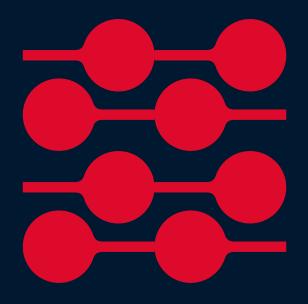
### **Governance Capability**





2021
Elected
members
headline
measures
survey
report



August 2021, Version 1.0 Christie McFadyen, Senior Advisor Governance



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### **Purpose**

This report summarises the results and feedback received from the 2021 elected members headline measures survey.

# **Executive summary**

Previously, an elected members survey has been conducted every 18 months to measure elected members satisfaction with staff advice and support. The last survey was conducted in 2019. After undergoing a review of the project, a shorter, headline measures survey was developed based on the previous elected members survey.

The 2021 headline measures survey consisted of a total of six questions. It asked about:

- overall satisfaction
- satisfaction with delivery of aspects of advice and support
- satisfaction with aspects of advice and support from different functional areas
- satisfaction with dedicated support available for their governance role.

Elected members were also given the opportunity to provide any comments on their satisfaction with council support and advice.

In relation to Council-Controlled Organisations (CCOs), Governing Body members were asked about:

- satisfaction with the way CCOs have engaged with them
- satisfaction with the quality of advice provided by CCOs.

Local board members were asked about:

- satisfaction with the way CCOs have engaged with their local board
- satisfaction that their local board has been able to influence relevant CCO projects and decisions.

Elected members were also given the opportunity to provide any comments on their satisfaction with the CCOs.

The survey ran for a total of three weeks, from 2-23 July 2021, and was sent to all 170 elected members. A total of 88 responses were received, being approximately 52 per cent of all elected members. Sixty-two per cent of Governing Body members responded and 50 per cent of local board members responded. There was a reduction of 23 per cent in the overall response rate in comparison to the 2019 elected members survey<sup>1</sup>.

Because the survey was significantly pared back, not all the results are directly comparable to the 2019 survey results. Where comparisons can be made, satisfaction has increased.<sup>2</sup>

Comparable measures to 2019	Increase <b>↑</b> in satisfaction
Overall satisfaction with the quality of staff advice and support	↑ by 24 per cent, to a total of 84 per cent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The difference between participation rates may be because elected members were given more reminders and assistance to help them complete the 2019 survey.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Graphs showing comparative results can be found in Appendix one.

Comparable measures to 2019	Increase <b>↑</b> in satisfaction
Overall satisfaction with written and verbal advice <sup>3</sup>	↑ to a total of 82 per cent
Overall satisfaction with timeliness of formal advice and information	↑ by 27 per cent, to a total of 62 per cent
Overall satisfaction with responsiveness to general requests and queries	↑ by 33 per cent, to a total of 75 per cent
Overall satisfaction with dedicated councillor advisory and committee support <sup>4</sup>	↑ to a total of 92 per cent
Overall satisfaction with dedicated local board support	↑ by 10 per cent, to a total of 88 per cent
Overall satisfaction with professional development support	↑ by 9 per cent, to a total of 63 per cent
Governing Body satisfaction with the quality of Eke Panuku Development Auckland's advice	↑ by 25 per cent, to a total of 69 per cent
Local board satisfaction with Auckland Transport engagement	↑ by 12 per cent, to a total of 47 per cent

Other key findings from the survey results include:

- local board members are significantly more satisfied with overall council advice and support in comparison to 2019. They are also more satisfied than Governing Body members, which is a change from past results
- Governing Body members are significantly more satisfied with legal guidance, advice and support than local board members. Local board chairs are least satisfied with this support
- Governing Body members are significantly more satisfied with tikanga and Māori responsiveness guidance, advice and support than local board members. Local board chairs are least satisfied with this support
- local board members are significantly more satisfied with communications guidance, advice and support than Governing Body members
- local board members are significantly more satisfied with community facilities, services and development advice than Governing Body members
- local board members are significantly more satisfied with professional development advice and support than Governing Body members. Local board chairs are most satisfied with this support
- local board chairs are overall more satisfied with the CCOs than local board members.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This question bundled together three different questions about written and verbal advice from the 2019 survey. While the overall result can be attributed to the same topic, and is higher than all three previous scores, a percentage increase cannot be attributed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This question bundled together two different questions about councillor advisory and committee support from the 2019 survey. While the overall result can be attributed to the same topic, and is higher than both previous scores, a percentage increase cannot be attributed.

While satisfaction has generally increased, in many instances significantly, across the board, elected members noted that they would like to see some more improvements. The following key improvement areas were obtained from elected member feedback, mainly from local board members:

- proactiveness, timeliness and responsiveness of staff communication with elected members
- tikanga and Māori responsiveness guidance, advice and support to local boards
- financial information and advice to local boards
- Auckland Transport engagement and communication with the community
- Auckland Unlimited engagement with elected members
- Eke Panuku Development Auckland engagement and communication with local boards. In addition, providing local boards relevant opportunities to and influence projects and decisions
- Watercare providing local boards relevant opportunities to influence projects and decisions.

#### **Context**

An elected members survey has previously evaluated elected members satisfaction with advice and support provided by staff. However, the general sentiment is that it hasn't provided enough valuable insights to drive meaningful change. Results tend to remain static, with the current approach preventing staff from understanding and addressing elected members needs and expectations.

A new approach for the project has been developed and is made up of two research components. The first is a headline measures survey, based on the previous elected members survey. The purpose of the survey is to monitor trends in levels of satisfaction with existing staff performance in general advice and support. This report summarises the results of that survey.

The second component is interviews and focus groups with a cross-section of staff and elected members to identify:

- the functions and behaviours that staff need to demonstrate to enable elected members to do their job well
- any behavioural or other barriers to enabling good governance practices
- the key elements of building and maintaining trusted relationships between staff and elected members.

Together, the results will be used to build a new performance indicator framework for council group staff that more accurately reflects how we enable effective and accountable governance. They will also help inform the implementation of other organisation-wide initiatives, such as the code of conduct 2021 and the hauora / wellbeing review.

### Who we heard from

A total of 88 elected members responded to the survey, being approximately 52 per cent of all elected members.

Thirteen of the respondents were councillors, being approximately 62 per cent of all Governing Body members.

