Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Policy & Finance Committee – 13 December 2022
SUBJECT:	Arun District Council Residents Survey 2022
LEAD OFFICER:	Jackie Follis, Group Head of Organisational Excellence
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Shaun Gunner
WARDS:	All

CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:

The annual residents survey 2022 provides a valuable insight into public perceptions of and satisfaction with the services we deliver and Arun as a place to live. The survey results enable us to identify areas of high performance and also areas where performance is not so strong, feeding into decisions on how to deliver services during the period of the Council Vision 2022 – 2026.

DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:

It is important that all services including those in the Organisational Excellence Directorate understand the views of our customers and community in order to support the best possible service delivery within existing constraints.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

There are no financial implications

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1.   To inform members about the outcomes from the 2022 ADC Residents' Satisfaction Survey.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

1.2.   To review and note the contents of the survey.

2.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1.   Each year the council undertakes a Residents Satisfaction Survey as part of its performance framework.

2.2.   The Residents Satisfaction Survey for 2021/22 was undertaken during July and August 2022. The council instructed BMG Research to undertake the survey.

2.3.   This report sets out the main finding of the survey for review by Members.

3. DETAIL

3.1. As part of the council's performance framework, an annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey is undertaken each year. BMG Research Ltd carried out the survey on our behalf, so that residents can be assured that their responses are anonymised. This report summarises the survey results for 2022, covering performance in 2021/2022. A copy of the survey questions is attached, along with a copy of the final survey report at Appendix A

3.2. Section 1.2 of the report explains the methodology. BMG sent a postal survey to 3000 randomly selected residents, ensuring that this was geographically representative of the whole district. Overall, 845 questionnaires were completed - a total response rate of 28% which is in line with the response rate of 28% (849 questionnaires) in 2021. Residents had the option of responding online.

3.3. In order to ensure that all Arun residents had the opportunity to provide their feedback, an 'open' version of the same survey was placed on our website and advertised through social media and press. Respondents were asked to verify their status by entering their home postcode.   Analysis of responses to identify multiple responses from one source indicates that no duplicated responses were suspected. The open survey allowed an additional 522 respondents to complete the survey (528 in 2021)

3.4. All the data collected was subsequently weighted by area (areas defined in section 1.3, Table 1) and within each area by age and gender.

The data in the report is benchmarked against questions in the Local Government Association's (LGA) national public poll in June 2022 on resident satisfaction with local councils. BMG is careful to point out that the national survey is carried out by telephone and consists of data from 1,002 adults. The cost of carrying out telephone surveys for Arun would have been prohibitive and it is possible that self-completion surveys are less inhibited.   The impact of this on findings, if any, cannot be quantified.

3.5. Due to the fact that the open survey responses are likely to be a bias sample of those who are more likely to engage with Arun District Council, the open and postal surveys have been analysed separately and a gap analysis is set out later in this report.

3.6. It should be noted that the questions and responses are contextualised within the priority themes contained in the Corporate Plan 2018-2022 and that future surveys will be based on the key themes in the new 2022 – 2026 Council Vision.

4.7   Another point to note is demonstrated in various tables throughout the report where performance over time is shown.   For many questions, performance is notably better for 2020, returning to a similar pattern to 2019 in 2021 and 2022 (for example Figure 10).   There was a tendency for this to be the same across local government with a perception from communities that local authorities had 'delivered' particularly well with a high profile during the early stages of the pandemic.   In addition, the 2020 survey was carried out during a period of national lockdown.

4.8   Members may find it useful to look at both positive and negative responses for each question and the extent to which they are positive or negative, there is more detail in the text of the BMG report.

Living in Arun District (Section 2)

3.7.   Overall Satisfaction (section 2.1)

Overall satisfaction levels are high, with 80% of residents saying they are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their local area (15-20 minutes walking distance of their home). This is in line with the results seen in 2021 (80%) and the LGA benchmark of 81%.   BMG suggests that perceptions of the local area as a place to live tends to inform satisfaction with the council.   Residents from eastern areas are significantly more satisfied with the local area as a place to live (84%) with those in western areas being less satisfied (75%).   Satisfaction levels tend to be higher for those aged 65+.

