

ROTHERHAM RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

Wave 10

June 2020

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

During 2015 and 2016, the LGA undertook four polling surveys to find out what residents of Rotherham Borough thought about Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) and the borough in general. The survey formed part of the improvement activity within the authority which began in May 2015, with the first survey taking place in June 2015. The survey asked about satisfaction with the Council, perceptions of value for money, responsiveness, trust and confidence in the Council, and satisfaction with aspects of life in Rotherham.

Following the ending of the LGA's support related to resident satisfaction, the Council has continued the surveys to monitor satisfaction levels and the extent to which the views of residents have changed over time. The Council has also wanted to explore residents' perceptions of safety, optimism about the future of the borough and town centre, and views on community cohesion.

This report details the findings of the most recent residents' satisfaction survey (Wave 10). It makes comparisons with the previous nine waves of the survey in Rotherham and with the LGA's most recent national survey of British residents. The latest national poll was made up of a representative random sample of 1,001 British adults (aged 18 or over) and was carried out by telephone by Populous Data Solutions in March 2020. The Rotherham survey sample was made up of 504 adults who were polled between 1st and 7th June 2020.

Comparing Rotherham's results to the national picture provides useful context although many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level. These include local demographics, social and economic factors, and media coverage prior to the survey.

It is impossible to ignore that the polling this year took place against a backdrop of the unprecedented impact of a global pandemic and during the Covid-19 national lockdown, and in Wave 10 a new local question about satisfaction with the council's response to Coronavirus has been included. The needs of residents who required immediate and urgent support during this period has driven the response from RMBC and will continue to influence and drive service delivery for the foreseeable future. Therefore, whilst the results of the polling in Rotherham provide a good high-level indication of resident views of Rotherham and its council, it is important that they are seen as complementary to a wider approach to understanding and responding to communities at the local level at this current time.

As noted in the Methodology section, the relatively small sample size in Rotherham means that small variations from one survey wave to another should not be interpreted as indicating a significant change in opinion. The results of this survey should be seen in the wider context provided by the patterns of the nine surveys since 2015.

METHODOLOGY

Between 1st and 7th June 2020, a statistically representative random sample of 504 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) was polled mainly by landline telephone using quotas set by age and gender. The data was further weighted to reflect the age, gender and social grade profile of Rotherham. This ensures that the sample is as representative of adults in the borough as possible as there is often a bias in the profile of people who respond to any survey. The use of landline telephones has become increasingly problematic in surveying young adults aged 18-34 so additional people were polled by mobile phone to boost the number of younger respondents. Previous surveys took place in June 2015, December 2015, June 2016, December 2016, June 2017, February 2018, June 2018, December 2018 and June 2019.

The questions used in the Rotherham survey are outlined in Annex A for information. Most of the questions asked also feature in the LGA's regular national polling on resident satisfaction. These questions were developed and tested by the LGA and Ipsos MORI, then modified and agreed via consultation with wider local government. Core questions have been repeated across all nine Rotherham surveys. Additional questions about perceptions of safety, community cohesion and optimism have also been asked since June 2017. A local question about satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live has been asked in each survey apart from Wave 5.

Where tables and figures report the base, this description refers to the whole 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 with the LGA's national results, where the questions asked are the same. Differences between the national survey and Rotherham's results are only highlighted within the report where they are statistically significant. The confidence interval of the Rotherham survey is 4.3 per cent at the 95 per cent level which means that only a difference of five per cent or more between different survey results indicates a statistically significant change. Caution is needed when comparing the results of individual surveys and interpreting small variations between waves. Where results fluctuate it can be useful to consider the average of several waves combined to provide a larger sample size and reduce the effect of random variation. For example, the 95 per cent confidence interval for four waves combined would be 2.15 so a three per cent difference would be statistically significant.

Please note the following when reading this report:

- Throughout the report, percentages in figures and tables may add up 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.

KEY FINDINGS

Rotherham MBC commissioned a tenth survey (known as Wave 10) to capture what residents of Rotherham currently think about their local area, the wider borough and the Council. The questions included six measures of resident satisfaction which also feature in the LGA's regular national polling. Additional questions were also asked about residents' feelings of safety, optimism about the future of the borough and town centre, and their views on community cohesion.

From the initial survey in 2015 (Wave 1) to June 2020 (Wave 10) the overall direction of travel across the majority of the survey questions is positive. The gap between Rotherham's results and the national average has narrowed on all measures where comparison is possible, in most cases by a significant amount.

