

REPORT TO COUNCIL: 27 October 2009

RESULTS OF THE PLACE SURVEY 2009

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr John Bowman

LEAD OFFICER: Acting Director Quality of Life

REPORT AUTHORS: Head of Policy and Performance and Performance Improvement Manager

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council considers the initial findings of the Place Survey 2009 in Copeland and agrees to endorse the approach taken to improve the Council's performance as outlined in paragraph 3.2.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Place Survey was conducted by local authorities in England for the first time during the Autumn of 2008 and the results were published in June 2009. It is a statutory survey whose contents were prescribed by the Government. It replaced the previous Best Value User Satisfaction Survey, and explored two main areas: residents' satisfaction with public service bodies (councils, NHS, Police and so on) and residents' satisfaction with the place in which they live. The results are considered as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) of the public service agencies.

2. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

2.1 1,478 responses were received from Copeland residents to the Place Survey in 2008. In addition, Copeland Borough Council decided, when commissioning the Place Survey work, to top up the required sample across the Borough to gain additional responses in each of the five notional localities (Whitehaven, Mid-Copeland, South Copeland, North East Copeland and West Copeland). An additional 843 responses boosted the sample from within these notional localities, bringing the total to 2,321.

2.2 The additional respondents were surveyed at the same time as the statutory minimum sample, and their answers provide us with statistically valid results for the localities.

2.3 In order to meet the Government defined criteria for the Place Survey, and to ensure that the sample surveyed was representative of the people who live in the Borough, the survey company weighted responses. This is to ensure that gender, age, geography, ethnicity, disability and occupational factors were taken into account proportionately as they are reflected in the Copeland population, which is expected good practice in this type of survey.

2.4 The overall headline results, which have already been publicised, show that Copeland residents had a satisfaction level with Copeland Borough Council at 27.7% (29% including the boosted sample) and Copeland residents had a

satisfaction level with Cumbrian County Council of 30%, both lower than other Cumbrian councils.

2.5 Overall satisfaction of Copeland residents with Copeland as a place to live was at 76.3%, compared with an average for other Cumbrian residents of 86%.

2.6 There are many factors which influence satisfaction with the Council and with Copeland as a place to live. Analysis nationally shows that there are complex inter-linking factors which affect how residents see the effectiveness of the public sector bodies, and the impacts of those services on quality of life.

2.7 It is important that we understand what is driving people's perceptions reflected within the Place Survey results. According to Ipsos MORI, a nationally recognised source of expertise, some of the survey results are beyond the control of local authorities to influence. In fact MORI are able to predict quality of life results from the Place Survey knowing only 5 factors about the population who responded: incidence of degree level or higher educational qualifications, households living in homes with 0.5 people or fewer per room, scores in indices of multiple deprivation, proportion of people under 21 and geographic region.

2.8 National indicators

The Place Survey provides eighteen national indicators for local authorities. These indicators are summarised below.

National Indicator	%
NI1: % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	74.8
NI2: % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	66.8
NI3: Civic participation in the local area - % who have taken part in listed activities within the last 12 months	13.2
NI4: % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	23.6
NI5: Overall / general satisfaction with local area - % satisfied	76.3
NI6: % participating in regular volunteering	23.3
NI17: Perceptions of anti-social behaviour - % who feel ASB is high based on score calculated from responses regarding ASB problems	23.6

NI21: Local council and police are dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues - % agree	28.7
NI22: Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area - % agree	26.7
NI23: Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration - % who state people not doing so is a problem	34.7
NI27: Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police - % who agree their views are sought on these issues.	28.6
NI37: % aware of civil protection arrangements in the local area	19.6
NI41: Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem - % who state this is a problem	32.3
NI42: Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem % who state this is a problem	38.3
NI119: Self-reported measure of people's overall health and well-being - % describing health as good	71.7
NI138: Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood	85.1
NI139: The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently - % who believe this support is available	36.5
NI140: Fair treatment by local services - % who agree they have been treated fairly in the last year	66.3

2.9 Copeland Residents' Satisfaction with Public Service Providers:

- 58% are satisfied with Cumbria Police;
- 90% are satisfied with Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service;
- 85% are satisfied with their local GP;
- 75% are satisfied with their local hospital;
- 53% are satisfied with their local dentist;
- 27.7% are satisfied with Copeland Borough Council
- 30% are satisfied with Cumbria County Council.

Out of 2321 responses 612 are very or fairly satisfied with how the Council runs things (26.38% including "don't know"s). Below are some of the key findings relating to satisfaction. The first example is explained in some detail, as the

following use the same methodology less information on how they are calculated is provided. Full information is available on request.

