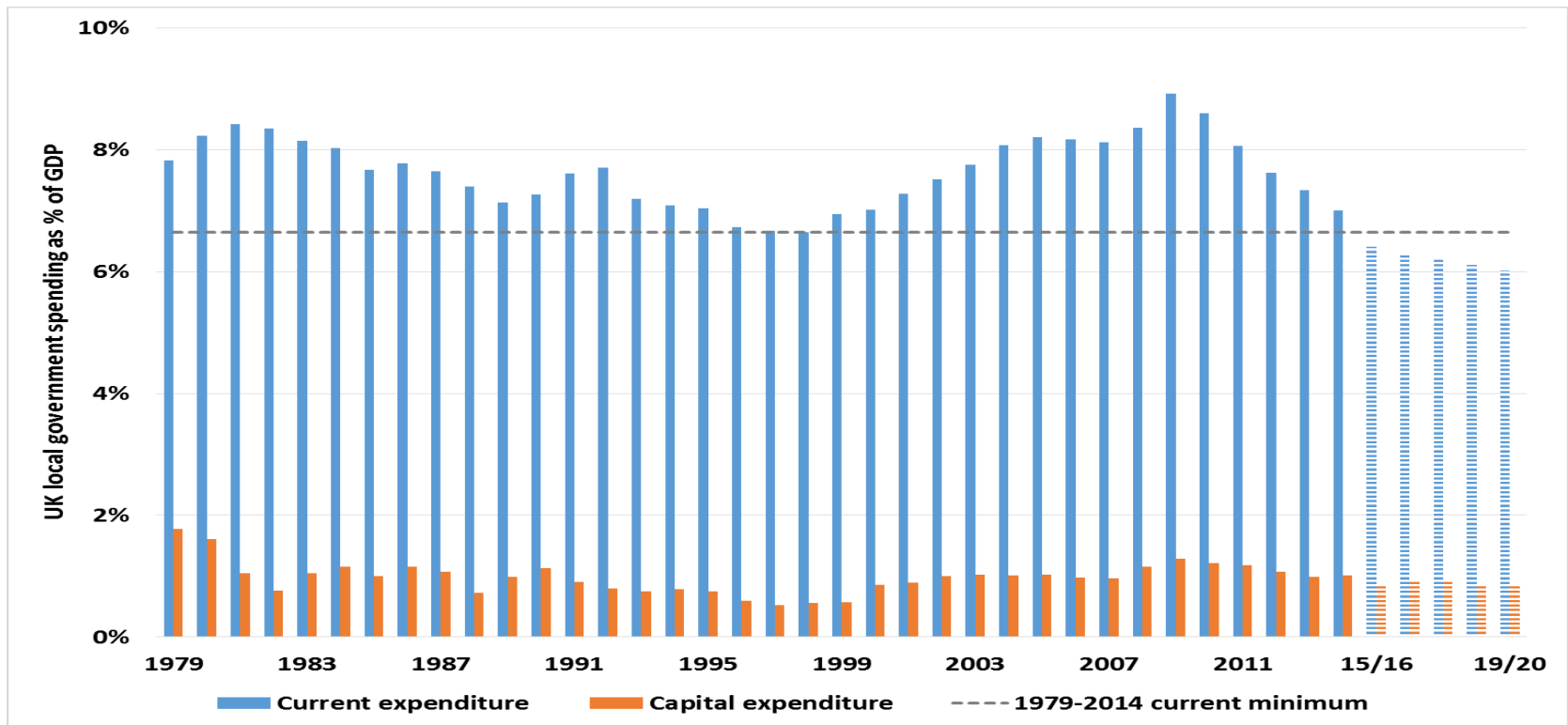




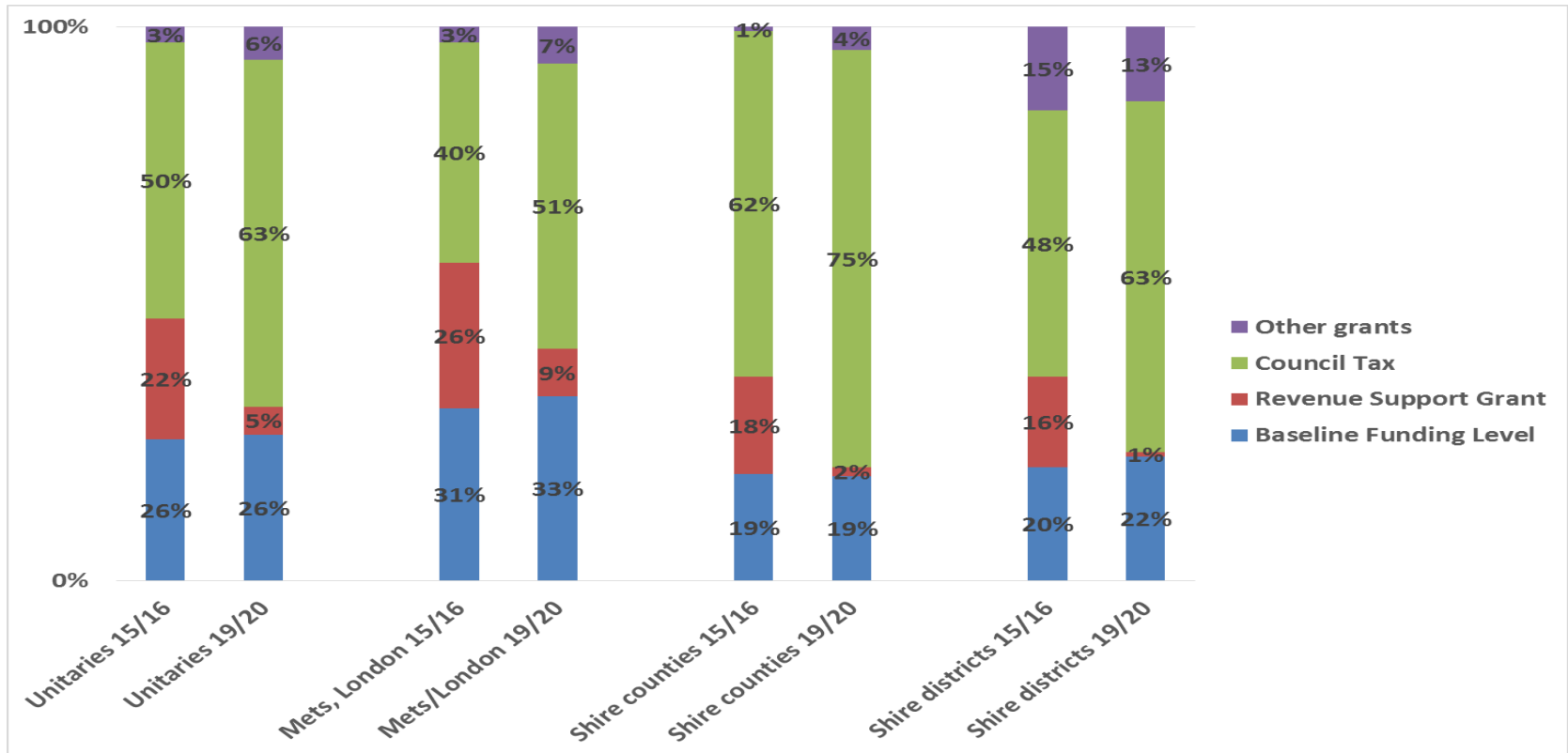
The future of UK Parks

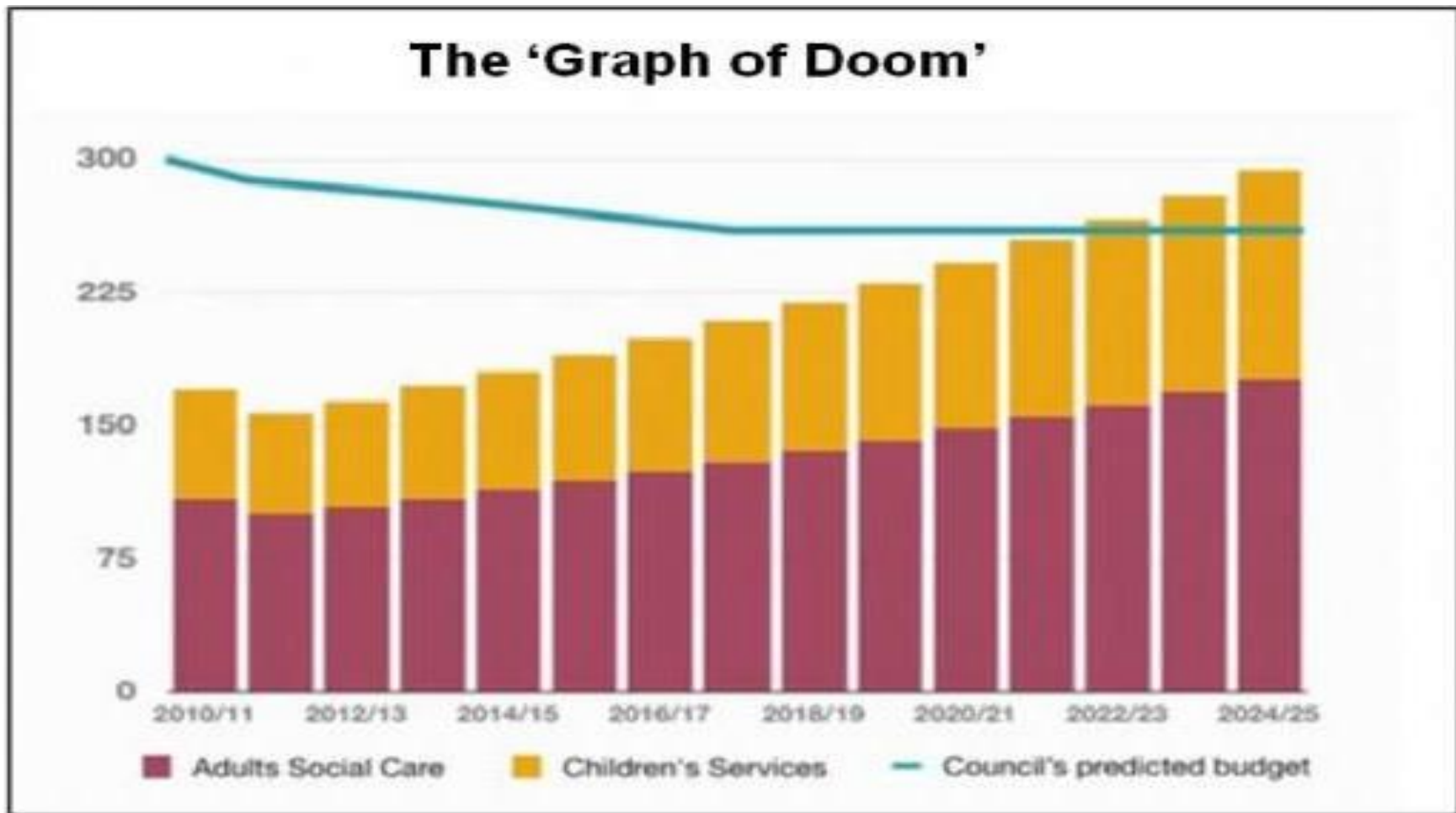
Paul O'Brien,
Chief Executive, APSE

UK local government spending as a share of GDP: current spending, already below the 1979-2014 minimum, is projected to go on falling to 2020



Balance of core spending power 15/16 and 19/20: as RSG shrivels beyond London and the Mets, most LA funding will come from council tax







Association for Public Service Excellence



Reductions in spending

- Neighbourhood services have been the hardest hit of all local government services.
- Spending on neighbourhood services in England fell £3.1bn or 13 per cent between 2010/11 and 2015/16 while spending on social care rose £2.2bn.

Impact on frontline services

- The worst hit neighbourhood services have seen spending fall by 50 per cent, and most services have seen falls of at least 20 per cent.
- English local councils spending fell by 41 to 50 per cent in three of the 40 individual neighbourhood services
- By 31 to 40 per cent in four (including crime, safety and CCTV) and by 21 to 30 per cent in seven (including sport and recreation and road and bridge maintenance).

