Moreton Says Pulse #1 Survey Report

- Corporate Plan
- Community Wellbeing Strategy
- Preparedness for extreme weather events
- Moreton Says 'core items'

INTRODUCTION

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, starting with a detailed Anchor survey in mid-2021. This report provides a summary of data collected from the first of several brief Pulse surveys that will be undertaken over the next few years.

This first Pulse survey was open to Moreton Bay residents, visitors and those that work in the region, with data collected between 20th October and 24th November 2021.

Where the Anchor survey provided a detailed understanding of community perspectives on many aspects of their relationship with and the work of Council, Pulse surveys have a different purpose. They allow Council and community members to track over time the most important parts of this relationship and provide space to explore specific issues in more detail.

In Pulse #1, we focused on three specific issues:

- Council's new Corporate Plan and vision for the region
- A Community Wellbeing Strategy that Council is developing for the region, and
- Community preparedness for extreme weather events heading into summer.

ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

The Council and Voconiq worked together to invite community members to participate in this first Pulse survey. A broad-scale social media campaign was conducted, paper copies of the survey were positioned in Council libraries, and eight community 'pop-ups' were held at events and markets across the region throughout the data collection period. In addition, flyers were distributed to community members, project banners and corflute signs were positioned around the region and community groups encouraged to spread the word. All community members that registered with Voconiq for the Anchor survey were invited back for the Pulse #1 survey via email.

190 community members also participated in focus groups conducted by Council to explore issues related to the Corporate Plan and Community Wellbeing Strategy in more detail. Five broader focus groups were conducted with community members, community organisations and service providers. 18 smaller discussions were held with members of groups such as those identifying as LGBTIQA+, young people, First Nations Peoples, seniors, those that are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), and people with disabilities.

Of the total number of people that engaged in the Pulse survey, 2,370 surveys were retained for analysis after the data was cleaned and prepared. This represents a large, statistically robust sample. Of particular importance, for most groups within the dataset (e.g. gender, geographic region, age categories) we collected more than 60 surveys, providing enough data to conduct statistically meaningful comparisons.

Examining the demographic profile of the sample showed that it closely mirrors that of the Anchor survey, again providing confidence that we are 'comparing apples with apples' when looking at Pulse #1 scores relative to Anchor scores on key measures like trust and approval of Council.

Figure 1. Participation in Pulse #1 by statistical area across the Moreton Bay Region, with selective reference point labels.
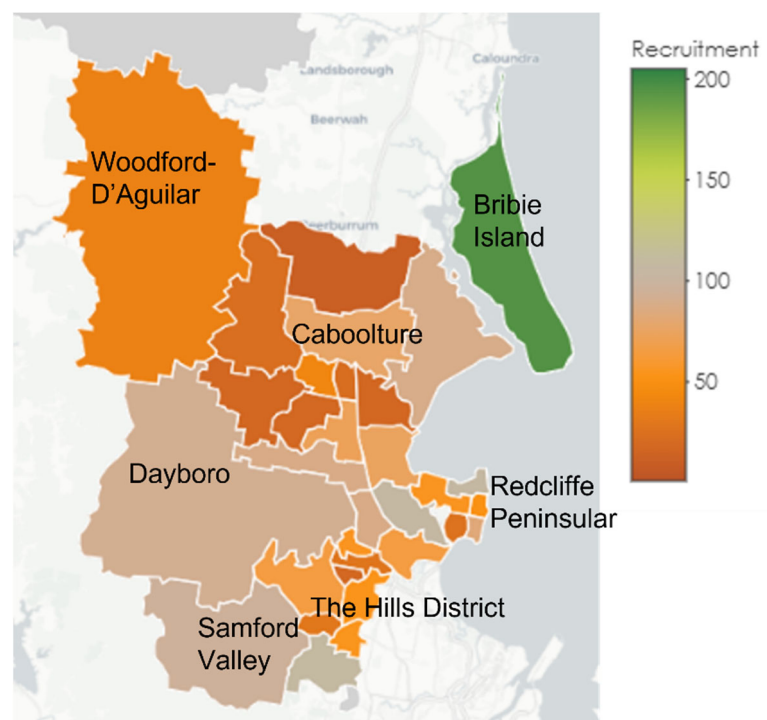
A selection of demographic information about the sample is included below:

