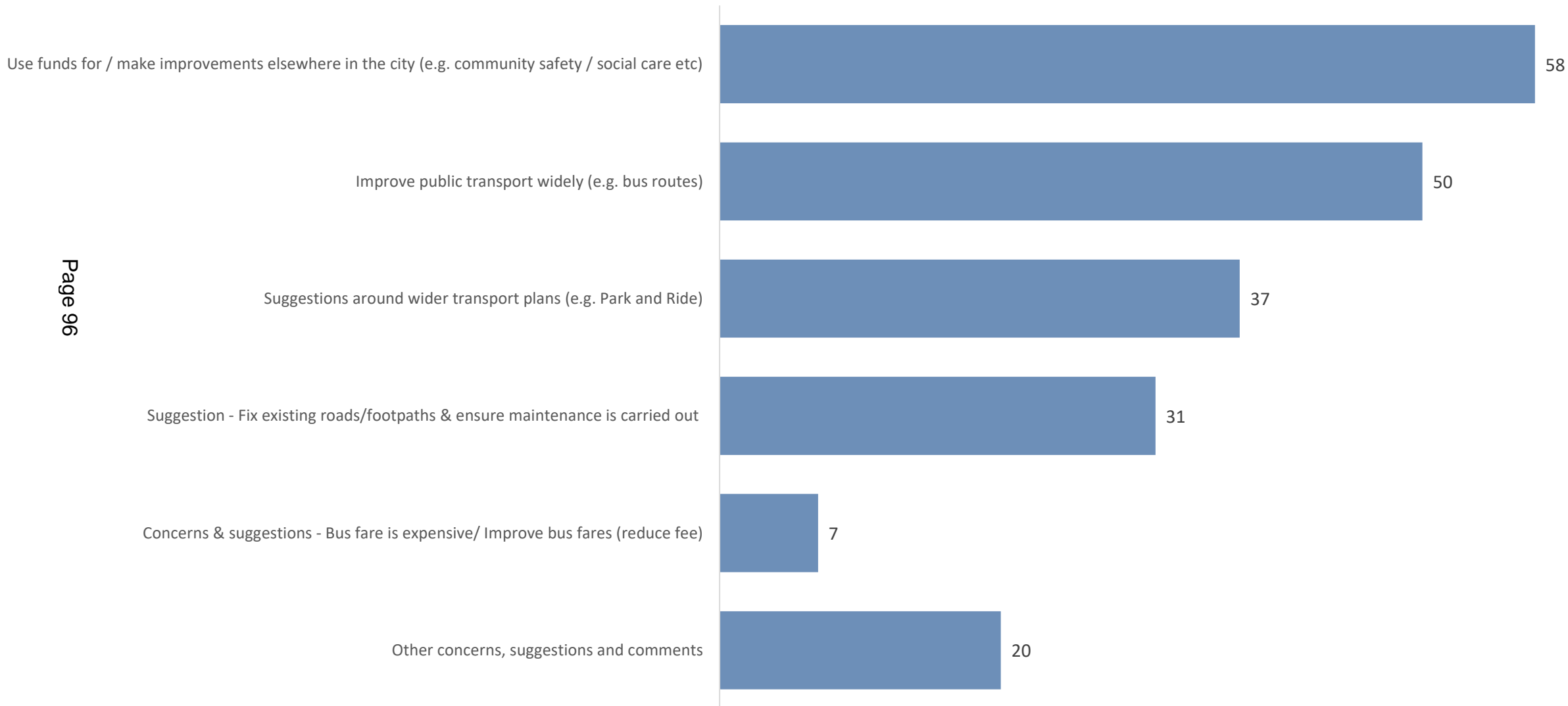
Total free text comments





Additional suggested areas of focus (e.g. across the city)

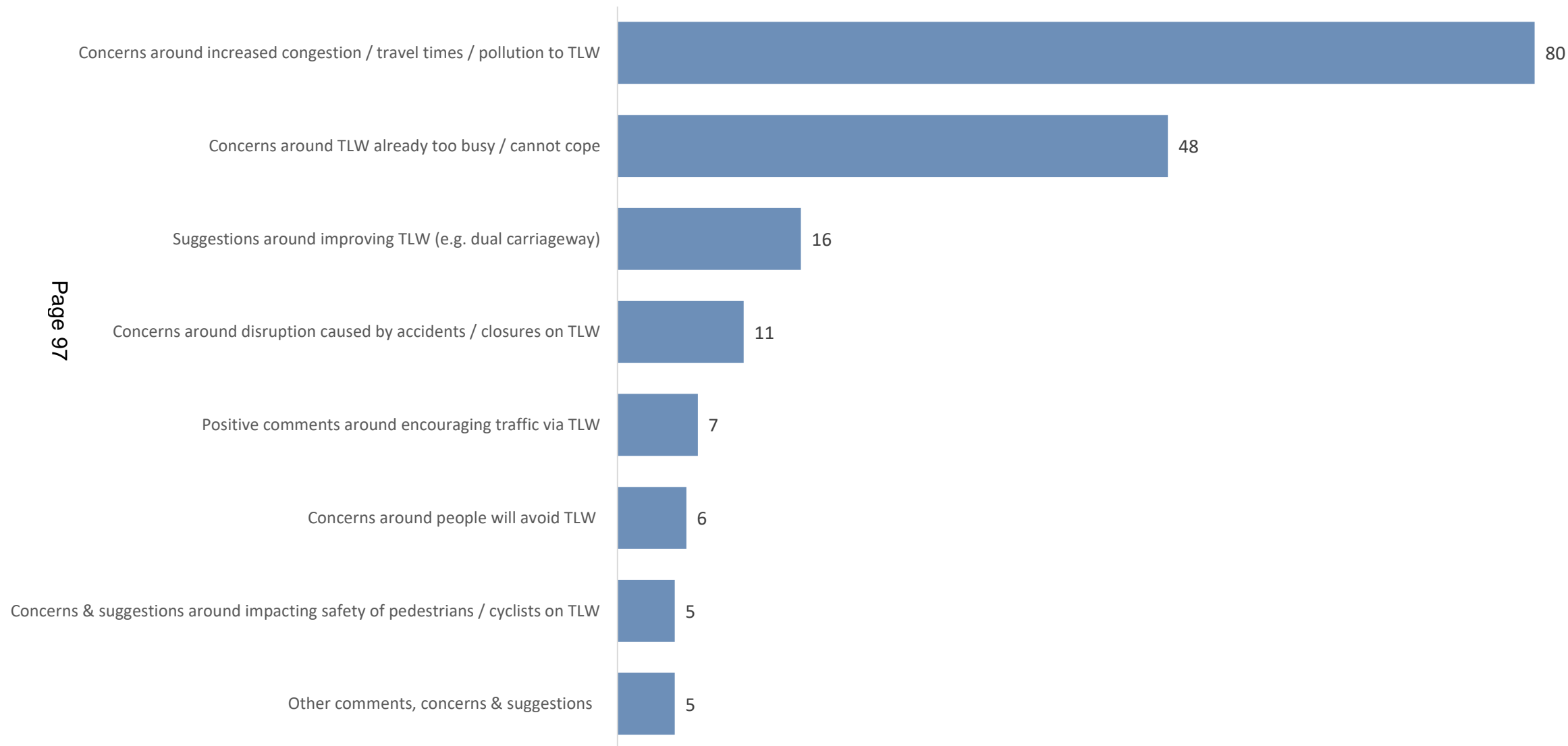
Total free text comments





Comments around Thomas Lewis Way (TLW)

Total free text comments



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Appendix 5 – “You Said, We Did”

Addressing free text comments received from questions with a comment from the Integrated Transport team in response.

	You said	Council Response
1	Trends in results – Age related, more support in younger demographic reducing to an older demographic on key questions	<p>The age profile of respondents to the survey reflects the age profile of Southampton City and Portswood Ward in 2023¹.</p> <p>Those responding to the aged 65+ was higher than the proportion of Portswood ward residents in same age bracket (26% of survey responses, although they make up 14.2% of the ward’s population). This indicates that the consultation was effective in engaging with a wide range of the population including the older demographic. Provision of a range of in-person consultation sessions - drop in sessions on Portswood Broadway, attending resident association & community group meetings, and production of brochures – alongside material online enabled effective engagement with all age ranges.</p> <p>Future engagement on the project will need to focus on this range of activities along with making materials available for longer (i.e. in libraries) as opposed to solely available online / website material.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to feed into the design process for Portswood Broadway and the Active Travel Zone. To ensure that all ages are considered and included participants will be sought from across the community – including seeking people to represent the views from elderly community.</p>
2	Trends in results – Mobility related with less support for respondents identified as having a disability / uses a wheelchair / mobility scooter)	As of the 2021 Census 17.7% of Southampton’s population, and 16.6% of Portswood ward, reported themselves as Disabled under the Equality Act. Respondents to the Portswood survey 14% identified as having a disability.

¹ Southampton Data Observatory Small Area Population Forecasts – Portswood Ward [Microsoft Power BI](#)

	You said	Council Response
		<p>Responses from people with a disability or use a wheelchair / mobility scooter have tended to have a lower positive / higher negative response to questions relating to attractiveness, visitor numbers, ease of access.</p> <p>An Access Strategy was prepared for the consultation material, and more work is required to refine the Strategy and seek input into the Strategy from people who represent the views from people who are disabled.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to feed into the design process for Portswood Broadway and the Active Travel Zone. To ensure that all abilities are considered and included participants will be sought from across the community – including seeking people to represent the views of people with disabilities (hidden and/or visible).</p> <p>The Council’s Accessibility Forum will be engaged in progressing the scheme and provide a critical review function on scheme design.</p>
3	Concerns & suggestions – increased traffic elsewhere / journey times / rat runs	<p>Information was provided on the predicted traffic flows for surrounding roads to Portswood Broadway. Depending on the different scenarios for the proposed Active Travel Zone (ATZ) information was provided on traffic flows on those roads. Some of the proposed measures in the ATZ will reduce the displaced Portswood Broadway traffic on those adjacent local roads, and increase them on main roads such as A335 Thomas Lewis Way.</p> <p>It is proposed that the ATZ is designed with a community co-design process. Information will be provided to participants on different measures that could be introduced and what impact that they would have on traffic being displaced / journey times in the area. Participants will then be able to make an informed choice on the measures to be implemented.</p> <p>As part of the ATZ and Portswood Broadway scheme implementation the impacts would be monitored to understand the before and after situations. Measures within an ATZ can be trialled</p>

	You said	Council Response
		through Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders and adjusted as necessary depending on the outcomes. The monitoring would feed into the evaluation of a trial scheme (see 5 for details).
4	Concern – Air quality / pollution / net zero – it may increase or shift elsewhere	<p>Information was provided on the Council’s ambition for the then Green City Charter - now updated / replaced with the Climate Change Strategy. The scheme supports Goal 4 – apply authority and use influences to support the city in becoming net zero and climate change ready by 2035.</p> <p>A priority for the plan is to deliver on the long-term Local Transport Plan including a Mass Transit System – of which the Portswood corridor is an essential element to achieving this. Modelling carried out as part of the Strategic Outline Business Case for submission to the Department for Transport has indicated that as a corridor Fair Oak – Eastleigh – Portswood / St Denys / Southampton, the range of packages and interventions in the TCF bid will result in up to nine minutes of journey time savings for buses, improvements in average speeds and increase reliability of bus. This in turn will lead to more people choosing to travel by bus over private car transport. With more people changing their transport modes to more sustainable and less polluting options, there will be a net benefit for air quality along the corridor and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Modelling done for the Strategic Outline Business Case indicates that as a whole package, TCF will result in 6,100 fewer vehicle trips a day by 2026 and an increase of 4,600 bus journeys made a day by 2026.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to other measures that reduce air pollution in the area, such as roll out of EV charging to help accelerate a switch to a cleaner vehicle fleet in conjunction with the Council’s upcoming bid to Government for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding for additional EV charging points. These can be located in local streets and destinations such as Portswood. Consideration for working with the bus operators on making the buses zero-emission as well.</p> <p>As part of the introduction of the scheme, monitoring of Air Quality will be carried out pre / post scheme in the area and can feed into elements of trial evaluation (see 7 for details).</p>

	You said	Council Response
5	Concern – Will have a negative impact on the community / local residents	<p>It is noted that the scheme has majority of respondents indicating a positive response on impacts such as attractiveness, safety and travel by bus / walking / cycling. However, some respondents were concerned about the impact from the scheme and the combination of the scheme for Portswood Broadway and Active Travel Zone. Other locations where schemes have been implemented in Southampton and wider in the South East have seen residents initially having a negative perception of scheme introduced changing their perception after experiencing the scheme.</p> <p>The consultation feedback has indicated that the scheme will have a negative effect on travelling by car to Portswood Broadway.</p> <p>Noting that there are some concerns about the scheme, it is recommended that the scheme proposal is altered and trialled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction times to be 7am-10am and 4pm-7pm (Part time bus gate) to allow some access for loading and people who chose to drive but to ensure some form of bus priority in the AM / PM peak hours • A reduction in the size of the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction to be from Westridge Road to St Denys Road Spur
6	Concern – around e-scooters and bikes (eg riding on pavements)	<p>The Council is addressing e-scooter issues/ nuisance riding in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing dedicated space on the highway such as cycle lanes / reduced traffic flows so riders will feel safer / segregated from normal traffic and will not feel the need to ride on pavements. Use of the cycle lanes / reduced traffic flow roads will be quicker than along the pavement and will be a more attractive route for journeys; and • Extending the Voi e-scooter trial in alignment with Department for Transport guidance and providing a framework for e-scooter use which is more responsible / reportable / able to be monitored. The current e-scooter supplier Voi allows for reporting of nuisance / illegal riding to a portal and has a tiered punishment system which will eventually see riders suspended or unable to use an e-scooter.

	You said	Council Response
		<p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – the working group will examine ways to deter pavement riding through the use of street furniture / trees (but noting that there will need to be a balance between deterring pavement riding and the need for some clutter free routes for people with mobility / visual impairment issues)</p>
7	<p>Suggestion – support a trial / conduct a trial</p>	<p>Respondents with a SO17 postcode favoured a trial of the proposed measures for Portswood Broadway.</p> <p>Noting that there are some concerns about the scheme, it is recommended that the scheme proposal is altered and trialled for 6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration to the extent of the bus gate/motor vehicle restriction to be from Westridge Road to St Denys Road Spur • A reduction in the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction times to be 7am-10am and 4pm-7pm (Part time bus gate) to allow some access for loading and people who chose to drive but to ensure some form of bus priority in the AM / PM peak hours <p>A trial of the bus gate on Portswood Broadway would allow the ATZ measures to be installed and adjusted if assumptions made such as traffic displacement were not correct, or there were unintended consequences such as displacement to another road.</p> <p>Information was provided during the consultation on a potential phasing of any trial, with the ATZ measures installed / trialled ahead of ongoing community co-design of the measures for Portswood Broadway, which would allow time to address the issues raised in this consultation.</p> <p>The Council has the use of trial powers through Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) – this would allow installation of measures such as motor vehicle restrictions and have the ability to make changes to the restriction before they are made permanent. Consultation is carried out throughout the ETRO period allowing continuous feedback.</p>

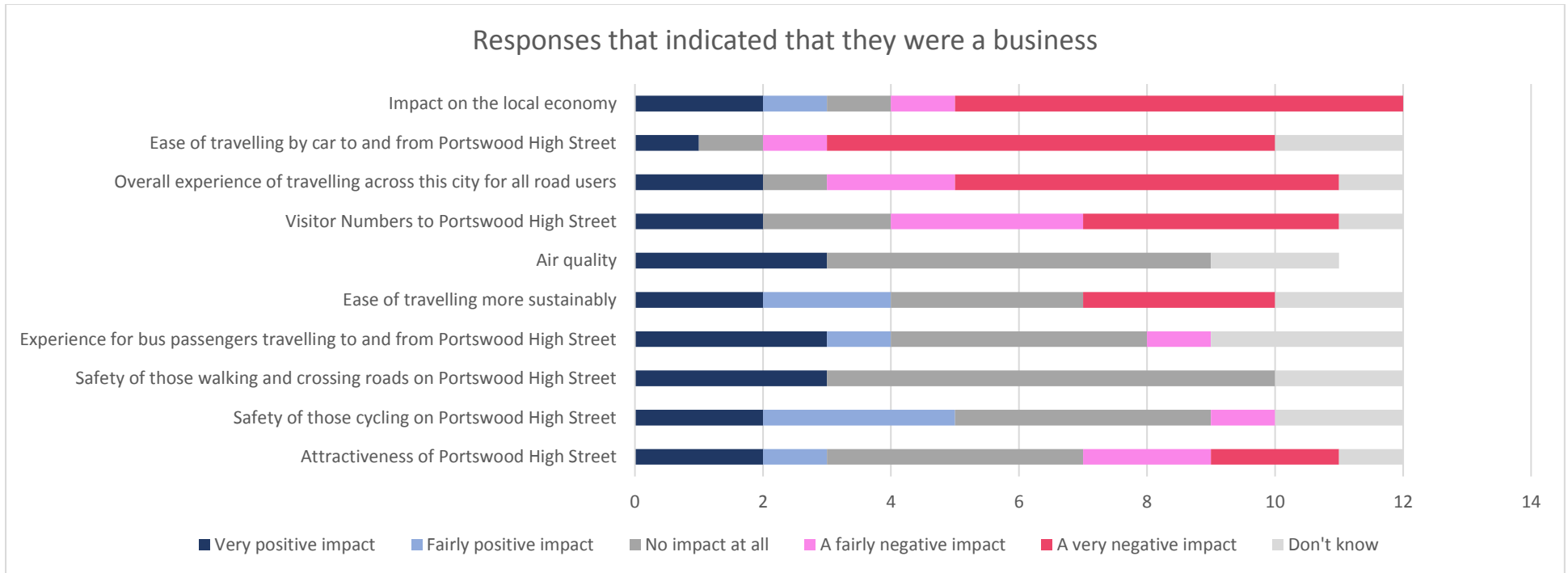
	You said	Council Response
		<p>The measures of a trial will include pre / post traffic flows on roads, the use of air quality monitors, resident / retail / visitor feedback. Measures will also be taken in relation to business activity – footfall counters, engagement with businesses on spend / profit, and spend profiles of visitors to the area.</p> <p>It is proposed to undertake a six month trial of any measures introduced on the Broadway area that restrict motor vehicle access.</p>
8	Concern – proposal not helping economy and decreasing footfall	<p>Opinion was split on the question relating the information provided about the impact on the economy, and what impact the scheme would have. The results by profile (age, people with a disability, mode of transport) mirror the responses on other questions.</p> <p>The results indicate that further work is required to examine the impacts of the scheme beyond an independent Economic Impact Assessment, and the use of a trial implementation would allow additional information to be gathered to determine the impact on the economy. This information would be used as part of the assessment on the outcome of the trial.</p> <p>As part of the scheme, a strategy will be created to increasing economic activity in the area. Businesses have been engaged since the consultation and meetings have been held to establish a Business Engagement Forum – information will be provided to this forum on how business can take advantage of schemes such as Portswood Broadway to increase economic activity.</p>
9	Concern – removal of street parking for those with disabilities	<p>An Access Strategy was prepared for the consultation material, and more work is required to refine the Strategy and seek input from people who represent the views from people who are disabled.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including seeking people to represent the views from people with disabilities. The Council’s Accessibility Forum will be engaged in progressing the scheme and provide a critical review function on scheme design.</p>

	You said	Council Response
10	Concern – accessing Portswood and having to drive further for those with disabilities	<p>The scheme is proposing to reduce traffic volumes on Portswood Broadway via the use of a motor vehicle restriction along the Broadway.</p> <p>A review of the consultation results has led to a recommendation for a reduction in the motor vehicle restriction in terms of position and time of operation. It is proposed to proceed to trial a restriction between Westridge Road and the St Denys Road spur road 7am-10am and 4pm-7pm. This will allow some access through the Broadway for people who chose to drive but provide bus priority in the peak hours. The times would be part of the trial to determine if the hours of operation are suitable or requiring reviewing.</p>
11	Concern – Lack of Police presence / handling of reported crimes	<p>Hampshire Police has recently received additional funding under the Government’s Safer Streets Fund to address neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls, and anti-social behaviour. The project will provide additional CCTVs on Portswood Broadway.</p> <p>The Council continue to work with Police in the area to address anti-social behaviour.</p>
12	Concern – Proposal causing an increase in crime and antisocial behaviour	<p>Businesses have been engaged since the consultation and meetings have been held to establish a Business Engagement Forum – which has included attendance from the Police who have inputted into concepts for the area to reduce crime.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including having representatives from the Police to advise on aspects such as designing out crime in public spaces.</p> <p>Hampshire Police has recently received additional funding under the Government’s Safer Streets Fund to address neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls, and anti-social behaviour. The project will provide additional CCTVs on Portswood Broadway.</p>

	You said	Council Response
13	Concern – Increased seating negatively impacting feeling of safety	<p>The proposal for Portswood Broadway is to introduce additional seating to provide opportunities to stop and rest – especially for elderly and people with disabilities who may not be able to travel for longer distances. The benefits for these groups would outweigh any potential use for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The design of seating spaces and the furniture used will take into consideration their potential use for anti-social behaviour, and will be part of the community co-design for the space.</p>
14	Concern – disagreement with a proposed Active Travel Zone – keep as is	<p>Although the majority of respondents favoured some form of an Active Travel Zone, free text comments received showed some respondents were against an Active Travel Zone / keeping the area as it is.</p> <p>During community drop in sessions, the objection to an Active Travel Zone focused more as an objection to the Portswood Broadway scheme - in that a resident was opposed to the Broadway scheme they were more likely to be opposed to an Active Travel Zone.</p> <p>With the introduction of a motor vehicle restriction on Portswood Broadway being recommended (via a trial), there will be some traffic displacement in the area. The introduction of an Active Travel Zone is designed to mitigate the impact.</p> <p>The measures implemented as part of an Active Travel Zone can be scalable on their impact based on the community co-design process and it may be the community decide on measures that still allow existing access arrangements in the area to be retained.</p>
15	Suggestions for inclusion of options for Active Travel Zone	<p>It is proposed that the Active Travel Zone is designed with a community co-design process. Information will be provided to participants on different measures that could be introduced and what impact that they would have on traffic being displaced / journey times in the area. Participants will then be able to make an informed choice on the measures to be implemented.</p>

Appendix 6 – Responses that identified as a business

Results for the 12 businesses: (results are number of responses, not percentages)



Addressing free text comments received from questions with a comment from the Integrated Transport team in response

You said	Council Response
<p>Concerns over loading – delivery time of day cannot be guaranteed, parcels will be difficult to moved from truck to store front over large distances</p>	<p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including seeking people to represent the views from businesses.</p> <p>Noting that there are some concerns about the scheme, it is recommended that the scheme proposal is altered and trialled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction times to be 7am-10am and 4pm-7pm (Part time bus gate) to allow some access for people who chose to drive but to ensure some form of bus priority in the AM / PM peak hours • A reduction in the size of the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction to be from Westridge Road to St Denys Road spur road <p>The bus gate / motor vehicle restriction may have an exemption for HGV movements south – north to allow for trucks to provide loading for Portswood Broadway from the south and exit without having to turn around / use Westridge Road to exit the Broadway area. In addition, a loading bay could be introduced on the St Denys Road spur road adjacent to the proposed Travel Hub, which would provide for loading opportunities from St Denys Road or the north.</p>

<p>Car users come to the area for the convenience of on street car parking and reduction of this will impact business</p>	<p>An Access Strategy was prepared for the consultation material which showed that car users will still be able to access existing on-street car parking spaces.</p> <p>Noting that there are some concerns about the scheme, it is recommended that the scheme proposal is altered and trialled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction times to be 7am-10am and 4pm-7pm (Part time bus gate) to allow some access for people who chose to drive but to ensure some form of bus priority in the AM / PM peak hours • A reduction in the size of the bus gate / motor vehicle restriction to be from Westridge Road to St Denys Road spur road <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including seeking people to represent the views from businesses.</p>
<p>Spend money on Policing and security cameras</p>	<p>Hampshire Police has recently received additional funding under the Government's Safer Streets Fund to address neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls, and anti-social behaviour. The project will provide additional CCTVs on Portswood Broadway.</p> <p>The Council continue to work with Police in the area to address anti-social behaviour.</p>

<p>Current bus network are not good enough to be relied on for providing main access / requires a city wide improvement</p>	<p>The Portswood Broadway scheme is one part of the wider Transforming Cities Fund projects which is improving four corridors across the city, plus the city centre. The key aims are to deliver an ambitious proposal of transport investment to sustainably connect people from where they live to the City Centre, places of work, education and leisure, aiming to increase the number of people cycling, walking and using public transport, reduce congestion, improve air quality, and place Southampton at the forefront of economic competitiveness and productivity.</p> <p>Further work will be carried out on the Council's Local Transport Plan after the completion of the Transforming Cities Fund to identify gaps in the transport offering across the city region. Ongoing work on the Bus Service Improvement Plan will also see a review of the city wide bus network and what routes may be required after the improved bus priority works</p>
<p>Other schemes like these have not worked – recent Bedford Place / Carlton Place for example</p>	<p>The submission quoted recent scheme where prioritising pedestrians has not worked such as Bedford Place. Ongoing work with retailers of Bedford Place since the introduction of the scheme has indicated that local businesses are in favour of the scheme and acknowledge the benefits that the scheme has delivered for footfall and turn over for their businesses.</p> <p>However, it is proposed to introduce the scheme on a trial basis.</p> <p>The measures of a trial will include pre / post traffic flows on roads, the use of air quality monitors, resident / retail / visitor feedback. Measures will also be taken in relation to business activity – footfall counters, engagement with businesses on spend / profit, and spend profiles of visitors to the area.</p> <p>It is proposed to undertake a six month trial of any measures introduced on the Broadway area that restrict motor vehicle access.</p>
<p>Concern that there will be no enforcement of the proposed restrictions</p>	<p>The Council is required to follow Department for Transport guidelines on the introduction of motor vehicle restrictions and their enforcement. This includes the Council exhausting other solutions such as engineering treatments / signage before carrying out camera enforcement.</p> <p>The scheme will be introduced on a trial basis which will include examination of the level of compliance before camera enforcement can be introduced.</p>

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Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Portswood Broadway next steps
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>Transport and Planning / Integrated Transport service is responsible for the policy and strategy relating to all transport activities within the City.</p> <p>It is responsible for managing the Local Transport Plan (LTP), Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) between the Council and local bus operators, and the Southampton Cycling Strategy.</p> <p>Integrated Transport is delivering the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) – a government funded programme to provide changes to the transport network including improving walking / wheeling, providing bus priority to make buses faster and more reliable, and new transport interchanges. Portswood Broadway is a scheme in the Eastleigh – Portswood – City corridor for the TCF programme. The extent of the proposals are for Portswood Broadway and surrounding areas including Highfield.</p> <p>Customers for the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who drive along Portswood Road • People who visit / shop at Portswood Broadway • Retailers / traders who trade at Portswood Broadway • Residents in the surrounding area of Portswood Broadway 	
Summary of Impact and Issues	
To authorise the trial of a part time bus gate / motor vehicle restriction on	

Portswood Broadway via an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order
 Measures to limit the impact on adjacent streets via an Active Travel Zone
 To establish a co-design group to inform design decisions for Portswood Broadway

Access to the Broadway area by those who chose to drive

Increased traffic elsewhere by displacing traffic from Portswood Broadway

Impact on the local economy due to reduced access for those who chose to drive

Anti-social behaviour from e-scooter riders

Access to the Broadway for those with mobility issues

Anti-social behaviour in the wider area

Potential Positive Impacts

Improved reliability and journey times for buses

Provision of better facilities for those who chose to walk / wheel

Improvements to local economy from increased visitor numbers overall

Increased biodiversity / greening in public spaces

Improved security / CCTV presence / safer spaces by design

Design principles focusing on improvements for people with disabilities / aged / mobility issues

Responsible Service Manager	Wade Holmes
Date	December 2023
Approved by Senior Manager	
Date	

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	<p>Consultation results indicate an age trend in results with the older demographic more likely to indicate that the proposals will have a negative impact on</p> <p>Ease of travelling more sustainably</p> <p>Ease of travelling by car</p>	<p>Bus travel forms a key transport mode for people aged over 65 with the availability of the concessionary bus pass. This project will make bus travel more attractive and a viable option</p> <p>The scheme design will take design principles of 8-80 – designing for all abilities / age ranges. Documents references will include LTN1/20 cycle design guide.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to feed into the design process for Portswood Broadway and the Active Travel Zone. To ensure that all ages are considered and included participants will be sought from across the community – including seeking people to represent the views from elderly community.</p>
Disability	<p>Consultation results indicate that people who identified as having a disability / use a wheelchair / mobility aide more likely to indicate that the proposals will have a negative impact on:</p>	<p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to feed into the design process for Portswood Broadway and the Active Travel Zone. To ensure that all abilities are considered and included participants</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of travelling more sustainably • Ease of travelling by car 	<p>will be sought from across the community – including seeking people to represent the views of people with disabilities (hidden and/or visible).</p> <p>The Council's Accessibility Forum will be engaged in progressing the scheme and provide a critical review function on scheme design.</p> <p>The scheme is proposing to introduce design elements such as Alzheimer friendly features, seating / rest areas for people who cannot walk long distances, new accessible kerbs for loading / unloading onto buses, and providing accessible pavements including new drop kerbs and level pavement surfaces.</p> <p>The operation time of the proposed bus gate / motor vehicle restriction has now been suggested as a timed restriction to allow from access for loading and people who chose to drive – new restriction 7am – 10am and 4pm – 7pm</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>Data has not been sourced about gender reassignment in the consultation survey</p> <p>Of the 1,007 hate crimes reported in Southampton in</p>	<p>An upgraded bus interchange as part of the works will provide increased seating, lighting and information on routes to limit the time</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<p>2023, less than 50 were related to transgender identity.</p> <p>Safety concerns relating to hate crime may be exacerbated at night time and in darkness</p>	<p>required to wait for buses.</p> <p>Additional CCTV will be installed to address antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portwood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including having representatives from the Police to advise on aspects such as designing out crime in public spaces.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>Data has not been sourced for marriage / civil partnership usage on the Broadway</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposals will have a greater negative impact on these individuals</p>	<p>No specific mitigation is proposed</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Impact relates to issues of accessibility with reduced mobility / using buggies for transport</p> <p>People in this category who chose to drive may need to park in closer proximity to their destination</p> <p>People in this category who chose to cycle may have larger styled bicycles (cargo bikes)</p>	<p>The scheme is proposing to introduce design elements such as Alzheimer friendly features, seating / rest areas for people who cannot walk long distances, new accessible kerbs for loading / unloading onto buses, and providing accessible pavements including new drop kerbs and level pavement surfaces.</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		<p>The operation time of the proposed bus gate / motor vehicle restriction has now been suggested to be timed to allow from access for loading and people who chose to drive – new restriction 7am – 10am and 4pm – 7pm</p>
Race	<p>80.7 % of Southampton residents identify with being white, with 10.6% identify being Asian / Asian British, 3% identify being Black, Black British</p> <p>Of the 1,007 hate crimes reports in Southampton in 2021, the majority (almost 600) were related to race</p> <p>Safety concerns relating to race may be exacerbated at night time and in darkness</p>	<p>Additional CCTV will be installed to address antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including having representatives from the Police to advise on aspects such as designing out crime in public spaces.</p>
Religion or Belief	<p>43.4% of Southampton have no religion, 40.1% Christian and 5.6% Muslim</p> <p>Portswood Broadway is adjacent to a large Mosque</p>	<p>Additional CCTV will be installed to address antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including having representatives from the Police to advise on aspects such as</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		designing out crime in public spaces.
Sex	<p>Survey respondents for the Broadway scheme were 65% male / 45% female, which is against the general percentage split across Southampton city wide. However, it is considered that the views of the impacts of the scheme have been gathered from both sexes.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposals will have a greater negative impact on these individuals</p>	No specific mitigation is proposed
Sexual Orientation	<p>Hate crime reporting data for Southampton indicates that of 1007 hate crime reported incidents in 2021, sexual orientation made up approximately 150 reports.</p> <p>Safety concerns relating to sexual orientation may be exacerbated at night time and in darkness</p>	<p>An upgraded bus interchange as part of the works will provide increased seating, lighting and information on routes to limit the time required to wait for buses.</p> <p>Additional CCTV will be installed to address antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including having representatives from the Police to advise on aspects such as designing out crime in public spaces.</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Community Safety	<p>The consultation has seen respondents raise issues relating to anti-social behaviour with an increase in seating / congregating spaces</p>	<p>Additional CCTV will be installed to address antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce a co-design working group for the project to comment on design issues and solutions for Portswood Broadway with representation from various user groups – including having representatives from the Police to advise on aspects such as designing out crime in public spaces.</p>
Poverty	<p>Southampton is a relatively deprived city being 55th out of 317 local authorities and some areas being within the 10% deprived in England</p> <p>Bus travel is a viable option for people on low incomes in Southampton, with bus fares representing an affordable travel options compared to other modes.</p> <p>Some characteristics of people in poverty may prevent them from accessing information such as written material or on the internet</p>	<p>Future engagement on the project will need to focus on this range of activities along with making materials available for longer (i.e. in libraries) as opposed to solely available online / website material.</p>
Health & Wellbeing	<p>The Southampton area has high rates of obesity and poor health</p>	<p>The scheme will provide improvements to walking and wheeling, making them more attractive and in turn increase the numbers of active transport activity in the area.</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		Design principles to make the street more healthy – improving air quality, additional street trees, reduction in traffic numbers will reduce noise
Other Significant Impacts		

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DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	ITCHEN BRIDGE TOLL CHARGES
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JANUARY 2024
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR KEOGH CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director – Place	
	Name:	Adam Wilkinson	Tel: 023 8254 5853
	E-mail	adam.wilkinson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Service Manager - Parking and Itchen Bridge	
	Name:	Richard Alderson	Tel: 023 8083 2725
	E-mail	richard.alderson@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable.

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Council has proposed removing the off peak charging classification from the Itchen Bridge Toll for Class 2 vehicles (defined as vehicles measuring up to 1.33m at first axle) so that all vehicles in this category would pay a single rate for all trips. It also proposed that the toll for Class 4 vehicles (defined as vehicles measuring greater than 2.39m at first axle) increase from £25 to £40 with the corresponding concessionary rate for Class 4 vehicles accessing the Local Concession Zone increasing from £2 to £3. The reason for the proposal is to ensure that all Class 2 vehicles using the crossing are contributing the same costs towards the maintenance of the bridge while ensuring that the toll continues to prompt drivers, particularly HGV traffic, to make a meaningful decision about whether to use the route. The Council has received 324 responses to the consultation on the proposals.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	To remove the Off Peak charging classification from the Itchen Bridge Toll for Class 2 vehicles and introduce a single charge band for all trips.
	(ii)	To implement an increase in the Itchen Bridge toll paid by Class 4 vehicles from £25 to £40 and an increase in the associated concessionary rate (for Class 4 vehicles accessing the Local Concession Zone) from £2 to £3

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	To encourage all drivers of Class 2 vehicles to make a meaningful decision about using the bridge and associated routes regardless of the time of crossing in order to better manage congestion in the areas around the bridge and support on going maintenance demands
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2.	To recognise that all traffic contributes to the structural depreciation of the Itchen Bridge and highway surface regardless of the time of crossing
3.	To strongly discourage non-local HGV traffic from using the Itchen Bridge crossing and associated routes
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
4.	To continue operating an off peak period as per the exiting structure as this would not properly account the wear and tear creating by the high volume of traffic that crosses the bridge in off peak periods.
5.	To increase the toll for Class 4 vehicles crossing the Itchen Bridge as the £25 charge will become less of a deterrent year on year with increases in inflation
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
6.	The Council has proposed removing the Off Peak classification for Class 2 vehicles (defined as vehicles measuring up to 1.33m at first axle) from the Itchen Bridge toll, meaning that all Class 2 crossings of the bridge would be payable at the standard rate of £1.00 or £0.40 for Southampton residents with a Smart Cities card. The Council has also proposed increasing the toll for Class 4 vehicles (defined as vehicles measuring greater than 2.39m at first axle) from £25 to £40 and the increasing associated concession from £2 to £3.
7.	Construction of the Itchen Bridge was completed in 1977. The crossing is a post-tensioned, fixed cantilever structure that is 28m high at its apex. The reason for the size of the bridge was to allow for shipping to pass beneath it and as a consequence it constitutes a significant structure in terms of construction and ongoing maintenance costs. It is unusual for a single Local Authority to have sole financial responsibility for a bridge of this size and structure. The construction of the bridge also opened up a highway route for traffic that was previously not available. The Council therefore gave consideration to the need to manage the volume of traffic using the route, particularly traffic that was non-local in nature. The Council was also keen that HGV traffic should only use the bridge to reach destinations in the local area. Therefore, prior to the construction of the bridge, the Council planned for the bridge to be a toll crossing for the dual purposes of financing the construction and maintenance costs of the bridge and to ensure that the increased traffic did not lead to congestion or harm the amenity of the local area along the new route. The principle of the Itchen Bridge becoming a Toll route was approved by parliament in 1973 and the reasons as outlined above for maintaining the toll were later enshrined in Section 22 of the Hampshire Act 1983 (See Appendix 1).
8.	Bridges, tunnels and other large infrastructure projects constitute significant investment, and there are other examples within the UK of tolls being used to finance construction/maintenance costs and subsequently manage vehicle crossings. The other major toll routes in the UK and the costs for cars and HGVs to use these routes are listed in Appendix 2. While these have been included for comparative purposes, the rationale for toll prices will vary from location to location depending on the type of route, the volume of traffic using that route, the organisations responsible for managing the route and any relevant legislative processes. It should be noted that such routes are typically operated either by private interests on behalf of Local Authorities or the Government (e.g. Mersey Gateway M6 Toll) or by a joint partnership of Local

	<p>Authorities (e.g. Tamar Bridge, Clifton Bridge). As noted, Southampton is a rare example of a single Local Authority being solely responsible for the financial upkeep of such a structure.</p>
9.	<p>The reason for the circumstances as outlined is that the decision to move forward with construction of the bridge was that taken at Local Authority level. It was not a project initiated by central government and no government funding was provided for the construction of the bridge or subsequent major maintenance works. The bridge does not serve a route of key strategic importance and therefore, the Council is unlikely to be successful were it to bid for significant funding to finance maintenance projects for the structure. By contrast, Northam Bridge does sit on a key strategic transport route. The vital maintenance works carried out to that crossing in 2015 were made possible via funding from the Department for Transport for which the Council had made a successful bid. If the Council is to maintain the Itchen Bridge crossing, it needs to provide the finance for major works itself. Examples of past maintenance projects to the Itchen Bridge include replacement of bearings in 2011 and multiple replacement of expansion joints which have a life expectancy of approximately 7 to 10 years..</p>
10.	<p>The Council is now planning what will be the most significant programme of maintenance works to the Itchen Bridge crossing since it first opened. The works which will include resurfacing, drainage improvements and the installation of additional safety features, are expected to cost up to £5M. They are currently scheduled to be delivered in the Summer of 2024. The maintenance project will ensure that the bridge remains in good working order and is a key example of the maintenance works that can be delivered via funding secured against the tolls that are paid through vehicle crossings.</p>
11.	<p>The Itchen Bridge itself functions via central spans resting on bearings which by design allows for movement as the bridge is crossed by vehicles. This flexibility is common in large bridge structures as otherwise the span would crack under the repeated external pressures of traffic movements and as the bridge expands and contracts through temperature changes. As the bridge responds to these pressures, the structural features that facilitate these movements (bearings, expansion joints etc) will degrade over time. As such, any vehicle crossing is contributing to the wear and tear of the structure, regardless of what time the crossing is made. The current peak periods are 07:00 to 09:30 and 16:00 to 18:30 Monday to Friday. A profile of weekly vehicle crossings (from 04/12/2023 to 10/12/2023) is shown in Appendix 3. This week was selected as there were no football matches that would have noticeably affect the figures on the given day. Over 70% of the crossings occurred in periods currently categorised as off peak but these will have had an equal impact to the structure. By having the same toll for Class 2 vehicles for all times of the day, all crossings are making the same contribution to the upkeep of the bridge. As shown in Appendix 2, this approach is also reflective of other UK toll routes, with the majority neither defining nor making a distinction between peak and off peak periods. It is also noted that the Council does not seek to manage peak traffic via means of encouraging traffic to travel at an earlier period along any other of the radial routes into the City Centre (or other busy roads).</p>
12.	<p>The route served via the bridge is single carriageway and as such is unsuited for carrying large volumes of HGV traffic or vehicles of a similar size. Since the bridge first opened in 1977, the toll for HGVs has been set at a level to</p>

	discourage HGVs from using this route, with the crossing initially costing £10 for this vehicle type. It has since risen to £25, but has not been subject to an increase since 2002. In order for it to constitute a meaningful deterrent, the relevant toll category therefore needs to increase in line with inflation. Accordingly, services costing £25 in the early 2000s would now be priced in the region of £40.
13.	<p>The Council carried out a consultation on the proposals from 10th November 2023, which closed on 15th December 2023. There were a total of 390 responses to the consultation.</p> <p>324 responses were logged as objections 35 responses were logged as being in support 31 responses were logged as comments</p> <p>A summary of the objections and the officer response is included as Appendix 4.</p> <p>The consultation responses in full are included as Appendix 5.</p> <p>Officers are of the view that no objections have been submitted that constitute a material overriding consideration to the proposals.</p>

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

14.	<p>As discussed in the report, the primary purpose of the proposals is to encourage all drivers of Class 2 vehicles to make a meaningful decision about using the bridge and associated routes regardless of the time of crossing in order to better manage congestion in the areas around the bridge and support on going maintenance demands.</p> <p>The projected revenue impact of the proposals are set out below. The projections assume a potential minor reduction in traffic volume. As noted in the report, there are works planned to the bridge in 2024/25 which may have an impact on bridge finances and this has also been accounted for.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2023/24</th> <th>2024/25</th> <th>2025/26</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Additional Income £'000</td> <td>72</td> <td>300</td> <td>428</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Surplus revenue generated by the toll contributes to maintenance of the bridge, the highway and the maintenance of the toll plaza equipment. While the Council may not have direct cause to use the surplus for maintenance in any given year, there are associated costs (Highways contract, Street lighting contract, Capital financing costs) that are drawn from the general fund.</p>		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Additional Income £'000	72	300	428
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26						
Additional Income £'000	72	300	428						

<u>Property/Other</u>	
15.	N/A
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
16.	The statutory powers to manage the Itchen Bridge crossing by means of Toll payment are set out in Section 22 of the Hampshire Act 1983.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
17.	In reaching a decision on increasing toll charges, or removing concessions the Council has had regard to its legal duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and Crime & Disorder Act 1998 together with other relevant pervasive legislation. No adverse equality impact has been identified that cannot be addressed through existing mitigation measures relating to tolls and class of vehicle usage already in effect for the bridge.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
18.	The proposals carry a low risk of Financial impact as they will likely result in a revenue increase. The proposals carry a low impact to Service Delivery as there is no direct impact to other Council projects. The proposals carry a moderate impact to Reputation given local interest in the Itchen Bridge Toll. However, the overall response to the consultation was not significant relative to the population of Southampton, and Southampton residents will continue to benefit from a significant discount on the toll via the Smart Cities Card.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
19.	The proposals are in accordance with the Southampton City Council's Local Transport Plan – Connected Southampton Transport Strategy 2040, specifically the Sustainable Growth section of the plan, which looks to reduce growth in the amount of traffic coming into Southampton and ensuring the transport asset is in a good condition and can accommodate the demands placed upon it.
20.	The proposals are also in accordance with the Southampton City Strategy 2015-2025 and the Southampton Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy 2019-2021

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Section 22 of the Hampshire Act 1983
2.	UK Toll Locations and Charges
3.	Itchen Bridge Crossings during Peak and Off Peak Periods
4.	Summary of Consultation Feedback and Officer Response
5.	Consultation Response

6.	Public Notice
7.	ESIA

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	
2.	

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)		Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.		
2.		

Hampshire Act 1983 - Section 22

Tolls

22.—(1) The county council may demand, take and recover in Tolls. respect of all or any class of traffic passing over or on the bridge, other than pedestrians, tolls not exceeding those specified in any order made under this Part (or under Part III of the Southampton Corporation Act 1973) and for the time being in force; and for any 1973 c. xix. other services rendered by the county council in connection with the bridge, such reasonable charges as they think fit.

(2) Subject to subsection (4) below, the power to make an order under this section includes power to make an order amending or revoking any earlier order made hereunder (or under section 15 of the Southampton Corporation Act 1973), including power to make an order whereby the council cease to demand, take and recover tolls or tolls in respect of any specified class of traffic, or resume demanding, taking and recovering tolls.

(3) In exercising their powers under this section the county council shall have regard to—

first, the financial position and future prospects of the bridge; secondly, the need to control the composition and flow of traffic over the bridge so as to avoid causing traffic congestion in areas adjacent to the bridge and so as to preserve the character and amenities of those areas; and thirdly, whether to allow any class of traffic to use the bridge without payment of tolls or on payment of tolls at a reduced rate either generally or during specified hours or on specified occasions—

(a) where the grant of any such concession would assist the disabled or aged;

22

c. v

Hampshire Act 1983

PART V
—cont.

(b) where, in the opinion of the county council the grant of any such concession for a limited period would be desirable in the interests of assisting the establishment of industry or commerce in the city;

(c) where the traffic is of a local character.

(4) If an order for the time being in force has been made by the Secretary of State in pursuance of section 23 (Revision of tolls by Secretary of State) of this Act, the county council may not make a further order revising all or any of the tolls or any classification of traffic specified in any such order unless—

(a) a period of not less than 12 months has elapsed since the making of the order by the Secretary of State; and

(b) the county council have notified the Secretary of State of their intention to make such an order and considered any observations of the Secretary of State; and

(c) in the opinion of the county council there has been, since the date of the making of the order by the Secretary of State, a material change in any of the circumstances relating to any of the matters referred to in subsection (2) above.

(5) Before making an order under this section the county council shall give notice by advertisement in one or more local newspapers circulating in the city stating the contents of the proposed order and shall take into consideration any objections or representations in respect of the proposed order made within 28 days of the first publication of the notice.

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Toll Route	Charging Hours	Car Toll	Off Peak Car Toll	Car Concession*	HGV Charge
Clifton Bridge	24 hours	£1.00	None	£0.74 to £0.42	4 ton limit
Dartford Crossing	6am to 10pm	£2.50	None	£2.00	£6.00
Humber Bridge	24 hours	£1.50	None	£1.35	£12.00
M6 Toll	24 hours	£8.90	None	£5.80	£15.90
Mersey Gateway	24 hours	£2.00	None	£1.80/£1.90	£8.00
Mersey Tunnels	24 hours	£2.00	None	£1.40	£8.00
Tamar Bridge**	24 hours	£2.60	None	£1.30	£10.40/£14.40
Dyke Tunnels	24 hours	£2.00	None	£1.98	£4.40
Wichan Bridge Existing	24 hours	£1.00	£0.80	£0.30/£0.40	£25.00
Wichan Bridge Proposed	24 hours	£1.00	None	£0.40	£40.00

*Concessions on Tolls are offered for various reasons, typically either a concession for local users or a multi-trip discount

**Crossings of the Tamar Bridge are only charged one way, but the alternative route between Saltash and Plymouth would be an additional 25 miles. Therefore, it is likely that the majority of traffic would use the Tamar Bridge regardless of direction of travel. The standard Tamar toll is therefore effectively £1.30 each way

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Agenda Item 9

Appendix 3

Time	4th Dec	5th Dec	6th Dec	7th Dec	8th Dec	9th Dec	10th Dec
00:00	97	94	90	127	152	491	540
01:00	74	65	74	75	114	332	386
02:00	45	44	48	52	85	247	284
03:00	68	56	65	51	74	164	215
04:00	87	100	95	95	97	121	144
05:00	286	304	294	292	253	196	114
06:00	726	799	726	743	688	318	235
07:00	1463	1435	1444	1436	1301	425	240
08:00	1378	1437	1451	1454	1320	891	360
09:00	1253	1317	1256	1228	1131	1151	609
10:00	874	987	986	918	1060	1231	916
11:00	1002	945	969	968	1031	1329	1063
12:00	990	1005	988	1069	1097	1364	1172
13:00	975	1101	1077	1113	1192	1272	1115
14:00	1163	1147	1155	1167	1299	1262	1053
15:00	1337	1314	1381	1309	1497	1292	1057
16:00	1512	1569	1501	1535	1572	1347	1071
17:00	1501	1564	1586	1582	1577	1283	958
18:00	1337	1465	1441	1524	1405	1310	843
19:00	794	909	943	1015	1265	1083	653
20:00	612	663	706	739	843	737	504
21:00	506	496	458	541	629	637	447
22:00	321	355	413	401	640	632	298
23:00	165	214	254	298	573	683	194

Peak Crossings	36669	27.7%
Off Peak Crossings	95579	72.3%
Total Crossings	132248	

Peak crossings for 09:00 to 09:30 and 18:00 to 18:30 calculated by adding total crossings for 08:00 to 10:00 and 17:00 to 19:00 and dividing by 4 This gives the average for a 30 minute period across the two hours which is the likely figure for the 09:00 to 09:30 and 18:00 to 18:30 period

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Appendix 5 – Summary of Consultation Feedback and Officer Response

Ref	Issue	Response
1	<p>Increase in Costs / Costs of Living Crisis</p> <p>General objections to the increase in costs. Often with reference to increases in the cost of living having reduced the ability of many to pay additional charges.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“I use the Itchen Bridge twice a day and avoid peak times so the increase in price would cost me a LOT.”</i></p> <p><i>“Costing working class families a lot more a year. You say this is a minor increase but when this is added up it is adding hundreds of pounds a year to already struggling families especially during a cost of living crisis. It will put more strain on traffic and other bridges.”</i></p>	<p>The change is to ensure that the toll remains effective at managing the number of crossings made by Class 2 vehicles and to address congestion in areas around the bridge while supporting ongoing maintenance.</p> <p>Drivers of Class 2 vehicles already travelling in the period currently defined as peak will not experience a toll increase.</p> <p>Southampton residents using the Smart Cities card who are drivers of Class 2 vehicles and are travelling in the off peak period will pay an increase of only £0.10.</p> <p>Other drivers of Class 2 vehicles travelling in the off peak period will pay an increase of only £0.20.</p> <p>The cost of the crossing is either equal or cheaper than similar toll routes across the UK.</p>
2	<p>Drivers will be more likely to travel during peak times</p> <p>The proposals will mean that drivers will be less likely to travel in the off peak period and will travel in peak periods</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“Objecting the removal of off peak discount. This encourages people to change their journeys to be at times when there is less traffic. Removing off peak discount will mean more traffic at peak times.”</i></p> <p><i>“I am concerned that removal of the off-peak charge will encourage more motorists to use the Itchen Bridge during the peak rush hours only adding to the congestion seen at those times. It might raise more money but at the expense of more traffic congestion ... and hence more pollution.”</i></p>	<p>The difference between the current peak and off peak charges are not significant, being £0.20 for standard users and £0.10 for Southampton residents with a Smart Cities Card.</p> <p>Most other UK Toll routes do not make a distinction between peak and off peak travel, while other key routes within Southampton do not have a comparable means of managing peak traffic.</p>

3	<p>Concession not available for non-Southampton residents</p> <p>Objections by residents in non-Southampton City Council areas east of the city (e.g. Netley) who believe they should be eligible for the reduced concessionary toll.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“As a Netley Abbey resident the bridge really is the only option to get into town without spending a lot more time and emitting more emissions going via Bitterne. We are not offered any resident discount and the cost is already quite eye watering for the 2 minute drive across.”</i></p>	<p>It is not considered appropriate to expand the concessionary zone, as it is intended to provide a reduced toll to those for whom the alternative routes are less viable.</p>
4	<p>The change will prompt drivers to use alternative routes or deter visits to the City Centre</p> <p>Concerns that increasing the toll will force more vehicles to undertake lengthy detours to other bridges causing unnecessary air pollution and congestion or that people will choose not to visit the City Centre which will damage the local economy</p> <p>Examples comments:</p> <p><i>“I live a 1 minute drive from bridge and therefore would use more petrol to go over a non charging bridge, if I have to I would not go into the city and businesses would suffer.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s going to cause even more mayhem to what is already a congested route to the city on bitterne road and will cause even more pollution to these areas as people would rather drive a bit further to get into the city for free!”</i></p> <p><i>“The increase in the price of the toll will have an impact on the high street economy. The council appears to want to deter all cars going into the city, but then wonder why the high street economy is dying.”</i></p>	<p>The toll is intended to manage the number of vehicles using the bridge and therefore congestion in the local area. It is accepted and intended that some vehicles will use other routes. This would be offset by the associated reduction in congestion on the A3025 which is not suited to carrying large volumes of traffic.</p> <p>The toll would still constitute a relatively minor cost compared to the expenditure for retail or leisure trips to the City Centre.</p>

5	<p>Tolls were to be removed once the Bridge was paid for. Tolls have been removed on other UK bridges.</p> <p>The tolls were originally intended to pay for the construction of the bridge. Now this has been paid for the toll should be removed.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“My view is that tolls should be scrapped completely on this bridge. Surely 40 years on there is no need to still be paying for the bridge.”</i></p> <p><i>“The bridge should be free for cars, as the promise made to the people of Southampton was that it would be free once the build cost was paid for.”</i></p> <p><i>“The 2 bridges over the Severn also said that tolls would be removed once the new build cost has been recouped, which they have now, & the tolls have been removed. You say the Itchen bridge is not a strategic route, but I would disagree there, it is a very important route for people in Woolston/Weston/Sholing into the city & the docks. I am sure national government would help with the maintenance of the bridge just as they have on the 2 Severn Bridges”</i></p>	<p>While there is a frequently repeated claim that the Council had stated that the tolls would be removed once the original construction costs of the bridge had been repaid, there is no record of this statement having been made by the Council.</p> <p>The legal power to collect the tolls is provided by the Hampshire Act 1983 and it is made clear that when determining the charge, the Council should have regard to the financial position and future prospects of the bridge and the need to control the composition and flow of traffic over the bridge so as to avoid causing traffic congestion in areas adjacent to the bridge and so as to preserve the character and amenities of those areas.</p> <p>Removing the toll would likely lead to significant congestion issues in the vicinity of the bridge and is not considered appropriate.</p> <p>In the case of the Severn Bridge, maintenance is now paid for by Highways England which in turn receives grant funding by the UK government. The Council is unlikely to receive similar grant funding as the bridge does not serve a route of key strategic importance.</p>
6	<p>Automation / No Staff at the Toll Plaza</p> <p>Queries whether tolls to cover operating costs are warranted following automation of the Toll Plaza.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“The fees are already enough for people struggling, they have continually been raised again and again, despite the cost savings that must have come with automating the machines and removing staff.”</i></p>	<p>The lanes are still monitored by a team of employees based in the Toll Plaza office who respond to any customer calls via the intercoms and address any faults with the lanes.</p> <p>There are around 18,000 to 21,000 movements through the Toll Plaza per day. Therefore, while automated, the toll equipment needs regular maintenance which is carried out by the Parking Maintenance team and via a maintenance contract with equipment supplier.</p>

7	<p>Maintenance to the Itchen Bridge</p> <p>Queries over what maintenance is carried out to the Itchen Bridge structure and what it costs</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“This bridge is nothing but a cash machine, no improvements are made and no notice is ever taken.”</i></p> <p><i>“You claim this increase is for maintenance costs, by I have used this bridge 5 days a week for 7 years and I have not seen one person work on it, so how can you claim this is for maintenance??”</i></p>	<p>Maintenance to the bridge is carried out, but these works are generally done at nighttime to minimise disruption. Examples of maintenance work include the replacement of bearings in 2011 while the expansion joints are replaced every 7 to 10 years depending on need.</p> <p>A significant of programme of maintenance for the Itchen Bridge is scheduled for 2024/25 which will include resurfacing and drainage improvements</p>
8	<p>Lack and unsuitability of public transport</p> <p>Public transport options to the city centre are not suitable or available for many people as such there is a requirement to drive across the bridge.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“Public transport has never been reliable enough and as for the hire scooters/bikes around the city, they’re just overpriced and would cost me more hiring these per week as opposed to taking my car to work.”</i></p> <p><i>“If you use public transport which currently a shambles, you’re stuck in traffic. It makes no difference to the time of your journey on the bus or driving by car. And now the increase will just make it even worse!”</i></p>	<p>There are a range of frequent Bus Services that serve the Woolston and Sholing areas.</p> <p>Registered public transport services are able to make use of the bus gate access onto the bridge which reduces journey times.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with bus operators on fare offers, including;</p> <p>£1 Evening Fare continuing to March 2025 for £1 evening fares in Southampton after 1800</p> <p>Group Fare Offer (£5 for 5) for Summer 2023 & 2024 (six week school holiday period only) and Christmas 2023 and 2024 (six-seven week period prior to New Year’s Day).</p>

9	<p>The proposals are an attack on motorists.</p> <p>Views that the proposals are related to green measures to discourage people from driving.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“Strongly object. I pay council tax and it’s an essential route for me. Absolutely disgusting even proposing this change. Make it free for all and stop attacking motorist.”</i></p> <p><i>“Yet again S.C.C. Are penalising motorists. You seem hell bent on supporting cyclists who pay no contribution for using public roads.”</i></p>	<p>The Itchen Bridge crossing is funded solely by Southampton City Council. All users (with the exception of registered bus services and emergency services) are required to pay a contribution towards the upkeep of the bridge.</p> <p>The underlying principle of any toll is to prompt drivers to make a meaningful decision over whether they use the route and this can include encouraging them to consider alternative forms of travel e.g. public transport</p>
10	<p>The proposals are aimed at raising revenue</p> <p>The Council has proposed the change to raise revenue to cover financial shortfalls elsewhere.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“It’s a poor way of boosting the council coffers by fleecing motorists once again.”</i></p> <p><i>“Although the Bridge continues to require investment the burden of this should not fall to local tax payers. It is well know that Southampton City Council is struggling financially and this is clearly an attempt to fill some of that void at the expense of the public.”</i></p>	<p>The Itchen Bridge requires maintenance to ensure its continued operation while the Toll Plaza also requires regular upkeep. As such there are regular annual costs and these will be affected by inflation.</p> <p>While the Council may not have cause to spend surplus revenue on maintenance in any given year, there are related costs (highway maintenance, street lighting) which financed from the general fund.</p> <p>The Council is also due to undertake a programme of maintenance works to the Bridge in 2024/25 that are projected to cost up to £5M.</p>

11.	<p>Objections to the increase in the Toll for HGVs</p> <p>Increases in the toll for HGVs or large vehicles will be damaging for businesses and/or force them to use routes that will make journeys uneconomical</p> <p>Example comments</p> <p><i>“Increasing HGV charges will place an undue financial burden on local businesses in the area. Local businesses already face numerous challenges, especially with the economic impacts of the ongoing pandemic. The additional cost of higher HGV charges will be passed on to consumers, which could lead to increased prices for goods and services. This can ultimately deter customers and hinder economic growth in the region.”</i></p> <p><i>“£40 for an HGV is ludicrous £25 is too much - be reasonable. The more you put up costs the more businesses put up costs the less people have to spend in Southampton.”</i></p>	<p>The HGV toll (or Class 4 toll) has always been set at a level to deter HGVs from using the crossing. The increase is reflective of inflation since the toll for Class 4 vehicles was last changed.</p> <p>There remains a concessionary rate for vehicles serving a business with a business address within the Local Concession Zone.</p>
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Rip off, council can't even maintain the blocked road side drains that are completely blocked and send a road sweeper round close to portswood primary school. Haven't seen a road sweeper round here for atleast 5 months!

the bridge tolls were originally in place until the bridge was paid for.. Now it seems it will increase year on year

I use the Itchen Bridge twice a day and avoid peak times so the increase in price would cost me a LOT

As a keyworker living in Netley Abbey this further rise will have a serious impact on my finances... I use the bridge 5-7 days a week to get into the city for my shifts...Please lower it!

The cost of living is horrendous right now and with parking going up for us from £2 to £2.60 for just 2 hours parking it is a big hike. This bridge must have paid for itself by now as it has been there all my life and I am 51.

Have the council paid off the loan on the bridge. The bridge is a cash cow for the council, how often do we see work taking place, not often. I think a lot of people will go via Northam. Personally I get 30p going to 40p, so every 4th journey I will go via Northam just to keep the payments as is now.

Because there is no need to charge people for using the bridge so much outside of peak hours. This bridge was supposed to be free once the costs were covered and that was years ago - this council are milking this cash cow for all it's worth!!

By increasing the costs at off peak times you are not supporting people in this cost of living crisis.

I agree with the argument that all crossing impact the wear and tear of the bridge. However,I disagree with your proposal.

I think if there is any increase it should be to peak travel.

Peak time travel results in queuing and congestion which is more polluting. A larger variation between off peak and peak charges could result in some travellers commuting by public transport or at different times which spreads out demand and reduced congestion.

Do not penalise the off peak travellers!

If you want to increase revenues, get a speed camera on the bridge! It's a safety nightmare as people use it as a race track out the city.

Hgv and similar should be discouraged from this route. Residential area on woolston side cannot cope with large numbers of these vehicles.

Proposal does not affect residents personal vehicles which is good.

The council already make a ridiculous amount of money from the toll. Increasing the levy for HGVs will cause these vehicles to use the smaller roads, adding to congestion and destroying the road surfaces across the communities. These roads are already past breaking point and in desperate need of repair

You have enough money out of us using this road , when you built this bridge you said that the toll would only last so long and yet you continue to charge and considering mainly cars use the bridge you are using it as a exercise to get more money out of the people that use it most, which you won't use the money well and continue to cause traffic to divert on other busy routes , we are in a cost of living crisis !

The cost of the bridge has gone up dramatically since I've lived in Southampton (2019). It would be good to deter people from using the bridge but then the traffic going over other bridges and the extra pollution involved by getting to the other bridges, it would counteract the 'good' done. £1 is a totally unreasonable amount to expect people to pay to cross the bridge!

We are in a cost of living crisis and increasing these costs in unjustifiable.

Because it's just another lame excuse for the overpaid pen pushers at the top that wants to stop private vehicles going into the city centre. Public transport has never been reliable enough and as for the hire scooters/bikes around the city, they're just overpriced and would cost me more hiring these per week as opposed to taking my car to work. Shoppers will eventually go elsewhere like Whitely and Gunwharf which would make Southampton a boring city which will have no appeal to tourists, students or even the residents. Well done SCC for your plans to ruin the city.

The bridge is already a heavy expense and it causes a back up of traffic in woolston and makes people's journeys home take longer. The cost of living is already too high and this is nothing more than greed.

The proposed changes seem fair and reasonable.

Some detailed comments that I hope are helpful:

Schedule 2 table: Apostrophe missing and "Resident"/"Residents" not used consistently.

Schedule 3 map: It is not explicitly clear that this is the map defining the boundary for the Local Resident Concession. This map is almost illegible in the Draft Order document.

Is a second map needed to show the area covered by the Residents' Concession?

The second page of your form requires the email address to be a number and it is impossible to enter a valid email address there.

Getting in and out of Southampton is increasingly difficult. Planned permanent road closure will exacerbate this. Free of tolls this bridge will release pressure elsewhere

For a council that is really pushing the "go green" mantra, the removal of the off-peak concession for class 2 vehicles is yet another cost increase in disguise for motorists which, in many cases, will force many of us to drive longer distances in order to avoid Itchen Bridge (i.e., driving through Bitterne instead), with the consequential impact on local air pollution. However, SCC never seems to listen to local residents and it is clear that your public consultations are merely a paper-ticking formality you must undertake even though the decision has already been made at your end, regardless of the local opinion.

Will cause extreme traffic at the Northam Bridge.

Like all other roads and bridges maintenance of structures is already paid for by our taxes. The costs of living has increased, the council instead of helping families is considering of these changes which is not helpful at all! As a local resident I constantly use the bridge so I am certainly not in favour of these changes.

- 1.- We don't use vehicles for fun, we use them for work.
- 2.- the bus service at the moment it is heavily unreliable since there is only one company operating.
- 3.- councils are supposed to help with the increase in the cost of living, this is just the opposite.
- 4.- this is only a money making measure. If needed for environmental reasons or to protect the bridge, the council could just ban lorries or heavy vehicles from using it. No need to increase prices.

