

Central Coast Council Community Survey Report

November 2012



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1. Detailed report

Introduction

Survey objectives

Insync Surveys was engaged by Central Coast Council to conduct a Community Survey during the period of November 2012 to measure community members' views, ideas and suggestions. This is the third Community Survey conducted by Insync Surveys for Central Coast Council, with the first survey conducted in May/June 2008.

The objectives of the Community Survey are to:

- Provide the community with the opportunity to communicate openly and candidly with the Management Team & Council staff of Central Coast Council
- Identify key issues for Central Coast Council's residents
- Measure performance across key areas for Central Coast Council
- Use the information from the community survey in a meaningful way to build a stronger and more satisfied community.

Survey Process

Central Coast community members were given the opportunity to participate in the survey conducted during November 2012. Participation in the survey was completely anonymous, thus improving the potential for community's concerns to be captured and identified. The survey was distributed to a representative sample of 2533 Central Coast Community members via the post. From this sample, 484 survey forms were received. The survey forms received were significantly higher than the survey forms returned in 2010, whereby only 282 survey forms were returned in 2010.

This is a satisfactory sample which allows for confidence in interpreting the results; we have a 95% level of confidence (with between 5-10% margin of error) that results in this survey can be generalised to the population.

The Survey comprised of eight sections:

Section 1, 3 and 5 asked community members to rate how **important** each of the statements is to them, on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1=Low and 7=High. Community members were then asked to rate (on the same scale) how they felt Central Coast Council was **performing** with regard to each statement.

Section 2 asked community members to respond to questions in relation to how they interact with the Council.

Section 4 asked community members to respond to questions in regard to themselves and their community.

Section 6 asked community members about their preferred source of information.

Section 7 asked community members to provide open (free-text) comments regarding Central Coast Council and to highlight any general concerns or suggestion for improvement that they might have for the Council.

Section 8 asked community members to provide some broad demographic information; including locality, gender, ownership status (i.e., owner, tenant, visitor), age, computer access, access to the internet, employment status, and length of residency in Central Coast municipal area.

Response statistics

The overall response rate for the 2012 survey was 19% (484 responses). This response rate was significantly higher than that achieved in 2010 (14.1%, 282 responses).

The following table details the number of survey forms received from each of the demographics in the survey. A number of community members did not specify their demographic information, and these forms have consequently been classified as 'unspecified'.

Insync Surveys received a total of 484 completed forms. As can be seen in the response statistics table below:

- The majority of the respondents are from the Ulverstone at 34.3%
- More than half of respondents have resided in Central Coast for over 20 years (60.7%), followed by 11-20 years (15.1%) and 6-10 years (12.8%)
- Approximately 39.7% of respondents are in the 51-65 year old age bracket while 34.7% of respondents are aged 65 years and over
- The gender ratio of respondents is relatively equal with 44.4% men and 55.6% females
- The majority of respondents (96.9%) identified themselves as owners of property within Central Coast
- With regard to employment status, a significant proportion of respondents are retired (42.9%) or are working full time (26.2%)
- More than three quarters of the respondents (72%) indicated owning a personal computer at home
- Almost half of the residents (47.1%) indicated having internet access at home.

Executive summary

Here are some key findings from the 2012 survey:

- Overall, 484 responses (19%) were captured and is significantly higher than the last survey in 2010, with only 282 responses (14.1%). The majority of respondents were from Ulverstone (34.3%).
- Areas of high performance relate to friendliness of Council staff, Council's financial management, traffic movement throughout the municipal area, appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs and continuity of Council Staff. No significant gap scores was recorded which is noteworthy. Approximately 62% of respondents indicated fairly high satisfaction with the Council.
- A high proportion of community members contact the Council in person (80%) or by phone (48%). However, only 44% indicated that they have used the Visitor Information Centre in the last 12 months.
- Central Coast residents prioritised council facilities and services as recycling collection services, parks and gardens, garbage collection services, playgroup equipment and general enquiries at customer service. Although no significant gap scores is recorded for this section, *Roadside management – rural* recorded a gap score approaching significant at 1.71.
- The two areas that had decrease in performance were around being a member of a community group, having enough jobs in Central Coast and having enough variety of jobs.
- In terms of Central Coast's 'Future Direction', *The Shape of the Place* recorded the highest performance ranking.
- Majority of community members preferred to receive information from the Council through newsletters (53%) and monthly page in *The Advocate* (35%). Only 3% perceived media coverage of Council activities to be very negative.
- The comments provided rich insights into understanding the results further as well as providing improvement suggestions. When asked about issues facing Central Coast Council in the next five years, the responses were related to the lack of job opportunities, especially for youths, lack of aged care facilities and concerns on ageing population, housing affordability, increasing rates and sustaining local businesses. Some positive aspects of Central Coast Council were identified as safety of living in Central Coast, free parking, beautiful surroundings and beaches, and the location. Respondents identified areas for improvement as development and maintenance of cycling tracks, walking tracks, footpaths and roads, reducing Council rates and increasing frequency of green waste collection.

Central Coast Council Community Survey results
Response statistics

	Nov 2012	Jul 2010
Total	484	282
Please indicate where you live		
Forth	18	7
Leith	9	1
Turners Beach	27	4
Ulverstone	166	39
West Ulverstone	85	113
Penguin	85	13
Sulphur Creek	12	5
Heybridge	6	3
Gawler	18	3
Cuprona	5	13
West Pine	6	13
Riana	3	5
South Riana	2	1
North Motton	11	17
Preston	4	12
Nietta	1	6
Kindred	9	3
Gunns Plains	4	n/a
Castra	0	n/a
Sprent	3	n/a
Unspecified	10	24
Employment Status		
Full time	127	103
Part time	92	40
Student	2	5
Household	14	10
Retired	208	99
Other	27	17
Unemployed	3	n/a
Unspecified	11	24
Length of time residing in Central Coast municipal area		
Less than 3 years	18	19
3 to 5 years	28	23
6 to 10 years	62	32
11 to 20 years	73	43
More than 20 years	294	159
Unspecified	9	24
Gender		
Female	269	135
Male	203	140
Unspecified	12	24

Status		
Owner	469	245
Tenant	4	21
Visitor	0	1
Unspecified	11	24
Do you have a computer at home?		
Yes	349	230
No	96	44
Unspecified	39	24
Do you have access to the internet?		
At home	228	148
At work	12	17
At home and work	125	n/a
None	104	50
Unspecified	15	24
Age		
18 years and under	0	3
19 to 34 years	27	24
35 to 50 years	79	71
51 to 65 years	192	108
Over 65 years	168	73
Unspecified	18	24

Section 1: What is on your mind and how are we doing?

What the community feel is important

The five highest ranked importance variables for Central Coast community members (listed in descending priority order) for **Section 1** are reported in the table below.

November 2012 Top 5 importance	Mean	July 2010 Top 5 importance	Mean
Council's financial management	6.26	Council's financial management	6.24
Friendliness of staff at the Council	6.14	Appearance of your neighbourhood/district	6.15
Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs	6.05	Friendliness of staff at the Council	6.12
Appearance of your neighbourhood/district	6.02	Knowledge and experience of staff at the Council	6.09
Council management of the environment	5.96	Ease in contacting the right person at the Council	6.07
June 2008 Top 5 importance	Mean		
Council's financial management	6.35		
Appearance of your neighbourhood/district	6.24		
Friendliness of staff at the Council	6.23		
Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs	6.21		
Council management of the environment	6.17		

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five importance for 2010

The top five importance list contains three variables that are consistent with the previous survey in July 2010, and importance scores have increased slightly with the exception of *Appearance of your neighbourhood/district* which has decreased. When comparing the 2012 results to 2008 results, all five areas of importance were consistent despite being in different order of importance. This indicated that areas of importance to the community members have remained stable over time.

Areas of high importance for Central Coast community members relate to Council's financial management, friendliness of Council staff, appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin, appearance of the neighbourhood/district and council management of the environment. All five statements attracted mean importance scores above six from a possible score of seven, with the exception of *Council management of the environment*, indicating high levels of importance for community members.

How the community feel Central Coast Council is performing

The table below reports, in descending order, the five variables ranked highest in performance by Central Coast community members for **Section 1**.

November 2012 Top 5 performance	Mean	July 2010 Top 5 performance	Mean
Friendliness of staff at the Council*	5.57	Friendliness of staff at the Council	5.36
Council's financial management*	5.12	Traffic movement throughout the municipal area	5.03
Traffic movement throughout the municipal area	5.08	Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs	4.94
Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs*	4.92	Council's financial management	4.78
Continuity of Council staff (Same Council officer handling your issue)	4.91	Knowledge and experience of staff at the Council	4.67
June 2008 Top 5 performance	Mean		
Friendliness of staff at the Council	5.62		
Traffic movement throughout the municipal area	4.84		
Council's financial management	4.72		
Continuity of Council staff (Same Council officer handling your issue)	4.65		
Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs	4.63		

(N.B. Statements marked * were also identified in the top five importance list)

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five performance for 2010

The top five performance list contains three variables from the top five importance list, namely:

- *Friendliness of staff at the Council*
- *Council's financial management*
- *Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs*

These variables can be seen as the strengths of the Council, with community members identifying them as both important **and** performing better than the remaining variables. Furthermore, scores of five and above on a seven-point scales identify areas of particularly high performance.

