



# Draft Council Plan

## RESULTS

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

A Council Plan enables the Council to communicate its direction and priorities to the public,

Stakeholders and staff, and supports transparency and accountability. In January 2020, a Cabinet strategy session assessed the existing Council Plan, vision, values and priorities in light of what has been achieved, the operating environment and Council's new operating model. It was recognised that there had been significant progress towards achieving the existing Council Plan and a revision to the Plan was appropriate.

Elected Members recognise the importance of the Council Plan reflecting the needs of the communities, focussing on where the Council will add most value, deliver the best outcomes and focus its resources. It was therefore agreed that a test of the ambitions of the draft Plan through consultation with stakeholders including Councillors, staff, residents, businesses and partner organisations was required.

The survey focused on the top level vision and following key priorities:

- Create empowered, engaged & inclusive communities
- Support business and town centres to recover and prosper
- Become a green council
- Be a financially sustainable council by 2022
- A clean safe environment with affordable homes to buy or rent for everyone in West Lancashire
- Everyone to be healthy, happy, safe and resilient
- Everyone to be proud of their council

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

Plans were made to carry out local community based engagement and consultation, however due to COVID-19 it was not possible to take these options forward.

There are 3 surveys which have been created to capture views of our citizens, stakeholders and staff. An additional workshop has also been held with Members of Corporate & Executive Overview & Scrutiny to review and comment on the draft plan.

The consultation was held from 8<sup>th</sup> July - 19 August via an on-line survey on the Council website. In order to drive people to the website an advert was placed in the champion newsletter on 8 July and a social media campaign was used. The contact details for the customer engagement team were also given out as part of the consultation promotion to enable people to email comments directly about the plan.

Emails were sent to a stakeholder list to ask them to complete the survey as a stakeholder but also encouraging any employees to also complete the citizen survey. Partners such as CVS were also asked to distribute the link via their newsletter.

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In order to encourage business engagement a social media campaign was carried out on letstalkskelmersdale platforms and also via the Skelmersdale Ambassadors.

As we are aware that not all citizens wish to, or are able to engage via digital methods we also gave an option for customer to request a postal survey or complete over the telephone with a member of the customer engagement team.

Members of staff were also given an opportunity to take part in the survey and give their views. This was supported by a short promotion video about the importance of the Council Plan and their role in its delivery.

### 3.0 RESPONSE RATE

The following table shows the response rate to the survey.

	Number of replies
Citizens	297
Stakeholders	24
Staff	163
Elected Member workshop	17
Email feedback	11
Total	512

In total, 484 consultation responses were received and considered in addition to the feedback from the scrutiny workshop with 17 Councillors and 11 emails received. The data shown below uses a total of 484 data sets. This is due to the fact that the 11 emails received provided feedback on the council plan but did not reply directly to the questions asked in the consultation. This same principle applies to the scrutiny workshop held with members as there was the opportunity to carry out a more detailed consultation. The comments from the emails have been added to the relevant themes in the consultation comments. These comments and the workshop feedback has all been used in the analysis of the themes arising.

### 4.0 RESULTS OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of the feedback from the consultation with citizens, stakeholders and staff.

The feedback strongly endorses the council vision and priorities and this is the consensus with all three responder groups.

Key headline data shows:

- 73% agree or strongly agree with the vision
- 88% agree or strongly agree with the priority to *Create empowered, engaged & inclusive communities*
- 84% agree or strongly agree with the priority to *Support business and town centres to recover and prosper*
- 88% agree or strongly agree with the priority to *Become a Greener Council*

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- 81% agree or strongly agree with the priority to *Be a financially sustainable Council by 2022*
- 81% agree or strongly agree with the priority to have a *Clean, safe environment with affordable homes to buy or rent for everyone in West Lancashire*
- 87% agree or strongly agree with the priority for *Everyone to be healthy, happy, safe and resilient*
- 86% agree or strongly agree with the priority for *Everyone to be proud of their Council*

Throughout the survey there was the opportunity to make comments if respondents had answered disagree or strongly disagree and where possible these have been grouped together to highlight some common themes. Despite attempts to engage with Stakeholders limited feedback has been received and no specific themes were identified. Details of all the comments received are shown as appendices to this report.

