



Living in Lancashire Survey

Local measures

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1. Executive summary

This wave of the Living in Lancashire panel dealt with satisfaction with respondents' area and with the district and county council. The survey was sent by email or by post to all 2,474 members of the panel on 14 November. No reminder was sent and the fieldwork ended on 5 December 2014. In total 1,549 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 63%.

1.1. Key findings

- Around two-thirds of respondents (65%) agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together while around one in seven (13%) disagree.
- Over four-fifths of respondents (86%) are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.
- Respondents are more likely to feel that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood than to Lancashire with nearly four-fifths of respondents (78%) saying that they feel strongly that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood and around three-quarters of respondents (72%) saying they feel strongly that they belong to Lancashire.
- Respondents feel that the most important things that make somewhere a good place to live are health services (56%), the level of crime (55%), affordable decent housing (43%), clean streets (41%) and education provision (41%).
- The things that respondents feel most need improving in their area are road and pavement repairs (57%), the level of traffic congestion (42%), activities for teenagers (41%) and job prospects (35%).
- Around a third of respondents (31%) agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, while over half (54%) feel they can't.
- Around half of respondents (47%) agree that local public services are working to make their area cleaner. Two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that local public services treat all types of people fairly.
- Opinion is divided on whether local public services promote the interests of local residents (26% agree, 23% disagree) and act on the concerns of local residents (29% agree, 28% disagree).
- Two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that their local district council provides value for money. A quarter of respondents (25%) disagree.
- Around a third of respondents (35%) agree that Lancashire County Council provides value for money. Around a quarter of respondents (26%) disagree.

- The majority of respondents (91%) feel at least fairly well informed about how and where to register to vote and around three-quarters of respondents (74%) feel at least fairly well informed about how their council tax is spent.
- Only a quarter of respondents (25%) feel at least fairly well informed about how they can get involved in county council decision-making.
- Two-fifths of respondents (40%) feel at least fairly well informed about the county council while around three-fifths of respondents (57%) don't feel well informed.
- Around two-fifths of respondents (44%) agree that overall the quality of the county council's services are good. Around a fifth of respondents (18%) agree that the county council treats all parts of Lancashire fairly.
- Around a third of respondents disagree that the county council communicates clearly to them (35% disagree) and listens to them (33% disagree).
- Over two-fifths of respondents (45%) agree that the county council is too remote and impersonal and two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that it is too bureaucratic (40%).
- Around a fifth of respondents (19%) agree that the county council is not relevant to them.
- Half of respondents (50%) are satisfied with the way their local district council runs things and around a fifth of respondents (18%) are dissatisfied.
- Two-fifths of respondents (40%) are satisfied with the way Lancashire County Council runs things and around a fifth of respondents are dissatisfied (19%).

1.2. Recommendations

Overall, the majority of local measures in this survey have not changed significantly since 2012 (wave 39). With the budget constraints across the whole public sector and the associated changes to services we provide it is important that the county council communicates to residents how their council tax is spent and what level of service they can expect from us. To ensure we understand if we are communicating these messages effectively, it is important that we continue to monitor resident perception of the county council.

The proportion of respondents who agree that local public services are working to make the area safer and that local public services treat all types of people fairly has decreased in comparison to 2013. This should continue to be monitored and further work should be done to determine the cause.

2. Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Living in Lancashire regularly since August 2001 (formerly known as Life in Lancashire). A panel of willing participants is recruited and is approached on a regular basis to seek their views on a range of topics and themes. Panel members are voluntary participants in the research they complete and no incentives are given for completion.

The panel has been designed to be a representative cross-section of the county's population. The results for each survey are weighted in order to reflect the demographic profile of the county's population.

The panel provides access to a sufficiently large sample of the population so that reliable results can be reported at a countywide level. It also provides data at a number of sub-area and sub-group levels.

Each wave of Living in Lancashire is themed. Firstly, it enables sufficient coverage on a particular topic to be able to provide insight into that topic. And secondly, it comes across better to the residents completing the questionnaires if there is a clear theme (or 2-3 clear themes) within each survey.

The panel is refreshed periodically. New members are recruited to the panel and some current members are retired on a random basis. This means that the panel remains fresh and is not subject to conditioning ie the views of panel members become too informed with county council services to be representative of the population as a whole.

3. Research objectives

The objective of this survey is to look at people's views about local public services. Questions looked specifically at:

- perception of respondents' local area;
- local public services; and
- local district councils and the county council.

4. Methodology

This wave of Living in Lancashire was sent to 2,474 members of the panel on 14 November. No reminder was sent and the final closing date was 5 December 2014.

The survey was conducted through a postal questionnaire and an online version of the same questionnaire. The postal questionnaire was sent to 1,876 members and the online questionnaire was emailed to 598 members.

In total, 1,549 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 63%.

The data set is weighted by age, ethnicity and district to reflect the Lancashire overall population, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled to match the effective response of 948, which is the equivalent size of the data if it had not been weighted and was a perfect random sample.

These questions were also asked in November 2013 (wave 43¹) and November 2012 (wave 39²). Responses in this wave have been compared to the responses from 2013 and 2012 and statistically significant differences are noted in the text.

4.1. Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1,000	3%	3%	2%
1,500	3%	2%	2%

¹ Wave 43 was sent to panel members in November 2013. 1,266 responses were received, giving a response rate of 47%.

² Wave 39 was sent to panel members in November 2012. 1,496 responses were received, giving a response rate of 48%.

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1,000 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (ie +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire Lancashire population using the same procedure.

The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of sample A	Size of sample B	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
100	100	14%	13%	8%
100	200	12%	11%	7%
500	1,000	5%	5%	3%
1,500	1,500	4%	3%	2%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, where the size of sample A and sample B is 1,500 responses in each and the percentage result in each group you are comparing is around 50% in each category, the difference in the results needs to be more than 4% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference in the results of the two groups of people is not due to chance alone and is a statistically valid difference (eg of opinion, service usage).

For each question in the survey, comparisons have been made between different sub-groups of respondents (eg age, gender, disability, ethnicity, geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report.

