



**Aberdeenshire Council**

**2010 Residents Survey**

**Garioch Area Report**

**7<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

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## SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FOR GARIOCH

Overall satisfaction levels with the Council as a provider of local services are somewhat better than those in Aberdeenshire as a whole; they have improved between 2008 and 2010 in line with the general Council trend.

Ratings for a variety of aspects of customer service and communications are also at least as good as in the Council area as a whole and appear to be better in relation to some factors such as helpful and knowledgeable staff and the ability to access services from a single point. Garioch respondents were slightly more interested on average in using electronic methods of contacting the Council.

Ratings for the achievement of certain community wellbeing priorities are generally more positive in Garioch than elsewhere (this applies particularly to issues such as community spirit, vibrancy and the Council's performance in making towns and villages attractive places for people to live and for tourists).

Ratings for the availability of affordable housing (whether to buy or to rent) are, however, somewhat poorer than in the Council area as a whole.

Overall ratings for quality of life are slightly better in Garioch than in the Council area as a whole.

The Council's performance in relation to a number of strategic priorities under the Jobs and the Economy theme is much more likely to be seen positively in Garioch than in the Council area as a whole.

The achievement of certain Lifelong Learning priorities are also somewhat more likely to be seen positively (particularly with regard to a number of sports and leisure issues).

The views of Garioch residents appear to be generally in line with those of Aberdeenshire residents as a whole with regard to the Council's achievement of strategic priorities in relation to sustainable environment issues.

The ratings achieved for a range of universal services in Garioch are very much in line with the Council norm although they are slightly better in relation to street lighting, maintenance of open spaces and dog wardens and slightly poorer in relation to street cleaning and road maintenance.

There is a mixed picture in terms of satisfaction with specific services that people use (as compared to the ratings achieved in the Council area as a whole) although such comparisons need to be treated with caution due to low base numbers.

Garioch residents have similar views to residents of the Council area as a whole as regards services that should be prioritised for budget protection other than placing even greater emphasis than others on refuse collection, road maintenance and winter gritting / snow clearing.

## 1.0 BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

### ***BACKGROUND***

- 1.1 This 2010 Residents survey is the sixth full-scale survey of residents' views which Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken since 2000 (such surveys have now been undertaken in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010). Specific in-depth items of research have also been conducted in the intervening years (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009). The survey repeats a number of questions from the previous surveys, to allow for tracking of changes in perceptions over time. In some cases, it is possible to track changes back to the 2000 survey.
- 1.2 As in previous years, the results obtained for each of the Council's six Administrative Areas have been compared to the overall results from all responses received across Aberdeenshire Council as a whole. This report sets out the results for **Garioch**.
- 1.3 Until 2008, the survey questionnaire had evolved over time, with only fairly modest changes being made. However, for 2010 much more substantial changes were made both to capture information on perceived achievement of the Council's strategic priorities and to capture new information on budget priorities and charging issues. The resultant questionnaire was more comprehensive in nature but also more challenging to complete. It forms Appendix 1 of this report (appendices have been supplied under separate cover).
- 1.4 The original broad aims and objectives of the 2010 Residents' Survey were:
- To identify issues of importance to Aberdeenshire residents.
  - To determine perceptions of the Council's performance against these priorities.
  - To track changes in residents' perception over time.
  - To provide an overall "headline" measure of public satisfaction.
  - To consider residents' priorities for the future, with particular reference to future budget priorities.
  - To assist the process of setting goals, and planning actions, for future improvement.

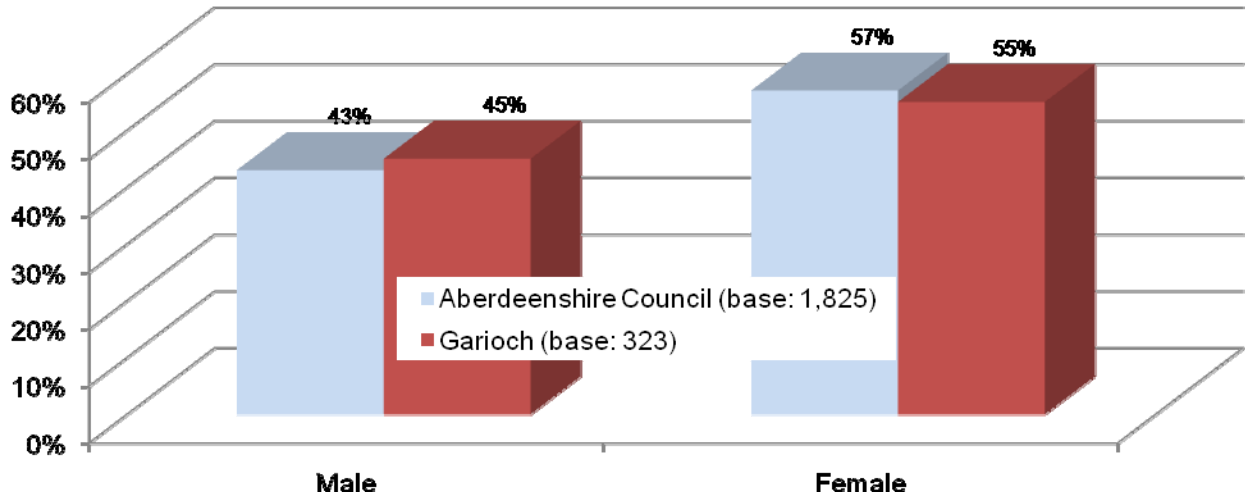
These broad aims were pursued in the first instance through the large scale postal survey as described below. An additional element of the survey for 2010 was a survey of young people, which included both an online response option (which school pupils were encouraged to complete) and self-completion surveys completed by young people engaging with the Council's youth services. In many cases the results of these two surveys have been merged to provide an overall view although there were also a number of questions asked in only one or other of the surveys. The survey of young people, however, did not gather data on respondents' geographical location so these results cannot be ascribed to a particular Administrative Area.

### ***SURVEY RESPONSE***

- 1.5 The "main" survey was conducted on a postal basis, with a total of 12,000 invitations being issued, at random, to households in Aberdeenshire, selected to be representative of the population in the Council's six administrative areas. This approach was similar to that undertaken in previous years. The fieldwork period covered late-May and June 2010.
- 1.6 A total of 1,799 responses were received for this survey including 1,780 postal and 19 online responses. This represents a response rate of approximately 15%. This is within the anticipated range of response rates for surveys of this nature which IBP would normally cite at between 10% and 20%. It is, however, lower than response rates achieved for the Council's previous residents' surveys, which ranged between 19% and 26% between 2002 and 2008. The main variable to have changed is the questionnaire content. A number of blank questionnaires were returned leaving 1,734 usable questionnaires. For the **Garioch** area specifically, a total of 333 completed questionnaires were received from a total of 2,235 invitations, giving a response rate of approximately 15%, in line with that of the Council average.
- 1.7 There were a total of 161 responses to the young person's survey including 107 hard copy and 54 online responses. Taken together with the main survey, the total sample size is therefore 1,895.
- 1.8 For illustrative purposes, a randomly selected sample of 1,895 people provides a level of accuracy of +/- 2.24% for the Aberdeenshire population as a whole, which compares to a confidence interval of +/- 1.86% for the 2008 survey. The response numbers are therefore large enough for us to have an acceptable level of confidence in the findings. For the **Garioch** area specifically, there were 333 responses to the main survey and a random sample of this size gives a confidence interval of +/- 5.35%. The actual total number of respondents to the Garioch survey will be slightly higher than this but, as noted previously, we are not able to allocate respondents to the young person's survey to a specific geographical area.
- 1.9 It is, however, important to consider the profile of the achieved sample in an individual area when considering the comparability of the data to the overall results.

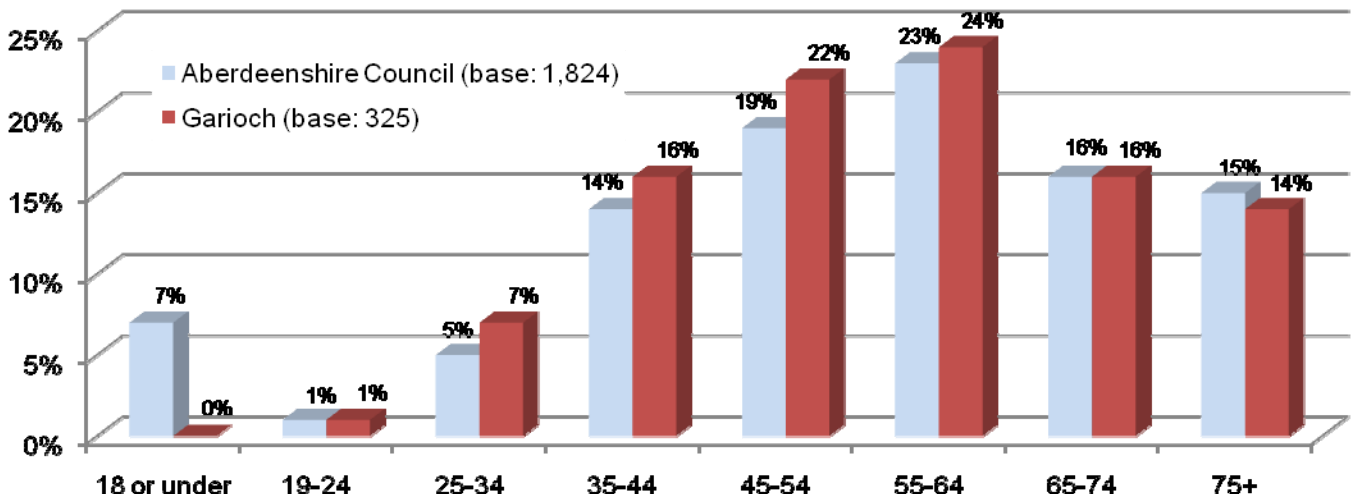
Figure 1.1 below illustrates that Garioch respondents were very slightly more likely to be male than female compared to Aberdeenshire Council as a whole. It is worth noting at this point that, throughout the report, numbers may not add to 100% due to the effects of rounding.

**Figure 1.1: Profile of Respondents (Gender)**



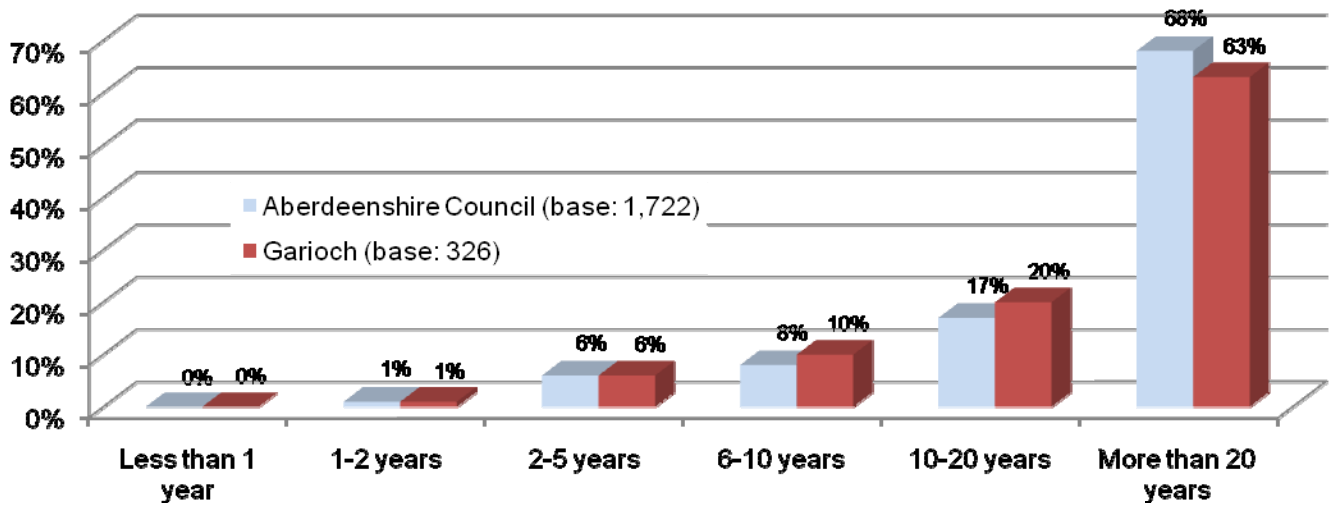
1.10 Due to the addition of the young person’s survey, the age profile of the overall survey has changed somewhat, with the addition of a significant number of responses from young people in the overall results. This is not reflected in the profile for Garioch below, which does not include the responses from the youth survey.

**Figure 1.2: Profile of Respondents (Age)**



1.11 Most survey respondents have lived in Aberdeenshire for some period of time as shown in Figure 1.3 below with Garioch residents slightly more likely to have lived in the area for between 6 and 20 years and slightly less likely to have lived in the area for more than 20 years. It should be noted that not all descriptive questions were asked of young people so some aspects of the sample profile are based on the results of the main survey only.

**Figure 1.3: Profile of Respondents  
(Time Lived in Aberdeenshire)**



1.12 The profile of responses by employment status is set out in Table 1.1 below, with the profile of Garioch respondents being broadly similar to that of the Council area as a whole.

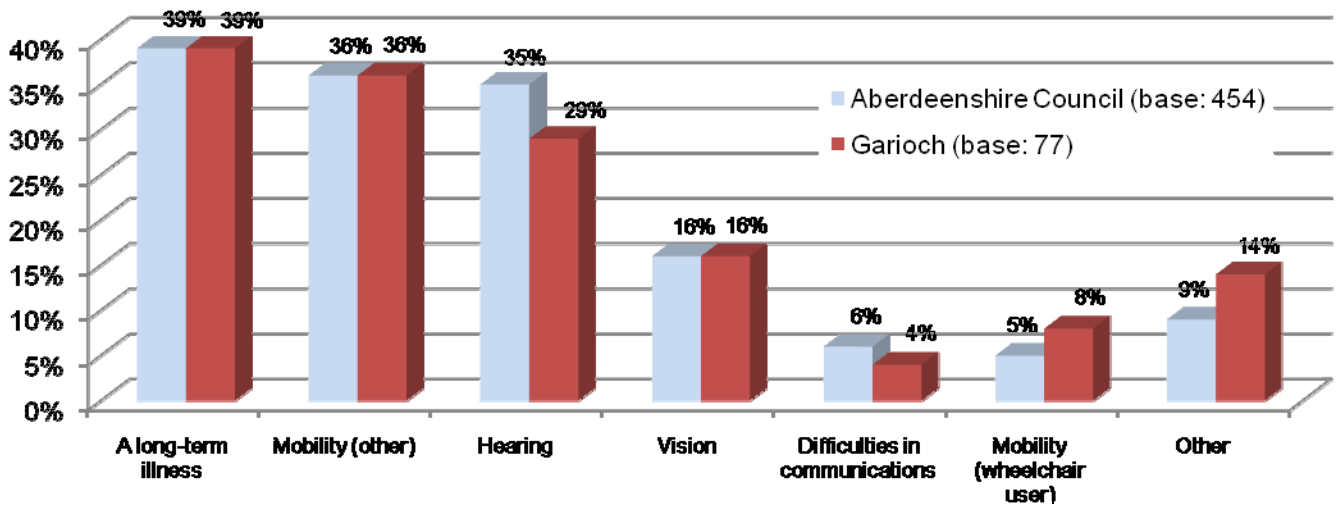
**Table 1.1: Employment Status**

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Aberdeenshire Council</b>	<b>Garioch</b>
Employee	39%	41%
Self-employed	9%	8%
Government employment and training programme	1%	0%
Unpaid family worker	1%	1%
Other employment	1%	1%
Unemployed	1%	0%
Student	0%	0%
Looking after family home	3%	4%
Temporarily sick or injured	1%	1%
Long-term sick or disabled	4%	2%
Waiting results of job application	0%	0%
No jobs available	-	0%
Not yet started looking	0%	0%
Do not need or want employment	1%	1%
Retired from paid work	35%	34%
Other	2%	4%
Not answered	3%	3%
<b>Base:</b>	<b>1,734</b>	<b>333</b>

1.13 83% of Garioch respondents described themselves as being of Scottish ethnicity (75% of all respondents) whilst 7% said English (12%). A further 5% described themselves as British (8%). 2% of people did not answer this question (3%) with the remaining 3% of responses being from people of various ethnicities (2%).

