



Business Survey 2018

SLIDE #	
4	Introduction
5	Objectives
6	Executive Summary
13	Profile of businesses surveyed
18	The detailed report
19	Business growth and the future
25	Trading locally
28	Staff and training needs

CONTENTS (cont'd)

SLIDE #	
32	Business facilitation and support
40	Awareness of the City's support
47	The Business eNewsletter

The City of Stirling has approximately 22,000 businesses within its boundaries which are divided into a number of economic zones. The City now wishes to survey its business community to update its information about the needs and expectations of the businesses with the City and the types of assistance which will help these businesses to thrive and grow within the future.

The City of Stirling supports a business incubator in the Stirling Regional Business Centre and helps businesses to access a range of State and Federal Government support services. The initial survey was undertaken by Research Solutions in 2016 which led to policy changes to local laws and planning schemes, including the removal of the alfresco dining fee for business proprietors. The study has helped the Economic Development Unit decide which business services to budget for in the future and what training to direct people to. The results of the 2018 survey and comparisons to the 2016 survey are detailed in the following pages of this report.

The purpose of the research was to engage with businesses and local industry to provide the City with an understanding of the following:

- ▶ Future prospects and the type of support and assistance that businesses are seeking in order to help them grow and thrive in the future.
- ▶ Propensity to trading locally and the types of products and services which are difficult to source locally
- ▶ Staff training needs for the future
- ▶ Awareness of what State and Federal Government support is available in their areas of need.
- ▶ Awareness of the type of support which the City offers and satisfaction with the support it provides to business
- ▶ Awareness and readership of the Business eNewsletter and suggestions for content which businesses would be interested in.

Executive Summary



Source: Business district | City of Stirling

The City of Stirling conducts a biennial survey of businesses in its local government area, to determine their needs and expectations and their awareness of the business services available to them. All the businesses in the City that could be identified through the Australian Business Registry, the City's business e-newsletter and other sources were sent an email by the City to inform them of the survey and asked to participate. Research Solutions sent each business identified a unique link to the survey, sent two reminder emails and provided the City with a link to the survey which was placed on its website.

A representative sample of 488 businesses in the City responded to the survey and generally the results were similar to the 2016 survey.

1. The advantages and disadvantages of the City

The advantages of being situated in the City where:

- Its central proximity
- Proximity to home
- Access to transport routes.

The main issue continues to be traffic congestion around the City and at the freeway exits as in 2016.

2. Business confidence and the future

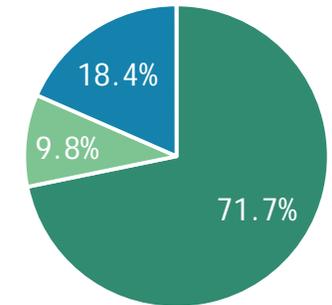
Optimism about future prospects for the region was high at 71.7%

However businesses still expressed concern about their business being impacted by:

- Lower business confidence (44.9%) particularly small businesses
- Aggressive competition (31.1%)
- Changes in technology (28.7%)

Though 1 in 3 businesses felt that they would be positively impacted by the economic upturn.

Optimism about the future



■ Optimistic ■ Pessimistic ■ Neutral

3. Buying Locally

Sourcing goods and services locally was undertaken by almost 2 in 3 businesses in the City, particularly the medium and large businesses, this is an improvement on 2016 when less than 60% sourced goods locally.

11.0% of businesses say that there are goods and services which are hard to source and the list is diverse with few mentioned more than once or twice. The most common was specialist food products though that was mentioned by less than 1% of businesses

4. Help and assistance

Many businesses are still not aware of what is available:

- ▶ 51.4% aware of Federal Government support for business (ASBAS funding 18.0%)
- ▶ 31.6% aware of State Government funding for small business
- ▶ 17.8% aware of the Stirling Business incubator

In all, just over 1 in 4 businesses (27.3%) identified themselves as needing help, and the most frequent request for help was in liaising with Small Business Development Corporation over training.

The most frequently mentioned types of training they felt would be useful in the future were:

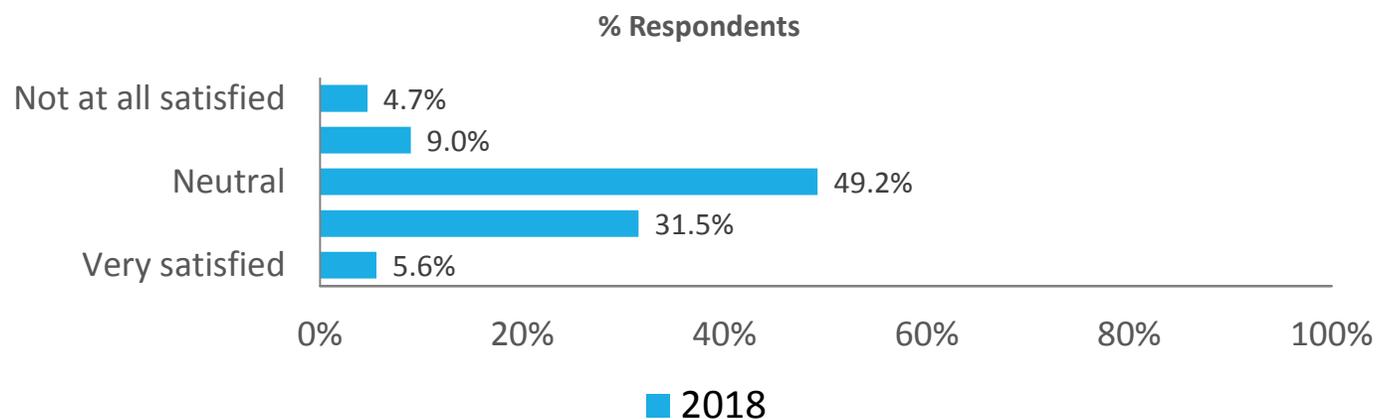
- ▶ Marketing their business
- ▶ Technical job related training
- ▶ Marketing Strategy training
- ▶ Business planning

5. The City of Stirling

Just over 1 in 4 or 28.9% of businesses surveyed had had contact with the City of Stirling in the last 2 years. Satisfaction was rather mixed with:

- 43.0% of these businesses were satisfied with their contact
- 47.3% neutral about their contact
- 9.5% were not satisfied.

Satisfaction with the City's support for small businesses (asked of small businesses only) was similar as shown below with 37.1% of small businesses satisfied, 49.2% neutral and 13.7% dissatisfied.



The eNewsletter

The City's eNewsletter was read by just under 40% of businesses compared to last year at 30.6%, though some of the survey contact details came from the eNewsletter list so this will inflate the figures. Two thirds of the businesses say that they read the newsletter or at least flick through it.

The majority of respondents to the survey are micro businesses, that is they have 4 or less employees. This is consistent with statistics on businesses generally, most have one business premises in the City of Stirling and the survey was completed by the owner.

In reviewing the results of the survey we put forward the following issues for consideration:

1. Satisfaction with the City's support for small businesses is not particularly high with just over one in three small businesses satisfied with the City's support for small business, though few (13.7%) are actively dissatisfied. Satisfaction with contact and support is always a vexed question in local government due to the regulatory nature of City functions. Perhaps the City could get more of a multiplier on its resources through the Small Business Development Corporation (see point 2 below) and through the various business networks in the City. Hence the City could give consideration to engaging further with business associations to bring them to the attention of businesses in the City; and possibly for the City to engage directly with businesses in the City to provide them with the opportunity to network with each other and to network with council buyers, possibly in the same way that WALGA provides the opportunity for members of its panel to network at forums with local government members. The eNewsletter also provides an opportunity for communication as businesses are requesting further useful business information and information on business support.

2. Businesses realise that training courses are a means of improving their business and that skills development would be useful to their business and to their staff. As noted above, there are a wide range of training and skills development courses which would be of benefit to businesses, this year again the demand is for training courses on how to market their business, marketing strategy and business planning. Therefore we suggest that the City of Stirling work with SBDC to raise its profile amongst small business in the City of Stirling (as only 30.6% of the micro businesses are aware of the State Government assistance available) to ensure that small businesses are made aware of the training courses offered as these correlate well with the needs expressed by the Stirling business community in the survey. Also this correlates with the information sought from the City's eNewsletter.
3. As satisfaction with contact with the City is around 43% and with just under 4% of respondents commenting on over regulation and inflexibility by the City and lack of progressiveness by officers there is still some work to be done in this area, though comment on regulation, inflexibility and lack of progressiveness has improved significantly compared to the 8% of businesses who raised this issue in 2016. A rising economy may help this situation also.

Profile of businesses surveyed



Source: Photograph of City of Stirling's Library

Sample profile – industry type

	Industry in which the business operates	ABS % 2017	Sample %
1.	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1.2	0.8
2.	Mining	0.6	2.0
3.	Manufacturing	3.2	2.7
4.	Electricity, gas, water and waste services	0.2	0.8
5.	Construction	19.3	12.9
6.	Wholesale trade	3.2	2.0
7.	Retail trade	5.6	7.0
8.	Accommodation and food services	3.4	3.9
9.	Transport, postal and warehousing	8.4	3.9
10.	Information media and telecommunications	0.9	4.7
11.	Financial and insurance services	11.3	8.0
12.	Rental hiring and real estate services	12.7	4.3
13.	Professional, scientific and technical services	14.0	24.8*
14.	Administrative and support services	3.9	2.9
15.	Public administration and safety	0.4	0.4
16.	Education and training	1.3	4.3
17.	Health care and social assistance	5.7	6.1
18.	Arts and recreation services including gyms	1.1	3.9
19.	Other	3.9	4.5

*Note - Professional, scientific and technical services is a very diverse group many of which are sole operators or micro businesses, the proportion in the sample is similar to 2016.

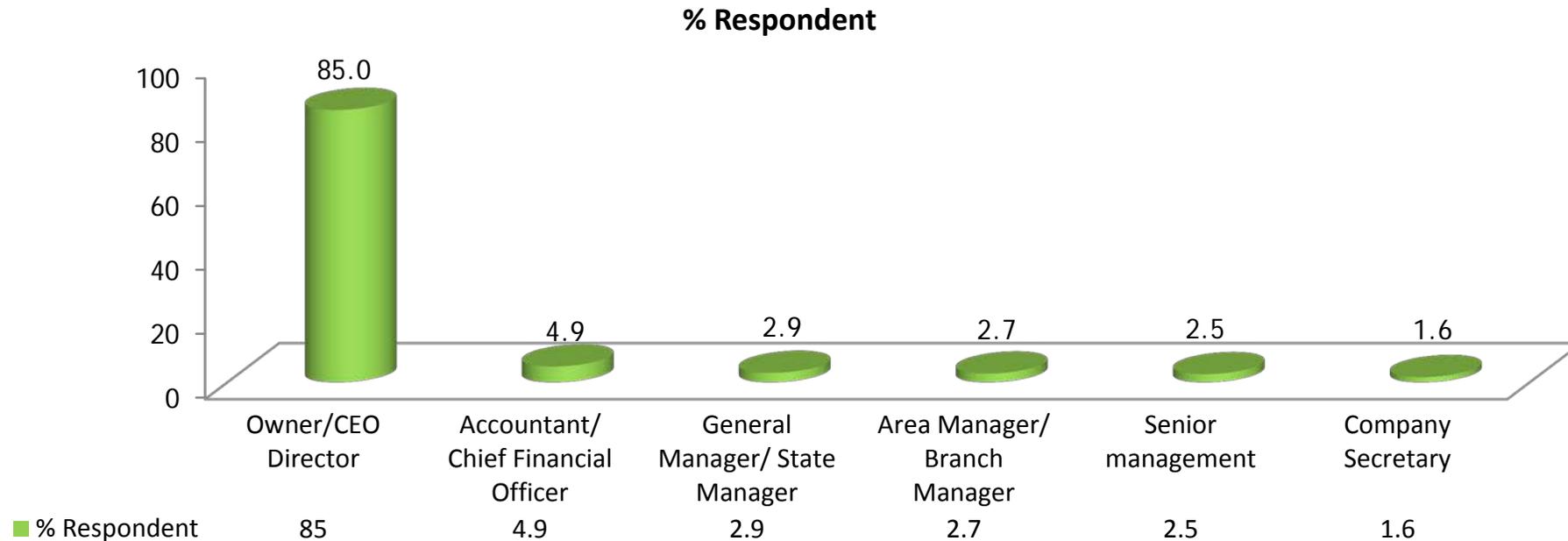
Q.2 In which industry does your business operate? N=488

