

**COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY
SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL
JUNE 2012**

- RESEARCH REPORT -

**Coordinated by the
Department of Planning and Community Development
on behalf of Victorian councils**



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Summary of Findings

- In 2012 South Gippsland Shire Council recorded an Overall Performance Index Score of 50. This is significantly lower than the State-wide average for this measure of 60 and the average Index Score of 56 in the Large Rural Shires group.
- On other core performance measures (which can also be compared against all Councils State-wide and the Regional Centres group) South Gippsland Shire Council scored as follows:
 - 65 for Customer Service
 - 53 for Community Consultation and Engagement
 - 51 for Advocacy
 - 43 for Overall Council Direction
- More specifically on these core measures:
 - 65 for Customer Service is 3 points lower than the Large Rural Shires group average of 68 and significantly lower than the State-wide average of 71. It is based on the 60% of Council residents who have had contact with South Gippsland Shire Council in the last 12 months.
 - 53 for Consultation is significantly lower than the State-wide average of 57 but only 1 point lower than the Large Rural Shires group average of 54.
 - Similarly, 51 for Advocacy is significantly lower than the State-wide average of 55 but only 2 points lower than the Large Rural Shires group average of 53.
 - 43 for Council Direction is significantly and well below the State-wide average of 52 and the Large Rural Shires group average of 48.

Summary of Findings

- In terms of its Overall Performance Index Score of 50, which as noted is significantly lower than the State-wide and Large Rural Shires group averages of 60 and 56 respectively, rated performance for South Gippsland Shire Council is:
 - Highest amongst residents aged 18-34 (53) and women aged 18-49 (52).
 - Lowest amongst men, men aged 50+, people aged 35-49 and those aged 50-64 – all rated at 49.
- Of the 60% who have had contact with South Gippsland Shire Council over the last 12 months and who rate it 65 overall for Customer Service, rated performance is:
 - Highest amongst people aged 35-49 (70).
 - Lowest amongst 18-34 year olds (59).
- On Community Consultation and Engagement, women aged 18-49 (58), 35-49 year olds (55) and women (55) are the only groups that rate the Council's performance higher than the average, with men, including over and under 50s and also 50-64 year olds generally all recording a below average rating of 51.
- It should also be noted that when looking at the detailed results on this Consultation question, only 4% rate South Gippsland Shire Council 'very good', which is 4 points lower than the State-wide average of 8% and 3 points lower than the Large Rural Shires average of 7%.

Summary of Findings

- Similar to all other performance measures, there is very little divergence and no significant differences from the overall result of 51 on the rating of Council's Advocacy efforts. Women aged 18-49 rate Council highest at 54, whilst men, including the under and over 50's and 50-64 year olds rate Council lowest at 50.
- The same is true on the rating of Council's Direction over the last 12 months, with the average rating of 43 bounded by a high score of 45 amongst women aged 50+ and men aged 18-49 and a low score of 41 amongst men aged 50+ and 42 for men generally and women aged 18-49.
- For comparison, on the detailed results for this Council Direction question South Gippsland Shire Council rates 3 points lower at 11% for improvement over the last 12 months against the Large Rural Shires group average result and 6 points higher at 24% for deterioration, with 60% saying things have stayed about the same (4 points lower than the average group result).
- Residents had some difficulty naming the best thing about South Gippsland Council. A high 31% said there was nothing they could think of, whilst the highest mentioned issues were its customer service response and accessibility (9%) and Councillors working well and being approachable (8%). No other issue was mentioned by more than 6% of people.
- On the downside, sealed road and street maintenance was mentioned by 41% of residents as an area where Council most needs to improve its performance, whilst 10% mentioned community consultation. A range of other issues were mentioned by 7% of residents as requiring improvement, including rates, town planning, financial management and business development.

Observations & Recommended Next Steps

- In summary:
 - Across all core measures of performance South Gippsland Shire Council is rated below both the State-wide and Large Rural Shires group averages, in many cases significantly so including on Overall Performance and Council Direction.
 - Lower performance ratings are consistently driven by people 50+, particularly men, It should be noted that people aged 50+ represent 54% of the local resident population so their views do require attention.
 - More concerning is that poor performance ratings are consistently recorded across all key gender and age groups, with no groups recording significantly higher than average results as is common in other Councils.
 - Another telling result is on the intensity of results on all performance measures, where South Gippsland Shire Council residents were less inclined than people State-wide or in the Large Rural Shires group as a whole to rate Council's performance as 'very good'.
 - On a more positive note, women aged 18-49 rated South Gippsland Shire Council higher than average (but not significantly so) on all measures apart from Council Direction in the last 12 months.
- It is recommended that South Gippsland Shire Council review its performance across all key responsibility areas, paying heed to the areas where residents have specifically stated Council needs to improve its performance. Further analysis of the open-ended question results and verbatims is recommended for this purpose, with particular focus on the gender and age cohorts that appear to be driving these lower than average performance ratings, such as 50+ year olds.
- An approach we recommend considering is to further mine the survey data to better understand the profile of any over and under-performing demographic groups. This can be achieved via additional consultation and data interrogation, or self-mining the SPSS data provided or via the dashboard portal available to the Council.

Background & Objectives

- Welcome to the report of results and recommendations for the 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey for South Gippsland Shire Council.
- Each year the Department of Community Planning and Development (DCPD) coordinates and auspices this Community Satisfaction Survey throughout Victorian Local Government areas. This coordinated approach allows for far more cost effective surveying than would be possible if Councils commissioned surveys individually.
- Participation in the Community Satisfaction Survey is optional and participating Councils have a range of choices as to the content of the questionnaire and the sample size to be surveyed, depending on their individual strategic, financial and other considerations.
- The main objectives of the survey are to assess the performance of South Gippsland Shire Council across a range of measures and to seek insight into ways to provide improved or more effective service delivery. The survey also provides Councils with a means to fulfil some of their statutory reporting requirements as well as acting as a feedback mechanism to DCPD.

Background & Objectives (Cont'd)

- **Please note that comparisons should not be made with Community Satisfaction Survey results from 2011 and prior. As a result of feedback from extensive consultations with Councils, in 2012 there have been necessary and significant changes to the methodology and content of the survey which make comparisons invalid, including:**
 - The survey is now conducted as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18 years or over in local Councils, whereas previously it was conducted as a 'head of household' survey.
 - As part of the change to a representative resident survey, results are now weighted post survey to the known population distribution of South Gippsland Shire Council according to the most recently available Australian Bureau of Statistics population estimates, whereas the results were previously not weighted.
 - The service responsibility area performance measures have changed significantly and the rating scale used to assess performance has also changed.
- As such, the results of the 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey should be considered as a benchmark. Tracking comparisons will be possible in future years.
- Detailed explanations of the 'Survey Methodology & Sampling' and 'Analysis & Reporting' approaches are provided in the following sections.

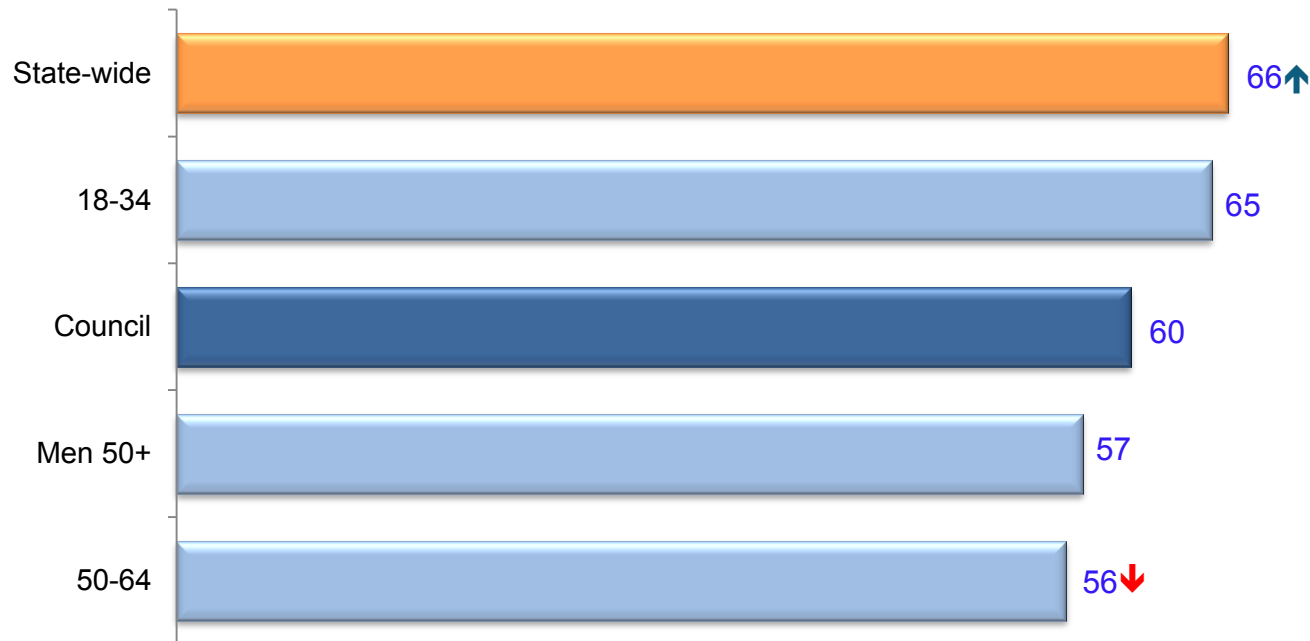
Survey Methodology & Sampling

- This survey was conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18+ years in the South Gippsland Shire Council.
- Survey sample matched to the South Gippsland Shire Council was purchased from an accredited supplier of publicly available phone records, including up to 10% mobile phone numbers to cater to the diversity of residents in the Council, particularly younger people.
- A total of n=400 completed interviews were achieved based on a survey of an estimated average length of 6 minutes. Survey fieldwork was conducted in the period of 18th May – 30 June 2012.
- Minimum quotas of gender within age groups were applied during the fieldwork phase. Post survey weighting was then conducted to ensure accurate representation of the age and gender profile of the South Gippsland Shire Council area.
- Any variation of +/-1% between individual results and NET scores in this report or the detailed survey tabulations is due to rounding.
- “NET” scores refer to two or more response categories being combined into one category for simplicity of reporting.

