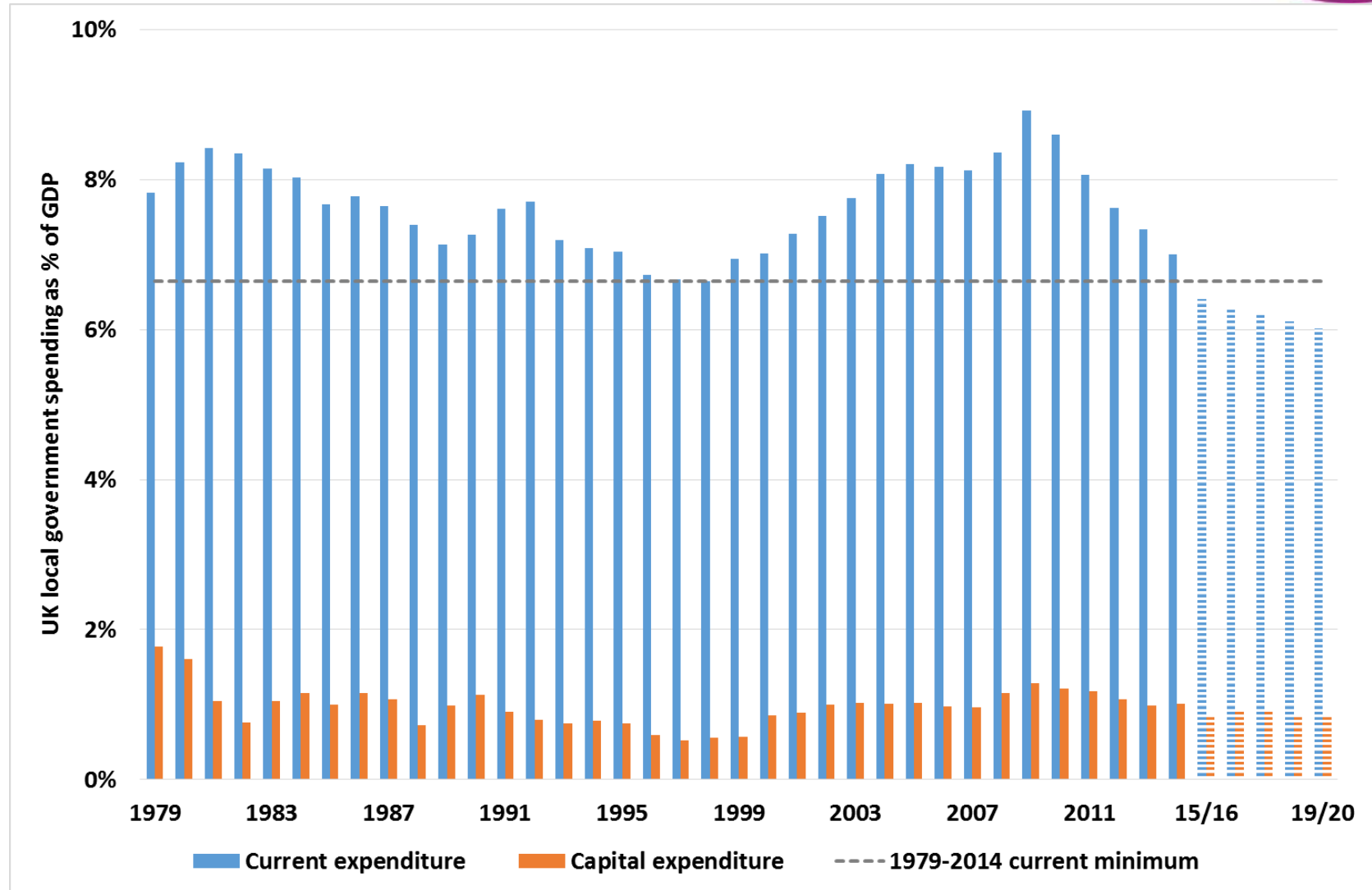




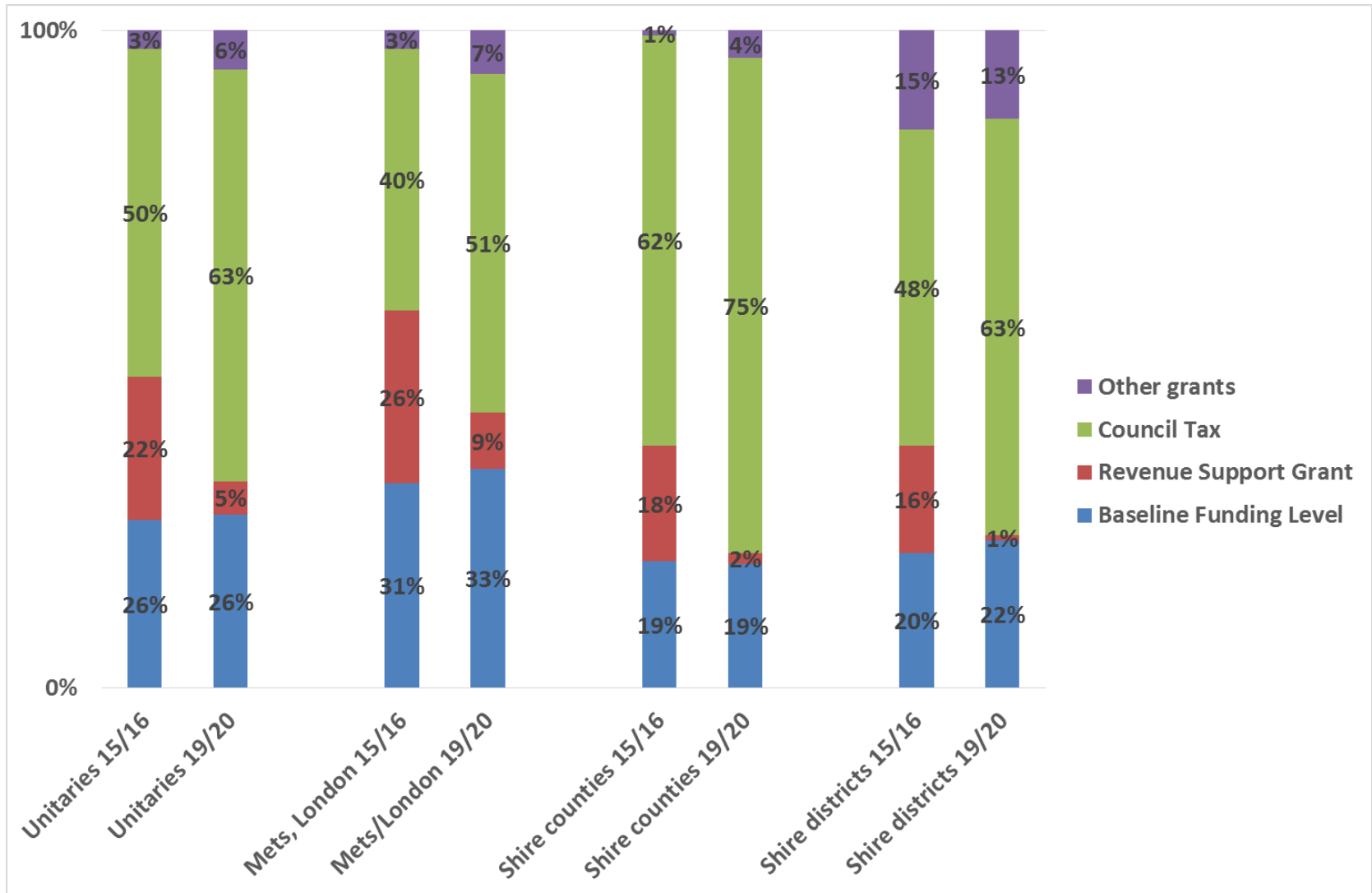
How are Parks services dealing with austerity?

