
SUBJECT: CRMP 2023-27 UPDATE INCLUDING CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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Head of Strategic Support and Assurance**

Background Papers:

- Details of our 2022-23 CRMP consultation are [HERE](#)
 - FRA report from 10 February 2022 entitled Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-23 Action Plan and Budget Consultation Update see [HERE](#)
 - FRA Executive report from 22 June 2022 on Proposals for Strategic Planning Cycle for CRMP 2023-27 and update on 11th October See [HERE](#)
 - FRA report from 8 September 2022 entitled CRMP Planning and Engagement update See [HERE](#)
 - FRA Executive held on 7th November 2022 CRMP update report. See [HERE](#)
 - Minutes of verbal updates to the FRA Executive Committee held on 10th January 2023 on progress with the CRMP. See [HERE](#)
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Implications

This table provides a short statement of the impact of the recommendations in this report.

Will this report affect any of the following?

	Yes / No	Impact / Reference
Financial Implications	Yes	Financial implications in the report are considered in budget workshops on 13th January 2023, the 2023-24 budget, and medium-term financial strategy
Risk Management	Yes	The Corporate risk register will be updated accordingly

Legal Implications	Yes	The Fire Service Act 2004 and National Framework 2018 places a statutory obligation on Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to produce a Community Risk Management Plan
Privacy and Security Implications	Yes	Applicable to consideration of national security risks, consultation and community engagement
Duty to Collaborate	Yes	Applicable and included in the section on Collaboration Principles
Health and Safety Implications	Yes	Applicable and included in the People aspects of the CRMP report
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Yes	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is mainstreamed and integrated throughout the CRMP report
Environmental Sustainability	Yes	Applicable and is a theme raised in community consultation.
Consultation and Communication	Yes	Extensive consultation and communication has been used in developing the CRMP. The final CRMP report will be published on the Service website.

PURPOSE:

For FRA Members to consider progress with developing the 2023-27 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and results of the CRMP and Budget consultation.

Appendix 1 contains detailed survey results and Appendix 2 (to follow) contains a Word version of a working draft of our CRMP for 2023-27.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members review and approve:

1. the progress in developing the Authority's next 4-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) covering the period 2023-27, and;
2. results of public consultation and community engagement on the Authority's 2023-24 Budget and the 2023-27 CRMP.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) received overwhelming support for proposals and have a rich baseline of comments and insight from which to draw on over the next four years in line with the Service Value 'Every Contact Counts'. Strongest support is for the new mission statement and investing in the estate. More muted support is expressed for carrying out further trials to pinpoint the best location for any new or upgraded fire stations.
- 1.2 The CRMP for 2023-27 contains a number of new features including more coverage of:
- The Conceptualisation of risk;
 - Results of our community risk analysis;
 - Collaboration Principles;
 - Consultation principles;
 - Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT); and
 - Our year 1 objectives clearly inked to our new Strategic Commitments
- 1.3 A total of 437 responses were received @ 24th January. Highlights included:
- 88% of those responding agreed or strongly agreed to the £5 increase in Council Tax;
 - A variety of comments were given related to suggestions for making efficiencies, such as collaboration with other services, and in boosting organisational productivity;
 - 85% agreed or strongly agreed that the Authority has considered the right community risks;
 - 90% agreed or strongly agreed with the new mission statement;
 - 93% agreed or strongly agreed with the six new strategic commitments;
 - 89% agreed or strongly agreed with investing in the estate;
 - 88% agreed or strongly agreed to expand the capacity of fleet and equipment workshops; and
 - 42% agreed or strongly agreed with further trials to pinpoint the best location for any new or upgraded fire station.
- 1.4 The Authority received fewer returns than 2021 but the average time it takes to complete the survey is 17 minutes so respondents are potentially better informed. In 2021 average time to complete the online survey was six minutes and seven seconds.

2 Background

- 2.1 Over the last 18 months the Authority has carried out three surveys. The first on the CRMP action plan for 2022-23 in December 2021, the second survey on community concerns in July 2022, and the third on CRMP proposals in December 2022. As a result the Authority has an invaluable source of information on community thinks, what the public values and what people are concerned about.
- 2.2 The link to the survey was sent to the 15,411 people registered on the BedsFireAlert Community messaging system, who are willing to take part in consultations. This was sent out on two additional occasions as a reminder. It was also made available via the Authority's website and publicised through several social media campaigns on the Service's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels. It was promoted to BFRS staff through the weekly editions of Blue Bulletin and a supporting briefing note sent to all managers.
- 2.3 The survey was sent to a number of key partners in the emergency services and local government inviting their views. We also asked a number of organisations including the three unitary authorities, the Police, East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST), Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce and community groups to promote the consultation to their members..
- 2.4 The Authority engaged with community groups, local universities and colleges, Luton Airport, neighboring fire and rescue services, local faith groups, charity and Gypsy and Travelers groups, cultural groups, Visit Bedford, and Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce. We carried out interviews with representatives of town and parish councils.
- 2.5 The improvements to community engagement is important because the first of the thirteen Areas for Improvement (AFI) in our most recent Effectiveness, efficiency and people inspection report for 2021/22 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue HMICFRS finds: *The service needs to improve how it engages with its local community.*
- 2.6 This consultation forms part of the response to this AFI. Officers are currently working through survey responses to pick out any new risks or areas we need to do more to resolve. Considering all three consultation exercises in the last 18 months, road safety and the Authority's response to extreme weather are the most frequently community concerns.
- 2.7 The 30 community engagement events and interviews with community and business leaders used for developing the CRMP are highlighting some common themes. Community engagement is directed by stakeholder analysis of power and influence. Emerging headlines include:

- All stakeholders and community leaders we spoke to have a positive view of the Fire and Rescue Service, but many admit this is from a narrow point of view;
- Senior leaders in Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) are being encouraged to demonstrate more visible community leadership;
- There is an opportunity to explain why we collaborate with partners as there are misconceptions about why the Authority does it.
- The most frequently mentioned Community risk is in public service not understanding the long-term impact of a series of national crises that are affecting people's physical and mental health; and
- Other risks mentioned are the impact of climate change and extreme weather causing flooding and overheating to infrastructure, people, FRS staff and buildings.

2.8 Community leaders are most interested in social wellbeing issues that impact on community safety. The desire to see a louder community leadership voice from BFRS keeps emerging. And they are very interested to know if the Authority is a good and ethical employer. They are less interested in the details of response services provided they are not being downgrading. However, all community leaders are concerned about the perceived threat of cuts to public services.

2.9 The biggest opportunities for BFRS up to 2050 are included in Appendix 1 below.

3 So What? How is the Authority responding to consultation

3.1 In 2021 the Authority received a significant public interest in improving its focus on community engagement, environmental management and demonstrating ethical governance credentials. These issues did take a stronger focus in 2022-23 and in developing our next CRMP from 2023-27 onwards.

3.2 In response to feedback from community leaders the CRMP report includes principles of consultation, principles of collaboration and a clearer articulation of how we consider and conceptualize community risks. Prevention and corporate communications will be better tailored to individual audiences and our communications and engagement department are undertaking a thorough review of this. Our website is also being updated with a launch date planned for the spring of 2023.

