

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO

### POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 9 June 2009  
 title: The Place Survey 2008/09  
 submitted by: Chief Executive  
 principal author: Michelle Haworth – Corporate Policy Officer

## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform committee of the results of the new Place Survey.

## 2 RELEVANCE TO THE COUNCIL'S AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES:

- Council Ambitions: The survey has been 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.
- Community Objectives:
- Corporate Priorities:
- Other Considerations:

## 3 BACKGROUND

- 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 BVPIs have been replaced by a new National Indicator set, along with the Place survey.
- 3.2 The Best Value General Household Satisfaction Survey was conducted in 2000, 2003 and 2006 – triennially. The Place survey will be conducted every two years.
- 3.3 Methodology – was 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 selected using the postal address file
  - No more than 12 pages of questions sent and completed by post
  - Two reminders after the initial survey
  - Branded with the logos of the Council, Lancashire County Council and the Lancashire Partnership.
- 3.4 The survey was 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
- 3.5 The survey was used to collect 18 of the citizen perspective indicators from the new National Indicator Set through a standard series of questions. These NIs will be used by government to assess the performance of local areas, through the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. There is a marked departure from the traditional BVPI approach. There is more focus on the local area and well-being, and less on service satisfaction, perceptions of the council and value for money. 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.
- 3.6 In addition to citizen perspectives, the new survey allows 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.

- 3.7 We were allowed (with partners) to insert a series of local bespoke questions, tailored to our requirements – as with the previous BVPI surveys.
- 3.8 The Place survey guidance suggested/recommended 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 also contributed £50,000 to the cost of running the survey. Lancashire County Council carried out a tender process and Ipsos Mori were awarded the contract.
- 3.9 Each of the Collaborative Consultation and Research Service (CRACS) authorities (formerly ELeP) purchased the basic survey for £4,359.62 (being paid from our subscription). All analysis and reporting is being done by the Joint Consultation Coordinator - saving each authority at least £1,750.

#### 4 RESULTS

- 4.1 Initial results have been presented to Corporate Management Team (CMT) and will be presented to Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership Board on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009. A headline report of Ribble Valley's Place Survey results, as prepared by CRACS, is attached at Appendix A. Further reports and copies of presentations prepared by LCC's Research and Consultation team and MORI are available on the Council's Intranet at the following –

[http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents\\_info.php?documentID=63&pageNumber=3](http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=63&pageNumber=3).

- 4.2 **Summary of Results** - Of the 18 NI's covered, Ribble Valley ranks first for all 18 in East Lancashire and first for 14 of these across the County. The lowest ranking (6<sup>th</sup>) position relates to NI 1 - percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.

National Indicator	Ribble Valley %	Lancashire %	Ribble Valley Rank
NI 1 - % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	79%	74%	6 <sup>th</sup>
NI 2 - % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	73%	62%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 3 - Civic participation in the local area	16%	14%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 4 - % of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	31%	28%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
NI 5 - Overall/general satisfaction with local area	94%	79%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 6 - Participation in regular volunteering	30%	24%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 17 - Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	8%	19%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 21 - Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police	40%	30%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 22 - Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	50%	30%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 23 - Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration	15%	30%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 27 - Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police	30%	29%	4 <sup>th</sup>
NI 37 - Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area	17%	15%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
NI 41 - Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem	18%	29%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 42 - Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem	16%	30%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 119 - Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing	80%	74%	1 <sup>st</sup>

National Indicator	Ribble Valley %	Lancashire %	Ribble Valley Rank
NI 138 - Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood	93%	84%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 139 - The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home	39%	33%	1 <sup>st</sup>
NI 140 - Fair treatment by local services	81%	71%	1 <sup>st</sup>

4.3 Relative satisfaction is extremely high with the only potential issues surrounding satisfaction with the Fire & Rescue service.

