insight and

inspiration

| Prepared for | Local Government Commission |
|---|---|
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| Issue date | March 2008 |
| Reference | 3699-3300 |

## - THE SUBMITTER EXPERIENCE - REPORT NO.2

Understanding Experiences of Interacting with Local Government:

A quantitative study

unlimited/JRA

The Best Places to Work

FINALIST 2005
Small Workplace Category

ConsumerLink

bright house

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WHAT IS MY CUSTOMER

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to report on the findings of quantitative research with people who have made a written submission to local government.

This is the second of two complementary research projects that Colmar Brunton has conducted among participants in the council public consultation process. This quantitative survey has followed in-depth qualitative interviews with individuals who have made written submissions to council.

## Methodology

Three hundred and one (n = 301) telephone interviews were conducted among a sample of those who have made a written submission to one of 14 predetermined councils in the 18 months prior to December 2007. The 14 councils were selected because they had previously taken part in council/elected member discussions with Local Government Commission. The survey was conducted between 11 February and 19 February 2008. It had a response rate of 56%.

## Key findings

### Who makes submissions to council?

- The majority of submitters are ratepayers (97%), New Zealand European (89%), and over the age of 45 (83%). Submitters also tend to have a higher level of formal education when compared with Statistics New Zealand data for the entire country, with 49% being educated at degree-level or higher (14% of the New Zealand population over 15 are educated at degree level or higher).[1] There is no statistically significant difference in the demographic profiles of individual submitters and those who submit on behalf of a community group.
- The submitters that we interviewed have varying levels of experience in making submissions. Four in every ten submitters (39%) were first time submitters, 22% had made one submission to their council in the past 18 months (but this was not their first ever submission), and 37% had made more than one submission to their council in the past 18 months.

### The process of making a submission

*Finding out about the issues*

- Just over two-thirds of submitters make their submission after seeing council information requesting their views. The main council information sources are pamphlets, brochures, and newsletters received in the mail (45%), community newspapers (21%), and daily newspapers (17%). Those who submit on behalf of a community group are more likely than individual submitters to have seen information on a council website (15%, cf. 3% of individual submitters).

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[1] Census usually resident population count 2006 (Statistics New Zealand).

- Those who did not make their submission in response to council information requesting their views (30% of submitters) are most likely to have personally noticed or became aware of the issue themselves (30%). Other common information sources are people they know (15%), groups, clubs, or organisations (14%), and daily newspapers (13%). As may be expected, those submitting on behalf of a community group are more likely than individual submitters to have heard about the issue through a group, club, or organisation (35%, cf. 7% of individual submitters).

**Time spent preparing a written submission**

- The majority of submitters (84%) spend less than five hours preparing their submissions, including the time it takes to gather information about the issue. The median amount of time is 1 hour. A small proportion of submitters (13%) spend less than 15 minutes on their submission. These submitters may be responding on 'preformatted' submission cards or letters supplied by a third party.

**Presenting in-person at a council meeting**

- One in every five submitters that we interviewed (20%) submitted in-person at a council meeting. Those more likely to submit in person are community group submitters (42%, cf. 15% of individual submitters), more experienced submitters (24%, cf. 13% of first time submitters), and those who have spent longer (more than one hour) on their submission (34%, cf. 8% who spent less than one hour).
- The majority of those who did not present in person (81%) say they *were* given the opportunity to do so.
- Key reasons for not making a verbal submission reflect the reasons that were offered by submitters during the qualitative research. They include the perception that their written submission is sufficient (42%), and being unable to make a verbal submission due to other commitments, illness, or location (42%). Very few submitters (3%) said there would be no point giving a verbal submission.

## Overall evaluation of the public consultation process

- Overall, 30% of submitters feel that the public consultation process for their submission was either excellent or very good, 16% feel it was good, and 38% feel that it was fair or poor. Consistent with the findings of the qualitative research, decision outcome is the primary variable by which perceptions of the public consultation process vary. Those for whom council made a decision against their views have more negative perceptions of the process (64% gave a rating of fair or poor, compared to 16% of those for whom council made a decision in their favour).
- Main reasons for feeling positive about the public consultation process are a sense of appreciation for opportunities to express views (22%), and that the council keeps the public well informed (17%) and the issues well publicised (13%).
- Main reasons for feeling negative about the public consultation process are perceptions that councils do not really listen (17%) and that they are not really interested in the views of the public (11%).

## Principles of consultation

- *Access to Information:* The qualitative research demonstrated that submitters generally feel that councils provide an appropriate level of information for their requirements. Consistent with this, around two thirds of submitters agree that the council provided enough background information about the issue or issues (67%), and that this information was user friendly and easy to understand (66%).

- *Reasonable opportunity to present:* The qualitative research indicated that submitters generally feel they are given a reasonable opportunity to present their views. Consistent with this, the vast majority of the submitters that we interviewed (90%) agree that they had enough time to prepare and submit their views.

- *Open-mindedness and due consideration:* Those we interviewed for the qualitative research had some difficultly commenting on whether council received the submission with an open mind. Nearly three quarters (72%) of the submitters that we spoke with during the telephone survey however, agree that council was open to hearing their views. These positive perceptions of 'openness' may relate more generally to council's willingness to accept submissions, rather than consideration of the actual issues at hand, as only 37% of submitters agree that council carefully considered the issues they raised in their submission. Twenty nine percent of submitters were unsure how to respond to this statement (ie, they said not applicable or don't know).

- *Information on decisions:* Overall, 59% of submitters that we interviewed agree that council kept them informed about when they were going to make a decision. Those for whom council made a decision against their views are more likely than average to *disagree* (34%, cf. 26% of all submitters), as are those who did not make a submission in response to council information requesting their views (35%, cf. 22% who did respond to a call for public submissions).

- *Reasons for decisions:* Sixty three percent of submitters for whom council has made a decision agree that council explained the reasons for their decision in a way they could understand. Again, those for whom council made a decision against their views were more likely to disagree (45%, cf. 26% of all submitters).

## Likelihood of making another submission

- The vast majority of submitters (95%) would make another submission to council about an issue they feel is important.

# CONCLUSIONS

Results of this quantitative survey build upon earlier qualitative work with those who have made a written submission to their local council.

*Submission outcome is closely tied to views of the consultation process*

The qualitative research has illustrated that submitters' views of the public consultation process are intrinsically tied to their perceptions of the outcome of their submission. This survey confirms that submission outcome is the factor that has the most profound influence over perceptions of the public consultation process. Those for whom council made a decision against the views expressed in their submission feel more negative about the process as a whole. They tend to feel that council does not listen, that council is uninterested in public views, and that council decisions are unfair and biased. This is also reflected in views of how councils are performing with regard to the principals of consultation that we assessed through the survey (and as set out in Section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002).

Conversely, those for whom council made a decision in favour of the views expressed in their submission feel much more positive about the process. They are more likely to express appreciation for being kept informed about the issues, and they are more likely to perceive that council listens to submissions with an open mind.

The qualitative research also suggested that *some* unsuccessful submitters felt discouraged about the process and may not submit again in future. The surveys results illustrate that this proportion of submitters is very small, and that vast majority would make another submission about an issue they feel is important.

*Community group submitters tend to be more experienced submitters*

Community group submitters and those submitting individually do not differ demographically, but they do vary in other ways. The qualitative research illustrated that community group submitters have more awareness of the submission process and that they are more 'plugged-in' to the way councils operate. Consistent with this, community group submitters tend to be more experienced at making submissions than those who submit individually. Furthermore, their submissions may be more complex, as they tend to spend longer on their submissions, and they are more likely to present their views in-person at a council meeting. They are also more likely than individual submitters to *disagree* that council provides enough background information about issues.

The qualitative research also suggested that community group submitters can be more proactive in calling council and discussing their submission than individual submitters. Consistent with this, and perhaps as a consequence, survey results show that community group submitters are less likely than individual submitters to be *unsure* about how carefully council considered the issues they raised in their submission.

*Level of submission experience and views of the submission process*

The qualitative research suggested that individual submitters tend to feel less capable of having an influence, and therefore may be more likely in future to make a submission as part of a community group. Survey results appear to support this, as those who have made previous submissions (experienced submitters) are more likely to make their submissions on behalf of a community group.

First time submitters are less likely to present their submission in person. Their submissions may also be less complex overall, as first time submitters tend to spend less time preparing their submission and they tend to agree that council has provided them enough preparation time to do so. First time submitters may generally be less aware of council terminology and processes. They are less likely than experienced submitters to feel that background information provided by council is user friendly and easy to understand, and first time submitters who respond to council requests are less likely than average to do so after reading an LTCCP or Annual Plan.

*Level education and views on the submission process*

On average, those who make submissions to council tend to have a higher level of formal education than the average New Zealander. More educated submitters tend to spend longer preparing their submissions and, perhaps as a consequence, they are less likely to agree that they had enough time to prepare and submit their views. Those submitters who have a higher level of formal education are less likely than others to agree that their council carefully considered the issues they raised in their submission.

# BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

## Background to the research

The Local Government Commission (LGC) is carrying out an operational review of the Local Government Act 2002 and Local Electoral Act 2001. Accordingly, the Commission requires information concerning how the Acts are actually implemented on a practical level and whether or not they are operating as intended.  As part of this review, the Local Government Commission requires information concerning residents' experiences and perceptions of opportunities to participate in local government decision making.  'Participation' in this context encompasses the following:

- voting in local elections
- directly inputting into local authority decision-making (through, for example, such mechanisms as making written submissions or attending council meetings).

To this end the Local Government Commission contracted Colmar Brunton to undertake three pieces of research aimed at obtaining residents' (the public) views and experiences:

- *Post (local) elections survey 2007:* examines voting behaviour of electors (people who were eligible to vote) and the impact of various sources of advertising and other information on voter understanding and behaviour.
- *National survey: Knowledge of, and participation in, local government.*
- *Interviews and survey of residents (individuals and community groups) who have inputted to council decision.*  24 in-depth interviews supported by a telephone survey of a further 300.

All research reports are, or will be, available on the Commission's website www.lgc.govt.nz (refer to the 'legislative review' page).

Similarly, the Local Government Commission is interested in gaining an insight into council officers' views of, and experience with, public participation as one input to council decision making. Accordingly, in addition to the exploration of the issues that the Commission has made (or will make) directly, the Commission has contracted Colmar Brunton to undertake a fourth piece of research being an on-line survey of all New Zealand's local authorities (85 in number).  At the time of compiling this report, that survey was yet to be conducted.

The current report presents results of a quantitative survey of 301 people who have made a written submission to council. It has been subtitled Report No.2, as an initial report has already been provided which presents results of in-depth interviews of 24 people who have made submission(s) to councils.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## Rationale for the quantitative research

This quantitative research report builds upon earlier qualitative work conducted by Colmar Brunton for Local Government Commission. Qualitative research was conducted in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of submitters to council. This quantitative report provides insight into how common, or how often, different types of experiences of engagement occur, especially with regard to public perceptions about how councils implement the principles of consultation set out in Section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Together, these reports provide both a depth and breadth of understanding regarding the experiences of those who actively engage in local authority decision making processes.

## Sample and process

Three hundred and one (n = 301) telephone interviews were conducted between 11 February and 19 February 2008. The survey had a response rate of 56%.

Respondents were drawn from unculled lists provided by 14 councils of people who had submitted to their 2006-07 Annual Plan or Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). The 14 councils were selected because they had previously taken part in council/elected member discussions with Local Government Commission. These councils were: Kaipara District Council, Manakau City Council, , Waitakere City Council, Waikato Regional Council ,South Taranaki District Council, Stratford District Council, Hastings District Council, Hutt City Council, Nelson City Council, Environment Canterbury, Hurunui District Council, Dunedin City Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council and Southland District Council.

Council lists were telematched and a sample was drawn from the successfully telematched submitters. Before interviewing commenced, each potential respondent was sent a letter from Local Government Commission. This letter informed submitters about the upcoming survey and gave them the opportunity to opt out of the research.

One goal of the research was to understand the differences between those who make submissions as individuals and those who make submissions on behalf of community groups. A quota was therefore set to ensure we interviewed a minimum of 50 people who had made a written submission on behalf of a community group. We were able to obtain contact details of some submitters who we knew were in this category. All of these submitters were included in the sample to be telephoned. All other submitters in the sample were selected at random from the lists provided by council.

During interviews respondents were asked to think about the most recent submission they had made on behalf of a community group or business in the past 18 months. If they had not made a submission on behalf of a community group or business, respondents were asked to think about

their most recent individual submission. Therefore, although all respondents had made a submission relating to an Annual Plan or LTCCP, not all were focusing on that submission during their interview.

Overall, we interviewed:
- 66 submitters who were asked to think about the most recent submission they had made on behalf of a community group.
- 8 submitters who were asked to think about the most recent submission they had made on behalf of a business.
- 227 submitters who were asked to think about the most recent submission they had made as an individual.

A screening question was used to ensure that we did not interview anyone whose most recent submission was a request for a funding grant.

Results have been weighted by submitter type (individual/business or group) to ensure that overall percentages are not biased due to having 'over sampled' those who have submitted on behalf of a community group.[2]

## Notes to this report

### Definition of ratepayer
To determine ratepayer status, we asked all respondents whether their household pays council rates. This was the preferred approach because we felt that the question "Are you a ratepayer?" may be confusing for those who own their home, but who are not the person responsible for actually paying the council rates bill.

### Categorisation of responses to open-ended questions
Where questions were open-ended, responses are recorded verbatim by interviewers. These responses are then coded into like categories post fieldwork. A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified.

### Relative performance of councils is not the role of the research
This report does not discuss the relative performance of each council. The purpose of speaking to submitters to a range councils is to determine their views overall, and to canvas a range of submitters.

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[2] Weights applied to each respondent were calculated from the proportion of respondents (for whom we had no submission-type information) that agreed to be interviewed. We applied a weight calculated from the proportions of community group and other submitters in these interviews.

# DETAILED FINDINGS

# SUBMITTER DETAILS

This section describes the submitters that we interviewed in terms of their demographic profiles, the time since they made their submission, and their level of experience in making submissions to council.

## Demographic profile of submitters

The following tables provide profiles of the submitters that we interviewed.

**Table 1: Demographic profile**

| | All submitters (n=301) % | Submission type | |
| | | Individual (n=227) % | Community group (n=66) % |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | | |
| Male | 57 | 56 | 59 |
| Female | 43 | 44 | 41 |
| **Age** | | | |
| 18-24 years | - | - | - |
| 25-34 years | 4 | 4 | 6 |
| 35-44 years | 13 | 12 | 17 |
| 45-54 years | 21 | 19 | 21 |
| 55-69 years | 36 | 37 | 36 |
| 70+ years | 25 | 27 | 20 |
| **Ethnic group** | | | |
| NZ European | 89 | 89 | 91 |
| Maori | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Pacific | 1 | - | 2 |
| Asian | 1 | 1 | - |
| Other | 11 | 12 | 8 |
| **Ratepayer status** | | | |
| Ratepayer | 97 | 97 | 95 |
| Non-ratepayer | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| **Highest educational qualification** | | | |
| No qualification | 9 | 10 | 3 |
| Secondary school qualification | 22 | 24 | 14 |
| Post-school qualification (below degree) | 19 | 18 | 28 |
| Post-school qualification (bachelors degree) | 32 | 30 | 38 |
| Post-graduate qualification (eg, Honours, Masters, Doctorate) | 17 | 16 | 17 |
| Other | 2 | 2 | - |

Base: All submitters, excluding those who refused or said don't know.
Source: Q6a – Q6e
Note: The demographic profile of those who submitted on behalf of a business is not displayed due to the small base size (n = 8).

The majority of submitters that we interviewed are ratepayers (97%), New Zealand European (89%), and over the age of 45 (83%). The submitters that we interviewed also tend to have a

higher level of formal education when compared with Statistics New Zealand data for the entire country, with 49% being educated at degree-level or higher (14% of the New Zealand population over 15 are educated at degree level or higher)[3]

Further sub-analyses indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the demographic profiles of individual submitters and those who submit on behalf of a community group.

## Time since submission was made

All submitters were asked how many months ago they made the submission in question. As can be seen in the chart below, just over half of all submitters stated that they made their submission in the 6 months prior to their interview (52%), and the majority (92%) stated that they made their submission within 12 months. Eight percent of submitters stated that they made their submission 13 to 18 months prior to their interview.

Time since submission was made

*"About how many months ago did you make your written submission?"*

Median is 6 months

| 1 to 3 months | 4 to 6 months | 7 to 9 months | 9 to 12 months | 13 to 18 months |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 37 | 17 | 23 | 8 |

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q2e

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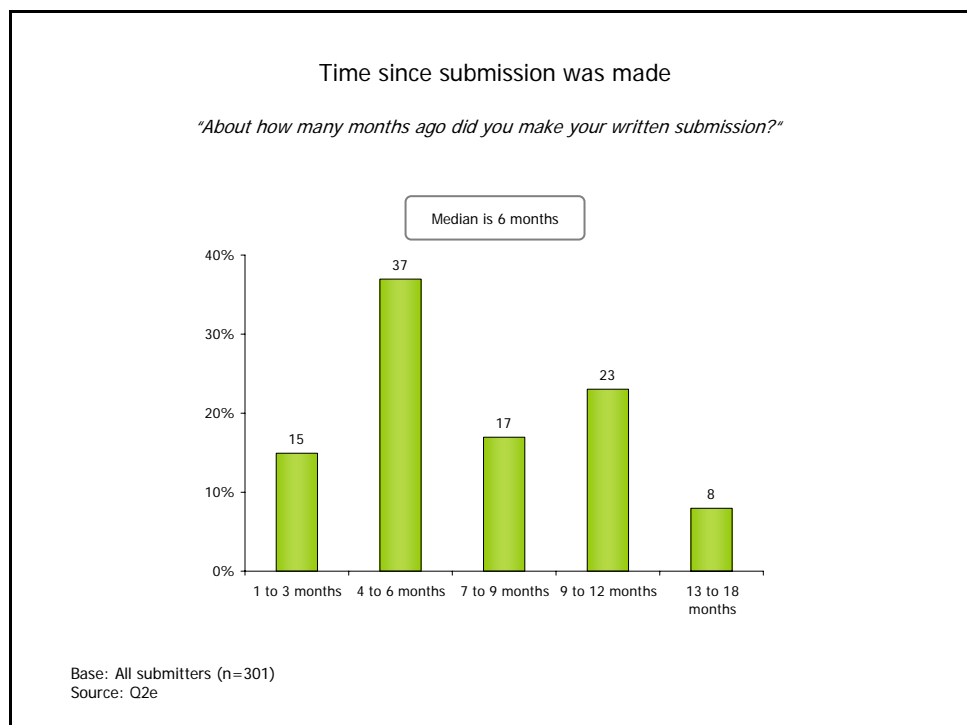
[3] Census usually resident population count 2006 (Statistics New Zealand).