1.14 23% of Garioch residents consider themselves to have a disability (26% of all respondents), with the profile of such disabilities being as shown on the following page:

**Figure 1.4: Profile of Respondents (Disability)**



1.15 A specific breakdown of the Garioch results by ward is enclosed, under separate cover, as Appendix 2. A full listing of the Garioch responses to the open-ended questions in the survey is included as Appendix 3.

## 2.0 OVERALL SATISFACTION

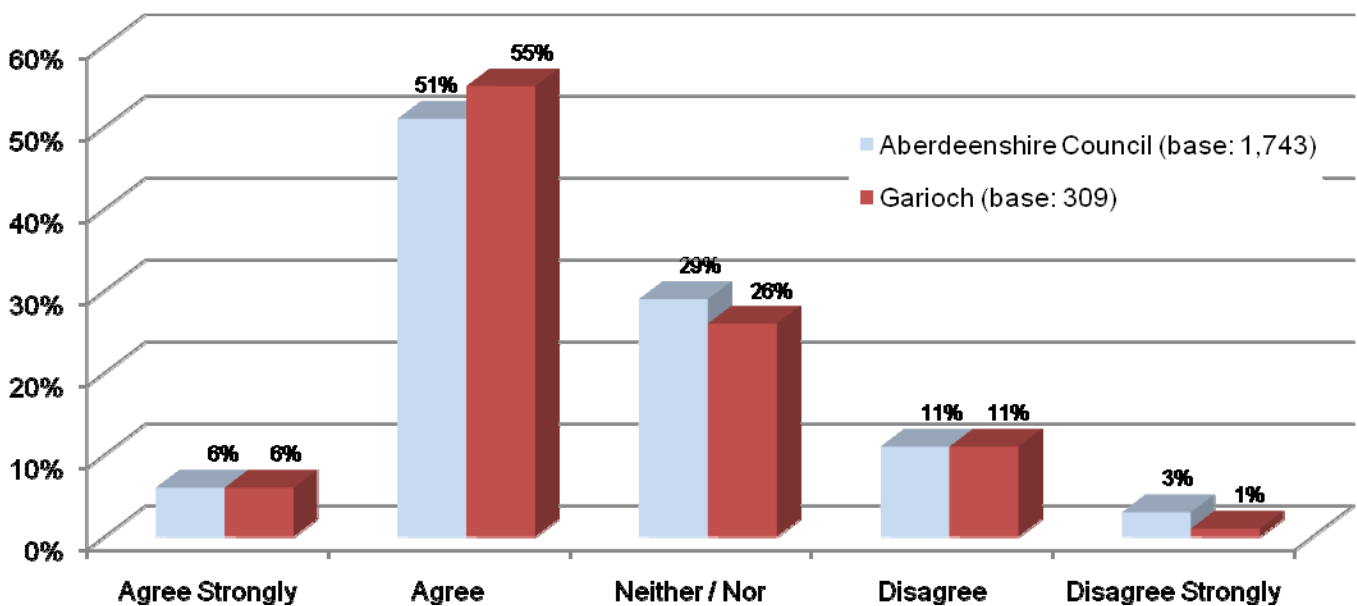
2.1 This section sets out patterns of overall satisfaction with Aberdeenshire Council, as identified by the quantitative survey.

A “headline” picture of overall satisfaction comes from levels of agreement with the statement *“I am satisfied with Aberdeenshire Council as a provider of local services”*.

The pattern in responses to this question shows that overall satisfaction in Garioch is 62%; this is above that of Aberdeenshire Council as a whole as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Within many of the graphs in this report, “net agreement” figures will be given. That is to say, the figure quoted is the % agreeing with a statement (or expressing satisfaction) less those disagreeing (or expressing dissatisfaction). This allows for agreement and disagreement levels to be taken into account in a single figure, thus allowing for large amounts of data to be summarised easily.

**Figure 2.1: Overall Satisfaction**



2.2 Figure 2.2 over the page profiles the trend in relation to net satisfaction with the Council as a service provider, based on the above statement.

**Figure 2.2: Overall Net Satisfaction**

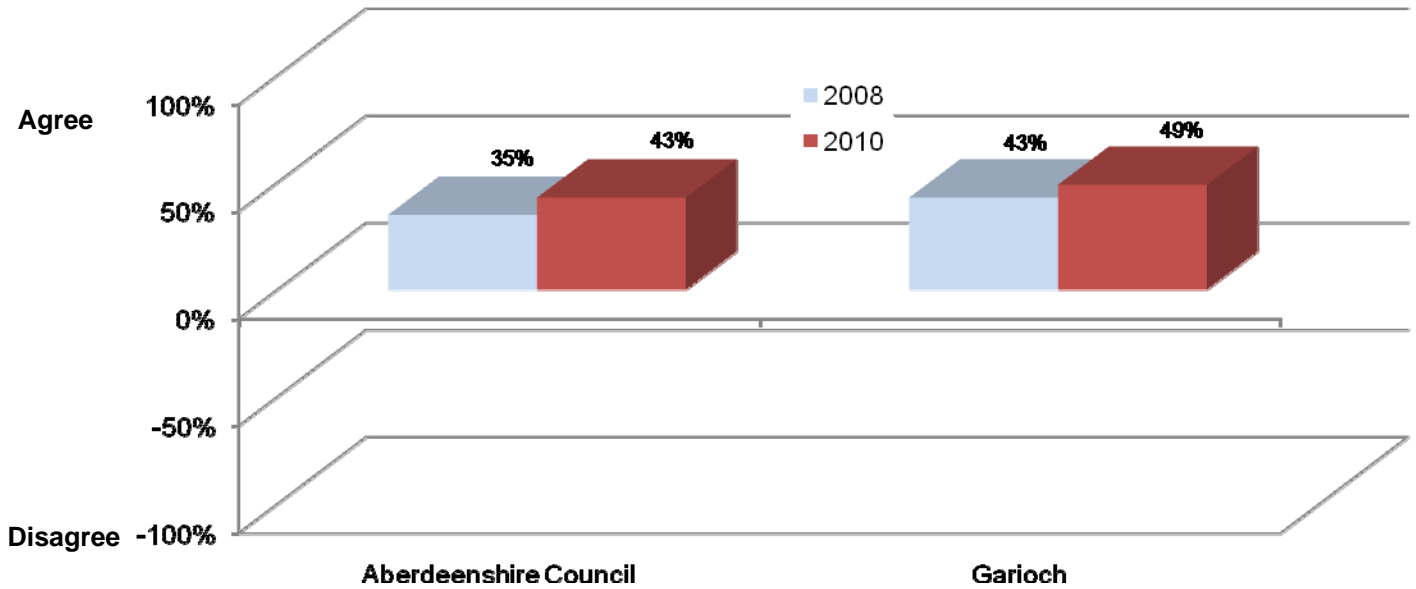
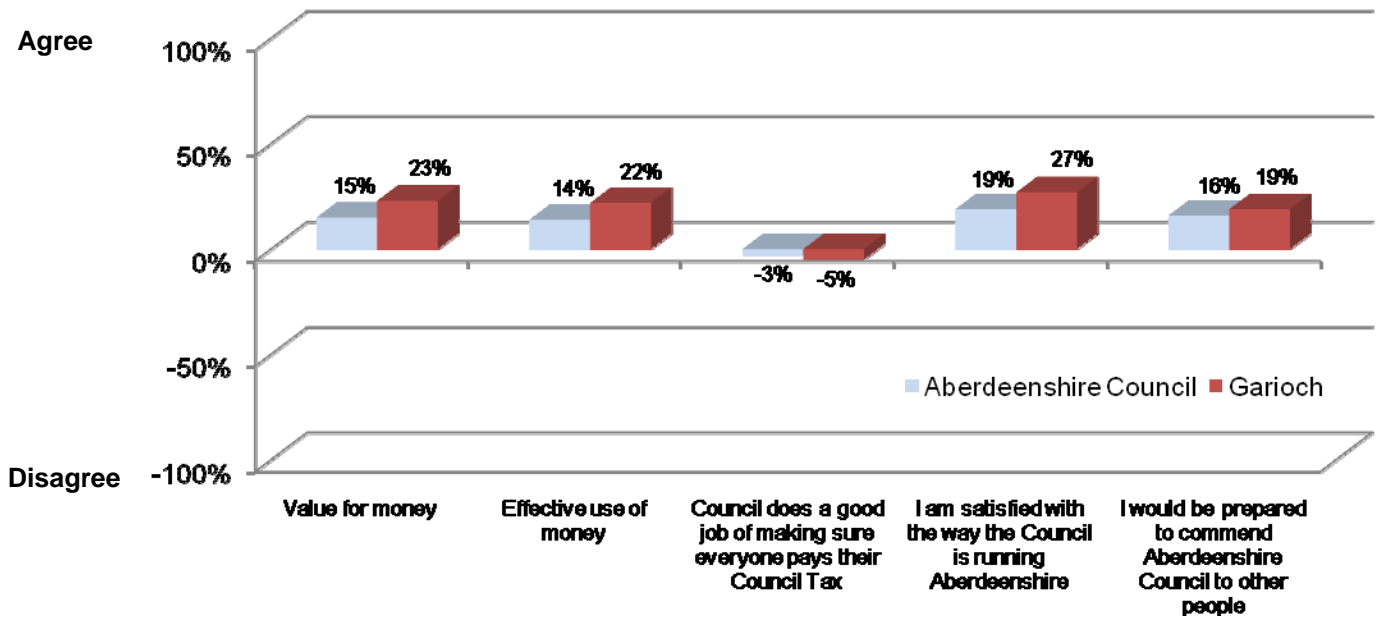


Figure 2.2 demonstrates that net satisfaction in Garioch has improved from +43% to +49%, which is in line with the upwards trend within the Council area as a whole.

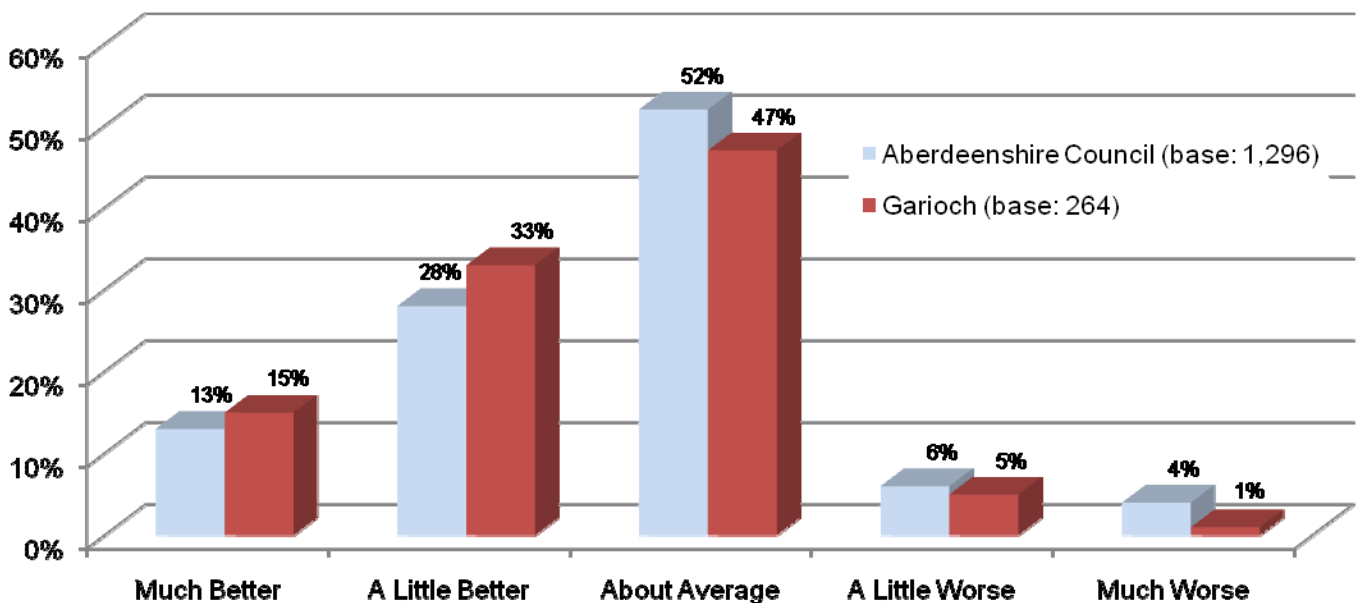
- 2.3 The overall views of respondents were explored by reference to a number of attitudinal statements. As can be seen in Figure 2.3, Garioch residents are somewhat more positive about a number of these statements, particularly those relating to value for money indicators.

**Figure 2.3: Overall Views on Key Issues**



2.4 Aberdeenshire residents are generally more likely to view the Council more favourably to other Councils than unfavourably, with this view being even more apparent amongst Garioch residents.

**Figure 2.4: Overall Views (Compared to Other Councils)**



### 3.0 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 18% of Garioch respondents do not remember ever having been in contact with the Council and these are excluded from the figures below, which profile reasons for the most recent contact with the Council (12% of all respondents fall into this category).

