

**MEMBERS' SURVEY
2019-20
OUTCOMES REPORT**

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1. Background and introduction

In 2017, a Members' **Exit Survey** sought the views of all Elected Members who had held the office of Councillor on their experiences during their term in office (which for most members was five years up to May 2017). As part of this survey, Members were asked about their experiences of bullying, discrimination, and any other unacceptable behaviours.

Following the Local Elections in May 2017, a survey of Members was undertaken to establish their training and development needs, as well as identify some of the challenges that they encountered during the first six months of their term in office. In this survey, Members were also asked about their experience of bullying, discriminatory and unacceptable behaviours.

To allow for comparability of responses, the **2017-18 Survey** used the same questions that were used during the Exit Survey. In addition to the questions in respect of "*Member's experience*" that used in the Exit Survey, a question on whether "*Members have witnessed*" an incident of bullying, discrimination and other unacceptable behaviours was also included in the 2017-18 Survey. The data from the Members' Exit Survey in 2017 and the 2017-18 Members' Survey was the basis for this comparative analysis.

This methodology was also used to compile the **2019-20 Survey** with the findings from each of the surveys being considered where this is appropriate and using cross-tabulation of variables such as gender, age or political party have been presented.

2. Member Respondents' Profile

2.1 Number of respondents

Chart 1 displays the total of 39 Members who responded to the bullying, discriminatory and unacceptable behaviours questions in the Exit Survey at the end of the political term in 2017.

Following the elections in 2017, 47 out of 75 Elected Members responded to the 2017-18 Survey. Of this number, 33 Members (44%) responded to the bullying discriminatory and unacceptable behaviours questions.

In 2019-2020 a total 42 respondents completed the survey and of this number, 40 (95%) responded to the questions on bullying, discriminatory and unacceptable behaviours.

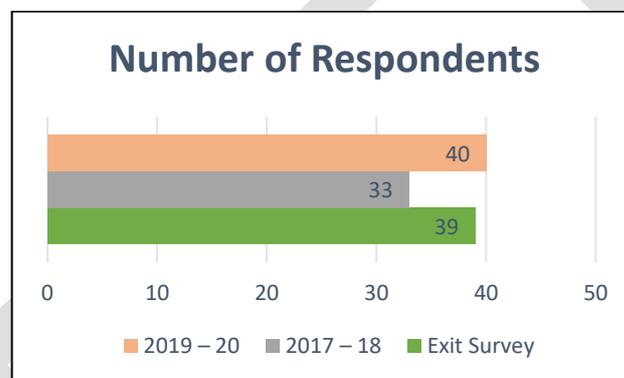


Chart 1

2.2 Respondents by Gender Type

The results in **Chart 2**, shows that most of the respondents to the surveys were "Male".

Males represented 54% of respondents in the Exit Survey and nearly two-thirds (61%) in the 2017-18 Survey. There was a greater proportion (36%) and number of Female (14) respondents who completed the Exit Survey compared with the 2017-18 Survey where they represented just over a quarter (27%) of respondents. Similarly, in both surveys, a few respondents did not disclose their gender category.

The results of the 2020 Survey indicate a similar distribution of respondents by gender categories. The majority of respondents were "Male" (62%) with just over a third (36%) declaring as "Female". One of the respondents did not disclose their gender.

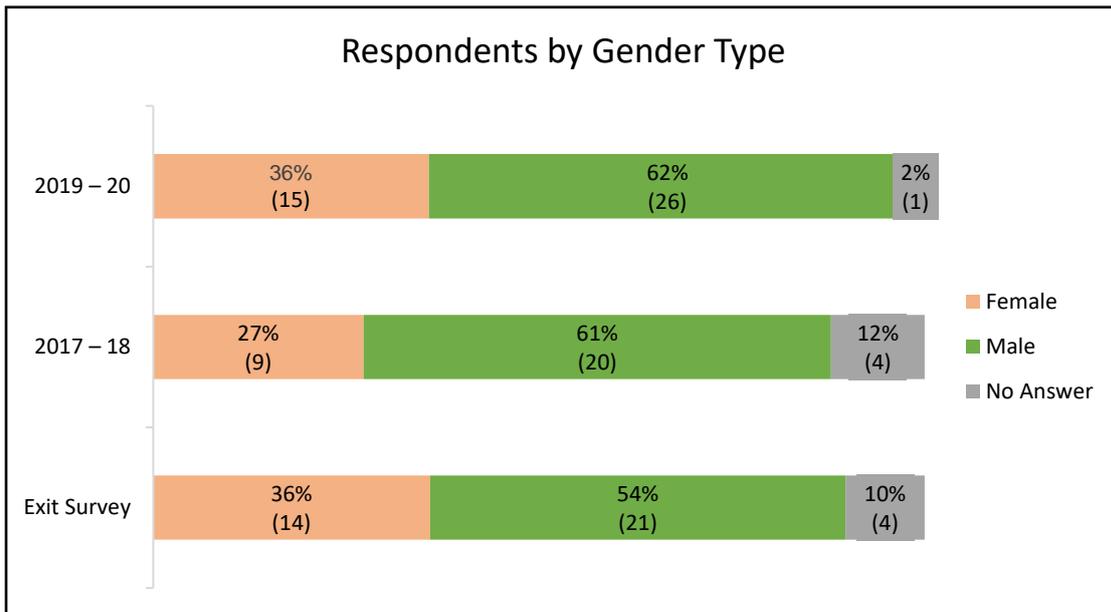


Chart 2

2.3 Distribution of Respondents by Political Group

There were more respondents to the bullying and other discriminatory behaviour questions in the Exit Survey (44%) and the 2017 Survey (45%) from the Labour group.

There were also more respondents from the Conservative group in the 2017-18 survey (27%) compared to (17%) in the Exit Survey. This was likely to be as a result of the increase in Conservative Councillors following the Local Government Elections in May 2017 which saw their representation on the Council rise from 11 to 20.

The distribution of respondents by political party in the 2019-2020 Survey as shown in **Chart 3**, reflects a similar trend to the previous surveys. Most of the respondents (45%) represent the Labour group, with a significant proportion (30%) from the Conservative group. A total of 3 respondents did not disclose the political group that they are affiliated to.

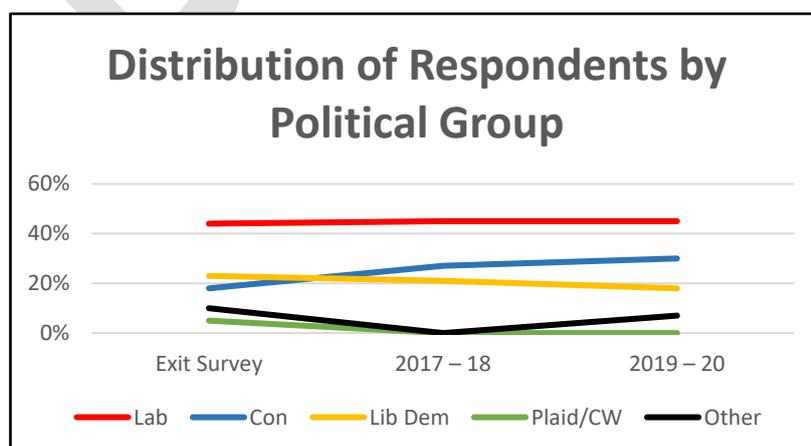


Chart 3

2.4 Number of Returning and New Councillors

Of the 75, Elected Members, a total of 47 responded to the 2017-18 Survey. Of this number, only 33 Members responded to the bullying, discriminatory and unacceptable behaviours questions. The majority (58%) of those who completed these questions were “Newly Elected” Members (19) with “returning” Members (14) accounting for 42% of total respondents.

