

Draft Home to School Transport and Post-16 Travel Arrangements Policy – Consultation Feedback

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Introduction

1. Southampton City Council undertook public consultation on a draft Home to School Transport and Post-16 Travel Arrangements Policy. The consultation took place between 27 September 2018 and 19 December 2018.

2. The proposals were discussed at Cabinet on 18 September 2018 and the cabinet agreed that the proposed policy should be consulted with key stakeholders and the public before any final decisions made.
3. 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 both supplements and contextualises the summary of the consultation included within the Cabinet report.
4. 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.

Aims

5. The aim of this consultation was to:
 - Communicate clearly to residents and stakeholders the proposed changes to the draft Home to School Transport and Post-16 Travel Arrangements Policy.
 - Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder who wishes to comment on the proposals has the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have.
 - Provide feedback on the results of the consultation to elected Members to enable them to make informed decisions about how to best progress.
 - Ensure that the results are analysed in a meaningful, timely fashion, so that feedback is taken into account when decisions are made.

Consultation principles

6. The council takes its duty to consult with residents and stakeholders on changes to services very seriously. The council's consultation principles ensure all consultation is:
 - Inclusive: so that everyone in the city has the opportunity to express their views.
 - Informative: so that people have adequate information about the proposals, what different options mean, and a balanced and fair explanation of the potential impact, particularly the equality and safety impact.
 - Understandable: by ensuring that the language used to communicate is simple and clear and that efforts are made to reach all stakeholders, for example people who are non-English speakers or disabled people.
 - Appropriate: by targeting people who are more likely to be affected and using a more tailored approach to get their feedback, complemented by a general approach to all residents, staff, businesses and partners.
 - Meaningful: by ensuring decision makers have the full consultation feedback information so that they can make informed decisions.
 - Reported: by letting consultees know what was done with their feedback.
7. Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard, which are meaningful and comply with the following legal standards:
 - Consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage
 - Sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response
 - Adequate time must be given for consideration and response
 - The product of consultation must be carefully taken into account.

8. Public sector organisations in Southampton also have a compact (or agreement) with the voluntary sector in which there is a commitment to undertake public consultations for a minimum of 12 weeks wherever possible. This aims to ensure that there is enough time for individuals and voluntary organisations to hear about, consider and respond to consultations. It was felt that a 12 week consultation period would be the best approach.

Consultation methodology

Feedback channels

9. Deciding on the best process for gathering feedback from stakeholders when conducting a consultation requires an understanding of the audience and the focus of the consultation. It is also important to have more than one way for stakeholders to feedback on the consultation, to enable engagement with the widest range of the population. Previous best practice was also considered in the process of developing the consultation methodology.
10. The agreed approach for this consultation was to use a combination of online and paper questionnaires as the main basis, supported by a range of drop-in sessions and public meetings. Feedback was also received through emails and social media.
11. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured questionnaire, helping to ensure respondents were aware of the background and detail of the proposals. The questionnaire was broken down into sections where comparisons were made between the previous policy and the proposed draft policy to make potential changes as clear as possible. Paper copies of the questionnaire were available on request and were made available at consultation events.
12. It was felt that due to the complexity of the consultation it was important to provide face to face contact with consultees to provide clarity and answer any questions. The drop-in or stakeholder sessions were designed to both increase awareness of the consultation but also to answer questions and explain elements of the policy to specific stakeholder groups. Those who attended were also encouraged to complete a questionnaire to capture their feedback. The following events and meetings were held:
 - 8 November, 10am to 12noon at Great Oaks School, Vermont Close, Southampton, SO16 7LT
 - 12 November, 9:30am to 11:30am at Cedar School, Redbridge Lane, Nursling, SO16 0XN
 - 13 November, 9:30am to 11:30am at Rosewood School, Aldermoor Road, SO16 5NA
 - 14 November, 1pm to 3pm in the Community Room/building at Springwell School, Hinkler Road, Thornhill, SO19 6DH
 - 19 November, 5pm to 6pm, Facebook Live hosted by SEND Service Manager) and Southampton Parent Carer Forum Coordinator
13. The yourcity.yoursay@southampton.gov.uk email address was advertised to provide a channel for people to ask additional questions or provide feedback.
14. Respondents to the consultation could also write letters to provide feedback on the proposals.
15. Feedback was collected via posts on the corporate social media pages of Southampton City Council. Whilst we didn't explicitly encourage this route for providing feedback, naturally people commented and responded to promotional posts and tweets about the consultation. Therefore to be as inclusive as possible any comments were coded and analysed and have been included in this report for consideration.

Promotion and communication

16. Throughout the consultation, every effort was made to ensure that as many people as possible were aware of the proposals and had every opportunity to have their say.

17. The consultation was promoted in the following ways:

- A link to the consultation questionnaire and full Cabinet paper was included on the consultation section of the council website. A shortened link was created www.southampton.gov.uk/HTST to direct people to the webpage more easily.
- A news release was sent to the local media and councillors
- Stay connected e-alert: City News (7000 subscribers) – 05/10/18
- The consultation (with a link to the webpage) was promoted in several Facebook and Twitter posts throughout the consultation period.

Consultation feedback

Overall respondents

18. Overall, there were 127 separate written responses to the consultation.

19. The majority of responses were received through the consultation questionnaire; 120 in total. Additional written responses were also received through emails and letters and social media comments. The breakdown of all written responses is shown within table 1 below.

Feedback route	Total number of responses
Questionnaire (Paper and online)	120
Letters or emails	2
Social media comments	6
Total	127

Table 1

20. In addition to written responses to the consultation, there were a number of public engagements and meetings in which verbal feedback was provided.

21. All written and verbal feedback received is summarised within the following section.

Consultation feedback

Breakdown of questionnaire respondents

22. A number of questions were asked within the questionnaire to find out a bit more about the respondents to help contextualise their response.

23. The first question asked respondents what their interest in the consultation was. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of responses to this question. Please note percentages add up to more than 100% as respondents could select multiple options. The highest number of respondents described themselves as a parent or carer of a user of home to school transport; 61 respondents in total. The second highest interest in the consultation was that 57 respondents described themselves as a resident of Southampton. A further 22 respondents described their interest as an employee of a school or place of education. Of the remaining options, 8 respondents described themselves as a user of home to school transport, 6 respondents said they were a residents elsewhere in Hampshire, 5 respondents described themselves as an employee of a local authority, 4 respondents represented a community group or organisation, 3 respondents were political members and 2 respondents answered the questionnaire as a business or organisation. A further 11 respondents answered "other" when asked what best described their interest in the consultation. A list of these responses is provided below:

Advocate for families

Advocate for families of young children with PMLD

Family member lives in area.

Parent of child with SEN
Parent of people in education
Parent of SEN Child without transport
Parent of two teenagers who have attended sixth form college
Parents of a child with special needs who will be using this transportation next year
School Governor

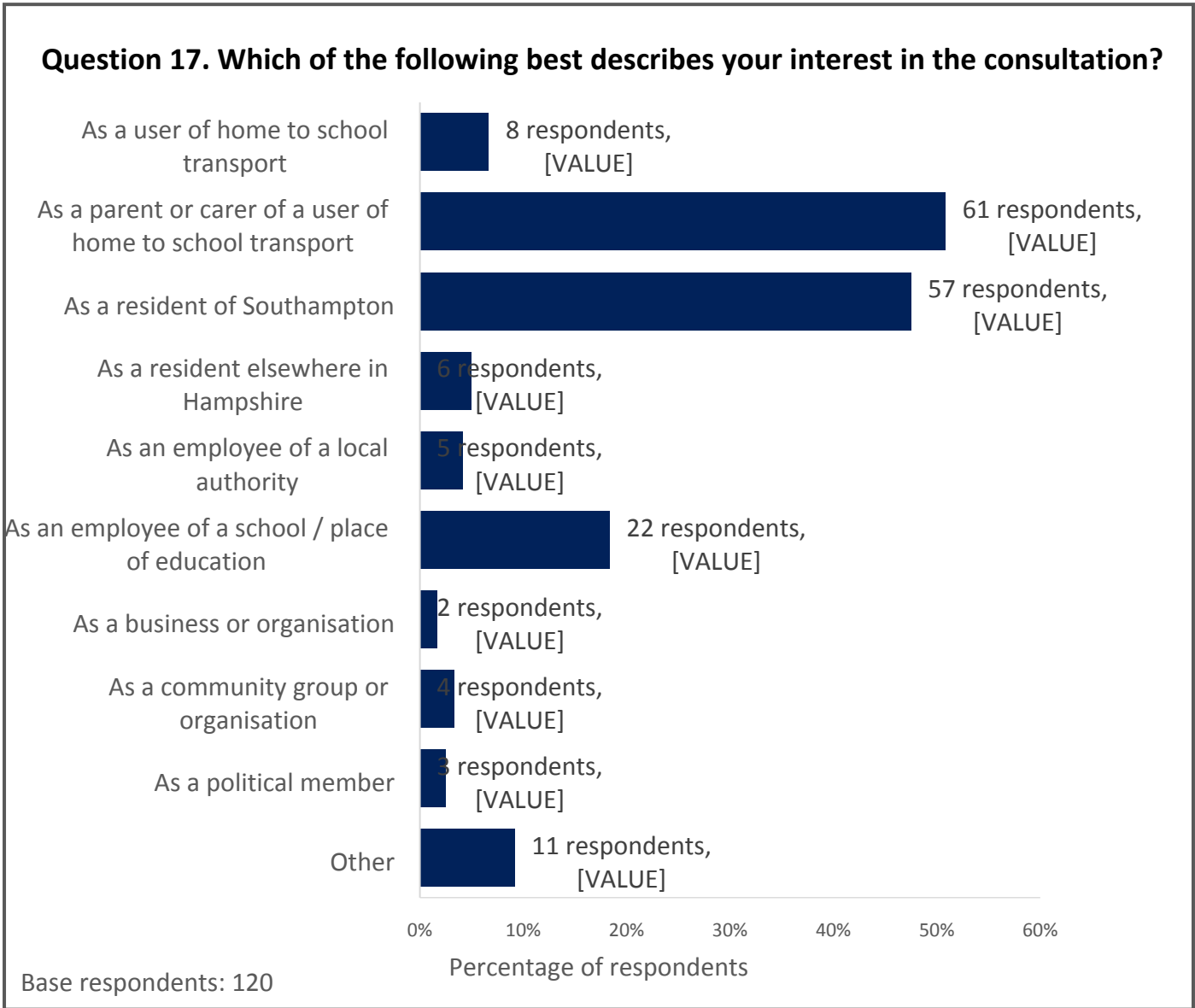


Figure 1

24. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of questionnaire respondents by gender. The majority of respondents, 73%, described themselves as female. The remaining 31 respondents (27%) described themselves as Male.

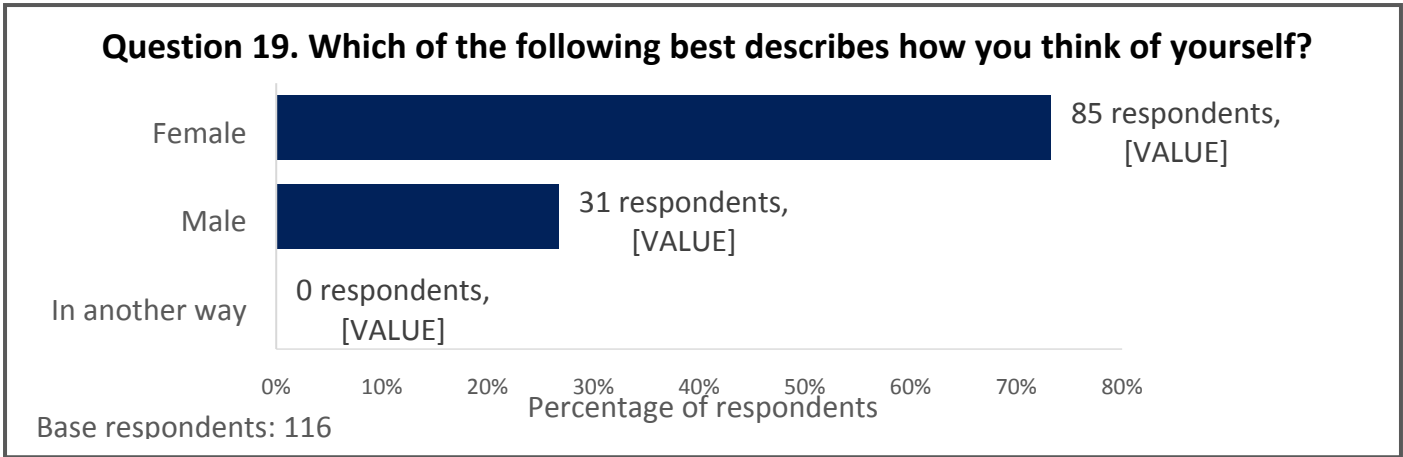


Figure 2

25. Respondents were asked to provide their age category. Figure 3 highlights that the majority of respondents (85%) were between the ages of 25 and 54, with the highest category between the ages of 45 and 54 (38%). There were no respondents to the consultation under the age of 25 or above the age of 75 and so these groups were unrepresented in the consultation.

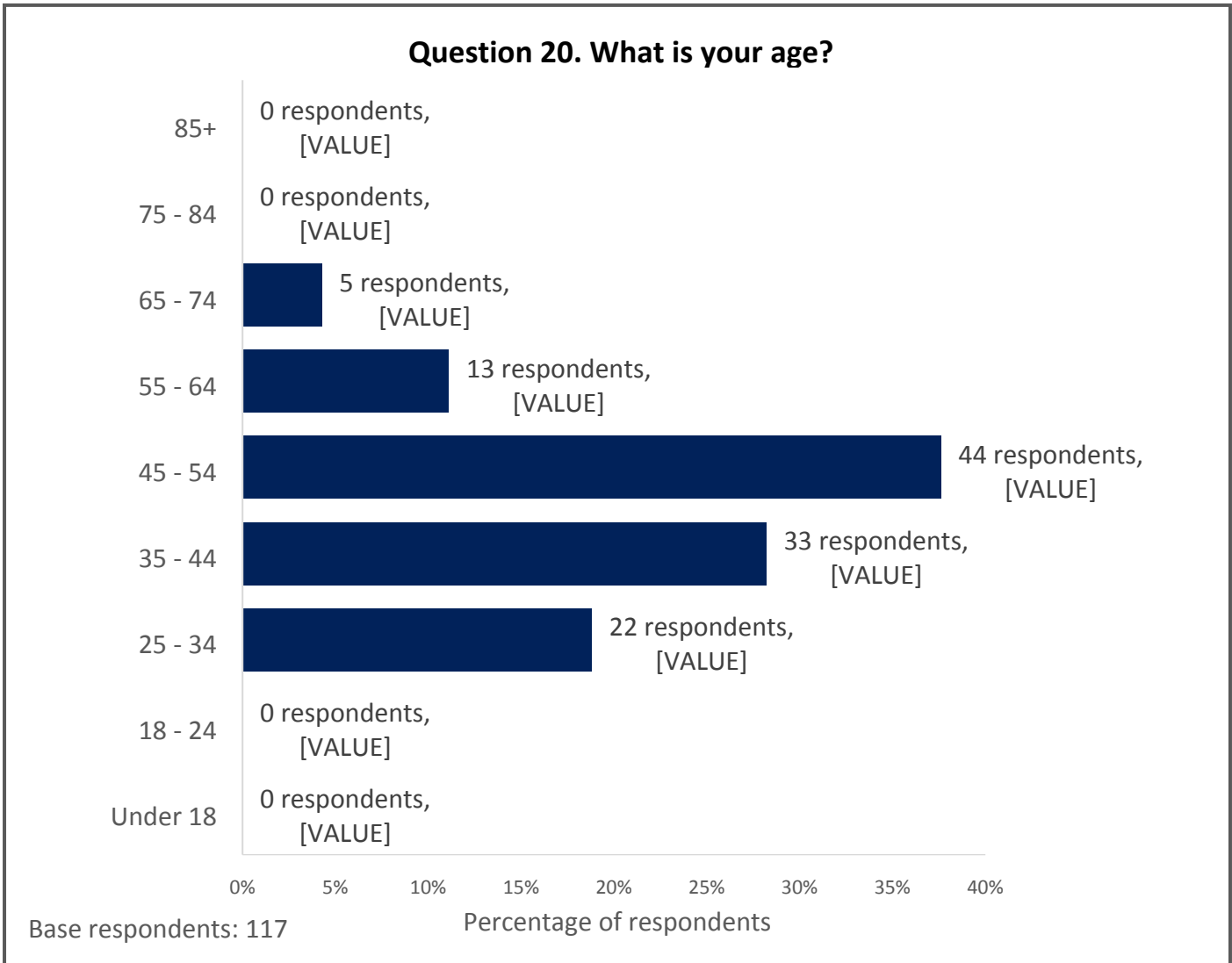
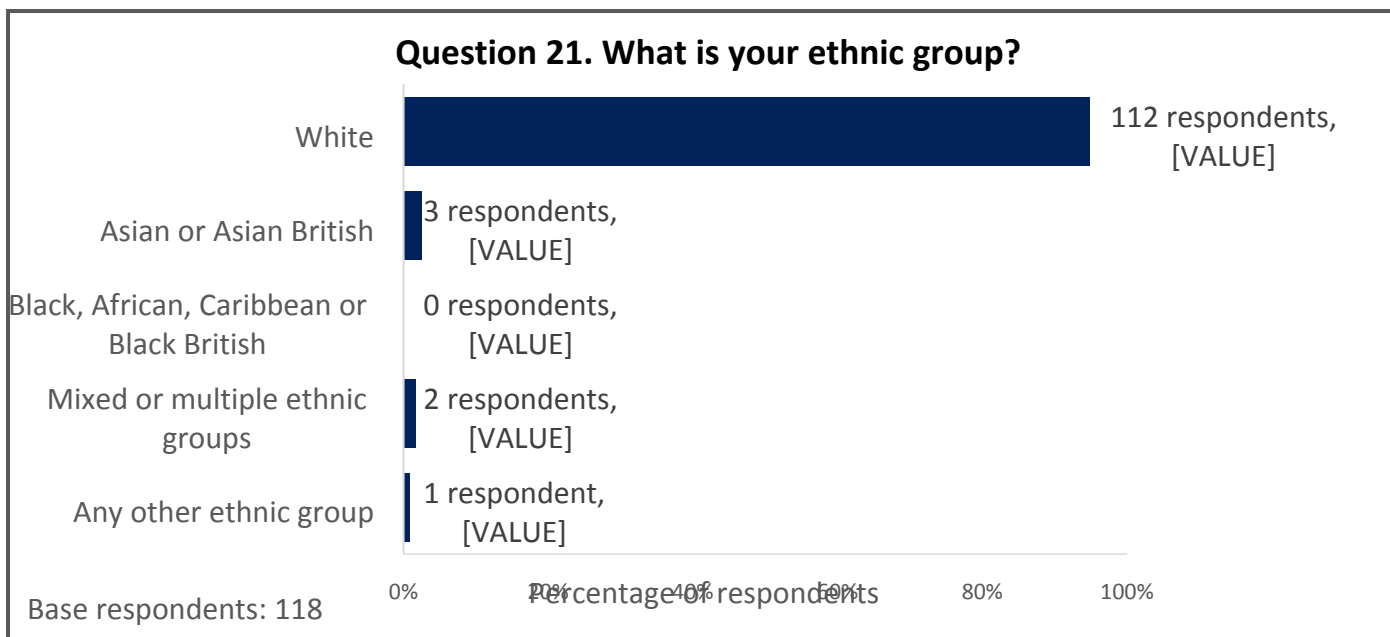


