

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

RESULTS FROM 2019 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE RESIDENTS' SURVEY

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the findings from the 2019 Nottinghamshire Residents' Survey, consider the results and actions required.

Information and Advice

2. This annual satisfaction survey for the County Council has been undertaken since 2012 and aims to measure headline satisfaction and residents' views about the Council, its services and the local area.
3. In line with best practice from the Consultation Institute, information gained from the annual satisfaction survey helps the Council to understand the views and priorities of residents; helps shape strategies, business and budget planning and determine priorities for services. Asking similar questions to other local authorities over a period enables the Council to monitor progress against key performance indicators locally and benchmark performance in Nottinghamshire more broadly.
4. This survey has been undertaken by an independent research company, Enventure Research since 2012.
5. As in the previous years the 2019 Nottinghamshire Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey used face-to-face interviews with residents, who are representative of the Nottinghamshire population. Face-to-face interviews are the best methodology as this allows people to fully express their real views in a direct way. This technique is also acknowledged for producing robust population-based samples which stand up to scrutiny.
6. Local based quota sampling techniques were used to achieve a representative sample of the Nottinghamshire population. Quotas were set based on district, gender, age, working status and ethnicity as well as disability and ward classification.
7. The brief was to undertake a minimum of 150 face-to-face interviews in each of the seven districts, making a total county sample size of 1,050. In practice more interviews were conducted and a sample size of 1,068 was achieved. This response rate has achieved a 95% confidence interval meaning the results are accurate to approximately

+/- 3%. This means with a result of 50%, we can be 95% sure that if we interviewed all residents then the result would be between 47% and 53%.

8. In addition to the questions around levels of satisfaction the 2019 survey included questions to measure public opinion on areas of the Council's business to support the planning of future provision. Additional questions also measured public perception of the state of the county in relation to the Council Plan's four vision statements that contribute to making Nottinghamshire 'a great place'. These results will help inform the planning of proposals for future years and where appropriate further consultation will be carried out on specific budget/service proposals with the relevant stakeholders. Results from the representative sample are shown in the final report and key findings summarised below.
9. In 2019 as well as the face to face interviews described above, the survey was also made available for all residents to complete if they wished. From 4 November till the 13 December the survey was available on the Council's website and printed copies available at all Nottinghamshire libraries. In total this received 1299 responses; with 1206 made online and 93 in writing. These results are not from the controlled and representative sample, but the additional responses provide the opportunity to further test the credibility of the representative survey, which it successfully did this year with both sets of results corroborating the main trends.
10. The research report captures local people's views, experiences and perceptions and includes tables and charts broken down by geographical areas, and demographic subgroups including age, gender and working status.
11. In order to understand how levels of satisfaction and perceptions have changed, comparisons have been made between the 2018 and 2019 survey results, the most recent baseline data for performance reporting, that also used the same methodology. It must be emphasised that residents' responses and opinions are often influenced by local, national and international issues and media in addition to the direct activity of the Council.
12. Responses to the various questions are set out below in relation to key themes and areas of importance beginning with overall indicators of satisfaction.

Summary of key findings from the 2019 survey

Overall resident satisfaction

13. Comparing the results for 2019 with those over the last 7 years, overall satisfaction with the Council and with residents' local area has remained high and there remains a positive perception of the Council providing value for money and keeping residents informed. This level of consistency over time further supports the validity of the survey results and reinforces the positive levels of confidence in the Council amongst residents. Some of the specific components of this are identified below.
14. **Council satisfaction**
This specific indicator gauges overall attitudes. The satisfaction rating (fairly to very satisfied) of 58% is broadly in line with the 2018 figure. This, supported by other key

measures, provides a positive picture of how local people view and experience the Council.

15. **Value for money**

A major influence of satisfaction with the County Council is the feeling that it provides value for money. 48% of respondents agree that the County Council provides good value for money. This is unchanged from the 2018 survey.

16. **Satisfaction with the local area**

Understanding how people feel about where they live provides important context to help Nottinghamshire County Council understand attitudes on other local issues. Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with their local area as a place to live (their local area was defined as the area within 15-20 minutes' walking distance from their home). 77% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their local area.