- 56% of participants identified as female, 42.1% as male, 1.1% preferred not to say, 0.5% preferred to self-describe, and 0.3% identified as non-binary,

- 8.91% indicated they were living with a disability, 2.5% that they were a carer/support worker, 2.3% indicated they preferred not to say if they had a disability, and 86.3% reported they did not have a disability,

- 2% of participants indicated they were of Aboriginal or Torres Straight Island heritage, and 98% indicated they were not,

- 93.8% indicated English was their first language, 5.4% that English was not their first language, and 0.8% preferred not to say,

- 92.9% said they were a resident of the Moreton Bay region, 6.3% lived somewhere else, and 0.8% that they preferred not to say.
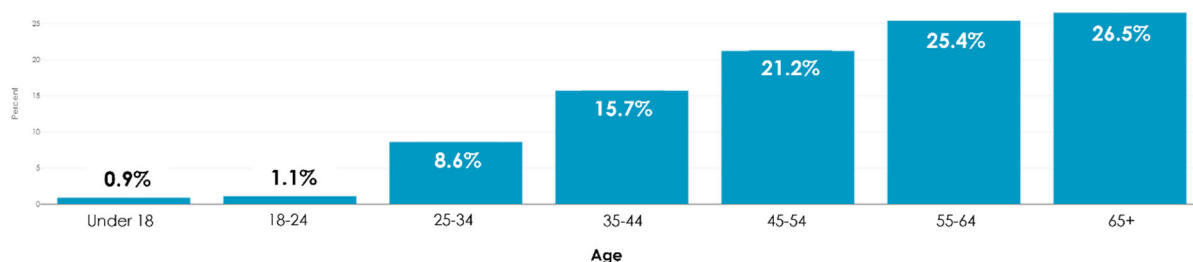

Figure 2. Percentage participation in Pulse #1 by age category.

Participation by location:

12.5%	Bribie Island and surrounds
8.5%	Caboolture and surrounds
4%	Dayboro and surrounds
8.1%	Hills District
11.2%	Narangba and surrounds
10.6%	North Lakes and surrounds
19.6%	Redcliffe Peninsula
4.3%	Samford Valley
9.7%	Strathpine and surrounds
4.1%	Woodford-D'Aguilar and surrounds
6.6%	Live outside region

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The Pulse #1 results are reported below in three sections:

1. Responses to questions about Council's Corporate Plan and Vision for the region, and the Community Wellbeing Strategy,

2. Responses to questions about preparedness for extreme weather events, and

3. Core items from the Anchor survey that were repeated in the Pulse #1 survey.

1. Corporate Plan and Vision for the region

Moreton Bay Regional Council is currently developing a roadmap for action for the next 20 years. A key component of this roadmap is a Corporate Plan that sets high-level direction for how all of Council's work is then conducted. Within the Corporate Plan is a Vision for the region, a statement that seeks to quickly communicate to everyone living, working, and visiting the region where we are all heading, together.

In the Pulse survey, we presented a draft of this Vision statement (below) and asked three simple questions about it.

Draft Vision statement:
"More opportunity. More liveable. More connected. Moreton Bay."
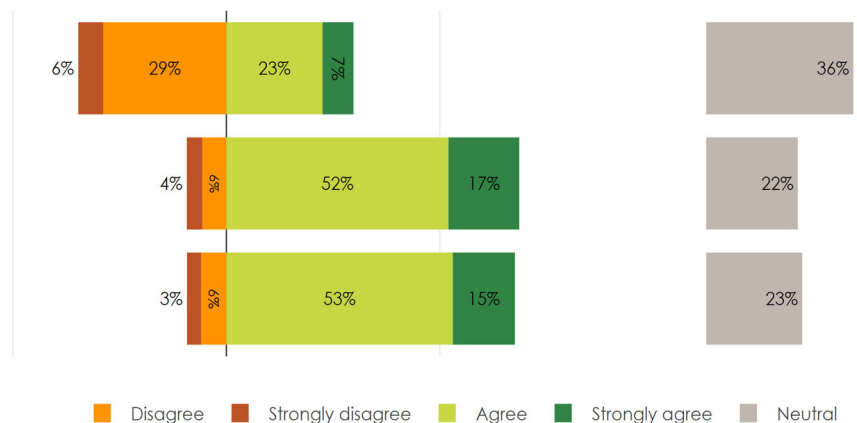
When responding to the positively worded items, community members were in strong agreement that the region will be a better place if the Vision is achieved and that they support the Vision for the region.