The consultation with all responder groups has provided feedback which will help to improve and strengthen the Council Plan and the overall themes should be incorporated into the revised plan.

The main themes that have emerged from the feedback are:

- Digital inclusion/engagement support
- Emphasis for support for the rural economy
- Role of Council to role model and influence citizens and business to support the green agenda
- Strengthening the approach community safety
- Strengthening opportunities for engagement

It was clear that all responder groups have an interest in understanding the key actions the Council will develop to deliver the priorities.

Another clear theme was an importance to recognise the differences in our communities and that a one size approach will not be appropriate. There was a clear desire from all groups that the plan encompasses all of the Borough.

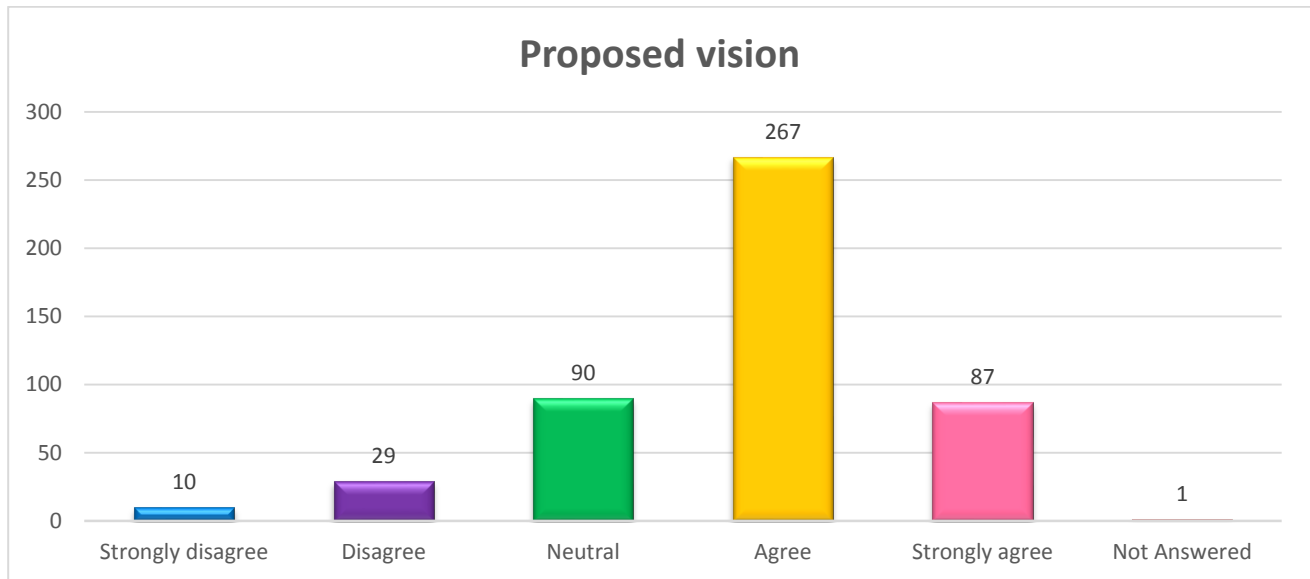
Comments have been received about issues which West Lancashire Borough Council is not responsible for such as flooding, infrastructure and public transport.

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### 4.1 Vision

Do you agree with our proposed vision for West Lancashire?

*West Lancashire is the place of choice to live, work, visit and invest*



Of the 483 responders to this question, 73% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the proposed vision. 19% responded that they were neutral to the vision and 8% stated they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

