



# Kempsey Shire Council

Community Research

Prepared by: Micromex Research  
Date: December 2020



# Background & Methodology

## Why?

- Understand and identify community priorities for the Kempsey Shire Council LGA
- Identify the community's overall level of satisfaction with Council performance
- Assess and establish the community's priorities and satisfaction in relation to Council activities, services, and facilities
- Gauge level of support for a possible name change for the LGA
- Identify level of support for the community vision and strategic plan

## How?

- Telephone survey (landline and mobile) to N=304 residents
- 9 acquired through number harvesting (previous collection sheets, no new number harvesting was conducted for this project due to COVID-19 social distancing rules)
- We use a 5 point scale (e.g. 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied)
- Greatest margin of error +/- 5.6%

## When?

- Implementation 4<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020



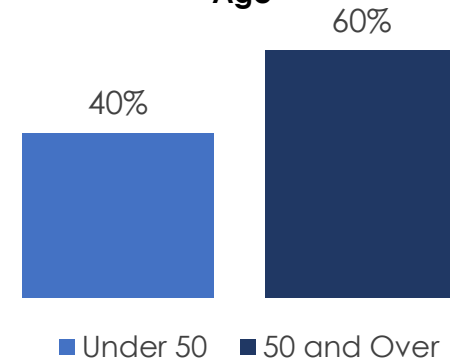
# Sample Profile

The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2016 ABS community profile of Kempsey Shire Council.

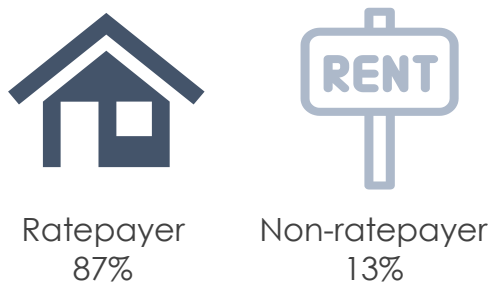
## Gender



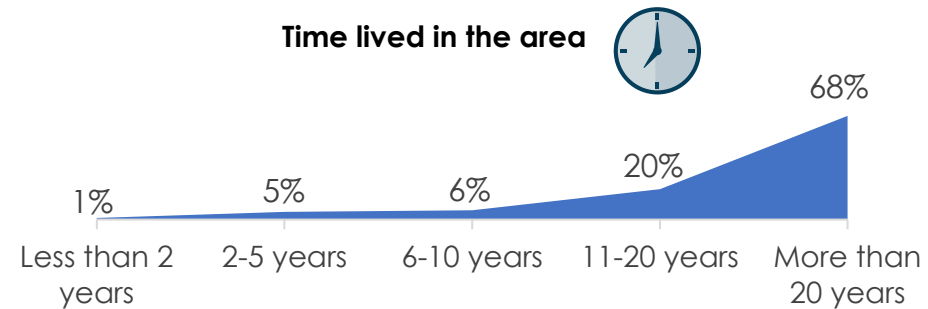
## Age



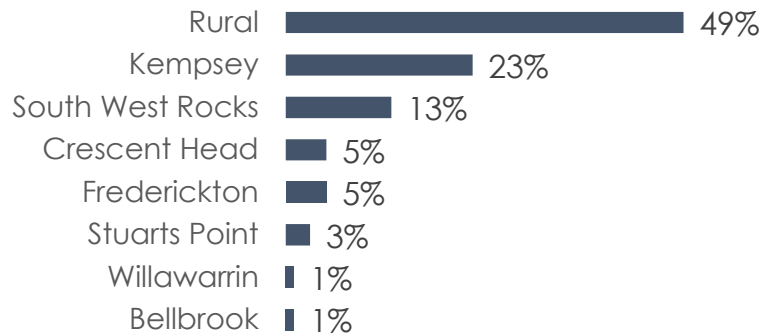
## Ratepayer status



## Time lived in the area



## Suburb/Village



N=304  
Telephone Interviews  
with Kempsey Shire  
Council Residents



# Key Findings

# Key Findings - Summary

## Most Valued Aspects of the area



The natural environment/beaches/rivers/ climate/animals



Lifestyle/quiet/relaxed/rural atmosphere



Community feel/close to friends and family/friendly people

## Highest Priority Issues



Roads/traffic management/bridges

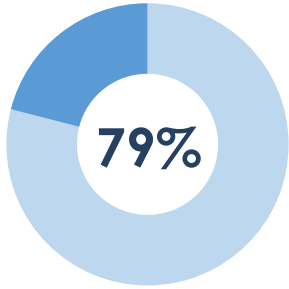


Employment/local business opportunities/economic stimulation



Community safety/crime prevention

# Key Findings - Summary



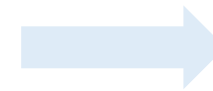
of Kempsey Shire residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council in the last 12 months



93% of residents rate their Quality of Life as good to excellent

## Name Change

Of the 3 options, support and preference is for keeping the name as Kempsey Shire Council



## Top Drivers of Overall Satisfaction



Council decision-making reflecting community opinion



Opportunity to participate in Council decision making



Financial management



Provision of Council information to the community



# Living in the Kempsey Shire

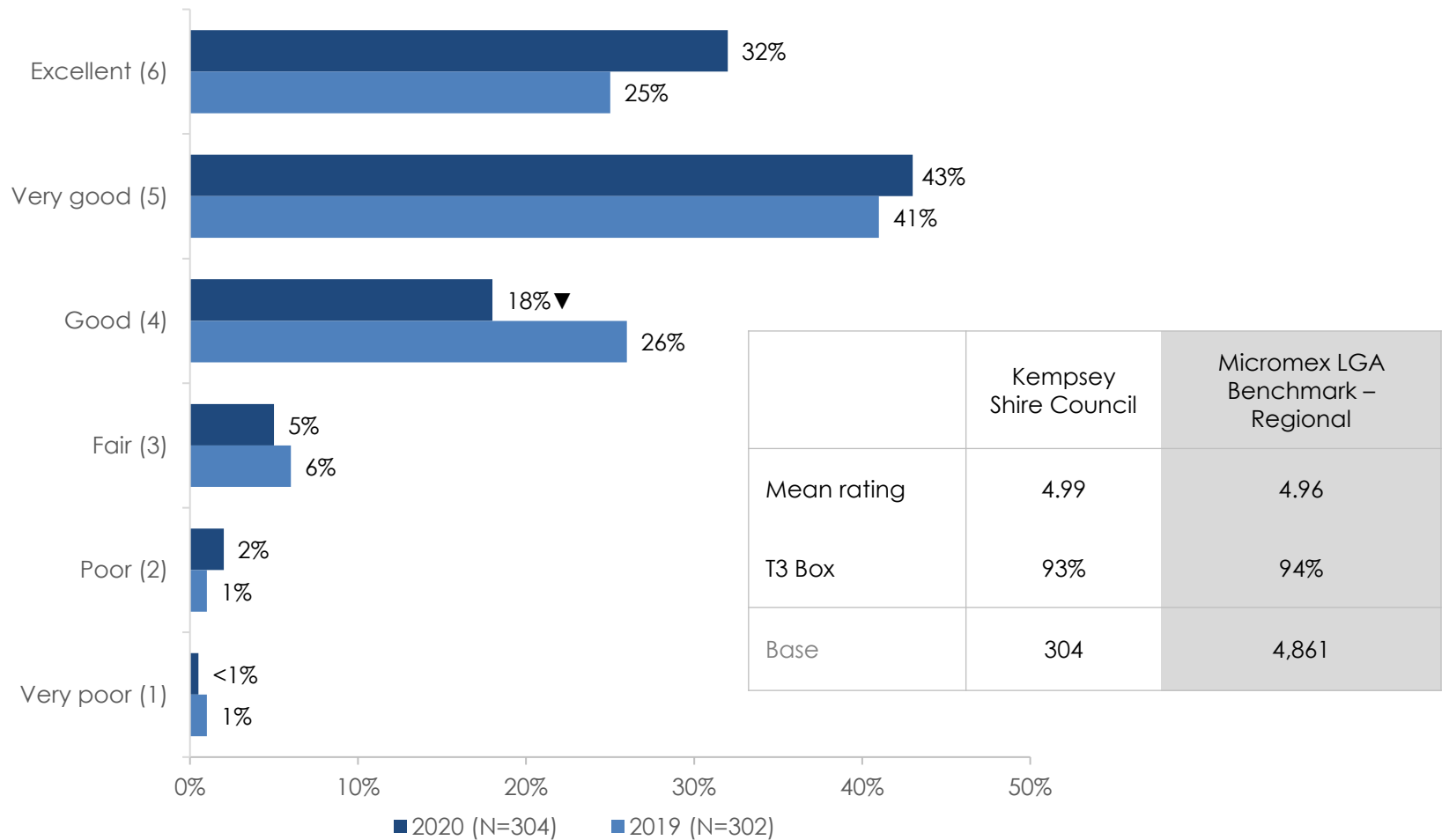
**KEMPSEY**  
Shire Council



**micromex**  
research

# Quality of Life

Q1C. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life you have living in the Kempsey Shire Council area?



