

## **Performance Improvement Plan 2021/22 - Consultation Process**

**June 2021**

### **Consultation Duty**

In preparing for the Performance Improvement Plan 2021/22 there is a duty on Council to consult with residents, rates payers and those with an interest in the area.

### **Context – Covid 19**

Council's usual consultation process for our Performance Improvement Plan has been significantly affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the limits on formal gatherings, events and face to face contacts. It is important to remember that in usual times we would have been conducted consultation work on the upcoming Performance Improvement Plan during January – March 2021, but of course during those months we were still very much subject to a national lockdown and all the affects that had on Council business and Council facilities. Indeed, there was a period during which there was uncertainty that the requirement for a Performance Improvement Plan for 2021/22 may be removed, but fortunately we were able to proceed.

### **Consultation Process 2021/22**

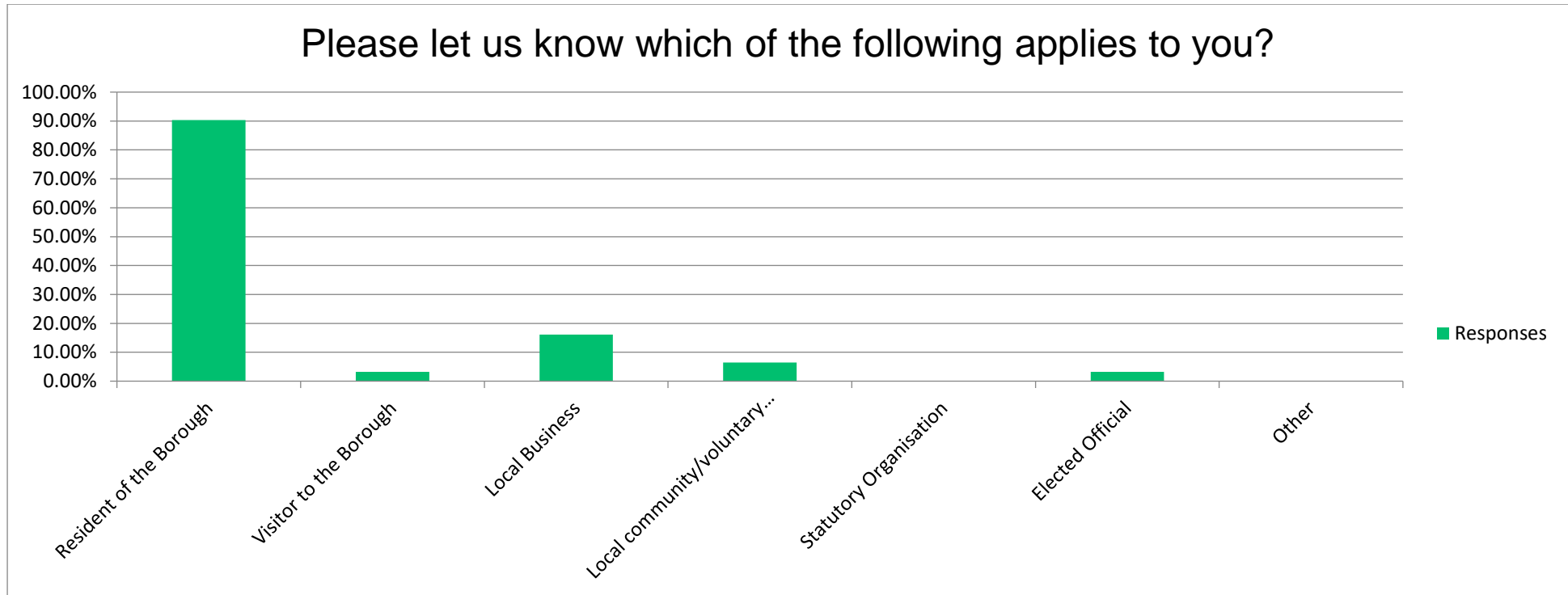
Advice from the Department for Communities suggested still having some form of consultative opportunity for citizens, albeit remotely and more succinct in its nature.

As such we have published an online survey asking citizens for their opinions on our Performance Improvement Objectives. This exercise was opened on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and remained open until the end of June 2021. During which time views were sought via an online survey, social media, staff newsletter and the Council web site. Council received 30 responses including over 200 separate comments.