The top five performance list contains four variables included in the top five performance list in the 2010 survey. The mean scores for *Friendliness of staff at the council*, *Council's financial management* and *Traffic movement throughout the municipal area* have improved slightly since the previous survey in 2010, while *Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs* decreased slightly.

Similar to the top five importance, the results from 2012 and 2008 were consistent (albeit being in different order of performance) which indicated that the community's perception of the Council's performance remained stable over time.

At the other end of the scale are the lowest performing variables. This table shows the five variables given the lowest rankings by Central Coast community members in 2012 as compared with those ranked lowest in 2010 and 2008 for **Section 1**. Please note that the lowest performing variable appears first on the list.

November 2012 Lowest 5 performance	Mean	July 2010 Lowest 5 performance	Mean
Opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making	4.02	Urban and rural planning	3.89
Urban and rural land use planning	4.12	Opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making	3.90
After hours service provision by Council	4.20	Elected member representation of community issues	3.98
Elected member (councillor) representation of community issues	4.29	After-hours service provision by Council	4.20
Council support of local industry and business	4.32	Council's leadership within the community	4.21
June 2008 Lowest 5 performance	Mean		
Urban and rural planning	3.51		
Opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making	3.75		
Council's leadership within the community	3.88		
Elected member representation of community issues	3.89		
After-hours service provision by Council	4.06		

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five lowest performance for 2010

The lowest five performing areas relate to opportunities for the community be involved in decision making, urban and rural land use planning, after hours service provided by the Council, councillor's representation of community issues and Council support of local industry and business.

As can be noted from the above table, none of the lowest performing variables are common to the top five importance list, which is a positive result.

The list has four variables in common with the 2010 survey. Furthermore, all of these have shown improvements over time.

When comparing results from 2012 and 2008, there were four variables that were common in both results with the exception of *Council's leadership within the community* which was present in 2008 only. Again, this indicated that the areas of improvement opportunities as perceived by the community stayed somewhat constant over time.

Where Community members Feel Central Coast Council can improve

In identifying factors for improvement, Insync Surveys analyses the perceived difference – or “gap” – between the importance and performance score for each variable. These gaps indicate areas of frustration or dissatisfaction for community members and thus represent improvement opportunities. Based on our research, gaps of or above 2.00 are considered significant, with a gap score of 3.00 or higher generally pointing to widespread dissatisfaction. For the purpose of business improvement, it is important to keep in mind that a larger gap does not indicate a larger problem, rather it indicates an increase in certainty that the variable is indeed of some level of concern.

The table below reports the five variables with the highest gap scores for **Section 1** of the 2012, 2010 and 2008 surveys.

November 2012 Top 5 gaps	Mean	July 2010 Top 5 gaps	Mean
Opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making	1.52	Urban and rural planning	2.02
Urban and rural land use planning	1.49	Opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making	1.74
Council support of local industry and business	1.47	Appearance of your neighbourhood/district	1.64
Appearance of your neighbourhood/district*	1.39	Ease in contacting the right person at the Council	1.61
Elected member (councillor) representation of community issues	1.25	Council support of local industry and business	1.53
June 2008 Top 5 gaps	Mean		
Urban and rural planning	2.55		
Appearance of your neighbourhood/district	1.93		
Opportunities for the community to	1.92		

participate in decision-making	
Council's leadership within the community	1.88
Elected member representation of community issues	1.84

(N.B. Statements marked * were also identified in the top five importance list)

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five gaps for 2010

A review of the results across all 20 variables identified no gap scores of 2.00 or higher. This is an extremely positive result for Central Coast.

The top five improvement opportunities list contains one variable from the top five importance list. The statement *Appearance of your neighbourhood/district* represent the Council with improvement opportunities as they are important to community members, but are not perceived to be performing as well as other areas.

On a pleasing note, the gap scores for the top three areas of concern have decreased slightly since the 2010 survey.

The top five gaps for the 2012 results and 2008 results shared four common variables, with the exception of *Council's leadership within the community* which was present in 2008 results only.

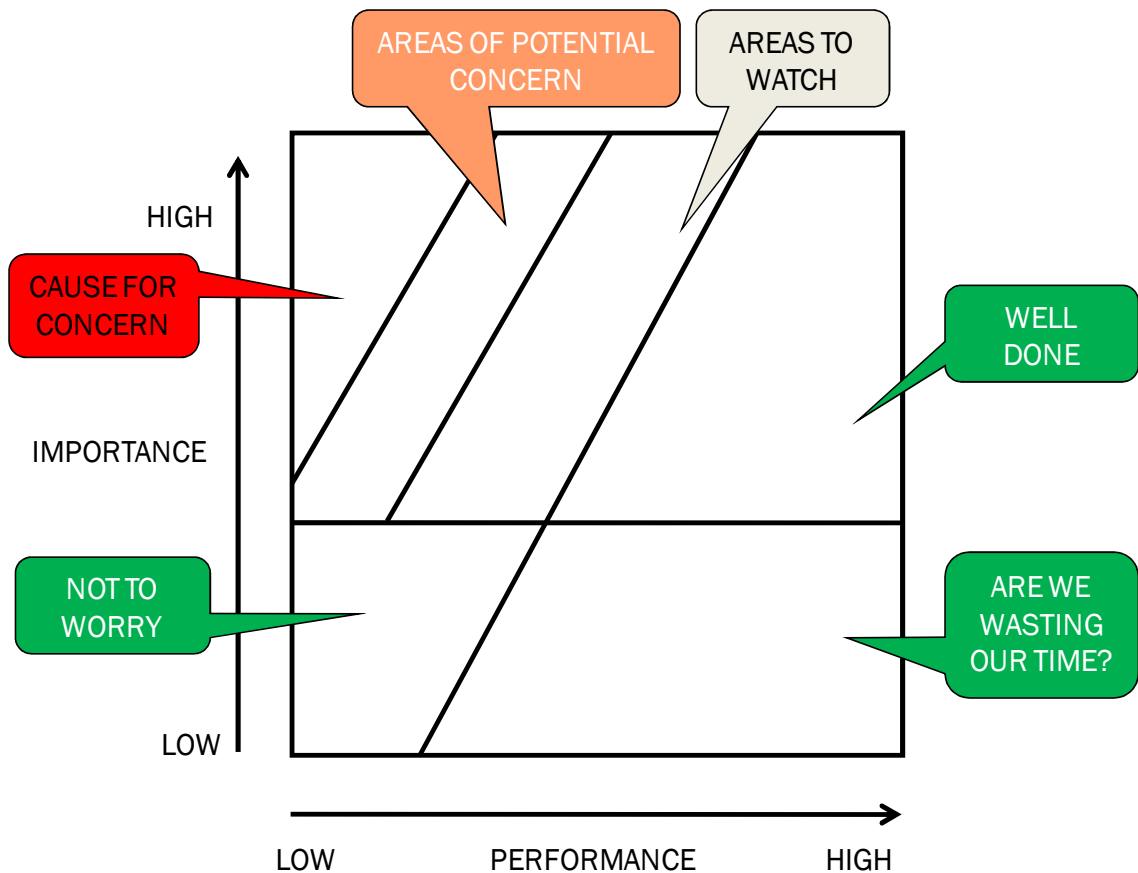
Prioritising improvement opportunities – gap grid analysis

Analysis of these gaps enables Central Coast Council to prioritise strategies for improvement, in terms of those factors considered most pressing by community members.

For an issue to be considered in need of attention, it must have both a gap score above 2.00 and be of high importance. A significant gap score together with a low importance score does not indicate an issue for community members. Conversely, a significant gap score together with a high importance score suggests an area of concern.

It is important to note that a larger gap does not indicate a larger problem. It rather indicates an increase in certainty that the variable is indeed of some level of concern.

This information is calculated by and reported in the gap grid. It is a unique visual tool that allows you to see several key pieces of information within the one diagram. For each survey variable it shows the performance score (horizontal axis), the importance score (vertical axis) and the gap score (colour coded). The gap grid is a highly effective tool at an aggregate level and also at a specific demographic level.