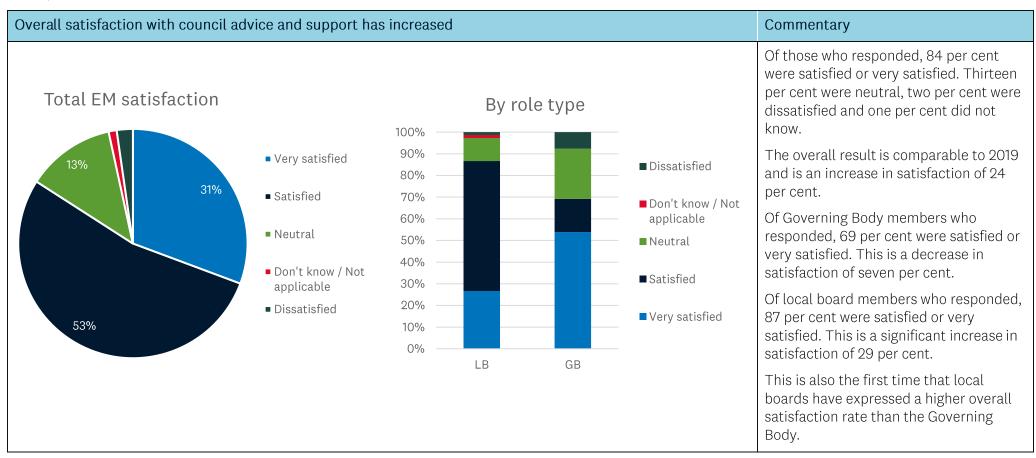
Seventy-five of the respondents were local board members, being approximately 50 per cent of all local board members. Of these respondents, 11 were local board chairs (approximately 52 per cent of all local board chairs) and 11 were local board deputy chairs (approximately 52 per cent of all local board deputy chairs).

# **Summary of results**

### **Auckland Council**

#### **Overall satisfaction**

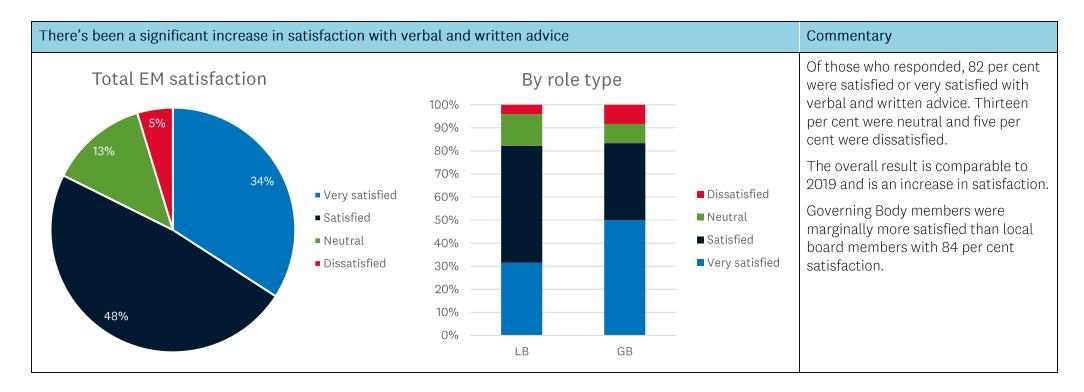
Elected members were asked 'Thinking about your experience overall, how satisfied are you with the advice and support provided to you by Auckland Council employees?'

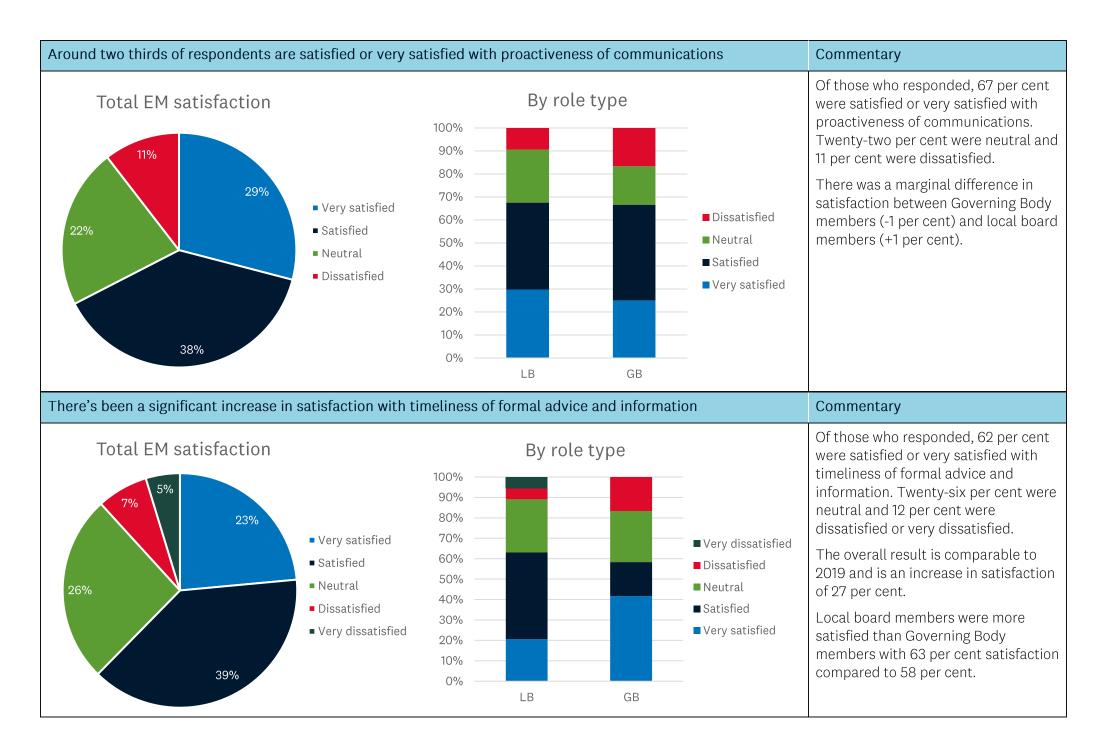


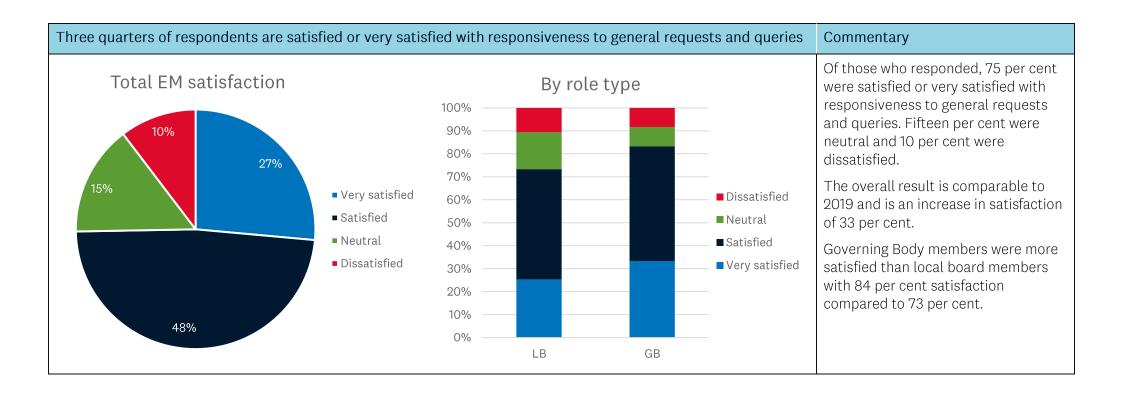
#### Satisfaction with aspects of advice and support

