



Balranald Shire Council Community Satisfaction Survey

Results from a random telephone survey of 171 adult
Balranald Shire residents, conducted in April 2020

Client: Balranald Shire Council

FINAL REPORT

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Executive summary

In March 2020, Balranald Shire Council commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and statistically valid telephone survey of 200 adult residents living within the local government area (LGA) to assess satisfaction with, and priorities towards different Council-managed facilities and services. The survey was also designed to measure satisfaction of those having direct contact with Council, communication preferences and to understand resident values and ideas for the shire.

Surveying was conducted from April 15th to 29th, as a random telephone survey of adult residents living throughout the LGA. No formal quotas were applied, although we did attempt to ensure a robust mix of ages, genders and sub-regions.

The final sample size was n=171 residents. Based on the number of households within the Balranald Shire, a random sample of 171 adult residents implies a margin for error of +/- 7.1% at the 95% confidence level. (This essentially means that if we conducted a similar poll 20 times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population – in this case “all Balranald Shire adult residents excluding Council employees and Councillors” - to within a +/- 7.1% margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

For more information on survey methodology, sampling error and sample characteristics, see pages 9-12.

Among the survey’s major findings:

1. Overall satisfaction with Council staff maintenance of infrastructure and facilities was satisfactory. In all, 39% of residents were satisfied with Council’s overall performance and 25% were dissatisfied. Net satisfaction rating (NSR) was hence +14% (i.e. 14% more residents felt satisfied than dissatisfied) and the mean overall satisfaction score was 3.15 out of five. (This ranked Balranald seventh out of eleven NSW regional Councils measured.)
2. Satisfaction with Council leadership was lower with just 17% satisfied against 47% dissatisfied (the overall mean score was 2.57 out of a possible 5, and 30% more residents were dissatisfied than satisfied).
3. Libraries and sewage collection and treatment were rated of highest satisfaction, each enjoying a mean satisfaction score of 4 or more. These were closely followed by cleanliness of streets (3.9), parks, reserves and playgrounds (3.9) and sporting facilities (3.8). Meanwhile just 6 of the 24 facilities and services scored below the “par” mean of 3.0. Poorest satisfaction scores came with unsealed roads (mean score 2.4), youth facilities and activities (2.5) and economic development and attracting new investment (2.6).
4. Sealed roads were deemed to be of highest importance, with a mean score of 4.4 (out of a possible five). This was followed by cleanliness of streets (4.4), water supply (4.3), waste and recycling (4.2), cemeteries (4.1) and tourism marketing (4.1). However, with all but four of the 24 services having an importance score over 3, this suggests that almost everything is deemed important by residents.
5. When placed into a matrix of importance vs. satisfaction, the following picture emerged. (Those facilities and services listed top right are those that are deemed of higher importance and for which residents are relatively satisfied. However those in the top left quadrant are those which are perceived to be of high importance yet where expectations are not presently being met. Within each quadrant services are listed in alphabetical order, not by priority.)

Higher importance/lower satisfaction	Higher importance/higher satisfaction
<p>Economic development and attracting new investment</p> <p>Footpaths and cycleways</p> <p>Sealed roads</p> <p>Tourism marketing</p>	<p>Cemeteries</p> <p>Cleanliness of streets</p> <p>Parks, reserves and playgrounds</p> <p>Waste and recycling</p> <p>Water supply</p>
Lower importance/lower satisfaction	Lower importance/higher satisfaction
<p>Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)</p> <p>Development applications (DA's)</p> <p>Environmental monitoring and protection</p> <p>Online services</p> <p>Stormwater drainage</p> <p>Unsealed roads</p> <p>Weed control</p> <p>Youth facilities and activities</p>	<p>Bridges, culverts and causeways</p> <p>Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms</p> <p>Council pool</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Public toilets</p> <p>Sewage collection and treatment</p> <p>Sporting facilities</p>

6. When asked what they felt the major spending priority should be for the next 3-5 years, residents focussed primarily on roads and rebuilding trust in Council.
7. 42% of residents indicated that they had contacted Council in the past 12 months for reasons other than paying rates. Of those who had contacted Council, 80% had done so more than once.
8. 58% of those contacting Council had done so by telephone, while 31% did so face-to-face. Only 8% contacted Council via email and just 3% by letter or fax. This suggests that even in an era of online communication and social media, phone and face-to-face remain critical forms of contact.
9. Some 48% indicated that their most recent enquiry was handled well (rating of 4 or 5) and 38% poorly (rating of 1 or 2). Mean satisfaction ranking was just above “par” at 3.16 out of a possible 5.
10. There is a strong correlation between time taken to resolve an issue, and satisfaction with the way it was handled.
11. When asked how they preferred Council to inform them of changes to services, policies or activities, 68% nominated Council’s monthly newsletter, and 57% letterbox drops. Facebook and email newsletters were popular option among younger residents.
12. In terms of what people value most about living in the Balranald Shire, the community and people were front of mind (mentioned unprompted by 51% of those surveyed). Peace and quiet was second (at 27%) followed by the country lifestyle (17%).

Recommendations

Based on the survey findings, we would recommend the following action points:

1. A focus on those areas with the biggest gap between expectations and satisfaction – these include:
 - a. economic development and attracting new investment,
 - b. youth facilities and activities,
 - c. tourism marketing,
 - d. sealed roads,
 - e. footpaths and cycleway, and
 - f. unsealed roads.
2. Perception of Council leadership was poor, and efforts should hence be made by Council’s new leadership rebuild trust. Engagement with the community on a regular basis will also ensure they feel informed and included in Council decision-making.
3. Customer service quality is consistently (i.e. among ALL councils we monitor) a higher determinant of overall community satisfaction than individual facilities and services. A high and consistent level of front desk service is hence critical to improvements in overall customer satisfaction scores over time. In particular, the focus should be on (a) sorting out issues as quickly as possible; and (b) trying to ensure that residents are satisfied with the *process* – particularly when the result has not gone “their way”.
4. While Council’s newsletter and the local newspaper will remain the major vehicles of communication in coming years, social media is of rapidly rising importance – especially to younger (18-59) residents. Again, it is important to promote any wins loudly and proudly, as subtlety can be lost on less engaged residents (which is typically the majority).

Introduction

Background and Objectives

In March 2020, Balranald Shire Council commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and statistically valid telephone survey of adult residents living within the local government area (LGA) to assess satisfaction with, and priorities towards different Council-managed facilities and services. The survey was also designed to measure satisfaction of those having direct contact with Council, communication preferences and to understand resident values and ideas for the shire.

Methodology

The survey was conducted as a random fixed line and mobile telephone poll of Balranald Shire residents aged 18+. Respondents were selected at random from a verified random sample residential telephone database of 1576 residential and mobile telephone numbers within the LGA¹. A survey form was constructed collaboratively between Council management and Jetty Research based on satisfying the above objectives.

Polling was conducted between April 15th to 29th from Jetty Research's Coffs Harbour-based² call centre. A team of five researchers called Balranald Shire residents on weekday evenings (excluding Friday) from 3.30 to 8pm. 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 survey was conducted on a purely random basis. Respondents were screened to ensure they were aged 18 or over, lived within the Balranald Shire, and were not Councillors or permanent Council employees.

A final sample of n=171 was achieved.

Average survey time was 19.55 minutes. Response rate (measured as percentage of eligible residents reached who agreed to participate) was acceptable for a survey of this length, at 57%.

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.

¹ Random valid numbers were supplied by SamplePages, a respected supplier of random numbers to the market and social research industry.

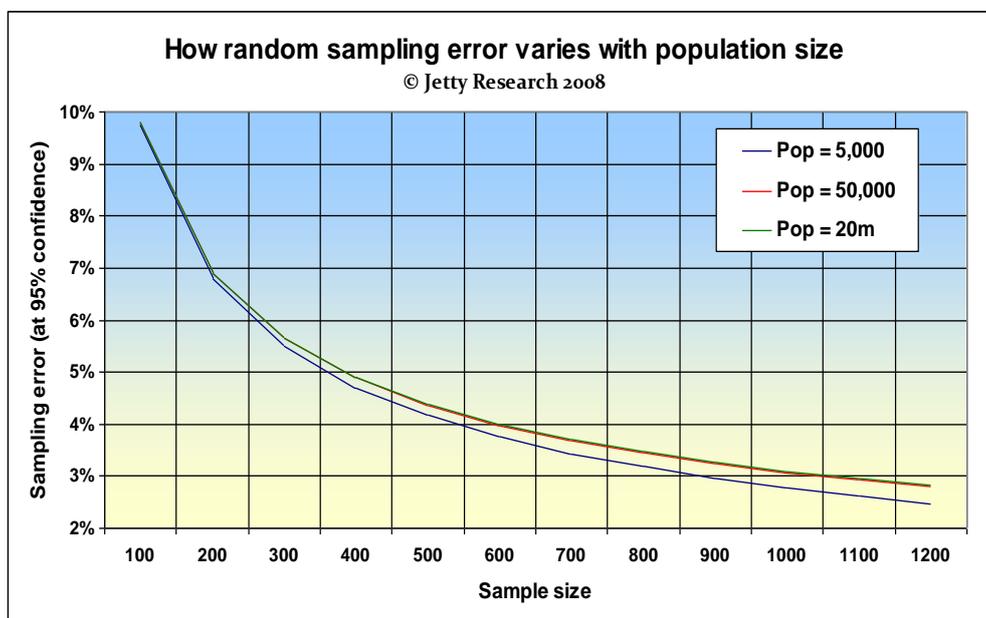
² Computer-assisted telephone interviewing

Sampling error

According to the 2016 ABS Census (Usual Resident Profile) the total population of the Balranald LGA was 2,361. Based on this survey population, a random sample of 171 adult residents implies a margin for error of +/- 7.1% at the 95% confidence level. (This means that if we conducted a similar poll 20 times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population to within a +/- 7.1% margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

As Graph i 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 +/- 9.6% (again at the 95% confidence level).

Graph i: How sampling error varies with sample and population size



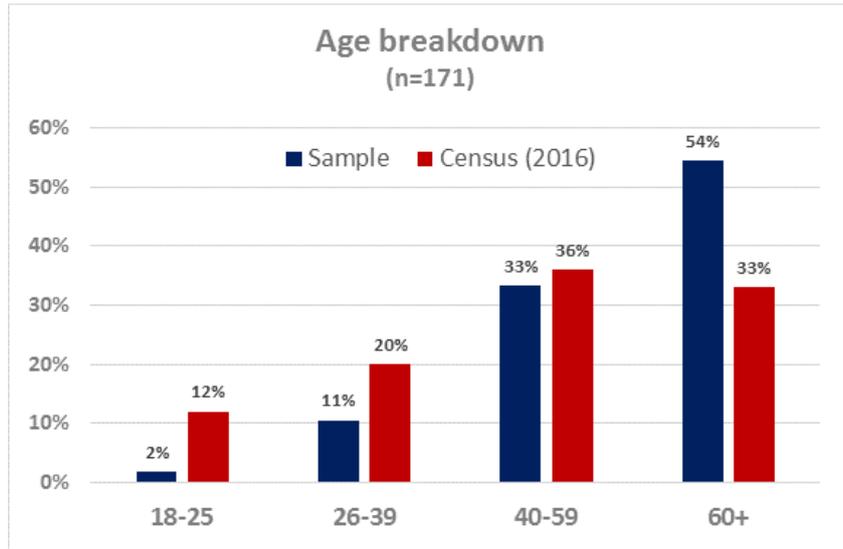
In addition to the random sampling error, above, there may also be some forms of non-random sampling error which may have affected results. These include residents unreachable by phone, the proportion of non-respondents (refusals, no answers etc.) and/or imperfections in the survey design. However, steps have been taken at each stage of the research process to minimise such errors wherever possible.

