

# Polling on resident satisfaction with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council: Wave 2

January 2016





## Acknowledgements

The Local Government Association (LGA) Research and Information team would like to thank Populus Data Solutions for conducting this polling. We would also like to thank all the participants who took part in it.

To view more research from the Local Government Association Research and Information team please visit: <http://www.local.gov.uk/local-government-research>

# Contents

- Introduction..... 5
- Methodology ..... 5
- Key findings ..... 7
  - Headline results:..... 8
- Rotherham’s Polling Results..... 10
  - Overall satisfaction with local area ..... 10
  - Overall satisfaction with local council ..... 11
  - Value for money ..... 11
  - Council responsiveness..... 12
  - Informed about the council ..... 13
  - Trust ..... 13
  - Confidence ..... 14
  - Rotherham as a place to live ..... 14
- Annex A: Polling questions ..... 16
- Annex B: Authority level comparison ..... 18

## Introduction

This report outlines the results of a second poll (known as Wave 2) of Rotherham residents undertaken in December 2015. The poll asked eight questions about satisfaction with the council, value for money, responsiveness, trust and confidence in the council. An earlier poll was conducted in June 2015 (known as Wave 1) to establish a baseline picture of resident views of the council. This report examines how, if at all, views have changed over the period.

Throughout the report, we make comparisons to our national poll of British residents, which takes place every four months. Our most recent poll, made up of a representative random sample of 1,009 British adults (aged 18 or over), was carried out by telephone between 25 and 28 September 2015<sup>1</sup>.

Additionally, Annex B, provides an analysis of Rotherham's results against other authorities that have conducted comparable surveys. These data are drawn from councils that have used our *Are You Being Served*<sup>2</sup> questions on resident satisfaction and have uploaded their results to LG Inform (the LGA's free data and benchmarking service).

Comparison with local and national results provides useful context; however, many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level, including local demographics. Therefore, while the results of the polling in Rotherham provides a good high-level indication of residents' views of Rotherham and its council, it is important that these polling results are seen as complementary to a wider approach to understanding and responding to communities at a local level.

## Methodology

Between 4 and 7 December 2015, a statistically representative random sample of 528 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) was polled by telephone.<sup>3</sup>

The polling was based on a landline sample. While this means that mobile-only households were not included in the sample, the data has been weighted to the known profile of the area, to ensure it is representative.

The question set is outlined in Annex A for information. These are the key questions that the LGA uses regularly in polling, and were developed and tested by the LGA and Ipsos MORI, and then modified and agreed via consultation with the sector.

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<sup>1</sup> The results of previous LGA polling can be found here: <http://www.local.gov.uk/research-performance-and-improvement>

<sup>2</sup> <http://lginform.local.gov.uk/about-lg-inform/resident-satisfaction>

<sup>3</sup> Quotas were set on age and gender and the data weighted to the known Rotherham profile of age, gender and social grade. The polling was conducted by Populus Data Solutions.

Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the unweighted number of respondents who answered each question.

As mentioned, this report includes comparisons to the national results from September, where questions are the same, and to Rotherham's results from June 2015. Differences between the national and Rotherham results are only highlighted within the report where this is statistically significant<sup>4</sup>.

Please note the following when reading the report:

- Throughout the report percentages in figures and tables may add to more than 100 due to rounding.
- The following conventions are used in tables: '\*' - less than 0.5 per cent; '0' – no observations; '-' – category not applicable/data not available.
- Social grades are defined as:
  - AB: Higher and intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations
  - C1: Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations
  - C2: Skilled manual occupations
  - DE: Semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations

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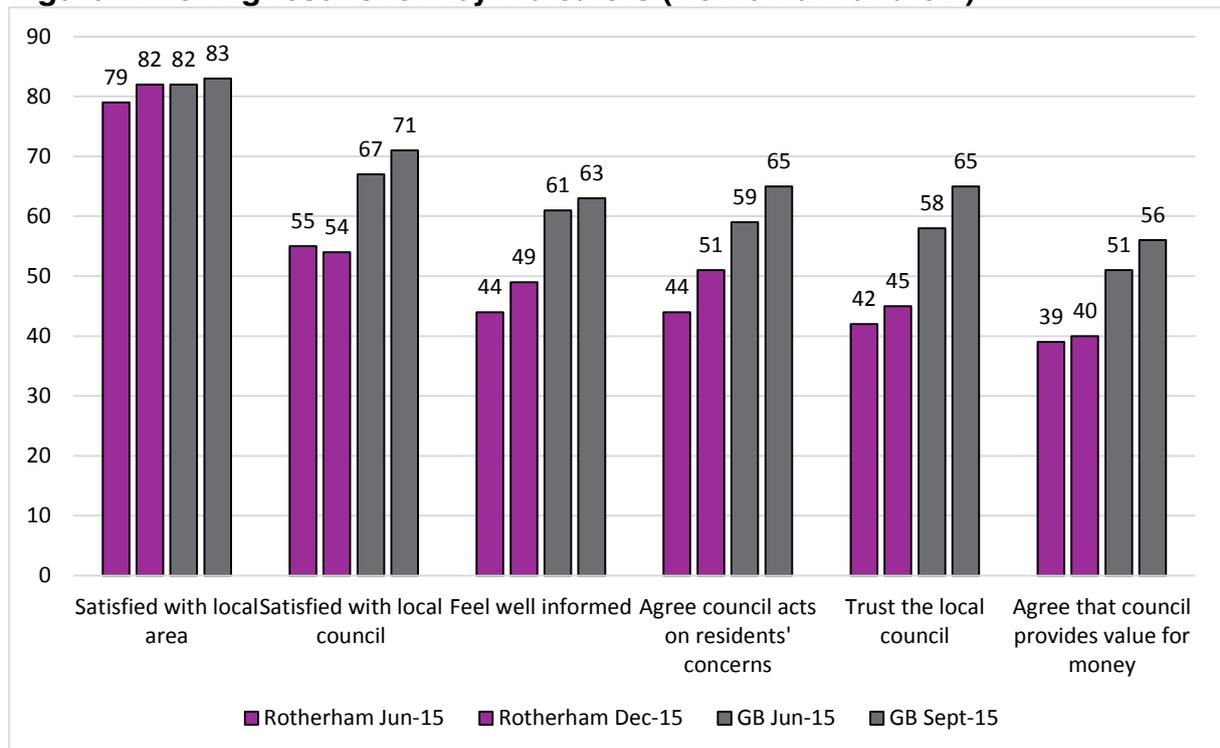
<sup>4</sup> Statistical significance is tested at the 95% level.

