

2023 Annual Budget Research

Research findings of a survey of Aucklanders

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Date: 21 April, 2023

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Summary

Auckland Council commissioned Kantar Public (formerly Colmar Brunton) to measure Aucklanders' levels of support for four proposals in Auckland Council's 2023/2024 annual budget. These proposals relate to reducing operational costs, selling council's shares in Auckland International Airport Limited, rates and debt increases, and a proposal to prepare for and respond to future storms.

A mixed method survey of 3,989 Auckland residents was carried out from 1-29 March, 2023. The questionnaire was evaluated using cognitive testing and conventional piloting to ensure survey questions were easily understood.

The questionnaire was developed by Kantar Public in collaboration with the reviewer from the University of Auckland. Auckland Council had input into the questionnaire. However, the mayor or mayor's office did not see or have any input into the design of the questions.

Key results are as follows:

Aucklanders' level of support for the proposed reductions in operational spending

Most Aucklanders (80%) believe there needs to be spending cuts. Support is stronger for proceeding with 'some' of the proposed spending reductions (54%), than all the proposed reductions (26%). Seven percent of Aucklanders don't want council to proceed with any operational spending reductions, 4% would prefer some 'other' option, and 8% did not know or felt they needed more information to give a response.

Aucklanders' level of support for the proposed sale of council's shares in Auckland International Airport Limited

The reader should read the correction statement on page 8 of this report before interpreting the results to this question.

In response to the question asked, around three quarters (76%) support council selling all or some of its shares in Auckland International Airport Limited. Support is stronger for selling 'some' of its shares (52%) than all its shares (24%). Seventeen percent believe council should not sell any of its shares.

Aucklanders' support for the proposal to increase total rates by 4.66% and increase debt by up to \$75 million

Thirty five percent of Aucklanders support Auckland Council's proposed increases to rates and debt. The most popular alternative is a lower rates increase, but with council borrowing more (27%). Four percent support council increasing the rates by more than 4.66%.

Support for Auckland Council's proposal to increase operating budgets by \$20 million to prepare for future storms

Opinion on the storms proposal is fairly evenly split with 40% supporting the proposal and 43% opposing it. An additional 6% chose some other option and 10% said they don't know.

The task at hand

Auckland Council is consulting on its 2023/24 annual budget. This budget focuses on managing ongoing budget pressures and, as a result, Auckland Council is required to make some decisions to address this.

Following recent rapid increases in inflation and interest rates, council now need to address a \$295 million shortfall in the forecast budget for the 2023/2024 financial year. The recent storm and cyclone events that impacted Tāmaki Makaurau adds to the already significant challenge of managing the financial situation.

The 2023/2024 annual budget includes the following proposals:

- Reducing operational costs by an additional \$125 million across Auckland Council and Council-Controlled Organisations (CCO's). This would impact some services that council currently deliver.
- Selling shares that Auckland Council currently holds (approximately 18%) in Auckland International Airport Limited. The options are for council to sell all, some, or none of its shares – which not only impacts on the shareholding, but also council debt and rates.
- A total rates increase of 4.66% (or \$154 per year for the average value residential property).
- Increase how much debt council borrows by up to \$75 million.
- An additional 1% rates increase (on top of the proposed 4.66% rates increase) to improve council's ability to prepare for and respond to future storms.

The purpose of the proposed annual budget is to ensure a financially sustainable future for council while still providing the key services for Aucklanders. The first four of these proposals are needed for council to address the \$295 million shortfall. If any one of these doesn't go ahead, council will need to look at bigger rates increases or more debt.

Auckland Council held a consultation for Aucklanders to provide their feedback on the 2023/24 annual budget proposal.

Auckland Council commissioned Kantar Public to carry out an independent mixed method survey (online and telephone) of a demographically representative sample of nearly 4,000 Aucklanders across Tāmaki Makaurau. This report details the results from this survey. Insights from the survey will support local government decision-making in relation to the proposed 2023/24 annual budget.

Research objectives

The research was designed to measure:

- The level of public support for key proposals (listed above) under the 2023/24 annual budget.
- Levels of public support for the proposals under the 2023/24 annual budget by local board and sub-region, as well as key demographic groups (age, gender, ethnicity, and household income).

This report presents the survey findings and methodology Kantar Public used to carry out the research.

A reviewer from the University of Auckland was also commissioned to independently review the survey design, methodology, and survey findings.

Research methodology

Kantar Public carried out a survey of 3,989 Aucklanders from 1-29 March, 2022.

The target population was Auckland residents aged 18 years and older.

A mixed method approach, which employed both online and telephone surveying, was used. The use of online surveying recognised the decreasing proportion of households with landline phones. The use of phone interviews recognised that some areas have significant numbers of households without internet access. In addition, it was not feasible to interview enough people using an online survey in some local boards (e.g. Waiheke and Great Barrier).

In total, 3,391 Aucklanders took part in an online survey and 598 Aucklanders were interviewed by telephone. Across the combined online and telephone survey fieldwork, approximately 200 interviews were conducted in each local board except for Waiheke (150) and Great Barrier (30).

Online survey fieldwork

The online survey was conducted using Kantar's online panel and Dynata's online panel as a sampling frame.

The first half of fieldwork focused on ensuring quotas on age by gender, ethnicity, and household income by household size were met, to ensure a demographically representative sample. The second half of fieldwork focused on ensuring local board quotas were met.

Telephone survey fieldwork

A random digit dialling (RDD) methodology was used to sample landline telephones, including people with unlisted phone numbers. Telephone interviews were restricted to those living in Māngere-Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, Papakura, Puketapapa, Rodney, and Waiheke and Great Barrier to account for low internet penetration in these areas and low representation on online panels. All telephone respondents lived in households with a working landline telephone. A response rate of 27% was achieved for the telephone fieldwork (based on all estimated eligible attempted contacts).

Maximum margin of error

The maximum margin of error on the total sample size of 3,989 is +/-1.6%¹ (at the 95% confidence level).

Weighting

Survey data were weighted to align with Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census population demographic characteristics: age by gender, ethnicity, and local board area. Statistics New Zealand 2021 Household Economic Survey data was used to weight the data to estimated population household income by household size characteristics.

Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was developed by Kantar Public in collaboration with the reviewer from the University of Auckland. Auckland Council had input into the questionnaire. However, the mayor or mayor's office did not see or have any input into the design of the questions.

The draft questionnaire was cognitively tested with five respondents, in a video call setting, to test respondent comprehension and interpretation of the survey questions. The final questionnaires incorporated revisions made to draft versions following the cognitive testing, conventional online survey and CATI pilot surveys, feedback from interviewers, and observations from a researcher listening to a sample of the recordings. Further information on the

¹ The disproportionate sampling approach used in targeting local boards has been considered in calculating the margin of error associated with the total sample size.

cognitive testing methodology can be found in Appendix A. The average interview length for the online survey fieldwork was seven minutes. The average telephone interview length was 11 minutes. The online questionnaire is appended to this report in Appendix C.

Contextual information given to respondents

Near the start of the survey, all respondents were given the following contextual information so that they could make informed responses throughout the survey.

*Auckland Council has faced ongoing budget challenges for some time. Following recent rapid increases in inflation and interest rates, they now need to address a \$295 million **shortfall** in the forecast budget for the 2023/2024 financial year.*

To do this, Auckland Council is proposing that it:

- *Reduces council operating costs by \$125 million*
- *Increases rates by 4.66%*
- *Sells council's shares in Auckland International Airport*
- *Borrows no more than \$75 million of additional debt.*

All four of these proposals are needed for council to address the \$295 million shortfall. If any one of these doesn't go ahead, council will need to look at bigger rates increases or more debt.

Aucklanders' level of support for the proposed reductions in operational spending

This section examines Aucklanders' support for the proposed reductions in operational spending. Respondents were asked the following question:

*First let's look at Auckland Council's proposal to reduce its **operational spending** by \$125 million.*

Council is going to share resources across council organisations and reduce staff to save money.

Council is proposing 6 other ways to reduce spending. We want to know if you support all, some or none of these ways:

- *Maintaining the current reductions in public transport services.*
- *Reducing funding for economic development and tourism promotion, and increasing prices at Auckland's zoo, art gallery, stadiums and venues.*
- *Reducing regional events, community programmes and social services.*
- *Reducing local board funded activities.*
- *Reducing regional contestable grants.*
- *No longer providing the small number of council delivered early childhood education services (affecting around 300 children).*

*If council does **not** go ahead with some of these reductions in spending, it would need to increase rates by more than 4.66% and/or borrow more than \$75 million of additional debt.*