Elected members were asked 'Thinking about your recent interactions with council staff, how satisfied are you with the delivery of the following aspects of advice and support:

- verbal and written advice
- proactiveness of communications
- timeliness of advice and information
- responsiveness to general requests and queries'



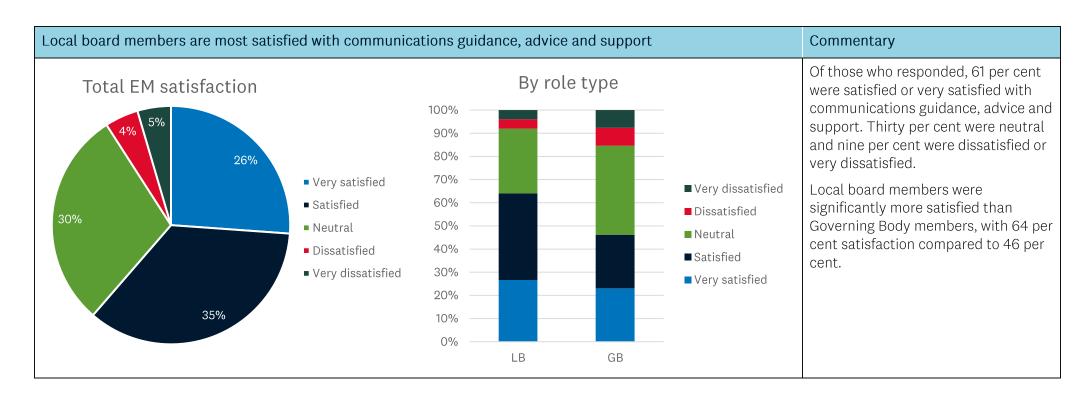


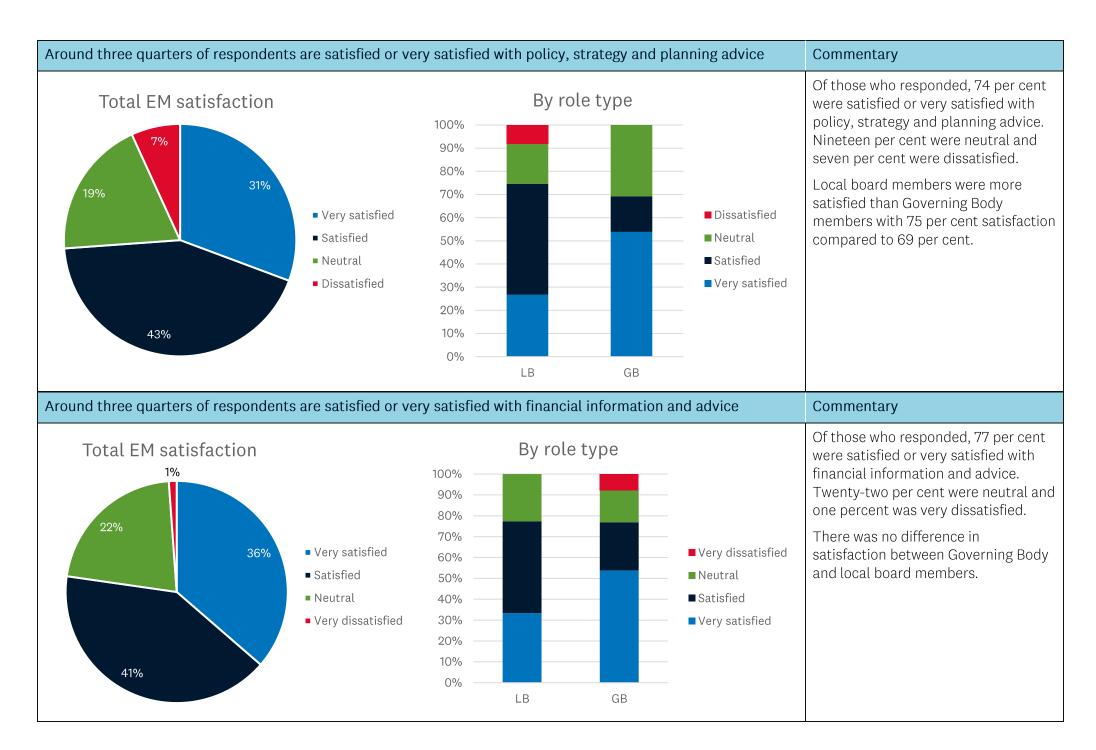


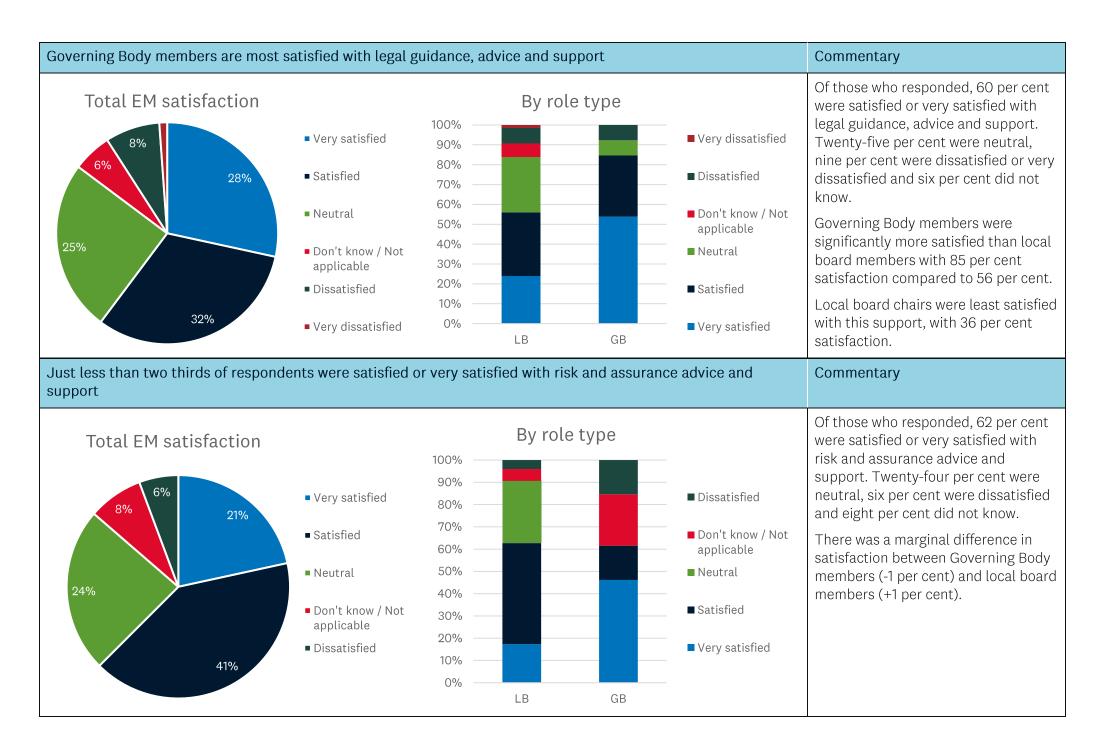
#### Satisfaction with advice and support from functional areas

