Moray Council Corporate Recovery Plan Consultation

Findings from survey responses by Moray residents

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Carl Bennett
Research & Information Officer
Strategy and Performance

CONTENTS

Moray Council Corporate Recovery Plan – Public Consultation

AIM

Moray Council has consulted the people of Moray on the proposed recovery plan from the Covid-19 lock-down. The survey was made widely available during the period 24 August to 28 September 2020 through various online platforms. This allowed local residents, volunteers and businesses to share their experiences and concerns and provide their views on the proposals. The aim of the consultation was to identify and prioritise the key issues that local people believe need to be addressed in recovery here in Moray.

In particular, the survey had the following aims:

- To enable Moray Council to understand the needs of our local communities better,
- To ensure residents have influence on the policy and priorities adopted, and
- To build trust and enable local people to be involved.

The Corporate Management Team will review the feedback and use the information to:

- Prioritise the issues to address first, and
- Identify solutions and opportunities for community action and co-design.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Before looking at the survey responses in more detail we must first acknowledge the impact of Covid-19 on some families in Moray, particularly to the six people who responded who have experienced bereavement due to the virus. Please accept our condolences for your loss and our gratitude for completing the survey to allow us to take your views and experiences into account.

There was an excellent response from local residents with 1,480 completed surveys submitted from households across the whole of Moray. Although not all respondents provided post-codes, we were able to determine that at least one response was submitted from every data zone in Moray. Around 75% of respondents were female. Similarly, 75% of respondents were aged between 35 to 64 years old, although responses were received from all age categories. The survey respondents were not fully representative of the demographics of the Moray population with males, the older and younger members of the population being under-represented.

At the time of the survey relatively few Moray households had been affected by Covid-19 with 95.5% of respondents stating that no-one in their household had caught the virus. As

an aside, Moray has the 4th lowest rate of Covid-19 deaths for Scottish Local Authorities[1], and there have been 258 confirmed cases since 21 March 2020[2].

The responses to the survey suggest that for many residents the impact of the lockdown on their employment status was relatively minor, with 89% stating they were in work during the lockdown or retired. However, some respondents noted the isolation and loneliness associated with long-term homeworking, and few opportunities for meeting colleagues. In addition, there is likely to be greater demand for financial support as the data, when extrapolated to reflect the whole population, suggest that in the region of 500 residents could have lost their jobs or been furloughed across Moray during the lockdown.

For those who had been made redundant almost two-thirds suggested they would look for work within Moray, and 40% would consider retraining. Almost half were not in a position to retire and would be looking for new employment opportunities. The most popular choice for retraining was Computer/Digital and Technology, which may cause difficulties for job-seekers wishing to remain in Moray as Information and Communication only accounts for slightly more than 1% of the Moray job-market. Another popular choice for retraining was in the Tourism and Hospitality, and the Food and Drink sectors, which are significant employers in Moray. However, to further compound the difficulties of potential job-seekers nationally both these sectors are facing higher levels of furlough.

Overall residents appeared to be reasonably happy with the changes to the method for contacting the Council, library services and Social Care services that Moray Council introduced to reduce the spread of Covid-19. However, while most were happy there were some individuals who found these changes caused a major impact. The changes that generated most comments were the 3-weekly change to domestic waste collection and having to book an appointment for a slot at recycling centres. Families with younger children or family-members with additional support needs, and larger households in particular struggled with the 3-weekly collection schedule. The reasons for the dissatisfaction with the need to book appointments at recycling centres were unclear. Both measures also had their supporters, albeit relatively few.

Relatively few people who responded to the survey requested support during the lockdown (just under 1 in 10), and most of them received the support they needed. However, 6 respondents did not receive the support that they had requested. If this figure is extrapolated across Moray's population, there could be potentially by 300-400 residents

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[1] National Records of Scotland, weekly data published 18 November 2020:
https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths/deaths-involving-coronavirus-covid-19-in-scotland
[2] Public Health Scotland, Covid-19 in Scotland, Daily Update 18 November 2020:
https://public.tableau.com/profile/phs.covid.19#!/vizhome/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview

with unmet needs. Additionally, there are bound to be residents who have not been able to contact anyone and whose needs are unknown.

Most residents were able to obtain guidance on the Covid-19 from TV and radio broadcasts, government and Moray Council websites and social media. Concerns were raised about the timeliness of information and being able to find information easily, particularly on official websites. There were also concerns about the accuracy of information and the prevalence of misinformation on social media.

Residents have mixed feelings about the future after the pandemic is over, with concerns expressed over health and wellbeing and future employment prospects. On balance more people were optimistic than not, but there was a significant minority who were worried.

An underlying theme emerged about the difficulties of providing universal services. There were a small number of people who were not able to access information or services digitally, who did not have access to the support they needed or remained isolated from family and friends for extended periods. There were also residents who had disabilities, special needs or who were carers, whose particular needs were not catered for.
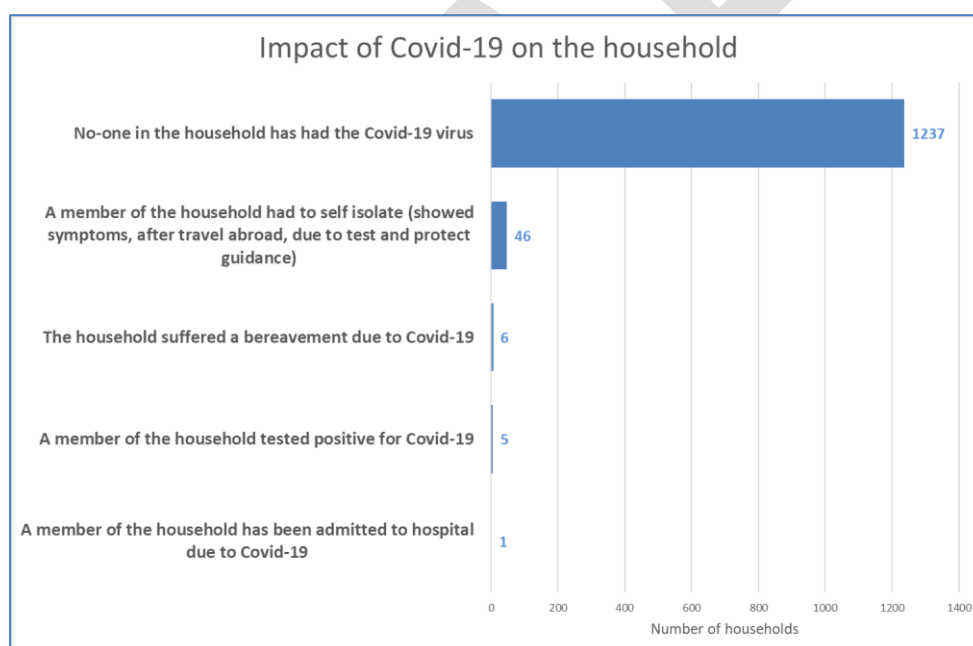
SECTION 1 – SURVEY RESPONSES

1.1   SURVEY RESPONSES – IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HOUSEHOLDS

Moray has had a relatively low rate of confirmed Covid-19 cases compared to the rest of Scotland, particularly the urban local authorities, and has recorded the 4th lowest rate of deaths per 100,000 population at 22.96[3], just under one-quarter of the National rate of 93.99.

Consequently, it is not surprising that the largest proportion of respondents indicated that no-one in the household had caught the virus (95.5%). Fewer than 4% of households had someone who had self-isolated for any reason and just 5 (0.4%) people had tested positive with one requiring hospitalisation. Sadly, 6 households had suffered bereavements resulting from Covid-19; 2 were for people living in the household and 4 for relatives of the household living elsewhere (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Impact of Covid-19 on Moray households

### 1.2   SURVEY RESPONSES – EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Three-quarters of respondents and their partners were employed including part-time, full-time, self-employed, or those on maternity leave (Figure 2). Retirees accounted for 14% of the sample, while long-term unemployed, disabled, and full-time carers accounted for a further 3%.

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[3] Data published by National Records of Scotland - 7th September 2020.

Figure 2: Employment status of respondents and partners during lock-down
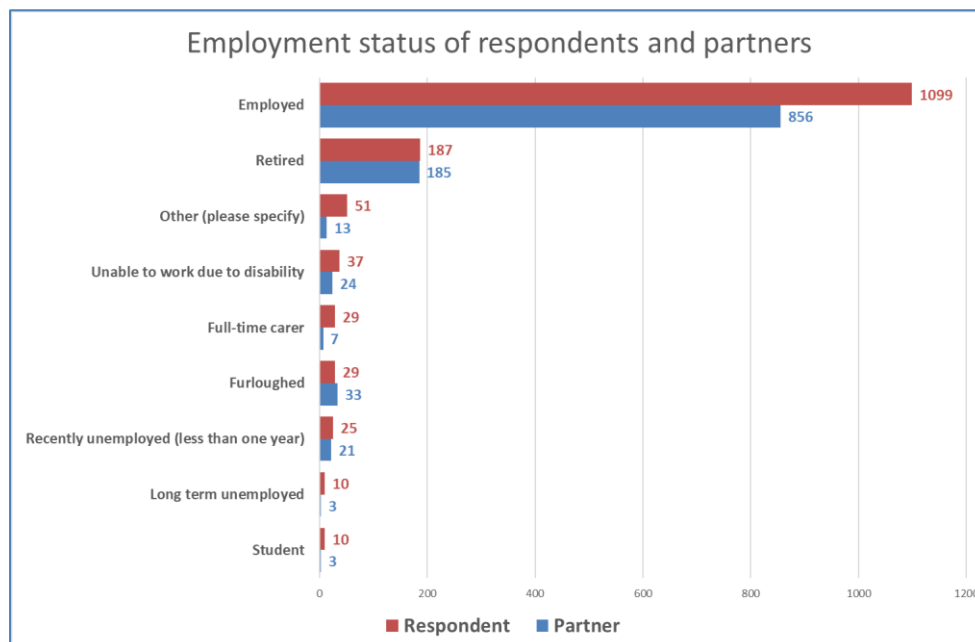
There were just 13 students (not including 2 people who described themselves as 'employed and students') and 64 others, detailed in the following table:

Others:	Respondent	Partner
Homemaker/Housewife/House person	19	7
Stay at home parent	11	-
Semi-retired	5	-
Supply/Relief worker	4	-
Company Director/Business owner	2	1
Shielding	2	-
Employed and a student	2	-
On sick leave/ill health	2	1
Zero-hour contract - no work	1	-
At risk of redundancy	1	1
Unable to work due to government Covid-19 regulations	-	1

The employment status of respondents follows a similar pattern to the statistics for the wider Moray population[4], although the proportions of each group differ. For example, 47% of the Moray population are in employment rather than the 75% of the sample; the difference is likely to be due to the limited number of responses from Under 18s and over

[4]NOMIS Labour Market Profile – Moray April 2019-March 2020)

75-year olds. Similarly, the number of responses from older people reduced the proportion of retired residents to 14%, whereas for Moray almost one-quarter of the population are retired.

However, the responses indicate there is a reasonable correlation with the actual composition of Moray and the responses can be extrapolated to provide a representative view of local people's experiences during lock-down and what they would like from services in the future. 108 people have been furloughed (2.4% of the sample) or made redundant due to impact of the pandemic (1.8% of the sample). Extrapolating these numbers to the whole of Moray suggests that up to 500 people will have been furloughed or recently made unemployed across Moray during the initial period of lock-down.

Many people have had to change their work patterns. Some have not been able to work and have suffered loss of earning as a result, while many are now home-workers. Some of the issues faced by residents are illustrated by the following comments:

> *"Loss of earnings forced to sell cars."*

> *"Road closure has made my work quiet all the time, so (will) probably lose my job soon."*

> *"Working from home since March 2020 I have managed to maintain most of my work practices. What I have missed out on is the office environment and the general information that floats around during general conversations with colleagues. Even though it is called the grapevine it has definitely been a loss to me. I don't know what is happening in the office business wise. New people and roles have been developed and I consider myself out of the loop."*

> *"Without education services i.e. school I was left to home-school, shield and work full-time which is a huge task for an individual."*

> *"Having had to work from home full time and provide support/assistant to my son who was home schooling and struggles with dyslexia, this put immense pressure on myself, causing high levels of anxiety throughout."*

The measures have affected people across Moray including council staff some of whom commented on the impact of the lock-down measures on their work:

> *"I have two jobs with the council, the one in which I teach night classes was affected by covid, I have not had any classes since end of March.   Not likely to have now until possibly January 2021; loss of earnings."*

> *"Not able to work due to the service I work in being closed."*

> *"I work for MC and lost overtime due to reduction in services. Although not a big impact, I was still affected slightly."*

## 1.3   SURVEY RESPONSES – RESPONSE TO REDUNDANCY AND RETRAINING

Although 46 respondents said that they or their partners had been made redundant in the past year there were considerably more people (235) who responded to the question on the options that they would choose if they were to lose their jobs. This suggests possibly a greater unease amongst those in employment about the fragility of their current positions.