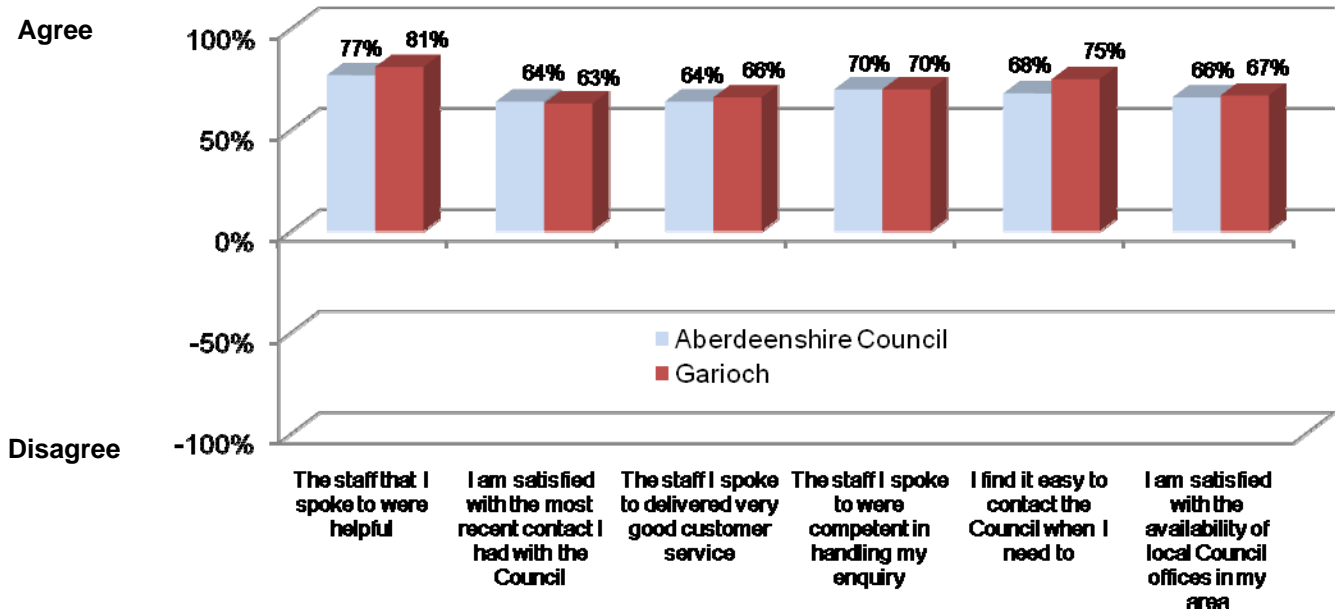
**Table 3.1: Reason for Most Recent Contact**

Reason for Contact	Aberdeenshire Council	Garioch
To make a payment	18%	13%
To request a Council service	15%	15%
To make an application for something	13%	12%
To report a problem	13%	13%
To get information or advice about a Council service	11%	18%
In response to a communication from the Council	6%	4%
To make a complaint about a Council service	4%	4%
To get more general information or advice	4%	4%
To make a complaint about something else	3%	3%
On a business-related matter	2%	3%
For another reason	11%	11%
<b>Base:</b>	<b>1,434</b>	<b>274</b>

Garioch residents were somewhat more likely than others to contact the Council for information and advice and slightly less likely to make contact in order to make a payment.

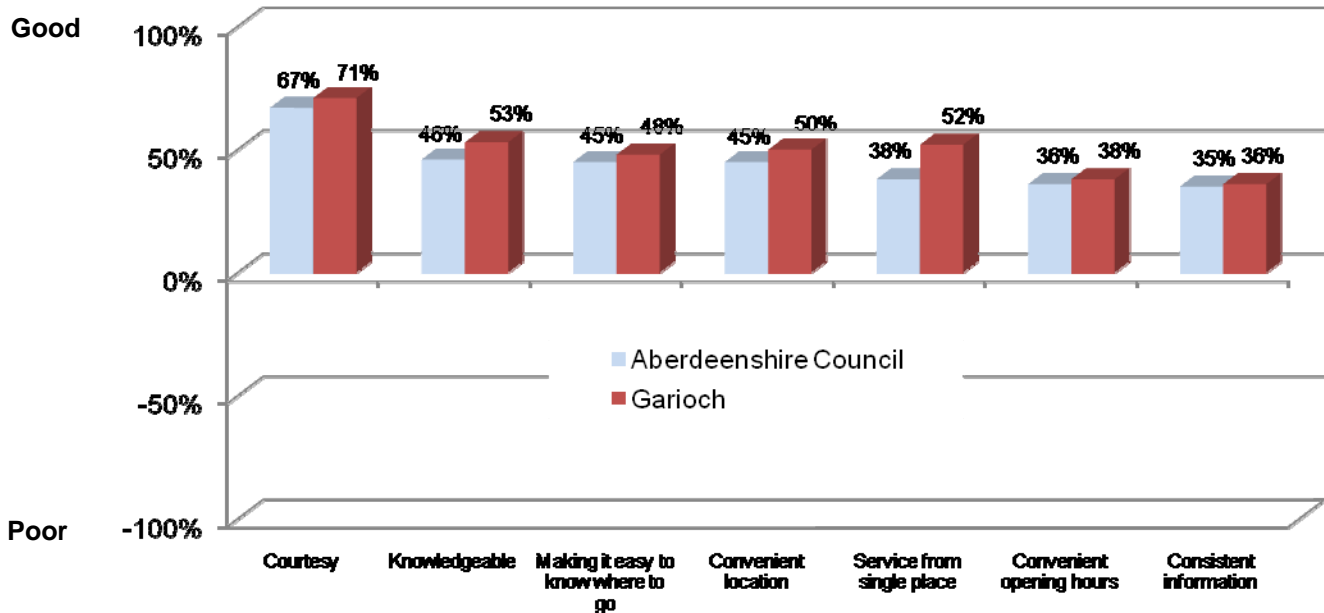
- 3.2 Figure 3.1 on the following page profiles net agreement with a number of statements concerning how such contacts have been managed, with Garioch respondents generally giving ratings in line with the overall ratings for these elements of contact (and more positive ratings for some elements such as helpful staff and ease of contact). There are varying base numbers of responses to these questions, which are detailed in the appendices.

**Figure 3.1: Agreement with Attitudinal Statements**

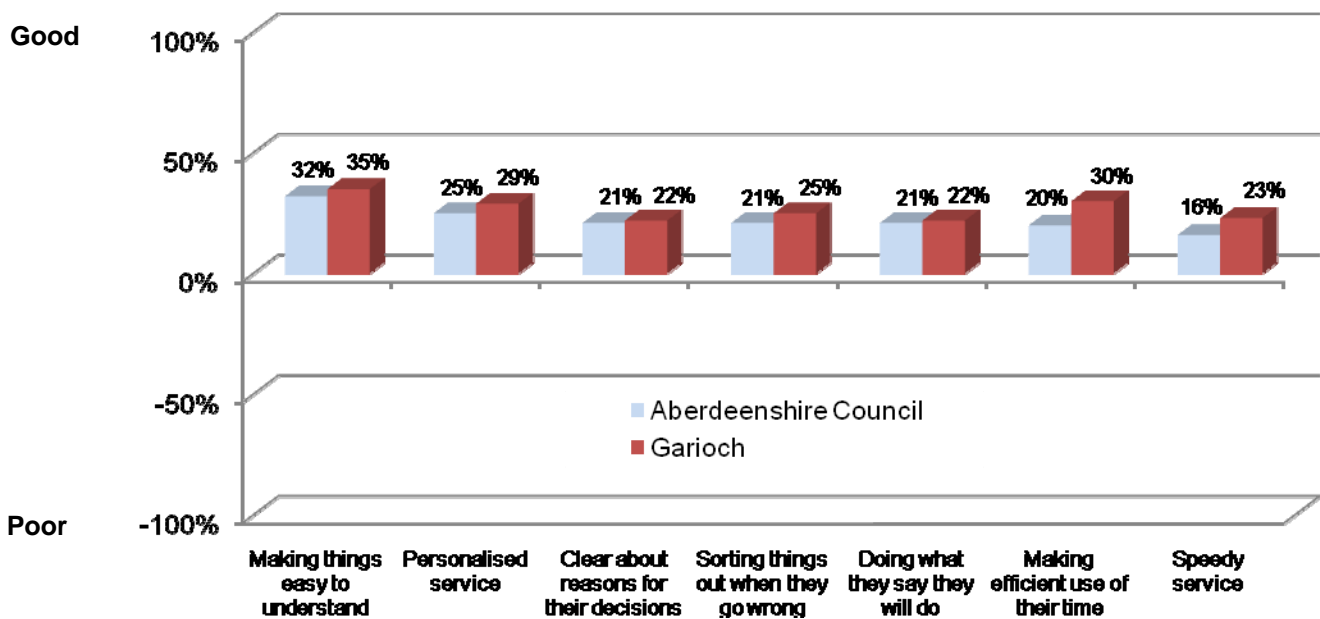


3.3 The ratings observed for Garioch in Figure 3.1 are reflected in ratings for a range of service attributes. Garioch residents are significantly more likely to be positive about issues such as knowledgeable staff and being able to access services from a single place. These results are set out in figures 3.2(a) and (b) on the following page.

**Figure 3.2(a): Customer Service and Contact Management**



**Figure 3.2(b): Customer Service and Contact Management**



3.4 The 2010 survey profiled preferred methods of contacting the Council for a range of services as illustrated below with the figures for Garioch shown above and the figures for Aberdeenshire Council shown below in italics and brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

**Table 3.2: Preferred Methods of Contact**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Personal visit to Central Office of Service Point</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Electronic methods (such as email or internet)</b>	<b>Other</b>
Apply for a Council house and track your position on the waiting list	10% <i>(9%)</i>	33% <i>(31%)</i>	21% <i>(25%)</i>	33% <i>(33%)</i>	3% <i>(2%)</i>
Apply for Council Tax Benefit and / or Housing Benefit	17% <i>(15%)</i>	34% <i>(35%)</i>	26% <i>(24%)</i>	23% <i>(24%)</i>	1% <i>(2%)</i>
Arrange and / or pay for a bulky uplift	2% <i>(1%)</i>	2% <i>(10%)</i>	68% <i>(64%)</i>	26% <i>(24%)</i>	2% <i>(1%)</i>
Book and pay for a leisure activity	1% <i>(5%)</i>	10% <i>(18%)</i>	48% <i>(39%)</i>	40% <i>(36%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Book and / or pay for an evening class	3% <i>(4%)</i>	16% <i>(19%)</i>	37% <i>(35%)</i>	43% <i>(41%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Book and / or pay for school-based activities	7% <i>(7%)</i>	14% <i>(20%)</i>	29% <i>(26%)</i>	47% <i>(43%)</i>	3% <i>(4%)</i>
Inform the Council of a change of address	16% <i>(19%)</i>	9% <i>(12%)</i>	29% <i>(32%)</i>	45% <i>(37%)</i>	2% <i>(1%)</i>
Pay a parking fine	26% <i>(30%)</i>	18% <i>(19%)</i>	14% <i>(11%)</i>	41% <i>(38%)</i>	2% <i>(2%)</i>
Pay your Council Tax	10% <i>(8%)</i>	12% <i>(20%)</i>	6% <i>(5%)</i>	45% <i>(41%)</i>	27% <i>(25%)</i>
Report a housing repair	1% <i>(2%)</i>	9% <i>(15%)</i>	62% <i>(57%)</i>	25% <i>(23%)</i>	3% <i>(2%)</i>
Report an incident of anti-social behaviour	1% <i>(2%)</i>	9% <i>(14%)</i>	70% <i>(65%)</i>	19% <i>(17%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Report and track a road or street light fault	2% <i>(1%)</i>	4% <i>(7%)</i>	60% <i>(61%)</i>	34% <i>(30%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Submit a social work assessment form	25% <i>(20%)</i>	22% <i>(26%)</i>	22% <i>(24%)</i>	29% <i>(29%)</i>	3% <i>(2%)</i>
Submit and / or pay for a planning application	26% <i>(25%)</i>	25% <i>(30%)</i>	11% <i>(9%)</i>	37% <i>(34%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>

The profile of responses from Garioch is broadly in line with that from respondents in the Council area as a whole.

3.5 The 2010 survey asked how residents currently contacted the Council and went on to ask their preferred method of contact as set out below:

**Table 3.3: Methods of Receiving Council Information**

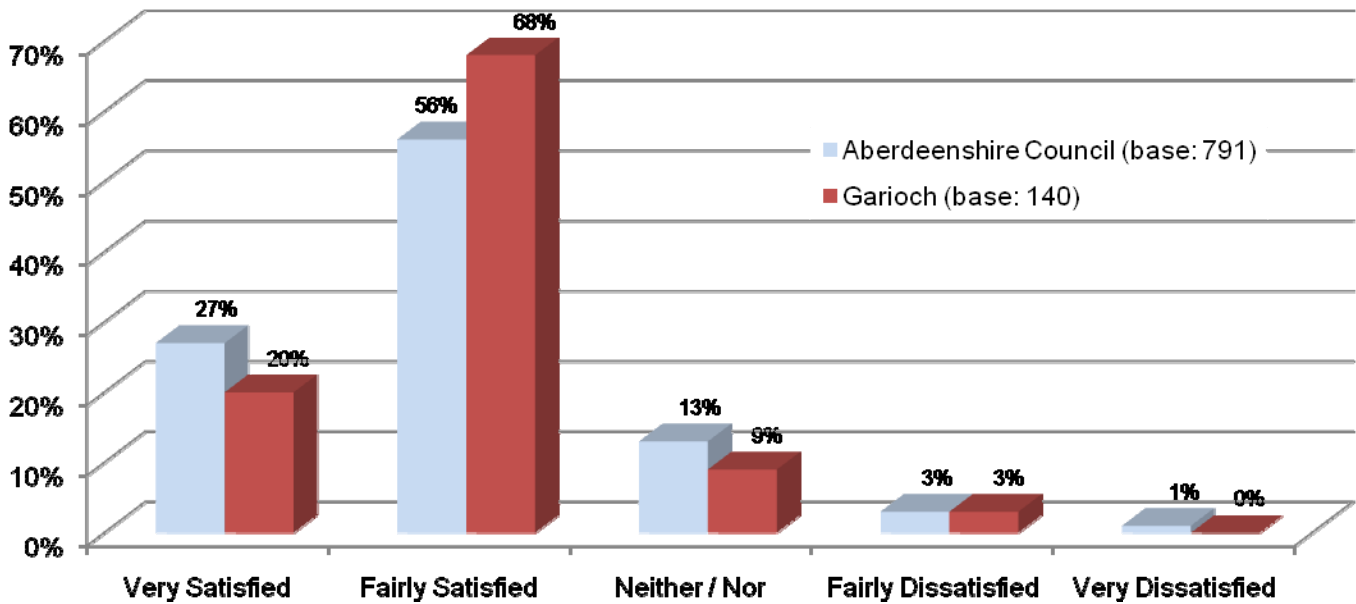
Method of Contact	Current		Preferred	
	Council	G	Council	G
Through the Council's website	38%	43%	37%	46%
Through the Council Tax mailing	45%	42%	36%	34%
Leaflets, posters or newspapers provided directly by the Council	52%	51%	47%	46%
From direct mailings	29%	26%	38%	39%
From pages of information contained in the local newspaper	49%	50%	38%	39%
Local Councillors	7%	9%	12%	11%
Community Councils, community groups or tenants' groups	9%	9%	11%	10%
Word of mouth	33%	35%	12%	7%
Text messaging	1%	1%	5%	2%
Through social networking sites	<1%	1%	6%	1%
Other	1%	2%	2%	1%
<b>Base:</b>	<b>1,678<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>326</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>319</b>

These figures show a greater degree of preference for contact through the Council's website than is the case elsewhere in the Council.

