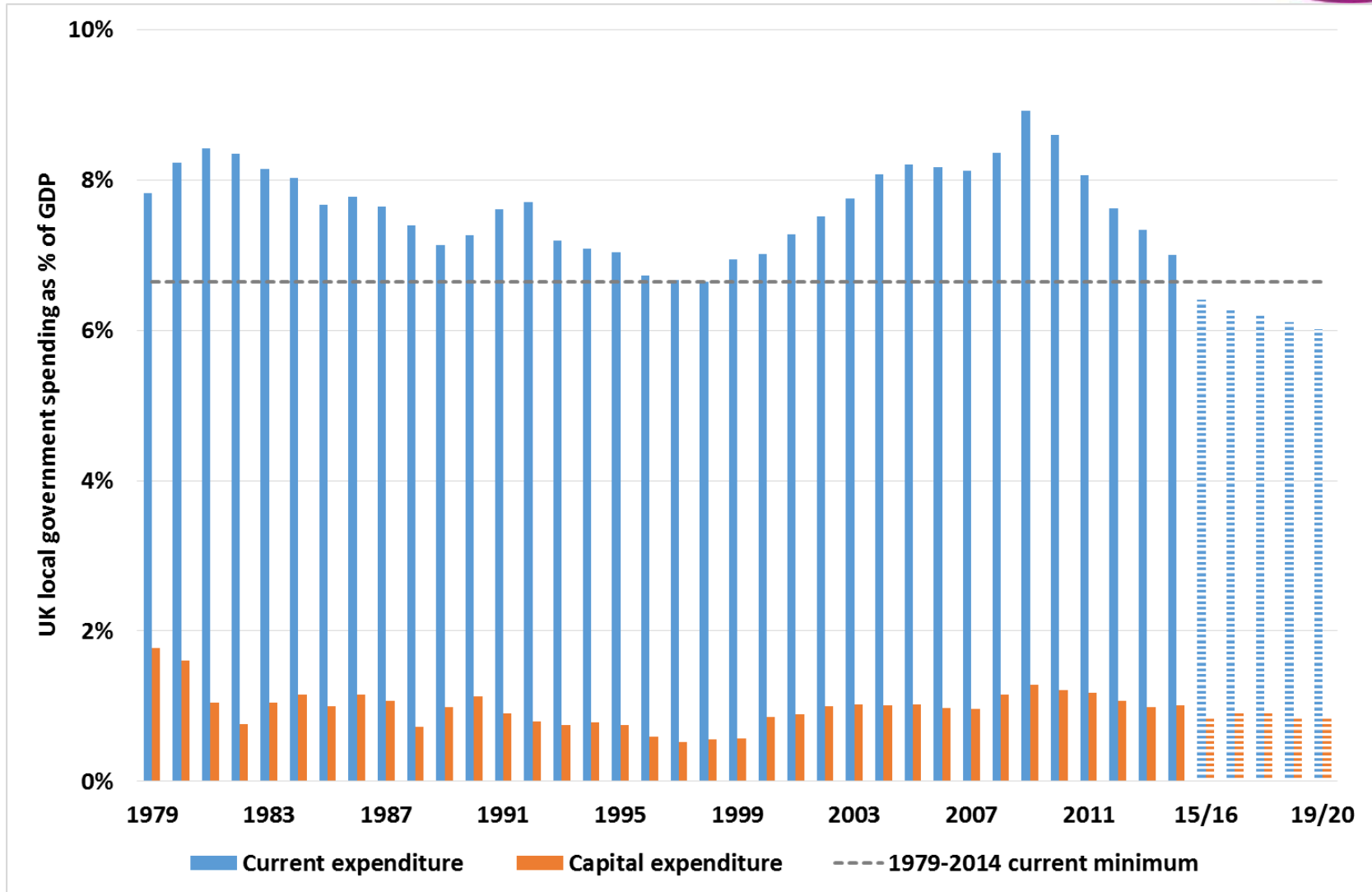




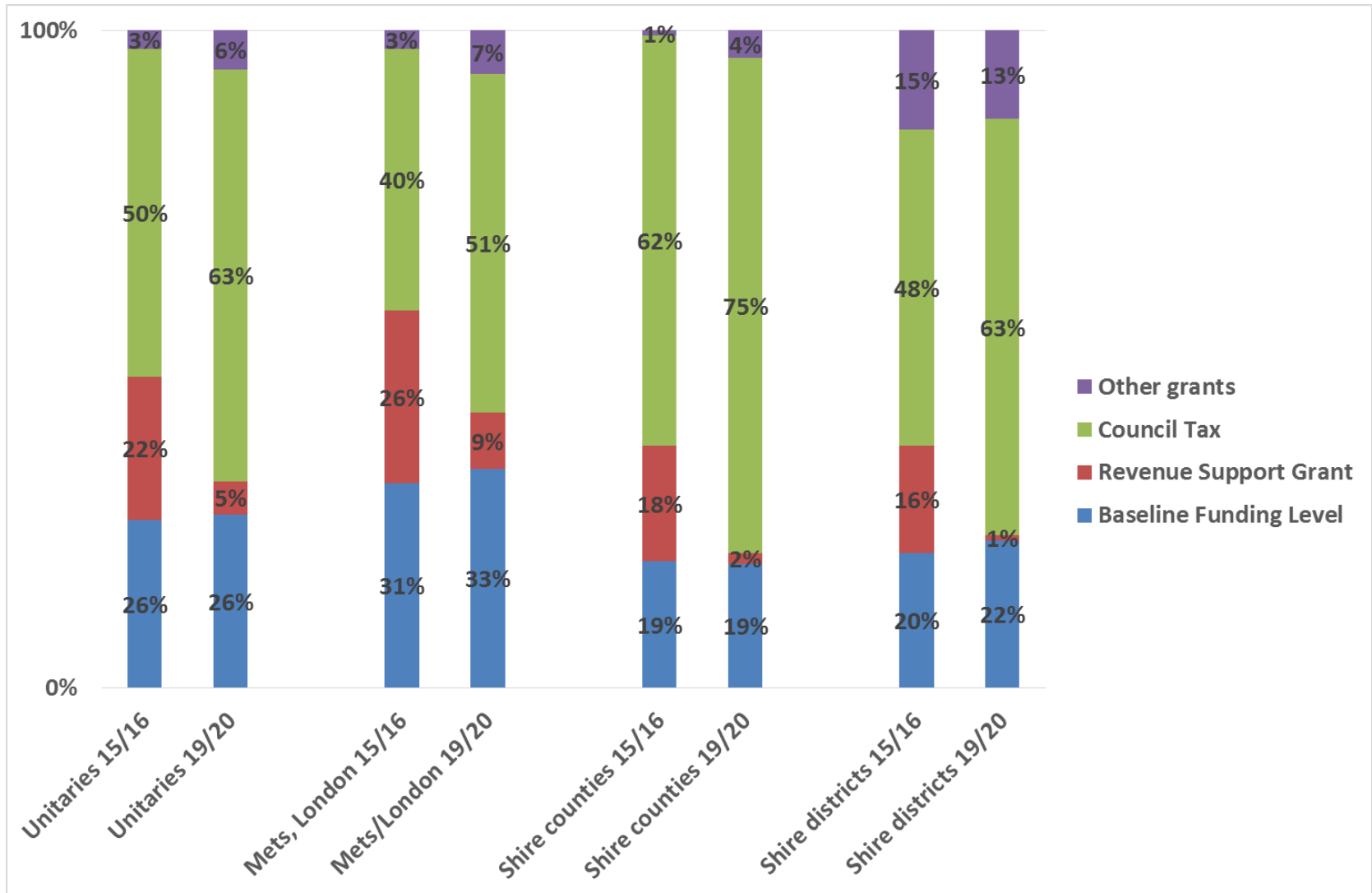
The future of England's Parks

Paul O'Brien,
Chief Executive, APSE

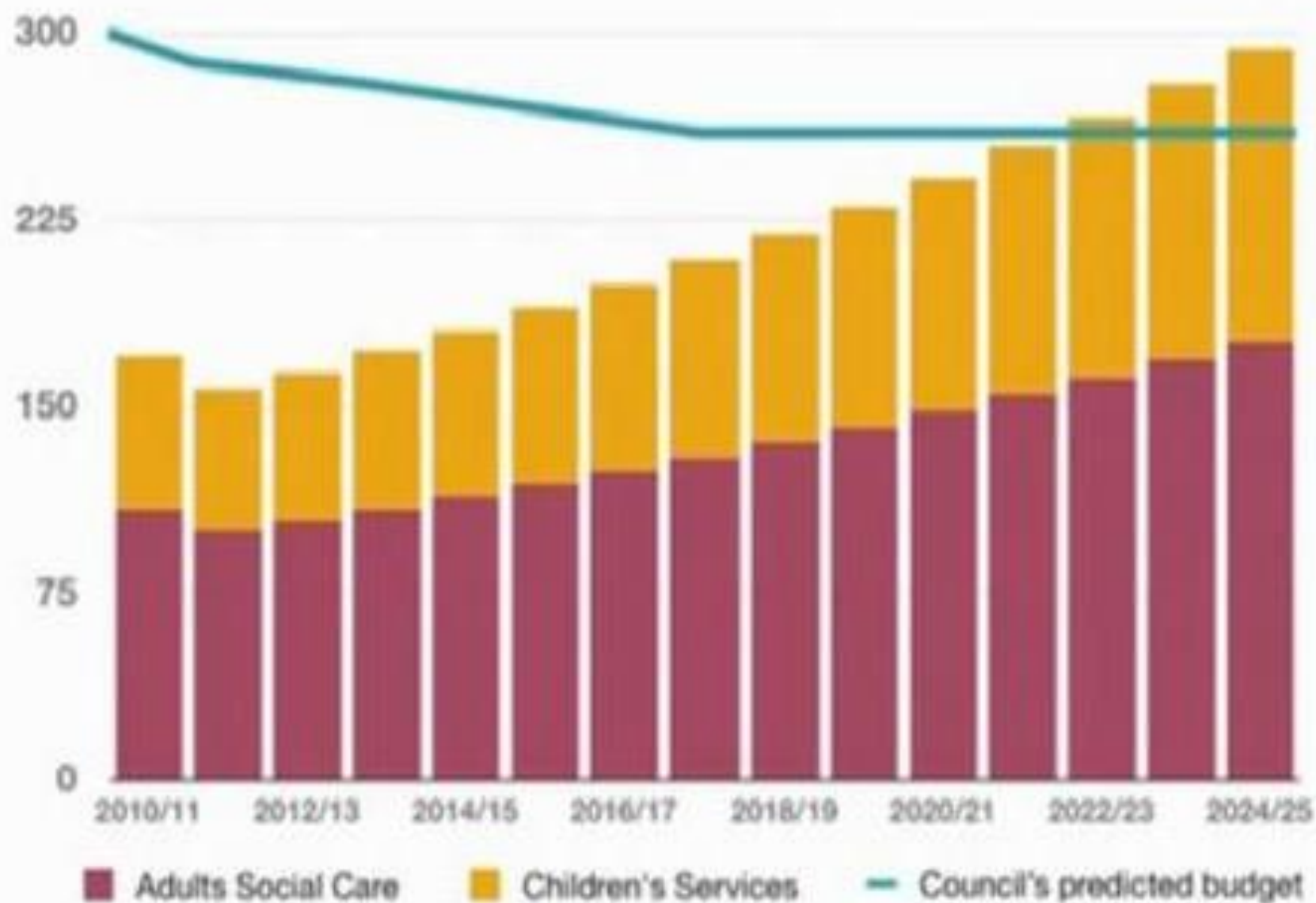
UK local government spending as a share of GDP: current spending, already below the 1979-2014 minimum, is projected to go on falling to 2020



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



The 'Graph of Doom'



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

State of the market headlines



- 57% expect less than 15% cuts in next 5 years
- 16% looking at compulsory redundancies
- 84% expecting staff cuts of less than 10%
- 72% of parks services delivered in-house
- 56% are part of an integrated street scene service (street cleansing/GM/parks)

State Of the market headlines



- 91% see parks as key to supporting healthy living.
- 78 % expect park numbers to stay the same or increase slightly.
- 91% have Friends and residents groups.
- Asset transfers - mainly buildings and playing fields
- 96% felt there are clear limits to volunteer/community involvement – ‘additionality’



Has Austerity bitten?

What the public think

Key findings: Trust and taxes remain high



As in 2016, Trust in Councils and Councillors high versus Government ministers and Private Companies.