Sample profile – location – economic zones

Sample of businesses surveyed per economic zone	%
Balcatta/Hamersley	12.3
Dianella (duplicated below)	4.9
Innaloo/Doubleview	6.5
Karrinyup	5.7
Mount Lawley/Inglewood	7.0
Balga/Mirrabooka/Dianella	9.0
Osborne Park	15.8
Scarborough	8.9
Other suburbs in the City	35.1

Q.1 Which of the following City of Stirling suburbs does your business have an office or premises in? n=488

Sample profile – Respondent title



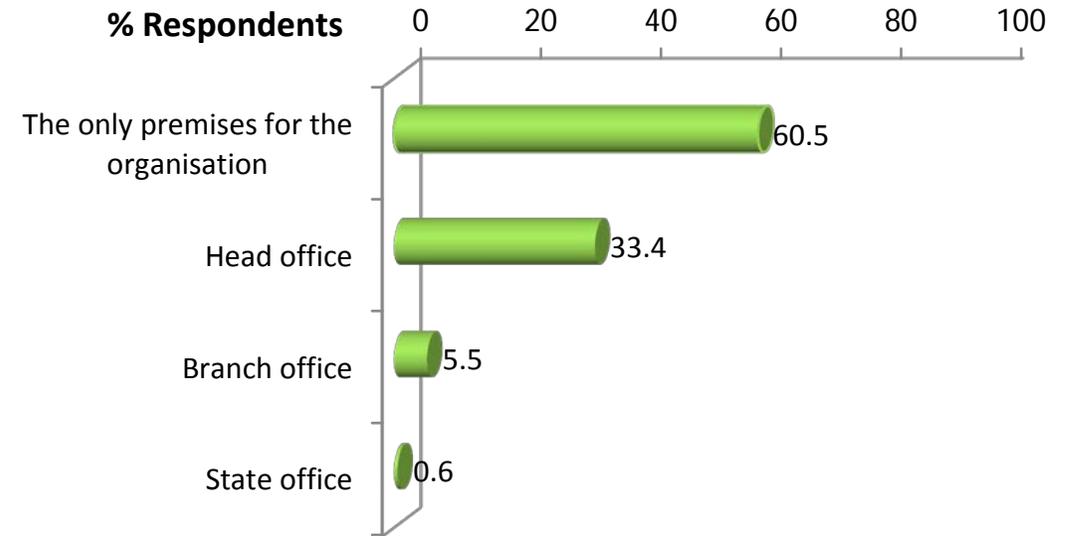
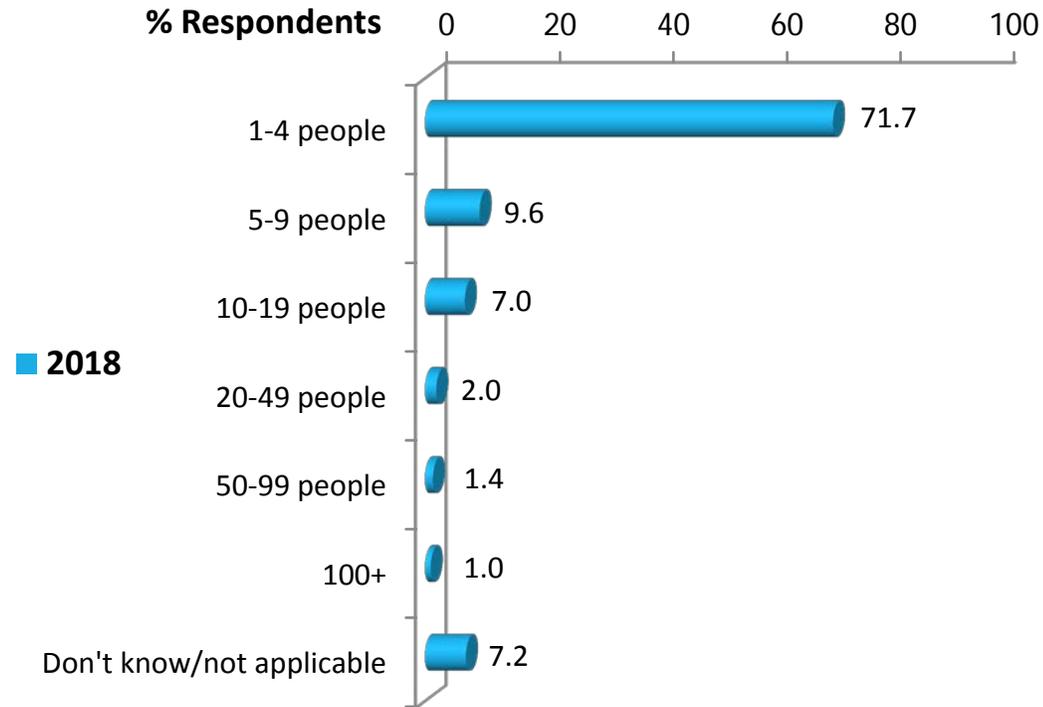
Q.22 What is your title? n=488

The profile of the Respondents completing the 2018 survey is similar to that of the 2016 survey.

Surveys completed by the owner or CEO:

- 1-4 employees 90.0%
- 5-9 employees 80.9%
- 10-19 employees 55.9%
- 20 or more employees (medium and large) 50.0%

The bigger the business the more likely the questionnaire was to be completed by the accountant/chief financial officer rather than the owner/CEO.



Q.2 Is this the head office premises for your business or is it a state or branch office? n=488

Q.7 How many full time equivalent people were employed by your business as at the 30th June this year? n=488

As in 2016, the results in 2018 for business size and office size are similar to the results for 2016.

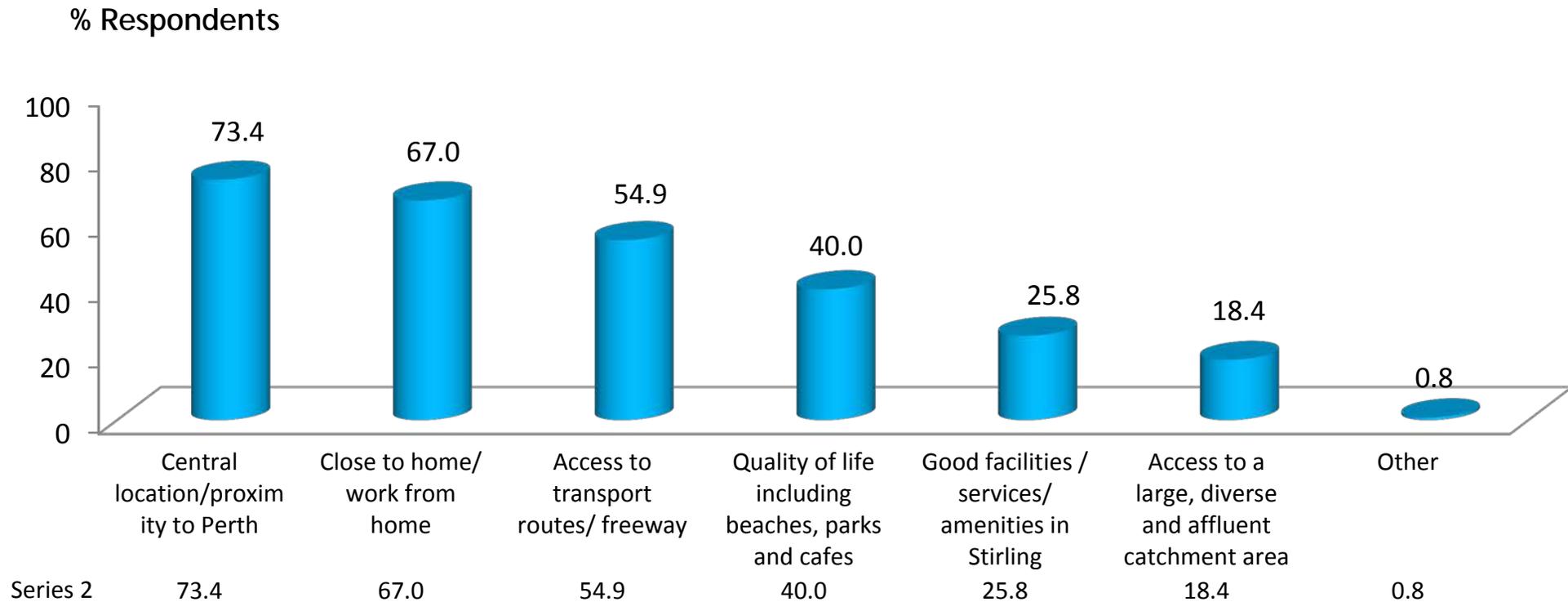
Note: Small business is defined as 1-19 employees, micro businesses 4 employees or less.

The detailed report

Source: Public art – Lina, City of Stirling Offices



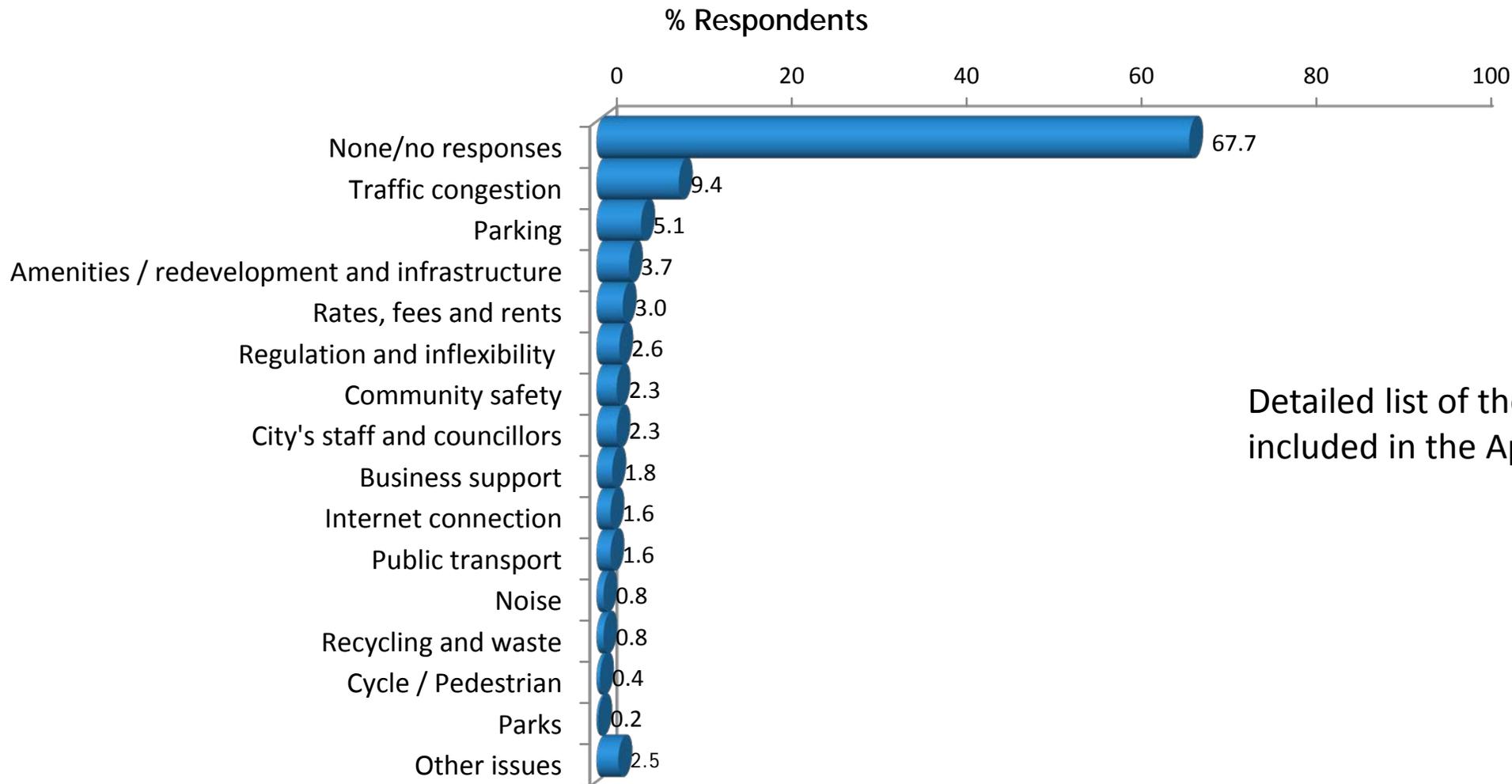
Business growth and the future



Q.14 What are the best aspects of being located in the City of Stirling? n=488

Advantages of doing businesses in Stirling are similar in 2018 to those identified in 2016; however, in 2018 Respondents were provided with a list of advantages to select from (based on the 2016 results) which makes the 2018 results more accurate.

