CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Executive

6 May 2008

Report of the Director of People and Improvement

Residents' Opinion Survey Results 2007/08

Summary

1. This report is for information. It informs the Executive of the results of the Residents' Opinion Survey (07/08).

Background

2. This report summarises the results of the Residents' Opinion Survey 2007/08. 5,000 local residents were invited to take part, via a self-completion postal survey in November 2007. In total 1,655 usable completed questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 33%.

3. A sample size of 1,655 is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-2.4% at a 95% level of confidence. Please note that 2007/08 is a non-statutory year and the survey is know as the "Residents' Opinion Survey". In statutory years (2000; 2003; 2006) it is replaced with the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) General Survey.

4. This report is a broad overview of the results. Action will be taken in conjunction with Corporate Management Team and the relevant service areas over results that cause greatest concern. Measures to redress these concerns will be outlined in the corporate planning process.

5. For some service areas (such as housing, planning and personal social services) satisfaction data collected via the Residents' Opinion Survey is lower than seen in customer-targeted surveys. Possible reasons are the lower number of residents completing the Residents' Opinion Survey with direct experience of the service (as customers), and because of the more general nature of the questions asked. For some services the number of actual "customers" of the service completing the Residents' Opinion Survey is low. To this end, the results from the customer-targeted surveys are more statistically reliable and are based on direct experience rather than perception of the service. Customer-targeted surveys include two annual surveys (the Annual Service Monitor Survey and the Personal Social Services Survey), and a survey conducted every three years and a continuous survey conducted by the Planning Team. The majority of the questions in the Residents' Opinion Survey, the Annual Housing Monitor, the Planning and the Personal Social Services Survey are prescribed by central government.

Key findings

Corporate health

6. In total, 51% of respondents are satisfied with the way the City of York Council runs things, a proportion which is significantly higher than that returned in the 2005/06 BVPI survey (44%).

7. In terms of whether things have changed in the last three years, the majority (65%) feel that it has stayed the same, whilst smaller proportions feel that it has either got worse (18%) or got better (17%).

8. Looking at more specific performance indicators, respondents express relatively strong agreement that the council is working to make the area cleaner and greener (80% a great deal/to some extent), is making the local area a better place to live (77%), treats all people fairly (75%), and is working to make the area safer (73%).

9. However, perceptions are less strong in relation to the council providing value for money (54% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 46% not very much/not at all).

Contact with the council

10. Approaching a fifth of all respondents (17%) contacted the authority with a complaint in the last twelve months. Amongst these, less than a third (30%) rate themselves as satisfied with how their complaint was handled; this level has remained low since 2003. Over half (53%) rate themselves as dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled. (Responses to this question should be viewed with some caution, as experience shows us that satisfaction with the way a complaint is handled can be significantly affected by the outcome of the complaint, rather than purely how it was handled)

11. Less than half (45%) of all respondents have contacted the council other than to complain in the last twelve months. Amongst these, two thirds (66%) are satisfied with the final outcome of their contact and almost a quarter (23%) are dissatisfied.

12. Other than making a complaint, respondents said they made contact to ask for advice or information (37%), to report a problem or issue (32%) or to apply to use a service (23%). These contacts are done mainly via the telephone (65%).

Information provision

13. The degree with which respondents feel informed about certain aspects of council service provision could be divided into three categories: a) those where a majority of respondents feel fairly or very well informed, e.g. how to pay bills to the council (89%); b) those where views are more balanced but still weighted towards feeling well informed, e.g. what standard of service to expect from the council (49%) and c) those where a clear majority do not feel well informed, which relate to more abstract aspects of council performance, e.g. its role in tackling anti-social behaviour (30%).

14. Overall, less than one in two (45%) feel the council keeps them very or fairly well informed, the remainder (56%) feel they do not keep them well informed, including 18% who feel they do not keep them well informed at all.

15. In relation to the amount of information provided by the council, over two in five respondents (38%) express satisfaction and around a quarter (24%) say that they are dissatisfied. This shows a sharp decline from 63% satisfied since 2003.

Services

Refuse services

16. Almost a third (30%) of respondents feel the council's keeping land clear of litter and refuse has improved over the last three years, while around one in ten (11%) feel it has got worse.

17. Just over two-thirds of respondents (67%) are satisfied that the council keeps all open public land it controls clear of litter and refuse. This represents a four percentage point decrease on results returned in 2006, where 71% of respondents were satisfied.

Household waste collection

18. Three quarters of respondents are either very or fairly satisfied. This marks no significant change since the 2006 BVPI result of (72%), although a statistically significant decline since the 2003 BVPI result of 91%.

