



# **Local Businesses Budget Consultation for Stroud District Council**

## **Research Results**

**Prepared for Stroud District Council**

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## **Local Business Budget Consultation for Stroud District Council**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **E1: Background**

Stroud District Council wish to engage the public and local businesses in a consultation exercise when setting their budgets. The Council used to consult with the local business community through annual public meetings; however these were not well attended. In 2006 it was decided that a survey, under taken by Research Box<sup>1</sup> would produce more representative results. Foster and Brown Research, a local research company based in Tetbury, were commissioned to undertake the 2007 consultation with 100 local businesses using a telephone interview survey. This report contains the principle findings arising from this consultation. 70% of the businesses employed 5 or more people (larger businesses) and 30% had less than employees (small businesses).

#### **E2: Scope**

The research, conducted in October 2007, consisted of a 20 minute telephone interview with 100 owners (or equivalent) of companies in Stroud District. 70% of the businesses employed 5 or more people. The respondents were chosen from a pseudo-random sample database of over 1000 (from a total of approximately 3000 businesses in the district). The database was constructed to include proportionally larger companies (the majority of companies in Stroud district employ less than 5 people) and included a good geographical spread across the district. Over 70% of them have been established in Stroud District for more than 10 years.

The demographics of the respondents were similar to 2006<sup>1</sup> with the exception respondent position. In 2006 59% of respondents described themselves as owners and equivalent compared to 79% in this study. The questionnaire (annex 1 of this report) was shorter than the previous year and some sections were revised. However many questions were similar in order to allow cross comparison and trend analysis. It was split into five themes

- The perception of Stroud District Council
- Stroud District Council policies
- Environmental issues
- Business Advice and Support
- Overall Opinions

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<sup>1</sup> Research Box Ltd., Business Consultation 2006; Report of Research November 2006.

## E3: Summary of Main Findings

### E3.1: Perception of Stroud District Council

When asked how well the Council performs in a list of services the Council provides, the average rating was 65% or 3.24 on a five point scale where 4 is good and 3 is neither good nor bad. An average of 38% of respondents rated services as good or very good and less than 13% rated them as poor or very poor overall. Recycling, pest control, refuse collection and street cleaning were seen to be good or very good by nearly two thirds of the respondents, public conveniences and car parks however were rated poor or very poor by over a quarter of the respondents.

The response is very similar to last year's (2006) Business consultation with exceptions of pest control, recycling and town centre improvements all of whom have increased their ratings by 8 or 9 percentage points.

When asked about areas where the Council should be spending **more**, nearly 30% of the respondents replied "none". The main areas mentioned for more spending were car parks, recycling and composting and street cleaning. There was no clear consensus on where to spend **less** money on services.

### E3.2: Stroud District Council Policies

The respondents were asked to give a priority rating to following key Council policy areas:

- Regeneration
- Environment
- Affordable Housing
- Community Safety
- Healthy Living

All were rated as high priority and there was a slight increase on last years ratings. The environment and regeneration were perceived to be the highest priority and healthy living the lowest. However healthy living was still rated as high or very high priority by 86% of the respondents who expressed a view.

When asked for suggestions on economic regeneration for the district the most popular theme was help for small businesses and ideas to attract new businesses, regeneration, planning and value for money was also mentioned.

The respondents were divided in their opinion as to whether there are sufficient business premises available locally. Smaller businesses were more likely to agree that there were. When

asked what type of business premises should be provided, small scale light industrial units, small office premises and mixed units were popular. Large scale industrial units were rejected by nearly 70% of respondents.

The respondents were also divided on their [perception of the Council's planning policy, with smaller businesses slightly more negative than larger ones. 40% of respondents believed the Council restricts businesses through planning - this is an increase from 30% from last year.

### **E3.3: Environmental issues**

The majority (63%) of respondents were satisfied that the Council is improving the environment. Only 13% disagreed with this view. Larger businesses were more positive than smaller ones. In line with last year's survey an overwhelming proportion (80%) of businesses were willing to invest in solutions to combat climate change – only 12% were not willing to invest.

In addition:

- 77% were interested in information on improving environmental performance
- 94% are aware of “duty of care” regarding waste
- 87% recycle business waste

### **E3.4: Business advice and support**

In line with last year's research, the respondents were in the main satisfied with the advice they had received from the following organisations:

- Federation of small businesses
- Business Link
- Gloucestershire First
- The Chamber of Commerce/Trade
- South West RDA
- Stroud District Council

Business Link had been used the most – by over half, 58% of the respondents. They along with the federation of small businesses (used by 46%) and the chamber of commerce (used by 26%) received the highest satisfaction rating.

Stroud District Council had been approached by just over a quarter of respondents (27%) and 85% were satisfied or highly satisfied.

### **E3.4: Overall Opinions**

The respondents were asked if they agreed, or disagreed with a series of statements;

*Overall, I am satisfied with the way Stroud District Council runs things* (64% agreed, 13% disagreed)

I believe that Stroud District Council is businesslike and efficient (58% agreed, 19% disagreed)

Overall, the services that Stroud District Council provide have improved over the past few years (56% agreed, 10% disagreed)

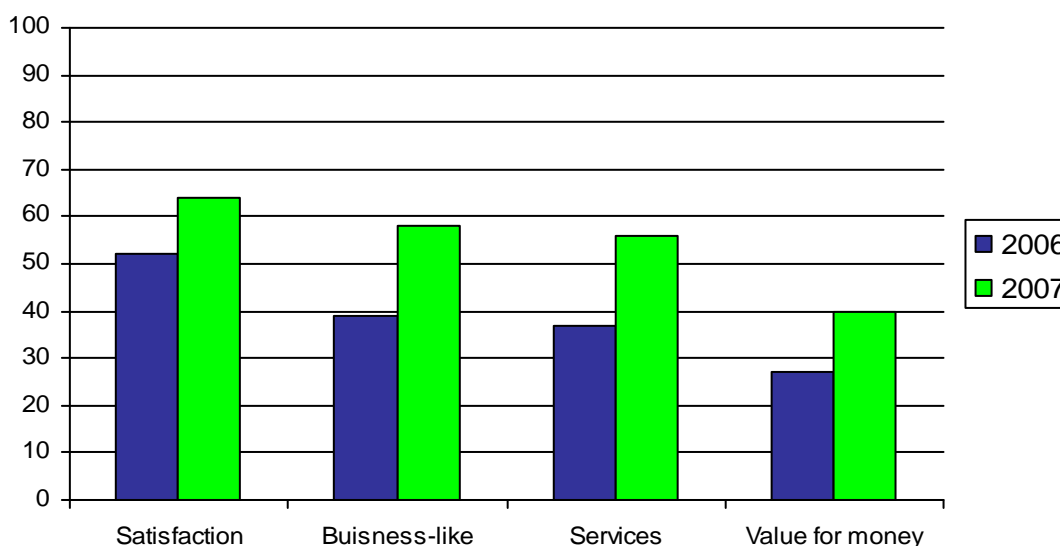
I think we get value for money from Stroud District Council (40% agreed, 32% disagreed)

Generally speaking larger business owners were more positive than smaller ones.

This is the only area where there has been a consistent significant change in the respondent's ratings from last year's survey. Opinions have become significantly more positive across all of the scales.

**Figure E1: Change in agreement ratings in the 2006 and 2007 business surveys**

% respondents



## **1: Background**

### **1.1: Aims and Methodology**

The Council wish to engage the public and local businesses in a consultation exercise when setting their budgets. The Government Council Tax Consultation Guidelines for Local Authorities<sup>2</sup> states:

*"The public now expect to be consulted in a way that it perhaps did not before. Consultation does not remove responsibility for making final judgement about the spending level of tax to set.... Asking the public makes a contribution by giving you more information on priorities and how far people are prepared to go to fund public services in your areas"*

To this end Stroud District Council commissioned Foster and Brown Research in September 2007 to undertake consultation with local businesses. The purpose of this research exercise was to consult a range of local businesses to of Stroud district about the Council budget. The methodological approach for this research was a quantitative telephone survey with 100 business owners (or equivalent) which was conducted in September and early October 2007. The respondents were from businesses of different sizes in the district by telephone. The businesses where from a range of rural and town locations from various segments of the business community in order to gain a good representation of opinions rather than taking a purely random sample. The questionnaire used is shown in Annex 1 of this document.

The interviews took an average 17 minutes to complete. Often three or four phone calls were made in order to contact the owner or equivalent, organise an appropriate time for the interview and finally conduct the interview. The businesses that Foster and Brown Research contacted were picked pseudo-randomly from a database of 1000 contact numbers that we compiled from a larger commercial database (2,500) picked to represent the diversity of the district.

The interviews were conducted by a small team of three professional market research telephone interviewers, with an average experience of over ten years in this field. They were supervised and organised by Judy Barrett based in Kent, who also conducted back-checks (part of our quality control processes) on approximately 10% of the respondents. This process allowed separation of the fieldwork and total objectivity in the interviewing, analysis and subsequent reporting which has been completed by Pauline Foster, author of this report.

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<sup>2</sup> The Government's Council Tax Consultation – Guidelines for Local Authorities: Office of Department of the deputy Prime Minister, July 2002 <http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/>

## 1.2: Demographics

### 1.21: Sector (n = 100)

Sector	%
Retail Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles & Motorcycles	12
Manufacture of Electrical Machinery and Apparatus Not Elsewhere Specified	8
Education	5
Recreational, Cultural & Sporting Activities	5
Health & Social Work	4
Manufacture Not Elsewhere Classified	4
Marketing, market research advertising, PR, business consultancy & related	4
Computer & Related IT Activities	3
Construction	3
Financial - Except Insurance & Pension Funding	3
Hotels & Restaurants	3
Manufacture of Pulp, Paper and Paper Products	3
Publishing, Printing & Reproduction of Recorded Media	3
Sale, Maintenance & Repair of Motor Vehicles & motorcycles	3
Agriculture & Hunting	2
Travel Agencies	2
Electricity, Gas, Steam & Hot Water Supply	2
Manufacture of Basic Metals	2
Manufacture of Food Products and Beverages	2
Manufacture of Machinery & Equipment Not Elsewhere Specified	2
Recycling	2
Enamelling/painting	2
Insurance & Pension Funding	1
Manufacture of Chemicals & Chemical Products	1
Manufacture of Fabricated Metal Products	1
Manufacture of Furniture	1
Manufacture of Medical, Precision & Optical Instruments, Watches & Clocks	1
Other Service Activities	1
Real Estate Activities	1
Architects	1
Auctioneers	1
Consultancy for systems engineering	1
Distribution of garden machinery	1
Drains	1
Garage doors - supply and installation	1
Kitchen planning and installing	1
Packaging	1
Packers	1
Security	1
Solicitors	1
Tools	1
Pest Control	1
Video filming	1