Survey Methodology & Sampling (Cont'd)

- Within tables and index score charts throughout this report, statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level are represented by upward directing blue and downward directing red arrows. Significance when noted indicates a significantly higher or lower result for the analysis group in comparison to the 'Total' result for the Council for that survey question. Therefore in the following example:
 - The State-wide result is significantly higher than the overall result for the Council.
 - The result amongst 50-64 year olds in the Council is significantly lower than for the overall result for the Council.

Overall Performance – Index Score (example extract only)



Margins of Error

- The sample size for the 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey for South Gippsland Shire Council was 400. Unless otherwise noted, this is the total sample base for all reported charts and tables.
- The maximum margin of error on a sample of approximately 400 interviews is +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence level for results around 50%. Margins of error will be larger for any sub-samples.
- As an example, a result of 50% can be read confidently as falling midway in the range 45.1% - 54.9%.
- Maximum margins of error are listed in the table below, based on a population of 22,000 people aged 18 years or over for South Gippsland Shire Council according to ABS estimates.

Table 2: Survey sub-samples and margins or error

Demographic	Actual survey sample size	Weighted base	Maximum margin of error at 95% confidence interval
South Gippsland Shire Council	400	400	+/-4.9
Men	160	196	+/-7.7
Women	240	204	+/-6.3
18-34 years	43	84	+/-15.1
35-49 years	78	100	+/-11.1
50-64 years	147	114	+/-8.1
65+ years	132	102	+/-8.5
Men 18-49 years	46	91	+/-14.6
Men 50+ years	114	106	+/-9.2
Women 18-49 years	75	93	+/-11.4
Women 50+ years	165	110	+/-7.6

Analysis & Reporting

Council Groups

- Wherever appropriate, results for South Gippsland Shire Council for this 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey have been compared against other Councils in the Large Rural Shires group and on a State-wide basis. South Gippsland Shire Council is self-classified as a Large Rural Shires Council according to the following classification list:
 - Inner metropolitan councils
 - Outer metropolitan councils
 - Rural cities and regional centres
 - Large rural shires
 - Small rural shires
- The Councils in the Large Rural Shires group are: Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Campaspe, Colac Otway, Corangamite, East Gippsland, Glenelg, Macedon Ranges, Mitchell, Moira, Moorabool, Moyne, South Gippsland, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast and Wellington. All participating Councils are listed in the State-wide report published on the DPCD website. In 2012, 71 of the 79 Councils throughout Victoria participated in this survey.

Analysis & Reporting (Cont'd)

Index Scores

- Many questions ask respondents to rate Council performance on a five-point scale, for example, from "Very good" to "Very poor", with "Can't say" also a possible response category. To facilitate ease of reporting and comparison of results over time (after this initial 2012 benchmark) and against the State-wide result and the Council group, an 'Index Score' has been calculated for such measures.
- The 'Index Score' is calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale), with "Can't say" responses excluded from the analysis. The '% RESULT' for each scale category is multiplied by the 'INDEX FACTOR'. This produces an 'INDEX VALUE' for each category, which are then summed to produce the 'INDEX SCORE', equating to '60' in the following example.

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Very good	9%	100	9
Good	40%	75	30
Average	37%	50	19
Poor	9%	25	2
Very poor	4%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 60

- Similarly, an Index Score has been calculated for the Core question 'Performance direction in the last 12 months', based on the following scale for each performance measure category, with 'Can't say' responses excluded from the calculation:
 - 'Improved' = 100
 - 'Stayed about the same' = 50
 - 'Deteriorated' = 0

Analysis & Reporting (Cont'd)

Reporting

- Every Council that participated in the 2012 Victorian Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey receives a customized report. In addition, DPCD is supplied with a State-wide summary report of the aggregate results of 'Core' and 'Optional' questions asked across all Council areas surveyed.
- Tailored questions commissioned by individual Councils are reported only to the commissioning Council and not otherwise shared with DPCD or others unless by express written approval of the commissioning Council.
- The State-wide Research Results Summary Report is available on the Department's website at www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au.

Contacts

- For further queries about the conduct and reporting of this Community Satisfaction Survey, please contact JWS Research as follows:
 - John Scales – jsc@jwsresearch.com - 0409 244412
 - Mark Zuker – mz@jwsresearch.com - 0418 364009

Analysis & Reporting (Cont'd)

Core, Optional and Tailored Questions

- Over and above necessary geographic and demographic questions required to ensure sample representativeness, a base set of questions for the 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey were designated as 'Core' and therefore compulsory inclusions for all participating Councils. These Core questions comprised:
 - Overall performance last 12 months (Overall performance)
 - Lobbying on behalf of community (Advocacy)
 - Community consultation and engagement (Consultation)
 - Contact in last 12 months (Contact)
 - Rating of contact (Contact rating)
 - Overall council direction last 12 months (Council direction)
- Reporting of results for these Core questions can always be compared against other Councils in the Council group and against all participating Councils State-wide. Alternatively, some questions in the 2012 Community Satisfaction Survey were optional. If comparisons for South Gippsland Shire Council for some questions cannot be made against all other Councils in the Large Rural Shires group and/or all Councils on a State-wide basis, this is noted for those results by noting the number of Councils the comparison is made against.
- Councils also had the ability to ask tailored questions specific only to their Council. Results for these tailored questions are only reported to the commissioning Council.