## Key findings

The results of our second Rotherham poll (known as Wave 2) shows satisfaction rose significantly in relation to the council's responsiveness (i.e. the extent to which the council acts on the concerns of local residents) between our first poll in June 2015 and our second poll in September 2015 (see Figure 1). However, satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live dropped significantly between polls (see Figure 2).

There was no significant change in satisfaction levels regarding overall satisfaction with local area, overall satisfaction with local council, feeling informed, residents' trust in the council, views on value for money and confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC). This means that while results were slightly higher (or lower in the case of satisfaction with the council) opinion did not vary enough between the two polls to indicate a meaningful change.

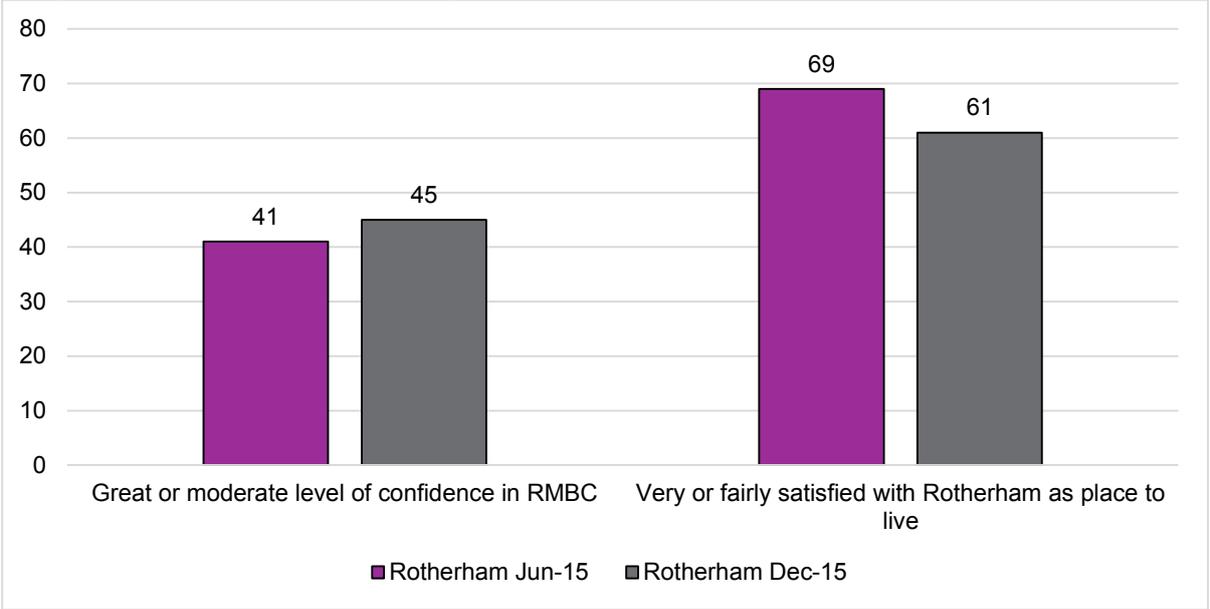
**Figure 1: Polling results for key indicators (Rotherham and GB)**



Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

Two additional questions from the Rotherham poll (which did not feature in our GB poll) asked respondents about their confidence in RMBC and satisfaction with the borough of Rotherham as a place to live. There was no significant change in confidence between polls. However, as reported, satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live dropped significantly. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Polling results for confidence in RMBC and satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live (June 2015 and December 2015)**



**Headline results:**

**Satisfaction with local area as a place to live**

- There was no significant change in overall satisfaction between polls.
- 82% of respondents in Wave 2 were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with their local area as a place to live – similar to the national result of 83%.
- While there was no overall change in satisfaction between polls, those in Wave 2 were more likely to say they were ‘fairly satisfied’ with their local area than those in Wave 1.

