

Annual Budget 2017/2018 consultation feedback report for Waitemātā Local Board

1. Purpose

- A. This report summarises all feedback received through the Annual Budget 2017/2018 consultation on Waitemātā Local Board proposals. It also summarises feedback on the regional proposals from people or organisations based in the Waitemātā Local Board area.
- B. The purpose of this report is to inform the Waitemātā Local Board of the views of their local community on the annual proposals. This will build on the board's understanding of community priorities and preferences as established in the development of the Waitemātā Local Board Plan 2014.
- C. The feedback received will inform the Waitemātā Local Board decisions on allocation of their local budgets in their local board agreement for 2017/2018. It will also inform the Waitemātā Local Board discussions with the Finance and Performance Committee on 9 May on advocacy and local priorities in relation to the regional budgets and proposals.

2. Executive Summary

Out of the 8058 submissions received on the Annual Budget 2017/2018 across Auckland, 461 were submissions from people living in Waitemātā Local Board area or concerning Waitemātā Local Board local proposals.

A. Waitemātā Local Board local proposals consulted on for 2017/2018

The local matters consulted on for the Annual Budget 2017/2018 were:

1. In your opinion, have we got our priorities right for this local board area in 2017/2018?
 - central City Library refurbishment
 - continued delivery of streetscape improvement projects from the Newmarket Laneways Plan
 - progress the Grey Lynn Park Multi-purpose facility
 - continue the Myers Park upgrade including entrance enhancement and splash pad installation
 - renewal of existing assets such as community facilities.

2. Have we got our proposed changes and improvements to projects right?
 - Complete development plans for Meola Reef Reserve and Western Springs Lakeside Park
 - Increase the budget for ecological restoration of Waipapa Stream
 - Digitisation of the Heritage Foreshore Trail interpretative signage
 - Commence scoping, design and community engagement for the Newmarket Youth Space

- Name two public open spaces that are currently unnamed at Freemans Bay and St Marys Bay and consider renaming Wairangi Wharf Reserve.
 - Defer the installation of solar heating for the Parnell Baths until the renewal of the facility is complete.
3. Do you support our key advocacy areas?
 4. The local board has approximately \$500,000 allocated per annum for local transport projects. What projects should we prioritise for this fund?
 5. Do you support the Local Board allocating additional funds to renewals such as the Hopetoun Street Stairs at Western Park Tuna Mau?

Key themes across all feedback received showed support for:

- Cycling infrastructure
- Prioritising walking/pedestrian safety
- Addressing homelessness
- Options to address issues caused by the combined network and stormwater pollution
- Development of 254 Ponsonby Road as an open space
- Reduction in agrichemical use
- Improvements to public transport
- Maintaining libraries services

B. Regional proposals consulted on for 2017/2018

Issue 1: Rates increases

Feedback shows that the majority of people in Waitematā (57 per cent) felt council had the balance about right with a 2.5 per cent rates increase. The proportion of people who wanted to do more and have a 3.5 per cent rates increase was the same as those who wanted to do less and have a 2 per cent rates increase, both with 21 per cent. A general theme that emerged was for council to focus on cutting costs in its operation.

Issue 2: Rating stability

Feedback received shows a significant majority of people agreeing (62 per cent) with businesses having a smaller increase in rates than residential ratepayers.

Issue 3: Paying for tourism promotion

Just over half (54 per cent) of submitters in Waitematā agreed with the proposal to introduce a targeted rate on accommodation providers to pay for tourism promotion, while 32 per cent opposed the proposal. There were a number of submissions from the tourism and hospitality sector with a clear position against this targeted rate. A general theme emerged regarding the perceived merit of Auckland Tourism Events and Economic Development (ATEED).

Issue 4: Paying for housing infrastructure

A majority of people (59 per cent) agreed with the proposal to fund new infrastructure for new housing development through targeted rates. Twenty-two per cent of respondents disagreed and a significant minority (16 per cent) were not sure if they agreed or disagreed.

Issue 5: Paying council staff a living wage

A clear majority of people (65 per cent) supported implementing a living wage policy whereas 21 per cent disagreed. A theme that emerged in submissions was that savings within the existing budgets were supported, but not at the cost of reducing existing council services.

Other regional matters

Other regional matters outlined in the annual budget were:

- Waste management and charges
- Mass transit network
- Business Improvement District rates
- SkyPath implementation
- Collaborations on reducing homelessness
- Rural fire service

These matters did not receive a significant level of feedback. Where feedback was received mass transit, with a focus on the airport, received support, the SkyPath received some support and the collaborations on homelessness received a good level of support although there were also a number of submissions which did not support this matter.

C. Other feedback (on any other proposals and/or other local issues)

Nearly half of the submissions referred to transport issues with the number one theme being cycling and walking infrastructure with a strong emphasis on developing more cycleways in Waitemātā. Another identifiable theme was improvements to public transport infrastructure and network including enhancing bus services. A significant number of submitters identified homelessness (and begging) as being an issue and supported initiatives to reduce rough sleeping. Reducing or eliminating agricultural use and addressing issues related to stormwater and combined system overflows were also recurrent themes across the submissions.