Figure 3

26. Respondents were also asked their ethnicity in the about you section of the questionnaire. Figure 4 shows that the majority of respondents (95%) described themselves as White. Of the remaining 5% of respondents, 3% described themselves as Asian or Asian British, 2% Mixed or multiple ethnic groups and 1% as another ethnic group.



Changes to the policy for early years under the age of 5

27. The first section within the questionnaire asked respondents about proposed changes to the policy for early years under the age of 5. The following changes were proposed:

Existing Policy	Proposed new policy
Travel assistance will be provided to children attending the nearest appropriate early years setting to their home where their placement is supported by the Early Years and Portage team or the Special Educational Needs team and the distance between their home and the early years setting is more than 2 miles.	The draft policy 2019/20 no longer specifies automatic entitlement for those children attending Rosewood Free School, The Cedar School and the Early Learning Group. Children of statutory school age attending these schools whose Education, Health and Care Plan identifies a travel assistance requirement will qualify for support, and those under statutory school age may be considered under the Exceptional Circumstances Criteria.
Travel Assistance will be provided to all children attending Rosewood and Cedar Schools from age 2 years if placement agreed by the Local Authority.	
Travel assistance will be provided to children attending the Early Learning Group if the distance between home and the setting is over 2 miles and placement is agreed by the Early Years and Portage Manager.	

28. Respondents were first asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposed changes to the policy for early years under the age of 5. Figure 2 shows that 31% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposals. Of this 9% strongly agreed and 22% agreed. A further 15% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining 53% of respondents expressed disagreement with the proposals with 16% of all respondents disagreeing and 37% strongly disagreeing.

Question 1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes to the policy for early years under the age of 5?

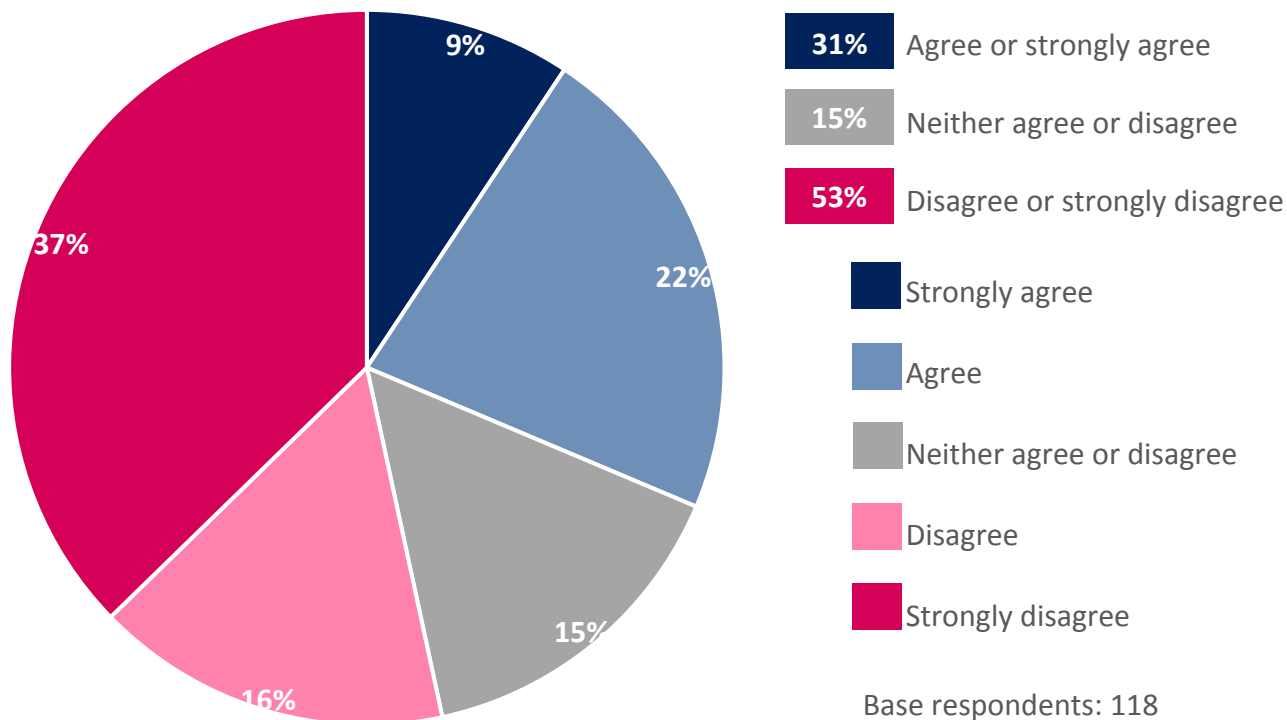


Figure 4

29. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 5 shows the themes of comments regarding proposed changes to the policy for early years under the age of 5 and the number of respondents that raised this point. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent table after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

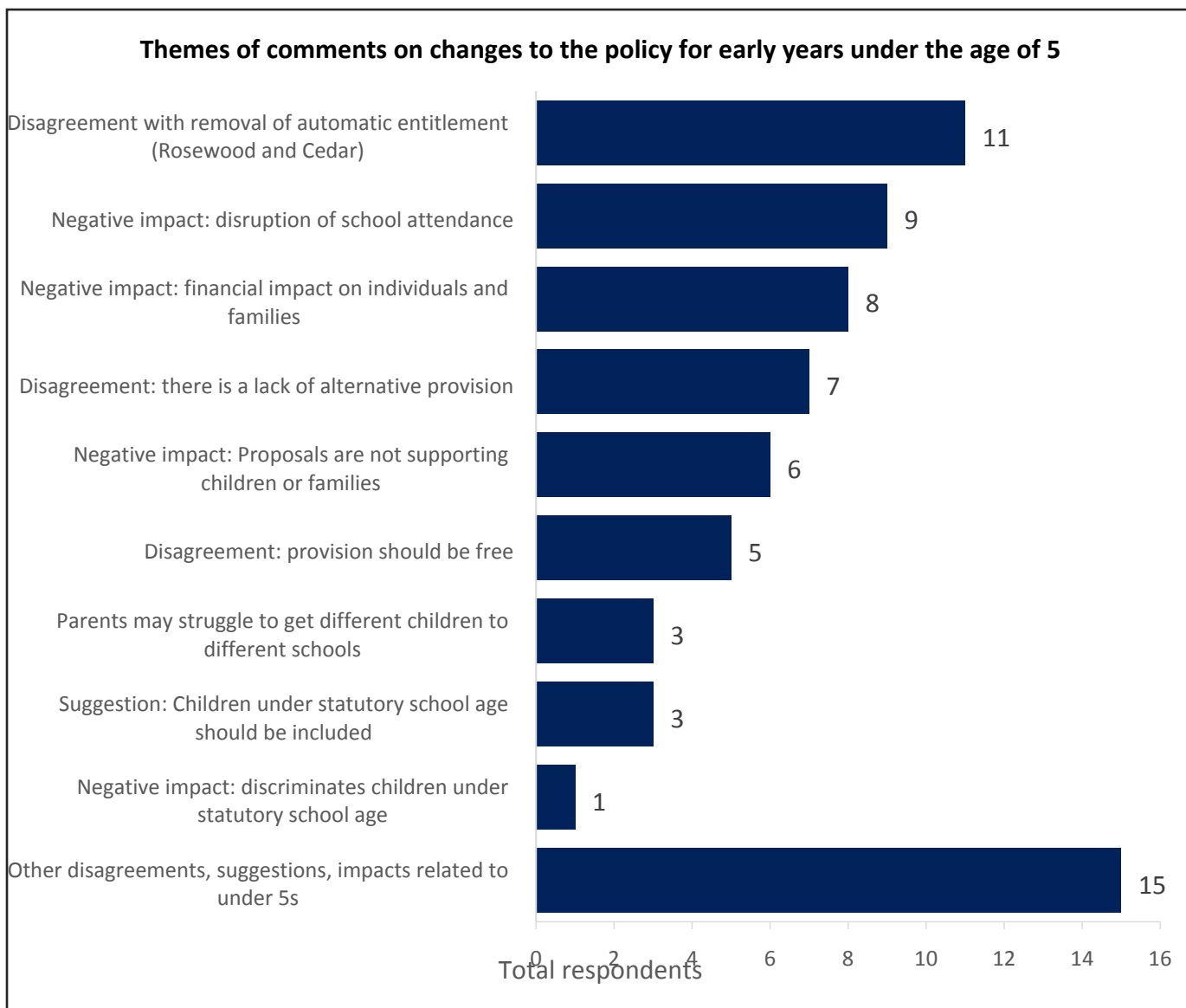


Figure 5

30. Unique comments and suggestions related to changes to the policy for early years under the age of 5:

Disagreement with removal of automatic entitlement (Rosewood and Cedar)	<i>Rosewood is a special school that a student attends due to a need, not purely a want. Families with students at rosewood have enough daily struggles in their lives without the further worry or distress of having to fund transport costs. Students attending Rosewood should automatically be entitled to free transport</i>
	<i>Early years children who have ehcp receiving a specialist school should receive free transport. There are only 2 settings that currently cater for nursery places for students with complex health, physical + learning needs. No transportation can affect families choices immediately discriminating against them and preventing them from accessing specialists.</i>
	<i>All children at rosewood free school should be entitled to transport if required especially those below statutory and above statutory school age. al children should have equality of access to the best school that will meet their learning needs . the value of early years education on 'life' is well documented</i>

	<p><i>The needs of send children attending rosewood or cedar were explicit in the exisiting policy . the current policy is not needs led and will increase the pressure on schools and families to prove their childs needs. the proposed exeptional circumstances seems unecessary breauracratc when exceptional needs can be determined by a placement in a specialist setting.</i></p>
	<p><i>The families that attend Rosewood and Cedar School are our most vulnerable children and families and a blanket removal of automatic entitlement for these families we feel will have a hugely negative effect. We understand that the way in which transport eligibility is decided will be more equitable and fall in line with the needs based proposed model. We feel that adding another 'process' for them to carry out in order for their children to recieve transport along with all the other processes/day to day care that families with children with this level of profound and complex needs already have to contend with, will result in families finding themselves in difficult situations.</i></p>
	<p><i>Rosewood free school pupils should not have their entitlement to free home - school transport removed. we have been assured that families could still access this by fighting for exeptional circumstances- they would all be able to argue for this on the grounds of educational outcomes for the child. health + wellbeing of their child/family. ' a childs speacial needs + medical condition ' health + safety risks ', evidence of service and extraordinary circumstances related to parents canns commitments - why put families through this and recieve the LAS schools</i></p>
	<p><i>My main concerns about the draft policy is the 0-5yrs provision. Rosewood Free school is the only setting in the city that offers nursery places for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and for those with complex medical needs. Therefore there are many families who come from all over the city as there is simply no other choice, they can not just simply choose another nursery or preschool as there isn't one. I understand that legally the council does not have to provide transport but I think an exception should be made for those attending Rosewood. I understand that most pupils will probably be granted transport through the exceptional circumstances rule, so it seems logical for all Rosewood children to be included rather than making families go through the ordeal of yet another assessment. I feel that families will be caused unnecessary worry that they will no longer qualify and if due to the exceptional circumstances it is likely that all students will qualify why put them through that. The number of students that are in the 0-5 category is not going to be a large amount, as some parents who are able to will choose to transport their own children. But there are those families who rely on home to school transport in order for their children to attend an educational setting which meets their needs</i></p>
	<p><i>The end of automatic entitlement will surely lead to an increased need for haggling, begging, negotiating and legally challenging by parents whose true needs are dismissed by the authority to save costs. This will mean that those families who do not posses the cash, time, energy or intellect to legally challenge the authority will have to accept and suffer the resulting hardship. If the authority could be relied upon to provide solutions that meet a childs needs instead of identifying needs that match existing solutions then this could be avoided.</i></p>
<p>Negative impact: disruption of school attendance</p>	<p><i>Transport is often an issue that compromises attendance this is especially true of children below statutory school age who may be vulnerable at home potential safeguarding consequences</i></p>