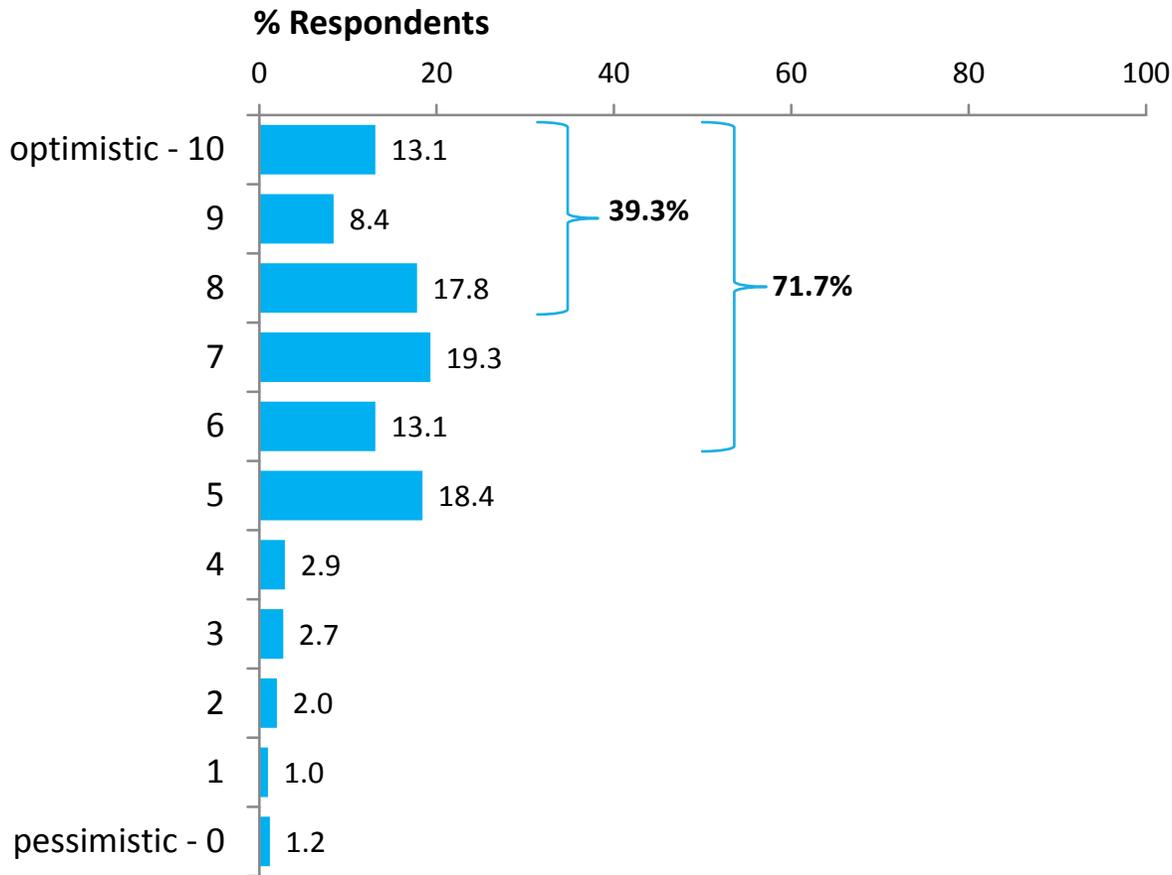
Doing business in the City – the most detrimental aspects ²¹



Detailed list of the issues is included in the Appendix.

Q.15 What are the problems you encounter being located in the City of Stirling? n=488

Future prospects of the business in the region



The level of optimism amongst business was similar in 2018 to that in 2016, although there are small increases in the percentage of businesses expressing optimism.

Optimism did vary by business type.

The most optimistic (8-10/10) were:

- Education and training – 61.9%
- Health care and social assistance – 60.0%

Overall optimism (6-10/10) was 71.7%, again health care had the highest level of overall optimism at 90.0%.

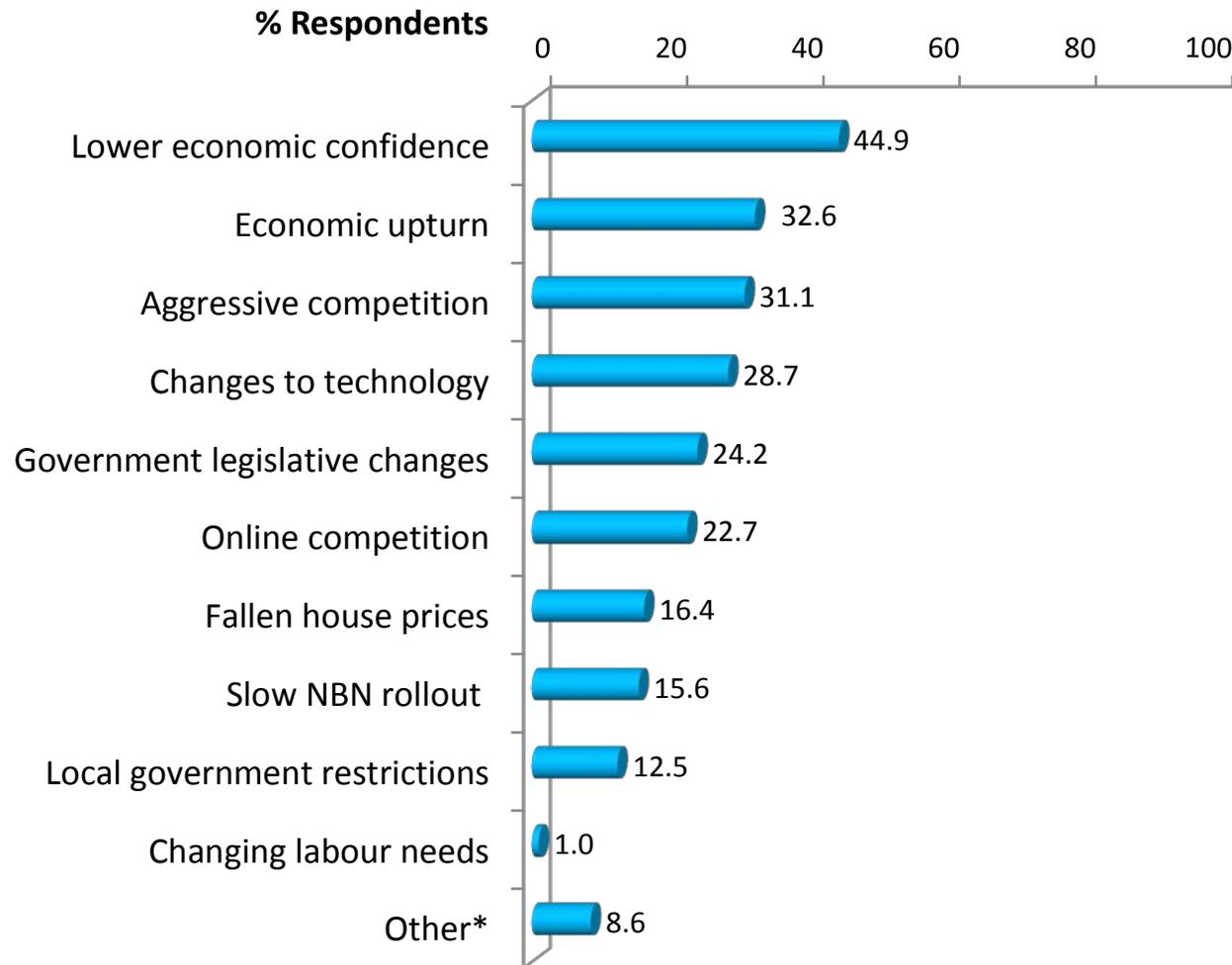
The mining industry had similar levels of optimism but the sample of mining and oil and gas companies is small.

The least optimistic (0-5/10) was the retail industry – 52.9% of retailers rated their optimism as 0-5/10, twice as many were pessimistic compared to businesses generally in the City of Stirling.

Small businesses showed similar levels of optimism to large businesses.

Q.8 Thinking about the future of your business in this region, how do you feel about the future prospects for your business? n=488

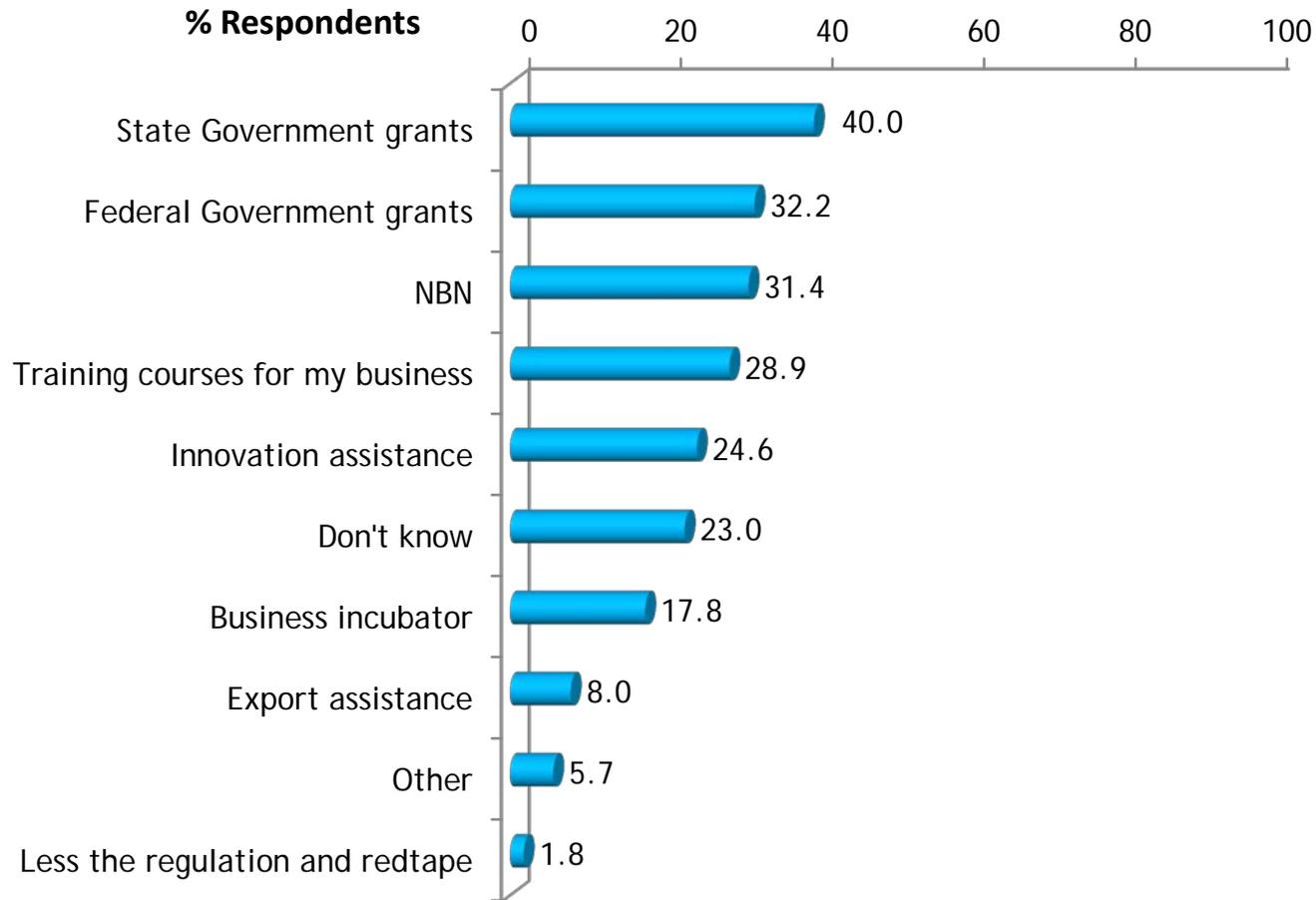
The changes looming



Q.9 What changes are looming in your industry that might impact upon your business? n=488

Businesses reported a fairly mixed outlook in relation to changes that might impact upon their business. Just under half of the business commented on lower economic confidence and one in three commented on the economic upturn. The businesses most likely to comment on the economic upturn impacting their business were mining companies and the larger companies with 20 plus employees.

