

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

RESULTS FROM 2018 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE RESIDENTS' SURVEY

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the findings from the 2018 Nottinghamshire Residents' Survey, consider the results and further actions.

Information and Advice

Background

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. The information gained from the annual satisfaction survey helps the Council to understand the views and priorities of local residents and provides monitoring data for key performance indicators.
4. This survey has been undertaken by an independent research company, Enventure Research since 2012. Following a rigorous tender process in 2016, a reduced annual cost of £13,425 was secured for the period of the four year contract.
5. As in the previous years the 2018 Nottinghamshire Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey used face-to-face interviews with residents, who are representative of the Nottinghamshire population. Face-to-face interviews are considered to be 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 (circa 785,800 based on the Census 2011 data). 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 2018 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 regard to the Council Plan's four vision statements that contribute to make 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 2018 the survey was also made available to all residents to complete. From 12 November till the 10 December the survey was available on the Council's website and printed copies available at all Nottinghamshire libraries. In total this received 479 online responses and 51 written responses. These results are not from the controlled and representative sample but the additional sample size provides 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.

Summary of key findings from the 2018 survey relating to customer satisfaction

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 with the 2016 and 2017 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 events and media. The timing of the survey may well have led to residents' views on national issues, such as progress on Brexit, being reflected in the feedback. It may also reflect more local issues such as the debate on Local Government Reorganisation across Nottinghamshire.
12. Comparing the 2018 results with those over the last 6 years, overall resident satisfaction with the Council and with their local area has remained high and there has also remained a positive perception of the Council providing value for money and keeping residents' informed. Over this period the results for how much residents' feel they can influence local decision making' have remained persistently low which is in line with the national trend as the UK findings from 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer reported "Trust in Government (*generally*) remains very low at 36 percent and the majority feel as though their views are not represented in politics today".
13. The only result which is significantly different to the national trend over the last 6 years was the measure of community cohesion which saw a significant increase in Nottinghamshire

and very positive response in residents agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together.

14. In overall terms the results, when compared to last year, show that there has been an increase in residents agreeing:
- The Council provides value for money
 - They can influence local decision making.
 - They feel informed by the Council.
 - Their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well.
15. The responses to individual questions were as follows:

Value for money

A major influence of satisfaction with the County Council is feeling that it provides value for money. 48% of respondents agree that the County Council provides good value for money. This is 2 percentage point increase from 2017.

Council satisfaction

This indicator gauges overall attitudes and is generally considered to be an indicator of how well regarded the Council is by its residents. The satisfaction rating (fairly to very satisfied) has reduced to 62% by two percentage point from the 2017 figure of 64% but remains three percentage points above the 2016 figure of 59% in 2016.

Providing high quality services

The 2018 survey was the first year that the survey sought residents' views on the important subject of how they rated the quality of Council services. 47% of respondents agreed that Nottinghamshire County Council provides high quality services with 22% disagreeing.

Local decision making

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 an increase of 2 percentage points from 2017.

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, which is a one percentage point increase from last year.

Community safety and community cohesion

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 62% of residents agreed with this statement which represents a 15 percentage point increase from last year's result.

Respondents were asked how safe they felt in their local area and in their homes. 61% felt safe outside in their local area after dark (4 percentage point increase from 2017). 92% of respondents felt safe when home alone at night (3 percentage point decrease from 2017).

92% felt safe outside their local area during the day (5 percentage point decrease from 2017).

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). 80% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their local area. This is a reduction of 3 percentage points from 2017, but remains a 1 percentage point increase from 2016.

Summary of key findings from the 2018 survey relating to future planning.

16. In line with best practice from the Consultation Institute these survey questions were designed to measure and understand residents' opinions on the direction that they believe the Council should follow and to help inform its future business planning and budget setting.

Care and Support for Independent Living

In response to the question 'Are you in favour of the Council supporting people who need care and support to stay independent in their own home for as long as possible?' almost all residents (94%) responded 'yes definitely' or 'yes, to some extent' and just 2% responded 'no'.