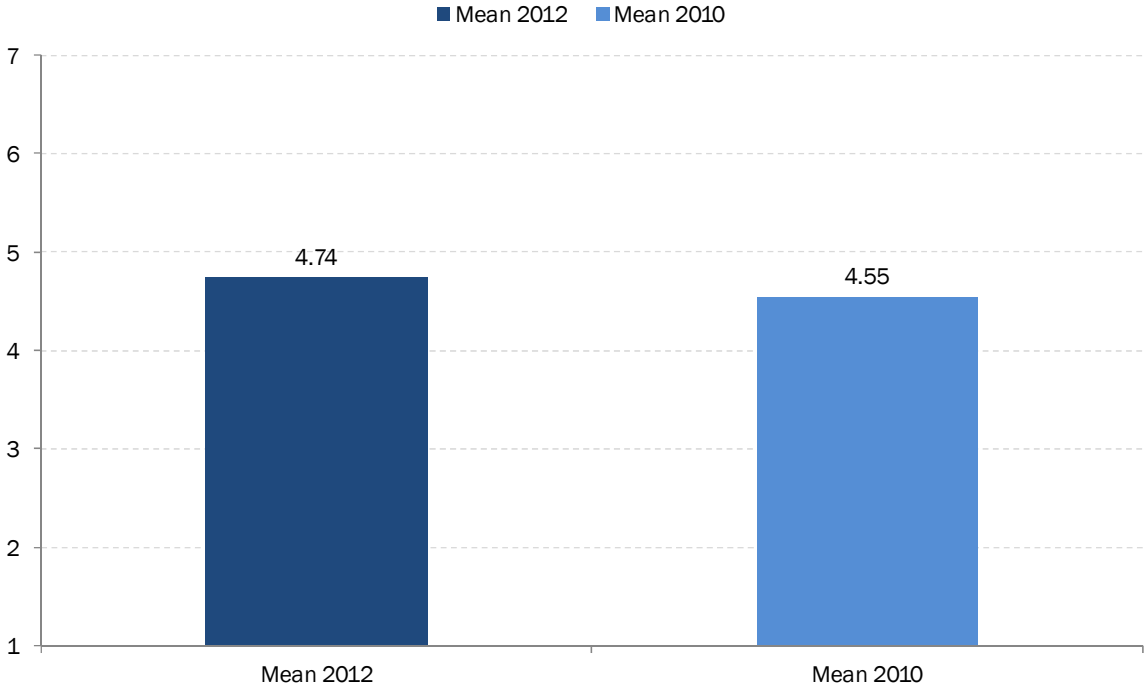
Legend: ■ Gap > 2.9 ■ Gap > 1.9 ■ Gap > 1.4 ■ Gap > 0.9 ■ Gap < 0.9

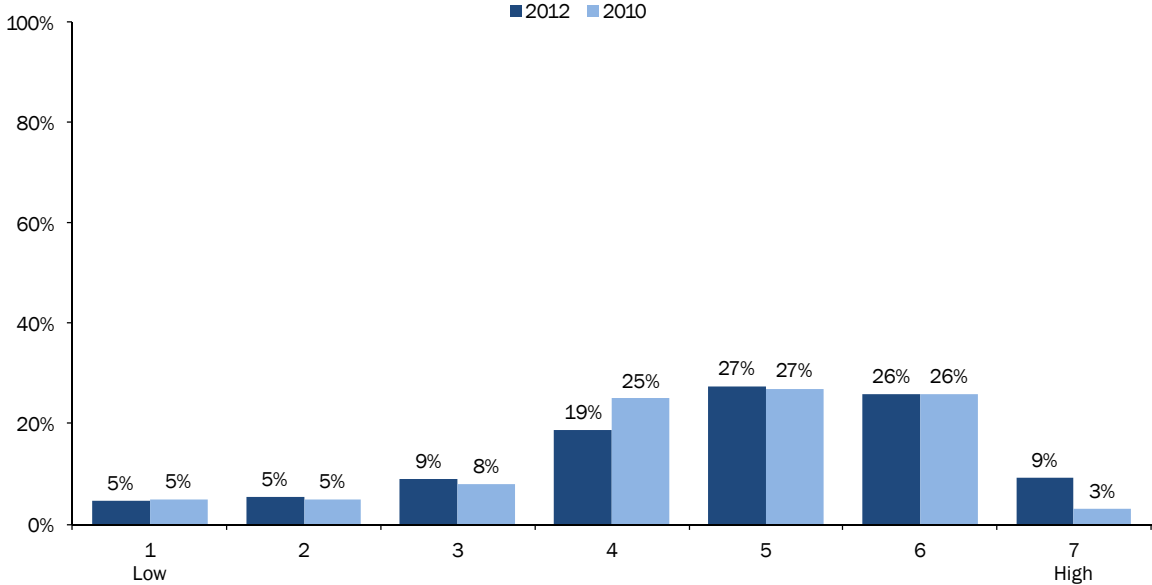
Using this information, the factors that should be prioritised as improvement opportunities can be identified. The gap grid is a highly effective tool at an aggregate level and also at a specific demographic level.

Overall satisfaction with Council

The following graph illustrates the community’s overall satisfaction with the Council, where 1 = Low, and 7 = High.

Approximately 35% of respondents indicated fairly high overall satisfaction, providing ratings between six and seven, which have increased by 6% since 2010. A further 9% indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Council (a rating of seven) and 5% indicated a low level of satisfaction (a rating of one).

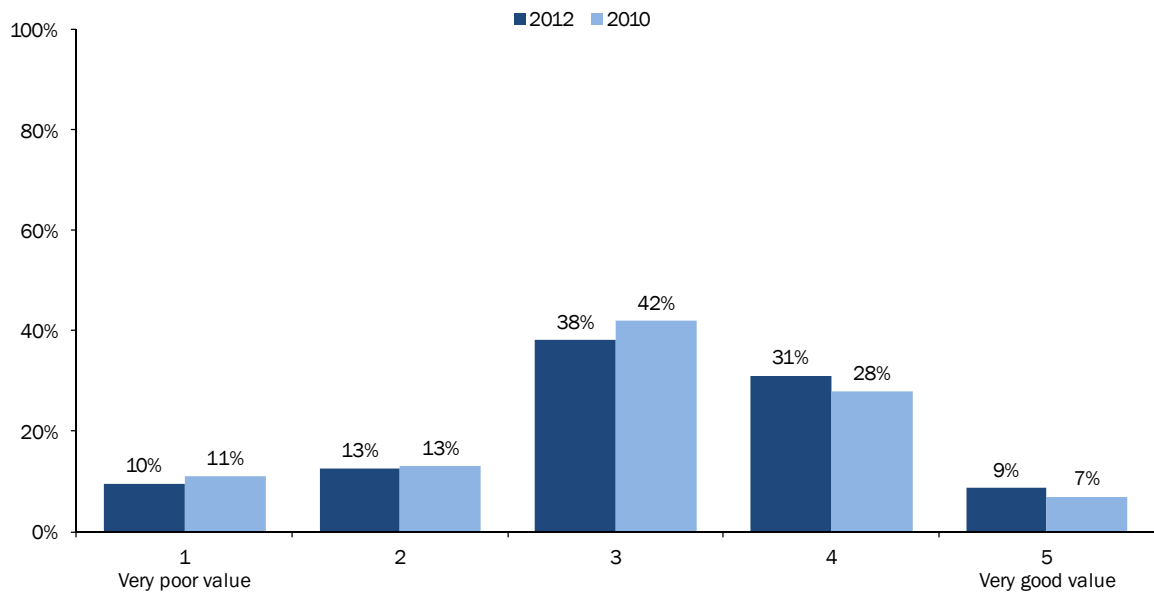




Do you think the services provided by Central Coast Council are good value for your rates?

Community members were asked to indicate whether the services and amenities provided by the Council were good value for the rates paid, where 1= very poor value, and 5 = very good value.

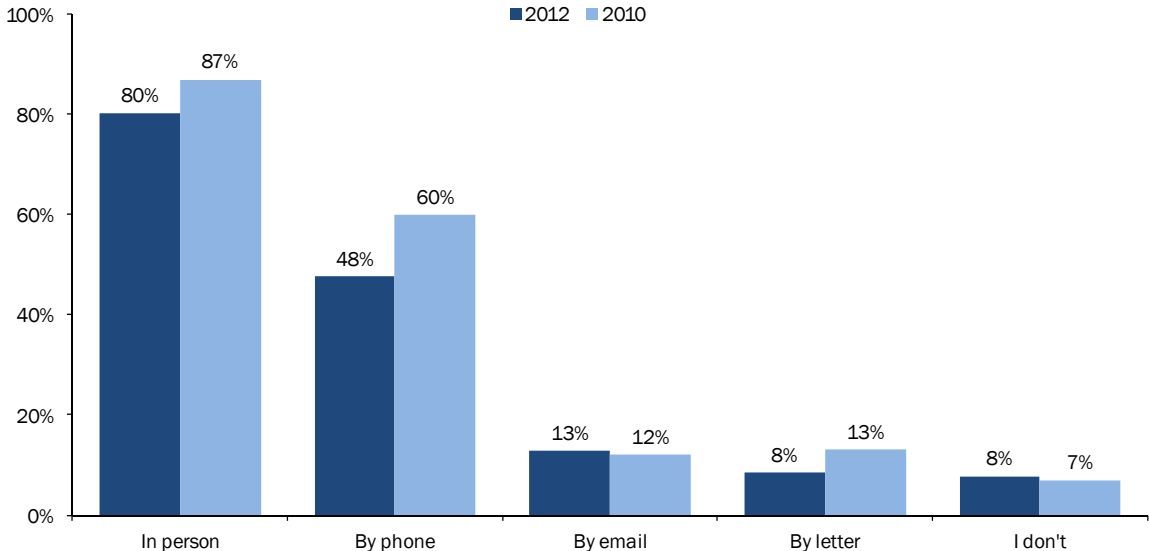
The following graph represents the percentage of respondents for each rating. As can be seen below, a number of respondents (38%) provided a fairly neutral rating of three out of five. A further 40% assigned ratings of four or five suggesting that services provided were good value for money, which has increased from 35% since 2010. Moreover, 23% of respondents indicated that the rates paid reflected poor value for money (allocating ratings of one and two out of five).



Section 2: How do you interact with Council?

