

To	Waikato District Council
Report title	2023/2024 Resident Perception Survey Results Presentation
Date:	13 August 2024
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1. Purpose of the report

Te Take moo te puurongo

The purpose of this report is to provide the Performance and Strategy Committee (P&S) with an overview of our 2023/2024 Resident Perception Survey results. The report also provides an update on a number of key preventive, detective and corrective actions Council already has in place or will need to explore to address current dissatisfaction and provide for improved community outcomes. This survey data provides the basis for several of the Long-Term Plan Key Performance Indicators which are being presented separately in this agenda.

2. Executive summary

Whakaraapopotanga matua

The Resident Perception Survey is undertaken quarterly by Key Research Limited. This survey provides valuable insights for Council and helps identify where to best focus our improvement opportunities.

Michael Hooker, Managing Director of Key Research Ltd, will attend and present the annual results to the Committee. The full report is attached as **Attachment 1**.

High-level key findings from the 2023/2024 include:

- **Overall Satisfaction:** 40% of residents are satisfied with the Council's performance, a drop of 9 percentage points since the 2021/22 reporting period.

- **Value for Money:** 31% of residents feel they receive good value for their rates, a drop of 12 percentage points from 43% in 2021/22.
- **Image and Reputation:** 46% of residents consider the Council's image and reputation to be 'Good' or 'Excellent', showing little change since last year.
- **Core Service Deliverables:** 48% of residents are satisfied, with Council's core service deliverables, a drop of 6 percentage points over 12 months, with roading the main contributing factor.

Additionally, the report outlines some preventative, detective and corrective actions for number of key resident perception areas to help provide an improved service to our residents such as reviewing key service levels and KPIs through the Long Term Plan planning process

3. Staff recommendations Tuutohu-aa-kaimahi

THAT the Performance and Strategy Committee receives the 2023/2024 Resident Perception Survey Results presentation and report.

4. Background/Discussion Koorero whaimaarama/Matapaki

The survey is conducted quarterly with participants randomly selected from the Electoral Roll. Residents are contacted via post and given the option to complete the survey online or via mail.

In exploring the results, a general rule of thumb is that any result greater than 5% is likely to be considered 'significant'.

Overall, 2023/24 a high number of measures across Council have seen consistent satisfaction levels across the past three years. However, this year's survey has recorded several declines in key performance measures, some of which have been on a declining trend over the past 24 months.

Key findings include:

- **Overall Satisfaction:** 40% of residents are satisfied with the Council's performance, a drop of 9 percentage points since the 2021/22 reporting period.
- **Value for Money:** 31% of residents feel they receive good value for their rates, a drop of 12 percentage points from 43% in 2021/22.
- **Image and Reputation:** 46% of residents consider the Council's image and reputation to be 'Good' or 'Excellent', showing little change since last year.

- **Core Service Deliverables:** 48% of residents are satisfied, with Council's core service deliverables, a drop of 6 percentage points over 12 months, with roading the main contributing factor.

Regarding specific services and facilities:

- **Lowest Satisfaction:** Roding (28%) and Community Engagement (25%) have the lowest levels of satisfaction.
- **Highest Satisfaction:** Waste Management has the highest satisfaction among core services, with 69% of residents satisfied.

Positive Outcomes

Over the past year, a positive trend in customer service results has been observed. This upward trajectory highlights our continuous effort to improve service quality and customer satisfaction through the Service Request Transformation Project. Through new key performance measures in this year's Enhanced Annual Plan and ongoing performance monitoring, we expect to see this trend continue to rise.

Over the past year, Council has successfully maintained high levels of resident satisfaction across key facilities, including libraries, local parks, reserves, swimming pools, community halls, and cemeteries with satisfaction ratings ranging from 73% to 89%.

Resident satisfaction with councils overall water supply, its quality and its reliability have remained steady over the past three years with a resident satisfaction ranging between 67 - 83%.

Key Challenges

Roding remains a major challenge area for Council. Residents from the Tuakau-Pokeno ward, in particular, have raised issues about potholes, signage, and the lack of footpaths. Many comments note the current state of the roads across the district contributes to decreased safety.