A key driver analysis has been carried out which can be found in section 2.2, Figure 1.1, which correlates levels of satisfaction with the importance of various indicators. The factor which appears to be the strongest driver for high levels of satisfaction is "satisfaction with the local area as a place to live" with the strongest drivers for low satisfaction being "trust the council to make the right decision", "acts on the concerns of local residents" and "provides value for money". As these last three metrics have the highest relative importance for overall satisfaction levels, they are the areas which it is recommended the council examine to increase positive perceptions. These are similar to 2021.

3.8.   Community Cohesion (section 2.3)

54% of respondents agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, 17% disagree. This is almost identical to 2021 at 55% and 16% and again like last year a high proportion of people (30%) are neutral. The majority of those who agree 'tend to agree' rather than 'strongly agree' which potentially identifies an area for the council to consider in terms of future action. It is possible that the high 'neutral' figure is because people do not consider that they have significant contact with people from different backgrounds.

3.9.   Cleanliness of Arun District (section 2.4)

In 2022 66% of respondents are satisfied overall with the cleanliness of the district. This is higher than 2021 when it was 63%. The detailed analysis (section 2.5, Figure 4) gives more detail on different kinds of places in the district. Parks & Open spaces and Beaches & Promenades have the highest levels of satisfaction, with Public Toilets at the bottom of the list. Table 2 shown below shows how these have changed over time.

Table 2: Satisfaction with cleanliness over time (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)

Cleanliness of...	Proportion satisfied									
	2013 (510)	2014 (515)	2015 (399)	2016 (574)	2017 (473)	2018 (585)	2019 (579)	2020 (611)	2021 (806)	2022 (805)
Parks and open spaces	75%	72%	76%	79%	73%	70%	74%	79%	79%	77%
Beaches and promenades	69%	70%	71%	68%	74%	67%	77%	78%	72%	75%
Town/village centre shopping areas	66%	63%	67%	68%	69%	62%	65%	69%	70%	69%
Out of town shopping areas	62%	62%	61%	65%	62%	62%	62%	59%	67%	67%
Car parks	58%	63%	62%	64%	60%	55%	58%	60%	63%	65%
Residential roads	54%	59%	57%	56%	54%	50%	57%	66%	59%	60%
Public toilets	34%	36%	34%	34%	29%	25%	36%	35%	43%	41%

Table 3 below shows perceptions of cleanliness by age and location

Table 3: Satisfaction with cleanliness by age and location (All valid responses: base size in parenthesis)

	Total	Age			Area		
		18-44	45-64	65+	Downland	Western	Eastern
Parks and open spaces (774)	77%	77%	70%	84%	75%	73%	83%
Beaches and promenades (785)	75%	79%	70%	77%	78%	71%	78%
Town/village centre shopping areas (805)	69%	60%	67%	78%	79%	61%	75%
Out of town shopping areas (695)	67%	66%	64%	71%	64%	62%	74%
Car parks (759)	65%	61%	61%	71%	66%	58%	73%
Residential roads (805)	60%	55%	60%	65%	66%	54%	65%
Public toilets (615)	41%	28%	40%	56%	45%	30%	54%

The detailed analysis in the BMG report describes differences between different locations by age and where the resident lives in Arun which may reflect how these are used by different members of the community, for instance residents with children are less likely to be satisfied with the cleanliness of parks and public toilets.

3.10.   Problem behaviours in Arun

Residents were asked if they perceive anti-social behaviours as a problem and the results are set out in section 2.6 and Figure 5. Levels of problematic behaviour are seen as the same or worse than results seen in 2021, the most significant increase being in people being drunk and rowdy which has moved from 27% to 32% of respondents seeing this as a problem, the next highest increase is in graffiti and vandalism going from 26% to 30%.

There are some differences between areas set out in the report with residents in western areas perceiving litter and rubbish, using or dealing drugs and drunkenness as more of a problem than the total sample.

Customer Satisfaction with the Council and its Services

3.11.   Satisfaction with the overall quality of services (section 3.1)

63% of residents are satisfied with the quality of service provided by the council. This is a decrease of 5% from last year's findings.

