



# Kempsey Shire Council

**Community Satisfaction Research – 2024**

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Date: October 2024



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## Research Objectives

Kempsey Shire Council commissioned Micromex Research to conduct a random telephone survey with residents living in the Kempsey Shire Council local government area (LGA).

### Objectives (Why?)

- Understand and identify community priorities for the Kempsey Shire Council LGA and desired level of investment for a range of service
- Identify the community's overall level of satisfaction with Council performance and importance of, and satisfaction with local services and facilities
- Explore areas for Council to generate more income and level of focus for infrastructure and facilities

### Sample (How?)

- Telephone survey (landline N=56 and mobile N=245) to N=301 residents
- We use a 5-point scale (e.g. 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied)
- Greatest margin of error +/- 5.6%

### Timing (When?)

- Implementation 10th – 17th October 2024

# Methodology and Sample



## Sample selection and error

A total of 301 resident interviews were completed. Respondents were selected by means of a computer based random selection process using Australian marketing lists, List Brokers and Leading Lists.

A sample size of 301 residents provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 5.6% at 95% confidence. This means that if the survey was replicated with a new universe of N=301 residents, 19 times out of 20 we would expect to see the same results, i.e. +/- 5.6%. For example, that an answer such as 'yes' (50%) to a question could vary from 44% to 56%.

## Interviewing

Interviewing was conducted in accordance with The Research Society Code of Professional Behaviour.

## Data analysis

The data within this report was analysed using Q Professional.

Within the report, **blue** and **red** font colours are used to identify statistically significant differences between groups, i.e., gender, age, etc.

Significance difference testing is a statistical test performed to evaluate the difference between two measurements. To identify the statistically significant differences between the groups of means, 'One-Way Anova tests' and 'Independent Samples T-tests' were used. 'Z Tests' were also used to determine statistically significant differences between column percentages.

Note: All percentages are calculated to the nearest whole number and therefore the total may not exactly equal 100%.

## Ratings questions

The Unipolar Scale of 1 to 5 was used in all rating questions, where 1 was the lowest importance or satisfaction and 5 the highest importance or satisfaction.

This scale allowed us to identify different levels of importance and satisfaction across respondents.

**Top 2 (T2) Box:** refers to the aggregate percentage (%) score of the top two scores for importance. (i.e. important & very important)

**Note:** Only respondents who rated services/facilities a 4 or 5 in importance were asked to rate their satisfaction with that service/facility.

**Top 3 (T3) Box:** refers to the aggregate percentage (%) score of the top three scores for satisfaction. (i.e. somewhat satisfied, satisfied & very satisfied)

We refer to T3 Box Satisfaction in order to express moderate to high levels of satisfaction in a non-discretionary category. We only report T2 Box Importance in order to provide differentiation and allow us to demonstrate the hierarchy of community priorities.

## Micromex LGA Benchmark

Micromex has developed Community Satisfaction Benchmarks using normative data from over 80 unique councils, more than 200 surveys and over 100,000 interviews since 2012.



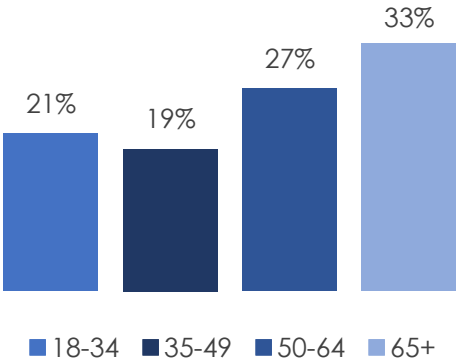
# Sample Profile

The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2021 ABS Census data for the Kempsey Shire Council LGA.

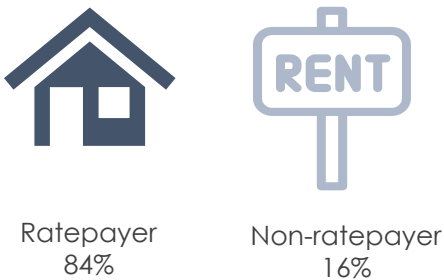
## Gender



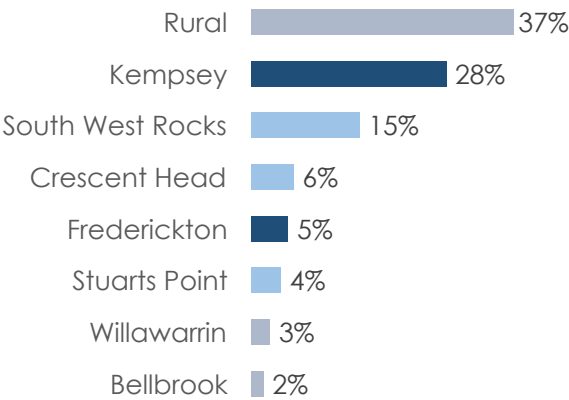
## Age



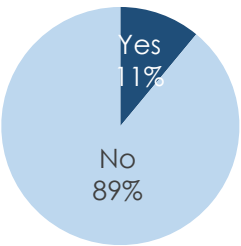
## Ratepayer status



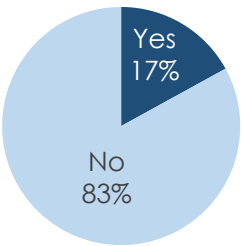
## Location (detail)



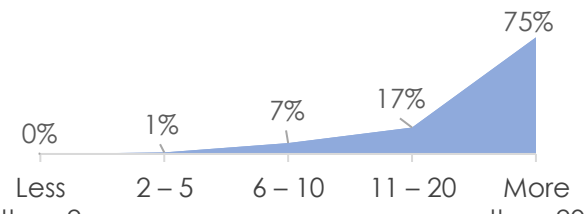
## Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?



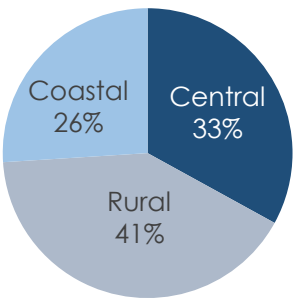
## Do you identify as living with disability?



## Time lived in the area

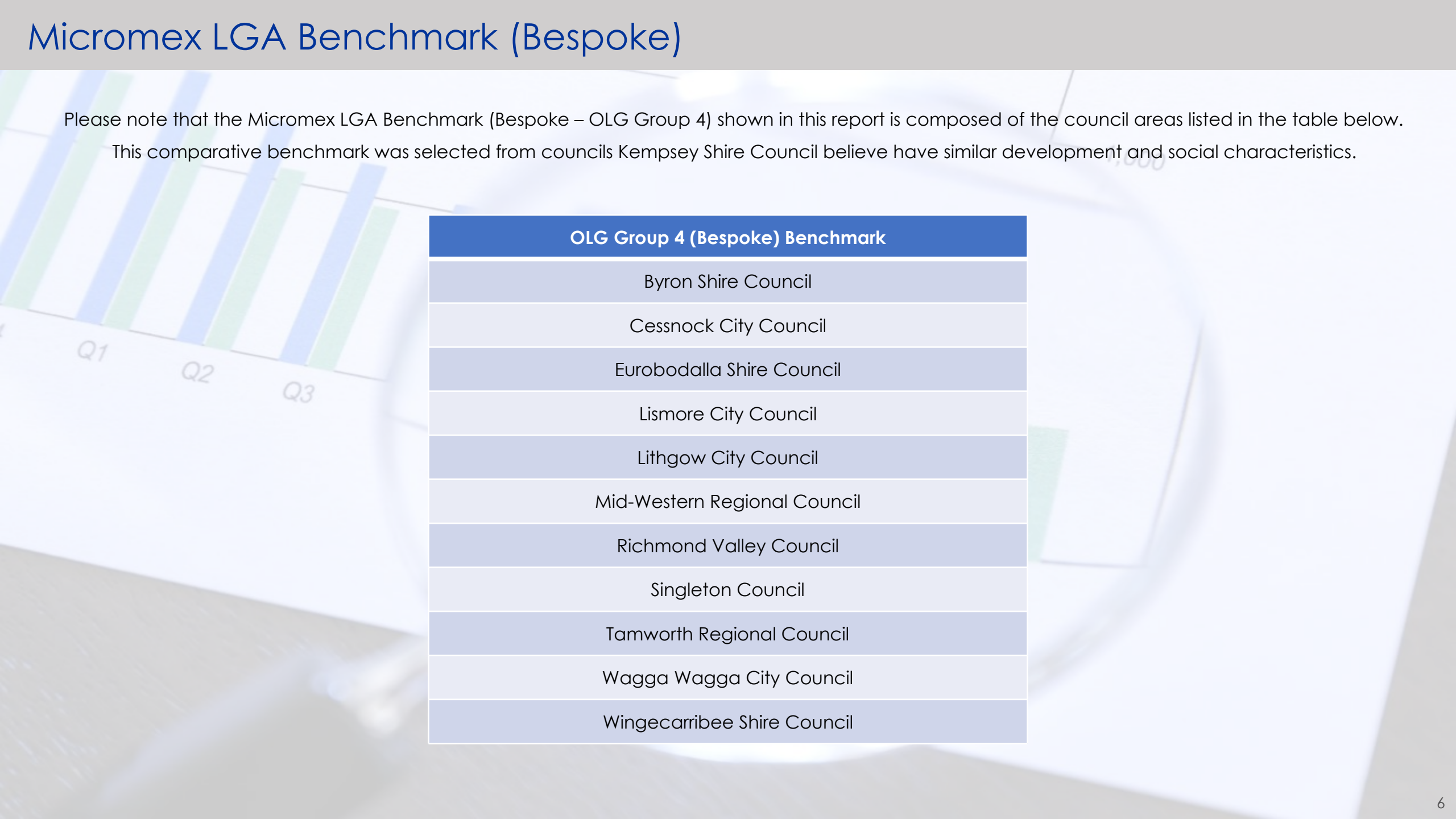


## Location (grouped)



# Micromex LGA Benchmark (Bespoke)

Please note that the Micromex LGA Benchmark (Bespoke – OLG Group 4) shown in this report is composed of the council areas listed in the table below. This comparative benchmark was selected from councils Kempsey Shire Council believe have similar development and social characteristics.



OLG Group 4 (Bespoke) Benchmark
Byron Shire Council
Cessnock City Council
Eurobodalla Shire Council
Lismore City Council
Lithgow City Council
Mid-Western Regional Council
Richmond Valley Council
Singleton Council
Tamworth Regional Council
Wagga Wagga City Council
Wingecarribee Shire Council



# Summary Findings



An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely Kempsey, showing a river flowing through the landscape, a residential area with houses and buildings, and green fields. In the background, there are blue mountains under a clear blue sky.

# Executive Summary

Overall, 89% of residents rate their quality of life living in the Kempsey Shire region as good to excellent. Residents value the natural environment, the community atmosphere, and the lifestyle offered by the region. Quality of life has dipped from the last measure. This is a trend we have observed across other LGAs in the last 12 months.

The key priorities for the next ten years tended to be expressed primarily as roads, traffic management, and infrastructure, services and facilities to support growth. Housing affordability and availability are a growing concern particularly for younger residents.

Satisfaction with Council's performance has declined, with 66% of residents expressing moderate satisfaction - down from previous years and below benchmarks. Possibly impacted by the recent Special Rate Variation. Additionally in 2024 Micromex has observed category wide drops in relation to overall satisfaction for most LGAs.

Areas of strength include libraries, sporting facilities and arts and culture; however, satisfaction scores for development applications, financial management, and roads, generally, are relatively low.

Residents would prefer that Council focus on maintaining existing infrastructure rather than investing in new assets, with 61% favouring the maintenance of current assets.

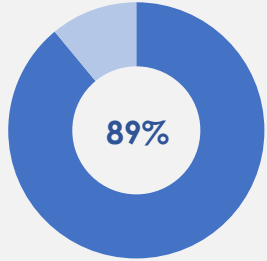
On the whole, the community want to see the same or greater resourcing allocated across most service areas. There is really little appetite for service reduction.

Key drivers of satisfaction are around the communication of financial management, customer service and community engagement/involvement.



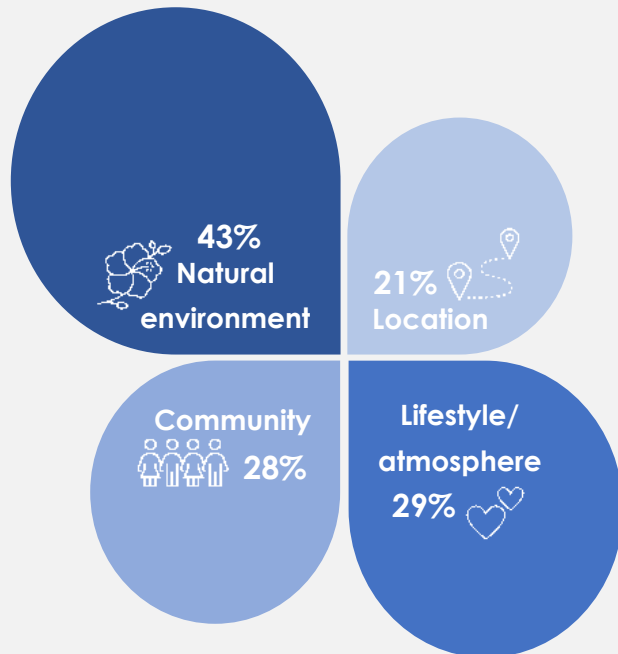
# Summary Stats

## Living in the area:

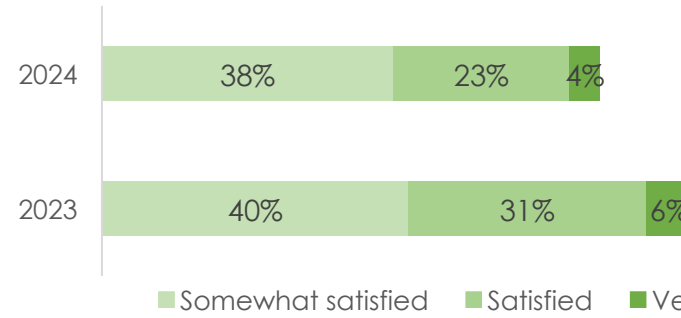


89% of residents rate their quality of life living in the Kempsey Shire region as 'good' to 'excellent'.

Residents strongly value the natural environment within the region, the lifestyle the area provides and the sense of community:



## Overall satisfaction



66% of residents at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months – a softening from 2023 (77%).

Satisfaction is lowest overall for DA assessments, financial management, airports and roads.

## What is driving satisfaction this year?



Financial management



Customer service



Opportunity to participate in decision-making

## Largest gaps in performance:

Financial management

Roads (sealed and unsealed)

Engaging with and informing the community

DA assessments and public toilets

## Areas to focus on

Residents would like to see more money invested into roads, community engagement, business support and communications and less into the Slim Dusty Centre.

Financial management is a key focus area. There is opportunity for further communications and transparency on financial decisions/outcomes and a focus on efficient budgeting/spending. There is also opportunity to further enhance the DA process and clarify community expectations regarding planning and service delivery/infrastructure maintenance to accommodate growth.

# Satisfaction Scorecard

12 of the 34 services/ facilities achieved a satisfaction score of 80% or more (see green-shaded cells), whilst 8 services/ facilities were below 60% (see red-shaded cells).

Core strengths tend to fall within community partnerships and water/ sewer services whilst there is room for improvement within corporate services and governance and roads.



**Good performance**  
(T3B sat score ≥80%)



**Monitor**  
(T3B sat score 60%-79%)



**Needs improvement**  
(T3B sat score <60%)

Water and Sewer Services	Strategic and Asset Planning Services	Commercial Business Services
Water supply	Environmental monitoring and protection	Waste management (garbage and recycling)
Urban stormwater and drainage	Flood management	Business growth support (economic development /tourism)
Sewer services	Weed control	Airports
Land use planning and development		
Development and Compliance Services	Infrastructure Delivery Services	Slim Dusty Centre
Development applications assessment	Bridges	Swimming pools
Pet adoption and registration	Appearance of town centres and public spaces	Cemeteries
Food safety inspections	Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	
Community Partnerships	Sporting facilities	Corporate Services and Governance
Libraries	Parks, reserves and playgrounds	Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making
Customer services	Footpaths and cycleways	Provision of Council information to the community
Arts and culture	Sealed roads	Long-term planning for the LGA
Community events	Public toilets	Engaging the community in planning
	Unsealed roads	Financial management





## Section One

# Living in the Kempsey Shire Region

This section explores resident's quality of life, what they value about living in the area and priority issues for the next 10 years.

# Summary: Living in the Kempsey LGA



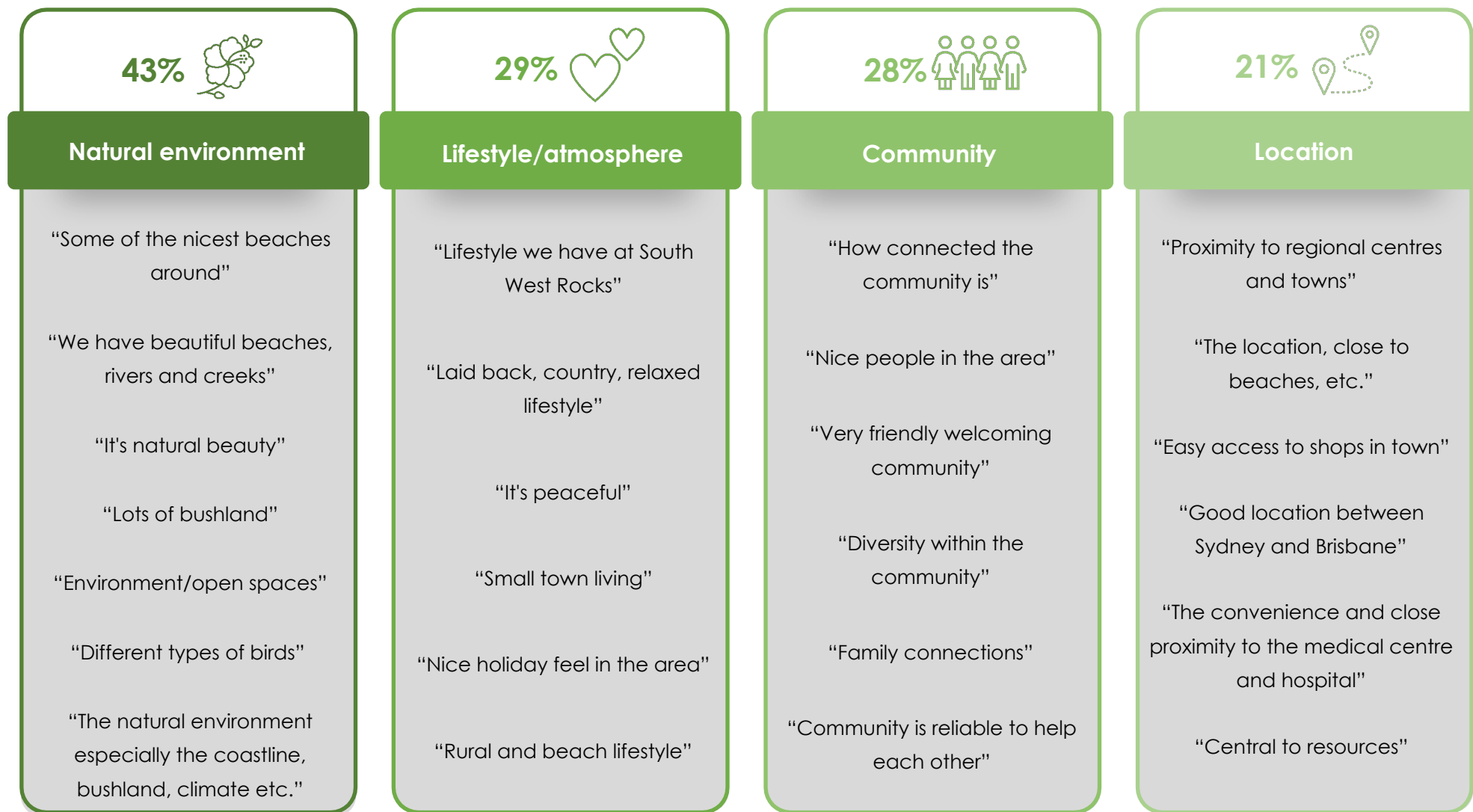
- Residents strongly value the natural environment within the region, the lifestyle the area provides and the sense of community
- 89% of residents rate their quality of life living in the Kempsey Shire region as 'good' to 'excellent', with 69% stating their quality of life has remained the same or improved over the past few years.
- Priority areas for the next 10 years include:
  - Roads, traffic management and bridges (37%)
  - More/ improved services, facilities and infrastructure to cater for growth (25%)
  - Affordability and availability of housing/ lower rates/ lower cost of living (24%)
  - Community safety/ crime prevention/ social cohesion (23%)
- Residents are keeping up-to-date on local news and community events via word of mouth (90%), social media (73%), community associations (52%), local TV (52%) and local radio (51%).