Glossary of Terms

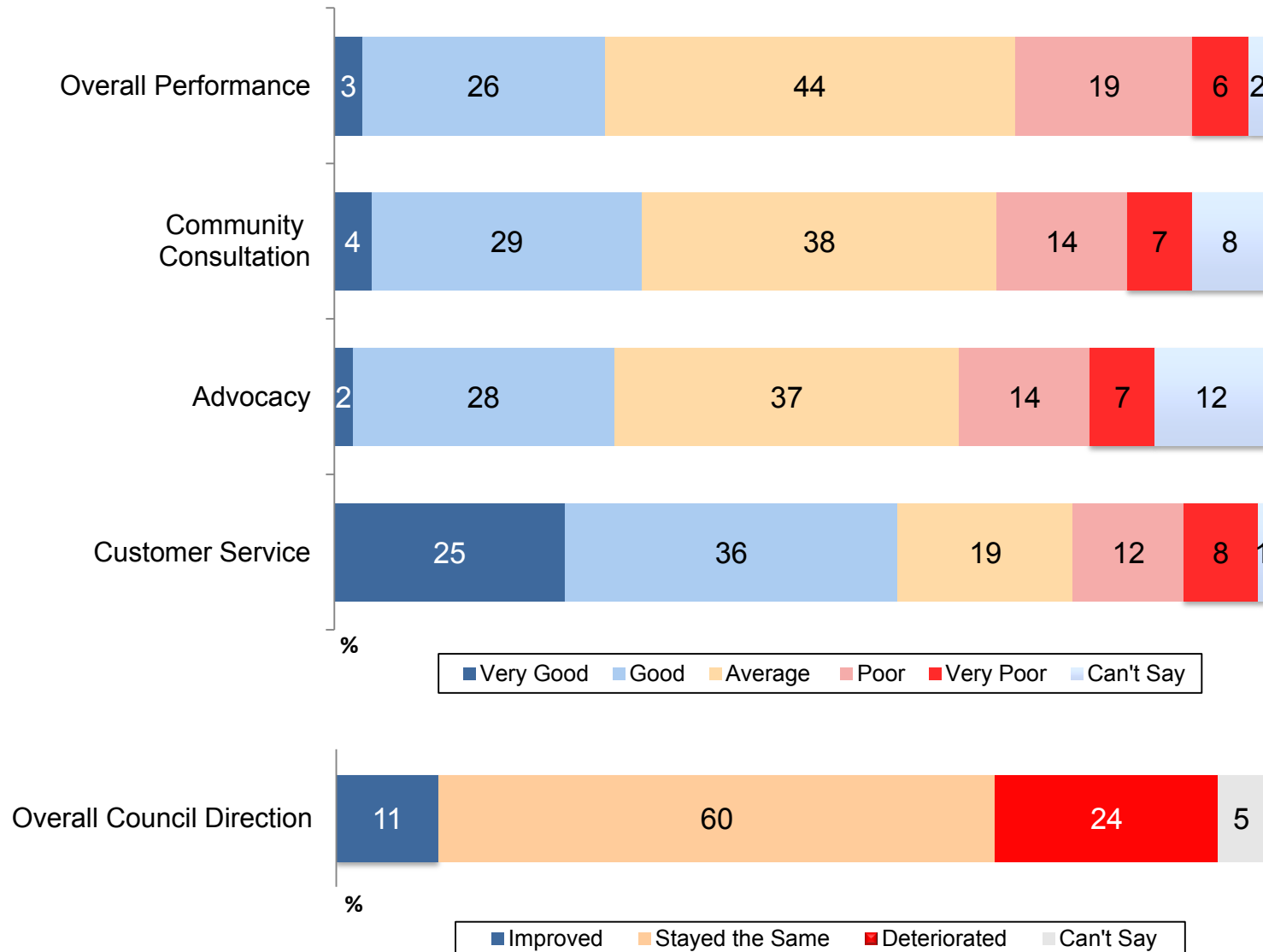
- **Core questions:** Compulsory inclusion questions for all Councils participating in the CSS.
- **CSS:** 2012 Victorian Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.
- **Council group:** One of five self-classified groups, comprising: inner metropolitan councils, outer metropolitan councils, rural cities and regional centres, large rural shires and small rural shires.
- **Council group average:** The average result for all participating Councils in the Council group.
- **Highest / Lowest:** The result described is the highest or lowest result across a particular demographic sub-group e.g. Men, for the specific question being reported. Reference to the result for a demographic sub-group being the highest or lowest does not imply that it is significantly higher or lower, unless this is specifically mentioned.
- **Index Score:** A score calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale). This score is sometimes reported as a figure in brackets next to the category being described, e.g. men 50+ (60).
- **Optional questions:** Questions which Councils had an option to include or not.
- **Percentages:** Also referred to as 'detailed results', meaning the proportion of responses, expressed as a percentage.
- **Sample:** The number of completed interviews, e.g. for a Council or within a demographic sub-group.
- **Significantly higher / lower:** The result described is significantly higher or lower than the comparison result based on a statistical significance test at the 95% confidence limit. If the result referenced is statistically higher or lower then this will be specifically mentioned, however not all significantly higher or lower results are referenced in summary reporting.
- **State-wide average:** The average result for all participating Councils in the State.
- **Tailored questions:** Individual questions tailored by and only reported to the commissioning Council.
- **Weighting:** Weighting factors are applied to the sample for each Council based on available age and gender proportions from ABS census information to ensure reported results are proportionate to the actual population of the Council, rather than the achieved survey sample.

KEY RESULTS SUMMARY

Summary of Key Community Satisfaction Results

	Index Score
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	50
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (Community consultation and engagement)	53
ADVOCACY (Lobbying on behalf of the community)	51
CUSTOMER SERVICE	65
OVERALL COUNCIL DIRECTION	43

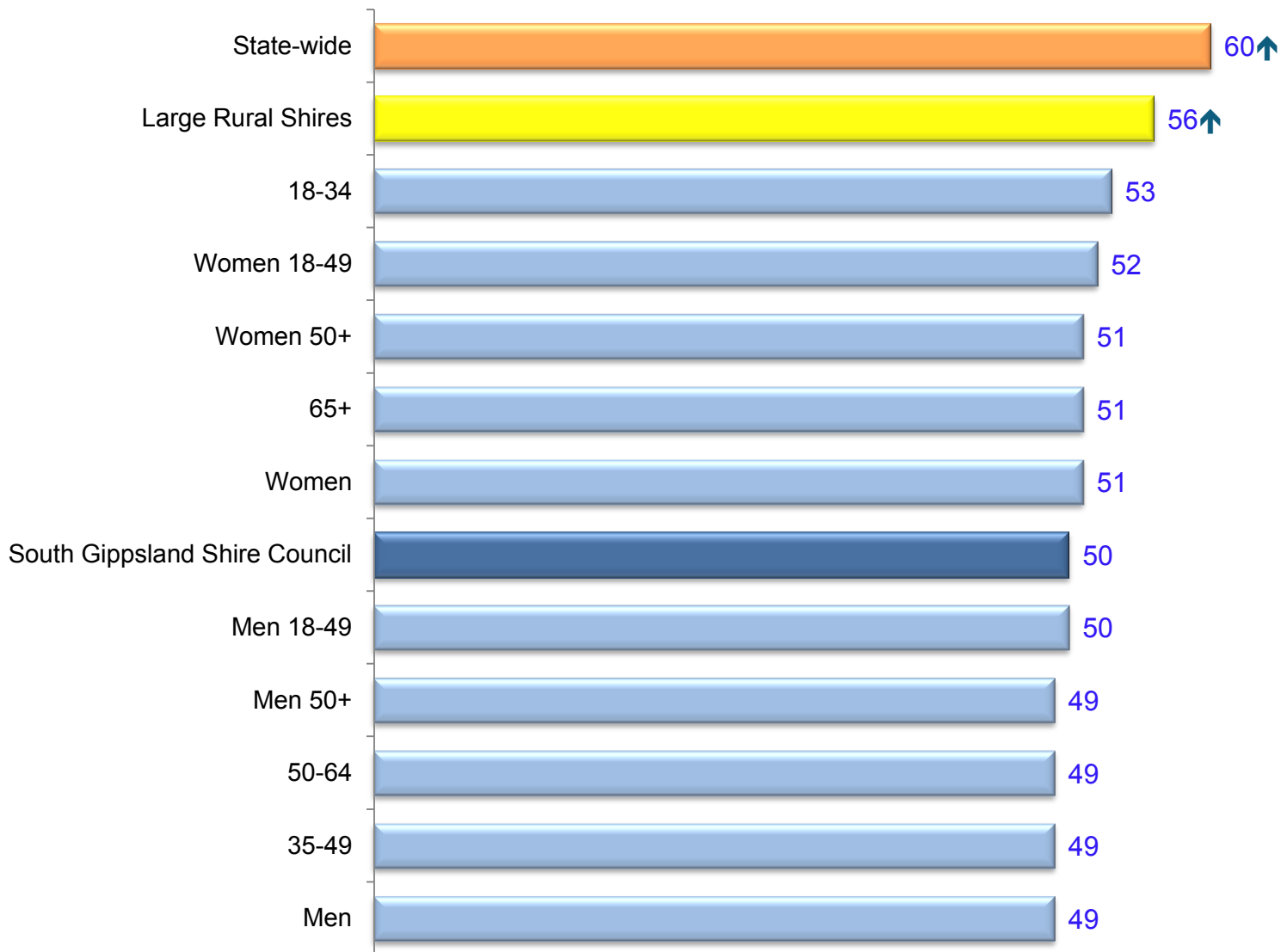
Summary of Key Community Satisfaction Results