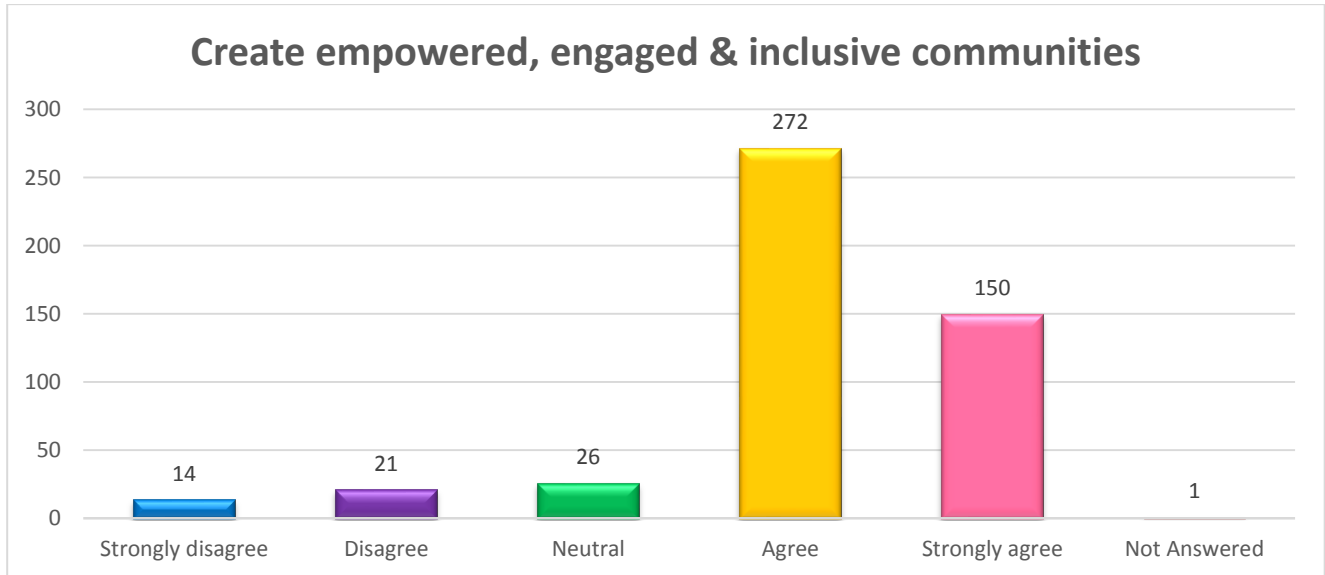
The citizen survey shows 65% answered agree or strongly which shows support for the vision. However 23% of citizens responded with a neutral reply only 12% disagree with the vision.

There is a general agreement with the vision, however a common theme in the comments is that the improvements need to benefit all of West Lancashire and not a sole focus on Ormskirk.

### 4.2 Create empowered, engaged & inclusive communities

Do you agree with this priority

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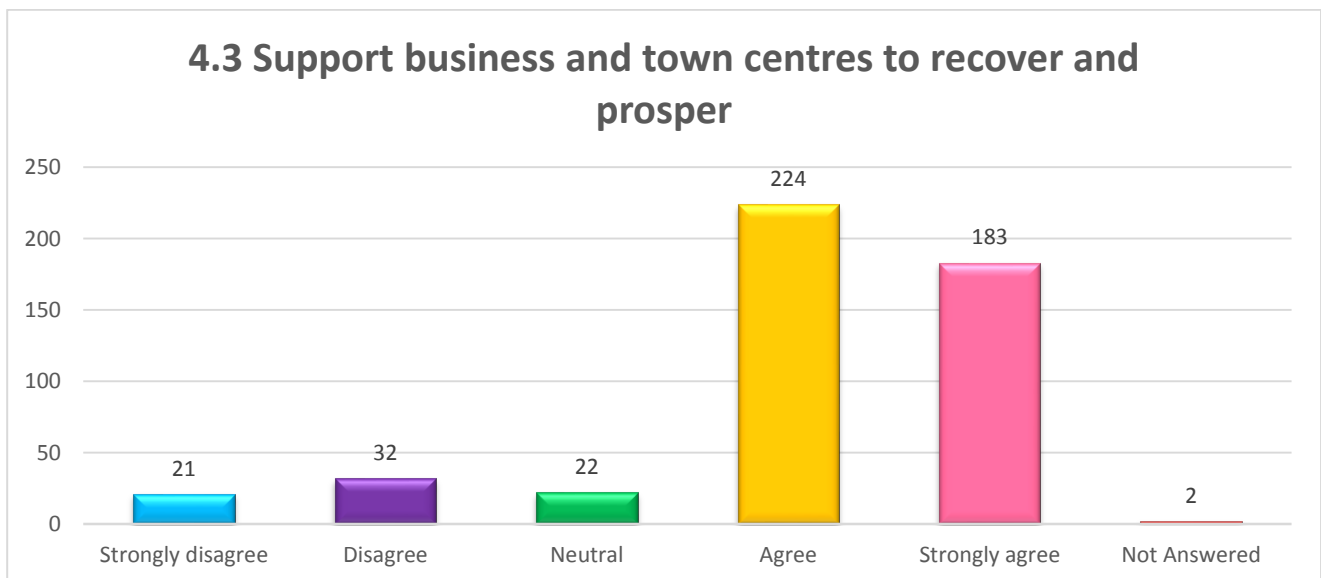
Of the 483 responders to this question, 88% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "create empowered, engaged & inclusive communities". 5% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 7% stated they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

83% answered agree or strongly from the Citizen Survey which shows support for this priority.