You money grabbing bastards. Should be making cheaper for people to use the bridge given the cost of living crisis. Also making it more expensive will force people to avoid the bridge making journeys longer, traffic in the rest of the city worse. All of these factors leading to increased pollution. This also being said are you even managing the bridge at the moment or have you sold it off to another council to manage.

Scum!

Again like the evening parking charges you are hammering the motorist for your incompetence. Do you not realise that there is a cost of living crisis and you Southampton city council are not helping the residents at all

Fare increases, on top of the current car park increases just mean even poorer residents of Southampton. I'm happy to change this if we also get a council tax reduction too to compensate for all these increases?

Sds

Penalising those who live in on that side of the bridge - this is an area of the city that has pockets of poverty/low income and to remove the off peak charge will be to the detriment of those who are already struggling

When the bridge was originally built it was advised that it would become free once it paid for itself. This was when my mum was little, she is now 61, the bridge has probably paid for itself and all the maintenance over the years tenfold. This new proposed anytime same fee is a way of bringing in extra money and putting more pressure on those that live the other side of the bridge but work in the town centre. I'm all for charging those that don't live in a Southampton postcode to cross, but it should be free for Southampton residents who present a toll bridge card.

Raising the cost will have a major impact to me and mainly working class people who use this bridge to travel into the city daily. I use the bridge to travel into work most days and it will cost hundreds of pounds extra to be able to do this a year. Which negatively impacts my family's finances putting us into further financial hardship. It will also further cause pollution as more and more people will be using Northam bridge which is already traffic heavy making this worse.

The bridge toll should not be increased. It is not fair to put this cost on residents. We already pay Road tax to upkeep the roads so that should be sufficient to upkeep itchen bridge. With an ever growing population you will inevitably have more use on the roads, so trying to increase an unfair payment on people using those roads because more people are on the roads, because population is increasing over time, is ridiculous.

This should be free for SO19 residents. The infrastructure of exiting residential roads in Woolston is not practical for all of the traffic to avoid paying a toll, travelling through Peartree and down Athelstan to get into the city to work. You require employees in our city in order to continue to make revenue and this is just one more way of taking money from hard workers. At least retain the off peak charge for SO19 residents!! There's no way that the Bursledon Rd/Maybray King Way would EVER cope with all of the Itchen Bridge traffic being diverted that way, if everyone stopped using the bridge.

There is always a traffic jam in rush hours in the morning and afternoon. Long queues and delayed buses. Very good initiative, although it should have been done long time ago.

The fact that you are asking residents to pay a higher toll off peak is despicable, especially in the current economic climate. Your reasons for the toll are to manage traffic & maintenance. Increasing the costs of this does not manage traffic. People will use the bridge at specific times of the day due to travelling to work. This is called peak times. You've just increased the peak time amounts, so now you're trying to justify increasing the off peak amount to this. It's hard enough commuting through the city due to the ridiculous traffic calming measures & now people are going to be forced to use Northam bridge for access to the city. If you use public transport which currently a shambles, you're stuck in traffic. It makes no difference to the time of your journey on the bus or driving by car. And now the increase will just make it even worse!

The bride was build by tax payers money and should be free off charge.

I object to the off peak concessions being removed for residents.

I'm supportive of increasing HGV tolls.

Test

I do not feel this is appropriate at a time when personal incomes are under pressure.

I do not agree with proposed changes. The residents of Southampton should not be paying for crossing the bridge at all. I do not believe it costs this much to complete repairs on the bridge. In the last 10 years all I noticed is the new lights on the bridge were added. I think this money from toll bridge is mostly for City Councils own benefit. Also increasing the toll doesn't make the traffic flow this is just some nonsense given to residents so the changes can be implemented by Council.

Again you are hammering the motorist to pay for your incompetence. You are not helping the residents at all during the cost of living crisis.

The maintenance needs to be done and needs to be paid for, and the increased tolls will do that. Plus it's not a big increase for residents and I don't often travel by car anyway.

Some of us who choose to live on the east side of the city have no choice but to use a car and the bridge when we need to be at the bottom end of the town for appointments especially when disability means that we can't use busses so we will be penalised again when short of money already as disability money will only stretch so far

I think it's disgusting that residents still have to pay to get across to town, by pushing people into other routes will make already congested roads even worse, affecting the air pollution even more, this council has done nothing in recent years to help traffic to move smoothly in this city, as a bus driver I do nothing but sit in traffic. Why people would come to shop in this city on a Saturday when there is football and 4 cruise ships in is beyond me, bet they only do it once and then choose another city to shop at! You've had enough increases on this bridge in the last year!

The bridge tolls have been raised multiple times in recent years when the bridge has paid for itself multiple times over. Increasing again will make town inaccessible to many who cannot pay higher prices and thus affecting the businesses within town.

Want an outline of how the cost increase will be spent

The cost of the bridge is high enough. If the aim of the toll is to reduce traffic the off peak toll should not be impacted. This should remain the same to encourage travel outside of rush hour.

The Itchen Bridge gets enough money from users. Taking away off peak charges penalises locals who need to use it and forcing users to take alternative routes to avoid the charges. This then means cars are making longer journeys than necessary.

Absolute conning bastards the lot of you at the council

Ok have £1 during day but have free from midnight till 0500 robbing bastards

I don't feel there should be a fee yet alone an increase!

The fees are already enough for people struggling, they have continually been raised again again, despite the cost savings that must have come with automating the machines and removing staff.

Southampton is nearly at a state of beyond repair - the council is doing nothing to incentivise businesses and visitors (outside cruise ships!!). It's becoming an awful place to live and all this supports is contributing to driving people out, what the council needs to be focusing on is creating a thriving city that people actually want to visit, not thinking how can we extort more money out of locals

Costing working class families a lot more a year. You say this is a minor increase but when this is added up it is adding hundreds of pounds a year to already struggling families especially during a cost of living crisis. It will put more strain on traffic and other bridges.

Objection to the Southampton City Council's Proposal to Increase HGV Charges:

1. Burden on Local Businesses:

Increasing HGV charges will place an undue financial burden on local businesses in the area. Local businesses already face numerous challenges, especially with the economic impacts of the ongoing pandemic. The additional cost of higher HGV charges will be passed on to consumers, which could lead to increased prices for goods and services. This can ultimately deter customers and hinder economic growth in the region.

2. Longer Delivery Routes:

Higher HGV charges may incentivise truck drivers to opt for longer delivery routes to avoid the increased costs. Longer journeys not only lead to higher fuel consumption but also increased wear and tear on the vehicles, resulting in more frequent maintenance expenses. Additionally, longer routes may result in extended travel times, which can disrupt delivery schedules and lead to delays for businesses and consumers.

3. Increased Air Pollution:

One of the unintended consequences of longer delivery routes is the potential for increased air pollution. According to data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, heavy-duty trucks are significant contributors to air pollution, particularly in terms of nitrogen oxide emissions. A study has shown that for every additional five miles travelled by HGVs, there is an estimated increase in emissions of 5% to 10% (EPA, "Emission Facts: Average Heavy-Duty Truck Emissions"). This means that longer journeys caused by increased charges can have a measurable impact on local air quality, which is detrimental to public health and the environment.

Objection to the Toll Bridge and Air Pollution:

1. Toll Bridge Costs Recovered:

The toll bridge in question was initially implemented to fund its construction and maintenance. If the costs of the toll bridge have been recovered, there is a strong argument to remove or reduce tolls. Continuing to charge tolls when the original financial objectives have been met can be viewed as unjust and could be considered a form of taxation without representation.

2. Air Pollution from Bridge Queues:

It's evident that the toll bridge is contributing to air pollution due to long queues during rush hours. This problem is not only an environmental concern but also a public health issue. According to data from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), long exposure to traffic-related air pollution can lead to various health problems, including respiratory issues, cardiovascular diseases, and even premature mortality.

3. Impact on Local Economy:

The toll costs and traffic congestion resulting from long queues during rush hours can discourage people from traveling into the city to spend money. Businesses in the city center may suffer due to decreased foot traffic, resulting in economic losses and potential job layoffs. This can have a cascading effect on the local economy, as it discourages economic activity and investment in the region.

In conclusion, there are valid objections to both the proposal to increase HGV charges and the continued tolls on the bridge. These objections are based on concerns about the impact on local businesses, longer delivery routes and increased air pollution, as well as the need to reevaluate tolls after cost recovery and address the negative consequences of traffic congestion.

It should be free to locals You get a budget every year stick to it don't waste money on stupid roadworks especially cycle lanes

The same amount of traffic will use the bridge. The council just want more money.

Again the council trying to increase cash flow to stop going bankrupt

The bridge toll area is outdated. It creates more traffic due to the lack of technology. You do not allow ANPR account so that it creates free flow. Instead the barriers are hit and cars get stuck with no other route. If the money was being spent on infrastructure technology improvements it would gain my approval

After paying the road tax and the increased Council taxes every year, this seems to another service that is charged higher but service is reduced!

Bridge should be free for residents, could be done based on scanning art card (with expiry date so has to be renewed every 2-3-4 years). Cobden bridge is always blocked. This would smooth traffic and also reduce CO2- shorter journeys.

As a local resident I'm lucky enough to have a SmartCard and pay a discounted rate. I don't understand the reason to remove the off-peak charge and only keep the peak charges. If you want to make it just one rate then it'd be appreciated that you choose the lower charge.

I live within 0.5 mile from the bridge so have no choice but to use it and even with smart cities card, the price continues to escalate!!

If there were no long queues at night I might not mind but the route is not quicker and am paying to sit in traffic. Off peak should stay even though I don't receive this much as work 9 to 5.

By increasing the toll, you are only going to divert more traffic over Northam Bridge. This route is already very busy and is regularly congested. More cars will sit idle in traffic, increasing air pollution.

This is good, not only will it go towards maintaining the bridge which is necessitated by vehicular traffic, but it's also likely to encourage walking or journeying by public transport/bicycle for shorter journeys-which the council is rightfully trying to encourage.

Local residents tolls should not be increased again. Not only will this increase necessary expenses for those working in areas not easily accessible by public transport (such as Totton from Woolston) but also if people were to take longer alternative routes this would create a higher environmental impact, as well as more of a bottle neck for traffic on already limited routes.

Local residents to the kitchen bridge are being discriminated against having charges to use the bridge increased. As a Woolston resident this is my direct route into and out of the city. Residents local to Northern bridge or Cobden bridge have free access, so we're being penalised. Increasing the cost to HGV's is more understandable however not to the normal family car/van driver. I oppose the removal of the off-peak charge and discount for local residents.

Insufficient information has been provided re cost of maintenance versus income generated by toll. This needs to be made explicit. If evidence of income v expenditure is provided and showed a justifiable increase then I should be happier to contribute.

Originally the reduced rate was for Woolston Residents only. It has now been extended to anyone who lives in the city. There should be some recognition that for Woolston Residents to use alternative routes into the city is not an environmentally friendly option.

If the increase is to encourage residents to use the buses then the bus service needs significant improvement. Until very recently if I went into the city I would use public transport but the 10 minute service on my route is now completely erratic and a wait of 30 minutes plus not uncommon. Buses appear scared to travel on my route now unless in a minimum of pairs.

I have to use the bridge 6 days a week for work it's a joke that you are considering putting the price up so soon, my street has the lights turned off during the night what more does the council want from us it's ridiculous.

I oppose any changes. This bridge should be made free to use. No work is ever carried out to maintain it. The booths don't give change and most residents will agree it's just another way to collect money from residents to be used elsewhere.

We already pay enough! It's ridiculous! We live in Woolston and it's our main route into the city centre, it's just a further tax on us during a time when everything costs more.

Seems reasonable when the council needs money, simpler too

I'm local, and have a SmartCities card. My concern with the proposal is that it may 1) reduce income by encouraging use of other routes, which could 2) lengthen journeys and therefore increase vehicle related emissions within the Southampton City area.

I believe that it is already too expensive, and this may deter people going into the city centre from the Woolston side of the bridge and have a negative impact on trade

The Bridge was promised to be free years ago when it was proposed as per usual from a business as that's what councils are rip off the normal person in the street!

It's too expensive as it is, scc waste money pointless roadworks , funding never put into correct pots. Children with special educational needs ignored and funding striped, the amount of council tax and road tax paid in soton should be more than enough to maintain the bridge for Southampton residents

It's already been raised a few times in the last couple of years not fair on local residents who live local to the bridge that will then have to drive out there way to stop using it which will add on a lot of commute time.

Will disabled drivers still be able to cross for free?

I believe that removing off peak options from the bridge will remove the incentive for people to travel at quieter times and potentially increase traffic in peak times. This would make congestion worse and increase pollution contrary to the councils stated aims.

I live on the east side of the city and to enter my city centre I have to pay a fee. We were told when the bridge first opened we would only be charged for a short while and then it would be free. I have travelled through Scotland and over the many bridges there free of charge and much bigger bridges than the short itchen bridge so explain why they are free but Southampton charge. I very rarely go into town now because of this charge I take my custom to Fareham rather than be ripped off in my home city. You need to offer free passage to so19 residents, we are a part of the city as well.

The price of crossing the bridge has nearly doubled already in only a few years so to scrap the lower fee for off peak as well is just extortionate. The bridge has been paid for, why are we still paying to cross it when we have other bridges that are free. I live in so19 but I actually take the northam bridge route sometimes because I would rather spend the fuel money than give you money you're not entitled to. Terrible idea from people I assume either do not live in the area or do not have bills to pay.

The money you take in from tolls does not equal the amount you spend on the upkeep of the bridge over the years. Stop exploiting drivers who use this route of travel especially late at night when no public transportation is available

I feel in the cost of living crisis it's unfair to subject the residents of so19 and so18 to extra costs

I live a 1 minute drive from bridge and therefore would use more petrol to go over a non charging bridge , if I have to I would not go into the city and businesses would suffer.

Objecting the removal of off peak discount. This encourages people to change their journeys to be at times when there is less traffic. Removing off peak discount will mean more traffic at peak times.

1. By removing off peak tolls there is less of an incentive to not travel in peak times, increasing rush hour congestion and making pollution worse?

2. The amount of morning bridge users are working parents, it's a rush to get school run done and off to work ourselves - meaning putting toll prices up is not going to make people not use it. As driving is only going to ever be the option for working parents. Squeezing in every hour to bring home money to live in this messed up world ...to then rush back and pick children up.

3. Stop trying to cause more mayhem

I need to travel over the bridge twice daily (in each direction), for a total of four tolls per day. The cost has risen exponentially over the years, and in this economic climate it's ridiculous to increase it yet again.

Another increase to the toll on the bridge is not the answer to the councils proposed spending of £5m on the bridge. It would be interesting to see how much the upkeep on the bridge alone costs

profits gained already show this isn't in line with cost of living

It was not so long ago that the tolls were increased. The bridge has been a cash cow for far too long. Give the poor motorists a break!

Think local residents should be free. Agree with hgvs increase.

This comment I know will be a pointless exercise, the residents of this city have not agreed with other implemented proposals that this council has put in place, like 20 mph speed limits on none built up areas, 30 mph limits on dual carage ways and roads being closed at school entrance ways, instead teach the green cross code in these schools, or shall I ask you for compensation for the extra brake pad wear or for the damaged caused when I have to drive constantly at a speed my automatic car is not to drive at, or do I receive compensation for driving a car that has a speed restriction added but doesn't operate below 30 mph, of course I don't, so instead of taking a journey that takes 15 minutes across a bridge at 30 mph I have to to take a longer route that will take 45 minutes travelling at 20 mph for half of it to get to the same destination, it doesn't make a sense, If you don't have enough money to run your business you cut back on expenses and your biggest expense is Ceo's that earn more money than the prime minister,

Why should "I" a person that earns less than 12,000 a year pay for someone who earns 100,000 a year that doesn't have any interest in looking after the welfare of my home

Cost of fuel is high, cost of living is high increasing costs further on the toll bridge will just add more traffic to surrounding roads and increase travel costs further, Not only the environmental impact of increasing pollution levels - how this can be justified is beyond me!

The negative impact of the increasing costs here are only to the council suggesting them

Supportive that there are no changes to residents charges. The bridge is still busy during off peak times, so £1 is a fair charge

There is only one proposal, half of journeys at off peak? Obviously. Doubling your income . Congestion charge by back door

I am partly objecting on these proposals. I agree that raising charges for HGVs is a good idea. But for residents who need to get into the city I am opposing the increase to a standard off peak price. As someone who lives in Weston, my children go to school in town at Hope Community School and I work at the civic - we already find the charges are too much spending over a pound most days which feels a little unfair as we only have to pay this based on where we live in the city. To raise this further when charges and the cost of living is generally going up everywhere feels like an additional cost to people trying to get by. My husband works full time, I myself two days a week (I have a two year old) and we don't need further increases to our cost of living.

Absolute disgrace. The council is almost bankrupt and yet again the working class car/van drivers are to be fleeced for more cash. This has nothing to do with surface and traffic flow costs and all to do with money however you dress it up. Because I live in Woolston you are discriminating against me. Why not put a toll on the millbrook road west flyovers which seem to be in constant repair state. I promise to add to the traffic coming over northam bridge if this goes ahead.

Because when the bridge was first built once the bridge had paid for itself it was going to be free. I understand paying a little for general upkeep but the charges you are asking is too much .

I think it's great to have consistency for car drivers and to charge more to the larger vehicles who block up the roads and bring more pollution

Getting rid of the off peak charges is not fair to local residents. If the proposal is to reduce emissions / encourage road users to take buses / public transport this will not work. It will push car users to other already congested roads in the morning, increasing queue times and ultimately emissions. I understand the bridge needs to be maintained however please consider the impact this may have on people when there is already a cost of living crisis. Prices are increasing everywhere and this is a cost that does not need to be increased. I feel the charge on HGV is excessive however can understand they put higher pressures on the bridge, perhaps a smaller increase would be appropriate. Or just increase for hgv drivers to cover costs. Southampton is already becoming very difficult to drive in with the newly imposed 20mph speed limits and closing roads to public only allowing taxis and buses. Although the change recommended is only small it will be unsettling for many road users.

It's going to cause even more mayhem to what is already a congested route to the city on bitterne road and will cause even more pollution to these areas as people would rather drive a bit further to get into the city for free!

Rip off when the toll was only meant to be a temporary measure. How we can restrict and charge people to travel within our own city is ludicrous.

The Council has stated that it is unlikely the Planned Works to the bridge will receive Government funding as the bridge is " not a key strategic transport route" yet further into the article Councillor Eamonn Keogh (cabinet member for Environment and Transport) is quoted as saying "investment in the bridge is necessary if this KEY link between communities" my question to the Council is , is it or isn't it ?

Secondly

According to the Freedom of Information Act the Itchen Bridge made a surplus of approx £2.344 million in the year 2021/2022, I think it would be a fair assumption that similar profits will be recorded for 2022/2023, if you combine these profits it gets very close to the £5million quoted for the upcoming works.

My question is, if the Council knew these works were to be carried out, what were the profits made by the bridge spent on ? And why weren't they set aside for " essential " maintenance.

It is clear to me the proposed increase in the toll is purely to try to plug the gap in this Councils profligacy.

Residents in the east of the city are punished based on their postcode. The majority of cars entering the city from outside the city boundary tend to come over Northam bridge. Makes more sense to make every entry into the city centre a toll. This is just punitive and unreasonable for east side residents.

The bridge is part of the highways which should be funded in the same way as all other roads. There is no need for this huge change at this time of extreme hardship.

the toll on this bridge serves no other purpose than a cash grab on local motorists and raising the tolls again is completely unjustifiable. why not make every road in the city a toll road??! Ridiculous. The toll should be scrapped not increased. I don't care about the Councils poor management of financials and dire budget position - that is their problem to solve.

Significant traffic at peak hours, delaying everyone, even those not using the bridge. Why would you actively choose to increase usage at that time?

I do not believe that the residents should have a price increase on the Smart Cities cards. We pay a vat amount on council tax, which I haven't seen a benefit from in my community. I do not think it's fair to penalise residents further by this additional increase.

The Itchen Bridge was supposed to provide a good crossing and you are suggesting now that drivers should take a detour on already congested roads so that you can rake in more money! No!

Object to removal of off peak for class 2 vehicles.

It's about time the toll's on this bridge were removed altogether, not increase them. It's a poor way of boosting the council coffers by fleecing motorists once again.

As a local resident I only use the bridge at Off peak times commuting to and from the hospital 5 days a week. So, I will stop using the bridge and go around since although it will cost more in fuel and extra time it will still be cheaper than paying peak rate twice a day 5 days a week if it is increased.

Woolston residents ought to be exempt from paying a toll to use the bridge.

As a resident I welcome the continuation of the Smartcities card and the small increase of 10p per journey. Sat Nav's play a part in foreign HGV's using small roads and very often have vehicles come down Bryanston Road looking to get to the industrial estate in Hazel Road.

Please do not remove the discount for residents.

I am concerned that removal of the off-peak charge will encourage more motorists to use the Itchen Bridge during the peak rush hours only adding to the congestion seen at those times. It might raise more money but at the expense of more traffic congestion ... and hence more pollution.

This will disincentivise car traffic into the city centre. However, cycle infrastructure on either end of the bridge is poor, with bike lanes on the West end being entirely unprotected and on the East end being both unprotected and ending abruptly. Improving cycling infrastructure here would make a more meaningful difference to how residents choose to use the bridge.

£40 for an HGV is ludicrous £25 is too much - be reasonable. The more you put up costs the more businesses put up costs the less people have to spend in Southampton

Cars should have a minimum toll of 50p per crossing and it should be free between 6pm and 6am

Shouldn't have to pay at all!

The increase in toll bridge charges is unfair to residents. The bridge is a very useful asset to the residents on the East side of Southampton. It has already increased in recent years.

It will become increasingly difficult, especially during a cost of living crisis, for people to use the bridge. My other objection is the huge increase in HGV costs to use the bridge. This not only comes at a very difficult time for businesses, especially local ones, but will result in everyone paying more for the goods being transported as companies will pass on the costs.

My view is that tolls should be scrapped completely on this bridge. Surely 40 years on there is no need to still be paying for the bridge.

In addition, many cars go the long way round to avoid paying the toll, additional to increased traffic and pollution.

I know that the Council is strapped for cash, but tolls like these punish the poorer off in society.

Removing the off peak charge is another "tax" on local residents. It does not make sense environmentally or financially for local drivers (eg weston, woolston etc) to drive to use Bitterne Rd and Northam Bridge

Your reason to increase charges because of maintenance work for 24 /25. How much has been spent on maintenance in the last 3 years.

I think there should be a lot more toll roads around Southampton with the proceeds funding better mass transit.

I think the increases are short sighted. People will use alternative roads, so the repair work will transfer to another road, this will not save any money. I also think it is insensitive to hit people and businesses with further cost increases during this time.

Forcing drivers to use alternative longer routes does not help with the city's pollution problems.

Cost of living and people need to get to work

Again another money grabbing solution from City council! Unbelievable taking away the off peak part. Penalising people on the east side of the city!! And at a time when people are massively struggling with the cost of living! Although not much point in asking peoples comments as you will do what you want!!!!!!

Normally a public consultation by a council means you've already decided and will go ahead whatever the consultation comes up with.

Reinstate the zero emissions nil toll rate to encourage use of environmentally friendly vehicles and improve air quality

Will result in volume increase on other roads. Others schemes are encouraging use of town quay so that will in result in further travel more cost for residents on east side and of more congestion to what already exists creating more pollution. It seems to me it's local people that use off peak and they are the ones who suffer most. SCC knew full well when the bridge was commissioned it would not attract any future Gov funding but still went ahead with it now you expect residents to cover the cost of your vanity project and egos. The bridge would have to be maintained unless it was knocked down this proposal will only reduce income and reduce still further city centre footfall

I think the toll is too high as it is and it could be bad for Southampton by limiting people coming into the city.

As a Woolston resident I am subjected to paying an extra tax in order to go into Southampton. It is the only bridge in Southampton that charges a toll. It is an unfair tax and I object to being made to pay more

It's disgusting you said it would be free once laid for.

It's disgusting that you are trying to claw more money from Southampton residents. At a time when people are not only struggling with affording to just live, but the high street it also suffering with online competition.

You should back away from this way Earning back the massive amounts you wasted and lost on the failed bus lane on Avenue and look at something a lot more productive such as by increasing speeding fines.

The off-peak rate is designed to encourage people to use the bridge outside the rush hour. Abolishing it will make rush hour traffic worse. It's bad enough as it is!

Just a money making scheme yet again. There is regularly an issue when trying to top up cards. Failing reading plates and not opening enough lanes to co with rush hour direction of traffic. You don't even employ staff now.

Although the Bridge continues to require investment the burden of this should not fall to local tax payers. It is well know that Southampton City Council is struggling financially and this is clearly an attempt to fill some of that void at the expense of the public. there should l'm fact be a reduction in the toll charge (especially local residents) until such time as high standard park and rides are implemented on the Woolston side of the bridge and improved road layouts are set up to reduce congestion.

Why do cars entering the city from the west and north, and Northam Bridge not have to pay a toll. Why do y you ask Centrsl Government for a grant.

So long as the cost for residents remains reasonable, I support measures to reduce non local traffic using Portsmouth Road - particularly lorries.

The whole traffic infrastructure needs to be addressed not just making car drivers pay more when they are already paying more for fuel. The traffic queues accessing the bridge at rush hour create high levels of pollution due to poor traffic light management and the use of contactless payments or apple pay etc which are slower to process than the bridge card

It is ridiculous, I have no choice but to go over the bridge to get to work and my girlfriend's house. I have to live outside of the city due to lack of appropriate housing and due to congestion in the city. I spend about 20 pounds a week on the toll bridge. With this new cost of living crisis I'm struggling to pay all my bills, feed myself and do basic activities this extra 20 pounds a week isn't helping. It is absolutely ridiculous you guys really do take the piss.

Considering the cost of living crisis, I am shocked and disgusted that the council want to increase the toll charge yet again. The comment that the bridge is a key link for Southampton's communities is correct, but it has become apparent that this is being used as an excuse to charge more and more. I would very much like to see an in-depth outline on how much the bridge costs to maintain yearly and how much has been collected from the toll charges, going back at least 5 years.

There was a cost of living summit held in October, the aim of which was to discover what we can do to combat the crisis together. Southampton City Council were a key partner in this summit. So to now up the toll charges during the crisis (again!) by removing the off-peak charge is a farce.

People are struggling. Residents can't help where they live, and to have their charge increased will only mean that other routes will become even more busy, clogging up roads and making air pollution worse. I believe this will make Residents not visit Southampton recreationally as this added cost will have to be considered in their costs and in the end shops and businesses will be effected, it's already not recovered post covid. You should be encouraging growth by allowing drivers to visit Southampton easier not make it more expensive, you've already reinstated the evening parking charge. If charges are required to upkeep the bridge then make those who are not Residents pay more, like businesses. People who commute daily into Southampton shouldn't have their charges increased, they have to go to work and travel is very expensive as is, things are already burdensome, you've put up parking, petrol is still expensive, insurance has gone up at least 40% extra. This war on drivers is unfair. As someone who lives in Solihull I don't feel safe after dark, I already stay home a lot more, bus is not an option as I would have to walk alone in the dark, I rely on my car for safety and live right by the bridge, I would have to do a massive u-turn to get into Southampton to avoid the toll. You may call it a small increase but to those effected it adds up.

Strongly object. I pay council tax and it's an essential route for me. Absolutely disgusting even proposing this change. Make it free for all and stop attacking motorists.

It's unfair for people living or working on the east side of the water to be penalised with increased toll charges. It will drive more traffic through town on the Northam Bridge.

Per person this seems an acceptable raise.

Before any proposal is put forward, a full financial record should be made available to the public, to include all expenditure and all income. If the bridge has been paid for, there must be a massive amount in this account. Therefore, with full transparency a fair recommendation can be made, and the paying Council residents can possibly come up with alternate recommendations. If this is available please let the public know where to find this information.

I believe the off peak period should remain but are in agreement for the local residents costs to be increased but for this benefit to still remain in place

Whilst I agree in principle for the costs to increase for general users, I object to the increase for SO19 residents. One of the main reasons for the toll as explained on the intro is to control the flow of traffic, so it should be those from outside the area contributing more because they are one of the main volume increases.

To even consider removing the off-peak cost is appalling, and downright shocking. To punish people for using a road that everyone should be able to use is just awful. £1 for each trip is an absolute joke, and to then enforce that for all times of the day is ridiculous. It will put people off of visiting the city and residents from going into the city centre. It will cause shops to lose business most definitely, as people are struggling as it is right now and do not need to be worrying about paying a stupid £1 charge each way. I'm local so have a smart cities card, but I still find it shocking that I should have to pay 40p each way to go into another part of my home city. Why should residents be expected to pay to go into their own city?? You think it is ok to allow people to have to pay to go to the hospital if they live on the other side of the water? Disgusting. With all of this, it will put more pressure on the other bridges. Causing more congestion and pollution. It's already bad enough as it is at peak times for traffic. But to finish it off, charging large vehicles £40 to cross is actually astounding. Must be the most expensive toll bridge in the entire country at that rate! As a port city that relies on people taking cruise ships and importing goods as profit, this sort of thing really confuses me. It just puts people off and will negatively effect the city's income. Additionally, as a local I have seen what this current council has done to our roads and it is appalling. Closing roads for weeks or months (causing more congestion in the city) to put in stupid road layouts that have caused multiple accidents and not fill in pot holes properly. What are our taxes paying for? Because it feels like they do nothing but get thrown at the next unnecessary project the council feels with gain them more money, and cause residents to suffer.

As a local person that lives very close to the bridge I do not believe it is fair I pay full peak rate, which I guess you will increase further!, just because of my location to access the city centre. This proposal will force me to travel further and use alternative routes to get to town adding to congestion and air pollution, as it will be a cheaper alternative to going over the bridge.

Cars impact the bridge less than HGV vehicles, so the charges for HGV vehicles should be increased as this can be arranged to be paid by the companies who require them to go over the itchen bridge constantly. To punish the people who are taking their cars over to town is a disgrace. This council needs to realise that all that will happen with this is people will use the itchen bridge less and start to use other routes such as northern bridge....which will then have an impact on that bridge and require the council to pay out for repairs regardless. I believe that the rates should stay the same for cars ,or even reduced slightly, as this will keep people going over the itchen bridge, which will provide some funds aswell as the increased funds the council will get from HGV vehicles as I proposed previously.

The bankrupt council has to get money somewhere when they are happy to lose thousands in closing a very busy car park at Albion Place and converting it to grass how crazy is that its scandalous

Local residents travelling to work in the city have had recent parking charge increases and petrol increases. An increase in toll for residents is not sustainable and may result in more people working from home therefore not utilising businesses in the city for lunch/shopping etc.

I am a local resident. By removing the off-peak charge there is no incentive to travel outside the peak period.

All local residents of Woolston, Peartree and Sholing should be able to use the Itchen Bridge for free with a reduced toll for other Southampton tax payers (controlled via the Smartcities card). Non Southampton tax payers should continue to pay the full fee.

It's already expensive if you live in the east side in Woolston it's unfair as we use the bridge regularly

The price of the tolls has already increased making it very expensive for the small amount of convenience. We generally only use the bridge when there is congestion or closures on other routes into or out of the city, otherwise it isn't worth the price for the small amount of convenience. By removing the off peak pricing you will be removing incentive for people to travel at off peak, or to use the bridge at all. It will not discourage people from driving, some of us have no choice as our routes aren't serviced by suitable public transport options, it will just be increasing congestion on other routes.

Drivers should be encouraged to use the bridge at off peak times or traffic jams will increase at peak times. This is just an excuse to put prices up.

The bridge should be free for cars, as the promise made to the people of Southampton was that it would be free once the build cost was paid for.

If the argument is the damage to the road surface, I would suggest this is caused by the increased volume of large tipper trucks and articulated vehicles which get a large reduction in toll in the concession charge. Rather than penalising class 2 cars living in Woolston, charge all vehicles OVER 7.5t the full £25 toll.

Another fee earner would be to impose penalties for motor bike using the cycle lanes (often at speeds over 30 mph) which has become common place over the past 12 months.

There are far too many HGVs using Portsmouth Road, a higher fee to cross the bridge would incentivise heavy vehicles to use the much better suited Bitterne Road West route.

To encourage more people to cycle and upkeep / maintenance of the bridge.

Living in Woolston I don't have any other option than to use the Itchen Bridge without it causing more pollution and costing more in petrol

The 2 tier tariff encourages drivers to avoid busy times and spreads traffic out over a longer period. It seems a cynical way to generate additional revenue and create more congestion.

We can go to Whitely without paying a toll for the bridge and not pay to park. Increasing the bridge toll will simply be another nail in the coffin for Southampton's shops. This is a short sighted proposal at a time when there is a cost of living crisis.

Seems a way of raising monies. I note there is no income in the documents, but expenditure is listed at £5 million

The LATEST proposed rise cannot be reasonably expected to have a significant effect on congestion, but it can be expected to raise a lot of extra revenue for the council.

Councillor Keogh has told me he believes in being fair to both the council and residents. This move doesn't appear to meet with his stated values!

The bridge should be free, increasing prices when people are struggling will result in greater poverty. This will mean drivers may go other routes, thus increasing journey times, congestion on other roads and thus pollution!

Athelstan Road will see a large increase in traffic, a road that is poorly laid out and surfaced. Also it will increase the number of illegal oversized vehicles using Athelstan Road.

What is Labour's issue with motorists, it will cost you the council again.

Your proposal to increase off-peak fees for class 2 vehicles and fees for lorries, will simply dissuade drivers of those vehicles from using the bridge. This will have a three-fold effect. Firstly, it will reduce the amount of money raised by bridge tolls. Secondly, it will significantly increase traffic on alternative routes. Thirdly, it will mean that the Itchen bridge will be under-utilised. Also, increased traffic on alternative, longer routes, will increase CO2 pollution on those routes.

While you say the additional revenue is required for maintenance & upgrading of the bridge, you:

A) Haven't said what those upgrades will be. And;

B) You haven't told the public how much income the bridge already generates per year.

This is essential information so us paying residents know exactly where the current bridge income is spent.

Also, C) Why is the Labour council so intent on wasting MILLIONS of pounds on unnecessary cycle lanes that nobody wants, nobody needs, and were PROVED to be a total & utter dud during your last period in charge?

Instead you could & should be spending that money on ESSENTIAL roadworks, such as repaving the streets & pavements, which are like driving & walking over a ploughed field.

Why is the Labour council so intent on wasting money on vanity schemes instead of investing it in essential works?

Local residents in Woolston and Sholing with a smart card should be able to travel free as they have paid for these for years at the same level as non-local residents. Due to the locality it's their only option

I believe the crossing should be free for local residents by way of a card to cross. Then fees can be paid by all those trying to access southampton from outside the local area.

By penalising traffic crossing the bridge you are increasing the amount of vehicles driving longer distances than needed to cross the river. This increases congestion on other routes and increases pollution. This directly contradicts the council commitment to improving the environment

As a Netley Abbey resident the bridge really is the only option to get into town without spending a lot more time and emitting more emissions going via Bitterne. We are not offered any resident discount and the cost is already quite eye watering for the 2 minute drive across.

This is an easy option to gain revenue and the maintenance of the bridge is in part a smoke screen.

The so called link should not be exploited for your gain and to make up for obvious financial challenges you face OR, be transparent and honest.

For example, if my extra 20 p per trip was fairly and rightfully used (it's not all for the maintenance of the bridge) I would accept it but again I am fortunate in that I can afford this increase others can not.

Never seen any maintenance done to it! It's a fucking joke. I travelled across it during peak traffic to pick my wife up from the basepoint industrial estate where she works (£40 a month that costs to cross that bridge and work there.)counted 300 cars going towards Woolston, on the way back it took us 5 minutes to cross the bridge. That's £1500 every 5 minutes during peak traffic in one direction. It should be free as Southampton city council don't spend any money repairing the pot holes across the city. They prefer to waste money on stupid islands like the ones on obelisk road and closing the roads for weeks.

the proposals seem vague on detail at the moment.; what will be the actual car tolls for those currently with post codes from the Woolston./Sholing side...will there be any discounted toll at all?...how about EV's...these still impact to the road surface so will these vehicles be included in the tolls? If all vehicles were EV's there would under the current scheme be an exemption yet continual wear to the surface?

This bridge is nothing but a cash machine, no improvements are made and no notice is ever taken. Maybe put some high fencing up to stop people jumping and attempting or taking their lives.

It's nothing but a bank roll for the council.

There are not really alternative roads to access town that won't make traffic even worst and pollute extra as doing a long detour. People living in this area we don't have a choice but to use the bridge and the removal of the concession rate will take a huge hit in our pockets when we are already suffering to make ends meet. Please do reconsider

The bridge charge has only just gone up, the residents of Netley don't benefit from discounted charges, yet we're an SO postcode and the bridge is our main route to get to work, your literally pricing me out of working, my wages aren't raising to cover the bridge charge keep going up. As the charges have already been put up and card holders hadn't. Why can't you leave it as 80p off peak and £1 peak and raise card holders prices more, as it these car users that should be encouraged to use public transport but are being encouraged to drive because it's cheaper for them, Southampton residents should go up to £60 off peak and £80 peak as it's these people that will use the bridge more often. You will just put more pressure on other roads because people can no longer afford to go over itchen bridge. Southampton makes millions off that bridge already certainly enough to maintain it.

If you discourage people from using the Itchen Bridge you will move the traffic onto Northam Road which is already busy enough and needs sorting out also

Increasing the tolls in the middle of a cost of living crisis is not good. Couldn't you at least delay till things settle down a bit

The increase in the price of the toll will have an impact on the high street economy. The council appears to want to deter all cars going into the city, but then wonder why the high street economy is dying. The cost for cars may appear small but adds up when there is a cost of living crisis. Equally the cost for HGVs could cripple the docks and again the city. Surely the city needs to consider the impact on the wider community and keeping money coming into the city. I think £40 is excessive and will stop goods coming into the city.

just a tax on the poor—we were promised that the toll would be free when paid for and funny how now council deny it and the notes of that meeting have gone missing—charge cyclists to use it then as well and to stop hgv using portsmouth road, just ban them and put up sign saying no hgv -the extra charge will be passed onto the public=keogh must resign, he hates cars [ABUSIVE CONTENT REMOVED]

Will increase air pollution in city due to people avoiding the toll.

I live SO31 5GL postcode (Eastleigh BC) 100 yards from Southampton border and get no concessions. So I never go shopping in Southampton I go Whiteley and hedge ends. Too expensive to cross bridge and park!

huge discrepancy between 'residents' and 'non residents' even though the distance between the two can be only a 200 feet. instead makes people drive away from the bridge causing more pollution and more traffic in a different area and adds to their travel time. if prices rise concessions need to be the first to rise and this is a ridiculous difference

Diversion of HGVs to other routes into city, specifically Cobden Bridge. My concern is threefold; 1, Pedestrian safety particularly at the Triangle; 2, increasing air pollution due to increased traffic and congestion in the St Denys Road area; and 3, wear and tear on the road structure.

I have to use the bridge multiple times a day to collect and drop off my step daughter from her nursery. It costs a ridiculous amount of money to get my step daughter - it's a joke

Toll bridge price increase unreasonable as only recently increased !

This should NOT be funding the

Councils poor financial situation - the cost of the bridge has been paid off for years stop ripping local people off ! You have increased council tax and have enough money from residents as it is - this makes me so angry !

People who use the bridge should pay for it.

As a local resident/senior citizen age, this proposal/increase comes in the same year as a substantial council tax increase, garden waste bin increase and imminent city car parking charges increase. I feel that I will not be alone in keeping visits to the City at a minimum.

Why is this still happening us residents who hVe paid for this bridge 1000 times over its ridiculous. How can the money just simply be going on repairs when there is never any work to be seen being done!!!

The bridge was supposed to have paid for itself many, many years ago. My son finds it very expensive travelling to and fro each day to visit me.

This is extortionate and you've only just put the prices up. Plus you have already paid for the bridge so you're being greedy now

If the upkeep is linked to the amount of heavy goods vehicles traversing the bridge why not simply ban them and keep the cost for residents the same?

The cost is already extraordinarily high. I think it should be reduced at all times, but to increase it in off peak times just seems wrong. It will not encourage people to use the bridge, thus increasing traffic through Bitterne. Feels greedy....

Yes. Increasing tolls will help pay for the continual maintenance of this ageing concrete structure and help to reduce traffic on this route, encouraging bus and cycle travel.

The upkeep for this bridge has more than paid for itself through tolls

Why did you make the stupid mistake in closing castle way and Albion street car parks you will lose the revenue now and we the people who pay your wages just for you to continue to make schoolboy errors

It should be free to cross the bridge. How can you justify increasing costs when there is such a major cost of living crisis

You increased the toll charge recently, and now you're doing it again, explain how this is fair to people who rely on the bridge to get to work! You last reported an enormous profit from the toll increase, so much so, the £2.5m excess profits were distributed across other Southampton sectors, so why are you increasing it again?! The bridge is not a subsidiary for funding poorly managed budgets of other sectors!

You claim this increase is for maintenance costs, by I have used this bridge 5 days a week for 7 years and I have not seen one person work on it, so how can you claim this is for maintenance??

This is purely a money making scheme to line your pockets, plain and simple; you take us for fools if you think we'll believe anything but!

Sadly we know this is just a formality, and you have already made your mind up, and no matter what anyone else or how many people object, you will do what you want. I just hope more people wake up to your lies and schemes, and start making a stand! Southampton is a dying city and it's stuff like this that's helping to kill it.

Southampton...what a sh!t hole...

It costs a lot already for regular users and the original toll for the bridge was only meant to be temporary!

Bloody rip off, the Severn bridge is 3 times as big as this piddly assed bridge and that is FREE !!!!!

As a resident of Netley Abbey, I do not get the discounted rate, even though we are local to the bridge at only a 6 minute drive away from it. I transport my foster children to school in Millbrook twice a day 5 times a week, plus to contact at Cxford road twice a week, the quickest route is across the bridge costing me £20 per week, without the off peak reduction this would be £24 per week. £20 on top of the £50 a week I spend on petrol to do the school run is already an astronomical amount just to get children to school so any increase is going to be objected against.

I cross the bridge everyday two to three times a day all hours of the night, I have yet to see any maintenance being carried out on this bridge, the automated toll booths are useless, motorbikes don't have to pay yet use two wheels so should at least half as much as everyone else, maybe start charging them, if your looking to save money maybe look at yourselves a council like every other wasting millions of pounds of tax payers money criminals! Should be ashamed of yourselves squeezing more money out of hard working tax payers with an extortionate convenience tax, why doesn't Northam bridge have a charge on it, sees more traffic then the itchen bridge.

Hardly ever use the bridge.

What exactly am I paying for ? I am SO19 and surely 46 years since opening the bridge should be free as promised in 1977

I live in Netley Abbey and although in the Borough of Eastleigh we are very much part of Southampton. It is very unfair that we have to pay so much to go and shop or carry out any other business in Southampton. Much less likely to go across the bridge and shop at Whitely or other out of town centers.

An extra cost to residents amongst the cost of living crisis, it's bad timing, especially with the chaos in Southampton over the past few weeks due to very bad planning of events on the part of the council and constant flooding of roads at the first drop of rain causing even more chaos. Sort out the existing problems first, making life and driving easier for residents before adding more expenses in our lives.

It should have been paid off years ago (as promised). The people of Southampton rely on the Bridge and are being held hostage by the local authority who use it as a cash cow

No justification for increasing the cost to local residents, have no issue with anyone else

Absolutely a joke charge enough already and the queueing at the gates is atrocious at times ☹️

I have cross the Itchen Bridge to travel to work. I am ostracised due to where I live. Due to the current economic crisis, the cost of living is horrendous and I am on minimum wage. This charge is targeting those that are struggling to put food on the table. It's a geographical tax on an already struggling demographic.

As a resident of Sholing I use the bridge regular as I'm a domiciliary carer sometimes it's easier to use the bridge especially as we have customer who live in Woolston and if we are at the bottom end of town it make practical sense to use the bridge I have a smart city card topping it up is already costing me enough without adding a y further increases.

Think before you make a wrong decision

Stop taking advantage of your residents and make it free as it was meant to be intended!

You're expecting a worker to spend £1460 a year crossing a bridge in a car on top of petrol.

Haven't you already stolen enough of our money with your ridiculous costs for council tax and all the rest?

The toll should have ended year ago

The cost of crossing that bridge is too excessive.

If central government will not fund council services then local residents will need to.

I feel this is purely to account for the shortfall in the councils budget due to overspending. The council should be more responsible with tax payers money and not spend money on vanity projects such as removing car parks and converting them into parks and bus station hubs. They should also look to stop funding failing leisure centres which don't have enough users and stop subsidising them in conjunction with other vanity projects including changing road layouts before looking at hiking charges for the itchen bridge. The last increase more than covers the cost of maintaining the bridge even now. This will encourage road users to use alternative longer routes into the city adding to pollution and congestion on the other routes. Access to the city shouldn't be made more difficult the congestion in and out of the city is already at breaking point!

I can't afford to visit town. I've never seen any maintenance being done on this bridge, the council is an absolute joke.

All this maintenance you say is required, I have used this bridge since 1980 and have failed to see any maintenance being done, I had a relative who used to work for S.C.C. And he said the only maintenance he saw was clearing the pigeons from under the bridge. Yet again S.C.C. Are penalising motorists. You seem hell bent on supporting cyclists who pay no contribution for using public roads,

Residents were promised when the bridge was paid for crossing it would be free. Within the current financial climate and continued tax on motorists for fuel and alike residents in SO19 with a smart card should be permitted to cross for free. SCC has wasted millions on highway schemes, such as bus and cycle lanes clogging up other bridge crossings and therefore to seek an increase is not warranted.

The city council has already increased the costs of the bridge within the last year.

The local council are meant to be ECO Friendly, why would they push traffic to drive around the long way which would cause more traffic and pollution.

Absolutely shameful! It's more about raising money due to miss using it on stupid 20 mile speed limits, traffic calming measures and cycle lanes that no one uses.

Making more and more difficult for people to get to work and causing more pollution rather than fixing the problem.

2 million pound income per year the bridge takes in, there certainly needs an investigation into the councils miss use of money. So I think it's time for a government petition to investigate this further.

You are ruining our lovely city!

By taking away off peak charges there will be less income for the maintenance of the bridge. Where will this come from? Will our council tax go up to help pay for the bridge. Should the smart card pass residents who use the bridge at peak time have to pay more to make up for the free use off peak, I don't think they should. More people will use the bridge during off peak times which will increase the traffic on the bridge and therefore increase the frequency of repairs needed.

They said the bridge would be free once it had paid for itself. I'm sure it has by now. With the cost of living etc it's crazy. The machines are slow if paying by card. It holds traffic up so make it free.

It costs the people who travel over the bridge to get to work every day enough money as it is! Cost of living has increased and people can't afford the increase. The residents of Southampton pay enough to use the bridge and have done for the last 20 years.

Many years ago we were told the bridge would be free, whilst I understand it has to be maintained, so will never be free! prices should stay the same

Can you please publish the income and expenditure for the bridge in the last 10 years to help people make an informed choice on your proposal.

The bridge needs investment to maintain a safer level of use. If it can discourage HGV use of the bridge then even better.

I don't use it very often so it wouldn't really affect me too much.

The bridge makes enough money to pay for it's own maintenance. I suggest it is a strategic highway now that this stupid council has overpopulated woolston without improving traffic flow.

Residents of Woolston do not have any reasonable alternative other than to use the Itchen Bridge, so it is not fair to increase the amount that we have to pay in order to use it. All the other bridges in the city are free, so it is already very unfair that residents of Woolston have to pay to use the closest bridge to get into the city.

If the charges are being put up to deter extra traffic then that is understandable, but this should not include residents of Woolston, as we do not have a reasonable alternative.

More and more punishment for regular people who drive into the city from the east side. Better off going to Whitely now. Absolute joke. Better to make it free for cardholders and charge more for those from outside the city.

Also, cab drivers who charge still full fare and should pass through at cost, but do not... this is a problem.

Also a mention to motorcyclists who use the cycle lane (ant silly speeds) instead of using the toll booth system (even though it's free for those people) is very dangerous for cyclists who the council seem to love when it suits them!

Getting rid of the off peak charge will do nothing to decrease use of the bridge. This is the only practical option for drivers. The option of having to drive around and get to northern bridge will simply put Southampton on a standstill. I do know people who wait until the off peak to use the bridge and taking away that will only cause them to just join the peak queue.

Terrible decision that's not based on anything other than justifying earning more money for the bridge. Make public transport a priority. Schedule more trains coming through woolston. Put in a tram line. But putting more costs on cars makes no difference, it will simply just cost us more to travel

This bridge brings in far more revenue than is needed to maintain it

Local residents using a SmartCities Card should not face an increase

Despite council rhetoric that the bridge is costing a good deal of money there have never been properly published accounts of profit/loss for the bridge!

The proposed increase defined as "SMALL," for residents if increasing from 40p to 50p (some plain english required here!!!!) is actually a 20% increase and not a small increase in most peoples consideration.

I think that the residents costs should be kept at 30p at all times and the other fees adjusted

The toll bridge creates more pollution. Traffic tails back across Woolston for people waiting to use the bridge. This move will not help this. Pollution costs more in public health for the government. Traffic should not be waiting causing traffic jams. All those poor children in st Patrick's school!

Prepaid toll should be available for more flow

The charges will be going up at the expense of local citizens. If there has to be an equalisation of the fees, please make this only for customers who don't have a city bridge pass. This way the locals continue to pay the same rate.

It is becoming an increasingly pernicious tax for the working population at a time when costs are already high. There is no justification for this as you have got rid of one of the major costs, which was the humans working in the booths.

Don't agree that HGVs should bear the burden. Cars should pay too.

This bridge has paid for itself already, its rubbish about how much traffic goes across it, the 7th bridge charge has more traffic going over it and its free, your just money grabbers, its paid for itself 30 times over by now.

Seems excessive

Increase the toll for lorries going over bridge. The bridge wasn't built for these lorries. Also when bridge was built we were told the toll would be removed once bridge was paid for. Surely it's paid for now !!!!!!!

I agree with the uplift for HGV's - from the consultation notice, the reason that the toll charge remains is to control the traffic and 'weight' over the bridge - HGV's should be encouraged to use other routes. This will also aid in other local roads being used regularly by HGV traffic.

But I STRONGLY OBJECT to the increase in residents price reduction! This is such a minor perk for local people who occasionally use the bridge in off-peak hours! The ethos of controlling the traffic over the bridge is not being applied here; residents in the adjacent postcodes during off-peak hours will be a minor use in the grand scheme of traffic, but it will result in a large increase for said residents! This is purely being suggested for money making reasons.

How is this truly a suggestion to benefit Southampton residents?!

I do not understand the logic that the toll is there to manage the traffic, and yet you're removing an incentive to use the bridge at quieter times by abolishing the peak rate? From where I live, the bridge is a significant time saving over other routes and I assume you do still want people to keep using it and pay the toll. It feels like this is really about raising more money, The tolls were already increased significantly this year - albeit I understand they had been frozen for a number of years - and removing the peak rate now would mean a roughly 40% increase in the full price of an off-peak crossing in the last 12 months.

Cost of living, that bridge has been paid for over and over again, stop putting the prices up

The toll for the Itchen Bridge has not increased for many years and so has fallen in real terms. Given that it is a critical source of revenue for upkeep of the bridge, it makes sense for it to rise with inflation. Also, a higher toll will hopefully discourage car traffic over the bridge and encourage a modal switch to bus, cycling, or walking where possible, thereby reducing congestion and pollution.

In this tough times people are finding it harder and harder to put food on the table, or a roof over their head. Putting the bridge price up is going to make it harder for families plus it will push more cars to drive to the other bridges, so longer drives, more air pollution

This will only serve to push more traffic on to the already congested Northam Road which has bottlenecks over the railway bridge at Bitterne Station and the bridge near St Mary's stadium.

There are only 2 bridges into Southampton, both cause huge queues the pollution and traffic it causes around schools in particular is awful. By raising prices you are penalising those who work, want to add to the community and society. If I had any other option to get into town for work I would but it's sit in one out of two queues. For me to get the bus to work would take 2 hours due to 3 bus changes so public transport isn't an option!

Why not make it free for Smart City card holders only.

The price has recently gone up and a proposal to go up again is greedy.

It's expensive enough, getting to work, let alone putting up the prices of a bridge that was supposed to be free by now! You will be killing the economy in town by doing this, as less people are willing to go there and work or even shop. And with public transport are not getting cheaper This is just a ridiculous move in an economy where everything is getting put up anyway.

As a Woolston resident, I think any savings made on the upkeep of the Itchen bridge will need to be spent on Northam bridge, which will be the alternative route for all vehicles not wanting to pay the increased tariff. This is also detrimental to the environment, with cars using more fuel to take a roundabout route. I use the bridge mainly to visit an elderly relative in Brockenhurst and my son in the Chapel area of Southampton and to use the shopping facilities in the city. . Public transport is out of the question to visit my aunt in Brockenhurst. I will use the shopping facilities less, as will a lot of the Woolston residents. If the council only use the bridge profits for the upkeep of the bridge & not as a council income I'm sure a drop in the tariff would be forthcoming. Maybe the accounts could be made public, so we can see all the money spent on bridge repairs?

I am an interested resident

The toll for the itchen bridge was meant to have been taken away decades ago. Stop increasing the tolls and start decreasing

I believe the toll for the bridge is already high enough. SCC are encouraging local people to take longer less environmentally friendly routes into the city. I would welcome better preventative suicide measures - that is long overdue!

The toll is over priced now. Just another scheme surrounded by lies by a totally inept head in the sand council.

The bridge was built to ease traffic to northam bridge and other roads , and promised to keep charges to minimum . how much toll does it take per year , a big secret , hundreds of heavy buses uses it daily doing more wear and tear so the council should fund these

Woolston residents should have free access to city centre , same as those in Shirley, portswood etc, discriminated against once again, about time it was brought into the national road maintenance network

Managing traffic is best carried out by discouraging motorists from using Itchen Bridge at peak times - by having a cheaper off peak charge. Forcing motorists to use the Northam Bridge route will lead to more congestion on the Northam Bridge route, more track miles driven, more pollution and more CO2 emissions. This proposal sounds more like a money grab rather than a serious attempt to control traffic.

I think the proposal for large businesses & non resident's is fair but resident's should be allowed to use the bridge for free. Public transport is not reliable, timely or cost effective for most people so resident's are choosing to shop in places like whitley where parking is free & there's no additional cost to travel which will be having a negative impact on Southamptons economy. The cost of living and decisions like this & council tax increases are breaking hard working people, surely the council need to take that into consideration.

When the bridge was first built we were never told that it would be a toll bridge forever, we were led to believe that we just had to pay for the building. Southampton is now just one big traffic jam and it no longer is a nice place to live.

It's unfair residents in so19 will be penalised, and forced to increase pollution by taking longer routes into town

It costs enough to get into Southampton to work and shop as it is.

There is no need to tax drivers further. This bridge was paid for years ago and its just used as a money spinning exercise forcing drivers to take a longer journey and using more fuel.

It's a key route for many people and we don't have the infrastructure in place outside of the itchen bridge. Also for those who live in Woolston/sholing, this would add significant commuting time to journeys.

The price increases seem to be happening more and more frequently. When the bridge was built, people were advised the charge would be scrapped after so many years not increased. How do you justify these constant price increases?

Bad idea. First you have not mentioned how much the increase would be for drivers who have a SmartCities discount, or are you doing away with the discount altogether? If so, that would make it a huge increase.

You would normally expect to pay more at the busiest times, by removing that differential will only make it worse. It will only encourage people to use the Northam Bridge instead, causing it to be an even more polluted city then it already is. It such a bad idea, I think you have done it on purpose just to get a reaction.

When the bridge was first built it was supposed to become a free crossing once the costs of building it had been recouped but now it is just a tax on people wishing to travel from one side of the water to the other. I for one will now go back through Bitterne and across Northam Bridge to avoid paying this.

Work harder to actively reduce fees on the toll to support hard working residents, and concentrate your efforts on community efforts to boost the local economy. This does neither so should be scrapped!

The charges are a lot already to use the bridge. Those that need to use it daily to get to work have to pay a hell of a lot. Putting the charges up yet again will start to put people off working in the city centre. Also it will put people off going into the city centre as much to go shopping, use restaurants or other leisure facilities. Which could cause a huge impact on the cities economy and cause more business to close.

The impact on this will be to either just make money as people will pay the additional fee, or move more traffic in the roads around Bitterne Road West and Northam Bridge. Effectively creating a longer rush hour. The increase in workers returning to work bases means the traffic is rising and congestion returning to pre pandemic levels.

All cars going via Northam Bridge will then link into the reduced road network. Reduced as the council are making it 'more attractive' to use buses etc. It also comes at a time when costs to park in unutilised car parks such as old Northam road are increasing. With increased traffic the bus times from Thornhill and Bitterne will then increase, in spit of the 'improvements' at East Park and Portland Terrace.

Vehicles should be encouraged to use the bridge at all times, rather than use the other residential roads. Off peak charges encourage this . Raising the tariff to £1 at all times for cars ,will lead to more cars diverting via bitterne, athelston road. Potentially increasing pollution and traffic noise in those areas

It's just such a high toll for a relatively small piece of infrastructure. Compare this to other toll bridges in the UK, and relative to size this is ridiculous.

The bridge has taken in more than enough to cover the £5m upcoming improvements over the past few years. There was a £2m surplus (profit!) from the bridge in 2022, and with there having been no major maintenance projects on the bridge since around 2016, there should be more than enough money in the bank to not need to raise the toll to raise more money to cover the new engineering works.

Of course in reality, surplus from previous years was siphoned off to fund other council projects, and motorists of the future shouldn't have to pay for that.

Although I agree to the increase in costs for larger vehicles to help discourage their use of the bridge, I strongly disagree with the increase that local residents will have to pay.

The bridge is key infrastructure to the city and is an important piece in reducing congestion through the rest of the city. It is ludicrous that claims of maintenance are being used to instigate toll charges in this instance when maintenance to the rest of the road network infrastructure is able to be managed by the council without tolls. Any move to change charges should be made in the other direction with the abolition of tolls.

The reasons for my objection are as follows (1) First your claim that the discount for resident hasn't increased in 20 years when in recent years the smart discount has increased from when we used to buy blue and red tokens for 30 and 40 pence to now paying 80p off peak and £1 for peak times. (2) The council has never accounted to the residents across the bridge that use it daily, how much they make a day, monthly and yearly. How that money is used and where? Instead of all this the council should be investing in a reliable bus service that does not service other areas in the city 1/2 hourly and hourly, but want to change road usage in the city centre(portland street). Last year or is it council changed road usage (cycle lanes) in the avenues, which was later reversed at what cost. How about investing that money in project that improve and not increase traffic jams across the city in the disguise of saying you want to improve traffic around the city. How about consulting the people that use the use whether they want a dedicated bus hub or more buses.

Already expensive when you going through this area in a regular bays even as a resident

Absolutely disgusting, please don't try and kid residents it's for the upkeep, it's not, also there are two other bridges that go into town, where is the toll on them, if this goes ahead I will personally ensure that there will be demonstrations

I support the proposal, as long as the current and extra income 100% goes into maintaining the bridge rather than a general SCC Slush Fund.

Please confirm all toll income goes to pay for the bridge?

I support dissuading HGVs, large Vans from using the Bridge because the roads in Woolston are not suitable for them and make it dangerous for cyclists.

I live in Netley Abbey and visit my elderly mother 3-4 times a week and as a retiree myself I struggle to pay to cross the bridge. When the bridge was first opened we were told that it would be a toll bridge until the money to build it had been recovered. That goal was achieved some time ago so I object strongly to you putting the price up and the toll charges should be dropped

SCC is ripping off motorists using the bridge and councillor Keogh and his fellow councillors are killing off support for the labour run council.

We have found that we have abandoned shopping and visiting central Southampton due to the cost, both bridge and parking. We go from Bitterne to Romsey, Winchester, instead. The city needs to be encouraging visitors, not driving them away.

I use the bridge and this will add additional cost travelling across the city performing my duties as a carer.

Traffic is ridiculous as it is with permanent road closures to buses and taxis STILL NO PARK AND RIDE ANYWHERE IN THE CITY????? So behind the times

I still don't understand why us, citizens of Weston and Woolston have to pay a penny to cross this bridge. It should be free for us, as Coben and Northam bridge are free for everybody. All the time there is an excuse to maintain the toll bridge, which is highly unfair for us. We have to expend more petrol going around to cross other bridges for free. Charge whatever you want to anybody else but it should be free for neighbours in the area

It will cost me a fortune as I use the bridge twice a day...to get to and from work.

While this bridge is indeed important, I feel the council is doing everything in its power to make the city as inconvenient to the public as possible.

The focus on the one single bridge and its repair, but the blatant disregard for the state of the roads connecting to the piece of infrastructure, is honestly ridiculous.

As a citizen of the city I wish to receive a full explanation to the question "What do nearly £200 pounds worth of COUNCIL taxes go for?"

The state of roads in Southampton is equivalent to the state of the roads of Bulgaria, yet we pay monthly premiums for the "privilege" of destroying our vehicles on the appalling roads of the city.

If the argument is that the council wants to charge a greater fee in order to maintain the ONE piece of infrastructure sound and well repaired, then what pray tell would be the plan for the whole lot of the rest of this city??

Please consider that your citizens are constantly inconvenienced by the stupendously planned repairs of roads, untimely flood interventions and constant failure of adequate governing.

As a Woolston resident we have no option but to use the Itchen Bridge to take away the subsidy would result in more congestion across Nortam Bridge or drive people to out of town shopping.

Broadly increasing tolls to allow for proper maintenance and to manage traffic flows makes sense. The bridge is fundamentally unsuitable for HGVs given the narrow cycle lines (there is no way for an HGV to give the space recommended in the Highway Code for passing).

However, more important is to find a way to encourage less traffic to use the bridge - tolls are a part of that, but equally important is to provide alternative transport (eg bus services that don't get stuck in the traffic jams).

Given that the bridge is completely clogged at peak times, why is this particular increase entirely focused on off-peak? It would make more sense to increase both peak and off-peak by a smaller amount

It is the only feasible way to get to and from work at the hospital and it feels discriminatory to Southampton East residents. Also feels like it will put people off going into town when it's arguably quicker to get to Whiteley where there is 4 hours free parking. Do we really want to see the city centre even more run down?

Also, I have never seen anyone doing any maintainance on the bridge.

I understand the increase for HGVs, but as I drive an electric vehicle, not only has central government removed the grant towards EVs so has the City Council removed the free access and has hiked parking charges in the city. I thought it was only the conservative party who made stealth taxes; how wrong can one be.

The council have made a mockery of travelling around the city. This adds insult to injury!

Raising the toll charges for HGVs will just impact other areas of the city, causing more gridlock in places like the Northam Bridge and St Denys. Surely we want to encourage all drivers to spread out across the city. Congestion is a major problem as it is, and if HGV drivers are required to go to areas such as Weston and Woolston, they'll likely avoid the Itchen Bridge because an increase in £15 is absurd. The current charges for cars on and off peak are reasonable, surely changes should not be made, unless they're to decrease costs across the board. Especially during a cost of living crisis, even when businesses such as haulers, are being affected!

Although I understand the reasons behind the proposals I do not agree with removing off peak and think the HGV increase is too much. You will be adding to congestion and moving pollution towards housing areas.

For people who have to work in Southampton and live in Netley we do not benefit from the discounted southampton city Council tariff. £16 a month extra doesn't sound like much, but for people struggling in today's circumstances, this proposal is yet another scheme of the council to squeeze more money from the working class. Utterly ridiculous!

The bridge is expensive enough as it is, it's a cost of living crisis and there are no real alternatives to crossing the bridge. Northam and Cobden bridge are a joke to cross with traffic at the moment. If the tolls have to go up, invest in better public transport so people aren't forced to use cars. This city has enough people to warrant a mass transit system connecting with outlying areas such as Hedge End or Eastleigh perhaps even inter-city connections to Portsmouth and Winchester. A war on motorists is not the answer when there are many bigger problems facing Southampton

I usually disagree with the labour council's utter contempt for drivers, but in this case, it is reasonable. 1 pound is not a lot of money these days.

Continuous increase for failure to manage within existing budgets. Need to even traffic flow throughout city instead of increasing traffic through other routes, thereby increasing pollution.

The bridge is only 1 of 2 ways into Southampton. Both roads are extremely congested. Should you put the prices up the only other road would become gridlocked. You must make millions already at £1.10 rush hour. The number of cars that go over at this time must already cover the cost of repair. SCC. Should look at managing their funds in a more better and proactive way

Removing the off-peak class2 charge will not impact the traffic, and the loses would be acceptable.