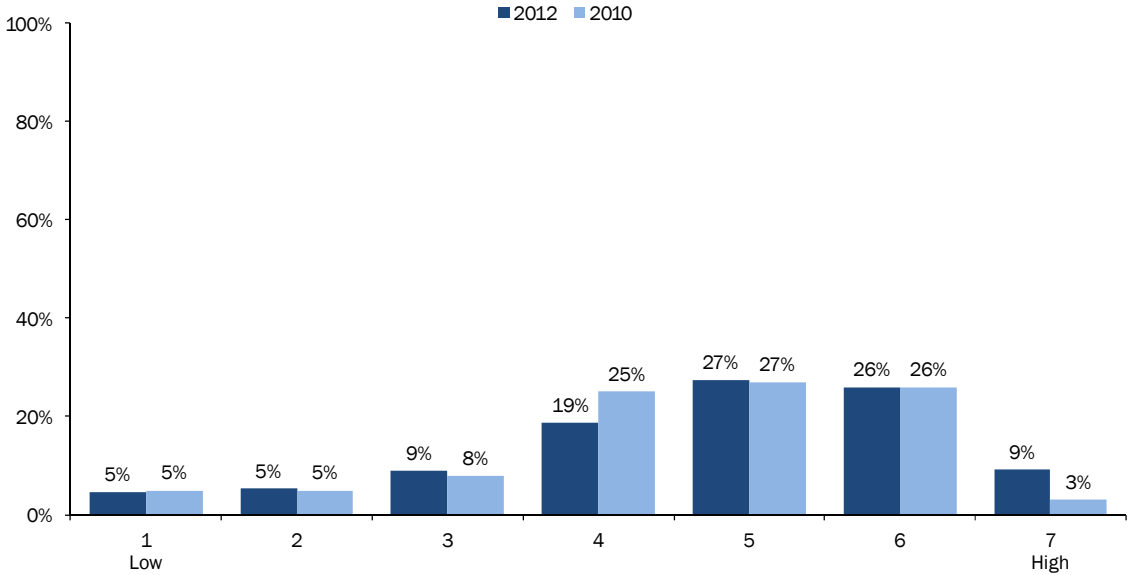
How do you currently contact Council?

Community members were asked to identify which mode(s) of contact were currently utilised to contact the Council. As can be seen from the below graph, most community members contact the Council in person (80%), which has decreased by 7% since 2010, or by phone (48%), which has also decreased by 12% since 2010.



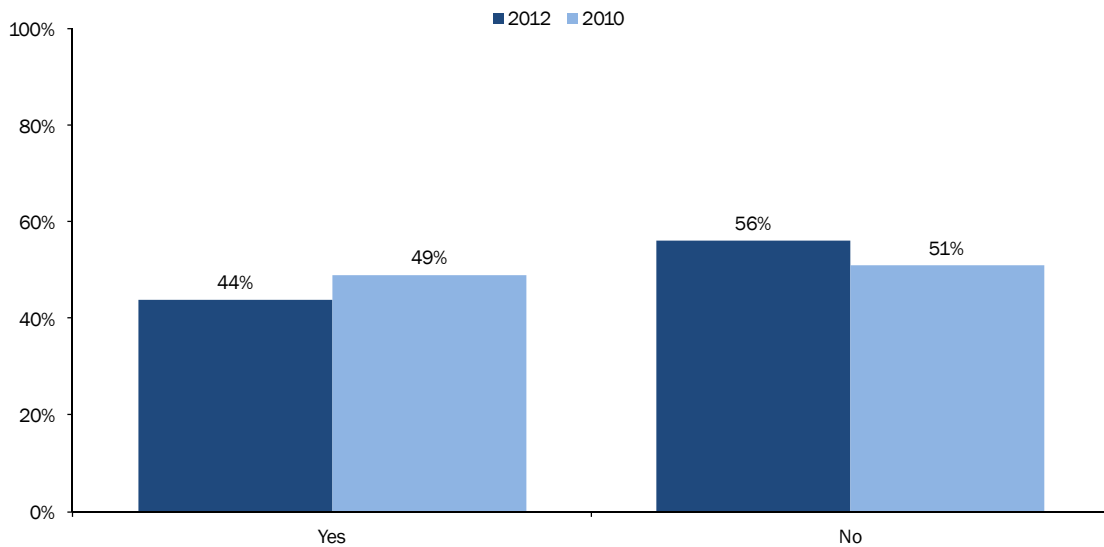
Would you use Council’s website for any of the following services?

Approximately 43% of residents indicated that they use the Council website for information about paying Council accounts, Council jobs, services, processes and plans, while a further 16% indicated that they use the council website for finding community contacts and links. Only a fraction of residents used the Council website for visitor information (8%) and placing a customer request or complaint (7%).

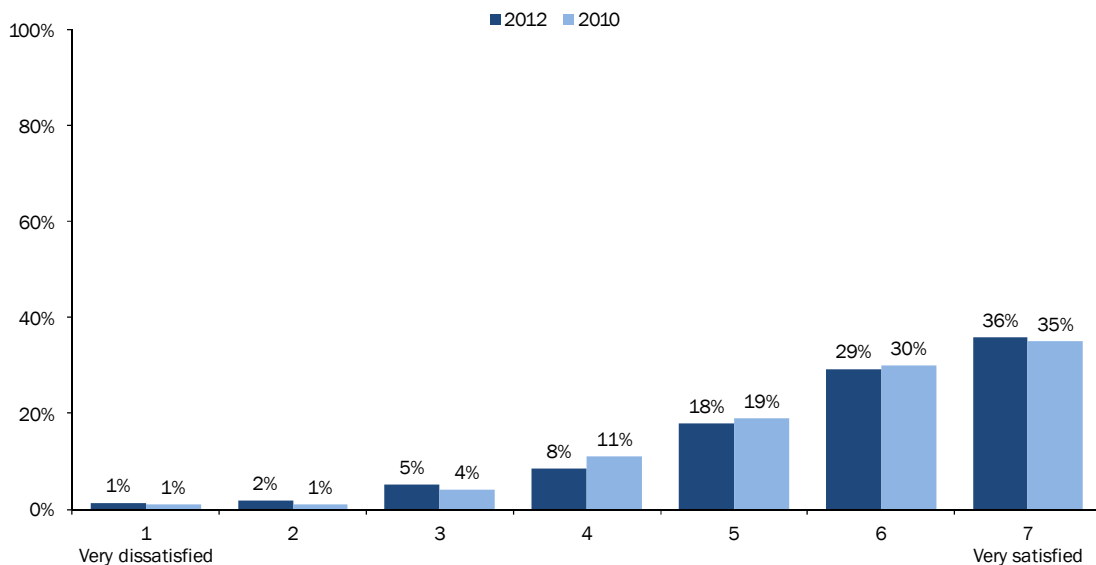


Have you used Visitor Information Centre within Central Coast in the last 12 months?

Community members were asked to indicate whether they had used the Visitor Information Centre in the last year. Slightly more residents indicated that they have not used the Visitor Information Centre compared to those who have been using the centre facilities, with 56% and 44% respectively. Compared to 2010, the proportion of residents who responded 'Yes' have decreased by 5% and 'No' have increased by 5%.

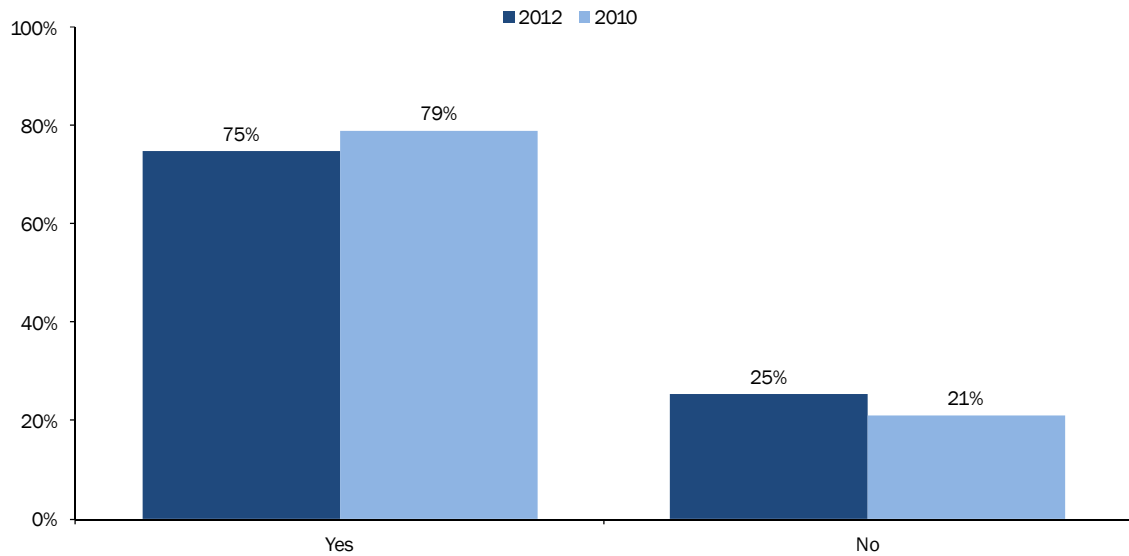


When asked whether residents were satisfied with the Visitor Information Centre, an overwhelming majority (83%) indicated that they were very satisfied (scores of five and above), which has been maintained since 2010. Only 3% of respondents rated their satisfaction with the Visitor Information Centre as a one or two.