Identified themes from the feedback are the role of Elected Members in the community, a desire for empowered and engaged communities throughout the Borough.

### 4.3 Support business and town centres to recover and prosper

Do you agree with this priority?



Of the 482 responders to this question, 84% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "support business and town centres to recover and prosper". 5% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 11% stating they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

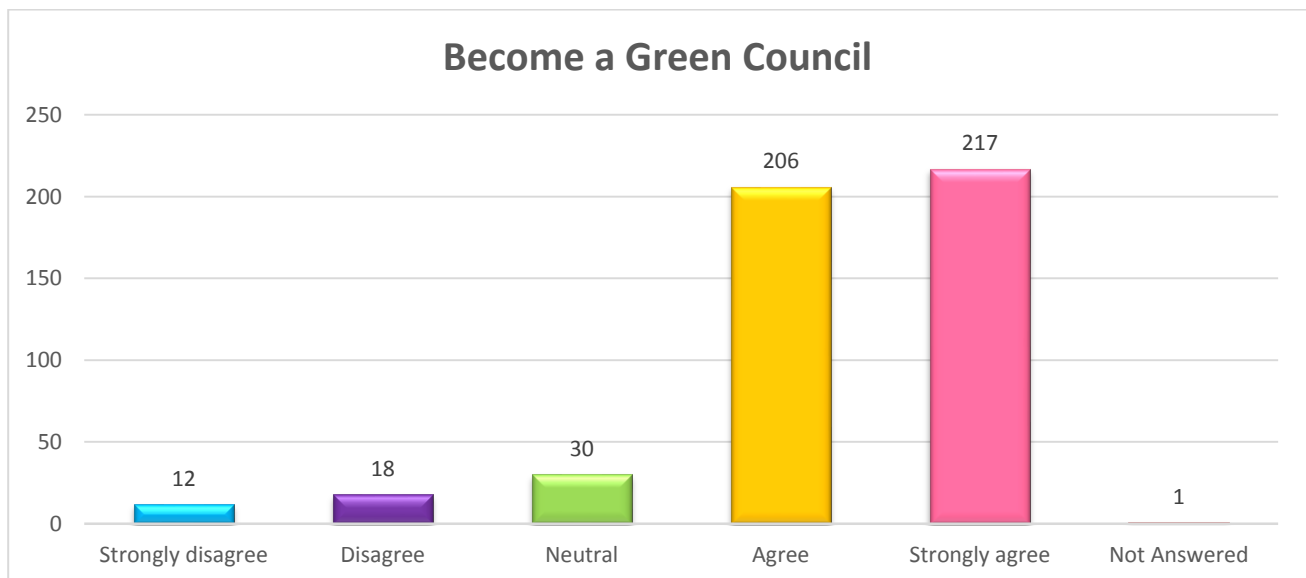
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78% answered agree or strongly from the responders to the Citizen Survey which shows support for this priority.

Identified themes suggest a need to ensure businesses are supported all over the Borough and not just a concentration in Ormskirk and also included the agricultural industry and rural economy. Car parking charges in Ormskirk were also highlighted.

### 4.4 Become a Green council

Do you agree with this priority?



Of the 483 responders to this question, 88% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "become a green council". 6% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 6% stating they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

83% of responders from the citizen survey answered agree or strongly agree.

