

Cherwell District Council

Executive

6 October 2014

Customer Satisfaction Survey Results 2014

Report of Head of Transformation

This report is public

Purpose of report

To update the Executive on the results of the annual satisfaction survey and identify any areas to be reflected in future business and/or performance plans.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the results of the customer survey, with particular reference to improvement in areas that were identified as priorities as an outcome of the survey undertaken in 2014.
- 1.2 To agree the priorities and areas of focus for future action as set out in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Cherwell District Council has a strong track record in customer and community consultation and currently uses a citizen's panel to help track customer satisfaction with council services and understand people's priorities, issues and concerns.
- 2.2 This report provides a summary of the results of the customer satisfaction survey undertaken in May/June 2014. The survey was conducted via the Council's citizen's panel and respondents were encouraged to complete the survey online. Hard copies were available for those that needed them.
- 2.3 The survey includes questions on most council services, value for money, spending priorities and quality of life issues. Specific services that the majority of the general public wouldn't have accessed during the year (e.g. Development Control or Benefits) are not included within the questionnaire, although respondents are able to make any additional comments about council services in the open questions that are included within the questionnaire.

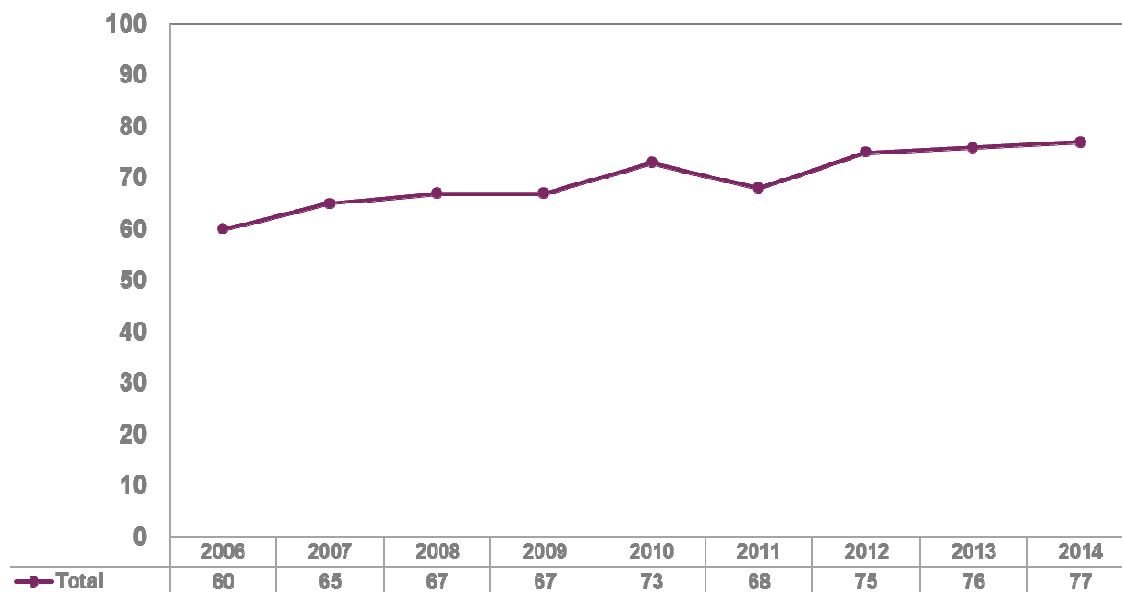
- 2.4 The Council has been undertaking customer surveys since 2006 and the data provides a statistically valid and robust trend analysis to help inform decision making, prioritisation and customer service development.
- 2.5 A full summary of the survey results is attached as Appendix 1. The Performance and Insight Team are able to provide additional analysis through the Dynamic reporting tool if required and may be contacted by email: consultation@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

3.0 Report Details

3.1 Overall satisfaction with the Council

Overall satisfaction now peaks at its highest recorded level of 77%. This demonstrates a very positive upward trend since 2006, where 60% were satisfied (representing a notable 17% improvement since we started monitoring resident satisfaction).

The graph below highlights the overall satisfaction with services provided with the Council since the inception of the survey in 2006.



Overall dissatisfaction remains at a very low level, with just 8% very/fairly dissatisfied illustrated in the attached appendix (slides 15 – 18).

It is encouraging that residents are now feeling safer in their local community and over half have noticed the Council’s efforts at dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance. This is a particularly positive finding given its importance for driving overall satisfaction.

There is an increased optimism among Cherwell residents about the state of the economy. Satisfaction with the availability of good quality jobs is now at its highest recorded level and a significantly higher proportion of residents agree that the economic climate in Cherwell is better than it was 12 months ago.