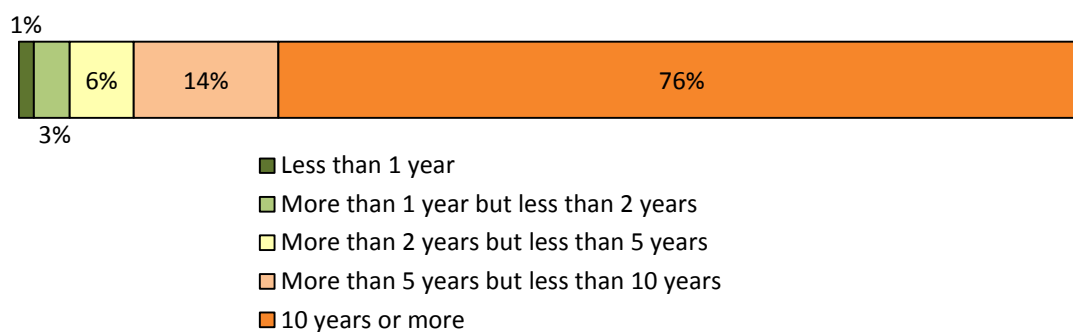
In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

5. Main research findings

5.1. Local area

Panel members were asked how long they have lived in their local area. Around three-quarters of respondents (76%) have lived in their local area for 10 years or more.

Chart 1 - How many years have you lived in this local area?

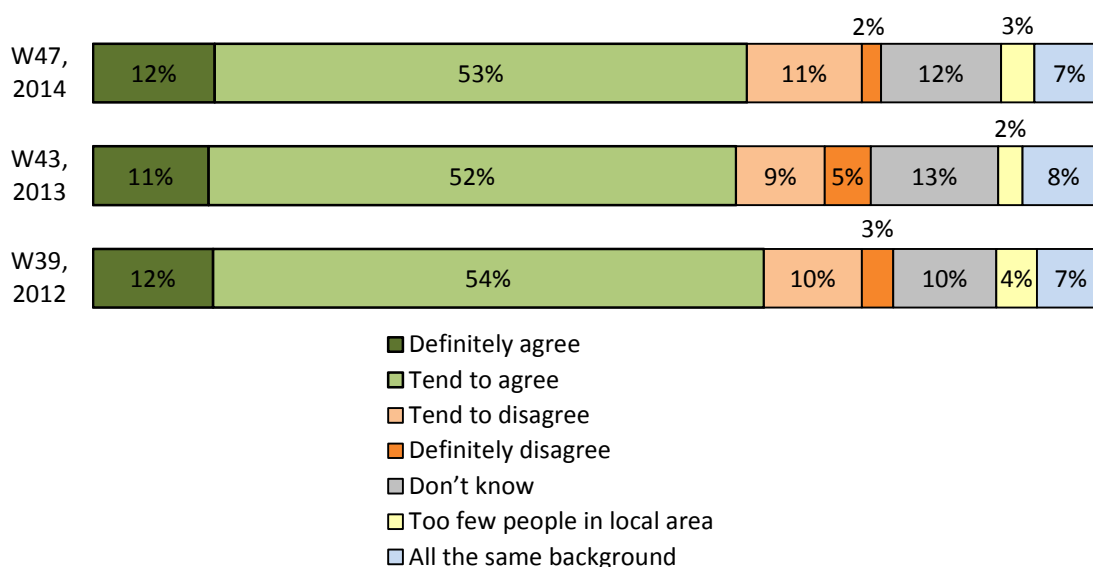


Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,537, weighted 1,029)

Panel members were asked about how well people from different backgrounds get on in their local area.

Around two-thirds of respondents (65%) agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together while around one in seven (13%) disagree.

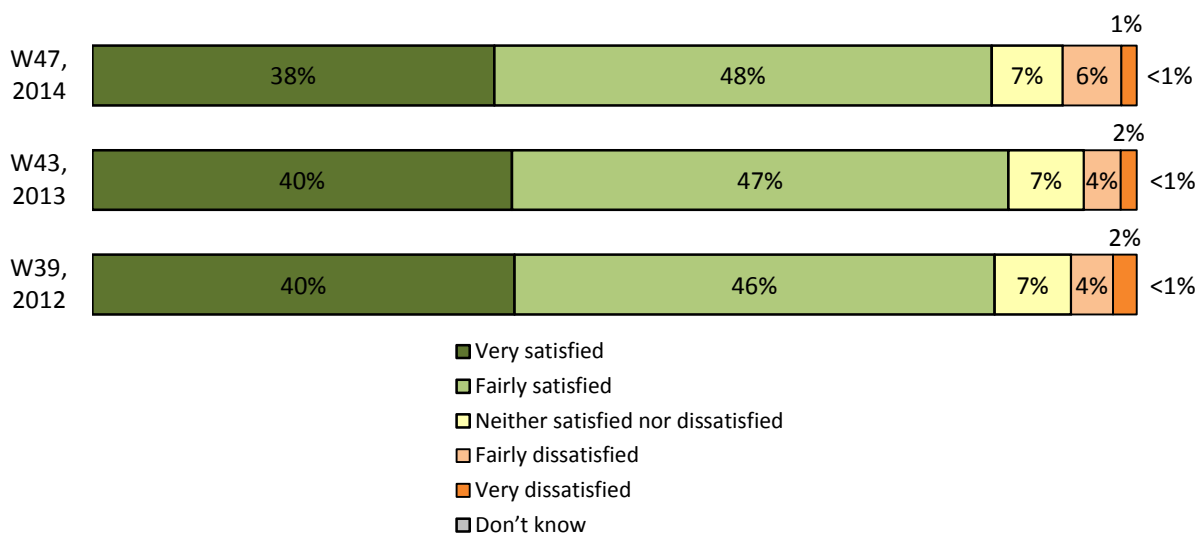
Chart 2 - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?



Base: all respondents 2014 (unweighted 1,523, weighted 1,017)
 all respondents 2013 (unweighted 1,251, weighted 871)
 all respondents 2012 (unweighted 1,485, weighted 992)

Over four-fifths of respondents (86%) are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

Chart 3 - Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?