Paul O'Brien,
Chief Executive, APSE

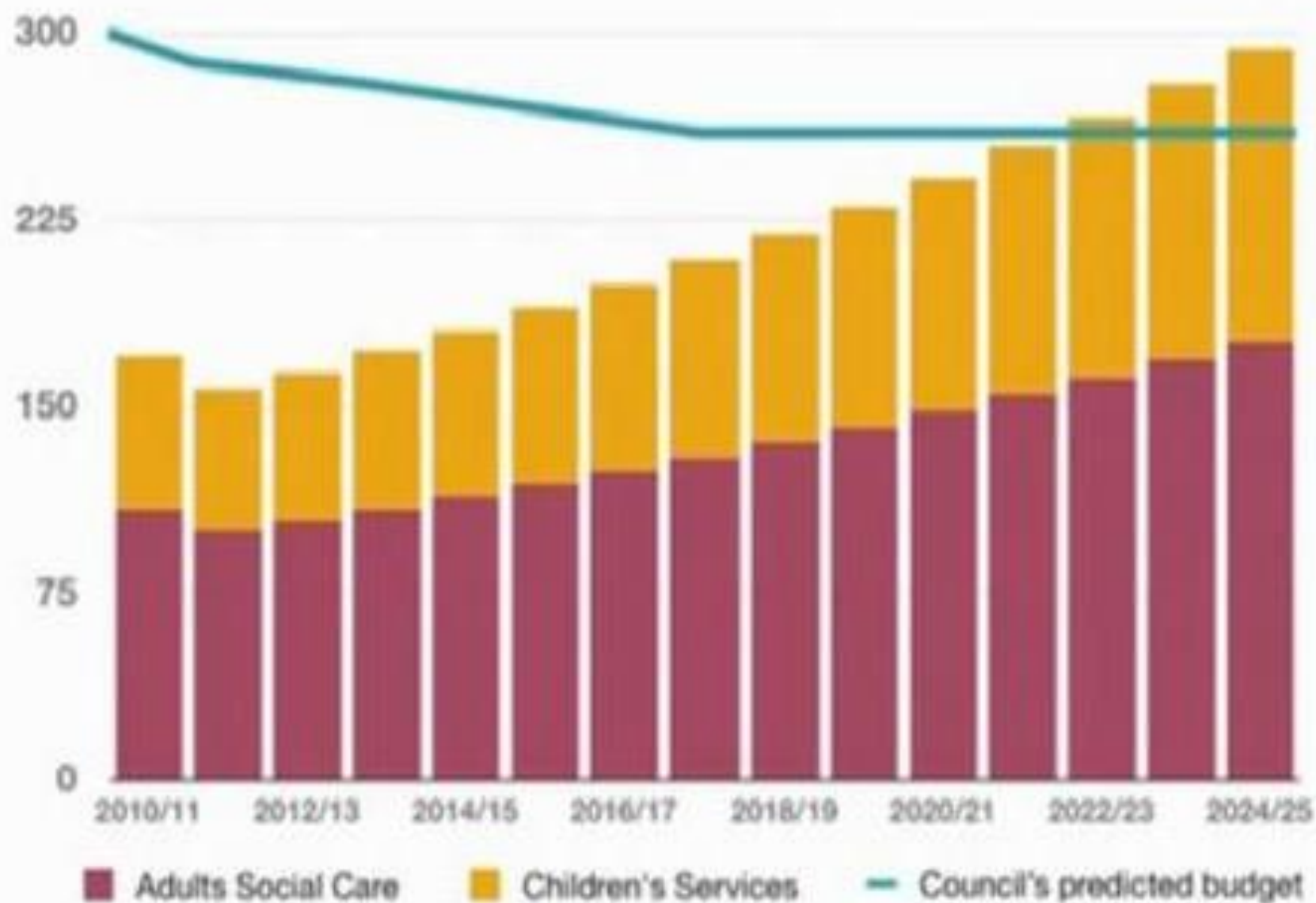
UK local government spending as a share of GDP: current spending, already below the 1979-2014 minimum, is projected to go on falling to 2020



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 21% to 30%
- Wales phenomenon
- APSE state of the market

State of the market headlines



- 2/3rds expect less than 15% cuts in next 5 years
- Only 15.8% looking at compulsories
- 86% expecting staff cuts of less than 10%
- Some worried about sustainability of existing arrangements
- However, over 90% are part of an integrated streetscene service
- 88% have friends and residents groups volunteering