	<p><i>I have two children at different schools as one is at special school, which one do I get to school on time? Is education prepared to accept one of my children being late for school every day? They are both entitled to an education yet one of them will miss the beginning and end of their day. missing even 15 minutes each end is 8% of their education. Would you accept me deciding that my child could be off for 8% of the time? I would get a fine. Not to mention the disruption to the rest of the class.</i></p>
	<p><i>Our nursey families (from rosewood) who use transport do so reluctantly as their is no other way for them to get their child to school. noone puts 2-3 old children on the bus if they can avoid it. these children will be unable to access school under the new proposal. (family well- being issues for 16-18 year olds and benefits) at ROsewood increased levels parent drop off / pick up conjection issues + all children delayed getting home/ picked up v early (mainly journey >1 hr already.) As a nursery teacher i am seriously concerned that some of the most vulnerable children in southampton will be unable to access the educational provision they are entitled to.</i></p>
	<p><i>Alot of children and parents depend on this service not everyone is able to get their child to school without it</i></p>
	<p><i>this is disastrous decision, early years is a vital time in a childs development. To cut this funding will hinder access to education and restrict those families who have children in other settings.</i></p>
<p>Negative impact: financial impact on individuals and families</p>	<p><i>Families of children with additional needs are often financially stretched already to add another cost to them for something that their children are entitled to receive, education and support, is appalling.</i></p>
	<p><i>If suitable alternative schools are avialible closer then I would agree, but some children have to travel extra for a certain school, putting extra expense and pressure on parents getting them there, so for those charging for the travel is wrong.</i></p>
	<p><i>I find it astonishing that a LABOUR Council would even consider the reduction in financial support to the most vulnerable group and by extension their carers, all of whom are not only living under incredibly stressful conditions but also save the public purse a small fortune through the poor provision of benefit to carers!</i></p>
<p>Disagreement: there is a lack of alternative provision</p>	<p><i>If parents are having to take their children to these sites then they have little or no choice due to how bad the SEN provision is in some schools in Southampton, for example my local school.</i></p>
	<p><i>Inequality for early years - already limited options in the city</i></p>
	<p><i>Rosewood free school is the only setting in the city that offers nursery places for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and for those with complex medical needs. Therefore, there are many families who come from all over the city as there is simply no other choice.</i></p>
	<p><i>When my daughter was preschool age we were initially offered a setting miles away and I dont drive. If people are put in the same situation, placement may be turned down purely due to transport and its important children with special needs dont miss out on early years on the fact they cant get there</i></p>
	<p><i>These are schools for children with no other suitable school that they can attend. These children's lives require so much extra cost to manage in every way - providing help for them to get to and from the only schools that can meet their needs is the bare minimum.</i></p>

Negative impact: Proposals are not supporting children or families	<i>I strongly disagree with the proposal, i think all under 5's families should be supported as well</i>
	<i>I feel like the system is being chipped away to the point where we will be left with nothing to support our families. This is just another thing to tip us over the edge.</i>
	<i>As parents of children with special needs, dont you think we go through enough pressure and stress with bringing up a child with special needs that we have to fight or wait to see if we qualify for for transportation for their school</i>
	<i>The proposed policy would make it difficult for certain children to get to their appropriate school and make life hard for those families.</i>
Disagreement: provision should be free	<i>Families on low income and those who have special education needs and those who are statemented should receive transport.</i>
	<i>I believe all students , regardless age, should have free transport.</i>
	<i>There should be no charge, life is hard enough for carers.</i>
	<i>Children under 5 with complex needs should still have an entitlement to free transport</i>
Parents may struggle to get different children to different schools	<i>I live on the opposite side of the city to my son's school, Great Oaks and I do not drive. I am a single parent with no partner to assist with travel to and from school and I have another child who I have to take to and from school also. To go by public transport it would take me at least two buses and a round trip of 3 hours each way something that my Son would not be able to manage. In addition to this my son is unable to use public transport as he becomes very distressed by smell and noise and is unable to tolerate babies or small children or people looking at him. My son also has flat foot so he is unable to walk far and is very slow walking. He simply would refuse to go to school. I have another child in another school and it currently takes me 2 buses and 3 hours a day to get him to and from school. I currently pay £130 a month for travel alone for both of us.</i>
	<i>A family that I know lives less than 2 miles from Rosewood but has 2 disabled children who attend and 2 children who attend mainstream school, they would not be able to get all their children to school without school transport</i>
Other disagreements, suggestions, impacts related to under 5s	<i>You could raise the mileage to be in line with over 5's</i>
	<i>Cutbacks disguised as changes as per usual</i>
	<i>At this age it can take a while to assess for and produce an EHCP (children in higher age bands more likely to already have this) or for a child's case to be discussed as an 'Exceptional Circumstance'. No time limits</i>
	<i>This is punishing the most vulnerable families in our city community. Many families who have the exising challenge of having a child with PMLD would have extra challenge juggling ones family members work with the pratical problem of how to get their childto essential early years education.</i>
	<i>I feel from my personal experience that getting my son into Cedar was stressful enough experience. In my personal experience there were a lot of errors with transport. Despite me personally telling them that my child was in a wheel chair they gave him a booster seat and not a wheelchair space. I also told them we had moved and gave them our new address because things had been posted to the wrong address. Yet the bus and escort where given our old address. So, I don't have the confidence that information would be accurately passed between the teams.</i>

<p><i>I agree that the policy should explicitly set out provisions for children/ young people with SEND, But the true needs or rosewoods population needs to be considered carefully and the impacts it will have on children/ communities/ school employees.</i></p>
<p><i>This is an iniquitous decision, with the potential to include young children children (at a viral time in their development) from accessing the education to which they are entitled . they have already had educational input at the child development center removed and do not receive educational input until after they reach 2 age- this is a further barrier to education for children entitled to EHC plan.</i></p>
<p><i>I dont understand what was wrong with current policy. This seems to me to be quite shocking. Disabled toddlers paying the price of cuts?</i></p>
<p><i>Does this include those attending Rosewood or Cedar schools?</i></p>
<p><i>for EY's assessed as requiring an EHC and educational in a specialist setting transport should be available. provision of nursery placements able to meet the needs of complex health physical and learning needs is restricted to currently only 2 settings families are not choosing/selecting provisions on any other criteria than need. if the child has a sibling this policy immediately discriminates , as families will not be able to access specialist + the local setting without transport.</i></p>
<p><i>Old policy works better and give a parent like myself which child attend special school peace of mind . Current transport provider is print , considering and caring .</i></p>
<p><i>the value of early years education on 'life' is well documented</i></p>
<p><i>Families with more than one child will struggle to get them all to school at the appropriate time - particularly without a car. Parents do have to work!!! To put a case of 'exceptional' circumstances will only be another bureaucratic fight and barrier for already stretched parents of SEN children.</i></p>
<p><i>Its absolutely outrageous that the poorest families and children with the greatest needs are being forced to pay for essential help accessing education. These additional costs will be intolerable and push already poor families deeper into debt and destitution. The council is using the bodies of the most vulnerable children in society as a human shield to avoid cutting elsewhere. And that it is a LABOUR council making this decision is grotesque and horrific. Every councillor involved in making a decision like this should be publicly shamed and expelled from the Labour Party. Let the consequences of this abhorrent cruelty follow them for the rest of their lives</i></p>
<p><i>Research shows early interveticion + education is key. familieswho have children with profound + multiple learning difficulties find it hard to transport them to school when these families are under many pressures at home this is another pressure to them when would they realistically have time to apply for exeptional circumstances . if they apply, how long would this take? keep the trasport service for under 5's.</i></p>
<p><i>Think its important that they settle in well and if transport helps then they should be able to get that help</i></p>

Definitely an equality issue regarding access to appropriate education for under 5's with profound and multiple learning difficulties. they may not be of statutory school age but would be entitled to an education health and care plan from birth. what will southampton education offer be to those families who cannot transport their child to rosewood? already families of children under 3 are unable to access our stray and play group if they dont have transport - being unable to access nursery education will further isolate those families. note scc tagline ' a city of opportunity where everyone thrives. those proposed changes to the policy are contrary to your own aspirations i feel.

My daughter doesn't do the normal school hours so she couldn't even use the school transport.

I feel it is vital that the most appropriate placement is available for special needs children as early as possible. This gives them the best chance to make progress

Any reduction in support for journeys such as this may lead to an increase in car journeys.

Changes to the policy for young people aged 16 – 19

31. The second section of the questionnaire asked respondents to provide feedback on changes to the policy for young people aged 16 – 19. The following changes were proposed.

Existing Policy	Proposed new policy
Travel assistance is provided to the nearest college or school with a sixth form offering an appropriate course to meet the individual's needs.	<p>The provision of free transport assistance for post 16 students will no longer be offered under the new policy. Transport assistance will still be available to students aged between the ages of 16 and 19 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), but will be subject to a flat rate contributory charge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £600 per annum, payable in 3 termly instalments of £200. £495 per annum payable in 3 termly instalments of £165 for students whose families meet the low income criteria set out in the policy.

32. When asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposals, a total of 75% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Of this, 22% selected disagree and 53% selected strongly disagree. Overall, 21% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposals (11% strongly agree, 10% agree). The remaining 4% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals.

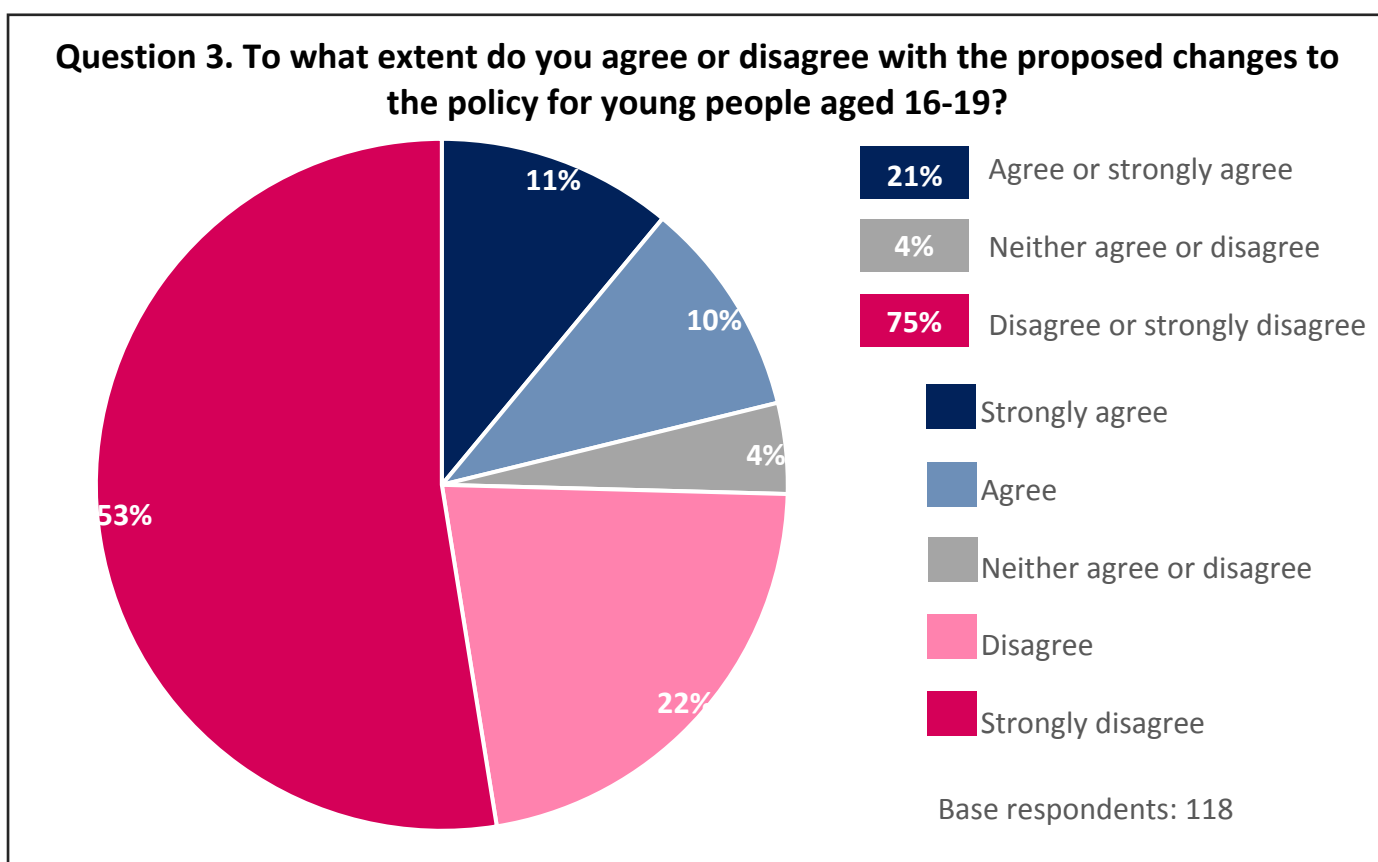


Figure 6

33. Respondents were then asked what they thought about the proposed charging amount themselves. Firstly they were asked about the full contributory charge of £600 per annum. A total of 80% of respondents felt that either the charges were too high or there should be no charge. Of this 13% felt the charge was slightly too high, 19% far too high and 48% felt there should be no charge at all. A total of 14% of respondents that felt that the charge was the right amount. The remaining 6% of respondents felt the charge was too low (5% far too low, 1% slightly too low).

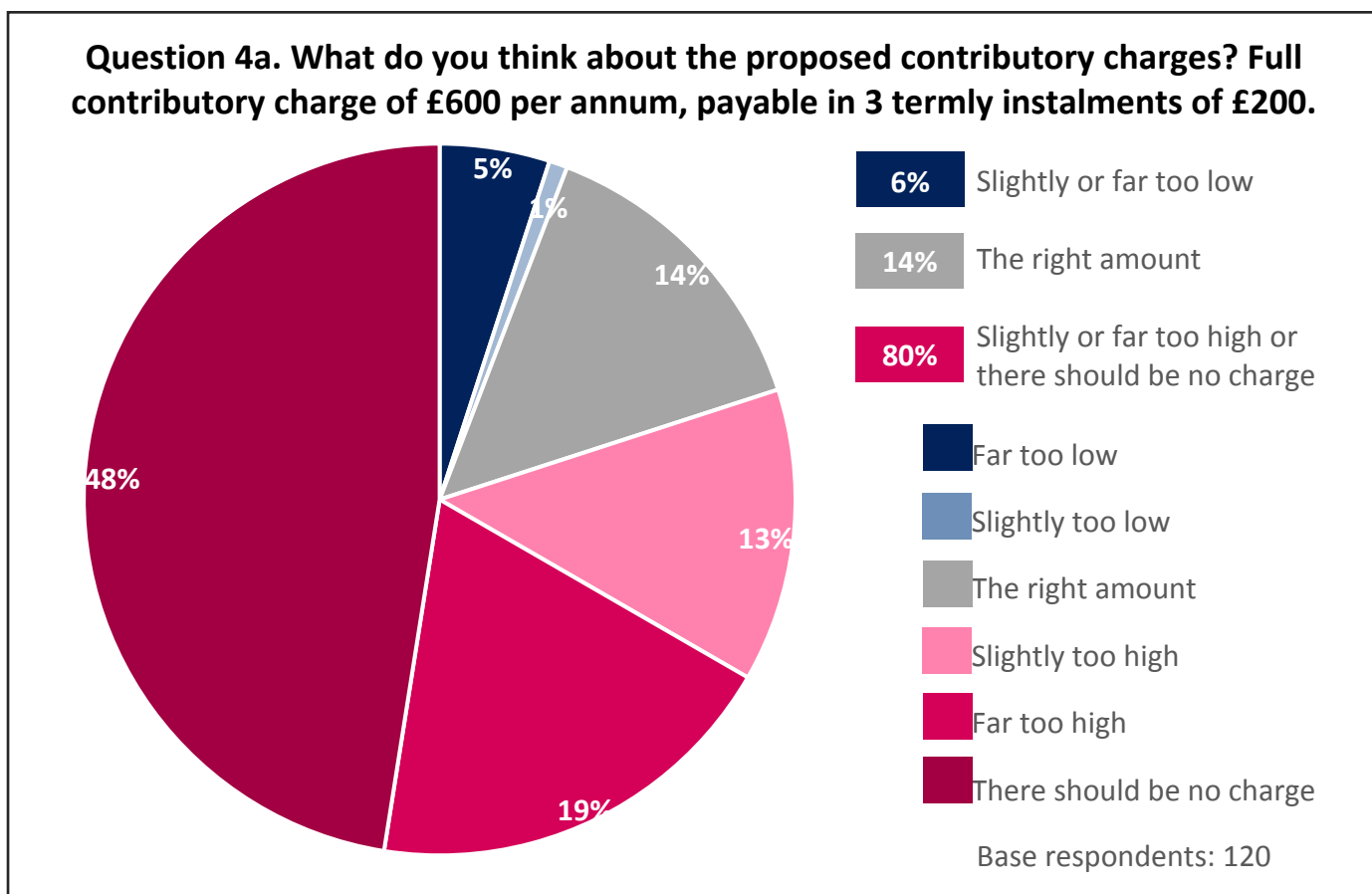


Figure 7

34. Respondents were then asked the same questions regarding the reduced contributory charge of £495 per annum, payable in 3 termly instalments of £165 for students whose families meet the low income criteria. Similarly to the full charge, a total of 80% of respondents felt that either the charge was too high or there should be no charge. Of this, 9% felt the charge was slightly too high, 18% felt the charge was far too high and 54% felt there should be no charge. Overall, 12% of respondents felt that the charge was the right amount. The remaining 8% of respondents felt that the charge was too low (5% far too low, 3% slightly too low).

