

Polling on Resident Satisfaction with Rotherham MBC and Rotherham as a place to live: Wave 7

June 2018



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Introduction

During 2015 and 2016, the LGA undertook four polling surveys to find out what residents of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough thought about the Council (RMBC) and the borough in general. This piece of work has formed part of ongoing improvement activity within the authority since May 2015. The poll 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 direct support related to resident satisfaction, the Council has continued with the survey in June 2017, February 2018 and June 2018, in order to monitor the extent to which the views of residents have changed over time. The Council also wished to explore residents' perceptions of safety, optimism about the future of the borough and town centre, and their views on community cohesion. An eighth polling survey is planned for December 2018.

This report details the findings of the most recent polling survey (Wave 7). It makes comparisons to the previous six polls in Rotherham and also to the LGA's most recent national survey of British residents. The latest national poll was made up of a representative random sample of 1,004 British adults (aged 18 or over), and was carried out by telephone by Populous Data Solutions in early June 2018. The Rotherham sample was made up of 515 adults who were surveyed between 4th and 12th June 2018.

Comparing Rotherham's results to the national picture provides useful context; however, many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level, including local demographics, economic factors and social circumstances. Therefore, whilst the results of the polling in Rotherham provides 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. As noted in the Methodology section, the sample size in Rotherham means that small variations from one survey to another should not be interpreted as indicating a significant change in opinion.

Methodology

Between 4th and 12th June 2018, a statistically representative random sample of 515 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) was polled 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. Previous polling surveys took place in June 2015, December 2015, June 2016, December 2016, June 2017 and February 2018.

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 seven of Rotherham's polling surveys. Additional questions about perceptions of safety and community cohesion, as well as feelings of optimism about Rotherham's future and that of its town centre, have also been asked since June 2017. A local question about satisfaction with Rotherham as 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 poll and Rotherham's Wave 7 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 results from different surveys indicates a statistically significant change. Caution is therefore needed in interpreting the results of individual surveys and small variations between surveys in any measure. Where results fluctuate it can be useful to consider the average of several polls combined to provide a larger sample size and reduce the effect of random variation.

Please note the following when reading this 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.

Key findings

Rotherham MBC commissioned a seventh polling survey (known as Wave 7) to capture what residents of Rotherham currently think about their local area, the borough and 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.

Resident satisfaction measures

Considering the measures of resident satisfaction, the results from Wave 7 point to four key features of resident satisfaction (also see 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 (79 per cent of respondents were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied), higher than in February 2018 but average overall. Satisfaction with the local has tended to be slightly below the national average of 81 per cent although Rotherham matched the national score in June 2018.
- **Satisfaction with the way RMBC runs things:** 45 per cent reported feeling 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way RMBC runs things – the lowest level observed across all seven polling surveys, contrasting with the June 2017 result of 59 per cent. Satisfaction with the council since June 2015 has averaged 52 per cent and remains well below the national average of 61 per cent.
- **Trust in RMBC:** 46 per cent said they trusted Rotherham council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' – a higher proportion than Waves 1 to 3 but lower than Waves 4 to 6. Whilst the national figure for trust in the council (56 per cent) is significantly higher than for Rotherham, the average level of trust in RMBC has increased from 44 per cent in Waves 1-3 to 49 per cent in Waves 4-7.
- **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 six polls which illustrates volatility in opinion. The June 2018 result is similar to that in February, at 37 per cent whilst the average level of 39 per cent is below the national average of 45 per cent.

