

Northern Grampians Shire Council

Community Satisfaction Report 2026

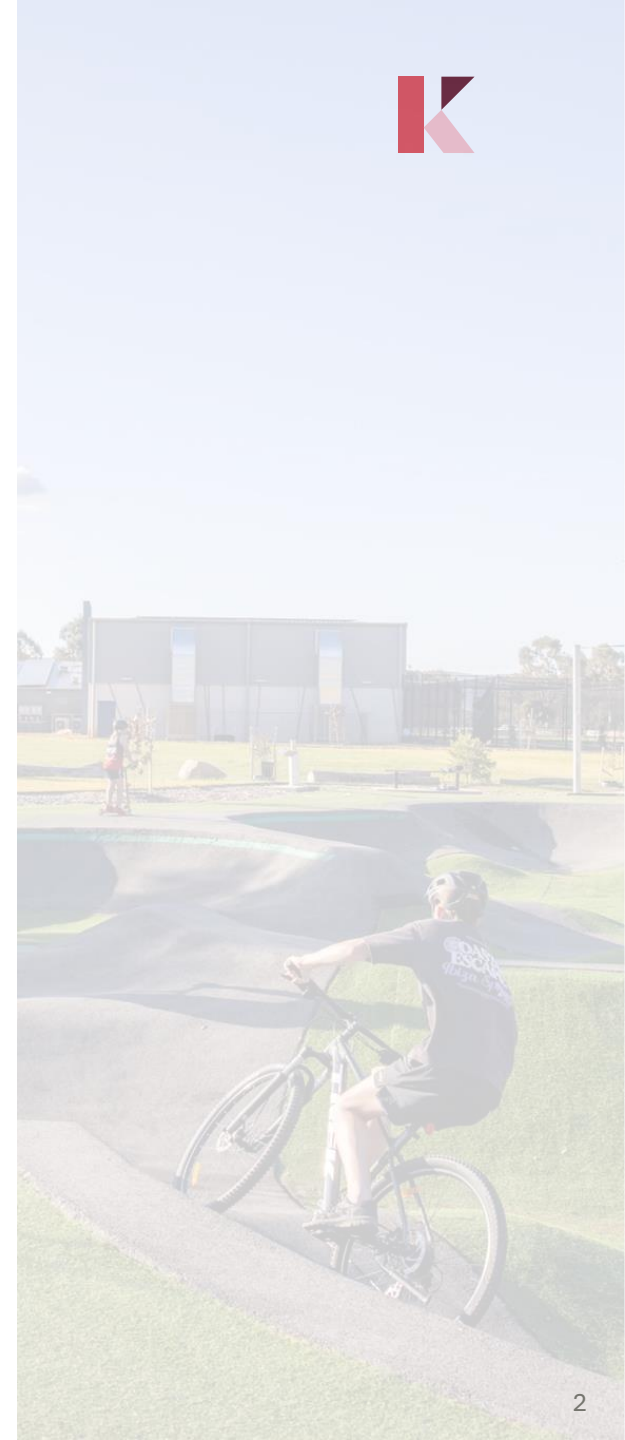


klein

Coordinated by the Department of Government
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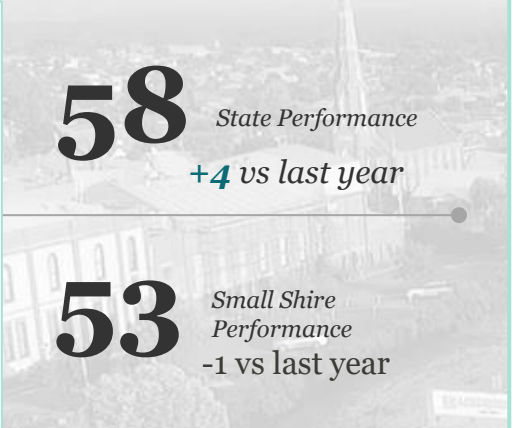
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Executive Summary



Northern Grampians Shire Council Community Satisfaction



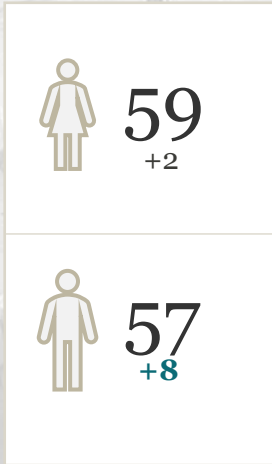
Key Takeouts



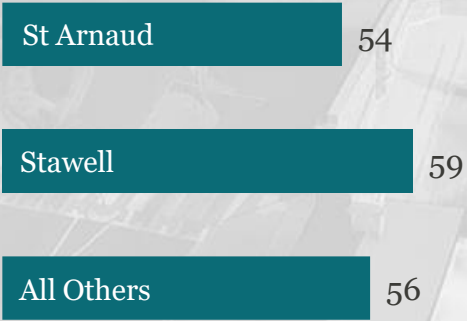
Northern Grampians Shire Council’s overall performance is 58, a significant increase from 2025. This exceeds the Small Shire benchmark and is similar to the State. Sentiment is more positive amongst younger residents (18-34 years) and resident in Stawell.

Top performing areas

68	Waste Management*	
67	Customer service	



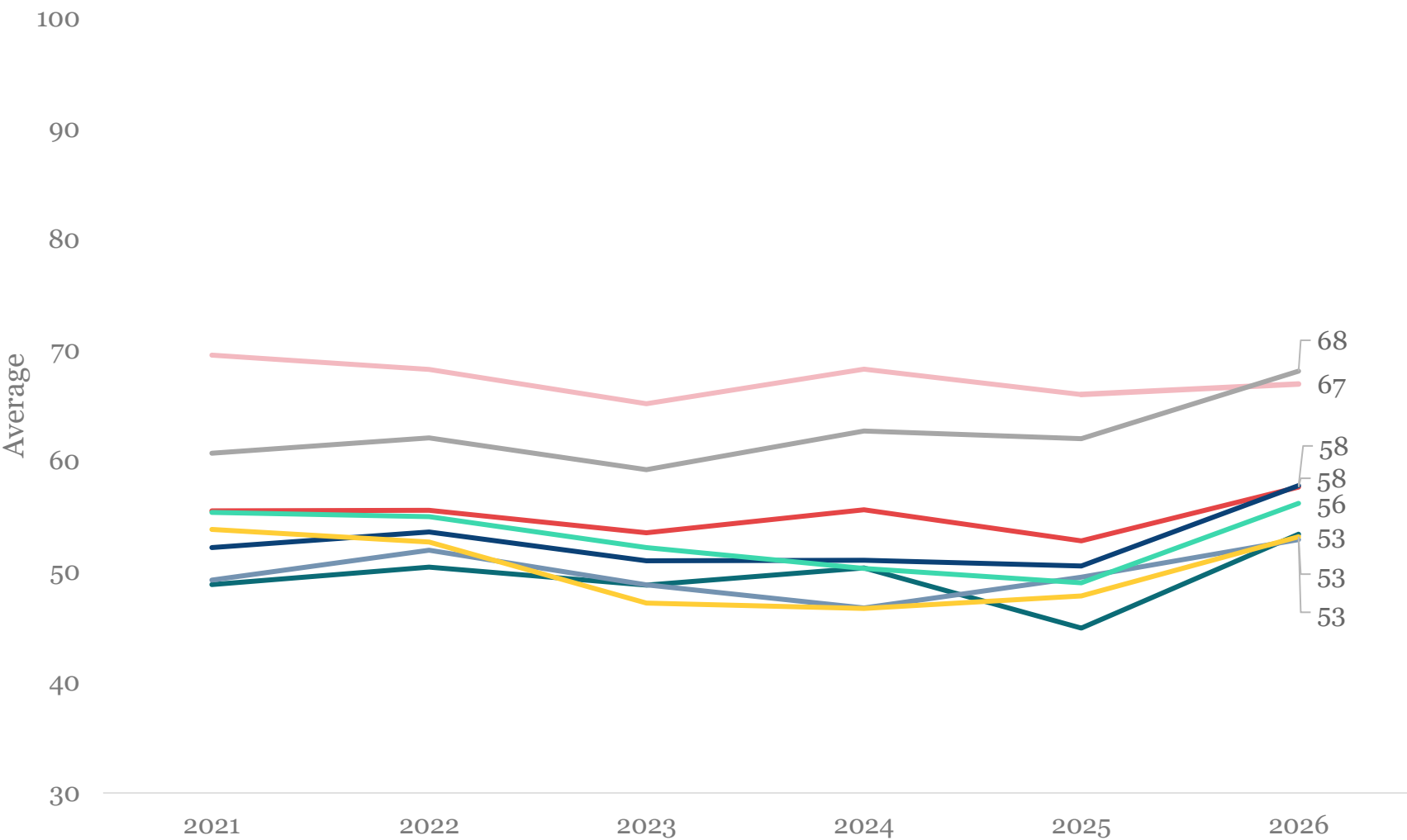
Aged 18-34	65	+5
Aged 35-49	51	+6
Aged 50-64	55	+10
Aged 65+	59	+2



Lowest performing areas

53	Sealed local streets*	
56	Making decisions*	

Core Measures by Year



Change on Previous Year

+5	Overall Performance	
+8	Spending Public Funds*	
+3	Direction of council	
+1	Customer Service	
+7	Opportunities to give feedback*	
+6	Waste Management*	
+7	Making Decisions*	
+5	Sealed local Streets*	

Changed questions are marked with an asterisk.

LGV Core Summary



		Northern Grampians SC 2026	Chg vs 2025	State 2026	Chg vs 2025	Small Shire 2026	Chg vs 2025
Overall Performance <i>Overall Performance of Council</i>		58	+5	58	+4	53	0
Spending Public Funds <i>Spending public funds... in ways that benefit the community</i>		53	+8	51	+4	47	-1
General Direction <i>Views on direction of council's performance</i>		53	+3	48	+2	46	-
Customer Service <i>...on most recent contact, rate Council for Customer Service</i>		67	+1	68	+2	65	-
Opportunities to Give Feedback* <i>Opportunities offered by Council to give your feedback on key local issues</i>		58	+7	55	+5	54	+2
Waste management* <i>Waste Management including garbage, recyclables and green waste</i>		68	+6	72	+6	71	+5
Making decisions* <i>Making decisions in the interest of the community</i>		56	+7	52	+3	51	+1
Sealed local streets* <i>Condition of sealed local streets</i>		53	+5	54	+9	45	+1

Performance of Council Services – Summary by Service Area

Governance, Engagement & Advocacy			Infrastructure & Maintenance			Community Services & Support		
Service	2026	vs LY	Service	2026	vs LY	Service	2026	vs LY
Opportunities to give feedback*	58	+7	Condition of sealed local streets*	53	+5	Waste management*	68	+6
Making decisions in the interest of the community*	56	+7						

Changed questions are marked with an asterisk.

Executive Summary – Key Strengths of Northern Grampians Shire Council



Making decisions in the interest of the community

Decisions in the interest of the community is the single most influential driver of overall satisfaction across the services measured in this report, and Northern Grampians Shire Council slightly out-performs both peer groups on it. A score of 56 sits four points above the State benchmark and five points above the Small Shire group, and has improved significantly by seven points.



Spending public funds

Spending public funds shows the largest year-on-year improvement of the headline measure tracked, climbing eight points to 53 and Council now sits two points above the State benchmark and six above the Small Shire group.



Opportunities to give feedback

A score of 58 on opportunities to give feedback sits three points above the State benchmark and four above the Small Shire group, with a seven-point lift year-on-year. Engagement and consultation also emerges as the most frequently raised positive theme in open-ended feedback, confirming residents notice and value how Council is involving them.



General direction of Council

Direction of Council is the largest positive gap against the State benchmark of any headline measure tracked; a score of 53 sits five points above State and seven above the Small Shire group, with a three-point annual lift. Consistent with the increase in Overall sentiment, the community are more confident in where Council is heading.

Executive Summary – Key Opportunities for Council to Address



Condition of sealed local streets

Condition of sealed local streets is the most frequently raised improvement priority in open-ended feedback across the service areas measured in this report, and the gap is felt unevenly; residents outside St Arnaud and Stawell rate it at 48, eight points below Stawell residents and the largest geographic spread of any service tracked. A score of 53 sits broadly in line with the State benchmark, but its prominence in the verbatim commentary mark this as the most acutely felt service experience.



Waste management

Waste management is the only headline service where Northern Grampians Shire Council sits below both benchmarks with a score of 68 is four points below State and three below the Small Shire group. The gender spread is also notable: male residents rate the service at 66 against 78 from female residents, the widest gender gap of any service measured in this report.



