



Community Satisfaction Results Released

South Gippsland Shire Council has published the results of its 2018 Community Satisfaction Survey. The annual survey is a requirement for all Victorian councils. Council engaged Key Research to undertake this year's survey, marking a shift away from landline-based phone surveys to a written survey that could be completed either on paper or online.

Most residents surveyed think Council's performance has stayed the same over the past 12 months, although around one-fifth think it has deteriorated. Close to half of residents are satisfied with Council's overall performance, giving a rating of six or more out of ten. General feedback from all residents highlights their concern regarding rates, as well as rubbish collection and recycling.

Residents who were dissatisfied with overall performance of Council had a range of suggestions on how to improve the scores. The most common theme being reducing rates, including a fairer rates system and providing better value for money. The next most common theme was that Council should listen to ratepayers, with more collaboration, better communications, and more transparency and accountability.

South Gippsland Shire Mayor Councillor Lorraine Brunt was pleased with the work undertaken by Key Research. "Even though there hasn't been much of a shift in how our performance is viewed by the community and the results in many areas are quite disappointing, this new research provides more detail on the data behind the headline figures. In time this will give us more understanding on how to start changing perceptions.

"There is always a tension between people who want more services and better facilities and those who want to see rates and service levels reduced. We strive to find that balance in how we allocate resources according to the Council Plan and the four year Strategic Resource Plan.

"On a positive note it is encouraging to see significant increases in areas such as sealed local roads and customer service this year. Hopefully they're the start of a pattern that will emerge over the next couple of years.

"Finally, I'd like to thank the 621 people who took the time to give us their feedback. I appreciate that it took some time to complete. The survey is a significant investment by Council and a legislative requirement, so it's vital that people continue to engage with this research as we move to quarterly surveys after July."

The information provided in the survey will be utilised in a few months' time to inform the 2018/19 annual review of the Council Plan and the development of the 2019/20 Annual Initiatives and Annual Budget, and the Long Term Financial Plan. Council will include the relevant results in the Annual Report.

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