3.3 The Authority is working hard to identify and deliver efficiencies. For example, the Shared Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Service is in operation and there are numerous other shared work areas with local authorities. Shared arrangements are in place for democratic services, legal services, strategic communications, and some aspects of operational training. The Authority is a founding member of the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC), providing an alternative to traditional insurance.

- 3.4 Members will be aware of the collaboration work underway with the Police, Ambulance Service and other organisations. These initiatives are increasing with the sharing of premises and operational service areas, such as Forced Entry, Missing Persons Search and the Falls Team. We are now servicing Ambulance vehicles and there is also a new joint fire Investigation post, with costs shared between three Services, for a two-year period included within the 2022/23 budget.
- 3.5 The Authority now shares its estate with the police at three locations (Bedford, Leighton Buzzard, and Toddington), the East of England Ambulance Trust at five (Luton, Sandy, Stopsley, Shefford and Dunstable) with discussions taking place for Bedford station and others in the north of the county. Other partner organisations also rent some space at our stations.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 Officers are mapping results against objectives in our 2023-24 CRMP action plan. For example, environmental, road safety, community engagement and communication issues will take a much stronger focus.

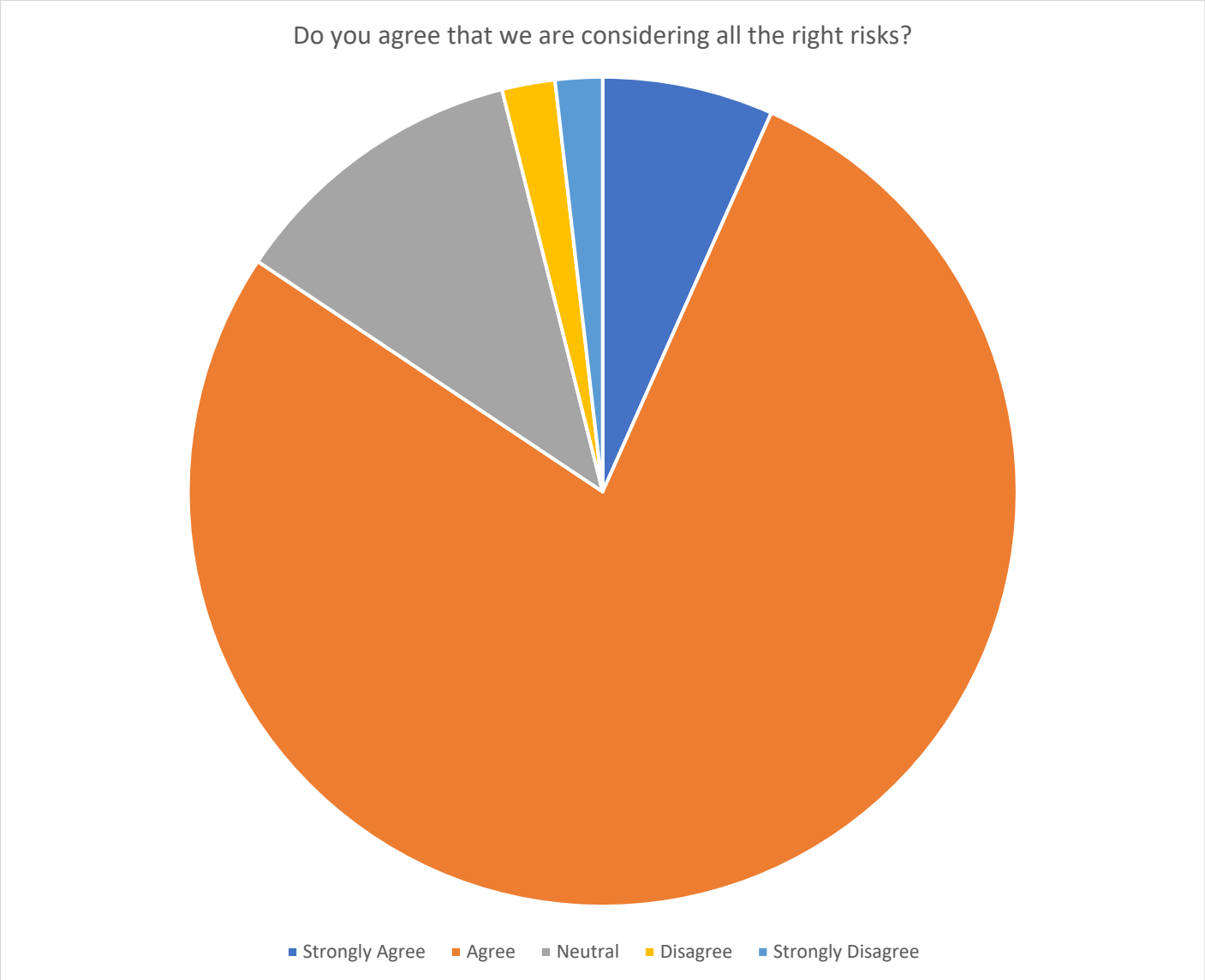
5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members review, discuss and approve the contents of this report

STEVE FRANK
HEAD OF STRATEGIC SUPPORT AND ASSURANCE

Appendix 1 – detailed survey results

Do you agree that we are considering all the right risks?



Road safety mentioned 16 times

Climate change 14 times

Health data 8 times

Typical and frequent comments included:

“Flood risk is discussed but we need the Beds Fire and Rescue to be more forthright that we need to plan ahead better”

“A particular focus on identifying and supporting vulnerable people through your community safety service would be useful”

“The cost-of-living crises and impact of a person's safety is important”

“Link between fire setting and organised crime?”