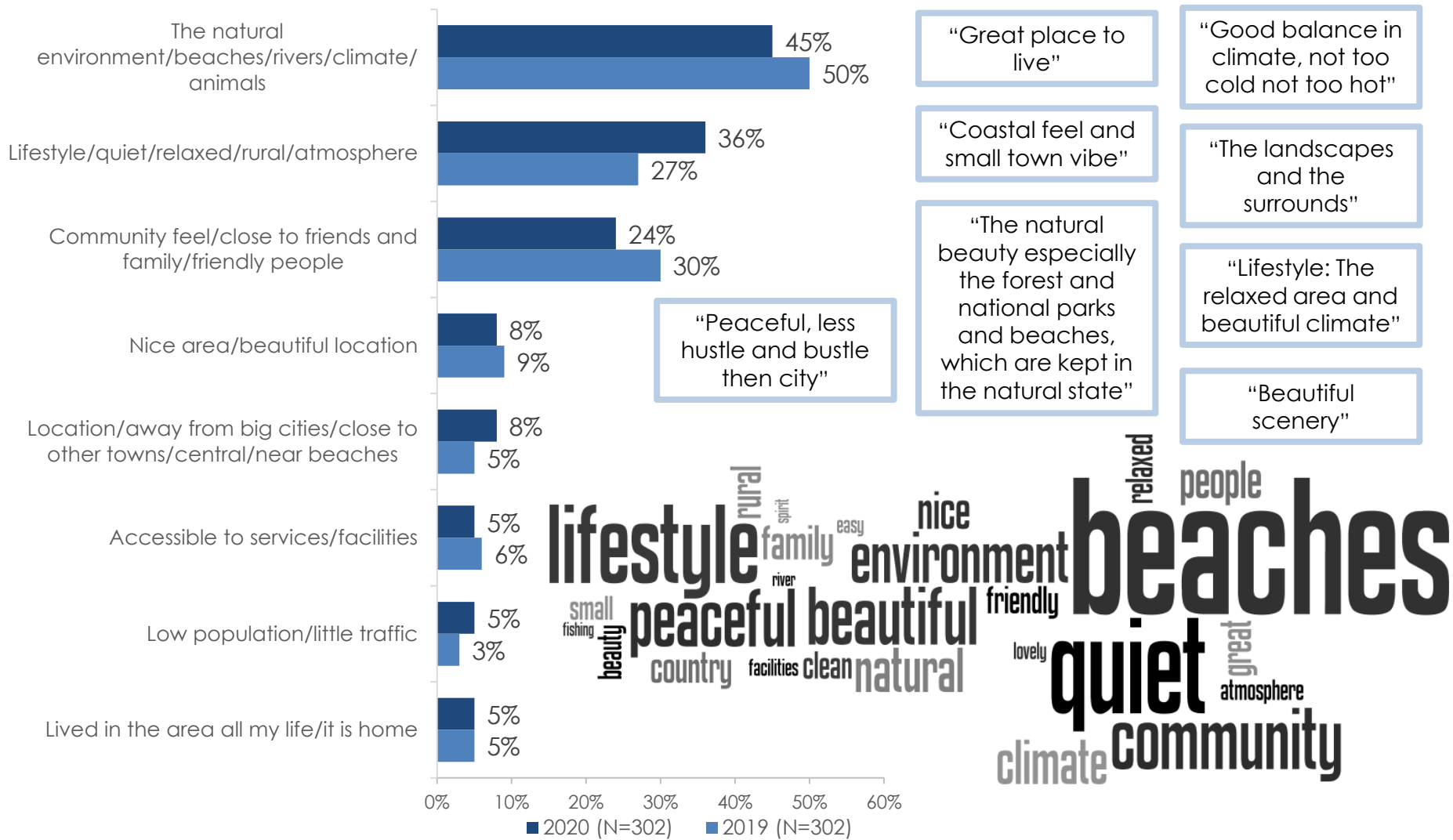
Scale: 1 = very poor, 6 = excellent

**Quality of life in the Kempsey Shire region is high, with 93% of residents rating their quality of life as good to excellent, and results are on par with our LGA regional benchmark, a very positive result considering the current COVID-19 pandemic and recent bushfires in the area.**



# Most Valued Aspect About Living in the Area

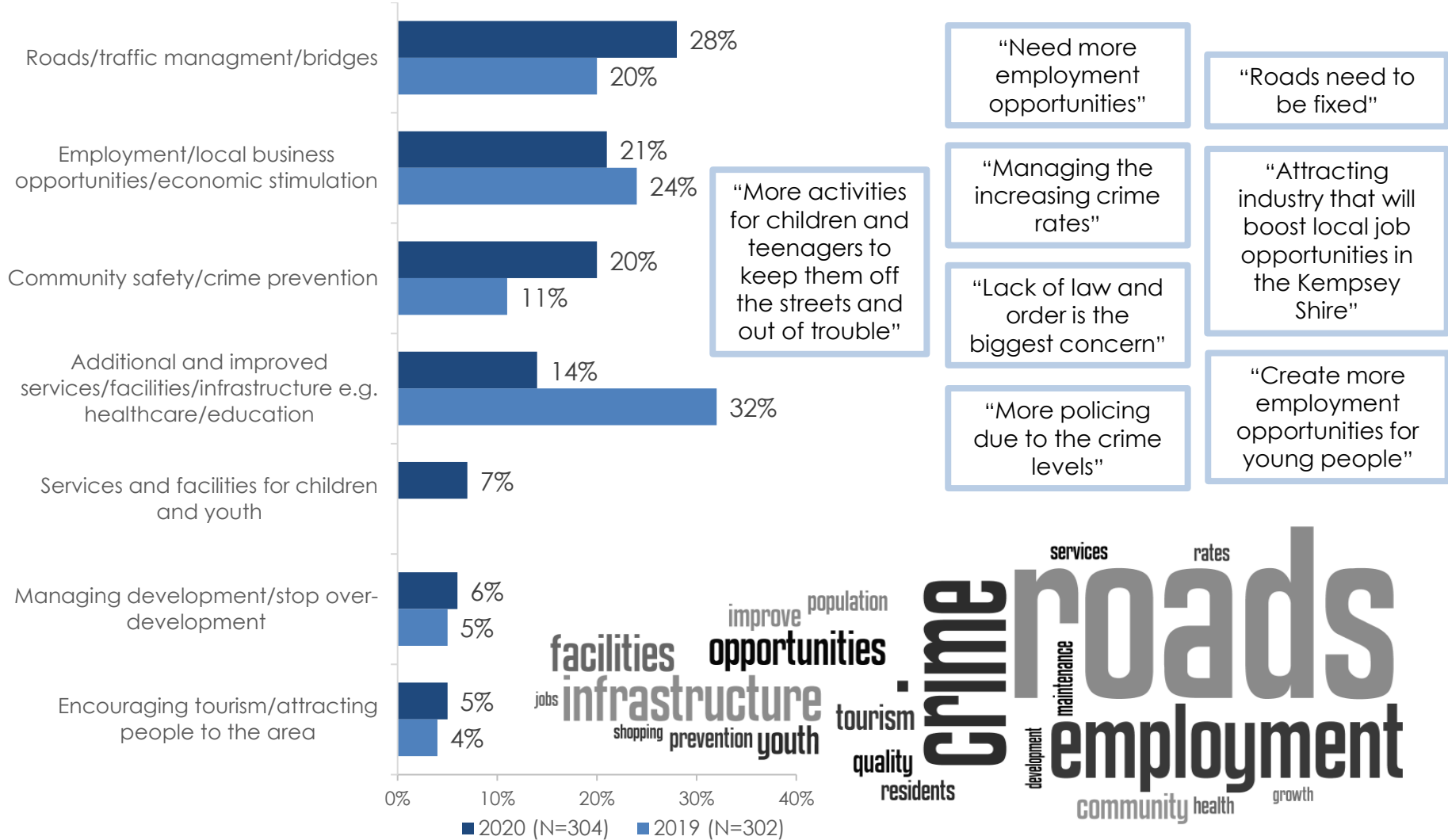
Q1. What do you value most about living in the Kempsey Shire Region?