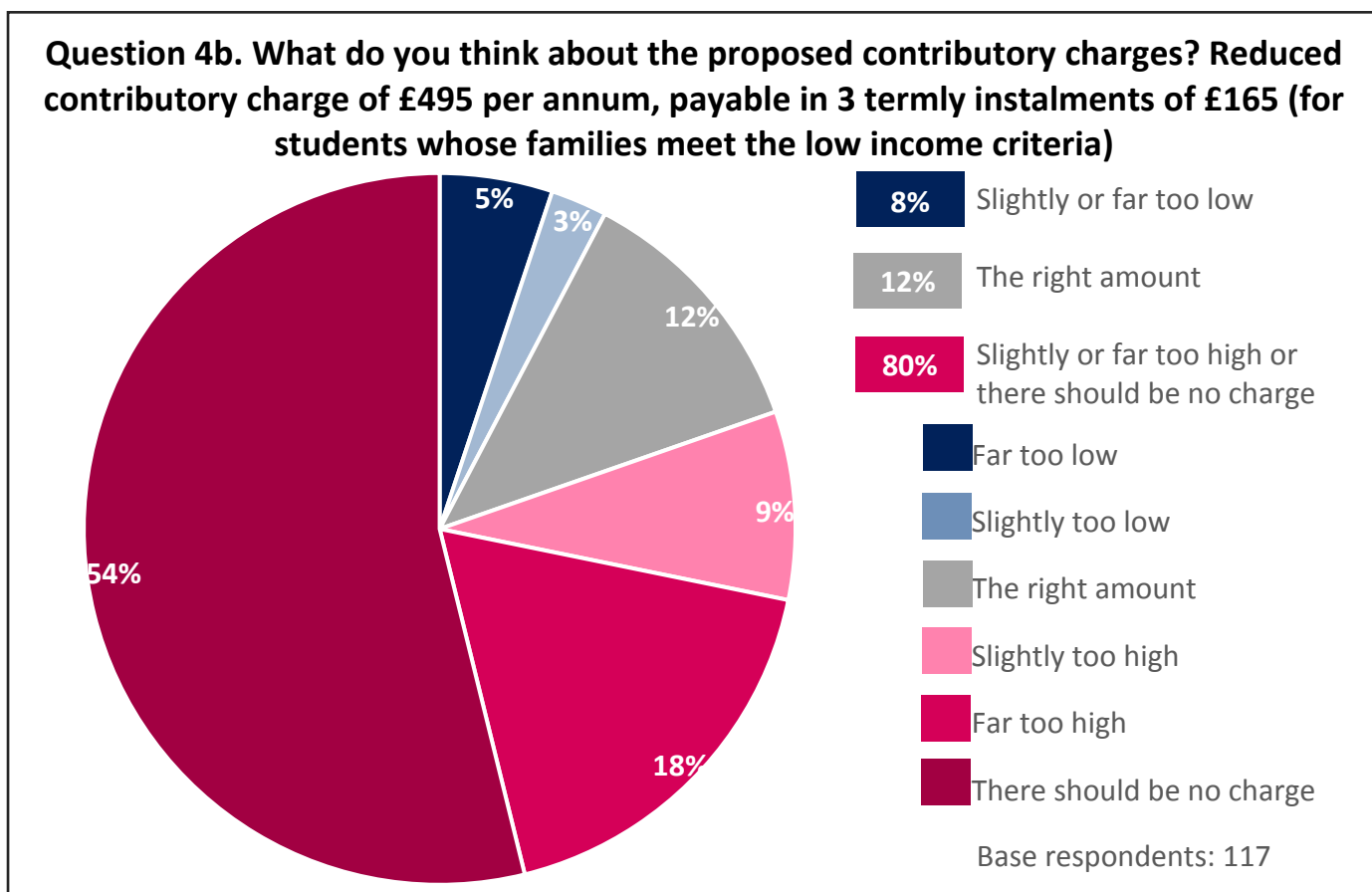


Figure 8

35. Respondents were asked what impact they felt the proposed changes to the policy for young people aged 16 – 19 would have on them, their family or community. Overall, 80% of respondents felt that there would be a

negative impact as a result of the proposed changes. Of this, 10% felt the impact would be slightly negative, 13% fairly negative and 58% very negative. A total of 14% of respondents felt there would be no impact at all and a further 3% of respondents did not know what the impact would be. The remaining 3% of respondents felt that the impact would be positive (1% slightly positive, 0% fairly positive and 2% very positive).

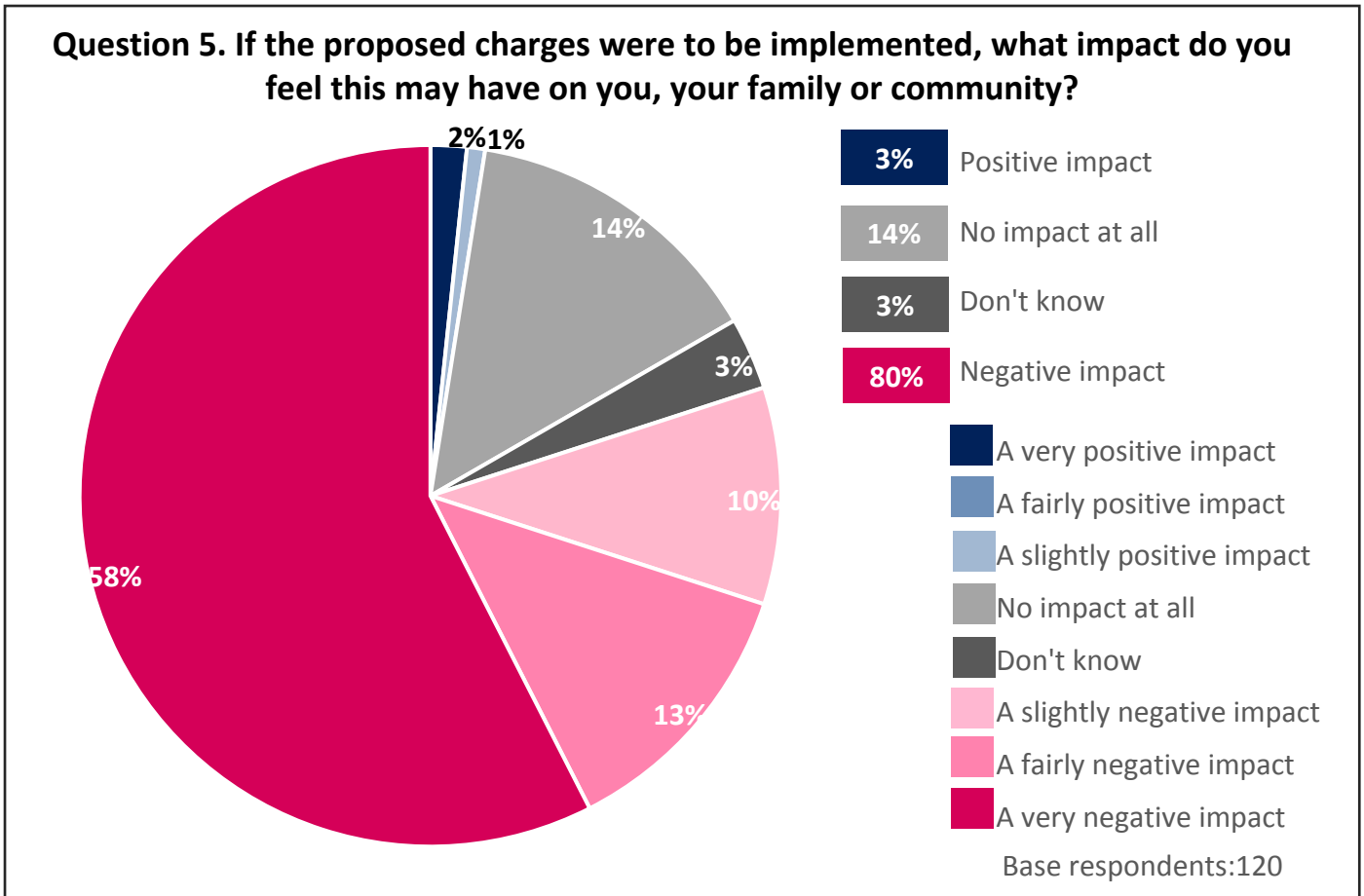


Figure 9

36. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 10 shows the themes of comments regarding proposed changes to the policy for young people aged 16-19 and the number of respondents that raised this point. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent tables after provides the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

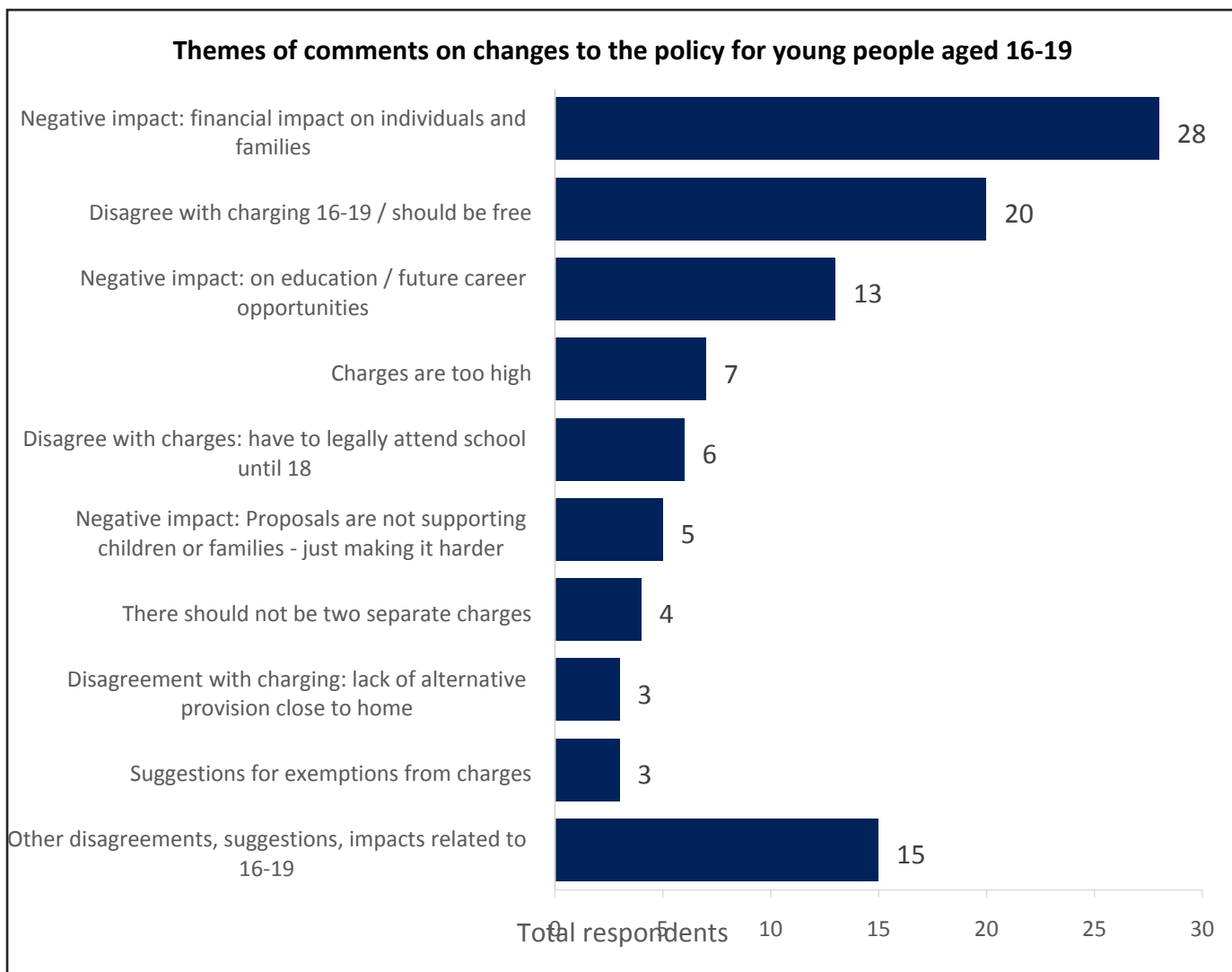


Figure 10

37. Unique comments and suggestions related to proposed changes to the policy for young people aged 16-19:

Negative impact: financial impact on individuals and families	<i>These are some of the most vulnerable children in the city that would be affected. Myself being on low income would never be able to afford to pay for transport. I think many families will struggle if these new policies are implemented.</i>
	<i>Whilst we understand that the financial budgets are becoming increasingly tight due to rising need and therefore local authorities are scaling back policies to what the law states, we feel that more clarification is needed around how families can affordably pay for their contributions. A monthly direct debit/standing order would benefit our families as many families cannot make the suggested contribution (£600 or £495) in full.</i>
	<i>At the age of 16, young people's needs have not changed yet the parents of this age group are being specifically targeted (it feels) to help with the budget deficit. The proposed amount of contribution will add financial burden at a time when lots of things are changing for families and a more affordable and flexible system needs to be found. In my case personally this will put an immense amount of pressure financially as i am unable to work full time because of my daughter's care needs and i am a single parent.</i>

	<p><i>I struggle as single parent to meet my living expenses now so having another bill to pay would be catastrophic. What happens to parents who cannot afford this tax on disabled children?</i></p>
	<p><i>Does not take into account transport costs / other costs with other children</i></p>
	<p><i>An inclusive / child friendly city needs to be proactive in meeting children needs and their entitlement for education 16-19 (and beyond) without causing financial hardship on families that already being impacted by changes to benefits/disability allowances . special education is not selective education it is about meeting needs.</i></p>
	<p><i>A young person with SEND should not pay more for their contributory charge than a non SEND child who travels from the same area to the same college using a season ticket/college bus pass, as although the cost of providing the service would be higher for the SEND child, it would be discriminatory for them to pay more. Many parents with a SEND child are single parent Carers on low income or benefits, and the council has already introduced a number of additional charges over the years for things that were not previously charged for, so this will stretch their budget even further. Trying to pay the contribution towards my non SEND child's transport to college (£235 for the whole year) while on Income Support was difficult enough, so this amount could be prohibitive and may affect the young SEND persons access to leisure, lead to difficulties paying bills or mean not choosing the right college for the young person.</i></p>
	<p><i>many families could not afford this extra cost, so the young person would miss out on vital education, support for the wider family from school community.</i></p>
	<p><i>Alot of families with children in great oaks are low income or benefits these changes will make things alot Harder for families such as myself . If I could afford these silly fees I'd be buying a car myself and taking our child myself hense the importance of this transport to allow special needs children to be at school . If you start charging families that can't afford it will not be able to send there children in which also affect the children and there future .</i></p>
	<p><i>It is incredibly important to encourage young people of this age to continue with their studies, but if it comes down to finances, then this could be detrimental to those people.</i></p>
	<p><i>Since being on UC and working nights my money has dropped from when I was on child tax credits, I wouldn't be able to afford to pay this cost, so unfortunately we would have to consider taking them out of school, and I would have to give up mu job to become full time carer</i></p>
	<p><i>I would not be able to afford these costs which in turn would mean no more education and more than likely have an impact on my working life whereby I would probably need to stop work. Cant see how that is assisting anyone!</i></p>
	<p><i>I can't afford those fees as I am on benefits so my son may not be able to attend post-16 college / specialist provision</i></p>
	<p><i>For families like mine who have a young adult with complex needs and needs 1:1 support in all aspects of his life, we are limited to the hours we work because we can only work within the hours of a short school day and term time only. This restricts our earning potential and therefore are on a low income.</i></p>