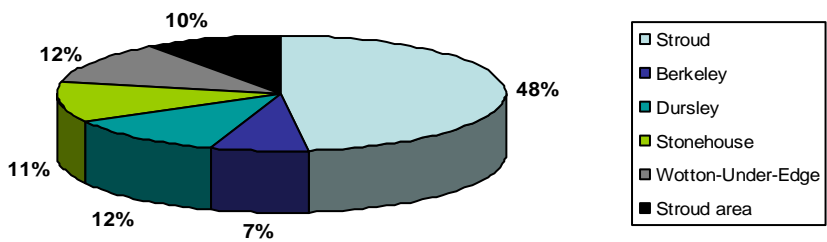
### 1.22: Gender (n = 100)

Male	Female
73%	23%

### 1.23: Location of Businesses

Berkeley & area – 7 (7%)  
Dursley and Cam & area - 12 (12%)  
Stonehouse - 11 (11%)  
Stroud 48 – ( 48%)  
Area surrounding Stroud – 10 (10%)  
Wotton-under-Edge & area – 12 (12%)

Figure 1: Location of Businesses surveyed



#### Full list of locations

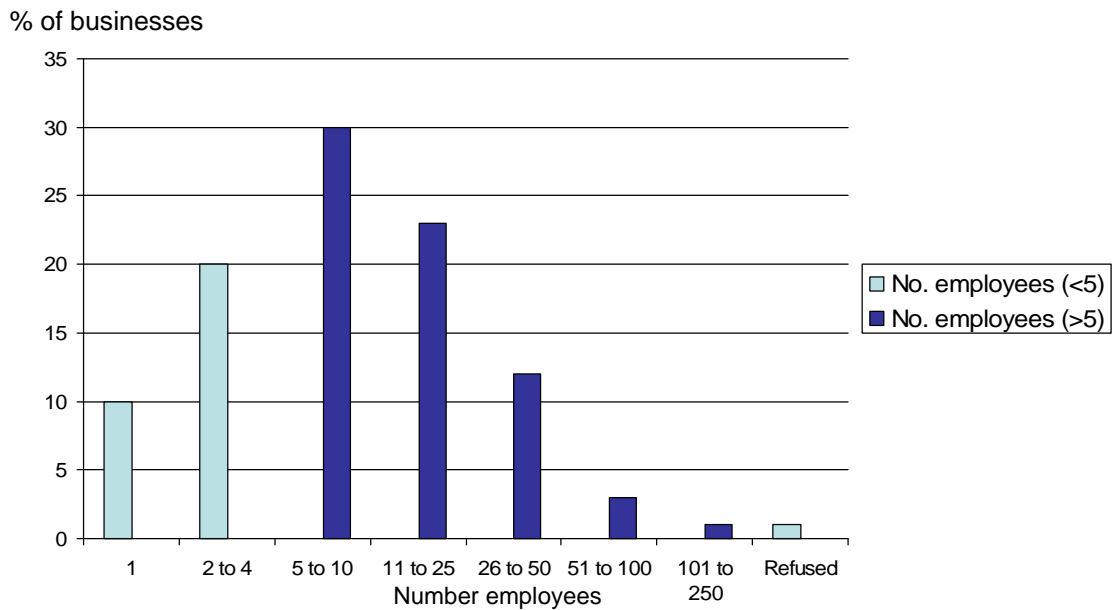
- Aston Down
- Berkeley
- Brimscombe
- Cam
- Chalford
- Coaley
- Dursley
- Forcester
- Leonard Stanley
- Nailsworth
- Nupend
- Owlpen
- Painswick
- Sharpness Docks
- Sheepscombe
- Stonehouse
- Stroud
- Uley
- Wotton-under-Edge

**1.24: Number of employees (n = 100)**

70% of the businesses we interviewed employed 5 or more people

Number of Employees	%
1	10
2 - 4	20
5 - 10	30
11 - 25	23
26 - 50	12
51 - 100	3
101 - 250	1
Refused	1

**Figure 2: Distribution of the number of employees in businesses surveyed**



**1.25: Number of years the business has been located at present site**

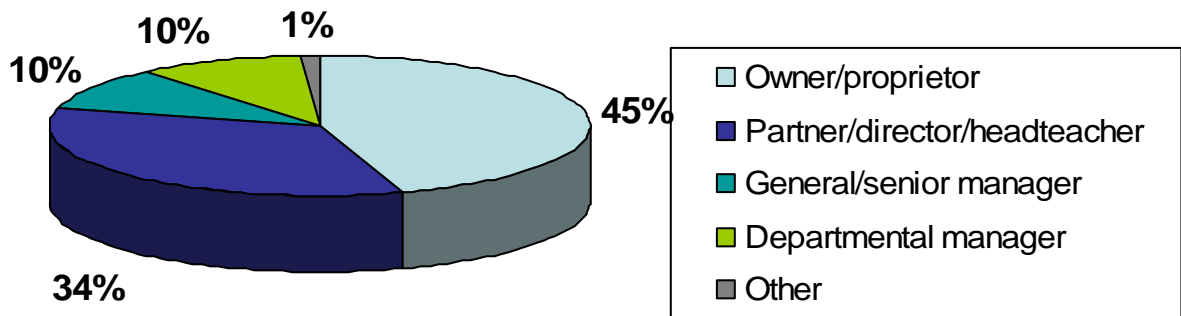
Nearly 70% of the businesses surveyed have been on their present site for more than 10 years

Number of Years in location	Count	%
Less than 1 year	1	1
1 year	2	2
2 -5 years	15	15
6 – 10 years	12	12
11- 20 years	23	23
Over 21 years	46	46
Refused	1	1

### 1.26: Respondent position

Nearly 80% of the respondents were owners or equivalent of their businesses. This is an increase of 20% from last years survey.

Figure 2: Respondent position in business



## 2: Results

### Section 1: Council Performance

#### 1.1: How well does the Council Perform? (Q6)

The respondents were asked to rate their perception of the Council's performance in a list of services on a 5 point verbal scale, very good to very poor. We have converted these ratings into numerical values, where

Very Good = 5

Good = 4

Neither Good nor Poor = 3

Poor = 2

Very Poor = 1

Overall the results are very similar to last year's survey, with the same services (recycling, and refuse collection) receiving good ratings by over two thirds of respondents.

Service	Very Good	Good	Neither	Poor	Very Poor	Overall Rating*	Rating as %**
Car Parks	5	37	33	20	5	3.17	63.4
Community projects	3	26	61	10	0	3.22	64.4
Community safety	2	25	61	10	2	3.15	63.0
Concessionary fares	2	18	75	5	0	3.17	63.4
Social housing	0	24	65	9	2	3.11	62.2
Food, health & safety	4	43	51	2	0	3.49	69.8
Pest control	9	49	31	9	2	3.54	70.8
Grants to voluntary & community groups	1	17	78	4	0	3.15	63.0
Housing advice	1	23	71	5	0	3.20	64.0
Sport and leisure services	6	35	47	12	0	3.35	67.0
Licensing	3	36	65	2	0	3.34	66.8
Museum	7	32	54	5	2	3.37	67.4
Neighbourhood wardens	6	16	62	16	0	3.12	62.4
Planning & building control	3	42	32	16	7	3.18	63.6
Public conveniences	2	24	46	24	4	2.96	59.2
Recycling & composting	18	50	14	13	5	3.63	72.6
Refuse collection	12	53	17	13	5	3.54	70.8
Street cleaning	11	46	26	16	1	3.50	70.0
Tourist promotion	7	30	50	11	2	3.29	65.8
Town centre improvements	8	32	42	14	4	3.26	65.2

(\*Note overall rating is calculated with a maximum of 5)

(\*\* The % rating is calculated by assigning 5 a value of 100 and 1 a value of 20, therefore neither good nor poor is 60)

#### Rank order of ratings of Council Performance

Recycling & composting	72.6
Pest control	70.8
Refuse collection	70.8
Street cleaning	70.0
Food, health & safety	69.8
Museum	67.4

Sport and leisure services	67.0
Licensing	66.8
Tourist promotion	65.8
Town centre improvements	65.2
Community projects	64.4
Housing advice	64.0
Planning & building control	63.6
Car Parks	63.4
Concessionary fares	63.4
Community safety	63.0
Grants to voluntary & community groups	63.0
Neighbourhood wardens	62.4
Social housing	62.2
Public conveniences	59.2

**Frequency that services that were rated “Good” or “Very Good”**

Service	% of respondents who rated the service good or very good, 2006	% of respondents who rated the service good or very good, 2007
Car Parks	42	42
Community projects	28	29
Community safety	34	27
Concessionary fares	28	20
Social housing	23	24
Food, health & safety	49	47
Pest control	49	58
Grants to voluntary & community groups	23	18
Housing advice	(20)	24
Sport and leisure services	-	41
Licensing	36	39
Museum	43	39
Neighbourhood wardens	24	22
Planning & building control	46	45
Public conveniences	23	26
Recycling & composting	60	68
Refuse collection	63	65
Street cleaning	(56)	57
Tourist promotion	33	37
Town centre improvements	32	40

Only 18% of respondents rated grants to voluntary and community groups positively, however 78% rated this service as “neither” indicating that most respondents did not have personal knowledge of this particular service.

**Frequency that services that were rated “Poor” or “Very Poor”**

Service	% of respondents who rated the service poor or very poor
Car Parks	25
Community projects	10
Community safety	12
Concessionary fares	5

Service	% of respondents who rated the service poor or very poor
Social housing	11
Food, health & safety	2
Pest control	11
Grants to voluntary & community groups	4
Housing advice	5
Sport and leisure services	12
Licensing	2
Museum	7
Neighbourhood wardens	16
Planning & building control	23
Public conveniences	28
Recycling & composting	18
Refuse collection	18
Street cleaning	17
Tourist promotion	13
Town centre improvements	18

Over a quarter (28%) of respondents rated public conveniences as poor or very poor, although nearly an equivalent proportion (26%) cited them as good. 23% of the respondents rated planning and building control as poor or very poor, although 45% rated it as good or very good.

If we remove the “neither” scores from the analysis we are able to calculate the percentage of respondents who rated the services as either good and very good or poor and very poor in the table below.

Service	Good/ Very Good (%)	Poor/Very Poor (%)	Number of Respondents
Car Parks	62.7	37.3	67
Community projects	74.4	25.6	39
Community safety	69.2	30.8	39
Concessionary fares	80.0	20.0	25
Social housing	68.6	31.4	35
Food, health & safety	95.9	4.1	49
Pest control	84.1	15.9	69
Grants to voluntary & community groups	81.8	18.2	22
Housing advice	82.8	17.2	29
Sport and leisure services	77.4	22.6	53
Licensing	95.1	4.9	41
Museum	84.8	15.2	46
Neighbourhood wardens	57.9	42.1	38
Planning & building control	66.2	33.8	68
Public conveniences	48.1	51.9	54
Recycling & composting	79.1	20.9	86
Refuse collection	78.3	21.7	83
Street cleaning	77.0	23.0	74
Tourist promotion	74.0	26.0	50
Town centre improvements	69.0	31.0	58

Food health and safety and licensing are rated good or very good by over 95% of the respondents who expressed an opinion (over 40). The museum, concessionary fares, pest control, recycling and street cleaning were also rated highly. Public conveniences were rated as poor or very poor by over half of those who expressed an opinion.