The most valued aspect about living in the Kempsey Shire Region is 'the natural environment/beaches/rivers/climate/animals'.

# Priority Issues

Q1b. Thinking of the next 10 years plus, what do you believe will be the highest priority issues within Kempsey Shire area?



"Need more employment opportunities"

"Roads need to be fixed"

"Managing the increasing crime rates"

"Attracting industry that will boost local job opportunities in the Kempsey Shire"

"Lack of law and order is the biggest concern"

"Create more employment opportunities for young people"

"More activities for children and teenagers to keep them off the streets and out of trouble"

"More policing due to the crime levels"

**Residents believe that roads/traffic management/bridges will be the highest priority issues within the Kempsey Shire area over the next 10 years. Employment and business opportunities, as well as community safety and crime prevention were other common responses.**

# Awareness of the Community Vision

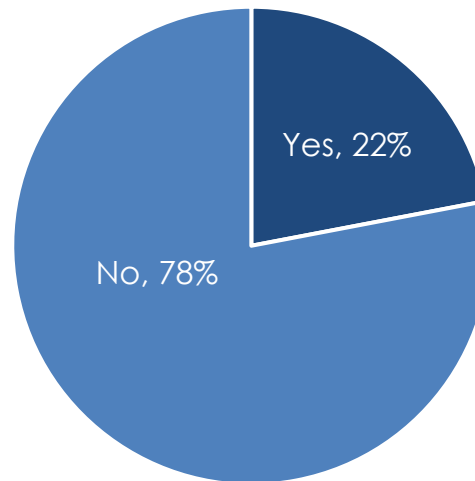
The community's vision as stated in Macleay Valley 2036 Community Strategic Plan June 2017 is:

*“We live in a community that provides opportunity to all, to prosper in an environment that supports well-being, connectedness and access to resources the community wants and needs”*

Q4a. Are you aware of this vision?

	Overall 2020	Overall 2019	Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Yes %	22%	29%	20%	23%	29%	15%	24%	24%
Base	304	302	152	152	29	93	59	123

	Ratepayer status		Time lived in the area		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Up to 10 years	11-20 years	More than 20 years
Yes %	23%	15%	32%	16%	22%
Base	266	38	38	59	207

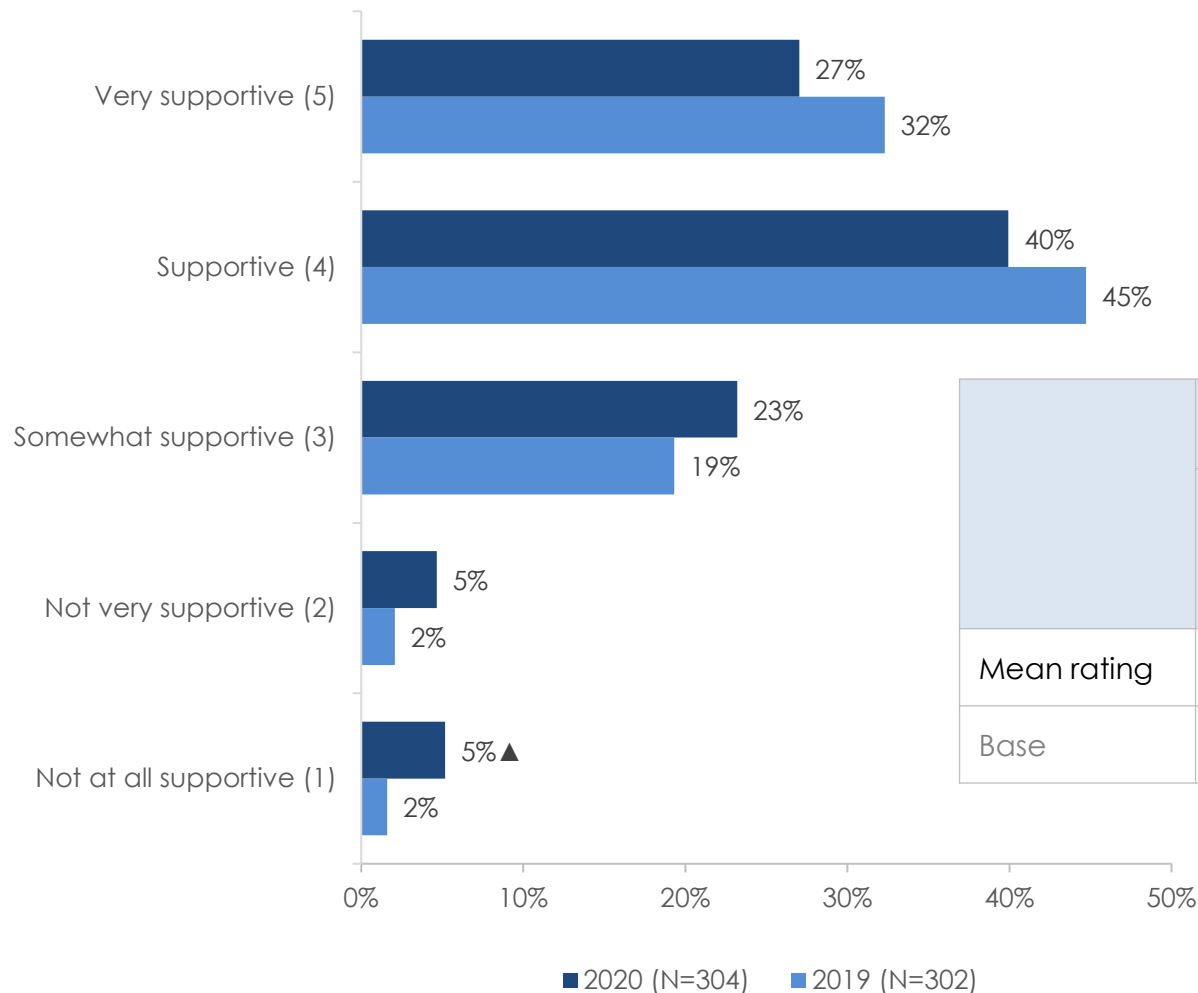


Base: N = 304

**Overall, 22% of residents are aware of the community vision, a slight decrease from 2019 (29%).**

# Support Towards the Community Vision

Q4b. How supportive are you of this community vision?



	Satisfaction with Council's Performance		
	Not at all satisfied/ not very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied/ satisfied
Mean rating	3.41▼	3.71	4.04▲
Base	66	103	135

▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of support (by group)



**90% of residents are at least somewhat supportive of the community vision, though level of support has decreased significantly compared to 2019.**

# Importance of CSP Strategies

## Higher Relative Importance strategies



Improving employment opportunities

**2020** **2019**  
**94%** **94%**



Promoting community connections in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour are prompted

**92%** **85%**



Working with various agencies in crime reduction

**92%** **91%**



Minimising risks to our community's health

**91%** **90%**



Providing infrastructure that enables active lifestyles

**90%** **89%**

## Lower Relative Importance strategies

**2020** **2019**  
**74%** **78%**

Creating a shared social view



**75%** **78%**

Encouraging community based cultural development



**79%** **83%**

Creating a range of community meeting places



**80%** **83%**

Minimising environmental and negative lifestyle impacts through planning controls



**82%** **80%**

Prompting education on accident minimisation



Note: percentages above represent T2B figures (important/very important)

**All strategies were rated high importance with only 3 attributes falling below a Top 2 Box (important/very important) rating of 80%, suggesting that the Community Strategic Plan aligns with community values.**



