

**Resident Survey 2015**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy & Communications
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Anna Collier, Policy and Information Manager Clare Wood, Performance & Information Officer
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:**

1. Agree to the merging of the budget consultation and resident survey to minimise cost.
2. Review the draft Resident Survey 2015 and make any recommendations for additions or exclusions (Appendix A).

**This report relates to the following corporate priorities:**

The Resident Survey provides data for indicators that measure all priorities.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy and Resources Committee	23/09/2015

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Committee to agree the draft resident survey 2015 and agree an approach to maximise response and achieve improved value for money.
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### 2. Background and approach

- 2.1 A resident survey was last undertaken in 2013. Following the removal of the national requirement to undertake a Place Survey in 2011, it was agreed that the Council would undertake a resident survey every two years, to inform priorities and work planning, and to gauge satisfaction levels with the Council and its services.
- 2.2 In previous years a sample of at least 6,000 surveys has been sent with one reminder alongside an open survey online that anyone is able to complete. This is a standard approach to more easily ensure a statistically valid result and also allows the Council to participate in the LGA benchmarking.
- 2.3 The objective of the survey is 2015 to understand residents' views of the Council's performance and where money should be spent. In achieving that objective the approach should focus on maximising response and minimising cost. In 2013 the resident survey had a 32% response rate, with lower response rates achieved from particular wards, BME groups and 18-24 year olds. The cost per returned survey was £6.42. The following draft target outcomes have been set to be achieved this year.
- An overall response rate of at least 32% (dependant on survey methodology)
  - Reduce cost to £5.95 or less, per survey
  - Gain a minimum of 50 responses from each of the borough's wards
  - Gain a minimum 4% overall response rate from BME groups
  - Gain a minimum 6% overall response rate from 18-24 year olds
- 2.4 Engagement with groups that have historically produced a low response rate whilst delivering value for money has been essential criteria for selecting the company to carry out the survey. Companies were asked to demonstrate how they would achieve the Council's desired outcomes.
- 2.5 A specification has already been prepared and sent to local Market Research Companies. To date we have received four expressions of interest.

## Questions 2015

- 2.6 The draft survey is attached at Appendix A for consideration. It is recommended that the survey is kept to a maximum of three pages to ensure a good response from residents.
- 2.7 The current draft includes questions that should not be removed
- Data for performance indicators (these are marked with an asterix\*)
  - Data for benchmarking (these are marked with a hashtag #)
- 2.8 To further achieve value for money five budget consultation questions have been included (questions are marked with a pound symbol £).
- 2.9 All additional questions have come from discussions with unit managers, heads of service or are based on previous surveys.
- 2.10 The year before last the Council participated in LGA benchmarking, although performance wasn't analysed. Only eleven other council's participated of which one was comparable (Swale Borough council).
- 2.11 Benchmarking data can only be obtained in relation to questions 1-3. To participate in benchmarking the Council must follow certain data collection methodology. Although this doesn't prevent other methods being used, data collected in alternative ways cannot be submitted for benchmarking, however there is nothing preventing the Council from obtaining this data and using this to assess trends, it would not be comparable statistically.

## Cost

- 2.12 The cost of the survey in 2013 was £12,500; the survey has traditionally been funded from the Policy and Information and the Communication and Marketing budgets. In order to have the same funds available this year the available funding for the resident survey and budget consultation have been combined.

## Next Steps and Timescales

- 2.13 Below is the proposed timetable for this project.

Activity	Due date
Specification sent out	3 <sup>rd</sup> September
Specification response deadline	18 <sup>th</sup> September
Responses review, company engaged	21 <sup>st</sup> September
Committee approval	23 <sup>rd</sup> September
Survey Finalised	25 <sup>th</sup> September
Survey distributed	1 <sup>st</sup> October
Initial high level results received	19 <sup>th</sup> October
Survey closes	23 <sup>rd</sup> November

2.14 It is recommended that next year following final analysis of the results a short review of the outcomes of the resident survey including looking at the frequency and funding. This will ensure that Council is taking the right approach and collecting the right data in the right way and therefore ensuring value for money.

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### 3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Council could choose not to undertake a Resident Survey in 2015 however, this could lead to the Council delivering services that do not meet the needs of local people or are not of a sufficient quality.
- 3.2 The Council could look at different methods of gaining feedback from residents such as a Resident Panel. The Council previously had a feedback group (pre 2007) but difficulties in ensuring regular attendance meant this was disbanded.
- 3.3 Another option would be topic specific focus groups to inform particular work streams, however, neither this nor the above option would give good quality data that could be compared over time.
- 3.4 The Council could choose to undertake the survey in house to achieve a saving on the procurement of a company to conduct the survey. However, this would be highly resource intensive and would impact on the delivery of other services.

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### 4. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	Performance Indicators in the Strategic Plan are derived from Resident Survey data.	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Risk Management</b>	If the Council does not undertake survey of residents there is a risk that the services the council delivers do not meet the needs of local people or are not of a sufficient quality.	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Financial</b>	The 2013 survey cost £12,500. Costs are usually shared 50/50 between the Communications and the Policy Teams' budgets. Sufficient budgetary provision doesn't exist this	Head of Finance & Resources

	year so it is recommended that the budget consultation and resident survey are combined.	
<b>Staffing</b>	None	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Legal</b>	The response data from the survey will need to be processed in accordance with the DPA 1998 (A privacy statement will be included as part of the survey).	
<b>Equality Impact Needs Assessment</b>	The survey asks about protected characteristics in order to assess inequalities in relation to perception and service delivery	Policy & Information Manager
<b>Environmental/Sustainable Development</b>	None	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Community Safety</b>	None	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Human Rights Act</b>	None	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Procurement</b>	We are seeking a minimum of three quotes to undertake the survey. The overall cost is expected to be under £15,000	Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Asset Management</b>	None	Head of Policy and Communications

## 5. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Draft Survey Questions

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## 6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Strategic Plan 2015-20.