3.6 44% of Garioch respondents said they had previously used the Council offices (compared to 48% of all respondents). A reasonably high level of satisfaction with offices was apparent as shown in Figure 3.3 on the following page, with the overall results for Garioch being broadly in line with the Council average.

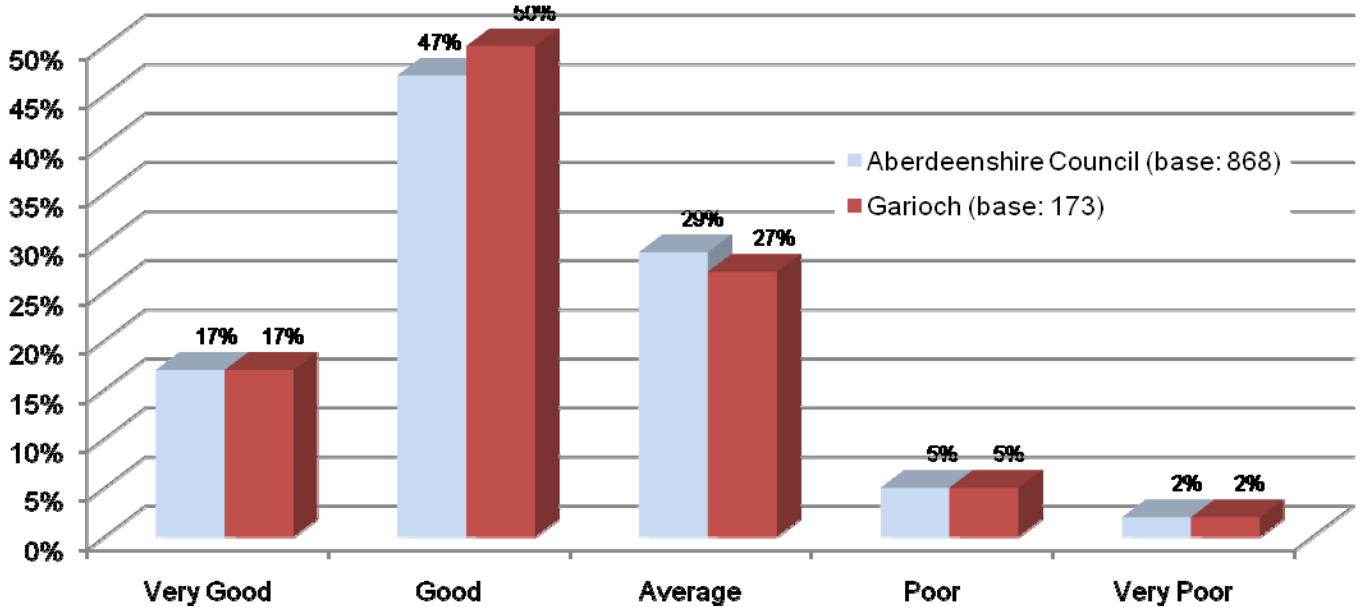
<sup>1</sup> Young people were not asked this question for reasons of space.

**Figure 3.3: Satisfaction with Council Offices**



- 3.7 65% of those Garioch respondents who answered the question said that they had seen the Council's Guide to Council Services, which was issued in 2010 with Council Tax demands (compared to 65% of all respondents). Of these, 80% say that they have a copy available to them (compared to 81%) and 90% of those who express an opinion believe it to be a useful publication (compared to 90%).
- 3.8 15% of Garioch residents (compared to 18% of all respondents) were aware of the network of digital screens that have been located in a range of libraries, community centres and supermarkets. Of these respondents, 63% said that they had seen the screens (compared to 77%) and 63% of those who had done so considered them to be useful (compared to 67%).
- 3.9 52% of Garioch respondents had used the Council's website (compared to 47% of all respondents) and expressed an opinion about it, the results of which are summarised on the following page.

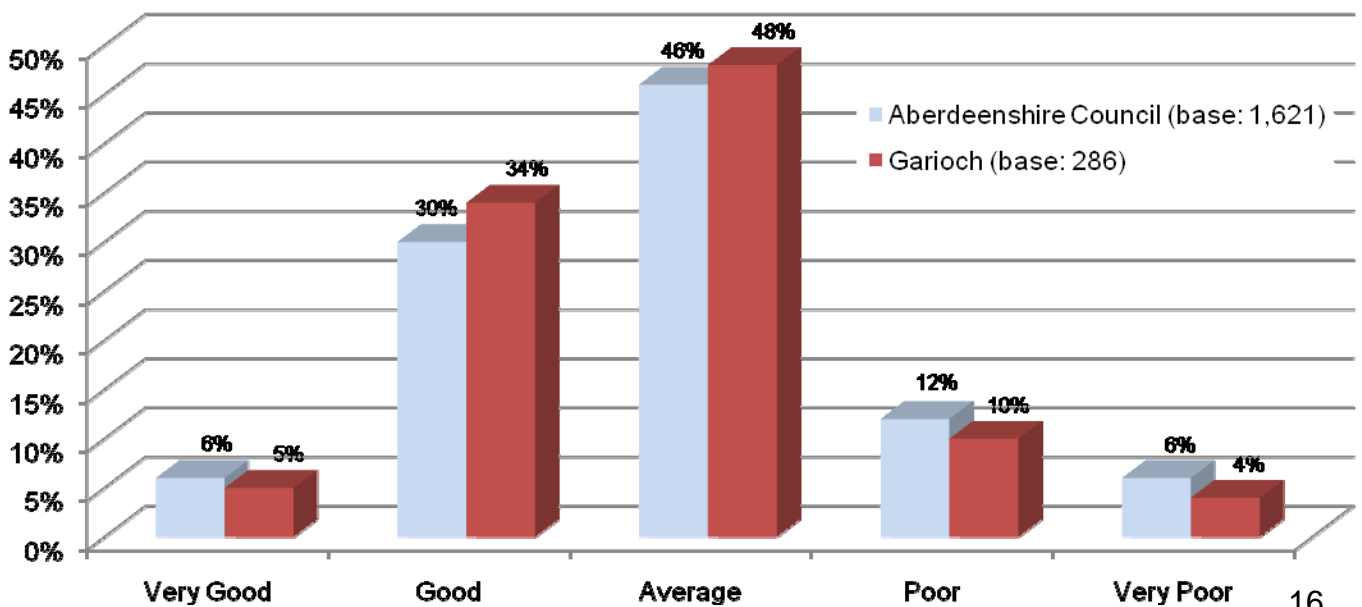
**Figure 3.4: Experience of Using Council Website**



Garioch residents are somewhat more likely to rate their experience of the Council's website as good.

3.10 Overall, more people express a positive view than a negative view when asked to rate the Council's overall communications with Garioch residents' ratings being slightly more positive than those of respondents in the Council area as a whole.

**Figure 3.5: Council's Overall Communications**



## 4.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – COMMUNITY WELLBEING

4.1 The 2010 survey asked residents how well they perceived the Council to be achieving its strategic priorities. These are set out in a number of themes:

- Community Wellbeing
- Jobs and the Economy
- Lifelong Learning
- Sustainable Environment.

Chapters 4 to 7 detail the results of responses in relation to each of these strategic priorities.

4.2 The Council's strategic priority in relation to Community Wellbeing was described as thus in the questionnaire:

*“The Council is committed to working with its partners to ensure that people in Aberdeenshire feel safe, live in good quality affordable housing, located in thriving communities and have access to resources and services which encourage and support healthy and productive lifestyles. The Council is committed to ensuring that individuals, families and communities are actively involved in Council decisions and to ensuring that vulnerable people receive care and support to enhance the quality of their lives.”*

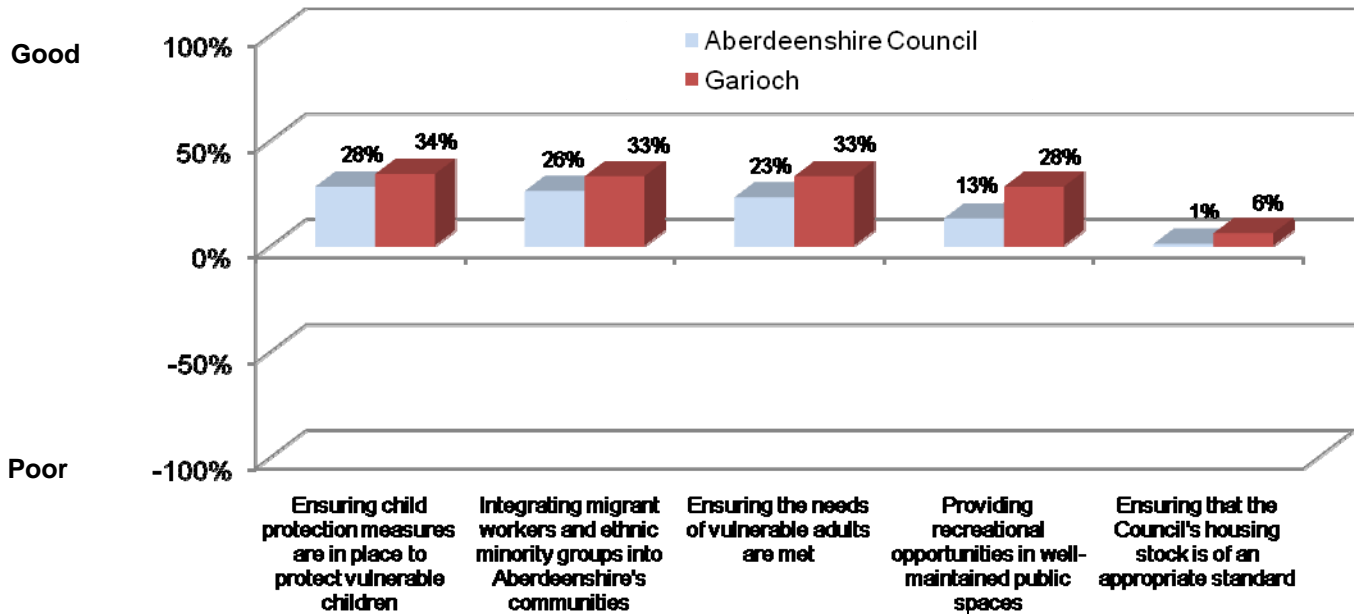
4.3 Respondents were then asked to rate the Council's performance in relation to a range of issues. In the first instance we have tabulated responses to these questions in Table 4.1, setting out the results in detail. Again, the results from Garioch are shown above, with the results from Aberdeenshire as a whole shown below in italics and brackets.

**Table 4.1: Detailed Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities**

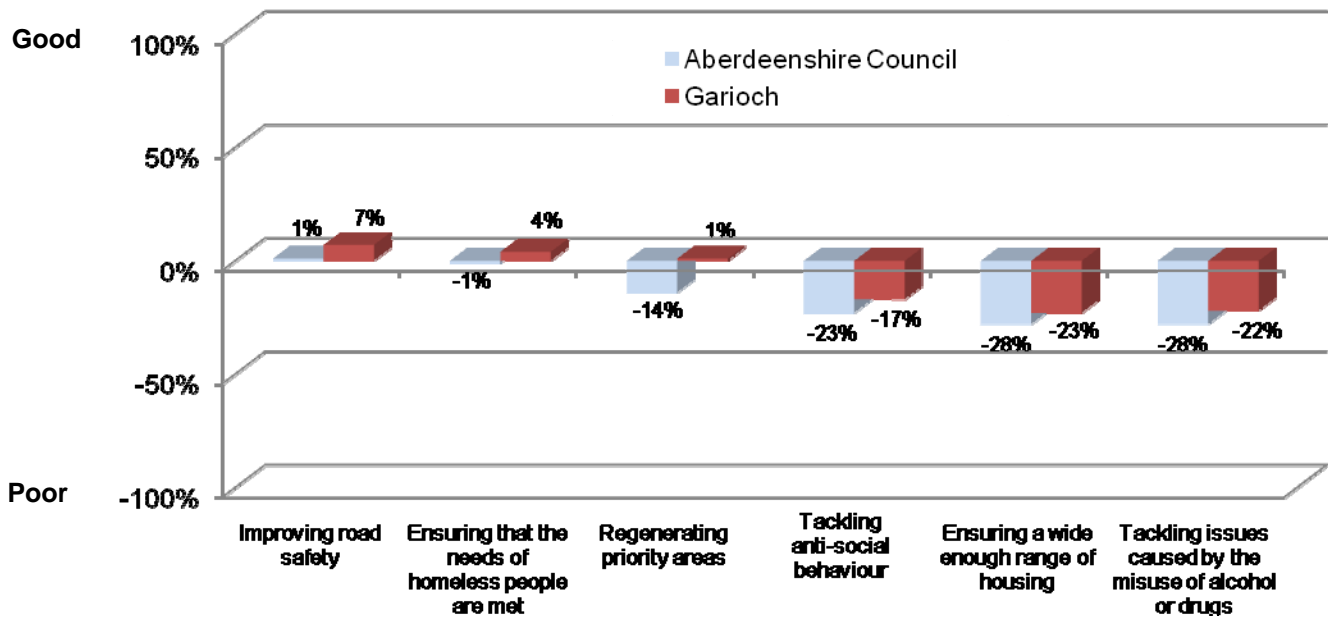
	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Improving road safety	2% (3%)	28% (24%)	21% (21%)	19% (20%)	6% (7%)	24% (26%)
Tackling anti-social behaviour	1% (1%)	11% (12%)	21% (17%)	17% (20%)	5% (7%)	44% (43%)
Tackling issues caused by the misuse of alcohol or other drugs	2% (1%)	9% (10%)	19% (16%)	17% (19%)	5% (7%)	49% (46%)
Ensuring child protection measures are in place to protect vulnerable children	2% (2%)	17% (17%)	14% (13%)	5% (5%)	0% (2%)	62% (60%)
Ensuring the needs of vulnerable adults are met	1% (2%)	23% (19%)	13% (13%)	8% (8%)	1% (3%)	55% (56%)
Ensuring a wide enough range of housing choices	0% (0%)	10% (8%)	13% (12%)	15% (14%)	4% (5%)	57% (60%)
Ensuring that the Council's housing stock is of an appropriate standard	1% (1%)	11% (11%)	15% (11%)	6% (8%)	3% (4%)	65% (66%)
Ensuring that the needs of homeless people are met	1% (2%)	9% (9%)	13% (12%)	7% (7%)	2% (4%)	69% (66%)
Regenerating priority areas	1% (1%)	9% (8%)	19% (16%)	6% (10%)	3% (4%)	62% (62%)
Integrating migrant workers and ethnic minority groups into Aberdeenshire's communities	2% (3%)	12% (11%)	10% (12%)	3% (4%)	2% (2%)	71% (68%)
Providing recreational opportunities in well maintained public spaces	5% (3%)	34% (28%)	19% (19%)	14% (16%)	4% (6%)	24% (29%)

4.4 These issues are analysed further in Figures 4.1(a) and (b), which summarises the findings **amongst those who gave a response**, although care should be taken in comparing results as a number of low base numbers exist (a full breakdown is included in the appendices). The Garioch figures are somewhat more positive across a range of these indicators.

**Figure 4.1(a): Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities**

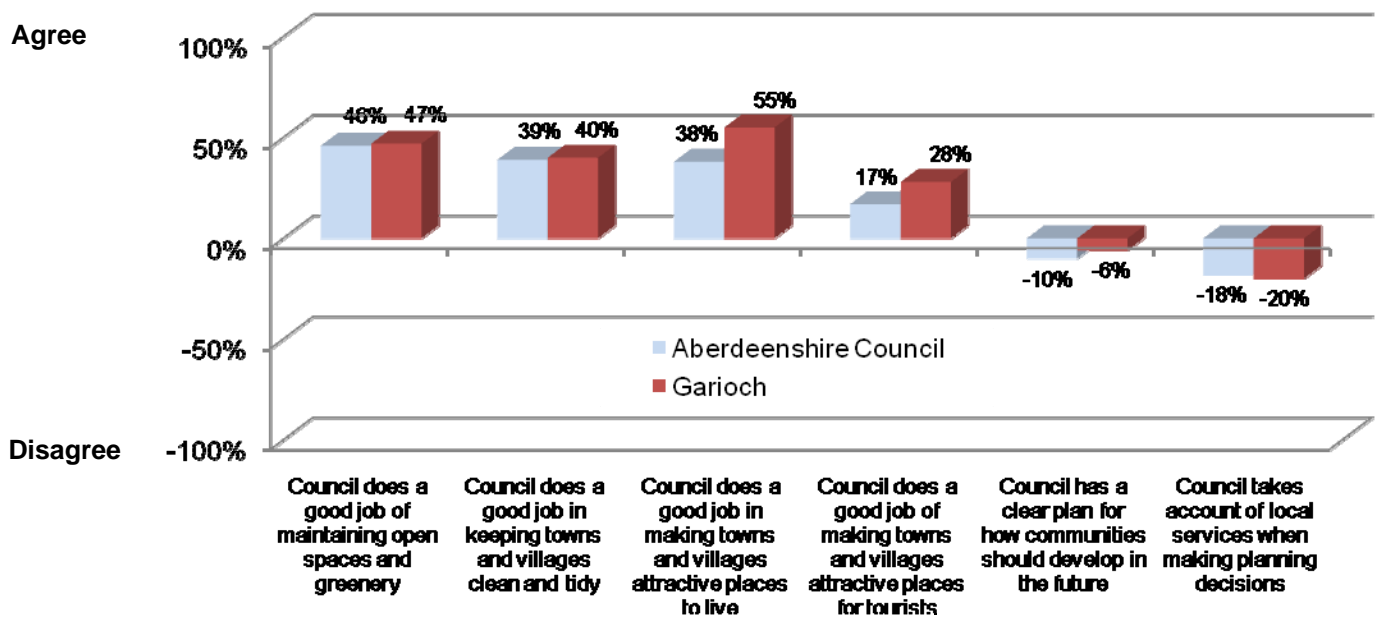


**Figure 4.1(b): Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities**



4.5 The strength of agreement / disagreement with a number of issues concerning Aberdeenshire’s towns and villages is set out below (bases for these questions vary).

**Figure 4.2: Towns and Villages**

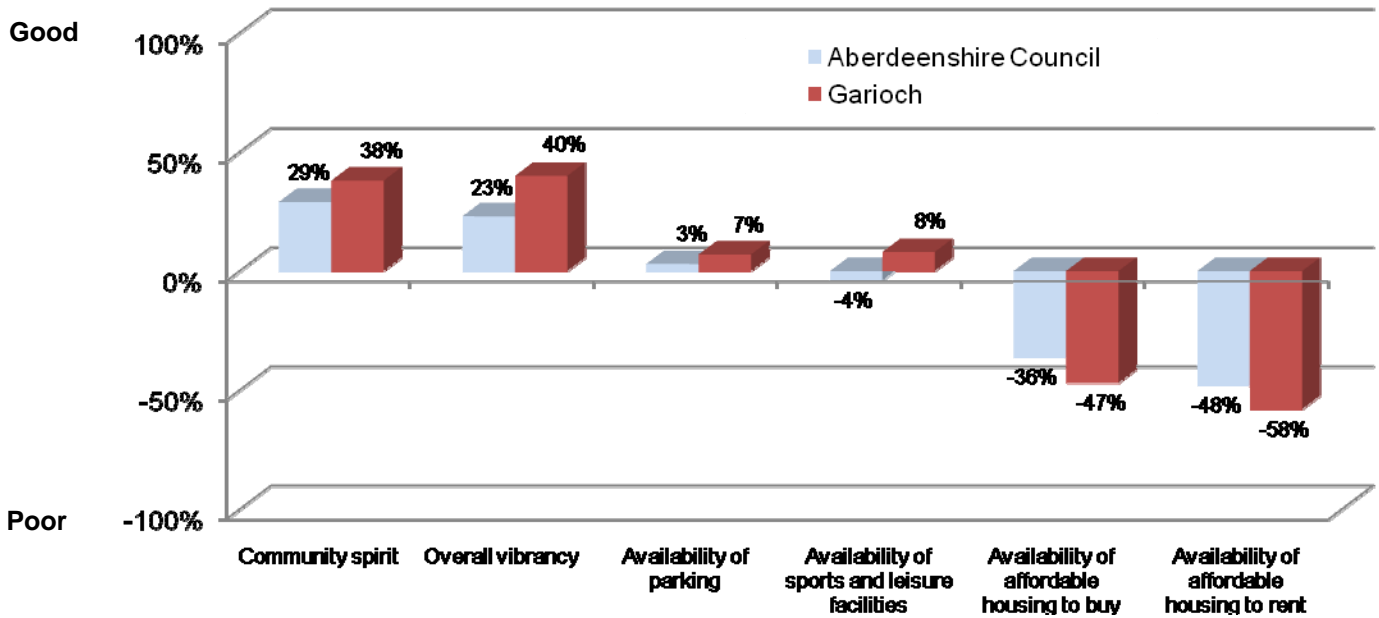


Garioch residents were generally more likely to agree that the Council does a good job in making towns and villages attractive places to live and attractive places for tourists.

4.6 Respondents were also asked to provide ratings for a number of features of the town or village in which they live, the results of which are set out on the following page (the figure given is a net figure whereby very good / good ratings are calculated and poor / very poor ratings are subtracted from this).

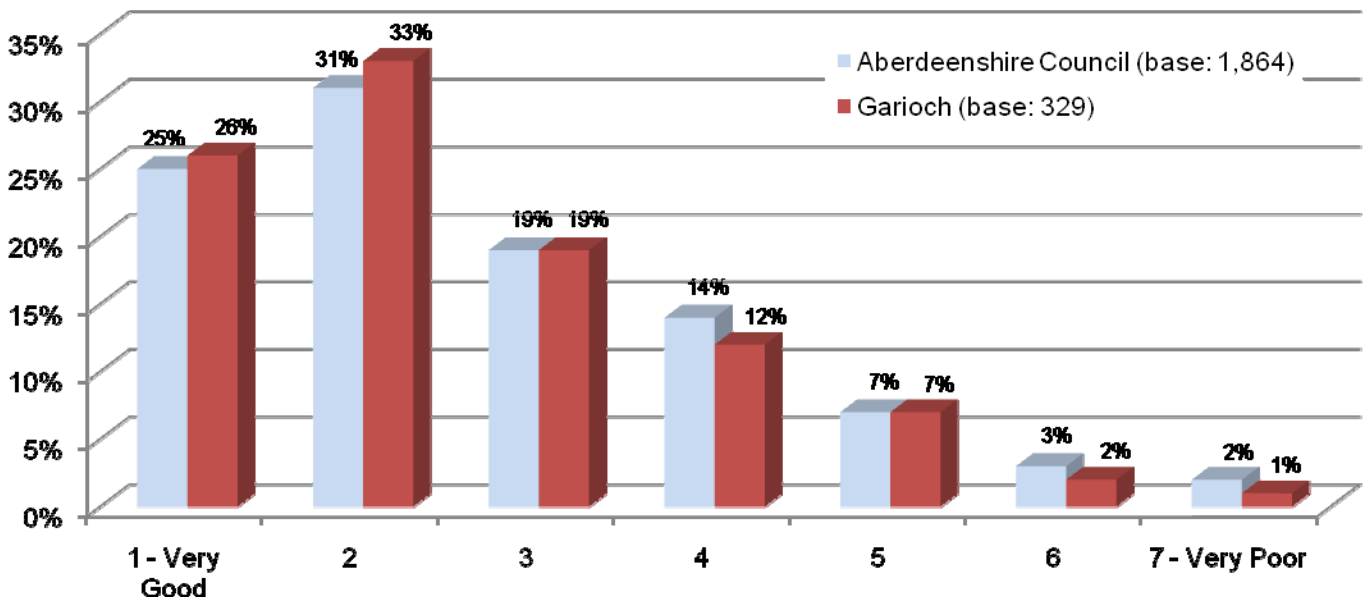
Compared to the Council average, better ratings were received in Garioch in relation to issues such as community spirit and overall vibrancy. However, poorer ratings were received for the availability of affordable housing to rent.

**Figure 4.3: Community Issues**



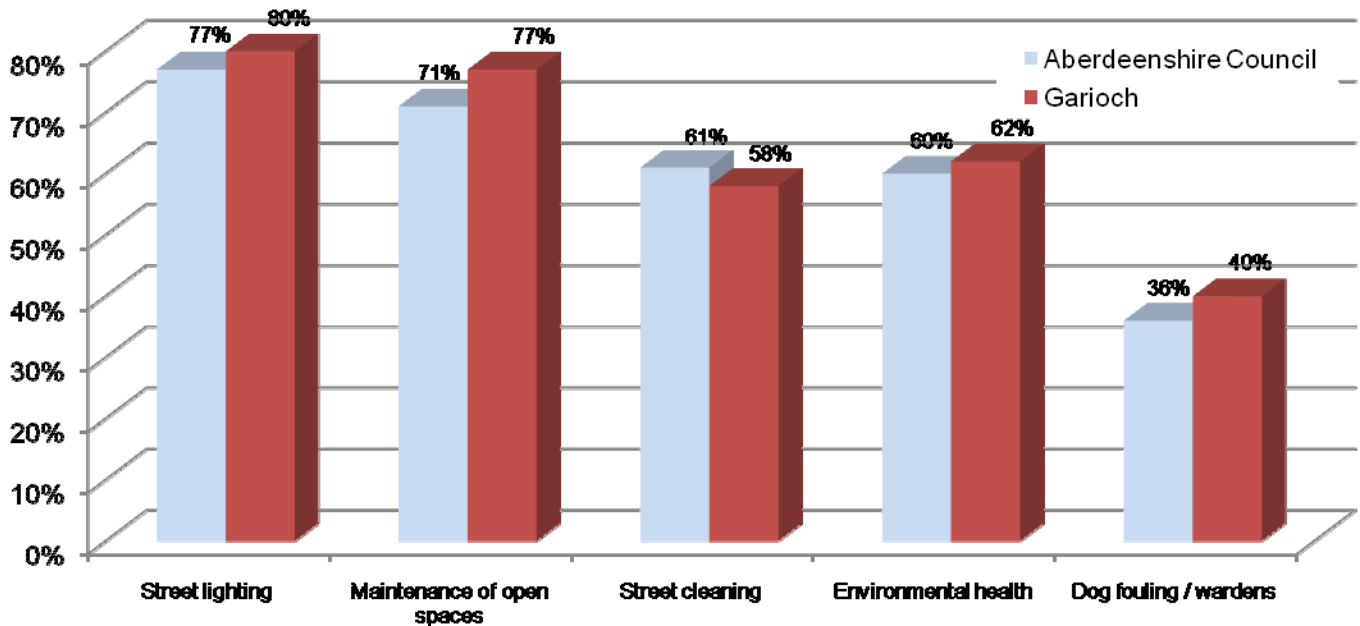
4.7 To provide an overall baseline of perceptions of quality of life, respondents were asked to rate their overall quality of life on a scale from 1 (very good) to 7 (very poor). Results for this showed an overall mean score of 2.50 for Garioch residents (compared to all respondents' overall mean score of 2.63) meaning that, on average, people in Garioch are slightly more likely to rate their quality of life positively.

**Figure 4.4: Rating of Quality of Life**



4.8 A number of questions regarding certain “universal” Council services that were posed in the questionnaire relate to the issue of community wellbeing. These results are detailed below (figures given are overall satisfaction figures, not net satisfaction):

**Figure 4.5: Rating of Universal Services  
Community Wellbeing**



Ratings in Garioch are somewhat more positive for certain services including street lighting, maintenance of open spaces and dog wardens but are very slightly poorer for street cleaning.