Sample characteristics

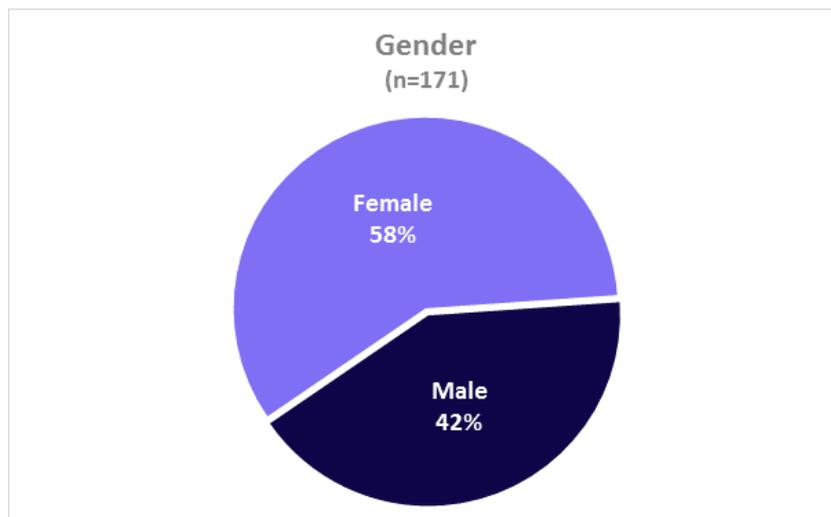
The survey was designed on a purely random basis, with no age or gender quotas.

Graphs i to v show the sample breakdown by a variety of factors.

Graph i: Age Breakdown

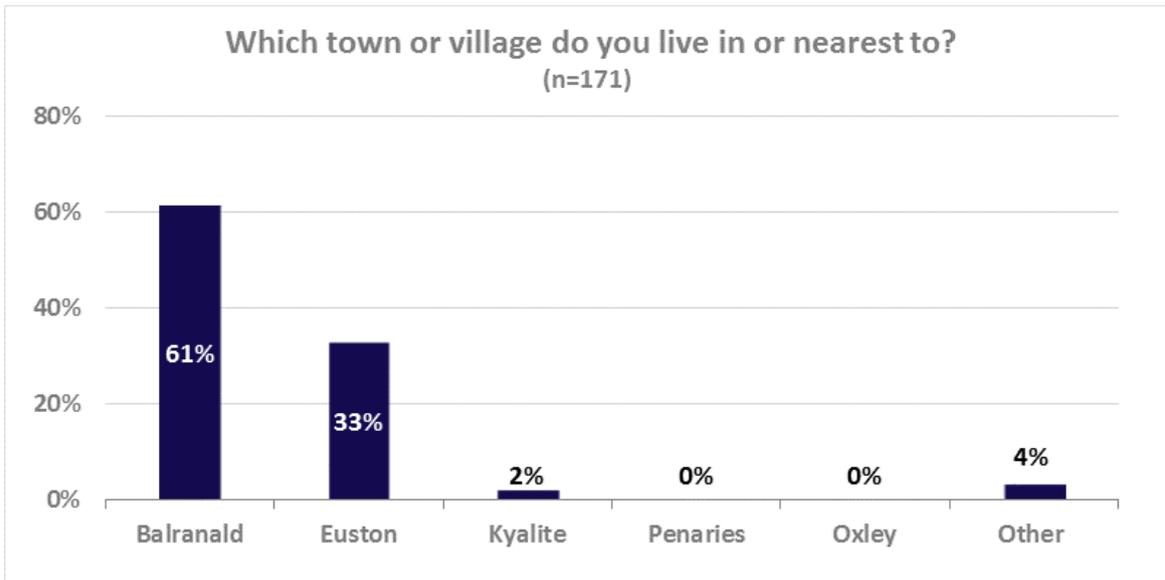


Graph ii: Gender Breakdown



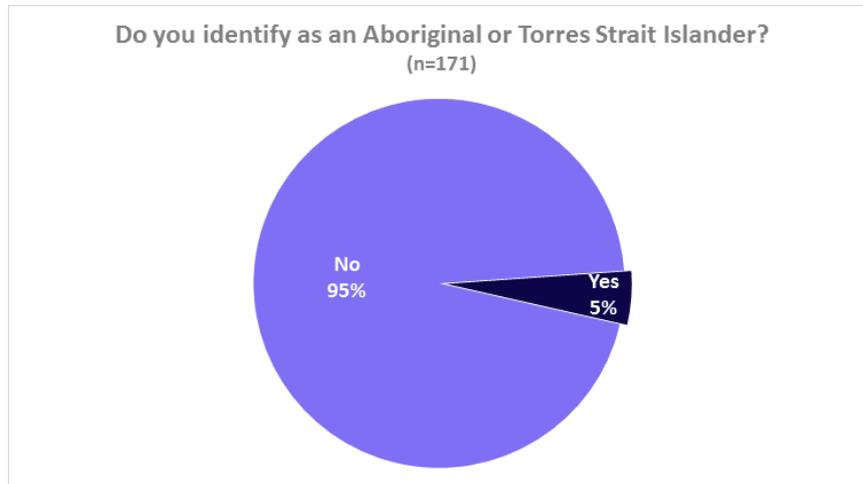
This indicates that the survey has under-represented younger residents and males (who make up 51% of the population.) Results have not been post-weighted to match the shire’s age and gender profile based on 2016 ABS Census data.

Graph iii: Residential location



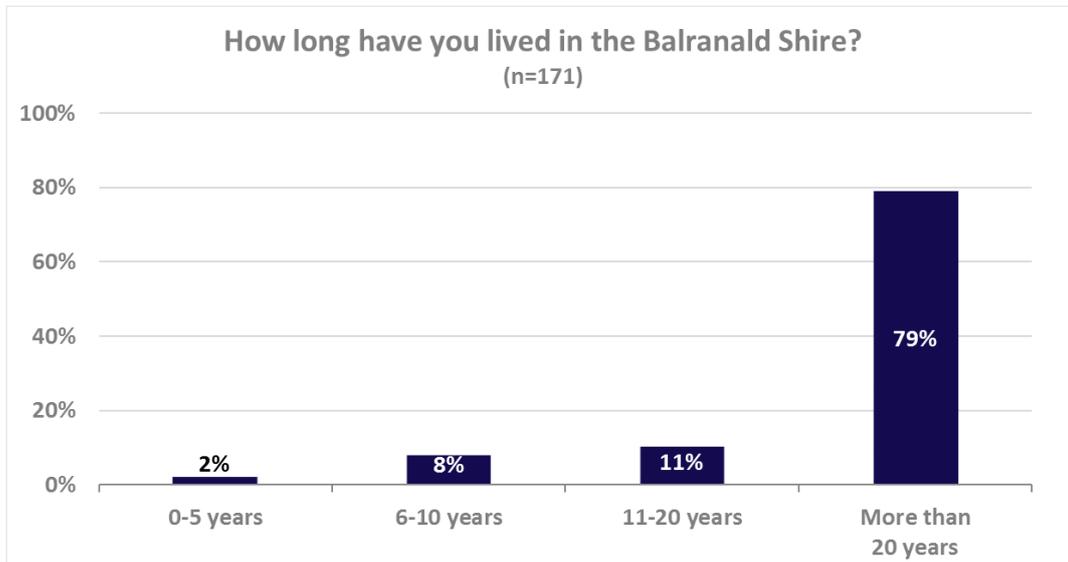
Three in five of those surveyed indicated their closest town was Balranald (61%), followed by Euston (33%).

Graph iv: Residential location



Some 5% of the sample identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (against 8% in the 2016 ABS Census).

Graph v: Residential location

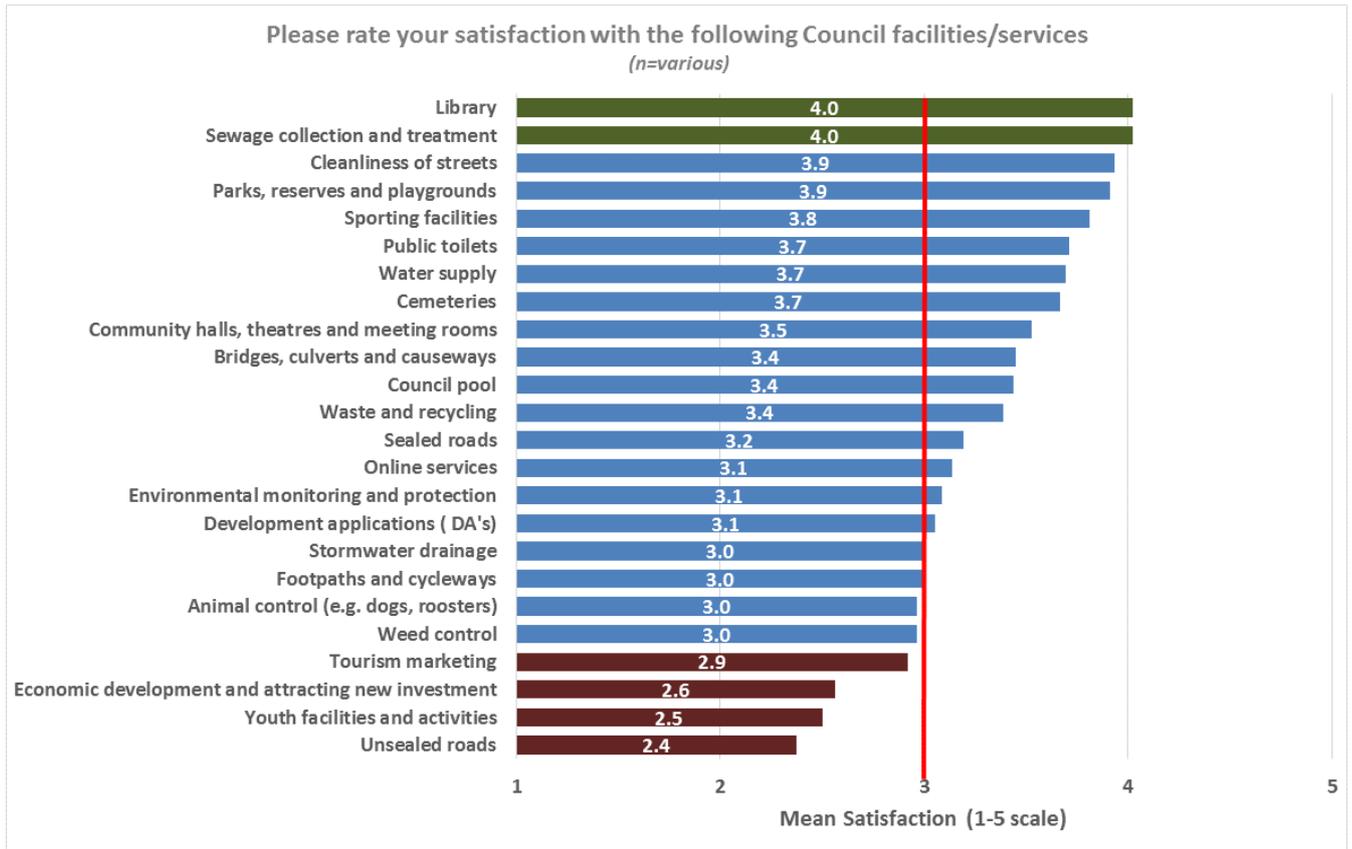


Almost four in five respondents had resided in the Balranald Shire for more than 20 years.