Those aged 65+ are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the local council overall, they make up 79% of the 63% of residents expressing satisfaction. The same is true of those who are satisfied with the cleanliness of their local area (79%) and that the council provides value for money (86%).   Residents who rent from the council are significantly less satisfied (46% of the 63% expressing satisfaction) with the overall quality of council services.
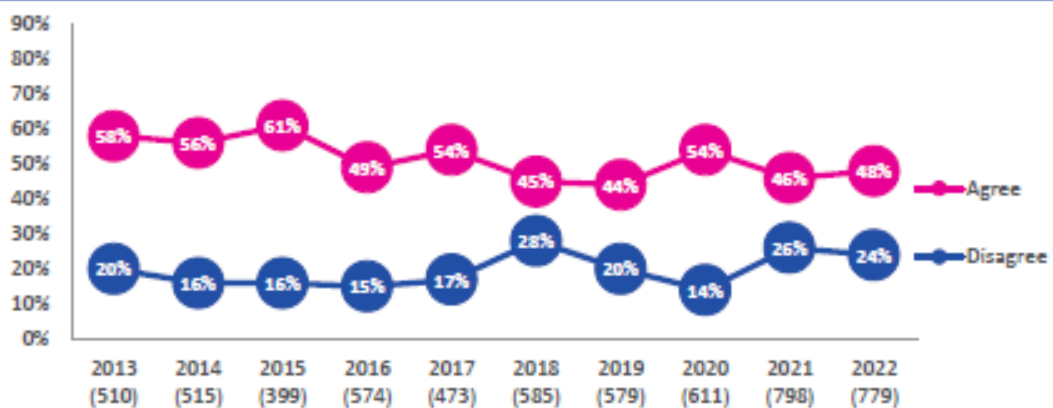
3.12.   Satisfaction with specific council services (section 3.2)

This remains high for the specific services which residents were questioned on, and total satisfaction is shown in Figure 7, with performance over time at Figure 8. The figure for waste collection and recycling is 83% which is in line with both 2021 (84%) and the LGA benchmark which is 81%. Satisfaction levels are 78% for parks, open spaces and play areas in line with 76% for 2021. The LGA benchmark is 82%.   Satisfaction with council-owned leisure centres is 66%, in line with 64% for 2021. It should be noted that residents in western areas are significantly less satisfied with all three council services as shown in Table 4.

3.13.   Value for money (section 3.3)

48% of respondents agree that the council provides value for money, with 42% tending to agree. This is in line with 2021 when it was 46%. The LGA benchmark figure is 48%. Figure 10 below shows how this has changed over time.

Figure 10: Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Arun District Council provides value for money? - Over time (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)

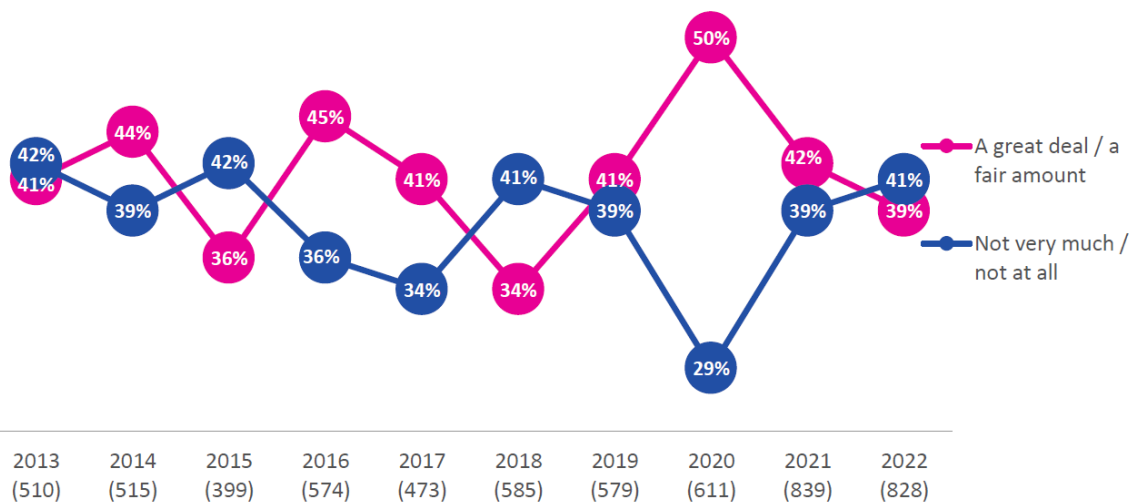|	2013 (510)	2014 (515)	2015 (399)	2016 (574)	2017 (473)	2018 (585)	2019 (579)	2020 (611)	2021 (798)	2022 (779)
Agree	58%	56%	61%	49%	54%	45%	44%	54%	46%	48%
Disagree	20%	16%	16%	15%	17%	28%	20%	14%	26%	24%