4.9 Certain of the questions asked of people were users of specific services also relate to the strategic priority of community wellbeing. Satisfaction levels amongst **users** of these services are tabulated on the following page. The figures given are for Garioch with the comparative figures for Aberdeenshire as a whole in brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

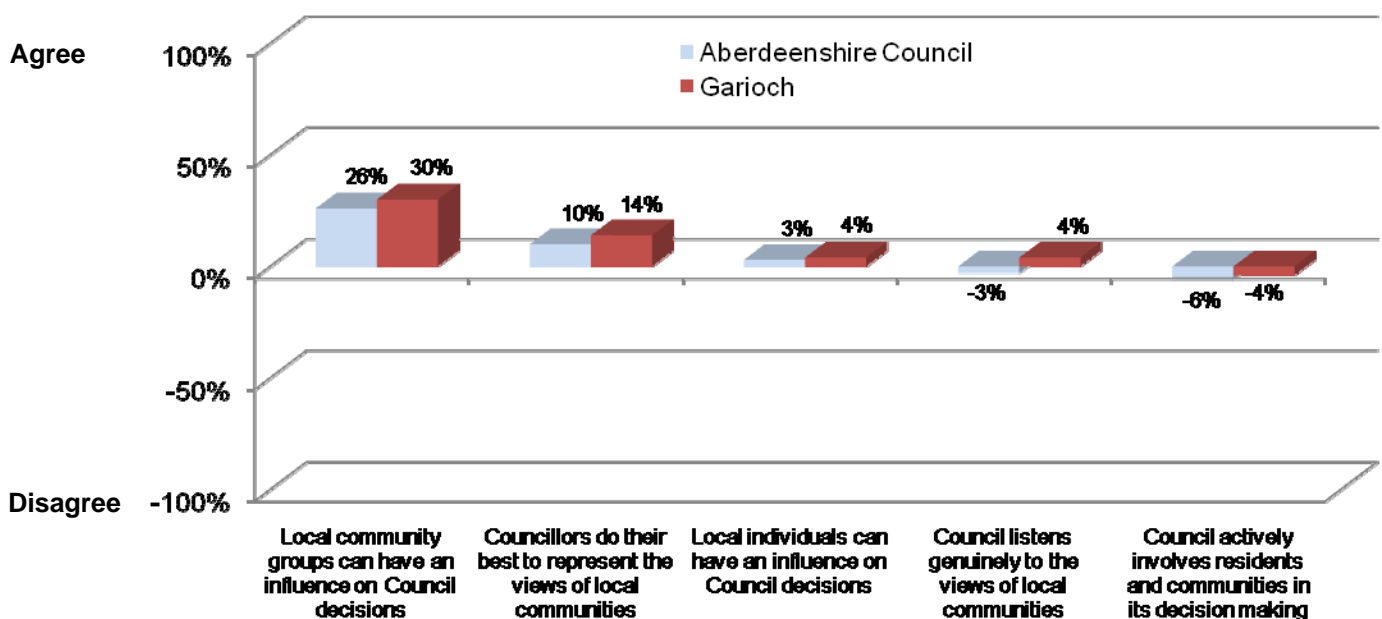
**Table 4.2: Rating of Specific Services – Community Wellbeing**

Service	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither / Nor	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not answered	% of respondents who use service
Burial grounds	26% (30%)	45% (47%)	9% (9%)	9% (6%)	1% (2%)	10% (5%)	27% (28%)
Council housing services	19% (23%)	47% (43%)	14% (14%)	11% (6%)	3% (5%)	6% (8%)	11% (11%)
Council-run leisure / sports facilities	11% (14%)	63% (56%)	13% (15%)	8% (9%)	5% (4%)	1% (2%)	39% (39%)
Country parks	32% (29%)	52% (55%)	9% (10%)	3% (3%)	1% (1%)	3% (2%)	65% (63%)
Social work services	38% (37%)	36% (35%)	4% (10%)	4% (7%)	4% (2%)	13% (8%)	14% (14%)
Trading standards	12% (19%)	31% (40%)	23% (19%)	12% (8%)	8% (6%)	15% (8%)	8% (8%)

The only material difference in these results is a somewhat poorer rating for trading standards (which should be treated with caution due to the low base number of respondents as set out in the appendices).

4.10 Figure 4.6 below shows ratings for a number of issues relating to Council decision-making and consultation, which is itself an important dimension of community wellbeing. Garioch residents’ levels of net agreement were generally in line with the Council average although they were slightly more positive about a number of these indicators.

**Figure 4.6: Council Decision Making and Consultation**



## 5.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

5.1 The following description of the Council's strategic priority for Jobs and the Economy was set out as:

*“Aberdeenshire has a broad economic base from traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing and forestry to those that have grown over the last 30 years such as the energy and service sectors. The Council is committed to working with partners to help the Aberdeenshire economy become more resilient and adaptive to change. With the lowest unemployment rate in mainland Scotland, Aberdeenshire is an attractive area to live in and aims to have the necessary infrastructure for new and existing businesses, both large and small, to thrive.”*

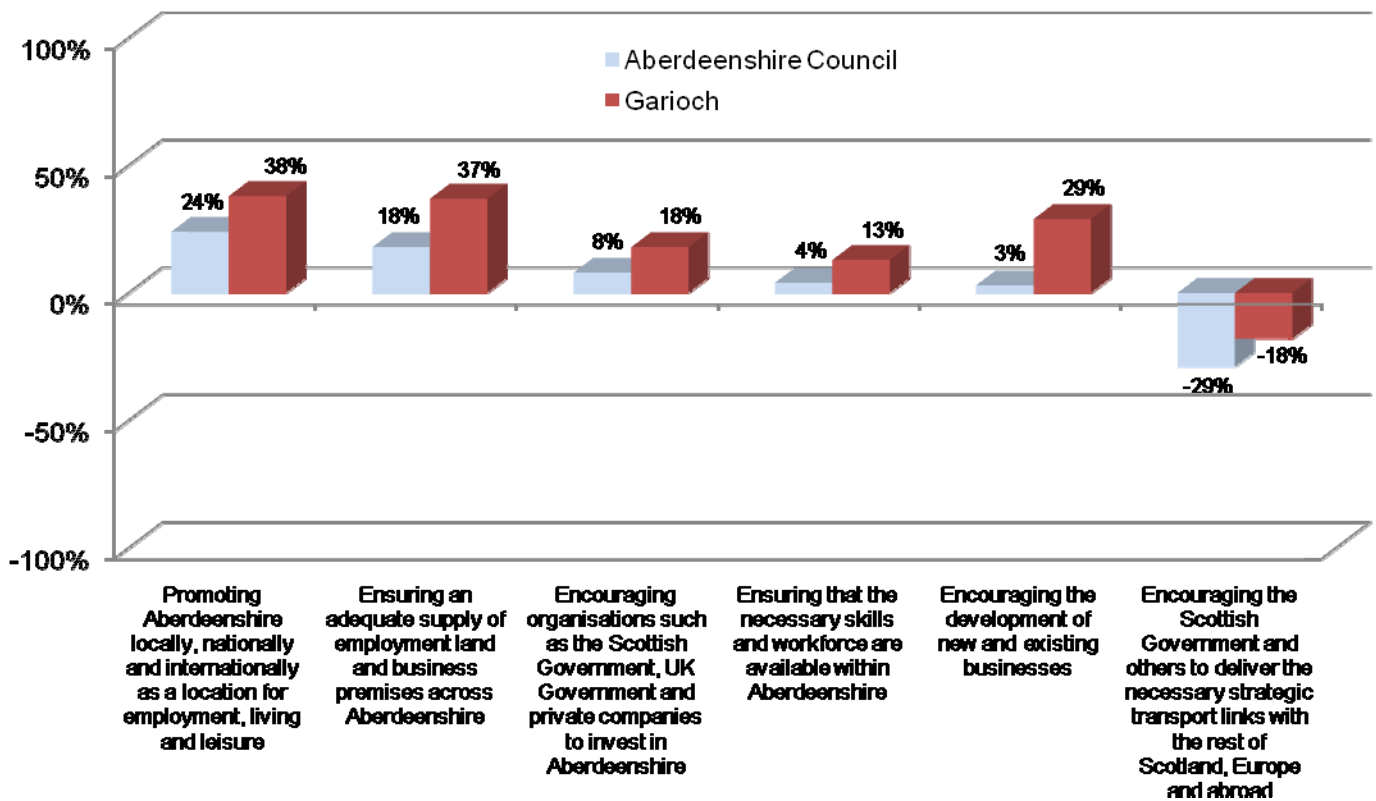
5.2 With regard to residents rating of the Council's performance with regard to Jobs and the Economy, Table 5.1 sets out the results obtained. The figures given are for Garioch with overall Aberdeenshire Council figures in brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

**Table 5.1: Detailed Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities**

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Promoting Aberdeenshire locally, nationally and internationally as a location for employment, living and leisure	3% (3%)	29% (22%)	25% (28%)	5% (8%)	2% (2%)	37% (37%)
Encouraging organisations such as the Scottish Government, UK Government and private companies to invest in Aberdeenshire	2% (2%)	20% (16%)	26% (25%)	9% (11%)	2% (3%)	39% (43%)
Ensuring an adequate supply of employment land and business premises across Aberdeenshire	3% (2%)	26% (18%)	24% (25%)	5% (8%)	2% (3%)	41% (44%)
Ensuring that the necessary skills and workforce are available within Aberdeenshire	1% (1%)	16% (14%)	27% (26%)	8% (10%)	2% (4%)	45% (45%)
Encouraging the development of new and existing businesses	4% (2%)	22% (16%)	28% (27%)	5% (12%)	2% (4%)	39% (39%)
Encouraging the Scottish Government and others to deliver the necessary strategic transport links with the rest of Scotland, Europe and abroad	3% (2%)	11% (10%)	26% (23%)	14% (18%)	11% (12%)	37% (37%)

5.3 Amongst those respondents who gave an answer with regard to the aspects of Jobs and the Economy previously noted, Figure 5.1 details these results in further detail. Please note that comparison between Aberdeenshire and Garioch should be treated with some caution due to low base numbers (full details are included in the appendices). Having said this, ratings for the achievement of these priorities are much more positive than in the Council area as a whole.

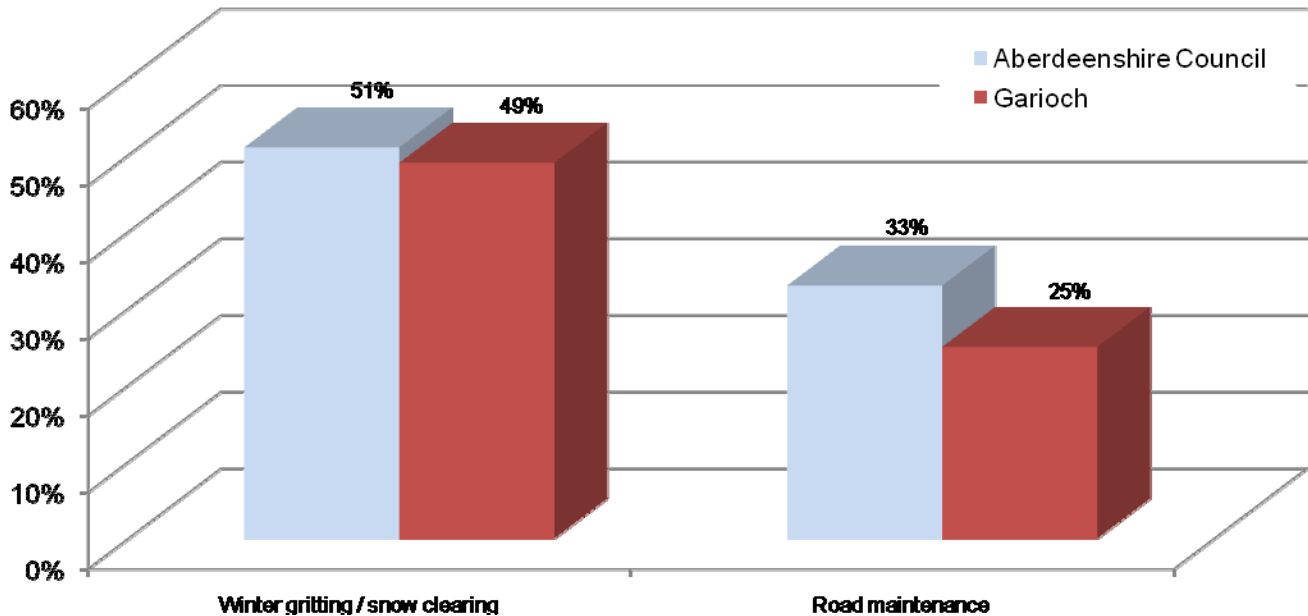
**Figure 5.1: Rating of Jobs and the Economy Performance**



5.4 The following questions regarding universal Council services are considered to relate specifically to Jobs and the Economy, with the figures quoted being the overall satisfaction<sup>2</sup> of residents who expressed an opinion. Garioch respondents are slightly less likely to be satisfied with winter gritting / snow clearing and much less likely to be satisfied with road maintenance.

<sup>2</sup> Overall satisfaction is defined as the proportion of respondents who stated that they were either very or fairly satisfied with a service. Respondents who gave a don't know response or did not provide an answer have been excluded from the analysis.

**Figure 5.2: Rating of Universal Services – Jobs and the Economy**



5.5 A small number of specific services used also related to this theme as tabulated below. The figures given are for Garioch with the figures for Aberdeenshire as a whole in brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

**Table 5.2: Rating of Specific Services – Jobs and the Economy**

Service	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither / Nor	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not answered	% of respondents who use service
Planning and building control	18% (13%)	44% (42%)	14% (16%)	16% (18%)	6% (7%)	1% (4%)	24% (28%)
Support to local businesses	13% (9%)	42% (42%)	17% (22%)	17% (13%)	0% (4%)	13% (10%)	7% (10%)
Training and employment initiatives	33% (16%)	22% (33%)	0% (18%)	22% (15%)	6% (6%)	17% (13%)	5% (7%)

## 6.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – LIFELONG LEARNING

6.1 The following description of the Lifelong Learning priority was included:

*“With over 400 facilities including schools, recreation centres, community centres, libraries, museums and other cultural venues the Council plays a vital part in making Aberdeenshire a great place for learning and leisure.”*