# Most Valued Aspects Living in the Kempsey Shire Region

When asked about the most valued aspects of the Kempsey Shire Region, 43% of residents mentioned aspects of the natural environment (including beaches, climate and animals).

Further, 29% stated they value the lifestyle and atmosphere of the area and 28% value the community feel.

A complete list with comparison to 2023 results is shown on the following slide.



Base: N = 301

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



# Most Valued Aspects Living in the Kempsey Shire Region

The environment, lifestyle, sense of community and location remain the most valued aspects of living in the Kempsey Shire Region.

Compared to 2023 significantly more residents stated they value the natural environment aspects and less comments on the physical location.

Valued aspects	2024 (N=301)	2023 (N=301)
The natural environment/beaches/rivers/climate/animals	43%	31%
Lifestyle/quiet/relaxed/rural/atmosphere	29%	24%
Community feel/close to friends and family/friendly people	28%	25%
Location e.g. proximity to other areas, services and natural environment	21%	31%
Lived in the area all my life/it is home	9%	6%
Nice/beautiful area	8%	9%
Low density living/low population and congestion/large blocks	7%	6%
Recreational opportunities e.g. sporting opportunities, fishing, activities, etc.	5%	4%
Quality/variety of services/facilities/infrastructure	4%	6%
Affordability of the area e.g. houses, going out, etc.	2%	1%
Cleanliness of the area	1%	0%
Council is doing a good job	1%	0%
Work opportunities	1%	2%
It is a safe area	0%	0%
Other	2%	3%
Don't know/nothing	2%	4%

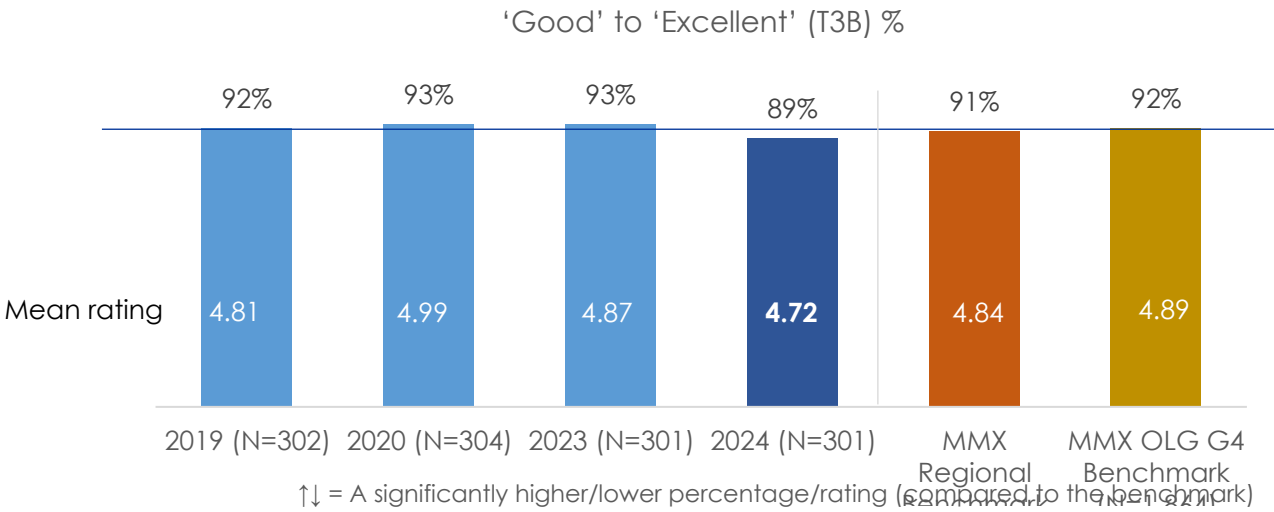
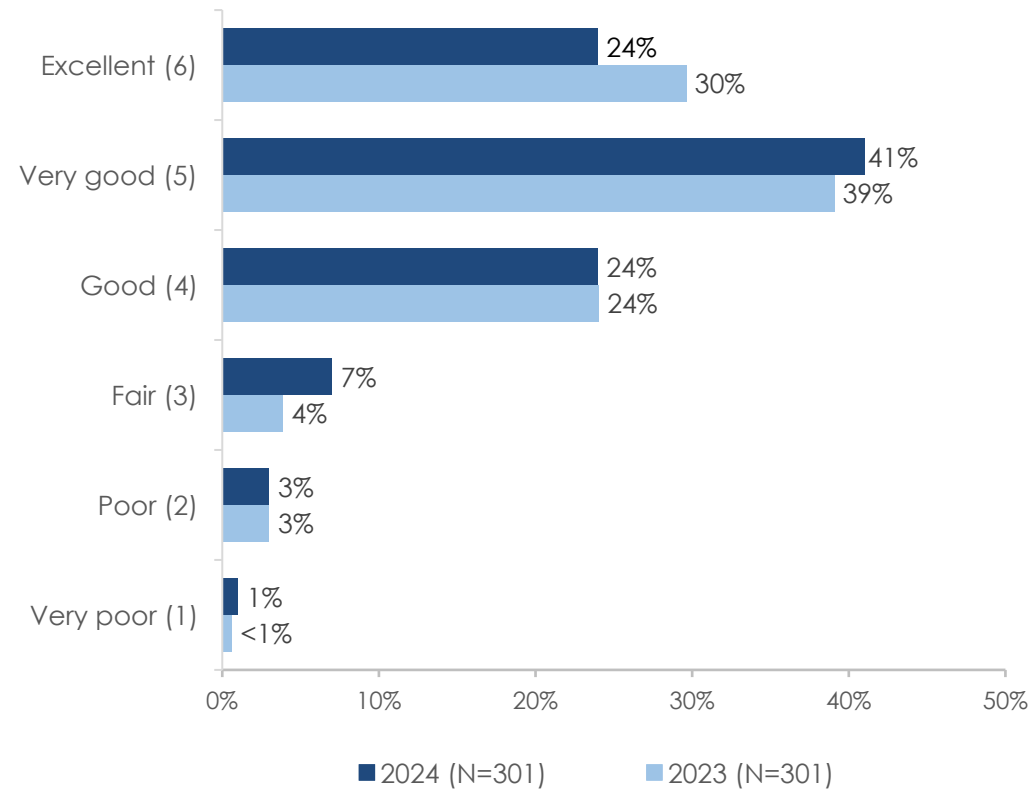
Note: Slight amendments have been made to the code frame this year. Last year's data has been updated to reflect changes

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

# Quality of Life

Overall, 89% of residents rate their quality of life living in the Kempsey Shire Council area as good to excellent. Although a slight softening in results, quality of life remains in line with previous years and the Regional/OLG Group 4 Benchmarks.

Slightly higher quality of life ratings for older residents and those living in Coastal areas.



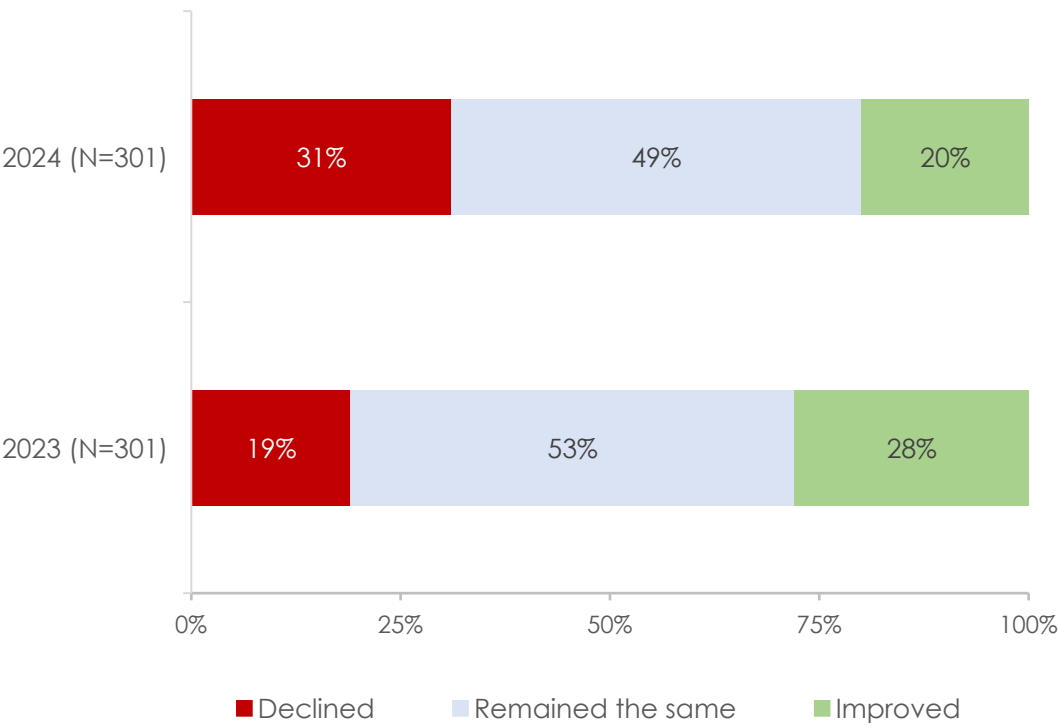
	Overall 2024	Overall 2023	Gender		Age			
			Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Top 3 Box %	89%	93%	90%	87%	84%	84%	90%	92%
Mean rating	4.72	4.87	4.80	4.64	4.66	4.66	4.78	4.75
Base	301	301	151	150	63	57	82	99

	Ratepayer status		Location		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Top 3 Box %	89%	85%	88%	88%	90%
Mean rating	4.75	4.60	4.72	4.77	4.65
Base	253	48	99	125	77

# Change in Quality of Life

20% of residents stated they have experienced an improvement in their overall quality of life in the past few years, while 31% stated it has declined, this is a negative shift from 2023.

Rural residents are significantly more likely to state their quality of life has improved over the past few years, while Coastal residents are significantly less likely to state it has improved.



	Overall 2024	Overall 2023	Gender		Age			
			Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Improved	20%	28%	22%	18%	16%	28%	19%	19%
Remained the same	49%	53%	48%	51%	53%	37%	56%	50%
Declined	31%	19%	30%	32%	31%	35%	25%	32%
Base	301	301	151	150	63	57	82	99

	Ratepayer status		Location		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Improved	21%	16%	21%	26%	7%
Remained the same	49%	52%	50%	44%	57%
Declined	30%	32%	28%	30%	35%
Base	253	48	99	125	77

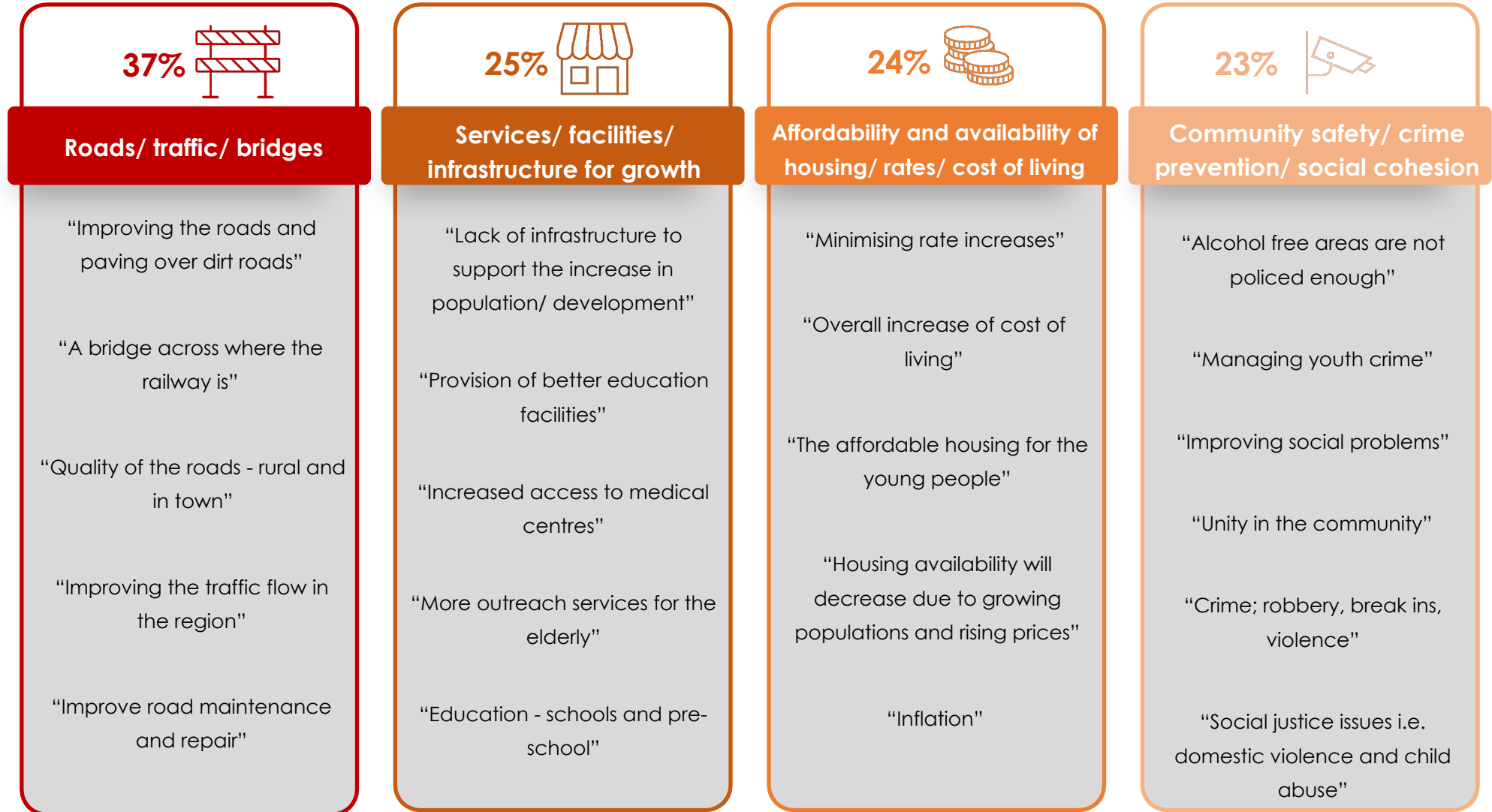


# Highest Priority Issues

37% would like to see roads, traffic and bridges prioritised over the next 10 years.

Other priority areas include catering for growth by ensuring adequate services, facilities and infrastructure in the area (25%), addressing rising costs (24%) (more likely younger residents) and community safety issues (23%).

A complete list with comparison to 2023 results is shown on the following slide.



Base: N = 301

Q2. Thinking of the next 10 years plus, what do you believe will be the highest priority issues within Kempsey Shire area?

# Highest Priority Issues

Residents continue to prioritise roads, catering for growth and community safety.

Compared to 2023 significantly more residents prioritised affordable living.

Priority issues	2024 (N=301)	2023 (N=301)
Roads/traffic management/bridges	37%	41%
More/improved services/facilities/infrastructure to cater for growth e.g. healthcare, education, aged, youth, parking, etc.	25%	26%
Affordability and availability of housing/lower rates/lower cost of living	24%	11%
Community safety/crime prevention/social cohesion	23%	20%
Employment/local business opportunities/economic stimulation	12%	13%
Improve management of Council e.g. communication/transparency, financial management	12%	10%
Town planning e.g. managing development/population growth	10%	11%
Recreational opportunities e.g. events, activities, sports, etc.	8%	9%
Improved essential services e.g. water, sewerage, waste	7%	6%
Protection and management of the natural environment/climate change	5%	6%
Natural disaster management/prevention e.g. bushfires, flood mitigation, stormwater drainage	5%	7%
More shopping facilities/better variety	4%	3%
More/improved footpaths, cycleways, kerb and guttering	4%	1%
Maintenance/cleanliness of the area	3%	2%
Maintaining the character of the area	2%	0%
More/improved public transport	1%	2%
Internet/mobile phone service	1%	<1%
More inclusion of/connections with the Aboriginal community	1%	1%
Tourism management	1%	3%
Animal control	1%	<1%
Poverty/homelessness	<1%	1%
Other	3%	3%
Don't know/nothing	1%	4%

Note: Slight amendments have been made to the code frame this year. Last year's data has been updated to reflect changes

Q2. Thinking of the next 10 years plus, what do you believe will be the highest priority issues within Kempsey Shire area?

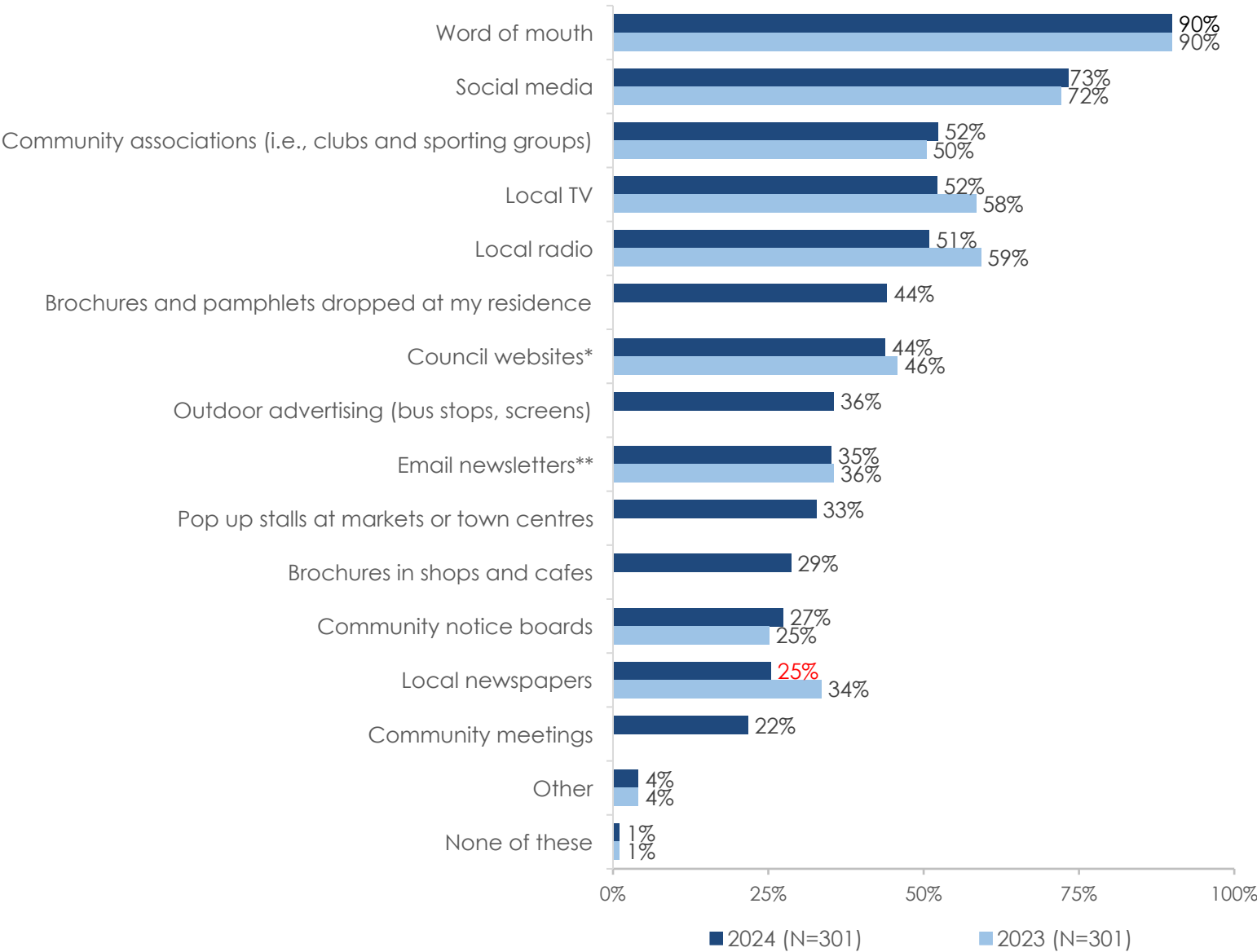
A significantly higher/lower percentage (by year)  
Please see Appendix A for results by age and location 18

# Sources of Information for Local News and Community Activities

Word of mouth and social media continue to be the most common methods of sourcing/ finding out information about local news and community activities.

