



REPORT

Nambucca Valley Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021

December 2021



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Prepared by: James Parker

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Taverner Research Group | **T** +61 2 9212 2900 | **W** www.taverner.com.au

A Level 2, 88 Foveaux Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010, Australia |

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nambucca Valley Council (NVC) commissioned Taverner Research Group (TRG) to conduct its 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey, as a random and representative telephone survey of 400 adult residents living within the Nambucca Valley LGA. Surveying was conducted from November 1st to November 10th. The sampling error is $\pm 4.84\%$ at the 95% confidence level. Among the key findings:

- Of 26 Council services and facilities measured, 18 had a mean satisfaction score of three or above (using a 1-5 satisfaction scale).** Top-ranked services included water supply, which scored 4.11 out of a possible 5, and sewage collection and treatment (at 4.05). Libraries, parks, reserves and playgrounds, sporting facilities and cleanliness of streets also scored highly.
- Conversely, eight facilities or services had a mean score of below “par”.** Unsealed roads were the worst-ranked of the services measured (scoring a mean of 2.50) followed by youth facilities and activities (2.60), development applications (2.67) and economic development (2.78).
- There was a 27% improvement in satisfaction rating for upgrading CBDs and destinations such as the V-Wall.** However, the stormwater drainage rating fell 15%, and public toilets were 8% lower.
- In terms of importance, river water quality once again had the highest mean rating at 4.51 (again using a 1-5 scale), together with sealed roads (also 4.51).** These were followed in importance by waste and recycling (4.39), coastal and beach management (4.28) and cleanliness of streets (4.27) and environmental monitoring and protection (also 4.27).
- When placed into a matrix of importance vs. satisfaction, the following picture emerged:

PRIORITIES FOR COUNCIL	STRENGTHS TO MAINTAIN
12 River water quality 13 Coastal and beach management 15 Footpaths and cycleways 16 Services for the elderly 18 Environmental monitoring and protection 19 Sealed roads 21 Stormwater drainage 22 Public toilets	1 Water supply 4 Parks, reserves and playgrounds 6 Cleanliness of streets 8 Bridges 9 Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall 10 Waste and recycling
SECOND ORDER ISSUES	OPPORTUNITIES
14 Dog control 17 Online services 20 Weed control 23 Economic development and attracting new investment 24 Development applications (DA's) 25 Youth facilities and activities 26 Unsealed roads	2 Sewage collection and treatment 3 Libraries 5 Sporting facilities 7 Council pool 11 Community halls



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

6. This suggests that perceived Council strengths include water supply, parks, reserves and playgrounds, cleanliness of streets, bridges, upgrading CBDs and other destinations, and waste and recycling.
7. However, Council is seen to be falling short in higher importance areas such as river water quality, coastal and beach management, footpaths and cycleways, services for the elderly, environmental monitoring and protection, sealed roads, stormwater drainage and public toilets. In particular, this highlights the increasing expectations of Council in relation to a range of environmental issues.
8. **Overall satisfaction has fallen marginally in this latest survey, to a mean (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale) of 3.30 - against 3.43 in 2019.** However, the difference is not considered statistically significant. Meanwhile 43% of residents were satisfied or very satisfied, against 16% dissatisfied (and the balance neutral). The net satisfaction score (% satisfied less % dissatisfied) of +27% compares with +37% for 2019 and +26% for 2016.
9. **Roads (20%), addressing environmental concerns (13%) and attracting new businesses and investment (also 13%) were the top-mentioned priorities for Council resources.** The major priorities have changed little since 2019.
10. TRG is able to benchmark NVC satisfaction scores against 25 other regional NSW councils. **In the case of infrastructure, Council scores are largely on par with its peers – and substantially higher in the case of water supply.** However, it is slightly lower in relation to libraries, and at the bottom of the list in relation to stormwater drainage.
11. **In the case of services, NVC is again on par with other regional councils on many measures.** And overall satisfaction (3.40) is slightly above the mean for its regional peers (3.34). However, it is lower in relation to environmental monitoring and protection, public toilets, and youth facilities and activities.
12. Some 54% of respondents had contact with Council's administration during the previous 12 months. **Satisfaction with Council's handling of these respondents' most recent interaction fell to a mean satisfaction score of 3.08** (on a 1-5 scale) – above the 3.0 "neutral" score, but down from the 3.50 mean in 2019.
13. Residents were asked their views on a range of issues chosen by outgoing Councillors. **Results showed strong levels of support for Council playing a role in increasing the stock of affordable housing in the Nambucca Valley (57% for, 32% against), and for the initiative to create a Great Koala National Park (78% for, 18% against).**
14. However, views were split on the other two issues. **In relation to adopting strategies for more medium-density housing in Nambucca Heads and Macksville, 47% supported while 42% opposed. And on the topic of punishing continued waste contamination offenders by stopping their green and yellow bin collection, 44% supported this initiative while 46% opposed.**



2. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Background and Objectives

In August 2021, Nambucca Valley Council (NVC) commissioned Taverner Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of 400 adult residents to measure their satisfaction with Council service levels. The survey was also designed to provide for longitudinal (i.e. time-based) comparisons with similar telephone polls conducted by Taverner (or its predecessor, Jetty Research) approximately triennially since 2007.

In this instance, Council additionally sought community feedback on provision of social housing, increased density in urban areas, waste, and creation of a national park to protect koala habitat.

2.2. METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted using a random fixed line telephone poll of 400 residents aged 18+. Respondents were selected at random from a verified random sample residential telephone database of 4,352 residential landline and mobile telephone numbers within the LGA (with approximately 60% of numbers sourced being mobiles). A survey form was constructed collaboratively between Council management and Taverner Research (see Appendix 1), based on satisfying the above objectives.

Polling was conducted between November 1st and November 10th from Taverner Research's Coffs Harbour CATI call centre. A team of eight researchers called Nambucca Valley residents on weekday evenings (excluding Friday) from 3.30 to 8pm, and on weekends from 10am-4pm. Where phones went unanswered, were engaged or diverted to answering machines, researchers phoned on up to five occasions at different times of the afternoon or evening.

The poll was conducted on a random basis, other than ensuring an adequate mix of respondents across different sub-regions. Respondents were screened to ensure they were aged 18 or over, had lived within the Nambucca Valley for at least 12 months, and were not councillors or permanent Council employees.

Survey duration average 17.5 minutes. Response rate was standard for a Council survey of this length, with 26% of eligible households reached agreeing to participate (against 39% in 2019).

Results have been post-weighted to reflect the age and gender profile of the NVC LGA as at the 2016 ABS Census (usual resident profile).

Please note that due to the nature of the survey, not all respondents answered every question. The number of respondents answering each question is marked as "n = XXX" in the graph accompanying that question. Caution should be taken in analysing some questions due to the small sample size.

Where differences in this report are classed as significant, this implies they are statistically significant based on independent sample t-scores or other analysis of variation (or ANOVA) calculations. In statistical terms, significant differences are unlikely to have been caused by chance alone.

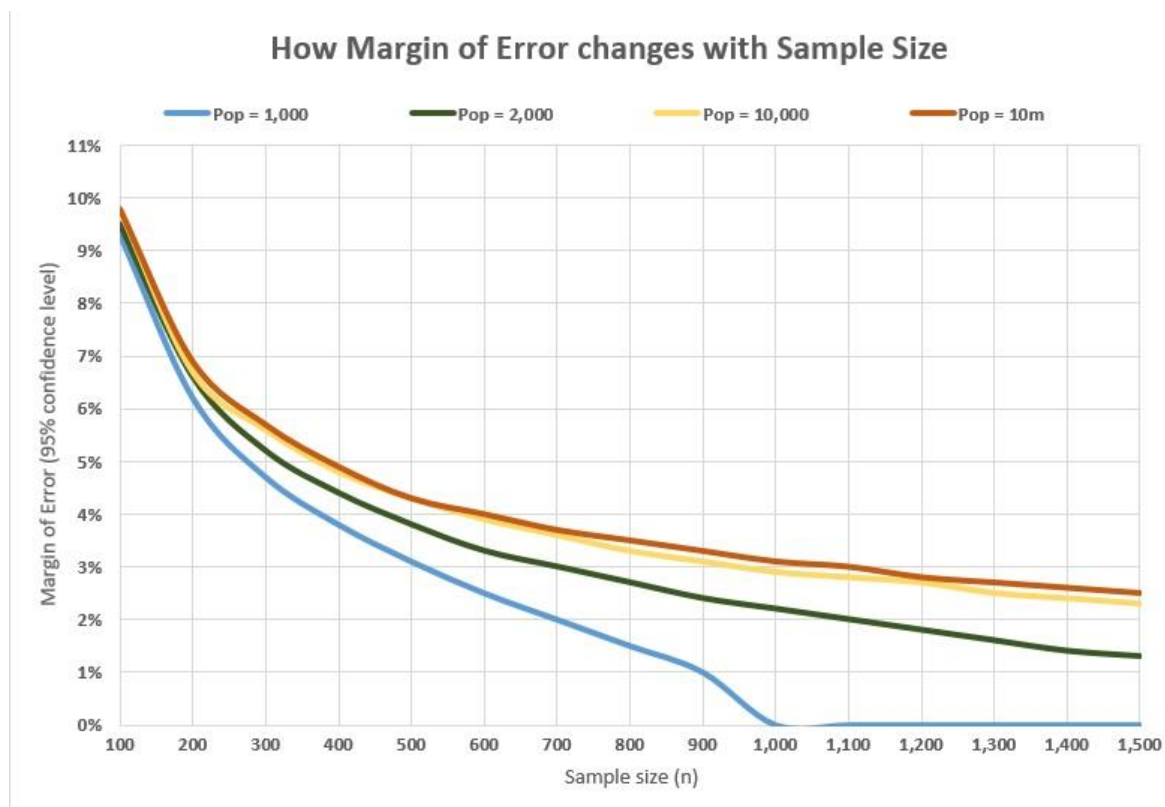


2. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

2.3. SAMPLING ERROR

According to the 2016 ABS Census (Usual Resident profile) the total population of the Nambucca LGA was 19,212, of which 15,362 (80%) were aged 18 and over. Based on this latter survey population, a random sample of 400 adult residents implies a margin for error of $\pm 4.8\%$ at the 95% confidence level. (This means in effect that if we conducted a similar poll twenty times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population to within a $\pm 4.8\%$ margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

As the graph below shows, margin for error falls as sample size rises. Hence cross-tabulations or sub-groups within the overall sample will typically create much higher margins for error than the overall sample. For example, using the above population sizes, a sample size of 100 exhibits a margin for error of $\pm 9.8\%$ (again at the 95% confidence level).



In addition to the random sampling error, above, there may also be some forms of non-random sampling error which may have affected results. These include residents without known phone numbers, the proportion of non-respondents (refusals, no answers etc.) and/or imperfections in the survey database. However, steps have been taken at each stage of the research process to minimise non-random error wherever possible.



3. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The 2021 customer satisfaction survey exhibited the following characteristics. Note that as in previous years, results have been post-weighted to reflect the actual adult NVC population by age and gender as per 2016 ABS Census data).