Resident Satisfaction Measures

The results from Wave 10 point to four key features of resident satisfaction (see also Figure 1).

- **Satisfaction with local area as a place to live:** The great majority of Rotherham residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (84 per cent of respondents were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied), the highest result since the survey began and exceeding the national average (81 per cent) by 3 percentage points.
- **Satisfaction with the way Rotherham MBC runs things:** 54 per cent reported feeling 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way RMBC runs things – higher than the figure in June 2019 (48 per cent) and above the average of 51.5 per cent across all ten surveys. Satisfaction with the council in Rotherham remains well below the national average of 63 per cent.
- **Trust in Rotherham MBC:** 56 per cent said they trusted Rotherham Council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' – higher than in any previous wave of the survey. Whilst the national figure for trust in the council (59 per cent) is slightly higher than in Rotherham, the average level of trust in RMBC has increased from 46.5 per cent in the early Waves 1-5, to 50 per cent in the more recent Waves 6-10.
- **Provision of value for money:** The proportion of Rotherham respondents who agreed that RMBC provides value for money fell from 43 per cent in June 2017 to 36 per cent in February 2018. These were the highest and lowest results for this question across the previous six polls, illustrating the volatility in opinion as measured by the surveys. The December 2018 and June 2019 results were both 38 per cent, and in June 2020 there was a slight increase to 41 per cent, which is still lower than the national average of 48 per cent.

Opinions on how **well informed** residents were by RMBC have generally become more positive with the results in Waves 6 to 10 being significantly above the average

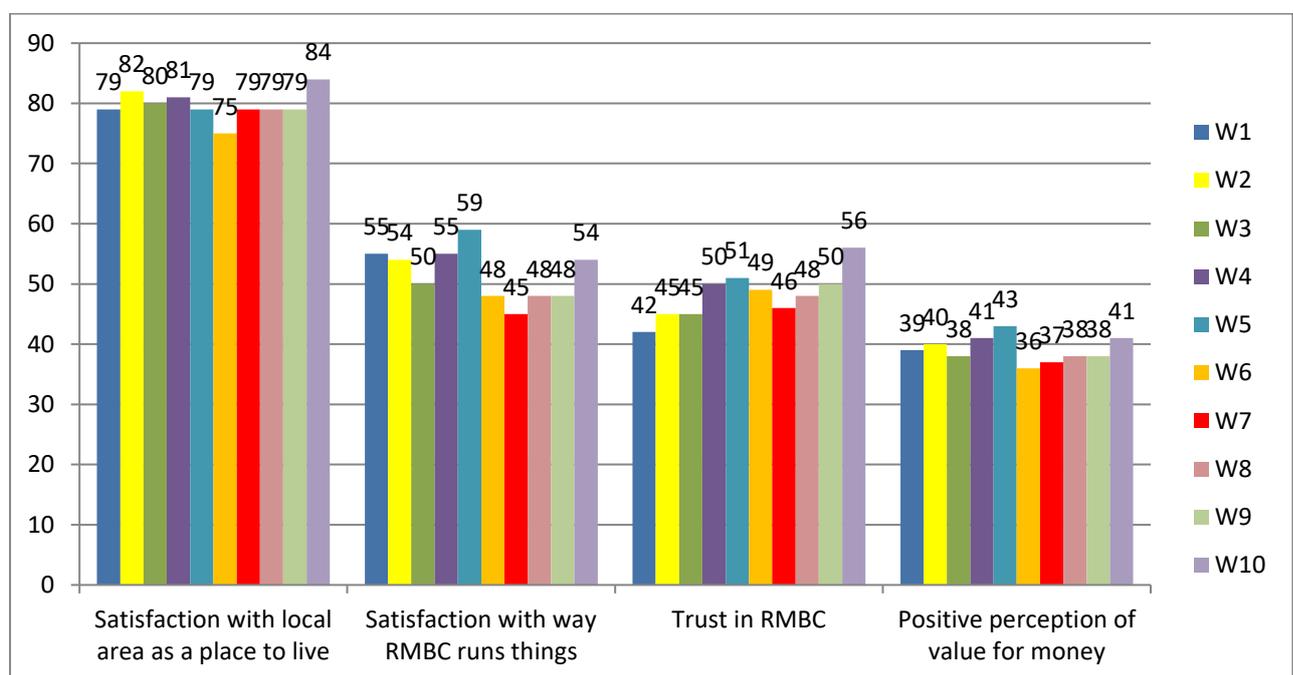
of the first five polls (53.5 per cent and 46.6 per cent, respectively), although positive responses have fluctuated by up to fifteen percentage points between the polls.

