

MORETON SAYS: ANCHOR SURVEY REPORT

September 2021

**MORETON
SAYS...**

Why do you want to continue to work, live or play in the Moreton Bay Region?
The stickers to be placed on the top three.

Affordable lifestyle

New housing

Restaurants, cafes and shops

Services (e.g. health, schools, sport and recreation facilities)

Enriching experiences
libraries, galleries



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Voconiq and Moreton Bay Regional Council would like to acknowledge and thank the many community members from across the region and beyond that participated in the Moreton Says Anchor survey.

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CITATION

Voconiq (2021). Moreton Says: Anchor survey report. Voconiq, Australia.

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INTRODUCTION

The Moreton Bay Region is an amazing place. At more than 2000km² in size and home to approximately 470,000 residents, the region is large and diverse. Its residents share mountain ranges, beaches, paddocks, centres for industry and higher education, and suburban neighbourhoods. Its communities also play host to many visitors throughout the region that also enjoy this wonderful place.

Making sure that the region thrives as it grows is a complicated business, and Moreton Bay Regional Council (Council) is committed to ensuring it has a deep understanding of what matters to everyone that lives, works and plays in the region. The Moreton Says program is a key part of Council's commitment to listen effectively to community perspectives and include them in every part of their work.

WHAT IS MORETON SAYS?

Moreton Says is an engagement program designed to bring the voices of community members from across the Moreton Bay Region into Council's decision-making processes. It includes a series of region-wide surveys Council is undertaking over the next few years to better understand and keep track of the things that matter most to their communities. Moreton Says kicked off with an Anchor survey that anyone who lives, works or visits the region was invited to participate in. Data for the Anchor survey was collected between the 29th April and 13th June 2021. This report provides a summary of the Anchor survey data.

The Anchor survey revealed what is most important to community members across the region and to those that visit from other locations. A series of shorter 'Pulse' surveys will now be conducted every few months or so to keep our 'finger on the pulse' of community views to monitor changes over time. These brief 'Pulse' surveys will also allow Council to gain community insights on

specific issues relating to key Council policies, plans and projects. Your voice matters, and through Moreton Says it will be heard in all of the important decision-making processes within Council.

Council is committed to ensuring that Moreton Says is an inclusive listening process and includes a broad range of communication and engagement activities to connect with community members, raise awareness of the surveys and to help as many people to participate as possible.

Through the course of collecting the Moreton Says Anchor survey responses, Council invested significant energy into ensuring as many community members as possible knew that they were invited to share their views.



Initial Anchor survey
Getting to know our communities better



Regular Pulse surveys
Helping to keep our finger on the pulse of our communities and monitor change over time



Data collections & analysis
Data is managed confidentially by voconiq

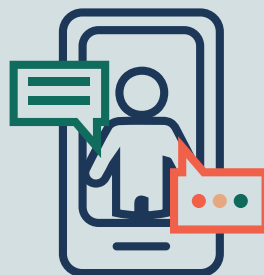
How Moreton Says works



Informed decision-making
Council is committed to using survey insights in our decision-making and planning



Reporting back to community
Sharing survey results with our communities to inform their own decision-making and planning



Listening & learning
Understanding the things that matter most to our communities



ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY

Moreton Bay Regional Council is committed to inclusive engagement with the communities that it serves. For the Moreton Says Anchor survey, Council conducted a broad array of community engagement and awareness-raising activities throughout the data collection period. The Anchor survey kicked off with a community leaders breakfast, where representatives from more than 50 community groups from across the region came together with councillors, Council staff, and program partners to launch the program and discuss how to ensure as many community voices as possible were included in the process. More community based organisations were engaged directly to get the word out and encourage participation.

Throughout the course of data collection community members were invited to participate through a social media campaign, physical signs placed in public spaces, pop-up stalls at markets and junior sporting events, stands with paper survey copies in Council libraries and Customer Service Centres, through rates notices and directed letter box drops, and other channels. Participation in the survey was also monitored in real time so that effort could be directed toward increasing participation among specific groups of people or in specific areas to ensure a robust, diverse sample was achieved.

Anchor survey engagement activities

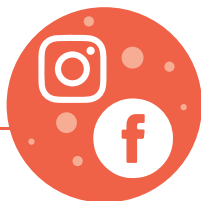
Face-to-Face

- Launch event attended by community group representatives
- Pop ups at shops, markets, sports fields and events
- Presented to Council's community networks groups: youth groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples



Social Media

- Moreton Says and Council social media channels including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn



Third Party Support

- Distributed paper surveys through community organisations
- Schools, sporting clubs and community groups shared information via their own channels



Printed Communication

- Flyers delivered to rate payers with their rates notice
- Info in Councillor newsletters
- Flyers distributed face-to-face
- Business cards inserted in pet registration paperwork



Awareness

- Adverts in local newspapers, magazines and radio
- Billboard on the Bruce Highway
- Signs and banners in parks and key locations across the region



WHAT DID WE MEASURE IN THE MORETON SAYS ANCHOR SURVEY?

Table 1: Anchor survey topics, purpose and example items.

TOPIC	PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
Community wellbeing and resilience	To understand how communities in the region are feeling and how strong they feel as a 'community'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My community is able to manage change" • "I am proud to be a member of my community"
Community values	To find out what is most important to community members in choosing a place to live within the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The natural beauty of the region" • "Ease of affording the lifestyle you want"
Importance of different Council roles	To find out what community members think is most important for Council to be focusing on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Keeping public spaces safe" • "Managing population growth sustainably"
Performance of Council	To check in on how Council is performing in their key roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Supporting the growth and development of business in the region" • "Waste and recycling (e.g. bin services, waste management and recycling facilities)"
Responsiveness	To find out if community members feel like Council listens and responds effectively to community concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Council listens to and respects my opinions with regard to community issues" • "The Council is prepared to change its practices in response to community concerns"
Fairness of Council resource allocation	To understand the extent to which community members feel Council uses its resources appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My community receives a fair share of Council resources"

Table 1: Anchor survey topics, purpose and example items (cont.)

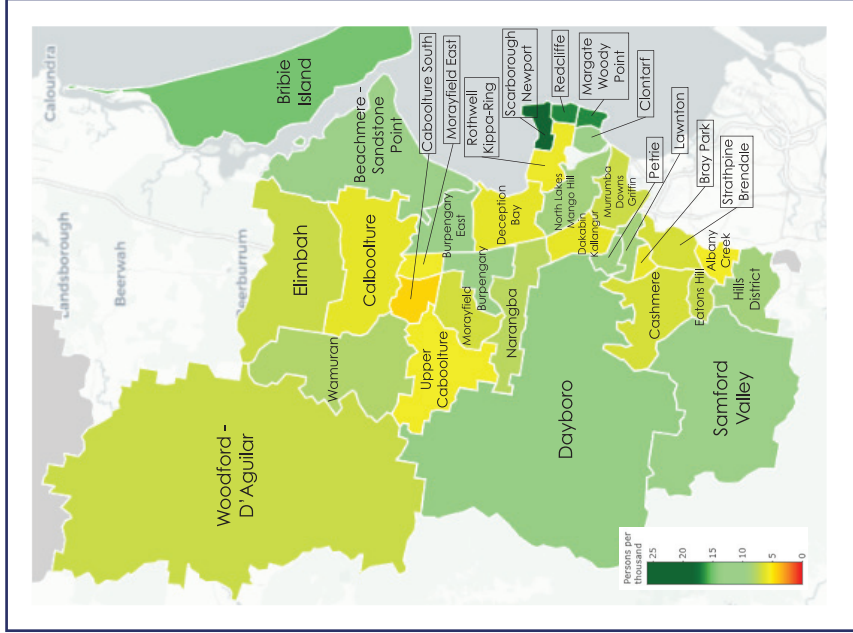
TOPIC	PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
Transparency of Council processes	To understand how much faith community members have in the checks and balances that govern Council and its work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Internal policies and guidelines ensure the Council does the right thing” • “There are checks and balances to prevent corruption in Council”
Trust in Council and others, and approval of Council	To understand where Council's relationship is with community right now	<p>How much do you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Trust the Council to act responsibly” • “Approve of the Moreton Bay Regional Council”

In addition, we asked community members to tell us a little about themselves so that we could understand how community views differ by individual characteristics such as age, gender, and where community members live. Strict data management rules are applied to ensure that the personal information of community members is not inappropriately used outside of the consent conditions that all participants must agree to before participating in the Moreton Says program.