Figure 1: Sample by age

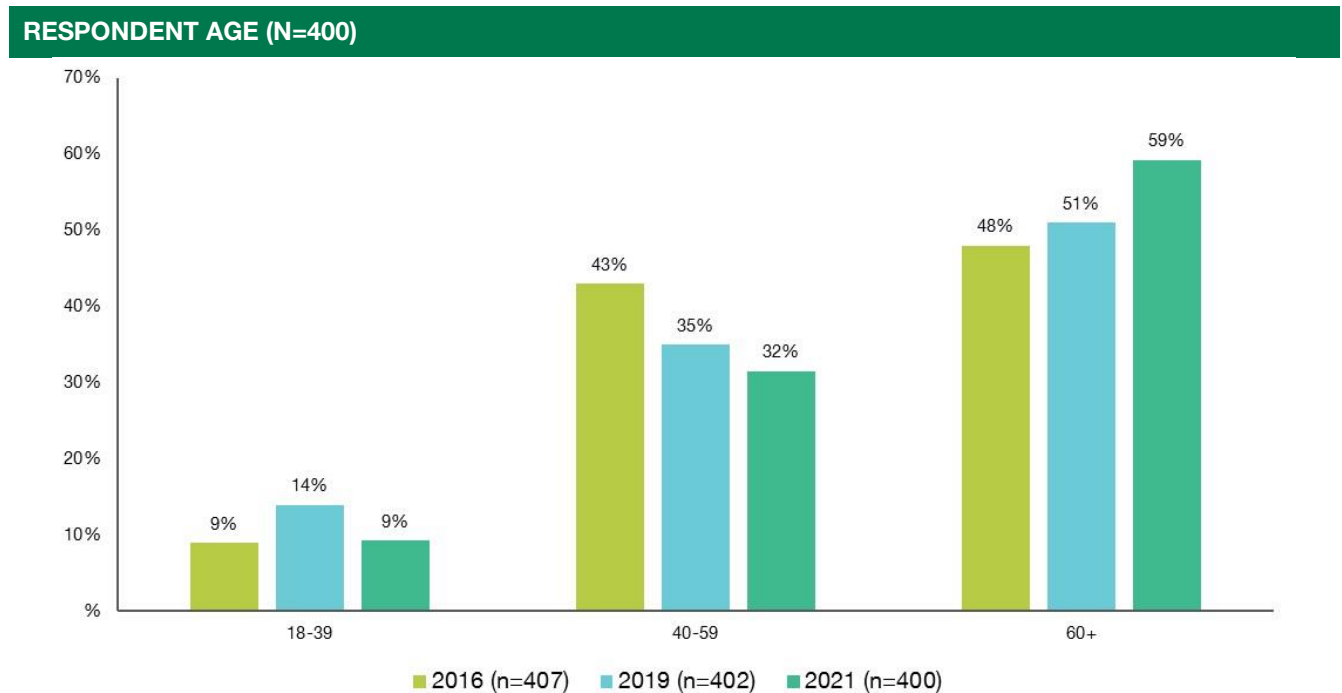
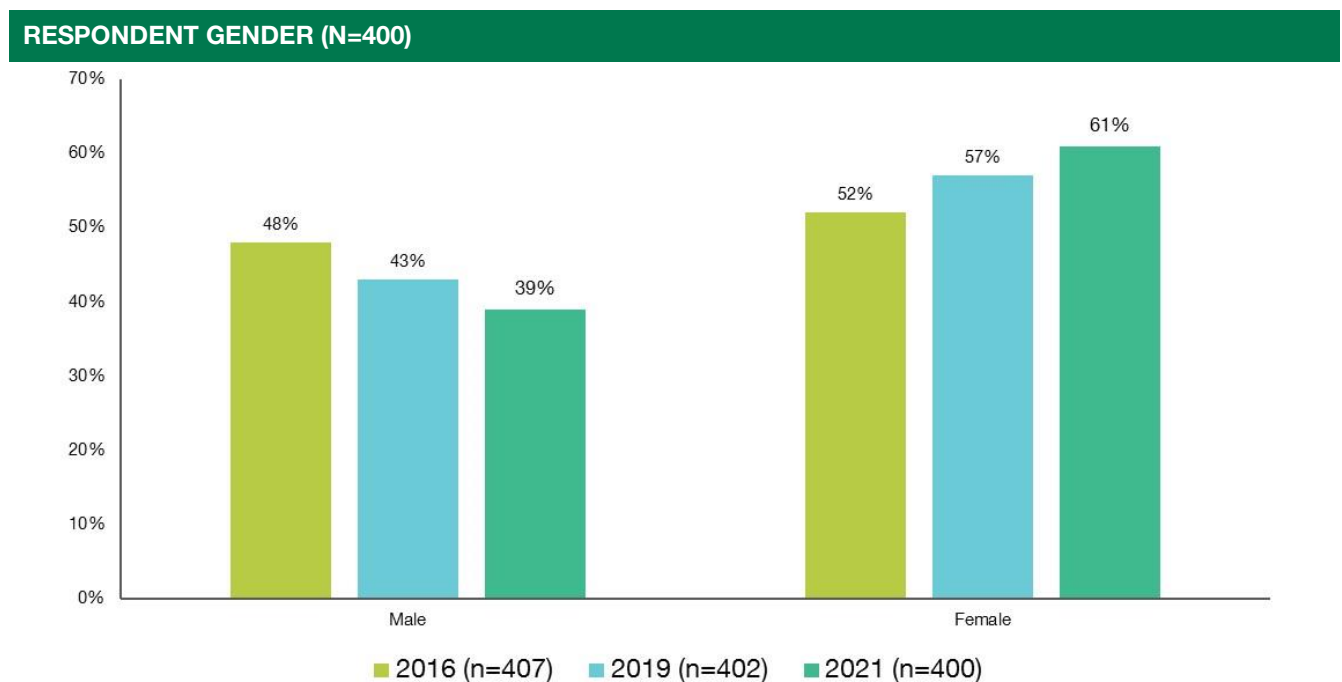


Figure 2: Sample by gender





3. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 3: Sample by urban vs. rural

RESPONDENT URBAN VS. RURAL (N=400)

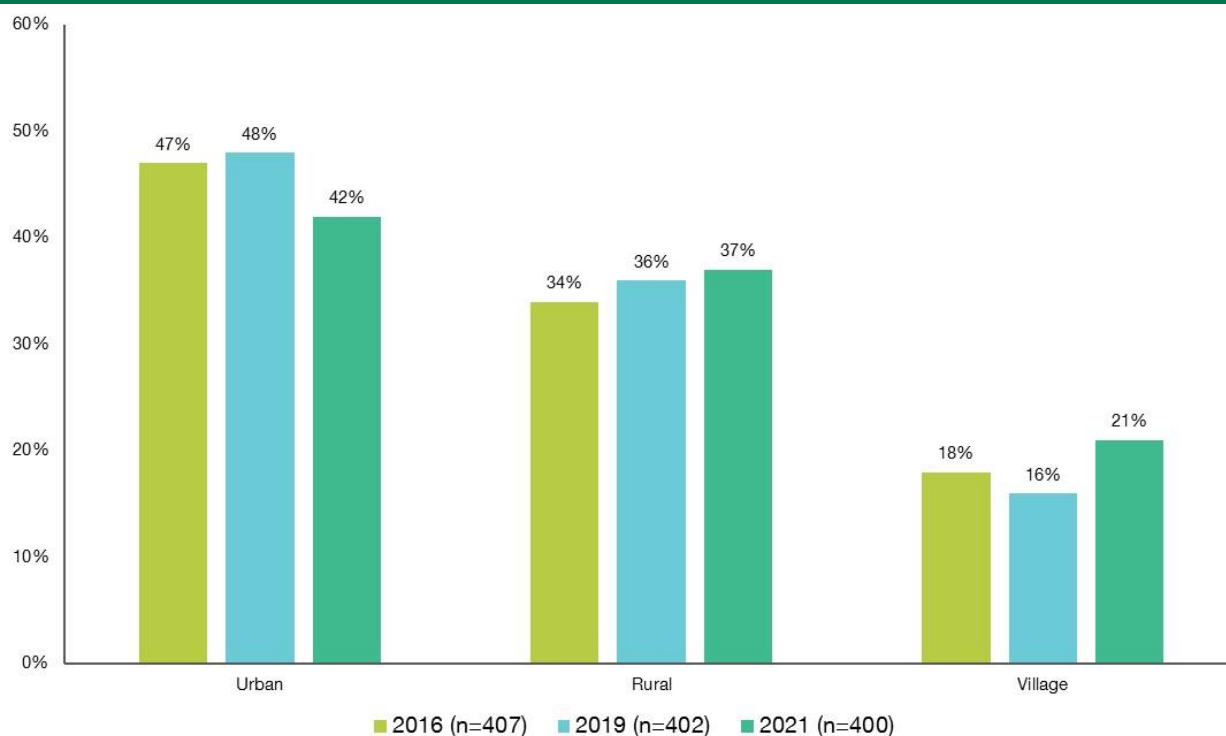
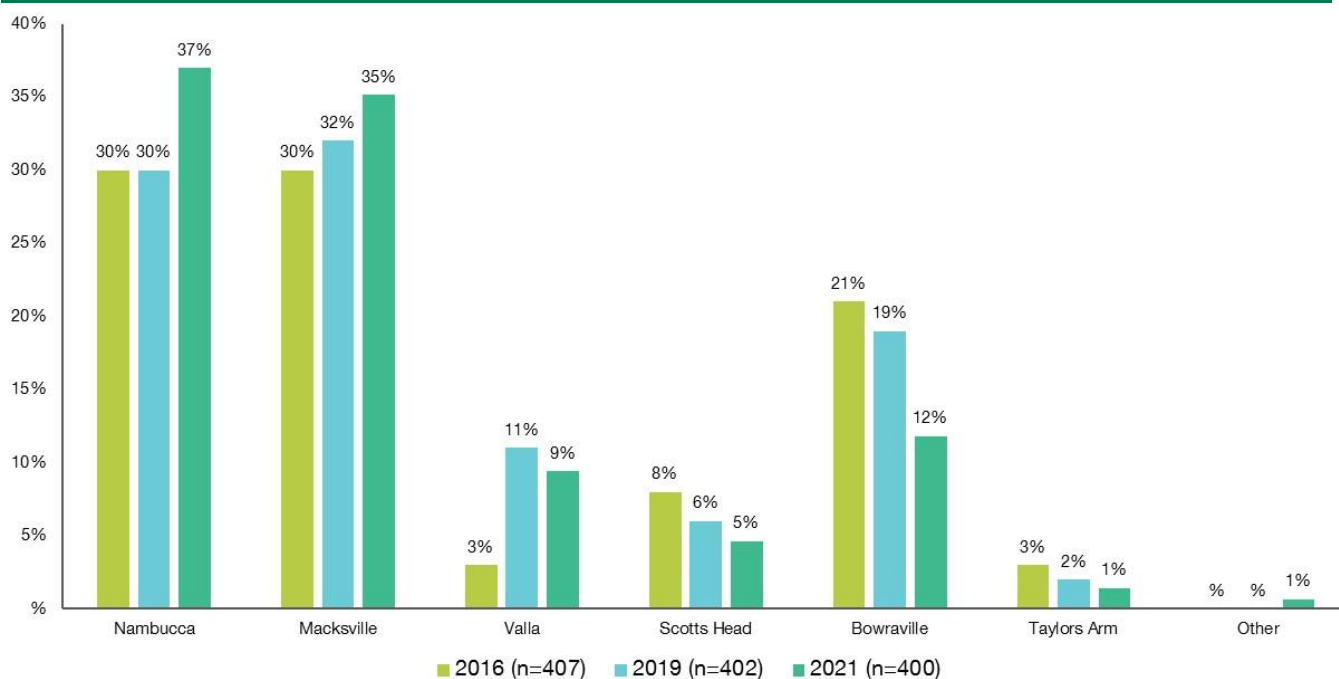


Figure 4: Sample by place of residence

RESPONDENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE (N=400)