## **1.2: Areas the Council should be spending more (Q7)**

In this research the respondents were asked if there were any areas the Council should be spending more or less in. They were asked to focus on the services the Council provides, rather than Council wages, pensions etc.

There wasn't an overwhelming service mentioned – over a third of the respondents thought nothing or would not express an opinion. The most frequently mentioned services were:

- Car Parks
- Recycling & composting
- Street cleaning
- Tourist promotion
- Town centre improvements

Although public conveniences were relatively perceived as “poor” they were only mentioned by less than 5% of respondents.

Areas Council Should Spend More	% frequency
Nothing/None/No	29.5%
Car Parks	8.9%
Recycling & composting	8.0%
Street cleaning	8.0%
Don't know/ not sure	8.0%
Tourist promotion	7.1%
Town centre improvements	7.1%
Community Safety	6.3%
Refuse collection	5.4%
Social housing	2.7%
Public conveniences	2.7%
Community Parks	1.8%
Planning & building control	1.8%
Food H&S	0.9%
Museum	0.9%
Everything	0.9%

### **Other improvements that could be made & related comments**

*Bus services in rural areas*

*Could do with some out of school projects for the children to stop them getting into of mischief*

*Get rid of the 'yobs' late at night*

*Industry*

*Make people aware of these services, I didn't know half of them*

*Make Stroud more of a bespoke town*

More street lights  
Need more public conveniences  
Parking in Wotton-under-Edge  
Regeneration  
Spend more in Dursley  
Sponsor more youth workers, invest in youth  
The centre of Dursley is badly run down  
These are consumer questions  
They take enough money as it is  
Tidy up Stroud  
Youth services

**Services Mentioned which are not Stroud District Council**

Flood defenses  
More police  
Recycling policies towards schools  
Support of schools

**1.3: Areas the Council should be spending less (Q8)**

The majority of respondents (83%) did not think the Council should be spending less on any services. A further 9% did not express an opinion.

Areas Council Should Spend Less	Count
Nothing/None/No	83
Don't know/ not sure	9
Grants to voluntary groups	1
Sport & leisure	1
Licensing	1
Neighbourhood Wardens (Community safety)	1
Town Centre Improvements	1

**Other comments made**

Probably on staff, they employ too many people  
Putting billboards in the middle of the road  
Spend less in Stroud  
Spend less money on jobs we don't need

## Section 2: Council Priorities

### 2.1: Priority Rating (Q9)

The respondents were asked their opinion on the level of importance each of five key areas.

Council Priority	Very low	Low	Neither	High	Very High	Overall rating*	Average %**
Regeneration	1	0	14	67	18	<b>4.01</b>	80%
Environment	0	2	9	63	26	<b>4.13</b>	83%
Affordable Housing	1	1	22	53	23	<b>3.98</b>	80%
Community Safety	0	6	20	52	22	<b>3.90</b>	78%
Healthy Living	0	10	27	53	10	<b>3.63</b>	73%

(\*The overall rating is calculated with a maximum of 5)

(\*\* 80% = High)

All of the priority areas were rated highly – environment and regeneration are the highest and healthy living the lowest. These ratings are generally higher than the 2006 survey.

Below is a table of the % of respondents who voted high/very or low/very low. The neither scores have been removed, but the pattern is similar with regeneration and the environment scoring highly and healthy living the lowest, however 86% of those who expressed a view (three quarters of respondents) rated healthy living as high or very high priority.

Council Priority	Low or Very low	High or Very High %	Number of respondents
Regeneration	1%	99%	<b>86</b>
Environment	2%	98%	<b>91</b>
Affordable Housing	3%	97%	<b>78</b>
Community Safety	8%	93%	<b>80</b>
Healthy Living	14%	86%	<b>73</b>

### 2.2: Ways Council should Promote Economic Regeneration (Q10)

The respondents were asked in what ways did they think the Council should be promoting economic regeneration. This was an “open field”, i.e. unprompted question.

A full list of responses is given in annex 2 of this document. We have ordered these into topic areas for the sake of clarity and analysis.

**Frequency of comments on suggestions on how the Council should promote economic regeneration (n = 96)**

Comments (Themes)	Frequency mentioned	% Frequency
Help for small businesses & ideas to attract new businesses	26	27%
Regeneration	17	18%
Planning	14	15%
Value for money	14	15%
Promotion	7	7%
Transport	6	6%
Other	12	13%

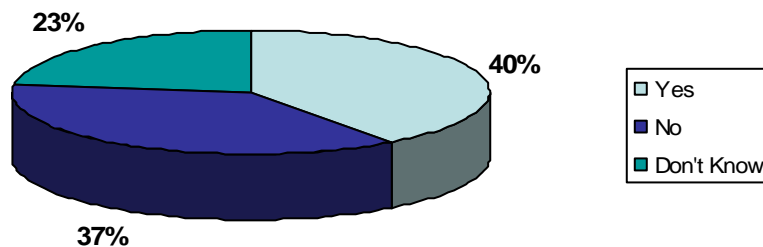
Just over a quarter of the suggestions related to helping small businesses and attracting new businesses into the area. Regeneration, planning and value for money suggestions were also frequently mentioned (15-18%), as were promotion of the area and transport issues (7%).

**2.3: Business Premises (Q11) (n = 100)**

The respondents were asked if they thought there sufficient / appropriate premises available locally to ensure businesses that could enable businesses to establish and grow.

The respondents were fairly evenly split with slightly more (40%) thinking there are sufficient, compared to those who thought not (37%)

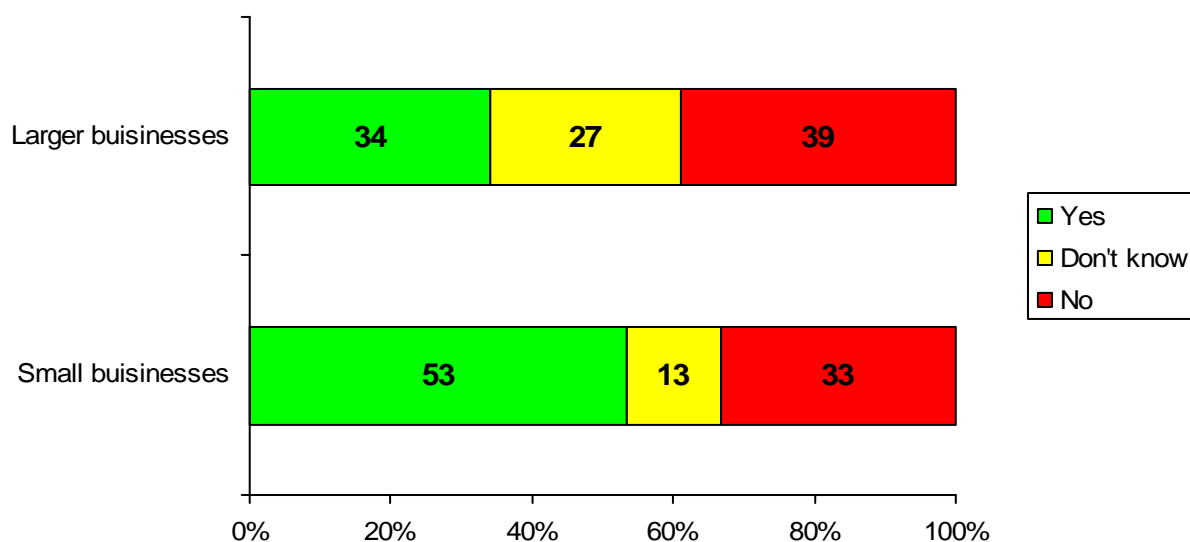
Are there sufficient / appropriate premises available locally?	Frequency %
Yes	40
No	37
Don't Know	23



**Figure 3: Agreement that there are sufficient business premises available locally**

However when we analyse the data by business size, smaller business (less than 5 employees) were much more satisfied – with over half of the respondents agreeing there are enough appropriate business premises available locally, where as only a third of larger business owners agreed with this statement.

**Figure: 4: Rating of sufficient business premises available locally by business size**

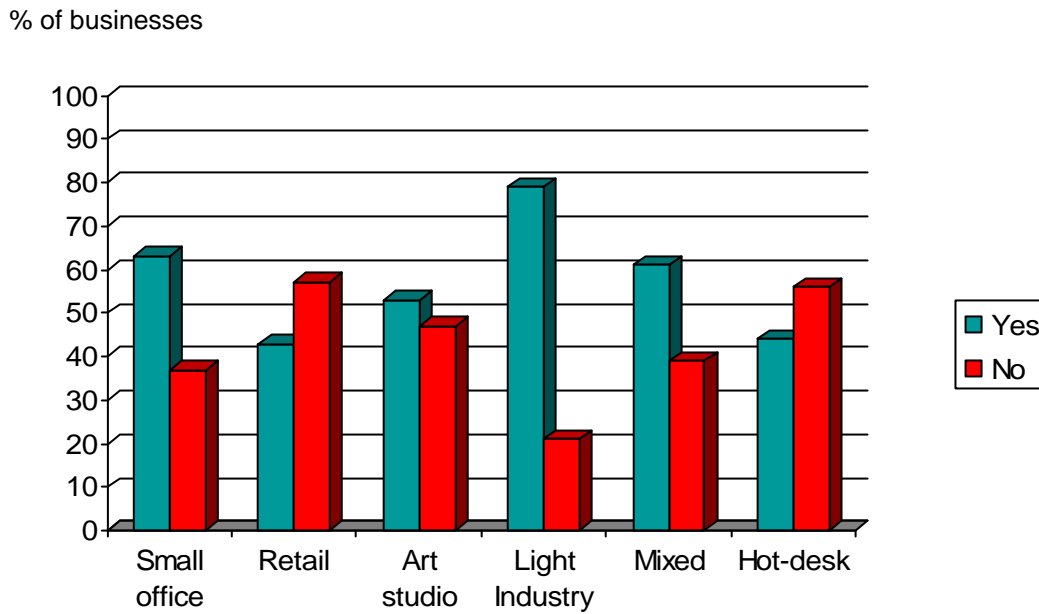


## 2.4: Business Accommodation (Q12)

The respondents were given a series of business accommodation options and asked which they thought the Council should provide.