Satisfaction with Council

The following areas have a strong relationship with satisfaction with the Council:

- Council providing value for money (key role here will be informing residents)
- Perception of the County Council and Cumbria Constabulary
- Clean and green
- People being treated with respect
- Refuse collection
- People being kept informed about local public services
- People being able to influence decisions affecting local area

These key areas are analysed in more detail below:

Value for Money

Overall 455 people agreed the Council provides value for money. Of these 396 people are satisfied with how the Council run things. This means of those who agree we provide value for money 87.04% are satisfied with how the Council runs things compared to the 26.38% average. If someone agrees the Council provides value for money they are 3.3 times more likely to be satisfied with how the Council runs things than average.

County Council

83.67% of those who are satisfied with Cumbria County Council are satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. If someone is satisfied with Cumbria County Council they are 3.2 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

72.82% of those who agree Cumbria County Council provide value for money are satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. If someone agrees Cumbria County Council provides value for money they are 2.8 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

Clean and Green

59.42% of those who feel the Council is doing 'A great deal' working to make the area cleaner and greener are satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. They are 2.3 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

People who are very satisfied with the Council keeping public land clear of litter and refuse are 2.0 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

Treated with respect and consideration by local public services

Of those who feel public services treat them with respect and consideration “All of the time” 53.98% are satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. They are 2.0 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

People that agree ‘a great deal’ with the statement ‘local public services treat all types of people fairly’ are 2.2 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

Refuse Collection

People who are dissatisfied with refuse collection (461 people) are 2.0 times more likely to be dissatisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average. Those dissatisfied with local tips and household waste recycling centres (367 people) are 1.9 times more likely to be dissatisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things.

Being kept well informed about local public services

51.76% of those who feel ‘overall’ well informed are satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. They are 2.0 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

Interestingly, the importance of being kept informed occurs a number of times:

- People who feel very well informed about how Council tax is spent are 2.1 times more likely to be satisfied with the Council than average.
- People who feel well informed about public service performance are 1.8 times more likely to be satisfied with the Council than average.
- People who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making are 1.7 times more likely to be satisfied with the Council than average.
- People who feel well informed about the standard of service you should expect from local public services are 1.7 times more likely to be satisfied with the Council than average.

Influencing decisions affecting local area

50.09% of those who feel they are able to influence decisions affecting their local area are satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. They are 1.9 times more likely to be satisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

Cumbria Constabulary

64.27% of those who feel dissatisfied with Cumbria Constabulary are also dissatisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. They are 2.0 times more likely to be dissatisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average. If people disagree that police and other local public services are successfully dealing with local area issues they are 1.8 times more likely to be dissatisfied with how the Council runs things than average.

Satisfaction with local area as a place to live

63.86% of those who are dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live are dissatisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things. They are 2.0 times more likely to be dissatisfied with how Copeland Borough Council run things than average.

2.10 Residents' Stated Priorities for Improvement

Below is a summary of what residents feel most needs improving in their local area (at least 30% of residents agreed). Items in bold are where 40% or more of residents felt the topic was important.

Locality	Activities for teenagers	Affordable decent housing	Clean streets	Crime level	Job prospects	Public transport	Road and pavement repairs	Shopping facilities	Traffic congestion
NE Copeland	X			X	X	X	X		
W Copeland	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Mid Copeland	X	X				X	X		
S Copeland	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Whitehaven	X				X		X		X
Copeland Overall	X				X	X	X		

Of the items flagged above Cumbria County Council are responsible for public transport, road and pavement repairs and traffic congestion. Cumbria Constabulary has overall responsibility for reducing crime although we have section 17 responsibilities and are part of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

NEXT STEPS

3.1 Clearly the Council has to continue to address a number of issues arising from the Place Survey as a matter of priority, if it is to improve the results in 2010/11 – the next time that the survey will be run. Some analysis has been conducted locally to help us find the key services and activities which could make a difference. The key findings from our analysis are that we need to demonstrate improved :

- Value for money
- Communication and engagement
- Customer focus

3.2 An OSC taskgroup has been established to review in detail the findings and to propose actions to improve the Council's performance in the Place Survey 2010/11. An officer group will also be reviewing how the Council's corporate and service plans will contribute to improving the scores for a number of areas in the Place Survey.

3.3 In tackling the need for improvement the Council is working in a number of areas to engage better with the public and develop the organisation. These include:

- The Choosing to Change programme which proposes development in all parts of the organisation;
- Proposals for locality working, which will offer more opportunities for residents to be involved in influencing their public services.
- Improved partnership working at all levels including through the LSP and with parish councils;
- Seeking to be more visible and more available to residents through a range of neighbourhood events and forums;
- Using the mechanisms we already have to ensure that we are making a difference including: work towards reducing avoidable contact (NI14); the Council's complaints, comments and compliments system; the customer commitments;
- Communication tools, including the website, and budgets to inform residents about the Council's services and plans;

3.4 This report does not propose any expenditure in addition to what is already in the budget for 2009/10. The detailed proposals to be developed by Members and officers in due course may require bids in future budget rounds.

List of Appendices: none

List of Background Documents: Research Report : Place Survey 2008/9 prepared for Copeland Borough Council by BMG Ltd.

List of Consultees: Corporate Team, Executive Members