

7.3.7 WASTE CHARGE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Responsible Manager:	Deep Sethi, Chief Financial Officer
Responsible Director:	Simone Wickes, Director Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council


1. **Endorses the introduction of a full cost recovery Waste Service Charge commencing in 2026/27.**
2. **Will comply with Local Government Service Rates and Charges: Minister's Good Practice Guidelines for implementation of a Service Rate or Charge.**
3. **Will introduce support measures for Pensioner Concession Card holders and vulnerable residents, and a temporary safety net transition concession arrangement be provided for households with lower property values or financial hardship.**
4. **Endorses development of a Waste Service Charge implementation plan and Communications program to address community needs and expectations.**
5. **Will investigate different bin sizes and packages to respond to community needs.**

INTRODUCTION

The State Government's rate cap has been in place for ten years, causing significant financial pressure on Victorian councils, including Monash, which is the only council without a separate Waste Service Charge under sec 162 of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic). This has forced Monash to absorb rising waste management costs within its capped rates, further straining its financial position. The existing Recycling and Waste Levy only partially recovers these costs, which include recycling expenses, EPA levy increases, and costs related to the FOGO bin feedback program. As waste management costs continue to rise, Monash faces considerable financial risk and reduced capacity to meet community needs without a full cost recovery separate Waste Service Charge.

Additionally, the implementation of programs under the Circular Economy (Waste Reductions and Recycling) Act 2021 (Vic) will further increase costs for Monash Council. These programs include the introduction of a specific glass bin and as landfills in the Eastern region of Melbourne reach capacity, Monash will need to explore alternative waste disposal methods, such as Waste to Energy solutions or transporting waste to the western region of Melbourne, both of which are likely to incur higher costs. Contractual costs are also expected to rise as contractors pass on increased expenses related to transport and general increases in their cost structures. Introducing a separate Waste Service Charge starting 1 July 2026 will mitigate these financial pressures in the long term.

Monash is currently the only one of 79 councils that does not levy a separate Waste Service Charge. Implementing a Waste Service Charge enables the recovery of costs associated with waste services in accordance with actual increases because unlike general rates and charges, the Waste Service Charge is not capped by legislation. Councils that do not impose a Waste Service Charge



must address rising recycling and waste-related expenses exceeding the rate cap by either proportionally reducing budgets for other services or risking significant financial instability.

Throughout the year, Council was presented with various options and their respective impacts prior to initiating formal community engagement around the Waste Service Charge. From 24 June to 1 September 2025, multi-channel communication and engagement was undertaken to introduce the proposed Waste Service Charge and understand community sentiment towards the principles underpinning it.

Timing of the implementation of a Waste Service Charge is important. Community engagement has highlighted that further information and education around the charge is expected in the lead up to and post implementation. This warrants the development and roll-out of a communication program across the municipality to ensure community expectations are managed and those in need are aware of the support mechanisms available.

COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Implementation of a separate Waste Service Charge is one of the ways we are supporting the delivery of an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable municipality.

The proposed Charge also supports the delivery of key Council Plan objectives including our commitment to a city that promotes environmental sustainability and one that provides good governance and strong leadership. Our community engagement approach around the principles of the Waste Service Charge further demonstrates our commitment to community involvement in our decision making. We will leverage the insights received through our engagement and continue to work with our community towards a zero-waste future and actively explore ways to increase reuse and recycling and improve waste management.

BACKGROUND

Monash currently includes the costs for waste in the general council rates.

Section 162 of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic) allows a council to raise a separate Waste Service Charge for the provision of 'waste, recycling, or resource recovery services' ('waste services'). All councils in Victoria, except for Monash, apply a separate Waste Service Charge.

A separate Waste Service Charge is a charge that may be declared on the basis of any criteria specified by Council which may include a flat charge that applies equally to all properties that receive waste services. Councils can also set a variety of separate Waste Service Charges that reflect the level of waste services that are chosen by the resident (i.e. residents can elect to have standard or larger bin) and the Charge can reflect these choices.

Most councils set the separate Waste Service Charge at a level that fully recovers the cost of providing the waste service. Increases in the Waste Service Charge are separate to the cap on council rates.

This Charge will allow for greater transparency for the community in what the real costs of waste services are. Without having to cover the cost of waste services through general rates, this will free up funding to maintain and improve existing and future services.

In 2025/26 Monash Council applies a partial cost recovery charge of \$65 per assessment with a Council funded pensioner rebate of \$65 to eligible ratepayers to remove the charge for pensioners. This levy recovers only \$5.6 million of the total \$31.6 million that Council is expected to spend on providing waste services in 2025/26.

Most of Council's expenditure on waste services such as kerbside collection and disposal of waste, recycling and green waste, hard rubbish collection and food organic collection is funded from general rates.

Over the years, Council evaluated the implementation of a separate waste service charge, ultimately adopting a partial Recycling & Waste Levy model in 2018 in response to the recycling crisis and emerging pressures. In recent years, however, it has become clear that this approach is unsustainable, prompting the need for long-term strategies to address increasing financial challenges.

Several Waste Service Charge scenarios were developed and presented to Councillors for deliberation through January to June 2025, with the objective of identifying options that are both financially sustainable and socially responsible, including measures to support vulnerable residents and those potentially impacted by the transition. At the June 2025 Council meeting, Council resolved on a formal position regarding the structure of the separate Waste Service Charge and agreed to proceed with formal community consultation regarding its introduction from July 2026, seeking feedback on Council's proposed approach and guiding principles.

DISCUSSION

There are several key discussion points associated with this report. They are:

- Proposed Waste Service Charge Model
- Future changes to the structure of waste services
- Financial risk and risk appetite of Council
- Communication and Engagement Report findings

Proposed Waste Service Charge Model:

Following comprehensive community engagement and strategic planning, a Waste Service Charge proposal has been formulated. The objective of this initiative is to establish a fair and transparent mechanism for charging the costs associated with waste and recycling services, while also providing incentives to reduce waste generation and promote increased recycling or resource recovery.

Currently, Council levies rates based on the Capital Improved Value (CIV) of each property, with the general rate revenue constrained by a rate cap. Under the proposed Waste Service Charge model, all costs related to waste, and recycling services will be split from the general rates and charged separately. In its initial year of implementation, there will be no increase in overall general rates revenue generated by Council, as required under the Fair Go Rates System rate cap. Instead, income from general rates will be decreased by an equivalent amount to that raised by the new Waste Service Charge.

As the separate Waste Service Charge is proposed to be introduced from next financial year, ratepayers will notice the changes to rates notices from July 2026. The Waste Service Charge will be displayed as a separate item on the rates notice.

Separate Waste Service Charge

A separate Waste Service Charge is a charge to properties for Council providing waste and recycling services. It is proposed to introduce a separate Waste Service Charge, which is compliant with the Local Government Service Rates and Charges: Minister's Good Practice Guidelines for their use (the 'Ministerial Guidelines'):

The proposed new Charge recovers the full cost of providing kerbside waste collection service forming part of the waste, recycling, or resource recovery services, including:

- Collection of bins
- Waste disposal and processing fees
- Operational staff wages and salaries
- The waste levy charged by the State Government (applied to residual waste landfill waste disposal)
- New and replacement bins
- Hard waste collection

The kerbside separate Waste Service Charge will be charged to all properties eligible for kerbside services. Unlike commercial and some multi-unit developments that use private waste services, kerbside services are mandatory for many residents across Council. "Opting-out" of kerbside services to avoid paying the Waste Service Charge was raised as an area of concern by community members who associated this with increases in illegal dumping and disposal of rubbish in other residents' bins. If implemented, it will be clearly communicated that residents cannot "opt-out" of kerbside collections to avoid the Waste Service Charge. The Waste Service Charge will only be waived for commercial or multi-unit developments that can provide proof of the provision of sufficient private waste services.

The financial implications of implementing a separate Waste Service Charge will vary based on property type, as detailed below:

Residential

The proposed separate Waste Service Charge* of \$394 for residential properties will include the following bins as a standard offering:

- 120 litre garbage bin collected fortnightly
- 240 litre recycling bin collected fortnightly
- 240 litre food and organics bin collected weekly

This is Council's standard/minimum kerbside waste service offering to residents. There is no discount or subsidy provided if this service is not used or bins are returned.

*Shared Services may not be entitled to the standard offering due to space restrictions.

Commercial (non-residential)

Non-residential service offering will change from one 240 litre bin, which is weekly collected to the following standard offering and is proposed* to be \$425 from 01 July 2026:

- 240 litre garbage bin collected fortnightly
- 240 litre recycling bin collected fortnightly

*These charges are estimates and will be finalised as a part of the 2026/27 budget process.

Options will also be available to add bins to the fortnightly collection for an additional fee.

Alternatively, if a non-residential property can better meet their needs through a private waste provider, the Waste Service Charge component will automatically be removed from their annual rates notice.

As part of our community engagement and communications program, 3,669 commercial customers were notified of the proposed Separate Waste Service Charge and what this means for them.

Non-rateable

Non-rateable properties will continue to be charged according to their current arrangements, based on the number of bins in use. The Council will maintain ongoing data audits and provide guidance regarding service entitlements and associated costs for each assessment. The parties responsible may select their preferred service provider in accordance with their service requirements.

Multi-unit Developments

As part of the implementation of the separate Waste Service Charge, Council has conducted an audit of multi-unit properties, visiting 4,908 locations to update council records. Council will continue to work with multi-unit developments to ensure they have the provision of appropriate waste services on site.

Shared bin services will pay the same standard separate waste charge, as our commitment to comprehensive waste collection is fulfilled through additional bin collection offerings or by meeting specific waste requirements. Developments which employ a private waste management service, as outlined in their Waste Management Plan and do not use council services, will not be subject to a separate waste charge.

Additional Waste Bin Charge

This charge would be for additional optional bins:

- Additional Food and Garden Organics bin
- Additional garbage bins
- Additional recycling bins.

Additional bin charges will be applied for any bins in addition to the standard service. Additional bins will be charged via the rates notice. Charges will apply for any additional general waste, recycling or food and garden organics (FOGO) bins. These charges will be reflective of the additional costs to supply increased services to the property and published annually as part of the annual budget process.

What's not covered in waste charge

Public Waste Service Costs funded as per Ministerial Guidelines:

There is a wide range of waste services that Council provides that benefit all residents. Council has aligned the following costs to continue to be funded through general rates in accordance with Ministerial Guidelines:

- Public place litter and recycling bins

- Street cleaning
- Drain cleaning
- Waste and environmental education

Glass bin introduction and impacts to a separate Waste Service Charge

The Victorian Government's requirement to introduce a glass bin service by 1 July 27 and the expected cost increases associated with this received strong opposition, and much negative sentiment from community members throughout our recent engagement, particularly at in-person sessions.

The implementation of glass bins is projected to increase costs by \$68 per property starting July 2027, reflecting the expenses associated with distributing new bins.

During the recent community consultation, there was a clear preference for maintaining the current yellow bin system without introducing separate bins for glass. Community concerns raised centered around not having room for an additional bin, strong preferences for expansion of the current Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), and a genuine desire for Council to continue to advocate to the Victorian Government on their behalf.

Financial Assistance

The affordability of a separate Waste Service Charge during a cost-of-living crisis was an area of concern for many community members. This sentiment correlated with strong support and positivity (70 per cent of 400 phone survey participants) for the provision of targeted assistance to those in need such as Pensioner Concession Cardholders and Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Cardholders. The provision of a safety net for others in need was also positively supported by 59 per cent of phone survey participants with 31 per cent of these 'strongly positive'.

In response to community feedback, it is proposed that the Council implement a fully separate Waste Service Charge, offering a 40% concession for Pensioner Concession Cardholders and Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Cardholders. The 40% concession proposed for Pensioner Concession Cardholders includes anyone receiving the:

- age pension
- disability support pension
- carer payment
- JobSeeker payment
- youth allowance
- single parenting payment.

Additionally, a \$150 safety net will be provided as a temporary transitional concession in 2026/27 and 2027/28 for households with low property values or those experiencing financial hardship who may require additional support during this transition. This strategy aims to alleviate financial pressures while ensuring equitable access to waste services for all residents.

Future changes to the structure of waste services

The industry remains volatile with several major changes likely to occur in the coming years.

As part of the Circular Economy Act, all councils are required to introduce a specific glass bin by 1 July 2027 which will require Council to acquire 54,000 purple lidded bins and to introduce a collection service for these bins. Notably, the introduction of this service and its' associated costs received consistently negative feedback and strong opposition from community members during

the Waste Service Charge engagement. It is recommended Council acknowledge this and advocate the Victorian Government remove its requirement for councils to introduce the glass bin service.

Over the next five years, all landfills in the Eastern region of Melbourne will have reached capacity, and Council will need to dispose of its waste in a different form.

At present the options are to move to a Waste to Energy solution or transport waste to the western region of Melbourne. Both options have the potential to increase costs for Council.

Further increases in both the State landfill levy and contractual costs are also likely to continue.

Financial risk and risk appetite of Council

As noted in this report, most increases in the cost of providing waste services have been absorbed by Council within the rate cap set by the Victorian Government.

If Council were now to continue to operate without a separate Waste Service Charge, it would be accepting a significant financial risk when its financial position is already strained.

The introduction of a separate Waste Service Charge would mitigate the financial risk of increasing waste service costs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council is currently experiencing significant financial pressure. When rate capping was introduced in 2016/17, it treated all councils equally and paid no regard to whether councils were either low or high rating councils at the commencement of the capped rates.

Monash commenced rate capping as the lowest rating council per capita in metropolitan Melbourne and with the waste costs absorbed into the general rates.

Over the past 10 years, other councils have been able to increase their Waste Service Charge over and above the rate cap to meet rising costs.

Whilst having low rates is a positive outcome for residents of Monash, it does significantly restrict Council's ability to provide ongoing services, and both renew its existing assets and provide new facilities for the community. Council is facing increased financial pressure to maintain adequate liquidity.

Without access to a separate Waste Service Charge, all these increased costs will need to continue to be absorbed by Council within the rate cap that is set annually by the Victorian Government. This represents a significant financial risk and reduces Council's ability to deliver services and infrastructure.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of a separate Waste Service Charge will require an update to the strategies outlined in the Financial Plan and Revenue and Rating Plan. This will also inform the development of the Waste Management Strategy.

CONSULTATION

Community engagement on the proposed Waste Service Charge was conducted from 24 June to 1 September 2025. The Communication and Engagement Program undertaken supports our Council Plan commitment to community involvement in our decision making while also addressing the engagement requirements of the Essential Services Commission (ESC) for implementing a Service Charge. The ESC has been actively engaged and informed of our approach and will receive the Waste Service Charge Communications and Engagement Report (Attachment 4.1.6.1).

It is acknowledged that there was very little opportunity for our community to influence aspects of the proposed Waste Service Charge as much of this is governed by legislation, including requirements on Council as to what services are provided and how waste charges are calculated.






As such the scope of the communications and engagement program was limited to testing support for the principles underpinning Council's decision, in particular:

- ensuring financial sustainability
- improving environmental sustainability
- ensuring charges are fair and equitable
- providing support to those who are most impacted and can least afford price increases.

To build awareness of the proposed Waste Service Charge and encourage participation across the engagement opportunities provided, we leveraged multiple channels to communicate with Monash residents and businesses and ensured every household across the municipality was informed of the proposed charge and how they could 'Have their Say.' To do this we:

- Explained the proposed charge and how community members could 'Have their Say' through a direct mail piece accompanying rates notices to 86,285 ratepayers.
- Communicated the engagement program and proposed charge through a lead article in the Monash-Bulletin reaching 76,461 households across the municipality.
- Promoted our pop-up engagement opportunities through social media with 12,832 followers.
- Wrote to 3,669 commercial customers currently utilising Council kerbside waste services to explain the charge and options available to them.
- Explained the charge and engagement opportunities available in an article in the Monash e-newsletter with 3,347 subscribers.
- Developed a dedicated page on Council's online community engagement platform, Shape Monash, to explain the charge, provide FAQs, and access an online survey. An online calculator was also developed for ratepayers to understand what the charge would specifically mean for them based on their property value. The page received 1,673 views.

Throughout the community consultation period, Council conducted a series of engagement activities to understand community sentiment, needs and information expectations around the proposed Waste Service Charge and the principles underpinning it. The activities conducted are summarised below.

 440 Community Members	10 Pop-Up Sessions <p>Pop-up sessions were conducted in high-traffic locations across the municipality, providing community members the opportunity to discuss the proposed charge in-person with Council staff. Translators were also available.</p>
 400 Ratepayers	Phone Survey <p>JWS Research was engaged to conduct a survey of 400 ratepayers regarding the proposed charge to ensure we covered a representative sample of community members.</p>
 64 Community Leaders	6 Focus Groups <p>Council staff held 6 focus group discussions with community leaders representing specific needs and interests of members within the community.</p>
 85 Responses	Online Survey <p>Community members were invited to share their feedback through an online survey on the Shape Monash engagement platform.</p>
 22 Calls	Waste Service Charge Hotline <p>A dedicated phone line was established for community members to ring and discuss the proposed charge with Council staff.</p>

While there were differences in community sentiment across engagement channels the key themes were consistent and centered around the following:

Affordability and transparency

Given rising costs of living, affordability of the proposed charge was top of mind for community members with many concerned around adding additional strain to household budgets. This was mixed with skepticism and speculation as to whether the proposed charge was a Council cash-grabbing exercise to bypass rate-capping. Community members want transparency around the proposed charge and cost-breakdowns to ensure it's only recovering actual costs and not a profit-making exercise.

The additional increases to the proposed charge in coming years due to the Victorian Government's requirement to introduce a glass bin service received strong community opposition and negative sentiment across all engagement activities, regardless of channel.

Strong support for support measures.

With rising costs and affordability of the proposed charge top of mind for many community members, there was strong support for targeted financial support measures proposed for those in need. There was 70% support for discounts for pensioners and veterans and 59% support for a safety net for those in need from phone survey respondents. While support measures were also supported among online survey respondents, it was notably weaker to that received across other community engagement activities.

Fairness and equity.

The principles of fairness and equity of the proposed charge varied across engagement activities and channels. With community pop-up and focus group sessions there was broad community sentiment that the charge was fair in principle but could be improved, particularly in terms of options for single and lower waste households and those consciously reducing waste output through incentives with smaller bin sizes and service packages.

More Information. Further Communication.

The complexities of introducing a separate Waste Service Charge have proved perplexing for many community members. In fact, 67 per cent of ratepayers in the phone survey wanted more information, even if they were already aware of the proposal. After receiving more information, attitudes towards the charge improved (positive views rose from 8 to 31 per cent).

Ensuring better education and information on the proposed charge with the community is warranted as is exploration of alternative communication channels given 55 per cent of phone survey respondents had not heard of the waste charge proposal despite communications previously sent.

Glass Bin Feedback.

There was strong opposition to the introduction of the glass bin service across community engagement activities particularly at the in-person Community Pop-Up and focus group sessions. While the additional costs in coming years to the Waste Service Charge sparked concerns among some community members, the need or practicality of the service was a clear area of contention for many. Not wanting or having the space to accommodate an additional bin, contentment with the existing yellow recycling bin service and support for expansion of the current Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) were common and consistent drivers for negativity sentiment towards the glass bin service.

Opportunities for Improvement.

Throughout the engagement, community members provided great insight into how to improve the Waste Service Charge if implemented. Some of these suggestions included:

- Weight-based systems that charged households by weight of waste were frequently suggested as a real 'user pays' approach. However, community members could understand that this may not be practical to implement.
- Council explore ways to incentivise lower waste households and acknowledge single person/ elderly households with lower waste outputs through alternative bin sizing and packages, including offering a smaller bin at a lower price point.
- Ensure commercial properties pay proportionately to their waste generation.
- Launch education and incentive programs to promote sustainable waste practices.
- Provide clear communication about how the Waste Service Charges are calculated and applied to demonstrate this as a cost-recovery exercise. Council could be clearer in its

communications that this is not a new charge but a change to how the charge is represented and applied on rates notices.

- To address community information needs, expectations, and misconceptions regarding the Waste Service Charge it is proposed Council develop a communications program that covers pre- and post-implementation.

Promoting sustainable waste habits.

Many residents expressed satisfaction with Council's waste services and efforts to promote responsible waste habits. Many ideas and suggestions were offered to assist the community to further reduce their waste. These ranged from information campaigns and service offerings to incentive-based programs and community driven initiatives.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Affordability and the fairness and equity of a separate Waste Service Charge were two key social implications highlighted as areas of interest by community members.

With current cost of living pressures for households top of mind there was strong support for targeted financial assistance for those in need which the Council is directly addressing through the proposed 40% concession for pensioners and Veterans Affairs Gold Cardholders and a \$150 safety-net, transitional concession for hardship and lower value property households needing support through the change.

The fairness and equity of a separate Waste Service Charge received mixed responses with phone survey respondents largely agreeing that the Waste Service Charge is fair (62% say everyone pays equally; 61% say it is fair because it is not tied to property value). Online survey respondents show significantly lower agreement (only 18–29% across fairness measures). Feedback through the online survey, in person sessions and focus groups highlighted that it is unfair that small or single-person households and those proactively reducing their waste outputs pay the same as households that fill their 120 litre bin every fortnight. It was consistently suggested Council could strengthen the proposed Waste Service Charge by recognising efforts to lower waste output through the provision of smaller bin options at a lower price point. With at least 18 Victorian councils currently offering smaller bin options to encourage lower waste output and help households save money it is recommended Council investigate its current bin sizes and packages including a smaller bin at a lower price point to respond to feedback that Council should be incentivising people producing less waste.

Misconceptions that residents could “opt-out” of waste services to avoid the proposed Waste Service Charge also raised questions around fairness and much concern among community members and leaders who feared this would lead to improper bin use (dumping rubbish in other people bins) and increases in illegal dumping. Residents eligible for kerbside waste collection services cannot ‘opt-out’ of them. This misconception further highlights the need for more communication and education around the Waste Service Charge prior to and post-implementation.

The introduction of a separate Waste Service Charge will also have some social implications in how the waste service is funded.

Currently, most waste services expenditure is funded by general rates. This means that despite all properties having equal service delivery, higher valued properties are cross subsidising waste services costs for lower valued properties. Notably, in the Ministerial Guidelines, the recovery of waste service charges by way of using property values (which is essentially what is currently occurring at Monash City Council) is not recommended.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no human right implications of this decision. The development of this recommendation has been done in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Council recognises the importance of maintaining equitable access to waste services, particularly for residents experiencing special circumstances. To ensure that vulnerable households are not disadvantaged by changes to waste service delivery, existing bespoke arrangements will continue to be supported. These include exemptions for households with two or more children in nappies, residents with medical conditions, and those experiencing financial hardship (e.g. households with six or more residents).

