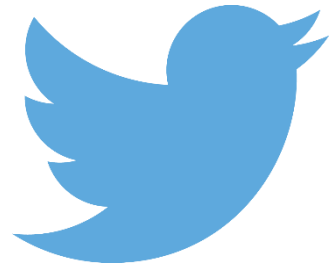


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# The future of Local Government

**Mo Baines,  
APSE Chief Executive**

# The Messy Public Policy Issues

- Local Government Finance
- Post-covid recovery
- Waste and resources
- Climate change
- Housing and neighbourhoods
- Cost of Living / Cost of Providing Services
- The Workforce
- What do the public want?

# The public want....everything!

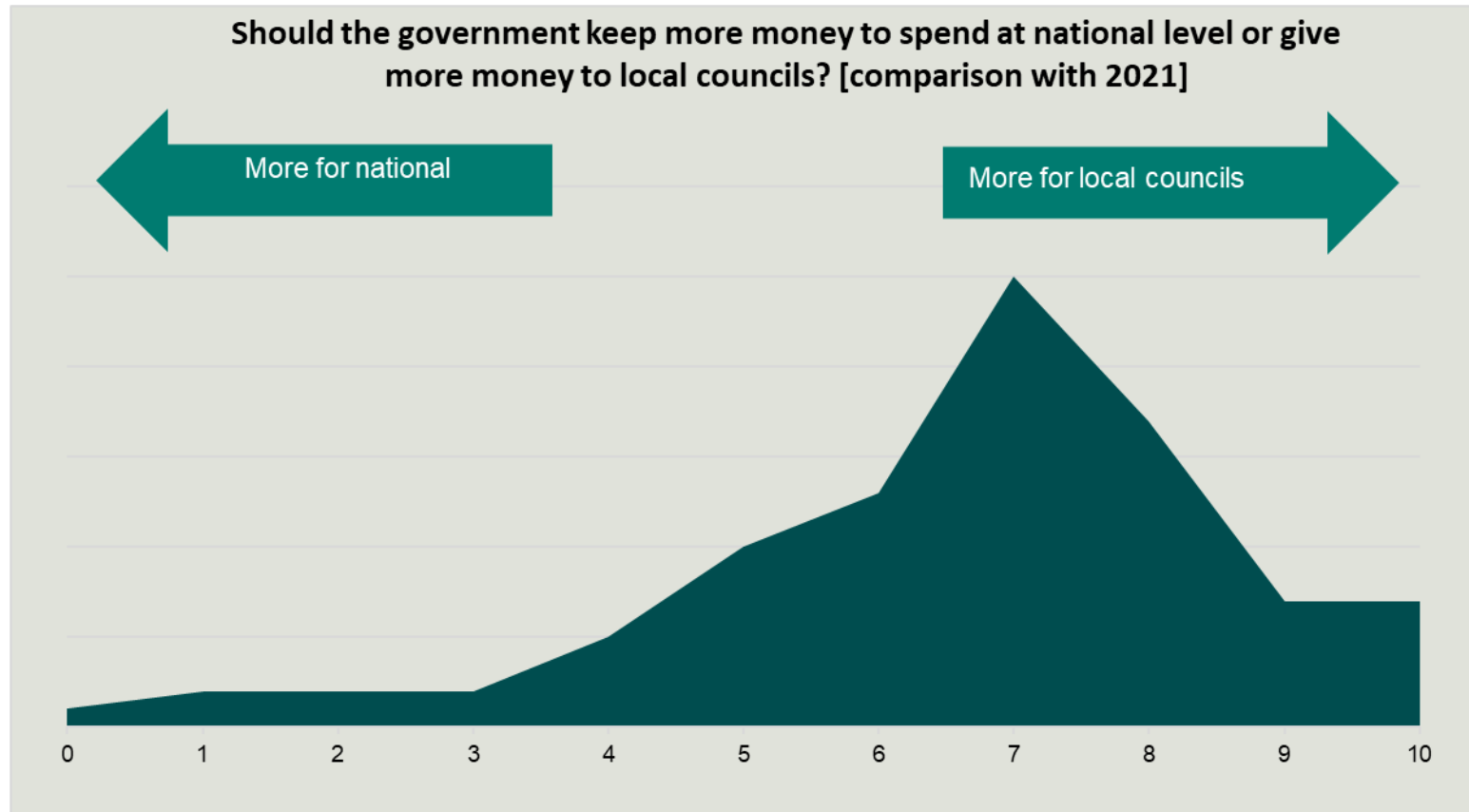
- Good local public services remain a priority
- From potholes to social care the public want more!
- They trust you to spend the taxpayer £ - more so than Westminster politicians
- Trust in politics has been dented.
- Do we have the resources?
- Do we have the skills