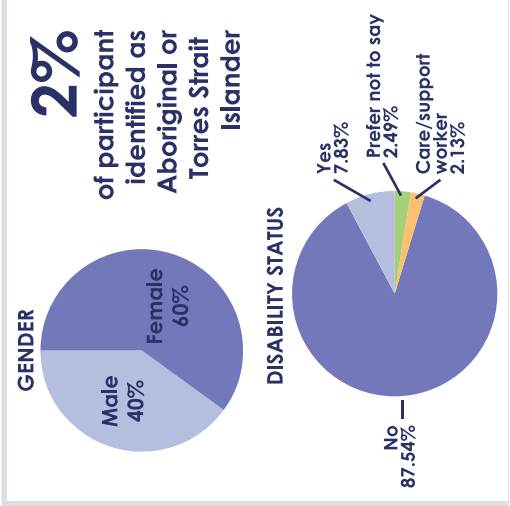
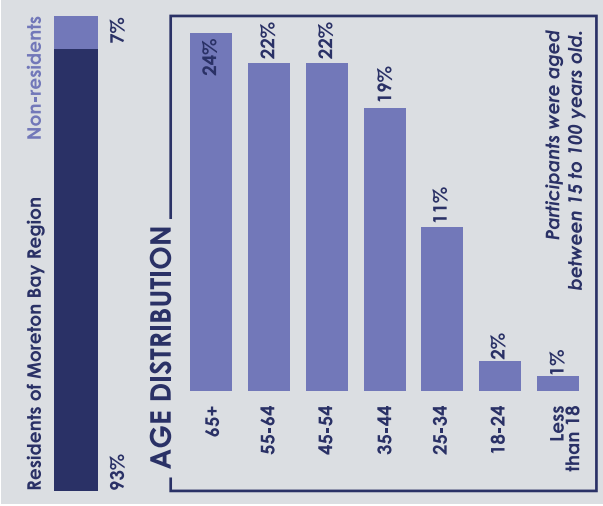
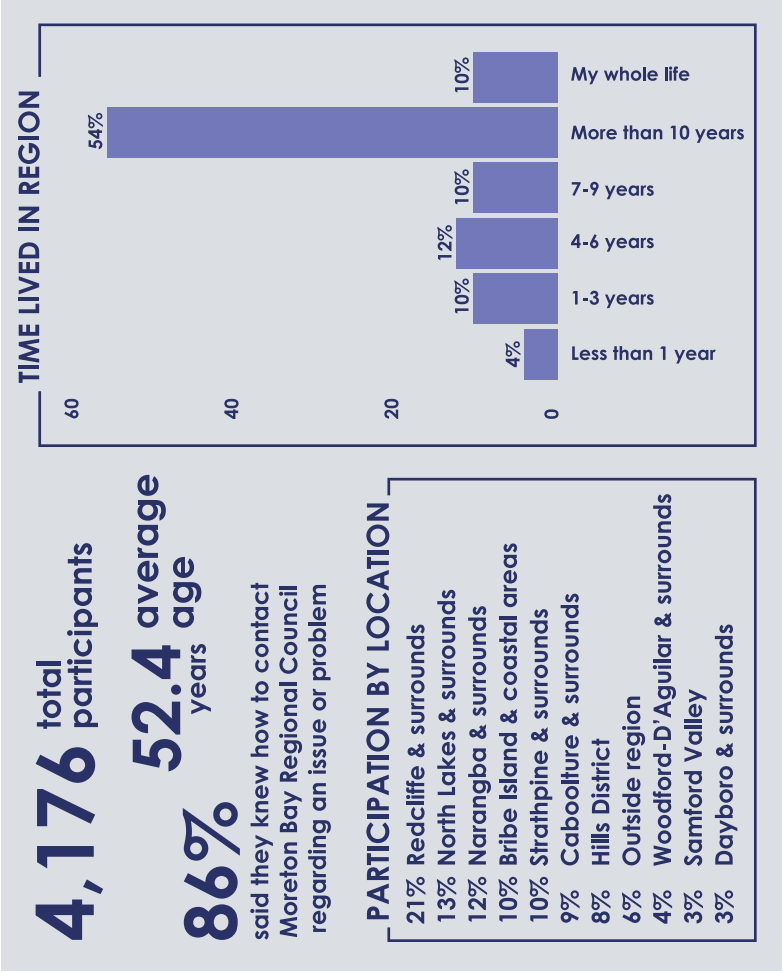


WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE MORETON SAYS ANCHOR SURVEY?

The Moreton Says Anchor survey was an opportunity for anyone that lives, works or plays in the region to have their say. More than 4000 people took that opportunity and completed the Anchor survey. Participants were diverse and from all parts of the region, providing a rich and meaningful set of perspectives to analyse and use to inform Council understanding and decision-making.



571 people indicated they owned or ran a business in the region



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS

When analysing the data, we found key individual characteristics that were more important than others in helping us to understand the diversity of perspectives within the Moreton Bay Region.

They were age, time lived in the region, and where people lived in the region. While responses for age and time lived in the region were taken straight from participant responses, we needed to create clusters of suburbs to create a new variable, 'location'. This involved grouping clusters of suburbs together based on their proximity and similarity in the way residents of these suburbs responded to questions in general. We created 10 location groups, as can be seen on the map below.



LEGEND

- Bribie Island & coastal areas
- Caboolture & surrounds
- Dayboro & surrounds
- Narangba & surrounds
- North Lakes & surrounds
- Redcliffe & surrounds
- Samford Valley
- Strathpine & surrounds
- Woodford - D'Aguliar & surrounds

MAIN FINDINGS

COMMUNITY VALUES

A key aim of the Anchor survey was to really understand what community members value most about this amazing region.

To understand this, we asked community members to rate the importance of a range of attributes or characteristics that inform where people choose to live. For example, we asked participants to rate on a scale from 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important) how important “An active lifestyle (i.e. being able to walk to places you go to often, exercise regularly)” is when choosing a place to live. Ten different characteristics were included for community members to rate.

These ratings revealed that the natural beauty of the region is of primary importance to community members (see Table 2). It was the number one rated attribute regardless of where participants live in the region, their employment status or gender. There was also strong

consistency across community member ratings for ease of affordability and an active lifestyle. For younger participants (i.e. under 25 years), ease of affordability was the most important characteristic when choosing a place to live.

From the comments that participants left in the survey, it is also clear that natural beauty is not only important to residents of the region but to visitors as well.

It is also important to note that ratings of the other values on this list were all above ‘3’, or the middle-point of the scale we used. This means they are all important to the majority of community members that we surveyed. Some of the values with lower average ratings were more important to people in specific locations. For example, for people that live in Redcliffe, proximity to restaurants, cafes, and shops was more important than for people in Samford Valley or Dayboro. We will be looking at important differences by location a little later in the report.

Table 2. Average ratings of what is most important when choosing a place to live.



COMMUNITY VALUES	AVERAGE RATING
The natural beauty of the region	4.42
Ease of affording the lifestyle you want	4.05
An active lifestyle (i.e. being able to walk to places you go to often, exercise regularly)	3.88
Access to services (e.g. health, schools, sport and recreation facilities)	3.88
Family-friendly activities and facilities (e.g. parks and playgrounds)	3.79
Physical distance to your neighbours	3.72
How long it takes you to get to work or other regular destinations	3.70
How close you are to restaurants, cafes and shops	3.33
How close you are to cultural experiences (e.g. libraries, museums and performing arts)	3.22
How close you are to public transport	3.19

(Ratings by residents of Moreton Bay Region only; the higher the attribute appears in the list the more important it was rated by community members, on average.)



COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE

The Moreton Bay Region is dynamic and ever-changing as the population grows and the role of Council evolves to meet community expectations. And as we have all come to understand over the last 18 months, life can be challenging and unpredictable. We started the Moreton Says Anchor survey with questions about community wellbeing and resilience to understand more about how communities in the region are prepared to tackle challenges in the present, and importantly, to inform how Council can work with community members to meet the challenges they may face in the future.

WELLBEING

Community members were asked to rate the extent to which they were satisfied with different aspects of their lives and things that we know are important for general wellbeing. These included satisfaction with:

- participants' "life as a whole",
- sense of belonging,
- lifestyle affordability in the region, and
- feelings of safety.



YOU TOLD US:

"The Council needs to ensure the preservation of the region's natural beauty." – resident

"I love the area I live in and would like to see more upgrades, infrastructure, restaurants, coffee shops, community events and participation." – resident

"Would love to see Council do more to protect the wildlife that's ALREADY in the area. We should be building around them, not moving them away." – resident

"The natural beauty of Moreton Bay is one of the reasons why I visit the region on days off." – non-resident

Using a scale from 1 (Very dissatisfied) to 5 (Very satisfied), responses were generally very positive, with 86% of participants either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their lives as a whole. In addition:

- 72% of participants also indicated they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their sense of belonging,
- 70% indicated that they could afford the lifestyle they want, and
- 66% reported feeling safe, overall.

However, when examining these wellbeing measures in more detail, we found important differences in the way people feel depending on their location and individual characteristics (see the Safety breakout box).

On all of the wellbeing measures, there was a strong positive relationship between satisfaction and age, with participants feeling more satisfied the older they were. Those in paid employment also expressed greater levels of satisfaction than those that were not in paid work.

On perceptions of safety, participants that selected "male" or "female" reported feeling much safer in general than those participants that chose not to select a gender category or to self-define their gender category. Relatively few participants selected "self-define" or chose not to select a category and so this data should be interpreted with caution.

RESILIENCE

Examining community resilience, we looked at a range of factors that are important when communities face challenges or need to bounce back from an impactful event. Using a rating scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree), community members were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements such as "My community can manage change", "My community has leadership that protects its best interests", and "My community is organised and can take effective action".

Overall, responses on these resilience questions were positive with responses in general at or just above the middle-point of the scale used. However, there is room to grow and improve this capacity to effectively deal with future challenges.

There were few differences in these scores when we compared different groups such as gender, age, or whether someone was employed, retired or not currently working. There were also differences when we examined the data by location, with participants living in Samford Valley, Dayboro and surrounds and on Bribie Island all more positive that they have leadership that protects their best interests and that their community can take effective action collectively (see Figure 1).