3. Context

A. This report is being provided to the Waitemātā Local Board summarising the local consultation feedback received on the annual budget. Council received feedback in

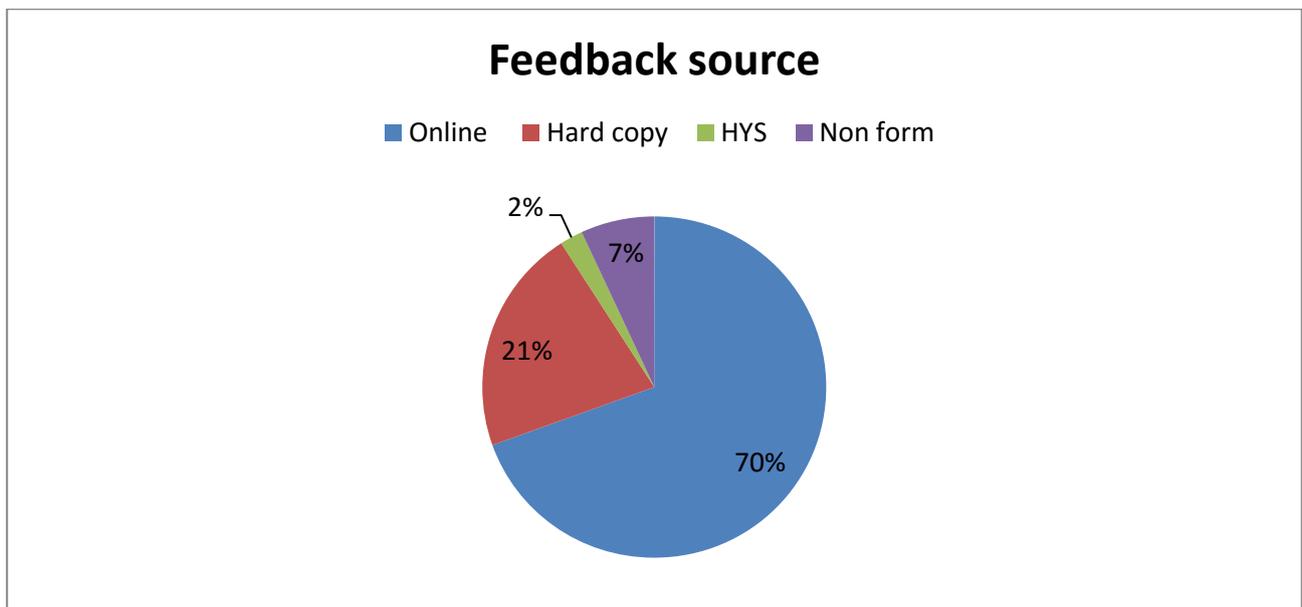
person at community engagement events, through written forms (including those submitted online) and through social media.

B. Feedback on Waitemātā Local Board local proposals and on regional proposals from the Waitemātā Local Board area was received through:

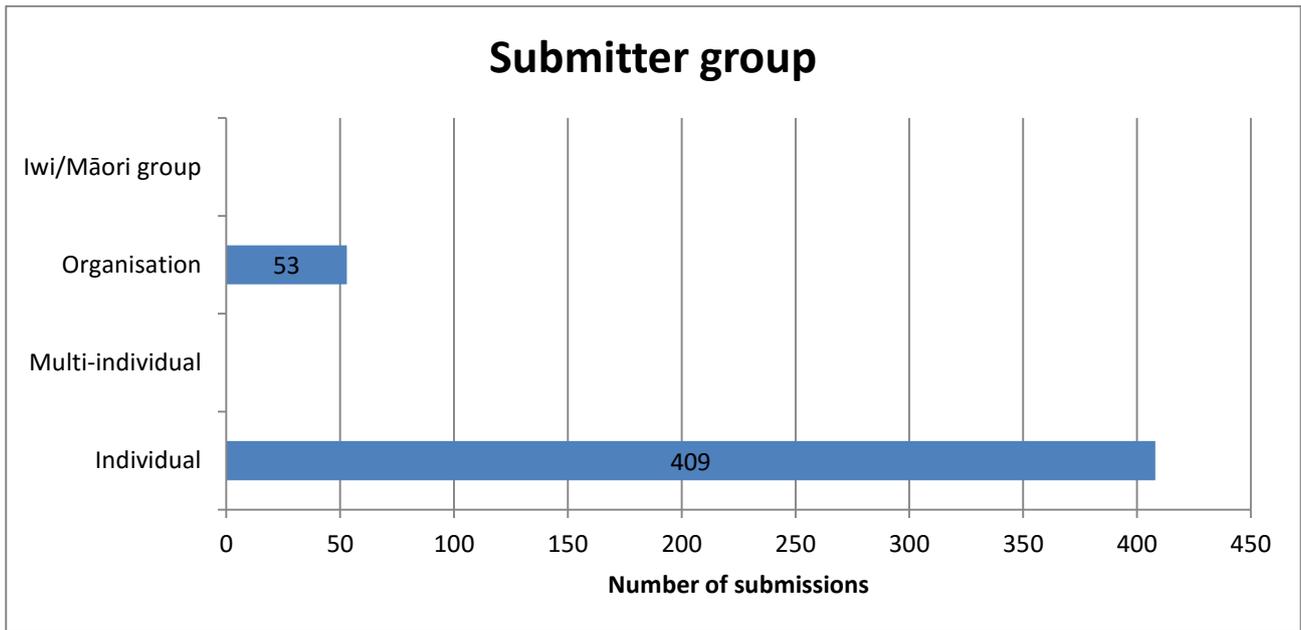
- Written feedback – 420 feedback forms
- In person – Feedback was received through one Have Your Say event on March 8, 2017, at the Waitemātā Local Board office and two community events, Family Circus Sunday (Victoria Park, 19 March, 2017) and Pasifika Festival (Western Springs, 25 and 26 March, 2017)
- Social media – two feedback points were received through social media channels

