

Inangahua Community Consultation Survey

Planning for our
future



BULLER DISTRICT

Community Planning

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Executive Summary

This report outlines the results of a survey designed and carried out by Year 12 Maths students from Reefton Area School, on behalf of the Buller District Council.

The survey was an Education for Enterprise (E4E) project. The E4E programme is co-ordinated by Development West Coast. It aims to foster the growth of enterprising skills and attributes in West Coast students.

Conducted in the Inangahua community, the survey focused on three Council documents;

- Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)
- Annual Plan (AP)
- Buller District Plan (BDP)

Respondents were asked what they know about these documents, how interested they are in them and how much impact they feel the documents have on their day to day lives.

Respondents were also asked how they currently receive information on these documents, how they would like to receive this information and how they would like to give feedback on them to Council.



Introduction

During August 2009 the Buller District Council (BDC) and a Year 12 Maths class from Reefton Area School worked together on a survey project looking at how BDC communicates with the Inangahua community.

In particular, the survey was focused on three planning documents which BDC must produce and consult with the public on—the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), the Annual Plan (AP) and the Buller District Plan (BDP).

BDC staff provided the students with a brief, outlining what they wanted to achieve with the survey. The objective of the project was:

“In order to consult effectively and efficiently with our community we need to know a few things:

- *How much do people know about the documents we are consulting on (including how they fit in with the overall responsibilities and functions of the Council)*
- *How interested people are in having a say on these issues*
- *What is the best way of getting information about these documents and Council’s functions to people*
- *If people do want to have a say, how do they want to do this (ie on paper, via email, online forms etc)*

This information will help us decide how best to engage with people in our community to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to have their opinions heard.”

The intended outcome of the project was:

“We would like to get an idea of the level of understanding and interest there is for what Council does, and how we can improve on this.”

The students were asked to design a survey which would meet BDC’s intended objective and outcome.

The students designed surveys individually, then with input from BDC staff, combined their ideas into a draft final survey. The students worked together as a class to determine an appropriate method to carry out the survey.

The draft final survey was presented to BDC staff, who worked through it with the students to get to the final survey design.

The students designed a sampling method which took into account the distribution of residents in the Inangahua community.

Using random number generation, 250 residents were selected from the phone book. The number of residents selected from each area of Inangahua was proportionate, based on the total number of residents in that area. It was anticipated that 20% of those who received the survey would complete and return it.

Recognising that only those residents listed in the phone book would have the opportunity to receive and complete the survey, forms were put in the Clarion as well.

The survey forms in the Clarion were printed on blue paper so that they were distinguishable from the posted surveys.



Participation

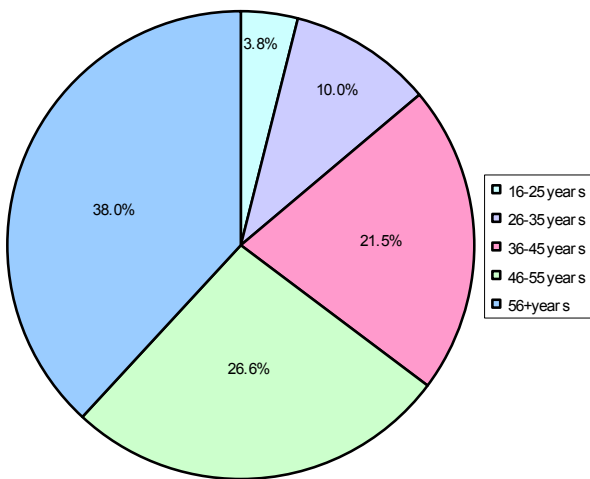
Out of the 250 surveys posted out, 58 were returned completed. This was slightly more than the 50 that were expected.

There were 22 surveys from the Clarion returned completed, making a total of 80 completed surveys.

The majority of respondents, 63.3%, were female and 36.7% were male.