Figure 3: Options considered if made redundant
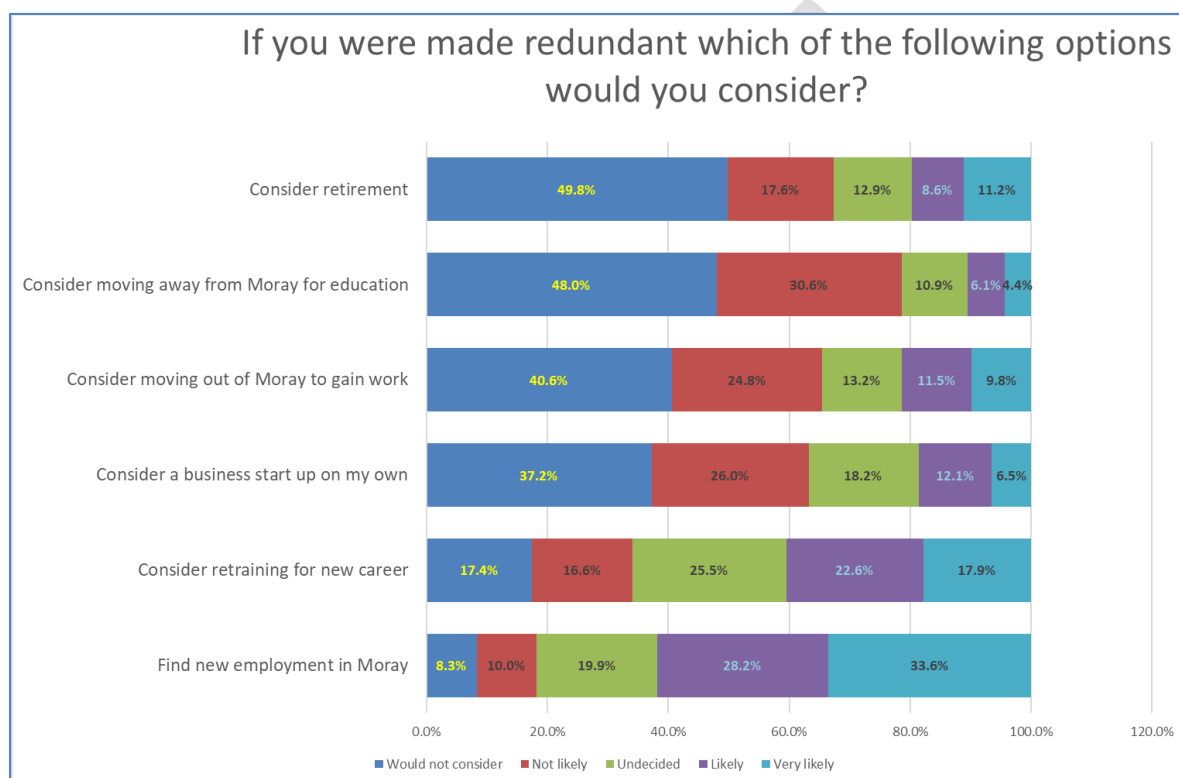
The most popular choice for those who had been made redundant would be to find new employment in Moray with 61.8% of the respondents stating they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to pursue this option (Figure 3). Around 40% of respondents would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to consider retraining for a new career. People were less likely to start up their own business or move away from Moray to gain work, and even less likely (just 10.5%) to move away from Moray for education. Given the average age of respondents it is not surprising that almost half (49.8%) would not consider retirement.

Figure 4: Sectors in which people would be interested to retrain
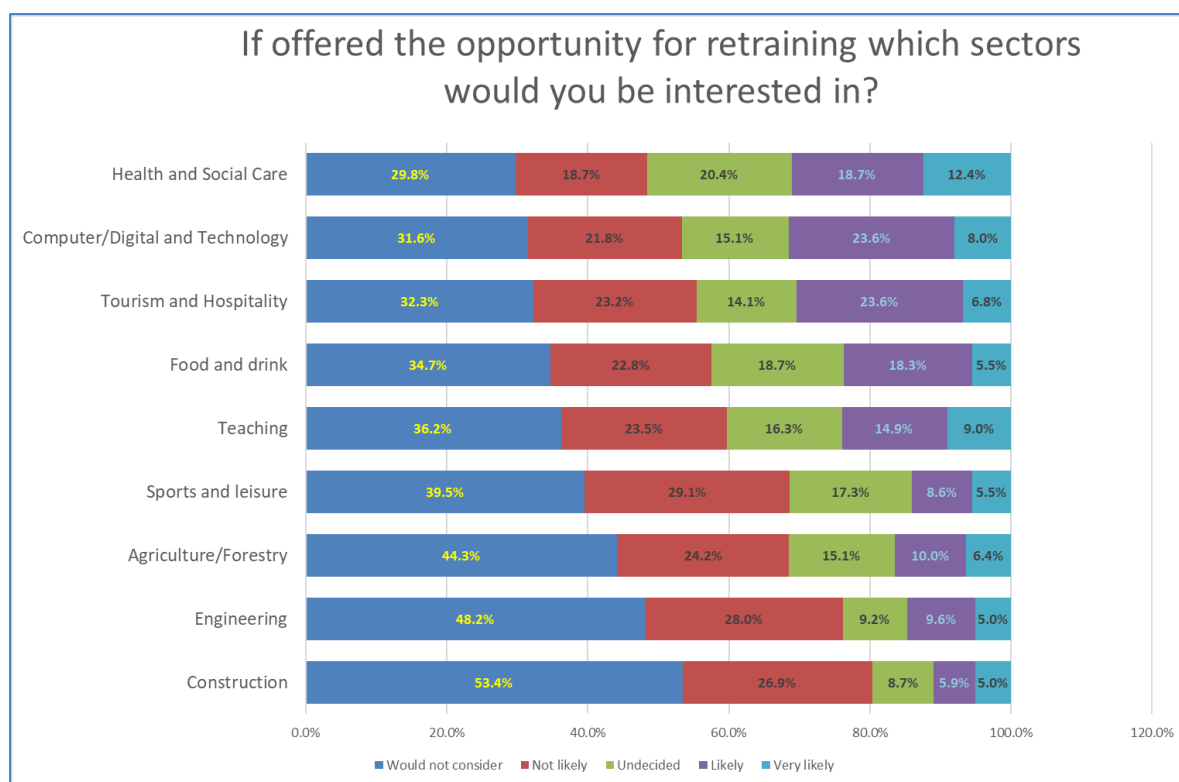
For those considering retraining the most popular choices are (Figure 4):

- Computer/Digital and Technology (31.6% 'likely' or 'very likely'),
- Health and Social Care (31.1% 'likely' or 'very likely'),
- Tourism and Hospitality (30.5% 'likely' or 'very likely'),
- Food and Drink (23.7% 'likely' or 'very likely'), and
- Teaching (24% 'likely' or 'very likely')

The results of the 2017 Annual Business Survey illustrate the importance on the Moray job market of Manufacturing & Wholesale, Retail and Repairs (Figure 5). These 2 sectors account for almost half the jobs in Moray. In 2017 just over 1% of Moray employees worked in Information and Communication roles, suggesting a mismatch between expectations and the ability of the current Moray job-market to provide suitable opportunities.

Figure 5: Moray employment by sector – 2017 Annual Business Survey
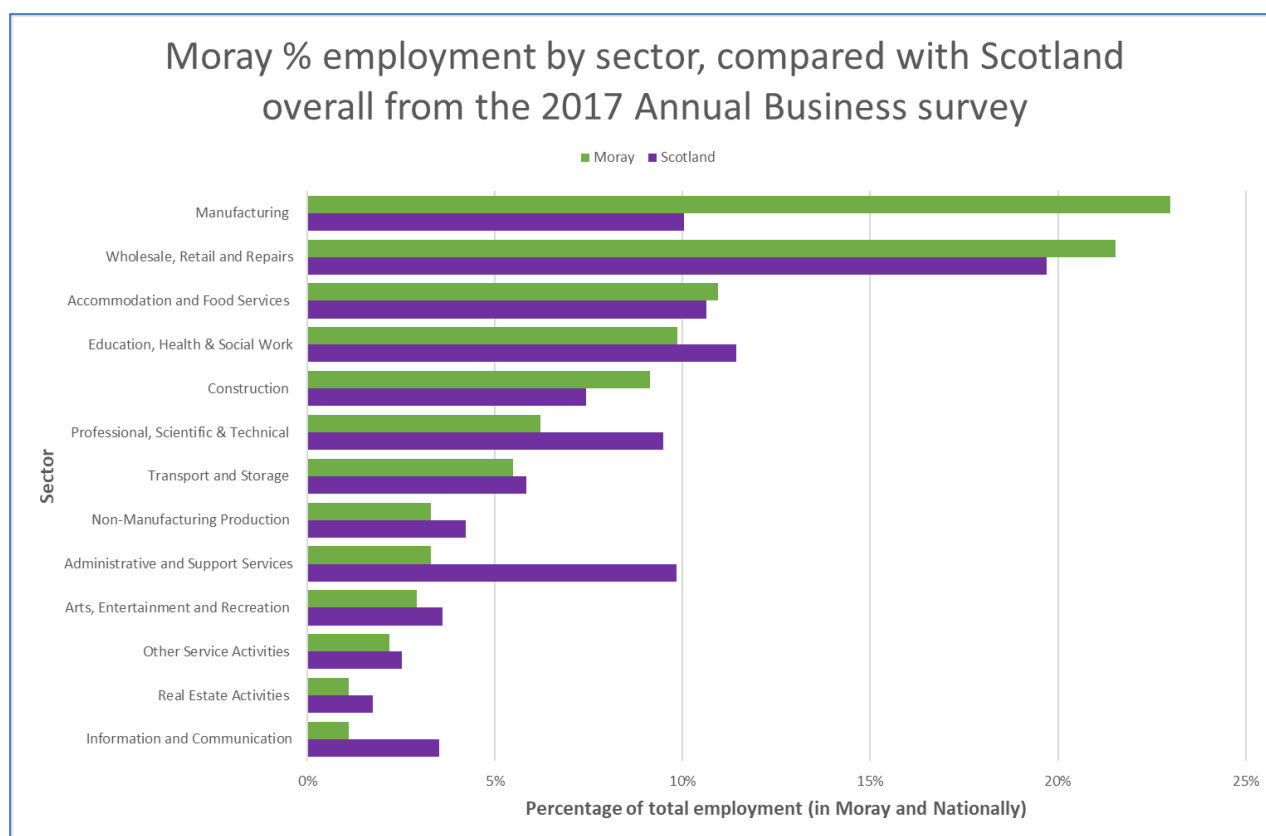
A slightly different viewpoint is provided by NOMIS[5] , which indicates that in 2018 the industries in Moray with the most jobs were:

- Joint largest: Human Health and Social Work Activities & Manufacturing (17.1% each of jobs in Moray),
- Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles (14.3%),
- Joint 4th largest: Accommodation and Food Service Activities & Education (8.6% each), and
- Joint 6th largest: Construction & Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security (6.4% each)

All other industries in Moray each account for less than 5% of all jobs. The NOMIS data suggest those looking for new careers in Health and Social Care, Tourism and Hospitality, & Food and Drink may find opportunities locally when, or if, the economy recovers to its pre-pandemic levels, but those looking for jobs in Information and Communication may have to look for employment outside of Moray.

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[5] ONS Business Register and Employment Survey 2018 – published in NOMIS
(https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157424/report.aspx?town=moray#tabempocc)

Data published by the HMRC[6] on the impact of the furlough scheme (Figure 6) indicate around 30% of the Moray workforce have been furloughed. Nationally, the sectors most affected are Accommodation & Food Services (74%) and Construction (72%). Wholesale, Retail & Repairs (42%) and Manufacturing (38%) have also seen significant numbers of employees placed on furlough. The long-term impact of these measures will need to be carefully monitored to understand the level of unemployment that Moray may face, and the additional demands for support that will be placed on Moray Council and partners.