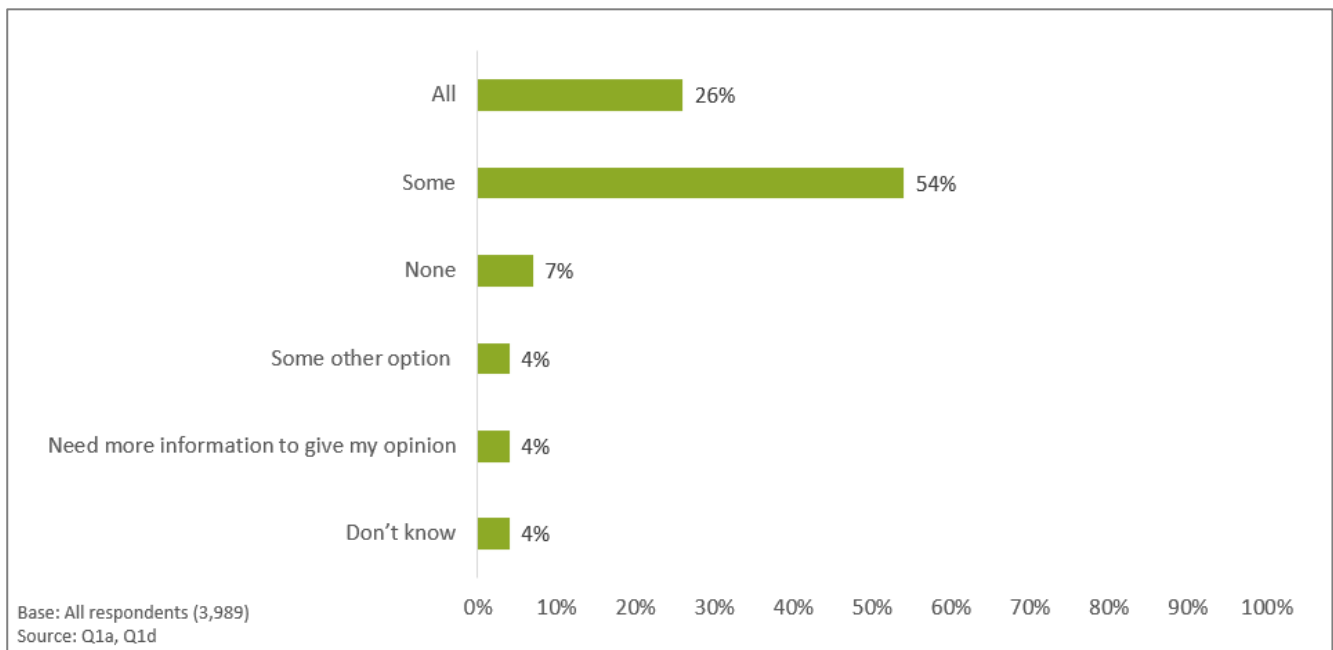
What do you think council should do?

- *Proceed with **all** the proposed spending reductions*
- *Proceed with **some** reductions*
- *Don't proceed with **any** reductions*
- *Some other option (please tell us)*
- *I need more information to give my opinion*
- *Don't know*

Note, 7% of respondents said they needed more information to give an opinion. They were then asked what type of information they needed² and provided additional information on the requested topic. The additional information provided is detailed in the appended questionnaire. Just over half (57%) of the 7% of respondents who wanted more information were then happy to answer the question on spending reductions.

² The most common requests were for more information on local board activities (3%), regional events, community programmes and social services (3%), sharing resources across council organisations and staff reductions (3%), regional contestable grants (3%), funding for economic development and tourism promotion (3%), early childhood education (3%), public transport services (3%), or something else (0.4%).

Graph 1: Support for reductions in operational spending



Most Aucklanders (80%) believe there needs to be spending cuts. Support is stronger for proceeding with some of the proposed spending reductions (54%), than all of them (26%).

Demographic analysis shows that:

- Support for proceeding with all the spending reductions is higher among:
 - Males (31%, vs 22% of females)
 - Asian Aucklanders (30%, vs 20% of Māori, 23% of Pasifika, and 25% of NZ Europeans)
 - High income households (33% with a household income over \$200,000, vs 25% with a household income lower than this)
- Support for proceeding with only some of the proposed spending reductions is higher among:
 - Females (58%, vs 50% of males)
 - Māori and NZ Europeans (57% respectively, vs 50% of Asian Aucklanders).

The most common response among Pasifika was to support 'some' of the reductions (53%), but Pasifika were also especially likely to say they didn't know or needed more information (15%, vs 8% on average).

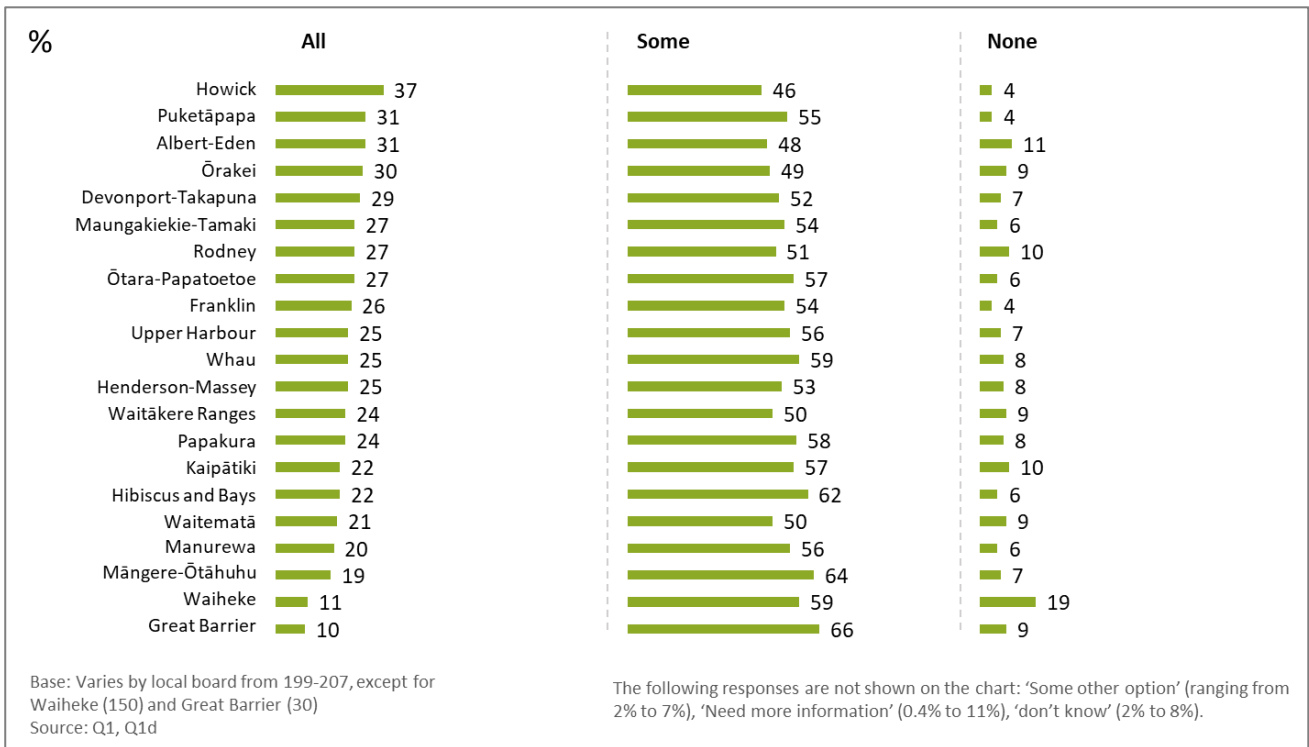
There are no clear patterns by age.

Level of support by region

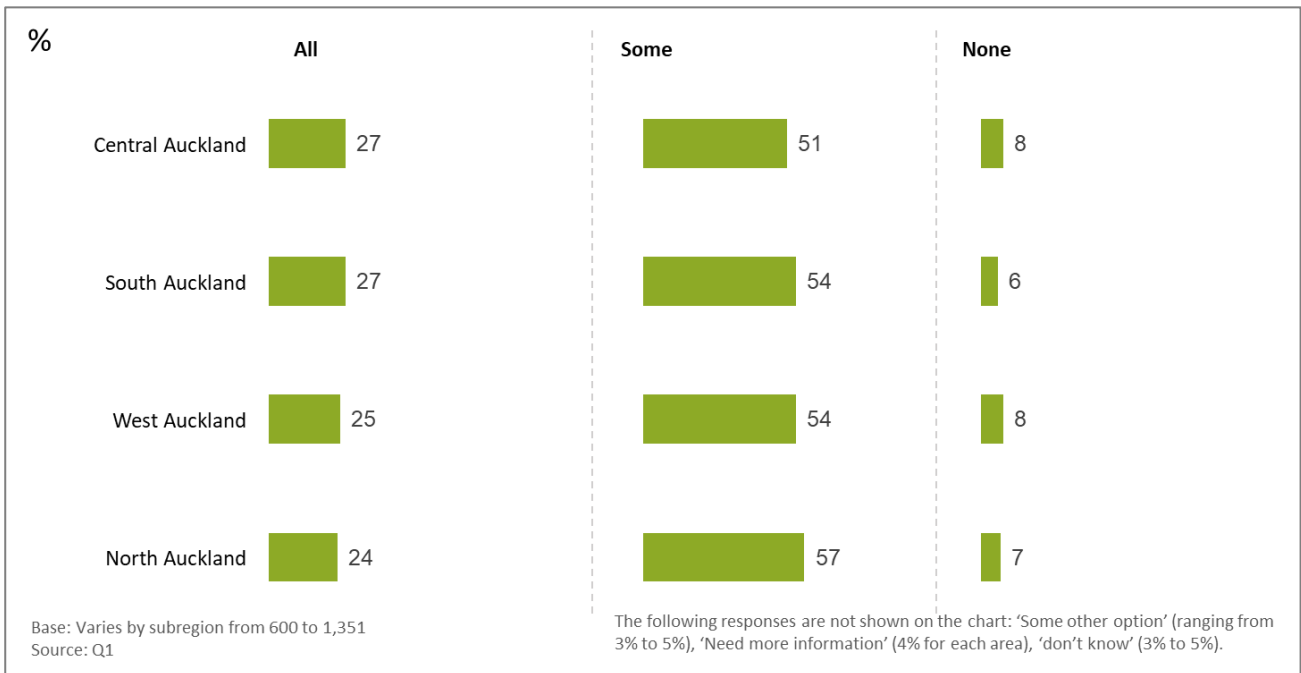
The next two charts show support levels for the proposed operational spending reductions by local board and sub-region area. These charts highlight that:

- Support for all reductions in operational spending is highest among Howick (37%), Puketāpapa (31%) Albert-Eden (31%), and Ōrakei (30%).
- Support for some operational spending reductions is highest in Great Barrier (66%), Māngere-Ōtāhuhu (64%) and Hibiscus and Bays (62%) where nearly two-thirds of residents support this.
- Support levels are fairly similar at a sub-region level.

