



# Residents' satisfaction with Council services 'on the up'

Council's 2024 resident survey recorded an increase in satisfaction of 68%, up from 66% last year and 62% in 2022. The survey and report were presented to the Economic, Finance and Community Committee recently.

Mayor Nadine Taylor said satisfaction was tracking up again, which was good to see.

"Despite the negative impacts of inflation and recovery from extreme weather events, there has been an increase in public satisfaction for many services compared to 2023." "Thirty two out of 47 (70%) services rated by residents achieved satisfaction of 60% or above, with nine services achieving 80% satisfaction or higher, indicating generally positive sentiment across most areas."

The top five performing services remained consistent, with minor changes in rank compared to 2023: public sports grounds (90% satisfaction; 2nd in 2023), libraries (89%; 4th in 2023), swimming pools (89%; 7th in 2023), cemeteries (88%; 1st in 2023), and parks and reserves (86%; 6th in 2023).

"While many results have remained consistent, there were also notable increases in satisfaction," Mayor Taylor said.

"The greatest increases were in housing for seniors (65% in 2024, up from 49% in 2023), stormwater drainage (70%, up from 56%), Building Act consent services (55%, up from 45%), community safety (76%, up from 66%), resource consent management (60%, up from 42%), and flood protection (65%, up from 57%). Satisfaction with roads also saw a notable increase to 58% compared to 40% last year," she said.

"It is very pleasing to see such a high level of public satisfaction with these core Council services."

"Overall Marlborough - at 68% satisfaction - tracks well ahead of the national council benchmark of 54%."

"Of course there is always room for improvement but

generally I'm very pleased with the results," Mayor Taylor said.

The survey is carried out independently by SIL Research. The report is available to read at [www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/long-term-and-annual-plans-policies-and-reports/residents-satisfaction-survey](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/long-term-and-annual-plans-policies-and-reports/residents-satisfaction-survey)



Satisfaction with public sports grounds such as Lansdowne Park was consistent in the latest Resident Satisfaction Survey with results overall well ahead of the national council benchmark.

## New proposal for annual and long-term planning



Council is changing its annual and long-term planning in an effort to streamline the process, find greater cost efficiencies, and improve the region's long-term outcomes.

A report presented by Chief Executive John Boswell and Chief Financial Officer Geoff Blake to the Economic, Finance and Community Committee was strongly supported by the mayor and councillors.

"Our traditional annual and long-term planning process has limitations, reducing the time available for Council to identify opportunities to be both more effective and efficient in the delivery of services," Mr Boswell said. "The new process means we will engage with the public earlier, giving ourselves time and space for a broader assessment of options and more focused analysis of fully costed activities and outcomes."

The new Annual Plan process proposes:

- Starting this year with the 2025-26 Annual Plan, Council will provide an extended opportunity for public input

- primarily online - from November 2024 to January 2025 (dates to be confirmed)

- For the 2026-27 Annual Plan, Council will provide a similar opportunity for public engagement in late 2025

- For the 2027-37 Long-Term Plan, the third year of the revised planning cycle, Council will again provide an opportunity for early engagement and, in line with statutory requirements, undertake full consultation with public hearings

Mayor Nadine Taylor said she welcomed the new approach, saying Council would continue to carry out a formal consultation with public hearings every three years for the Long-Term Plan.

"A formal Annual Plan consultation with hearings each year is onerous for both the Council and the community. There is actually no requirement

under the Local Government Act for a formal consultation each year, unless a significant change is proposed to Council budgets. However, Council does consider it important to continue to provide the community an opportunity to have input into the process." Mayor Taylor said the Council had very little 'wiggle room' for additional funding requests and a rates increase of 10.62% is currently proposed in the LTP for next year, 2025-26.

"We will be working hard to reduce that increase by looking critically at our funding requirements and finding efficiencies. It's a tough environment right now but the benefit of this new planning process means Council can spend more time examining its own operations and seeking savings," Mayor Taylor said.

The proposed new process is subject to ratification at the full Council meeting on 31 October.

## Elmslie Bay jetty replacement needs government funding



The Elmslie Bay jetty is at the end of its life and needs replacement

The future of a critical link between French Pass and Rangitoto ki te Tonga / D'Urville Island was discussed at a recent Assets and Services Committee meeting.

Marlborough Roads Manager Steve Murrin presented a 'Low Cost, Low Risk' roading programme report which had included \$1 million for replacing Elmslie Bay jetty, which services the local community and visitors. This project, and a number of others including an urban Whale Trail connection through Blenheim and implementation of the Speed Management Plan around schools, were listed in Marlborough Roads' bid for funding.

"I hate to be the bearer of bad news but Marlborough was not successful in obtaining any subsidies," he said. "The only positive is there is still an opportunity to apply for resilience funding for the jetty."

Mr Murrin cited the jetty replacement as critical.

"The jetty is at the end of its life and Marlborough Roads will apply for resilience funding through NZTA but we don't know whether it is likely to be successful," he said.

The committee decided to go ahead with the replacement of the jetty subject to access to resilience funding. Councillors voted to proceed with other projects not funded by NZTA in the order recommended, which was the urban Whale Trail connection and Speed Management Plan around schools.

This will be subject to full Council approval on 31 October.