## Experience making council submissions

We asked submitters how many submissions they had made to the council in question in the past 18 months. If they had made only one submission, we asked if that was the first submission they had ever made. Results for both questions are displayed in the chart below.



**Number of submissions made to council in last 18 months**

*"How many submissions have you made to [INSERT COUNCIL] in the past 18 months?"*

- Don't know 1%
- More than 5 submissions 2%
- 4 to 5 submissions 2%
- 2 to 3 submissions 33%
- 39% 1 submission, and this was the first ever council submission (to any council)
- 22% 1 submission, but this was <u>not</u> the first ever council submission

> 61% of submitters have made just one submission <u>in the past 18 months</u>.
>
> For 39% of submitters, this was their first ever submission.

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q1b & Q2a

Nearly four in every ten submitters that we interviewed (39%) were first time submitters. Thirty-seven percent of submitters had made more than one submission to the council in question in the past 18 months.

First time submitters are more likely to be:
- Submitting as an individual (43%, cf. 26% of community group submitters are first time submitters).
- Women (48%, cf. just 33% of men are first time submitters)
- Younger submitters (84% of those aged 25-34 are first time submitters, cf. 58% aged 35-44, 40% aged 45-54, 30% aged 55-65, and 36% aged 70+)

More experienced submitters (those who have made two or more submissions to their council in question in the past 18 months) are more likely to be:
- Submitting on behalf of a community group (59%, cf. 33% of individual submitters have made 2 or more submissions in the past 18 months)
- Aged 45+ (41%, cf. 25% of those under 45 have made 2 or more submissions in the past 18 months).

# THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

This section presents findings relating to the process of making a submission, including becoming aware of the issues, time spent preparing a written submission, presenting in-person, and the outcome of the submission.

## How submitters find out about the issues

We asked all submitters whether they made their submission in response to council information requesting their views (ie, a call for public submissions), and how they found out about the issues they raised in their submission. As can be seen below, just over two thirds of submitters (68%) respond to a request for public submissions.

There were no statistically significant sub-group differences in the likelihood of submitters to be responding to a council request for public submissions.

Responses to council requests for public submissions

*" Did you make this submission after seeing council information requesting your views?"*

Don't know, 2%

No, 30%

Yes, 68%

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q2b
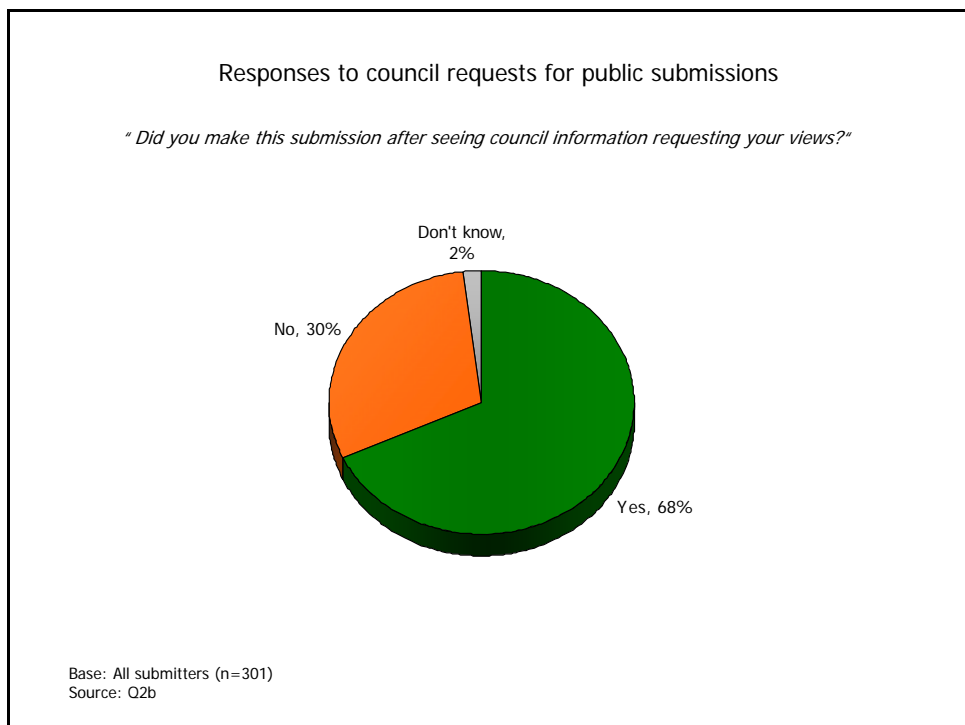
### Information sources: Those responding to a council request

Without prompting with possible responses, we asked those who responded to a council request for public submissions where they saw this information from council. As can be seen below, the main source is information received in the mail, such as pamphlets or newsletters (45%). Community newspapers (21%) and daily newspapers (17%) are the next most common sources mentioned by submitters. Nine percent of submitters who responded to a request for public submissions saw this request when reading an Annual Plan or Long Term Council Community Plan.

**Table 2a: Where submitters see council information requesting their views**

|  | %<br>(n=204) |
|---|---|
| Something received in the mail (eg, brochure, pamphlet, newsletter) | 45 |
| Community newspaper | 21 |
| Daily newspaper | 17 |
| Council Annual Plan or Long Term Council Community Plan | 9 |
| Council website | 5 |
| Word of mouth | 5 |
| Magazines | 3 |
| Council papers | 2 |
| Newspapers (non specific) | 2 |
| Personal contact with council | 2 |
| Email | 1 |
| Visited display / open day | 1 |
| Other | 4 |
| Don't know | 4 |

Base: All those who made a submission after seeing council information requesting their views (n = 204).
Source: Q2c

The following sub-groups differences are evident among those who responded to a request from council:

- Those submitting on behalf of a community group are less likely than individual submitters to have responded to something they received in the mail (21%, cf. 51% of individual submitters). They are more likely than individual submitters to be responding to information on a council website (14%, cf. 3% of individual submitters).

- Elderly submitters (aged 70+) are more likely to be responding to information received in the mail (61%, cf. 39% of those under 70 years of age).

- Male submitters are more likely than female submitters to be responding to an LTCCP or Annual Plan (12%, cf. 3% of female submitters).

- First time submitters are less likely than others to be responding to an LTCCP or Annual Plan (3%, cf. 12% of all submitters).

- Submitters with a post-graduate education are more likely than other submitters to be responding to information in a daily newspaper (30%, cf. 14% of other submitters).

## Information sources: Those not responding to a council request

Also without prompting, we asked those who did not make their submission in response to a request for public submissions how they found out about the issues they raised. The largest proportion of these submitters (30%) personally became aware of or noticed the issue themselves. Hearing about the issue through other people (15%) or through a group, club or organisation (14%) are the next most common sources.

**Table 2b: How submitters find about the issues they raise (if not from council)**

|  | %<br>(n=97) |
| --- | --- |
| Personally noticed or became aware of the issue | 30 |
| Heard about it through people I know | 15 |
| Heard about it through a group / club / organisation | 14 |
| Daily newspaper | 13 |
| Community newspaper | 9 |
| Heard about petitions to council / current submissions | 6 |
| Council Annual Plan | 4 |
| Mail from council (eg, letters or information in rates bill) | 4 |
| Through the media (non specific) | 3 |
| Newspaper (non specific) | 2 |
| Other | 6 |
| Don't know | 7 |

Base: All those who did not make a submission after seeing council information requesting their views, or who don't know (n = 97)
Source: Q2d

The following sub-group differences are evident among those who did not respond to a request from council:

- Those submitting on behalf of a community group are more likely than individual submitters to have heard about the issue through a group, club, or organisation (35%, cf. 7% of individual submitters).
- Younger submitters (under 45 years of age) are more likely than those aged 45+ to have heard about the issue through a group, club, or organisation (38%, cf. 9% of those aged 45+).
- First time submitters are less likely than other submitters to say they responded after personally noticing or becoming aware of an issue (18%, cf. 39% of other submitters).