Small businesses were more likely to comment on the lower economic confidence in 2018, however it is pleasing to see that almost 1 in 3 businesses mentioned an economic up turn as a looming change. In 2016 this question was an unprompted question where the economic downturn dominated responses on the business community, in 2018 the question was tightened up and a list of options provided to respondents. The relative importance of the issues raised has remained the same with only the addition of the economic upturn which is consistent with the current economic climate.



In comparison to 2016, the NBN is significantly less important and State and Federal Government grants have both increased significantly in importance.

The business incubator was particularly attractive to micro business with 1-4 employees.

Those seeking export assistance was made up of:

- Professional, scientific and technical services -17.5%
- Retail – 15.0%
- Information, media and telecommunications – 7.5%
- Rental, hiring and retail services – 7.5%
- Wholesale – 7.5%

The remaining were mentioned by 2 respondents in: Manufacturing, Agriculture, Education and Training, Mining and Financial and Insurance Services.

Q.19 What sorts of projects do you feel would improve local businesses and conditions? n=488

Trading locally

Sourcing services locally

About two-thirds of businesses in 2018 sourced goods and services from other businesses in the City of Stirling. This compares to just over half of businesses in 2016 as seen in the graph opposite.

The larger the organisation was, the more likely that they were to say that they sourced goods and services within the City.

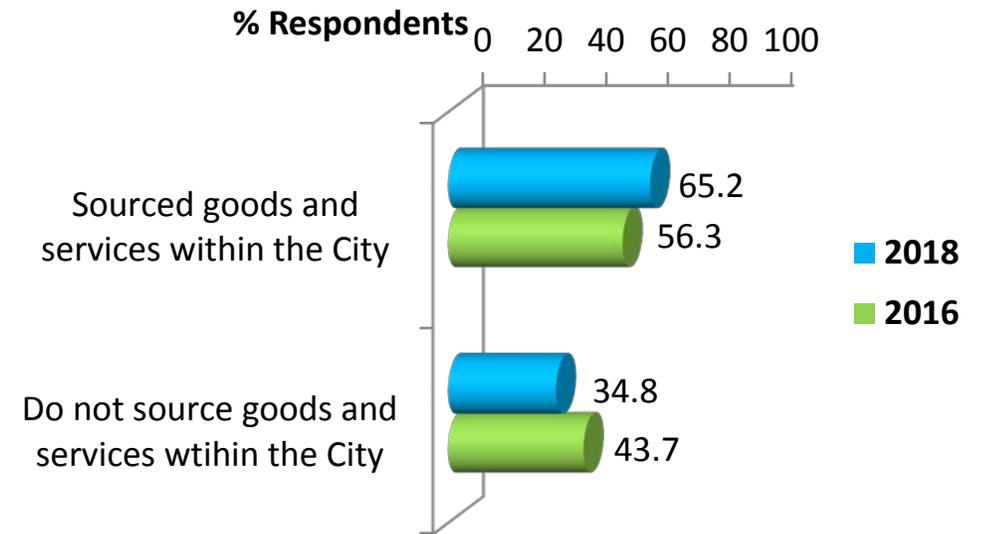
Organisation sourcing locally:

- ▶ 1 to 4 employees = 59.1% sourcing locally
- ▶ 5 to 19 employees = 76.4% sourced locally
- ▶ 20 plus employees = 95.5% sourced locally

Those organisations significantly more likely to source goods and services locally were:

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Accommodation and Food

Those businesses least likely to source goods and services locally were not drawn from any particular segments.



Q.4 Does your business source goods and services from other local businesses? n=488

Problems sourcing goods and services within the City

In all 7.7% of businesses source goods and services locally for use in their business, but have problems sourcing them and a further 3.3% of businesses do not source some goods or services in the City as they feel they are not available in the City. Hence a total of 11.0% of businesses nominated products that they found difficulty accessing.

The types of goods and services which organisations identified as problematic were diverse; with the most common being specialist food products (natural products, organic products, Middle Eastern products) which was mentioned by four companies.

- Automotive repair parts
- Beauty products consumables
- Bottles
- Building hardware
- Computer hardware
- Engineering products
- Equipment hire
- Glass finish products
- Health equipment
- Medical items

- Office furniture
- Office services (printing, laminating, etc)
- Photographic products
- Qualified labour
- Reliable trades people
- Rigging supplies
- Scientific products
- Specialist creative and promotional services
- Specialist food products (natural products, organic products, Middle Eastern products)

Q.7 What sorts of goods and services do you have a problem sourcing? N=488, with problems sourcing goods locally n=51

Staff and training needs



The key areas of interest for training were:

- Marketing my business
- Marketing strategy
- Business planning
- Business financials

The main other options mentioned were:

Risk management training, project management training, networking and business development.

Q.13 What type of training and skills development would be useful to your business and staff? n=488

Interest in training and skills development as a % of each type of business:

Professional scientific and technical services businesses:

- ▶ 37% are interested in marketing their business
- ▶ 31% are interested in Marketing Strategy and Planning
- ▶ 9% are interested in export

Construction companies

- ▶ 45% are interested in marketing their business
- ▶ 35% are interested in Business Planning training

Retail businesses:

- ▶ 58% are interested in marketing their business
- ▶ 40% are interested in Marketing Strategy
- ▶ 20% are interested in export training

Financial services:

- ▶ 51% are interested in training to market their own business
- ▶ 35% are interested in Marketing Strategy

Health services:

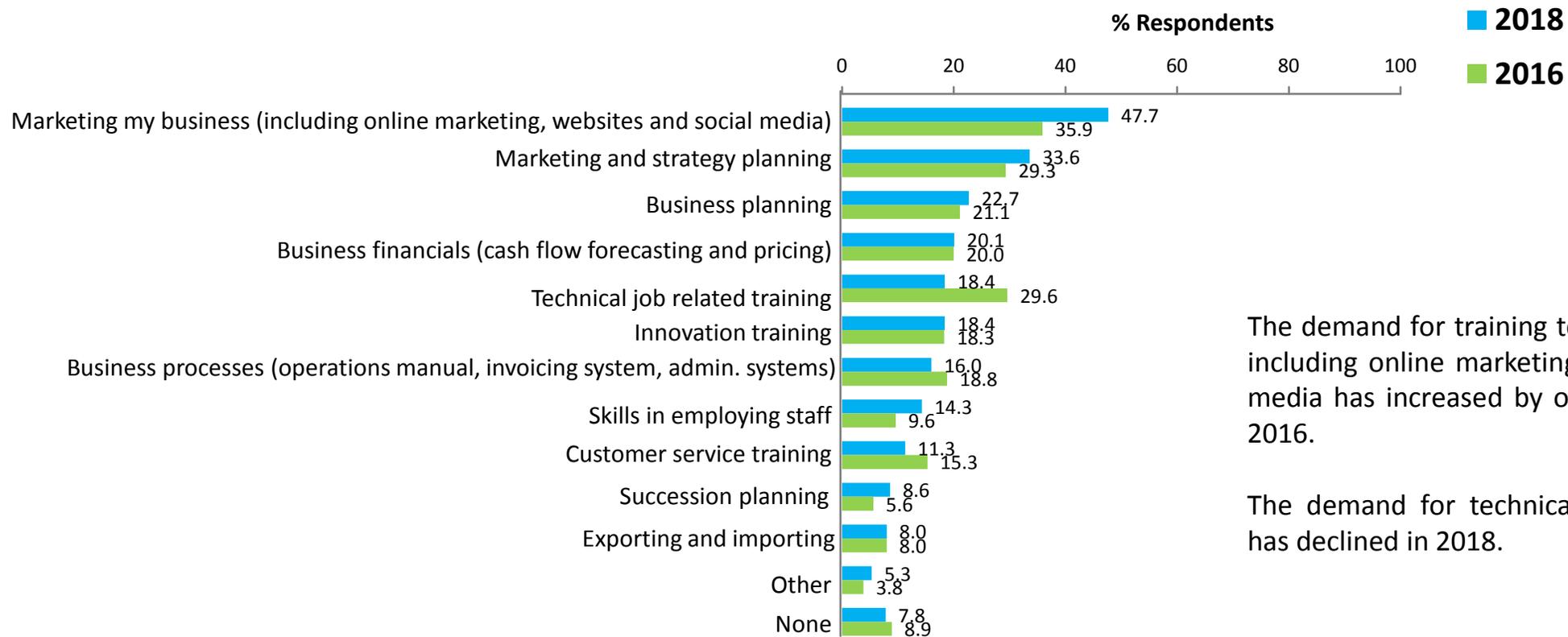
- ▶ 61% are interested in training to market their business
- ▶ 39% are interested in Marketing Strategy

Rental Hiring and real estate

- ▶ 77% are interested in training to market their business
- ▶ 47% are interested in Marketing Strategy

Information technology

- ▶ 66% are interested in training to market their business
- ▶ 49% are interested in Marketing Strategy



The demand for training to market the business including online marketing, websites and social media has increased by over 30% compared to 2016.

The demand for technical job related training has declined in 2018.

Q.13 What type of training and skills development would be useful to your business and staff? n=488

As noted on slides 36 & 39 the lack of awareness of State and Federal Government support and training was equally evident across all of these types of training. Though of the businesses seeking training on marketing their business only 15% were aware of the ASBAS.

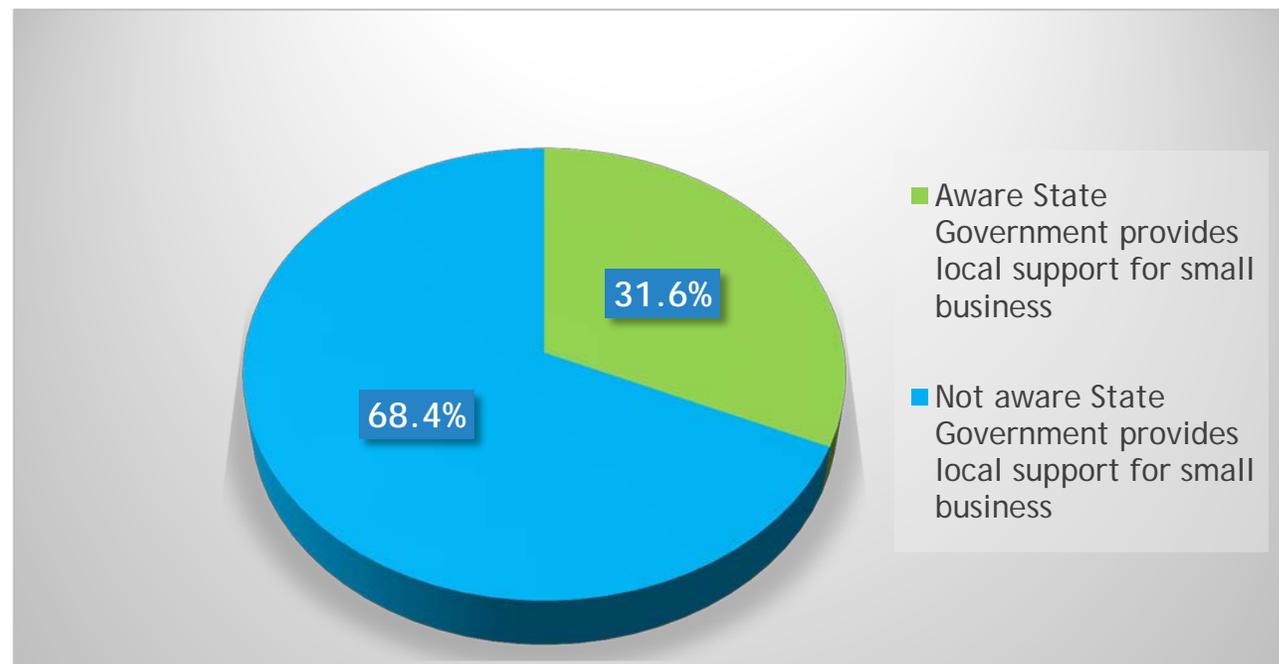
Business facilitation and support

Awareness of business facilitation and support

One in three businesses surveyed were aware that State Government provided local support for small business; this awareness has fallen from one in two businesses (51.4%) in 2016, showing a clear decline in awareness of SBDC services. Awareness that State Government provides local support for small business increased with the size of business as in 2016. In 2018 amongst micro businesses awareness was less than the one in three business increasing to almost 60% amongst medium to large size businesses. See Table below.