	<p><i>For people deemed to be on low income this is still an awful lot of money to find. Families that are deemed not to be on low income but have very little spare income will be severely affected by trying to find this money which will have a detrimental effect on the young person too and add to stress levels within the family.</i></p>
	<p><i>£495 a year for families already struggling to survive on benefits and/or part time work around their child!!! Even those working on the minimum wage who are just above the low income criteria will really struggle to find this.</i></p>
	<p><i>I am worried that a blanket approach will be taken, refer to the policy, sort of mentality. It is already difficult conversing with the transport unit and often a non helpful approach is taken by staff. There are many families who do not have disposable income who these charges will affect significantly. Family breakdown in families of children and young people with SEND are already higher and at risk with financial stress.</i></p>
	<p><i>The need for transport should be incorporated in ehcp and where need identified. Families are already stretched in meeting the needs of these vulnerable young people and transport should be provided.</i></p>
	<p><i>Children and young adults are entitled to an education so shouldn't be penalised by making it unaffordable to make the most of opportunities available</i></p>
	<p><i>Particularly when one or both parents may not work due to caring for a child</i></p>
<p>Disagree with charging 16-19 / should be free</p>	<p><i>Wrong to charge those who need specific schools and cannot travel to their school on their own. It is not their fault they cannot go to a closer school or have the understanding to get there safely by other means</i></p>
	<p><i>Charging should depend on if the child gets PIP to contribute to transport.</i></p>
	<p><i>Dont think we should have to pay as then families will be trying to find the money as other money goes on bills etc. Should just leave it as it works fine</i></p>
	<p><i>As I said life is hard enough for carers. Pupils didn't ask to be born with disabilities and should be helped.</i></p>
	<p><i>Families pay already and they shouldnt put on the extra cost thats why we pay taxes for welfare.</i></p>
	<p><i>This is just another way disabled children and young people are being targeted to save some money for the council. It's very very wrong.</i></p>
	<p><i>By introducing a charge for the SEND 16-19 age group are you opening the door to further charges, and can you guarantee that once set, the parental contribution will not be increased, or that it will not be increased above inflation, for example.</i></p>
	<p><i>Free transport for all as it would put less strain as parents financially , ensures all children get an education that they need and there would be enough room on the car park, if transportation was free and parents wouldnt have to pay for it.</i></p>
	<p><i>I feel this charge is discriminating against our family for having a disabled child who could not attend school/college without transport. I think it is completely wrong to charge parents so their disabled child can access education where a need has been specifically identified in the EHCP. Would it be acceptable to ask parents of physically disabled children to pay for ramps, lifts or other works allowing them access to school?</i></p>

	<p><i>Due to Universal Credit, some of the most disadvantaged families are going to be struggling on top of this now you are planning on charging a fee for travel for some of the most vulnerable children in our city alot of families will just not be able to afford this and plummet them into more poverty!</i></p> <p><i>Students attending Rosewood should automatically be entitled to free transport.</i></p> <p><i>All travel costs for education should be free up to 25.</i></p> <p><i>Any reduction in support for journeys such as this may lead to an increase in car journeys.</i></p>
Negative impact: on education / future career opportunities	<i>Children and young adults are entitled to an education so shouldn't be penalised by making it unaffordable to make the most of opportunities available</i>
	<i>not reasonable to charge students going to college to improve career opportunities</i>
	<i>Daughter does not do normal school hours so cannot use the school transport attendance at school will be affected, and would be bad for young children where there are safeguarding concerns</i>
	<i>without transport, it would take 3 hours a day to get to school and child would not do this and would refuse to go to school</i>
	<i>Miss out on going to a place of education / not able to attend further education</i>
	<i>Lack of SEN/worse SEN provision in some local schools means charging would penalise some parents wanting to give their child a better education</i>
	<i>it is incredibly important to encourage young people of this age to continue with their studies</i>
	<i>Those who most need the encouragement to continue their education are the group most likely to be directly impacted by the change.</i>
Charges are too high	<i>The charges suggested seem very similar to the cost of transport on public transport for non SEND folk.</i>
	<i>I think the charges for the 16-19 if it has to be charged is too high an amount to pay in one go even termly</i>
	<i>The cost seems rather high if compared to the cost of travel on public transport. This feels discriminatory to those with a disability.</i>
	<i>The reduced charge for families on a low income should be half the full amount</i>
Disagree with charges: have to legally attend school until 18	<i>Legally have to attend school until 18</i>
	<i>Summer born children are school compulsory from age 4</i>
	<i>There should be more funding for the 16-18 age group as have to be in education</i>
Negative impact: Proposals are not supporting children or families - just making it harder	<i>This would create further challenges for families</i>
	<i>Families with children who have EHCP's already face many challenges, emotionally and financially, so this would just make it harder on those families.</i>
	<i>Disability is hard as it is. People with able bodies making it more harder by making unfair decisions. I'm so disappointed. Support is what they need. No restrictions.</i>
There should not be two separate charges	<i>Parents not at work have more time to be able to take children to school themselves compared to the parents that are out at work.</i>
	<i>I 100% do not agree with the proposal of lower incomes getting a lower rate, who says I have more disposal income just because my earnings are more. If there was a transport fee to be paid then it should be the same for each student, regardless of family income.</i>

	<i>Both should pay the same</i>
Disagreement with charging: lack of alternative provision close to home	<i>We don't have enough local provision for SEN children for "local schools" to be an option. If you cannot provide the school then provide the transport to the right place.</i>
	<i>Whilst I am happy to contribute to the cost of transport for post-16, this would only apply if my child is able to access education within Southampton. I do not see why I should have to fund transport for my child if they are forced to go to an educational setting outside of the city because the local authority cannot/will not meet the needs of their education.</i>
	<i>When my child gets to this age there is no provision within walking distance</i>
	<i>There is no other suitable college for my son that is closer. We have a college a mile up the road that my other son attends but that's because he has a choice of colleges, having a disability is not a choice.</i>
Suggestions for exemptions from charges	<i>It is a lot of money to find for my child to be able to access further education and it just doesn't make sense that there is a charge for 16-19 but then when they reach 19 that transport is then free again I feel it should possibly be the other way round that maybe a charge when they reach 19 but £600 is a lot of money to find.</i>
	<i>If you are going to means test it test it at the £45k income bracket.</i>
	<i>Families on low income</i>
Other disagreements, suggestions, impacts related to 16-19	<i>it beggars belief that this iniquitous proposal to charge the most vulnerable in society should come from a LABOUR Council. Its a shameful way of trimming your budget and attacks those who in many cases literally have no voice to oppose it.</i>
	<i>EHCP is not awarded lightly and this change just dilutes the the whole meaning of 'Care'. The proposed changes are so worrying and it is the long term mental impact to affected families that may well be detriment to the the child.</i>
	<i>As a result of the recent consultation events, key points were raised around low-income families who receive benefits. Child Tax Credit and Universal Credit were mentioned with the eligibility criteria; however, many familes receive working tax credits and income support who have not transferred to the Universal Credit system yet. More clarification is needed around the eligibility and specific benefits.</i>
	<i>i have recently moved and now live just under 2 milesfrom great oaks. i lost my sons transport because of this. i had to apply under special circumstances- another child child on the spectrum going to a different setting, no public transport and physical issues of my ownmeans i am unable to take my son to school myself. I am also a single parent low income family still need to prove this every year to qualify for transport?</i>

Please recognise Income Support and Child Tax Credit are still current benefits for those on the least income and for years have been recognised gateway benefits to Free School Meals- only new applicants in Southampton are placed on Universal Credit with those on Income Support/ Child Tax Credit due to be transitioned over some point in the future, so the qualifying criteria for low income should continue to state Income Support and Child Tax Credit (with an earned income of no more than £7,400) in addition to Universal Credit. The contribution amount stated for those on very low incomes seems a very minimal reduction (£105) which does not at all reflect the real difficulty this group may have in paying it, and seems far too high- this could lead to increased stress levels and support needs for these families, who though they might be able to apply for 'Exceptional Circumstances' may feel reticent in doing so. Alternatively, it may lead to an increased level of dispute which could prove costly to the council. While I understand parents contribute to transport for a non SEND child, families without a SEND child are statistically more likely to be better off, therefore the impact on finances is less harmful. I am relieved that Southampton is proposing to maintain transport provision to this group albeit with a parental contribution, however I feel the contribution amount is far far too high and therefore will have a negative impact on these young people and their families who are supposed to be a protected group according to equality law.

inequality for 16-19- families already transitioning into adult services/ changed benefit system

My son attends college three days a week. These charges make it poor value per term for his travel. A daily rate would be better. A discounted bus ticket would be helpful.

A monthly bill might be more reasonable to incorporate into a family budget particularly as universal credit is paid monthly so it would make sense to pay bills monthly

The need for transport should be incorporated in ehcp and where need identified transport should be provided.

Clarification of the provisions and assistance for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

38. The third section of the questionnaire asked respondents to provide feedback on the clarification of the provisions and assistance for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The following changes were proposed.

Existing Policy	Proposed new policy
The old policy did not explicitly refer to assistance for children and young people with SEND.	The policy has been updated to explicitly set out provisions and assistance for children and young people with SEND needs in line with legislation.

39. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposed changes to the policy for the clarification of the provisions and assistance for children and young people with SEND (Figure 11). Overall, 59% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed changes (34% agreed, 25% strongly agreed). A total of 28% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposed changes.

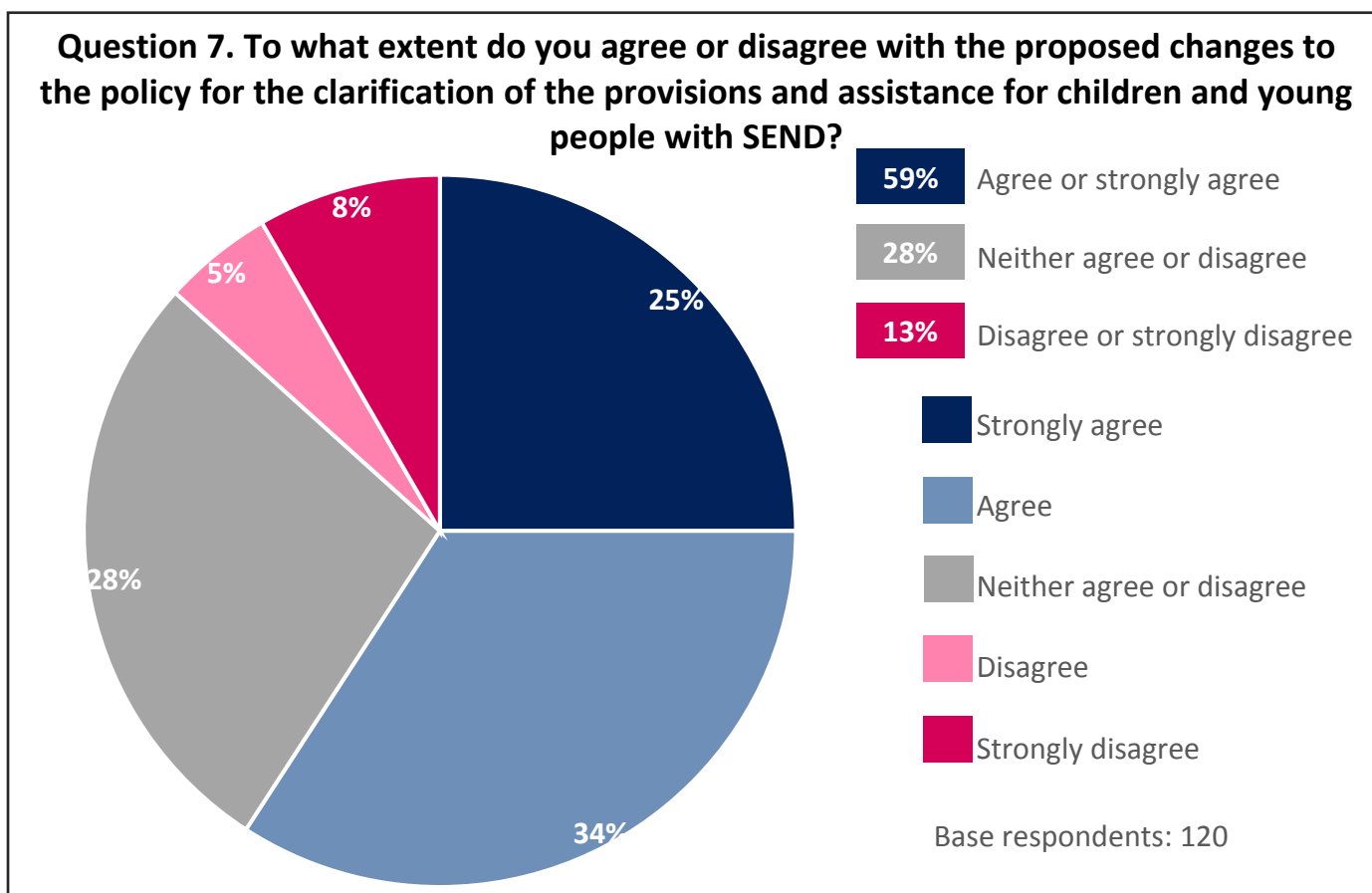


Figure 11

40. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 12 shows the themes of comments regarding the clarification of the provisions and assistance for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and the number of respondents that raised this point. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions

gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent table after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

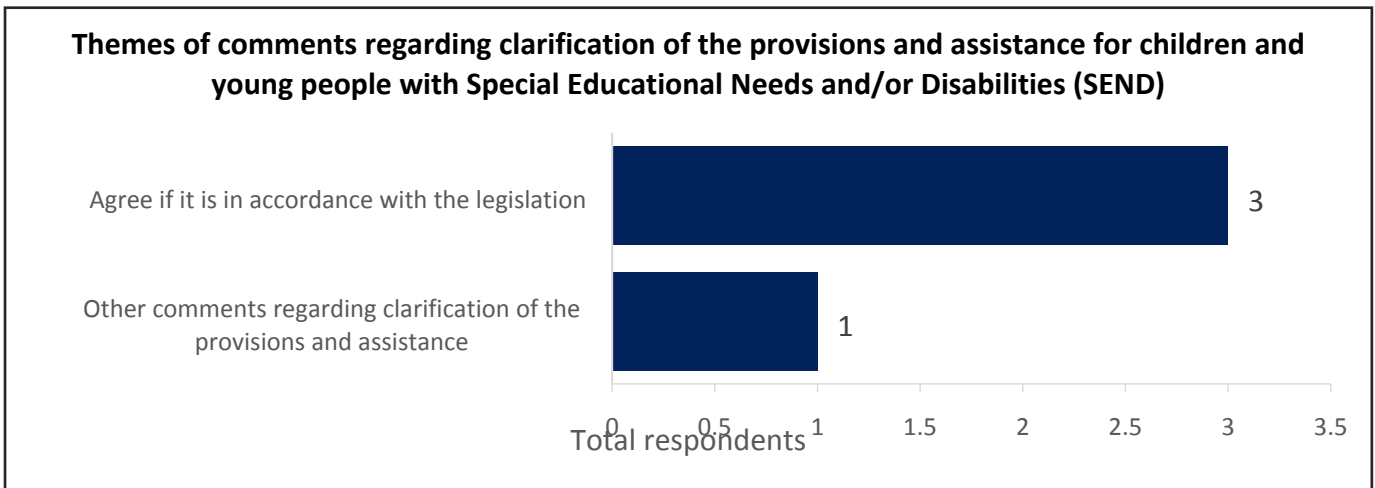


Figure 12

41. Unique comments and suggestions related to the clarification of the provisions and assistance for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND):

Agree if it is in accordance with the legislation	<i>As long as it enshrines the rights of disabled children to transport in legislation it would be good</i>
	<i>Agree if in accordance with the education act</i>
	<i>It would really depend on what the legislation and guidelines state</i>
Other comments regarding clarification of the provisions and assistance	<i>I hope that they do not create or encourage a pigeon-hole or checklist-type approach resulting in many not receiving the provision or assistance they need (as has happened since 2010 in so many areas of life where it intersects with government)</i>

Clarification of the use of independent travel trainers

42. The following section of the questionnaire asked respondents to provide feedback on the clarification of the use of independent travel trainers. The following changes were proposed.

Existing policy	Proposed new policy
By applying for travel assistance agreement is being given to have an assessment for Independent Travel Training.	The proposed policy explicitly references the expectation of engagement with independent travel training from year 9 plus for children and young people who are assessed through Education, Health and Care Plan Annual Review processes to have the potential to achieve this skill, leading to positive outcomes relating to preparation for increased independence in adulthood.

43. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposals on the use of independent travel trainers (Figure 13). Overall, 13% strongly agreed with the proposals and 43% agreed which represented a total of 56% of respondents that expressed agreement. A further 21% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Of the remaining 24% of respondents, 13% disagreed with the proposals and 11% strongly disagreed.