3.14.   Trust in the council to make the right decision (section 3.4)

58% of respondents say they trust the council to make the right decision (59% in 2021) with the majority of respondents (53%) saying they trust the council a fair amount.   This is somewhat below the LGA benchmark of 67%, but the LGA question is more generic: "how much do you trust your local council", which may account for the difference in responses (we will review this question for future surveys).   There is some geographical variation in responses to this question shown in table 5.

3.15.   Acting on concerns

39% of respondents agree the council acts on residents' concerns which is a slightly lower than last year.   41% think that they don't act much at all on residents' concerns, a slight increase from last year.   Figure 13 below shows changes over time.

Figure 13: Q4. To what extent do you think Arun District Council acts on the concerns of local residents? - Over time (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
(510)	(515)	(399)	(574)	(473)	(585)	(579)	(611)	(839)	(828)

Residents aged 65+ are significantly more likely to feel that the council acts on their concerns (63% of 48% positive responses) with those aged 45 to 64 significantly less likely to think the same (42% of 48% positive responses). Agreement that the council acts on residents' concerns is significantly lower than the LGA benchmark of 60%.

Residents preferred channels to be kept informed (section 3.6)

3.16.   Essential to building a relationship of trust with the council is that our residents feel well informed.   The numbers for most of the channels are in line with last year. However, 57% of respondents now express a stronger preference for the council's website, against 49% in 2021.   This is a significant increase and confirms that we should continue to make our website as accessible and effective as possible.   This is followed by the Arun Times (hard copy) at 34%, with a number of those aged 65+ preferring this to digital channels. There are other more digital preferences being expressed by different age groups which are covered in more detail in the full report.

Closed survey versus open survey (Section 4)