The charges are already a tax on local residents as Northam isnt always an option. I strongly oppose an increase in charges

Motor traffic should be discouraged from entering the city, while other means of transport that do not place as much stress on the city's infrastructure (public transport, bicycles, etc.) should be encouraged, because they provide a more efficient and sustainable way of moving around.

This is a cash cow for local government. No justification for raising the toll during these tough economic times.

For the love of God when will the council realise we don't drive to work because we're lazy we drive to work because we have to!!! No buses go to industrial estates... why? How do working mothers get their kids to breakfast clubs then get to a bus stop and hope to loving God they turn up in time and they are not late for work! Drive from another city because no trains run! Walk in the summer great, global warming, stink when you get there or soaking wet because there's a storm! Get real we would all love not to be sat in traffic every morning and night but reality is... we have NO CHOICE!! work from home oh no your ruining the economy, go to work oh no your destroying the planet! Councils spending money on passion projects more concerned with looking like they are pro active and wasting money rather than actively helping the situation! I live right next to the bridge, pre covid 1.5 hours to get home from Nursling what should of been a 15 minute drive! Post covid.... no idea lost my job but I know I can get to Portsmouth now in 25 minutes! Money spinning for their made up jobs!

Only just put the prices up and it's already too expensive especially if you have to use it daily

Simple price scheme, hopefully will not make rush hour worse

Has already gone up in the year

The reasons given suggest discouragement of use. If this is actually what that Council is proposing why are they not proposing closure of the bridge? In truth it is an excuse to look to raise charges to fill the funding gap. To this I object.

Perhaps SCC could consider reinstating charges for motorcycles and mopeds. This would raise extra funds and also stop them dangerously using the cycle lane by forcing them through the toll barriers.

It's ridiculous, paid for years ago and now unmanned. Just greed

There is such a thing as off-peak travel on trains, and that is public transport, and there should continue to be a concession cost reduction for using the bridge outside of peak rush hours, and into the evening and overnight. You should also Stop charging all residents who have SmartCities cards. Only charge non-residents, and put the toll up for them for the three tiered times of peak, off peak, out-of-hours overnight. You are already penalising residents that have no option other than to cross the itchen bridge to get to or from work when all other routes are equally congested.

Alternate routes are a longer and more wasteful journey. Charging your residents the same as visitors is unnecessary, same as reducing or removing off-peak discounts.

Because local people have to use this 5 days a week ,twice a day , and we do have to use it because the alternative route of northam bridge and Athelstan rd simply can't cope with the extra traffic as was highlighted when the council made the ridiculous decision to keep it closed until 9.00am recently. The cost soon rises when using everyday.

The fact we pay road tax, fuel tax, VAT on fuel and VAT on car repairs is already enough for using our cars. I struggle to see how the council can charge taking into account the above, let alone punish motorists further by just increasing and increasing costs.

Work harder at cutting down on inefficiencies, waste, unnecessary social care etc. before punishing hard working people further.

We are already discouraged from entering Southampton City by the difficult and expensive car parking. Removing the off peak benefit is another nail in the coffin, to stay away from the City altogether!

The 'new' Itchen Bridge as sold to the citizens of Southampton was to be toll free once the loans provided for its construction were repaid. Honour that promise.

I live in Athelstan Road which is regularly used as a rat run when there are issues on the Itchen Bridge .The proposed increase of the toll on the Itchen Bridge would cause many to look for another route into Southampton, namely using Athelstan Road. This road is in poor condition through the middle flat section and with this additional traffic it would deteriorate further. This will result in a higher level of vehicle exhaust gases not only cars and vans but large lorries which will ignore the clear signage stating they are above the legal weight and use the road to get to Northam Bridge into Southampton. There are many young children and families who use this road to get to the local schools. and the additional traffic could have a detrimental impact on their health.

Why is people in sholing and supporting area having to pay this costs yet again. we live this side of the water and having to pay thwse additional costs

The cost for residents has increased so much already over the years. They should definitely have a cheaper toll option than non residents. By increasing toll for hgvs you will increase the hgv traffic on Bursledon Road and Bitterne Road west which will not be good either.

1. We live near to the itchen Bridge (so14). Avoiding the itchen Bridge due to the toll will add, on average, 15 minutes to our journey. That is 15 minutes of additional emissions - and 15 minutes of additional traffic as we must drive through the city.
2. Southampton has one of 23 toll bridges in the UK. The majority of these, like the Ely Bridge toll, have tolls as they are historic bridges - the tolls go towards restoring and maintaining the bridge. The itchen Bridge is not an old bridge - if tolls are required for its upkeep, why not the Northam bridge? Is there a fundamental difference between the two?
3. I believe public trust in SCC is harmed by this increase. Many residents recall being told the bridge would become free after initial tolls - not only has this not transpired, tolls are now increasing.
4. By removing off peak tolls you are removing any incentive for people to travel into the city in less busy times.
5. Reading your unaudited statement of accounts, as a lecturer in public sector finance, I see no genuine financial reason to raise the toll.
6. Ideologically I feel this is a misstep. I assume that you can see that this move simply makes it harder for those on low income to access the city. Most of these people will be accessing the city for work. Introducing a measure that worsens the disparity between those who can pay and those who cannot does not seem in keeping with a majority labour council. I am thoroughly in favour of reducing the ease of car travel around the city (despite being a driver who lives in the city), but I am not in favour of creating this reduction in a way that only impacts those who cannot afford to pay.

While I agree with the proposal for non-residents, they will result in something approaching a 30% increase in toll costs for residents. That is unacceptable.

This will put people off using the bridge and people will use Northam or Cobden bridges putting more strain on these routes during peak times, which in turn will increase pollution. People living in the Woolston area should not be penalised for using the bridge. SCC gets a considerable revenue from these tolls and getting rid of the lower rate should be abandoned. In addition when I went over the bridge on 10th November at 09:38 I was charged the peak rate, so have SCC already implemented this price change already?

Local residents with toll bridge cards/smartcities cards should not have their price increased.

it is already too expensive and we have stopped using it. I note that Southampton residents get a concession so might look into that option but I would prefer pay as you go.

I work in town and live in woolston and to be honest I pay way too much to go over the bridge each day even with my card. I think it's unfair to put the prices up again as they only went up about a year ago! Also maybe exempt locals that have to use it from such big charges all the time

We are already paying enough. This is a further tax whereby very little has changed in regard to the maintenance costs associated with the bridge. This is a further barrier for people working in the city and visitors etc it is more harmful than good. Perhaps you should've spent out on a more fit for purpose scheme when building it originally or maybe when making it all digital again making sure that errors were minimal so as not to have to let thousands go when toll cards are wiped with no evidence. Be more efficient and imyou wouldn't need the increases we should not be paying for your failings

I agree with the increase in price for HGV's - this will aid in controlling the traffic around the City and local roads, discouraging their use of the Itchen bridge and aiding in CO2 emissions.

But I strongly OBJECT to the increase for local residents at off-peak times! This is a crazy idea, and will put local residents off visiting the main City, shops & restaurants. For myself and many of my friends, we would need to use alternative routes in/out of the City to avoid the higher toll charges, so I personally would not. This will impact the local businesses, and by encouraging local residents to take longer routes around the City there will be an increase in CO2 emissions - what a crazy suggestion!

The increase in toll charges for local people is unfair as they will still be compelled to pay the extra charge (clear profiteering on behalf of the Council) rather than use the Northam route. encouraging users to use other routes will only increase road miles (more wear and tear on the already badly maintained roads) and pollution, which is not going to help the Council achieve aims under the Clean Air Strategy. The Itchen Bridge should be self funding regarding repairs and it is unlikely the current charges are a reflection of the damage caused to the bridge by each crossing. unfortunately there is no transparency as to how much money the bridge makes. Without this transparency it is hard to see why increases in tolls are needed to fund repairs which although they need to happen periodically, are not that frequent. Costs for operation of the bridge have reduced with reduction in staff and automation, not to mention not giving change which has increased takings. Removing the lower concession rate is likely to reduce the use of the Smart Cities Card increasing wait times at the bridge and increasing pollution as cash and bank card transactions take longer. With regard to the point made about concessions not changing in 20 years I would point out that we were told that once the construction costs of the bridge were paid, it would be free. This has never come to pass, it would be interesting to see the balance sheet since the project started. Over half the crossings made are outside peak times due to the size of the communities on the Woolston side of the bridge. These plans are effecting local people (who vote!!) and will cause more congestion, more pollution and longer journey times. They will not help the council achieve it's aims unless the aim is to raise more revenue. This scheme and other so called "improvements" to Southampton roads are misguided to say the least. There should be faster easier cross city routes to avid congestion and reduce pollution. The current plans are failing in this aim and failing to meet action plans and policy. As a resident of Woolston and a life long Sotonian I strongly object to this proposal.

People in Netley, Hamble and Bursledon are yet again being penalised with unfair pricing when it's sometimes more convenient to use the itchen bridge to and from their place of work. Saying they are to use the other 2 bridges is just ridiculous with the amount of traffic as it is.

The bridge doesn't help with either congestion in the city or pollution. Increase charge for residents where the bridge is the shortest way to get into town, will force taking longer routes and produce more gases than quick journey across, most cases in/out of work or school runs.

The peak/off peak system encourages citizens like me to travel at times where the bridge will be quieter. I would like to see data from engineers about whether more stress is placed on the bridge by twice daily slow moving traffic (ie, queue on the bridge) or continuous lower volume traffic, as is currently encouraged by the peak/off peak system.

Equally I am objecting to this as the changes this year to the bridge toll charge and also the smart cities charging mechanism have both been handled poorly and been extremely negatively received. Having a 3rd large change with associated missteps at this point is really aggravating.

In 1977 resident were told it was only until the bridge was paid for 46 years later still paying for the original bridge bill

You should remove the peak discount for everyone else and you can charge them £1 the make ot free off peak

No way

There has been little or no maintenance on the bridge since the installation of the blue lights some years ago. As the Council is in financial trouble this looks like a further money generating scheme

I agree that the HGV charge should increase, however it is not fair to remove the concessionary rate. It is understandable that you are trying to get people to consider whether they should use the bridge or not, but, it is not feasible for individuals like myself who have to use the bridge daily to get to work, or be stuck in traffic for an hour plus every morning, to pay anymore for the bridge. Travelling via Northam Bridge or Bitterne would mean I would be in standstill traffic daily, requiring earlier starts in the morning, potential increase in fuel, which in turn will lead to any increase in pollution, and this will also impact on my mental health as I, alongside many others, are struggling at present financially and mentally. I do not use public transport as I have extreme social anxiety, so adding more traffic time in the morning will increase this. We are ALL struggling financially at the moment too, so adding increased costs to residents is unfair. Increase costs for non-residents and HGV, but protect your residents of Southampton.

I know you need to generate funds to maintain the bridge , but this seems another example how particular the older generation that use out of peak will pay more and living on the east of the city being disadvantaged again , no hospitals. It may also have the impact of more users choosing Northam bridge option increasing congestion.

As Bursledon residents we already cannot apply for the discount card, although still part of Southampton city. Toll fees have already increased recently, so a further increase would be totally unfair. Especially for people living in the close surroundings. The alternative routes are far longer drives with consequent higher carbon footprints. It's a shame to see the council encourages such behaviours against the green culture of saving carbon emissions with shorter journeys.

I use the bridge on a daily basis mostly at off peak times for work. We are in the midst of a cost of living crisis and this means even less money in the pockets of your residents. Also raising the price for HVG'a is only going to get passed on to the consumer too. I think people in Southampton pay enough in council taxes to negate the charge all together.

I agree with the increase in charges for the HGV vehicles.

I cant understand why this route in to Southampton is NOT classed as a Major route for government funding, when you consider the volume of vehicles using it on a daily basis.. as indicated by the vast numbers of queues at various times of day..

Having a Peak and NON - Peak charge, should encourage more people to miss the Peak times and hopefully ease congestion at these times..

It was built in 1977/1978. It has more than paid for itself and very little maintenance has been done over the years. It is just a cash making machine for Southampton City Council.

As a Woolston resident I think it's too expensive already

already too expensive as it is.

The toll bridge has only recently been raised. We live locally and travel over everyday so my daughter can attend her sports club. Can any discount be made available for locals or families?

This is a dreadful idea and should be opposed. The bridge costs were paid off in 2016 and yet still Sotonians are being charged to use this vital piece of infrastructure. It is a shame on our city that we continue to do this. The east side of the river needs to be easier to get to to encourage people to visit, and making it harder and more expensive to get to can only make things worse.

These are difficult times financially and for those that need to use the bridge regularly for employment will suffer the most. Nothing new has been added to the bridge and the revenue made surely must outweigh the yearly cost of maintaining it.

vehicle owners should pay to maintain roads

inflation - needs to go up

I fully support removing toll for cars as they do not cause significant damage to the infrastructure.

If you didn't waste so much money on stupid road schemes then you would have the money for the bridge

This will have a significant impact on emissions, forcing cars to take a longer, less efficient route to avoid the increased tolls and therefore increasing pollution in the city. This goes against Southampton's commitments for a greener city

While often a good way to raise funds, it is not in this case. No longer encouraging drivers to avoid peak times will worsen traffic significantly, something which the council has failed to manage adequately. It will also encourage longer routes, increasing emissions in both this case and in the case of stagnant traffic. This is undoubtedly against public interest, and is not how we should be funding our gov't.

This will have a negative effect on the environment, forcing cars to take a much longer route round. And could make traffic worse at peak times, given there's now no incentive to avoid it. Off peak and peak being the same. As well as just being incredibly greedy.

Encouraging more traffic along the Bitterne Rd/Northam Bridge doesn't make sense. This will inevitably cause more traffic queues and misery for those who live that way. Not to mention the polluted air quality from cars sitting in traffic. The Itchen Bridge is used by people who live in Woolston and surrounding areas. It is access to the west side of the city. If the council wish to make changes to the toll, they should be setting it at the off peak tariff and not the peak tariff. Stop penalising the motorist, it's the cruise ships that the council should be targeting.

The cost of everything else is expensive enough! If it is to go ahead the extra revenue needs to be put towards making the top up cards either auto-renewing or having anpr at the booths with auto pay, such an antiquated system at present

It'll cause cars to go a longer route causing more emissions. The toll bridge wasn't also suppose to be permanent

Stop increasing the toll price!!!! You're driving people away from the city and hurting locals, unforgivable in a cost of living crisis. Southampton is a tourist city and you're killing it.

The tolls should be completely removed.

Cost of living is high already. Cardholders should be free and not have to have a higher fee, and charge those comments on to the city for cruises. as there is no park and ride this causes issues with traffic

It is stated that the increase is to cover road repairs (increased traffic). Exactly how much has been spent up to date on road repairs? I think this is a spurious comment!

For the environmental reasons toll bridge should be removed. All these cars queuing in a rush hours and polluting the environment is hard to believe. It also hard to believe that Southampton city council looks after their pocket more than after health of local residents.

As a resident of Netley Abbey, just a couple of miles from the bridge, I already find it annoying that we get no discount on the crossing and it has already leapt up in price from 80p to £1 per crossing at peak times so any further increase has a huge impact on my life. I currently cross at 0515 to get to work, so get the slightly reduced crossing, but if this is also £1 it's going to cost me even more and reduce my spending power. Work at junction 7 of the M27 and the work due at junction 8 make alternative routes unviable, so I'm stuck! Surely local residents, including us in Netley, should get a slight discount?

As it is many years since these increases and maintenance has to be done I don't see with these proposals.

Vehemently object on the grounds of council greed and current cost of living. Information released under the Freedom of Information act reveals that the total income collected from tolls over the last 3 years is in excess of £9.3 million pounds. It also states that initial construction costs were paid off in 2016. Adding the income from that time is likely to add another £12 million to the coffers so over £20 million plus any interest accrued. In that same time the amount of visible maintenance seen on the bridge has been minimal and almost non-existent. If necessary I will seek your maintenance records and costs under the same freedom of information to see exactly how much you have spent. I suspect that what I will discover is that the bridge tolls are a moneyspinner for other council projects. As someone who uses the bridge regularly, I don't see why have to subsidise the rest of the city's inhabitants. Your proposal will have doubled the toll in 5 years!

Although the discounted toll available to residents has not increased in over 20 years, increasing the off-peak time by 10p can be a financial issue for many of the residents we live within the c. For example many time I have to cross that bridge 4 times in day and the cost can add up within a month.

If one of the key reasons for maintaining the toll is to manage the traffic, residents within the Concessionary Zone should not be affected by this increase. One option the Council should consider is to remove the off-peak as proposed but keep the toll at 30p for resident within the Concessionary Zone. For many of us living within the Concessionary Zone, the use of the Northam Bridge can add 15 minutes or more to our journey. This also have an environmental impact as we have to drive further, so the use of Northam Bridge for many is not a real option.

I trust the Council will do the right thing and will not increase the toll for residents in the Concessionary Zone or even better if reduce to a single standard toll of 30p.

I am objecting specifically to the removal of the off-peak period toll for class 2 vehicles. The toll was only recently increased in April 23 and raising the value again in such a short time frame is not acceptable. One of the suggested reasons stated for the increase it to ensure sufficient funding for future maintenance of the crossing. The previous increase was predicted to earn the council an extra £400,000 this year (2023-2024), from which I have seen no investment on maintenance of the bridge with increasing pot holes and poor road quality which need repair - where have the extra funds been going to date? In addition if the funds are for wear and tear on the bridge I do not see why buses, motorbikes and even emergency vehicles (when not on an emergency call) are not required to input for their use of the bridge and why the costs routinely fall to car users. The other reason stated for increase is to manage to traffic, however the presence of the toll (the entrance for which is poorly designed and managed) is actually the cause of traffic backing up into Woolston instead of allowing free flow and movement over the bridge. At the very lease a re-design which widens the road entrance allowing for three clearly defined lanes on each side would be a much better method of traffic flow management than a toll increase.

Labour increased the peak and off peak rate in May 2023 so shouldn't be allowed to remove the off peak rate until at least May 2024.

Local people who have to cards should get discount off the two rates not one rate.

Just because Labour have mis-managed funds does not mean all residents should pay the price of their stupidity!

Local SO19 residents should not loose our discount on the peak and off peak rates.

Labour SCC put the fees up earlier in 2023 which should mean no further changes can take effect until the same period 2024.

I do not understand why Labour SCC hate local residents so much, they rinse every last Penny out of us. Whether it's for Council Tax, Car Parking and now the Toll Bridge.

Labour SCC advise they don't dislike motorists, yet all sanctions are on the motorists.

I object to these changes, I need to drive my vehicle which is electric, (which used to be free on the bridge. Labour SCC removed that incentive for people to go green). I drive due to being disabled.

Why should disabled drivers be penalised???

The itchen bridge toll is designed to be a way of managing traffic across the bridge and for paying maintenance - during an off peak period, there is no reason to be charging the same as a on peak period.

Traffic volumes are lower which results in less strain on the bridge and the tolls themselves. There is less cost therefore as a result of the off peak period. This is nothing but a commercial money grab by raising the tolls

The bridge was supposed to be paid off years ago, this is not fair. It is especially unfair to local residents who have no choice but to travel over the bridge.

Bc you're rich enough already you robbing scrubbers

As I live in itchen ward and work

In totton I rely on the bridge everyday to commute on average I pay around £20 a month using my smart cities concession card which may not seem a lot but with all costs rising I am finding my budget stretched my company has been unable to offer any pay rise for 3 yrs due to the economic situation I urge the council to reconsider

I would support this if you had the honesty to rename it the Woolston Tax

Heavier vehicles do more damage, and repairing the bridge is expensive.

I am objecting because this is the 2nd time in under 12 months that the council have increased the toll charges. When the Itchen bridge was built the council said that the tolls would cease when the bridge building costs had been recouped from tolls. When are you going to keep your promise? it has certainly been paid for. The 2 bridges over the Severn also said that tolls would be removed once the new build cost has been recouped, which they have now, & the tolls have been removed. You say the Itchen bridge is not a strategic route, but I would disagree there, it is a very important route for people in Woolston/Weston/Sholing into the city & the docks. I am sure national government would help with the maintenance of the bridge just as they have on the 2 Severn Bridges

The council talk about needing to be "carbon Neutral"-by doing away with the toll booths this would help that immensely. Traffic wouldn't have to queue to pay & cross. When a booth breaks down-which happens often -the traffic quickly builds up along Portsmouth rd all the way to Butts rd. This causes a lot of fumes as cars stop/start/crawl along the rd, buses also get wat behind their schedule/timetable. If the bridge was opened up with no tolls vehicles would be able to cross easily & create very little emissions

To go to church on a Sunday I am

Now already having to pay £4 parking. Now

You are adding more. This is crazy. I live right near the bridge. A compromise would be for residents to have the off peak still. I don't think it will deter people generally. However it means I am less likely to shop in Southampton but go to Hedge End or Whitely.

Road infrastructure does cost a lot

True cost of motoring

Your explanation makes sense.

The buses are always using the bridge and are causing a lot of impact to the bridges structural integrity but they are fine to skip the toll. The bridge already costs enough for the public and you now wish to increase this unfairly. As you stated more people use the bridge during off peak times we see that the bridge is not used as a cut through for work but as a way of going to town for shopping. If you make changes this will impact the amount of people going into the city and reduce the customers to our businesses. You are already causing a lot of issues with the introduction of 20mph everywhere and the closing of roads to make them for buses and taxis only. The itchen bridge toll was meant to be only for funding it but then you changed it to cover repair costs but from what the public see there has been no repairs so where does this money actually go?

I'm a local resident and use the bridge on my twice weekly commute as it is still the fastest route into town despite the recent increase in queue times.

Once again this council is raising costs for people that cannot afford it. Another attack on drivers

I don't believe there should be any charge at all. The state of the entrance towards the toll gates says it all about the amount of money spend on maintaining. The slow traffic during the peak times in the mornings and evenings every single day causes WORKING people to waste their time and money. It goes without saying what environmental effect the fumes have when the cars are stuck in the traffic from town quay all the way towards the bridge. When talking about environmental issues in the city no one ever mentions this!

The bridge has been paid for many times over and should be subsidised

I would like to put it to the Council that anyone who lives in the Concessionary Zone (and has a Smart Card) should get a reduced toll for ANY vehicle. Not just business vehicles registered in the Consessionary Zone. It does not seem fair that a person (with a Smart Card) driving a car who lives in say Millbrook should be able to cross the Itchen Bridge for the same cost as someone living in Woolston who has a Smart Card. I would like to see the Consessionary charge for anyone driving any vehicle registered in the Concessionary Zone to be cheaper. Even making a car 30p for those in the Concessionary Zone rather than 40p for other Smart Card users would acknowledge that we HAVE to use the Bridge to get into town or hospital. Thank you.

The Itchen bridge is the most direct route for many residents on the Woolston side of the Itchen to go into the city centre of Southampton, and increasing the cost with force people to drive around, pushing congestion into other areas of Bitterne and into town. These longer journeys will also produce more emissions, further reducing air quality in our city. In addition, increasing costs for people during a cost of living crisis will make it more expensive to get to work or into the city centre and may discourage people going into town. Perhaps a Park and Ride on this side of town, into the city centre would help reduce congestion and traffic over the bridge without costing residents more.

Tolls are an important 'stick' to ensure we aren't stuck in traffic chaos - though it would be good if you had a bit more 'carrot' - protected cycle ways, better bus facilities etc

The bridge makes enough money with the current set up of charging. Charges needed to be removed or even reduced after it was paid off.

I disagree with the removal of the discount for residents within the SO19 postcode. We live minutes away from the bridge and therefore use this for commuting. To travel to work within rush hour, it is impossible for me to get to the other bridges Cobden/Northern due to the amount of local traffic. I would have to leave up to an hour earlier than usual which is not an option due to school runs.

I feel there should continue to be a discounted rate for local residents.

Southampton is a city that is plagued by congestion . Access rules that discriminate people . These types of Rules prevent disabled people from visiting our city

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PUBLIC NOTICE

THE CITY OF SOUTHAMPTON (ITCHEN BRIDGE TOLLS) (NO.2) ORDER 2023

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL proposes to make the above Order, the effects of which would be:

1. To remove the off-peak period toll for class 2 vehicles (those with a height at first axle of no more than 1.33m - cars, small vans and small 4x4s). The current peak period toll would apply to class 2 vehicles at all times (Maximum Toll: £1, Residents Concession: £0.40, Local Resident Concession: £0.40, Local Commercial Concession: £0.40).
2. To increase the toll for class 4 vehicles (those with a height at first axle of more than 2.39m – HGVs) to £40 (currently £25). The Local Resident Concession and Local Commercial Concession for class 4 vehicles would also be increased to £3 (currently £2).

Copies of the draft Order can be viewed on the Councils website: transport.southampton.gov.uk/TRO or may be inspected Monday - Thursday, 9am - 4pm at the Southampton, Fareham and Havant Legal Partnership in the Civic Centre, Southampton SO14 7LY. Further information may also be obtained from the Highways division on 023 8079 8065.

Any person wishing to object or make any other representation relating to this order must do so in writing via the Councils website: transport.southampton.gov.uk/TRO or by post to the Highways Legal Team at Southampton City Council, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY quoting the order title and stating the grounds for objection, within 28 days of the date of this notice (i.e. by 15th December 2023).

Please note that all representations submitted, including the name and address of the person submitting it, may be made available for public inspection.

Dated: 17th November 2023

Richard Ivory, Solicitor
Director of Legal, Governance & HR
Southampton, Fareham and Havant Legal Partnership



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Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Removal of the off-peak classification from the Itchen Bridge toll for Class 2 vehicles and increase in toll for Class 4 vehicles
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>The Itchen Bridge first opened in 1977 to reduce the congestion from traffic leaving and entering the city. The bridge is operated and maintained by Southampton City Council and uses a variable toll, which is based on the height of the vehicle at the front axle. The Itchen Bridge serves as a major link between the east and west of the city, with a flow of around 18-20,000 vehicles per day. Crossing the bridge has always been subject to a toll payment, upon opening of the bridge with reasons for maintaining the toll outlined in the Hampshire Act 1983.</p> <p>Some regular users of the bridge make payments by using a Smartcities card, whilst other users currently pay by cash, including people passing through the city on business or for leisure, and non-regular users. Concessions are available to local residents and local commercial businesses when paying using a Smartcities card.</p> <p>Residents with a Blue Badge and who receive Smartcities eligible mobility related benefit payments are entitled to free travel across the Itchen Toll Bridge with a Smartcities card.</p> <p>The toll charges were last amended in 2022, with an increase in the peak charges of £0.20 and off peak charges of £0.10. The discount available to Southampton residents via the Smart Card was frozen.</p> <p>Below is a table which shows the current charge for crossing the Itchen Bridge:</p>	

	Non-Smart Card users	Non-resident (Smart Card)	Local Resident (Smart Card)	Local Commercial (Smart Card)	Local Taxi Concession (Smart Card)
Class 1 – motorcycles and three-wheeled vehicles	Free	Free	Free	Free	N/A
Class 2 – cars, small vans and small 4x4s OFF PEAK	80p	80p	30p	30p	N/A
Class 2 – cars, small vans and small 4x4s *PEAK	£1.00	£1.00	40p	40p	N/A
Class 3 large vans (e.g. transit) and large 4x4s	£1.40	N/A	60p	60p	80p
Class 4 HGVs	£25	£25	£2	£2	N/A

*Peak Times are 07:00-09:30 and 16:00 to 18:30

Summary of Impact and Issues

The 1st proposal is to increase remove the off peak classification from the Itchen Bridge vehicles in classes 2 and above crossing the bridge, who are not eligible for a concession. This will impact all users, whether using a smart card or paying in cash, who are driving cars, small vans and small 4x4.

Southampton Residents that receive a concessionary toll through use of a Smart Card will still have access to the discounted toll, but there will no longer be an off peak option. Southampton Residents who do not currently have a Smartcities card would need to apply for one in order to benefit from this discount.

The 2nd proposal is to increase the toll for Class 4 vehicles from £25 to £40 and the associated concession from £2 to £3.

The proposed charges would be as follows:

	Non-Smart Card users	Non-resident (Smart Card)	Local Resident (Smart Card)	Local Commercial (Smart Card)	Local Taxi Concession (Smart Card)
Class 1 – motorcycles and three-wheeled vehicles	Free	Free	Free	Free	N/A
Class 2 – cars, small vans and small 4x4s	£1.00	£1.00	40p	40p	N/A
Class 3 large vans (e.g. transit) and large 4x4s	£1.40	N/A	60p	60p	80p
Class 4 HGVs	£40	£40	£3	£3	N/A

Potential Positive Impacts

Removing the off-peak classification would encourage an increased number of users currently crossing during that time to make a meaningful decision about whether to use that route for the benefit of reduced traffic along Portsmouth Road corridor. The increased Class 4 toll would strongly encourage HGV traffic to use the alternative routes for gaining access to the M27.

Responsible Service Manager	Richard Alderson
Date	09/11/23
Approved by Senior Manager	Pete Boustred
Date	09/11/23

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	Removal of the off-peak period will impact on drivers of all ages	Residents of the city not already doing so can apply for a concession via

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		a Smart Cities card to benefit from the reduced toll
Disability	No specific impact as increased charges will impact on all drivers. Existing mitigation for drivers with mobility issues is already in place.	People with mobility issues may qualify for the Disabled Concession
Gender Reassignment	No identified impact	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No identified impact	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	No identified impact	N/A
Race	No identified impact	N/A
Religion or Belief	No identified impact	N/A
Sex	No identified impact	N/A
Sexual Orientation	No identified impact	N/A
Community Safety	No identified impact	N/A
Poverty	This proposal may have a negative impact on users who need to travel to across the bridge to work or other reasons	Southampton Residents can access the concessionary toll via the Smart Cities card which will still constitute a significantly reduced rate
Health & Wellbeing	No identified impact	N/A
Other Significant Impacts	None	N/A

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	E-SCOOTER TRIAL EXTENSION
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JANUARY 2024
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR KEOGH CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director of Place	
	Name:	Adam Wilkinson	Tel: 023 8254 5853
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
NOT APPLICABLE	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
<p>The Department for Transport (DfT) has announced a further extension of its national rental e-scooter trials from 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2026. As a key contributor to the existing wider Solent Transport trial, which is funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) Future Transport Zone, Southampton City Council has the opportunity to continue to participate in the extended trials. This report provides an update on the operation of the current rental e-scooter trial (operated by Voi) and justification for continued participation in the extended trials.</p> <p>In addition, a bike share scheme is in operation in the city, currently operated by Beryl, also funded by the Future Transport Zone programme, which legislation currently allows, without the need for a Government approved trial. To achieve commercial viability in the medium term, it is proposed to move to a sole micromobility operator model for the provision of rental e-scooters and bike share from summer 2024 onwards. This report sets out the justification for moving to a sole operator model and the process for achieving this.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	<p>(i) To approve the renewal of the Vehicle Special Order (VSO) for Southampton’s rental e-scooter trial until 31 May 2026, in accordance with the DfT’s new end date for its national trials. To delegate authority to the Executive Director Place, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and Section 15 officer, to amend further e-scooter trial end dates if changes are made to the DfT national trial.</p>

	(ii)	To approve Southampton City Council participating in a Solent Transport led procurement to select a sole micromobility operator from summer 2024 onwards.
	(iii)	To delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and Section 151 officer, to implement the rental e-scooter trial within the parameters established by the VSO and the DfT, and for Southampton City Council to enter into an operating contract with the highest scoring tenderer identified through the procurement.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS		
1.		To facilitate the ongoing collection of e-scooter data and information that will inform national legislation for e-scooters and support the ongoing independent data validation.
2.		The trial to date has demonstrated there is a demand for a rental e-scooter service in Southampton with over 82,000 users having collectively made over 1.5 million trips, between March 2021 and October 2023.
3.		To understand how new innovations from the Future Transport Zone programme will interact with the e-scooter service, for example the Mobility-as-a-Service app (Breeze), and to continue to refine the service to improve uptake, safety and efficiency.
4.		Bike share ridership in Southampton is below the levels required to sustain a commercially viable operation. Moving to a sole micromobility operator model will provide flexibility and economies of scale for the chosen supplier and will improve opportunities for commercial viability in the medium term.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED		
5.		<p>That Southampton City Council withdraws from the rental e-scooter trials at the end of the current trial on 31 May 2024. This was rejected as the current trial has proved popular with users, is demonstrating mode shift from private vehicles, delivering air quality outcomes, and collecting data which is useful for informing future government transport policy.</p> <p>To extend the e-scooter and bike share operating contracts of the current operators. This was rejected on the basis that revenue from bike share is not sufficient to offset operational costs. The extent of the losses being incurred by the operator indicate that a 'do nothing' approach is likely to result in the operator exiting the scheme at the end of the initial contract term on 31 June 2024.</p> <p>Make a direct contract award for the sole provision of micromobility to either of the incumbent operators in Southampton. Whilst this is permissible through the Bike Share and Micromobility Services Framework, it would not allow for market testing and a demonstration of best value.</p>
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)		
6		<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>In March 2020, Solent Transport was awarded £28.8m of funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to implement the Solent Future Transport</p>

	Zone (FTZ); a programme of trials of innovative approaches to transport across the Solent area. The FTZ programme and its funding is due to conclude on 30 June 2025.
7.	Rental e-scooter and bike share schemes, collectively defined as micromobility, are key outputs from the FTZ programme. Southampton has hosted a rental e-scooter trial since March 2021, and a bike share scheme launched in October 2022, which legislation allows without a trial.
8.	In Southampton, rental e-scooters are operated by Voi, and bike share by Beryl. Both operators were selected through open procurements. The current term of the Voi operating contract ends 31 May 2024 in line with the previous end date of the national e-scooter trials, and the initial term of the Beryl operating contract for bike share ends 30 June 2024.
9.	The Southampton micromobility schemes form part of wider Solent FTZ micromobility operations in the Solent area, with Voi also operating rental e-scooters in Portsmouth, and Beryl operating bike share in Portsmouth, and bike share and rental e-scooters on the Isle of Wight. The FTZ is also providing funding to Hampshire County Council to introduce bike share in Gosport and Totton with the operator to be determined.
10.	<p><u>Rental e-scooter trial extension</u></p> <p>On 8 November 2023 following the King’s Speech, the DfT confirmed that e-scooter trials would be further extended for a period of two years from 31 May 2024 to 31 May 2026.</p> <p>The original deadline for the end of the trials was 30 November 2021, but trials have since been extended on three occasions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first to March 2022 to allow time for gathering evidence following a slower than expected start to trials during the COVID-19 pandemic; • secondly to November 2022 after DfT issued updated guidance in February 2022 designed to enhance existing safety measures; • thirdly to 31 May 2024, which will allow DfT to reflect on the further analysis or evidence that may be needed and would be beneficial.
11.	<p>The DfT rationale for a further trial extension is to continue to build robust evidence about the benefits, public perceptions, and wider impacts of e-scooters in order to inform legislation that may be necessary beyond the e-scooter trial period. Information collected to date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safety outcomes for rental e-scooter users and what influences this • interaction with, and effect on, other road users; • public perceptions of the rental e-scooters, including impacts for people with disabilities; • nature of modal shift and new journeys that have been enabled; • characteristics of users and how uptake differs for different groups; • Local Authority perception of effects on their transport system and public environment.

12.	Solent Transport is continuing to collect quantitative and qualitative data regarding the impact of the schemes. Ongoing engagement with key stakeholder groups will continue to take place throughout the trial to understand perception and impacts, while the council has also undertaken its own perception survey.
13.	The extended trial does not address the need for legislation to provide clarity on rental and private e-scooter provision in the medium term. DfT has previously outlined plans to create a new low-speed zero-emission vehicle (LZEV) category incorporating e-scooters, but this will not be brought forward in the current government cycle, meaning that any such legislation will be determined after the next general election.
14.	The parameters of the two-year extension are expected to mirror the current arrangements. DfT intends to publish updated guidance in January 2024 setting out how the extended trials will operate.
15.	<p>The rental e-scooter trial supports the ambitions of Connected Southampton, the council's adopted transport strategy to 2040. Although the strategy pre-dates the launch of the DfT e-scooter trials, there is clear alignment between rental e-scooter outcomes and Southampton's 2040 vision, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enabling people to move around our growing city easily, efficiently and safely around the city, more space is given over to people walking, cycling or travelling by public transport, helping to reduce people's dependence on the car for their everyday journey by making these more viable and attractive; • taking advantage of new and innovative technology to enable the transport network to operate as efficiently as possible, helping to accommodate new trips generated by growth without increasing levels of congestion; • tackling inequalities by designing transport improvements so that they meet the needs of everyone in society and that everyone can get around more safely and easily; and • reducing the level of emissions from transport towards zero.
16.	<p>A summary of key statistics from the current Southampton rental e-scooter trial (March 2021 to October 2023) is set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of active users: 82,004 • Volume of active vehicles*: 1076 • Total distance travelled: 3,651,729 km • Total rides: 1,550,251 • Total e-scooter footway parking bays: 229 • Total shared operator footway parking bays: 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total shared operator carriageway parking bays: 8 • Average ride time: 11.92 minutes • Average distance travelled: 2.4km • CO2 equivalent saved**: 340 tonnes • Car trips replaced***: 655,651 • Parking compliance: 96% <p>*Volume for October 2023 only. The Vehicle Special Order allows for a maximum of 1500 e-scooters to be deployed. The operator manages supply to reflect seasonal demand, hence the volume varies over time.</p> <p>** Voi's carbon savings stated above were calculated based on inputs such as trip data, mode shift percentages collected from user surveys, the government's emission factors for the modes their rental e-scooter trips are replacing, and rental e-scooter Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs). Emission savings are calculated in CO2 equivalent units, meaning they factor in all greenhouse gases. To validate the robustness of these calculations and identify opportunities to deliver even greater carbon savings, Solent Transport has commissioned TRL (a global centre for innovation in transport and mobility that was appointed by Solent Transport to augment its Monitoring and Evaluation for the e-scooter trial and other projects in the FTZ programme) to lead its participation in a 2024 pilot to apply the New Urban Mobility (NUMO) alliance's environmental impact assessment methodology to the region's micromobility schemes, including Southampton's rental e-scooter trial.</p> <p>***The car trips replaced figure is calculated by asking survey respondents how they would have made their last trip if not by rental e-scooter, which is considered a best practice approach in monitoring mode shift. The figure is based on Voi's user surveys.</p>
17.	<p>In autumn 2022, the council published the results of its e-scooter public perceptions survey (n~1572). At the time of the survey rental e-scooters had been operating in Southampton for circa 16 months.</p> <p>Key findings from the survey included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • just over a quarter of respondents selected that they had used the e-scooter rental trial scheme in Southampton; • 88% of rental e-scooter users agreed that they would recommend rental e-scooters to a friend; • from a list of factors for using rental e-scooters, 'environment/sustainability' and 'to avoid traffic congestion' were selected as the most important by users; • 42% of rental e-scooter users said that if they hadn't used a rental e-scooter on their last trip, they would have used a private vehicle (e.g. car / van / motorbike / moped); • the majority of respondents selected that the top reason they are prevented from using the e-scooter rental trial was 'safety concerns';

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that rental e-scooters make it easier to travel around Southampton; • 73% of rental e-scooter users strongly agreed that rental e-scooters had led to them considering changing how they currently travel; and • 33% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that that the benefits of rental e-scooters outweigh any issues they create. <p>To better understand current public perceptions about the e-scooter rental schemes, Solent Transport has recently commissioned TRL to carry out a further survey, asking comparable questions to the previous surveys, but ensuring a more representative mix of respondents. Findings from this research will become available in early 2024.</p>
18.	<p><u>Enforcement</u></p> <p>Voi employs a range of tools to tackle anti-social behaviour and misuse of e-scooters. In addition to the measures referenced above to mitigate risk, Voi has implemented a “three-strikes” policy, whereby a user reported for an offence is first banned for seven days and is required to complete its online traffic school. Following a second strike, the user is banned for 30 days. Finally, a further offence results in the user being permanently banned from using the e-scooters. A ban can be applied for a range of offences including, but not limited to, allowing an underage rider to use an e-scooter, pavement riding, and twin riding. As of 31 October 2023: 1,920 temporary bans for inappropriate riding and 58 permanent bans have been issued to Southampton e-scooter trial users.</p>
19.	<p><u>Safety</u></p> <p>Voi uses the DfT categorisations for accidents, which are defined as follows:</p> <p>Slight injury: An injury of a minor character such as a sprain (including neck whiplash injury), bruise or cut which are not judged to be severe, or slight shock requiring roadside attention. This definition includes injuries not requiring medical treatment.</p> <p>Serious injury: An injury for which a person is detained in hospital as an “inpatient”, or any of the following injuries whether or not they are detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushings, burns (excluding friction burns), severe cuts, severe general shock requiring medical treatment and injuries causing death 30 or more days after the accident.</p>
20.	<p>During the trial to date, from March 2021 until October 2023, 246 slight and 46 serious injuries in Southampton have been reported to Voi. The rate of accidents was 65 slight injuries per 1million kms travelled, and 13 serious injuries per 1million kms travelled.</p>
21.	<p>The validation of accident data forms part of Solent Transport's ongoing evaluation of the trial alongside Local Authorities and partner organisations including TRL. It is hoped it will be possible to obtain richer e-scooter accident data from the police in due course (currently, there is not a clear</p>

	distinction between incidents involving rental e-scooters and privately-owned scooters, but it is well-understood that the incident rate for the latter is significantly higher).
22.	TRL analysis commissioned by Solent Transport has indicated a general downward trend in e-scooter rental accident rates in Southampton since the trial began, with the accident rate in every month from April 2022 to March 2023 being lower than in the corresponding month the previous year. This type of comparison is especially useful in the transport sector, as it takes account of seasonal variations in road traffic and weather conditions.
23.	<p>Extending to 31 May 2026 will enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued data collection to add to the DfT and Solent Transport's evidence base, and further inform future national legislation on e-scooters; • more data collection to help ensure fluctuations caused by weather, major events, availability in residential areas, and returning users are as fully accounted for as is possible during the trial period; • opportunities to assess the impact of introducing the Mobility-as-a-Service app (Breeze), and how e-scooters interact with these innovations; • implementation of new service innovations and trials, including on-carriageway parking bays, marking of virtual bays with paint or signage and improving availability of e-scooter parking across the city; and • a growing volume of users to continue to benefit from the service.
24.	<p><u>Sole Micromobility Operator</u></p> <p>Micromobility in Southampton and Portsmouth is currently a split provision, historically due to the e-scooter trial occurring first with Voi awarded the e-scooter delivery in 2021.</p> <p>Following an open procurement in 2022, four micromobility suppliers were appointed to a Portsmouth City Council (PCC) Bike Share and Micromobility Services Framework on behalf of Solent Transport. As the highest scoring tenderer, Beryl was called off the Framework to deliver bike share schemes in Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. Subsequently after a period of mobilisation, bike share schemes were launched in these areas in October 2022.</p>
25.	The bike share scheme in Southampton, branded as Beryl Bikes by Breeze, comprises a mix of pedal bikes and e-bikes. Users can access the scheme through the Beryl smartphone app, or via the Breeze Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform developed through the FTZ programme. Users are able to select pay-as-you-go pricing or better value 'minute bundles' purchased in advance for use over a longer time period.
26.	Beryl has established a core base of bike share users and seen an increase in ridership alongside a summer 2023 expansion of bikes and bays.

27.	<p>Key statistics for the Southampton bike share scheme (October 2022 to October 2023) are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total volume of active users: 6,729 • Total fleet size*: 394 • Total distance covered: 83,044 km • Total rides: 32,908 • Total bike share only footway parking bays: 84 • Total bike share/e-scooter shared footway bays: 2 • Total bike share/e-scooter shared carriageway bays: 8 • Parking compliance: 96% <p>*Total fleet size has expanded over time and currently comprises 164 pedal bikes and 194 electric bikes. Beryl is consistently meeting or close to meeting its contract Key Performance Indicator of 80% of the total fleet size being available for hire.</p>
28.	<p>Whilst bike share ridership has grown steadily during the first year of operation, revenue from rides is lower than that required to generate a commercially viable scheme. The situation is consistent across all Beryl schemes in the Solent area. The extent of the losses being incurred indicate that a 'do nothing' approach is likely to result in the operator exiting the scheme at the end of the initial contract term on 30 June 2024.</p>
29.	<p>Competition with other forms of micromobility may be a contributing factor to bike share not realising its full potential. Since the bike share scheme launched in October 2022 there have been approximately 20 rental e-scooter trips for every one bike share trip in Southampton.</p>
30.	<p>To generate a robust and sustainable micromobility operation, it is proposed to move to a sole operator model from summer 2024 onwards, securing a single operator to deliver rental e-scooters and bike share.</p>
31.	<p>Southampton is one of only two known locations outside London which host more than one micromobility operator. Analysis of other comparable UK markets suggests that a sole operator model is the preferred approach. Locations such as West Midlands, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Norwich, York, Oxford and Cambridge all have a single operator for rental e-scooters and bike share.</p>
32.	<p>A sole operator model is considered to present the following benefits for the operator and contracting authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides flexibility for operators to deploy a fleet size which meets demand and reflects seasonality; • allows the operator to generate economies of scale; • creates an operational environment most likely to sustain commercially viable schemes in the medium term. • allows for market testing;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> likely to generate the maximum income for contracting local authorities e.g. from revenue share arrangements.
33.	Whilst the Southampton bike share scheme receives no operational subsidy, it is supported by capital funding from the FTZ. This has been used to support the mobilisation of the scheme, parking infrastructure, and purchase the first 200 bikes. Should the incumbent bike share operator not become the sole operator, there is provision in the existing contract for Beryl to return part of the capital investment received to date.
34.	The Bike Share and Associated Micromobility Services Framework Agreement makes provision for running a mini competition amongst existing framework suppliers. This will operate as a closed tender and will be managed by Portsmouth City Council's procurement team, as the lead procurement authority for Solent Transport.
35.	The intention is to launch the mini-competition early in 2024. Following a period of mobilisation, it is expected that the selected sole operator will be in a position to launch in summer 2024.
36.	Due consideration will be given to providing a smooth transition to the sole operator, including making necessary arrangements to transfer eligibility to use micromobility parking locations, integration with the Breeze MaaS platform, and user communications.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
37.	Capital project costs associated with the provision of micromobility will continue to be met by the Solent Transport through FTZ programme, using ring-fenced external funding from the DfT. Solent Transport also funds a Micromobility Project Manager dedicated to overseeing rental e-scooters and bike share schemes in the Solent area.
38.	Solent Transport funding through the FTZ is available until June 2025 when the FTZ ends. Framework suppliers tendering for the sole operator opportunity will be required to demonstrate how they can operate beyond June 2025 without further funding support. Should this not be possible the trial period could be terminated prior to May 2026 as and when its clear the funding is not available as expected.
39.	The new sole operator will be required to enter into a revenue sharing arrangement with Southampton City Council. Ringfencing some or all of this income to support the further implementation of carriageway parking would be desirable.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
40.	Not applicable
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	

41.	The Electric Scooter Trials and Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations and General Directions 2020 came into force on 4 July 2020, to facilitate e-scooter trials, with further provisions in the Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2021 which came into force on 19 February 2021.
42.	The trial had been facilitated by an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) which allowed trial e-scooters to use cycle lanes. A permanent Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was subsequently made in September 2022 to continue to enable trial e-scooters to use cycle lanes to the end of the trial and beyond if required.
43.	The DfT will issue a new Vehicle Special Order (VSO) to 31 May 2026 that permits the sole operator to provide rental e-scooters in Southampton. The VSO sets out the conditions which e-scooters need to comply with and sets a maximum volume of e-scooters which can be deployed.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
44.	Only rental e-scooters operating as part of the trial are legal in Southampton. Privately owned e-scooters will continue to be illegal on the public highway for the period of the trial extension.
45.	It is proposed that the initial term of the sole operator contract extends to 31 May 2026, in line with the end date of the extended e-scooter trials. The contract can be further extended in increments to be agreed up to a maximum duration of eight years. Any further contract extension relating to e-scooters is subject a further DfT trial extension or appropriate legislation, and approval from Southampton City Council.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
46.	Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIA) for rental e-scooter and bike share have been drafted and are regularly updated. These provide detail for the mitigations in place to reduce risks presented by micromobility operations in Southampton.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
47.	The proposals within this report are in accordance with the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and LTP Implementation Plan.

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Rental E-Scooters Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA)
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	None.
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes

Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
<p>Other Background Documents</p> <p>Government Guidance on E-Scooters for Local Authorities: www.gov.uk/guidance/e-scooter-trials-guidance-for-users</p> <p>Southampton rental e-scooter perception survey results www.southampton.gov.uk/media/jvdb1xq4/escooter-survey_final_report.pdf</p> <p>Southampton City Council E-Scooter webpage: E-scooter usage and enforcement (southampton.gov.uk)</p> <p>Electric Scooter Trials & Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations & General Directions 2020: The Electric Scooter Trials and Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations and General Directions 2020 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> <p>The Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2021: The Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2021 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> <p>Southampton City Council E-Scooter Safety Video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8cRTeCvsYM</p>	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	Not Applicable

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Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

Appendix 1

The **public sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

<p>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</p>	<p>Southampton E-Scooter Trial (Future Transport Zone)</p>
<p>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</p>	<p>To facilitate the safe use of rental e-scooters within the city.</p> <p>The E-scooter trials are being delivered under the Future Transport Zone programme managed by Solent Transport and delivered on behalf of Solent Transport in Southampton by Southampton City Council. A similar trial is being delivered by the same supplier in Portsmouth by Portsmouth City Council.</p> <p>The objective is to provide a fast, clean and convenient travel option in line with the strategic objectives set in the Council’s Air Quality Action Plan, Green City Charter and Local Transport Plan and Future Transport Zone programme.</p> <p>The e-scooter trial will be delivered by a micromobility operator, Voi.</p> <p>The trial will be publically accessible to all residents and visitors in Southampton. It will be strictly geographically constrained to the Southampton administrative boundary.</p> <p>The number of e-scooters is limited by the Vehicle Special Order issued by the Department for Transport at 1500 e-scooters. E-scooters will be classed as Motor Propelled Vehicles (MPVs), restricting their use to carriageway only.</p> <p>Voi, meets the minium DfT standards: DfT E-scooter Guidance and Minimum Standards</p>

	<p>Voi e-scooters, and the project approach, will have a range of features and terms of use to ensure their safe use, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lights • Indicators • Voi insure every ride, including third party • Heavy to mitigate risk of e-scooters being picked up and moved inappropriately or thrown • Meets DfT minimum standards • Identification plates • Speed limited to 12.5mph (the DfT limit is 15mph) • Geofencing capability to allow No Ride Zones (NRZs) and slow zones to reduce speed in higher risk areas • GPS tracked, and riders identified by Voi from accounts to enforce against inappropriate riding • Need for provisional licence before being approved to use the Voi e-scooters • Kick stand to avoid e-scooters toppling over • “Parking Cop” to ensure suitable parking, with consequences for poor parking including a ban • Ride like Voila training and education • Strict reporting and banning policy to discourage inappropriate riding • Parking rack site risk assessments to ensure suitable location on the footway, taking into consideration equality impact assessment and a risk and safety assessment. • Continued review of the scheme to ensure new risks and safety concerns can be addressed due to the trial nature of the project. • Safety events to provide direct training and distribute free helmets • Encourage use of helmets in-app • Ongoing issue resolution and maintenance programme for e-scooters • Regular engagement with impacted groups including hosting disability roundtable events and direct engagement through the Voi dedicated City Success Manager • Operating hours limited to 4am-10pm to reduce risk of drink riding. Sobriety testing on the app starts at 9pm to further mitigate this risk. • Open and regular communication with Hampshire Constabulary and Southampton City Council community groups and community cohesion teams. • Voi support to Police for enforcing illegal use of rented e-scooters. • Co-design of E-scooter parking racks with the Royal National Institution for Blind People (RNIB). • Continued development and innovation (e.g. e-scooter noise and pavement riding detection). • Colour scheme of Voi e-scooters is designed to be recognisable and being more distinguishable to visually impaired people. • Voi have introduced a mandatory training requirement to ensure all users are briefed on the behavioural requirements for riding a Voi E-Scooter.
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**Summary of
Impact and
Issues**

Unfamiliar Technology:

- Due to the innovative nature of the trials there is little existing data on the impacts of e-scooters. The purpose of the trial is to inform future legislation. As they are a novel technology, particularly to the UK, users, pedestrians, and other road users may not be familiar with them, which increases the risk of conflict/collisions on the carriageway, cycleways, shared paths, and footpaths.
- The E-scooters have been in Southampton since March 2021 and so residents and visitors are likely becoming more familiar with their presence.

E-scooter Parking Hazards:

- As the e-scooters are publicly accessible they also need to be parked on public space. As they will predominantly be placed on public land owned by the local authority, this will mean parking racks will be placed on the footway, further increasing the risk of conflict with pedestrians. This is an increased risk for visually impaired or other disability groups who may find the additional street furniture more challenging to navigate, which was corroborated at the Voi hosted disability roundtable event. Trips and falls are reported back to the DfT through Voi, Solent Transport and SCC's reporting process.

E-scooter/Pedestrian Conflicts and Pavement Riding:

- The e-scooters will legally use the carriageway and designated cycle lane, however there is currently nothing to physically prevent an e-scooter riding on the pavement. This means reliance will be on education, training, and enforcement. This does risk a negative perception and pavement conflict with pedestrians as it is not possible for this to entirely diminish the risk, however the project will ensure every feasible mitigation is in place to prevent this. Voi will also continue to develop their product to mitigate risks such as this, emphasising the importance for the trial to proceed and collect monitoring and evaluation information to inform this development and ultimately legislation.
- Voi have committed to reducing pavement riding through better enforcement and trialling of technologies in Southampton.

E-scooter Sound:

- E-scooters do not make a distinguishable sound and therefore are a risk to visually impaired people. This was corroborated by the disability roundtable hosted by Voi where the issue was discussed. Possible solution of noise generating e-scooters is being explored by Voi, but currently reliance is on the user to ride the scooter appropriately and in accordance with the terms and

	<p>conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voi have committed to trialling audible sounds from E-scooters in Southampton. <p>Speed of E-scooters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speed of e-scooters is limited to 12.5mph in Southampton, which is lower than the maximum limit of 15mph. The speed limit is considered as too fast by some groups (and corroborated by the disability roundtable event) and is likely to heighten the risk of collision with pedestrians if inappropriately ridden at speed. This is anticipated to impact disabled and/or older and younger groups of people due to possible reduced mobility or slower reactions to an e-scooter at its maximum speed. • Conversely, for e-scooter users, the speed limit can also be a risk as they are negotiating traffic that can be travelling at double their speed or more, or trying to negotiate difficult traffic conditions (e.g. road works with temporary lights) where speed is required to ride more safely with the flow of traffic. <p>Private E-scooter Use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private e-scooters are illegal to use in public spaces. Prevalence of private e-scooters could be attributed to the trial e-scooter scheme operated by Voi and SCC, negatively impacting the scheme. <p>Different demographic's uptake of e-scooters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women: The Sustrans Southampton Bike Life report¹ which reviewed the Southampton City Region cycling habits identifies that 11% of women use a bicycle at least once a week, compared to 27% men. • Ethnic minorities: According to the same report, 22% of white people use a bicycle at least once a week compared to 18% of people from an ethnic minority background. • Disability: 10% of people who are disabled use a bicycle at least once a week compared to 21% of people who are not disabled. • It is assumed that these trends are likely to be mirrored with e-scooters. <p>Cost of using an e-scooter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The e-scooter trial is run by a commercial company and prices are set by Voi.
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¹ [bikelife19_southamptoncr_web.pdf \(sustrans.org.uk\)](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife19_southamptoncr_web.pdf)

<p>Potential Positive Impacts</p>	<p>E-scooters are successfully implemented in non-UK countries, with the UK looking to implement legislation based on these trials, ensuring it is as robust and informed as it can be.</p> <p>E-scooters will provide a reliable, efficient, and environmentally friendly transport option to residents and visitors in Southampton.</p> <p>Air quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced emissions of particulate matter, NO_x and other pollutants due to reducing combustion engine vehicle trips. • Supports SCC's Air Quality Action Plan, Clean Air Strategy and Local NO₂ Plan (ministerial direction to deliver legal compliance with NO₂ legal limits within the shortest possible time). <p>Greenhouse Gas Emissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing combustion engine vehicle trips will reduce emissions of greenhouse gas. <p>Public Health and Active Travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging alternatives to private vehicle use for short journeys. Using an e-scooter will likely be combined with other modes (e.g. walking, public transport). • Reduced pollution will improve air quality and reduce pollution related deaths in the city. • Access to green and leisure spaces. <p>Covid-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People may feel less confident to use traditional public transport due to Covid-19 pandemic. E-scooters offer an individual means of travel that could help mitigate the reduction in other public transport use. <p>Complement Existing Transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-scooters will also compliment traditional public transport services by providing a "last-mile" option, e.g. from the front door to bus stop, increasing the uptake of public transport and reducing private vehicle use. <p>Economic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-scooters offer an alternative public transport service that could open access up to jobs that otherwise people would be unable to reach. The scheme currently beings at 4am where other public transport services could be less available. • The e-scooters could also support access to other services such as healthcare, education and leisure facilities. • Micromobility is a new industry, meaning supporting the trial will generate and provide work for jobs for Voi ambassadors, contractors in implementing the infrastructure, local warehouse operatives and others
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	<p>involved in the supply, maintenance and management of the trial.</p> <p>Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-scooters offer an alternative public transport option that mean people can travel at speed through areas, potentially making them less vulnerable, particularly at night. <p>Data, Information and Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A large volume of data will be generated by this scheme which will inform future transport schemes in Southampton and inform the Government when drafting permanent legislation change if the trials are successful. The scheme will be continually reviewed and improved meaning the E-scooter provision in Southampton will be continually improved, risks reduced, and effectiveness maximised.
Responsible Service Manager	Pete Boustred
Date	September 2022

Approved by Senior Manager	
Signature	
Date	

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions <i>(Note: All measures highlighted in the service brief will also mitigate impacts. The below table is a further discussion of those relevant to impacted categories)</i>
Age	<p><u>Older people</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: Some older people may feel more vulnerable to inappropriately or unlawfully ridden e-scooters (e.g. on the pavement, not in accordance with the highway code) and may be more vulnerable to collisions. 	<p><u>Older People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the range of safety measures Voi offer on e-scooters (as described above) are implemented. • Training and education requirement and incentives for users. • Require e-scooters to be parked in Mandatory Parking Zones (MPZs) to ensure each parking site is risk assessed for passing pedestrians. • A maximum capacity cap at each parking hub has been introduced to reduce the risk of over supply of e-scooters causing clutter. • 06/12/23: SCC footway parking requirements ensure that all parking bays leave a minimum of 1.8m footway space remaining to ensure adequate space for vulnerable pedestrians. • 06/12/23: Quarterly Solent Micromobility Equalities Forum in place to ensure open dialogue between equalities groups, Solent Transport, LTAs and operators.

	<p><u>Younger People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: The anticipated higher proportion of use by younger people and potential for less experience on the highway could increase the risk of crashing or inappropriate riding. • Positive: The trial will require a driver's licence and a minimum age of 18. This could benefit university age users, in addition to a student discount by Voi, providing an affordable means of transport. • Positive: Young people are at greatest risk to poor air quality², by encouraging e-scooter use over private vehicles, the associated improvements to air quality will benefit young people. 	<p><u>Younger People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training safety events to be held at the university and other key locations in the city where young people are expected to engage and undertake social media campaigning to promote safe riding.
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: Concerns that users will ride on pavements, at speed and otherwise inappropriately may be felt by a higher proportion of disabled people. • Negative: Those with sight or hearing loss may not be able to see or hear e-scooters. • Negative: Parked e-scooters could create an additional hazard on the footway, causing a hazard for a higher proportion of disabled people. • Positive: Some people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the range of safety measures Voi offer on e-scooters (as described above) are implemented. • Training and education campaign for all users, including emphasis that e-scooters should not be used on the pavement. • Voi have committed to continued development of innovative technology to mitigate sound risk (e.g. adding a unique noise to an e-scooter to make it identifiable to pedestrians and other highways/footway users.

² [How does air pollution affect children's lungs? | British Lung Foundation \(blf.org.uk\)](https://www.blf.org.uk/health-and-air-quality/air-pollution-and-your-health/childrens-lungs/)

	<p>with disabilities may benefit from publicly available e-scooters if they have difficulties walking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require e-scooters to be parked in Mandatory Parking Zones (MPZs) to ensure each parking site is risk assessed for passing pedestrians. • A maximum capacity cap at each parking hub has been introduced to reduce the risk of oversupply of e-scooters causing clutter. • 01/02/2023: Voi visited Southampton Sight to meet visually impaired residents and learn their experiences of interacting with scheme. • 06/12/23: SCC footway parking requirements ensure that all parking bays leave a minimum of 1.8m footway space remaining to ensure adequate space for vulnerable pedestrians. • 06/12/23: Quarterly Solent Micromobility Equalities Forum in place from March 23 to ensure open dialogue between equalities groups, Solent Transport, LTAs and operators.
Gender Reassignment	N/A	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	
Pregnancy and Maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: Pregnant women and those with young children may experience similar concerns/issues as disabled, older and younger people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures as per disabled and age category.
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: Based on 2011 Census, over 22% of Southampton's population are non-White British. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A driving licence is required for the scheme, it is a mandatory requirement set by the DfT so this impact

	<p>White people are most likely to have a driving licence, with black people being the least likely³.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: Based on results from the 2011 Census, 7,522 households (7.7%) in Southampton have no one in them who speaks English as their main language, compared to 4.4% nationally. This could limit participation in the trial⁴. 	<p>must be accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Voi website automatically uses Google Translate and the app has 10 different language options. The icons used throughout are also universally recognised to ensure the website is intuitive regardless of language.
Religion or Belief	None	N/A
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: high levels of e-scooter use in cycle lanes and paths could discourage women from walking or cycling in these areas if users of e-scooters are travelling at higher speeds or they are perceived to be less manoeuvrable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-scooters will have a speed cap and will have a minimum age limit, so reducing risk of inconsiderate or dangerous behaviour by scooter users.
Sexual Orientation	None	N/A
Community Safety	<p>Negative: Perception that rental e-scooters could be detrimental to community safety (e.g. users congregating at racks, dropping litter at racks, driving e-scooters dangerously or congregation at parking areas)</p> <p>Positive: Voi can track users'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from local police in contact with project team and have attended safety events. • Ability to implement slow zones, no ride zones and remove racks where significant concerns to community safety are evidenced. • Incidents reported to project

³ [Driving licences - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)

⁴ [Ethnicity and language \(southampton.gov.uk\)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk)

	<p>journeys and identify e-scooters from ID plates. If someone reports an e-scooter for inappropriate riding or unlawful behaviour, Voi can provide detail to the police that aids investigation.</p>	<p>team and addressed where appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate riding could result in fines or ban from service. • Consultations on rack locations offer opportunity for issues to be raised and addressed. • Clear advertisement of “how to report an e-scooter” either to Voi or to 101/the police. ID plates on Voi e-scooters allow identification of e-scooters and riders.
Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative: There is a charge to use the e-scooters, this could be unaffordable to some. Potential users may also not have access to a smart phone or bank account which are essential requirements for the trial. • Positive: 33% of households living in Southampton do not have access to a car (most of whom are in deprived wards). Improving active travel through e-scooter trials will help improve quality of life for residents living in more deprived wards through widening travel horizons to access employment and training opportunities within a certain travel time of where they live. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users from low-income groups, who hold a valid HC2 Certificate, can opt in to receive a discount off the cost. • Operator is supporting NHS and Emergency Service workers a discount. • Student discount is for all students and staff higher educational institutes, it enables user to subscribe to monthly and daily Voi passes at a discounted price. • Parking will be deployed in areas of deprivation (according to Index of Deprivation)⁵. • The service will be integrated with the Mobility as a Service app which will provide alternative way of route planning and paying for e-scooter use. This will promote the various travel options available to all residents and visitors.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive: increased levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine trial as it progresses

⁵ [Deprivation and poverty \(southampton.gov.uk\)](http://southampton.gov.uk)

<p>Significant Impacts</p>	<p>of use of active travel modes such as e-scooters is expected to improve health (through increased physical activity) and enable cleaner air through mode shift from the private car, walking to and from e-scooters, and aiding accessibility to open spaces in Southampton.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will also contribute to the Council's Green City agenda. 	<p>to ensure benefits are maximised and risks minimised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Voi that commits them to making improvements to key areas of the service and review the performance of this MoU throughout the trial period.
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DECISION-MAKER:	Cabinet
SUBJECT:	Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Strategy
DATE OF DECISION:	16 January 2024
REPORT OF:	Councillor Keogh Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director for Place	
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
N/A

BRIEF SUMMARY
<p>Southampton City Council (SCC) declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. In its Green City Plan 2030, it made a commitment to create a greener, healthier, and more sustainable city that is better adapted to the various challenges arising from climate change. The Corporate Plan 2022/30 sets a further ambition for Southampton to have an increased amount of connected, good quality green space. A key aim of both plans is to create a more resilient city, one that is healthy, and attractive for people to live in, work in and visit; a city that is designed to benefit people and wildlife.</p> <p>We need to address the commitments in those plans. We also need to meet our new statutory obligations arising from the Environment Act 2021, including a strengthened Biodiversity Duty and a requirement to secure at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) from planning developments. SCC will also be required to contribute toward the development and delivery of new Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), a spatial strategy to aid nature recovery and environmental improvement. Hampshire’s LNRS, currently being developed by Hampshire County Council (HCC), focusses on restoring habitats and increasing connectivity in the wider county.</p> <p>The Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy outline how the council will play its part in transforming its own activities in terms of land management and spatial planning. They also set out how improved GI and biodiversity will make the city more resilient to the effects of climate and improve the health, wellbeing and prosperity of Southampton.</p>

The GI Strategy seeks to optimise the full range of benefits that our natural assets can offer. This includes offering outdoor amenity space, safe and attractive routes for travel, local flood management, improving local air quality, capturing carbon and providing the infrastructure to support wildlife. The Biodiversity Strategy complements the GI Strategy by identifying a wider range of opportunities that will specifically support wildlife.