To ensure that vulnerable households are not disadvantaged by implementation of a separate Waste Service Charge, existing bespoke arrangements for special circumstances will continue to be supported.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) has been completed as part of this work because the proposed Waste Service Charge is considered to have a direct and significant impact on the Monash community.

Demographic insights and the community engagement findings have informed the Waste Service Charge Gender Impact Assessment.

Of relevant consideration in this assessment is:

- Females are disproportionately represented in lower income brackets with 47.2% of women and 35.6% of men in Monash having an income below the minimum weekly wage.
- Females over 55 years are known to be overrepresented in single person households (62%).
- Females are overrepresented in single parent households (81% versus 19% male).
- Females disproportionately bare unpaid caring responsibilities which contributes to reduced workforce participation and likelihood of working part-time or in casual roles, impacting their economic security.
- Females are overrepresented in vulnerable households resulting in intersectional disadvantage.

The GIA found that the community engagement program evaluated relevant principles underpinning Council's decision making, particularly:

- ensuring charges are fair and equitable

- providing support for those who are most impacted and can least afford price increases

It should be noted that females may have been overrepresented in feedback to the online survey - 46.8% of respondents identified as female compared to 33.8% male with the remainder preferring not to say.

The GIA supported the following recommendations to ensure equity of access to waste services:


- Council will implement a 40% discount on the Waste Service Charge for Pensioner Concession Card Holders and Veteran Affairs Gold cardholders to provide support for those in need inclusive of anyone on the age pension, disability support pension, carer payment, JobSeeker payment, youth allowance and single parenting payment.
- Council will provide a safety net transition concession on implementation of the Waste Service Charge for owner/occupiers of low value properties and those experiencing financial hardship.
- Council will investigate the option of providing a smaller bin at a lower price point, to respond to feedback that single-person households are unfairly paying the same as larger households even though they don't fill their bin.
- Council will continue to provide special arrangements for those with a disability, medical condition, or diverse household needs. This includes providing bigger or additional bins for households with two or more children in nappies, residents with medical conditions and large households of six or more with demonstrated financial hardship. Due to the intersectional nature of disability and caring responsibilities this likely has an inherent positive gendered impact. As of August 2025, Council supports:
 - **822 households** with a nappy exemption
 - **472 households** with a medical exemption
 - **42 households** with a hardship exemption
- Council will continue to maintain assisted services currently in place for **69 residents** with mobility challenges who are unable to get their bins to and from the kerbside for collection.

Council develop a communication plan for implementation of the Waste Service Charge and ensure this addresses the diverse information needs and expectations of the Monash community including people of all genders and abilities, particularly those with disabilities or who speak languages other than English. This plan should also work to clarify existing misconceptions around the Waste Service Charge.

CONCLUSION

Council is currently in a challenging financial position. The rising costs of waste services will make it increasingly difficult for Council to maintain its current services and improve infrastructure in line with community needs and expectations as costs will outstrip revenue.

Council cannot continue to absorb these increased costs within the capped rates without an impact on services and ability to renew existing assets and the provision of new and upgraded community facilities.



This report requests that Council endorse a separate full cost recovery Waste Service Charge with the charge to be finalised as a part of 2026/27 budget process and an implementation plan be developed.

Council should continue its compliance with Ministerial Guidelines and remain consistent with any future changes introduced. It is also recommended Council investigate different bin sizes and packages including the opportunity to offer a smaller bin at a lower price point that responds to community feedback to incentivise waste reduction. Council will develop a communication program post budget finalisation to inform and educate the community about the Waste Services Charge and address the misconceptions identified during the community consultation.

Findings from the Waste Service Charge Communication and Engagement Program and updates on the proposed Waste Service Charge will be shared with the broader community through Council channels over coming months. A copy of the full report (Attachment 4.1.6.1) will also be published on Councils community engagement platform Shape Monash.

ATTACHMENT LIST

1. Communication & Engagement Report [7.3.7.1 - 94 pages]



Waste Service Charge Communication and Engagement Report

September 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

Monash Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

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Context

Waste costs have increased by 31% over the past five years, driven by increases in the Victorian Government's landfill levy, state government requirements to introduce new services and changes in global markets. The cost of providing waste services in Monash City Council is currently included within general rates. The rate cap, set by the Victorian Government, has not kept pace with rising waste costs.

In response, Council is proposing a change to the way waste services are charged. Legislation caps rate increases but allows councils to charge a separate waste charge to recover the actual costs of waste.

A Communications and Engagement program was undertaken from 24 June to 1 September 2025 to outline the proposed separate Waste Service Charge and understand community sentiment towards the charge and the principles underpinning it. This report outlines the findings from the program.



Our Approach

The objectives of the Waste Service Charge Communication and Engagement Program were to understand community response and information needs on the proposed changes to the way waste services are charged.

Specifically, Council sought to:

- Inform the Monash community about the proposal and reasons for the change.
- Understand community attitudes towards the proposal and how council could help reduce waste further.

It is acknowledged that there was very little opportunity for the community to influence aspects of the charge as much of this is governed by legislation, including requirements on Council as to what services are provided and how waste charges are calculated. As such the scope of our engagement program was limited to testing support for the principles underpinning Council's decision, in particular:

- ensuring financial sustainability.
- improving environmental sustainability.
- ensuring charges are fair and equitable.
- providing support to those who are most impacted and can least afford price increases.

The communication element of the program aimed for maximum community reach to ensure every household and impacted business was informed of the proposed change and how they could have their say on the principles underpinning it. Given the complexity of the proposed charge, multi-channel communications were focussed on using simple, clear messaging to explain the charge and promote the engagement opportunities community members could participate in or seek further information through. The engagement opportunities provided enabled participation through channels of choice with phone, in-person and online options made available.

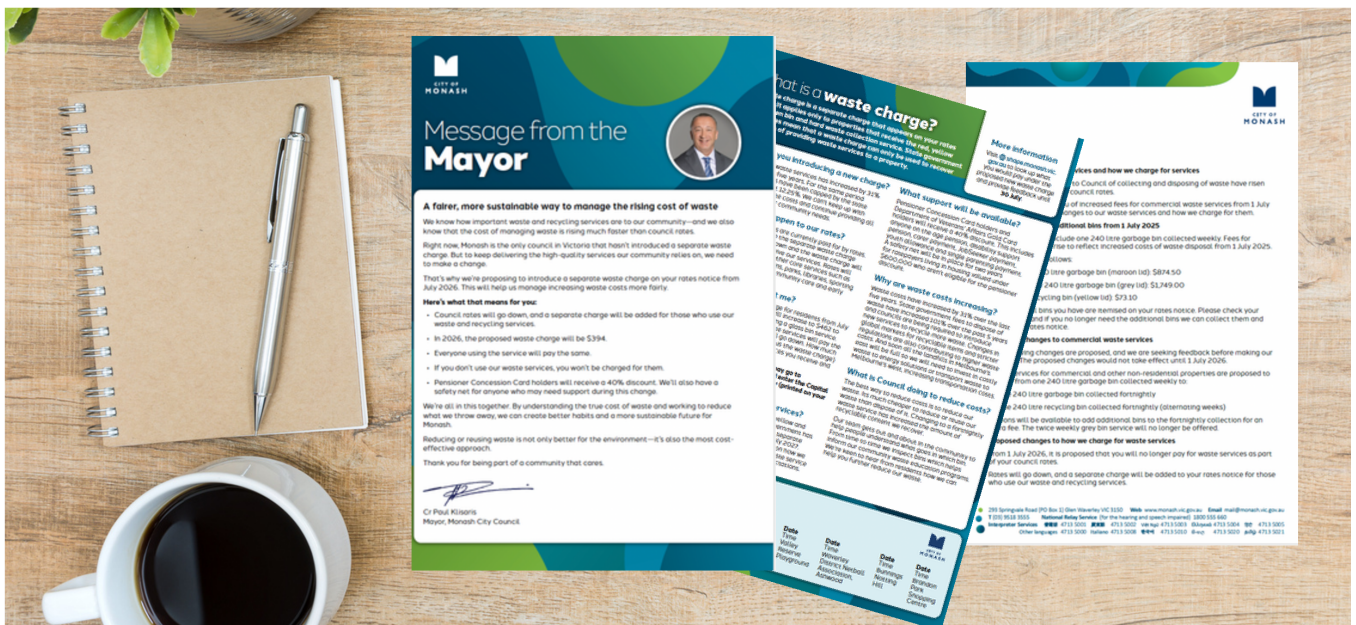
Our Approach

Communication Overview

To build awareness of the proposed Waste Service Charge and encourage participation across the engagement opportunities provided, Council leveraged multiple channels to communicate with Monash residents, businesses, and community members.

The communication element of the program aimed for maximum community reach to ensure every household and impacted business was informed of the proposed changes and the principles underpinning it. Given the complexity of the proposed charge, Council endeavoured to use simple and clear language in all communications with a focus on explaining why the charges are being proposed and how people could have their say or seek further information through their channel of choice in-person, online or over the phone through a dedicated hotline.







From an article in Council's newsletter distributed to every household (76,461) across the municipality to direct mail detailing the proposed charge and ways to 'have your say' accompanying every rates notice (86,285) the communication program undertaken was broad and far reaching. Council's communication efforts are detailed in the following snapshot.



Our Approach

Communication Overview

Waste Service Charge Communication Snapshot

 <p>86,285 RatePayers</p>	<p>Rates Notice</p> <p>A direct mail piece outlining the proposed charge and how community members could 'have their say' was include with all rates notices.</p>
 <p>76,461 Households</p>	<p>Monash Bulletin</p> <p>The proposed Waste Service Charge was the lead article in Council's newsletter which is delivered to all households across the municipality.</p>
 <p>12,832 Followers</p>	<p>Social Media</p> <p>Promotion of in-person "pop-up" sessions for community members to discuss the proposed charge with Council staff were advertised on social media.</p>
 <p>3,699 Commercial Customers</p>	<p>Direct Mail</p> <p>A letter explaining the proposed charge was sent to all commercial customers that use Council's kerbside waste services.</p>
 <p>3,347 Subscribers</p>	<p>e-Newsletter</p> <p>An article explaining the charge and how community members could 'have their say' was included in Council's e-newsletter.</p>
 <p>1,673 Page Views</p>	<p>SHAPE Monash</p> <p>A dedicated page was developed on Council's community engagement platform to explain the charge, provide FAQs, and access to an online survey. An online calculator was also developed for ratepayers to understand what the charge would mean for them based on their property value.</p>

Our Approach

Engagement Overview

From 24 June to 1 September 2025, Council conducted a series of engagement activities to understand community sentiment, needs and information expectations around the proposed Waste Service Charge and the principles underpinning it.

With very little opportunity for the community to influence aspects of the charge other than the principles underpinning it, the level of influence for Council's engagement is classified as 'Consult' on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) scale.

To accommodate the diverse needs across the municipality, engagement activities were conducted across multiple channels with opportunities for community members to have their say or seek further information in-person, online or over the phone. To further assure a diverse range of perspectives were included Council conducted focus groups with several Advisory Committees comprising of Community Leaders who represent special interests of communities across the municipality.

Independent research firm, JWS Research was commissioned to conduct a quantitative phone survey of 400 ratepayers to ensure a representative sample of the community was engaged. Quotas were achieved on age, gender, and suburb with a maximum margin of error +/- 4.9% at the 95% confidence level.

An online survey about the Waste Service Charge and underlying principles was provided through Council's engagement platform Shape Monash. The online survey page provided community members with supporting information, FAQs, and an online calculator for ratepayers to check what the charge means for them based on their property value.






A visible Council presence was established through Community Pop-Ups in 9 high traffic locations across the municipality including shopping centres, community centres, hardware stores, markets, playgrounds, sporting, and education facilities. Translators for key languages were also available.

The engagement activities undertaken and their community reach are outlined in the following snapshot.

Our Approach




Engagement Overview

Waste Service Charge Engagement Snapshot



 440 Community Members	10 Pop-Up Sessions Pop-up sessions were conducted in 9 high-traffic locations across the municipality providing community members the opportunity to discuss the proposed charge in-person with Council staff. Translators were also available.
 400 Ratepayers	Phone Survey JWS Research was engaged to conduct a survey of 400 ratepayers regarding the proposed charge to ensure we covered a representative sample of community members.
 64 Community Leaders	6 Focus Groups Council staff held 6 focus group discussions with Community Leaders representing specific needs and interests of members within the community.
 85 Responses	Online Survey Community members were invited to share their feedback through an online survey on the Shape Monash engagement platform.
 22 Calls	Waste Service Charge Hotline A dedicated phone line was established for community members to ring and discuss the proposed charge with Council staff.

Key Findings

Seven key themes emerged from the community engagement activities undertaken. The insights for these themes overlap significantly with findings around affordability and transparency directly correlating to feedback around more information and communication. Similarly, community insights around fairness and equity correlate strongly with opportunities for improving the Waste Service Charge proposal.

 <p>Affordability and transparency.</p>	<p>Many fear rising charges will strain household budgets and some prefer waste services remain rate funded.</p> <p>Some are sceptical that the change is a workaround to bypass rate caps.</p> <p>Requests for transparent cost breakdowns and evidence that charges reflect actual service costs.</p>
 <p>Fairness and equity.</p>	<p>Phone survey respondents largely agree the waste charge is fair (62% say everyone pays equally; 61% say it's fair because it's not tied to property value).</p> <p>Online respondents show significantly lower agreement (only 18–29% across fairness measures).</p> <p>Exemptions for apartment dwellers with private collection services received mixed support (40% agreement via phone, 28% online).</p>
 <p>Strong support for support measures.</p>	<p>70% of phone respondents support discounts for pensioners and veterans; 59% support the safety net for those in need.</p> <p>Agreement increases when examples of support recipients are shown.</p> <p>Online survey respondents were less supportive overall but still show moderate positivity (41–47%).</p>

Key Findings

 <p>More information. Further communication.</p>	<p>55% of phone survey respondents had not heard of the waste charge proposal despite broad outreach.</p> <p>65% of phone survey respondents were unaware that waste service costs have risen faster than rate caps.</p> <p>Ratepayers in the phone survey were much more negative (46%) than positive (8%) about this change. This pattern holds true among those who claim to be aware of the proposed change.</p> <p>A further 46% of rate payers have no formed opinion on the matter (either 'unsure' or 'neutral'), presenting Council with an opportunity to inform and shape views here.</p> <p>After receiving information, attitudes improved (positive views rose from 8% to 31% among phone survey respondents). Community Pop-up sessions and focus groups also saw shifts in negative sentiment once the proposed charge was explained in more detail.</p> <p>67% of ratepayers in the phone survey wanted more information, even among those already aware of the proposal.</p>
 <p>Glass bin feedback.</p>	<p>Across all engagement activities and most prevalent at the in-person Community Pop- Up and focus group sessions, community members expressed strong opposition to the introduction of a fourth glass bin service.</p> <p>The cost impact of the service on the proposed Waste Services Charge was an area of concern.</p> <p>Space to accommodate a fourth bin was viewed as problematic.</p> <p>Strong preferences to keep the current yellow recycling service and expand the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).</p>

Key Findings

<div></div> <div>Opportunities for improvement.</div>	<p>Residents recommended tiered pricing based on household size and waste output.</p> <p>Extending discounts to low-waste households and ensuring commercial properties pay proportionately.</p> <p>Commercial customers want more frequent bin collections and more responsive service.</p> <p>Residents suggested clearer communication, education programs, and incentives for sustainable practices.</p> <p>Doubts persist about whether the new system will improve recycling or reduce landfill.</p> <p>Calls for weekly rubbish and recycling collection, on-demand hard waste pickups, and more responsive service models.</p>
<div></div> <div>Promoting responsible waste habits.</div>	<p>Many residents were happy with the waste and recycling services of Council.</p> <p>Suggestions for clearer guidelines on what can go into bins, with extended examples online and regular updates via council channels.</p> <p>Praise for educational resources and the simplicity of the current bin system.</p> <p>Suggestions to provide education and incentive programs to promote sustainable waste practices.</p> <p>Interest in incentive-based programs like competitions, audits, and financial rewards for proper recycling.</p> <p>Greater hard waste collection flexibility and encourage community garage sales.</p>

What We Heard

Overview

The engagement element of the Waste Service Charge Communication and Engagement Program provided great insights into community sentiment towards the proposed charge, provided opportunities for improvement, and demonstrated how additional information and engagement could positively shift sentiment. It also provided Council insight into how the community thought the charge could be strengthened and how Council could encourage responsible waste habits.

The community insights gathered across multiple channels had their differences, respondents to the phone survey were more positive towards all aspects of the Waste Service Charge than respondents to the online survey. Similar to the phone survey, views shared at the in-person sessions (Community Pop-Ups and Focus groups) were also generally more positive, particularly when provided with more information. However, regardless of the engagement activity community feedback consistently centered around the seven key themes. Community insights around these themes and verbatim feedback shared across the various engagement activities have been summarised in the following section.



What We Heard

Affordability and transparency.



Given rising costs of living, affordability of the proposed charge was top of mind for community members with many concerns around adding additional strain to household budgets. This was mixed with scepticism and speculation as to whether the proposed charge was a Council cash-grabbing exercise and a way to bypass rate-capping. Community members want transparency around the proposed charge and cost-breakdowns to ensure it is only recovering actual costs and not a profit-making exercise. Additional increases to the proposed charge in coming years due to the State Government's introduction of a glass bin service received strong community opposition across all engagement activities, regardless of channel.

Key community insights:

Waste collection is seen as a core service for Council. As such it is argued by some that it should remain rate-funded and not be itemised separately. Some respondents urged Council to focus on essential services to keep rates low rather than expanding into other services such as childcare and sporting facilities.

There was some fear expressed that separating waste charges is a tactic to bypass the rate cap and that the system will be manipulated to recoup costs through other means. These residents want clear, verifiable evidence that charges reflect actual service costs.

Current costs of living and the pressure the charge would place on already strained household budgets was a significant area of concern.

Some community members could understand the drivers for the charge and were generally supportive.

WHAT WE HEARD:

"Good change about waste charge and flat rates." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Very sceptical that waste charge won't be scaled up once introduced."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"Just another roundabout way to introduce higher charges for the future." (Online survey)

"Lack of info in this proposal tied with Monash having a say in how much it costs to provide the service (understand it has to be the case) just leaves too much open ended at the moment, complete lack of clarity."
(Online Survey)

"How do we know what your actual costs are? Council need to be transparent and publish this."
(Online Survey)

"It causes cost of living to increase." (Online Survey)

"Understand rates are low and surprised Council hadn't already introduced a waste charge." (Pop-Up Participant)

What We Heard

Fairness and equity.



The principles of fairness and equity of the proposed charge varied across engagement activities and channels. At community pop-up and focus group sessions there was broad agreement that the charge was fair in principle but could be improved, particularly in terms of options for single and lower waste households and those consciously reducing waste output through incentives with smaller bin sizes and service packages.

Key community insights:

Six in 10 ratepayers surveyed by phone 'strongly' or 'somewhat agree' that the waste charge is fair because everyone pays equally (62%) and the charge is not based on property value (61%).

There was lower agreement (40%) that there is a fairness benefit by exempting people in apartments who already pay for a private collection service.

In contrast, only 18% of online survey respondents agree that the waste charge is fair because everyone pays equally, 29% agree it is fair because it's not based on property values and 28% agree it's fairer because people who pay for a private collection will not be charged for the council service.

Some residents advocate for a system that reflects actual waste output. It was argued that uniform charges are regressive, penalising smaller households and those who generate less waste.

In-person engagement activities had higher agreement with fairness that people in apartments will no longer pay twice.

Some expressed a preference for charges based on bin size, household size, and waste volume, noting Council already offers two bin sizes with a price differential to reflect smaller volume. There were several requests for an 80-litre bin option at a lower price point again.

There was strong support for commercial waste customers being required to separate recycling from landfill and a belief that businesses should bear a greater share of costs due to higher waste generation.

WHAT WE HEARD:

"Appreciate that apartments will no longer pay twice." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Makes sense. Great to hear the support for concession card holders." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Fair and cost increasing more stable." (Pop-Up Participant)

"My understanding is that I will be paying more for waste – and that's not fair – if the waste charge is introduced and others will be paying less."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"Singles especially retirees, should receive some discount as well. Just because they're not on a pension doesn't mean they're not struggling! Single-person household generates less waste!"
(Online Survey)

What We Heard

Strong support for support measures.



With rising costs and affordability top of mind for many community members there was strong support for the targeted financial support measures proposed for those in need. There was 70% support for discounts for pensioners and veterans and 59% support of a transitional safety net concession for those in need from phone survey respondents. While support measures were also supported among online survey respondents it was notably weaker to that received across other community engagement activities.

Key community insights:

A strong majority (70%) of those surveyed by phone are positive about discounts applying to pensioners and veterans (including 44% 'strongly positive') and Council's commitment to providing a safety net for those in need (59%, including 31% 'strongly positive').

There was broad support for the targeted support measures across Community Pop-ups and focus group sessions.

When shown specific examples of who qualifies for these support measures, 70% of ratepayers agree that Council has adequate help in place for those who need it.

It is notable that 22% of respondents to the phone survey held a pension or concession card whereas only 6% of respondents to the online survey were Pensioner Concession Card holders.

In contrast, 41% of online survey respondents are positive about Pensioner concessions, 47% positive about the safety net and 32% agree Council has adequate help in place for people who need support.

Whilst there was strong support for the discount for Pensioner Concession Card Holders and the transition safety net concessions, there were some mixed views on discounts, with calls for more targeted support and means-testing.

WHAT WE HEARD:

"As a single person there are no considerations for me. With increased cost of living, it is difficult financially for me." (Online Survey)

"Happy about now paying less personally. Very happy with pensioner rebate. Very happy with the safety net. Will pass on info to the community members. Like having a Greek translator." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Makes sense. Great to hear the support for concession card holders." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Appreciative of Council looking after pensioners." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Appreciates that apartments will no longer pay twice." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Singles especially retirees, should receive some discount as well. Just because they're not on a pension doesn't mean they're not struggling! Single-person household generates less waste!" (Online Survey)

What We Heard

More information. Further Communication.