Awareness that State Government provides local support for small business

	Aware	Not Aware	Total
1 - 4 employees	30.6%	69.4%	100.0%
5 - 9 employees	40.4%	59.6%	100.0%
10 - 19 employees	35.2%	64.8%	100.0%
20 plus employees	59.1%	49.9%	100.0%



Q.16A Did you know that the State Government provides local support for small business?
n=488

Businesses with the highest level of awareness were:

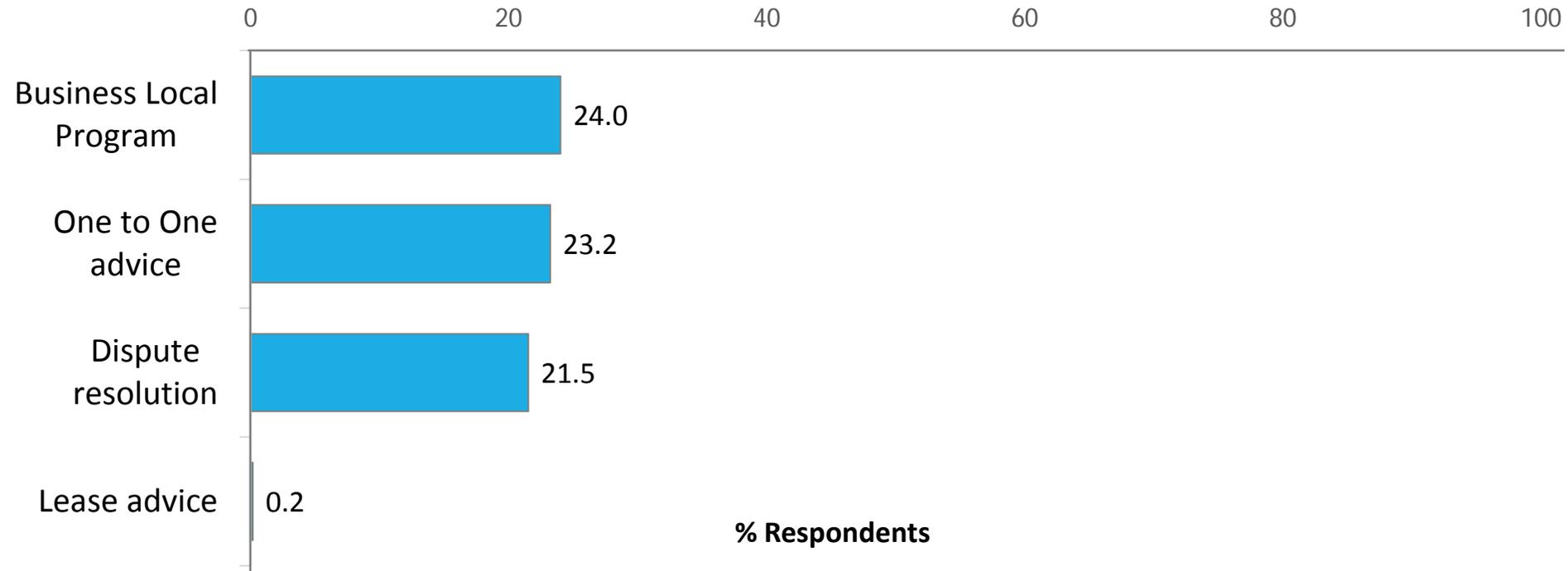
- ▶ Manufacturing
- ▶ Rental, hiring and real estate services
- ▶ Training and education

Awareness appears to be lower, but not significantly lower amongst:

- ▶ Accommodation and food services
- ▶ Transport, postal and warehousing
- ▶ Arts and recreation purposes
- ▶ Retail trade

Amongst the construction industry awareness that State Government provides local support for business is only 10%.

Awareness of types of State Government support



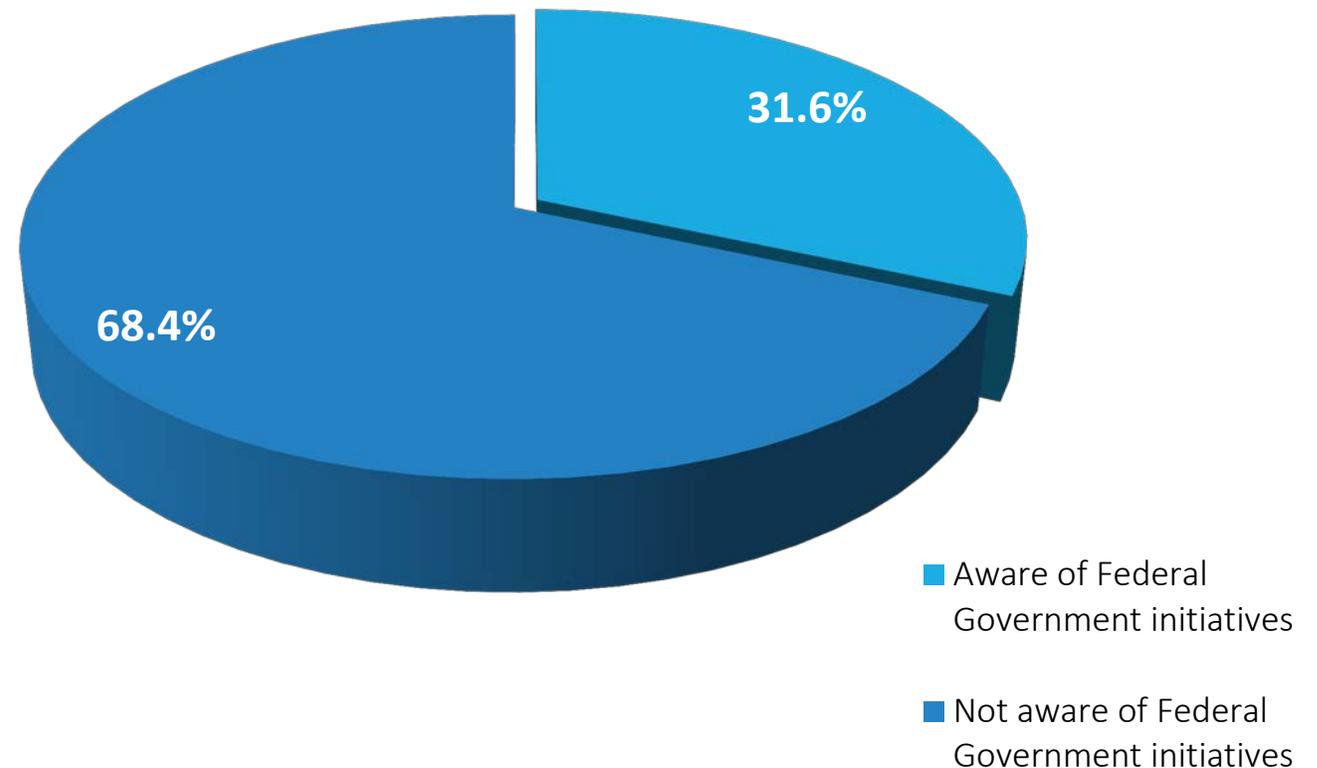
Q.16B What type of advice does it provide? n=488 – Results based on the whole sample

Awareness of the programme were similar amongst all sections of the business community.

Awareness of Federal Government initiatives for business 36

Awareness of Federal Government initiatives for business is similar to awareness of the State Government initiatives at 31.6%. Also, awareness of initiatives increase with business size from 30.6% amongst micro business (1-4 employees); to 59.1% amongst medium to large businesses (20 plus employees).

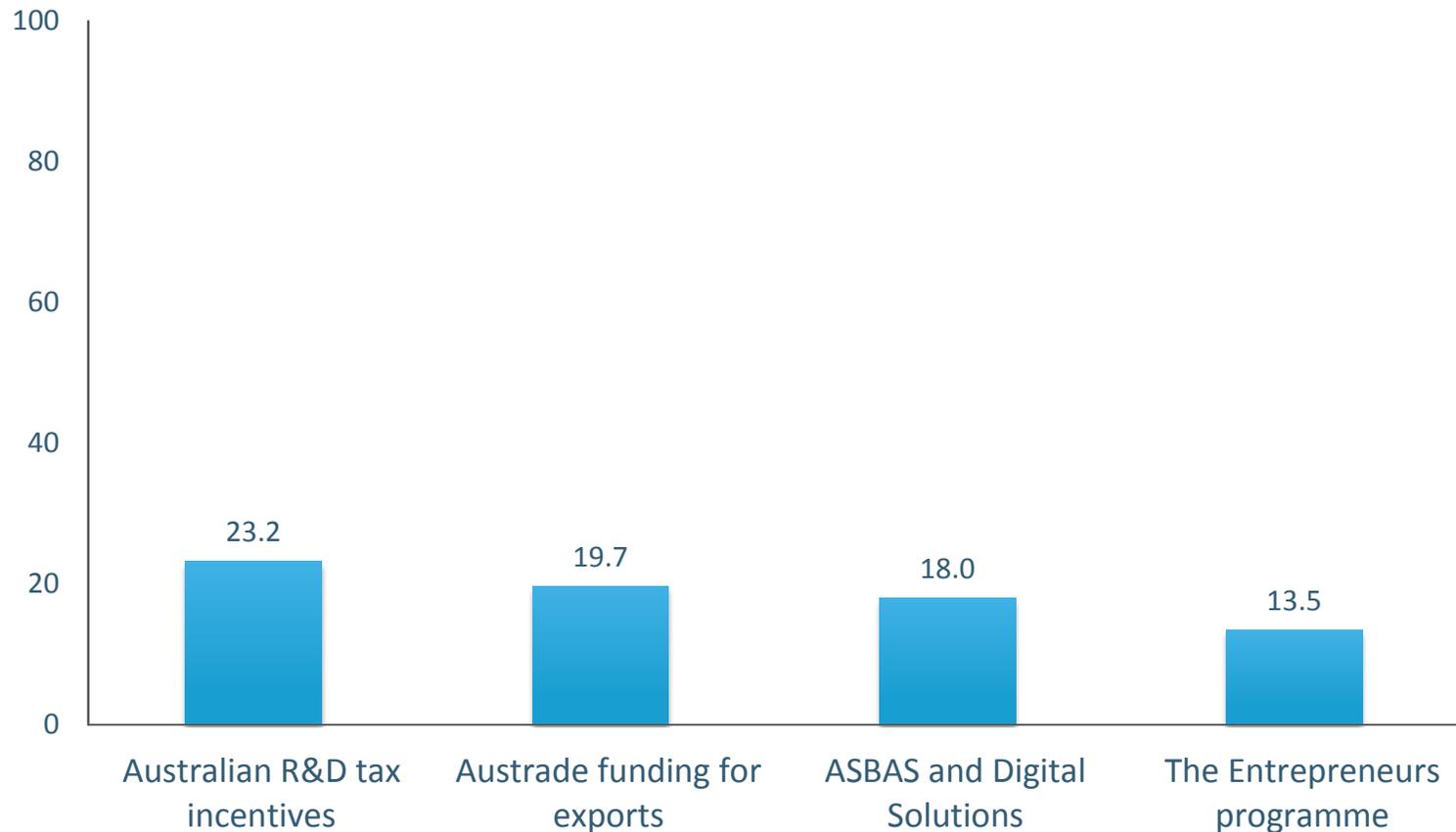
Awareness was highest amongst mining companies, manufacturing companies, rental and real estate services and education and training. Awareness was lowest amongst construction companies, and accommodation and food service companies.



