

Lithgow City Council

Community Research

Prepared by: Micromex Research

Date: June 2016



Background & Methodology



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Lithgow City Council sought to examine community attitudes and perceptions towards current and future services and facilities provided by Council. Key objectives of the research included:

- Current community priority issues
- Satisfaction with Council's performance overall
- Drivers of community satisfaction
- Importance and satisfaction with Council provided services and facilities
- Relative importance of Council provided services and facilities
- Satisfaction with customer service levels from Council staff

To facilitate this, Micromex Research was contracted to develop a survey template that enabled Council to effectively analyse attitudes and trends within the community.

 Micromex Research, together with Lithgow City Council, developed the questionnaire.

Background & Methodology


Data collection

The survey was conducted during the period 15th April – 28th April 2016 from 4:30pm to 8:30pm Monday to Friday, and from 10am to 4pm Saturday.

Sample selection and error

A total of 407 resident interviews was completed.

390 of the 407 respondents were selected by means of a computer based random selection process using the electronic White Pages. The remaining 17 respondents were 'number harvested' via face-to-face intercept at the Cook St Plaza.



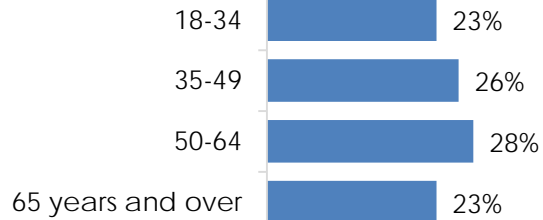
The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2011 ABS census data.

Sample Profile

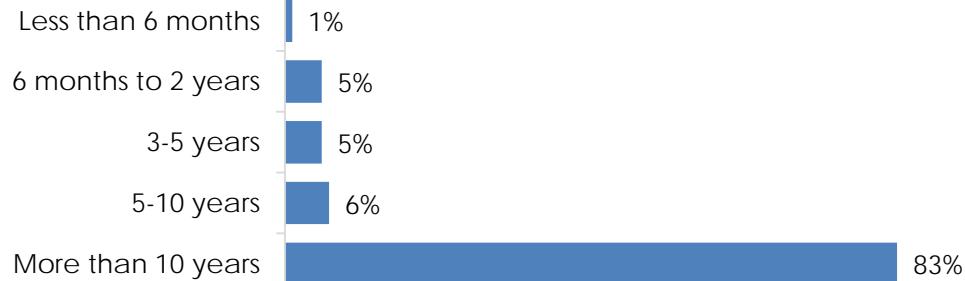
Gender



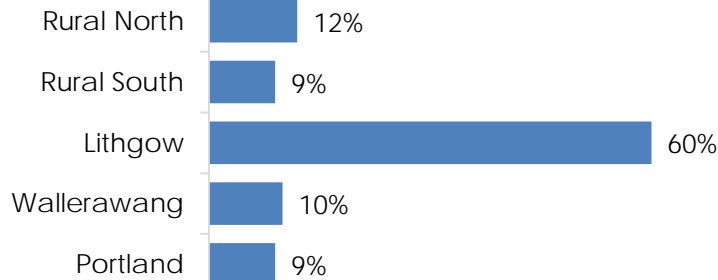
Age



Time lived in the area



Planning Precinct



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2011 ABS community profile of Lithgow City Council

• We Explored Resident Response to 67 Service Areas

Infrastructure & basic Services		
Bus shelters	Walkways and cycleways	Farmers Creek Flood Plain Mitigation Works
Traffic management	Condition of public toilets	Bridges, culverts, and crossings
Provision of car parking	Town roads	Provision of street lighting
Footpaths	Rural roads	
Waste Services		
Household waste collection (including garbage, recycling)	Management of Waste Transfer Station	Greenwaste pick-up service
Management of landfill	Household bulky item clean ups	Street cleaning
Environmental Services		
Caring for bush areas	Management of local flooding	Community Landcare programs
Council operates in an environmentally friendly way	Management of Farmers Creek	Management of the water supply
Environmental protection & enforcement	Management of street trees	Management of sewerage services
Management and control of domestic pets	Weed management programs	
Planning & Development Services		
Development approvals process	Hygiene standards of retail food outlets	Managing residential development
Encouraging local industry and business	Managing commercial development	Managing the impact of visitors to the area
Community Services		
Support for volunteers	Facilities and services for older people	Facilities and services for youth
Facilities and services for people with disabilities		



Tourism & Cultural Development

Street cafe culture	History Avenue Sculptures (Inch Street)	Tourism development
Traffic flow in Main Street	Libraries	Festivals & Event Management
Lithgow Laneways Program (Main Street)	Eskbank House & Museum	Shop Local programs