Figure 6: Sectors most affected by furlough scheme

Moray % employment by sector, compared with Scotland overall from 2017 Annual Business survey
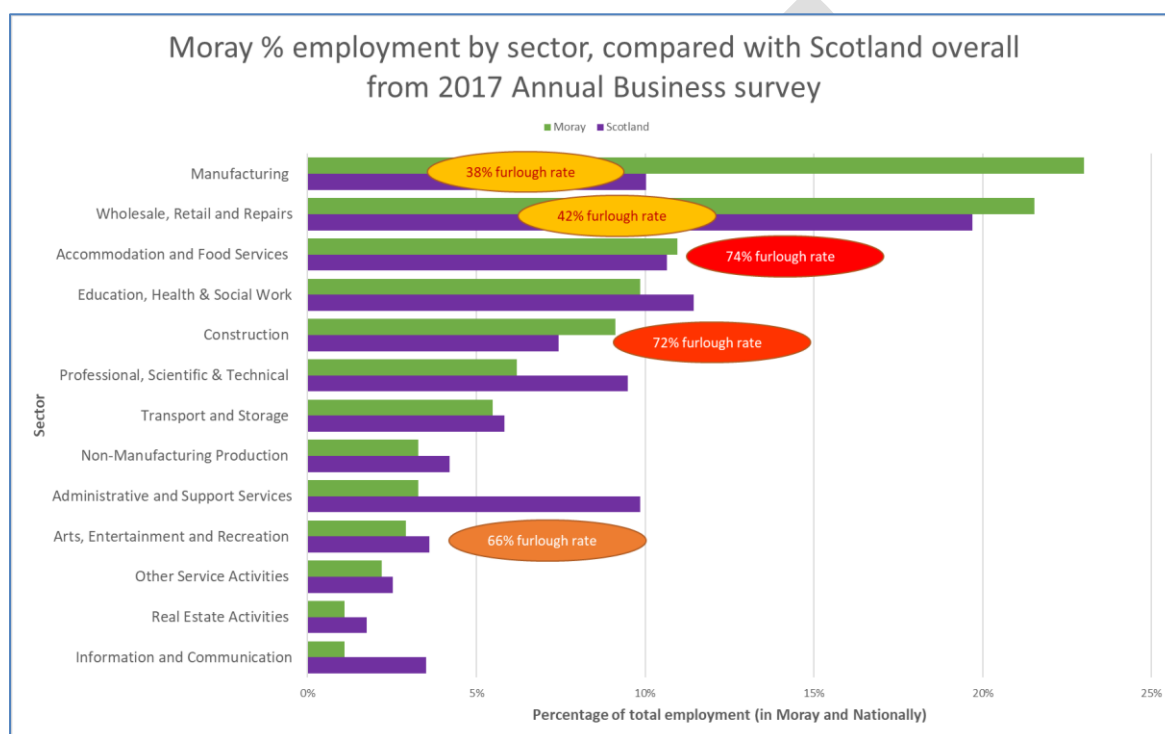
1.4   SURVEY RESPONSES – IMPACT OF REVISED COUNCIL SERVICE PROVISION ON HOUSEHOLDS

Residents were asked to rate the impact of the changes introduced by services on their households using a scale running from 0 to 5, where 0 was not much of an impact and 5 was a major impact. Figure 7 shows there were many households where the changes had a relatively low impact, a similar proportion where the changes had caused some difficulty, and a small, but significant minority had used the top 2 ratings of 4 or 5 (111 responses, equivalent to 9% of the sample).

The average score of just under 2 might suggest the changes were reasonably well received as such a score would mean households experienced relatively little difficulty. However, the

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[6] HMRC - Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) Statistics: July 2020

over 250 comments that were made on this question are testament to the strength of feeling amongst many households.

The following example illustrates the difficulties for the elderly and others who need support. The recovery plan must take the impact on such individuals into account.

> *"I am answering for my elderly mother who lives alone in Moray & who will not see this online consultation: My physically limited but mentally lively 91 yr old mother has suffered greatly - the closure of community centres & libraries has meant extreme isolation from any interest groups & recurrent depressions. The demand for everything to be done online by someone her age with zero computer knowledge has caused extreme stress, especially when family are not allowed to visit to help. The unavailability of telephone help impacted her, she could not get maintenance help or benefits & other advice when she needed them & I had to become one of her carers…. She needs help with cleaning her house - she has very bad arthritis & osteoporosis & cannot bend, vacuum or sweep or easily hang out her laundry or tidy her garden which her residence insists must be kept to a high standard. If my sibling & I are not permitted to help her who is?"*

> *"My son is an adult with severe learning difficulties. He is not able to live in his supported accommodation and there are no day services. This has had a significant effect on all the family."*

> *"I am unable to get health care. My mental health has been much worse to the point I've taken many overdoses. I had problems getting medical care prior to covid but now it is impossible. My mental health impacts my ability to engage with the council and this has also been even harder during the lockdown. I am not getting any support."*

Some residents were able to share positive experiences of support they had received during the lock-down that had helped them through a difficult time.

> *"I was furloughed from March from my previous job…. While I was furloughed, I received food packages and a laptop with dongle from school for my child's schoolwork, I also got help from Moray school bank for my meters."*

> *"Impacted positively by food delivery service provided with council funding, delivered by volunteers from RVS; this service really helped."*

Figure 7: The impact of the changes to services overall
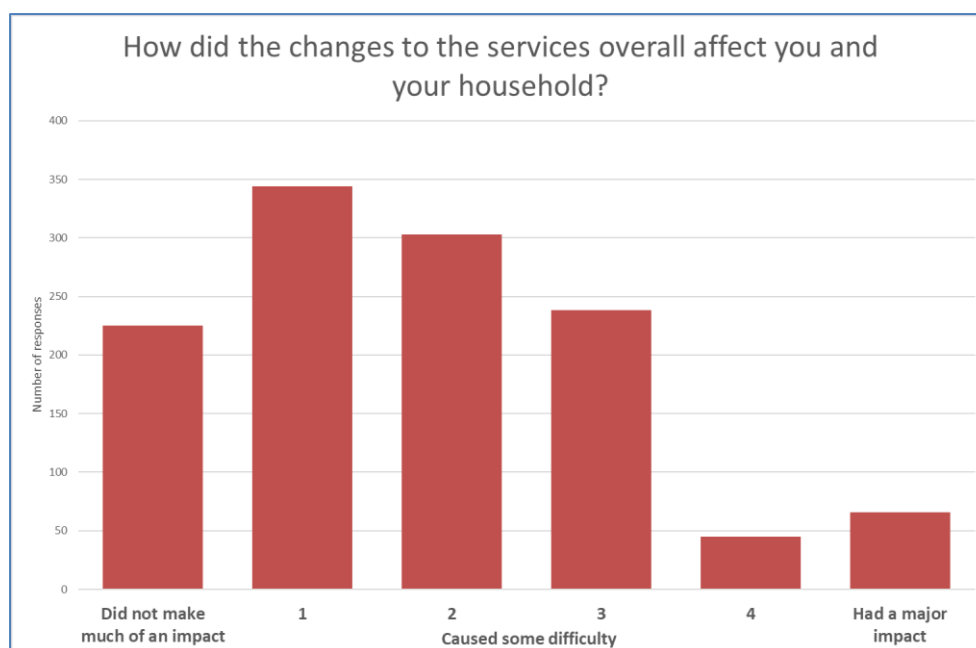
Further analysis was undertaken to identify any common characteristics to the respondents who stated that the changes had caused significant difficulty to them and their households (scores of 4 or 5). Households in this category came from all over Moray and included families from the more deprived data zones as well as the least deprived (SIMD 2020 deciles 3 to 10) (see Table 1 below). Since there was no correlation between particular areas and the changes to services having a major impact other factors were investigated: age (65 years and older), unemployment, furlough, being a carer, single parents and single parents who were also unemployed or furloughed. No single, common factor stood out particularly for any of the data zones, although the following communities had slightly higher concentrations in people in these categories who felt the impact of the service changes more than most:

- Burghead, Roseisle and Laich: 65 years and older and carers,
- Keith and Fife Keith: single parents and furlough,
- Buckie Central East: unemployed and single parents,
- Lossiemouth East and Seatown: 65 years and older, unemployed, single parents,
- Lossiemouth West: single parents,
- Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward: single parents,
- Elgin Bishopmill East and Ladyhill: single parents, and
- Rafford, Dallas, Dyke to Dava: single parents.

Please note though that the number of respondents in each category in each data zone is small, so care must be taken in reading too much into this information. It is also impossible to draw conclusions about why these groups in these areas might have suffered more. Some

of these data zones may have limited access to public transport, some of the residents in this category may not have access to private cars or may not have family and friends nearby.

Table 1: Data zones where residents reported a major impact (scores of 4 or 5) due to the service changes

Data zone	SIMD decile	Number of responses of 4 or 5	Respondents from Data zone	% of respondents
Keith and Fife Keith - 03	6	5	33	15%
Buckie West and Mains of Buckie - 01	8	5	23	22%
Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward - 01	6	4	16	25%
Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward - 03	7	4	34	12%
Findhorn, Kinloss and Pluscarden Valley - 01	6	4	15	27%
South Speyside and the Cabrach - 05	7	3	9	33%
Rural Keith and Strathisla - 01	7	3	10	30%
Elgin Bishopmill East and Ladyhill - 01	4	3	26	12%
Lossiemouth East and Seatown - 01	9	3	17	18%
Lossiemouth West - 05	4	3	24	13%
South Speyside and the Cabrach - 03	7	2	10	20%
North Speyside - 01	7	2	14	14%
Keith and Fife Keith - 02	3	2	11	18%
Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty, Drybridge and Berryhillock - 08	5	2	15	13%
Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward - 02	8	2	14	14%
Fochabers, Aultmore, Clochan and Ordiquish - 03	7	2	9	22%
Heldon West, Fogwatt to Inchberry - 03	8	2	34	6%
Lhanbryde, Urquhart, Pitgavney and seaward - 01	7	2	22	9%
Elgin Central West - 04	10	2	13	15%
Lossiemouth East and Seatown - 04	7	2	12	17%
Lossiemouth East and Seatown - 05	5	2	18	11%
Burghead, Roseisle and Laich - 06	8	2	10	20%
Rafford, Dallas, Dyke to Dava - 01	8	2	11	18%
North Speyside - 02	7	1	14	7%
North Speyside - 05	7	1	11	9%
Rural Keith and Strathisla - 02	6	1	9	11%
Rural Keith and Strathisla - 03	7	1	6	17%
Keith and Fife Keith - 04	4	1	14	7%
Keith and Fife Keith - 05	7	1	10	10%
Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty, Drybridge and Berryhillock - 01	6	1	7	14%
Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty, Drybridge and Berryhillock - 05	5	1	5	20%
Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty, Drybridge and Berryhillock - 06	7	1	5	20%
Buckie Central East - 02	6	1	3	33%
Buckie Central East - 03	3	1	6	17%
Buckie Central East - 04	5	1	8	13%
Buckie West and Mains of Buckie - 04	5	1	7	14%
Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward - 05	6	1	9	11%
Heldon West, Fogwatt to Inchberry - 01	6	1	8	13%
Lhanbryde, Urquhart, Pitgavney and seaward - 02	8	1	14	7%
Elgin Central West - 02	9	1	15	7%
Elgin Central West - 03	8	1	12	8%
Elgin Bishopmill East and Ladyhill - 04	7	1	8	13%
Elgin Bishopmill West and Newfield - 03	5	1	6	17%
Elgin Bishopmill West and Newfield - 05	6	1	10	10%
Lossiemouth East and Seatown - 02	10	1	22	5%
Lossiemouth West - 01	7	1	8	13%
Lossiemouth West - 02	7	1	14	7%
Lossiemouth West - 06	4	1	10	10%
Burghead, Roseisle and Laich - 02	10	1	2	50%
Findhorn, Kinloss and Pluscarden Valley - 02	8	1	7	14%
Findhorn, Kinloss and Pluscarden Valley - 03	7	1	14	7%
Forres Central East and seaward - 01	5	1	15	7%
Forres South West and Mannachie - 01	4	1	5	20%
Rafford, Dallas, Dyke to Dava - 03	8	1	17	6%
Rafford, Dallas, Dyke to Dava - 04	6	1	9	11%

SECTION 2 – IMPACT OF CHANGES

2.1 IMPACT ON THE CHANGES INTRODUCED BY SERVICES

Despite the changes overall having a relatively limited impact for many residents, the views were not consistent for all of the changes as this next section illustrates. The survey asked residents to assess the impact of changes that had been introduced by some services in response to the Covid-19 safety guidance issued by the Scottish Government. The measures were:

- Residential waste collections changed to a 3-week cycle,
- Introduction of online booking for slots at recycling centres,
- E-mail, telephone and online customer services,
- Electronic books and magazines,
- Click and collect library book service,
- Attending and participating in care planning and review meetings held virtually with individuals,
- Attending and participating in care planning and review meetings held virtually with the individual's family, and
- Contact with social workers/ support workers through virtual means.

The responses are shown at Figure 8 and can be broadly summarised as follows:

- Measures having a mainly negative impact:
  - o Changing the residential waste collections to a 3-week cycle, and
  - o Introducing the requirement to book slots at recycling centres.
- Measures with a mainly neutral impact:
  - o The remainder.

Despite around two-thirds of respondents stating the changes to the recycling and waste collection arrangements were having a negative impact approximately 30% found they had made no difference, and a small minority were content for the measures to be maintained.

As an aside, Moray Council has decided to make the booking system at the Chanonry recycling site in Elgin permanent to avoid the need to develop an alternative site[7]. The booking system, introduced to manage traffic and maintain social distancing during Covid-19, has "proven very effective in managing numbers."

The other changes to the way people contacted the Council, the way libraries operated and the move to online care planning and social worker meetings were mainly well-received.