Graph 2: Support for reductions in operational spending by local board



Graph 3: Support for reductions in operational spending by sub-region



Aucklanders' level of support for the proposed sale of Auckland International Airport Limited shares

This section examines Aucklanders' support for the proposed sale of Auckland Council's shares in Auckland International Airport Limited. Respondents were asked the following question:

This next question is about Auckland Council's approximate 18% of shares in Auckland International Airport Limited (known as an 18% shareholding).

The options are for council to sell all, some, or none of its shares.

*If council sells **all** its shares, council debt and the interest on that debt would reduce the most.*

*If council only sells **some** of its shares so that it keeps a 10% shareholding, council debt and interest would reduce but by less. **A** 10% shareholding would mean council would still own enough of Auckland International Airport to stop other companies from buying or controlling the Airport company.*

Refer to correction below on the highlighted statement*

If council sells only some or none of its shares, it will need to increase rates more than 4.66% and/or borrow more than \$75 million additional debt. Selling no shares would mean the largest increases in rates and/or debt.

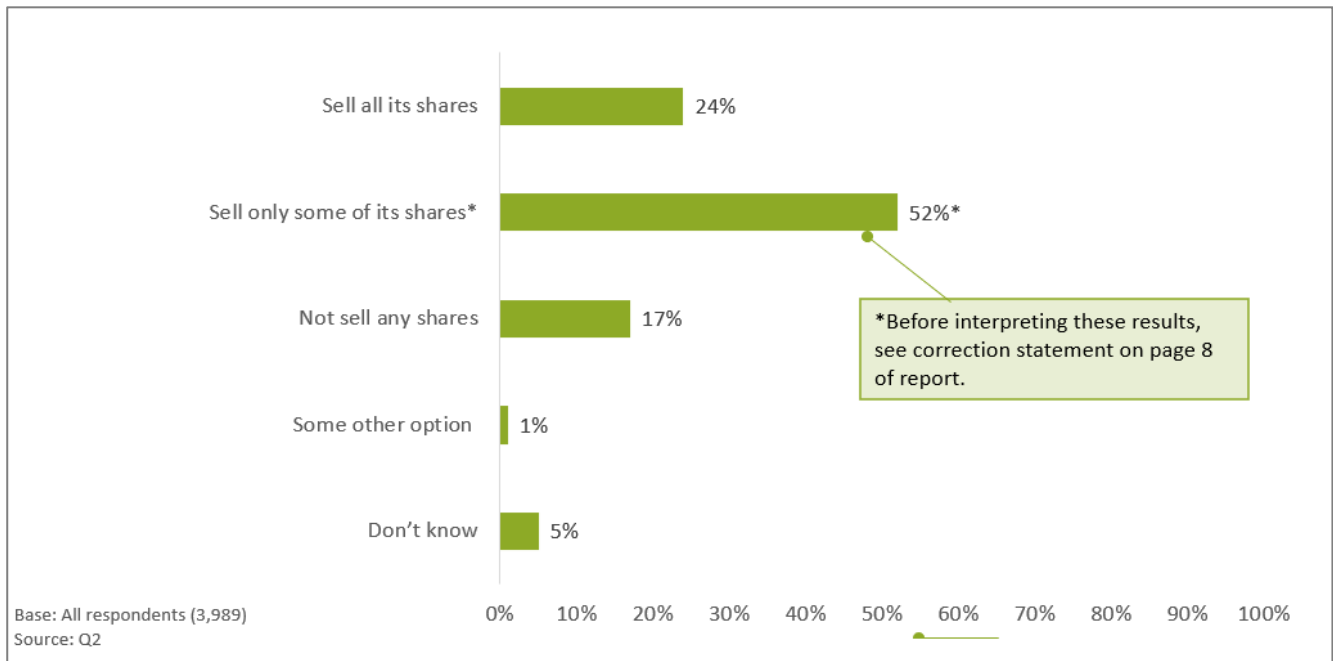
Do you think council should...

- *Sell all its shares*
- *Sell only some of its shares*
- *Not sell any shares*
- *Some other option (please tell us)*
- *Don't know*

***Correction statement for reader to consider in interpreting the survey results:** This statement was incorrect. A 10% shareholding would not prevent someone from acquiring 51% or 75% of the shares, and therefore taking majority or total control of the company. Majority control (51%) gives certain abilities such as passing majority votes at shareholder meetings and appointing directors. A 10% shareholding could prevent a 100% takeover under the provisions of the takeovers code (as a 10% shareholder can't be forced to sell their shares under the code) but it could not necessarily block a 100% takeover by way of a "scheme of arrangement" which requires a court order, and approval of only 75% of the shareholding votes cast. Note, as AIAL's shares are currently widely held, in practice it may be difficult for anyone to achieve the requisite 90% or 75% shareholder approval for a takeover, and council could use any shares it retains to vote against a takeover even if it cannot block one alone. Additionally, a foreign entity could not obtain a 25% interest in AIAL without national interest approval under the Overseas Investment Act.

Results are presented overleaf.

Graph 4: Support for Auckland Council selling its shares in Auckland international Airport Limited



In response to the question asked, around three quarters (76%) support council selling shares. Support is stronger for selling 'some' of the shares (52%) than all shares (24%).

Demographic analysis shows that:

- Support for selling all the shares is higher among:
 - Males (27% vs 22% of females)
 - Asian Aucklanders (30%, vs 13% of Pasifika, 20% of Māori, and 23% of NZ Europeans)
- Support for selling some of the shares is higher among:
 - Females (56% vs 47% of males)
- Support for selling none of the shares is higher among:
 - Males (20% vs 15% of females)
 - Pasifika, Māori and NZ Europeans (22%, 20% and 18% respectively, vs 13% of Asian Aucklanders).

There are no clear pattern by age or income, other than that the lowest income households were more likely to say they don't know (12% vs 5% on average).

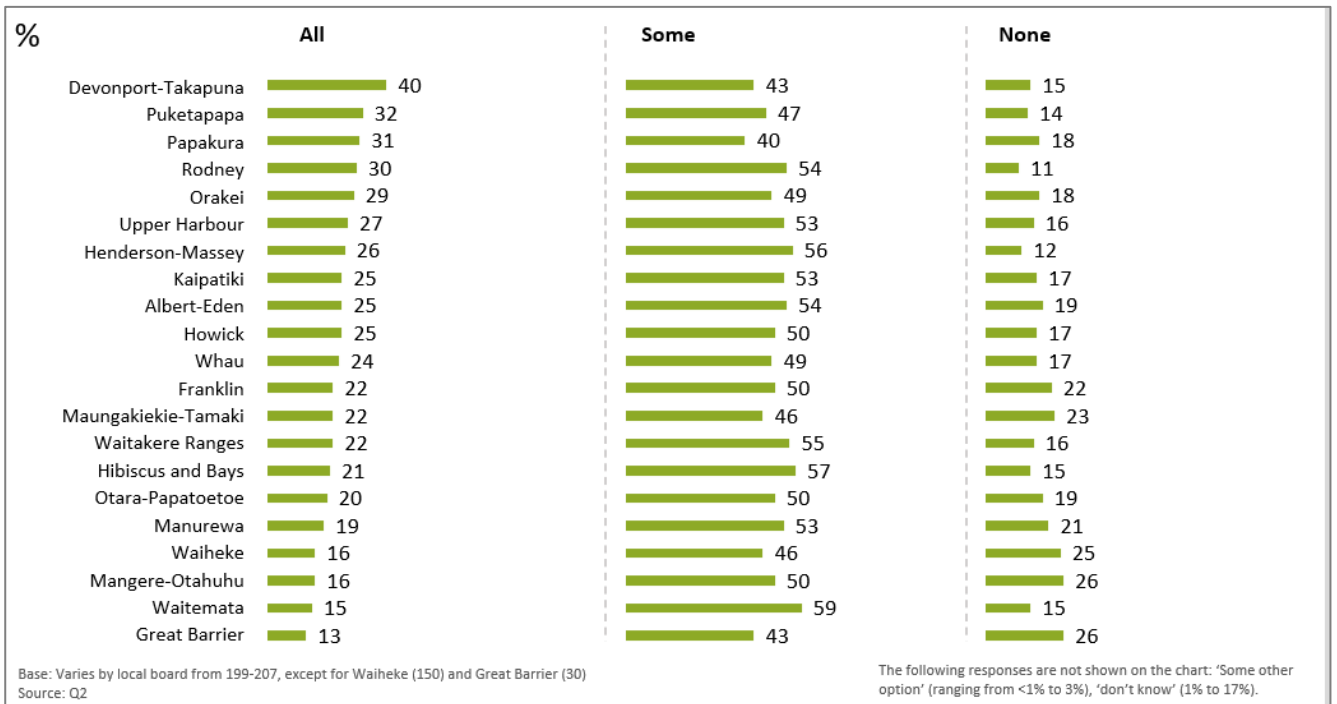
Level of support by region

The next two charts (overleaf) show support levels for the proposed sale of Auckland International Airport Limited shares by local board area and sub-region. These charts highlight that:

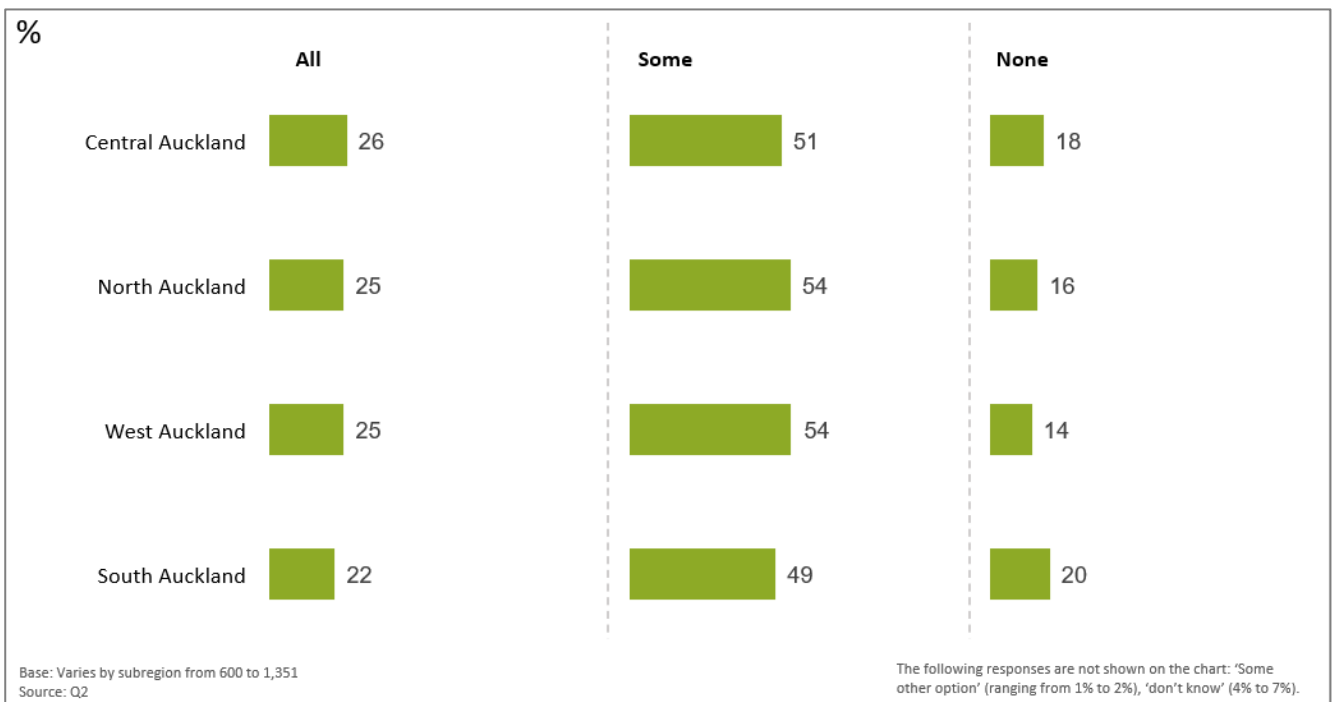
- Support for selling all shares of Auckland International Airport Limited is highest among residents of Devonport-Takapuna (40%), Puketāpapa (32%) and Papakura (31%).
- Support for selling some Auckland Airport shares is higher than 50% in nine local boards, and highest among residents of Waitemātā (59%), Hibiscus and Bays (57%) and Henderson-Massey (56%).
- At the sub-region level, support for selling all share is highest in Central Auckland (26%), and lowest in South Auckland (22%).

- There is less variation at a sub-region level. Overall, South Auckland is less supportive of selling the shares (although 71% still support selling some or all shares).

Graph 5: Support for Auckland Council selling its shares in Auckland international Airport Limited by local board



Graph 6: Support for Auckland Council selling its shares in Auckland international Airport Limited by sub-region



Aucklanders' level of support for the proposed increase in rates and debt

This section details Aucklanders' support for council's proposal on rates and debt increases.

Respondents were asked about the proposal using a series of questions. This was needed due to the complexity of the topic, the need to ask questions that were understood in both the online and phone survey settings, and the need to have a consistent set of options that broadly aligned with the consultation options. First, all respondents were asked:

This next question is about rates and debt.

Auckland Council is proposing:

- *A total rates increase of around 4.66% per year (or \$154 a year) for the average value residential property, and*
- *To increase how much debt council borrows by up to \$75 million.*

Do you think council should...

- *Proceed with these proposed increases to rates and debt*
- *Proceed with some other option (we'll cover this more shortly)*
- *Don't know*

Respondents who preferred 'some other option' were then asked:

You chose another option. Do you think council should...

- *Increase rates by less than 4.66%, and borrow more than \$75 million additional debt*
- *Increase rates by 4.66%, but borrow more than \$75 million additional debt*
- *Increase rates by more than 4.66% (if you choose this, we'll ask you about debt separately)*
- *Some other option (please tell us)*
- *Don't know*

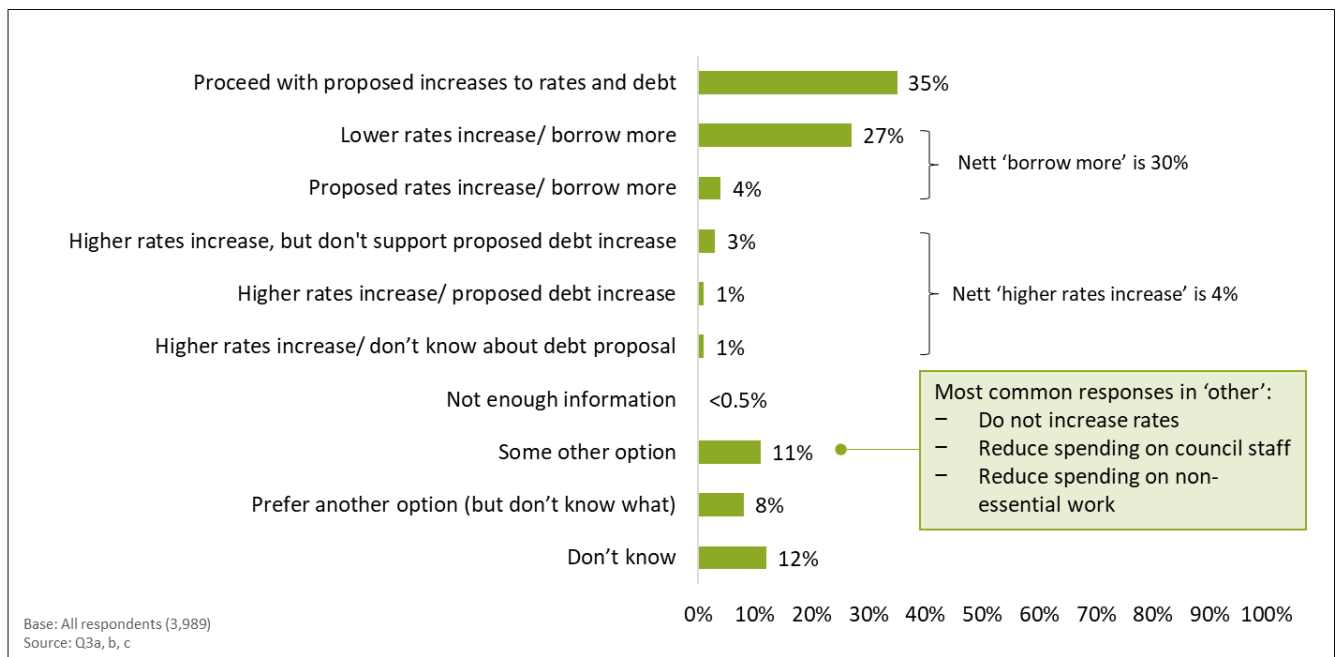
Respondents who support increasing rates by more than 4.66% were then asked:

If council increases rates by more than 4.66% would you support them borrowing additional debt up to \$75 million?

- *Yes*
- *No*
- *Don't know.*

Results are presented overleaf. All percentages are based on all respondents so that response categories can be compared.

Graph 7: Support for Auckland Council's proposal for increasing rates and debt



Thirty five percent of Aucklanders support Auckland Council's proposed increases to rates and debt. The most popular alternative is to borrow more (30%), especially to enable a lower rates increase. Overall, 4% suggest a rates increase higher than the proposed increase of 4.66%.

Demographic analysis shows that support for council's proposed increases to rates and debt is higher among:

- Males (39% vs 31% of females)
- Older Aucklanders (46% of those aged 60+ vs 32% of those aged under 60)
- NZ European Aucklanders (41% vs 29% of Māori, 24% of Pasifika, and 24% of Asian Aucklanders)
- Higher income households (40% with household incomes over \$200,000, vs 34% of household incomes up to \$200,000).

Support for an alternative of making more use of debt is higher among:

- Aucklanders aged under 60 (33%, vs 22% of those aged 60+)
- Asian Aucklanders (39%, vs 27% of the rest of Aucklanders).