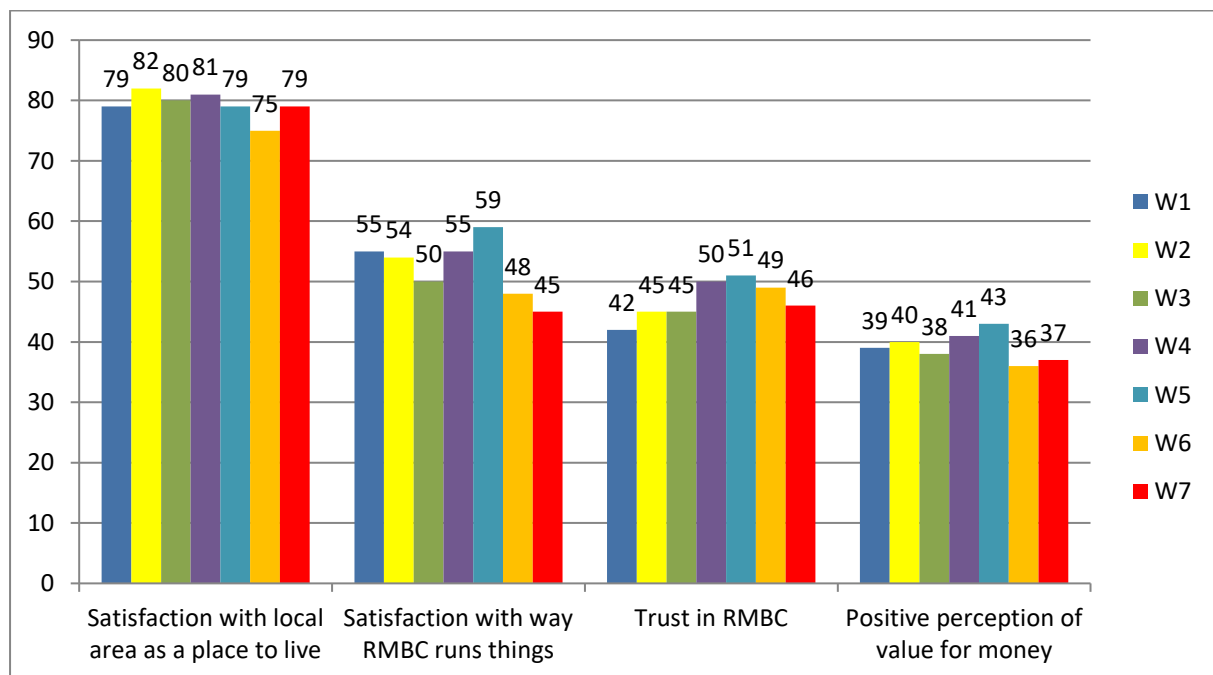
Opinions on how **well informed** residents were by RMBC have become more positive with the results in Waves 6 and 7 being above than the average of the previous five polls (52.5 per cent and 46.5 per cent, respectively), although positive responses have fluctuated up to ten percentage points between the polls. The

proportion of respondents replying favourably is now similar to the national picture (52 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively).

Views on the **responsiveness** of RMBC were less positive at 44 per cent in June 2018 than the 50 per cent in June 2017 and below the polling average of 47 per cent. Both this and the latest figure are well below the national average of 53 per cent.

Figure 1 Key findings (Wave 6)