Engagement with middle aged residents (35–49)

Residents aged 35 to 49 consistently sit below the municipal average across the highest-influence services tracked; making decisions (50, against 61 from 65+), opportunities to give feedback (52, against 60 from 65+), and sealed local streets (51). This cohort is feeling the gaps in Council services and engagement most sharply of the age groups measured in this report.



Geographic equity beyond St Arnaud and Stawell

Residents living outside St Arnaud and Stawell rate Council consistently lower across the services measured. These smaller communities feel less served and less connected than the two larger towns of the municipality.

Executive Summary – Recommendations



Build on the relative performance gains

We recommend Northern Grampians Shire Council communicate its strong relative position openly and frequently — performance against benchmark has improved across every headline measure, with direction of Council, spending public funds, opportunities to give feedback, and decisions in the interest of the community all now sitting above both the State and Small Shire groups. The story of momentum is itself an asset; making it visible to residents will help consolidate the gains and shift the perception of Council from improving to confidently performing.

Prioritise sealed local streets

We recommend Council treat the condition of sealed local streets as the single highest-priority service area to act on across the service areas measured. Even though the score sits broadly in line with State, open-ended feedback consistently identifies road condition and maintenance as the dominant improvement priority, particularly among residents outside St Arnaud and Stawell. A targeted, geographically prioritised maintenance program will be essential to closing the perception gap.

Strengthen waste management

We suggest Council review waste service delivery and resident communication to close the gap against benchmark as waste management is the only service area where Council sits below both State and Small Shire peers. Understanding why male and St Arnaud residents rate the service materially lower than other cohorts should be the starting point.

Engage middle aged residents and the smaller townships

We recommend Council design a targeted engagement program for residents aged 35 to 49 and for those living outside St Arnaud and Stawell — both cohorts sit consistently below the Council average across the highest-influence services tracked. Working-age residents are typically harder to reach through traditional channels, and smaller settlements need visible presence rather than centralised communications.

Summary of Approach



About the LGV CSS program

What the program is

Program overview

The **LGV Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS)** is a state-wide program that measures how residents rate the performance of their local council. It provides councils with an independent, consistent and comparable view of community perceptions across key service and performance areas, helping them to:

Understand strengths
and areas for improvement

1

Track performance
over time

3

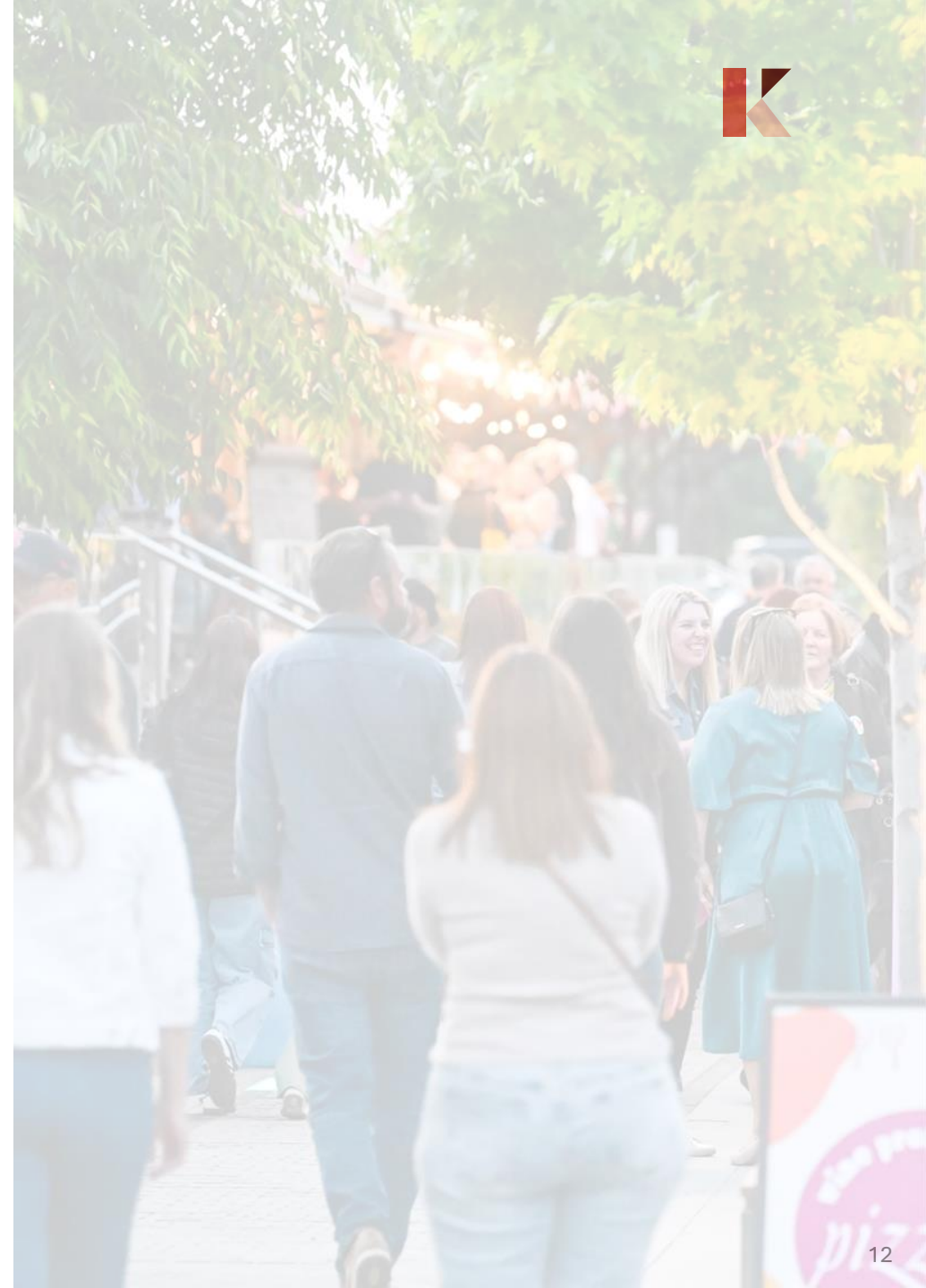
Benchmark against similar
councils and the wider sector

2

Support planning, service
improvement and community
accountability

4

The LGV CSS program provides a common framework for understanding and benchmarking council performance from the community perspective.



About Klein

What the program is and Klein's role in its next phase

Klein's appointment to the program

Klein is the newly appointed and Government-endorsed provider for the LGV CSS program. Our appointment through a robust and competitive procurement process provides confidence in the strength of the approach and the quality of delivery.



A new phase for the program

As the new provider, Klein brings energy, curiosity and a modern perspective — helping to refresh the program while maintaining the integrity, comparability and credibility that councils rely on.

Independent. Comparable. Credible. Refreshed for the program's next phase.

The LGV CSS program provides a common framework for understanding and benchmarking council performance from the community perspective.



About Klein

- 30 years' experience in community and customer satisfaction tracking.
- Diverse expertise in public-sector, local-government and stakeholder engagement, as well as commercial clients.
- Proven in managing large tracking programs.
- A “safe set of hands” - independent, transparent, and responsive.

Explanation of Survey Metrics

How the key survey measures should be interpreted



Key metrics included in this report

This report includes a range of measures to understand how residents view Council's performance, services and role in the community.

Key Performance: Measures overall views of Council, including overall performance, value for money and direction.

Core measures: Covers key areas such as decision-making in the interests of the community, waste management, opportunities to give feedback, and the condition of sealed local streets.

Importance of council services: Measures how important different services are to residents.

Performance: Measures how residents rate Council's performance in each area over the past 12 months.

Experience: Measures whether residents or anyone in their household has used particular services in the past 12 months.



Service reporting categories

For ease of interpretation, service results are grouped into the following categories

Governance, Engagement & Advocacy

Infrastructure & Maintenance

Community Facilities & Recreation

Community Services & Support

Planning & Growth



Note on interpretation

Residents may rate Council based on either direct experience or broader perceptions. Both are valuable, as they help show not only how services are experienced, but also how Council is seen by the wider community.

This report includes a range of measures to understand how residents view Council's performance, services and role in the community.



How results are reported

Results are typically shown for

Total Council sample

Demographic sub-groups within the Council such as age, gender and region

Similar councils for benchmarking

State-wide results for broader comparison



Benchmarking and comparison

How Council's results are interpreted in context

Why Benchmarking matters	Benchmarking helps put Council's results into context by comparing performance with relevant peers, historical results and key resident groups.
What it helps show	Benchmarking helps answer four key questions: • How is Council performing overall? • How is Council performing compared with all participating councils? • How is Council performing compared with similar councils? • Which results reflect Council-specific issues versus broader sector-wide patterns?
Important note	Comparisons are based on a common methodology and question set. Where differences are observed, significance testing is used to identify whether Council is <i>meaningfully above or below</i> benchmark.

Benchmark comparisons used in reporting

Comparator	What it helps show
State-wide average	How Council compares with all participating councils across the program
Council group average	How Council compares with similar councils, providing the most relevant peer context
Previous years	Whether performance is improving, stable or declining over time
Resident sub-groups	Which groups score higher or lower, and where perceptions differ across the community



Wodonga City Council is classified as a **Small Shire** council. The **Small Shire** group includes: Alpine Shire Council, Buloke Shire Council, Central Goldfields Shire Council, Indigo Shire Council, Murrindindi Shire Council, Pyrenees Shire Council, Strathbogie Shire Council, Towong Shire Council and West Wimmera Shire Council

Enhanced Questions

Question wording review and comparability assessment



CORE MEASURES



In consultation with Local Government Victoria and participating councils, a number of questions used in the Community Satisfaction Survey were reviewed and updated to improve clarity and relevance.

As wording changes can affect comparability with historical results, a split-sample approach was used to assess the impact of the main revisions. One group received the historic wording and another received the enhanced wording.

The following table summarises the changes made and the extent to which the revised wording affected results.

Enhanced Wording	Historic Wording	Estimated Impact	Outcome
How would you rate [COUNCIL.NAME] at spending public funds on infrastructure and services in ways that benefit the community	How would you rate [COUNCIL.NAME] at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?	N/A	Not tested. The historic question focused on perceptions of value for money, while the revised measure assesses perceptions of how effectively council directs public funds to generate community benefit. As these are related but not equivalent concepts, direct trend comparability was not assumed.
The opportunities offered by [NAME OF COUNCIL] to give your feedback or engage on key local issues.	Community consultation and engagement	+1pts	No material impact detected. Results are considered comparable.
Condition of sealed local streets in your area. This includes local streets but does NOT include highways and major arterial roads such as [INSERT UP THREE LOCAL EXAMPLES].	The condition of suburban sealed local roads in your area. This includes local streets and roads managed by your council but excluding highways and main roads that are managed by VicRoads.	+2pts	No material impact detected. Added specificity does not appear to have materially changed responses.
Waste management including the collection of garbage, recyclables and green waste	Waste management	+6pts	Material impact detected; revised wording appears to have increased positive ratings likely by making the measure more concrete and inclusive.
Making decisions in the interest of the community	Decisions made in the interest of the community	-1pt	No material impact detected. Results are considered comparable.
Advocating for, and representing the community to government and other organisations	Lobbying on behalf of the community	+2pts	No material impact detected. Results are considered comparable.
Developing and promoting local tourism	Tourism Development	-3pts	No material impact detected. Movement appears within expected variation.
Developing and promoting the local economy	Business and community development	-3pts	No material impact detected. Movement appears within expected variation.
Enforcement of local laws and Council regulations	Enforcement of local laws	-5pts	Potential material impact detected. Expanded reference to “Council regulations” may have broadened respondents’ frame of reference and contributed to lower ratings.
The condition of footpaths in your area	The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area	+2pts	No material impact detected. Revised wording appears comparable.
Keeping the community informed on council services, events and programs	Informing the community	+3pts	No material impact detected. Revised wording appears comparable.

Changed questions are marked with an asterisk.

Elicitation of Qualitative Feedback



Open ended comments are a great way to capture information and insights.

To encourage richer, more natural feedback, our survey platform utilises a technology called 'EVE' (Evolved Verbatim Engine).

EVE uses natural language processing to enable human-like interactions with survey respondents. It enables us to provide

- **Deeper and richer insights from open comments**
- **An improved respondent experience**

Think of EVE having a chat with the respondents (where there are open-ended question in the survey), allowing them to engage with an inquisitive feedback companion using two-way, automatically moderated conversation. 'EVE' probes them further in unique ways depending upon what the customer has said.

This leads to more reliable feedback and insights.