Parks & Reserves

Queen Elizabeth Park	Lake Wallace Recreation Area	Hassans Walls Lookout
Blast Furnace Park/Lake Pillans Wetland	Clarence Pirie Park, Capertee	Bracey Lookout
Endeavour Park	Other parks/playgrounds	Pearsons Lookout

Sporting Facilities & Reserves

Lithgow Aquatic Centre	Wallerawang Oval	Lithgow Golf Club
Tony Luchetti Sportsground	Kremer Park	Other sporting facilities

Public Buildings

Administration Centre	Community halls/centres
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Communication

Consultation with the community by Council	Council responsiveness to community needs	Information on Council services
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Overview of Results

As with many regional LGAs, there are concerns about the current and future opportunities in regard to local employment, as well as attracting new business to the area.

There are also concerns around renewing and maintaining the local infrastructure, the management and process of development, as well as the provision of community facilities for residents.

Overall, 83% of residents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with Council's performance. This is in line with the NSW category benchmark. Significantly, residents living in the 'Rural North' region were palpably less satisfied with the overall performance of the council.

Community satisfaction with Council staff and the elected members was 85% and 84% respectively.

Council is providing at least a moderate level of satisfaction for 56 out of the 67 services areas.

The top 5 drivers of overall satisfaction account for just under 20% of overall satisfaction. These drivers included encouraging local business, town roads, community consultation, council responsiveness, and the provision of community festivals and events.



Key Findings

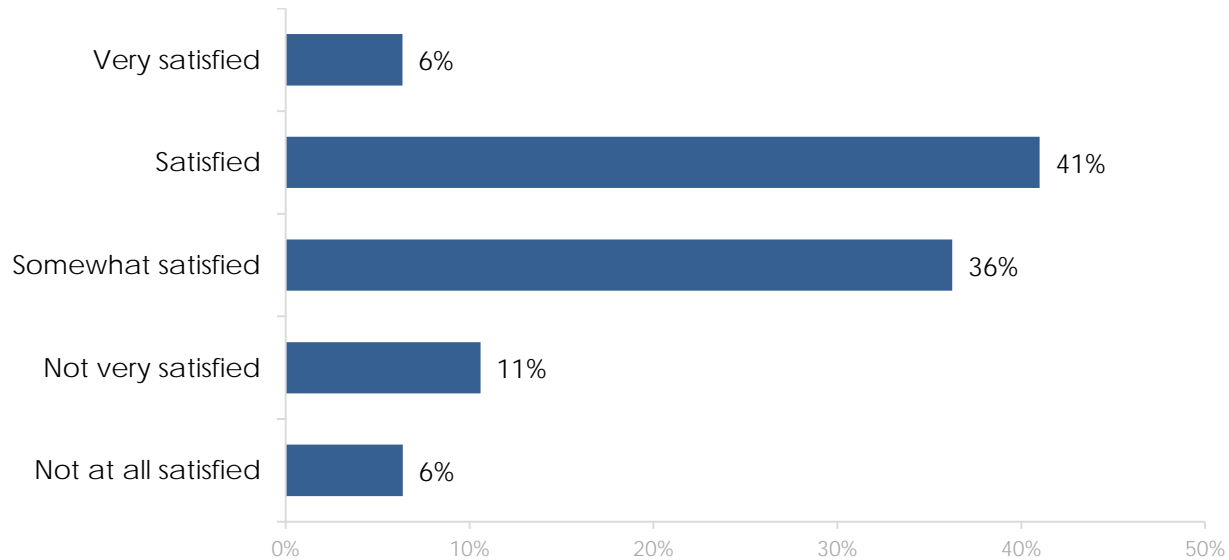


Overall Satisfaction with Council

Q8. How would you rate the overall performance of Lithgow Council as an organisation over the past 12 months?

	Overall 2016	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Rural North	Rural South	Lithgow	Wallerawang	Portland
Mean ratings	3.30	3.15	3.45↑	3.40	3.13	3.11↓	3.61↑	3.01↓	3.17	3.32	3.49	3.44

NSW LGA BRAND SCORES	Metro	Regional	All of NSW	Lithgow City Council 2016
Mean ratings	3.45	3.22	3.31	3.30