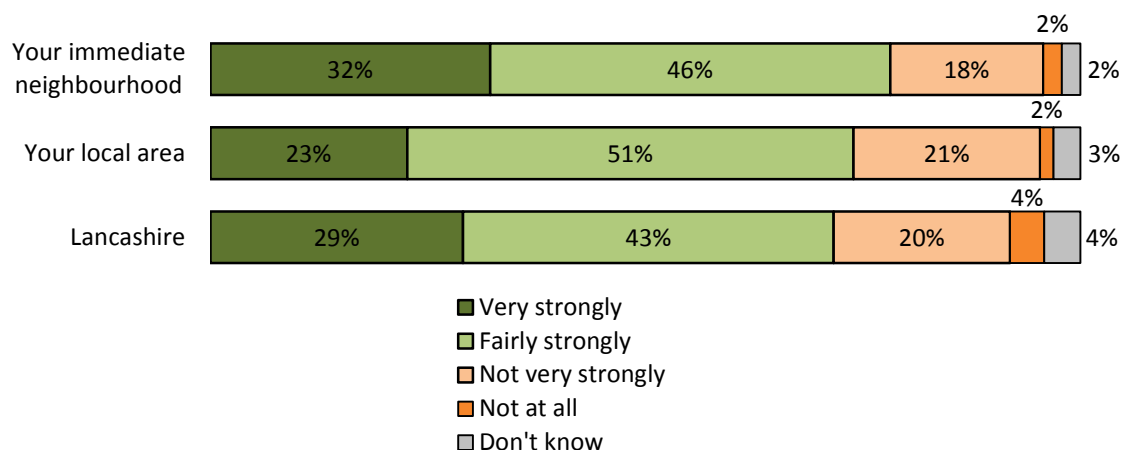
Base: all respondents 2014 (unweighted 1,532, weighted 1,022)
 all respondents 2013 (unweighted 1,253, weighted 872)
 all respondents 2012 (unweighted 1,490, weighted 990)

Respondents in Hyndburn are more likely to be dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live (19%). Respondents in Hyndburn were also more likely to be dissatisfied when they were asked this question in 2013 (wave 43) and 2012 (wave 39).

Panel members were asked how strongly they feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood, their local area and Lancashire.

Respondents are more likely to feel that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood than to Lancashire with nearly four-fifths of respondents (78%) saying that they feel strongly that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood and around three-quarters of respondents (72%) saying they feel strongly that they belong to Lancashire.

Chart 4 - How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood, your local area and Lancashire?



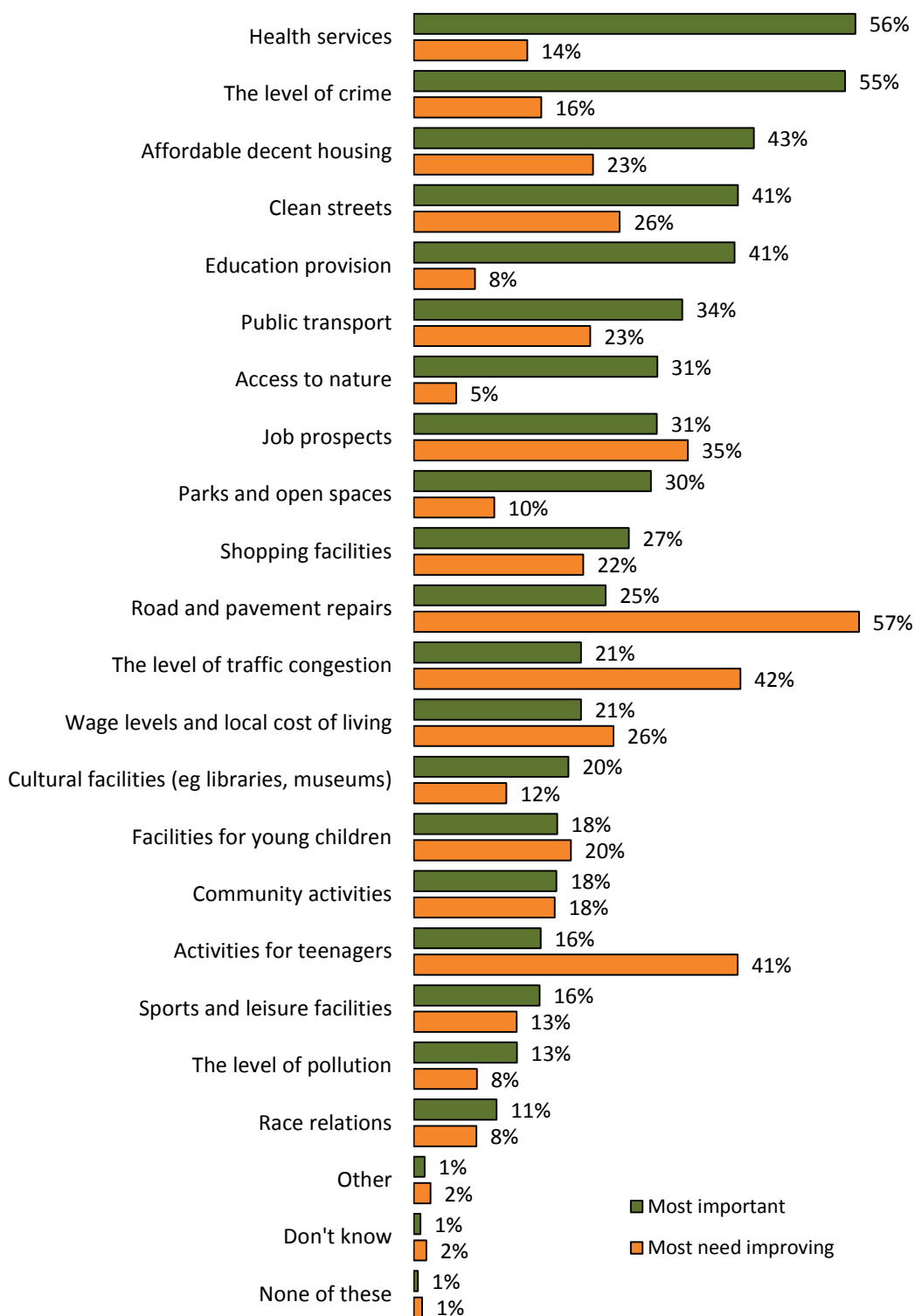
Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,444-1,512, weighted 971-1,005)

Respondents in Pendle are less likely to feel strongly that they belong to their local area (57%). This was also the case in 2013 (wave 43).

Panel members were then asked to choose five things, from a list of twenty, which, to them, are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live. The most common responses were health services (56%), the level of crime (55%), affordable decent housing (43%), clean streets (41%) and education provision (41%). These were also the most important in 2013 (wave 43) and 2012 (wave 39).