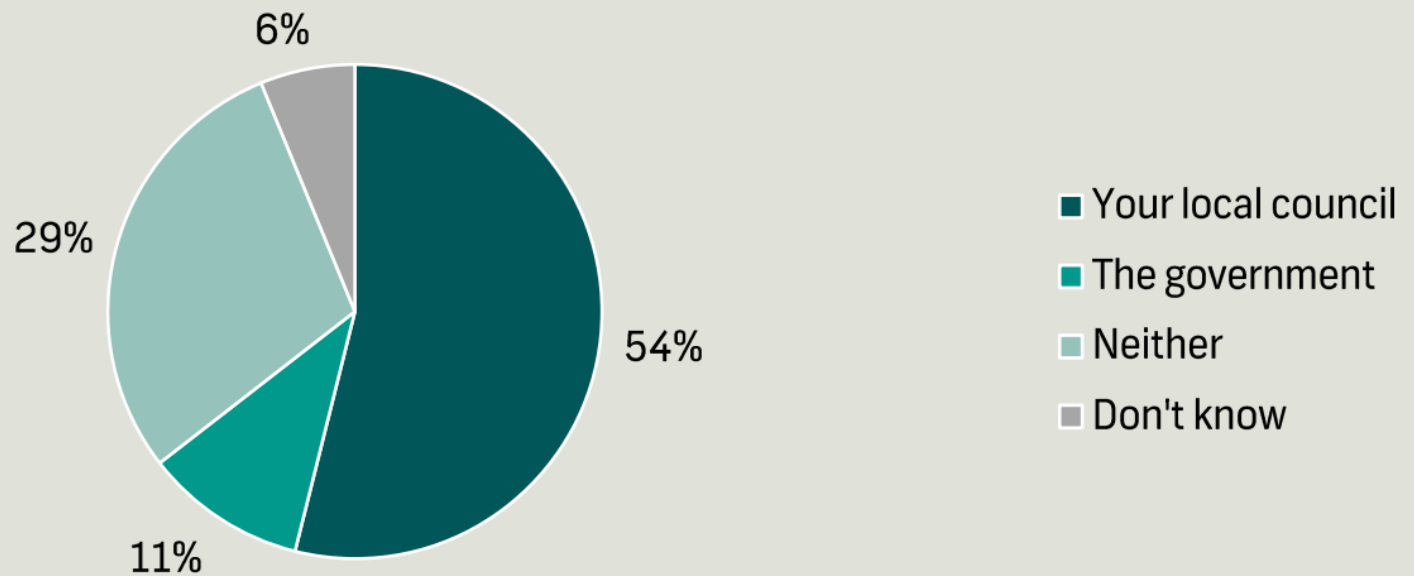


Neighbourhood Services Poll

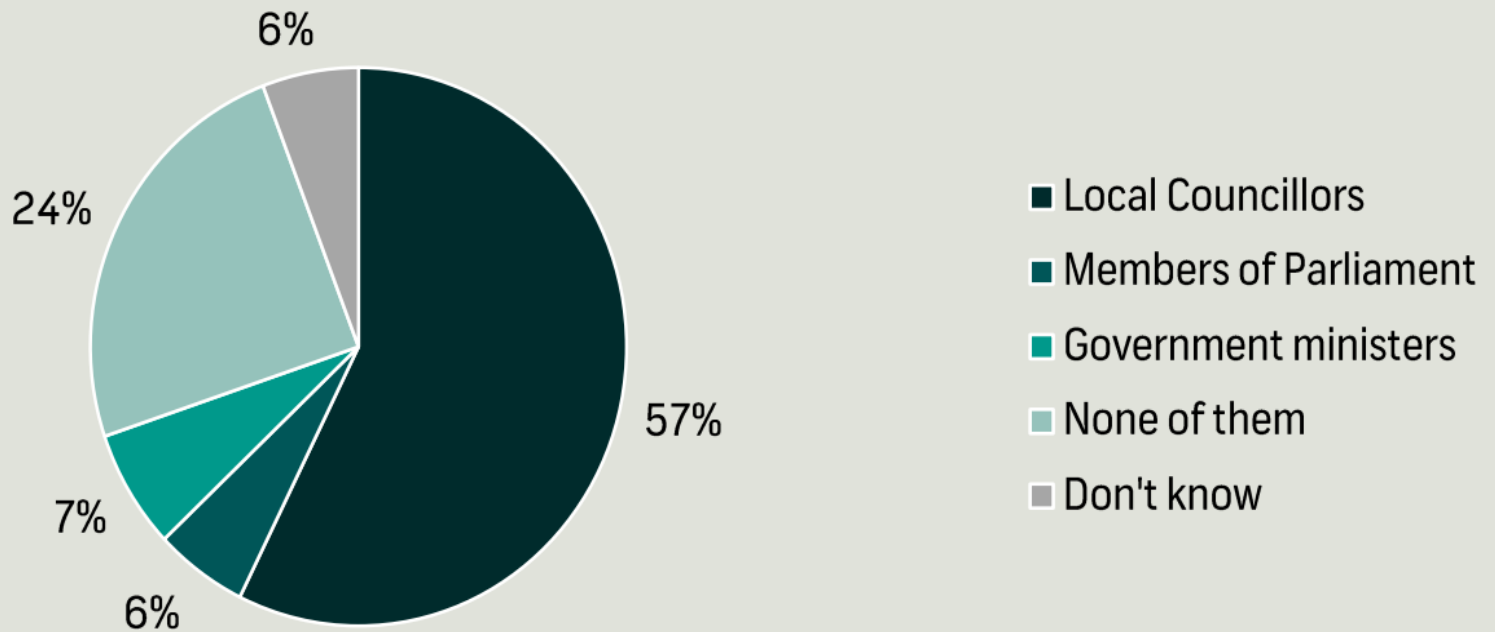
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**Survation on behalf of the
Association for Public Service
Excellence**

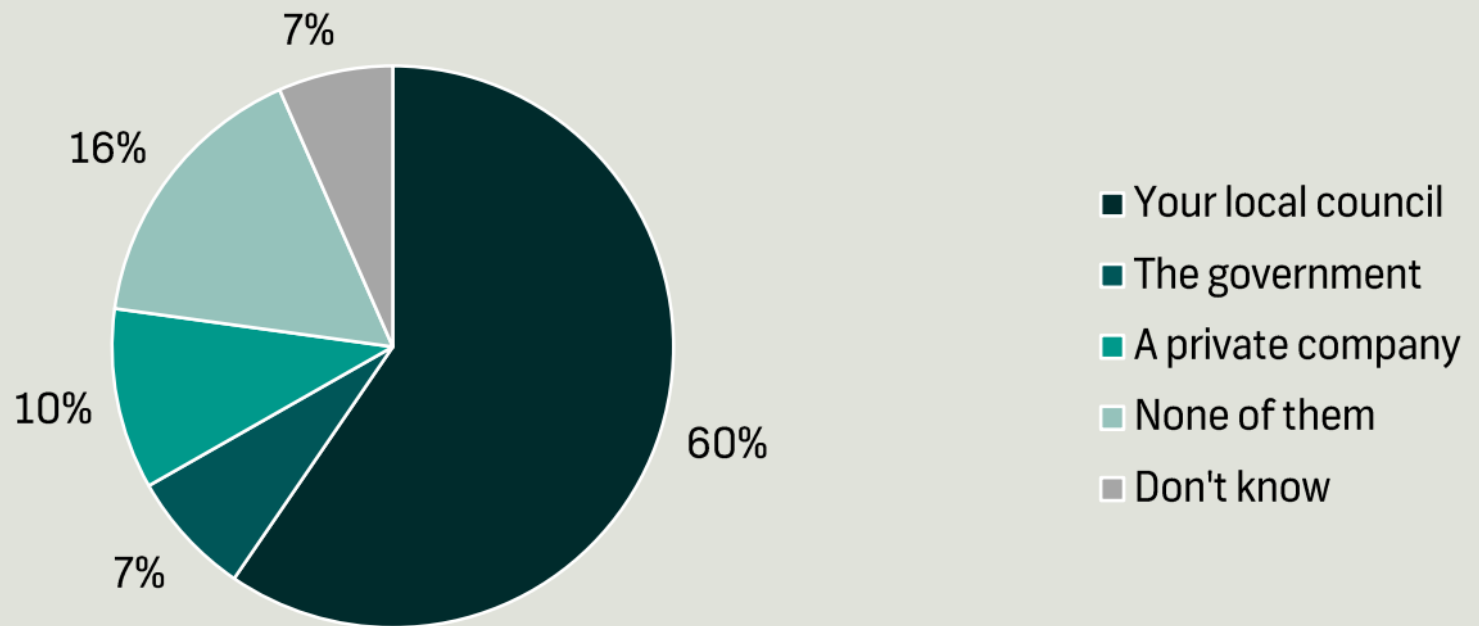
Who do you trust the most to make decisions about how services are delivered and about how services are provided in your local area?



