

Agenda Item 10	Appendix
Corporate Strategy and Business Plan 2023/25 Refresh/2024-25 CA Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan to 2027-28	G

Executive Summary

In the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) region, there is widespread support for increasing the Mayoral Precept to improve local bus services. The majority of survey participants support the proposal to increase the Mayoral Precept to £36. Seven in ten participants agree to increasing the Mayoral Precept to some extent to support bus service improvements.

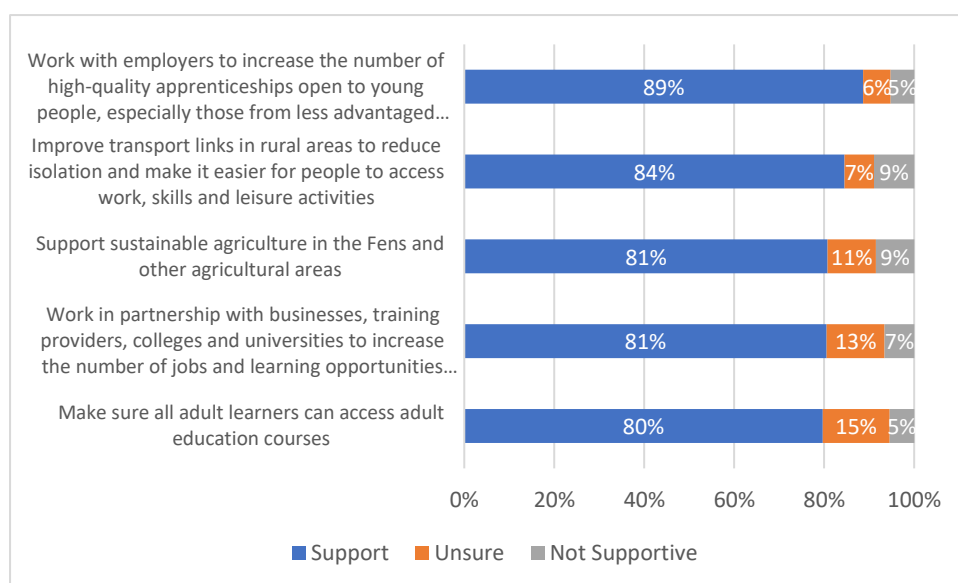
One in seven participants use local buses most weeks and about one in ten use them most days. Three in ten survey respondents use them a few times a month. The remainder, almost a half, do not use the local bus services. More reliable bus services and more bus routes are the two key factors that survey respondents said are most likely to encourage them to take buses more frequently.

Delivering high-quality apprenticeships is the most popular CPCA work programme activity in the survey followed by improving transport links in rural areas. Among the activities which are most supported by survey participants, there is a strong focus on the 'Ambitious Skills and Employment Opportunities' strategic objective.

Eight in ten participants are looking for the combined authority to work in partnership with education and skills providers to increase local employment and educational opportunities. This is underpinned by similar support for making sure adult learners can access educational courses.

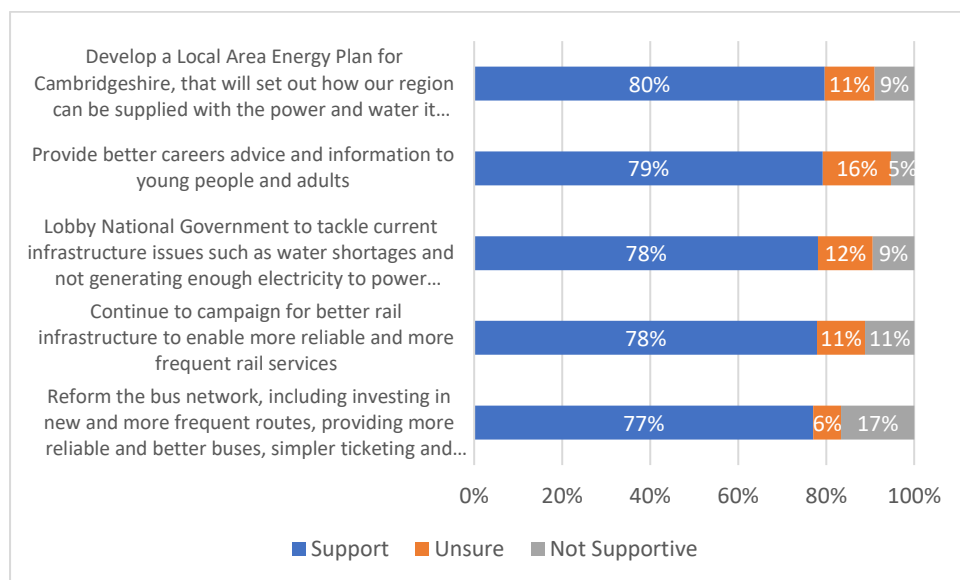
Equally, eight in ten participants support sustainable agriculture for the region.

Top 5 Supported Activities



Eight in ten participants would like to see a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) created for Cambridgeshire. Almost eight in ten would like to see better careers advice being provided and support the lobbying of national government to tackle local utility infrastructure issues. Equally, almost eight in ten participants want to see improvements to rail and bus infrastructure with more frequent rail and bus services.

Top 6-10 Supported Activities



By comparison to activities with the most support, participants are most 'unsure' about plans to designate the Fens as a special area, developing an Infrastructure Delivery Framework and increasing commercial space for businesses to grow.

There are no activities where most participants are not supportive. This said, four in ten are not supportive of finding money for new roads and three in ten are not supportive of improving the infrastructure for electric vehicles. A quarter are not supportive of extending commercial space for businesses or delivering the Local Net Zero Programme 2022-2025.

Seven in ten participants said that they feel they know at least a little about Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority. Three in ten participants said that they are 'Very much' informed about the combined authority.

Methodology

The overarching objective of the 'Your views count' consultation is to give as many people as possible who live in the Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority region the chance to have their say on the Mayor's plans for his precept for 2024/25.

The CPCA wanted to reach as wider range of residents as possible – not just the usual suspects but to ensure it gained opinions from people right across the region. The authority also wanted to use the survey as an opportunity to get feedback on the planned work programme for the CPCA and to help residents to gain a better understanding of CPCA's role and responsibilities. This focus on the planned work programme has been supplemented with extra questions to help inform a bus franchising consultation - mainly to gain a better understanding of what would persuade people to use buses in the future.

The survey was open to anyone and so has not been weighted to reflect the make-up of the region. Most respondents filled the survey in online and were driven to a web page mainly via social media.

Some respondents attended face-to-face events with the Mayor who used the forum to discuss his plans for how he would like the additional precept funding to be invested. Equally, digital surveys, links to the web page and printed copies of the survey forms were circulated with our constituent councils to distribute through their own networks.

In the survey, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority invite local residents to give their views across four strategic objectives:

1. Achieving Good Growth
2. Improving Connectivity
3. Ambitious Skills and Employment Opportunities
4. Enabling Resilient Communities

For each of these strategic objectives, a list of activities associated with that objective were identified. The public in the 'Your views count' survey were then invited to state whether they 'support' the activity, were 'unsure' about the activity, or were 'not supportive' of the activity.

In addition to giving views on activities from these four strategic objectives, as has already been stated, the public were also asked a set of questions about 'Better Buses'. This includes questions on personal bus usage, bus frequency, improvements to the bus service and willingness to support bus improvements through the Mayoral Precept.

Finally, the public were asked how well informed they perceived themselves to be about the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, with particular attention to the awareness of the what the authority is, what it does and the authority's vision for the future.

The full survey is attached as an appendix for easy referral to the entire content of the survey.