Base: N = 407

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

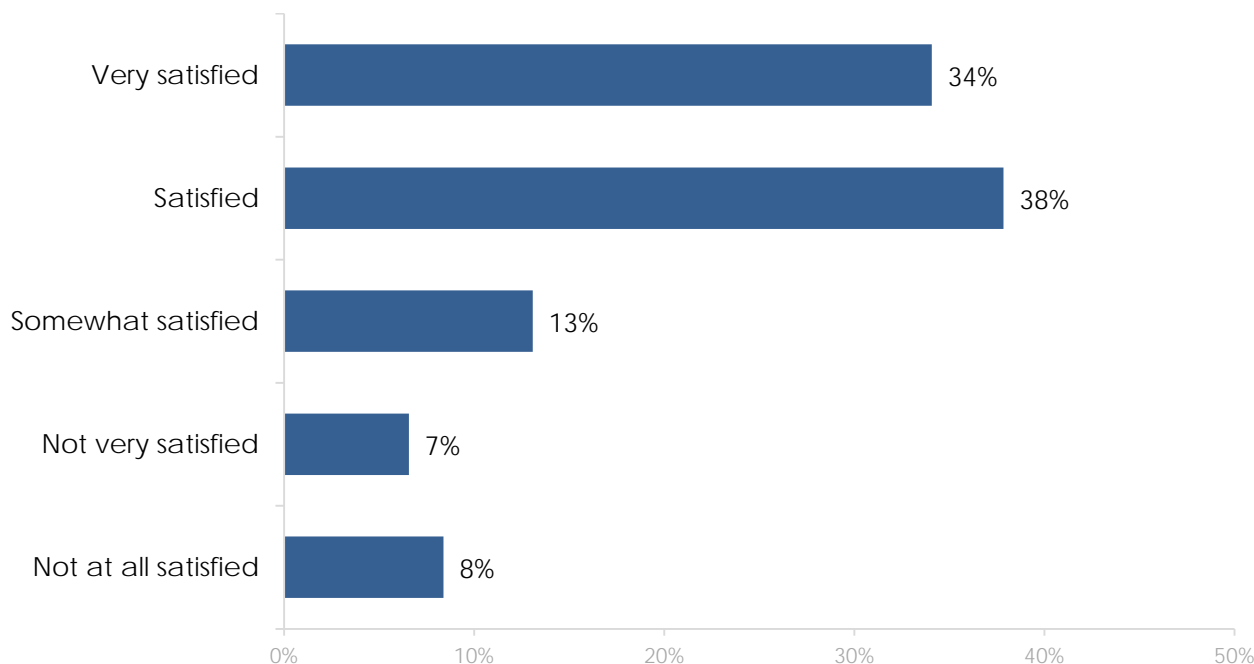
Overall, 83% of residents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with Council's overall performance.

Council's overall performance is in line with the regional benchmark and the benchmark for all of NSW.

Satisfaction with Council Staff

Q6c. How satisfied were you with the overall performance of Council's staff in dealing with your enquiry?

	Overall 2016	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Rural North	Rural South	Lithgow	Wallera wang	Portland
Mean ratings	3.83	3.80	3.86	3.42	3.85	3.93	4.05↑	4.04	3.42	3.78	3.98	4.16



Base: N = 389

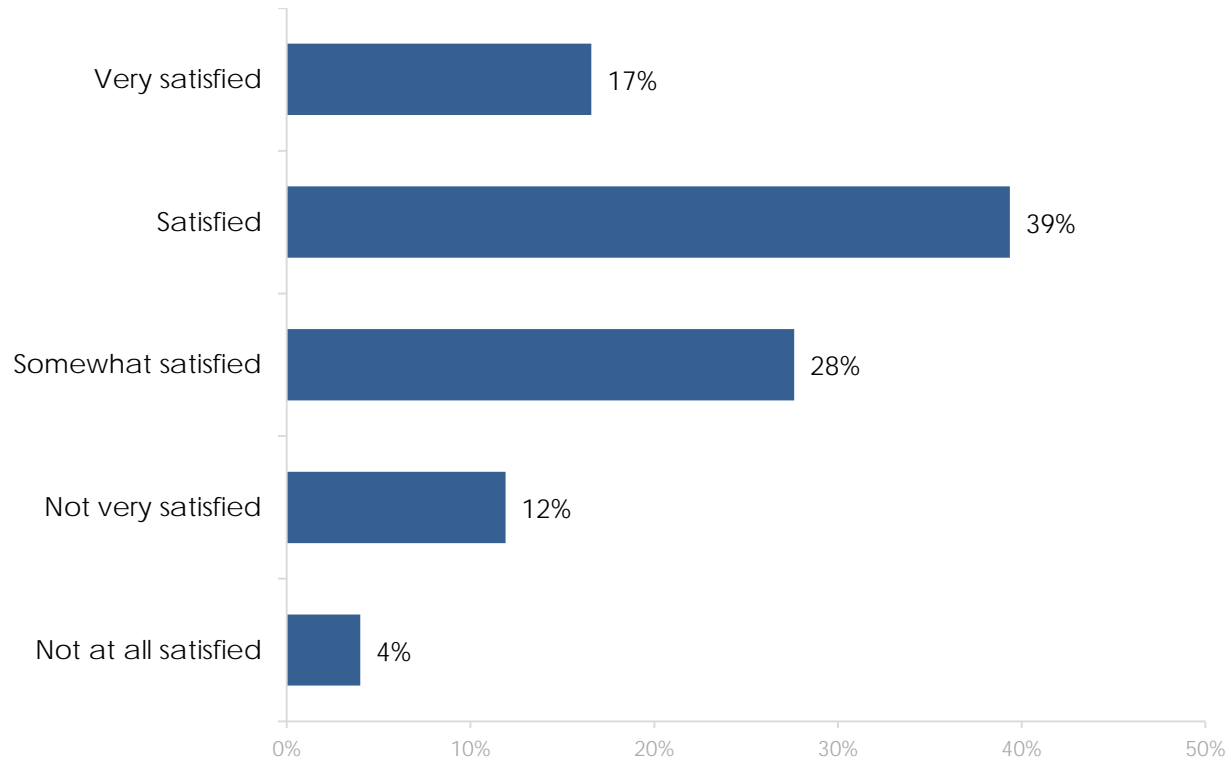
Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower level of satisfaction (by group)