However, responses to the negatively worded item, "The Vision does not currently reflect the priorities I think are important for the region", responses were markedly more mixed.

The Vision does not currently reflect the priorities I think are important for the region	6%	29%	23%	7%	36%
If this Vision is achieved, the region will be a better place	4%	6%	52%	17%	22%
I support this Vision for the region	3%	6%	53%	15%	23%

Legend: Disagree · Strongly disagree · Agree · Strongly agree · Neutral

These responses show that while the Vision currently describes a region that most community members feel will be a great place to live and work, that key aspects of what makes Moreton Bay region great are absent.

The comments left by community members help to identify these aspects. Broadly, commentary indicated that the Vision could be more specific and should include reference to the beauty and environmental importance of the region. That is, the number one value identified through the Anchor survey (preservation and enhancement of the environment) should be incorporated into the Vision statement itself.

Figure 3. Distribution of responses for Vision statement items.

"It's too generic. It doesn't reflect anything about the place. Maybe add something about natural beauty?"

"More liveable must include greener more sustainable planning in development"

"More sustainable?? There is no recognition of the environment at all in this overall vision and it was the thing that the community told you was most important."

Other themes that were prominent in comments left by community members when prompted to list anything that may be missing from the Vision included:

- Sustainability in the way development takes place, energy efficiency and emissions reduction in the region, and responses to climate change;
- Ensuring the region is liveable, affordable, safe, and equipped with the services and support community members need to live their best lives;
- Sound and timely development of transport and social infrastructure;
- Development that is sensitive to context and well planned.

"The goals to get us there"

Within the Corporate Plan are a number of goals that Council have developed that show how the Vision is intended to be achieved. These are goals that will guide those parts of Council responsible for achieving them and help community members feel confident that Council is focused on the right issues.

Goals were defined by Council in five areas, or 'pillars', that will underpin the Vision for the region:

- Thriving communities
- Progressive economy
- Healthy environments
- An engaged Council, and
- A well-planned region.

Responses from community members were very supportive of the goals Council has defined (see Figure 4). The proportion of neutral scores were greater for the Progressive Economy goal than the others, indicating that there is work for Council to do in helping community members understand more clearly what this may look like as the region grows and develops. This is captured neatly in the following comment left by one participant:

"I'm interested to understand the term "progressive economy" and how that will incorporate sustainability and move away from a disposable throwaway society."
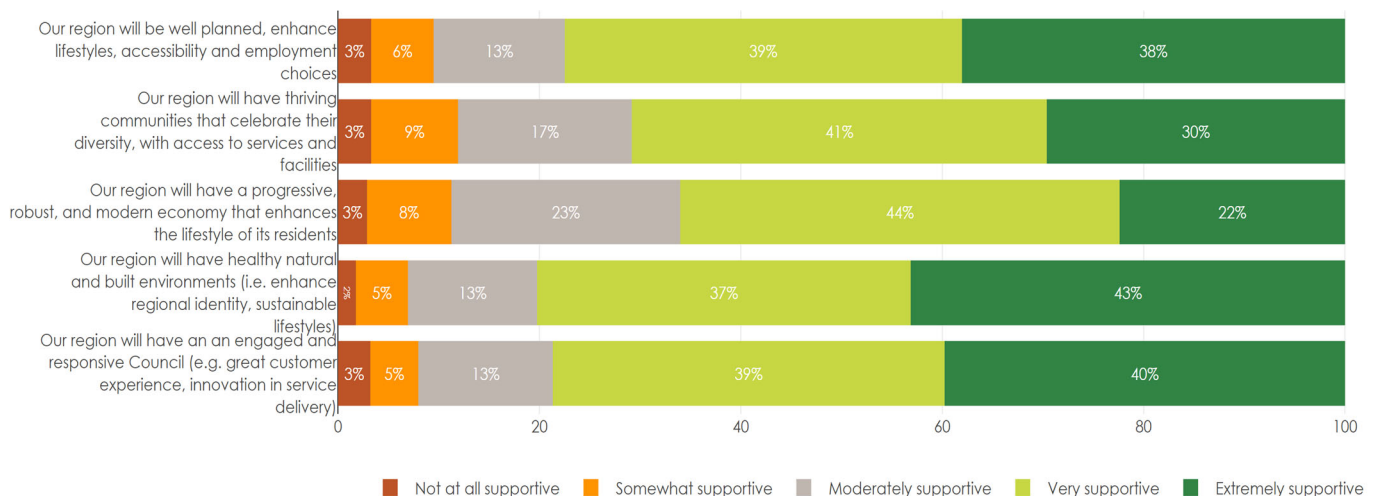
While ratings of the Corporate Plan goals were positive, many community members took the opportunity to make comment on what is most important to them about these pillars, what Council should focus on. For example, specific comments were made about planning in the region and the relationship between this and other pillars:

"Improved road networks and pathways needs to be included in the 'well planned community' strategy"

Figure 4. Distribution of responses for Council goal statements.

"The balance between built and natural environments needs to be maintained, development at all costs seems to be the current M.O."

"I think it important as part of the planning that our 'interconnection' is also reflected in our roads and transport. Too often there are new communities built without the appropriate infrastructure to support it, we need to forward plan that infrastructure."

Similar relationships between other pillars were also discussed, for example:

"Progressive economy and thriving community should include our wildlife and their ever-decreasing habitats. They are part of our community and as caretakers we should include them."

"I believe that the Progressive Economy and Engaged Council (and to an extent, a Well-Planned Region) should be considered enablers for the two most important outcomes: Healthy Environments and Thriving Communities."

And finally, principles of sustainability and responding to the broader environmental context in which the region find itself was also mentioned:

"We need a plan to actively reduce our contribution to climate change, something the entire community can get behind. We need to leave Moreton Bay a better place into the future. Moreton Bay is very susceptible to climate change. We need to do more"

These comments highlight for Council that while there is a practical need within the organisation to structure work in manageable ways, community members across the region expect them to effectively consider the relationships between the pillars.

Community Wellbeing Strategy

Within the Corporate Plan, each of the goal areas or pillars will have their own strategy where specific actions, priorities and measures of success will be defined. In this Pulse survey, we asked community members to provide feedback on the Community Wellbeing Strategy that is responsible for achieving the 'Thriving Communities' goal.

As a reminder, the goal for this pillar of the Corporate Plan is that by 2033 the region has:

"Thriving communities that proudly come together to participate in and celebrate different cultures and life experiences, with access to the services and facilities they need".

Participants in the Pulse survey were then asked to rate their level of agreement that each of a series of outcome areas Council may focus on to help achieve thriving communities.

There was almost universal agreement among participants that the outcome areas set out in the Community Wellbeing Strategy will help achieve thriving communities across the region.

Table 1. Average agreement that actions will help achieve Thriving Communities (where 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree).

Action	Avg. score
Supporting community members to make healthy and active lifestyle choices	4.1
Ensuring the region has the services and facilities it needs to support physical and mental wellbeing	4.3
Supporting our communities to be safe, resilient and respectful	4.3
Encouraging communities to participate in creative experiences through libraries, galleries, museums, and Council cultural programs	4.1
Facilitating inclusive and engaged communities that value diversity	4.0
Supporting communities to connect more fully with the people and places around them	4.1

Examining neutral scores for each outcome area revealed the proportion to be highest for the diversity and inclusion statement (i.e. 19% of responses were '3' on the 1-5 scale). Examining comments left by participants reveals a tension that is not unique to the Moreton Bay region but may influence how different members of community feel the region should look in 2033.

First, several comments were left that reflected the following sentiment:

"Inclusiveness, values, respect and unity. We must honour our past to embrace our future, this includes the beautiful and rich culture of the Indigenous people of our region that sadly has been greatly undervalued. My magic wand would be one of equality, where everyone who lives and works in this area has something of value to offer."

But there were also comments made that view work in the area of inclusiveness differently:

"What's not inclusive now? Stop this virtue signalling if people don't feel included now they never will be, stop pandering to this leftist nonsense."