In the 2019-20 Survey more than half (55%) were elected at or since the Local Government Elections in 2017. **(See Chart 4)**

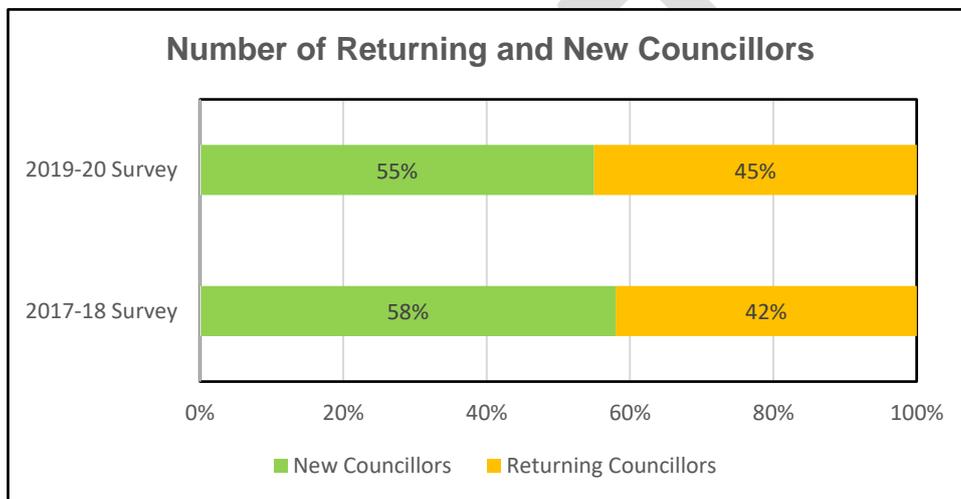


Chart 4

2.5 Number of Respondents by Age Group

In **Chart 5**, slightly over a third (36%) of respondents to the Exit Survey were under 55, while nearly half (46%) were over 55. In comparison, the age distribution of respondents in the 2017-18 survey showed that most of the respondents (45%) were under 55 years old. Those who were over 55 years old accounted for 33% of total respondents.

In both the Exit Survey (18%) and the 2017-18 Survey (15%), several respondents did not disclose their age.

As with the previous surveys, the largest proportion of respondents in the 2019-20 survey were over 55 years old. The percentage of respondents who were between 35 – 55 years old was 35% (14) and represents a significant proportion.

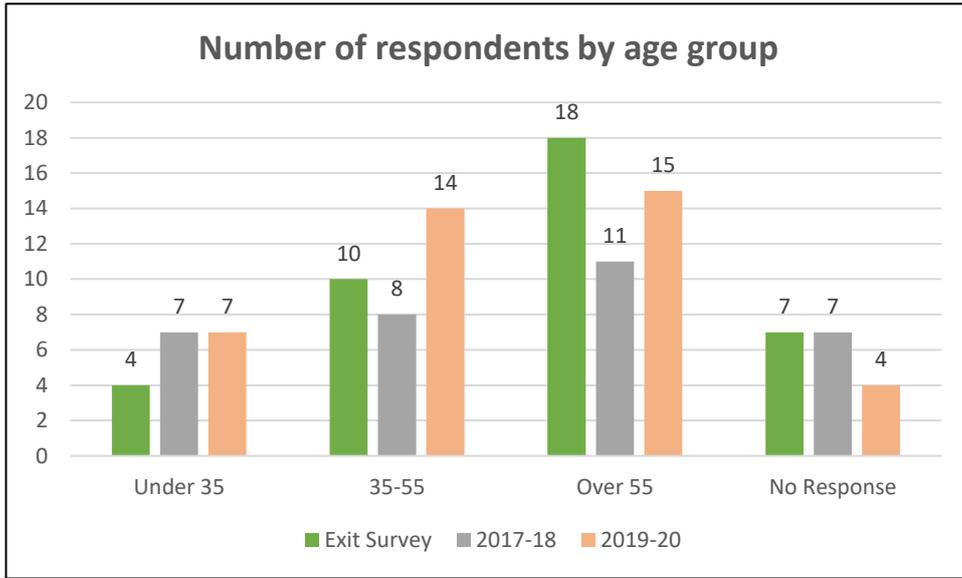


Chart 5

3. Member’s Experience of Unacceptable Behaviours

3.1 Respondents Experience of Unacceptable behaviours

As part of the Exit Survey and the 2017-18 Survey, respondents were asked, “During your term in office have you personally experienced bullying, discriminatory or any other unacceptable behaviours?”

In **Chart 6** a proportion (in the range of 45% - 56%) of Members indicated that they have experienced either bullying, discriminatory or other unacceptable behaviours. A higher proportion of respondents (56%) to the Exit Survey identified that they had experienced an incident compared to respondents (45%) in the 2017-18 Survey.

The results of the 2019-20 Survey show that there is a proportion of respondents who indicated that they have experienced some form of bullying, discriminatory or other unacceptable behaviours.

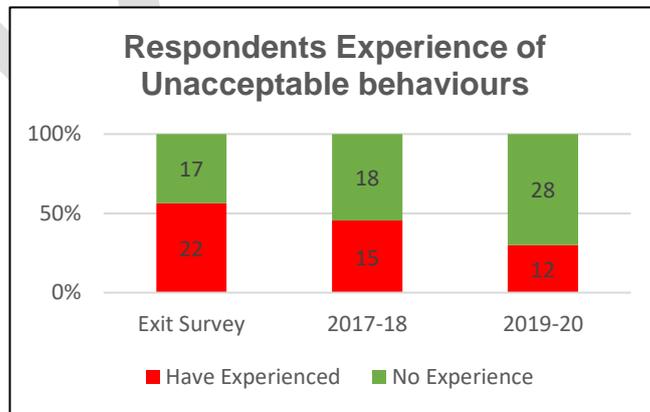


Chart 6

The number (12) and proportion (30%) of respondents who confirmed that they had experienced these behaviours in the 2019-20 survey was lower in comparison with previous years (45% in 2017-18 and 56% in the Exit Survey).

During the previous administration, as indicated by the results of the Exit Survey, a higher proportion of Members had experienced bullying (36%) and or discrimination (31%).

The results show that a proportion of Members elected at the Local Government Elections 2017 had experienced bullying (21%) and discrimination (15%) other unacceptable behaviours (21%).

3.1.1 Bullying

The results from the 2019-2020 Survey in **Chart 7** that a proportion of Members (12%) confirmed that they have experienced bullying since the period from January 2018. This is comparatively lower than those reported during 2017-18 Annual Survey (21%) and the Exit Survey (36%).

