

Tauranga City Council

Annual Residents Survey

2024/25: Wave one:
27 August 2024 - 01 October 2024

Introduction

The Annual Residents Survey measures the perceptions of residents regarding various aspects of services that Council provides. The results of this survey feed into the Tauranga City Council Long-term Plan reporting process and allow Council to assess the performance of the Council against a set of pre-determined actions and performance levels.

What does this report show?

This report summarises the responses received from the first wave of Tauranga City Council's 2024/25 annual residents survey. In this wave, 152 people responded. Responses are on-track to receiving feedback from at least 600 responses in total across all waves.

A high-level view of the responses received to date and how they compared to previous years is presented in this report. It is important to note that as the full year survey has not yet been completed, these results are indicative but do not meet the threshold of statistical relevance to be reflective of the views of the whole city.

Research Objectives:

- To determine residents' satisfaction with various Council services and facilities.
- To determine residents' perceptions about aspects of living, working, and playing in Tauranga.
- To identify progress towards Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in Council's Annual Report.
- To assess trends in perceptions and satisfaction through comparisons with previous survey results.

Methodology:

The 2024/245 annual study will target 600 responses from the residents in the Tauranga City Council area, with approximately 150 per wave.

Each wave's mail out quotas are applied according to age, gender, and ward, to ensure that a representative sample of Tauranga City's population is achieved.

The data is weighted to account for variances in the achieved quotas and to ensure that the sample reflects the population profile achieved.

Data collection is taking place in four waves between August 2024 and May 2025 to align with the quarterly reporting of the non-financial performance targets.

The overall results have an anticipated margin of error of +/- 4.6% at the 95% confidence level.

Summary results

Overall, the results for overall performance has increased year to date against the full year 23/24 satisfaction score.

Declining satisfaction trends YTD worth noting are below:

- Image and reputation – All measures from wave four 23/24 to wave one 24/25 declined in satisfaction. Similarly, all but the measure for quality of services saw declines against the previous year’s score.
- Overall value for money – dropped slightly both YTD and from wave four.

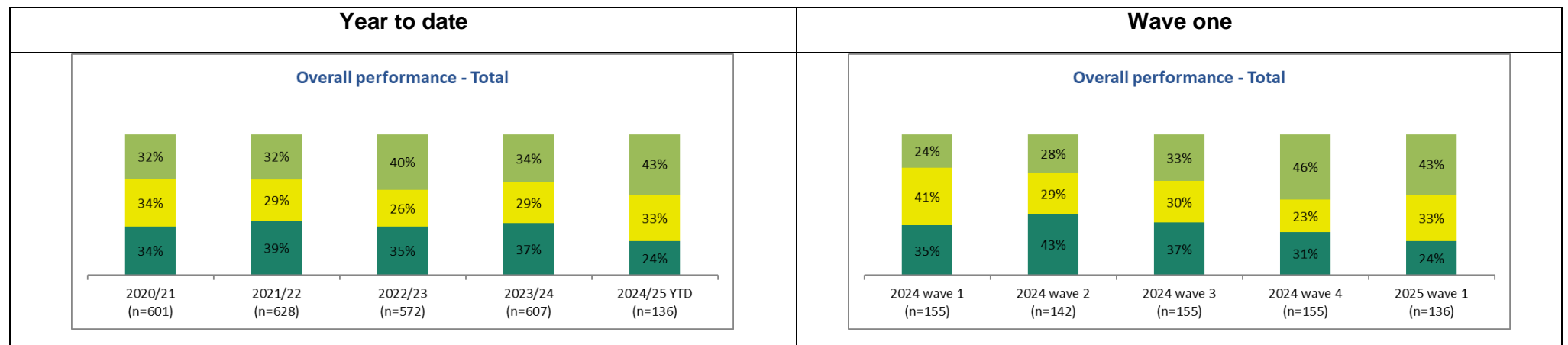
Increasing satisfaction trends YTD are below from:

- Roading and footpaths – YTD and between waves all areas have increased and shown good improvements.
- Waste management – has shown good improvement overall and continued strong scores in other waste measures.
- Improvements also seen in core services, facilities, waters and outdoor measures.

