

**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO
PARISH COUNCIL LIASON COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 25 September 2008
 title: The Place Survey 2008
 submitted by: Chief Executive
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform committee of the new Place survey.

2 RELEVANCE TO THE COUNCIL'S AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES:

- Council Ambitions: The survey will be used to collect 18 of the citizen perspective indicators from the new National Indicator Set. These will be used by government to assess the performance of local areas through the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). CAA encourages local authorities to move towards a new 'place-based' approach to delivering services and monitoring performance, we get a new way of measuring customer satisfaction.
- Community Objectives:
- Corporate Priorities:
- Other Considerations:

3 THE SURVEY

3.1 With changes to Best Value legislation, all Best Value Performance Indicators were discontinued in England from 31 March 2008. As a result, the Best Value Satisfaction Surveys were also ceased. BVPIs have been replaced by a new National Indicator set, along with a Place survey.

3.2 The Best Value General Household Satisfaction Survey was conducted in 2000, 2003 and 2006 – triennially. The new Place survey will be conducted every two years.

3.3 The Place Survey has been extensively developed, including two national pilots of the questionnaire.

3.4 Methodology – this has been prescribed to allow for robust comparison of data between local areas, and against previous BVPI survey data where relevant:

- Mandatory response of 1,100 from a random sample of residents (2500 for RVBC) selected using the postal address file
- No more than 12 pages of questions to be sent and completed by post
- Two reminders after the initial survey has been sent
- Originally it was to be branded with an area logo and recommended that this was the Local Strategic Partnership/Sustainable Community Strategy logo. This has recently been amended to it must be the Council's logo and in two-tier areas this should be both the county's and the districts.
- Fieldwork to take place from 29 September

3.5 The survey is intended to be:

- relevant to anyone living in the area
- not specific to any one agency or service
- not specific to any particular client group

3.6 The survey will be used to collect 18 of the citizen perspective indicators from the new National

Indicator Set through a standard series of questions. These will be used by government to assess the performance of local areas through the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. The introduction of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is one of the things which has led to the introduction of the Place survey. As CAA encourages local authorities to move towards a new 'place-based' approach to delivering services and monitoring performance, we get a new way of measuring customer satisfaction. There is a marked departure from the traditional BVPI approach. There will be more focus on local area and well-being, and less on service satisfaction, perceptions of the council and value for money.

- 3.7 In order to provide the public with an opportunity to shape the area in which they live, the new Place Survey focuses on quality of life factors that make an area a desirable or undesirable place to live. The upshot of this is that more residents are likely to voice their opinions, as the questions being asked are much more relevant to the issues that affect our local communities.
- 3.8 In addition to citizen perspectives, the new survey will also allow local authorities to continue to track some of the corporate image and service satisfaction data collected through the last three rounds of BVPI surveys, by including a number of questions drawn from the previous BVPI surveys. This was something that was seen as critically important to local authorities and the Local Government Association during the Place Survey consultation.
- 3.9 We are allowed (with partners) to insert a series of local bespoke questions, tailored to our requirements – as with the previous BVPI surveys.
- 3.10 The Place survey guidance suggests/recommends that in two tier areas a survey be jointly commissioned and this was the decision made by the Lancashire Partnership, the local strategic partnership for the county. They have also contributed £50,000 to the cost of running the survey.
- 3.11 So, for the purposes of the 2008 Place survey, 13 authorities have come together through the Lancashire Partnership to contract out the administration of 12 surveys to cover each district council area to a single outside contractor. Lancashire County Council carried out a tender process and Ipsos Mori have been awarded the contract.
- 3.12 Initial results will be available January/February, but will require weighting by the Audit Commission so it will be probably be March before we can fully report on the results.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1

- Resources: Analysis and report writing will be done by the East Lancashire Citizen Panel Coordinator which saves costs of around £1750. A further contribution of £4359 will be paid by each authority for the basic survey package – this will be taken from ELeP funding.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal: A Legal Agreement has been drawn up and signed by all involved. LCC carried out the tender process.
- Political: None
- Reputation: Results will be used to report on 18 National Indicators and also to ascertain overall satisfaction with the Council and the services it provides.

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