**Satisfaction with how RMBC runs things**

- There was no significant change in overall satisfaction between polls.
- 54% of respondents were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with the way RMBC runs things – significantly lower than the national figure of 71% (when asked about respective councils).

**Provision of value for money by RMBC**

- There was no significant change in overall agreement between polls.
- 40% of respondents ‘tended to agree’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that RMBC provides value for money – significantly lower than 56% nationally.
- While there was no overall change in agreement, respondents in Wave 2 were less likely to strongly disagree with the statement about value for money than those in Wave 1.

**Responsiveness of RMBC**

- There was a **significant increase** in views about responsiveness between polls.

- Respondents in Wave 2 were more likely than those in Wave 1 to say the council acts on the concerns of local residents; however, overall agreement sits significantly behind the national result (51% in RMBC and 65% nationally).

### **Keeping residents informed**

- There was no significant change in feelings of being informed between polls.
- 49% of respondents said that RMBC keeps residents 'very well informed' or 'fairly well informed' about the services and benefits it provides, which is significantly lower than 63% nationally.

### **Trust in RMBC**

- There was no significant change in overall trust between polls.
- 45% stated that they trust the council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount', which is significantly lower than 65% nationally.
- While there was no overall change in overall trust, those in Wave 1 were significantly more likely to say they didn't trust the council 'at all' than in Wave 2.

### **Confidence in RMBC**

- There was no significant change in overall confidence between polls.
- 45% of respondents said that they had 'a great amount' or 'a moderate amount' of confidence in RMBC, compared to 41% in Wave 2.
- While there was no significant difference in overall confidence, Wave 1 respondents were more likely to say 'not at all' when asked how much confidence they had in the council.

### **Satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live:**

- There was a **significant drop** in overall satisfaction between polls.
- 61% of respondents in Wave 2 said that overall, all things considered, they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with RMBC as a place to live, whereas the figure for Wave 1 was 69%.

## Rotherham's Polling Results

This section outlines the full set of polling results for our second Rotherham poll which took place in December 2015 (Wave 2). An earlier poll was conducted in June 2015 (Wave 1) to establish a baseline picture of resident views of the council.

### Overall satisfaction with local area

The vast majority of respondents were positive about their local area as a place to live – with 82% of respondents in Rotherham ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with their local area as a place to live, similar to the proportion nationally (83%).

Notable differences within Wave 2:

- Respondents in the 65 and over age group were more likely to have higher overall satisfaction with their local area as a place to live than those in the 18-24 group.
- Men were more likely than women to say they were ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ with their local area as a place to live.
- Those in the ‘DE’ group of semi-skilled, unskilled and unemployed people were more likely to have higher overall dissatisfaction than all other social grades.

Notable differences between polls were:

- Respondents in the national sample were more likely to be ‘very satisfied’ with their local area as a place to live compared to those in Rotherham’s Wave 2.
- Respondents in Wave 2 were more likely to be ‘fairly satisfied’ with their local area as a place to live than those in Wave 1, although there was no significant difference between waves in the number who reported being ‘very’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ overall.

**Table 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?<sup>5</sup>**

	June 2015		Dec 2015	Sept 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	GB (National)	Rotherham Wave 2	GB (National)
	%	%	%	%
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>83</b>
Very satisfied	35	31	31	37
Fairly satisfied	44	51	51	46
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	9	6	8
Fairly dissatisfied	7	6	6	6
Very dissatisfied	5	3	6	3
Don't know	-	-	-	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

<sup>5</sup> Local area was defined as “the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.

## Overall satisfaction with local council

Satisfaction with the way the local council runs things was significantly lower in Rotherham than nationally. In Wave 2, 54 per cent of respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied', compared to 71 per cent nationally. There was no significant increase/decrease in satisfaction between Waves 1 and 2.

**Table 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?<sup>6</sup>**

	June 2015		Dec 2015	Sept 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	GB (National)	Rotherham Wave 2	GB (National)
	%	%	%	%
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>71</b>
Very satisfied	12	16	15	21
Fairly satisfied	42	50	39	50
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	16	16	13
Fairly dissatisfied	16	10	18	9
Very dissatisfied	14	6	12	7
Don't know	*	1	*	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

## Value for money

The proportion of respondents who 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' that their local council provides value for money stood at 40 per cent in Rotherham, significantly lower than 56 per cent nationally. However, those in Wave 1 were more likely to disagree that the local council provides value for money than in Wave 2.

Notable differences within Wave 2 were:

- Those in the 65 and over age group were more likely than those aged 25-54 to 'strongly agree' that the council provides value for money.
- Those in the 'AB' group of managerial and professional workers were *less* likely than all other social grades to strongly agree that the council provides value for money.

<sup>6</sup> The GB polling asked about 'your local council' rather than naming an individual council.