When we asked community members "if you could wave a magic wand, what would you do to achieve stronger, more inclusive, thriving communities in your area?", we received some fantastic, creative responses. These included general responses such as,

"Greater appreciation and gratitude of what we have compared to the rest of the world."

And…

"Safe communities for both young and old with mental illness. Good structured housing for those in dire need."

But also some great, pragmatic ideas such as,

"Free activity days for children, children intermingle easier than adults do, let the kids make new friends and the adults will do the same off the back of that"

"Council sponsored connection opportunities, for families, ethnic, creative and business groups into the wider community."

And...

"Encourage neighbours to have street programs that include sustainability and support when a family needs it most. Setting up local hubs that allow people to connect in on issued for that residential area."

"Council should offer an in-home garden planning service providing advice and expertise to community members on how to protect fauna and flora in their own spaces - one house at a time. If nature thrives - we thrive."

2. Preparedness for extreme weather events

With summer now well and truly upon us, Council was keen to understand how prepared community members feel they are to deal with extreme weather events.

First, we asked how confident community members were in dealing with a range of specific events on a scale from 1 (Not at all confident) to 5 (Extremely confident). As shown in Figure 6, confidence varied greatly, with preparedness higher for significant storm tides and floods while community members had lower levels of confidence that they were prepared for cyclones and bushfires.

Figure 6. Distribution of responses for confidence in preparations for weather-related events.

As may be expected, confidence in preparations for these events varied by location. Looking first at coastal areas within the region, the responses of people that live in Redcliffe and surrounds and Narangba and surrounds were very similar to responses overall. However, people that live on Bribie Island and nearby coastal areas expressed lower levels of confidence in their preparations for cyclones, storm tides, floods and bushfires when compared to responses overall.

Looking at communities further inland, the people of Dayboro and surrounds indicated much higher levels of confidence in preparing for floods and severe storms when compared to overall scores, while for cyclones and bushfires they felt less prepared. Similar patterns were observed for Samford and surrounds, Woodford-D'Aguilar and surrounds, and the Hills District.

Specific preparation strategies

We asked community members to tell us what specific strategies or actions they had taken to prepare for extreme weather events. Participants could choose as many of the following options as were applicable:

- An emergency kit (i.e. torch, batteries, radio, important documents such as insurance paperwork),

- A family or personal Emergency Plan (i.e. a written or discussed plan about what to do if an emergency occurs),

- 'Other' (i.e. a different strategy not listed), and

- No strategy.

Results show that two thirds of participants have at least one strategy in place, with 33% selecting no strategy.
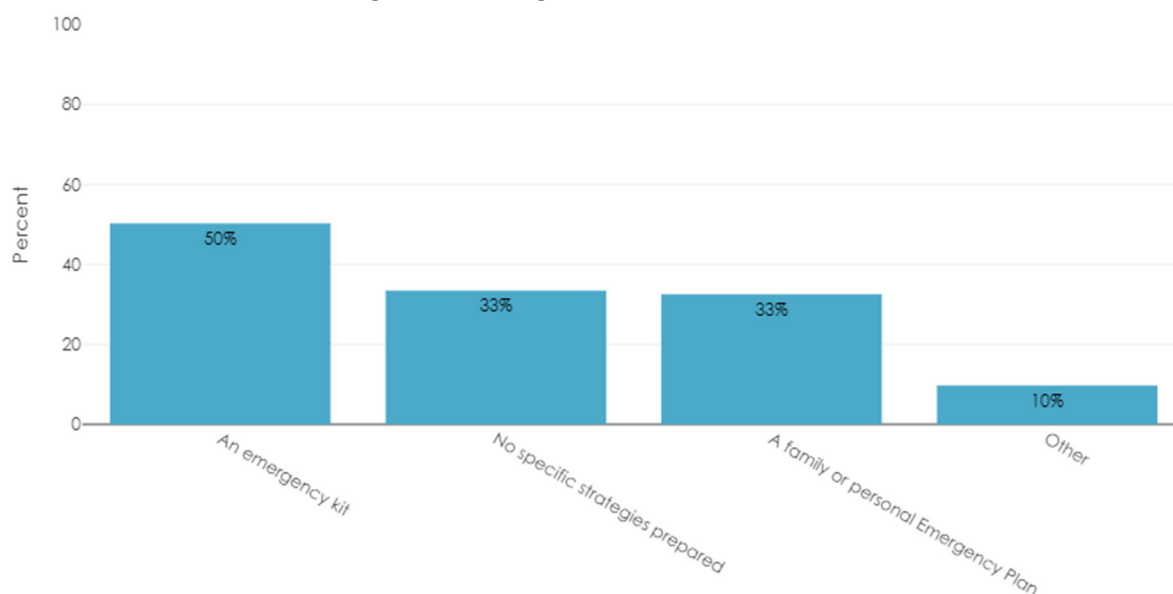

