

05) **SURVEY ON FUTURE DELIVERY OF SERVICES**
(Director Corporate Services)

RECOMMENDED:

1. That Council note the Survey on Future Delivery of Services report.

REPORT

Blayney Shire Council undertook a Community Survey during September 2013 to measure the views, ideas and suggestions of community members. The survey was prepared by Groupwork as part of the special rate variation community consultation work being undertaken on behalf of Council.

The objectives of the Community Survey were to:

- Provide the community with the opportunity to communicate openly and candidly with Council;
- Ascertain those services of importance to residents;
- Identify key issues for the Blayney Shire residents;
- Measure performance across key areas for the Blayney Shire;
- Obtain feedback from community members in a meaningful way to build a stronger and more satisfied community;
- Inform future funding decisions of Council;
- Allow for comparative longitudinal analyses of the Council's performance over time.

The attachments to this report analyses and summarises the findings from the 2013 Survey on Future Delivery of Services.

Survey process

Blayney Shire community members were given the opportunity to participate in the survey during September 2012. The survey was distributed to community members in three forms: telephone, online and paper:

- The paper version of the survey was distributed to approximately 4,000 community members via an Australia Post letterbox drop. A further 1,250 was distributed to the Blayney township and Millthorpe village as an insertion in a catalogue drop.
- The online survey was made accessible via the Council website, Facebook and Twitter.

Responses were received by over 6% of eligible community members and provided a representative sample of the overall community - both in terms of number of responses and geographic location.

Survey outline

The survey listed a cross section of Council services and asked respondents to rank the services on importance and satisfaction. It also sought broad information on demographics and location.

Respondents were provided 3 responses on Importance of Services from *Very Important to Not Important*.

Respondents were provided 4 responses on Satisfaction of Services from *Very Satisfied to Not Satisfied or N/A*.

The survey results revealed the following:

Most Important Service Activities

The top 5 service delivery items, as identified by the community, were ranked as follows (highest to lowest):

1. Local Roads
2. Helpful (Council) Staff
3. Clean Food Shops and Restaurants
4. Order and Cleanliness
5. (Standard) of Public Toilets

Greatest Satisfaction with Council's Service provision

Those services achieving the highest level of satisfaction were:

1. Parks and Gardens
2. Rubbish Tips and Recycling
3. Helpful Staff
4. Sewer Services
5. Library

Greatest Level of Dissatisfaction with the provision of Council Services

In contrast, the greatest level of 'Dissatisfaction' with the provision of Council Services was ranked as follows (from most dissatisfied to less dissatisfied):

1. Local Roads
2. Development and Building Approvals
3. Footpaths
4. Animal and Pest Control
5. Bridges

These results will help Council to determine future funding priorities and will provide benchmark data for surveys undertaken.

A copy of the survey results will be published on Council website.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with distribution of surveys will be borne within existing budgets. Costs associated with the community consultation program are included in the first quarter review of the 2013/14 Operational Plan.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

IP&R LINK

DP 6.2.3 – Develop communications between Councillors and the community to provide community opinion.

Attachments

- 1 Analysis of Service Results 4 Pages
- 2 Survey Results 1 Page

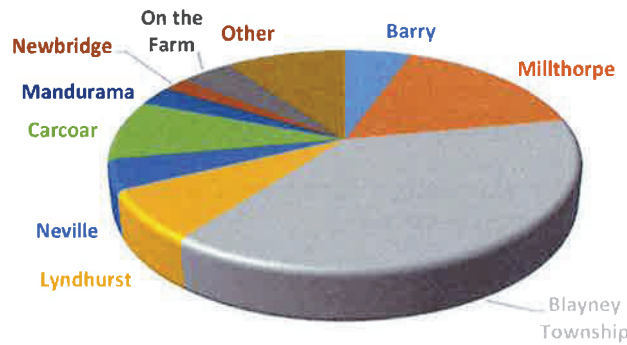
Community Survey Results - Service Provision

Background

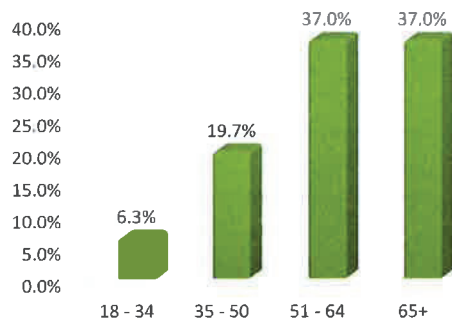
The Community Survey was undertaken between Friday, September 30th and Friday, October 19th 2013. The Survey was available in both paper format and for completion on-line via Council's website. Printed survey forms were 'mailed' to each household in Blayney (a copy of the distributed survey form is attached at Appendix 'A'). In addition to this mail distribution, the survey was promoted on Council's website, on Facebook and Twitter and at community and other meetings.