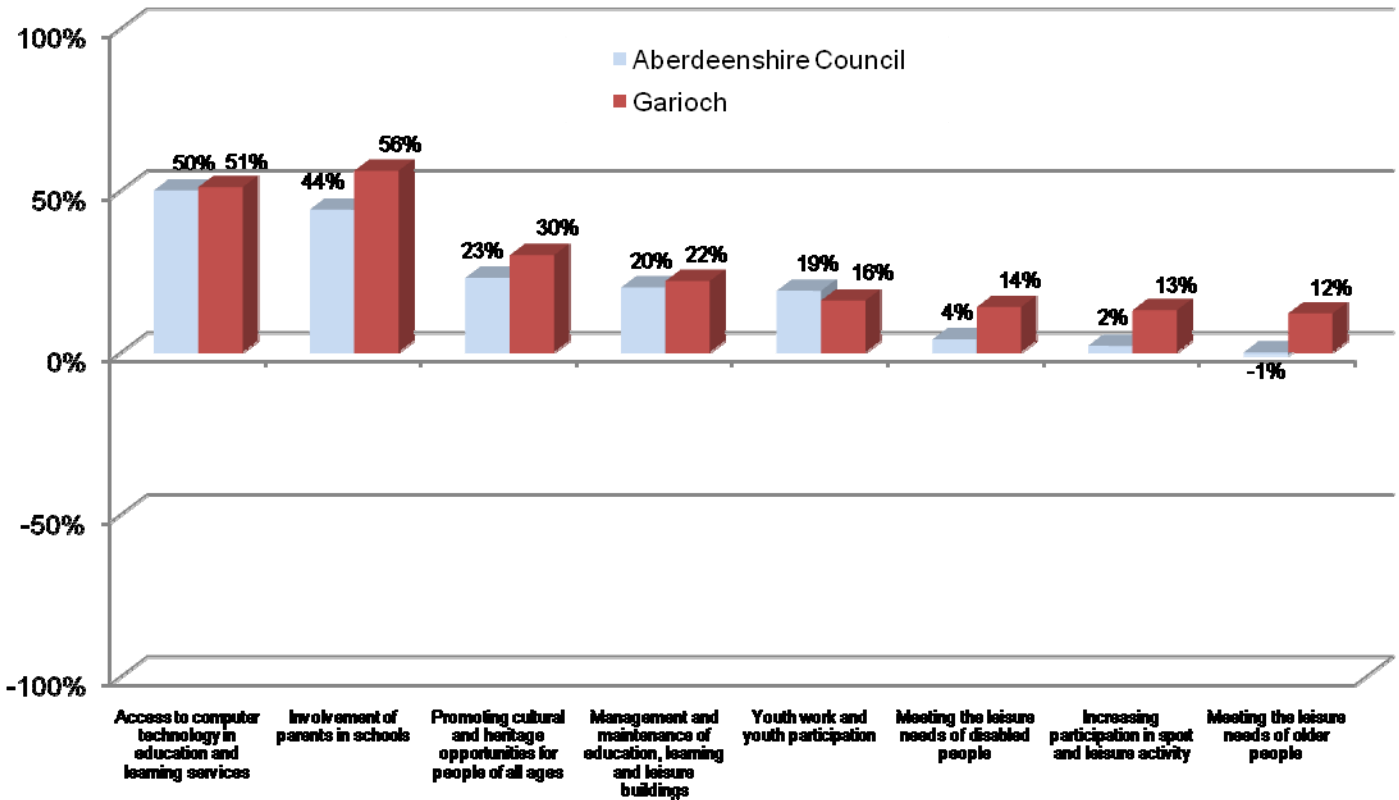
6.2 Detailed ratings in relation to the Council's performance with regard to the issues explored under “Lifelong Learning” are shown below, including “don't know” responses (the small number of people who did not answer the question are excluded and base numbers therefore vary for each question and are set out in full in the appendices). The figures given are for Garioch with the figures for Aberdeenshire Council as a whole provided in brackets.

**Table 6.1: Detailed Rating of Lifelong Learning Performance**

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Management and maintenance of education, learning and leisure buildings	3% (4%)	24% (24%)	31% (29%)	9% (10%)	3% (4%)	30% (32%)
Access to computer technology in education and learning services	6% (6%)	29% (30%)	22% (21%)	3% (4%)	1% (1%)	39% (37%)
Youth work and youth participation	2% (4%)	15% (16%)	20% (18%)	6% (7%)	3% (3%)	54% (52%)
Involvement of parents in schools	6% (5%)	25% (22%)	17% (17%)	2% (4%)	1% (2%)	49% (50%)
Promoting cultural and heritage opportunities for people of all ages	2% (2%)	20% (19%)	28% (25%)	4% (7%)	2% (2%)	44% (45%)
Meeting the leisure needs of disabled people	2% (2%)	14% (12%)	22% (16%)	5% (8%)	3% (5%)	54% (58%)
Meeting the leisure needs of older people	2% (2%)	18% (15%)	24% (19%)	10% (12%)	3% (5%)	42% (46%)
Increasing participation in sport and leisure activity	2% (2%)	20% (15%)	27% (25%)	10% (12%)	4% (4%)	38% (42%)

6.3 Perceptions of the Council’s performance in delivering these strategic priorities are summarised below, based on those respondents that expressed a view (base numbers vary and are detailed in the appendices):

**Figure 6.1: Rating of Lifelong Learning Performance**



Again, direct comparison of results should be undertaken with caution due to the low base numbers. However, it can be seen that Garioch responses are broadly in line with those of the Council as a whole but somewhat more positive in relation to some issues (including parental involvement in schools and a number of indicators relating to sports and leisure).

- 6.4 Certain specific services that people use relate to the Lifelong Learning theme. Results in relation to these are tabulated below, again with the Garioch results followed by Aberdeenshire results in brackets (full details of the base number of responses are set out in the appendices).

**Table 6.2: Rating of Specific Services – Lifelong Learning**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Fairly Satisfied</b>	<b>Neither / Nor</b>	<b>Fairly Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Not answered</b>	<b>% of respondents who use service</b>
Adult education	38% (34%)	32% (48%)	12% (6%)	6% (5%)	6% (4%)	6% (3%)	10% (10%)
Before and after school care	47% (39%)	32% (36%)	0% (4%)	5% (5%)	11% (11%)	5% (4%)	6% (4%)
Education and training for people with disabilities	20% (27%)	53% (35%)	7% (12%)	13% (15%)	0% (2%)	7% (10%)	5% (6%)
Library services	42% (45%)	43% (41%)	3% (6%)	6% (3%)	2% (1%)	3% (4%)	48% (51%)
Museums and arts	24% (28%)	59% (53%)	7% (9%)	5% (5%)	3% (1%)	3% (4%)	35% (37%)
Your child / children's school(s)	30% (31%)	47% (47%)	4% (9%)	11% (7%)	0% (1%)	7% (5%)	21% (25%)
Youth clubs and services	22% (30%)	44% (44%)	4% (9%)	19% (6%)	0% (4%)	11% (7%)	8% (13%)

## 7.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

7.1 The following description of the Sustainable Environment priority was included:

*“The Council is committed to ensuring that what the economy and society does now in terms of meeting the needs of the current generation does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We are committed to providing a range of initiatives promoting renewable energy, energy conservation, waste management, strategic development, cultural heritage and education. The Council is further committed to reducing its carbon emissions with the aim of being a carbon neutral organisation in the short to medium term.”*

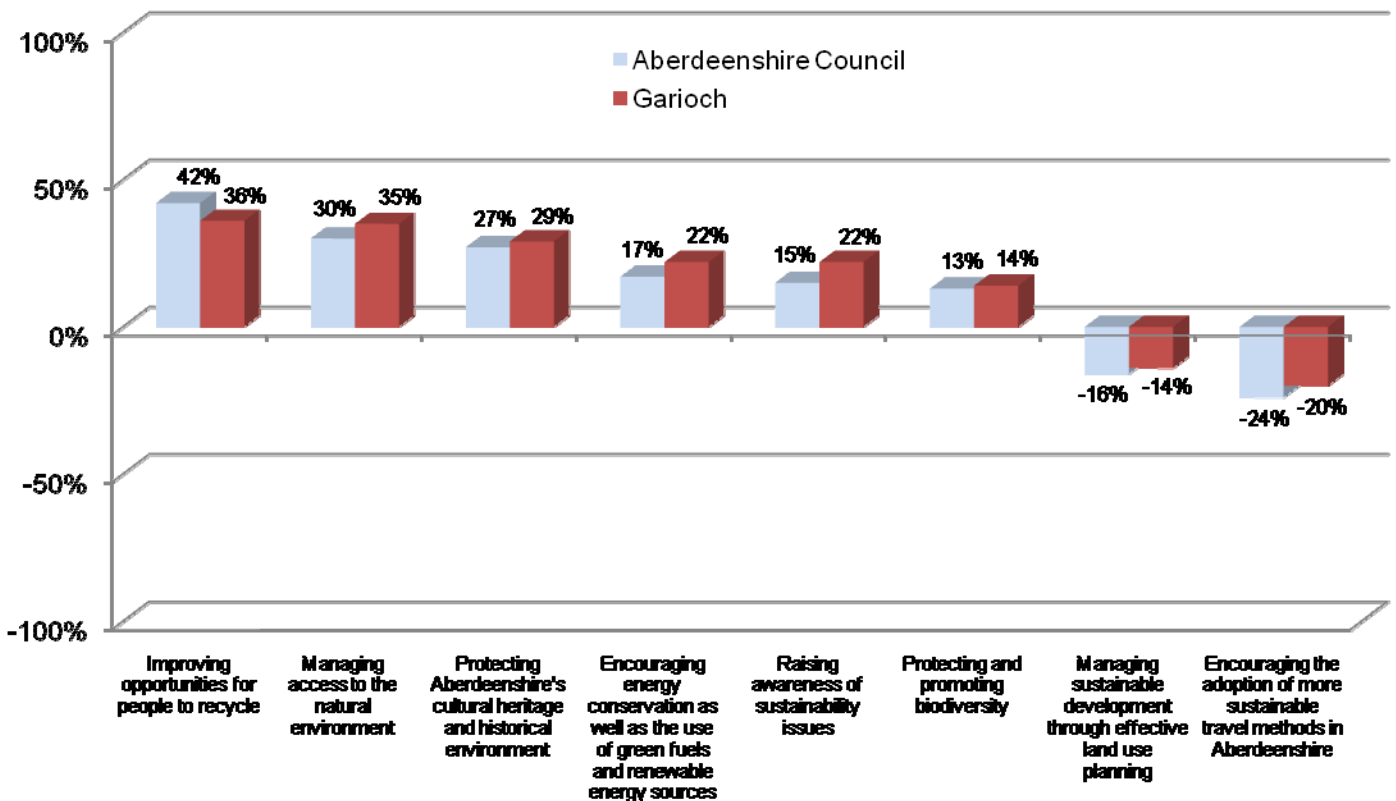
7.2 The detailed results in relation to perception of the Council's performance with regard to these aspects of the Sustainable Environment priority are detailed below, including “don't know” responses (the small number of people who did not answer the question are excluded and base numbers therefore vary for each question and are set out in full in the appendices). The figures given are for Garioch with the Aberdeenshire Council figures as a whole provided in brackets.

**Table 7.1: Detailed Rating of Sustainable Environment Performance**

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Encouraging energy conservation as well as the use of green fuels and renewable energy sources	4% (3%)	24% (21%)	28% (28%)	10% (10%)	2% (2%)	33% (36%)
Raising awareness of sustainability issues	3% (3%)	25% (20%)	27% (27%)	11% (11%)	2% (2%)	33% (37%)
Managing sustainable development through effective land use planning	1% (1%)	10% (8%)	20% (20%)	12% (13%)	5% (4%)	51% (54%)
Encouraging the adoption of more sustainable travel methods in Aberdeenshire	2% (2%)	12% (12%)	26% (23%)	20% (19%)	8% (9%)	33% (35%)
Protecting Aberdeenshire's cultural heritage and historical environment	2% (3%)	26% (25%)	27% (29%)	8% (7%)	2% (3%)	33% (33%)
Managing access to the natural environment	2% (2%)	28% (25%)	27% (27%)	6% (6%)	2% (2%)	35% (37%)
Protecting and promoting biodiversity	1% (1%)	14% (12%)	21% (22%)	6% (6%)	2% (2%)	56% (57%)
Improving opportunities for people to recycle	11% (12%)	38% (39%)	28% (24%)	10% (8%)	5% (5%)	8% (12%)

7.3 Ratings of performance in relation to the Sustainable Environment priority are set out below amongst those that expressed a direct opinion (base numbers vary and are detailed in the appendices):

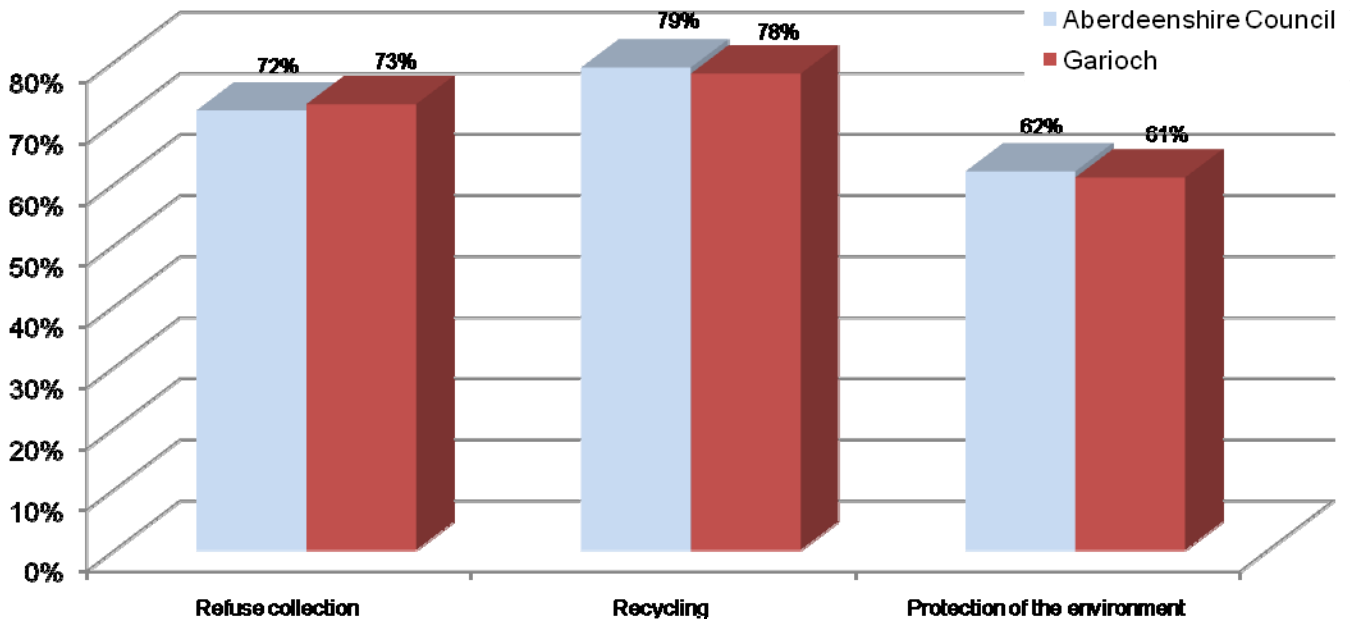
**Figure 7.1: Rating of Sustainable Environment Performance**



Comparison between Aberdeenshire Council's overall results and Garioch should be undertaken with some caution owing to low base numbers but the ratings in Garioch tend to be slightly more positive other than in relation to improving opportunities for people to recycle.

7.4 Certain of the universal services for which ratings were identified related to the Sustainable Environment priority. These ratings are summarised in the figure below.