## Amount of preparation involved in making a submission

We sought to determine how long people spend preparing their written submissions, including the time spent researching or collecting information about issues.

Time spent preparing written submission

*"Including the time it took to gather information about the issue, about how many hours did it take you to prepare your written submission?"*

Median amount of time is 1 hour

| | |
|---|---|
| 15 mins or less | 13 |
| More than 15 mins but less than 1 hour | 20 |
| 1 hour | 20 |
| 2 to 4 hours | 31 |
| 5 to 7 hours | 6 |
| 8 to 10 hours | 4 |
| 11 to 20 hours | 3 |
| 21 to 30 hours | 2 |
| More than 30 hours | 1 |

Base: All submitters, excluding those who said 'don't know' (n=292)
Source: Q2f

The majority of submitters (84%) prepare their submission in less than five hours. The median amount of time spent preparing submissions is 1 hour. A small proportion of submitters (13%) spend less than 15 minutes on their submissions. These submitters may have used 'preformatted' submission cards or letters supplied by a third party, which can be completed quickly and mailed to council.

Those more likely to spend longer than one hour on their submission are:
- Those who submit on behalf of a community group (70%, cf. 41% of those who make an individual submission spend more than one hour).
- Those who have made more than one submission to their council in the past 18 months (63%, cf. 35% of those who have made just one submission spend more than one hour).
- Those with a higher formal educational qualification (61% of those with a post-graduate qualification spend more than one hour, cf. 50% of those with a degree, 40% of those with a school or post-school qualification below degree level, and 37% with no qualification).
- Men (52%, cf. 39% of women spend more than one hour).

## Presenting in-person at a council meeting

We asked all submitters whether they presented their submission in-person at a council meeting. We also asked those who did not submit in-person whether they were given the opportunity by their council to do so. Results for both questions are displayed below.



Making a verbal submission

"Did you present your submission in person at a council meeting?"

"Did council give you the opportunity to present your submission in person?"

85% of **all submitters** either presented in person or recall they were given the opportunity to do so.

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q2g

Base: Those who did not present in person (n=238)
Source: Q2h
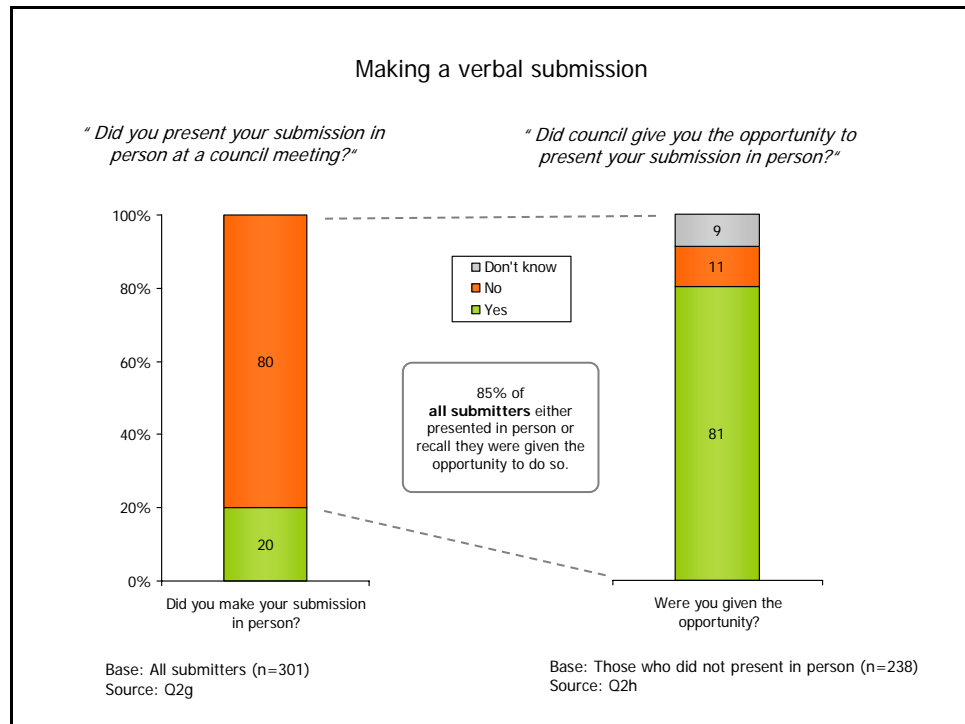
One in every five submitters that we interviewed (20%) presented their submission in-person at a council meeting. Those more likely to submit in-person include:

- Those submitting on behalf of a community group (42% submitted in-person, cf. 15% of those who made individual submissions).
- More experienced submitters, for whom this was not their first submission (24%, cf. 13% of first time submitters made their submission in-person).
- Those who spent longer (more than one hour) preparing their written submission (34%, cf. 8% who spent less than one hour).

The majority of those who did not make a verbal submission recall they *were* given the opportunity to do so (81%). We asked these submitters why they chose not to present their views in-person. Results are shown in the table overleaf. Like responses have been grouped into 'nett' categories to highlight general themes. These categories are highlighted in bold print, and give the percentage of respondents who gave at least one of the more details responses that relate to them.

Key reasons for not making a verbal submission reflect the reasons that were offered by submitters during the qualitative research. They include the perception that their written submission was sufficient (42%), and being unable to make a verbal submission due to other commitments, illness, or location (42%). Twelve percent of submitters who were given the opportunity to submit said that they did not do so due to a dislike of public speaking. Very few submitters (3%) said there would be no point giving a verbal submission.

**Table 3: Reasons for not submitting in-person at a council meeting**

| | %<br>(n=191) |
|---|---|
| **Written submission was sufficient** | **42** |
| Information clear in written submission / was sufficient / nothing to add | 25 |
| I didn't feel the need / it didn't seem necessary | 11 |
| Other people presenting the same views / making the same point | 9 |
| **Unable to make a verbal submission** | **42** |
| Too busy / don't have the time to do it / had other responsibilities | 24 |
| Could not get time off work / it was during working hours | 10 |
| Due to illness / due to having a baby | 5 |
| Location / I live too far away | 4 |
| I was out of town / out of the country | 3 |
| **Prefer to make a written submission** | **13** |
| Not very good at public speaking / don't like speaking in public | 12 |
| Could present my ideas better in writing / easier to do it in writing | 2 |
| **No point making a verbal submission** | **3** |
| Previous submissions ignored / don't get answers | 3 |
| Its a waste of time | 2 |
| **No meeting / public hearing scheduled yet** | **1** |
| **Other** | **10** |
| **No reason** | **2** |

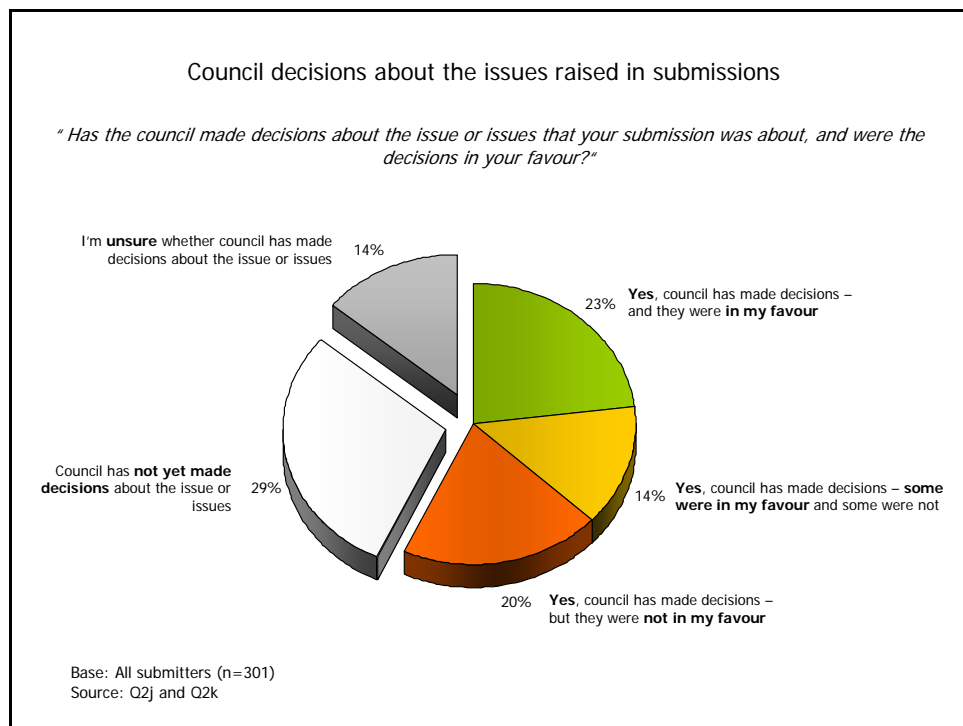Base: All submitters who did not present their submission in person, but who were giving the opportunity to do so (n=191)
Source: Q2i

Those making an individual submission are more likely to feel that their written submission was sufficient (45%, cf. 19% of community group submitters). There are no other statistically significant subgroup differences in the reasons people gave for not making an in-person submission.