Panel members were then asked to select, from the same list, the five things that they think most need improving in their local area. The most common responses were road and pavement repairs (57%), the level of traffic congestion (42%), activities for teenagers (41%) and job prospects (35%). Again, these were the things that respondents said most needed improving in their area in 2013 (wave 43) and 2012 (wave 39).

**Chart 5 - Which of the following...
a) are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?
b) do you think most need improving in your local area?**



Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,473-1,527 weighted 988-1,017)

Respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to say that health services (67%) and road and pavement repairs (35%) are the most important things in making somewhere a good place to live. Respondents with a disability are also more likely to think road and pavement repairs are important (32%). Respondents with a disability are more likely to say that affordable decent housing (52%) and public transport are important (42%). Respondents with children are more likely to consider that education provision (56%) and facilities for young children (24%) are important.

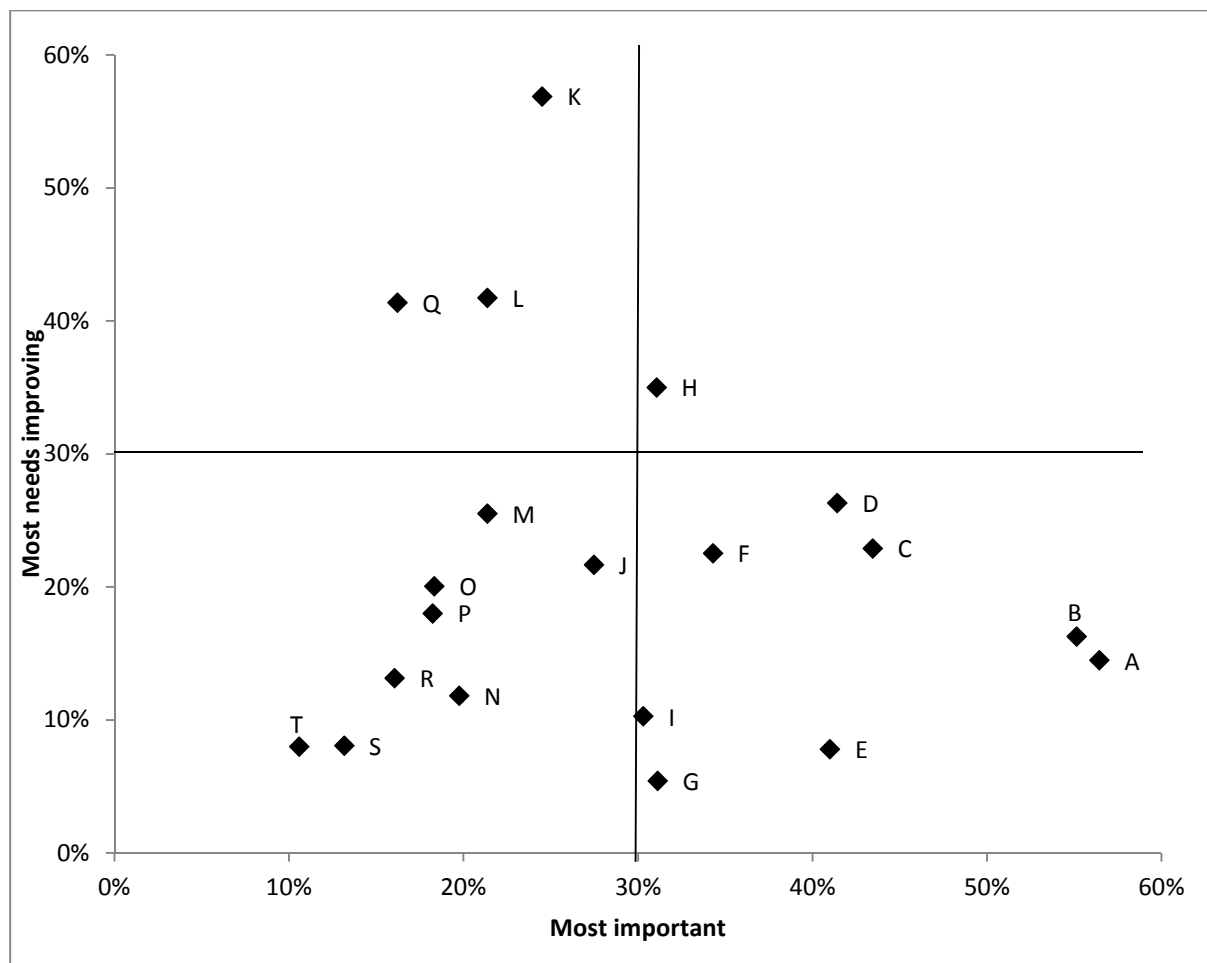
Respondents who are retired are more likely to say that road and pavement repairs need improving in their local area (67%). Respondents in the lowest socio-economic groups (DE) are more likely to say that wage levels and local cost of living need improving in their local area (35%). Respondents with children are more likely to say that activities for teenagers need improving in their local area (54%).

Respondents in Lancaster are more likely to say that the level of traffic congestion needs improving in their area (59%). Respondents in Rossendale are more likely to say that job prospects need improving in their local area (55%) and respondents in Hyndburn are more likely to say that race relations need improving (23%).

The following chart compares respondents' views on the facilities that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live and the facilities that most need improving in their local area. The facilities that are most important to have in an area. The facilities in the top right quadrant should be the priority areas as these are felt to be among the most important and also most in need of improving. This should be followed by facilities in the top left quadrant – facilities which are felt to be less important but more in need of improvement.

Based on the chart, the priority area should be job prospects (H). Lesser priorities for improvement should be road and pavement repairs (K), the level of traffic congestion (L) and activities for teenagers (Q).