## **Key fact 1: Relative Trust in Councils high**

**Trust in Councils and Councillors has increased slightly in the past year, as trust in Government and Ministers has had some marginal losses. Trust in Councils and Councillors is still high overall compared to trust in Government and Ministers.**

- Almost four times as many trust the local Council (54%) over the Government (14%) to make decisions about how services are delivered in your local area.
- Almost six times as many trust local Councillors (51%) over Government ministers (9%) to make decisions about their local area.
- Many more people trusted Councils (51%) to deliver local services over a private company (14%) or the Government (9%)

## Key fact 2 : People trust Councils with their tax



# Neighbourhood services matter!

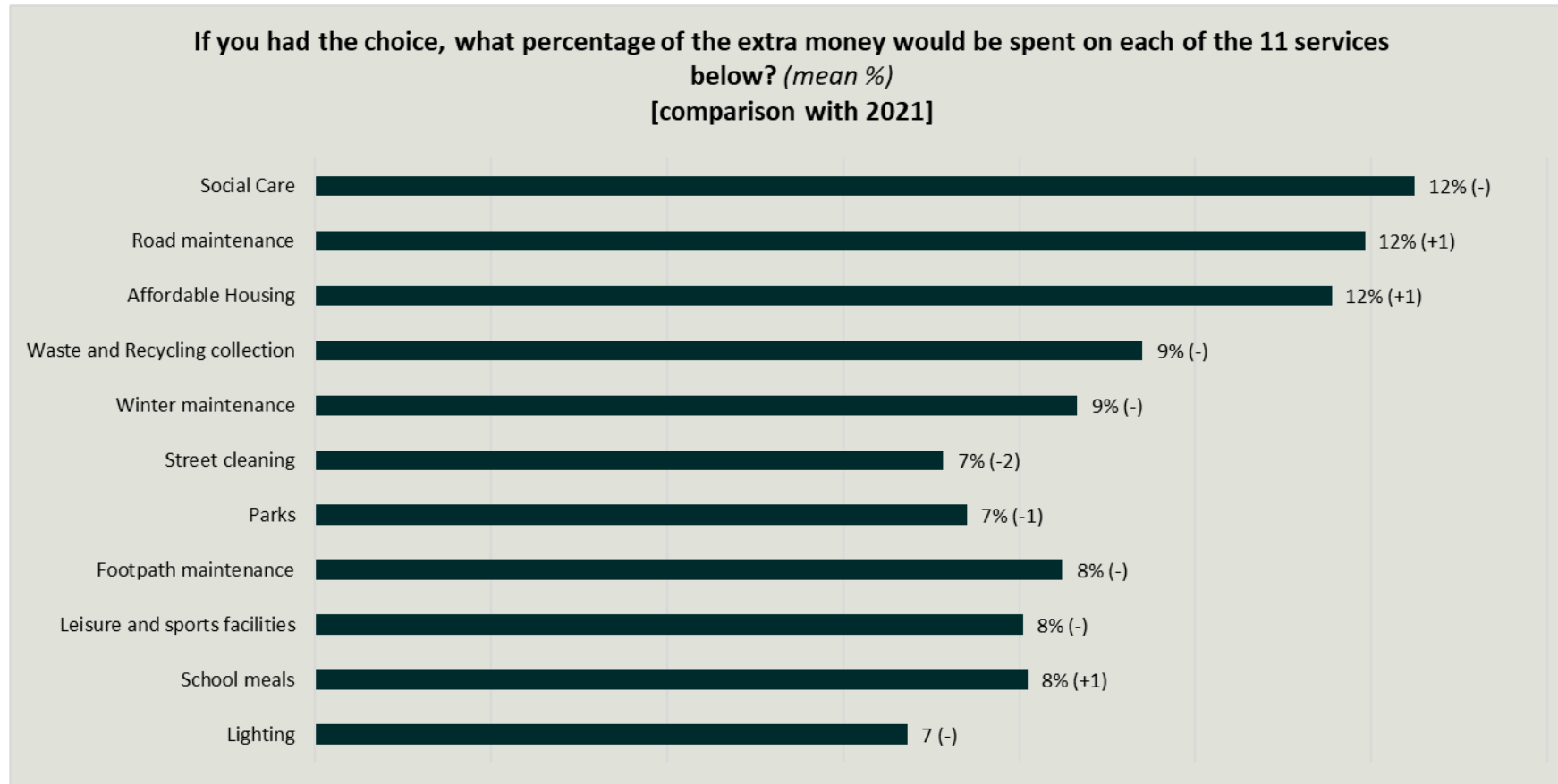


## Satisfaction levels vary between services





## Social care attracts public vote for most funds



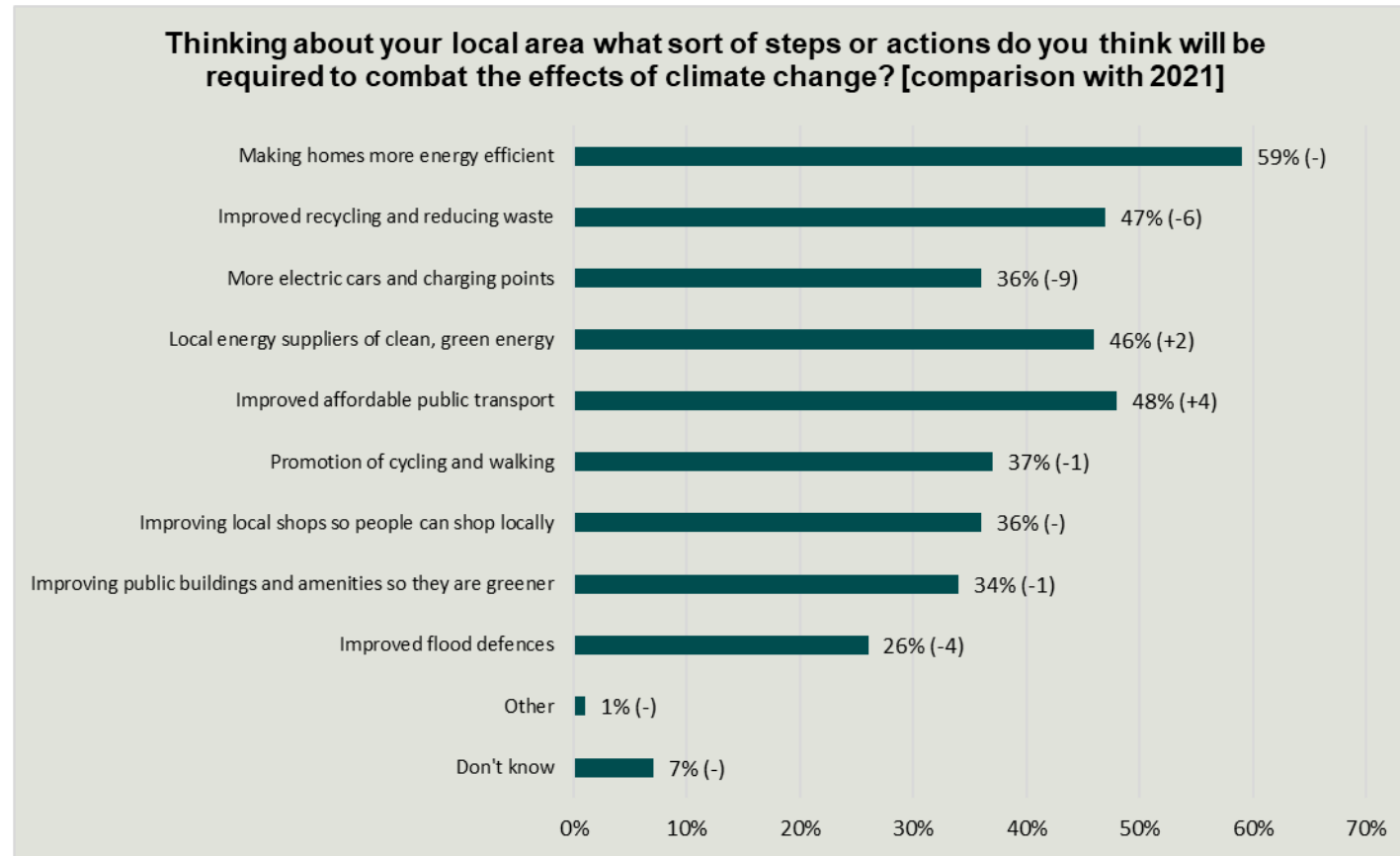
## Climate Change still a priority for Councils

**This year we undertook the same questions about Councils and climate change as last year which show that it a priority for the public and they expect Councils to take a leading role in responding to climate change.**

Five Key findings

1. 70% (down 1%) expect that local communities will have to respond to the effects of climate change in their area.
2. 54% support additional money for Councils to respond to climate change locally, which is the same as last year
3. 38% (up 1%) see Councils as best placed to take combat the effects of climate change compared to 29% (down 1%) for the Government.
4. Top priorities for local climate change action are making homes more energy efficient at 59%.
5. Climate change is the equal second highest new spending priority after Social Care, on par with Road Maintenance and Affordable Housing.