# Council decisions

## The outcome of council decisions

We then asked submitters if council had made decisions about the issues they raised, and whether those decisions were in their favour.

Council decisions about the issues raised in submissions

*" Has the council made decisions about the issue or issues that your submission was about, and were the decisions in your favour?"*

- I'm **unsure** whether council has made decisions about the issue or issues — 14%
- **Yes**, council has made decisions – and they were **in my favour** — 23%
- **Yes**, council has made decisions – **some were in my favour** and some were not — 14%
- **Yes**, council has made decisions – but they were **not in my favour** — 20%
- Council has **not yet made decisions** about the issue or issues — 29%

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q2j and Q2k

Nearly six in every ten submitters that we interviewed (57%) said that council had made a decision about one or more of the issues they raised in their submission. Nearly one quarter of submitters (23%) report that council made decisions in their favour, one fifth (20%) say those decisions were not in their favour, and 14% say the decisions were mixed. Twenty nine percent of the submitters that we interviewed say that council has not yet made a decision about the issues they raised in their submission.

Around one in seven submitters (14%) are unsure whether council has made a decision about the issues they raised. Those who did not submit in-person are more likely than those who did to be unsure (16% are unsure, cf. 4% of those who submitted in person).

## Notification of council decisions

We asked all those who know that council have made a decision whether they were notified by the council in writing about that decision. Nearly three quarters of submitters (72%) say they were notified in writing by council (base n=173).

# OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

We asked all submitters to tell us how they rate the overall public consultation process for the issue on which they submitted. Results are shown in the chart below.



Overall rating of public consultation process

*"All things considered, how would you rate the public consultation process for this issue?"*

Don't know, 2%
Excellent, 7%
Very good, 23%
Good, 29%
Fair, 17%
Poor, 21%

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q4a
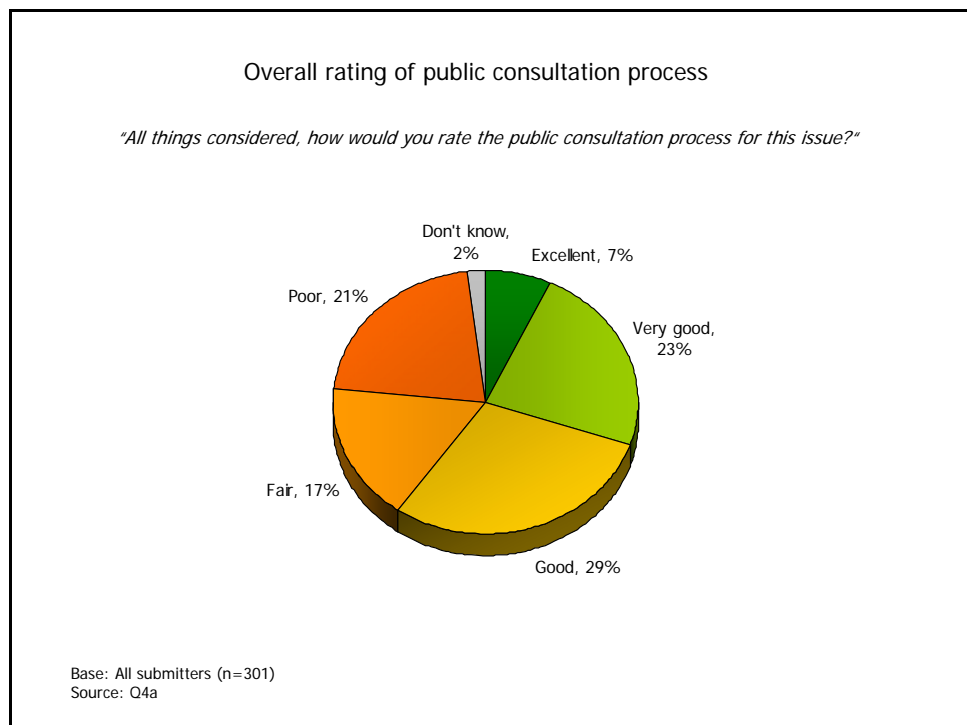
Overall, 30% of submitters feel that the public consultation process was either excellent or very good, while 38% feel it was fair or poor. Consistent with the findings of the qualitative research, decision outcome is the primary variable by which perceptions of the public consultation process vary. Those for whom council made a decision against their views have more negative perceptions of the overall process (64% gave a rating of fair or poor, compared to 16% of those for whom council made a decision in their favour). Conversely, those for whom council made a decision in their favour have more positive perceptions of the overall process (47% gave a rating of excellent or very good, compared to 18% of those for whom council made a decision against their views).

Those for whom council has not yet made a decision also tend to hold negative perceptions of the public consultation process (50% rated the process at fair or poor, compared to 16% of those for whom council made a decision in their favour).

Finally, those under the age of 45 are more likely than older submitters to rate the public consultation process as excellent or very good (44%, cf. 28% of those aged 45+). There are no other statistically significant sub-group differences.

We asked all respondents to give their reasons for their overall rating of the public consultation process. Results are illustrated in the table below.

The main reasons for feeling positive about the public consultation process are a sense of appreciation for opportunities to express views (22%), and that the council keeps the public well informed (17%) and the issues well publicised (13%).

- Those for whom council made a decision consistent with their views are more likely than others to express appreciation for being kept informed (29%, cf. 13% of other submitters) and say that council was ready to listen or had an open mind (19%, cf. 6% of other submitters).
- Individual submitters are more likely than community group submitters to say that the public consultation process is well publicised (15%, cf. 5% of community group submitters).
- More experienced submitters are more likely than first time submitters to say that the issues are well publicised (16%, cf. 7% of first time submitters).
- Younger submitters (aged 25 to 34) are more likely than other submitters to express appreciation for the opportunity to express their views (46%, cf. 21% of other submitters). Submitters under the age of 45 are more likely than those aged 45+ to express appreciation that council gave them feedback or let them know the outcome of their decision (13%, cf. 4% of those aged 45+).

The main reasons for feeling negative are perceptions that councils do not really listen (17%) and that they are not really interested in the views of the public (11%).

- Those for whom council made a decision against their views are more likely than others to say that council does not listen (40%, cf. 11% of other submitters), that they are not interested in the minds of the public (27%, cf. 7% of other submitters), and that decisions were unfair or biased (10%, cf. 2% of other submitters).
- Female submitters are more likely than male submitters to say that council does not provide enough information (13%, cf. 5% of male submitters).
- Those who spent longer than one hour on their submission are more likely to say that the decisions of council are unfair or biased (7%, cf. 1% of those who spent less than one hour).
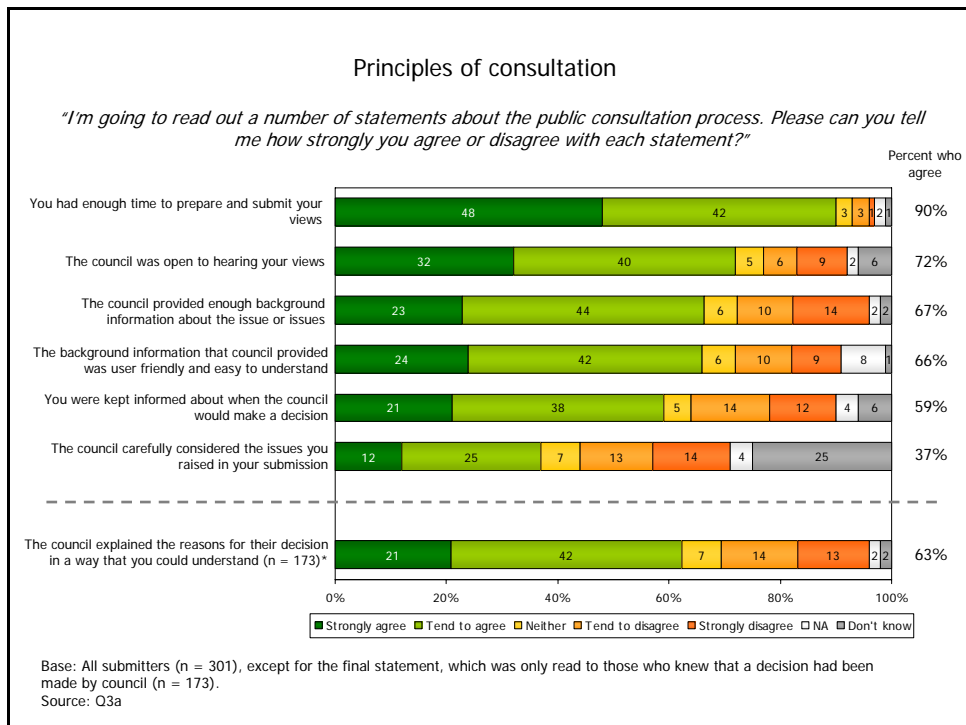
**Table 4: Reasons for rating the public consultation process at excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor**