In total, 458 full survey responses were received from residents across the combined authority. As well as the surveys, the authority received twenty-three written submissions to the consultation, some of these were organisational responses to the consultation, others were individual submissions.

In terms of the report methodology, the participants responses are described in the survey findings and for clarity unless otherwise stated the results are based on all 458 participant responses. When the total number of responses differs from 458, the total number of responses are given in brackets.

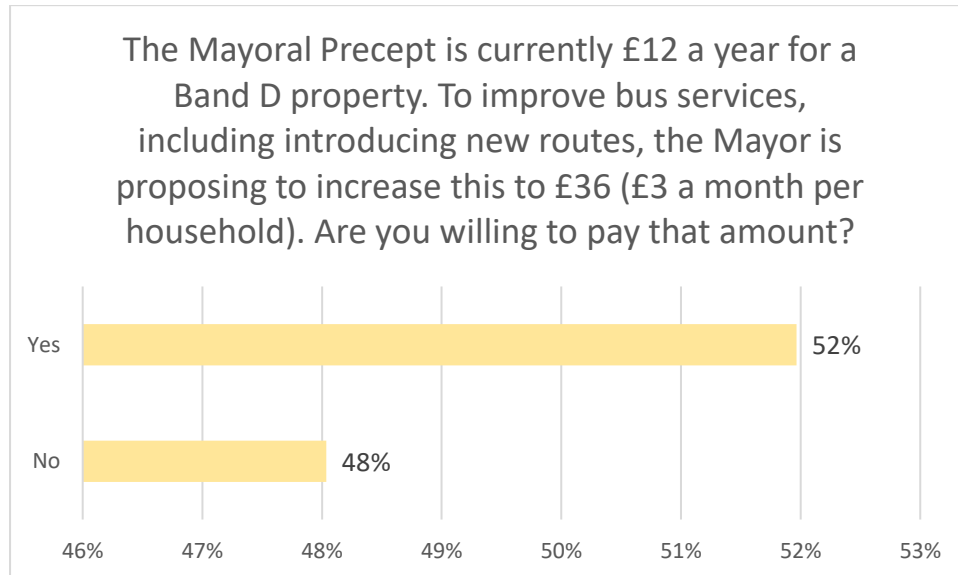
In terms of the presentation of the findings, through rounding, on occasion it is possible for the results of a chart to total 101 rather than 100 percentage points.

Survey Findings

Mayoral Precept

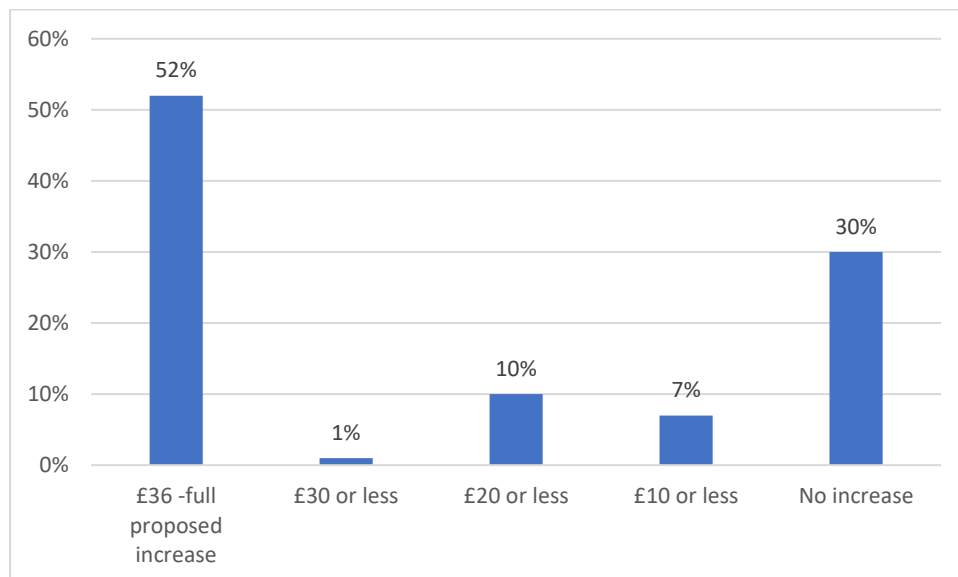
A majority support the proposal to increase the Mayoral Precept to £36 to improve bus services.

Mayoral Precept



There is widespread support to increase the Mayoral Precept with a view to improving bus services. Seven in ten participants agree to increasing the Mayoral Precept to some extent to support improvement in bus services.

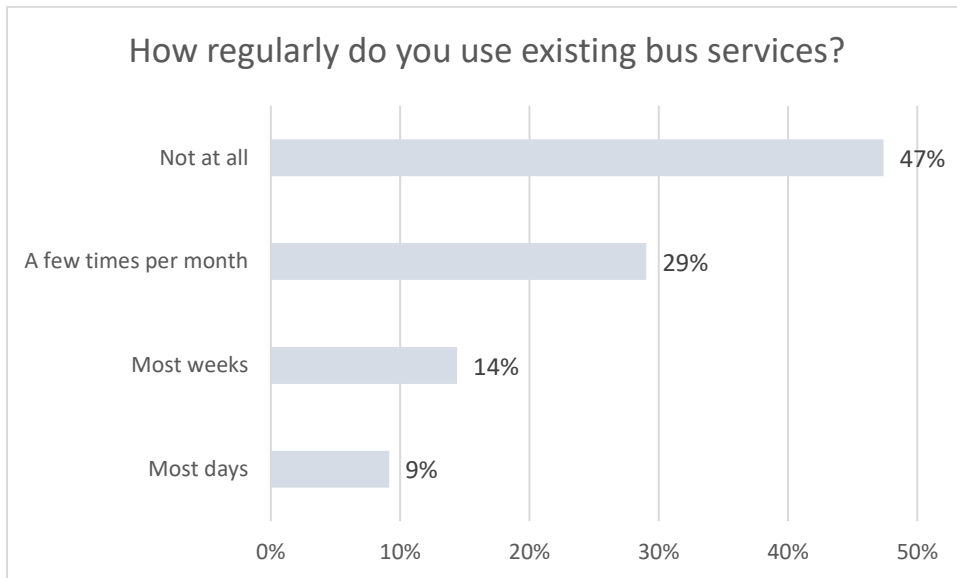
Overall Perceptions of increasing the Precept



Better Buses

Almost half the survey respondents do not use local bus services, and three in ten use them a few times a month. One in seven participants use local buses most weeks and about one in ten use them most days.

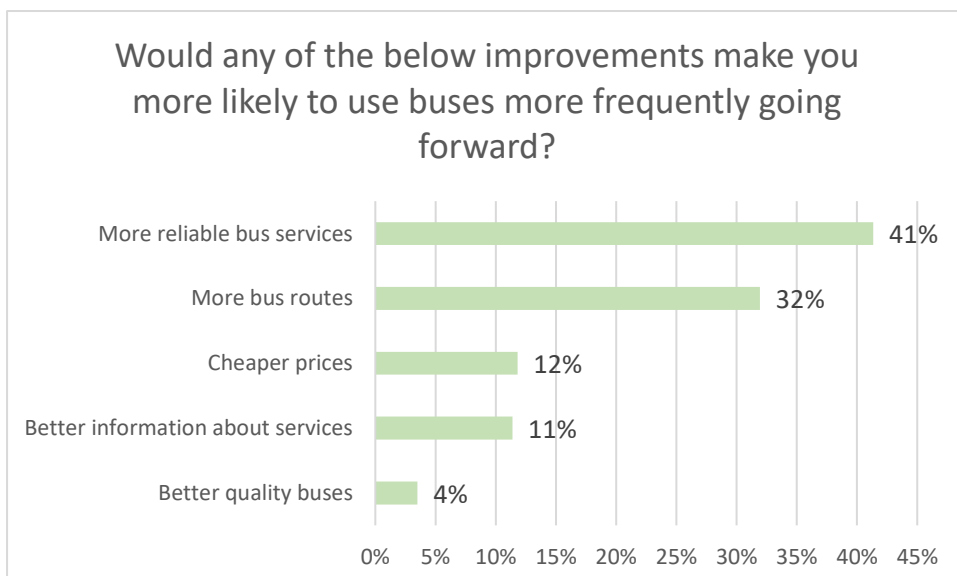
Bus Usage



Participants in the survey say that more reliable bus services and more bus routes are the two factors that are most likely to encourage them to take a bus more often.