Supporting children and young people

In response to the question 'Do you think providing opportunities and positive outcomes for children and young people should be a higher priority for the Council?' the vast majority of residents 93% responded 'yes definitely' or 'yes, to some extent' and just 4% responded 'no'.

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
Improving public transport	36%	26%	19%	14%
Major new road developments	25%	26%	25%	18%
Repairing roads and pavements	80%	15%	3%	1%
Better facilities for cyclists	32%	27%	17%	15%
Traffic calming	27%	25%	18%	24%

Waste strategy priorities

In response to the question 'In regard to its waste strategy, to what extent do you think the Council should prioritise....?' for 'the reduction and recycling of plastic waste' 94% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' whilst just 4% responded 'not very much' or 'not at all'. For 'incineration of household waste' 75% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 15% 'not very much' or 'not at all'.

17. Residents were also asked to what extent they would recommend Nottinghamshire against the four vision statements which are at the heart of the Council Plan and underpinned by our commitments to local residents:

A place to bring up your family

In response to the question 'Would you recommend Nottinghamshire as a place to bring up your family?' 88% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 10% 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?' 68% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 26% 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?' 76% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' and 17% 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', 27% responded 'not very much' or 'not at all' and 25% responded 'don't know'.

18. In comparison to last year, the results relating to the questions about the Council Plan showed a marginal decrease in residents' recommending Nottinghamshire in relation to the four key areas and commitments. Last year's survey was carried out shortly after significant promotion of the Council Plan when awareness would have been higher. The 2018 results suggest further ongoing work is required to raise awareness and engage with residents' regarding the positive impact the Council makes in peoples' daily lives, to help sustain and further reinforce a positive perception of Nottinghamshire as a place to live, visit and do business.
19. In response to the question 'As a resident of Nottinghamshire do you identify with being from the county?' 83% responded 'Yes' and 14% 'No' which shows a strong local identify with Nottinghamshire residents'. This feedback will be used to help inform future development of the county's 'place' branding and promotion, as a baseline measure of the current level at which residents' identify as being from the county, as opposed to more local or wider geographical areas. This question was not asked previously.

Further actions

20. The results of the 2018 Residents' Survey and changes to the way in which the Council works have led the Council to reflect on the way in which it engages with residents and seeks their views on strategic issues such as the Council Plan and budget, broader satisfaction with the Council and also more targeted and specific issues.
21. A sharper, more agile and dynamic approach is being developed, maximising digital and other tools, including greater use of our Libraries, to ensure broad and representative engagement and greater ability to influence decision-making. The new approach will be undertaken throughout the year, rather than a one-off exercise. It is important that any package of measures enables the Council to continue to ensure an inclusive approach

accessible to all residents going forward. This will supplement and complement the Residents' Survey to provide greater context and insight into particular areas of Council activity and could be used to explore some issues and responses in more depth. Proposals will be developed for further consideration by members.

Other Options Considered

22. The Council is considering options and developing proposals to modernise the Council's approach to seeking the views of residents whilst maintaining an inclusive approach and maximising residents' engagement.

Reasons for Recommendations

23. The report and the recommendations within it inform Members about the findings of the latest Residents' Survey and seek agreement to use these to develop the Council's service and delivery plans in line with residents' views and priorities. The report also recommends further work is undertaken to consider the best ways in which resident views are sought on an ongoing basis to encourage engagement and better align with corporate planning activity.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. 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

25. The total cost for conducting the 2018 Residents' Survey was £13,425. This cost was for commissioning the independent research company Enventure Research to undertake the survey and report the results. These costs will be met by the Council's budget for communications and marketing.

Equalities implications

26. In considering new ways to seek the views of and engage with residents the Council will ensure any package of measures developed for further consideration are inclusive and accessible to all residents across the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that elected members:

- 1) Agree that the results of the Residents' Survey are used to inform development of the Council's service delivery plans and budget setting.

- 2) Agree to receive a further report setting out proposals for a refreshed approach to seeking the views and engaging with residents on key issues going forward.

Councillor Kay Cutts
Leader of the County Council

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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 25 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Nottinghamshire Resident Survey (2018) - Final report

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All