| | Total (n = 294) % | Excellent (n = 22) % | Very good (n = 70) % | Good (n = 87) % | Fair (n = 51) % | Poor (n = 64) % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Positive responses** | **56** | **100** | **92** | **77** | **19** | **-** |
| Council has given us the opportunity to voice our opinion / plenty of opportunity to consider issues / consult / submit | 22 | 53 | 34 | 32 | 5 | - |
| Council keeps us informed / adequate info / lets us know about the issues | 17 | 31 | 22 | 28 | 4 | - |
| Issue was well publicised / good info in the media (eg, newspapers / publications of the council / news letters) | 13 | 18 | 25 | 18 | - | - |
| Council was ready to listen / had an open mind to community views | 9 | 18 | 12 | 14 | 4 | - |
| It was straightforward / clear process / method for making submissions was clear | 9 | 33 | 15 | 6 | 4 | - |
| Council gave us time to prepare / told us when the meeting was held | 6 | 14 | 12 | 5 | 2 | - |
| They gave feedback / they let you know of the outcome | 5 | 10 | 13 | 4 | 2 | - |
| They do a good job / are well organised / decisive / fair / efficient | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | - | - |
| Forms were easy to understand / user friendly | 2 | 5 | 5 | 1 | - | - |
| Friendly environment / they treat us well | 2 | - | 6 | 1 | - | - |
| **Negative responses** | **42** | **-** | **8** | **24** | **78** | **88** |
| They do not listen / don't give the opportunity to be heard / do not consult | 17 | - | 2 | 5 | 31 | 44 |
| They're not interested in the minds of the public / already made up their minds beforehand / have their agenda already cut and dried | 11 | - | 2 | 6 | 20 | 25 |
| Don't get enough info / don't give out info / poor info | 8 | - | 2 | 4 | 16 | 19 |
| No feedback / poor feedback / takes a long time to get a reply from the council | 7 | - | - | 7 | 13 | 13 |
| The process is complex / long-winded / time consuming | 4 | - | 2 | 5 | 8 | 5 |
| The decisions are unfair / lack balance / biased | 4 | - | - | - | 9 | 11 |
| Some issues were not covered / need more in-depth discussion about issues | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Council is indecisive / avoids making decisions | 2 | - | - | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| They interfered / interrupted when giving submission / humiliated those who made submissions / laughed at submissions | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 7 |
| Other | 13 | - | 4 | 13 | 18 | 21 |
| Don't know | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 6 | 2 |

Source: Q4b / Base: All submitters, excluding those who said 'don't know' at Q4a (n = 294)

# THE PRINCIPLES OF CONSULATION

We asked all submitters whether they agree or disagree with a series of statements relating to the principles that local authorities must follow when they consult (these principles are set out in Section 82 or the Local Government Act 2002). Results are displayed in the chart below.



Principles of consultation

*"I'm going to read out a number of statements about the public consultation process. Please can you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement?"*

| Statement | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Neither | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | NA | Don't know | Percent who agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| You had enough time to prepare and submit your views | 48 | 42 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 90% |
| The council was open to hearing your views | 32 | 40 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 72% |
| The council provided enough background information about the issue or issues | 23 | 44 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 67% |
| The background information that council provided was user friendly and easy to understand | 24 | 42 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 66% |
| You were kept informed about when the council would make a decision | 21 | 38 | 5 | 14 | 12 | 4 | 6 | 59% |
| The council carefully considered the issues you raised in your submission | 12 | 25 | 7 | 13 | 14 | 4 | 25 | 37% |
| The council explained the reasons for their decision in a way that you could understand (n = 173)* | 21 | 42 | 7 | 14 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 63% |

Base: All submitters (n = 301), except for the final statement, which was only read to those who knew that a decision had been made by council (n = 173).
Source: Q3a

To aid readability, we have summarised our analyses under the sub-headings below, which relate to principles of consultation that were investigated during the survey. The more detailed sub-analyses (and percentages) for all statistically significant sub-group differences can be found at the end of this section.

### *Access to information*
The earlier qualitative research demonstrated that submitters feel that council provides an appropriate level of information for their requirements. Consistent with this, around two thirds of survey respondents agree that the council provided them with enough background information about the issue or issues they raised in their submission (67%), and that this information was user friendly and easy to understand (66%).

Further analyses of the survey data illustrate that submitters who responded to a council request for public submissions are more likely to feel that council provides good access to information (ie they are more likely to agree with both statements) than those who did not respond to a council request. Council requests for public submissions often come with (or appended to) information about the issues in question. For this reason, those responding to such requests may be more likely to have ready access to information from council. Those not responding to a council request

may need to proactively approach council for information or, if they are responding to an issue they have personally noticed themselves, they may not require information at all.

Others more likely to *disagree* that council provides good access to information are those for whom council made a decision against the views expressed in their submission, those who submitted on behalf of a community group, and first time submitters.

### Reasonable opportunity to present

The earlier qualitative research indicated that submitters feel they are given a reasonable opportunity to present their views to council. Consistent with this, the vast majority of the submitters that we interviewed during the survey (90%) agree that they had enough time to prepare and submit their views.

Further analyses of the data illustrate that those more likely to *disagree* are those with a higher level of education and those who are more experienced at making submissions to council. More educated and experienced submitters may be presenting more complex submissions. The qualitative research illustrated that those submitting on more complex issues would generally like more time.

### Open-mindedness and due consideration

Submitters interviewed during the qualitative research had difficulty commenting on the principle of open-mindedness. Interestingly however, the majority (92%) of survey respondents are able to respond to the statement "*the council was open to hearing my views*", and nearly three quarters of submitters agree (72%).

Having said this, these positive perceptions of 'openness', may relate more generally to council's willingness to publicise issues and accept public submissions, rather than their careful consideration of the actual issues at hand. When asked specifically if council carefully considered the issues they raised in their submission, only 37% of submitters agreed, and 29% were unsure how to answer (ie, not applicable or don't know). Those who disagree that council carefully considered their views tend to be those for whom council has made a decision against their views, and those educated at post-graduate level.

The earlier qualitative findings also illustrated that submitters who present in-person at a council meeting are more easily able to judge how council received their views. Consistent with this, survey respondents who did not present their submission in-person are less able to respond when asked if council was open-minded, or whether council carefully considered their views (ie, they were more likely to say don't know or not applicable). Those who submitted as individuals (who are also less likely to present their submission in-person) are also more likely than others to be unsure if council carefully considered their issues.

### Information on decisions and reasons for those decisions

We asked all submitters whether they were kept informed about when council would make a decision. We also asked those for whom council had made a decision whether council explained the reasons for those decisions in a way they could easily understand.

Overall, 59% of submitters that we interviewed during the survey agree that council kept them informed about when they were going to make a submission. Submitters more likely to disagree are those for whom council made a decision against their views, and those who did not make a submission in response to a call for public submissions. The qualitative research indicated that those in the latter group sometimes do not specifically make 'formal submissions'. Instead, they provide unsolicited feedback on an issue which council then feds into the submission process. It is possible that these submitters may be more 'in the dark' when it comes to the submission/decision process – they may be unsure how to follow-up, or where to seek information, about decisions relating to the issues they raised.

Sixty three percent of submitters for whom council has made a decision agree that council explained the reasons for their decision in a way they could easily understand. Consistent with the qualitative research, those for whom council made a decision *against* their views were much more likely to *disagree* with this statement. Qualitative research suggests that these submitters want more information about why decisions go against them – some feel 'fobbed off', and many want an opportunity to discuss or appeal their decisions.

**Detailed sub-group differences**

*Submission type*
- Those who submitted on behalf of a community group are more likely than individual submitters to *disagree* that council provided enough background information about the issue or issues (33% disagree, compared to 21% of individual submitters).
- Individual submitters are more likely to be *unsure* that council carefully considered the issues they raised in their submission (32% said don't know or not applicable, compared to 18% of those who submitted on behalf of a community group).

*Level of submitter experience*
- First time submitters are less likely than other submitters to agree that the background information provided by council was user friendly and easy to understand (59% agree, compared to 71% of those who have made other submissions).
- Experienced submitters (those for whom this was not their first submission) are more likely than first time submitters to disagree that they had enough time to prepare and submit their views (7% disagree, compared to 1% of first time submitters).

*In-person submissions*
- Those who did not make a written submission are more likely that those who did to say 'don't know' or 'not applicable' when asked if council was open to hearing their views (9%, cf. 1% of those who submitted in-person) or whether council carefully considered their views (31%, cf. 19% of those who submitted in-person).