The complexities of introducing a separate Waste Service Charge have proved perplexing for many community members. In fact, 67% of ratepayers in the phone survey wanted more information, even if they were already aware of the proposal. After receiving more information, attitudes towards the charge improved (positive views rose from 8 to 31%). Ensuring better education and information on the proposed charge with the community is warranted as is exploration of alternative communication channels given 55% of phone survey respondents had not heard of the waste charge proposal despite communications previously sent.

Key community insights:

Despite communication being distributed to every ratepayer and household, more than half of respondents to the phone survey (55%) said they had not heard of the proposal to separate waste charges.

Most ratepayers also do not know that the cost of waste services has increased at a higher rate over the past five years than rate increases allowed by the State Government (65%).

Whilst ratepayers surveyed by phone were initially much more negative (46%) than positive (8%) about this change, positive attitudes (31%) outweighed negative attitudes (27%) following exposure to information about the proposed Waste Service Charges. This observation was reinforced by the response from people attending the in-person sessions.

A further 46% of rate payers have no formed opinion on the matter (either 'unsure' or 'neutral'), suggesting an opportunity to further inform views about the change.

Two in three ratepayers (67%) said they require more information on this change from Council. Even among those who were aware of the proposal, more than half (55%) still seek more information.

There is some confusion about the Waste Service Charge implementation and the ability of residents to "opt-out" to avoid the charge. This led to fear that an option to opt-out would lead to bin misuse and illegal dumping. (It is important to note that the only property classes that can opt out are businesses and apartment complexes that have an adequate private collection service in place.

WHAT WE HEARD:

"After talking to the council team there is a lack of info re. this."
(Online survey)

"Neighbours will start using my bin if they don't have the service." (Online survey)

"People will say they don't use it and put their rubbish in other's bins." (Online survey)

"Received information with rates notice. Understand but not convinced Council is delivering value for money. Conceptually agree with proposal."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"Was not happy when heard about the change, appreciated the explanation and agreed its fair for people who don't use the service to pay for it." (Pop-Up Participant)

"People will be dumping their rubbish illegally into others bins."
(Online survey)

What We Heard

Glass bin feedback.



There was strong opposition to the introduction of the glass bin service across all community engagement activities but even more so at the in-person Community Pop-Up and focus group sessions. While the additional costs in coming years to the Waste Service Charge sparked concerns among some community members, the need or practicality of the service was a clear area of contention for many. Not wanting or having the space to accommodate an additional bin, contentment with the existing yellow recycling bin service and support for expansion of the current Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) were common and consistent drivers for negativity sentiment towards the glass bin service.

Key community insights:

There was strong opposition to introducing a fourth bin for glass recycling and a clear preference for maintaining the current yellow bin system.

Opposition to the glass bin service was a particularly strong theme across in-person sessions (Community Pop-ups and focus group sessions).

There were preferences for expanding the existing Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).

Many residents were happy with and had a clear preference for maintaining the existing yellow recycling bin service.

There were questions as to why a fourth glass bin was needed.

Being able to find the space to store a fourth bin was seen as problematic for many.

Moving glass to another bin wasn't seen to help community recycling efforts but reduce sorting effort and costs at recycling facilities.

There was a clear expectation that Council would represent community opposition to the glass bin service introduction and advocate on their behalf to State Government.

WHAT WE HEARD:

"Purple bin – no room to put an extra bin and no need for it."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"I don't believe we need a separate bin for glass it another way of getting money from taxpayers."(Online Survey)

"Crap idea I already have enough bins"
(Pop-Up Participant)

"If I don't (want) a separate bin for glass why I pay for it I rarely have glass in recycling bin. You are not encouraging people to recycle." (Online Survey)

"Don't want the purple bin, no need for it or if you have the purple pay for the size you have."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"Understand waste charge and cost increase. Don't support glass bin. There's no space on kerbside for fourth bin. Why have it when there is CDS?" (Pop-Up Participant)

"No need for purple bin, we can allocate into yellow bin."
(Pop-Up Participant)

What We Heard

Opportunities for improvement.



Throughout the engagement, community members provided great insight into how to improve the Waste Service Charge if implemented. There was a range of ideas, innovations and suggestions provided for Council to consider. These ranged from a smaller bin option and extending discounts to single person households to providing transparent information about how the waste charge is calculated. Other feedback related to broader opportunities to improve waste services.

Key community insights:

Implement a tiered pricing model based on household size and waste output, including the option of an 80-litre bin.

Extend discounts to single-person and older households who generate less waste.

Ensure commercial properties pay proportionately to their waste generation.

Provide clear communication about how charges are calculated and applied.

Some expressed doubts that the new system will improve recycling or reduce landfill and called for incentives including linking charges to composting, recycling efforts, and offering performance-based discounts.

Other feedback related to broader aspects of waste services. Some respondents were unhappy with fortnightly red bin collections and fear further service cuts. Others expressed scepticism about whether recycling is genuinely occurring.

There were requests for weekly recycling collection and on-demand hard waste services tailored to household needs, including the suggestion of paid pickups to reduce costs and encourage personal responsibility.

Praise for educational resources and the simplicity of the current bin system.

Requests to keep soft plastics return programs and continue collecting a wide range of recyclables.

WHAT WE HEARD:

"Feedback on recycling – can we broaden recyclable products. More soft plastic and other overseas goods that end up in red bin."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"Could there be an option to reduce the size of your red bin to get a lower charge?"
(Online Survey)

"Red bin needs to be collected 1 time a week rather than fortnight." (Pop-Up Participant)

"Not happy with the fortnightly service. Wants us to explore dropping 120L to 80L for garbage."
(Pop-Up Participant)

"If council insists on imposing this fee, then residents should receive something in return such as a reverting back to weekly red bin collections or an upgrade to a larger red bin at no additional cost." (Online survey)

"Single and low waste households should have smaller bin options that are discounted" (Focus groups)
"Some more education from Council to ratepayers and

What We Heard

Promoting responsible waste habits.



Many residents expressed satisfaction with Council’s waste services and efforts to promote responsible waste habits. Many ideas and suggestions were offered to assist the community to further reduce their waste. These ranged from information campaigns and service offerings to incentive-based programs and community driven initiatives.

Key community insights:

Many residents are satisfied with Monash Council’s existing waste and recycling services.

Praise for educational resources and the simplicity of the current bin system.

More education and incentive programs to promote sustainable waste practices.

Suggestions for more adult-focused campaigns that highlight cost savings through reuse and waste reduction.

Interest in incentive-based programs like competitions, audits, and financial rewards for proper recycling.

Calls for council to promote a repair culture and second-hand use to prevent durable goods from going to landfill.

Suggestions for community garage sales and flexible hard waste pickups.

Desire for clearer communication and evidence of environmental impact.

Suggestions for clearer guidelines on what can go into bins, with extended examples online and regular updates via council channels.

WHAT WE HEARD:

“Some more education from Council to ratepayers and residents on what can be recycled. Too much people just chuck it in the waste.” (Online survey)

“You are doing your best at the moment. It is up to the residents to correctly manage their waste.” (Online survey)

“Repeat recycling guideline in the Bulletin and on social media.” (Online survey)

“Annual Hard waste pick up to be available based on residential needs once or twice a year, when requested.” (Online survey)

“Special bin markings to identify bin types.” (Focus group)

“Need to look at finding ways for items to be fixed and reused rather than just throwing out things.”(Online survey)

“Happy for Council to do anything.” (Pop-Up Participant)

Engagement Activities

Community Pop-Up Insights

During the consultation period, 10 Community Pop-Up sessions were held in 9 high traffic locations across the municipality. These sessions created a visible Council presence and provided the opportunity to discuss the proposed Waste Service Charge, provide feedback, or seek further clarification of the charge in-person with Council staff.

Translators and translated collateral were made available at all sessions and details of the sessions were advertised across multiple channels to increase awareness and encourage community participation. The Pop-Up session at Glen Waverley Secondary College was targeted to reach our Chinese speaking population, specifically the families of the 1200 students that attend Chinese language classes on weekends and was not advertised publicly as it was held on the school grounds.

The Community Pop-Up sessions engaged 436 community members in direct conversations around the proposed Waste Service Charge. Details of the sessions and their engagement reach (community members engaged) are outlined below.

COMMUNITY POP-UP DETAILS	REACH
Glen Waverley Shopping Centre: Thursday 24 July 2025, 11am -2pm.	54
Ashwood Netball Courts: Saturday 26 July 2025,10am-1pm.	14
Clayton Community Centre Café: Monday 28 July 2025,10am-12pm.	50
Bunnings Notting Hill: Saturday 2 August 2025,10am-2pm.	100
Bunnings Notting Hill: Sunday 3 August 2025,10am-2pm.	46
Brandon Park Shopping Centre: Thursday 7 August 2025,10am-1pm.	43
Mulgrave Farmers Market: Sunday 10 August 2025, 8am-12.30pm.	52
Oakleigh Central Shopping Centre: Thursday 14 August 2025, 10am-1pm.	54
Valley Reserve Playground: Saturday 16 August 2025 ,2-4pm.	13
Glen Waverley Secondary College: Sunday 17 August 2025,9.30-10.30am.	10

Engagement Activities

Community Pop-Up Insights

Key Community Insights

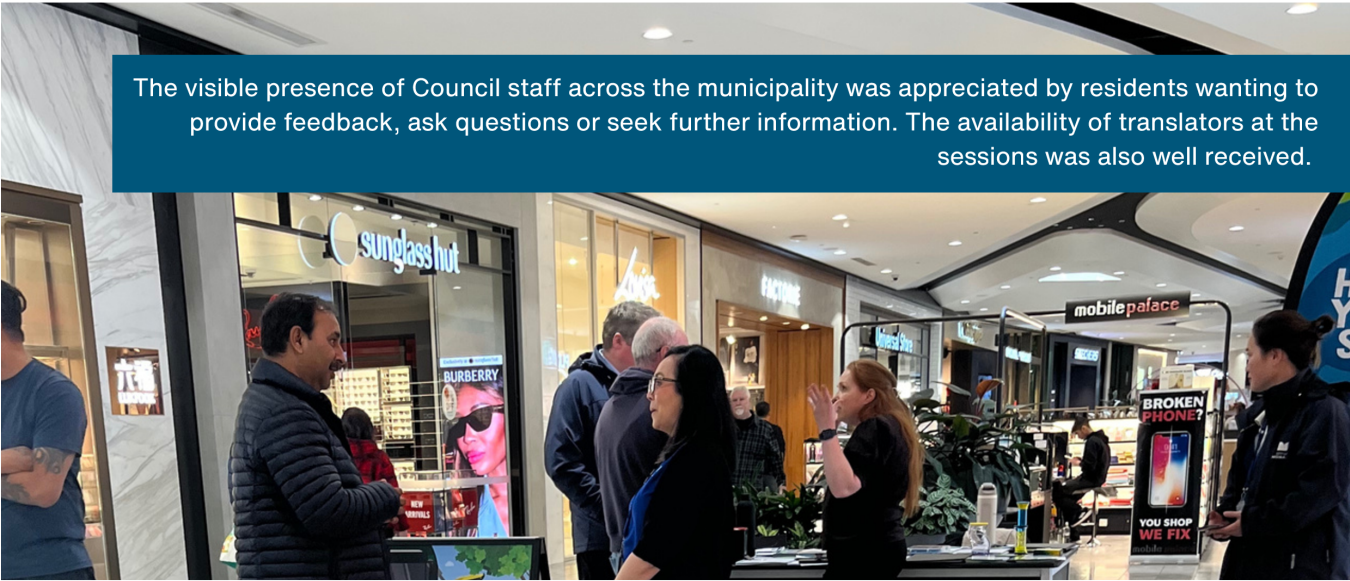
 <p>More information. Further communication.</p>	<p>More information: The community pop-up sessions demonstrated the power of more information with council staff provided with an opportunity to explain the Waste Service Charge in more detail to those in opposition to it. The provision of more information saw shifts in negative participant sentiment to that more positive in nature. There were also participants who bought the information they received to have this explained further.</p> <p>Further communication: While some participants at the sessions were aware of the Waste Service Charge and had used the online calculator to understand the impacts for them, there were many who were unaware of the proposed charge despite receiving previous communication. Council staff also received consistent feedback on making it clear in future communications that the Waste Service Charge is not a new or additional charge but one that is being separated/split from the rates charge.</p>
 <p>Fairness and equity.</p>	<p>There were concerns raised around low waste and single households and if smaller bins could help reduce the charge, community sentiment was relatively positive. The concept of same service, same price resonated well with many acknowledging a greater sense of fairness being delivered to those living in apartments and multi-unit developments who utilise private waste services not being charge for council waste services that they do not use.</p>
 <p>Strong support for support measures.</p>	<p>Participants across the sessions were appreciative of the support measures proposed, particularly given concerns around cost of living and strain on existing household budgets. Pensioner discounts were consistently supported.</p>

Engagement Activities

Community Pop-Up Insights

Key Community Insights

 Glass bin feedback.	The need for, storage complexities and cost impacts of the introduction of a fourth glass bin on the Waste Service Charge in coming years saw strong opposition to its introduction across the community pop-up sessions. There was consistent feedback around preferences for maintaining the current yellow recycling bin and expansion of the current Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) across the sessions.
 Opportunities for improvement.	As seen across other engagement activities some community members were keen for Council to address ways for incentivising lower waste and single households with smaller bin options at lower price points to reduce the proposed charge. Returning to weekly service collections and not introducing the glass bin to keep costs down were also common suggestions.
 Promoting responsible waste habits.	Many participants across the sessions were happy with Councils current waste and recycling services. Those offering suggestions for improvement encouraged more information and education around what could go into the bins and interest in incentive -based programs and offerings that encourage recycling and lower waste outputs.



Engagement Activities

Phone Survey Insights







Independent research firm, JWS Research was commissioned to conduct a quantitative phone survey of 400 ratepayers (aged 18yrs plus) from 21-25 July 2025 on the proposed Waste Service Charge to ensure we reached a representative sample of the community based on age, gender, and location. The surveys conducted were approximately 8 minutes in length, and the insights provided represent a 95% confidence level (+/- 4.9% error margin). While key findings have been highlighted for this report, detailed findings are provided in Appendix A. The structure and length of the phone survey did not enable broader feedback on areas for improvement or general feedback on other elements of waste services such as the introduction of glass bins.

Note that this survey was targeted at ratepayers therefore suburbs with high student populations such as Clayton and Notting Hill were underrepresented in the sample and areas with higher owner/occupier rates including Mulgrave, Glen Waverley and Wheelers Hill were overrepresented in the sample. A demographic summary of respondents is outlined on the following page.



Engagement Activities

Phone Survey Insights

DEMOGRAPHIC	SAMPLE MEASURE (%)	
 Gender	52% identified as male.	48% identified as female.
 Age	9% were aged 18 to 39 years. 39% were 40 to 64 years.	52% were 65 plus years.
 Pension or Concession Card	22% had a pension or concession card. 74% were not cardholders.	2% were unsure. 2% preferred not to say.
 Property Type	88% separate house. 5% semi-detached, row or terrace house or townhouse. 5% flat, unit or apartment	0.5% something else. 2% prefer not to say.
 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	73% spoke English only. 26% spoke a language other than English at home. 2% preferred not to say	62% born in Australia. 36% born in a country other than Australia.
 Suburb	2.5% (10) Ashwood 1% (4) Chadstone 21% (84) Glen Waverley 1% (4) Huntingdale Waverley 14.3% (57) Mulgrave	1.8% (7) Burwood 0.3% (2) Clayton 3% (12) Hughesdale 23.8% (95) Mount

Engagement Activities

Phone Survey Insights

Key Community Insights



**More information.
Further
communication.**

More information: The need for more information around the proposed waste service charge among phone respondents was clear.

A majority of ratepayers do not know that Monash is the only council in Victoria that has not yet introduced a separate waste charge (73%), or that the cost of waste services has increased at a higher rate over the past five years than rate increases allowed by the State Government (65%).

Information provision also significantly improves attitudes towards the proposed change. Positive attitudes (31%) outweigh negative attitudes (27%) following exposure to information about the proposed waste charges.

Ratepayers are much more negative (46%) than positive (8%) about this change. This pattern holds true among those who claim to be aware of the proposed change. A further 46% of rate payers have no formed opinion on the matter (either 'unsure' or 'neutral'), presenting Council with an opportunity to inform and shape views here.

Information provision significantly improves attitudes towards the proposed change. Positive attitudes (31%) outweigh negative attitudes (27%) following exposure to information about the proposed waste charges.

Two in three ratepayers (67%) claim to require more information on this change from Council. Even among those who claim to be aware of the proposal, more than half (55%) still seek more information.

Further communication: One in two ratepayers are unaware of the proposal to separate waste charges. More than half of ratepayers (55%) report that they have not heard of the proposal to separate waste charges despite recent communication with their rates notice.

Engagement Activities

Phone Survey Insights

Key Community Insights

 <p>Fairness and equity.</p>	<p>There was higher agreement with messages in equality based fairness than with fairness through exemptions.</p> <p>Six in 10 ratepayers ‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat agree’ that the waste charges are fair because everyone pays equally (62%) and charges are not based on property value (61%).</p> <p>In contrast, agreement is lower (40%) that there is a fairness benefit by applying exemptions for people in apartments. (Noting that this is not relevant to ratepayers given the benefit does not apply to them.)</p>
 <p>Strong support for support measures.</p>	<p>Messages that emphasise support for vulnerable groups are the most positively received among ratepayers.</p> <p>A strong majority (70%) are positive about discounts applying to pensioners and veterans (including 44% ‘strongly positive’) and Council’s commitment to providing a safety net for those in need (59%, including 31% ‘strongly positive’).</p> <p>When shown specific examples of who qualifies for these support measures, 70% of ratepayers agree that Council has adequate help in place for those who need it.</p>

Engagement Activities

Focus Group Insights

To ensure engagement for the Waste Service Charge reflected the diverse and unique needs of groups across the municipality Council conducted focus group sessions with community leaders representing the needs of six special interest advisory groups to understand a range of perspectives. The groups represented and engagement reach are tabled below.

ADVISORY GROUP DETAILS	REACH
Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, Asexual and others Advisory Committee: Monday 30 June 2025, 6pm	9
Gender Equity Advisory Committee: Monday 4 August 2025, 6.30pm	8
Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee: Thursday 7 August 2025, 6.30pm	14
Environmental Advisory Committee: Friday 11 August 2025, 6pm	12
Disability Advisory Committee: Monday 21 August 2025, 6pm	9
Eyes Right Advisory: Monday 1 September 2025, 10.30am	12

Engagement Activities

Focus Group Insights

Key Community Insights

 <p>Affordability and transparency.</p>	<p>Misconceptions that the Waste Service Charge was additional funding for Council (revenue raising as opposed to cost-recovery) raised questions as to where the extra funds would be invested.</p>
 <p>Fairness and equity.</p>	<p>There was acknowledgment of greater equity and fairness in the proposed Waste Service Charge from community members across the groups. Those living in or having experience with multi-unit developments were very supportive of the proposal while some community leaders held concerns that higher value properties would be better off with the proposed charge than lower value ones.</p>
 <p>Strong support for support measures.</p>	<p>There was strong support for support measures for the proposed Waste Service Charge across all advisory group focus sessions. Given rising costs of living, ensuring the vulnerable and those in financial hardship are supported was top of mind.</p>
 <p>Opportunities for improvement.</p>	<p>Like other engagement channels the need for Council to acknowledge and reward lower waste outputs and introduce smaller bin sizes and packages with discounts/concessions were seen as ways to strengthen the proposed charge and deliver greater fairness and equity.</p>

Engagement Activities

Focus Group Insights

Key Community Insights



More information. Further communication.

More information: There was consistent questioning received from the focus groups around what Council is doing to reduce wastage and keep costs down. This was accompanied with calls for more waste information and education around what you can and cannot recycle.

Further Communication: There was feedback around ways to improve communication of the proposed Waste Service Charge. Suggestions included:

Scenarios- including impacts of the Waste Service Charge and what this means for different individual scenarios would be useful (i.e. commercial vs ratepayer vs pensioner) and important in ongoing communications to help community members understand what this means for them and others.

Clarity around the charge- Being clear in communications that Council is splitting or separating the Waste Service Charge from rates and emphasising that this is not a new or additional charge and emphasising it is not about revenue generation but cost-recovery.



Glass bin feedback.

Across the advisory group's community leaders questioned the need for extra bins for glass collection with many in strong opposition to their introduction and the associated cost impacts on the proposed Waste Service Charge in coming years.

There is an expectation that Council would take this feedback onboard and advocate to State Government on their behalf that councils should not be forced to introduce the service.

Community leaders recommended Council conduct research into other options for glass bin collection and learn from what has been trialled and tested in other countries.

Expansion of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) was broadly advocated and seen as a means for avoiding the introduction of a fourth glass bin service and its associated costs.

Engagement Activities

Focus Group Insights

Key Community Insights



**Promoting
responsible waste
habits.**

There were suggestions across the focus groups for greater information and clarity on what can and cannot be recycled across the different bins. Provisions of an assisted bin service for those with disabilities, special bin markings to identify bin types for the sight -impaired and ensuring important information is communicated in plain text so it can be processed through screen readers were also suggested.



There was genuine appreciation by community leaders across the advisory groups for the opportunity to represent the needs of their community members and further engagement on other important topics was widely welcomed.

Engagement Activities

Online Survey Insights

Council's online community engagement platform, Shape Monash, hosted an online survey. The dedicated page included further supporting information on the proposed Waste Service Charge, FAQs, and a calculator for community members to check what the charge means for them based on their property value. Throughout the consultation period the page received 1,673 views with 85 responses received for the online survey.







The online survey was designed to seek verbatim feedback from people who were negatively predisposed towards one or more aspects of the proposal to understand whether there were opportunities to improve the waste charge, services, or proposed support.

Questions asked in the survey were not mandatory, enabling respondents to skip questions if preferred and there were no registration requirements to participate in the survey to encourage maximum participation. Highlights from the demographic data, where provided by respondents, is outlined in this section.



Engagement Activities

Online Survey Insights

Demographic	Sample Measure (%)	
 Gender	33.8% identified as male. 19.4% preferred not to say.	46.8% identified as female.
 Age	34.6 % were aged 50-64 years. 30.8% 35-49 years.	12.8% 65-74 years of age.
 Pension or Concession Card	91.6% were not card holders.	
 Property Type	89.4% were residents. 7.1% own or managed a business.	96.3% were property owners. 3.7 % renting/leasing.
 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	69% of respondents were born in Australia.	14.1% preferring not to say.
 Suburb	23.8% Mount Waverley. 15% from areas across Oakleigh. 13.8% from Glen Waverley.	12.5% from Wheelers Hill. 8.8% Mulgrave.

