

5.3 RESULTS OF 2021 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

(JR:)

Submitting Senior Officer: Dr Andi Diamond, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the findings of the 2021 Monash Community Satisfaction Survey, including excellent results for Council's Customer Service, and that specific areas have been identified for further attention or improvement.

INTRODUCTION

This year's Community Satisfaction Survey was conducted in April 2021 as a telephone survey, not a face-to-face doorstep interview as planned, due to COVID-19 restrictions. The research was again undertaken by independent research company *Metropolis Research Pty Ltd*, with 800 randomly selected residents aged 15 years and over.

The survey also measured the importance to the community of 28 individual services and facilities and explored the top issues the community feel needs to be addressed in the municipality. The survey sample reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of our community with 45% of respondents coming from a multi-lingual household.

The survey meets the requirements of the Local Government Victorian annual satisfaction survey by providing ratings on importance and satisfaction for the major services and facilities provided by Council, as well as scores for satisfaction with Council.

The results are useful to Council as they highlight areas where we are performing well and identify areas for improvement, as well as helping track our performance over time.

RESULTS

Council recorded a strong result again this year for "overall satisfaction," a score of 7.3, however there was a 2.3% decline compared to last year's very high score of 7.5. The score of 7.3 still places Monash as recording the highest level of satisfaction amongst metropolitan Councils.

Monash reported scores "measurably higher" than the metropolitan Melbourne average benchmark of 69 and marginally higher than the 7.2

recorded by the eastern region councils in the 2021 *Governing Melbourne* research.

The overall satisfaction score of 7.3 brings this category back into line with the long-term average over the last five years of 7.37.

Overall satisfaction with the City of Monash remains in the “very good” range.

Satisfaction in the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework reporting requirements were:

- Council’s overall performance (7.3)
- Maintaining trust and confidence of the local community (7.2)
- Community engagement and consultation (6.9)
- Making decisions in the interest of the community (7.1)
- Responsiveness to local community needs (7.1) and
- Representation, lobbying and advocacy on behalf of community (6.8).

Each of these aspects rated significantly above the Melbourne metropolitan benchmarks however there was an average 4.5% decline in satisfaction with the five aspects of governance and leadership, more than reversing the average 1.8% increase recorded last year. Similar and larger declines in governance and leadership have been observed in other Council results, and Metropolis Research advises that these appear unrelated to satisfaction with overall performance. It is possible that the local government elections in late 2020 may have impacted on satisfaction with governance and leadership.

Satisfaction with Council’s customer service increased substantially this year, up 4.3% to 7.8, taking its rating from “very good” to “excellent.”

The survey also asks about satisfaction with, and the importance of, 28 specific Council services and facilities. The report concludes that satisfaction with services and facilities in Monash was stable this year at 7.8 and remains on average at an “excellent” level. Across metropolitan Melbourne, satisfaction with Council services is rated as “very good” at an average score of 7.5.

In Monash, the highest community satisfaction continues to be with the rubbish collection (8.5), recycling service (8.5), local libraries & library services (8.4), green waste collection (8.4), Council run services for children and their families (8.21), hard rubbish collection (8.19), and recreation and aquatic centres (8.13).

Residents dissatisfied with Council’s overall performance mentioned public toilets, the Monash Bulletin, green waste and garbage collection, parking enforcement, provision of parking facilities, footpath maintenance and repairs and local traffic management.

SOME AREAS FOR COUNCIL'S ATTENTION OR IMPROVEMENT

The areas identified as needing attention of Monash Council are:

- Building, housing and planning and development (9.6% up from 9.2%)
- Parks, gardens and open spaces (9.1% up from 3.6%)
- Traffic management (7.6% down from 10%)
- Parking (7.2% down from 11.1%)
- Road maintenance and repairs (6% up from 2.6%).

There was a significant increase this year in the proportion of respondents nominating issues around parks, gardens, and open spaces. This increase from 3.6% last year to 9.1% this year, brings this result into line with the metropolitan Melbourne average, and highlights the importance of parks, gardens, and open spaces to the community, particularly through COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

Council thanks those community members who gave of their time to participate in our 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey. Such feedback provides direction and focus on what matters to our residents and inspires us to build an even higher-functioning organisation that is community-focused.

The full results of this survey have been made public (in this meeting's agenda) and will be communicated to residents via the Monash Bulletin, the e-newsletter, a media release and on Council's website. There is no requirement for this but Monash does make its full report publicly available every year in the interests of transparency and open government.