Lower bus prices and better information are identified as motivating factors for just under one in eight participants. Fewer than one in twenty participants highlights better quality buses as factor that will encourage their bus usage.

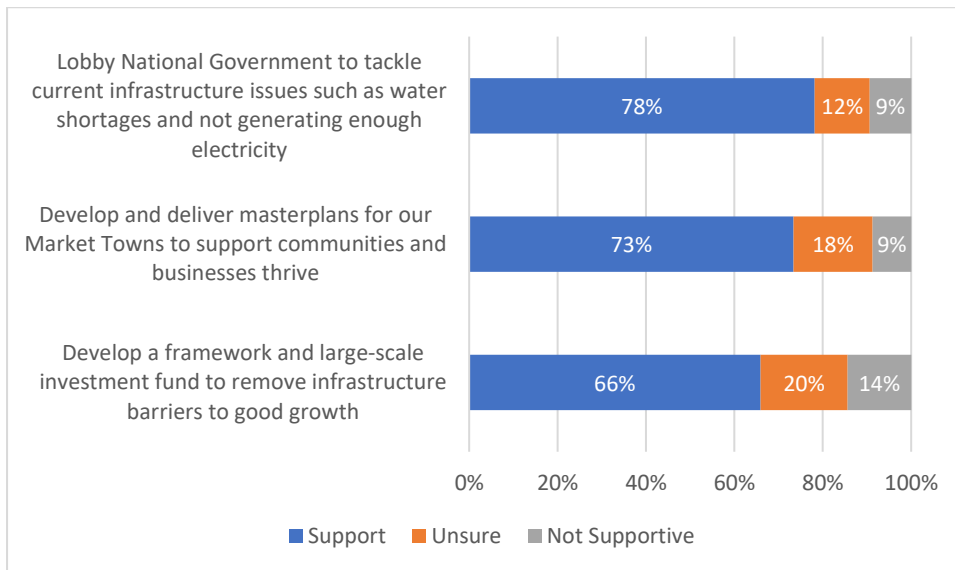
Bus Improvements



Achieving Good Growth

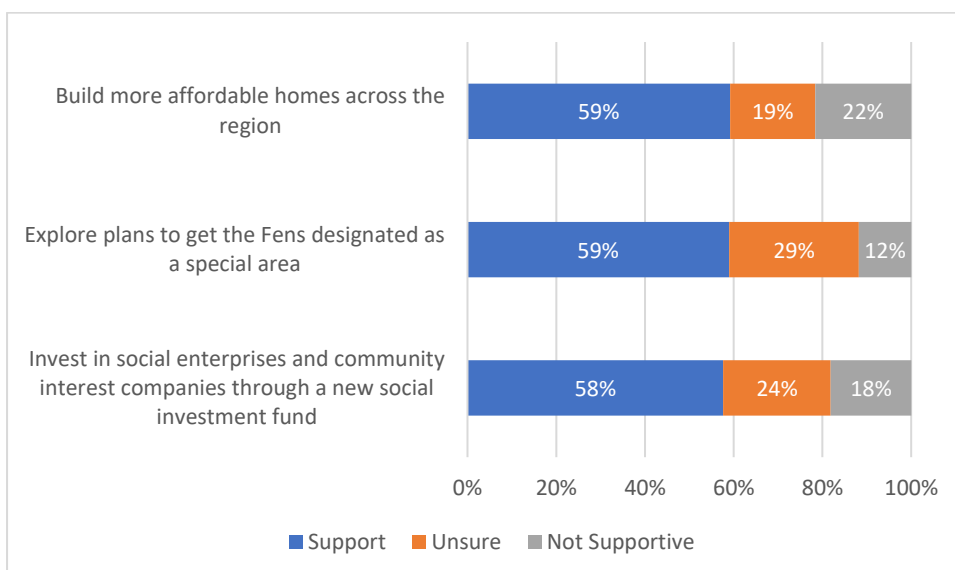
Under the strategic objective of ‘Achieving Good Growth’, the activities which garnered the most support were infrastructure and planning issues. Over three-quarters of respondents want the authority to lobby national government on infrastructure issues, just under three-quarters want the delivery of masterplans for market towns to support communities and business, and two-thirds desire a large-scale investment fund to remove infrastructure barriers to good growth.

Achieving Good Growth 1



Almost six in ten respondents support building more affordable homes in the region, designating the Fens as a special area, and want to see more investment in social enterprise and community interest companies (CICs)

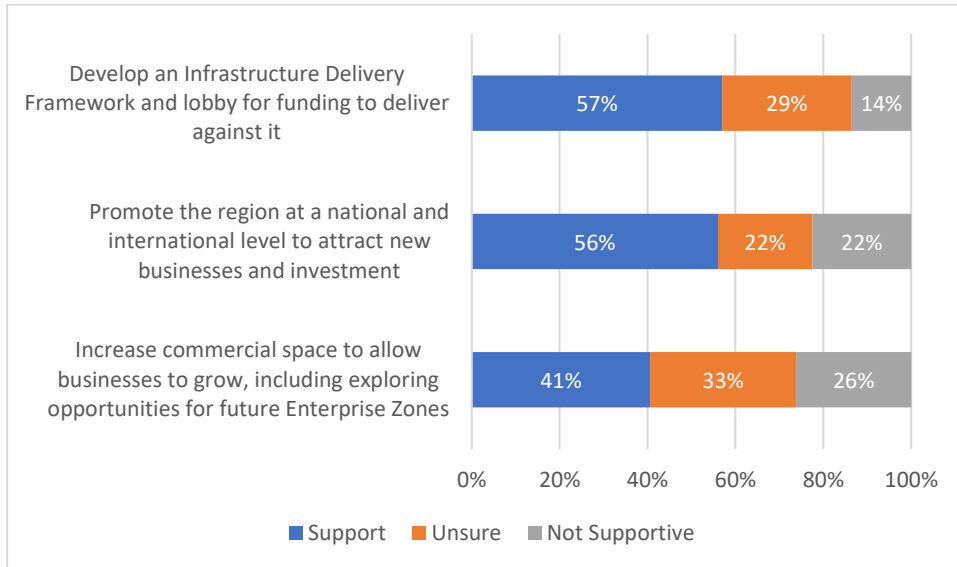
Achieving Good Growth 2



The majority of respondents want to see an Infrastructure Delivery Framework and see that the combined authority has a role in promoting the region, nationally and internationally, to

attract more business and investment. Opinion is more balanced with respect to increasing commercial space through Enterprise Zones. In this case, most respondents were either unsure or not supportive of the policy.

