Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Policy Committee

7 January 2015

Agenda Item: 6

REPORT OF THE LEADER

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ANNUAL RESIDENTS' SATISFACTION SURVEY 2014

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the findings from the 2014 Nottinghamshire Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey and consider actions arising from the survey.

Information and Advice

2. The annual residents' satisfaction survey aims to explore views about the Council, its services and the local area. This is the third survey undertaken and presents directly comparable results with previous years.

3. The information helps the Council to understand the views and priorities of local residents and how effective the authority has been in influencing the three key drivers of satisfaction: how informed people feel, value for money perceptions and how able residents feel they can influence local decision making.

4. An independent research company, Enventure Research, carries out the satisfaction survey through face-to-face interviews with residents. It is proposed that consideration is given to review the sample size, coverage and range of questions in the 2015 survey to allow further comparison with national polling data collected by the Local Government Association.

Methodology

5. The research was conducted via a face-to-face on-street interviews with residents aged 18+ across Nottinghamshire. 1,053 respondents (150 from each district) were interviewed between 1 October 2014 and 29 October 2014. The sample was closely monitored to ensure that it would replicate the 2011 Census data including specific quotas to ensure fair representation on basis of: district, gender, age, working status, ethnicity and disability as shown in the table below. The 2011 census defines disability slightly differently from the survey as "day to day activities limited a little, or limited a lot". The sample size means that the percentages quoted in the results are accurate to approximately +/-3%.

	Sample %	Census 2011 %
Male	49	49
Female	51	51
Age 18-24	10	10
Age 25-34	14	14
Age 35-54	36	36
Age 55-64	16	16
Age 65+	23	23
Employed	56	71
Retired	23	17
Disability	23	11
Ethnicity - White	97	96
Ethnicity - Other	3	4

6 The detailed 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. The report also contains data requested by the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner. A reference copy is available as a background paper.

Summary of key findings

7. Overall, the survey indicates that satisfaction during 2014 has improved over the past 12 months and residents remain fairly positive about Nottinghamshire. The findings compare well with other councils, especially around satisfaction and value for money (a key driver of satisfaction) that both exceed the 2014/15 Strategic Plan targets.

8. In order to understand how levels of satisfaction and perceptions have changed, comparisons have been made with the 2013 survey and, where relevant, to 2012 survey results. All three surveys used the same methodology.

8.1 Council Satisfaction

The satisfaction rating (fairly to very satisfied) has increased by 3 percentage points since 2013 to 61%. This exceeds the Nottinghamshire County Council 2014/15 Strategic Plan target of 60%.

8.2 Value for Money

A major influencer on satisfaction with the Council is respondents feeling that it provides value for money. 47% of respondents *agree* that the County Council provides them with value for money, compared to 24% that *disagree*. This is an increase of 4 percentage points since the 2013 survey. It exceeds the 2014/15 Strategic Plan target of 43%.

8.3 Advocacy and Consideration

Respondents were asked to indicate which one of a number of statements came the closest as to how they felt about the Council. Thirty-five percent stated that they speak positively of the Council, either without being asked (6%), or if they are asked (29%), representing an increase of 2% since the 2013 survey.

As in previous years, the greatest proportion of respondents, 61%, feel that they have been treated with respect and consideration by their local public services and people within public services.

8.4 Local decision making

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree/disagree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area. A total of 36% of the respondents *agree* they can influence decisions. This represents a significant increase of 8 percentage points since 2013 (28%) and is above the 2014/15 Strategic Plan target of 33%.

8.5 Information provision

The Duty to Involve came into force in April 2009. It requires councils to involve residents in decisions made about how they provide services. Good information and communications are important elements of service delivery, and there is a strong relationship between how informed residents feel they are kept by their council and their perceptions of its performance. Understanding residents' views on this is therefore important both as an indicator of the effectiveness of communications and as one of the most important drivers of reputation among local residents.

Respondents were asked for their overall view about how well informed they feel the Council keeps them about the services and benefits. Fifty-three percent of respondents felt that the Council kept them well informed (11% very well informed and 42% fairly well informed). This represents an increase of 2% from 2013, and is 2% above 2014/15 Strategic Plan target of 51%.

8.6 Publications

The Council has introduced three new publications - County Life; Family Life and Your Life, respectively aimed at all residents; families, and retired people. The survey sought views on County Life and Family Life (Your Life was not printed and distributed in time for the start of the survey).