Approximately half of residents also sourced information through community associations, local tv and local radio.

Non-ratepayers are significantly more likely to source information through local newspapers and females are more likely to get their information from social media, pop up stalls and brochures in shops and cafes.



\*Compared to 'online websites' in 2023  
\*\*Compared to 'community newsletters & emails' in 2023  
Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics





## Section Two

# Summary of Council Performance and Services/Facilities

This section explores overall satisfaction with Council and summarises the importance and satisfaction ratings for the 34 services and facilities. In this section we explore trends to past research and comparative norms.

# Summary: Performance of Council

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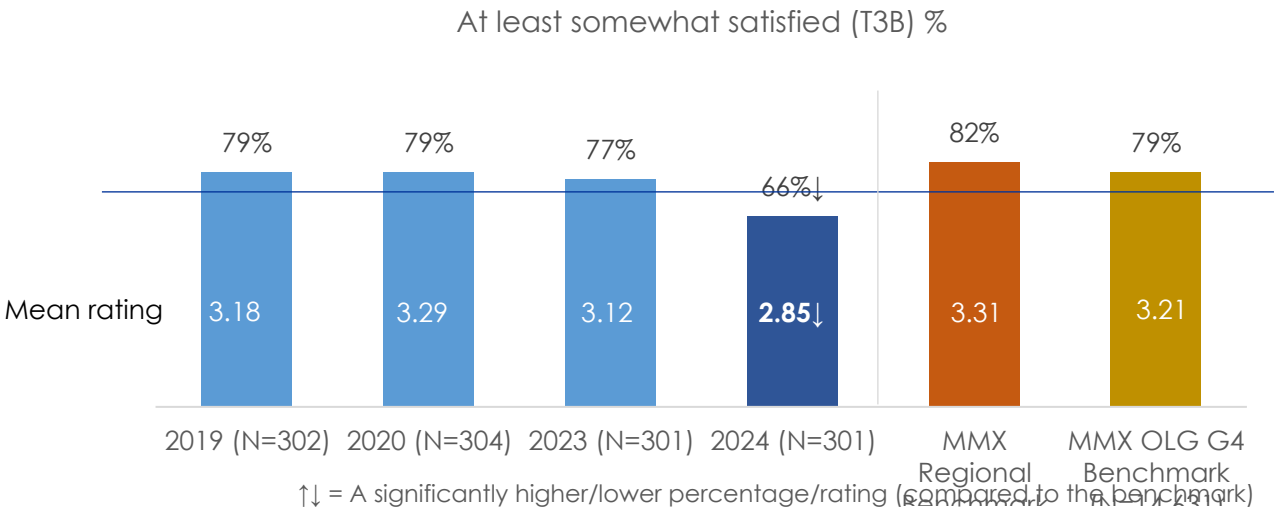
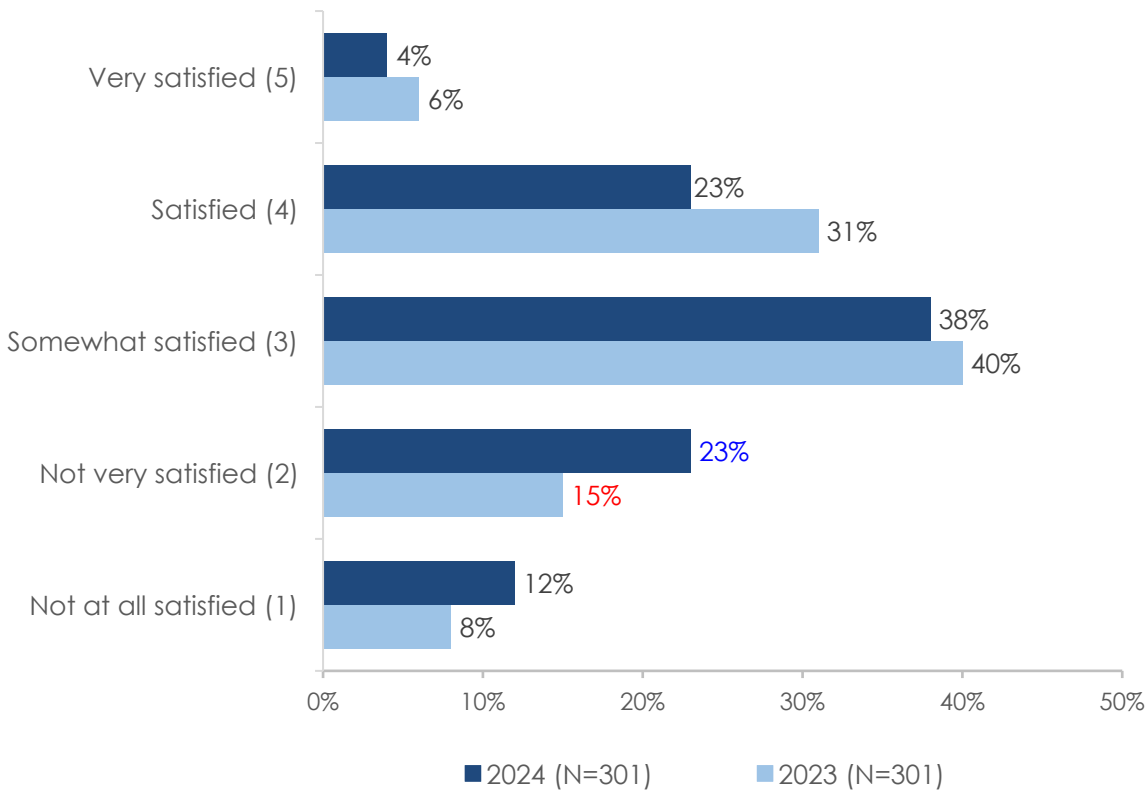


- 66% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council in the last 12 months, which is significantly lower than 2023 (-11%) the Regional Benchmark (-16%) and the OLG Group 4 Benchmark (-13%)
  - Largest drivers of overall satisfaction revolve around governance, working with the community and roads.
- Residents placed the highest level of importance on waste management and financial management, are most satisfied with libraries and least satisfied with development applications assessments and financial management.
- Largest gaps in performance (importance score minus satisfaction score):
  - Financial management (48% gap)
  - Sealed roads (40% gap)
  - Engaging the community in planning (31% gap).
- Compared to the Benchmarks, areas that are less satisfactory to Kempsey Shire LGA residents include:
  - Airports
  - Financial management, and
  - Development applications assessment.

# Overall Satisfaction

Results continue to soften with 66% of residents at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months.

Satisfaction levels are below the Micromex Regional Benchmark (16% lower) and the OLG Group 4 Benchmark (13% lower). Older residents are significantly more satisfied with Council's performance.



	Overall 2024	Overall 2023	Gender		Age			
			Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Top 3 Box %	66%	77%	61%	70%	62%	50%	67%	76%
Mean rating	2.85	3.12	2.76	2.95	2.78	2.51	2.77	3.16
Base	301	301	151	150	63	57	82	99

	Ratepayer status		Location		
	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Top 3 Box %	65%	68%	69%	62%	67%
Mean rating	2.81	3.09	2.96	2.73	2.90
Base	253	48	99	125	77

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied  
A significantly higher/lower level of satisfaction (by year/group)



# Council Services and Facilities

A major component of the 2024 Community Survey was to assess perceived Importance of, and Satisfaction with 34 Council-provided services and facilities – the equivalent of 68 separate questions!

We have utilised the following techniques to summarise and analyse these 68 questions:

Highlights and Comparison with 2023 Results



Comparison with Micromex Benchmarks



Performance Gap Analysis



Quadrant Analysis



Regression Analysis (i.e.: determine the services/  
facilities that drive overall satisfaction with Council)



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

A core element of this community survey was the rating of 34 facilities/services in terms of Importance and Satisfaction. The analysis below identifies the highest and lowest rated services/facilities in terms of importance and satisfaction. Financial management and sealed roads were in the top 5 highest rated in importance and bottom 5 in terms of level of satisfaction.

## Importance

The following services/facilities received the highest T2 box importance ratings:

Higher importance	T2 Box	Mean
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	93%	4.65
Financial management	92%	4.66
Bridges	91%	4.63
Sealed roads	90%	4.54
Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	4.55

The following services/facilities received the lowest T2 box importance ratings:

Lower importance	T2 Box	Mean
Slim Dusty Centre	27%	2.56
Pet adoption and registration	52%	3.42
Arts and culture	53%	3.45
Airports	60%	3.62
Libraries	65%	3.86

T2B = important/very important  
Scale: 1 = not at all important, 5 = very important

## Satisfaction

The following services/facilities received the highest T3 box satisfaction ratings:

Higher satisfaction	T3 Box	Mean
Libraries	94%	4.33
Food safety inspections	92%	3.85
Cemeteries	90%	3.93
Pet adoption and registration	88%	3.79
Sporting facilities	88%	3.75
Community events	88%	3.67
Arts and culture	88%	3.63

The following services/facilities received the lowest T3 box satisfaction ratings:

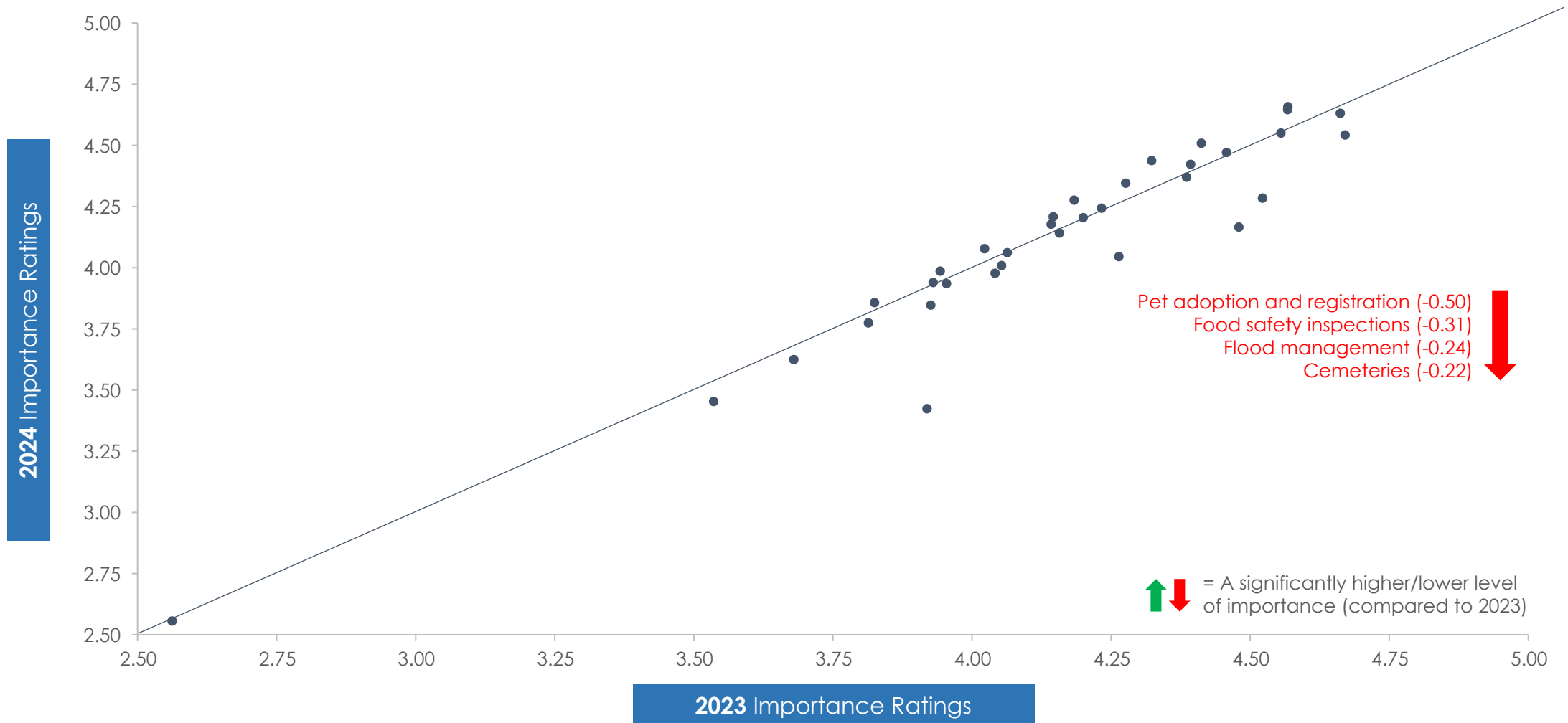
Lower satisfaction	T3 Box	Mean
Development applications assessment	43%	2.38
Financial management	44%	2.34
Airports	49%	2.53
Sealed roads	50%	2.53
Unsealed roads	53%	2.63

T3B = somewhat satisfied/satisfied/very satisfied  
Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

# Services and Facilities – Importance: Comparison by Year

The below chart compares the mean importance ratings for 2024 vs 2023.

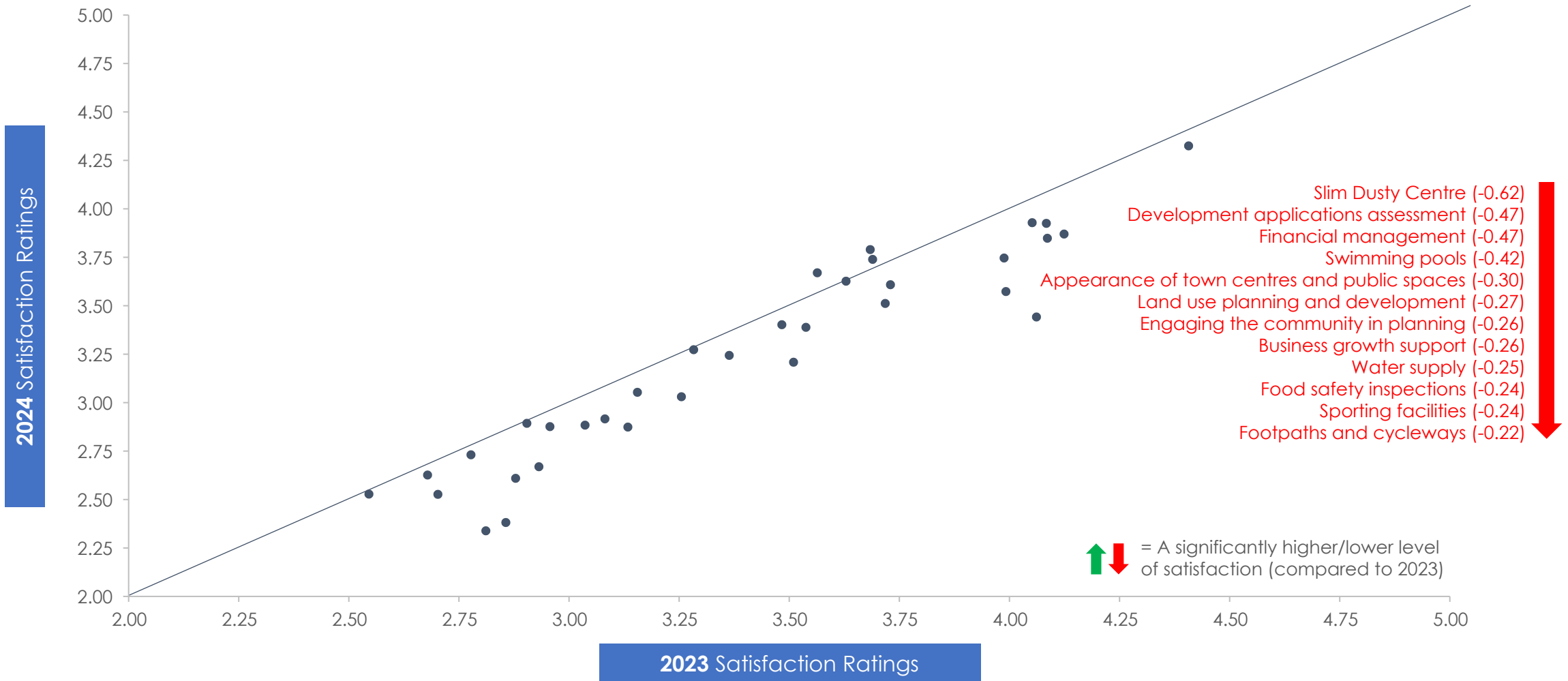
Importance significantly decreased for 4 of the 34 comparable services and facilities, there were no significant increases in importance.



# Services and Facilities – Satisfaction: Comparison by Year

The below chart compares the mean satisfaction ratings for 2024 vs 2023.

Satisfaction significantly decreased for 12 of the 34 comparable services and facilities, there were no significant increases in satisfaction.

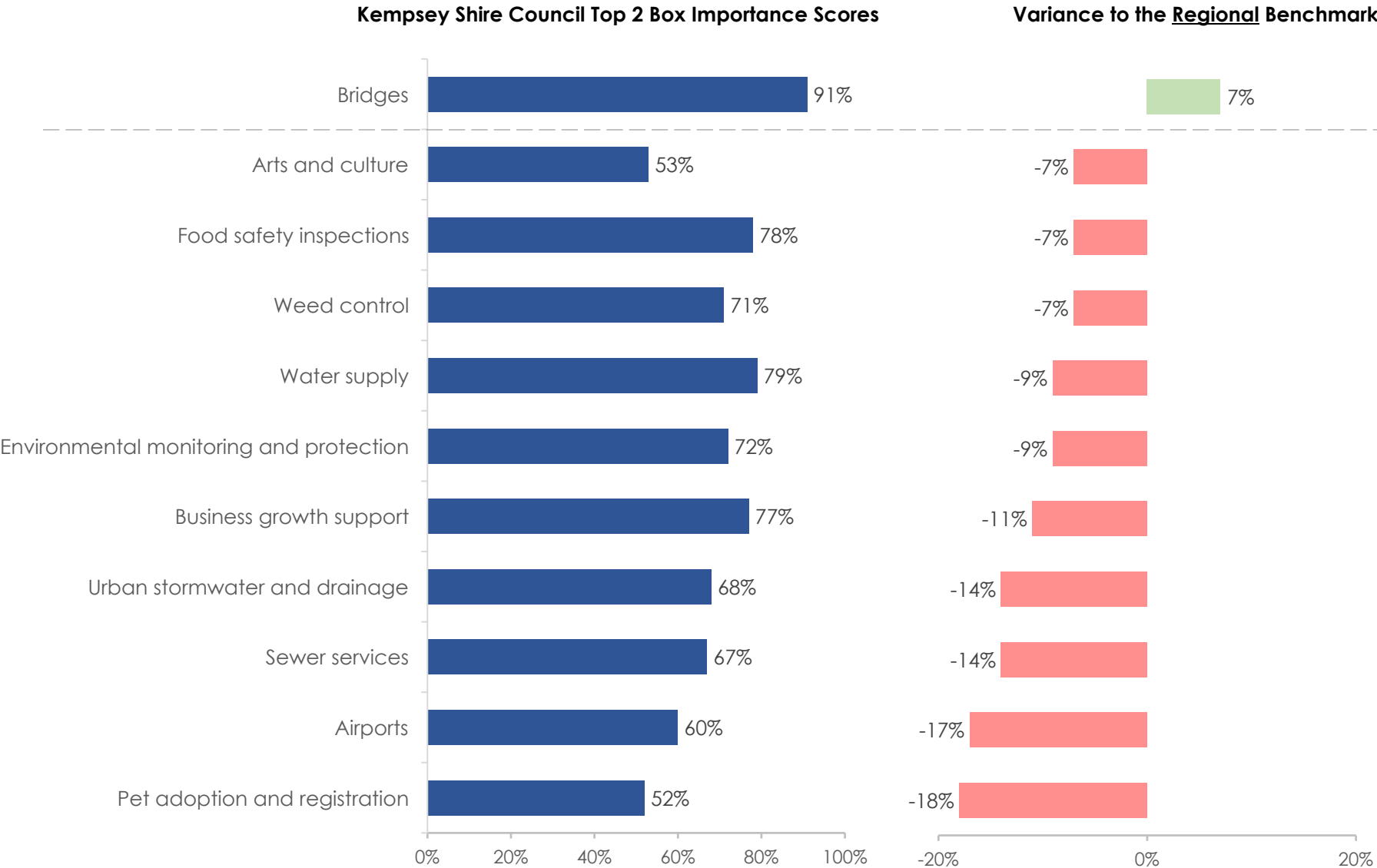




# Summary Importance Comparison to the Micromex Regional Benchmark

The chart to the right shows the variance between Kempsey Shire Council top 2 box importance scores and the Micromex Regional Benchmark.