Collection boxes were provided in each village and a box was also available in Council's Foyer. All surveys, whether submitted in hard copy or completed online, were entered into computer based collection and analysis software.

The number of surveys returned represented over 6% of eligible community members and provided a representative sample of the overall community - both in terms of number of responses and geographic location. The chart below shows the relative number of responses and geographic location:



The age spread of respondents is shown below, where 74.0% of respondents were 51 years or older and 26% of respondents were 18 to 50 years of age.



The gender of respondents was 44% male and 56% female.

'Top 5' Rankings

The overall results were analysed to determine the 'Top 5' Rankings in each of 3 principal categories:

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A full list of results and ranking of Council services is summarised at Appendix 'B'.

Correlation between Categories (Importance and Satisfaction)

While 'Local Roads' ranks as the most important service provided by Council, *it also* ranks as the service of greatest community dissatisfaction. This clearly reinforces the need for greater funding to provide improved road (and bridge) maintenance and renewal - to achieve a higher level of community satisfaction.

Conversely, 'Helpful Council Staff' which ranks as the 2nd most important Council provided service, is also ranked as the 3rd highest level of Community Satisfaction – suggesting that Community expectations are being met.

Service Item	Importance Rank	Satisfaction Rank	Δ
Local Roads	1	31	30
Helpful Staff	2	3	1
Clean Food Shops and Restaurants	3	10	7
Order and Cleanliness	4	7	3
Public Toilets	5	17	12

The above chart shows the difference (Δ) between 'Importance' and 'Satisfaction' rankings, for the 5 'most important' services provided by Council.

It can be seen that while there is general satisfaction with the provision of the top 5 Council services, there is a substantial divergence between the importance of Local Roads (infrastructure) and the satisfaction level recorded by the Community.

Other services with a high divergence between their rated importance and satisfaction levels were:

- Aged and Disability Access
- Road Safety and Traffic Management
- Signage
- Order & Cleanliness
- Overall Attractiveness
- Animal and Pest Control
- Footpaths

Overall Satisfaction

For all service categories, the level of 'Satisfaction' exceeded that of dissatisfaction – ranging from 78.9% to 98.4% of respondents being either 'Somewhat Satisfied' or 'Highly Satisfied'.

Overall results demonstrated that there is satisfaction with the delivery of council services, however, there is community expectation that the level of service for certain, generally infrastructure related services, be improved.

Community Comments

Community comments were included in both the printed responses and surveys completed on-line. 17% of respondents also provided additional comments. The Text Analysis shown below depicts graphically the most frequently repeated words or topics:

Blayney Centrepoint Library Live Local Millthorpe
Rates Road Street Toilets

Comments ranged from the method by which the survey was conducted, to the provision of services and the proposed Special Rate Variation.

Typical comments and responses are shown below:

- I commend Blayney Council for improving various services within the shire and a great improvement in public relations - Keep up the good work!
- Good to see council proactively seeking the community's opinion. Well done.
- Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this survey
- [I] am completing this online as we didn't receive a survey. Other farmers in the area also did not receive a survey...Very poor communication from Blayney Shire Council.

- Comment on Centrepoint - pool must be heated. It is useless cold.
- Need toilets at some Sports Fields.

- We believe that the street-scape could be greatly improved. Perhaps something similar to Boorowa's street beautification.
- Main Street, empty shops. I feel that a lot of old trees should be cut down, limbs picked up. Rubbish around parks and walkways could be more tidy e.g. IGA. Driving into town could be nicer.
- I would like to see empty shops in Adelaide Street have a coat of paint (volunteers) and let out to artisans at a nominal rent to bring interest and tourism to the town.

- Happy to pay increased rates if councillors provide improved services to village areas. Concern[ed] roads in rural areas are causing cost increases to village residents.
- All these services are very important. How and when they are approached should be in the hands of Council staff and the elected Councillors.
- I do not agree with the 15% increase in rates. As most aged pensioners will be forced to sell their homes and move into small rent units to live out their life.

Complete details of Survey results and all comments will be provided on Council's website.

