



# Inner West Council

## Community Survey – De-amalgamation

Prepared by: Micromex Research  
Date: July 2022



# Community Survey

## DE-AMALGAMATION



In 2016 the Councils of Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville were amalgamated to create Inner West Council.

Inner West Council voted to conduct a poll on de-amalgamation at the election on 4 December. A non-binding poll was held regarding the potential de-amalgamation of Inner West Council and the results were that 62.49% of voters asked for a de-amalgamation.

Inner West Council is developing a business case for the NSW Minister for Local Government who will decide whether Council should de-amalgamate. This report summarises the results of a community survey conducted with N=601 residents. The survey sought feedback from the community regarding their support for the development of a business case to de-amalgamate.

# Background and Methodology

## Objectives:

- Explore community support for Council submitting a business case to the Minister supporting de-amalgamation
- Identify the community's awareness of Council's exploration of community sentiment regarding de-amalgamation

## Sample:

- Telephone survey to N = 601 residents (138 via landline and 463 via mobile phone)
- Greatest margin of error +/- 4.0%

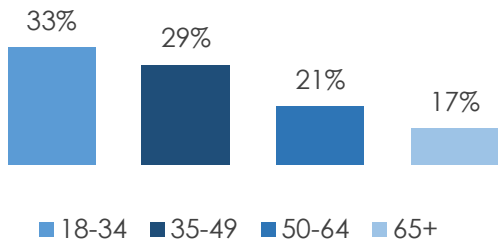
## Timing:

- Implementation 30<sup>th</sup> June – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022

# Sample Profile

The sample was weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2021 ABS community profile of the Inner West LGA.  
 The sample was also weighted by the previous LGA population distributions to reflect the 2011 ABS data –  
 Further detail is provided in Appendix A.

## Age



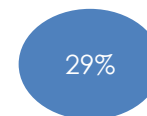
## Ratepayer status



Ratepayer  
70%



Non-ratepayer  
30%



Identify as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

## Gender



Female 52%



Male 48%

Non-binary <1%  
Different identity <1%

## Previous LGA

Marrickville Council 46%

Leichhardt Council 30%

Ashfield Council 24%

## Employment status\*

Work full time outside the LGA 47%

Work full time in the LGA 21%

Retired 14%

Work part time or casual outside the LGA 9%

Work part time or casual in the LGA 9%

Student 3%

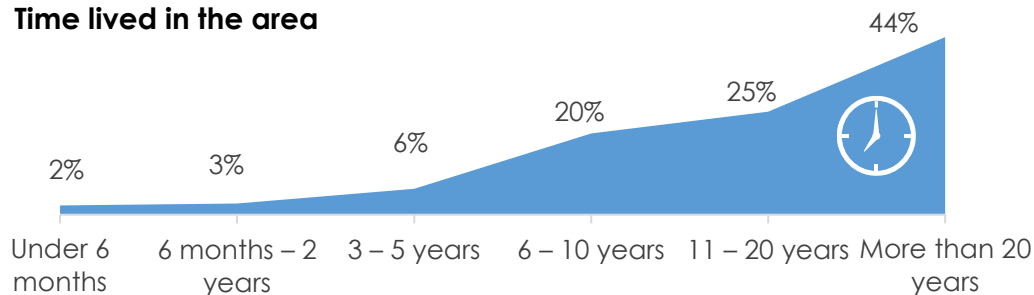
Unemployed/pensioner 3%

Home duties 2%

Other 4%

\*Note: the total exceeds 100% as respondents could select more than one option

## Time lived in the area

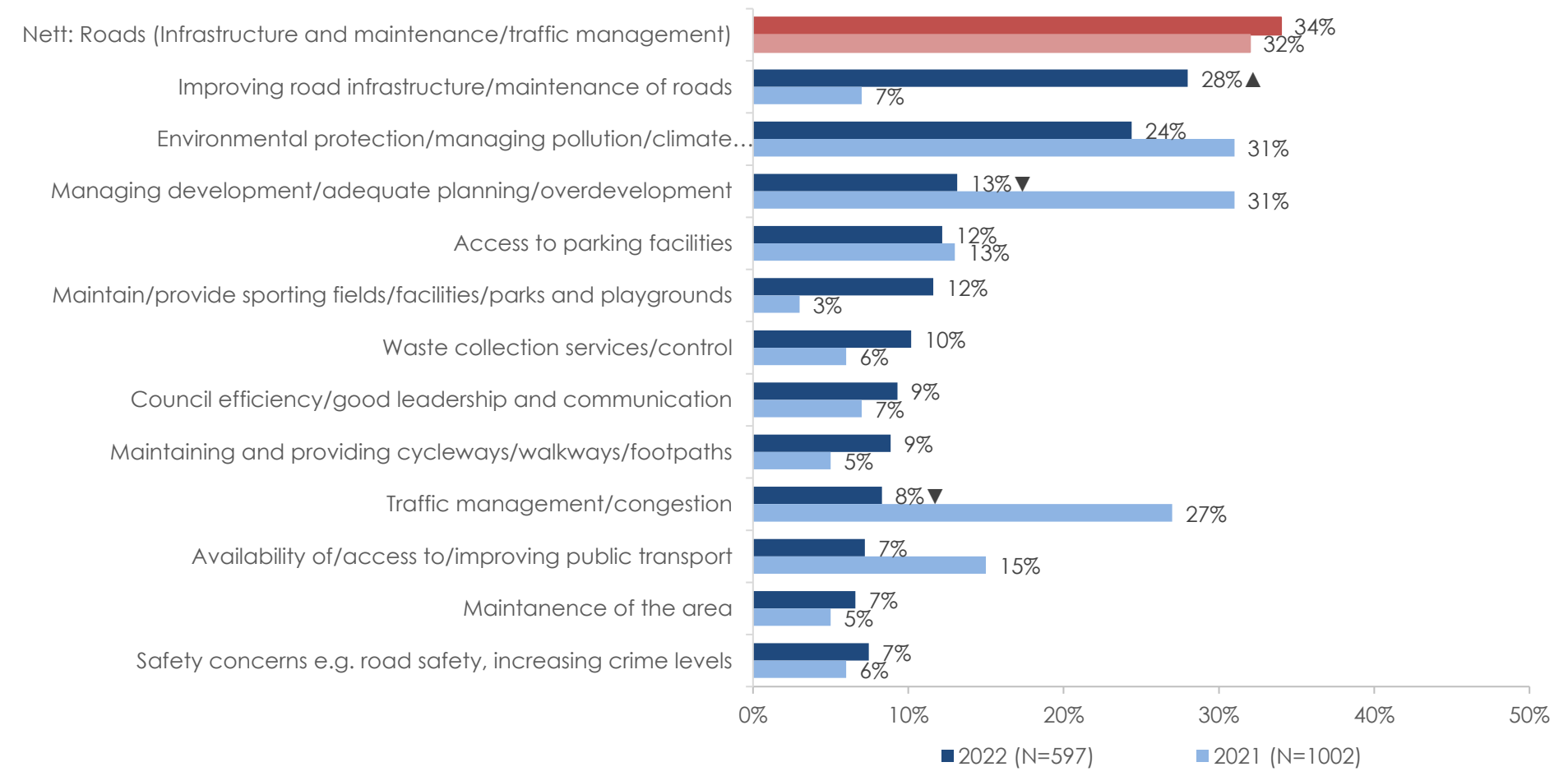




# Context

# Key Priorities for Council in the Local Area (Unprompted)

Q2. What do you think are the key priorities for Council in the local area?



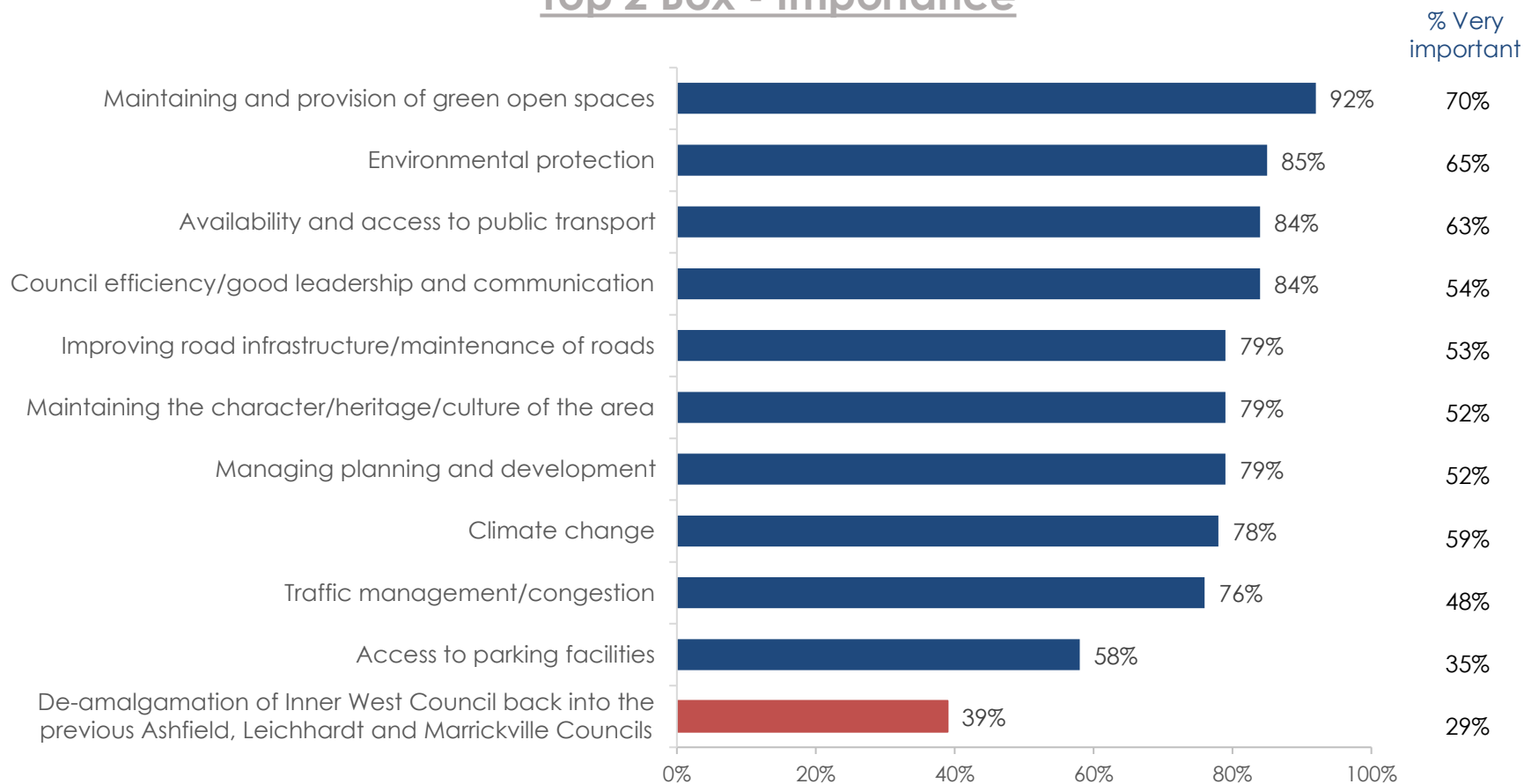
▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage by year

**Key priorities for Council included, 'improving the road infrastructure/maintenance of roads' and 'environmental protection/managing climate change/maintaining and provision of green open spaces'.**

# Priorities for Council to Focus on in the Local Area

Q4. Thinking of the priorities for your local area for Council to focus on in the future, on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important, how important is...

## Top 2 Box - Importance



Base: N = 601

**The community prioritises many issues significantly more important than de-amalgamation.**

# Priorities for Council to Focus on In the Local Area

Q4. Thinking of the priorities for your local area for Council to focus on in the future, on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important, how important is...

| Top 2 Box % (Very important/Important)  | Overall | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+  | CALD Background (Yes) | Ratepayer | Non-ratepayer |
|---|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Maintaining and provision of green open spaces  | 92%     | 94%   | 95%   | 89%   | 87%▼ | 91%                   | 90%       | 97%▲          |
| Environmental protection  | 85%     | 85%   | 85%   | 85%   | 84%  | 85%                   | 83%       | 90%           |
| Availability and access to public transport   | 84%     | 88%   | 82%   | 80%   | 86%  | 84%                   | 82%       | 89%           |
| Council efficiency/good leadership and communication  | 84%     | 88%   | 82%   | 82%   | 81%  | 87%                   | 83%       | 87%           |
| Maintaining the character/heritage/culture of the area  | 79%     | 75%   | 83%   | 77%   | 84%  | 76%                   | 80%       | 77%           |
| Improving road infrastructure/maintenance of roads  | 79%     | 75%   | 86%▲  | 79%   | 78%  | 82%                   | 79%       | 79%           |
| Managing planning and development   | 79%     | 70%▼  | 81%   | 86%▲  | 83%  | 87%                   | 83%▲      | 70%           |
| Climate change  | 78%     | 85%   | 78%   | 73%   | 71%▼ | 77%                   | 74%       | 86%▲          |
| Traffic management/congestion   | 76%     | 74%   | 77%   | 78%   | 76%  | 79%                   | 79%▲      | 69%           |
| Access to parking facilities  | 58%     | 45%▼  | 64%   | 64%   | 66%▲ | 65%                   | 59%       | 55%           |
| De-amalgamation of Inner West Council back into the previous Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils | 39%     | 29%▼  | 38%   | 46%   | 49%▲ | 41%                   | 40%       | 35%           |

▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of importance

**Ratepayers consider 'managing planning and development' and 'traffic management/congestion' significantly more important.**

**Residents aged 65+ rated the importance of de-amalgamating Inner West Council significantly higher.**



# Priorities for Council to Focus on in the Local Area

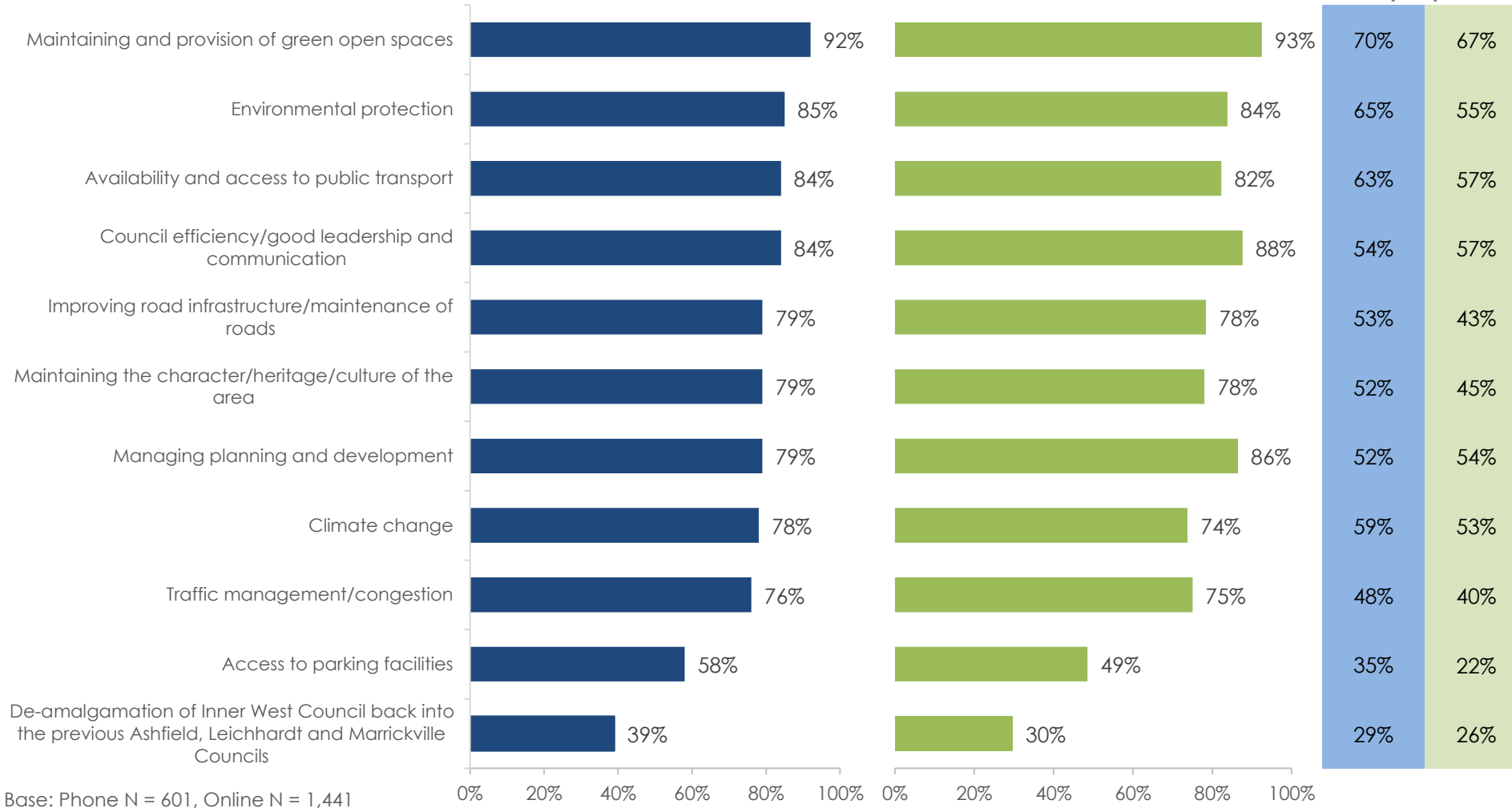


Phone Online

Q4. Thinking of the priorities for your local area for Council to focus on in the future, on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important, how important is...

## Top 2 Box - Importance

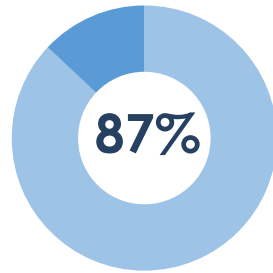
% Very important



**As with the phone interviews, online respondents continue to prioritise many issues significantly more important than de-amalgamation.**

# Overall Satisfaction with the Performance of Council

Q3. Overall, for the last 12 months, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, not just on one or two issues but across all responsibility areas?



Of Inner West residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the **performance of Council** over the last 12 months

|             | Overall | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+  | CALD Background (Yes) | Ratepayer | Non-ratepayer |
|-------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Mean rating | 3.49    | 3.71▲ | 3.39  | 3.30▼ | 3.47 | 3.47                  | 3.35      | 3.80▲         |
| Top 3 Box   | 87%     | 94%▲  | 84%   | 80%▼  | 85%  | 85%                   | 83%       | 97%▲          |
| Base        | 600     | 196   | 175   | 128   | 101  | 176                   | 420       | 179           |

|             | Previous LGA         |                    |                  | Time lived in the LGA |              |           |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|
|             | Marrickville Council | Leichhardt Council | Ashfield Council | <5 years              | 6 – 10 years | 10+ years |
| Mean rating | 3.56                 | 3.39               | 3.45             | 3.83▲                 | 3.70▲        | 3.37      |
| Top 3 Box   | 88%                  | 84%                | 88%              | 97%▲                  | 91%          | 84%       |
| Base        | 273                  | 182                | 145              | 68                    | 117          | 415       |

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied  
▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of satisfaction

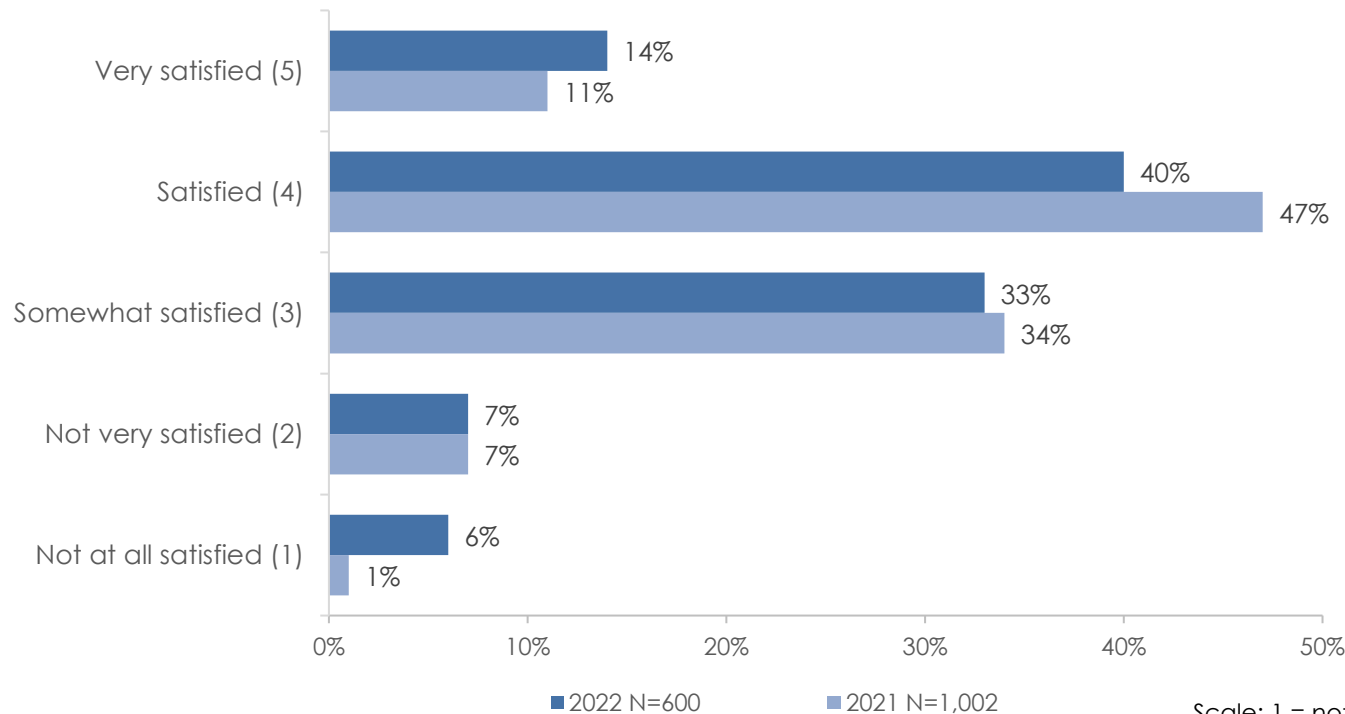
**87% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council.**

**Satisfaction levels are highest amongst those aged 18-34, non-ratepayers and those who have lived in the area for fewer than five years.**

# Overall Satisfaction with the Performance of Council

Q3. Overall, for the last 12 months, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, not just on one or two issues but across all responsibility areas?

|             | Overall | Submit business case for a de-amalgamation | Remain as Inner West Council | Inner West Council Community Research 2021 | Micromex LGA Benchmark - Metro |
|-------------|---------|--|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Mean rating | 3.49    | 3.25                                       | 3.70▲                        | 3.58                                       | 3.59                           |
| T3 Box      | 87%     | 81%  | 92%▲                         | 92%  | 90%                            |
| Base        | 600     | 281  | 315                          | 1,002                                      | 45,633                         |



Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied  
 ▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of satisfaction

**Residents who prefer Council to remain as Inner West Council expressed a higher level of satisfaction with Council overall.**

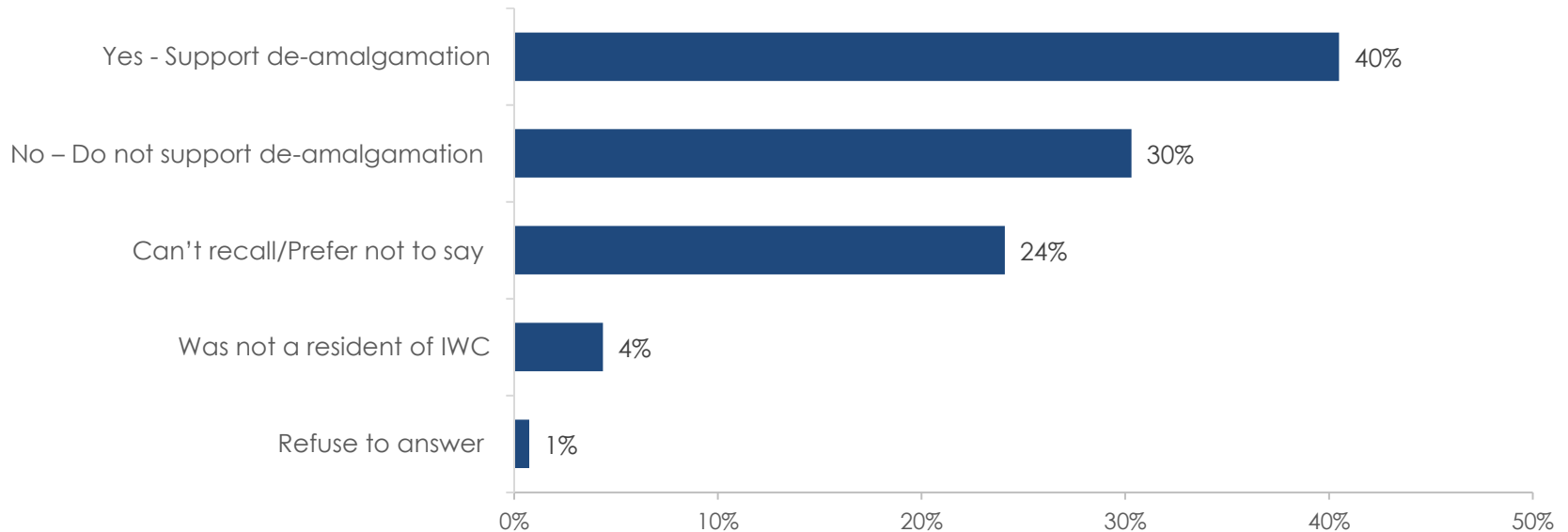


# 2021 Poll

# 2021 Poll on De-amalgamation

Q5a. Can I ask what you voted for in 2021?

|                                     | Overall | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+  | CALD Background (Yes) | Ratepayer | Non-ratepayer |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Yes - Support de-amalgamation       | 40%     | 34%   | 42%   | 40%   | 51%▲ | 36%                   | 40%       | 42%           |
| No – Do not support de-amalgamation | 30%     | 22%▼  | 32%   | 36%   | 37%  | 25%                   | 33%       | 23%           |
| Can't recall/Prefer not to say      | 24%     | 34%▲  | 21%   | 23%   | 12%▼ | 33%                   | 22%       | 28%           |
| Base                                | 601     | 196   | 175   | 128   | 102  | 176                   | 421       | 179           |



Base: N = 601

▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)

**40% of residents indicated that they voted to support de-amalgamation during the 2021 poll. Residents aged 65+ were significantly more likely to have voted in support of the de-amalgamation.**

# 2021 Poll on De-amalgamation

Q5a. Can I ask what you voted for in 2021?

|                                     | Previous LGA         |                    |                  | Time lived in the LGA |            |           | Support for de-amalgamation                |                              |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--|------------------------------|
|                                     | Marrickville Council | Leichhardt Council | Ashfield Council | <5 years              | 6-10 years | 10+ years | Submit business case for a de-amalgamation | Remain as Inner West Council |
| Yes - Support de-amalgamation       | 41%                  | 48%▲               | 30%▼             | 25%                   | 42%        | 42%       | 72%▲                                       | 13%                          |
| No – Do not support de-amalgamation | 30%                  | 29%                | 33%              | 24%                   | 27%        | 32%       | 9%   | 50%▲                         |
| Can't recall/Prefer not to say      | 25%                  | 19%                | 29%              | 24%                   | 27%        | 23%       | 13%  | 33%▲                         |
| Base                                | 273                  | 182                | 145              | 69                    | 117        | 415       | 282  | 315                          |

▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)

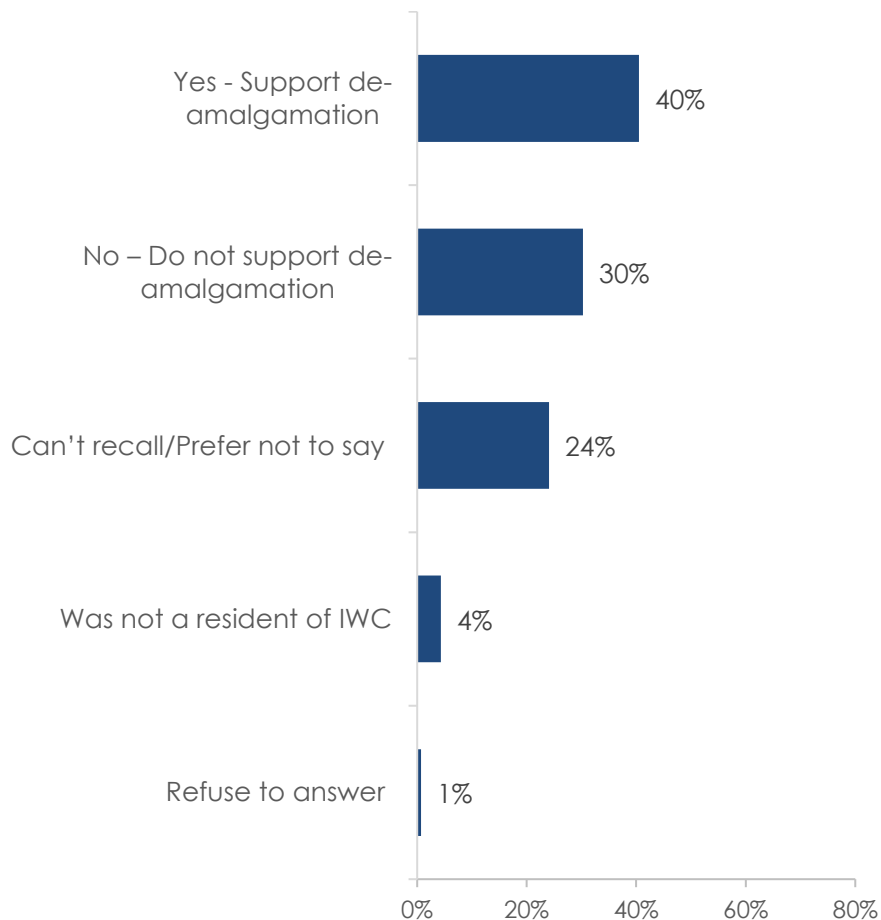
**Residents of the previous Ashfield Council were significantly less likely to have voted in support of the de-amalgamation in the 2021 poll.**

# 2021 Poll on De-amalgamation

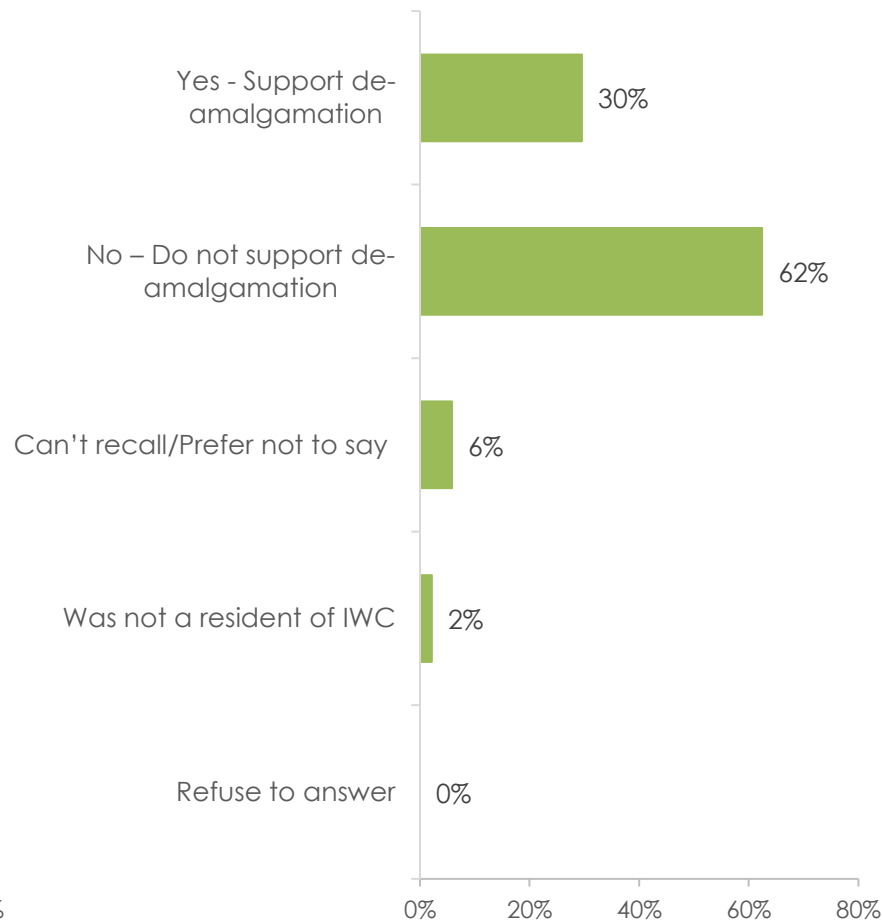


Phone Online

Q5a. Can I ask what you voted for in 2021?



Base: N = 601



Base: N = 1,441

**30% of online respondents indicated that they voted to support de-amalgamation during the 2021 poll.**

**Online respondents were less likely to have voted to support the de-amalgamation at the poll.**

# 2021 Poll on De-amalgamation – Reasons for Support

Q5a. Can I ask what you voted for in 2021?

Q5b. (Only if Yes or No on Q5a) Why did you vote that way?

| Reasons for <u>supporting</u> de-amalgamation  | Base N=243 |
|--|------------|
| The three areas are very diverse and have different local priorities, e.g. culturally, geographically etc      | 33%        |
| The amalgamated Council has not provided any improvement in service delivery/facilities/services have declined | 27%        |
| The smaller/individual council areas were easier to manage/provided better services/facilities                 | 12%        |
| Amalgamation has removed governance/decision making from the community, a more localised response is needed    | 10%        |
| Communication/engagement/transparency with the community   | 10%        |
| Efficiency of service delivery/management  | 10%        |
| Inner West is too much of a large area/large population for one Council  | 10%        |
| Cost implications/considerations/financial impact  | 7%         |
| Amalgamating the councils was not in the best interests of the community initially                             | 5%         |
| Three separate councils are better for preserving the heritage/character of the different areas                | 3%         |
| Inner West Council is more supportive of planning/development  | 1%         |
| Amalgamation has failed in other councils  | <1%        |
| Other  | 12%        |
| Don't know/unsure  | 7%         |

## Verbatim Comments

*“Each council should be its own entity as the areas are vastly different”*

*“Noticeable decline in Council services and maintenance since amalgamation”*

*“Small local government is better suited to the specific needs of the local area”*

*“Councils are more effective in supporting the communities needs when they are smaller”*

*“Everything is too big and has become unmanageable”*

*“There are too many suburbs under the umbrella of one council and other smaller areas are missing out”*

**For residents who supported de-amalgamation in the 2021 poll, their primary reasons centred on the diversity of the three previous LGAs and their differing local priorities, as well as a perceived decline/lack of improvement in services/facilities in the area since the amalgamation.**



# 2021 Poll on De-amalgamation – Reasons for Against

Q5a. Can I ask what you voted for in 2021?

Q5b. (Only if Yes or No on Q5a) Why did you vote that way?

## Verbatim Comments

| Reasons for NOT supporting de-amalgamation  | Base<br>N=182 |
|---|---------------|
| Cost implications/considerations/financial impact   | 42%           |
| The amalgamated Council has better managed/provided improved services in the area   | 28%           |
| Efficiency of service delivery/management   | 18%           |
| I don't think de-amalgamation will benefit the community/no cause for de-amalgamation   | 10%           |
| Inner West Council is doing a good job/Satisfied with the Council currently   | 10%           |
| Communication/engagement/transparency with the community  | 4%            |
| De-amalgamation is not viable/More changes to Council are not productive  | 4%            |
| The amalgamated Council provides a stronger, more independent voice for residents   | 2%            |
| The amalgamation has provided a good identity for the community/people identify as a part of the Inner West community             | 2%            |
| The amalgamated Council is focused on larger issues (e.g. climate change, recycling, sustainability) rather than localised issues | 1%            |
| Inner West Council is more supportive of planning/development   | 1%            |
| Council performance could be improved without de-amalgamation   | 1%            |
| Other   | 10%           |
| Don't know/unsure   | 5%            |

*"Efficiencies and collaboration with a larger council works better - has improved the area overall"*

*"We are here now and can't go back in time and waste money"*

*"The amalgamated council has better management of the area"*

*"They operate far better now as one council"*

*"The Inner West council has been more efficient and affective as a larger council"*

*"Its too late to de-amalgamate, it would take too much time and resources"*

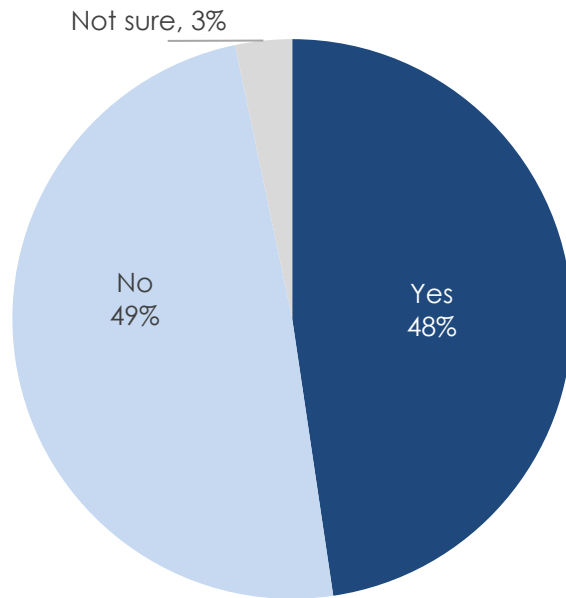
*Current council has a broader vision for the whole LGA than as individual council areas*

**The primary reasons for not supporting the de-amalgamation included cost considerations/financial implications, as well as perceived improvements in services and efficiencies within the Inner West Council.**

# Awareness of Council Exploring Community Sentiment to De-amalgamation

Q9a. Prior to this call, were you aware that Council was exploring community sentiment towards a de-amalgamation?

|      | Overall | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+  | CALD Background (Yes) | Ratepayer | Non-ratepayer |
|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Yes  | 48%     | 34%▼  | 55%▲  | 51%   | 57%▲ | 40%                   | 50%       | 42%           |
| Base | 601     | 196   | 175   | 128   | 102  | 176                   | 421       | 179           |



|      | Previous LGA         |                    |                  | Time lived in the LGA |              |           | Support for de-amalgamation                |                              |
|------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|--|------------------------------|
|      | Marrickville Council | Leichhardt Council | Ashfield Council | <5 years              | 6 – 10 years | 10+ years | Submit business case for a de-amalgamation | Remain as Inner West Council |
| Yes  | 46%                  | 54%                | 44%              | 29%▼                  | 49%          | 50%       | 52%  | 43%                          |
| Base | 273                  | 182                | 145              | 69                    | 117          | 415       | 282  | 315                          |

Base: N = 601

▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of awareness

**Almost half of residents were aware Council was exploring community sentiment towards de-amalgamation.**

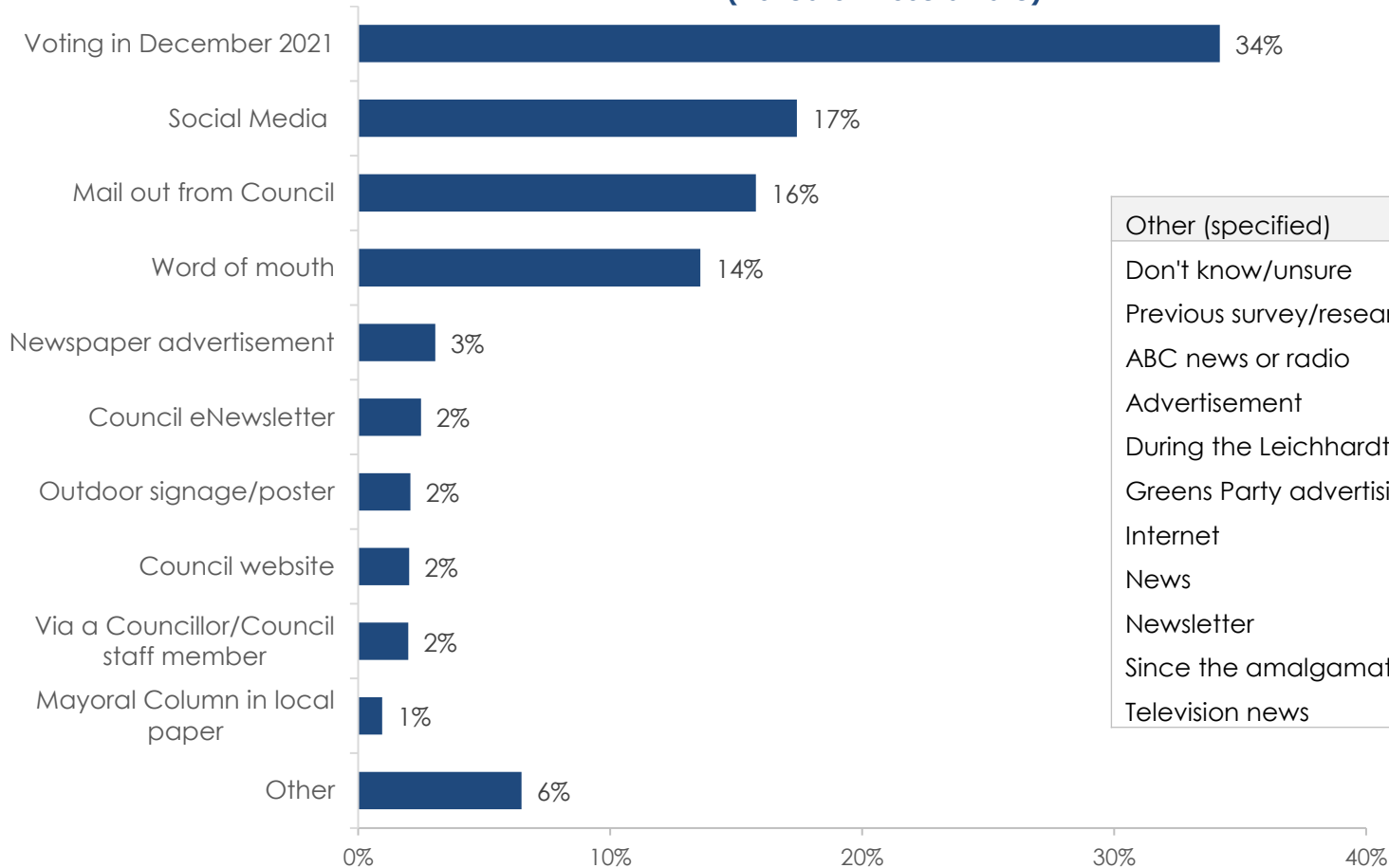
**Awareness levels were highest amongst those aged 35-49 and 65+.**

# First Awareness of the De-amalgamation

Q9a. Prior to this call, were you aware that Council was exploring community sentiment towards a de-amalgamation?

Q9b. How did you first become aware of the de-amalgamation?

**First Awareness of the de-amalgamation  
(Asked of those aware)**



| Other (specified)                 |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Don't know/unsure                 | 6 |
| Previous survey/research report   | 2 |
| ABC news or radio                 | 1 |
| Advertisement                     | 1 |
| During the Leichhardt change      | 1 |
| Greens Party advertising          | 1 |
| Internet                          | 1 |
| News                              | 1 |
| Newsletter                        | 1 |
| Since the amalgamation took place | 1 |
| Television news                   | 1 |

Base: N = 286

**Of those residents aware of the exploration, 34% became aware via the poll in 2021, 17% via 'social media' and 16% 'mail out from Council'.**



# Response to Options



## Concept Statement

Inner West Council is seeking your views on options for the way forward.

De-amalgamation may bring a number of benefits, such as:

- Improved local representation with more Councillors per resident
- A right to self-determination and the removal of forced amalgamation
- Some perceived service level improvements
- Better alignment of Council priorities to communities of interest

De-amalgamation also presents significant costs and potential risks including:

- Increases in rates for each de-amalgamated Council to cover funding shortfalls
- Increased costs in staffing, services and program delivery through the loss of efficiencies gained from the amalgamation. De-amalgamation would, for example, add an estimated \$2.25 million per year in executive staff and councillor costs
- Service disruption for the community during the de-amalgamation process
- Staff redundancies, loss of corporate knowledge and the appointment of an interim administrator

Since the amalgamation in 2016, service levels have been maintained by Inner West Council with a projected modest budget surplus from 2022-23.



## Concept Statement (Cont'd)

If Inner West Council is de-amalgamated there are projected increases in rates for each de-amalgamated Council to cover service level funding shortfalls because of a loss of efficiencies that have been gained through the amalgamation. Ultimately each restored Council would determine how to bring their council into a financially sustainable position through improving cost recovery of services, increasing annual charges or rates and/or reviewing the levels and types of services provided. However, to assist the community determine a preference, independently appointed consultants have prepared a business case that weighs-up three distinct de-amalgamation options.

Specifically:

Option A De-amalgamate and return to the service levels provided prior to amalgamation

Option B De-amalgamate and maintain the service levels provided by the current Inner West Council

Option C De-amalgamate and reduce to below pre-amalgamation Council service levels

For two of the three options, deficits have been projected by the independent consultants for all three Councils. The deficits are due to increased costs for new facilities in each Council area, as well as higher costs that will be involved in delivering some services. The costs will need to be funded by a cost increase to households.

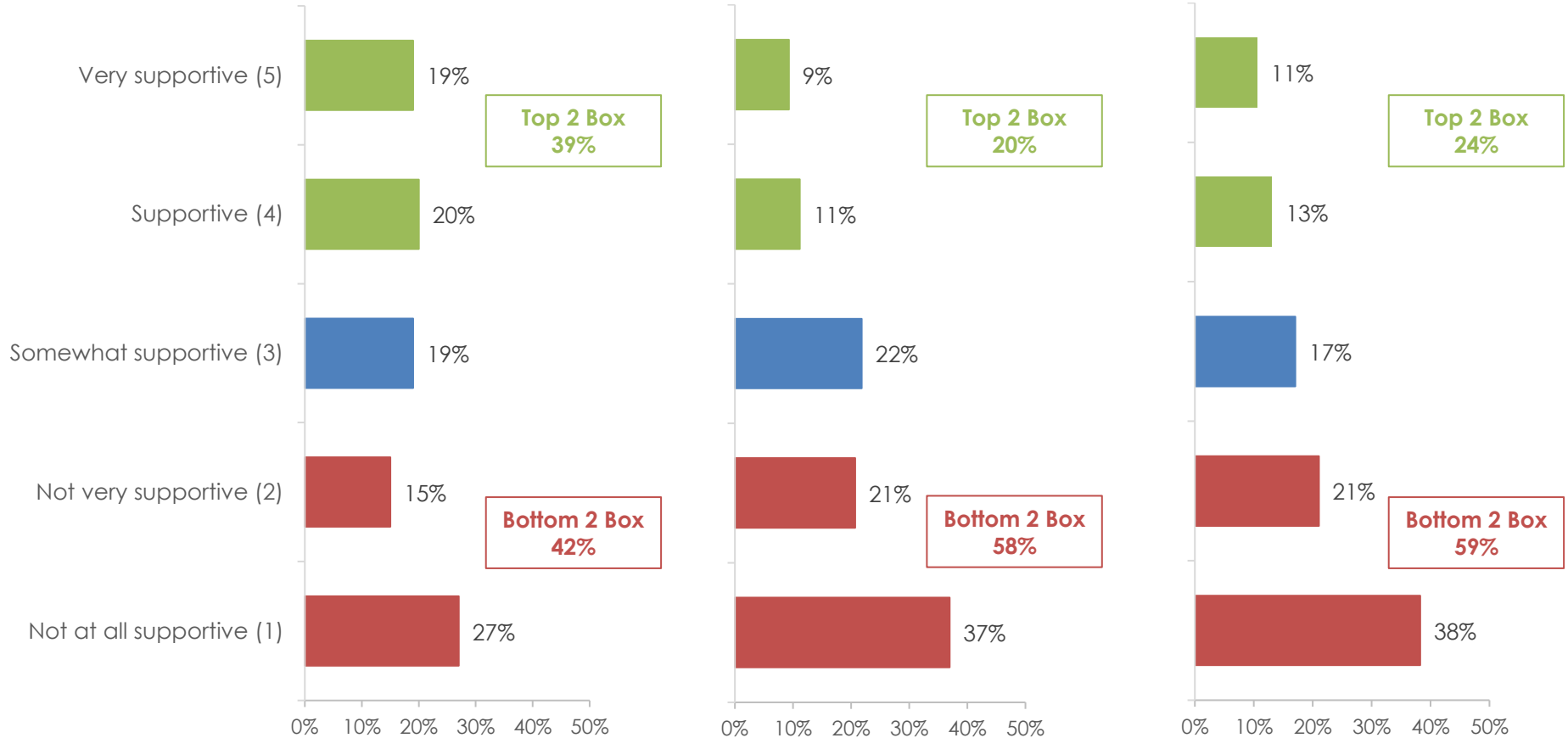
# Summary of Support for Options

Q6. How supportive, if at all, are you of Council proceeding with Option A/B/C?

**Option A - Return to services levels pre-amalgamation\***

**Option B - Maintain the service levels provided by Inner West Council\***

**Option C - Reduce to below pre-amalgamation service levels\***



Base: N = 601

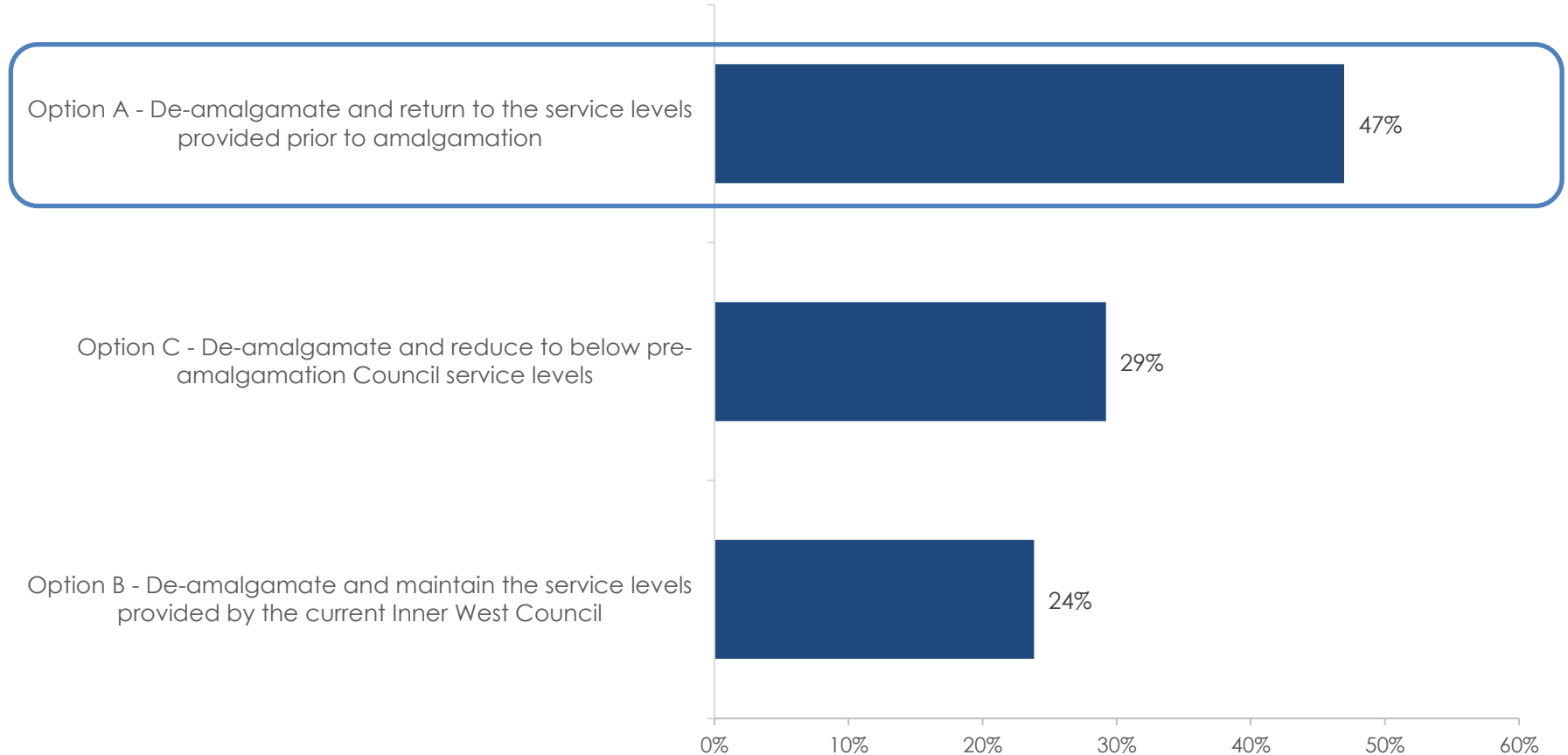
\*Please see the following slides for a complete description of options

**Level of support is highest for Option A – but could not be considered overwhelmingly strong.**

# Preferred De-amalgamation Option

Q7. If Inner West Council were to de-amalgamate, please rank the 3 options in order of preference:

## First Preference - Overall



Base: N = 598

If there were to be a de-amalgamation, residents were asked to rank their preference of the 3 options. Option A, de-amalgamate and return to the service levels provided prior to amalgamation was the first preference for 47% of residents.



# Preferred De-amalgamation Option

Q7. If Inner West Council were to de-amalgamate, please rank the 3 options in order of preference:

| First preference %                      | Overall | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | CALD Background (Yes) | Ratepayer | Non-ratepayer |
|---|---------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Option A – Return to service levels*    | 47%▲    | 40%   | 50%   | 52%   | 48% | 45%                   | 49%       | 42%           |
| Option C - Reduce service levels*       | 29%     | 41%▲  | 21%▼  | 23%   | 28% | 32%                   | 27%       | 35%           |
| Option B - Maintain the service levels* | 24%▼    | 18%   | 29%   | 25%   | 24% | 23%                   | 24%       | 24%           |
| Base                                    | 598     | 196   | 175   | 125   | 101 | 176                   | 418       | 179           |

| First preference %                      | Previous LGA         |                    |                  | Time lived in the LGA |              |           | Support for de-amalgamation                |                              |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|--|------------------------------|
|   | Marrickville Council | Leichhardt Council | Ashfield Council | <5 years              | 6 – 10 years | 10+ years | Submit business case for a de-amalgamation | Remain as Inner West Council |
| Option A – Return to service levels*    | 49%                  | 49%                | 41%              | 50%                   | 40%          | 48%       | 64%▲                                       | 31%                          |
| Option C - Reduce service levels*       | 30%                  | 26%                | 31%              | 32%                   | 30%          | 28%       | 19%▼                                       | 39%                          |
| Option B - Maintain the service levels* | 21%                  | 25%                | 28%              | 18%                   | 30%          | 23%       | 17%▼                                       | 30%                          |
| Base                                    | 272                  | 181                | 145              | 69                    | 117          | 412       | 280  | 314                          |

\*Please see the previous slide for the complete description

▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)

**Residents aged 18-34 were more supportive of Option C (de-amalgamate and reduce to below pre-amalgamation Council service levels) as a first preference.**

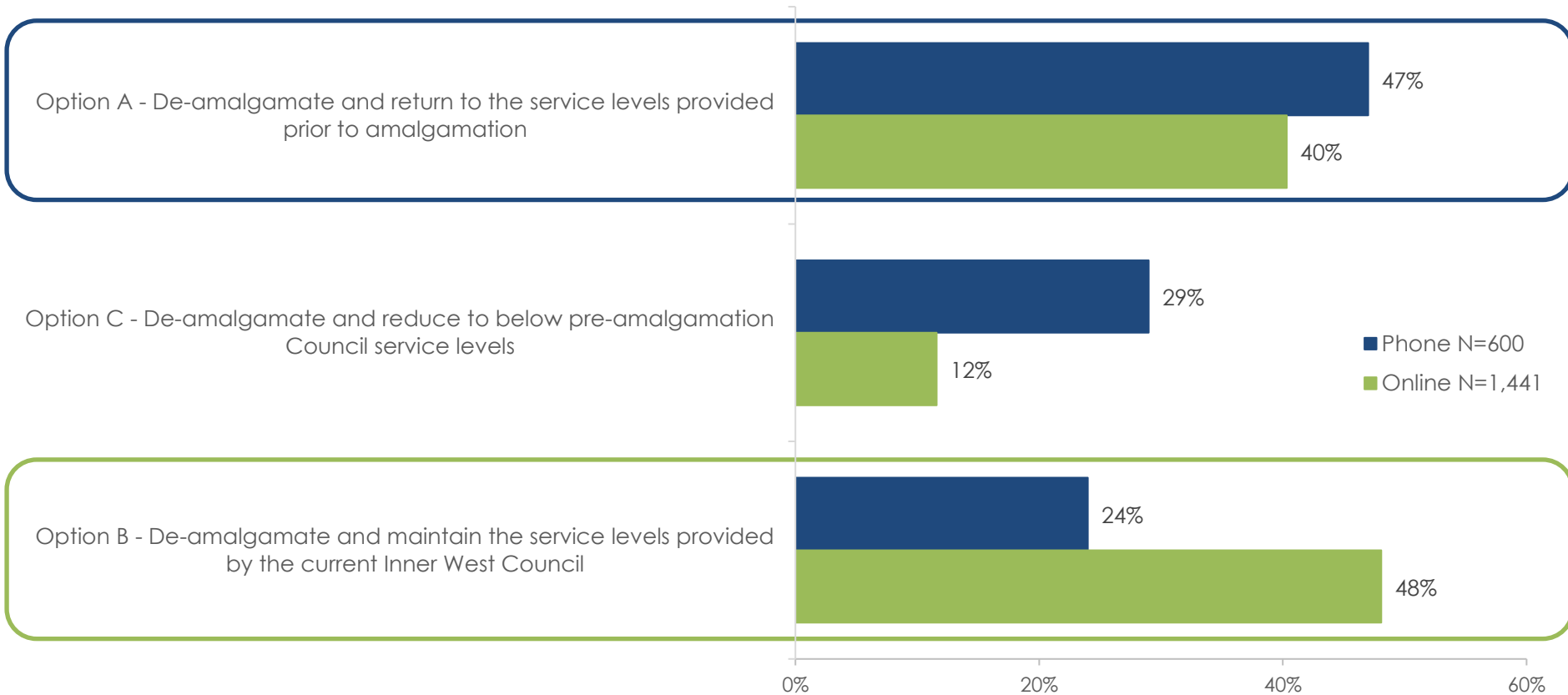
# Preferred De-amalgamation Option



Phone Online

Q7. If Inner West Council were to de-amalgamate, please rank the 3 options in order of preference:

## First Preference - Overall



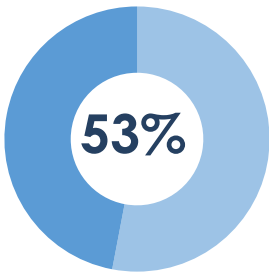
**For online respondents, Option B, de-amalgamate and maintain the service levels provided by the current IWC was the preferred option (48%). This option was the preference for only 24% of telephone respondents.**



# Overall Preference

# Preference for De-amalgamation or Remain Inner West Council

Q8a. Considering everything now, is your preference that Council submit a business case to the Minister supporting a de-amalgamation, or should Council remain as Inner West Council?



Of residents prefer for Council to **remain as Inner West Council**

|  | Overall | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+ | CALD Background (Yes) | Ratepayer | Non-ratepayer |
|--|---------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Remain as Inner West Council               | 53%     | 54%   | 51%   | 56%   | 49% | 54%                   | 51%       | 56%           |
| Submit business case for a de-amalgamation | 47%     | 46%   | 49%   | 44%   | 51% | 46%                   | 49%       | 44%           |
| Base                                       | 597     | 193   | 175   | 128   | 102 | 176                   | 421       | 175           |

|  | Previous LGA         |                    |                  | Time lived in the LGA |              |           |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|
|  | Marrickville Council | Leichhardt Council | Ashfield Council | <5 years              | 6 – 10 years | 10+ years |
| Remain as Inner West Council               | 54%                  | 44%▼               | 62%▲             | 59%                   | 53%          | 52%       |
| Submit business case for a de-amalgamation | 46%                  | 56%                | 38%              | 41%                   | 47%          | 48%       |
| Base                                       | 271                  | 181                | 145              | 69                    | 117          | 411       |

▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group)

**Given all information and provision of de-amalgamation options, residents were asked for their preference overall.**

**53% of residents prefer for Council to remain Inner West Council, with residents from the previous Ashfield Council area most supportive of this option.**

# Preference for De-amalgamation or Remain Inner West Council

- Q8a. Considering everything now, is your preference that Council submit a business case to the Minister supporting a de-amalgamation, or should Council remain as Inner West Council?
- Q8b. Why do you say that?

| Submit a business case for de-amalgamation   | Base N=280 |
|--|------------|
| Smaller/individual council areas are better/provide improved management/better services/facilities             | 29%        |
| The amalgamated Council has not provided any improvement in service delivery/facilities/services have declined | 22%        |
| Cost implications/considerations/financial impact  | 18%        |
| The three areas are very diverse and have different local priorities, e.g. culturally, geographically etc      | 15%        |
| Efficiency of service delivery/management  | 8%         |
| Inner West is too much of a large area/large population for one Council  | 6%         |
| The business case should be submitted for review and informed decisions made                                   | 6%         |
| Communication/engagement/transparency with the community   | 5%         |

### Verbatim Comments

*“Inner West is too large of a council for such a diverse community”*

*“Smaller Council runs better and will satisfy local needs more”*

*“We were promised rate decreases and better services and in actual fact it's been the opposite”*

*“More representatives in the local community, representing the local community”*

*“Since amalgamation Council services have been deteriorating”*

*“The Council that we had before amalgamation was much more effective, efficient”*

*“Blanket approach neglects certain aspects of the local areas”*

\*Please see Appendix A for comments <5%



**Key reasons for preferring Council submit a business case supporting de-amalgamation centre on a sentiment that smaller/individual council areas provide better management/services, as well as the feeling that the current service delivery has declined.**

# Preference for De-amalgamation or Remain Inner West Council

Q8a. Considering everything now, is your preference that Council submit a business case to the Minister supporting a de-amalgamation, or should Council remain as Inner West Council?

Q8b. Why do you say that?

| Remain as Inner West Council   | Base N=315 |
|--|------------|
| Cost implications/considerations/financial impact  | 51%        |
| Efficiency of service delivery/management  | 22%        |
| I don't think de-amalgamation will benefit the community/no cause for de-amalgamation                                | 20%        |
| The amalgamated Council is better managed/provides improved services in the area                                     | 19%        |
| Inner West Council is doing a good job/I like the area amalgamated   | 15%        |
| Communication/engagement/transparency with the community   | 4%         |
| The amalgamated Council provides a stronger, more independent voice, particularly when lobbying the State Government | 4%         |

## Verbatim Comments

*"Council shouldn't waste money on de-amalgamation"*

*"I don't see a good case for de-amalgamation"*

*"Really appreciate the connections and engagement with our current council"*

*"Happy with how the Council works with the services provided"*

*"Since amalgamation the Council has been performing more efficiently"*

*De-amalgamating would mean going completely backwards and creating huge cost increases"*

*"De-amalgamation increases rates/costs for residents"*

\*Please see Appendix A for comments <4%

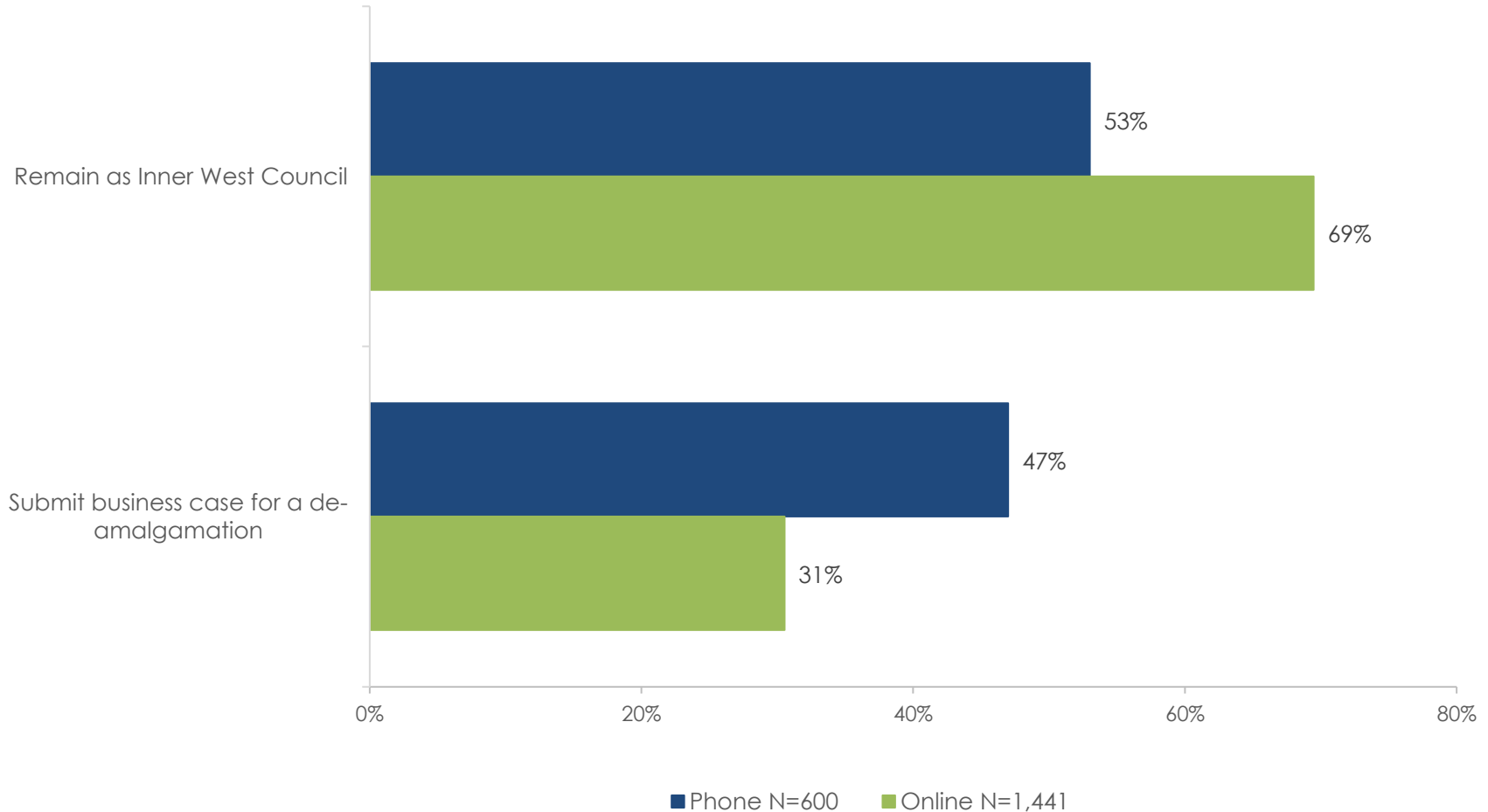
**For those supportive of Council remaining amalgamated, key reasons centre on cost implications/financial considerations as well as the efficiency of the current service delivery/management provided by Inner West Council.**

# Preference for De-amalgamation or Remain Inner West Council



Phone Online

Q8a. Considering everything now, is your preference that Council submit a business case to the Minister supporting a de-amalgamation, or should Council remain as Inner West Council?



**Given all information and provision of de-amalgamation options, respondents were asked for their preference overall. 69% of online respondents prefer for Council to remain as Inner West Council. Support for remaining as IWC was strongest amongst online respondents 69% v 53%.**

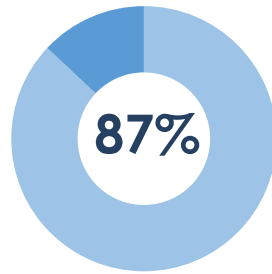


# Summary of Findings



# Summary of Findings

## Overall Satisfaction with the Performance of Council



Of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the **performance of Inner West Council** over the last 12 months

### Key Priorities in the Local Council Area (unprompted)



Improving road infrastructure/maintenance of roads (28%)



Environmental protection/managing pollution/climate change/maintaining and provision of green open space (24%)



Managing development/adequate planning/overdevelopment (13%)

### Priorities for Council to Focus on in the Future (T2B Importance)



Maintaining and provision of green open spaces (92%)



Environmental protection (85%)



Availability and access to public transport (84%)



Council efficiency/good leadership and communication (84%)



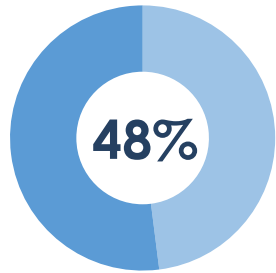
De-amalgamation of Inner West Council back into the previous Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils (39%)

**87% of residents are at least 'somewhat satisfied' with the performance of Inner West Council across all responsibility areas for the last 12 months.**

**When asked to rank their priorities for the local area, 'de-amalgamation of Inner West Council' was rated comparatively lower in importance.**

# Summary of Findings

## Awareness



Of Inner West residents were previously aware that Council was **exploring community sentiment to a de-amalgamation**



The most common ways residents were advised:

Voting in December 2021 **(34%)**



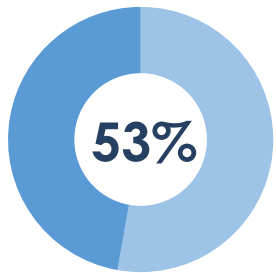
Social media **(17%)**



Mail out from Council **(16%)**



## Overall Preference



Of Inner West residents prefer for Council to **remain as Inner West Council**

**Top reasons for wanting to remain as Inner West Council (53%):**

Cost implications/considerations/financial impact  
Efficiency of service delivery/management

**Top reasons for supporting the submission of the business case for (47%):**

Smaller/individual council areas are better/provide improved management/better services/facilities

The amalgamated Council has not provided any improvement in service delivery/facilities/services have declined

**53% of residents would prefer to remain as Inner West Council.**

The logo for micromex research features the word "micromex" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. A stylized compass rose is integrated into the letter "o", with a red needle pointing towards the top-left. Below "micromex", the word "research" is written in a smaller, grey, lowercase, sans-serif font. The background of the entire image is a scenic view of a paved path leading to a body of water under a blue sky with scattered clouds. Two people are walking away on the path to the left.

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