Part 1: Satisfaction with facilities and services

The survey commenced with questions relating to residents’ satisfaction with 24 specific Council-run facilities and services, based on a 1-5 Likert scale with 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent. Mean (i.e. average) scores are shown below, ranked from highest to lowest satisfaction:

Graph 1.1: Satisfaction with Council facilities and services



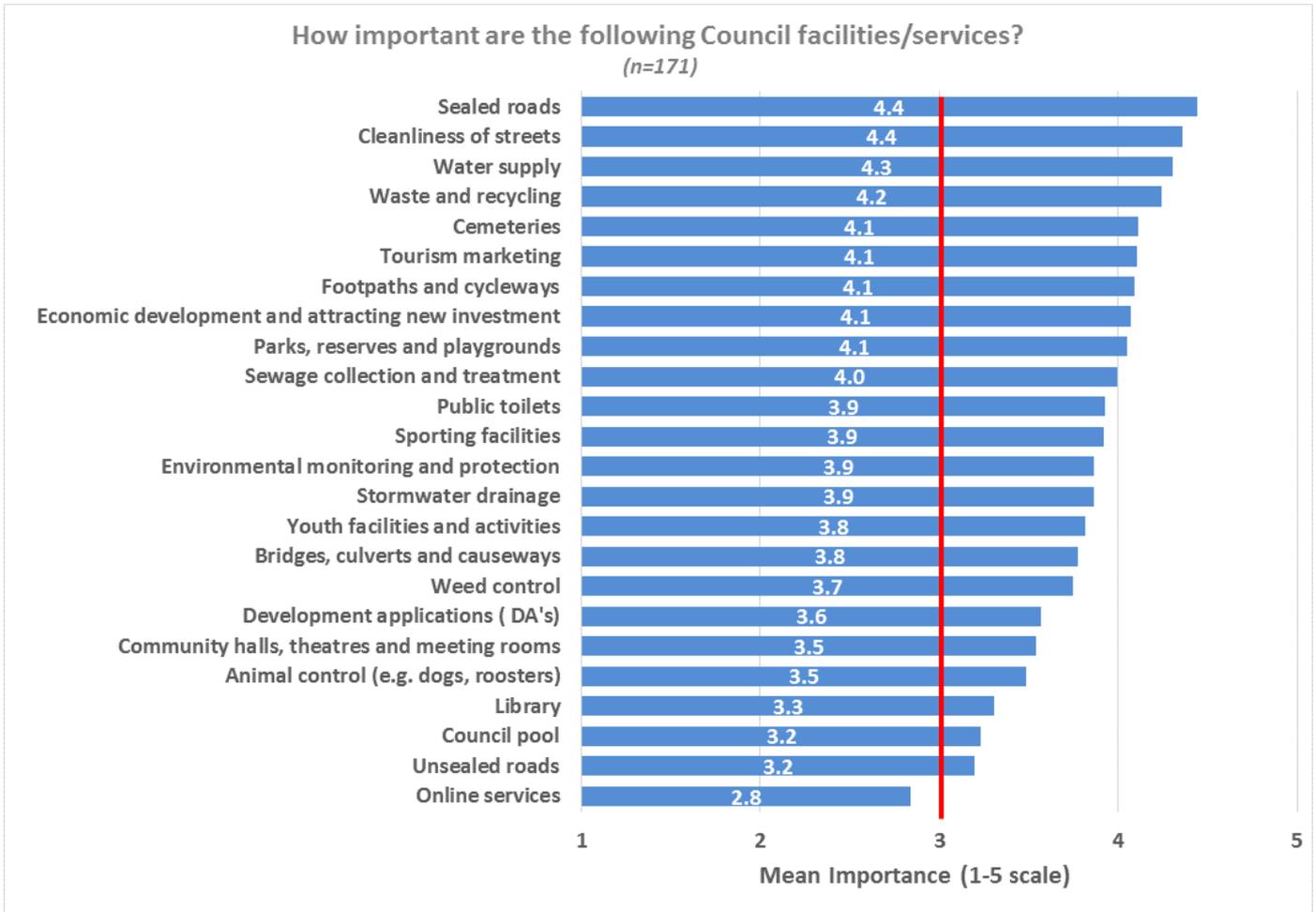
Libraries and sewage collection and treatment were rated of highest satisfaction, each enjoying a mean satisfaction score of 4 or more. These were closely followed by cleanliness of streets (3.9), parks, reserves and playgrounds (3.9) and sporting facilities (3.8).

Meanwhile just six of the 24 facilities and services scored below the “par” mean of 3.0. Poorest satisfaction scores came with unsealed roads (mean score 2.4), youth facilities and activities (2.5) and economic development and attracting new investment (2.6).

There is a detailed breakdown of these scores by age, gender etc. in Appendix 2 outlining differences in satisfaction ratings in a number of measures and predominantly suggesting that Balranald residents are more satisfied than Euston residents in the provision of sealed roads, sporting facilities, parks, reserves and playgrounds, community halls and tourism marketing.

Graph 1.2 (over page) shows the importance assigned to each of the 24 facilities and services, again using a scale of 1 (unimportant) to 4 (very important) and 5 (critical):

Graph 1.2: Importance of Council facilities and services



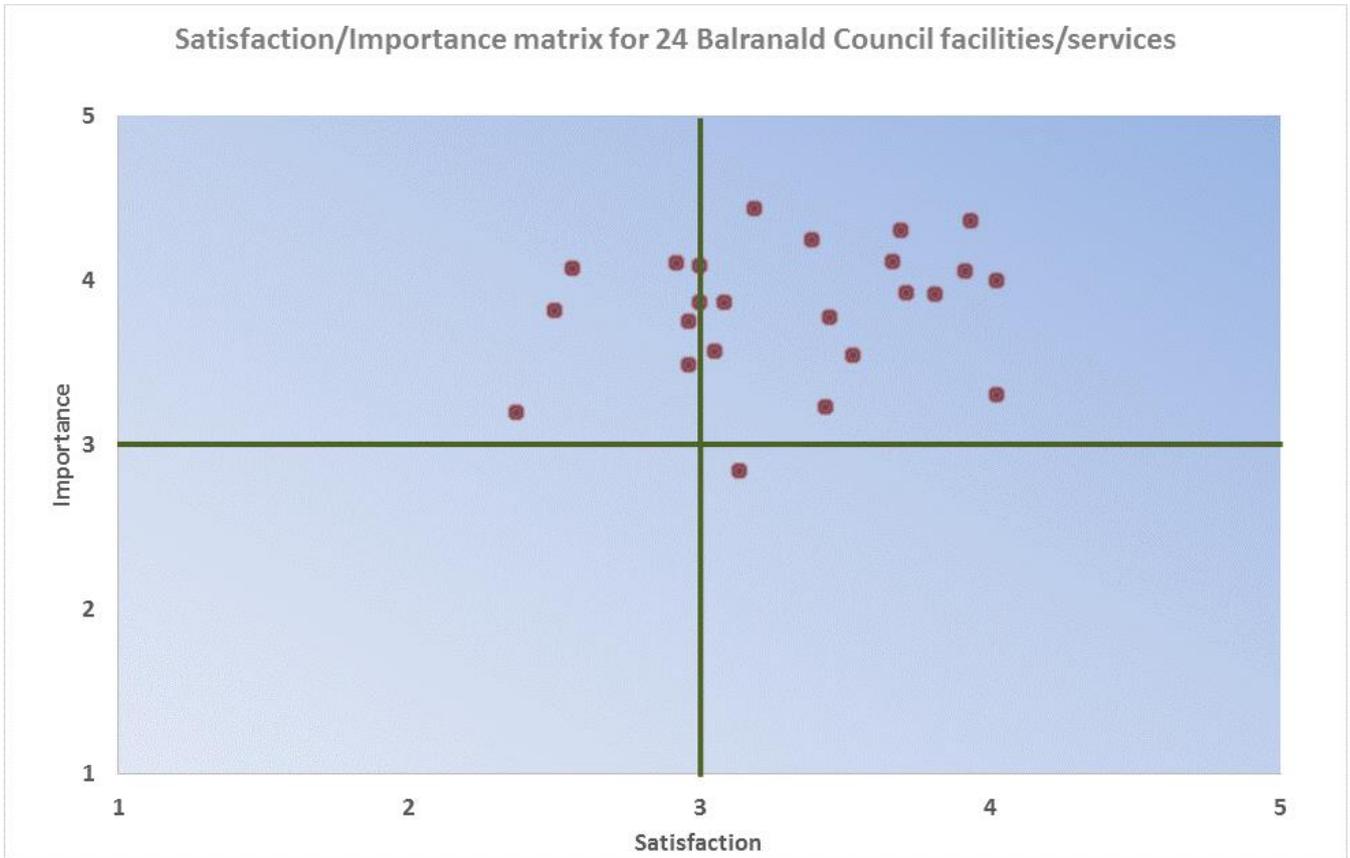
Sealed roads were deemed to be of highest importance, with a mean score of 4.4 (out of a possible five). This was followed by cleanliness of streets (4.4), water supply (4.3), waste and recycling (4.2), cemeteries (4.1) and tourism marketing (4.1).

However, with all but one of the 24 services having an importance score over 3, this suggests that almost everything is deemed important by residents.

At the other end of the scale, those “niche” services scoring less than 3.5 are of huge importance to those using or requiring them – however their average score is dragged down by non-users.

Graph 1.3, next page, shows (in summary) how the different facilities and services fare when placed on a satisfaction/importance matrix:

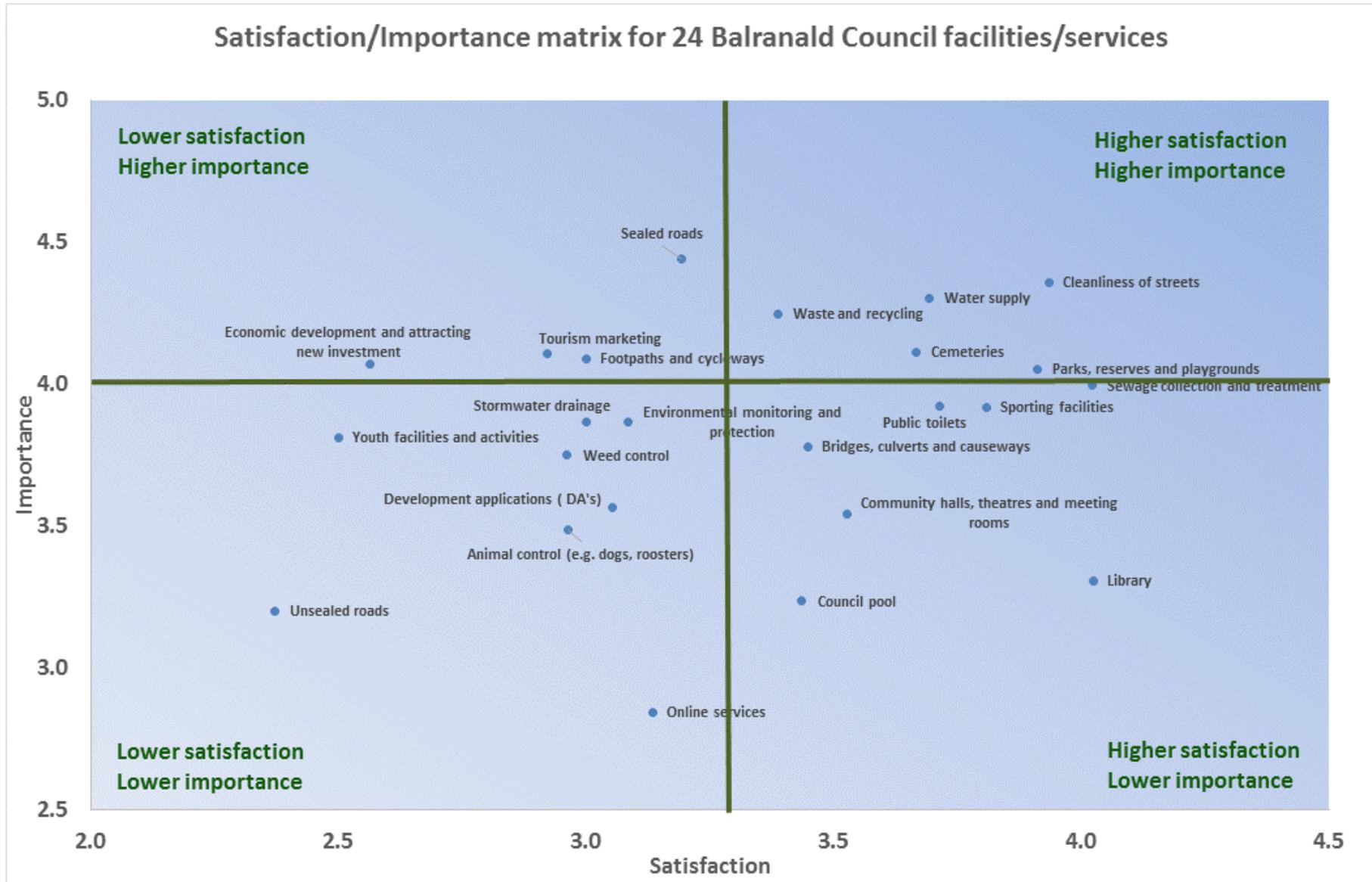
Graph 1.3a: Satisfaction/Importance Matrix (summary)



This highlights that almost all services and facilities are deemed as “important” (i.e. above the 3.0 midpoint). But that there is a much wider disparity in satisfaction scores (horizontal axis).