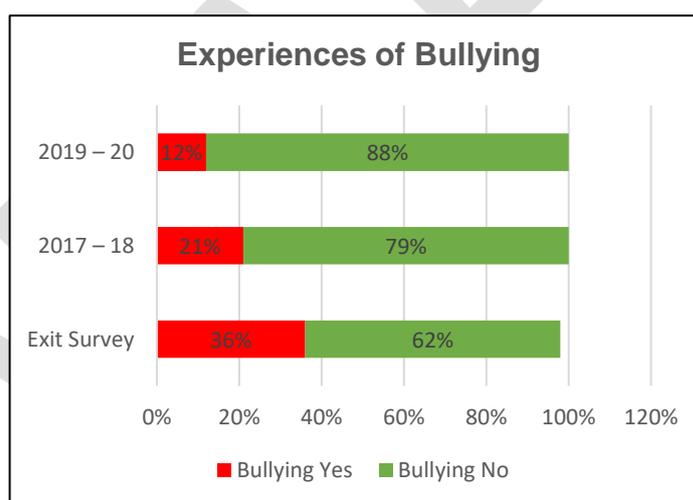


Chart 7

3.1.2 Discrimination

In the 2019-2020 Survey there was a number (6) or proportion (15%) of respondents who experienced discriminatory behaviours. **Chart 8** indicates that this figure is comparatively lower than the number or proportion of those who experienced discrimination in the Exit Survey and the 2017-18 Survey

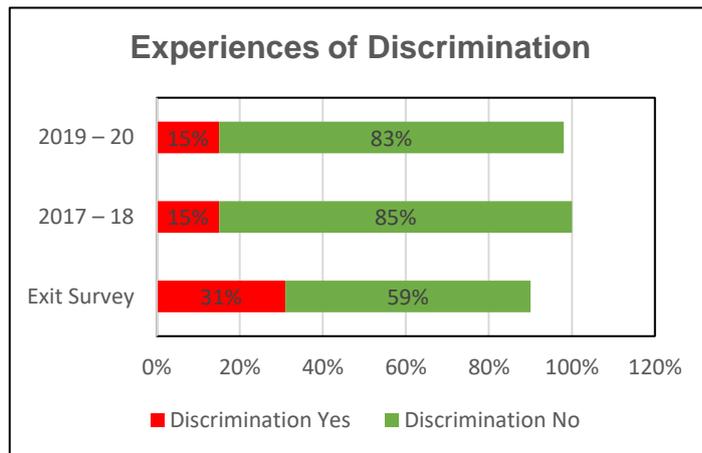


Chart 8

3.1.3 Other Unacceptable Behaviours

The comparative data in **Chart 9** shows that the percentage of respondents who experienced various types of unacceptable behaviours has declined since the Exit Survey and the 2017-18 Survey.

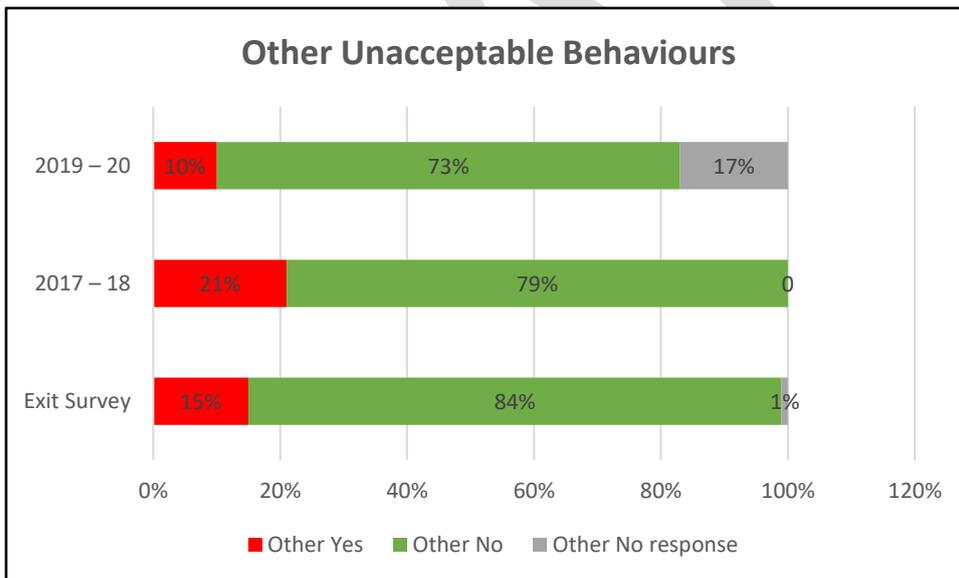


Chart 9

Those respondents (4) who responded that they had experienced other types of unacceptable behaviours have described these as:

- Patronising and condensing attitudes, dismissing concerns
- Very friendly
- Voicemail left by one Member and formal complaint being considered Heckling and goading at council meetings. Although this is accepted as normal within

political environments it is not a respectful way to behave and engage with your peers

It must be noted that there is a significant number of respondents (7) who have not responded to either confirm or deny whether they have experienced any “Other” types of unacceptable behaviours. This may suggest that these respondents were reluctant to disclose whether they experienced what is regarded as unacceptable behaviour. Furthermore, this may also suggest that there are respondents who are unclear or unsure of what constitutes or could be regarded as unacceptable behaviours.

3.2 Experience of Unacceptable Behaviours by Gender Type

3.2.1 Female Respondents experience of Unacceptable Behaviours

The results from the Exit and 2017-18 Surveys show that majority of the female respondent’s experienced bullying, discrimination, or other unacceptable behaviour.

In the Exit Survey, as many as 10 (71%) female respondents experienced such incidents. There is a slightly smaller proportion (56%) of female respondents in the 2017-18 Survey who had similar experiences. Although the figures are lower in the 2017-18 Survey, the results from both surveys would suggest that most female Elected Members have experienced either bullying, discrimination or other unacceptable behaviours. See **Chart 10** below.

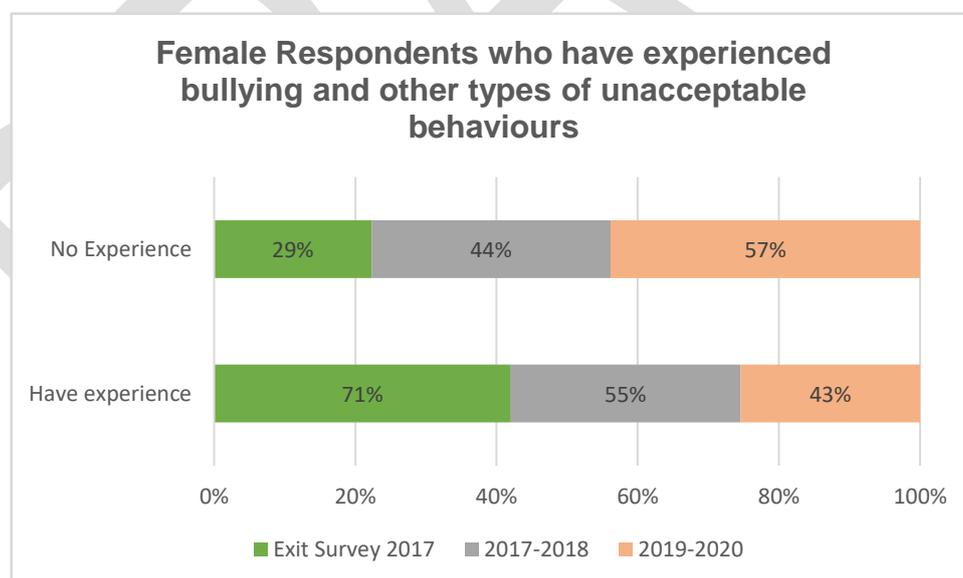


Chart 10

The 2019-20 survey results show that a significant proportion of female respondents (43%) had experienced some form of unacceptable behaviour including bullying or discrimination. Compared to the previous 2017-18 Survey (5), there is a slightly higher total number of female respondents (6) who experienced these behaviours. This number is, however, a much lower figure when compared to the results in the Exit Survey. It should be noted that the percentage of female respondents who have

experienced unacceptable behaviours has reduced from 55% in 2017-18 to 43% in 2019-20.