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[7] Press & Journal, 6 October 2020:
https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/moray/elgin/2547190/booking-system-to-remain-permanent-at-elgin-recycling-centre-to-save-relocation-costs/

Around 20% of the respondents had a negative experience with not being able to contact the Council in person, and this group is considered in more detail in Section 4 below.

Figure 8: Views on each of the measures introduced by services during lock-down

The impact of the changes was examined first using respondent's employment status and determining the proportion of all respondents in each employment category who had reported a major negative impact for each change (Figure 9). The changes to residential waste collection had most impact on a larger proportion of people with disabilities (38% of respondents) and carers (34% of respondents). The introduction of appointments for recycling centres impacted 38% of people who are unable to work due to a disability, the group most affected negatively by this change.

The other changes mainly impacted negatively on carers, disabled and unemployed respondents, but at a lower level compared to the waste collection and recycling measures. The changes to the library services had a proportionately bigger impact on the recently unemployed, and the changes to the method for contacting the Council impacted the disabled, carers and recently unemployed, in particular. Unsurprisingly, the changes to health and social care measures were mainly felt by carers and disabled respondents, although 9% of the long-term unemployed respondents reported a major negative impact around virtual meetings concerning their family and contacting their social worker or support worker virtually.

*Figure 9: Changes having a major negative Impact - by employment status*

Next, SIMD 2020 data was used to determine if people in the more deprived areas were more likely to report a major negative impact since the introduction of the changes. The impact of the changes to 3-weekly residential waste collections and the method of contactring customer services impacted a greater proportion of respondents living in more deprived areas. For the other changes there was no clear pattern that would suggest deprivation was a factor (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Changes having a major negative Impact - by SIMD 2020 deciles (1 = most deprived; 10 = least deprived)

No clear pattern emerged when looking at which age groups reported a major negaive impact of these changes (Figure 11). Note the high percentage of under 18s reporting problems with residential waste collections and the booking system at recycling centres were based on only 4 responses. The 3-weekly residential waste collections were more of a problem for under 55 year olds, while the age-groups experiencing problems with the recycling appointment booking system were broadly the under 75 year olds.

Figure 11: Changes having a major negative Impact – by age group
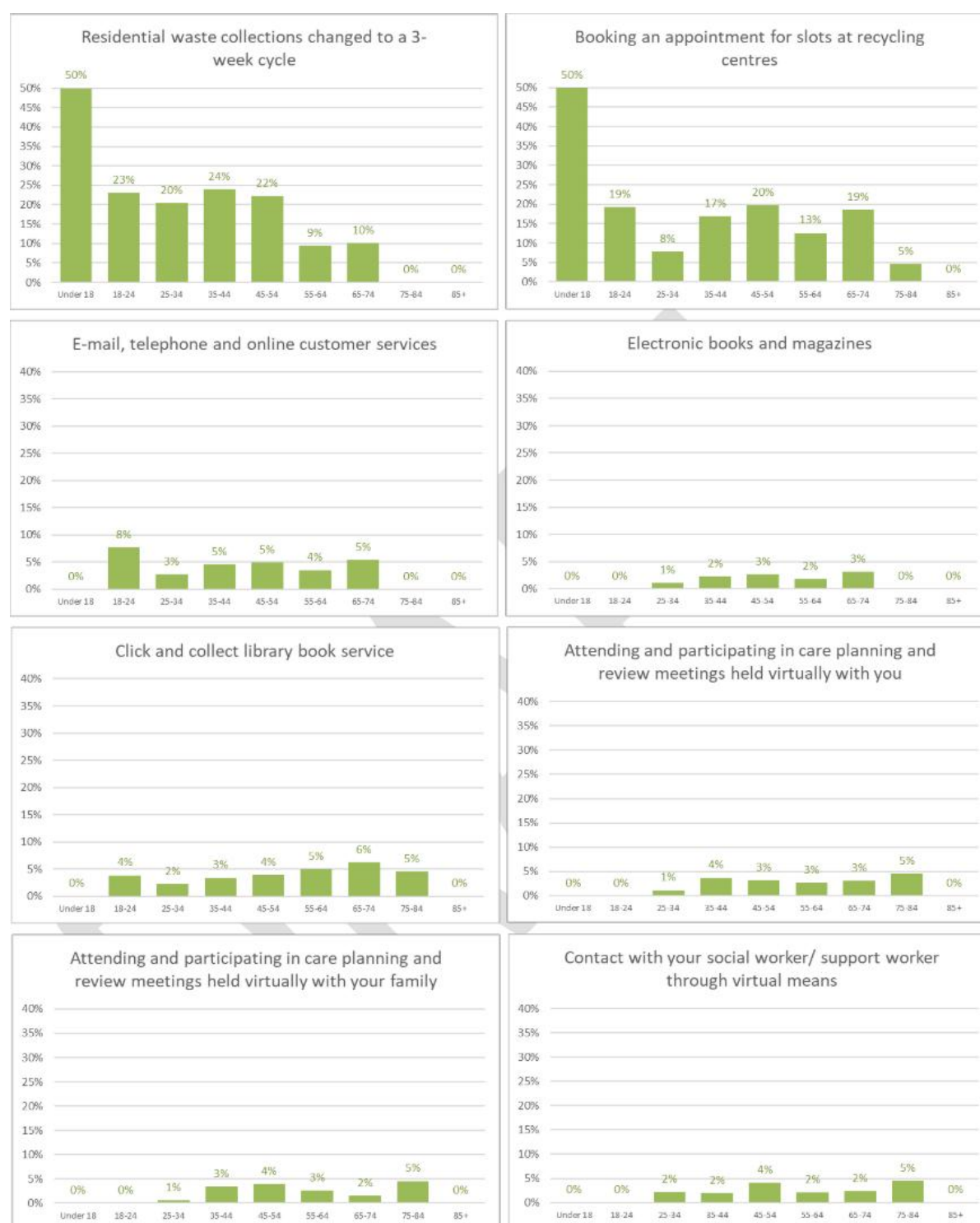
Perhaps unsurprisingly, a greater proportion of the larger households tended to report the changes to residential waste collection and booking a recycling appointment as causing a major impact (Figure 12). However, since there were only 2 households with 7 residents and 2 with 8 or more a proportion of 50% represents just one household.

Figure 12: Changes having a major negative Impact – by size of household

Although the numbers and proportions of respondents who reported major problems with the changes to the health and social care arrangements are generally small some of the comments suggest that the impact on those involved were significant:

> *"I work as a social worker in Adult services. Clients and their families suffered tremendously during this time, care was suspended, families and carers became ill, sometime resulting in hospitalisation. This put great strain on me and my colleagues*

when trying to help our service users as so many services were closed, and we had very little resources to offer people in crisis. This led to increased stress and sleepless nights for me."

"As a full time carer for our disabled son who is also vulnerable to Covid-19 (we shielded) we had no support services available during lockdown and have limited support services available still now."

"I am unable to get health care. My mental health has been much worse to the point I've taken many overdoses. I had problems getting medical care prior to covid but now it is impossible. My mental health impacts my ability to engage with the council and this has also been even harder during the lockdown. I am not getting any support."

Figure 13: Analysis of comments – topics in order of popularity
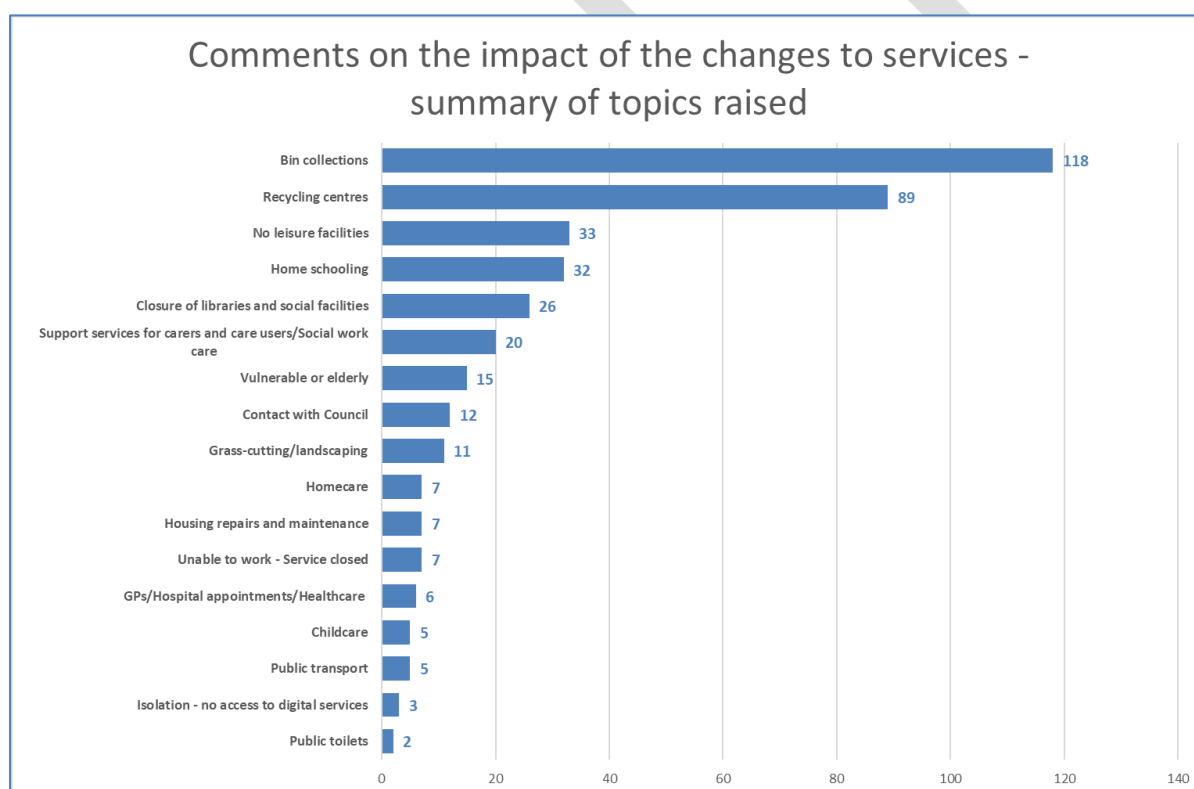
The Scottish Human Rights Commission undertook some research into the impact of reduced social care support across Scotland during the pandemic. An extract from *The Journal of the Law Society of Scotland*[8] published on the 6th October 2020 provides some useful context:

Many people who use social care support at home have experienced either a reduction or complete withdrawal of support during the coronavirus pandemic, to the

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[8] https://www.lawscot.org.uk/news-and-events/legal-news/breaches-of-rights-in-social-care-cuts-commission/

detriment of their rights, according to research published today by the Scottish Human Rights Commission. Cases brought to the Commission's notice include people being left without essential care, such as assistance to get up and go to bed, leaving people forced to sleep in their wheelchairs, and assistance to wash and use the toilet, to eat and drink, and to take medication. The Commission says it is "deeply concerned" about the current social care support available to people whose packages have been reduced or withdrawn, and calls on the Scottish Government and COSLA to commit jointly to the return of care and support at pre-pandemic levels, as a minimum. It also calls for the Government to establish better data collection mechanisms, and for public authorities to use human rights as a tool to inform future decisions about people's care and support.

SECTION 3 – VOLUNTEERING AND SUPPORT NEEDS

3.1   SUPPORT NEEDS

Just under 1 in 10 of respondents (121 people, 9.4%) said that they required some assistance during lock-down. Figure 10 shows the various types of support that were required with the largest needs being prescription collection; shopping & food; and provisions. These requested tended to be met by neighbours in the main, as well as by volunteers. Volunteers provided the majority of meal deliveries.

Moray Council provided the bulk of money advice, social work access, IT, home-schooling resources, and free school meals (through vouchers and provision of hot meals in hubs and schools). However, for all types of support requested there was a small proportion of people whose requests were not fulfilled. While small in number this shows that for some individuals the lock-down has proved a particular challenge with the largest unmet need being befriending. Given the concerns raised about the impact of isolation on individuals this presents an opportunity to put in place ways of supporting more vulnerable residents. Furthermore, the responses to this question may be under-representing the true picture given the lower proportion of 75-year olds and over in the sample who responded compared to the demographics of Moray (Figure 14, below).