4. Feedback received on the local proposals

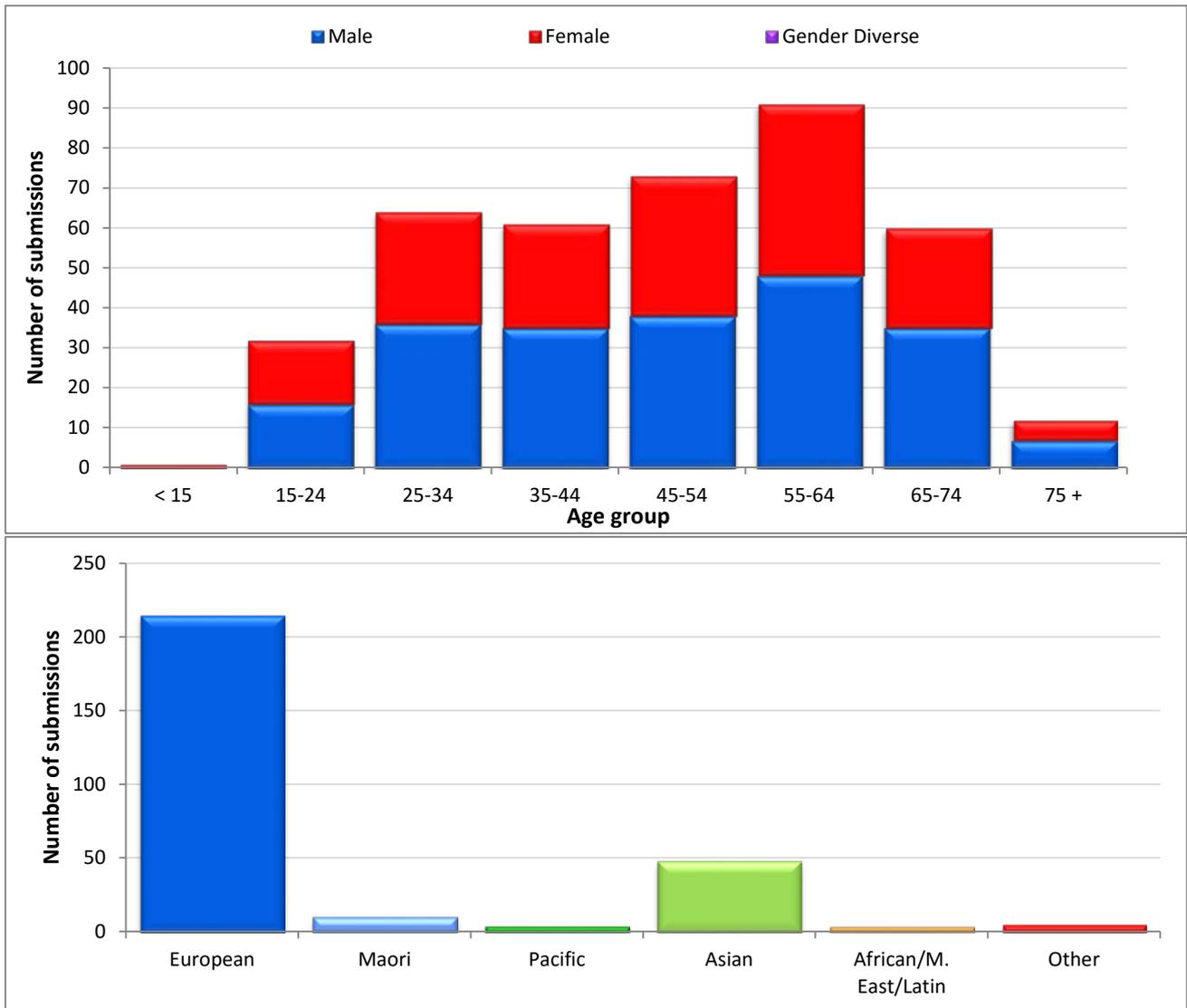
The majority (72 per cent) of feedback received for Waitemātā came via online channels.



In terms of submitter groups, most of the submitters were individuals (409 submissions) with a smaller number of submissions from organisations (53 submissions). Most of the organisations (32) belonged to the tourism, hospitality and property development sectors and expressed their disagreement with the targeted rate on accommodation providers. Submissions were received from five business associations (Grey Lynn Business Association, Heart of the City, Newmarket Business Association, K Rd Business Association and Parnell Business Association).



Considering demographic data, the two biggest groups who provided feedback in the public consultation were those aged 55 to 64 years old and those aged 45 to 54 years old. People identifying as having European origin were the leading group in terms of submissions, with 215 (78 per cent of total submissions), while people identifying as Asian were second with 48 submissions (18 per cent).



A. Key themes across all feedback received were:

1. Cycling infrastructure
2. Prioritise walking/pedestrian safety
3. Homelessness
4. Combined network and stormwater pollution
5. Developing 254 Ponsonby Road as an open space
6. Agrichemical use
7. Improve public transport
8. Support for maintaining libraries services

B. A summary of the feedback received through each channel is provided below.

Written feedback received

Below there is a summary of responses to each question included in the written forms (both online and hard copy).

Question 1: In your opinion, have we got our priorities right for this local board area in 2017/2018?

The general response to all priorities showed that 83 per cent of respondents supported or partially supported the local board's priorities, while 15 per cent of submitters did not.

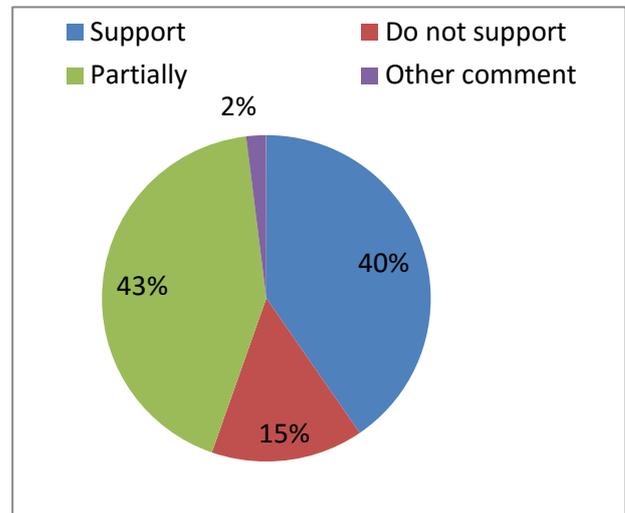
Some of the comments received for this question were:

"I am all for upgrading the library. One of the problems with a single central library is that in a dense city where many people must travel on foot, it becomes difficult to access. Please also think about developing a number of satellite libraries. Perhaps west of Queen Street and K Rd".