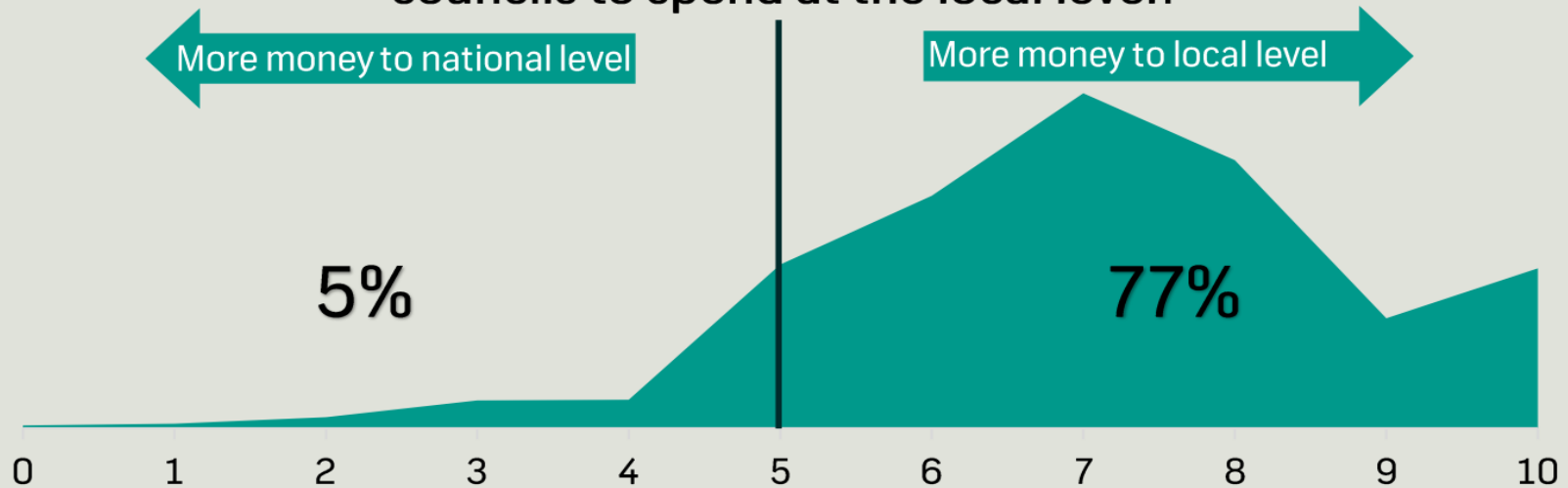
Who do you trust the most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?



Who do you trust most to deliver services to your local area?



Would you like to see the government keep more money than it currently gives to local councils to spend at national level or should it give more money to local councils to spend at the local level?



- Respondents were asked to place themselves on a scale of 0-10 scale, where 0 meant that they would like to see the government keep more money than it currently gives to local councils in order to spend more at the national level and 10 meant that they would like to see the government give more money to local councils to spend at the local level.