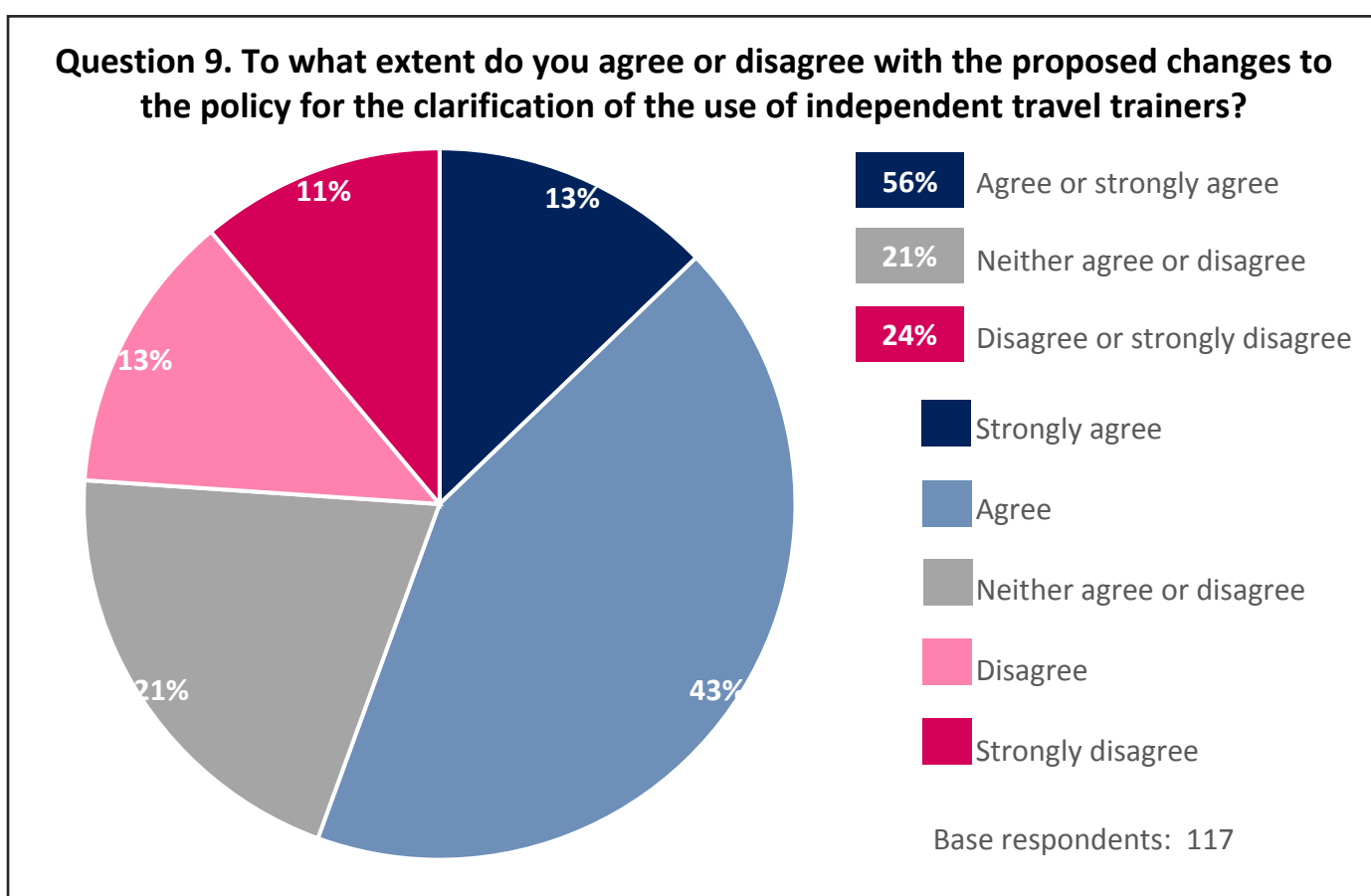


Figure 13

44. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 14 shows the themes of comments regarding the clarification of the use of independent travel trainers and the number of respondents that raised this point. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the

unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent table after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

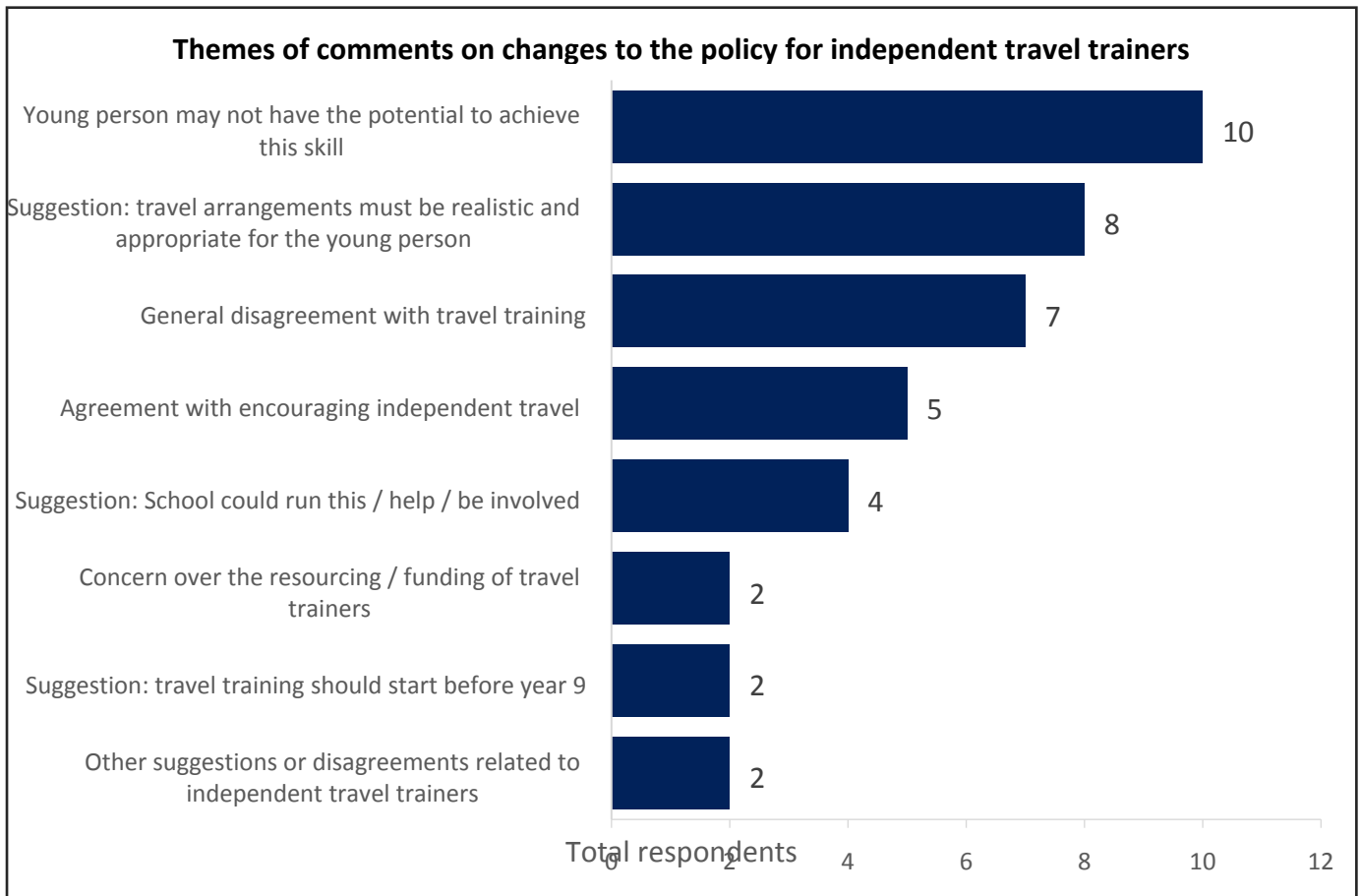


Figure 14

45. Unique comments and suggestions related to the clarification of the use of independent travel trainers:

Young person may not have the potential to achieve this skill / not appropriate	<i>There will be a number of children for whom this is not appropriate and a waste of resources</i>
	<i>Young people/those with little sense of danger and proven vulnerability this would be irresponsible and could endanger them.</i>
	<i>However, it would not be necessarily appropriate for all children from Year 9 onwards because some young people would still need assistance in getting to school and might not be able to independently.</i>
	<i>My child although able to walk, refuses to do so. No sense of danger. We at present do not qualify for high rate of mobility due to the fact she can "walk" I would be extremely concerned allowing her to do this on her own</i>
	<i>If young people could be independent - they would - to put young people and their parents under the constant pressure of losing their transport is intolerable. I suspect many of the young people the council assess as fit to travel on their own will not be and so transport will then fall to the family possibly leading to loss of employment and impacting on their whole family. A young girl with Autism was recently beaten to within an inch of her life by a gang and is permanently disfigured. Just because someone can theoretically use and may even enjoy using a bus - it does not mean they can cope with the whole experience of being alone in the wider world.</i>

	<i>They are not all able to do this even if they are ambulant, there are many factors to take into account.</i>
Suggestion: travel arrangements must be realistic and appropriate for the young person	<i>The safety of the young person must be assessed. Must not place a young person at risk, and must be realistic</i>
	<i>With respect to the travel training assessment, can you reassure parents who have a very vulnerable young person that they will not be required to do an assessment which places them in a dangerous situation? It should not be necessary to put people at risk in order to prove that they need transport to be provided in order to travel safely, therefore if, for instance, a person has a proven track record of vulnerability, or little awareness of/ understanding of danger, then those who know them well should be listened to. While there are some young people for whom travel training is a great idea, for many others this will not be appropriate.</i>
	<i>One day a young person maybe able to cope with this level of independence and another day be totally hindered by their disabilities that they cannot cope with any independence at all.I cant see that this will be taken into account if they are assessed on a good day.</i>
	<i>Assessment must be thorough (not just based on notes or records; must take into account family situation)</i>
	<i>For a significant population at other special schools I welcome this, providing it is done well eg: experiential education. For rosewoods population this could be very interesting - providing 2:1 stating ratio, ensuring public transport is appropriate , public bus as not near train station. Ensuring medication can be given due to inceased time it will take. some of our students will have to set off at 6am!! what about the effect of our vulnerable learners.</i>
	<i>Use of travel trainers should not be a blanket policy, but those who know the young person should be consulted as to whether it is appropriate to their child, and should be listened to. The assessment should only involve practical elements if it is totally safe to do so, otherwise should perhaps be discussed as to whether appropriate at Annual Review.</i>
	<i>ensuring public transport is appropriate , public bus as not near train station. Ensuring medication can be given due to inceased time it will take. some of our students will have to set off at 6am!</i>
	<i>some of our students will have to set off at 6am!!</i>
	<i>Acknowledge their are some major differences in behaviours seen at school and those at home</i>
General disagreement with travel training	<i>Parents teach their children life skills, and sometimes assistance is needed even into adulthood, so "travel trainers" is an abhorrent idea.</i>
	<i>These children are our most vulnerable when out in public. They should be given appropriate transport in order that they can travel to school safely.</i>
	<i>I disagree with this as I can see it being used as it sometimes already does as mandatory for a young person.</i>
Agreement with encouraging independent travel	<i>Reduces school-run traffic</i>
	<i>I agree with this because my son has taken part in the independent travel training and it has had a positive impact on him in terms of his independence.</i>
	<i>I think this could be a good idea for some young people who are more able. However, safety and safeguarding would have to be of paramount importance for all young people with SEND.</i>
	<i>For a significant population at other special schools I welcome this, providing it is done well</i>

Suggestion: School could run this / help / be involved	<i>Require good leasing with school</i>
	<i>funds would need to be delegated to schools to plan personalized travel training using staff who know the child.</i>
	<i>I think to implement this new policy finances will need to be delegated to school to plan personalized travel training using staff known to the child/young person.</i>
	<i>School could help with this</i>
Concern over the funding / resourcing of travel trainers	<i>To fully imbed the skills needed to travel independently will require a lot of time and lots of 1:1 sessions that schools will not be able to staff or fund.</i>
	<i>How many more council officials will have to be employed to manage this new mountain of paper work? Wouldn't it be cheaper just to run the transport?</i>
Suggestion: travel training should start before year 9	<i>Training for independent travel should start from year 4 and the expectation should be that by year 6 most children are traveling to and from school on their own.</i>
	<i>Should be implemented for all ages</i>
Other related to independent travel trainers	<i>not access to education</i>
	<i>Queries regrading implementation of travel trainers: the cost, how it is funded, when the training will take place, the amount of time taken for the young person to learn the skill.</i>

The clarification of the policy generally

46. As well as suggesting proposed changes to parts of the existing policy, the aim was also to clarify the previous policy into a more user-friendly document that is easier to read and understand. When asked, 51% of respondents said they had read the proposed draft policy and 32% said they had read some of it. 17% said they had not read any of it. Of the people that said they had read or partly read the proposed draft policy, they were then asked a few questions regarding its clarity.

47. Firstly respondents were asked whether they felt that the draft policy was easy to understand (Figure 15). A total of 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (62% agreed, 3% strongly agreed). There was 23% of respondents that neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining 12% of respondents did not feel that the policy was easy to understand as 9% selected disagree and 3% selected strongly disagree.

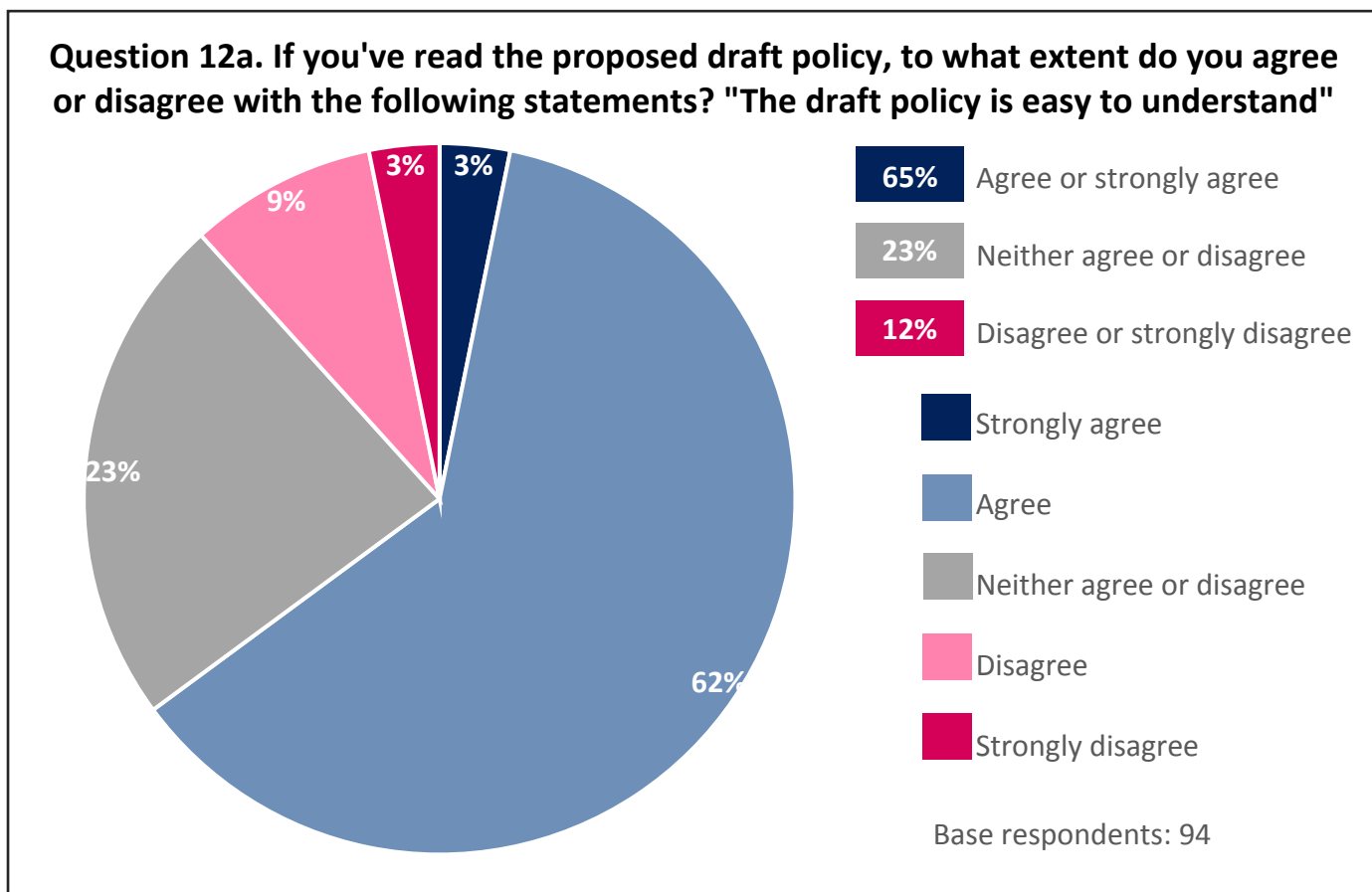


Figure 15

48. Respondents were then asked whether they felt that the draft policy provided sufficient information (Figure 16). Overall, 65% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that there was sufficient information (60% agree,