The following groups were more likely to say they don't know, or prefer another option but don't know what that might be:

- Females (23%, vs 15% of males)
- Pasifika and Māori (27% and 25% respectively, vs 17% of NZ European Aucklanders, 20% of Asian Aucklanders and 14% of those with another ethnicity).
- Low income households (31% of those with up to \$30,000 annual household income, vs 18% of those with higher household incomes).

The reasons respondents gave for preferring 'some other option' (11%) are summarised in the table below. Percentages are based on the total sample.

Table 1: Most common 'other' options suggested by residents

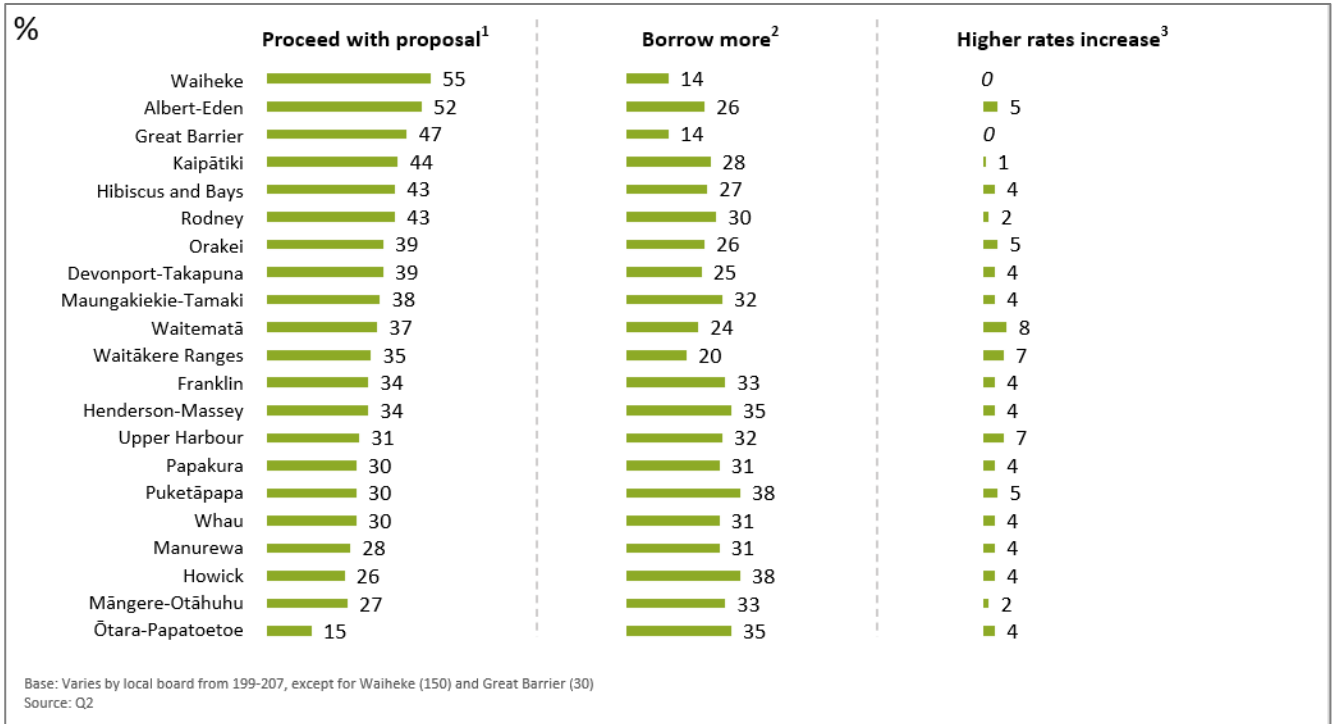
	%
Do not increase rates	4%
Nett: Reduce spending on Council staff e.g., reduce staff level, contractors, decrease staff salaries, office expenditure	3%
Nett: Reduce spending on non-essential work e.g., Reduce funding for events, festivals, light rail or stick to core activities	3%
Increase rates by less than 4.66%	1%
Increase debt / borrow more	1%
Do not borrow anymore, reduce existing debt or borrow a lesser amount	1%
Reduce spending on public transport / Auckland Transport	1%
Stop wasting money	1%
Find another solution	1%
Cost of living is high now / people are having a tough time	1%
Poor decision making / mismanagement by Council	1%
Other	1%
<small>*Percentages sum to more than 11% as multiple responses were allowed. Themes expressed by less than 1% of respondents not included. Base: All respondents (3,989). Source: Q3b</small>	

Level of support by region

The next two charts (overleaf) show support levels for Auckland Council's proposal for increasing rates and debt by local board area and sub-region. These charts highlight that:

- Over half of residents in Waiheke (55%) and Albert Eden (52%) support the proposal to increase rates and debt.
- Support for the proposal is lowest among residents of Ōtara-Papatoetoe (15%). Just over one in four residents of Howick (26%), Māngere-Ōtāhuhu (27%) and Manurewa (28%) support the proposal.
- At the sub-region level, support for the proposal is highest in North Auckland (40%) and Central Auckland (40%), and lowest in South Auckland (25%).

Graph 8: Support for Auckland Council’s proposal for increasing rates and debt by local board



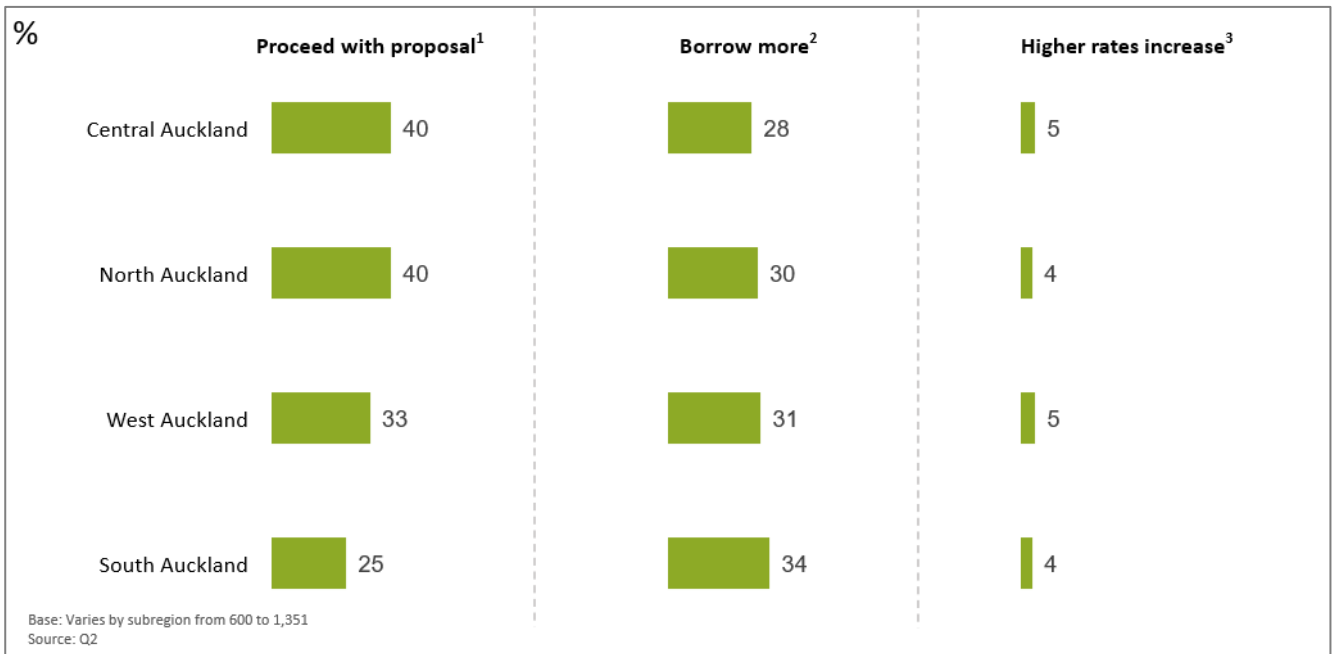
¹% of respondents who support council’s proposal to increase rates and additional debt.

²% of respondents who think council should borrow more than \$75 million additional debt and either increase rates by 4.66% or more than 4.66%.

³% of respondents who think council should increase rates by more than 4.66% and either support the debt proposal, don’t support the debt proposal, or don’t have a view on the debt proposal.

The following responses are not shown on the chart: ‘some other option’, ‘prefer another option but don’t know what’, ‘don’t know’, and ‘not enough information to answer question’.

Graph 9: Support for Auckland Council’s proposal for increasing rates and debt by sub-region



¹% of respondents who support council’s proposal to increase rates and additional debt.

²% of respondents who think council should borrow more than \$75 million additional debt and either increase rates by 4.66% or more than 4.66%.

³% of respondents who think council should increase rates by more than 4.66% and either support the debt proposal, don’t support the debt proposal, or don’t have a view on the debt proposal.

The following responses are not shown on the chart: ‘some other option’, ‘prefer another option but don’t know what’, ‘don’t know’, and ‘not enough information to answer question’.

Aucklanders' level of support for the future storms proposal

This section examines Auckland Council's proposal to increase its funding to prepare for and respond to future storms.