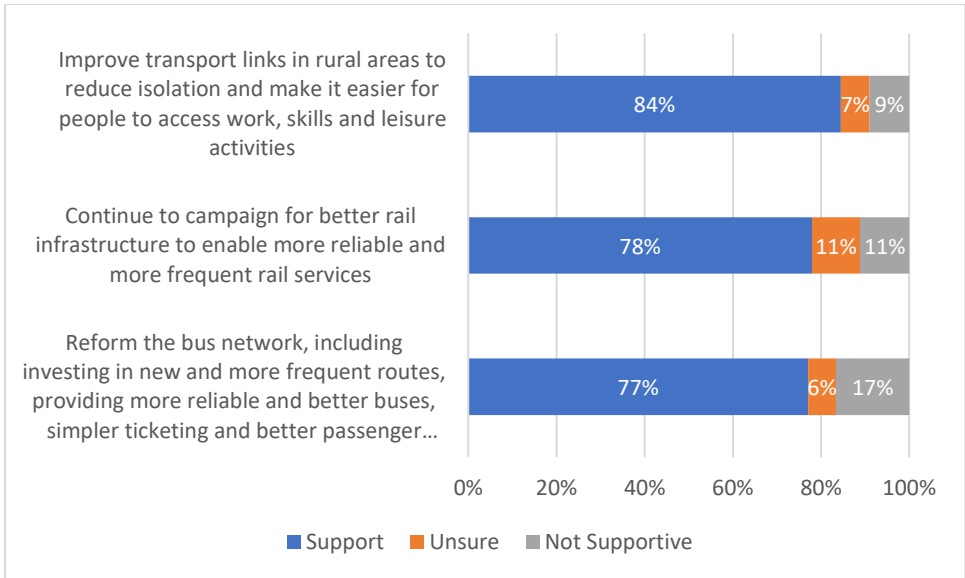
Achieving Good Growth 3



Improving Connectivity

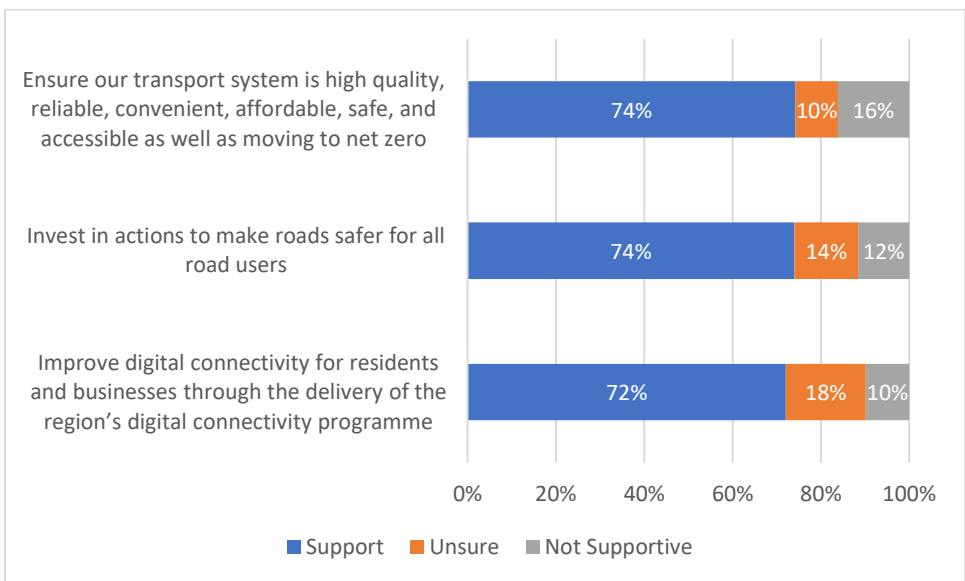
Local participants are keen to see improvements to the transport infrastructure of the region. Eight in ten respondents want to see improvements to transport links to rural areas. Over three-quarters want better rail infrastructure in the region and reform of the bus network.

Improving Connectivity 1



Almost three-quarters of participants want a high-quality transport system that supports the environmental target of net zero and initiatives that improve road safety. More than seven in ten participants would like improvements in digital connectivity for residents and businesses.

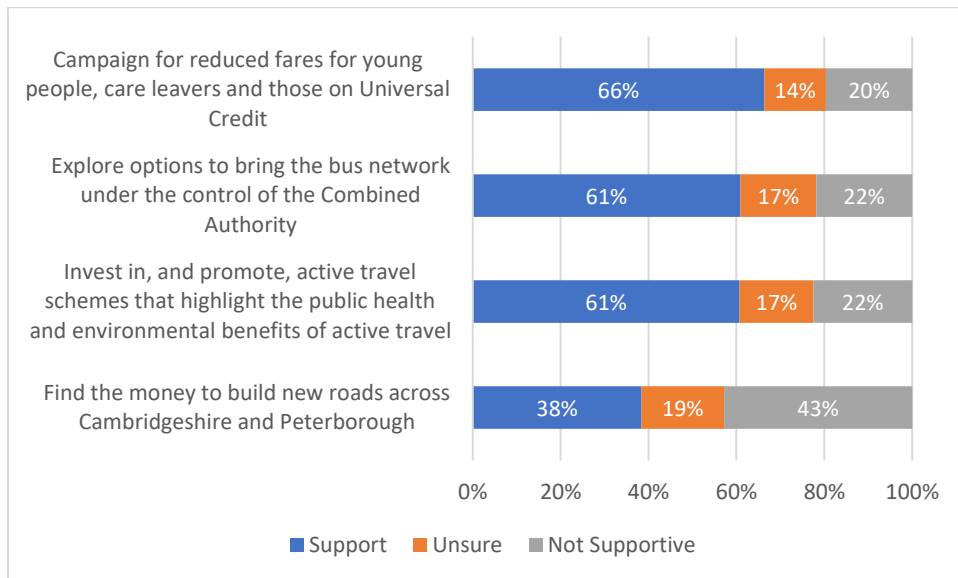
Improving Connectivity 2



Two-thirds want lower fares for young people, care leavers and people on Universal Credit. Six in ten, the majority of participants, support exploring options to bring the bus network under combined authority control. Six in ten participants would also like to see active travel schemes that promote public health.

Opinion on finding money to build new roads was evenly balanced with just under four in ten participants supportive and just over four in ten not supportive. A fifth were unsure.

Improving Connectivity 3

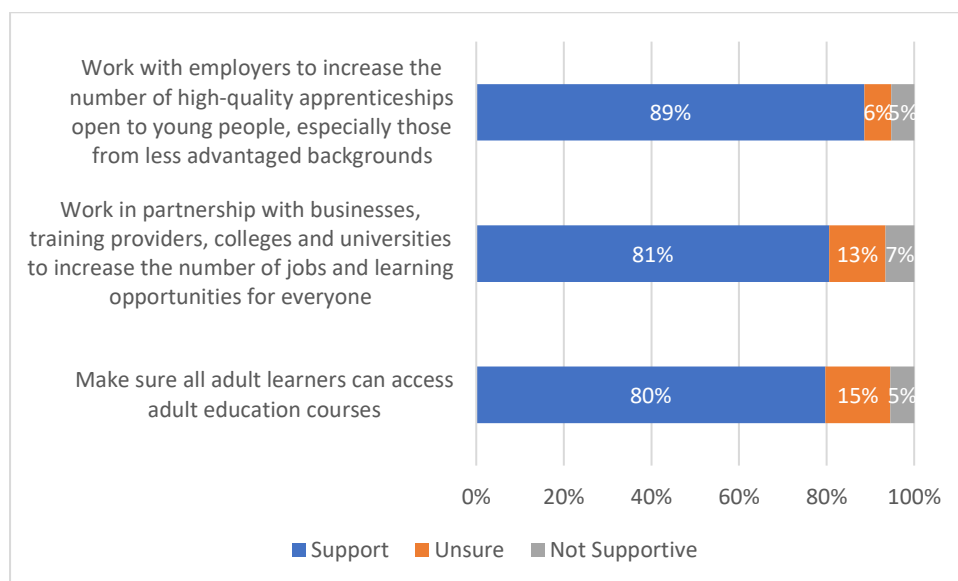


Ambitious Skills and Employment Opportunities

Within the 'Ambitious Skills and Employment Opportunities', there was widespread support for all the activities outlined. Almost nine in ten participants support working with employers to extend the number of high-quality apprenticeships available to young people.