3.17.   Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18 show the difference in perceptions between the open and closed surveys, as well as presenting the differences in key drivers for satisfaction.   In the majority of instances residents in the closed survey report more positive perceptions than the open survey, suggesting that residents have engaged with the open survey because in some instances they are unhappy with a certain issue or service.
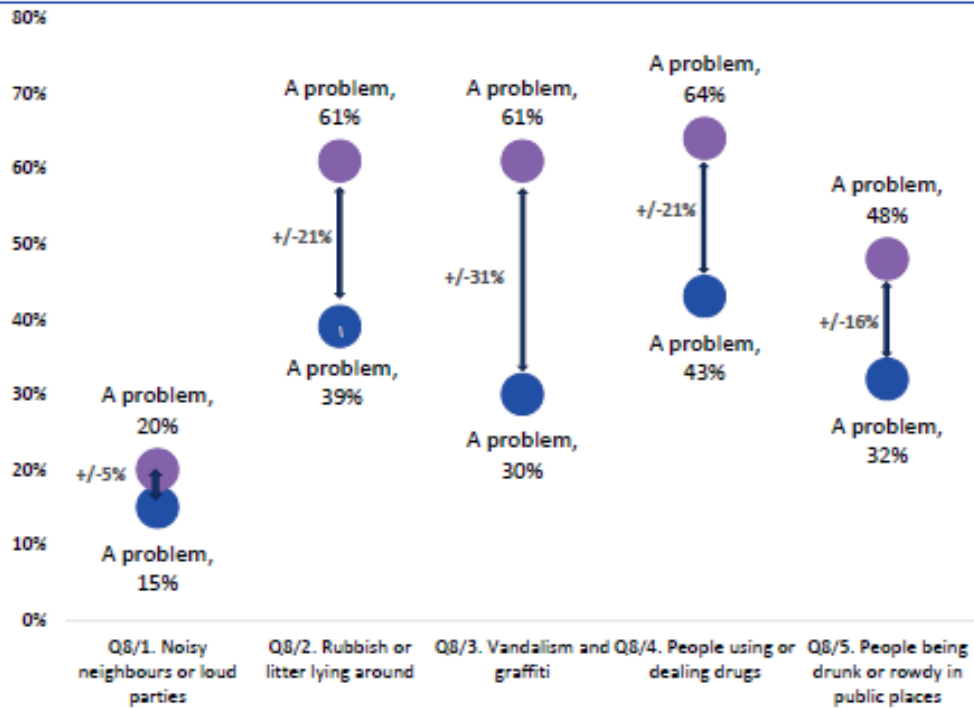
Figure 15: Gap analysis chart
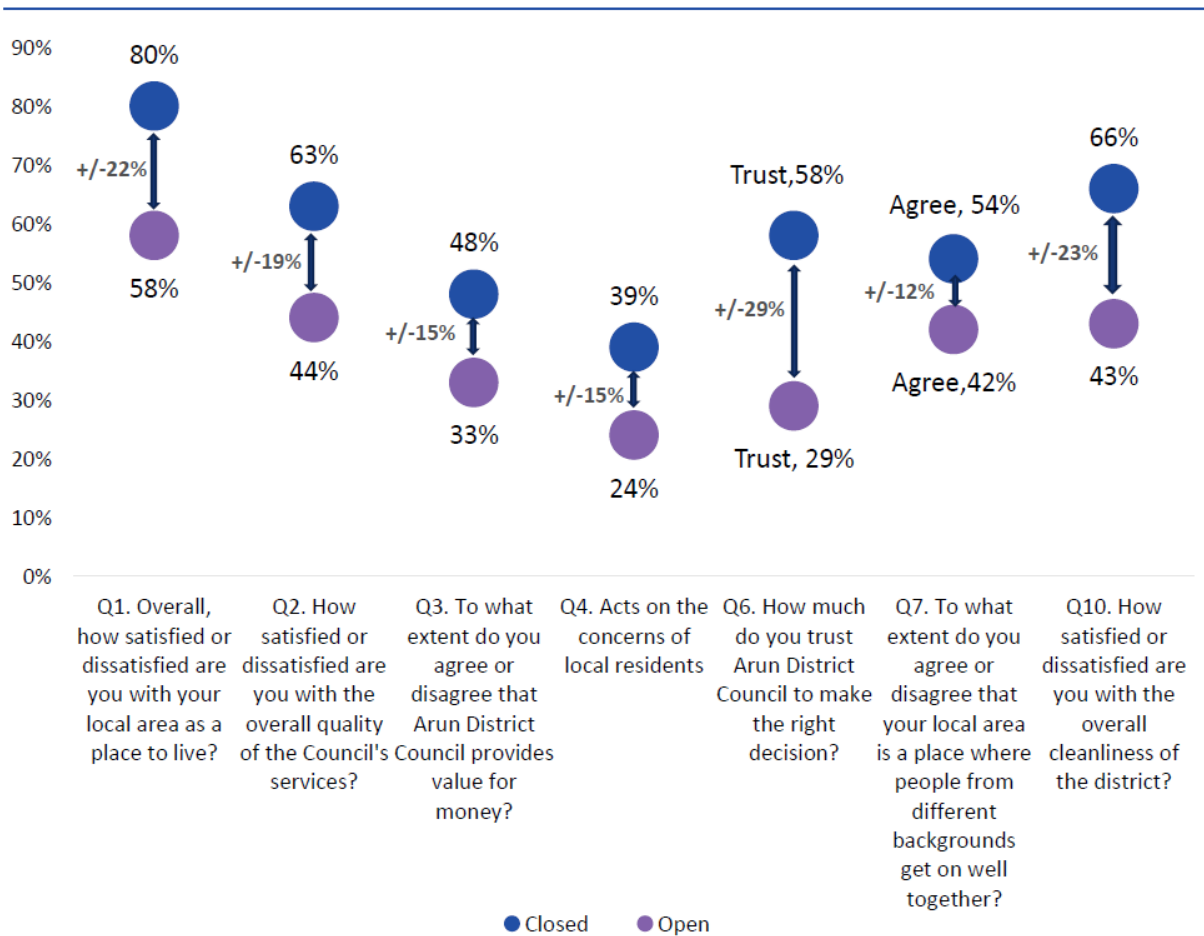
*This chart is showcasing satisfaction levels, unless otherwise stated