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

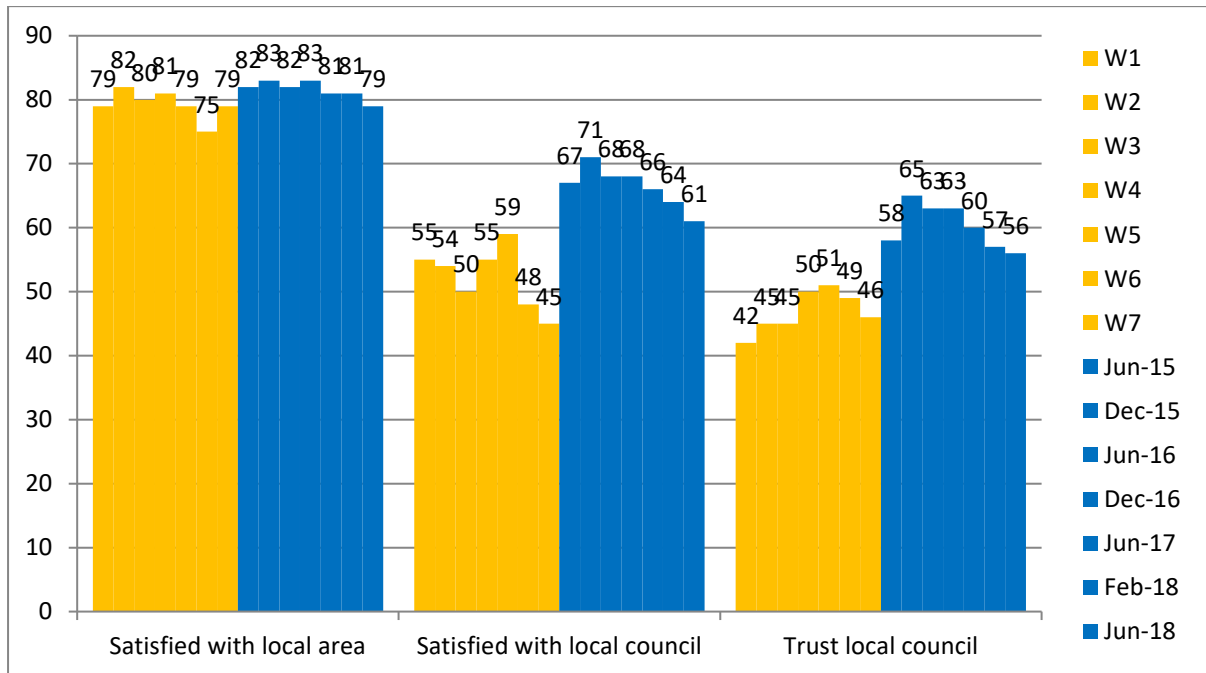
Figure 1 summarises the polling results for four indicators of resident satisfaction used in the Rotherham polling survey, combining the positive results achieved for each question (e.g. ‘a great amount’ and ‘a fair amount’).

Figure 1 shows a high level of satisfaction with the local area as a place to live and residents remain far more satisfied on this measure than any other. Although satisfaction with the way the Council runs things and trust in the Council have both fallen recently, trust in the Council is slightly higher than in 2015-16.

Figure 2 summarises the polling results for three indicators of resident satisfaction used in the Rotherham polling survey, combining the positive results achieved 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 Polling results for key indicators (Rotherham and GB)