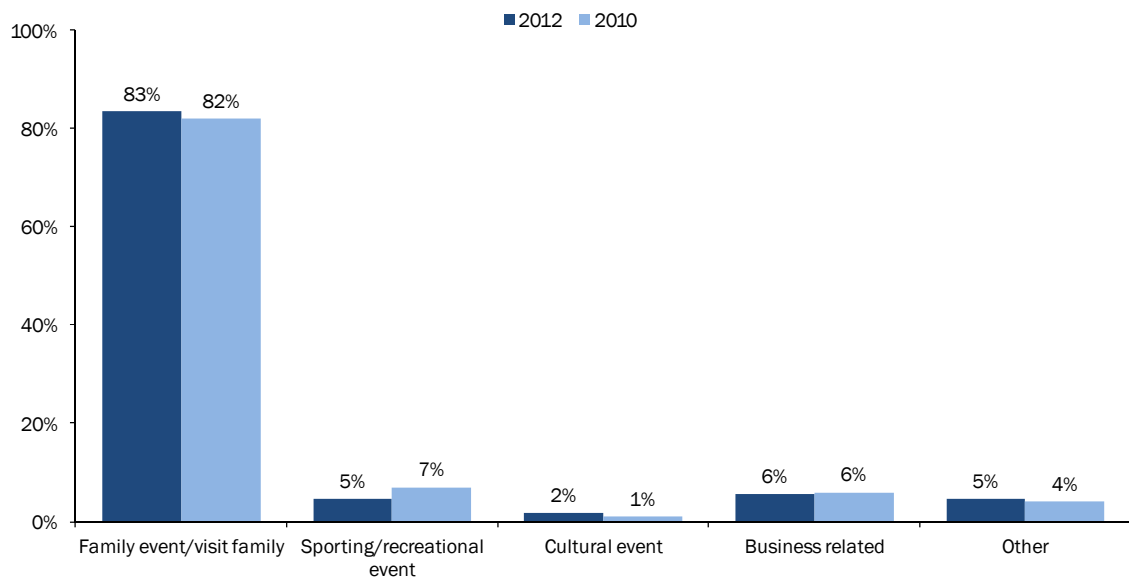


In the last 12 months have you had a friend or relative not from Central Coast visiting Central Coast?

Community members were asked to indicate whether they had a friend or relative visit Central Coast in the last year. The majority of respondents (75%) indicated they did have someone outside of Central Coast visit the area. This has decreased slightly since 2010.



Of those indicating that they had a friend or relative visit the area, the majority (83%) indicated that this was due to a family event or a family visit in general. This was followed by business related activity (6%).



Section 3: Council facilities and services

What the community feel is important

The five highest ranked **importance** variables for Central Coast residents for **Section 3** (listed in descending priority order) are reported in the table below for 2012, 2010 and 2008.

November 2012 Top 5 importance	Mean	July 2010 Top 5 importance	Mean
Recycling collection services	6.28	Public toilet amenities (Council-owned park / community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities)	6.12
Garbage collection services	6.20	Rural roads	6.03
Public Toilet Amenities (Council-owned park/community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities)	6.08	Roadside management (e.g. trees, slashing, litter)	5.99
Parks & gardens	6.00	Parks and gardens	5.96
Urban roads	6.00	Management of traffic flow (e.g. lights, roundabouts, street signs)	5.95
June 2008 Top 5 importance	Mean		
Garbage collection services (including recycling)	6.44		
Sewer services	6.30		
Water provision	6.30		
Monitoring of environmental issues (e.g. water, air quality, salinity)	6.26		
Public toilet amenities (Council-owned park/community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities)	6.22		

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five importance for 2010

The top five importance list contains two variables consistent with the previous survey in July 2010, and importance scores have decreased slightly for *Public toilet amenities* and increased marginally for *Parks and gardens*. When comparing results from 2012 with 2008, only two variables were consistent and scores for these variables have decreased slightly.

Areas of high importance for Central Coast community members relate to recycling collection services, garbage collection services, public toilet amenities (Council-owned park/community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities), park and gardens, and urban roads.

All five statements attracted mean importance scores above five from a possible score of seven, indicating high levels of importance for community members.

How the community feel Central Coast Council is performing

The table below reports, in descending order, the five variables ranked highest in performance by Central Coast community members for **Section 3**.

November 2012 Top 5 performance	Mean	July 2010 Top 5 performance	Mean
Recycling collection services*	5.61	Parks and gardens	5.24
Parks & gardens*	5.60	General enquiries at Customer Service	5.22
Garbage collection services*	5.57	Garbage collection services	5.15
Playground equipment	5.54	Resource Recovery Centre	5.12
General enquiries at Customer Service	5.38	Ulverstone Civic Centre	5.12
June 2008 Top 5 performance	Mean		
Water provision	5.45		
Garbage collection services (including recycling)	5.37		
Sewer services	5.31		
General enquiries at Customer Service	5.31		
Parks and gardens	5.30		

(N.B. Statements marked * were also identified in the top five importance list)

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five performance for 2010

The top five performance list contains three variables from the top five importance list, namely:

- *Recycling collection services*
- *Parks and gardens*
- *Garbage collection services*

This area can be seen as strength of the Council, with community members identifying it as both important **and** performing better than the remaining variables. Furthermore, scores of five and above on a seven-point scales identify an area of particularly high performance.

The top five performance list contains three variables included in the top five performance list in the 2010 survey. The mean scores for all three variables have increased slightly since the previous survey. In comparison to results from 2008, there were three variables that are similar and overall, the scores have increased slightly.

At the other end of the scale are the lowest performing variables. This table shows the five variables given the lowest rankings by Central Coast community members in 2012 as compared with those ranked lowest in 2010 and 2008 for **Section 3**. Please note that the lowest performing variable appears first on the list.

November 2012 Lowest 5 performance	Mean	July 2010 Lowest 5 performance	Mean
Ranger Services - Animal Management	4.19	Ranger Services - Animal Management	3.84
Roadside management - rural (e.g. trees, slashing, litter)*	4.21	Weed control	3.90
Weed control	4.21	Development Services (applications, permits, inspections)	4.02
Rural roads	4.36	Swimming Centre	4.08
Ranger Services - Parking Management	4.40	Ranger Services - Parking Management	4.20
June 2008 Lowest 5 performance	Mean		
Cycleways/walking tracks	3.52		
Weed control	3.76		
Footpaths	3.95		
Development Services (applications, permits, inspections)	4.01		
Roadside management (e.g. trees, slashing, litter)	4.01		

(N.B. Statements marked * were also identified in the top five importance list)

€ The statements shaded were also in the five lowest performance for 2010

The lowest five performing areas relate to ranger services- animal and park management, roadside management, weed control, rural roads and ranger services – parking management.

Only one of the lowest performing variable was identified from the top five important list. The variable relate to roadside management – rural (e.g. trees, slashing, litter). This presents an opportunity for improvement given that the variable is important to the residents and is one of the lowest performing variable.

The list has three variables in common with the 2010 survey and all three showed improvements since the 2010 survey. When comparing to 2008 results, the list has two variables common with the 2008 survey and both variables indicated improvement over time.

Where Community members Feel Central Coast Council can improve

In identifying factors for improvement, Insync Surveys analyses the perceived difference – or “gap” – between the importance and performance score for each variable. These gaps indicate areas of frustration or dissatisfaction for community members and thus represent improvement opportunities. Based on our research, gaps of or above 2.00 are considered significant, with a gap score of 3.00 or higher generally pointing to widespread dissatisfaction. For the purpose of business improvement, then it is important to keep in mind that a larger gap does not indicate a larger problem, rather it indicates an increase in certainty that the variable is indeed of some level of concern.

The table below reports the five variables with the highest gap scores for **Section 3** of the 2012, 2010 and 2008 surveys.

November 2012 Top 5 gaps	Mean	July 2010 Top 5 gaps	Mean
Roadside management - rural (e.g. trees, slashing, litter) *	1.71	Weed control	1.87
Weed control	1.60	Rural roads	1.78
Footpaths*	1.59	Roadside management (e.g. trees, slashing, litter)	1.65
Rural roads	1.41	Public toilet amenities (Council-owned park / community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities)	1.62
Public Toilet Amenities (Council-owned park/community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities) *	1.29	Footpaths	1.58
June 2008 Top 5 gaps	Mean		
Cycleways/walking tracks	2.25		
Weed control	2.19		
Public toilet amenities (council-owned park/community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities)	2.15		

Footpaths	2.07
Monitoring of environmental issues (e.g. water, air quality, salinity)	1.93

(N.B. Statements marked * were also identified in the top five importance list)

€ The statements shaded were also in the top five gaps for 2010

No variables recorded a gap score of 2.00 or greater, which is a positive finding consistent with results from 2010.

The top five improvement opportunities list contains three variables from the top five importance list. These areas represent the Council with improvement opportunities as they are important to community members, but are not perceived to be performing as well as other areas:

- *Roadside management – rural (e.g. trees, slashing, litter)*
- *Footpaths*
- *Public toilet amenities (Council-owned park/community amenities, excludes shopping centre provided amenities)*

Section 4: You and your community

Statements in relation to Central Coast Community

The table below shows community members responses to twelve statements about their community. The percentages of Yes and No responses to each question were recorded.