85% of residents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with the overall performance of Council staff dealing with enquiries.

Satisfaction with the Mayor and Councillors

Q7. How satisfied were you with the overall performance of the Mayor and Councillors?

	Overall 2016	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Rural North	Rural South	Lithgow	Wallerawang	Portland
Mean ratings	3.52	3.36	3.67↑	3.43	3.50	3.30↓	3.88↑	3.44	3.12	3.58	3.71	3.39



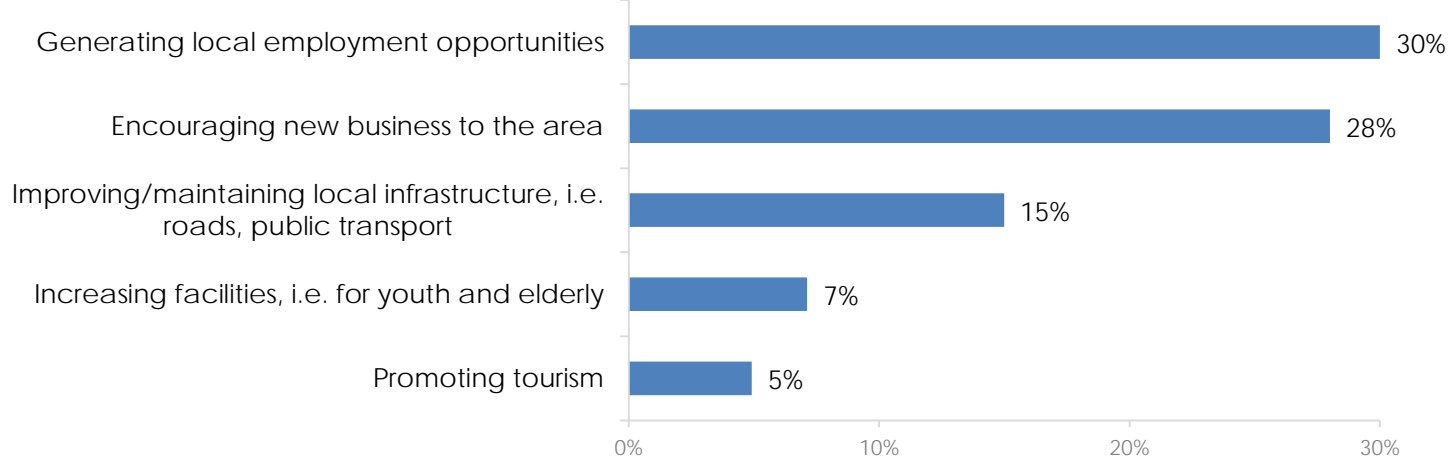
Base: N = 407

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

84% of residents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with the overall performance of the Mayor and Councillors.

Key Challenges

Q9. Thinking of the area as a whole, what would you say is the key challenge for Lithgow LGA in the next 5 to 10 years?