"Myers Park upgrade - can a path be put in linking the Grey's Ave west most entrance (Amora hotel) to the path up to Kadimah school - to create stair free access from the western end of the park. Path doesn't (need) to be any fancier than the school path".

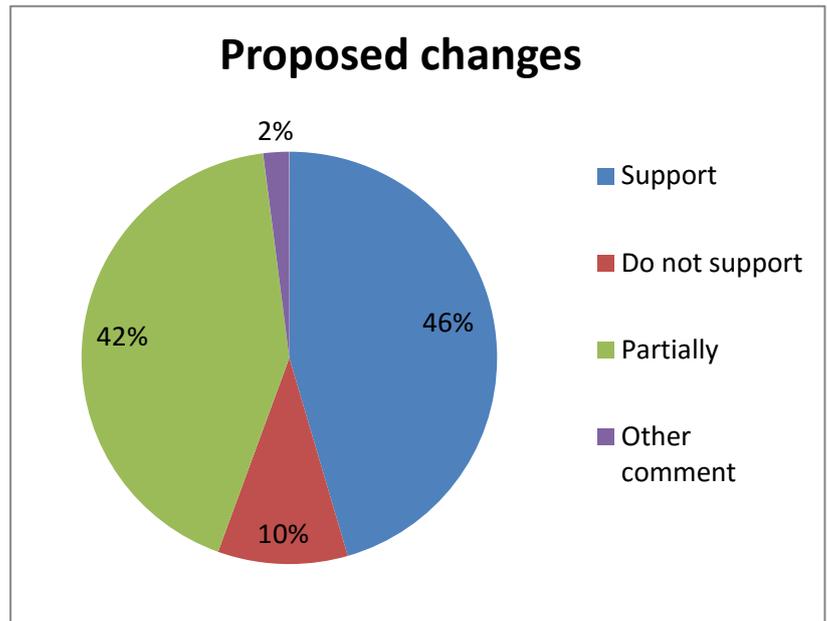
"Please focus on improving the parks and the City Library. I also wouldn't mind if the Board played a greater role in pressuring the Auckland Council regarding the LRT along Queen Street and Symonds Road down Dominion Road".

"One thing missing in my opinion is some focus on events. Events are massive for this area, and it is hit with far far more events than other areas. As a result sometimes our parks and open spaces can be impacted adversely. Perhaps a targeted charge for maintenance could be trialled?"



Question 2: Have we got our proposed changes and improvements to projects right?

The proposed changes and improvements to projects (complete development plans for Meola Reef Reserve and Western Springs Lakeside Park; increase the budget for ecological restoration of Waipapa Stream; digitisation of the Heritage Foreshore Trail interpretative signage; commence scoping, design and community engagement for the Newmarket Youth Space; name two public open spaces that are currently unnamed at Freemans Bay and St Marys Bay and consider renaming Wairangi Wharf Reserve and defer the installation of solar heating for the Parnell Baths until the renewal of the facility is complete) received support or partial support from 88 per cent of respondents. Ten per cent of submitters said they did not support these changes and improvements.



From the list of proposed changes or new projects, the digitisation of the Heritage Foreshore Trail received mixed support, with more people against the proposal than in support.

The naming of two open spaces and renaming of Wairangi Wharf received little support, with more submissions against the proposal received than supporting the project. A number of submitters felt this project was of limited value.

Some of the comments received for this question were:

“Increase in budget for Waipapa Stream restoration is good. Digitisation and naming are trivial.”

“Digitisation of signage is a waste of money.”

“Spending money on renaming unnamed areas is wasteful in current environment. More water quality improvement initiatives are needed before this kind of superficial stuff should be looked at.”

“Add in the Pt Erin Pools for a refit and upgrade.”

“The priorities should be evenly spaced across a range of interventions. These interventions are limited to the use of public space. There should be more involving the unique aspects of this area, such as safe nightlife, tourism support, youth services, public transport into CBD such as train services, and homelessness.”

“Allocate funding for the public park at 254 Ponsonby Road.” (Partial support)

Question 3: Do you support our advocacy areas?

Sixty-four per cent of submitters supported our advocacy areas, while 22 per cent partially supported them.

Submitters showed strong support for dealing with homelessness, upgrading the waste water infrastructure, improving public transport including bus services and rapid transport, developing 254 Ponsonby Road and reducing or eliminating agrichemical use.

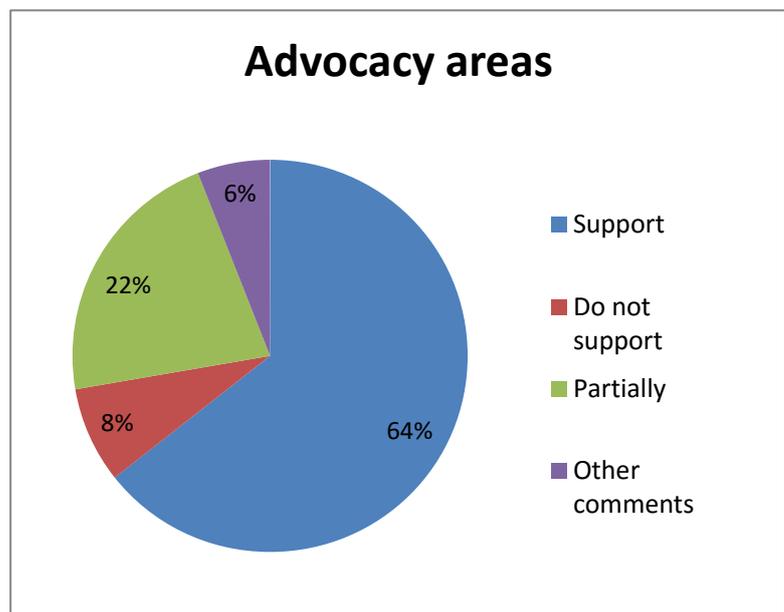
Some of the comments received for this question were:

“It is CRITICAL that Cox’s Bay estuary be cleaned up. It is an environmental disaster. This is a community asset that is long overdue for remediation. .”