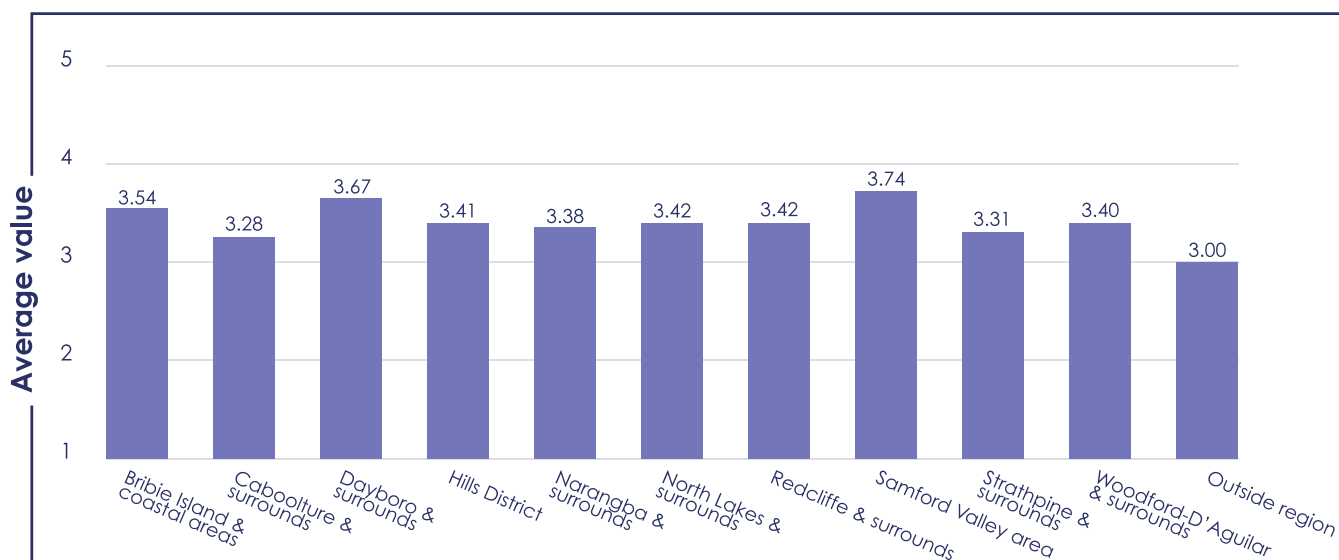


Figure 1. Ratings of "My community is organised and can take effective action" by location (higher scores represent stronger agreement).

FEELING SAFE IN THE MORETON BAY REGION

One of the really interesting findings from the Moreton Says Anchor survey related to how safe community members feel. We found there was a strong positive relationship between age and how safe community members feel, with feelings of safety increasing with each age bracket (see Figure 2).

The same pattern was not evident when examining expectations that Council has an important role in keeping public spaces safe (strong agreement among all participants) or in ratings of Council performance in fulfilling this role (generally lower levels of agreement, but still positive). Examining the comments that community members made specifically about safety did not reveal any specific clues about why younger people feel less safe either.

Looking deeper, however, we found that those people that feel less safe are also more likely to:

- find lifestyle affordability in the region more difficult,
- to be more likely to report having a disability, and
- feel less connected to the region as a whole.

Rather than this strong effect we have observed being about safety, it appears that this measure of how safe people feel is more accurately reflecting a sense of insecurity and vulnerability. When we examined where community members that reported this combination of characteristics are located, we found that they are more likely to live in Caboolture and surrounding suburbs, North Lakes and surrounding suburbs, and to an extent Strathpine and surrounding suburbs.

This is an important finding because it tells us that Council's approach to safety may need to be assessed in light of the factors associated with this important area among younger, more vulnerable community members. Existing strategies are clearly effective in helping older residents and visitors to the region feel safe, but for younger people these strategies may need to refocus on affordability and helping younger people to feel more connected to their communities.

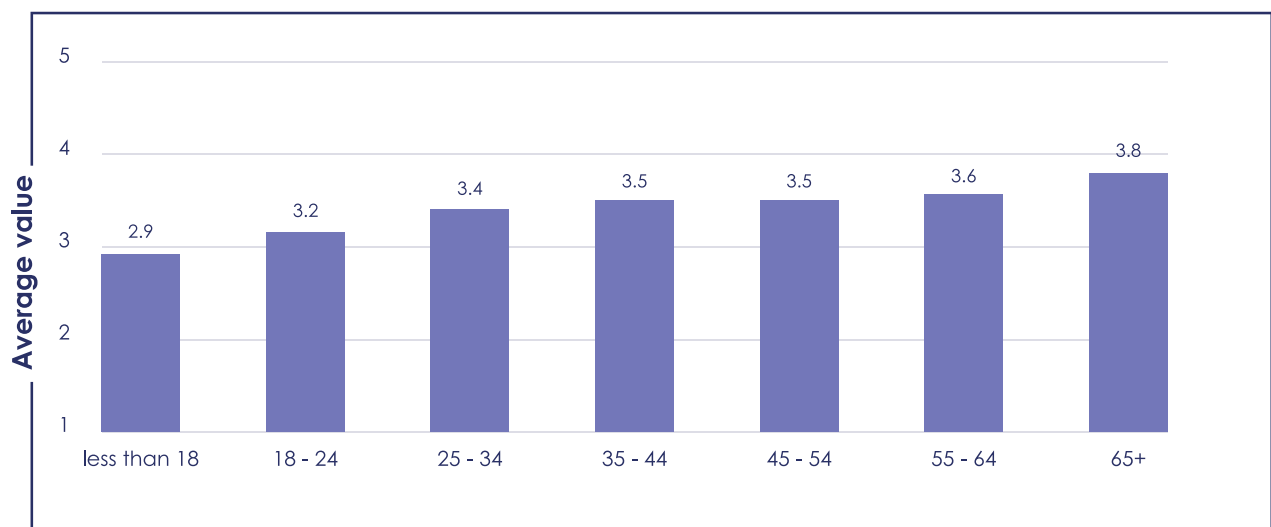


Figure 2. Ratings of satisfaction with "How safe you feel" by age group

WHAT COUNCIL DOES AND HOW IT IS PERFORMING

The Moreton Bay Regional Council is in a process of renewal, with a focus on engaging community in new and meaningful ways to build trust. A key component of developing trust in the relationship between Council and community members is through demonstration of competence and capability in areas that are relevant to that relationship.

In the Anchor survey, we asked community members to tell Council what they thought were the most important things they should be focused on and then to rate Council performance on similar areas of responsibility.

For example, we asked community members to:

- rate the importance of Council's role in "Ensuring opportunities for sport and recreation"
- then later in the survey to rate their satisfaction with Council's work in the area of "Sports, recreation and community venues (e.g. playing fields, public swimming pools, community halls)".

This allowed us to see in which areas community expectations of Council align most and least with community satisfaction with performance in similar areas.

The numbers of areas community members were asked to respond to was broad, reflecting the diverse set of roles of a Council responsible for such a large region.

They included population growth management and planning for the future, day-to-day services such as waste collection and recycling, asset management and keeping public spaces clean and tidy, as well as delivering cultural experiences and key community services such as libraries, sporting facilities and support for community organisations.

Three groups or clusters of Council roles and satisfaction scores were identified:

- Areas where importance and Council performance were both high (i.e. areas where Council is doing well)
- Areas where importance and Council performance were similar (i.e. meeting community expectations)
- Areas where importance was high, but Council performance was rated lower (i.e. areas to improve).

Importance of Council roles was rated on a scale from 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important), and satisfaction with Council performance was rated on a scale from 1 (Very dissatisfied) to 5 (Very satisfied).

WHAT IS COUNCIL DOING WELL?

To start, we looked at those areas of work where community members rated the role of Council to be most important and Council performance to be good.

Consistently across the region, community members nominated areas of Council work that may be considered 'day-to-day services' as areas of high importance and strong performance, like:

- maintenance of public spaces (e.g. beaches, parks, reserves),
- managing waste and recycling (e.g. bin services, waste management and recycling facilities), and
- keeping public spaces safe.

The stand out result in this area showed 94% of participants considered Council's role in maintaining public spaces to be "very important" or "extremely important". 63% of residents also reported they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Council's performance in this area.

On managing waste and recycling, 87% of participants considered Council's role in managing waste and recycling effectively to be "very important" or "extremely important". 65% of residents also reported they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Council's performance in this area.

We also found, using a different set of measures, that where community members have had interactions with Council over the last 12 months, these have been very positive and consistent in their nature. This represents an important asset for Council and we explore this in more detail later in the report.

Where Council is doing well...

"Moreton Bay is a huge region and you maintain this big region really well for local residents. We love your libraries, council BBQ's and your recycling services."

"I've lived and worked in the region for many years and Council has improved their services and community response greatly. Keep up the good work, especially the communication."

"Cleaners and maintenance staff do a fantastic job in maintaining the public spaces. Very satisfied with Council's ability to maintain the local areas."

WHERE IS COUNCIL MEETING COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS?

Next, we looked at areas where Council performance and community ratings of importance were most closely aligned, or areas where Council performance was most closely meeting community expectations.

Across the region, we found that community expectations and ratings of Council performance were most aligned on:

- providing and maintaining sports, recreation and community venues (e.g. playing fields, public swimming pools, community halls),
- managing pet registrations and providing places to exercise them, and
- providing arts and cultural events through galleries, museums and libraries.

To illustrate, 72% of residents reported that sport and recreation facilities were a "very important" or "extremely important" area of Council work and 64% of residents reported they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Council performance in this area.

67% of residents reported that Council's role in providing opportunities for sport and recreation within the region was "very important" or "extremely important", and 64% of residents reported they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Council performance in this area.

Where Council is meeting community expectations...

"Netball facilities to ensure young woman stay in sport for mental health, fitness, connectedness, community, positive body image, building strong athletes."

"Parks, sports facilities dog parks, wheelchair access."

"Education on being a responsible dog owner."

"Culture and arts - more opportunities and support to this sector."

WHERE CAN COUNCIL IMPROVE?