5% strongly agree). A total of 22% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. A further 13% of respondents expressed disagreement that the draft policy provided sufficient information, of which 11% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

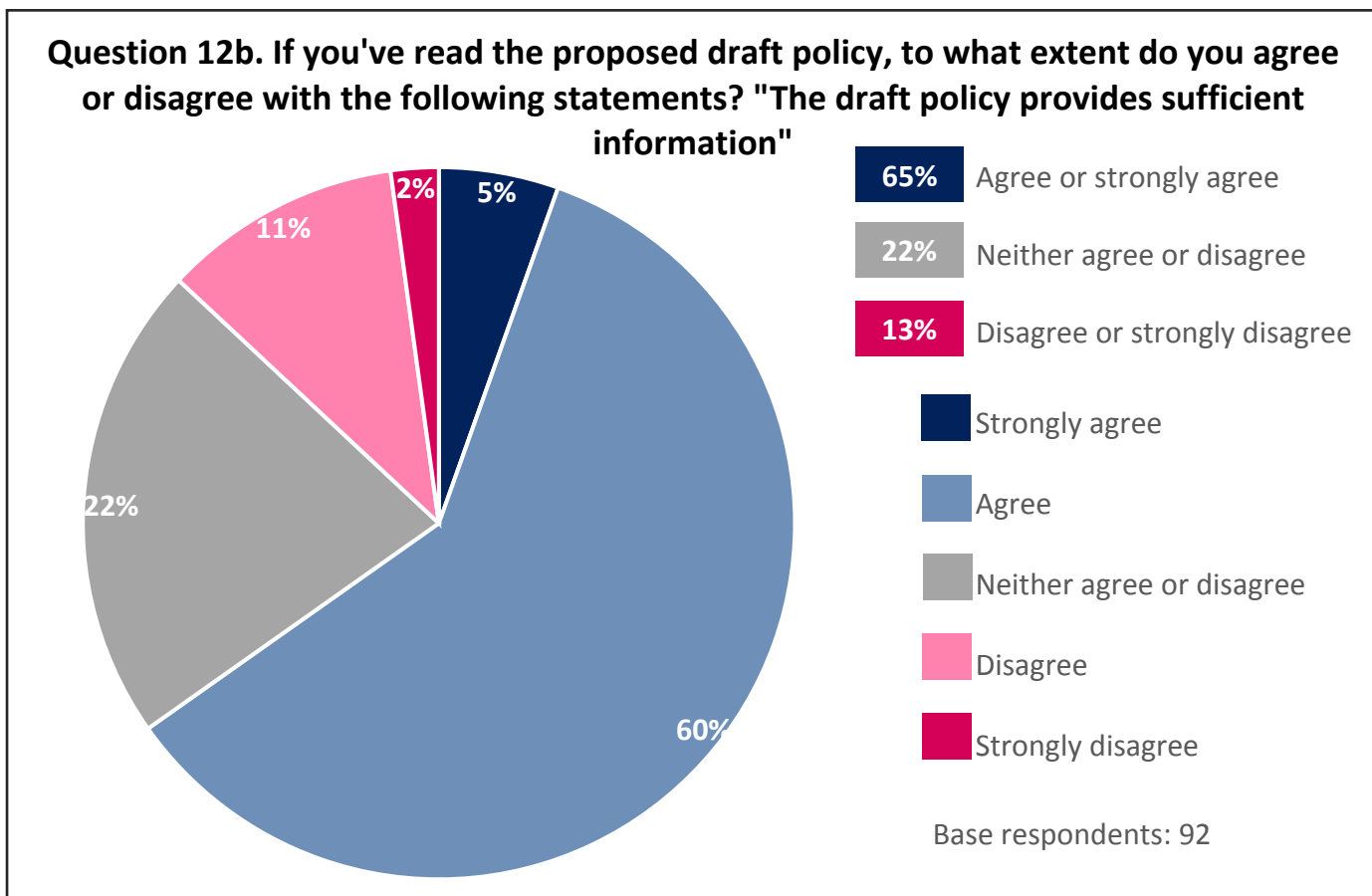


Figure 16

49. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 17 shows the themes of comments regarding the clarification of the policy generally and the number of respondents that raised this point. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent table after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

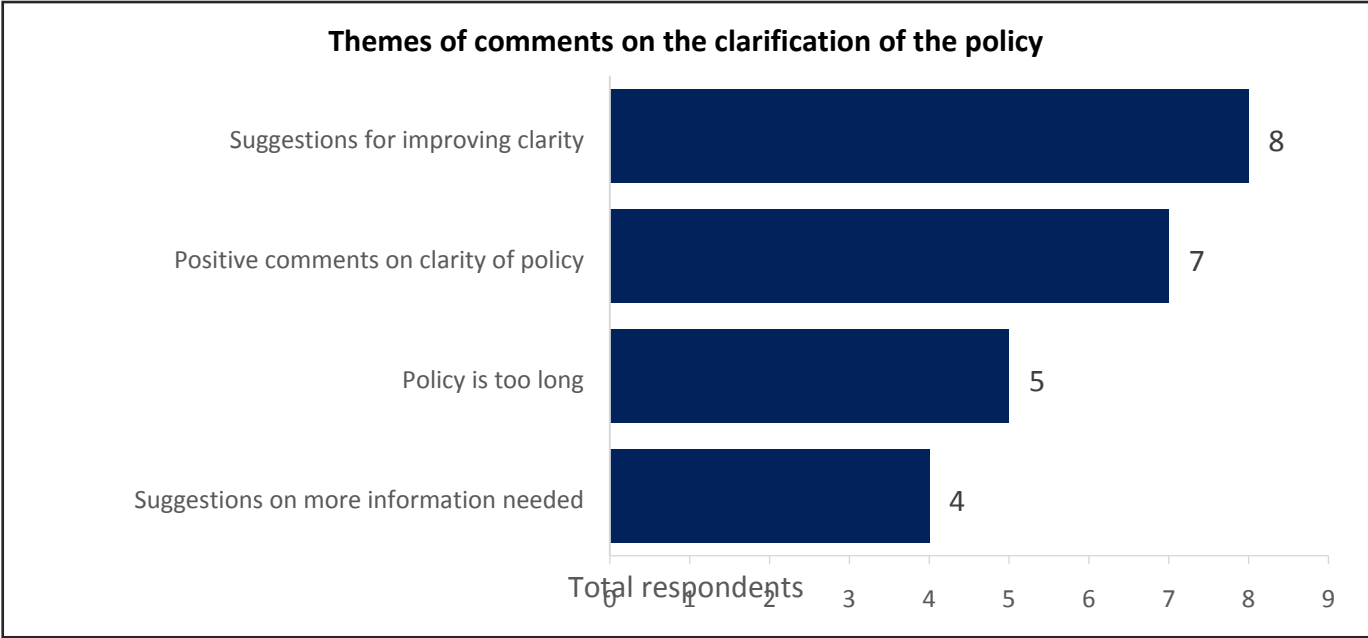


Figure 17

50. Unique comments and suggestions related to the clarification of the policy generally:

Suggestions for improving clarity	<i>Use plain english</i>
	<i>Make it simpler to understand whether your child would be eligible or not, or whether they have to pay a contribution or not</i>
	<i>Do not understand proposed change</i>
	<i>Use more tables or grids showing criteria for travel assistance against cost</i>
	<i>Make the policy more concise, not soo long-winded, use more bullet points.</i>
	<i>Get someone to proof read the policy who has no prior knowledge of the area</i>
Positive comments on clarity of policy	<i>It was clear and informative but i disagree with the content.</i>
Policy is too long	<i>the policy is 32 pages long. it is unreasonable to expect families of children with complex needs such as those who atrend rosewood to plough their way through in order to unearh the specific implications for their child or young person.</i>
Suggestions on more information needed	<i>Information is quite basic in places</i>
	<i>In exceptional circumstances I couldn't see it mentioned when a young person requires a 1:1 escort and to be the only passenger (apart from the escort and driver) due to their complex needs and personal safety and for the safety of others. Would the cost be the same in this situation?</i>
	<i>Relatively clear except for any points I have highlighted in this questionnaire. Also, more information as to what travel trainers do and how children would be assessed would be helpful.</i>
	<i>provide information to families and ask them what their about their opinion and how they feel about it.</i>
	<i>more information as to what travel trainers do and how children would be assessed would be helpful.</i>
	<i>Regarding independent travel trainers: does it include Rosewood and Cedar Schools</i>
	<i>Unsure if the policy applies to rosewood and cedar schools</i>

Impacts, further comments and suggestions

51. The final section of the questionnaire asked questions generally about the proposals as a whole. The first question asked respondents what impact they felt the draft policy would have on them, their family or community if it were implemented (Figure 18). The highest proportion of respondents (72%) felt that the draft policy would have a negative impact if it were to be implemented. This was broken down into 12% that felt it would be a slightly negative impact, 18% a fairly negative impact and 42% a very negative impact. A total of 15% of respondents felt there would be no impact at all and 3% felt that they did not know what the impact would be. The remaining 9% of respondents all felt there would be a positive impact (4% slightly positive impact, 3% fairly positive impact, 2% very positive impact).

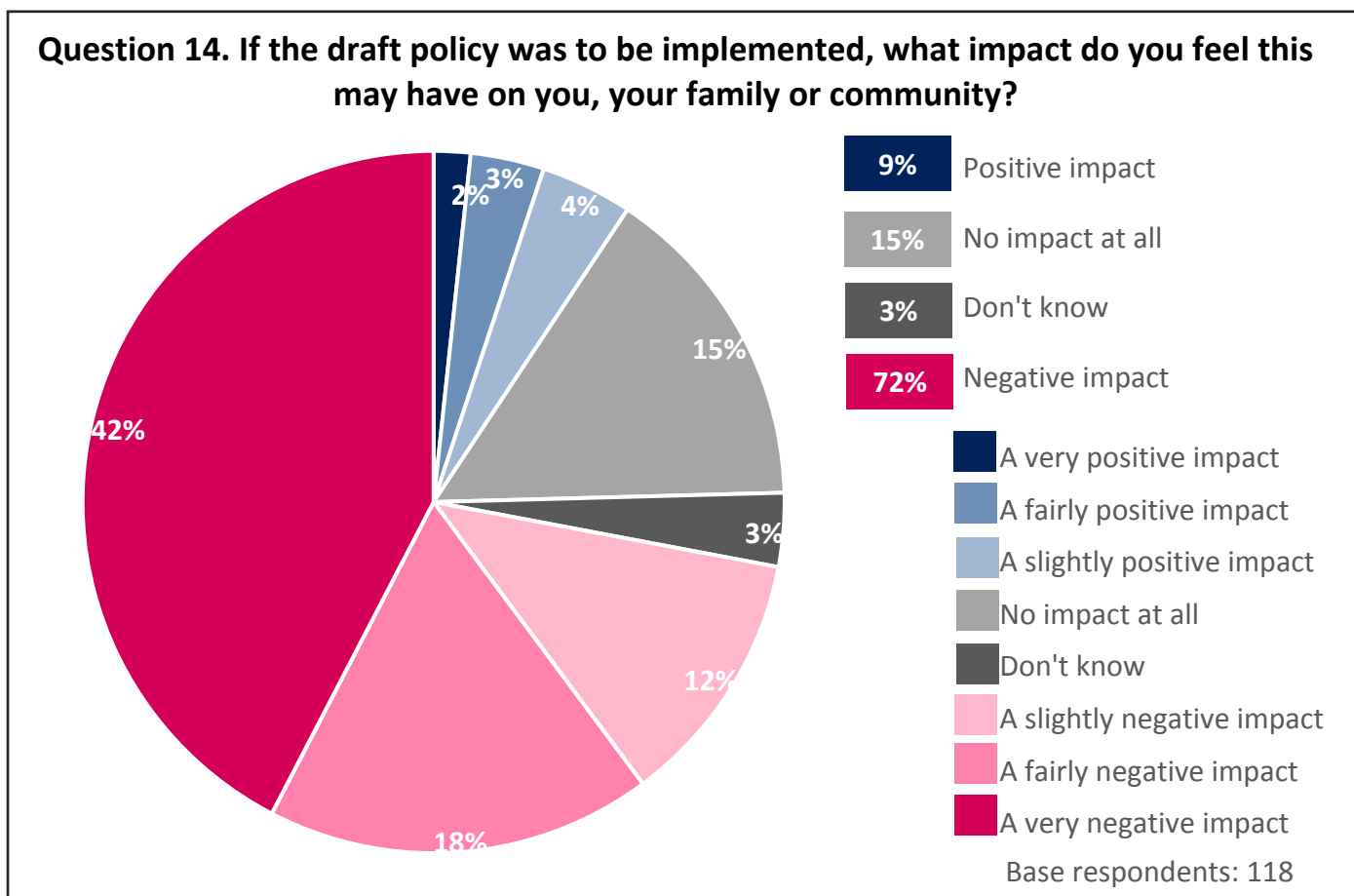


Figure 18

52. Respondents were given opportunities throughout the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. In addition anyone could provide feedback in letters and emails. All written responses and questionnaire comments have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 19 shows the themes of comments, suggestions and impacts about the changes to the policy generally and the number of respondents that raised this point. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent table after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

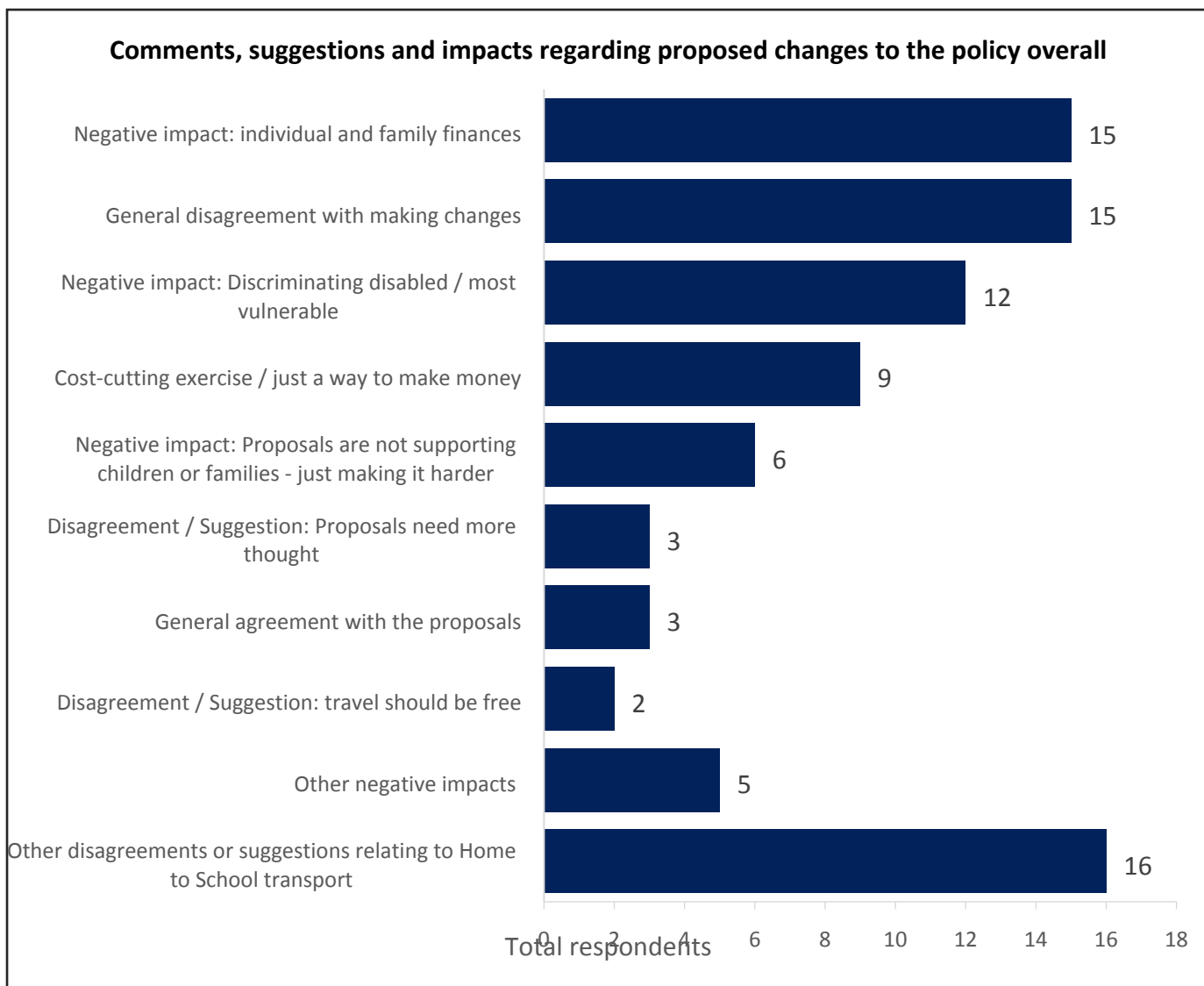


Figure 19

53. Unique comments, suggestions and impacts related to comments about changes to the policy generally:

Negative impact: individual and family finances	<i>The impact this will have financially on people. My travel cost get paid for by the tax payer yet the disable are getting penalised. Will be a worry trying to afford it. It would impact greatly if it affects us as I am unable to get my son to school without the help of school transport and could not afford to pay for the transport.</i>
	<i>We are in debt financially as it is... Can I ask... are you really understanding what these proposals are? Isn't austerity over now?</i>
	<i>As a single parent i struggle to meet my current bills. Having an extra bill would cause more hardship. A monthly bill might be more reasonable to incorporate into a family budget particularly as universal credit is paid monthly so it would make sense to pay bills monthly</i>
	<i>Obviously we would be £600 a year worse off.</i>
	<i>Does not take into account transport costs / other costs with other children</i>
	<i>We are foster careers the fees we get have only increased by 2 percent over the last 10 years so all the cut backs costs are a lot more than the fees have gone up so we foster careers are getting less and less we already give 2 pounds a week to</i>