- **Five times as many still trust the local Council over the Government to make decisions about how services are delivered provided in your local area**
- **Eight times as many trust local councillors over government ministers to make decision about their local area**
- **Five and half times as many trusted council to provide services in their local area over a private company with people trusting the council 7.5 times more than the government.**
- **79% would like the government to give more money to local councils to spend at the local level for services that are their neighbourhood.**

Performance of Councils services positive



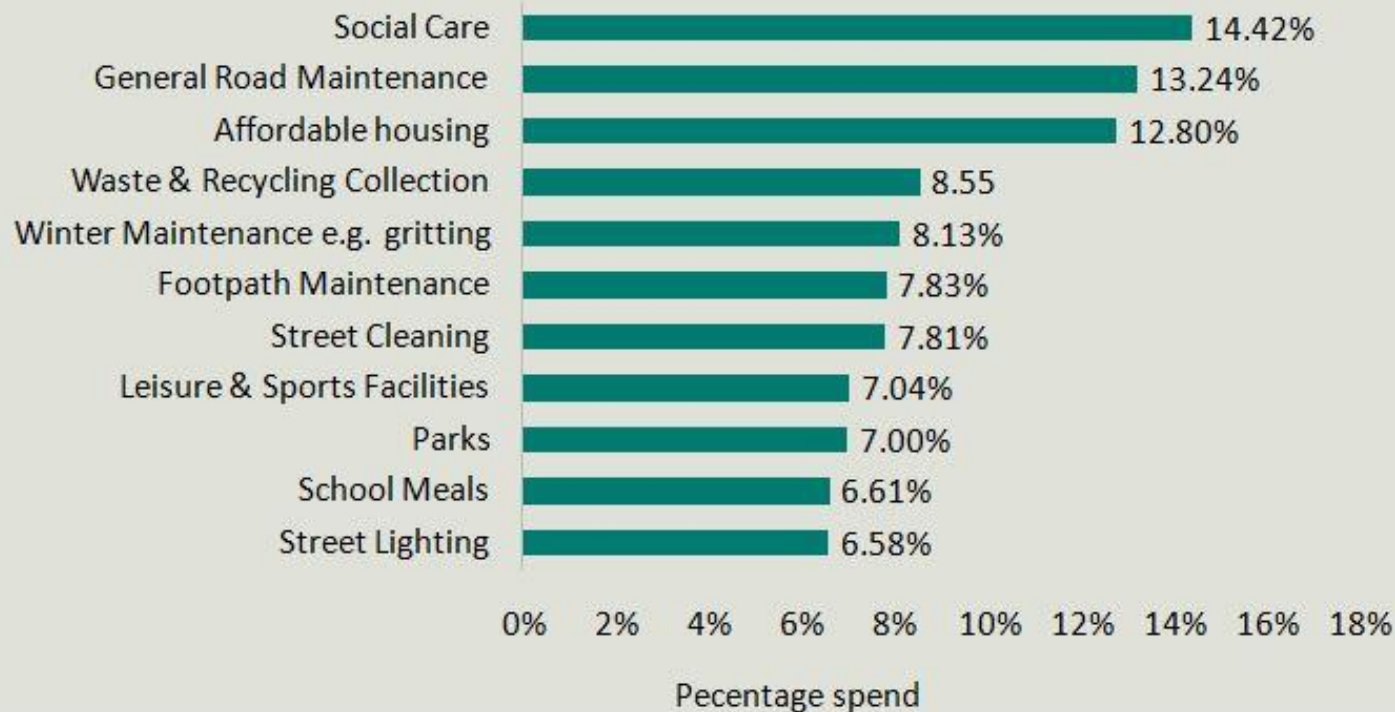
Satisfaction With Services



How the public would like extra funds spent



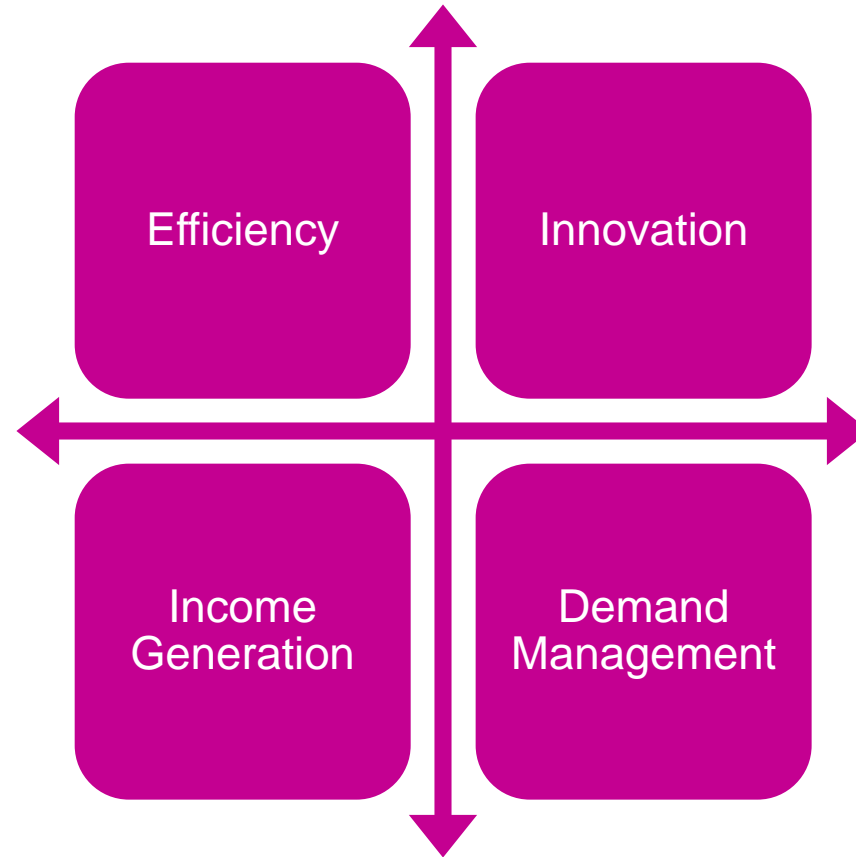
What percentage of the extra money would be spent on each of the 11 services below?



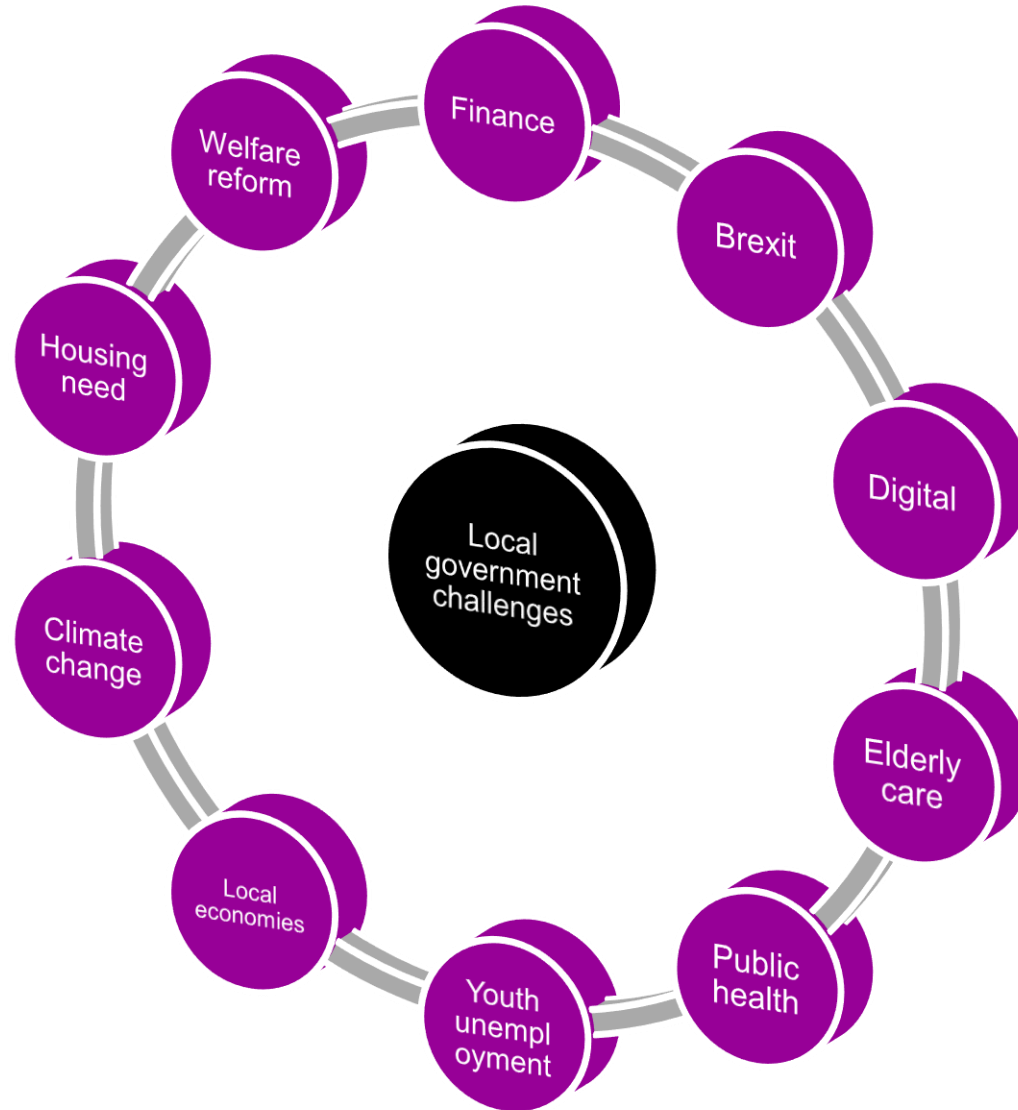
What will local government look like in 2020?