Services/facilities shown in the chart highlight larger positive and negative gaps.



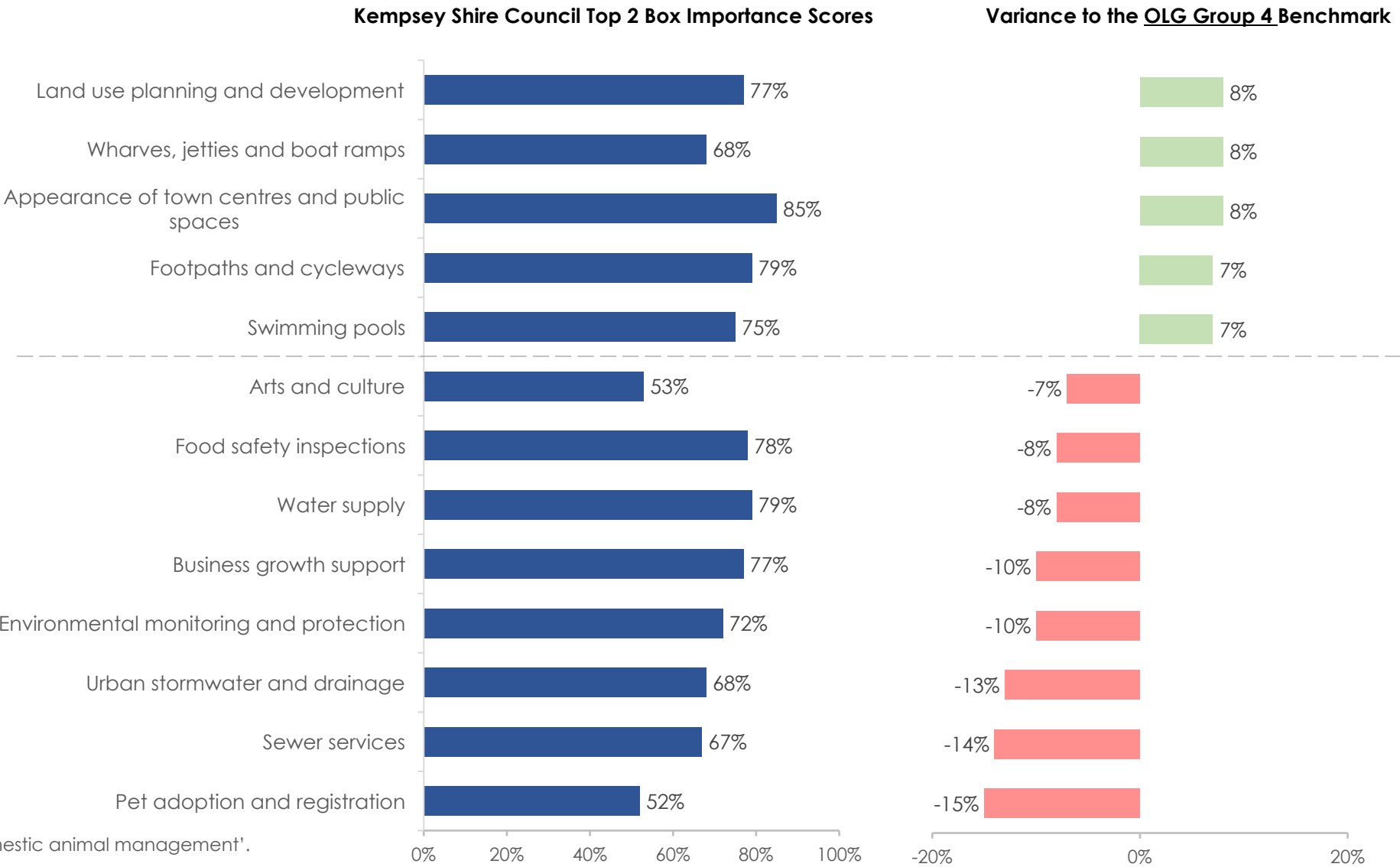
Note: 'Pet adoption and registration' is compared to 'domestic animal management'

Note: Only services/facilities with a variance of +/- 7% to the Benchmark have been shown above. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed list  
Top 2 box = important/very important

# Summary Importance Comparison to the Micromex OLG G4 Benchmark

Repeating the previous slide, the chart to the right now shows the variance between Kempsey Shire Council top 2 box importance scores and the Micromex OLG Group 4 Benchmark.

Services/facilities shown in the chart highlight larger positive and negative gaps. Results are like the comparison against the Regional Benchmark; however, some areas are considered slightly more important to Kempsey residents than the OLG Benchmark.



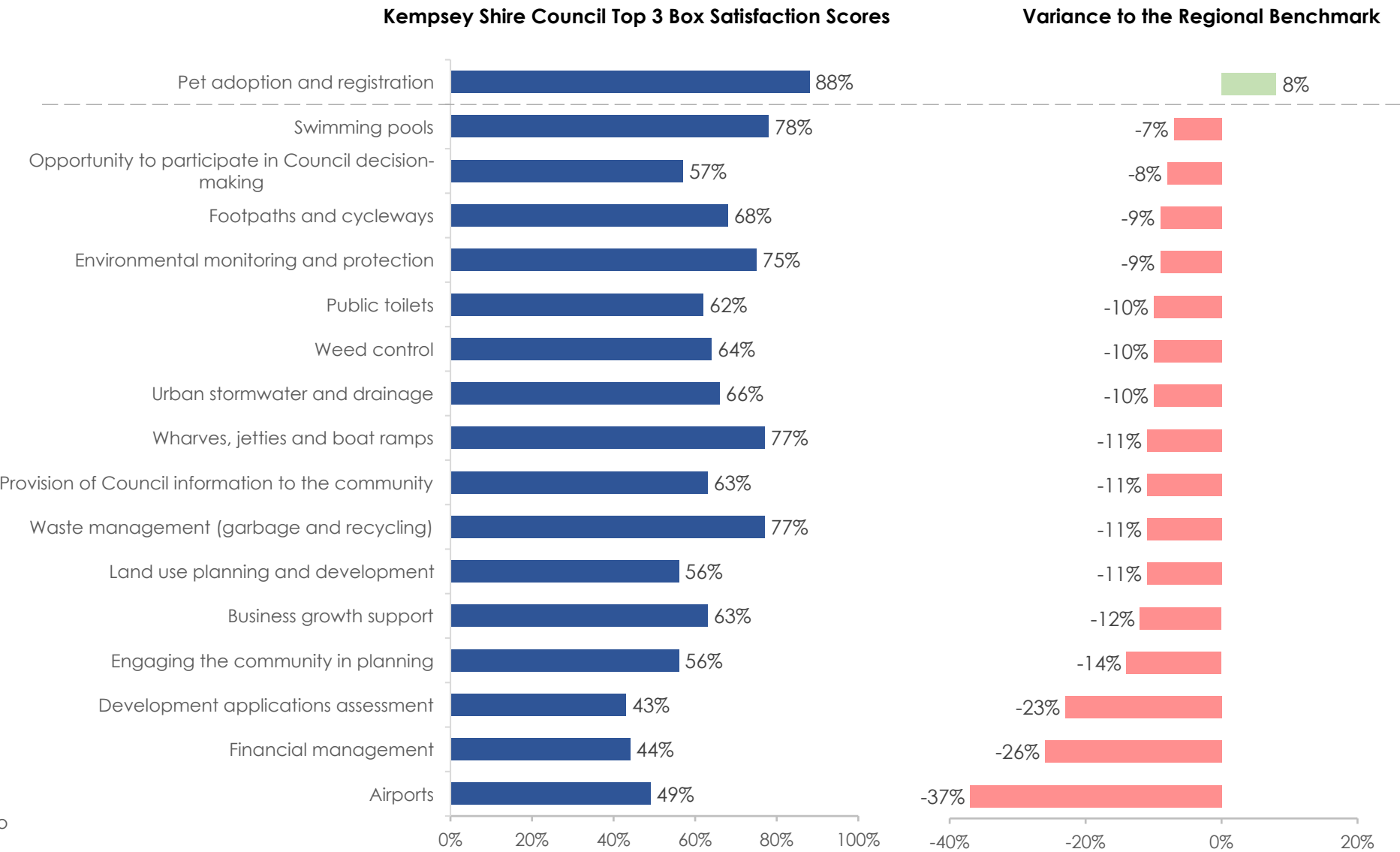
Note: 'Pet adoption and registration' is compared to 'domestic animal management'.  
'Bridges' is not included in the OLG Benchmark

Note: Only services/facilities with a variance of +/- 7% to the Benchmark have been shown above. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed list  
Top 2 box = important/very important

# Summary Satisfaction Comparison to the Micromex Regional Benchmark

The chart to the right shows the variance between Kempsey Shire Council top 3 box satisfaction scores and the Micromex Regional Benchmark.

Services/facilities shown in the chart to the right highlight larger positive and negative gaps.



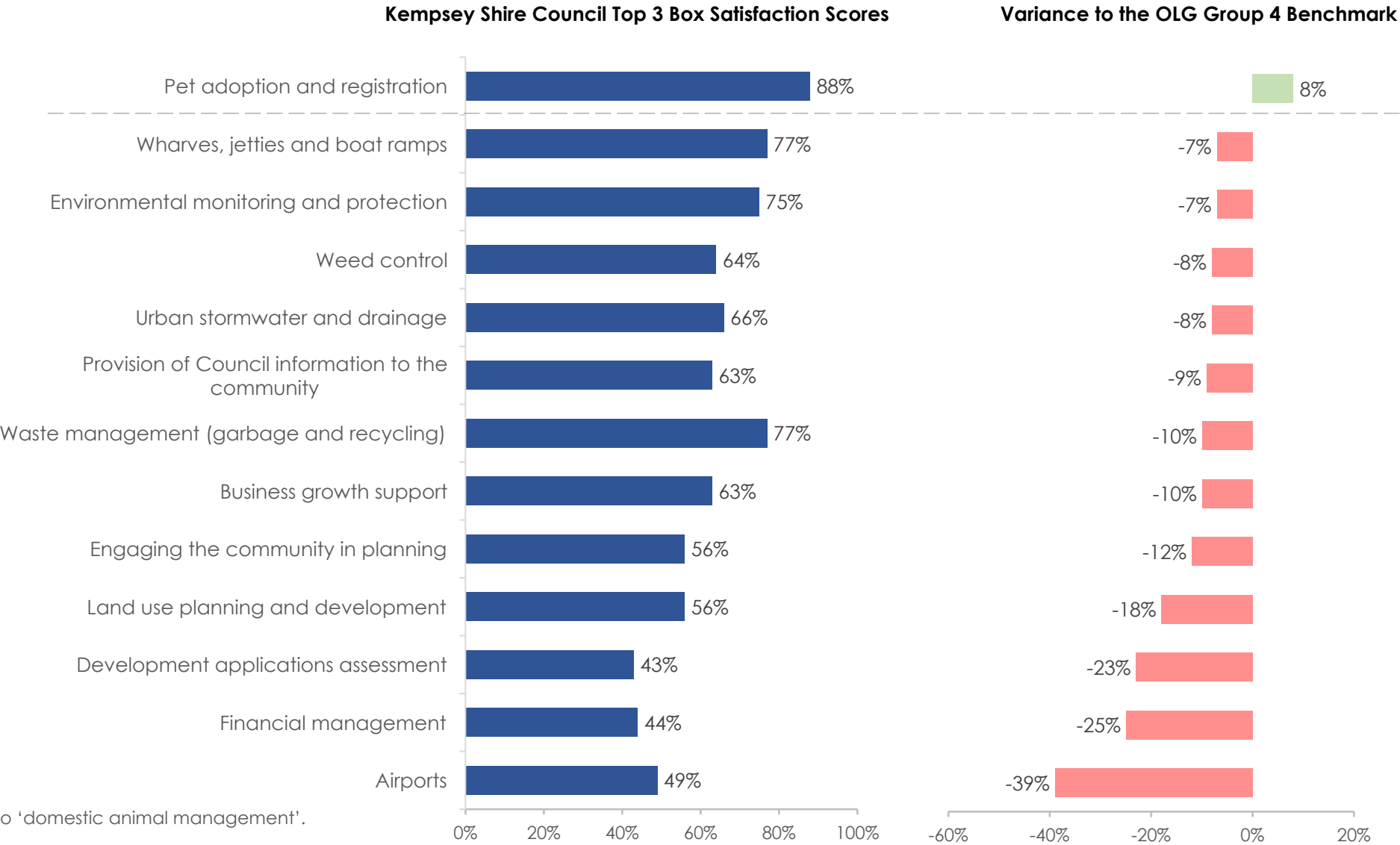
Note: 'Pet adoption and registration' is compared to 'domestic animal management'

Note: Only services/facilities with a variance of +/- 7% to the Benchmark have been shown above. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed list  
Top 3 box = at least somewhat satisfied

# Summary Satisfaction Comparison to the Micromex OLG G4 Benchmark

The chart to the right shows the variance between Kempsey Shire Council top 3 box satisfaction scores and the Micromex Benchmark.

Services/facilities shown in the chart to the right highlight larger positive and negative gaps. Like the Regional comparison, pet adoption and registration achieved a higher score, and DA's, financial management and airports received lower.



Note: 'Pet adoption and registration' is compared to 'domestic animal management'.  
'Bridges' is not included in the OLG Benchmark

Note: Only services/facilities with a variance of +/- 7% to the Benchmark have been shown above. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed list  
Top 3 box = at least somewhat satisfied



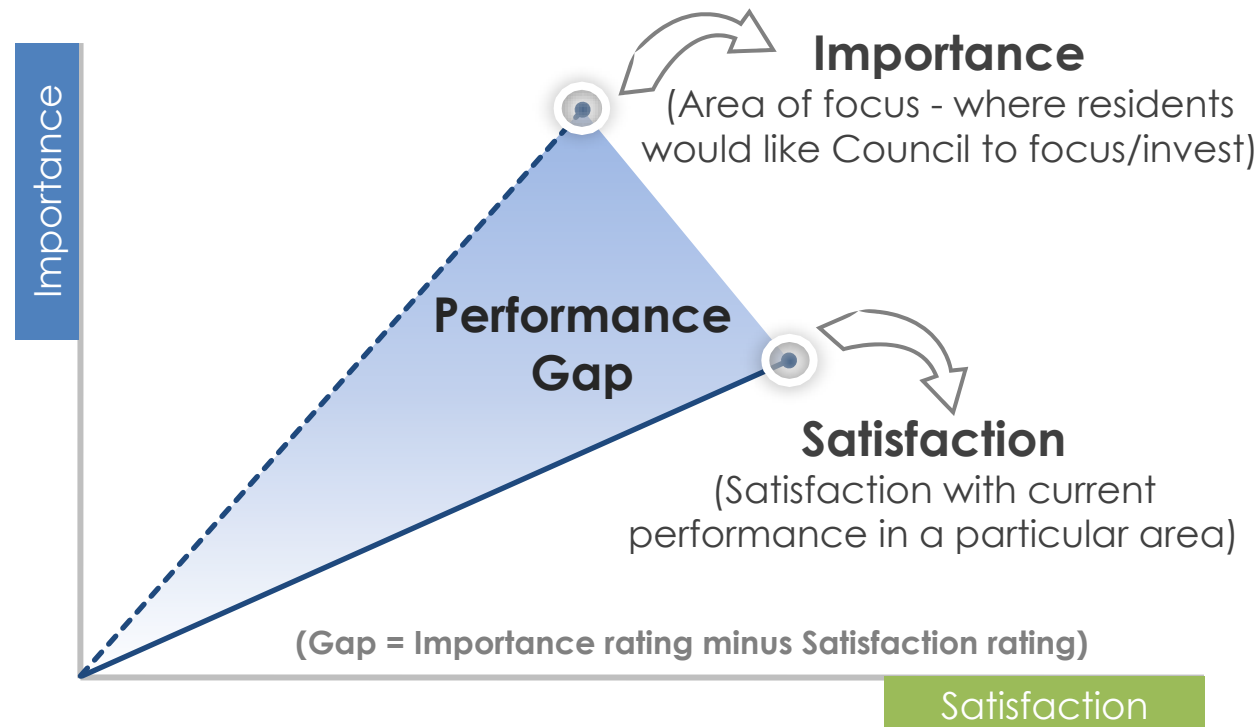
# Performance Gap Analysis

PGA establishes the gap between importance and satisfaction. This is calculated by subtracting the top 3 satisfaction score from the top 2 importance score. In order to measure performance gaps, respondents are asked to rate the importance of, and their satisfaction with, each of a range of different services or facilities on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low importance or satisfaction and 5 = high importance or satisfaction. These scores are aggregated at a total community level.

The higher the differential between importance and satisfaction, the greater the difference is between the provision of that service by Kempsey Shire Council and the expectation of the community for that service/facility.

In the table on the following page, we can see the services and facilities with the largest performance gaps.

When analysing the performance gaps, it is expected that there will be some gaps in terms of resident satisfaction. Those services/facilities that have achieved a performance gap of greater than 20% may be indicative of areas requiring future optimisation.



# Performance Gap Analysis

When we examine the largest performance gaps, we can identify that all of the services or facilities have been rated as high in importance, whilst resident satisfaction for all of these areas is between 43% and 66%. The largest performance gaps tend to centre around Corporate Services and Governance and Infrastructure Delivery Services.

Service Area	Service/Facility	Importance T2 Box	Satisfaction T3 Box	Performance Gap (Importance – Satisfaction)
Corporate Services and Governance	Financial management	92%	44%	48%
Infrastructure Delivery Services	Sealed roads	90%	50%	40%
Corporate Services and Governance	Engaging the community in planning	87%	56%	31%
Corporate Services and Governance	Provision of Council information to the community	88%	63%	25%
Development and Compliance Services	Development applications assessment	67%	43%	24%
Infrastructure Delivery Services	Public toilets	86%	62%	24%
Infrastructure Delivery Services	Unsealed roads	76%	53%	23%
Corporate Services and Governance	Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	66%	23%
Strategic and Asset Planning Services	Land use planning and development	77%	56%	21%

**Note:** Performance gap is the first step in the process, we now need to identify comparative ratings across all services and facilities to get an understanding of relative importance and satisfaction at an LGA level. This is when we undertake step 2 of the analysis.

# Quadrant Analysis

Quadrant analysis is often helpful in planning future directions based on stated outcomes. It combines the stated importance of the community and assesses satisfaction with delivery in relation to these needs.

This analysis is completed by plotting the variables on x and y axes, defined by stated importance and rated satisfaction. We aggregate the top 2 box importance scores and top 3 satisfaction scores for stated importance and rated satisfaction to identify where the facility or service should be plotted.

On average, Kempsey Shire Council residents rated services/facilities slightly less important than our Benchmark, and their satisfaction was, on average, lower.