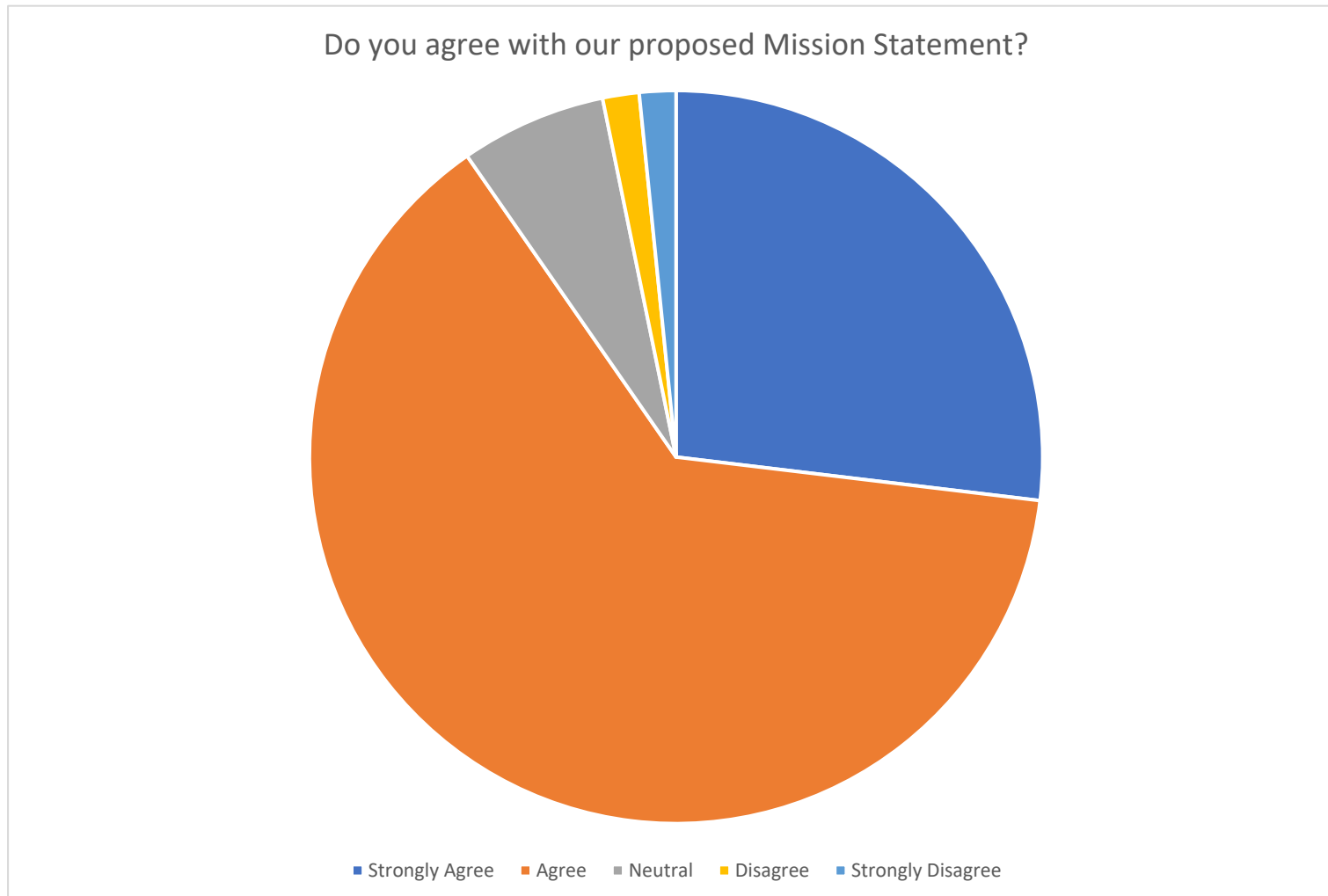
“Road safety including cycling and E-bikes”

“I can't see enough on road safety, nor any relevant health data”

“Health and wellbeing data?”

“Road condition affecting highway and road safety is a big issue. Cyclists and bikers are particularly vulnerable. Climate change won't help that”

Do you agree with our new mission statement which we think should be about: “Working together to keep Bedfordshire safe”?



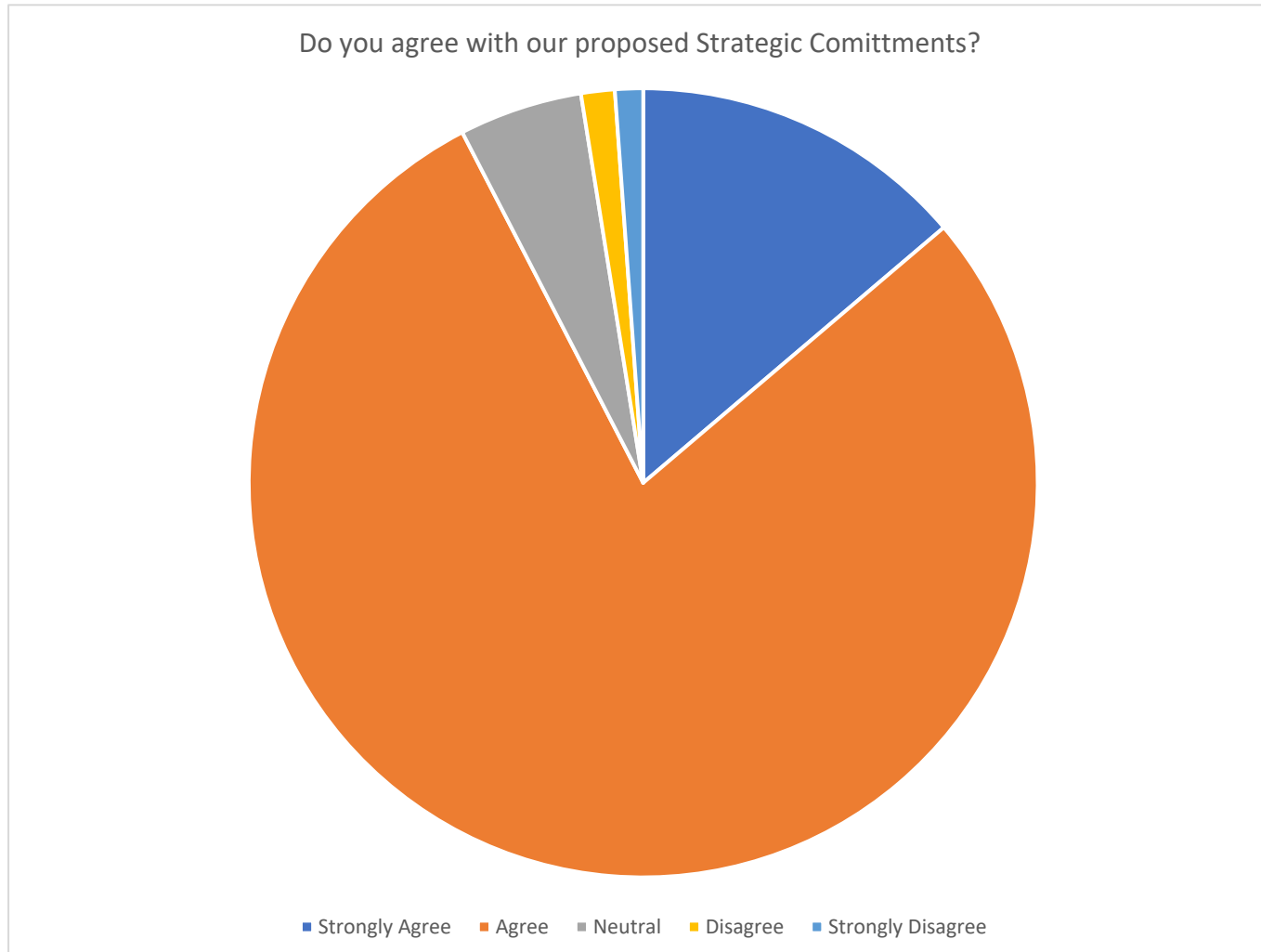
Indicative comments include:

“It’s succinct and clear - just what a mission statement should be”

“I approve. Very short and snappy”

“Strong statement. Easy to remember. I like it”

Do you agree with our proposed new Strategic Commitments?