There were also two areas of Council work that were consistently rated high on importance by residents, but Council performance was rated consistently lowest across the Moreton Bay region. These two areas were:

- buildings and development (e.g. town planning, development application processes), and
- protecting and preserving the environment (e.g. forest, animal habitats, management of waterways).

85% of residents rated Council's role in managing of building and development as "very important" or "extremely important" but only 18% indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Council performance in this area.

It is important to note that 41% of residents indicated they were "somewhat satisfied" with Council performance in this area. Satisfaction was lowest among people that have lived in the region longer than 4 years, and there was a strong effect for age on this measure, with older people much less satisfied than younger people.

For environmental preservation, 90% of residents indicated this was a "very important" or "extremely important" role for Council, but 18% of residents indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Council performance in this area. Again, 41% of participants indicated that they were "somewhat satisfied" with Council performance in this area. Those that had lived in the region longer tended to have lower levels of satisfaction in Council performance.

Where Council can improve...

"Ensuring that future developments continue to have adequate recreational spaces. Council should be proactive with road upgrades to cater for increased traffic. Brays Road is a clear example of building houses first and addressing congestion later."

"The Council appears to pay lip service regarding environmental policy. We are a Council area that will face significant impacts due to climate change and thus should be at the forefront when it comes to not just adaptation, but also doing all we can to prevent it."

"Conservation of the natural environment. Access to services. Improve cultural life. Respect and support our Indigenous culture."

"Getting the balance right between development and maintaining the beauty and culture of Moreton Bay. Eco/tourism/family-friendly/on-the-coast attractive business and jobs in business parks make Moreton a hub for work from home families."

In the diagram below (Figure 3) we have plotted the level of importance community members placed on different areas of Council work against the level of perceived Council performance in managing these areas of activity and responsibility.

Those towards the top right are areas where importance was rated high and performance was also highest (e.g. waste management, maintenance of public spaces), those lower and towards the right hand

side (e.g. sport and recreation, culture and arts) are areas where ratings of importance and performance were similar, and those toward the top left of the plot (e.g. environment and building and development) were high in importance but had low ratings of Council performance.

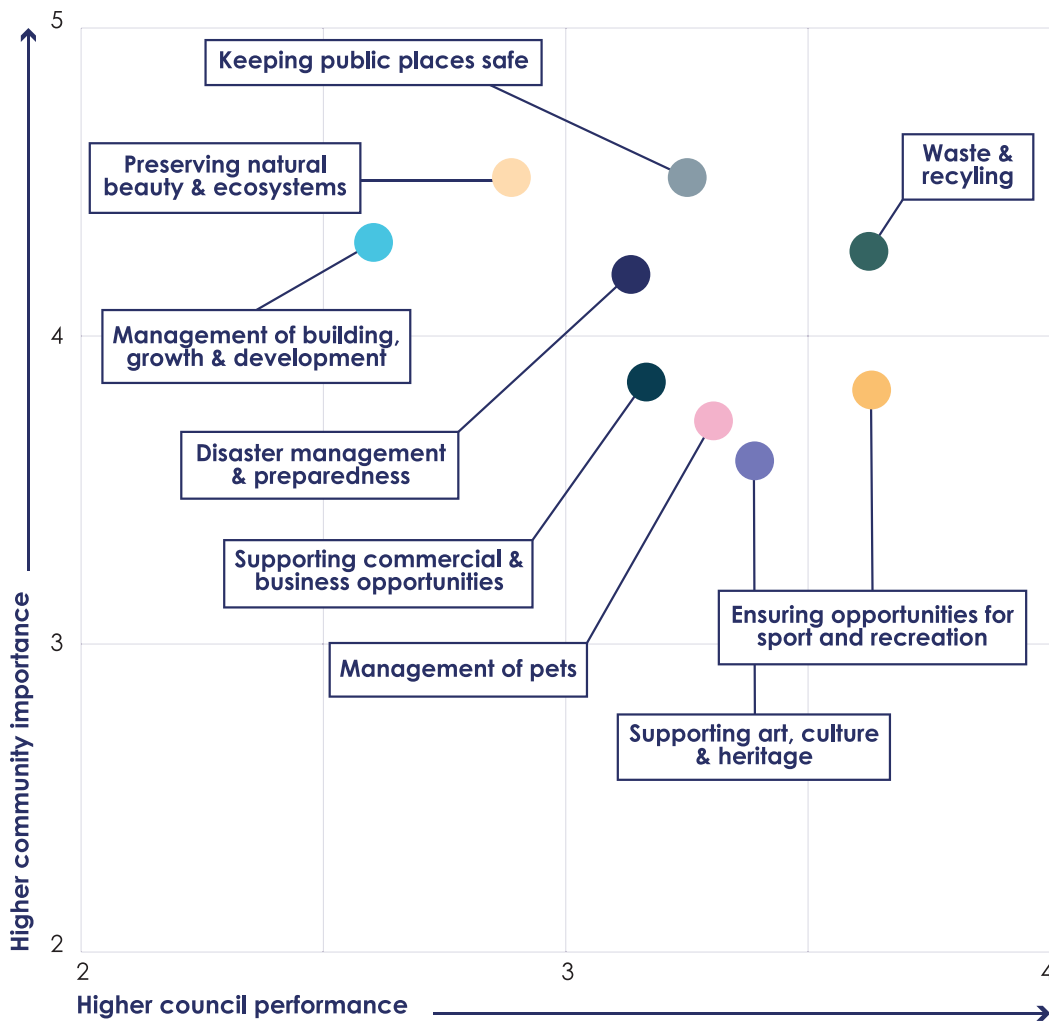


Figure 3: Average ratings of importance of Council roles by satisfaction with Council work in similar areas, for all residents.

COMPARING THE DAY-TO-DAY WITH LONGER TERM PLANNING

In the Moreton Says Anchor survey, we also asked participants to rate their overall level of satisfaction with:

- Council's management of "day-to-day services in the region (e.g. mowing, maintenance, cleanliness)", and
- Council's handling of "planning for the future needs of the region (e.g. growth management and infrastructure development)".

In the maps on page 20 (Figures 4 and 5), it is easy to see the clear differences in the responses of community members on these measures. These differences were evident in terms of level of satisfaction with Council services versus planning, and differences in responses on each question by location.

Community members indicated strong levels of satisfaction with Council's management of day-to-day services and much lower levels of satisfaction with planning for the future needs of the region.

The differences within each map are also clear, with parts of the Redcliffe and surrounds, the Hills District and Eatons Hill, Bribie Island and Elimbah very satisfied with service provision. People in areas surrounding Woodford-D'Aguilar are less positive in their responses to this question, although still well above the middle point of the scale on average (i.e. positive).

For future planning, community members were generally least satisfied in areas surrounding Morayfield, Burpengary, Narangba and Bribie Island. More neutral responses can be seen around parts of the Redcliffe and surrounds, the Hills District, Samford Valley, Strathpine and Lawnton (although for all areas ratings were below the middle point of the scale used, on average).

Satisfaction with Council planning for the future was also negatively related to time lived in the region, with people living in the region longer generally less satisfied than those that have more recently moved to the area. Time lived in the region did not affect satisfaction with day-to-day services, however, with satisfaction consistently high across groups.