Q.17 Did you know that the Federal Government offers a number of initiatives to businesses? n=488

Awareness of Federal Government programs

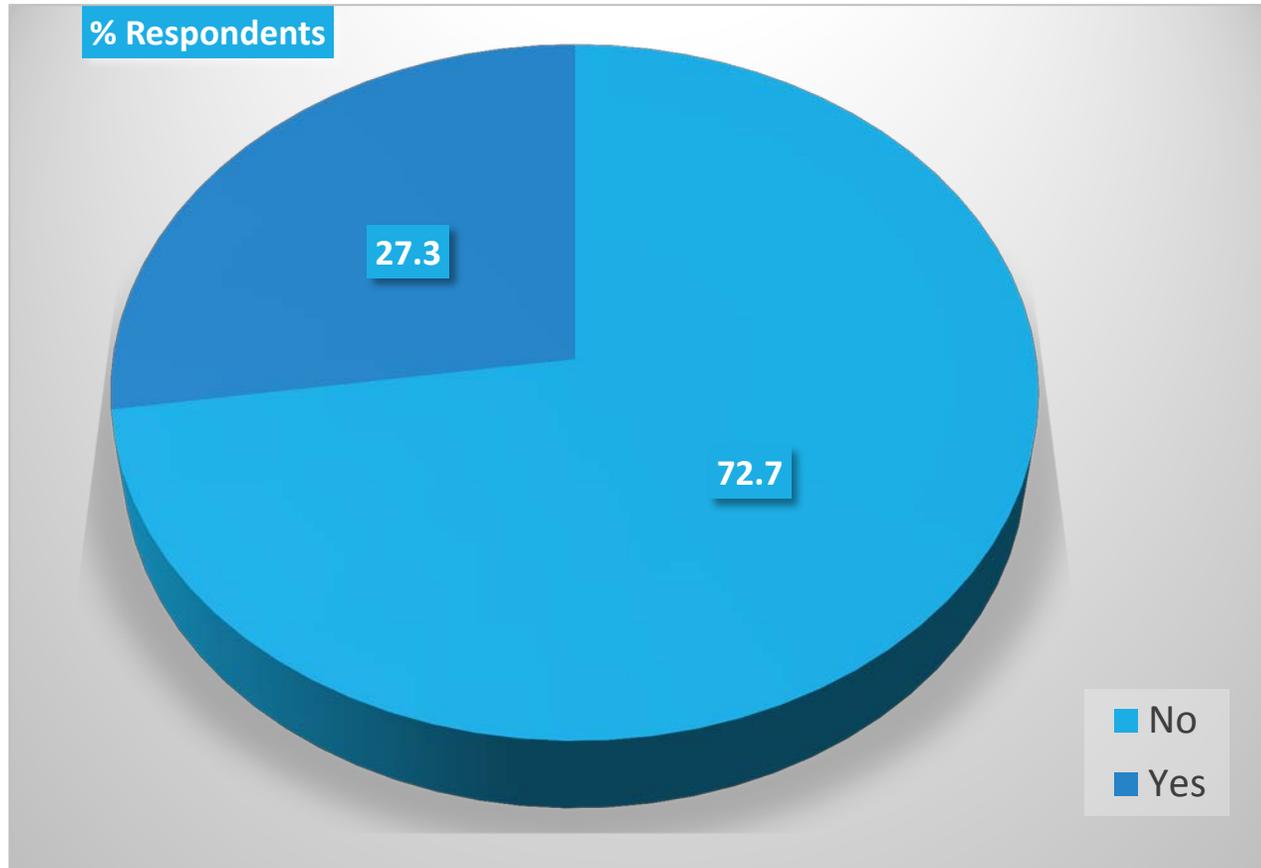
% Respondents



Q.18 Which of these programs are you aware of? n=488 – the Chart is based on all businesses.

Amongst those people who knew about Federal Government programs, the Australian R&D tax incentive program was the most well-known and had high levels of awareness amongst medium and large size companies with around 60% of medium to large size companies being aware of this program.

Awareness of the Australian Small Business Advisory Services (ASBAS) which provides training and digital services for small business, awareness of Austrade funding for exports and awareness of the Entrepreneurs program which offers a range of programs to improve business competitiveness and productivity was similar amongst all sections of the business community.

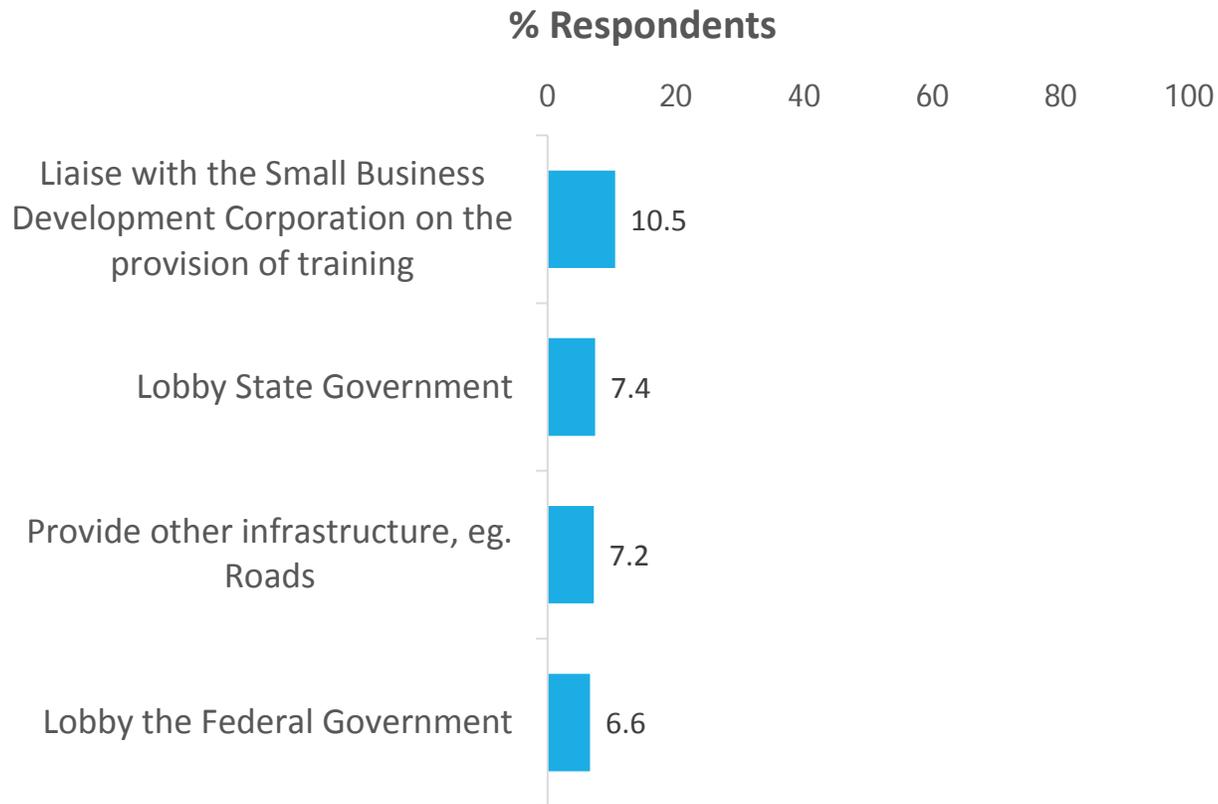


In all those businesses most likely to identify themselves as in need of help were drawn from all sizes of businesses and all sectors. The exceptions was transport, postal and warehousing where none of the businesses identified themselves as needing any assistance from the City of Stirling.

The proportion of businesses identifying themselves as in need of help in 2018 was similar to the proportion identified in 2016.

Q.22 Is there anything that you can think of that the City of Stirling can do to assist your business to grow? n=488

Suggestions to help business grow



Q.23 Which of the following or other things can the City do to assist your business to grow? n=488

Note: No other suggestions with strong support were made and the 2018 results are similar to the 2016 results. Other suggestions made by 2% or less of business respondents are shown in the list opposite.

- Reduce red tape, particularly in the areas of Building and Planning approvals (9 people)
- Connect local businesses with each other through networking (4 people)
- Have a preferential policy to use local businesses (5 people)
- Reduce the commercial rubbish charges and allow recycling/recycling on demand (3 people)
- Develop a local business directory (2 people)
- Enforce parking regulations to stop congestion and people using our parking (2 people)
- Be more mindful of initiative particularly in development applications (2 people)
- Do not introduce parking fees (2 people)
- Assist businesses to market in their catchment area (2 people) For further suggestions see Appendix

Awareness of the City's support

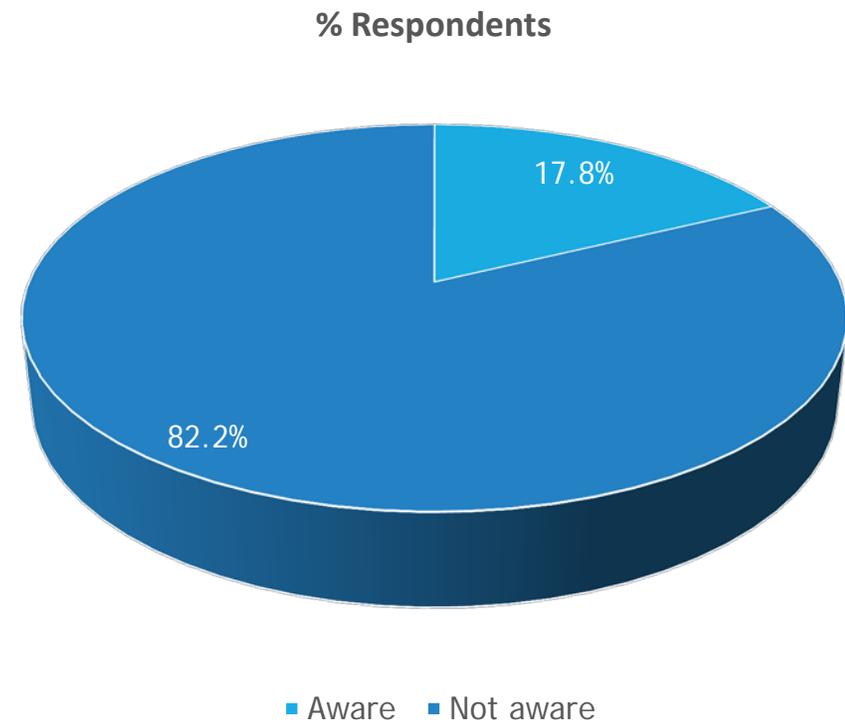
Awareness of the Stirling Business incubator in Balcatta is 17.8% which is statistically similar to the 15.0% level of awareness in 2016.