Resident satisfaction (%) Waves 1-7 and GB 2015-18

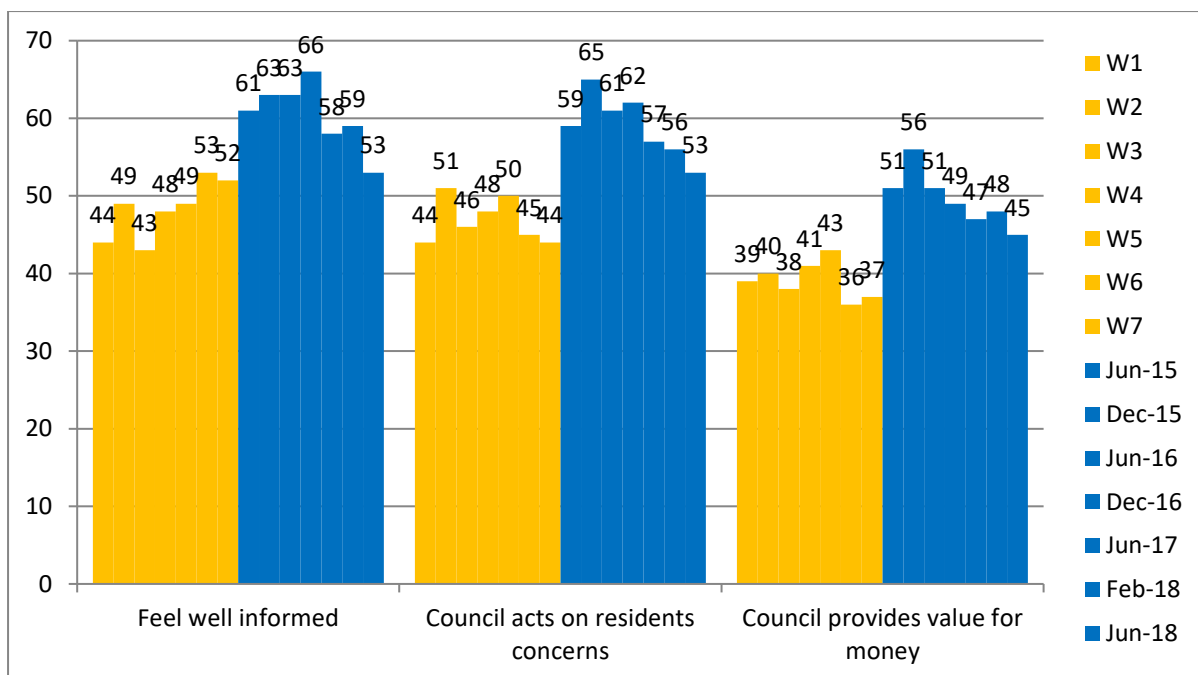


Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; Feb 2018 GB: 1,001; June 2018 Rotherham 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Figure 2 shows consistently high and stable satisfaction with resident’s local area as a place to live, which is similar in Rotherham to nationally. Satisfaction with councils nationally has fallen since December 2015 whilst the picture in Rotherham is less clear although it has followed the national trend more recently. Trust in Rotherham Council has tended to be higher since 2016 than previously which contrasts with falling trust in councils nationally.

Figure 3: Polling results for council indicators (Rotherham and GB)

Resident satisfaction (%) Waves 1-7 and GB 2015-18



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 Rotherham: 517; Feb 2018 GB: 1,001; June 2018 Rotherham 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Figure 3 follows the format of Figure 1 in comparing the seven local waves to the national picture. The chart shows that people in Rotherham feel better informed about Council services whilst this has been declining nationally. Nationally, the proportions of people who think their council acts on residents’ concerns and provide value for money have both fallen but the picture in Rotherham is less clear.

Confidence in RMBC

In each survey wave, respondents were asked to state the extent to which they had confidence in RMBC. In Wave 7, 45 per cent said they had a ‘great’ or ‘moderate’ amount of confidence in the council. This was a lower proportion than observed in the three previous polls but higher or the same as the first three surveys – suggesting that confidence increased but has fallen back recently. 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 in Waves 5, 6 and 7:

Feelings of safety: Significantly lower feelings of safety in the local area were reported by respondents in Rotherham than those reported nationally. Eighty three per cent felt ‘very safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ during the day and 61 per cent felt the same after dark (94 per cent and 75 per cent, nationally). There was a significant gender difference in feelings of safety after dark – 67 per cent of men said they felt ‘very

safe' or 'fairly safe' but only 56 per cent of women. These are both much lower than the national figures of 84 per cent for men and 74 per cent for women feeling safe.

Feelings of optimism: Optimism among respondents about the future of Rotherham as a place to live totalled 54 per cent (either 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic'), but only 21 per cent felt the same about the future of the town centre (either 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic'), the latter being lower than in June 2017 but higher than in February 2018. There is no national comparison for this question.

Community cohesion perceptions: The results from Wave 7 show no consensus among respondents as to whether or not Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (32 per cent agree, 30 per cent gave a neutral response and 37 per cent disagree). The equivalent measure to the former National Indicator 1 (community cohesion), which excluded neutral responses, would be 46 per cent. This is almost the same as in June 2017 and December 2018. There is no national comparison for this question.

Rotherham's Polling Results

This section outlines the full set of results for the seventh Rotherham poll which took place in June 2018 (Wave 7). Six previous polls have been conducted, one in June 2015 (Wave 1) to establish a baseline picture of residents' views of Rotherham and the Council, a second in December 2015 (Wave 2), a third in June 2016 (Wave 3), a fourth in December 2016 (Wave 4), a fifth in June 2017 (Wave 5) and a sixth in February 2018 (Wave 6).