**Table 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?<sup>7</sup>**

	June 2015		Dec 2015	Sept 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	GB (National)	Rotherham Wave 2	GB (National)
	%	%	%	%
<b>Strongly or tend to agree</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>56</b>
Strongly agree	8	9	10	13
Tend to agree	31	42	31	42
Neither agree nor disagree	28	22	33	23
Tend to disagree	19	18	17	12
Strongly disagree	13	8	8	8
Don't know	1	1	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

### Council responsiveness

Council responsiveness is an important measure of local accountability as it looks at whether councils are perceived to be receptive to local issues and problems. The proportion of respondents who answered positively as to whether RMBC acts on the concerns of local residents (a great deal or a fair amount) was significantly lower than the national results (51 per cent compared to 65 per cent).

Notable differences between polls were:

- Respondents in Wave 2 were more likely than those in Wave 1 to think that RMBC acts on the concerns of local residents ‘a great deal’ or ‘fair amount’ – however, those in the September national poll were more likely than in both waves to say this was the case (i.e. there was a significant positive change between waves but Wave 2 still sat significantly behind the national poll).
- Rotherham respondents in both waves were more likely to reply ‘not very much’ when asked about council responsiveness than in the most recent national poll.

<sup>7</sup> The following preamble was used: “In considering the next question, please think about the range of services [Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council/your council] provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services [Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council/your council] provides to the community. We would like your general opinion. ”

**Table 4: To what extent do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?**

	June 2015		Dec 2015	Sept 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	GB (National)	Rotherham Wave 2	GB (National)
	%	%	%	%
<b>A great deal or fair amount</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>65</b>
A great deal	5	8	7	10
A fair amount	39	51	44	54
Not very much	37	31	36	27
Not at all	12	7	9	7
Don't know	7	3	4	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

### Informed about the council

Forty-nine per cent of Rotherham respondents in Wave 2 said that their council keeps residents 'very well informed' or 'fairly well informed' about the services and benefits it provides. This is significantly lower than the most recent national result (63 per cent). There was no significant change from Wave 1.

**Table 5: Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**

	June 2015		Dec 2015	Sept 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	GB (National)	Rotherham Wave 2	GB (National)
	%	%	%	%
<b>Very or fairly well informed</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>63</b>
Very well informed	6	12	8	16
Fairly well informed	38	49	42	47
Not very well informed	37	28	35	26
Not well informed at all	15	11	14	10
Don't know	3	1	2	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

### Trust

Forty-five per cent of Rotherham respondents stated that they trust their council a great deal or a fair amount; this is significantly lower than national respondents, of which 65 per cent trusted their council a great deal or a fair amount. There was no significant change between waves. Fifteen per cent of Rotherham respondents said that they did not trust their local council at all, significantly more than those nationally (nine per cent).

Within Wave 2, women were more likely than men to say that they had a fair amount of confidence in the council. Men were more likely than women to say 'not at all' when asked this question.

**Table 6: How much do you trust Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?**

	June 2015		Dec 2015	Sept 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	GB (National)	Rotherham Wave 2	GB (National)
	%	%	%	%
<b>A great deal or fair amount</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>65</b>
A great deal	6	8	7	9
A fair amount	35	50	38	55
Not very much	34	28	39	25
Not at all	22	13	15	9
Don't know	2	1	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008; Dec 2015 Rotherham: 528; Sept 2015 GB: 1009

## Confidence

As Table 7 shows, 45 per cent of respondents in Wave 2 stated that they have a great or moderate amount of confidence in RMBC. Eighteen per cent of respondents said that they had no confidence at all in the council. The only significant difference between waves was that those in Wave 1 were more likely to say 'not at all' when asked about their confidence in the council.

Within Wave 2, women were more likely than men to report higher levels of confidence in the council (i.e. reply by saying to a great or moderate extent).

**Table 7: To what extent would you say that you have confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?**

	June 2015	Dec 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	Rotherham Wave 2
	%	%
<b>To a great or moderate extent</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>
To a great extent	6	7
To a moderate extent	35	38
To a small extent	33	37
Not at all	25	18
Don't know	1	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528

## Rotherham as a place to live

Finally, respondents were asked, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with Rotherham as a place to live. Significantly more respondents in Wave 1 said they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' (69 per cent) than in Wave 2 (61 per cent). Those in Wave 2 were significantly more likely to answer that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (20 per cent) than in Wave 1 (15 per cent).

Within Wave 2, respondents aged 45 and above were more likely than those aged 18-24 to say they were satisfied with Rotherham as a place to live. Those in the youngest age band were more likely to say they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied than those aged 45 and above.

**Table 8: Overall, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Rotherham Borough as a place to live?**

	June 2015	Dec 2015
	Rotherham Wave 1	Rotherham Wave 2
	%	%
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>61</b>
Very satisfied	19	18
Fairly satisfied	50	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15	20
Fairly dissatisfied	9	11
Very dissatisfied	7	7
Don't know	*	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528

## Annex A: Polling questions

1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

*Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home*

Very satisfied  
Fairly satisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Fairly dissatisfied  
Very dissatisfied  
Don't know

Your local area receives services from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is responsible for a range of services such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social care services and road maintenance.

2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?