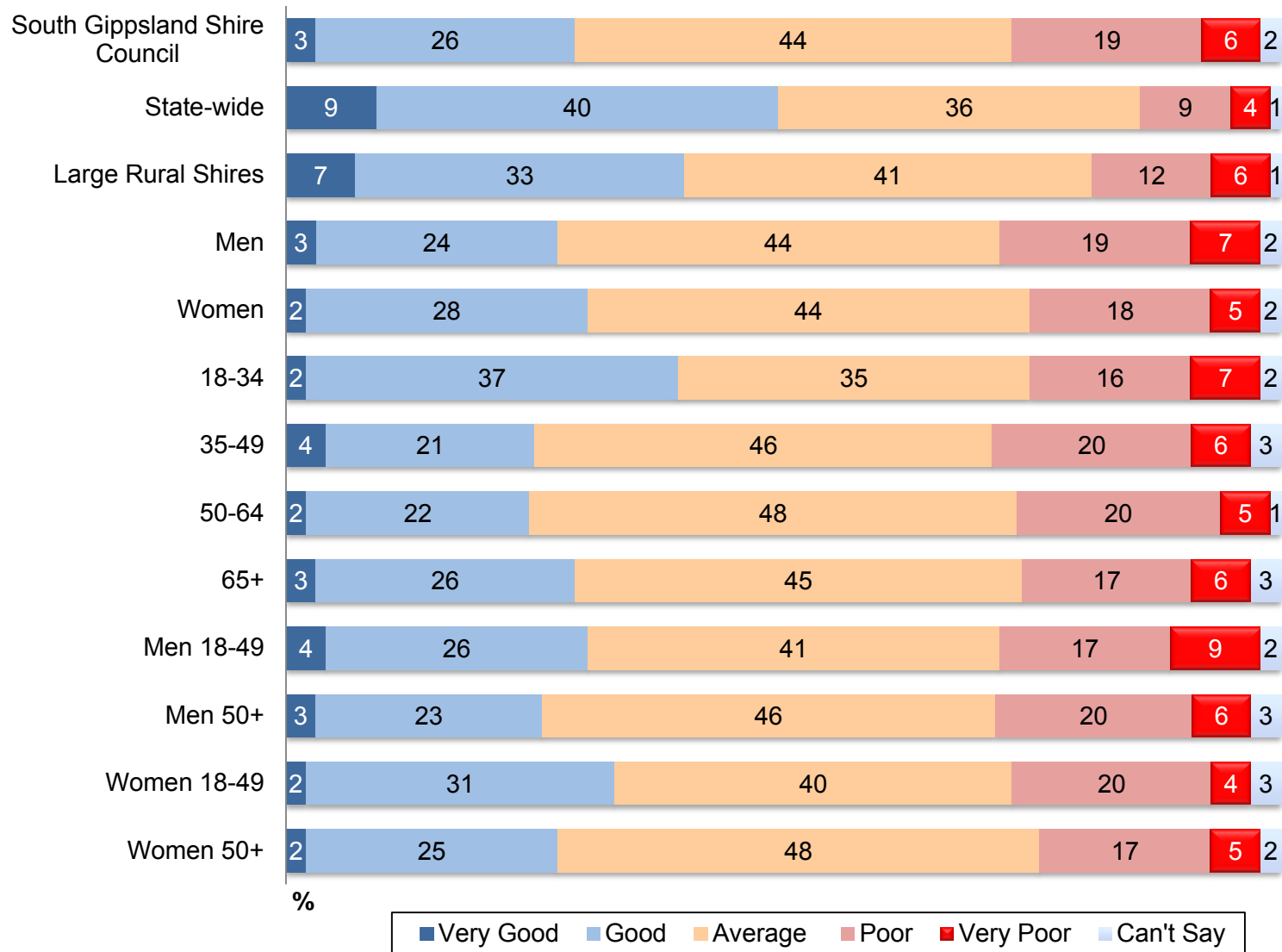
DETAILED RESULTS

SECTION 1: OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Overall Performance – Index Score