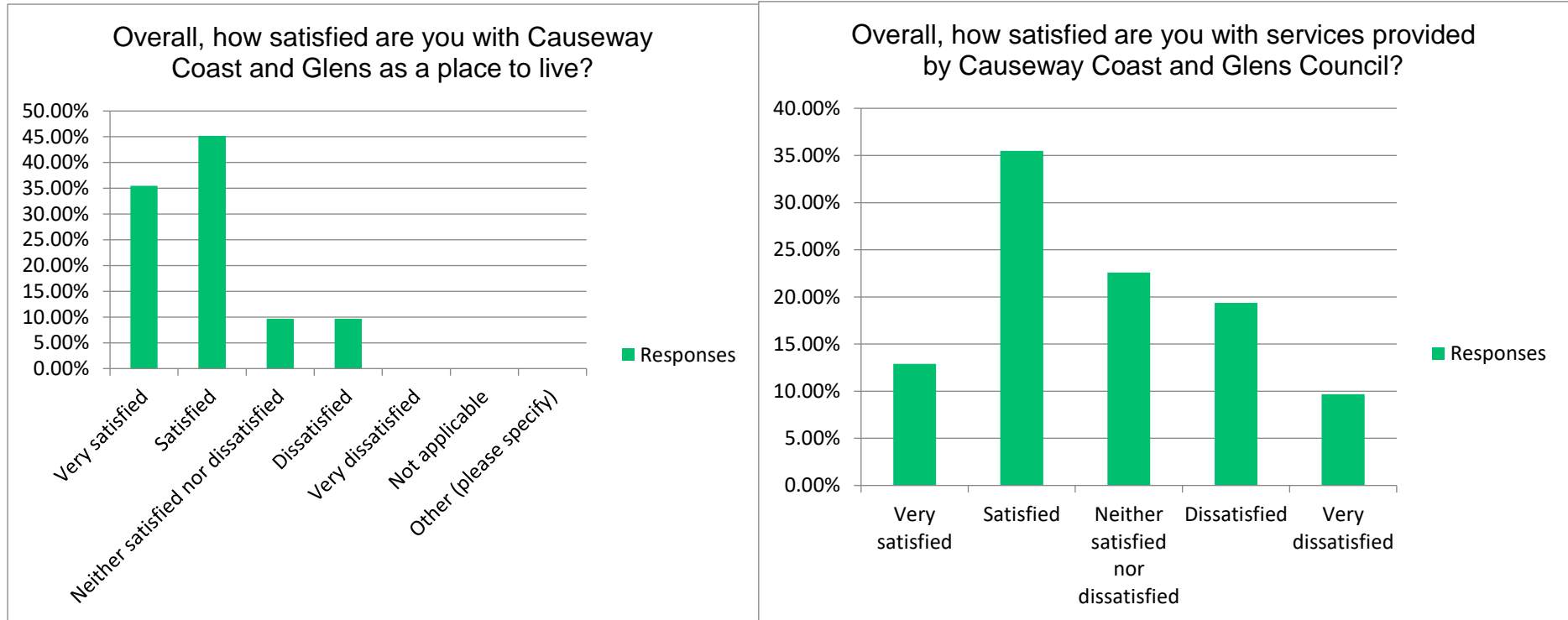
The Performance Team has also engaged with Council Heads of Service and Directors on Improvement requirements within their service area. These senior officers have all provided responses, completing the relevant templates with their Service specific areas for improvement.

### 1. Who responded to the survey?

As you can see from the table below, the majority of respondents (90%) were residents of the Borough



## 2. What questions did we ask in the public consultation survey?



**3. What response did we receive when asking about the proposed Improvement Objectives for 2021/22?**

<b>The Performance Improvement Plan is framed around specific annual Improvement Objectives as well the Council's self-imposed targets and indicators. For 2021/22 Council is proposing to focus on the areas below as Performance Improvement Objectives. Can you please rate the importance to you of inclusion of these proposed improvement objectives for 2021/22?</b>					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reducing staff absenteeism	43.33%	20.00%	16.67%	0.00%	20.00%
Driving economic growth through the Growth Deal	46.67%	33.33%	13.33%	6.67%	0.00%
Improve rates and processes for Borough Wide recycling	63.33%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%
Improve Business and Performance Reporting to Council	36.67%	26.67%	23.33%	3.33%	10.00%
Increase Borough wide engagement between Council and Citizens	60.00%	33.33%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%