The current versions of the strategies have been developed following a thorough process of internal and external engagement to ensure our approach remains ambitious whilst also being achievable in scale and scope, striking the right balance for SCC and those service areas which have a more direct responsibility for delivering the actions needed to implement both strategies.

The strategies set out a vision and broad priorities that will dictate future delivery plans. Those delivery plans will be subject to a process of due diligence to ensure they are affordable, can be resourced and offer value for money. This in turn will dictate the speed, scale and scope of the outcomes achieved. Work on the delivery plans has commenced and the expectation is that these will be presented to Cabinet in 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To adopt the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The GI Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy address the Council’s existing commitments in the Green City Plan 2030 and the Corporate Plan 2022/30. The strategies also set out how SCC will to meet its enhanced biodiversity duty and statutory obligations under the Environment Act 2021, including delivery of BNG, support HCC’s work in the development and delivery of Hampshire’s LNRS and how the SCC will conserve and enhance biodiversity. Adoption of the GI and Biodiversity Strategies will encourage all stakeholders including business, conservation groups and public sector organisations to work together to deliver a shared outcome, making Southampton a cleaner, greener, healthier and a more sustainable environment for people and wildlife.
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ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	In the absence of a GI and Biodiversity Strategy or, where there is a delay in their introduction, the council will be unable to demonstrate how it intends to deliver its legal obligations under the strengthened Biodiversity Duty or the goals set out in the Corporate Plan or the Green City Plan. Penalties for failing to deliver statutory duties are currently unclear, however, there is a risk of reputational damage in addition to incurring higher future costs in adapting to the impacts of climate change and coping with loss of GI and continued loss and degradation of habitats and wildlife.
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DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3.	The majority scientific consensus is that human induced climate change has already started. Our world is warming causing more extreme weather events, and sea level rise. The consequences include increased loss of biodiversity, flooding, more frequent and severe heat waves, water scarcity and more pollution. There will be a detrimental impact on people's lives including health, and damage to homes and businesses. The UK is already experiencing more frequent and extreme weather events. In February 2020, storms brought devastating floods to large areas of Wales, northern England and the Midlands; in 2015, storms resulted in benchmark levels of flooding in the UK. Droughts were formally declared across much of England in 2022 due to record temperatures and low rainfall.
4.	Our GI and Biodiversity Strategies, together with our Climate Change Strategy, help address our aim for Southampton to be more resilient to the effects of climate change, effects which are particularly felt within a city setting with its hard landscape, sealed surfaces, and higher temperatures. The main current drivers of GI loss in Southampton include pressure from increased development, absence of or poorly designed GI in new development, pollution, increased public pressure and inappropriate management of habitats. Over time, the city's GI has become more fragmented. Small-scale, incremental encroachment on incidental spaces (such as road verges) is eroding the network. Equally, our network of semi-natural habitat is under threat through both direct loss and degradation.
5.	GI, the network of natural and semi-natural areas, is capable of providing a suite of environmental benefits. GI which is linked together in urban settings creates a network, a Green Grid, which is able to provide multiple benefits including supporting a green economy, improving quality of life, protecting biodiversity and enhancing the ability of ecosystems to deliver services (Ecosystem Services) such as, providing space for recreation and relaxation, improving water and air quality, reducing surface water flood risk, lowering ambient air temperatures and capturing and storing carbon.
6.	In Southampton, GI includes open spaces (such as parks and gardens), greenways, allotments, woodlands, grassland, road verges, hedges, lakes, ponds, playing fields, coastal habitats, as well as footpaths, cycleways, railway corridors, streams and rivers. The GI in our city is currently disconnected and is therefore not resilient to climate change. The GI Strategy seeks to create a way forward by increasing the extent of GI, forming stronger links between areas and improving habitat condition to increase resilience to environmental pressures. We need GI that is well designed and multi-functional, GI which helps address local flooding, improves air quality and delivers benefits for wildlife.
7.	Our Biodiversity Strategy complements the aims of the GI Strategy by providing objectives and methods for how the city can address the severe declines in wildlife, improving and increasing the extent and condition of our semi-natural habitats and in turn, improving species populations and increasing biodiversity. Both strategies set out ambitious, but realistic, targets for creating a better city for wildlife and for people.

8.	<p>The GI Strategy deals with GI, our network of green and blue infrastructure. Our Biodiversity Strategy focusses on conservation and enhancement of species and semi-natural habitats. Although different in their objectives, the strategies rely on each other for ensuring our GI network is strong, resilient and delivers Ecosystem Services, services needed by people and wildlife.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Strategy and GI Strategy underwent internal consultation in 2022 and 2023 (respectively). External consultation took place on both strategies in September and October 2023 where over 400 responses were received. Internal and external consultation took place in July 2022 to introduce the concept and need for the Green Grid, over 2,500 responses were received.</p> <p>Delivery plans for our Biodiversity Strategy and GI Strategy are underway with the anticipation these will be in draft ready for Cabinet briefing during 2024.</p>
9.	<p>Geodata (University of Southampton) were commissioned by SCC to analyse socio-economic data alongside maps and other data sets, including priority habitats, designated sites, street trees and public rights of way. The data were brought together to produce a high-level map of the GI in the city, our green and blue network termed our “Green Grid”. The Green Grid is the city’s ecological network that connects a series of core ‘ecosystems’ with corridors and steppingstones of habitats. Parks, open spaces, streams and rivers form the core areas of the network connected by corridors of street trees, highway verges, railway embankments and gardens. We are identifying opportunities to utilise buildings and land to add to the Green Grid through the creation of green walls/facades and roofs, tree planting and wildflower areas. We will work with landowners across the city to assess opportunities for forming links in the Green Grid on non-council land and encouraging the creation of GI wherever possible to create a connected, resilient, healthy, climate change adapted city.</p> <p>Policies and Supplementary Planning Documents within the Local Plan have been reviewed and include guidance on the GI standards we expect as part of any development. Our Green Grid map shows where this GI is most needed. We will provide guidance on what type of GI we expect to be delivered, ensuring it is high quality, effective and suitable for our city setting.</p> <p>A Green Grid Implementation Plan is being developed. The Plan will include how and where GI will be delivered.</p>

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

10.	<p>Both Strategies have been developed using existing internal resources and their completion and adoption generates no additional budget pressures. Neither will they limit services in their ability to deliver any immediate saving targets. Both strategies set out a vision and broad priorities that will dictate future delivery plans. Those delivery plans will be subject to a process of due diligence through existing governance processes to ensure they are affordable, can be resourced and offer value for money. This in turn will dictate the speed, scale and scope of the outcomes achieved.</p>
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Property/Other

11.	N/A
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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

	s.1 Localism Act 2011 allows the Council to do anything deemed necessary or desirable to deliver or support its functions and duties providing that action is not otherwise prohibited by statute (the general power of competence). The preparation and delivery of The Strategy and Action Plan is authorised by virtue of s.1.
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Other Legal Implications:

12.	The strengthened Biodiversity Duty, as set out in s.102 of the Environment Act 2021, was enacted in January 2023 and a deadline of 1st January 2024 set for the completion of the first review of what actions the City Council will take to conserve biodiversity. Reporting on these actions is required by 1st January 2026. The Biodiversity Strategy constitutes a review of actions needed to conserve biodiversity within Southampton and will enable the City Council to meet its obligations. From January 2024, the Council will have a mandatory duty to deliver BNG through the spatial planning system. To maximise the benefits of BNG for the city's biodiversity, the draft Biodiversity Strategy includes actions relating to the delivery of BNG within development sites and at other sites within the Local Planning Authority area. The draft Biodiversity and GI Strategies both contain actions aimed at delivering relevant targets from the Hampshire's LNRS which is being developed by Hampshire County Council.
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RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

13.	In the absence of a GI and Biodiversity Strategy or, where there is a delay in their introduction, the council will be unable to demonstrate how it intends to deliver its obligations under the strengthened Environment Act 2021 Biodiversity Duty or the goals set out in the Corporate Plan or the Green City Plan. Penalties for failing to deliver statutory duties are currently unclear, however, there is a risk of reputational damage in addition to incurring higher future costs in adapting to the impacts of climate change and coping with loss of GI and continued loss and degradation of habitats and wildlife.
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POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

14.	Strategies will assist with delivery of the Corporate Plan 2022/30 and satisfy actions identified in the Green City Plan. They will form part of an integrated policy framework that will ultimately replace the Green City Plan and ensure the council is able to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to address the challenges of climate change and ecological decline by creating a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable city.
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KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	ALL
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Green Infrastructure Strategy
2.	Biodiversity Strategy
3.	Green Infrastructure Consultation Report and Biodiversity Strategy Consultation Report
4.	Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	N/A	
Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.		Yes (appended)
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.		No
Other Background Documents		
Other Background documents available for inspection at: N/A		
Title of Background Paper(s)		
1.	N/A	



BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

VISION: “TO HALT THE DECLINE OF BIODIVERSITY,
PROTECT AND RE-CONNECT OUR HABITATS AND
CONSERVE, RESTORE AND ENHANCE SPECIES
POPULATIONS”

Executive Summary

- Our vision is to halt the decline of biodiversity in Southampton, strengthen habitat connections and to improve the condition of our valuable semi-natural habitats. As our statutory Biodiversity Duty, we will ensure developers deliver no less than 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for all small and large developments taking place across the city; a measurable increase in habitat delivered within Southampton. We will ensure our plans for habitat restoration integrate measures from the Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity within the city. We will help Central Government deliver its targets set out in the 25-year Environment Plan, recovering and enhancing nature and protecting and improving our natural environment.
- Human health depends on a well-functioning natural environment. A healthy environment delivers multiple benefits including supporting a green economy, improving quality of life, protecting biodiversity and enhancing the ability of ecosystems to deliver services (Ecosystem Services) such as improving water and air quality, providing space for recreation/relaxation and climate change adaptation. Environments rich in wildlife improve wellbeing through emotional, social and psychological benefits.
- In England, we have lost over 15% of species since 1970, there has been widespread loss and degradation of habitats across England dating back many centuries, from which, our wildlife has not recovered. 97% of wildflower meadows were lost between the 1930s and 1984. Four UK high temperature records were broken in 2019 and there was a 12% increase in above average rainfall with significant flooding events. There has been a 41% decrease in species' populations since 1970. The majority of people in the UK acknowledge that nature is under threat and needs urgent action to protect and restore it.
- Southampton's biodiversity is rich, diverse and valuable. It includes nationally and internationally important habitats such as coastal shingle, mudflat, chalk rivers, streams, ponds, grassland, wet meadow and ancient woodland.
- Our semi-natural habitats are under threat through both direct loss (generally from development pressure) and degradation in their condition (due to a lack of management, pressure from our increasing population, and pollution).
- This strategy sets out the key priorities relating to habitats and wildlife within Southampton, identifies the main issues and challenges and outlines how we will tackle those issues. Detail on how this strategy will be implemented will be provided in an accompanying Delivery Plan.
- As a Council, we have a legal duty to consider biodiversity across all of our functions to help halt the loss of biodiversity, seek opportunities to reverse the decline of habitat loss, and enhance species diversity and species abundance.

Our Approach

- The timeframe for the Biodiversity Strategy covers the period from 2024 to 2029, after which time, it will be reviewed.
- The council will improve its knowledge of Southampton's biodiversity and the reasons for its degradation and loss. We will undertake systematic surveys of our habitats and species. The results of surveys will help identify key habitats and species and inform how we manage our land.
- We will update our Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), providing a record of our ecological baseline, identifying key species and habitats, setting clear goals of what we want to achieve, our timeframes and how we will go about restoration and enhancement.
- We will increase knowledge and understanding of species requirements and wildlife legislation with increased levels of training for our staff.
- We will continue to develop our understanding and appreciation of the crucial benefits (ecosystem services) that are delivered by a healthy city ecosystem (such as climate control and flood alleviation) and ensure the benefits we receive from healthy ecosystems are understood by all our key staff and decision makers.
- We will ensure that our Local Plan Framework, guiding development in the city, sets out policies for the conservation of important international, national and local wildlife sites, habitats of biodiversity importance and species. The statutory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will be included in our Biodiversity policy. We will set high standards for all future development, ensuring that the right habitat/green infrastructure is delivered in the right location. To support our Biodiversity policy, Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will provide further information in relation to nutrient neutrality, mitigation for recreational disturbance, and, where and what type of BNG will be required within Southampton.
- Wildlife needs a network of linked habitats. We will retain existing habitat links, strengthen those which have become fragmented and create new ones. Links will be strengthened, both within the city and into adjoining districts, creating a robust Green Grid.
- Collaborative working. Council departments will work together, ensuring our Biodiversity Duty and approach to land management protects, enhances and connects habitats across the city. We will work with others on joint biodiversity related initiatives including Hampshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and Southampton National Park City. We will work with people studying, working and living in the city, helping forge relationships across communities to encourage people to access, explore and make improvements to their local green spaces. Increasing opportunities for outdoor physical activity and improving physical and mental health whilst, at the same time, benefiting wildlife. Collaborative working on various city-wide projects will be key to making connections between parks, open spaces, the Greenways and other important sites and habitats. Our new Rangers, working with the wider Natural Environment Team and Maintenance Operations teams, will ensure the city's habitats are appropriately managed. We will make improvements in all our semi-natural spaces for wildlife and for people. We will work closely with residents, helping to engage and empower communities to act for nature in order to help Southampton become a greener, healthier, city for wildlife and people. Our Community Campaigns Officer will continue to work with volunteers on habitat restoration projects.

Focus

We are developing a Green Grid to help us recognise and safeguard existing green infrastructure and identify how to maximise benefits through introducing more. The Green Grid will set out key green connections in the city, both existing (such as our Greenways) but also aspirational links which we have identified as being crucial for ensuring a better connected, greener and healthier city for people and wildlife. Our Green Infrastructure Strategy will provide information on the importance of green infrastructure and how the Green Grid will be implemented. Green Grid policy will be included in our Local Plan Review, helping to guide well-designed development and setting high standards for green infrastructure to be delivered. This policy will be supported by a Green Grid Map/s showing current and proposed connections. Our Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan will identify projects, on the ground, that will be delivered to help create and strengthen connections across the city.

The Biodiversity Strategy provides a statement on how Southampton City Council will protect, enhance, connect and create areas of nature conservation value within Southampton and help species recovery. We will manage land and structures within our portfolio to protect and enhance habitats and species in line with our statutory duties. We will secure dedicated resources within the council to deliver improvements in semi-natural habitat in the city.

As well as engaging with external stakeholders, we will engage with our own staff to ensure that we are working collaboratively and delivering benefits for wildlife whilst undertaking our statutory duties. We will ensure all the work we undertake as a council (management of our land, housing, schools and other built structures) aligns with wildlife legislation and best practice guidance, making sure we protect habitats and species whilst going about our day-to-day activities.

Our Local Plan Review will include clear policies that ensure development in the city is well-designed, delivers no less than 10% BNG and aligns with the aims of Hampshire's LNRS.

We will work with all sectors of the city, including engaging with as many residents as possible, to design and deliver plans to create green links. Together we will green the grey, tree line our streets, incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and help inspire others to support wildlife.

Key Priorities

We have identified five key priorities:

- Priority 1: Protect, Enhance and Connect our Ecological Network
 - Increase the area of habitat located between core sites in the ecological network to act as stepping-stones for species moving between core sites
- Priority 2: Engage in a Programme of Habitat Management Work to Achieve an Overall Improvement in Habitat Condition
 - A programme of habitat management and monitoring work will lead to an improvement in the condition of habitats on the city's semi-natural greenspaces.
- Priority 3: Increase Species Diversity and Improve Species Populations
 - Identify species which are declining and/or at risk and put in place a programme of conservation management to support wildlife and increase diversity and populations.
- Priority 4: Identify and Deliver Opportunities for the Creation and Enhancement of Habitats
 - Update our knowledge of biodiversity in the city. Ensure council land is managed to benefit biodiversity, wherever possible. Retain extent and improve quality (where needed) of statutory and non-statutory designated land of nature conservation. Help increase the quality, diversity and extent of habitats on land outside of council ownership.
- Priority 5: Priority/ outcomes 5. Increase Resilience of Biodiversity to Safeguard Ecosystem Service Delivery
 - Habitats in better condition which are more resilient to climate change and support increased species population levels.

Setting the Scene

- Southampton's geographical location, relatively warm climate, underlying geology and position between two rivers (the Test and Itchen) has resulted in a city with a diverse range of habitats and species.
- The city supports a wide variety of notable habitats including coast, mudflats, rivers, ponds, wet meadows, heathland, grassland and woodland. Some of these habitats are of significant importance and protected under national and international legislation including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites. The city also supports 66 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- The city has a relatively large extent of non-designated habitat, with 49 parks and 1,140 hectares of green open space, including the Common which has over 17 million visitors each year. In total, 20% of the city is classified as publicly accessible green space.
- Southampton neighbours the New Forest National Park, Southampton Water, the Solent and the range of protected habitats within them.
- The Southampton BAP, which updated the 1992 Nature Conservation Strategy, is now over 16 years old. Since publication of the BAP, there have been significant changes to legislation (the Environment Act, 2021), policy and guidance. The 2021 Environment Act is very ambitious. Its implementation will halt the decline of nature by 2030 and requires all new development to deliver a minimum of 10% BNG. The duty of delivering BNG is the responsibility of Local Planning Authorities. As part of the Act, Local Nature Recovery Strategies will be created to help build a Nature Recovery Network across England; Hampshire County Council are currently developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, which includes Southampton.
- Southampton City Council realises the importance and urgency of halting the global decline in species. The council is committed to improving and increasing the greenspace across the city, playing its part in halting the loss of biodiversity at a local level. We realise the importance of acting without delay; stopping the decline and fragmentation of biodiversity in the city needs to be addressed urgently. Making important changes to the way we deal with our natural environment now will lead to lasting physical and mental health benefits for the city's population and make the city a more attractive place to work, live and visit. To improve our residents' wellbeing and ensure that wildlife and habitats can persist for future generations, we want to make the city as green as possible. The council cannot protect and enhance biodiversity on its own; we will need the help of residents, businesses, and visitors.
- We acknowledge there is a balance between the inevitable future growth within the city and the associated pressures that brings, in particular, to designated sites in Southampton and the surrounding area such as the New Forest National Park.
- The key drivers of biodiversity loss in Southampton include climate change, development, pollution (both on the land and in our watercourses), population related impacts (such as habitat degradation/erosion/disturbance/recreation), 'Permitted Development' changes (such as car parking resulting in additional hardstanding), and inappropriate and/or lack of management of habitats. Small-scale, incremental encroachment on small incidental spaces and private gardens is eroding the city's green network for both people and wildlife. Fragmentation of the green network is affecting the benefits (ecosystem services) that a healthy, well-connected ecosystem can deliver.

What Do Our Residents Say?

In March 2022, we ran a consultation about a Southampton Green Grid. We asked people what they thought about the city's greenspaces, and these are some of the most commonly raised responses:

- There is widespread affection and appreciation of the green spaces in Southampton, and a sense of pride, but people feel that the quality of these spaces has declined in recent years. The Greenways in particular were mentioned as amazing places for wildlife but that better management of these sites is imperative.
- Concern about the environment and climate change have been cited as the most important challenges faced by the city. People expressed concern that further development will be detrimental to the extent and quality of our green spaces (City Vision 2020).
- 98% of responses stated people would like more nature and wildlife in the city.
- 84% of respondents said they enhance their outside spaces for wildlife, reducing mowing to encourage pollinators, planting pollinator-friendly species, constructing ponds and enhancing gardens for wildlife such as birds and hedgehogs.
- 89% of respondents feel that using native species (local and natural) for planting is important for encouraging wildlife and improving habitats and that plants and trees used in landscaping should be chosen to be of benefit to wildlife.
- 91% of respondents said that street tree planting improves the character of an area.
- Nearly half of respondents mentioned The Common as being their favourite green space in the city due to its close proximity to where they live and being able to walk there. Riverside Park was cited as the next most visited green space.
- 91% of respondents said they would like to see more green spaces in the city. The remaining 9% said they would like to see the existing green spaces better maintained and improved.
- Asked about what would encourage people to make more use of their green space, the majority of people cited more wildlife, peace and tranquillity, biodiversity and facilities such as toilets/cafés. People also asked for better signage, transport connections and generally better access.
- St James Park received an overwhelming number of positive comments (85% of respondents said they felt positive about this park). On the contrary, Mayflower Park was the park mostly frequently highlighted as being in need of significant improvements.

Priority/Outcomes 1. Protect, Enhance and Connect our Ecological Network

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
Increased protection of existing habitats.	Ensure that all existing habitat is safeguarded and being managed appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure policy framework is strong enough to safeguard areas of habitat from inappropriate uses. ▪ Change management regimes to improve habitat condition (ie. reduce mowing frequency). ▪ Create areas of buffering habitat to protect principal biodiversity features. ▪ Only use pesticide in situations where all other alternatives have been considered ineffective.
Increased habitat connectivity, a city-wide Green Grid.	Increase the extent of habitat located between core sites in the ecological network to act as stepping-stones for species moving between core sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement our GI Strategy, create ward-level Green Grid maps with clear targets, actions, delivery partners and funding opportunities. ▪ Create areas of new habitat to link up existing isolated areas. ▪ Use the planning system to deliver new habitat within developments. ▪ Ensure landscape planting includes species of recognised value to wildlife. ▪ Education campaigns around ‘wildlife friendly’ gardening and landscaping ▪ Create ‘stepping-stones’ for wildlife – through introduction of new green/blue infrastructure. ▪ Plant appropriate trees along streets and ensure ongoing management. ▪ Deliver SuDS features that support biodiversity.

Priority/Outcomes 2. Achieve an Overall Improvement in Habitat Condition

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
Improved habitat condition.	<p>Understand the existing condition of our habitats and the reasons for their decline in extent and condition. Retain and increase the extent of land protected by statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations, bringing all sites into favourable condition. A programme of habitat management and monitoring work will lead to a measurable improvement in the condition of habitats within the city's semi-natural green and blue spaces, whilst also ensuring that our open spaces are safe places for the public to enjoy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat management plans, with clear targets/action/management will be prepared for each semi-natural area, including all of our designated sites; these plans will be implemented by our Ranger team. ▪ Annual work programmes will be developed and implemented by our Ranger team, informed by up-to-date baseline habitat and species data. ▪ Additional resources, including volunteers and Community Payback, will be involved in practical habitat management work. ▪ A monitoring programme for habitats and species will be put in place so we can identify and report on the improvements being made. ▪ Engage with landowners to improve habitats outside of the council's land ownership.

Priority/Outcomes 3. Increase Species Diversity and Improve Species Populations

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>Improve species diversity and species populations.</p>	<p>Identify species which are declining and/or at risk and put in place a programme of conservation management and initiatives to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In our new BAP, we will set clear goals, identifying target species and their habitat requirements within the city. ▪ Develop and implement conservation management plans for target species, where these are needed. ▪ Review land management practices across the council to ensure our approaches are consistent and in line with good conservation practices. ▪ Establish a programme of habitat mapping and species monitoring. ▪ Develop a system of accurate and consistent recording and storage of species and habitat data. ▪ Continue to increase wildlife awareness and good practice for those staff involved in land and building management across the council.

Priority/Outcomes 4. Identify and Deliver Opportunities for the Creation and Enhancement of Habitats

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
Create and enhance habitats.	Update our knowledge of biodiversity in the city. Ensure all our land is managed to protect and enhance biodiversity. Help increase the quality, diversity and extent of habitats outside of our land ownership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detail will be provided in our local updated BAP. ▪ Identify suitable sites and projects for BNG funding. ▪ Prepare sites within the city for habitat banking to deliver off-site BNG units. ▪ Work with others across the council to deliver habitat enhancements on our land, wherever possible. ▪ Work with other landowners /stakeholders to develop and deliver habitat enhancements. ▪ Run biodiversity initiatives to encourage residents, businesses, and community organisations to create opportunities for wildlife on land outside of council ownership, such as gardens and grounds. ▪ Deliver new habitats, in a spatially strategic way via the planning system. ▪ Ensure planning advice consistently aims to protect and enhance of biodiversity in both new and redevelopment applications, delivering clear and measurable gains for biodiversity.

Priority/Outcomes 5. Increase Resilience of Biodiversity to Safeguard Ecosystem Service Delivery

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
More robust biodiversity.	Healthier and better connected green and blue habitats which are more resilient to climate change and human pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure we have sufficient protective buffers around our more sensitive sites to reduce disturbance to wildlife and habitats. ▪ Ensure no further loss of habitat. ▪ Raise awareness of how everyone in the city can help improve space for wildlife. ▪ Plant the right species. Use climate adaptable planting and planting species of value to local wildlife (with appropriate long-term management in place).

Delivering our strategy

- Southampton's wildlife can only effectively be protected and enhanced with the support of the council, the community and other landowners in the city all acting in partnership. Fortunately, there is already a very high level of public support and interest. Encouraging and supporting communities to enhance their local green spaces for the benefit of wildlife also has the potential to deliver benefits across other council priorities and strategies, such as improving health and wellbeing. The council will continue to encourage and will increase its support in helping people and communities to improve their local green space for nature.
- The council will update its BAP; the BAP will act, in part, as an implementation plan for this strategy. It will have clear targets and detail on how those targets will be achieved, including a set of annual actions and a monitoring regime. We will work with local nature organisations in its development to ensure the BAP is concise, ambitious and deliverable.
- The delivery of this Strategy will require the council to manage its land for the benefit of biodiversity, wherever possible. We will alter grassland mowing (grounds maintenance) regimes to ensure this habitat is managed to benefit wildlife. Our Ranger Team will work closely with our Grounds Maintenance Teams and Ecologist to identify further habitat that can be managed for wildlife. We will work closely with all our teams across the whole of the council to ensure we seize the opportunity to improve biodiversity within all our sectors of work (including highways, rail, landscape, schools and housing), providing clear advice in the form of advice/guidance notes to ensure a consistent, joined up approach. All habitat creation activities will take account of any potential conflicts of interest within the council (ie. tree planting must take account of potential impacts relating to air quality/sightlines/underground services/archaeology etc) and the need for ongoing management.
- The aims and objectives of the Local Plan, Greenspace Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Tree Strategy (to be developed) will all align. This will ensure that our efforts are consistent, joined up and delivered in the right way and in the right locations.
- We will continue with our rolling programme of species-specific and habitat surveys to record and monitor the ecological baseline of the city; the data from these surveys will inform habitat management plans for our semi-natural sites (such as the Greenways and waterbodies). Our Rangers will implement these habitat management plans, over time, improving the condition of all our semi-natural habitat.
- Planning policies and Development Management will deliver some of the priorities within this strategy. Green Grid Policy, Biodiversity Policy and Supplementary Planning Documents to support our Local Plan will ensure appropriate BNG (no less than 10%) is delivered in the right parts of the city. Planning Policy will ensure that future development includes high quality green infrastructure, delivered in the right areas of the city to improve and strengthen our green network, such as green roofs/green facades and "stepping stone" habitats for wildlife. The Green Space Factor tool will be used to assess impacts of development.
- The council will continue to work with statutory agencies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, together with partners such as the Forestry Commission, neighbouring Local Authorities, academic institutions and the commercial sector.
- We will support organisations who are working with and supporting communities to improve green spaces, habitat and species diversity such as Parks Friends groups, SO18 Big Local, Green Volunteer Network and Southampton National Park City. We will support the efforts of local and national nature conservation groups such as Southampton Natural History Society, Hampshire and Isle of

Wight Wildlife Trust, Hampshire Bat Group, Hampshire Ornithological Society, Hampshire Swift Society, and People's Trust for Endangered Species.

- Biodiversity will be considered in every relevant section of the council, ensuring as we undertake tasks as part of our regulatory and statutory functions, we have regard for the aims of this Strategy to provide a fully joined up approach.
- All our day-to-day activities (including work carried out by staff within our supply chain, such as contractors) will be compliant with relevant environmental and wildlife legislation and best practice guidance. Internal wildlife awareness training will continue to be delivered to all relevant staff across the various council departments who are involved in building and land management.
- We will reduce our use of pesticides, ensuring we only use pesticides in situations where all other alternatives have been considered ineffective. Where possible, using non-chemical, manual or mechanical means of managing invasive plants.
- Further information on how the Council will implement this strategy will be provided within the Biodiversity Strategy Delivery Plan (to be developed during 2024). The Delivery Plan will include specific targets, mechanisms for delivery (including partnership working and funding requirements), and timeframes along with how progress will be monitored and reported.

How will we measure success?

We will:

- Increase the amount of land designated as Local Nature Reserve (LNR), aiming to meet the Natural England ANGSt target of at least one hectare of LNR per 1,000 people
- In accordance with Part 6, Section 103 of the Environment Act 2021, monitor and report on of the amount of BNG secured via the planning system
- Improve the condition of our semi-natural green and blue habitat and aim for “favourable conservation status” for all of our designated sites
- Increase the amount of land designated as SINC and will provide information on how and where our habitats are improving. SINC condition will continue to be monitored and reported back to SCC by HCC
- Increase overall species diversity and restore and improve species populations. We will set clear, specific and measurable targets within our updated local BAP
- Ensure continued compliance with relevant habitat and species related legislation whilst carrying out our duties such as tree works, building maintenance and routine habitat management

Details about what specific targets we are setting in order to see how biodiversity is fairing in our city will be published in our updated BAP. This document will be reviewed and updated regularly for the duration of this strategy. We will also develop a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s) to measure our progress in habitat restoration and management and seek to identify means of measuring habitat connectivity through development and implementation of our Green Grid map/s and Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

This Biodiversity Strategy, together with the Green Grid work and Green Infrastructure Strategy will contribute to an overall improvement in the health of the city. The wider benefits of a more natural environment are well recognised, helping with carbon storage, flood alleviation, noise reduction, improved air quality and people’s health and wellbeing. We anticipate that making our city greener, more connected and attractive, and therefore a healthier place to live and work, will also result in economic benefits for Southampton.

END OF REPORT



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

VISION: “TO CREATE AN INTERCONNECTED,
HEALTHIER CITY THAT RELIABLY DELIVERS
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES FOR ITS RESIDENTS AND
WILDLIFE”

Foreword

- In this strategy, the term Green Infrastructure (GI) covers both green and blue infrastructure. GI is a network of natural and semi-natural areas capable of providing a suite of environmental benefits. GI which is linked together in urban settings creates a network, a Green Grid, which is able to provide multiple benefits including supporting a green economy, improving quality of life, protecting biodiversity and enhancing the ability of ecosystems to deliver benefits (Ecosystem Services) such as improving water and air quality, providing space for recreation/relaxation and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- In Southampton, GI includes open spaces (such as parks and gardens), greenways, allotments, woodlands, grassland, road verges, hedges, ditches, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, playing fields and coastal habitats, as well as footpaths, cycleways and railway corridors.
- Southampton has long been known as a green city. With its diversity of parks, semi-natural spaces and two chalk rivers (the Test and the Itchen) flowing through it into the Solent; we have a wealth of GI for such an urban setting however, much of our GI is fragmented.
- As in the vast majority of towns and cities, benefits from GI are not well understood, let alone properly valued. This situation risks the loss of critical natural capital at a point in time when we need it most. With a backdrop of rapidly diminishing budgets, green and blue infrastructure that can provide a diverse range of benefits, simultaneously, is a vital resource.
- This strategy is, quite naturally, incomplete; no matter how long we spend gathering information we can never know all there is to know about the natural environment. However, this is no reason to delay taking action.

Executive Summary

“We may have distanced ourselves from nature, but we rely completely on the services it delivers.”

Living Beyond Our Means: Natural Assets and Human Well-being. The Board of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005).

This simple statement neatly sums up our current relationship with the natural world. However, as the information in this strategy illustrates, this is a dangerous road to travel risking a loss of human wellbeing and prosperity.

The worst consequences are not inevitable; by adopting a new approach to the natural environment we can better understand the benefits we are receiving and ensure that safeguarding them is integrated into the council’s policies and practices. In this way, we can restore the health and wellbeing of our communities and achieve long term sustainable prosperity.

Our Approach

- The timeframe for the Green Infrastructure Strategy covers the period from 2024 to 2029, after which time, it will be reviewed.
- Following local and national activity, Southampton City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and published its Green City Charter, identifying key priorities to create a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable city. Since then, we have gone on to demonstrate how we intend to deliver on this Charter through the Green City Plan. As part of our commitments, we are developing a robust, bigger, better, well linked network of GI; a Southampton Green Grid. This will help us recognise, record and safeguard existing GI in Southampton. It will identify how the optimum benefits can be achieved by introducing more, well designed GI to deliver much needed Ecosystem Services across our city. This well designed, well connected, robust Green Grid, will provide benefits for both the city's wildlife (much of which has decreased and/or deteriorated) and our increasing population. An increase in more, better linked GI will be imperative in helping the city meet its net zero carbon goal by 2035 and be part of the solution to tackling climate change.
- Developing our Green Grid started in January 2021. The first step involved the production of a series of maps by Geodata (Southampton University), clearly identifying all of our existing green and blue spaces. This was followed by analysis of socio-economic data alongside other data sets, including priority habitats, designated sites, street trees and public rights of way. As part of the development of our Green Grid, we are identifying opportunities to utilise buildings and land to add to the Green Grid through the creation of green walls/facades and green roofs, tree planting and wildflower areas. We will also be working with landowners across the city, assessing opportunities for forming links in the Green Grid on non-council land, encouraging the implementation of GI wherever we possibly can to create a resilient, healthy, climate change resilient city.
- Policies and Supplementary Planning Documents within the Local Plan are being reviewed and will include clear guidance on the GI standards we expect as part of any development. Our Green Grid map will show where this GI is most needed and we will provide guidance on the type of GI we expect to be delivered, ensuring it is good quality and suitable for our city setting. We will ensure our cityscape is well designed and high quality, ensuring the built environment meets the highest of standards in all cases and is resilient to challenges such as climate change and increasing population.
- This is a city-wide strategy and once adopted, a more detailed plan will be developed to explain how we will implement the strategy. Our GI Delivery Plan will include how GI will be delivered (ie. reduced mowing of our grassland areas to increase sward height, more hedgerows and trees, roadside planters), where and when this will be delivered and by whom. To create well-connected and well-designed GI will require input and energy from communities and landowners across the city. We can achieve a greener, better linked and healthier city if we all work together.
- We will find ways to quantify the Ecosystem Services delivered by good quality, well planned GI so investment can be based on sound business cases and to find innovative ways to use this to attract investment through inseting (a mechanism to help businesses tackle effects of climate change and biodiversity loss) and social value schemes.

Focus

We have identified seven priorities:

- Biodiversity. We want to develop a city that supports a diverse range of species, with robust population levels and a connected network of habitats that is accessible to both people and wildlife.
- Flood Regulation. We want a network of GI that reduces the risk of flooding across the city and has sufficient capacity to cope with all but the most extreme weather events.
- Temperature Regulation. We want to ensure there is sufficient GI within Southampton to moderate the effects of high temperatures and poor air quality caused by the Urban Heat Island and climate change.
- Air Quality Management. We want extensive, well-connected GI that helps improve the city's air quality and reduces pollutant levels to below national thresholds.
- Health and Wellbeing. We want sufficient GI across the city which provides opportunities for residents to get outside and enjoy access to nature and we want more tranquil places for people to relax and unwind.
- Recreation. We want residents to have access to a variety of GI, close to their homes, which provides opportunities for a range of recreational activities.
- Social Cohesion. Green spaces are at the heart of community activity, we want to provide more opportunities for friendship and collective action.

A further three potential priorities have been identified and will be developed further as supporting evidence is gathered. These are:

- Economic Value – a high quality green and blue environment in which to live and work that supports the prosperity of the city.
- Education and Skills Training – green spaces are a focal point for education and training, providing skills for employment and skills for life.
- Carbon Capture – Improving our GI is integral to helping the council achieve our net zero targets (our Climate Change Strategy and Climate Change Delivery Plan provide further details).

Setting the Scene

- Parks and green and blue spaces in England deliver an estimated £6.6 billion of health, climate change and environmental benefits every year. But with 80% of people now living in towns and cities, one third of people do not have access to good quality green and blue space within 15 minutes of their home (Natural England). In February 2023, Natural England launched their new GI Framework. The new Natural England GI Framework will help increase the amount of green cover in England to 40% in urban residential areas; one of its priorities is to connect people to nature by creating accessible nature-rich spaces close to where people live and work. Improving access to GI for particular groups of people would contribute to reducing inequalities such as mental and physical health in different areas of the city.
- The council will adopt this GI Framework and use it to help improve and increase the green and blue spaces across the city, playing its part in helping to halt the loss of habitat. We realise the importance of acting without delay; halting the decline and fragmentation of GI in the city needs to be addressed urgently. Making important changes now to how we deal with our natural environment will have lasting physical and mental health benefits for the city's population and make the city a more attractive place to live in, work in, and visit. This strategy, along with our other strategies (including Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategies and our Public Realm Masterplan), outline the key ways in which we will work together with our partners to make improvements in the quality and extent of green and blue space across the city.
- One of the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, is the development of spatial strategies for nature, a National Nature Recovery Strategy. At the local level, Hampshire County Council (HCC) is producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). This GI Strategy, along with the Green Grid mapping and GI Delivery Plan, complements the LNRS work of HCC, by providing more detail and guidance at a scale that is relevant to the city.
- The city has a large amount of green space. It has 49 parks and 1,140 hectares of opens spaces, including the Common which hosts over 17 million visitors each year. In total, 20% of the city is classified as green space. It neighbours the New Forest National Park, Southampton Water, the Solent and the range of protected habitats within them. The city supports a wide variety of habitats including coasts, mudflats, rivers, ponds, wet meadows and woodlands. Some of these habitats are of national and international importance, including our two chalk river systems.
- The main current drivers of GI loss in Southampton include climate change, pressure from increased development, absence of, or poorly designed, GI as part of development, pollution (both on the land and in our watercourses), increasing public pressure and lack of/inappropriate management of habitats. Over time, the green areas of our city have become more and more fragmented, and our rivers and streams have become polluted and unnatural. Small-scale, incremental encroachment on incidental spaces (including road verge loss and reduction of private gardens) is eroding the green network for both people and wildlife

Priority/Outcomes 1. Biodiversity

- The term ‘biodiversity’ is a shortened version of ‘biological diversity’ which can be defined, very simply, as the variety of life.
- Biodiversity forms the fabric of GI. This ranges from very common to extremely rare species. The strategy addresses the two different facets of biodiversity and its interaction with GI. Firstly, as the basis of GI there is a need to ensure the resilience of the species that are providing the Ecosystem Service benefits that we want delivered. Secondly, there is the issue of biodiversity conservation where we take specific actions to reverse the losses of species and improve the size and resilience of populations. This second aspect is covered in detail in the Biodiversity Strategy
- Biodiversity has long been appreciated for the goods and services it provides and the way it enhances our quality of life. However, this has not prevented significant losses occurring. Significant declines have been caused by human activities such as agriculture, urban development and pollution. Within Southampton, for example, intensification of the built environment through building on gardens, open spaces and over watercourses has led to further losses.
- Biodiversity plays a key functional role in ecosystems and hence the delivery of Ecosystem Services. Whilst the precise role it plays is not well understood, it appears that ecosystems are more stable with higher levels of biodiversity which means that maintenance of good levels of biodiversity is key to ensuring future provision of Ecosystem Services.
- Unfortunately, despite concerted efforts at both the national and local level, biodiversity is still in decline which could result in a reduction, or loss, of Ecosystem Services. The consequences of this decline would be particularly noticeable in urban areas such as Southampton where large numbers of people, who benefit directly from Ecosystem Services, live.

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>GI which contains the right species and is made up of habitat types which are capable of coping with environmental challenges, such as climate change and population increase. Offset some of our current carbon emissions through localised habitat creation.</p>	<p>Ecosystems within the city are in good condition and Ecosystem Service provision is protected. Good quality GI which supports the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Better access to greenspace whilst at the same time, improving habitat quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement our Biodiversity Strategy ▪ Monitor the biodiversity value of existing and new GI including open spaces, green roofs and green walls/facades. ▪ Undertake research to establish the value of ornamental species/cultivars. ▪ Continue to work with the city’s universities to develop a better understanding of Ecosystem Service delivery within Southampton. ▪ Develop a natural capital asset register. ▪ Undertake a natural capital assessment to establish the financial value of Ecosystem Services being delivered in Southampton. ▪ Use results of natural capital assessment to create business case to attract investment in the GI. ▪ Undertake research into the management of GI in the face of climate change and population increase. ▪ Deliver conservation education to improve awareness of the need to protect habitats.

Priority/Outcomes 2. Flood Regulation

- Flooding is one of the most significant challenges faced by Southampton. It poses a risk to the health and well-being of residents (ie. drowning and infections caused by contaminated water); it damages homes and infrastructure, and interrupts businesses, causing losses to the local economy.
- The risk to the city is increasing. A rise in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, linked to climate change, will result in more rainfall. Unfortunately, the fabric of the city, in common with most urban areas, is very poor at dealing with water. Extensive areas of impermeable surfaces on buildings, roads and pavements speeds water into the nearest drain leading to water, and in some cases sewage, overflowing onto roads and into property.
- Some areas of the city will fare better than others. Those areas with higher levels of GI and less “sealed” surfaces, will benefit from the greater levels of water interception and infiltration provided by vegetation and soils. Features such as woodlands, wetlands, meadows and gardens all have an important role to play.
- Areas with little or no GI, for example the city centre, will be more at risk. However, the inclusion of green roofs, green walls/facades, SuDS and street trees in new developments, or retrofitted into existing areas, can help.
- The focus going forward will need to be on the protection and management of existing GI, including gardens, and the creation of new features to increase water storage capacity.

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>A city-wide network of green infrastructure capable of delivering high levels of water interception and infiltration will have been identified. New developments will include GI leading to an increase in water storage capacity. Green roofs, green walls/facades and SuDS will have been retrofitted into city centre sites.</p>	<p>Southampton will develop a network of green and blue infrastructure that reduces the risk of flooding across the city and has sufficient capacity to cope with all but the most extreme weather events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create additional water attenuation capacity across the city through widespread but small-scale introductions of new landscape planting. ▪ Review land management practices adjacent to water courses to identify opportunities for increasing water interception capacity. ▪ Secure additional tree planting. ▪ Ensure new development uses sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to minimise and slow the rate of runoff. Explore how SuDS can be retrofitted into existing developments and infrastructure. ▪ Encourage greater use of green roofs and green walls/facades to improve water attenuation in areas with high levels of sealed surfaces. ▪ Map GI across the city to identify areas with good water management capacity. ▪ Map vegetation along transport corridors to increase understanding of current water attenuation capacity. ▪ Encourage local communities to identify places for new tree planting. ▪ Secure sponsorship for a community street tree project

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop simple messages explaining the role that vegetation plays in reducing flood risk.
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Priority/Outcomes 3. Temperature Regulation

- Urban areas are generally warmer, often by a degree or two, than surrounding countryside due to the release of heat from buildings and man-made surfaces. This is termed the Urban Heat Island effect.
- The main causes of the Urban Heat Island effect are the release of heat from buildings and other man made surfaces into the atmosphere at night which causes an increase in urban air temperature; and the loss of evaporative cooling from vegetation which has been replaced by built structures.
- Solar radiation is the principal source of heat being released from buildings and other surfaces. However, this is often supplemented by waste heat from air conditioning and the effects of vehicles and industry.
- Climate change is increasing the incidence of heat waves and exacerbates the Urban Heat Island effect which has serious implications for health (ie. increasing risk of heart attacks and respiratory issues) and the economy. Along with warming at the Earth’s surface, many other changes in the climate are occurring including rising sea levels and more extreme weather events.
- GI has been proposed as an effective tool for mitigating the adverse effects. It has been suggested that a 10% increase in tree cover in a dense urban area, would result in a cooling by up to 2.5°C.
- GI reduces temperatures in a number of ways: moisture is released into the atmosphere by evapotranspiration and reduces the ambient air temperature around vegetation, large plants such as trees and shrubs provide direct protection from both heat and UV radiation by shading buildings and outdoor space. Lower temperatures as a result of evapotranspiration and shading lead to a reduction in the amount of heat absorbed by man-made urban surfaces.
- Many areas in Southampton benefit from good levels of GI and will not be at risk from the Urban Heat Island effect. However, the high density of population and lower levels of GI within the city centre increases the risk of Urban Heat Island.

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Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>The severity of the Urban Heat Island effect has been reduced through the creation of new GI. Shade spaces have been created to provide cool spots which enable residents to gain relief from high temperatures. Residents have access to shade spaces which allow them to safely enjoy time outdoors.</p>	<p>Ensure there is sufficient GI within Southampton to moderate the impacts of high temperatures and poor air quality caused by the Urban Heat Island effect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement our Climate Change Strategy ▪ Identify opportunities for new street tree planting to create shady routes. ▪ Encourage the installation of green roofs, green walls, green facades on new buildings within the city centre (with reference to our Public Realm Framework). ▪ Develop a better understanding of how urban heat could affect Southampton. ▪ Identify areas at risk of the Urban Heat Island effect. ▪ Encourage residents in areas of low or no GI to green their neighbourhoods. ▪ Make the population aware of the need to take exercise in the shade of trees or woodlands during very hot weather, avoiding the peak heat of the day.

Priority/Outcomes 4. Air Quality Management

- Poor air quality is the greatest environmental risk to health, including increased risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. The key pollutants are Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM).
- NO₂ is mostly from road transport, although other sources, including industry and shipping, do contribute towards high levels. The city has ten Air Quality Management Areas where statutory air quality objectives haven't been met.
- PM comes from a large variety of sources, notably wood burning, and can have large impacts on health.
- Pollution can also have an impact on vulnerable habitats, making them less resilient to other stressors.
- While air quality has improved in the city since monitoring began, pollution still has a large impact on the city's residents, particularly those in vulnerable demographics. In response to this, the council has adopted its new Air Quality Action Plan which aims to achieve a continual improvement in the city's air quality. The Air Quality Action Plan sets out a series of measures to reduce emissions overall and reduce the impact of pollution through minimising exposure to pollution.
- As well as absorbing some pollution, GI, including hedges and green walls/facades (with the right choice of species), can help mitigate the impact of pollution by creating barriers between the source of pollution and people.
- It is important that green infrastructure is planned well to ensure unintended increases in pollution do not occur. Planting of certain tree species can, in some cases, limit the dispersal of pollution and worsen air quality in an area.

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>Improved air quality within Air Quality Management Areas. Improved background air quality.</p>	<p>Effective use of GI is improving the city's air quality and reducing pollutant levels to below national thresholds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement our Air Quality Action Plan ▪ Seek opportunities to increase the number of street trees where they are likely to improve air quality. ▪ Maintain shrub beds close to roads. ▪ Seek provision of green walls/facades and green roofs in new developments close to major roads. ▪ Secure the inclusion of appropriate species of trees and shrubs within landscape planting schemes. ▪ Map trees and other vegetation within and adjacent to all Air Quality Management Areas and assess its suitability for air quality management. ▪ Identify potential sites for additional tree planting within Air Quality Management Areas ▪ Encourage local communities, including schools, to identify places for new tree planting. ▪ Secure sponsorship for a community street tree project. ▪ Encourage householders to plant trees and shrubs in front gardens. ▪ Encourage communities to adopt areas of shrub planting and help with ongoing maintenance.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop simple messages explaining the role that vegetation plays in improving air quality.
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Priority/Outcomes 5. Health and Wellbeing

- Ecosystems provide some obvious benefits for health including providing fresh food, clean water and clean air. They also provide places for people to be active and to have contact with nature contributing to improved physical and mental wellbeing. Beyond this, ecosystems regulate environmental processes such as water management, temperature regulation and air quality which, if disrupted by environmental degradation, can become harmful to health.
- The idea of parks and green space being good for health can be traced back to Victorian times. Many of the parks in Southampton were established under the Public Health Acts of 1875 – 1925. Research has since shown that access to green space benefits both physical and mental wellbeing. Parks are particularly important in urban areas where populations tend to have higher levels of physical and mental ill health than their rural counterparts. Parks provide opportunities for physical exercise, which would combat the problem of growing inactivity and associated medical conditions such as obesity, Type 2 Diabetes and Cardio-Vascular Disease however, they need to be located close to where people live.
- Not everyone is able to take vigorous exercise, however, gentle exercise can still provide benefits. The critical factor is contact with the green environment.
- Access to the natural environment also has indirect benefits through greater social contact. It is particularly important for children enabling them to develop self-confidence and important social skills. It helps reduce stress and negative emotions and increases happiness. GI also helps boost attention, memory and creativity and mitigates noise pollution which in turn reduces stress and sleep disturbance.
- In general, deprived areas have less green space and where it exists, it is generally of poorer quality than that in more affluent areas. This is a significant health issue as deprived communities tend to experience higher levels of ill health and, whilst the health of all members of society benefits from improved access to greenspace, the health of individuals in the lowest socio-economic groups benefits the most.

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Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>The general health and wellbeing of the city’s residents has improved as people spend more time out and about in parks and green places.</p> <p>A range of different GI is meeting the needs of residents; whether they want to engage in vigorous exercise or to simply sit and unwind.</p>	<p>More connected GI across the city, more access to our waterfront, providing greater opportunities for residents get outside and take more exercise and unwind. We will have tranquil, safe, high quality, accessible places for all to spend time in.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement our “emerging” Mental Health Strategy ▪ Install and maintain suitable infrastructure to enable access to green spaces for all (ie. footpaths/seats/natural play areas). ▪ Ensure developments increase the level of GI enabling people to walk or cycle from home to a local park along tree-lined streets. ▪ Identify areas of low GI provision and high levels of ill health to enable targeting of greening initiatives. ▪ Provide a map of walks, footpaths and cycle routes across the city to signpost people to greenspaces. ▪ Improved engagement with residents, raising awareness and enjoyment of our greenspaces. ▪ Improved species richness, infrastructure, facilities and maintenance within our open spaces.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Support Green Social Prescribing initiatives such as community gardening, use of allotments and conservation volunteering.
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Priority/Outcomes 6. Recreation

- Physical inactivity is a growing problem which is thought to be at the route of many common health problems including obesity and heart disease and is a major concern for general health and wellbeing. There is a growing need to reverse the trend of increasing inactivity in order to improve the health of residents and reduce costs for the National Health Service
- GI provides a diverse range of opportunities for activity including, walking, cycling and gardening. In addition, recreation within green spaces has been shown to be more beneficial than equivalent exercise indoors as a consequence of the body's positive response to natural places.
- Not all green spaces will be able to accommodate the full range of activities whilst some activities, for example cycling and play areas for small children, may conflict. The challenge will be to maximise the range of activities that can be provided by each green space without damaging the sites' features or detracting from the quality of experience.
- Education material and supported activities such as guided walks, cycle routes, green gyms or Park Runs, may be helpful in encouraging more people to become more active.

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>There has been an increase in the number, and the diversity, of people taking regular exercise. A range of opportunities for physical exercise within green space is available and meets the needs of all members of society, 'something for everyone'. Health problems related to inactivity are declining in prevalence.</p>	<p>Residents have access to a variety of green space, close to their homes, which provides opportunities for a wide range of recreation activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement our Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Work with partners to implement the We Can Be Active Strategy by promoting our parks and green spaces as facilitators to being active and connecting with nature. Maintain green spaces so that residents and visitors feel safe and keen to use them, making sure they contain well-maintained infrastructure (ie. seating/ way markers, interpretation signs). Ensure that the Local Plan affords appropriate protection to public open space and sets out requirements to secure more open space and green infrastructure. Work with universities to gain a better understanding of recreational use of the city's greenspaces. Develop a programme of activities across the seasons, such as guided walk and volunteering opportunities. Develop material, accessible through mobile phone apps, that provides people with information about the facilities available and the wildlife they can expect find at different greenspaces. Provide a map of walks, footpaths and cycle routes across the city to signpost people to greenspaces.

Priority/Outcomes 7. Social Cohesion

- Access to good quality green space can play a significant role in community cohesion which is closely linked to health and quality of life benefits for individuals.
- The presence of green space has been shown to draw people outside which provides opportunities for social interaction and helps to break-down barriers. This can be especially helpful when trying to tackle mental health problems. Improved access to green space can be particularly helpful for groups such as seniors, children, ethnic minorities and Disabled People which tend to experience higher levels of social exclusion.
- The presence of community 'Friends of' groups provide people with an opportunity to come together to share a common interest. Events and activities such as guided walks organised by community groups can encourage people to be more active whilst conservation projects result in positive improvements to the local environment and generate a sense of achievement.
- Higher levels of social interaction is thought to be the reason why good quality green space has been found to reduce crime and violence levels.

Outcome/focus	What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve this?
<p>There is an increase in the number and range of park centred community activities providing opportunities for all residents to get involved.</p> <p>There is an increase in residents' feeling of safety when visiting their local park. There is a reduction in crime levels within communities surrounding parks.</p>	<p>Sufficient good quality, safe green space which provides opportunities for residents to meet their neighbours and engage in community projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify tasks that are suitable for community conservation projects. ▪ Provide training and support to enable communities to undertake practical action. ▪ Work with communities to identify their aspirations for potential new and existing local green spaces and the barriers to achieving those aspirations (ie. trialling parklets). ▪ Provide support to communities that either run or would like to set up 'Friends of' groups. ▪ Help 'Friends of' groups to develop information packs about their local green space for dissemination to the local community. ▪ Work with community groups to improve their connection to local green space and tackle issues of antisocial and damaging behaviours. ▪ Explore opportunities of co-location of community services (such as temporary medical screening facilities) that can help raise awareness of greenspaces, encouraging use and sense of safety.

What do our residents say?

- Consultation with residents and city users over their thoughts on existing GI in the city (Green Grid consultation, 2022) resulted in one of the most well responded to consultations that the council has ever run, with over 2,500 responses.
- The most important priorities in local areas and the city centre are parks, open spaces, nature and conservation, and better access to the coast/shoreline. Concern about the environment and climate change were cited as the most important challenges faced by the city (City Vision 2020).
- 98% of consultation responses stated people would like more nature and wildlife in the city.
- 84% of respondents said they enhance their outside space for wildlife, the majority of people do this by planting wildlife friendly plants, having a pond and not mowing to encourage insects, hedgehogs and birds.
- The majority of the city's residents who responded said they are involved in improving the city's wildlife, with just 18% of respondents not taking any action.
- 89% of respondents feel that using locally native species for planting is important for encouraging wildlife and improving habitats, and that plants and trees used in landscaping, should be chosen to be of benefit to wildlife.
- 91% of respondents say that street tree planting improves the character of an area.
- Nearly half of respondents mentioned the Common as being their favourite green space in the city due to its close proximity to where they live and being able to walk there. Riverside Park was cited as the next most visited green space. St James Park received overwhelming positive comments (85% of respondents said they felt positive about this park). Mayflower Park received the largest number of negative comments.
- 91% of respondents said they would like to see more green spaces in the city and that they would like the green spaces to be better maintained, providing better access but also better facilities (such as seating, toilets, interpretation signs, way markers) and more information to be available to advertise those spaces and how to get to them, especially the smaller ones.
- Asked about what would encourage people to make use of their green space more, the majority of respondents cited more wildlife, peace and tranquillity, biodiversity and better management.
- People feel that as a city near to the sea, access to the waterfront should be improved, particularly on the west side of the city. People said they felt the rivers and coast were almost "ignored".
- Many people have concerns about safety and lack of any apparent management of green spaces, resulting in them feeling run down, neglected and therefore more prone to vandalism.

Delivering our strategy

GI needs to be provided across the city. However, to ensure it is resilient, it needs to form a network. A network of the key GI in the city has been identified through work with Geodata; this network is called the Green Grid. The Green Grid pulls together delivery of all the priorities listed in this strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy; it comprises our most important GI and biodiversity sites, our key recreational network and our key connections. A set of Ward-level maps will be produced to detail where existing GI is located and where new GI is needed to form the network. These maps, together with a GI Delivery Plan, will provide further detail on delivery of GI in terms of the “how, what, where and when”.

- The aims and objectives of the Local Plan, along with other council strategies, including the Greenspace Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy, will all align. This will ensure that Council efforts are consistent and joined up.
- Irrespective of what portfolio the land falls within, and who is the landowner (ie. education, housing, corporate), we will ensure the Council’s land management practices are consistent, well designed and contribute towards building a network of good quality, linked GI across the city.
- Development design, including green and blue infrastructure, will be guided by the Local Plan and the Green Grid map and will adopt the Public Realm and Green Space Factor toolkits, delivering green and blue areas and providing links. GI delivered by the planning process will align with guidance such as Natural England’s GI Framework Standards and Building with Nature Standards. This would ensure a consistent approach and high standards. BNG delivery will be key in providing the right GI in the right areas.
- Working with neighbouring LPA’s, we will protect and enhance green links between Southampton, Eastleigh, the New Forest and Test Valley
- Partners will include Southampton National Park City, Southampton Common and Parks Protection Society, Southampton Natural History Society, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, SO18 Big Local, Pollinating Peartree, Sholing Valley Study Centre Association, Green Volunteer Network, Friends of Groups, Natural England, adjoining Local Planning Authorities, Environment Agency, local communities, schools and the commercial sector.
- We will produce Ward-level maps to show where GI is needed to “fill in the gaps” and a delivery plan detailing how and when that will be achieved. These maps, together with GI Delivery Plan, will be developed in partnership with the community to ensure residents are fully engaged in the process and therefore have a sense of ownership.
- Working collaboratively, we will reduce unnecessary reliance on resources such as water, chemicals or machinery where possible. We will reduce our CO2 emissions (becoming net zero in 2035) and embed a culture of “sustainability” in all council actions across all of our service areas and within our procurement process, including the choice of contractors we employ.

How will we measure success?

The GI Strategy is linked with other strategies which contain information on specific targets and how success will be measured. In addition to those targets, we will also:

- Increase the amount of land designated as Local Nature Reserve (LNR), aiming to meet the Natural England ANGSt target of at least one hectare of LNR per 1,000 people.
- Increase the number of parks with Green Flag status.
- Increase and measure the level GI, such as tree cover, in the city.
- Ensure no net loss in GI and deliver no less than 10% BNG for all relevant development, secured via the planning system, delivered within the city.
- Improve the condition of our semi-natural habitat and aim for “favourable conservation status” for all of our designated sites.
- Increase the amount of land designated as SINC.
- Set clear targets within our updated BAP to monitor the health of biodiversity.

This GI Strategy, together with our closely aligned Biodiversity Strategy and the work to develop the Green Grid, will contribute to an overall improvement in the health of the city. We anticipate that making our city greener, more connected and attractive, and therefore a healthier place to live and work, will also result in economic benefits for Southampton.

END OF REPORT

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Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Southampton City Council Green Infrastructure Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>The Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy are Southampton City Council’s response to the climate emergency and provide the framework to address the council’s statutory duty to halt the decline of biodiversity, protect and re-connect habitats, conserve, restore and enhance species populations and deliver connected GI in a response to the challenges posed by both climate change and the increase in the city’s population.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Strategy and GI Strategy explain the importance of habitats and GI, the principles for achieving no net loss of habitat and retain and enhance biodiversity, what needs to be considered to achieve those goals and provides the framework for how the council can meet its enhanced statutory duty under the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.</p> <p>Accompanying each strategy will be a Delivery Plan; the aim will be that Strategies and Delivery Plans will be adopted in 2024. The Delivery Plans will provide more detail about specific targets we want to achieve and will assign actions for lead officers or teams. The Delivery Plans will be reviewed on an annual basis and the strategies will be reviewed every three years.</p> <p>Our world is warming causing more extreme weather events and sea level rise. The scientific consensus is that human induced climate change has already started. The further warming of the atmosphere threatens our planet including our natural environment, but also human health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The consequences include increased flooding, more frequent and severe heat waves, water scarcity, more pollution, and loss of biodiversity. There will be a detrimental impact on people’s lives, including to their health, and damage to homes and businesses. Climate change is already having an impact, with parts of the UK</p>	

reaching over 40oC in July 2022, the UK’s hottest year on record.

Southampton is a bustling multi-cultural city with a growing prosperous economy and population. With continually evolving attractive investment opportunities bringing more people and businesses into the region, it is essential that social, economic, and environmental sustainability (sustainable development) is not lost for the sake of economic growth; a city lacking green infrastructure and healthy ecosystems is not sustainable or climate change adaptable, in turn, risking future economic growth

Summary of Impact and Issues

The GI Strategy seeks to optimise the full range of benefits that our natural assets can offer. This includes offering outdoor amenity space, safe and attractive routes for travel, local flood management, improving local air quality, capturing carbon and providing habitat to support wildlife. The Biodiversity Strategy compliments the GI Strategy by identifying a wider range of opportunities that will specifically support wildlife. The current versions of the strategies have been developed following a thorough process of internal and external engagement to ensure our approach remains ambitious whilst also being achievable in scale and scope, striking the right balance for SCC and those service areas who have a more direct responsibility for delivering the actions needed to implement both strategies.

The costs and impacts of a failure to do anything in the face of climate change will be significant, and the primary roles of the strategies are to help mitigate these impacts by taking action. There will be many positive co-benefits from the strategies such as better air quality, flood alleviation, improved wellbeing, improved habitats and species diversity/populations and a city more adapted to climate change.

The strategies will affect the way that most council services operate, given the wide-ranging services which may be affected by loss and degradation of habitat, declines in species diversity and numbers, loss of GI and challenges faced by a changing climate. There may be impacts on the way people need to behave, so more inclusive participation is imperative. There will also be changes to planning and city infrastructure and technologies and any impacts of these on different groups of people.

Although these are high-level strategies, individual projects arising from the strategies may have unintended consequences. We have tried to future proof the strategies by being mindful of what these impacts may be however, individual projects which will be outlined in the Delivery Plans, may also require an assessment of impacts.

Potential Impacts

The implementation of the strategies will have many environmental, social, and economic benefits such as equity and social cohesion, health and wellbeing, resilience, and citizen engagement. In the absence of a GI and Biodiversity Strategy or, where there is a delay in their introduction, the council will be unable to demonstrate how it intends to deliver its obligations under the strengthened Biodiversity Duty in the Environment Act 2021 or the goals set out in the Corporate Plan or the Green City Plan. Penalties for failing to deliver statutory duties are currently unclear, however, there is a risk of reputational damage in addition to incurring higher future costs in adapting to the impacts of climate change and coping with loss of GI and continued loss and degradation of habitats and wildlife.