Key Drivers of Satisfaction

In terms of what drives overall satisfaction we know that there are a number of services that impact on people's views. This 'key drivers' analysis indicates that the services below have the biggest impact on overall satisfaction and, as such, are important to 'get right' in terms of customer service.

A correlation analysis was conducted to examine the key drivers of overall satisfaction with Cherwell District Council, which highlights the hygiene factors that are most important for the Council to get right and the causes of any changes in levels of satisfaction.

The leisure activities provided by Cherwell District Council is the lead driver of overall satisfaction with the Council, followed by the Council's approach to anti-social behaviour.

There is a second tier of services that drive satisfaction:

- Local area as a place to live
- Local car parking facilities
- Street cleaning service

Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live is a key driver of overall satisfaction with the Council (ranking 3rd). With 81% of residents satisfied with the local area as a place to live, findings are consistent with 2013. Previous years have seen variability in satisfaction with this aspect, ranging from 78% in 2011 to a peak of 86% in 2012.

Positively, a significantly higher proportion of residents are satisfied with the availability of good quality jobs. With 3 in 10 satisfied with this aspect, it is now at its highest reported level, which is 15% higher than in 2011 (where just 15% were satisfied with this aspect). This reflects a generally more positive outlook regarding the economic climate in Cherwell.

Value for Money

Half of residents agree that the Council provides value for money, which is the highest level of agreement recorded. This represents a notable 13% increase on the lowest recorded level of 37% in 2011. However, 17% disagree that the Council provides value for money.

The top three key factors that are seen to drive perceptions of value for money are:

- Leisure activities - specifically the cost of using facilities and the refreshments/ catering at sports venues.
- The Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance – the speed of response to complaints of anti-social behaviour and nuisance.
- Local car parking facilities – this often drives value for money perceptions due to the fact the people have to pay for parking.

3.2 Satisfaction with Council Services

In addition to the overall satisfaction rating the survey provides more specific details about individual service areas. These results tend to be more likely to shift between years but give a good indication of where the council is getting things right and where improvement is required.

The table below summarises the satisfaction in the services areas included within the questionnaire and highlights percentage improvements since the inception of the survey. Looking at the results a general dip in satisfaction can be seen across several service areas during 2011, recovered during 2012 and consolidated but not significantly improved in 2013.

Of the Council's services Recycling and Waste collection consistently shows the highest levels of satisfaction.

	% change since 2006 *	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Overall Satisfaction	+17%	77	76	75	68	73	67	67	65	60
Recycling centres	+12%	89	91	87	88	87	86	83	77	77
Household recycling collection service	+9%	88	83	80	82	83	78	75	76	79
Waste collection service	+18%	85	82	80	76	78	70	68	67	67
Food and garden waste collection	+10%	86	81	80	80	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Street cleansing service	+8%	67	70	69	64	72	67	66	63	59
Local car parking facilities	+5%	64	64	63	49	63	64	63	58	59
Local parks and open spaces	+5%	77	75	77	72	74	73	70	71	72
Leisure facilities	+6%	68	69	76	74	71	68	63	58	62
Leisure activities	+0%	56	59	61	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Local area as a place to live	+3%	81	80	86	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Council's approach to dealing with environmental crime	+12%	54	48	47	42	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Dealing with anti-social behaviour/ nuisance	+22%	56	56	49	43	44	36	36	30	34

* – Percentage improvement since 2006 or the first year the question was asked
n/a – the question was not included within the survey in this year

3.3 Communication and Information Provision

Residents are now significantly more likely to obtain most of their information about Cherwell District Council from official Council sources and less likely to obtain it from the local media than they were in 2013, which might partly explain the more positive ratings recorded this year.

Cherwell Link remains the most popular source of information about Cherwell District Council. Three-quarters (74%) of residents say that they obtain most of their information about Cherwell District Council from Cherwell Link. This is a significantly higher proportion than in 2013 (65%) and the highest level recorded to date.

Similarly, the proportion using the Council website to obtain most of their information about the Council has risen significantly since 2013 (34% now vs. 25% in 2013), as has contact with Council staff, which now stands at 1 in 10 (10% vs. 6% in 2013).

3.4 Perceptions of the economy: The local economy and Council Budget Priorities

Concern about the nation's budget deficit has been steadily declining since 2012. Under 8 in 10 (78%) now say that they feel concerned about the nation's budget deficit and the need to rein in public spending. This compares with 80% in 2013 and 82% in 2012.

Further evidence for an increased optimism about the state of the economy comes from the finding that the proportion agreeing that the economic climate in Cherwell is better than it was 12 months ago has significantly increased. 2 in 5 now agree that the economic climate is better in Cherwell, which is a notable 19% increase from 2012.

Despite this, however, 43% agree that they have personally been affected by the public spending cuts, which is significantly higher than the proportion recorded in 2013.