However, the proportion of respondents replying favourably remains just below the national average (58 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively).

Views on the **responsiveness** of RMBC in June 2020 were slightly more positive at 51 per cent than the survey average of 47.5 per cent. Both this and the latest figure are well below the national average of 58 per cent.

Figure 1 Key Findings (Waves 1-10)

Resident satisfaction measures: key findings (%)



Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504

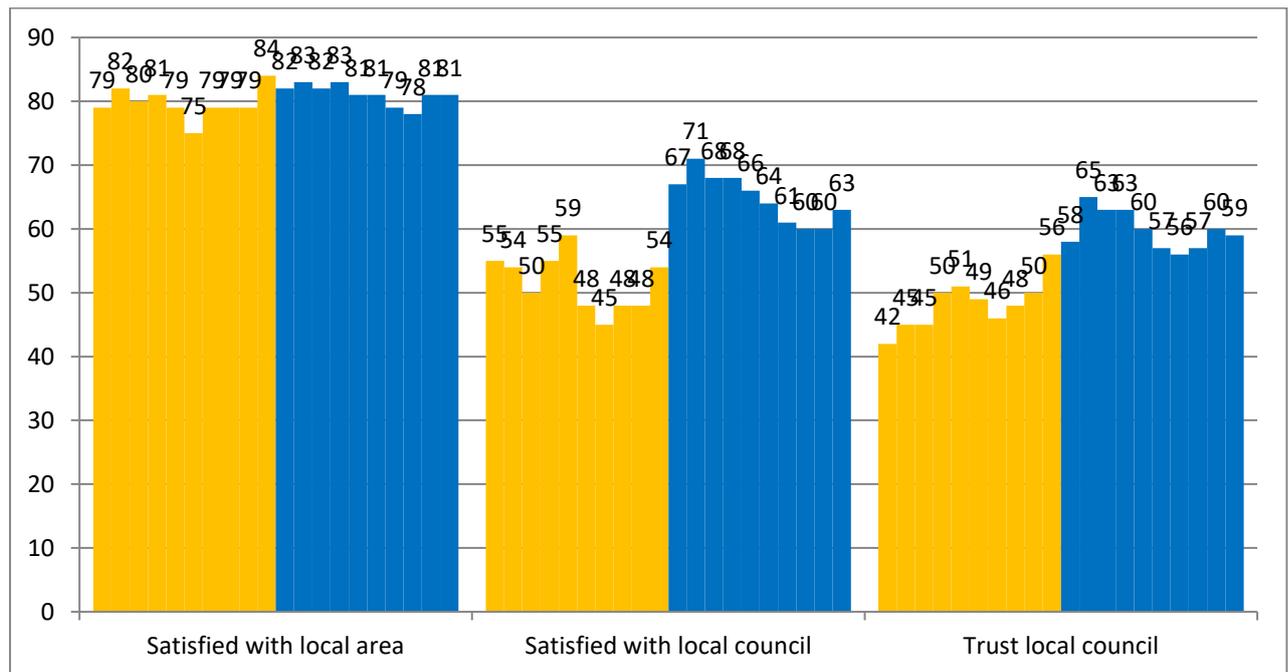
Figure 1 summarises the survey results for four indicators of resident satisfaction used in the Rotherham survey, combining the positive results achieved for each question (e.g. ‘a great amount’ and ‘a fair amount’).

Figure 1 shows a consistently high level of satisfaction with residents’ local area as a place to live and people remain far more satisfied on this measure than any other. Although satisfaction with the way the Council runs things is slightly lower than in 2015-16, trust in the Council has increased since 2015-16. Positive perceptions of value for money are consistently the lowest of the four measures, averaging 39 per cent with.

Figure 2 summarises the results for three indicators of resident satisfaction used in the Rotherham survey, combining the positive results for each question (e.g. ‘a great amount’ and ‘a fair amount’). The results are presented alongside those from the LGA’s national polling survey (in blue), for the nearest comparable time period.