Further top-level overall details on these are contained hereunder.

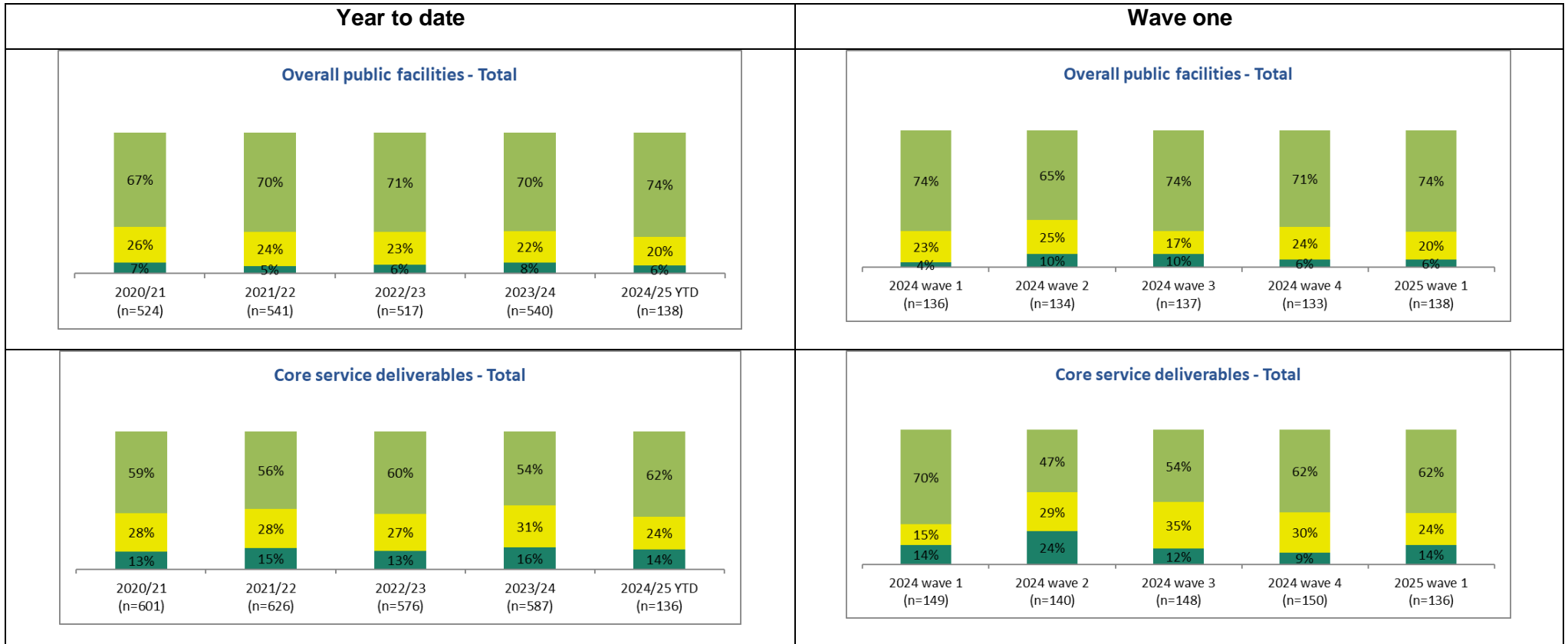
Key

- Satisfied (%7-10)
- Neutral (%5-6)
- Dissatisfied (%1-4)