Survey Variables	Central Coast Council Results				Average Council Results	
	Yes		No		Yes	No
	Nov 2012	July 2010	Nov 2012	July 2010		
Are you a member of a community group?	49%	52%	51%	48%	58%	42%
Would you recommend Central Coast as a place to live?	96%	95%	4%	5%	93%	7%
Do you consider Central Coast to be a progressive municipal area?	74%	71%	26%	29%	-	-
Do you think there are enough jobs available in Central Coast?	5%	20%	95%	80%	34%	66%
Do you think there is enough variety of jobs available in Central Coast?	12%	21%	88%	79%	-	-
Do you think land and housing in Central Coast is affordable?	69%	68%	31%	32%	53%	47%
Do you think the public transport is available to meet your needs?	52%	45%	48%	55%	-	-
Do you think Central Coast is a safe place to live and work?	97%	91%	3%	9%	84%	16%
Do you think your neighbours would be likely to help you if you needed them?	93%	89%	7%	11%	92%	8%
Do you think there is a good choice and availability of housing options in Central Coast?	76%	65%	24%	35%	71%	29%
Do you think Central Coast is a healthy community?	77%	75%	23%	25%	83%	17%
Do you feel that you are a part of your local community?	87%	85%	13%	15%	-	-

Many Central Coast community members agreed with the statements above with nine of the twelve statements receiving greater than 50% Yes responses. This is a positive result for the Council.

Conversely, the majority of respondents disagreed with the following statements:

- *Do you think there are enough jobs available in Central Coast? (95% disagreement, which has increased from 80% in 2010)*
- *Do you think there is enough variety of jobs available in Central Coast? (88% disagreement, which has increased from 79% since 2010)*
- *Are you a member of a community group? (51% disagreement)*

Section 5: About our strategies and goals

What the Community Feel is Important for Central Coast Council

Council identified five strategic directions in the Central Coast Strategic Plan (2009 – 2014). The **importance** rating of each 'Future Direction' (listed in descending priority order) is reported in the table below

Importance	November 2012 Mean	July 2010 Mean
Council Sustainability and Governance	6.21	6.08
The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure	5.95	5.87
The Shape of the Place	5.94	5.78
Community Capacity and Creativity	5.74	5.51
A Connected Central Coast	5.69	5.57

Council Sustainability and Governance obtained the highest importance rating of all the 'Future Directions' with an average importance score of 6.21 out of seven.

Moreover, all 'Future Directions' attracted high importance scores with each area recording a mean importance score of 5.00 and above out of seven.

It is a positive result that all 'Future Directions' identified by Council are considered to be important by residents also.

How the Community Feel Central Coast Council is Performing

The table below reports, in descending order, the **performance** of the five 'Future Directions' as determined by Central Coast community members.

Performance	November 2012 Mean	July 2010 Mean
The Shape of the Place	4.84	4.53
Council Sustainability and Governance	4.64	4.34
A Connected Central Coast	4.60	4.39
Community Capacity and Creativity	4.55	4.33
The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure	4.41	4.13

The Shape of the Place recorded the highest performance ranking with a performance score of 4.84 out of seven. The lowest performance score was 4.41; obtained by *The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure*.

The remaining 'Future Directions' recorded performance scores above 4.00, indicating average areas of performance.

Where the Community Feel Central Coast Council Can Improve

In identifying factors for improvement, Insync Surveys analyses the perceived difference – or ‘gap’ – between the importance and performance score for each variable. These gaps indicate areas of frustration or dissatisfaction for community members and thus represent improvement opportunities. Based on our research, gaps of or above 2.00 are considered significant. It is important to keep in mind that a larger gap does not indicate a larger problem, rather it indicates an increase in certainty that the variable is indeed of some level of concern.

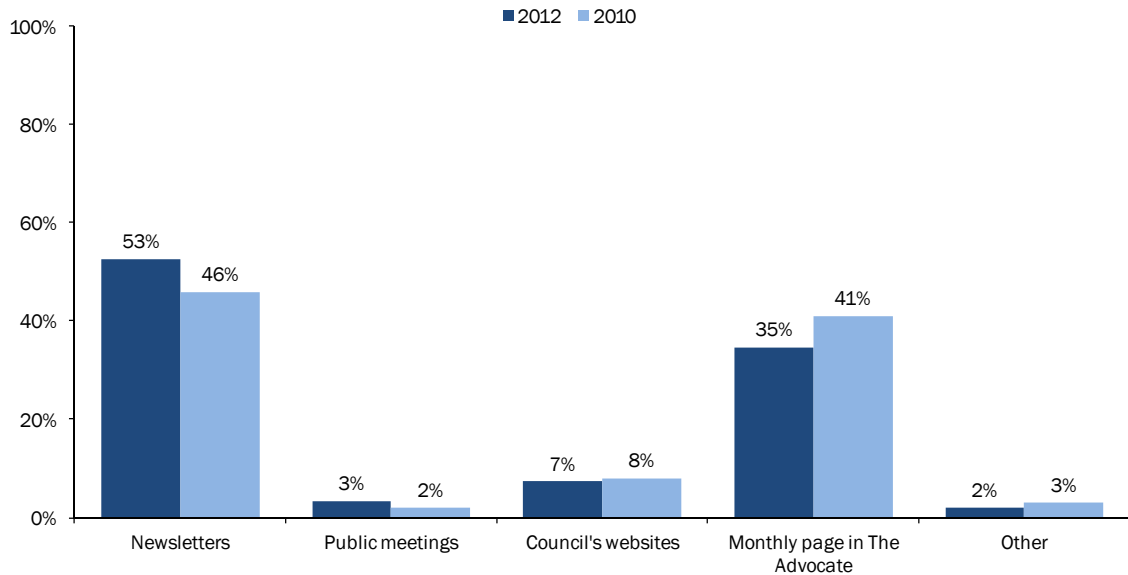
The table below reports the seven ‘Future Directions’ and their respective gap scores.

November 2012 Gaps	Mean	July 2010 Gaps	Mean
Council Sustainability and Governance	1.57	Council Sustainability and Governance	1.74
The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure	1.54	The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure	1.73
Community Capacity and Creativity	1.20	The Shape of the Place	1.25
The Shape of the Place	1.10	Community Capacity and Creativity	1.19
A Connected Central Coast	1.09	A Connected Central Coast	1.18

None of the five ‘Future Directions’ recorded a significant gap score, which is an overwhelming positive finding.

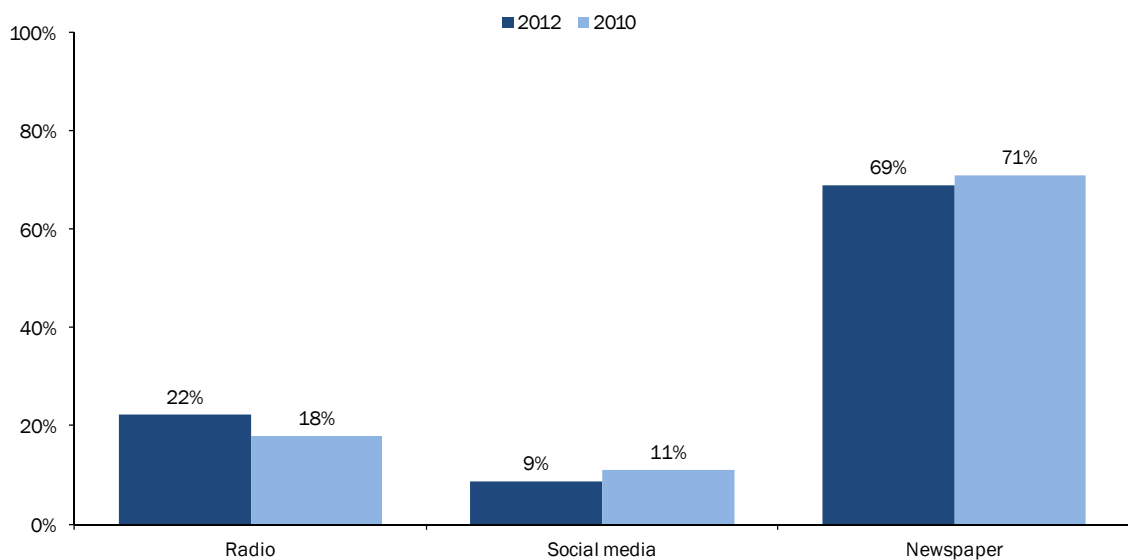
Section 6: Source of information

What is your preferred method of receiving information through Central Coast Council?