Base: N = 407

Key challenges mentioned were:
Generating local employment opportunities
Encouraging new business to the area
Improving/maintaining local infrastructure, i.e. roads, public transport

LGA Benchmarks

Service/Facility	Lithgow City Council Satisfaction Scores	Benchmark Variances
Management of local flooding	3.68	0.37▲
Household waste collection (including garbage, recycling) Recycling benchmark	4.25	0.36▲
Provision of car parking	3.16	0.17▲
Household waste collection (including garbage, recycling) Garbage collection benchmark	4.25	0.15
Town roads	2.91	0.11
Council operates in an environmentally friendly way	3.42	0.05
Libraries	4.18	0.04
Managing residential development	3.06	-0.02
Consultation with the community by Council	2.91	-0.07
Lithgow Aquatic Centre	3.60	-0.08
Other sporting facilities	3.65	-0.08
Footpaths	2.96	-0.09
Information on Council services	3.25	-0.09
Caring for bush areas	3.47	-0.10
Condition of public toilets	2.98	-0.15
Walkways and cycleways	3.07	-0.15
Rural roads	2.62	-0.18▼
Council responsiveness to community needs	2.85	-0.18▼
Facilities and services for people with disabilities	3.19	-0.19▼
Community halls/centres	3.44	-0.22▼
Other parks/playgrounds	3.51	-0.22▼
Managing commercial development	2.75	-0.33▼
Facilities and services for older people	3.21	-0.34▼
Facilities and services for youth	2.77	-0.41▼
Encouraging local industry and business	2.56	-0.63▼

Note: Benchmark differences are based on assumed variants of +/- 0.15, with variants beyond +/- 0.15 more likely to be significant

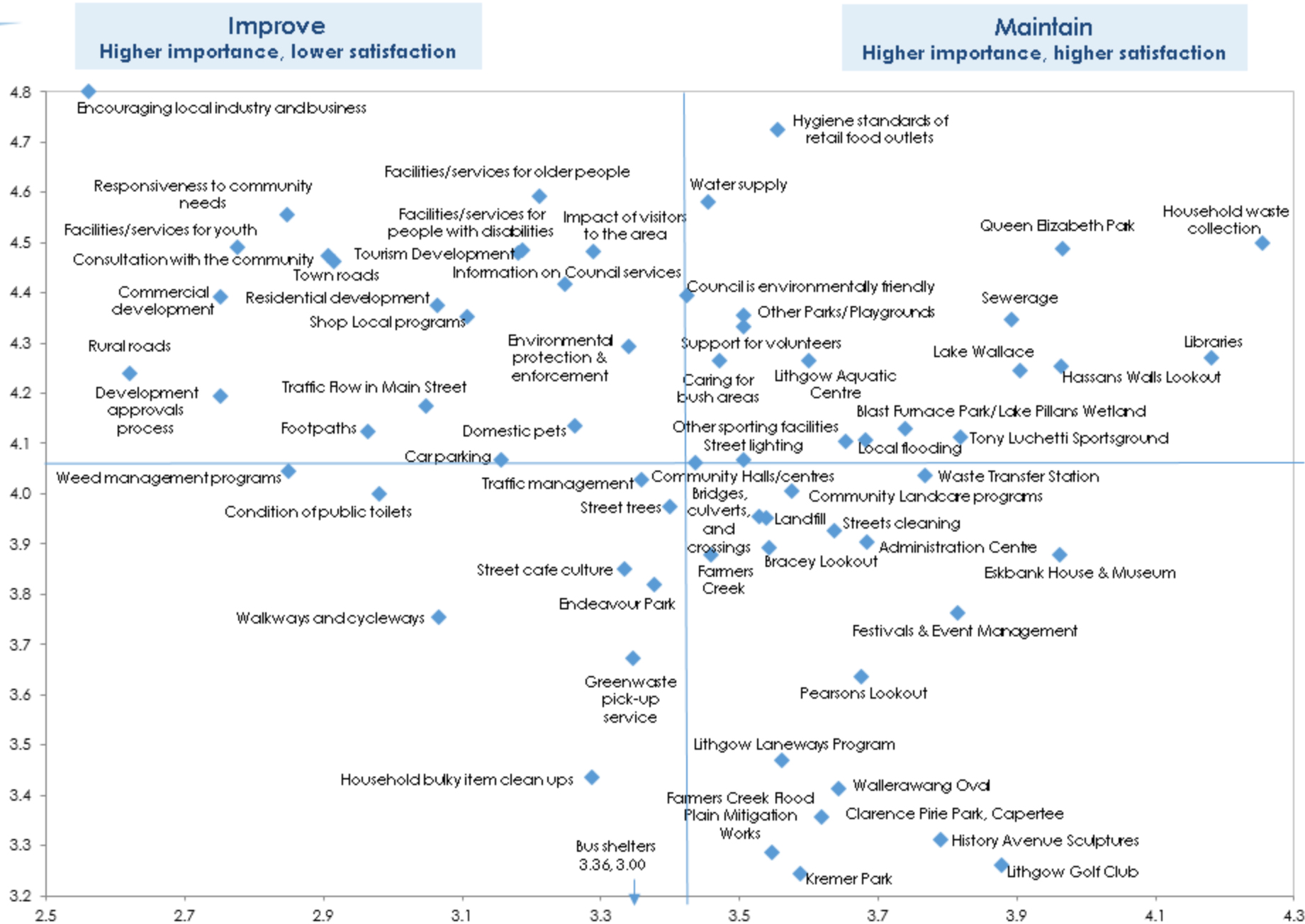
Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

▲▼ = positive/negative difference greater than 0.15 from LGA Benchmark

3 of the 22 comparable measures, were rated above benchmark threshold of 0.15, 13 on par and 9 of the measures were rated lower than the benchmark threshold of -0.15.

