

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

6 OCTOBER 2020

PART A : REPORT

SUBJECT: Residents' Satisfaction Survey 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: Jackie Follis DATE: 18 September 2020 EXTN: 37580

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

As part of the Council's performance framework, an annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey is undertaken. This report sets out the background to the survey and asks Members to note the contents of the survey.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) To note the contents of the Survey

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 As part of the Council's performance framework, we carry out an annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey. We commission an organisation called BMG to complete this in order that residents can be assured that their responses will be anonymised. The results of the survey for 2020 are attached, along with a copy of the survey and covering letter which was sent to residents.
- 1.2 Section 1.2 of the survey explains the methodology. BMG sent the survey to 1800 randomly selected residents, ensuring that this selection was geographically representative of the whole district. Overall, 611 questionnaires were returned, a total response rate of 34% against 32% in 2019. The survey and covering letter are attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The report outlines the findings from the research into the experiences of living in Arun and perceptions of the Council. Due to the number and variation in size and response of parishes within Arun, it is not statistically valid to provide a breakdown to parish level. In order to provide a more local picture, wards have therefore been grouped into Western, Eastern and Downland areas for some outcomes. Table 1 in section 1.3 gives this breakdown.
- 1.4 The data in the report is also benchmarked against some questions in the Local Government Association's (LGA) national public polls on resident satisfaction with local councils and section 1.3 describes this in more detail.
- 1.5 It is also worth noting that where tables and graphics do not match exactly to the text in the report this occurs due to the way in which figures are rounded up or down when responses are combined.

1.6 Questions 2 and 10 in the survey also relate to this Council's Corporate Plan performance indicators as follows:-

- CP1 – the level of public satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of the Council's services
- CP4 – The level of customer satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district

1.7 As the survey was issued during the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown period, responders were encouraged to consider their responses in relation to the services provided all year round. Section 1.4 comments on the broader context of the survey and sets out some thoughts on the impact of Covid-19. It is inevitable that the national context, whether it is Covid-19 or other issues, will impact on perceptions of local government.

1.8 There are two sections to the BMG Report and whilst this Committee report sets out some of the headlines, further detail can be found in the BMG report, in particular comparisons between different parts of the District and different demographic groups.

Living in Arun District

1.9 Overall satisfaction (section 2.1)

Overall satisfaction levels are high, with 87% of residents saying they are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their local area (15-20 minutes walking distance of their home). This compares favourably with the LGA benchmark which is 81% and the 2019 figure of 80%. Data suggests that those who are satisfied with the cleanliness of the District are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the area as a place to live.

1.10 Community cohesion (section 2.2)

49% of respondents agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, 11% disagree, and a high proportion of people (29%) are neutral. Whilst this 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'.

1.11 Cleanliness of Arun District (section 2.3)

In section 2.3, 78% of respondents are satisfied overall with the cleanliness of the District, with the detailed analysis giving more detail on different kinds of places in the District. Parks & Open spaces and Beaches & Promenades both have a high level of satisfaction, with Public Toilets at the bottom of the list. Table 2 shows how these have changed over time. The lower level of responses for public toilets may indicate the number of residents not using them and therefore feeling unable to comment. The satisfaction level for 2019 was 36% for toilets and 35% in 2020, so in reality is unchanged.

1.12 Problem behaviours in Arun (section 2.4)

There is some variation in the most prominent issues to be identified in different parts of the District, however it is worth noting that, compared to the 2019 survey, perceptions around the prevalence of all of the issues have declined.

Customer Satisfaction with the Council and its Services

1.13 Satisfaction with the quality of service (section 3.1)

77% of residents are satisfied with the quality of service provided by the Council. This is a significant increase up from 66% in 2019. This also compares positively with the LGA benchmark figure of 63%. There is an association between their local area and Arun District Council in resident's minds, with those who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live significantly more likely to be satisfied with the Council.

1.14 Satisfaction with specific Council services (section 3.2)

Satisfaction across services is high, especially for waste collection and recycling which has a figure of 91%, up from 85% in 2019. The LGA figure is 78%. Council owned leisure facilities have lower levels of satisfaction at 49% (50% in 2019), but this is driven by the high proportion of residents surveyed who do not use leisure centres and therefore have no opinion (32%).

1.15 Value for money (section 3.3)

54% of residents agree that the Council provides value for money against 44% for 2019 and the LGA benchmark of 48%. Figure 10 shows how this has changed over time.

1.16 Trust in the Council to make the right decision (section 3.4)

This has risen from 52% in 2019 to 63% in 2020. The LGA benchmark is 59%.

1.17 Acting on concerns (section 3.5)

50% of residents believe that the Council acts on residents' concerns, with 29% disagreeing. Figure 13 shows the change over time.

1.18 Residents preferred channels to be kept informed (section 3.6)

How we communicate with our Residents is a key component of building a trusted relationship. Figure 14 shows the responses to this question, indicating that the website is the preferred channel, down to word of mouth as the lowest. This shows the importance of maintaining a number of different channels, whilst continuing to develop those which are potentially most convenient and cost effective for residents and the Council.

The Council has already identified the importance of digital communications, both in its [Digital Strategy](#) and the Customer Services Strategy which is being developed.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

To note the contents of the Arun Residents Survey 2020

3. OPTIONS:

N/A

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:

YES

NO

Relevant Town/Parish Council

x

Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify) Residents of the District as set out in the survey report	x	
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal		x
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Safeguarding		x
Other (please explain)		x
6. IMPLICATIONS: The outcomes of this survey will contribute to the Council's overall understanding of what is most important to our residents and help Councillors and the Corporate Management Team to confirm areas of good performance and areas where improvements are needed.		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:
To keep Members informed of our residents' perceptions about the District and the services which the Council provides.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:
Arun Residents' Survey 2020 + covering letter
BMG Analysis Report