Engagement Activities

Online Survey Insights

Key Community Insights

 <p>Affordability and transparency.</p>	<p>Impacts of the charge given rising costs of living was an area of concern for respondents with commentary about how many households could afford the charge and what implications this may have such as opting out of waste services and illegal dumping.</p> <p>Negative sentiment towards the charge was often correlated as a way for Council to by-pass rate capping and increase costs with some questioning the lack of evidence or detail around the actual waste costs Council is recovering. Transparency around the charge and what Council is investing in across other services and how ratepayer funds are being spent was also a common theme.</p>
 <p>Fairness and equity.</p>	<p>Online respondents show significantly lower agreement with fairness measures. Nearly half (47% of respondents strongly disagreed that the new waste charge will be fairer as everyone who uses the waste services will pay the same amount.</p> <p>Many respondents questioned how the charge was fair when some households produce less waste than others and some groups would get discounts and concessions when others that may be struggling do not.</p> <p>There were also concerns raised about how fair it is for commercial customers and what impacts changes to the frequency of their bin services will have and whether the change meets their needs. Similarly, there was contention as to whether there was fairness when comparing costs for commercial businesses with greater waste outputs and residents.</p>

Engagement Activities

Online Survey Insights



Key Community Insights

 <p>Strong support for support measures.</p>	<p>Online survey respondents were less supportive of support measures overall but still show moderate positivity (41–47%).</p> <p>Drivers for lower support for targeted support measures were in relation to certain groups already having significant government support, with some viewed to be asset rich and cash poor or not really in need of a discount and the overall fairness of having to subsidise discounts for others who get the same value from the services provided.</p> <p>Given 92% of respondents did not hold a pension or concession card it's not surprising that there were concerns around how single person and low-income households who aren't eligible for concessions will afford the charge.</p>
 <p>More information. Further communication.</p>	<p>Survey respondents were clear in the desire for more information around the separate Waste Service Charge proposed particularly when it comes to what the actual costs being recovered are, how Council is investing across other service areas and what it is doing to reduce waste and encourage recycling. The misconception and concerns around residents “opting- out” of waste services to avoid the charge identifies the need for further information and clarification.</p>
 <p>Glass bin feedback.</p>	<p>As seen across other engagement activities there was also strong opposition to the introduction of the glass bin service and its associated costs from online survey respondents. Commentary centred around why couldn't it be optional, not having the space to accommodate it or the actual need for an additional service when current yellow bin system works well.</p>

Engagement Activities

Online Survey Insights

Key Community Insights

 <p>Opportunities for improvement.</p>	<p>Aside from not introducing the charge at all suggestions for improvement centred around accommodating lower-waste households with smaller bin options at lower price points, weight-based systems where you pay based on waste outputs and the return of weekly and more frequent collections. There were also suggestions for making concessions income based and clearly demonstrating value for money i.e. what do ratepayers get from the charge.</p> <p>Recognition for single-person and low waste households who are doing the right things to reduce waste was a common area of contention for respondents. This includes being able to get smaller bin sizes or not having to pay for bins not used i.e. green or recycling.</p>
 <p>Promoting responsible waste habits.</p>	<p>When it came to what else Council can do to encourage responsible waste habits there were calls for more annual hard rubbish collections and clearer communication to provide guidance on what can go into each of the bins and to call out if there are actually limits of certain items that can go into the bins i.e. number of tissues in a green bin.</p> <p>It was also suggested Council regularly reinforce this across multiple channels including the website and <i>Monash Bulletin</i>. Incentivising recycling efforts and fostering a repair culture across the community were also suggested.</p>




Engagement Activities

Waste Service Charge Hotline Insights

To best support community members with a preference for discussing their feedback or seeking more information over the phone, Council set up a dedicated Waste Service Charge hotline. This dedicated service received a total of 968 calls from Monday 14 July to 15 August. Interestingly of the calls received only just over 2% (22 calls) were in direct relation to the proposed Waste Service Charge with customers wanting further information or the opportunity to provide feedback. Most of the calls received to the hotline where in relation to other waste related issues or questions regarding the Emergency Services Levy charge on the current rates notice.

The 22 calls received in direct relation to the Waste Service Charge centred around wanting to discuss the charge, note their stance on it or seek more information around it. Several of the calls received were from commercial customers expressing dissatisfaction with proposed increases to bin prices and the collection frequency proposed. While other caller feedback centred around key themes identified across other engagement activities as outlined below.

Key Community Insights

 <p>Affordability and transparency.</p>	<p>There were requests for more information on Council's budget and waste costs for the last financial year. Concerns around Council's lack of transparency regarding actual cost-recovery and financial management.</p>
 <p>More information. Further communication.</p>	<p>There was a misconception online that people could 'opt out' of the charge and not use council waste services leading to improper bin use and illegal dumping.</p>
 <p>Glass bin feedback.</p>	<p>Unfairness of glass bin introduction and costs if you don't need or wouldn't use it.</p>

What Happens Next?

The insights from our Communications and Engagement Program for the proposed Waste Service Charge will inform recommendations to Council on how to proceed. Recommendations centre around the key themes identified through the consultation and are detailed below.

Based on the findings from the Waste Service Charge Communication and Engagement Program it is recommended Council:

Introduces support measures for Pensioner Concession Card holders and vulnerable residents and ensure a temporary safety net transition concession arrangements will be provided as safety net for households with lower property values.

Develops a communications program to address the desire for more information and communication around the implementation of a separate Waste Service Charge including transparent information about costs to Council and how the waste charge is calculated.

Investigates different bin sizes including the option of a smaller 80 litre bin at a cheaper price point or respond to incentivise waste reduction and make it fairer for people who produce less waste.

Acknowledges strong opposition and negative community sentiment regarding the introduction of a fourth glass bin service and continue our advocacy to the Victorian Government to expand the Container Deposit Scheme and delay the implementation of a separate glass bin.

The findings from this report and updates on the proposed Waste Service Charge will also be shared with the community through Council channels over coming months. A copy of this report will also be published on our community engagement platform *Shape Monash*.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED

Council would like to thank all the community members who provided their insights and feedback on the Waste Service Charge proposal.

Whether you completed our online survey or talked to our team at a Community pop-up or focus group sessions this report and the recommendations it has shaped would not be possible without your active participation. Thank you.

Appendices

Appendices

JWS Phone Survey - Detailed Report



Community perceptions of separate waste charges: Research report

Prepared for the City of Monash
August 2025



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<u>Appendix: Demographics</u>	<u>21</u>





Background, objectives and methodology



Background and objectives

In response to escalating waste management costs, driven by increases in the Victorian EPA levy, landfill costs and recycling fees, the City of Monash (Council) is proposing a change to the way waste services are charged.

Currently, these costs are embedded within general rates. To improve transparency and ensure a fairer distribution of costs, Council proposes that beginning with the 2026/2027 rates notice, waste charges be itemised separately from general rates.

From the 15th July 2025, a 'message from the Mayor' flyer was distributed to households in the City of Monash, outlining this proposal.

Research objectives

The objectives of this research are to understand community response and information needs on the proposed changes to the way waste services are charged.

Specifically, Council wants to:

- determine the community's level of awareness of the change to separate waste charges from general rates, including reasons driving the change
- understand community attitudes and perceptions of the benefits associated with the waste charge changes
- identify key messages that most effectively shift attitudes in a positive direction.



Survey research methodology

QUANTITATIVE TELEPHONE (CATI) SURVEY			
Sample size	Representation	Margin of error and confidence level	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n=400 City of Monash ratepayers aged 18+ years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey quotas on age, gender and location. The data has not been weighted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=400 is +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence level. Differences of +/-1% for net scores are due to rounding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 minutes in length. Conducted from 21st to 25th July 2025.

The research was conducted in compliance with AS-ISO 20252.

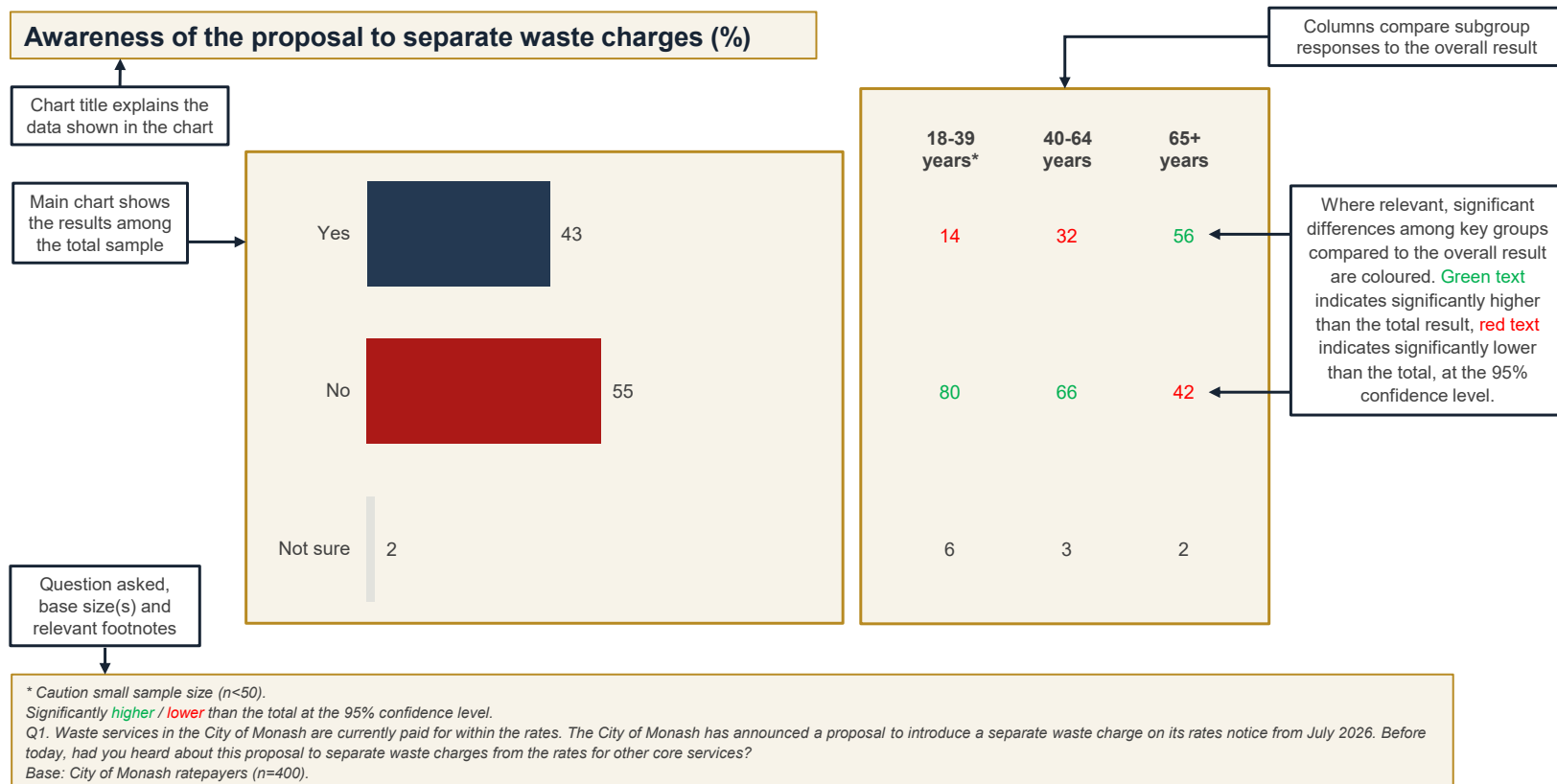


Reporting notes: segment definitions

The table below shows the definitions of sub-sample segments described throughout the report:

Label	Description
Aware of proposal	Before messaging, those who have heard of the proposal to separate waste charges from the rates of other core services
Not aware of proposal	Before messaging, those who have not heard of the proposal to separate waste charges from the rates of other core services

How to read charts in this report

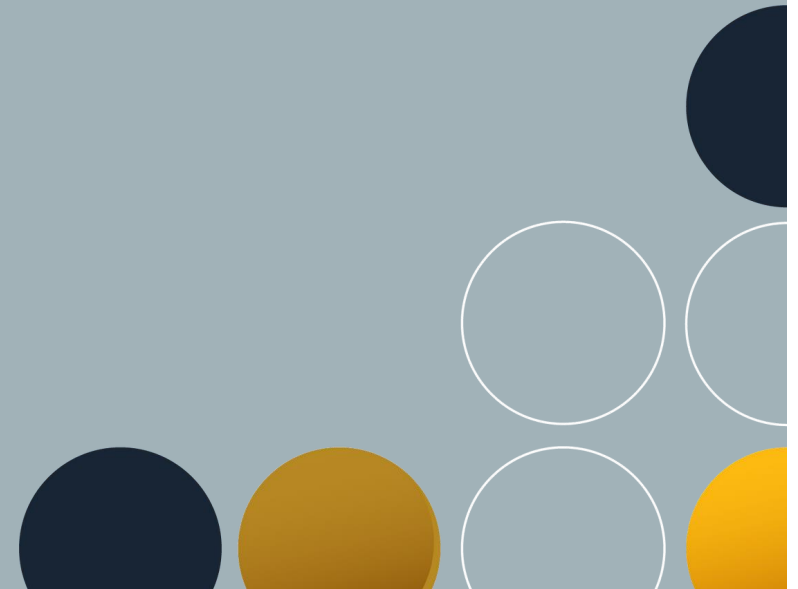


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Executive summary



Executive summary

One in two ratepayers are unaware of the proposal to separate waste charges



More than half of Council ratepayers (55%) claim they have not heard of the proposal to separate waste charges.

The majority of ratepayers also do not know that Monash is the only council in Victoria that has not yet introduced a separate waste charge (73%), or that the cost of waste services have increased at a higher rate over the past five years than rate increases allowed by the State Government (65%).

As such, ratepayers are much more negative (46%) than positive (8%) about this change. This pattern holds true among those who claim to be aware of the proposed change. A further 46% of rate payers have no formed opinion on the matter (either 'unsure' or 'neutral'), presenting Council with an opportunity to inform and shape views here.

There is higher agreement with messages in equality-based fairness than with fairness through exemptions



Six in 10 ratepayers 'strongly' or 'somewhat agree' that the waste charges are fair because everyone pays equally (62%) and charges are not based on property value (61%).

In contrast, agreement is lower (40%) that there is a fairness benefit by applying exemptions for people in apartments. (Noting that this is not relevant to ratepayers given the benefit does not apply to them.)

Support-focused messaging resonates most strongly



Messages that emphasise support for vulnerable groups are the most positively received among ratepayers. A strong majority (70%) are positive about discounts applying to pensioners and veterans (including 44% 'strongly positive') and Council's commitment to providing a safety net for those in need (59%, including 31% 'strongly positive').

When shown specific examples of who qualifies for these support measures, 70% of ratepayers agree that Council has adequate help in place for those who need it.

Continued communication is required

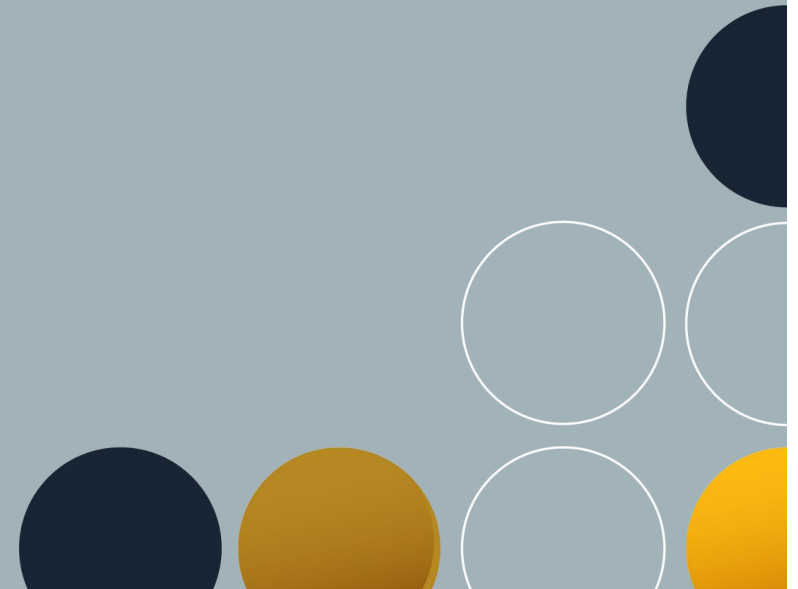


Information provision significantly improves attitudes towards this proposed change. Positive attitudes (31%) outweigh negative attitudes (27%) following exposure to information about the proposed waste charges.

Two in three ratepayers (67%) claim to require more information on this change from Council. Even among those who claim to be aware of the proposal, more than half (55%) still seek more information.



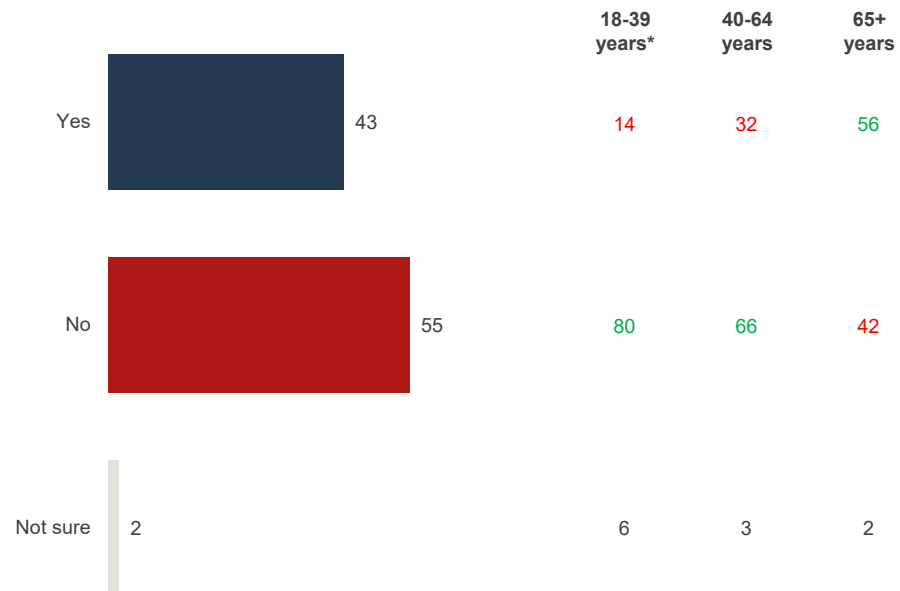
Detailed findings



Fewer than half of ratepayers are aware of proposed separate waste charge, higher awareness among those aged 65+ years



Awareness of the proposal to separate waste charges (%)



* Caution small sample size (n<50).

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence level.

Q1. Waste services in the City of Monash are currently paid for within the rates. The City of Monash has announced a proposal to introduce a separate waste charge on its rates notice from July 2026. Before today, had you heard about this proposal to separate waste charges from the rates for other core services?

Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

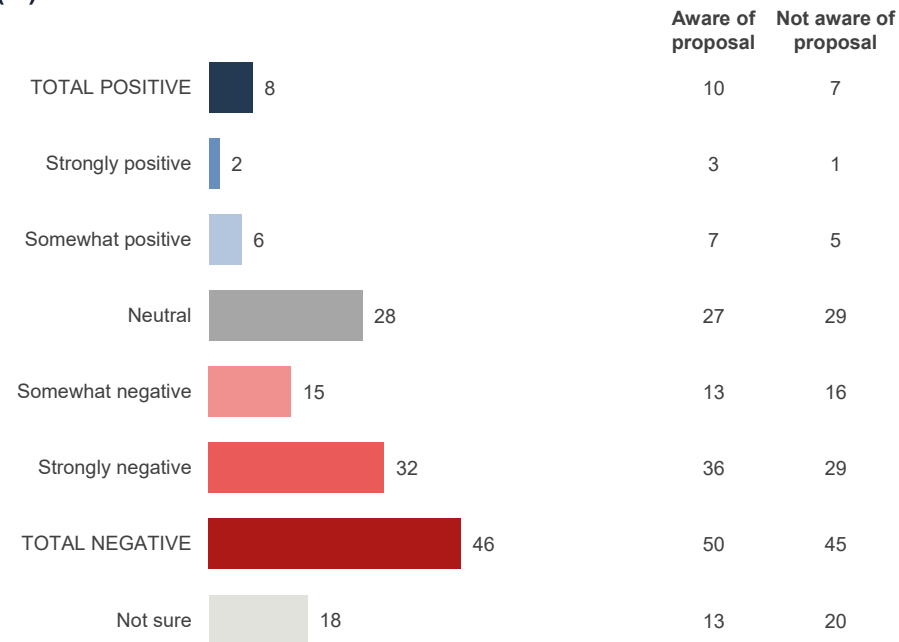
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Ratepayers are more negative than positive towards the separate waste charges, regardless of prior awareness



Attitude towards the separate waste charges (%)



Q2. Do you feel positive or negative or are you neutral towards this change?
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

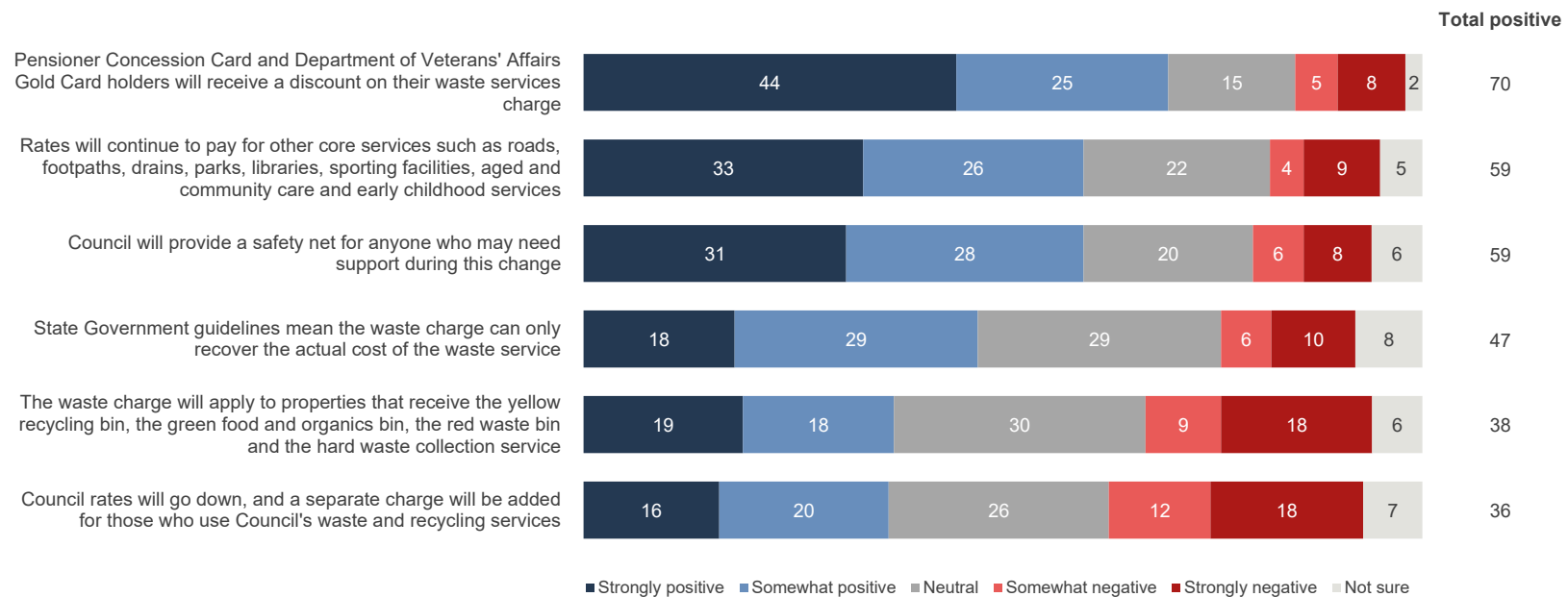
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A majority respond positively to discounts for pensioners and veterans, continued core services and support measures



Attitude towards the change to the way waste charges are collected (%)



Q3. I am going to read some statements about the change to the way waste charges are collected. For each one, please tell me if it makes you feel positive or negative about the change.
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

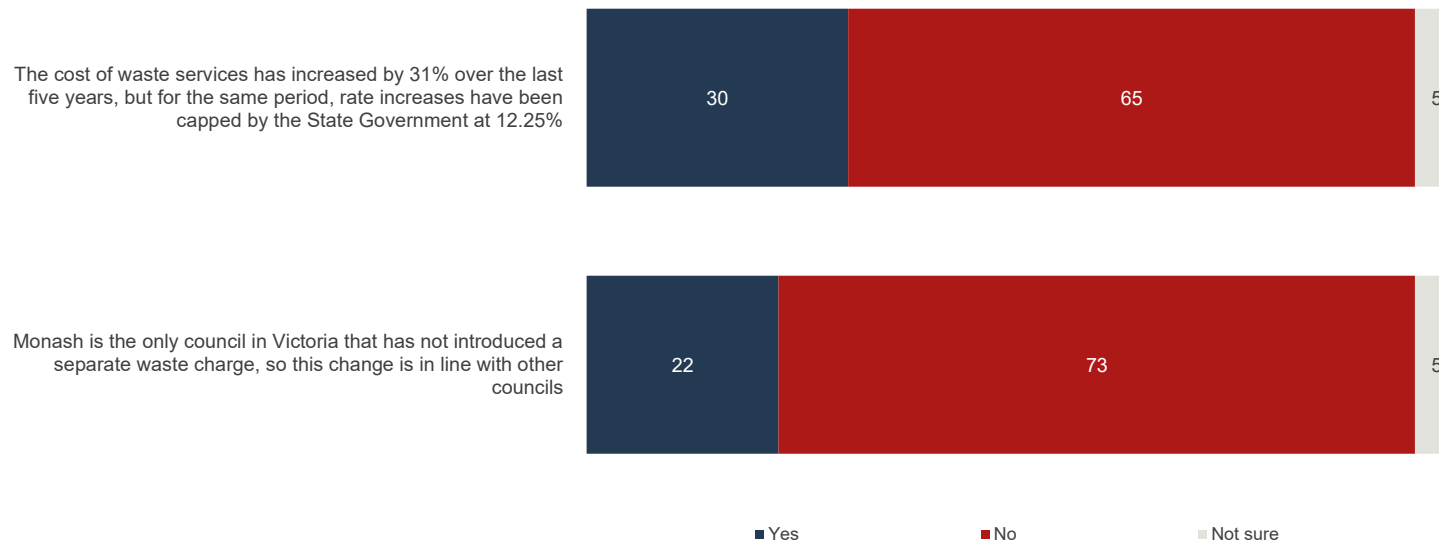
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Few are aware Monash is the only council without a separate waste charge or that service costs rise while rates stay capped



Awareness that... (%)



Q4. Before today, were you aware that...
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

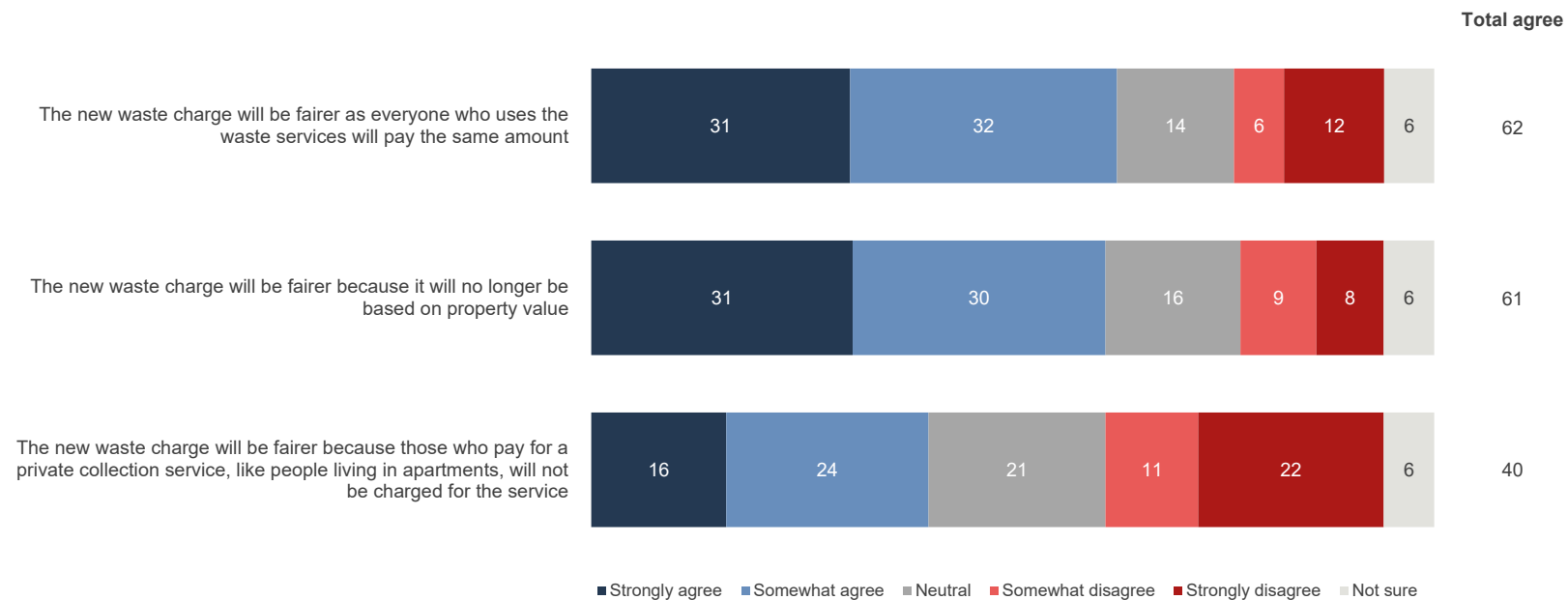
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Most ratepayers agree the new waste charge will be fairer, though views weaken when it comes to those who are exempt



Agreement of the benefits of the separate waste charges (%)



Q5. I'm going to read you some statements outlining the benefits of this change and want to know whether you agree or disagree that each is a benefit.
 Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

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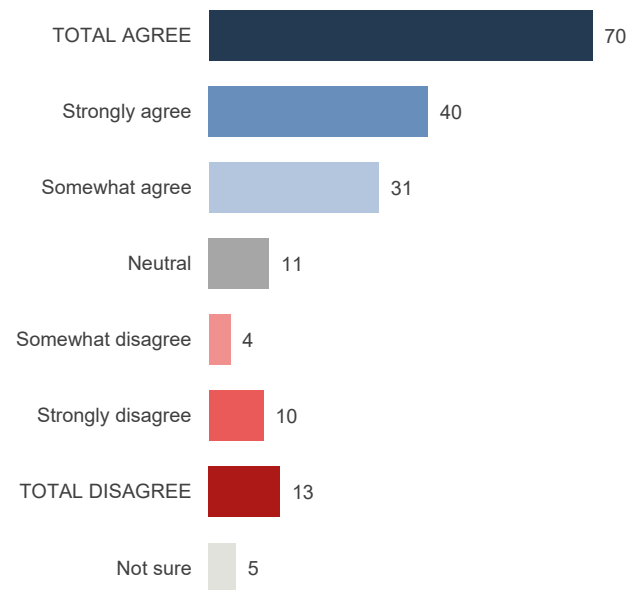
There is high and strong agreement that Council has adequate help in place for people who need support



Agreement of Council having adequate help for people who need support (%)

There will be a 40% discount for people on the aged pension, a carer payment, disability support pension, JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance or the Single Parenting Payment.

A safety net will also be in place for two years for people living in low cost housing who are not eligible for the discount, to help them adjust.



Q6. ... With this in mind, do you agree or disagree that Council has adequate help in place for people who need support?
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

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After exposure to information, ratepayers are more positive than negative about the change to waste services charge

Attitude towards the separate waste charges (%)



Significantly higher ▲ / lower ▼ than the initial at the 95% confidence level.

Q2. Do you feel positive or negative or are you neutral towards this change? / Q7. Now having heard a bit more information about the change to the waste services charge, do you feel positive or negative or are you neutral towards this change?

Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

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Converter Analysis™ explained

The previous page demonstrates that positive attitude towards the separate waste charges increases significantly at the total level following exposure to information about the proposal.

Delving into the data at an individual respondent level provides further insight. The chart overleaf places survey respondents into categories to show how attitudes either change or stay the same.

6% of respondents are 'always positive' toward the proposed new waste charges in the City of Monash

These respondents initially stated that they either feel 'strongly positive' or 'somewhat positive' toward the proposal. At the end of the questionnaire they still feel either 'strongly positive' or 'somewhat positive' toward the proposal (i.e. their considered attitudes).

47% of respondents we describe as 'positive converters'

These are the people who, irrespective of their attitudes towards the proposal initially, are more positive when asked a second time (after consideration of information). For example, a respondent might rate their attitude to the separate waste charges as 'neutral' initially, and the information provided gave that person reasons to now feel 'somewhat positive' towards the proposal.

Another respondent may feel 'somewhat negative' towards the proposal initially, and on consideration of the information, now feel 'somewhat positive' towards the separate waste charges. A positive converter also includes anyone who initially feel 'somewhat positive' towards the proposal, but on consideration feel 'strongly positive' towards it. These people fall into the 'always positive' category as well, but as their considered attitude toward the separate waste charge has moved up the scale, they are also described as 'positive converters'.

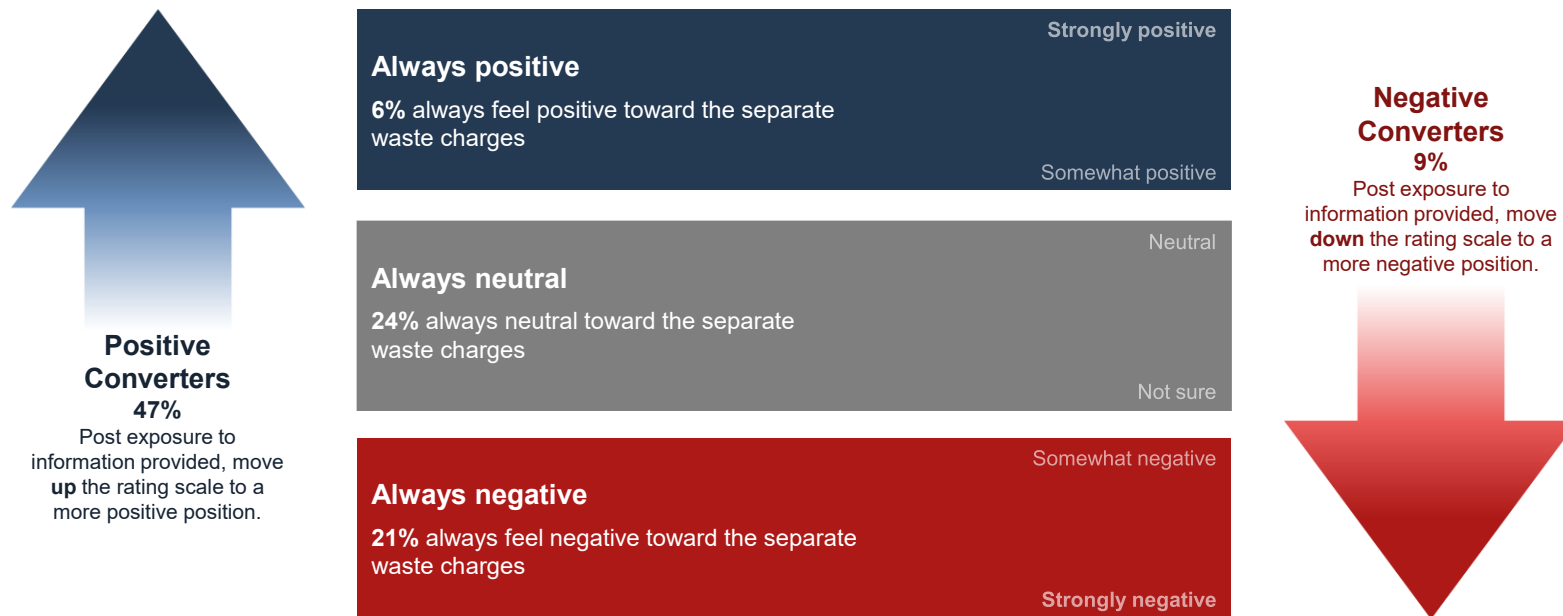
Just 9% of respondents are negative converters

On the other hand, 'negative converters' are those who move down the attitude scale at the end of the questionnaire. There are far more 'positive converters' than there are 'negative converters'.



Positive converters outweigh negative converters 5:1, demonstrating that information can shift attitudes

Converter Analysis™ shows the movement in attitude toward the separate waste charges following exposure to information about the proposal.



Note: Converter analysis categories are not mutually exclusive, therefore the percentages add to more than 100%.

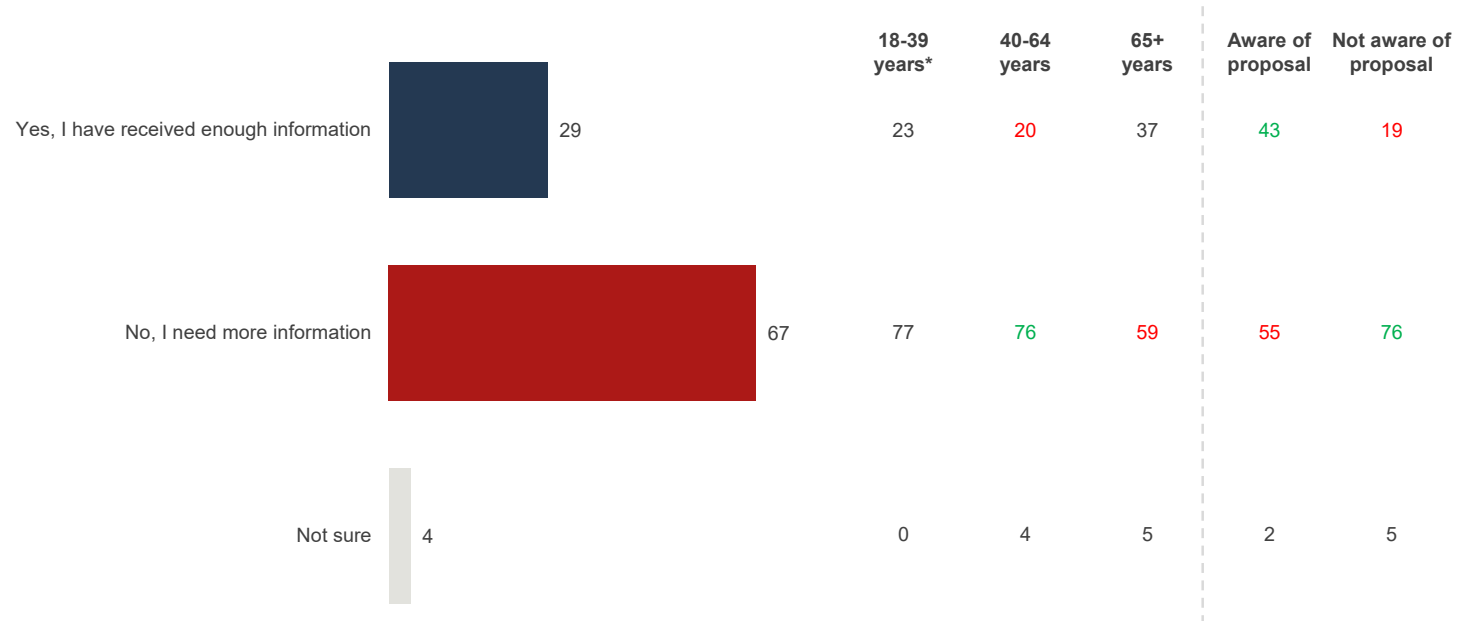
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Most ratepayers need more information, even those who claim that they were aware of the proposed change to waste charges



Perception of information received on the separate waste charges (%)



* Caution small sample size (n<50).

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence level.

Q8. Before today, have you had enough information on this change to the waste services charge from Council?

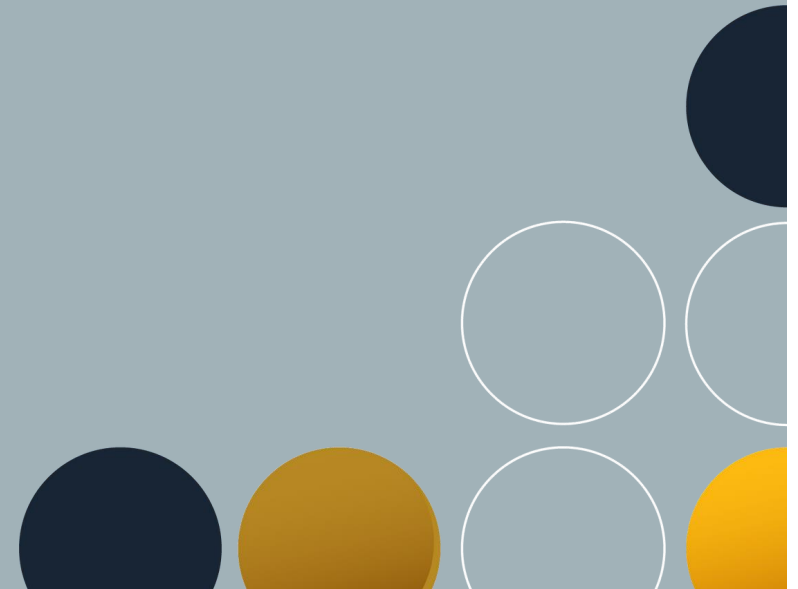
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

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Appendix: Demographics





Demographics

Gender	%
Men	52
Women	48
Non-binary	0
Prefer to use a different term	0
Prefer not to say	0
Age	%
18 to 39 years	9
40 to 64 years	39
65+ years	52

Hold a pension or concession card	%
Yes	22
No	74
Not sure	2
Prefer not to say	2
Property type	%
Separate house	88
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse	5
Flat, unit or apartment	5
Something else	<0.5
Prefer not to say	2

S3. Can you please tell me how you describe your gender? / S4. Could you please tell me how old you are? / D3. Do you hold a pension or concession card that entitles you to a rebate on your rates? This includes the aged pension, a career payment, disability support pension, JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance or the Single Parenting Payment. / D4. Is your home a...
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

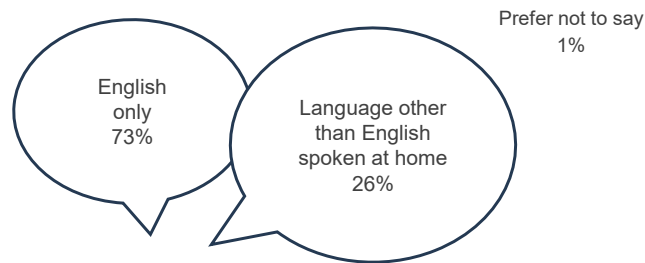
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Demographics (cont'd)

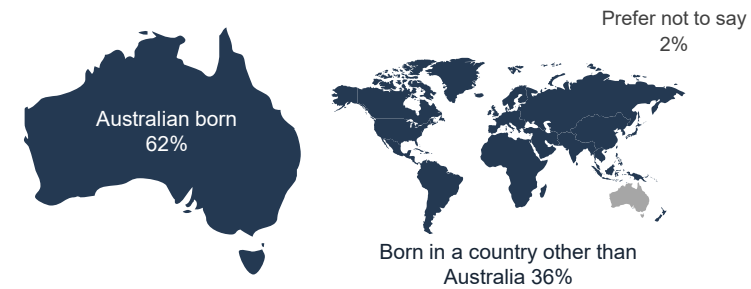
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD): 38%

Languages



• Chinese	7%	Other languages mentioned by less than 1% of respondents include Vietnamese, Russian, Korean, Japanese, Hungarian, French and Croatian. <i>Note: This not an exhaustive list of languages mentioned.</i>
• Greek	5%	
• Italian	2%	
• Hindi	2%	
• Spanish	1%	
• German	1%	
• Arabic	1%	

Country of Birth



• India	5%	Other countries mentioned by less than 1% of respondents include Canada, United States, Hungary, and Japan. <i>Note: This not an exhaustive list of countries mentioned.</i>
• China	5%	
• Other European	4%	
• United Kingdom	4%	
• Other Asian	4%	
• Greece	2%	
• Germany	2%	
• New Zealand	1%	

D1. What languages, other than English, are spoken regularly in your home? / D2. Could you please tell me which country you were born in?
Base: City of Monash ratepayers (n=400).