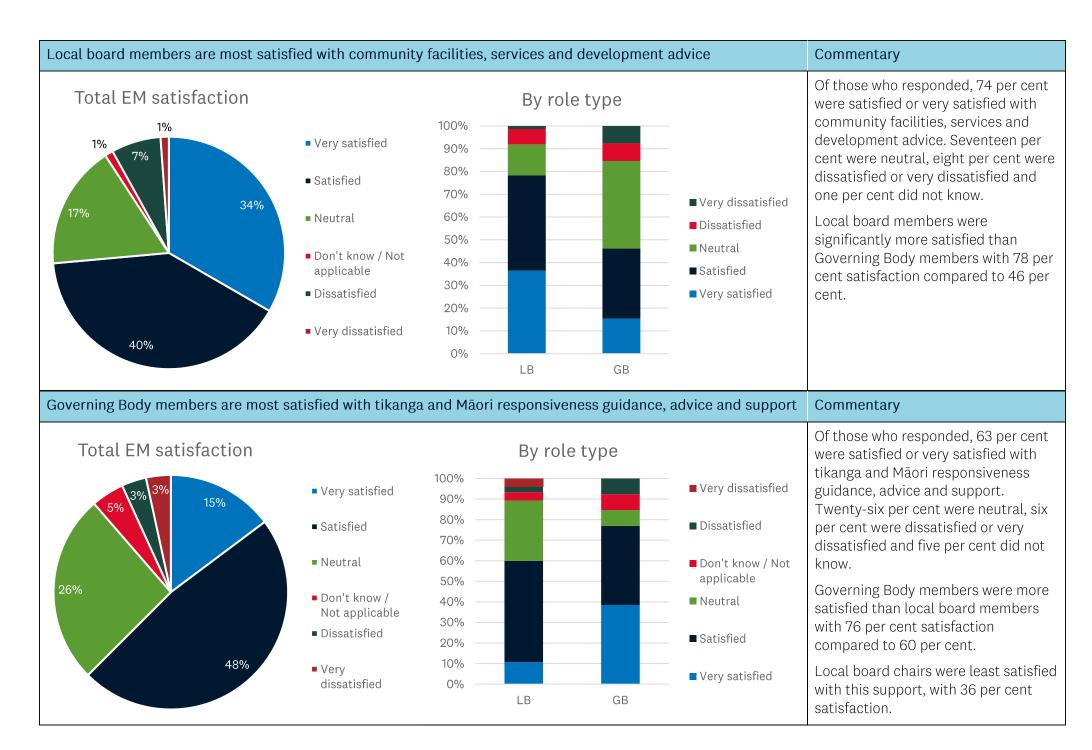
Elected members were asked 'How satisfied are you with the following aspects of advice and support from council staff?

- communications guidance, advice and support
- policy, strategy and planning advice
- financial information and advice
- legal guidance, advice and support
- risk and assurance advice and support
- community facilities, services and development advice
- tikanga and Māori responsiveness guidance, advice and support'