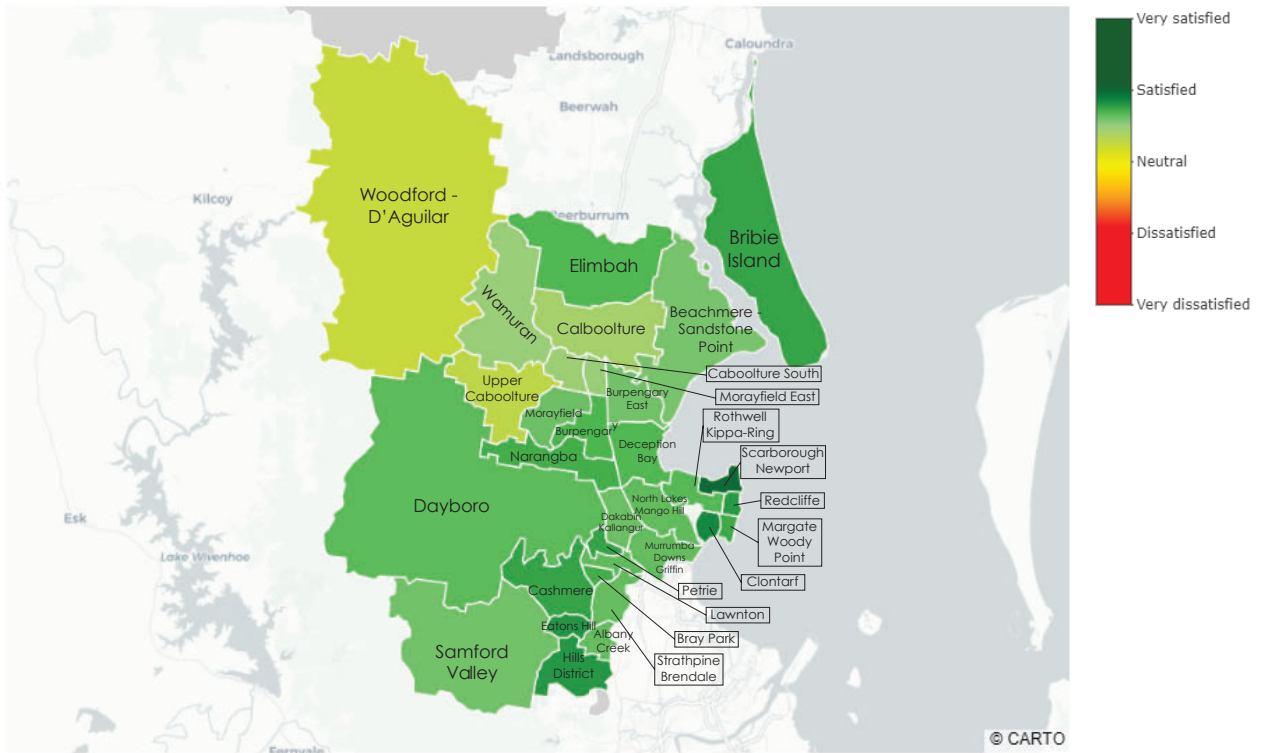


Figure 4. Ratings of satisfaction with day-to-day services by SA2¹

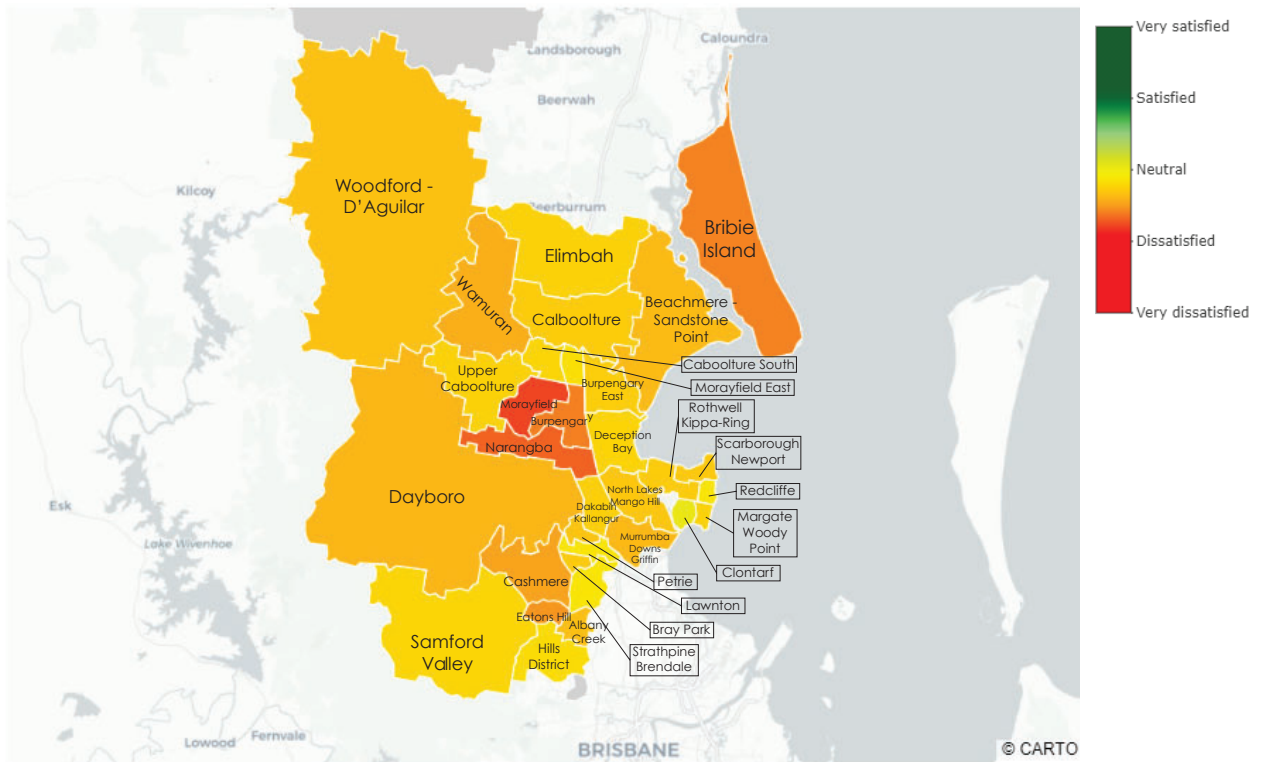


Figure 5. Ratings of satisfaction with planning for the future by SA2¹

¹ Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2) are medium-sized general purpose areas built up from whole Statistical Areas Level 1. Their purpose is to represent a community that interacts together socially and economically. (ABS: [https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/by%20subject/1270.0.55.001~july%202016~main%20features~statistical%20area%20level%202%20\(sa2\)~10014](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/by%20subject/1270.0.55.001~july%202016~main%20features~statistical%20area%20level%202%20(sa2)~10014))

ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

The Moreton Bay Region is a dynamic place, rich in natural assets and a desirable place to live. Over the last 50 years, the population of the region has grown significantly, and will continue to do so. Council has a key role in managing the needs and values of its current residents and visitors within the context of planning for this growth.

The Moreton Says Anchor survey has shown us that community members across the whole region highly value the natural beauty and amenity where they live, and it is also a key reason why people visit the region.

What we have also seen in the data is that community members have concerns about the way that building and development have been managed within the region. Rates of homelessness, pressures around housing affordability and the accessibility of public infrastructure for people with a disability were all topics of comment by community members.

Supporting inclusive growth and development alongside key community values related to the environment is a key challenge for Council.

Our analyses have revealed that there is a strong connection between community attitudes toward building and development and values related to the preservation of the natural environment, animal habitats and amenity. We examined the 7,270 comments made by participants in the Anchor survey to further understand this relationship. It is clear that when community members mentioned planning, development or building, they discussed it within the context of preservation of the environment, natural beauty, and wildlife (see example quotes below).

There is important nuance in the way that community members are describing this relationship. It is not that development and growth are 'bad' or should be excluded altogether (although some community members do feel this way), it is that this development and growth needs to be carefully planned and executed to ensure it occurs in line with community values around the environment and natural amenity of the region.

For example:

"Preservation of our natural environment with property, sustainable planning for new housing developments is absolutely crucial to maintaining Moreton Bay Region as a desirable place to live for both people and fauna."

"Regulating development so that rural integrity and natural environment are protected."



“Keeping the natural environment intact in the Moreton Bay Region. Planning new developments to include natural spaces to ensure wildlife can coexist.”

“Protecting the environment and stopping unnecessary developments that destroy the natural beauty of the land and the native animals and their natural habitats.”

“The protection of the existing ambience and natural environment and saying “no” to development which destroys the reason residents have spent their hard earned money to live in.”

“The natural environment, native birds and animals need to be protected. Development shouldn’t occur at their expense.”

“Concerned about the increase of medium density developments-including size of developments and lack of infrastructure support (e.g. public transport, roads and traffic congestion).”

“Have infrastructure fully underway e.g. roads, railway parking, roundabouts before approval is given for new homes and new housing estates, before the developers move in and start work.”

Looking through the many comments left by community members in the survey, we could see that history is important when interpreting this data. Events such as the amalgamation of three shires in 2008 to form the Moreton Bay Regional Council has led some residents to feel the size of the region makes good governance more difficult, and that some areas have been prioritised at the expense of others.

For example:

“Redcliffe seems to get the majority of Council funding. Town planning in Caboolture needs an overhaul.”

“Since the amalgamation of Councils I think that Caboolture has been forgotten.”

And yet there are also signs of optimism that the new Council is gaining traction and building trust with community members:

“For the first time since Caboolture Shire was taken over by the Moreton Bay Shire ‘re-zoning’, I have felt we are back on the right path and a good path. “



A CLOSER LOOK AT THE COMMENTS

Moreton Says is about community members having their say on a range of issues related to the Moreton Bay Region and Council – and when offered the opportunity, community members made their voices heard. 7,270 individual comments were recorded by participants in the Moreton Says Anchor survey, providing a richness and depth to the survey question data. We analysed these comments to identify the issues and topics that community members mentioned most often, or to identify specific issues of relevance in particular parts of the region.

Most often, community members talked about roads, traffic, and parking when making a comment. The context for much of this commentary was population growth and planning effectively to ensure transport infrastructure can keep up with the number of people using it.

From these comments it was clear there is frustration within communities across the region, with roads and traffic either the most or second most frequent comment topic in all 10 of the geographic communities we used to analyse the data by location.

"Have some concern regarding the population growth and the ability to maintain services and traffic conditions (roads are already pretty busy)."

"Roads can't sustain the amount of traffic without falling apart."

"Roads need more attention. If new estates are created, the roads need to be modified to cope with additional traffic."

As discussed earlier, the environment, natural amenity and habitat for wildlife was also mentioned frequently in comments. Again, development and planning were prominent in these comments overall, with the need to ensure preservation of the environment a particular theme.

"Reservation of our natural environment with PROPER, SUSTAINABLE Planning for new housing developments is absolutely crucial to maintaining Moreton Bay Region as a desirable place to live for both people and fauna."

"Keeping the natural environment intact in the Moreton Bay Region. Planning new developments to include natural spaces to ensure wildlife can coexist."

"Balancing development opportunities with lifestyle and environmental considerations. I would like this region to be the best example in the whole country of how development can occur while putting the natural environment first. We live in a beautiful and diverse part of the world and its preservation should be #1. I believe there are ways to develop a place where people can live and businesses can thrive at the same time as the wildlife and birdlife and natural habitats. I know it's not an easy ask, but I personally also think that we elect leaders to find solutions to difficult issues."

It is also important to note there were many comments that were positive in their tone, highlighting work that Council had completed to enhance or improve and protect environmental amenity.

"I love the enhancement of our water ways, particularly the one in Clontarf off Maine Road (between Duffield and Dover). I hope you continue

to improve the other drainage systems and provide more beautiful places to see nature."

"More continuity between communities and natural beauty integrated with buildings and shops. Ban neon and tacky signs, it takes away from the natural beauty. Great job on walkways along waterfront."