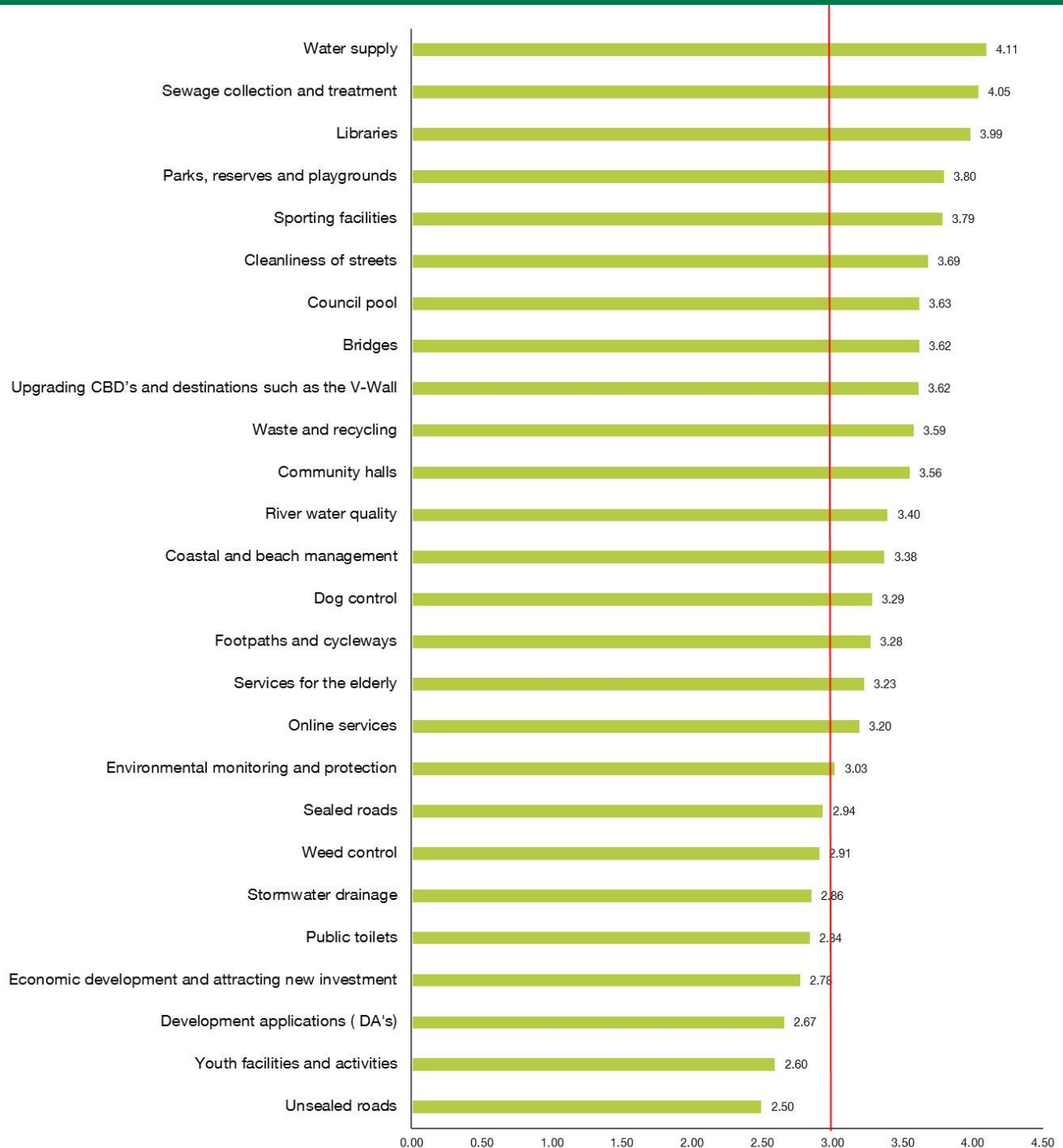


4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

The survey proper began with residents being asked to rate their satisfaction with 26 different Council-managed facilities and services:

Figure 5: Satisfaction with facilities and services (2021 only)

PLEASE RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL FACILITIES OR SERVICES. WE'LL USE A SCALE OF 1-5, WHERE 1 MEANS YOU THINK IT'S VERY POOR AND 5 IS EXCELLENT. IF YOU DON'T USE THE SERVICE, JUST SAY SO AND I'LL MOVE TO THE NEXT ONE. (N=400)





4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

Top-ranked facilities and services included water supply (mean score 4.11 on a 1-5 satisfaction scale), sewage collection and treatment (4.05), libraries (3.99), parks, reserves and playgrounds (3.80) and sporting facilities (3.79).

In all, 18 of the 26 touch points rated above the “neutral” score of 3.0. Those falling below included unsealed roads (2.50), youth facilities and services (2.60), development applications (2.67), economic development and attracting new investment (2.78), public toilets (2.84) and stormwater drainage (2.86). Weed control and sealed roads also fell fractionally below the 3.0 “neutral” score.

There were very few differences in satisfaction scores by age, gender or location. (See Appendix 2 for Data Tables).

Table 1, next page, shows the change in satisfaction scores from 2019 to 2012. It indicates a statistically significant increase (27%) in satisfaction with CBD and other destination upgrades, and a small increase in satisfaction with dog control.

However, six touch points shows decreases of 6% or more, led by stormwater drainage (down 15%), public toilets (down 11%) and Council’s pool (down 8%).



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

Table 1: Satisfaction scores 2021 against 2019

SERVICE OR FACILITY	2019 MEAN	2021 MEAN	% CHANGE
Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall	2.86	3.62	27%
Dog control	3.07	3.29	7%
River water quality	3.34	3.40	2%
Economic development and attracting new investment	2.73	2.78	2%
Water supply	4.07	4.11	1%
Waste and recycling	3.58	3.59	0%
Footpaths and cycleways	3.28	3.28	0%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	3.82	3.80	0%
Sewage collection and treatment	4.06	4.05	0%
Services for the elderly	3.25	3.23	-1%
Sporting facilities	3.85	3.79	-2%
Coastal and beach management	3.44	3.38	-2%
Cleanliness of streets	3.77	3.69	-2%
Community halls	3.64	3.56	-2%
Libraries	4.11	3.99	-3%
Sealed roads	3.05	2.94	-4%
Environmental monitoring and protection	3.14	3.03	-4%
Bridges	3.78	3.62	-4%
Online services	3.34	3.20	-4%
Unsealed roads	2.64	2.50	-5%
Weed control	3.13	2.91	-7%
Youth facilities and activities	2.80	2.60	-7%
Development applications (DA's)	2.88	2.67	-7%
Council pool	3.93	3.63	-8%
Public toilets	3.19	2.84	-11%
Stormwater drainage	3.37	2.86	-15%

Figure 6, below, shows the importance scores (again on a 1-5 scale, where 1= unimportant, 4=very important and 5=critical). As is fairly typical of these surveys, almost all facilities and services were classed as important, with only online services (2.99) falling below the 3.0 "neutral" score.



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

Top of the importance list in 2021 were river water quality and sealed roads, closely followed by waste/recycling, coastal and beach management, and cleanliness of streets.

Figure 6: Importance of facilities and services (2021 only)

THIS TIME PLEASE RATE HOW IMPORTANT THESE COUNCIL FACILITIES OR SERVICES ARE TO YOU OR YOUR FAMILY. WE'LL USE A SCALE OF 1-5, WHERE 1 MEANS YOU THINK ITS UNIMPORTANT, 4 IS VERY IMPORTANT AND 5 IS CRITICAL. (N=400)

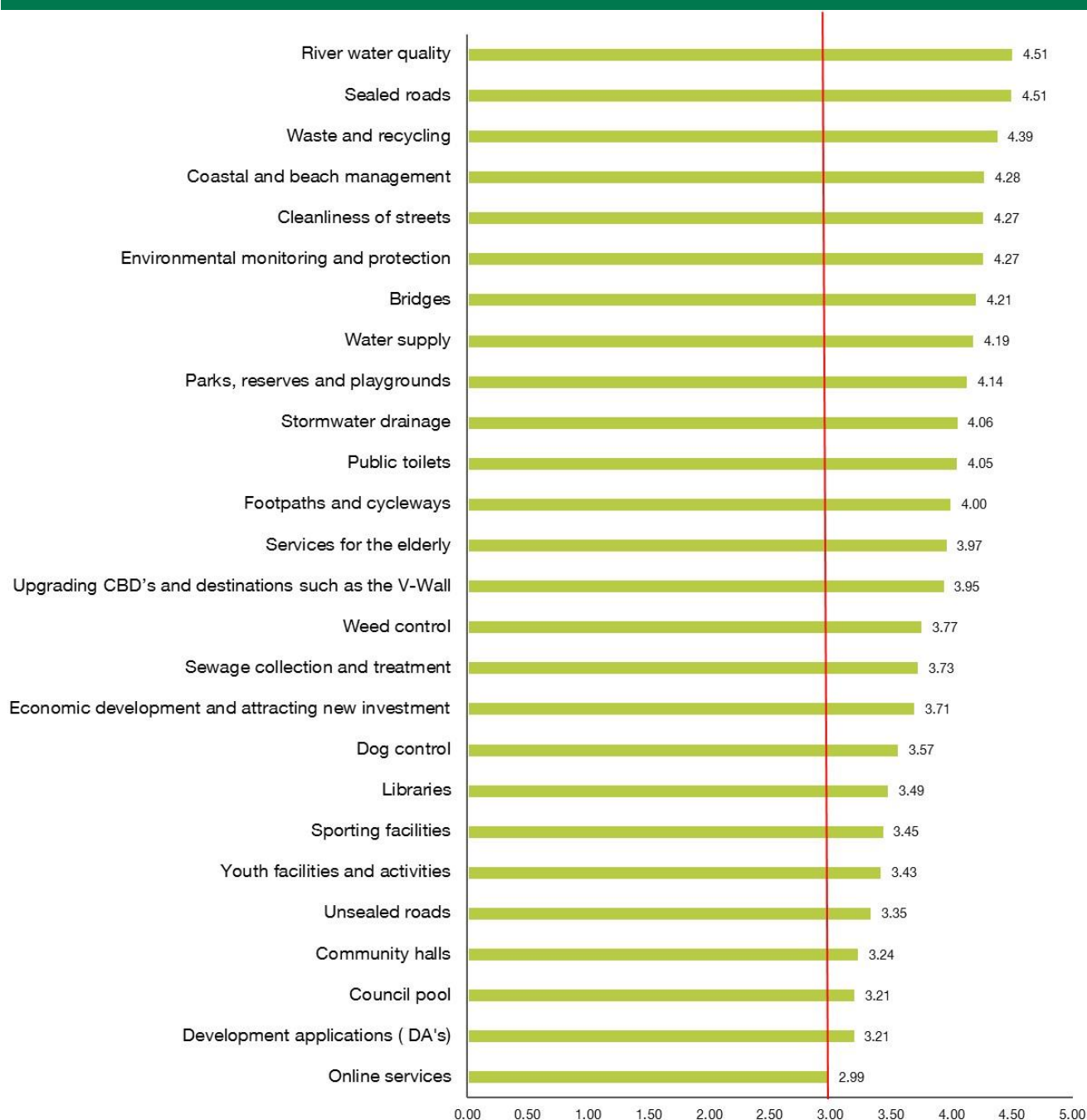


Table 2, below, shows that importance scores have changed little survey-to-survey. However, stormwater drainage and online services stand out as becoming more important over time.



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

Table 2: Importance scores 2021 against 2019

SERVICE OR FACILITY	2019 MEAN	2021 MEAN	% CHANGE
Stormwater drainage	3.75	4.06	8%
Online services	2.78	2.99	8%
Water supply	3.97	4.19	6%
Footpaths and cycleways	3.80	4.00	5%
Bridges	4.00	4.21	5%
Sealed roads	4.31	4.51	5%
Unsealed roads	3.21	3.35	4%
Sewage collection and treatment	3.58	3.73	4%
Public toilets	3.93	4.05	3%
Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall	3.83	3.95	3%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	4.02	4.14	3%
Cleanliness of streets	4.16	4.27	3%
Council pool	3.13	3.21	3%
Environmental monitoring and protection	4.20	4.27	2%
River water quality	4.44	4.51	2%
Weed control	3.71	3.77	2%
Development applications (DA's)	3.16	3.21	1%
Coastal and beach management	4.24	4.28	1%
Waste and recycling	4.36	4.39	1%
Services for the elderly	3.95	3.97	0%
Dog control	3.58	3.57	0%
Libraries	3.50	3.49	0%
Community halls	3.25	3.24	0%
Youth facilities and activities	3.45	3.43	-1%
Sporting facilities	3.48	3.45	-1%
Economic development and attracting new investment	3.96	3.71	-6%

Table 3, next page, shows how the “gap” between importance and satisfaction has changed over time. Given that importance (or expectations) generally outweigh satisfaction, most “gaps” (i.e. satisfaction less importance) are negative. However, this is not always the case, with (for example) Council pool, libraries and even sewage collection treatment enjoying positive differences.