Very satisfied  
Fairly satisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Fairly dissatisfied  
Very dissatisfied  
Don't know

3. In considering the next question, please think about the range of services Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?

Strongly agree  
Tend to agree  
Neither agree nor disagree  
Tend to disagree  
Strongly disagree  
Don't know

4. To what extent do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

5. Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?

- Very well informed
- Fairly well informed
- Not very well informed
- Not well informed at all
- Don't know

6. How much do you trust Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

7. To what extent would you say that you have confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?

- To a great extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- Not at all
- Don't know

8. Overall, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Rotherham Borough as a place to live?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

## Annex B: Authority level comparison

This section outlines Rotherham’s results against the results of other councils that have used the same method and set of questions. These councils have all complied with the LGA’s ‘Are You Being Served’ guidance<sup>8</sup>, which allows councils to upload their data to LG Inform (the LGA’s free data and benchmarking service), to benchmark their results against other councils.

This annex outlines results for those councils that have uploaded surveys conducted, like Rotherham, by telephone. To date, just a small number of forward-thinking councils have begun to participate in this benchmarking and upload their results to LG Inform, both to put their own results into context and provide a resource for the benefit of the whole sector. As more councils upload data, the analysis in this section can be updated. Other authorities have submitted data collected postally or face-to-face; these have not been included here as survey results collected via these different methods are not directly comparable to the results of telephone surveys. However, for interest, these further results, as well as more information about the guidance, can be found here: <http://lginform.local.gov.uk/about-lg-inform/resident-satisfaction>.

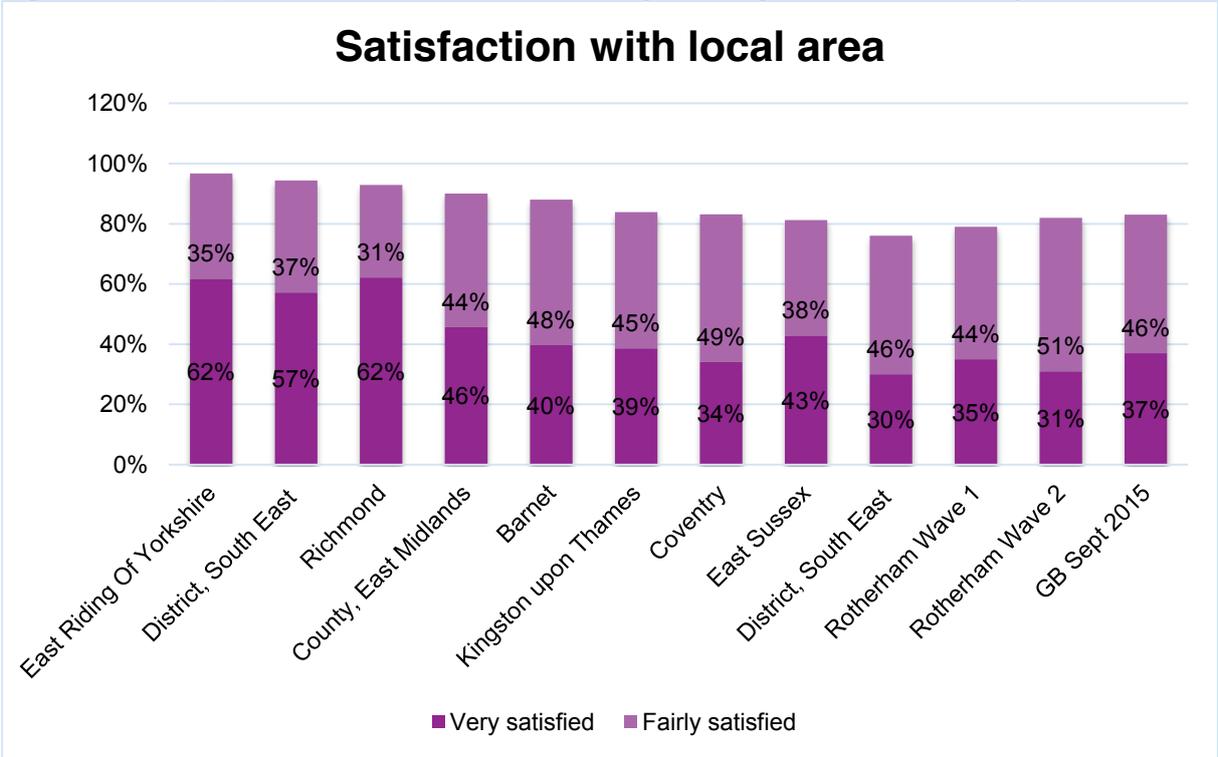
The table below provides details about the councils that have provided results to date. Note that not every council included every question in their survey; therefore the number of comparators differs by question.