Graph 1.3b, next page, provides a more detailed view of this matrix. Note that the green dividing lines have been moved to an (arbitrary) level, to help us distinguish higher from lower satisfaction and importance (i.e. as opposed to simply high and low).

Graph 1.3b: Satisfaction/Importance Matrix (detail)



The results have been summarised in Table 1.2, below, with services and facilities listed in alphabetical order by quadrant:

Table 1.2: Satisfaction/Importance matrix, by quadrant

Higher importance/lower satisfaction	Higher importance/higher satisfaction
<p>Economic development and attracting new investment</p> <p>Footpaths and cycleways</p> <p>Sealed roads</p> <p>Tourism marketing</p>	<p>Cemeteries</p> <p>Cleanliness of streets</p> <p>Parks, reserves and playgrounds</p> <p>Waste and recycling</p> <p>Water supply</p>
Lower importance/lower satisfaction	Lower importance/higher satisfaction
<p>Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)</p> <p>Development applications (DA's)</p> <p>Environmental monitoring and protection</p> <p>Online services</p> <p>Stormwater drainage</p> <p>Unsealed roads</p> <p>Weed control</p> <p>Youth facilities and activities</p>	<p>Bridges, culverts and causeways</p> <p>Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms</p> <p>Council pool</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Public toilets</p> <p>Sewage collection and treatment</p> <p>Sporting facilities</p>

The facilities and services listed top right are those that are deemed of higher important and for which residents are relatively satisfied. However those in the top left quadrant are those which are perceived to be of high importance yet where expectations are not presently being met. (Again it should be emphasised these are in alphabetical order, not by priority.)³

Table 1.3 (next page) shows the “gap” between expectation (importance) and delivery (satisfaction). While importance should ideally match or exceed satisfaction, this is rarely the case in any Council. And so in the case of Balranald, where only 3 of 24 services have a positive gap:

³ Not also that averages can be deceptive, particularly for services only used by a proportion of the population – and the smaller the number using a service, the more cautious one should be. For example, services such as sewage collection, weed control and DA’s are of critical importance to those using these services. But as they are typically of negligible importance to non-users, this can lead to low average importance scores.

Table 1.3: Gap analysis

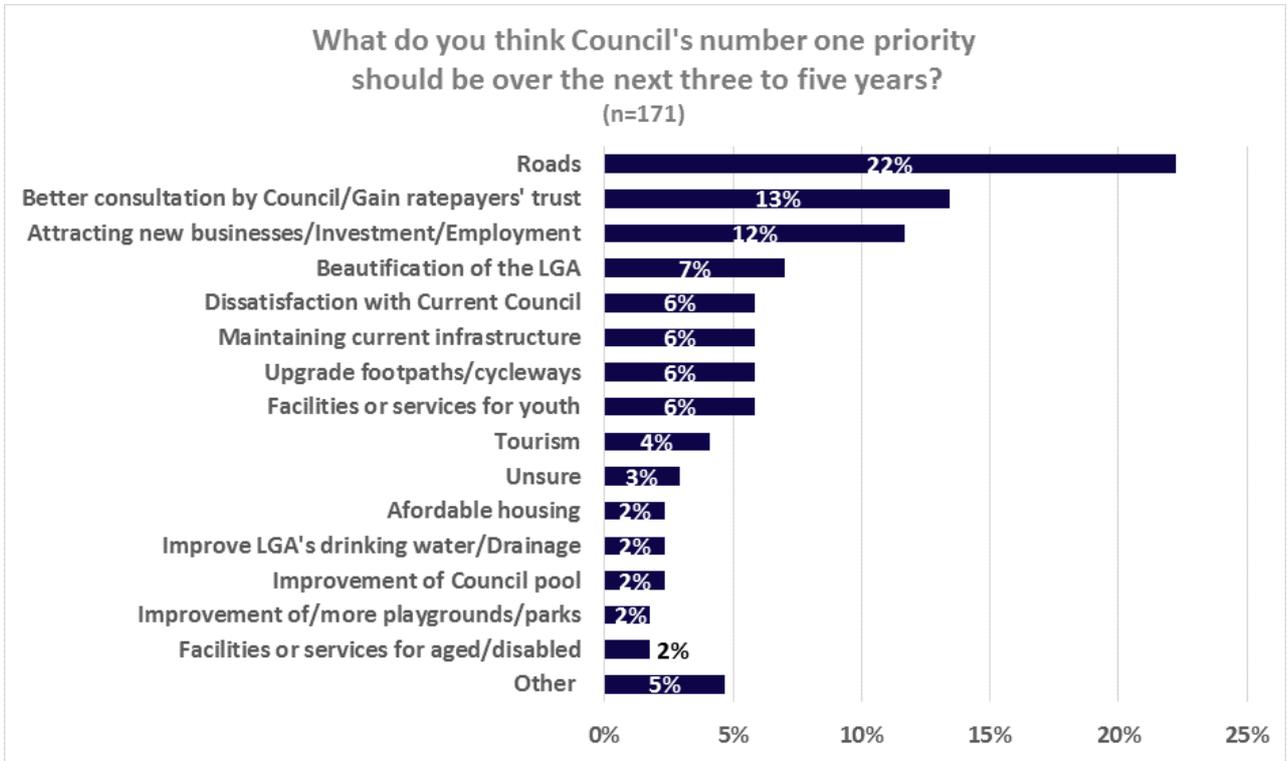
<i>Council services/facilities</i>	<i>Overall satisfaction mean</i>	<i>Overall Importance mean</i>	<i>% difference</i>
Library	4.02	3.30	22%
Online services	3.14	2.84	10%
Council pool	3.44	3.23	6%
Sewage collection and treatment	4.02	3.99	1%
Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms	3.53	3.54	0%
Sporting facilities	3.81	3.92	-3%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	3.91	4.05	-3%
Public toilets	3.71	3.92	-5%
Bridges, culverts and causeways	3.45	3.78	-9%
Cleanliness of streets	3.93	4.36	-10%
Cemeteries	3.67	4.11	-11%
Water supply	3.69	4.30	-14%
Development applications (DA's)	3.05	3.57	-14%
Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)	2.96	3.49	-15%
Environmental monitoring and protection	3.09	3.87	-20%
Waste and recycling	3.39	4.25	-20%
Weed control	2.96	3.75	-21%
Stormwater drainage	3.00	3.87	-22%
Unsealed roads	2.37	3.20	-26%
Footpaths and cycleways	3.00	4.09	-27%
Sealed roads	3.19	4.44	-28%
Tourism marketing	2.92	4.11	-29%
Youth facilities and activities	2.50	3.81	-34%
Economic development and attracting new investment	2.57	4.07	-37%

This suggests that the highest negative expectation gaps are in the areas of economic development and attracting new investment, youth facilities and activities, tourism marketing, sealed roads, footpaths and cycleways and unsealed roads.

Conversely, Council is perceived to be performing very well in the areas of library, online services and Council pool.

In the final part of this analysis, residents were asked (in an unprompted, open-ended question) to describe what they felt Council's number one priority should be for the next 3-5 years. Their responses have been coded (i.e. themed) and the most popular responses are shown in Graph 1.4, next page:

Graph 1.4: What do you think Council's number one priority should be for the next 3-5 years?

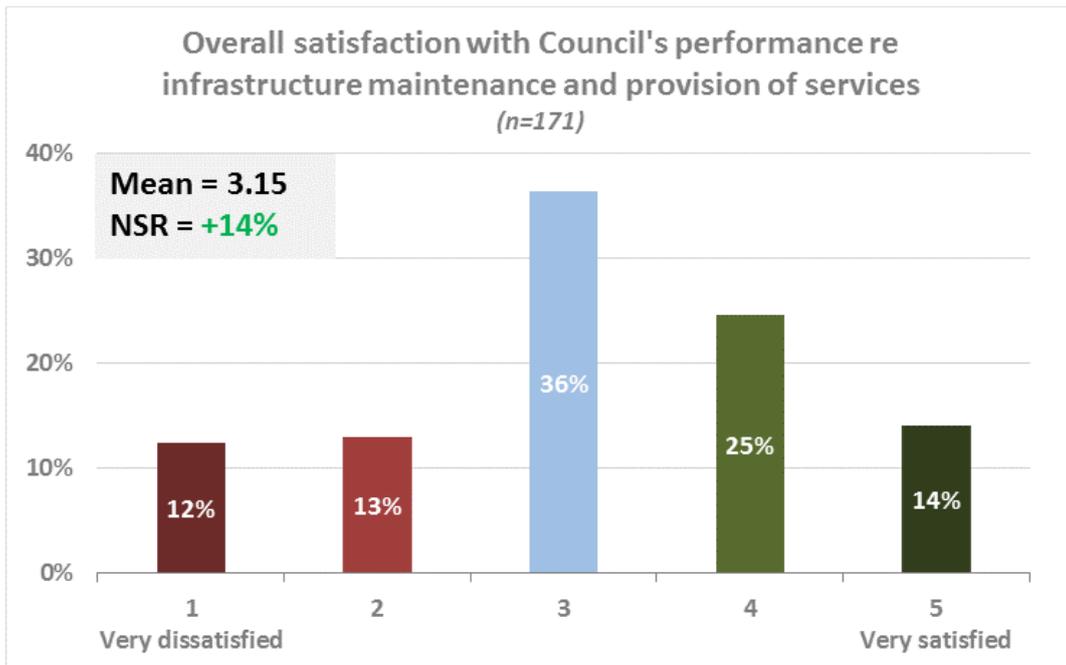


Echoing earlier findings, roads and economic development were two of the dominant themes raised, as was better consultation by Council and regaining ratepayer trust.

Part 2: Overall Satisfaction

Respondents were then asked to rate their satisfaction with Council’s overall performance in maintaining infrastructure and facilities, again using a 5-point scale (where 1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied):

Graph 2.1: Satisfaction with Council’s overall performance in maintaining infrastructure and facilities

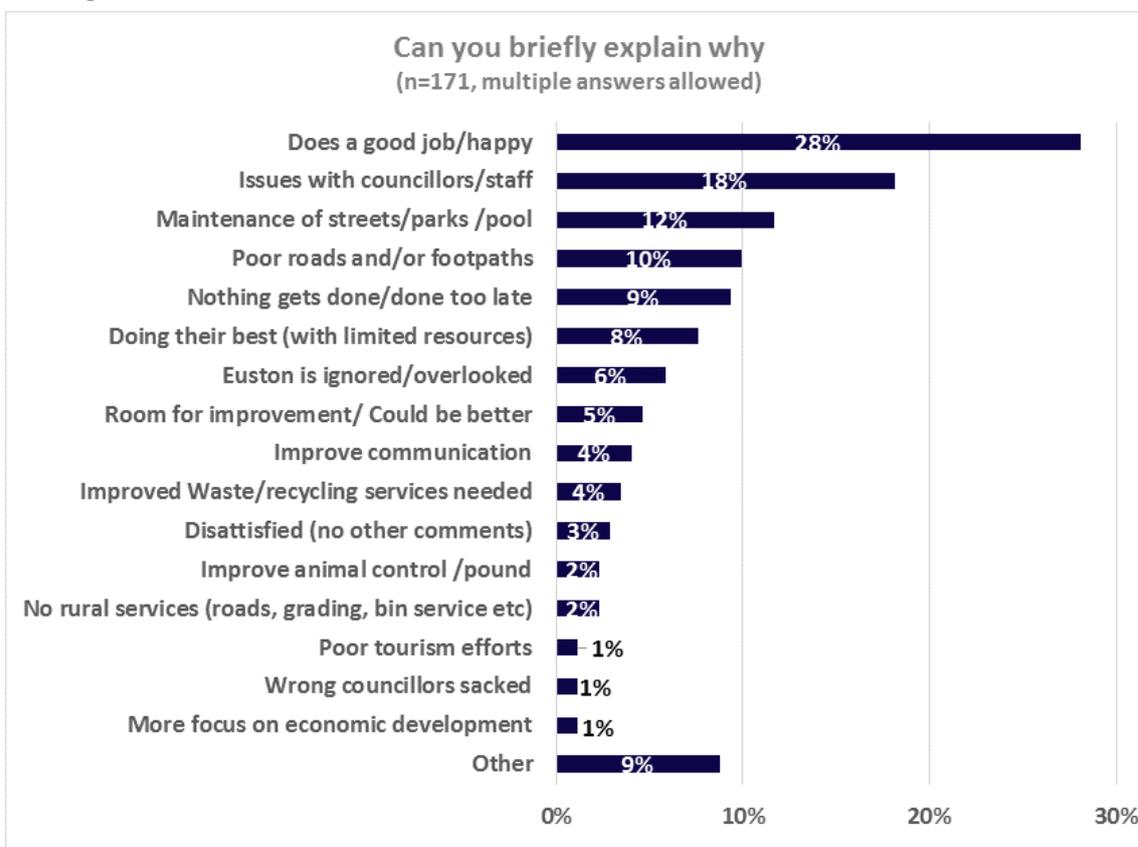


The overall mean score was 3.15 out of a possible 5, and 14% more residents were satisfied than dissatisfied. Importantly, the figure is comfortably above the “par” rating of 3.0.

