

Cherwell District Council

Executive

1 October 2018

<h3>Results of the Residents' Satisfaction Survey 2018</h3>

Report of Assistant Director – Performance and Transformation

This report is public

Purpose of report

To provide the Executive a summary of the key results from the annual satisfaction survey and to identify areas to be reflected in future business and service plans.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note the results of the survey, with particular reference to the priority service areas identified by respondents as set out in section 3.13 and 3.14.
- 1.2 Agree that the results and priority service areas identified will be used as part of the business and service planning process for 2019-20.
- 1.3 Request that officers undertake a review of how the Council communicates with residents to ensure we reach as many residents as possible with key service updates and that we effectively communicate progress against our business plan objectives and how the Council spends its money.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Cherwell District Council has a strong track record of customer and community consultation and uses an annual satisfaction survey to understand residents' priorities, issues and concerns in order to shape and improve service delivery.
- 2.2 This report provides a summary of the results of the survey that took place during May and June 2018. The survey was carried out by a professional company, Marketing Means on behalf of the Council.
- 2.3 The survey includes questions on most council services, value for money, priority areas and areas for improvement. 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 survey provides a statistically valid and robust data set to help inform decision making, prioritisation and service development.
- 2.5 A summary of the results is included in Appendix 1. The Council's Insight Team are able to provide additional analysis if required and may be contacted by email: consultation@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

3.0 Report Details - Headline key results

- 3.1 This section summarises the headline key results from the satisfaction survey.

Local area as a place to live

- 3.2 79% of respondents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, with 10% dissatisfied.

Here are a couple of extracts from our resident's responses:

- Banbury resident: *"We love living in Banbury and are looking forward to the developments to the town centre"*.
- Bicester resident: *"Very good overall but we need more shops in the town centre as loads have gone"*
- Kidlington resident: *"Provide great services making this a very nice area to live"*.

- 3.3 At ward level there is a clear correlation between satisfaction and deprivation, with satisfaction significantly lower in the most deprived wards in the district, notably the Banbury Ruscote ward. The data will be used to inform the work of the Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme. The Council is a key partner in the programme designed to relieve deprivation by improving access and opportunity for individuals within Banbury's most disadvantaged areas.

Satisfaction with Services

- 3.4 55% of respondents were satisfied with the services provided by Cherwell District Council, with 16% dissatisfied.

Here are a couple of extracts from our residents:

- Banbury resident: *"Everything the council is providing is fairly good"*
- Bicester resident: *"Bicester offers a good amount of recreational services for families."*
- Kidlington resident: *"The service CDC provides are very good"*.

- 3.5 Household waste collection and recycling collection/food and garden waste collection services were highlighted as two of the top three most important services in making somewhere a good place to live. Satisfaction with these services are high, with 86% satisfied with the Council's green bin collection service; 81% satisfied with the Council's household recycling collection service and 85% satisfied with the Council's household food and garden waste collection service.

It is worth noting here that Cherwell District Council remains the only council in Oxfordshire not to charge for garden waste collection. Here is an extract from a resident:

- Bicester resident: *“Comprehensive recycling and garden waste collection service is excellent - better than many other councils”.*

- 3.6 63% of respondents were satisfied with the street cleaning service. Throughout the year a number of neighbourhood blitzes are carried out with local residents to engage local residents in cleaning up their communities.
- 3.7 50% of respondents were satisfied with the Council's approach to dealing with environmental crime (littering, fly tipping, graffiti etc.). The council takes a proactive approach in educating residents about environmental crime starting in schools across the district.
- 3.8 Overall satisfaction with leisure facilities provided by the council was 57% and 68% of respondents were satisfied with the way parks and play areas are managed by the Council.
- 3.9 The main leisure facilities across Cherwell have seen an increase in usage within the first quarter of this year. Woodgreen Leisure centre 50m swimming pool has made the most of the hot weather over the last few months and seen an increase in residents making use of the outdoor facility. This summer Cherwell also launched the FAST family programme that is supported by a £215,000 grant from Sport England to deliver affordable activities in four specific Banbury wards, and the Diabetes programme which is funded by Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) with the Leisure Team being the Physical Activity delivery mechanism. Extensive work is also being carried out locally to ensure community club provision and opportunities are available for all.
- 3.10 Overall satisfaction with leisure activities provided by the council was 48%. This summer Cherwell has offered an extensive range of activities and free days out for families to attend across the district. The summer holiday programme has had 2,943 attendees, attending 18 different activities.
- 3.11 Satisfaction with the council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance was 32%, with dissatisfaction at 33%. This is clearly an area of concern for residents and is reflected in the priority services outlined in section 3.14.
- 3.12 The full survey results including the free text commentary from respondents will be shared with each service area as part of the service planning process for 2019-20 to ensure that the concerns of residents are taken into consideration, opportunities for improvement are identified where possible and those areas of high satisfaction are maintained. There will be a specific focus through the business planning and service planning process on the priority service areas set out in the next section of the report.