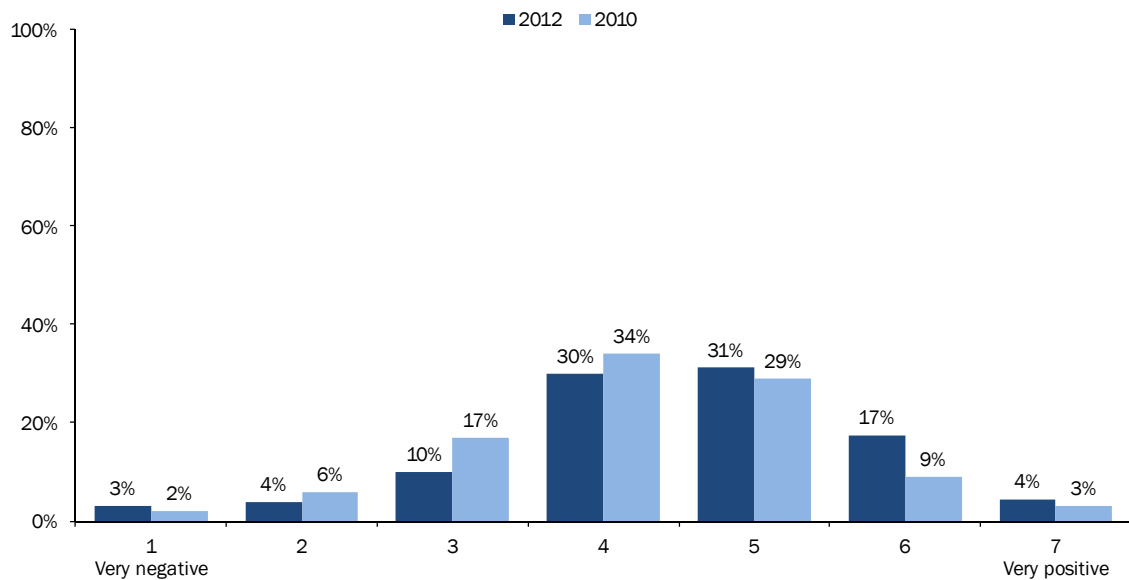
The majority of residents identified Council Newsletters as their preferred method of receiving information through the Council (53%), followed by monthly page in The Advocate (35%).

What is your preferred method of receiving information from other sources?



Most residents expressed that they preferred receiving Council information through the Newspaper (69%) than radio (22%) or social media (9%).

How do you perceive coverage of Council activities in the media?



A large proportion of respondents (52%) found the media coverage to be positive (a score between five and seven). This has increased slightly by 1% since the previous survey in 2010. On the other hand, 17% of respondents found the coverage to be negative (a score between one and three). Only 3% of respondents believed the media coverage to be very negative and only 4% perceived the media coverage to be very positive.

Section 7: Resident written comments

A large number of residents who completed the survey also provided written comments about at least one of the questions posed. Despite the qualitative comments being potentially biased and subjective, the quantitative results are supported by the written comments received. A sample of the comments representative of those received are enclosed for review. Comments are provided in their verbatim form, i.e. as residents have written them with only minor corrections to spelling and grammar where necessary.

What do you think are the main issues facing our community in the next 5 years?

Respondents identified a variety of issues which may face Central Coast in the next five years. A number of recurring responses related to lack of jobs and employment, particularly for youth; aged care and the aging population; availability of affordable housing; rates and sustaining businesses. A sample of comments is presented below:

Jobs and employment

Approximately 20% of respondents identified this theme as an area of concern.

- *“Jobs - lack of especially to keep young people here.”*
- *“Keeping our young people in jobs.”*
- *“Jobs – employment.”*
- *“People leaving to move to mainland for jobs.”*
- *“Loss of jobs, therefore people moving away from area and Tasmania...”*
- *“Stop thinking of themselves and do things to help keep jobs in town.”*

Sustaining businesses

Approximately 11% of respondents identified this theme as an area of concern.

- *“Attracting business back into the town.”*
- *“Sustaining small business.”*
- *“Keeping small businesses viable.”*
- *“Local business' remaining viable.”*
- *“Jobs and businesses staying viable.”*
- *“Local business taking a turn for the worse.”*

Aged care and aging population

Approximately 8.5% of respondents identified these related themes as areas of concern.

- *“Aging of the community and therefore reduced income capacity.”*
- *“Supporting an aging population on background of decreasing employment opportunities and declining health care options.”*
- *“Adequate facilities for an aging population.”*
- *“... and accommodation for old people.”*
- *“An aging population, lack of residential affordable housing and retirement village.”*

Rates

Approximately 8% of respondents identified this theme as an area of concern.

- *“Extremely high rates and charges.”*
- *“Keeping rates at an affordable price.”*
- *“Rates constraint, awareness of aged pensioner needs.”*
- *“Maintaining a viable infrastructure without an unattainable increase in rates.”*
- *“Making rates more affordable to encourage people to move or build in the community.”*
- *“Keeping cost of rates and utilities affordable.”*

Availability and affordability of housing

Approximately 4.5% of respondents identified this theme as an area of concern.

- *“Housing affordability.”*
- *“Availability and affordability of housing.”*
- *“Affordable housing for young families.”*
- *“Lack of residential affordable housing.”*
- *“Lack of housing.”*

What is the one thing you like most about Central Coast Council?

Some commonly occurring responses to this question related to the safety of living in Central Coast; the beaches; central location; and no parking meters. A sample of comments is presented below:

Safety

Approximately 14% of respondents identified these themes as strengths of Central Coast Council.

- *“The safety aspect - no real issues in Penguin at the current time.”*
- *“Community safety.”*
- *“The council are facilitating a safe, family, friendly place to live.”*
- *“It's a safe, friendly place to live.”*
- *“Quiet and safe.”*

Free parking

Approximately 12% of respondents identified this theme as a strength of Central Coast.

- *“No parking meters and the CBD is centralised.”*
- *“Not having to pay for parking.”*
- *“Free parking in Ulverstone and Penguin.”*
- *“Free parking- encourages a vibrant town centre with movement.”*
- *“Not having to pay for parking.”*
- *“Provision of parking for shopping.”*

Beaches

Approximately 10% of respondents identified this theme as a strength of Central Coast.

- *“The environment, relaxed lifestyle, the beaches.”*
- *“Beaches and playgrounds.”*
- *“Location beaches.”*
- *“Beaches, Safe.”*
- *“Its natural beauty, beach - real large baxy to get ahead all its lonely parks and pool parks (walking tracks) ...”*

Location

Approximately 8% of respondents identified these related themes as strengths of Central Coast.

- *“Central location- Good geographical location. eg. River, Parks, Beaches etc.”*
- *“Central location between D'port and Burnie.”*
- *“Nice location, great scenery, not over populated with active shopping hubs.”*
- *“It's location to rest of the state.”*
- *“Natural environment and location.”*
- *“Coastal location- approachable.”*

If Central Coast Council could do one more thing to make living in Central Coast better for you, what would it be?

The development and maintenance of cycling tracks, walking tracks, footpaths and some roads were commonly identified as areas that could be improved (in terms of both their quality and location). Another common improvement in relation to development was to increase the frequency of green waste collection and decreasing rates.

Many respondents also felt that if the Council rates were to be reduced it could improve their quality of life in the Central Coast Please see a sample of comments below.

Rates

Approximately 16% of respondents identified this theme as something that needs to be improved in the Central Coast.

- *“Make rates fairer in accordance to the services provided for the area in which families reside.”*
- *“Lower the cost of rates.”*
- *“Keep rates low, without cutting services.”*
- *“Stop increasing rates.”*
- *“Stop increasing rates.”*
- *“Look after all rate payers by reducing rates.”*

Maintenance of footpaths, roads and parks

Approximately 12% of respondents identified these related themes as something that needs to be improved in the Central Coast.

- *“Allow more money for basic fundamentals, e.g. Footpath maintenance, looking after country roads.”*
- *“Cycle track to exercise off roads.”*
- *“Stop wasting rate payer’s money like on the wharf and put into foot paths and roads.”*
- *“To maintain country roads!!!”*

Waste collection

Approximately 10% of respondents identified this theme as something that needs to be improved in the Central Coast.

- *“No fees for green waste or recyclables through the resource recovery centre to prevent dumping.”*
- *“Free green waste disposal at transfer stations.”*
- *“Introduce green waste rubbish collection using small size bins monthly collection.”*
- *“Monthly pick up household green waste.”*
- *“Council garbage pick up x 1 green waste, x 1 hard waste.”*

Please provide any other general comments.

A variety of responses were received for this question, however there was still some common themes that emerged. In relation to roadwork or traffic issues, the responses indicated areas relating to signage, traffic lights, transport links and road conditions. Concern over the appropriate maintenance of footpaths was indicated as an issue Central Coast needs to address. The issue regarding rates was also raised again by quite a few respondents as well as maintenance concerns. A sample of comments is presented below.

Roadwork/traffic issues

Approximately 11% of respondents identified this theme as something that needs to be improved in the Central Coast

- *“Road signage and directive signs in Forth area need a good scrub or replacing.”*
- *“Transport links to Burnie and Ulverstone increased community health, more safety”*
- *“Need of roundabout/traffic lights at Leighlands ave, Eastland drive, Faffney St.”*
- *“Traffic lights on Main st need to be better synchronised with train lights.”*
- *“Crack down in "honing.”*
- *“The country roads are a disgrace!!!”*

Maintenance of footpaths

Approximately 10% of respondents identified this theme as an issue in the Central Coast

- *“Many footpath need attention to aid the increasing use of mobility scooters.”*
- *“Footpaths need improving, trees lopped, over hanging shrubs onto footpaths need attending to.”*
- *“Footpaths are a disgrace around West Ulverstone in some streets. Barking dogs day and night.”*
- *“Weed spraying while necessary is poorly controlled (ie) Termyn st footpath.”*
- *“Would like to see the footpaths and roadways at the two cemeteries paved. Also the carpark at Coles and Furners hotel upgraded.”*

Rates

Approximately 10% of respondents identified this theme as an issue in the Central Coast

- *“Have a fairer system for accessing rates. i.e. why are people with neat houses penalised and pay more than a neighbour with a run down house.”*
- *“Cut rates, water and Aurora only charge for what people use and not a set figure for everyone.”*

- *“This would be a wonderful place to live if charges and rates were at affordable prices.”*
- *“Fees at tip absolutely disgusting for the rates we pay.”*
- *“My rates increase was ridiculous.”*

2. Summary and Discussion

Summary

Overall, 484 (19%) Central Coast community members completed the Community Survey during November 2012 period. The response rate is higher than the last survey in 2010 (14.1%) which is a positive result and have captured valuable information and insights into the opinions of community members for Central Coast. The majority of respondents were from Ulverstone (34.3%).