Hence in Table 3 a decrease **in red** means the positive difference has fallen in this latest survey, while a decrease **in green** means the negative difference has lessened.



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

(Where the difference was and remains negative, a reduction is favourable and hence shown in green, while an increase in the negative gap is shown in red.)

This suggests favourable changes to the gap in the case of dog control, economic development and upgrading CBDs and destinations such as the V-Wall. However, all those touchpoints shown in red have less favourable gaps in 2021 than in 2019.

Table 3: Satisfaction/Importance Gap scores 2021 vs. 2019

SERVICE OR FACILITY	2019 GAP	2021 GAP	CHANGE
Dog control	-17%	-9%	Decreased
Economic development and attracting new investment	-45%	-34%	Decreased
Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall	-34%	-9%	Decreased
Libraries	15%	13%	Same
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	-5%	-9%	Same
Sporting facilities	10%	9%	Same
Waste and recycling	-22%	-22%	Same
Footpaths and cycleways	-16%	-22%	Same
Cleanliness of streets	-10%	-16%	Same
Water supply	3%	-2%	Same
Community halls	11%	9%	Same
Services for the elderly	-22%	-23%	Same
Coastal and beach management	-23%	-27%	Same
River water quality	-33%	-33%	Same
Online services	17%	6%	Decreased
Sewage collection and treatment	12%	8%	Decreased
Council pool	20%	11%	Decreased
Sealed roads	-41%	-53%	Increased
Unsealed roads	-22%	-34%	Increased
Bridges	-6%	-16%	Increased
Stormwater drainage	-11%	-42%	Increased
Public toilets	-23%	-43%	Increased
Weed control	-18%	-29%	Increased
Youth facilities and activities	-23%	-32%	Increased
Development applications (DA's)	-10%	-20%	Increased
Environmental monitoring and protection	-34%	-41%	Increased



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

We have also conducted a driver analysis, which shows the correlation between individual facilities and services and overall satisfaction with Council (next section). The higher the correlation, the more these touchpoints are more likely to “drive” changes in overall satisfaction.

In this case, only “upgrading CBD’s and destinations such as the V Wall” appears to be an important driver, with all others falling below 0.5 on the zero to one scale:

Table 4: Driver analysis

SERVICE OR FACILITY	STRENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP TO OVERALL SATISFACTION
Upgrading CBD’s and destinations such as the V-Wall	.513
Waste and recycling	.484
Online services	.471
Footpaths and cycleways	.465
Cleanliness of streets	.456
Sewage collection and treatment	.452
Sporting facilities	.443
Community halls	.439
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	.426
Sealed roads	.423
Libraries	.420
Coastal and beach management	.411
Weed control	.411
Services for the elderly	.407
Development applications (DA's)	.402
River water quality	.401
Bridges	.394
Water supply	.392
Environmental monitoring and protection	.388
Stormwater drainage	.383
Economic development and attracting new investment	.356
Youth facilities and activities	.340
Unsealed roads	.285
Public toilets	.282
Council pool	.280
Dog control	.280



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

Finally in this section, we look at the quadrant analysis – by which all 26 facilities and services are shown on a matrix of satisfaction (horizontal axis) and importance (vertical axis). We then divide each touchpoint into one of four quadrants depending on whether they are higher or lower on each scale. (Note that this is purely a *relative* measure, with an arbitrary dividing line.)

Figure 7 on this page shows where the different touchpoints sit on the matrix, while Table 5 shows exactly which facilities and services fall into which quadrant:

Figure 7: Satisfaction/Importance Matrix (2021)

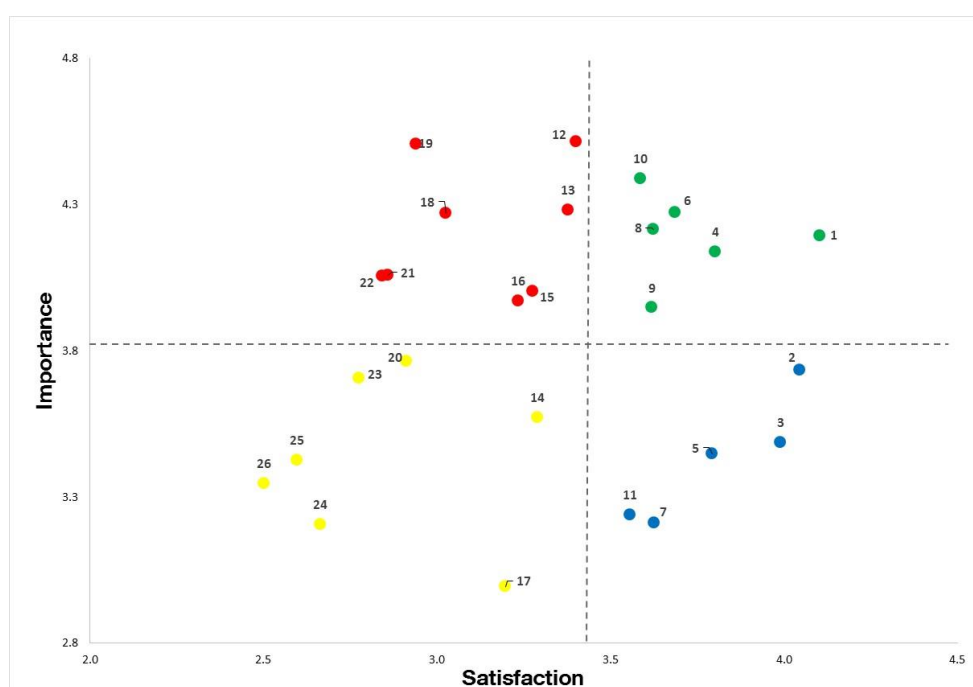


Table 5: Satisfaction/importance quadrants

PRIORITIES FOR COUNCIL	STRENGTHS TO MAINTAIN
12 River water quality 13 Coastal and beach management 15 Footpaths and cycleways 16 Services for the elderly 18 Environmental monitoring and protection 19 Sealed roads 21 Stormwater drainage 22 Public toilets	1 Water supply 4 Parks, reserves and playgrounds 6 Cleanliness of streets 8 Bridges 9 Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall 10 Waste and recycling
SECOND ORDER ISSUES	OPPORTUNITIES
14 Dog control 17 Online services 20 Weed control 23 Economic development and attracting new investment 24 Development applications (DA's) 25 Youth facilities and activities 26 Unsealed roads	2 Sewage collection and treatment 3 Libraries 5 Sporting facilities 7 Council pool 11 Community halls



4. SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES/SERVICES

Results for the quadrant analysis shown in Table 5, previous page, can be interpreted as follows:

- The upper right quadrant (higher importance and higher satisfaction) represents current service strengths or **‘Strengths to Maintain’**
- The upper left quadrant (higher importance but lower satisfaction) denotes services where satisfaction should be improved or **‘Priorities for Council’**
- The lower left quadrant (relatively lower importance and relatively lower satisfaction) represents lower priority service dimensions or **‘Second Order Issues’**
- The lower right quadrant (relatively lower importance and high satisfaction) represents Council’s **‘Opportunities’**. These are services with higher satisfaction, but which are not currently driving overall satisfaction. By highlighting achievements in these areas, Council may be able to increase the link between the two

This suggests that perceived Council strengths include water supply, parks, reserves and playgrounds, cleanliness of streets, bridges, upgrading CBDs and other destinations, and waste and recycling.

However, Council is seen to be falling short in higher importance areas such as river water quality, coastal and beach management, footpaths and cycleways, services for the elderly, environmental monitoring and protection, sealed roads, stormwater drainage and public toilets.

In particular, this highlights the increasing expectations of Council in relation to a range of environmental issues.

5. OVERALL SATISFACTION



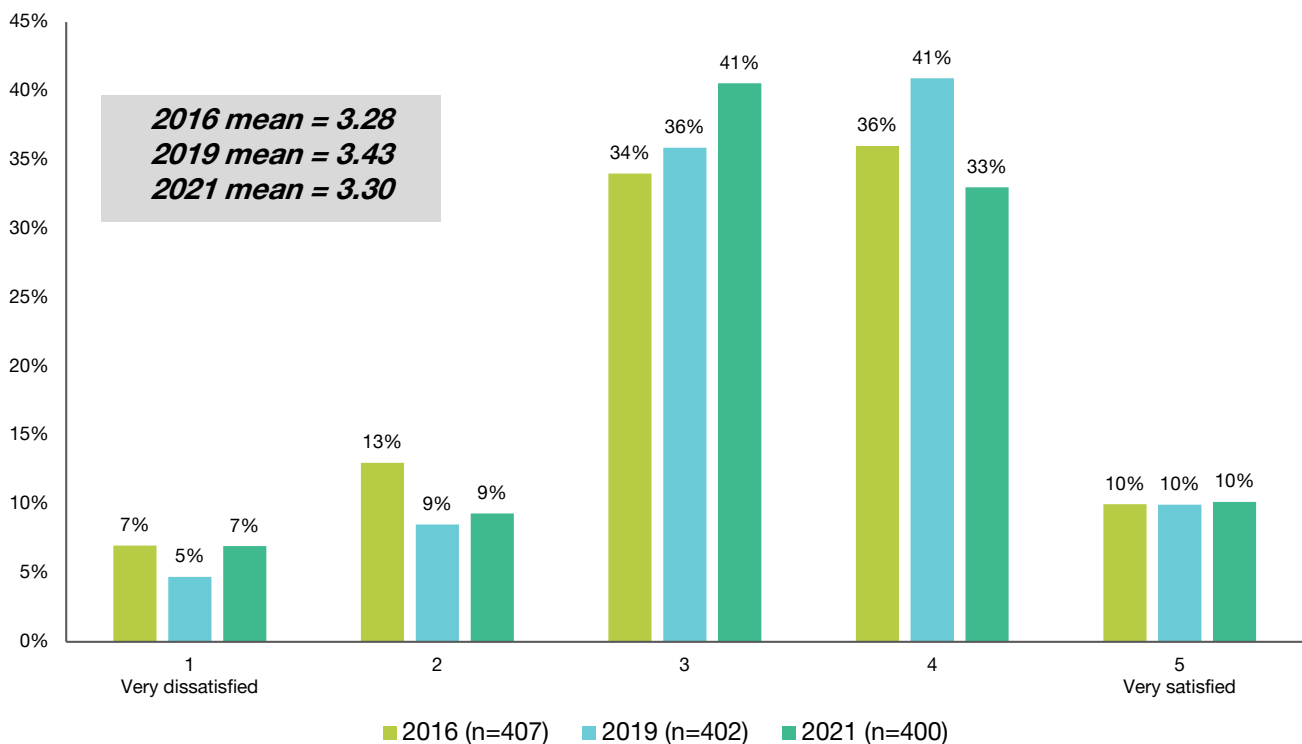
Residents were next asked to rate their satisfaction with Council's overall performance. Results for the last three surveys are shown in Figure 8, below.

Overall satisfaction has fallen marginally in this latest survey, to a mean (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale) of 3.30 - against 3.43 in 2019. However, the difference is not considered statistically significant.

Meanwhile 43% of residents were satisfied or very satisfied, against 16% dissatisfied (and the balance neutral). The net satisfaction score (% satisfied less % dissatisfied) of +27% compares with +37% for 2019 and +26% for 2016.