	Kempsey Shire Council	Micromex Comparable Regional Benchmark
Average Importance	75%	79%
Average Satisfaction	72%	79%

Note: Micromex comparable benchmark only refers to like for like measures

## Explaining the 4 quadrants (overleaf)

Attributes in the top right quadrant, **CELEBRATE**, such as 'bridges', are Council's core strengths, and should be treated as such. Maintain, or even attempt to improve your position in these areas, as they are influential and address clear community needs.

Attributes in the top left quadrant, **IMPROVE**, such as 'financial management' are key concerns in the eyes of your residents. In the vast majority of cases, you should aim to improve your performance in these areas to better meet the community's expectations.

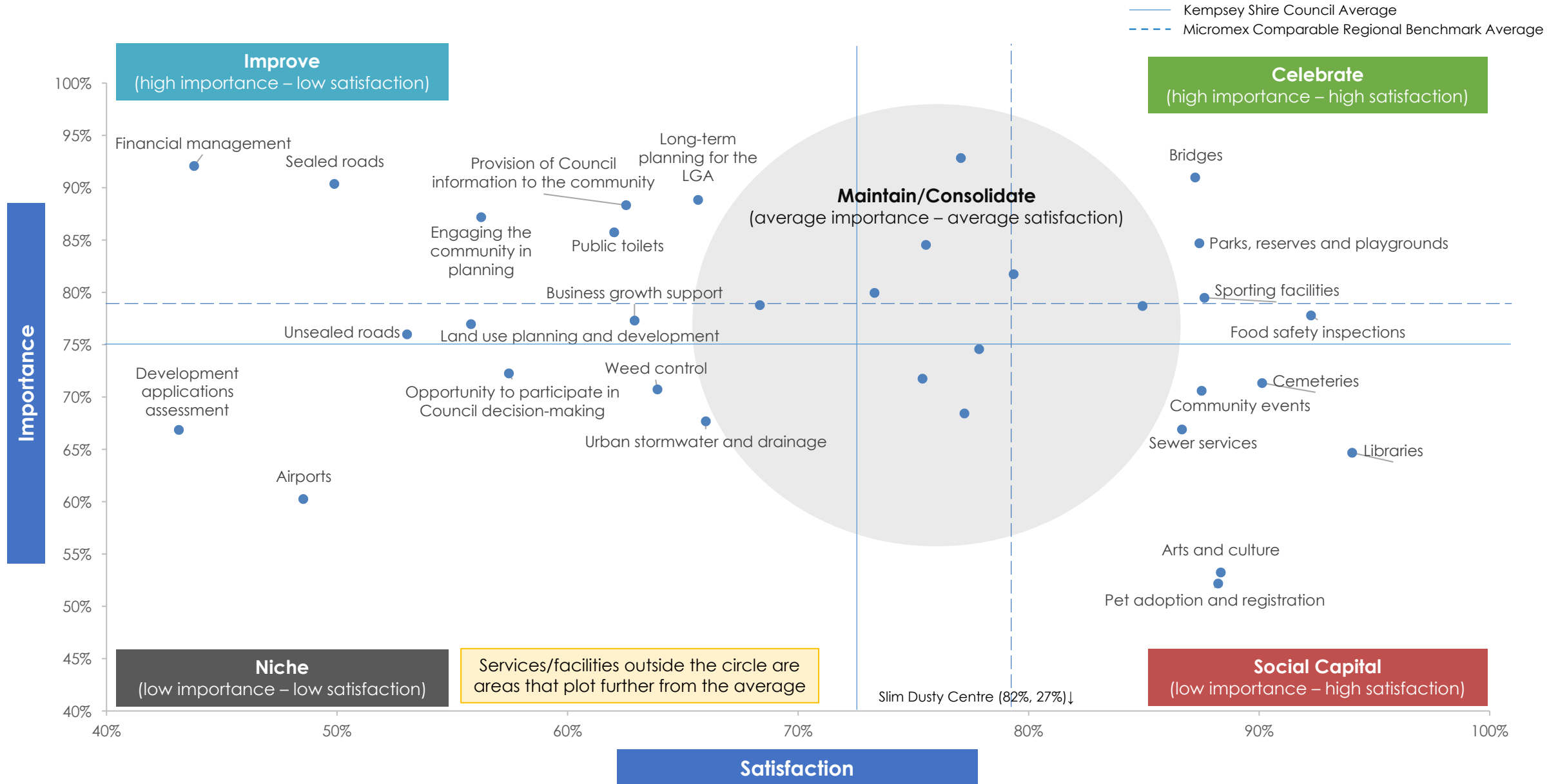
Attributes in the bottom left quadrant, **NICHE**, such as 'airports', are of a relatively lower priority (and the word 'relatively' should be stressed – they are still important). These areas tend to be important to a particular segment of the community.

Finally, attributes in the bottom right quadrant, **SOCIAL CAPITAL**, such as 'arts and culture', are core strengths, but in relative terms they are considered less overtly important than other directly obvious areas. However, the occupants of this quadrant tend to be the sort of services and facilities that deliver to community liveability, i.e. make it a good place to live.

Recommendations based only on stated importance and satisfaction have major limitations, as the actual questionnaire process essentially 'silos' facilities and services as if they are independent variables, when they are in fact all part of the broader community perception of council performance.

# Quadrant Analysis – Mapping Priority Against Delivery

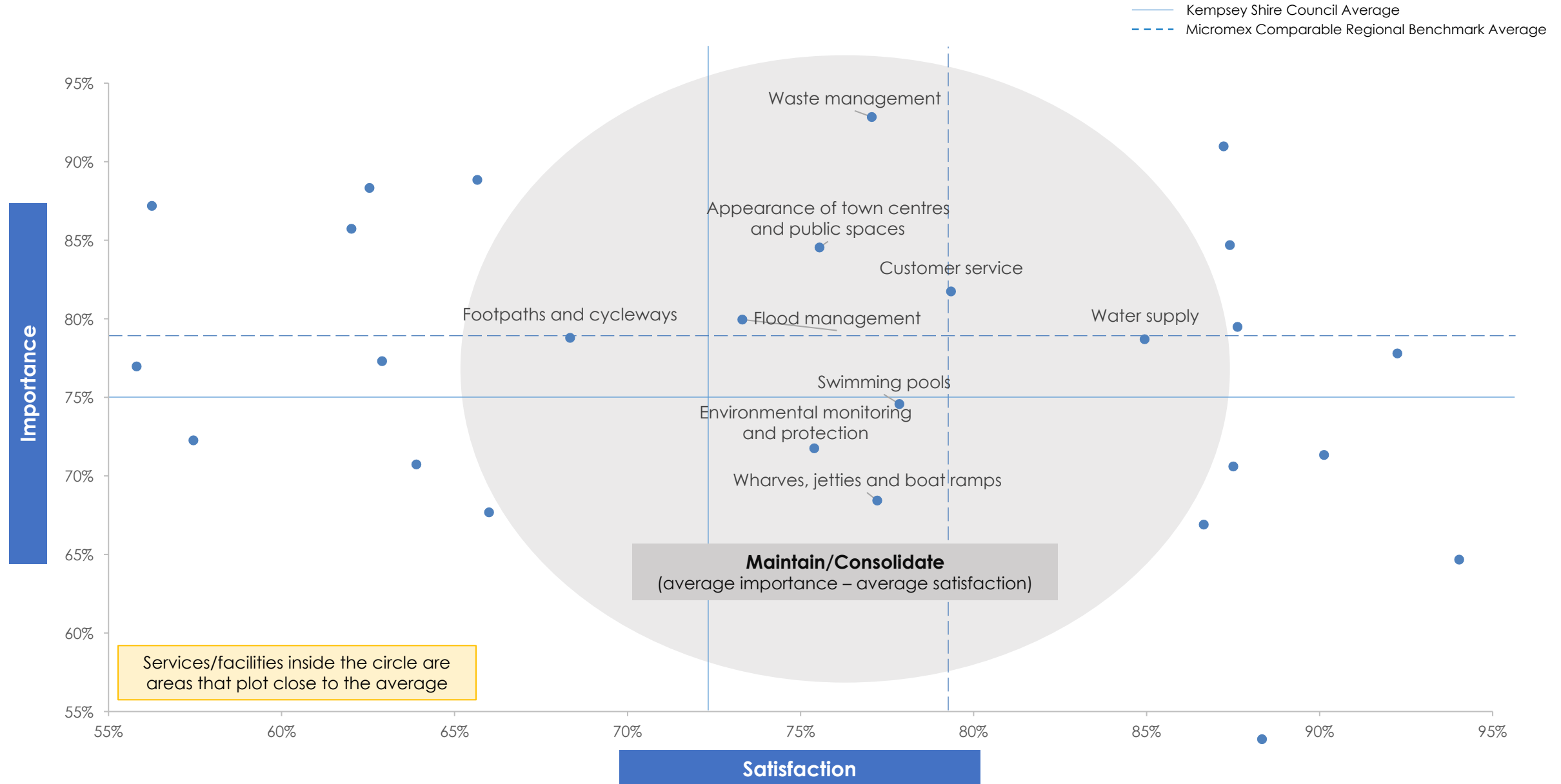
The chart below shows the satisfaction (T3B%) with service/facilities measures plotted against importance (T2B%).





# Quadrant Analysis – Mapping Priority Against Delivery

Following on the previous slide, the chart below shows the measures in the 'maintain/consolidate' area.



# Regression Analysis

The outcomes identified in stated importance/satisfaction analysis often tend to be obvious and challenging. No matter how much focus a council dedicates to 'sealed roads', it will often be found in the **IMPROVE** quadrant. This is because, perceptually, the condition of local roads can always be better.

Furthermore, the outputs of stated importance and satisfaction analysis address the current dynamics of the community, they do not predict which focus areas are the most likely agents to change the community's perception of Council's overall performance. Therefore, in order to identify how Kempsey Shire Council can actively drive overall community satisfaction, we conducted further analysis

## Explanation of Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical tool for investigating relationships between dependent variables and explanatory variables. Using a regression, a category model was developed. The outcomes demonstrated that increasing resident satisfaction by actioning the priorities they stated as being important would not necessarily positively impact on overall satisfaction.

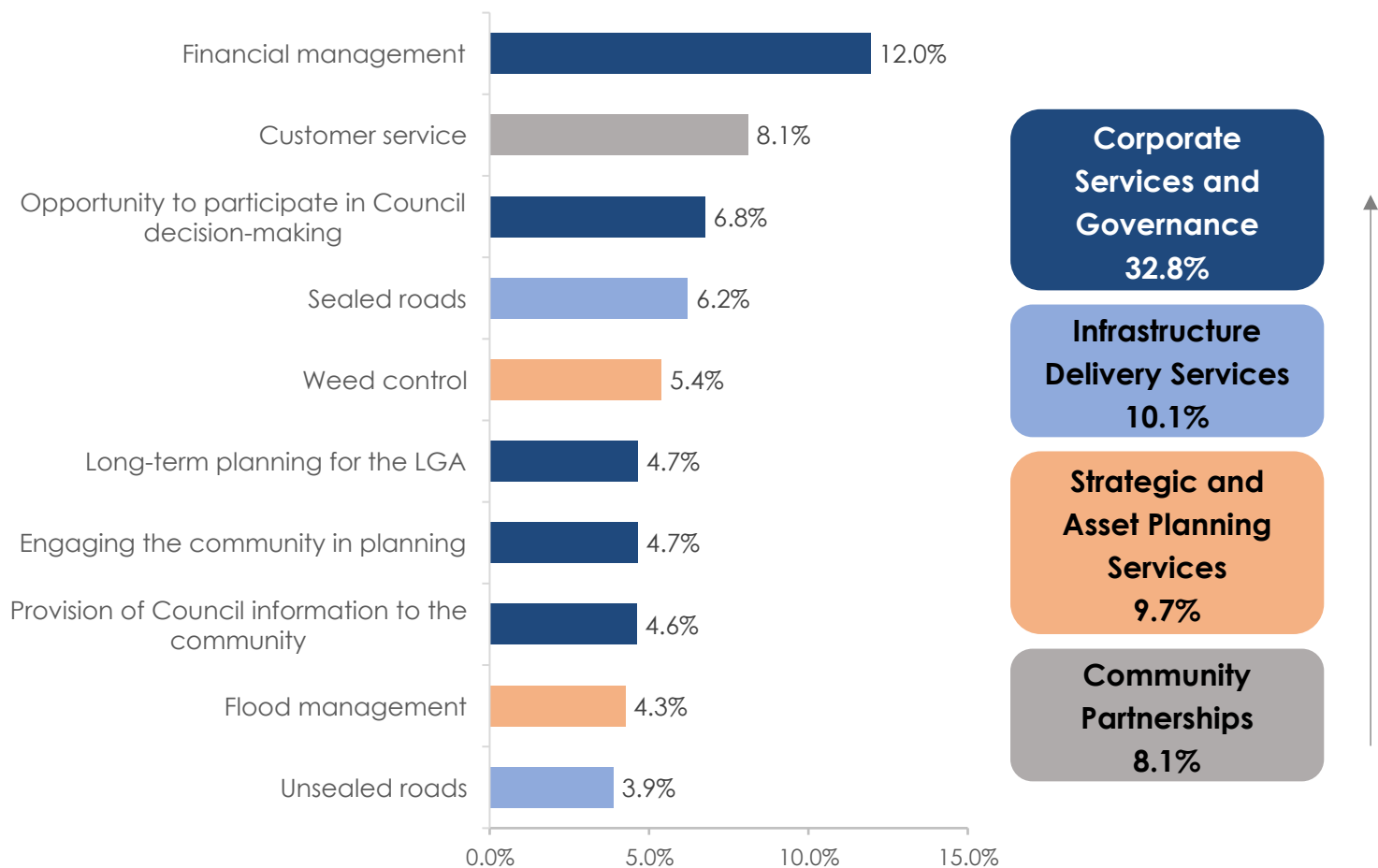
## What Does This Mean?

The learning is that if we only rely on the stated community priorities, we will not be allocating the appropriate resources to the actual service attributes that will improve overall community satisfaction. Using regression analysis, we can identify the attributes that essentially build overall satisfaction. We call the outcomes 'derived importance'.



# Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction with Council

The score assigned to each area is not a measure of performance, rather, it indicates the percentage of influence each measure contributes to overall satisfaction with Council. All services/facilities are important – but if Council can increase satisfaction in these key driver areas, they will likely see an improvement in overall community satisfaction.



These top 10 services/facilities (so 29% of the 34 services/facilities) account for 60% of the variation in overall satisfaction.

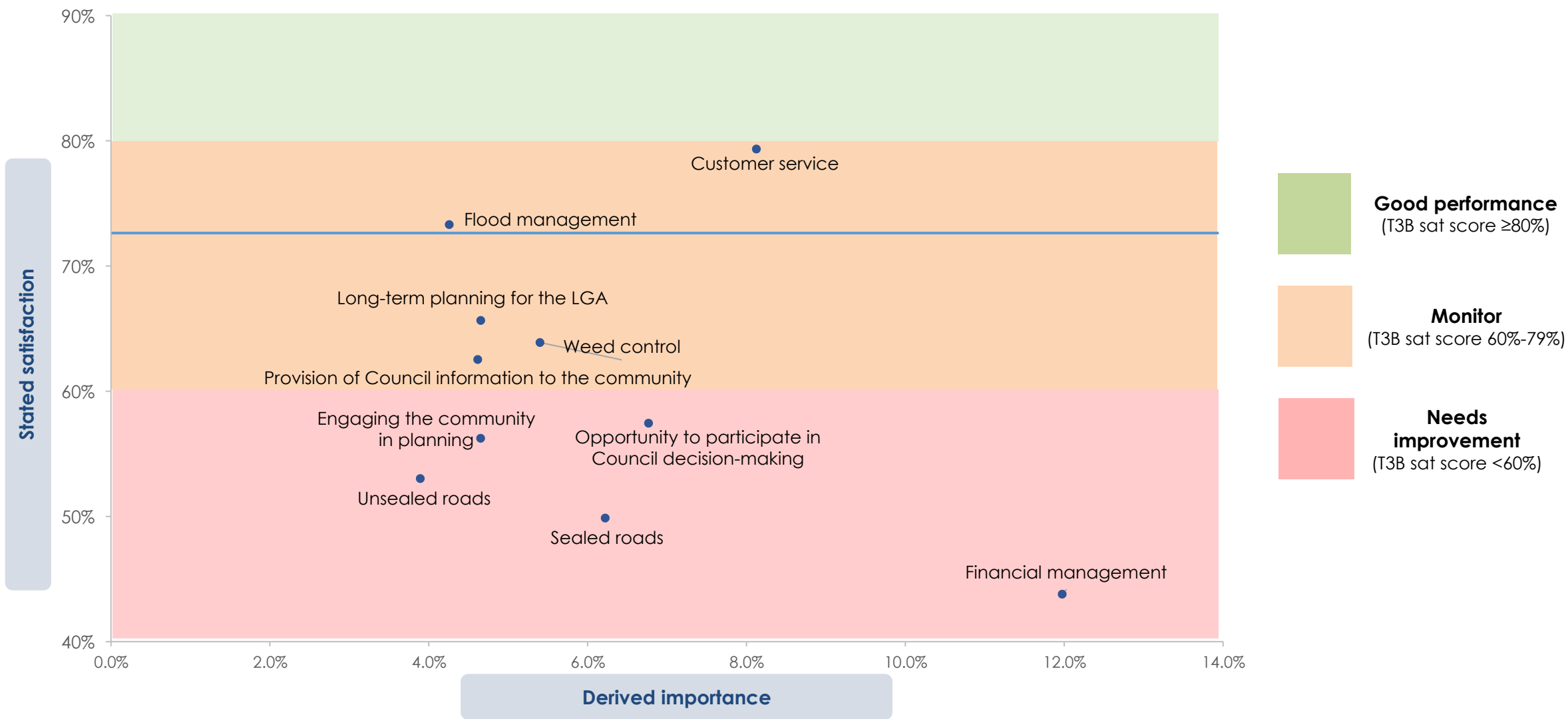
Investigating the measures separately, financial management is the most vital driver of overall satisfaction, followed by customer service and opportunity to participate in Council decision-making.

After summarising them into their thematical groups, Corporate Services and Governance is the most important driver category.

R<sup>2</sup> value = 0.50  
Note: Please see Appendix 1 for complete list

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

The below chart looks at the relationship between stated satisfaction (top 3 box) and derived importance (Regression result) for the key drivers of overall satisfaction to identify the level of contribution of each measure. Any services/facilities below the blue line could potentially be benchmarked to target in future research to elevate satisfaction levels in these areas.



Note: Blue line represents the average top 3 box (at least somewhat satisfied) of all 34 measures





## Section Three

### Future Expenditure

This section explores community views on Council's level of expenditure for a range of services and facilities, the level of focus on infrastructure and facilities and ways to generate more income.



# Summary: Future Expenditure

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- There is greater preference amongst residents for Council to focus more on maintaining current infrastructure such as roads, bridges and drainage rather than providing new assets (61% maintain and 15% prefer new).
- 43% of residents would like Council to focus on providing a greater number of more basic facilities, while 25% prefer Council to focus on providing fewer centralised higher quality facilities.
- Main areas where residents Council should 'increase' spending include:
  - Roads, bridges and transport (70%)
  - Community engagement and consultation (55%)
  - Business growth and support (53%)
  - Communications (53%)
- Less desire for a reduction in spend across all areas. Areas with greater 'reduction' results include:
  - Slim Dusty Centre (49% 'reduce', 6% 'increase')
  - Arts/ Cultural development (20% 'reduce', 26% 'increase')
  - Airports (19% 'reduce', 37% 'increase').
- 27% of residents would be willing to pay/pay more for parking in high use foreshore areas.

