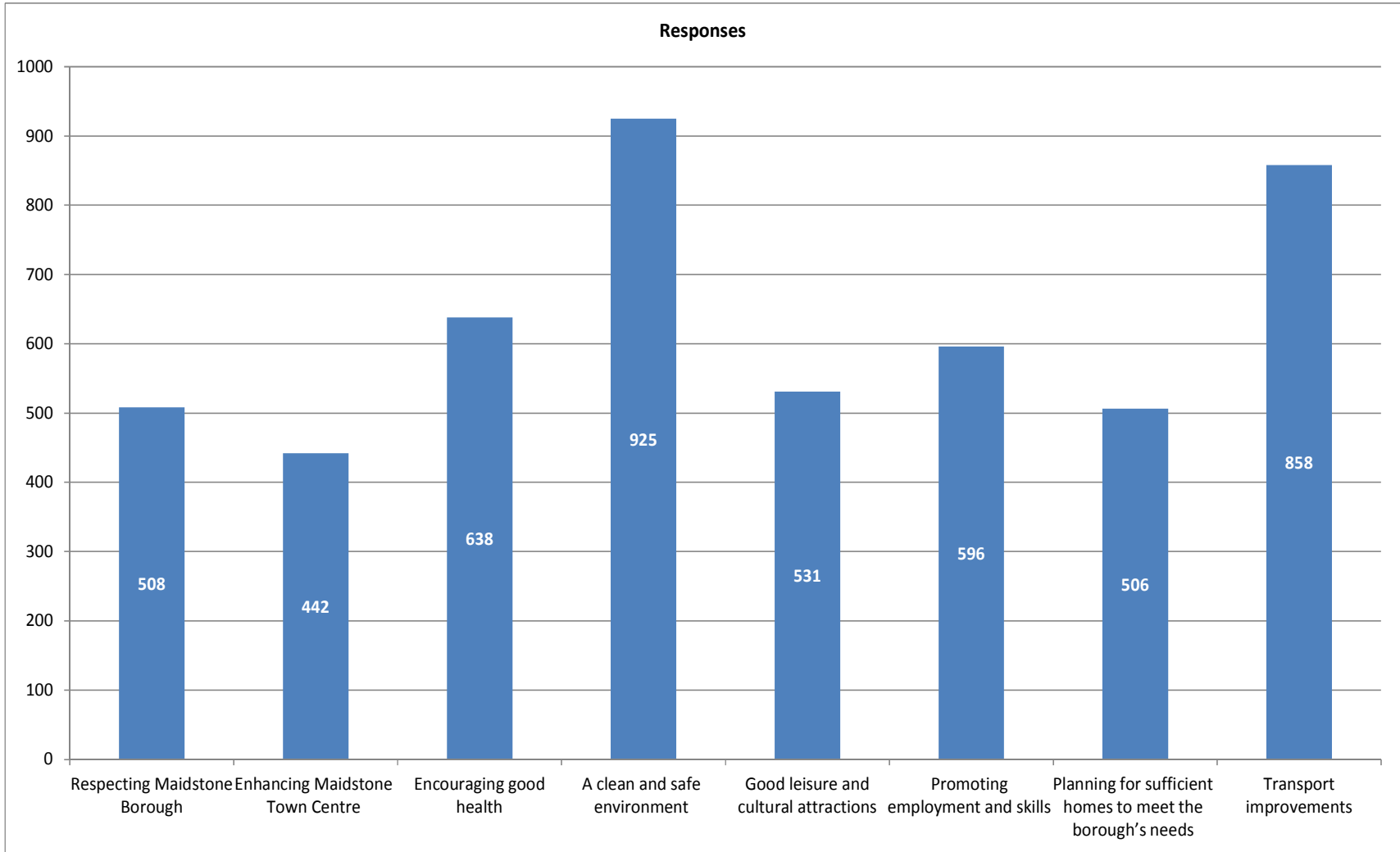


MY council what matters to ME – Consultation Results



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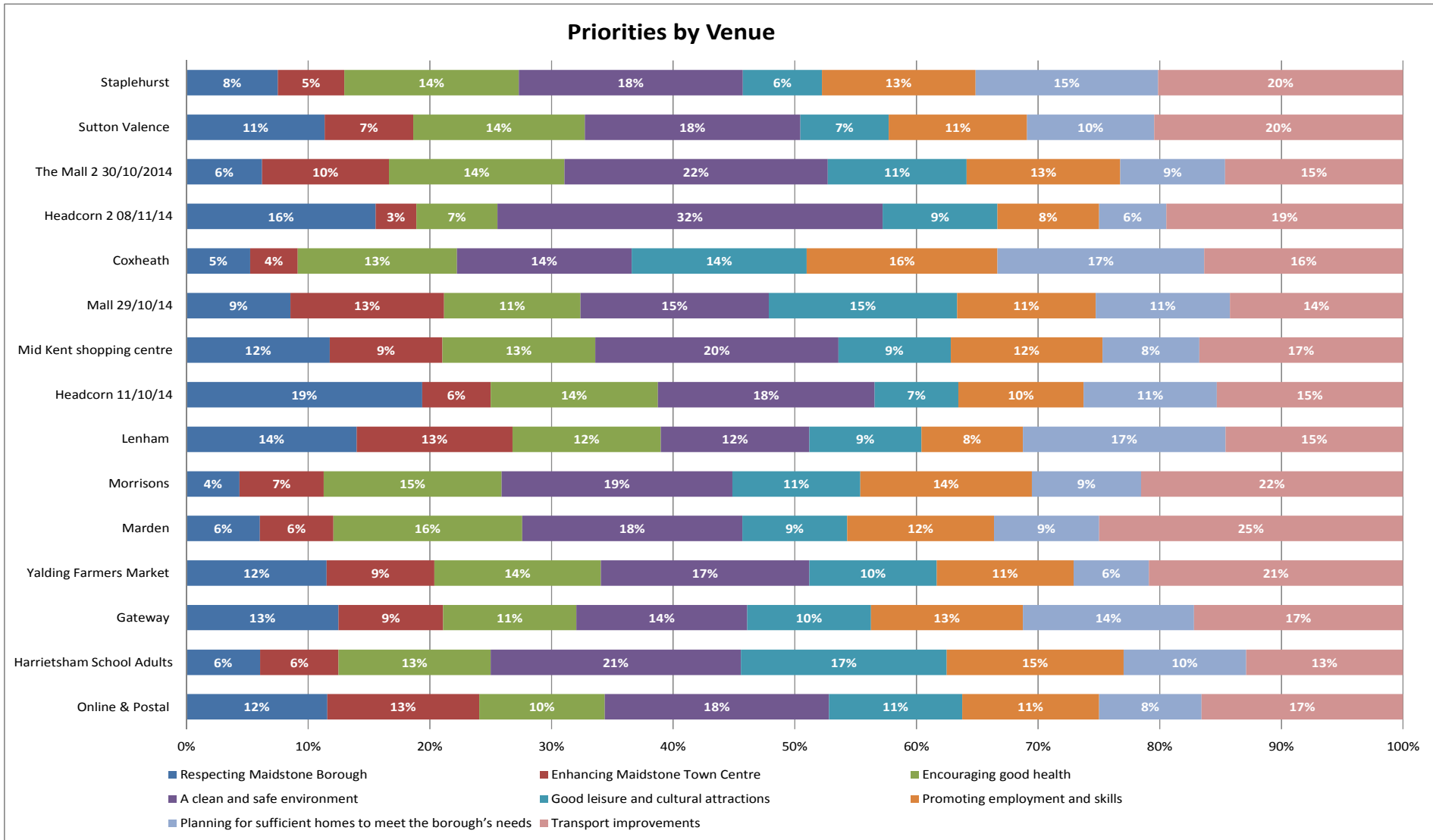
Percentage of responses by priority



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	Respecting Maidstone Borough	Enhancing Maidstone Town Centre	Encouraging good health	A clean and safe environment	Good leisure and cultural attractions	Promoting employment and skills	Planning for sufficient homes to meet the borough's needs	Transport improvements
Online & Postal	12%	13%	10%	18%	11%	11%	8%	17%
Harrietsham School Adults	6%	6%	13%	21%	17%	15%	10%	13%
Gateway	13%	9%	11%	14%	10%	13%	14%	17%
Yalding Farmers Market	12%	9%	14%	17%	10%	11%	6%	21%
Marden	6%	6%	16%	18%	9%	12%	9%	25%
Morrisons	4%	7%	15%	19%	11%	14%	9%	22%
Lenham	14%	13%	12%	12%	9%	8%	17%	15%
Headcorn 11/10/14	19%	6%	14%	18%	7%	10%	11%	15%
Mid Kent shopping centre	12%	9%	13%	20%	9%	12%	8%	17%
Mall 29/10/14	9%	13%	11%	15%	15%	11%	11%	14%
Coxheath	5%	4%	13%	14%	14%	16%	17%	16%
Headcorn 2 08/11/14	16%	3%	7%	32%	9%	8%	6%	19%
The Mall 2 30/10/2014	6%	10%	14%	22%	11%	13%	9%	15%
Sutton Valence	11%	7%	14%	18%	7%	11%	10%	20%
Staplehurst	8%	5%	14%	18%	6%	13%	15%	20%

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Online & Postal Comments

There were 31 comments received about the consultation, in summary there were three around reducing cultural services, nine about income generation, and four relating to reducing staff costs. Four comments have been categorised as management where the comments were about shared services and reviewing services and three were categorised as Homes and Planning, though each has a different focus within this category.

The full comments are shown in full below:

Response Text

Run a Home Improvement Agency that takes fees from the customers who are able to pay. Many residents are uncomfortable with finding builders, choosing the right works, seeking quotes, knowing whether the price is reasonable and the quality of work is right, knowing when they should apply for Building or Planning consents. A Home Improvement Agency could help.

Take more services (e.g.transport & refuse) in house ,which should save money and increase locally based employment and achieve better service via more accountability

reduce cultural & central services

Cut unnecessary job roles in local government, reduce inefficiencies in delivery of services, outsource to the private sector where cost-savings can be made

No new builds.

How much has this cost- need an answer

Why no link sutton road to loose road look at bircholt road

We live in the Borough, but only come into Maidstone 2-3 times per year. The southern approach needs improving - we might come in more often then, pay parking, support businesses etc. Or you could save the money that you spend on the parks, river, Leisure Centre that we don't use because the traffic is so bad. Why don't you make all events, cultural, leisure facilities self funding - they have to break even. You could contract them out.

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Planning affects everyone but benefits a few. Increase costs of planning permission etc because this is costing a lot and the cost of planning next to the investment and return are minimal. Cultural services whilst more is spent it does benefit everyone and is raising income locally through tourism and events and makes it a vibrant place to live. What does central services include?

Could we share a Chief Executive with another council?

Charge for Car Parking

Charge for fees for freedom of information requests

Give the council the opportunity to have business plans without restrictions

Be more commercially aware

Explore more shared services/resources with neighbouring boroughs. Look at corporate sponsorship/selling advertising space to increase revenue so that all services aren't effected by budget cuts.

Do a comprehensive review of the council's services putting customers at the focus of the review - then cut out all the waste.

MAKE MORE REVENUE FROM EMPTY BUILDINGS, UTILISE CURRENT PROPERTY MORE BY ALLOWING MORE EVENTS TO BRING MONEY IN, OPENING PLACES LIKE THE TOWN HALL UP TO OTHER BUSINESS TO USE AS MEETING ROOMS ETC, ENCOURAGE LOCAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES TO USE THE SERVICES MORE

Bigger issues all infrastructure

Focus on purpose. Think systemically. Be honest about the level of current failure demand inherent in every single service.

Severe cuts to the allowances paid to councillors. They must feel some of the pain of this.

Sack all employees paid over £60k pa

Less money to be spent on cultural services

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To increase income:

Make use of the traffic wardens we already have or consider increasing the number. I walk around large areas of the town regularly and see so many motorists parked illegally causing traffic obstructions or creating hazards for pedestrians. I have complained to the council and the police several times about illegal parking on Buckland Hill and St Peters Street.

Make more regular checks on housing benefit and council tax benefit claimants, the council seem to assume that people will automatically update them of a change in living arrangements. Possibly a bi-annual claim form to be signed and returned by claimants would at least allow the council to investigate any that are not returned promptly.

To make savings:

The council could make more use of volunteers to save on staffing costs and at the same time encourage residents to be more involved in their community. There are plenty of young people either unemployed or in some form of training/education who often need some form of work experience or references to help them secure their first job. There are many retired people feeling isolated and research shows that keeping active longer improves general health. There are many parents who are currently not working as they have young children but would gladly give a few hours of their time while children attend pre-school. There are costs involved with recruiting and coordinating volunteers but the town would benefit short-term from savings to staffing costs and long-term from the sense of community involvement that it would create which would in turn possible cut other costs such as graffiti, littering etc.

Make in house optimisations

The council should be saying to the business community 'Maidstone is open for business' this is clearly not the case as we have recently seen with the J8 purposeful turned down. This will mean a reduction in business rates being collected and residents having to bear the brunt of cuts of increased council tax. Council tax should not rise above inflation any year.

More fare paying attractions, e.g. Crazy golf in Mote Park (a really good one!); selling expertise to other councils on a consultancy fee basis; investing in property and becoming a market landlord

Encourage well known brands into town who can afford to stay - no more cheap shops

I believe building on the Commercialisation strategy to encourage income, look at outside funding as a way of supporting staff posts where possible and identifying where services are available and eradicating duplication in Maidstone where possible will all aid savings.

Increase charging for advice and consent eg. Planning and other professional services.

Greater use of advertising and sponsorship to generate income.

Invest in solar panels and other renewables for long term income.

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Charge night venues more for licensing and fines for anti social behaviour and kebab shop fines for the litter and rubbish

Set up, encourage and support local community volunteer groups, who help keep their local communities clean and tidy. Litter picking etc.

Make more council buildings/facilities eco sustainable. Install solar panels.

Have bin men report large amounts of litter or fly tipping or investigate if public reported if they are going by it - save having an inspector go out to it.

Increase income from Maidstone Leisure Centre - charge more, do one of events, seasonal events that bring in money.

Run more seasonal and special events at Mote Park to increase income.

Encourage youth clubs to do activities that help and support the local areas and communities.

Privatise the museum, theatre and leisure centre.

Reduce spending on the many services which are not your responsibility and concentrate on delivering core services efficiently.

Increase Council Tax

Sack the the deadlegs at the top
