

Notice of Meeting:

I hereby give notice that an ordinary Meeting of the Council will be held on:

Date: Thursday 25 August 2016
Time: 1:30pm
Meeting Room: Council Chamber
Venue: Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton

Richard Briggs
Chief Executive

Council OPEN LATE AGENDA

Membership

Chairperson	Her Worship the Mayor J Hardaker
Deputy Chairperson	Cr G Chesterman
Members	Cr M Forsyth
	Cr M Gallagher
	Cr K Green
	Cr A King
	Cr D Macpherson
	Cr G Mallett
	Cr A O'Leary
	Cr R Pascoe
	Cr L Tooman
	Cr E Wilson
	Cr P Yeung

Quorum: A majority of members (including vacancies)

Meeting Frequency: Monthly

Mary Birch
Committee Advisor

24 August 2016

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Committee: Council

Date: 25 August 2016

Report Name: City News Overview

Author: Sean Hickey

Report Status	<i>Open</i>
Strategy, Policy or Plan context	<i>Not Applicable</i>
Financial status	<i>The annual budget for printing and distributing City News is \$80,129. Photography and design costs are estimated to cost an additional \$12,000 per year.</i>
Assessment of significance	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

1. Purpose of the Report

- The purpose of this report is to respond to questions raised at the 18 August 2016 Finance Committee.

Recommendations from Management

That:

- the report be received; and
- staff do not bring a further report on City News to the Council meeting on 29 September 2016.

3. Attachments

- Attachment 1 - Response to LGOIMA Request
- Attachment 2 - Versus Research Findings
- Attachment 3 - Overview of September City News Articles

7. Background

- City News is a news and information publication produced monthly by the Council. Its purpose is to:
 - communicate the business of the council, including the activities and projects happening in the city
 - communicate the decisions of Council
 - promote what's on in the city

- fulfill a statutory obligation to communicate public notices

9. City News has been produced in its current format of eight- pages, distributed monthly since 9 March 2015. Prior to this, City News was a four-page publication, distributed fortnightly.
10. At the Finance Committee meeting 18 August 2016, a motion was put (and then withdrawn) that City News production should be stopped. From the subsequent discussion, the Chief Executive agreed to bring a report to the 25 August 2016 Council meeting to respond to issues raised at the Finance Committee.

11. Distribution

12. NZ Media and Entertainment (NZME) print and distribute 57,000 copies of City News each month. 54,000 copies are delivered to Hamilton households and 3,000 copies are delivered for public pick up from Council’s Municipal Building, other Council facilities, key shopping centres and Hamilton Airport.
13. City News is not delivered to PO Boxes, residences where a letterbox is not visible from the road and residences within commercial areas. It is delivered to all other letterboxes in Hamilton and, with a change in the distributor two years ago, the number of complaints of non-delivery have reduced significantly from several a week to virtually none.
14. City News is also available electronically on the Council website and through the Council’s social media channels. The number of views of City News on the Council website is shown below:

January	168 page views
February	285 page views
March	229 page views
April	172 page views
May	195 page views
June	231 page views
July	198 page views
August (1 – 19)	112 page views

15. Cost

16. Print and distribution costs for City News are \$80,129 for 11 issues per year. Design and photography costs vary from \$5500 to \$12,000 (based on a range of \$500 - \$800 design per edition and \$0 - \$300 photography per edition).
17. This equates to an approximate (top end) cost of \$8,364 per issue (or 15 cents per copy).

18. Editorial and publication process

19. Stories for City News are generated from various sources including suggestions from staff and elected members (eg when chairing a working group). Stories are drafted by Communications Advisors with input from the relevant staff in the organization. Elected members who are involved in a particular project/decision may be asked to contribute quotes to the relevant article.
20. Each story is reviewed and approved by the subject matter expert and contributors. Since August 2016, General Managers also sign off articles relating to their respective business areas.

21. The Mayor receives the draft designed City News edition the Friday before it goes to print (the following Thursday) to understand the story themes in order to draft her column. The Mayor will comment on factual inaccuracies or omissions.
22. Communications Unit staff work with an external designer to produce City News. Prior to restructuring in 2015, the General Manager Customer Services reviewed City News before printing. Since August 2016, the General Manager, Strategy & Communications reviews and approves the edition before final sign-off by the Chief Executive.
23. Attachment 1 contains the Chief Executive's response to questions raised by Councillor King in respect of many of the above matters, with particular reference to the July 2016 issue of City News.

24. Readership

25. Versus Research were engaged to telephone survey 300 Hamilton residents aged 18 or over about City News in February 2015.
26. The survey found that 24% of respondents regularly read/read every edition of City News, 38% occasionally read it, 22% hardly ever read it and 17% weren't aware of City News.
27. The paper version of City News emerged as a clear preference in terms of format with 67% of respondents preferring a paper copy in their mailbox. 26% of respondents preferred an email or e-newsletter format and 11% preferred an online format.
28. When asked about frequency of delivery, 41% of respondents preferred a fortnightly distribution, 36% preferred a monthly distribution, 12 % preferred a weekly distribution and 11% preferred some other frequency of distribution or did not know.
29. 72% of readers indicated that the amount of content in City News is 'just right', with 13% feeling there was too little content and 14% unsure. Regarding content type, those surveyed identified events, Council decisions, services and news as their top four preferences.
30. The survey also found that older residents (45 years plus), were more likely to read the publication, and in more depth, than younger residents.
31. A copy of the Versus Research findings is shown in Attachment 2.

32. Implications of stopping City News

33. The contract with NZME commenced on 1st July 2016 and has a two year term. Council can terminate the contract by giving 20 business days' notice and would be liable for any charges due up until the termination date. At the time of writing the report we have not received a legal opinion on whether Council would be liable for any additional exit costs.
34. If Council decided to stop publishing City News and not to replace it with anything, the majority of design, print and distribution costs would be saved.
35. However, there are likely to be increased costs through other media, e.g. paid advertising for public notices in newspapers or increased social media costs to promote city events. Future community consultations that require distribution of information to households (e.g. the Founders Theatre consultation) would also need to meet the full cost of printing and distribution as one-off items. Staff estimate this is likely to be more than producing a single issue of City News under the NZME contract.
36. The September issue of City News is currently close to being finalised. If Council wished to stop City News with immediate effect, the issue could be stopped before printing but Council would

incur a cost for doing so. For reference, a summary of the stories that are to appear in the September Issue of City News is shown in Attachment 3.

37. Financial and Resourcing Implications

- 38. The cost of preparing this report is 25 hours of staff time. Using Council’s standard calculation, this equates to \$2,500 (25 hours @\$100/hour).
- 39. The financial implications of stopping City News have been outlined above. There would be no savings in staff time as resource would need to be redeployed into alternative communication channels.

40. Risk and consequences

- 41. There is no risk with the recommendations in this report.
- 42. There are some risks associated with stopping City News:
 - i. There could be some public backlash from people who enjoy reading City News
 - ii. Council could suffer some negative impact to its commercial reputation from exiting a two year contract after two months

43. Staff View

- 44. It is the view of staff that City News remains a cost-effective way to communicate with Hamiltonians and that Council should continue with City News in its current format. However, given trends away from print media, Communications Unit staff plan on completing a comprehensive review of City News by June 2017 to look at opportunities that may include print and online.

Signatory

Authoriser	Sean Hickey, General Manager Strategy and Communications
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Response to LGOIMA Request from Councillor Andrew King in relation to the Claudelands article in the July City News

1. Who's responsibility is City News?

Responsibility for the city news contract, and for the creation of the publication, sits with the Strategy and Communications Group and the Communications Unit.

2. Who's budget is it?

It is funded from the Communications Unit budget.

3. Who writes it?

The publication's stories are drafted by Communications Advisors in the Unit. Elected Member who are involved in a particular article contribute quotes and content.

4. Who reviews it?

The process to date involves five review stages for the publication:

1. Each story is signed off by the subject matter expert and contributors.
2. Editor (until August 2016 this was the senior communications advisor and for the September 2016 edition onwards it will be the Communications Team Leader).
3. The Online Manager from a proofing perspective.
4. The Mayor receives the draft designed City News edition the Friday before it goes to print (the following Thursday) to understand the story themes in order to draft her column. The Mayor will comment on factual inaccuracies or omissions.
5. The Communications Unit Manager.

Prior to the restructuring the General Manager Customer Services reviewed City News.

From August 2016 onwards a new sign off process has been introduced that involves all GMs signing off articles that reflect stories from their Groups, the GM Strategy and Communications to review the edition and the CE authorising the full publication.

5. Who authorises it?

Prior to July 2016 edition, the publication was reviewed before print by the Communications Unit Manager. As with point 4, from August 2016 a new authorisation process has been developed.