3.2.3 Incidents Experienced by Female Respondents

Chart 11 shows that of the 6 female respondents who experienced unacceptable behaviours, most of them (67%) indicated that these were discriminatory behaviours. Half of the female respondent (s) also indicated that they had experienced bullying. One respondent (17%) stated that she had experienced “Other” unacceptable behaviour and had described this as “heckling and goading at Council meeting” which she regarded as a disrespectful way of behaving and engaging with peers.

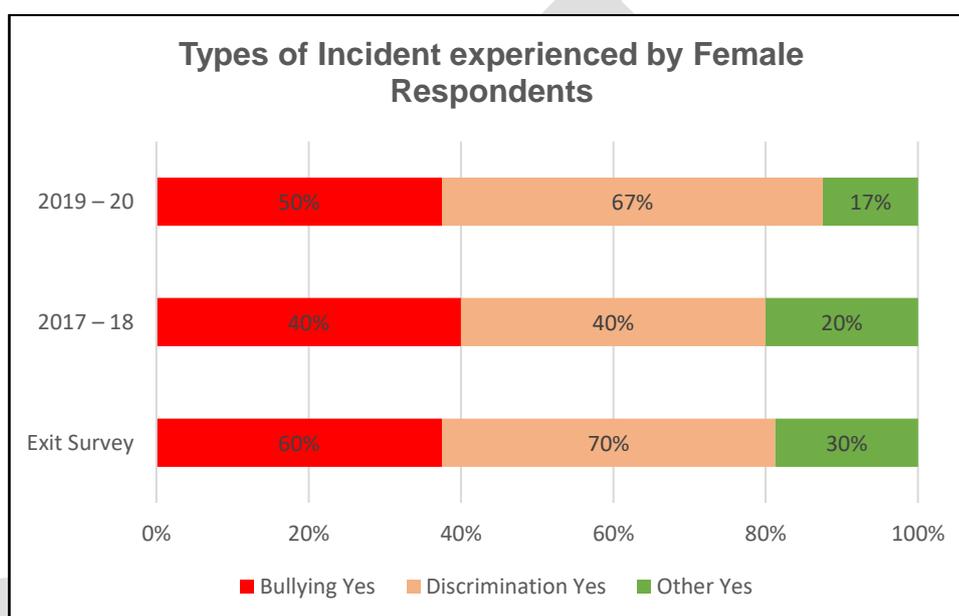


Chart 11

3.2.4 Male Respondents Experience of Unacceptable Behaviours.

The results in Chart 12 show that half of male respondents (50%) in the Exit Survey experienced bullying or other unacceptable behaviours. There is a smaller proportion of male respondents (35%) in the 2017-18 Survey who experienced similar incidents.

The 2019-20 survey results show that there is a smaller proportion (20%) of male respondents who experienced some form of unacceptable behaviours.

A comparison of the findings from the various surveys show a decreasing trend in the number and proportion of male respondents who “experienced” unacceptable behaviours. The results show that during the Exit Survey as many as 50% experienced these behaviours with the figures declining to 35% in the 2017-18 Survey, and have decreased further to 20% in the 2019-20 Survey.

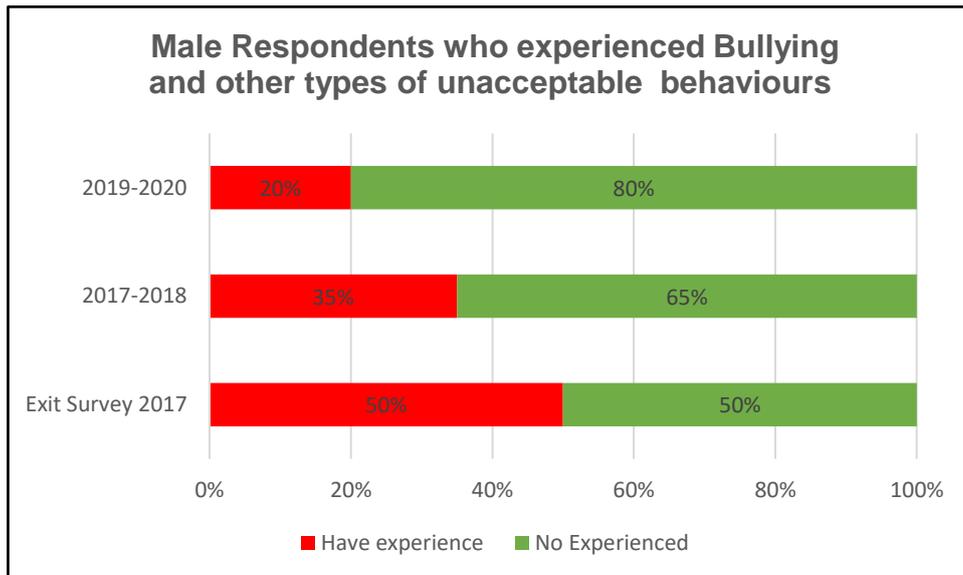


Chart 12

3.2.5 Incidents Experienced by Male Respondents

Chart 13 illustrates the percentage and distribution of male respondents who have experienced various types of unacceptable behaviours.

The results show that in the Exit Survey a greater number and proportion of male respondents experienced bullying and other unacceptable behaviours compared with those in the 2017-18 Survey.

Of the 5 male respondents who experienced unacceptable behaviours, only 1 (20%) indicated that they had experienced bullying, whilst 2 (40%) experienced some form of discriminatory behaviours. Three of the 5 male respondents (60%) experienced other forms of unacceptable behaviours. The “other” unacceptable behaviours that were cited by these male respondents included: “Patronising and condensing attitudes, dismissing concerns”; unwelcome attention that is referred to as “very friendly” and unwelcome/unacceptable telephone messages.

A comparison of the 2019-20 results with the findings from previous years show that the total number and percentage of male respondents who had experienced bullying and discriminatory behaviours had declined.

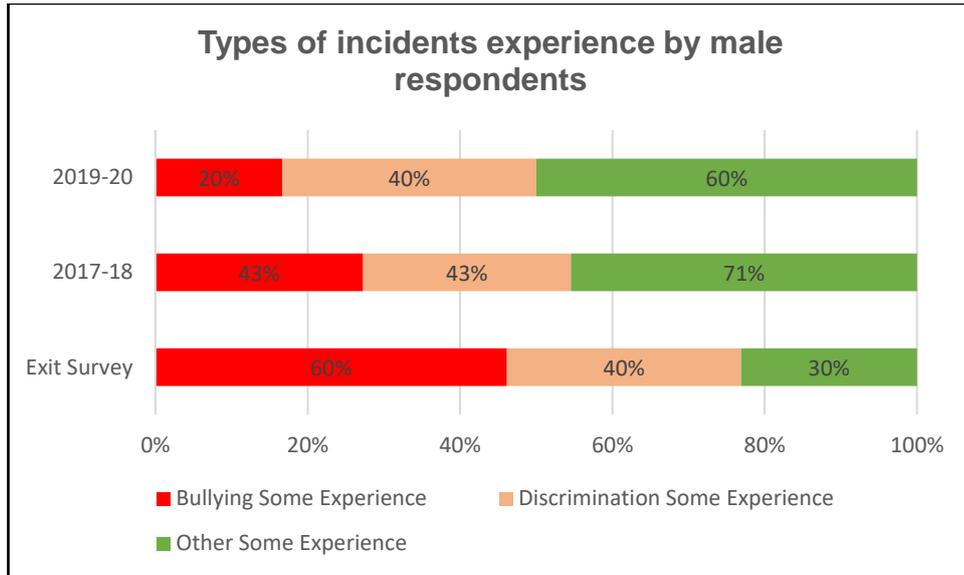


Chart 13

3.3 Experience of Unacceptable Behaviours by Age Group

3.3.1 Over 55's Experience of Unacceptable Behaviours

Chart 14 illustrates the distribution of respondents and their experience by age group.