A significantly higher proportion would now be prepared to pay more council tax to maintain services (27% vs. 18% in both 2012 and 2013). However, half disagree with this.

While residents generally trust Cherwell District Council to do what's right for residents in the current economic climate, the proportion agreeing that Council's don't need to cut services as enough money can be saved through efficiency savings is at its highest recorded level. Almost 3 in 5 agree with this, which is significantly higher than in 2013 (59% now vs. 50% in 2013).

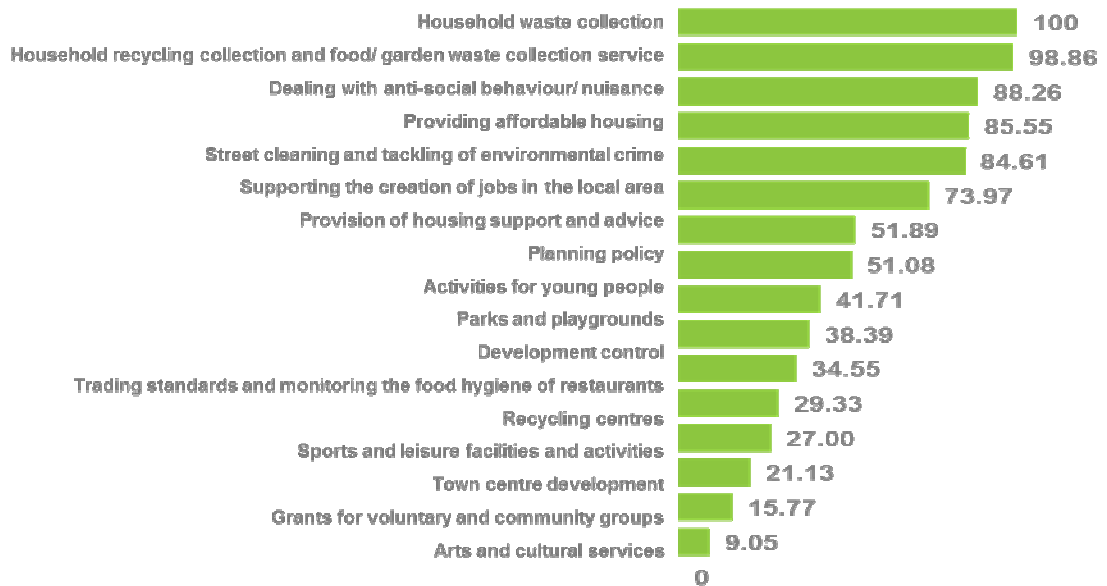
3.5 Customer Priorities

As part of the survey respondents are also asked to trade off services in terms of priority. This list gives us a ranked order of customer priority.

Waste collection, street cleansing and dealing with anti-social behaviour always tend to be reflected highly in the list and in recent years we have seen jobs and affordable housing move up the order of priority, for 2014 this general pattern has not changed.

However satisfaction with the availability of good quality jobs is now at its highest recorded level and a significantly higher proportion of residents agree that the economic climate in Cherwell is better than it was 12 months ago.

Ranking of Customer Priorities 2014



The diagram above highlights a 'top 6' of key services which are perceived to be a priority by local residents in greater magnitude than other council services.

- 1) Household waste collection
- 2) Household recycling collection and food/ garden waste collection service
- 3) Dealing with anti-social behaviour/ nuisance
- 4) Providing affordable housing
- 5) Street cleaning and tackling environmental crime
- 6) Supporting the creation of jobs in the local area

It should however, be recognised that the survey is only of local residents and that other stakeholder groups, e.g. local businesses may have slightly different priorities.

3.6 Suggested Areas for Future Focus

The list below highlights areas where it is recommended that continued focus is maintained. These recommendations are based on two factors, current levels of satisfaction and the extent to which the service is a high priority for local residents.

- a) Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour: The positive increase in satisfaction with the Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance recorded last year has been maintained in 2014, with 56% satisfied. This is notably higher than the lowest recorded level of 30% in 2007. However ranked third in the above perceived priorities.
- b) Sports and Leisure facilities: Overall satisfaction with leisure activities provided by Cherwell District Council remains in line with previous years, with 56% satisfied with their provision and 11% dissatisfied. The leisure activities provided by the Council is the lead driver of overall satisfaction and as such, it is important to maintain satisfaction levels in this area. There are also areas of

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, Tel 0300 0030107,
Kevin.Lane@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision - No

Financial Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Sound Budgets and Customer Focussed Council

Lead Councillor

Councillor Kieron Mallon
Lead Member for Performance and Communications

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	2014 customer survey results
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Louise Tustian, Acting Corporate Performance Manager
Contact Information	Tel: 01295 221786 louise.tustian2@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk