

Polling on resident satisfaction with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

June 2015



Acknowledgements

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

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Introduction

This report outlines the results of a poll of Rotherham residents undertaken in June 2015, which asked eight key questions to establish a baseline picture of resident views of the council. This will be followed by a poll in October 2015 which will examine how, if at all, views have changed over the period.

This polling was conducted alongside a national poll of British (GB) residents that was commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) as part of their regular public polling of resident satisfaction with local councils, which takes place every four months.¹

These results provide a good high level indication of residents' views of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. Comparison with the national results provides useful context, however many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level, including local demographics. It is important therefore that these polling results are seen as complementary to a wider approach to understanding and responding to communities at a local level.

Methodology

Between 5 and 7 June 2015, a statistically representative random sample of 531 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) was polled by telephone.²

The polling was based on a landline sample. Whilst 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. The questions cover a range of key issues including overall satisfaction with the council, trust and value for money. These questions are the key ones 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.

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.

The paper includes comparisons to the national results from the same polling. Differences between the national and Rotherham results are only highlighted within the report where this is statistically significant.³

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.

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

² 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.

³ Statistical significance is tested at the 95% level.

- An analysis of results against other authorities that have conducted comparable surveys can be found at Annex B.

Key findings

Polling results for Rotherham show that residents are generally less satisfied than the national average. The exception to this was for how satisfied or dissatisfied residents were with their local area as a place to live, for which there was no significant difference between the Rotherham and national results. The headline results are:

- 79 per cent were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live, similar to 82 per cent nationally
- 55 per cent of Rotherham respondents were very or fairly satisfied with the way the council runs things, compared to 67 per cent nationally
- the proportion that tended to or strongly agreed that the council provides value for money was 39 per cent in Rotherham, compared to 51 per cent nationally
- 44 per cent thought that the council acts on the concerns of local residents a great deal or a fair amount, compared to 59 per cent who thought this about their council nationally
- 44 per cent said that the council keeps residents very or fairly well informed about the services and benefits it provides, compared to 61 per cent nationally
- 42 per cent stated that they trust the council a great deal or a fair amount, compared to 58 per cent nationally
- 41 per cent of respondents said that they had a great or moderate level of confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (this question was not asked in the national poll)
- 69 per cent of respondents said that overall, all things considered, they were very or fairly satisfied with Rotherham Borough as a place to live (this question was not asked in the national poll).

Polling on resident satisfaction with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

This section outlines the full set of polling results.

Overall satisfaction with local area

The vast majority of respondents were positive about their local area as a place to live – with 79 per cent of respondents in Rotherham very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live, similar to the proportion that were very or fairly satisfied nationally (82 per cent).

Table 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?⁴

	June 2015	
	Rotherham	GB
	%	%
Very or fairly satisfied	79	82
Very satisfied	35	31
Fairly satisfied	44	51
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	9
Fairly dissatisfied	7	6
Very dissatisfied	5	3
Don't know	0	0

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008

Overall satisfaction with local council

Satisfaction with the way the local council runs things was significantly lower in Rotherham than nationally. In Rotherham 55 per cent⁵ of respondents were very or fairly satisfied, compared to 67 per cent nationally.

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

	June 2015	
	Rotherham	GB
	%	%
Very or fairly satisfied	55	67
Very satisfied	12	16
Fairly satisfied	42	50
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	16
Fairly dissatisfied	16	10
Very dissatisfied	14	6
Don't know	*	1

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008

⁴ Local area was defined as “the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home”

⁵ Whilst the individual ‘very satisfied’ and ‘fairly satisfied’ answer options displayed in Table 2 appear to sum to 54 per cent, this is due to the fact the figures in the table have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Please note that this may also occur in other parts of the report where answer categories are combined.

⁶ The GB polling asked about ‘your local council’ rather than naming an individual council.

Value for money

The proportion that tended to or strongly agreed that their local council provides value for money stood at 39 per cent in Rotherham, significantly lower than 51 per cent nationally.

Significantly more Rotherham respondents answered that they neither agreed nor disagreed that the council provided value for money when compared to respondents nationally (28 per cent compared to 22 per cent). Further, significantly more Rotherham respondents tended to disagree or strongly disagreed (32 per cent) that the council provided value for money (compared to 26 per cent nationally).