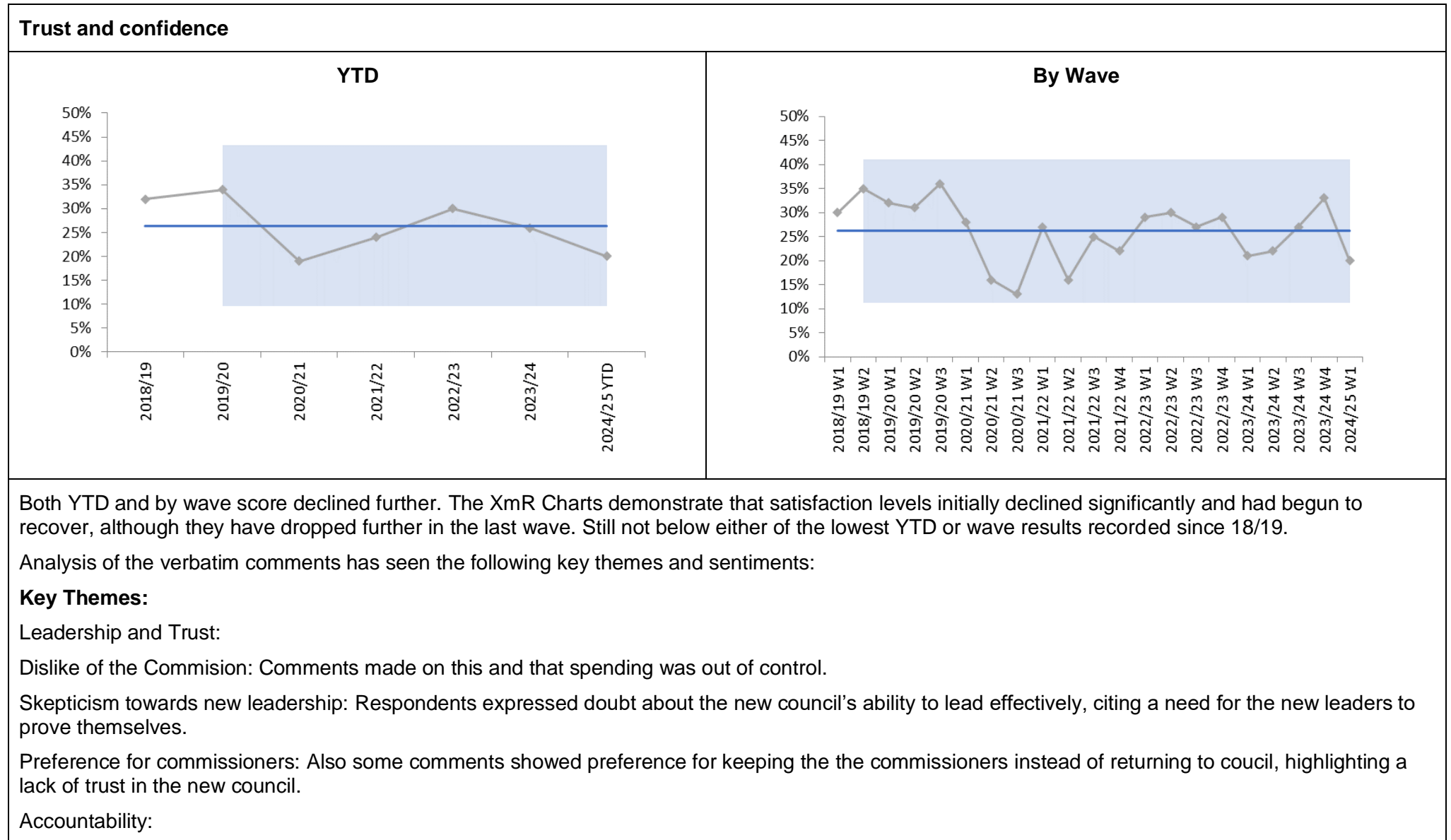






Measures of Interest

The 2023/24 full year report highlighted three areas of council performance as these measures have the highest impact on residents' overall perception of the council combined with a relatively low performance.



Ensuring that council members and staff are held accountable for their actions and decisions is vital for building trust. Respondents want transparency and responsiveness to community concerns.

Communication and Accountability:

Clear Communication: Providing regular updates on council activities and decisions through multiple channels is necessary to ensure wide reach in the community.