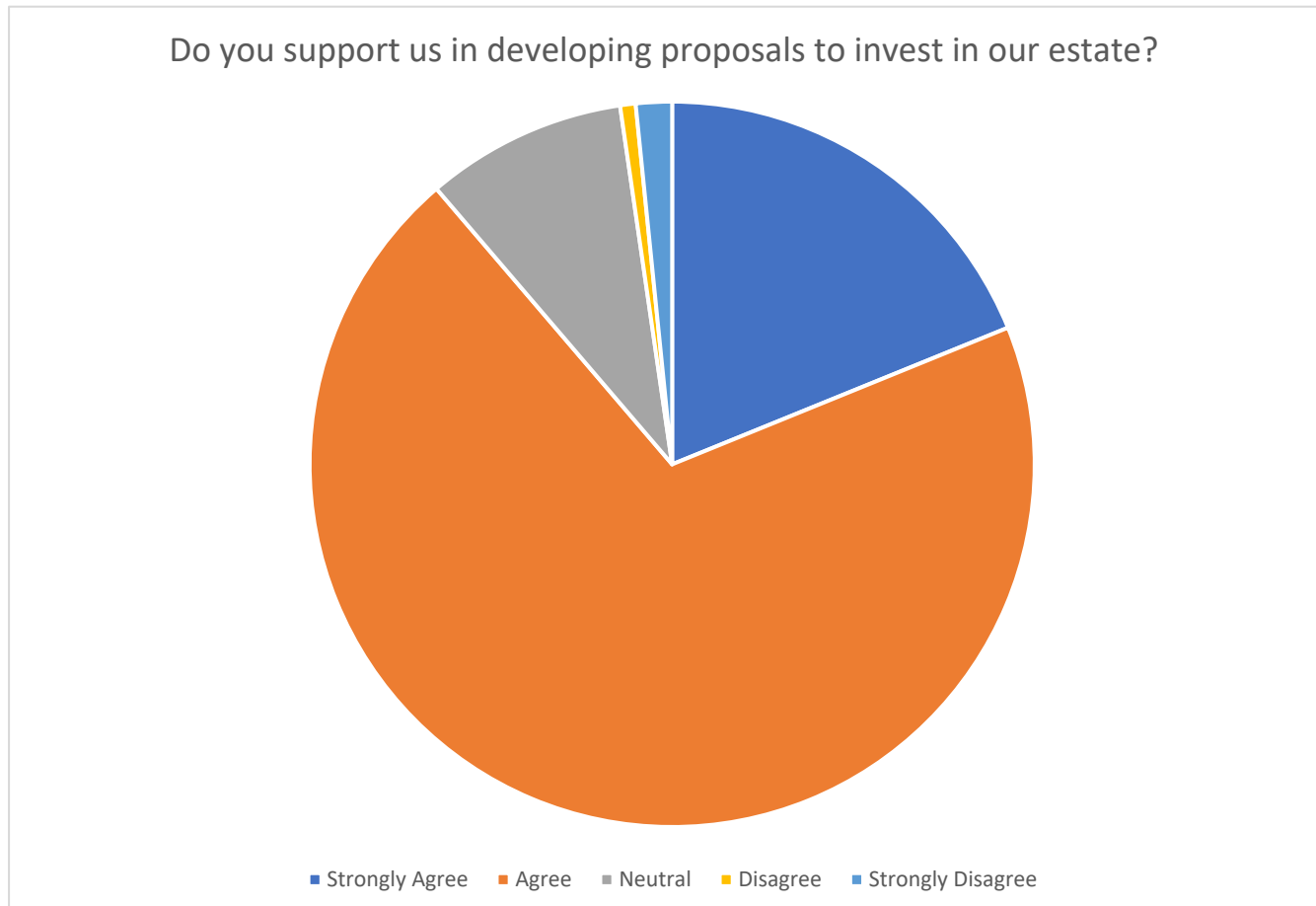
Indicative comments include:

“These are all great statements”

“I especially like the business engagement commitment”

“Good to see businesses included”

Do you support us developing proposals to invest in our estate so we adapt to climate change and meet long-term operational need?

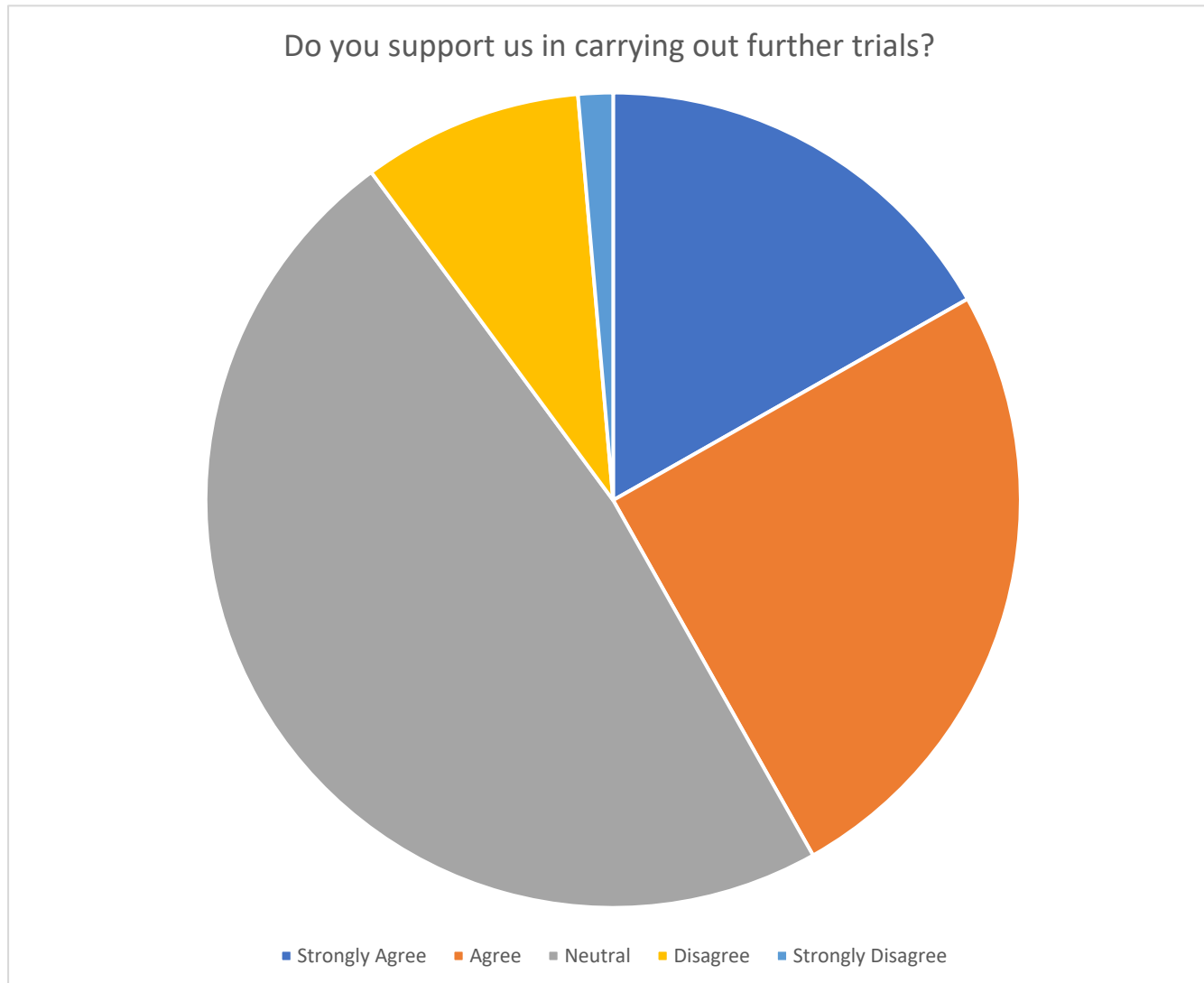


Indicative comments include:

“We have to move with the times and advancements in techniques and equipment to ensure that the people of Bedfordshire receive the best service possible.”