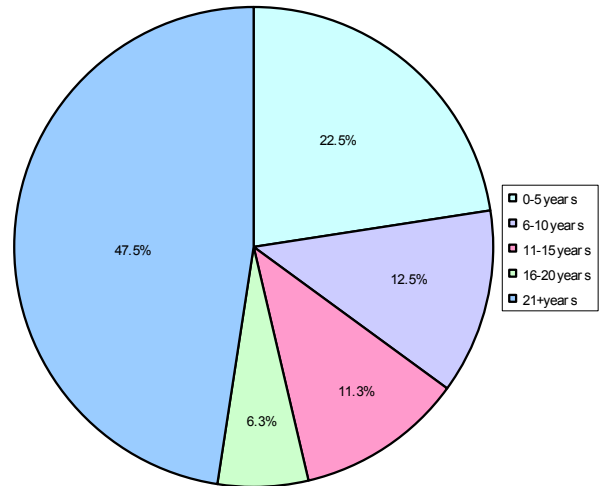
More than half of the respondents were aged 46 years or over, and almost half had lived in Inangahua for 21 years or more.

Graph 1: Age category of respondents



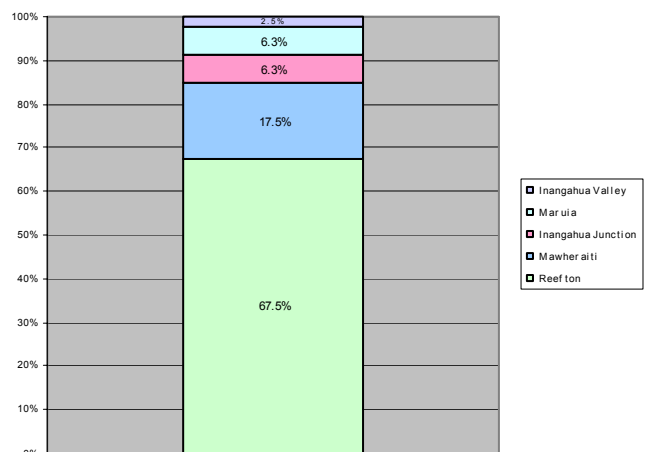
The survey had been limited to those aged 16 years and over.

Graph 2: Length of time respondents have lived in Inangahua



As would be expected with the proportionate distribution of the surveys, the majority of responses came from Reefton, followed by Mawheraiti. The same number of responses were received from Inangahua Junction and Maruia. Inangahua Valley had the fewest number of responses.

Graph 3: Area of Inangahua respondents live in



Responses were received from people in all age categories and from all parts of the Inangahua area.



Current community understanding

The next questions on the survey were aimed at finding out what the community currently knows about the LTCCP, AP and BDP.

This would give us a sense of how effective our current methods of communication are.

Respondents were asked if they had heard of these documents, if they had read them, and if they were aware of their purpose.

Respondents were then asked which of the listed terms they felt best described each of the documents. The terms were:

- Environment
- Projects
- Budgets
- Direction of Council
- Natural resources
- Projected income and expenditure

When the results were analysed, respondents were allocated a score for each document, depending on their level of understanding:

- 0 = not understood
- 1 = little understanding
- 2 = some understanding
- 3 = good understanding

These results show us what areas we need to work on in terms of raising community awareness and understanding of these important strategic documents.

Long Term Council Community Plan

60% of respondents have heard of the LTCCP and 28.8% have read it. 43.8% of respondents said they were aware of the purpose of the LTCCP.

33.8% of respondents had no understanding of the LTCCP and 17.5% had little understanding. 31.3% had some understanding and 17.5% had a good understanding of the LTCCP.

Annual Plan

65% of respondents have heard of the AP and 16.3% have read it. 38.8% of respondents said they were aware of the purpose of the AP.

35% of respondents had no understanding of the AP and 8.8% had little understanding. 26.3% had some understanding and 30% had a good understanding of the AP.