Priority Service Areas

- 3.13 A new service prioritisation question was included this year after feedback that the previous question was complicated and confusing. The new question asked:

‘Thinking generally about the services we provide, how important are the following in making somewhere a good place to live?’

‘And thinking about the local area, which of the services below, if any, need improving?’

- 3.14 The service areas which were highlighted as most important were:
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour (80% very important);
 - Household waste collection (75% very important); and
 - Household recycling collection and food/garden waste collection (74%).

As highlighted earlier satisfaction with waste and recycling services remains high as does the Council’s performance in this area.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour is a clear priority area for residents. This is reflected in the Council’s business plan under the priority ‘Protected, Green and Clean’. Nationally, the District remains a low crime area; however crime in the district has increased over the past year in line with the national trend. The Council continues to work proactively with partners in this area and action plans covering all community safety and safeguarding activity are currently being developed.

Accredited Community Support Officers (Community Wardens) are employed by Cherwell District Council and cover the areas of Banbury and Bicester. They have been accredited by Thames Valley Police and are able to use certain powers to assist them to carry out their daily role. Community Support Officers have powers to issue fixed penalty notices for the offences of littering and dog fouling, and they have access to the police issue airwave radio, enabling them to work more closely with their police colleagues.

Officers will be reviewing how we communicate the preventative measures we are taking, working with residents and partners to reduce anti-social behavior across the district.

- 3.15 The service areas identified most frequently by respondents in most need of improvement were:
- Town centre development (54%);
 - Providing affordable housing (46%); and
 - Activities for younger people (44%).

Town Centre development is a national issue, with many town centres struggling. This has been exacerbated by the well documented issues facing the retail sector over the past year. Cherwell has always taken a positive proactive approach to town centre development and will continue to do so. The Council played a key role in the development of Pioneer Square in Bicester and has recently completed the purchase of Castle Quay in Banbury and committed to delivering the next phase of the development.

The provision of affordable housing is again another national challenge; however Cherwell has a strong track record in supporting the delivery of affordable housing. The Council’s Build! team has completed 31 separate development projects since its inception, developing affordable homes for sale as shared ownership or to rent.

- 3.16 The results of the priority services questions will be used as part of the business and service planning process for 2019-20.

Communication and Value for Money

- 3.17 Around half of respondents did not feel very or fairly well informed about the benefits and services the Council provides (49%) nor what it spends money on (51%).

The Council uses a variety of communication methods to communicate with residents, including among other Cherwell Link (quarterly newsletter delivered to all households in the district), social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter etc.), the Council website, press releases and public consultations. Information about how the Council spends its money is also included in the Annual Performance Report.

Of those who responded 67% were satisfied with Cherwell Link (the Council Magazine) and 74% were satisfied with the Cherwell District Council website.

However, as 49% of respondents did not feel very or fairly well informed about the benefits and services the Council provides there is a need to review how the Council communicates with residents moving forward.

- 3.18 33% of respondents agreed that the Council provides value for money, lower than in 2017 and consistent with the 2016 results. This is clearly an area where more can be done to communicate the work that the Council has done over recent years to deliver significant savings, protect frontline services and invest in priority areas.
- 3.19 It is recommended that officers undertake a review of how the Council communicates with residents to ensure we reach as many residents as possible with key service updates and that we effectively communicate progress against our business plan objectives and how the Council spends its money.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 The Customer Satisfaction Survey is an annually commissioned consultation which provides the Council with a standard source of data for gauging satisfactions levels across the district, which enables informed decision making with regard to service provision and priorities.
- 4.2 The results of the survey and the additional analysis carried out will be used to inform the Council's budget and service planning process for 2019-20. Officers have been tasked carry out further analysis into the priority areas identified by residents and to review how the council communicates with our residents.

5.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The satisfaction survey provides the Council with a standard source of data for gauging satisfactions levels across the district, which enables informed decision making with regard to service provision and priorities.

- 5.2 It is important that the data is used as part of business and service planning and those areas of further investigation as outlined in section 3 of this report are progressed. These further investigations by officers, coordinated by the Insight Team, will provide the council with more detailed customer feedback and insight enabling evidence-based decision making.

6.0 Consultation

- 6.1 The Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey was undertaken between 7 May and 27 June 2018.

7.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 7.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

To reject the findings of the satisfaction survey results and not incorporate them as part of the business and service planning process for 2019-20. This has been rejected as the survey provides the Council with a standard source of data for gauging satisfactions levels across the district, which enables informed decision making with regard to service provision and priorities.

8.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:

Adele Taylor, Interim Executive Director: Finance and Governance
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Legal Implications

- 8.2 There are no legal issues arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

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Risk Implications

- 8.3 There are no risk implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:

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9.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The satisfaction survey results cover the Council as a whole as well as the local area and will inform the business and service planning process for 2019-20.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance Management

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	2018 Satisfaction Survey Infographic
Background Papers	
None	
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