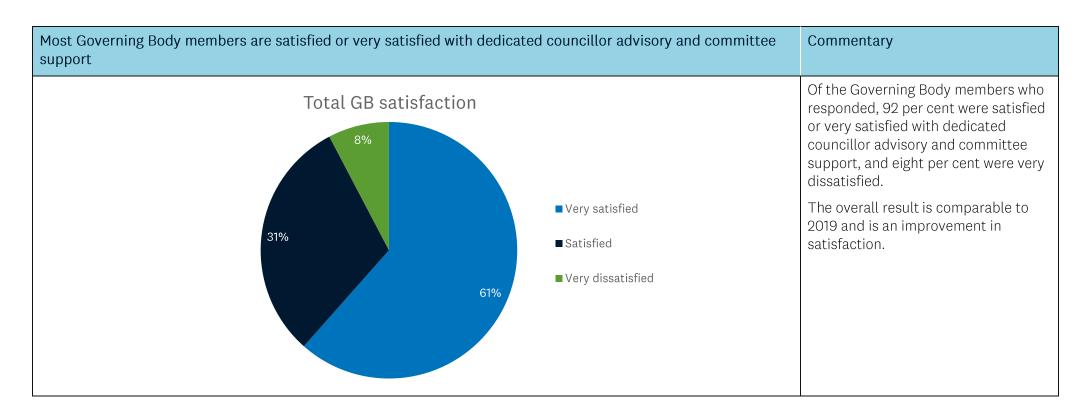


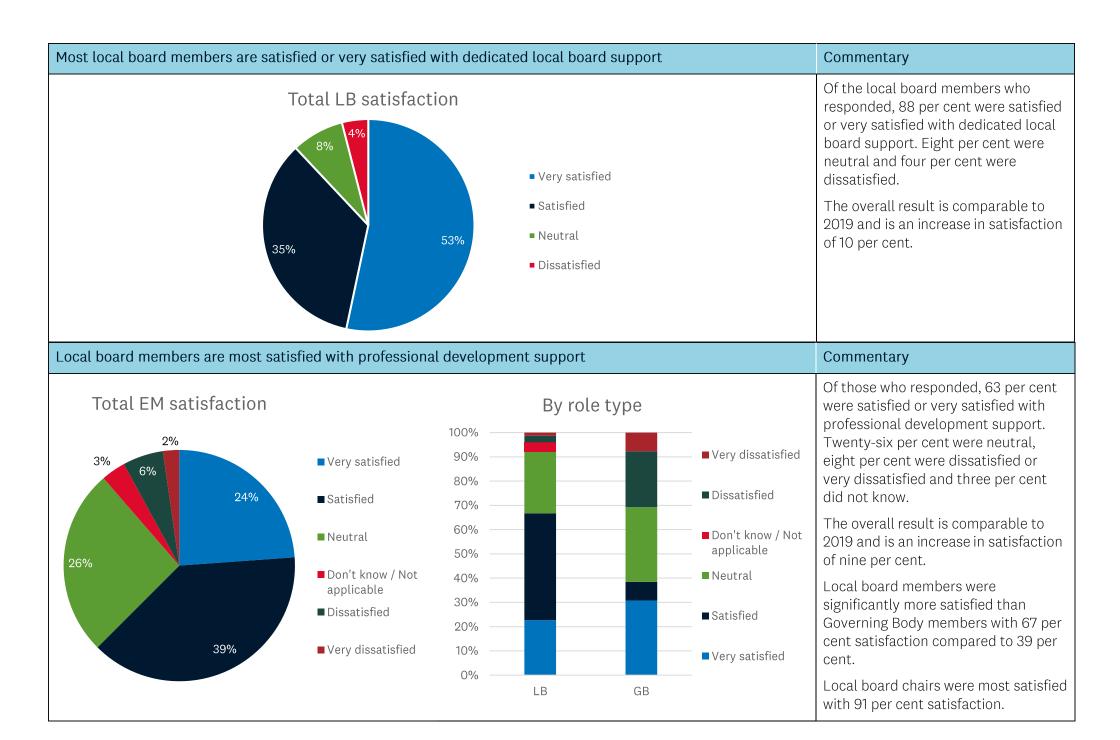


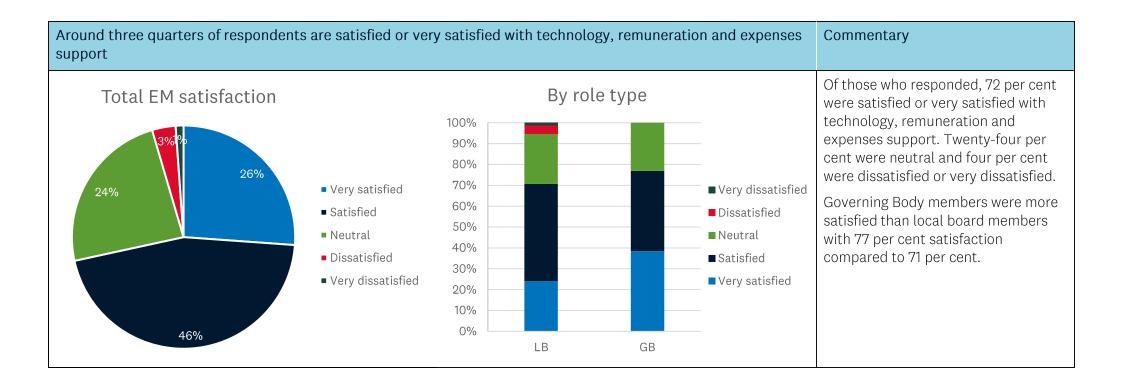
#### Satisfaction with dedicated governance support

Elected members were asked 'How satisfied are you with the dedicated support available for your governance role?

- dedicated councillor advisory and committee support
- dedicated local board support
- professional development support
- technology, remuneration and expenses support'







### **Key themes from elected member feedback**

Elected members were given the opportunity to provide comments on their satisfaction with council staff advice and support. Some felt the survey questions were too broad to provide specific feedback. Most comments were provided by local board members. The key themes that were able to be obtained are set out in the table below.

Proactive, timely and responsive communication	Elected members acknowledge the impact of restructuring on resourcing, and the affect this can have on the organisation's ability to provide timely information and quality advice.
	They would like to see more timely communication, particularly for advice on important / complex issues.  They would also like to see outstanding issues resolved more efficiently.
	Elected members would like more proactive communication and clarity on key contact persons for projects and workstreams that are relevant to them.
Tikanga and Māori responsiveness guidance, advice and support	Local boards would like to see improvements in the quality of guidance, advice and support. They would like this support made easier to obtain and for there to be timelier responses to requests for assistance.
Financial information and advice	Local boards would like the quality of information and advice to be improved, particularly for financial impacts. They would also like to be provided with more robust information relevant to their work.
Dedicated governance support	Generally satisfied with the support from Local Board Services and councillor support advisors.

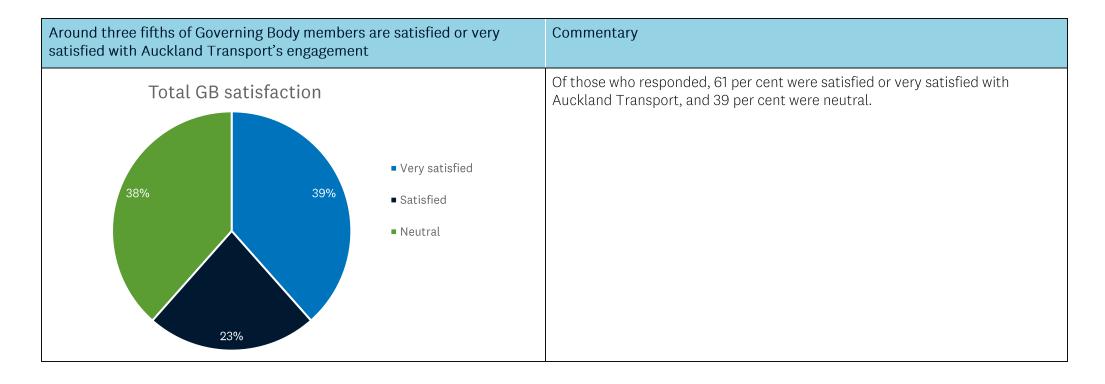
### **Council-Controlled Organisations**

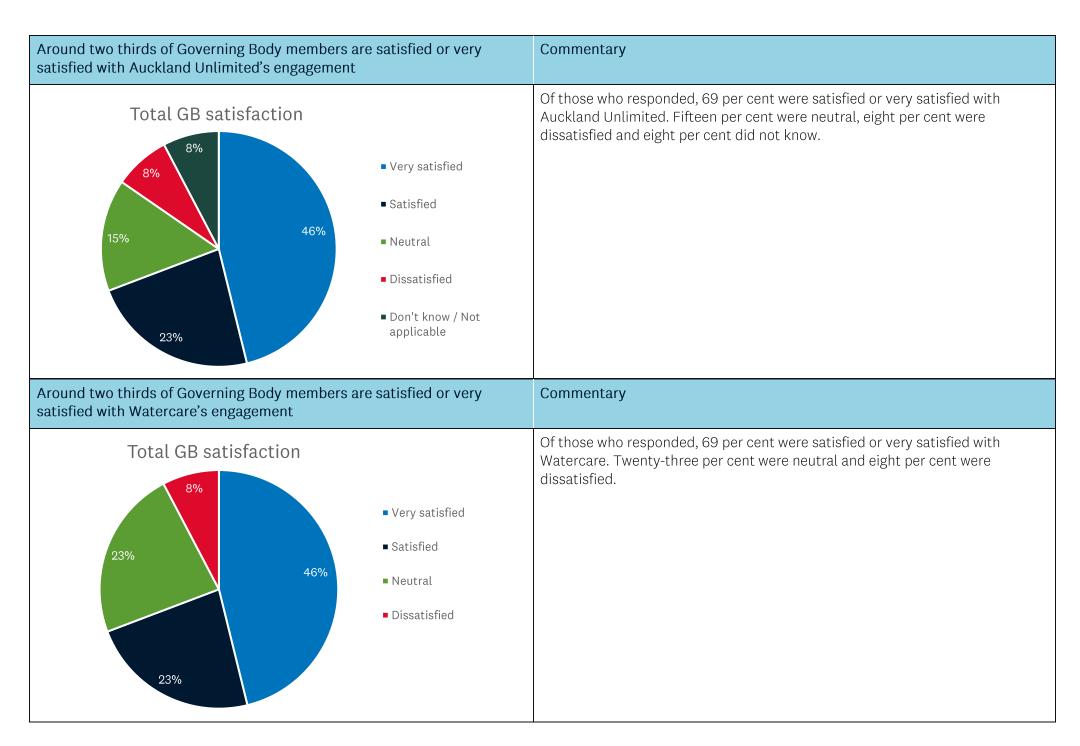
Governing Body members and local board members were each asked two separate questions about their satisfaction with the CCOs.