The results from the previous surveys shows that the majority of respondents over the age of 55 had experienced an incident of bullying, discrimination, or other unacceptable behaviour. In the Exit survey, this accounts for 72% of respondents and for 54% in the 2017-18 Survey.

The 2019-20 Survey result show that less than a third of respondents over the age of 55 experienced some form of “unacceptable behaviours”.

A comparison with the survey results from previous years the number and percentage of the over 55 respondents who have experienced unacceptable behaviours has been declining. In the Exit Survey as many as 72% had experienced these behaviours, but this figure had decreased to 54% in the 2017-18 Survey and declined further to 27% this in the latest survey.

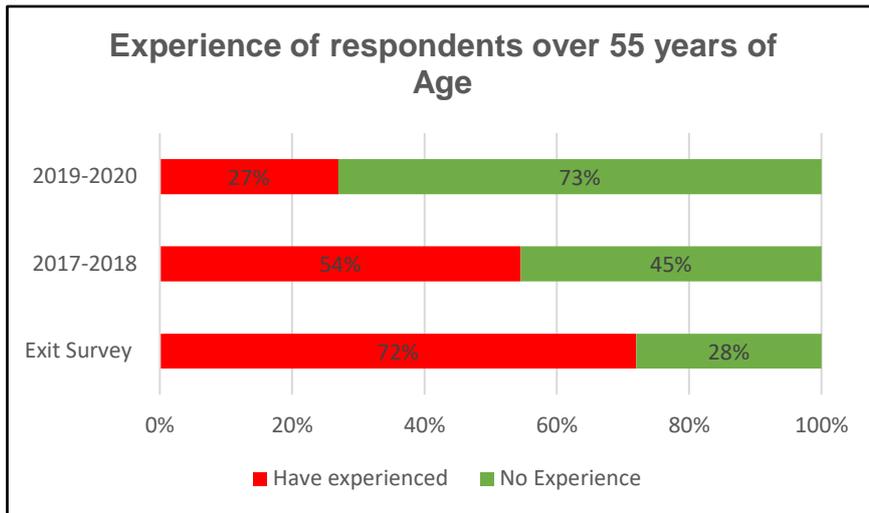


Chart 14

3.3.2 Incidents Experienced by over 55 year olds

Chart 15 shows that in the 2017-18 Survey a smaller number and proportion of male respondents over 55 years old had experienced bullying or unacceptable behaviours.

Of the 4 respondents aged over 55, only 2 (50%) of them confirmed that they experienced bullying whilst two (50%) respondents experienced discriminatory behaviours. One of these respondents also indicated that they had experienced “other” unacceptable behaviours and had described this as “unacceptable telephone messages”.

The results of the 2019-20 survey showed that the number and percentage of the aged over 55 respondents who experienced these behaviours were generally lower when compared to the survey findings in previous years.

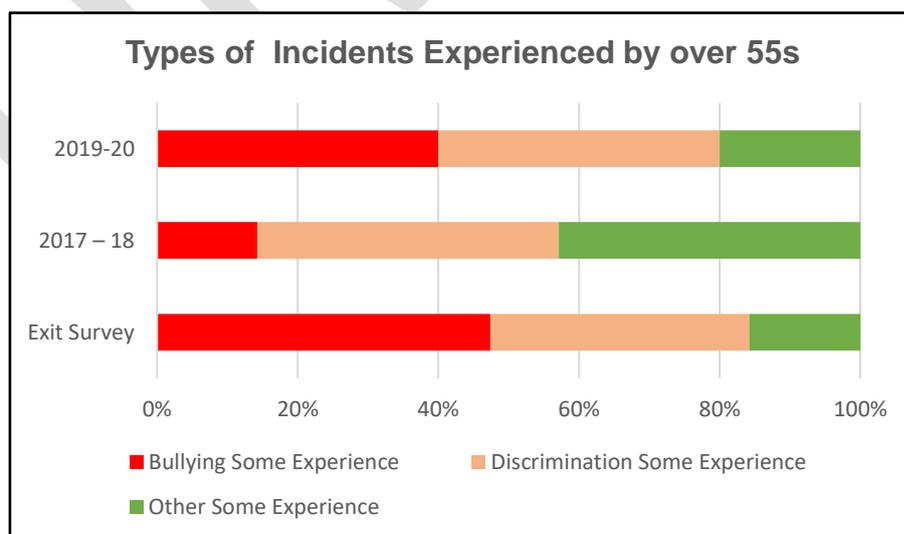


Chart 15

3.3.3 Under-55 year olds Experience of Incidents of Unacceptable Behaviours

Chart 16 shows the number and proportion of respondents in Exit Survey (36%) and 2017-18 Survey (33%) under 55 years of age who had experienced bullying and other unacceptable behaviours were not hugely dissimilar.

The results of the 2019-20 survey show that a third (33%) of respondents aged under 55 years had experienced some form of unacceptable behaviours.

The total number of under 55 respondents in the 2019-20 Survey who experienced these behaviours is slightly higher compared to those in previous years. However when analysed as a proportion of total respondents, the percentage under 55 respondents this year (33%) who have had these experiences is the same (33%) as the in the previous 2017-18 Survey.

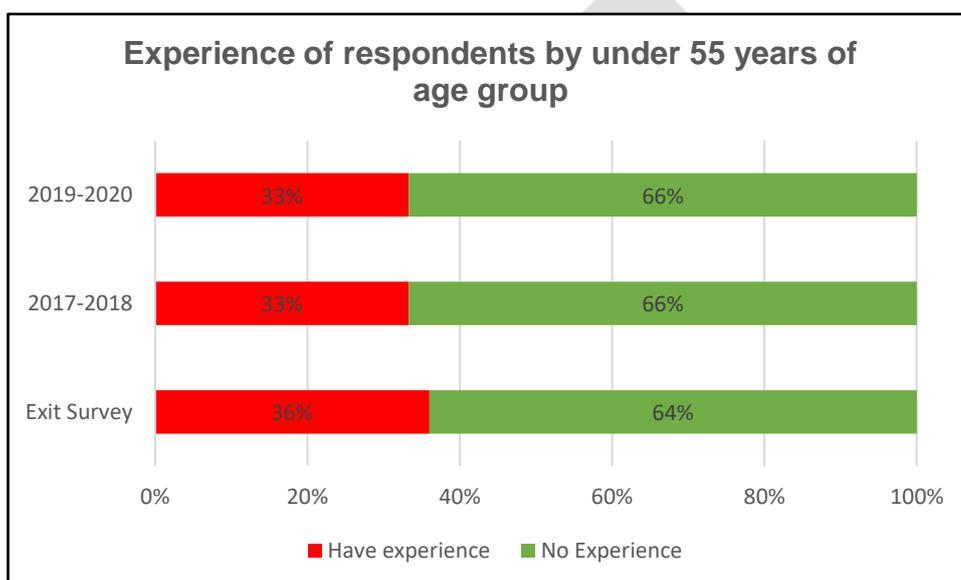


Chart 16

3.3.4 Types of incidents experienced by under-55's

In **Chart 17**, of the 7 respondents aged under 55 in the 2019-20 Survey who had experienced unacceptable behaviours, 2 (29%) experienced bullying whilst 4 others (57%) experienced discriminatory behaviours. Three respondents (43%) stated that they had experienced "other" unacceptable behaviours. These included: sexist language; patronising condescending behaviours; unwanted attention/friendliness and heckling and goading at Council meetings.