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JWS RESEARCH

**There are more than 209,200 people living
in the City of Monash...**

Find out what they're thinking.

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Issued: 11th August 2025

Appendices

Shape Monash Online Survey Report

Shape Monash

Form Results Summary

Jun 24, 2025 - Aug 22, 2025

Project: Proposed waste charge

Form: Provide feedback on proposed waste charge

Tool Type: Form

Activity ID: 587

Exported: Aug 25, 2025, 09:17 AM

Exported By: SRoss

Filter By: No filters applied.

Closed

Provide feedback on proposed waste charge

Proposed waste charge

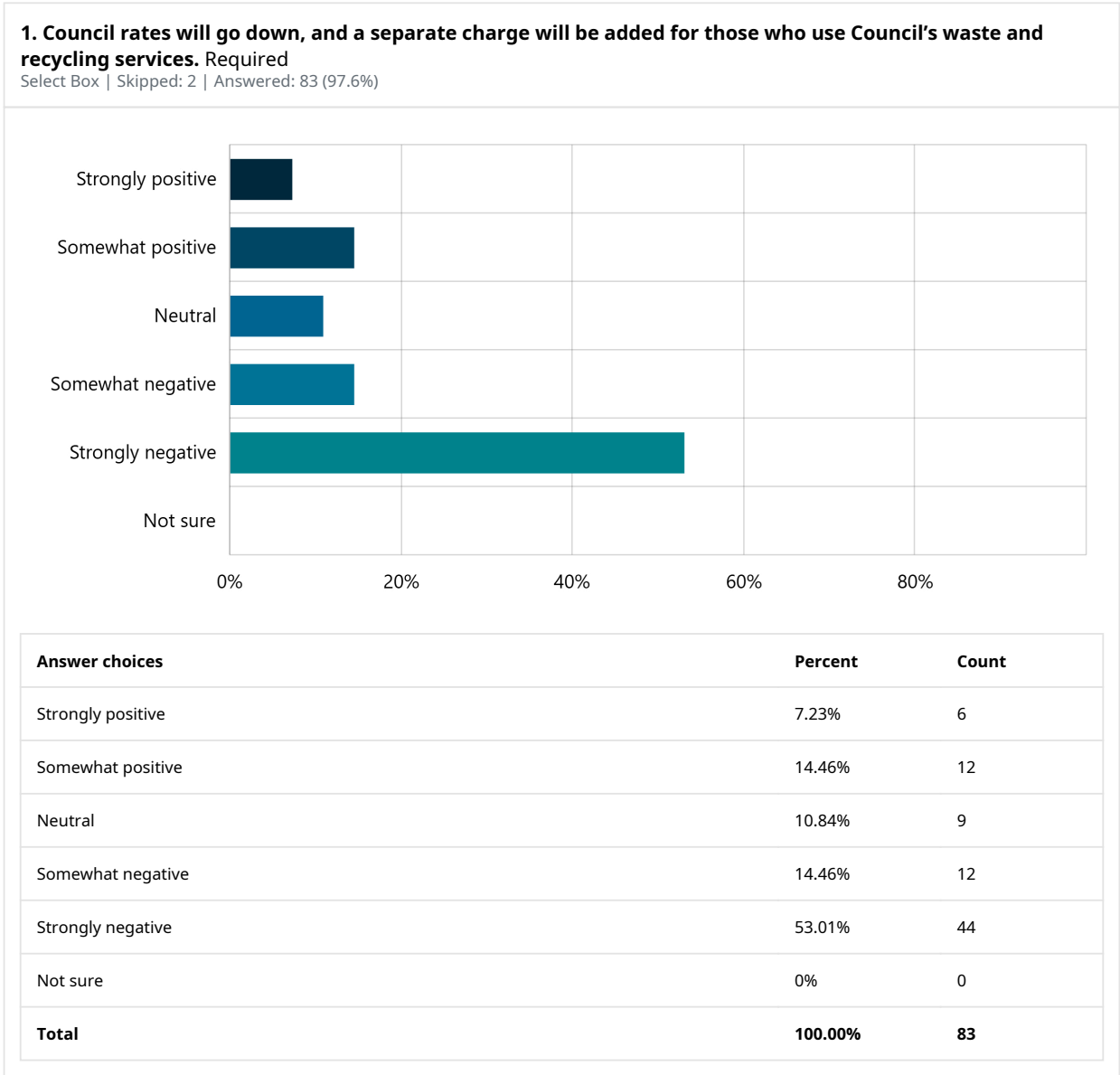
80

Contributors

85

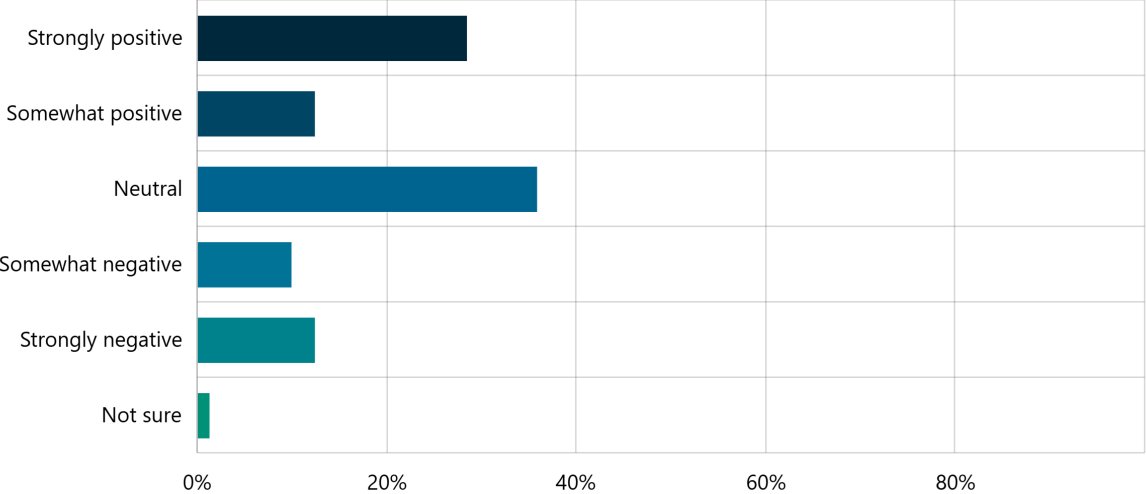
Contributions

Contribution Summary



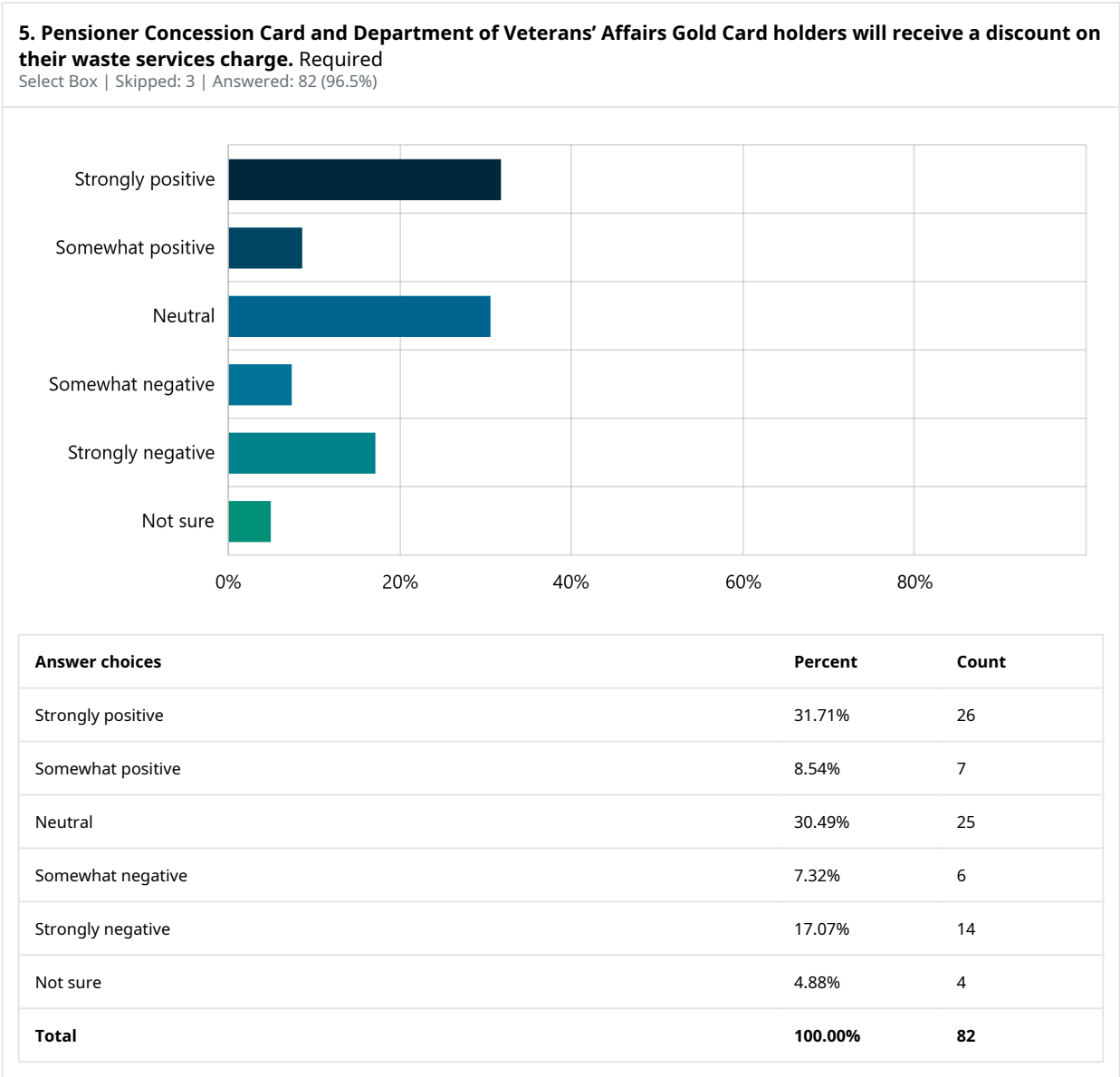
3. Rates will continue to pay for other core services such as roads, footpaths, drains, parks, libraries, sporting facilities, aged and community care and early childhood services. Required

Select Box | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 81 (95.3%)



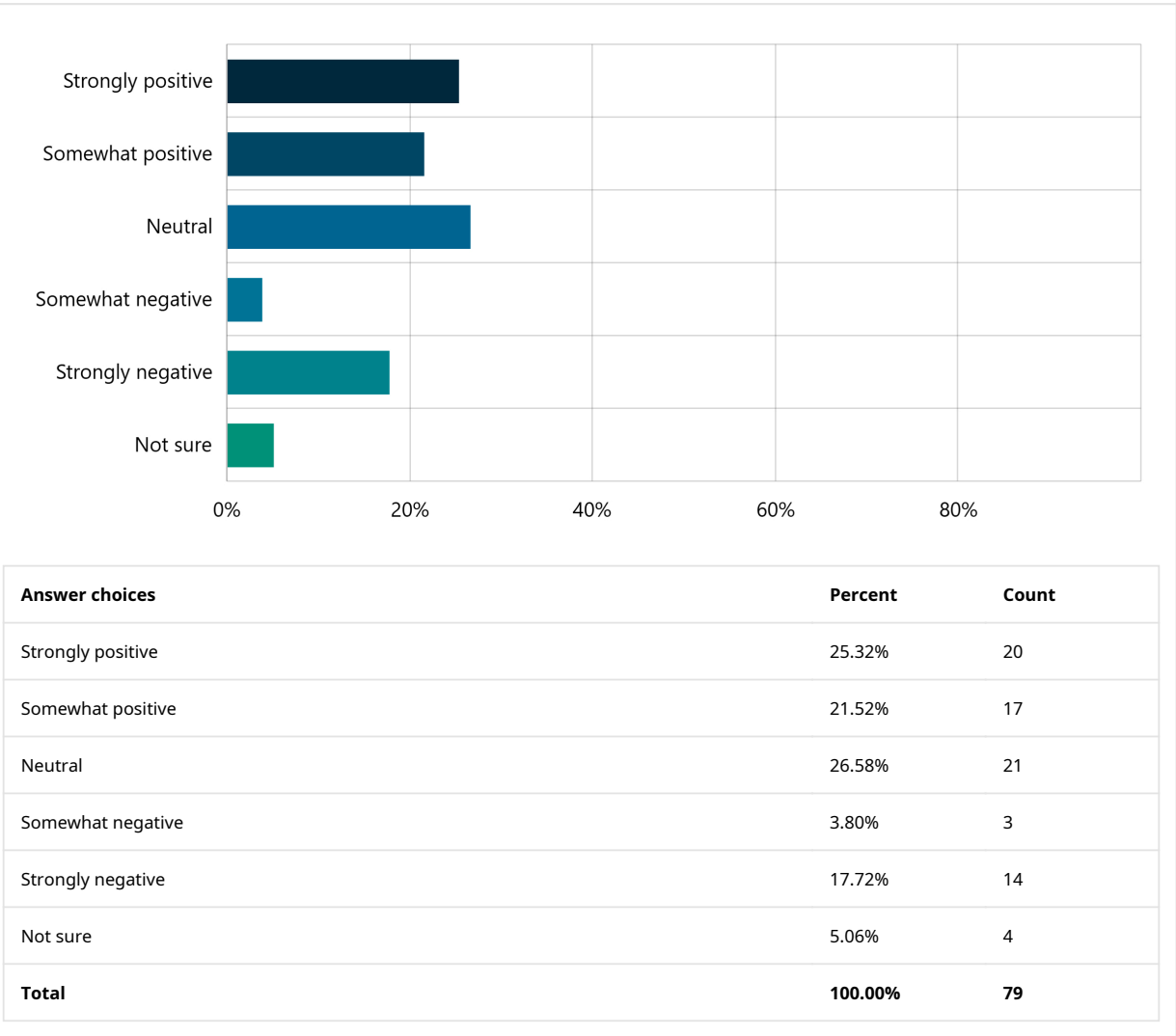
Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly positive	28.40%	23
Somewhat positive	12.35%	10
Neutral	35.80%	29
Somewhat negative	9.88%	8
Strongly negative	12.35%	10
Not sure	1.23%	1
Total	100.00%	81

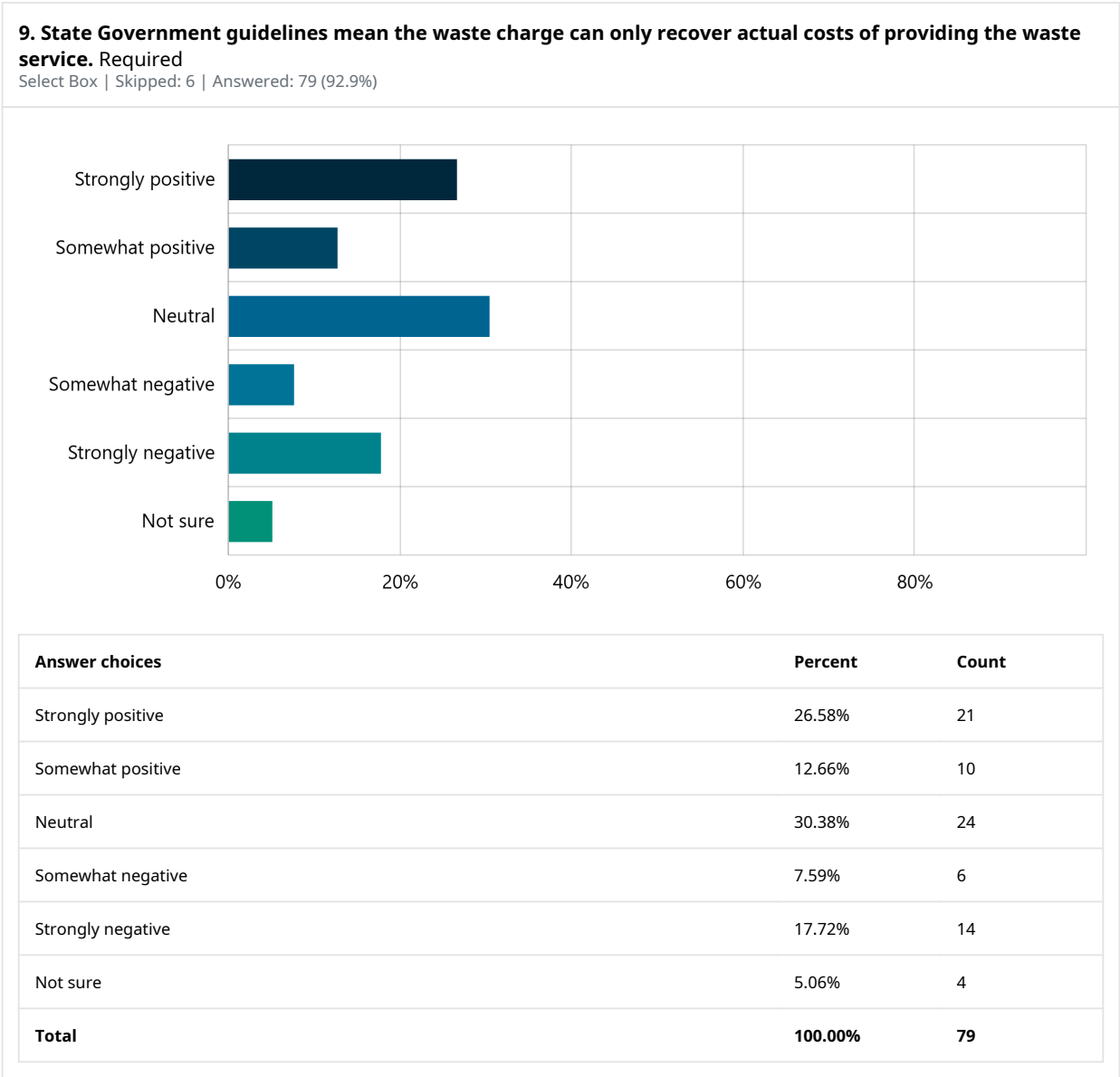
4. Please explain why you feel this way. Short Text Skipped: 69 Answered: 16 (18.8%)
Sentiment No sentiment data
Tags No tag data
Featured Contributions No featured contributions



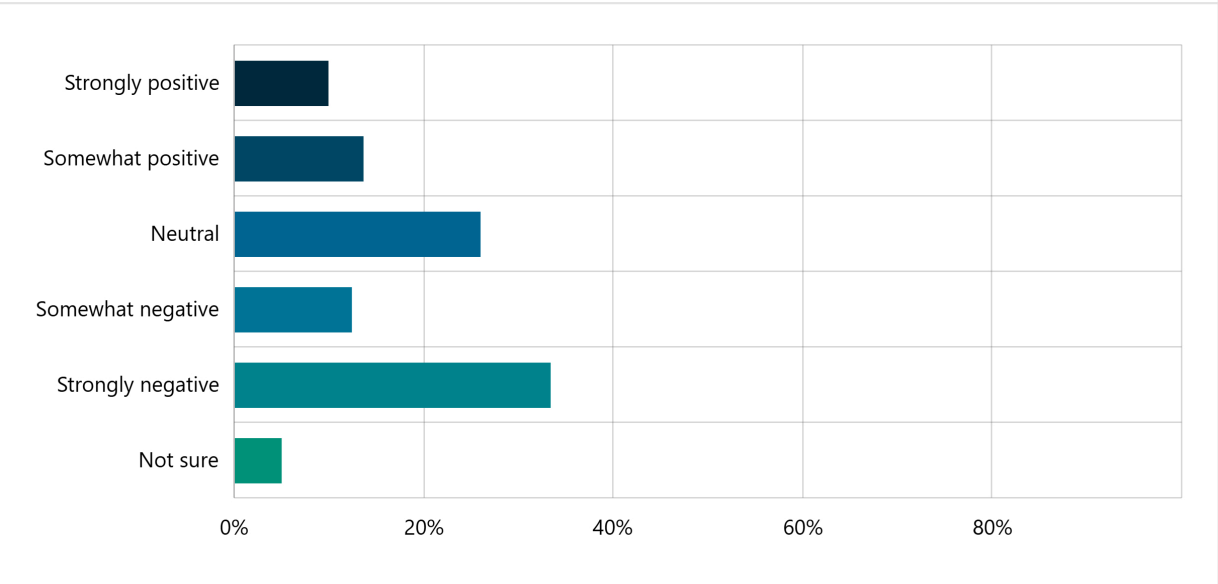
7. Council will provide a safety net for anyone who may need support during this change. Required

Select Box | Skipped: 6 | Answered: 79 (92.9%)



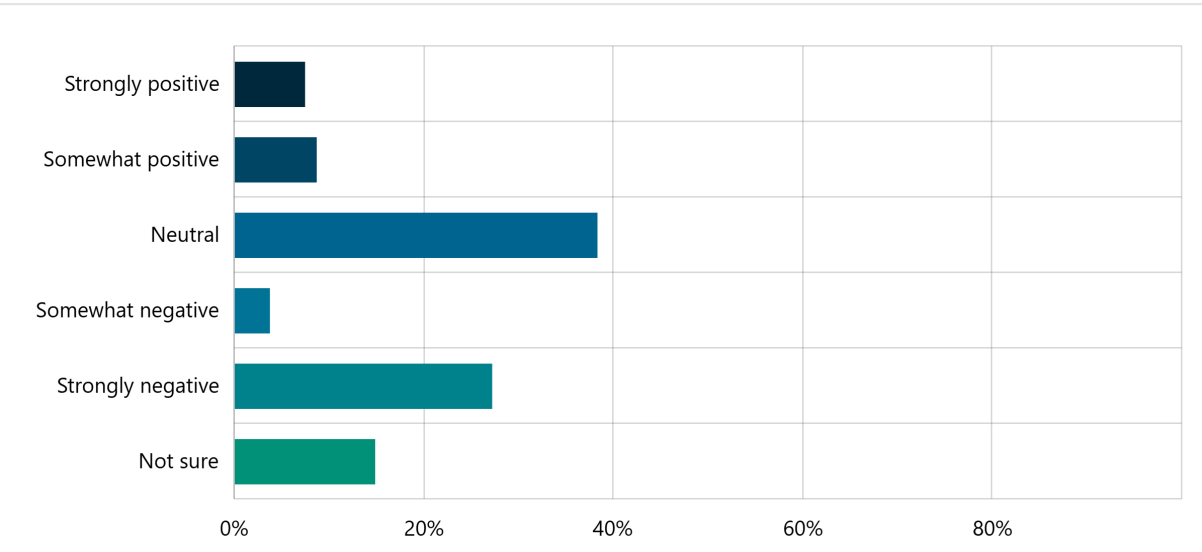


11. The waste charge will apply to properties that receive the yellow recycling bin, the green food and organics bin, the red waste bin and the hard waste collection service. Required
Select Box | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 81 (95.3%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly positive	9.88%	8
Somewhat positive	13.58%	11
Neutral	25.93%	21
Somewhat negative	12.35%	10
Strongly negative	33.33%	27
Not sure	4.94%	4
Total	100.00%	81