Those residing in Balranald were significantly more satisfied with Council staff’s maintenance of infrastructure and facilities (with mean scores of 3.4 vs. 2.9 among Euston residents).

Respondents were then asked, in an open-ended follow-up question, to explain why they had provided their particular rating. Their comments have again been coded, with the main responses shown in Graph 2.2, next page:

Graph 2.2: Explanation for overall satisfaction score



As is normal in such surveys, those who were satisfied generally found it difficult to articulate the reasons – for them, it seems Council is the “lubricant” that makes a community run smoothly.

Those who were dissatisfied, however, tended to find more specific reasons: such as perceived issues with councillors or staff, maintenance of streets/parks/pool or poor roads and/or footpaths and an urge to see more done on economic development in the shire.

Residents were next asked to rate their satisfaction with how effective the Council has been in recent years as community leaders:

(Continued over page...)

Graph 2.2: Satisfaction with Council's leadership



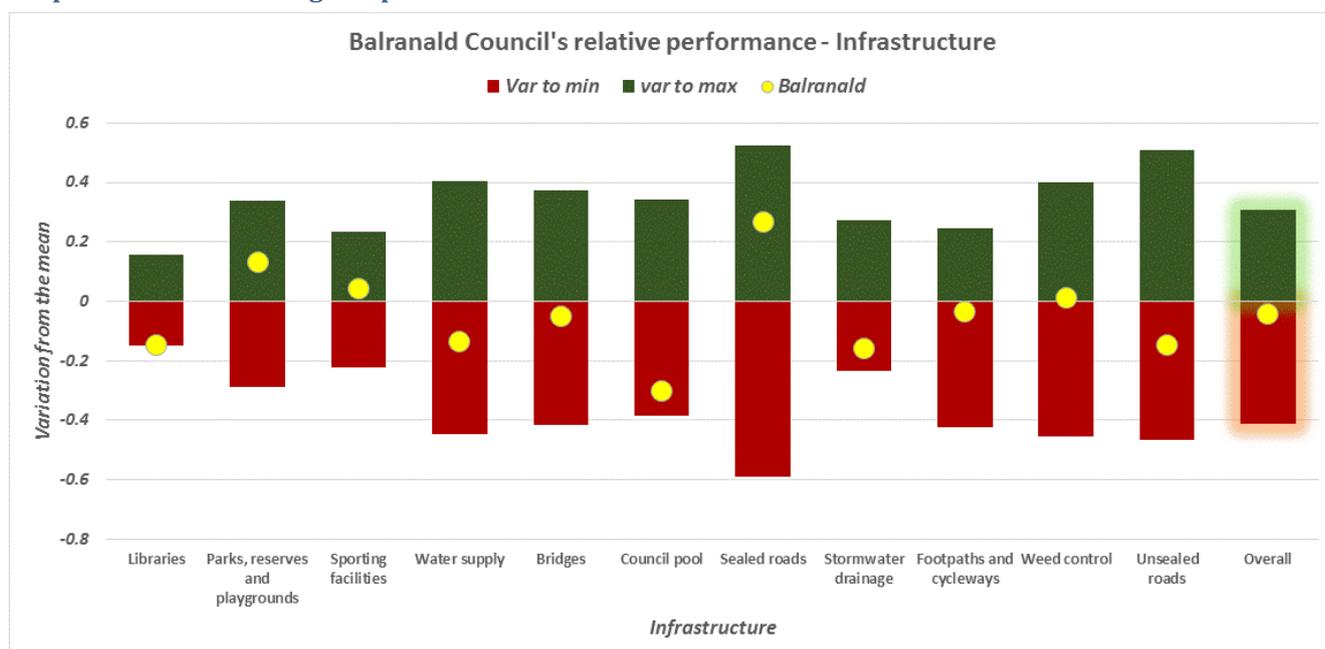
The overall mean score was 2.57 out of a possible 5, and 30% more residents were dissatisfied than satisfied.

Part 3: Benchmarking against other regional Councils

Jetty Research conducts community satisfaction research for many NSW Councils, and is able to benchmark Balranald's results against ten other regional Councils surveyed within the last three years.

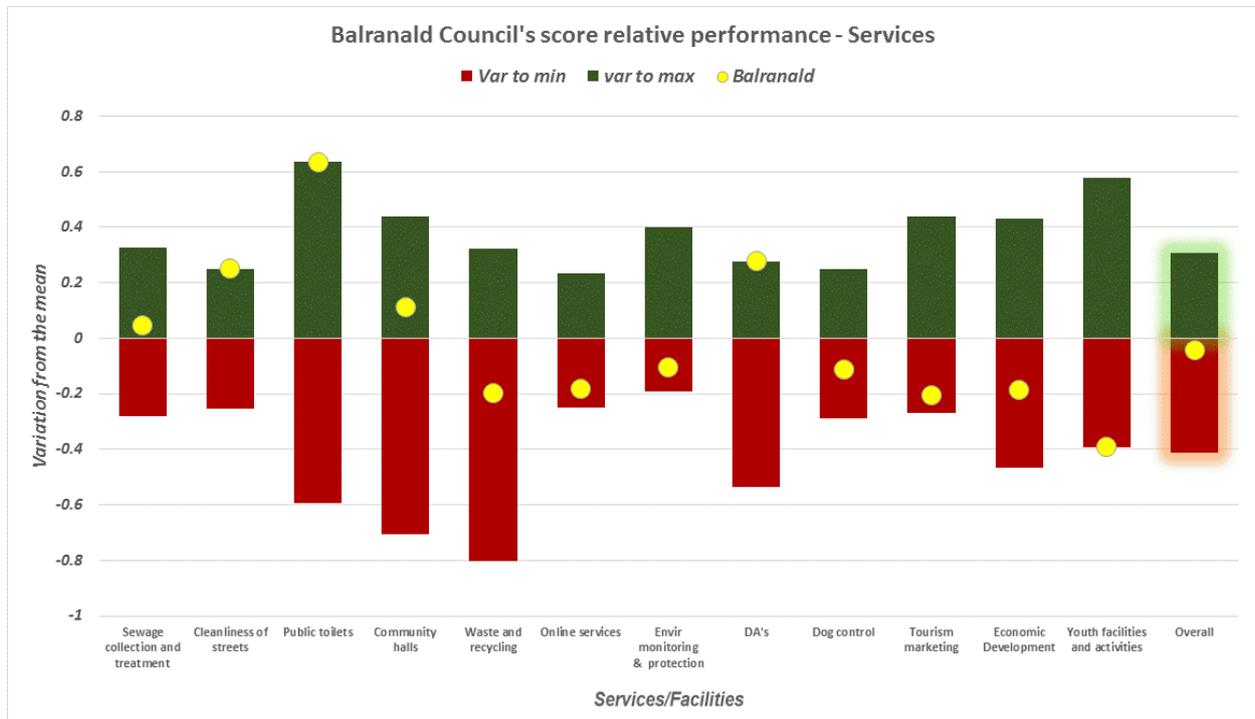
Graphs 3.1 and 3.2 show where Balranald's mean satisfaction ranking (yellow dot) compares with its peers. (The green and red lines show the extent of difference between the top and bottom ranked Councils for that particular facility or service. So, for example, there is a much wider diversity of opinion between different Council areas for sealed roads than there is for libraries.)

Graph 3.1: Benchmarking comparison - infrastructure



This shows that, among the 11 regional Councils rated, Balranald scored strongly in relation to its sealed roads, parks, reserves and playgrounds and sporting facilities. However it scored poorly relative to its peers in relation to the Council pool, libraries and stormwater drainage.

Graph 3.2: Benchmarking comparison – services



In relation to services, Balranald scored favourably in relation to public toilets and DA's. However it performed worse than its peers in youth facilities and activities, tourism marketing and online services.

Graph 3.3: Benchmarking comparison – overall satisfaction

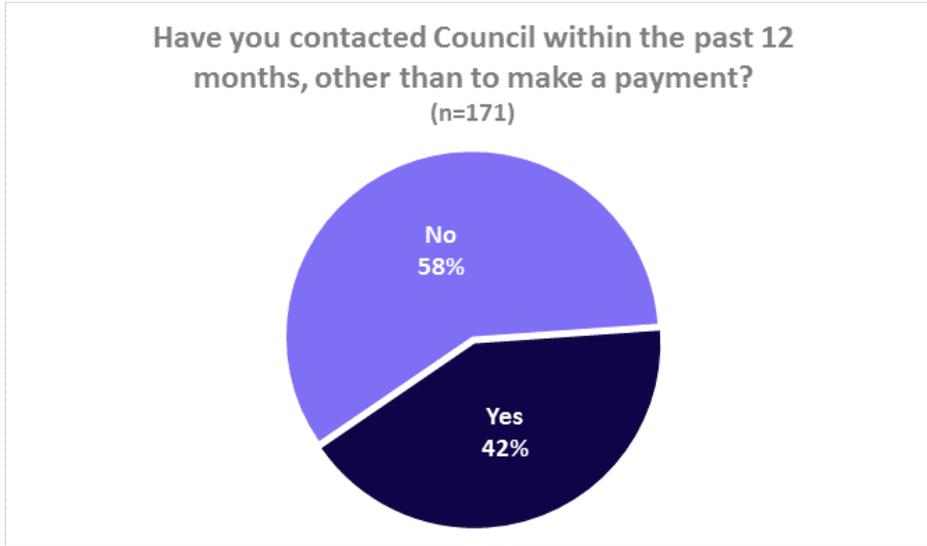


In terms of overall satisfaction, Balranald was the 7th best performing of eleven Councils rated. However the more important finding will be how this measure changes over time.