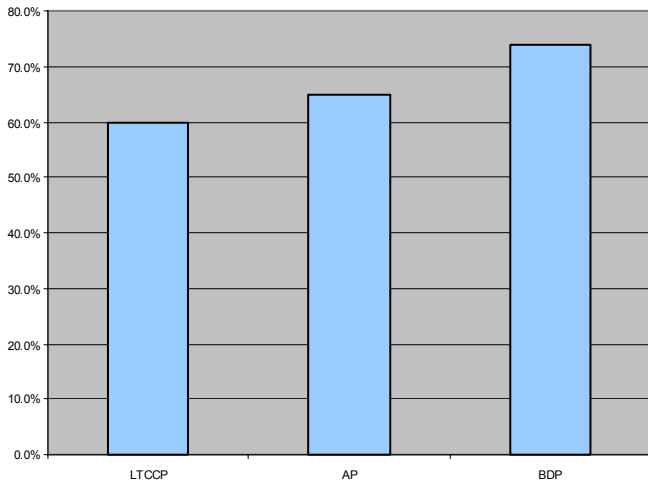
Buller District Plan

73.8% of respondents have heard of the BDP and 22.5% have read it. 37.5% of respondents said they were aware of the purpose of the BDP.

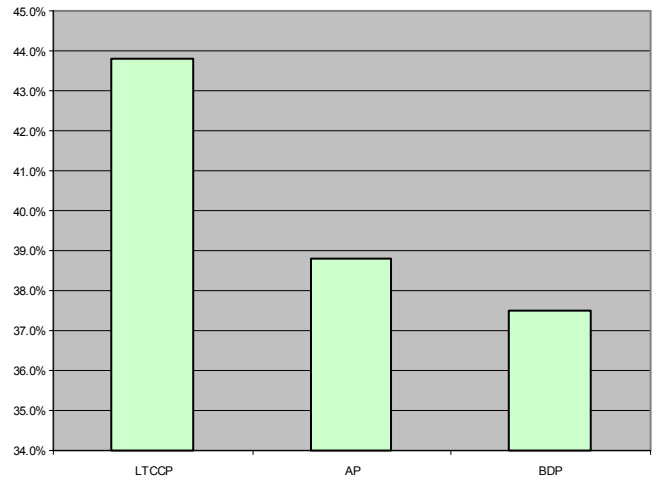
51.3% of respondents had no understanding of the BDP and 22.5% had little understanding. 11.3% had some understanding and 15% had a good understanding of the BDP.



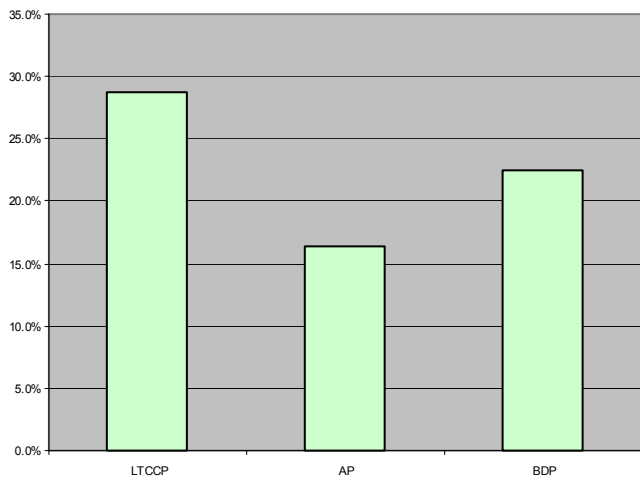
Graph 4: Percentage of respondents who have heard of the LTCCP, AP and BDP



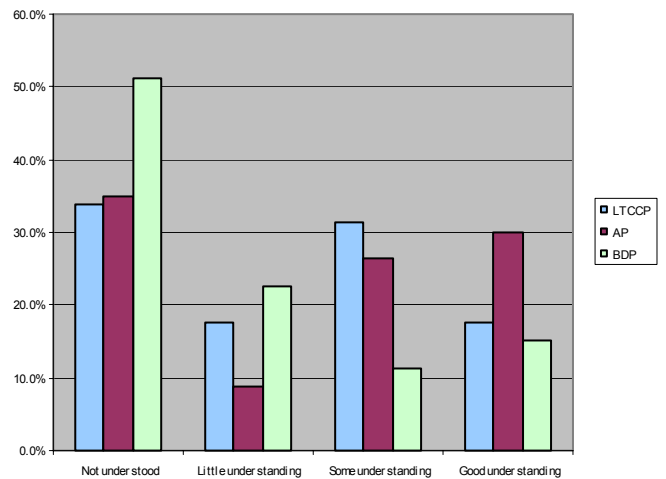
Graph 6: Percentage of respondents aware of the purpose of the LTCCP, AP and BDP