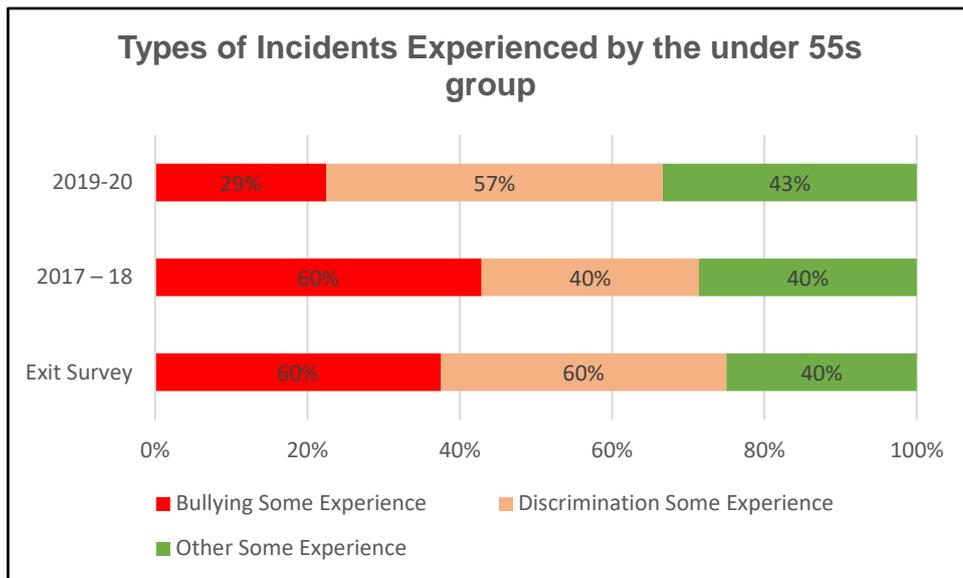


Chart 17.

3.4 Reporting of Experienced Incidents

3.4.1 Reporting Experience of Unacceptable Behaviours

When asked whether they had reported the incidents which they had witnessed or experienced, the results **Chart 18** show that the majority of respondents in both the Exit Survey (56%) and the 2017-18 Survey (in the range of 73% - 85%) did not report these incidents.

Compared to the Exit Survey, there was a greater proportion of respondents to the 2017-18 Survey who did not report the incidents that they experienced (73% of respondents) or witnessed (85% of respondents).

The results of the 2019-2020 Survey show that more than half of respondents (58%) did not report their experience of unacceptable behaviours. These figures are quite significant as this suggests that more respondents have chosen not to report these incidents. When compared with the results of the 2017-18 Survey a marked improvement (27% in 2017/18, increasing to 42% in 2020) in the percentage of respondents who reported their experiences of unacceptable behaviours.

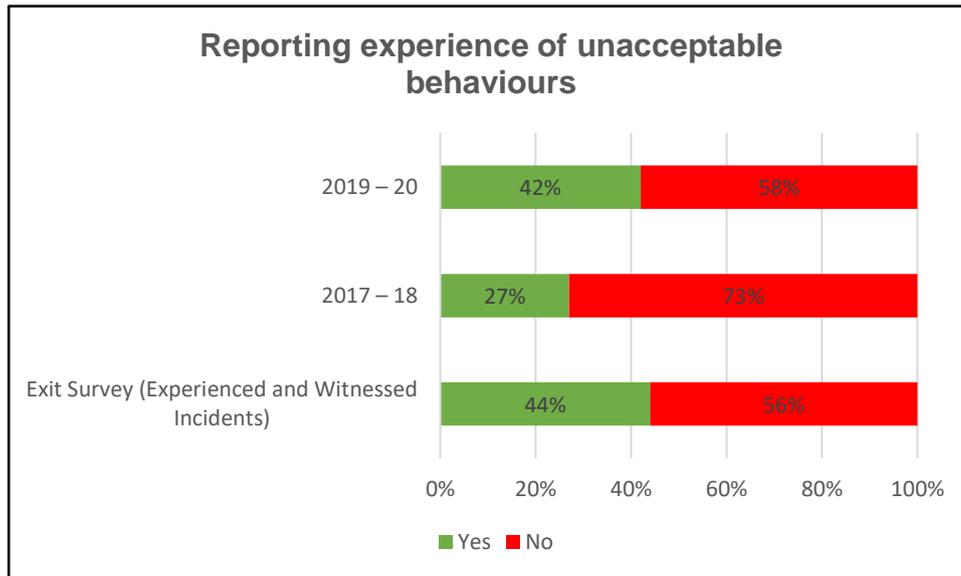


Chart 18

3.4.2 Reason Why Experience was Not Reported

- It involved a member of the public.
- It was in full council - in my view sexist language - and I intend to complain but as it was witnessed no need to report as such
- Anticipate that the response will just be "that's politics".
- Why do you think? Party on Party issues are never dealt with properly I dealt with personally
- Not sure
- Doesn't actually break any code of conduct.

3.4.3 To Whom the Incident was Reported

When asked to whom did they report the incident that they had experienced, most respondents in the Exit Survey and the 2017-18 Survey stated that they reported this to the Monitoring Officer and/or the Group Whip.

The results from the 2017-18 Survey also showed that only 2 respondents who experienced an incident indicated that they had reported this to the Group Whip. Other respondents in this category reported their experience to the Monitoring Officer (1 respondent) and to an undisclosed person (1 respondent).

In **Chart 18**, a total of 5 respondents to the 2019-2020 Survey confirmed reporting incidents that they had experienced. The results in **Chart 19** showed that most of these respondents (60%) reported the incident they had experienced to Monitoring officer. Another respondent (20%) reported it to their Group Leader while one (20%) of the respondents did not disclose to whom they reported the incident they experienced.

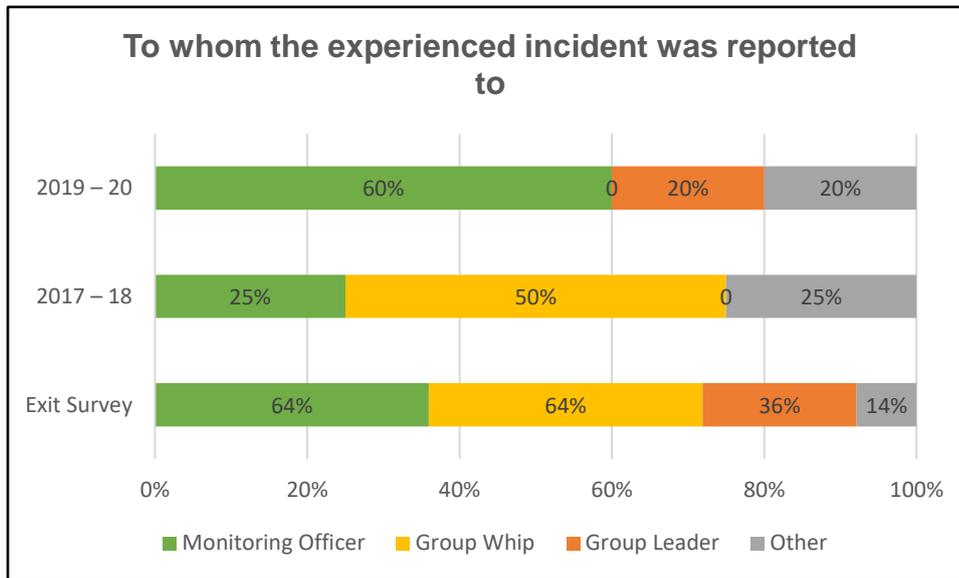


Chart 19

3.4.3 Satisfaction on how the Incident(s) was Dealt with

Chart 20 shows that the four respondents in the 2017-18 Survey who experienced an incident had different views on their satisfaction of how the incident was dealt with.