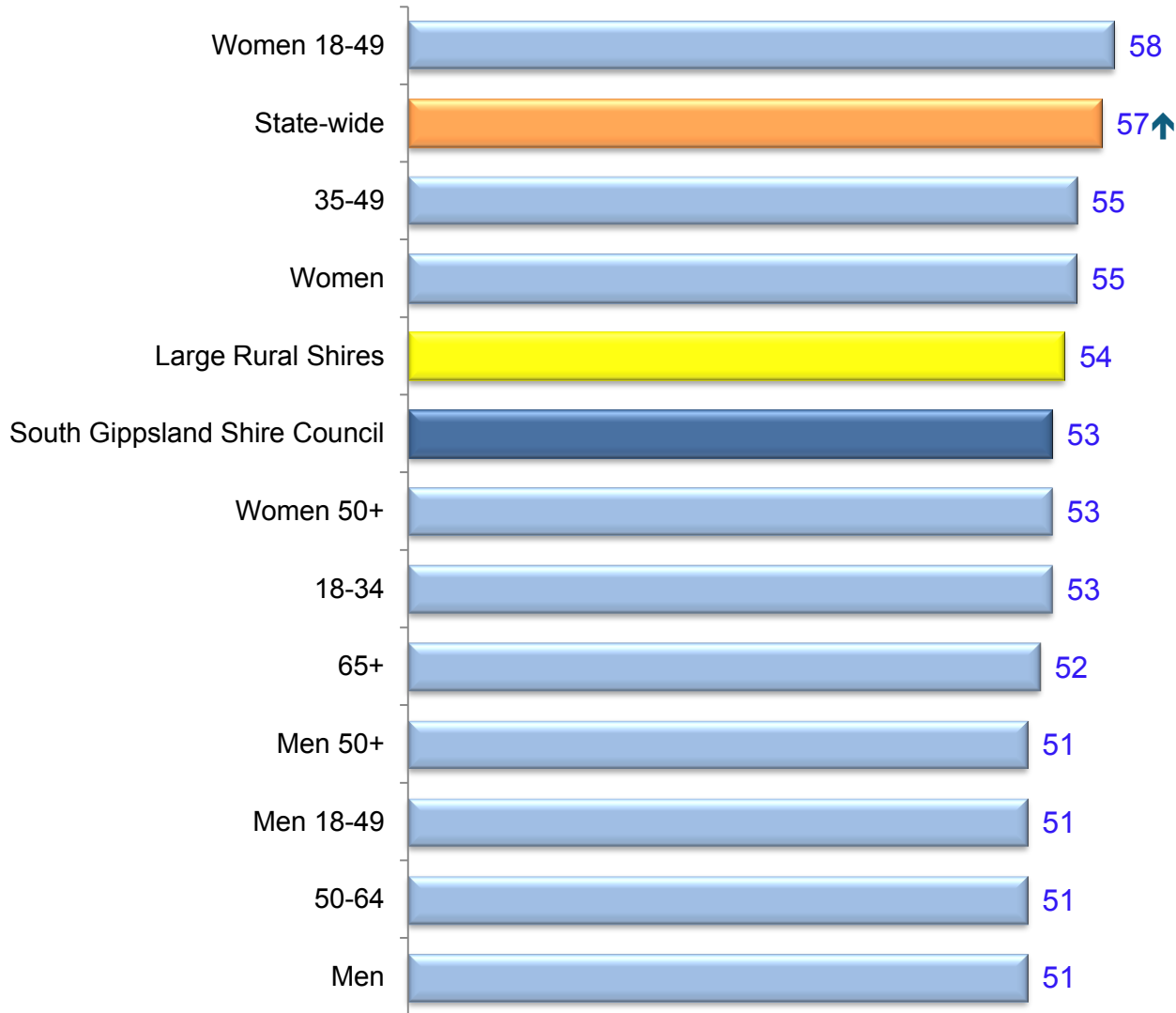


Overall Performance – Detail

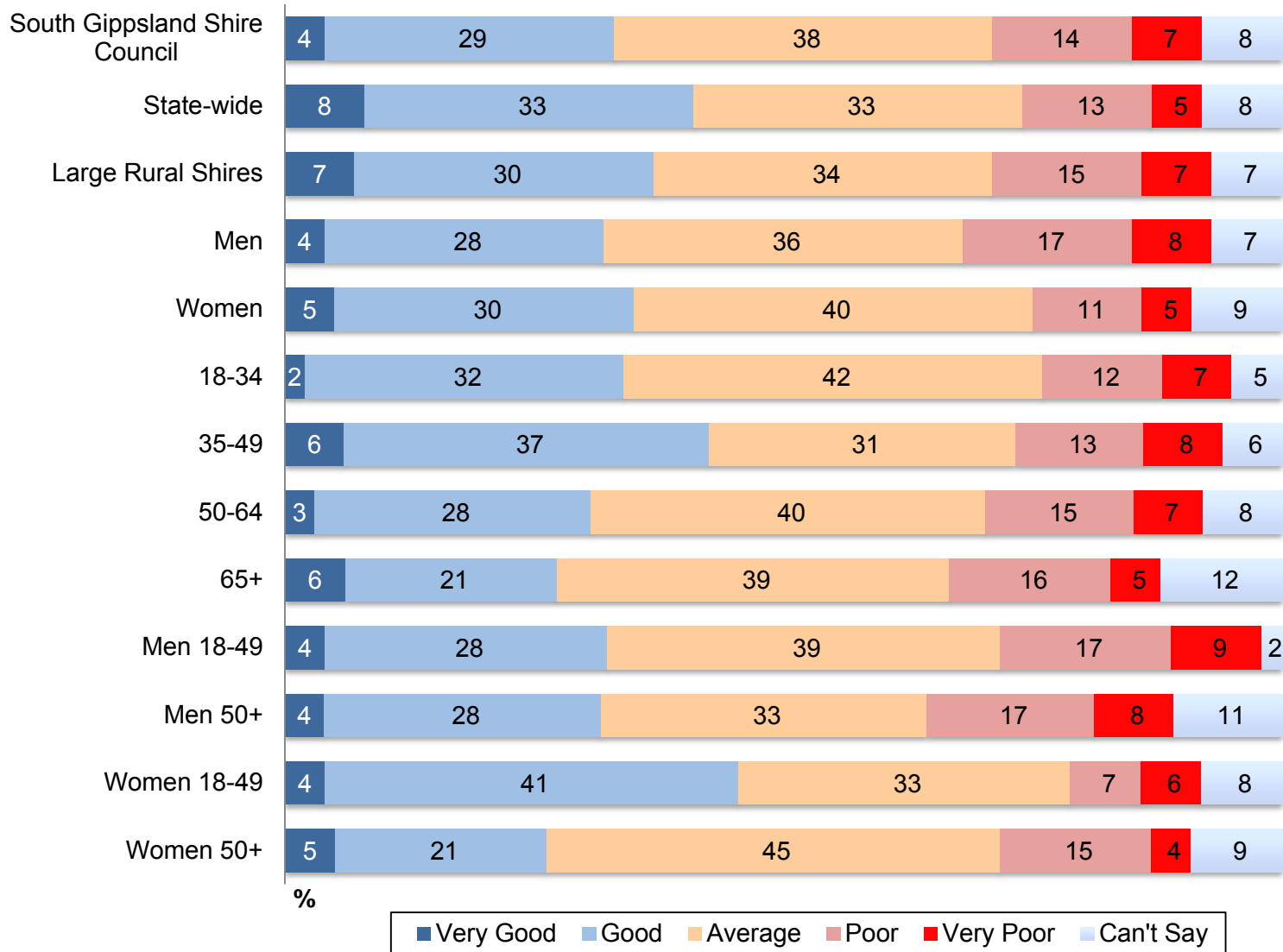


SECTION 2: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

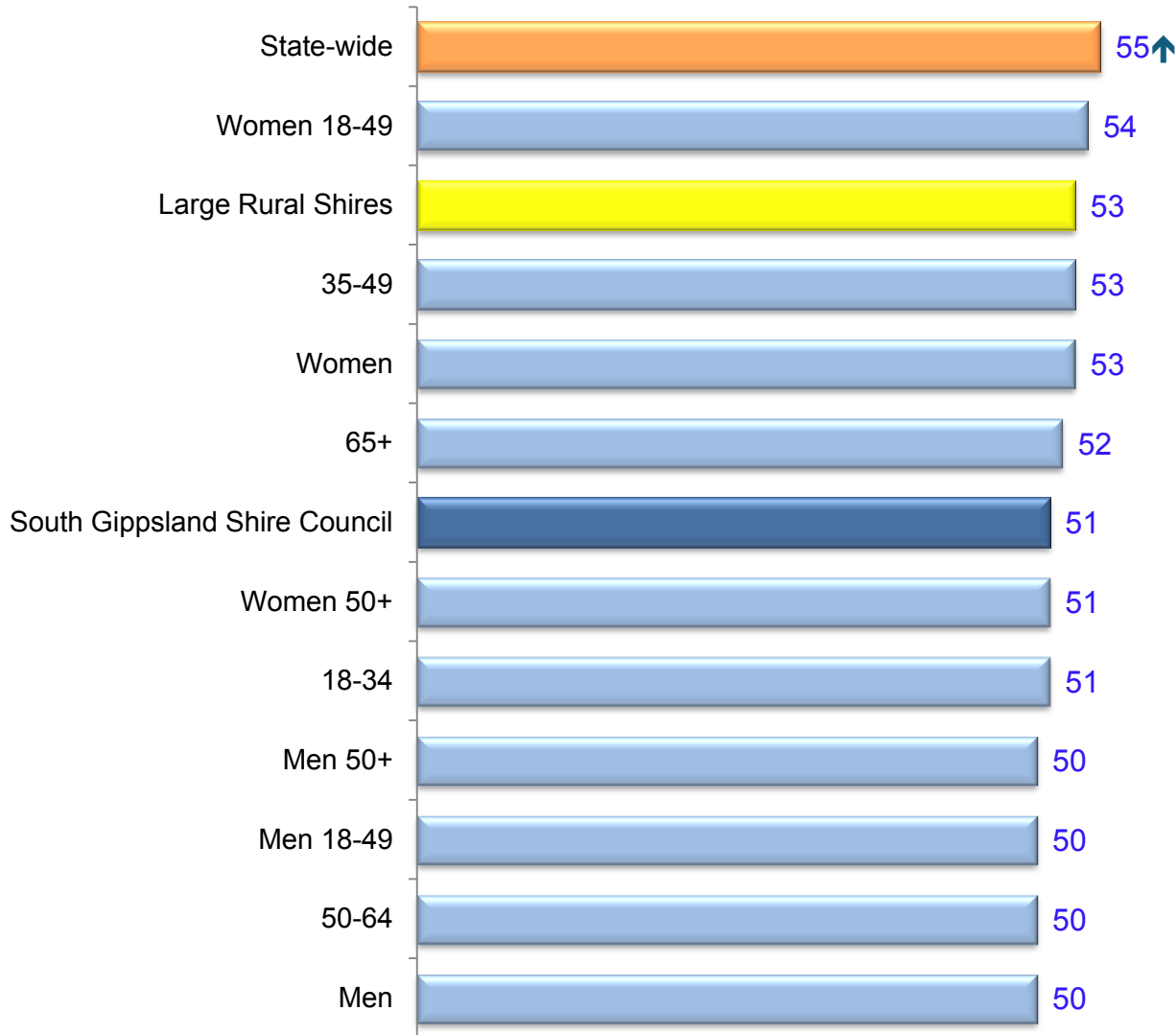
Community Consultation and Engagement – Performance Index Score



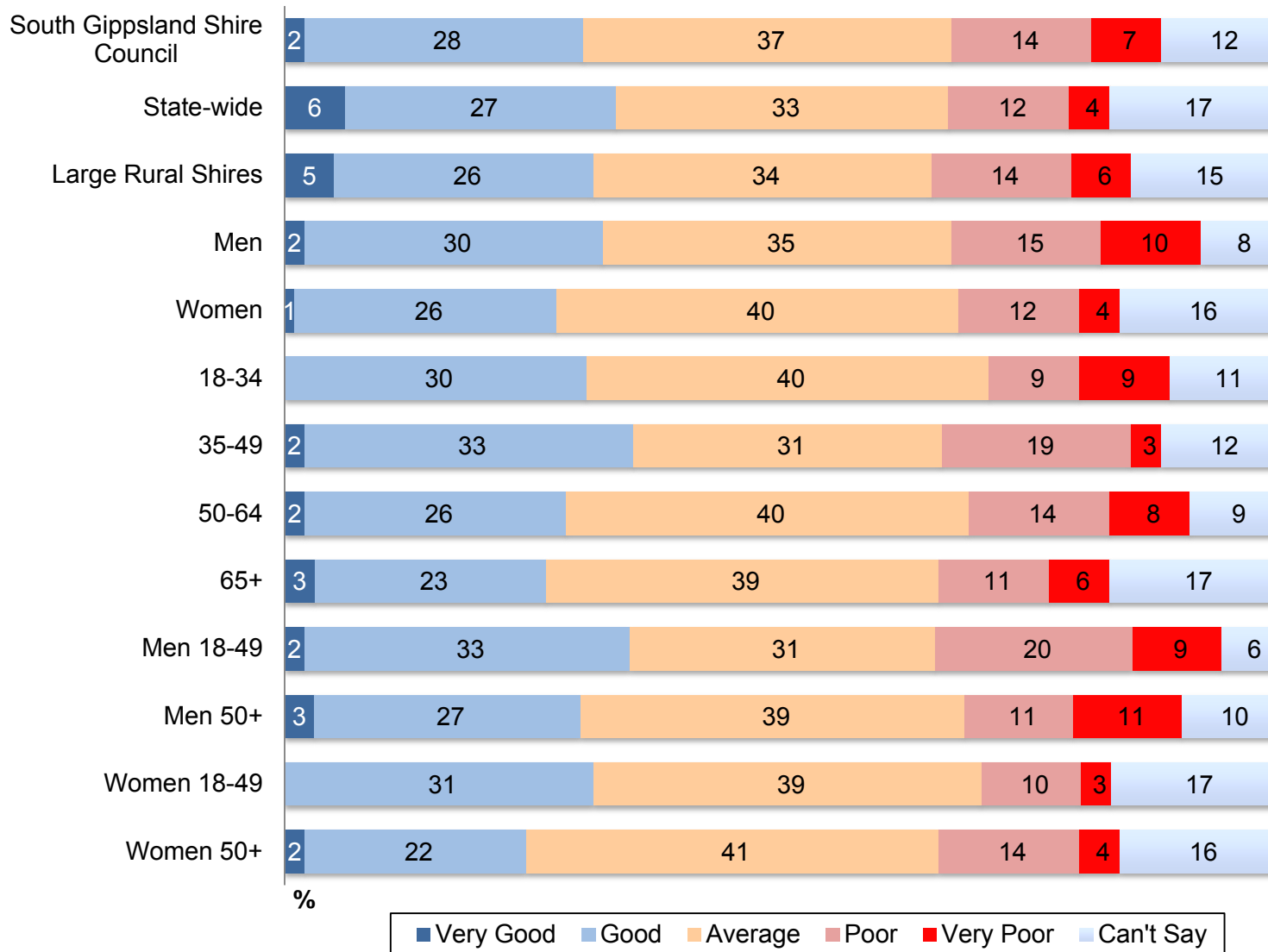
Community Consultation and Engagement – Performance Detail