Awareness was similar across all business types and sizes, except in:

- Information, media and telecommunications 0% awareness
- Mining 0% awareness
- Accommodation and food 5.3% awareness

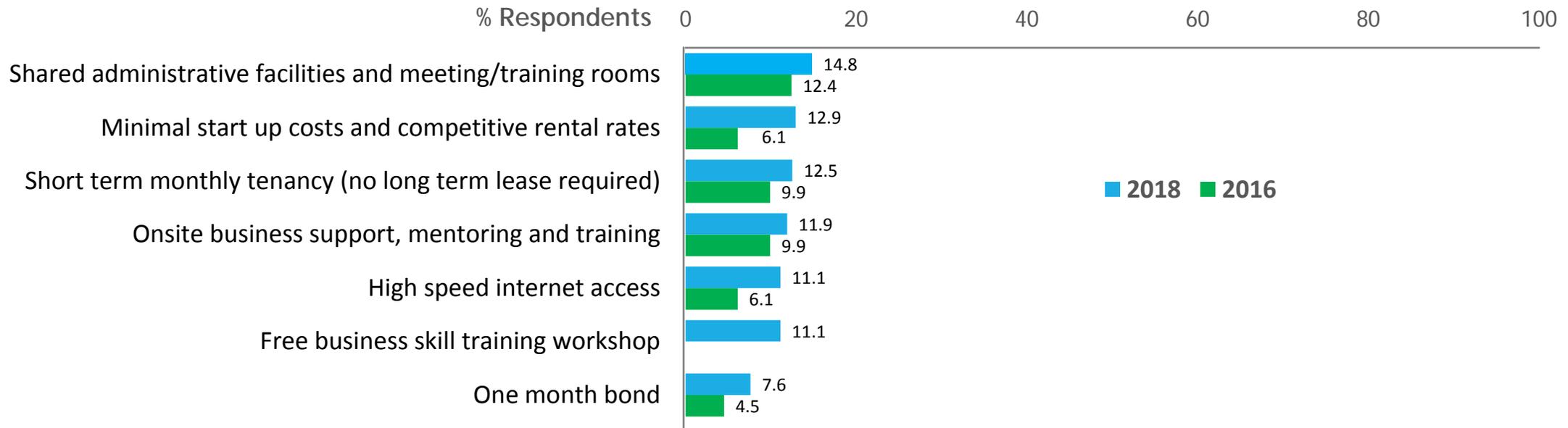
And appears higher in:

- Retail 29.4% awareness
- Healthcare 26.7% awareness
- Transport, postal and warehousing 26.3% awareness



Q.20 Are you aware of the Stirling Business Incubator in Balcatta? n=488

Awareness of what the Stirling Business Incubator offers



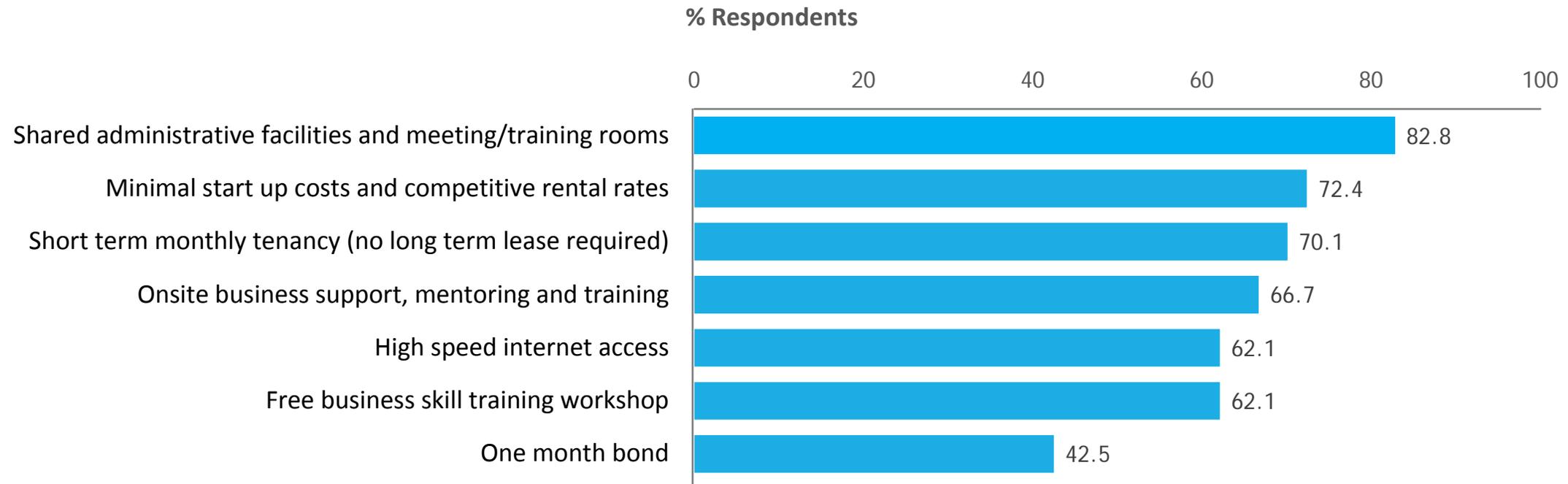
Q.21. What services does the Small Business Incubator offer? N=488

This chart is based on all respondents, to provide prospective about the level of awareness of the Stirling Business Incubator services across all businesses.

In comparison to 2016, awareness of the following services have increased significantly:

- Minimal start up costs and competitive rental rates
- High speed internet access

Awareness of what the Stirling Business Incubator offers 43

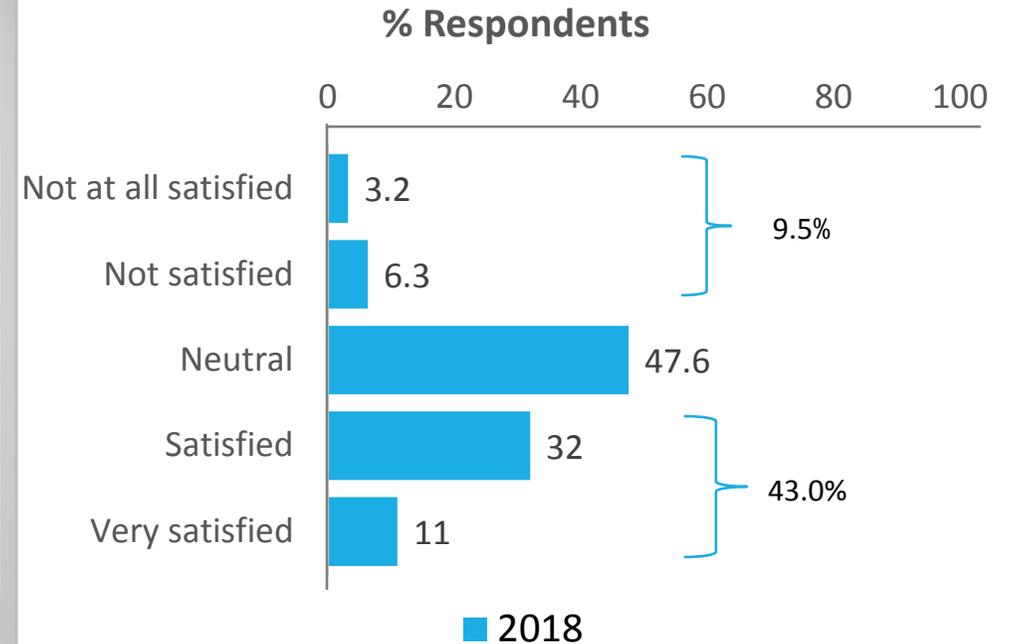
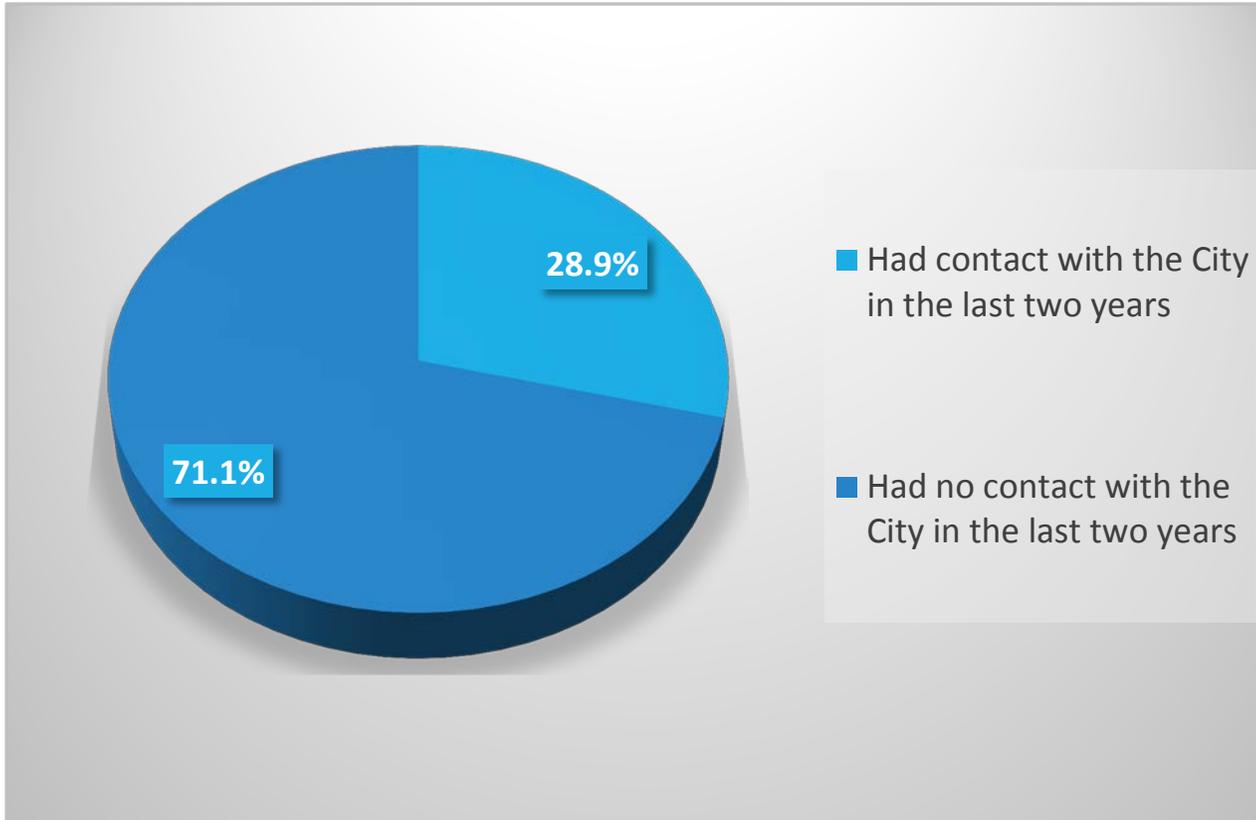


Q.21. What services does the Small Business Incubator offer? N=488

This chart shows the level of awareness of services amongst respondents aware of the Stirling Business Incubator.

Amongst those who had heard of the Stirling Business Incubator awareness of services was high for the physical facilities available (82.8%), but lower for the on site business support, workshops and bond. Indicating that the physical attributes of the Stirling Business Incubator were understood by those aware of it but not the additional support services provided.

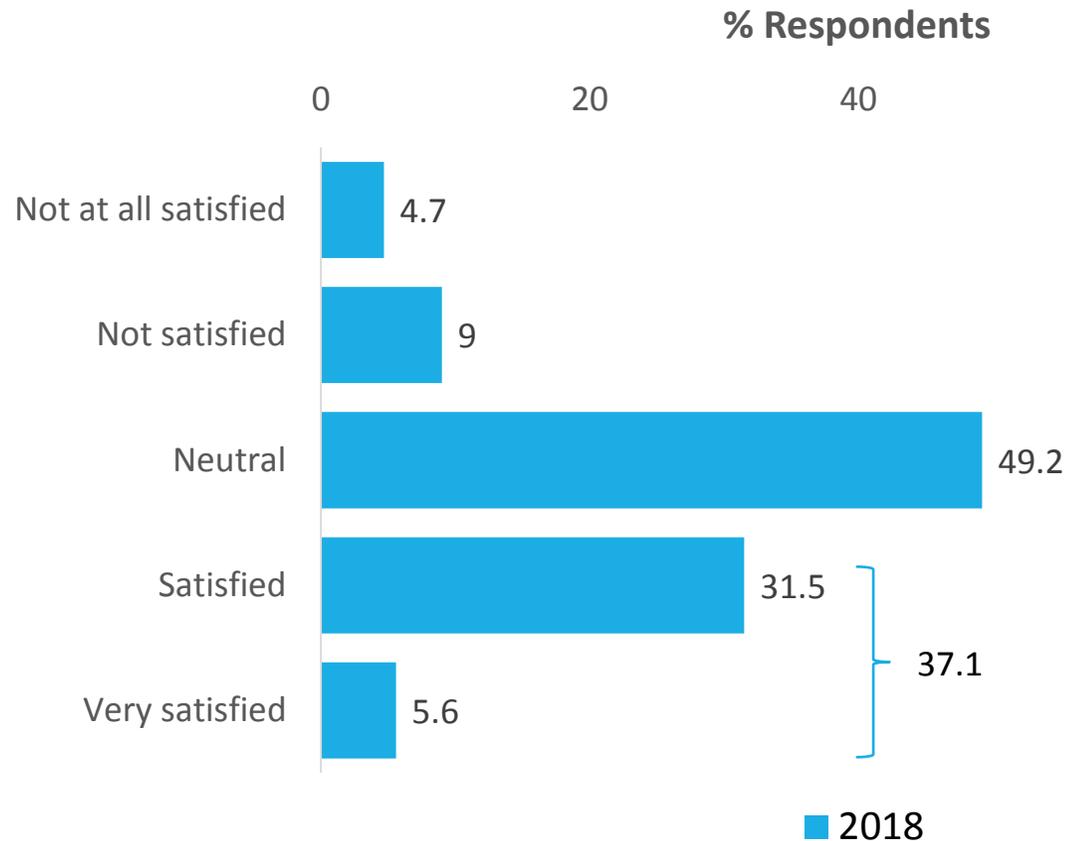
Satisfaction with contact with the City of Stirling



Just over 1 in 4 businesses had had contact with the City of Stirling in the last 2 years and of these, 43.0% were satisfied with their contact and 9.5% were not satisfied. These people were drawn from no particular sectors and the level of satisfaction with the City was similar across all business types and sizes.