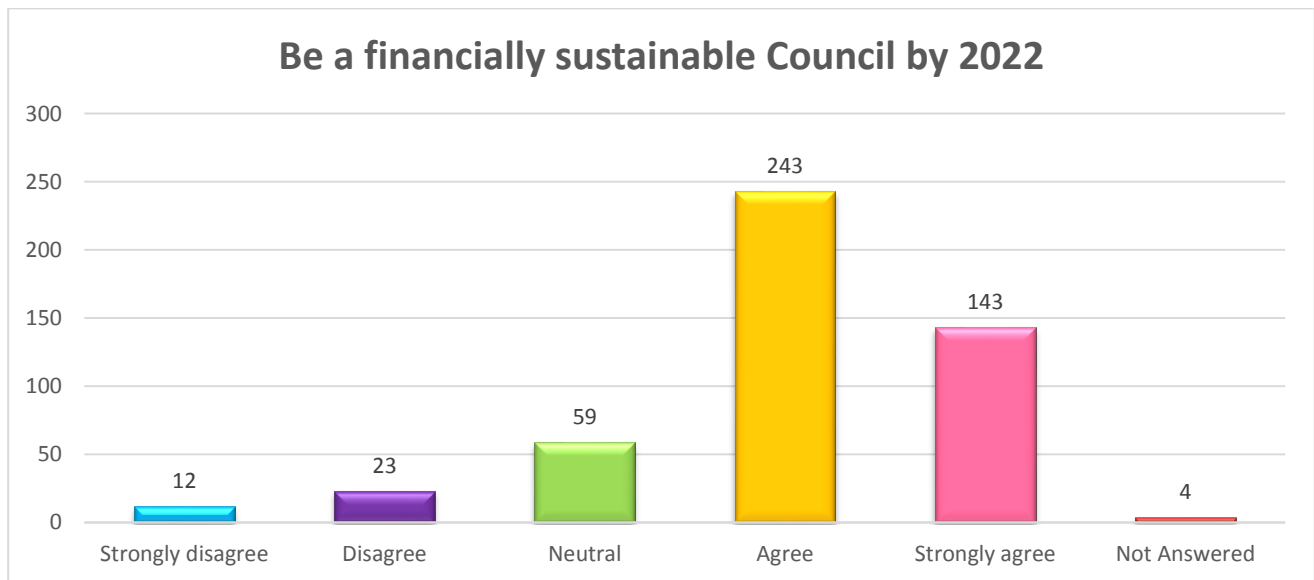
Identified themes are green belt land and wildlife habitat should be protected, support for an increase in recycling opportunities, including the waste centres and ensuring the infrastructure to support being green is created.



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**4.5 Be a financially sustainable Council by 2022**

Do you agree with this priority?



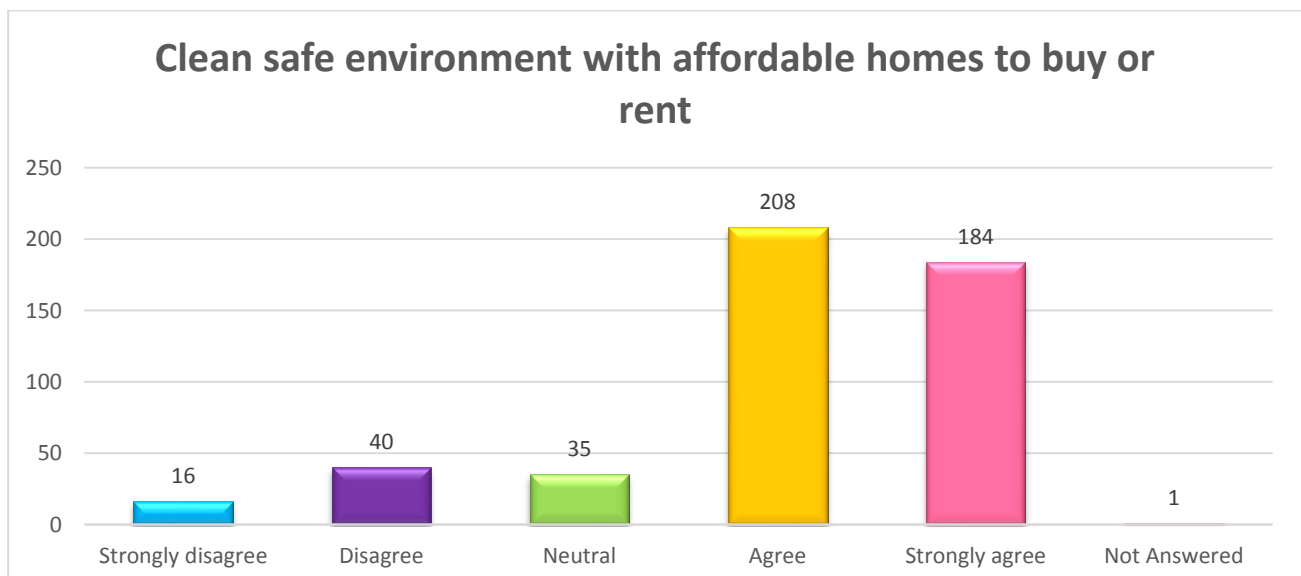
Of the 480 responders to this question, 81% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "be a financially sustainable Council by 2022". 12% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 7% stating they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