Lobbying on Behalf of the Community – Performance Index Score

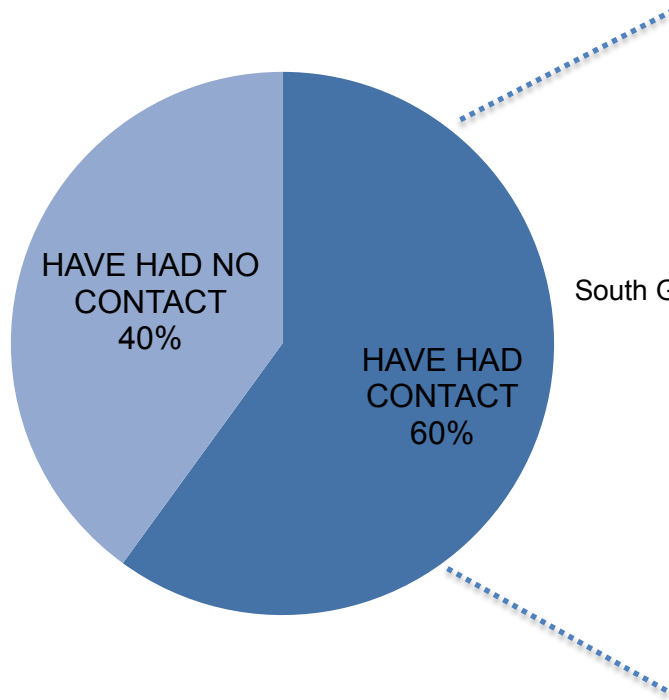


Lobbying on Behalf of the Community – Performance Detail



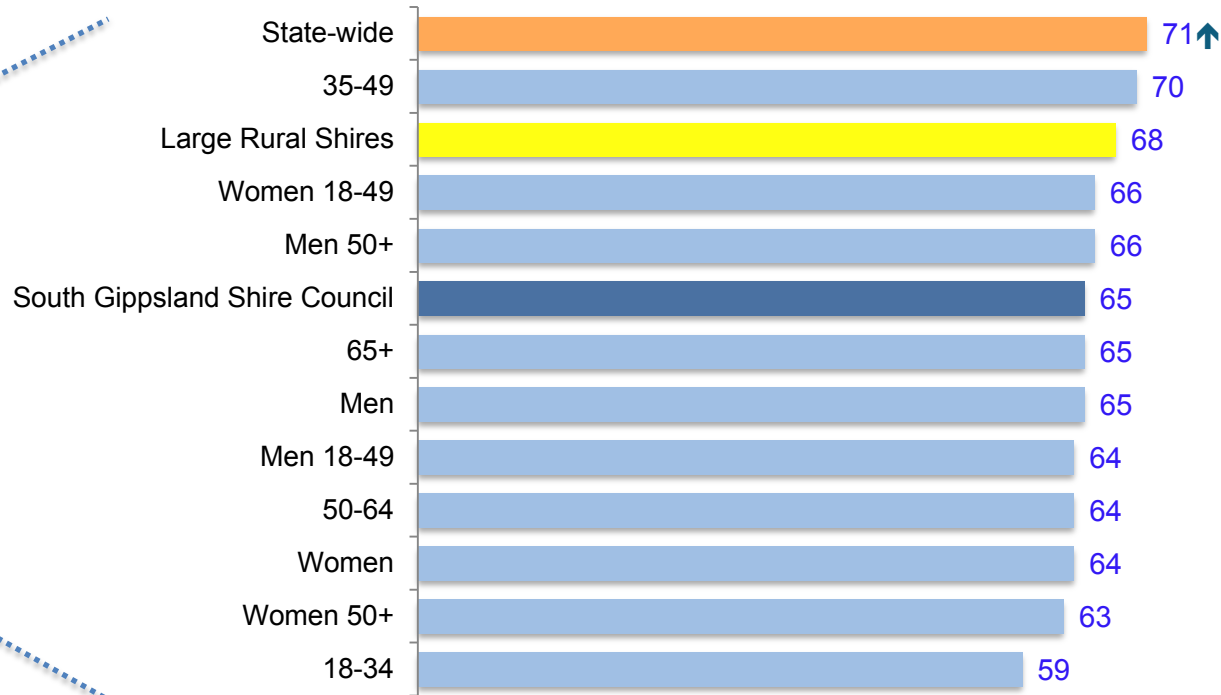
SECTION 3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Contact Last 12 Months



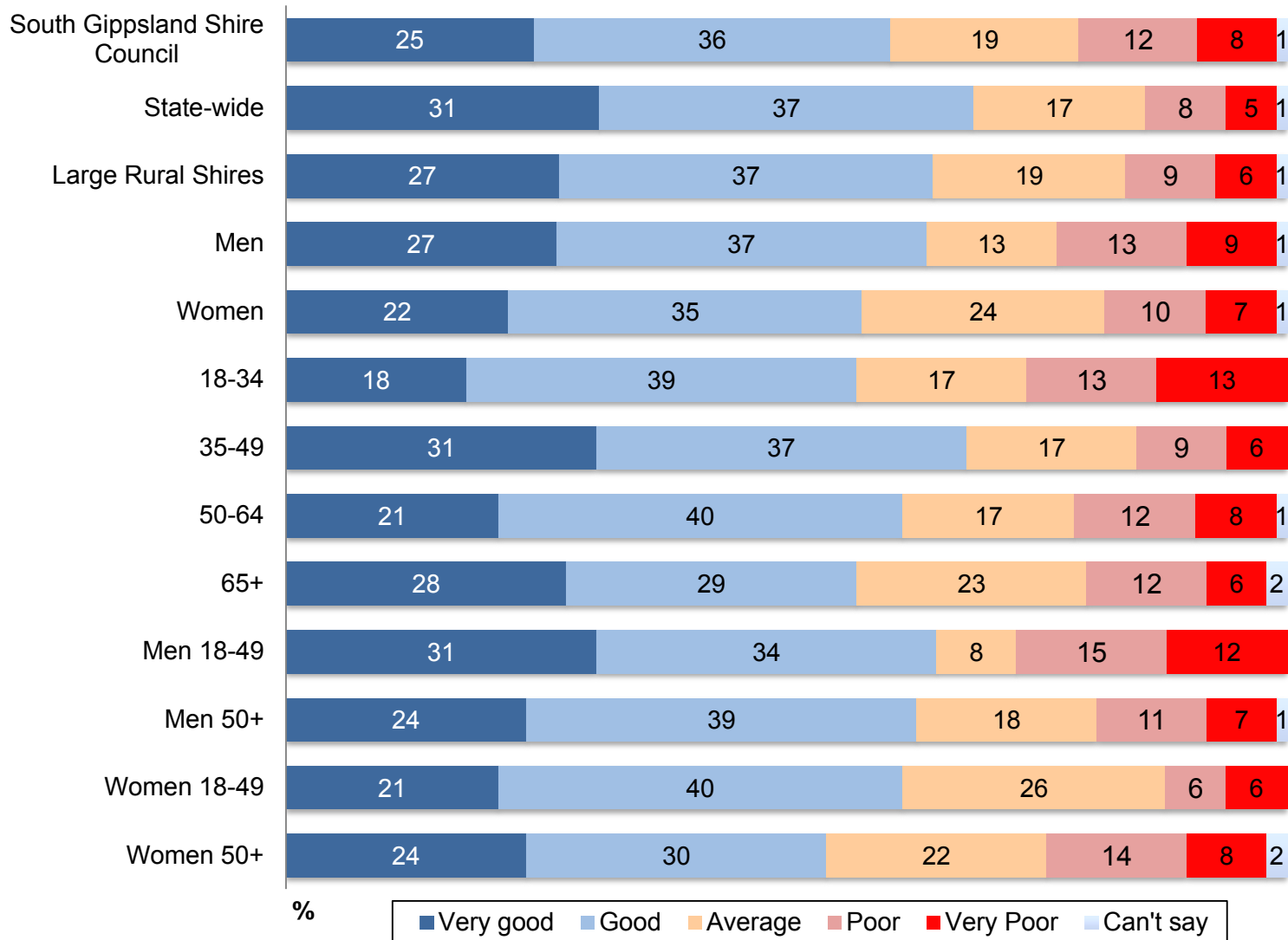
Base: All respondents.