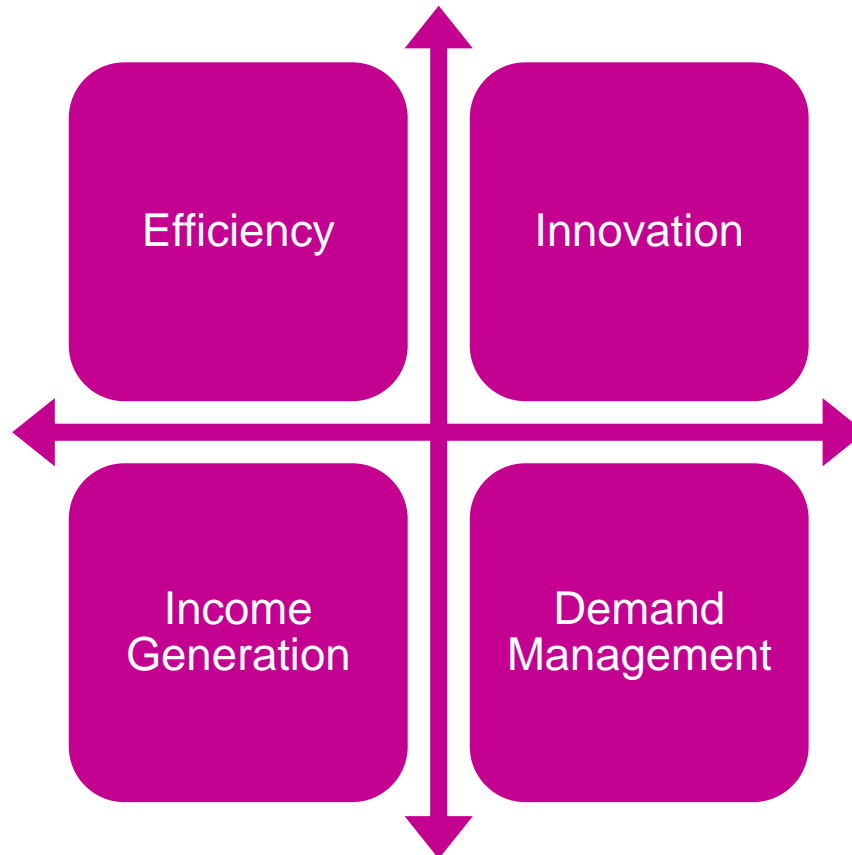
What has happened to Parks services?

- Neighbourhood grouping
- Total service expenditure %'s in UK
- Average cuts v's areas of deprivation
- Parks £1B
- Average cut 26% unadjusted, 32% inflation – 353 parks authorities
- Parks / Neighbourhoods / TSE
- London / Shire Districts
- Future finance 17 models

What will local government look like in 2020?