There was appreciation for the work of the volunteers and Moray council as illustrated by the following comments:

> *"impacted positively by food delivery service provided with council funding, delivered by volunteers from RVS, this service really helped"*

> *"I was furloughed from March from my previous job. I was offered a full time job in another establishment and started there on the 7th September. While i was furloughed i received food packages and laptop from school with dongle for child school work, i also got help from moray school bank for my meters."*

> *"My grandmother was given a hamper and people who have had support have been truly grateful so for those who cannot comment or fill out the survey which would probably a large proportion on lossie folk I want to say thank you in their behalf. Many people are struggling with mental health and they should always be supported during times like this."*

Figure 14: Support required and provider

Type of support required and who provided it
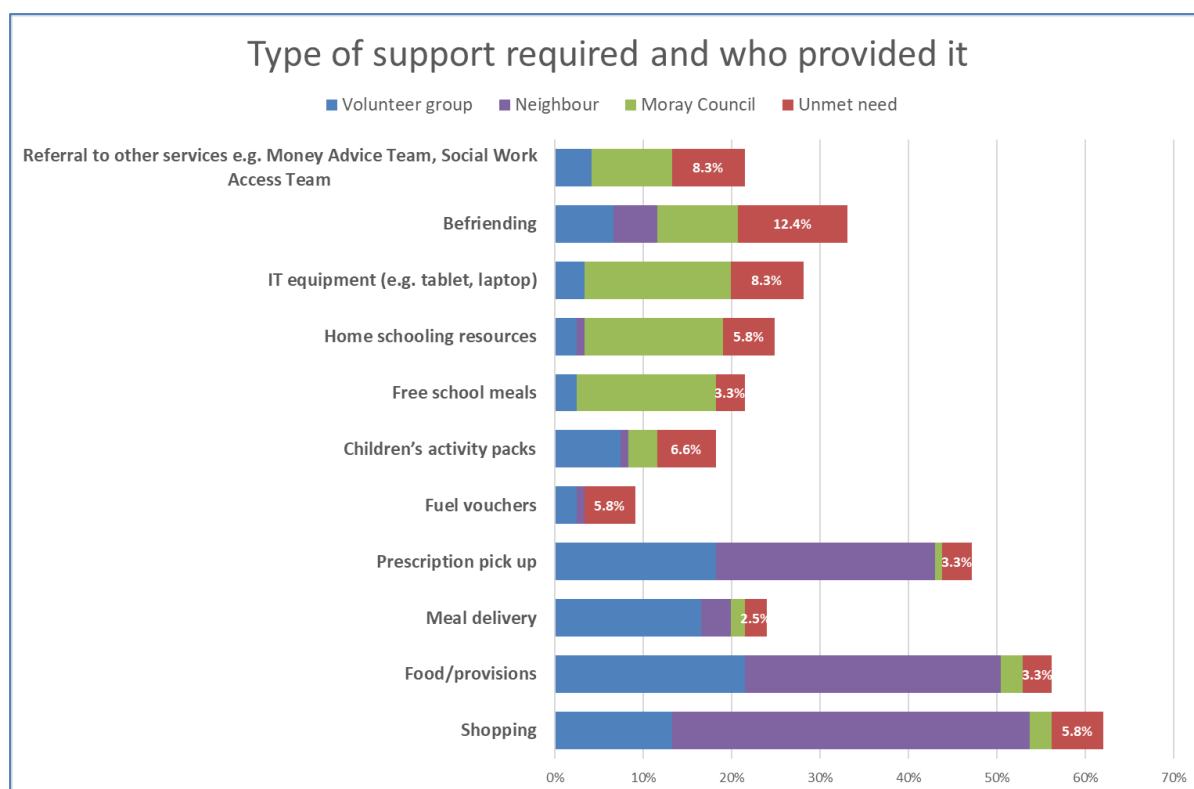
Residents who required support came from all parts of Moray except *Elgin Bishopmill West and Newfield*. The highest number of residents requiring support were in North Speyside and Lossiemouth, with relatively high numbers in *Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward; Burghead, Roseisle and Laich; and Forres Central East and seaward*. Table 2 provides a full list of the number of respondents who required support in each in each of the communities.

Further analysis was undertaken to determine whether residents in more deprived areas, older residents, residents with disabilities or being unemployed or furloughed were more likely to require support. The results at Figure 15 suggest a greater proportion of residents living in the more deprived areas of Moray required support, but there were residents needing support in every SIMD 2020 decile, indicating that deprivation is not the sole contributing cause. The largest proportion of respondents needing support were recently unemployed (36%) or unable to work due to a disability (46%). However, although only 4% of people requiring support were employed this was the category with the largest number of individuals needing support (44).

Most people requiring support were aged between 35 and 74 (103 responses, equivalent to 85% of all respondents needing support), but the proportions of each age group affected changed from below 10% for residents aged up to 64 years old to around 15% for residents aged 65 years old and over. This feels right intuitively as it would be expected some older people might have more needs and may be less able to support themselves. However, this is definitely not the case for everyone over 65 years old and most people who responded in

this age group did not require support. Note that the high proportion of under-18s requiring support (25%) was due to the low number of respondents.

Table 2: Communities where residents requested support

Community	Support required
North Speyside	13
Lossiemouth West	11
Mosstodloch, Portgordon and seaward	9
Burghead, Roseisle and Laich	8
Forres Central East and seaward	8
Lossiemouth East and Seatown	8
Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty, Drybridge and Berryhillock	5
New Elgin East	5
Rafford, Dallas, Dyke to Dava	5
Forres South West and Mannachie	4
Rural Keith and Strathisla	4
Buckie West and Mains of Buckie	3
Elgin Cathedral to Ashgrove and Pinefield	3
Findhorn, Kinloss and Pluscarden Valley	3
Fochabers, Aultmore, Clochan and Ordiquish	3
Keith and Fife Keith	3
Lhanbryde, Urquhart, Pitgavney and seaward	3
New Elgin West	3
Buckie Central East	2
Elgin Bishopmill East and Ladyhill	2
Heldon West, Fogwatt to Inchberry	2
Elgin Central West	1
South Speyside and the Cabrach	1
Elgin Bishopmill West and Newfield	0

The last 2 charts in Figure 15 show the support requirements for single households and couples by age-group and supports the finding that a greater proportion of households with residents aged 65 years old and over required support during lockdown with their daily needs.

There were 6 cases of residents who responded that no support was provided although it had been requested. Five of these cases provided postcodes, which indicated there was no one common area where support had not been provided: *Buckie Central East, Buckie West and Mains of Buckie, Findhorn, Kinloss and Pluscarden Valley, New Elgin East and New Elgin West*. With such a small sample size it is not possible to draw too many conclusions about the delivery of support services in different areas of Moray, but any future support provision needs to be able to deliver to all parts of Moray equally, both rural and urban.

Figure 15: Support required in lockdown – by SIMD 2020 decile, employment status and age group (percentage and number)

3.2   VOLUNTEERS AND VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Amongst the respondents to the survey there were 272 (approximately 22% of the people who answered this question) who had volunteered as an individual, as part of a group or who helped-out at the Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub (GCAH)

Most volunteers provided support as individuals (12.4%), some within a group (7.7%) and some as part of the GCAH (1.5%) (Figure 16). Volunteers came from every part of Moray with an average of 19% of respondents in each community saying they had volunteered. Areas with particularly high levels of volunteering (50% or more of respondents) included *North Speyside; Rural Keith and Strathisla; Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty, Drybridge and Berryhillock; Burghead, Roseisle and Laich; Forres Central East and seaward; and Findhorn, Kinloss and Pluscarden Valley.*

Figure 16: Breakdown of volunteers: individual, group, GCAH or did not volunteer
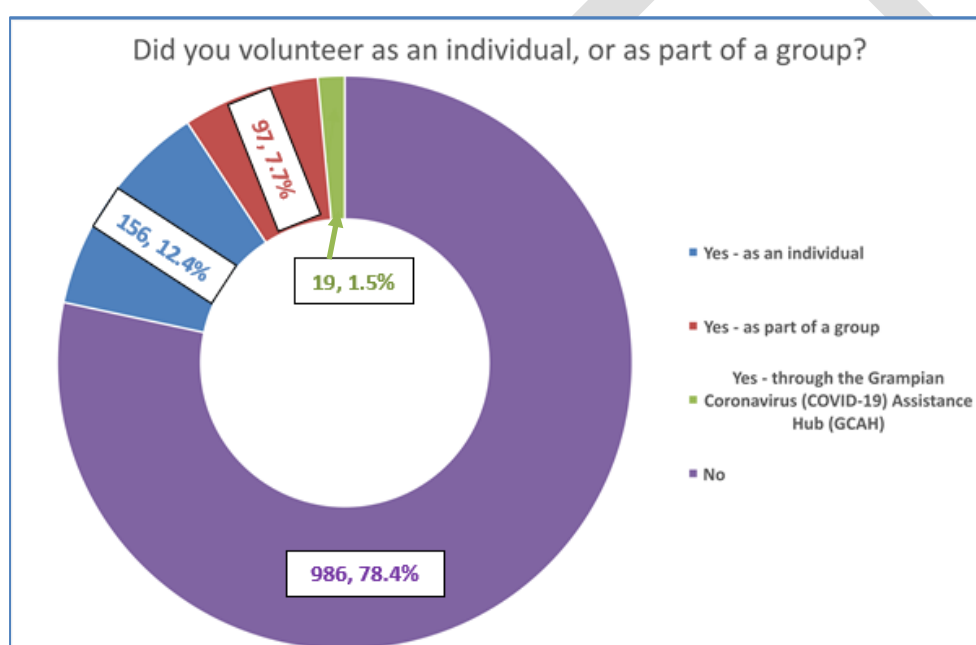
The delivery of food and provisions was the most popular form of support provided by volunteers, alongside delivering prescriptions and befriending (Figure 17). Many other services were provided across Moray including preparing and delivery of meals, shopping, gardening, dog walking, providing financial support and support for carer to name just a few. Further examples are included at Table 3 below.

Figure 17: Services delivered by volunteers
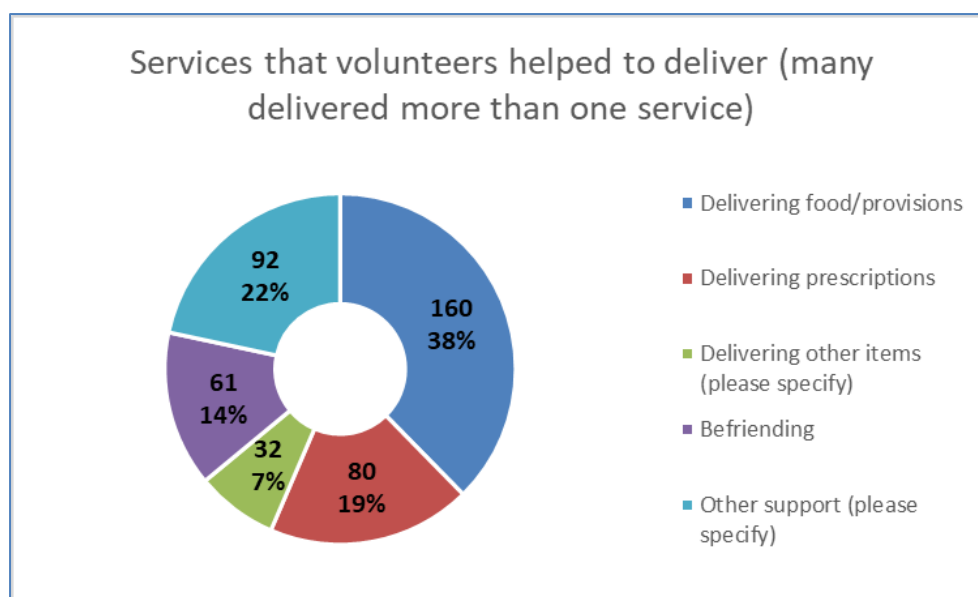
The wide range of support provided is a testament to the local communities who came together to support the most vulnerable in their time of need, and illustrated the community spirit that has been evidenced in previous work, including the Moray Community Planning Partnership locality profiles[9]. However, support in the future will have to be provided that meets the needs of all, regardless of age, disability, employment status or where they live. Although the proportion of residents with unmet needs was less than 1/2 of one percent of all responses received (0.4%), if this proportion were applied to the whole population of Moray there could be potentially by 300-400 residents with unmet needs.

*Table 3: Examples of the support provided by volunteers across Moray*

Support provided	Examples
Financial	Banking; Financial support; Money advice - signposted people to other agencies; As a member of Lossie Community Council was heavily involved in the coordination of support and acted as treasurer for grants we received; Financial support from a number of funding providers plus Wages of Hall keepers etc; Money for Aberlour school hub, Moray Handy Person Service, Aberlour Angling Club
Meals	Help send out meals to vulnerable, and fruit and vegetable boxes; School meals; Provide meals to relatives with dementia; Food bank collection; Set up and coordinated a fortnightly fresh meals initiative for the vulnerable through a local hotel and café; building of a temp food/ essential items parlour to support 24/7 access; Established larder and hot meal deliveries; Baked and delivered cakes to those living on their own and in vulnerable groups; Afternoon tea, Fun Goody Bag; Picked up food for food Bank from various pickup points; Provided meals 3 days a week for elderly relative with dementia who no longer got Shared lives support; Helping make and deliver food and drinks to prevent businesses closing permanently.