Respondents were asked:

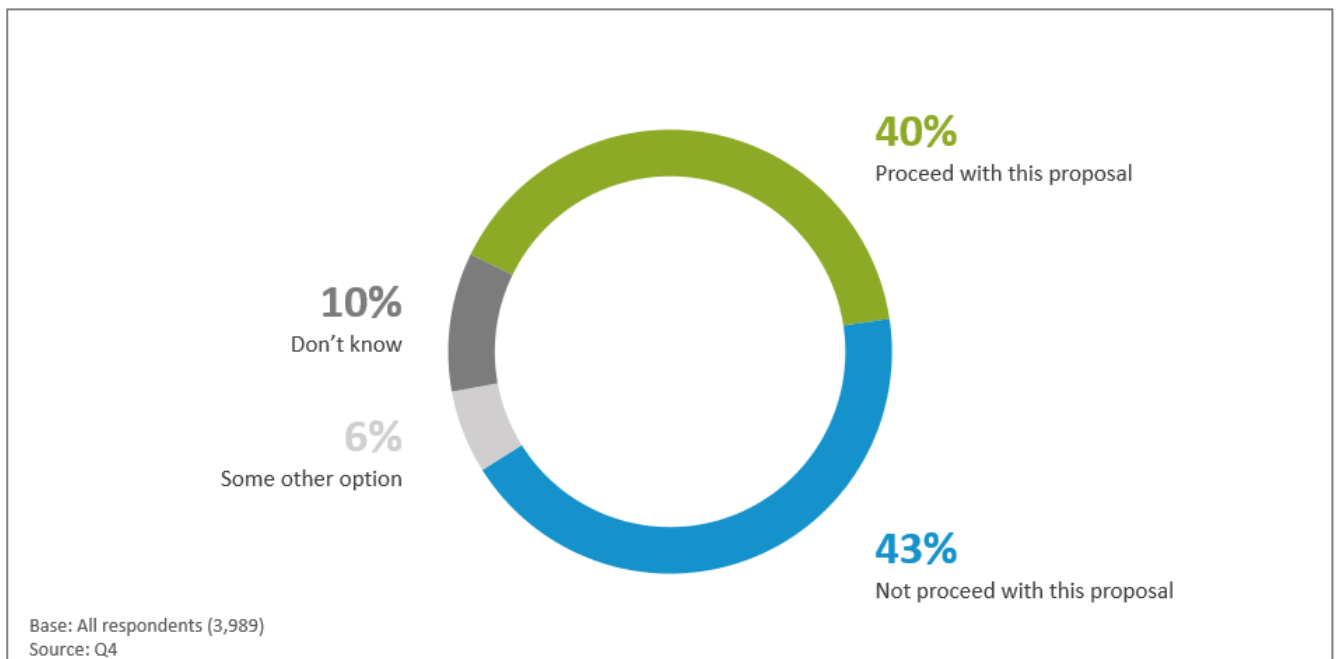
Council is proposing to increase its operating budgets by around \$20 million each year to improve its ability to prepare for and respond to future storms. This would likely mean an additional 1% rates increase (on top of the 4.66% rates increase explained earlier).

Do you think council should...

- Proceed with this proposal
- Not proceed with this proposal
- Some other option (please tell us)
- Don't know

Results are presented below.

Graph 10: Support Auckland Council's future storm proposal



Opinion is fairly evenly split, with 40% supporting the proposal and 43% opposing it.

Demographic analysis shows that support for the proposal is higher among:

- Older Aucklanders (50% of those aged 65+ vs 39% of under 65s.)

Conversely, opposition to the proposal is higher among:

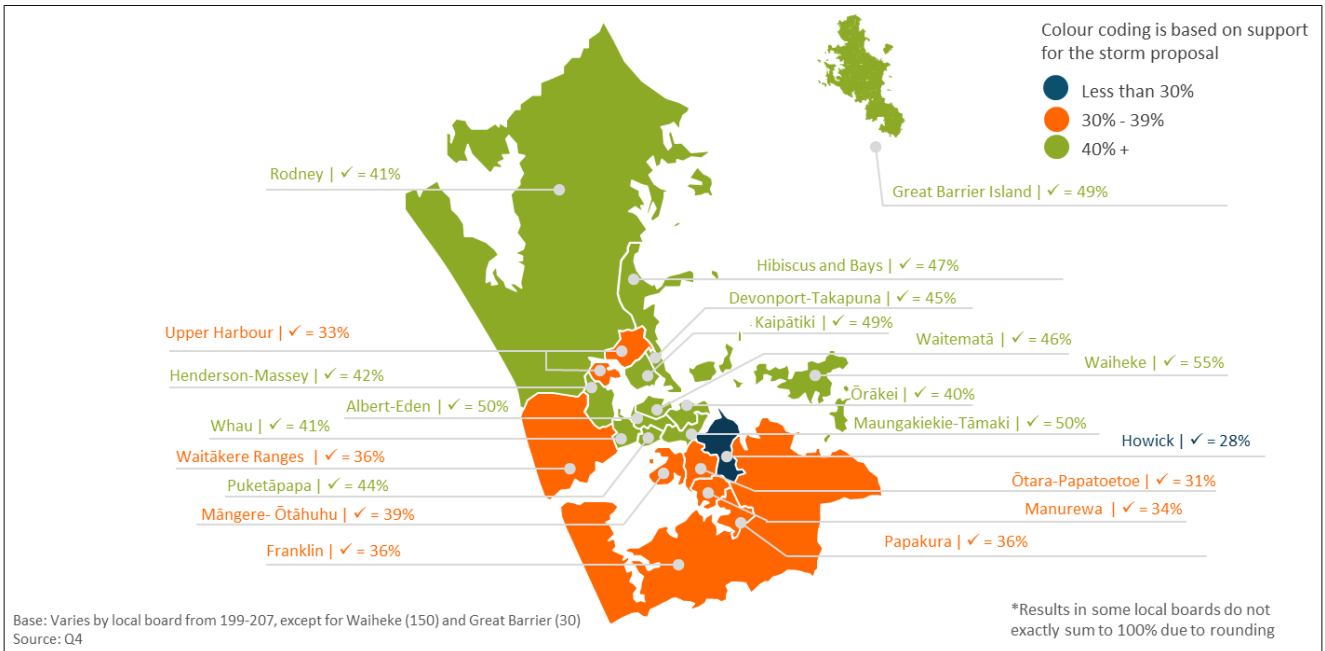
- Aucklanders under 65 years (45%, vs 33% of those aged 65+)
- Asian Aucklanders (56%, vs 38% of NZ Europeans, 41% of Māori, 42% of Pasifika, and 42% of other ethnic groups).

Level of support by region

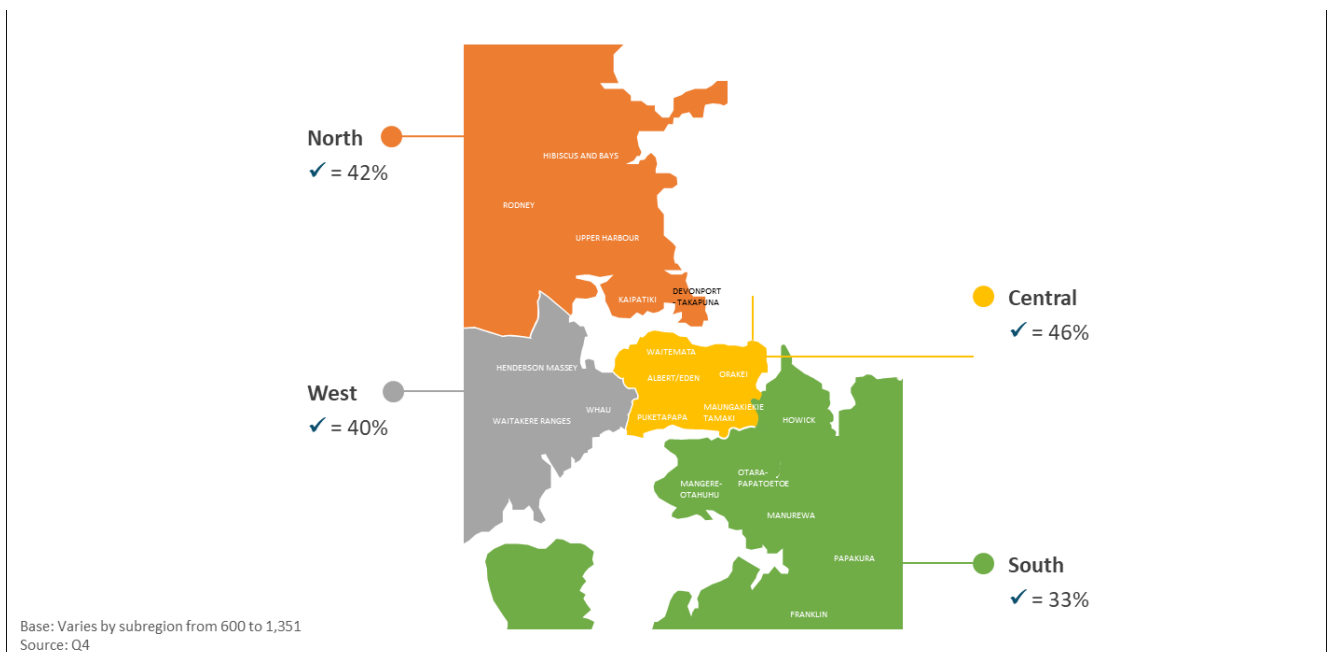
The next two charts show support levels for Auckland Council’s future storms proposal by local board area and sub-region. These charts highlight that:

- Over half of Waiheke residents (55%), and half of residents of Maungakiekie-Tāmaki (50%) and Albert-Eden (50%), support the storms proposal.
- Support for the proposal is lowest among residents of Howick (28%).
- At the sub-region level, support for the storms proposal is lowest in South Auckland (33%).