**Figure 7.2: Rating of Universal Services – Sustainable Environment**



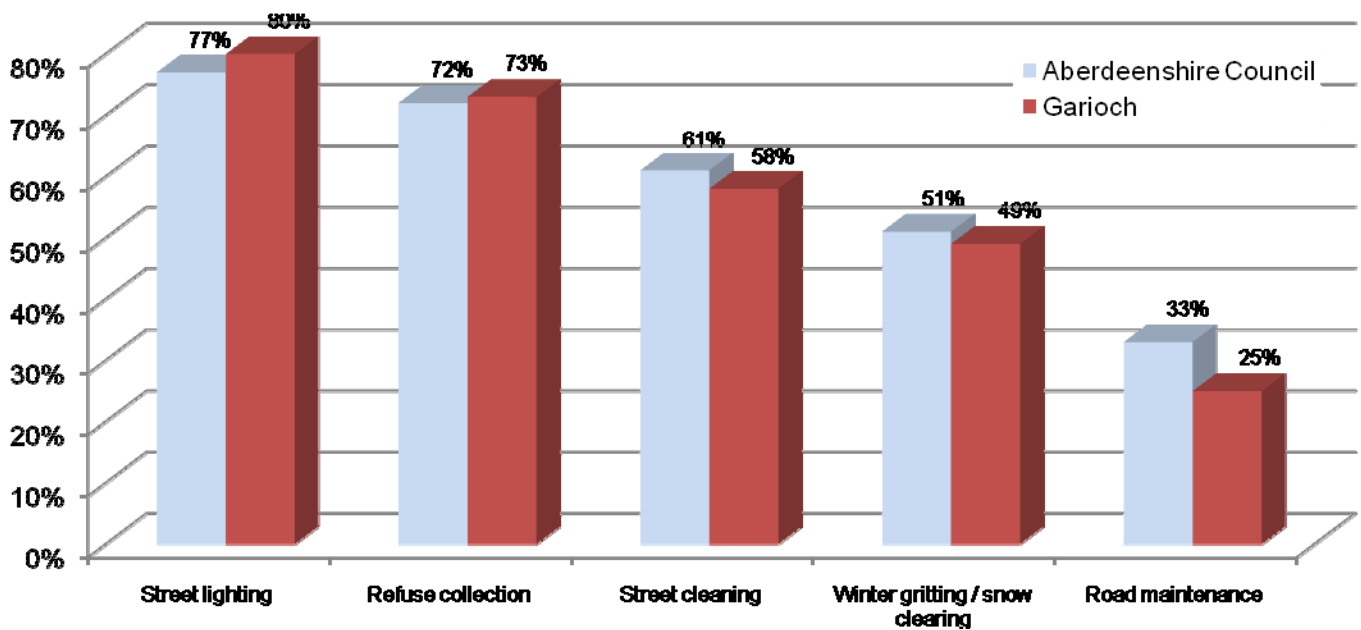
Garioch residents' rating of these services is in line with those of respondents from the Council area as a whole.

## 8.0 SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES

8.1 The various satisfaction ratings have already been incorporated in chapters 4-7. However, as these have previously been incorporated in a single chapter of the Residents' Report we have included these results here, for completeness.

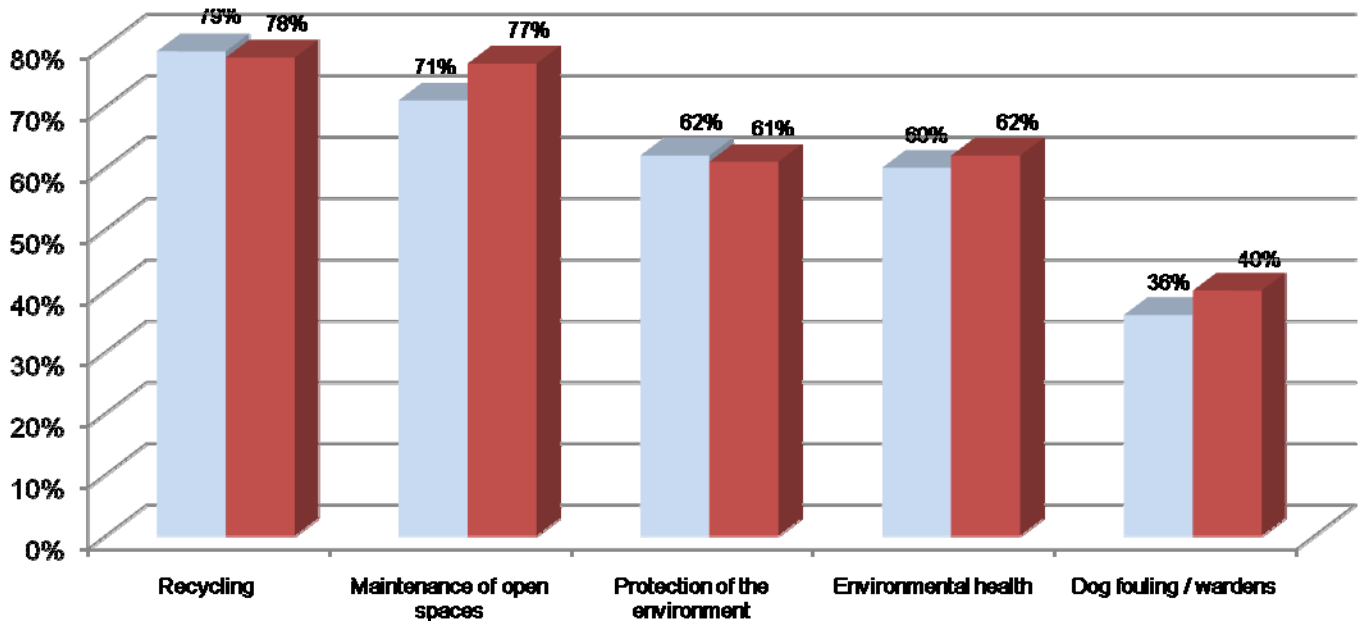
8.2 Ratings for a range of universal services are set out below:

**Figure 8.1(a): Rating of Universal Services**



8.3 In 2010, a number of new questions were asked under this heading and ratings for these are summarised on the following page:

Figure 8.1(b): Rating of Universal Services



8.4 Ratings for a number of specific services that people either have a need for or choose to use are tabulated below (not answered responses included). Results are provided in full for reference but the very low base number of respondents in some cases should be noted.

**Table 8.1: Usage and Satisfaction with Services**

Service	Aberdeenshire Council			Garioch		
	% of respondents who use service	Base	Satisfaction	% of respondents who use service	Base	Satisfaction
Library services	51%	967	86%	48%	156	88%
Country parks	63%	1,195	84%	65%	209	86%
Adult education	10%	166	82%	10%	32	75%
Museums and arts	37%	696	81%	35%	114	85%
Local Council offices	48%	825	80%	49%	140	88%
Burial grounds	28%	472	78%	27%	82	79%
Your child / children's school(s)	25%	481	78%	21%	65	83%
Before and after school care	4%	67	75%	6%	18	83%
Youth clubs and services	13%	245	74%	8%	24	75%
Social work services	14%	262	73%	14%	41	85%
Council-run leisure / sports facilities	39%	730	70%	39%	128	74%
Council housing services	11%	191	67%	11%	34	71%
Education and training for people with disabilities	6%	110	62%	5%	14	79%
Trading standards	8%	144	59%	8%	22	50%
Planning and building control	28%	486	55%	24%	78	63%
Support to local businesses	10%	180	52%	7%	21	62%
Training and employment initiatives	8%	132	48%	5%	15	67%

Although the pattern of results is broadly similar between Garioch and the Aberdeenshire Council area as a whole there are some areas where the Garioch ratings are more positive (e.g. local Council offices, before and after school care, education and training for people with disabilities, planning and building control, support to local businesses and training and employment initiatives) and some areas where they are poorer (adult education, trading standards). Particular caution is advised in the interpretation of these results when base numbers are low.

## 9.0 FUTURE PRIORITIES

### ***BUDGET PRIORITIES***

- 9.1 A new section of the questionnaire concerned issues around the Council's future budget priorities. The following preamble was included in the questionnaire:

*“Due to the well publicised expected reduction in government grant funding, all local authorities will need to make significant budget savings over the next few years. Your answers to questions in this section will be one of the things that the Council takes into account in setting its budgets in the future.”*

- 9.2 Respondents were then asked to nominate up to 10 service options they considered MOST important to protect and up to 10 that they considered LEAST important.<sup>3</sup> The results of this are set out over the page, organised in order of the “net figure” accorded to each service (it should be noted that the information in Figure 9.1 is based only on the results of the “main” survey). The figures given are for Garioch with the Aberdeenshire Council figures as a whole provided in brackets.

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<sup>3</sup> For reasons of space, young people were only asked the question as to what was MOST important to protect and the information in Table 9.1 is based only on the results of the main survey.

**Table 9.1: Protection of Services**

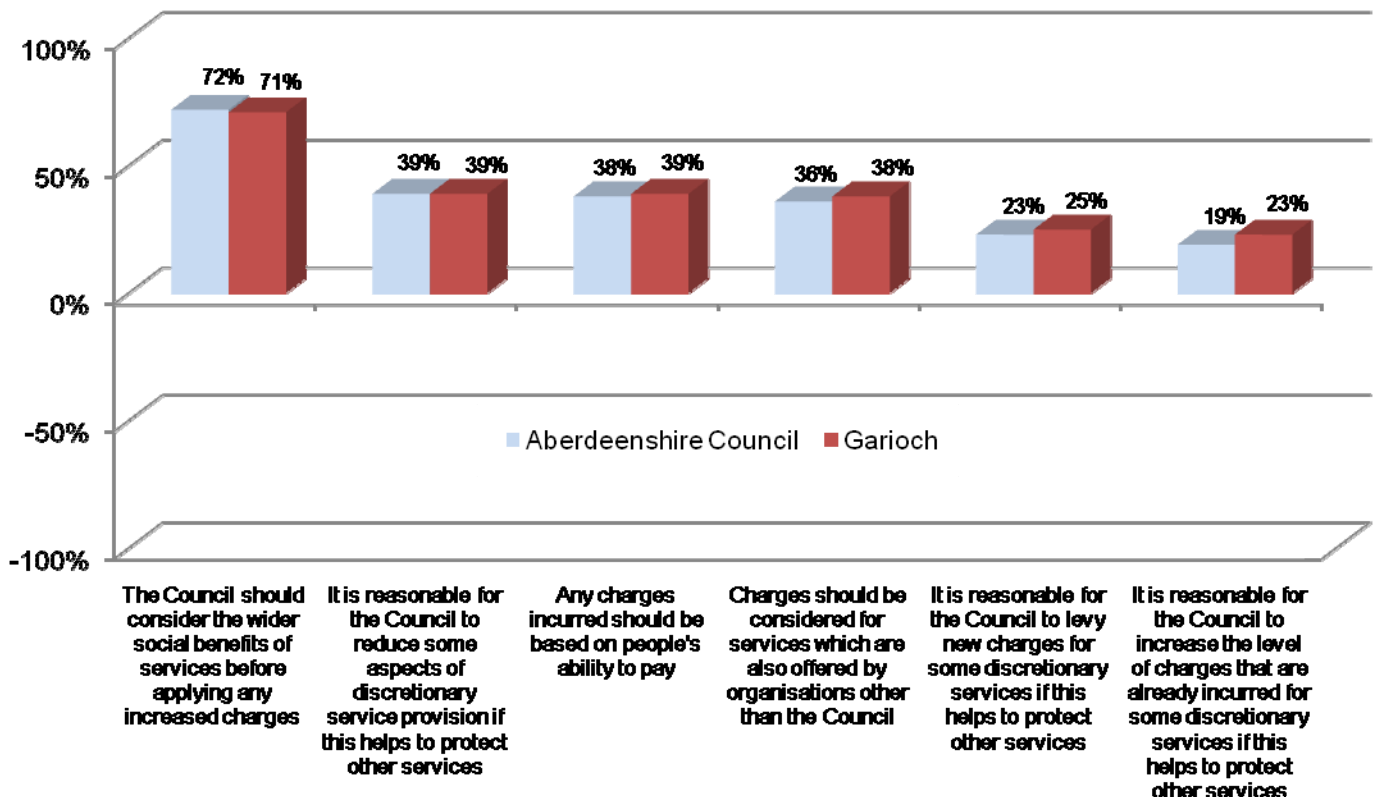
Service	Proportion Nominating as Most Important to Protect	Proportion Nominating as Least Important to Protect	Net Figure <sup>4</sup> (proportion nominating as most important less proportion nominating as least important)
Refuse collection	75% (72%)	1% (3%)	+74% (+69%)
Road maintenance	79% (71%)	3% (2%)	+77% (+69%)
Winter gritting / snow clearing	79% (69%)	5% (5%)	+74% (+64%)
Child protection	59% (61%)	6% (4%)	+53% (+57%)
Recycling	55% (56%)	10% (10%)	+45% (+46%)
Your child / children's school(s)	49% (45%)	10% (10%)	+38% (+35%)
Street cleaning	36% (38%)	15% (12%)	+25% (+26%)
Education and training for people with disabilities	37% (38%)	11% (11%)	+26% (+27%)
Maintenance of burial grounds	39% (38%)	16% (16%)	+22% (+22%)
Council-run leisure / sports facilities	37% (36%)	18% (19%)	+19% (+17%)
Library services	35% (37%)	12% (22%)	+12% (+15%)
Street lighting	35% (33%)	17% (17%)	+17% (+16%)
Council housing services	28% (31%)	20% (17%)	+8% (+14%)
Social work services	29% (27%)	16% (14%)	+12% (+13%)
Protection of the environment	29% (29%)	22% (19%)	+8% (+10%)
Maintenance of open spaces	35% (31%)	23% (22%)	+12% (+9%)
Environmental health	33% (28%)	21% (21%)	+12% (+7%)
Country parks	24% (26%)	26% (24%)	-2% (+2%)
Planning and building control	24% (24%)	20% (22%)	+5% (+2%)
Youth clubs and services	19% (22%)	29% (23%)	-10% (-1%)
Training and employment initiatives	11% (19%)	40% (27%)	-29% (-8%)
Dog fouling / wardens	28% (25%)	33% (35%)	-5% (-10%)
Before and after school care	21% (21%)	29% (32%)	-8% (-11%)
Adult education	17% (18%)	30% (31%)	-14% (-13%)
Local Council offices	16% (18%)	38% (33%)	-22% (-15%)
Support to local businesses	16% (18%)	41% (35%)	-26% (-17%)
Trading standards	11% (8%)	48% (41%)	-37% (-33%)
Museums and arts	11% (11%)	50% (46%)	-39% (-35%)
<b>Base</b>		<b>333 (1,734)</b>	

The general pattern of responses is similar to the Council area as a whole but Garioch residents are even more likely than others to prioritise refuse collection, road maintenance and winter gritting / snow clearing.

<sup>4</sup> Allowing for rounding

9.3 Respondents to the main survey were then asked to agree or disagree with a range of statements regarding the Council’s approach to charging, with the results of this being set out below (the figures provided represent “net agreement”):

**Figure 9.1: Agreement with Charging Statements**



Garioch respondents’ views closely match those of Aberdeenshire respondents as a whole.