Accommodation Type	YES (%)	NO (%)
Premises suitable for small office-based businesses	63	37
Retail premises	43	57
Studios suitable for arts & craft based businesses	53	47
Small-scale light industrial units	79	21
Large-scale industrial units	29	71
Mixed work/living units ( <i>note this is where someone lives in close proximity to the work unit</i> )	61	39
“Hot desk” office space, where a company can rent an office for a couple of hours at a time	44	56
None of these = 1,		
All of these = 1		

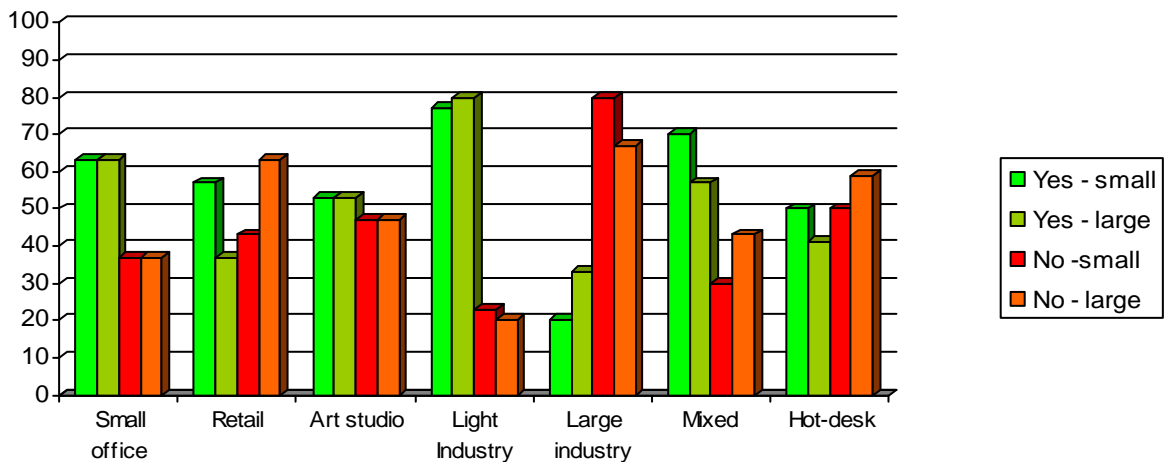
**Figure 5: Business accommodation wanted**



**Other suggestions**

- Workshop options
- Premises suitable for medium office-based businesses
- Promoting leisure facilities
- MOT stations
- Rural businesses

The most popular choices were accommodation for light industry and small office accommodation. Hot desk and retail outlets were not so popular. There were some differences between small and large businesses:



**Figure 6. Business accommodation wanted by business size**

Small businesses (less than 5 employees) tended to want retail spaces; where as larger business owners (more than 5 employees) did not. Smaller business owners were more likely to be in favour of hot desk and mixed accommodation than larger business owners.

## Planning Policies

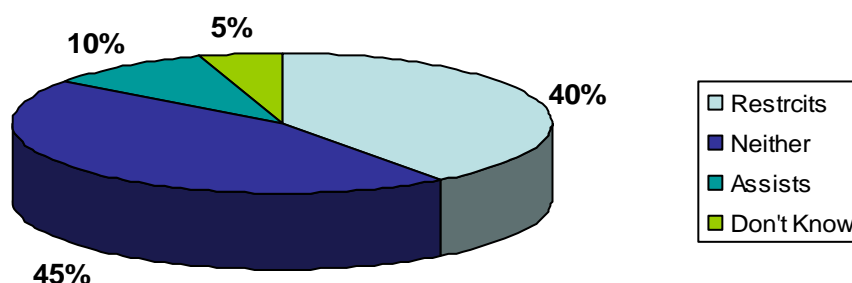
### 2.5: Does Council assist or restrict through planning policies? (Q13)

The respondents were asked if they thought the Council assists or restricts local businesses and organizations through its planning policies. Only 10% of respondents thought the Council assists local businesses. Nearly four times as many business owners thought the Council restricts local business rather than assists. However nearly half of the respondents felt the Council neither restricts or assists.

Generally restricts	Neither restricts nor assists	Assists	Don't Know
40	45	10	5

Overall score = 56% (i.e. slightly assists)

**Figure 7: Perception of Planning Permission**



The 40% proportion of respondents who believe the Council restricts businesses through planning is an increase on the 30% from last year.

The respondents were asked in what way they believed the Council assists or restricts local businesses in its planning policies. Those respondents who felt the Council assists reported that the Council were helpful, prompt and transparent. Those who felt the Council restricts businesses said they felt the Council were not helpful and had there were a number of respondents who had had

planning permission blocked. There were also negative comments about planning policies and red tape being a barrier.

### **Assists**

- *All enquiries are dealt with promptly*
- *Generally they do assist*
- *It's got quite a good policy in terms of business rates*
- *Maps out areas where it can help from the district plan*
- *Quite well known and transparent*
- *Reasonable consultation with businesses*
- *They approve a lot of what's given to them (2 respondents)*
- *They have reduced business rates*
- *We had a lot of help when starting out i.e. grant for listed buildings*

### **Restricts**

*Businesses can't always expand if they want to/can't get permission to expand (2 respondents)*

*By limiting the number of days we can operate as a salesroom, even though we are freehold (auctioneers)*

*General negative statement (2 participants)*

*Lots of planning issues in Aston Down, there's loads of space not being used here*

*Makes life difficult for rural businesses*

*Most planning requests have been turned down*

*Need to be more helpful, I've had to jump through hoops and there's too much red tape/they provide hurdles all the time and that's why we're looking to move out of the area/there's too much red tape, too restrictive in allowing businesses to expand (3 respondents)*

*No planning permissions here as we're in a green belt*

*Not a lot of help to small businesses, maybe employ local businesses to do work for them/they don't use the best qualities of the local population (2 respondents)*

*Not a lot of help, could give more incentives i.e. lower rent and rates for the short term to help businesses get started (4 respondents)*

*Not been helpful, we had to go to the Parish Council for information*

*Not encouraging to businesses in rural areas (2 respondents)*

*Not enough premises*

*Over regulation*

*Peculiar planning decisions*

*Planning battles with the council about rebuilding our premises, they were very unhelpful*

*Planning permission often not granted/not good at granting permission for things (2 respondents)*

*Protective of the green belt*

*Rates are too high*

*The length of time listed building planning consent takes to go through*

*The time and money they want, just to pass something [planning]*

*Their interpretation of policies is not always right (respondent did not wish to expand on this comment)*

*They are indecisive, the canal project is disastrous*

*They could be more helpful*

*They don't do anything to help small businesses*

*They don't want to change the purpose of our building*

*They have no positive policies at all*

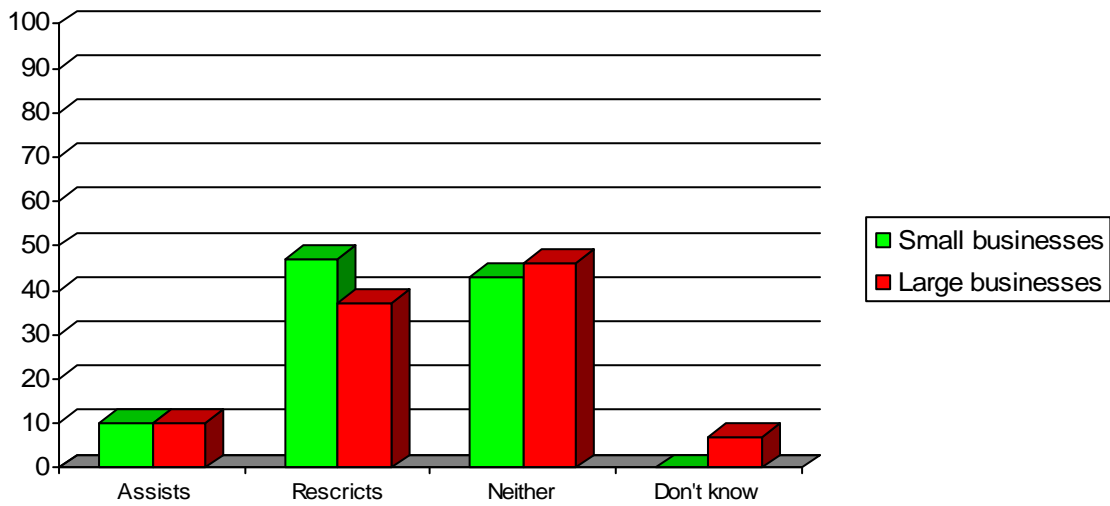
*They should have objectives to assist us*

*They're difficult about planning permission*

We have planning issues at the moment  
We're trying to turn sheds into office space and we're getting turned down

Small businesses (less than 5 people) were more likely to perceive the Council planning policies as restricting than larger business

**Figure 8 Perception of planning policies by business size**



### Section 3: Environment

The respondents were read the following statement and asked a series of questions about environmental issues.

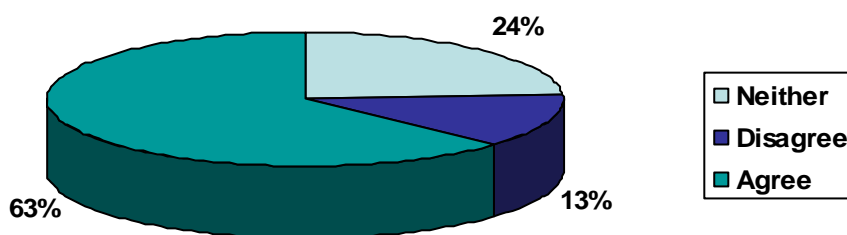
*“Stroud District Council is currently examining ways to address climate change issues. Improving energy efficiency, increasing the amount of renewable energy being produced (e.g. solar, wind and water power) and reducing the dependency on fossil fuels are all key objectives. The Council is also concerned about reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill.”*

#### 3.1: Perception of Council policy (Q23)

The respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement; *“Overall I am satisfied that Stroud District Council is improving the local environment”* the majority, 63%, of them agreed and only 13% disagreed.

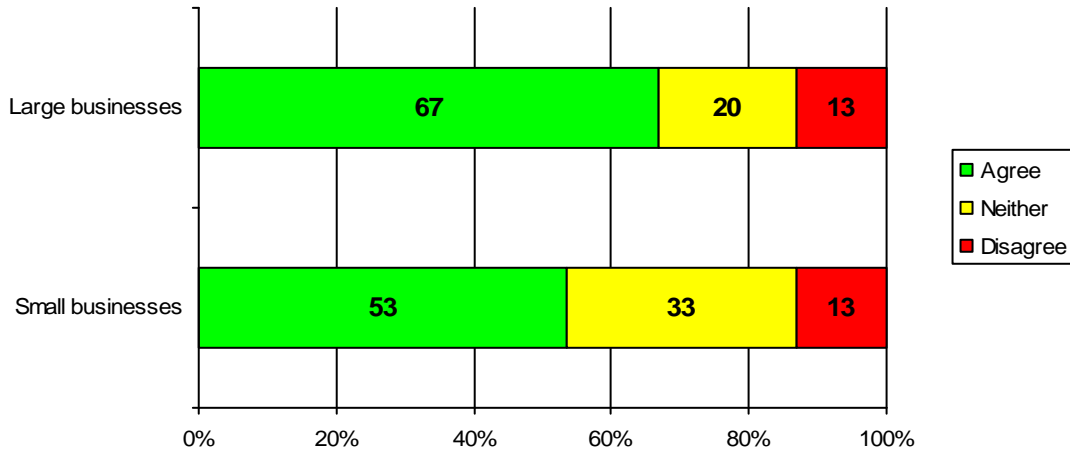
Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
Overall I am satisfied that Stroud District Council is improving the local environment	1	12	24	61	2

Figure 9: Agreement with the statement that Stroud District Council is improving the local environment



Owners of larger businesses were more likely to agree (67%) with this statement than smaller ones (53%). There was no difference in the proportion who disagreed (13%), but proportionally more smaller business owners neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 10 : Agreement by business size that the Council is improving the local environment