Part 4: Satisfaction with Council contact

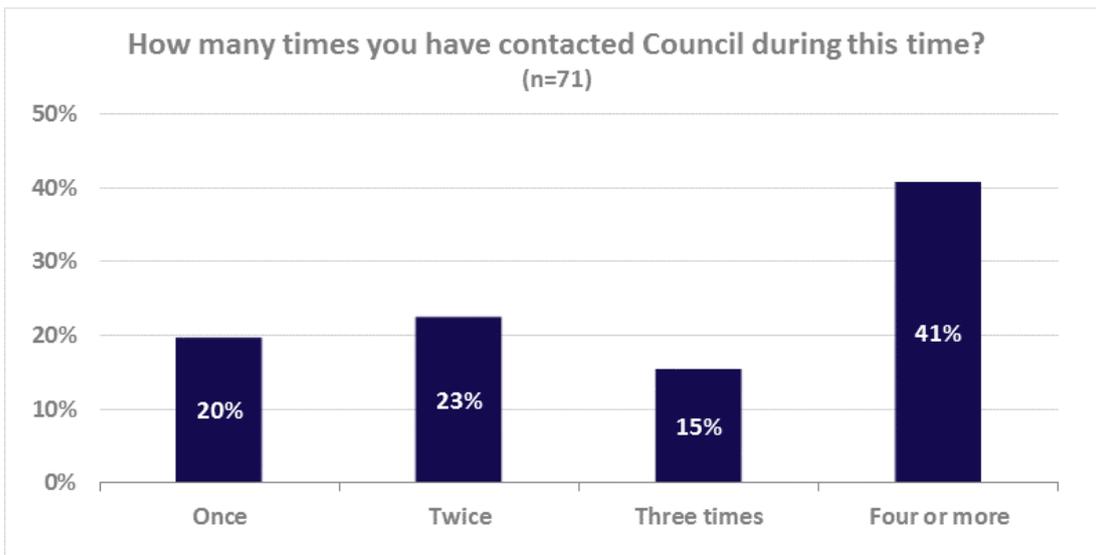
Residents were next asked a series of questions about their personal contact with Council:

Graph 4.1: Have you contacted Council over the past 12 months (other than to pay rates)?



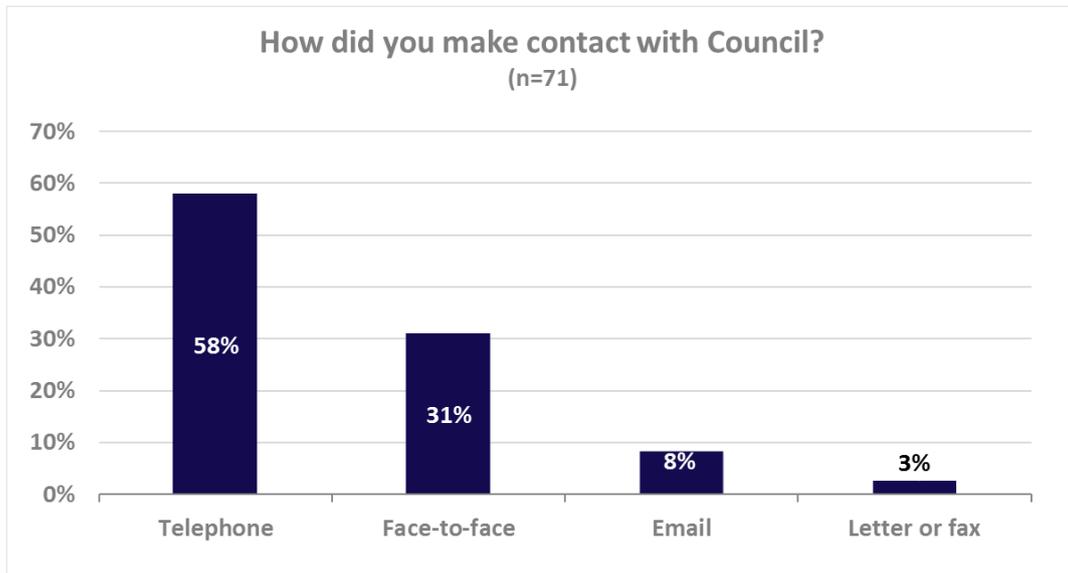
Of the 171 respondents, just over two in five had contacted Council within the previous 12 months (for a reason other than paying rates).

Graph 4.2: How many times have you contacted Council?



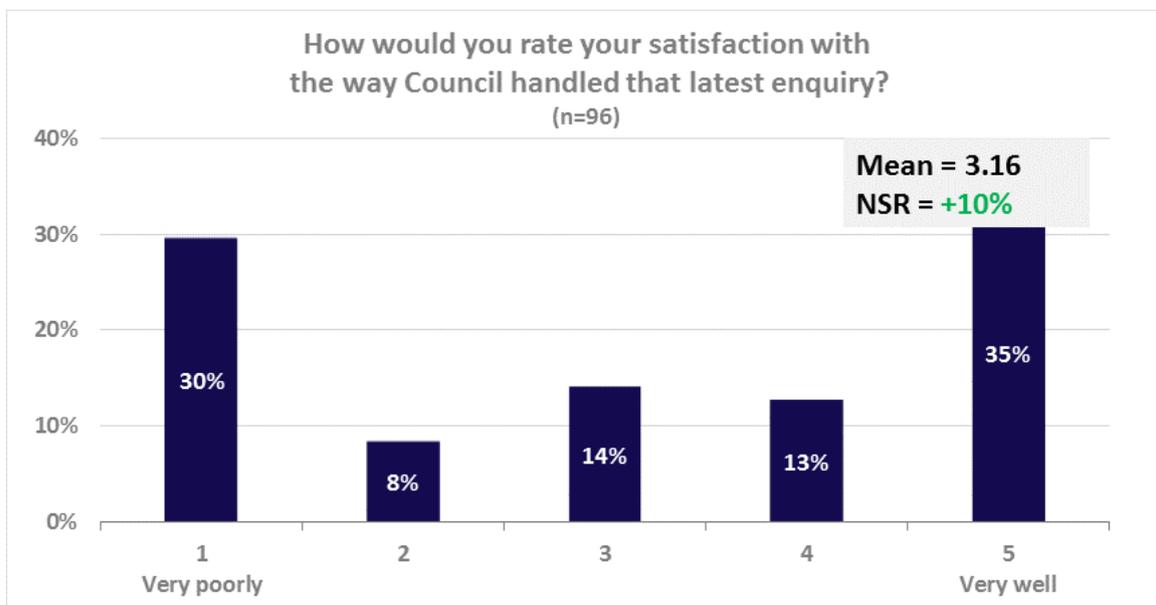
Of these (71) respondents, over 40% had contacted Council four or more times.

Graph 4.3: How did you first make contact with Council?



Even in this era of online communication and social media, the vast majority of inquiries continue to be made either over the phone (58%) or face-to-face (31%).

Graph 4.4: How did Council handle that (latest) inquiry?



Satisfaction was extremely polarised, with three in ten feeling their most recent interaction had been handled very poorly, against 35% believing it had been handled very well. Overall 10% more people were satisfied than dissatisfied, while the mean rating of 3.16 was just above “par”.

Table 4.1: Relationship between mean satisfaction and number of contacts to resolve issue

Number of times needed to resolve matter	Mean (1-5)
One	3.71
Two	3.00
Three	3.09
Four or more	3.07
Total	3.16

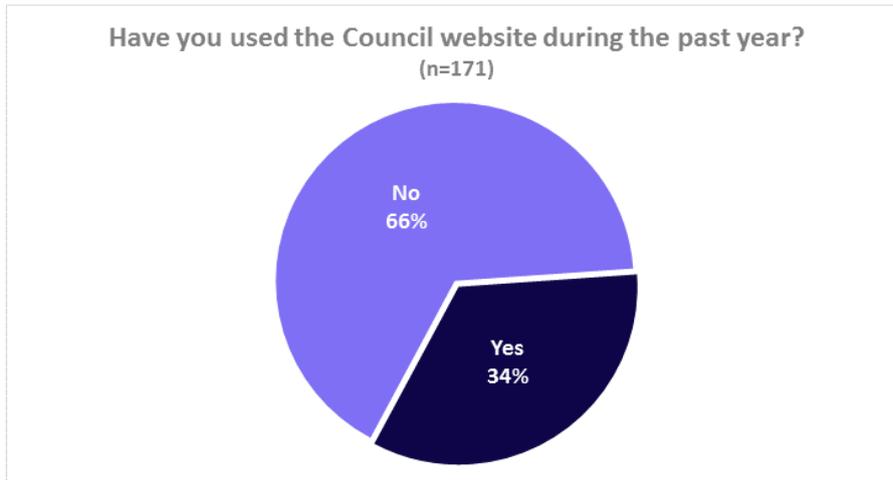
Table 4.1 shows the strong correlation between times taken to resolve and satisfaction with the way that interaction was handled – put simply (and at the risk of stating the obvious), the quicker an issue is resolved the happier people are.

This also manifested itself in a strong positive correlation between residents’ satisfaction with their most recent interaction, and their satisfaction with Council’s overall performance. This suggests that people’s interactions with Council are almost certainly a more important determinant of their overall satisfaction than the sum total of their satisfaction with all the Council-managed facilities and services that they encounter.

Part 5: Communication Preferences

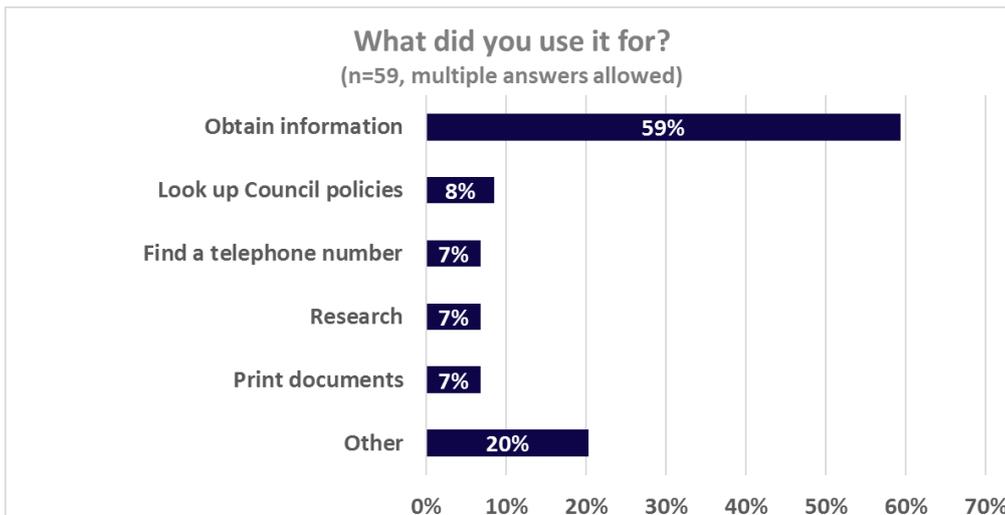
The next section of the survey covered communication between residents and Council. Firstly, respondents were asked if they had used Council’s website over the previous 12 months:

Graph 5.1: Have you used the Council website during the past 12 months?



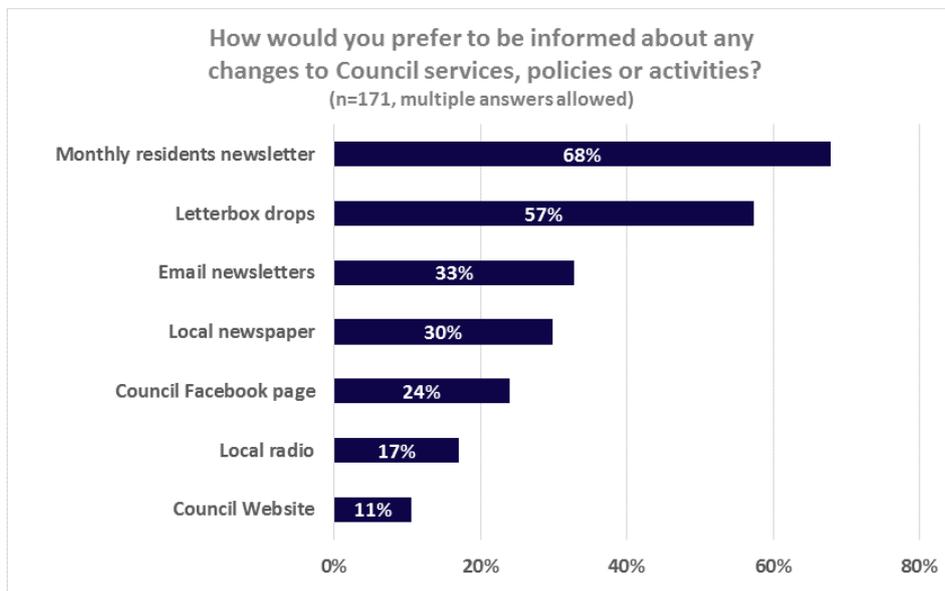
One third of respondents had accessed Council’s website over the previous year (34%). As one would expect, access was significantly higher (40%) among residents aged under 60. (There were no other differences by different demographic groups.)