“Strongly agree any money generated should go solely to front line services”

Do you support us in carrying out further trials to pinpoint the best location for any new or upgraded fire stations?

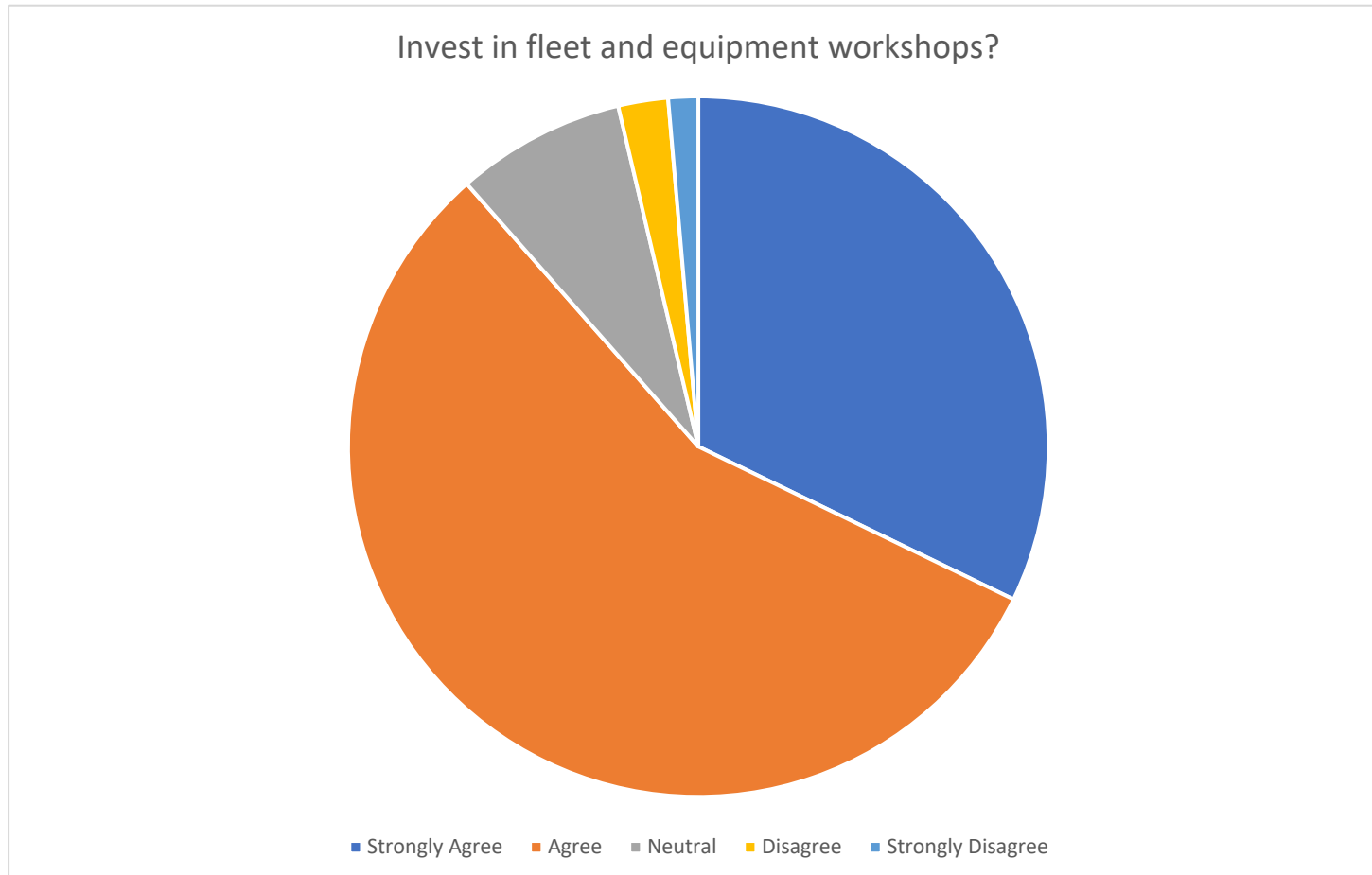


Indicative comments include:

“Very late, delayed and looks repetitious”

“Just so long as it does not involve reducing F&R response to rural areas”

With all this in mind, and subject to a Fire Authority approved business case, do you support us in investing in expanding the capacity of our fleet and equipment workshops to generate more income to reinvest in front-line services?



Indicative comments included:

“But only if it’s cost neutral”

“We need to commit to investment and take some risk we are often risk averse”

Please tell us how we can save money and make further efficiencies?

Demand management reduce false alarms

review shift systems **Cut red tape** prioritise services

collaboration area-based approach merger

Fewer FRA Members zero based budgeting volunteering

Reinstate local procurement multi skill staff understand unit costs

stop using agency staff Share back-office functions

cut sickness absence Systems thinking Involve/engage

What should Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service look like in 2050?

- This provides a very source of information. We see a tension between respondents wanting the government to define the role of the fire and rescue service but for the Service not to be nationally driven. We see an even split between those that want to see closer alignment with the health service (12 comments) and those that advise against working with that they see as a “failed NHS”

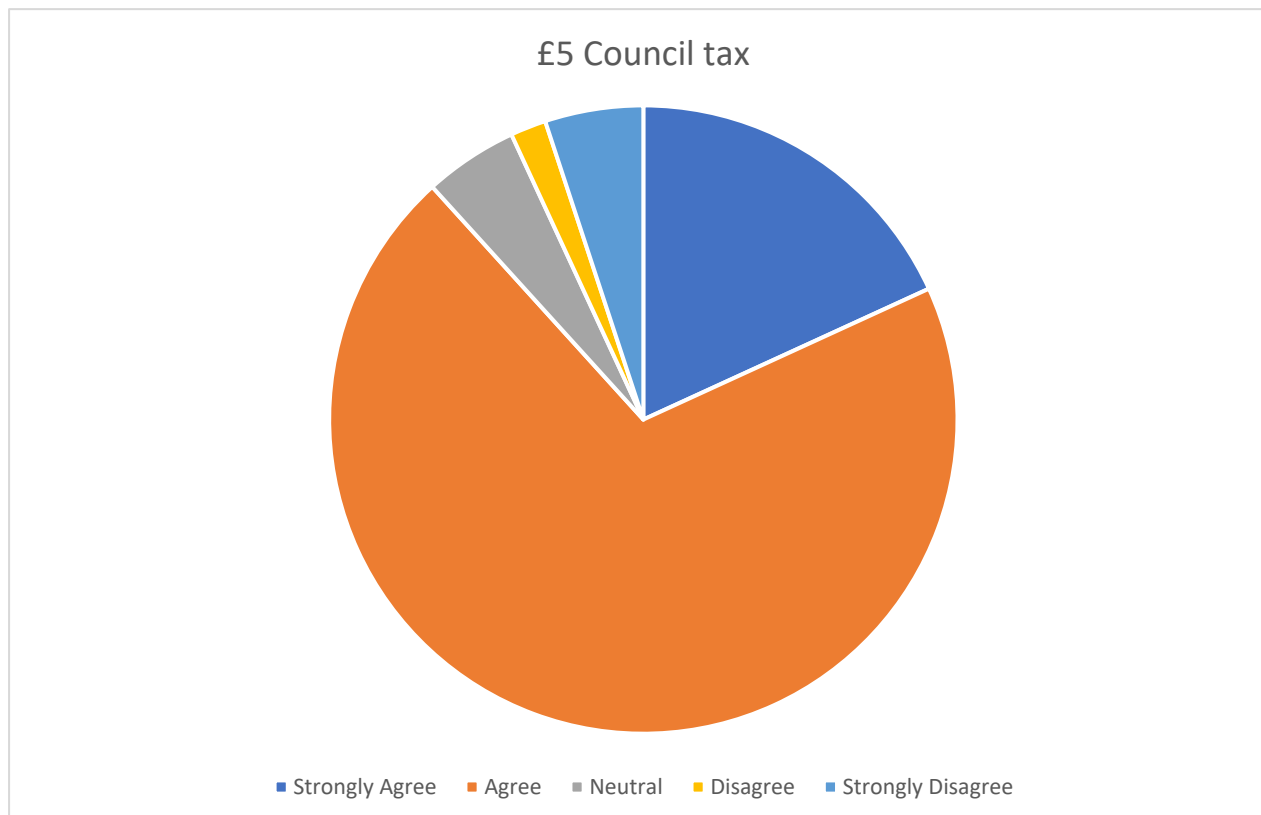
Retain a local identity Self-determination defined role

Community resilience Merits of a mayor Integration

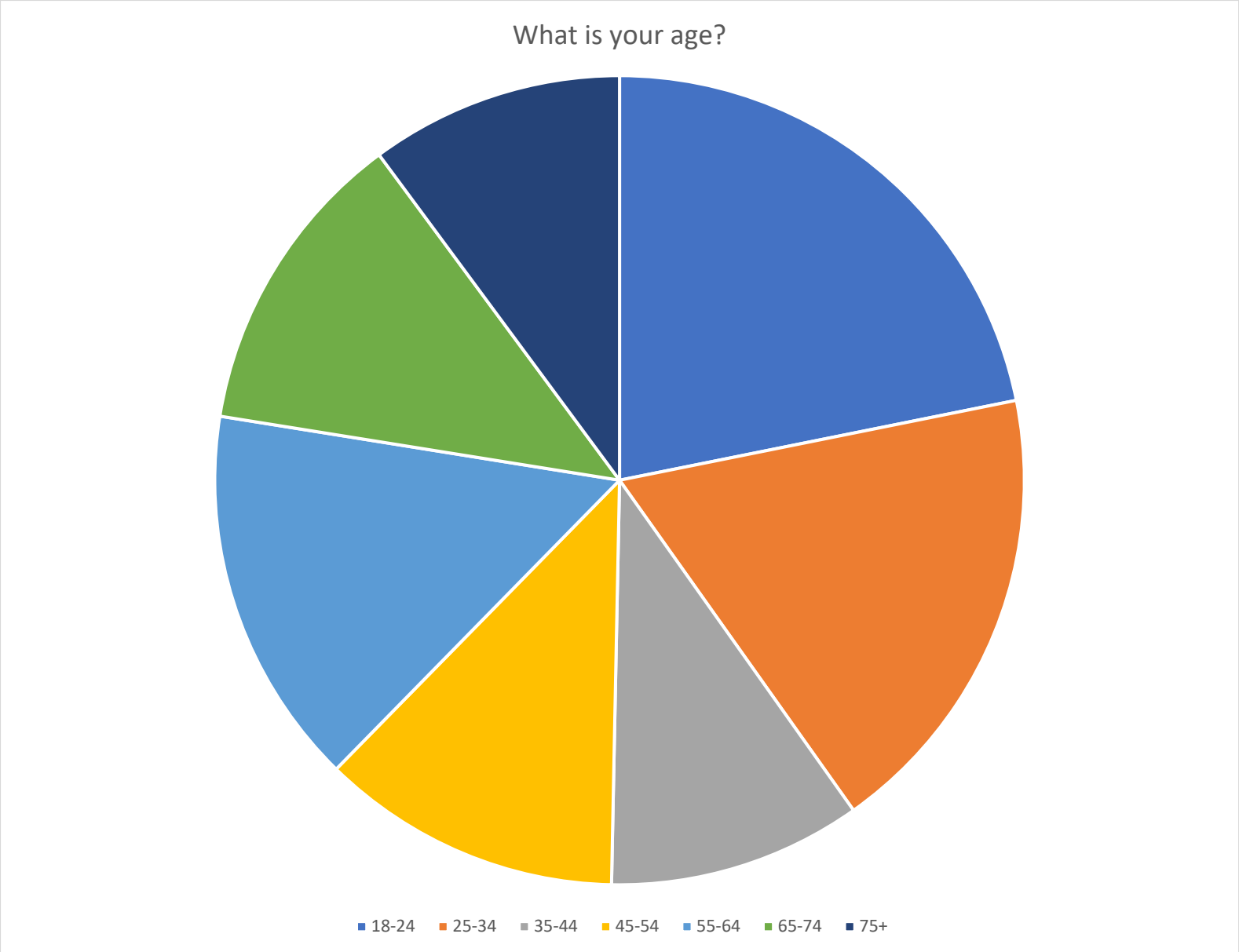
Technology Community based Outward focused Merger

Accountability Learn from other sectors

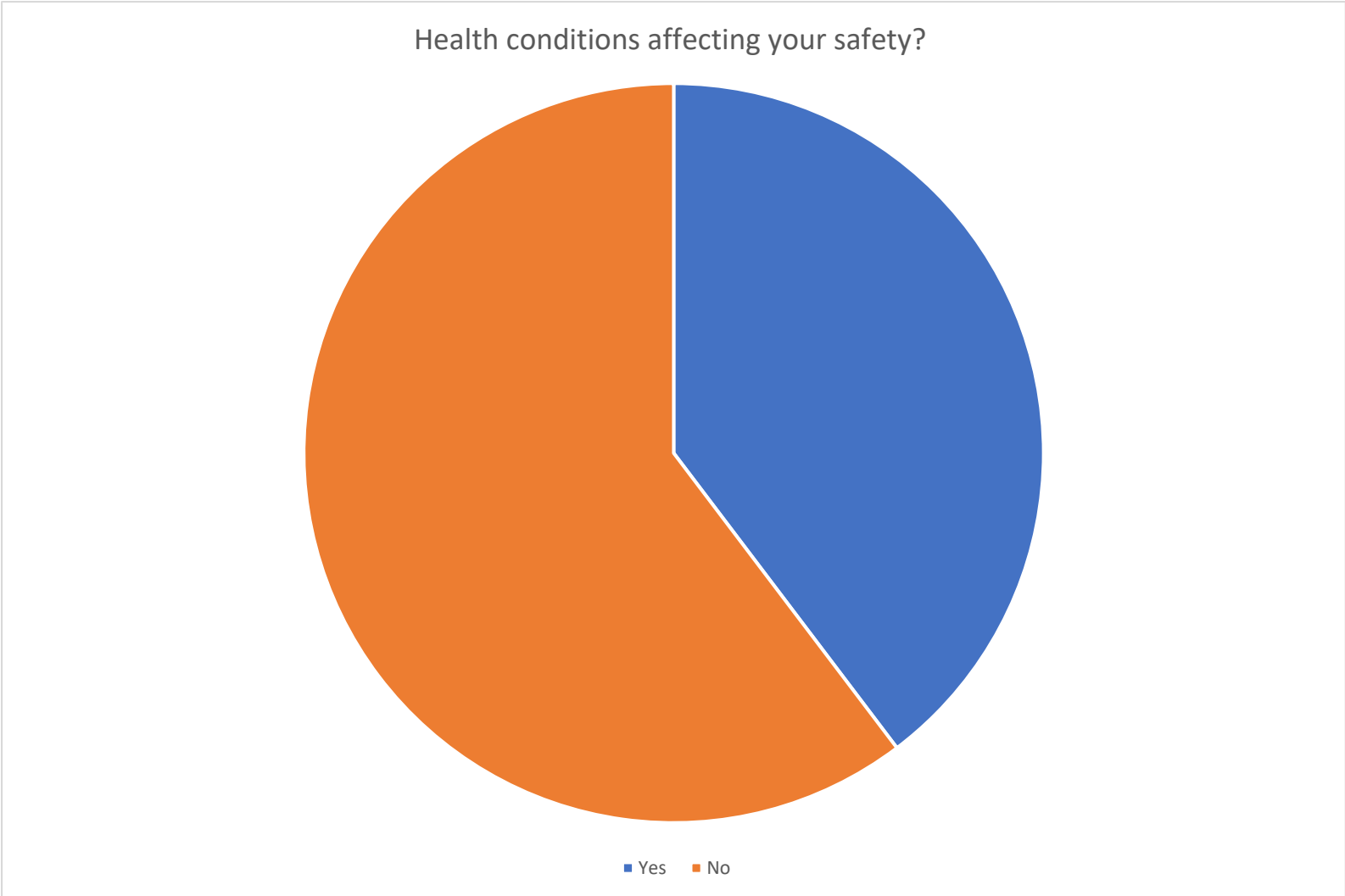
If Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority were to also consider a small increase to your Council Tax, equivalent to £5 per year for a Band D property (rising from £104.45 to £109.45 per year), would you be supportive?



What is your age?



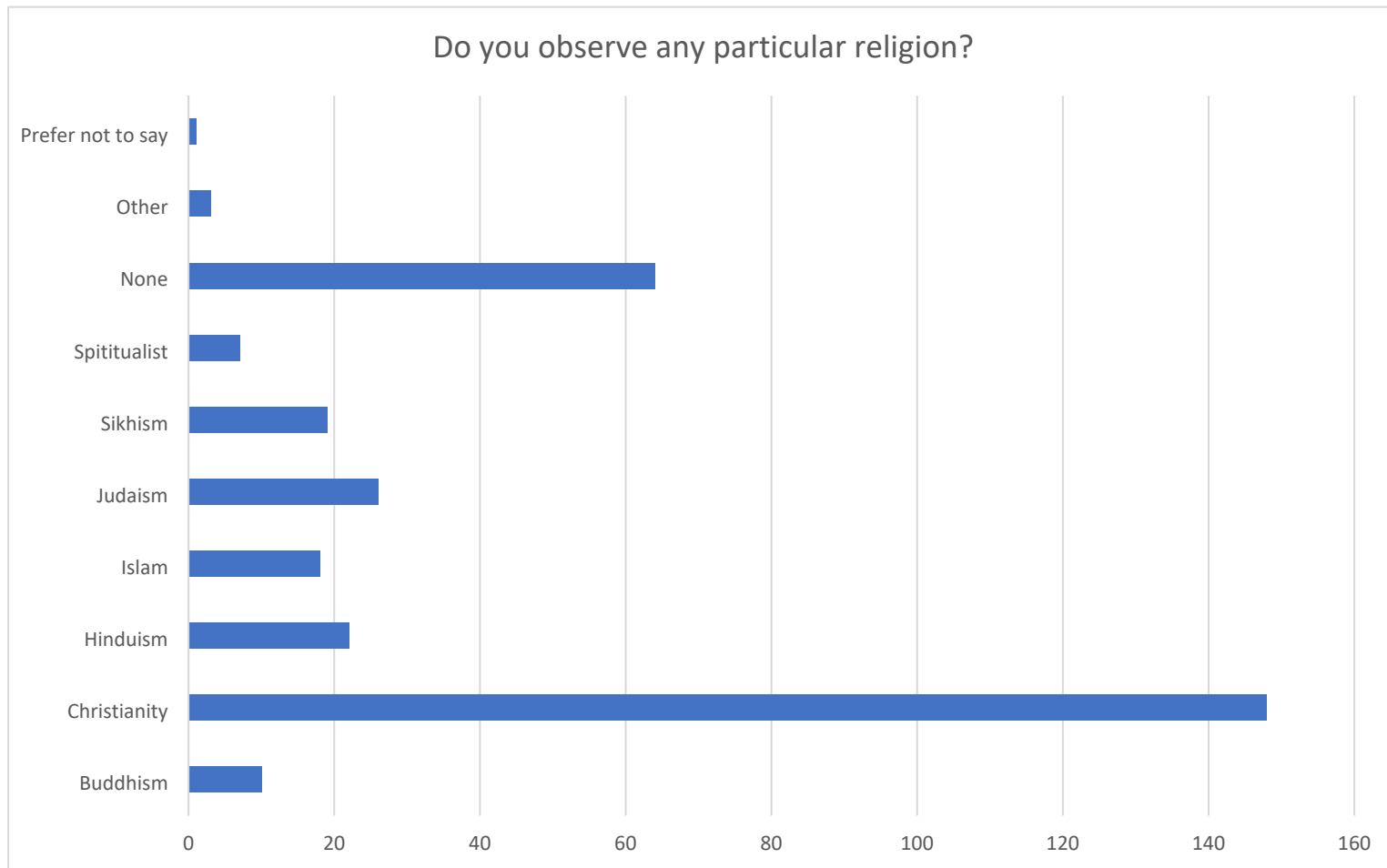
Please could you tell us if you have any health conditions that may impact on your safety in the event of an emergency?



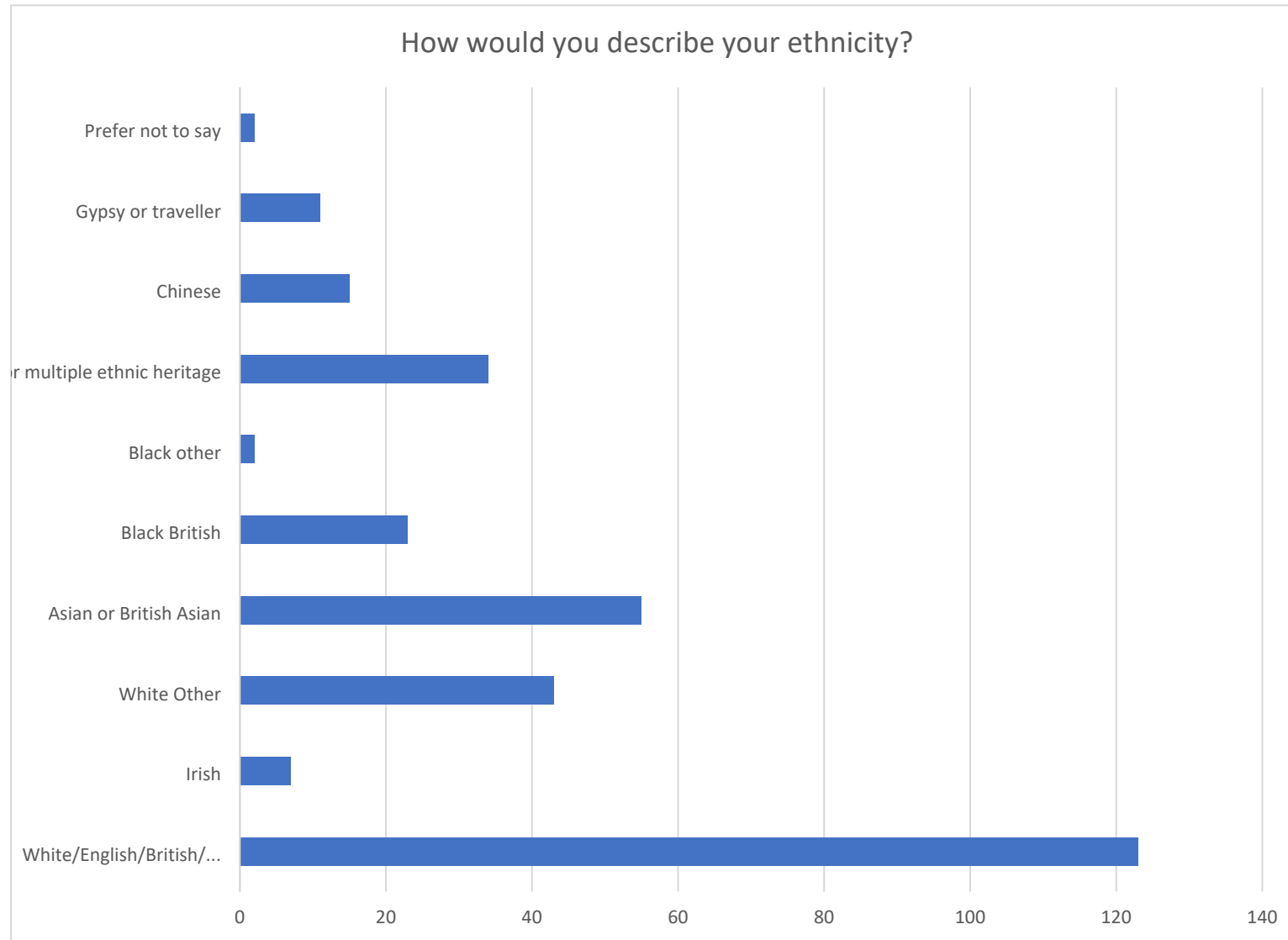
If yes, please feel free to tell us what they are?

Stroke related conditions are the most frequent comment (19), followed by cardiovascular (12) and mobility issues (11) and then hearing loss (10)

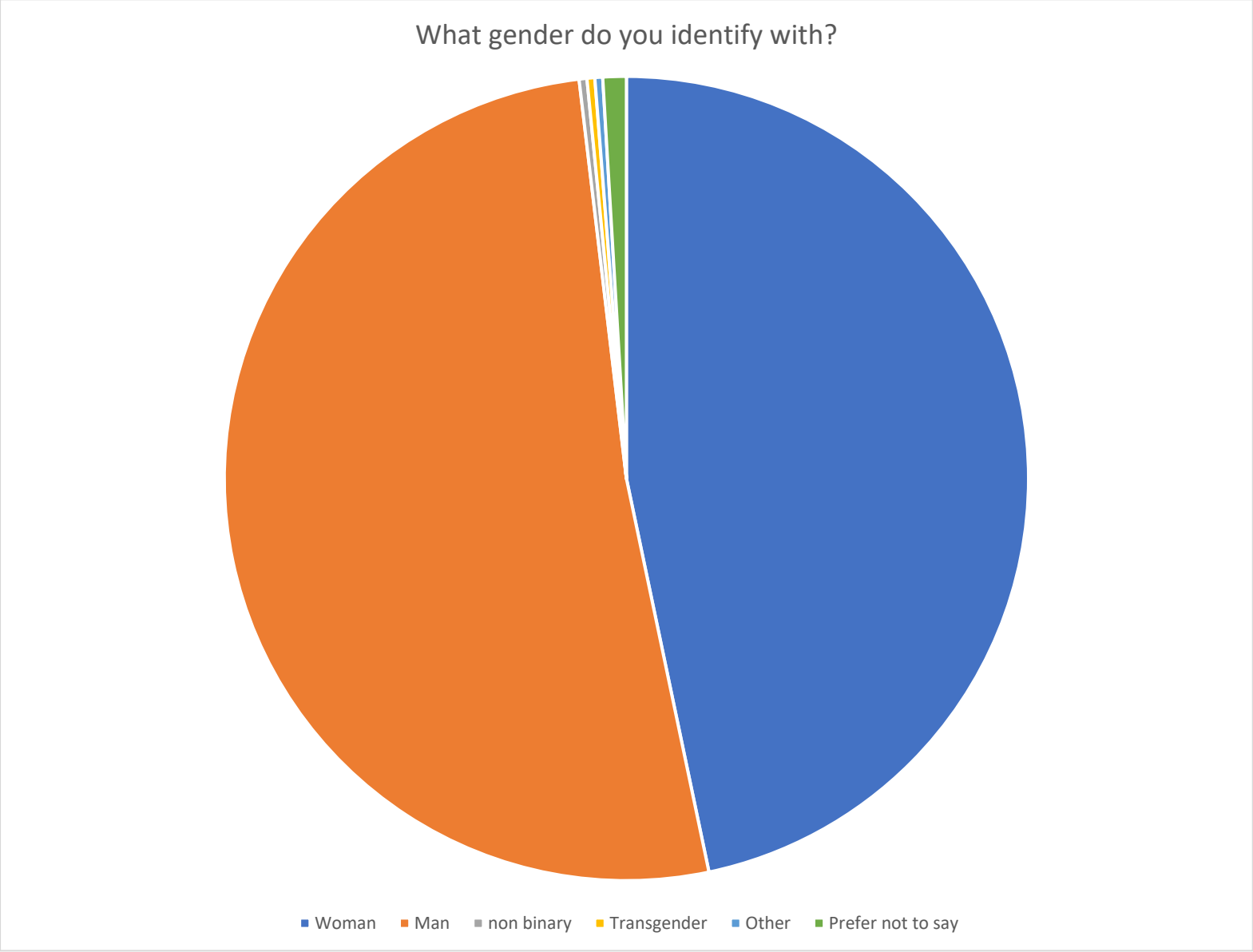
Do you observe any particular religion?



How would you describe your ethnicity?



What gender do you identify with?



How would you describe your sexual orientation?