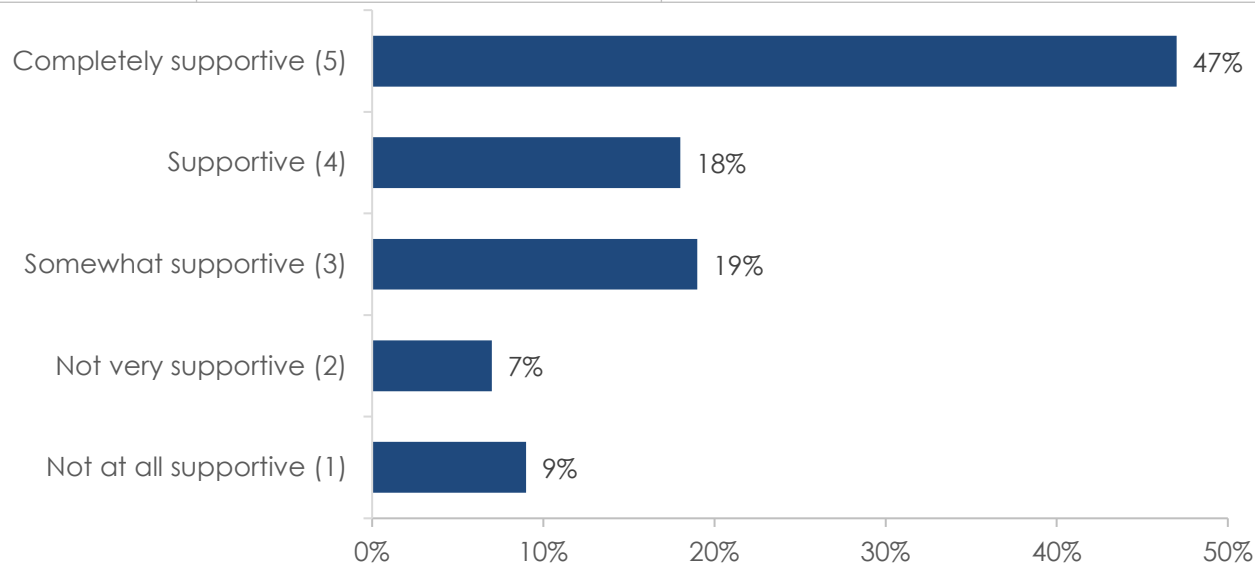
# Changing the Name of the Area

# Support for Keeping the Kempsey Shire Council Name

Q10a. How supportive are you of Kempsey Shire Council keeping the name of Kempsey Shire Council?

	Overall 2020	Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Mean rating	3.87	3.86	3.88	3.45	3.83	3.79	4.04
Base	304	152	152	29	93	59	123

	Ratepayer status		Time lived in the area		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Up to 10 years	11-20 years	More than 20 years
Mean rating	3.89	3.76	3.57	3.83	3.94
Base	266	38	38	59	207



Base: N=304

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = completely supportive

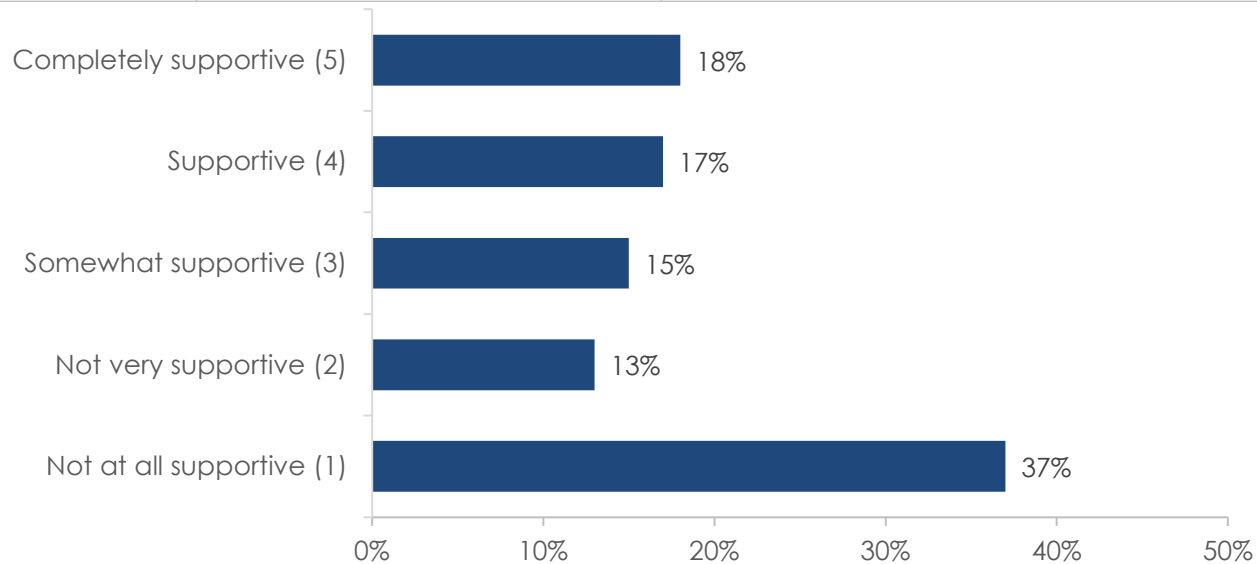
**Support for keeping the name of Kempsey Shire Council is high, with 84% of residents being at least somewhat supportive of this option. Level of support follows an upward trend with time lived in the area.**

# Support for Changing the Name to Macleay Valley Council

Q10b. How supportive are you of Kempsey Shire Council changing the name to Macleay Valley Council?

	Overall 2020	Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Mean rating	2.64	2.54	2.74	2.84	2.73	2.73	2.48
Base	304	152	152	29	93	59	123

	Ratepayer status		Time lived in the area		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Up to 10 years	11-20 years	More than 20 years
Mean rating	2.69	2.28	2.78	3.03	2.50
Base	266	38	38	59	207



Base: N=304

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = completely supportive

**Support for the option of changing the name to Macleay Valley Council is relatively low, with half of Kempsey Shire residents stating they are not very/not at all supportive.**

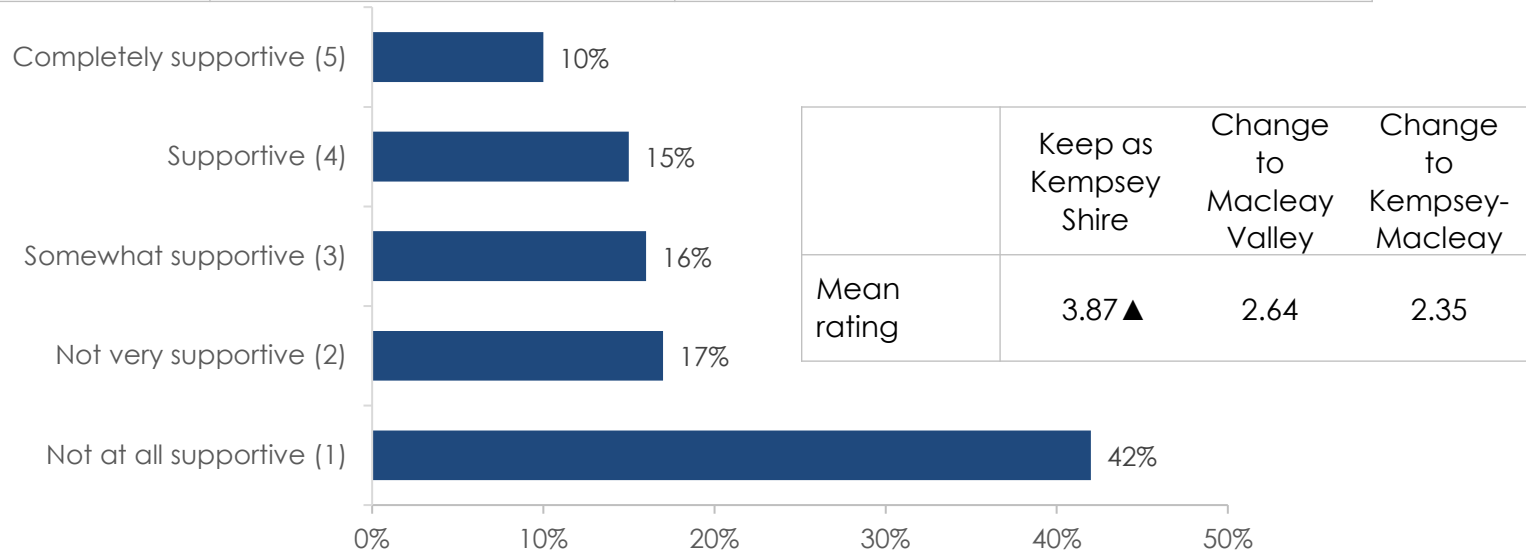


# Support for Changing the Name to Kempsey-Macleay Council

Q10c. How supportive are you of Kempsey Shire Council

	Overall 2020	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Mean rating	2.35	2.29	2.41	2.59	2.28	2.36	2.34
Base	304	152	152	29	93	59	123