Figure 2 Results for Key Indicators (Rotherham and GB)

Resident satisfaction (%) Rotherham Waves 1-10 (orange) and GB (blue) 2015-20

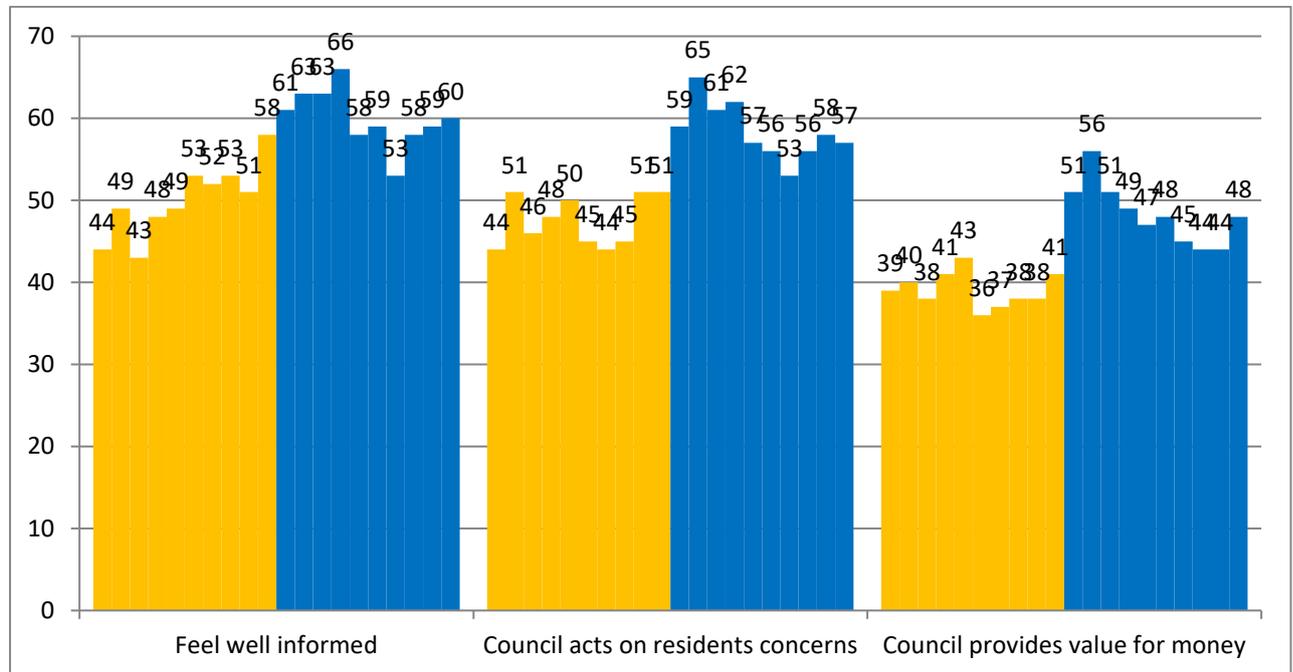


Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): Rotherham June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; GB: between 1,001 and 1009

Figure 2 shows consistently high and stable satisfaction with residents’ local area as a place to live, with this measure generally seeing Rotherham mirroring the national average. Satisfaction with councils nationally has fallen steadily since December 2015 but has seen an increase in the most recent survey, whilst the picture in Rotherham is less clear over time with a 6 percent increase in satisfaction in Wave 10. Trust in Rotherham Council has tended to be higher since 2016 than previously, which initially contrasted with declining trust in councils nationally, although this is now improving in line with continued improvement in Rotherham.

Figure 3: Polling Results for Council Indicators (Rotherham and GB)

Resident satisfaction (%) Rotherham Waves 1-10 (orange) and GB (blue) 2015-20



Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): Rotherham: June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504. GB: between 1,001 and 1,009.

Figure 3 follows the format of Figure 1 in comparing the ten local waves (in orange) to the national picture (in blue). The chart shows that people in Rotherham now feel better informed about council services than in 2015/16 whilst nationally the picture is generally improving after a steep decline in June 2018. Nationally, the proportion of people who think their council provides value for money has fallen but the picture in Rotherham is less clear. The patterns for councils acting on residents’ concerns are less clear although the more recent data shows a slight increase locally.

Confidence in RMBC

In each survey wave, respondents were asked to state the extent to which they had confidence in RMBC. In Wave 10, 54 per cent said they had a ‘great’ or ‘moderate’ amount of confidence in the Council. This was higher than all the other surveys – and 13 per cent higher than in June 2015. There is no national comparison for this question.