The respondent (1) who reported to the Monitoring Officer was satisfied with how the incident was dealt with. Of the (2) respondents who reported to their Group Whip, one stated that they were not satisfied with how the incident was dealt with while the other respondent did not provide any response. It must be noted that the number of respondents who have reported an incident as with the number of respondents who confirmed their satisfaction of how this was dealt with are very small.

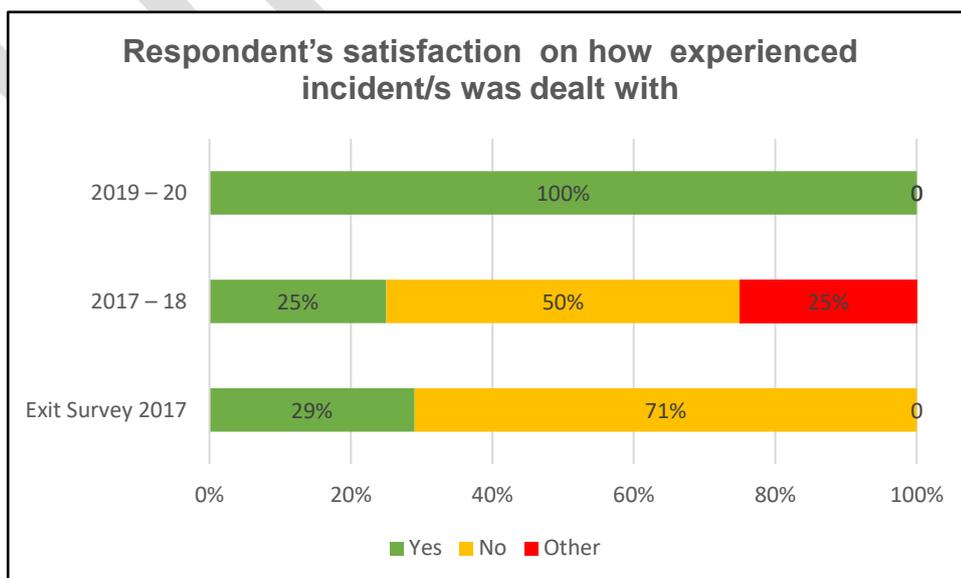


Chart 20

The results of the 2019-20 Survey show that a total of 4 respondents reported the incident they had experienced. Three (3) reported the incident to the Monitoring Officer and one (1) to a Group Leader, resulting in all of these respondents being satisfied with how this was dealt with.

4. Respondents who Witnessed Unacceptable Behaviours

Chart 21 shows that of the 18 respondents who confirmed witnessing unacceptable behaviours, 8 respondents (44%) had witnessed bullying, while 9 respondents (50%) witnessed discriminatory behaviours. A total 10 (55%) also specified “other” unacceptable behaviours that they had witnessed.

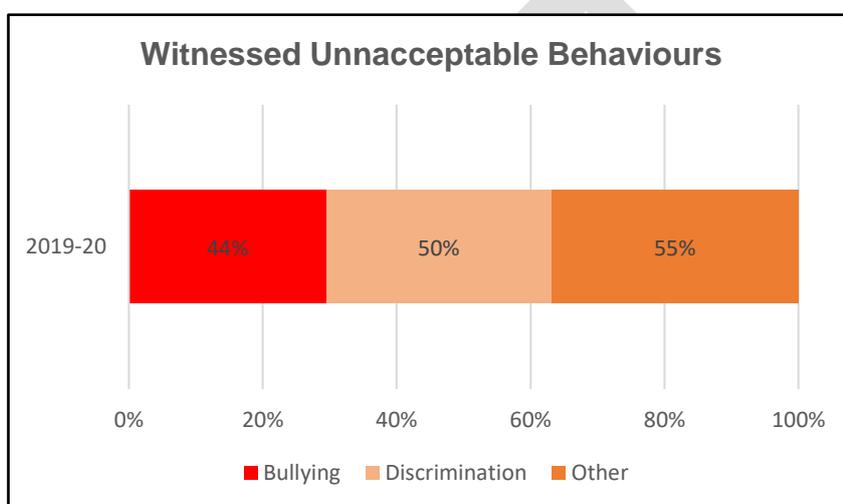


Chart 21

The results of the 2019-20 survey show that nearly half of respondents (45%) had witnessed some form of unacceptable behaviours. Only 1 respondent did not provide a response.

A comparison in Chart 22a and 22b shows that there were a greater number of respondents who reported that they have witnessed various unacceptable behaviours compared to those who had experienced unacceptable behaviours. A total of 12 female and male respondents (30%) had experienced unacceptable behaviours. In contrast to a total of 18 respondents (45%) who indicated that they had witnessed unacceptable behaviours.

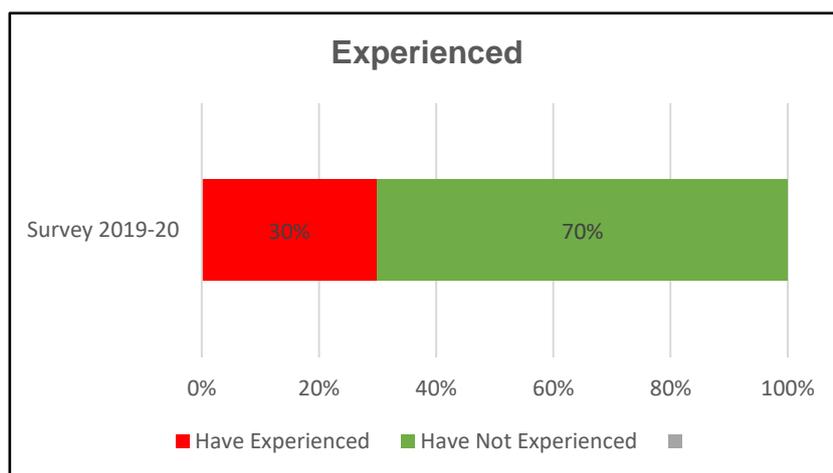


Chart 22a

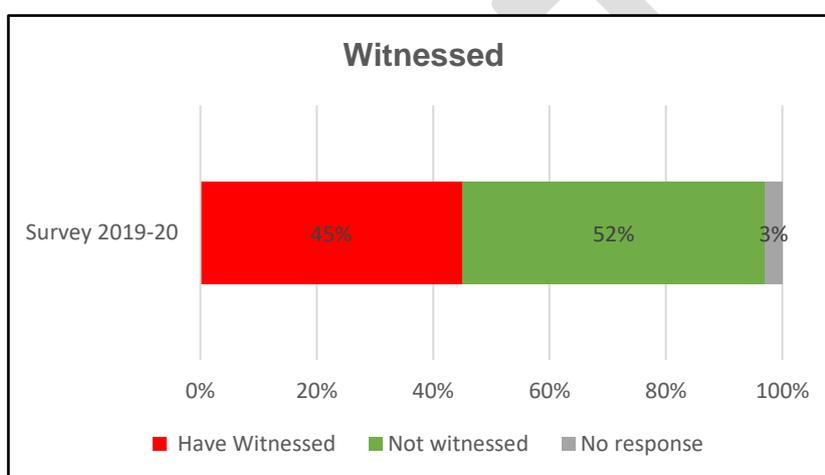


Chart 22b

4.1. Other Types of Witnessed incidents:

- Instigated by an external party
- Treatment of backbench members, particularly from cabinet members in the chamber.
- Occasionally some slightly poor behaviours in council and extremely poor behaviour by "Councillor *Named*".
- Some general rudeness and shouting In meetings
- I've watched the "*the individual*" in action often at council meetings
- Hearing Panel 14/1/2020
- Councillors who make their point either in meetings or on line in a bullying and aggressive way Councillors who say and do things without thinking of the consequences to other councillors, staff, residents and service users
- General comments made in committee and council
- Hectoring in Council meetings.