Contact Customer Service – Index Score



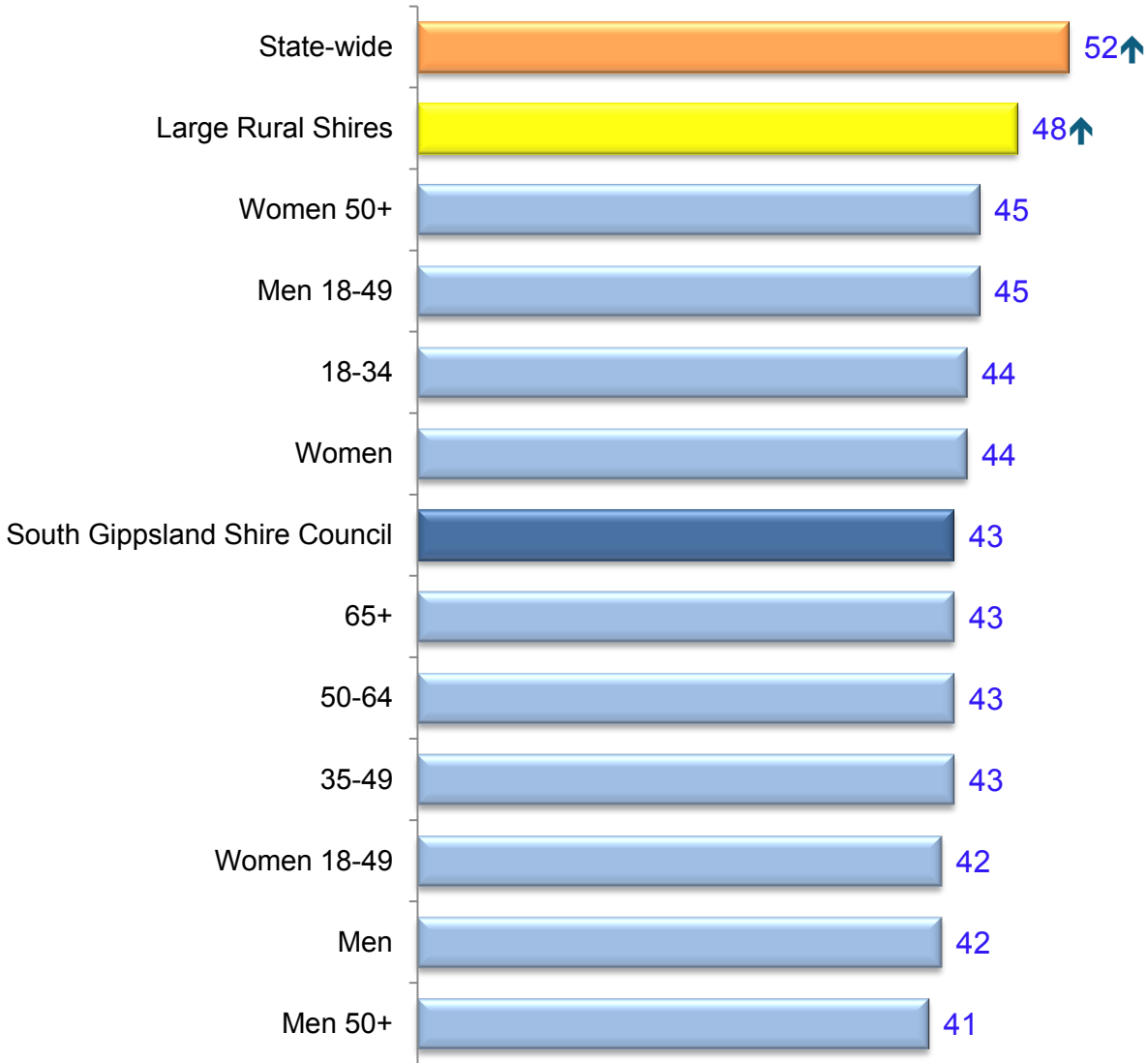
Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Contact Customer Service – Detail

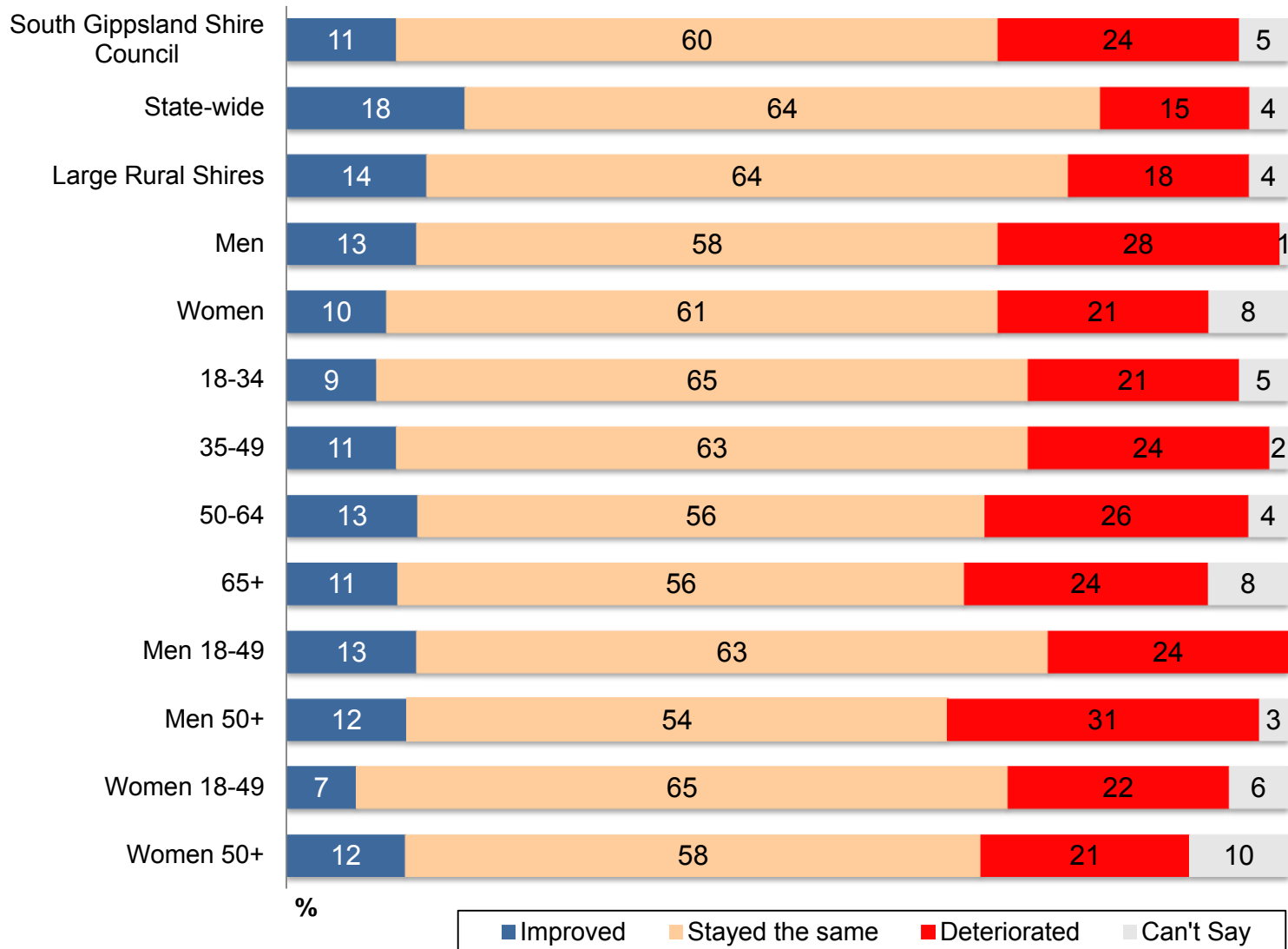


SECTION 4: COUNCIL DIRECTION INDICATORS

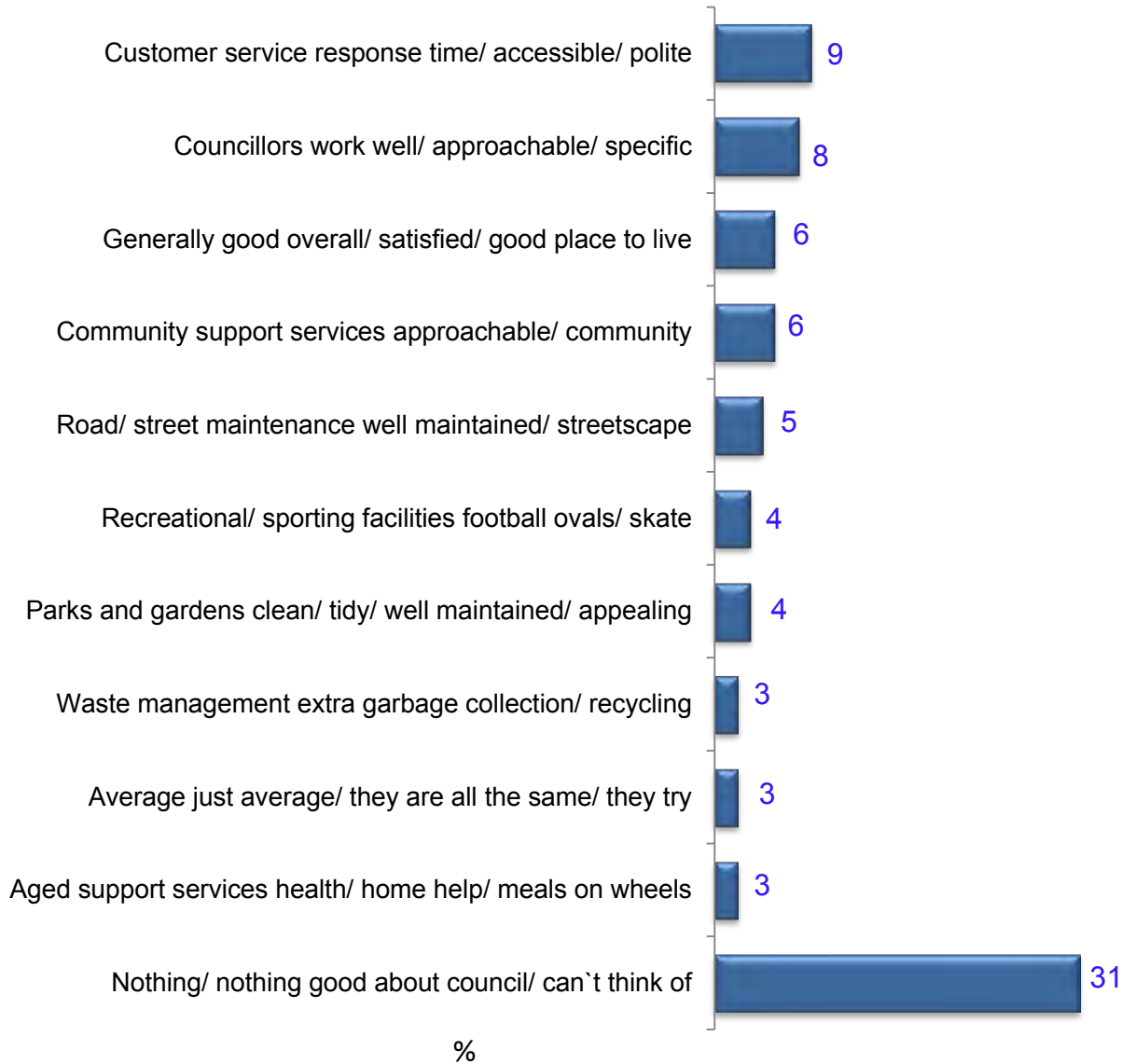
Overall Direction Last 12 Months – Index Score