Graph 5.2: What did you use it for?



As one might expect, the bulk of access was to obtain information (59%). Interestingly, most of those looking at the Council’s webpage were watching the Council meetings or searching for the Council meeting agendas or minutes.

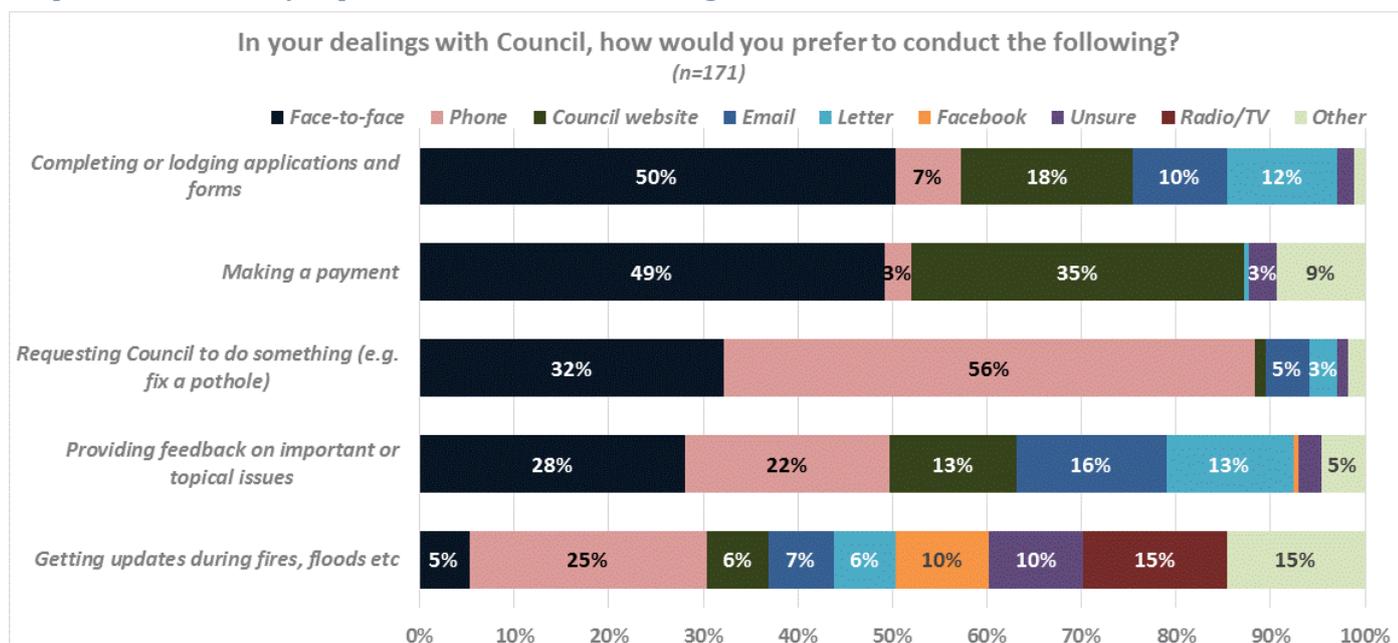
Graph 5.3: How would you prefer to be kept informed of any changes to Council services, policies or activities?



As to how residents wanted to be reached by Council for any changes in services, policies or activities, there were two clear frontrunners in the monthly newsletter (68%) and letterbox drops (57%). However younger residents were more likely to nominate Email newsletters and Facebook as an important communication vehicle (47% and 38% respectively among those aged under 60 years vs. 20% and 12% respectively of those aged 60 years and over).

Graph 5.4 shows how residents prefer to deal with a range of Council-related interactions:

Graph 5.4: How would you prefer to conduct the following?



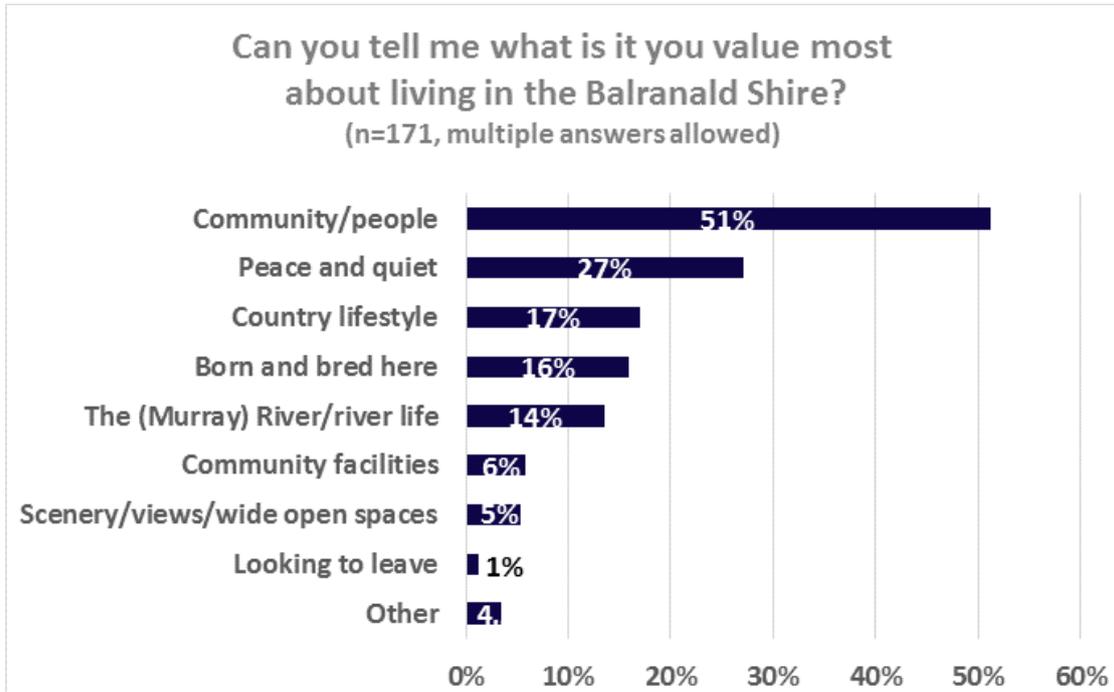
This indicates very much a “horses for courses” approach – while 50% of respondents preferred to lodge an application or form in person, and 49% sought to make payments the same way, phone was still the preferred option for requesting Council to do something (56%) and receiving information during natural emergencies (25%).

Meanwhile 35% said they would be happy to make a payment via Council’s website. However there seemed little appetite at this stage for using social media as a major communication tool.

Part 6: Other issues

The survey concluded with questions relating to values and ideas.

Graph 6.1: What do you value most about living in the Balranald shire?

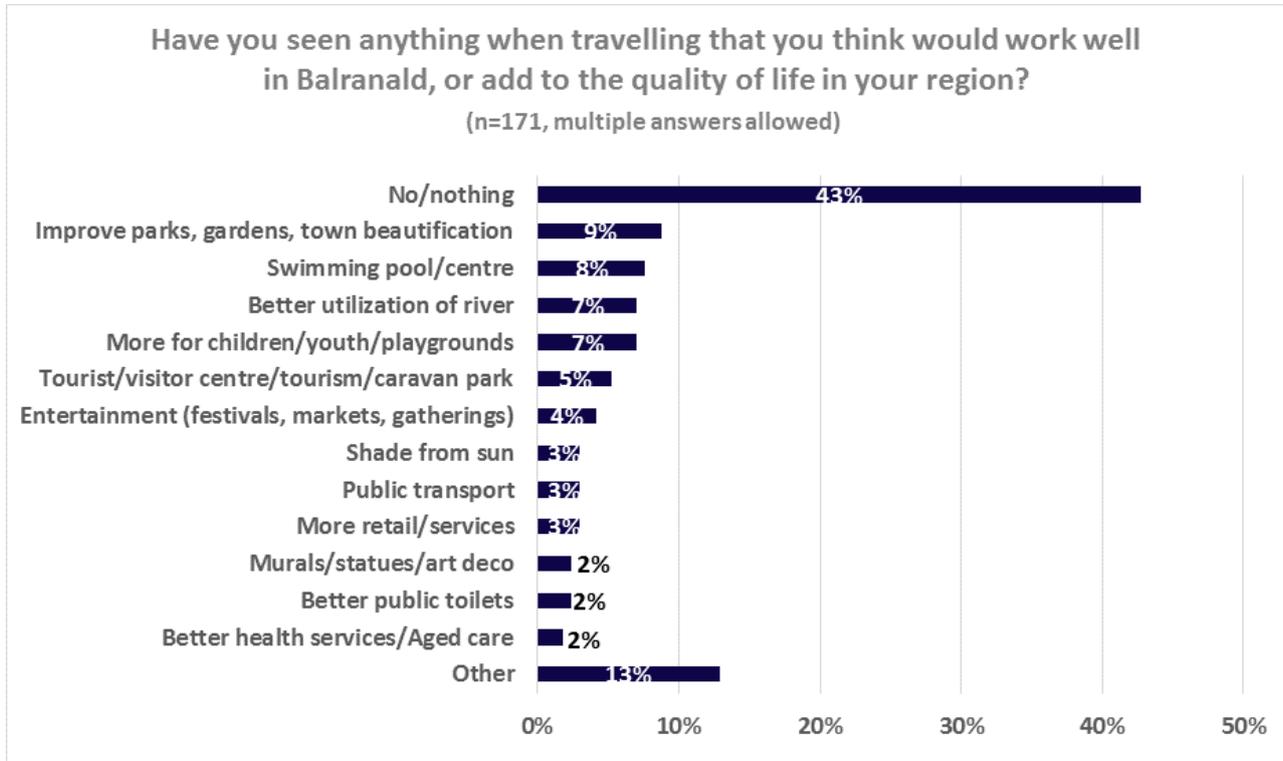


When asked (in an open-ended question) what they valued most about living in the area, most respondents focussed on the local community and people. However the country lifestyle and the area’s peace and quiet were also mentioned prominently.

As a final question, residents were asked whether they had seen anything in their travels that they felt would improve the quality of life in the Balranald shire:

(Continued over page...)

Graph 6.2: Have you seen anything when travelling that would also add to the quality of life in Balranald?



While over two in five couldn't think of anything (43%), those that did focussed on the need to improve parks, gardens and town beautification, the swimming pool/centre and better utilisation of the river. Others sought additional playgrounds, tourism and entertainment.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Version 3: 5821_Balranald_CSS_2020

Last modified:15/4/2020

- Q1.** Hi my name is (name) and I'm calling from Jetty Research on behalf of Balranald Shire Council. Council is conducting a customer satisfaction survey of its residents. 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. To confirm survey phone 03 5020 1300 during business hours and arrange callback.

Yes	1	Go to Q3
No	2	

Q1

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

If NOT IN LGA: I'm sorry this survey is only for residents in the Balranald Shire Council area. Thank you for your time.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN A COUNCILLOR IN THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS OR PERMANENT COUNCIL EMPLOYEE (EITHER CURRENTLY OR IN THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS):

I'm sorry, but current and recent 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

Yes	1	
No	2	Go to Q2

Q3

- Q4.** Do you live in the Balranald Shire Council area?

Yes	1	
No	2	Go to Q2

Q4

- Q6.** Within the past 12 months, have you been a Councillor or full-time Council employee or are you currently a full-time Council employee?

(i.e. Current employees are also ineligible)

Yes	1	Go to Q2
No	2	

Q6

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

Q7

- 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, 3 is neutral and 5 is excellent. If you haven't used this service

within the past 12 months, just say so and I'll move to the next one. So, on a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are you with?

PROMPTED- You may need to remind respondent over the course of this question to only rate services they have used within the past 12 months.

