

By: David Beaver (Commercial Manager)

To: **Maidstone Joint Transportation Board**

Subject: **Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2011**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Inform Joint Transportation Boards of the key results of the 2011 Resident, County Member and Parish/Town Council Highway Tracker Survey. The full survey report is published on the KCC website.

Introduction

1. Satisfaction surveys, to gauge perception of the highway service have been carried out since 1987. The 2011 survey was undertaken between November 2011 and January 2012 and sought views from residents, County Members and Parish/Town Councils.
2. To reduce the overall costs much of the survey was undertaken by the KCC Contact Centre. An independent market research company called BMG was used to undertake the specialist face to face survey work with residents.
3. A summary of the results are presented in this report. This information will be used by the Director and Divisional Management team to identify actions to help improve service delivery. Indeed the 2010 survey was used to help shape the structure of Highways and Transportation as implemented last summer.
4. A total of 1,205 face to face interviews were carried out on a representative sample of Kent residents with approximately 100 interviews in each of the twelve Districts, reflecting the age, gender and economic status.
5. In addition to residents views the same survey questions were asked of all County and Parish/Town Councils. A total of 49 County Members responded (a response rate of 58%) and for Parish/Town Councils a total of 164 completed the survey (a response rate of 54%). Both of these response rates are higher than last year.
6. The questionnaire comprised 30 questions, ranging from satisfaction with the condition of roads, pavements, streetlights and local bus and train services through to views on congestion, safety cameras, Member Highway Fund and the Parish Annual Meeting.

The 2011 survey results

7. To ensure independence in the analysis of the survey results the independent market research company (BMG) was commissioned to identify key issues emerging from the three stakeholder groups. The

graphs in the following appendix present the results as % satisfied (green line) and % dissatisfied (red line). Results will not add up to 100% as respondents are also offered a neither satisfied or dissatisfied option if they have no strong positive or negative views. Across all stakeholder groups BMG identified the following key points;

- a) Road satisfaction is fairly positive following a substantial dip in 2010 albeit Parish/Town Councils are the least satisfied with concern for country lanes (Fig. 1, 4, 7 and 10). For pavements the results are more mixed with a fall in overall net satisfaction from Parish/Town Councils, with County Members most concerned about pavements in town centres, shopping/ pedestrianised areas (Figs 2, 5, 8 and 11). Views on streetlights are also highly inconsistent, positive overall but far more so amongst County Members (Figs 3, 6, 9 and 12).
 - b) The overall improvement in perception of the service amongst Parish/Town Councils and County Members continues and builds on the benefits of closer liaison with the District Managers and Stewards. There is more to be done to build on and improve communication as in many cases there are new faces and relationships still to be fully developed (especially with Parish/Town Councils).
 - c) Currently only 21% of residents know about the single 08458 number to contact KCC about a fault and only 12% of residents have contacted them in the last 12 months to log an enquiry. Whilst satisfaction with the service received by those who have reported a problem remains strong across all three groups more work is needed to raise awareness of how and who to contact. The KCC plan for 'unified communications' and the roll out of 0300 numbers will provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the telephone number and on-line fault reporting.
 - c) Satisfaction with those who use local train and bus services remains strong. However the cost of fares and frequency of public transport services continue to be areas of concern for all stakeholder groups using public transport.
 - d) Different Districts are experiencing problems with off-peak congestion compared to those with peak-time congestion. Over 60% of Residents and County Members agree that safety cameras are helping to make Kent road safer but this falls to 44% of Parish/Town Councils.
8. Examples of some of the main results included in the full report are set out in Appendix 1. Figures 1-3 show the combined County Members, Residents and Parish/Town Councils satisfaction results for Roads, Pavements and Streetlights. Figures 4 to 6 set out resident satisfaction results with roads, pavements and streetlights. Figures 7-9 show the results from Parish Councils and Figures 10-12 for County Members.

Conclusions from the Director of Highways and Transportation

9. Overall the results show a positive trend, this is a significant achievement in light of the worst winter for almost a generation, and significant reductions (over 20%) in both budget and staffing levels. During this time the business has been totally restructured, a new works contractor appointed and significant financial savings delivered. It has been a year of transformation and putting in place the foundations for a service that will meet public needs and excel in service delivery.

10. Clearly there is always room for improvement and the Highways and Transportation Division is continuing to develop its service delivery ethos and focus on delivering ever improving outcomes for our ultimate customers, the public of Kent. The contents of this report will be used to help shape our future actions and improvement plans and as such is greatly valued.

Further Information

11. The full tracker survey report is very large and contains much more information along with a more detailed executive summary of the issues identified from the results by BMG. A copy of the report is available on the KCC website

Background Documents: None

Other Useful Information: Highways & Transportation Highway Tracker Survey 2011

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