	<p><i>the great oaks college mencaap fees have gone up 100 percent over the last few years</i></p>
<p>General disagreement with making changes</p>	<p><i>For many of these children it is not a case of them going to the local school, they often have to travel out of their 'catchment' to attend the school which could mean different buses, as well as the financial burden on their families.</i></p> <p><i>its wrong to charge those who need specific schools and cannot travel to their school on their own. It is not their fault they cannot go to a closer school or have the understanding to get there safely by other means.</i></p> <p><i>I oppose the draft proposals strongly as it will have a detrimental effect on our family and special needs child.</i></p> <p><i>I think whoever drafted this may have overlooked their humanity.</i></p> <p><i>if you want to provide education to all based on the ethnicity of equality then you are evoking the possibilities for the very young or poor, 16 students to access their education which is their right.</i></p> <p><i>Yes don't change it don't charge for it or children and families will be strongly affected.</i></p> <p><i>The negative impact needs to be looked at. Not all parents have transport. Education will cease if the child is unable to attend due to cost or access.</i></p> <p><i>Anything that threatens the transport arrangements for young people with special needs to make the lives of the young people and their parents more difficult could prove to be the straw that breaks the camels back</i></p> <p><i>Many parents dependent on the transport</i></p> <p><i>The proposed changes are a disgrace</i></p>
<p>Negative impact: Discriminating disabled / most vulnerable</p>	<p><i>Prejudice because of where you live</i></p> <p><i>Families with young people with disabilities have so many challenges already, this would create further challenges for them</i></p> <p><i>The whole policy prejudices against disabled children and young people ! who should have the right to attend a school in their area but as the education provision in Southampton is so woefully bad they have to travel to school out of their area and have no choice where they attend. None of this is equal or provides equality of opportunity or provision to the families supporting these young people whose lives are governed by the terrible and sparse education provision and the lack of choice in where their children go. Every family would all prefer their child not to leave the house at 7am in the morning to get to school on a bus but don't have a choice! Every family would prefer to drop their child at school in the morning and chat to other mums but they don't have a choice ! Low income families will not be able to afford any contribution to travel, for many simply getting through every day supporting a disabled child with all the additional travel to hospitals and car parking that entails are already struggling to pay bills - not equality!</i></p> <p><i>This is another devastating policy aimed at parents or carers of disabled children. It's embarrassing for Southampton in the way it treats its vulnerable.</i></p> <p><i>Equality due to the fact education will cease purely due to being unable to access transport, whether it be due to criteria or cost. The safety aspect would be my concern , expecting the child to travel of their own accord</i></p> <p><i>Discriminates against children with disabilities. If this policy is implemented, disabled children will suffer. Its disgusting.</i></p>

	<p><i>Services for disabled people have been unfairly treated by cuts. It is not their fault that they have transport needs, or cannot attend a local school.</i></p> <p><i>Children with SEND have already been affected greatly by budget cuts, whether this is within the NHS (CAHMS) or Jigsaw and children services, and this is noticeable to families.</i></p>
Cost-cutting exercise / just a way to make money	<p><i>Obviously meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND is very important. Charging for school transport is not in the best interests of children, young people with SEND and their families. It is only the council who gain from these new proposals.</i></p> <p><i>Cutbacks, Further cutbacks and more cutbacks is all we hear these days. Its hard for parents to support their children positively when all we get our negative outcomes and decisions made. Stealth charges for supposedly free education. It seems the demand has increased and you want to cut the service.</i></p> <p><i>I think when making a policy like this, it is important to consider the challenges that these young people (and their families) face in getting to school, and encouraging them to see it as a positive experience. Sometimes children with special needs have had negative experiences of school, so do not need another 'difficulty' put upon them. Also, for many of these children it is not a case of them going to the local school, they often have to travel out of their 'catchment' to attend the school which could mean different buses, as well as the financial burden on their families. The overwhelming feeling I have from reading the draft policy is that it is another way of the authority to save money and that you have really not considered the views and feelings of the people it affects.</i></p> <p><i>This appears to be a cost cutting exercise and not a development or improvement of the services already provided. Attendance has a direct correlation to outcomes for pupils and without maintaining at the least, or improving the current provision of the Home to School Transport service, children's attainment will be affected.</i></p>
	<p><i>You have not looked at the impact on the families as a whole. Families have more than one child and many carers are trying to earn a living. If children loose their transport - it may well end up costing the council a lot more in the long term.</i></p> <p><i>It's expensive to care for a disabled child. Equality of educational provision is the responsibility of SCC. Parents and children have the right, as does every other child, to attend a school which is right for their needs. Having a disabled child is hard and chaotic, many parents will not be able to get their child to school if they can't use the transport system.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed policy would make it difficult for certain children to get to their appropriate school and make life hard for those families. The lack of support and assistance is already challenging without putting additional pressure by taking away the transport. These children already find life very challenging and the world a scary place.</i></p> <p><i>it is important to consider the challenges that these young people (and their families) face in getting to school, and encouraging them to see it as a positive experience. Sometimes children with special needs have had negative experiences of school, so do not need another 'difficulty' put upon them.</i></p> <p><i>If support for 2 year funding is reduced or removed you will be making it more difficult for the poor child. Please be supportive rather than being restrictive. Paying for facilities such as transports is not right.</i></p>
Disagreement / Suggestion: Proposals need more	<p><i>Does not take into account the needs of families and children</i></p>

thought	<p><i>Please don't change the current policy it would be very negative and negatively influence my daughter's travel arrangements to school.</i></p> <p><i>I feel you need to go back and reconsider the proposals you have made, and ask a few parents to join you when making new proposals.</i></p>
General agreement with the proposals	<p><i>I think the proposals are fair. I live just outside city jurisdiction and had to pay approx £2400 in bus costs over the last 3 years for my two children to attend sixth form college (£600 each per year) to do their A levels. We are not entitled to any benefits, earning just over tax credit threshold, and it was a struggle, but the councils do not have big money pots anymore and cuts have to be made.</i></p> <p><i>Anything to stop the flood of cars at school gates</i></p> <p><i>In an ideal world all vulnerable road would be supported according to need, however as finances are not infinite it seems inappropriate to protect one group to the detriment of others. If transport is fully funded without consideration of parent/guardian income then their funding must be found from and requires other budgetary sources, potentially to the detriment of other children. Hard decisions sometimes need to be made.</i></p>
Disagreement / Suggestion: Travel should be free	<p><i>All children with SEND who live outside the 2 miles should have access to education and transport that is free and without charges. The families and children really need our support to develop and the car park would be too full and financial difficulties would arise as they have less money for families or take them out of education.</i></p>
Other negative impacts	<p><i>Particularly in families where parents work and don't own a car</i></p> <p><i>School attendance decrease</i></p> <p><i>Parking at schools will become a health + safety risk with increased volumes of traffic. needs of the children + families should come first not as additional hoops for them to jump through, we have many families with EAL which the proposal would discriminate as few social workers who could support them.</i></p> <p><i>Q5 comment : the drop off at special schools is already very busy at the beginning + end of the school day. more families bringing their own children will add to this increasing the risk of an incident involving student/family. Q6 : special education is not selective education, but driven by a child's needs, including 16-19 year olds, children are entitled to an education + the city needs to remain proactive in its inclusivity without causing families financial hardship, especially as they are being impacted by other changes to benefits/disability allowances.</i></p> <p><i>Failing duty of care to children with SEND</i></p> <p><i>More pollution and more cars on the road</i></p> <p><i>Not having access to transport could mean for some of our learners that they have no access to education.</i></p> <p><i>Also it depends on the family situation and how it would affect them, I have another child to take to school as well Great Oaks is not close to us, it is on the other side of the city and it wouldn't not be possible for me to take both children to school so it is not a situation which is black and white.</i></p>
Other disagreements or suggestions relating to Home to School transport	<p><i>There should also be clear guidance and accepted standards for the drivers of private hire vehicles if they are used for home to school transport and training given to assist those drivers with the special needs of any of their passengers.</i></p> <p><i>For SEND you need to follow the education act and disregard the exceptional circumstances rule as it NOT APPLICABLE.</i></p>

<i>A taxi with too many children in can be loud & upsetting. Taxis need to be reliable, often they are late which impacts on the rest of the familys day & upsets the child waiting.</i>
<i>Have you explicitly set out provisions so that you can take them away?</i>
<i>Mobility cars should be used for transporting children. Some people use the cars for work but could take to school.</i>
<i>I do not believe that parents taking their child to school by car should receive a grant if they don't go on school transport.</i>
<i>If i was a parent reading this thinking about my child who attends rosewood, id be wondering weather my childs need had been considered at all.</i>
<i>Mobility allowance paid directly to council</i>
<i>Depends on what will qualify them to receive transport? Very hard to agree to something we don't know the full details of.</i>
<i>All learners are not equal now as some get denied to learning and free transportation. Our learners with special needs cant get to school as easy as other children as there are only certain special schools (limited amounts) in one area. in order to get the school that they need to get so they need free transportation. They are unable to walk to school. Families are already under pressure . they need support with their children from education, psychological therapists , OT/ Nurses to achieve their potential . If they wouldnt get transport some could ot send their children. If 16 year olds would not come less older learnins would be able to styay here as the support is provided till they are 25. Gaps would not ensure continuity.</i>
<i>Close the roads near schools for 3/4 h each side of start and end of school day to discourage the school run. Explicitly mention in the policy an aim to reduce car use on the school run.</i>
<i>Please read the Care Act 2014 - carers cannot be assumed to be able to provide care or transport - nor is it lawful to expect DLA and PIP to be used in the provision of care or transport. You will have to provide a CONVINCING explanation for cutting each child's service which cannot be attributed to lack of funds and cannot arbitrarily cut people's services. You are also planning to levy a charge which takes no account of people's ability to pay i.e even on low incomes which is not how contributions can be based.</i>
<i>the complex needs of children/ young parents ability to hold people who have PMCD down employment if they have to transport their child- presuming they have an appropriate 'mobility' type vehicle to do so. what about their other children who attend different schools- effects on their transport to/from school arrangements.</i>
<i>Build more schools/colleges that specialise in SEN, especially ASC and recognise that GIRLS are diagnosed with this. If there were more state schools that could support thees students then there wouldn't be the need for ridiculously expensive independent schools. Where in Southampton can a student with ASC study to A level standard in an environment that takes into account their struggles with large busy colleges.</i>
<i>not all our learners have their diagnosis when they start attending school. again there would be more families being left without travel support .</i>
<i>Bring back the sca mini buses.children where happier on the mini buses.</i>
<i>I just would like help with transport when my son leaves school next year to get to college as he don't realy like traveling on his own but if he could get a taxi each day he would prefer It as he don't like buses</i>

Public engagements, meetings and verbal feedback

54. There were separate public engagement events to support the consultation process. The main purpose of these events was to explain the proposals, answer questions and signpost people towards the questionnaire as the main route for consultation feedback.

55. During the course of these events the following points and questions were raised:

- Children in Foster care/ with SGO carers: Do the 'charges' apply to foster children? Are the charges based on the income of the foster carer or the birth parents?
- If a foster child is moved midterm/ year do carers get any of the money back (if they are the ones who pay).
- Weather – if weather conditions mean that transport is cancelled will parents get any money back?
- Some young people get their own EMA payment – will this be taken into account/used to cover the costs?
- When does the change start?
- Could the pupil premium be used to pay transport costs for foster children/ CLA?
- Would there be a charge for a young person who needed short term transport under exceptional circumstances?
- Will parents/ carers need to apply each term?
- The maximum and minimum amount doesn't take into account the size of a family. A large family may be on a higher rate of benefits, but have lots more children.
- Who would pay, e.g. if we live in Winchester but go to school in Southampton?
- Could a child under 8 be pushed two miles?
- When is the date for the government's guidance on post-16 transport?
- Is there someone having a word in someone's ear, e.g. about the above?
- Concerns were raised about relief escorts and how they're matched with runs, e.g. not being physically capable of doing the job.
- Government likes children to name a current account
- Will it be capped?
- What happens is parents' circumstances change?
- A lot of children are from single-parent families and on low incomes
- Travel-training – what about if they're vulnerable
- It was felt that the process needs to be as clear and easy as possible, the system needs to be made as easy as possible.
- What would be the situation for people on Universal Credit – or would it be Working Tax Credit?
- Will assessment coordinators know that travel should be included in EHCPs?
- Parents spend so much time fighting, they may not know they're entitled to transport; can we make sure Portage and others know they need to state transport
- Concerns were raised about why it was looking at the family income and not the child's. It was noted parents.
- Can this be flexibly worded, e.g. a suite of options, such as monthly/termly?
- Parents asked to be shown the quality of the service (Working Group)
- There was a discussion around children's NHS number, training and how much personal information should be included on their passport.
- It was noted that Hampshire comes and police-checks their drivers much more often than Southampton – perhaps 3-4 times a year.

- Concerns were raised about the impact of costs on new partners, e.g. they shouldn't be financially responsible
- It was noted that transition and writing the plan are very stressful, then transport is added in – it's an extra thing which is not there for other schools
- There was a discussion around blue badges
- Concerns were raised about the impact on the wider family if they were transporting their children.
- Concerns were raised about not having appropriate transport for a wheelchair

56. Many of these topics will have also been raised through other channels as a part of the consultation but in the interest of transparency they have also been summarised here.

Feedback on the consultation process

57. The council is committed to make the whole consultation process as transparent as possible. As a part of this, any feedback on the consultation process itself received during the course of the consultation is summarised in this section.

58. Overall, a total of 6 respondents commented on the consultation process itself.

59. The comments made regarding the consultation process are shown below:

<i>Send out a link to the draft policy document before sending out the questionnaire link</i>
<i>I don't understand section on independent travel trainers and other statements. Don't understand the section on "Clarification of the provisions and assistance for children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Need more detail on the legislation.</i>
<i>Provide information to families and ask them what their about their opinion and how they feel about it.</i>
<i>I binned it. I am not going to read a 32 page questionnaire. It should be are you happy with your childs transport or are you not! Yes thanks</i>
<i>Ask a few parents to join you when making new proposals.</i>

Conclusion

60. Southampton city Council sought views on a draft Home to School Transport and Post-16 Travel Arrangements Policy. The consultation took place between 27 September 2018 and 19 December 2018.
61. Overall, there were 127 separate written responses to the consultation.
62. All questionnaire results have been analysed and presented in graphs within the report. In addition all written feedback has been read and assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme and descriptions have been provided of each category within the report.
63. In conclusion, this consultation allows Cabinet to understand the views of residents and stakeholders on the proposals that have been consulted on. It represents the best possible summary and categorisation of all the feedback received through the consultation period.