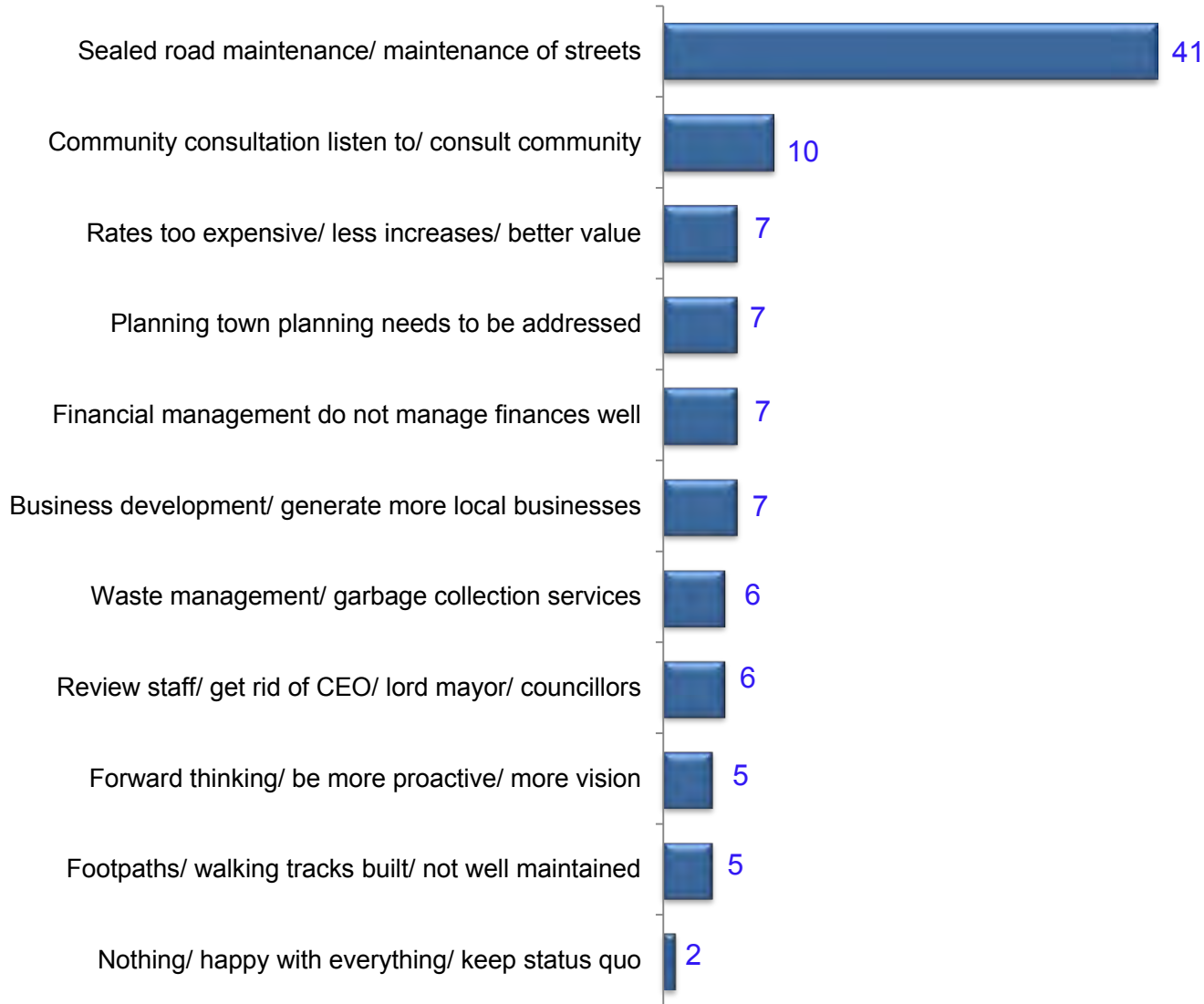
Overall Direction Last 12 Months – Detail



Best Things about Council



Council needs for improvement



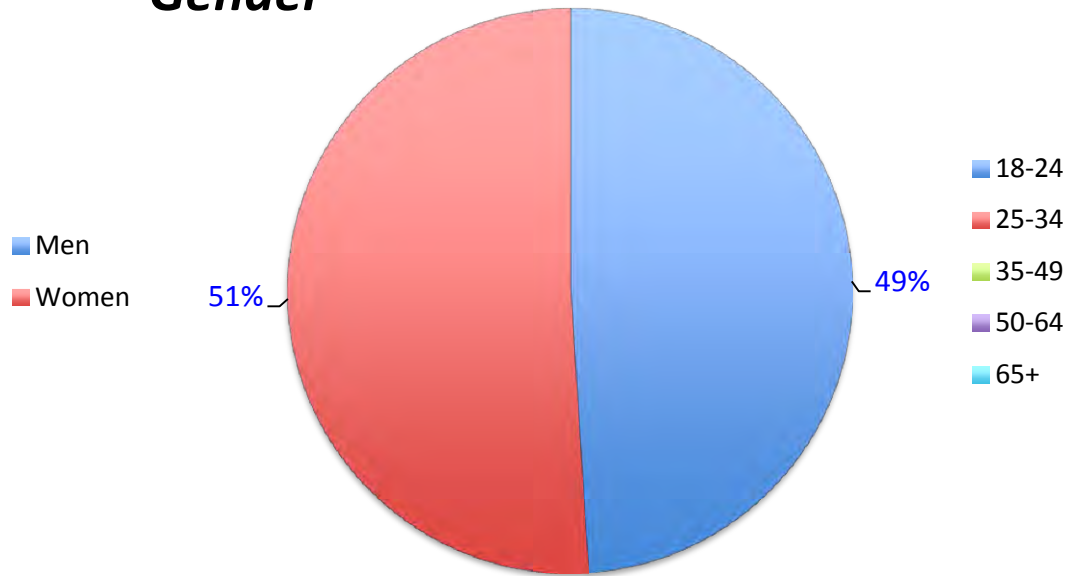
%

Q17. What does Council most need to do to improve its performance?

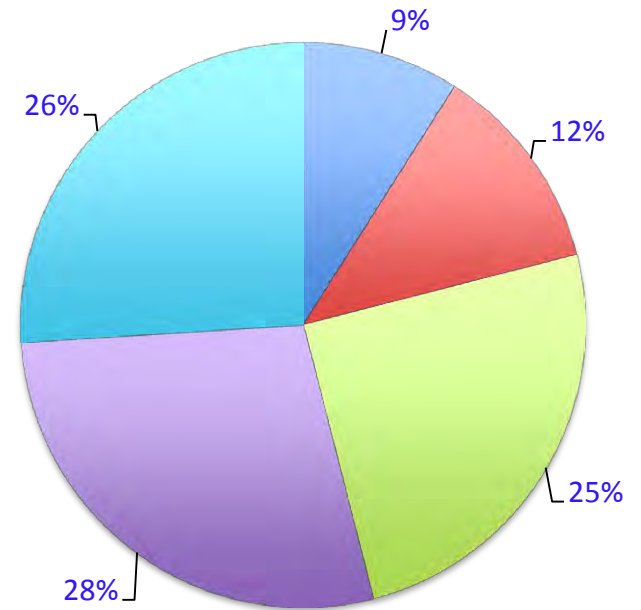
Base: All respondents. Councils asked statewide: 31 Councils asked group: 9

SECTION 5: WEIGHTED DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender



Age



Household Structure

No data available

APPENDIX A: DETAILED SURVEY TABULATIONS

Available in Supplied Excel File