Feelings of Safety, Optimism and Cohesion

The following results were obtained in relation to three additional questions that were added to the polling survey from Wave 5 onwards:

Feelings of safety: Lower feelings of safety in the local area were reported by respondents in Rotherham than those reported nationally. Ninety per cent felt ‘very safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ during the day and 63 per cent felt the same after dark (91 per cent and 74 per cent, nationally). There was a significant gender difference in feelings of safety after dark – 70 per cent of men said they felt ‘very safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ but only 57 per cent of women.

Feelings of optimism: Optimism among respondents about the future of Rotherham as a place to live was 58 per cent (either ‘very optimistic’ or ‘fairly optimistic’), but only 22 per cent felt the same about the future of Rotherham town centre (either ‘very optimistic’ or ‘fairly optimistic’), the latter being lower than in June 2017 but slightly better than more recent results. There is no national comparison for these questions.

Community cohesion perceptions: The results show a significant increase in people who agree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (42 per cent agree, 27 per cent gave a neutral response and 29 per cent disagree in Wave 10). This was an increase from 32 per cent who agreed in Wave 9 (and 39 per cent who disagreed). There is no national comparison for this question.

ROTHERHAM’S SURVEY RESULTS

This section outlines the full set of results for the tenth Rotherham survey which took place in June 2020 (Wave 10).

Satisfaction with Local Area as a Place to Live

Satisfaction with the local area within Rotherham as a place to live has remained high and fairly stable since the first satisfaction survey in June 2015 (see Table 1). Across the ten waves, the average level of satisfaction has been 80 per cent and no previous survey result has varied from this by more than four per cent, until this year where an increase in satisfaction of 5% has been recorded. The proportion of respondents who were either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ across all nine previous polls was very similar to the national average over the same time period.

Eighty-four per cent of respondents in Wave 10 reported feeling ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ which is the highest recorded level across all waves and 3% higher than the proportion observed nationally in March 2020. Young adults (aged 18-24 years) were the *least* likely to report being ‘satisfied’ (78 per cent) although a large

percentage (15 per cent) expressed a neutral view. Older middle-aged people (aged 45-54 years) are the *most* likely to be satisfied with their local area (87 per cent).

It should be noted that the 'local area' refers to the local neighbourhood or village where residents live and not the whole of Rotherham. Residents' satisfaction with their local area far exceeds their satisfaction with Rotherham borough which was only 64 per cent in Wave 10 (see Table 11).

Table 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area (within a 15-20 minute walk from your home) as a place to live?											
	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Mar 20
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%									
Very or fairly satisfied	79	82	80	81	79	75	79	79	79	84	81
Very satisfied	35	31	35	35	35	29	33	32	30	38	31
Fairly satisfied	44	51	45	45	44	46	46	47	49	47	50
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	6	9	8	8	11	8	7	9	7	8
Fairly dissatisfied	7	6	6	7	8	9	7	10	7	6	7
Very dissatisfied	5	6	5	4	4	5	6	5	5	2	4
Don't know	-	-	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	-	-

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504
Mar 20 GB: 1,001

Satisfaction with how Rotherham MBC runs things

Fifty-four per cent of respondents in Wave 10 were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way RMBC runs things (see Table 2). This was the first significant increase since the dip from a peak of 59% in June 2017 to a low of 45% a year later.

Respondents aged 18-24 were most likely to report being satisfied with the way the Council runs things (64%). Residents aged 45-54 were most likely to be dissatisfied (32%).

Compared to the most recent national figure for satisfaction with the council (63 per cent), the figure for Rotherham is still significantly lower.

Table 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?											
	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 20
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very or fairly satisfied	55	54	50	55	59	48	45	48	48	54	63
Very satisfied	12	15	12	14	15	10	11	12	10	11	15
Fairly satisfied	42	39	38	41	43	38	33	36	38	43	48
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	16	17	13	15	14	14	14	18	18	18
Fairly dissatisfied	16	18	20	19	17	21	22	22	17	17	11
Very dissatisfied	14	12	13	11	9	16	19	16	17	11	7
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	*	1	*	*	*	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; Mar 2020 GB: 1,001

Provision of Value for Money by Rotherham MBC

Forty-one per cent of respondents would 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' that Rotherham MBC provides value for money (see Table 3). This is close to the average level of satisfaction for this question across all ten polls (opinion rarely varies enough to indicate a significant change), though it does represent an increase in satisfaction of 3 per cent since June 2019. The result is still significantly lower than the proportion observed nationally (48 per cent).

It is notable that, on average, 31 per cent of respondents expressed a neutral opinion and 28 per cent expressed a negative view. Younger respondents (aged 18-34 years) and older people (aged 65 and above) were most likely to agree that the Council provides value for money whilst middle aged people (aged 45-54 years) were most likely to disagree.