Prior to the restructuring the General Manager Customer Services also authorised City News.

6. What does it cost?

The contract has been recently let and, following a RFP process, a preferred supplier and updated contract has been organised. The contract from 1 August 2016 costs \$80,000 per year for print and delivery of the publication to 55,000 Hamilton homes and copies to Council facilities.

Specifically on the July 2016 edition the article on page 7 on Claudelands, with specific reference to the 3 myths, but also including the whole article.

a. **Who wrote it?**

The H3 marketing team drafted the content in conjunction with the communications team.

b. **Who reviewed it?**

- H3 Marketing Manager and Communications Advisor
- GM H3
- The Mayor and Chief of Staff
- Chief Executive - Briefly
- Communications Unit Manager

c. **Whose idea was it?**

A meeting held on 24th May 2016 to discuss Claudelands performance and possible competition from other convention centres in the country.

At the meeting were the Chair of the Finance Committee, Mayor, Chief Executive and the Executive Director H3 and Major Events.

Broad discussion was had that a facts based article could be considered for City News, particularly given the 1 millionth visitor was coming up. Specifics were not discussed.

A meeting was held with the Mayor, Communication Unit Manager and GM City Growth on 10 June where a number of items in relation to this edition of City News were discussed – including Central City, Claudelands and the River Plan. Following this meeting a brief was verbally passed from the Communications Unit Manager to the H3 marketing manager.

d. **Who authorised it?**

Refer to point 5.

e. **Which elected members viewed it before comms released it?**

Refer to point b.

f. **Which elected members had input into it?**

Refer to point 4.



City News Review 2015

Hamilton City Council

versus.co.nz

Executive Summary

Survey Scope

- As part of the City News review, a telephone survey was conducted in mid-February 2015 to collect Hamilton City residents' feedback regarding readership, distribution and content of the publication.
- N=300 interviews were conducted with a random selection of Hamilton residents aged 18 years or older.
- A sample of n=300 is relatively robust and yields a margin of error of +/-5.7% at the 95% confidence interval.
- Age and gender weightings, based on Census 2013 proportions, were applied to ensure the final dataset is representative of the overall population.

Executive Summary

Awareness and Readership

- The majority of residents (83%) are aware of the City News.
- Compared to previous measures (2012 readership measure), a considerably greater proportion of residents indicate they 'hardly ever' read City News (26% c.f. 11% in 2012). Lack of distribution, preference for other news formats, personal choice and lack of content differentiation from other publications are cited as the main reasons for not reading the publication.
- Readership patterns are fairly evenly divided between skim readers (57%) and in-depth readers (43%). These align strongly with age groups, with readers under 45 years of age more likely to be skim readers, while older readers (45+) are more likely to read the publication in-depth.

Executive Summary

Distribution and Content

- The majority of readers prefer a fortnightly (41%) or monthly (36%) distribution cycle. The current paper format is preferred by 67% of readers, with 37% indicating that an email (26%) or an online (11%) format would be better.
- The amount of content appears to be on target with 72% of readers indicating it is 'just right'. This is further supported by a proportion of readers indicating that the publication is 'fine as is' when asked to generate other topics (11%) or indicate what would better align the publication to their interests (15%).
- In terms of content development, readers consider it important that upcoming events and decisions from Council are communicated through the publication. Upcoming events and Council plans were also the main topics or information that readers felt could make the publication more relevant to them.
- Information regarding Council's services or news, consultations and Your Voice receive similar positive ratings, while opinion pieces from elected members and stories about people at the council were considered to be less important to include.

Executive Summary

Points to Consider

- Readership patterns indicate two clear audiences; both of whom are strongly aligned to age group and ratepayer status.
- Younger audiences skim read City News as a quick source of information regarding events and services in Hamilton. As such an online / email format is preferred by younger readers, with some remarking on possible cost savings to ratepayers should an electronic version be available. Promoting online access to this publication amongst residents younger than 45 and the non-ratepayer population would match their readership requirements.
- Older audiences read City News in greater depth, seeking a forum to be informed and also discuss and comment on Council's plans, Council's spend and city development. As such, the current paper copy fits the purpose, and suggested improvements revolve around maintaining the current format and distribution, but including more public opinion or comment regarding Council's proposed plans.

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Background and Objectives

- Hamilton City Council provides information to residents through their fortnightly publication City News.
- As part of the current review of the publication Council wanted to collect residents' feedback regarding readership, distribution and content to ensure the publication is on target.
- To this end Versus Research was contracted to collect an updated measure of:
 - City News readership;
 - Preferred publication frequency and distribution channels;
 - Content ratings and;
 - General feedback.

Method

- This project involved a telephone survey conducted between the 12th and 18th February 2015, with a randomly selected sample of Hamilton residents aged 18 years and older.
- Council also collected feedback from residents via social media and face-to-face consultation to gather further anecdotal evidence. This report outlines results from the telephone survey only.
- The questionnaire had an average duration of five minutes and was constructed by Versus in conjunction with Hamilton City Council.
- N=300 interviews were conducted, which yields an overall margin of error of +/- 5.7% at the 95% confidence interval.
- By way of example, this means that if the observed result on the total sample of n=300 residents is 50% (point of maximum margin of error), then there is a 95% probability that the true answer falls between 44.3% and 55.7%.

Method

- Age and gender weightings have been applied to the final dataset.
- Weighting ensures that specific demographic groups are not under- or over-represented in the final dataset and that each group is represented as it would be in the population. Weighting gives greater confidence that the final results are representative of Hamilton City's population overall and are not skewed by a particular demographic group.
- The proportions used for the gender and age weights are taken from the 2013 Census data (Statistics New Zealand); a full profile of the sample, compared to the 2012 sample, is provided in the Sample Profile (slide 25).

Method

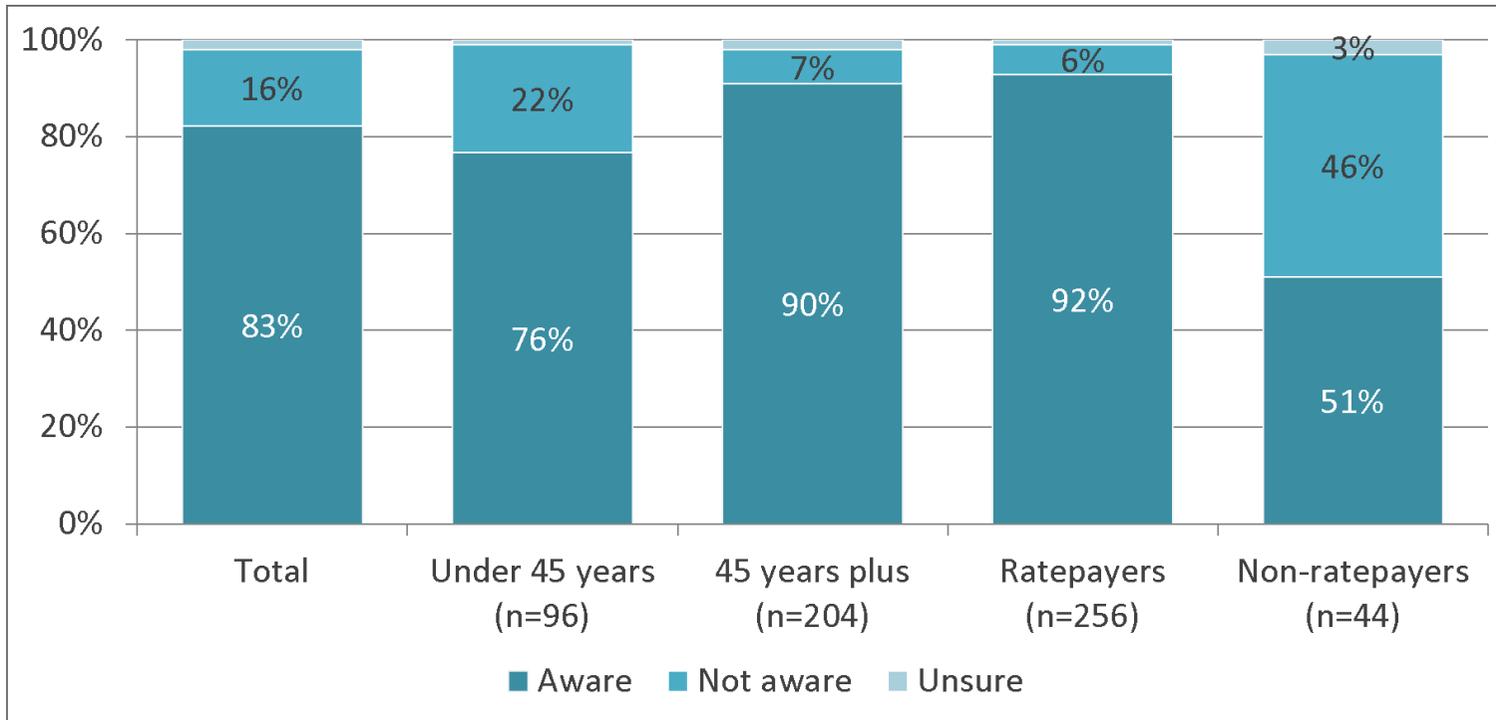
- For ease of interpretation charts are used to display most data in this report at the total level. Labels on charts for very small proportions (e.g., 1% and 2%) may be omitted for ease of reading.
- The question asked in the survey and the relevant base size (that is, the number of people who answered the question) are both shown as footnotes at the bottom of each slide.
- Not all percentages shown add up to 100%. This is due to the applied weights, rounding and/or questions that allow multiple responses (rather than a single response).
- Where applicable results have been compared with 2012 findings. Statistically significant results are indicated by green and purple as follows:
 - Green show that the 2015 results statistically greater than the 2012 results at the 95% and 99% confidence intervals.
 - Purple show that the 2015 results are statistically lower than the 2012 results at the 95% and 99% confidence intervals.