<b>Council</b>	<b>Council type</b>	<b>Council region</b>	<b>Year survey conducted</b>	<b>Base</b>
Richmond	London Borough	Greater London	2012/13	1,428
Barnet	London Borough	Greater London	2012/13	1,602
Coventry	Metropolitan District	West Midlands	2013/14	1,111
East Sussex	County	South East	2013/14	1,006
Kingston upon Thames	London Borough	Greater London	2013/14	999
East Riding of Yorkshire	Unitary Authority	Yorkshire and Humber	2013/14	1,067
Anonymised	District	South East	2014/15	1,001
Anonymised	County	East Midlands	2014/15	1,103
Anonymised	District	South East	2014/15	500

<sup>8</sup> This comprises a set of resident satisfaction questions that councils can include in their local surveys and guidance on quality criteria which, when followed, allows them to make comparisons with other councils’ results.

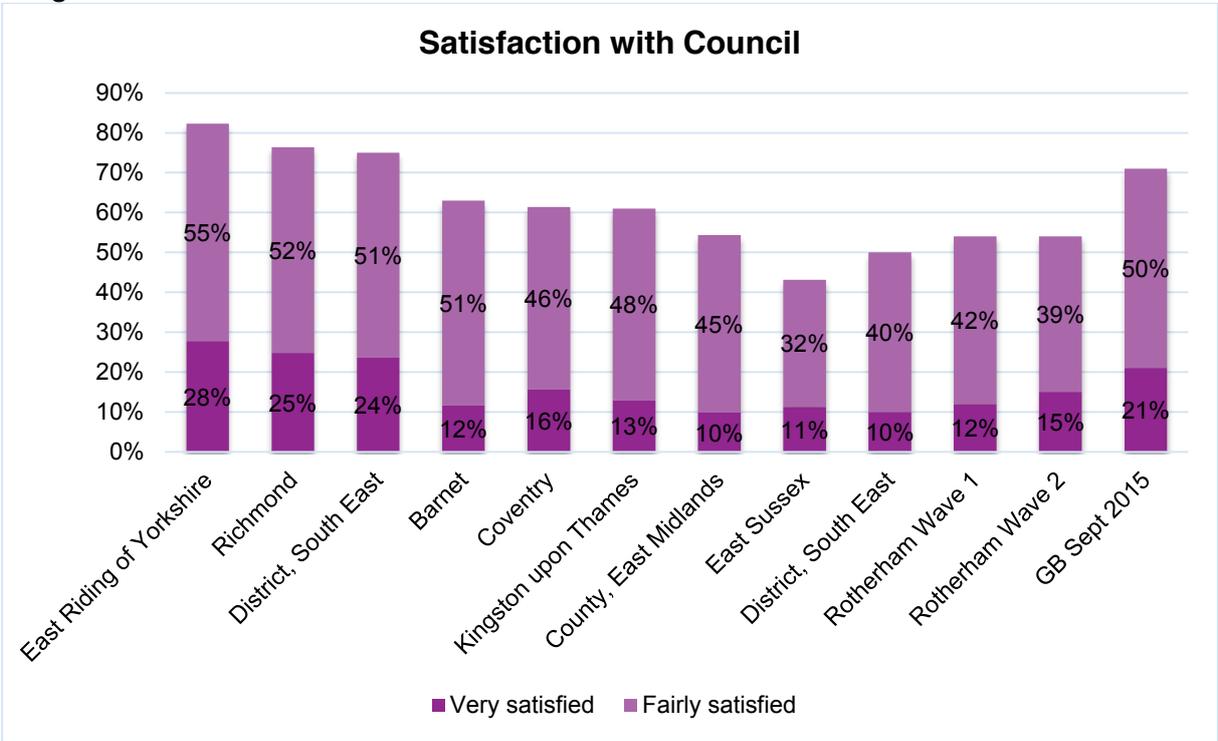
The charts below outline, for each question, Rotherham’s results against the results of the councils listed in the table above.