Table 3: To what extent do you think that the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?											
	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 2020
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly or tend to agree	39	40	38	41	43	36	37	38	38	41	48
Strongly agree	8	10	7	7	9	7	8	8	7	8	9
Tend to agree	31	31	31	34	34	30	29	30	32	33	38
Neither agree nor disagree	28	33	29	30	30	27	28	28	29	31	31
Tend to disagree	19	17	19	19	19	21	22	20	18	18	14
Strongly disagree	13	8	13	9	7	14	13	13	14	10	7
Don't know	1	1	*	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; Mar 2020 GB: 1,001

Responsiveness of Rotherham MBC

Council responsiveness is an important measure of local accountability as it relates to whether councils are perceived to be receptive to local issues and problems raised (see Table 4). Residents were asked for their opinion about services provided by the Council to the community as a whole, as well as to their own household.

Fifty-one per cent of respondents in Rotherham answered positively when asked about the extent to which RMBC acts on the concerns of residents (i.e. 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'). This is the same as the findings last year (Wave 9) but considerably lower than the national result (57 per cent). The youngest respondents (aged 18-24) were most likely to think that the Council acts on the concerns of local residents whilst those aged 55-64 were least likely to have this view.

Table 4: To what extent do you think that the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?											
	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 2020
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal or fair amount	44	51	46	48	50	45	44	45	51	51	57
A great deal	5	7	6	6	8	5	6	6	5	8	8
A fair amount	39	44	40	42	42	41	38	39	46	43	49
Not very much	37	36	37	36	37	37	39	36	34	36	31
Not at all	12	9	13	11	9	13	13	14	12	10	8
Don't know	7	4	4	5	3	5	4	6	3	3	4

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; Mar 2020 GB: 1,001

Keeping Residents Informed

Fifty-eight per cent of Rotherham respondents in Wave 10 said that RMBC keeps residents 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed about the services and benefits it provides (see Table 5). This is just below the most recent national result (60 per cent) but above the average for Rotherham surveys (50 per cent) and fifteen percentage points higher than in June 2016. Younger respondents (aged 18-44) were more likely than older people to think that the Council keeps residents well informed.

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

	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 2020
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very or fairly well informed	44	49	43	48	49	53	52	53	51	58	60
Very well informed	6	8	7	8	7	7	10	9	7	12	12
Fairly well informed	38	42	36	40	42	46	42	45	44	46	48
Not very well informed	37	35	38	34	39	34	31	31	34	29	25
Not well informed at all	15	14	18	17	11	13	16	15	14	12	14
Don't know	3	2	*	1	1	1	1	1	*	1	2

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; Mar 2020 GB: 1,001

Trust in Rotherham MBC

Fifty-six per cent of respondents said they trusted Rotherham Council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' (see Table 6), an increase of 6 per cent since Wave 9 (and the highest rating since the survey began in 2015). Trust in councils nationally is 59 per cent, a little higher than trust in RMBC.

The local survey results since December 2016, averaging 51 per cent, show an improvement in trust compared to the first three polls (average 44 per cent). The level of trust in RMBC is lowest amongst people aged 45-64 and highest amongst those aged 18-24 years.

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

	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 2020
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal or fair amount	42	45	45	50	51	49	46	48	50	56	59
A great deal	6	7	5	9	9	8	8	7	4	7	8
A fair amount	35	38	40	42	43	41	38	42	46	48	50
Not very much	34	39	32	32	32	30	34	33	33	29	29
Not at all	22	15	22	15	15	20	18	17	16	14	11
Don't know	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; Mar 2020 GB: 1,001

Residents' trust in their council is an important aspect of reputation, which is likely to impact on issues such as democratic legitimacy and engagement. In terms of what the word 'trust' means to residents, it is useful to look at the results of the cognitive testing carried out as part of the review to develop this question.

The testing indicated that respondents based their answers on criteria including: transparency and openness, upholding promises, responding to residents, reliability, and recollection of 'scandal'. Recollection of the past failings of RMBC in relation to child sexual exploitation is likely to be one factor which makes trust in Rotherham MBC lower than the national average for councils.

Confidence in Rotherham MBC

As Table 7 shows, 54 per cent of respondents in Wave 10 stated that they have confidence in Rotherham MBC (either 'to a great extent' or 'to a moderate extent'). This is the highest score since the survey began (and an increase of 6% from Wave 9). It is a significantly higher proportion than for Wave 1 (June 2015) and higher than the average of the last seven polls (48 per cent), which show an improvement in confidence since the first three polls (average 43 per cent). The youngest respondents (aged 18-24) have the highest confidence in the Council. There is no national comparison for this question.