Q.10 How satisfied are you with your contacts with the City of Stirling as a business owner/manager? n=488

Satisfaction with the City's support for Small Businesses



Satisfaction with the City's support for small business is fairly low at 37.1%, almost half of the small businesses surveyed were neutral about the City's support. These results mirrored business satisfaction with their contact with the City of Stirling.

Those people who were ambivalent about the service they received when they had contact with the City were also ambivalent about the City's support for small business. The same is true of those who were satisfied and dissatisfied.

The satisfaction with the City's support for small business is similar across businesses of all types and sizes.

The question was not measured in 2016.

Q.12 How satisfied are you with the City of Stirling's support for small business? n=321

Note: This question was only asked of small businesses with under 20 employees.

Suggestions for attracting additional visitors to the City

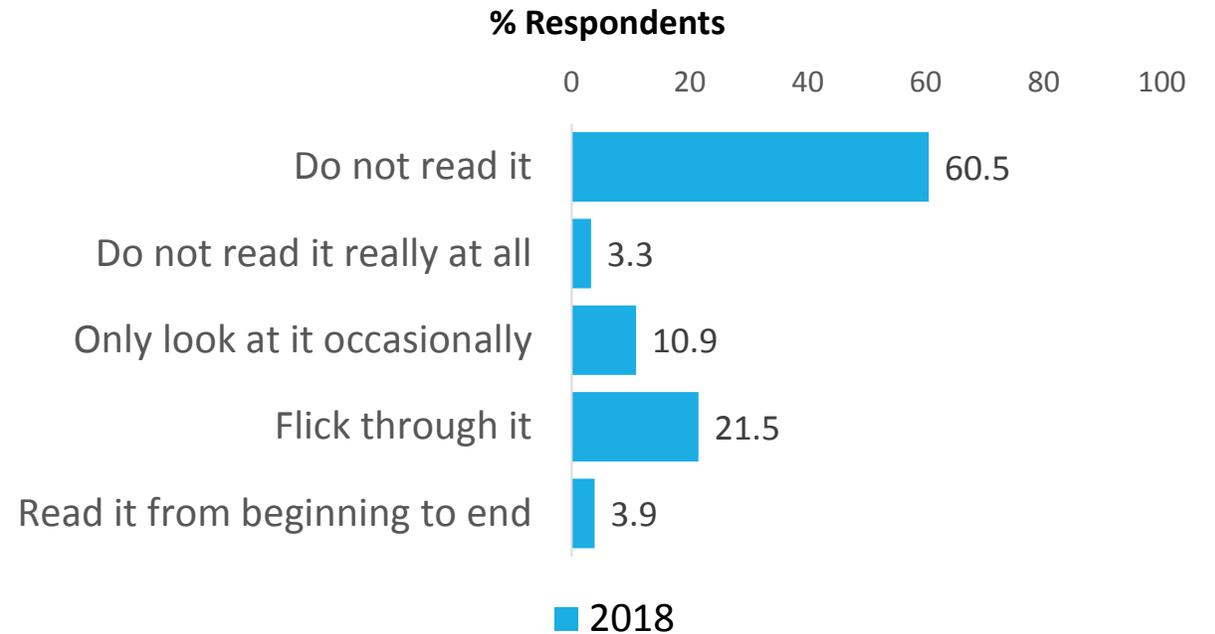
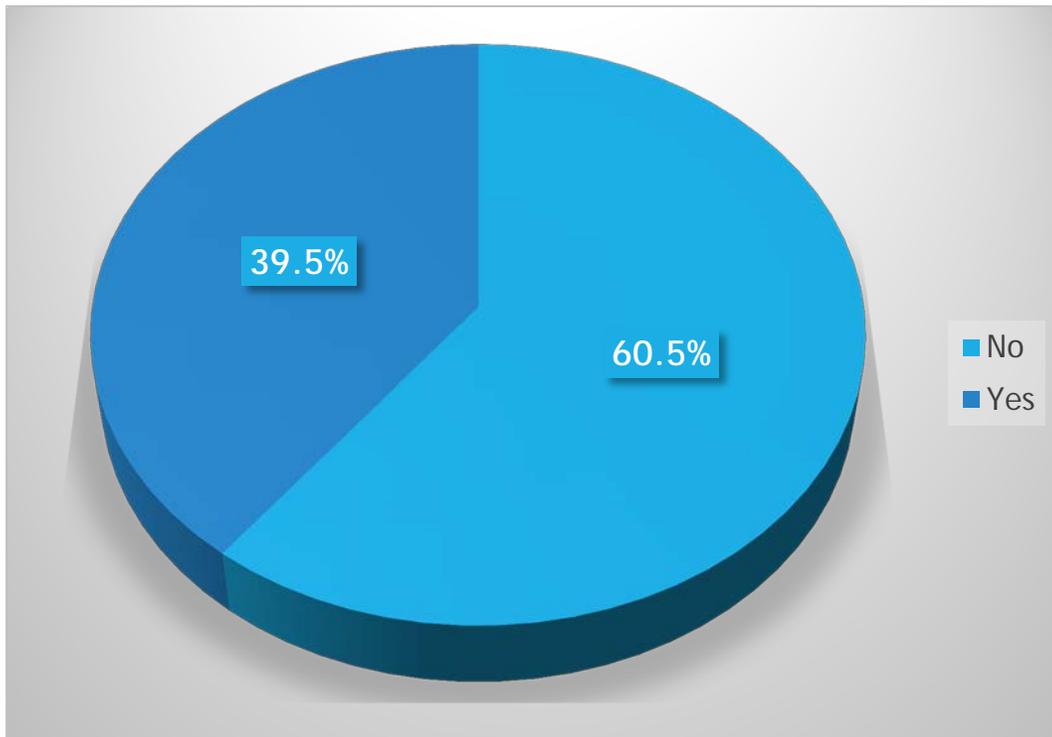
In all 5.5% of businesses responding to the survey identified themselves as involved in the tourist industry. These were all small businesses involved in:

- Accommodation and food services
- Arts and recreation services
- Professional, scientific and technical services

The suggestions from these companies for the City to attract additional visitors included:

- Night markets
- Attracting large events like the National Surf Life Saving Championships, cultural activities, etc.
- Providing more parking in Scarborough for people wishing to access the beach and foreshore
- Encourage more live music events, hiring professional local musicians and more live music in the restaurants
- Create marketing videos to promote the City and its businesses
- Create precincts, turning Mt. Hawthorn (Mt Hawthorn is not in Stirling) into Little Italy and marketing it, was an example of the type of approach the City could embrace.
- Participate in trade shows overseas to invite travellers to visit Scarborough Beach
- A wine museum or a children's museum
- Increase the profile of the City of Stirling
- Increased transport options

The Business eNewsletter

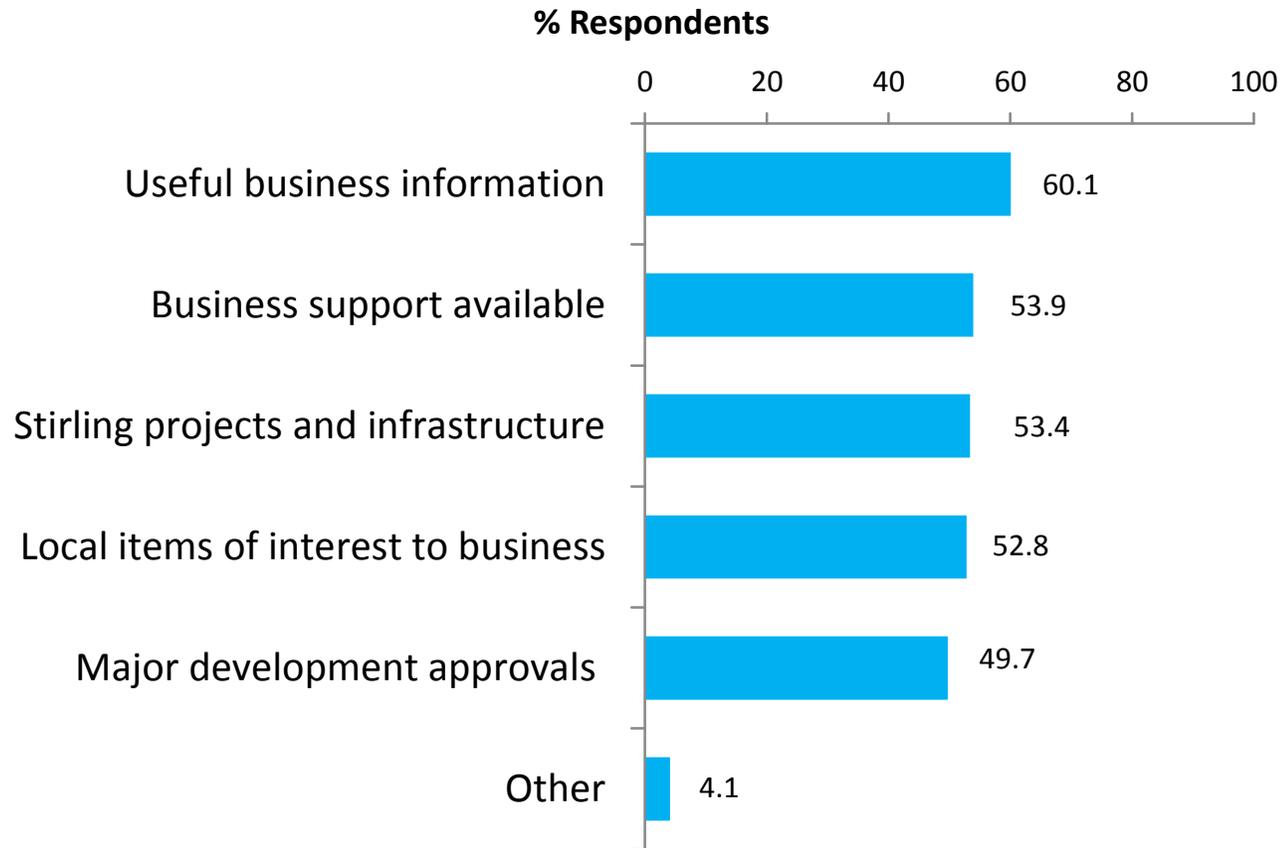


Q.27 Do you receive the business the e-Newsletter from the City? n=488

Q.28 Do you read each issue? n=488 (Based on the whole sample)

Survey respondents reported that the City's eNewsletter was received by 39.5% of the businesses participating in the survey this is an increase from 30.6% in 2016. Of those who receive the newsletter just over half of the businesses 'flick through' the eNewsletter when they receive it and a further one in four look at the eNewsletter occasionally. Receivership of the eNewsletter was similar by business size and type and most businesses receiving the eNewsletter opened the eNewsletter even if only occasionally.

Items of interest in the City's business eNewsletter



In comparison to 2016, this year businesses responding to the survey expressed more interest in articles on:

- Useful business related information
- Business support available, e.g. training and grants

Suggestions for other items of interest include:

- Local businesses featured and case studies, e.g. winners of the Stirling Business Association Awards
- Training courses available
- Upcoming projects and tender advice
- Advice pieces from micro/small business owners
- Advertising of deals offered by local business