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[9] http://www.yourmoray.org.uk/ym_standard/Page_111096.html

Support provided	Examples
Shopping	Kept in touch and delivered shopping for any Duffus SWI members as required; Funded shopping for our Community Blessing Boxes which are placed outside the Free Church.
Scrubs/masks	Sewed scrubs as part of the Moray Scrubs group; Making face masks to be donated to those who can't afford them via Aberlour youthpoint Moray
Befriending	Setting up befriending and assistance groups/pages on social media
Health	Support mental health
Respite support	Get shopping, prescriptions and offer supervision support to enable carer of the relatives with dementia to get a break
Support for the vulnerable	Set up and advertised a Fone Friends scheme to contact the vulnerable people in the local area; IT support for families and shielding/isolated locals; Support and reassurance that I was available at any time night or day in the event anyone needed any help without having to go to an official group to ask for it, greatly put my neighbours at ease; Contact responder for falls alarms; iPads to vulnerable households and the care home in Aberlour.
Childcare	Working at hub with children whose parents were key workers, Care for school kids
Other	Dog walking and delivering dog food; gardening; Phone call assistant, spiritual assistance and practical support; Technical help; Started a free book and dvd swap; Held litter picks; Delivering information leaflets on help available and contact numbers; Household grants, lawn services; Delivered printed church services to those with no access to internet; News Papers; Taking broken glasses to the optician.

Volunteers were asked to rate the support they had been given by Moray Council, with almost half of those who responded to this question having a neutral opinion (90 respondents, 47%). More were positive than negative with 39% being satisfied or very satisfied (75 respondents) compared to 14% being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (27 respondents).

Figure 18: How volunteers rated the support they had received from Moray Council
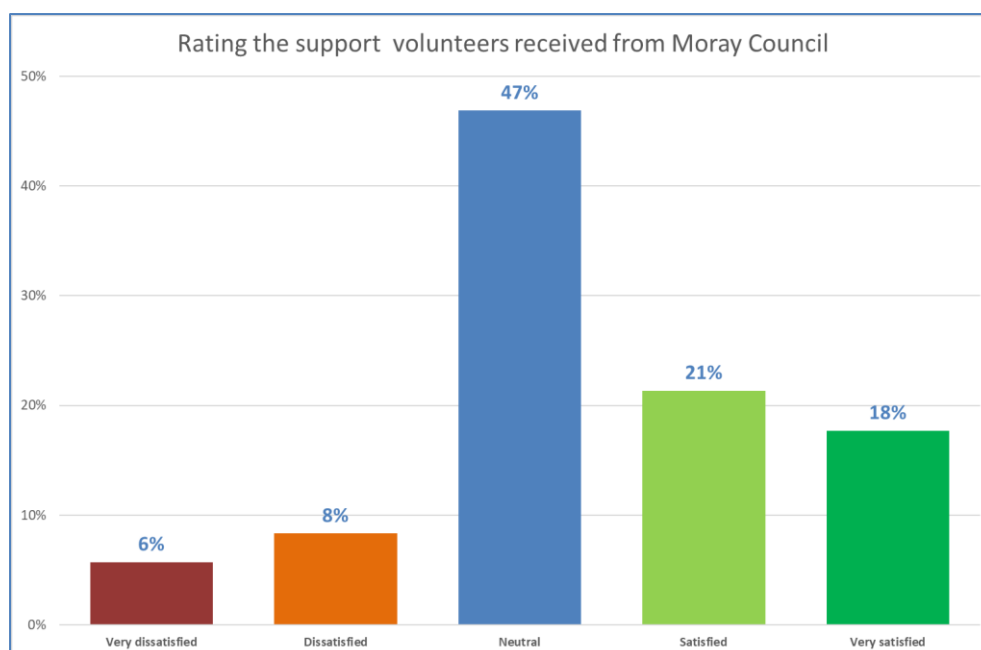
Examples of comments from volunteers who were very satisfied included:

> *"general thank you to moray council and the positive way the people assisted our community only negative would be your people were rushed off their feet."*

> *"The DDCA received support with the purchase of IT equipment which has been issued within our community. We have also received PPE to support our activities."*

> *"I received loads of support and advise from Moray Council on how I could support my neighbours and friends during this time."*

> *"Cannot fault the support provided by line manager and colleagues who provided fabric and thread for making scrubs."*

Most of the 11 respondents who were very dissatisfied with the support they were provided as volunteers provided very specific details of their issues, which also include allegations that cannot be readily substantiated. These comments will be made available to the relevant departments for their consideration. More general matters that caused dissatisfaction included:

> *"No support was given by the Moray Council to any of our volunteers"*

> *"No support for the area of Lossiemouth until 7 weeks after lockdown.   No support from local councillors except one."*

> *"No support given in providing premises/room for food bank, care packs, meals, and other support and care packs. The group had to spend much needed volunteer hours locating and relocating through private and community premises…"*

"There was no help given to our volunteer group given by the Moray Council. We have spent the last 6 months sourcing funding to help individuals and families in crisis"

"Due to confidentiality issues, which we respect, it has made it very difficult to target the right people and I suspect that many have fallen through the net, particularly in rural areas. It has been a guessing game. Neighbours do not always know who is struggling with finance or anything else. Many people do not like to reveal themselves as needing help. It has been very stressful to support people without this information."

SECTION 4 – VIEWS ON THE FUTURE AND KEEPING INFORMED

4.1   OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE

Residents were asked how optimistic they felt about 6 factors and asked to rate each factor from "very optimistic" to "very worried":

- Your health and wellbeing;
- Your family's health and wellbeing;
- Household income;
- Employment status;
- Children's education; and
- Your local community

The responses can be put into 3 broad categories:

- Reasonably optimistic
    - The respondents' health and wellbeing
    - Employment status
- Neutral
    - Household income
    - Their family's health and wellbeing
- Some concern
    - Children's education
    - Their local communities

However, as Figure 19 illustrates the responses are not as quite clear cut as that. There were a significant number of people "quite worried" about their health and wellbeing, and their future employment status. For each of the 6 factors there were on average over one-third of respondents who were "worried" or "quite worried" about the future. Ideally, the recovery plan would need to address these concerns and include provisions that would enable residents to have confidence that the future for Moray residents in the aftermath of the Coivid-19 pandemic will be promising.

Figure 19: Respondents' level of optimism for the future
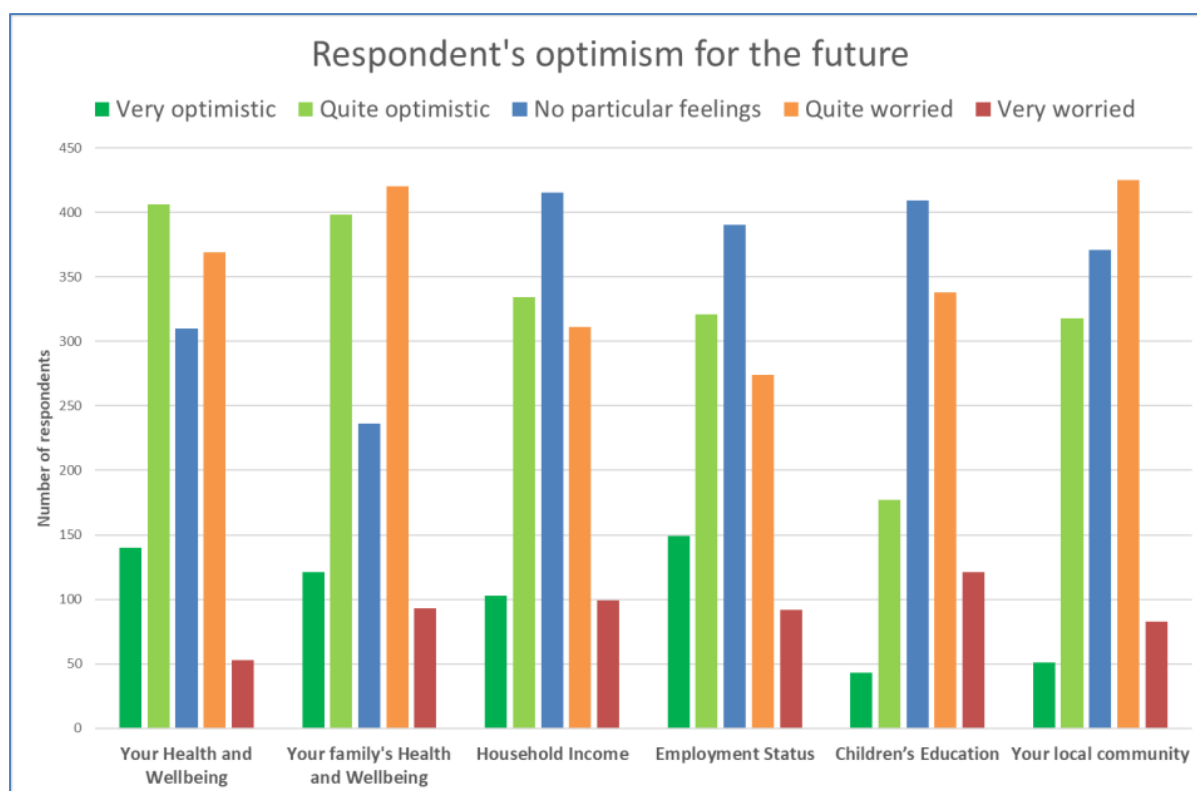
4.2   OBTAINING INFORMATION ON COVID-19 GUIDANCE

The majority of respondents found it easy to obtain information about the Covid-19 response measures from their TVs or from social media. The Government and Council websites were also considered to be relatively easy ways to obtain such information, although more people accessed the Scottish Government website compared to the Moray Council website (Figure 20). People were less likely to access information from newspapers, leaflets, word-of-mouth, Moray Council employees or the GCAH.

Many people able to keep themselves abreast of the latest information using TV, social media and the radio, while others also received briefings from their children's school, the Care Inspectorate and their place of work; NHS Grampian was mentioned specifically. The Lossiemouth Community Council page on Facebook was mentioned, as were updates from local councillors, assistance groups and Richard Lochhead MSP, for example. Others obtained information from the World Health Organisation website, professional bodies and websites with a scientific background. The tsiMORAY website, ebulletin, forums and networks were also mentioned by one respondent.

Some comments were made about sources of information and their usefulness:

> *"The variety of information sources was adequate. The challenge for some is filtering out misinformation from various sources; especially social media and word of mouth."*

"There are a lot of ways to access information so I don't think this could be done any better."

"There were plenty of places to find information although many were contradictory at every level.   Changes were quick and easy to understand."

"… the daily briefings from the First Minister has been the most helpful of all."

Figure 20: Ease of accessing information on Covid-19 guidance from various sources
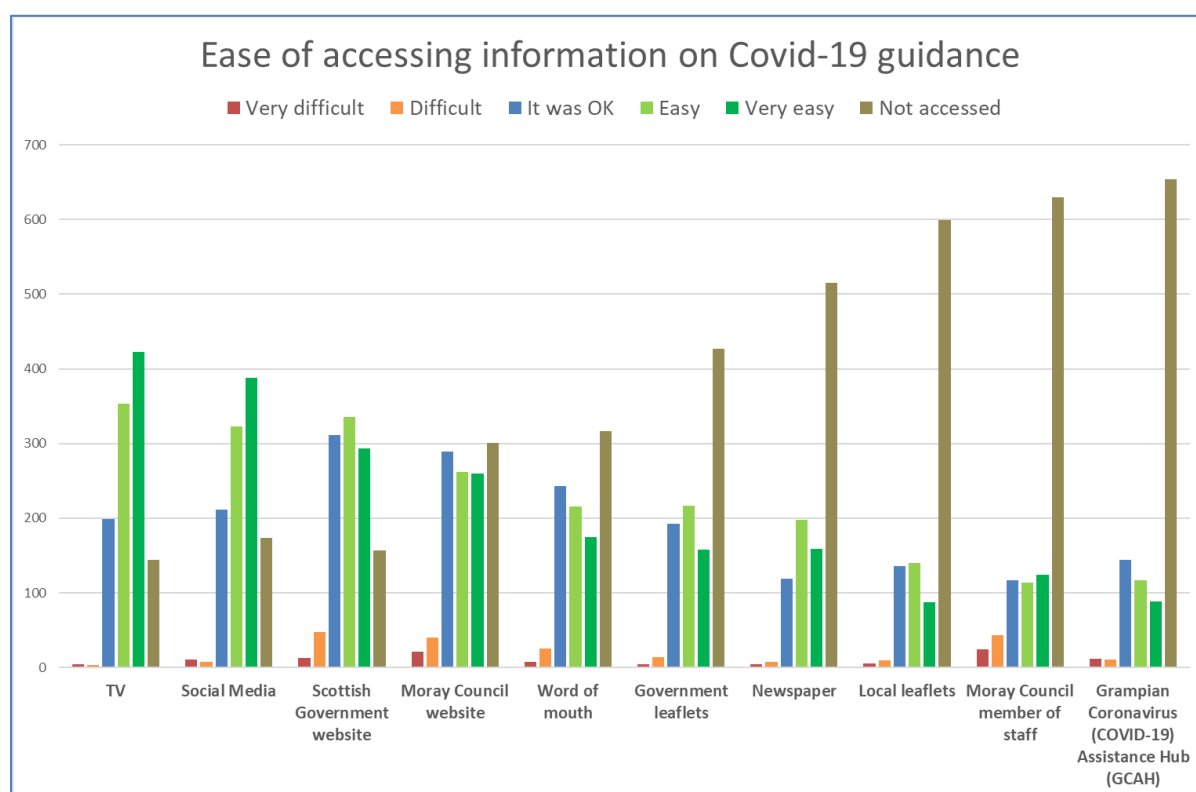
Although relatively few people had difficulty with accessing information from any of the sources there were over 100 comments made on the problems that respondents encountered. The common themes included finding up-to-date, timely and clear advice on both the Scottish Government and Moray Council websites; difficulty in keeping up with changing guidance; sorting out the contradictory and misleading information especially on social media sites; and finding trustworthy sources. Some people felt they were being overloaded with information and struggled to find the particular guidance they were after, while 2 respondents highlighted the issue with broadband access in some parts of Moray and weren't able to access information by digital means. One person suggested information should be available in a child-friendly format, and there was one request for audio information to be posted to households who have learning disabilities so that they do not get left out.