Commentary was also often very localised, focusing on topics such as parks and how they may be improved, and the qualities that residents love about their local green spaces. Parks in particular provided a hugely diverse set of comments. Dog off leash areas, safety concerns in some parts of the region, improving amenities within parks, and utilising parks for community focused events and celebrations were all discussed as the following examples illustrate. Comments about parks were most prominent when we asked community members where Council should focus in the future:

"Safety and Cleanliness in the beaches, parks and other public places."

"I believe sun safety with regards to parks and playgrounds is very important. I would like to see all of them in the area to have adequate shade cover! Also access to all abilities."

In some parts of the region, specific issues were prominent among participant comments. For example, water was mentioned frequently by community members in Dayboro and surrounding suburbs. This

was most often in relation to water availability and infrastructure for its transportation.

"Dayboro and surrounds needs a better long term water solution to supply current and future residents."

In North Lakes, there were a small but vocal group of participants highly engaged about the former North Lakes golf course. These comments were mostly related to the proposed development of the former golf course, with most comments overwhelmingly negative in tone.

"Keeping the North Lakes golf course as a golf course & definitely as 100% open space. The golf course was a large part of the reason we moved to North Lakes."

Together, the comments made by community members provide important depth and richness to the Anchor survey data, helping Council to understand the context within which survey responses were made. This context and content will be valuable in ensuring that community voices are present in decision-making contexts – the data is already proving an important resource for Council in developing plans for the future of the region.

“Day to day, roads rates & rubbish services are adequate. But more could be done in respect to attracting innovative businesses, infrastructure and unique events to the region.”



BUILDING A STRONGER RELATIONSHIP

The Moreton Says program is about bringing the voices of community members into Council to inform its decision-making processes and help Council to understand more about the communities it serves. An important part of this process involves understanding more about what community think of Council itself, how it makes decisions and what Council can be focusing on to build a stronger, deeper relationship with community members. Confidence in the way Council governs and conducts its business is the foundation on which community trust in Council is built.

18-34 years more positive than those in older age categories.

Related to this, we asked community members to rate the extent to which they felt “internal policies and guidelines ensure Council does the right thing” on the same response scale. As with the transparency measure, 54% responded either “moderately”, “very much” or “extremely” while about half of participants (46%) indicated “not at all” or “slightly”. These two measures show that while Council has changed their practices in the last few years, it has work to do in building confidence about the way it does its business with the community.

“I have had positive dealings with the Council since their appointment but I still have no idea about the inner machinations of the Council itself and can only hope that they are not corrupt, nor self-serving but genuine in their efforts for the shire. To date, they have not let me down.”

TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

TRANSPARENCY

We included a range of questions in the Moreton Says Anchor survey that allows us to understand more about how community members view Council itself. We asked participants to rate the extent to which “Council operates in a transparent way” on a scale from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely). Overall, 51% of participants felt the Council is at least “moderately” transparent in the way it operates, although 20% indicated “not at all” and 29% “slightly”. While there were no real differences when we examined these responses by location, the longer that people had lived in the region, the more negative their views on this issue. Similarly, there was a modest difference by age, with participants between

COUNCIL ACCOUNTABILITY

Given the challenges that Moreton Bay Regional Council has been through in the last few years, we also included measures to explore the extent to which community members feel there are external mechanisms to ensure Council operates in an appropriate way. Specifically, we asked participants to rate on the same scale the extent to which “External regulations ensure the Council does the right thing” and “There are checks and balances to prevent corruption in Council”.

On whether external regulations are effective, 44% of participants indicated “not at all” or “slightly”, 38% “moderately” and 18% “very much” or “extremely”. Asked to rate the extent to which they felt there are checks and balances to prevent corruption in Council, 49% of participants indicated “not at all” or “slightly”,

35% "moderately" and 16% "very much" or "extremely". This indicates there is some way to go for Council to build confidence in the integrity of its procedures and decision-making processes.

Looking at responses among different groups within communities, younger people and those that had lived in the region for less time were more positive toward Council on both measures. It seems that experience with previous Councils in the region may influence how people feel about the current Council. However, comments left by participants in the Moreton Says Anchor survey also point to cautious optimism about how the current Council may improve its standing within the community through action.

"It seems as though the MBRC are trying to improve and I appreciate that."

"Hard to say on the last questions, because some past Councillors have been in trouble, but the new ones are only new. So trustworthy until proven otherwise."

"Trust is earned, I don't believe Council has done anything over and above to earn the trust it wants in return."

PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS AND RESPONSIVENESS

We examined community perceptions of procedural fairness in the way that Council makes decisions, listens to and responds to community concerns. Specifically, we examined the extent to which "Council listens to and respects my opinions" and "is prepared to change its practices in response to community concerns". Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with these questions on a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

While 22% of participants indicated some level of agreement that Council listens to community concerns, 31% disagreed (47% responded "neutral" on this scale). Similarly, 18% indicated some level of agreement that Council is prepared to change its practices in response to community concerns, 35% indicated some level of disagreement (again, 47% were "neutral"). We also found that 27% of people "agreed" or "strongly

agreed" that "people in my community are able to participate in decisions about community issues made by Council", while 31% disagreed to some extent (42% were "neutral" on this measure).

These results indicate there is work to do by Council to help community see that they are responsive to community concerns and issues, and include community perspectives in decision-making processes. The large proportion of "neutral" scores may also be an opportunity for Council to improve their relationship with the community in the future through clear communication and open demonstration of their intent through actions.

Again, it appears that sharing a longer history with Council affects responses, with those that have lived in the region longer also having more negative views about Council responsiveness (see Figure 6). Younger people (18-34 years) also more positive than community members in older age categories. As can be seen in the following quote, it is likely that the history of the region informs the views of those community members that have lived here for a longer period of time, impacting on their ratings of Council's responsiveness:

"Needs of Bribie Island are somewhat ignored by the Council. Residents are still hurting from when Moreton Bay Council was formed. Lots of money was spent on a referendum, approx 70% did not want an amalgamation. They discounted this and amalgamated. Trust was broken then."

"We only seem to find out about Council decisions after they are made."

"I feel that I do not know what is happening around my region and I do not feel that I have ever been asked for my input before decisions have already been made."

"I would like to see wherever possible that all council decisions in regards to material changes of use be published on the council website with the conditions of approval to ensure transparency and consistency in the decision process."



Figure 6. Average ratings of the extent to which Council listens to community opinions with regard to community issues by time lived in the region (higher scores represent more positive ratings).

CONTACT QUALITY AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

QUALITY OF INTERACTIONS WITH COUNCIL

We asked participants directly about their interactions with Council through the many and varied channels available to community members, either face to face or via other ways such as phone calls. 69% of participants reported having at least some contact with Council over the last 12 months. Overwhelmingly, these contact experiences were positive, with 71% of participants rating their contact with people from Council as either “positive” or “very positive”.

Importantly, 64% of community members also indicated these contact experiences with people from Council were either “consistent” or “very consistent” in their nature (i.e. when engaging Council on multiple issues or with different parts of Council). 23% of people indicated “neutral” on this measure, and 13% that their experiences had been “inconsistent” or “very inconsistent”.

While there were only small differences among these experiences by location within the region, people from Redcliffe and Woodford-D’Aguilar reported less consistent contact experiences than people in other areas.

FAIRNESS OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Finally, the size and diversity of the Moreton Bay region means that resource allocation by Council is complex and challenging. We wanted to understand how

community members feel about how Council currently allocates resources, asking participants to rate their level of agreement with the following statements on a 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) scale: “People like me receive a fair share of Council resources” and “My community receives a fair share of Council resources”.

Overall, 38% of participants “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their community receives a fair share of Council resources, 40% were “neutral” and 22% “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed”. Responses to the second fairness question were slightly less positive, with 32% indicating agreement, 41% “neutral”, and 24% indicating disagreement.

There were modest differences in responses to these measures based on time lived in the region (longer term residents indicated less agreement that their community receives a fair share of resources, for example), but there were important differences by location. People in Woodford-D’Aguilar, Dayboro and Caboolture and the suburbs that surround them felt that resources were allocated to their communities less fairly than did people in other locations. Residents of the Redcliffe and surrounds, North Lakes and surrounds, and Samford Valley and surrounds were higher on this measure than other areas within the region.

“Equity across MBRC. It is a large region and I feel resources and not fairly distributed.”

“Fair distribution of funding across all communities, not just Redcliffe.”

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS WITHIN THE REGION

We asked participants if they ran a business in the Moreton Bay Region, allowing us to explore whether this group of people have different views on key topics and issues. 571 business owners participated in the survey (542 from small businesses, i.e. <20 employees, 25 medium, i.e. between 20 and 199 employees, and 4 large, i.e. >200 employees), representing 13.67% of total participants. Broadly, the views of business owners were less positive than the views of non-business owners on almost all measures. With specific reference to conditions for local business, they had more negative views about Council's performance in facilitating local business (e.g. permits and licences) and supporting the growth and development of local business in the region (see Figure 7).

Business owners also tended to trust Council less than other participants, feel that people like them do not receive a fair share of Council resources to a greater extent, and feel more strongly that Council does not listen to or respect their opinions than other community members. However, business owners do have similar levels of identity with the Moreton Bay Region as other participants and similar strong levels of a sense of belonging.

"Opportunities for businesses or at least removing disincentives such as high costs to run them and meet licensing requirements etc. Encourage growth in industries that create employment, opportunities for growth in new industries and innovation in existing industries."

"Apart from Rates, Roads and Rubbish, the Council needs to focus on facilitating new business, as well as providing excellent tourist experiences. MBRC may not be the place to do the large scale, but there are lots of unique opportunities."