# Level of Expenditure: Summary

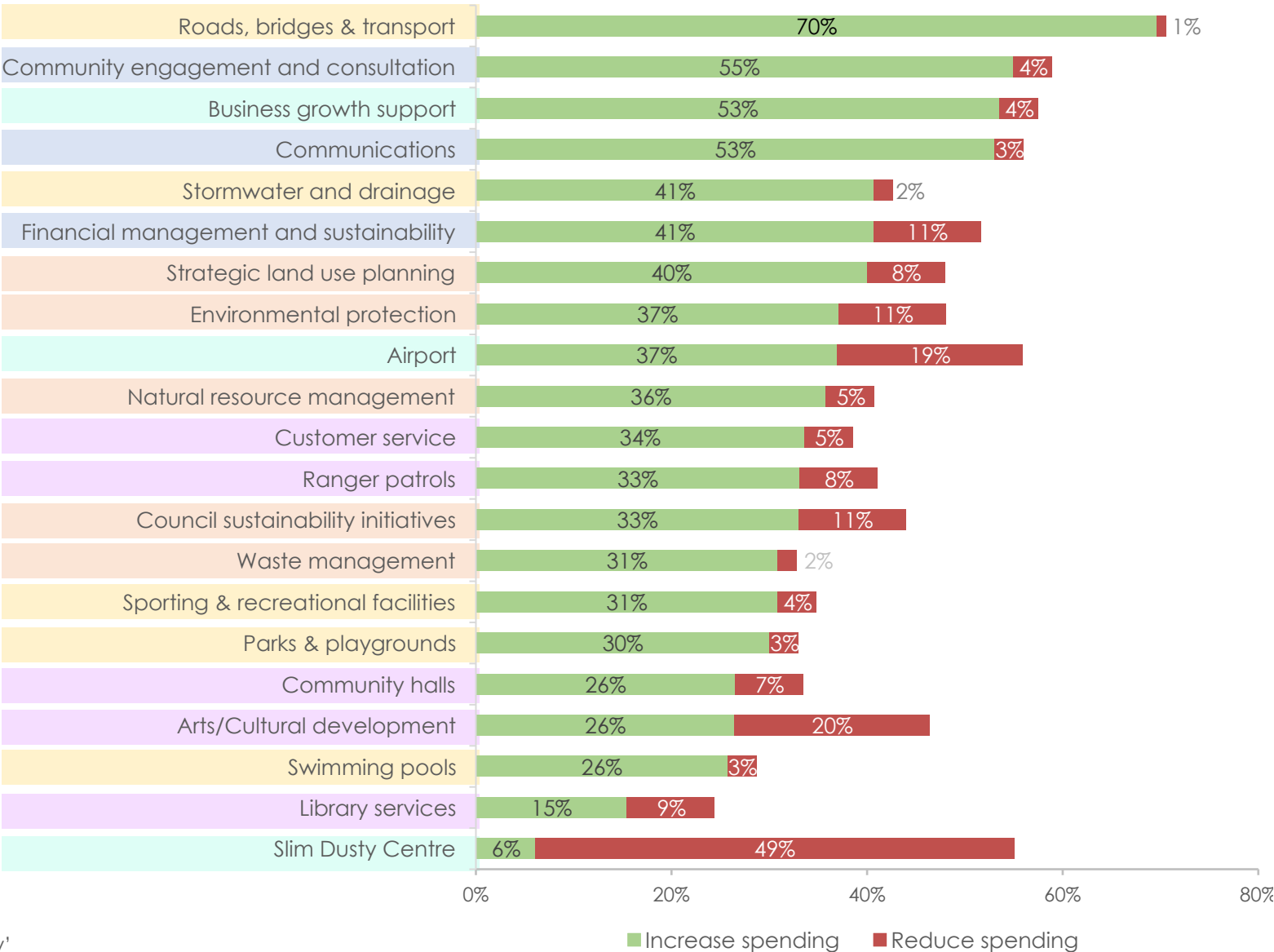
Regarding the Council's spending, most residents desire an increase in spending for roads, bridges, and transport. Over 50% would also like to see increased funding for community engagement and consultation, business growth support and communication (see chart to the right).

The results below indicate the net average preference for increased spending in these categories. On average, residents are more inclined to support increased spending on Governance measures.

### Average: 'Increase Spending'

Governance (3)	50%
Infrastructure (5)	39%
Environment (5)	35%
Economy (3)	32%
Community (5)	27%

Note: Number in brackets represent number of measures within the category



Base: N = 301

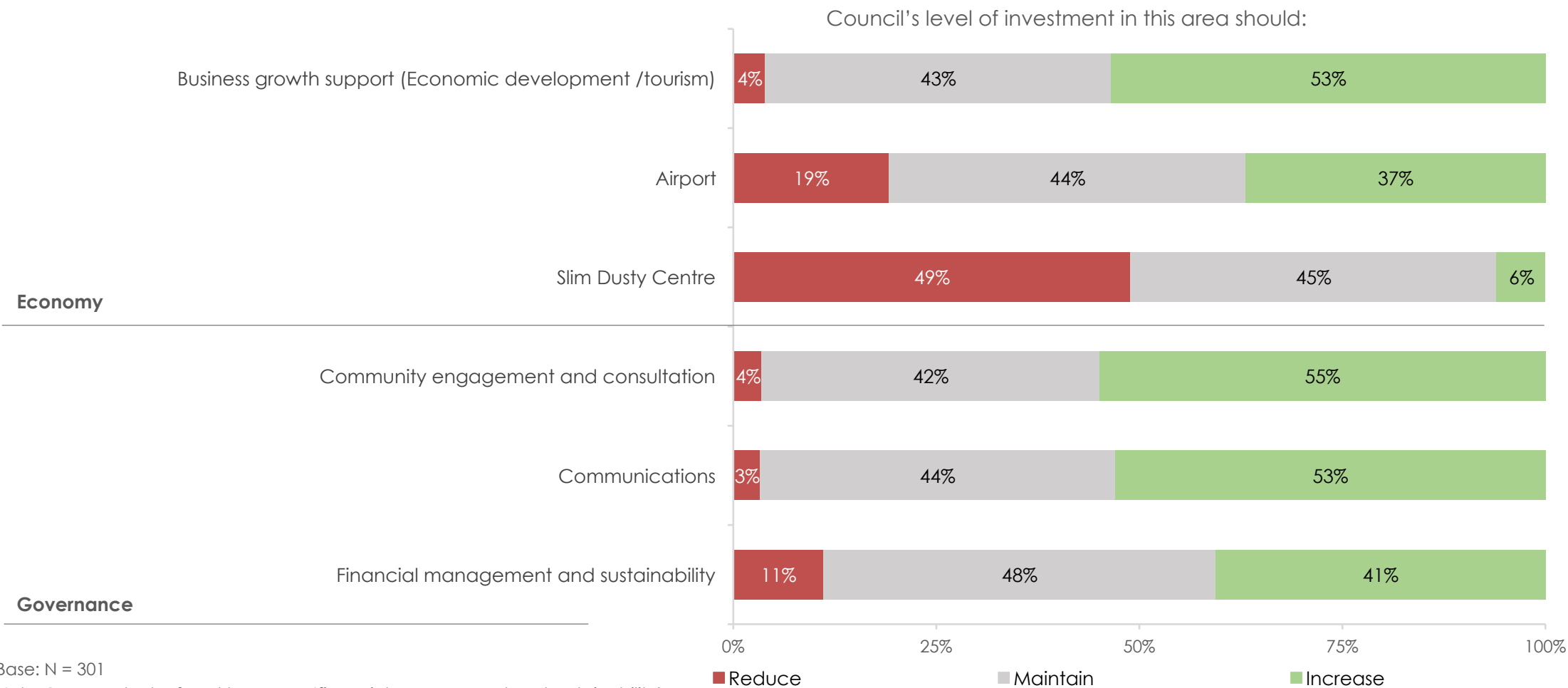
Note: 1 respondent refused to answer 'financial management and sustainability'

Q8. Given Council's need to focus on reducing costs, and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the most efficient way, we are keen to understand your views around the level of expenditure Council should be making across a range of services. For the following list of services, do you believe Council's level of expenditure in that area should be increased/maintained/reduced?

# Level of Expenditure: Economy and Governance

Within the Economy category, 53% of residents would like to see Council increase their spending on business growth support (Central residents significantly more likely) and 49% would like to see a reduction in spending for the Slim Dusty Centre.

Just over half of residents would like to see an increase in spend for community engagement and consultation and communications.



Base: N = 301  
Note: 1 respondent refused to answer 'financial management and sustainability'  
Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics

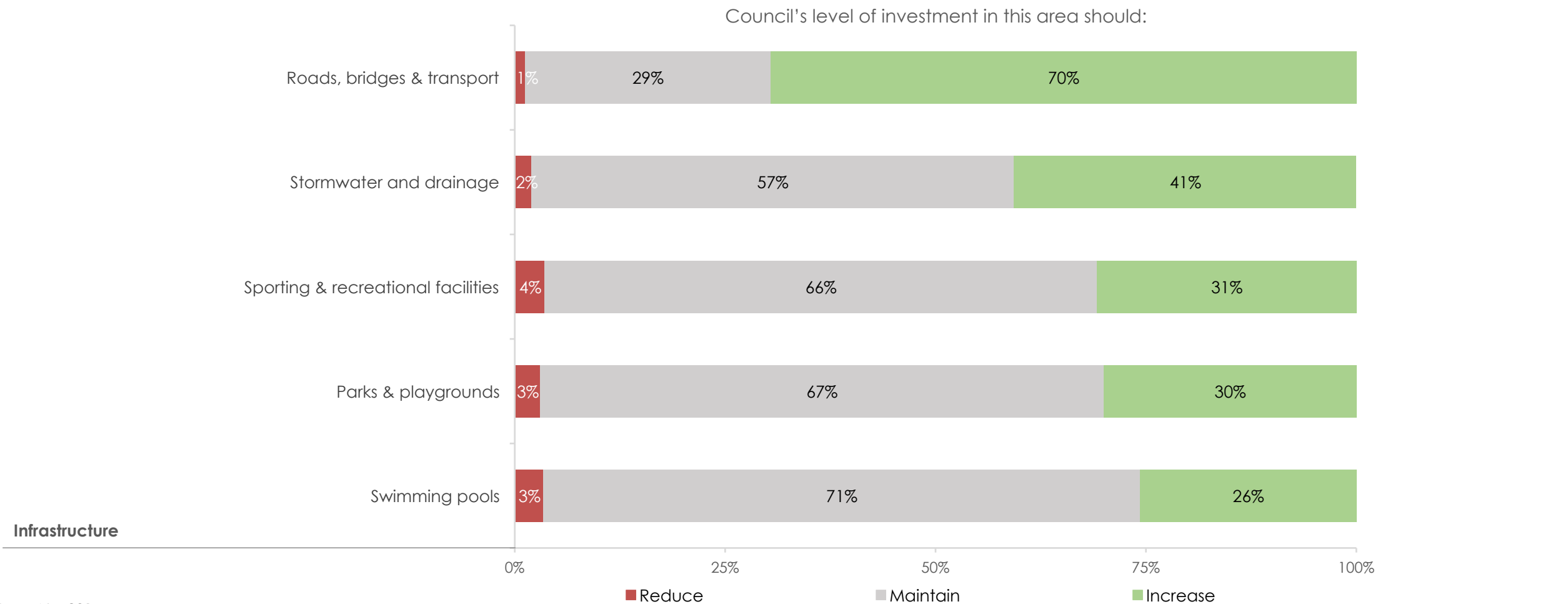
Q8. Given Council's need to focus on reducing costs, and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the most efficient way, we are keen to understand your views around the level of expenditure Council should be making across a range of services. For the following list of services, do you believe Council's level of expenditure in that area should be increased/maintained/reduced?



# Level of Expenditure: Infrastructure

70% of residents would like to see an increase in spending for roads, bridges and transport, representing the highest demand for additional funding overall. In contrast, other services and facilities within the Infrastructure category tend to show a stronger preference for maintaining current spending levels.

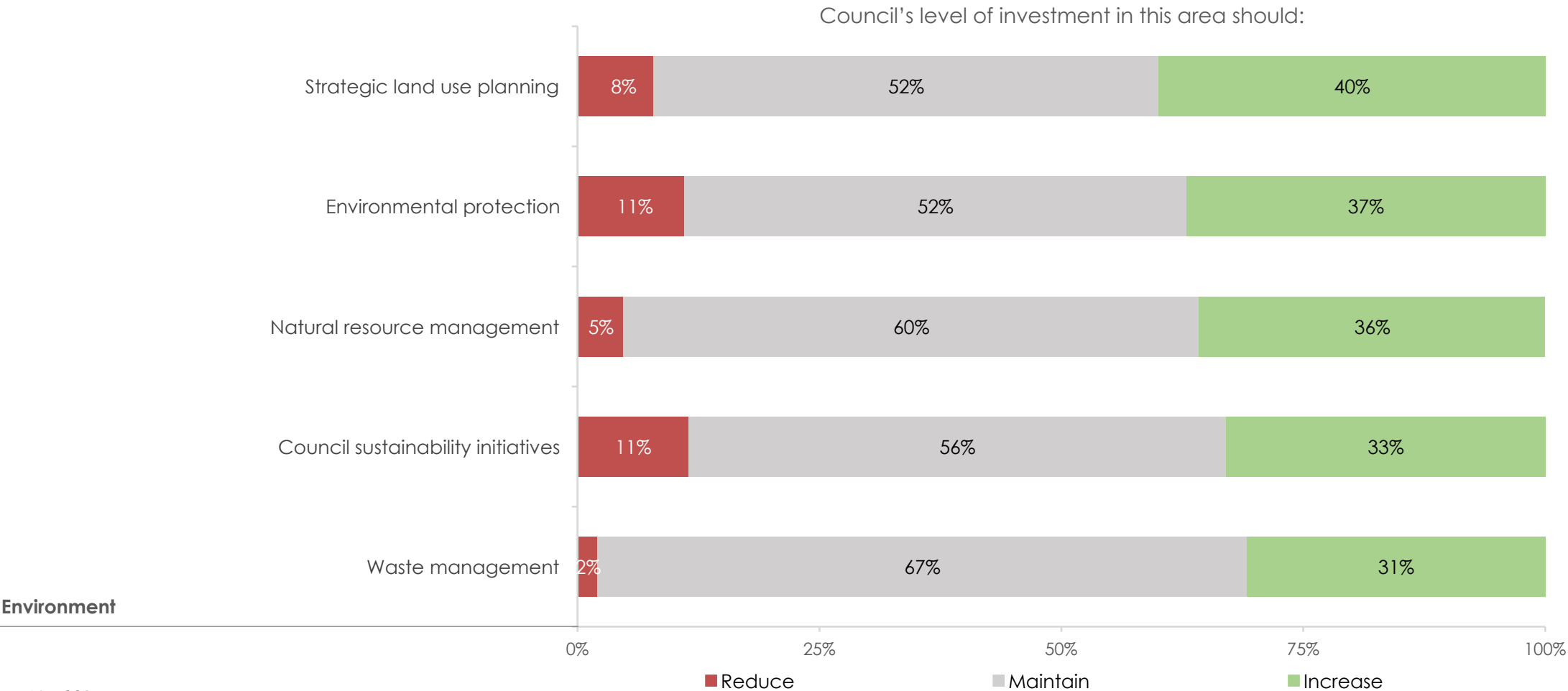
Residents aged under 50 are significantly more likely to state they would like to see increased spending on sporting and recreational facilities.



# Level of Expenditure: Environment

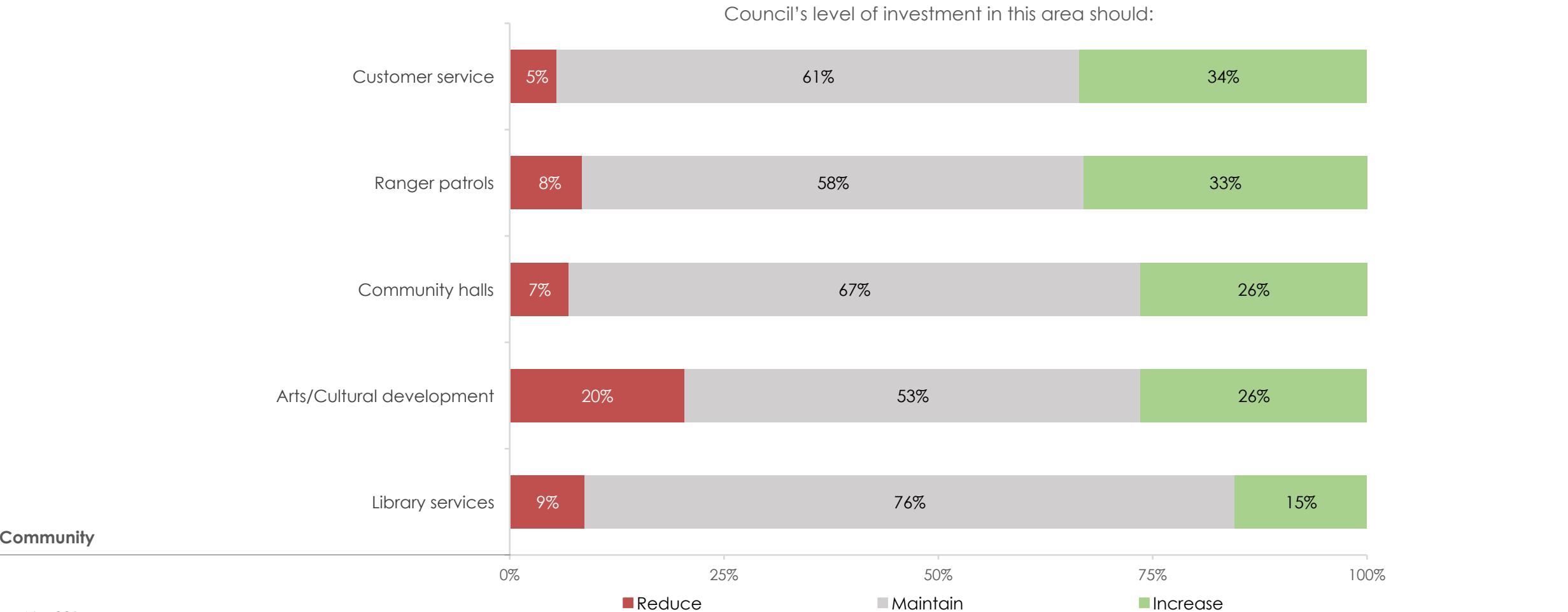
There is greater preference to maintain the level of expenditure within the Environment category, with 67% wanting Council to maintain the level of spending on waste management. 40% would like to see Council increase spending on strategic land use planning.

Coastal residents are significantly more in favor of Council increasing spending for environmental protection.



# Level of Expenditure: Community

Approximately 1 in 3 residents would like to see an increase in the level of expenditure for customer service and ranger patrols, while 76% would like to see spend on library services maintained.

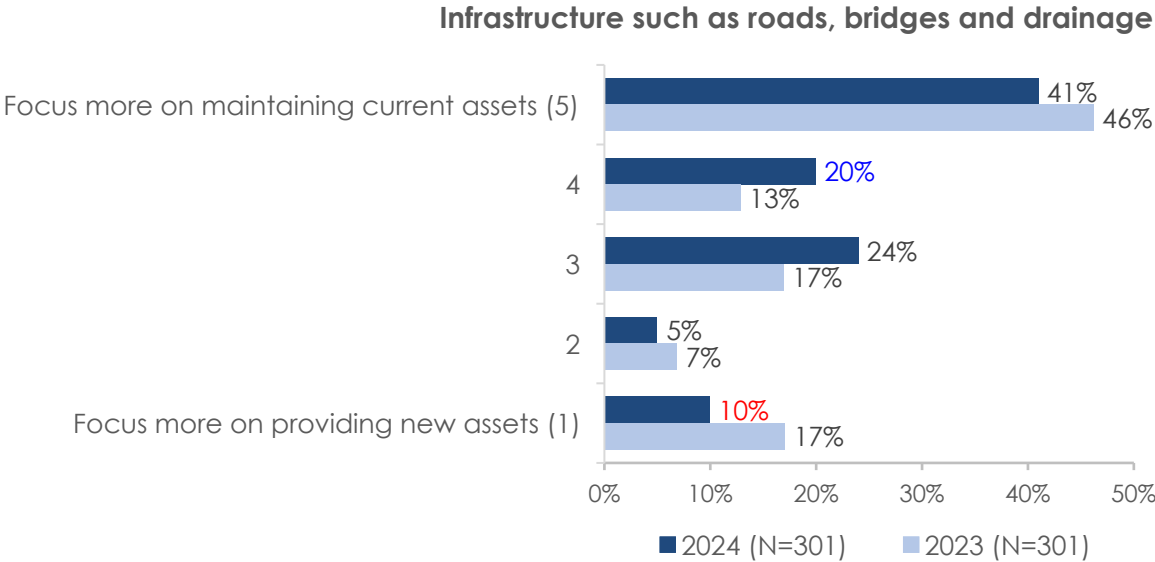


Base: N = 301 Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics

Q8. Given Council's need to focus on reducing costs, and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the most efficient way, we are keen to understand your views around the level of expenditure Council should be making across a range of services. For the following list of services, do you believe Council's level of expenditure in that area should be increased/maintained/reduced?