Figure 8: Overall satisfaction (2021 against 2019 and 2016)

PLEASE RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE ON A SCALE OF 1-5. WHERE 1 IS VERY DISSATISFIED AND 5 IS VERY SATISFIED (N=400)



There were also no statistically significant differences by age, gender, location or urban/rural.

Residents were next asked to briefly explain why they had provided their overall satisfaction scores. The open-ended comments were coded into themes. These are shown in Figure 9, next page.

As in previous years, it suggests that those who are happy with Council have trouble articulating the reasons for their satisfaction – whereas those who are unhappy are more likely to have a specific reason. So while some 39% felt that Council “did a good job” (or similar wording), 27% expressed dissatisfaction with roads, 13% felt it communicated poorly, and 8% believed there was too much red tape.



5. OVERALL SATISFACTION

Figure 9: Reasons for overall satisfaction score

CAN YOU BRIEFLY EXPLAIN WHY YOU GAVE THAT RATING? (N=400)

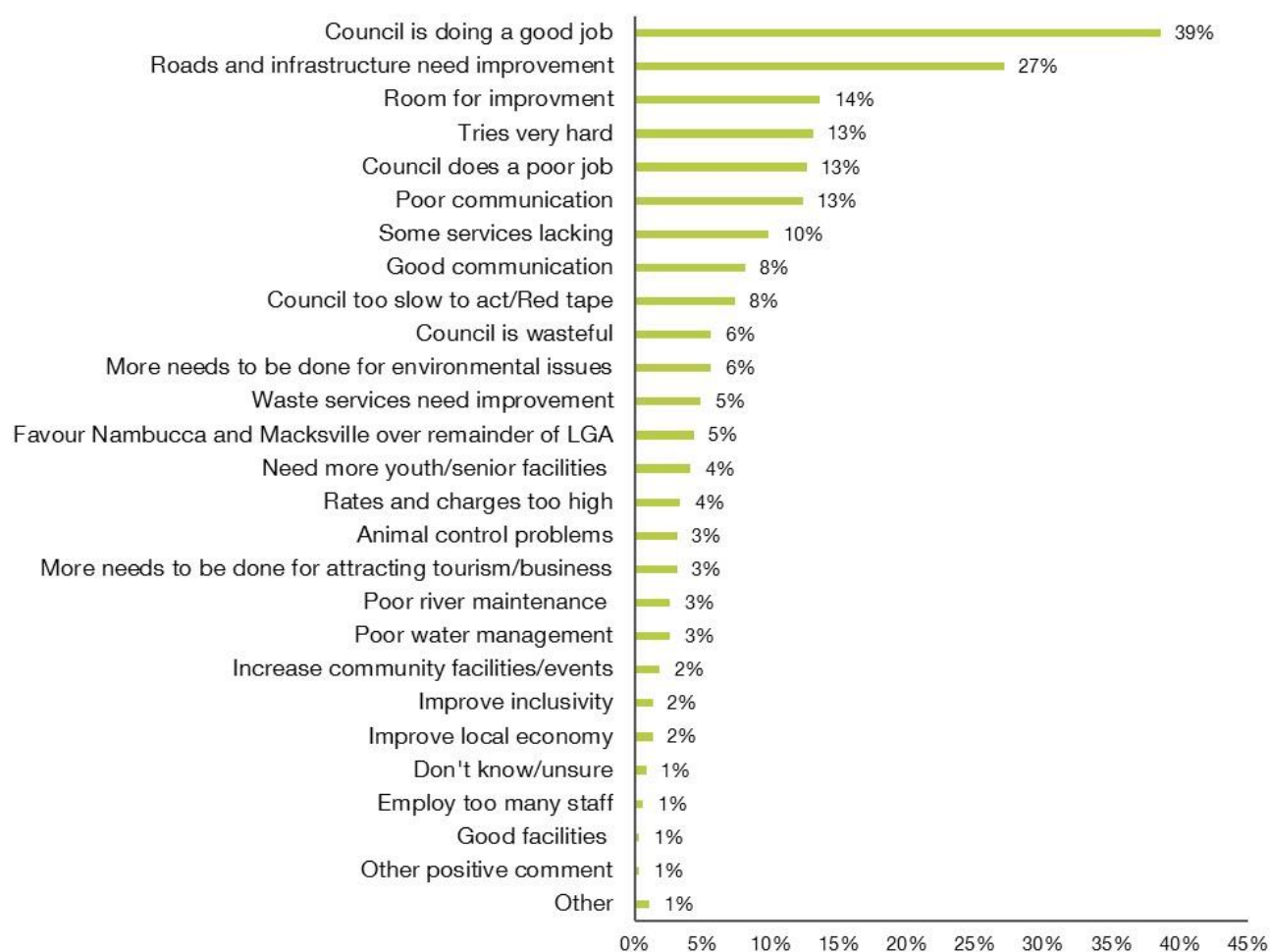


Table 6, below, shows the major percentage responses for 2019 and 2021. It suggests very few changes in sentiment survey-to-survey, other than the proportion mentioning a need for improved roads jumping from 15% to 27%.

Table 6: Top five reason for overall satisfaction score, 2021 against 2019

REASON	2019	2021	DIFFERENCE
Council is doing a good job	33%	39%	5%
Roads and infrastructure need improvement	15%	27%	12%
Room for improvement	18%	14%	-4%
Tries very hard	5%	13%	8%
Council does a poor job	5%	13%	7%
Poor communication	5%	13%	7%
Some services lacking	8%	10%	2%

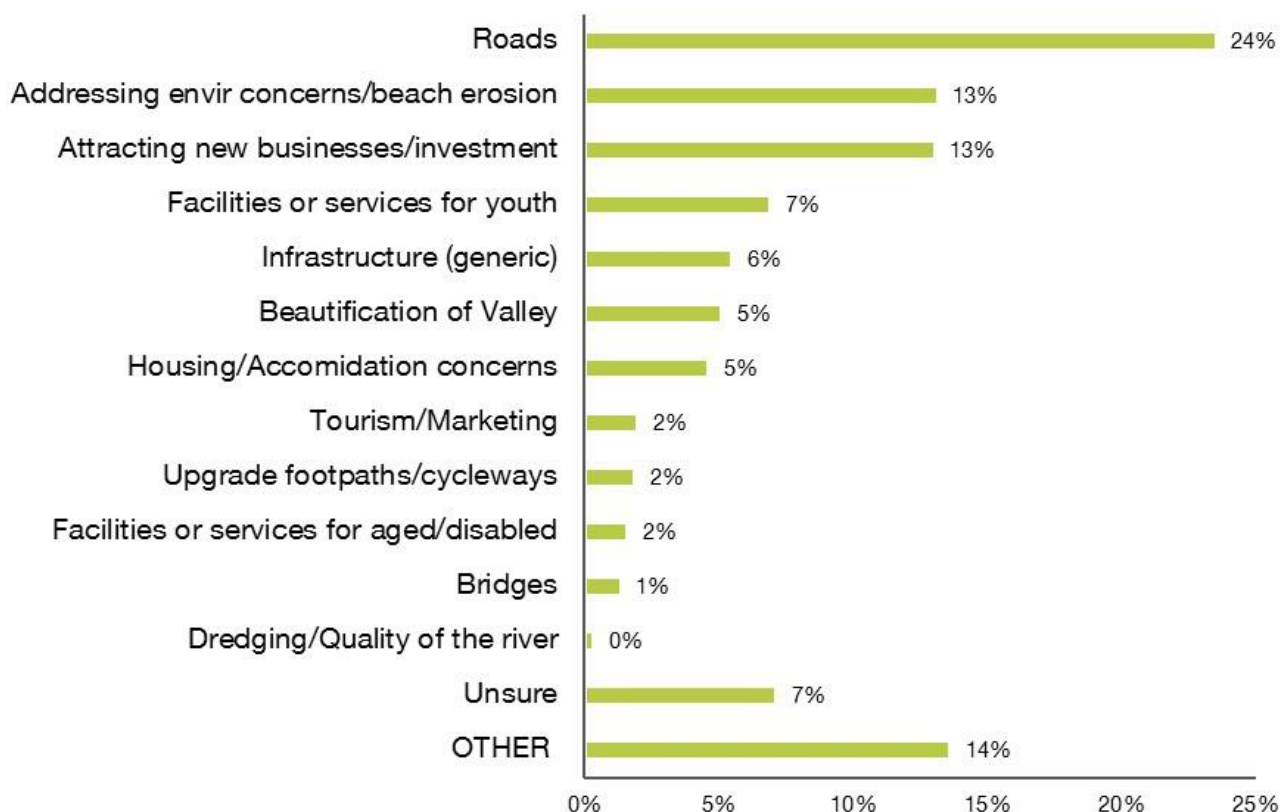


5. OVERALL SATISFACTION

The issue of roads also appears in relation to what residents perceive Council's number one priority should be over the coming decade (Figure 10, below). Roads was a clear leader, followed by addressing environmental concerns (13%) and attracting new investment (also 13%).

Figure 10: Major priority for spending

THINKING ABOUT COUNCIL SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE AS A WHOLE, WHAT DO YOU THINK COUNCIL'S NUMBER ONE PRIORITY SHOULD BE OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS? (N=400)



Meanwhile Table 7, below, shows that these priorities have changed little since 2019. (However, residents are arguably more confident now with the amount of new business and investment coming into the LGA, as it has dropped 10% survey-to-survey.)

Table 7: Priorities for next decade (2021 against 2019)

TOP 5 PRIORITIES	2019	2021	% CHANGE
Roads	20%	24%	4%
Addressing environmental concerns/beach	12%	13%	1%
Attracting new businesses/investment	23%	13%	-10%
Facilities or services for youth	3%	7%	4%
Infrastructure	0%	6%	6%



6. BENCHMARKS TO OTHER COUNCILS

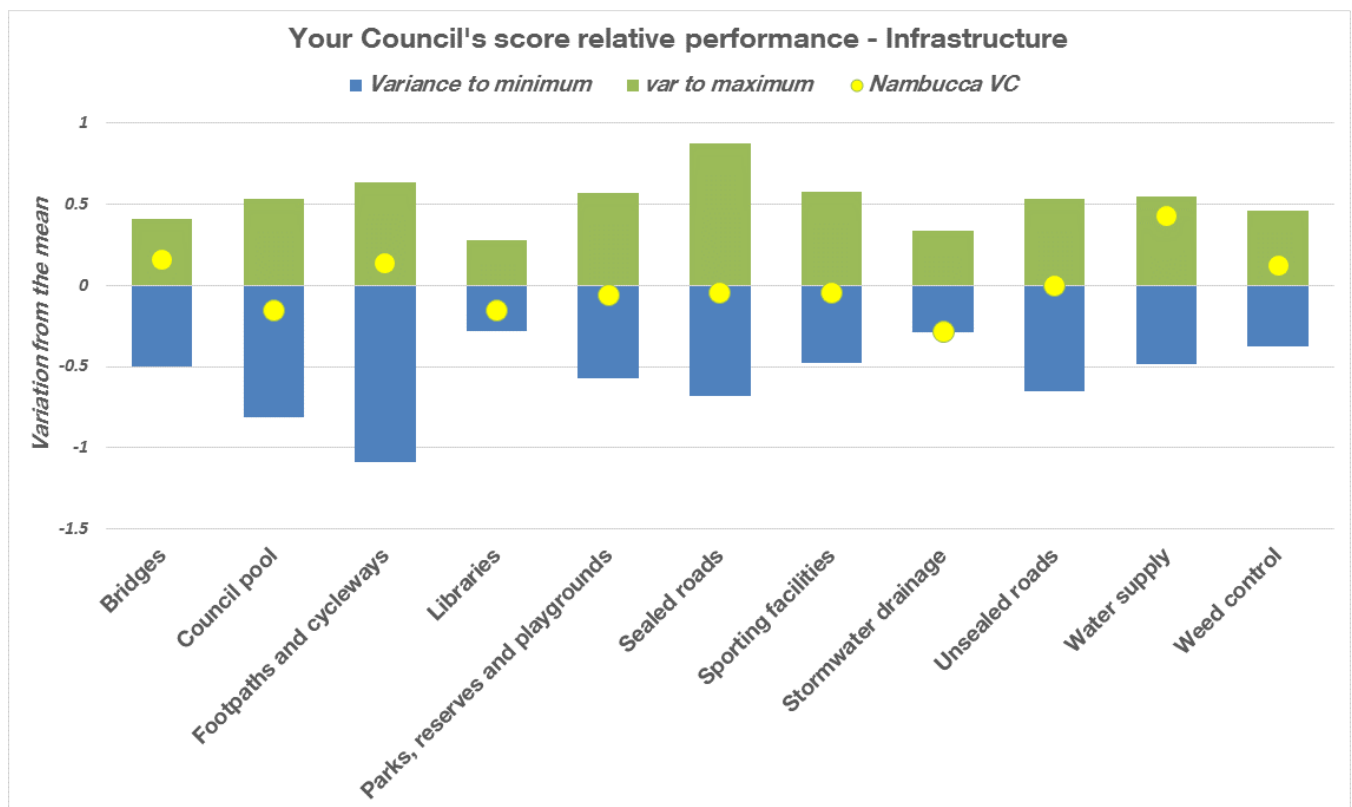
Taverner Research is able to benchmark NVC's satisfaction scores against 25 other NSW regional Councils for which it conducts similar research. Results for 2021 are shown in Figure 11 (below) and Figure 12 (next page).