Responsible

Ian Collins

Service Manager	
Date	24 th November 2023
Approved by Senior Manager	Adam Wilkinson
Date	24 th November 2023

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	No negative impact identified. Improved GI and biodiversity will make the city more resilient to the effects of climate and improve the health, wellbeing and prosperity of Southampton for everyone.	
Disability	No negative impact identified. Improvements to increase access and use of our green spaces will be beneficial for everyone, including those with mental and physical disabilities.	
Gender Reassignment	No impact identified.	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact identified.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	No impact identified.	
Race	No negative impact identified.	
Religion or Belief	No negative impact identified.	
Sex	No impact identified.	
Sexual Orientation	No impact identified.	
Community Safety	No negative impact identified. With improved access and better infrastructure within our green spaces, they will more widely used and in turn become safer places for all to visit.	
Poverty	No impact identified.	



Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
<p>Health & Wellbeing</p>	<p>No negative impact identified.</p> <p>Improvements in public health will be delivered as our green spaces become will become more accessible. People’s relationships with green space will increase and in turn, deliver benefits to physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>We will work more closely with Health colleagues to ensure strategies which enhance health and wellbeing, through improving opportunities for exercise and contact with nature, improving air quality and improving green spaces for mental and physical wellbeing, align.</p>	
<p>Other Significant Impacts</p>	<p>Tourism - improvements to and promotion of our green spaces will put these spaces “on the map” and encourage everyone to visit who may currently not do so.</p>	

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET COUNCIL
SUBJECT:	ENERGY PROCUREMENT CONTRACT
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JANUARY 2024 21 FEBRUARY 2024
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR BOGLE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	PLACE	
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
NOT APPLICABLE	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
Southampton City Council (Council) procured £14.8M of electricity and gas covering its corporate and housing assets, in 2022/23.	
The current council electricity and gas contracts are procured via the Laser Energy Procurement Framework and will expire on 30th September 2024.	
This paper proposes to continue the procurement of electricity and gas through Laser from October 2024, using their OJEU compliant framework.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
(i)	To approve the procurement of the council's energy needs via the Laser Energy Procurement Framework 2024 through to September 2028, and
(ii)	To give delegated approval to the Executive Director of Place following consultation with the Executive Director Corporate Services (S151) to undertake the following recommendations:
(iii)	To enter into appropriate Customer Access Agreements through the Laser Framework for the supply of electricity, gas, and ancillary services.
(iv)	To procure and award a call off contract under a Laser framework agreement for the Council's (including partners) gas and electricity supplies for a term of up to four years for the period 2024-2028.
(v)	To approve the in-contract purchasing options and additional ancillary services under the Laser Framework.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To ensure all gas and electricity supplies are covered by a contracted price to guarantee the Council does not pay significantly higher 'out of contract' rates and manages ongoing cost risks.
2.	Ensure that the Council procures its gas and electricity needs in a compliant, best practice and cost-efficient manner.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
3.	The option to undertake an open tender process was considered and rejected.
4.	A separate open tender process was ruled out as procuring this requirement alone would not result in the reduced cost risk achieved via the economies of scale associated with the Laser framework. There would also be an additional cost from procuring a broker to leverage the market on the Council's behalf. This option would not have resulted in a value for money solution over the term of the next contract and the associated procurement exercise would have been time-consuming and costly.
5.	In addition, it is proposed the Council portfolio and/or consumption profiles will change over the next 4-year contract period. Particularly when considering the council's aspirations to decarbonise its corporate assets. The Laser contracts will protect the Council from financial penalties associated with these changes, which a standard open tender would not, without a cost risk.
6.	The Council will gain a greater benefit from an established framework; this enables it to use the additional purchasing power of joining with a cohort of similar organisations. This approach will allow the Council to achieve the most favourable pricing available for its gas and electricity requirements, even through a period of change.
7.	There are a number of frameworks available which broadly meet the Council's requirements; these have been reviewed as part of the process. The Laser Framework has been assessed as it provides the best value available by utilising units bought at a competitive pricing point, greater flexibility, closest alignment to the Council's objectives, along with reduced administration that would come from using the same suppliers and support provided by Laser. It also provides a strong future option for the Council to explore "Green" baskets or flexibility contracts as part of the Green City and Cost Reduction Programmes. Therefore, it is proposed the Council should purchase gas and electricity for its housing and corporate assets under the Laser framework.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
8.	<p>Southampton City Council (SCC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procures all the Council's gas and electricity via the Kent County Council's Energy Buying Group (Laser) as part of a 2020-2024 Flexible Energy Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) compliant Framework. • Is supplied by Npower and TotalEnergies under the Framework, supplying the Councils electricity and gas needs, respectively.
9.	During the past 3 years there have been huge fluctuations in wholesale energy prices. With historical market lows during the main Covid 19 lockdown periods of the pandemic, to the highest ever prices recorded in subsequent months and years. Prices have recently levelled off, though at higher than previous baselines.

10.	At times, the wholesale market gas prices have been over 500% higher than pre-pandemic levels. Due to the SCC procurement strategy, SCC have been protected from the worst of the increases. The Council has seen, and will continue to see, higher than pre-pandemic energy prices for the foreseeable future. Figures 1 and 2 below show the affect of the energy market volatility since winter 2020.
11.	This paper provides the rationale for re-procuring all the Council's gas and electricity contracts via the Laser Energy Procurement Framework.
12.	There is also an overview of the Laser framework and associated benefits along with current Council's management of the energy accounts within the appendix.
13.	<p>Over the past framework period Laser has proven to perform better than average based on the market conditions for the Purchase in advance (PIA) basket. Both portfolios (housing and corporate) achieved costs were significantly lower than average market rates. See figures 1 & 2 below.</p> <p>Figure 1 – Laser Electricity Purchase in Advance (PIA) basket performcne.</p>  <p>Figure 2 – Laser Gas Purchase in Advance (PIA) basket performcne.</p> 
14.	Consultation has been undertaken with associated SCC staff (including legal, procurement, senior managers) and Councillors.

15.	<p>The contracts will be separated between Housing and Corporate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing will include all gas and electricity supplies for council owned landlord related supplies, for example tower block lighting and landlord heating. • Corporate will include all non-domestic buildings and assets such as the Civic Centre, schools, depots, and street lighting.
16.	<p>Energy related invoicing has been centralised and is managed electronically by the Energy Team. This has significantly reduced administration of the contract, which consists of over 2,300 energy meters. Most of which are billed monthly.</p>
17.	<p>The Energy Team delivers the energy managed service, including all leisure centres under the Active Nation contract and schools. This service includes centralised payment, bill validation, contract management, management of billing and existing metering queries. It involves ensuring costs are managed and savings identified as part of the service. On the corporate energy contract alone, this service has identified and delivered £400K of savings to the corporate gas and electricity contract since 2021. These savings do not include those achieved from centralising the payment of invoices and validation process. On the corporate energy contract only, this will be offset by approximately 0.6% fees, which the council levies to energy costs to cover the added value energy managed services delivered as part of the contract management¹.</p>
18.	<p>The proposed contracts will enable flexibility to reduce purchased energy volumes significantly. One of the most effective means of reducing carbon emissions is to reduce grid imported energy consumption significantly (through investment in energy efficiency projects and/or self-supply from on-site or local renewable energy installations). Many energy supply contracts contain punitive terms ('take or pay clauses') which penalise customers for significant reductions in purchased volumes (typically more than 10% volume variation). Due to the flexible procurement strategies employed by Laser, their large portfolio and longer-term supply periods, it can absorb variances in volumes and in doing so critically provide the flexibility for the customer to reduce its purchased consumption significantly. This is a major benefit of the Laser contract over alternative arrangements, paving the way for decisive action on energy and carbon reduction.</p>
19.	<p>Energy market price volatility has increased since January 2021. This has pushed gas and electricity prices to an all-time high and will continue to have a bearing on the prices secured from 1st October 2024. Energy is sold in the market like any other commodity, which means the Council are at the mercy of the price at the time of entering the market. That is why the flexible procurement route has been advised by central government and always proved to be the least risky and most beneficial purchasing strategy for the Council.</p>
20.	<p>The Council will gain a greater benefit from an established Framework (like Laser) which it can call off from as part of a commitment cohort with similar organisations.</p>
21.	<p>Within the contracts there are several different purchasing options which balance cost against risk.</p>

¹ This includes monitoring of energy consumption for reduction purposes, electronic invoice payment & management, price checking and validation, along with energy procurement, contract, and query management.

22.	It is proposed the 'Purchase in Advance' (PIA) option (basket) is retained. This means all energy is purchased at intervals prior to the fixed pricing start date, which is historically October 1st each year. This gives a fixed price electricity and gas price certainty over a twelve-month period.
23.	It is also proposed to move the annual (12 monthly) fixed price period, charged on our electricity and gas unit rates from October to September, to April to March; however, the timing of this change needs to consider the best time based on market volatility and winter pricing. Now a fixed energy price is provided from October for twelve months (under PIA). But its proposed moving forward the fixed price will be set over a financial year (April to March) as requested by schools and finance during a consultation process. It is planned the fixed price periods are moved to April to March to align with the Councils financial year to ease reporting and budgeting. This will only be undertaken if cost risks are low, which they have not been to date due to market volatility. The recommended approach is to stay in October PIA and then the Council can assess with Laser /market over the course of the framework to pick the best time to make the move. Rather than having to battle the contractual and operational move at the same time and increase winter pricing costs significantly during the first 6 months of the change.
24.	There is also the option to procure competitively priced ancillary services under the framework, such as metering, data, and wider energy services. The Council will utilise these services if it is cost effective to do so. Historically metering and data has been procured via these arrangements. However, these will be procured separately if there are better value alternatives.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Revenue

25.	Electricity and gas costs have risen from £9M per annum in 2019-20 up to the current £14.79M in 2022/23, even though the Council's consumption has dropped over the same period.										
26.	<p>Total costs of energy in financial year 2022-23 is shown in Table 1 below.</p> <p>Table 1 – Total Council gas and electricity costs 2022-23</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Actuals- 2022/23</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>£M</td> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Corporate (including streetlighting & schools)</td> <td>7.27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Housing</td> <td>7.52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>14.79</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Actuals- 2022/23		£M	Corporate (including streetlighting & schools)	7.27	Housing	7.52	Total	14.79
	Actuals- 2022/23										
	£M										
Corporate (including streetlighting & schools)	7.27										
Housing	7.52										
Total	14.79										
27.	Energy is treated like other commodities, with all gas and electricity being procured via the wholesale energy market. The fixed and regulated costs are then added to the wholesale energy price achieved, which makes up the total energy cost.										
28.	Market assessment from Cornwall Insights, the most widely used energy analysts, and Laser estimate that energy costs are likely to stay at, or close to, current levels until 2030. Therefore, the Council needs to ensure that all efforts are made to reduce consumption and spread the risks with an effective flexible procurement strategy.										

29.	Based on market conditions and aggregated purchasing benefits on the Laser Framework over the current contract period, it is estimated Laser has enabled the Council to avoid costs of £2.1M per annum.
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Property/Resources

30.	All Council assets and operations require energy to operate, and it is importance to ensure that sites, assets, and meters are covered under an energy supply contract. Out of contract rates can be over double the costs of in contract rates.
31.	The daily operation of Council corporate and housing energy contracts is undertaken by resources based in the Asset Management Service Area, within the Energy Team. This daily management is spread across 4 FTEs, with 2 FTEs currently vacant, which has reduced the opportunity to deliver further savings on the contract.
32.	Based on current consumption, under the new framework, LASER's procurement only management and purchasing fees would be approximately £120k (0.8% of total costs) per annum (subject to CPI increases).

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

33.	S.1 Localism Act 2011. There is a requirement in both the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 regulations (PCR) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) for the Council to run a competitive tender when procuring the supply of energy.
34.	This competitive tender has been undertaken by Laser (the Central Purchasing Body) in setting up their Energy Procurement and Supply framework and because in their OJEU advert, they indicated that Southampton City Council would be a buyer or within a class of buyers indicated, that satisfies both the requirements of the PCR and the CPR.
35.	Therefore, the regulatory requirements on the Council to tender for the energy supply have been complied with. The conditions to the use of the Laser procured energy contracts are being met.

Other Legal Implications:

36.	N/A
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RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

37.	<p>Risk has been identified as high in relation to Financial and Green City Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Failure to enter gas and electricity supply contracts runs the risk of facing out of contract pricing, which can attract premiums of more than 100%. ii. The energy market has seen significant rises in gas and electricity wholesale prices on both the spot and forward purchasing market. At the time of writing, market prices for gas and electricity continue to be high and this is going to affect the price of energy supplied to SCC from October 2024. A purchasing strategy is being assessed for the year ahead from October 2024, which will hopefully reduce the impact on the Council. Now it is impossible to quantify any increase or decrease, as these will be market driven and based on the buying window prices. iii. Locking into certain energy contracts can also penalise future energy reductions or shifting energy consumption, making them uneconomical and effectively blocking significant potential future cost and carbon
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	reduction activities. Laser contracts have been chosen as they do not carry this cost risk. iv. Furthermore, failure to enter flexible supply contracts in advance, minimises the window for forward buying. This buying window needs to start by end of March 2024.
38.	Not building capacity in our contract to; adopt green tariffs; enter direct purchase of renewables or be penalised for reducing consumption would undermine our Green City Action Plan and efforts to be a net zero organisation by 2030. Laser Framework Contracts provide this certainty.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
39.	The procurement strategy and buying option for energy outlined here will support and deliver council outcomes in the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate plan 2020 -2025: Green City and Wellbeing (improving the energy efficiency of school buildings) • Green City Plan 2030 - to ensure the council corporate assets and streetlighting become zero carbon by 2030. The corporate assets cover all non-domestic buildings including SCC schools and streetlighting.

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	ALL
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Background & Benefits of Kent Laser

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None.
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impa Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	
2.	

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Appendix 1 – Background & Benefits of Laser

Who is Laser?

Laser acts like a 'buying club' whereby the council joins together with other public sector bodies and the tender of prices on the energy market takes place based on energy and water supplies worth £1.5 Billion per annum (approximately 2% of the UK's non-domestic energy demand) rather than with just the Council's £15M. The approach is compliant with procurement regulations (PCR15). LASER provides the aggregated, flexible, and risk-managed approach recommended by Government, and expertise in energy-buying for the public sector.

The LASER framework contracts have been awarded to NPower for electricity and Total Gas and Power for gas. These are the Councils current energy suppliers and would provide continuity across the contracts.

LASER uses a governance process managed by representatives from its members from London Boroughs, County, and unitary authorities. The governance panel helps to set buying strategy and provides an audited record of each buying decision.

LASER currently procures energy for over 200 public organisations including 130 local authorities, representing over £1.5 Billion of energy and water contracts every year. It has completed the procurement to appoint the energy providers for the period October 2024 to September 2028.

Why the council procure from LASER?

The council has procured its electricity and gas supplies in this way since 2009. This provision of energy and procurement services by LASER in the current 2016-2021 contract was previously independently benchmarked and shown to be best value.

The aggregation of energy demand from the contracted public authorities within the Laser buying group is attractive to the energy market and promotes the lowest 'cost to serve'.

The LASER contract provides flexible procurement which means rather than be tied to the cost of energy at the time of the tender return, LASER buy portions (clips) of energy at the most economical time during the rise and fall in the market. This approach is proven to take advantage of market variation to procure at the best price.

The electricity provided by NPower under the LASER framework will enable SCC to procure renewable electricity either via Complex Sites (Elexon P441) or direct from a large generator under a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).

It is proposed that the council does not procure Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificates to apportion our power consumed to renewable electricity.

There is not the business case and it is considered a 'nice to have' in the current financial situation.

Market liquidity (the availability of raw gas and electricity within the wholesale market) beyond the front 2-3 years is limited, therefore, a rolling two to three year buying window is sufficient to enable LASER to effectively manage price risk on a continuous basis.

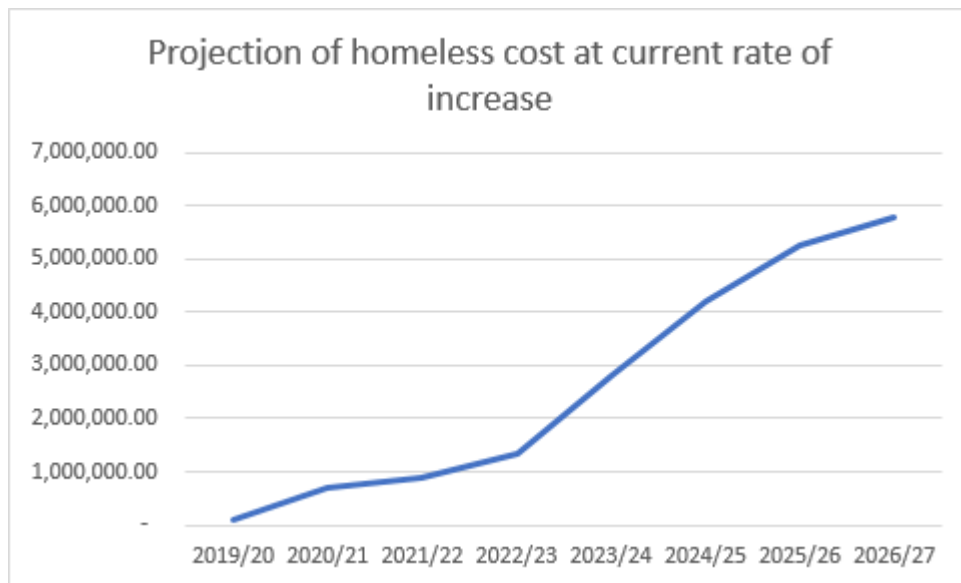
There are a number of procurement options within the LASER framework that will enable SCC to procure energy using the most effective buying option to suit each meter consumption profile. This will help smooth the risks associated with an extremely volatile energy market.

Approximately 50% of the electricity cost charged to the council comes from fixed and other non-raw energy related costs, which will continue to see significant changes over the coming years. By being part of a central purchasing body like LASER we can mitigate or reduce the risk of price increases, market volatility, and help to lessen the impact of the fixed pricing mechanisms more easily, leading to a lower delivered price.

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR OFFER POLICY		
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JANUARY 2024		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEATH AND HOUSING		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Jamie Brenchley	Tel: 023 8083 3687
	E-mail:	jamie.brenchley@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	Claire Edgar	Tel: 023 8083 3687
	E-mail:	claire.edgar@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
NOT APPLICABLE	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
The Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 set out the statutory responsibilities of Southampton City Council (the council) to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and are eligible for assistance.	
In Southampton, the demand for social housing outweighs the supply. Therefore, many homeless households are unable to access affordable housing within the social housing sector.	
This policy will enable the council to offer private rented sector accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. A Private Rented Sector Offer (PRSO) will assist in fulfilling the council's homelessness duties.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) To approve the Private Rented Sector Offer Policy.
	(ii) That, following consultation with the Cabinet Housing, the Executive Director of Wellbeing and Housing be given delegated authority to make minor and non-substantive amendments to the policy, as appropriate.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
3.	To enable the council to offer private rented sector accommodation to fulfil homelessness duties and help tackle homelessness.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
4.	To not implement the policy, and not be able to offer private rented sector accommodation to fulfil homelessness duties.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
5.	The rate of households assessed as homeless in Southampton is 10.4 per 1000 households in 2021/2022. This is significantly higher than the national average of 6.1 per 1000 households, and several comparators (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, 6.7; Liverpool, 4.8).

6.	<p>The council's statutory responsibilities to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness are set out in the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. If an individual is eligible, the council may owe a 'prevention duty,' 'relief duty' or 'main housing duty:'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Relief duty' (Section 189B of Housing Act 1996) with a six-month tenancy; a local housing authority has 56 days to take reasonable steps to help the applicant secure accommodation for at least 6 months. • 'Main housing duty' (Section 193 of Housing Act 1996) with a twelve-month tenancy: local housing authorities must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant until the duty is ended, through the offer of a settled home or another reason. • 'Prevention duty' (Section 195 of Housing Act 1996): a local housing authority must take reasonable steps to help someone threatened with homelessness to secure that accommodation does not cease to be available to them.
7.	<p>There are limited vacancies in social housing so, the council cannot always offer social housing to fulfil homelessness duties. There were 7,379 people on the waiting list for social housing in Southampton in March 2022, but only 1024 social houses were let in the same year.</p>
8.	<p>The council can offer private rented sector accommodation to eligible households to help prevent and relieve homelessness. This is known as a Private Rented Sector Offer (PRSO).</p>
9.	<p>The council will ensure that the property is suitable for the tenant, and consider the location, affordability, property size and standards and will comply with the technical legal requirements to ensure any offer is a valid PRSO.</p>
10.	<p>Those eligible for assistance may be provided with the option of private rented sector accommodation to discharge a relief duty. If the accommodation is a 12 month tenancy, appropriate and suitable, but the applicant refuses the offer, then no further accommodation offer will be made. This will preclude the applicant from being owed a main duty.</p>
11.	<p>A public consultation ran from 21 September 2023 to 1 November 2023. The consultation was promoted through the council's website and social media. There was a total of 41 responses received. 68% of the respondents agreed with the council offering private rented sector accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.</p>
<p>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</p>	
<p><u>Capital/Revenue</u></p>	
12.	<p>There are current budget pressures on the council. The Cash Limited Budget plan for the Wellbeing and Housing Directorate is £95.11M in 2023/24, £87.65M in 2024/25, £92.13M in 2025/26 and £86.98M in 2026/27. The budget for homelessness provision sits within this cash limited budget.</p>
13.	<p>If the rate of increase in Temporary Accommodation cost seen between 2022/23 and 2023/24 continues into 2024/25 and beyond, with no interventions and assuming the cost of accommodation does not significantly change, simplistically, the trajectory of cost increase would look like this:</p>



When the local authority places a household in emergency accommodation, the authority is invoiced by the accommodation provider for the placement. The authority can claim a subsidy level which is equivalent to the 2011 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) one bedroom rate for shared/nonshared accommodation where households are eligible for housing benefit this will covers the accommodation cost element. This is based on the subsidy level which is equivalent to the 2011 LHA one bedroom rate for shared/non shared accommodation which for Southampton is £121.15 per week regardless of the size of the household. However, the variance between the LHA and B&B cost and private rentals has widened considerably over the last 18 months. This accounts for £1.7m of the total cost of temporary accommodation. It is envisaged by having this policy in place it will assist the authority to be able to end our homelessness duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 through a private rented sector offer, which will assist in reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation. However, this will be subject to availability of properties in the private rented sector.

14.	The cost of providing temporary accommodation is split between the General Fund and provision made within the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG). Spend on temporary accommodation is currently forecast at £2.8M, of which, after application of HPG, the cost to the General Fund is forecast at £1.6M. The council is currently overspending on the provision of temporary accommodation in order to meet its statutory duties, and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) currently records an ongoing overall pressure above budget of £1.2M. This is as a result of cost increases in temporary accommodation, and increased demand for the service.
15.	If the council can provide accommodation in the privately rented sector, with a robust policy to support, pressure on the provision of temporary accommodation would reduce with subsequent cost avoidance. It is not possible to quantify at this stage likely impact as it is dependent on a significant number of variables, however the effectiveness of the policy will need to be monitored and reported through the year.
16.	The policy will create savings if we are able to secure long term private rented sector properties for households that are under a main housing duty, but is subject to the supply and demand of the housing market. Without the

	policy, households under a main housing duty would have to wait for a social housing property and with over 8000 households currently on the Housing Register this can take a considerable amount of time.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
17.	The policy expands the housing options that the council can use to discharge homelessness duties. Private rented accommodation provides more options for people to move into, therefore, reducing the time spent in, and money spent on temporary accommodation. This will also reduce the demand on social housing.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
18.	The council will use the powers granted to local authorities by the Localism Act 2011 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to provide private rented accommodation to fulfil homelessness duties and prevent or relieve homelessness.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
19.	The consultation and design of the proposed policy, as well as the Equality Safety Impact Assessment, has been undertaken having regard to the requirement of the Equality Act 2010, in particular s.149 of the Public Sector Equality Duty (“PSED”).
20.	There are technical legal requirements to make a valid PRSO which mean that any errors cannot be rectified upon review.
21.	If the new Renters Reform Bill becomes an Act before the policy is reviewed in one year, then this policy will need to be updated to reflect the changes. The Bill aims to change laws about rented homes, including abolishing fixed term assured tenancies and assured shorthold tenancies. Instead, the tenancy will be on a periodic basis so tenants will have the right to end the tenancy at any point by providing notice to the landlord. Landlords will only be able to bring possession action if the tenant has breached the terms of the tenancy.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
22.	As the demand for social housing outstrips the supply, homeless households are placed in temporary accommodation for long periods with limited move-on options. Therefore, the risk of not implementing this policy will result in the continued use of temporary accommodation. This can negatively impact the well-being of people in temporary accommodation and will be at a cost to the council.
23.	There may be a risk that the council is not able to secure private rented accommodation to meet the demand. This may extend the time people remain in temporary accommodation. The council will work with landlords in the private rented sector to find affordable and suitable accommodation quickly.
24.	This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer. However, it may be more challenging to find suitable accommodation for people with a disability within the private rented sector. Major adaptations may be required to make the potential offer of

	accommodation suitable and may delay the offer. It is more likely that major adaptations can be completed on a social rented property than on a private rented property as any adaptations require permission from the landlord/letting agent. The council will make sure that accommodation is suitable and meets the needs of households with a disability.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
25.	This policy is in line with the council's policies and strategies, including the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	ALL
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Appendix 1: Private Rented Sector Offer Policy
2.	Appendix 2: Equality and Safety Impact Assessment
3.	Appendix 3: Public Consultation Summary Report
4.	Appendix 4: Consideration of Feedback Table
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	None.
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	N/A

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Southampton City Council
Housing and Wellbeing
Private Rented Sector Offer Policy

Southampton City Council Housing & Wellbeing Private Rented Sector Offer Policy

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Suitability of Offer	5
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The Offer Process	8
Monitoring and Performance Management	9

Private Rented Sector Offer Policy			
Version	Version 1	Approved by	Jamie Brenchley
Date last amended	30/11/2023	Proposed Approval date	16/01/2024
Lead officer	Maria Byrne	Proposed Review date	16/01/2025
Contact	Maria.Byrne@southampton.gov.uk	Proposed Effective date	24/01/2024

Purpose

1. The Housing Act 1996 (as amended) sets out the statutory responsibilities of the Local Housing Authority to those that are eligible for assistance and are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
2. If the applicant is eligible, a council may owe the applicant a prevention, relief, or main housing duty (defined below) under the Housing Act 1996 and as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The local council is required to secure suitable accommodation for eligible applicants.
 - ‘Prevention duty’ (Section 195): a local housing authority must take reasonable steps to help someone threatened with homelessness to ensure secure accommodation does not cease to be available to them.
 - ‘Relief duty’ (Section 189B) with a six-month tenancy; a local housing authority has 56 days to take reasonable steps to help the applicant secure accommodation for at least 6 months.
 - ‘Main housing duty’ (Section 193) with a twelve-month tenancy: local housing authorities must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant until the duty is ended, through the offer of a settled home or another reason.
3. There is a higher demand for social housing in Southampton than there are available social homes. This means that not all homeless applicants can readily access affordable housing within the social housing sector. Therefore, the private rented sector has an important role to play in providing good quality accommodation and flexibility to meet household needs.
4. Using the powers granted to local authorities in the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the policy enables Southampton City Council (the council) to use private rented sector tenancies to fulfil duties under the Housing Act 1996.
5. The use of the private rented sector is an effective tool for the council to comply with the requirements set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The aims of this policy are to:
 - make the best use of good quality private sector accommodation;
 - use the private rented sector to discharge statutory duties owed;
 - widen the choice of housing solutions available to homeless applicants;
 - enable applicants to find appropriate housing quickly;
 - build positive relationships with private-sector landlords;
 - reduce reliance and pressure on temporary accommodation, including reducing B&B use;
 - ensure movement and relieve pressure on the Housing Register.

Scope

6. This policy applies to people who are threatened with homelessness or who are homeless and have applied to the council for housing support.

Legislative Context

7. The Localism Act 2011 provides for local housing authorities to fully discharge the main housing duty with a 'private rented sector offer'. Most recently, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 provides for local housing authorities to use private rented accommodation to prevent or relieve homelessness. The policy complies with:
 - Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
 - Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996;
 - Human Rights Act 1998;
 - Equality Act 2010;
 - Localism Act 2011;
 - Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012;
 - Homelessness (Review Procedure etc.) Regulations 2018;
 - Homelessness Code of Guidance, 2018.

Policy Commitments

Applicants eligible for a Private Rented Sector Offer

8. An offer of accommodation in the private rented sector is known as a Private Rented Sector Offer (PRSO).
9. We consider an offer of a private rented tenancy to be suitable for the majority of households who approach the council for housing assistance. This includes households who are about to become homeless and those who are already homeless and in temporary accommodation waiting for long-term accommodation to become available.
10. There are a few exceptions where the council may believe a household is not suitable for an offer of private rented accommodation, these would include:
 - those who require supported accommodation or are unlikely to be able to adequately sustain a private rented tenancy;
 - those who require significant disabled adaptations to the property which could not be met in the private rented sector.
11. If the council considers an available private rented sector property to be suitable for the needs of an applicant, a PRSO of that property is likely to be made. This supports the objectives of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which is to prevent and relieve homelessness.
12. In order for an offer to be a PRSO and therefore entitle an authority to discharge duty:
 - the offer must be made by a private landlord pursuant to arrangements between the private landlord and the local housing authority section 193(7AC)(a);
 - the offer must be approved by the local housing section 193(7AC)(b);
 - the tenancy must be for a period of at least 12 months section 193(7AC)(c);
 - the tenancy must be for a period of at least 12 months section 193(7AC)(c);
 - the local authority must be satisfied that the property is suitable, with reference to the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2012 section 193(7F);
 - the applicant must not be under any contractual obligations that he is unable to bring to an end before being required to take up the offer section 193(8).

PRSO

13. A private rented sector offer (PRSO) will be made under the following duties: 189B relief duty and Section 193 (2) main housing duty. The council can also use powers under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to use private rented accommodation to prevent homelessness and discharge its prevention duties.

14. **189B Relief duty**

14.1 An Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) allows a landlord to let out a property to a tenant while retaining the right to repossess the property at the end of the term of the tenancy. The landlord must give the tenant two months' notice before reoccupation. An Assured Tenancy enables a tenant to live in the property for life, under normal circumstances.

14.2 A relief duty may be ended if there is a final accommodation offer (section 193(6) and 193C (9)) of an AST or an Assured tenancy, where appropriate, for a minimum fixed term of 6 months if the applicant accepts or refuses the offer. The applicant must be informed of the possible consequences of acceptance or refusal and of their right to have a review of the suitability. In this case, if the applicant has been provided with this final accommodation offer, even if the applicant has a priority need, the main housing duty will not apply.

15. Section 193 (2) Main housing duty

15.1 A PRSO ([section 193\(7F\)](#)) of an AST for a minimum fixed term of 12 months may be made under the main housing duty.

15.2 The council may cease to be subject to the main housing duty if the applicant accepts or refuses a PRSO. The applicant must be informed of the possible consequences of acceptance or refusal, the right of review of suitability and the re-application duty.

16. A PRSO is made by and with the approval of the local authority. However, the landlord will have the final decision on whether households will be accepted into the property.

Suitability of Offer

17. The council will ensure that all properties in the private sector are suitable with reference to [Article 3 of the Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2012](#).

Location

18. The council, where reasonably practical, will seek to offer private rented sector accommodation within the area, except in the following circumstances:

- where the council considers it beneficial to move the applicant out of the area. For example, to reduce the risk of domestic abuse, other violence, or harassment, or to assist a person to break away from a detrimental situation, such as drug or alcohol abuse, or where support and specialist services are available outside of the city;
- when the applicant wishes to move away from Southampton, including where the applicant has found the accommodation themselves;

- where there is no suitable accommodation within the city;
- where it is not reasonably practicable to secure accommodation within the city within a reasonable time, having regard for the general housing conditions prevailing in the local area.

19. When making a PRSO, the council will consider the significance of any disruption caused by the location to employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household.

19.1 If the applicant (or their partner) is in employment (usually taken to be at least 16 hours per week), then the location must be within reasonable travel to the work area of that employment and have transport links frequent enough to enable this.

19.2 If the applicant is verified as the carer for another person, who cannot readily withdraw this care without serious detriment to the well-being of the other party, then the location will need to be of sufficient proximity to enable this, even if this may require public transport. Although sometimes inconvenient, it is not always unreasonable to rely on public transport.

19.3 If any members of the household are undertaking GCSEs at school (Years 10 & 11 – children aged 14 to 16), or other proven vital examinations, then they should not be required to change schools. Due to the limited availability of accommodation in the city, if it is practicable for children within this age group to travel to their existing school for the period of study, an offer not in the immediate vicinity of the existing school may be made if public transport is available.

20. When making a PRSO, the council will consider the proximity & accessibility to medical facilities & other support which are used by, or essential to the well-being, of the household.

20.1 If the applicant or any member of the household requires specialist medical treatment or support, which can only be provided in Southampton, then the location will need to be of sufficient proximity to enable this, although this may require public transport. We will also have regard to other medical treatment or support required by the applicant or any member of the household, and where health professionals consider that it will be significantly detrimental to change provider or location. Significantly means exceptional and not desirable by either the applicant or health professional.

21. When making a PRSO, the council will consider the proximity & accessibility to local services, amenities & transport.

21.1 Regardless of location, the council will seek to offer accommodation that is reasonably accessible to local services and amenities, especially for persons on low incomes, and those with a need to rely on public transport.

Affordability

22. The council will consider whether the applicant can afford the housing costs without being deprived of basic essentials such as food, clothing, heating, transport and other essentials specific to their circumstances. Housing costs should not be regarded as affordable if the applicant would be left with a residual income that is insufficient to meet these essential needs.
23. As part of our overall assessment, consideration will be given as to whether financial assistance is required in terms of deposit or rent in advance.
24. The council will ensure that any PRSO made is affordable for the tenant and their household based on the facts of their application.

Property Size and Standards

25. In considering whether a property is suitable, the council will make sure:
 - that the property is not overcrowded at the time of PRSO. The council will have regard for the household composition and the space in the accommodation, including the impact of any medical needs.
 - the property is in a reasonable physical condition, and free from any Category 1 hazards as defined by the Housing, Health, and Safety Rating system;
 - that the property meets the required gas safety regulations i.e., by having an up-to-date Gas Safety Certificate;
 - the property meets the electrical equipment regulations i.e., by having an up-to-date Electrical Safety Certificate;
 - that the property is appropriately licenced if the property is an HMO (house in multiple occupations);
 - that there are appropriate fire safety precautions, including a working smoke alarm;
 - a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is provided by the landlord, as all properties will require;
 - there is no evidence to suggest that the landlord of the property cannot be considered a 'fit and proper person' as defined by Section 66(2) of the Housing Act 2004.
26. The council will be satisfied that the landlord has provided a written tenancy agreement which is adequate for the purposes of a PRSO.
27. The council is required to assess whether accommodation is suitable for each household individually, and case records should demonstrate that they have taken the statutory requirements into account in securing the accommodation, including general duties such as the public sector equality duty.

Re-application after Two Years

28. If an eligible applicant has become unintentionally homeless within two years of accepting a PRSO to end the council's main housing duty, the council will owe them the duty (section 193) in accordance with the Housing Act.
29. The date from which the two years begins is the date of acceptance of the PRSO, not the date when the tenancy was granted or when the applicant moved in.

The Offer Process

30. The case officer will send a letter to the applicant before an offer is made by a landlord, setting out the following:
- the duty under which the offer is being made;
 - possible consequences of refusal or acceptance;
 - the right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation;
 - that the council is satisfied that the accommodation is suitable;
 - if the PRSO is under the main housing duty, the letter will provide information on the re-application duty.

Refusal of PRSO and reviews

31. Households will only be made one suitable offer of accommodation and the council will discharge its duty upon refusal.
32. Applicants will be advised of their right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation offered and the review will be carried out in accordance with the review regulations. Applicants can accept a PRSO offer, move in and request a review of the suitability of the accommodation.
33. Where the council concludes that the PRSO is suitable and the offer is for a 12-month tenancy, the council will consider its duty to be discharged and no further offer of accommodation will be made. Where the applicant accepted and moved into the property, this will remain available to them, but where a property has been refused and the review finds that the offer was suitable, no further offer of housing will be made, and the applicant will be responsible for securing their own housing.
34. Where an offer of accommodation is made under a prevention duty and the offer is refused, this will not affect any further duties that may be owed to the applicant. However, it may be the case that the same accommodation may then be offered to an applicant as a relief duty where this is appropriate and suitable. Where a final offer is made at the relief stage, and this is refused it will preclude the applicant from being owed the main duty.
35. Applicants can appeal to the County Court on a point of law should they remain dissatisfied with the review outcome.

Monitoring and Performance Management

36. The Housing team will review this policy annually to ensure it reflects the latest legislation and the latest examples of best practices.

[END]



Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Private Rented Sector Offer Policy
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>The council will use the powers granted to local authorities by the Localism Act 2011 (sections 148 and 149) and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to provide private rented accommodation to fulfil homelessness duties and prevent or relieve homelessness.</p> <p>Under Housing Act 1996 (HA96) and as amended (section 193), the council may owe a “main duty” to an eligible individual who is homeless. The Localism Act 2011 (sections 148 and 149) introduced provisions which enable the council to provide a suitable offer of a private rented sector tenancy to an individual experiencing homelessness, rather than a social housing tenancy. This offer of accommodation in the private rented sector will bring the council's statutory main housing duty to an end.</p> <p>Amendments under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 extend the powers in the HA96 to enable local authorities to use private sector accommodation to discharge its prevention stage and relief stage duties to homeless households and households threatened by homelessness. An offer of accommodation in the private rented sector to discharge homelessness duties is known as a Private Rented Sector Offer (PRSO). Southampton City Council will consider PRSOs to prevent or relieve homelessness in all cases.</p> <p>Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 details the suitability of privately rented accommodation offered to certain applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Private rented sector accommodation must meet the requirements of Article 3 if it is to be considered suitable when offered to end homelessness duties.</p>	

Summary of Impact and Issues

The policy will affect all households in Southampton City Council that are owed either a prevention duty, relief duty or a main housing duty (Section 193(2)).

In the year 2021/2022, 542 households were owed a prevention duty, 1,062 households were owed a relief duty and 92 households were owed the main housing duty.

There are some challenges with providing a PRSO. For example, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find a suitable and affordable option in the private rented sector. This is mostly due to the gap between rents and the local housing allowance rates in Southampton. Private rented accommodation is also more expensive than social housing, and social housing is typically seen as more secure and longer term.

However, the demand of social housing outweighs the supply. In March 2022, there were 7,379 households on the social housing waiting list which far exceeds the supply in the city. Therefore, this policy will enable the council to provide an alternative housing option for people who are homeless.

All eligible households who are owed a homelessness duty may be offered accommodation in the private rented sector. The PRSO does not discriminate against people with protected characteristics. Under Article 3 of the Homelessness Order (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012, the council must ensure that the private sector accommodation meets the suitability needs of each household. The policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a PRSO. However, there may be limited accommodation which meets the suitability needs of people with a disability. Therefore, people with a disability may be negatively impacted by this challenge to find suitable accommodation. The council will work to find suitable accommodation and if reasonable work with landlords to adapt properties to ensure that the needs of eligible households with a disability are met.

The council will aim to ensure that the household being offered a PRSO is clear about the offer and the consequences of accepting and rejecting the offer. This includes ensuring that there are a variety of accessible formats and languages of the PRSO if necessary.

The information below outlines the anticipated impacts of the policy on people with protected characteristics.

Potential Positive Impacts

There are some positive impacts which this policy anticipates, including an increase in health and wellbeing of the applicant and improved community safety. This is because this policy aims to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping and provide households with suitable stable accommodation.

Responsible Service Manager	Maria Byrne, Service Lead Housing Needs and Welfare
Date	28/11/2023
Approved by Senior Manager	Jamie Brenchley, Director of Housing
Date	28/11/2023

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	No negative impact of the policy is identified.	<p>The policy does not discriminate or disadvantage anyone due to their age.</p> <p>A household/person can approach homelessness services for help and guidance.</p> <p>Under Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012, the private sector accommodation used by the local authority to discharge homelessness duties is subject to an enhanced standard of suitability which will ensure that any offer made meets the needs of the household.</p>
Disability	There may be limited accommodation in the private rented sector which meets the suitability needs of people with disabilities.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer. However, it is accepted that for some cases it is more challenging to find suitable accommodation for people with a disability within the social housing sector. For example, there are some situations</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		<p>where the physical characteristics of a potential home are not suitable for somebody with a particular disability. Major adaptations may be required to make the potential offer of accommodation suitable and may delay the offer. It is more likely that major adaptations can be completed on a social rented property than on a privately rented property as any adaptations require permission from the landlord.</p> <p>The existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p> <p>The council will work to find suitable accommodation and if reasonable work with landlords to adapt properties to ensure that the needs of eligible households with a disability are met.</p>
Gender Reassignment	No negative impact identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>The existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		<p>from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No negative impact identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>The existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	No negative impact was identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>The existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Race	No negative impact was identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>The existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		(Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).
Religion or Belief	No negative impact identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>However, the existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Sex	No negative impact was identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>However, the existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Sexual Orientation	No negative impact was identified.	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>However, the existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		<p>accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Community Safety	<p>We anticipate a positive impact as this policy aims to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.</p>	<p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>However, the existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Poverty	<p>No negative impact identified.</p>	<p>All households approaching the council with a housing issue are given advice and information and according to their situation and the legislative framework may be assisted into accommodation.</p> <p>This policy does not exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>However, the existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Health &	<p>We anticipate a positive</p>	<p>This policy does not</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Wellbeing	impact as this policy aims to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.	<p>exclude any groups from being offered a Private Rented Sector Offer.</p> <p>The existing Homelessness legislation would prevent the council from making an unsuitable accommodation offer (Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012).</p>
Other Significant Impacts	Where applicants do not have English as a first language.	<p>Where applicants do not have English as a first language, it is important that decision notifications are offered in a variety of accessible formats and languages. This will be especially important where a Private Rented Sector Offer is being made and the applicant needs to carefully weigh up the consequences of accepting or refusing such an offer.</p> <p>The council will aim to provide a variety of accessible formats and languages of the Private Rented Sector Offer.</p>

Private rented sector offer policy consultation

Feedback report

Southampton City Council undertook a public consultation on draft proposals for a private rented sector policy offer in relation to homelessness. The new draft policy would enable the Council to offer private rented sector accommodation to those that are homeless or are threatened with homelessness, in lieu of accommodation in the social housing sector, for which demand outweighs supply in the city.

This consultation took place between **21/09/2023 – 01/11/2023** and received **41** responses.

The aim of this consultation was to:

- Clearly communicate the proposed draft policy to residents and stakeholders;
- Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder in Southampton that wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have, and;
- Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives of the policy in a different way.

This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.

It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.

Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard and which are meaningful and comply with the *Gunning Principles*, considered to be the legal standard for consultations:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made);
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow 'intelligent consideration';
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response, and;
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

1. **proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
2. **there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
3. **there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
4. **'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the 'Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²), which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, England and Wales Court of Appeal (Civil Decision) Decisions, Accessed: 13 December 2016.

³ BAILII, United Kingdom Supreme Court, Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute

The agreed approach for this consultation was to use an online questionnaire as the main route for feedback. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured way, helping to ensure respondents are aware of the background and detail of the proposals.

Respondents could also write letters or emails to provide feedback on the proposals. Emails or letters from stakeholders that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.

The consultation was promoted in the following ways by:

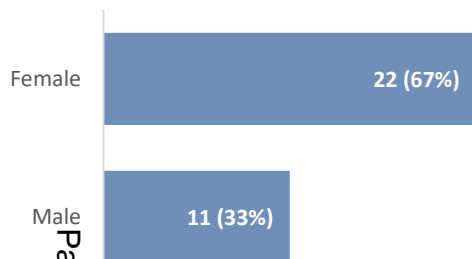
- Southampton City Council website
- Social media posts (including Facebook, LinkedIn, X/Twitter)
- Southampton City Council e-bulletins

All quantitative survey results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were also given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals.

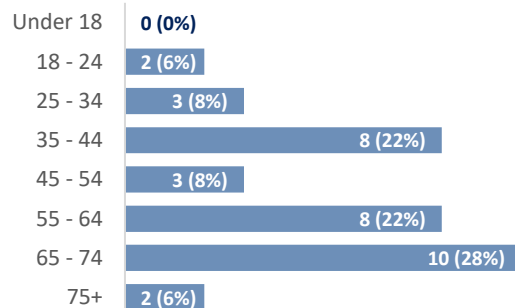
Total responses
 41 survey responses
 0 email responses
 41 total

Graphs on this page are labelled as count (percentage).

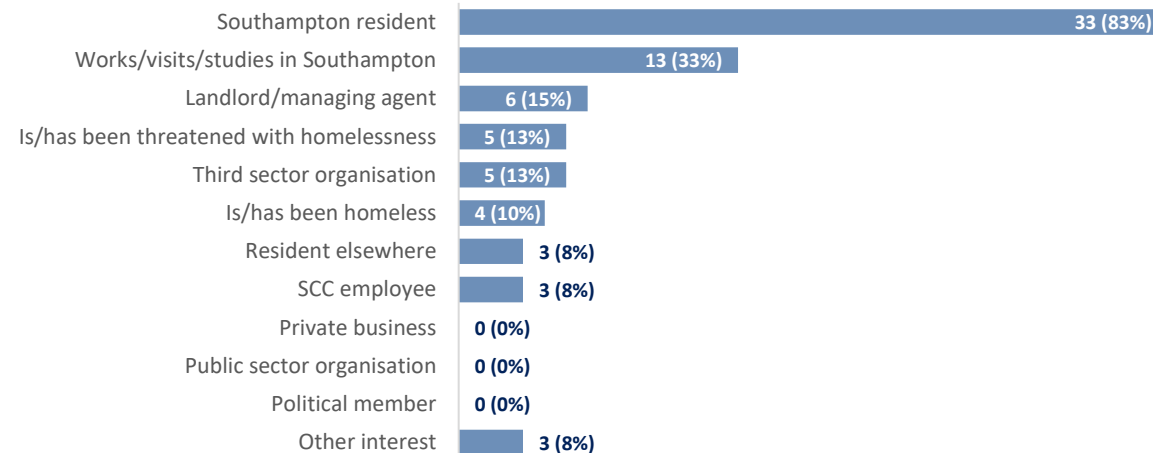
Sex



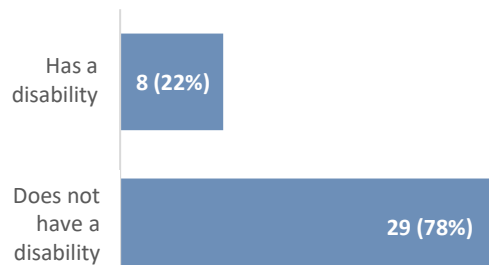
Age



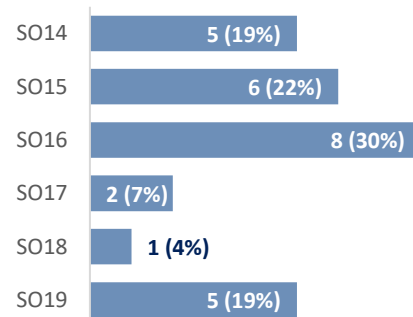
Interest in the consultation



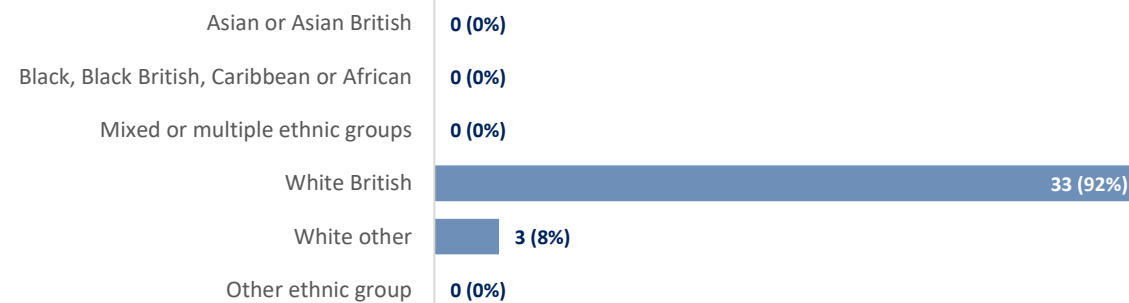
Disability



Postcode



Ethnicity



The proposed new policy



“If an individual is eligible, the Council has duties in relation to homelessness (under the Housing Act 1996, and as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017).

These duties include:

- If a household is **threatened by homelessness**, the Council must take reasonable steps to help someone ensure secure accommodation does not cease to be available to them. This is called a **prevention duty**.
- If a household is **unintentionally homeless**, the Council has 56 days to take reasonable steps to help the applicant secure accommodation for at least 6 months. This is called a **relief duty**.
- If a household is **unintentionally homeless and categorised as vulnerable**, they will have a priority need for emergency housing. If a household has not received secure accommodation within 56 days under the relief duty, and has a priority need, then the Council must provide temporary or permanent accommodation. This is called a **main housing duty**.

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In Southampton, the demand for social housing outweighs the supply. Therefore, many homeless households are unable to access affordable housing within the social housing sector.

Therefore, we have drafted a new policy which would enable the Council to instead offer private rented sector accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened by homelessness.”

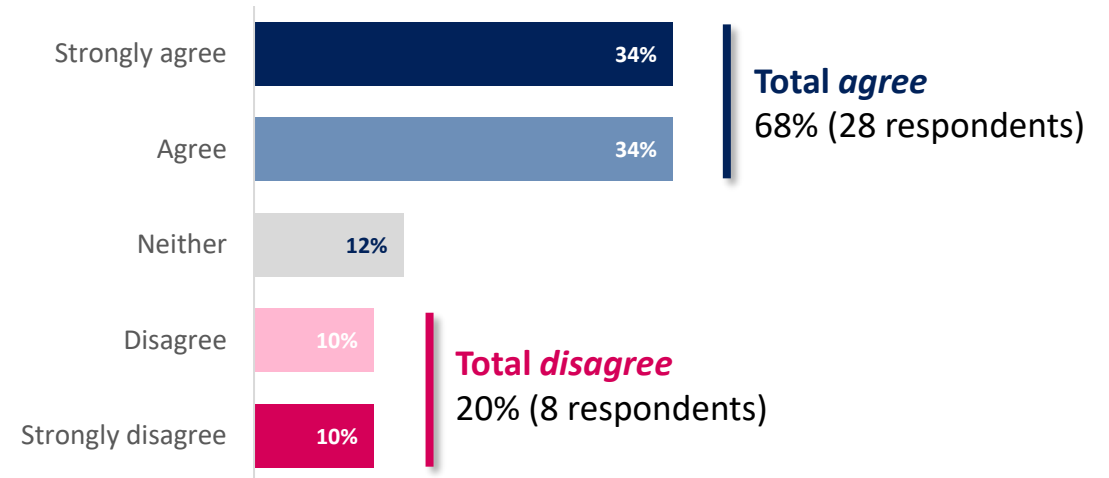
“The aims of this draft policy are to:

- Make the best use of good-quality private sector accommodation;
- Use the private rented sector to fulfil the Council’s responsibility to provide accommodation for people who are homeless or threatened by homelessness;
- Widen the choice of housing solutions available to homeless applicants;
- Enable applicants to find appropriate housing quickly;
- Build positive relationships with private-sector landlords;
- Reduce reliance and pressure on temporary accommodation, including reducing B&B use, and;
- Ensure movement and pressure relief on the Housing Register.”

Page 306

Question 1 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Council offering private rented sector accommodation to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness?

Responses | 41



Over half (68%, 28 of 41 respondents) agreed with the draft policy, with 20% (eight respondents) saying that they *disagreed*.

Question 2 | If you disagree, or have any comments, impacts, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider, please provide details

Responses | 13

"A lot of private accommodation is of a very poor standard, eg mould present, so it must be checked properly. People who can afford to pay are being expected to pay for this! I feel the council should be stopping this."

"This should not stop councils building quality, affordable homes to rent/buy. If people in this private rented accommodation want to work, they will need to earn enough to cover rent. This will prevent many from starting work, while risking benefit sanctions if this isn't possible at their skill level. Rents must be carefully managed so Landlords cannot use this need as a further tool to push up rents. They should also be strictly monitored to ensure they meet their obligations for safe, well maintained property. Where council tenants abuse property or deliberately fail to maintain it (not through genuine ill health) they should be moved to private rented property and the council property let to conscientious tenants."

"My only concern would be around reducing available private rented accommodation to other people as a reduction in the rental sector could lead to increased competition/prices for those whose only option is to rent as they are unable to buy."

"To what degree will the Council carry out DBS checks on these landlords, and will you ensure support is in place for those renting are not given inappropriate notice to leave for no reason at all"

"Council should provide housing"

"Probably the least bad option."

"What safeguards or regulations will be in place to ensure that private rentals are safe, non-exploitative and suitable?"

"How will the prospective tenant provide references and a deposit? As a landlord, I would need to be sure the tenant would care for my property. Would the Council provide the deposit and take responsibility if the tenant stops paying the rent or damages the property?"

"As a private landlord I worry i will be forced into accepting a tenant if the council deem my property suitable. Will I achieve the market rent for it?"

"As a person who the council forced into private rented when I was made homeless, privately rented accommodation is two expensive and also doesn't allow adequate adaptations to the property for disability needs. Also what happens when private sector interests go up. We have been in this property coming up a year and if they put the rent up we will become homeless again"

"Private rental properties should be for professionals or working people, students etc. not for people on benefits."

"Private rental properties should only be available to renters who do not collect benefits."

"However, we know that private landlords will use this to manipulate prices upwards to extract as much 'free money' (for them) from the council as they can (and our council tax will go up). They will view the council and vulnerable tenants as low-maintenance, pushing standards down for the rest of us in private rented accommodation (c.f student lets and HMOs). They will then come to view this easy option as preferable to other tenants, and the private rented housing available to the rest of us reduces further, pushing prices up and consequently more of us into unaffordable/ insecure housing situations. Something needs to be in place to ensure these consequences don't automatically follow. City-wide rent controls for one. If private landlords don't like it because they're suddenly not making enough money, they can sell up, releasing homes onto the market that those in a position to buy can then do so, removing themselves from the rental sector and in turn reducing competition for the remaining rentals."

“Eligibility of applicants

An offer of a private rented tenancy is likely to be suitable for the majority of households that approach the Council for housing assistance. This includes households who are about to become homeless and those who are already homeless and in temporary accommodation, waiting for long-term accommodation to become available.

Page 308 There are a few exceptions where the Council may believe a household is not suitable for an offer of private rented accommodation. These would include:

- those who require supported accommodation or are unlikely to be able to adequately sustain a private rented tenancy, and;
- those who require significant disabled adaptations to the property which could not be met in the private rented sector.

Suitability of the offer

The Council will ensure that the property is suitable for the tenant by considering the following:

- **Location.** For example, considering the significance of any disruption caused by the location to employment, caring responsibilities, or education of the household.
- **Affordability.** The Council will consider whether the applicant can afford the housing costs without being deprived of basic essentials such as food, clothing, heating, transport and other essentials specific to their circumstances.
- **Property size and standards.** For example: ensuring the property is not overcrowded; is in reasonable physical condition; it meets required safety standards in relation to gas, electrics, and fire safety; there is no evidence to suggest the landlord cannot be considered a ‘fit and proper person’.”

“The offer process

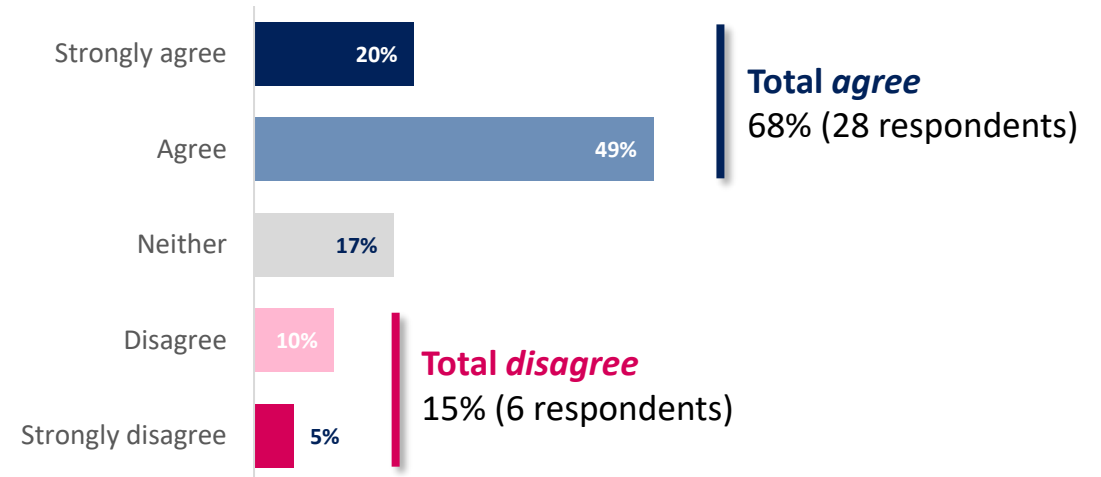
A letter will be sent to the applicant before an offer is made, setting out the following:

- the duty under which the offer is being made;
- possible consequences of refusal or acceptance;
- the right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation;
- that the Council is satisfied that the accommodation is suitable;
- if the PRSO is under the main housing duty, the letter will provide information on the re-application duty.”

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Question 3 | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the commitments of the draft policy?

Responses | 41



Over half (68%, 28 of 41 respondents) agreed with the commitments of the draft policy, with more responding *neither* than *disagree* (17% to 15%, seven to six respondents respectively).

Question 4 | If you disagree, or have any comments, impacts, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider, please provide details

Responses | 9

"If the person does not agree that the accommodation is suitable will there be an opportunity to discuss why?"

"On this page above, it is "adaptations", not "adaptions". We speak English here, not American. Another exception should be made for those applicants who have a history of antisocial activity, including but not exclusively, drug abuse, threatening or intimidating behaviour (including minors or other dependants), noise, uncontrolled pets (particularly dogs), alcohol abuse especially consumption in public places."

"If the person refuses the offer, the reasons should be analysed and not simply punished with another offer. This housing could be given to another person, as there will surely be many on the waiting list who will accept this housing."

"Who decides whether the property meets an individual's needs? Putting a female with mental health problems and a history of domestic abuse into shared accommodation with only men is not going to be adequate for their mental wellbeing. I have seen this offered to someone."

"I think that many people (especially those I work with with English as an additional language) have very little understanding about the differences between private sector, council housing and housing association accommodation other than the firm belief that council housing is the safest and best option. It would be useful to have some easy read and / or translated guides on the differences between the types of accommodation and tenants/landlord responsibilities for each. We have been running workshops to upskill our clients on these topics and making them aware of the situation."

"You will be forcing down rental values and availability of property doing this. Where is the commitment with property developers to build and provide truly affordable/social housing they ALL promise at planning stage?!"

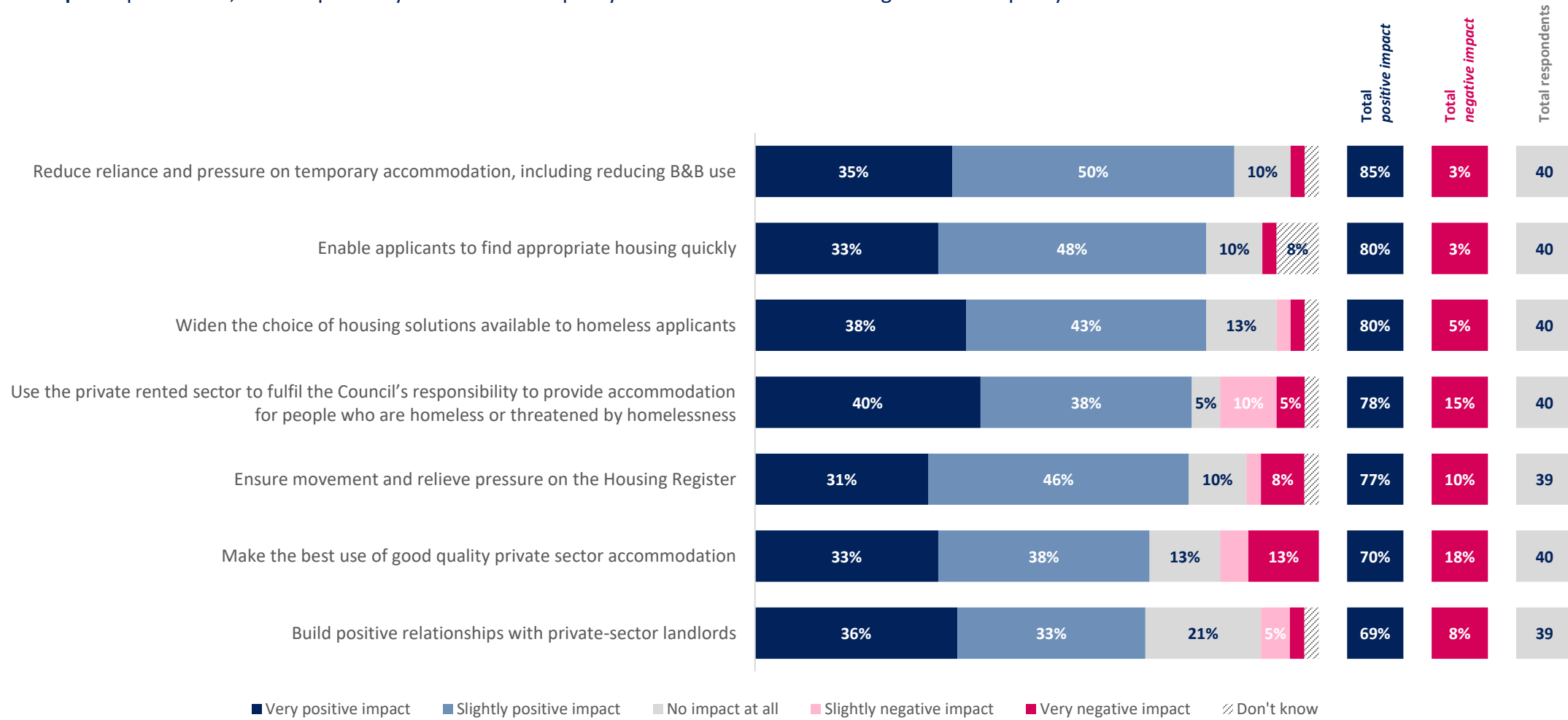
"SCC should be building more houses"

"Does the private landlord have a say in this decision or it all down to what the council decides? If I was a landlord, I would not want a homeless person in my flat."

*"There's quite a lot unsaid in that final point "If the accommodation is appropriate and suitable, but the applicant refuses the offer, then no further accommodation offer will be made" and it's quite easy to see how this could be used to simply wash your hands of a problem because "well, we tried >massive shrug<" One very easy way to bring down the homelessness numbers is to simply cross people of the list for being 'unreasonable', 'uncooperative', 'uppity'. There can be quite legitimate reasons a person/family has for refusing a place that a nameless, faceless, office bot has seemed acceptable (for *other* people, not themselves). Is there support/negotiation to help people adjust to their new place? Is there an appeals process? Will the process remember that homeless people are still people with preferences and wishes and would like to be able to exercise choice?"*

Question 5 | If implemented, what impact do you feel the draft policy would have on the following aims of the policy?

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Question 6 | Please use the following space to tell us more about the potential impact the draft strategy and if there is anything else we should consider

Responses | 17

"Anything that provides more options for those facing homelessness seems positive to me. I wonder if you will find landlords willing to provide such accommodation though as many don't even want to take people on Universal Credit. Sorting out deposits and the rent will need to be managed."

"With more residents unable to afford the high cost of private-sector properties we still need to provide more social housing in Southampton and build more council housing."

"It has been well documented around the country that council properties are being rented out illegally and also used as air bnbs. Councils should have checks in place to ensure these properties are identified and reallocated. Where the council is involved in any right to buy or shared ownership schemes, there should be clause that these properties can't be let. I've tried to buy a shared ownership several times to later find it has been rented out by the purchasers. How is this happening!?"

"Bi sexual, same sex couples should be treated equally, available council staff available to contact in respect of any impass between the landlord and tenants"

"It will also help those who no longer wish to be landlords be able to sell their houses without having tenants who cannot move out. Will also relieve the stress on estate agents when tenants are unable to move out despite notice being correctly served"

"I am a private landlord but my tenants tend to stay in my property for years. Would the council pay housing benefit direct. What happens if the tenant causes significant damage"

"If people are being evicted because they cannot pay rent, how will this help?"