Of the respondents who had received a copy of **County Life,** 57% said that they had read it either thoroughly or selected articles. Furthermore, 70% said that they had found it to be informative. Of the respondents who received a copy of **Family Life**, 64% said that they read it either thoroughly or read selected articles. Furthermore, 79% said that they had found it to be informative.

8.7 Perceptions of the local area

Eighty per cent are *satisfied* with their local area (defined as within 20 minutes' walk of their home) as a place to live. This is an increase of two percentage points since 2013.

8.8 Community Cohesion

A recognised measure of community cohesion is achieved by asking people about the extent to which they agree that their local area is one where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together. Fifty-one percent agree that people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together in Nottinghamshire. This is a decrease of 6% from 57% in 2013.

8.9 Community safety

Perceptions of crime and safety are often central to whether residents see an area as a good place to live. Ninety-five percent of respondents *feel safe during the day* (one percentage point increase from 2013). This is higher than the national Local Government Association figure of 94%. In relation to *feeling safe outside at night* the Nottinghamshire figure is 75%.

8.10 Satisfaction with the local area

Respondents were asked how much of a problem certain types of anti-social behaviour were in their local area. The table below summarises the 2014 results together with the previous two years. The majority of respondents felt that each of type of anti-social behaviour is <u>not</u> a problem.

Anti-social behaviour	Problem in 2012	Problem in 2013	Problem in 2014	Net Change 2013 to 2014
Vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property or vehicles	11%	13%	16%	+3%
Rubbish or litter lying around	19%	24%	26%	+2%
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	10%	14%	11%	-3%
Abandoned or burnt out cars	3%	3%	2%	-1%
Groups of people hanging around the streets	16%	19%	18%	-1%
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	14%	17%	17%	=
People using or dealing drugs	14%	20%	20%	=
People being attacked/harassed because of their skin colour/ethnic origin/religion	3%	5%	5%	=

8.11 Helping out and getting involved

The proportion of respondents who volunteer regularly in a typical week is 14%. This is a de*crease* of one percentage point since 2013. It is also notable that the amount of time people in Nottinghamshire volunteer per week has slightly decreased by two percentage points across all time bands. The type of voluntary activity undertaken that has seen the biggest increase is supporting the local community or neighbourhood groups (39% compared to 18% in 2013) based on a total sample size of 167 respondents.

8.12 Broadband and Internet Usage

In order to help build up a picture of how Nottinghamshire residents interact digitally, respondents were asked a series of questions about accessing the internet. With 87% of the UK now using the internet, the ways in which people are now accessing online services is changing. In Nottinghamshire, the survey indicated that 72% of the respondents were aware of the different ways and means to access the internet. Mobile broadband was more frequently used by the younger age groups, with 31% of those aged 18-24 and 28% of those aged 25-34 indicating that they most often used this type of broadband.

54% of respondents said that they most frequently used a computer (desktop or laptop) to access the internet, whilst 30% most frequently used a tablet or smartphone. In terms of usage, which was a multiple choice answer, 50% of respondents engage with social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. More than half use it to shop online, and 43% for banking online. In terms of entertainment, 31% stream video or watch TV and movies online and 23% engage in online gaming.

Conclusions

9. Overall, satisfaction during 2014 has improved over the past 12 months and residents remain positive about Nottinghamshire. The findings compare well with other councils, especially around satisfaction and value for money (a key driver of satisfaction) that both exceed the 2014/15 Strategic Plan targets.

10. Tracking changes in satisfaction alongside questions on other related issues about residents' local areas can provide valuable information on what is driving resident perceptions and therefore what the Council can do to better serve their local communities. Many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level, including local demographics. It is important therefore that these results are seen as part of a wider approach to understanding and responding to local communities at a local level.

12. The detailed results will also be used as a tool for evaluating quality within the Council's service plans and will be explored to integrate the results as part of the relevant performance management processes.

Other Options Considered

13. The cost of the survey was £13,796. The Council contributed £9,796 with the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner contributing £4,000. This is considered to be good value for money as other comparable surveys cost in excess of £20,000. The survey provides important information on residents' views about the Council, its services and the local area.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. The information gained through the 2014 Nottinghamshire Annual Residents' Satisfaction will help the Council to better understand the views and priorities of local residents and will be taken into account when decisions are made about Council plans and services.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1) Findings of the 2014 Nottinghamshire Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey are noted.
2) The report is used to inform development of planning, policy and delivery plans.

Alan Rhodes
Leader of the Council

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Constitutional Comments [SLB 10/12/2014]

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

Financial Comments [SEM 10/12/14]

2. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents
Contextual and comparative data from previous surveys
Final report (excluding Partners' data)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All