	1 Very poor	2	3	4	5 Excellent	N/A	
Sealed roads	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_1
Unsealed roads	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_2
Bridges, culverts and causeways	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_3
Footpaths and cycleways	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_4
Cleanliness of streets	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_5
Online services	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_6
Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_7
Stormwater drainage	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_8
Public toilets	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_9
Weed control	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_10
Waste and recycling	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_11
Water supply	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_12
Sewage collection and treatment	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_13
Sporting facilities	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_14
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_15
Council pool	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_16
Library	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_17
Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_18
Youth facilities and activities	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_19
Economic development and attracting new investment	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_20
Tourism marketing	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_21
Development applications (DA's)	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_22
Cemeteries	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_23
Environmental monitoring and protection	1	2	3	4	5	555	Q8_24

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 it's unimportant, 4 is very important and 5 is critical. Again answering with a number only, on a scale of 1-5, how important to you or your family is?

PROMPTED- If service not used by them or their family, rate as 1

	1 Unimportant	2	3	4 Very important	5 Critical	
Sealed roads	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_1
Unsealed roads	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_2
Bridges, culverts and causeways	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_3
Footpaths and cycleways	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_4
Cleanliness of streets	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_5
Online services	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_6
Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_7
Stormwater drainage	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_8
Public toilets	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_9
Weed control	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_10
Waste and recycling	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_11
Water supply	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_12
Sewage collection and treatment	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_13
Sporting facilities	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_14
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_15
Council pool	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_16
Library	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_17
Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_18
Youth facilities and activities	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_19
Economic development and attracting new investment	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_20
Tourism marketing	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_21
Development applications (DA's)	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_22
Cemeteries	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_23
Environmental monitoring and protection	1	2	3	4	5	Q9_24

Q10. Please rate your satisfaction with how effectively Council staff maintain infrastructure and facilities and provide services on a scale of 1-5. where 1 is very dissatisfied, 3 is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 5 is very satisfied?

1 Very dissatisfied	1	
2	2	
3	3	
4	4	
5 Very satisfied	5	

Q10

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

PROBE

Q11

Q11a. Please rate your satisfaction with how effective the Council has been in recent years as community leaders on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is very dissatisfied, 3 is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 5 is very satisfied?

1 Very dissatisfied	1	
2	2	
3	3	
4	4	
5 Very satisfied	5	
666 Unsure	666	

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 three to five years?

Unprompted. If respondent is unsure, you can 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 few years.'

Roads	1	
Attracting new businesses/investment	3	
Facilities or services for youth	4	
Facilities or services for aged/disabled	5	
Addressing environmental concerns	6	
Upgrade footpaths/cycleways	7	
Beautification of the LGA	8	
Unsure	666	
OTHER		

Q12

Q13. Now [Q7], have you contacted Council within the past 12 months, other than to make a payment?

UNPROMPTED

Yes	1	
No	555	Go to Q20
Unsure	666	Go to Q20

Q13

Q14. Could you please tell me approximately how many times you have contacted Council during this time?

UNPROMPTED



Once	1
Twice	2
Three times	3
Four or more	4
Unsure	666

Q14

Q18. Thinking about your most recent inquiry, how did you make contact with Council?

UNPROMPTED

Telephone	1
Face-to-face	2
Letter or fax	3
Email	4
Website	5
Social media	6
Unsure	7

Q18

Q19. 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

1 Very poorly	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5 Very well	5

Q19

Q20. On a slightly different topic [Q7], how would you prefer to be informed about any changes to Council services, policies or activities? I'll give you seven options, and you can pick up to three.

Prompted - tick up to TWO

Local newspaper	1
Local radio	2
Council Website	3
Council Facebook page	4
Monthly residents newsletter	5
Email newsletters	6
Letterbox drops	7

Q20_1
Q20_2
Q20_3
Q20_4
Q20_5

Q21. And in your dealings with Council, how would you prefer to conduct the following?

UNPROMPTED (unless absolutely necessary).Radio/TV applies to road closures

	Face to face	Phone	Council website	Email	Letter	Facebook	Unsure	Radio/TV
Making a payment	1	2	3	4	5	6	666	7
Requesting Council to do something (e.g. fix a pothole)	1	2	3	4	5	6	666	7
Completing or lodging applications and forms	1	2	3	4	5	6	666	7
Providing feedback on important or topical issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	666	7
Getting updates during fires, floods etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	666	7

Q21_1
Q21_2
Q21_3
Q21_4
Q21_5

Q22. Have you used the Council website during the past year?

Last 12 months

Yes	1		
No	2	Go to Q25	Q22
Unsure	666	Go to Q25	

Q23. What did you use it for?

UNPROMPTED - tick any mentioned

Obtain information	1		Q23_1
Print documents	2		Q23_2
Research	3		Q23_3
Check for employment vacancies	4		Q23_4
Read the business paper	5		Q23_5
Find a telephone number	6		Q23_6
Look up Council policies	7		Q23_7
Make or log an online request	8		Q23_8
OTHER			Q23_O

Q24. Do you have any suggestions on how it could be improved?

PROBE or type no

Q24

Q25. [Q7], can you tell me what is it you value most about living in the Balranald Shire?

Probe - two or three is fine

Q25

Q26. And conversely, have you seen anything when travelling to other places that you think would work well in Balranald, or add to the quality of life in your region?

Q26

Q27. 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

18-25	1		
26-39	2		
40-59	3		Q27
60+	4		

Q28. Gender?

Dont ask

Male	1		
Female	2		Q28

Q29. Is your residence in an urban, rural or village location?

Village is very tiny town

Urban	1		
Rural	2		Q29
Village	3		

Q30. Which town or village do you live in or nearest to?

UNPROMPTED. If not listed ask which town closest town

Balranald	1
Euston	2
Penarie	
Oxley	
Kyalite	
OTHER	

Q30

Q31. How long have you lived in the Balranald Shire?

Less than 5 years	1
Five years or more	2
Declined	555

Q31

Q32. Do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Yes	1
No	555

Q32

Q33. And how long have you lived in the Balranald Shire?

UNPROMPTED

1-5 years	1
6-10 years	2
11-20 years	3
More than 20 years	4

Q33

Q34. Just before we finish, Balranald Shire Council is currently seeking to establish a randomly selected online survey panel of local residents. This panel is being established to provide a quick and easy way for locals such as yourself to provide feedback to Council on issues of community importance from time to time. Is this something that may interest you?

Ensure they have an email address that they check at least weekly. ONLINE only

Yes	1	
No	555	Go to Q37

Q34

Q35. Thanks, that's great. If I could just get your name and email address, Council will be in touch shortly with further details.

Read back email address carefully. If resident is concerned, assure them that their contact details will be supplied only to Council, who will not share them with anyone else. And their survey responses will be separated from their contact details to protect the anonymity of their answers.

First Name	1
Surname	2
Email address	3

Q35_1_1

Q35_1_2

Q35_1_3

Q36. Thanks so much [Q7], that's the end of the survey. Balranald Shire 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.

End

Appendix 2: Satisfaction and Importance scores by age, gender, location

SATISFACTION

Facility or service	Total	Age		Gender		Location		
		Under 60	60+	Male	Female	Balranald	Euston	Other
Sealed roads	3.19	3.01	3.34	3.07	3.27	3.43	2.75	3.20
Unsealed roads	2.37	2.29	2.45	2.30	2.44	2.51	2.23	1.78
Bridges, culverts and causeways	3.45	3.48	3.42	3.21	3.61	3.47	3.49	3.00
Footpaths and cycleways	3.00	2.94	3.05	3.05	2.97	3.14	2.73	2.88
Cleanliness of streets	3.93	3.91	3.96	3.86	3.99	4.03	3.70	4.22
Online services	3.14	2.90	3.39	2.88	3.31	3.31	2.75	3.50
Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)	2.96	3.15	2.82	2.72	3.14	2.98	2.93	3.00
Stormwater drainage	3.00	3.08	2.94	2.84	3.11	3.01	2.98	3.00
Public toilets	3.71	3.59	3.81	3.68	3.74	3.77	3.54	4.00
Weed control	2.96	3.11	2.84	2.91	3.00	2.94	3.00	3.00
Waste and recycling	3.39	3.01	3.68	3.44	3.35	3.33	3.54	3.14
Water supply	3.69	3.86	3.57	3.60	3.76	3.52	4.09	3.71
Sewage collection and treatment	4.02	4.00	4.04	4.14	3.93	3.98	4.22	3.50
Sporting facilities	3.81	3.57	4.00	3.61	3.97	4.06	3.27	4.00
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	3.91	3.76	4.05	3.85	3.96	4.07	3.56	4.10
Council pool	3.44	3.40	3.47	3.65	3.32	3.57	2.64	3.17
Library	4.02	3.83	4.13	3.62	4.20	4.17	2.80	4.33
Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms	3.53	3.33	3.68	3.43	3.60	3.69	2.94	4.14
Youth facilities and activities	2.50	2.29	2.68	2.57	2.45	2.64	2.11	2.89
Economic development and attracting new investment	2.57	2.37	2.75	2.19	2.88	2.73	2.21	2.70
Tourism marketing	2.92	2.93	2.91	2.68	3.09	3.23	2.24	3.10
Development applications (DA's)	3.05	2.80	3.24	2.93	3.15	3.16	2.85	2.83
Cemeteries	3.67	3.54	3.76	3.59	3.72	3.79	3.40	3.67
Environmental monitoring and protection	3.09	3.25	2.96	3.04	3.13	3.11	3.00	3.29

IMPORTANCE

Facility or service	Total	Age		Gender		Location		
		Under 60	60+	Male	Female	Balranald	Euston	Other
Sealed roads	4.44	4.64	4.27	4.32	4.52	4.43	4.50	4.20
Unsealed roads	3.20	3.72	2.76	3.28	3.14	3.22	3.16	3.20
Bridges, culverts and causeways	3.78	4.23	3.40	3.76	3.79	3.90	3.59	3.50
Footpaths and cycleways	4.09	4.03	4.14	3.87	4.24	4.26	3.82	3.80
Cleanliness of streets	4.36	4.36	4.35	4.24	4.44	4.35	4.43	4.00
Online services	2.84	3.17	2.57	2.66	2.97	2.76	2.93	3.20
Animal control (e.g. dogs, roosters)	3.49	3.51	3.46	3.46	3.50	3.56	3.36	3.40
Stormwater drainage	3.87	3.83	3.89	3.75	3.95	4.12	3.59	2.70
Public toilets	3.92	4.04	3.83	3.80	4.01	3.98	3.91	3.40
Weed control	3.75	3.90	3.62	3.59	3.86	3.81	3.73	3.20
Waste and recycling	4.25	4.18	4.30	4.20	4.28	4.41	4.13	3.20
Water supply	4.30	4.14	4.44	4.24	4.35	4.50	4.07	3.50
Sewage collection and treatment	3.99	3.81	4.15	3.89	4.07	4.32	3.54	3.10
Sporting facilities	3.92	4.04	3.82	3.87	3.95	4.02	3.70	4.10
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	4.05	4.18	3.95	3.93	4.14	4.16	3.89	3.80
Council pool	3.23	3.44	3.06	2.80	3.54	3.69	2.34	3.50
Library	3.30	3.31	3.30	2.66	3.76	3.72	2.43	3.80
Community halls, theatres and meeting rooms	3.54	3.71	3.41	3.45	3.61	3.71	3.23	3.50
Youth facilities and activities	3.81	4.18	3.51	3.73	3.87	3.86	3.71	3.90
Economic development and attracting new investment	4.07	4.35	3.84	4.10	4.05	4.00	4.23	3.90
Tourism marketing	4.11	4.21	4.02	4.08	4.12	4.08	4.20	3.90
Development applications (DA's)	3.57	3.83	3.34	3.54	3.59	3.53	3.63	3.60
Cemeteries	4.11	3.99	4.22	3.92	4.25	4.23	3.86	4.30
Environmental monitoring and protection	3.87	3.96	3.78	3.65	4.02	3.91	3.82	3.60