Figure 7. Percentage of participants choosing each strategy (note: total percentage exceeds 100% because participants could choose more than one strategy).

Business owners in the sample were asked explicitly if they had an emergency plan in place. Of the participants that indicated having an emergency plan was applicable to their business, results were split with half indicating that they did and half indicating they did not have a plan in place (see Figure 8).
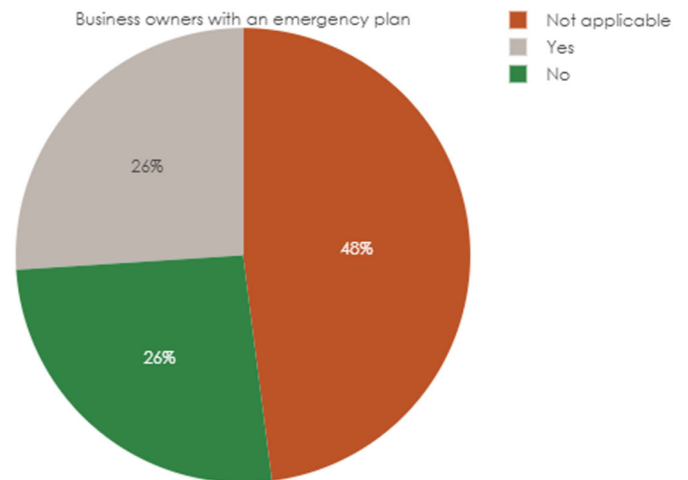

Figure 8. Proportion of business owners indicating they have an emergency plan in place.

3. Tracking key measures over time

The Anchor survey provided an excellent, detailed baseline of community perspectives about Council and its work. We used that data to explore in more detail the key drivers of trust in and approval of Council. These key drivers, as well as trust and approval, will be measured in each Pulse survey. This is to help Council and community members to understand how the relationship changes over time, and the extent to which Council's approaches to deepen the relationship are successful.

Trust and approval

These key measures improved very slightly from the Anchor survey to the first Pulse survey. As more Pulse surveys are conducted we will be able to determine if the work that Council is doing to improve its relationships with community members through focusing on the key drivers of these measures is paying off.

Figure 9. Average ratings of trust in and approval of Council, with change over time.

Internal and external governance mechanisms

The Anchor survey data modelling showed that community confidence in the internal and external mechanisms that ensure Council does the right thing and operates in a transparent way were important drivers of trust. On both of these measures, confidence in governance has improved since the Anchor survey.Ratings that "External regulations ensure the council does the right thing" improved from 2.61 to 2.88. Confidence that "Council operates in a transparent way" improved from 2.46 to 2.73.

While more data points are needed to establish a trend, these results are promising as Council seeks to renew its relationship with community members across the Moreton Bay region.

Council responsiveness

The extent to which Council is seen to be responsive to community concerns and demonstrates that it is listening to community perspectives was a strong positive driver of trust in the Anchor survey. Ratings of Council responsiveness improved from 2.81 to 3.0, a strong improvement at this early stage of the Moreton Says program. Figure 10, however, reveals that a large proportion of community members responded with a neutral score on this measure, as they did in the Anchor survey, indicating that Council have an opportunity to demonstrate to this 48% of the sample that they are willing and active participants in a conversation about its current work and the future of the region.
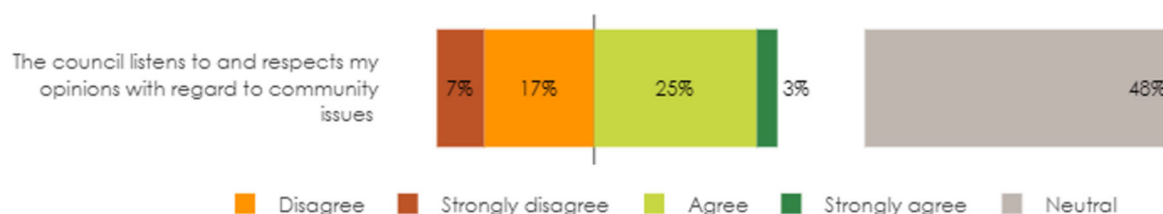

Figure 10. Distribution of scores for responsiveness item.