**Figure 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?<sup>9</sup>**



Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and councils’ own surveys

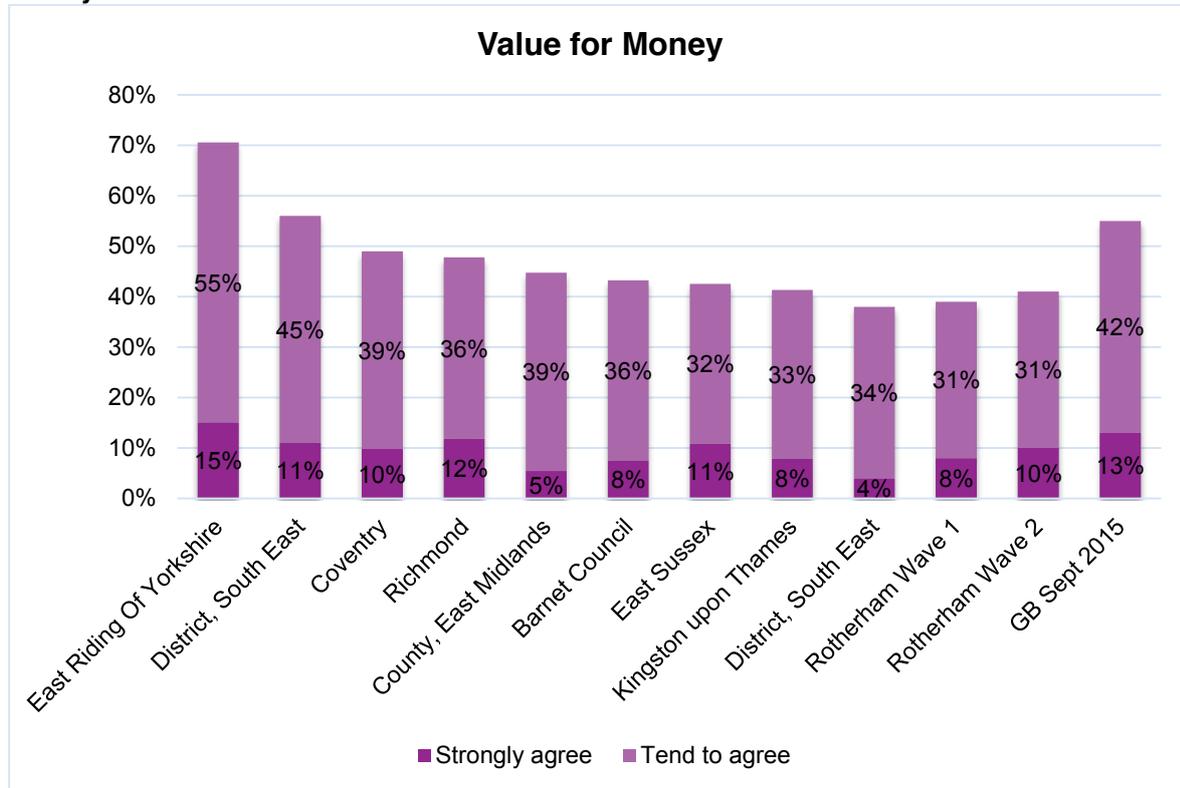
**Figure 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way [name of council] runs things?**



<sup>9</sup> Local area was defined as “the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home”

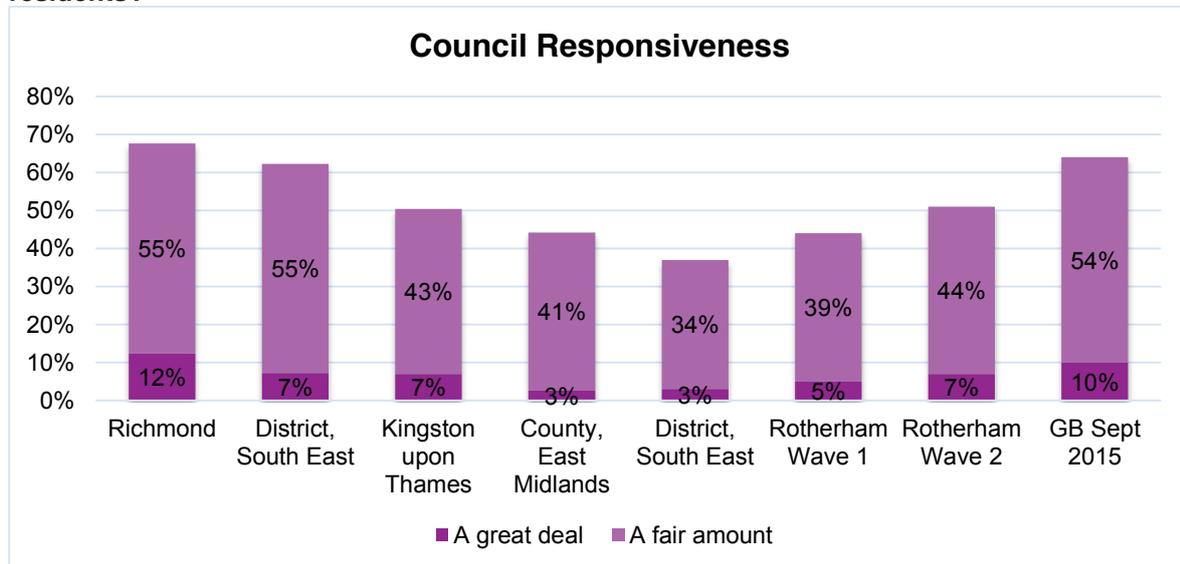
Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and councils' own surveys

**Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that [name of council] provides value for money?<sup>10</sup>**



Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and councils' own surveys

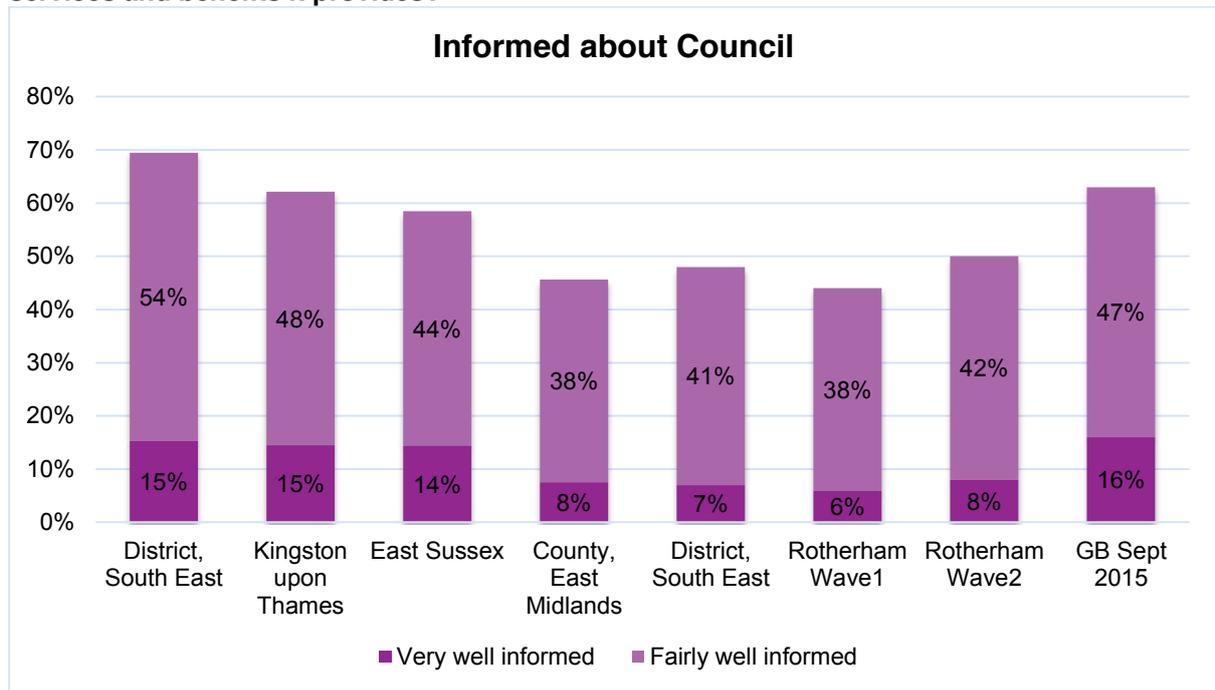
**Figure 4: To what extent do you think [name of council] acts on the concerns of local residents?**



Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and councils' own surveys

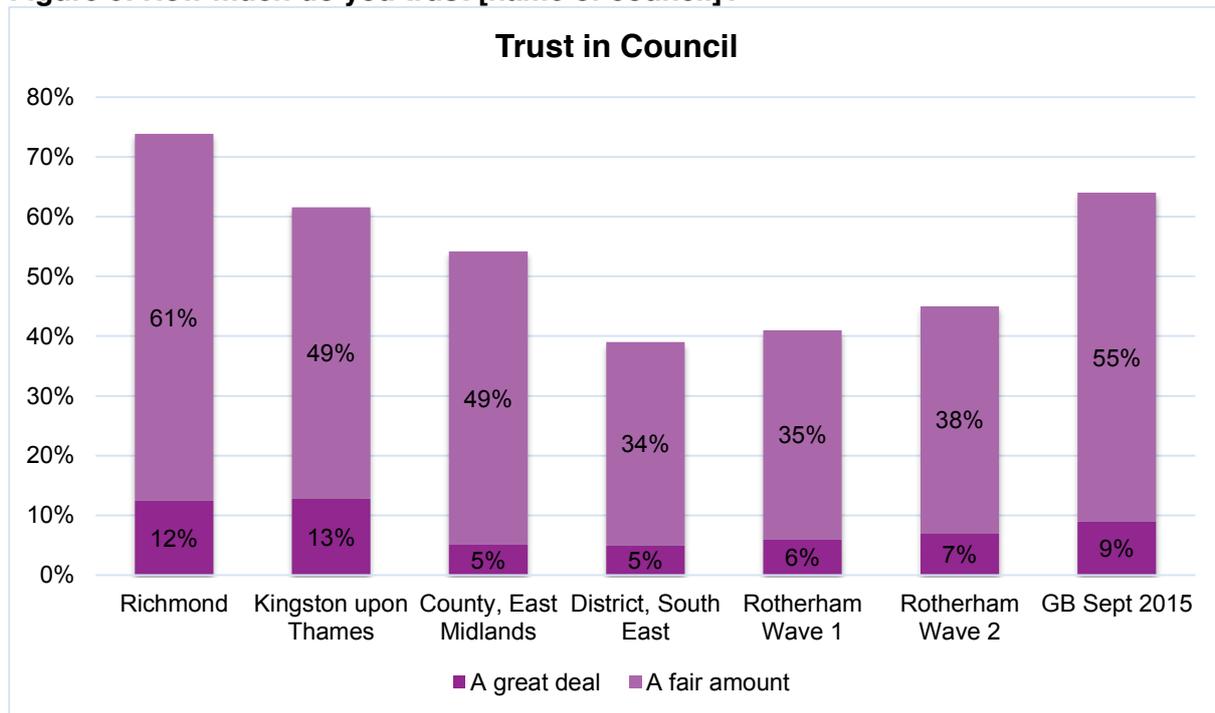
<sup>10</sup> The following preamble was used: 'In considering the next question, please think about the range of services [name of council] provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services [name of council] provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.'

**Figure 5: Overall, how well informed do you think [name of council] keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**



Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and councils' own surveys

**Figure 6: How much do you trust [name of council]?**



Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and councils' own surveys



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