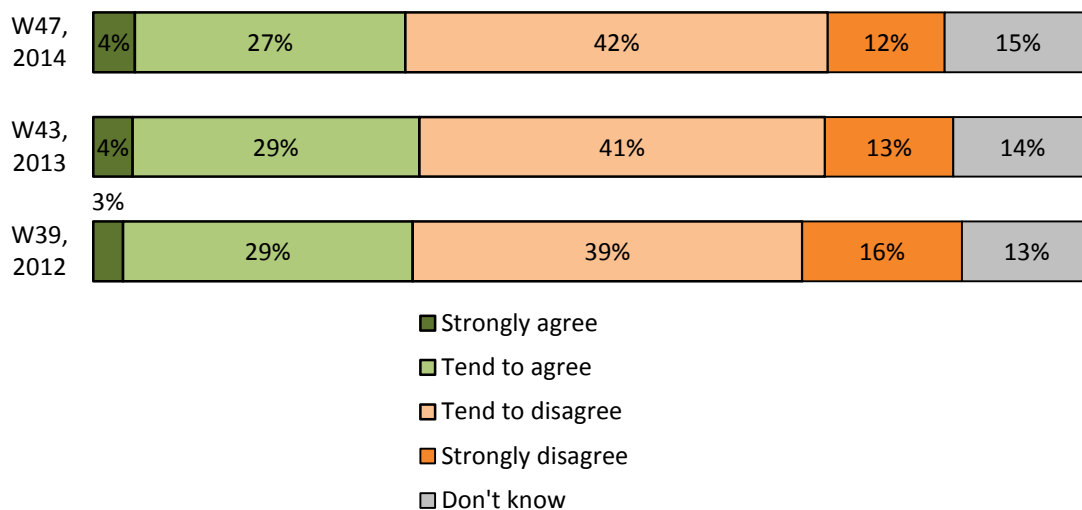
Chart 6 - Comparison of facilities most important in making somewhere a good place to live and most in need of improvement in respondents' local areas



A	Health services	K	Road and pavement repairs
B	The level of crime	L	The level of traffic congestion
C	Affordable decent housing	M	Wage levels and local cost of living
D	Clean streets	N	Cultural facilities
E	Education provision	O	Facilities for young children
F	Public transport	P	Community activities
G	Access to nature	Q	Activities for teenagers
H	Job prospects	R	Sports and leisure facilities
I	Parks and open spaces	S	The level of pollution
J	Shopping facilities	T	Race relations

Around a third of respondents (31%) agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, while over half (54%) feel they can't. This is similar to the response in 2013 (wave 43) and 2012 (wave 39).

Chart 7 - Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?



Base: all respondents 2014 (unweighted 1,541, weighted 1,031)
 all respondents 2013 (unweighted 1,254, weighted 871)
 all respondents 2012 (unweighted 1,482, weighted 995)

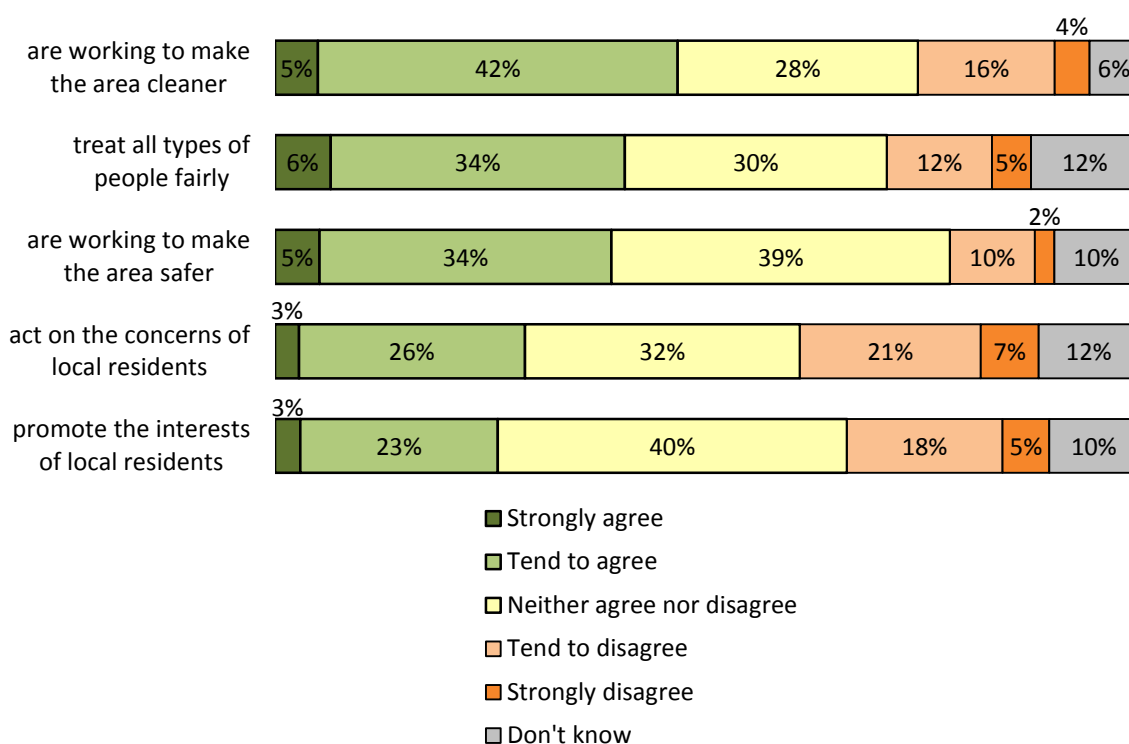
5.2. Local public services

Panel members were then asked a series of questions about public services in their local area.

Around half of respondents (47%) agree that local public services are working to make their area cleaner. Two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that local public services treat all types of people fairly. Opinion is divided on whether local public services promote the interests of local residents (26% agree, 23% disagree) and act on the concerns of local residents (29% agree, 28% disagree).

Compared to the response in 2013, the proportion of respondents who agree that local public services are working to make the area safer has decreased (49% in 2013, 39% in 2014). The proportion of respondents who agree that local public services treat all types of people fairly has also decreased (47% in 2013, 40% in 2014).

Chart 8 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about public services in your local area? Local public services...



Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,506-1,528, weighted 1,005-1,020)

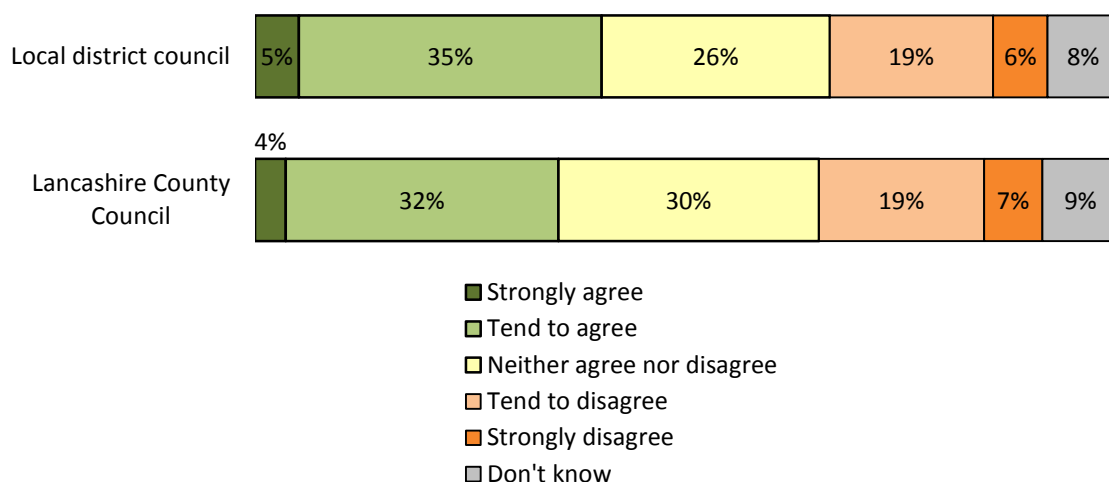
Respondents who are not in employment are more likely to agree that local public services promote the interests of local residents (36%).

5.3. Local district councils and the county council

Two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that their local district council provides value for money. A quarter of respondents (25%) disagree.

Around a third of respondents (35%) agree that Lancashire County Council provides value for money. Around a quarter of respondents (26%) disagree.

Chart 9 - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local district council and Lancashire County Council provide value for money?



Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,523-1,530, weighted 1,019)

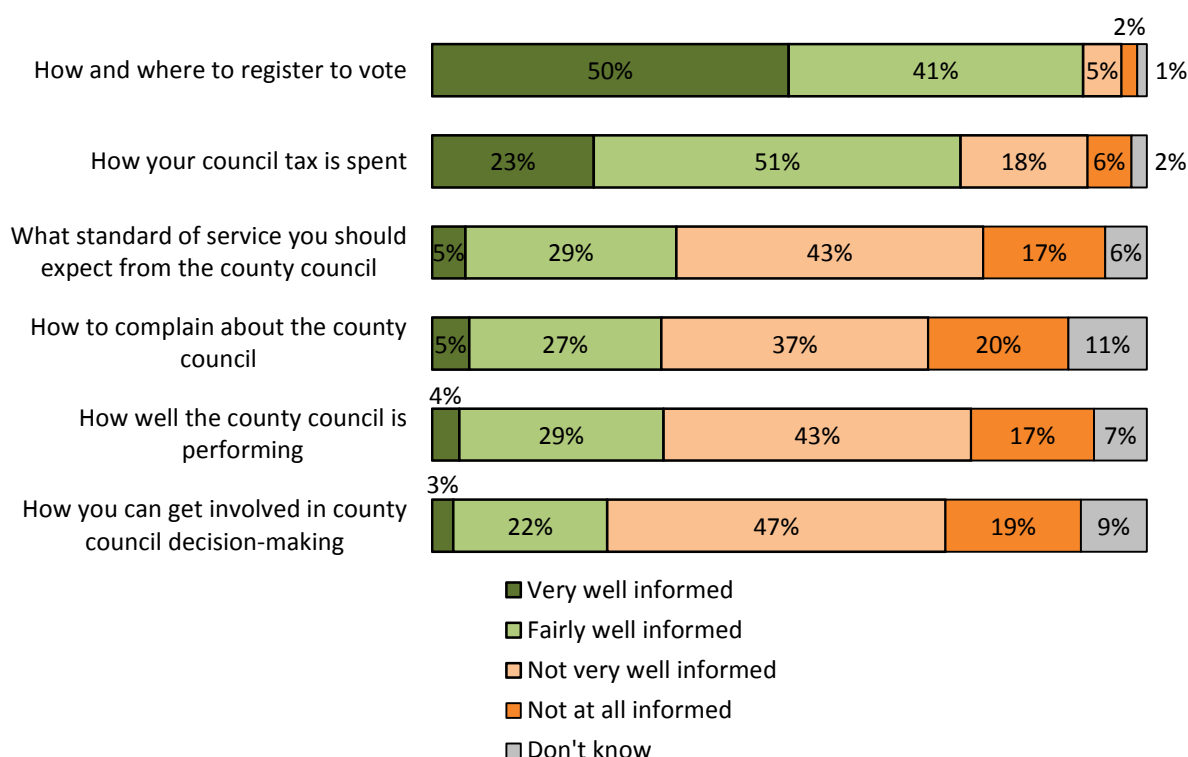
Respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to agree that their local district council provides value for money (48%).

Respondents in Rossendale are more likely to disagree that their local district council provides value for money (43% disagree).

Panel members were asked how well informed they feel about Lancashire County Council on a range of issues.

The majority of respondents (91%) feel at least fairly well informed about how and where to register to vote and around three-quarters of respondents (74%) feel at least fairly well informed about how their council tax is spent. However, respondents do not feel as well informed about the remaining four statements. Only a quarter of respondents (25%) feel at least fairly well informed about how they can get involved in county council decision-making.

Chart 10 - Thinking specifically about Lancashire County Council, how informed do you think you are about each of the following?

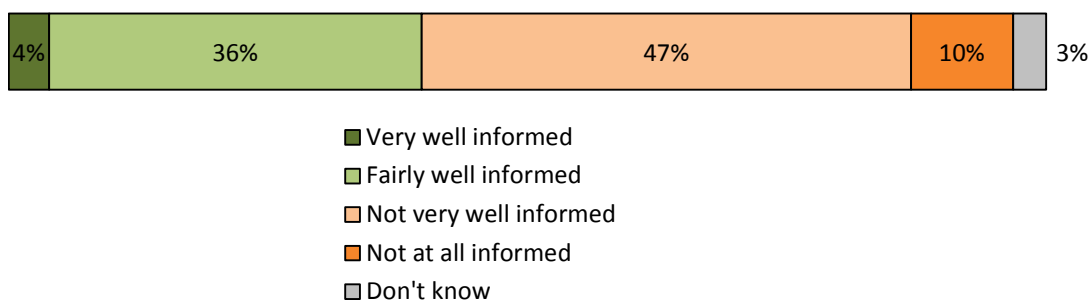


Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,516-1,531, weighted 1,008-1,017)

Respondents aged 60 and over are more likely to feel at least fairly well informed about what standard of service to expect from the county council (41%). Respondents in socio-economic groups DE are less likely to feel at least fairly well informed about how their council tax is spent (61%).