19. Over the last three years over half (56%) feel the household waste collection service has got better, while one in ten feel that has deteriorated.

Provision of local waste recycling facilities

20. Just under four out of five (77%) respondents are either very or fairly satisfied. This remains stable with the satisfaction ratings achieved in the 2006 BVPI (75%), but an improvement on the 2003 BVPI result of 70%.

21. Overall, three out of five (58%) respondents feel that the service has improved over the last three years, and only 6% are of the view that it has got worse.

Local Tip/HWRC

22. Levels of satisfaction are very positive, with 85% very or fairly satisfied, and only 4% dissatisfied to any extent. This level has remained stable in 2007 following a significant increase in 2006 (86%) on results returned in 2003 where only 69% of respondents were satisfied.

23. This is confirmed by the finding that around three in five (58%) respondents providing a response feel that the service has improved over the last three years, and only 5% feel it has got worse.

Door recycling collection

24. Three quarters of (74%) respondents report that they are either very or fairly satisfied.

25. Overall, approaching six in ten (56%) respondents feel the service has improved over the last three years, and only 10% feel it has got worse.

Public transport information

26. In relation to public transport information overall, at 53%, the level of satisfaction is relatively stable in comparison with the levels achieved in 2006 (54%) and 2003 (57%). Amongst users of public transport information, three quarters of respondents (77%) express satisfaction with the provision of public transport information overall, although over one in ten (14%) do express some level of dissatisfaction.

27. However, a fifth (20%) of respondents believe the provision of local transport information has got worse over the past three years, compared to just 12% who feel it has got better.

Local bus service

28. In terms of overall satisfaction with the local bus service, at 68%, satisfaction with the service has remained fairly stable compared with the 2006 BVPI (71%).

29. Just over three-quarters (76%) have used the local bus service in the last year and one in ten (12%) use buses almost every day. Amongst this group, satisfaction is slightly better than for the wider population, with 73% of users providing a response expressing satisfaction and 17% expressing a level of dissatisfaction.

Sports and leisure facilities

30. The level of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities has remained fairly stable in 2007 compared with that recorded in 2006 (44% c.f. 41%). However, this result remains in the lowest quartile (based on 2006/07 unitary quartiles) and well below the 2006/07 unitary average of 58% satisfied. Amongst users satisfaction is higher than for the wider population with half (50%) expressing satisfaction; approaching one third (32%) express a level of dissatisfaction.

31. Over half (55%) of all respondents report that they have used sports and leisure facilities in the last twelve months.

32. Well over half (56%) of respondents feel that sports and leisure facilities have stayed the same over the last three years, respondents are substantially more likely to believe they have deteriorated over the past three years (32%) than to believe that they have improved (11%).

Libraries

33. Nearly three quarters (73%) of all respondents are satisfied with libraries and is stable in relation to the results returned in 2006 (73%).

34. Approaching three out of five respondents (57%) have used library facilities in the last twelve months. Amongst users close to nine in ten (86%) are satisfied with libraries and only 6% express a level of dissatisfaction.

35. Certainly, whilst the majority (81%) of respondents feel that libraries have stayed the same over the last three years, a higher proportion feel that they have improved (13%) than feel they have deteriorated (6%).

Museums and galleries

36. As with libraries, the level of satisfaction (73%) with museums and galleries has remained fairly stable since 2006 when 76% were satisfied. Only 4% express a level of dissatisfaction.

37. Three out of five respondents (60%) have visited a museum or gallery in the last twelve months and approaching nine in ten of those providing a response (84%) are either very or fairly satisfied and only 2% express a level of dissatisfaction.

38. While the majority (89%) of respondents feel that museums and galleries have stayed the same over the last three years, more do feel that they have improved (9%) than feel they have deteriorated (2%).

Theatres and concert halls

39. In line with libraries and museums and galleries, the level of satisfaction (69%) with theatres and concert halls has remained fairly stable since 2006 where 68% of respondents were satisfied.

40. Around two thirds (67%) of all respondents have visited a theatre or concert hall in the last twelve months and amongst those providing a response, around three quarters (76%) are satisfied to a degree and just 11% express a level of dissatisfaction.

41. Certainly, while the majority (82%) of respondents feel that museums and galleries have stayed the same over the last three years, marginally more do feel that they have deteriorated (10%) than feel they have improved (8%).

Parks and open spaces

42. Satisfaction with parks and open spaces is high at 75% of all respondents, with only 10% dissatisfied. This remains relatively consistent with previous results since 2003.