## Top priorities for local climate change action



# How do we deliver these public priorities?

- Correlation between climate change and local actions
- Walking and cycling routes
- Active travel
- Ill-health prevention
- Waste and Resources

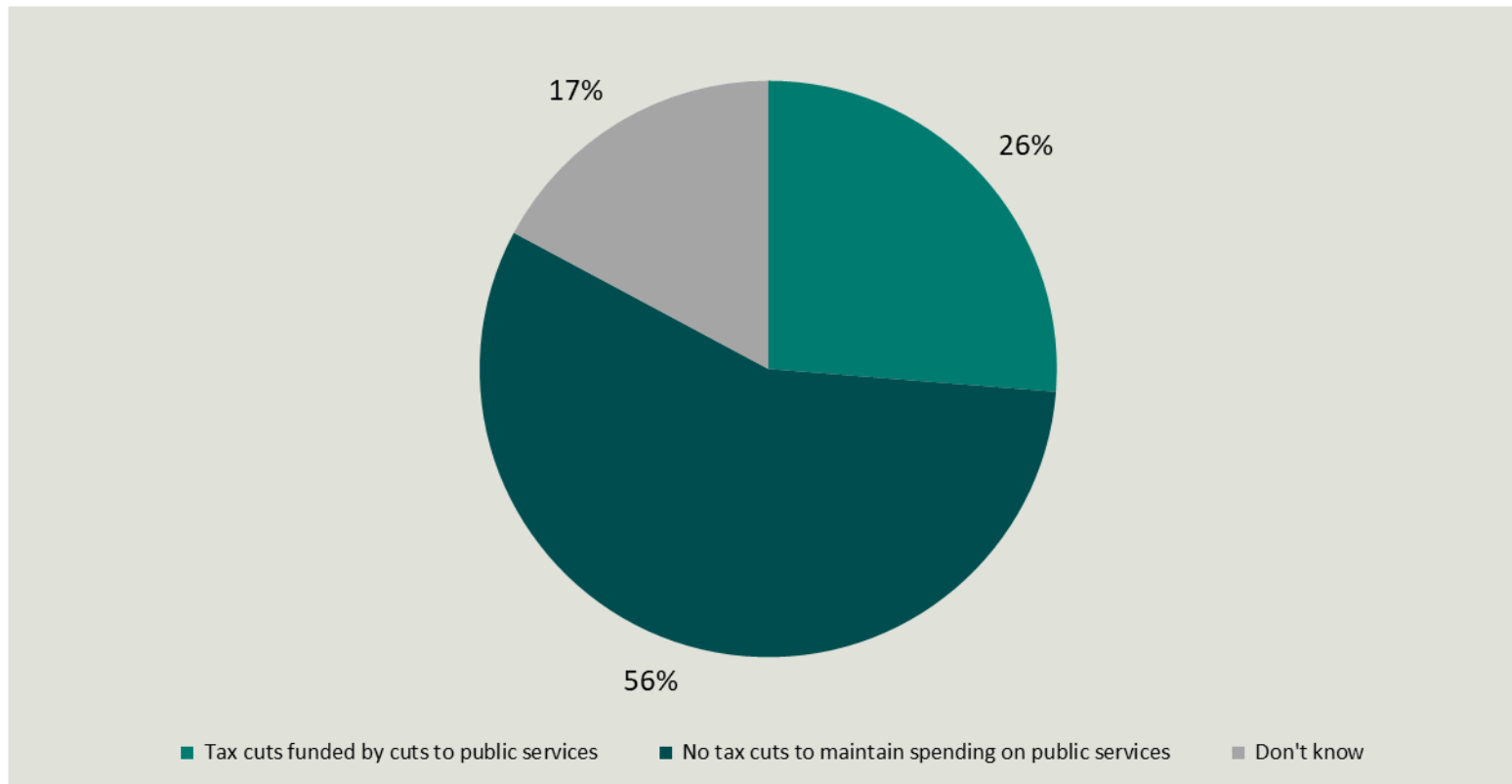
## Support for protection of public services