EVE
Evolved Verbatim Engine

How to interpret results

Statistical significance and margin of error

Statistical significance

Statistical significance testing at the 95% confidence level has been applied to key comparisons in this report.

Where a difference is highlighted, it is unlikely to be due to chance alone. Where no difference is highlighted, the results should be treated as broadly similar.

95%

Reading the charts and tables



Up arrow or green text = significantly higher



Down arrow or red text = significantly lower



Circle / marker or black text = not statistically significant, but may still be noteworthy

Approximate margins of error used in this report

All survey results are subject to a margin of error, which varies depending on sample size.

Sub-Group	Sample	Margin of error
Northern Grampians SC	401	+/-4.9 pts
State	17,730	+/-0.7 pts
Small Shire	3,994	+/-1.6 pts
18 to 34	35	+/-16.6 pts
35 to 49	85	+/-10.6 pts
50 to 64	143	+/-8.2 pts
65+	138	+/-8.3 pts
Male	216	+/-6.7 pts
Female	185	+/-7.2 pts
St Arnaud	64	+/-12.2 pts
Stawell	209	+/-6.8 pts
All Others	128	+/-8.7 pts

Larger groups have a smaller margin of error; smaller groups have a larger one.

Why the sample size is appropriate

Understanding the Sample



Sample size

This survey includes enough interviews to give a reliable overall picture of community views.



Margin of error

All surveys have a small amount of natural variation. A bigger sample reduces this (and Councils have the option to increase sample size), but the improvement in accuracy becomes smaller as sample size increases.



Confidence level

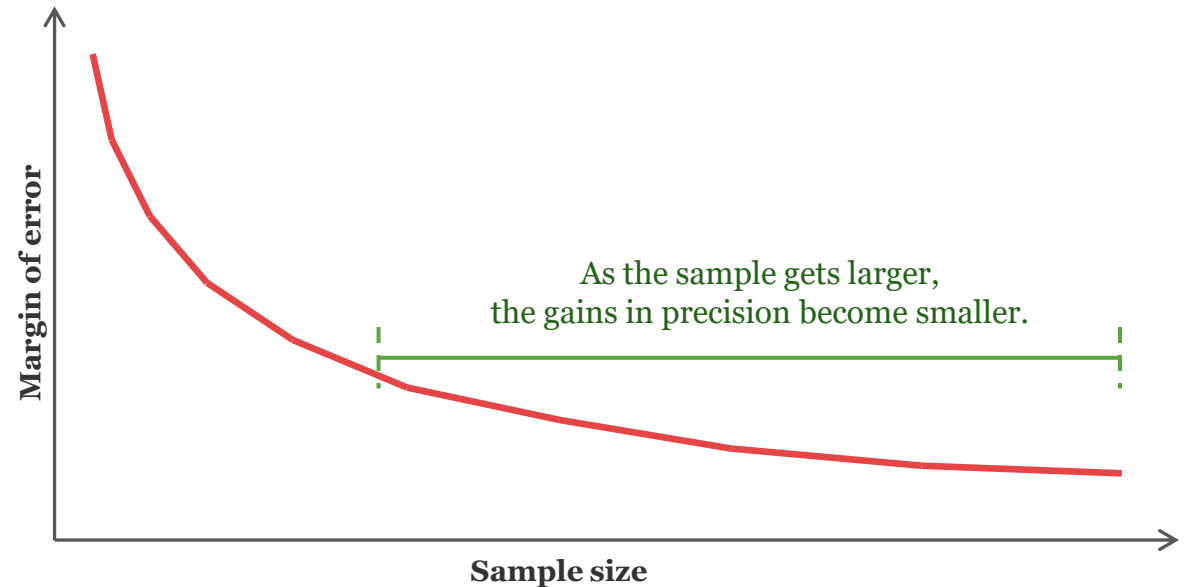
We use the standard "95% confidence level". In simple terms, this means we can be highly confident the survey gives a trustworthy picture of wider community views.



Statistical significance

In our analysis, we test whether differences and movements in scores are large enough to be meaningful, rather than just normal survey variation. These are highlighted through the report.

How sample size affects precision



What this means

Larger samples can improve precision, but after a point they are unlikely to materially change the overall story.

How weighting is used

What weighting does

Weighting adjusts the final results so the achieved sample more closely reflects the actual community profile.

Why it matters

Some groups can be a little over- or under-represented in the raw sample. Weighting helps ensure no group has too much or too little influence on the final results.

How to read the table

“Unweighted” shows the profile of the achieved sample. “Weighted” shows the profile after adjustment. Each council receives its own weighting table.

Sample weighting

Age	Unweighted	Weighted
18-24	1%	2%
25-34	8%	19%
35-49	21%	19%
50-64	36%	30%
65+	34%	29%
NET	100%	100%

Gender	Unweighted	Weighted
Male	54%	50%
Female	46%	50%
NET	100%	100%

Weighting improves representativeness, but it does not change what respondents said. It simply helps ensure that each group is reflected in the right proportion in the final results.

Comparative Benchmarks



In addition to the core LGV questions, each council was able to select additional service areas to assess. As a result, the number of councils in the benchmark for each questions varies. The following are the number of councils for each service area assessed within this report. Where there is only one other council in the benchmark, we have not provided a benchmark and labelled it as NA.

Performance	State	Small Shire
Condition of sealed local streets*	38	10
Decisions in the interest of the community*	38	10
Opportunities to give feedback on key local issues*	38	10
Waste management*	38	10

How Performance Index Scores are Calculated

A simple guide to how 5-point ratings are converted into a 0 to 100 index

In simple terms

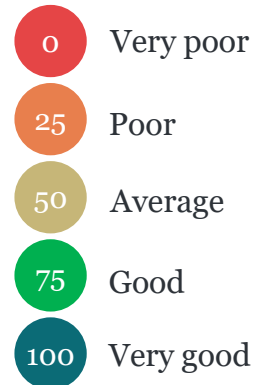
Performance is asked on a 5-point scale from Very poor to Very good.

Responses are then converted into an index from 0 to 100 so results can be compared consistently.

Scale



Index Values



Can't say is excluded from the calculation

Worked example

Each response ‘% share’ is multiplied by its index value. The contributions are then summed to create the score.

Response	Index Value	Share	Contribution
Very good	100	25%	25.0
Good	75	30%	22.5
Average	50	20%	10.0
Poor	25	10%	2.5
Very poor	0	10%	0.0
Can't say	-	5%	Excluded
Total index score		100%	60.0

How to interpret scores

Higher scores indicate stronger performance.

Band	Interpretation
85+	Very strong performance
75-84	Positive performance
50-74	Mixed or passable performance
40-49	Underperforming
<40	Clear community dissatisfaction

Direction in the past 12 months

The same principle is used for the Direction metric: Improved = 100, Stayed the same = 50, Deteriorated = 0. “Can't say” responses are excluded.

How to read the results slide - Performance Distribution



Guide to reading results

What this slide shows

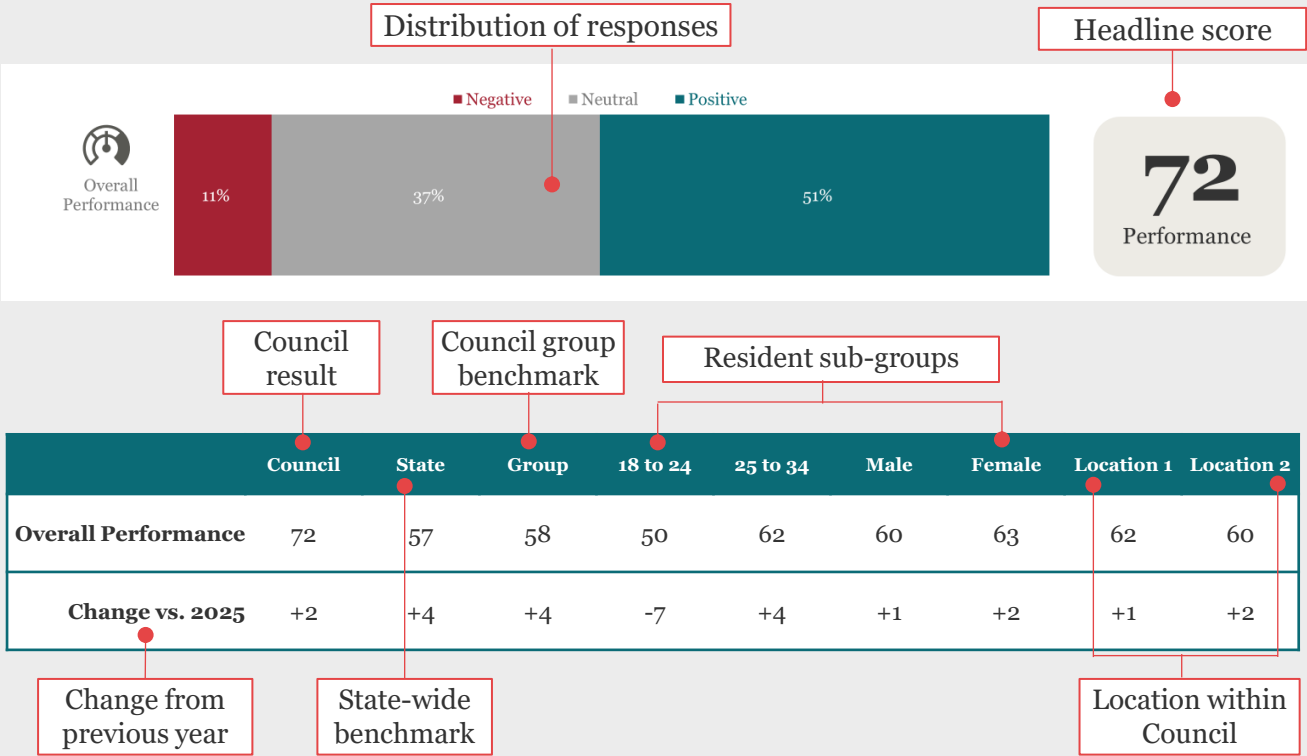
This slide shows the overall result, the distribution of responses, and how results vary across benchmarks and key sub-groups.

- It helps the reader see:
- How Council is performing overall
 - How the result compares with key benchmarks
 - Which groups score higher or lower
 - Whether the result has improved or declined over time

What the table categories mean

- Council** - result for this Council
- State** - average across all participating Councils
- Group** - average for similar councils
- Age / gender / location columns** - results for key sub-groups within the Council area
- Change vs. previous year** - movement since last year