Quadrant Analysis – Importance v Satisfaction

Importance



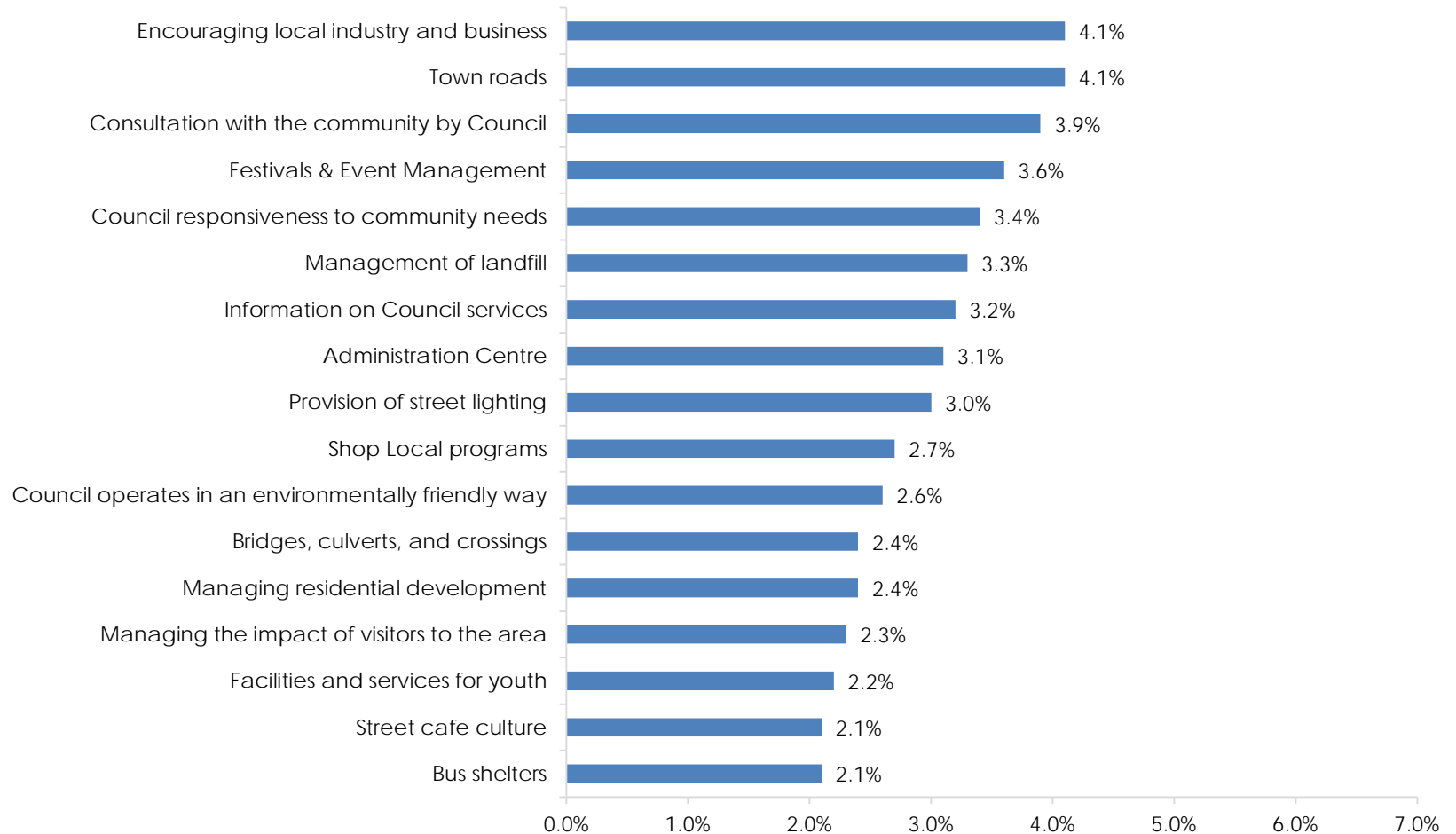
Summary of Performance Gap Analysis (PGA)

