

**TO: ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
25 JUNE 2013**

**RESIDENTS' SURVEY 2012 – ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To brief the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the results of the Residents' Survey 2012 relating to services provided by Environment, Culture and Communities.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel note the results of the Residents' Survey 2012 as they relate to Environment, Culture and Communities.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Panel with the results of the Residents' Survey 2012 as they relate to Environment, Culture and Communities.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Overall headlines

- 5.1 The 2012 Residents' Survey was conducted by QA Research, the Council's provider of independent consultation and engagement services. The aim of the survey was to gather the views of a representative number of Bracknell Forest residents on a variety of issues relating the Council as well as attitudes towards Bracknell Forest as a place to live and work. A full copy of the QA Research Results Report is attached as Annex 1 and includes a copy of the survey used.
- 5.2 The survey was delivered to all households in the borough. Residents also had the option of completing the survey online. In total, 4,816 postal and 212 online surveys were returned, giving a total response of 5,109. This equates to a response rate of 11% which compares favourably with the national average response rate for this type of household survey of between 3% and 5%.
- 5.3 Overall, the results from the 2012 survey indicated higher levels of satisfaction than the results of previous surveys in 2008 and 2009. 30% of respondents believed they can influence decisions in their locality and 85% were satisfied with the local area as a place to live (with just 7% indicating dissatisfaction). 60% of respondents were satisfied with the way the Council runs things and 64% felt that the Council kept them very or fairly well informed, an increase of 25 percentage points on 2008/2009. The

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single most important area on which residents wanted the Council to focus was the regeneration of the town centre (20%).

- 5.4 Respondents were asked to indicate the three things they liked best about living in the Borough. The two most popular answers related to access to green space and the countryside – parks and open spaces 58% and access to nature 50% - and these were consistently rated as being the best things about the borough by all respondents regardless of their age.

Use of services provided by Environment, Culture and Communities

- 5.5 Respondents were then asked to provide details of the Council services they used and the frequency they used them. For Environment, Culture and Communities, the services included were refuse collection/recycling, parks and open spaces, local tips/household waste recycling centres, sport/leisure facilities, libraries, local bus services, arts facilities and planning. On average, respondents were using just under 3.5 of these services on at least a monthly basis. The most frequently used services were refuse collection/recycling with 96% of respondents using them at least once a month, 82% using them once a week and 9% using them every day.
- 5.6 Although 73% of residents used parks and open spaces at least once a month, 19% used them at least once a day. This was the second highest daily usage rate among any of the services, second only to schools.
- 5.7 Male respondents were more likely than females to use local tips/household waste recycling centres and planning services, whereas females were more likely than men to use libraries and parks and open spaces. Younger respondents (aged 16-24) were particularly reliant on the local bus service with 33% of this age group using the bus services on at least a monthly basis. The other age group using the bus services regularly were those aged over 65 (43%). The most frequently used service in all wards was refuse collection/recycling.

Satisfaction with services provided by Environment, Culture and Communities

- 5.8 Respondents were then asked to rate their satisfaction with the services provided, with satisfaction highest for parks and open spaces (86%) and local tips/household waste recycling centres (82%). Overall, there were a high number of 'don't knows' for a number of services and unsurprisingly, the areas where the proportion of 'don't knows' was highest corresponded to those areas where usage was low. The main exception to this was the planning service where 43% of respondents did not know how satisfied they were with this service but 76% indicated they had never used the service. QA Research suggested that this was because, even though individuals did not use the service, it still had the potential to impact on them, and therefore respondents felt able to rate the service.
- 5.9 There were some service areas where there were relatively high levels of dissatisfaction. These included road maintenance (41% of respondents dissatisfied), planning services (30% dissatisfied) and the Council's efforts at keeping public land clear of litter and refuse (26% dissatisfied).
- 5.10 In general, female respondents tended to have higher levels of satisfaction with the various services than males. Individuals over the age of 65 tended to have the highest levels of satisfaction with refuse collection, libraries and doorstep recycling compared with other age groups. Of the two age groups who were significant users

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of local bus services, those aged over 65 were particularly satisfied with them whereas young people gave them the lowest satisfaction rating.

- 5.11 Parks and open spaces had the highest mean satisfaction score in all wards, apart from Binfield with Warfield, Crowthorne and Old Bracknell. Road maintenance had the lowest mean satisfaction score in all wards apart from Binfield with Warfield, Crown Wood, Harmans Water, Old Bracknell and Warfield Harvest Ride where planning services had the lowest mean satisfaction score.

Overall satisfaction and suggestions for improvement

- 5.12 Satisfaction with the Council overall was significantly linked to satisfaction with each of the specific services. As the number of individual services with which respondents expressed dissatisfaction increased, so did the likelihood that they expressed dissatisfaction with the Council overall. There was a particularly sharp rise in dissatisfaction levels between those dissatisfied with two services and three services (14.8% to 28.4%) and those dissatisfied with four services and five services (35.1% to 55.8%).
- 5.13 The final part of the survey looked at respondents' suggestions on things the council could do differently to have a positive impact within Bracknell Forest. Relevant to the services provided by Environment, Culture and Communities were the following suggestions:
- § Improve maintenance of public areas – 14%
 - § Improve/change road maintenance/infrastructure – 13%
 - § Return to weekly refuse collections – 9%
 - § Recycle a wider variety of materials – 8%
 - § Other changes/improvements to waste refuse collection – 8%
 - § Improve/change local public transport – 7%
 - § Improve/change provision of parking places – 7%
 - § Stop building/over-developing the area – 5%
 - § Better provision of open/green spaces – 5%
 - § Improve/change provision of sport/recreation services – 5%
 - § Remove/change/reduce car parking charges – 4%

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 None sought

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 None sought

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 N/A

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 N/A

Other Officers

6.5 None sought

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 N/A

Method of Consultation

7.2 N/A

Representations Received

7.3 N/A

Background Papers

Bracknell Forest Residents Survey 2012 – QA Research Results Report

Contact for further information

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