Graph 5: Percentage of respondents who have read the LTCCP, AP and/or BDP



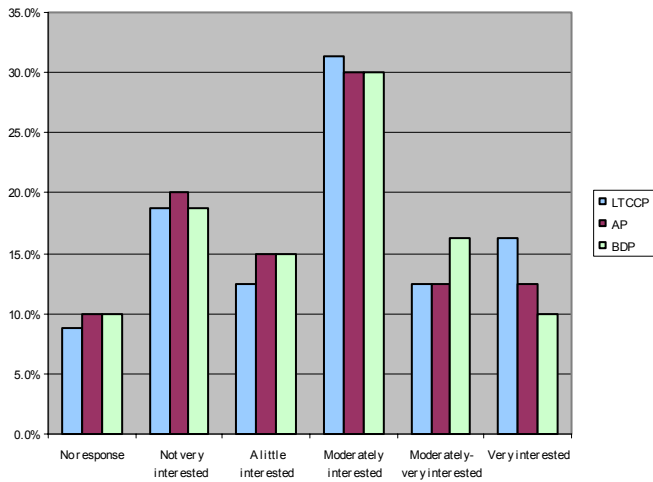
Graph 7: Respondents' levels of understanding of the LTCCP, AP and BDP



Interest and impact

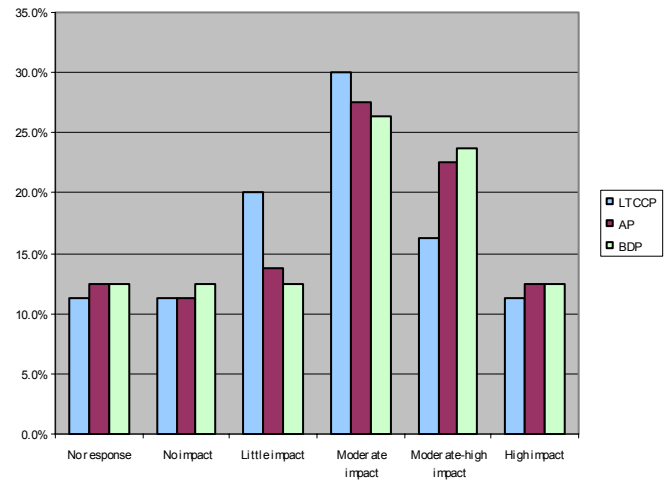
Respondents were asked how interested they were in the LTCCP, AP and BDP, and how interested they would be in having a say when these documents are being consulted on.

Graph 8: Levels of interest in the LTCCP, AP and BDP

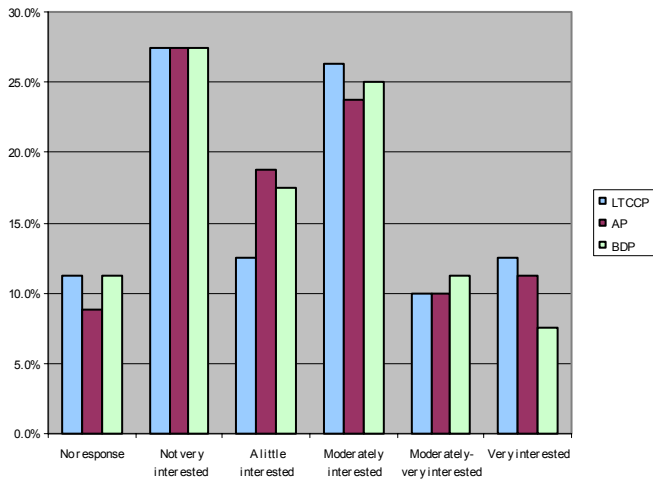


Respondents were also asked to think about their day to day lives and indicate how much of an impact they feel the LTCCP, AP and BDP have on them.

Graph 10: Perceived impact of the LTCCP, AP and BDP



Graph 9: Levels of interest in having a say during consultation on the LTCCP, AP and BDP



While the level of interest in the documents themselves with the greatest number of responses was “moderate interest”, when it came to interest in having a say during consultation, the level of interest receiving the greatest number of responses was “not very interested”.

The LTCCP received the greatest level of interest, both of itself and in terms of having a say on its content, yet it was considered to have the least impact on respondents’ day to day lives.

More respondents identified the BDP as having a moderate to high impact on their day to day lives than the LTCCP and AP. The BDP had the second highest level of interest in the document itself but the lowest level of interest in terms of having a say on its content.

The AP had the lowest level of interest in the document itself and was second in terms of both interest in having a say and impact on day to day lives.

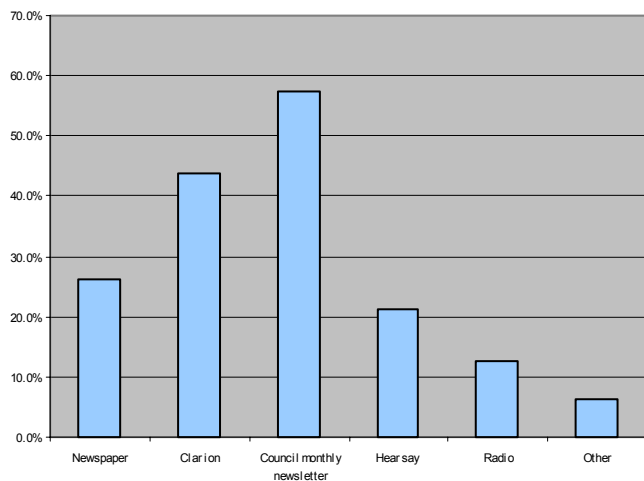


Communication

One of the key outcomes of this survey was to find out whether or not the ways we currently communicate information about the LTCCP, AP and BDP are working.

Respondents were asked how they currently receive information on these documents and how they would like to be informed about the documents, proposed changes to them and opportunities for public consultation.

Graph 11: How respondents currently receive information about the LTCCP, AP and BDP

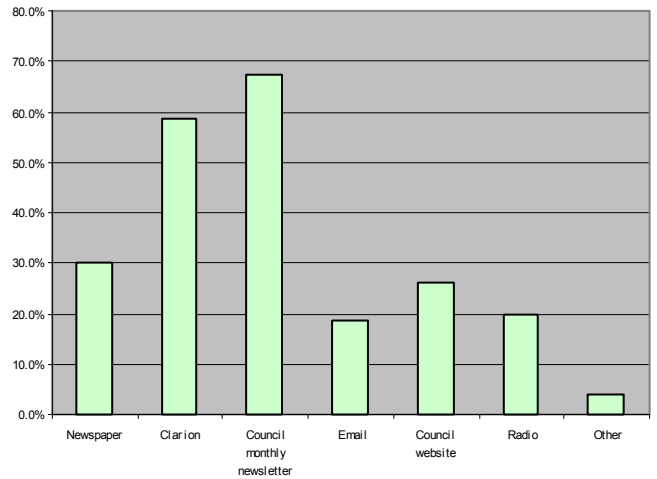


The majority of respondents (57.5%) currently receive this information from Council’s monthly community newsletter. The next most common ways to receive information were the Clarion (43.8%) and newspapers (26.3%).

“Other” included receiving information from the internet, from Councillors, members of the Inangahua Community Board and/or Council staff.



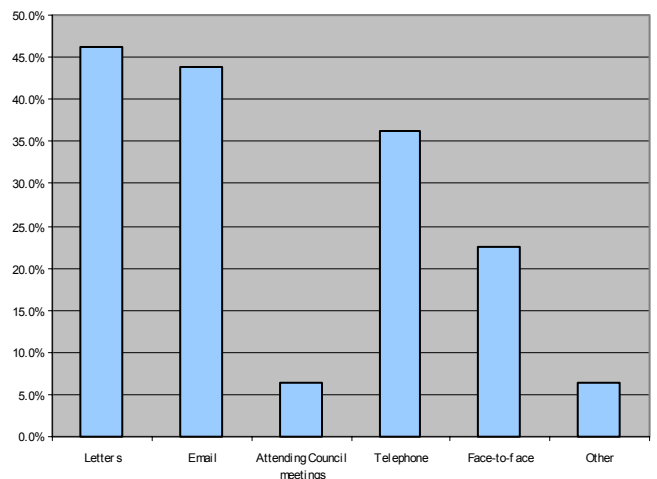
Graph 12: How respondents would like to receive information about the LTCCP, AP and BDP



The majority of respondents (67.5%) would like to receive this information from Council’s monthly community newsletter. The next most common ways were the Clarion (58.8%) and newspapers (30%). Those who indicated “other” want to receive information by mail.

As public consultation plays an important part with these documents, respondents were also asked how they would prefer to provide Council with their feedback.

Graph 13: How respondents would like to provide feedback to Council



“Other” included via the internet and through Councillors.

What does this tell us?

Communication and consultation

The majority of respondents, 57.5% currently receive information on the LTCCP, AP and BDP through Council's monthly community newsletter, and 67.5% have indicated that this is how they would like to receive this information.

This tells us that we should not only continue to include information about these documents in the newsletter but we should include more information on the LTCCP, AP and BDP in the newsletter.

That the newsletter is the most commonly used and most requested form of communication suggests that this should be the key form we use to both provide information on these documents and to educate residents about them and their purpose.

More than 40% of respondents say they currently receive this information in the Clarion and almost 60% said they would like to. This suggests that we should be placing more information on the LTCCP, AP and BDP in the Clarion as well, to ensure we reach as many residents as possible.

26.3% of respondents said that they currently receive this information from a newspaper and 30% said they would like to.

This suggests that while newspapers are a useful way of getting information to people, we cannot use them as our sole means of communicating with the public.

Email was the least favoured option (18.8%) for receiving information, but 43.8% of people said that they would like to be able to email their feedback to Council, making it the second most preferred option behind letters (46.3%).

These results suggest that we should accept submissions and other feedback via email as well as via the post and at Council offices.

Overall, the results suggest that information about the LTCCP, AP and BDP is reaching the Inangahua community and that by continuing with the main methods of communication we are currently using, this information should continue to reach them.

When it comes to receiving information from the Inangahua community, an increase in the amounts and types of information we can receive by email, and continuing to accept information via the post, in person and over the telephone should ensure that people in Inangahua can have their say on these important Council documents.



What does this tell us?

Understanding, interest and impact

The majority of respondents have heard of the LTCCP, AP and BDP. This suggests that there is a good basis for us to communicate with the community and build understanding of these documents.

Fewer respondents had heard of the LTCCP than the other documents, but more had read and understood the purpose of the LTCCP than the AP or BDP.

It is surprising that fewer people had heard of the LTCCP, but not surprising that it was better understood as extensive consultation was carried out earlier this year when the LTCCP 2009-2019 was written.

The BDP was the least well understood of the three documents. 73.8% had little or no understanding of what the BDP is about (37.5% of respondents had indicated they were aware of the purpose of the BDP).

Just over half (51.3%) of the respondents had little or no understanding of the LTCCP and 43.8% had little or no understanding of the AP.

Levels of interest in each of the three documents were similar, with 60.1% of respondents having a moderate to high interest in the LTCCP, 55% in the AP and 56.3% in the BDP.

Levels of interest in all documents decreased when it came to having a say. 48.8% had a moderate to high interest in the LTCCP, 45.1% in the AP and 43.8% in the BDP.

The perceived impact of the documents was also similar. 57.6% felt the LTCCP has a moderate to high impact on their day to day lives, 62.5% felt that the AP did and 62.6% felt that the BDP did.

There is generally a good level of interest in the LTCCP, AP and BDP themselves, though interest in having a say on their content is not as high.

The majority of people feel that the LTCCP, AP and BDP have at least some impact on their day to day lives.

These results suggest there is a need to facilitate greater community understanding around these documents.

Given the level of interest in the documents and their perceived impact, increased understanding may lead to increased interest in having a say when these documents are being consulted on.



Conclusion

The survey brief contained a set of questions we wanted to know the answers to. We can now answer those questions as follows:

How much do people know about the documents we are consulting on?

While the majority of people have heard of the LTCCP, AP and BDP, few people have a good knowledge or understanding of what these documents are about and why we have them.

This tells us we need to help increase people's understanding of these documents.

How interested are people in having a say on these issues?

While people are generally interested in the documents themselves, fewer people are interested in having a say on their content.

Comparing levels of interest with levels of understanding tells us that the better people understand one of these documents, the more likely they are to be interested in them, and in having a say during consultation on their content.

What is the best way of getting information about these documents and Council's functions to people?

The way the majority of people currently receive this information, and would like to receive this information, is Council's monthly community newsletter.

This tells us we should continue to use the newsletter to inform people about Council documents and activities.

The Clarion was also a popular choice.

If people do want to have a say, how do they want to do this?

Letters and email were the most popular methods for people to provide feedback and information to Council.

Buller District Councillors and Council staff are already well set up to receive information by letter and email.

This tells us that we already have appropriate methods in place to receive information from people in our community.



COMMUNITY SURVEY

On behalf of the Buller District Council a Year 12 class at Reefton Area School want to get feedback from the Inangahua Community about three Council documents. The Council by law are required to produce and share these plans with the community. This survey is completely anonymous.

1. What gender are you? (please circle one)

Male Female

2. What age category do you fit into? (please circle one)

16 – 25 years 26 – 35 years 36 – 45 years 46 – 55 years 56+ years

3. What part of the Inangahua District do you live in? (please circle one)

Reefton Mawheraiti Inangahua Junction
Maruia Inangahua Valley

4. How long have you lived in the Inangahua District for? (please circle one)

0 – 5 years 6 – 10 years 11 – 15 years 16 – 20 years 21+ years

The following questions are to determine what you already know about three specific Council documents.

5. Have you heard of the following documents? (please circle all that apply)

Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Annual Plan District Plan
None of the above

6. Have you read any of these documents? (please circle all that apply)

Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Annual Plan District Plan
None of the above

7. Are you aware of the purpose of any of the following documents? (please circle all that apply)

Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Annual Plan District Plan
None of the above

8. Please indicate which terms you feel best describe each of these documents. You may indicate more than one term for each document, and you do not have to use all of the terms. (please tick all that apply)

	Environment	Projects	Budgets	Direction of Council	Natural Resources	Projected Income and Expenditure
LTCCP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
District Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. How interested are you in these documents? (please circle one for each document)

Not very interested = 1 2 3 4 5 = very interested

LTCCP 1 2 3 4 5

Annual Plan 1 2 3 4 5

District Plan 1 2 3 4 5

The Council are required by law to produce and share the LTCCP, Annual Plan and District Plan with the community and consult with the community about these documents. The following questions relate to how you think you can best be informed about these documents and how you can provide feedback to the Council on these documents.

10. Thinking of your day to day life do you think any of these documents have an impact on you? (please circle one for each document)

No impact = 1 2 3 4 5 = High impact

LTCCP 1 2 3 4 5

Annual Plan 1 2 3 4 5

District Plan 1 2 3 4 5



11. How do you currently receive information about these documents? (please circle all that apply)

Newspaper Clarion Council monthly newsletter (Mailer)

Hearsay Radio

Other (please state) _____

None of the above

12. How would you like to be informed about these Council documents, upcoming changes to these documents and opportunities for public consultation? (please circle all that apply)

Newspaper Clarion Council monthly newsletter (Mailer)

Email Council Website Radio

Other (please state) _____

None of the above

13. Are you interested in having your say in relation to the three Council documents? (please circle one for each document)

Not very interested = 1 2 3 4 5 = very interested
| | | | |

LTCCP 1 2 3 4 5
| | | | |

Annual Plan 1 2 3 4 5
| | | | |

District Plan 1 2 3 4 5
| | | | |

14. Which of the following methods of communication are convenient methods for you to contact the Council providing feedback about these Council documents? (please circle all that apply)

Letters Email Attending Council meetings

Telephone Face-to-face

Other (please state) _____

Thank you for your time in completing this survey. Please return in the post-paid envelope provided within 2 weeks of receiving this survey.