Community Survey Results - Service Provision

Appendix B'

Rank	Service Item	Score /100	Rank	Service Item	Score /100	Rank	Service Item	Score /100	Rank	Service Item	Score /100
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Most Important Services

1	Local Roads	100
2	Helpful Staff	94
3	Clean Food Shops & Restaurants	91
4	Order & Cleanliness	88
5	Public Toilets	80
6	Road Safety & Traffic Management	79
7	Signage	76
8	Bridges	73
9	Rubbish Tips & Recycling	72
10	Overall Attractiveness	71
11	Aged and Disabled Access	67
12	Industry & Business Support	64
13	Tourism Support	60
14	Development & Building Approvals	60
15	Street Trees	60
16	Parks and Gardens	59
17	Town Planning	59
18	Sewer	58
19	Animal & Pest Control	57
20	Footpaths	55
21	Street Lighting	52
22	Drains & Kerbing	50
23	Library	50
24	Cemeteries	50
25	Youth Services	48
26	Heritage Conservation	47
27	Community Assistance Grants	46
28	CentrePoint Sport & Leisure	44
29	Car Parking	42
30	Support for Events	40
31	Sports Facilities	38
32	Cycle & Walkways	31
33	Council's Website	26
34	Use of Facebook & Twitter	10

Greatest Satisfaction with Service Provision

1	Parks and Gardens	100
2	Rubbish Tips & Recycling	83
3	Helpful Staff	77
4	Sewer	74
5	Library	67
6	Car Parking	63
7	Order & Cleanliness	62
8	CentrePoint Sport & Leisure	58
9	Street Trees	58
10	Clean Food Shops & Restaurants	57
11	Sports Facilities	54
12	Cemeteries	54
13	Road Safety & Traffic Management	50
14	Signage	48
15	Community Assistance Grants	46
16	Overall Attractiveness	46
17	Public Toilets	45
18	Street Lighting	43
19	Drains & Kerbing	41
20	Cycle & Walkways	36
21	Heritage Conservation	36
22	Aged and Disabled Access	35
23	Animal & Pest Control	34
24	Footpaths	33
25	Council's Website	29
26	Bridges	27
27	Town Planning	26
28	Support for Events	25
29	Tourism Support	20
30	Development & Building Approvals	19
31	Local Roads	16
32	Youth Services	15
33	Use of Facebook & Twitter	15
34	Industry & Business Support	15

Greatest Dissatisfaction with Service Provision

1	Local Roads	100
2	Development & Building Approvals	67
3	Footpaths	57
4	Animal & Pest Control	56
5	Bridges	56
6	Tourism Support	56
7	Signage	52
8	Public Toilets	52
9	Overall Attractiveness	49
10	Aged and Disabled Access	45
11	Industry & Business Support	41
12	Town Planning	40
13	Youth Services	40
14	Cycle & Walkways	39
15	Drains & Kerbing	38
16	Support for Events	35
17	Street Trees	34
18	Rubbish Tips & Recycling	28
19	Order & Cleanliness	27
20	Use of Facebook & Twitter	27
21	Road Safety & Traffic Management	26
22	Community Assistance Grants	26
23	Street Lighting	26
24	Sewer	24
25	Heritage Conservation	24
26	Library	23
27	CentrePoint Sport & Leisure	23
28	Sports Facilities	23
29	Car Parking	20
30	Helpful Staff	19
31	Clean Food Shops & Restaurants	19
32	Cemeteries	19
33	Council's Website	19
34	Parks and Gardens	10

Least Important Services

1	Use of Facebook & Twitter	100
2	Council's Website	55
3	Cycle & Walkways	46
4	Car Parking	45
5	Support for Events	43
6	Sports Facilities	43
7	CentrePoint Sport & Leisure	42
8	Sewer	40
9	Drains & Kerbing	32
10	Library	32
11	Heritage Conservation	29
12	Youth Services	28
13	Community Assistance Grants	28
14	Footpaths	27
15	Street Lighting	25
16	Aged and Disabled Access	22
17	Cemeteries	20
18	Development & Building Approvals	18
19	Street Trees	18
20	Tourism Support	17
21	Animal & Pest Control	16
22	Town Planning	15
23	Industry & Business Support	14
24	Road Safety & Traffic Management	13
25	Bridges	9
26	Rubbish Tips & Recycling	9
27	Parks and Gardens	9
28	Public Toilets	8
29	Clean Food Shops & Restaurants	7
30	Signage	7
31	Overall Attractiveness	7
32	Order & Cleanliness	5
33	Local Roads	3
34	Helpful Staff	2