“254 Ponsonby Road is a link in creating ‘connected, accessible and safe transport choices’. I urge you to include this site into your transport planning. It will help create a safe cycle and walkway for school children in the area as well as for other users. Yes to reducing Homelessness and the use of toxic chemicals.”

“The transport priority should be given to public transport as this will keep the city moving, especially in the CBD and roads leading to it. Also, it would be good to have a program aimed at helping the homeless people who are present on Queen Street.”

“In addition to solutions for the homeless we need to make sure they are safe and comfortable while they are on the streets. We should spend more money on comfortable seating, shade, fountains, and fruit trees.”



Question 4: The local board has approximately \$500,000 allocated per annum for local transport projects. What projects should we prioritise for this fund?

The majority of respondents said that the local board should prioritise projects that improve cycling infrastructure, pedestrian safety and public transport. Submitters expressed specific support to the following projects:

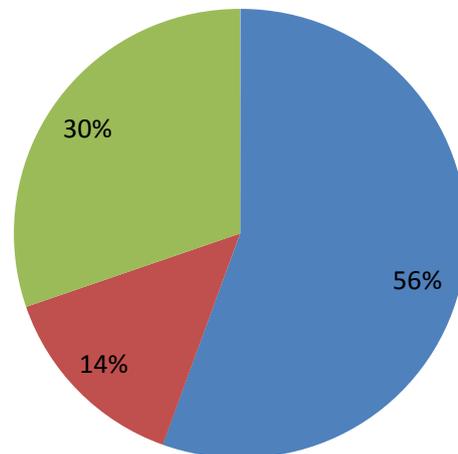
- *Cycleways on Ponsonby Road and Westend Road.*
- *Laneways on Ponsonby road*
- *Wellesley Bus Corridor, Victoria Linear Street Park, Shared street network, Laneway circuit*
- *Dedicated, grade separated cycle path along Tamaki Drive from the end of Quay Street through to the end of Tamaki Drive.*
- *Signage along Beach Rd. to prevent pedestrians using the biking lane. Look after the planting in the same area - between Tangihua and Britomart Place.*
- *Slower speeds in residential streets.*
- *We would like some allocation of funding to fund an urban design study of the St Georges Bay road "Warehouse" (submission from Phillimore Propertes Limited in line with Parnell Business Association)*
- *Links for cycling & walking to schools especially Western Springs and Pasedena in the context of Western Springs/Meola plans. Endorse drinking water facilities where good cycling walking routes are developed.*
- *Make Queen St carless. Buses and pedestrian zone, no private cars. Shops and businesses deliver pre 7am and post 10pm*
- *Improve cycling around Shore Road. Fix the previous mistakes made at the Domain drive/Ayr/Parnell Road intersection.*

Question 5: Do you support the local board allocating additional funds to renewals such as the Hopetoun Street stairs at Western Park Tuna Mau?

A majority of people (56 per cent) supported the allocation of additional funds for renewals and a significant 30 per cent said they were not sure.

Additional funds for renewals

■ Support ■ Do not support ■ Not sure



Feedback received through Have your say events

Key themes raised at our Have Your Say event on March 8 were:

- Strong opposition to targeted rate on accommodation providers (submissions from Rydges Hotel, Heritage Hotel, Young Women’s Christian Association)
- Focus on homelessness solutions
- A gathering place for youth in the city; support for a youth hub
- Support to the separation of the combined drainage network in the Western Bays area/overflows into the Harbour (submission from St Marys Bay Association)

Feedback received through other community events

Not many people provided feedback at the Family Circus Sunday community event on March 19. Local feedback was received on:

- Improving park safety
- Naming the park in St Marys Bay “Flora McKenzie Park”

At Pasifika Festival, no local board feedback was received, all submissions (total of 105) related to regional matters.

Feedback received through social media channels

Only two pieces of feedback related to Waitemata were received via Social Media:

- *“bit more greenery downtown.....dare I SAY TOILETS SEEM SCARCE....down town....I know there is No 2 wharf.....and small shed near viaduct ...but not exactly world class facilities though are they..?”*

- *“please put money towards improving access in Waitemata, e.g. Fleet St stairs – need a ramp as well. More playgrounds in Waitemata, specifically Basque Park – lots of families moving near (this one included!)”*

5. Overview of feedback received on regional proposals from the Waitematā Local Board area

The consultation on the proposed annual budget focused on five key issues:

- Issue 1: Rates increases,
- Issue 2: Rating stability,
- Issue 3: Paying for tourism promotion,
- Issue 4: Paying for housing infrastructure and
- Issue 5: Paying council staff a living wage.