**This year we added questions about potential cuts to public services.**

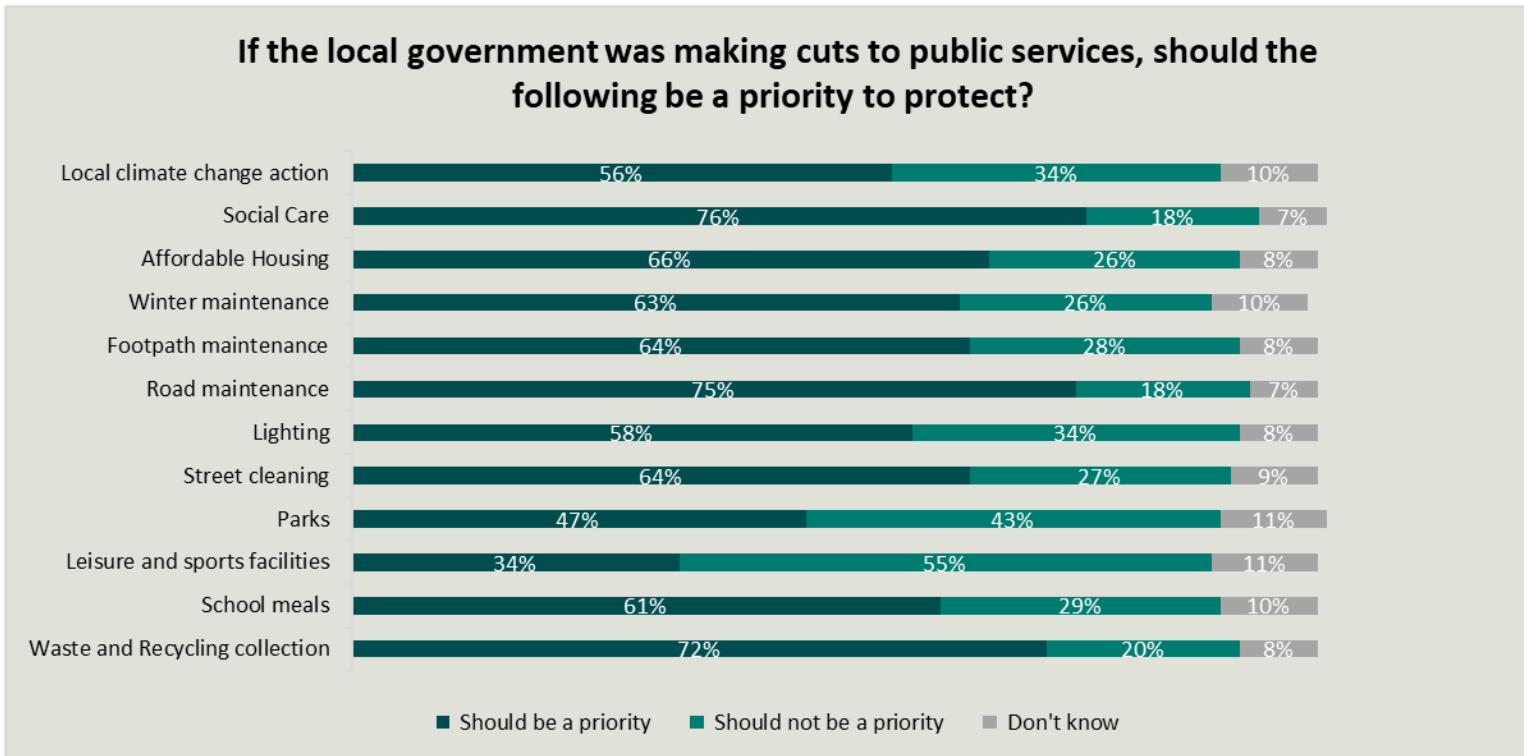
Three Key findings

1. When faced with a choice, 56% would rather see no tax cuts in order to maintain spending on public services, over tax cuts which are funded by cuts to public services.
2. Social Care (76%), Road Maintenance (75%) and Waste and Recycling collection (72%) are most important local services for councils to prioritise.
3. Housing (66%), Street Cleaning (64%) and School Meals (61%) followed in terms of which services to prioritise.

## Public would rather see spending on public services maintained with no tax cuts



# Local public services are important to protect, with Social Care the biggest concern



# Are we able to deliver?

- Resources
- Skills
- The workforce of the future?



# Painting the picture by numbers

- NHS, Education, Police and Fire, Local Government employ around **5.6M**
- Estimated that local government employs just over **2M** people.
- Local Government up by just 3,000 people (**0.1%**)
- Growth of **0.3%** in the NHS and **0.1%** in the Civil Service.
- But the 'Covid year' numbers suggest NHS employment grew by **3.5%** , the Civil Service by **3.9%** and local government growth just **0.2%**
- During the years of austerity, it is estimated that councils lost around **27%** of their spending power and around **25%** of the overall workforce.

# Impact ?

- Early retirement and redundancy
- Job freezes and internal back-filling of posts
- Redeployment measures
- Less opportunity for progression
- If we were a dating App we would get a massive swipe to the .....?