In each case the length of the bar shows the variation between councils – so for example (in the table below) there is much greater variance in satisfaction scores for footpaths and cycleways than there is for libraries.

In each case, the NVC figure is indicated by the yellow dot.

In the case of infrastructure, Council scores are on par with its peers – and substantially higher in the case of water supply. However, it is slightly lower in relation to libraries, and at the bottom of the list in relation to stormwater drainage (the latter an ongoing feature of this survey).

Figure 11: Benchmark (against regional NSW Councils) for infrastructure



(Continued next page...)

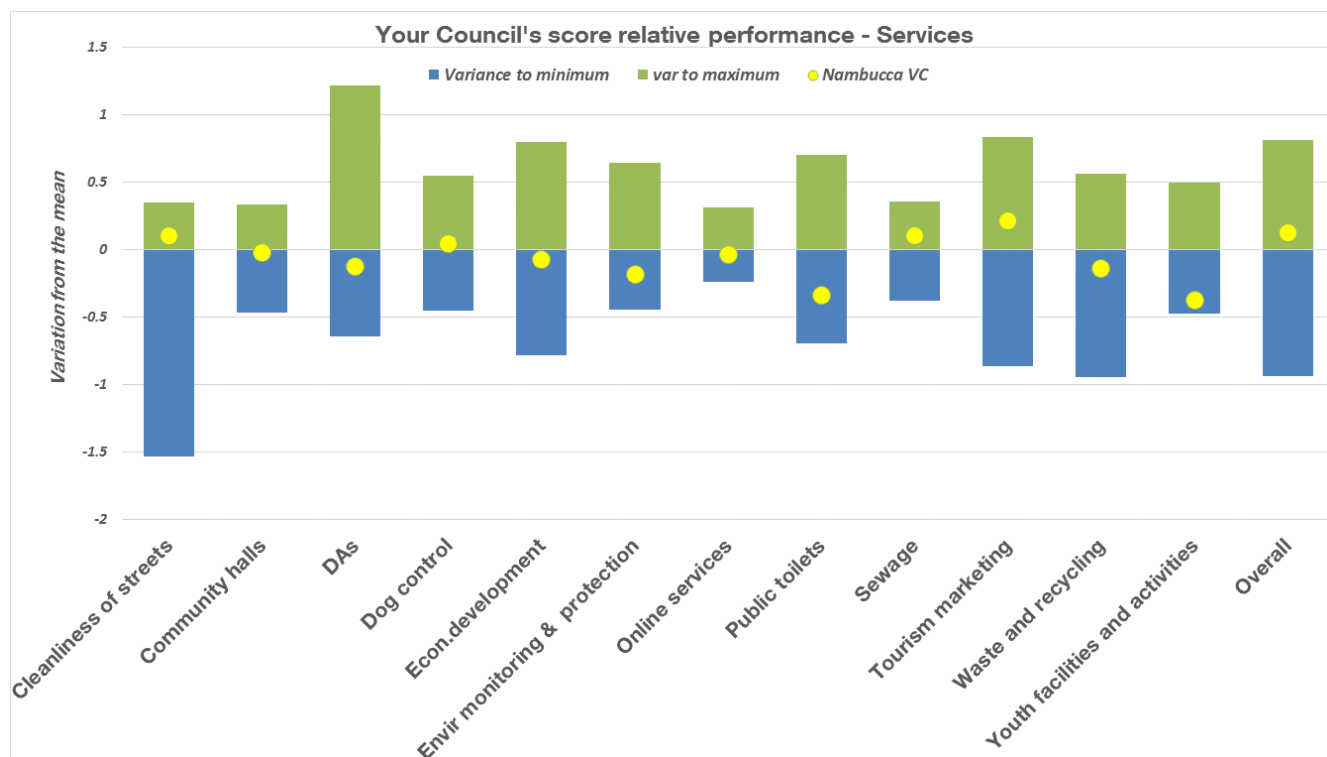


6. BENCHMARKS TO OTHER COUNCILS

In the case of services, NVC is again on par with other regional councils on many measures. And overall satisfaction (3.40) is slightly above the mean for its regional peers (3.34).

However, it is lower in relation to environmental monitoring and protection, public toilets, and youth facilities and activities.

Figure 12: Benchmark (against regional NSW Councils) for services



7. CUSTOMER SERVICE



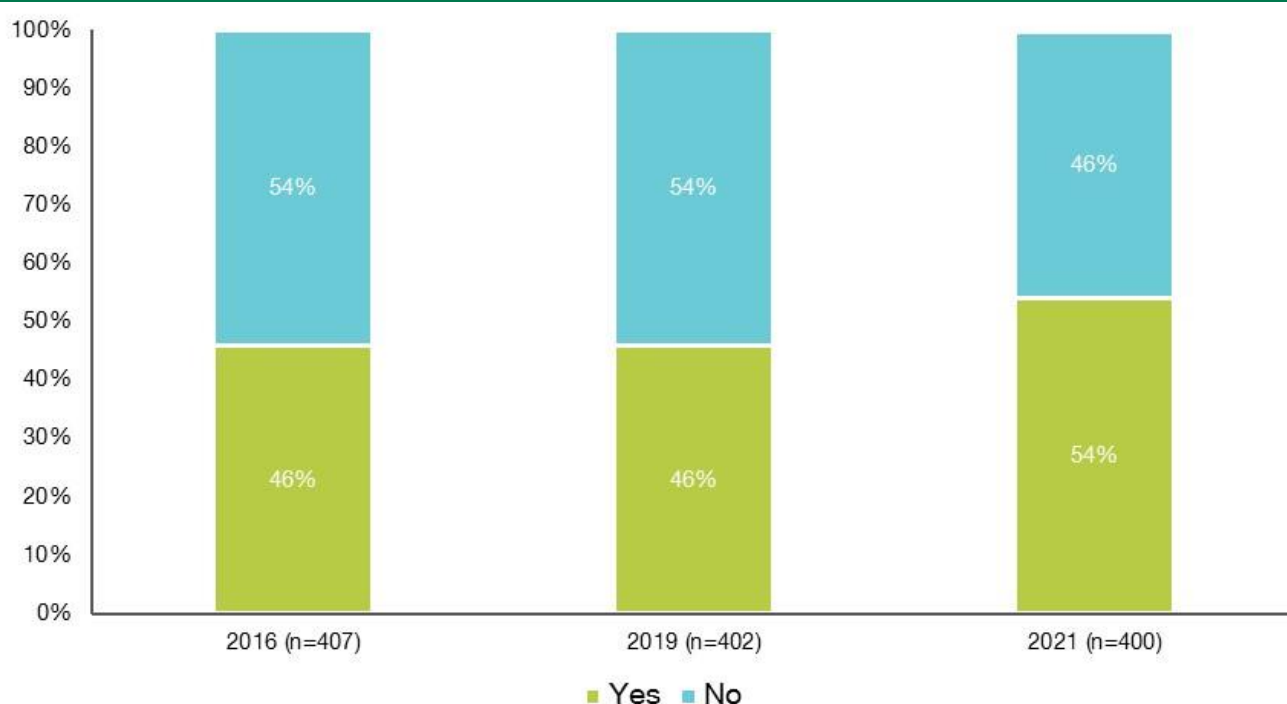
Residents were next asked about their most recent customer service experience.

Figure 13, below, shows the proportion of residents who had contacted Council within the previous 12 months. This has jumped in the most recent survey, from 46% in each of 2013, 2016 and 2019 to 54% in 2021.

Results for this question were consistent by age and gender.

Figure 13: Council contact

HAVE YOU CONTACTED COUNCIL WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS? (N=400)



Satisfaction with the most recent interaction (Figure 14, next page) fell in this most recent survey, from a mean (on a 1-5 satisfaction scale) of 3.50 in 2019 to 3.08 in 2021. Although this keeps satisfaction above the “neutral” rating of 3.0, the change is considered statistically significant.

Put another way, net satisfaction (i.e. % satisfied less % dissatisfied) fell from +30% to +6% from survey-to-survey.

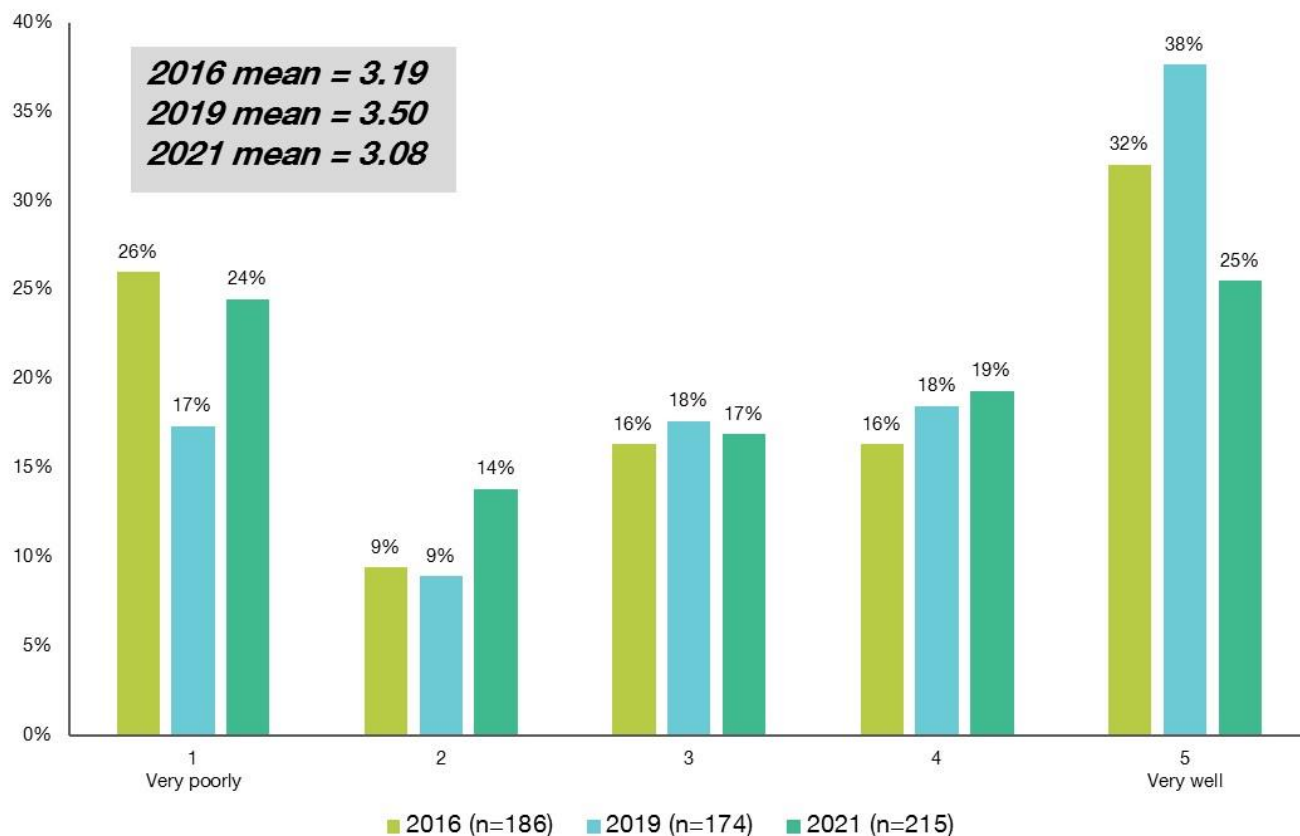
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7. CUSTOMER SERVICE