**3.2: Interest in investing in practical solutions to combat climate change investment (Q14)**

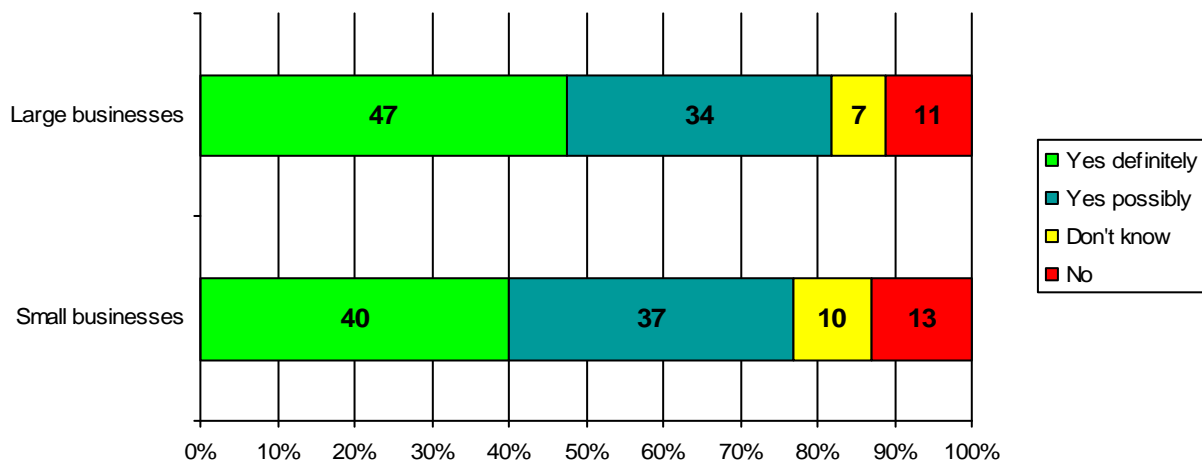
The respondents were asked if their business would be willing to invest impractical solutions to combat climate change.

Yes - definitely	Yes - possibly	No	Don't Know
45	35	12	8

An overwhelming 80% of businesses are interested in investing in practical solutions to combat climate change; this figure includes one company who are already investing in such measures. Only 12% are not willing to invest.

Larger businesses are more likely to definitely invest than smaller ones

Figure 11: Businesses willing to invest in practical solutions to combat climate change



In addition 77 (77%) respondents replied that they would be interested in receiving more information on improving their environmental performance of their business and only 23 respondents were not interested.

### **3.3: Awareness of Duty of Care responsibilities regarding waste (Q16)**

The respondents were asked if they were aware of their duty of care responsibilities regarding waste. An overwhelming majority, 94 (94%) businesses replied “yes” and only 6 (6%) businesses said they were not aware.

### **3.4: Awareness that there are local businesses that recycle commercial waste (Q17)**

The respondents were asked if they were aware that there are local businesses that recycle commercial waste. Again the vast majority - 93 (93%) respondents replied “yes” they were aware of this commercial service and only 7 (7%) businesses said they were not aware.

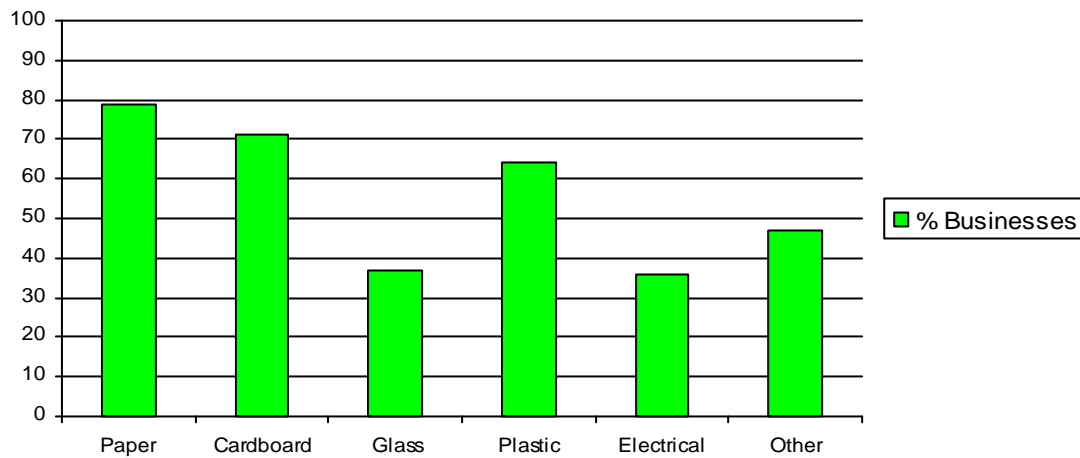
### **3.5: Recycling (Q18 and 19)**

The respondents were asked if they recycle business waste. Again a large majority (though slightly down on the previous questions) - 87 (87%) respondents replied “yes” and only 13 (13%) respondents said they did not recycle business waste. The types of materials they recycle is shown below

#### **Material that is recycled by businesses in Stroud District**

<b>Material Recycled</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Frequency %</b>
Paper	69	79%
Cardboard	62	71%
Glass bottles & jars	32	37%
Plastic	46	64%
Electrical Items	31	36%
Other (see below)	41	47%

**Figure 12: Materials recycled by businesses (87% of businesses)**



**Other items recycled**

- Acids (1 respondent)
- Aerosols (1 respondent)
- Batteries (3 respondents)
- Bricks (1 respondent)
- Cans (1 respondent)
- Cement (1 respondent)
- Computers (2 respondents)
- Fabric (2 respondents)
- Food waste (3 respondents)
- Furniture (1 respondent)
- Ink jet cartridges (3 respondents)
- Metals/Steel (7 respondents)
- Oil (3 respondents)
- Oil filters (1 respondent)
- Packaging (4 respondents)
- Stone waste (1 respondent)
- Video tapes (1 respondent)
- Wood (5 respondents)
- Wool (1 respondent)

## Section 4: Business Advice and Support

### 4.1: Business advice (Q20)

The respondents were asked if they had ever turned to the following organisations for business advice.

- Federation of small businesses
- Business Link
- Gloucestershire First
- The Chamber of Commerce/Trade
- South West RDA
- Stroud District Council

Those who were asked to rate the quality of advice they had received. Nearly three quarters of the respondents had approached these organisations for business advice and in general were satisfied. This is similar to last years findings.

#### Rating of business advice received

Organisation	Received information (Yes)	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Federation of small businesses	46	24	17	1	2	2
Business Link	58	27	25	1	4	1
Gloucestershire First	11	4	5	1	1	0
The Chamber of Commerce/Trade	26	11	13	1	1	0
South West RDA	41	15	24	2	0	0
Stroud District Council	27	7	16	2	2	0
None	26	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

These ratings can be converted into relative satisfaction scores

Organisation	% respondents satisfied or very satisfied	Average rating out of 5	Average satisfaction %
Federation of small businesses	89%	4.3	86%
Business Link	90%	4.3	85%
Gloucestershire First	82%	4.1	82%
The Chamber of Commerce/Trade	92%	4.3	86%
South West RDA	95%	4.1	82%
Stroud District Council	85%	4.0	80%

(Satisfied = 80% or 4/5)

**Other organisations mentioned** (each by one respondent)

DEFRA (Quite satisfied)  
Institute of Directors (Very satisfied)  
British Institute of Innkeepers (Very satisfied)  
Engineering Skills Council (Quite satisfied)  
Natwest Mentor Service (Quite satisfied)  
National Microelectronics Institute (Quite satisfied)  
Destination Bristol (Very satisfied)  
Land Drainage Contractors Association (LDCA) (Very satisfied)

**4.2: Free on-line Business directory** (Q21a)

The respondents were asked if it was a good idea for the Council to develop a free on-line business directory for the district. 87 (87%) businesses agreed “yes” this is a good idea and only 13 (13%) businesses said “no” it is not a good idea. Those who did not think it a good idea were asked to explain their reasoning.

**Reasons given why this was considered not a good idea by 13% of businesses** (note these were all given by single respondents)

- Probably wouldn't get looked at; won't get used if people use Yellow Pages
- Wouldn't be used
- Wouldn't help us
- Too many similar things already
- We'd forget about it
- (I) Don't “do” computers
- We're 94% export
- No local customers
- Don't do consumer products
- Not cost effective
- We're too local
- We're too bespoke

75 (75%) businesses said that they would be likely to use an on-line business directory and 25 (25%) businesses said they did not think they were likely to use it.

**4.3: Business rates for vacant premises** (Q22a)

The respondents were asked if they were aware of the changes in rules regarding business rates for vacant premises which may be charged in full from April. Only 25 (25%) businesses replied “yes” they were aware. The majority - 75 (75%) businesses said they were **not** aware. However, when asked if they would like further information on this topic only 35 (35%) businesses replied “yes” they would like more information and 65 businesses said they did not want any more information. Presumably a majority of these do not have vacant business premises.

## Section 5: Overall Opinions

The respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

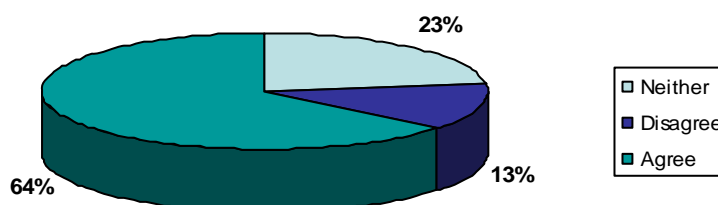
- Overall, I am satisfied with the way Stroud District Council runs things
- I believe that Stroud District Council is businesslike and efficient
- Overall, the services that Stroud District Council provide have improved over the past few years
- I think we get value for money from Stroud District Council
- Overall I am satisfied that Stroud District Council is improving the local environment (note, the results of this statement have been discussed in section 2. )

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Average score (%)
Overall, I am satisfied with the way Stroud District Council runs things	1	12	23	61	3	71%
I believe that Stroud District Council is businesslike and efficient	2	17	23	58	0	67%
Overall, the services that Stroud District Council provide have improved over the past few years	1	9	34	54	2	67%
I think we get value for money from Stroud District Council	4	28	28	40	0	61%
Overall I am satisfied that Stroud District Council is improving the local environment	1	12	24	61	2	70%

### 5.1: Satisfaction

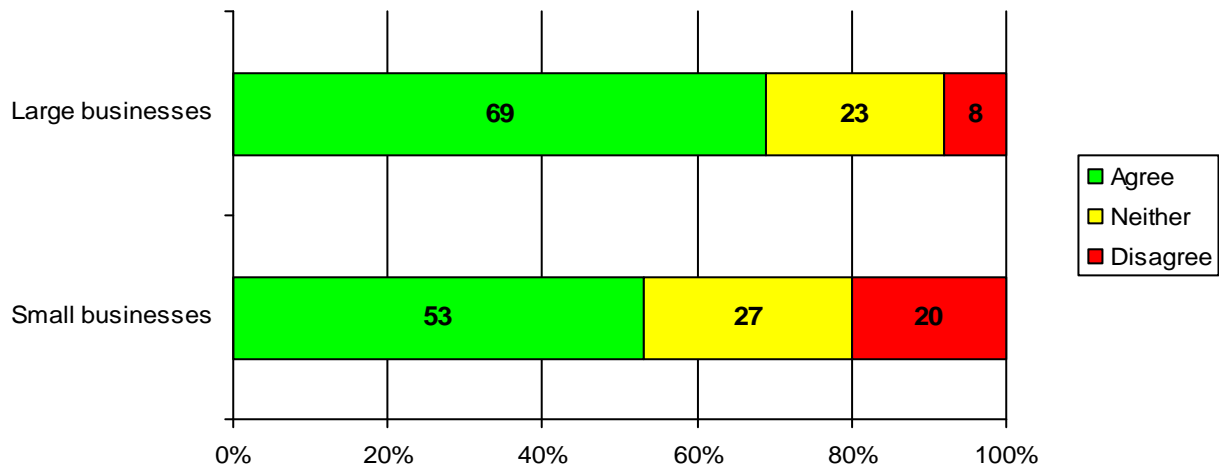
Overall, the respondents were satisfied with the way the Council runs things. 64% agree or strongly agreed and only 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed (1 respondent).