72% of responders from the citizen survey answered agree or strongly agree. 10% answered disagree or strongly disagree with 18% neutral for this question.

Concerns are raised in the comments about the impact of COVID-19 and therefore if this could still be delivered within timescale. There are also comments that the generation of income should not come with increases to council tax or at a detriment to other services.

**4.6 A clean safe environment with affordable homes to buy or rent for everyone in West Lancashire**

Do you agree with this priority?



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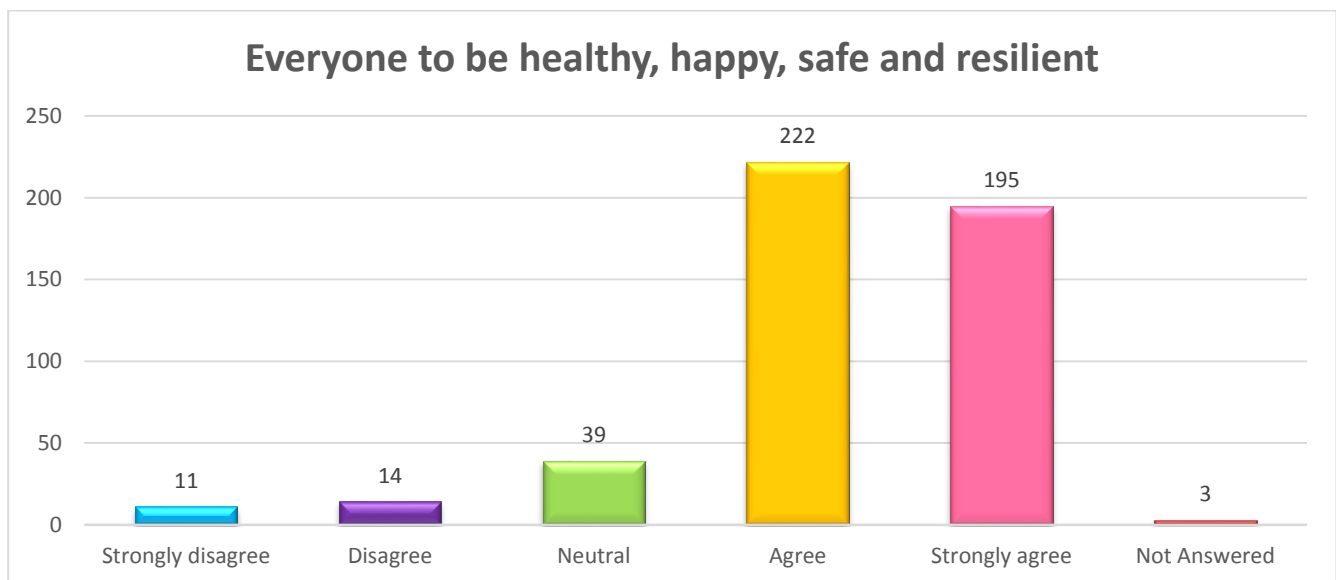
Of the 483 responders to this question, 81% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "a clean safe environment with affordable homes to buy or rent for everyone in West Lancashire". 7% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 12% stating they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

72% of responders from the citizen survey answered agree or strongly agree.

Feedback themes included the needs to have improved infrastructure to cope with new housing and on the loss of green belt.

### 4.7 Everyone to be healthy, happy, safe and resilient

Do you agree with this priority?