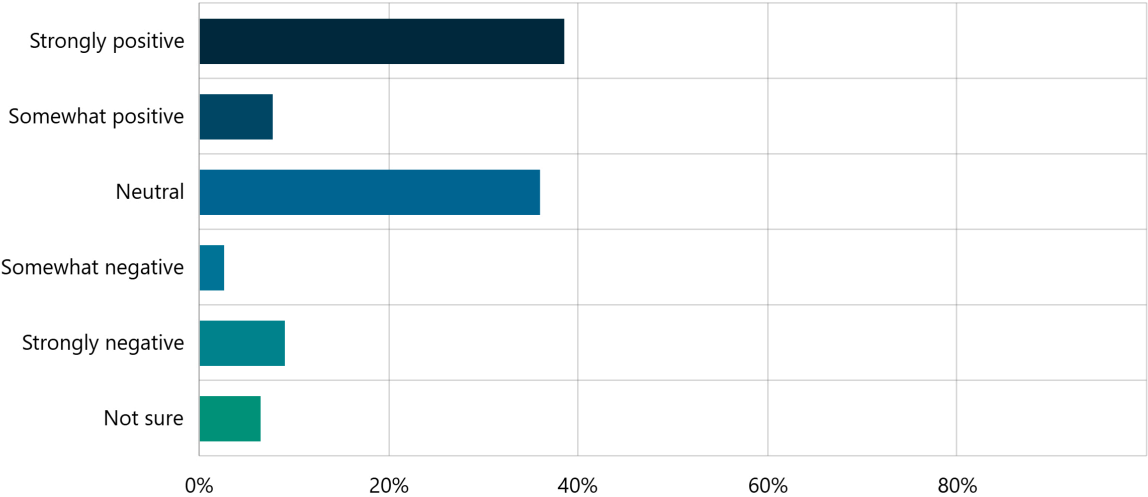
13. Monash Council is the last council in Victoria to introduce a separate waste charge. Required
Select Box | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 81 (95.3%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly positive	7.41%	6
Somewhat positive	8.64%	7
Neutral	38.27%	31
Somewhat negative	3.70%	3
Strongly negative	27.16%	22
Not sure	14.81%	12
Total	100.00%	81

15. Commercial waste customers will receive a yellow recycling bin and be required to separate recyclable material from landfill. Required

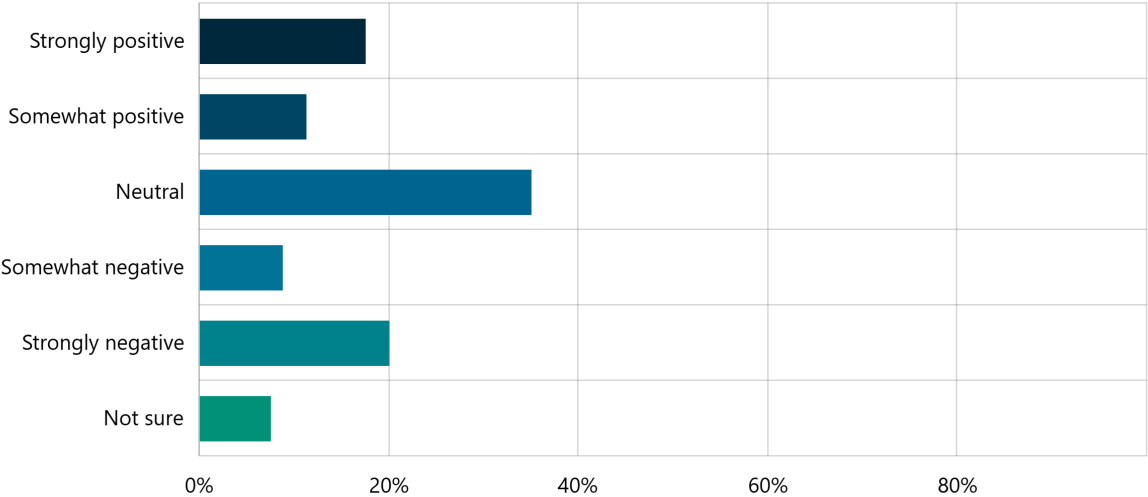
Select Box | Skipped: 7 | Answered: 78 (91.8%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly positive	38.46%	30
Somewhat positive	7.69%	6
Neutral	35.90%	28
Somewhat negative	2.56%	2
Strongly negative	8.97%	7
Not sure	6.41%	5
Total	100.00%	78

17. Commercial waste services will be bought in line with the residential service meaning the recycling bin and landfill bins will be picked up fortnightly on alternating weeks. Required

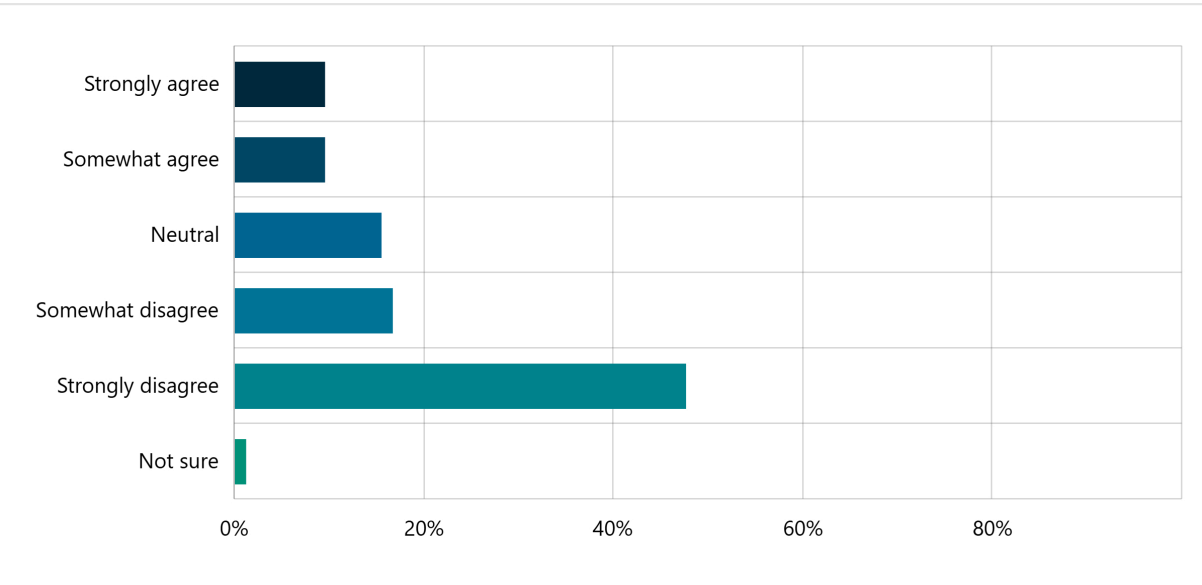
Select Box | Skipped: 5 | Answered: 80 (94.1%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly positive	17.50%	14
Somewhat positive	11.25%	9
Neutral	35.00%	28
Somewhat negative	8.75%	7
Strongly negative	20.00%	16
Not sure	7.50%	6
Total	100.00%	80

19. The new waste charge will be fairer as everyone who uses the waste services will pay the same amount.

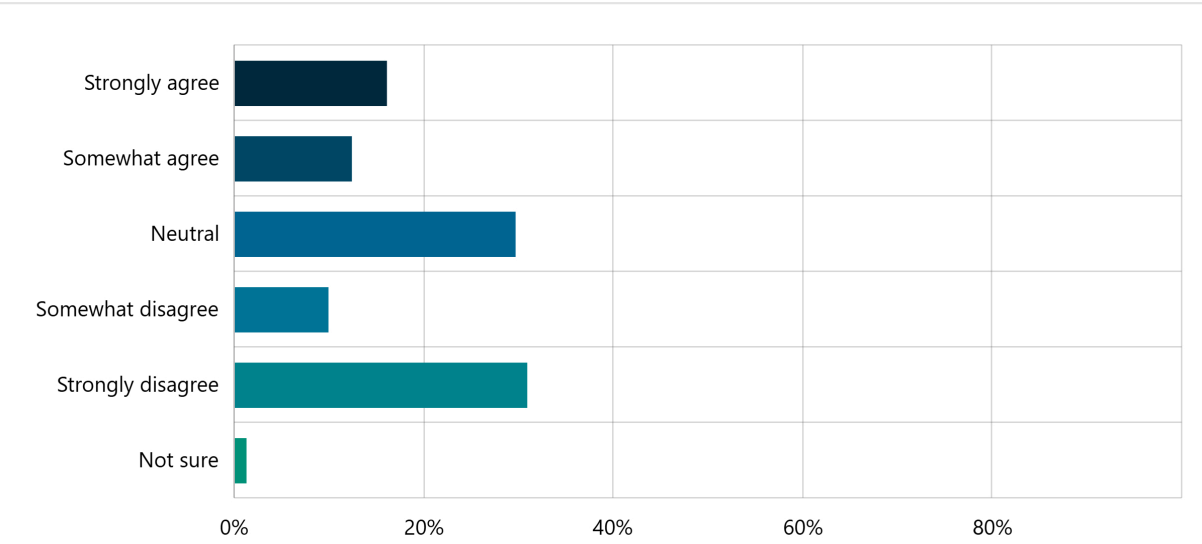
Select Box | Skipped: 1 | Answered: 84 (98.8%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	9.52%	8
Somewhat agree	9.52%	8
Neutral	15.48%	13
Somewhat disagree	16.67%	14
Strongly disagree	47.62%	40
Not sure	1.19%	1
Total	100.00%	84

21. The new waste charge will be fairer because those who pay for a private collection service, like businesses and people living in apartments, will not be charged for the service.

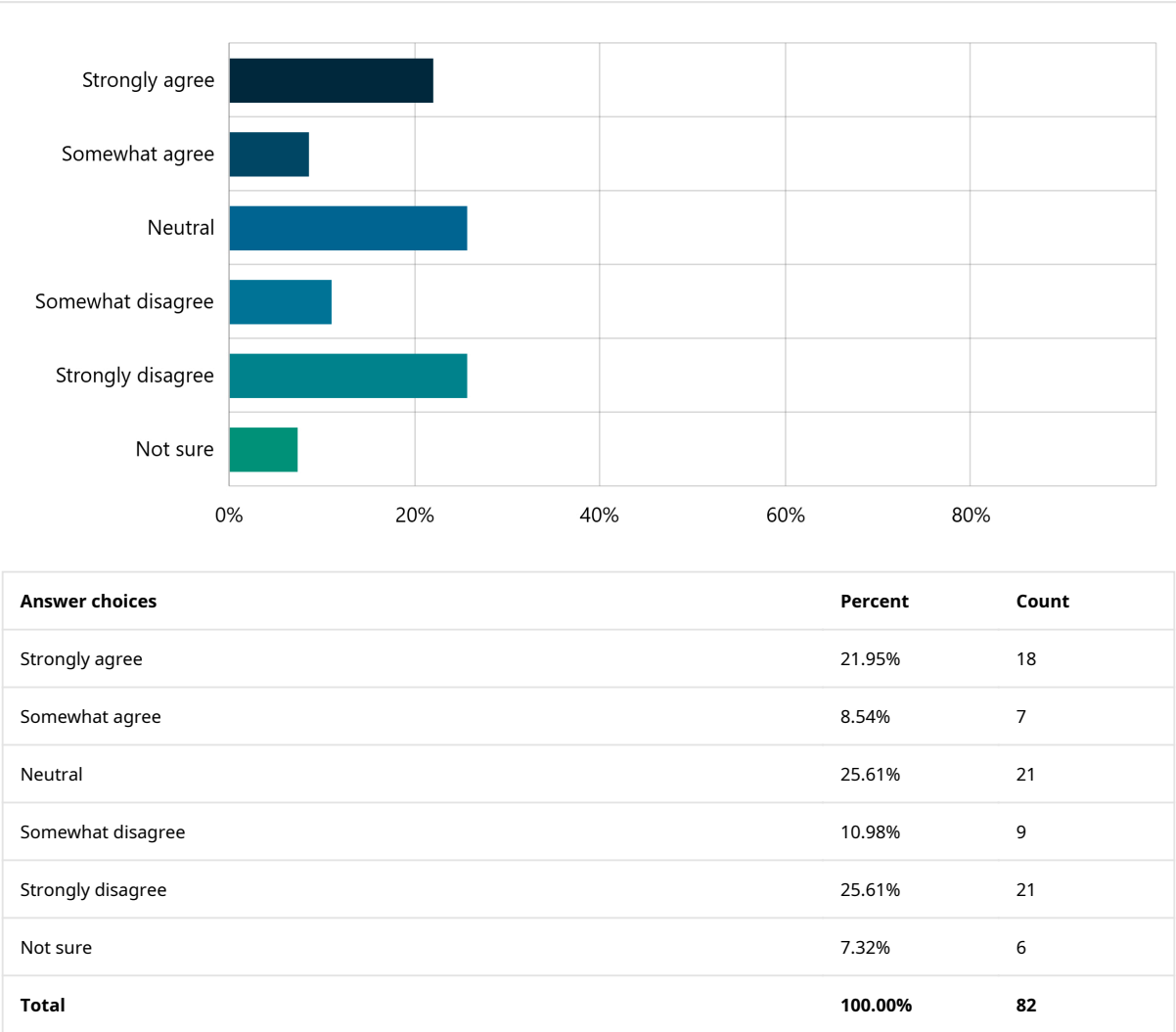
Select Box | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 81 (95.3%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	16.05%	13
Somewhat agree	12.35%	10
Neutral	29.63%	24
Somewhat disagree	9.88%	8
Strongly disagree	30.86%	25
Not sure	1.23%	1
Total	100.00%	81

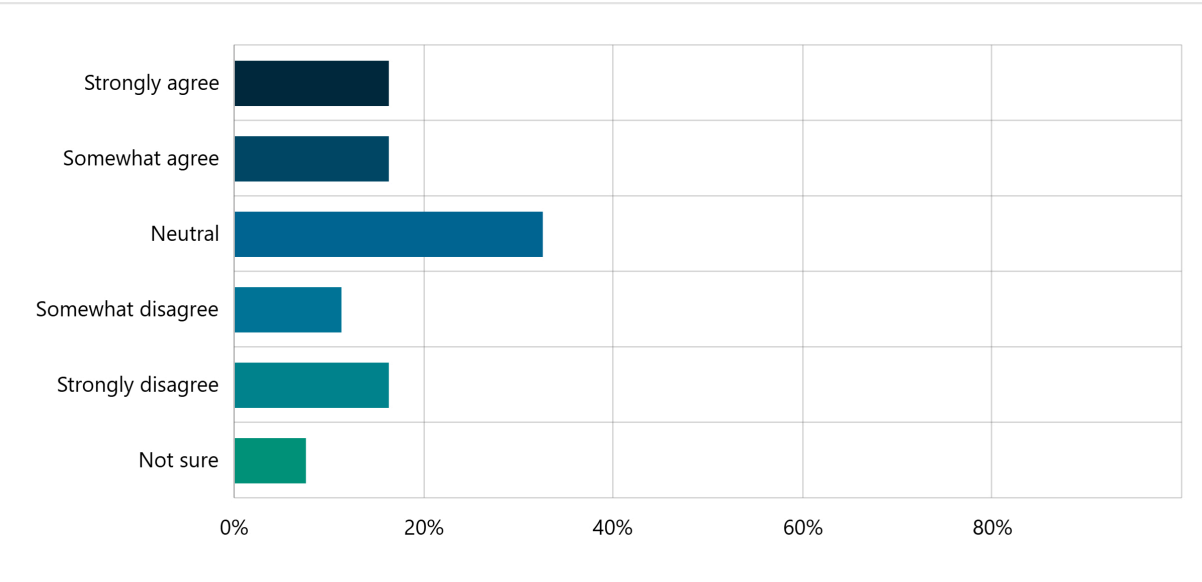
23. The new waste charge will be fairer because it will no longer be based on property value.

Select Box | Skipped: 3 | Answered: 82 (96.5%)



25. To what extent do you agree/disagree that Council has adequate help in place for people who need support?

Select Box | Skipped: 5 | Answered: 80 (94.1%)



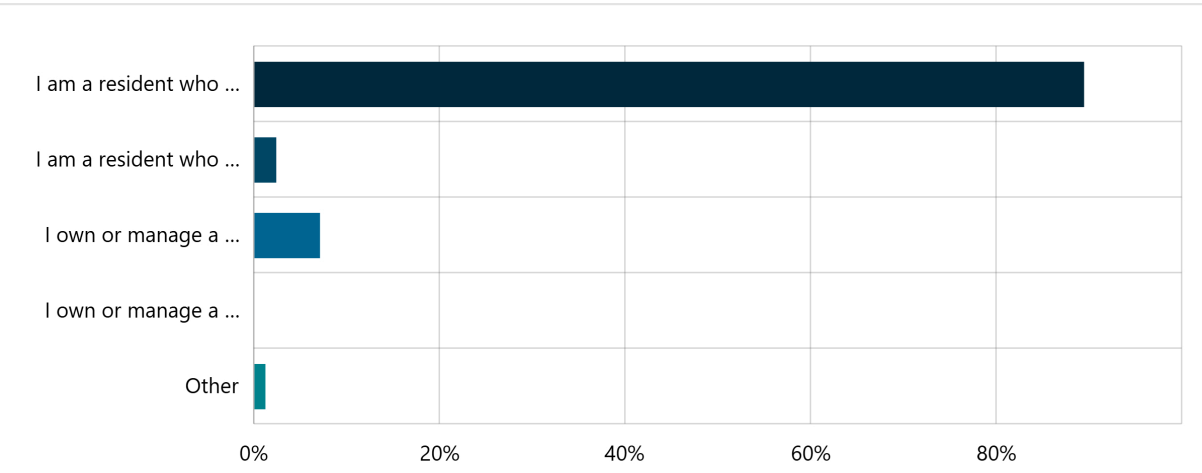
Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	16.25%	13
Somewhat agree	16.25%	13
Neutral	32.50%	26
Somewhat disagree	11.25%	9
Strongly disagree	16.25%	13
Not sure	7.50%	6
Total	100.00%	80

27. How can Council help you to reuse, recycle and reduce waste? Long Text Skipped: 25 Answered: 60 (70.6%)
Sentiment No sentiment data
Tags No tag data
Featured Contributions No featured contributions

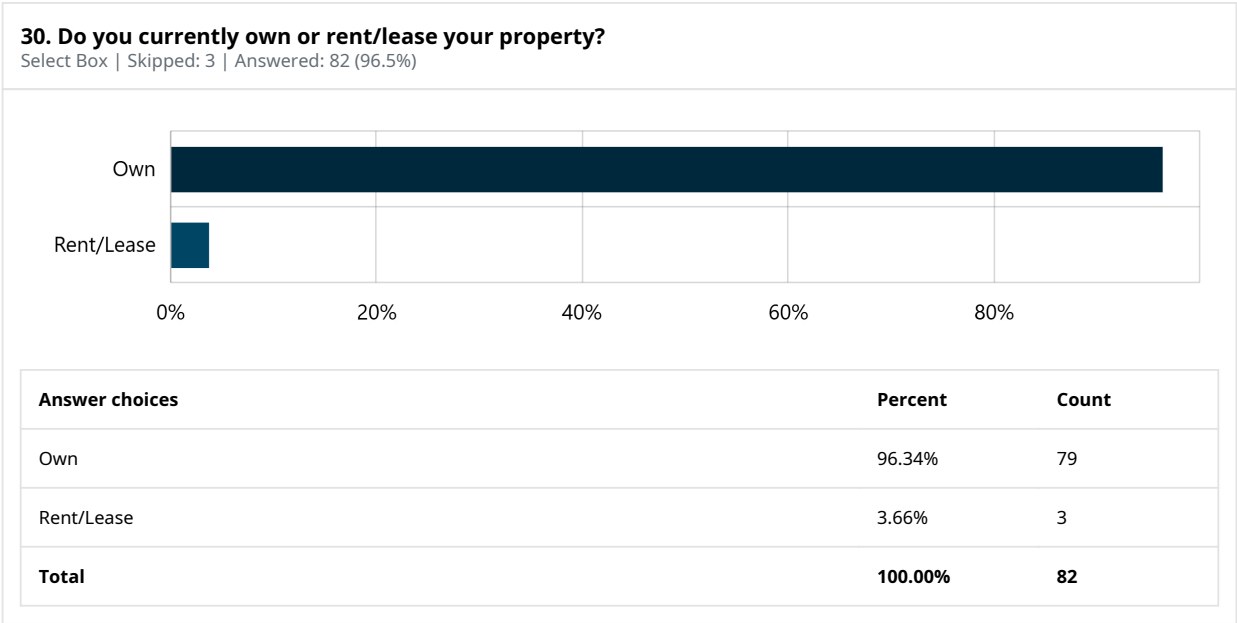
28. Is there anything else you would like Council to consider when making their decision on whether or not to proceed with this proposed change? Long Text Skipped: 16 Answered: 69 (81.2%)
Sentiment No sentiment data
Tags No tag data
Featured Contributions No featured contributions

29. What best describes you? Required

Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 85 (100%)