Ranking	Service/ Facility	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Performance Gap
1	Encouraging local industry and business	4.81	2.56	2.25
2	Facilities and services for youth	4.49	2.77	1.72
3	Council responsiveness to community needs	4.56	2.85	1.71
4	Managing commercial development	4.39	2.75	1.64
5	Rural roads	4.24	2.62	1.62
6	Consultation with the community by Council	4.47	2.91	1.56
7	Town roads	4.46	2.91	1.55
8	Development approvals process	4.20	2.75	1.45

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

The key outcomes of this analysis would suggest that, while there are opportunities to improve satisfaction across a range of services/facilities, 'Encouraging local industry and business' is the area of least relative satisfaction

These Top 17 Indicators Contribute to Over 50% of Overall Satisfaction with Council



The contributors to satisfaction are not to be misinterpreted as an indication of current dissatisfaction



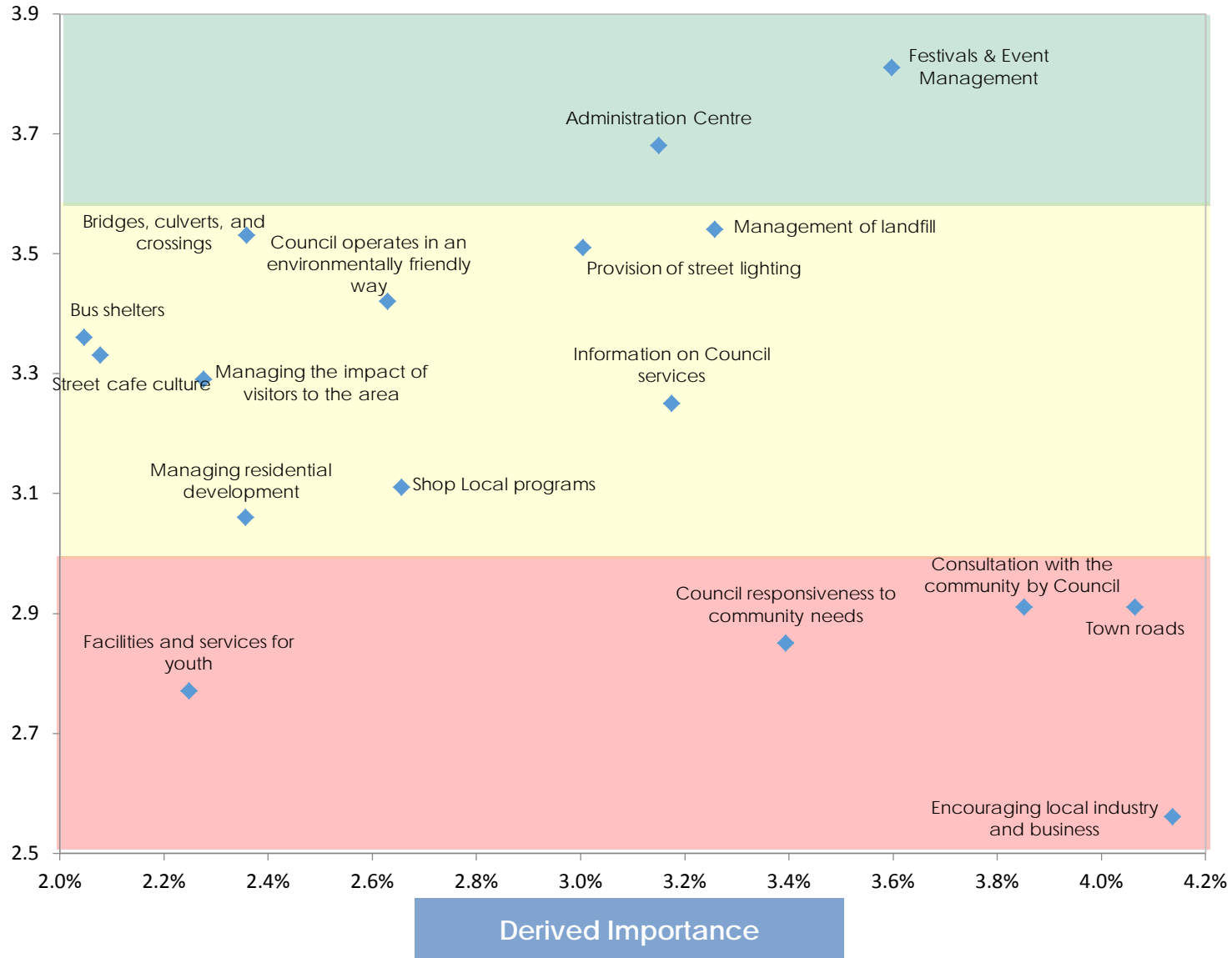


Mapping Stated Satisfaction and Derived Importance Identifies the Community Priority Areas