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 polling survey in June 2015 (see Table 1). Across the seven waves, the average level of satisfaction has been 79 per cent and no survey result has varied from this by more than four per cent. The proportion of respondents who were either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' across all seven polls was only slightly below the national average over the same time period.

Seventy nine per cent of respondents in Wave 7 reported feeling 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' which is the average for Rotherham over all the waves and the same as the proportion observed nationally in June 2018. Young people (aged 18-24 years) were significantly *less* likely to report being 'very satisfied' than average. Skilled manual workers were also more likely to be dissatisfied with their local area. People aged 55-64 years are the *most* likely to be satisfied with their local area.

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	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very or fairly satisfied	79	82	80	81	79	75	79	79
Very satisfied	35	31	35	35	35	29	33	30
Fairly satisfied	44	51	45	45	44	46	46	49
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	6	9	8	8	11	8	9
Fairly dissatisfied	7	6	6	7	8	9	7	8
Very dissatisfied	5	6	5	4	4	5	6	4
Don't know	-	-	*	*	*	*	*	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Satisfaction with how RMBC runs things

Forty five per cent of respondents in Wave 7 were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way RMBC runs things (see Table 2). Respondents in the highest age band (aged 65 and above) were more likely to report being 'very satisfied' than the average for all age groups. Women are significantly more likely to be satisfied than men and people from social grade C1 – skilled non-manual workers are most likely to be dissatisfied.

Table 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?								
	Jun-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very or fairly satisfied	55	54	50	55	59	48	45	61
Very satisfied	12	15	12	14	15	10	11	14
Fairly satisfied	42	39	38	41	43	38	33	47
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	16	17	13	15	14	14	19
Fairly dissatisfied	16	18	20	19	17	21	22	12
Very dissatisfied	14	12	13	11	9	16	19	8
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	*	1	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Provision of value for money by Rotherham MBC

Thirty seven per cent of respondents would 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' that Rotherham MBC provides value for money (see Table 3). The result is lower than the proportion observed nationally (45 per cent) for the same period. It is notable that on average, 29 per cent of respondents expressed a neutral opinion and 30 per cent expressed a negative view. Older people (aged 65 and above) are most likely to

agree that the Council provides value for money whilst young people aged 18-24 were least likely to agree.

Table 3: To what extent do you think that the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?								
	Jun-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly or tend to agree	39	40	38	41	43	36	37	45
Strongly agree	8	10	7	7	9	7	8	9
Tend to agree	31	31	31	34	34	30	29	36
Neither agree nor disagree	28	33	29	30	30	27	28	28
Tend to disagree	19	17	19	19	19	21	22	16
Strongly disagree	13	8	13	9	7	14	13	11
Don't know	1	1	*	2	1	1	1	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Responsiveness of RMBC

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 those used by their own household.

Forty four per cent of respondents in Rotherham answered positively when asked about the extent to which RMBC acts on the concerns of local residents (i.e. 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'). This is lower than in the June 2017 survey although similar to the February 2018 poll, and is significantly lower than the national result (53 per cent). The youngest respondents (aged 18-24) were most likely to think that the Council acts on the concerns of residents and women were more likely to be positive than men.

Table 4: To what extent do you think that the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?								
	Jun-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Feb-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 6	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal or fair amount	44	51	46	48	50	45	44	53
A great deal	5	7	6	6	8	5	6	6
A fair amount	39	44	40	42	42	41	38	47
Not very much	37	36	37	36	37	37	39	34
Not at all	12	9	13	11	9	13	13	9

Don't know	7	4	4	5	3	5	4	4
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Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Keeping residents informed

Fifty two per cent of Rotherham respondents in Wave 7 said that RMBC keeps residents 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed about the services and benefits it provides (see Table 5). This is similar to the most recent national result (53 per cent) and the second highest figure achieved in the Rotherham polls, nine percentage points higher than in June 2016. People aged 35-44 were most likely to think that the Council keeps residents well informed and women felt better informed than men.