Sentiments:

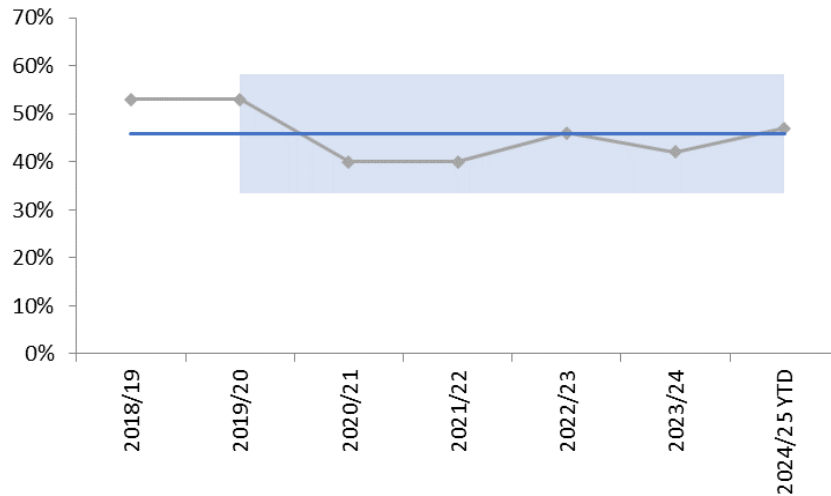
Disappointment and Frustration: Many responses reflect disappointment with past and current council actions, particularly regarding financial management and infrastructure projects.

Cautious Optimism: While there is skepticism, some respondents express hope that the new council will learn from past mistakes and improve.

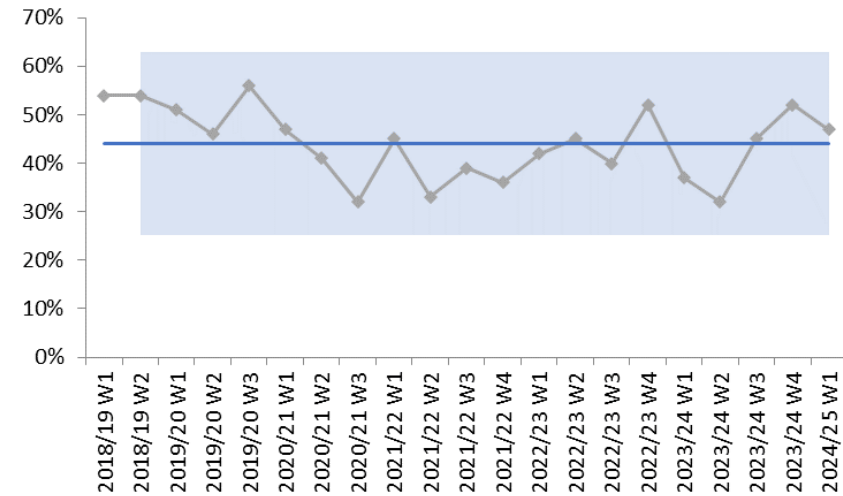
Demand for Accountability: There is a strong demand for accountability and transparency from the council, with a focus on practical and visible improvements in the community.

Quality of services

YTD



By Wave



YTD saw improvement from previous years score, but the score declined slightly from the wave four score. The XmR Charts demonstrate that satisfaction levels with quality of services have remained relatively steady with the biggest range in variation seen between 19/20 and 20/21.

Analysis of the verbatim comments has seen the following key themes and sentiments:

Key Themes

Roads and Traffic: There is a strong demand for better maintenance of roads, including fixing potholes and managing traffic congestion more effectively. Respondents want roadworks to be completed efficiently to minimise disruptions.