"I would like to see this region become a magnet for artisans and creative people of all kinds, where there are great local shops and businesses that offer something unique, and where people from round the country will want to visit and stay, and spend money. There is amazing potential for that to happen in this region - we have it all, the coastline, tracts of natural forests and wetlands."

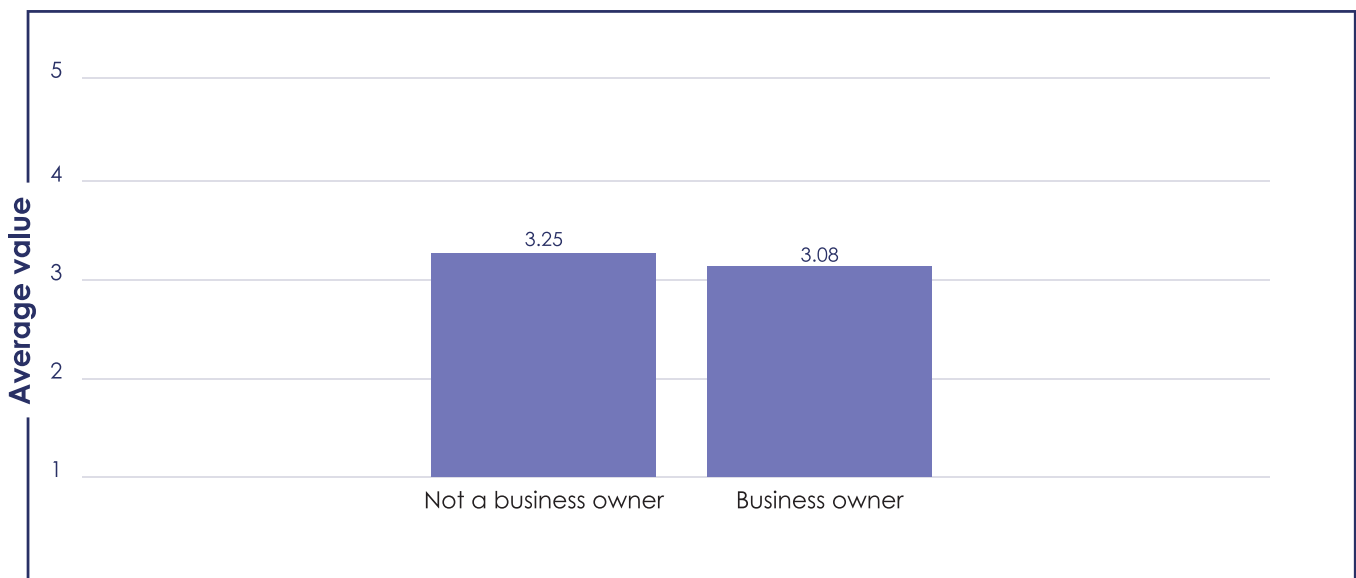


Figure 7. Average satisfaction ratings of Council's work supporting the growth and development of business in the region for business owners and those that do not own a business (higher scores represent higher satisfaction).

TRUST, APPROVAL AND WHY IT MATTERS

Finally, we measured community trust in and approval of Moreton Bay Regional Council. We measure trust and approval because they provide a baseline measure of the health of the relationship between community members and Council. Specifically, trust is fundamentally important in this relationship if Council is going to successfully navigate the future growth and evolution of the region with community expectations front and centre in their decision-making.

We measured trust in Council two ways, directly (e.g. trust the Council to act responsibly") and in relation to other important groups within the region (e.g. all levels of government, the tourism industry, small business and local traders). Approval is important because it allows Council to see how they track over time on this 'outcome' measure, with ratings representing the product of community expectations of and experiences with Council.

Looking at trust first, results show that Council has moderate trust within the community and room to improve (see Figure 8). On the measure "trust the Council to act responsibly", for example, 45% indicated moderately" and 24% "very much" or "extremely".

However, 31% indicated "Not at all" or "slightly". When we examined trust in Council relative to other groups (i.e. using a different measure of trust), we found Council were trusted more than other levels of government and local social media groups, but less than local traders and small business people (see Figure 10).

Trust in Council was higher among younger community members and among people that had lived in the region for less time.

There were also important differences in trust ratings by location as can be seen in the map over the page (Figure 9). Trust was generally higher in Burpengary East, Deception Bay, parts of the Redcliffe and surrounds, Rothwell, Strathpine and The Hills District. Trust was lower in Morayfield, Elimbah and Woodford-D'Aguilar.

Approval ratings of Council were generally higher than for trust, with 73% of participants indicating they had at least moderate levels of approval (45% "moderately", 25% "Very much", 3% "Extremely"). 27% of participants indicated "Not at all" or "Slightly" with respect to approval of Council.

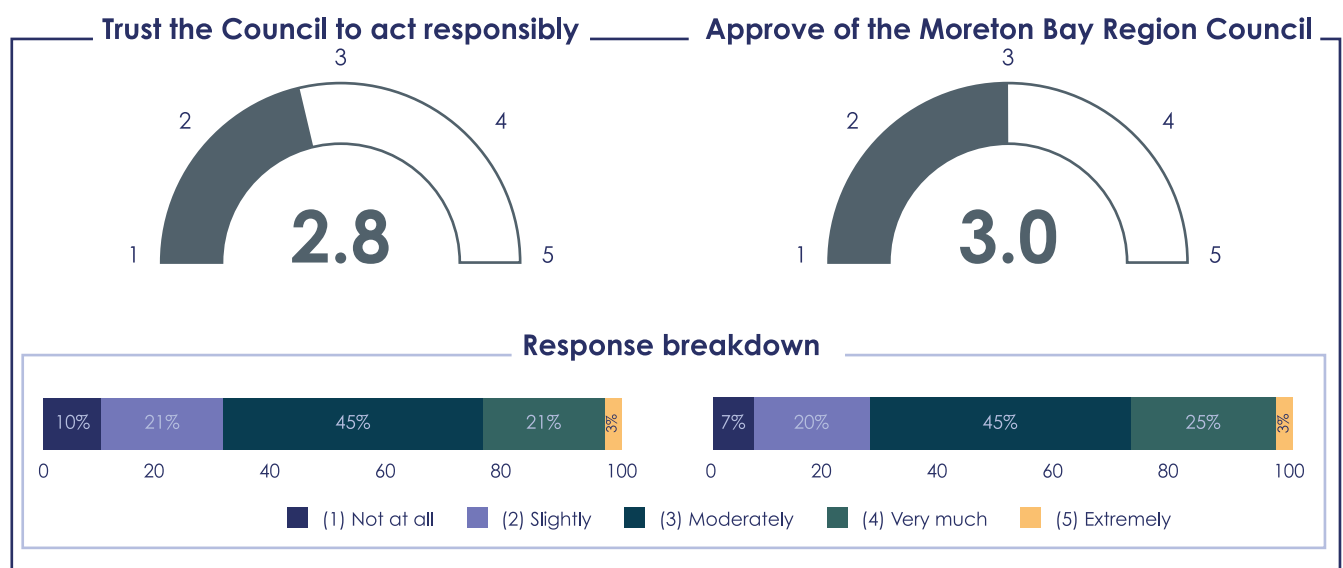


Figure 8. Trust and approval ratings of Council's health and relationship between community members and Council.

PATHWAYS TO A STRONGER RELATIONSHIP

A key goal for the Moreton Says program of work is to establish the conditions for building stronger relationships between Council and the communities it serves. Throughout the report we've seen clearly what values, issues and topics are most important to community members. In this section, we will look at what is most important for Moreton Bay Regional Council to focus on in building trust and approval within the community. Building trust will be important to enable Council to work collaboratively with communities within the region to effectively navigate future challenges together.

To do this we have used a powerful analysis technique called path modelling that helps us understand what drives trust in and approval of Council. Specifically, path modelling tells us the relative importance of each driver of trust and approval, so that Council can focus on what is most important to you, in the right way. Looking at the path model (Figure 11), there are several key, and perhaps surprising, findings.

TRUST IS CENTRAL TO THE RELATIONSHIP

The path model shows trust as being central, operating as a vehicle that translates the experiences and expectations of community members into their level of approval of Council: as trust in Council increases, so does the level of community approval of it and its work. Trust is positioned centrally in the model because it is central to the relationships between communities and their Council. Trust creates goodwill toward Council decision-making, benefit of the doubt when things

don't go exactly to plan, and a willingness to work with Council to shape the future communities want to see. For Council, the next key question to explore is what leads to stronger trust with the Moreton Bay Region community?

TRANSPARENCY AND RESPONSIVENESS ARE MOST IMPORTANT

Our analyses show that transparency in the way Council operates and its responsiveness to community concerns are by far the most important of the trust drivers. The more that community members feel that Council operates in a transparent way and has strong internal policies and guidelines that ensure it does the right thing, the more they trust Council. This is important because it shows Council that helping community members to understand how it holds itself accountable is fundamental to its relationship with community members. Currently, ratings of Council transparency have room to improve, meaning there is work to do in this critical area.

The second strongest driver of trust was Council responsiveness. This driver has several parts. The first is about effectively listening to community concerns and taking action based on those concerns. This does not mean just doing what the loudest community voices are saying but it does mean that the more community members feel their voices are present in Council decision-making, the more they trust the organisation.

Responsiveness also means engaging with community members genuinely and effectively, following through on commitments and supporting community members to actively participate in Council decision-making processes where appropriate. The Moreton Says program of work is itself a Council commitment to listening effectively to community perspectives, a great step toward demonstrating increased emphasis on responsiveness.