#### **Governing Body satisfaction with engagement**

Governing Body members were asked 'Thinking about your recent interactions with Council-Controlled Organisations (CCOs), how satisfied are you with the way they have engaged with you?

- Auckland Transport
- Auckland Unlimited
- Watercare
- Eke Panuku Development Auckland'



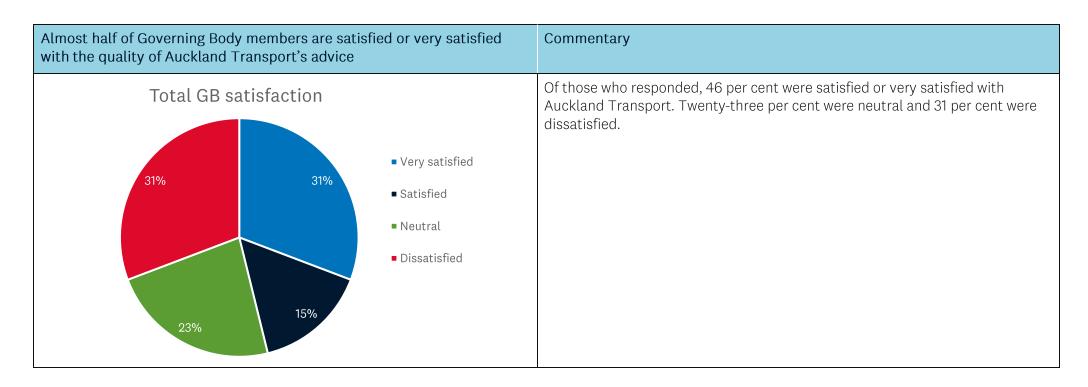


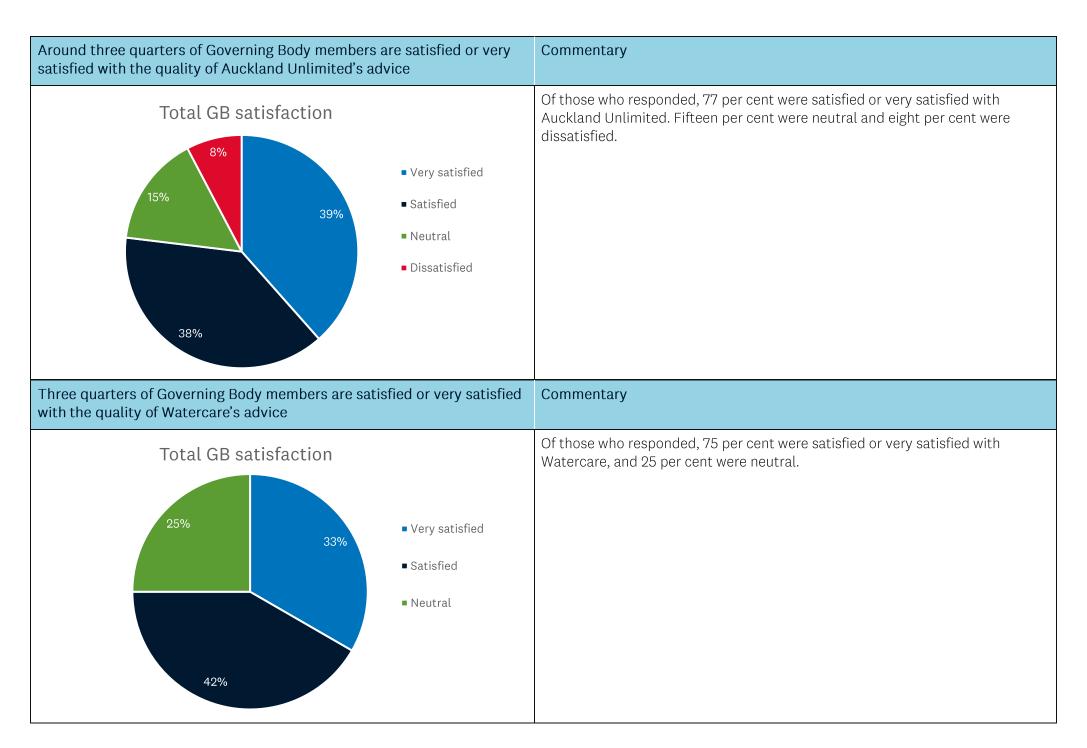
Around two thirds of Governing Body members a satisfied with Eke Panuku Development Aucklan		Commentary
Total GB satisfaction  8%  46%	<ul> <li>Very satisfied</li> <li>Satisfied</li> <li>Neutral</li> <li>Dissatisfied</li> </ul>	Of those who responded, 69 per cent were satisfied or very satisfied with Eke Panuku Development Auckland. Twenty-three per cent were neutral and eight per cent were dissatisfied.

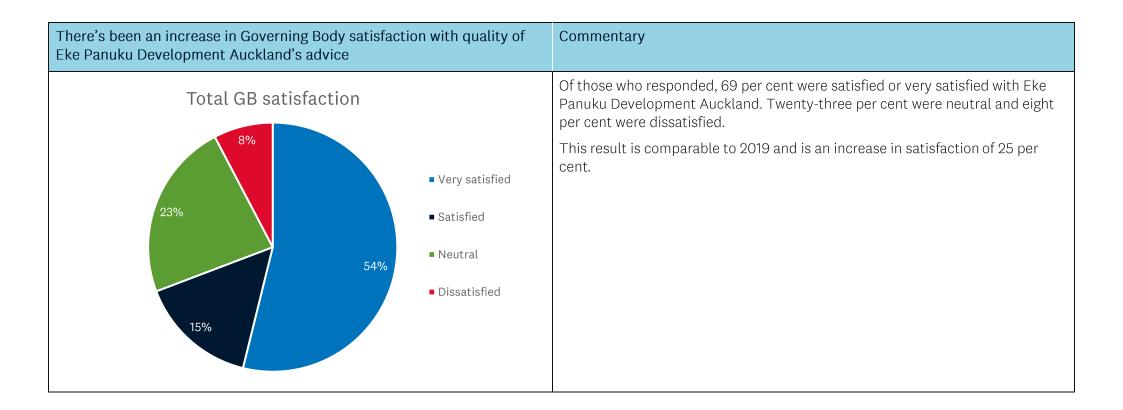
#### Governing Body satisfaction with quality of advice

Governing Body members were asked 'Thinking about your recent interactions with Council-Controlled Organisations, how satisfied are you with the quality of advice provided?