The results for trust (Table 6) and confidence (Table 7) in the Council show a very close alignment which demonstrates a strong association between the two in the public mind. People who trust the Council are almost certain to have confidence in the organisation.

Table 7: To what extent would you say that you have confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?										
	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
To a great or moderate extent	41	45	44	49	50	46	45	45	48	54
To a great extent	6	7	4	7	7	6	8	7	6	8
To a moderate extent	35	38	39	42	43	41	38	38	42	46
To a small extent	33	37	32	31	35	33	35	35	34	30
Not at all	25	18	23	19	14	20	20	20	18	16
Don't know	1	*	1	1	1	*	*	*	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504

Feelings of Safety

The last six Rotherham surveys asked two questions about feelings of personal safety, which also feature in the LGA's national survey. Ninety per cent of respondents in Rotherham said they felt 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' during the day when outside in their local area. Sixty-three per cent reported the same feelings of safety after dark, an improvement on the average for the last six surveys (59 per cent), whilst 20 per cent felt unsafe.

Feelings of safety during the day (90 per cent) have improved steadily and are now very close to the figures observed nationally (91 per cent), feelings of safety after dark have also improved (63 per cent) but remain lower than the figures observed nationally (74 per cent).

Table 8: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day? How safe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?														
	During the day							After dark						
	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 2020	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Mar 2020
	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very safe or fairly safe	83	88	83	85	87	90	91	59	58	61	54	59	63	74
Very safe	34	42	45	39	40	50	61	17	15	17	14	15	19	35
Fairly safe	49	46	39	46	47	40	30	43	43	44	41	44	44	39
Neither safe nor unsafe	7	6	9	5	6	6	5	10	15	13	13	15	17	12
Fairly unsafe	5	4	6	6	5	3	2	18	17	17	20	16	13	9
Very unsafe	4	2	1	3	2	2	2	10	8	7	11	9	6	5
Don't know	*	*	1	*	-	-	*	2	3	1	1	1	*	1

Base (all respondents): June 2017 Rotherham: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; March 2020 GB: 1,001

There was a significant difference between men and women's feelings of safety after dark in the Rotherham survey, with 70 per cent of men reporting feeling 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' compared to only 57 per cent of women. People aged 65 and above are most likely to feel safe after dark and those aged 35-44 least likely to feel safe, which may relate to the places people in these age groups visit after dark. People with low skilled manual occupational backgrounds are least likely to feel safe.

Feelings of Optimism

The last six Rotherham surveys have asked two questions about people’s feelings of optimism about Rotherham as a place to live and Rotherham town centre. A majority of respondents (58 per cent) reported feeling ‘very optimistic’ or ‘fairly optimistic’ about the future of Rotherham as a place to live (see Table 9), this is a more positive response than in previous surveys. Young people (aged 18-24) were the most likely to be very optimistic about the future of Rotherham and men were more optimistic than women overall.

Far fewer respondents felt as positive about the future Rotherham town centre (22 per cent felt ‘very optimistic’ or ‘fairly optimistic’) as they did about the future of the wider borough. This is in line with the average of 21 per cent for all six surveys, although the last five results were all lower than in June 2017, which could reflect more empty retail units. Forty per cent of residents were not optimistic at all about the town centre, slightly lower than in the previous survey. People aged 45-64 years were most likely not to be optimistic at all, whilst young people aged 18-24 years were the most optimistic. Low skilled workers were notably more optimistic than professional and managerial workers. There is no comparable national data for these questions.

Table 9: How optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham as a place to live? And, more specifically, how optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham town centre?

	Rotherham as a place to live						Rotherham town centre					
	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020
	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very optimistic or fairly optimistic	53	52	54	53	52	58	26	18	21	19	22	22
Very optimistic	7	10	10	11	8	10	5	4	3	2	3	4
Fairly optimistic	45	42	44	42	45	48	21	14	17	16	19	18
Not very optimistic	34	30	29	28	32	29	38	34	36	32	35	36
Not optimistic at all	13	17	16	18	15	13	33	43	41	47	41	40
Don't know	*	1	1	1	1	*	3	4	2	3	2	2

Base (all respondents): June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504

Community Cohesion Perceptions

The last six Rotherham surveys have asked for views on whether people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is a question commonly used to measure community cohesion and the survey has consistently generated mixed responses. In Wave 10 there has been a significant shift towards respondents

agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together (42 per cent), with 27 per cent giving a neutral response and 29 per cent disagreeing. Interpretation of the question could relate to views about residents' local area and/or perceptions about Rotherham as a whole, but views about community relations since the question was first asked in June 2017 have never been so positive.