Eight in ten want to see partnership working used to lever job and learning opportunities for local people and an important part of this is making sure adult learners have access to adult education courses.

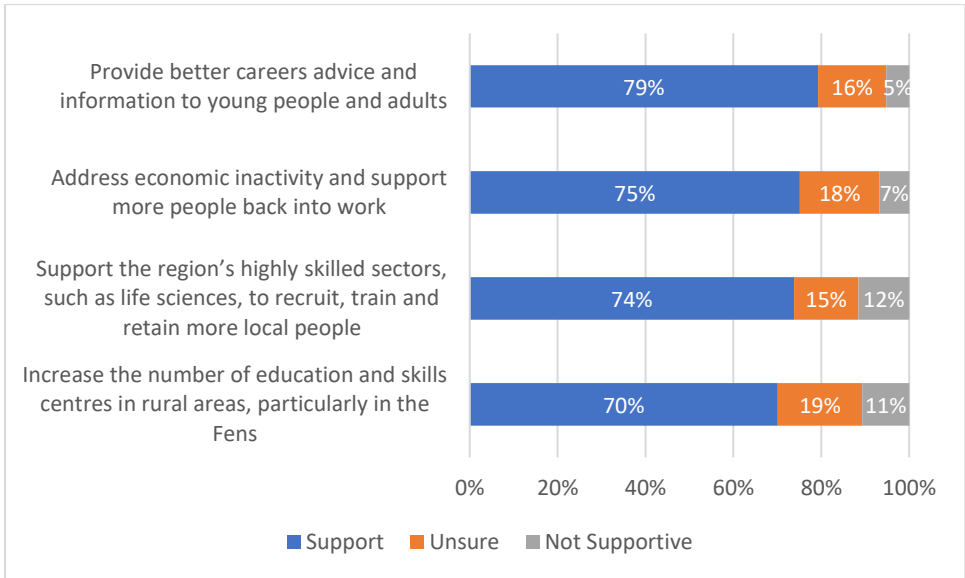
Ambitious Skills and Employment Opportunities 1



Almost eight in ten participants want to see better careers advice and information and three-quarters want to see more done to address the challenges of the economically inactive to help them back to work.

Almost three-quarters of participants recognised the value of supporting the region's highly skilled sectors to provide well-paid work for local people. Seven in ten support more education and skill centres in rural areas, especially in the Fens.

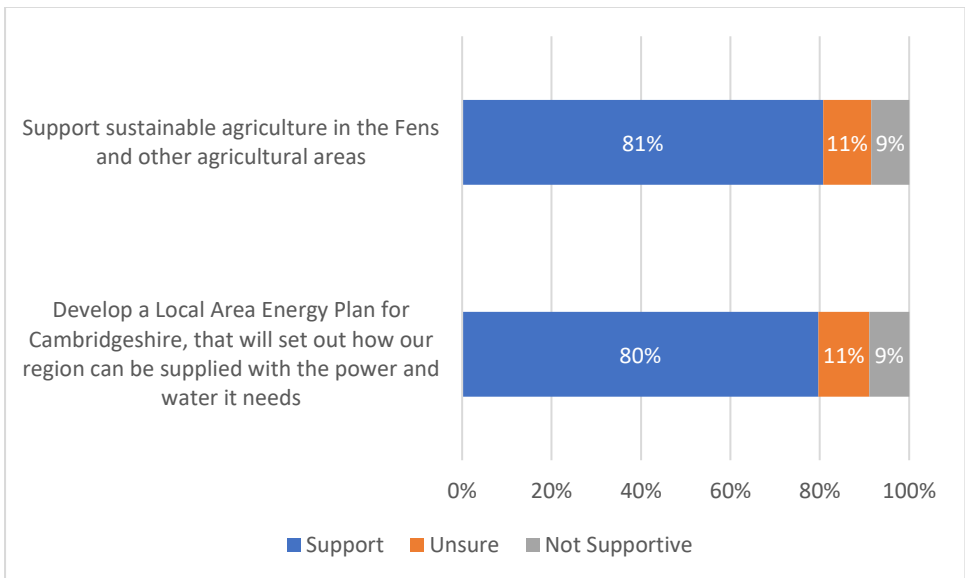
Ambitious Skills and Employment Opportunities 2



Enabling Resilient Communities

Eight in ten participants support sustainable agriculture in the region as well as eight in ten participants supporting a Local Area Energy Plan for Cambridgeshire.

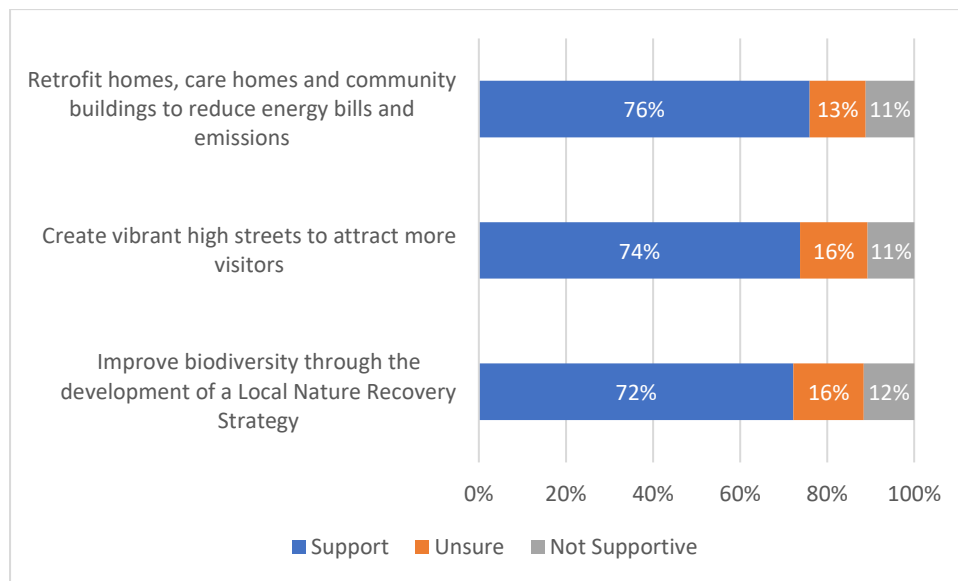
Enabling Resilient Communities 1



Three-quarters of participant want to see retrofitting for households, care homes and community buildings to reduce energy bills and emissions.