Annotated example



How to read the line chart slide - Performance



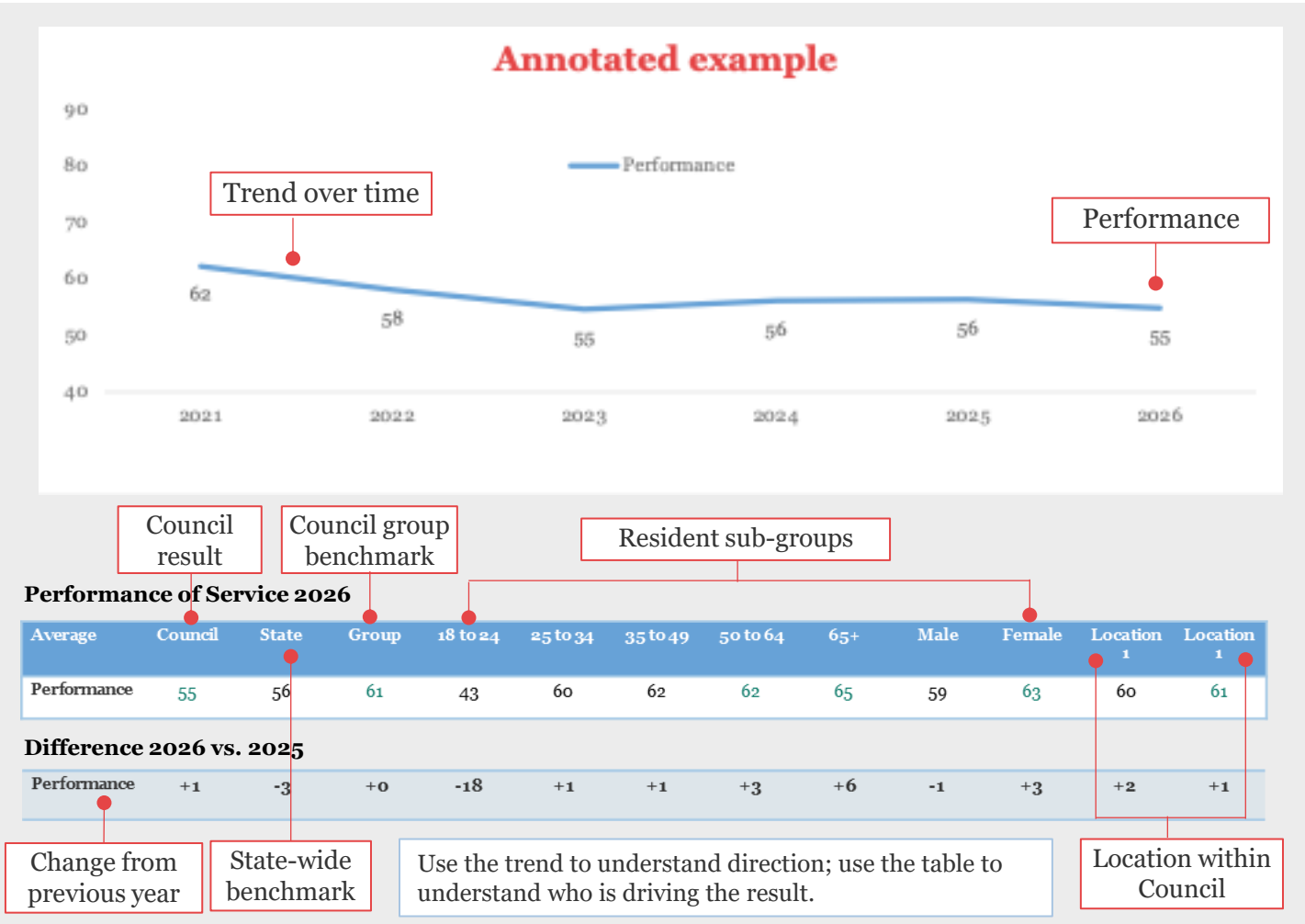
Guide to reading results

What this slide shows

- These slides show how importance and performance have changed over time, and how the current year result varies across benchmarks and sub-groups.
- The top chart shows the trend over time.
- The table below shows the current year results by benchmark and sub-group.
- The change table shows movement compared with the previous year.
- Importance = how much the area matters to the community
- Performance = how residents rate Council on that area

Table categories

Council, State and Group provide benchmarks; age, gender and location columns show resident sub-groups.



Fieldwork Summary

Who?

Residents of Northern Grampians Shire Council aged 18+
Minimum quotas of gender within age groups were applied during fieldwork. Post-survey weighting was then conducted to ensure accurate representation of the ABS age and gender profile of the council area.

What?

8-minute survey
Conducted by Telephone

How Many?

n=401 Telephone recruited from sourced residential sample list

When?

Fieldwork conducted February/March 2026



Key Performance Measures



Overall Council Performance



Overview



This section provides a summary of overall community perceptions of Council performance. It presents key headline metrics and a high-level view of how Council is performing across the municipality.

Specifically, this section includes:

- Overall performance score
- Perceptions of Council direction
- Views on how well Council spends public funds
- Benchmark comparisons (where applicable)
- Results by key subgroups (e.g. age, location)

Together, these results provide a clear snapshot of overall community sentiment and set the foundation for the deeper insights that follow in the report.

Summary of results

Key measures:

- Community views of overall performance were more positive in 2026, with the result increasing 5 points to 58.
- Residents were also more positive about council direction in 2026, with the result increasing 4 points to 53.
- Perceptions of spending public funds to benefit the community increased by 8 points to 53 compared with 2025.

Vs. Benchmarks

- Overall performance scores 58, sitting on par with the State (58) and above Small Shire (53).
- Council direction scores 53 and also tracks above the State (48) and Small Shire (46) benchmarks.
- Spending of public funds sits above both the State (51) and Large Shire benchmarks (47).

Sub-group differences:

- Residents aged 18-34 were generally positive, particularly on overall performance.
- Residents aged 35 to 49 were less positive on overall performance, Council direction, and spending public funds to benefit the community.

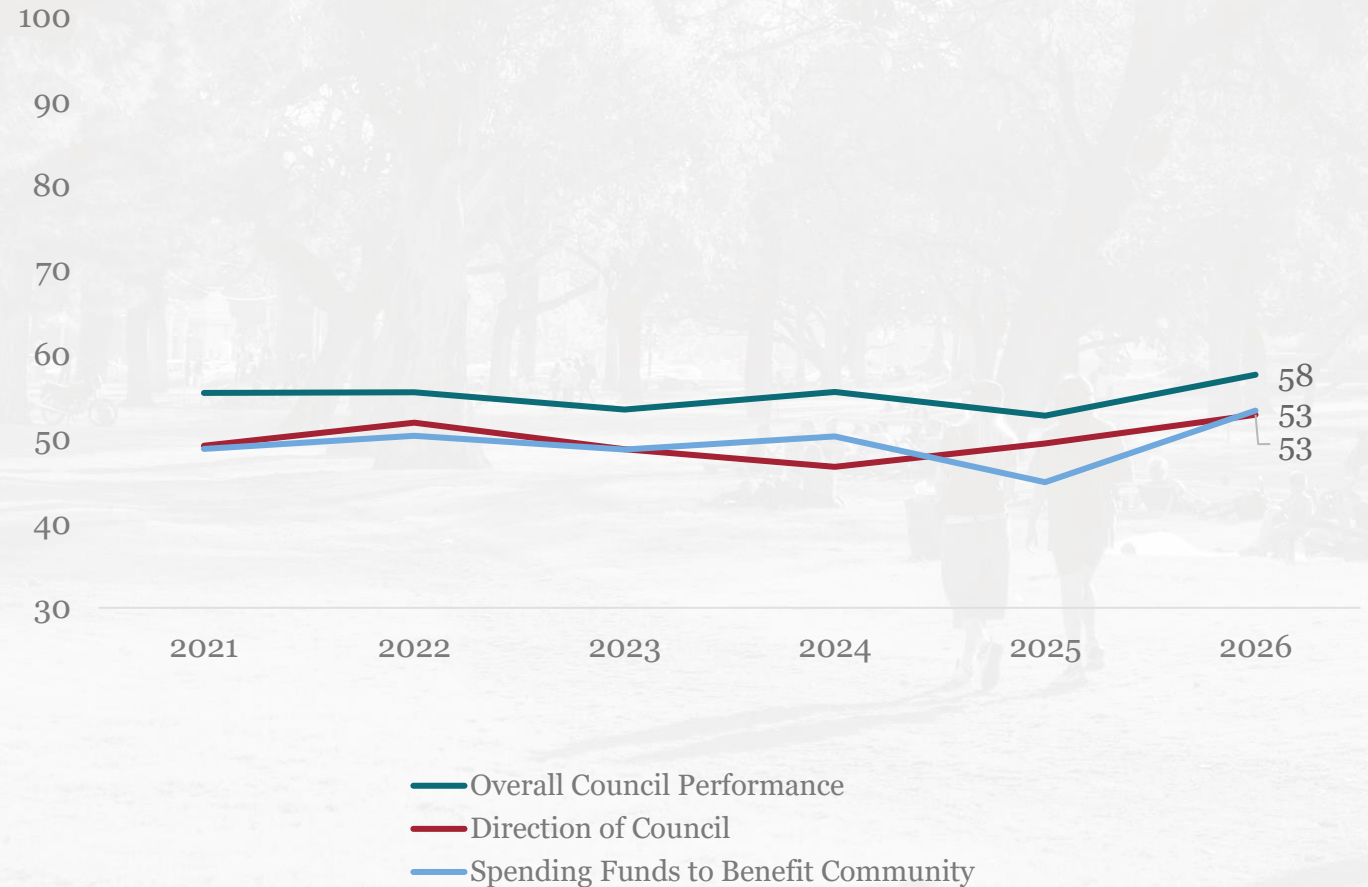
Performance Summary – At a Glance



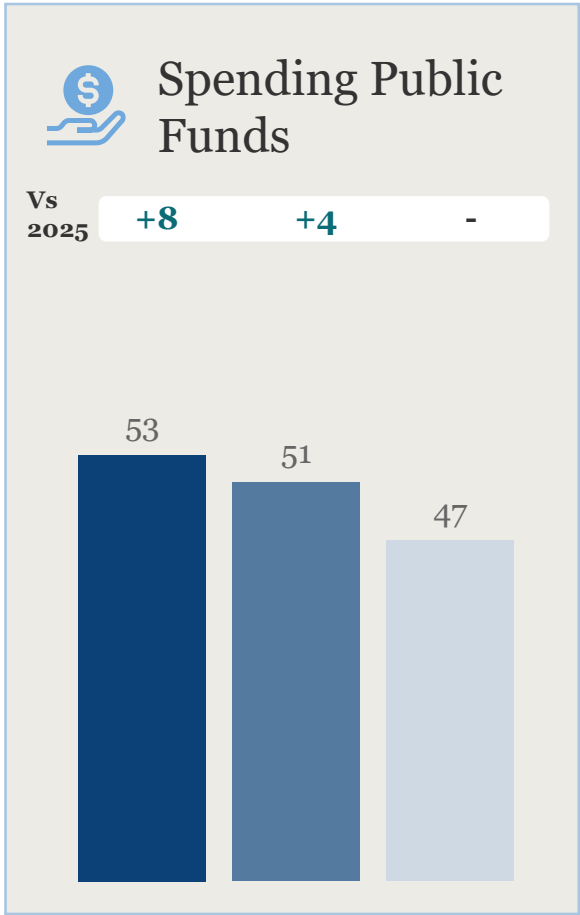
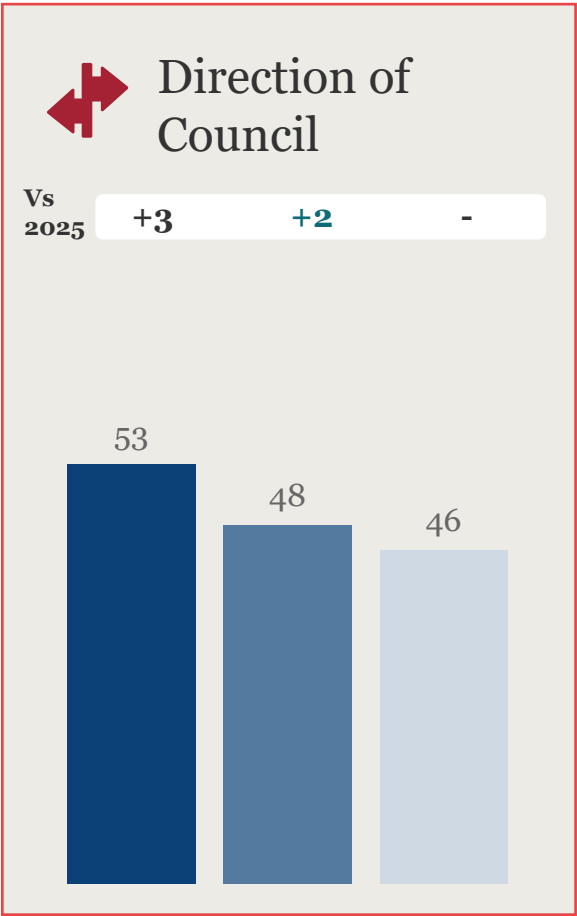
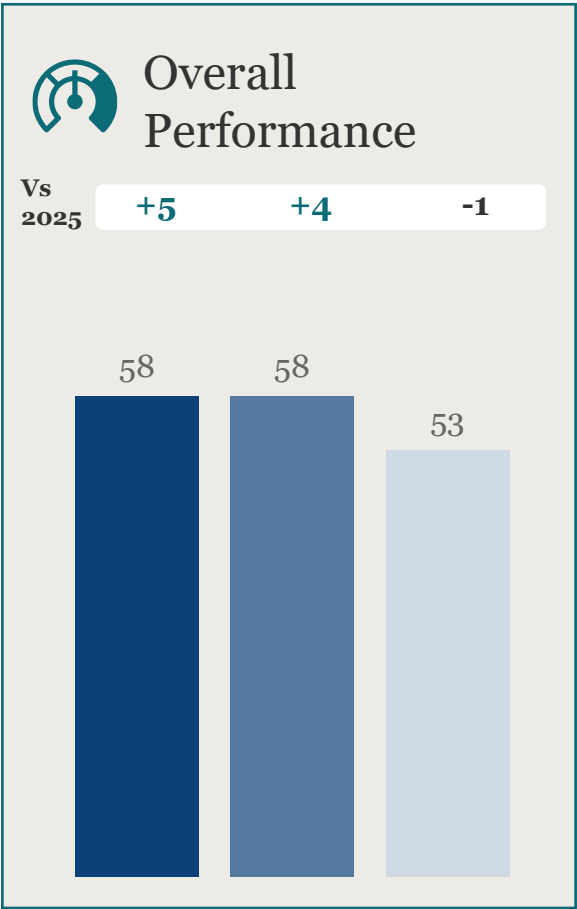
Council performance summary.
Results shown are index scores out of 100.