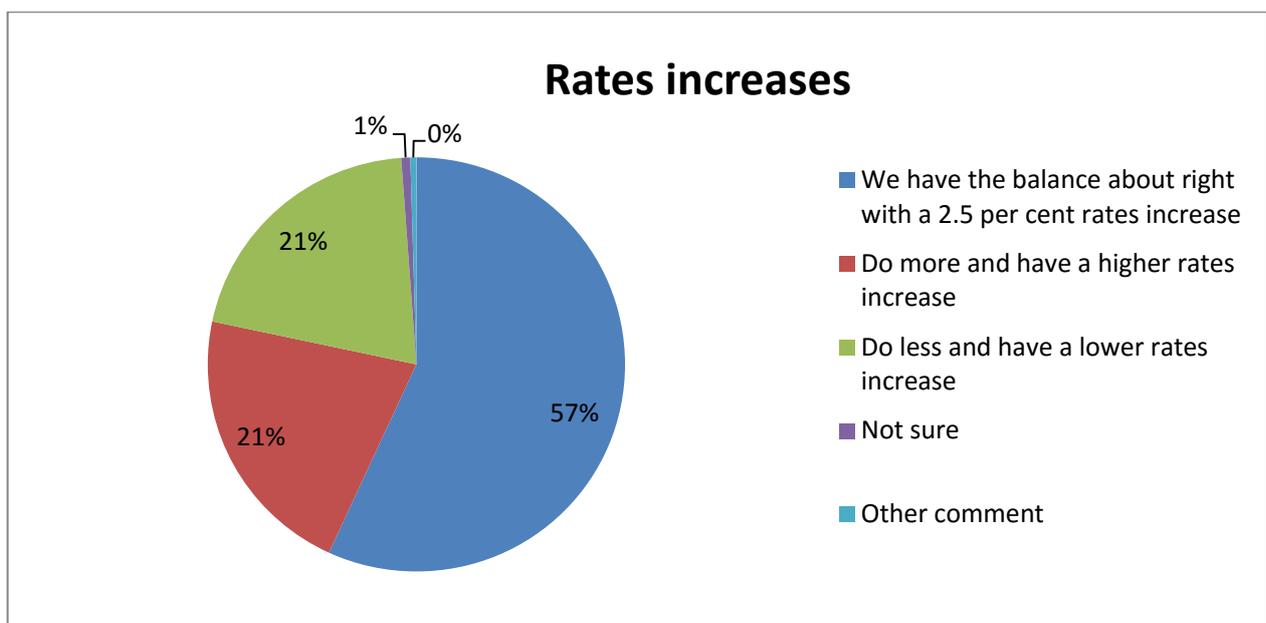
The written feedback received from the Waitematā Local Board area on these key consultation topics is summarised below, along with an overview of any other areas of feedback on regional proposals with a local impact.

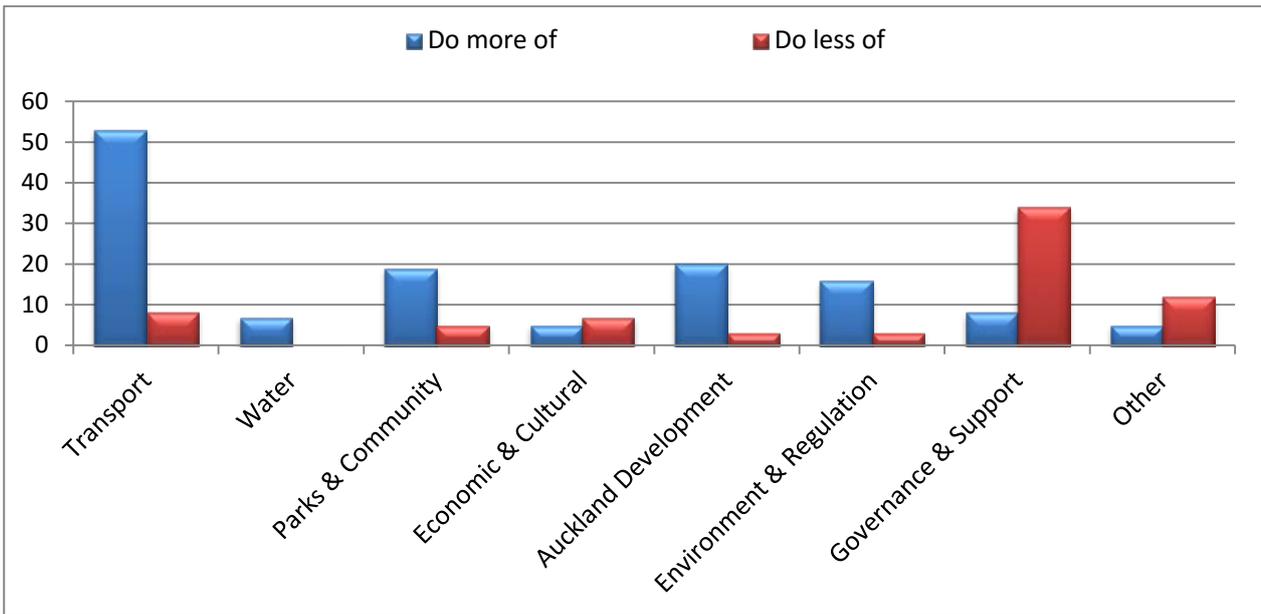
Issue 1: Rates increases

Aucklanders were asked if we have the balance right with a 2.5 per cent average rates increase or should we have a higher rates increase (3.5 per cent) and do more or a lower rates increase (2 per cent) and do less.

Question 1: Delivering our planned investments and services will require an average rates increase of 2.5 per cent for 2017/2018. A higher rates increase would enable us to do more, while a lower rates increase would mean we can do less. What do you think?

The graphs below give an overview of the responses from the Waitematā Local Board area.



