

3.5 THE 2008 DEPARTMENT FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES ANNUAL COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

(CORP27: MK:DW)

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the results of the Monash City Council Annual Community Satisfaction Survey for 2008 conducted by the Victorian State Government.

BACKGROUND

The 2008 Community Satisfaction Survey conducted in February and March is the eleventh survey undertaken to measure how Victorian residents rate the performance of their local governments. This year the statewide survey was conducted by an independent research group, Wallis Consulting Group, and is jointly funded by the Department for Victorian Communities and Victorian Councils.

DISCUSSION

In an interview lasting around ten minutes, a minimum of 350 residents in each of the participating Victorian municipalities are asked to rate their Council's Performance on a 5 point scale between 5= 'Excellent' and 1= 'Needs a lot of improvement', for:

- Overall Performance in general of Council,
- Customer service, community representation on key local issues and community engagement and;
- 9 Key responsibility areas.

The mean (average) score for each area is calculated and then multiplied by 20 to give an "indexed mean" of up to 100. Where respondents indicated that performance in key responsibility areas needed improvement, diagnostic questions were asked and additional analysis was done.

A key aim of the survey is to establish a standard methodology for comparative measurement of community satisfaction across all Victorian Councils with the objective of focusing on the trend in results over time and strategies to further improve services.

The City of Monash mean (average) results are compared to the mean (average) results for a group of 16 "like" (inner metropolitan) Councils and to the mean (average) results for all participating Victorian Councils. Council can benchmark its performance to assist in determining focus areas for improvement.

In October each year, Monash also undertakes its own independent and more extensive research of community satisfaction.

KEY RESULTS

Local Government indicators

Council maintained its good result in recent reports for Overall Performance of Council with a result of (70). This result is 'higher' than the mean for all Victorian Councils and similar to the mean for the group of "like" (inner metropolitan) Councils. Community Engagement (63) 'improved' significantly up 8 points from last year while Customer Contact (74) and Advocacy (64) marginally improved their strong results from last year.

Specific Performance Areas

Very pleasing results were achieved for the Specific Performance Areas with an improvement on last year where considered 'improved' performance was achieved in 2008 when compared with last year's results. In addition to this Council's performance across four service areas was higher than all councils in the Group (inner metropolitan) and higher across five service areas for all Councils (across the State).

Results for the following Specific Performance Areas produced a higher performance on last year for the indexed mean:

- Health and Human Services (75) (up 5 points)
- Recreational Facilities (74) (up 6 points)

In addition to this outcome "improved" results were also achieved for Community Engagement, (up 8 points). Also of note are the results for Town Planning Policy and Approvals (up 3 points) and Waste Management both achieving a 'higher' result than the mean for both the group of "like" (inner metropolitan) Councils as well as the mean for all Victorian Councils.

Results for the following Specific Performance Areas were considered 'unchanged' (less than 5 points on the indexed mean) but 'higher' to the mean for the group of "like" (inner metropolitan) Councils in 2008:

- Traffic Management and Parking (60) up from (58)
- Waste Management (78) maintained at (78)
- Enforcement of Local Laws (67) up from (66)
- Town Planning Policy and Approvals (62) up from (59)

Results for the following Specific Performance Areas remained 'unchanged' against Council's own results for 2008 when compared with last year's results and 'similar' to the mean for the group of "like" (inner metropolitan) Councils:

- Local Roads/Footpaths (65)
- Appearance of Public Areas (70)
- Economic Development (67)
- Appearance of Public Areas (70)

OVERVIEW

The following is an overview of the 2008 results: Note: All numbers in brackets are an “indexed mean” of up to 100.

1. Monash residents who participated in the survey rated Council’s overall performance at (70), ‘unchanged’ from 2007 and ‘higher’ than the mean for all Victorian Councils. This excellent score is the result of 84% of respondents indicating an ‘improved’ or ‘stayed the same’ assessment.

2. Satisfaction with Council’s Customer Contact (interaction and responsiveness) for respondents who had contact with Council over the last 12 months was ‘unchanged’ at (74). This result is similar to the mean for both the group of “like” (inner metropolitan) Councils and all Victorian Councils. 65% thought the Council’s performance with regard to customer contact was good to excellent while 17% indicated that Council’s performance needed improvement.

3. Satisfaction with how well Council engages with their community in decision making on key local issues ‘improved’ to (63). This area of Council is relatively important to respondents, the level of importance has an impact on the ability to achieve a high score. Importantly only 28% indicated that Council’s performance needed improvement.

4. Satisfaction with how well Council performs in lobbying to other levels of government and private organisations remained unchanged at (64). This result is similar to the mean for both the group of “like” (inner metropolitan) Councils and all Victorian Councils.

Those results that form the Local Government Indicators will be included in the Council’s Annual Report for 2007 – 2008. Copies of the survey will be available at Council’s five libraries, the Civic Centre in Glen Waverley, the Oakleigh Service Centre and on Council’s web site.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Council’s overall results continue to reflect a high level of performance with improved performance recorded for one Local Government Indicator and two Performance Areas. Improved results were achieved for Community Engagement, Health and Human Services and Recreation Services.

CONCLUSION

The very pleasing results show that Council continues to perform well, improving own its own results as well significantly improved performance in comparison with other Councils within the group (inner metropolitan) and all other Councils across the State.