The pillars of excellence





State of the market survey 2019 and APSE performance networks data 2017-18

Local authority parks services

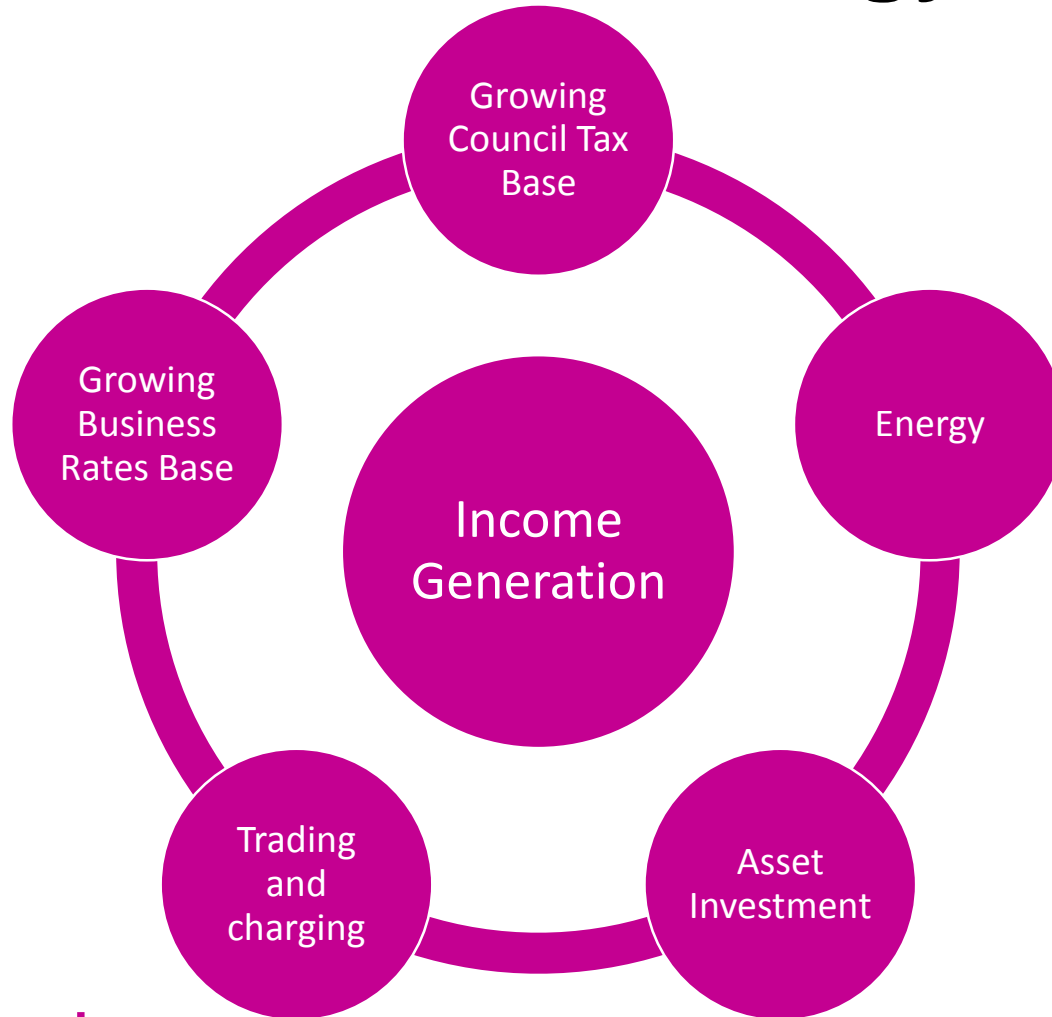
State of the market headlines

- 67% expect less than 10% cuts in next 5 years
- 16% looking at compulsory redundancies
- Most authorities expecting staff cuts of less than 10% (48% not considering staff losses)
- 87% of parks services delivered in-house
- 56% are part of an integrated street scene service (street cleansing/GM/parks)

State Of the market headlines

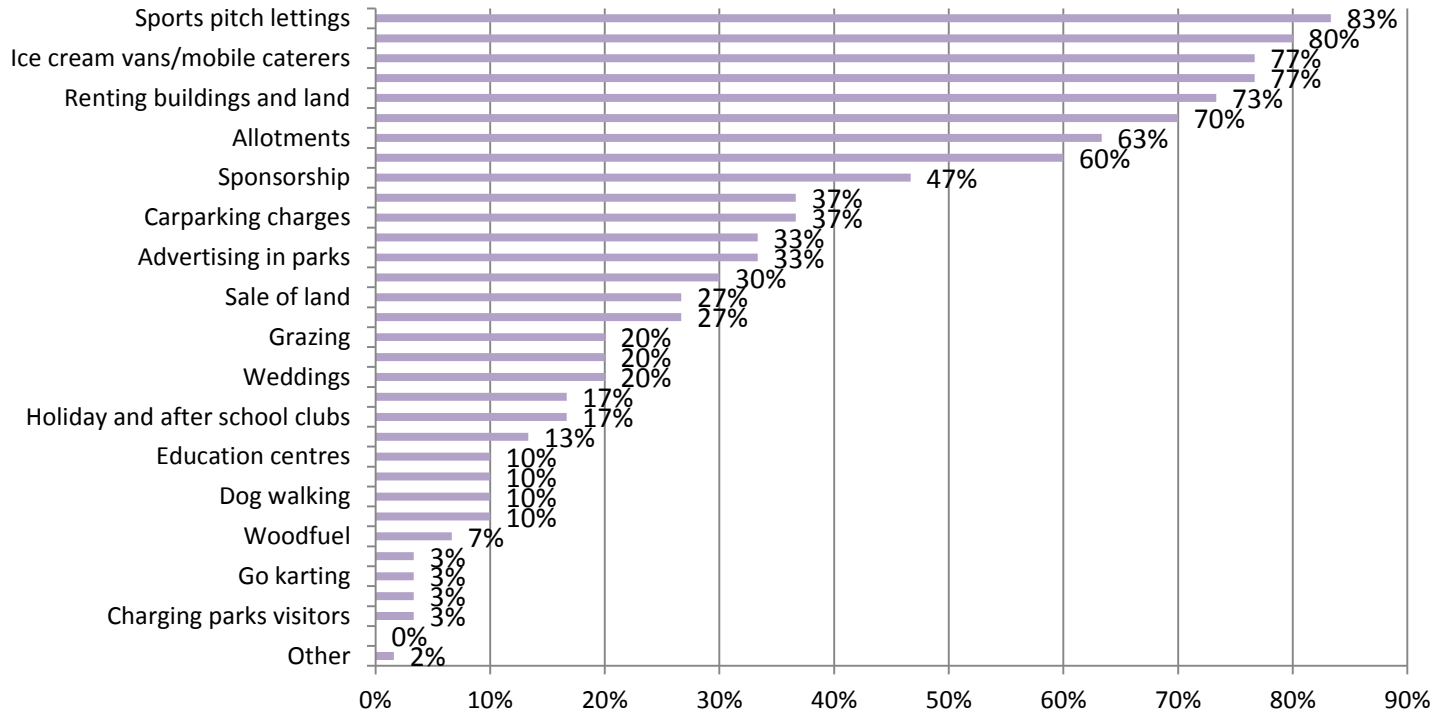
- 100% see parks as key to supporting healthy living.
- 84 % expect park numbers to stay the same or increase slightly.
- 97% have Friends and residents groups.
- Asset transfers - mainly buildings and playing fields
- 98% felt there are clear limits to volunteer/community involvement – ‘additionality’