Topic of Satisfaction	East Lancashire ranking
Local Area	1 <sup>st</sup>
Home	1 <sup>st</sup>
Local Council	1 <sup>st</sup>
Lancashire County Council	1 <sup>st</sup>
Police	1 <sup>st</sup>
Fire and Rescue	5 <sup>th</sup>
GP	1 <sup>st</sup>
Hospital	1 <sup>st</sup>
Dentist	1 <sup>st</sup>

4.4 Overall satisfaction with the Council has fallen 10% since 2003, but this seems to be a national trend. 60% of respondents disagreed that they can influence local decision-making, a fall from 51% in 2006. This could have some impact on CAA, especially when it comes to evidencing how strategies and policies have been informed by community needs. The CAA regime will expect not only the opportunity to be available, but also direct links to provision.

4.6 We accept that not all people will want to get involved in local decision-making, but it is important for us to provide opportunities for all residents to get involved (it's then their choice as to whether they take it.) This comes on the back of the new Duty to inform, consult and involve which has been in place since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 - tick box consultations are now a thing of the past (see my report on Duty to Involve on this agenda).

4.7 CMT also discussed this issue in some detail and agreed that this area requires further investigation. The Ribble Valley Summer Citizens Panel Survey has a section dedicated to this area. Satisfaction by influence - statistically there is a significant relationship between satisfaction with the Council and whether residents feel they can influence local decision-making as the table below shows.

	Of those who feel they can influence (27%) – the % who are satisfied with the Council	Of those who feel they can't influence (60%) – the % who are satisfied with the Council
Burnley	60%	27%
Hyndburn	69%	31%
Pendle	64%	30%
<b>Ribble Valley</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Rosendale	57%	23%

4.9 There are lower levels of satisfaction surrounding specific Council activities. This may be because of:

- Limited awareness,
- Aware but they expect better; or
- Simply a sign of the times.

4.10 There is evidence to suggest growing dissatisfaction with the provision of sports and leisure facilities in the borough. Only 38% of respondents were satisfied, compared to 57% in 2006. However, the frequency of use is similar to 2006. This could simply be as a result of growing expectations coupled with a similar standard of service provision.

4.11 CMT discussed the falling levels of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities and again agreed that this

area requires further investigation to ascertain the reasons why. The Ribble Valley Summer Citizens Panel Survey has also included a section of questions on this area.

4.12 General communication seems to have its weaknesses. Specifically in the following areas:

- How to complain
- What standard of service to expect
- How to get involved in local decision making

4.13 The importance of the local press cannot be underestimated. They are the biggest single influence on the perceptions of crime. However, reported crime and reports of arrests need to be real and carry a large degree of independence.

4.14 There is evidence throughout the survey that the young and BME residents feel more isolated. This may also partly explain the 6<sup>th</sup> position surrounding NI 1 - percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Corporately there are some very encouraging results, especially when we compare ourselves to other authorities within Lancashire. However, we should remember that it is comparison on a national basis that will provide us with a better picture of performance, especially when we compare 'like with like'.

5.2 National comparison of these results is still awaited (and long overdue) and will be reported on as soon as they are made available to us. CLG is taking forward work to finalise the national publication of the Place Survey results in accordance with the new Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which obliges them to ensure the data meets sufficient quality standards.

5.3 We also need to be aware that on closer inspection of our results there are some areas for improvement and these should be addressed.

5.4 Satisfaction with Fire and Rescue service is the lowest in East Lancashire. It is import to share this with appropriate colleagues and investigate whether there is something underlying this finding and whether anything can be dome to improve it. The presentation of the results to the RVSP Board, on the 8th June, 2009 will ensure that relevant information is shared with our partners.

5.5 We now have the opportunity to make the most of the largest random survey conducted and a chance to link the findings to the decision making process. We also have lots of good evidence for the looming CAA.

## 6 RISK ASSESSMENT

- Resources: Analysis and report writing was done by the Citizen Panel Coordinator with a cost saving of around £1750. A further contribution of £4359 has been paid by each authority for the basic survey package – this has been taken from CRACS funding.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal: None.
- Political: None
- Reputation: Results are being 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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For further information please ask for Michelle Haworth, extension 4421

Further reports and copies of presentations prepared by LCC's Research and Consultation team and MORI are available on the Council's Intranet at the following:  
[http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents\\_info.php?documentID=63&pageNumber=3](http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=63&pageNumber=3)