Table 5: Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?								
	Jun-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very or fairly well informed	44	49	43	48	49	53	52	53
Very well informed	6	8	7	8	7	7	10	10
Fairly well informed	38	42	36	40	42	46	42	42
Not very well informed	37	35	38	34	39	34	31	34
Not well informed at all	15	14	18	17	11	13	16	13
Don't know	3	2	*	1	1	1	1	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Trust in Rotherham MBC

Forty six per cent of respondents said they trusted Rotherham council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' (see Table 6). While the national figure remains significantly higher than the result for Wave 7 (56 per cent), the more recent local results show a significant improvement in trust compared to the first three polls in 2015-16. The level of trust is lowest amongst people aged 25-34 and skilled manual workers, and women had notably more trust in the Council than men.

Table 6: How much do you trust Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?								
	Jun-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal or fair amount	42	45	45	50	51	49	46	56

A great deal	6	7	5	9	9	8	8	6
A fair amount	35	38	40	42	43	41	38	50
Not very much	34	39	32	32	32	30	34	31
Not at all	22	15	22	15	15	20	18	12
Don't know	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

Confidence in Rotherham MBC

As Table 7 shows, 45 per cent of respondents in Wave 7 stated that they have confidence in RMBC (either 'to a great extent' or 'to a moderate extent') – a significantly higher proportion than for Wave 1 (June 2015) and similar to the average of all seven polls (46 per cent) indicates an improvement in confidence since the first three polls (average 43 per cent). Both the youngest (aged 18-24) and oldest (aged 65 or over) respondents have relatively high confidence in the Council, and women have more confidence than men. 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 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-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
To a great or moderate extent	41	45	44	49	50	46	45
To a great extent	6	7	4	7	7	6	8
To a moderate extent	35	38	39	42	43	41	38
To a small extent	33	37	32	31	35	33	35
Not at all	25	18	23	19	14	20	20
Don't know	1	*	1	1	1	*	*

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

Feelings of safety

The last three Rotherham polling surveys asked two questions about feelings of personal safety, which also feature in the LGA's national polling survey. Eighty three per cent of respondents in Rotherham said they felt 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' during the day when outside in their local area, and 61 per cent reported the same feelings of safety after dark. Both results are much lower than the proportions observed nationally. A much smaller proportion of respondents in Rotherham said they felt 'very safe' in their local area compared with the national figures and a significantly higher proportion felt very or fairly unsafe.

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-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-18	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-18
	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	GB
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very safe or fairly safe	83	88	83	94	59	58	61	75
Very safe	34	42	45	62	17	15	17	33
Fairly safe	49	46	39	32	43	43	44	41
Neither safe nor unsafe	7	6	9	4	10	15	13	11
Fairly unsafe	5	4	6	1	18	17	17	9
Very unsafe	4	2	1	1	10	8	7	5
Don't know	*	*	1	*	2	3	1	1

Base (all respondents): June 2017: 520; February 2018 Rotherham: 517; June 2018: 515; June 2018 GB: 1,004

There was a significant difference in men and women's feelings of safety after dark in the Rotherham polling survey, with 67 per cent of men reporting feeling 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' compared to only 56 per cent of women. However, the gender difference is less marked than in the previous two surveys. People aged 55-64 are most likely to feel safe after dark and those aged 18-24 least likely to feel safe, which may relate to the places people in these age groups tend to visit after dark. Professional and managerial residents are more likely to feel safe, probably because they are more likely to live in neighbourhoods where crime and ASB rates are low.

Feelings of optimism

The last three Rotherham polling surveys asked two questions about people's feelings of optimism about Rotherham and the town centre. The majority of respondents (54 per cent) reported feeling 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic' about the future of Rotherham as a place to live (see Table 9), very similar to the response in June 2017. Older respondents (aged 65 and above) were the most likely to be very optimistic about the future of Rotherham whilst those aged 25-34 were most

likely to be fairly optimistic. Young people aged 18-24 years were the least optimistic about Rotherham along with skilled non-manual workers.