Graph 11: Support Auckland Council’s future storm proposal by local board



Graph 12: Support Auckland Council’s future storm proposal by local board sub-region



Appendix A: Cognitive testing

Cognitive pretesting procedures were enacted to ensure that the amount of information provided was sufficient for most respondents and that the subject matter was expressed in a manner that was non-biased, easily digested, and able to be understood by the general public.

The cognitive pretesting interviews involved individual online interviews which lasted up to an hour each. Experienced researchers undertook the cognitive testing.

In total, five cognitive interviews were conducted with participants ranging in age, gender, income and ethnicity. Subsequent to conducting these interviews, a team of experienced researchers from Kantar Public reached a consensus that the most significant design issues regarding the survey had been identified. Evidence of this was presented to the reviewer from the University of Auckland and to Senior Research staff at Auckland Council. Throughout the cognitive pretesting procedure, very small modifications to the questionnaire were undertaken to provide greater clarity in wording.

Appendix B: Sample profile

Demographic profiles of the unweighted and weighted samples are provided below.

Demographic profile of sample

Table 2: Sample profile

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	1716	43%	1946	49%
Female	2267	57%	2041	51%
Another gender	6	*	2	*
Age				
18 – 24 years	594	15%	640	16%
25 – 29 years	335	8%	347	9%
30 – 34 years	210	5%	338	8%
35 – 39 years	254	6%	439	11%
40 – 44 years	302	8%	370	9%
45 – 49 years	285	7%	330	8%
50 – 54 years	297	7%	332	8%
55 – 59 years	307	8%	310	8%
60 – 64 years	307	8%	252	6%
65 – 74 years	624	16%	395	10%
75 – 84 years	387	10%	200	5%
85 years or over	83	2%	35	1%
Refused	4	*	1	*
Ethnicity				
NZ European / Pakeha	2523	63%	2279	57%
Māori	435	11%	379	10%
Chinese	314	8%	412	10%
Indian, Pakistani or Sri Lankan	343	9%	398	10%
Other Asian group	182	5%	236	6%
Samoan	185	5%	244	6%
Cook Island Māori	67	2%	83	2%
Tongan	67	2%	83	2%
Niuean	46	1%	67	2%
Other Pacific Island group	56	1%	64	2%
Other European group	176	4%	156	4%
New Zealander/Kiwi	36	1%	25	1%
Another ethnic group (specify)	28	1%	24	1%
Refused	12	*	7	*
Household size				
One	590	15%	368	9%
Two	1303	33%	887	22%
Three	775	19%	944	24%
Four	715	18%	863	22%
Five	359	9%	587	15%
Six or more	241	6%	339	8%
Refused	6	*	1	*

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	n	%	n	%
Household income				
\$30,000 or less	437	11%	279	7%
\$30,001-\$50,000	446	11%	367	9%
\$50,001-\$70,000	474	12%	440	11%
\$70,001-\$100,000	589	15%	706	18%
\$100,001-\$150,000	731	18%	947	24%
\$150,001 to \$200,000	447	11%	608	15%
Over \$200,000	402	10%	580	15%
Don't know	416	10%	57	1%
Refused	47	1%	6	*
Sub-region				
Central Auckland	1351	34%	1245	31%
North Auckland	1008	25%	1015	25%
South Auckland	1030	26%	1104	28%
West Auckland	600	15%	625	16%
Local Board				
Albert-Eden	200	5%	260	7%
Devonport-Takapuna	200	5%	150	4%
Franklin	200	5%	186	5%
Great Barrier	30	1%	3	*
Henderson-Massey	200	5%	291	7%
Hibiscus and Bays	201	5%	268	7%
Howick	200	5%	358	9%
Kaipātiki	200	5%	230	6%
Māngere Ōtāhuhu	201	5%	179	4%
Manurewa	200	5%	222	6%
Maungakiekie-Tamaki	201	5%	195	5%
Ōrakei	200	5%	219	5%
Ōtara Papatoetoe	200	5%	202	5%
Papakura	199	5%	139	3%
Puketāpapa	200	5%	151	4%
Rodney	207	5%	168	4%
Upper Harbour	200	5%	163	4%
Waiheke	150	4%	25	1%
Waitākere Ranges	200	5%	129	3%
Waitematā	200	5%	245	6%
Whau	200	5%	205	5%

Base: All respondents (3,989)

Source: S1, S2, S4, S6, S7

* denotes a % between 0.0% and 0.5%

Appendix C: Questionnaire (online version)

AUCKLAND COUNCIL 2023 ANNUAL BUDGET RESEARCH – ONLINE VERSION

First, we have some questions to ensure we survey a wide range of people.

S1. Are you...

Male	1
Female	2
Another gender	3

S2. What is your age?

Under 18 years	SCREEN OUT
18 – 24 years	1
25 – 29 years	2
30 – 34 years	3
35 – 39 years	4
40 – 44 years	5
45 – 49 years	6
50 – 54 years	7
55 – 59 years	8
60 – 64 years	9
65 – 74 years	10
75 – 84 years	11
85 years or over	12

S3. Are you a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident?

Yes	1	
No	2	SCREEN OUT

S4. Which of the following ethnic groups do you belong to?

Please select all that apply.

NZ European / Pakeha	1
Māori	2
Samoan	3
Cook Island Māori	4
Tongan	5
Niuean	6
Another Pacific Island group (please tell us)	7
Chinese	8
Indian, Pakistani or Sri Lankan	9
Another Asian group (please tell us)	10
Middle Eastern / Latin American / African	11

Another European group (please tell us)	12
Another ethnic group (please tell us)	13

S5 Which **suburb** do you **live in**?

Please type in your suburb and select the option that best applies.

[PROGRAMMER NOTE – SHOW SUBURB LIST AS DROP DOWN BOX IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER. INCLUDE ‘I don’t live in the Auckland region’ and ‘I’d prefer not to say’ as single response codes outside of the drop down box]

<INSERT SUBURB LIST>	1	
None - I don't live in the Auckland Region	2	SCREEN OUT
I'd prefer not to say	3	SCREEN OUT

PROGRAMMER NOTE – THE FOLLOWING AREA BOARDS ARE THE QUOTAS WHICH ARE THEN LINKED FROM SUBURB LIST

QUOTAS – MAX n=205 per area board below

Albert-Eden	1
Aotea / Great Barrier	2
Devonport-Takapuna	3
Franklin	4
Henderson-Massey	5
Hibiscus and Bay	6
Howick	7
Kaipātiki	8
Māngere Ōtāhuhu	9
Manuwera	10
Maungakiekie-Tamaki	11
Ōrākei	12
Ōtara-Papatoetoe	13
Papakura	14
Puketāpapa	15
Rodney	16
Upper Harbour	17
Waiheke	18
Waitakere Ranges	19
Waitemata	20
Whau	21

PROGRAMMER NOTE – AUTO CODE LOCAL BOARD INTO THE FOLLOWING WIDER AUCKLAND AREAS

Central Auckland	1
East Auckland	2
Gulf Islands	3
North Auckland (Includes Rodney and North Shore)	4
South Auckland (Includes Manukau, Papakura and Franklin)	5
West Auckland	6

S6. Including yourself, how many people usually live in your household?

One	1
Two	2
Three	3
Four	4
Five	5
Six or more	6

S7. This question just helps to ensure we survey a wide range of people. Which of the following best describes your **annual household income, before tax?**

Please consider all sources of income including any salary or wages, self-employed income, child support payments, money from the Government, and investments, etc.

If you're unsure, your best estimate is fine.

\$30,000 or less	1
\$30,001-\$50,000	2
\$50,001-\$70,000	3
\$70,001-\$100,000	4
\$100,001-\$150,000	5
\$150,001 to \$200,000	6
Over \$200,000	7

NEW SCREEN

These next questions have some long explanations, so please read them very carefully.

NEW SCREEN

Auckland Council has faced ongoing budget challenges for some time. Following recent rapid increases in inflation and interest rates, they now need to address a \$295 million **shortfall** in the forecast budget for the 2023/2024 financial year.

To do this, Auckland Council is proposing that it:

- Reduces council operating costs by \$125 million
- Increases rates by 4.66%
- Sells council's shares in Auckland International Airport
- Borrows no more than \$75 million of additional debt.

All four of these proposals are needed for council to address the \$295 million shortfall. If any one of these doesn't go ahead, council will need to look at bigger rates increases or more debt.

Click the green arrow to continue

DS: SET UP TIME STAMP. IF LESS THAN 10 SECONDS BRING SHOW: You looked at the information we just showed you very quickly. It's important that you read all of the information we just showed you before answering the question. Please go back and read it all.

NEW SCREEN

Q1a First let's look at Auckland Council's proposal to reduce its **operational spending** by \$125 million.

Council is going to share resources across council organisations and reduce staff to save money.

Council is proposing 6 other ways to reduce spending. We want to know if you support all, some or none of these ways:

DS: ROTATE ORDER OF LIST:

- Maintaining the current reductions in public transport services.
- Reducing funding for economic development and tourism promotion, and increasing prices at Auckland's zoo, art gallery, stadiums and venues.
- Reducing regional events, community programmes and social services.
- Reducing local board funded activities.
- Reducing regional contestable grants.
- No longer providing the small number of council delivered early childhood education services (affecting around 300 children).

If council does **not** go ahead with some of these reductions in spending, it would need to increase rates by more than 4.66% and/or borrow more than \$75 million of additional debt.

What do you think council should do?