Awareness, Readership and Distribution

11
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Awareness of City News

Eighty three per cent of residents are aware of the City News publication, with older residents and ratepayers considerably more so. Of the 41 people unaware of the publication 24 would be interested in reading City News (59%).

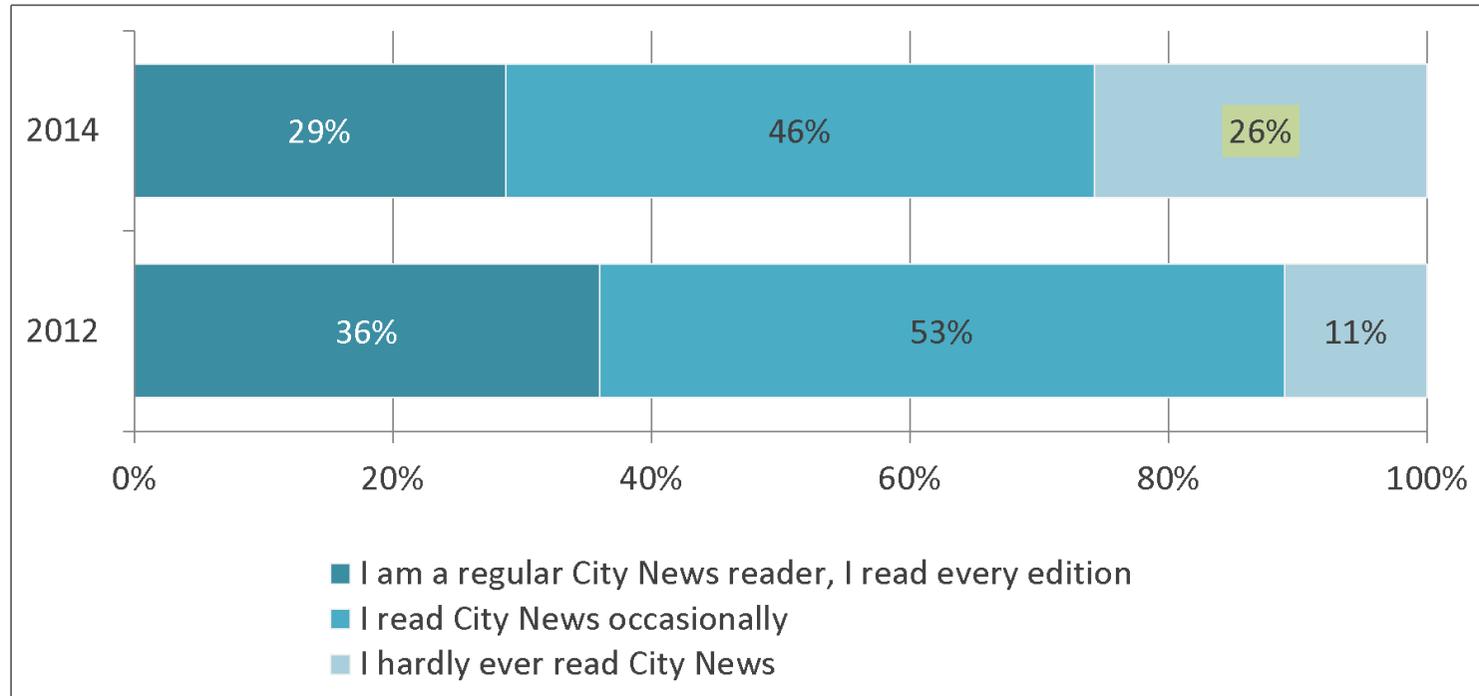


Q. Have you ever heard of or seen the City News publication? Base: total sample n=300.

Q. If no / don't know City News – Would this be a publication you would be interested in reading? Base: n=41

Readership of City News

In comparison to the 2012 measure, regular and occasional readership declined with a significant proportion of Hamiltonians 'hardly ever' reading City News. Those younger than 45 are more likely to fall in to this category (37%), while those aged 45+ years are more likely to read every edition (43%).

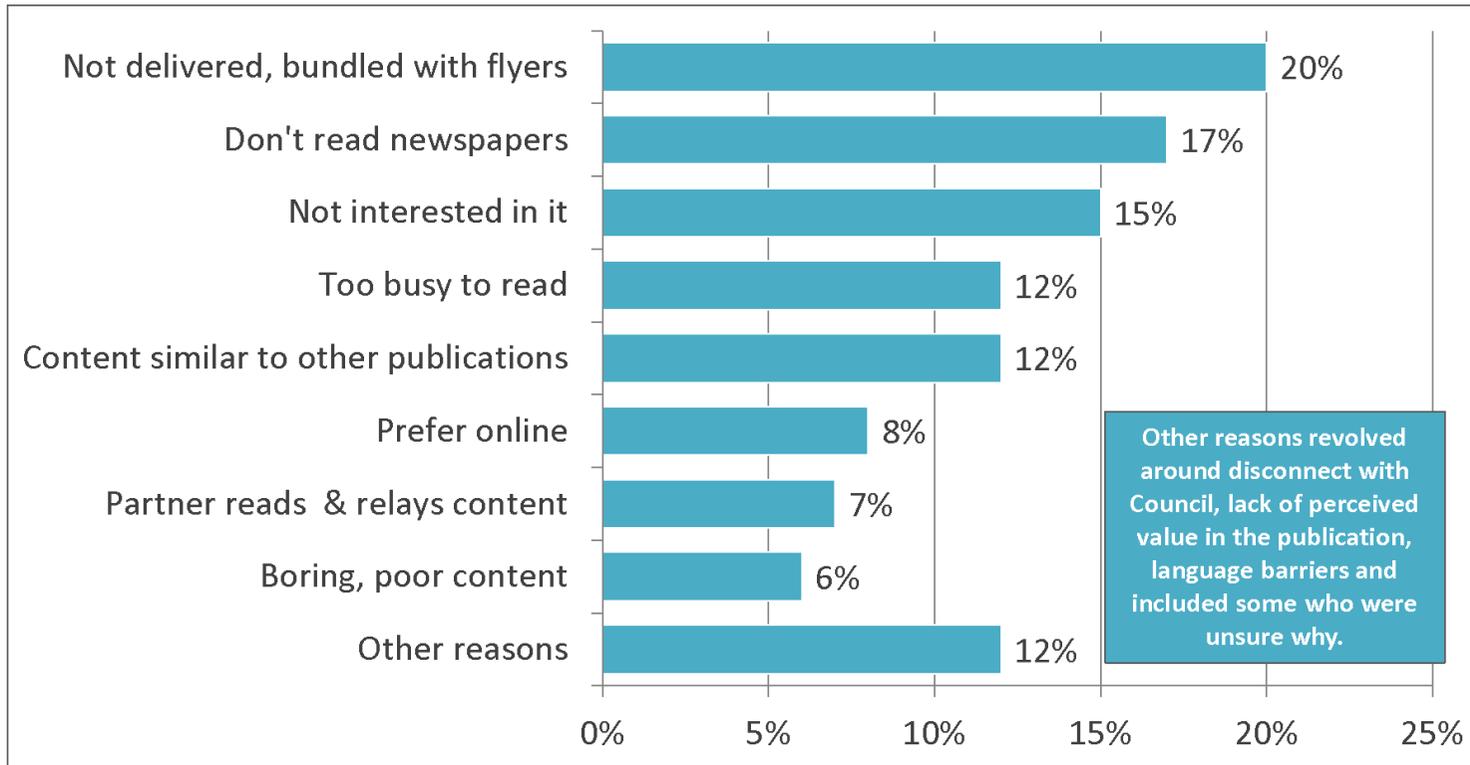


Q. Which of the following best describes you as a City News reader? Base: those aware of City News 2015 n=259; 2012 n=133.