# The crisis in recruitment and retention

- 170,000 – 190,000 care workers, with 105,000 in England alone Care workers vacancies running at between **17%** and **20%**
- 100,000 shortage for HGV driver jobs and over **50%** of APSE member councils report moderate or severe shortages in non-HGV driver roles
- Near to a quarter (**24.3%**) report severe shortages in building and construction services and **51%** report moderate shortages
- Over **66%** report moderate or severe shortages in Parks and Grounds Services
- **64%** Highways, near to **74%** in vehicle maintenance **65%** in catering and cleaning (Soft FM) services

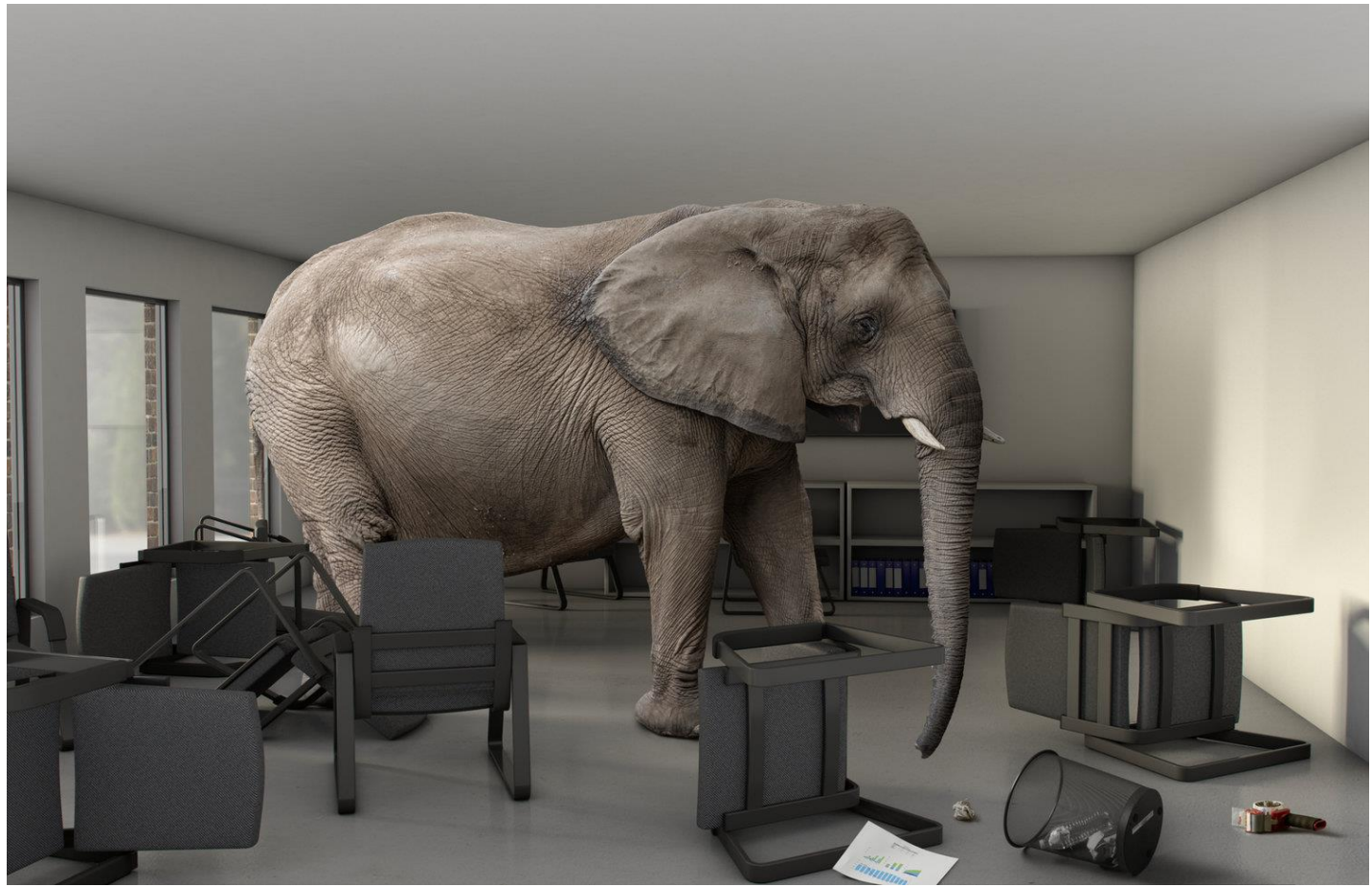
# What issues in which services?