	Ratepayer status		Time lived in the area		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Up to 10 years	11-20 years	More than 20 years
Mean rating	2.37	2.17	2.27	2.45	2.33
Base	266	38	38	59	207



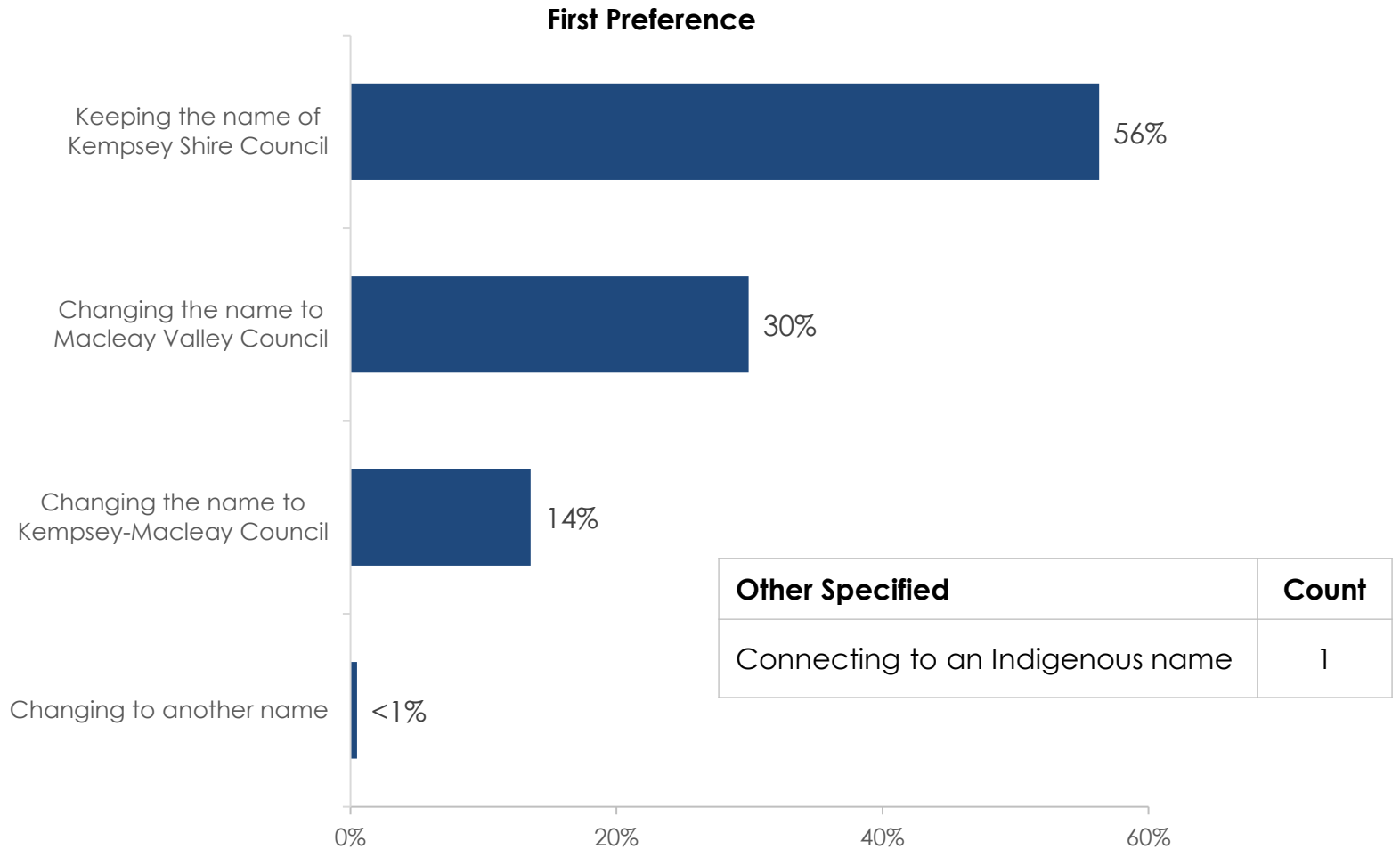
Base: N=304

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = completely supportive  
▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of support (by option)

**Of the 3 options, support is lowest for the option of changing the name to Kempsey-Macleay Council, with only 41% of residents suggesting they are at least somewhat supportive of this option.**

# Preferred Options

Q10d. Thinking about the options we have just discussed, which is your preferred option?



Base: N=304

**Overall, the most preferred option was to keep the name of Kempsey Shire Council, with 56% of residents suggesting this as their first preference.**

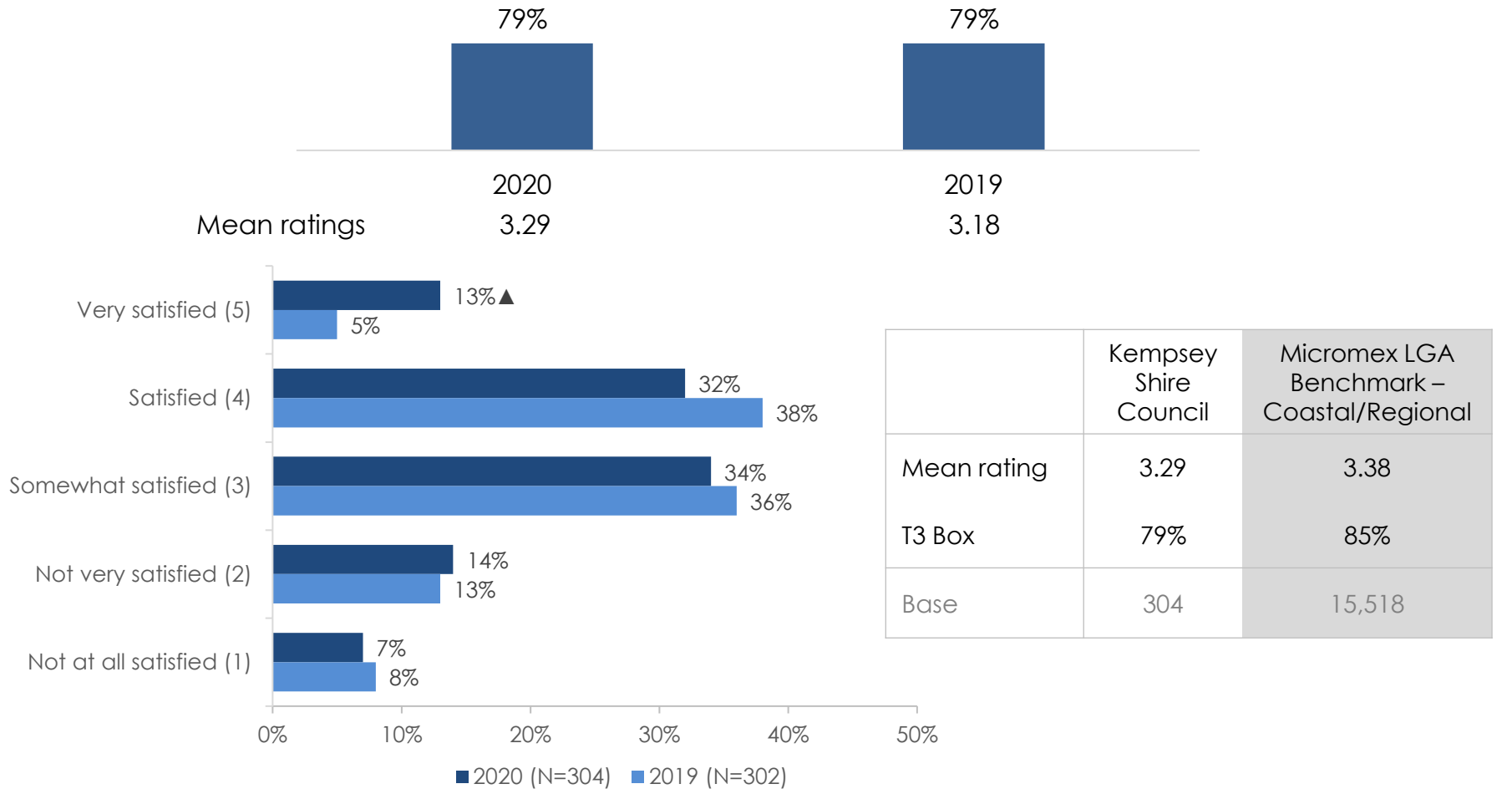


# Performance of Council

# Overview – Overall Satisfaction

Q3. Overall, for the last 12 months, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, not just on one or two issues, but across all responsibility areas?