Council Performance by Year



Overall Performance – Council vs. Benchmarks

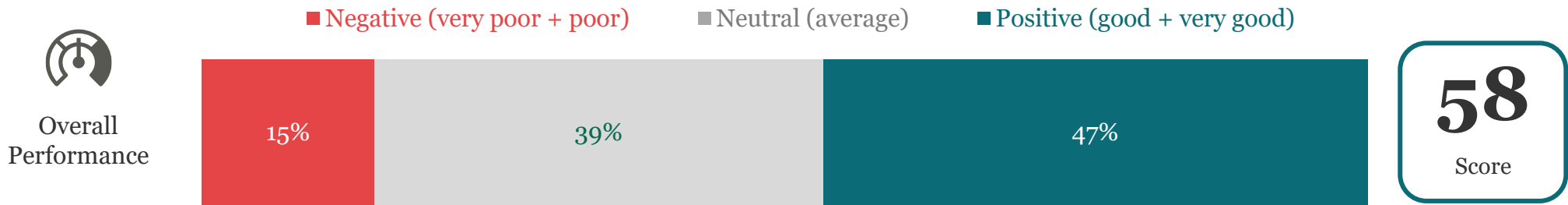


■ Northern Grampians ■ State ■ Small Shire

Overall Performance – Distribution of Results 2026



These results show the distribution of responses for **Overall Performance** (categorized into negative, neutral and positive), and by sub-group to give deeper insight into community perceptions

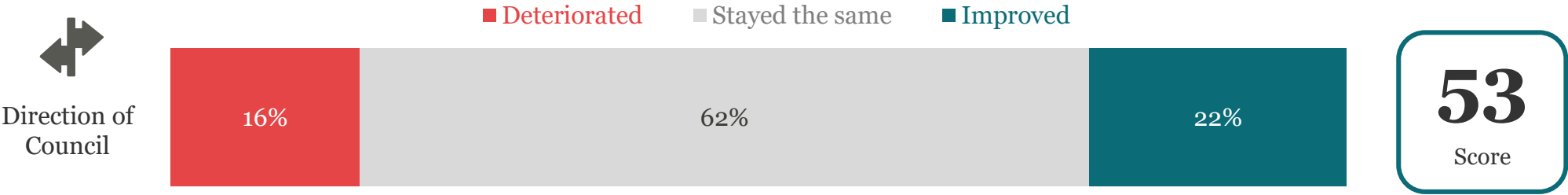


	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Overall Performance	58	58	53	65	51	55	59	57	59	54	59	56
Change vs. 2025	+5	+4	-	+5	+6	+10	+2	+8	+2	+3	+5	+5

Direction of Council – Distribution of Results 2026



These results show the distribution of responses for **Direction of Council** (improved, stayed the same, deteriorated), and by sub-group to give deeper insight into community perceptions



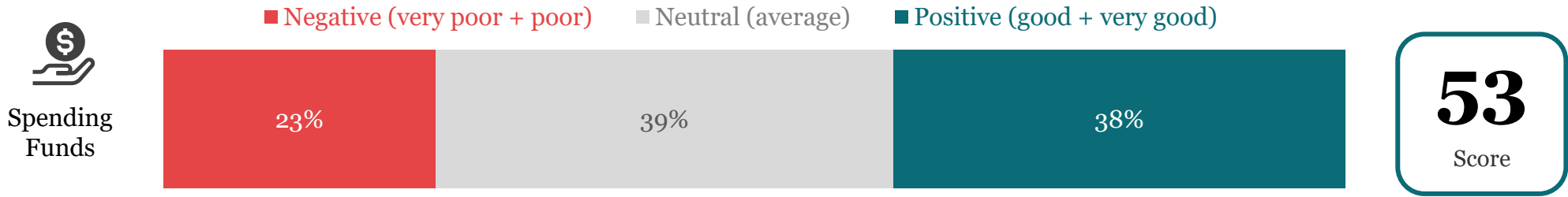
	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Direction of Council	53	48	46	55	46	54	55	49	57	46	57	49
Change vs. 2025	+3	+2	-	-	+6	+13	-2	+5	+1	-3	+4	+4

Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Council’s overall performance? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Spending Public Funds to Benefit Community – Distribution of Results 2026



These results show the distribution of responses for **Spending Public Funds** (categorised into positive, natural and negative), and by sub-group to give deeper insight into community perceptions



	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Spending Funds	53	51	47	57	47	52	56	52	54	53	55	51
Change vs. 2025	+8	+4	-1	+8	+13	+15	+4	+10	+7	+8	+7	+10

Q3b. How would you rate Council at spending public funds on infrastructure and services in ways that benefit the community? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

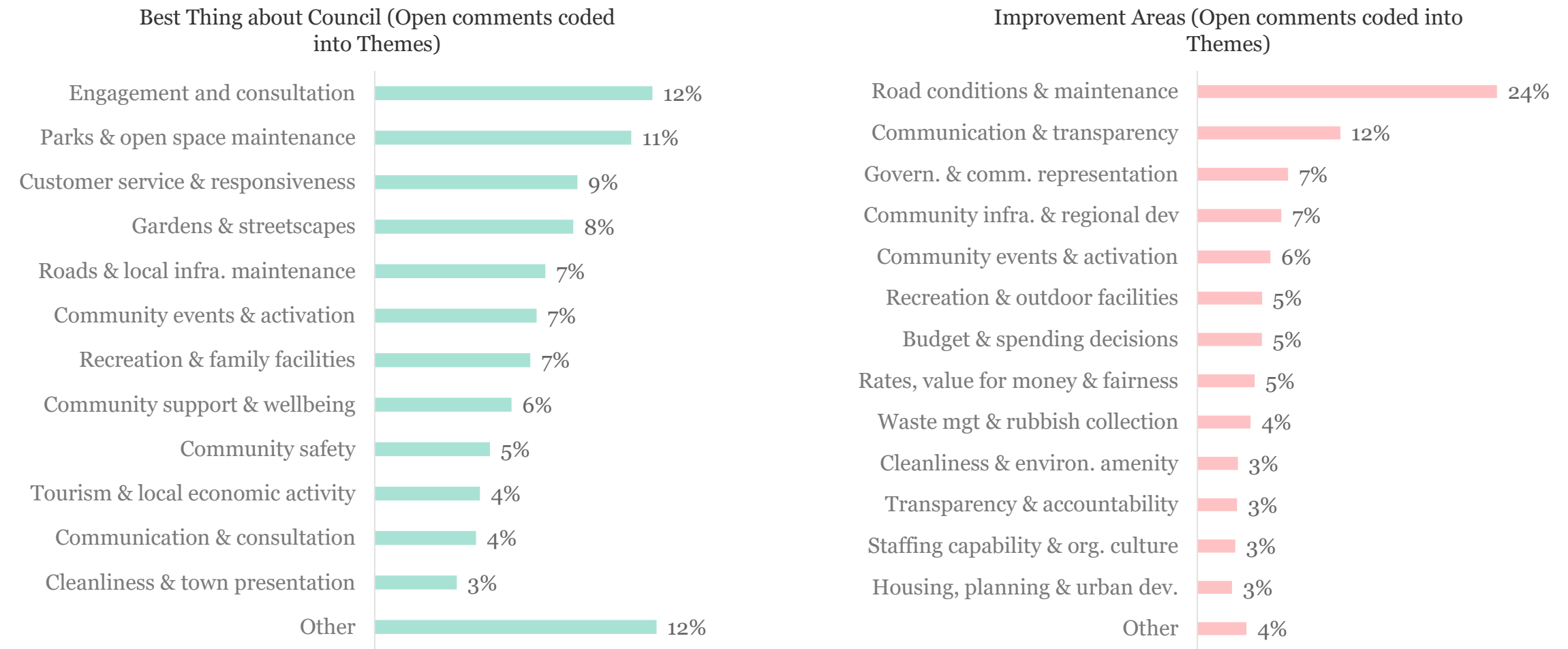
Open Ended Resident Feedback





Open ended Resident Feedback - Reasons for Sentiment

Verbatim Comments



Q16. In your own words, please tell me what is the BEST thing about [INSERT COUNCIL NAME]? Q17. What does [INSERT COUNCIL NAME] most need to do to improve its performance? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Open ended Resident Feedback - Reasons for Sentiment

Demographic Differences

Best Thing about Council ●

- Engagement and consultation is the most commonly mentioned strength across the municipality.
- Parks and open space maintenance, customer service and responsiveness and gardens and streetscapes are also recognised positively, reflecting appreciation for public amenity, local liveability and community spaces.
- Parks and open space maintenance is more commonly recognised by residents aged 25 to 34.
- Community events and activation is more frequently cited by residents aged 25 to 34.
- Roads and local infrastructure maintenance and community events and activation emerge as secondary positive themes raised by residents.
- Subgroup differences are otherwise relatively limited overall, indicating broad alignment in perceptions of Council strengths.

Improvement Areas ●

- Road conditions and maintenance overwhelmingly dominate improvement feedback across the municipality, particularly among residents aged 25 to 34 and residents in other areas.
- Communication and transparency, governance and community representation and community infrastructure and regional development emerge as notable secondary concerns raised by residents.
- Community infrastructure and regional development is more commonly raised by residents aged 25 to 34.
- Community events and activation and recreation and outdoor facilities are recurring but clearly secondary concerns relative to the leading issues.
- Customer service and operational capability attract comparatively limited criticism.
- Subgroup differences are otherwise relatively limited, suggesting broad alignment in improvement priorities across the community.

Performance of Council Services



Performance of Council Services



Overview



This section provides a summary of community perceptions of performance across key Council service areas. It highlights how well residents believe Council is delivering services and where performance is strongest or may require improvement.

Specifically, this section includes:

- Performance ratings of Council services
- Trends over time

Council service areas are grouped into five key categories:

- Governance, Engagement & Advocacy
- Infrastructure, Waste & Maintenance
- Community Facilities & Recreation
- Community Services & Support
- Planning, Development and Growth

Summary of results

Key measures:

- Waste management was the strongest performing service area, scoring 68, followed by opportunities to give feedback on key local issues at 58.
- Condition of sealed local streets received the lowest results, scoring 53.
- Compared with 2025, opportunities to give feedback on key local issues and decisions in the interest of the community recorded the strongest improvements, both increasing by 7 points.

Vs. Benchmarks

- Waste management performs below both the State benchmark (72) and the Small Shire benchmark (71).
- Opportunities to give feedback on key local issues performs above both the State benchmark (55) and the Small Shire benchmark (54).
- Decisions in the interest of the community also performs above both the State benchmark (52) and the Small Shire benchmark (51).
- The condition of sealed local streets sits broadly in line with the State benchmark (54) but above the Small Shire benchmark (45).

Sub-group differences:

- Residents aged 18 to 34 were more positive on condition of sealed local streets and opportunities to give feedback on key local issues.
- Residents aged 35 to 49 were less positive on condition of sealed local roads, decisions in the interest of the community and opportunities to give feedback on key local issues.