Young people (aged 18-24) were more likely than average to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together, but younger people (aged 18-34) were also the most likely to disagree with the statement. Skilled manual workers were most likely to strongly disagree with the statement.

Table 10: To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?						
	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Dec-18	Jun-19	Jun-20
	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree or tend to agree	34	32	32	29	32	42
Strongly agree	5	7	7	7	6	11
Tend to agree	28	25	24	21	26	31
Neither agree nor disagree	27	29	30	27	28	27
Tend to disagree	23	18	20	23	20	17
Strongly disagree	15	18	17	19	19	12
Don't know	2	3	1	3	1	2

Base (all respondents): June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504

The following explanation was added after this question: "By getting on well together, we mean living alongside each other with respect."

Satisfaction with Rotherham as a Place to Live

Respondents were asked, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with Rotherham borough as a place to live. Sixty-four per cent of respondents said that, overall, they were satisfied. This was above the average of the previous surveys (61.5 per cent) although there has been considerable fluctuation between waves. The average of the five most recent surveys (59 per cent) is notably lower than in the first four waves (64.5 per cent).

The variation in satisfaction with the borough as a place to live differs from residents' more consistent satisfaction with their local area as a place to live (Table 1).

Residents are significantly more satisfied with their own local area (average 80 per cent) than the borough as a whole (average 61.5 per cent). This could reflect the lower levels of optimism about the future of Rotherham as a place to live and the much lower level of optimism about the town centre (Table 9).

Within Wave 10, respondents aged 25-34 were most likely to feel satisfied with Rotherham as a place to live, with 70 per cent satisfied. Respondents aged 18-24

had the lowest level of satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live, with only 53 per cent satisfied. Dissatisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live was highest amongst people aged 65 and above.

This question was not asked in Wave 5 so there is no data for this in Table 11. There is no national comparison for this question.

Table 11: Overall, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Rotherham Borough as a place to live?										
	Jun 2015	Dec 2015	Jun 2016	Dec 2016	Jun 2017	Feb 2018	Jun 2018	Dec 2018	Jun 2019	Jun 2020
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 10
	%									
Very or fairly satisfied	69	61	62	66	-	56	57	61	58	64
Very satisfied	19	18	18	19	-	13	17	14	15	16
Fairly satisfied	50	43	44	47	-	43	41	46	43	48
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15	20	17	15	-	21	18	15	16	19
Fairly dissatisfied	9	11	13	12	-	15	14	14	15	9
Very dissatisfied	7	7	8	7	-	8	11	10	10	7
Don't know	-	-	*	*	-	*	*	*	1	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504

Response to the Coronavirus crisis

In Wave 10 a new local survey question was included which asked respondents how they feel the council has responded to the Coronavirus crisis. Seventy per cent of respondents said that the council had responded very or quite well. Overall, women (72%) were more likely than men (67%) to feel that the council had responded well. Young people aged 18-24 were the most positive about the council's response, with 85% agreeing that the council had responded very or quite well, whereas respondents aged 65+ were least likely to feel that the council had responded well (59%). There is no national comparison for this question.

Table 12: How well do you think the council has responded to the Coronavirus crisis?	
	Jun 2020
	Wave 10
	%
Very or quite well	70
Very well	19
Quite well	51
Not very well	17
Not well at all	7
Don't know	6

Base (all respondents): June 2020 Rotherham: 504

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

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.

3. 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

5. Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents?

- Very well informed
- Fairly well informed
- Not very well informed
- Not well informed at all

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

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all

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

8. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?

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

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Fairly unsafe
- Very unsafe

9. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?

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

10. How optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham as a place to live?

Very optimistic
Fairly optimistic
Not very optimistic
Not optimistic at all

11. And, more specifically, how optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham town centre?

Very optimistic
Fairly optimistic
Not very optimistic
Not optimistic at all

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together? *By getting on well together, we mean living alongside each other with respect.*

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree

13. 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

14. How well do you think the council has responded to the Coronavirus crisis?

Very well
Quite well
Not very well
Not at all well
Don't know

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