Figure 13: Satisfaction with the way Stroud District Council runs things



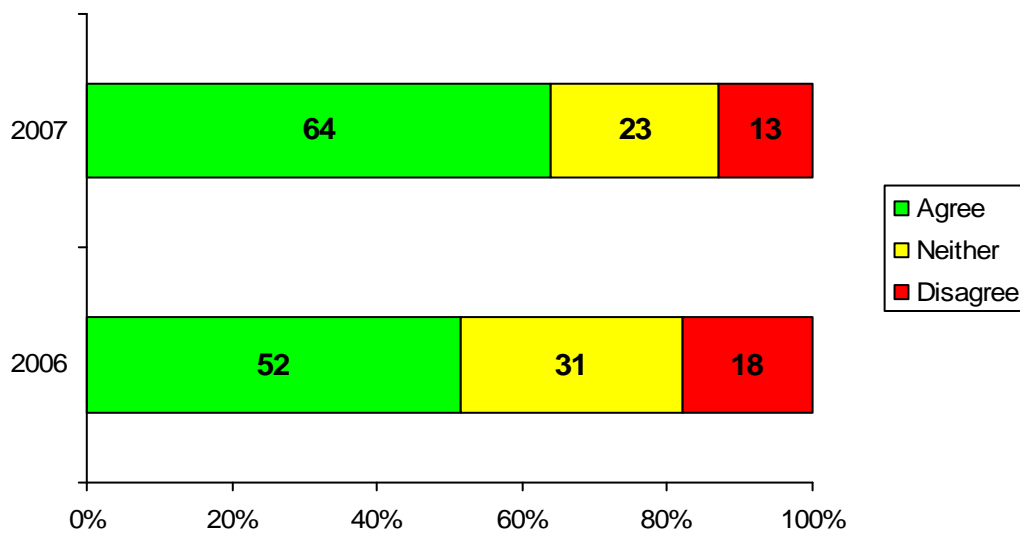
Larger business owners (two thirds) were more likely to agree that they were satisfied with the Council than smaller ones (just over a half) and 20% of small business owners disagreed compared to just 8% of larger businesses.

**Figure 14: Satisfaction with the way Stroud District Council runs things by business size**



This is a significant improvement on last year's results, when 52% agreed compared to this year's 64%. Two thirds of 12% improvement appears to have come from the neither agree nor disagree, but there is a reduction of 5% of owners who disagree.

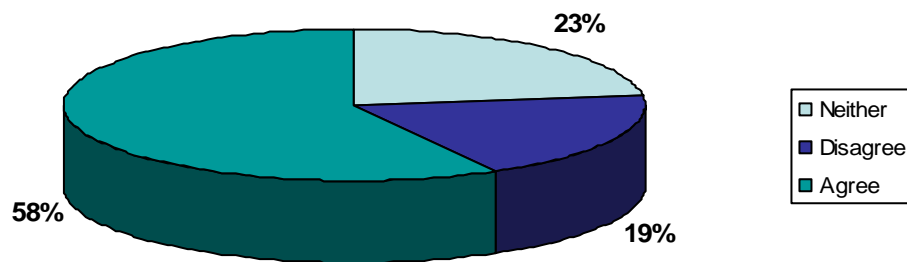
**Figure 15: Satisfaction with the way Stroud District Council runs things compared to last years results**



## 5.2: Business-like and Efficiency

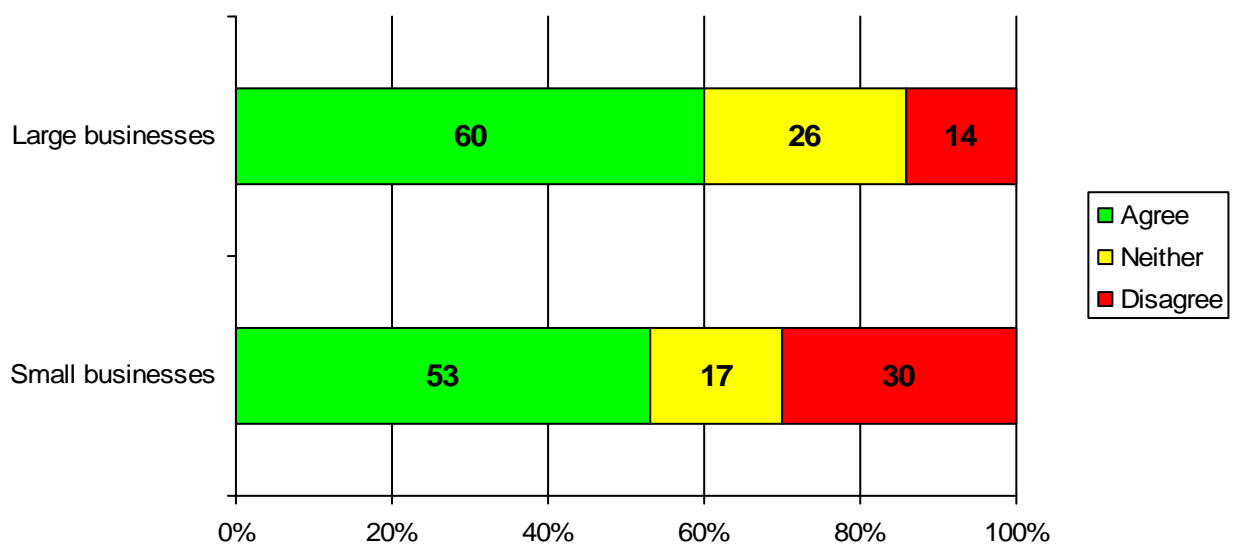
Nearly 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Council is business-like and efficient.

Figure 16: Perception of the Council being business-like and efficient



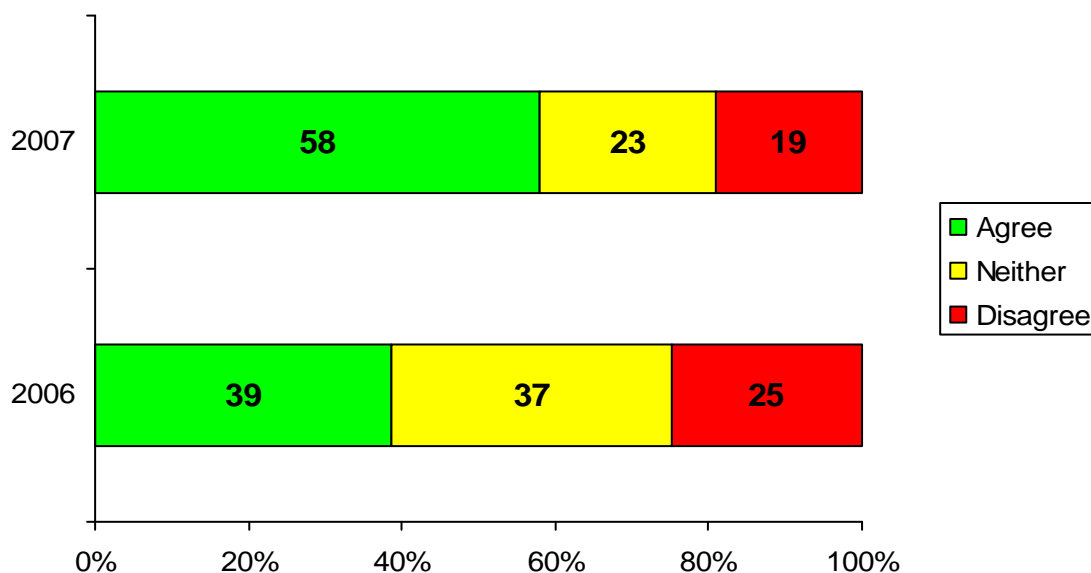
Again, slightly more, larger business owners than smaller ones agreed with this statement (60% compared to 53%). However, over twice the proportion of smaller business owners disagreed with the statement compared to larger businesses (30% compared to just 14%)

Figure 17: Perception of the Council being business-like and efficient, by business size



Again, we see a very large improvement (nearly 20 points) on last years' results, the majority of this change is the conversion from the neither agree nor disagree to agree, although the disagree has improved by 6 percentage points.

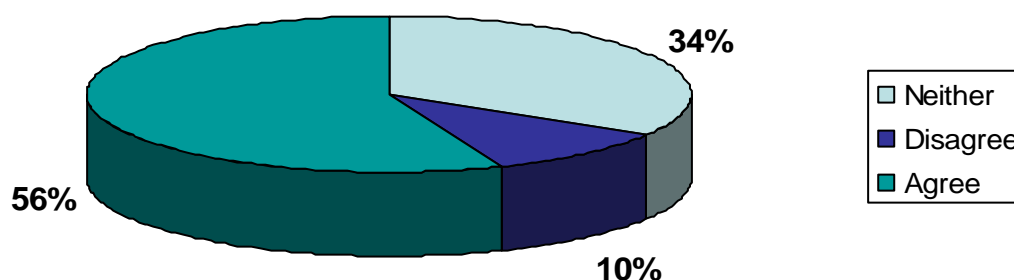
**Figure 18: Perception of the Council being business-like and efficient compared to last years results**