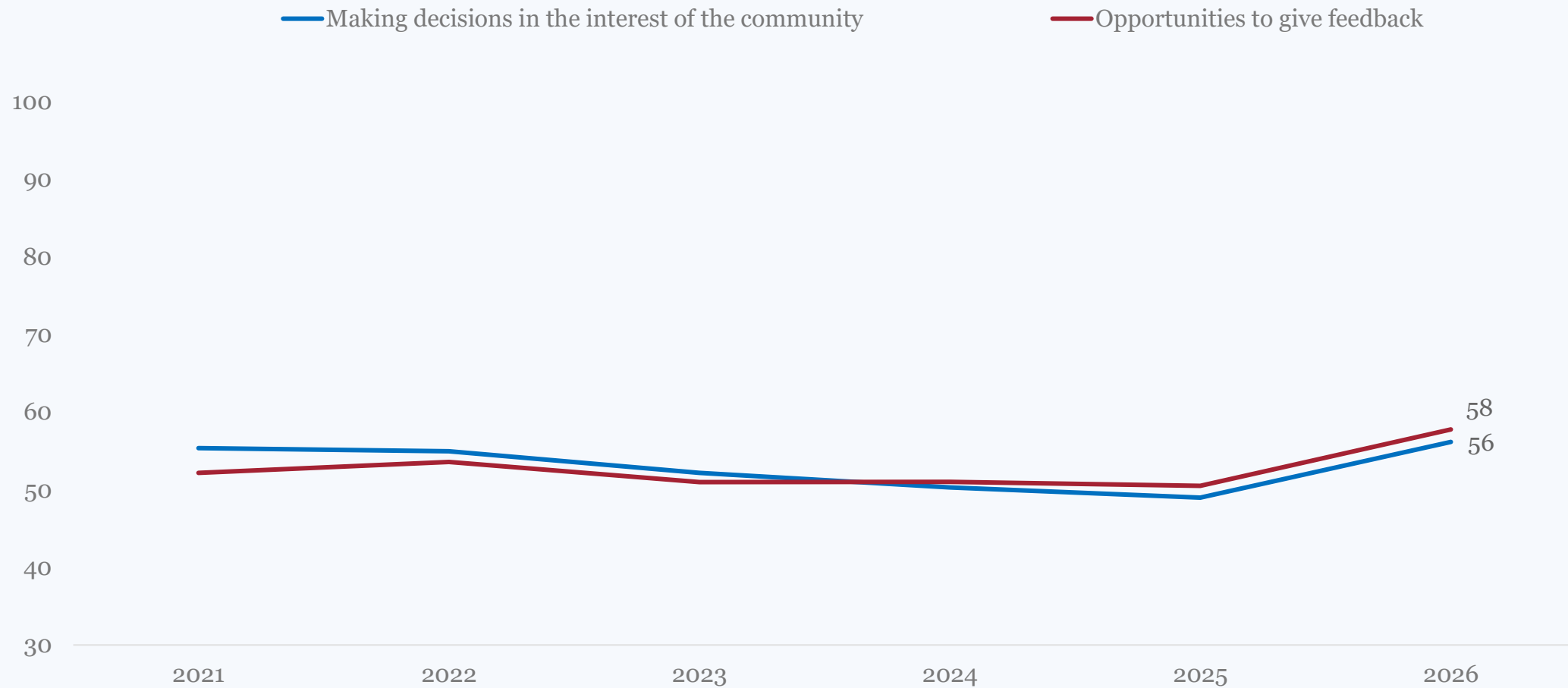
Performance of Council Services – by Year



	Northern Grampians SC 2026	Chg vs 2025	State 2026	Chg vs 2025	Small Shire 2026	Chg vs 2025
Waste management*	68	+6	72	+6	71	+5
Opportunities to give feedback on key local issues*	58	+7	55	+5	54	+2
Decisions in the interest of the community*	56	+7	52	+3	51	+1
Condition of sealed local streets*	53	+5	54	+9	45	+1

Q2. I would now like you to rate the performance of Council over the last 12 months. Firstly, how has Council performed on [SERVICE] over the last 12 months? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Performance of Council Services – Governance, Engagement & Advocacy



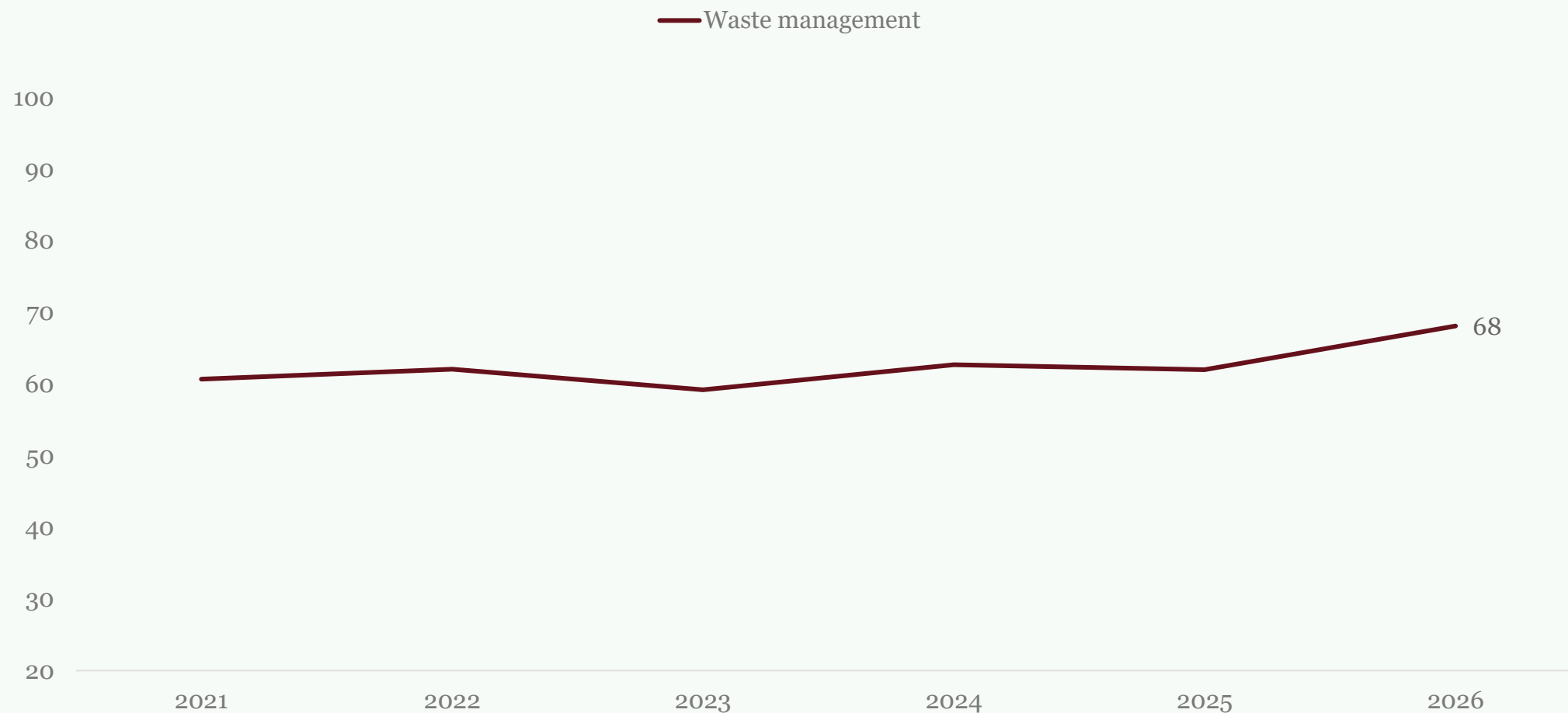
Q2. I would now like you to rate the performance of Council over the last 12 months. Firstly, how has Council performed on [SERVICE] over the last 12 months? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Performance of Council Services – Infrastructure & Maintenance



Q2. I would now like you to rate the performance of Council over the last 12 months. Firstly, how has Council performed on [SERVICE] over the last 12 months? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Performance of Council Services – Community Services & Support



Q2. I would now like you to rate the performance of Council over the last 12 months. Firstly, how has Council performed on [SERVICE] over the last 12 months? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Influence-Performance Matrix

Analysis Framework

How to read the Matrix

The influence-performance matrix helps show which areas matter most, and where improvement is likely to have the greatest impact.

- **Influence**

is based on regression analysis, this indicates which attributes matter most to overall satisfaction. Derived influence is often preferred over asking directly (stated importance) because it uncovers subconscious drivers, hidden priorities, and actual behaviour. All aspects are important; some are more powerful at driving overall sentiment.

- **Performance**

is based on respondents' ratings of Council on each attribute.

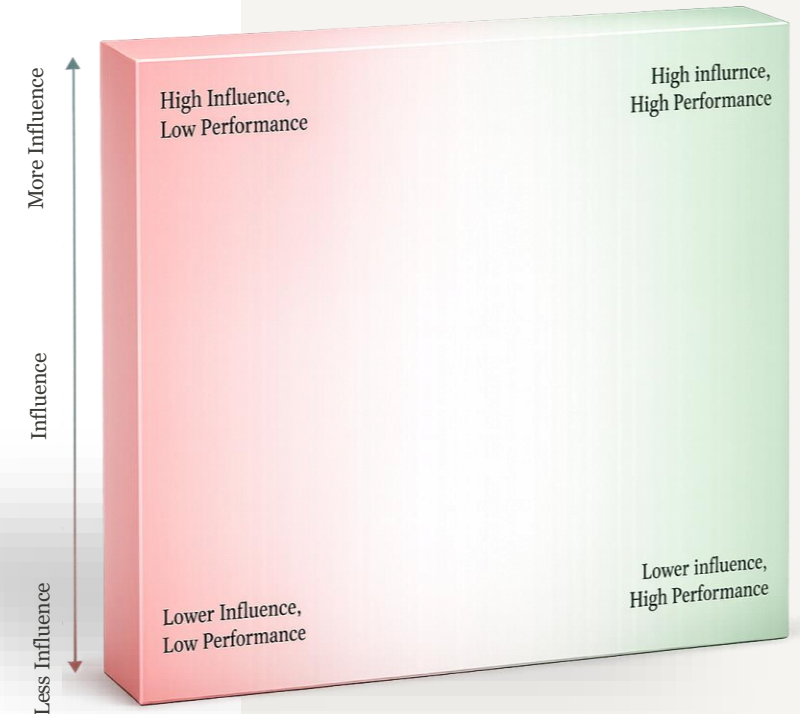
Together, these dimensions help identify priorities for action.

High influence, high performance - important areas where Council is performing well

High influence, lower performance - highest priorities for improvement.

Lower influence, high performance - performing well, but less influential overall.

Lower influence, lower performance - lower priority areas for improvement.





Influence vs. Performance – Service Delivery 2026



The influence analysis shifts the focus from performance levels alone to the areas most likely to change overall sentiment.

The most important areas to focus on are:

- Making decision to benefit the community
- Spending public funds
- Consultation and engagement with the community
- The condition of sealed local streets

Overall direction of council, customer service, and waste management including the collection of garbage, recyclables and green waste remain important, but the chart suggests they are less central to shifting overall perceptions.

Engagement with Council



Engagement with Council



Overview



This section provides an overview of how residents engage with Councils. It highlights the extent of contact with Council, satisfaction with customer service, and how engagement differs across the community.

Specifically, this section includes:

- Contact with the Council in the last 12 months
- Satisfaction with customer service
- Subgroup differences
- Preferred channels for accessing information

Together, these insights provide a clear view of how residents interact with Council, and opportunities to enhance the customer experience.

Summary of results

Key Performance:

- 61% of residents had contact with Council I the past 12 months, decreasing by 2 points from 2025.
- The customer service rating remained broadly stable at 67, indicating little shift in the quality of service experience.
- Newsletter via social was the most preferred channel for residents to receive news and information from Council (selected by 25%), but was followed relatively closely by Social Media (22%).

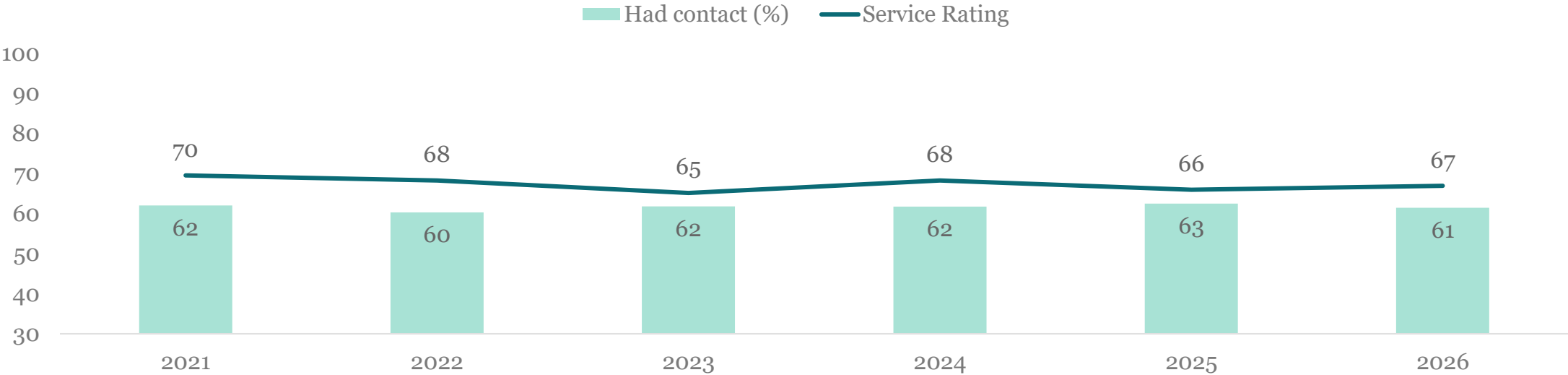
Vs. Benchmarks

- Contact with Council sits above the State (58%) but slightly below Small Shires (63%).
- Customer service rating is broadly on par with the State (68) and sits slightly above Small Shires (65).
- Council's preference levels for newsletters (either via social media or mail) was lower than benchmarks, while social media was roughly on par in popularity to State and Small Shire.