The decline in satisfaction with the roading network was anticipated by Council and mirrors a national trend. Residents expect quicker repairs and more attention to rural roads, with feedback indicating that maintenance and repairs do not last as long as expected.

Animal Management challenges in recruitment and reduced visibility of an animal control presence in the public has likely contributed to this years decrease in resident satisfaction. Combined factors such as ongoing issues in recruiting (attracting the right people with the right skills), training (it takes 6-12 months before an Animal Control Officer (ACO) is able to attend callouts independently), retaining (ACOs across the industry have a high turnover due to the dangerous and negative nature of the work) and remuneration (at industry level) contributes to retention and recruitment issues.

For example, the South team based in Ngaaruawaahia manage 62% of the volume of Service Requests. Of this, 15% are classified as dangerous, requiring two officers in attendance a time. However, in this area Council has had three vacancies since end 2023. Having two fully trained officers currently in South, that often require two officers attending, combined with the geographical challenges of covering the Central region, and West and Eastern wards can present challenges in attending calls within the Service Level Agreement timeframes.

Areas Requiring Action

The following areas have shown significant declines and require Councils' attention:

1. The Roothing Network
2. Animal Management
3. Safety After Dark
4. Fair and Reasonable Annual Property Rates
5. Value for Money

Key Actions

Several key preventatives, detective, and corrective actions and that are currently being actively worked on are outlined in the following table:

Table 1 – Actions to Address Areas of Focus to Improve Resident’s Perception

Issue	Preventative Actions	Detective	Corrective Actions
Decline in satisfaction with the roading network	<p>Additional funding for maintenance and renewal has been obtained through Enhanced Annual Plan and from NZTA.</p> <p>The uplift in funding allows a more concentrated focus on both sealed and unsealed roads.</p>	<p>“Roadroid” technology to measure road roughness.</p> <p>This will be done four -monthly on priority roads to get baseline data and allow for more proactive maintenance.</p> <p>The roading team captures a range of road related data that allows capture and</p>	<p>Analysis of data and data sources to support a proactive approach to maintenance and renewals as opposed to being reactive.</p>

		analysis of road condition and generation of forward works programmes for maintenance and renewals.	
Decline in Animal Management	<p>We are exploring how to better attract, train and develop and retain our Animal Control officers.</p> <p>We have also engaged with an external service provider on a short term contract to provide after hours cover three nights a week, to help deliver services in the right timeframes and to allow for staff to have some nights off.</p>	Quarterly resident satisfaction surveys	<p>We have changed the way we recruit to include a video showing 'a day in the life of an Animal Control Officer' with the aim of attracting more informed and suitable candidates.</p> <p>We are reviewing the training delivery model for ACOs through block courses for speed and ease of learning.</p> <p>We are bringing experienced ACOs from the North team to assist with managing the volume of South call outs.</p> <p>We are reviewing processes</p>

			<p>areas that, over time, may have become overly resource heavy. For example, the volume of adoption dogs and interactions associated with this.</p> <p>We have upgraded IT equipment at the Ngaruawahia pound to be more efficient with our impounds, making time and information gains.</p>
Decline in safety after dark	<p>Council has secured funding to support the installation of CCTV cameras in selected townships across the district to address safety concerns.</p> <p>Partnering with Hamilton City Council for offsite monitoring is being explored.</p>	Quarterly resident satisfaction surveys	

Decline in fair and reasonable annual property rates	Overall affordability pressures are impacting our communities and ratepayers.	Quarterly resident satisfaction surveys	
Decline in value for money	Availability of support will form part of our overall communications with the community, including rates rebate flyers included with the rates assessment notices. Additionally, testing service levels and willingness to pay will be looked at through the LTP work programme.		

5. Next Steps

Ahu whakamua

In looking towards the year ahead the following steps will be taken:

- Continue to monitor customer service requests through monthly reporting to the Executive.
- A programme to support ongoing training in supporting quality service request handling and customer service.
- Continue to monitor survey results and implement required corrective and preventative actions.
- Provide perception information to the incoming Executive Manger Communication.
- Review performance against 2023/2024 all the of Government Benchmark reports.

6. Attachments

Ngaa taapirihanga

1. Waikato DC Dashboard 2023-2024 W4
2. Waikato District Council 2024 Draft report