Planning for the future of the region

Development and planning concerns were prominent in both the Anchor survey and Pulse #1 survey comments and ratings. Satisfaction with planning for the region was also an important driver of trust in Council; as confidence in Council's planning for the region increases, so does trust.

In Figure 11, the distribution of scores on this measure in Pulse #1 show that a greater proportion of community members are dissatisfied than satisfied with Council's planning for the region. However, ratings on this measure improved since the Anchor survey from 2.69 to 2.8.
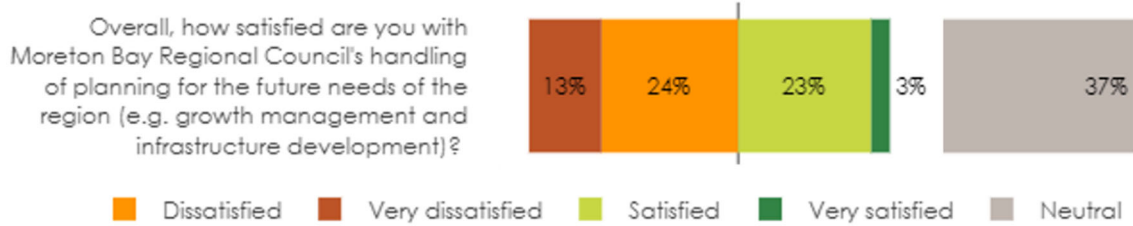
Figure 11. Distribution of ratings on satisfaction with planning for the future of the region.

In the Anchor survey we saw consistently that older and longer-term residents of the region were less positive in their views on these core items. Interestingly, improvements on these measures have largely been driven by positive change in the sentiment of these same groups. The views of newer residents and those in younger age categories did not change to the same degree.

Together, these core items show that on the key drivers of trust, community attitudes toward the Council and its performance have improved modestly since the Anchor survey. As indicated by the modelling of the Anchor data, this has led to a small improvement in both trust and approval of Council.

Conclusion

The Moreton Says program is now into full stride, bringing community voices into the development of key strategies for Council while also tracking core parts of the relationship between Council and community members.

In this first Pulse survey, we found broad endorsement for Council's Corporate Plan pillars and the key elements of Council's Community Wellbeing Strategy. Analysis of the comments data revealed, however, that the draft Vision statement for the region could be more explicit in referencing key elements of life in the Moreton Bay region that community members value highly. Specifically, natural beauty, environmental beauty and significance, and liveability.

We also examined community preparedness for extreme weather events and found that, overall, community members are more confident in their preparations for significant storm tides and floods and had lower levels of confidence that they were prepared for cyclones and bushfires.

This confidence varied by location, though, with communities on and around Bribie Island less confident in their preparations for cyclones, storm tides, floods and bushfires. For community members living away from the coast, they indicated lower confidence in preparations for cyclones and bushfires, but more confident that the average overall in preparing for floods and severe storms. It was also encouraging to see that two thirds of respondents have some form of strategy in place for managing through extreme weather.

Finally, revisiting the key drivers of community trust in and approval of Council revealed a modest, positive improvement in ratings across the board. While this is only a single point of comparison with the baseline Anchor data, it is very encouraging and likely speaks to the significant work that Council has been conducting to listen and respond to community perspectives.

Moreton Says will be back in March 2022 to focus on something that is really important to all community members that live, work or visit the amazing Moreton Bay region: Council's environment and sustainability, integrated transport, and growth management strategies… stay tuned.

VoconiQ
Engagement Science
Insights

Phone
1800 232 836

Email
info@voconiq.com

Address
Level 6, 25 King St,
Bowen Hills, Qld
Australia, 4006

For more information, please contact:

Attn Dr. Kieren Moffat
info@voconiq.com