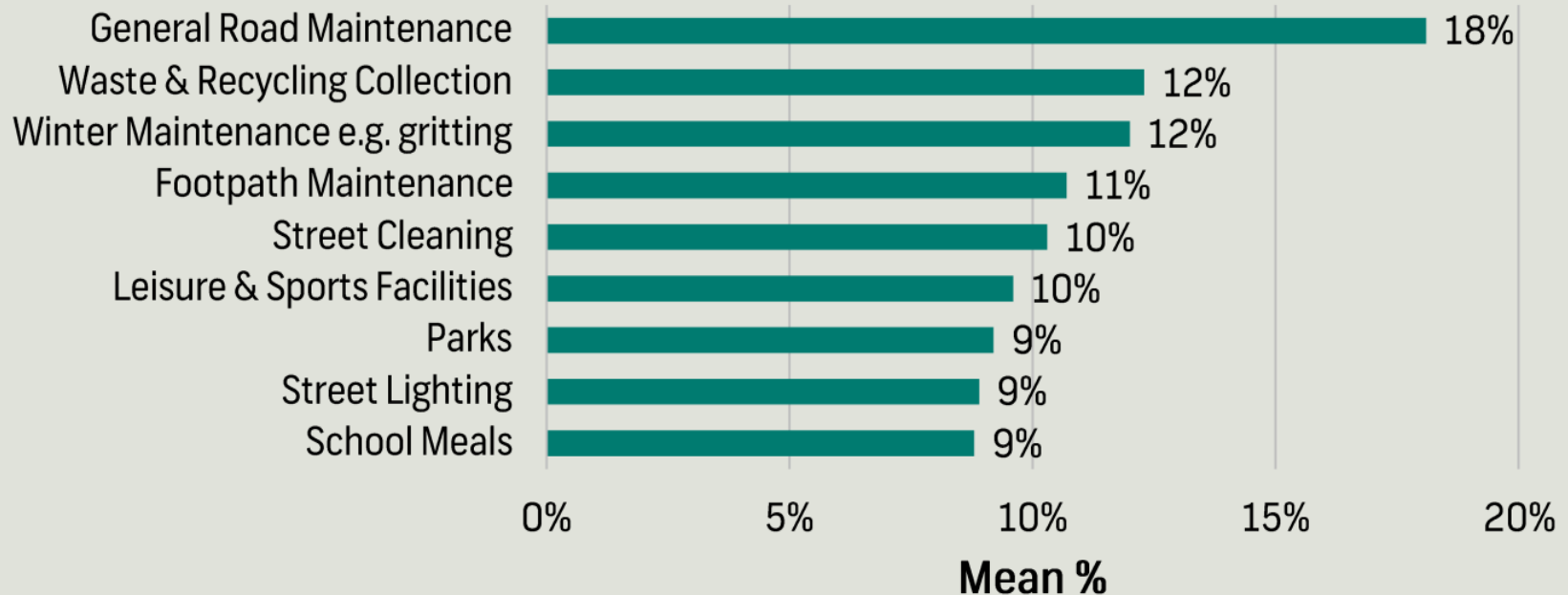


Satisfaction With Services



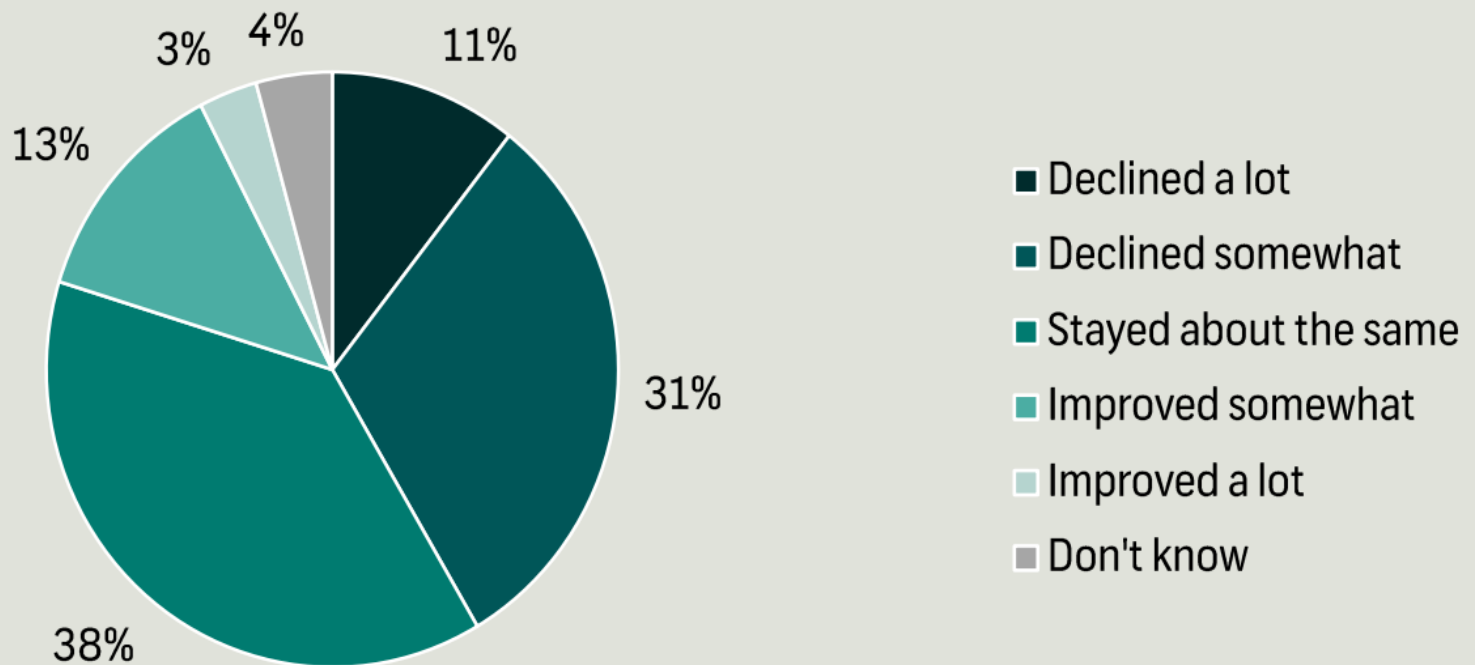
- Respondents were asked to give each of the nine local council services listed a score on a scale of 0-10 (where 0 = very dissatisfied and 10 = very satisfied). The 'Satisfaction Rating' is the average of the weighted results.

What percentage of the extra money would be spent on each of the 9 services below?