ACCOUNTABILITY BUILDS TRUST

We have seen that internal accountability builds trust (i.e. transparency), but so too does confidence in external accountability mechanisms. As Council works through a period of change and renewal, community members are saying that they trust Council more when they are confident in the formal rules governing Council activities and decision-making, and that “there are checks and balances to prevent corruption in Council”. This is the third strongest driver of community trust and currently ratings on these measures have significant room to improve. Building public confidence in both internal and external accountability mechanisms can take time, however, so there is a need for community members to have patience while Council works to demonstrate its commitment through action in this area.

A GOOD PLAN EXECUTED WELL

Throughout the Moreton Says Anchor survey data it is clear that many community members have strong views about planning, development and change within the region. This is understandable given the pace and nature of these changes among communities that highly prize features of the region that may feel threatened by this development. In the path modelling we found this concern influences the level of trust community members have in Council: higher levels of satisfaction with Council planning for the future needs of the region leads to higher trust in Council. This relates specifically to Council's management of population growth across the region and the development of infrastructure to support it. This was also the area that attracted the most comments from community members in the survey, with ratings of Council in this area currently weaker than they are for satisfaction with Council's work in delivering day-to-day services.

Of note here, while planning for the future was so prominent in community comments and the data more generally, it is the fourth strongest driver of trust in Council after confidence in internal and external accountability mechanisms and Council responsiveness. This shows that while the issues of

focus may be clear, it is how Council approaches them through its direct engagement, involvement of community members in decision-making and the integrity of these processes that matters most in developing deeper levels of community trust in Council.

QUALITY OF CONTACT

Finally, we found that quality of contact between community members and Council was a significant and positive driver of community trust: when interactions with Council are positive, so trust increases. There are many interaction points between community members and Council, whether it is receiving a rates notice in the mail; engaging with Council services through the MBRC Request app; visiting a Council service centre, gallery, library or waste facility; or attending a community engagement event about a new project. We found that the more positive these experiences are for community members, the stronger community trust in Council.

Importantly, ratings of contact quality were strong in the Moreton Says Anchor survey, with this interaction quality representing an important Council asset. It reaffirms the importance of every interaction point with community members for Council and provides strong evidence for its investment in providing a wide variety of ways that the diverse communities across the region can engage with Council.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES IN THE MODEL

As shown in the path model diagram, there are two other important features regarding the relationship of community with Council. Ratings of day-to-day services and community identity and resilience leads directly to approval of Council. This means they affect approval independent of, or separately to, trust.

In general, community members indicated high levels of satisfaction with Council's handling of day-to-day services like mowing, maintenance and keeping public spaces clean across the region. The modelling shows that this while this doesn't lead to higher trust, it can be seen as following through on a basic expectation

of Council, and that Council is performing well in this area. This is a good reminder for Council that while it is working to build deeper trust with community, this fundamental role should be maintained and focus on current performance celebrated.

Second, community identity and resilience were found to positively predict community approval of Council. This measure included questions about pride in being a community member, sense of belonging, capacity to manage change, and having leadership within community to take effective action in the interests of community. These are all measures of community wellbeing and resilience. As community feels more

confident in its capacity to manage challenges that arise, or bounce back from events like COVID-19, the better they feel about Council in general.

This speaks to the fundamental and important role that Council plays in the lives of community members across the region – how community feels about itself drives how community feels about Council. This is an important finding from the Moreton Says Anchor survey because it highlights for Council that the work they do to connect communities together, to build capacity, support vulnerable groups, and support the engines of economic prosperity across the region matter for community and for Council.

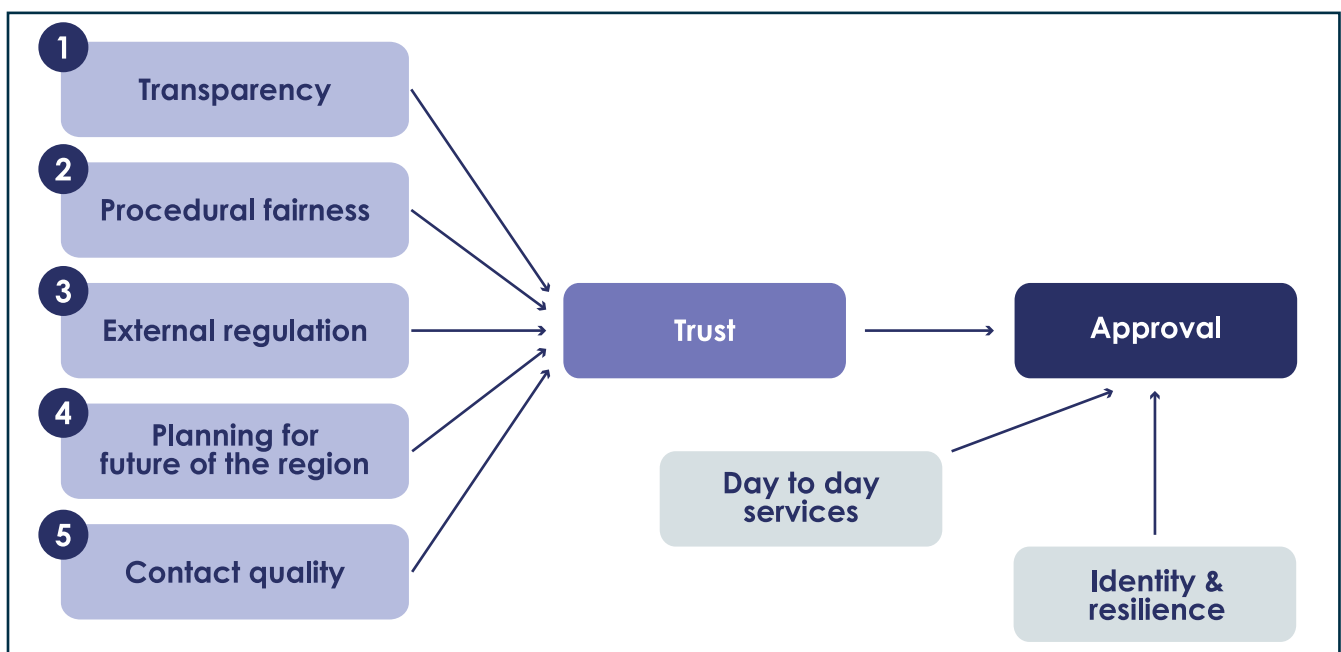


Figure 11. Pathways to trust and approval for Moreton Bay Regional Council.

HOW TO READ THIS PATH MODEL

When reading the path model on this page, follow the arrows from left to right. The direction of the arrow indicates the direction of the relationship; for example, trust leads to approval. The numbers in the boxes reflect their relative importance in driving trust in Council, compared to all of the other drivers; for example transparency in the way Council operates is more powerful than contact quality in driving trust in Council. All pathways in this model are positive, which means, for example, that as trust increases so does approval.

CONCLUSION

Moreton Says is an important program of work designed to bring the voices of community members inside the Moreton Bay Regional Council. The Moreton Says Anchor survey was the first of a series of opportunities for community members over the next few years to tell Council what is important to them. The size and diversity of the region was on clear display in the data presented in this first Moreton Says report, reinforcing the need to ensure a broad-based, inclusive approach to engaging community members in this work.

The Anchor survey data provided many important insights for Council and for community members. Council has indicated their intent to use Moreton Says to inform their decision-making and build stronger relationships with their communities to navigate the challenges ahead for the region.

A key theme in this data is the importance that community members place on the beauty, natural amenity, and environmental significance of the region, regardless of where they live. This importance was evident in the way community members discussed other issues as well, like development and Council planning for population growth within the region. Concern with new development was very often framed by the environmental consequences perceived to arise from it. In the analysis of comments made by participants, roads, traffic and adequate infrastructure to support population growth were also prominent.

This concern flowed through into negative sentiment toward Council's handling of planning for the future needs of the region, in stark contrast to the high levels of satisfaction with Council's management of day-to-day services. We also found that concerns about planning was a key driver of community trust in Council, operating within the path model very differently to day-to-day services in its relationship with community approval of Council.

This modelling revealed other important findings as well, chief among them that community trust in Council is fundamentally connected to how transparently Council operates and how accountable Council is to external checks and balances. Undeniably, the history of the region in terms of amalgamation and a more recent need for renewal plays a strong role in the way many people, especially those that have lived in the region for longer, feel about Council.

The modelling also revealed that a stronger, more trusting relationship with community is dependent on ensuring decision-making processes consider community perspectives, that Council itself listens to and respects community views and acts based on their concerns. The Moreton Says program can be seen as an important step by Council toward a more open, transparent and inclusive governance approach.

This work also revealed areas of real strength within community and within Council that harbours well for the future. Community wellbeing is generally high and resilience against future shocks or unexpected events was also largely robust. Key community assets include a capacity to get organised to tackle challenging events and to manage change effectively – this will be particularly important as Council works to fast-track the region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. There were also many comments made by community members that praised Council for making changes in recent times to improve outcomes for community, and cautious optimism and support for Council through process of renewal.

The challenge for Council is clear: managing population growth effectively, and planning with community values and priorities front of mind, is fundamentally important to those community members that have joined Moreton Says. This research has now

provided Council with a roadmap for creating an environment of deeper trust with community members to successfully navigate these challenges together while maintaining those core local government services that are essential expectations within community.

The Moreton Bay Region is a diverse region loved by its residents and those that visit from other places. Governing with understanding of diverse community perspectives, needs and interests is challenging yet

necessary to ensure the potential of the region to support the lives and livelihoods of its communities is realised. The success of Council will also depend, however, on the trust and confidence of community members in the renewal of the organisation. The scene is set for Council and community members to come together to work toward a prosperous and inclusive future for all.



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