"I'm not sure what the question is asking for here"

"Local Authorities should build more housing stocks for people rather than changing policies all the time. Stop making excuses and start building!!"

"There is currently a shortage of good quality private rented accommodation for applicants, so it is difficult to see how the Council will persuade landlords to take homeless people unless it was an HMO."

"I think many people are worried about the affordability of private sector accommodation - particularly in relation to Local Housing Allowance and therefore are likely to feel they will not be able to afford private sector accommodation. This may not be a popular policy. I think there is also a general lack of knowledge about the duties of the council around homelessness, so having guidance documents people can easily understand makes sense."

"Feels like being done unto. Would want to hear far more about the realities and commitments to private landlords if such a policy was enacted."

"I feel the council already doesn't follow the rules and consistently lies within their departments, this policy will enable them to lie and conceal the truth more. What the council actually needs to do is actually help the people of Southampton and not just those who are here on asylum. I find it such an insult as a person who served his country was poorly treated by this council"

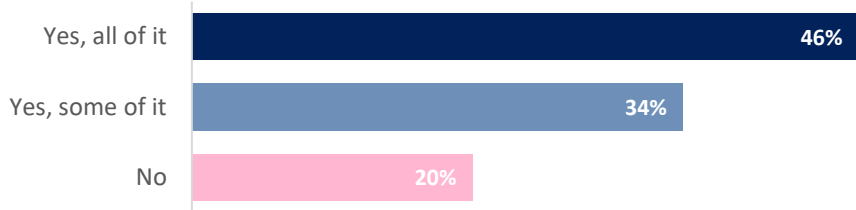
"My responses are optimistic rather than confident: I want to believe that the policy would have these impacts but this does require a bit of a leap of faith. The private rented sector is not a panacea and it has its own problems. A lot of properties in this sector wouldn't meet the quality threshold indicated by the policy, much will therefore depend on how the policy is implemented."

"It would add more pressure on the housing market for private renters, who would now be competing with the council for housing!"

"I rent and I work full time, when my land was selling my place I had to move and finding a property to rent was a nightmare. Even though I work full time I don't earn that much (grand 4 council) Places I had arranged to view were cancelled due to being taken less than 24 hours after making viewing. Stop giving out money and discounts to students, single mums and people who can't be arses to work due and help hard working people fine places to live first."

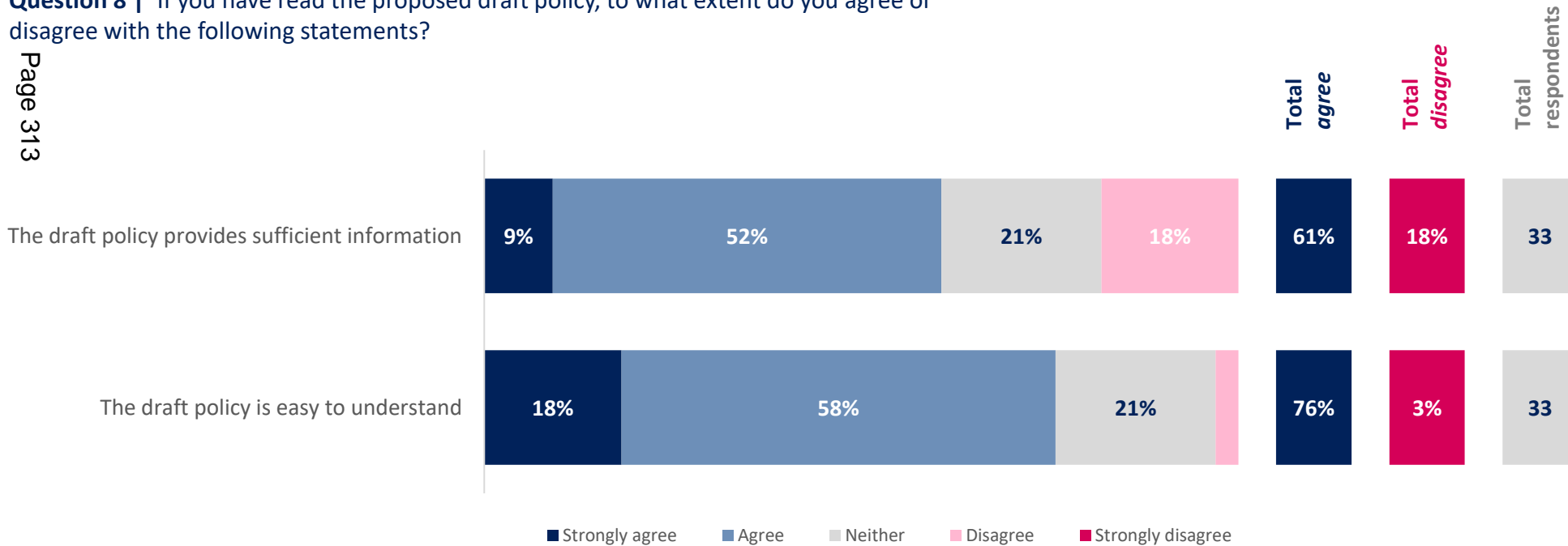
Question 7 | Have you read the proposed draft policy?

Responses | 41



Question 8 | If you have read the proposed draft policy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

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Question 9 | If there were parts of the draft policy that you did not understand or you feel need more information, please provide further details

Responses | 12

"I understood the policy. There are many groups that are mentioned as being at risk of homelessness, but there was one I could not find. Those given leave to remain when they have come here seeking asylum but are not part of one of the schemes you mention (e.g. Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine) now can have only 7 days in which to find accommodation before they are thrown out of the accommodation provided while they were still seeking asylum. The Home Office is speeding up its processing and many people are being given leave to remain, and these people urgently need housing. Many are young men who come low down the priority list as families with children are prioritised. This need for more housing is rising rapidly."

"More clarity on how the Council will manage landlord pressure for rent rises."

"I would like more information on protection and incentives for landlords to rent to homeless people, who rightly or wrongly are perceived as high risk tenants."

"It doesn't provide for those with complex needs. Homelessness often results in other issues which require support to overcome. This scratches at the surface without sorting out the underlying problems."

"I don't think only offering private rented sector accom once is sufficient. People should be afforded choice, perhaps up to 3 or 5 refusals. This supports dignity."

"Sections dealing with homeless client's refusal or acceptance of an offer"

"Commitments to and protections for private landlords. How will you safeguard from the availability of such property not being sold off to avoid being commandeered by the council and putting even more pressure on those of us left?"

"No it was easy to understand. It's a rubbish policy."

"It is easy enough to understand but the intricacies and complexity of the legal context makes it hard to grasp the details. For this reason, the summary version is much easier to follow and so I think the final version - which of course must be couched in formal terms, including references to all the relevant legislation - must include a "plain text" summary."

"N/A Don't change policy. Leave private landlords out of the equation and start building"

Considerations of consultation feedback – Private Rented Sector Offer Policy consultation, November 2023

Consultation feedback		Officer response	Actions proposed
Broad themes	Comment themes		
Quantitative feedback	28 of 41 respondents (68%) agreed with the draft policy overall.		
	<p>Respondents said that the draft policy would have a positive impact on the following areas by 69% or more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reducing reliance and pressure on temporary accommodation. ▪ Enabling applicants to find appropriate housing. ▪ Widening the choice of available housing solutions. ▪ Using the private rented sector to fulfil the council’s responsibility to provide accommodation for people who are homeless or threatened by homelessness. ▪ Relieving pressure on the Housing Register. ▪ Making best use of private sector accommodation. ▪ Building positive relationships with private landlords. 		
	Respondents said that the draft policy was both easy to understand (76%) and provided sufficient information (61%).		
Positive comments	General positive/supportive comments	No officer response is required (positive consultation feedback).	None.
Concerns and suggestions	General concerns and/or critical/not supportive comments.	The council believes that private rented accommodation should be offered to people who are homeless to give them a chance to improve their livelihoods. The landlord has the final decision on whether to accept a tenant into a property. We will make sure that people who are homeless and placed in private rented accommodation are sign-posted to support services to help meet their individual needs.	None.
	Comments related to the process of renting privately (regarding individual tenancies).	The council will make sure that people who are offered a private rented sector offer (PRSO), will have the funds to sustain a tenancy. The council will also work with both the landlords and tenants to ensure that the needs of both parties are met. The council will treat all individuals equally and with respect and be available to support tenants and landlords during the tenancy. As stated in the policy, the council will make and approve a private rented sector offer. However, the landlord will have the final decision on whether households will be accepted into the property.	The policy states that the council will consider whether applicants can afford housing costs without being deprived of essentials. The policy has been updated to include the statement “as part of our overall assessment, consideration will be given as to whether financial assistance is required in terms of deposit or rent in advance.”
	Comments/questions on property size/standards, inc. safety, landlord checks etc.	The council will make sure that all properties considered for a private rented sector are suitable and meet individual needs, with reference to Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. The council will work with the landlord to ensure that a written tenancy agreement has been agreed which is adequate for the individual and landlord.	None.

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Consultation feedback		Officer response	Actions proposed
Broad themes	Comment themes		
	Comments/questions on refusing an offer/requesting a review of the suitability of accommodation.	The council has certain suitability requirements and standards to meet when offering a PRSO. The applicants have a right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation offered. The council must meet certain regulations when carrying out this review. If the applicant still refuses an offer, after a review, then no further housing offer will be made. An applicant has a right to appeal to the County Court on a point of law if they are dissatisfied with the review outcome.	None.
	Comments on the need to continue building council/social housing.	The council is aware of the need to build more council housing. The local plan is in development and is considering how to address the housing development needs of the city.	None.
	Some individuals may not be able to sustain a private rented tenancy (inc. some may not be able to afford it, landlords may not accept certain 'high risk' tenants).	When providing a PROS, the council will ensure that the accommodation is suitable and affordable to the individual. The landlord will be able to ask for references from tenants, consider whether they can afford this rent (i.e. through credit checks) and make the final decision on whether to accept tenants. The council is currently reviewing our offer to landlords.	The policy states that the council will consider whether applicants can afford housing costs without being deprived of essentials. The policy has been updated to include the statement "as part of our overall assessment, consideration will be given as to whether financial assistance is required in terms of deposit or rent in advance."
Page 316	Comments/questions on whether the policy will add to pressure/competition/unaffordability in the private housing market.	The council does not believe that this will affect the market supply of private accommodation. The property rental price is decided by the landlord.	None.
	Comments/questions on the private renting market (inc. SCC's management/regulation) generally.	There is a tenancy fraud team within the council who will investigate any fraudulent activity around social housing tenancy.	None.
	Comments around having a simpler/easy-read version of the policy, including for those with disabilities/those for whom English is not their first language.	The council will consider providing a shorter version of the policy that is easier to read if required. The case officer will be able to support people who are homeless with the steps of the PRSO. The case officer can also flag with the homelessness team if a short version is required, or if a document needs to be translated into another language to be accessible to an individual.	None.
	Comments discuss the fact that it may not be possible to provide adaptations in the private rented sector.	When providing a PRSO, the council will ensure that the accommodation is affordable, suitable and meets the individual's needs. It is accepted that for some cases it is more challenging to find suitable accommodation for people with a disability who may require adaptations to the accommodation. The adaptations may delay the offer and will require permission from the landlord. The council will ensure that the accommodation is suitable for the needs of the individual.	None.

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	CORPORATE RENT GUARANTOR POLICY FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE		
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JANUARY 2024		
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR WINNING CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Stephanie Murray	Tel: 07909 321174
	E-mail:	steph.murray@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	Robert Henderson	Tel: 023 8083 4899
	E-mail:	robert.henderson@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
NOT APPLICABLE	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
<p>The Pathways Through Care Service proposes a 12-month pilot of the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme starting in January 2024. There will be a mid-way review after six months (June 2024) and it is proposed that the findings be presented to the Corporate Parenting Board.</p>	
<p>The policy will enable the council to act as a corporate guarantor for our care-experienced young people. This scheme will provide more housing options to young people by supporting young care leavers to access the private rental market. This could also result in cost avoidance for the council, as the council would not need to provide other sources of accommodation.</p>	
<p>The council will act as the guarantor for care leavers for 12 months of the tenancy, providing that the care leaver remains under 25 years old throughout the entire tenancy. The pilot scheme will be limited to 12 successful applicants in a year. This is to minimise the potential financial risks for the council and consider whether this scheme improves outcomes for care leavers.</p>	
<p>The council will guarantee to pay £850 per month for each care leaver. If a care leaver defaults on their rent every month for one year, the council must cover £10,200 per care leaver. If all 12 care leavers default on their rent every month for the year, the maximum amount the council will be liable for in this pilot scheme is £122,400. However, there are mitigations (outlined below) in place to reduce the risk of care leavers defaulting on this rent.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	<p>(i) To approve the pilot Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy for Care Experienced Young People.</p>
	<p>(ii) That the policy is returned to Cabinet after the pilot period has ended, in January 2025, to decide whether to pursue the policy.</p>
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	

1.	To improve Southampton City Council's Corporate Parent offer and support care experienced young people to access the private rental market.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	The policy is not approved, and the council does not act as a corporate guarantor to support care for experienced young people.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	The council has a responsibility to care for young people in Southampton who have experienced the care system. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 ensures that all local authorities establish a Corporate Parenting Board and publish a local offer for care leavers. In Southampton, the current local offer for care leavers includes support with accommodation, education, and employment including access to an allocated Personal Advisor (PA). This policy will enable the council to enhance the offer. The council will be able to act as a corporate guarantor on the care leavers' behalf and support care leavers to access the private rented sector.
4.	The Children Services and the Corporate Parenting Board are responsible for the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategic Plan 2022-2027 . This sets out 7 key priority areas, one of which is 'Home and Accommodation'. A key deliverable in this priority is increasing the council's housing offer for young people as they move into adulthood. The policy also aligns with the Corporate Plan 2022-2030 . One of the key performance indicators is the percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation. This policy would help to achieve these aims.
5.	The Head of Service for Pathways Through Care will decide on whether the council will act as a guarantor for a care leaver. The Head of Service will also have overall responsibility for the tracking and monitoring of financial implications.
6.	PAs will receive training to help them identify appropriate young people for this scheme and to support them with the application form.
7.	There are certain eligibility requirements outlined in the policy, which a care-experienced young person must meet. For example, the care leaver must be between 18 and 24 years of age and be willing to pay their own rent each month and hold a tenancy in their name.
8.	If successful, the care leaver will be provided with a corporate guarantor who can stand as the official guarantor for the initial 12 months of their tenancy (provided they remain under 25 years of age throughout this entire tenancy). Some landlords/letting agents only require a guarantor for the first year and therefore, with good payment history and adherence to expectations, they may not need to find another for ongoing occupancy.
9.	The council will be a guarantor for rent costs only and will not cover the cost of other breaches of the tenancy agreement, for example, damages. If the care leaver has been unable to pay their rent due to an unforeseen change in their circumstances, the council will cover the rent costs up to £850 per month per care leaver whilst in this initial 12-month period of their tenancy. The £850 per month limit is based on the median price for one bedroom in England (except London) between April 2022 and March 2023.

10.	The council will act as an advocate and single point of contact for issues around care leavers' accommodation and where appropriate and permissible, will engage with the landlord/property management firm to ensure that issues which could affect rent payment are dealt with swiftly.
11.	A public consultation ran from 27 September 2023 to 7 November 2023. The consultation was promoted through the council's website and social media channels. There was a total of 60 responses. 92% of respondents agree with the council acting as a corporate rent guarantor for care-experienced young people. The feedback was carefully considered, and minor amendments were made to the policy. The consultation report and consideration of feedback table is amended in the report.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
12.	If the council agrees to be a guarantor, it will be legally liable to pay the landlord/letting agent the sums that are due, even if the council could seek legal enforcement against the tenant. The policy has no dedicated resources and relies on resources within the Children and Learning Service, to ensure a successful delivery of the scheme. The Housing team will be able to provide tenancy support if needed.
13.	The scheme could potentially result in cost avoidance as the council will not have to provide other sources of accommodation. There are currently 281 young people aged 18 – 24 years old who have been in care and are being supported by the Children and Learning Service. These young people are in a range of different types of accommodation. Of the 281, there are 37 young people currently living in private rented accommodation. Before moving into private rented accommodation, these 37 children were in other types of accommodation (not privately rented) and were costing an average of £2,976 per month to the council. By acting as a corporate guarantor, the council can support young people to access the private rented sector and avoid the cost of paying for accommodation.
14.	The Pathways Through Care team will undertake a review of young people in both supported and semi-independent accommodation and move those who are eligible into the private rented sector. This may also result in lower costs for the council.
15.	The pilot policy will accept a maximum of 12 care leavers. The council only will provide a maximum of £850 per month per care leaver to cover rent costs, in the initial 12-month period of tenancy. The young person will not have to repay any cost covered by the council. If a care leaver defaults on their rent every month for one year, the council must cover £10,200 per care leaver. If all 12 care leavers default on their rent every month for the year, the maximum amount the council will be liable for in this pilot scheme is £122,400. Due to the mitigations in place, the risk of every care leaver defaulting every month is very low. The risks and mitigations are outlined in the risk table below.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
16.	The council is using powers under the Localism Act 2011 to carry out this scheme. The Localism Act 2011 contains a wide range of measures to

	devolve more powers to councils and neighbourhoods. The Localism Act 2011 states 'A local authority has the power to do anything that individuals may generally do', subject to certain exceptions, none of which are applicable here. This Act gives the power to Local Authorities to act as a corporate guarantor for young care leavers.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
17.	The Children and Social Work Act 2017 ensures that all local authorities establish a Corporate Parenting Board and publish a local offer for care leavers. The local offer provides practical information and advice to care for experienced young people and sets out the services on offer from both the local authority and other agencies. Private rented accommodation is not currently an area that the council can support their care leavers with.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
18.	<p>A table outlining the risks, probability, impact and controls is appended to this report. To minimise the financial risks to the council, this is a pilot policy for a maximum of 12 care leavers. The pilot will allow for any other risks or issues to be highlighted and considered. The risks and some mitigations are summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a risk that the council will need to cover the cost of rent for care leavers who are unable to pay. There are some mitigations to this risk. The council will only be obliged to cover rent payments up to £850 a month per care leaver. During the application process, the care leaver must show that they can manage a realistic budget and afford rent. If accepted into the scheme, the care leaver has a responsibility to inform the PA if they are at risk of not being able to pay rent. The PA will support the care leaver in applying for Universal Credit, finding employment, or adjusting the household budget to help the young person pay their rent. • Some landlords/letting agencies will not accept corporate guarantors. This may limit the number of properties care leavers can apply for with the council as a guarantor. This pilot will provide a better understanding of which landlords and letting agencies will accept corporate guarantors. If the relevant landlord or letting agency will not accept a corporate guarantor, the PA will work with the young person to review their options with other landlords and letting agencies. • Some landlords/letting agencies may need a guarantor for longer than a year. Therefore, care leavers will not be able to apply for this 1-year pilot scheme. The PA will work with the young person to review their options with other landlords and letting agencies. • There may only be a limited number of care-experienced young people who apply for the scheme and are successful for the scheme. This pilot is to test out certain parts of the scheme, such as the financial implications of the number of young people who default on rent payments. There will be a review after 6 months of the policy where limited numbers can be discussed, and options can be explored to encourage young people to apply for the scheme. • There is a risk that the legal services do not have the dedicated resources and capacity to support this pilot. There are ongoing

	discussions between the Legal team and the Pathways through Care team to ensure this is in place.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
19.	This policy is in accordance with relevant Policy Framework items (embedded in the council's Constitution: Part 2, Article 4.01).

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Appendix 1: Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy for Care-Experienced Young People
2.	Appendix 2: Risk Log Table
3.	Appendix 3: Equality and Safety Impact Assessment
4.	Appendix 4: Data Protection Impact Assessment
5.	Appendix 5: Consultation Report
6.	Appendix 6: Consideration of Feedback Table

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	Yes
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None.

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**Southampton City Council
Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy
2024**



**Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme for Care
Experienced Young People**

AUTHOR: Anisha Reed, Head of Service, Pathways Through Care

DATE: January 2024

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Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy for Care Experienced Young People			
Version	Version 1	Approved by	Steph Murray
Date last amended	27/11/2023	Proposed Approval date	16/01/2024
Lead officer	Anisha Reed	Proposed Review date	16/06/2024
Contact	Anisha.reed@southampton.gov.uk	Proposed Effective date	24/01/2024

Purpose

1. The Local Authority is responsible for providing care and support for children and young people who have been placed in the care system. Once they are 18 years old, Southampton City Council (the Council) wants to support these young people and help them to become more independent.
2. Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Council established a Corporate Parenting Board and published a local offer for care leavers. The offer sets out the services for children leaving care from both the local authority and other agencies.
3. As part of this local offer for care leavers, the Council wants to act as a Corporate Parent to support young people leaving care to lead happy and independent lives.
4. Many parents offer to be rent guarantors to support their children move into their own tenancy. Under this scheme, the Council can act as a Corporate Rent Guarantor for eligible young people, where there is no family member willing/able to do so.
5. This scheme aims to expand housing options by enabling young people leaving care to access private accommodation and to support them in becoming more independent.

Scope

6. The Care Leavers Service will begin a 12-month pilot of acting as a Corporate Rent Guarantor for eligible young people leaving care, starting in January 2024. A maximum of 12 young people will be accepted for this pilot scheme. The eligibility criteria are outlined later in the document.
7. The Council is obliged to cover the cost of rent if the young person is unable to pay due to a change in their circumstances. The limit that the Council will guarantee to pay is £850 per month per young person for rent under the scheme. The young person will not have to repay any cost covered by the Council.
8. The pilot will start on a small scale, to minimise the risks and consider learning from other Local Authorities. After the pilot, the Council will determine whether to implement this as a permanent policy change, with a larger cohort of young people, in 2025. There will be a mid-way review after six months (June 2024) and the findings will be presented to Corporate Parenting Panel.
9. The pilot will test out:
 - the financial implications by testing the numbers of young people who default on rental payments;
 - whether the scheme opens more choices of private rental accommodation, in terms of both quality and location;
 - whether young people in semi-independent accommodation can be moved into rental properties by using the enhanced offer of the Council acting as a guarantor;
 - if the guarantor offer directly improves the outcomes for our care leavers in securing long-term quality housing options.
10. There will be scope to review the young people in both supported and semi-independent accommodation, with an aim to move them into better quality independent rental properties. This may also result in lower costs for the Council.

Definitions

11. **Care Leaver:** Someone who has spent time in the care system, such as in a children's home or with a foster family, under the care of the Local Authority. This is for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday.
12. **Personal Advisor (PA):** A person who works with care leavers to ensure they receive the care, support, and entitlement they need when they leave care.
13. **Guarantor:** A financial term describing an individual who promises to pay a borrower's (tenant's) debt if the borrower (tenant) defaults on their loan obligation.
14. **Corporate Guarantor:** A guarantor for payment of debt (as above) but instead of having an individual person held responsible for these debts, a company or organisation (in this case Southampton City Council) agrees to bear this responsibility.
15. **Deed of Guarantee:** This is a legally binding contract between the landlord and renter naming a Guarantor on the tenancy. This deed of guarantee 'formalises' the agreement through the production of an official document, completed and signed by necessary parties to be legally enforceable. These often outline the exact expectations and liabilities of each party. However, they sometimes simply contain the official contact and other details of all parties.

Policy Commitments

The offer

16. The successful applicant will be provided with a 'Corporate Guarantor' (not personal) who can stand as an official guarantor for the initial 12 months of their tenancy (provided the young adult remains under 25 years of age throughout).
17. During the application process, the young person will need to give evidence that they can afford their rent commitments. However, if there is a **change in circumstances, which means they become unable to pay their rent** the Council agrees to cover unpaid rent costs for this young adult whilst in this initial 12-month period of their tenancy.
18. The limit that the Council will guarantee to pay is £850 per month per young person. The Council will only guarantee to cover the cost of unpaid rent and will not cover the cost of other breaches of the tenancy, such as damage.
19. The young person will not be required to re-pay the amount of rent the Council has covered. However, if the young person continues to be unable to meet their rent and living costs, the Council will support them out of private rented sector accommodation and into better-suited accommodation.
20. The young person will only be able to apply to this scheme once.
21. The Council will act as an advocate and single point of contact for issues around the young adult's accommodation. Where appropriate and permissible, the Council will engage with the landlord/property management firm to ensure that issues which could affect rent payment are dealt with swiftly.

Eligibility criteria applicable for all young people

22. Between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. The Council will only be a young person's corporate guarantor if they remain under 25 years of age throughout the tenancy. If they are 24, there must be another person in place agreeing to stand as guarantor from the day of their 25th birthday.
23. Willing and able to pay their own rent in full each month.
24. In agreement to pay ALL benefits issued for the purpose of payment towards rent costs in full towards their rent each month as per the purpose without exception.
25. Point 22 and 23 will be evidenced by agreement from the Practice Manager (PM) and Personal Advisor (PA). They will provide a written statement outlining that they believe this young adult fits the criteria and that they officially nominate the young adult for this scheme. They will ensure that a signature from the nominated young adult is provided outlining that they intend to pay all funds received for the purpose of rent payment to rent.
26. Be in either paid employment (at least 8 hours per week) OR in full-time, higher education. If an applicant is unable to work due to a disability or under medical grounds, they may still be eligible for the scheme. They will need to demonstrate that their income/benefits can cover the costs of rent and cost of living.

27. Be fiscally responsible and able to manage the variety of costs involved in running a home. This will be assessed with the involvement of the PA. The PA should record this on Care Director and include it within their latest Pathway Plan.
28. Not have any significant level of debt. The young person's current 'Debt to Income Ratio' must be no greater than 20%. This excludes student loan debt.
29. Engage regularly and meaningfully with any supporting professionals (and intention to continue) to ensure relevant support is being accessed and provided when required. If this is not occurring, (i.e. they have outstanding unaddressed need/s) this will need to be actioned prior to acceptance to avoid placing a young adult at risk of homelessness. There will be updates and reviews of the young adult required after a set period of time (3 months) OR at point of other significant change of circumstances.
30. Have the required independent living skills. This includes proactive problem solving, a 'proven ability to access support when required' and at least a basic ability to read and respond to correspondence in relation to their needs. For example, if they receive a letter which requires a response, they would either do this themselves or contact a relevant member of their support network to address this as a priority. This will be assessed by the involvement with PA. This should be recorded by Care Director and included within their latest Pathway Plan. This is necessary to avoid placing this young adult at significant risk of failing to maintain an independent tenancy.
31. The above criteria should be relevant to all young people who wish to access Private Rented Sector (PRS) accommodation and wish to receive support from the Council Rent Guarantor Scheme. However, as a service, we pride ourselves on being responsive to the needs of our young people and experts in their advocacy. If it is believed that a young adult does not 'match' with one of the above criteria, but should be supported to access this scheme, please discuss this with a PM, so that they might put a case forward to the Head of Service.

Eligibility criteria applicable for those in employment

32. Earning an income above or in addition to state benefits (be paid for at least 8 hours a week). For example, if a young person is working their total income must be more than the Local Housing Authority rate in the area desired for PRS accommodation OR the young adult must be earning income in addition to being in receipt of benefits.
33. Be engaged positively with their employment. This includes not being involved in, or expecting to become involved in, any disciplinary or other process which has the potential to limit or negatively impact their future income.
34. Have no intention to end this employment or have hours reduced below 8 hours per week, in the duration of the tenancy.

Eligibility criteria applicable for those in higher education

35. Currently enrolled in full-time education (Tertiary / Degree Level). This needs to be confirmed in writing. They must also have the intention to continue this study to its conclusion.
36. Be engaged positively with their education. They must not be involved in or expect to become involved in any disciplinary or other process which has the potential to limit or negatively impact their future enrolment in their current educational provision.

37. In receipt of all benefits/other incomes to which they are eligible to support with the costs of their studies and reduce the potential dependency i.e. Employment and Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, student grants/loans etc. This includes the Council's University bursary accessible via an application from the PA of the care leaver.

Expectations for fulfilment by the young adult

38. No choice will be made by the young adult whilst under this scheme not to pay their rent. A choice does not mark a 'change in circumstance which affects their ability to pay their rent'. Therefore, if it is understood to be a choice by the young adult not to pay, this will need to be addressed by the PA in advance of funds being released by the scheme.
39. If a young adult becomes aware that they are likely to experience problems in paying their rent at any point in the future, this must be communicated to their PA and landlord/letting agent as soon as possible. This will allow a joint approach to supporting the young adult to take preventative measures where possible and to work with their support network to avoid ongoing or recurring problems in this respect.
40. If the Council is not made aware of the amount owed, they cannot be held responsible for payment. Both the landlord/letting agent and young adult have the responsibility to inform the Council's Care Leavers Service of issues regarding rent payment arrears at the earliest possible point.
41. At the point that a change in circumstances which affects the young adult's ability to pay their rent becomes a reality and the scheme is required to cover their rents, the young adult remains responsible for paying any benefits or other monies issued for use against rent payments to the landlord/letting agent. Only the shortfall will be covered by the Corporate Guarantor Scheme.
42. If a young adult loses their job, they will be expected to notify their PA within 48 hours, to discuss the next steps. They will then be expected to engage immediately with the Department for Work and Pensions, to ensure that Universal Credit (or other benefits) can be utilised to pay their rent.
43. If a young adult claims benefits to support them to pay their rent and then disengages with or otherwise loses this provision, there is an expectation that this young adult will notify their PA within 48 hours. They will also accept support to reengage with this provision and explore other legal methods by which their rent liability can be met.
44. If the higher education setting accessed by the young adult has an offer of support for care leavers in respect of their rent or living costs, there will be an expectation that the young adult informs them of their change in circumstance. This is so that this support can be accessed to reduce costs for the Council's 16+ Services.

The process for accessing the Rent Guarantor Scheme

45. The PA will identify a young adult who is suitable for the scheme and complete a guarantor application form with the young adult. PAs will receive training to ensure they identify appropriate young people and can support them with the application form. The PA will need to provide a summary as to why they believe that the young adult can hold a tenancy. The young adult should not be made to believe that they

will be eligible for the scheme until the application process is complete in order to avoid disappointing them.

46. In most cases, the young adult will have identified a possible property and be aware of the main costs, including rent, rent in advance and deposit.
47. The young adult will sign a statement to say that they promise to meet the commitments of their rent payments each month, using whatever legal income they receive to do this. They will also sign to agree that all benefits or other monies received specifically for the purpose of paying accommodation costs, will be used.
48. The summary, application form and documents relating to the tenancy should be checked by the respective PM. The PM will need to agree that the young adult is able to meet the requirements to oversee their own accommodation.
49. The PM and PA will each sign a statement stating that they have assessed that there is affordability for this young adult, for which they feel it is appropriate for the Council to 'Guarantee'. They will each sign a statement to say they are confident in the young adult's ability to manage a tenancy with only basic input from their PA.
50. The PM or PA will then forward all the documents (including signed statements) to the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care who will check and assess whether it seems an appropriate agreement. The Head of Service for Pathways Through Care will decide whether or not to accept the application. The Head of Service will have overall responsibility for the tracking and monitoring of financial implications.
51. Each agreement may be different, for many it will be for student accommodation, and for others long-term private rental agreements. The PA, PM and Head of Service for Pathways Through Care will ensure that the risk is minimal for the young adult.
52. If the Head of Service agrees to the application, a letter will be given to the PA to give to the young adult confirming the outcome. The Council will aim to provide a response to the young adult within 2 weeks of the application being received.
53. If the young adult is accepted into the scheme, they will receive an 'Acceptance in Principle' letter, which confirms the Council are prepared to stand as a Corporate Guarantor for their tenancy. The Council aims to issue this form within 1 week of acceptance.
54. The young adult can use the 'Acceptance in Principle' letter when speaking to letting agencies as evidence that they have a Guarantor in place. However, the letting agent/landlord must be made aware that we are offering a Corporate Guarantee for rent only. Neither the Council nor any individual within the Care Leavers Service can stand as a personal Guarantor for a tenancy. Only if the letting agent/landlord is prepared to accept a Corporate Guarantor can we move forward.
55. If accepted, the PA and young person will complete a supplier request form ([Appendix F](#)) and send this to the Pathways Through Care Team.
56. If the young adult who is subject of any Corporate Guarantor Agreement defaults on their rent, it will be the Council's responsibility to pay this, as per the terms of the agreement. The Council must have on file, **all** documentation for each part of this agreement. The PA/PM will discuss any fund exceeding £500 with the Access to Resources Panel.

57. Most letting agents/landlords will want to include information about the Guarantor either within the Tenancy Agreement or by completing a separate 'Deed of Guarantee'. The Council will ensure that these documents reflect the Council's Policy of the scheme.
58. All documents should be sent to the Head of Service for agreement and signature. The signed copies can be returned to the letting agent/landlord. The PA must save the information to the Care Director case record (upload to 'Documents') and update a case note.

The process if a care leaver defaults on their rent

59. The young person is to inform their PA of any financial worries as soon as possible so that options such as accessing Universal Credit, finding employment, or adjusting their household budget can be explored to support the young person.
60. The PA will inform the Pathways Through Care team as soon as the young person is facing financial difficulties. The Pathways Through Care team will set up a Purchase Order against the Supplier.
61. If a young person is unable to pay their rent, the PA will request a rent statement from the landlord/letting agent, and any narrative on the issues and upload it as evidence on Care Director. The PA will inform and request support from the Pathways Through Care team. The PA will also inform the team of the young persons plans to address rent payments in the future.
62. The Practice Manager will liaise with the Head of Pathways Through Care who will determine how much the Council will cover (a maximum of £850 a month per care leaver for rent only) and when the payment will be made. Any funding required exceeding £500 from the Council will be discussed with the Access to Resource Panel. The Head of Service will inform the Team Standards Coordinator, PA, care leaver and landlord/letting agent of this decision.
63. The Team Standards Coordinator (TSC) will raise and inform the PA, PM and Heads of Service for Pathways Through Care team that this has been actioned and when it will be paid to the landlord. The TSC will record on the tracker.

Legislative Context

64. The Council is using powers under the Localism Act 2011 to carry out this scheme. The Localism Act 2011 contains a wide range of measures to devolve more powers to Councils and neighbourhoods. The Localism Act 2011 states 'A local authority has the power to do anything that individuals may generally do' subject to certain exceptions, none of which are applicable here. This Act gives the power to Local Authorities to act as a Corporate Guarantor for young care leavers.
65. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 ensures that all local authorities establish a Corporate Parenting Board and publish a local offer for care leavers. This sets out the services on offer from both the local authority and other agencies. It is important that young people have the best start in life possible. The Local Offer is designed to give care experienced young people some practical information. This scheme aims to improve our Local Offer and enhance accommodation options for young care leavers.
66. Other relevant legislation and codes of guidance have been considered, including the legislation outlined below.
67. The Housing Acts, 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004– outlines the legal requirements for the provision of rented properties, including social rented properties, houses in multiple occupation, rights and responsibilities of both tenant and landlord.
68. Human Rights Act 1998 – This Act gives effect to the human rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights. These include the right to life, the right to respect for private and family life and the right to freedom of religion and belief. Public authorities must follow this act.
69. Equality Act 2010- This Act protects everyone in Britain from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. Under the Equality Act, there are nine protected characteristics. The Council has considered how this policy may impact people with protected characteristics and outlined ways to mitigate negative impacts in the Equality and Safety Impact Assessment.

Appendix A – Application Form



Southampton
City Council
Civic Centre
Civic Centre
Road
Southampton
SO14 7LY

Date form completed:	
Name of Applicant:	
Applicant DOB:	
Allocated PA:	
Team/Hub:	
Practice Manager:	

This form allows you to seek an appropriate Corporate Guarantor. It will allow Southampton City Council (the Council) to gain an understanding of your financial position and emotional wellbeing in preparation of you living by yourself.

The answers that you provide the Council within this application form are part of the first stage application process for the potential of the Council acting as your Guarantor.

Once you have completed this application form in **full**, please submit the form to your Personal Advisor.

The Council will try to provide you with a response within 2 weeks of the application being received. When you receive a response from us, you will be provided with information on whether we have accepted your application, declined your application or we require further information to come to a decision.

If your application is successful, we will attempt to issue you with your 'Acceptance in Principle' letter within 1 week of acceptance.

Should you have any questions or require assistance when completing this application form, please contact your Personal Advisor who will be able to assist.

From everyone at Southampton City Council, we wish you luck with your application.

Application Questions

What is your current living situation?

What is the accommodation for? (e.g. University, full-time residence)

If University accommodation – name of University:

What is your current education, training or employment status? Employed full or part time, a full-time student (College or University)?

Do you have any reason to believe that this may change over the next 6 months?

How much can you afford to pay in rent per month?

£

Please explain how you will pay your rent, for example, wages, Housing Benefit, Student Loan, etc.:

Please submit to Southampton City Council copies of any below documentation **with** your application form. Please tick which documents you have also attached.

Housing Benefit eligibility letter

Letter of financial support from Southampton City Council

University Finance entitlement summary

Please also attach copies of the last 3 months' bank statements. Additionally, if you work, please attach the last 3 months' payslips and proof of employment.

3 Months' bank statements

3 Month's payslips and proof of employment

Please provide us with a breakdown of your planned expenditure in order to provide evidence to Southampton City Council you have a monthly budget.

Please advise and tick the appropriate box if you receive your income other than monthly

- Daily
- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Other, please specify _____

Planned expenditure breakdown:

Monthly income	
Wages	£
Universal Credit	£
Housing Benefit	£
Southampton City Council support	£
Job Seekers Allowance	£
Student Finance England (for university students only)	£
Bursary from University (for university students only)	£
Other, please specify	£
Other, please specify	£
Total amount	£

Monthly outgoings – Section A (if you are a university student and your outgoings are one payment covering a selection of the list below, please complete section B)	
Rent	£
Gas	£
Electric	£
Council Tax	£
Water	£
TV Licence	£
Food	£
Alcohol	£
Tobacco	£
Going 'out'	£
Clothes, Make-up, Washing products and other	£
Hobbies	£
Cleaning products	£
Travel	£
Phone	£
Internet	£
Education	£
Other, please specify	£
Other, please specify	£

Total	£
Monthly Outgoings Section B – (only complete this box if you are a university student)	
University accommodation costs per month (please list what this includes e.g gas, electric, water)	£
<p>Have you found a property?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>If you have said no, do you know which area/s you may want to live in and what are you doing to find a property, if so, <i>please specify</i>:</p>	
<p>If yes, what is the monthly rental cost per week/month:</p>	
<p>Please specify what research have you carried out in relation to local rent costs? I.e. is this accommodation similar in cost to others? If not, why have you chosen this accommodation?</p>	
<p>What will be the living arrangements in this property?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Alone <input type="checkbox"/> In a shared house with friends <input type="checkbox"/> In a shared house with others <input type="checkbox"/> In student halls of residence for university study <input type="checkbox"/> With a partner/friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other, <i>please specify</i> _____	
<p>Which skills do you believe that an individual requires in order to live independently and how would you describe those you have? How did you learn them? How do you use them?</p>	
<p>If you found yourself in financial difficulty, who would you turn to for budgeting and practical support? <i>Please explain.</i></p>	
<p>How would you financially cope if you found yourself with an unexpected bill, loss of your job, or if you do not have any 'spare money'; whilst still paying your rent?</p>	

--

Please provide us with contact details for a supporting reference, for example, your Personal Advisor, Social Worker, Carer, Employer, Tutor, or another:

Name and Job Title	Contact telephone	Contact email address	Company name

Please specify any further information that you feel may help towards your application.

Personal Advisor Comments/Recommendations:

--

Signature:

Date:

Practice Manager Comments/Recommendations:

--

Signature:

Date:

	Signatures	Date
Applicant		
Head of Service		

Appendix B – Young Person’s Guide to the Scheme



Young Person’s Guide to the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme for Care Leavers



Date: January 2024

What is a Guarantor?

A 'Guarantor' is a financial term describing an individual who promises to pay a borrower's (tenant's) debt if the borrower (tenant) defaults on their loan obligation.

A 'Corporate Guarantor' is a guarantor for payment of debt (as above) but instead of having an individual person held responsible for these debts, a company or organisation (in this case Southampton City Council) agrees to bear this responsibility.

What does the Care Leaver Rent Guarantor Scheme Offer?

In certain circumstances, Southampton City Council (the Council) can act as a Corporate Rent Guarantor on your behalf, where there is no family member willing/able to do so.

In these instances, you can apply for (via your Personal Advisor) support from the Care Leaver Guarantor Scheme, so that you are not disadvantaged.

The support available via this scheme is outlined below:

- If successful, you will be provided with a 'Corporate Guarantor' who can stand as the official guarantor for the initial 12 months of your tenancy (provided you remain under 25 years of age throughout this entire tenancy). Your PA will support you with the application process.
- If you are successful, the Council will provide you with an 'Acceptance in Principle' letter, which confirms the Council is prepared to stand as a Corporate Guarantor for their tenancy.
- You can only apply to this scheme once. Your PA will work with you to provide evidence that you are eligible for this scheme and able to cover your rent payments and other household costs during the tenancy.
- If you have not been able to pay rent due to an unforeseen change in your circumstances, the Council will cover the cost of rent up to £850 per month per young person in the initial 12-month period of your tenancy. The Council will **only cover rent**, and therefore, will **not** cover other breaches of the tenancy, for example for damages to the property. You will not be required to re-pay this cost. However, if you are unable to meet your ongoing rent or living costs, the Council will support you in other accommodation which is better suited.
- If you default on your tenancy and are not able to pay rent, you will be expected to work with your PA to address any needs you have around non-payment. This may include engaging with the Department for Work and Pensions, finding work or other actions as required as soon as possible.
- The Council will act as an advocate and single point of contact for issues around your accommodation. Where appropriate and permissible, the Council will engage with your landlord/property management firm to ensure that issues which could affect rent payment are dealt with swiftly.

Am I Eligible for Support via this Scheme?

You should meet the criteria below to be eligible for this scheme. Remember: it is best to check with your Personal Advisor (PA) on whether you are eligible before you decide to apply, even if you are confident, you meet the criteria below.

To be eligible for this support, you must be:

- between 18 and 24 years of age (if 24, there must be another person in place agreeing to stand as guarantor for you, from the day of your 25th birthday);
- willing and able to pay your own rent each month and hold a tenancy in your name;
- agree to pay all benefits issued for the purpose of payment towards rent costs in full towards your rent each month;
- be in either paid employment (at least 8 hours per week) OR in full-time, higher education. If you are unable to work due to a disability or on medical grounds, you will need to demonstrate that their income/benefits can cover the rent costs and cost of living.
- be responsible with money and able to manage the variety of costs involved in running a home, including bills and Council Tax;
- not have any significant level of debt (less than 20% of your income should be used for debt repayment). This excludes student loan debt;
- engage regularly and meaningfully with supporting professionals (and intention to continue) to ensure relevant support is in place to support you;
- have the skills to live alone, to avoid placing yourself at risk of failing to maintain an independent tenancy.

If you are in paid employment, you must:

- be paid for at least 8 hours of work per week;
- be engaged positively with your employment. This means not being involved in, or expecting to become involved in, any disciplinary or other process which has the potential to limit or otherwise negatively impact upon your future income;
- have no intention to end this employment, during the duration of your tenancy;
- if you have any knowledge that you are losing/leaving your job at some point during the proposed 12-month tenancy or are likely to have hours reduced to below 8 hours per week, this will make you ineligible for this scheme.

If you are in full-time higher education, you must:

- confirm in writing that you are currently enrolled in full-time education (Tertiary / Degree Level);
- have the intention to continue this study to its conclusion;
- be engaged positively with your education. You must not be involved in, or expect to become involved in, any disciplinary or other process which has the potential to limit or negatively impact your future enrolment in your current educational provision;
- in receipt of all benefits/other incomes to which you are eligible for to support with the costs of your studies and reduce the potential dependency on the scheme for payment of your rent. This includes Employment and Support Allowance and student loans and grants;
- use any money you receive through Student Finance for your studies, to cover rent costs. If you have asked for your rent to be covered but are known to be in receipt of these payments, it will be expected

that these are used to cover your rent before the scheme supports you with payments. This includes the Southampton City Council Higher Education Bursary accessible via an application from your PA;

- ensure that you make every effort to make your tenancy a success and leave yourself in a strong position to carry on paying rent for the following tenancy period. Some landlords only require a guarantor for the first year and therefore, with good payment history and adherence to expectations, you may not need to find another for ongoing occupancy.

What Do I Do If I am not able to Pay my Rent?

If you have been successful in your application and have received confirmation of this in writing and then find yourself unable to pay your rent, the process for accessing support is as follows:

1. As soon as you think/know you will be unable to pay your next rent instalment, notify your PA.
2. Your PA will then speak to a representative in the Southampton City Council Care Leavers Service (Pathways Through Care team) who has oversight on the scheme to request support.
3. Your PA will ask the landlord/letting agent for a rent statement and any narrative on the issue and upload this as evidence on Care Director.
4. The details of the amount owing and the period for which it is owed, will be considered and discussed with the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care, to agree payment.
5. Your PA will make sure that you are informed of how much will be paid via the scheme (the maximum the Council will cover is £850 per month per young person and for rent only).
6. Your PA will also discuss your plans to address rent payments in the future. This will ensure you feel supported in improving your situation. Taking action to address the situation could involve any number of actions for you, including (but not limited to) accessing the Universal Credit Housing Element, finding employment, or adjusting your household budget.

Appendix C– Process on a Page

Guidance on the process for applying to the Corporate Rent Guarantor scheme. Please ensure these processes are followed to protect young people and the effective use of public money.

Corporate Rent Guarantor application to Southampton City Council
When a young person is ready to live independently and eligible for the Corporate Rent Guarantor scheme, we advise that an application is submitted to support their search for accommodation as soon as possible.
Personal Advisor (PA) and Young People should complete Corporate Guarantor Application Form prior to a property being identified.
PA submits to Practice Manager (PM) for checking. PM checks and feeds back on any issues.
PM submits to the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care for authorisation.
The Head of Service for Pathways Through Care informs the PA and PM of the decision, copying in the relevant Service Lead.
Team Standards Coordinator (admin) (TSC) sends the letter to the young person outlining the outcome of the application. If accepted, this will be a letter of 'Acceptance in Principle' stating the Council stands as Corporate Guarantor pending a suitable agreement with the landlord/agent.
If accepted, the PA and young person will complete a Supplier Request Form (template in Appendix F) and send this to the Pathways Through Care team.

Corporate Rent Guarantor Process when a property is identified
Corporate Guarantor paperwork from landlord/agent to be submitted to Practice Advisor (PA) or Practice Manager (PM) for checking and ensuring our terms are agreed. Application review may be necessary at this stage if any young person's circumstances have changed.
The landlord/agent's terms should align with the Councils, stipulating a 12-month contract and that the guarantee is for unpaid rent only. If the property is deemed affordable and provided in writing by landlord/agent, the PA will forward the relevant documents to Head of Service for Pathways Through Care for Corporate Rent Guarantor paperwork to be signed. PA to upload evidence of the agreed terms on Care Director.
If terms are not aligned with Southampton City Council terms, i.e. not stipulating 12 months and rent only, the PA to liaise with letting agent/landlord and get written agreement that aligns with Southampton City Council terms.
Team Standards Coordinator and PA to track applications, agreements, and any issues.

Process if landlord requests a claim from Corporate Guarantor
Personal Advisor (PA) will inform the Pathways Through Care team as soon as the young person is facing financial difficulties. The Pathways Through Care team will set up a Purchase Order against the Supplier.
The landlord/letting agent can claim unpaid rent from the Pathways Through Care team. The PA will request a rent statement from the landlord/letting, and any narrative on the issues and upload it as evidence on Care Director.
The Practice Manager (PM) will liaise with the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care with agreement/refusal of payment and rationale and total to be paid.
Any funding required exceeding £500; PA/PM will discuss with the Access to Resources Panel.
PA will arrange for payment of arrears via Team Standards Coordinator (TSC).
TSC will raise and inform PA/PM/Head of Service for Pathways Through Care via email that this has been actioned and will be paid to the landlord/letting agent. TSC to record all on the tracker.

Appendix D - Approval Letter Template

Date:
Contact:
Telephone:
Email:



Dear *Name of applicant*

Re: Your Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme Application

Following your recent application to Southampton City Council's Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme, I am pleased to inform you that the Council will be able to act as your guarantor on this occasion.

Your Personal Advisor will be in contact shortly to confirm the next steps to complete to ensure we can act as your guarantor as soon as possible.

I would like to wish you well on this important step to independence.

Yours sincerely,

**Head of Service, on behalf of the Pathways Through Care Team
Southampton City Council**

Appendix E – Decline Letter Template



Date:
Contact:
Telephone:
Email:

Dear *Name of applicant*

Re: Your Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme Application

Following your recent application to Southampton City Council's Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme, I am very sorry to inform you that the Council will be unable to act as your guarantor on this occasion.

I know this will be disappointing for you and your Personal Advisor. Your Personal Advisor will be in contact shortly to discuss the reasons why we are unable to act as your guarantor. Your PA will be able to outline your alternative housing options and support you in addressing your housing needs.

Yours sincerely,

**Head of Service, on behalf of the Pathways Through Care Team
Southampton City Council**

Appendix F – Supplier Request Form

[Supplier Setup and Amendments \(southampton.gov.uk\)](http://southampton.gov.uk)

UNIT4 ERP ♥ 49 Southampton City Council

New Supplier Request Form x

New Supplier Form

Form ID* [NEW]

Form description*

Form owner
Cooper, Lucy
10088082

New Supplier Details | Supplier Address Details | Supplier Email Addresses | Bank Details | Add. Info and Messages

i Before attaching any documents the form will need to be Saved As Draft. NB. Please make sure to select an option for all 4 relation fields.

Supplier Information

Reason for Supplier Setup* <input type="text"/>	Type of Purchase* <input type="text"/>
Supplier Name* <input type="text"/>	
Short Name* <input type="text"/>	Supplier Group* <input type="text"/>
Ext Ref* SCC <input type="text"/>	Check Companies House <input type="checkbox"/>
Company Registration No.* <input type="text"/>	VAT Registration No.* <input type="text"/>
VAT Reg No. Check VAT Check	
Notes <input type="text"/>	

Risk Log

Risk	Probability*	Impact**	Identifying controls
<p>The council will be obliged to pay any rent costs only (not utility bills) if care leavers are unable to pay.</p>	<p>Possible (3)</p>	<p>Major (4)</p>	<p>As a first step, and during the application process, the care leaver must show that they are suitable for the scheme and that they are able to manage a realistic budget and will be able to afford rent. The team working around that young person will have a good indication of this, and an application process will be set up to ensure that only eligible, and suitable care leavers are accepted for this scheme.</p> <p>It will be the care leavers' responsibility to inform their Personal Advisor of any changes to their income, and if there is any risk of them not being able to pay rent. The Personal Advisor is to engage with the relevant leads within the Pathways Through Care Service to request support.</p> <p>Care Leavers are to inform their Personal Advisor of any financial worries as soon as possible so that options such as accessing Universal Credit, finding employment, or adjusting their household budget can be explored to support the care leaver.</p> <p>A young person's guide to the Rent Guarantor Scheme is appended to the policy. This will lay out the responsibilities of the care leaver as part of this process. The Personal Advisor will also support the young person to understand the details of the scheme.</p> <p>The council will only cover £850 a month on rent per care leaver. The council will guarantee rent only so, will not cover the cost of other breaches of tenancy, for example, damages to the property.</p> <p>Launching this policy as a pilot will enable the service and wider council to test out the scheme with up to 12 low-</p>

			risk young people to better understand the possible issues that would need further addressing.
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<p>Some landlords and letting agencies only accept personal guarantors. Meaning that the council would not be able to stand as guarantor for all properties.</p>	<p>Possible (3)</p>	<p>Significant (3)</p>	<p>The purpose of the pilot is for the local authority to gain a better understanding on which landlords and letting agencies will accept Corporate Guarantors. Initial engagement has already been made with 10 Southampton based letting agencies to understand whether they would accept a Corporate Guarantor. Some letting agencies may accept the council as a Guarantor and accept 'rent only', however, they all state it depends on the landlord, these agencies are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's Rent Southampton • Hunters Estate and Letting Agents • Edison Green Estate Agents <p>If the relevant landlord or letting agency will not accept a corporate guarantor, the Personal Advisor will work with the young person to review their options with other landlords and letting agencies.</p> <p>The Personal Advisor will also work with the young person to explore opportunities outside of the private rented sector which forms part of the local offer. This could include social housing or supported accommodation.</p> <p>If the young person is suitable for rented housing but the options are limited at the time, this may result in costs to the council to supply social housing or supported accommodation.</p> <p>This situation would not stop the young person from pursuing options to support their independence, but it may intervene with the wishes of the young person.</p>
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<p>Some landlords and letting agencies may need a guarantor for longer than the space of a year.</p>	<p>Possible (3)</p>	<p>Significant (3)</p>	<p>Some landlords only require a guarantor for the first year and therefore, with good payment history and adherence to expectations, the young person may not need to find another for ongoing occupancy.</p> <p>If this does occur, the Personal Advisor will work with the young person to review their options with other landlords and letting agencies.</p> <p>The Personal Advisor will also work with the young person to explore opportunities outside of the private rented sector which forms part of the local offer. This could include social housing or supported accommodation.</p> <p>If the young person is suitable for rented housing but the options are limited at the time, this may result in costs to the council to supply social housing or supported accommodation.</p> <p>This situation would not stop the young person from pursuing options to support their independence, but it may intervene with the wishes of the young person.</p>
<p>A limited number of care experienced young people apply for the scheme and are successful for the scheme.</p>	<p>Unlikely (2)</p>	<p>Moderate (2)</p>	<p>There is a possibility that care leavers do not apply for this scheme or are not successful in their application. This would not have any negative effects on the young person themselves, but it could mean that the pilot would not be successful and therefore the following areas would not be tested as part of the scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the financial implications by testing the numbers of young people who default on rental payments; • whether the scheme opens more choices of private rental accommodation, in terms of both quality and location; • whether young people in semi-independent accommodation can be moved into rental properties by using the enhanced offer of the council acting as a guarantor;

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the guarantor offer directly improves the outcomes for our care leavers in securing long term quality housing options. <p>The Pathways Through Care team are to create success criteria for the pilot, detailing what would need to happen as part of the pilot to achieve an understanding of the topics listed above.</p> <p>As stated in the report, there will be a mid-way review after six months (June 2024) and it is proposed that the findings be presented to Corporate Parenting Board. During the mid-way review, the numbers of those who have applied for the scheme will be reviewed alongside the success criteria. If the numbers are low, the Pathways Through Care team will explore options to extend the scheme, and work with the care experienced young people on their application process.</p>
Legal services do not have any dedicated resources to support this pilot	Likely (4)	Significant (3)	<p>Legal support is needed for the purposes of the Deed of Guarantee. A Deed of Guarantee is a binding legal document under which one party (the guarantor) agrees to guarantee that certain obligations of another party will be met. It is likely that the letting agencies/ landlord will create this document, but Legal support will be needed to review the document ahead of SCC signing it. SCC would not be able to sign a legally binding document without the approval of Legal Services.</p> <p>Discussions are on going on the availability of Legal Services.</p>

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Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

<p>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</p>	<p>Providing a rent guarantor scheme to care leavers.</p> <p>The rent guarantor offer will be against unpaid rent for the first 12 months of a young person’s tenancy. Offering to be a corporate rent guarantor for young people to move into their own tenancy is what any parent would do for their child if it meant they could move on to independence with security and stability for the first part of their tenancy.</p> <p>Our aim with the offer to be a guarantor is that we can open the private rental market to our young people, strengthening their case and giving them more options of accommodation. There would also be scope to review those young people in both supported and semi-independent accommodation, with a view to moving them into better quality independent rental properties. This may reduce costs for the Council whilst ensuring young people are supported in accessing private accommodation.</p>
<p>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</p>	
<p>The main target group will be young people, aged 18-24 years, leaving care who are ready for independence and prepared for their own tenancy. This includes young people in a foyer or supported accommodation. Young people must remain 25 years old during their tenancy to be eligible for the scheme.</p> <p>We currently have 281 Care Leavers aged 18-24 years old. Some of these young people will have alternative plans, such as requiring supported accommodation, attending university and education plans, or are bidding on social housing already. Some young people may not have plans to reside with a friend or family member. Some young people may not</p>	

require the Council to support them as a rent guarantor due to having other streams of funding or being fully independent.

However, this scheme will benefit young care leavers who require a corporate rent guarantor to access private rented accommodation.

Summary of Impact and Issues

There is a financial risk for the Council to pay the unpaid rent income if a care leaver under the scheme defaults on their tenancy. The likelihood is that any guarantee called in may not be recovered. Therefore, there will be budgetary implications for the Council on an ongoing annual basis. A 12-month period for a pilot would give an indication of the financial implications for future years. If the financial risks are too high, there is the option not to progress the pilot into Southampton City Council policy.

Potential Positive Impacts

The following list is the potential benefits that would be realised pending the successful delivery of the Rent Guarantor Scheme Policy pilot.

- Care Leavers will have better and more secure access to private rented accommodation.
- Care Leavers will have the same options and opportunities as young people that have not been in care.
- The local offer would have a better variety of support available to care leavers.
- It provides an opportunity for care leavers to become independent and learn to manage tenants and pay bills.
- Care leavers are supported by the council if issues arise around the accommodation.
- The Council will be able to support eligible care leavers as part of this scheme which could potentially result in cost avoidance to provide other sources of accommodation.
- The scheme aligns with key deliverables set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, and the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Responsible Service Manager

Ellie Steel and Nikky Brown

Date

27/11/2023

Approved by Senior Manager	Anisha Reed and Steph Murray
Date	27/11/2023

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	Not ready for independence at aged 18, likely to mean that their budgeting skills impact on their ability to sustain a tenancy.	Pathways Through Care have developed an Independent Life skills Workshop, an 8-week program to help develop independence skills and ensure young people are tenancy ready earlier.
Disability	Young People with a disability may face barriers to accessing employment or training which will impact on their ability to afford their accommodation.	<p>Personal Advisors ensure all young people have access to appropriate benefits that could provide them with a suitable income to manage their living expenses, to work with partner agencies to ensure more suitable accommodation is provided where needed.</p> <p>Young people who are unable to work due to a disability may be eligible for the scheme. They will need to demonstrate that their income/benefits can pay for rent costs and cost of living.</p>
Gender Reassignment	N/A	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	This could support a young person's application as it would allow 2 financial streams in respect of living costs.	Personal Advisors to ensure appropriate advice is given when holding a joint tenancy.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Young People may face barriers to accessing employment or training. This may impact their ability to afford	Personal Advisors ensure all young people have access to appropriate benefits that

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	their accommodation and may increase their living costs caring for a baby/child.	could provide them with a suitable income to manage their living expenses.
Race	N/A	N/A
Religion or Belief	N/A	N/A
Sex	N/A	N/A
Sexual Orientation	N/A	N/A
Community Safety	Young people's vulnerabilities may make it difficult to live in certain areas, this can be due to proximity to family members, contextual safeguarding or criminal offences.	The Rent Guarantor Scheme would allow the young person to access accommodation in other areas to mitigate the risks.
Poverty	Accommodation can be unaffordable in the Southampton City area, with cost of living rising, young people may struggle to manage their living costs	<p>Personal Advisors will help to ensure all young people have access to appropriate benefits that could provide them with a suitable income to manage their living expenses.</p> <p>Personal Advisors will support young people to secure employment or training to increase their income.</p> <p>The Rent Guarantor Scheme would allow the Council to access accommodation in other areas that may be deemed more affordable.</p>
Health & Wellbeing	Young People's health needs may make it more difficult to access employment or training which will impact their ability to afford their accommodation.	Personal Advisors will help to ensure all young people have access to appropriate benefits that could provide them with a suitable income to manage their living expenses, to work with partner agencies to ensure more suitable accommodation is provided where needed.

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
		The Rent Guarantor Scheme would support young people financially and remove the stress and worry in securing a home.
Care Experienced	This policy will support care-experienced young people in the private rented sector, expanding their housing options. The pilot policy limits the number of care experienced young people able to benefit from this scheme to 12.	The pilot will determine the positive impacts of this policy, and any issues which may need to be addressed. The Cabinet will review this policy in one year to determine whether to accept more care leavers into the scheme.
Other Significant Impacts	An Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker may still be awaiting their Home Office Decision and have no recourse to public funds to claim benefits or seek employment.	This cohort would not be eligible for a rent guarantor scheme until they receive Leave to Remain.

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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Project Details

Name of Project
Policy for the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme for Care Experienced Young People
Brief Summary of Project
<p>The Pathways Through Care Service would like to start a 12-month pilot of the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme starting in January 2024.</p> <p>The Guarantor Scheme means that Southampton City Council (the Council) will act as the ‘Corporate Guarantor’ for the councils care experienced young people in their leaving care journey. Implementing this scheme will provide more housing options to young people by enabling young care leavers to access the private rental market. The Council will act as the guarantor for care leavers for 12 months of the tenancy, providing that the care leaver remains under the age of 25 years old throughout the entire tenancy.</p> <p>The pilot will test out the financial implications, and the impact the scheme has on care experienced young people.</p> <p>The Pathways Through Care Service are proposing to start the pilot on a small scale by limiting the number of successful applications to 12 in the year. This is to minimise the potential financial risks for the Council involved in the scheme, and to consider learning from other Local Authorities. Other mitigating actions include an application process ensuring care leavers have the means to pay rent, and a limit on the amount the Council will guarantee to pay being £850 per month, for each care leaver.</p> <p>The care experienced young people who are interested in the scheme will need to apply via completion of an application form. The application form is part of the first stage application process and details will be needed from the young person in relation to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their currently living situation; • their education, training, or employment status; • their financial situation (including income, benefits, loans, bank statements); • evidence of their budget management plan (including monthly outgoings); • their housing/ accommodation aspirations; • their future living arrangements; • their independent skills; • their financial plans if anything was to go wrong; • contact details for their supporting references (could be their Personal Advisor, Social Worker, Carer, Employer, Tutor etc.). <p>Following the completion of the application form, the young persons Personal Advisor, and the relevant Practice Manager within the Children and Learning service will provide their comments, and recommendations for next steps. This information will be used to determine whether the young person will be successful for the scheme. Much of this</p>

information/ data would not be new to the service, but the way in which the data is collected is different to pre-existing arrangements. The data collected will then be used to make decisions regarding the young person's eligibility of the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme.

The Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme pilot would come to an end in December 2024, and a further decision will need to be made on whether the policy will remain in place long term.

Estimated Completion Date

December 2024

Name of Project Lead

Anisha Reed, Head of Service for Pathways Through Care (Children and Learning)

Details of Person Conducting DPIA

Name

Lucy Cooper

Position

Assistant Project Manager (Projects & Change)

Contact Email Address

lucy.cooper@southampton.gov.uk

Step 1: Identifying the need for a DPIA

Does your project involve the processing of personal data by or on behalf of Southampton City Council?

“Personal Data” means information that relates to an individual, who can be identified (either by the information alone, or when combined with other information).

“Processing” means collecting, recording, organising, structuring, storing, adapting, altering, retrieving, consulting, using, disclosing, combining, restricting, erasing, or destroying.

It should be integral to the project, and not just incidental to it.

Yes

No

If your project does **not** involve the processing of personal data by or on behalf of Southampton City Council, tick the declaration at the end of this section.

If your project **does** involve the processing of personal data by or on behalf of Southampton City Council, proceed to the next set of screening questions below.

Does your project involve any of the following? (Not all may apply, tick those that do)

- The collection of new information about individuals
- Compelling individuals to provide information about themselves.
- The disclosure of information about individuals to organisations or people who have not previously had routine access to the information.
- The use of existing information about individuals for a purpose it is not currently used for, or in a way it is not currently used.
- Contacting individuals in ways which they may find intrusive.
- Making changes to the way personal information is obtained, recorded, transmitted, deleted, or held

Are you planning to carry out any of the following? (Not all may apply, tick those that do)

- Evaluation or scoring
- Processing of sensitive data or data of a highly personal nature
- Processing on a large scale¹
- Processing of data concerning vulnerable data subjects
- Processing that involves preventing data subjects from exercising a right or using a service or contract

Do you plan to...? (Not all may apply, tick those that do)

- Use systematic and extensive profiling or automated decision-making to make significant decisions about people
- Process special-category data² or criminal-offence data on a large scale
- Systematically monitor a publicly accessible place on a large scale
- Use innovative technological or organisational solutions.
- Use profiling, automated decision-making or special category data to help make decisions on someone's access to a service, opportunity, or benefit
- Carry out profiling on a large scale

¹ "Large scale" can mean the number of individuals involved, the volume of data, the variety of data, the duration of processing, or geographical area.