*Submitted in responses to a call for public submissions*
- Those who made a submission in response to a call for public submissions are more likely than others to *agree* that their council provided enough background information about the issue or

issues (75% agree, cf. 49% who did not respond to a call for public submissions), that the background information was user friendly and easy to understand (72%, cf. 54% who did not respond to a call for public submissions), and that they had enough time to prepare their views (94%, cf. 83% of those who did not respond to a call for public submissions).

- Those who did not make their submission in response to a call for public submissions are more likely than others to disagree that council kept them informed about when they would make a decision about the issue or issues (35% disagree, cf. 22% who responded to a call for public submissions).
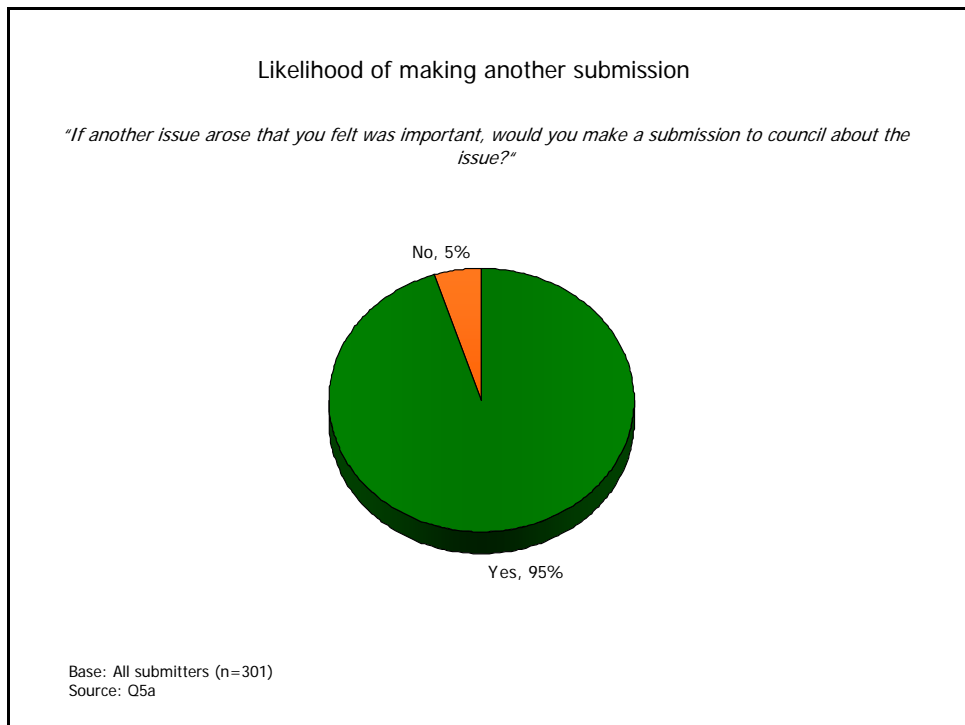
*Decision outcome*

- Those for whom council made a decision against the views expressed in their submission are more likely than average to *disagree* that council provided enough background information about the issue (38% disagree, cf. 24% of all submitters), that the background information was user friendly and easy to understand (23%, cf. 19% of all submitters), that the council was open to hearing their views (31% disagree, cf. 15% of all submitters), that the council carefully considered the issues they raised in their submission (50% disagree, cf. 27% of all submitters), that council explained the reasons for their decision in a way that they could understand (45% disagree, cf. 26% of all submitters), and that council kept them informed about the submission process (34%, cf. 26% of all submitters).

*Level of education*

- Submitters with a higher level of formal education are less likely than others to agree that they had enough time to prepare and submit their views (84% of those with a post-graduate qualification agree, compared to 89% with a degree, 90% with a post-school qualification below degree-level, 97% with a secondary qualification, and 91% with no qualification).
- Submitters educated to a post-graduate level are less likely than others to agree that council carefully considered the issues raised in their submission (27%, cf. 39% of others agree).

# LIKELIHOOD OF MAKING ANOTHER SUBMISSION

Finally, we asked all submitters whether they were likely to make another submission about an issue they felt was important. As can be seen in the chart below, the vast majority of submitters (95%) would do so.

Likelihood of making another submission

*"If another issue arose that you felt was important, would you make a submission to council about the issue?"*

No, 5%

Yes, 95%

Base: All submitters (n=301)
Source: Q5a

We asked submitters to give their reasons for not being likely to make another submission. Due to the small base size the table below presents the number of submitters who gave each reason rather than the percentage.

The key reason for not making another submission is a perception that submissions have little influence on council decisions.

| | #<br>(n = 13) |
|---|---|
| It's futile / council takes no notice / don't do anything about submissions | 6 |
| Council will do what they want anyway / they've made their decisions | 3 |
| They're money driven / it's money first not people | 3 |
| I'm not interested enough / it's council's job to sort out important issues | 2 |
| No faith in the council | 1 |
| Not feeling confident | 1 |

Base: All submitters who would not make another submission (n = 13)
Source: Q5b

Of the 13 respondents who are unlikely to make another submission, four say they would make their views heard another way - namely through the media (2 respondents), through joining a group (1 respondent), or through talking with friends and family (1 respondents). One respondent also says that he or she will stop paying rates.

# APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

## PARTICIPANT SURVEY 2008
## 36993300

| INTERVIEWERS NAME | | |
|---|---|---|
| DATE | PHONE NUMBER | |

| EMPLOYEE NO. | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| INTERVIEW DURATION | | | | | | |

| START TIME | FINISH TIME | AUDIT DETAILS |
|---|---|---|

## Initial contact

Good morning/afternoon/evening. May I please speak to **NAMED PERSON.**

I'm calling about a letter you may have received in the post from the Local Government Commission. My name is... from Colmar Brunton, and we are doing a survey among people who have made a submission to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**].

It will take 10 minutes to complete, depending on your answers. Can I run through this with you now?

**IF NO LETTER RECEIVED:** I'm sorry about that. I'm not sure why you didn't receive the letter. We are doing this survey for the Local Government Commission, who are reviewing the rules by which councils operate. Can I run through this with you now?

**IF NO NAMED PARTY HAS MADE A SUBMISSION, CODE [NQ – NO SUBMISSION] AND CLOSE.**

**MAKE APPOINTMENT IF NECESSARY**

**THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW IF RESPONDENT NOT WILLING TO CONTINUE**

## Introductory/screener questions

Thank you for agreeing to take part. Before we begin the interview, I just have some questions to check that we have a good mix of people.

Q1a    Firstly, do you recall making a submission to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**]?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

**IF NECESSARY:** You may have written a letter to council that was included as a submission.

| Yes | 1 | |
|---|---|---|
| No | 2 | **CLOSE** |
| Don't know / unsure | 3 | **CLOSE** |

**CLOSE:** Thank you. We are wanting to talk with people specifically about the process of their submission, so that is the only question I have for you today. Thank you very much for your time.

Q1b	And approximately how many submissions have you made to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**] in the past 18 months?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| 1 | 1 |
|---|---|
| 2 to 3 | 2 |
| 4 to 5 | 3 |
| More than 5 | 4 |
| Don't know / can't remember | 5 |

Q1c	**IF CODE 1 AT Q1b, ASK:** Did you make that submission to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**] on behalf of a community group or business? **IF YES PROMPT:** Which?

**IF CODE 2 TO 5, ASK:** Did you make any submissions to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**] on behalf of a community group or business? **IF YES PROMPT:** Which?

**IF NECESSARY:** A business is usually formed to make a profit.

**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes - community group | 1 |
|---|---|
| Yes – business | 2 |
| **ONLY PRESENT OPTION IF NOT CODE 1 AT Q1b**<br>Has made a community group AND business submission | 3 |
| No | 4 |

**ASK Q1d IF CODE 3 AT Q1c**

Q1d	Which was the most recent submission, the one you made on behalf of a community group or the one you made on behalf of a business?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Community group | 1 |
|---|---|
| Business | 2 |

**IF CODES 2 TO 5 AT Q1b AND (CODE 1 AT Q1c OR CODE 3 AT Q1c AND CODE 1 AT Q1d), SAY:**
Thank you. For the remainder of this interview, I'm just going to ask you about the most recent submission you made to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**] on behalf of a community group. We are particularly interested in the opinions of people who have made a submission on behalf of a community group.

**IF CODES 2 TO 5 AT Q1b AND (CODE 2 AT Q1c OR CODE 3 AT Q1c AND CODE 2 AT Q1d), SAY:**
Thank you. For the remainder of this interview, I'm just going to ask you about the most recent submission you made to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**] on behalf of a business. We are particularly interested in the opinions of people who have made a submission on behalf of a business.

**IF CODES 2 TO 5 AT Q1b AND CODE 4 AT Q1c, SAY:** Thank you. For the remainder of this interview, I'm just going to ask you about your most recent submission to [**INSERT COUNCIL NAME**].

**ASK Q1e IF CODE 1 OR 2 AT Q1c <u>OR</u> Q1d, OTHERWISE GO TO Q2a**

Q1e     Was your submission a request for a funding grant?
        **CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 | **CLOSE** |
|-----|---|
| No  | 2 | |

      **CLOSE:** Thank you. We are wanting to talk about a recent submission that does not relate to funding in any way, so those are the only questions I have for you. Thank you very much for your time today.