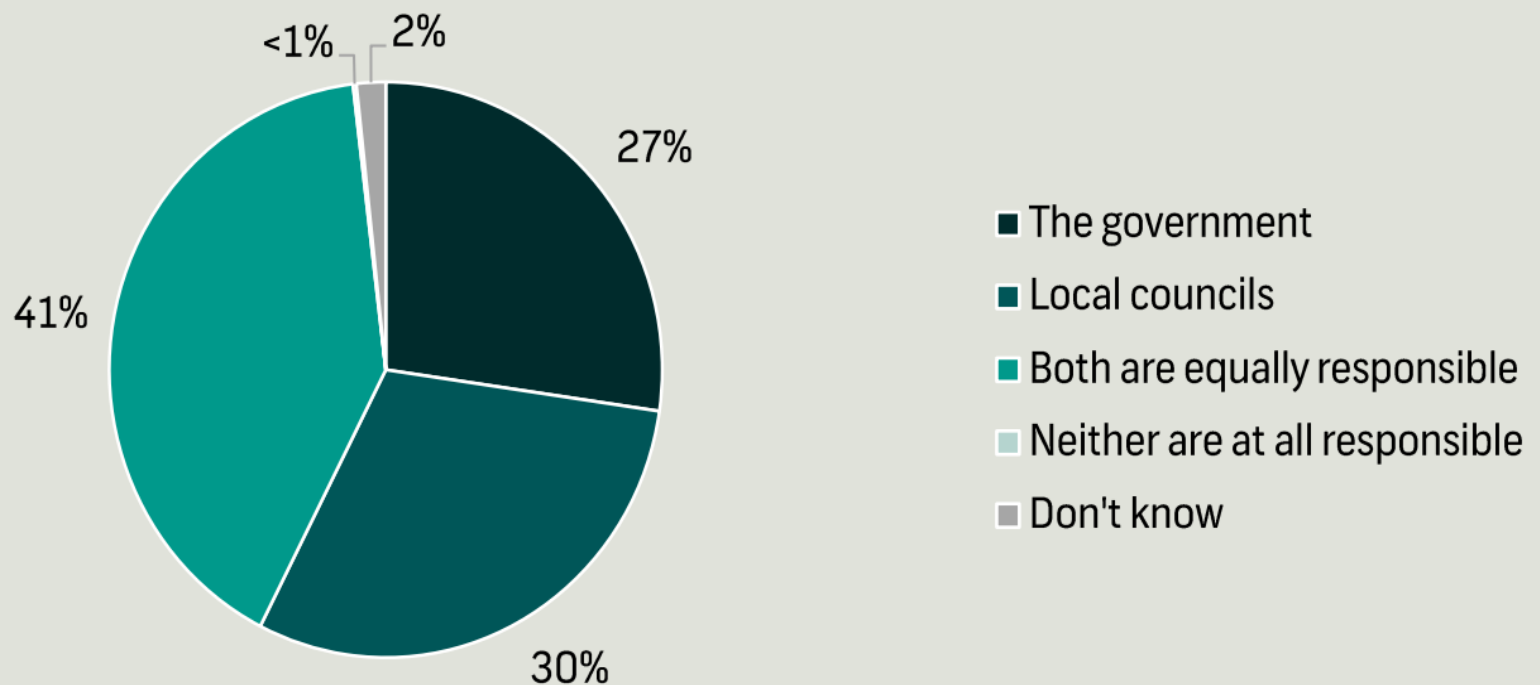


- Imagining that local councils were to receive extra funding, respondents were asked to allocate portions of a notional budget to the nine local services already discussed.

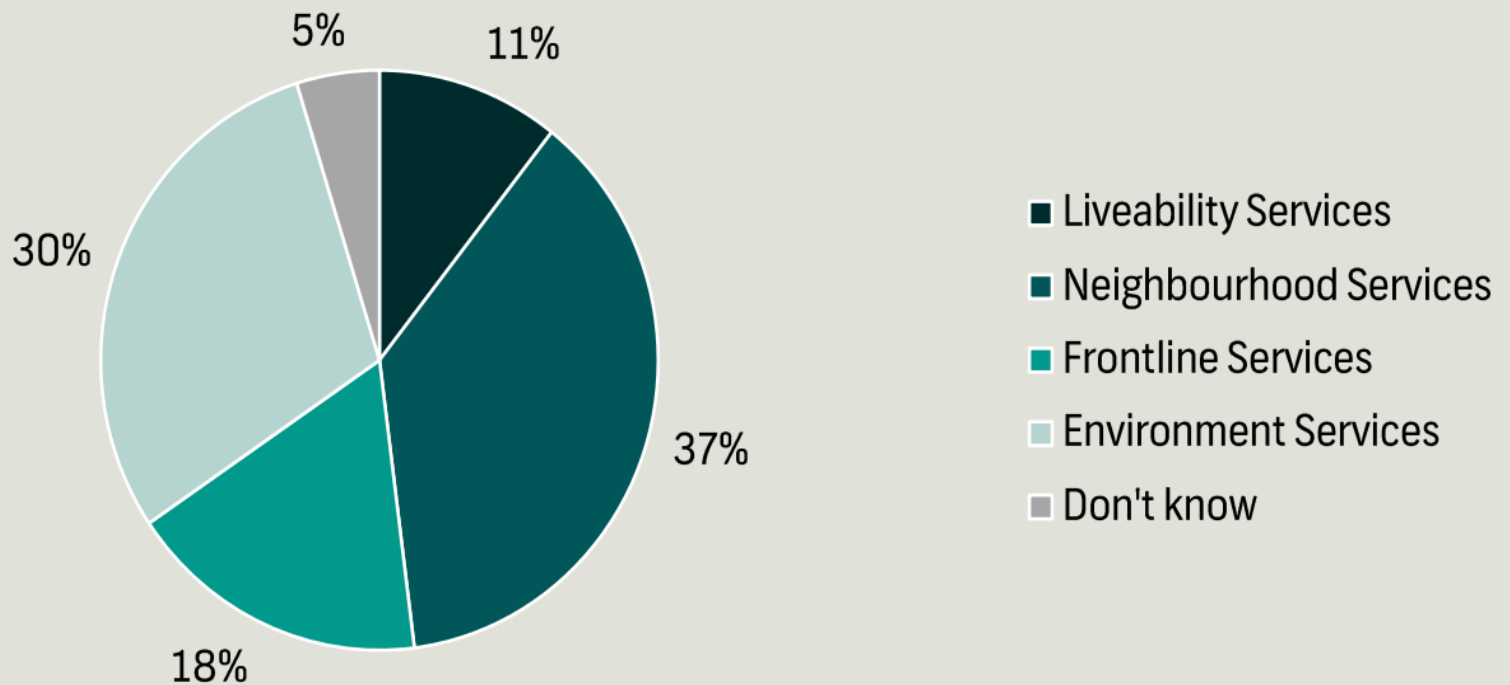
Do you think that local services have declined or improved in your local area in recent years?



Who do you think is the most responsible for the declining services in your local area?



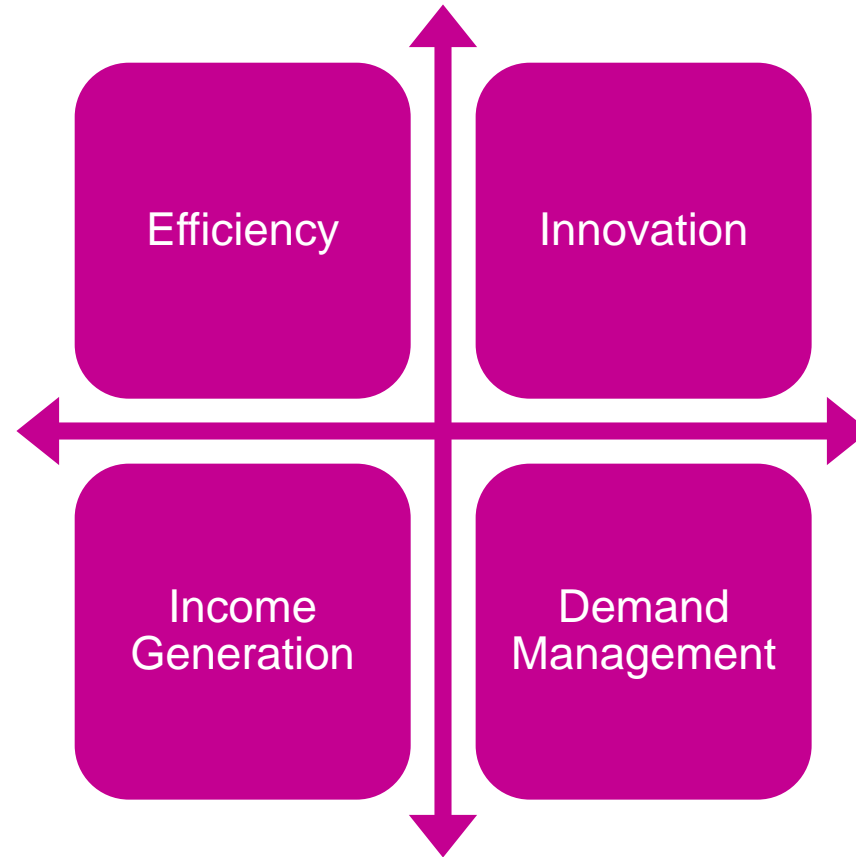
What name best describes the services operated by your local council?