Reasons Hardly Ever Read

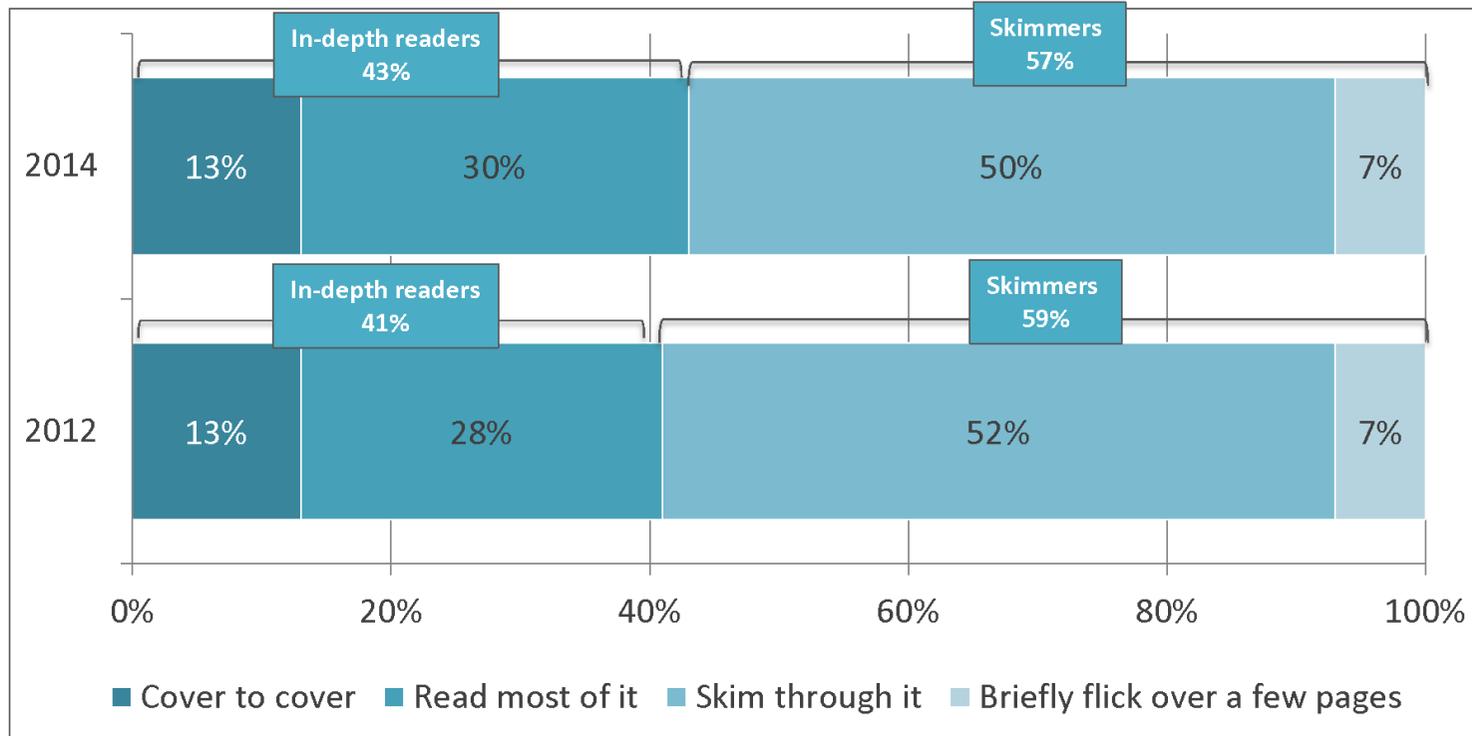
Distribution concerns, preference for other formats, personal choice and lack of content differentiation are the main reasons for 'hardly ever' reading City News.



Q. Why do you hardly ever read the City News publication? Base: those aware but not reading City News n=51.

Readership Pattern of City News

The readership patterns for City News continue to show a slight skew towards skim-readership with 57% skimming through or briefly flicking through the publication. Readers under 45 years (65%) and those living in the East Ward (67%) are more likely to be skimmers.

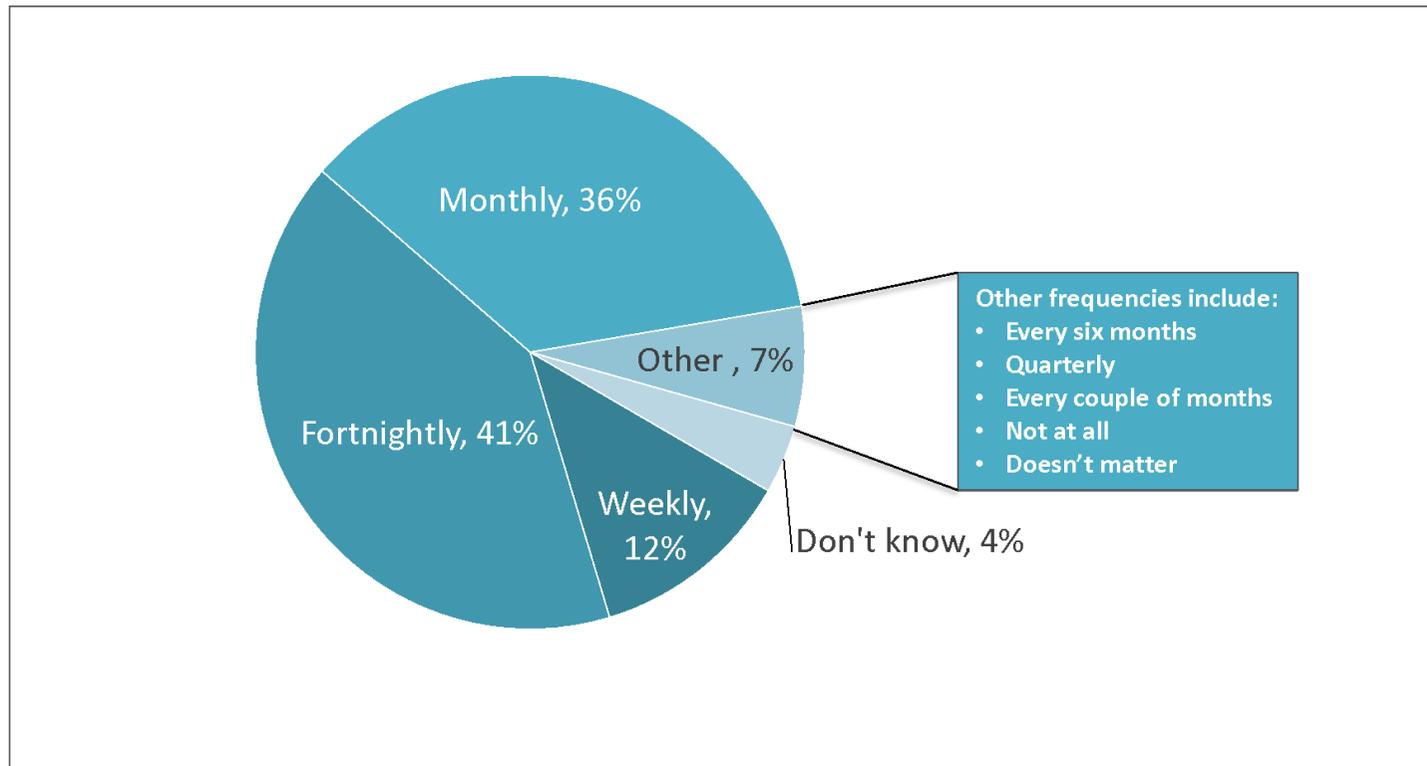


Q. Which of the following best describes how you typically read City News? Base: regular and occ. readers of City News 2015 n=208; 2012 n=133.



Preferred Frequency

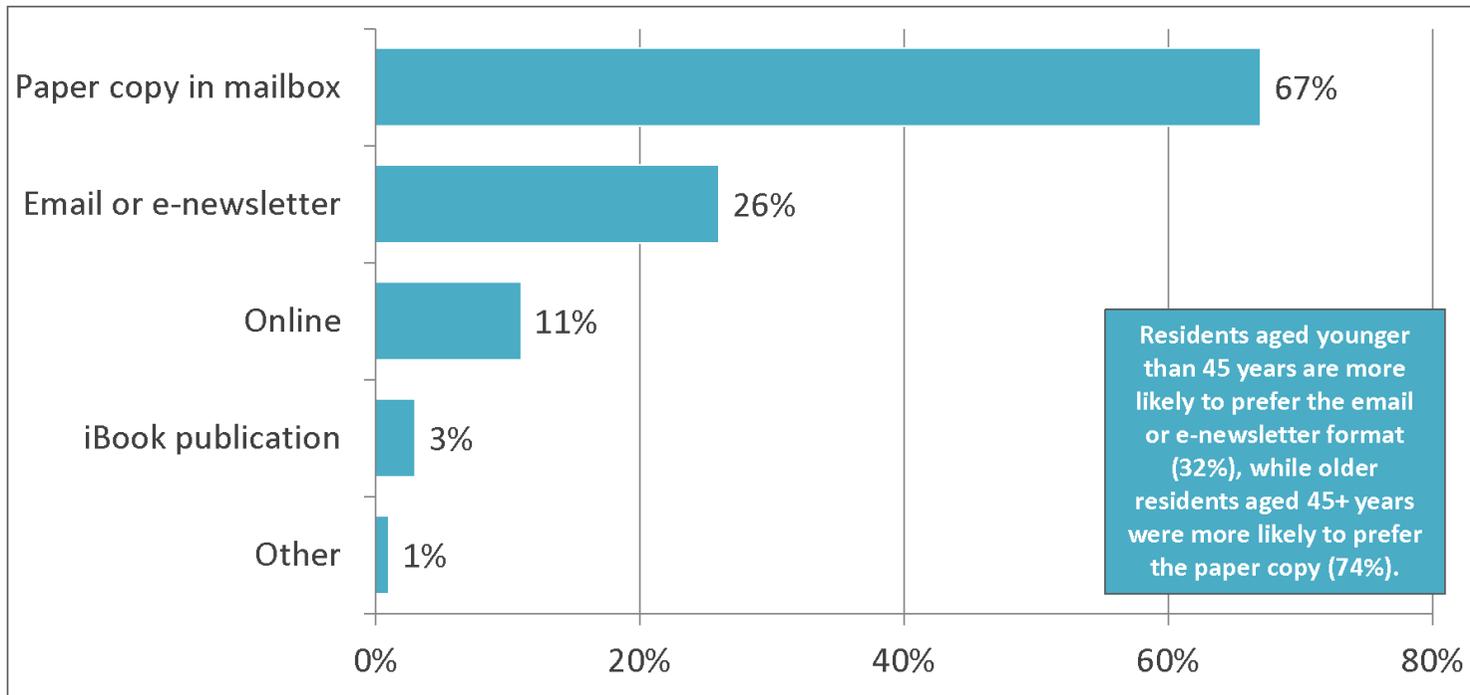
The majority of readers indicate a preference for a fortnightly (41%) or monthly (36%) distribution frequency, with 12% preferring weekly distribution.



Q. How often would you like to receive the City News publication? Base: readers and those interested in reading City News n=283.

Preferred Format

The paper version of City News emerges as a clear preference in terms of format, with verbatim comments indicating that the current City News is 'fine as is'. This is followed by 37% of residents indicating preference for either an email (26%) or an online (11%) version, with verbatim comments pointing to potential cost savings for ratepayers through electronic formats.



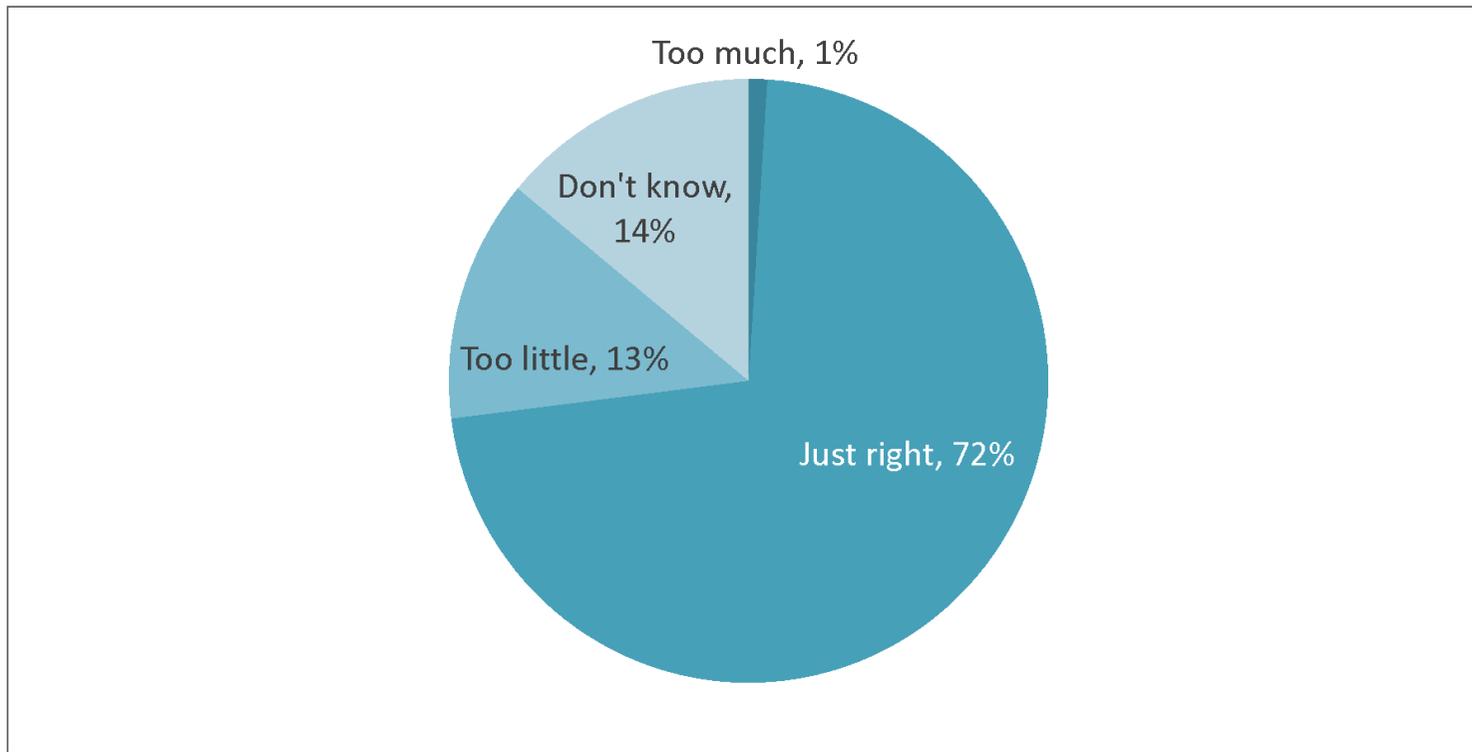
Q. In which of the following formats would you prefer to receive City News? Base: readers and those interested in reading City News n=283.





Amount of Content

Seventy two per cent of readers indicate that the amount of content in City News is 'just right'. Thirteen per cent feel there is too little content and 14% are unsure.