The problem with misinformation on social media is not unique to Moray. For example, the *Glasgow Evening Times*[10] reported that Glasgow City Council has said it will block any accounts from its social media channels that spread false information on the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown rules, and the legitimacy of vaccines. The local authority's Facebook page reaches almost 2.5m people, as does its Twitter account, leading officials to conclude that if misinformation is not challenged it could cause damage.

There were a small number of comments about the difficulties of contacting staff during lockdown. These included being put on hold for over 15 minutes, not being able to contact staff who were homeworking but did not have access to Council IT and lack of responses to emails. Three people had difficulties contacting GCAH or were allocated tasks too far away for them to undertake.

Comments on information from websites included:

> *"Too many sites providing the same information yet all slightly different. Leading to confusion and people ending up with information overload."*

> *"The COVID section of the Moray Council website was poor this should have been the main and only page of access on the website instead the general public could access all other pages on the web as normal which provided too much conflicting information. When emailing the Council the poor staff at times did not know about any changes or announcements that were on social media."*
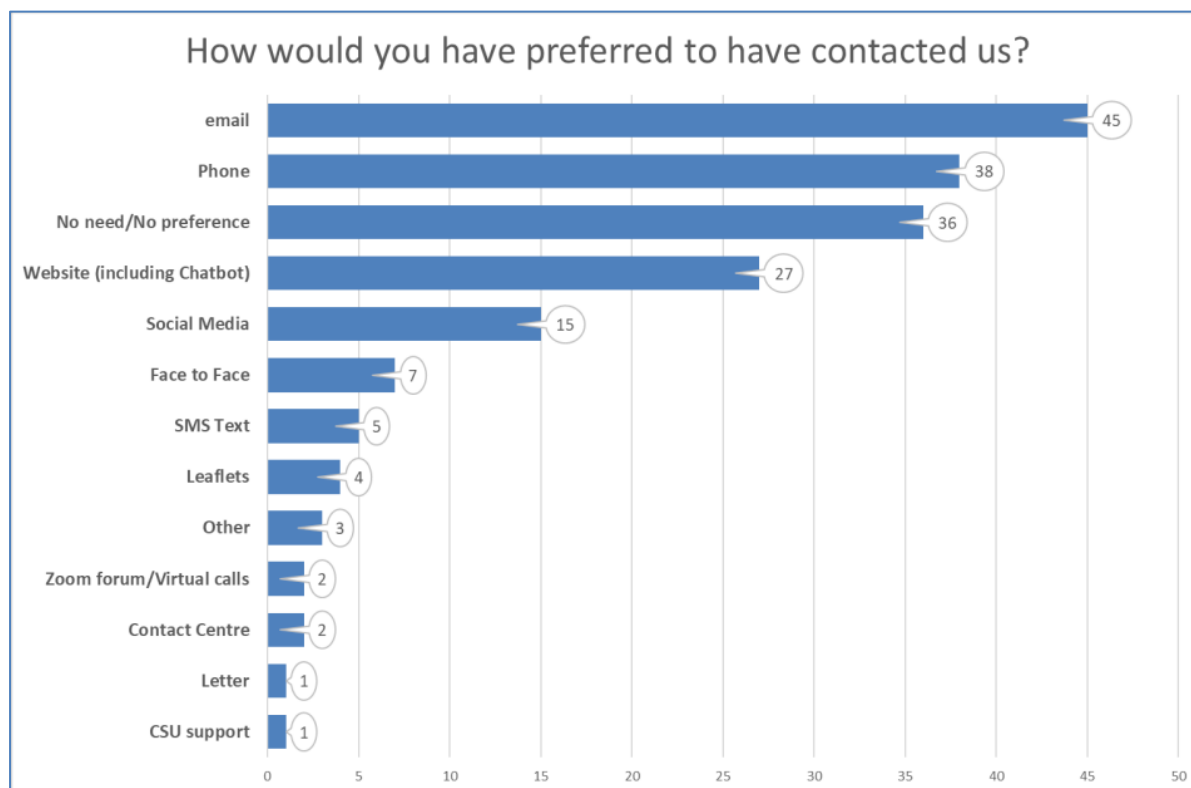
4.3   CONTACTING MORAY COUNCIL

The final question in the survey asked residents how they would prefer to contact Moray Council, but only 258 people responded to the question (less than one-fifth of respondents). Some responses did not mention their preferred option but made comments on experiences that had happened to them or had suggestions for improvements in communication. Consequently, there were fewer than 190 responses to this question that provided the preferred method for residents to contact Moray Council. The results are summarised at Figure 21.

Email and 'phone were the most preferred methods accounting for almost half the responses (44.6%), while 19.4% either had no need to contact the Council or did not have a preferred method. The website and social media were also popular methods, but SMS text was less popular than face-to-face. One person requested "Audio cd through the post or

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[10] Cited by LGiU Scotland, Wednesday November 18th, 2020

email audio pdf", which may indicate that our communication methods do not cover the needs of all residents.

Figure 21: Preferences for contacting Moray Council

How would you have preferred to have contacted us?

Method	Count
email	45
Phone	38
No need/No preference	36
Website (including Chatbot)	27
Social Media	15
Face to Face	7
SMS Text	5
Leaflets	4
Other	3
Zoom forum/Virtual calls	2
Contact Centre	2
Letter	1
CSU support	1

Some respondents provided positive examples of good communication and enquiries being handled well:

> "all contact with you was very professional and very helpful by your team that i dealt with via e-mail ,personal phone calls being direct with very good explanations ,advice and followed up with any outstanding issues with answers within a few hours ,i can't praise your team enough under the circumstances"

> "As part of Forres Covid19 Mutual Aid, I attended a weekly meeting along with Sylvia Jamieson the Forres Community Support worker. She was a good liaison and helped to point us in the direction as needed."

> "I contacted you by my preferred way, e mail, and got quick and informative responses about the over 60 bus pass."

> "… social media announcements were good."

However, there were some who did not have such a positive experience, and one person commented on their experience of the GCAH:

> *"Often telephones just rang or you got a message re covid and offices closed. If email sent often the reply was generic and matter of fact, not addressing actual complaint or enquiry."*

> *"I find MC communications quite long winded & not that easy to pin down."*

> *"On the one occasion I had need to contact the council (on non covid related matter) i did so by email which I thought would be best, however never received a response. This was to an email address in the Moray Council website."*

> *"Grampian Hub seemed to disjointed and did not have awareness of Moray geography."*

Three people provided some suggestions for improvements, including one looking for specific advice for businesses:

> *"I feel that due to the amount of technology available it was very easy and accessible for myself and household. However for older and more vulnerable people maybe they were not so able to access the correct details and may have had to rely others to let them know what was happening or were unable to ensure if they were accessing the correct information as there was a lot of incorrect information going around if you were unable to access the government or local council information."*

> *"One sole team for contacting with up to date and correct advice. A uniform narrative that is given to both staff and the public."*

> *"I would have preferred more detailed information about who business could contact for further information about how they should be running and how to set up etc and also what to expect when we go to hair and beauty premises etc and who to speak to with concerns ..."*

There were also comments about the Moray Council website and the need for it to be easy to use, up-to-date and with the information available off-line for people without access to the internet:

> *"On the Moray Council website but make it easier to understand. Some parts have not been updated to reflect current circumstances."*

> *"Have a really good, well made and easy to use and read section on your website which anyone can access by either app or non-app means, but also for non-computer users PLEASE have info points where needed info can be accessed and make these well known - advertise them."*

As noted above at Section 2.1 around 20% of the respondents had a negative experience with not being able to contact the Council in person. The comments could be broken down

into 2 main categories. The first being issues with the technology and the virtual meetings application being used:

> *"Vscene meetings are useless, people get kicked off, they freeze, too much background noise!"*

> *"Lack of fast connectivity in our area. Unable to access v scene at all by computer. using MS Teams also problematic. Frustrating when working from home."*

> *"The platform used meant many people couldn't be heard or seen."*

The other category was the negative impacts of the loss of face-to-face sessions, and one that demonstrated the problems of using technology inappropriately:

> *"As a foster carer to 15year old we all missed the face to face contact with our social workers during lockdown teenager didn't have any contact with family due to this became withdrawn and any progress that had been made was gone"*

> *"The lack of contact & meetings for the care of my disabled brother has been horrendous. The policies adopted have made this period extremely damaging to his physical & mental well being."*

> *"You tried to assess a deaf partially demented elderly woman on the phone. Ridiculous to think you could do that successfully."*

One comment in particular on the difficulties and frustration felt by one family illustrated the potential longer-term impact of the lock-down with more residents requiring additional support in the medium-term:

> *"None of this has been offered. A relative has been in hospital, can't be released until a care package is in place for them, why does it take so long. Only one visitor is allowed, the same visitor each time. Not seeing a parent for that long is unacceptable and as a result of being stuck with nobody they are suffering from depression now and not receiving the care they need. Updates have been poor, no virtual updates. Constant phone calls to try speak to someone. Poor communication. If masks and social distancing can be adhered to why is visiting so restricted."*

SECTION 5 – DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

5.1   SURVEY RESPONSES - DEMOGRAPHICS

Responses to the survey were submitted by 1,484[11] residents, three-quarters of whom were female. Similarly, around 75% of respondents were aged between 35 to 64 years old, although responses were received from all age categories. The survey respondents are not fully representative of the demographics of the Moray population with the older and younger members of the population being under-represented (Figure 12).

Figure 22: Demographics of respondents by age group and gender
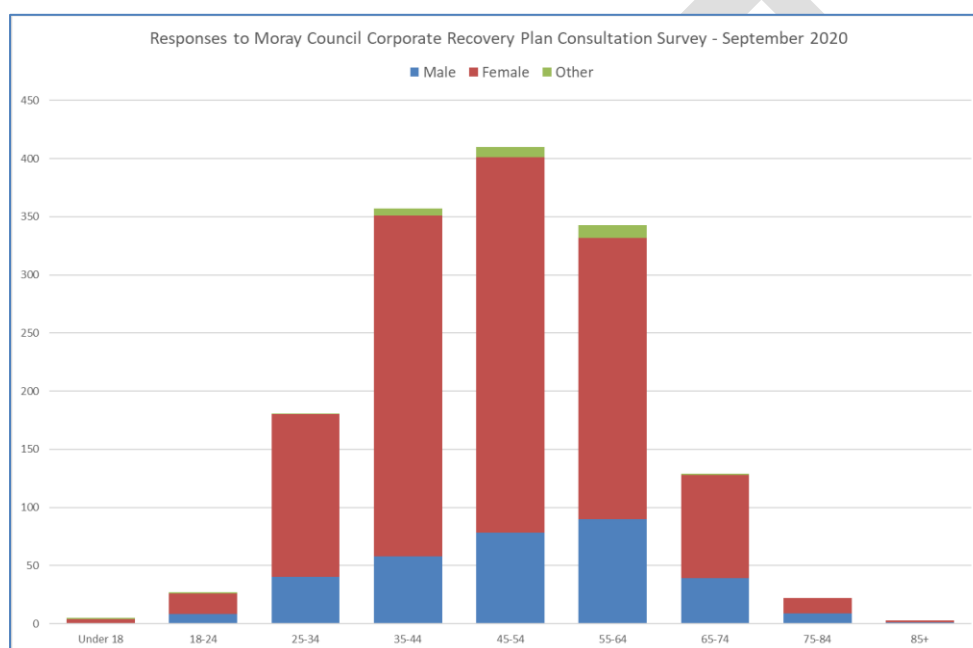
To help put the chart above into context Figure 13 shows the split between males and females for the same age groups for Moray, based on the Mid-2019 population estimates published by the National Records of Scotland.

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[11] Note that 3 of the respondents had not answered any questions and one had just entered their age group; making a total of 1,480 completed responses overall.