What will local government look like in 2020?



The pillars of excellence



Public policy challenges



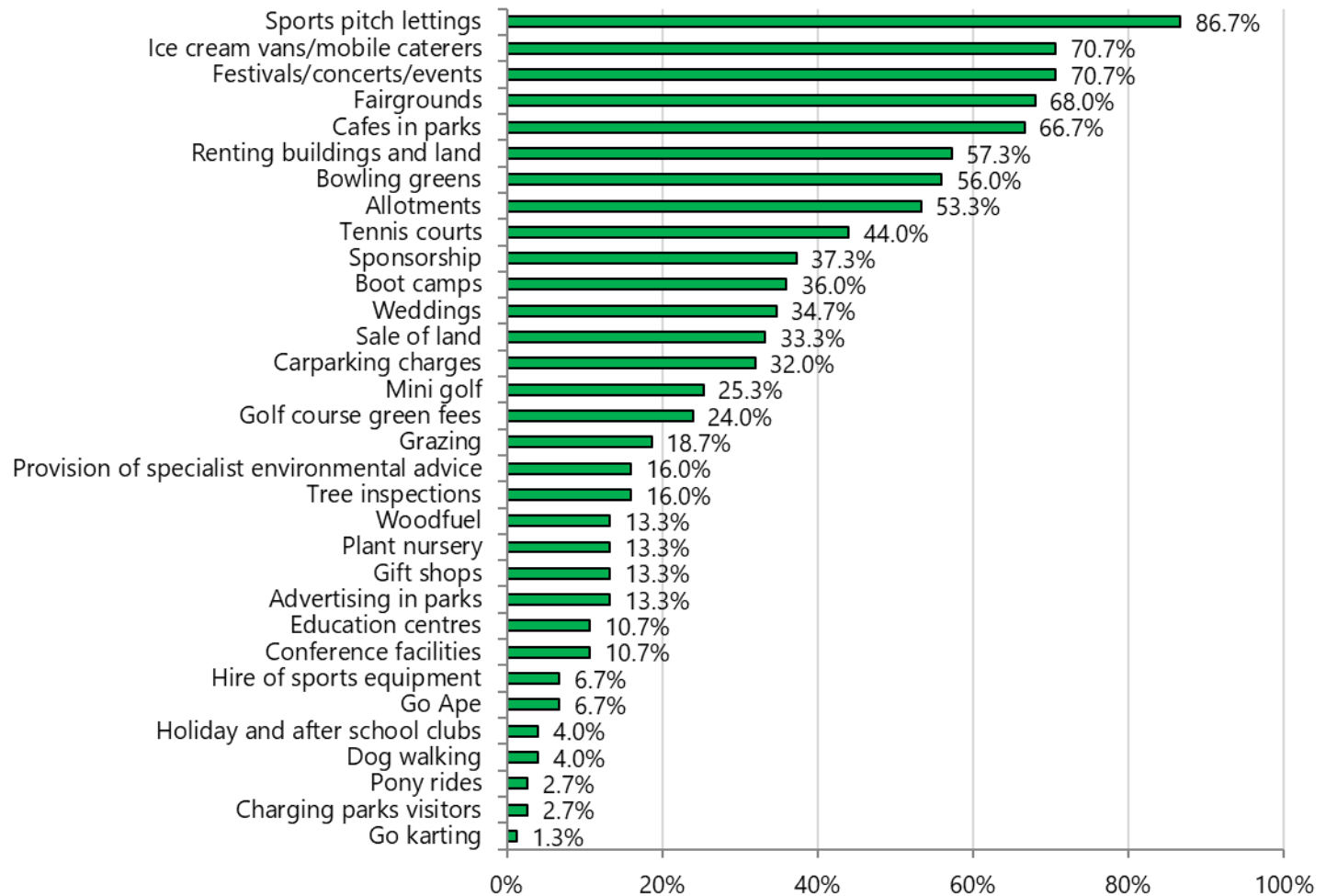
Income generation



Income generation



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

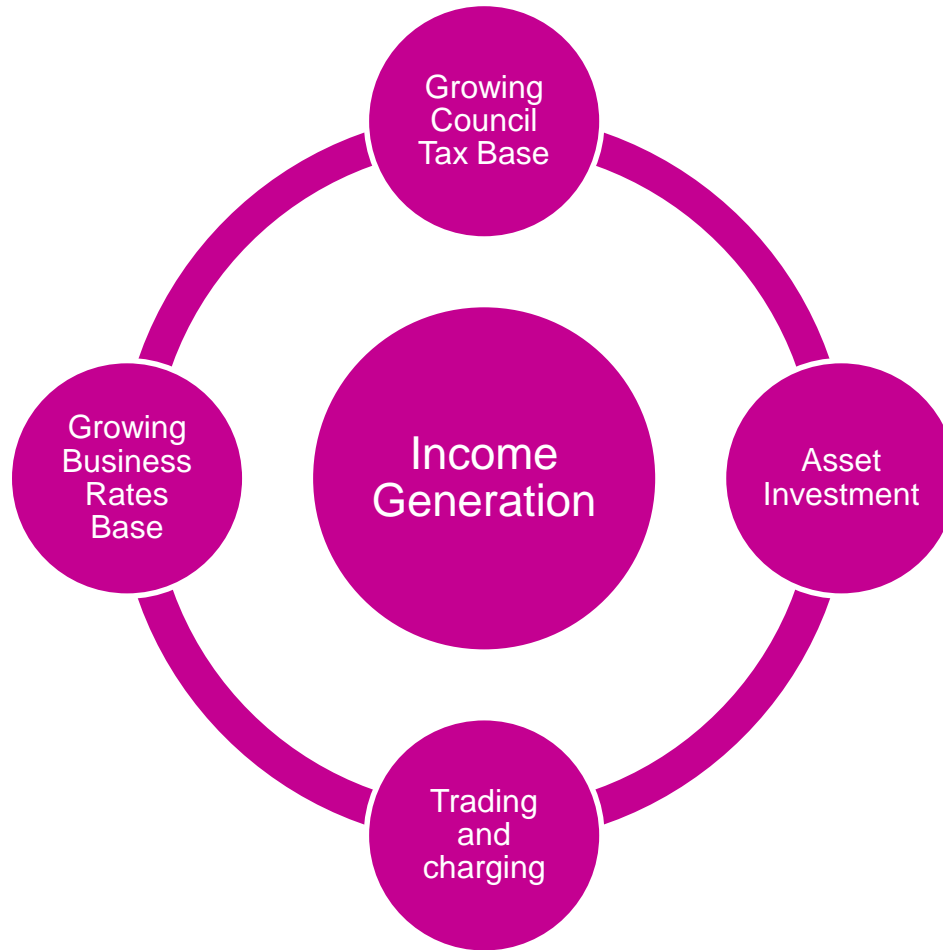




Additional funding

- 'Section 106 money' (89%).
- 'National Lottery Heritage Fund' (60%).
- Receiving income from friends of parks groups (59%).
- Grant funding from other sources risen to (51%).
- Sponsorship received by (48%).
- Figures for 'health funding' (18%).
- Sale of assets rose (e.g. timber) (29%).
- Private funding 12%.

Commercialisation Strategy



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

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

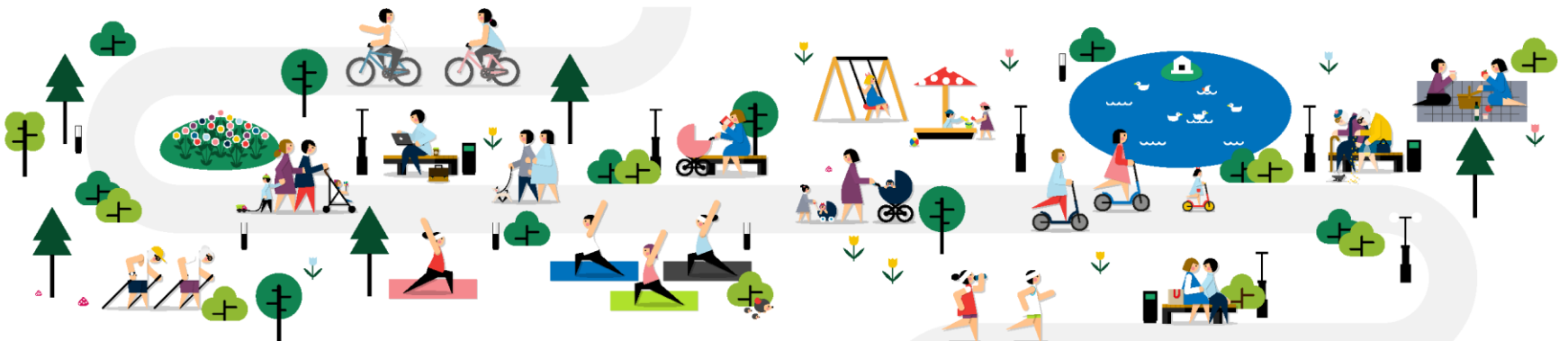
Staff skills

Community Engagement

Direct Council Income Generation

Partnerships

Charitable Funds



- Identify or improve skills base throughout structure
- Marketing
- Financial and contract management
- Horticultural understanding
- Landscape design
- Income generation opportunities
- 'One team' - flexibility and understanding of roles
- Succession planing - investment in apprenticeships



Case study - Bournemouth Council

- Service review following loss of 25% of posts
- Responsible for wide variety of greenspaces
- Increased / created new income streams
- Changed working practices
- Increased volunteering opportunities
- Reduced overall cost of service by 47%

Community engagement



- Offer variety of volunteering opportunities to bring additionality not to replace key skills
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Well trained in practical skills, funding acquisition, consultation and communication
- Involv volunteers in key projects eg 'In Bloom'
- Provide opportunities for disadvantaged groups eg. learning or physical difficulties/ long-term unemployed
- Social prescription - mental and physical health schemes

Case Study

- Wakefield - Regeneration of Thornes Park Nursery
- Derelict plant nursery
- Supported learning activities for young adults with learning difficulties
- Community tree growing/planting scheme
- Parks furniture
- Wildflower propagation
- Community shop

Case Study

Leicester City Council Volunteer Project
APSE Greenspace Innovation Award Winner 2017



- Commercial business plan based on USP
- Create commercial development role
- Identify demand, set up costs, price sensitivity
- Direct provision or concession