Figure 14: Satisfaction with service provided

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY COUNCIL HANDLED THAT LATEST ENQUIRY, ON A SCALE OF 1-5, WHERE 1 MEANS YOU THINK IT WAS HANDLED VERY POORLY AND 5 MEANS YOU THINK IT WAS HANDLED VERY WELL (2021 N=215)





8. COMMUNICATION WITH COUNCIL

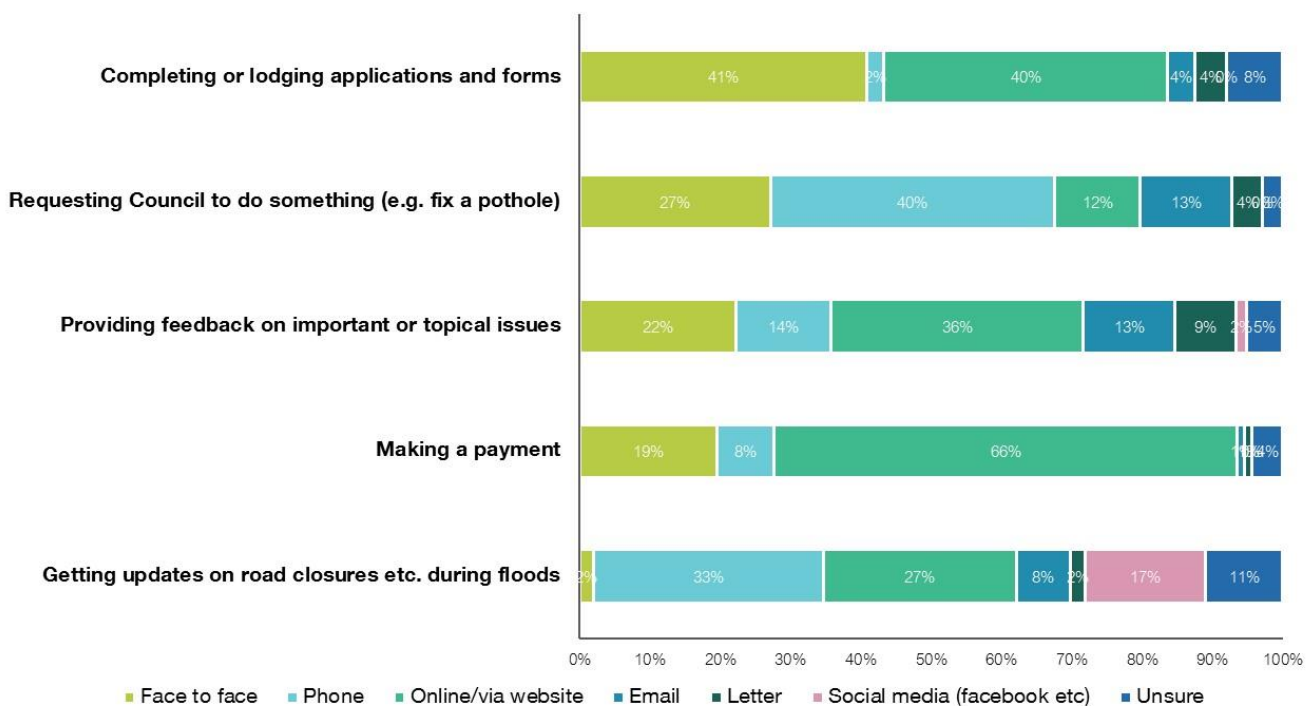
As in previous years, Council was keen to understand how residents preferred dealing with Council in a range of different scenarios.

Figure 15, below, shows that the method of preferred communication differs greatly from one from of inquiry to another. In this case:

- Residents still prefer lodging applications and forms face-to-face (41%, though via website now a close second at 40%);
- They prefer to phone when requesting to fix something (40%, followed by face-to-face on 27%)
- Council's website is the preferred medium for providing feedback (36%, followed by face-to-face at 22%)
- Two-thirds now prefer to make payments online
- Phone, email and social media were the preferred means of finding out about road closures etc during floods (at 33%, 27% and 17% respectively)

Figure 15: Preferred communication tools with Council

**IN YOUR DEALINGS WITH COUNCIL, HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO CONDUCT THE FOLLOWING?
(N=400)**





8. COMMUNICATION WITH COUNCIL

Although these results were for the most part similar to those encountered in the 2019 survey, there were two significant differences:

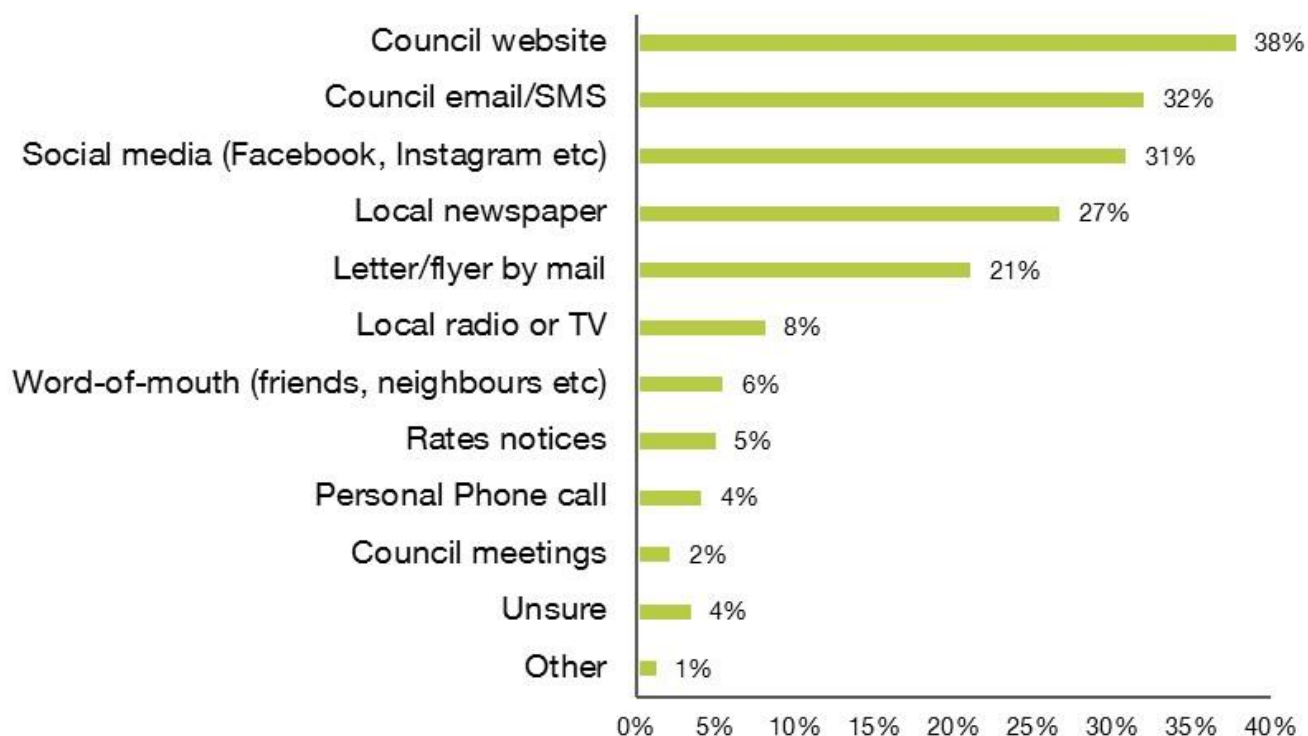
- The proportion wanting to phone Council to request it to do something fell 12% (from 52% to 40%), with the load of that change being equally shared by face-to-face, online and email; and
- 13% less said they would lodge or complete forms face-to-face (54% to 41%) – with almost all of that difference moving online to Council's website

Finally in this section, residents were asked their preferred methods for finding out about Council's activities or policies (Figure 16, below). Website, email and SMS were all popular.

As one would expect, social media and website were significantly more popular among younger residents, while those aged 60+ still had a strong preference for the local newspaper or letterbox drop (though even for this age cohort, 32% chose Council's website as one of their preferred methods.)

Figure 16: Preferred methods for finding out about Council policies or activities

WHAT ARE YOUR PREFERRED WAYS OF FINDING OUT ABOUT NAMBUCCA VALLEY COUNCIL ACTIVITIES OR POLICIES, OR CHANGES IN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES? (N=400)





9. OTHER ISSUES

Finally, residents were asked their views on a range of issues chosen by outgoing Councillors. Responses are shown in Table 8, below.

Results showed strong levels of support for Council playing a role in increasing the stock of affordable housing in the Nambucca Valley (57% for, 32% against), and for the initiative to create the Great Koala National Park (78% for, 18% against).

However, views were split on the other two issues. In relation to encouraging more medium-density housing in Nambucca Heads and Macksville, 47% supported while 42% opposed. And on the topic of punishing continued waste contamination offenders by stopping their green and yellow bin collection, 44% supported this initiative while 46% opposed.

Table 8: Responses to four questions on topics of interest

QUESTION	YES	NO	UNSURE
There's a lot of discussion at the moment about the need for more affordable housing. Do you believe it's Council's role to seek ways of increasing the amount of affordable housing in the Nambucca Valley?	57%	32%	11%
One aspect of affordable housing is increasing residential density in urban areas. Do you feel there should be more medium density housing (such as townhouses or apartments) in Nambucca Heads and Macksville?	47%	43%	9%
On the subject of waste, some people are still putting the wrong things in their yellow and green bins, which adds to the cost of waste processing. As a last resort, do you think Council should stop yellow and green bins collection from households that continue to do this?	44%	46%	10%
And there is a proposal to convert some state forests, including a state forest in the Nambucca Valley, to create the Great Koala National Park. Do you support this initiative?	76%	18%	6%

A breakdown of these results by age, gender and location is contained in Appendix 2.

10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1. Hi, my name is (name) and I'm calling from Taverner Research on behalf of Nambucca Valley Council. Council is conducting a customer satisfaction survey of its residents, and you have been randomly selected to participate in this. This survey takes around 12 minutes, we're not trying to sell anything and all answers will remain confidential. Would you be willing to assist Council this afternoon/evening?

Offer CALL BACK if inconvenient time. Council contact is XXXXXXXX. Phone 6568 XXXX during business hours and arrange Callback.

1. Yes
2. No THANK AND TERMINATE

IF YES (Q1=1) ASK Q3. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q2

Q2. Thank you for your time. Have a great afternoon/evening.

If NOT IN LGA: I'm sorry this survey is for residents in the Nambucca Valley. Thank you for your time.

LIVED IN LGA LESS THAN 1 YEAR: I'm sorry in that case you don't qualify for this survey as you need to be a resident for at least 1 year to participate. Thank you for your time.

COUNCILLOR OR PERMANENT COUNCIL EMPLOYEE: I'm sorry, but councillors and permanent employees or their families are not able to complete this survey. But thank you for your time.