Figure 23: Moray population by age and gender - Mid-2019 estimate

Moray population (based on mid-2019 estimate by National records of Scotland)
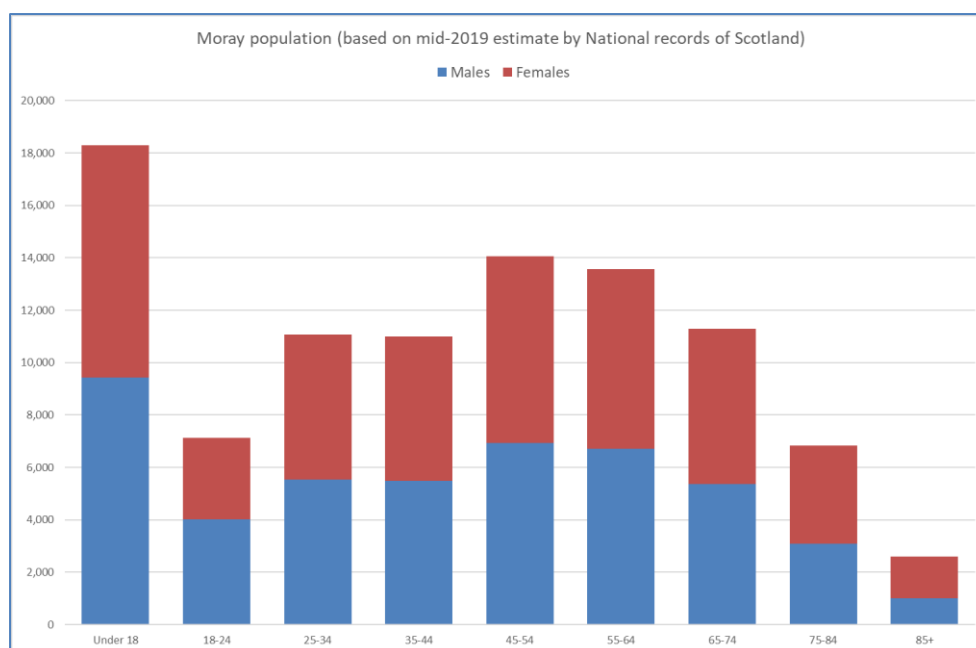
Figure 14 illustrates where the ages of the respondents differed from the ages of the wider Moray population. The greatest disparity was the under 18s with 0.3% of responses compared to over 19% of the population, followed by the 85-year olds and over (less than one-tenth of the responses to be truly representative). Similarly, the 18-24 and 75-84 age groups had responses that were between 4 and 5 times smaller than required to be representative. The 25-34 and 65-74 age groups were well-represented, and there were almost twice as many respondents in the 35-64 age groups compared to the make-up of Moray's population.

If further consultation is undertaken, then measures to consider how to reach the younger and older members of Moray's community would be recommended.

Figure 24: Comparing the demographics of respondents with the Moray population demographics

855 respondents included their full postcodes and base on this sample we were able to determine that responses were received from every data zone in Moray apart from *Buckie West and Mains of Buckie – 05.*

5.2   SURVEY RESPONSES – HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Most residents who responded to the survey were living as a couple or as a couple with their family (over 77%). People living alone, including widows and widowers, with or without other family members accounted for 22% of the responses. The proportion living by themselves was just under 12%; a sizeable minority who might be at higher risk of isolation during the lock-down (Figure 15).

Respondents lived in households of up to 10 people with the average being 2.8 (Figure 16).
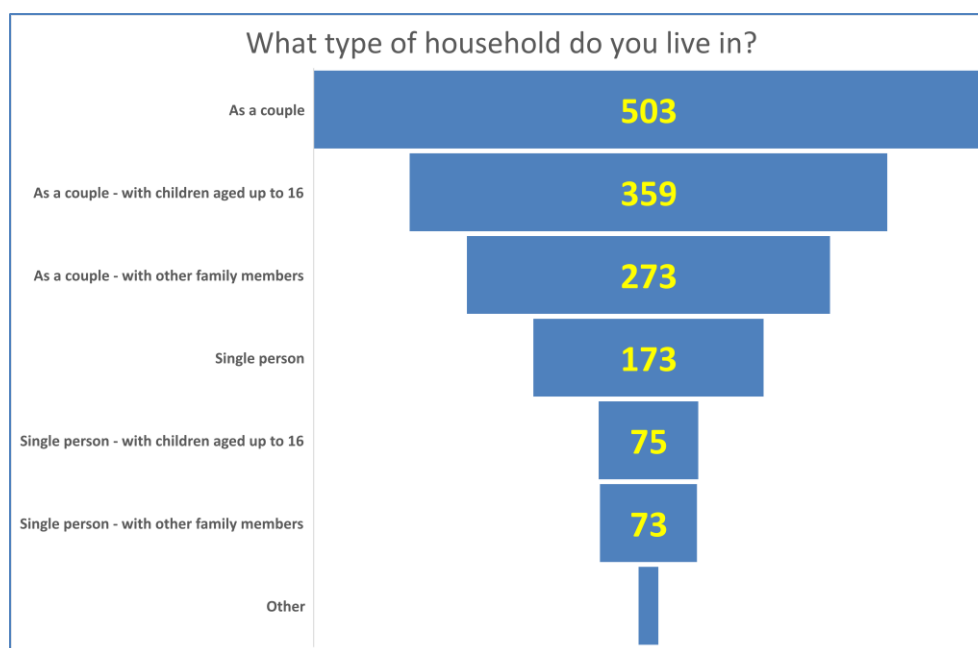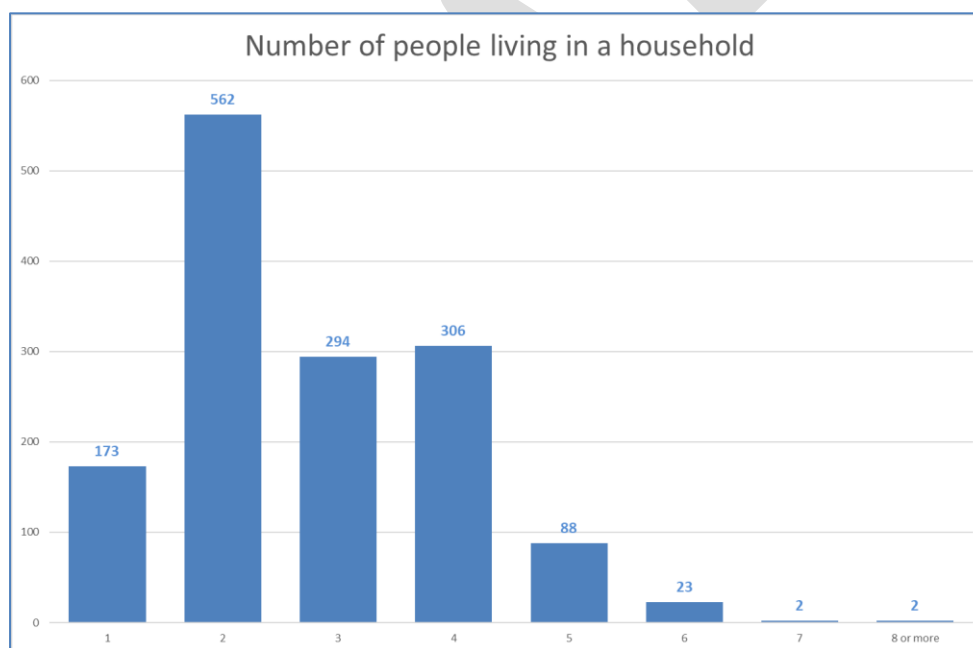
Figure 25: Composition of households

What type of household do you live in?

Household type	Value
As a couple	503
As a couple - with children aged up to 16	359
As a couple - with other family members	273
Single person	173
Single person - with children aged up to 16	75
Single person - with other family members	73
Other	

Figure 26: Number of people living in a household

Number of people living in a household

Number	Value
1	173
2	562
3	294
4	306
5	88
6	23
7	2
8 or more	2

CONCLUSIONS

At the population level the responses to the survey suggest that for many residents the impact of the lockdown on their employment status was relatively minor, with 89% stating they were in work or retired. However, this masks the impact at an individual level and extrapolating the findings of the survey suggests that in the region of 500 residents could have lost their jobs or been furloughed during the lockdown. Apart from the financial impact to those who had lost their jobs or were furloughed some respondents who remained in work noted the impact on their health and sense of wellbeing due to working at home for extended periods. Respondents missed the company and camaraderie of colleagues and feeling of being part of a team. There is likely to be an additional demand placed upon healthcare services and the benefits/money advice teams as the pandemic continues.

For those who had been made redundant almost two-thirds suggested they would look for work within Moray, and 40% would consider retraining. Almost half were not in a position to retire and would be looking for new employment opportunities. The most popular choice for retraining was Computer/Digital and Technology, which may cause difficulties for job-seekers wishing to remain in Moray as Information and Communication only accounts for slightly more than 1% of the Moray job-market. Another popular choice for retraining was in the Tourism and Hospitality, and the Food and Drink sectors, which are significant employers in Moray. However, to further compound the difficulties of potential job-seekers nationally both these sectors are facing higher levels of furlough. Consequently, the level of unemployment that Moray may face will need to be monitored closely so that Moray Council and partners will be prepared to meet the potential, additional demands for support.

Overall residents appeared to be reasonably happy with the changes that Moray Council introduced to reduce the spread of Covid-19. For the relatively small number of residents who experienced a major negative impact there were no obvious common factors, such as location, age or employment status. Although the numbers and proportions of respondents who reported major problems with the changes to the health and social care arrangements were low the impact on those involved were significant. Individual circumstances would appear to be the most significant factor, which suggests a potential concern for providing services that meet the needs of the most vulnerable.

However, although residents scored the overall impact of the changes there was concern expressed over the 3-weekly change to domestic waste collection and having to book an appointment for a slot at recycling centres. These 2 issues generated a considerable number of often passionate comments. While many people are able to cope with the 3-weekly waste collection cycle there were some with young children, babies, or family members requiring additional support who struggled with the timing. Similarly, larger households also found that their bins would be full before the next collection date. If the collection

schedules are reviewed then consideration of individual households' circumstances could be taken into account. It was not clear what the particular concerns were with the recycling centres' booking system, other than some people just didn't like it. It wasn't mentioned specifically, but responses to other questions indicate that some residents are still struggling to connect digitally, and this might be preventing a small number of people from being able to book a slot. It should be noted that for a small proportion of residents both these measures were seen to be positive (5% for 3-weekly collections and 7.5% for recycling centre appointments).

Relatively few people who responded to the survey requested support during the lockdown (Just under 1 in 10), and most of them received the support they needed. However, 6 respondents stated that they did not receive the support that they requested, with befriending being the largest unmet need. This highlights the impact of isolation for some individuals living in Moray and presents a challenge for Moray Council and its partners in creating services that can be delivered to individuals regardless of their circumstances.

A greater proportion of residents living in the more deprived areas of Moray requested support, but there were residents needing support in every SIMD 2020 decile, indicating that deprivation is not the sole contributing cause. The largest proportion of respondents needing support were recently unemployed or unable to work due to a disability, with around 15% of residents requesting support aged 65 years old and over. It is highly likely that more support is required than this survey suggests as the response rate for older people over 75 years old was much less than the demographics of Moray's population, and isolated residents who are unable to contact services are unlikely to have responded.

The responses to the support provided by Moray Council to volunteers was mainly neutral, but there were some very positive comments as well as negative criticisms. The positive comments appear to have come from individuals and groups that already had good links to the Council, through the Community Support Unit, TSI Moray and local community councils for example. The negative comments suggest that some individuals and groups received no support, which presents an opportunity to strengthen links to communities and raise awareness more widely of the support that is available.

Most people kept themselves abreast of the latest Covid-19 guidance from television, radio, social media and the Scottish Government and Moray Council websites. The majority were content with the information they received, but people raised concerns about finding up-to-date, timely and clear advice on both the Scottish Government and Moray Council websites; difficulty in keeping up with changing guidance; sorting out the contradictory and misleading information especially on social media sites; and finding trustworthy sources. Websites needed to be clearer and kept up-to-date. The problem of broadband access in some parts of Moray preventing access information by digital means was highlighted by 2 individuals.

Generally, people are happy to contact Moray Council by e-mail or phone, and there was reasonable support for using the website, with the addition of chatbots, and social media. Face-to-face is still preferred by some, and there are occasions when this would still appear to be the most appropriate method. One respondent noted the lack of information in a suitable format for people with disabilities.

A common recurring theme has been noted, which suggests that support is good where people know how to obtain services or have well connected networks in their communities. If individuals or groups are not aware of these channels or are isolated geographically or digitally, for example, they are less able to access the support they need.

There is some optimism for the future but there were still a high proportion of respondents who had concerns over their and their families', health and wellbeing, and the loss of employment in particular.