Almost three-quarters of participants want to see vibrant high streets to attract more visitors. Over seven in ten want to improve biodiversity through the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

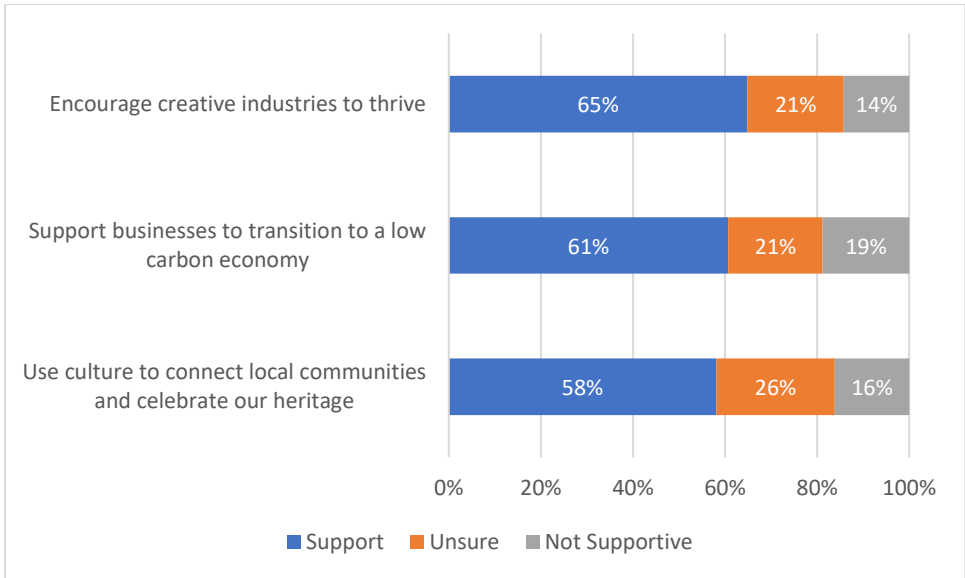
Enabling Resilient Communities 2



Almost two-thirds of respondents are behind efforts to help the creative industries to thrive in the region.

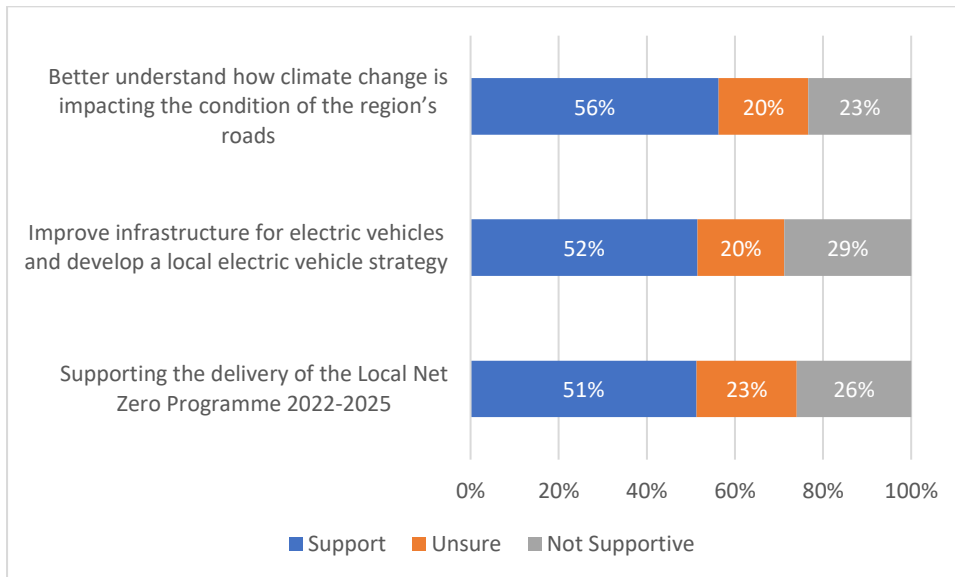
Six in ten would like to see support given to businesses to help them transition to a low carbon economy. Almost six in ten participants would like culture used to connect with local communities and celebrate our heritage.

Enabling Resilient Communities 3



The majority of participants want to see research conducted on how climate change is impacting the region’s road infrastructure. The majority also want to see better infrastructure for electric vehicles and a local electric vehicle strategy. Three in ten participants are not supportive of this. Equally, just over half the participants support the delivery of the Local Net Zero Programme with a quarter not supportive and almost a quarter unsure.

Enabling Resilient Communities 4

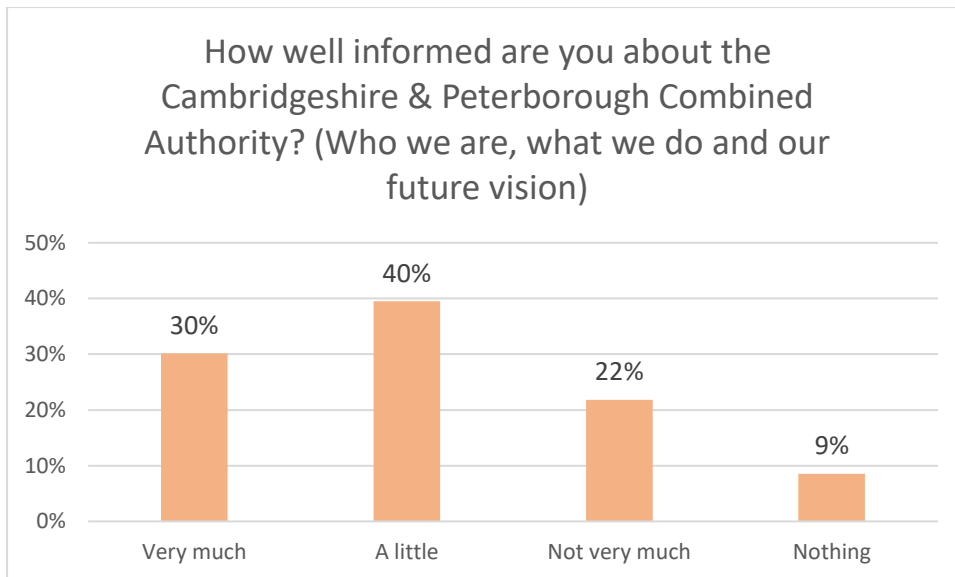


Informed Communities

The most common response from participants was that they feel they know a little about Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority.

Four in ten indicated this. Three in ten participants said that they are ‘Very much’ informed about the combined authority. About one in five said that did not know very much about the authority and fewer than one in ten said that they knew nothing.

Informed Communities



Analysis

The activities proposed through the four strategic objectives have been mapped onto a scattergram to display dimensions of 'support' and 'not supportive'.

The scattergram shows three groups of activities: a packed cluster in the bottom right corner, a looser cluster in the middle and four outliers top left. This graph illustrates not only which activities are supported but also how much opposition there is to them.