- Auckland Transport
- Auckland Unlimited
- Watercare
- Eke Panuku Development Auckland'



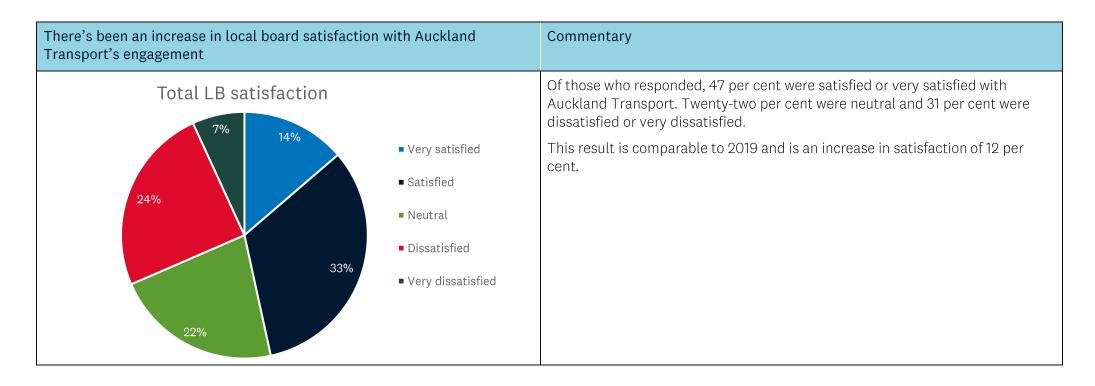


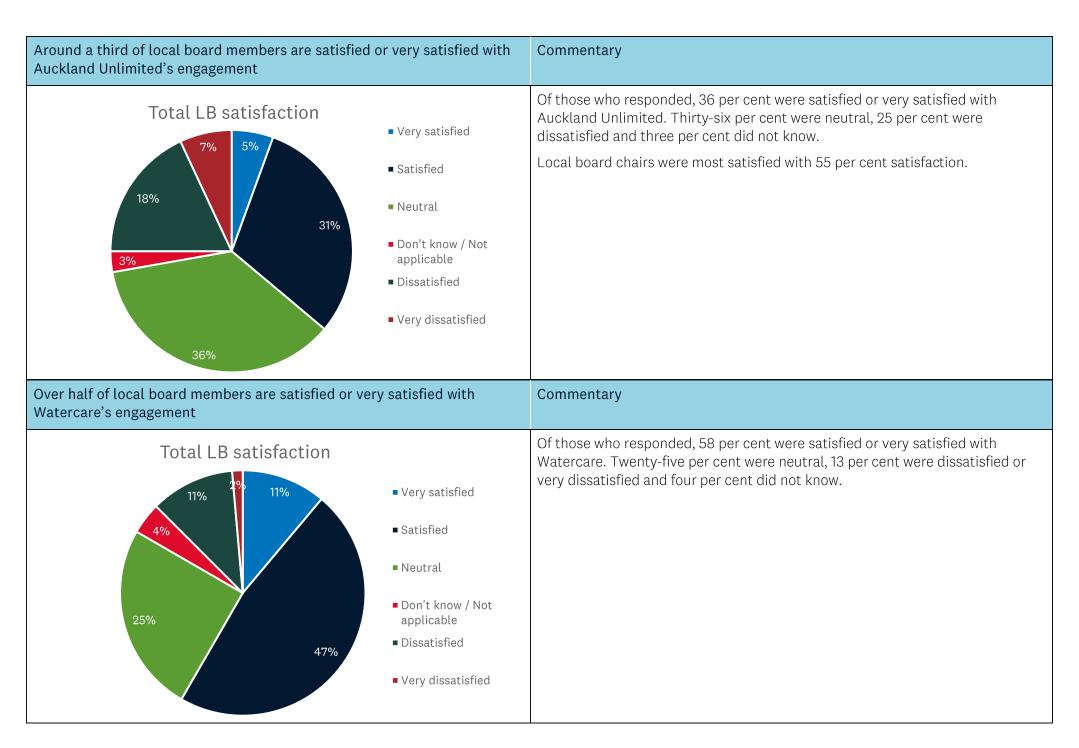


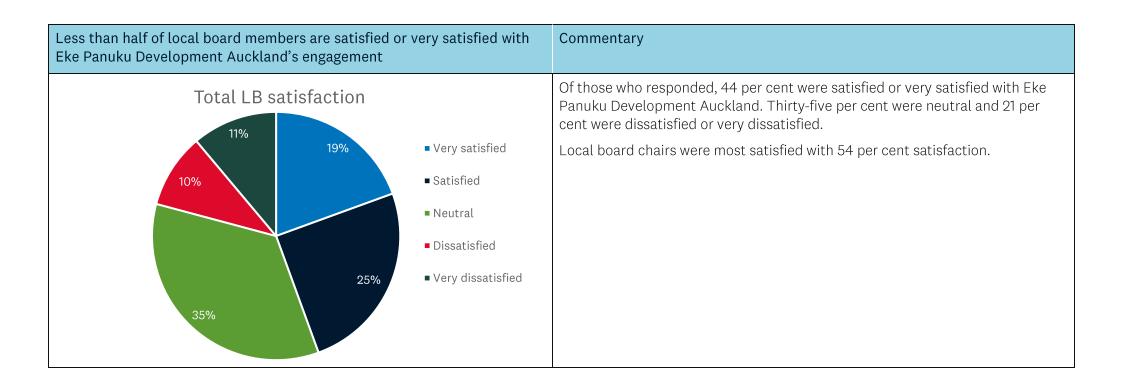
#### Local board satisfaction with engagement

Local board members were asked 'When thinking about the following questions, please keep in mind your local board CCO engagement plans, which set out the responsibilities CCOs have in engaging with your local board, including the way they engage with you. How satisfied are you that they have engaged with your local board in a way that reflects the agreed engagement plan?

- Auckland Transport
- Auckland Unlimited
- Watercare
- Eke Panuku Development Auckland'