#### 4. What further questions were explored?

We also asked the following: What should be the top priority for the Council and its partners in 2021/22?			
Aggregated Themes in responses			
Environmental	Covid	Economy and Finance	Council Services and Facilities
<p>Environment improvement including global warming</p> <p>Engage the public in a litter clean-up campaign</p> <p>Protecting the natural environment Council owns</p> <p>Environmental issues/protecting the natural environment and litter</p> <p>Protecting the environment as a key asset to tourism and economy</p> <p>Dealing with climate crisis</p>	<p>Safely getting facilities and events back open</p> <p>No more lockdowns if possible</p> <p>Covid recovery in terms of economic activity and health &amp; well-being.</p> <p>Get all facilities back open following lockdown</p> <p>Helping people return to normal</p> <p>Recovery from Lockdown</p>	<p>Helping people experiencing poverty</p> <p>Reliable broadband</p> <p>To reign in excessive spending</p> <p>Maintaining value for money services</p> <p>People getting more for their money</p> <p>To help businesses strive in these uncertain times</p> <p>Provide jobs</p> <p>And supporting business.</p>	<p>Improving services to rate payers and all citizens across the borough</p> <p>Services to rate payers especially in rural areas</p> <p>Decisions about the future based on merit not politics</p> <p>Improving the planning process and timeframes to boost the local economy.</p> <p>To strive for excellence in delivery of public services. That means a demonstrating a culture of communication; stakeholder participation in decision-making processes; transparency in financial management, and a priority focus on quality of life and sustainable development - not economic growth by free market advocates and increasing rates revenue.</p> <p>Focus on residents and locals</p> <p>Stop building new facilities which do not get maintained. Concentrate on maintaining existing facilities</p> <p>Leisure facilities in Ballycastle</p>

We also asked the following:

**What are the 3 most important issues facing you or your family just now?**

**Aggregated Themes in responses**

<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Covid and Health</b>	<b>Economy and Finance</b>	<b>Council Services and Facilities</b>
Environmental destruction How we deal with climate issues to include waste Litter in our public areas Litter	Recovery from covid 19 Lockdown restrictions Covid 19 pandemic Health & wellbeing Health of family Mental health support Health care & jobs	Cost of living increased Cost of living Job stability Cost of Rates Poor quality Rural broadband The NI protocol Trying to cope with loss of business No brexit preparations	Lack of facilities & car parking in Dungiven More leisure facilities required Unsatisfactory indoor leisure facilities in Ballycastle. No investment by Council Disability inclusion & access across council services More work required to assist community relations

5. We also asked – “Finally, please highlight which 3 of the areas outlined below you would like to see Causeway Coast and Glens Council make improvements to?”

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Arts, Culture and Heritage	20.00%	6
Building Control	3.33%	1
Licensing	6.67%	2
Community Services	13.33%	4
Economic Development	10.00%	3
Tourism and Events	46.67%	14
Environmental Health	3.33%	1
Leisure and Recreation	53.33%	16
Parks and Open Spaces	46.67%	14
Planning	30.00%	9
Registration Services (Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships)	0.00%	0
Street Cleansing	30.00%	9
Urban and Rural Regeneration	26.67%	8
Waste Collection and Recycling	33.33%	10
Total Respondents: 30		

## **Conclusions and next steps**

- Overall, we have a majority agreement from our consultees on proceeding with the draft Improvement Objectives as highlighted. Council will proceed as planned.
- Generally, the consultees have described Causeway Coast and Glens as somewhere that they are satisfied to live and that their Council is generally providing a satisfactory service
- It is important to consider the context in which this is taking place, as such there is no surprise that some of the most regular responses to areas of concern for residents were focused on dealing with the current and ongoing impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- It was also clear that residents have significant concerns in relation to environmental protections and finance/economy. The Improvement Objects for 2021/22 will support these themes.
- Council plans to conduct a significant consultation exercise through a Citizens Survey. This will be conducted and completed before the end of March 2022, and we aim to have responses from over 2,000 residents. Importantly, the results of such a consultation will be used in the planning for the 2022/23 Performance Improvement Plan.