Summary of Section 1: What is on your mind and how are we doing?

Areas of high performance for Central Coast community members relate to the friendliness of Council staff, Council's financial management, traffic movement throughout the municipal area, appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs and continuity of Council staff (same Council officer handling your issue). Three areas of importance are consistent with those identified in July 2010 which relate to customer service (*Friendliness of staff at the Council*), Council's financial administration (*Council's financial management*) and development of CBDs (*Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs*).

Three of the top five performing variables are common to the top five importance list, namely *Friendliness of staff at the Council*, *Council's financial management* and *Appearance of Ulverstone and Penguin CBDs*. This is a positive result for the Council with the community members identifying these areas as important **and** performing better than the remaining variables.

No significant gap score (score of 2.00 or greater) was recorded, which is a noteworthy result when compared to results from 2010 whereby one significant gap score was recorded. This indicated that the Council has improved significantly in this area since 2010.

Similar to 2010, the statement, *Appearance of your neighbourhood/district* presents an improvement opportunity for the Council as it is identified as an area that is performing poorly (in terms of gap scores) to community members but perceived to be of importance.

Overall, approximately 62% of respondents indicated fairly high satisfaction with the Council, providing ratings of five or six out of seven. This has increased by 9% since the previous survey in 2010. A further 9% indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Council (a rating of seven) and this is an improvement from 3% in 2010.

Summary of Section 2: How do you interact with the Council?

A majority of community members contact the Council in person (80%) or by phone (48%), which has decreased slightly from 87% and 60% respectively. Approximately 27% of residents surveyed use the Council website to pay Council accounts, while 16% of residents indicated that they use the website to find information on Council jobs, services, processes and plans as well as finding community contacts and links, respectively.

About 44% of respondents had used the Visitor Information Centre in the last twelve months, which has decreased slightly by 5% since 2010. Consistent to 2010, an overwhelming majority (83%) indicated that they were very satisfied (scores of five and above) with the Centre.

The majority of respondents (75%) had a friend or relative outside Central Coast visit the area in the last year, which has decreased slightly by 4% since 2010. Approximately 83% of these respondents indicated that this was due to a family event or family visit.

Summary of Section 3: Council Facilities and Services

Central Coast residents identified their priorities as recycling collection services, garbage collection services, public toilet amenities, parks and gardens, and urban roads. Only two of these priorities are common in the 2010 survey.

The top five performing areas identified by respondents included recycling collection services, parks and gardens, garbage collection services, playgroup equipment and general enquiries at customer service.

Recycling collection services, parks and gardens, and garbage collection services were identified as both one of the top five performer and top five importance. This is a positive result indicating that these areas can be seen as strengths of the Council, with community members identifying it as both important and performing better than the remaining variables.

No significant gap scores (scores of 2.00 or greater) were recorded in the November 2012 survey, which was a positive results and is consistent with results from 2010 survey results. However, Roadside management – rural (e.g. tree, slashing, litter) recorded gap score approaching the significant cut-off score, at 1.71. Thus, this presents an improvement opportunity for Central Coast Council.

Similarly, Roadside management – rural (e.g. trees, slashing, litter) was identified as an area of high importance to the residents and perceived to be performing relatively poorly. As such, this are also provide the Council with opportunities for improvement.

Summary of Section 4: You and Your Community

The following statements received a majority of Yes responses:

- *Would you recommend Central Coast as a place to live?* **96% Yes** (Increase of 1% since 2010)
- *Do you think Central Coast is a safe place to live and work?*
97% Yes (Increase of 6% since 2010)
- *Do you think your neighbours would be likely to help you if you needed them?*
93% Yes (Increase of 4% since 2010)
- *Do you feel that you are a part of your local community?*
87% Yes (Increase of 2% since 2010)
- *Do you think Central Coast is a healthy community?*
77% Yes (Increase of 2% since 2010)
- *Do you consider Central Coast to be a progressive municipal area?*
74% Yes (Increase of 3% since 2010)
- *Do you think there is a good choice and availability of housing options in Central Coast?* **76% Yes** (Increase of 11% since 2010)
- *Do you think land and housing in Central Coast is affordable?* **69% Yes** (Increase of 1% since 2010)
- *Do you think public transport is available to meet your needs?* **52% Yes**
(Maintained since 2010)

The following statements received a majority of No responses:

- *Are you a member of a community group?* **51% No** (Increase of 3% since 2010)
- *Do you think there are enough jobs available in Central Coast?* **95% No** (Increase of 15% since 2010)
- *Do you think there is enough variety of jobs available in Central Coast?* **88% No**
(Increase of 9% since 2010)

Despite the high level of disagreement with the above three statements, as 96% of respondents still answered Yes to 'Would you recommend Central Coast as a place to live?', it may be that these three

issues do not deter respondents from choosing to live, or recommending to live, in Central Coast, which is a positive outcome.

Summary of Section 5: About our strategies and goals

Similar to results from 2010, *Council Sustainability and Governance* was identified by respondents as the most important 'Future Direction', however all 'Future Directions' attracted high importance scores with each area recording a mean importance score of at least 5.69 out of seven.

The Shape of the Place recorded the highest performance ranking with a performance score of 4.84 out of seven and the lowest performer was *The Environment and Sustainable Infrastructure* with a performance score of 4.41 out of seven. These are consistent with results from the 2010 survey.

None of the 'Future Directions' recorded a significant gap score (score of 2.00 or greater) which is a positive result.

Summary of Section 6: Sources of Information

The majority of community members identified Newsletters as their preferred method of receiving information through the Council (53%), which has increased by 7% since the previous survey in July 2010.

In terms of other sources of information, most residents expressed that they prefer receiving Council information through the Monthly page in *The Advocate* (35%) rather than public meetings (3%), Council's website (7%) or other sources (2%).

A large number of respondents found media coverage of Council activities to be positive (52%), which has increased by 13% since 2010. Approximately 17% of respondents found the coverage to be negative, which has also decreased by 6% since 2008. Only 3% of respondents believed the media coverage to be very negative and only 4% perceived the media coverage to be very positive.

Improving the communication and promotion of Council initiatives and accomplishments can improve community perception of Council and as such, where possible, it is encouraged that Central Coast Council enhance and utilise any channels of communication.

Summary of Section 7: Written Comments

In addition to the quantitative data obtained in the study, a number of open-ended questions were also asked. This provided respondents with the opportunity to extend on issues addressed in the survey or bring new issues to the attention of the Council.

In terms of **issues facing Central Coast in the next five years**, respondents provided a variety of responses relating to the lack of aged care facilities and concern for the aging population, the lack of job

opportunities for youth and young adults, affordability of housing, increasing rates and sustaining local businesses.

Positive aspects of Central Coast Council that were identified include the safety of living in Central Coast and free parking in the CBDs. Respondents also mentioned the beautiful surroundings and beaches of Central Coast, and how pleasant it is to live in the area. In addition, respondents appreciate the convenient location of Central Coast which is identified as a definite strength.

Respondents also identified **areas for improvement** including the development and maintenance of cycling tracks, walking tracks, footpaths and roads. Respondents also suggested that Council rates should be equal for everyone and reduced, especially in rural areas. There were also various comments in relation to increasing the frequency of green waste collection for households.

Conclusion

In summary, it is important that Central Coast Council involve the community in discussing the results of this study to develop actions for improvement. Furthermore, Council should use these discussions to highlight positive aspects of Central Coast, help identify and understand key community issues, and celebrate what the Council is doing well. This also provides the Council with an opportunity to improve community engagement and improve community perception in the process. Planning for improvement is not limited to the findings and methods discussed above. A number of other areas also require consideration. For instance, there may be areas that the community have identified as low in importance but are high priority in the Council's strategy. As well as examining the overall results, it is also important to consider issues unique to different demographics, e.g. location, age, employment status etc. When prioritising issues for action, it is recommended that a combination of the provided analyses, comments and focus groups be used to gain a more in-depth understanding of that which underpins or drives community concerns. This study has highlighted some key areas that the council is currently performing well in and also areas that the council can definitely improve on.

This study can be used as a benchmark for more following community surveys that will be conducted and comparative data will be used from this study to monitor the performance of the council in the eyes of the community over time.

Report glossary

Gap Grid: The gap grid is a unique visual tool that allows you to see several key pieces of information within the one diagram. For each survey variable it shows the performance score (horizontal axis), the importance score (vertical axis) and the gap score (colour coded). The gap grid is a highly effective tool at an aggregate level and also at a specific demographic level.

Mean: The mean is the term used to describe the average. The mean is defined as the total of the scores divided by the number of scores.

Median: Defined as the value that lies in the middle of the distribution when the data is arranged in numerical order – in other words, it is the value that divides the distribution in half.

Significance: Refers to a gap score above 2.00, yet does not dictate true statistical 'significance'.