## T3B Satisfaction Scores (Somewhat satisfied to Very satisfied)



Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of satisfaction (by group/compared to 2019)

**79% of Kempsey Shire residents are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's performance over the last 12 months. The mean rating has lifted positively since 2019.**

# Importance & Satisfaction – Key Trends

## Key Importance Trends

Compared to 2019 research, there was a significant **increase** in residents' levels of **importance** for 1 of the 35 comparable services/facilities provided by Council, being:

	2020	2019
Urban stormwater and drainage	3.75	3.41

There were no significant **declines** in **importance** across the 35 comparable services/facilities.

## Key Satisfaction Trends

Over the same period there has been a significant **increase** in resident **satisfaction** for 4 of the 35 comparable services/facilities provided by Council, specifically:

	2020	2019
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	3.92	3.69
Long-term planning for the LGA	3.22	2.89
Public toilets	3.14	2.70
Engaging the community in planning	2.99	2.75

There were no significant declines in satisfaction across the 35 comparable services/facilities.

Scale: 1 = not at all important, 5 = very important  
Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

**A core element of this community survey was the rating of 35 facilities/services in terms of Importance and Satisfaction. The above analysis identifies the key importance and satisfaction trends when compared to the 2019 research.**

# Importance & Satisfaction – Highest/Lowest Rated Services/Facilities

## Importance

The following services/facilities received the highest importance mean ratings:

High 5 Importance	Mean	T2 Box
Bridges	4.53	87%
Waste management	4.52	89%
Cleanliness of streets	4.51	89%
Long-term planning for the LGA	4.50	88%
Sealed roads	4.50	88%

The following services/facilities received the lowest importance mean ratings:

Low 5 Importance	Mean	T2 Box
Arts and culture	3.67	60%
Saleyards	3.73	62%
Airports	3.74	63%
Urban stormwater and drainage	3.75	64%
Development applications	3.83	64%

## Satisfaction

The following services/facilities received the highest satisfaction mean ratings:

High 5 Satisfaction	Mean	T3 Box
Libraries	4.31	95%
Food safety	4.18	95%
Companion animals	3.93	90%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	3.92	93%
Sporting facilities	3.89	91%

The following services/facilities received the lowest satisfaction mean ratings:

Low 5 Satisfaction	Mean	T3 Box
Council decision-making reflecting community opinion	2.73	54%
Airports	2.78	54%
Unsealed roads	2.79	60%
Sealed roads	2.83	63%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	2.83	57%

Scale: 1 = not at all important, 5 = very important

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

**3 of the top 5 most important services/facilities are a part of the 'infrastructure' service area.**

# Importance Compared to the Micromex LGA Benchmark

Service/Facility	Kempsey Shire T2 box importance score	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Coastal/Regional T2 box importance score	Variance
Provision of Council information to the community	84%	80%	4%
Cleanliness of streets	89%	86%	3%
Community events	73%	70%	3%
Bridges	87%	86%	1%
Appearance of Kempsey town centre and public spaces	83%	82%	1%
Economic development and tourism initiatives	79%	78%	1%
Flood management	80%	85%	-5%
Unsealed roads	68%	73%	-5%
Sealed roads	88%	94%	-6%
Footpaths and cycleways	76%	83%	-7%
Weed control	70%	78%	-8%
Development applications	64%	72%	-8%
Environmental monitoring and protection	75%	84%	-9%
Sewer services	72%	81%	-9%
Potable water	69%	89%	-20% ▼
Airports	63%	83%	-20% ▼
Urban stormwater and drainage	64%	85%	-21% ▼

**Note:** Benchmark differences are based on assumed variants of +/- 10%, with variants beyond +/- 10% more likely to be significant  
▲/▼ = positive/negative difference equal to/greater than 10% from Benchmark.

# Satisfaction Compared to the Micromex LGA Benchmark

Service/Facility	Kempsey Shire T3 box satisfaction score	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Coastal/regional T3 box satisfaction score	Variance
Economic development and tourism initiatives	82%	73%	9%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	93%	85%	8%
Appearance of Kempsey town centre and public spaces	89%	82%	7%
Saleyards	84%	78%	6%
Food safety	95%	90%	5%
Sealed roads	63%	58%	5%
Urban stormwater and drainage	82%	77%	5%
Sewer services	85%	91%	-6%
Environmental monitoring and protection	78%	84%	-6%
Potable water	84%	91%	-7%
Provision of Council information to the community	70%	78%	-8%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	81%	91%	-10% ▼
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	57%	67%	-10% ▼
Weed control	66%	77%	-11% ▼
Airports	54%	90%	-36% ▼

**Note:** Benchmark differences are based on assumed variants of +/- 10%, with variants beyond +/- 10% more likely to be significant  
▲/▼ = positive/negative difference equal to/greater than 10% from Benchmark



# Performance Gap Analysis

6 of the 9 services/facilities with the largest performance gaps are a part of the '**Corporate Services and Governance**' service area.

Ranking		Service/Facility	Importance T2 Box	Satisfaction T3 Box	Performance Gap (Importance – Satisfaction)
2019	2020				
1	1	Council decision-making reflecting community opinion	80%	54%	26%
3	2	Sealed roads	88%	63%	25%
6	3	Financial management	85%	65%	20%
4	4	Engaging the community in planning	85%	66%	19%
7	5	Long-term planning for the LGA	88%	74%	14%
5	6	Provision of Council information to the community	84%	70%	14%
8	7	Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	70%	57%	13%
2	8	Public toilets	81%	70%	11%
9	9	Airports	63%	54%	9%