43. Overall, 81% of respondents have visited a park or open space in the last twelve months and of those providing a response; three quarters (75%) are satisfied to a degree with only 10% expressing any dissatisfaction.

44. While the majority (78%) of respondents feel that parks and open spaces have stayed the same over the last three years, the proportion feeling they have improved (15%) is greater than the proportion (7%) that feel they have deteriorated.

Housing services

45. Just over a tenth (13%) of all respondents report using the housing services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

46. Amongst users of housing services, under half (44%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied. However, over two fifths (41%) express some dissatisfaction, including 24% who are very dissatisfied. Conversely, results from the 07/08 Annual Housing Monitor Survey (a survey specifically targeted at housing tenants) gives an overall satisfaction rating of 88%.

Planning services

47. One in ten respondents (9%) report using the planning services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

48. Amongst users of planning services, half (50%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied. Over one third (36%) of users express a level of dissatisfaction, with 13% of these being very dissatisfied. Conversely, results from the 06/07 Planning Survey (a survey specifically targeted at planning customers) gives an overall satisfaction rating of 87%.

Personal social services

49. Approaching one in ten (8%) of all respondents report using the personal social services in the last twelve months.

50. Amongst users of personal social services, under half (44%) are either very or fairly satisfied. Just under two fifths (38%) express levels of dissatisfaction, including one in ten (13%) who are very dissatisfied. Conversely, results from the 05/06 Personal Social Services Survey (a survey specifically targeted at social service customers) gives an overall satisfaction rating of 94%.

Local authority education service

51. Only 7% of all respondents report using the local authority education service in the last twelve months.

52. Amongst users of local authority education services, just under three fifths (55%) are either very or fairly satisfied, with around one in six (18%) very satisfied; although a lower proportion (14%) do express a level of dissatisfaction.

Other services

53. In terms of other services provided by the council, levels of satisfaction are reasonably high in relation to local schools (67%) and street lighting (61%).

54. Although half the sample expresses some degree of satisfaction with pavement & footpath maintenance (51%), car parks (45%) and road maintenance (47%), dissatisfaction with car parks is high at 42%.

55. Satisfaction levels are much lower in relation to facilities for disabled people (29%) and facilities for older people 28%). They are the lowest for leisure activities for young people (21%); 52% express some level of dissatisfaction.

Quality of life

56. When asked about aspects that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live, the level of crime (63%), clean streets (43%), health services (42%), and affordable decent housing (39%) are the issues mentioned most often.

57. Similarly respondents were asked which aspects most need improving in the local area. Activities for teenagers (43%), the level of traffic congestion (43%), the level of crime (34%), road and pavement repairs (31%), affordable decent housing (26%) and clean streets (20%) are the factors identified as priorities for improvement.

Community cohesion

58. The way respondents feel about specific types of antisocial behaviour fall broadly into three groups: a) those which around a half of respondents regard as a very or fairly big problem e.g. parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children; b) those which around a third consider a very of fairly big problem e.g. people using or dealing drugs and c) those which a majority of respondents do not regard as being a particular problem e.g. abandoned or burnt out cars.

59. Over four fifths (82%) of respondents agree that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, while 18% disagree.

Local decision making

60. Under two fifths (37%) are satisfied, and a lower proportion (18%) dissatisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by the council. The results have declined since 2006 (43%). A significant proportion (45%) do not express a strong opinion one way or the other.

61. The proportion disagreeing that the council takes local residents views into consideration when making decisions that affect them (39%) continues to exceed the proportion which agree (27%).

62. A fifth (20%) of all respondents would like to be more involved in the decisions their council makes that affect their local area, and a further 66% say that it would depend on the issue in question. One in seven (14%) report that they would not like to be more involved in such decisions.