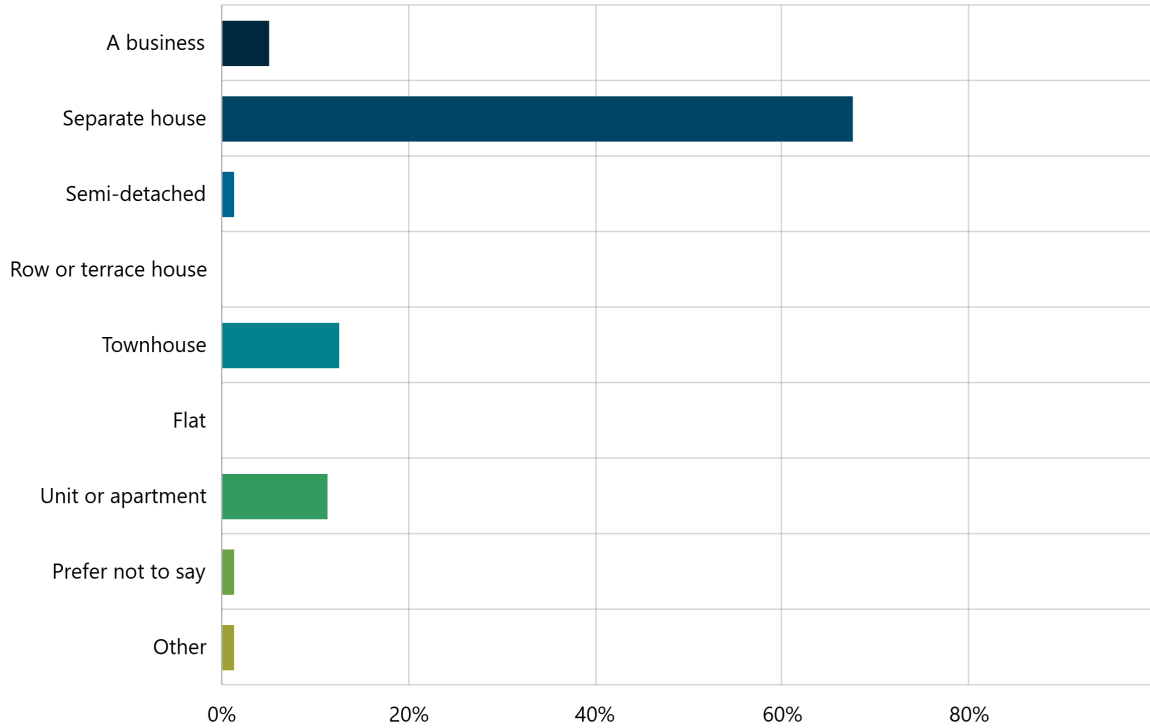


Answer choices	Percent	Count
I am a resident who receives Council's waste services	89.41%	76
I am a resident who does not receive Council's waste services	2.35%	2
I own or manage a business that receives Council's waste services	7.06%	6
I own or manage a business that does not receives Council's waste services	0%	0
Other	1.18%	1
Total	100.00%	85



31. What is your type of residence?

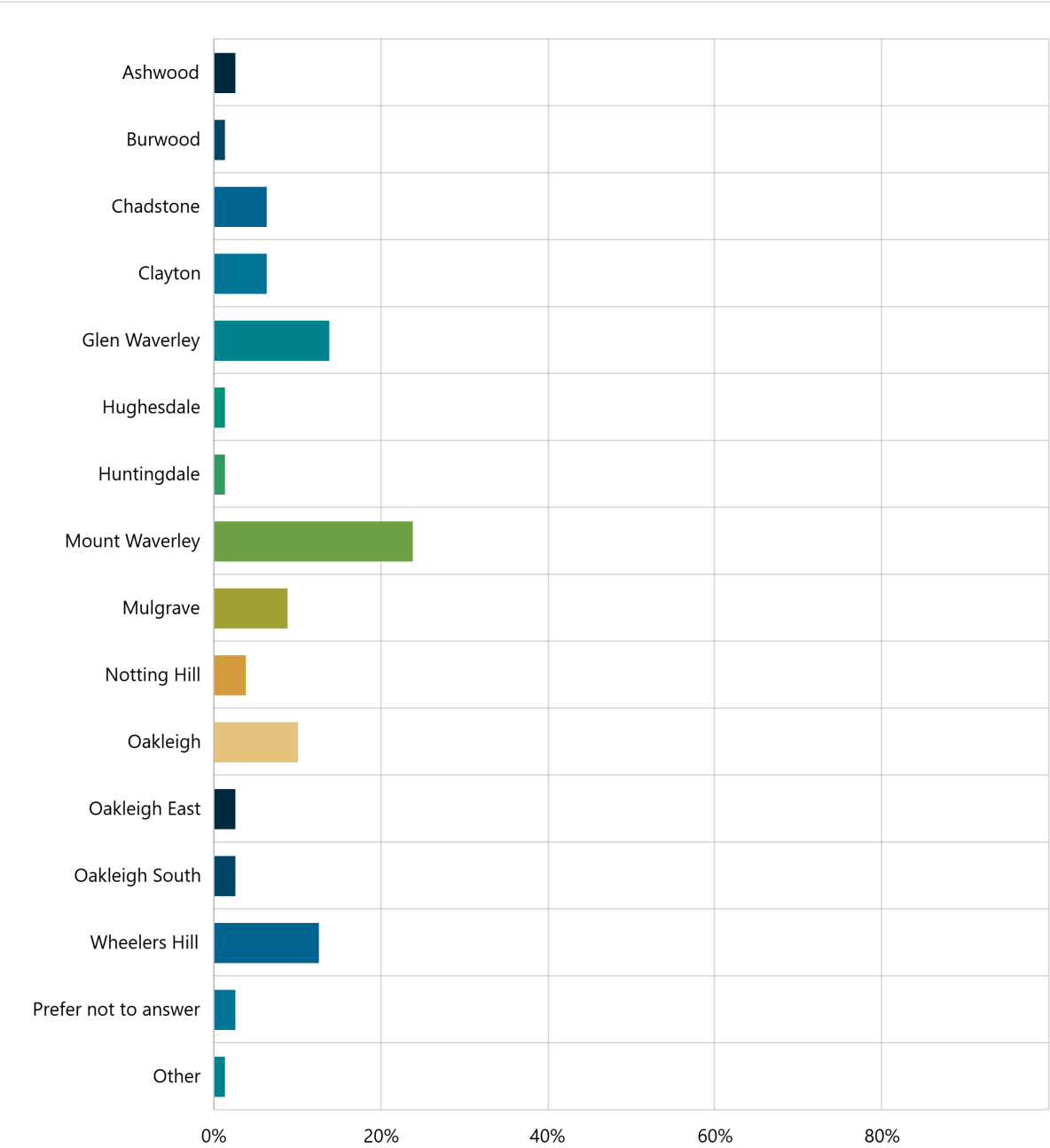
Select Box | Skipped: 5 | Answered: 80 (94.1%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
A business	5.00%	4
Separate house	67.50%	54
Semi-detached	1.25%	1
Row or terrace house	0%	0
Townhouse	12.50%	10
Flat	0%	0
Unit or apartment	11.25%	9
Prefer not to say	1.25%	1
Other	1.25%	1
Total	100.00%	80

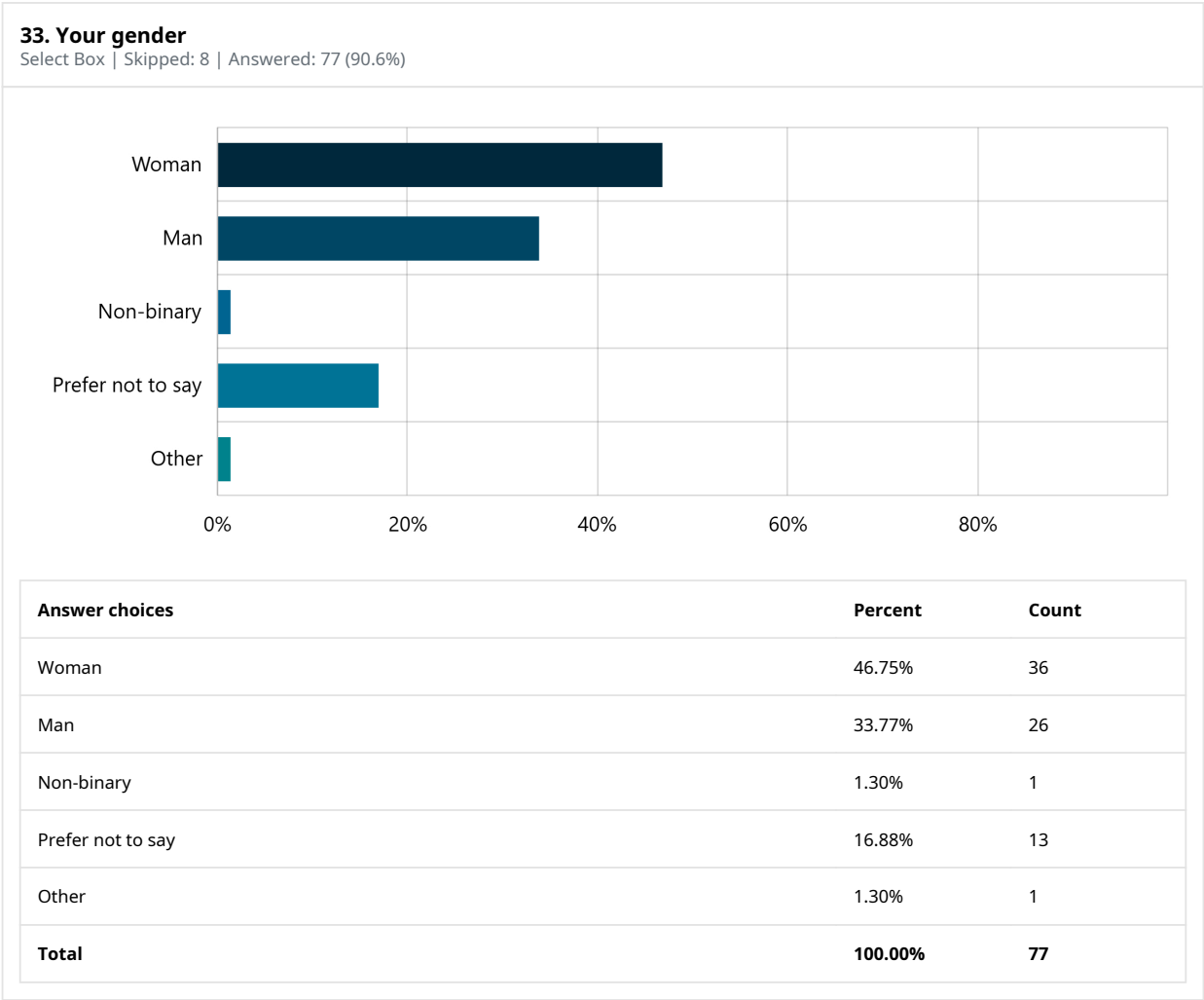
32. Your suburb

Select Box | Skipped: 5 | Answered: 80 (94.1%)



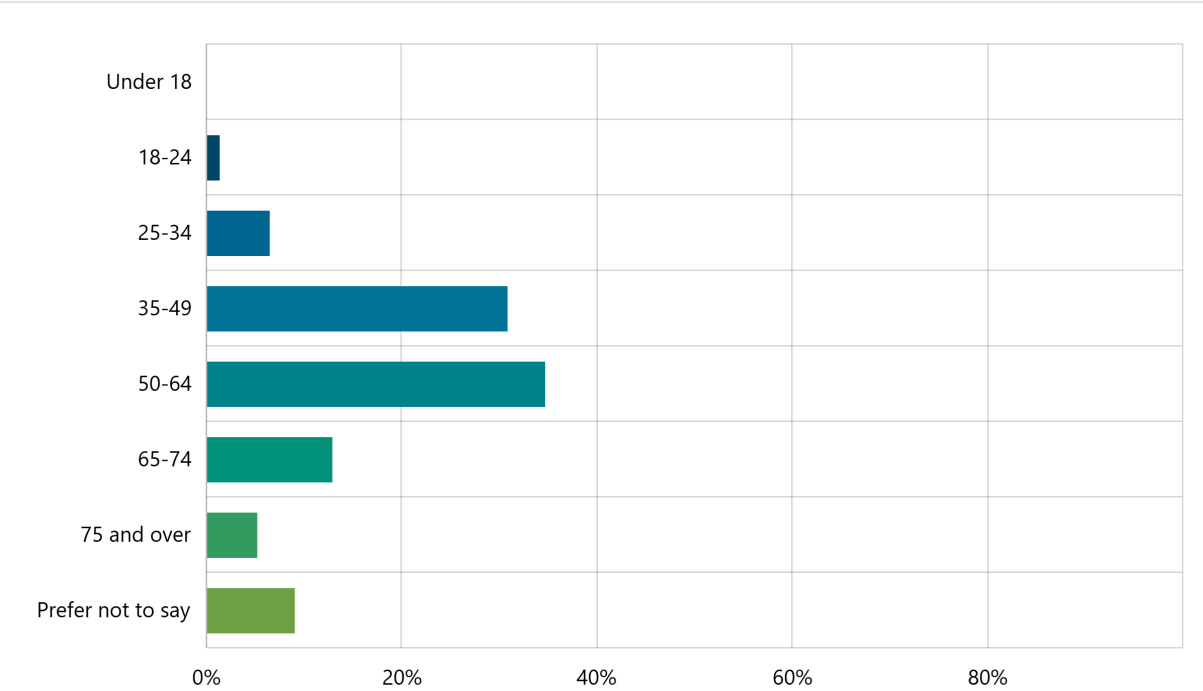
Answer choices	Percent	Count
Ashwood	2.50%	2
Burwood	1.25%	1
Chadstone	6.25%	5

Clayton	6.25%	5
Glen Waverley	13.75%	11
Hughesdale	1.25%	1
Huntingdale	1.25%	1
Mount Waverley	23.75%	19
Mulgrave	8.75%	7
Notting Hill	3.75%	3
Oakleigh	10.00%	8
Oakleigh East	2.50%	2
Oakleigh South	2.50%	2
Wheelers Hill	12.50%	10
Prefer not to answer	2.50%	2
Other	1.25%	1
Total	100.00%	80



34. Your age group

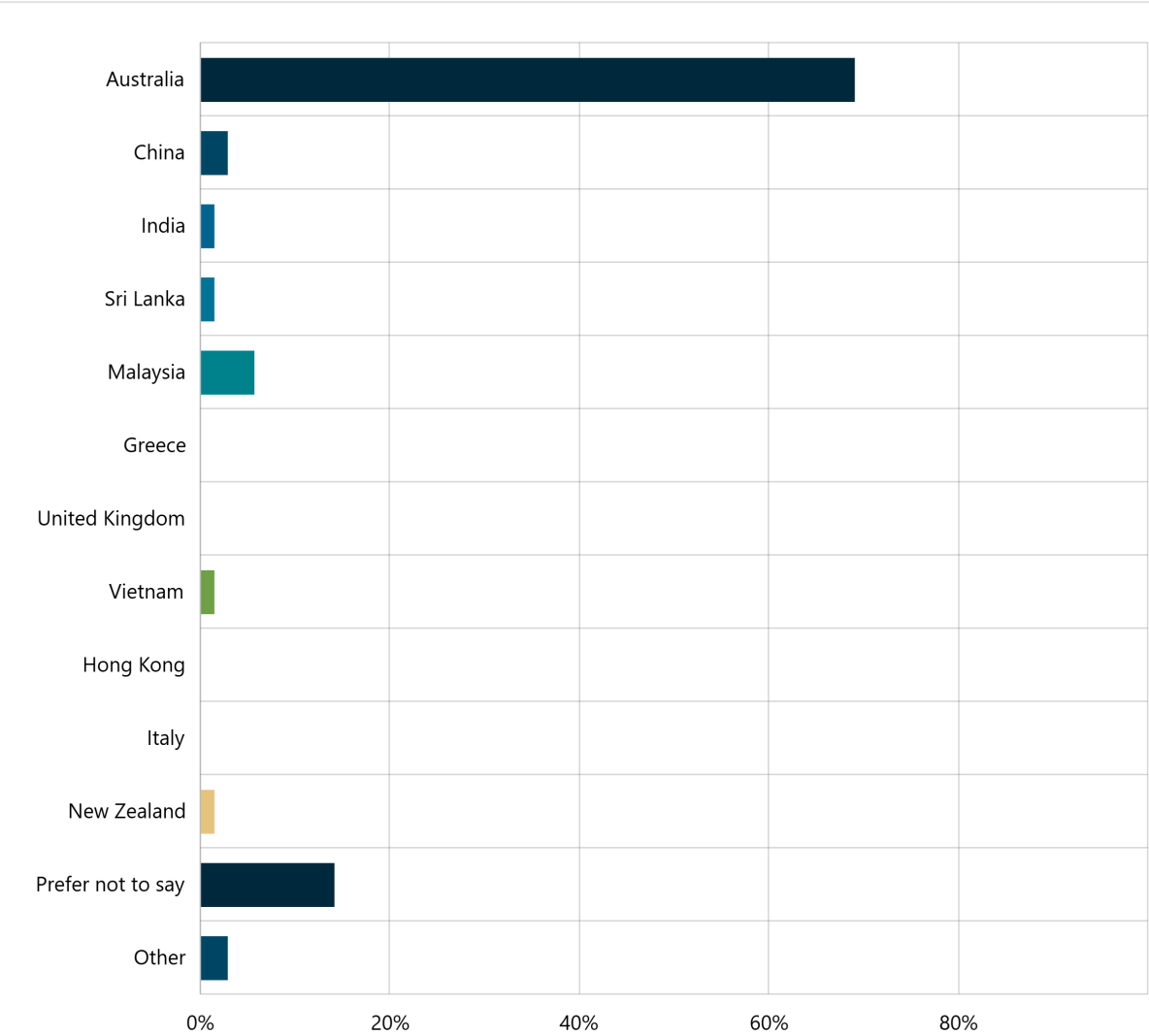
Select Box | Skipped: 7 | Answered: 78 (91.8%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Under 18	0%	0
18-24	1.28%	1
25-34	6.41%	5
35-49	30.77%	24
50-64	34.62%	27
65-74	12.82%	10
75 and over	5.13%	4
Prefer not to say	8.97%	7
Total	100.00%	78

35. Where were you born?

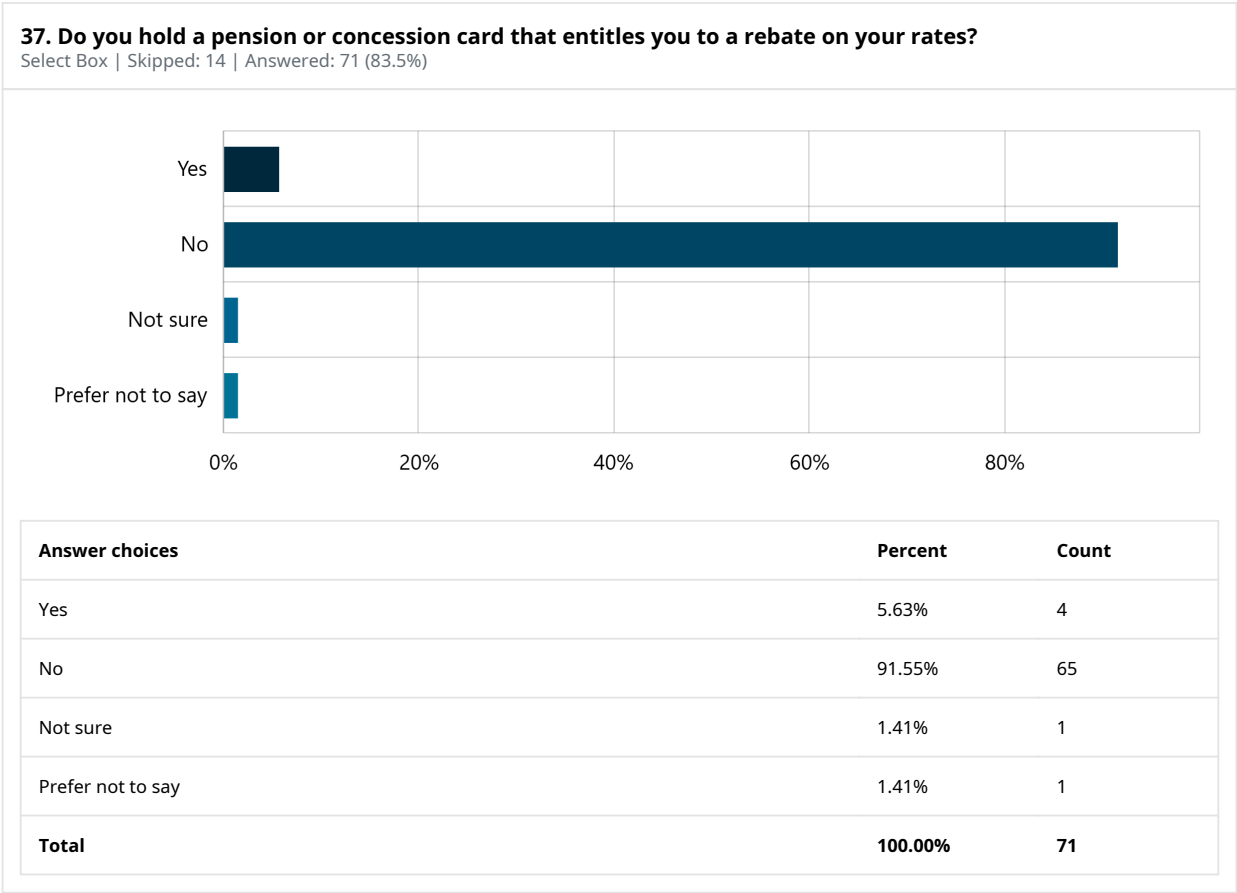
Select Box | Skipped: 14 | Answered: 71 (83.5%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Australia	69.01%	49
China	2.82%	2
India	1.41%	1
Sri Lanka	1.41%	1
Malaysia	5.63%	4
Greece	0%	0
United Kingdom	0%	0

Vietnam	1.41%	1
Hong Kong	0%	0
Italy	0%	0
New Zealand	1.41%	1
Prefer not to say	14.08%	10
Other	2.82%	2
Total	100.00%	71

36. Do you speak a language other than English at home? If so, please let us know which language below. Short Text Skipped: 56 Answered: 29 (34.1%)
Sentiment No sentiment data
Tags No tag data
Featured Contributions No featured contributions





Monash Civic Centre | 293 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, 3150 | 8.30am to 5pm | Monday to Friday
Oakleigh Service Centre | 3 Atherton Road, Oakleigh, 3166 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday
9518 3555 www.monash.vic.gov.au mail@monash.vic.gov.au NRS 1800 555 660

Monash Interpreter Service

普通话	4713 5001	Việt Ngữ	4713 5003	हिंदी	4713 5005	한국어	4713 5010	தமிழ்	4713 5021
廣東話	4713 5002	Ελληνικά	4713 5004	Italiano	4713 5008	සිංහල	4713 5020	Other languages	4713 5000