Thank you. I'll now proceed with the rest of the interview. All our calls are recorded for training purposes, but no one will be able to identify you from your answers.

# Submission/decision

**ASK Q2a IF CODE 1 AT Q1B**

Q2a     Is this the first council submission you have made?
        **CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 |
|-----|---|
| No  | 2 |

Q2b     Did you make this submission after seeing council information requesting your views?
        **CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 |
|-----|---|
| No  | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

**ASK Q2c IF CODE 1 AT Q2b**

Q2c     Where did you see information <u>from council</u>?
        **DO NOT READ OUT. CODE EACH MENTIONED.**

| Something received in the mail (eg, brochure, pamphlet, newsletter) | 1 |
|---|---|
| Council website | 2 |
| Daily newspaper | 3 |
| Community newspaper | 4 |
| Council Annual Plan or Long Term Community Plan | 5 |
| Other (**SPECIFY**) | 6 |
| **SINGLE CODE** Don't know | 7 |

**ASK Q2d IF CODE 2 OR 3 AT Q2b**

Q2d     How did you find out about the issue that your submission was about?
        **DO NOT READ OUT. CODE EACH MENTIONED**

| Heard about it through people you know | 1 |
|---|---|
| Heard about it through a group / club / organisation | 2 |
| Personally noticed or became aware of the issue | 3 |
| Daily newspaper | 4 |
| Community newspaper | 5 |
| Other (**SPECIFY**) | 6 |
| **SINGLE CODE** Don't know | 7 |

Q2e     About how many months ago did you make your written submission?

        **IF NECESSARY:** Just an approximate will be fine.

        **LOGIC CHECK: SHOULD NOT BE MORE THAN 18 MONTHS**

        **ENTER NUMBER OF MONTHS:_____**

Q2f     Including the time it took to gather information about the issue, about how many hours did it take
        you to prepare your written submission?

        **IF LESS THE ONE HOUR, SAY:** About how many minutes did it take you?

        **IF NECESSARY:** Just an approximate will be fine.

        (i) **ENTER NUMBER: _____**

        (ii) **CODE UNIT:**

| Minutes | 1 |
|---|---|
| Hours | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

Q2g     Did you present your submission in-person at a council meeting?
        **CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 | **GO TO Q2j** |
|---|---|---|
| No | 2 | |

Q2h     Did council give you the opportunity to present your submission in-person?
        **CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 | |
|---|---|---|
| No | 2 | **GO TO Q2j** |
| Don't know | 3 | **GO TO Q2j** |

Q2i     For what reasons did you decide not to take up this opportunity?
        **RECORED VERBATIM. CLARIFY.**

Q2j    Has the council made a decision about the issue or issues that your submission was about?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 | |
|---|---|---|
| About some of the issues, but not all | 2 | |
| No | 3 | **GO TO Q3a** |
| Don't know / unsure | 4 | **GO TO Q3a** |


Q2k    And was the decision, or were the decisions, in your favour?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 |
|---|---|
| Yes and no / some were, but not all | 2 |
| No | 3 |


Q2l    Did the council notify you in writing about its decision?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| Yes | 1 |
|---|---|
| No | 2 |

# Principles of consultation

Q3a   Now I would like to ask you some questions about your experience with the <u>public consultation process</u>. This is not about the decisions that council made, or whether or not the decisions were in your favour. It is about the <u>process</u> of making your submission to council.

I'm going to read out a number of statements about the <u>process</u>. Please can you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Please choose from strongly agree, tend to agree, neither agree nor disagree, tend to disagree, or strongly disagree. If the statement doesn't relate to your submission you can tell me.

**INTERVIEWER INTSRUCTION: DURING THESE STATEMENTS, IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO REMIND RESPONDENTS THAT WE WANT THEIR OPINION ABOUT THE <u>CONSULTATION PROCESS.</u>**

**REPEAT SCALE ONLY IF NECESSARY.  CODE ONE ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT.**

Firstly...  Next...

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | DO NOT READ Don't know | DO NOT READ Not applicable | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| i) The council provided enough background information about the issue or issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | **IF 7, GO TO (iii)** |
| ii) The background information that the council provided was user friendly and easy to understand. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| iii) You had enough time to prepare and submit your views. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| iv) The council was <u>open</u> to hearing your views. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| v) The council carefully considered the issues you raised in your submission. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| vi) You were kept informed about when council would make a decision. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |

## ASK (vii) ONLY IF CODES 1 OR 2 AT Q2j

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| vii) The council explained the reasons for their decision in a way that you could understand. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

# Overall rating of public consultation process

Q4a     And <u>all things considered</u>, how would you rate the public consultation process for this issue? Would you say that it was excellent, very good, good, fair, poor?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | 1 | |
| Very good | 2 | |
| Good | 3 | |
| Fair | 4 | |
| Poor | 5 | |
| Don't know | 6 | **GO TO Q5a** |

Q4b     What are your reasons for saying that the public consultation process is [**INSERT ANSWER FROM Q4a**]
**RECORD VERBATIM. PROBE TO NO\CLARIFY.**

# Likelihood of making another submission

Q5a     If another issue arose that you felt was important, would you make a submission to council about the issue?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | **GO TO Q6a** |
| No | 2 | |

Q5b     What would be your reasons for not making a submission?
**RECORD VERBATIM. PROBE TO NO\CLARIFY.**

Q5c     Would you try to make your views heard in any other way?
**CODE ONE ONLY.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | |
| No | 2 | **GO TO Q6a** |

Q5d     How would you make your views heard?
**DO NOT READ OUT. CODE EACH MENTIONED.**

| | |
|---|---|
| By voting in the elections/for a person who shares views | 1 |
| Approaching the Community Board | 2 |
| Standing for council | 3 |
| Personally speaking with councillors (not including at formal public meetings or forums) | 4 |
| Personally speaking with a local MP | 5 |
| Lobbying / lobbying with petitions | 6 |
| Attending formal council meetings (or committee meetings) | 7 |
| Attend a public consultation meeting run by council | 8 |
| Holding a community meeting (not run by council) | 9 |
| Protesting / marching / demonstrating | 10 |
| Forming a group / joining a group | 11 |
| Other (**SPECIFY**) | 12 |
| **SINGLE CODE** Don't know | 13 |

# Demographics

So that we can understand the views of different people, I have a few background questions.

Q6a  **CODE GENDER**

| Male | 1 |
| Female | 2 |

Q6b  First of all, which of the following age groups do you fall into?
**READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.**

| 18 to 19 years | 1 |
| 20 to 24 years | 2 |
| 25 to 29 years | 3 |
| 30 to 34 years | 4 |
| 35 to 44 years | 5 |
| 45 to 49 years | 6 |
| 50 to 54 years | 7 |
| 55 to 59 years | 8 |
| 60 to 69 years | 9 |
| 70+ years | 10 |
| **DO NOT READ** Refused | 11 |

Q6c  Which of these ethnic groups do you fit into.  You can be in more than one.  Are you..?
**READ OUT. CODE ALL MENTIONS.**

| Maori | 1 |
| NZ European / Pakeha | 2 |
| Other European | 3 |
| Samoan | 4 |
| Cook Islander/ Cook Island Maori | 5 |
| Tongan | 6 |
| Niuean | 7 |
| Chinese | 8 |
| Indian | 9 |
| Other (**SPECIFY**) | 10 |
| **DO NOT READ** Refused | 11 |

Q6d  Does your household pay council rates?
**CODE ONY ONLY.**

**IF NECESSARY:** Property owners pay rates to the council.

| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

Q6e    What is your highest completed educational qualification?
       **READ ONLY IF NECESSARY.**

| No qualification | 1 |
|---|---|
| School Certificate or NCEA level 1 | 2 |
| Sixth Form Certificate, University Entrance or NCEA Level 2 | 3 |
| Bursary, Scholarship or NCEA level 3 or 4 | 4 |
| A Trade Qualification | 5 |
| A certificate or diploma that does not require a degree | 6 |
| A polytech degree | 7 |
| A university degree | 8 |
| Postgraduate qualification, eg Honours, Masters, Doctorate, Fellowship, Postgraduate Diploma | 9 |
| Other (specify) | 10 |
| **DO NO READ** Don't know | 11 |
| **DO NOT READ** Refused | 12 |

# Close

That is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your time. My name is ... from Colmar Brunton, and we were conducting this survey for the Local Government Commission. If you have any questions please feel free to call my supervisor.

**GIVE RESPONDENT SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND PHONE NUMBER IF REQUESTED**

**INTERVIEWER DECLARATION:**
'I certify that I have conducted this interview in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Market Research Society Code of Practice and in accordance with the instructions from Consumer Link. I have thoroughly checked the questionnaire and it is complete in all respects.'

| Yes | 1 |
|---|---|
| No | 2 |