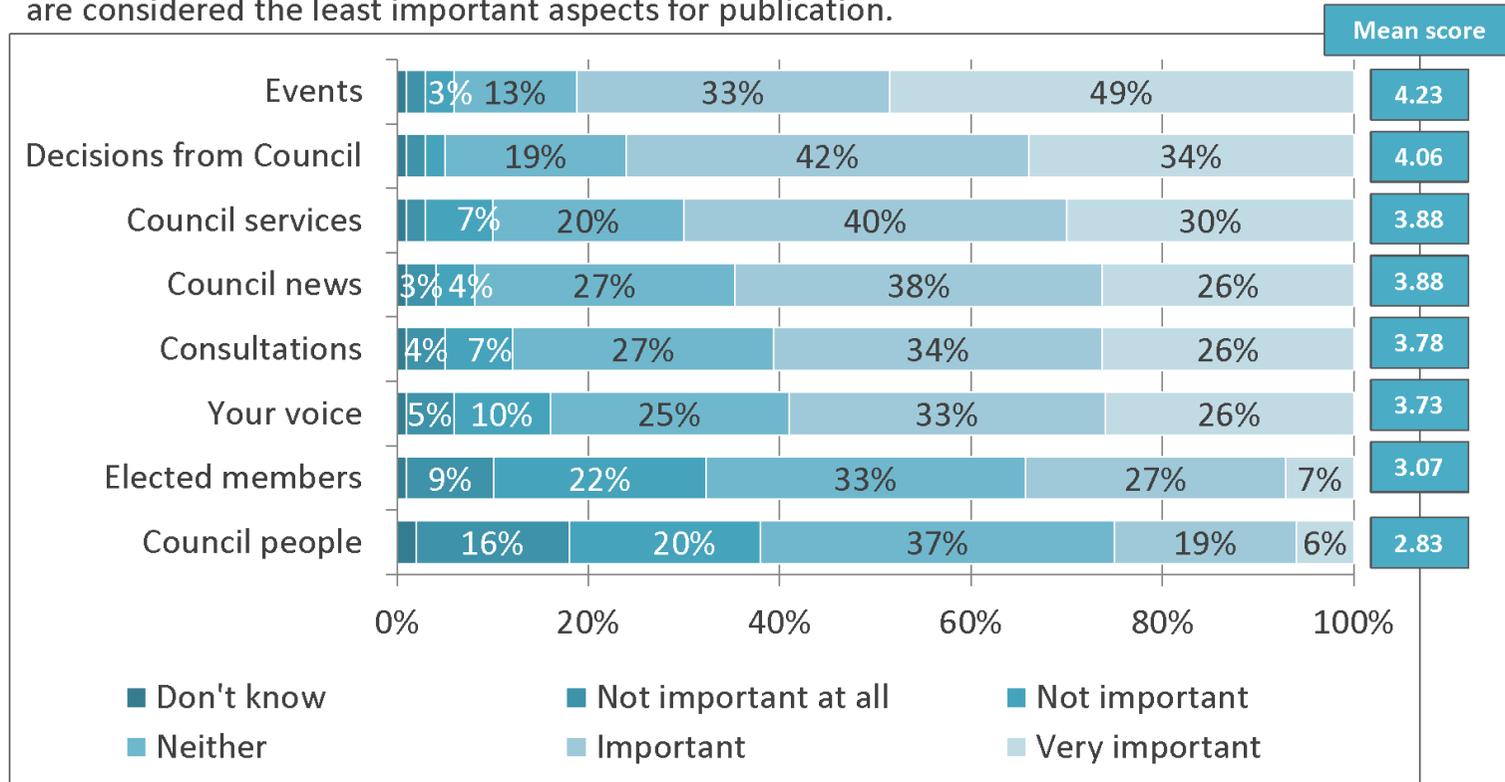


Q. How would you rate the amount of content in City News currently? Base: readers of City News n=259.



Content Ratings

Updates regarding upcoming events and decisions from Council are identified as the most important subject areas to cover. Content relating to elected members and people at the council are considered the least important aspects for publication.



Q. Please indicate how important you feel it is to include the following? Base: readers and those interested in reading City News n=283.



Content Ratings

Additional analysis of content ratings show female readers are more likely to rate all suggested topics, bar stories about Council people, important for inclusion. Readers living in East Ward were more likely to attach importance to information regarding upcoming events, decisions from Council and consultations.

Mean scores*	Total (n=283)	Male (n=97)	Female (n=186)	East Ward (n=133)	West Ward (n=150)
Events (e.g. activities at Waikato Stadium, Claudelands)	4.23	3.88	4.42	4.36	4.13
Decisions from Council	4.06	3.86	4.16	4.22	3.92
Council services (e.g. what can be recycled, when to call noise control)	3.88	3.61	4.02	3.99	3.78
Council news (e.g. rates review, animals at the zoo, 10 year plan, Hamilton Gardens expansion)	3.88	3.65	4.00	3.95	3.81
Consultations (e.g. current areas Council is seeking feedback on)	3.78	3.48	3.95	3.85	3.34
Your voice (e.g. feedback form the public about Council plans and decisions)	3.73	3.43	3.88	3.77	3.69
Elected members (e.g. opinion pieces from your Mayor and Councillors)	3.07	2.81	3.20	3.18	2.97
Council people (e.g. the stories behind the people who work at Council)	2.83	2.65	2.93	2.86	2.81

Q. Please indicate how important you feel it is to include the following? Base: readers and those interested in reading City News n=283. * Significantly higher scores indicated in orange.

Content Ratings

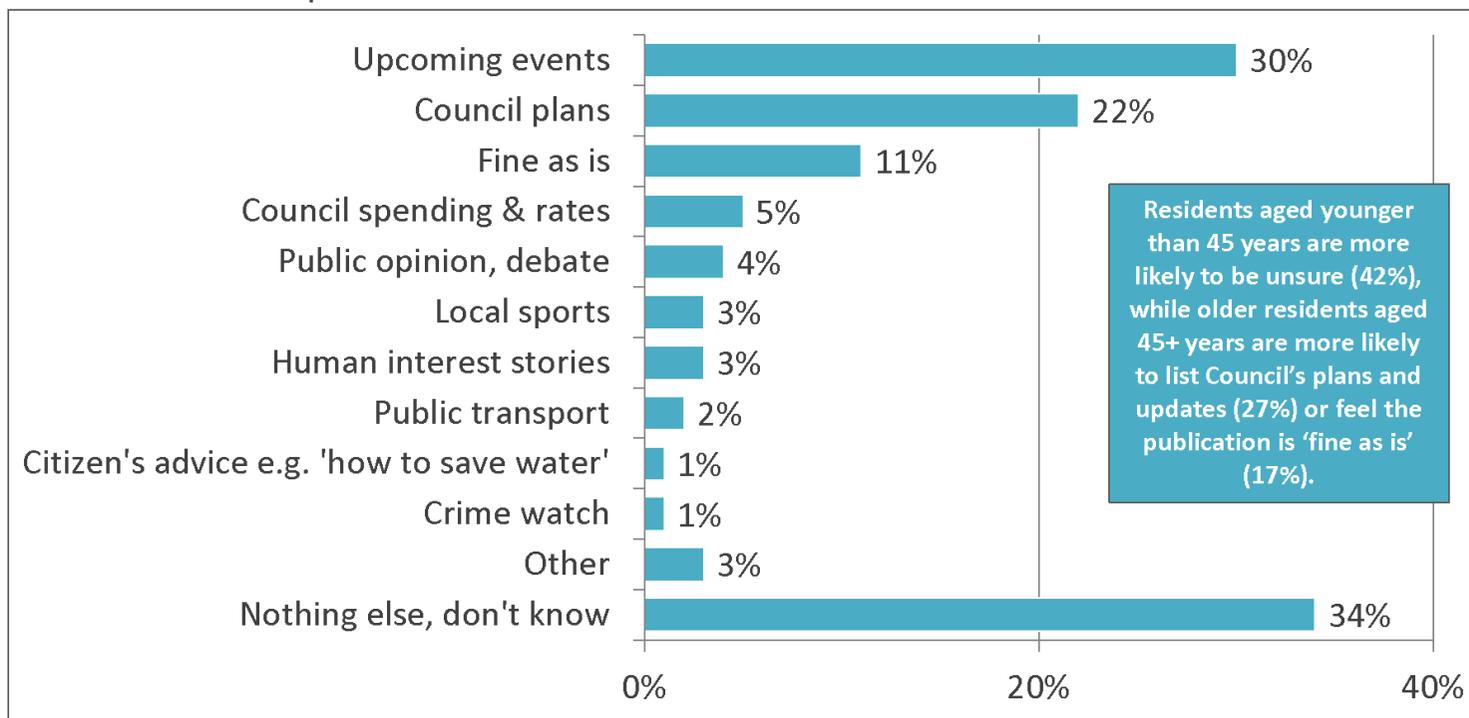
Younger readers are more likely to feel information regarding events and Council services are important. Ratepayers attach greater value to consultations.

Mean scores*	Total (n=283)	Under 45 (n=86)	45+ years (n=197)	Ratepayer (n=248)	Non-ratepayer (n=35)
Events (e.g. activities at Waikato Stadium, Claudelands)	4.23	4.43	4.15	4.20	4.46
Decisions from Council	4.06	4.13	4.03	4.07	4.03
Council services (e.g. what can be recycled, when to call noise control)	3.88	4.07	3.80	3.90	3.77
Council news (e.g. rates review, animals at the zoo, 10 year plan, Hamilton Gardens expansion)	3.88	3.80	3.91	3.91	3.66
Consultations (e.g. current areas Council is seeking feedback on)	3.78	3.74	3.80	3.85	3.34
Your voice (e.g. feedback form the public about Council plans and decisions)	3.73	3.60	3.78	3.75	3.54
Elected members (e.g. opinion pieces from your Mayor and Councillors)	3.07	3.08	3.06	3.05	3.23
Council people (e.g. the stories behind the people who work at Council)	2.83	2.87	2.82	2.86	2.62

Q. Please indicate how important you feel it is to include the following? Base: readers and those interested in reading City News n=283. *Significantly higher scores indicated in orange.

Other Topics

Additional prompts regarding other topics and information show interest in information in upcoming events, and information regarding Council’s plans for the city. Eleven per cent of readers indicate that the current publication meets their needs. One third of readers felt unable to list additional topics.