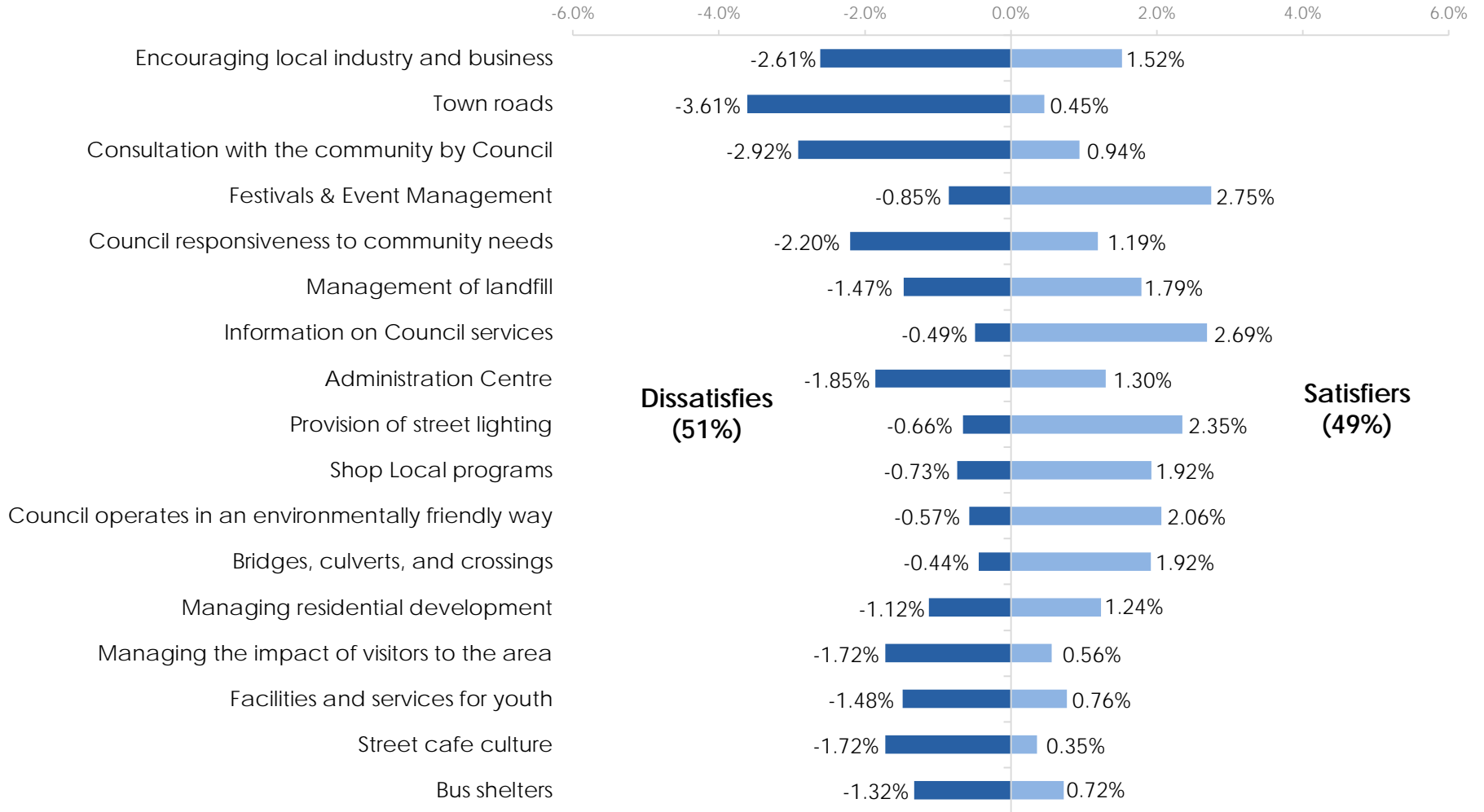
Moderately High Satisfaction
 ≥ 3.60

Moderate Satisfaction
3.00 - 3.59

Low Satisfaction
 ≤ 2.99



Key Contributors to Barriers/Optimisers



Different levers address the different levels of satisfaction across the community



Recommendations



Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, Council should:

1. Explore and address the community's concerns regarding the future viability of the areas with regard to employment
2. Understand the community expectation with Council's role in attracting new business, what levers can Council provide that will be acceptable to locals and appealing to businesses
3. Continue to consult and engage the community particularly across the areas of lower relative satisfaction





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research

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