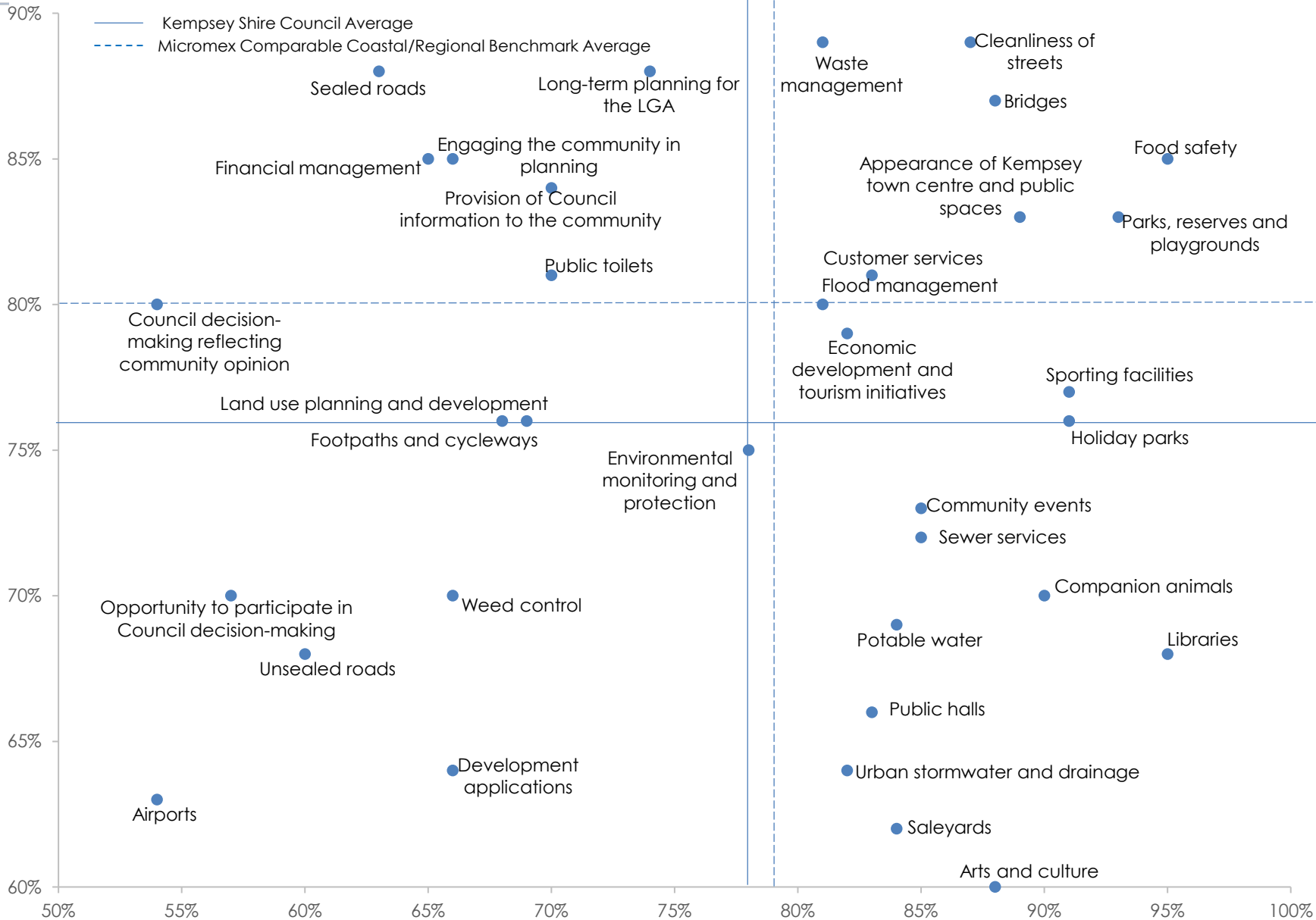


**Improve**  
Higher importance, lower satisfaction

**Maintain**  
Higher importance, higher satisfaction

— Kempsey Shire Council Average  
- - - Micromex Comparable Coastal/Regional Benchmark Average

Importance



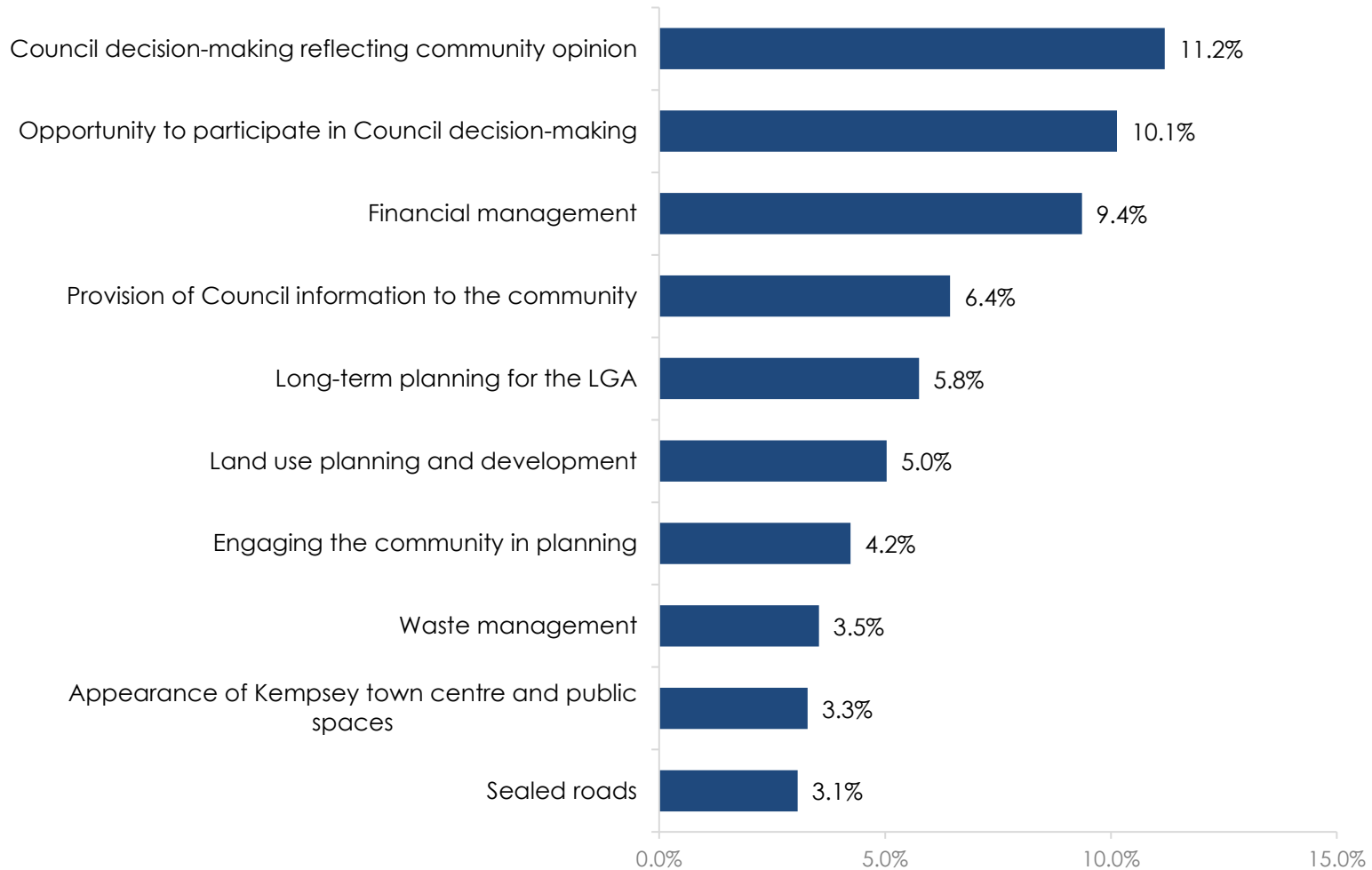
**Niche**  
Lower importance, lower satisfaction

Satisfaction

**Community**  
Lower importance, higher satisfaction

# Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction with Council

*Dependent variable: Q3. Overall, for the last 12 months, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, not just on one or two issues, but across all responsibility areas?*



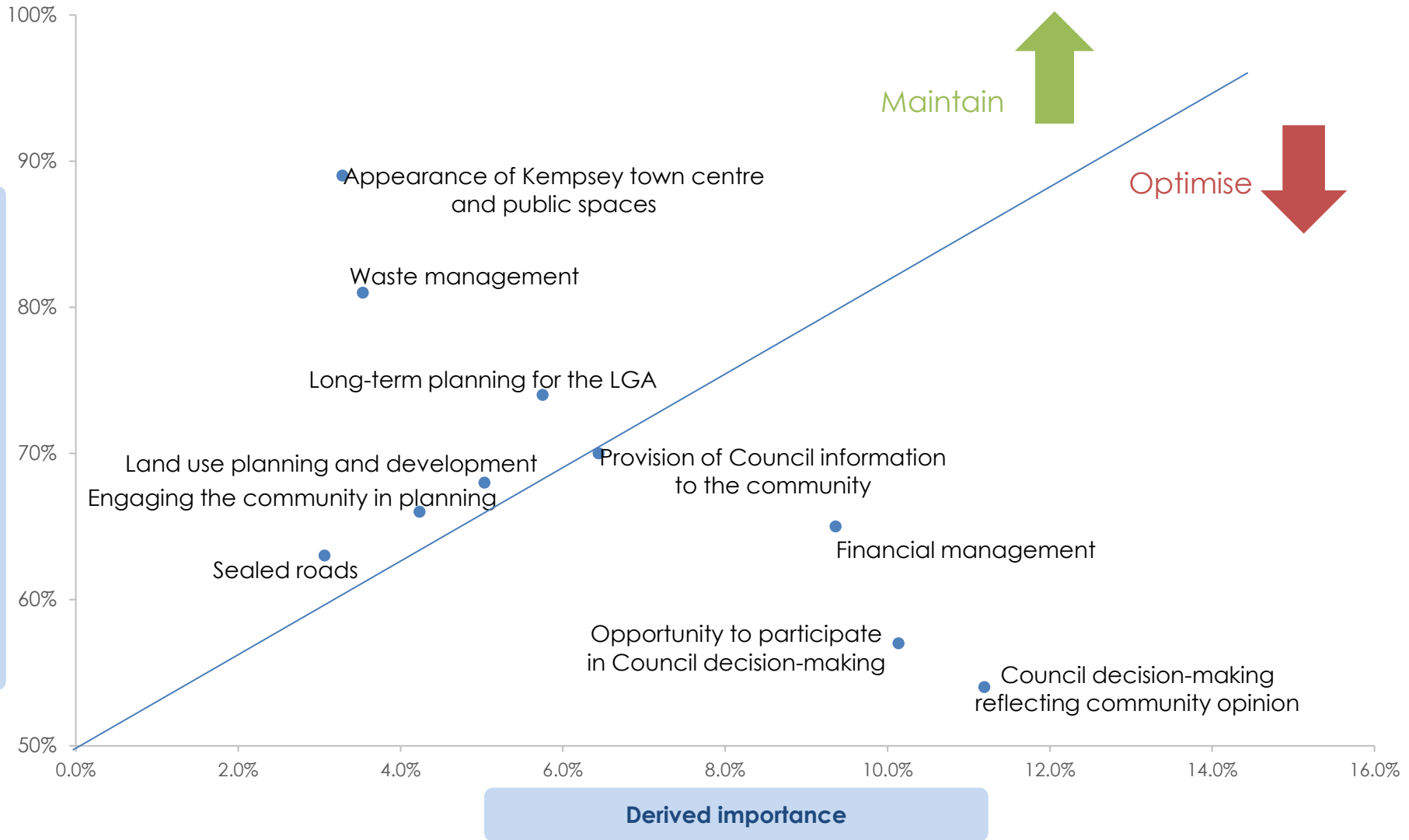
**These 10 services/facilities are the key community priorities and by addressing these, Kempsey Shire Council will improve overall community satisfaction. The score assigned to each area indicates the percentage of influence each attribute contributes to overall satisfaction with Council.**