Two-fifths of respondents (40%) feel at least fairly well informed about the county council overall while around three-fifths of respondents (57%) don't feel well informed.

Chart 11 - Overall, how well informed do you feel about the county council?

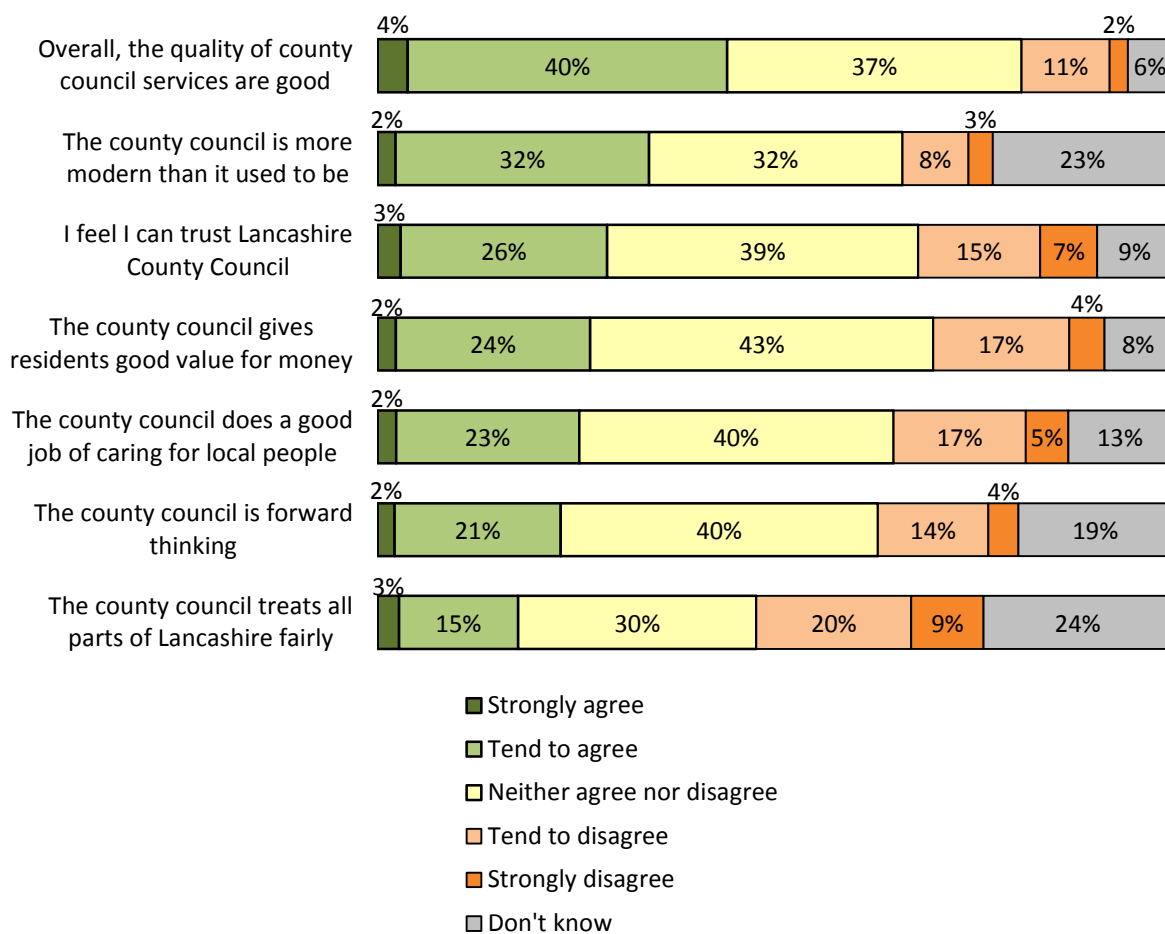


Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,534, weighted 1,025)

Panel members were asked to what extent they agree with a series of positive statements about Lancashire County Council. Many respondents are unsure about all the statements, with around half of respondents stating neither agree nor disagree or don't know.

Around two-fifths of respondents (44%) agree that overall the quality of the county council's services are good. Around a fifth of respondents (18%) agree that the county council treats all parts of Lancashire fairly.

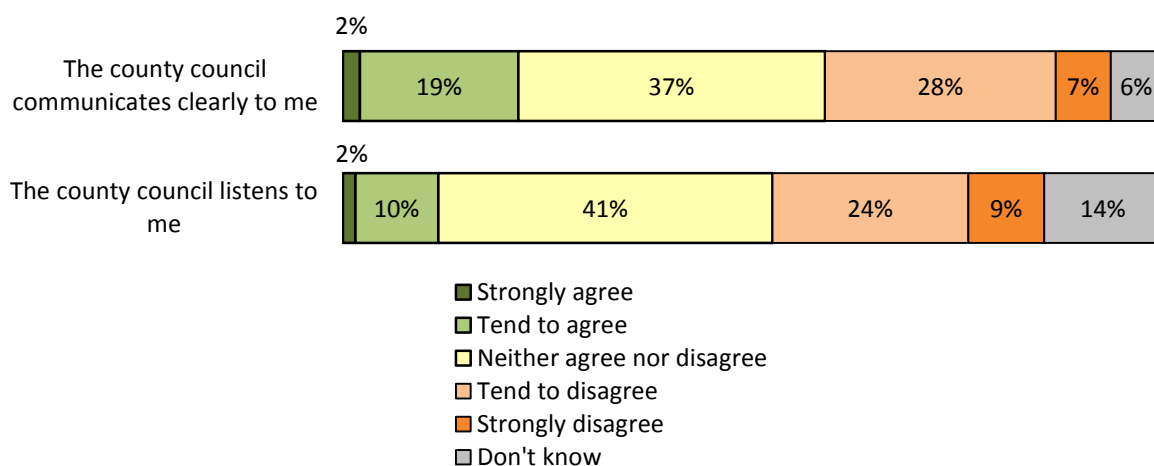
Chart 12 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Lancashire County Council?



Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,505-1,521, weighted 1,001-1,018)

Panel members were also asked to what extent they agree with some positive statements about how the county council communicates with them. Again, around half of respondents were unsure about the statements, answering neither agree nor disagree or don't know. Around a third of respondents disagree that the county council communicates clearly to them (35%) and listens to them (33%).