### 5.3: Improvement in Services

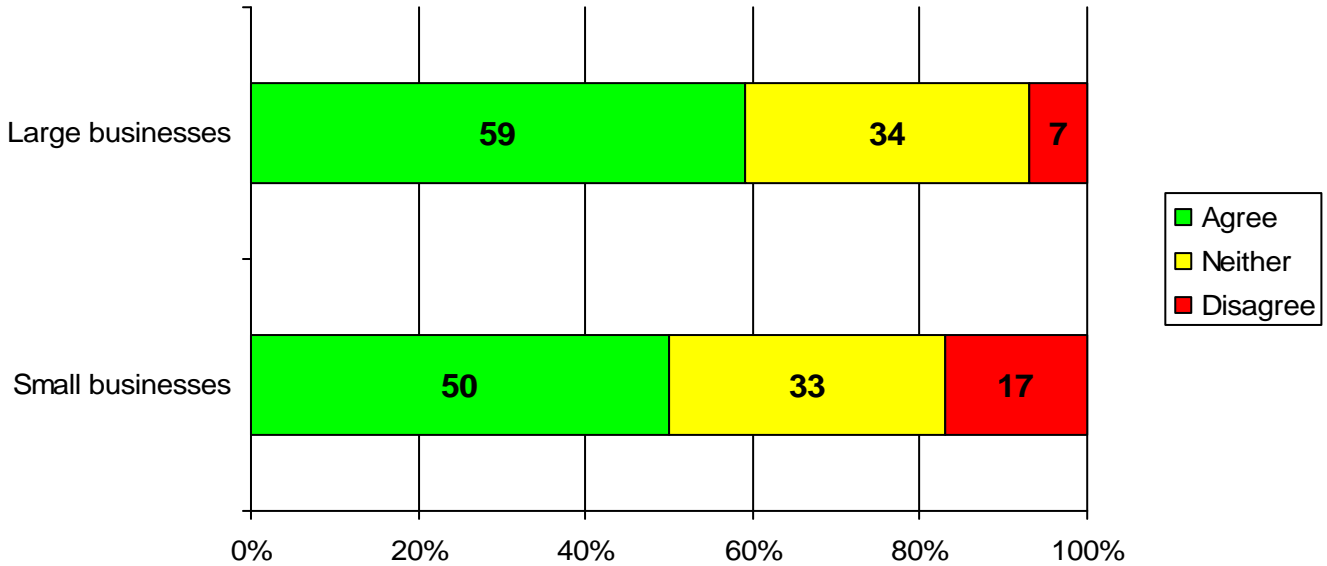
Following a similar pattern, over 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the services that Stroud District Council provide have improved over the past few years. Only 10% disagreed with this statement.

**Figure 19: Perception that services have improved over the past few years**



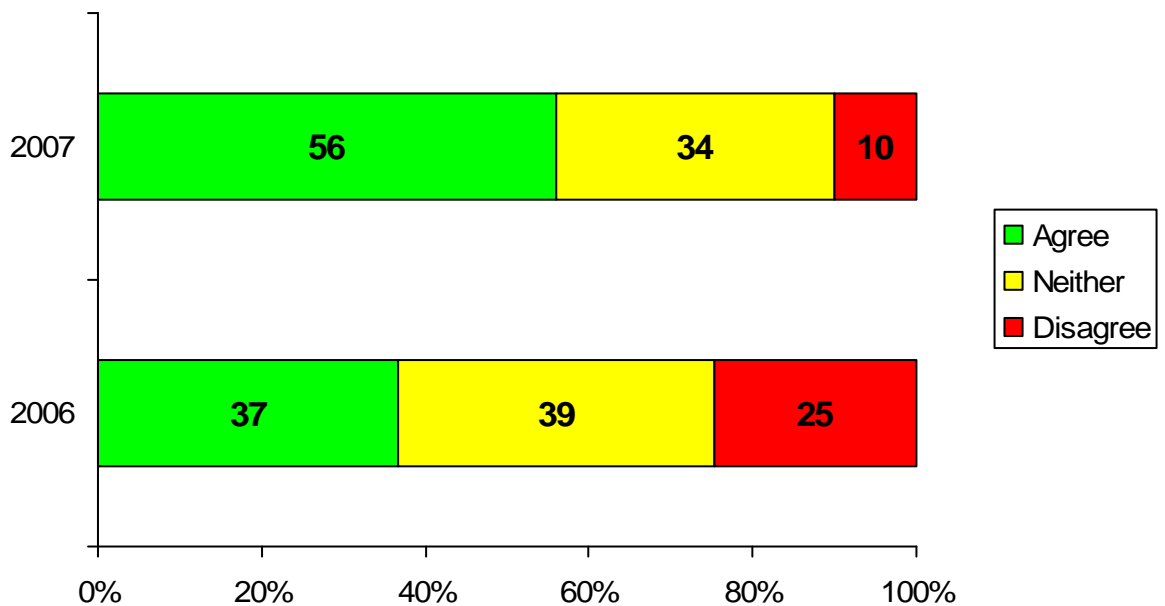
Following a similar pattern, proportionally more larger business owners agreed with this statement than smaller ones (59% compared to 50%).

**Figure 20: Perception that services have improved over the past few years, by business size**



Again we have nearly a 20% [point improvement on last years results, three quarters of which appear to have come from the disagree end of the scale.

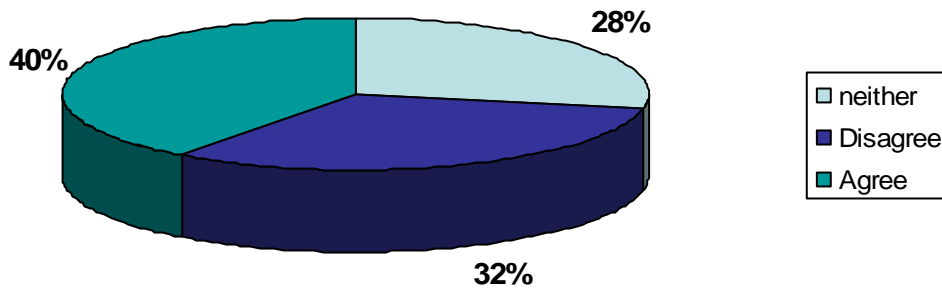
**Figure 21: Perception that services have improved over the past few years compared to last years results**



### 5.4: Value for Money

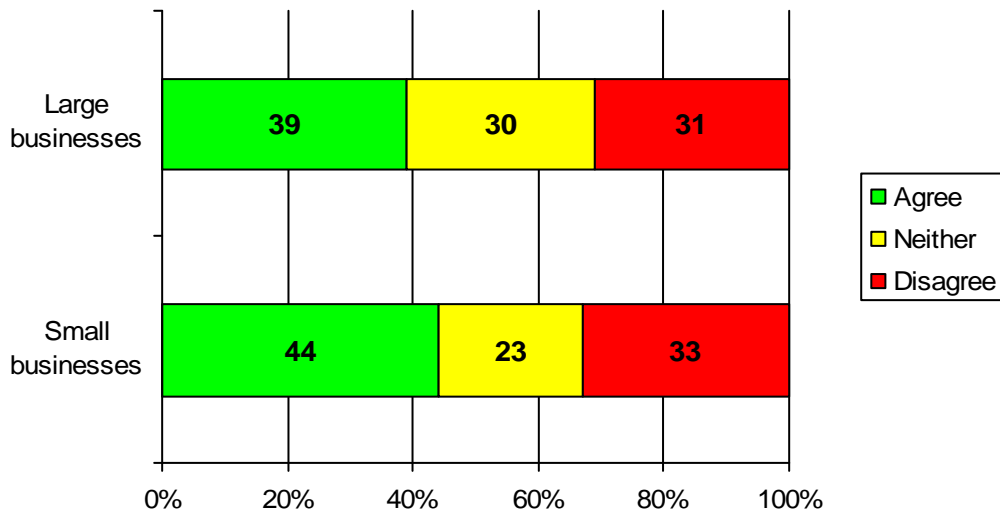
Less than half (40%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they get value for money from the Council. However fewer (32%) disagreed with this statement.

Figure 22: Perception that the Council gives value for money from business owners



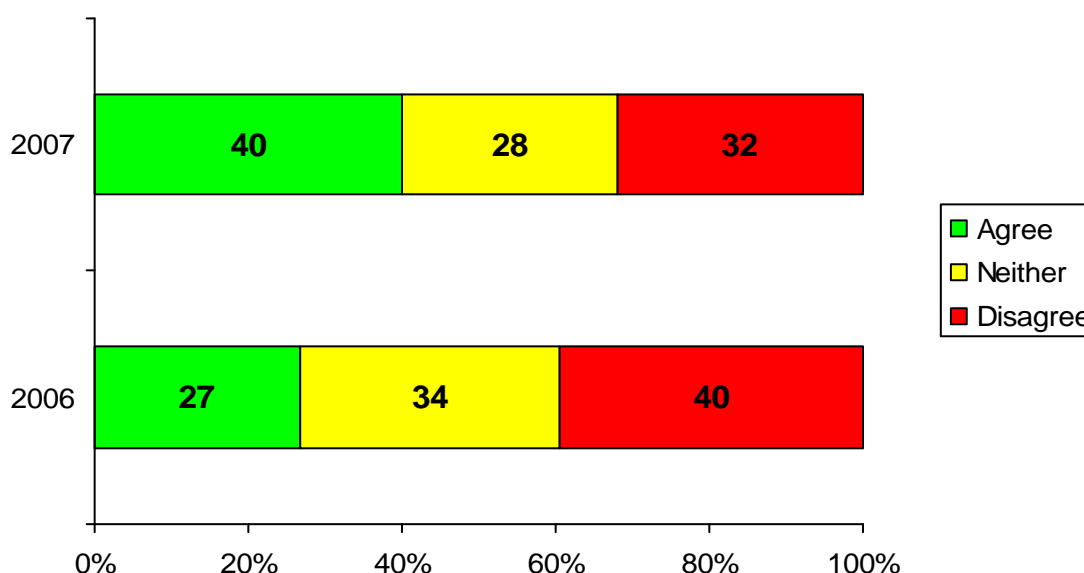
There was little difference in this opinion between large and smaller businesses

Figure 23: Perception that the Council gives value for money by business size



Following the trend of previous results we have a significant (if smaller) increase in agreement with this statement compared to last years results

**Figure 24: Perception that the Council gives value for money compared to last years results**



### 5.5: Final comments (Q24)

We asked the respondents if they had any final comments, 72 (72%) had no final comments. The comments that were made are listed below.