# Key Drivers – Importance and Satisfaction Compared to Benchmarks

Measure	Importance T2B% (important/ very important)	Coastal/ Regional Benchmark T2B% (important/ very important)	Satisfaction T3B% (somewhat satisfied/ satisfied/very satisfied)	Coastal/ Regional Benchmark T3B% (somewhat satisfied/ satisfied/very satisfied)
Council decision-making reflecting community opinion	80%	84%	54%	58%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	70%	74%	<b>57%</b>	67%
Financial management	85%	87%	65%	67%
Provision of Council information to the community	84%	80%	<b>70%</b>	78%
Long-term planning for the LGA	88%	89%	74%	70%

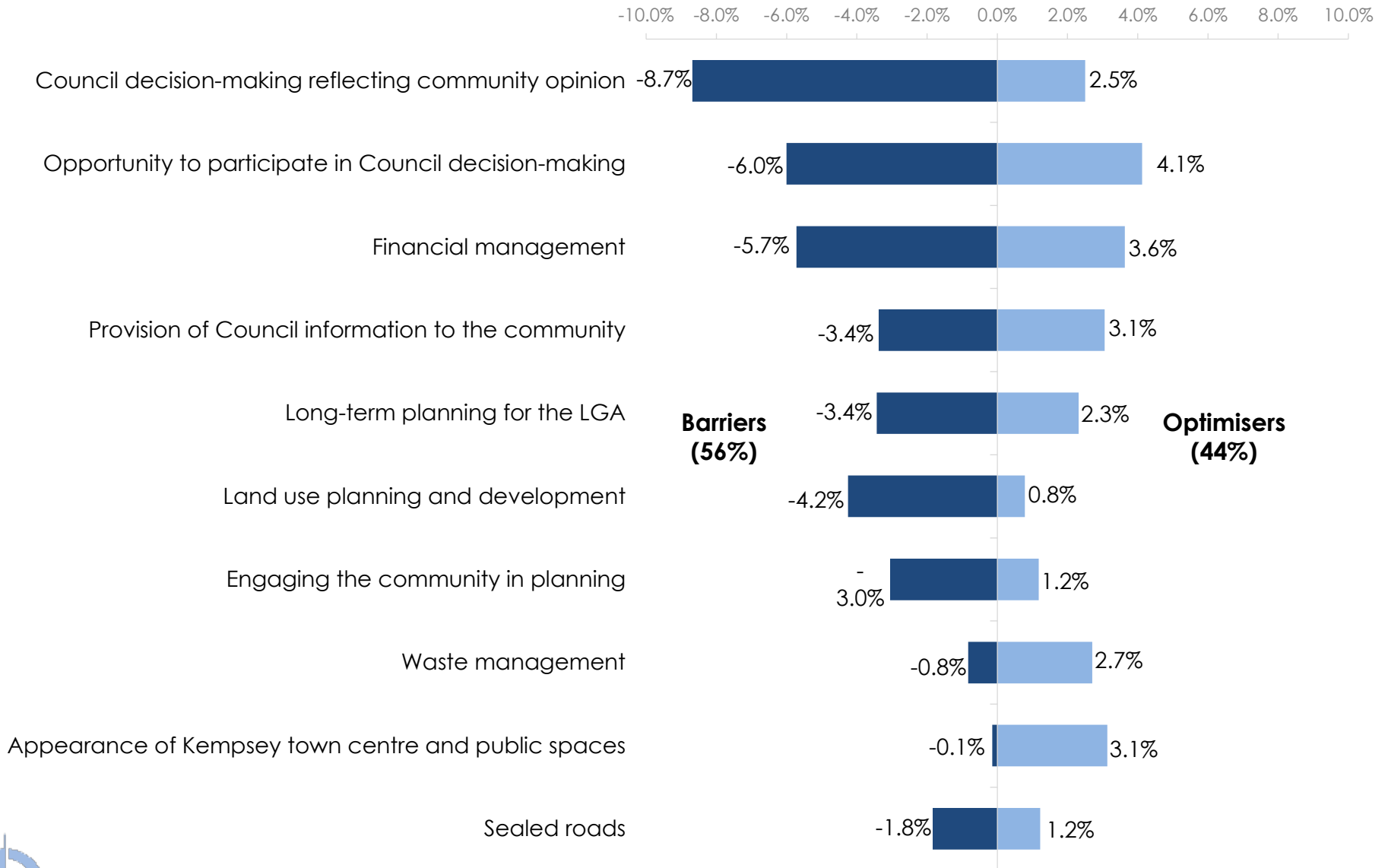


# Mapping Stated Satisfaction and Derived Importance Identifies the Community Priority Areas



The above chart looks at the relationship between stated satisfaction (top 3 box) and derived importance (Regression result) to identify the level of contribution of each measure.

# Key Contributors to Barriers/Optimisers



Different levers address the different levels of satisfaction across the community



# Key Findings



It is clear that Kempsey Shire Council residents' values are in line with the Macleay Valley 2036 community strategic plan.

- The top 5 most important measures within the CSP for Kempsey Shire residents in 2020 are:
  - Improving employment opportunities
  - Promoting community connections in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour are prompted
    - Working with various agencies in crime reduction
    - Minimising risks to our community's health
  - Providing infrastructure that enables active lifestyles

# Key Findings

## Council's Leadership and Communication



Council's level of communication with the community appears to be an opportunity area for Council:

- The '**Corporate Services and Governance**' service area contributes to almost 50% of overall satisfaction, and 6 measures within this category are key drivers of satisfaction.
- When asked if there is anything else Council should be considering, '**more communication/accountability from Council/listening to the community**' was top of mind for residents.
- Satisfaction with '**long term planning for the LGA**' and '**engaging the community in planning**' has increased significantly compared to 2019 – This also aligns with the Kempsey Shire Community Strategic Plan, with a core value being '**people are involved in their community**'.



# Key Findings



As is the case with most councils, upkeep and maintenance of roads and bridges is top of mind for Kempsey Shire residents.

- Residents also believe that roads/traffic management/bridges will be the highest priority issue within the area over the next 10 years.
- 'Sealed roads' is also a driver of overall satisfaction.
- 'Bridges' and 'sealed roads' are considered to be 2 of the top 5 most important services/facilities.

# Recommendations



## **Communication**

Continue to keep the community engaged in all areas of planning, and gauge community expectations in terms of the level/type/content/method of communication



## **The Local Road Network**

Explore expectations and inform the community about future road upgrades and changes



## **Community Strategic Plan**

Continue to promote the vision for the area to residents and beyond that the Shire is a healthy, safe, wealthy and connected region



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