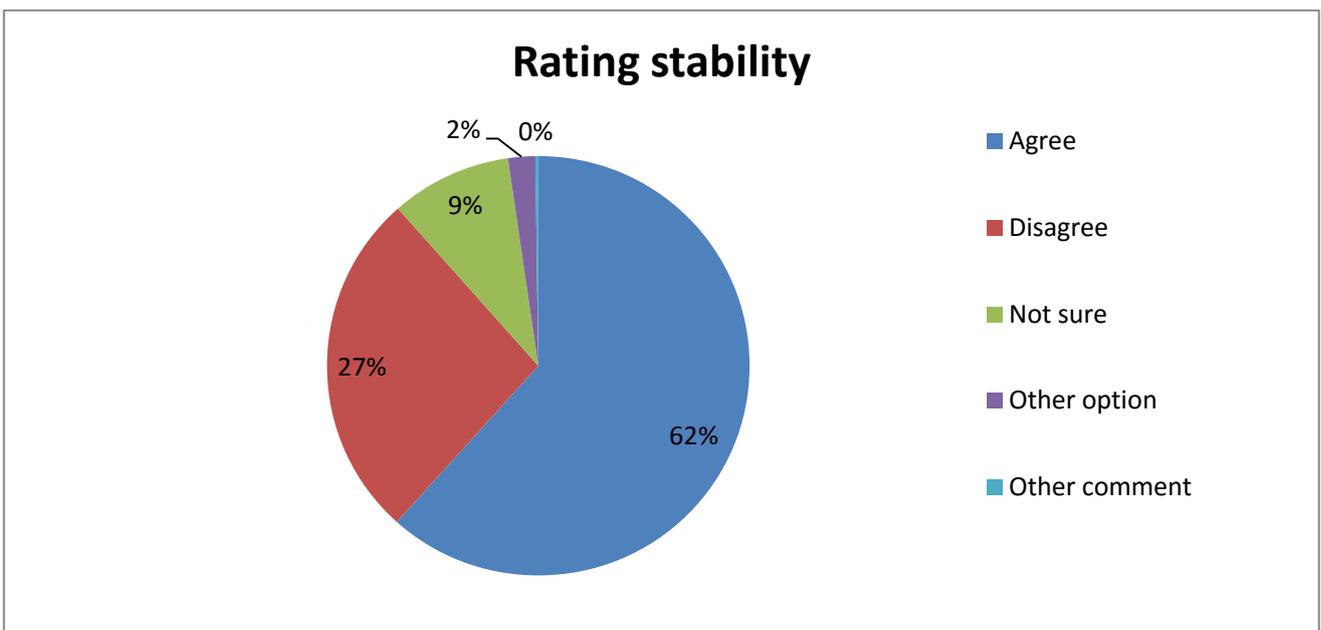


Issue 2: Rating stability

Aucklanders were asked if businesses should receive the same rates increase as residential ratepayers in 2017/2018.

Question 2: The council has been adjusting the share of general rates between businesses and residential ratepayers over time. This has resulted in businesses having a smaller increase than residential ratepayers. We are proposing that for 2017/2018 both should receive the same rates increase. What do you think?

The graph below gives an overview of the responses from the Waitematā Local Board area.

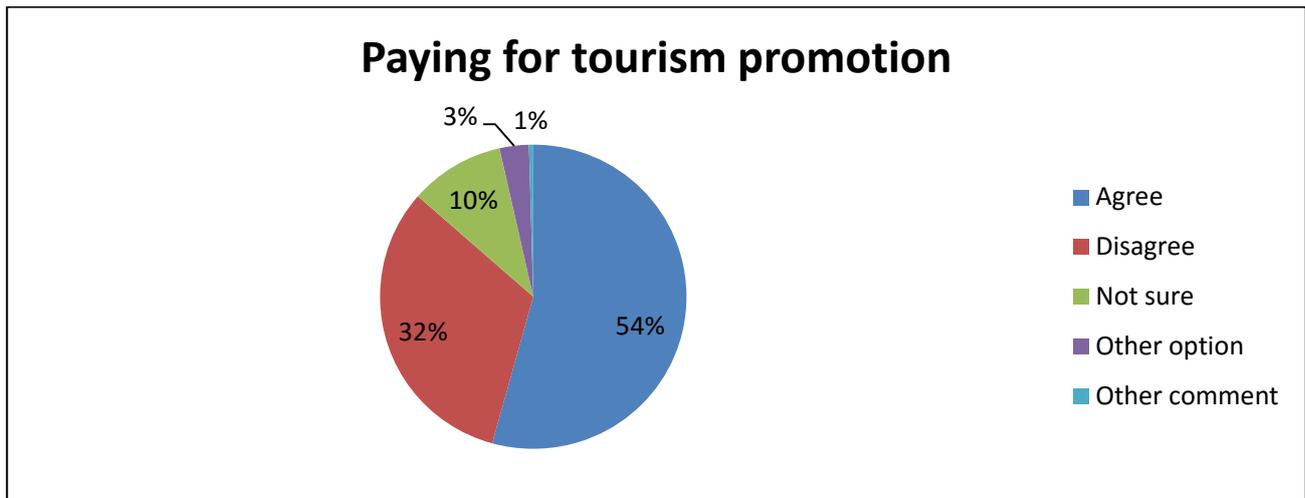


Issue 3: Paying for tourism promotion

Aucklanders were asked if they agree or disagree with the proposed targeted rate on accommodation providers to fund tourism promotion rather than from general rates.

Question 3: The council spends \$20-30 million on tourism promotion and major events each year. We are proposing to fund this from a targeted rate on accommodation providers rather than general rates. What do you think?

The graphs below give an overview of the responses from the Waitematā Local Board area.