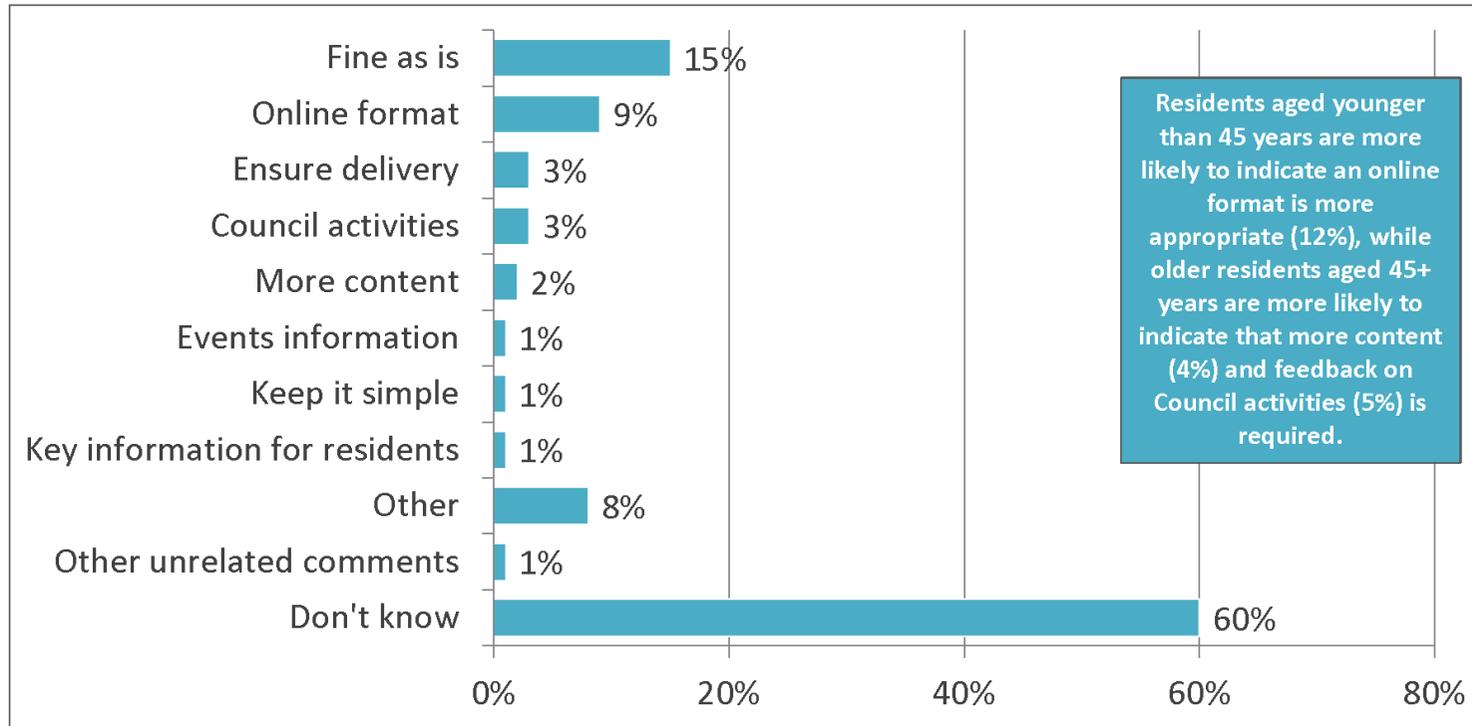


Q. What other topics or information would you like City News to have more emphasis on in future? Base: readers and those interested in reading City News n=283.



Improvements

The majority of residents are unsure how future copies can better align with their interests while a further 15% indicate the publication is 'fine as is'. Nine per cent of residents feel an online format is a better fit for them.

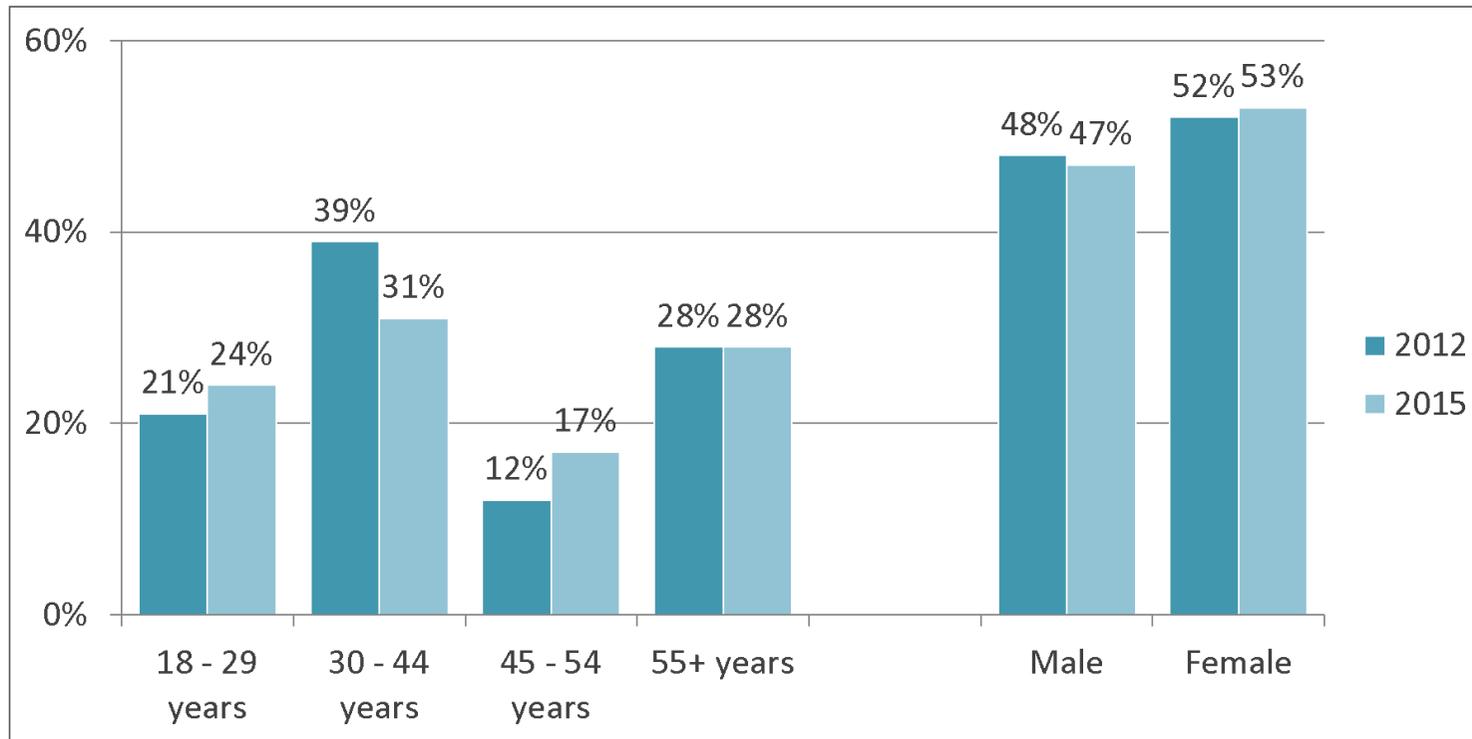


Q. Is there anything Council can do to make City News a better fit for you? Base: total sample n=300

A slide titled "Sample Profile" with a teal background. The left side of the slide is redacted with horizontal bars of varying lengths. The text "Sample Profile" is centered on the right side. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo for "versus.co.nz" with the number "25" above it.