17. **Service delivery**

Another key indicator of satisfaction with the Council is the perception of the quality of its services. Nearly half of respondents (49%) agree the Council provides high quality services. This is a 2-percentage point increase from 2018. 21% of residents disagreed with this statement. and the remainder neither agreed nor disagreed.

In response to a more specific question relating to services for children and young people 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that Nottinghamshire County Council provides high quality services that protects the safety and welfare of children and young people?' 40% of respondents agreed with 20% disagreeing.

18. **Information provision**

Generally, people's attitudes to various aspects of the local area and local public services are influenced by how well they feel informed. In Nottinghamshire, 52% of respondents feel informed about the services and benefits provided by the Council. This is unchanged from the 2018 survey

19. **Council's new mobile app**

The Council has launched a mobile app so residents can quickly, easily and conveniently access a range of Council services wherever they are. The app complements existing access to services through the customer service centre, council web site and face to face provision. In response to the question 'overall, how likely would you be to download and use the app?' nearly 60% of respondents said they were 'very likely' or 'quite likely'.

This feedback was collected before the launch of the app and therefore sets the baseline of local residents' perceptions and further reinforces the Council's decision to develop and launch the MyNotts mobile app; informed by feedback from residents. Taking a co-production approach, 28 residents from the Citizens Panel have volunteered to continue to be involved in testing the app to ensure it meets the needs of local people; that it is easy and intuitive to use and to make recommendations for further stages of development. Other specific user groups will also continue to be involved in the testing and ongoing development of the app to ensure that the app is accessible and inclusive to as wide a range of residents and communities as possible.

When asked how likely they would be to use the app for the following specific tasks residents responded:

	Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
Find out what events and attractions are on in your area	41%	24%	8%	21%
Report potholes and streetlight faults	39%	25%	9%	21%
Register births and deaths	27%	18%	11%	31%
Search for job vacancies at the Council	22%	19%	12%	33%
Apply for a school place	19%	12%	10%	37%

In future, the app will also provide opportunities for ongoing dialogue and discussion with local people and real time feedback on issues which are important to them. This can be used to complement the feedback from the annual Residents' Survey and help inform service change and improvements. This will be included in the next phase of development of the app and progress monitored through reporting to Improvement and Change Sub-Committee.

Transport, sustainability and the environment

20. Transport network priorities

In response to the question 'In regard to the county's transport network, to what extent do you think the Council should prioritise...?' the following responses were recorded:

	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all
Repairing roads and pavements	62%	28%	6%	2%
Investing in electric buses or other alternative fuel powered public transport	41%	28%	14%	10%
Cutting grass verges less frequently	24%	39%	16%	15%
Charging points for electric vehicles	35%	26%	17%	11%
Better facilities for cyclists	25%	31%	20%	14%
Traffic calming	24%	31%	23%	18%

As in 2018, overall residents think 'repairing roads and pavements' should be prioritised the most, followed by investing in alternative fuel powered public transport. The focus on these key areas of importance for local people is reflected in several of the Council's existing approaches and strategies. Of the areas identified above, residents considered 'traffic calming' the least important.

21. **Sustainable travel**

In response to the question 'which of the following would most influence your decision to change from using a car to using electric buses or other alternative fuel powered transport if they were available in your area?' the most frequent response was 'cost of fare' (24%) followed by 'frequency of the service' (18%), 'helping the environment' (17%), 'routes being close to home' (10%). The lowest response was for 'quality of transport' (4%). This suggests overall that people are willing to make the shift from using the car to public transport with cost and convenience of a regular service being the key factors in determining whether people would make the change closely followed by the environmental impact. This is useful information in helping the Council to develop its plans.

Community safety and community cohesion

22. A recognised measure of community cohesion is achieved by asking people about the degree that their local area is one where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Overall 60% of residents agreed with this statement which represents a 13-percentage point increase from the 2017 result but slight decrease from the 2018 figure.

