

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 15

meeting date: 5th APRIL 2016
title: PERCEPTION SURVEY 2015
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: MICHELLE HAWORTH – PRINCIPAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform committee of the results of the Perception Survey 2015.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives –
 - Corporate Priorities –
 - Other Considerations -
- The survey has been used to gauge perception and monitor the levels of satisfaction with the Council's services. The data collected can be used to help inform the development of Council strategies. The Corporate Strategy sets out the Council's ambitions and priorities for the following years.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The national Place Survey was conducted in 2009, with the intention of repeating every two years. In 2010 the coalition government removed the requirement for a biennial Place Survey. The majority of local authorities, however, saw a need for continuing to collect satisfaction and perception data.

2.2 The Lancashire authorities that make up the Infusion research and consultation partnership now carry out a biennial survey based on the questions asked in the Place Survey in order to collect and track this information. This also allows comparison between authorities. Some additional questions are added by the individual authorities. The aim of the survey is to determine views on the local area, local public services and the local community.

3 METHODOLOGY

- A satisfaction survey designed to give indicative direction of travel.
- The majority of questions asked as per Place Survey 2009.
- The survey was undertaken with residents across the borough of Ribble Valley and was intended to be relevant to anyone living in the area.
- An eight page survey was sent by post to 461 panel members on 19 October 2015. A further 523 email invitations were sent to panel members on the same date. A reminder was sent on 9 November, with a final closing date of 29 November 2015.
- In total 545 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 55%. Of this total, 403 responses were received by post whilst 142 responses were received online.
- In order to ensure that the survey reached people in all sections of the community, respondents were asked to provide some demographic information including their gender, age, disability and ethnicity.
- The data is weighted by age, gender, disability and ethnicity to reflect the overall population of Ribble Valley, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.

- The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.18% at a 95 percent level of confidence. This means that if the survey was conducted 100 times, the data would be within 4.18 percentage points above or below the percentage reported in 95 of the 100 surveys. Typically 3% is considered to be a 'good' margin of error.
 - The 2013 Perception Survey used the same methodology so results are directly comparable with the 2015 survey results.
- 3.1 The survey focused on the local area, well-being, service satisfaction, perceptions of the Council and value for money. In order to provide the public with an opportunity to shape the area in which they live, the survey focuses on quality of life factors that make an area a desirable or undesirable place to live. In addition to citizen perspectives, the survey allows local authorities to continue to track some of the corporate image and service satisfaction data collected through the previous surveys.
- #### 4 FINDINGS
- 4.1 Initial results have been presented to Corporate Management Team (CMT). The full report of Ribble Valley's Perception Survey results, as prepared by Infusion, is attached at Appendix A. A summary is provided below.
- 4.2 Your local area
- Health services, the level of crime and access to nature are seen to be the three most important things that make the local area a good place to live
 - 94% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- 4.3 Local public services
- Around 9 in 10 residents are satisfied with refuse and recycling services provided by the Council
 - Dissatisfaction with dog fouling is down from 49% in 2013 to 37%
 - 71% feel the Council provides value for money, down from 76% in 2013, but still higher than the County Council (41%)
 - Around 3 in 4 residents are satisfied with the Council overall
- 4.4 Recycling services
- More than 9 in 10 residents regularly recycle glass, cans, plastic, paper/ cardboard and green waste
- 4.5 Information and customer service
- People feel less informed about the Council than they did two years ago
 - But elements of customer service are on the up – waiting times, politeness of staff and how easy information is to understand
 - Residents still prefer printed publications for information and prefer to contact the Council by telephone or in person
- 4.6 Local community
- Perceptions of safety and anti-social behaviour in the local area are similar to 2013
 - But the perception that the police and public services are dealing with these issues successfully is down from 54% in 2013 to 43%
- 4.7 When comparing the 2013 survey results to the 2015 results (page 24):
- In 9.09% of the comparable questions satisfaction has been seen to improve
 - In 72.73% of the comparable questions satisfaction has stayed roughly the same
 - In 18.18% of the comparable questions satisfaction has been seen to decline

- When comparing Ribble Valley’s results with similar surveys conducted in other Lancashire authorities satisfaction with services is higher across the board in all but the following areas - Satisfaction with parks and open spaces.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources - Analysis and report writing was done by Infusion which is covered by our annual contribution to the partnership. Printing and postage was done in house.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None identified.
- Political – None identified.
- Reputation – Positive results have already been used in communications with the public ie Spring edition of Ribble Valley News and will be communicated to staff.
- Equality & Diversity - In order to ensure that the survey reached people in all sections of the community, respondents were asked to provide information about themselves including their gender, age, disability and ethnicity. The breakdown of respondents by these demographic groups is provided in section 3 of the report. For each question in the survey, comparisons were made between different sub-groups of respondents (namely gender, age, disability and geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report. Some groups cannot be included in the sub-group analysis as there were too few respondents to allow statistically significant results (e.g. young people and ethnic minorities).

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Corporately these are some very encouraging results. We now have the opportunity to make the most of the data available and a chance to link the findings to our decision-making processes and our Strategic Planning.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

REF:

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