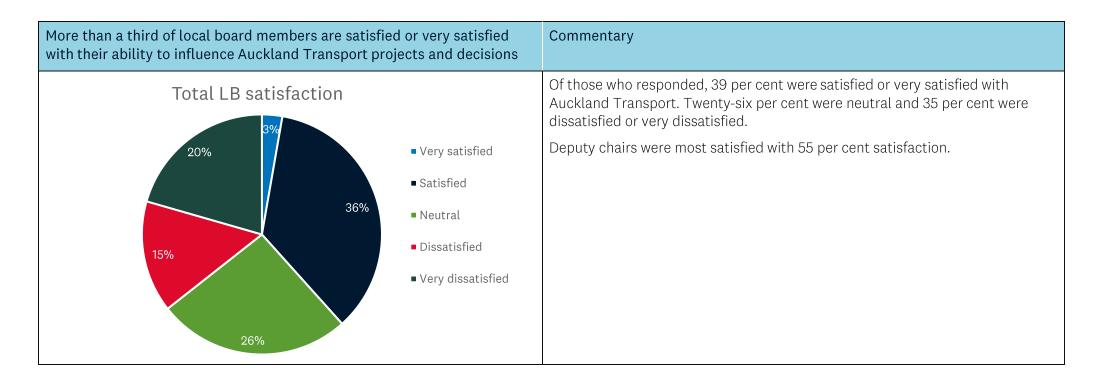


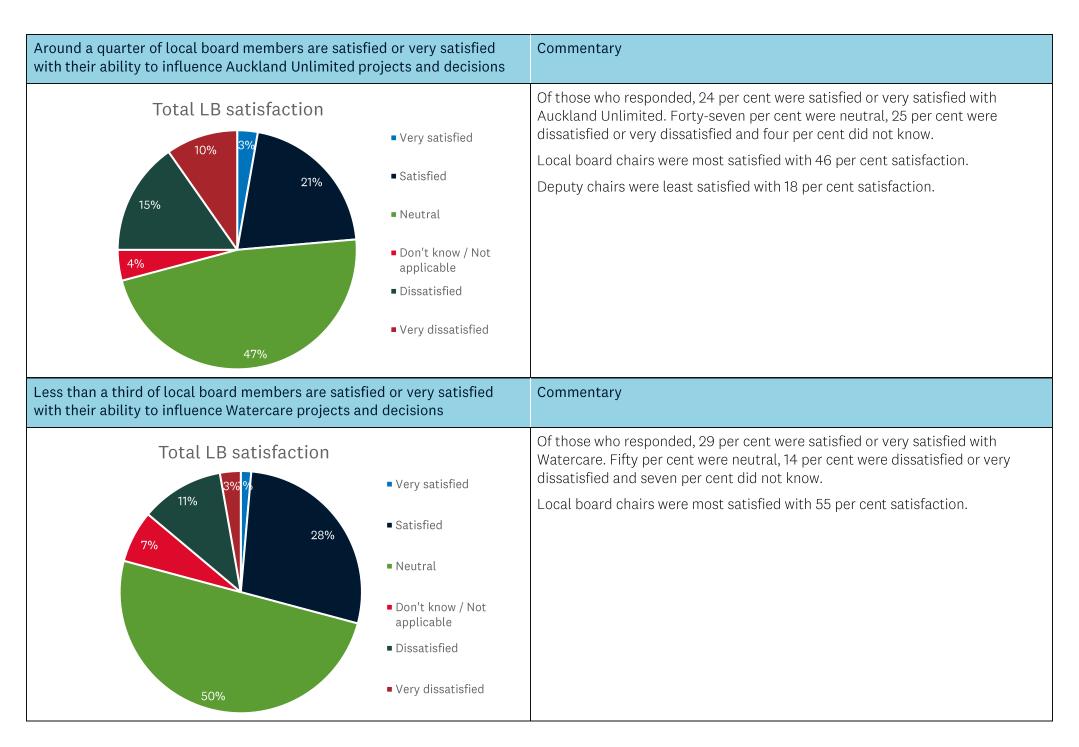


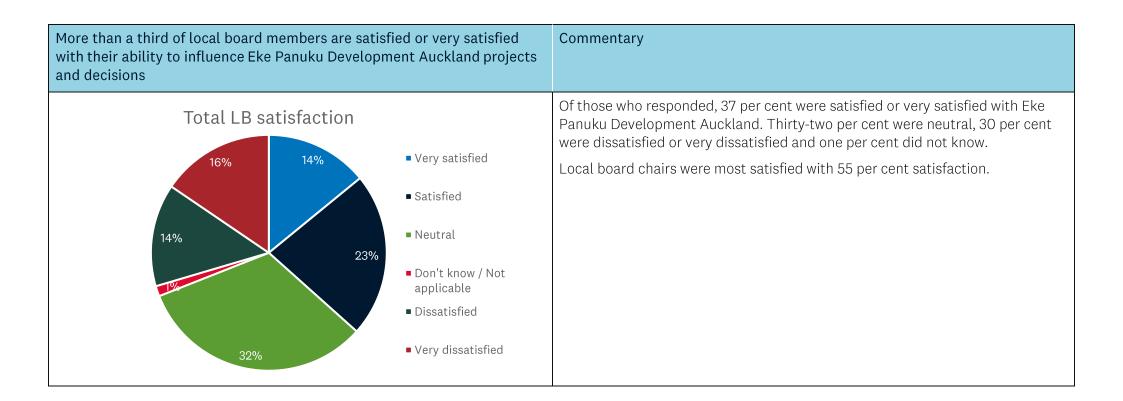
#### Local board satisfaction with their ability to influence

Local board members were asked 'How satisfied are you that your local board has been able to influence relevant CCO projects and decisions?

- Auckland Transport
- Auckland Unlimited
- Watercare
- Eke Panuku Development Auckland'







#### **Key themes from elected member feedback on CCOs**

Elected members were given the opportunity to provide comments on their satisfaction with the CCOs. Some felt the survey questions were too broad to provide specific feedback. Most comments were provided by local board members. The key themes that were able to be obtained are set out in the table below.

Auckland Transport	Local boards acknowledged that engagement has improved and continues to improve. However, they still want improvement in engagement and communication with the community.
Auckland Unlimited	Elected members would like to see more engagement and better quality of advice. However, they do acknowledge that the amalgamation of Regional Facilities Auckland (RFA) and Auckland Tourism, Event and Economic Development (ATEED) could have affected the ability to do this well over recent months.
Eke Panuku Development Auckland	Local boards would like to see improvements in engagement and communication and have more meaningful opportunities to influence relevant Eke Panuku projects and decisions.
Watercare	Local boards would like more meaningful opportunities to influence relevant Watercare projects and decisions.

### **Next steps**

Survey results will be considered alongside findings from focus groups and interviews. Once all findings have been gathered, full recommendations for improvements and a performance indicator framework will be developed.

In the interim, relevant staff should consider the following focus areas as a priority.

Areas with high rates of neutrality (more than	Timeliness of formal advice and information
25 per cent) to push satisfaction up	Communications guidance, advice and support
	Legal guidance, advice and support
	Tikanga and Māori responsiveness guidance, advice and support
	Professional development support
	Auckland Transport engagement with the Governing Body
	Watercare quality of advice to the Governing Body
	Auckland Unlimited, Watercare and Eke Panuku Development engagement with local boards
	<ul> <li>All CCOs giving relevant opportunities to local boards to input and influence their projects and decisions</li> </ul>
Areas with reasonably high dissatisfaction / low satisfaction rates	Auckland Transport quality of advice to the Governing Body
Areas where there's a significant difference between LB / GB satisfaction	Local board chairs satisfaction with legal guidance, advice and support
	<ul> <li>Local board chairs satisfaction with tikanga and Māori responsiveness guidance, advice and support</li> </ul>
	Governing Body satisfaction with communications guidance, advice and support
	Governing Body satisfaction with community facilities, services and development advice
	Governing Body satisfaction with professional development support

# Appendix 1 - comparable measures from previous surveys