- HGV drivers impacting on Refuse Collection
- Uptick in demand for hospitality industry jobs is stripping out labour supply for public sector catering and cleaning
- Loss of revenue budgets, impact on planning for longer term in parks and environmental services has limited apprenticeships, replacing staff
- Decline of local authorities as apprentice providers in construction
- Finance, legal and executives – now competing against other public sector employers – not just private sector

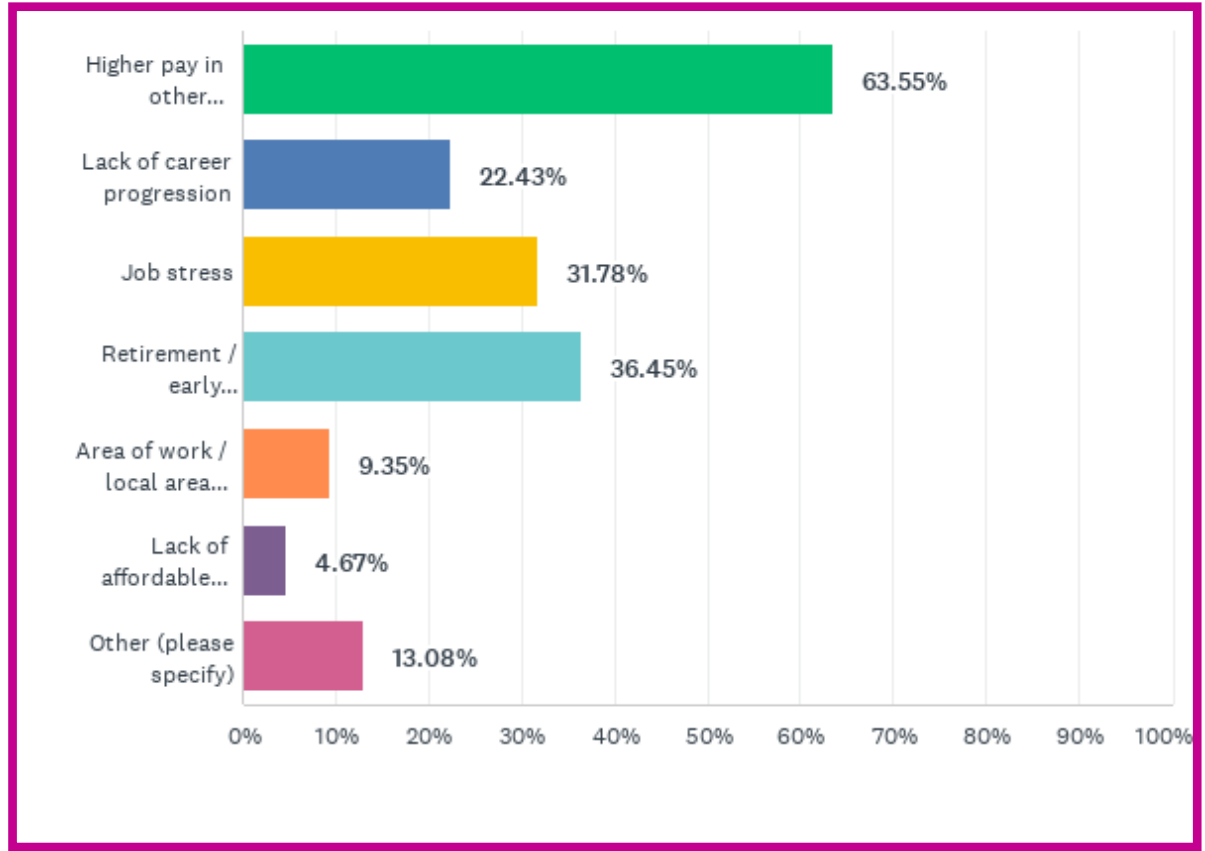
# A word on social care

- Capacity now a major issue of risk to local councils
- Loss of training capacity
- Impact on health care provision / NHS pressures will be exacerbated if we don't address social care
- And social care will continue to draw on resources from other services
- We still fail to integrate all other frontline services into the plans for social care (planning, public realm, refuse and recycling, housing, walking and cycling routes).....and yes even the impact of climate change.

*'We have normalised misery'*



# Pay, rewards, recruitment and retention



63.5% suggest pay the main issue for both recruitment and retention

36.4% suggest early retirement impacting on retention

31.7% Job stress – strong correlation to APSE findings during ‘Covid’ survey work