- Benchmark similar schemes
- VFM/ quality if chargeable offer
- APSE State of the Market reports identify at least 30 different income generating schemes
- Ensure income made in parks stays in parks - greater public acceptance of charges
- Don't overdo it! Parks are associated with free access
- New opportunities - Ecosystem services of Biodiversity offsetting



Case study Beam Park, Dagenham

- Value of national environment re benefits it provides
- 53 acres of floor alleviation for local communities/ business, schools and power stations
- Partnership investment ERDF, EA, Landfill Tax
- Habitat creation
- Award winning scheme

Partnerships



- Identify most appropriate partners - level of benefits they receive
- Health & wellbeing Boards - brands key links
- External organisations are many
- Natural England, HLF, Sport England, local business, SUStans, Historic England
- Crown funding good link to get public involved
- Wildlife organisations often good contacts
- Friends groups key to gain public support and excellent fund raisers
- NHS seeing more and more benefits from greenspaces



Look at new approaches which will support local authorities parks and greenspaces

Bournemouth Parks Foundation

- Independant from council funding projects which transform parks and go beyond normal parks maintenance
- Works alongside council to assist parks improvements
- Funded a wide variety of initiatives around childrens play, conservation and wildlife, art and culture, health and wellbeing, sport, apprenticeships etc
- Donations
- Legacies
- Volunteering
- Fundraising
- Partnerships

Leeds Park Fund

- Fund managed by Leeds Community Foundation which includes local authority
- Offers opportunities to make donations to greenspaces
- RHS Chelsea flower show funding for garden
- Improvements to parks building
- New attractions
- Play facilities for disabled
- View is to add value not to be a substitute for local authority funding
- Funds revenue as well as capital
- Local authority can apply
- Variety of options to donate - cash/ in-kind



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

Conclusions



- Budgets continuing to drop up to 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 seek out income generation opportunities to offset budget cuts
- Need for a commercialisation strategy
- Time for a spirit of municipal entrepreneurialism
- DCLG Parks Action Group

LOCAL SERVICES

LOCAL SOLUTIONS



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