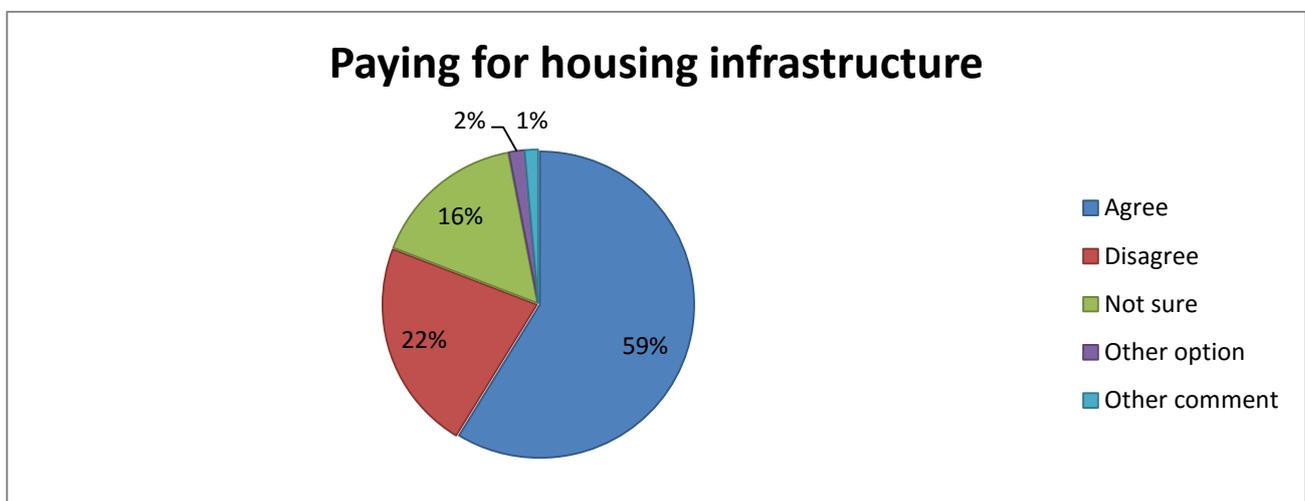


Issue 4: Paying for housing infrastructure

People were asked if they supported changing our funding policy to allow infrastructure for new housing developments to be funded by targeted rates alongside existing growth charges, rather than ratepayers across Auckland.

Question 4: The council is proposing to change our funding policy to allow infrastructure for new housing developments to be funded by targeted rates, rather than ratepayers across Auckland. What do you think?

The graph below gives an overview of the responses from the Waitematā Local Board area.

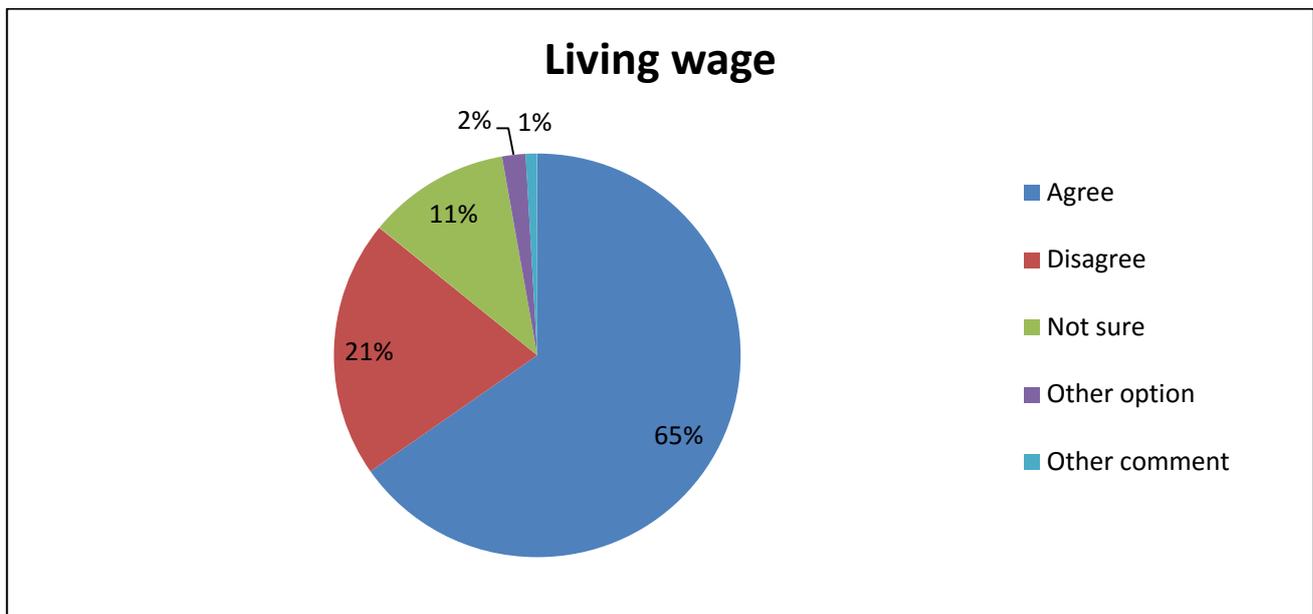


Issue 5: Paying council staff a living wage

People were asked if they support the council to implement a living wage policy over the council term ending October 2019 to ensure all council staff can afford typical living costs. This would be funded from savings within the existing budgets.

Question 5: The council is proposing to implement a living wage policy over the council term ending October 2019 to ensure all council staff can afford typical living costs. This would be funded from savings within the existing budgets. What do you think?

The graph below gives an overview of the responses from the Waitematā Local Board area.



6. Feedback on other regional proposals with a local impact

In addition to the five regional issues, the consultation also sought feedback on a number of regional matters which were as follows:

- Waste management and charges
- Mass transit network
- Business Improvement Districts rates
- SkyPath implementation
- Collaborations on reducing homelessness
- Rural fire service.

When compared to the total number of submissions received these regional matters did not generate a significant amount of feedback. Feedback on waste management charges and rural fire service was negligible. There was a good level of feedback on the mass transit network with all submissions in favour. There was a particular focus on mass transit to the airport, with a network along Dominion Road and to the North Shore also supported by a

number of submitters. SkyPath did not generate a significant number of responses, but of those received the vast majority were strongly in support including submissions from business associations such as Newmarket and Heart of the City.

Collaborations on homelessness received the highest number of regional matter responses. The overwhelming majority of submissions identified this as a key issue and supported initiatives to find short and long term solutions. A number of submissions to the contrary were received with many stating this was an issue for central government rather than Council or concerned that \$500,000 was a high cost for a coordinating role.

7. Feedback on other local topics

A number of other topics were raised by a small number of people, including:

- Complete Hobson Bay walkway
- More green spaces
- Perceived lack of safety in the city centre
- Air pollution and monitoring
- Housing affordability
- Developing Outhwaite Park and Basque Park
- Providing non-smoking outdoor dining
- More public toilets
- More mobility parking spaces
- Preserve heritage areas
- More efforts towards urban forest