End

Q3. Thanks so much. Before we proceed, I just have three quick qualifying questions. Firstly, can you confirm you're aged 18 or over?

If under 18 ask to speak to an adult and go back to page 1

1. Yes
2. No



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

IF NO (Q3=2) ASK Q2. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q4

Q4. Do you live in the Nambucca Valley local government area?

Nambucca LGA. Where would you go if you had to speak to Council?

1. Yes
2. No

IF NO (Q4=2) ASK Q2. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q5

Q5. Have you lived in the area for at least 1 year?

Must have lived in Valley for more than 12 months

1. Yes
2. No

IF NO (Q5=2) ASK Q2. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q6

Q6. And are you or an immediate family member a councillor or permanent employee of Nambucca Valley Council?

1. Yes
2. No

IF YES (Q6=1) ASK Q2. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q7

Q7. May I have your first name for the survey?

Only so we can refer to you by name

Q8. Thanks [Q7]. To get us underway, can you please rate your satisfaction with the following Council facilities or services. We'll use a scale of 1-5, where 1 means you think it's very poor and 5 is excellent. If you don't use the service, just say so and I'll move to the next one. Firstly, how satisfied are you with?

PROMPTED SINGLE RESPONSE - You may need to remind respondent to only rate services they use

COLUMNS

1. 1 Very poor
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5 Excellent
6. N/A

ROWS



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Sealed roads
2. Unsealed roads
3. Bridges
4. Footpaths and cycleways
5. Cleanliness of streets
6. Online services
7. Dog control
8. Stormwater drainage
9. Public toilets
10. Weed control
11. Waste and recycling
12. Water supply
13. Sewage collection and treatment
14. Sporting facilities
15. Parks, reserves and playgrounds
16. Council pool
17. Libraries
18. Community halls
19. Youth facilities and activities
20. Services for the elderly
21. Economic development and attracting new investment
22. Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall
23. Development applications (DA's)
24. Coastal and beach management
25. Environmental monitoring and protection
26. River water quality

Q9. I'm now going to read the list to you again but this time please rate how important these Council facilities or services are to you or your family. We'll use a scale of 1-5, where 1 means you think its unimportant, 4 is very important and 5 is critical. So firstly, how important to you or your family is?

PROMPTED SINGLE RESPONSE - You may need to remind respondent to only rate services they use

COLUMNS

1. 1 Unimportant
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4 Very important
5. 5 Critical



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

ROWS

1. Sealed roads
2. Unsealed roads
3. Bridges
4. Footpaths and cycleways
5. Cleanliness of streets
6. Online services
7. Dog control
8. Stormwater drainage
9. Public toilets
10. Weed control
11. Waste and recycling
12. Water supply
13. Sewage collection and treatment
14. Sporting facilities
15. Parks, reserves and playgrounds
16. Council pool
17. Libraries
18. Community halls
19. Youth facilities and activities
20. Services for the elderly
21. Economic development and attracting new investment
22. Upgrading CBD's and destinations such as the V-Wall
23. Development applications (DA's)
24. Coastal and beach management
25. Environmental monitoring and protection
26. River water quality

Q10. Please rate your satisfaction with Council's overall performance on a scale of 1-5. Where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied?

1. 1 Very Dissatisfied
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5 Very Satisfied

Q11. Can you briefly explain why you gave that rating?

PROBE



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Q12. And [Q7], thinking about Council services and infrastructure as a whole, what do you think Council's number one priority should be over the next ten years?

UNPROMPTED

SINGLE RESPONSE

If respondent is unsure: Say this may be a recurring expenditure item, a new piece of infrastructure, or anything else Council should make its number one spending priority for the next ten years

1. Roads
2. Bridges
3. Attracting new businesses/investment
4. Facilities or services for youth
5. Facilities or services for aged/disabled
6. Addressing environmental concerns/beach erosion
7. Upgrade footpaths/cycleways
8. Beautification of Valley
9. Unsure
10. OTHER

Q13. Now [Q7], have you contacted Council within the past 12 months?

UNPROMPTED

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure

IF NO OR UNSURE (Q13=2 or 3) ASK Q15. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q14

Q14. And how would you rate your satisfaction with the way Council handled that latest enquiry, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means you think it was handled very poorly and 5 means you think it was handled very well?

UNPROMPTED

SINGLE RESPONSE

1. 1 Very Poorly
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. Very Well



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Q15. In your dealings with Council, how would you prefer to conduct the following?

UNPROMPTED (Unless absolutely necessary) SINGLE RESPONSE

COLUMNS

1. Face to face
2. Phone
3. Online/via website
4. Email
5. Letter
6. Social media (facebook etc)
7. Unsure

ROWS

1. Making a payment
2. Requesting Council to do something (e.g. fix a pothole)
3. Completing or lodging applications and forms
4. Providing feedback on important or topical issues
5. Getting updates on road closures etc. during floods

16. And what are your preferred ways of finding out about Nambucca Valley Council activities or policies, or changes in Council activities? (Unprompted – probe for up to three)

1. Local newspaper
2. Rates notices
3. Council website
4. Local radio or TV
5. Word-of-mouth (friends, neighbours etc)
6. Social media (Facebook, Instagram etc)
7. Council emails
8. Unsure
9. Other

Q16a. There's a lot of discussion at the moment about the need for more affordable housing. Do you believe it's Council's role to seek ways of increasing the amount of affordable housing in the Nambucca Valley?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

IF NO or UNSURE (Q16a=2 or 3) GO TO Q15. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q17

Q17. One aspect of affordable housing is increasing residential density in urban areas. Do you feel there should be more medium density housing (such as townhouses or apartments) in Nambucca Heads and Macksville?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure

IF NO or UNSURE (Q17=2 or 3) GO TO Q15. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q18

Q18. On the subject of waste, some people are still putting the wrong things in their yellow and green bins, which adds to the cost of waste processing. As a last resort, do you think Council should stop yellow and green bins collection from households that continue to do this?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure

IF NO or UNSURE (Q18=2 or 3) GO TO Q15. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q19

Q19. And there is a proposal to convert some State forest, including State forest in the Nambucca Valley, to create the Great Koala National Park. Do you support this initiative?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure

Q20. Thanks [Q7], we are almost at the end of the survey. Just a few demographic questions to finish off. Firstly would your age range be between?

PROMPTED

1. 18-39
2. 40-59
3. 60+

Q21. Gender

DON'T ASK

1. Male
2. Female

Q22. Is your residence in an urban, rural or village location?

1. Urban
2. Rural
3. Village



10. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Q23. And which area do you live in?

UNPROMPTED. If not listed ask which town closest town

1. Bowraville
2. Nambucca
3. Macksville
4. Scotts Head
5. Taylors Arm
6. Valla Beach/Valla

Q24. And finally, how long have you lived in the Nambucca Valley?

1. Less than 5 years
2. 5-10 years
3. 11-20 years
4. More than 20 years

Q25. Thanks so much [Q7], that's the end of the survey. Nambucca Valley Council greatly appreciates your feedback. Did you have any questions about the survey? Just to let you know my manager may call you to confirm this interview was conducted correctly. Thanks again for your time and have a great afternoon/evening.

(ISO and conclude)

END

11. APPENDIX 2: DATA TABLES

Figure 17: Satisfaction scores by age, gender and urban vs. rural

Means scores (1-5 scale) by age, gender and urban/rural		Total	Age			Gender		Urban/Rural	
			18-39	40-59	60+	Male	Female	Urban	Rural + Village
Individual Council facilities and services	Sealed roads	2.94	2.94	2.66	3.18	3.03	2.88	2.97	2.92
	Unsealed roads	2.50	2.60	2.37	2.59	2.79	2.31	2.63	2.42
	Bridges	3.62	3.77	3.42	3.73	3.73	3.56	3.60	3.64
	Footpaths and cycleways	3.28	3.43	3.26	3.20	3.25	3.29	3.33	3.24
	Cleanliness of streets	3.69	3.60	3.69	3.74	3.77	3.64	3.57	3.78
	Online services	3.20	3.14	3.11	3.32	3.01	3.31	3.11	3.27
	Dog control	3.29	3.64	2.97	3.36	3.28	3.30	3.22	3.35
	Stormwater drainage	2.86	2.96	2.66	2.98	3.02	2.76	2.87	2.85
	Public toilets	2.84	2.66	2.81	2.98	3.20	2.64	2.81	2.87
	Weed control	2.91	2.95	2.90	2.91	2.91	2.92	2.82	2.98
	Waste and recycling	3.59	3.51	3.51	3.70	3.67	3.54	3.53	3.64
	Water supply	4.11	4.21	3.92	4.20	4.15	4.08	4.19	4.00
	Sewage collection and treatment	4.05	4.00	4.05	4.06	4.16	3.96	4.18	3.89
	Sporting facilities	3.79	3.83	3.59	3.97	3.80	3.79	3.76	3.82
	Parks, reserves and playgrounds	3.80	3.65	3.60	4.08	3.86	3.77	3.74	3.85
	Council pool	3.63	3.57	3.42	3.87	3.29	3.80	3.52	3.69
	Libraries	3.99	3.77	3.84	4.22	3.75	4.12	3.78	4.14
	Community halls	3.56	3.43	3.35	3.79	3.53	3.58	3.37	3.69
	Youth facilities and activities	2.60	2.59	2.46	2.76	2.75	2.51	2.40	2.75
	Services for the elderly	3.23	3.20	3.09	3.37	3.41	3.14	3.24	3.23
	Econ development/attract new investment	2.78	2.93	2.61	2.86	2.83	2.74	2.74	2.80
	Upgrading CBD's, V Wall etc	3.62	3.62	3.53	3.70	3.47	3.71	3.64	3.60
	Development applications (DA's)	2.67	2.95	2.59	2.57	2.66	2.67	2.56	2.73
	Coastal and beach management	3.38	3.55	3.27	3.39	3.34	3.40	3.38	3.38
	Environmental monitoring and protection	3.03	3.48	2.76	2.98	3.08	2.99	3.02	3.03
	River water quality	3.40	3.50	3.17	3.55	3.51	3.33	3.36	3.43
Overall performance	Overall satisfaction with Council	3.30	3.26	3.14	3.46	3.26	3.33	3.28	3.32
Latest enquiry	Overall satisfaction on Council's handling of your most recent enquiry	3.08	2.93	3.03	3.22	2.88	3.18	3.05	3.09

Figure 18: Topical question responses by age, gender and urban vs. rural

Question	Response	Total	Age			Gender		Urban/Rural	
			18-39	40-59	60+	Male	Female	Urban	Rural + Village
Do you believe it's Council's role to seek ways of increasing the amount of affordable housing in the Nambucca Valley?	Yes	57%	57%	63%	53%	51%	61%	54%	60%
	No	32%	25%	31%	36%	36%	29%	35%	29%
	Unsure	11%	18%	6%	11%	13%	10%	10%	11%
Do you feel there should be more medium density housing (such as townhouses or apartments) in Nambucca Heads and Macksville?	Yes	47%	40%	50%	49%	50%	46%	48%	46%
	No	43%	49%	44%	40%	46%	42%	45%	42%
	Unsure	10%	12%	6%	11%	4%	12%	6%	12%
Some people are still putting the wrong things in their yellow and green bins, which adds to the cost of waste processing. As a last resort, do you think Council should stop yellow and green bins collection from households that continue to do this?	Yes	44%	43%	44%	44%	39%	46%	39%	47%
	No	46%	37%	53%	46%	51%	43%	53%	41%
	Unsure	10%	21%	3%	11%	10%	11%	8%	12%
There is a proposal to convert some State forest, including State forest in the Nambucca Valley, to create the Great Koala National Park. Do you support this initiative?	Yes	76%	78%	72%	78%	67%	81%	78%	74%
	No	18%	16%	20%	17%	27%	12%	17%	18%
	Unsure	6%	6%	8%	5%	6%	7%	5%	8%