Figure 16 shows the gap analysis for problem behaviours, Figure 17 shows the analysis for satisfaction with council services and Figure 18 for cleanliness in different places in the district.
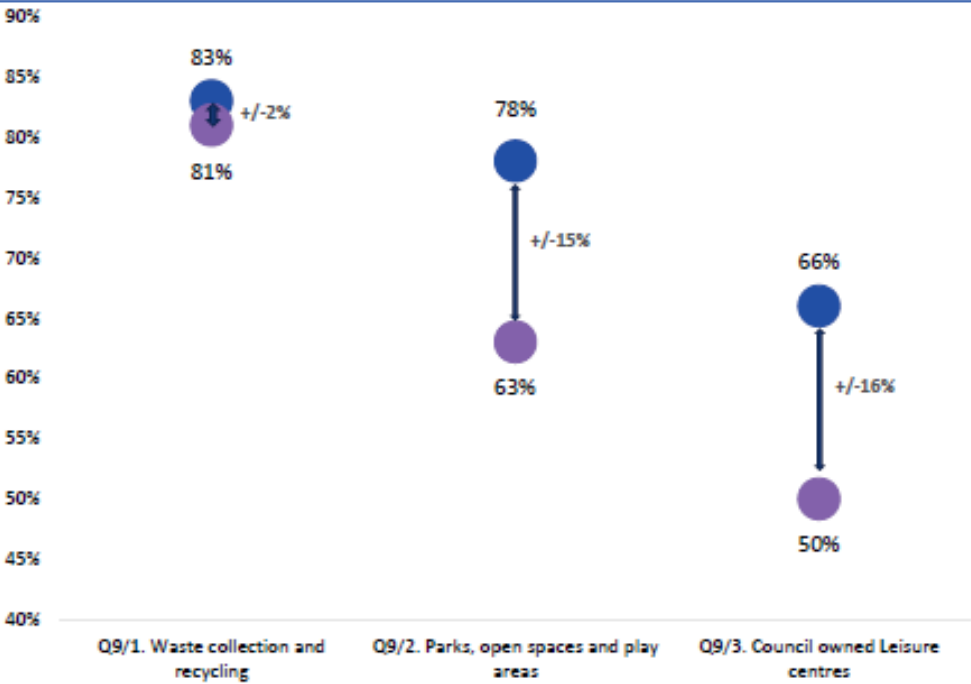
Figure 16: Gap analysis chart (continued) - Q8. Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are?

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● Closed   ● Open

Figure 17: Gap analysis chart (continued) - Q9. Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with Arun District Council's performance

|	Q9/1. Waste collection and recycling	Q9/2. Parks, open spaces and play areas	Q9/3. Council owned Leisure centres
Closed	83%	78%	66%
Open	81%	63%	50%
Gap	+/-2%	+/-15%	+/-16%

Q9. Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with Arun District Council's performance

*This chart is showcasing satisfaction levels

● Closed   ● Open

Figure 18: Gap analysis chart (continued) - Q11. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of cleanliness of the following places within the district?
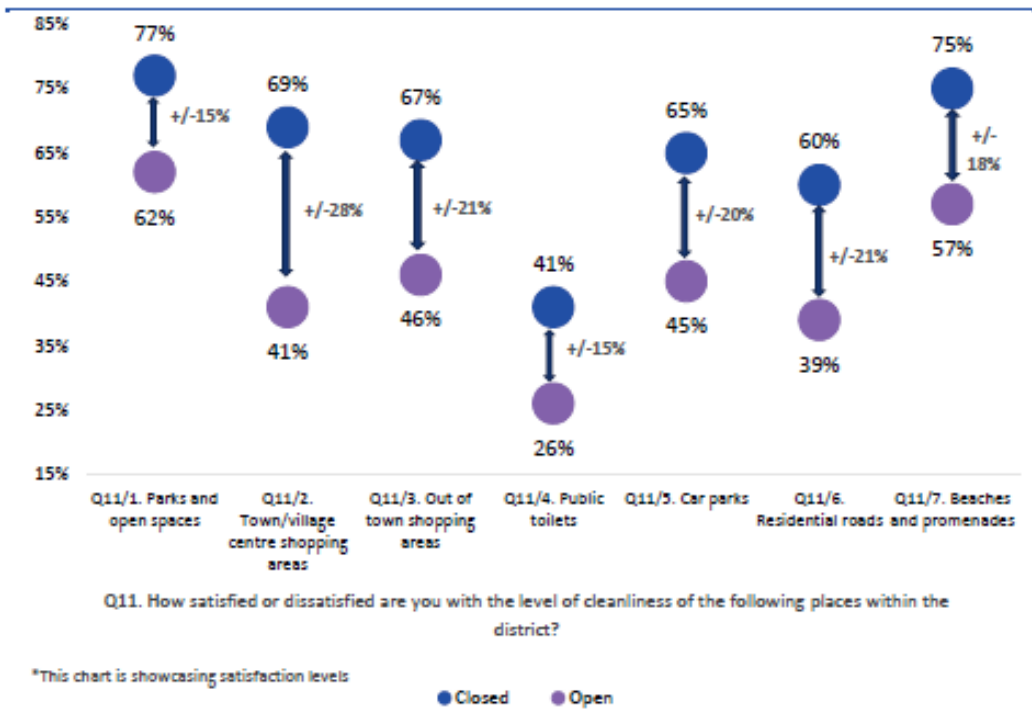
Section 4.2 also includes a table showing the differences between the relative importance of the key drivers of satisfaction (section 4.2) which shows small significant variation.