Sub-group differences:

- Residents aged 50-64 are more likely to have had contact with Council.
- Residents aged 18-34 are less likely to have had contact with Council, however, are more positive about customer service.
- Stawell precinct residents, along with 18-34 and 50-64 year olds (across Council) most preferred social media. This said, the margin in preference for these groups to newsletter via social media (highest preference for Council residents overall) was small.

Contact with Council and Satisfaction with Service During Contact



Contact with Council and Customer Service Rating: 2026 by Demographic Groups

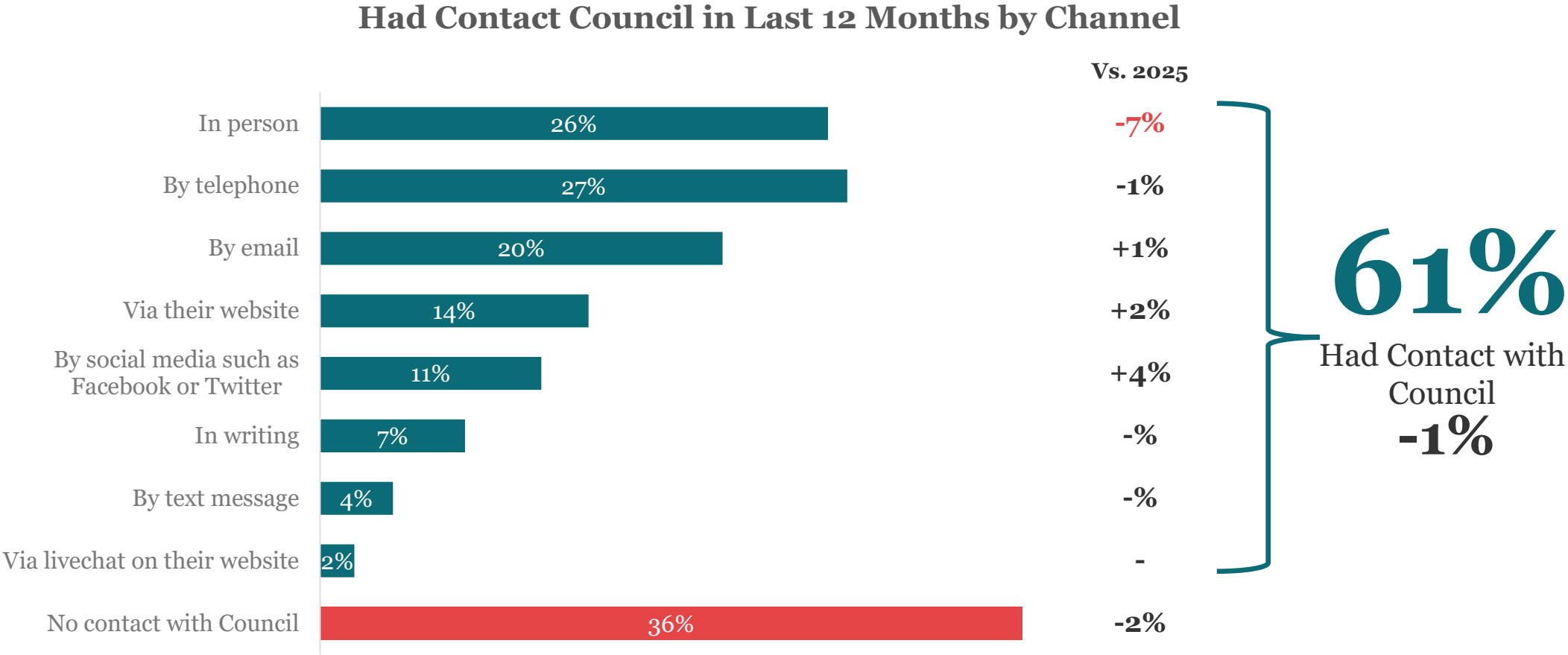
Average	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Had contact (%)	61	58	63	46	68	70	60	55	68	56	62	64
Service Rating	67	68	65	73	63	67	66	66	68	69	68	64

Difference 2026 vs. 2025

Had contact (%)	-1	-5	=0	-11	+8	-3	-1	-7	+4	-1	-1	-3
Service Rating	+1	+2	+0	+3	+1	+6	-2	+7	-5	+11	-3	+64

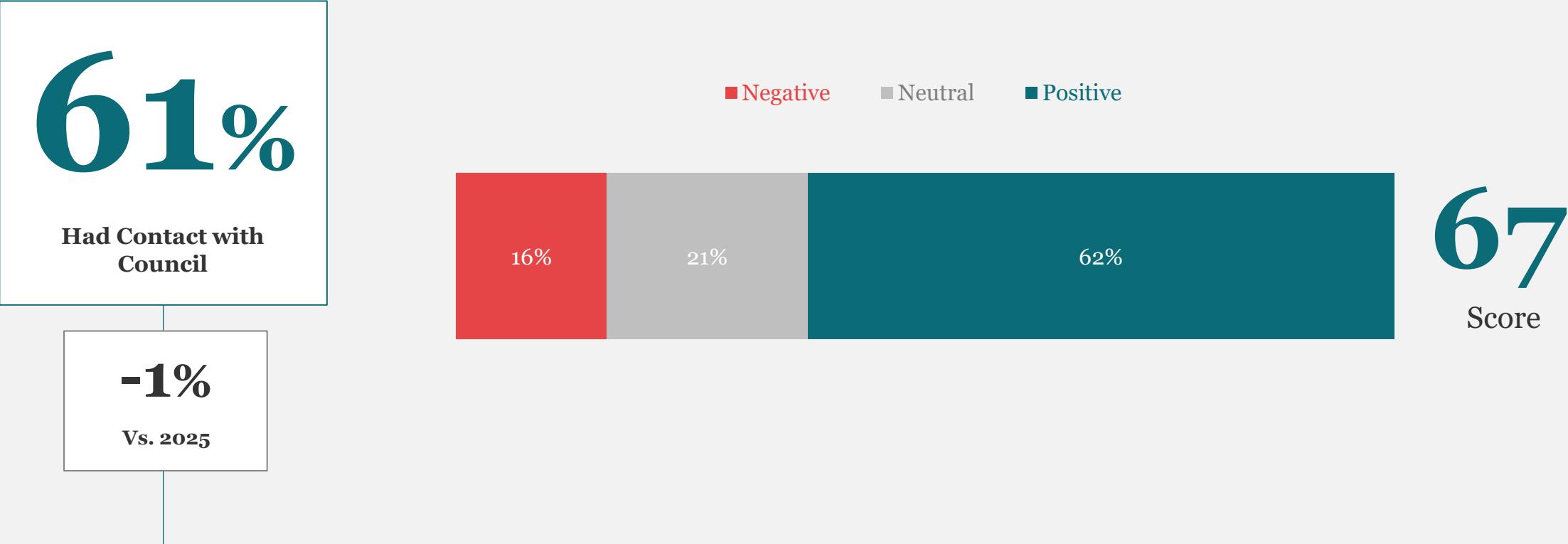
Q5. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with [INSERT COUNCIL NAME]? Q5A. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with Council in any of the following ways? Q5C. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Council for customer service? Please keep in mind we do NOT mean the ACTUAL OUTCOME. For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Contact with Council in Last 12 Months



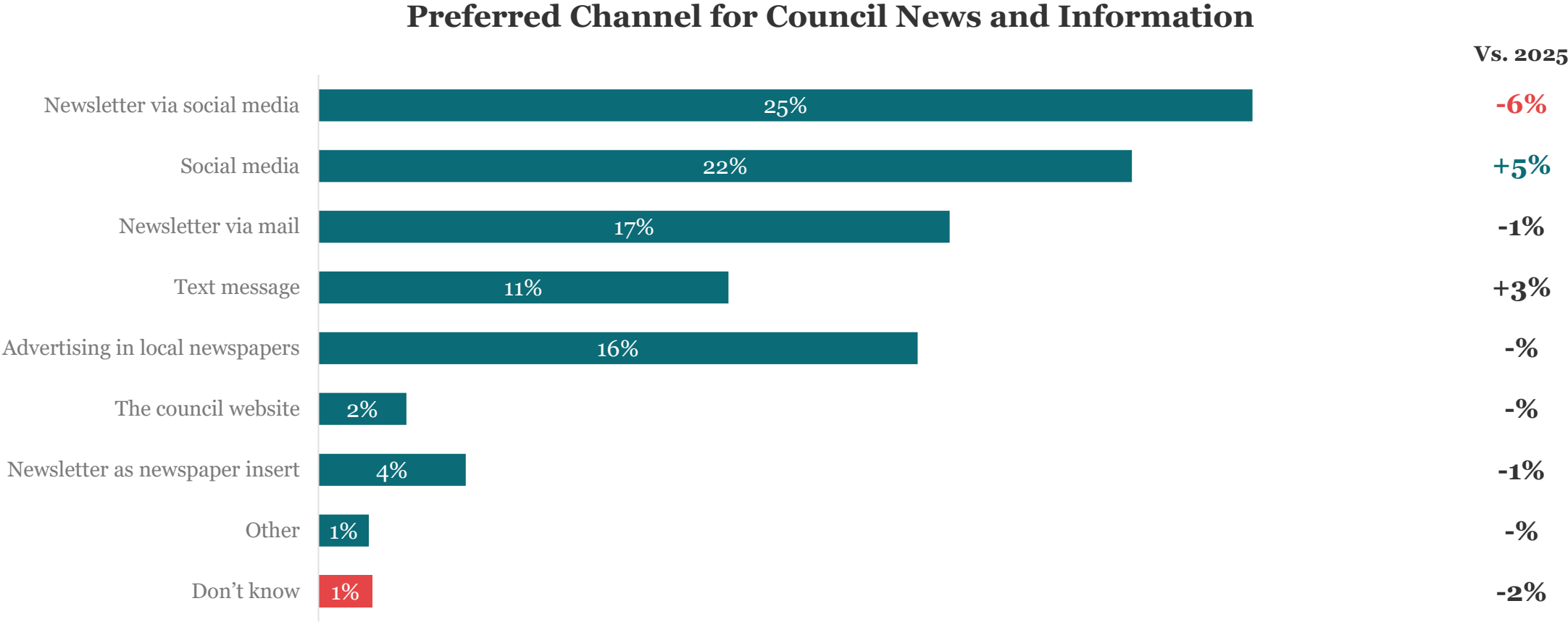
Q5A. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with Council in any of the following ways? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Satisfaction with Customer Service During Contact



Q5C. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Council for customer service? Please keep in mind we do NOT mean the ACTUAL OUTCOME. For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Preferred Channel for Council News and Information 2026



Q13A. If Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate to you? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Preferred Channel for Council News and Information 2026



Column %	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Newsletter via social media	25%	33%	27%	26%	26%	23%	25%	24%	25%	26%	24%	25%
Social media	22%	19%	22%	29%	20%	25%	14%	21%	22%	16%	26%	16%
Newsletter via mail	17%	21%	20%	11%	18%	20%	16%	17%	17%	20%	18%	13%
Advertising in local newspapers	16%	6%	12%	11%	6%	16%	25%	18%	14%	22%	12%	20%
Text message	11%	12%	9%	14%	17%	8%	7%	12%	10%	9%	9%	15%
The council website	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%	2%	0%	4%	1%
Newsletter as newspaper insert	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%	3%	6%
Other	1%	2%	1%	0%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	3%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%

Q13A. If Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate to you? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Bespoke Questions



Connection to Local Community – 2026 and Results by Sub-group



■ Not at all connected (0-1) ■ Not connected (2-3) ■ Moderately connected (4-6) ■ Connected (7-8) ■ Very connected (9-10)