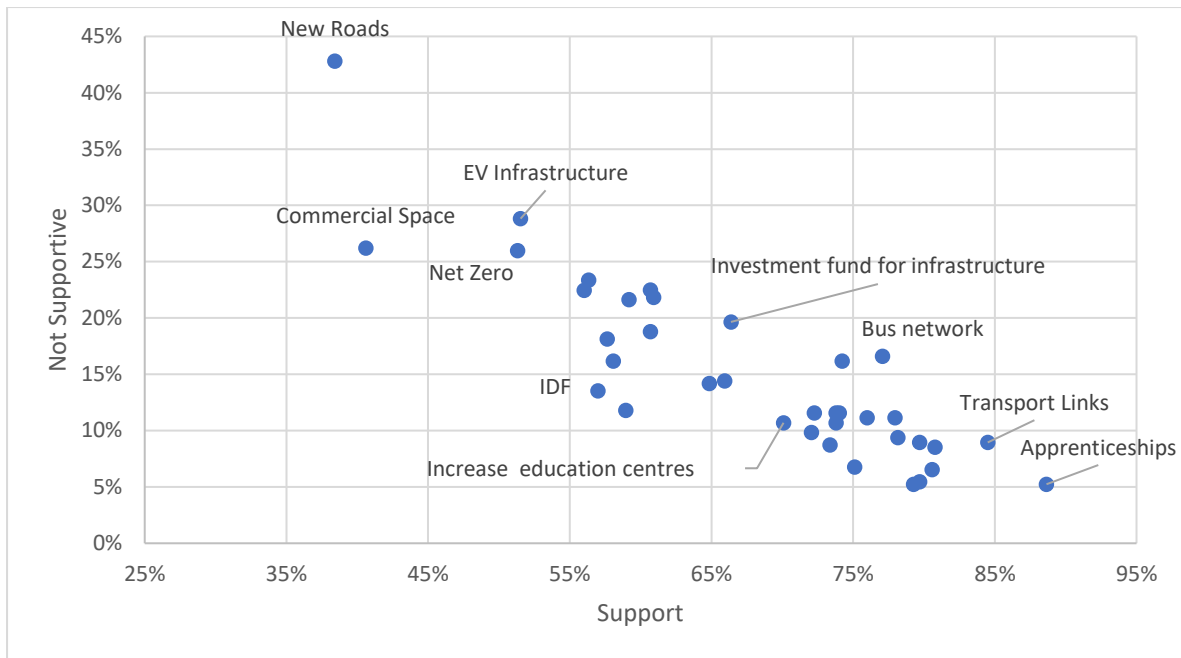
The chart indicates that where there is two-thirds support by participants for an activity there are lower levels of participants that are not supportive – the balance between 'unsures' and 'not supportives' becomes more even.

In the band between 55%-65% support, the balance begins to shift between participants who are unsure and participants who are not supportive of activities.

Below 55% support, resistance to the activities grows. There are four activities which garner the most 'not supportive' responses.

These are new roads, increasing commercial space, the Net Zero Programme and developing the Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure.

Activity Scattergram – All Support compared to Not Supportive



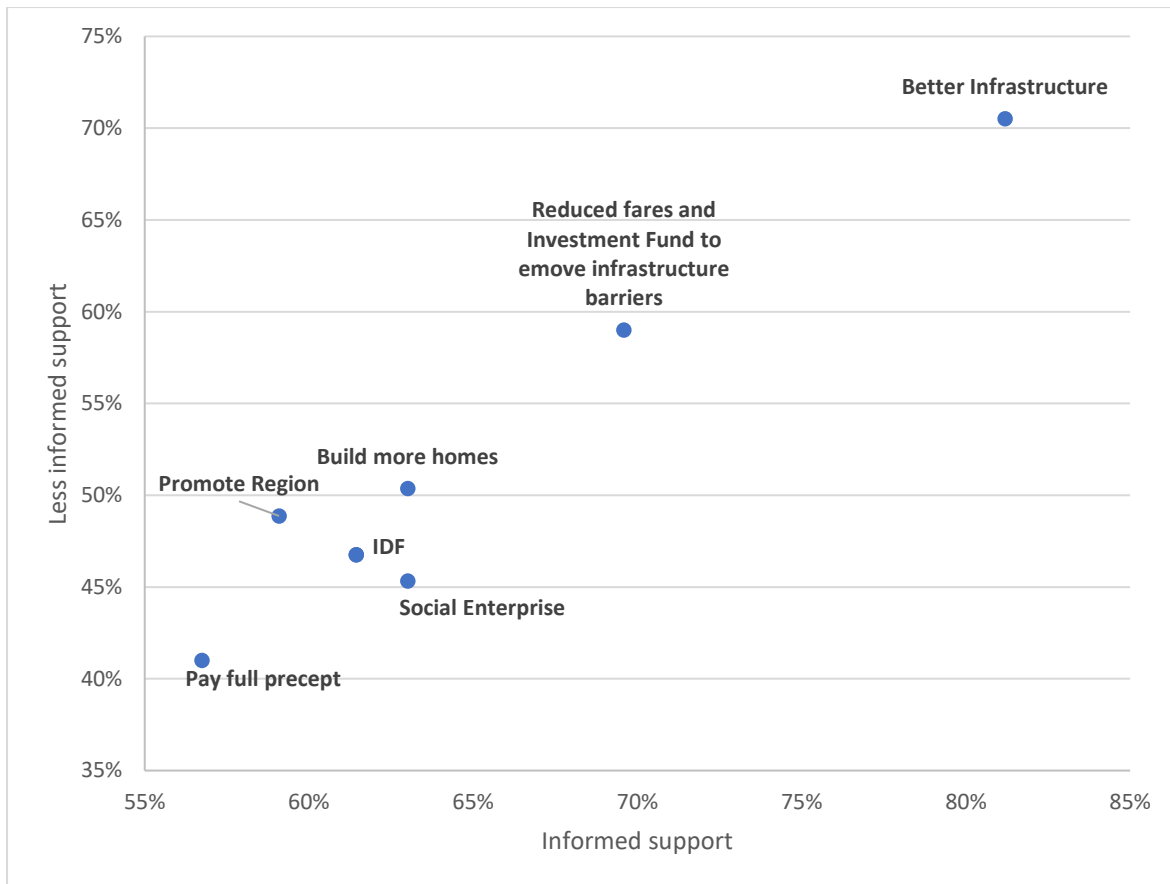
Informed Comparisons

Communications play an important role in the reputation of organisations and awareness and support of their activities. As part of the 'Your views count' survey, participants are asked how informed they are about CPCA, to make comparisons, the informed rating has been taken from combining the 'Very much' and 'A little' categories and the 'Not very much' and 'Nothing' categories.

On this basis, a majority of participants (70%) say they are informed about CPCA, the minority (30%) said that they know not very much or nothing about CPCA.

The chart below only shows activities where there is a difference between informed and less informed groups of $\pm 10\%$ levels of support. For all the activities shown here, activity support is lower amongst less informed participants.

Informed Support Comparisons



The largest differences between informed and less informed are for social enterprise (18%), paying the full precept (16%), and the Infrastructure Delivery Framework (15%).

Willingness to pay full Mayoral Precept

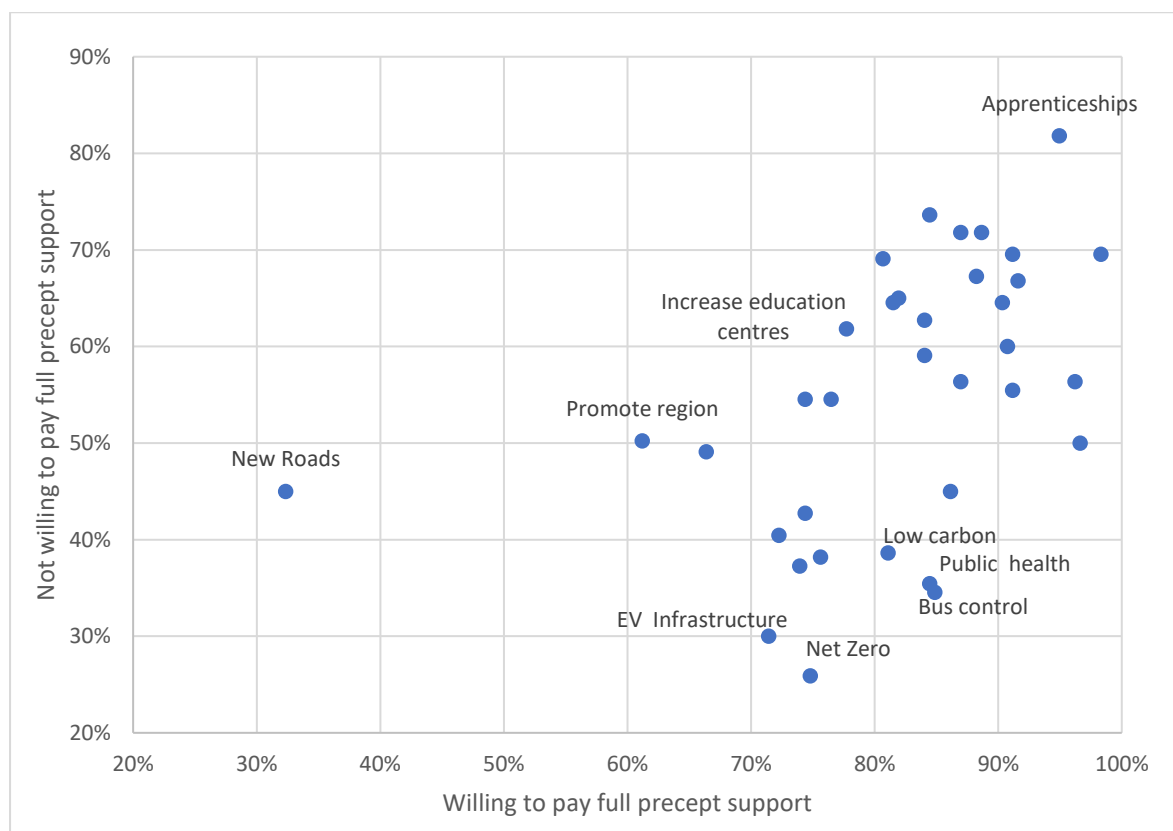
This analysis looks at the perception of activities through the lens of being willing or not willing to support the proposed precept increase to £36. As has already been stated, the majority of participants (52%) supported the full precept increase.