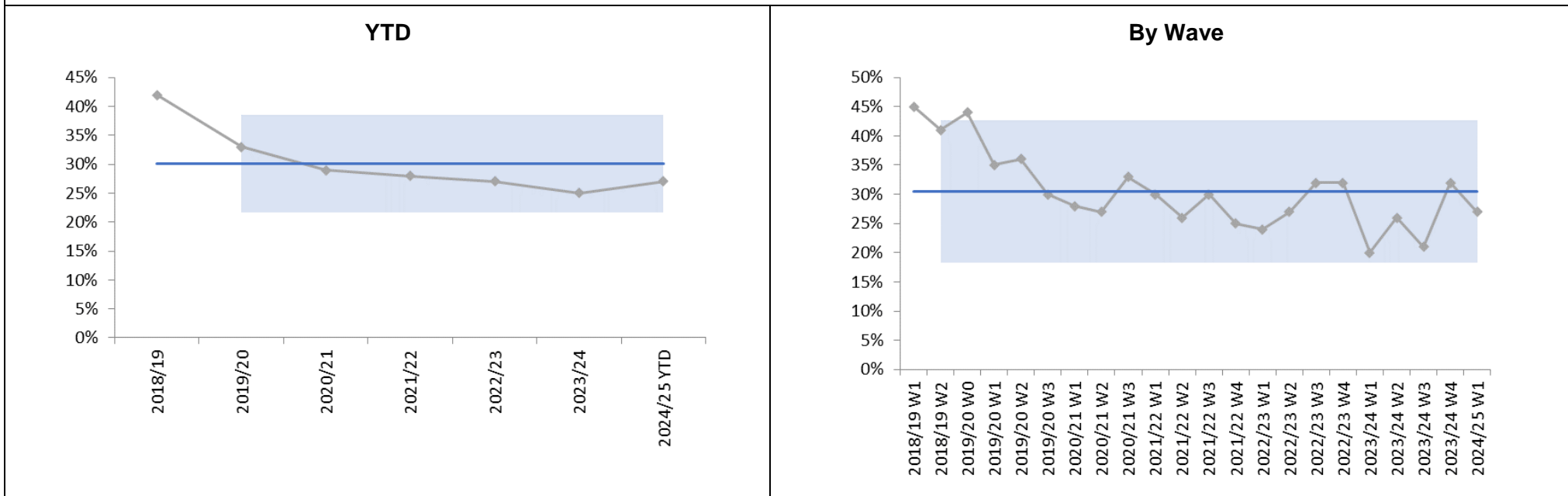
Public Facilities: Maintaining parks, libraries, and other community facilities to a high standard is a priority. Ensuring these facilities are safe, clean, and accessible is essential.

Prudent Spending: Respondents emphasise the need for the council to use funds wisely, focusing on essential services and avoiding unnecessary expenditures. They want to see clear returns on investment for all projects.

Sentiments

Same as trust and confidence above.

Annual Rates are fair and reasonable



YTD saw improvement from previous years score, but the score declined slightly from the wave four score. The XmR Charts demonstrate that satisfaction levels with annual rates being fair and reasonable has declined year on year since 18/19. The variation between the wave data shows that W1 usually sees a drop in the result which could correlate to the receiving of the first rates notice of the year.

Analysis of the verbatim comments has seen the following key themes and sentiments:

Key Themes

High Rates: Many respondents feel that the rates are excessively high and continue to increase without corresponding improvements in services.

Value for Money: There is a strong sentiment that the community is not receiving good value for the money paid in rates. Comparisons are made to other cities like Auckland and Rotorua, which are perceived to offer better services at lower rates.

Transparency and Accountability: There is a demand for more transparency in how rates are calculated and spent. Respondents want clear communication about council spending and better accountability for financial decisions.

Sentiments:

Frustration and Disappointment: Many responses reflect frustration with the current state of services and financial management. There is a strong sense of disappointment with how rates are being used.

Overall image and reputation

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	26%	24%	▼
Leadership	29%	22%	▼
Trust	26%	20%	▼
Financial Management	22%	16%	▼
Quality of services	42%	47%	▲

Comments:

The YTD result shows a decline in the overall image and reputation of Council from full year result for 2023/24.

All but quality of services measures are down in the first wave compared to the previous year's score.

Verbatim Summary:

This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Leadership and Trust: Scepticism towards new leadership and a preference for the previous Commissioners.

Financial Management: Concerns about high rates and calls for more prudent spending on essential services.

Infrastructure and Services: Frustration with poor road conditions, traffic congestion, and inadequate public facilities.

Community Engagement and Communication: Desire for the council to listen more to residents and improve transparency.

Traffic and Road Management: Complaints about ongoing roadworks and the need for better traffic management.