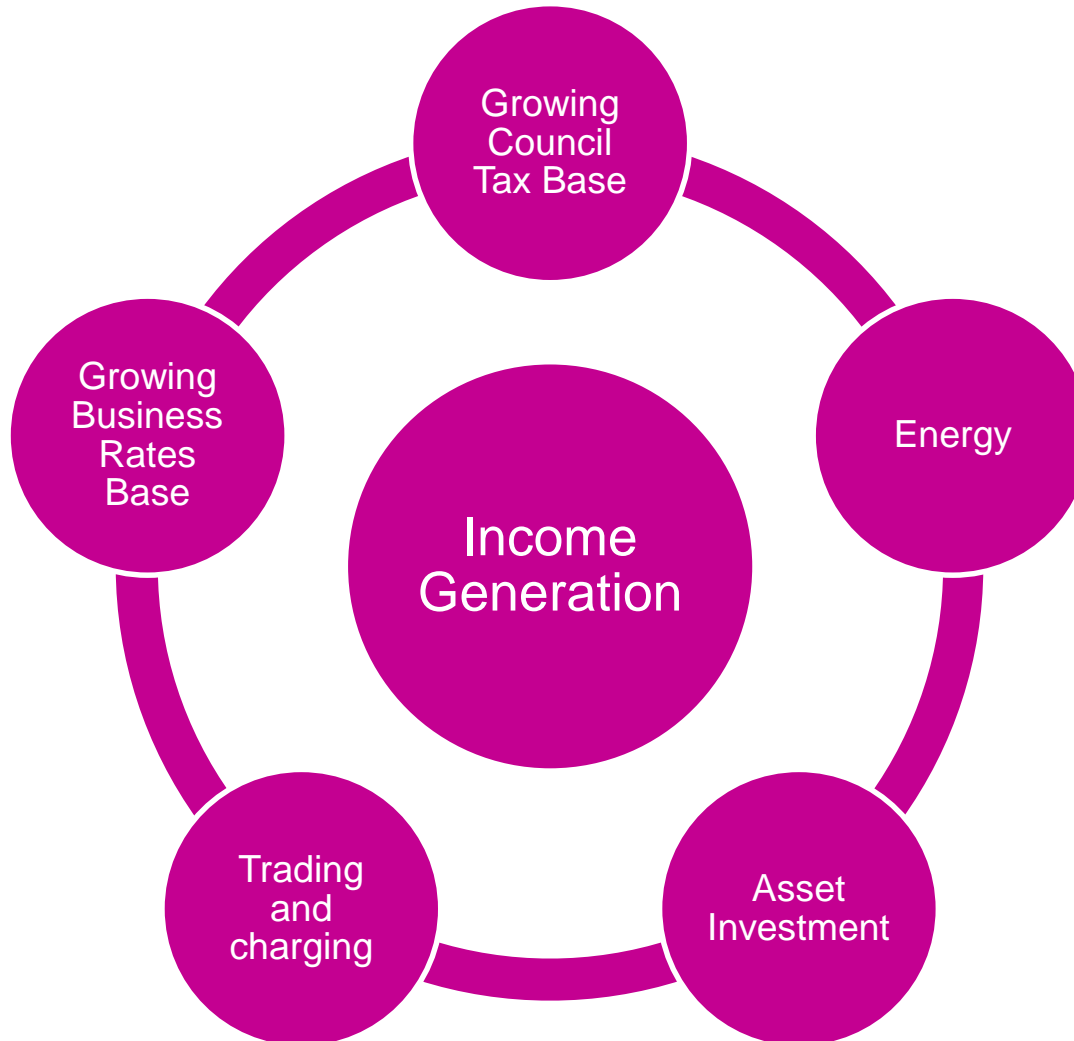
The pillars of excellence



Public policy challenges



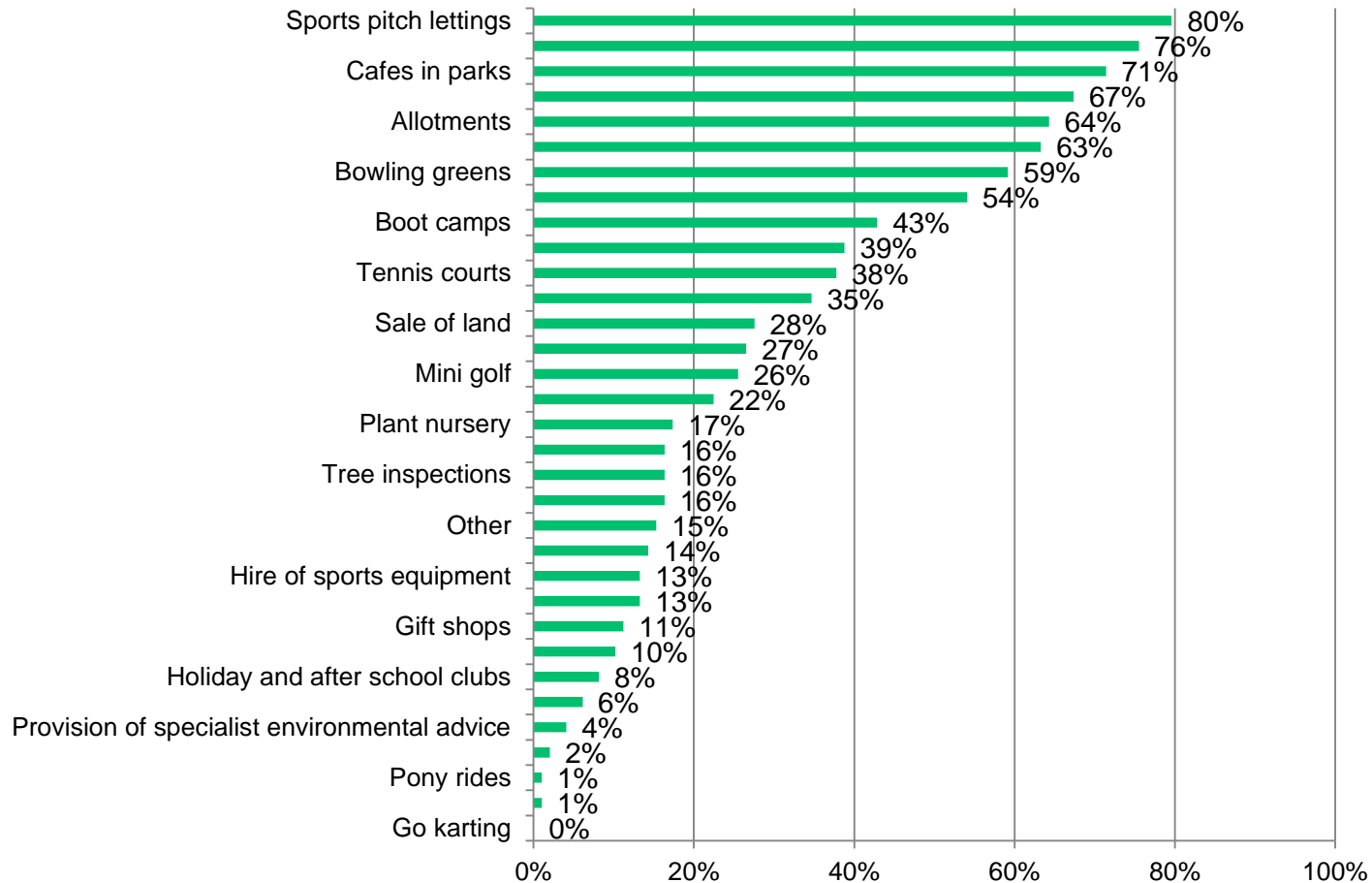
Commercialisation Strategy



Income generation



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





Additional funding

- 'Section 106 money' (82%).
- 'National Lottery Heritage Fund' (62%).
- Receiving income from friends of parks groups (66%).
- Grant funding from other sources risen to (52%).
- Sponsorship received by (41%).
- Figures for 'health funding' (27%).
- Sale of assets rose (e.g. timber) (19%).
- Private funding 10%.

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

Parks of the Future



Parks Champion - Chair

Elected Member / Director of Service / Charitable Fund Manager / Commercial Manager / Communication Manager