Commercialisation strategy



Income generation

What areas do you currently generate income in through fees and charges?



Additional funding

- 'Section 106 money' (93%).
- 'National Lottery Heritage Fund' (41%).
- Receiving income from friends of parks groups (90%).
- Grant funding from other sources risen to (48%).
- Sponsorship received by (45%).
- Figures for 'health funding' (24%).
- Sale of assets (e.g. timber) (14%).
- Private funding (7%).



Has Austerity bitten?

What the public think

Key fact : Relative trust remains high

As in 2016 and 2017, Trust in Councils and Councillors is high relative to Government ministers and private companies in a climate on increasing distrust of anyone.

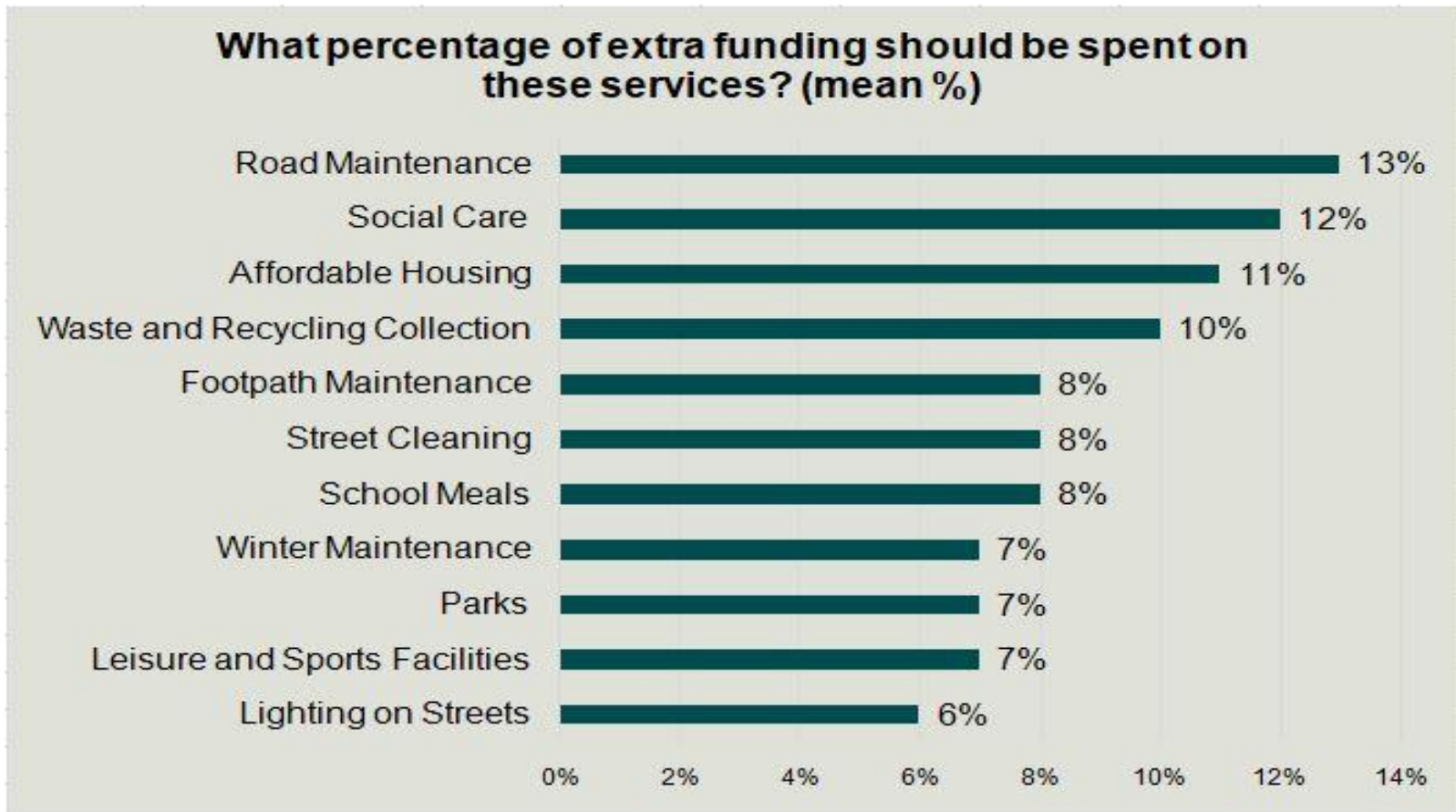
- Four times as many still trust the local Council over the Government to make decisions about how services are delivered provided in your local area.
- Six times as many trust local Councillors over Government ministers to make decision about their local area.
- Four and half times as many trusted Council to provide services in their local area over a private company with people trusting the council five times more than the Government.