# Resourcing Preference: Infrastructure

61% of residents are in favour of Council focusing more on maintaining current infrastructure assets and significantly less would like to see Council focus more on providing new assets compared to last year (15% cf. 24%).



	Overall 2024	Overall 2023	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
			Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Maintaining current assets (5/4)	61%	59%	58%	64%	59%	50%	60%	69%	60%	65%	61%	64%	56%
Neutral (3)	24%	17%	28%	20%	28%	30%	23%	18%	24%	22%	21%	23%	28%
Providing new assets (1/2)	15%	24%	14%	16%	12%	20%	17%	13%	16%	13%	18%	12%	16%
Base	301	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	262	39	119	112	70

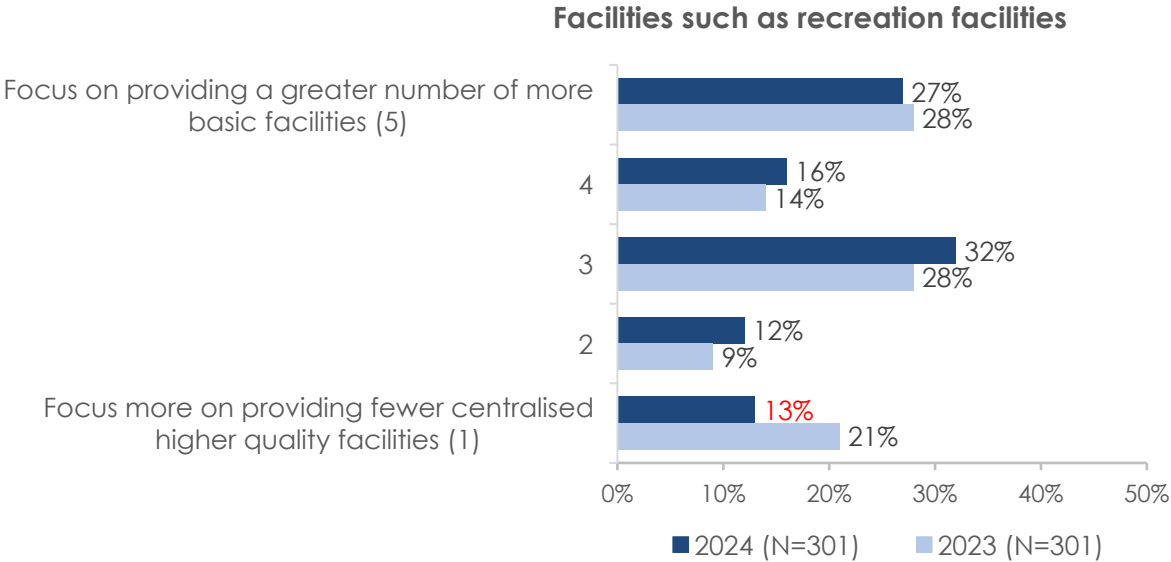
A significantly higher/lower percentage (by year/group)

Q9. Thinking generally about infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and drainage. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you prefer to see Council focus more on providing new assets and 5 means you would prefer for Council to focus more on maintaining current assets, how would you rate your position on this area?



# Resourcing Preference: Facilities

Mixed preferences for focus on facilities, with 43% in preference of Council providing a greater number of more basic facilities (more likely females and those 65+) and 25% preferring fewer centralised high-quality facilities (more likely those aged under 50).



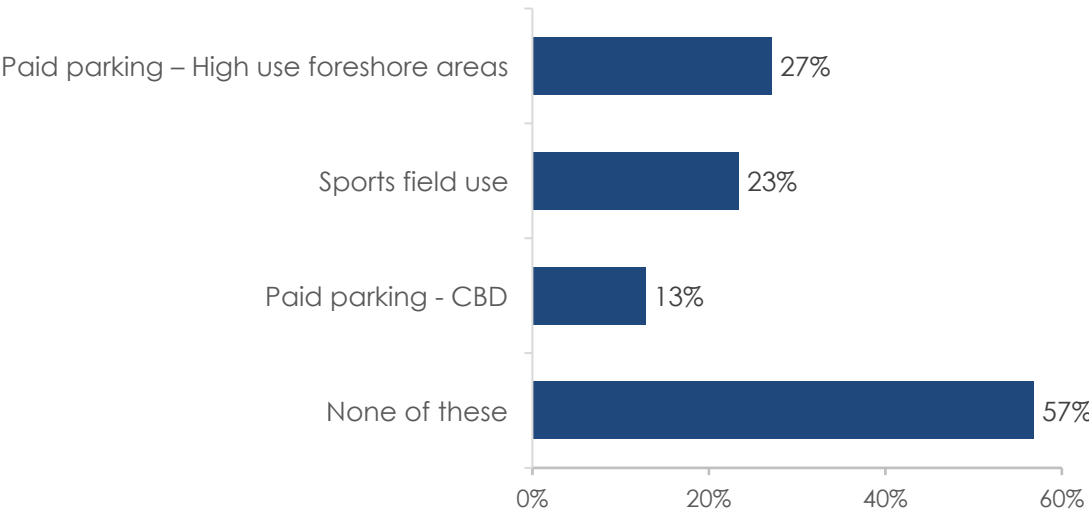
	Overall 2024	Overall 2023	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
			Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Providing a greater number of more basic facilities (5/4)	43%	41%	35%	50%	28%	34%	44%	55%	42%	44%	44%	42%	42%
Neutral (3)	32%	28%	36%	28%	28%	26%	35%	36%	32%	31%	27%	32%	39%
Providing fewer centralised higher quality facilities (1/2)	25%	30%	28%	22%	44%	40%	20%	9%	25%	26%	30%	26%	19%
Base	301	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	262	39	119	112	70

A significantly higher/lower percentage (by year/group)

Q10. Thinking generally about facilities, such as recreation facilities. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means you prefer to see Council focus more on providing the community fewer centralised, higher quality facilities, and 5 means you would prefer for Council to focus on providing the community a greater number of more basic facilities, how would you rate your position on this area?

# Ways to Generate Income

Areas willing to pay/ pay more:



43% of residents are open to paying for parking and sports field access to increase revenue for the Council.

The most widely accepted option for paid parking is in high-use foreshore areas (27%), this option is particularly favoured by those aged 35-49 and residents of the Central area.

	Overall 2024	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Paid parking – High use foreshore areas	27%	28%	27%	25%	41%	23%	24%	27%	28%	39%	24%	17%
Sports field use	23%	23%	24%	16%	20%	25%	29%	23%	27%	22%	24%	25%
Paid parking - CBD	13%	16%	9%	9%	17%	17%	9%	14%	9%	11%	13%	15%
None of these	57%	56%	58%	59%	55%	57%	56%	56%	61%	51%	61%	57%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	262	39	119	112	70

A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)

Q11a. To maintain or improve Council services to the community, Council needs to generate more income. The ways in which Council can do this are limited to things like rates income, user fees and charges. In principle, would you be willing to pay, or pay more, for any of the following Council services:

# Ways to Generate Income – Other Suggestions

Suggestions	N = 301
Net: Internal sources	37%
Net: External sources	25%
Council needs better financial management/efficient work practices and decisions	20%
Reduce Council staff/wages/spending money on staff e.g. buying cars	16%
Council wasting money on unnecessary services	8%
Increasing fees of facilities e.g. recreational and sporting facilities, parking, caravan fees	7%
Attracting tourism/charging tourists	7%
Holding more community events and markets/Council fundraisers	5%
Allowing more development/bring in more business/employment	5%
Assistance from the Government/grants	3%
Do not increase rates	3%
Increasing business and residential rates	3%
Increasing fines/enforcing permits	3%
Charging business owners/developers	1%
Selling existing assets	1%
Other	4%
Don't know/nothing	39%

When asked how the Council could enhance revenue, 37% of respondents recommended internal improvements, such as enhancing overall financial management, increasing performance output, reducing wages, and cutting expenditures.

Additional revenue sources could include implementing fees for certain facilities, such as tennis courts and parking areas, attracting more tourism and businesses to the region, and hosting events.



## Additional Analyses

### Appendix 1

# Highest Priority Issues

	Overall	Age				Location		
		18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Central	Rural	Coastal
Roads/traffic management/bridges	37%	38%	24%	45%	38%	37%	46%	22%
More/improved services/facilities/infrastructure to cater for growth e.g. healthcare, education, aged, youth, parking, etc.	25%	31%	25%	29%	19%	16%	21%	46%
Affordability and availability of housing/lower rates/lower cost of living	24%	31%	33%	18%	18%	37%	16%	19%
Community safety/crime prevention/social cohesion	23%	34%	30%	13%	19%	33%	23%	9%
Employment/local business opportunities/economic stimulation	12%	6%	9%	11%	19%	13%	13%	9%
Improve management of Council e.g. communication/transparency, financial management	12%	6%	16%	10%	15%	7%	16%	12%
Town planning e.g. managing development/population growth	10%	12%	5%	11%	10%	6%	5%	24%
Recreational opportunities e.g. events, activities, sports, etc.	8%	9%	16%	7%	4%	17%	4%	3%
Improved essential services e.g. water, sewerage, waste	7%	9%	0%	8%	10%	5%	4%	16%
Protection and management of the natural environment/climate change	5%	0%	5%	11%	4%	0%	8%	8%
Natural disaster management/prevention e.g. bushfires, flood mitigation, stormwater drainage	5%	3%	2%	5%	7%	0%	4%	11%
Base	301	63	57	82	99	99	125	77

Note: Only showing codes of 5% or more



# Sources of Information for Local News and Community Activities

	Overall	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Word of mouth	90%	92%	88%	97%	92%	90%	85%	91%	88%	91%	88%	93%
Social media	73%	68%	79%	81%	88%	74%	59%	72%	81%	81%	72%	65%
Community associations (i.e., clubs and sporting groups)	52%	49%	56%	53%	67%	41%	52%	52%	53%	50%	50%	59%
Local TV	52%	51%	54%	41%	37%	47%	72%	51%	59%	48%	51%	59%
Local radio	51%	53%	48%	41%	49%	50%	59%	52%	47%	47%	57%	46%
Brochures and pamphlets dropped at my residence	44%	44%	44%	38%	43%	44%	49%	45%	40%	46%	36%	55%
Council websites	44%	39%	49%	41%	43%	50%	41%	44%	40%	38%	43%	52%
Outdoor advertising (bus stops, screens)	36%	36%	36%	38%	39%	37%	32%	36%	31%	42%	37%	25%
Email newsletters	35%	38%	32%	28%	34%	37%	39%	36%	29%	26%	37%	43%
Pop up stalls at markets or town centres	33%	25%	40%	28%	32%	39%	31%	33%	32%	29%	31%	40%
Brochures in shops and cafes	29%	22%	36%	16%	25%	29%	39%	28%	29%	29%	23%	37%
Community notice boards	27%	25%	30%	16%	28%	26%	36%	28%	22%	19%	31%	33%
Local newspapers	25%	22%	29%	25%	16%	26%	31%	22%	45%	26%	22%	30%
Community meetings	22%	18%	25%	6%	24%	20%	32%	22%	21%	18%	18%	33%
Other	4%	3%	4%	0%	3%	1%	8%	3%	6%	2%	5%	4%
None of these	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	253	48	99	125	77

# Comparison to Previous Research (Mean Rating)

Service/Facility	Importance		Satisfaction	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Water supply	4.18	4.14	3.87	4.12
Urban stormwater and drainage	3.85	3.93	3.05	3.16
Sewer services	3.77	3.81	3.93	4.08
Environmental monitoring and protection	4.01	4.05	3.24	3.36
Flood management	4.28	4.52	3.27	3.28
Weed control	3.99	3.94	2.89	2.90
Land use planning and development	4.20	4.20	2.61	2.88
Development applications assessment	3.93	3.95	2.38	2.86
Pet adoption and registration	3.42	3.92	3.79	3.68
Food safety inspections	4.17	4.48	3.85	4.09
Libraries	3.86	3.82	4.33	4.41
Customer service	4.37	4.39	3.40	3.48
Arts and culture	3.45	3.54	3.63	3.63
Community events	3.98	4.04	3.67	3.56
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	4.65	4.57	3.51	3.72
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	4.21	4.15	2.87	3.13
Airports	3.62	3.68	2.53	2.70
Slim Dusty Centre	2.56	2.56	3.44	4.06
Swimming pools	4.08	4.02	3.57	3.99
Cemeteries	4.05	4.26	3.93	4.05

Service/Facility	Importance		Satisfaction	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Bridges	4.63	4.66	3.74	3.69
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	4.35	4.28	3.21	3.51
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	3.94	3.93	3.39	3.54
Sporting facilities	4.28	4.18	3.75	3.99
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	4.42	4.39	3.61	3.73
Footpaths and cycleways	4.24	4.23	3.03	3.26
Sealed roads	4.54	4.67	2.53	2.55
Public toilets	4.44	4.32	2.92	3.08
Unsealed roads	4.14	4.16	2.63	2.68
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	4.06	4.06	2.73	2.78
Provision of Council information to the community	4.51	4.41	2.88	3.04
Long-term planning for the LGA	4.55	4.56	2.88	2.96
Engaging the community in planning	4.47	4.46	2.67	2.93
Financial management	4.66	4.57	2.34	2.81

Scale: 1 = not at all important/not at all satisfied, 5 = very important/very satisfied  
A significantly higher/lower level of importance/satisfaction (by year)

# Comparison to Previous Research (Top 2 Box/ Top 3 Box %)

Service/Facility	Importance (T2B)		Satisfaction (T3B)	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Water supply	79%	77%	85%	91%
Urban stormwater and drainage	68%	70%	66%	68%
Sewer services	67%	68%	87%	85%
Environmental monitoring and protection	72%	71%	75%	78%
Flood management	80%	87%	73%	73%
Weed control	71%	67%	64%	61%
Land use planning and development	77%	78%	56%	63%
Development applications assessment	67%	67%	43%	60%
Pet adoption and registration	52%	66%	88%	85%
Food safety inspections	78%	86%	92%	95%
Libraries	65%	62%	94%	98%
Customer service	82%	85%	79%	78%
Arts and culture	53%	54%	88%	87%
Community events	71%	74%	88%	85%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	93%	90%	77%	82%
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	77%	73%	63%	71%
Airports	60%	59%	49%	55%
Slim Dusty Centre	27%	26%	82%	90%
Swimming pools	75%	74%	78%	91%
Cemeteries	71%	78%	90%	93%

Service/Facility	Importance (T2B)		Satisfaction (T3B)	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Bridges	91%	93%	87%	88%
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	85%	82%	76%	85%
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	68%	70%	77%	82%
Sporting facilities	79%	77%	88%	91%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	85%	84%	87%	88%
Footpaths and cycleways	79%	80%	68%	74%
Sealed roads	90%	91%	50%	47%
Public toilets	86%	81%	62%	69%
Unsealed roads	76%	76%	53%	56%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	72%	74%	57%	62%
Provision of Council information to the community	88%	86%	63%	70%
Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	87%	66%	65%
Engaging the community in planning	87%	86%	56%	67%
Financial management	92%	87%	44%	61%

T2B = Important/ Very important, T3B = At least somewhat satisfied  
A significantly higher/lower level of importance/satisfaction (by year)

# Importance Compared to the Micromex Regional Benchmark

Service/Facility	Kempsey Shire Council T2 box importance score	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Regional T2 box importance score	Variance
Bridges	91%	84%	7%
Financial management	92%	86%	6%
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	68%	62%	6%
Provision of Council information to the community	88%	83%	5%
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	85%	80%	5%
Public toilets	86%	82%	4%
Swimming pools	75%	71%	4%
Engaging the community in planning	87%	84%	3%
Footpaths and cycleways	79%	76%	3%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	85%	83%	2%
Sporting facilities	79%	77%	2%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	93%	91%	2%
Community events	71%	70%	1%
Land use planning and development	77%	77%	0%
Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	89%	0%
Customer service	82%	83%	-1%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	72%	73%	-1%
Unsealed roads	76%	77%	-1%
Flood management	80%	82%	-2%
Cemeteries	71%	74%	-3%
Sealed roads	90%	93%	-3%
Development applications assessment	67%	72%	-5%
Libraries	65%	70%	-5%
Arts and culture	53%	60%	-7%
Food safety inspections	78%	85%	-7%
Weed control	71%	78%	-7%
Water supply	79%	88%	-9%
Environmental monitoring and protection	72%	81%	-9%
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	77%▼	88%	-11%
Urban stormwater and drainage	68%▼	82%	-14%
Sewer services	67%▼	81%	-14%
Airports	60%▼	77%	-17%
Pet adoption and registration	52%▼	70%	-18%

**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.

**Note:** T2 = important/very important 55

# Importance Compared to the Micromex OLG G4 Benchmark

Service/Facility	Kempsey Shire Council T2 box importance score	Micromex LGA Benchmark – OLG Group 4 T2 box importance score	Variance
Land use planning and development	77%	69%	8%
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	68%	60%	8%
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	85%	77%	8%
Footpaths and cycleways	79%	72%	7%
Swimming pools	75%	68%	7%
Public toilets	86%	80%	6%
Financial management	92%	87%	5%
Sporting facilities	79%	74%	5%
Provision of Council information to the community	88%	84%	4%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	93%	90%	3%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	85%	83%	2%
Engaging the community in planning	87%	86%	1%
Community events	71%	71%	0%
Flood management	80%	81%	-1%
Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	90%	-1%
Sealed roads	90%	92%	-2%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	72%	75%	-3%
Airports	60%	64%	-4%
Customer service	82%	86%	-4%
Unsealed roads	76%	80%	-4%
Development applications assessment	67%	72%	-5%
Cemeteries	71%	76%	-5%
Libraries	65%	71%	-6%
Weed control	71%	77%	-6%
Arts and culture	53%	60%	-7%
Food safety inspections	78%	86%	-8%
Water supply	79%	87%	-8%
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	77% ▼	87%	-10%
Environmental monitoring and protection	72% ▼	82%	-10%
Urban stormwater and drainage	68% ▼	81%	-13%
Sewer services	67% ▼	81%	-14%
Pet adoption and registration	52% ▼	67%	-15%

**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.

**Note:** T2 = important/very important 56



# Satisfaction Compared to the Micromex Regional Benchmark

Service/Facility	Kempsey Shire Council T3 box satisfaction score	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Regional T3 box satisfaction score	Variance
Pet adoption and registration	88%	80%	8%
Bridges	87%	84%	3%
Unsealed roads	53%	50%	3%
Community events	88%	86%	2%
Food safety inspections	92%	90%	2%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	87%	86%	1%
Cemeteries	90%	90%	0%
Libraries	94%	94%	0%
Water supply	85%	85%	0%
Sporting facilities	88%	89%	-1%
Arts and culture	88%	90%	-2%
Customer service	79%	82%	-3%
Flood management	73%	76%	-3%
Sewer services	87%	90%	-3%
Long-term planning for the LGA	66%	71%	-5%
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	76%	82%	-6%
Sealed roads	50%	56%	-6%
Swimming pools	78%	85%	-7%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	57%	65%	-8%
Footpaths and cycleways	68%	77%	-9%
Environmental monitoring and protection	75%	84%	-9%
Public toilets	62%▼	72%	-10%
Weed control	64%▼	74%	-10%
Urban stormwater and drainage	66%▼	76%	-10%
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	77%▼	88%	-11%
Provision of Council information to the community	63%▼	74%	-11%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	77%▼	88%	-11%
Land use planning and development	56%▼	67%	-11%
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	63%▼	75%	-12%
Engaging the community in planning	56%▼	70%	-14%
Development applications assessment	43%▼	66%	-23%
Financial management	44%▼	70%	-26%
Airports	49%▼	86%	-37%

**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.

**Note:** T2 = important/very important 57

# Satisfaction Compared to the Micromex OLG G4 Benchmark

Service/Facility	Kempsey Shire Council T3 box satisfaction score	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Regional T3 box satisfaction score	Variance
Pet adoption and registration	88%	80%	8%
Community events	88%	84%	4%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	87%	84%	3%
Sealed roads	50%	47%	3%
Cemeteries	90%	88%	2%
Unsealed roads	53%	52%	1%
Food safety inspections	92%	92%	0%
Swimming pools	78%	79%	-1%
Sporting facilities	88%	89%	-1%
Flood management	73%	74%	-1%
Customer service	79%	80%	-1%
Libraries	94%	95%	-1%
Water supply	85%	87%	-2%
Sewer services	87%	89%	-2%
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	76%	79%	-3%
Long-term planning for the LGA	66%	70%	-4%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	57%	61%	-4%
Arts and culture	88%	92%	-4%
Footpaths and cycleways	68%	73%	-5%
Public toilets	62%	67%	-5%
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	77%	84%	-7%
Environmental monitoring and protection	75%	82%	-7%
Weed control	64%	72%	-8%
Urban stormwater and drainage	66%	74%	-8%
Provision of Council information to the community	63%	72%	-9%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	77%▼	87%	-10%
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	63%▼	73%	-10%
Engaging the community in planning	56%▼	68%	-12%
Land use planning and development	56%▼	74%	-18%
Development applications assessment	43%▼	66%	-23%
Financial management	44%▼	69%	-25%
Airports	49%▼	88%	-39%

**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.

**Note:** T2 = important/very important 58

# Performance Gap Analysis

When analysing performance gap data, it is important to consider both stated satisfaction and the absolute size of the performance gap.