² Special category data is personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation.

- Process biometric or genetic data
- Combine, compare, or match data from multiple sources
- Process personal data without providing a privacy notice directly to the individual
- Process personal data in a way that involves tracking individuals' online or offline location or behaviour
- Process children's personal data for profiling or automated decision-making or for marketing purposes, or offer online services directly to them
- Process personal data that could result in a risk of physical harm in the event of a security breach

If you have ticked any of these, please proceed to Step 2.

If **none** of these apply, please tick the below box, and return the form to the Information Lawyer (Data Protection Officer) at dataprotection@southampton.gov.uk

- None of the screening statements in Step 1 of this document apply to the project, and I have determined that it is not necessary to conduct a Data Protection Impact Assessment

Step 2: Describe the processing.

Details of the Personal Data

What type of personal data is being processed? Tick all that apply

- Education and training details
- Employment details
- Family, lifestyle, and social circumstances
- Financial details
- Goods or services provided and related information
- Personal details issued as an identifier (e.g. NHS Number)
- Personal details, including any information that identifies the data subject and their personal characteristics

What is the nature of the data?

INFO: Detail the type of personal data being processed. List any fields that will be processed (e.g. name, address, data of birth, NHS number, video images)

The following questions are within the draft application form for the young person to answer/ complete:

- Name & DOB of Applicant;
- What is your current living situation;
- What is the accommodation for (e.g., University, full-time residence);
- If university accommodation, name of university;
- What is your current education, training, or employment status;
- Do you have any reason to believe that this may change over the next 6 months;
- How much can you afford to pay in rent per month;
- Please explain how you will pay your rent, for example, wages, Housing Benefit, Student Loan, etc.;
- Please submit to Southampton City Council copies of any documentation with your application form (options: Housing Benefit eligibility letter, Letter of financial support from Southampton City Council, University Finance entitlement summary);
- Please also attach copies of the last 3 months' bank statements. Additionally, if you work, please attach the last 3 months' pay slips and proof of employment;
- Please provide us with a breakdown of your planned expenditure to provide evidence to Southampton City Council you have a monthly budget;
- Please advise and tick the appropriate box if you receive your income other than monthly (options: daily, weekly, fortnightly, other: please specify);
- Planned expenditure breakdown (including monthly income and monthly outgoings);
- Have you found a property;
- If you have said no, do you know which area/s you may want to live in and what are you doing to find a property, if so, please specify;
- If yes, what is the monthly rental cost per week/month;
- Please specify what research have you carried out in relation to local rent costs;
- What will be the living arrangements in this property (options: alone, in a shared house with friends, in a shared house with others, in student halls of residence for university study, what a partner/friend, other, please specify);
- Which skills do you believe that an individual requires to live independently and how would you describe those you have;
- If you found yourself in financial difficulty, who would you turn to for budgeting and practical support;
- How would you financially cope if you found yourself with an unexpected bill, loss of your job, or if you do not have any 'spare money'; whilst still paying your rent;
- Please provide us with contact details for a supporting reference (for example, your Personal Advisor, Social Worker, Carer, Employer, Tutor, or another);
- Please specify any further information that you feel may help towards your application.

The following questions are within the draft application form for the Children and Learning Service to answer/ complete:

- Date form completed;
- Allocated PA;
- Team/Hub;

- Practice Manager;
- Personal Advisor Comments/Recommendations;
- Practice Manager Comments/Recommendations.

What special category / sensitive data is being processed? Tick all that apply

- Physical or mental health
- Religious or philosophical beliefs
- Trade union membership
- Sexual orientation
- Criminal record
- Criminal proceedings
- Racial or ethnic origin
- Political opinions
- Biometric or Genetic data
- No special category / sensitive data

What is the nature of the special category / sensitive data? Please provide further information

n/a

Does the project involve the use of social care data?

- Yes
- No

Does the project utilise existing and established IT systems, or require the use / procurement of a new system?

- Existing / established system
- New system

The nature of the processing

Briefly describe the flow of personal data

INFO: Describe “the journey” of the data, from the point of collection from the data subject, through the various parties and departments involved.

- The Personal Advisor will identify a young person who is suitable for the scheme and will complete a guarantor application form with the young person. The Personal Advisor will need to provide a summary as to why they believe that the young person can hold a tenancy.
- The young person will sign a statement to say that they promise to meet the commitments of their rent payments each month, using whatever legal income they receive to do this. They will also sign to agree that all benefits or other monies received specifically for the purpose of paying accommodation costs, will be used.
- The summary, application form and documents relating to the tenancy should be checked by the respective Practice Manager and these will be shared via email. The PM will need to agree that the young person is able to meet the requirements to oversee their own accommodation.
- The Practice Manager and Personal Advisor will each sign a statement stating that they have assessed that there is affordability for this young person, for which they feel it is appropriate for the Council to ‘Guarantee’. They will each sign a statement to say they are confident in the young person’s ability to manage a tenancy with only basic input from their Personal Advisor.
- The Practice Manager or Personal Advisor will then forward all the documents (including signed statements) to the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care who will check and assess whether it seems an appropriate agreement. The agreement for the Council to act as a Guarantor will be given by the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care. They will also have overall responsibility for the tracking and monitoring of financial implications.
- Once the documents have been reviewed and a decision has been made on them, the files will be stored within the young persons file on Care Director.

Overall, the data shared by the young person via the application form will only be shared with the relevant Personal Advisor, the relevant Practice Manager, and the Head of Service for Pathways Through Care. The documents will be shared securely via email and stored in Care Director with the young person’s file.

How will the data be collected? E.g. via form, system transfer, face to face etc.

The data will be collected via an application form completed by the care experienced young person. The application form will be a Microsoft Word document which will be shared via email and later stored on Care Director after completion.

How will the data be used?

The data will be used to make an informed decision as to whether the young person is eligible for the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme.

How will the data be stored?

The data will be stored within the young person's file within Care Director for 7 years. This will enable the service to obtain the information throughout the process of the young person being part of the scheme (from 18 to 25 years old).

How will the data be deleted? E.g. Manually, via automated process etc.

The data will be stored within Care Director for 7 years, but how the data will be deleted is still to be confirmed. Work is being undertaken by the Care Director team to create a 'finance' section within the system for storing of all financial information on each child and young person open to children services. These updates have not yet been completed and will be an action to monitor as part of this DPIA. As part of the creation of the 'finance' section within Care Director the options are to be explored about whether a notification can be built into the section to highlight when information has been stored for the 7 years, and a reminder to manually delete the document.

The decision about whether the young person has been accepted for the scheme or not will be stored separately and will be manually deleted adhering to the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, s. 50 which states the retention period for records of looked after children should be obtained for 75 years from the child's 18th birthday. This information is to be kept for a longer duration to ensure that the young person will be able to access the information about the support that the council have provided them throughout their time being open to the service. There is a risk that any person that was open to social care can take legal action against the council for improper support, and logging this decision and the rationale for the decision will mitigate that future risk.

What is the source of the data? i.e. What is the flow of data into the Council?

The data will be submitted by the young person themselves and shared with their Personal Advisor via email, if they have not worked on the document together. If the young person and the Personal Advisor completed the document together, the Personal Advisor would then share it with the relevant leads within the council (Personal Advisor, Practice Manager, and Head of Service for Pathways Through Care). The application form will then be stored within Care Director for 7 years.

Will you be sharing data with anyone?

INFO: If yes, please provide details

The data will be shared with the relevant leads within the Children and Learning Service (Personal Advisor, Practice Manager, and Head of Service for Pathways Through Care).

If so, how will the data be transferred?

The data will be transferred via email to the relevant leads within the Children and Learning Service (Personal Advisor, Practice Manager, and Head of Service for Pathways Through Care).

If the data is being shared, will this be governed by an agreement? e.g. contract, data sharing agreement, data processing agreement

A privacy notice will need to be created for this work.

Describe the scope of the processing

How often will the data be collected and used?

The data will be collected on an ad hoc basis, as and when the young people apply for the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme. The Pathways Through Care Service are proposing to start the pilot on a small scale by limiting the number of successful applications to 12 in the year.

How long will you keep the data, and how is this length of time justified?

The data will be stored within Care Director for 7 years, but how the data will be deleted is still to be confirmed (detail above). A 7-year retention period is standard for financial information. This will also allow for the information to be obtained throughout the duration of the young person applying for the scheme (age 18), until the young person will no longer be supported by the children and learning service (age 25).

The decision about whether the young person has been accepted for the scheme or not will be stored separately and will be manually deleted adhering to the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, s. 50 which states the retention period for records of looked after children should be obtained for 75 years from the child's 18th birthday. This information is to be kept for a longer duration to ensure that the young person will be able to access the information about the support that the council have provided them throughout their time being open to the service. There is a risk that any person that was open to social care can take legal action against the council for improper support, and logging this decision and the rationale for the decision will mitigate that future risk.

Is the time period reflected in the Council's Retention Schedule?

<https://staffinfo.southampton.gov.uk/information-governance/records-management/retention.aspx>

INFO: Please specify the corresponding entry on the Council's Retention Schedule. If unsure, contact the Information Officer (Data Management):

records.management@southampton.gov.uk

Yes, regarding the retention period of the application form, financial records including accountancy, budget, assets, creditors/income, and banking can be stored for up to 7 year (Fin Yr of the transaction + 6 Fin Yrs.) which is corporate/ statutory.

Yes, regarding the retention period for the decision on the application, under section EA 9 (page 100), records relating to looked after children states the following:

Review/Retention period & by what authority: 75 years from date of birth; 15 years from date of death if deceased before age of 18 (where there is a family unit in care, the above apply to the date of birth of the youngest child).

How many individuals are affected?

The volume of individuals that will be submitting their personal data cannot be estimated and will be based on the amount of young people that submit a completed application form to their Personal Advisor. The Pathways Through Care Service are proposing to start the pilot on a small scale by limiting the number of successful applications to 12 in the year.

What geographical area does it cover?

National as not only will this scheme support care leavers moving into local private accommodation, but the scheme will also support care leavers that are at university across England to move into private rented accommodation for their studies.

Describe the context of the processing

What is the nature of your relationship with the individuals?

INFO: Detail who the data subjects will be (e.g. residents, carers, pupils, staff, professionals)

The young people that will be submitting data will be residents of Southampton and will be care leavers, therefore known to the Children and Learning Service. The care experienced young people will already have a relationship with their Personal Advisors (professionals).

How much control will they have over their data? Will they be able to change it, access it, delete it etc.?

The young person will be able to control the information that they submit ahead of sending off the application form. They will also be able to work with their Personal Advisors on the application itself, and the process in which to follow. Once the application has been submitted, following the review of the Personal Advisor, the information cannot be changed.

Would they reasonably expect the Council to use their data in this way?

INFO: Please provide details to support your answer

Yes, to make an informed decision, the Pathways Through Care Service will need the information set out within the application form. The information will only be used for essential council purposes and will only be shared out of the original remit if there is a safeguarding concern. A privacy notice will need to be created for this work.

Do they include children or other vulnerable groups?

INFO: If yes, please provide details

Yes, the information that is being shared via the application process is information about and from care experienced young people. The scheme and application process will be open to young people aged 18 - 24. The rationale for stating yes in this section is that children in care and care leavers are considered to have protective characteristics in Southampton and can be viewed as being in a vulnerable group.

Are you aware of any prior concerns over this type of processing or security flaws?

INFO: If yes, please provide details

No.

Is the processing novel in any way? E.g. do other local authorities have a similar process in place?

INFO: If yes, please provide details

No. Many other local authorities have implemented a Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme for care experienced young people. Some examples are Medway Council, North Somerset Council, Kent County Council, and Dorset Council. Engagement with Medway has taken place over the course of the policy development, and they also have an application form for the care experienced young people to complete as part of the scheme. Both application forms are very similar in the questions that it asks.

Are there any current issues of public concern that should be considered?

INFO: If yes, please provide details

No.

Describe the purposes of the processing

What do you want to achieve?

The Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme wants to achieve the following for care experienced young people:

- Care Leavers will have better and more secure access to private rented accommodation.
- Care Leavers will have the same options and opportunities as young people that have not been in care.
- The local offer would have a better variety of support available to care leavers.
- It provides an opportunity for care leaver to become independent and learn to manage tenants and pay bills.
- Care leavers are supported by the council if issues arise around the accommodation.
- The Council will be able to support eligible care leavers as part of this scheme which could potentially result in cost avoidance to provide other sources of accommodation.

What is the intended effect on individuals?

The intended effect on individuals is to ensure that care experienced young people have access to opportunities that other young people in the city have. The goal is to help care experienced young people with their independence, by supporting them to move into private rented accommodation without the worry of not having a personal guarantor. The information that the young people provide within the application form will help professionals make an informed decision on eligibility and ensure the best outcome for the young person.

What are the benefits of the processing – for the Council, and more broadly?

INFO: Please confirm which of the Council's key goals this will support, and how

Goal:

- Strong foundations for life
- A proud and resilient city
- A prosperous city
- A successful, sustainable organisation

Please explain how the goal is met

The Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme supports the Council’s key goal of ‘strong foundations for life’, ensuring that the care experienced young people have access to positive opportunities that support their future.

Children Services, and the Corporate Parenting Board are responsible for the delivery of the [Corporate Parenting Strategy](#) which was published in 2022 and will run until 2027. The strategy sets out 7 key priority areas, one of which is around home and accommodation. One of the key deliverables linked to the priority is around increasing the Council’s enhanced housing offer for young people as they move into adulthood. Publishing the Rent Guarantor Scheme Policy would help achieve this aim.

The scheme aligns with key deliverables set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, and the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Step 3: Consultation

Consider how to consult with relevant stakeholders

Do you think it’s necessary to consult with the public about the processing?
If not, why?

INFO: Please provide details to support your answer

A formal consultation on the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme pilot is set to start on Monday 14th August and conclude on 29th September (7 weeks total). The final decision is intended to be at Cabinet on 19th December 2023.

As part of the formal consultation period, direct engagement will be made with care leavers, the Corporate Parenting Board, and the internal Housing service so that they are able to understand how this would impact them, and what their views are on the pilot.

Legal have advised that a Privacy Notice is created as part of this work.

Who else do you need to involve, or have you already involved within the Council?

INFO: e.g. IT services, records management

The only services that have been involved within the development of the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme pilot is the Children and Learning Service, Finance, Legal, Policy, and Projects & Change.

Do you plan to consult IT, external information security experts, or any other experts? If not, why?

INFO: Please provide details to support your answer

Not currently but will if advised to do so.

Step 4: Assess necessity and proportionality

Describe compliance and proportionality measures

What do you consider your lawful basis for processing to be? Please choose one of the following...

INFO: There should generally only be one legal basis for processing.

- The data subject has given consent.
- The processing is necessary for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is party or to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering a contract.
- The processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the Council is subject.
- The processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Council.
- The processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the Council or by a third party

Please provide further information to support this

INFO: For example, if the processing is necessary in order for the Council to perform a statutory function, detail the relevant legislation.

The data will be provided directly by the young person, with the help of their Personal Advisor. The processing of the data provided is necessary to make an informed decision on whether the young person in question is eligible and suitable for the scheme. Once the data has been submitted by the young person, the individual cannot amend any information shared. If successful for the scheme, there will be a legal contract in place which details the role of the young person, and the role of the corporate guarantor.

Why is the processing deemed necessary?

INFO: e.g. Is the Council under an obligation to provide a service, or is there a particular problem that the project is trying to address?

The process is deemed necessary to offer a new service to care experienced young people. This work is for the purposes of a new opportunity and not to address a problem of any kind.

The problem that this scheme is addressing is that not all care leavers have their parents or adults in their lives to support them with independence. The scheme will allow the council to act as the corporate parents for the young person and give them the same opportunities other young people have.

Southampton's care leavers are some of the most vulnerable young people in the community who have experienced trauma and loss in their childhood. This has led to them being removed from their families and placed in local authority care. Once a young

person in care reaches the age of 18, they are at a stage in their lives where they can become more independent.

The Council is using powers under the Localism Act 2011 to carry out this scheme. The Localism Act 2011 contains a wide range of measures to devolve more powers to councils and neighbourhoods. The Localism Act 2011 states 'A local authority has the power to do anything that individuals may generally do', subject to certain exceptions, none of which are applicable here. This Act gives the power to Local Authorities to act as a Corporate Guarantor for young care leavers.

The following list is the potential benefits that could be realised pending the successful delivery of the Rent Guarantor Scheme Policy pilot.

- Care Leavers will have better and more secure access to private rented accommodation.
- Care Leavers will have the same options and opportunities as young people that have not been in care.
- The local offer would have a better variety of support available to care leavers.
- It provides an opportunity for care leavers to become independent and learn to manage tenants and pay bills.
- Care leavers are supported by the Council if issues arise around the accommodation.
- The scheme aligns with key deliverables set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, and the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Does the processing actually achieve your purpose?

INFO: Please provide details to support your answer

Yes, the process will help the Pathways Through Care Service to successfully roll out a new service for care experienced young people to have access to private rented accommodation, if they do not have a personal guarantor. Without the process, professionals will not be able to offer the scheme to young people as they would not have the information, they need to make an informed decision.

Is there another way to achieve the same outcome?

INFO: Please details to support your answer

No, without the young person submitting their data, the professionals would not have the evidence they need to determine whether this accommodation route would be suitable for that young person.

How will you prevent function creep?

INFO: Function creep is where data collected for one purpose is used for another purpose over time.

The data will primarily be used to determine eligibility for the scheme and will have professionals make those decisions. There is potential that if the young person applies form for the scheme, but it is declined, the Pathways Through Care Service would investigate options to use that data to help them secure other accommodation such as social housing. These options will be discussed with the care leaver themselves on what options they want to consider.

How will you ensure data quality and data minimisation?

INFO: We should only use the minimum amount of personal data possible to achieve the purpose of the processing.

The application form has been created with data quality in mind and is only asking necessary questions for decision making. The service will already have some of the information provided by the young person as part of other data processing for care leavers, but some of the data would be new and only needed for the purposes of checking eligibility of the scheme.

What information will you give individuals about the processing?

As part of the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme pilot, a young person’s guide has been drafted to ensure that the process of the scheme is clearly set out, and they understand key information such as what a Guarantor is, what does the scheme offer, as well as eligibility and support via the scheme.

Legal services have advised that a Privacy Notice is also needed as part of this work to ensure the young person is aware of what information the council is collecting, how it is being used, and stored.

Aside from existing corporate processes, will there be any additional measures in place to support individuals exercising their privacy rights?

INFO: Data subject’s rights include the right to access, rectify, erase, port, and restrict their data.

Additional measures could include self-service options to enable individuals to change / update their personal data, or download copies of their data

Legal services have advised that a Privacy Notice is also needed as part of this work to ensure the young person is aware of what information the council is collecting, how it is being used, and stored.

If a third party is carrying out the processing on our behalf, what measures will be in place to ensure they comply with the UK GDPR, and assist the Council in supporting individuals in exercising their rights?

INFO: E.g. will there be a contract in place with the third party that contains data protection obligations?

n/a

How do you safeguard any international transfers of personal data?

INFO: If there are no international transfers involved, please state this

n/a there would be no international transfers involved.

Step 5: Send DPIA Form to the Data Protection Officer

After completing this part of the form, please send the document to the Information Lawyer (Data Protection Officer) at dataprotection@southampton.gov.uk
The DPO will review the information provided and identify and assess the privacy risks.

Step 6: Identify and assess risks (DPO to complete)

Describe source of risk and nature of potential impact on individuals. Include associated compliance and corporate risks as necessary.	Likelihood of harm	Severity of harm	Overall risk
<p>Although a retention period has been identified, it is not yet known on an operational level how this retention period will be enforced / enacted.</p> <p>This could lead to personal data being kept for longer than is necessary.</p>	Low	Minimal	Low

Step 7: Identify legal basis and measures to reduce risk (DPO to complete)

Condition(s) for Processing
Personal Data
<p><input type="checkbox"/> The data subject has given consent</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The processing is necessary for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is party or in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the Council is subject</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Council</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the Council or by a third party</p>
Further Information
<p>If successful for the scheme, there will be a legal contract in place which details the role of the young person, and the role of the corporate guarantor.</p>

Special Categories of Personal Data

- The data subject has given explicit consent
- The processing is necessary for the purposes of carrying out the obligations and exercising specific rights of the controller or of the data subject in the field of employment and social security and social protection law
- The processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest
- The processing is necessary for the purposes of preventive or occupational medicine, for the assessment of the working capacity of the employee, medical diagnosis, the provision of health or social care or treatment or the management of health or social care systems
- The processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes
- No special category data being processed

Further Information

No special category personal data processed as part of the application.

Data Protection Act 2018 Schedule 1 Condition

N/A

Further Information

N/A

Identify additional measures you could take to reduce or eliminate risks identified as medium or high risk in step 5

Risk	Options to reduce or eliminate risk	Effect on risk	Residual risk
1.	<p>As per the DPIA, work is being undertaken by the Care Director team to create a 'finance' section within the system for storing of all financial information on each child and young person open to children services.</p> <p>As part of the creation of the 'finance' section within Care Director the options are to be explored about whether a notification can be built into the section to highlight when information has been stored for the 7 years, and a reminder to manually delete the document.</p>	Eliminated	N/A

Comments from the Data Protection Officer

No additional comments.

Comments from the Information Officer (Data Management)

No additional comments.

Comments from the Head of IT

Not consulted due to the use of existing / established systems.

Step 8: Sign off

Item	Date	Notes
DPO reviewed DPIA and provided advice on:	21 st November 2023	DPO should advise on compliance, step 7 measures and whether processing can proceed
Information Officer (Data Management) reviewed DPIA on:	28 th July 2023	SRO should advise on records management matters
Head of IT reviewed DPIA on:	N/A	Head of IT should advise on IT security matters
Measures approved by Project Lead on:	27 th November 2023	Integrate actions back into project plan, with date and responsibility for completion
Comments from Project Lead:	No comments.	
Residual risks approved by Information Asset Owner / Administrator on:	4 th December 2023	The relevant IAO or IAA is required to accept any residual risks associated with the processing.
Comments from IAO / IAA:	No comments.	
Project approved by Caldicott Guardian (CG) on:	28 th November 2023	The relevant Caldicott Guardian is required to approve any project involving the processing of social care data.
Comments from CG:	No comments (cc'd in)	
Residual high risks approved by the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) on:	N/A	If accepting any residual high risk, consult the ICO before going ahead
Comments from SIRO:	N/A	

Step 9: Review

Item	Date	Comments
DPO reviewed DPIA on:		
Date of next review:		

Draft Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy for Care Experienced Young People

Full results summary

Data, Intelligence & Insight Team – November 2023



- [Introduction and Methodology](#)
- [Respondents](#)
- [Proposed policy](#)
- [Council acting as Corporate Rent Guarantor](#)
- [Eligibility Criteria](#)
- [Commitments of the draft policy](#)
- [Impact on care experienced young people](#)
- [Proposed draft policy](#)



Introduction and Methodology



Southampton City Council undertook public consultation on the proposed Draft Corporate Rent Guarantor Policy for Care Experienced Young People

- The consultation took place between **27/09/2023 – 07/11/2023**.
- The aim of this consultation was to:
 - Hear thoughts on the proposals and any impacts or alternative suggestions regarding the policy that would enable the Council to act as a corporate guarantor for young people who have experienced care. This would help young care leavers to rent accommodation in the private rented sector.
- This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.
- It is important to be mindful that a consultation is not a vote, it is an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views, concerns and alternatives to a proposal. This report outlines in detail the representations made during the consultation period so that decision makers can consider what has been said alongside other information.



Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard, which are meaningful and comply with *The Gunning Principles (considered to be the legal standard for consultations)*:

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1. Proposals are still at a formative stage (a final decision has not yet been made)
2. There is sufficient information put forward in the proposals to allow ‘intelligent consideration’
3. There is adequate time for consideration and response
4. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made



New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement



Rules: The Gunning Principles

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation. Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

1. **proposals are still at a formative stage**
A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
2. **there is sufficient information to give ‘intelligent consideration’**
The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
3. **there is adequate time for consideration and response**
There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
4. **‘conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**
Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

These principles were reinforced in 2001 in the ‘Coughlan Case (R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan²)’, which involved a health authority closure and confirmed that they applied to all consultations, and then in a Supreme Court case in 2014 (R ex parte Moseley v LB Haringey³), which endorsed the legal standing of the four principles. Since then, the Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.⁴

¹ In some local authorities, their local voluntary Compact agreement with the third sector may specify the length of time they are required to consult for. However, in many cases, the Compact is either inactive or has been cancelled so the consultation timeframe is open to debate

² BAILII, [England and Wales Court of Appeal \(Civil Decision\) Decisions](#), Accessed: 13 December 2016.

³ BAILII, [United Kingdom Supreme Court](#), Accessed: 13 December 2016

⁴ The information used to produce this document has been taken from the Law of Consultation training course provided by The Consultation Institute



- The agreed approach for this consultation was to use an online questionnaire as the main route for feedback. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured questionnaire, helping to ensure respondents are aware of the background and detail of the proposals.
- Respondents could also write letters or emails to provide feedback on the proposals. Emails or letters from stakeholders that contained consultation feedback were collated and analysed as a part of the overall consultation.
- The consultation was promoted in the following ways by:
 - Through council communications – email bulletins and social media channels.
 - Shared with key contacts at other organisations e.g. Care Leavers Forum.
 - Southampton City Council website.
- All questionnaire results have been analysed and presented in graphs within this report. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition, anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails.



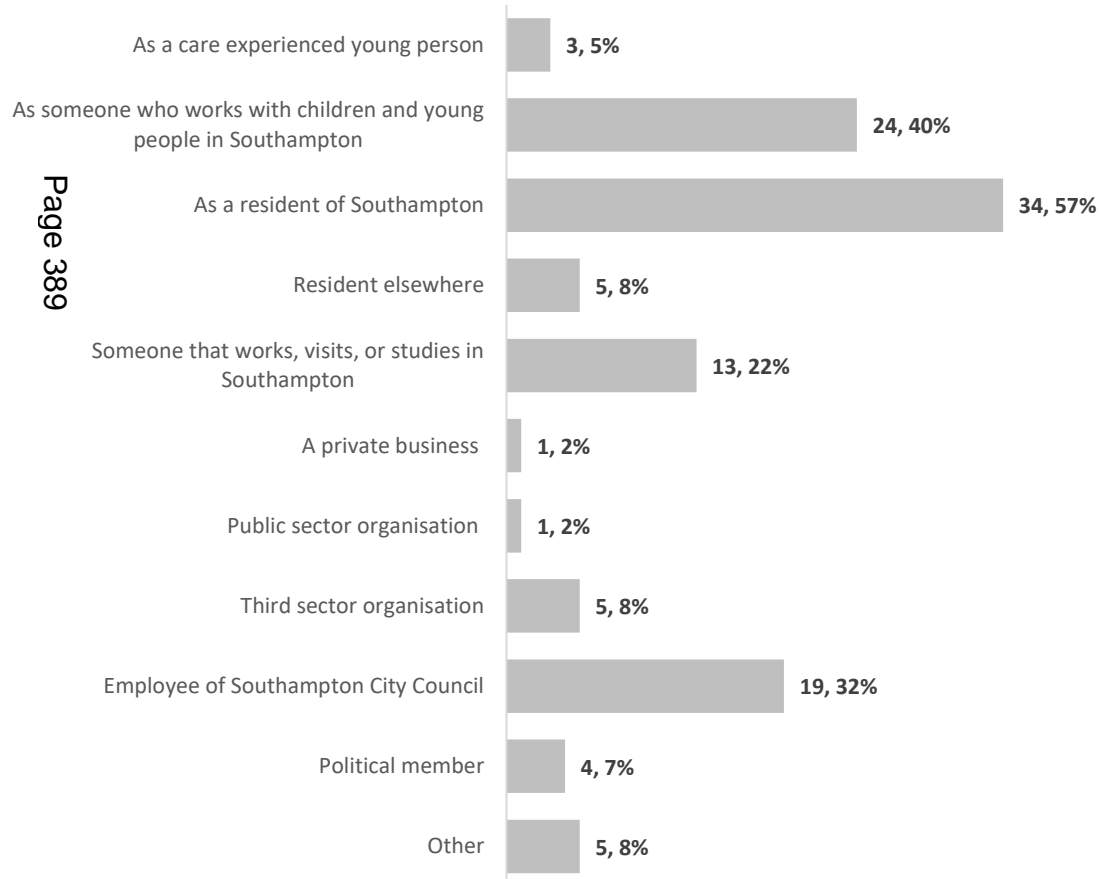
Who were the respondents?

Total respondents:

	Total number of responses
Questionnaire	60
Emails / letters	0
Total	60

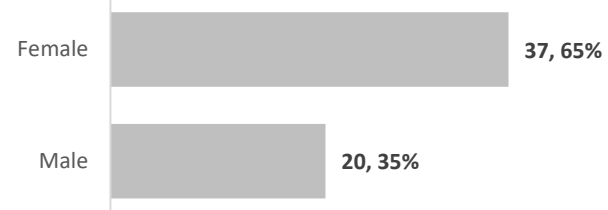
The following graphs are shown in respondent count and percentage .

Interest in the consultation:

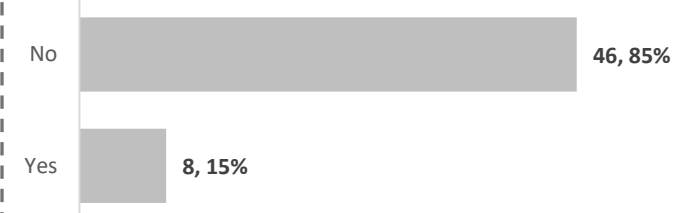


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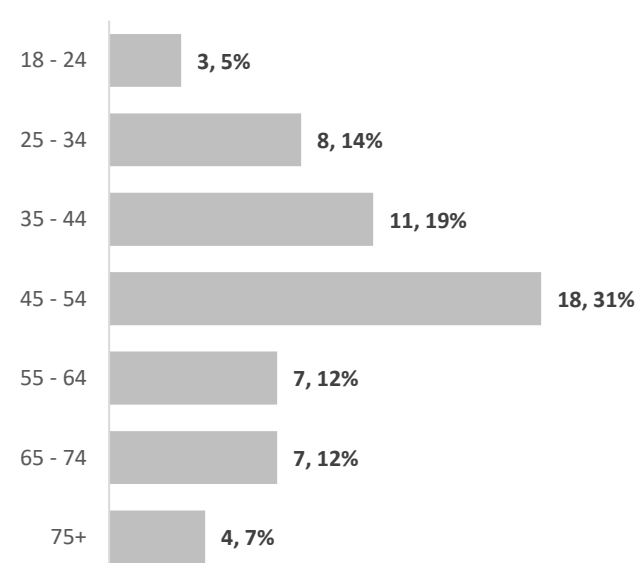
Sex:



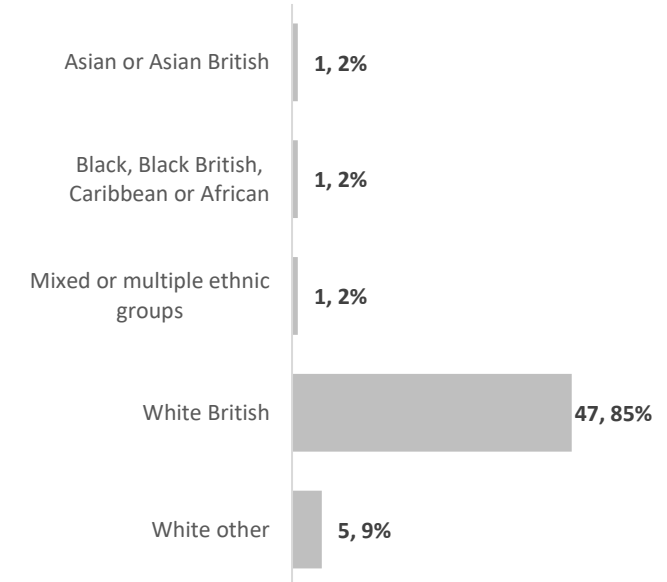
Disability:



Age:



Ethnicity:





Proposed policy



The questionnaire outlined the following background information:

A child or young person who has been removed from their families is placed in local authority care. The local authority is responsible to protect and support these young people with accommodation, education, employment and so on. When the young person in care reaches the age of 18, they are at a stage in their lives where they can become more independent. This may include moving into accommodation on their own or with others.

To rent in the private rental sector, landlords or letting agents may ask for a rent guarantor.

- A rent guarantor is a financial term describing an individual who promises to pay a tenant's debt if the tenant is unable to pay their loan obligation.
- A corporate rent guarantor is an organisation, rather than an individual, that agrees to be responsible for paying the debts mentioned above.

The aims of this draft policy are to:

- Enable the Council to act as a corporate rent guarantor for young people who have experienced care and where there is no family member willing or able to do so;
- Help young people access private rented accommodation and support them in becoming more independent.

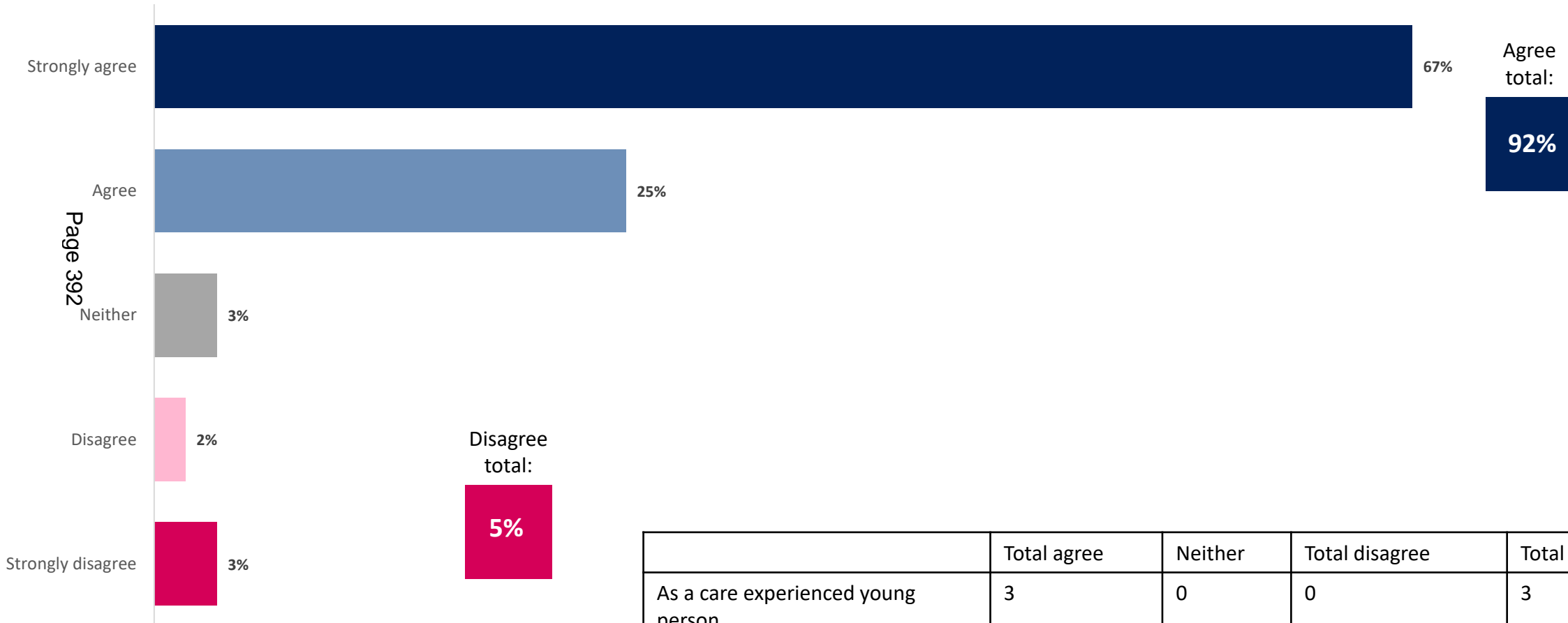
We are proposing to trial this for 12 months. Following this, a decision will be made going forward to implement the policy permanently, where more eligible young people experiencing care will have the opportunity to apply.



Council acting as Corporate Rent Guarantor

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Council acting as a Corporate Rent Guarantor for care experienced young people?

Overall:



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	Total agree	Neither	Total disagree	Total
As a care experienced young person	3	0	0	3
As someone who works with children and young people in Southampton	23	0	1	24

Base respondents: 60



Question: If you disagree, or have any comments, impacts, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider, please provide details:

Comments | 15

"I do not believe that a young person should be placed in unsupervised accommodation - it puts too much responsibility on "green shoulders". They are not experienced in living alone, budgeting, paying rent, cooking for themselves. I feel a better solution would be an HMO with a Warden in charge, who could assist a young person with all the above problems when they face the daunting prospect of living in the wider 'real' world."

"This is a fabulous idea - I have previously worked with these young people and it is a real struggle to get decent places for them to live without this type of support - well done Southampton !"

"I think it is a fantastic idea as some young people are very independent and have all of the life skills to succeed living privately however, they do not always have the connections to have a guarantor to support them."

"Private rent is not appropriate for our most vulnerable 18-year-olds. 18-year-olds have their parents as guarantors when they are accessing student accommodation, but they are not "on their own" here. They return to the family home for Christmas, Easter and the long summer break. If they are relatively local, they will be home more frequently to have their laundry done and restock from their parents' fridge. We do not expect our own 18-year-olds to live totally independently so why should we expect those from dysfunctional families to manage it?."

"We should definitely provide this as an option, it's just how this is implemented is the key to its success. In my experience, paying rent is a challenge for many young people and this often isn't down to affordability but more about prioritising essential spends such as rent and bills. I feel that eligibility for this scheme should be very carefully considered and sufficient support for those who fall behind with rent payments. What is their incentive to pay, if they know that the council will cover them? It has the potential to be too much of a safety net that prevents them from actually developing independence. However, I'm sure in many cases it removes a huge barrier for those who are ready for this next step in their journey. One suggestion is that the pre-tenancy questionnaire that is currently completed for additional quota points on the council register should also be completed for this scheme too, as a bare minimum."

"I strongly agree as many care experienced young people are estranged from all family members and are predominantly from economically deprived families. However, my concern is that providing a guarantor only is not sufficient. In order to be able to support young people fully to manage a tenancy in their own right, they need extensive support to understand their rights and responsibilities. The current support available (Personal Advisor and No Limits Floating Support) is not effective. As a result this is likely to be extremely costly to the Local Authority and would impact other services further with spend cuts."

"Who would cover the costs the council has to pay if a tenant defaults on their rent?"

"Will this system also address the observed behaviour of letting agents asking for increased amounts of upfront rents from benefit claimants, which does apply to a significant portion of our young people."

"This is an incredibly difficult transition for our young people, and I would fully support this initiative."

"I assume this is because LA housing supply is inadequate. I'm concerned that young people may end up in unsuitable or unsafe accommodation. And there is a risk of exploitation by landlords"

"If the LA/taxpayer has contributed to a young person's care and they have access to support that could be ongoing to add to 'corporate guarantor' makes perfect sense as a continued investment in that person's future and society."

"I think it's a good idea which will help young people in care find their own place, however I'm concerned if the council do need to cover the rent for a month, will you impose interest fees?"

"This sounds like a brilliant idea - I've had friends who've really struggled to find housing because they're not from middle class backgrounds so don't have family or connections who can do this for them"

"The young people need to know that this is not an alternative to them paying their rent and work completed to help them understand this and the costs involved with independence. Communication is the main key here and is reflected in the policy well."

"The council can't afford to pay rent for people who can't/won't pay it themselves."



The questionnaire outlined the following background information:

Eligibility:

For care leavers to be eligible for the scheme, they must:

- be between 18 and 24 years of age;
 - be willing to pay their own rent each month and hold a tenancy in their name;
 - agree to pay all benefits issued for the purpose of payment towards rent costs in full towards their rent each month;
 - be either in paid employment (at least 8 hours per week) OR in full-time, higher education;
 - be responsible with money and able to manage the variety of costs involved in running a home, including bills and Council Tax;
 - not have any significant level of debt (less than 20% of their income should be used for debt repayment);
 - engage regularly and meaningfully with supporting professionals (with the intention to continue) to ensure relevant support is in place for them;
 - have the skills to live alone, to avoid placing themselves at risk of failing to maintain an independent tenancy.
- The eligible applicant will then go through a series of internal processes, outlined within the full draft policy:

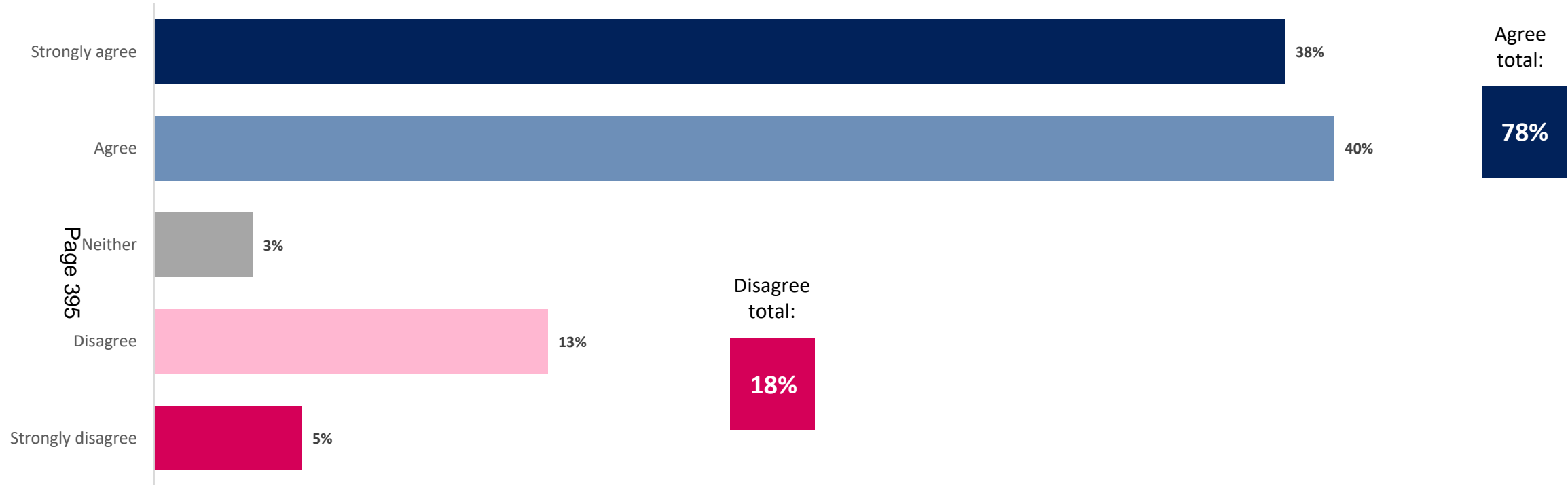
www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations



Eligibility Criteria

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the eligibility criteria is fair?

Overall:



	Total agree	Neither	Total disagree	Total
As a care experienced young person	3	0	0	3
As someone who works children and young people in Southampton	21	0	3	24

Base respondents: 60



The questionnaire outlined the following background information:

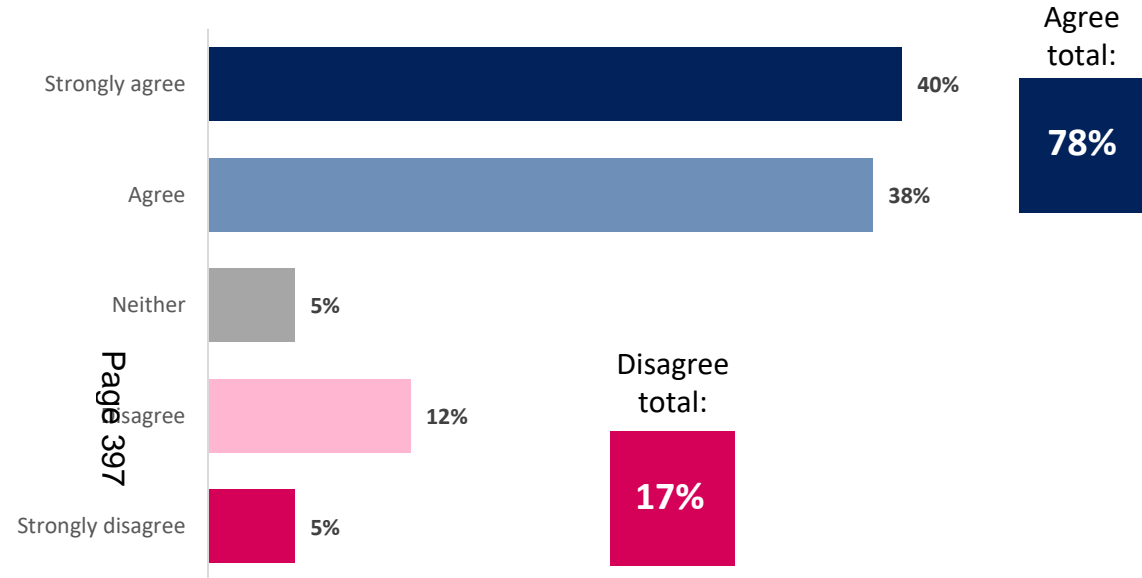
- The successful applicant would be provided with a corporate guarantor who can stand as an official guarantor for the initial 12 months of their tenancy (provided the young adult remains under 25 years of age throughout).
- If the young person has been unable to pay their rent due to an unforeseen change in their circumstances, the Council would cover the rent costs whilst in this initial 12-month period of their tenancy. The Council would cover a maximum of £50 per month per young person.
- The Council would be a guarantor for rent only and will not cover the cost of other breaches of the tenancy agreement, for example, damages.
- The Council would act as an advocate and single point of contact for issues around the young adult's accommodation.



Commitments of the draft policy & Impact on care experienced young people

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the commitments of the draft policy?

Overall:



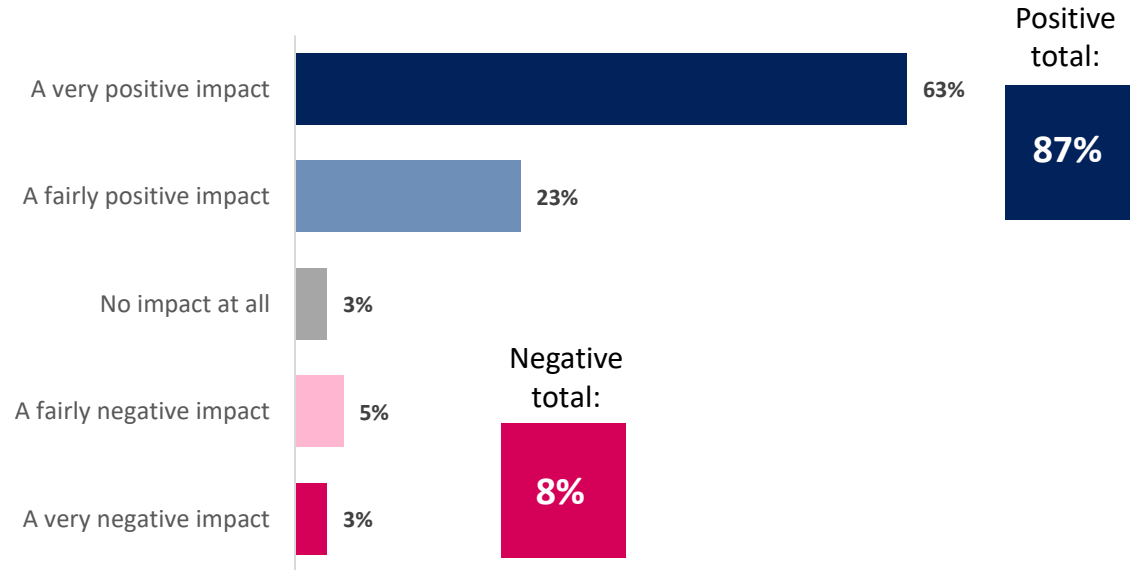
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	Total agree	Neither	Total disagree	Total
As a care experienced young person	3	0	0	3
As someone who works children and young people in Southampton	20	0	4	24

Base respondents: 60

Question: What impact do you feel this may have on care experienced young people?

Overall:



	Total positive	No Impact	Total negative	Total
As a care experienced young person	3	0	0	3
As someone who works children and young people in Southampton	21	1	2	24

Base respondents: 58



Free text comments on the commitments of the draft policy

Question: If you disagree, or have any comments, impacts, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider, please provide details:

Comments | 20

"I think the 'have the skills to live alone' may exclude many young adults at the lower age range (18), given they are unlikely to have developed the daily living skills to live their life independently. As such, inserting a caveat along the lines of... 'or a commitment to accepting [professional] support to gain independent living skills' may be more realistic and therefore appropriate."

"The Council would be a guarantor for rent only and will not cover the cost of other breaches of the tenancy agreement, for example, damages. as above normal guarantors are expected to cover everything. On the criteria part. What if they are unemployed as so many are... is this not penalising them?"

"If the council are to act as a guarantor, it needs to be the full spectrum of normal guarantor commitments which includes damages, otherwise there bound to be significant restrictions put in place by the letting agents/landlords. Also, if they are required to under 25 for the entirety of the tenancy, we are basically excluding everyone from the day after the 24th Birthday for a twelve-month rental agreement. We need to take into account the young people who are unable to work due to medical conditions, or periods of unemployment where they may not be eligible for supported accommodation or other council provided provision for housing."

"What landlord is going to agree to a guarantor only covering the first 12 months, with the threat of section 21 being outlawed and the courts being very slow with evicting problem tenants? The alternative is supported housing with a communal kitchen, laundry facilities and living room with a "house parent" who lives in. Think YHA hostel but with everyone having their own comfortable en-suite bedroom/study area. The "normal" 18-24-year-old experience is flying the nest gradually, as they feel ready. Not an almighty shove sometime after their 18th birthday."

"The eligibility criteria entitle a very small percentage if care experienced young people. Many of which are already in the position to privately rent without the support of the Local Authority. The proposed offer should look to support those working towards independence, these are the young people we know to be struggling to develop their independence because their basic need of stable housing hasn't been achieved. This offer doesn't address the vast majority of care experienced young people who sit somewhere between not having significant enough support needs to require supported accommodation and those who have more stability and are able to remain with carers or rent successfully on their own. The policy hits the mark as it doesn't target those most at need."

"I strongly agree with both of the above - however, if anything they are too restrictive. To be realistic, they probably need to be less restrictive. i.e. the Council should be responsible for deposits as well."

"Eligibility - they should be working at least 20 hours week, not 8! (if not in education). The proposed offer: far too long. 4 months payment only."

"If you are having to pay up to £850 per month it would demonstrate that that person is not tenancy ready and would need a life skills project and feel that a life skills project to enable them to hold a tenancy would be more provident use of money."

"By law the guarantor is responsible for damages and the landlord can sue the guarantor to cover these costs. How would the council get out of this clause?"

"How do you measure a person's responsibility with money?."

"I think the young person should have less debt. Perhaps less than 10% of their wages go on debt not 20%."

"Does 'significant level of debt' include student loans? I would assume not."

"A landlord will not accept these terms so what is the point. To be a guarantor you accept the landlord's conditions, you do not dictate them."

"I understand that there needs to be criteria for eligibility. However, some appear unduly stringent especially for those at the lower end of the age range"

"I do not believe that the majority of young people are initially capable of following the Council's brief. They need help, guidance and practice before taking on such responsibility."

"I worry that this policy might exclude the most marginalised people who need this kind of help!"

"I feel more council housing needs to be available to young people and families. A place they can make into a home with a secure affordable tenancy."

"I would suggest you consider having an agreement with the landlord which is robust as you would not want to start trying to make claims when rent is a few days late."

"Debt can be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Some may have high levels of debt because they are starting a business or paying for student loans."

"I disagree with be either in paid employment (at least 8 hours per week) OR in full-time, higher education; Opening up this opportunity to those who are claiming UC and look to go to work or education would give them a stable base for them to be able to achieve this. A room in a shared house is affordable to someone on benefits and they would be able to pay a small top up as bills are usually included. The opportunity should also be open to those who are on UC and claiming disability benefits. They may not be in work due to ill health and this is discriminating against them. I am aware this is only a trial however, an individual on benefits in a shared house is less of a risk than someone in their own flat so I am unsure why individuals claiming UC or UC and PIP have been excluded. - not have any significant level of debt (less than 20% of their income should be used for debt repayment) - with the current cost of living a debt of 20% of their income could make it difficult for them to afford outgoings. I feel this figure should be less."



Free text comments on the impact this may have on care experienced young people

Question: Please use the following space to tell us more about the potential impact the draft strategy and if there is anything else we should consider:

Comments | 20

"This will have a real tangible positive impact on care experienced young people. One of the most important need is accommodation and the stability this affords. Without which, other needs are more problematic to meet, and the instability often exacerbates an already difficult period of transition for a vulnerable young adult. Moreover, interim accommodation, where a statutory duty applies, is expensive for the council in so many ways."

"There are so many young people being placed into vulnerable homes of multiple occupation which poses a safety risk for these young people. If the council are the corporate parent then they should be looking after these young people who do not get the same backing as others would from their family"

"Being able to solve the issues a significant portion of care experienced young people experience with access to private rented accommodation, especially given the serious shortage of social housing provision, would have an enormously positive effect on these young people."

"As a former care leaver who was supported through pathways whilst undertaking higher education, I feel this is a really positive and supportive thing for Southampton city council to pursue. I hope they will inform and liaise with services such as Pathways so they could work together to support young care leavers with aspirations and be sure they fully understand the terms and conditions that they have all the support they need in place. If this is rolled out, it will definitely have a very positive impact for young care leavers building their independence and future, as having a safe home is imperative for their mental well-being which is of great importance for them to be able to achieve. I hope this works and is able to be rolled out in the future to reach more young people leaving care thus preventing them from falling into unstable house shares without support and/or potential homelessness."

"Providing the eligibility criteria and management of those who are successful is managed well, this will have a very positive impact on care experienced young people. If the eligibility criteria is too simple and this isn't managed well, it could have a very negative impact on young people getting into debt and/or not being able to manage debt, which is a very important life skill. One thing I don't know enough about this scheme is if the young adult will still need to pay back the council, if they cover unpaid rent? How does that work?"

"This initiative could provide the young person with an opportunity to find more appropriate accommodation. Unfortunately, at this moment in time the housing options for young carers without a guarantor are limited. This means that the majority of young carers are having to accept and live in sub standard rooms in sub standard accommodation."

"From experience of working with young persons that have been through local authority care services I would average that 90% are NO tenancy ready and that all would choose to have their own accommodation rather than having to engage with services to learn those skills."

"Care Leavers have struggled for years to gain decent suitable accommodation - as Corporate parents we should be doing what any parent would do for their own child."

"Again this would really impact those who are NEET"

"This would support young people to successfully gain independence"

"This is a wonderful idea. It will really support young people to get set up with housing in the city. More support is needed for young people in general."

"Young people going to university or living on their own have to learn budgeting skills and how to live successfully on their own."

"No landlord will accept your conditions. They give you a legal get out. Being rejected by landlords/agents will have a negative effect on the young person"

"A vulnerable 18 year old alone in a flat, or worse, an HMO. What could possibly go wrong?"

"There will always be young people who may and will fail, but they might reflect at some point and use the skills learnt at a later date and or when they as an individual have emotionally matured. We all deserve a chance."

"Many would just be overwhelmed by the level of responsibility required."

"If there was more council housing the money wouldn't need to be available to go into the private sector. This can help young people to have a permanent home and settle in one address. They may have moved multiple times in a very short space of time."

"Limited impact simply due to the target group of care experienced young adults. Criteria is too high and doesn't address the highest proportion of the cohort that the LA support."

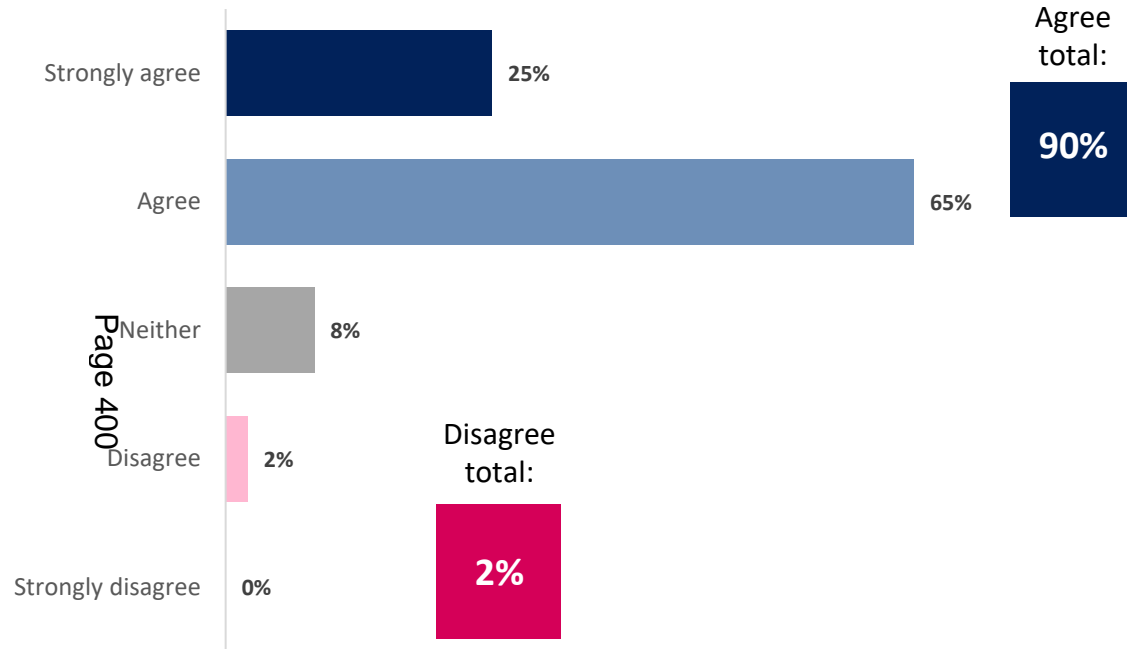
"Makes sense to be a Corporate Guarantor, as these young adults do not have able parents to do this for them."

"It will make it much easier for young people to access the private rented market and landlords more likely to take a risk on housing a young person."



Question: If you have read the proposed draft policy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

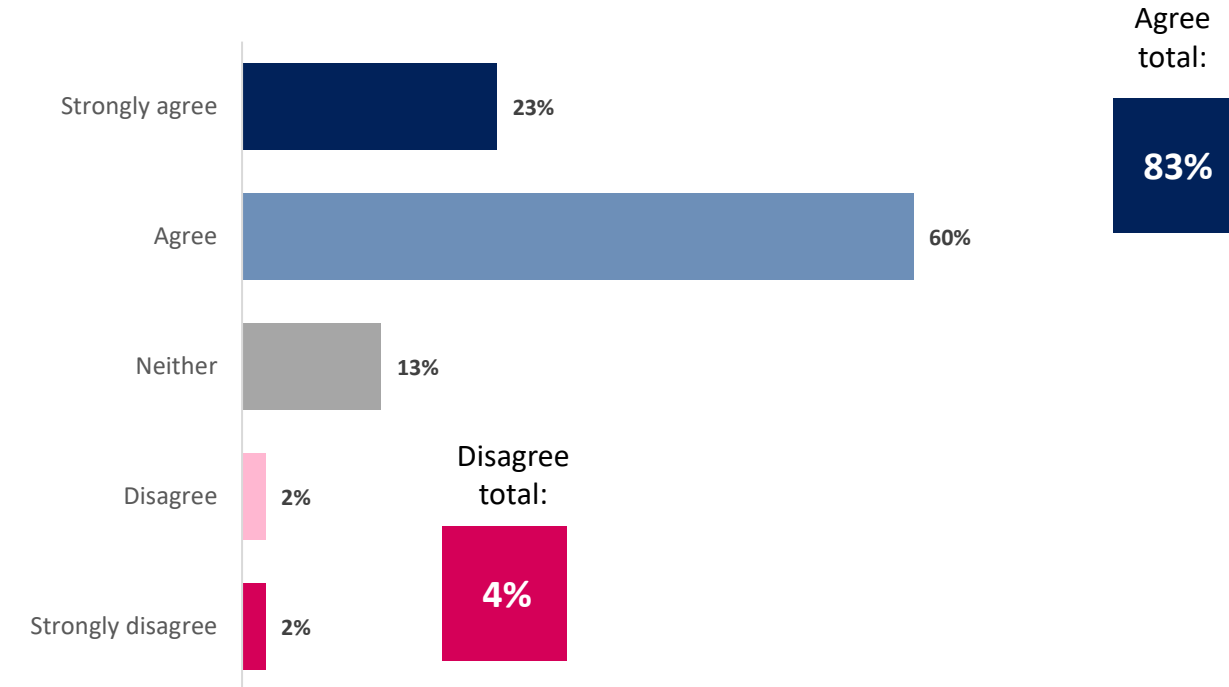
The draft policy is easy to understand



	Total agree	Neither	Total disagree	Total
As a care experienced young person	2	1	0	3
As someone who works children and young people in Southampton	19	1	1	21

Base respondents: 48

The draft policy provides sufficient information



	Total agree	Neither	Total disagree	Total
As a care experienced young person	2	1	0	3
As someone who works children and young people in Southampton	19	1	1	21

Base respondents: 48



Free text comments on the understanding of the draft policy

Question: If there were parts of the draft policy that you did not understand or you feel need more information, please provide further details:

Comments | 7

"Save my suggestions herein."

"The various criteria will exclude a significant portion of our care leavers and therefore not significantly reduce the load for all other housing provisions in the Southampton area."

"I am a person with a high level of education or may be difficult to read and understand for a young person!"

"This scheme can be used for student accommodation. What happens in the summer? In some areas student accommodation is rented out to holiday makers in the summer. Cousins of mine used to holiday in Portsmouth (I know, why?) staying in Portsmouth student halls of residence. This is a good plan for student accommodation, but only if the student has somewhere to return to when everyone else leaves the campus."

"Hopefully, I have covered this in the previous questions about the need for more information."

"At this moment in time I have yet to read the draft policy, however, it will be my intention to read it. If possible, I will provide further feedback"

"The draft policy does not provide much information regarding the type of young person the Council have in mind. The experience covers a very wide group and what do you do with the ones who do not qualify?"

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Considerations of consultation feedback – Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme for Care Experienced Young People, November 2023

Consultation feedback		Officer response	Actions proposed
Broad themes	Comment themes		
Quantitative feedback	92% of the respondents agreed with the draft policy overall.		
	87% of the respondents agreed that the draft policy would have a positive impact.		
	90% agree that the draft policy is easy to understand and 83% agree that it provides sufficient information.		
Positive comments	General positive/supportive comments	No officer response required (positive consultation feedback).	None.
Concerns and suggestions	Comments around the eligibility criteria and being tenancy ready.	The eligibility criteria outlined in the policy aim to ensure that any young person accepted into the scheme is tenancy ready. This is because we want to give every young person the best chance to be successful in maintaining a tenancy and living independently. During the scheme, the Personal Advisor is available to provide support if necessary. Whilst supporting young people into private accommodation, we also want to mitigate financial risks to the council.	None.
	Comments around debt of applicants.	The council understands that a young person's debt should not include student loans. The council has included a statement to make this clear.	The council has updated the policy to make it clear that the young person's 'Debt to Income Ratio' must be no greater than 20% (excluding student loan debt).
	Comments around people who are unable to work due to a disability or a medical condition.	The council wants to ensure that young people are ready to maintain a tenancy so that they are set up to succeed in this scheme. The council understands that some people may not be able to work due to their disability or on medical grounds. Therefore, we have updated the policy to make it clear that these people may still be eligible for the scheme.	A paragraph was added to the policy to make it clear that people who are unable to work because they have a disability or on medical grounds, may still be eligible for this scheme. However, they will need to demonstrate that their income/benefits can cover the costs of rent and cost of living.