Of the 481 responders to this question, 87% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "everyone to be healthy, happy, safe and resilient". 8% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 5% stating they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

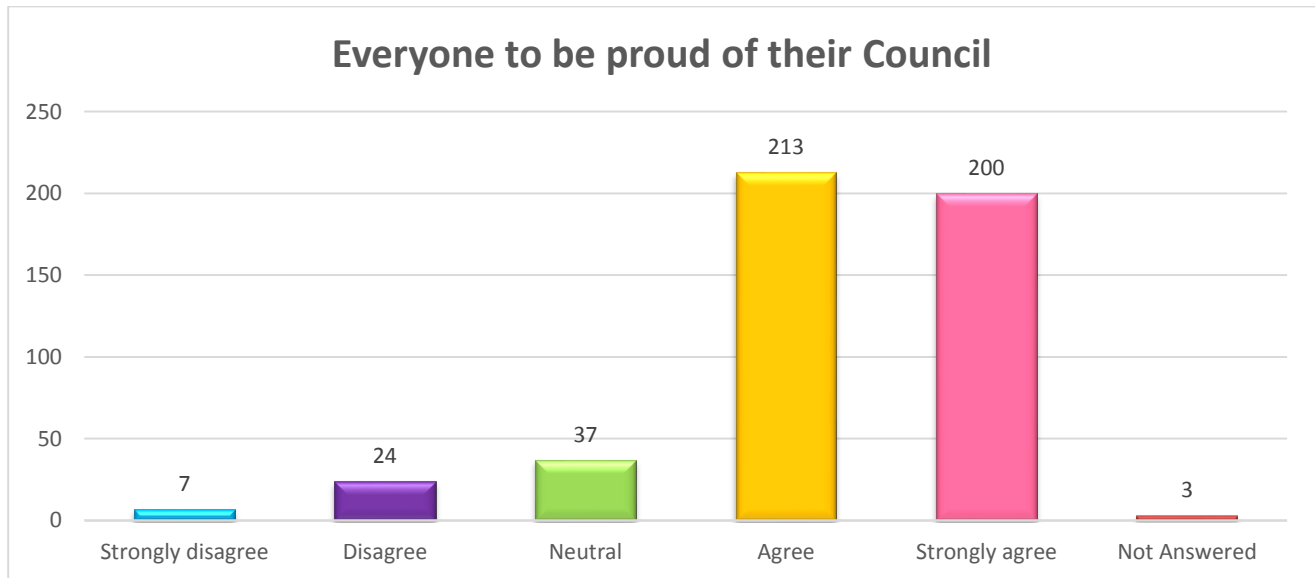
82% of responders from the citizen survey answered agree or strongly agree. 7% answered disagree or strongly disagree.

The comments for this priority relate to a need for more than just sport facilities including and increased range of social activities and an improved night-time economy. The protection and use of green and outdoor areas was also highlighted.

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### 4.8 Everyone to be proud of their Council

Do you agree with this priority?



Of the 481 responders to this question, 86% responded that they agree or strongly agree with the priority to "everyone to be proud of their Council". 8% responded that they were neutral to the priority and a total of 6% stating they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The citizen survey shows 80% support for this priority.

An identified theme is the importance of further engagement to enable resident's voices to be heard and to be inclusive.

### 4.9 Overall do you think the priorities outlined in the plan clearly show what we want to achieve and will enable us to achieve our proposed vision?

There was a general appreciation that the plan shows what the Council wants to achieve and support that this will achieve the vision. Participants have an interest in understanding the key actions the Council will develop to deliver the priorities.

### 4.10 Do you think there is anything else the council should be doing to achieve our proposed vision?

A strong theme shown in the comments was that there should be reference to more engagement and consultation carried out, overall and at a local level about the work of the Council. Comments were received about the number of HMO's and requests the need to improve the range of businesses, events and tourism in the area.

### 4.11 Do you have any further comments about the council's proposed vision and priorities?

A number of comments were received which are shown on the appendix to this report. The comments raised have been covered in the previous themes.

## **5.0 NEXT STEPS**

We asked participants if they would like to receive a summary of the results and actions taken as a result of the survey. This is to help evidence our "You Said, We Did" approach outlined in the Customer Engagement Strategy.

The summary document will also be required to be published on the Council website and details about next steps. Participants were also asked if they wanted to be contacted about further consultations and they will be contacted directly when appropriate.