4.2 Reporting of Witnessed Unacceptable Behaviours

The results in the 2019-20 Survey illustrated in **Chart 23** that only a small number of respondents (2) who had witnessed unacceptable behaviours reported these incidents.

Chart 22 shows that a total of 18 individuals confirmed that they had witnessed various types of unacceptable behaviours, however only 2 of them had reported the incidents that they had witnessed. There were 6 respondents who did not report the incidents that they had witnessed and an additional 10 others who did not respond to this question. This suggests that more work needs to be done to establish the reasons why they are reluctant to report these incidents and to encourage Members to report any unacceptable behaviours that they witness.

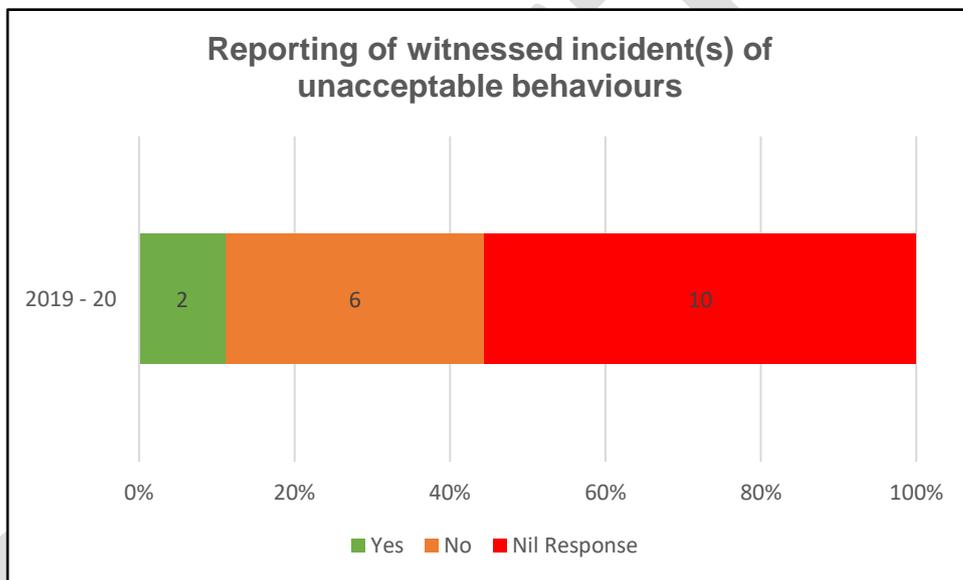


Chart 23

4.3 Reasons For Not Reporting Witnessed Incidents

Respondents in the 2019-20 survey have provided the following reasons for not reporting the incidents they witnessed

- It was at a public meeting and was recorded. Just answered!
- Not always possible None witnessed
- Same as my previous answer
- Most were being addressed by others and other incidents the victim did not want to take it further I don't want

4.4 To Whom the Witnessed Incident was Reported To

Of the 18 respondents in **Chart 22b** who witnessed unacceptable behaviours only one (1) reported this to the Monitoring Officer as shown in **Chart 24**. The other respondent did not indicate to whom they reported the incident they had witnessed.

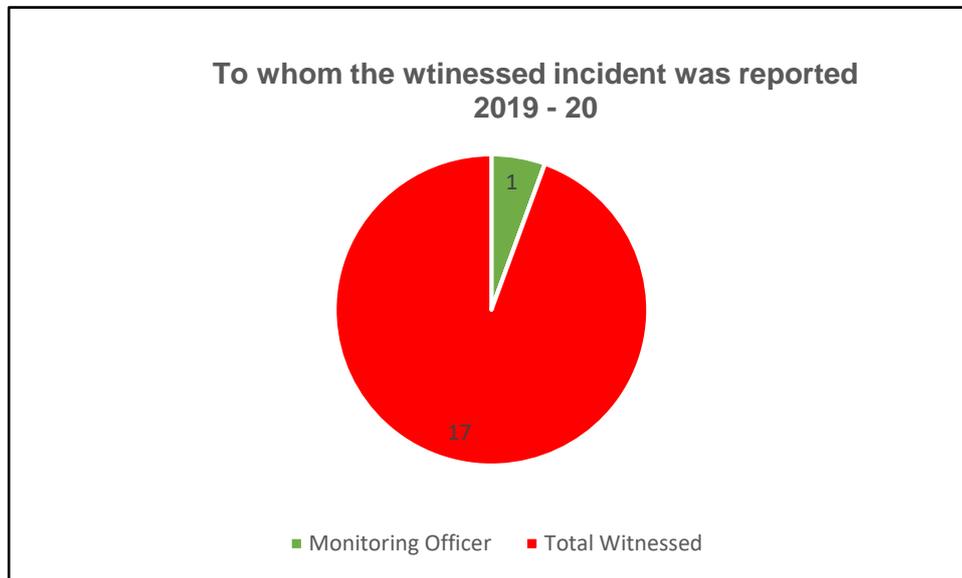


Chart 24

4.5 Satisfaction of How Witnessed Incident Was Dealt With

The respondent who reported the unacceptable behaviour they have witnessed to the Monitoring Officer was satisfied with how it was dealt with.

5. What should be done to prevent bullying and discriminatory behaviours

- Educate individuals as to what are classified as discriminatory views and actions. Continue the status quo that seems to work very well
- Be much stricter on those who exhibit bullying behaviour. Training for those identified displaying those kinds of behaviours.
- I think sexist, patronising or bullying behaviour in the chamber should be called out as it happens and the person asked to withdraw it. Groups should be challenging that kind of behaviour with their own members too
- Educate politicians that politics does not have to be a game of personal insults suspend offenders
- Zero tolerance. Zero tolerance
- Those who do breach behaviours should be quickly told they have
- Learn how to respond appropriately & remember that the perpetrator will not change With the consent of the complainant, name and shame
- You can protect officers as employees but you can't protect councillors as they are politicians, and the rules of normal decency do not apply to politicians
- Have clear guide lines and if they cross that line then ban them from those meetings until they apologise.

- Effective sanctions and swifter S&E response
- The council should engage political parties and other interested parties in the code of conduct and the principles of public life to ensure that any prospective candidate is aware of these prior to being approved or selected.
- Some could have been reported but if it is dealt with and does not reoccur I am satisfied.
- It is helpful to reissue guidance so that new members of the council are aware of the policy.
- Have a workshop on what constitutes bullying and unacceptable behaviour as I'm not sure people necessarily understand what some people class as such behaviour.
- Good quality awareness training that specifically looks at types of discriminatory behaviour and how it manifests itself.
- Members training and protocol needs to be mandatory Effective chairing.
- Training on respectful behaviours and expectations of behaviour. Calling out any inappropriate behaviour. Over time I think a culture change is needed to address dis-respectful behaviours between political members (this is widely accepted as normal in a political environment). Wider structural changes are needed throughout the council to address all forms of inequality - this should be part of every departments role, senior managers portfolio to normalise discussion on these issues, and address
- Code of conduct should be adhered too