80% would like the Government to give more money to local councils to spend at the local level for services that are in their neighbourhood.

Performance of Councils services positive



How the public would like extra funds spent



Case for direct provision

- Democratic accountability
- Council support
- Part of policy solution public health
- Proof of delivery
- Wider role in economy & neighbourhoods
- Ability to have full resource of council
- Focus on today's problem - austerity

Outsourcing to ADMs

- Look before you leap
- Grass isn't always greener
- Optimism bias – beware of false prof(ph)its
- Cherrypicking
- What happens to what's left behind
- Fragmentation
- Plan B, if it goes wrong
- Your workforce

The Parks Action Group

- Communities and local government select committee public parks inquiry – examine impact of reduced L.A. budgets on parks & open spaces Feb 17
- MHCLG tasked with reporting on ensuring future sustainability of parks
- Parks Action Group (PAG) launched Sept 17 by Government
- Government – MHCLG, Defra, DoH, Home Office, DCMS, DoE
- Sector – APSE, Parks Alliance, NFPGS, Fields in Trust, LGA, HLF, National Trust, Natural England, KBT, Groundwork
- Joint launch meeting
- Meetings and workshops

Workstreams

- Vision and values
- Finance
- Knowledge and skills
- Standards
- Increasing usage
- Empowering communities





Knowledge and skills

- No two places the same
- Context and skills can't be separated
- Traditional horticultural skills important
- Skills gaps
- Framework of competencies
- Training provision
- Career paths
- Apprenticeship levy
- Sharing best practice and knowledge
- Overall business case

£13 million new funding

- £9.7m to LA's for essential repair and creation of new green spaces
- £2.75m Pocket Parks Plus Fund
- £1.2m Future Parks Accelerator Initiative
- Funding timescales to be announced
- Community with council
- Some element of Match funding

Estimated 32% losses to parks budgets since 2010

Still a long way to go!

Conclusions

- The end of austerity?
- Budgets continuing to drop up to and 2020
- Sector response been good in terms of cost reduction, efficiency and improving productivity
- Public remain supportive of council parks services
- This only takes us so far
- We now need to continue to seek out income generation opportunities to offset budget cuts
- Need for a commercialisation strategy
- Time for a spirit of municipal entrepreneurialism

NEW MUNICIPALISM

Delivering for local people and local economies



Contact details

Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive

Email: po'brien@apse.org.uk

[@apsetweets](#)

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



GB 11409



GB 11132



GB 14074