Overall value for money

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	34%	33%	▼
Annual rates fair and reasonable	25%	27%	▲
Water rates fair and reasonable	42%	41%	▼
Invoicing clear and correct	72%	68%	▼
Payment arrangements fair and reasonable	69%	70%	▲

Comments:
The YTD result shows a decline in the overall value for money result from full year result for 2023/24.

Verbatim Summary:
This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

High Rates and Value for Money: Concerns about high rates and the perception that the services provided do not justify the cost.

Financial Management and Spending Priorities: Calls for more prudent spending, focusing on essential services rather than large, expensive projects.

Infrastructure Maintenance and Roadworks: Frustration with poor road conditions, ongoing roadworks, and inefficient traffic management.

Public Transport Quality: Criticism of the public transport system as unreliable and not good value for money, with calls for improvements in timetables and payment structures.

Maintenance of Public Facilities: Desire for better maintenance of parks, playgrounds, and other public facilities to ensure they are safe and well-kept.

Community Engagement and Responsiveness: Calls for the council to listen more to residents and improve transparency and communication.

Transparency and Accountability: Demand for better transparency in how rates are calculated and spent, and greater accountability for financial decisions.

Community Engagement and Communications

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Involves the public in the decisions it makes	25%	31%	▲
Decisions being in the best interests of the city	28%	26%	▼
Efforts to consult and engage directly with the community	27%	28%	▲
Influence the public has on the decisions Council makes	14%	19%	▲
Contact council when and how you want	56%	59%	▲

Comments:
The YTD result shows improvements in all but one of the communications and engagement metrics from full year result for 2023/24.

Verbatim Summary:
This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Communication and Engagement: Desire for better communication from the council, including newsletters, more surveys, and transparent calendars for events.

Listening to Residents: Calls for the council to genuinely listen to residents' feedback and not just the vocal minority.

Decision-Making and Consultation: Need for more genuine consultation processes and referendums on major issues.

Customer Service: Mixed feedback on customer service, with some finding it professional and others experiencing difficulties.

Transparency and Accountability: Demand for greater transparency in council actions and decisions, and accountability for spending and project outcomes.

Overall Water management

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	56%	63%	▲
Protection from flooding	66%	62%	▼
Quality of drinking water	71%	67%	▼
Know ways to conserve water	88%	85%	▼
Have conserved water in last 12 months	83%	85%	▲

Comments:

The YTD results for satisfaction with overall water management deliverable has increased slightly when compared to results from 2023/24.

Verbatim Summary:

This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Water Quality: Concerns about the taste and safety of drinking water, with many using filters to improve quality.

Fluoridation: Mixed opinions on adding fluoride to the water, with some strongly against it and others in favour.

Stormwater Management: Issues with clogged drains and flooding, with calls for better planning and maintenance.

Infrastructure and Capacity: Need for improved infrastructure to handle population growth and prevent water shortages.

Environmental Practices: Suggestions for planting native trees and using urban design solutions to manage stormwater.

Communication and Education: Desire for more information on water conservation and stormwater management practices.

Customer Service and Responsiveness: Mixed experiences with council responsiveness to issues like leaks and maintenance requests.

Transparency and Accountability: Calls for better transparency in water management decisions and more proactive maintenance.

Overall Road and footpaths

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	35%	53%	▲
Safety when cycling on roads and cycleways	42%	60%	▲
Safety on footpaths	61%	69%	▲
General cleanliness of footpaths	64%	72%	▲
Safety when driving on roads	39%	57%	▲

Comments:
The YTD result shows improvements in all the roads and footpath measures.

Verbatim Summary:
This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Road and Footpath Maintenance: Concerns about potholes, uneven footpaths, and the need for proper repairs.

Traffic and Congestion: Frustration with traffic congestion and the impact of ongoing roadworks on travel times.

Cycle Paths and Safety: Mixed opinions on cycle paths, with some finding them dangerous and others appreciating the infrastructure but noting it is underused.

Road Safety: Specific intersections and roads are highlighted as dangerous, with calls for improvements to enhance safety.

Public Transport: Criticism of the current public transport system, with suggestions for better services to reduce traffic congestion.