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

	June 2015	
	Rotherham	GB
	%	%
Strongly or tend to agree	39	51
Strongly agree	8	9
Tend to agree	31	42
Neither agree nor disagree	28	22
Tend to disagree	19	18
Strongly disagree	13	8
Don't know	1	1

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008

Council responsiveness

This is an important measure of local accountability as it looks at whether councils are perceived to be responsive to local issues and problems. The proportion that answered positively as to whether their local council acts on the concerns of local residents (a great deal or a fair amount) was significantly lower than the national results (44 per cent compared to 59 per cent).

A relatively high proportion of Rotherham respondents also answered 'don't know' to this question (seven per cent compared to three per cent nationally).

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

	June 2015	
	Rotherham	GB
	%	%
A great deal or fair amount	44	59
A great deal	5	8
A fair amount	39	51
Not very much	37	31
Not at all	12	7
Don't know	7	3

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008

⁷ 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. "

Informed about the council

Less than half of Rotherham's respondents (44 per cent) said that their council keeps residents very or fairly well informed about the services and benefits it provides. This is significantly lower than that the national result (61 per cent).

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

	June 2015	
	Rotherham	GB
	%	%
Very or fairly well informed	44	61
Very well informed	6	12
Fairly well informed	38	49
Not very well informed	37	28
Not well informed at all	15	11
Don't know	3	1

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008

Trust

Just over two in five Rotherham respondents stated that they trust their council a great deal or a fair amount (42 per cent); this is significantly lower than national respondents, of which nearly three in five trusted their council a great deal or a fair amount (58 per cent). Just over one in five Rotherham respondents said that they did not trust their local council at all (22 per cent).

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

	June 2015	
	Rotherham	GB
	%	%
A great deal or fair amount	42	58
A great deal	6	8
A fair amount	35	50
Not very much	34	28
Not at all	22	13
Don't know	2	1

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531, GB: 1,008

Confidence

As Table 7 shows, 41 per cent of respondents stated that they have a great or moderate amount of confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. However, one quarter of respondents (25 per cent) said that they had no confidence at all in the council.

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

	June 2015
	Rotherham
	%
To a great or moderate extent	41
To a great extent	6
To a moderate extent	35
To a small extent	33
Not at all	25
Don't know	1

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531

Rotherham Borough 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. The majority (69 per cent) were very or fairly satisfied. Fifteen per cent answered that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, whilst the remaining respondents were split fairly evenly between those who were fairly and very dissatisfied (nine and seven per cent respectively).

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

	June 2015
	Rotherham
	%
Very or fairly satisfied	69
Very satisfied	19
Fairly satisfied	50
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15
Fairly dissatisfied	9
Very dissatisfied	7
Don't know	*

Base (all respondents): Rotherham: 531

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' guidance⁸, 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 throughout 2015, 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>.

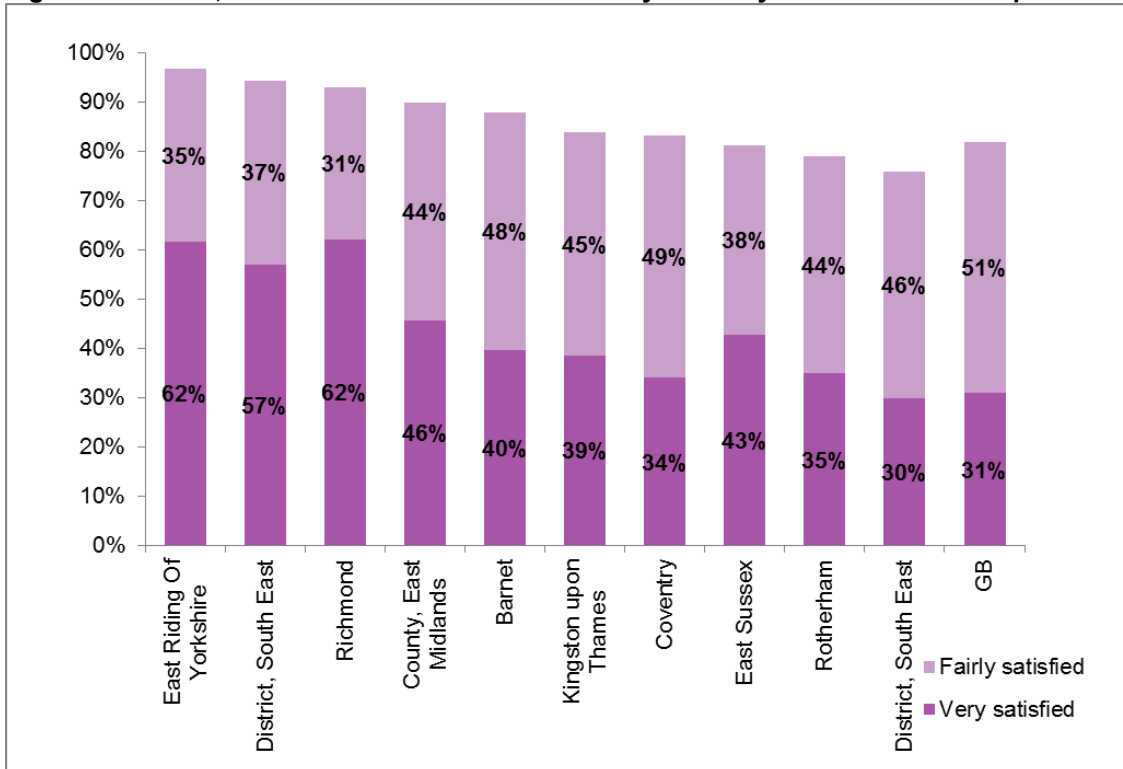
The table below provides details about the councils that have provided results to date. Note that not every council included every question in their survey; therefore the number of comparators differs by question.

Council	Council type	Council region	Year survey conducted	Base
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

The tables below outline, for each question, Rotherham's results against the results of the councils listed in the table above. Please note that the results for those authorities who conducted their survey in 2014/15 are currently only available to local authority users of LG Inform, therefore the results for these councils have been anonymised in this report. Public access via LG Inform to 2014/15 survey results will be granted on 31 March 2016.

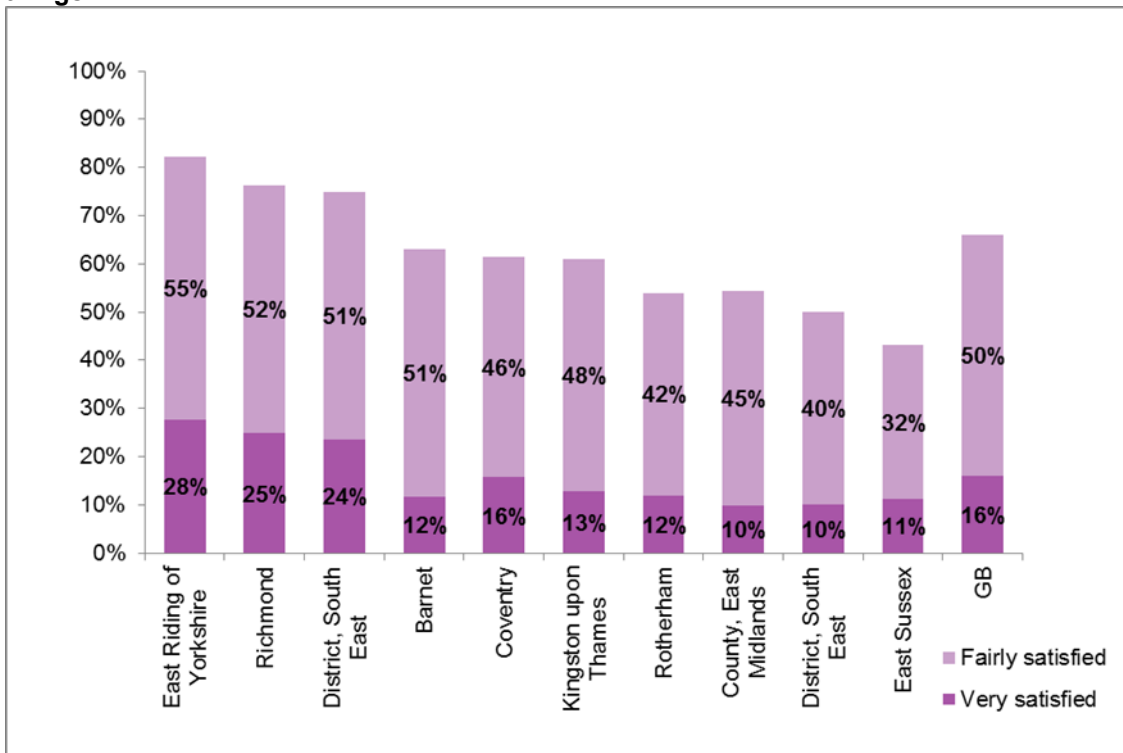
⁸ This comprises a set of resident satisfaction questions that councils can include in their local surveys and guidance on quality criteria which, when followed, allows them to make comparisons with other councils' results.

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



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

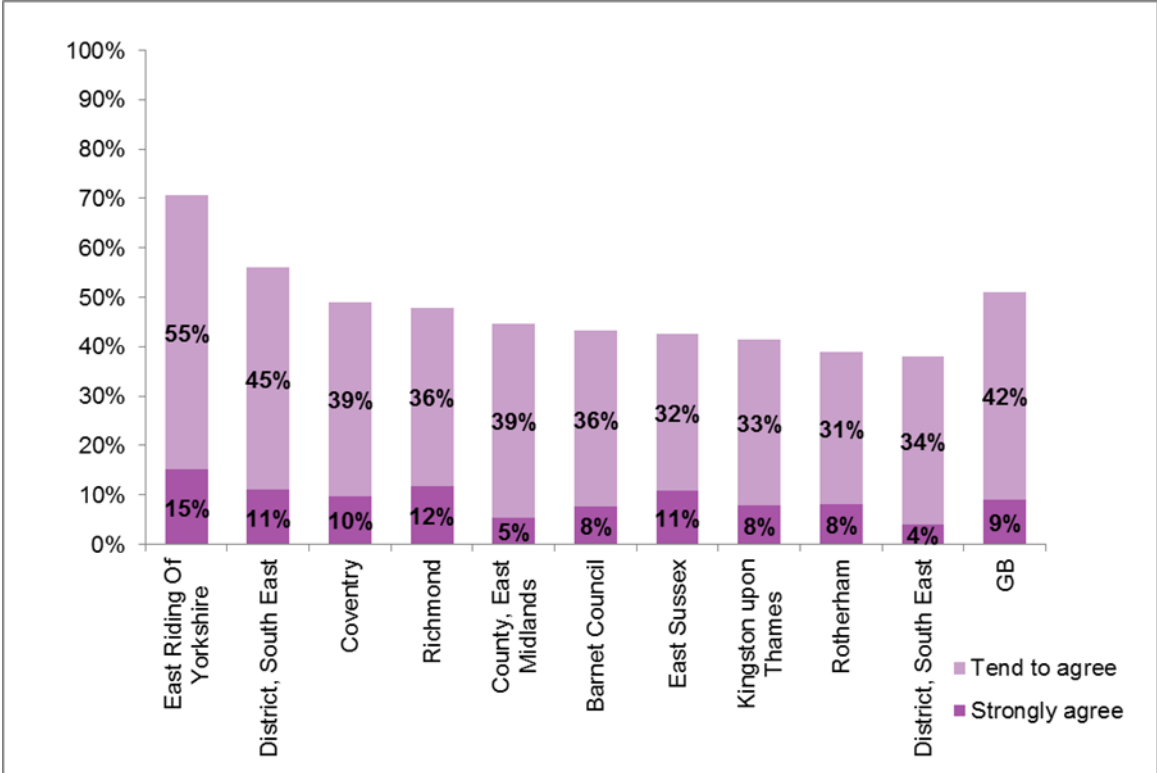
Figure 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way [name of council] runs things?



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

⁹ Local area was defined as "the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home"

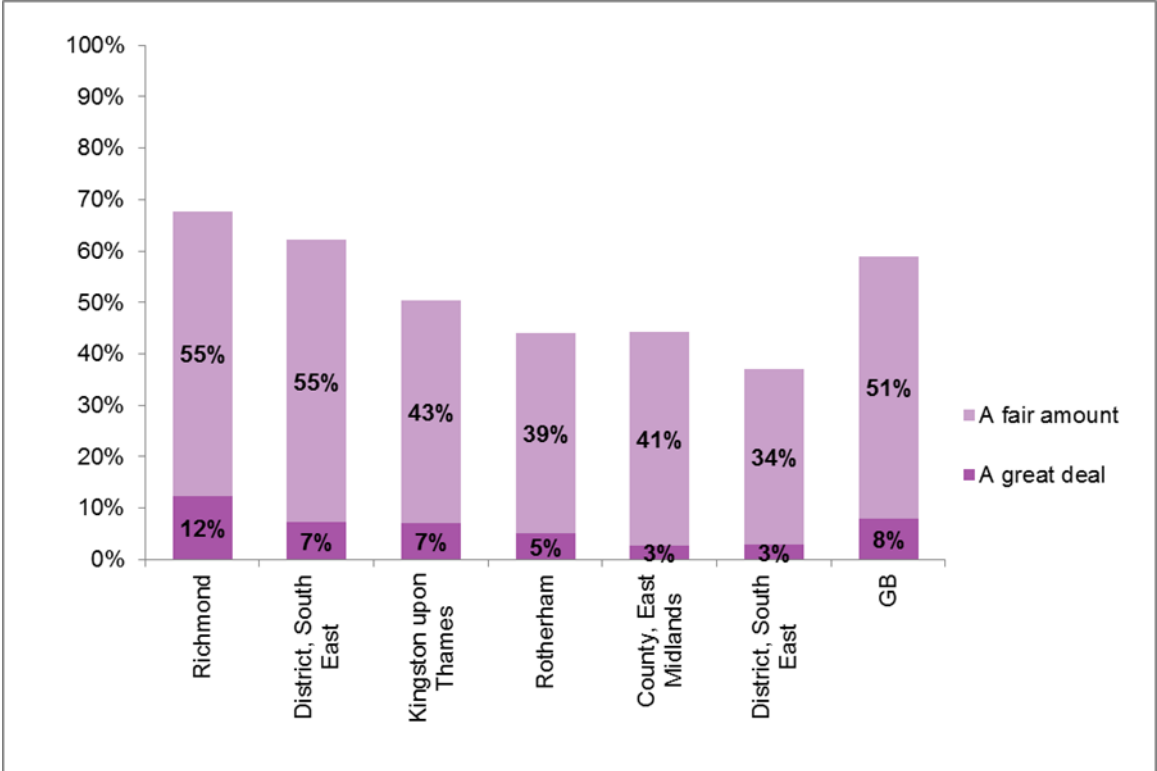
Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that [name of council] provides value for money?¹⁰



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

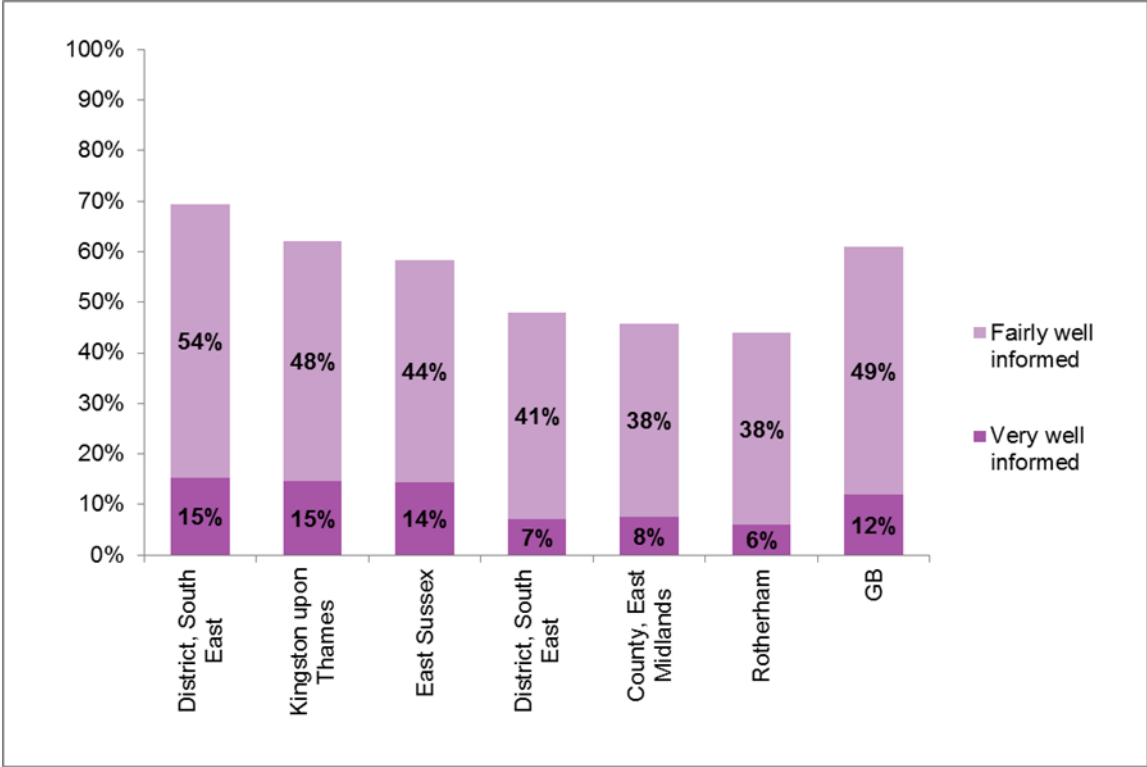
¹⁰ The following preamble was used: "In considering the next question, please think about the range of services [name of council] provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services [name of council] provides to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

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



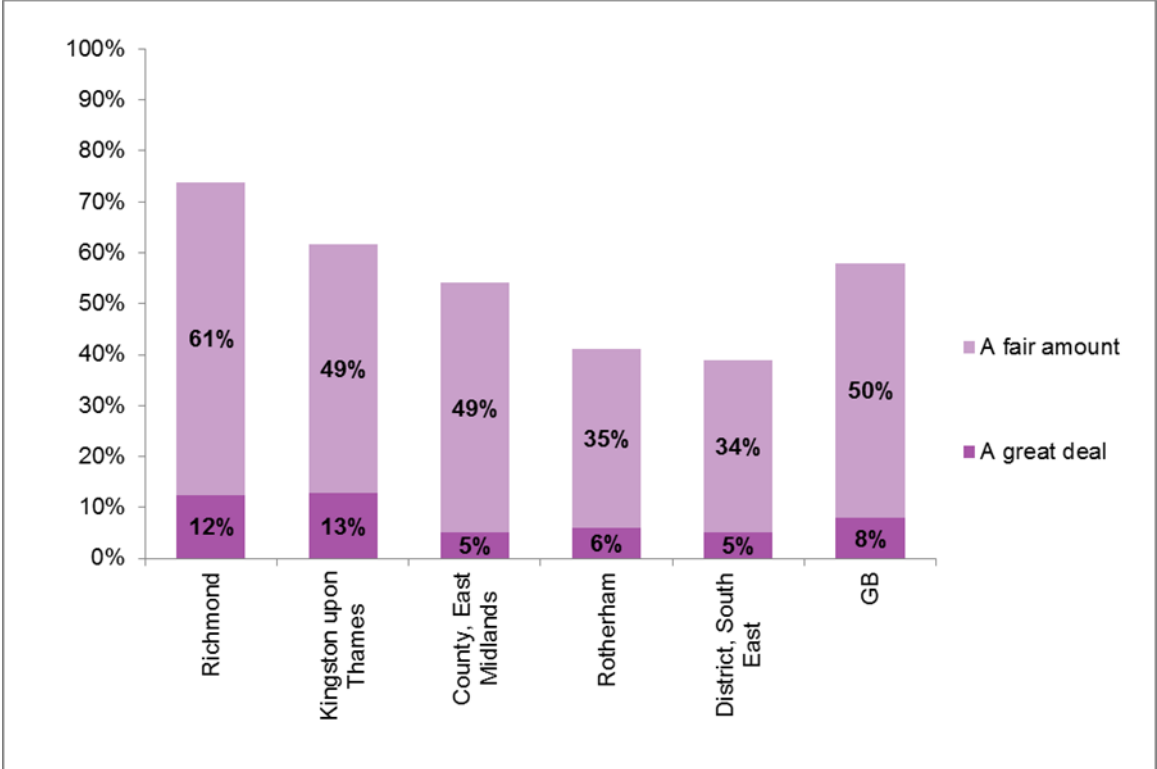
Source: LGA polling (GB and Rotherham) and council's own surveys

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 council's own surveys

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



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



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