Summary

3.18.   The overall direction of travel for the responses to the 2022 survey is positive, with the majority of responses being the same as or better than 2021.   There are some areas for concern, in particular the geographical variation between different parts of the district. The table below summarises the overall responses to each question and the changes in positive satisfaction since 2021.

3.19.   The table is colour coded as follows:
Maximum standard error in this sample is +/- 2.8% meaning that we can be 95% confident of the accuracy of the results.   For this reason, the direction of travel in 2022 is shown below as green if it has improved by more than this, amber if it is within the standard error, and red if it is more than 2.8% worse than the figure for 2021.

🟩	Better than last year (by more than 2.8%)
🟧	The same as last year (i.e. within sample standard error rate of +/- 2.8%)
🟥	Worse than last year (by more than 2.8%)

3.20. Summary of report responses

Section	Question	High or low is better	2021	2022	% difference
2.1	Living in Arun District	High	80	80	0
2.3	Community cohesion	High	55	54	-1
2.4	Cleanliness of Arun District overall	High	63	66	+3
2.5	Cleanliness of different places				
	• Parks & open spaces	High	79	77	-2
	• Beaches & promenades	High	72	75	+3
	• Town/village shopping areas	High	70	69	-1
	• Out of town shopping areas	High	67	67	0
	• Car parks	High	63	65	+2
	• Residential roads	High	59	60	+1
	• Public toilets	High	43	41	-2
2.6	Problem behaviours	Low			
	• People using or dealing drugs	Low	41	43	+2
	• Rubbish or litter lying around	Low	40	39	-1
	• People being drunk or rowdy in public places	Low	27	32	+5
	• Vandalism/graffiti and other damage to property or vehicles	Low	26	30	+4
	• Noisy neighbours or loud parties	Low	12	15	+3
3.1	Satisfaction with overall quality of services	High	68	63	-5
3.2	Satisfaction with specific services	High			
	• Waste collection and recycling	High	84	83	-1
	• Parks, open spaces and play areas	High	76	78	+2
	• Council owned leisure centres	High	64	66	+2
3.3	Value for money	High	46	48	+2
3.4	Trust in the Council to make the right decision	High	59	58	-1
3.5	Acting on concerns	High	42	39	-3

4. CONSULTATION

4.1. Consultation carried out with Arun District residents

5. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

5.1. N/A

6. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1. No financial implications

7. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

7.1. None

8. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

8.1. There are no direct legal or governance implications arising from this report.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

9.1. None

10. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

10.1. None

11. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

11.1. None

12. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

12.1. It is important to understand the views of our residents on the services we deliver. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data and community perceptions should be taken into account and used to support decision making and service improvements. The survey did comply with accessibility requirements.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

13.1. None

14. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

14.1. It is important that the Council and relevant services understand residents' perceptions of the area and antisocial behaviour, alongside the data that they collect to support service planning and their communications with residents.

15.   HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

15.1.   No immediate impact, but important information to support delivery

16.   FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

16.1.   The survey met GDPR requirements

CONTACT OFFICER:
Name: Jackie Follis
Job Title: Group Head of Organisational Excellence
Contact Number: 01903 737580

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS*:*
None