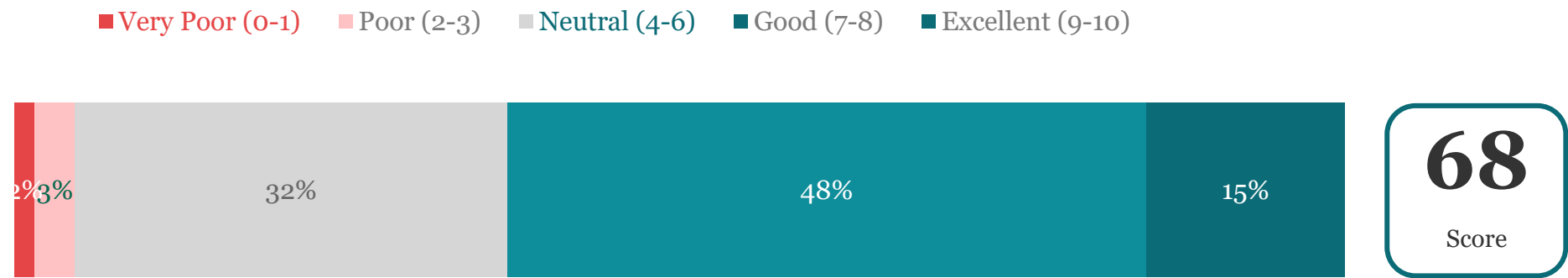


Connection to Local Community by Sub-group

Score	Northern Grampians SC	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	All Others	St Arnaud	Stawell
Connection to local community	65	63	60	67	68	66	64	62	66	66

NQ27 - Using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'very', how strongly do you feel a connection to, or part of your local community? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Quality of Life in Council Area – 2026 and Results by Sub-group

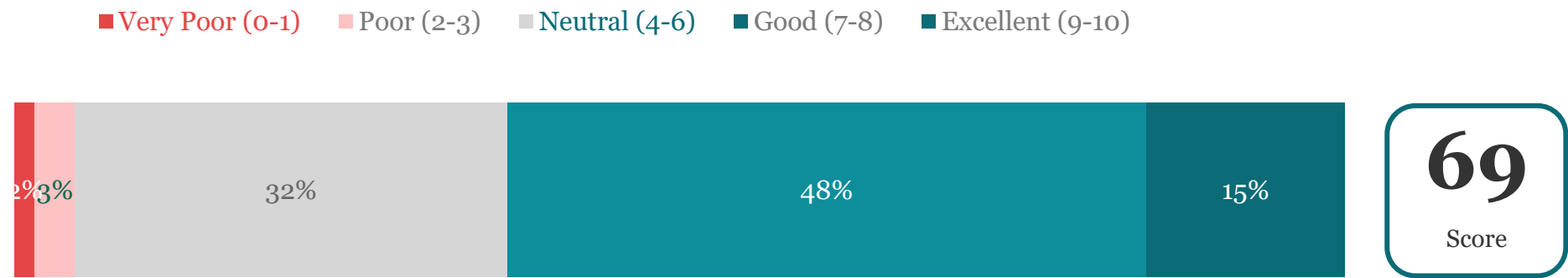


Quality of Life in Council Area by Sub-group

Score	Northern Grampians SC	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	All Others	St Arnaud	Stawell
Quality of life in Council area	68	71	61	67	72	68	68	68	68	69

NQ26New - Using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is 'very poor' and 10 is 'excellent', how would you describe your overall quality of life in Council? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Likelihood to Recommend Living in Nth Grampians – 2026 and Results by Sub-group



Recommend Living in Council Area by Sub-group

Score	Northern Grampians SC	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	All Others	St Arnaud	Stawell
Recommend Living in Council area	69	70	62	71	72	69	69	69	70	69

NQ32 - On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all likely and 10 is very likely, how likely are you to recommend living in your local area if someone asks? For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

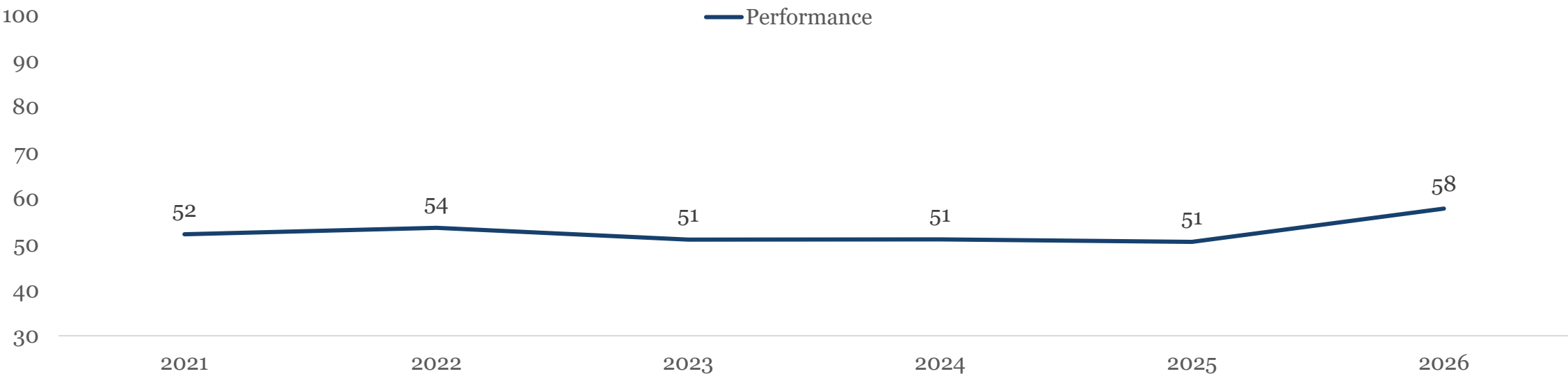


Council Service Areas

Performance by Year and Demographic Groups



Council Services – Opportunities to Give Feedback on Key Local Issues



Performance of Service 2026

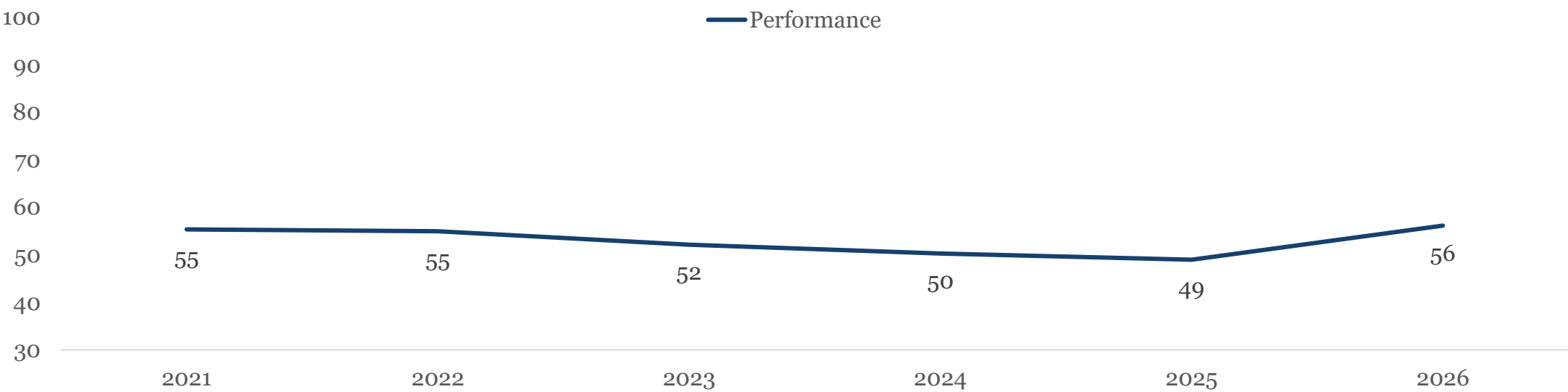
Score	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Performance	58	55	54	62	52	56	60	57	58	58	59	55

Difference 2026 vs. 2025

Performance	+7	+5	+2	-0	+9	+17	+5	+9	+5	+9	+6	+6
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Q1. How important should this be as a responsibility for Council? Q2. how has Council performed on this over the last 12 months? The opportunities offered by Council to give your feedback on key local issues. For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Council Services – Making Decisions in Interest of Community



Performance of Service 2026

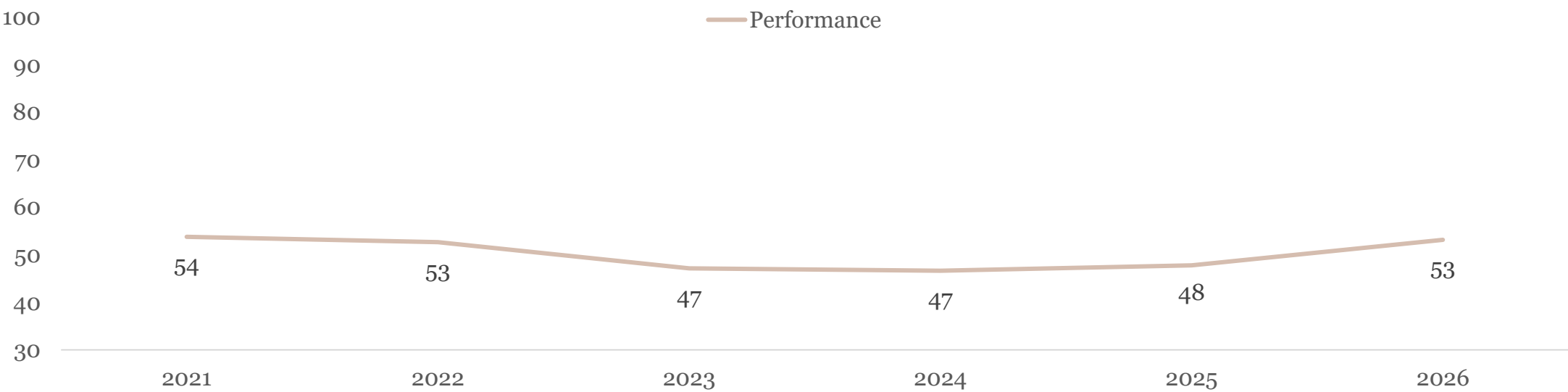
Score	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Performance	56	52	51	59	50	53	61	56	56	51	58	56

Difference 2026 vs. 2025

Performance	+7	+3	+1	+4	+9	+13	+6	+10	+4	+5	+7	+8
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Q1. How important should this be as a responsibility for Council? Q2. how has Council performed on this over the last 12 months? Making decisions in the interest of the community. For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.

Council Services – Condition of Sealed Local Streets



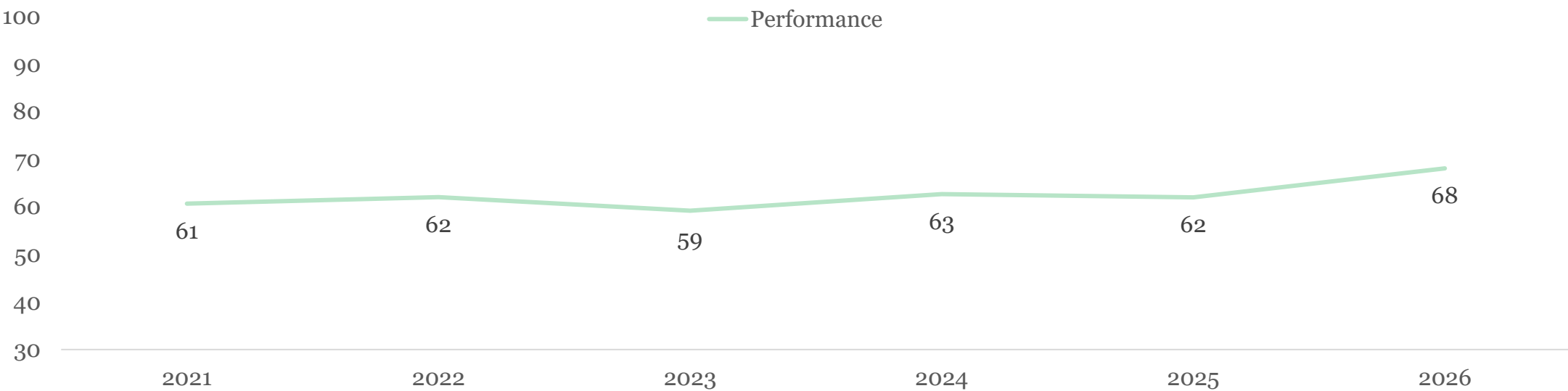
Performance of Service 2026

Score	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Performance	53	54	45	59	51	50	54	53	53	52	56	48

Difference 2026 vs. 2025

Performance	+5	+9	+1	+5	+7	+5	+6	+6	+5	+6	+2	+8
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Q1. How important should this be as a responsibility for Council? Q2. how has Council performed on this over the last 12 months? Condition of sealed local streets in your area. For base sizes, please refer to slide 18.



Performance of Service 2026

Score	Northern Grampians SC	State	Small Shire	18 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	65+	Male	Female	St Arnaud	Stawell	All Others
Performance	68	72	71	71	64	62	75	71	66	78	65	68

Difference 2026 vs. 2025

Performance	+6	+6	+5	+9	+8	+4	+8	+9	+3	+13	+3	+8
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Thank you

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