Community Representative / Local Chamber of Commerce Representative / Senior HWBB Representative

Health & Wellbeing Board

Parks & Greenspace Strategy

- Define ethos
- Parks - typology/USPs
- Assets
- Business Plans

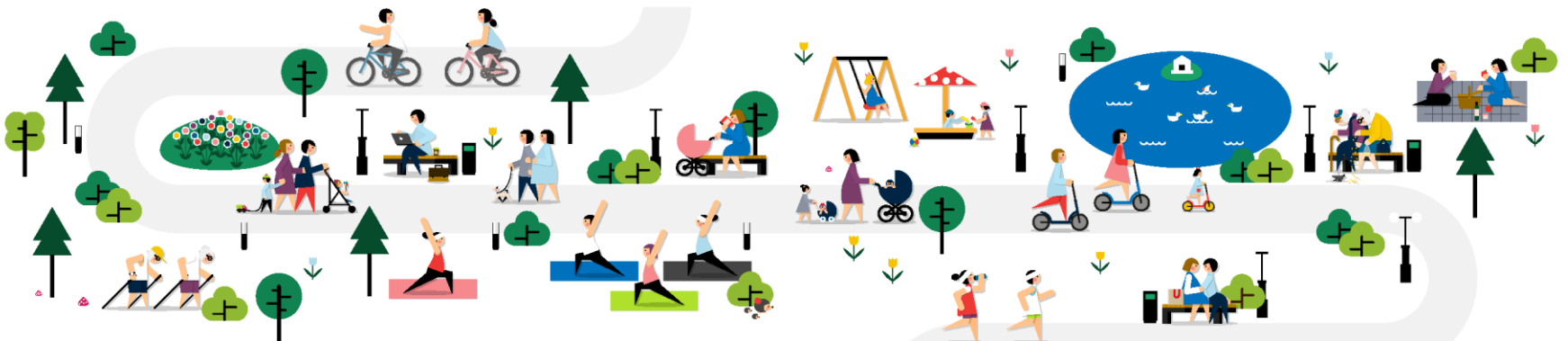
Staff skills

Community Engagement

Direct Council Income Generation

Partnerships

Charitable Funds





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



AWARD
SUBMISSIONS

VISITOR
MANAGEMENT

ASSET &
FACILITIES
MANAGEMENT

HORTICULTURAL
MANAGEMENT

BUDGET
MANAGEMENT

CONTRACT
MANAGEMENT

STAFF
MANAGEMENT

**TRADITIONAL
PARKS
MANAGER**





Survey respondents indicated the importance of an extensive range of skills that are required to meet the demands of their roles...



Identifying the business case for your service

Demonstrating value for money

Community engagement
Bidding for funds
Commercial entrepreneurship
Enhancing efficiency
Health and safety
Collaboration
Communications
Leadership
People management
Influencing policy makers
Performance management
Networking
Service review
Risk management
Sharing best practice

Strategic vision

Project management

Event management

Managing volunteers

Enhancing bio-diversity

Crisis change mitigation

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

Pocket Parks Plus



- £1m
- Timetable
- Underway by end of financial year
- £25k
- Community with council
- Match funding

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

LOCAL SERVICES

LOCAL SOLUTIONS



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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