



MEDIA RELEASE: FRIDAY, 14 JUNE, 2019

Customer Service at Strathbogie Shire Council exceeds state-wide ratings

Strathbogie Shire Council's Customer Service has received a rating of 75 in its recent Community Satisfaction Survey which has surpassed the state-wide average of 71.

This is a significant five-point increase on its 2018 Customer Service result, and is Council's highest result in the history of these reports to date.

The Community Satisfaction Surveys are independently coordinated by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on behalf of Victorian councils.

A survey sample of 400 residents, matched to the demographic profile of the Strathbogie Shire, participated in the survey where they provided a rating out of 100 on Council's performance and service delivery in a variety of areas.

The report revealed a general improvement across the board again this year, with the most improved area being Council's performance in making community decisions (index score of 55), which increased by seven points compared to 2018.

Council's highest performing areas also included:

- Tourism development (index score of 64)
- Waste management (index score of 63)
- Informing the community (index score of 59)
- Enforcement of local laws (index score of 59)
- Overall Council Direction (index score of 58)
- Community consultation and engagement (index score of 55)

Strathbogie Shire Mayor Cr Amanda McClaren said Council is very pleased to see an overall improvement in performance and service delivery across the board.

"We're here to serve our communities and it is pleasing to see we're slowly improving satisfaction levels across our services," Mayor McClaren said.

"As a Council, we do our very best to make decisions that we believe are in the best interest of the wider community, so we're proud to see Council's overall direction rated 58, which exceeds the state-wide average of 53."

However, Mayor McClaren said there is still plenty of work for Council to do to continue to improve overall performance and a number of low performing areas.

"Our overall performance did improve from a rating of 52 in 2018 to 56 this year, which is great to see, however, we're still trailing the small rural average by two points and the state-

wide average by four points, so there's still more improvement needed," Cr McClaren explained.

"The survey also revealed our communities continue to be frustrated with paying comparatively high rates, and we're looking at ways to address this and give our ratepayers the best value for money, especially when it comes to our road network, which is also one of our lower rated areas in the survey.

In our draft 2019-20 Budget, which is going to Council for consideration this month, we have proposed to reduce our municipal charge from \$266 to \$133 and to alter the farm rate differential from 82.5 percent of the residential rate to 80 percent, so we're hoping this provides some further equity and relief for our ratepayers.

We are also proposing to continue our Zero to One Roads Program, which we hope will continue to provide noticeable improvements to the standard of our zero roads."

Mayor McClaren said Council is also building on improvements in customer service, communication and community engagement with a number of initiatives underway.

"We've got a Communications and Engagement Policy and draft Community Engagement Strategy going to Council this month, and Council is currently working on a new Customer Service Charter," Cr McClaren explained.

"These types of initiatives are so important in achieving consistency and accountability when it comes to the way the organisation interacts with its customers."

If you'd like to read the full Community Satisfaction Survey Report, it is available on Council's website: www.strathbogje.vic.gov.au/council/plans-policies-strategies-a-reports/corporate

-ENDS-

Media contact: Clare Allen- 0418 336 078

Key Spokesperson: Mayor Amanda McClaren- 0409 700 958