Like the previous charts in this section, only activities where there is a difference in levels of support of at least $\pm 10\%$ are shown.

The picture here is quite different to the previous chart. The first thing to notice is that the large majority of activities appear in this chart because the differences between these two groups are much larger. The average difference in the level of support between the two groups is twenty-eight per cent.

The activities which have the biggest difference between those willing to pay the full precept and those not willing to pay the full precept are in the bottom right of the chart. These are exploring options for changing control of the buses, active travel schemes which promote public health, Net Zero Programme, low carbon and EV infrastructure.

Willingness to pay support comparisons



Written Responses

As well as the 458 survey responses, the CPCA received 23 written responses. Nineteen of these written responses were from individuals and councillors, and four were responses from organisations. The majority of individuals respondents said that they had completed the 'Your Views Count' survey. The four organisational responses came from Natural Cambridge, Campaign for Better Transport, Savills and a Labour Party meeting.

The key feedback from the individual responses was in no particular order:

- There was not an opportunity to give open-ended responses to the questions
- That the consultation focussed on the CPCA work programme as opposed to what residents might want
- Concerns about an increase to the Mayoral Precept
- Concerns about energy and transport policy relating to trains, buses and cars

The response from Natural Cambridge highlighted a shared Ambition for Nature and Climate with CPCA, the continuation and increase of capacity funding, the importance of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), support for the CPCA Sustainable Land Use Fund, the CPCA Fund for Nature and Community Activities as well as the CPCA Fund for Nature and Landscape Projects.

Combined Authority Committee Responses

The Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Corporate Plan Refresh, draft budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan at their meeting on Tuesday 9th January. The Business Board also discussed these draft proposals items at their meeting on Monday 15th January.

Feedback from the respective meetings has been included below and taken from the minutes of the respective meetings.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee received the report which provided consultation responses to the Combined Authority Board meeting on the 31st January 2024 regarding the draft Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the draft Corporate Strategy and requested the committee's feedback.

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- Officers advised that social media had been the main approach for advertising the consultation with 18 social media posts on a variety of platforms. Paper copies had also been placed at a number of identified locations after consultation with constituent councils.
- A modest amount of paid campaigns had been utilized and the CA had tried to ensure that the website and technologies were accessible to as many people as possible, for example ensuring that the webpage was usable for those using mobile phones.
- Officers took on board the point from members that freepost could be considered in future consultations.
- In response to a question about examining the statistical significance officers advised that there were too few responses and that they would use what they received to identify any gaps in the geographical area. In response to a question on the point in the MTFP about 600 affordable homes and whether the CA still delivered on housing officers advised that these related to the continuation of the final grants that had been paid out.
- Officers agreed to check whether all parishes had been directly contacted for the consultation. In response to a question about how the CA would set a budget next year when the corporate plan was only relevant until 2025, officers advised that the budget next year would be based on the existing MTFP and the Corporate Plan agreed this year but this could be adapted depending on the results of the Mayoral election in 2025.

- The Committee were advised that the decision about a Mayoral precept was a Mayor's decision and that it would take 2/3rds of the Board to veto the decision on the precept.
- In response to a question on the percentage for staff pay increases officers advised that the 4% increase had been estimated on the figures that had been available in November and that it had been viewed that the rate of inflation would fall but not as rapidly as getting back down to the 2% level. If the fall in interest was less than 4% then the CA may have more money to invest into further areas. It was important to note that the forecasting on pay was done at the national level and was down to the negotiations that would take place next year.
- In response to a question on the funding for the provision of electrical charging points members were advised that the data had not been available at the time of publishing but that this would be included in the final figures.
- In response to a question on bus franchising and whether this would be value for money officers advised that an audit had been carried out and they would rely on the final audit reports before making a judgement. The Committee requested that they be given an opportunity to scrutinise the plans for bus franchising and enhanced partnerships and were advised a report would be available for the January OSC meeting. In response to a question about the Mayor's precept the members were advised that the Mayor's budget formed part of the CA order and it was in the Mayor's power to reduce, increase or end a precept.
- The current precept was £12 and there are proposals to have a further £24 added this year which would make the precept going forward £36. Further details around the precept would be available once the final budget had been published on the 22nd January and the Committee would consider it at their meeting at the end of January.
- The Chair made a point about the £1 bus fare cap and that it was disappointing that it was only per bus journey rather than the full journey, meaning a journey needing 2 buses would cost £2. It would be good if this scheme was the first stage towards something more comprehensive and consideration for all modes of transport be given.
- The Chair also commented that within the corporate plan the two infrastructure constraints detailed should also include the peat within the fens as a major resource along with water and energy concerns.

The Committee RESOLVED to provide the following feedback on the consultation:

- The Committee commented that as there was no detail on the precept currently provided that they would reserve commenting until further information on what the level of precept would be, what it would pay for, the level of social value it provided and requested that a robust and detailed report be provided to the Committee on the Mayor's precept for the January meeting for members to consider.
- The Committee welcomed that the MTFP, Corporate Plan and the Mayoral ambitions were now all linked as it brought all the pieces together, the Committee requested that a good narrative that provided the detail that OSC required to scrutinize effectively be included in the final budget.

Business Board

From conversations that took place at the workshop the previous week there is broad support for the MTFP.

- There is need to maximise funds to support innovation and growth: the degree of unallocated funds gives opportunity to respond to projects that might come up.
- While it would be great to have more in that pot there is recognition that balancing the books overall is important. Officers confirmed that money is set aside for projects in-year and the new Investment Committee will make decisions up to £1million.

- There had been a brief conversation in terms of increasing mayoral precept but a general understanding that there is a need to see bus network improve and infrastructure will be required.

- The Business Board supports the MTFP but the most important way for the board to be responsive is to ensure not all areas are allocated to soon so they can be Responsive.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the financial position of the Business Division for the financial year 23/24 to November 2023.
- b) Review the consultation on the Combined Authority's Draft Corporate Strategy and Medium-Term Finance Plan and agree the Board's formal response to the consultation.