Project Management: Complaints about the management of road projects, including delays and perceived inefficiencies.

Overall Sustainability and waste

Waste Management			
	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	68%	80%	▲
Rubbish day collection	82%	87%	▲
Street afterwards on collection day	81%	81%	=
The management of street litter	67%	69%	▲
The management of litter bins in our parks and streets	64%	70%	▲
Te Maunga Transfer Station	63%	74%	▲

Climate and Sustainability			
	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	-	40%	
Help our city adapt to a changing climate	37%	40%	▲
Help our city reduce its emissions	30%	34%	▲
Enabling Tauranga residents to live sustainably	34%	31%	▼
An organisation that is committed to delivering sustainable outcomes	31%	33%	▲

Comments:

The YTD result shows all waste measures improving or equal.

This is a baseline year for the overall climate and sustainability measure.

Verbatim Summary:

This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Recycling and Waste Management: Desire for better recycling facilities, including bins for recyclable materials in public spaces and more frequent green waste collection.

Sustainability Initiatives: Calls for more visible and effective sustainability efforts, such as promoting solar panels, rainwater collection, and reducing emissions.

Public Awareness and Education: Need for better communication and education about what can be recycled and how to manage waste sustainably.

Infrastructure and Services: Concerns about the adequacy of current waste management infrastructure, including transfer stations and bin sizes.

Environmental Impact: Issues with air quality, particularly in Mount Maunganui, and the environmental impact of new developments and waste management practices.

Council Efficiency and Transparency: Criticism of council efficiency in managing waste and calls for greater transparency in their sustainability efforts.

Community Engagement: Suggestions for more community involvement in sustainability initiatives, such as beach clean-ups and better consultation on environmental policies.

Overall Outdoor spaces

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	68%	73%	▲
Enough parks or green spaces	69%	70%	▲
Quality of playgrounds	71%	71%	=
Cemetery	77%	73%	▼
Boat ramps and associated parking	64%	76%	▲

Comments:

The YTD result shows a increase overall and improvements in parks and greenspace and boat ramps.

Verbatim Summary:

This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Playground and Park Improvements: Desire for more shade, interesting playgrounds for older kids, and better maintenance of park assets.

Boat Ramp Fees: Strong opinions against charging for boat ramp use, with calls for more affordable or free access.

Maintenance and Cleanliness: Need for more frequent maintenance of parks, playgrounds, and public spaces to keep them clean and well-kept.

Community Facilities: Suggestions for additional facilities like outdoor exercise bars, dog parks, and destination playgrounds to enhance community spaces.

Waterfront and Urban Development: Calls for more thoughtful and attractive waterfront development, drawing inspiration from successful examples like Southbank in Brisbane.

Overall Public facilities

	Result	YTD Result	Trend
Driver	23/24	24/25	
Overall	70%	74%	▲
Libraries	90%	88%	▼
Historic Village	62%	61%	▼
Tauranga Art Gallery	61%	55%	▼
Baycourt	71%	76%	▲
Council swimming pools	72%	77%	▲
Council indoor sports facilities	74%	75%	▲
Council community centres	63%	65%	▲
Community share indoor sports facilities	67%	72%	▲

Comments:

The YTD result shows a decline in libraries, historic village and the art gallery from full year result for 2023/24.

Verbatim Summary:

This section of the survey includes a free text field in which respondents could comment further on their satisfaction score.

In summary, some broad feedback themes included:

Library Services: Positive feedback on library services, with suggestions for better parking, more varied book collections, and improved facilities.

Historic Village: Interest in more events and better promotion, with suggestions for updates to make it more vibrant and accessible.

Swimming Pools: Positive feedback on existing pools like Baywave, but concerns about overcrowding and the need for more pools.

Community Facilities: Calls for more diverse facilities, such as outdoor exercise areas, mental health groups, and a performing arts centre.

Maintenance and Upgrades: Need for regular maintenance and updates to existing facilities to keep them in good condition.

Parking and Accessibility: Issues with limited parking at popular facilities and the need for better accessibility for all community members.

Event and Activity Promotion: Desire for better promotion of events and activities to increase community engagement.