Respondents were asked how safe they felt in their local area and in their homes. 90% "felt safe outside their local area during the day". 89% of respondents "felt safe when home alone at night". 57% "felt safe outside in their local area after dark". These results are broadly similar to the 2018 results.

Visitor economy

23. **A place to visit as a tourist destination**

In response to the question 'Would you recommend Nottinghamshire as a place to visit as a tourist destination?' 66% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent'. This was the first year this question was asked so there were no previous results to compare with. This reinforces the decisions and direction set out in the Council's Visitor Economy Strategy and will provide helpful baseline data for measuring the impact of the implementation of the strategy and supporting action plans going forward.

Council Plan

24. Residents were asked to what extent they would recommend Nottinghamshire against the four vision statements which are at the heart of the Council Plan. The results for 2019 are broadly similar to the results of 2018 survey when these questions were first asked. This shows a high level of consistency and continuity of approach.

A place to bring up your family

In response to the question 'Would you recommend Nottinghamshire as a place to bring up your family?' 85% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 13% responded 'not very much' or 'not at all'.

A place to fulfil your ambition

In response to the question 'Would you recommend Nottinghamshire as a place to fulfil your ambition?' 65% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 28% responded 'not very much' or 'not at all'.

A place to enjoy your later life

In response to the question 'Would you recommend Nottinghamshire as a place to enjoy your later life?' 71% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 21% responded 'Not very much' or 'not at all'.

A place to start and grow your business

In response to the question 'Would you recommend Nottinghamshire as a place to start and grow your business?' 47% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent', 31% responded 'not very much' or 'not at all' and 23% responded 'don't know'.

These results suggest that further work is required to better understand the reasons for these responses and engage with local people to ensure that the priorities for the Council continue to reflect what is most important for local people and local businesses. This information can then help inform the next iteration of the Council Plan. Further work will be undertaken to develop approaches and identify tools and opportunities to engage local residents and businesses in these discussions.

Local decision making

25. Respondents in Nottinghamshire were asked the extent to which they agree/disagree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area. A total of 33% agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area. This is unchanged from the 2018 survey

Results for how much residents' feel they can influence local decision making have remained persistently low over the last 7 years in line with the national trend. The UK findings from 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer reported "69% of us say our fellow citizens are angrier about politics and society since the referendum". Implementing new approaches for ongoing engagement with local people as set out elsewhere in the report should contribute towards improving this measure. The only result which has not followed the trend over the last 7 years was the measure of community cohesion which saw a significant increase in 2018 with a very positive response in residents agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together.

Other Options Considered

26. It is important that the Council seeks the views of residents on a range of different issues and uses this feedback to influence the setting of priorities, policies and strategies. Using the standard Local Government Association framework for the residents' survey, supplemented with more specific questions on issues of more local interest, provides a balance between consistency and continuity of approach whilst reflecting specific local dynamics. Using an independent research company to undertake the work ensures the results are properly balanced.

Reasons for Recommendations

27. To inform Members about the findings of the latest residents' survey and ensure that the Council's service and delivery plans are informed by residents' views and priorities.

Statutory and Policy Implications

28. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

29. Following a rigorous tender process in 2016, a reduced annual cost of £13,425 was secured for a four-year period for conducting the Residents' Survey. This cost covers commissioning the independent research company Enventure Research to undertake the survey, analyse and report the results. These costs will be met by the Council's budget for communications and marketing.

Equalities Implications

30. In seeking the views and engaging with residents the Council will ensure all methods are inclusive and accessible to all residents across the County and that views are sought from as wide a range of residents as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that elected members:

- 1) Agree that the results are used to inform development of the Council's service delivery plans and budget setting.
- 2) Approve the Residents' Survey to be carried out in 2020 using a similar approach and methodology.
- 3) Approve the development of an ongoing programme of engagement with local people and that progress is reported through Improvement and Change Sub-Committee.

Councillor Kay Cutts
Leader of the County Council

For any enquiries about this report, please contact:

Paul Belfield

Senior Marketing Officer

0115 9774542

paul.belfield@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (SLB 15/01/2019)

Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (SES 18/01/19)

The financial implications are set out in paragraph 21 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Final report

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All