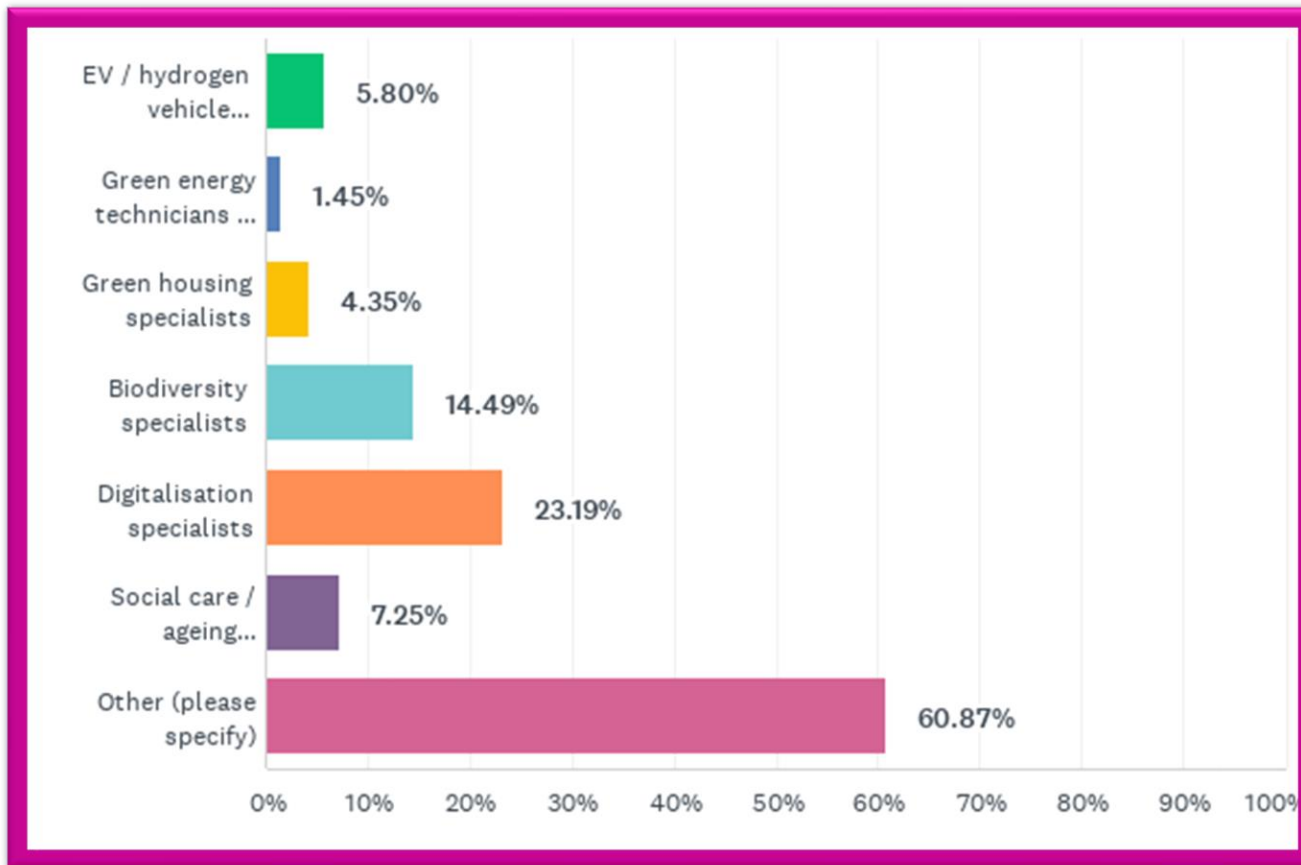
Competition for workers is not just between local councils but other public agencies and public services

# Not the same everywhere.....

- South / South East ..... Pressure on 'professionals' hard to recruit accountants, legal staff, chief executives, senior managers..
- London .... High demand jobs such as refuse drivers, and lots of flipping between councils.....interim demand appears to be higher
- Impact of Brexit uneven.....more pronounced in the economic hot-spots
- Scotland, Wales, North and Central areas... non HGV drivers, social care and competition with hospitality and retail sector for FM based jobs



# Green economy.....



# What needs to change to plan for the workforce of the future?

- Where are we now?
- Comprehensive assessment of future skills and workforce numbers?
- What do we need for the future? Skills in green technology and the interface with digital platforms
- Workforce planning that spans councils and local areas areas
- What does the future of work look like?



# Supporting local economies

- Having a workforce that reflects the communities that they seek to serve  
*‘The Commission supports the introduction of a duty for the local government workforce to be representative of the communities it serves, with an annual reporting mechanism on progress’*
- Councils should look to the long-term impacts of their decisions and work with young people to ensure positive outcomes for current and future generations.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty?

# The Future Delivery Model?

*‘An integrated set of services directly, that are democratically accountable but flexible and adaptable to local people’s needs, should be the default option for local services where they are best able to provide high quality, effective and socially just outcomes for local communities and local economies’*



# **NEW MUNICIPALISM**

Delivering for local people and local economies

# Contact details

**Mo Baines, Chief Executive**

**Email: [mbaines@apse.org.uk](mailto:mbaines@apse.org.uk)**



**GB 11409**



**GB 11132**



**GB 14074**

**Association for Public Service Excellence**

3rd floor, Trafford House, Chester Road,  
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0RS.

**telephone:** 0161 772 1810

**web:** [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk)