

Grant Review 2019

Survey results and summary

This report sets out the results of a survey among groups who have received grants and donations from the parish council since June 2015.

This report has been prepared by John Hesketh Parish Clerk
May 2019

Background

In November 2018, parish councillors asked the Clerk to undertake a review of the way that its Grants & Donations policy was working. This survey was conducted with groups who had received a grant or donation since May 2015 since the new scheme was launched.

Headlines

Most people replying were generally happy with the way that applications were made and managed, though a few made suggestions about improving the clarity of the guidance notes.

There was less overall support when asked about imposing restrictions on applicants which may be an issue when groups depend on funding from the parish council. Having said that, a majority (86%) of people replying said that their group had a regular plan for fundraising that included activities other than always applying to the parish council. It is clear however, that parish council funding is important to local voluntary groups when almost half (43%) replying were unsure if their work could continue without a grant, and 21% said it would not continue at all.

Next steps

The parish council will discuss this report at its next meeting on 16 May 2019 and decide if they accept the findings and what action to take next.

Option 1

Continue with a grants & donations scheme or not.

Option 2

Maintain and open-ended budget (as at present) or set a budget for a fixed period of time (for example, an annual sum).

If the budget is open-ended, how much should be allocated to it? If the budget is fixed, how much and for how long would this be?

Option 3

Should there be any change to the terms and conditions? These may be in two forms: to change the range and extent of current funding or to introduce limitations on what might be awarded.

Option 4

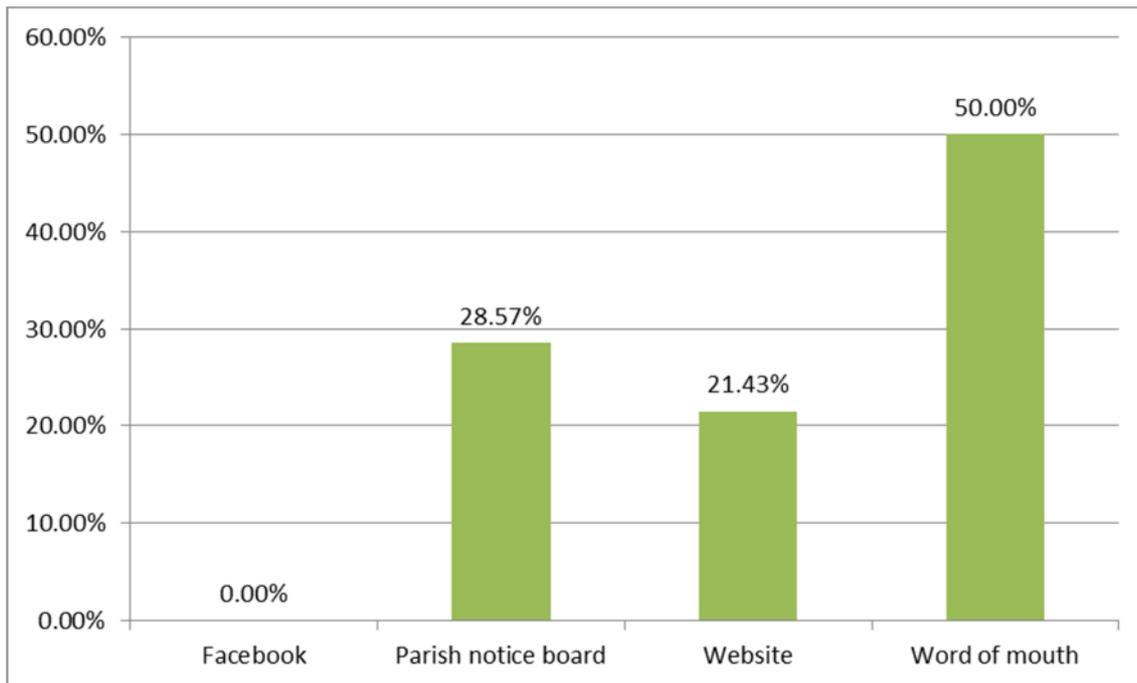
Examine what applicants need from the scheme (frequency of award, documentation or affirmations to council policy)

Stay connected

The Parish Council makes regular postings on its Facebook and Twitter feeds to keep residents informed of news in the parish. Our website is the main resource for all the information we accumulate through our work. Please follow us to keep up to date.

How did you learn about the council's grant scheme? (Choose one)

The most popular choice for all respondents (50%) was word of mouth, then the parish notice board. No-one heard about the grants from social media.

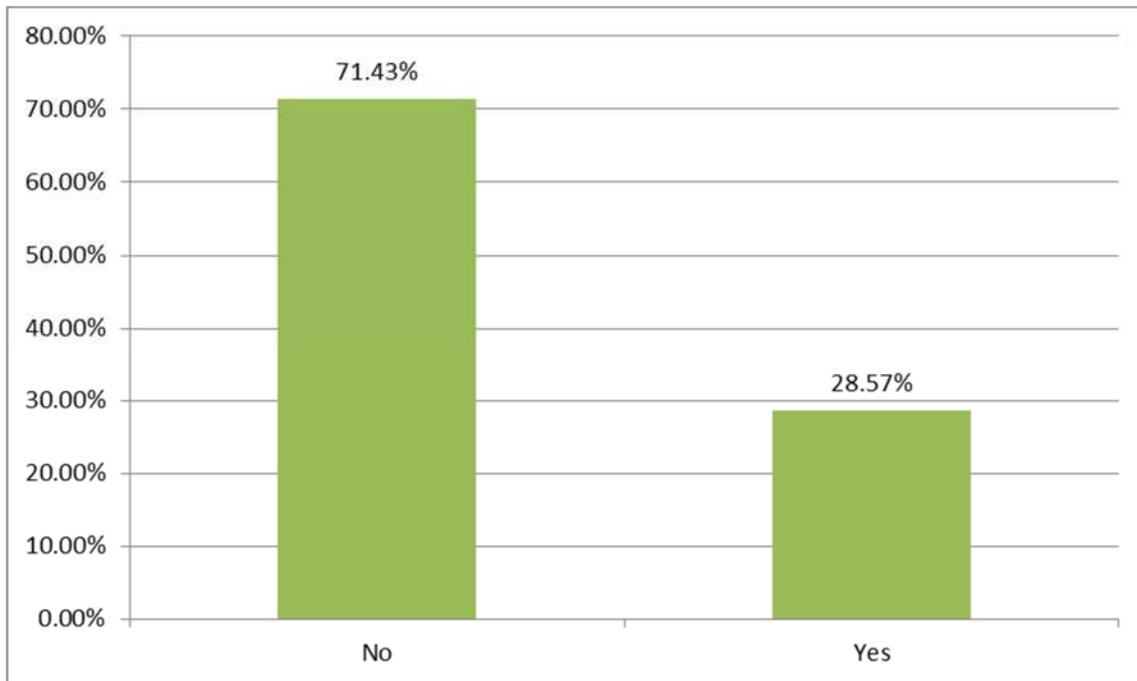


Comments

Cornwall County Council website

Was your application for £100 or less?

£100 is the cut-off point between small grants that can be awarded at any council meeting and the more substantial grants that are considered twice a year in April and November. Most respondents to the survey were in receipt of large grants. The answers to the subsequent questions may be influenced by the amount of grant which the applicant has received. Any comments they have made are printed below the chart.



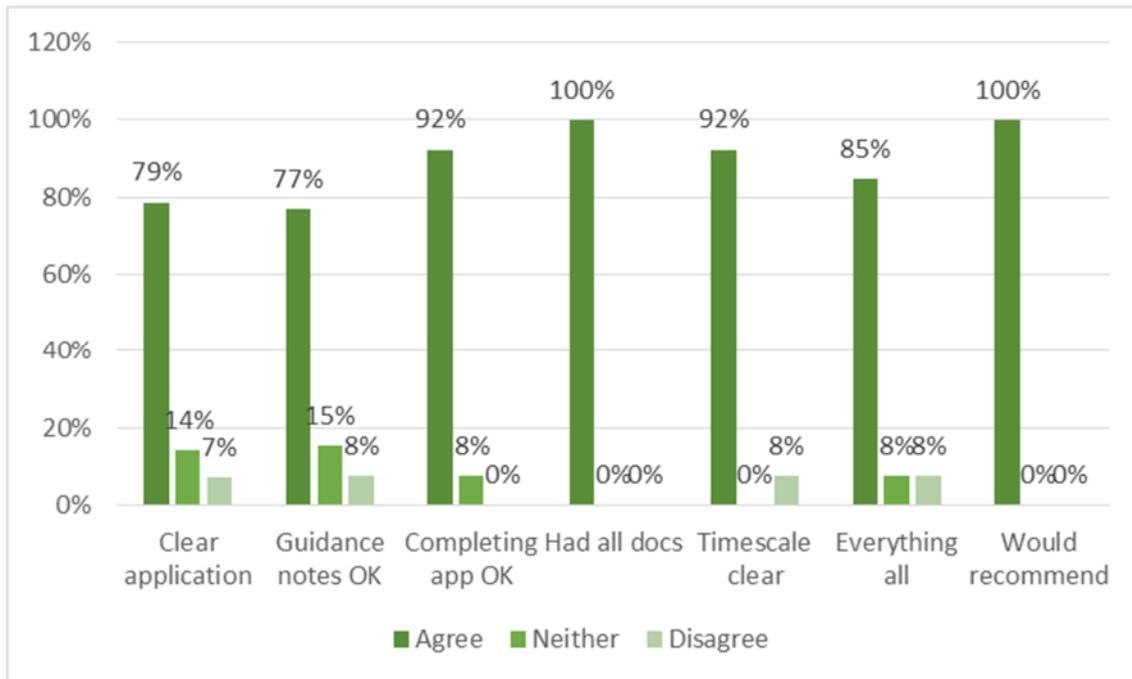
Comments
None

Making the application

Respondents were asked how far they agreed or disagreed with these statements:

- The application method was clear and straightforward
- The guidance notes explained what information was needed and why
- I had no problem completing the application
- I was able to send all the documents needed
- The timescale for making my application was clear
- I was able to explain everything about my application on the form
- I would recommend the council's grant scheme to someone else

The majority of respondents were in agreement with the statements out to them. However, the first questions that asked about clarity of making the application and using the guidance notes had the least satisfactory replies. *We will rewrite the guidance notes that are issued with the grant application.*



Comments

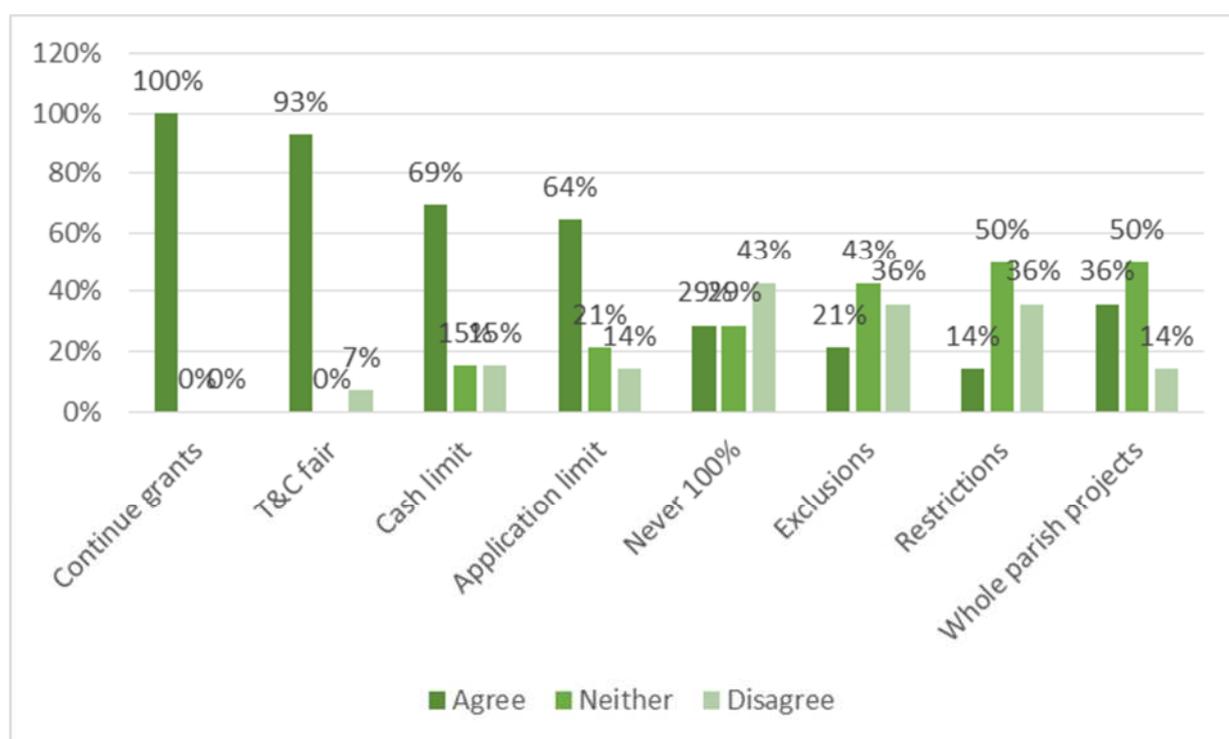
Found the form quite difficult to understand

Terms & Conditions

It's a legal requirement that councillors should justify how they spend your money, as well as being bound by legislation, so there have to be some conditions on how the grants money is awarded. There is also a limited amount of money that the council can use for grants. This section asks for your opinion on how it can be made to go further.

Respondents were asked how far they agreed or disagreed with these statements:

- The council should continue making grants and donations
- The Terms & Conditions that apply to the grant are fair
- There should be a limit on how much you can apply for
- There should be an annual limit on the number of times you can make an application
- The council should never award 100% of a grant request
- Some groups should not be allowed to ask for a grant (see comments below)
- The council should not be funding some projects (see comments below)
- The council should use the money set aside for grants to fund a project that will benefit the whole of the parish (see comments below)



Comments

Continue with grants?

There are numerous clubs and facilities within the Parish that would struggle without the grants and donations that are available.

Match funding should be taken into account

Should there be a cash limit?

This would give the charities, organisations and groups a realistic amount to apply for especially with the current financial pressures

For the committee to decide on individual basis

Obviously some funding grants will be much higher than others but I don't believe that there should be a cap, especially if the grant will benefit many in the long term.

Should there be a limit to the number of applications?

Perhaps once a year

Should there be a cap on the percentage awarded?

Often getting match funding is inefficient or fund raising too hard
I believe anyone applying for a grant should be able to provide at least 10% of the total funding required.

Should some groups be prevented from applying?

Charities seeking general donations

There is no harm in anyone applying but the council would have the discretion to decide if applications are appropriate. There should be no form of discrimination and there should be equality of opportunity

Only constituted groups

Political or extremist

Should the council not be funding some projects?

The council should assess each application in its own right without it mattering who has applied

No funding individuals

Those projects that have a commercial basis

Should money be set aside for a project that can benefit the whole parish?

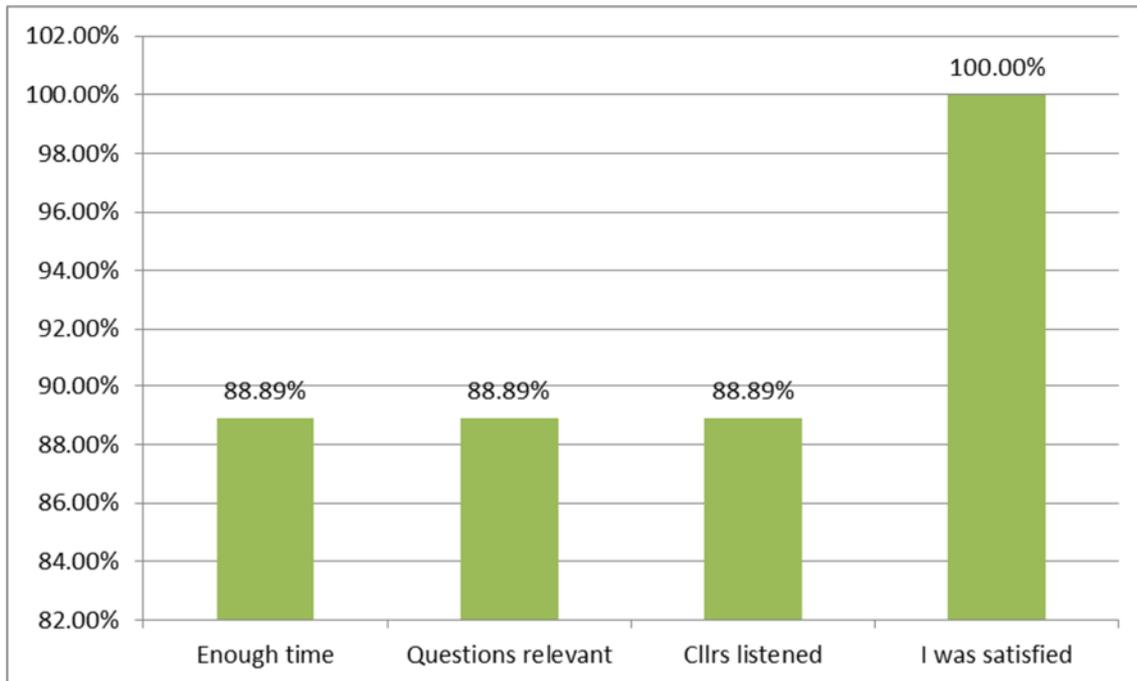
Running track around the field, skatepark, youth group

I personally think that the Parish council are fair with the funding grants. The MSA have received a couple of grants but it is for a facility that is used by many within the Parish.

Attending the council meeting

If you (or a representative) attended the council meeting, please complete this section.

- I had enough time to explain what my application was about
- The questions I was asked were relevant to my application
- The councillors listened and understood what my project was about
- I was satisfied with the way that my application was heard in the meeting.



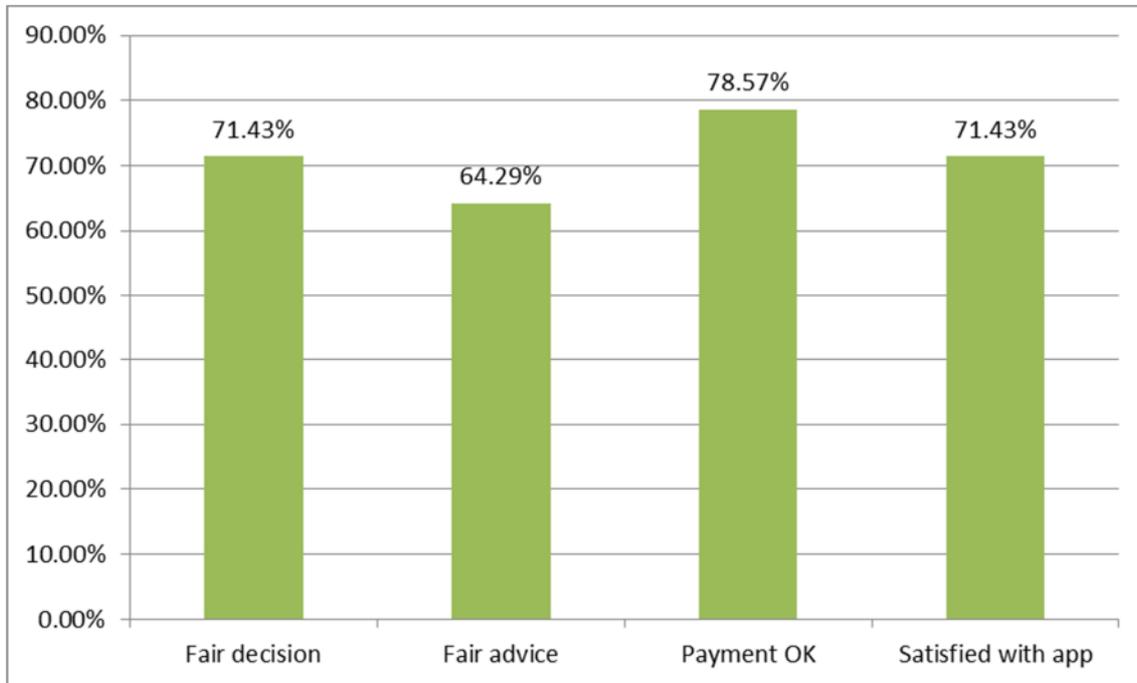
Comments

None

The decision

This part gives you the chance to comment on the decision that councillors made on your application. Tick as many as you agree with.

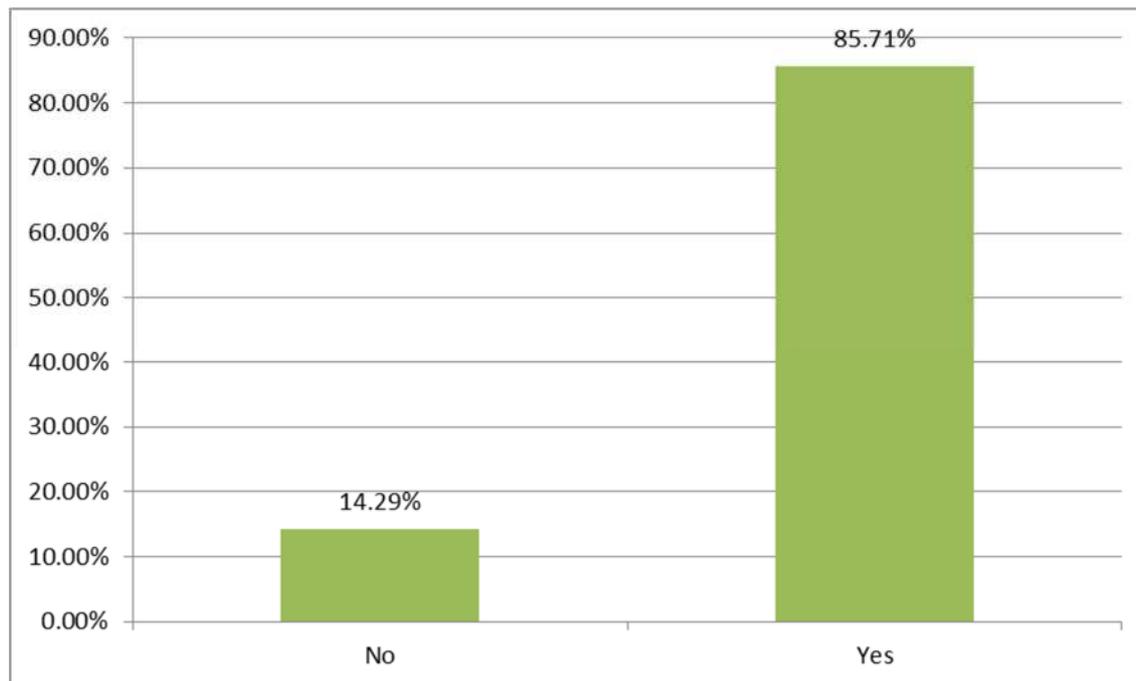
- The councillors made their decision in a fair and unbiased way
- The advice they were given was fair and impartial
- I received my payment promptly
- I was satisfied with the way that my application was heard in the meeting



Comments
None

Your finances

This section asks about your own fundraising, and how important the council's grants are to you. Does your group have a regular plan to raise money for its work? (This could be grant applications to other organisations or fundraising activities you hold locally)



Comments

Project has been decommissioned.

Grant applications are a vital part of raising money along with support from all parts of the community and businesses alike

We fundraise during the year

Special fund raising events

The Menheniot Sports Association hold various fundraising events

What was your grant for?

- To pay for a one-off cost or project
- For regular running costs

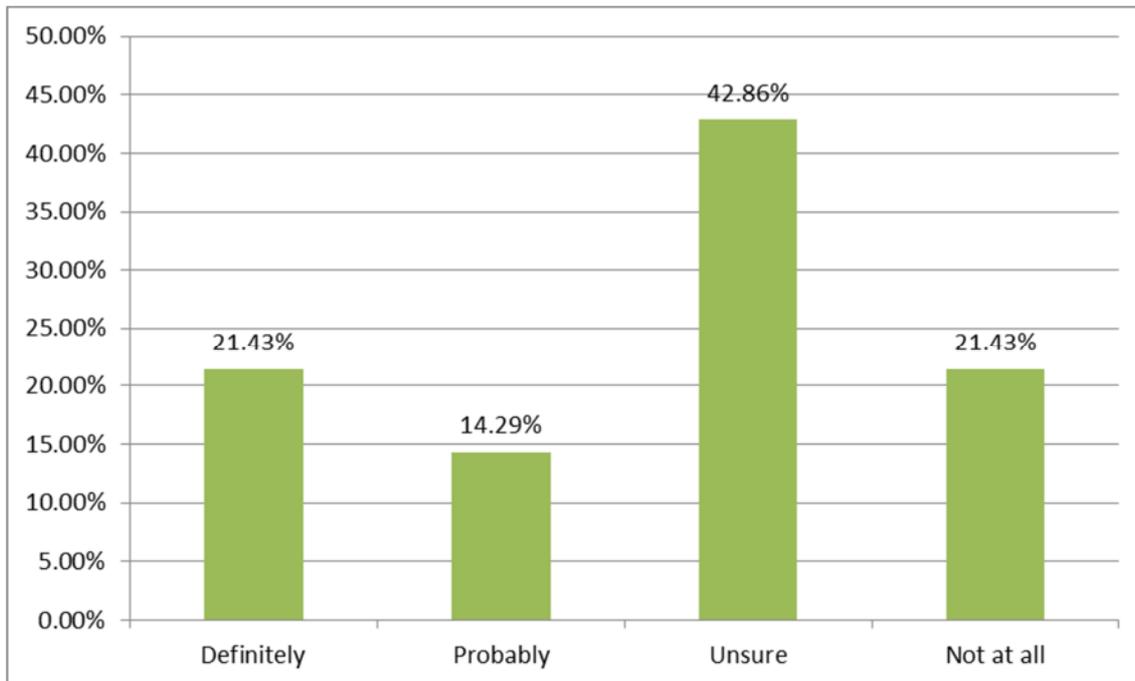


Comments

Enabled us to continue to offer house meal and other activities.

If you had not received funding from the council, what are the chances that your project would still have gone ahead? Choose one.

- Definitely
- Probably
- Unsure
- Not at all



Comments

Try other fund holders

The first grant we received was to rejuvenate the MUGA and we were fortunate that we also received grants from other groups otherwise the MUGA would have closed

It would be easier to make an application if . . .

In a couple of sentences, tell us how you would improve the current system

Comments

- Simple online form with attachments of evidence required.
- It was pretty easy - can't think of any improvements
- Some of the questions were inappropriate, being tied to an event rather than a one off project. This was only a minor frustration, however.
- The Parish Council should have annual meetings with each group in the parish, to discuss the groups development and suggest where they may be able to help.
- Nothing should change as less scrutiny could lead to money being unwisely spent.
- Maybe have grants of less than £500 available 4 times per year as currently there is a large gap if you miss one of the application dates
- There was more time allowed instead of just two windows with cut off dates

Technical

Survey open from 1 January 2019 until 31 January 2019.

14 responses were received from 18 known recipients of grants and donations. This means that 78% of recipients have engaged in the consultation. The survey was made anonymous so that frank responses would be encouraged.

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