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-17	Feb-18	Jun-18	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18
	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very optimistic or fairly optimistic	53	52	54	26	18	21
Very optimistic	7	10	10	5	4	3
Fairly optimistic	45	42	44	21	14	17
Not very optimistic	34	30	29	38	34	36
Not optimistic at all	13	17	16	33	43	41
Don't know	*	1	1	3	4	2

Base (all respondents): June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515

Far fewer respondents felt as positive about the future Rotherham town centre (21 per cent felt 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic') as they did about the wider borough. The last two results were considerably lower than in June 2017, which could reflect the loss of prominent shops and growth of empty units. Forty one per cent of residents are not optimistic at all about the town centre. Young people under 34 years were most optimistic about the future of the town centre whilst people aged 45-64 were the least optimistic. Low skilled manual workers were more optimistic than higher skilled workers. There is no comparable national data for these questions.

Community cohesion perceptions

The last three Rotherham polling surveys asked a question about people's views on whether people from different backgrounds get on well together. The polling survey generated mixed responses about perceptions of community cohesion. There was no clear consensus among respondents as to whether or not they saw Rotherham as a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, with 32 per cent agreeing with the statement, 30 per cent giving a neutral response and 37 per cent disagreeing. This could relate to a combination of localised views on community relations and perceptions about Rotherham as a whole.

A notable feature of the results is that far more respondents strongly disagreed than strongly agreed with the statement. There has been no significant change between the survey results in June 2017 and June 2018. This question was previously used to generate the former National Indicator 1 (NI 1) of community cohesion, which excluded neutral responses and don't knows. The polling data would have given

Rotherham a NI 1 score of 47 per cent in Waves 5 and 6, and 46 per cent in Wave 7, indicating no significant difference between the three surveys.

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
	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7
	%	%	%
Strongly agree or tend to agree	34	32	32
Strongly agree	5	7	7
Tend to agree	28	25	24
Neither agree nor disagree	27	29	30
Tend to disagree	23	18	20
Strongly disagree	15	18	17
Don't know	2	3	1

Base (all respondents): June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515

Older people (aged 65 and over) were the most likely age group to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together. Professional and managerial workers were even more likely to agree with the statement, with a NI 1 equivalent score of 57 per cent. People aged 35-44 and skilled workers were the most likely to disagree with the statement, the lowest NI 1 equivalent score being 33 per cent for skilled non-manual workers. Women were notably more likely to agree with the statement than men.

Satisfaction with Rotherham as a Place to Live

Finally, respondents were asked, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with Rotherham Borough as a place to live. Fifty seven per cent of respondents said, overall, that they were satisfied. This was the second lowest level of satisfaction so far recorded and nine per cent below Wave 4, although there has been considerable fluctuation between waves.

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 79%) than the Borough as a whole (average 62%). This could reflect the lower levels of optimism about the future of Rotherham as a place to live and in particular the future of the town centre (table 9).

Within Wave 7, respondents aged 65 and above were most likely to feel satisfied with Rotherham as a place to live, and to a lesser extent those aged 45-64. Respondents aged 25-34 had the lowest level of satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live. Dissatisfaction with Rotherham was highest amongst people aged 18-24 and skilled workers which suggests that this might be linked to educational and employment opportunities.

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-15	Dec-15	Jun-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Feb-18	Jun-18
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very or fairly satisfied	69	61	62	66	-	56	57
Very satisfied	19	18	18	19	-	13	17
Fairly satisfied	50	43	44	47	-	43	41
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15	20	17	15	-	21	18
Fairly dissatisfied	9	11	13	12	-	15	14
Very dissatisfied	7	7	8	7	-	8	11
Don't know	-	-	*	*	-	*	*

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

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



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