Chart 13 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Lancashire County Council?



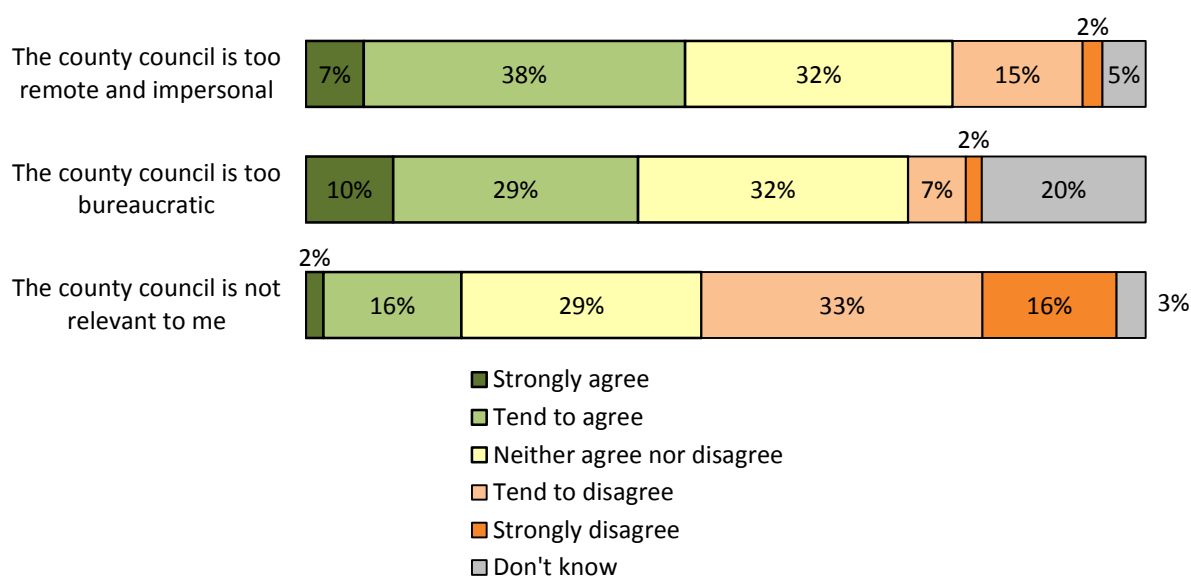
Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,506-1,515, weighted 1,012-1,017)

Respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with some negative statements about Lancashire County Council.

Over two-fifths of respondents (45%) agree that the county council is too remote and impersonal and two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that it is too bureaucratic.

Around a fifth of respondents (19%) agree that the county council is not relevant to them. This is an increase compared to the response in 2013 (wave 43) when 14% of respondents agreed that the county council is not relevant to them.

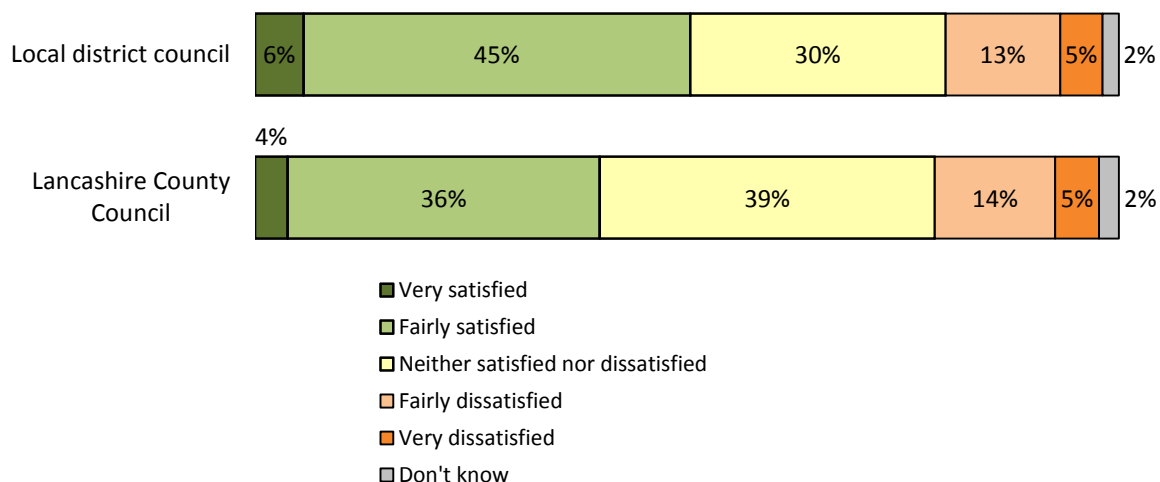
Chart 14 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Lancashire County Council?



Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,504-1,512, weighted 1,011-1,013)

Half of respondents (50%) are satisfied with the way their local district council runs things and two-fifths of respondents (40%) are satisfied with the way Lancashire County Council runs things. Around a fifth of respondents are dissatisfied with how their local district council runs things (18%) and how the county council runs things (19%).

Chart 15 - And now taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local district council and Lancashire County Council run things?



Base: all respondents (unweighted 1,526-1,531, weighted 1,020-1023)

Respondents in socio-economic group DE are less likely to be satisfied with the way their local district council runs things (41% satisfied).

6. Recommendations

Overall, the majority of local measures in this survey have not changed significantly since 2012 (wave 39). With the budget constraints across the whole public sector and the associated changes to services we provide it is important that the county council communicates to residents how their council tax is spent and what level of service they can expect from us. To ensure we understand if we are communicating these messages effectively, it is important that we continue to monitor resident perception of the county council.

The proportion of respondents who agree that local public services are working to make the area safer and that local public services treat all types of people fairly has decreased in comparison to 2013. This should continue to be monitored and further work should be done to determine the cause.

7. Appendix 1: Socio-economic group definitions

These groups are based on Market Research Society definitions and on the respondent. They are graded as A, B, C1, C2, D and E.

Group A

- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants.
- Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows.

Group B

- Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications.
- Principal officers in local government and civil service.
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments.
- Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows.

Group C1

- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions.
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements.
- Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows.

Group C2

- All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people.
- Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job.
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job.

Group D

- All semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers.
- Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their late job.
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job.

Group E

- All those entirely dependent on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons.
- Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation).
- Casual workers and those without a regular income.