DS: REVERSE ORDER OF FIRST THREE OPTIONS FOR 50% OF SAMPLE

Proceed with all the proposed spending reductions	1
Proceed with some reductions	2
Don't proceed with any reductions	3
Some other option (please tell us)	4
I need more information to give my opinion	5
Don't know	6

DS: SET UP TIME STAMP. IF LESS THAN 15 SECONDS BRING SHOW: You looked at the information we just showed you very quickly. It's important that you read all of the information we just showed you before answering the question. Please go back and read it all.

ASK IF CODE 5 AT Q1A, OTHERWISE GO TO Q2.

Q1b What would you like more information on?

Sharing resources across council organisations and staff reductions	1	CONTINUE
Public transport services	2	CONTINUE
Funding for economic development and tourism promotion	3	CONTINUE
Regional events, community programmes and social services	4	CONTINUE
Local board funded activities	5	CONTINUE
Regional contestable grants	6	CONTINUE
Early childhood education	7	CONTINUE
Something else	8	GO TO Q2
Don't know	9	GO TO Q2

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. DS: ONLY SHOW INFORMATION IF CODED AT Q1B.

SHOW IF CODE 1 AT Q1B:

Auckland Council is reducing costs by simplifying management structures and sharing resources more across the council group (including Auckland Transport, other Council Controlled Organisations and Ports of Auckland). There will be a reduction in staff. This will save around \$40 million.

SHOW IF CODE 2 AT Q1B:

Maintaining the currently reduced number of public transport services will save \$21 million.

SHOW IF CODE 3 AT Q1B:

Reducing funding for economic development, tourism promotion, and increasing pricing at key venues will save \$27.5 million.

SHOW IF CODE 4 AT Q1B:

Reducing regional services will save \$20 million. This would affect things like community and education programmes, arts and culture programmes, events, economic development, and other social services.

SHOW IF CODE 6 AT Q1B:

Regional contestable funds are available to community groups. Reducing these would save \$3 million.

SHOW IF CODE 7 AT Q1B:

Around 300 children are enrolled at Auckland Council delivered early childhood education services. Withdrawing this funding would mean these children would need to receive services from one of the other 1400 providers available in Auckland. The council would save around \$1 million.

DS: SHOW LOCAL BOARD INFORMATION RELATING TO RESPONDENT'S LOCAL BOARD (DETERMINED AT S5) ONLY IF CODE 5 AT Q1B.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Albert-Eden Local Board

Under this proposal Albert-Eden Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as arts, events, sports and activities in parks, environmental restoration, support to community groups, facility and park maintenance, library hours, increased community lease fees and possible venue closure.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Franklin

Under this proposal Franklin Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, community-led environmental initiatives,

programmes such as community gardens, development of recreational facilities, recreational activities at our parks, facility and park maintenance and charges to community leaseholders.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts – Hibiscus and Bays Local Board

Under this proposal Hibiscus and Bays Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, events and volunteer programmes, environmental initiatives, libraries hours, less mowing of parks and reserves and possible closure of some community venues.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Henderson-Massey Local Board

Under this proposal Henderson-Massey Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, events (including local ANZAC events), programmes in community facilities, arts centre and partners, libraries hours and environmental initiatives.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Howick

Under this proposal Howick Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$1.1 million. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, events, volunteer programmes, libraries hours, environmental initiatives including education, restoration and pest control, less mowing of parks and reserves and possible closure of some community venues.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Devonport-Takapuna

Under this proposal Devonport-Takapuna Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, volunteer programmes, youth services, events (delivered by community or business organisations), arts centre and partners, libraries hours and services, ecological restoration and pest control, mowing levels, charges to community leases and licences.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Kaipatiki

Under this proposal Kaipatiki Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$700,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, volunteer programmes, youth services, events (delivered by community or business organisations), community facilities, arts centres and partners, libraries hours and services, environmental initiatives, mowing levels, business support, charges to community leases and licences.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Manurewa

Under this proposal Manurewa Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$700,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, volunteer programmes, youth services, local events, community facilities services, arts centres, placemaking and local economic initiatives, support for community organisations, libraries hours and services, environmental initiatives and charges to community leases and licences.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Papakura

Under this proposal Papakura Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$900,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community and volunteer programmes, youth initiatives, arts venues and funding, facilities hours and service levels, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives and charges to community leases and licences.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Puketāpapa

Under this proposal Puketāpapa Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$500,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community programmes, youth initiatives, arts, facilities hours and service levels, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives and charges to community leases and licences.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Rodney

Under this proposal Rodney Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$900,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community programmes, arts,

libraries hours and service levels, plans / policy development for the future of local assets, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Upper Harbour Local Board

Under this proposal Upper Harbour Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$500,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community programmes, arts, libraries hours and service levels, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives and community lease charges.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Waitākere Ranges

Under this proposal Waitākere Ranges Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community houses and hall providers, arts including local galleries, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives including invasive weeds, pest control and wildlife protection and local parks planning.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Waitematā Local Board

Under this proposal Waitematā Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community programmes, arts including local facilities, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives including invasive weeds, ecological restoration and pest control, libraries hours and services and local parks planning.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Ōrākei Local Board

Under this proposal Ōrākei Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$700,000 million. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community and volunteer programmes, youth initiatives, arts and culture, park/open space maintenance, environmental initiatives including ecological restoration and pest control, community centre and libraries hours and service levels, and community leasing charges.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Whau Local Board

Under this proposal Whau Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$700,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community programmes, arts and culture, environmental initiatives, libraries, parks and community facilities, local planning and development and community leases.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Aotea / Great Barrier

Under this proposal Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$300,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants, environmental restoration and pest control programmes, water quality and waste minimisation programmes.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Waiheke

Under this proposal Waiheke Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$400,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community and volunteer programmes including youth, environmental initiatives, library hours and parks/open space mowing levels.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Māngere-Ōtāhuhu

Under this proposal Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$1.2 million. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community and volunteer programmes including youth, environmental initiatives, library hours, community lease charges and parks/open space mowing levels.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Otara-Papatoetoe

Under this proposal Otara-Papatoetoe Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$900,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community and

volunteer programmes including youth, environmental initiatives, library hours, community lease charges and parks/open space mowing levels.

Further information on Local Board operating cuts - Maungakiekie-Tāmaki

Under this proposal Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board would need to reduce planned spend by around \$800,000. This would mean stopping, reducing or increasing fees for services such as local community grants and events, community and volunteer programmes including youth, arts centre programming, environmental initiatives including ecological restoration and pest control, library hours and parks/open space mowing levels.

Q1c Having read that extra information, are you now able to answer the question about spending reductions, or would you like to move to the next topic?

Answer the question about spending reductions	1	ASK 1d
Move to the next topic	2	GO TO Q2

Q1d In answering this question, please think about all of the proposed spending reductions we told you about earlier. What do you think council should do?

DS: REVERSE ORDER OF FIRST THREE OPTIONS FOR 50% OF SAMPLE

Proceed with all the proposed spending reductions	1
Proceed with some reductions	2
Don't proceed with any reductions	3
Some other option (please tell us)	4
I need more information to give my opinion	5
Don't know	6

Q2 This next question is about Auckland Council's approximate 18% of shares in Auckland International Airport Limited (known as an 18% shareholding).

The options are for council to sell all, some, or none of its shares.

If council sells **all** its shares, council debt and the interest on that debt would reduce the most.

If council only sells **some** of its shares so that it keeps a 10% shareholding, council debt and interest would reduce but by less. A 10% shareholding would mean council would still own enough of Auckland International Airport to stop other companies from buying or controlling the Airport company.

If council sells only some or none of its shares, it will need to increase rates more than 4.66% and/or borrow more than \$75 million additional debt. Selling no shares would mean the largest increases in rates and/or debt.

Do you think council should...

DS: REVERSE ORDER OF FIRST THREE OPTIONS FOR 50% OF SAMPLE

Sell all its shares	1
Sell only some of its shares	2
Not sell any shares	3
Some other option (please tell us)	4
Don't know	5

DS: SET UP TIME STAMP. IF LESS THAN 10 SECONDS BRING SHOW: You looked at the information we just showed you very quickly. It's important that you read all of the information we just showed you before answering the question. Please go back and read it all.

Q3a This next question is about rates and debt.

Auckland Council is proposing:

- A total rates increase of around 4.66% per year (or \$154 a year) for the average value residential property, and
- To increase how much debt council borrows by up to \$75 million.

Do you think council should...

Proceed with these proposed increases to rates and debt	1
Proceed with some other option (we'll cover this more shortly)	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF CODE 2 AT Q3a:

Q3b You chose another option. Do you think council should...

Increase rates by less than 4.66%, and borrow more than \$75 million additional debt	1
Increase rates by 4.66%, but borrow more than \$75 million additional debt	2
Increase rates by more than 4.66% (if you choose this, we'll ask you about debt separately)	3
Some other option (please tell us)	4
Don't know	5

ASK IF CODE 3 (OPTION C) AT Q3b, OTHERWISE GO TO Q4:

Q3c If council increases rates by more than 4.66% would you support them borrowing additional debt up to \$75 million?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	4

Q4 Council is proposing to increase its operating budgets by around \$20 million each year to improve its ability to prepare for and **respond to future storms**. This would likely mean an additional 1% rates increase (on top of the 4.66% rates increase explained earlier).

Do you think council should...

Proceed with this proposal	1
Not proceed with this proposal	2
Some other option (please tell us)	3
Don't know	4

That's the end of the survey. Thank you!