Age and Gender

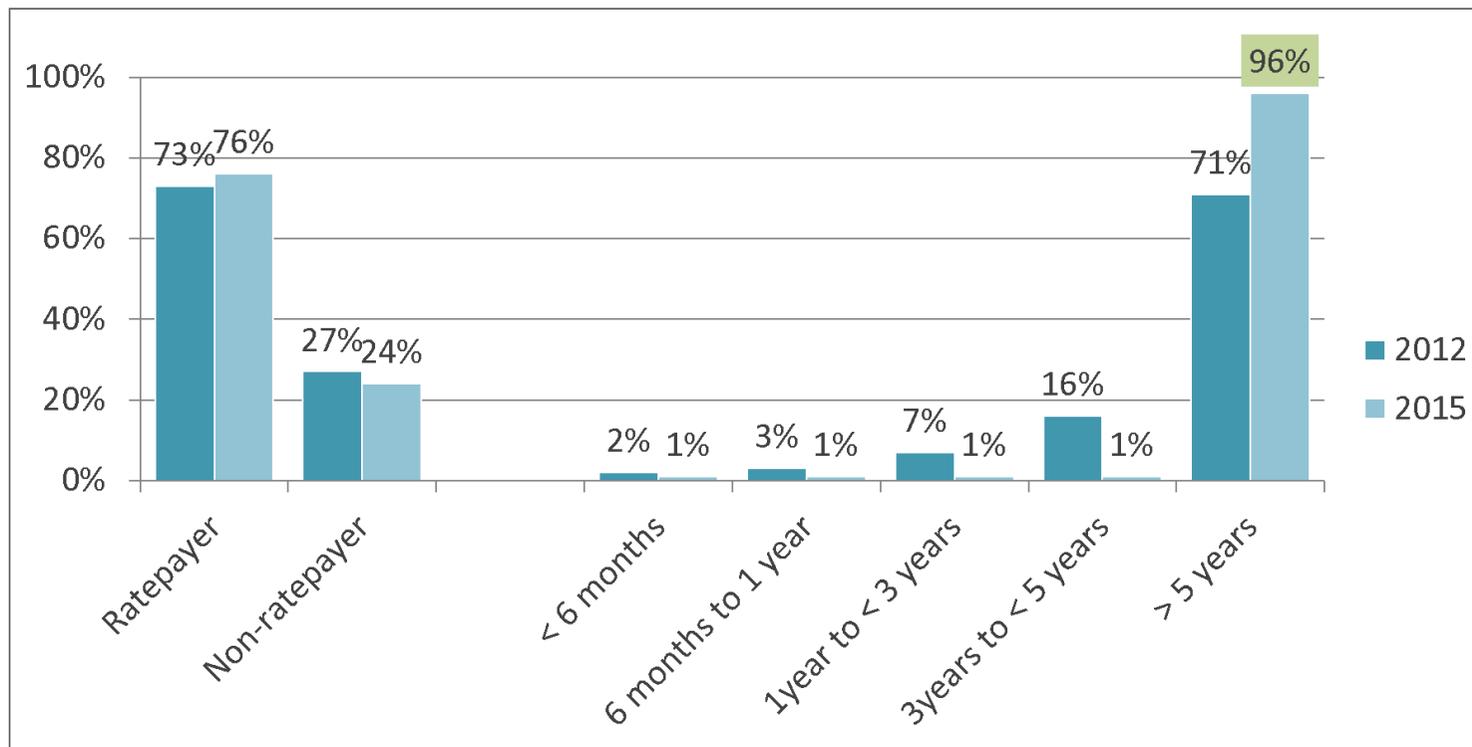
The final sample was weighed to representative proportions sourced from Statistics New Zealand Census 2013. A similar approach was used in 2012 with proportions based on Census 2006.



Q. Which of the following age groups are you in? Gender recorded. Base: total sample 2015 n=300, 2012 n=133.

Ratepayer and Tenure Status

Two thirds of respondents are ratepayers, and a considerable proportion (96%) have lived in Hamilton for five years or more.

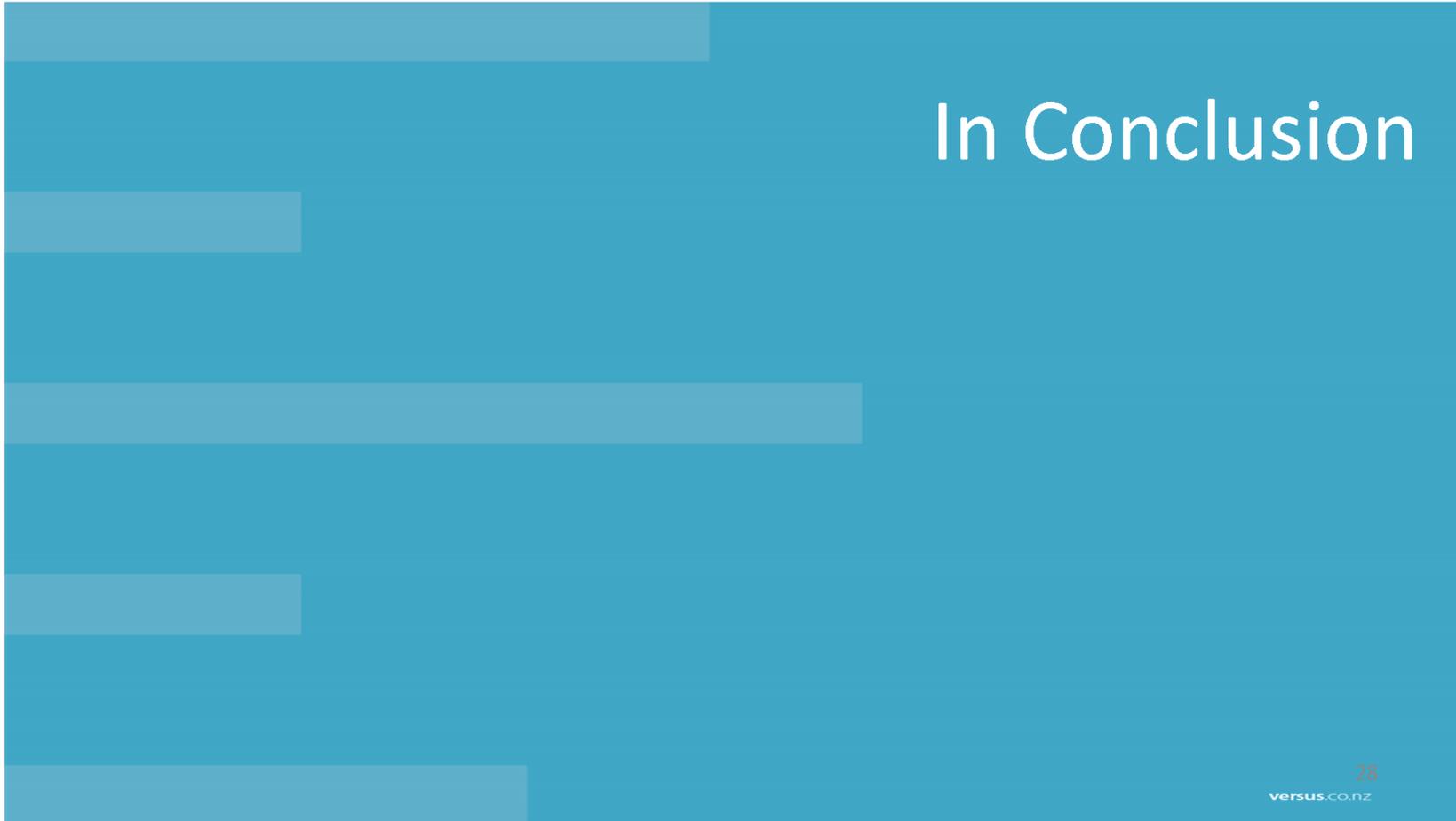


Q. Are you a Hamilton ratepayer? How long have you lived in Hamilton. Base: total sample 2015 n=300, 2012 n=133.



Item 11

Attachment 2



In Conclusion

- The City News publication enjoys high levels of awareness, in line with expectations given the distribution to all Hamilton households.
- However, one quarter (26%) of residents hardly ever read the publication with lack of delivery, lack of interest, lack of time and lack of content differentiation the main barriers to reading.
- Readership patterns indicate two clear audiences; namely skim readers and in-depth readers, with readership patterns closely aligned to age groups and ratepayer status; implicating a difference in readership by life-stage.
 - Younger audiences and non-ratepayers are more likely to skim read City News as a quick source of information regarding upcoming events in Hamilton and a summary of Council's services. As such, an electronic format would serve this audience well, as this format lends itself to quick communication updates. Promoting current online City News options will be key to capturing this audience.
 - Older audiences and ratepayers read City News in greater depth, seeking a forum to be informed about Council's spend and city developments, but also an opportunity to voice public opinion regarding Council's plans. As such the paper version fits their purpose, with suggested improvements centered on tweaks of content to allow for greater debate and consultation.

September 2016 City News Content Plan

The Content Plan may be updated (up until the time of print) to reflect changing stories and timely information.

Themes: Growth and Transport

- Housing supply/consenting figures (likely lead story)
- Broad overview of growth in the city and how Council is responding
- Growth Funding Policy
- Ferrybank development plan
- Rototuna Reservoir update
- Hamilton Expressway update (map)
- Motorcyclist training (pic)
- Yellow light campaign, awareness of traffic signals
- Freedom of the City for King Tuheitia (pic)
- Western Rail Trail sod-turning event (pic)
- Umbrellas for road safety supplied to schools for teachers who keep an eye on crossings (pic)
- Silary St underpass, links Ham East to Ham Gardens (artist's impression)
- International students visit
- Annual Report pointer
- Customer Services overview
- Run a mug of water – public notice
- Waste minimisation, opportunity for funding support (pic)
- Fluoride tap update (pic)
- An Empty Frame, museum upcoming exhibition on art crime (pic)
- Lake Domain Toilets refurbishment completed this month (pic)
- Community Funding profile of funded organisation (pic)
- HCL digital outreach – digital devices introduced to residents at rest homes (pic)
- Candidates for election – list only.
- City activities for Pumas vs All Blacks match