Key indicators and findings from the Residents' Opinion Survey 2007/08

Key Indicators and findings					
Best Value User Satisfaction Performance Indicators					
	% Fairly / Very Satisfied				Performance
	2000	2003	2006	2007	↑ ↓
BV3: The way the authority runs things					
BV3: % satisfied with the way the Authority runs things	70	57	44	51	**↑7**
BV4: Complaints handling					
BV4: % satisfied with satisfied with the handling of complaints	39	33	33	30	**↓3**
BV89: Litter					
BV89: % satisfied that the Authority has kept the land clear of litter and rubbish	67	60	71	67	**↓4**
BV90: Waste					
BV90a: % satisfied with the waste collection service overall	90	91	72	75	**↑3**
BV90b: % satisfied with the provision of local waste recycling facilities	53	70	75	77	**↑2**
BV90c: % satisfied with the local tip	74	69	86	85	**↓1**
BV103/104: Public Transport					
BV103: % satisfied with the provision of public transport information overall	39	57	54	53	**↓1**
BV104 % satisfied with the local bus service overall	48	67	71	68	**↓3**
BV119: Cultural and Recreational Services					
BV119a: % satisfied with sports and leisure facilities and events	53	55	41	44	**↑3**
BV119b: % satisfied with libraries	65	70	73	73	**No change**
BV119c: % satisfied with museums and galleries	72	72	76	73	**↓3**
BV119d: % satisfied with theatres and concert halls	72	73	68	69	**↑1**
BV119e: % satisfied with parks and open spaces	73	77	78	75	**↓3**

63. The following table compares the Council's Best Value Performance Indicators from 2007 with 2006/07 unitary quartiles. The position may changes once 2007/08 quartiles are released.

Top quartile position (1)	Second quartile position (2)	Third quartile position (3)	Lowest quartile position (4)

Best Value User Satisfaction Performance Indicators – 2007 York data compared with 2006/07 quartiles						
		All upper tier %	All Counties %	All Unitaries %	All Mets %	This authority %
BV3: % satisfied with the way the Authority runs things	Mean	51	50	**50**	52	**51**
	Top Quartile	55	52	**54**	56	
BV4: % satisfied with satisfied with the handling of complaints	Mean	32	34	**32**	32	**30**
	Top Quartile	35	36	**34**	36	
BV89: % satisfied that the Authority has kept the land clear of litter and rubbish the waste collection service overall	Mean	64	-	**64**	61	**67**
	Top Quartile	69	-	**71**	64	
BV90a: % satisfied with the waste collection service overall	Mean	79	-	**79**	82	**75**
	Top Quartile	84	-	**84**	85	
BV90b: % satisfied with the provision of local waste recycling facilities	Mean	66	-	**70**	67	**77**
	Top Quartile	72	-	**73**	72	
BV90c: % satisfied with the local tip	Mean	80	83	**81**	82	**85**
	Top Quartile	85	86	**85**	85	
BV103: % satisfied with the provision of public transport information overall	Mean	54	48	**51**	57	**53**
	Top Quartile	60	50	**56**	60	
BV104 % satisfied with the local bus service overall	Mean	60	54	**57**	61	**68**
	Top Quartile	68	58	**64**	64	
BV119a: % satisfied with sports and leisure facilities and events	Mean	55	58	**58**	55	**44**
	Top Quartile	61	61	**63**	59	
BV119b: % satisfied with libraries	Mean	72	74	**72**	72	**73**
	Top Quartile	76	77	**75**	76	
BV119c: % satisfied with museums and galleries	Mean	43	41	**46**	50	**73**
	Top Quartile	52	47	**57**	58	
BV119d: % satisfied with theatres and concert halls	Mean	45	42	**50**	47	**69**
	Top Quartile	55	47	**62**	58	
BV119e: % satisfied with parks and open spaces	Mean	72	73	**74**	69	**75**
	Top Quartile	77	77	**79**	75	

Consultation

64. This paper has been seen by Corporate Management Team

Options

65. As this report is for information, there are no options.

Analysis

66. As this paper is for information only and there are no options, there is no analysis of the option.

Corporate Priorities

67. The Residents' Opinion Survey relates to all of the corporate priorities, but is especially relevant to the value 'delivering what our customers want'.

Implications

- **Financial**

  None applicable

- **Human Resources (HR)**

  None applicable

- **Equalities**

  57% of survey respondents were female; 40% were male and 3% chose not to answer this question. In terms of age, 4% were aged 18-24 years; 26% aged 25-44 years; 37% aged 45-64 years and 7% chose not to answer this question. 78% of respondents were owner occupiers; 17% were tenants, of which half were council tenants. 23% of respondents have a disability; 70% do not. The majority of respondents were White (96%), 1% belong to a BME group and 3% chose not to answer this question.

- **Legal**

None applicable

- **Crime and Disorder**

None applicable

- **Information Technology (IT)**

None applicable

- **Property**

  None applicable

- **Other**

  None applicable

Risk Management

68. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

69. That the Executive note the results of the 2007/08 survey.

70. Reason: To inform the Executive of the results of the survey.

Contact Details

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Specialist Implications Officer(s)
There are no specialist implications in this paper

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all* **All** ✓

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:
Not applicable

Annexes
There are no annexes to this paper.