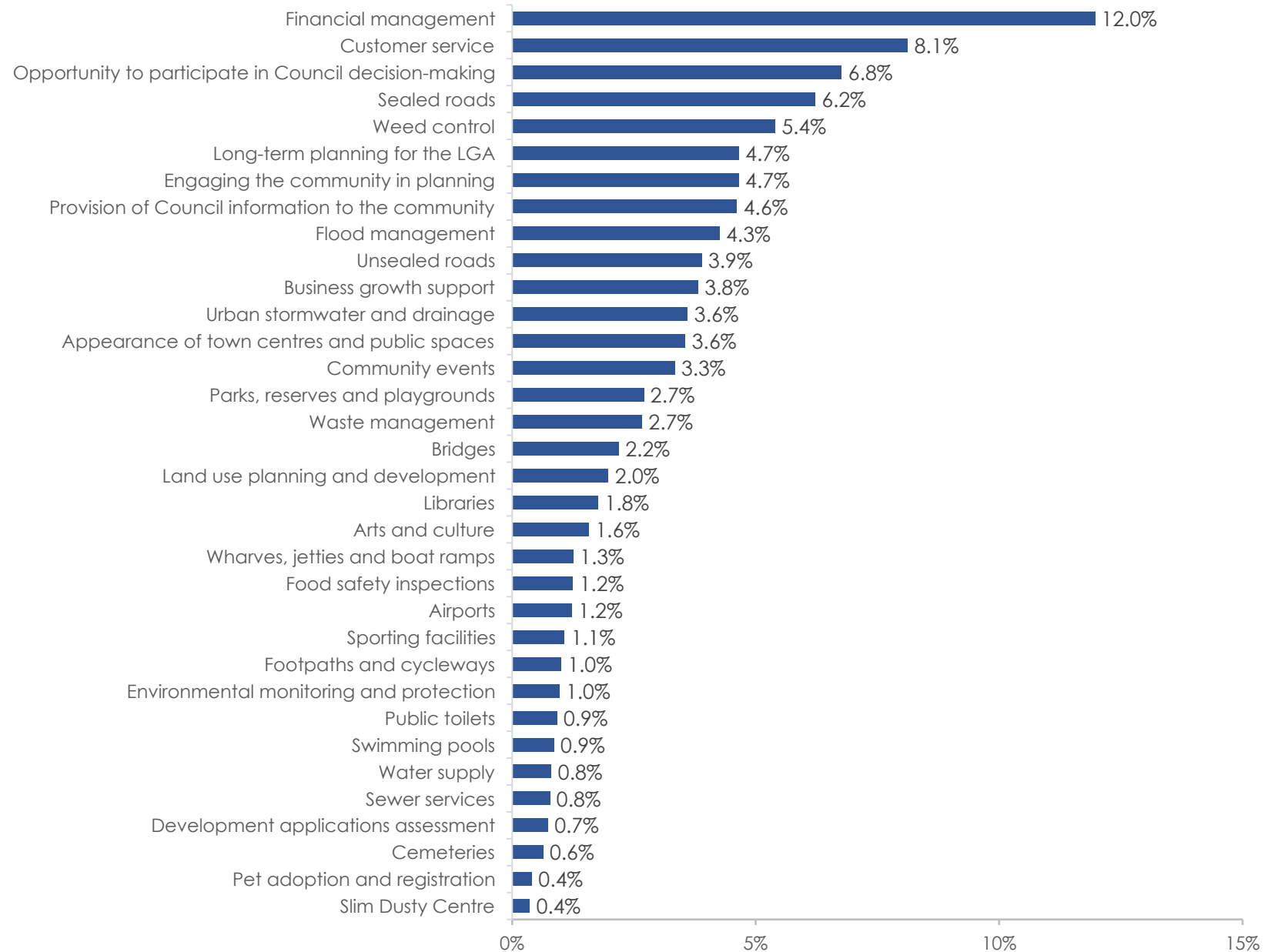
## Performance Gap Ranking

Service/Facility	Importance T2 Box	Satisfaction T3 Box	Performance Gap (Importance – Satisfaction)
Financial management	92%	44%	48%
Sealed roads	90%	50%	40%
Engaging the community in planning	87%	56%	31%
Provision of Council information to the community	88%	63%	25%
Development applications assessment	67%	43%	24%
Public toilets	86%	62%	24%
Unsealed roads	76%	53%	23%
Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	66%	23%
Land use planning and development	77%	56%	21%
Waste management (garbage and recycling)	93%	77%	16%
Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making	72%	57%	15%
Business growth support (economic development /tourism)	77%	63%	14%
Airports	60%	49%	11%
Footpaths and cycleways	79%	68%	11%
Appearance of town centres and public spaces	85%	76%	9%
Flood management	80%	73%	7%
Weed control	71%	64%	7%
Bridges	91%	87%	4%
Customer service	82%	79%	3%
Urban stormwater and drainage	68%	66%	2%
Parks, reserves and playgrounds	85%	87%	-2%
Environmental monitoring and protection	72%	75%	-3%
Swimming pools	75%	78%	-3%
Water supply	79%	85%	-6%
Wharves, jetties and boat ramps	68%	77%	-9%
Sporting facilities	79%	88%	-9%
Food safety inspections	78%	92%	-14%
Community events	71%	88%	-17%
Cemeteries	71%	90%	-19%
Sewer services	67%	87%	-20%
Libraries	65%	94%	-29%
Arts and culture	53%	88%	-35%
Pet adoption and registration	52%	88%	-36%
Slim Dusty Centre	27%	82%	-55%

**Note:** T2 = important/very important  
T3 = at least somewhat satisfied

# Regression Analysis – Influence on Overall Satisfaction

The chart to the right summarises the influence of the 34 facilities/ services on overall satisfaction with Council's performance, based on the Regression analysis.



# Council's Used to Create the Micromex Regional Benchmark

The Regional Benchmark was composed from the Council areas listed below:		
Albury City Council	Hawkesbury City Council	Narrandera Shire Council
Ballina Shire Council	Lachlan Shire Council	Parkes Shire Council
Bathurst Regional Council	Lake Macquarie City Council	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
Bland Shire Council	Leeton Shire Council	Richmond Valley Council
Blue Mountains City Council	Lismore City Council	Singleton Shire Council
Byron Shire Council	Lithgow City Council	Tamworth Regional Council
Cabonne Shire Council	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Tenterfield Shire Council
Central Coast Council	Maitland City Council	Tweed Shire Council
Cessnock City Council	MidCoast Council	Upper Hunter Shire Council
City of Newcastle	Mid-Western Regional Council	Wagga Wagga City Council
Coffs Harbour City Council	Moree Plains Shire Council	Walgett Shire Council
Devonport City Council	Murray River Council	Weddin Shire Council
Dungog Shire Council	Murrumbidgee Council	Wingecarribee Shire Council
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Muswellbrook Shire Council	Wollondilly Shire Council
Forbes Shire Council	Narrabri Shire Council	Yass Valley Council
Glen Innes Severn Shire Council		

# Level of Expenditure: Economy, Governance and Infrastructure

Economy – 'Increase' spending %	Overall	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Business growth support	53%	53%	54%	59%	58%	55%	46%	54%	49%	65%	48%	49%
Airport	37%	38%	36%	34%	32%	39%	40%	37%	35%	41%	38%	30%
Slim Dusty Centre	6%	4%	8%	3%	3%	6%	10%	5%	11%	7%	5%	6%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	253	48	99	125	77

Governance – 'Increase' spending %	Overall	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Community engagement and consultation	55%	53%	57%	69%	49%	55%	50%	56%	49%	58%	52%	55%
Communications	53%	52%	54%	63%	49%	49%	52%	53%	54%	62%	50%	46%
Financial management and sustainability	41%	40%	41%	53%	39%	37%	36%	41%	40%	44%	36%	43%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	253	48	99	125	77

Infrastructure – 'Increase' spending %	Overall	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Roads, bridges & transport	70%	72%	67%	72%	78%	70%	63%	72%	56%	73%	75%	57%
Stormwater and drainage	41%	38%	43%	53%	39%	36%	38%	40%	43%	38%	40%	45%
Sporting & recreational facilities	31%	32%	30%	47%	41%	23%	21%	30%	38%	34%	23%	39%
Parks & playgrounds	30%	28%	32%	41%	42%	23%	23%	29%	37%	40%	25%	25%
Swimming pools	26%	27%	25%	22%	28%	30%	23%	26%	26%	27%	21%	31%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	253	48	99	125	77

A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)

Q8. Given Council's need to focus on reducing costs, and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the most efficient way, we are keen to understand your views around the level of expenditure Council should be making across a range of services. For the following list of services, do you believe Council's level of expenditure in that area should be increased/maintained/reduced?



# Level of Expenditure: Environment and Community

Environment – 'Increase' spending %	Overall	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Strategic land use planning	40%	43%	37%	47%	47%	31%	39%	40%	41%	39%	39%	43%
Environmental protection	37%	34%	40%	44%	30%	38%	37%	37%	39%	33%	32%	51%
Natural resource management	36%	34%	37%	44%	32%	35%	34%	34%	44%	33%	33%	43%
Council sustainability initiatives	33%	35%	31%	44%	34%	31%	28%	34%	26%	37%	29%	35%
Waste management	31%	33%	29%	31%	33%	34%	27%	29%	41%	34%	30%	27%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	253	48	99	125	77

Community – 'Increase' spending %	Overall	Gender		Age				Ratepayer status		Location		
		Male	Female	18–34	35–49	50–64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	Central	Rural	Coastal
Customer service	34%	33%	34%	38%	33%	33%	32%	33%	35%	36%	35%	29%
Ranger patrols	33%	28%	39%	28%	29%	41%	32%	33%	34%	32%	36%	30%
Community halls	26%	24%	29%	37%	24%	21%	26%	27%	24%	23%	29%	27%
Arts/Cultural development	26%	20%	33%	28%	29%	23%	27%	24%	41%	26%	24%	31%
Library services	15%	14%	17%	12%	13%	19%	16%	14%	21%	12%	14%	22%
Base	301	151	150	63	57	82	99	253	48	99	125	77

A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)



## Questionnaire

## Appendix 2

**Kempsey Shire Council  
Community Survey  
2024**

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is .....and I'm calling on behalf of Kempsey Shire Council from a company called Micromex. We are conducting a survey regarding your local area would now be a good time to share your opinions?

**QA1.** Before we start, can I please confirm that you do live in the Kempsey Shire Council area?

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Yes	
2	No	Terminate

**QA2.** Which suburb/village do you live in or nearest to?

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Bellbrook	
2	Crescent Head	
3	Frederickton	
4	Kempsey	
5	South West Rocks	
6	Stuarts Point	
7	Willawarrin	
8	Rural (please specify)	

**Section A – Priority Issues**

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

Position	Answers	Notes
1		5 lines

**Q2.** Thinking of the next 10 years plus, what do you believe will be the highest priority issues within Kempsey Shire area?

Position	Answers	Notes
1		5 lines

**Q3.** Overall, how would you rate the quality of life you have living in the Kempsey Shire Council area?  
*Prompt*

Value	Answers	Notes
6	Excellent	
5	Very good	
4	Good	
3	Fair	
2	Poor	
1	Very poor	

**Q4.** Over the past few years, do you think your overall quality of life has improved, remained the same, or declined?

Value	Answers	Notes
3	Improved	
2	Remained the same	
1	Decline	

**Q5.** Thinking about what goes on across the Shire, which of the following do you use to search, or find out about, local news and community activities? *Prompt*

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Social media	
2	Community notice boards	
3	Outdoor Advertising (bus stops, screens)	
4	Brochures in shops and cafes	
5	Local newspapers	
6	Local radio	
7	Local TV	
8	Council websites	
9	Word of mouth	
10	Community associations (i.e., clubs and sporting groups)	
11	Community meetings	
12	Brochures and pamphlets dropped at my residence	
13	Email newsletters	
14	Pop up stalls at markets or town centres	
15	Other (Please specify)	
16	None of these	<exclusive/>

**Section B – Importance of, and satisfaction with, Council services**

**Q6.** In this section I will read out different Council services or facilities. For each one could you please rate your opinion of the importance of the service/facility to you, and your level of satisfaction with Council's performance/delivery of that service during the last 12 months. The scale is from 1 to 5, where 1 is low importance and low satisfaction and 5 is high importance and high satisfaction.

*Prompt*

**ASK SATISFACTION IF IMPORTANCE 4/5**

**Water and Sewer Services**

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low			High		Low			High	NA
1	Water supply	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2	Urban stormwater and drainage										
3	Sewer services										

#### Strategic and Asset Planning Services

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low		High			Low		High		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Environmental monitoring and protection										
2	Flood management										
3	Weed control										
4	Land use planning and development										

#### Development and Compliance Services

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low		High			Low		High		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Development application Assessment										
2	Pet adoption and registration										
3	Food safety inspections										

#### Community Partnerships

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low		High			Low		High		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Libraries										
2	Customer services										
3	Arts and culture										
4	Community events										

#### Commercial Business Services

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low		High			Low		High		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Waste management (garbage and recycling)										
2	Business growth support (Economic development /tourism)										
3	Airports										
4	Slim Dusty Centre										
5	Swimming pools										
6	Cemeteries										

#### Infrastructure Delivery Services

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low		High			Low		High		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Bridges										
2	Appearance of town centres and public spaces										
3	Wharves, jetties and boat ramps										
4	Sporting facilities										
5	Parks, reserves and playgrounds										
6	Footpaths and cycleways										
7	Sealed roads										
8	Public toilets										
9	Unsealed roads										

#### Corporate Services and Governance

Position	Answers	Importance					Satisfaction				
		Low		High			Low		High		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making										
2	Provision of Council information to the community										
3	Long-term planning for the LGA										
4	Engaging the community in planning										
5	Financial management										

**Q7. 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? Prompt**

Value	Answers	Notes
5	Very satisfied	
4	Satisfied	
3	Somewhat satisfied	
2	Not very satisfied	
1	Not at all satisfied	

## PART C - Future Expenditure

**Q8.** Given Council's need to focus on reducing costs, and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the most efficient way, we are keen to understand your views around the level of expenditure Council should be making across a range of services. For the following list of services, do you believe Council's level of expenditure in that area should be increased/maintained/reduced?

**Prompt**

**RANDOMISE PILLARS**

### Community

Position	Answers	Do you believe Council's level of spending in this area should: Increase/Maintain/Reduce
1	Customer service	
2	Arts/Cultural development	
3	Library services	
4	Community halls	
5	Ranger patrols	

### Economy

Position	Answers	Do you believe Council's level of spending in this area should: Increase/Maintain/Reduce
1	Business growth support (Economic development /tourism)	
2	Slim Dusty Centre	
3	Airport	

### Environment

Position	Answers	Do you believe Council's level of spending in this area should: Increase/Maintain/Reduce
1	Natural resource management	
2	Waste management	
3	Strategic land use planning	
4	Council sustainability initiatives	
5	Environmental protection	

### Infrastructure

Position	Answers	Do you believe Council's level of spending in this area should: Increase/Maintain/Reduce
1	Stormwater and drainage	
2	Roads, bridges & transport	
3	Parks & playgrounds	
4	Sporting & recreational facilities	
5	Swimming pools	

### Governance

Position	Answers	Do you believe Council's level of spending in this area should: Increase/Maintain/Reduce
1	Financial management and sustainability	
2	Community engagement and consultation	
3	Communications	

**Q9.** Thinking generally about infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and drainage.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you prefer to see Council focus more on providing new assets and 5 means you would prefer for Council to focus more on maintaining current assets, how would you rate your position on this area?

Value	Answers	Notes
1	Focus more on providing new assets	
2		
3		
4		
5	Focus more on maintaining current assets	

**Q10.** Thinking generally about facilities, such as recreation facilities.

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means you prefer to see Council focus more on providing the community fewer centralised, higher quality facilities, and 5 means you would prefer for Council to focus on providing the community a greater number of more basic facilities, how would you rate your position on this area?

Value	Answers	Notes
1	Focus more on providing fewer centralised higher quality facilities	
2		
3		
4		
5	Focus on providing a greater number of more basic facilities	

**Q11a.** To maintain or improve Council services to the community, Council needs to generate more income. The ways in which Council can do this are limited to things like rates income, user fees and charges. In principle, would you be willing to pay, or pay more, for any of the following Council services:

Please answer yes or no as I read each one. MR

Position	Answers	
1	Paid parking - CBD	
2	Paid parking - High use foreshore areas	
3	Sports field use	
4	None of these	<exclusive/>

Q11b. What else do you think Council could/should charge for, or do, to gain more income?

Position	Answers	Notes
1		5 lines

#### Section F – Demographics

D1. Please stop me when I read out your age group: Prompt

Position	Answers	Notes
1	18 – 34	
2	35 – 49	
3	50 – 64	
4	65 years and over	

D2. Which of the following best describes the dwelling where you are currently living? Prompt

Position	Answers	Notes
1	I/we own/are currently buying this property	
2	I/we currently rent this property	

D3. How long have you lived in the Kempsey Shire Council area? Prompt

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Less than 2 years	
2	2 – 5 years	
3	6 – 10 years	
4	11 – 20 years	
5	More than 20 years	

D4. Do you identify as living with disability?

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Yes	
2	No	

D5. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Yes	
2	No	

D6. Gender (determine by voice):

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Male	
2	Female	

As a participant in this research, you may be invited to participate in further community consultation, such as focus groups, about specific issues.

At this stage we are developing a register of interest for future consultations.

D7a. Would you be interested in registering your interest?

Position	Answers	Notes
1	Yes	
2	No	Go to end

D7b. May I please confirm your contact details?

Position	Answers	Notes
1	First name	1 line
2	surname	1 line
3	Phone number	1 line
4	Email address	1 line

Thank you for your time and assistance. This market research is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act, and the information you provided will be used only for research purposes. Just to remind you, I am calling from Micromex Research on behalf of Kempsey Shire Council (if respondent wants Council's number, it is (02) 6566 3200.)



An aerial photograph of a suburban town. In the background, a blue river flows through a green landscape. The town is filled with various houses and buildings, many with solar panels on their roofs. A large parking lot with many cars is visible in the center. The text 'micromex research' is overlaid on the image, with a compass rose icon integrated into the 'o' of 'micromex'.

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