Consultation feedback		Officer response	Actions proposed
Broad themes	Comment themes		
	Comments around landlords/letting agents involved in this policy.	The council will act as a single point of contact for issues around the young adult's accommodation. If necessary, the council will engage with the landlord/letting agents to ensure issues are dealt with. Local authorities have access to legal advice and support if necessary.	None.
	Comments about covering the cost of rent.	<p>As a corporate guarantor, the council will cover the cost of rent (up to £850) for a young person whose circumstances have changed and who is unable to pay rent. The council will not require the young person to pay the council back for covering the cost. However, if the young person is unable to manage the ongoing rent costs and cost of living, then the council will support the young person out of private rented accommodation and into other forms of accommodation.</p> <p>A care leaver must inform their Personal Advisor as soon as they think they may not be able to pay rent. The Personal Advisor will support the care leaver to find ways to cover these costs, (i.e., through finding employment).</p>	The policy has been updated to make it clear that the young person will not be required to re-pay any of the cost covered by the council. However, if they are unable to meet ongoing rent costs and living expenses, then the council will support the young person out of private rented accommodation and into other forms of accommodation.
	Comments on the suitability of accommodation.	The council will act as an advocate and single point of contact for issues around the young adult's accommodation, including unsuitable standards. If things deteriorate, the Personal Advisor will be able to support and advise the care leaver on the next steps.	None.
	General comments/concerns.	<p>This scheme aims to help young people to find sustainable accommodation that they can maintain in the long-term.</p> <p>This scheme plans to provide more housing options for our young people in a time of limited social housing vacancies.</p>	None.

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DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	SACRE – REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION
DATE OF DECISION:	16 JANUARY 2024
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR WINNING CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director – Wellbeing (Children and Learning)	
	Name:	Robert Henderson	Tel: 023 8083 2079
	E-mail:	robert.henderson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Governance & Leadership Advisor on behalf of Cross Phase Advisor	
	Name:	Katherine Lewis	Tel: 07775 593528
	E-mail:	katherine.lewis@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Council is required to consult Southampton Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) annually on a review of the SACRE constitution and receive any recommended changes put forward following that consultation alongside its own review of the makeup of SACRE and how it operates.

The Council has statutory responsibility for membership of SACRE and approval of its constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	Recommendation to confirm membership status of Southampton City Mission in Group A
	(ii)	Subsequent to the decision of recommendation (i) above to approve the revised SACRE constitution attached at Appendix 1

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	Another member of Group A has challenged the inclusion of Southampton City Mission (SCM) as member of Group A under “Christian Denominations” on the basis that this may lead to an over-representation/inequality of Christian Denominations within SACRE.
2.	There were no responses from any members of SACRE to this challenge, either positive or negative, and a decision from Cabinet is sought on their ongoing membership accordingly.
3.	The test for Group A is ‘a member that represents Christian denominations and other religions and their denominations who will appropriately reflect the

	principal religious traditions in the area.’ This can include an organisation representing multiple or collective recognised Christian denominations.
4.	SCM’s position is that it does not represent the individual churches that form part of SCM. They are a charitable organisation that is of Christian denomination. The work carried out in schools by SCM is to support the delivery of religious education. The charitable objects include the advancement of education. The staff and volunteers who work with schools come from a broad range of denominations of Christianity
5.	Data available from the school information systems attached at Appendix 2 indicates that the parents of 31,578 children took part in the census: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,073 had no religion (31.9%) • 10,663 are of Christian denomination (33.7%) • 5,298 religions other than Christianity (16.8%)
6.	The SACRE constitution document attached at Appendix 1 has been significantly revised to align with the format recommended in guidance from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE)
7.	The key changes to the constitution are: Paragraph 2.6 – to review the SACRE constitution every four years. There is no change to the annual review of membership. Paragraph 3.1.3 – the ability to nominate a standing substitute member.
8.	Subject to the decision of the Cabinet on recommendation (i) SACRE members unanimously supported adoption the revised constitution without any other changes to the membership.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED	
9.	Options for consideration are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SCM remain in Group A as currently listed (full membership) – no change. b) SCM become co-opted members. <p>Option a) provides a right to vote in Group A. Option b) does not.</p>
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
10.	A task and finish group comprising of the Chair of SACRE, the Humanist member of SACRE and the report author met to consider the current constitution and members. This included reviewing the Southampton School’s information data and the relevant extract from the National Census 2021
11.	The National Census data and Southampton School’s Information together with the revised constitution was presented to the SACRE meeting on 6 th November 2023.
12.	In preparing the revised constitution consideration was given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Education Act 1996. • DfE guidance (September 2023) following the decision in <i>Bowen v Kent County Council</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the guidance on constitution from NASACRE; the constitution document for Hampshire SACRE which was reviewed in 2023. the constitution document for Cambridgeshire SACRE
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
13.	Not applicable
<u>Property/Other</u>	
14.	Not applicable
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
15.	Southampton SACRE has been established pursuant to Section 309 Education 1996 as amended.
16.	<p>Section 390(4) of the Education Act 1996 sets out the representative groups required to be appointed by Southampton City Council.</p> <p>Section 390(4)(a) states “a group of persons to represent such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area”.</p>
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
17.	The report and proposed Constitution are fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
18.	Not applicable
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
19.	<p>The work of SACRE meets a statutory duty to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (not less than every five years). undertake monitoring across schools to improve outcomes for children in respect of school’s statutory obligations for religious education and collective worship. provide advice and guidance to schools on faith matters including the teaching of statutory relationships guidance from a faith perspective. provide advice to Southampton City Council on matters connected to religious education and collective worship in maintained schools to determine applications pursuant to sections 394 and 395 of the Education Act 1996

KEY DECISION?	Yes/No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Revised Southampton SACRE constitution
2.	Data from Southampton Schools Information System

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
2.	

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. Appendix 1 "Proposed SACRE Constitution 2023-24"	
2. Appendix 2 Schools Information Service Data (September 2023)	



SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Proposed CONSTITUTION November 2023- November 2024/7

Definitions

Act	The Education Act 1996, as amended.
Advising Officers	Non-voting professionals invited to meetings by the Chair to provide information and advice.
Agreed Syllabus	The agreed syllabus for religious education adopted by Southampton City Council
ASC	Agreed Syllabus Conference as defined in paragraph 2.7.
Authority	Southampton City Council
Chair	the representative appointed pursuant to paragraph 6.1
Clerk	the person appointed by the Authority to discharge its obligations contained in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.9
Group A, Group B, Group C or Group D	shall mean the representative groups as described in paragraph 3.
Members	the individual representatives appointed by Groups A, B, C and D
NASACRE	National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education
RE	Religious Education
SACRE	The Southampton City Council Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
SACRE Adviser	The professional adviser appointed by the Authority and/or the Authority's School Improvement Officers.
Vice- Chair	the representative appointed pursuant to paragraph 6.1

1. CONSTITUTION

- 1.1 The Authority has a duty to establish a permanent body known as the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for Southampton in accordance with the Act.
- 1.2 The Authority has a duty to establish a permanent body known as the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for Southampton in accordance with the Act.
- 1.3 The Authority has a duty to establish an occasional body known as the ASC to review and Agreeed Syllabus in accordance with the Act.
- 1.4 The constitution's aim is to ensure that both SACRE and ASC operate efficiently, transparently and are fully accountable to the public.

2. FUNCTIONS & OBLIGATIONS

- 2.1 The main role of SACRE is to provide advice to the Authority upon such matters to support the effective provision of collective worship in maintained schools and the religious education in maintained and voluntary controlled schools to be taught in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.
- 2.2 SACRE will also liaise with academy and free schools not required to teach the Agreed Syllabus, but a syllabus of their choosing, to provide an overview of matters connected with collective worship and religious education across maintained, academy and free schools in Southampton to support best practice identification and raise concerns if needed.
- 2.3 SACRE's statutory obligations as set out by the Act are:
 - 2.3.1 advise the Authority on matters connected with RE in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus (including but not limited to methods of teaching, choice of materials and provision of training for teachers) following a referral by the Authority or otherwise as SACRE sees fit;
 - 2.3.2 advise the Authority on collective worship in maintained schools;
 - 2.3.3 publish an annual report of its work which specifies:
 - 2.3.3.1 any matters on which the SACRE has advised the Authority;
 - 2.3.3.2 broadly describes the nature of that advice; and
 - 2.3.3.3 sets out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not initially referred to SACRE by the Authority.
 - 2.3.3.4 the details of any determinations made under paragraph 2.4 below.
 - 2.3.3.5 The annual report shall be agreed by Members at a meeting held in accordance with paragraph 4

2.3.3.6 the annual report shall be available for public inspection and a copy shall be sent to NASACRE, the relevant Government department and to any other organisations SACRE deems appropriate.

- 2.4 To determine any application from the head teacher of a maintained school following consultation with the governing body, for an amendment to the requirement that collective worship be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character pursuant to section 394 of the Act and review any determinations made by SACRE under section 394 of the Act on receipt of an application pursuant to section 395 of the Act.
- 2.5 To manage any complaints made to SACRE by members of the public regarding religious education or collective worship in accordance with the Authority's complaints process which is included at Appendix A.
- 2.6 To review the SACRE constitution every four years
- 2.7 At the request of the Authority to review the Agreed Syllabus every five years and to convene an ASC for this purpose.
- 2.8 To facilitate the effective operation of the SACRE in accordance with its constitution SACRE will respond as necessary to any further government guidance, legislation or new initiatives impacting upon the functions and obligations of SACRE.

3. MEMBERSHIP & COMPOSITION

3.1 Nominated Members

3.1.1 SACRE shall comprise members drawn from four groups, appointed by the Authority, as specified below:

GROUP A

One representative of each of the religions and other world views listed below:

Christian Denominations

The Roman Catholic Church	The Methodist Church
The Baptist Union	The United Reform Church
The Religious Society of Friends	The Assemblies of God
The Greek Orthodox Church	The Salvation Army
The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches	
<i>Southampton City Mission</i>	

Religions other than Christianity



Judaism Islam Hinduism Sikhism
Buddhism Baha'i

Other world views

South Hampshire Humanists

Appointed representative for people with non-religious affiliation or belief system not represented by any other membership group.

GROUP B

Four representatives of the Church of England nominated by the Diocese of Winchester.

GROUP C

Four teachers/ retired teachers representing associations recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation with one representative per association.

National Education Union (NEU), National Association Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL).

GROUP D

Four representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority.

- 3.1.2 Each faith or representative group within SACRE will be responsible for the method by which they elect their representatives for nomination for membership of SACRE.
- 3.1.3 Nomination of a Member will be formally endorsed by a majority group vote at the next SACRE meeting.
- 3.1.4 Each representative within a Group may nominate a standing substitute Member, subject to approval by the Authority, who shall attend meetings if the Member is unable to attend.
- 3.1.5 The Member shall ensure that any substitute members if fully informed of all issues before ASCRE so that they can contribute fully and knowledgeably to any meetings they are required to attend.

3.2 Co-opted Members

SACRE may co-opt additional representatives including:

3.2.1 such teachers as may be necessary to ensure adequate representation of teachers who are actively concerned with religious education; and

3.2.1.1 a representative in respect of the Academies and free schools operating in the City of Southampton which previously had Community or Voluntary status of SACRE. Academies are included (for non-voting purposes) as they are not technically represented by any other group and deliver part of the public sector curriculum (albeit with a different status to maintained schools) and effectively replace the old concept of Government Maintained schools. Foundation schools are not specifically included because they are effectively covered elsewhere as they are maintained schools (in common with Community and Voluntary schools) and are thus represented by other groups already present on the Committee.

3.3 Review of Membership

3.3.1 Membership of SACRE shall be reviewed annually by the Authority.

3.3.2 Members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings without satisfactory explanation will have their appointment reviewed by SACRE with any recommendations being given to the Authority

3.4 Term of Office and Re-appointment

3.4.1 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 3.4.3 below Members of the SACRE shall be appointed for a period of four years.

3.4.2 Co-opted and non-religious affiliate member shall be appointed for the period set by SACRE and may resign at any time or may be removed at any time by SACRE or the Authority.

3.4.3 A member of SACRE appointed by the Authority may be removed from membership by the Authority at any time if, in the opinion of the Authority, the person ceases to be representative of either the denomination, religious group, association or Academy which he/she was appointed to represent.

3.4.5 When appointed Members must declare any interests whether personal or prejudicial. It is the Members responsibility to update the record of interests as necessary.

3.4.6 Subject to paragraph 3.4.3 above members of the SACRE having served a full term are eligible for re-appointment.

3.5 Code of Conduct

Members will adhere to the local Code of Conduct for Authority Members included at Appendix B and are required to sign a declaration to this effect.

3.6 SACRE Advisers

The SACRE Adviser will be responsible for:

- 3.6.1 providing advice to SACRE and any sub-committees on professional issues.
- 3.6.2 advise and update Members on any new government guidance or policy documents.
- 3.6.3 supporting Members in their monitoring role
- 3.6.4 ensure that the review of the Agreed Syllabus is carried out within statutory timescales.
- 3.6.5 such other matters as shall be requested at the discretion of the Chair.

4. MEETINGS

- 4.1 SACRE shall meet at least once per academic term and no less than three times per academic year such meetings shall:
 - 4.1.1 operate to at timetable that mirrors the municipal year of the Authority.
 - 4.1.2 be at a time of day and at an appropriate location to allow full participation by Members.
 - 4.1.3 require at least one Member from Group A, Group B, Group C and Group D must be present for the meeting to be quorate.
 - 4.1.4 seek to operate on a consensual basis but if a consensus is not possible Members will be required to undertake a formal vote pursuant to paragraph 5 below.
 - 4.1.5 be open to the public unless, in the view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, confidential information or information exempt from public disclosure would be disclosed.
 - 4.1.6 whether information is confidential or exempt shall be determined by the Authority's constitution for the time being in force.
- 4.2 Where a Member has a prejudicial interest that interest must be declared at the start of any meeting where a relevant matter falls to be considered by SACRE and that Member must withdraw from the meeting prior to any discussion of the relevant item and take no part in the vote on that item.
- 4.3 The agenda for meetings will be determined by the Chair and the SACRE Adviser
- 4.4 Members may request an item for the agenda supported by a written report to the Chair at least 10 working days prior to the meeting.
- 4.5 The agenda and reports will be circulated to Members at least five working days prior to the meeting.
- 4.6 Following a meeting draft minutes will be sent to the Chair and SACRE Advisers for agreement within 10 working days and once agreed will be circulated to Members.

- 4.7 The Chair of SACRE can invite Advising Officers to meetings for the purpose of providing information and professional expertise.
- 4.8 The Executive Director and Executive Member with responsibility for SACRE shall have a standing invitation to attend all SACRE meetings including sub-committees but are not Members and cannot vote.
- 4.9 The Authority shall provide the following meeting support to SACRE:
- 4.9.1 convene and co-ordinate meetings including arranging accommodation and provision a Clerk.
 - 4.9.2 copying, dispatch and circulation of paper.
 - 4.9.3 provision of advice and guidance on the Authority's procedures and other relevant local government procedures

5. VOTING

- 5.1 On any matter to be decided by SACRE, Groups A, B, C and D shall be entitled to vote.
- 5.2 Each group shall have a single vote.
- 5.3 Decisions within a group on how a vote is to be cast do not require unanimity.
- 5.4 Each group is to regulate its own proceedings including provision for resolving deadlock.
- 5.5 In the event of a tied vote the Chair will have the casting vote.

6. CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

- 6.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed by Members annually at the first meeting of the academic year and will continue for the municipal year or until the person appointed ceases to be a Member whichever is the sooner.
- 6.2 A Chair and Vice-Chair must be a Member and are eligible for re-appointment to the position of Chair or Vice-Chair once they have been a full voting member for two continuous municipal years.

7. DISPUTES

SACRE is intended to be a collaborative and cooperative body and must ensure that no Group or Member is unduly favoured. Disputes should be debated and resolved at SACRE meetings however if resolution is not possible the following process should be followed:

Stage 1: the parties in dispute meet with the Chair and the SACRE adviser who will act in a mediation capacity to assist in finding or recommending a solution. If stage is unsuccessful the dispute is referred to Stage 2.

Stage 2: a special meeting of SACRE is convened with a statement submitted by each party for consideration by the meeting. The Chair and SACRE advisor will submit a report advising on options for resolution. If the special meeting is unsuccessful then the dispute will be referred to Stage 3.

Stage 3: guidance and or clarification will be sought from the Department of Education or relevant Government department and reported to SACRE and the parties to the dispute for consideration.

8. AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

- 8.1 The Authority shall cause an ASC to be convened for the purpose of reviewing the Agreed Syllabus for the time being adopted by the Authority.
- 8.2 The Authority must convene an ASC at least every five years.
- 8.3 The ASC is a separate statutory body from SACRE but may include the same Members as SACRE together with any other suitably skilled advisers requested by the Authority to attend and advise the ASC on the Agreed Syllabus.

9. RELATIONSHIP OF SACRE WITH THE AUTHORITY

- 9.1 SACRE is independent of the Authority.
- 9.2 The Authority should consult with SACRE on any matters falling within its functions and obligations.
- 9.3 When reports and actions are required that need to be considered by the Authority they will be formally considered by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member or Officer acting under delegated powers.

10. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

- 10.1 Requests for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will be handled in accordance with the Authority's published procedures for dealing with such requests.
- 10.2 Any Member of the SACRE receiving a request under the FOIA will be required to pass that request to Legal & Democratic Services within 24 hours of receipt of that request in order that Legal & Democratic Services may deal with the request on behalf of the SACRE within the 20 working day time limit.
 - 10.2.1 Where a request has been made for the disclosure of information covered by a qualified exemption under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or other relevant information), the Chair, Vice-Chair and SACRFE adviser will be invited to attend a Public Interest Test Panel

("the Panel") meeting to consider the potential disclosure. If the Chair, Vice-Chair or SACRE adviser are unable to attend the meeting the request will be dealt with by the Panel at their discretion.

10.2.2 Where the Panel decides that the balance of interest is in favour of the disclosure of the information requested, Legal & Democratic Services will arrange for disclosure. Where the Panel decides that the balance is in favour of the non-disclosure of the information requested, the information requested will be withheld and Legal & Democratic Services will arrange for the reasons for the decision to be communicated in writing. Such decisions will be made after taking any appropriate legal advice in accordance with the Authority's published policies and procedures.

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The SACRE and its members will co-operate with any reasonable request by the Authority in respect of its overview and scrutiny functions under Section 21 Local Government Act 2000. Any requests for information or attendance of SACRE members at the relevant overview and scrutiny committee will be made as soon as possible and generally at least 10 days before the meeting.

Appendix A

Complaints Policy

Southampton City Council

Corporate Services and Adult Social Care

Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy



1. Introduction

We acknowledge that – despite our best intentions – things do sometimes go wrong. When this happens, we want to put things right. We want our customers to be satisfied with our services. We welcome hearing our customers' comments, compliments, and complaints to better understand how they view our services and to use these valuable opportunities to learn and improve for the future.

2. Aims

We aim to deliver comments, compliments and complaints provision that:

- Is simple for everyone to use and understand
- Is led and supported by the very top of the organisation
- Consistently ensures excellent service standards are delivered
- Fulfills the needs of our customers
- Encourages us to learn from customer feedback in order to improve
- Complies with the relevant legislation and council policy
- Focuses on fair, proportionate resolution at the earliest stage
- Works in an open-minded and impartial way

3. Comments and Compliments

We understand that customers may wish to share their experiences of using our services, express a concern, or tell us about services which they would like to receive. Sometimes, customers may want to tell us when we're doing something particularly well. Comments of this nature are welcome.

4. Service Requests

The complaints scheme is used when there has been some form of persistent service failure and the customer believes it to be the council's fault. We don't treat "requests for service" as complaints. For example, if a customer reports a pothole, tells us that a streetlight isn't working or that their bin has not been collected, we will arrange for the matter to be dealt with without fuss and in line with normal service delivery – there is no need to use the complaints process unless there is evidence of multiple or systemic service failure.

5. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is: **"Any expression of dissatisfaction with our services"**

6. Complaints service standards

- We will apply the ***Customer Charter*** to all our dealings with complaints.
- We will protect personal information given to us in the course of a complaint.
- We will work to specific response targets and agree with the customer if we need more time to investigate and resolve the matter

Southampton City Council

Corporate Services and Adult Social Care

Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy



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Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy			
Version	3	Approved by	Complaints Resolution Manager
Date last amended	14/09/2018	Approval date	14/09/2018
Lead officer	Mark Naylor	Review date	17/01/2022
Contact	Complaints.review@southampton.gov.uk	Effective date	19/01/2021

- We will ensure that customers are informed of the options to request escalation to the next stage of the complaints process – or to the appropriate Ombudsman – if they remain dissatisfied following our response
- We will ensure that decisions are properly and promptly implemented

7. What the complaints scheme covers

The scheme will deal with any form of service dissatisfaction or maladministration.

Examples could include:

- Delay
- Incorrect action or failure to act
- Failure to follow procedures or the law
- Failure to provide information
- Inadequate record-keeping
- Failure to investigate
- Failure to reply
- Misleading or inaccurate statements
- Inadequate liaison
- Inadequate consultation
- Broken promises
- Behaviour of our staff (Separate HR policy exists for staff issues which may be more relevant dependent on complaint detail)
- Other issues causing unfairness

8. Where special arrangements apply

Sometimes there is a different, more appropriate procedure which must be used instead of the complaints procedure e.g. Appeals processes, Safeguarding procedures or Human Resources (HR) procedures.

If this applies we will advise the customer of the appropriate procedure.

Here are some examples:

- Complaints relating to the Council's Whistleblowing - Duty to Act or Health & Safety policies
- Refusal of a planning application, or the failure to make a decision within the given period - Appeals process
- The conduct of Councillors; these are dealt with according to the Members' Code of Conduct
- Some Children's Social care complaints - follows a statutory procedure.
- Schools admissions or exclusion - appeal process available
- Special Educational Needs (SEND) provision - appeal process available
- Freedom of Information or Data Protection Act matters

- Any other matters for which an alternative statutory or Constitutional appeals mechanism exists (including parking fines, Universal Credit claims etc.)
- Safeguarding procedures – proceedings under Safeguarding Adults procedures may warrant the Local Authority deferring consideration of some complaints or aspects of complaints
- The customer is seeking compensation through the Council's insurers
- The customer or Local Authority has started legal proceedings
- Complaints by an employee of the Local Authority about any matter relating to that employment
- Decisions made by Approved Mental Health Professional can be dealt with under the appeals procedure under the Mental Health Act

9. Direct Payments and Self-funded services

Complaints, which are about direct payments and individual budgets, are excluded from the procedures, once the service user has taken control of their care provision. There are procedures in place to appeal decisions.

This does not apply to complaints about the processes involved in the application e.g. assessment, allocation of funds, or the support available to enable people to manage the payments.

10. Treatment of other/concurrent procedures

Occasionally, a complaint may require us to start another procedure, such as an internal disciplinary procedure. In the interests of fairness, it may not be possible to provide a full response to the complaint until those proceedings have been completed. We will endeavour to keep complainants updated of the progress of their complaint, if this occurs.

11. Exclusions

The following issues **cannot** be dealt with under the Complaint procedure:

- The complaint is about services or matters which fall outside the control of the Council
- Complaint by another professional body or organisation
- Complaints which relate to contractual arrangements or other business arrangements made with the Local Authority
- Complaints where the subject matter has previously been investigated under these procedures or previous procedures prior to this one
- Any complaint which is being or has been investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or Housing Ombudsman
- Where a court has made, is making, or is about to make, a determination on the specifics of the complaint (please consult with the Complaints Resolution Manager and/or legal team)

12. Who Can Complain?

- Any person or organisation receiving or looking to receive a service from the Council or its contractors.
- Any person acting on behalf of an individual or group of individuals, provided they have written consent to do so; (this includes Members, MPs, Advice Agencies and other advocacy groups).

13. Help from someone else to make a complaint

A complainant may wish to involve someone else to help and support them through the process of making a complaint. Written signed consent **will** be required from the complainant. The complainant may wish to choose one of the following:

- Friend
- Relative
- Neighbour
- Independent Advocacy Service

14. Anonymous complaints

The Local Authority does not deal with anonymous complaints. However any anonymous complaints relating to vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and people with mental health or learning difficulties will be considered and investigated if there are safeguarding issues.

15. Access and Equalities

Customers may make a comment, compliment or complaint in the simplest way for them using any of the following contact methods:

- By using the form with a leaflet or factsheet
- By using the online forms found on the Council's website <http://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/comments-complaints/complaints.aspx>
- By letter
- By Telephone (written confirmation will be required)
- Email (complaints.review@southampton.gov.uk)
- In person

Please note: A complaint may be made to any member of staff, who will take the details and forward them to the involved service area manager.

16. Complaints involving multiple agencies

Customers may wish to make a complaint which straddles other organisations e.g. National Health Service or Mental Health Services. The Complaints Resolution Manager will liaise with colleagues within the other organisation to provide a

coordinated response.

17. Unreasonably Persistent and Vexatious Customer Behaviour

A copy of our policy can be viewed on our website:

http://www.southampton.gov.uk/policies/Vexatious-Behaviour-Policy_tcm63-361808.pdf

18. Time limit for initiating a complaint

You must make your complaint within 12 months of the disputed occurrence or incident. We will only investigate complaints relating to issues that are more than 12 months old at the discretion of the Complaints Resolution Manager. The complainant will need to explain why it was not possible for the complaint to be raised within the required 12 month period, for matters to be considered.

19. Reporting and Feedback

We produce an annual report which includes consistent information about the council's comments, compliments and complaints experience, which is published on the website.

20. Resolution and remedies

Where a complaint is found to be upheld, consideration will be given to the question of an appropriate remedy. Any remedy should be proportionate and, where possible, put the complainant back in the position they were in before the complained about occurrence.

Here are some examples of remedies which complainants might expect:

- apology
- explanation
- action taken that should have been taken previously
- reconsideration of a decision that was not taken properly
- improved procedures
- re-run procedures
- re-calculation of monetary amounts owed

21. Complaint Escalation

The initial investigation and response to a complaint is the responsibility of the Service Area responsible for the issue complained of. Where matters complained of cover more than one area, one manager will be responsible for collating individual responses to provide one Local Authority response to the complaint.

If the complainant receives their response from the service area complained of and remains dissatisfied, they may ask for an independent review. The escalation process will be contained on the resolution letter/communication.

The complainant will need to explain, in writing, the reasons for their dissatisfaction and why they are requesting a review. The Complaints Resolution Manager will review the stage 1 investigation with the service area manager. Where necessary, the Complaints Resolution Team will undertake the review.

Where the matter relates to Local Authority Housing and the complainant is a tenant, the complainant has the option to choose a review by the Tenant's Panel or by the Complaints Resolution Team.

The Tenants Panel operated by Southampton City Council is not a Designated Tenants Panel as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

There may be circumstances where the review process is dictated by the Complaints Resolution Team manager. Where this occurs the complainant will be informed of the reasons.

In the majority of cases the independent review will be undertaken by the Complaints Resolution Team (or if the complaint is about that team, by the Council's Head of Legal Partnerships or nominee.).

In some cases, where it can be shown to be an appropriate and reasonable method of resolving a complaint, the Complaints Resolution Manager may invite the parties to the complaint to participate in an informal mediation process as an alternative to or prior to consideration by the Complaints Resolution Team.

22. Further Escalation

Complainants have the right to contact the relevant Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied once **both** stages of the complaints procedure have been exhausted. Contact details will be included in the formal stage two response/communication.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

PO Box 4771

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Telephone: **0300 061 0614**

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

Housing Ombudsman Service (for issues relating to Local Authority housing)

81 Aldwych

London

WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Fax: 020 7831 1942

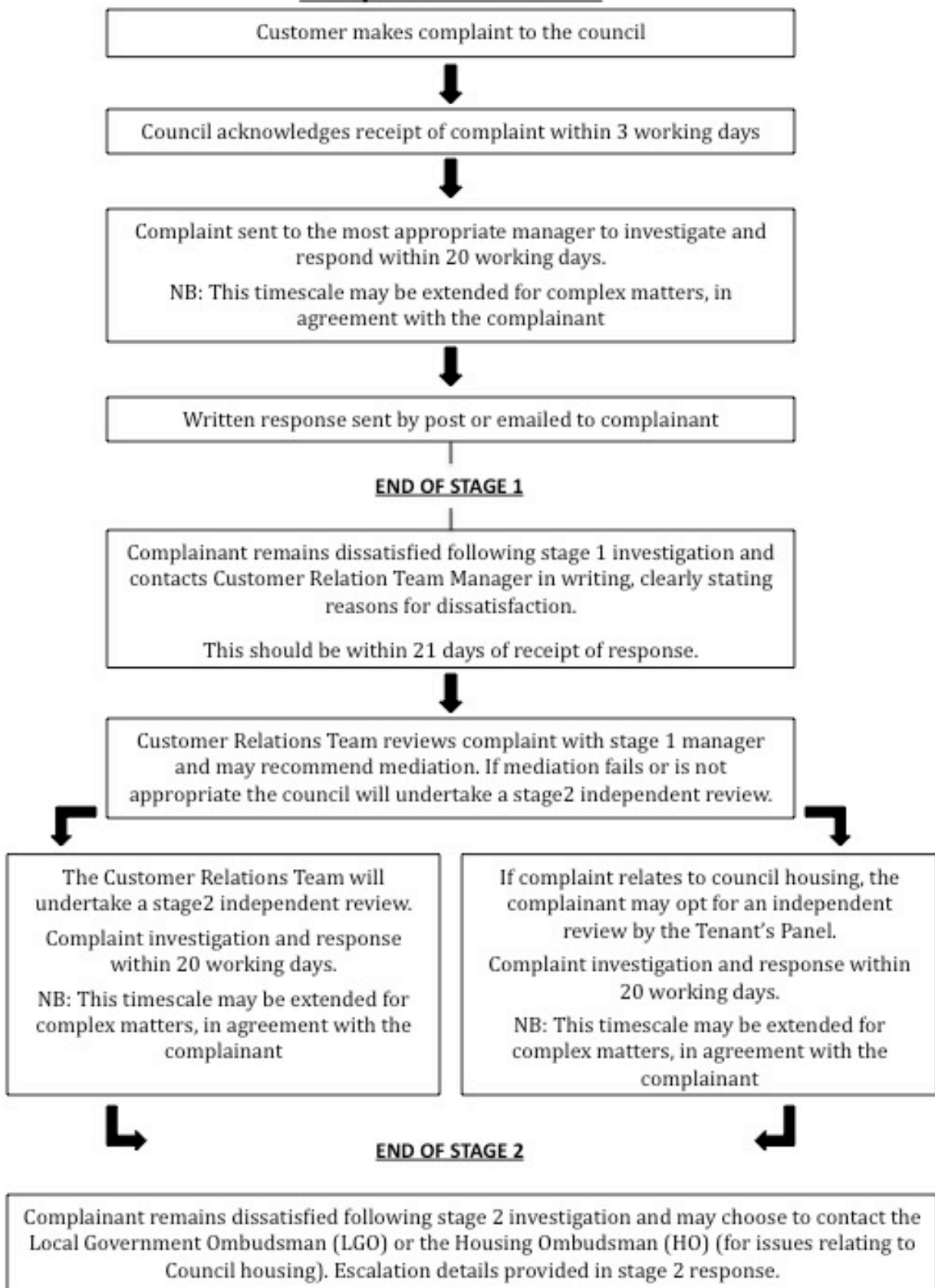
Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

23. WITHDRAWING A COMPLAINT

A complaint may be withdrawn verbally (written confirmation will be requested) or in writing at any time by the complainant. The Local Authority will write to the complainant to confirm the withdrawal of the complaint. The Complaints Resolution Manager, together with the relevant Service Manager will consider whether or not the issues that gave rise to the complaint should be considered further through an internal management review. This work should then be used in the consideration of any need for subsequent actions in the services the Local Authority deliver.

Quick Guide to the Corporate and Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure



Appendix B
Code of Conduct



Council Constitution 12 Part 5 - Members' Code of Conduct

Part 1 - Introduction and Interpretation

Introduction

This Code applies to you as a member of this authority when you act in your role as a member and it is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

As a member you are a representative of this authority and the public will view you as such, therefore, your actions impact on how the authority as a whole is viewed and your actions can have both positive and negative impacts on the authority.

This Code is based upon the “Nolan Principles – the seven principles of public life” which are set out in Appendix 1.

This Code does not cover matters in respect of which the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011 specifically provides that criminal sanction shall apply.

Interpretation

In this Code-

“**meeting**” means any meeting of:

- a. the authority
- b. the Executive of the authority
- c. any of the authority’s or its executives committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees;

whether or not the press and public are excluded from the meeting in question by virtue of a resolution of members

“**member**” includes a co-opted member (voting and non-voting) and an appointed member.

Part 2 - Scope and General Obligations

1 - Scope

1. This Code applies to all members of Southampton City Council, including co-opted voting members,
2. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
3. You must comply with this Code whenever you –

- a. conduct the business of your authority, or

- b. act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of your authority or in your official capacity as a member of the authority.
4. Where you act as a representative of your authority –
- a. on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's Code of conduct: or
 - b. on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your authority's Code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

2 - General Obligations

1. When acting in your role as a member of the authority –
- a. **do** treat others with respect;
 - b. **do not** conduct yourself in a manner which is contrary to the Council's duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of members;
 - c. **do** ensure that you are aware of and comply with the requirements which the Bribery Act 2010 places on you in your role as a Member and on the Council as a whole;
 - d. **do not** disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where—
 - i. you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
 - ii. you are required by law to do so;
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
 - iv. the disclosure is- (aa) reasonable and in the public interest; and (bb) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; and (cc) you have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.
 - e. **do not** prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law;
2. When using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the authority -
- a. **do** act in accordance with the authority's reasonable requirements including the requirements of the authority's ITC policy and the policies listed at Appendix 2, copies of which have been provided to you and which you are deemed to have read;
 - b. **do** make sure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes): and
 - c. **do** have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

Part 3 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (Localism Act 2011)

3 - Notification of disclosable pecuniary interests

1. Within 28 days of becoming a member or co-opted member, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of any 'disclosable pecuniary interests'.
2. A 'disclosable pecuniary interest' is an interest of yourself or your partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners) within the description at Appendix 2.

4 - Register of Interests

Any interests notified to the Monitoring Officer will be included in the register of interests. A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the authority's website.

5 - Sensitive interests

Where you consider that disclosure of the details of a disclosable pecuniary interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation, and the Monitoring Officer agrees, if the interest is entered on the register, copies of the register that are made available for inspection and any published version of the register will exclude details of the interest, but may state that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, the details of which are withheld under Section 32(2) of the Localism Act 2011

6 - Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

1. If you are present at a meeting of the authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered or being considered at the meeting-
 - a. you may not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting.
 - b. you may not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting.
 - c. if the interest is not registered, you must disclose the interest to the meeting.
 - d. if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.
2. In addition, Council Procedure Rules and Executive Procedure Rules require you to leave the room where the meeting is held while any discussion or voting takes place.
3. Where an executive member may discharge a function alone and becomes aware of a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being dealt with or to be dealt with by her/him, the executive member -
 - a. must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest; and
 - b. must not take any steps or further steps in the matter.
4. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any business of your authority, you may attend that meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise and you leave the room where the meeting is held immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence.

7 - Dispensations

The authority may grant you a dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

8 - Offences

1. It is a criminal offence to-
 - a. fail to notify the Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election;
 - b. fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
 - c. fail to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of a disclosable pecuniary interest that is not on the register that you have disclosed to a meeting;
 - d. Participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest;
 - e. As an executive member discharging a function acting alone, and having a disclosable pecuniary interest in such a matter, failing to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the interest;
 - f. Knowingly or recklessly providing information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a disclosable pecuniary interest or in disclosing such interest to a meeting;
2. The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.

Part 4 - Other Interests (Personal and Pecuniary)

9 - Notification of other interests

1. In addition to the disclosable pecuniary interests notifiable under the Localism Act 2011, you must, within 28 days of—
 - a. this Code being adopted by or applied to your authority; or
 - b. your election or appointment to office (where that is later),notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of the details of your other personal interests, where they fall within the following descriptions, for inclusion in the register of interests.
2. You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—
 - a. it relates to or is likely to affect—
 - i. any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;

- ii. any body—
 - aa. exercising functions of a public nature;
 - bb. directed to charitable purposes; or
 - cc. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union), of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;
- 3. You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest or change to any interest registered under paragraph (1), or as a disclosable pecuniary interest notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of that new interest or change

10 - Disclosure of other interests

1. Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5) below, where you have a personal interest described in paragraph 9 above or in paragraph (2) below in any business of your authority, and where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest, and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must-
 - a. disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.
2. (A) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;

(B) In sub-paragraph (2)(A), a relevant person is—

 - a. a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or
 - b. any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
 - c. any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
 - d. any body of a type described in paragraph 9(2)(a)(i) or (ii).
3. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 9(2)(a)(i) or 9(2)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.
4. Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 12, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.
5. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.

11 - Register of interests

A Member shall enter in the authority's register of interests the receipt of any gift or hospitality, where the Member estimates the value to be at least £50, within 28 days of receipt.

Any interests notified to the Monitoring Officer will be included in the register of interests. A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the authority's website.

12 - Sensitive interests

Where you consider that disclosure of the details an interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation, and the Monitoring Officer agrees, if the interest is entered on the register, copies of the register that are made available for inspection and any published version of the register will exclude details of the interest, but may state that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld.

13 - Non participation in case of pecuniary interest

1. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a pecuniary interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest and where that business—

- a. affects your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 10 ;or
 - b. relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 10.
2. Subject to paragraph (4) and (5) below, where you have a pecuniary interest in any business of your authority—
- a. You may not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting.
 - b. You may not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting.
 - c. If the interest is not registered, you must disclose the interest to the meeting.
 - d. If the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.
3. In addition Council Procedure Rules and Executive Procedure Rules require you to leave the room where the meeting is held while any discussion or voting takes place.
4. Where you have a pecuniary interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise and you leave the room where the meeting is held immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence.
5. Subject to you disclosing the interest at the meeting, you may attend a meeting and vote on a matter where you have a pecuniary interest that relates to the functions of your authority in respect of—
- a. housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
 - b. school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
 - c. statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
 - d. an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
 - e. any ceremonial honour given to members; and
 - f. setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
6. Where, as an executive member, you may discharge a function alone, and you become aware of a pecuniary interest in a matter being dealt with, or to be dealt with by you, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter, or seek improperly to influence a decision about the matter.

14 - Interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees

1. In any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where—
- a. that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the executive or another of your authority's committees, subcommittees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - b. at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint subcommittee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken,
- You may only attend a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee for the purpose of answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, and you must leave the room where the meeting is held immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence.

15 - Pre-determination or bias

1. Where you have been involved in campaigning in your political role on an issue which does not impact on your personal and/or professional life you should not be prohibited from participating in a decision in your political role as member, however do not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
2. When making a decision, do consider the matter with an open mind and on the facts before the meeting at which the decision is to be taken.

16 - Compliance with Constitution, Rules, Standards and Guidance

Failure to comply with the requirements of the Council's Constitution or any Rule, Protocol, Corporate Standards or Guidance issued pursuant to the Constitution shall be deemed to be a breach of this Code. Rules, Protocols, Corporate Standards and Guidance shall include (but is not limited to) the documents listed in Appendix 3.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Nolan Principles - The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Appendix 2 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Under The Localism Act 2011

Interest	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by M in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of M.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; andwhich has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to M's knowledge)—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">the landlord is the relevant authority; andthe tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest

	Blank	Anglican	Baptist	Buddhist	Christian	Christian (Ecumenical)
Banister Primary School	15	0	0	3	103	0
Bassett Green Primary School	8	0	1	1	19	0
Beechwood Junior School	7	0	0	1	107	0
Bevois Town Primary School	15	0	0	2	124	0
Bitterne C of E (VC) Primary School	43	0	0	0	141	4
Bitterne Manor Primary School	1	0	0	0	60	0
Bitterne Park Primary School	47	0	0	4	163	0
Bitterne Park School	8	3	0	5	542	2
Cantell School	1	0	0	6	313	1
Compass School	0	0	0	1	6	0
Fairisle Infant and Nursery School	2	0	0	2	44	0
Fairisle Junior School	15	0	0	3	92	0
Foundry Lane Primary School	15	0	0	4	162	0
Freemantle C of E Community Academy	0	1	0	4	146	0
Glenfield Infant School	3	0	0	0	69	0
Great Oaks School	7	0	1	0	72	0
Harefield Primary School	75	0	0	1	82	0
Highfield C of E Primary School	4	0	0	2	138	0
Hightown Primary School	8	0	1	1	45	0
Hollybrook Infant School	133	0	0	1	22	0
Hollybrook Junior School	9	0	0	4	79	0
Holy Family Catholic Primary School	24	0	0	0	152	0
Hope Community Free School	11	0	0	6	81	0
Kanes Hill Primary School	0	0	0	1	111	0
Ludlow Infant Academy	14	0	0	0	47	0
Ludlow Junior School	18	0	0	1	142	0
Mansbridge Primary School	16	0	0	0	51	0
Mansel Park Primary School	44	0	0	1	47	0
Mason Moor Primary School	38	0	0	2	32	0
Maytree Nursery and Infants School	2	0	0	0	45	0
Moorlands Primary School	5	0	0	1	87	0
Mount Pleasant Junior School	1	0	0	3	54	0
Newlands Primary School	17	0	0	1	56	0
Oakwood Primary School	64	0	0	2	111	0
Oasis Academy Lord's Hill	22	1	1	5	250	6
Oasis Academy Mayfield	33	0	0	5	216	1
Oasis Academy Sholing	27	0	2	3	277	0
Portswood Primary School	9	0	0	9	70	0
Redbridge Community School	20	0	1	4	222	2
Redbridge Primary School	9	0	0	0	33	0
Regents Park Community College	6	0	2	4	239	1
Rosewood Free School	29	0	0	0	3	0
Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College	6	0	0	1	92	1
Shirley Infant School	19	0	0	1	82	0
Shirley Junior School	2	0	0	2	123	0
Shirley Warren LC Primary and Nursery School	22	2	6	2	126	0
Sholing Infant School	9	0	0	0	65	0
Sholing Junior School	15	0	0	1	86	0
Sinclair Primary and Nursery School	17	0	0	0	57	0
Southampton Children's Hospital School	1	0	0	0	0	0
Springhill Catholic Primary School	3	0	0	0	148	0
Springwell School	5	0	0	0	58	0
St Anne's Catholic School	3	0	0	4	217	0
St Denys Primary School	45	0	0	3	66	0
St John's Primary and Nursery School	5	0	0	0	77	0
St Mark's Church of England School	62	0	0	3	267	0
St Mary's C of E (VC) Primary School	6	0	0	5	117	0
St Monica Primary School	9	0	0	0	116	0
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School	7	0	0	1	119	2
Swaythling Primary School	80	0	0	0	38	0
Tanners Brook Primary School	18	0	0	2	73	0
The Cedar School	14	0	1	0	12	0
The Polygon School	1	0	0	0	14	0
Thornhill Primary School	44	0	0	0	70	1
Townhill Infant School	0	0	0	0	30	0
Townhill Junior School	5	0	0	0	56	1
Upper Shirley High School	8	0	0	1	374	0

Valentine Primary School	145	0	0	0	103	0
Vermont School	1	0	0	0	6	0
Weston Park Primary School	134	0	0	1	71	0
Weston Secondary School	26	0	0	3	201	0
Weston Shore Infant School	61	0	0	0	7	0
Woodlands Community College	9	0	1	1	203	0
Woolston Infant School	17	0	0	0	45	0
Wordsworth Primary School	84	0	0	6	186	0
Total	1708	7	17	130	8260	22

Church of England	Free Church	Greek Orthodox	Hindu	Islam	Jehovah Witness	Jewish	Methodist	Mormon	Muslim	No Religion
0	0	0	22	114	0	1	0	0	2	101
2	0	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	128	0
1	0	0	9	1	0	0	0	0	16	184
0	0	1	18	2	0	0	0	0	105	54
37	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	1	133
0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	17	1
3	0	0	12	13	1	0	0	0	5	278
34	2	1	17	71	1	1	0	0	34	877
3	0	0	18	107	3	0	0	0	290	343
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	28
1	0	0	6	12	0	0	0	0	2	110
0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	6	232
4	0	0	19	33	3	0	0	0	5	270
0	0	0	17	0	1	0	0	0	44	128
0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	16	160
7	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	25	44
5	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	17	186
0	0	0	4	42	0	2	0	0	7	77
0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	1
0	0	0	5	1	1	1	0	0	3	7
1	0	0	7	0	0	2	0	0	26	90
4	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	71
0	0	0	7	0	0	1	0	0	19	56
3	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	8	3
3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	175
7	0	0	2	15	3	1	0	0	4	341
1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	14	6
0	0	0	2	12	0	0	0	0	4	203
1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	12	8
0	0	0	5	104	0	0	0	0	13	2
0	0	0	2	9	0	0	0	0	1	212
0	0	0	10	130	2	0	0	0	72	13
3	0	0	6	25	3	0	0	0	2	276
6	0	2	4	0	2	0	0	0	5	5
19	0	0	12	9	4	0	0	0	52	357
28	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	16	382
53	0	2	3	1	5	0	0	0	14	539
0	0	0	12	0	0	2	0	0	173	0
21	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	19	57
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
21	0	5	14	79	3	0	1	0	24	383
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
0	0	1	0	7	0	0	0	0	2	17
0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	21	120
1	0	0	5	0	2	2	0	0	15	172
5	0	0	12	30	0	0	0	0	3	131
0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	181
1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	215
1	0	0	2	7	0	0	0	0	2	90
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	2	6	10	0	0	0	0	1	14
2	0	0	11	43	0	0	0	0	7	117
45	0	2	37	1	0	0	1	1	396	68
1	0	0	4	11	0	0	0	0	8	51
2	0	0	28	132	0	0	0	0	30	84
12	0	5	38	5	0	0	0	0	126	163
0	0	0	18	2	0	0	0	0	253	1
4	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	7	2
4	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	8	9
0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	31	16
8	0	1	8	0	1	0	0	0	34	6
7	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	26
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	47
1	0	0	1	Page 441	0	0	0	0	11	208
1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	5	70
2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	8	49
0	0	2	14	1	2	1	0	0	79	486

6	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	13	11
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26
1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	4	235
5	0	0	9	16	6	0	0	0	123	287
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
15	0	1	2	38	2	0	0	1	26	470
0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	91
1	0	0	20	1	0	0	0	0	32	214
398	2	30	501	1117	64	15	4	2	2484	10073

Other Faith	Pagan	Quaker	Refused	Roman Catholic	Russian Orthodox	Salvation Army	Seventh Day Adventist	Sikh
3	0	0	0	8	2	0	0	20
129	0	0	21	32	0	0	0	6
6	0	0	1	7	0	0	0	4
9	0	0	7	14	0	0	0	42
11	0	0	2	7	0	0	0	3
92	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	8
1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	13
21	0	0	15	40	0	0	0	49
20	0	0	4	45	0	0	0	80
2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
5	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
4	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	16
6	0	0	1	18	0	0	0	5
4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
109	0	0	4	13	0	0	0	2
1	0	0	0	17	2	0	0	5
1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	12
105	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2	0	0	6	3	0	0	0	8
0	0	0	0	125	0	0	0	0
28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
213	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	1
3	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	2
6	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	1
89	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	4
1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
106	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	25
4	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	2
9	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	30
0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
183	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	1
29	0	0	1	17	1	0	0	11
128	0	0	11	40	0	0	0	4
37	1	0	11	31	2	1	1	9
98	0	0	2	20	0	0	0	18
679	0	0	9	29	0	0	0	3
155	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
7	2	0	18	16	4	0	0	32
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	673	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	8
5	0	0	2	17	0	0	0	9
4	0	0	4	42	0	0	0	2
1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	5	5	1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	2
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	4	408	0	0	0	4
5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
3	0	0	1	198	0	1	0	44
2	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	3
5	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	11
28	0	0	1	26	0	0	0	36
55	0	0	5	7	1	0	0	36
217	0	0	5	8	0	0	0	0
34	0	0	0	204	4	0	0	1
30	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	7
207	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	14
1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	3	7	Page 4431		0	1
2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
79	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	1
20	0	1	2	20	0	0	0	45

293	0	0	2	9	1	0	0	1
3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	24	6	2	0	0	0
34	0	0	22	23	1	0	0	20
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	2	0	18	18	0	0	0	18
8	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
42	0	0	0	11	1	0	0	8
3437	6	1	225	2338	25	2	1	708

United Reform Church Total

0 394
0 456
0 344
0 393
0 393
0 189
0 543
0 1723
0 1234
0 44
0 183
0 366
0 552
0 371
0 260
0 285
1 395
0 296
0 177
0 175
0 237
0 382
0 209
0 353
0 260
0 548
0 192
0 318
0 206
0 200
0 328
0 328
0 395
0 397
0 797
0 869
0 1019
0 413
0 1071
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0 861
0 33
0 802
0 262
0 357
0 391
0 263
0 343
0 184
0 1
0 608
0 253
0 1022
0 199
0 393
0 772
0 506
0 374
0 399
0 211
0 388
0 70
0 69
0 350
0 112
0 209
0 1056

0 589
0 38
0 489
0 776
0 72
0 850
0 170
0 606
1 31578

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	URGENT DECISION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS TO SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION ACTIVITIES
DATE OF DECISION:	22 nd DECEMBER 2023
REPORT OF:	RICHARD IVORY, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING OFFICER

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Director	Title	DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING OFFICER	
	Name:	Richard Ivory	Tel: 023 8083 2794
	E-mail	Richard.ivory@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Snr Democratic Support Officer	
	Name:	Judy Cordell	Tel: 023 8083 2766
	E-mail	Judy.cordell@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
N/A	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
This report advises Cabinet of the urgent decision made by the Chief Executive under the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Officers. to approve funding for additional urgent resources to deliver the People Related Spend project, Strategic Procurement Programme and the Asset Development and Disposal Programme	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) To note the attached report detailing the urgent decision taken under delegated urgent decision powers by the Chief Executive on 22 nd December, 2023.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	The council is undertaking a number of improvement and transformation activities which require support from a range of specialist roles. In order to progress this work at pace, additional capacity is required over and above current and approved resource levels.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	Not applicable.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	As set out in the attached report.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	

<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
4.	As set out in the attached report.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
5.	As set out in the attached report.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
6.	Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and Localism Act 2011.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
7.	None.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
8.	As set out in the attached report.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
9.	As detailed in the report in relation to revisions to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy.

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None directly
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Report of the Chief Executive

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None.
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	
2.	

DECISION-MAKER:	Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Urgent resource requirements to support improvement and transformation activities
DATE OF DECISION:	22nd December 2023
REPORT OF:	Mike Harris, Chief Executive

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Director of Strategy & Policy	
	Name:	Munira Holloway	Tel: 023 8083 3528
	E-mail:	Munira.holloway@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Head of projects and change	
	Name:	Helen Saward	Tel: 023 8083 3528
	E-mail:	helen.saward@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

N/A

BRIEF SUMMARY

The council is undertaking a number of improvement and transformation activities which require support from a range of specialist roles. In order to progress this work at pace, additional capacity is required over and above current and approved resource levels.

This report seeks approval to fund additional urgent resources to deliver the People Related Spend project, Strategic Procurement Programme (SPP) and the Asset Development and Disposal Programme (ADDP).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To approve funding and spend of £1,122,600 for key activity as detailed in the report
- (ii) Agrees to amend the flexible use of capital receipts strategy to reflect the new categories of spend and potential totals anticipated on transformation.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medium Term Financial Strategy report agreed at Council in July 2023 (<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/documents/s62315/Report%20-%20Medium%20Term%20Financial%20Strategy%20Update.pdf>)

set out the financial position of the Council over the period of 2023/24 to 2026/27. This position was a sizeable gap of £30M in year rising to £65M in 2026/27 that needed to be addressed. Work began immediately on identifying cost control measures to start to bring the council's expenditure into line with the budget.

For the council to become a sustainable organisation transformation plans needed to be built on and improvement plans drawn up to ensure the organisation. Further MTFS reports were taken in October and November detailing the high level progress including the need to review resources required to establish the plans and then to deliver these.

To support the council's exceptional financial support application it is important that the council shows progress on detailed transformation and improvement plans with savings to bring the council to a balance position.

Work on this has begun however the pace of progress needs to be much quicker to ensure we can demonstrate to staff, residents and stakeholders how we will achieve a sustainable organisation.

In order to gain this pace, working with the Improvement Board, a requirement for additional capacity has been identified. This capacity will enable us to draw up the plans and business cases for change, as well as implement a robust governance process ensuring the change is embedded in the organisation.

In order to fund this costs of change we will need to generate significant capital receipts from disposing of assets. This report also requests resource to establish a team to generate those capital receipts to fund the transformational change that is required. This may also generate savings from a consolidation of our property.

Whilst decision on the resources detailed is being taken as an urgent one, further work will continue on the defining the resources required. The decision around these resources will form part of the council tax and budget setting papers to Full Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

To absorb all activity within existing resource levels. However, this will mean projects take far longer and savings will not be achieved until further into the future. Also, existing resource can continue to work on other things that are important to the council.

To delay the decision, this was rejected, as urgent progress is needed to deliver the activities detailed.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

There are several key priorities that have been identified as requiring urgent additional capacity. The definition of urgent has been defined as resources which are required immediately, recruitment that needs to begin immediately and/or before the end of February 2024, in order to make progress in a timely manner. The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was consulted on the appropriateness of the urgency decision, (as required by the constitution) and having reflected that the need for additional pace in transformation activity was clear in the November OSMC meeting was supportive of the decision being made in this manner. The Improvement Board has urged additional pace in our transformation delivery.

The Asset Development and Disposal Programme (ADDP) will be undertaking a review of all corporate and operational assets and commercial and investment assets to

identify if best consideration would be achieved by retention, development or disposal. The outcomes expected from this programme include the development of homes, commercial premises/businesses, jobs, learning and skills opportunities, enhanced public realm, increased spending in the city supporting culture, restaurants, and retail etc. The direct financial benefits from the council will be through capital receipts, council tax, business rates and revenue savings.

The programme has targeted financial benefits of c. £85m and dedicated and specialist resource is required to deliver this high value programme of activity over the next two years and needs to be put in place as soon as possible. Activity supported by external partners in early January will enable prompt engagement with a range of investors and other parties who the council is already exploring opportunities with. A dedicated team of other professional roles, either directly employed, or secured through framework providers, will enable prompt delivery of the workshop activity in January. The projected spend in the 23/24 year is £538,700.

A project team is required to review people related spend (not including salary related costs) and associated Human Resources (HR) policies, to reduce spend across the council as much as possible. This includes allowances, expenses, variable payments (e.g. honoraria), working hours, redundancy payments, and external learning and development. The intention is for the project to run from January 2024 to March 2025, with spend in 23/24 of £65,000. The project team will be made up of employees from within HR, legal, projects & change, finance, with the potential to draw in new strategic expertise alongside enabling more time for the unions to participate and support other transformation activity. The aim is to implement changes as soon as they can be, bearing in mind the exploratory and analysis work required, and required negotiation with our unions. The savings target for this project is £1m per annum from 2025/26.

As a result of work instigated by the Improvement Board, further opportunities to drive efficiencies in Childrens and Adults services have been identified. Consultants will be procured to take these efficiencies forward and drive even greater value from the demand led services, where it is challenging to further reduce costs. A first phase piece of work will be commissioned in the 23/24 financial year. Given the substantial scale of potential organisational, process and systems change in social care, additional support to facilitate this, is also proposed.

A recent report to the Improvement Board recommended the appointment of a dedicated Transformation Director to ensure that all strands of the programme are cohesive subject rigorous governance and benefit realisation standards. There is currently work underway improving Debt management in the authority, some resources are required to maintain momentum in this programme.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

A summary of the estimated additional urgent resource required for the projects and funding sources is shown in the table below.

Activity	Projected 2023/24 spend
Asset Development & Disposal	£538,700
People related spend project	£65,000

Social Care improvement partner and transformation support	£433,800
Strategic transformation capacity	£85,100
Total	£1,122,600

It is proposed that these posts will be funded by from capital receipts in 2023/24~~2024/25~~, either utilising the flexible use of capital receipts strategy or the allowance of 4% for direct costs of disposal of an asset.

The current available capital receipts total is around £900,000, at present the maximum costs for 2023/24 exceed the available receipt levels. Further receipts in 2023/24 are anticipated which will allow the full request above to be funded.

Spend will only proceed on those areas indicated to the extent that capital receipt funding is available for 2023/24 and recruitment or procurement work will only proceed once it has the go ahead to the extent funding is available. Further approval will be sought for continuing spend into 2024/25 at the council budget setting meeting. Many posts will be on an agency or interim basis, so will have the capability to cease at short notice.

The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy previously agreed by Council has been updated to reflect this and is attached in Appendix 1. The update is needed as the areas of spend must be stated in the Strategy per Government requirements to allow the spend to be covered by capital receipts. The changes are limited to the detail of the projects to be supported by the use of the strategy, in paragraph 8, table 1.

By using capital receipts in this way, they are not available to finance the capital programme. Qualifying expenditure, to be chargeable to receipts, must comply with the requirement within the strategy that: "Expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public sector delivery partners."

The report and consideration of urgency, has been prepared following consultation with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Director of Legal and Governance.

Property/Other

The ADDP is specifically involved in reviewing property assets and the Asset Management Plan. Any decisions relating to specific properties will be put forward under the appropriate governance as the programme develops.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and Localism Act 2011.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>
None
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS
The council's transformation programme is currently under review and will include a detailed resource plan, it is likely that there will be differing or additional resource requirements to align with the priorities of the transformation programme.
Spending on the above areas to be managed in such a way that it stays in line with the capital receipts available during 2023/24.
The detailed scope and benefits of the projects that this paper is seeking additional resource for have not been fully developed, therefore there is a risk that the resource requirements may change once more detail is known and the scale of benefits may change.. It is nonetheless vital that more detailed business cases are developed from outline status so that benefits can be confirmed and included within the MTFs
Organisational change will require ongoing engagement with staff and Trade Unions, so that the principles, purpose and implementation of changes are shared and understood.
Competition for some of the roles required within the project teams is fierce at present, coupled with a lack of qualified and experienced individuals in some specialisms. This can be in part counteracted through utilising agency workers in the short term and convert to and/or recruit fixed term employees. We may also need to stop some other work in order to move employees to these projects in the short term.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS
As detailed in the report in relation to revisions to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy.

KEY DECISION?	Yes/
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None Directly
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2023/24
2.	

1.		
2.		
Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.		No
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.		No
Other Background Documents		
Other Background documents available for inspection at:		
Title of Background Paper(s)		Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	Consultant's Report on Social Care opportunities	Paragraph 3
2.	Outline Business cases for ADDP & People related spend	Paragraph 3
3.	Improvement Board Minutes	Paragraph 3

FLEXIBLE USE OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS STRATEGY 2023/24	
<u>BACKGROUND</u>	
1.	Capital receipts can only be used for specific purposes, and these are set out in Regulation 23 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 made under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 2003. The main permitted purpose is to fund capital expenditure, and the use of capital receipts to support revenue expenditure is not allowed by the regulations. The Secretary of State is empowered to issue Directions allowing revenue expenditure incurred by local authorities to be treated as capital expenditure and therefore funded by capital receipts.
2.	In the Spending Review 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the Government would allow local authorities to spend up to 100% of their capital receipts on the revenue costs of transformation projects, to support local authorities to deliver more efficient and sustainable services.
3.	The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government issued a Direction in March 2016, giving local authorities greater freedoms to use capital receipts to finance expenditure, up until 2018/19. Allowing local authorities to treat qualifying expenditure on transformation projects as capital expenditure and to fund it from capital receipts received after April 2016. Qualifying expenditure was defined as: <i>“Expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public sector delivery partners.”</i>
4.	This was extended in 2018/19 as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement for a further three years until 2021/22. Then, in the 2022/23 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement it was announced <i>“a 3-year extension from 2022-23 onwards of the existing flexibility for councils to use capital receipts to fund transformation projects that produce longterm savings or reduce the costs of service delivery”</i> . On 4 April 2022, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities confirmed this extension and published Guidance and a Direction.
5.	To take advantage of this freedom, the Council must act in accordance with the Statutory Guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This guidance requires the Council to prepare, publish and maintain a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy, with future Strategies included within future Annual Budget documents.
6.	The Council produced its first strategy for 2022/23, which was approved by Council in November 2022. This Strategy gives an updated view but very little has changed given the short time since approval.
PROPOSED INVESTMENTS	

7.	The Council will use the powers under the Government's Statutory Guidance on the flexible use of capital receipts, to fund up to £3.00M qualifying transformation expenditure on the projects summarised in Table 1 below. In some cases, there is a direct link between a project and the realisable financial benefit. In others, the project contributes to enabling the savings, requiring other existing resources.
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8.	Table 1	Description	Planned Use of Capital Receipts (£M)		Expected Savings
	Project		2022/23	2023/24	
	Organisation Restructure		A more focused and streamlined Executive Management Team (EMT), to prioritise strategic development and long-term planning, performance and delivery of strategy.	0.25	
	Automation	Investment across the Council's processes to enable automation and improved efficiency	0.15	0.40	Efficiencies and savings through improved processes, automation and enabling more tasks to be undertaken via self-service. <i>(Savings TBC)</i>
	Partnership Delivery Models	Increased efficiency through joint working.		0.50	The specific impacts will be considered as the new service delivery models are developed. The target is to provide savings of 10% on existing budgets. <i>(Savings TBC)</i>
Fees & Charges Review	Assessing income streams across the council to ensure they are appropriate and review process for income collection.	0.05	0.05	Potential increase in charges, leading to higher income. Efficiencies in associated processes, providing better customer experience and potentially reducing resources. <i>(As an illustrative example of savings, 1% on discretionary fees and charges would yield around £0.3M pa)</i>	

	SCC Transformation	A review of the SCC operating model. Review the way that we deliver ASC services. Strategic transformation capacity People related project	0.50	0.80 0.44 0.09 0.07	To support the achievement of the organisational vision, goals and corporate plan that implement a revised operating model, service design and process reviews to drive efficiencies and better meet customer need. To promote independence, preventative mindset and improve the way we work with people accessing our services including carers and providers. <i>(Estimated Saving Range £3M to £5M pa)</i> Senior staff and support which will facilitate savings across the programme HR related - review policies and procedures (savings tbc)
	Asset Development and Disposal Programme	Review of council owned assets*		0.54	A programme to develop and implement the proposals to retain, dispose and develop the Council's Assets so as to maximise the utilisation and benefit to the authority.
	CareDirector	Second phase of implementation.	0.20		Efficiencies and savings through improved processes. Better integration with other agencies. <i>(Savings TBC)</i>
	Fleet Telematics & Modernisation	To modernise and use the fleet effectively. Telematics will also enable the transition to an electric fleet.	0.05	0.05	Potential saving in fuel costs from efficiencies in route planning and driving techniques. <i>(Estimated Saving up to £0.1M pa)</i>
	TOTAL		1.20	2.94	Potential savings range - so far - (£3.6M to £5.8M), with work to confirm potential in some areas
<p>*costs directly attributable to the sale of assets can be charged against the sale proceeds up to 4%, which can and will occur irrespective of this strategy</p> <p>NB The table shows preliminary estimates, where known of the potential for savings, more detailed worked is needed in some of the areas specified. Not all projects will result in a direct budget saving but will provide efficiencies in service delivery, allowing resources to be better utilised.</p>					

9.	<p>In future years, the Council's flexible use of capital receipts to fund projects will continue to be subject to development of robust business cases. The business cases will be required to demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the initiative will transform service delivery, • generate on-going future savings or reduce future costs, and • the costs being funded are implementation or set up costs and not ongoing operational costs.
10.	<p>Projects identified in the Strategy can still be financed in whole or in part from other sources, e.g. revenue budgets. Having approved the Strategy, the Council is not obliged to fund these projects from capital receipts. Inclusion in the strategy does not constitute a commitment to fund through capital receipts as this decision needs to be taken in the light of the Council's overall revenue and capital financing requirements.</p> <p>For 2022/23, the actual financing will be approved as part of the Council's Capital Programme outturn and financing for the year.</p>
11.	<p>This strategy is based on prudent assumptions of future capital receipts and current available receipts which have not been budgeted to fund the capital programme.</p>
<u>IMPACT ON PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS</u>	
12.	<p>The council will have due regard to the requirements to the Prudential Code and the impact on the prudential indicators</p>
13.	<p>The capital receipts proposed to be used as part of this strategy are already built into the Council's current capital programme for this purpose and therefore have not been factored into the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) so the utilisation of these receipts for capital receipts flexibility will have no impact on the Council's prudential indicators, as set out in the Council's Capital Strategy.</p>
14.	<p>The prudential indicators show that this strategy is affordable and will not affect the Council's operational boundary and authorised borrowing limit, given the low values.</p>