#### Final comments made

##### Positive comments

- *I'm delighted there is no graffiti in Stroud*
- *Keep it up*
- *Overall, everything is OK from the council*

##### Other comments

- [Generally agree that the Council is performing well] Except for the bad roads into Stroud
- [The] Council never tells us about grants
- Business rates are too high
- Council should use local companies rather than going to businesses outside the area
- Have a bigger range of recycling options available
- How can the council help us as a museum?
- I hate fly-tipping and the like
- I wish you could still have business relief on two small businesses
- I'd like a breakdown of how our rates are spent and what on
- I'd like to see a radical change in the council's overheads i.e. cutting publically funded

jobs in offices

- I'd like to see more warehousing in Stroud, 5-10,000 square feet
- Local businesses need to improve business skills
- Need to preserve the countryside, it is what brings the tourists in
- No [comment] - except about the traffic
- On the council's orders, we have to burn more than we want to, thus increasing our carbon footprint
- Only recycling, would be nice if they remembered Wotton-under-Edge existed
- Recycling is initiated by the retailers, not the council
- Review policy for recycling from school premises
- The 'A' roads are falling to pieces
- The canal project is in stalemate
- The restrictions on trading times
- They should support schools in accessing renewable energies
- We don't need more open space
- Would like the council to consult more with businesses in Dursley, we're 10 miles away from Stroud and interest in us is less [than for Stroud businesses]

#### **Comments related to the survey**

- Does the council need to interview people at their workplace? Strange that none of the questions ask about rural issues
- Some of the questions are irrelevant and unclear (2 respondents)
- This survey is too long

## **ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Stroud District Council**

**Business Survey 2007**

Good morning/ afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ from Foster and Brown Research, and I am calling you today on behalf of Stroud District Council. The Council feels that it is important to consider the views of local businesses and is keen to obtain views of people like yourself about the level of spending on Council services; which services should get more money and which less money. Would you be kind enough to answer a few questions? The interview will last no more than 15(?) minutes and your answers will be strictly confidential

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Gender: M / F</b>	<b>Location:</b>
--------------	----------------------	------------------

**Section 1: Demographics**

**1. To begin, may I ask you a few details about you and your company/organisation/establishment? Which of the following best describes your position?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Owner or Proprietor <input type="checkbox"/> Director, Company secretary or partner <input type="checkbox"/> General or senior manager <input type="checkbox"/> Other manager	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please probe & record)
---	--

**2. How many employees does your company/organisation/establishment have on this site?**

<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 51 - 100
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 101 - 250
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 251 - 500
<input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 501 - 1000
<input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 50	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 1000

**3. Which industry or sector does your company/organisation/establishment operate in?**

Code from Annex 1 =
---------------------

**4. Can you please tell me your post code and the town or village you are located in/near?**

Postcode : GL	Town/Village:
---------------	---------------

**5a. How long has your business been located at this site?**

Number of years =	*****Note if less than 2 years go to 5b otherwise go to Q6
-------------------	--

<b>5b</b>	<b>What was the reason for establishing here? (Prompt only if necessary)</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> New business start-up	<input type="checkbox"/> Relocation from another site in Gloucestershire
	<input type="checkbox"/> Expansion of business	<input type="checkbox"/> Relocation from another site outside of Gloucestershire
	<input type="checkbox"/> Price of land / premises	<input type="checkbox"/> Transport links
	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of life	<input type="checkbox"/> Local environment
	<input type="checkbox"/> Market Links	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour skills
	<input type="checkbox"/> Relocation from another site in Stroud district	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (probe)

**Section 2: Council Performance**

<b>6</b>	<b>How well do you think the Council performs? I will read out a list of services the District Council provides. For each service, whether you use the service or not, could you please tell me in your opinion whether the Councils service is good or poor?</b>					
	<b>Service</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
a	Car Parks					
b	Community projects					
c	Community safety					
d	Concessionary fares					
e	Social housing					
f	Food, health & safety					
g	Pest control					
h	Grants to voluntary & community groups					
i	Housing advice					
j	Sport and leisure services					
k	Licensing					
l	Museum					
m	Neighbourhood wardens					
n	Planning & building control					
o	Public conveniences					
p	Recycling & composting					
q	Refuse collection					
r	Street cleaning					
s	Tourist promotion					
t	Town centre improvements					

<b>7.</b>	<b>Are there any of these areas where you believe the District Council should be spending MORE money in order to achieve improvements for businesses and residents? (Write in) (note if they say highways etc, this is County Council, probe for options on the list in Question 6)</b>

<b>8.</b>	<b>Are there any of these areas where you believe the District Council should be spending LESS money in order to achieve improvements for businesses and residents? (Write in) (note if they say Council wages/pensions etc, record but probe for options on the list in Question6)</b>

**Section 3: Council Priorities**

<b>9</b>	<b>Stroud District Council has five key priorities for the district. Can you please tell me the level of importance in your opinion, each priority should be given?</b>					
	<b>Heading</b>	Very low	Low	Neither	High	Very High
a	Regeneration					
b	Environment					
c	Affordable Housing					
d	Community Safety					
e	Healthy Living					

<b>10</b>	<b>In what ways do you think the Council should be promoting economic regeneration?</b>

<b>11</b>	<b>Do you think there are sufficient / appropriate premises available locally to ensure businesses that could enable businesses to establish and grow?</b>
	Yes
	No
	Don't Know

<b>12</b>	<b>What sort of business accommodation do you think the District Council should be influencing to provide ? Please say 'Yes' or 'No' to the following options.</b>		
		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
a	Premises suitable for small office-based businesses		
b	Retail premises		
c	Studios suitable for arts & craft based businesses		
d	Small-scale light industrial units		
e	Large-scale industrial units		
f	Mixed work/living units ( <i>note this is where someone lives in close proximity to the work unit</i> )		
g	"Hot desk" office space, where a company can rent an office for a couple of hours at a time		
h	None of these		
i	Other – probe & record		

<b>13</b>	<b>Do you think the Council assists or restricts local businesses and organisations through its planning policies?</b>			
		Generally restricts*	Neither restricts nor assists	Assists*
	*Q13a. Probe how or in what way they think the Council restricts or assists local businesses through its planning policies			

**Interviewer Read the Following Statement:** Stroud District Council is currently examining ways to address climate change issues. Improving energy efficiency, increasing the amount of renewable energy being produced (e.g. solar, wind and water power) and reducing the dependency on fossil fuels are all key objectives. The Council is also concerned about reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill.

<b>14</b>	<b>Would your business/organisation be willing to invest in practical solutions to combat climate change, which might initially require investment but would save you money in the long term?</b>				
		Yes - definitely	Yes - possibly	No	DK
	Environmental investment				

<b>15</b>	<b>Would you be interested in receiving more information on improving your environmental performance and the options that might be available to you, including the availability of grants?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES*	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If Yes please record their email address (or postal address if no internet access)	

<b>16</b>	<b>Are you aware of your Duty of Care of responsibilities regarding waste?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

<b>17</b>	<b>Are you aware that there are local companies that recycle commercial waste?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

<b>18</b>	<b>Do you recycle any business waste?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES* (go to Q19)	<input type="checkbox"/> NO (go to Q20)

<b>19</b>	<b>*If yes to Q18 what (Interviewer read list and tick all that apply)</b>	
	Paper	
	Cardboard	
	Glass bottles & jars	
	Plastic	
	Electrical Items	
	Anything else ?	

**Section 4: Business advice and support**

20	Which if any of the following sources of information have you ever turned for business advice? (Read list, if they have received information from then please ask them: How satisfied were you with the advice you received from name organisation?)						
	Received information (Yes/No)	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
	Federation of small businesses						
	Business Link						
	Gloucestershire First						
	The Chamber of Commerce/Trade						
	South West RDA						
	Stroud District Council						
	Other (record organisation)						
	None (go Q21)		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

21a	<b>Stroud District Council is looking to redevelop a free on-line Business directory for the District. To keep it current it would be the responsibility of the business to update their records each year. Is this a good idea?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ( Why)
21b	<b>Would you be likely to use it?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

22a	<b>Are you aware of the changes in the rules regarding Business Rates for vacant premises, which may be charged in full as from April?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES aware	<input type="checkbox"/> NO not aware
22b	<b>Would you like more information about this topic?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES*	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
	*If Yes record email address unless recorded in Q16	

**Section six: Final questions**

23	Finally, could you tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statements?					
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
a	Overall, I am satisfied with the way Stroud District Council runs things					
b	I believe that Stroud District Council is businesslike and efficient					
c	Overall, the services that Stroud District Council provide have improved over the past few years					
d	I think we get value for money from Stroud District Council					
e	Overall I am satisfied that Stroud District Council is improving the local environment					

<b>24</b>	<b>Have you any final comments you would like to make?</b>

<b>25</b>	<b>Stroud District Council would like to invite all the people who took part in this survey to a meeting* to present the research findings. Would you like an invitation to attend?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> YES Record email if not in Q16 or elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

\* The meeting will take place on the 7<sup>th</sup> November at 8.30am. This will be a breakfast meeting with refreshments provided and will be held in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud.

**Thank you very much for your time and help.  
All information will be used for this research only and treated in the strictest confidence.**

**-Close & Thank Respondent -**

**-Interviews Please Complete the Following-**

I declare that I have completed this interview in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct.

Name of interviewer.....

Signature of the interviewer.....

Initials and interview number (To tally with sample).....

Date of Interview.....

Approximate length of interview (minutes).....

## **ANNEX 2: Responses to question 10: In what ways do you think the Council should be promoting economic regeneration?**

- A more flexible local plan = 1
- Allow quick and easy decisions, the rules should be straight forward = 1
- Area looks nice/nice part of the world = 2
- Ask the residents of Stroud = 1
- Better [public] transport = 1
- Build small workshops = 1
- Building on flood planes is not a good idea = 1
- By offering subsidies = 1
- By using empty buildings = 1
- Canal regeneration/waterways regeneration/supporting the canal project = 4
- Cheaper rates and rent for start up businesses = 3
- Create awareness = 1
- Cut down their staff = 1
- Deal with the derelict areas = 1
- Encourage small businesses = 1
- Endeavour to promote small independent shops to compete against the bigger stores = 1
- Every way possible (but respondent could not expand on this when asked to) = 1
- Fund training = 1
- Grants = 4
- Incentives = 3
- Investment = 1
- Invite industry into the area/attract new businesses = 6
- It's very difficult dealing with planning applications with them = 1
- Keep rates low = 1
- Less interference in planning [decisions] = 1
- Look at the town centres = 1
- Low cost housing for locals/building more affordable houses = 2
- Lower business rates/reduce business rates/cut business rates = 8
- Modernisation as well as preserving the old = 1
- More emphasis on local businesses -why a Starbucks in the local college? = 1
- More industrial estates = 1
- More parking = 1
- Need more business premises/shortage of business premises = 2
- Need to look at integrated employment and housing = 1
- Note that it's easier for people to move into existing buildings, rather than building new ones = 1
- Only grant planning permission when new buildings will be compatible with the existing environment = 1
- Planning - how and where they fit in businesses and social housing = 1
- Planning = 1
- Promote local businesses/advertise local businesses = 2
- Promote Sharpness Docks = 1
- Promote the area on websites = 1
- Promote the good transport connections from Bristol and Cardiff airports/build on good transport links = 3
- Provide a good range of business buildings locally = 1
- Reduce rates for manufacturing businesses = 1
- Regeneration of derelict areas, rather than taking green belt land = 1
- Save the farms and stop building houses, allow commercial development in the agricultural community = 1
- Scrap the rules and regulations, there are too many = 1
- Should get really experienced people working together objectively = 1

- Sort out the residential from the commercial areas = 1
- Spend money earmarked for regeneration actually on regeneration = 1
- Spend more money = 3
- Support/assist small businesses = 3
- Take away our rubbish, they don't do that at the moment = 1
- The centre of Dursley needs to be cleared, make it more attractive, tourists think it's unsightly = 1
- The roads and congestion = 1
- They need to be clear about the strengths of the area = 1
- They spend too much on petty things, not enough on the bigger picture = 1
- Through local press = 1
- Through planning and specifically change of use, be more flexible = 1
- Tidy up Stroud = 1
- Use valuable land for businesses to optimise from = 1
- We don't get much help from them = 1
- We find it difficult to find staff = 1
- Work with businesses = 1
- Would like the area to rejuvenate = 1
  
- They do quite well – 1
- Quite green as they are – 1
- No idea/can't think of anything/don't know – 31