LISTENING PLYMOUTH HEADLINE RESULTS

BRIEFING 6 NOVEMBER 2012

PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2012, Marketing Means were commissioned to undertake a household survey on behalf of the Council. The survey 'Listening Plymouth- a view from you' was based on the Place Survey and adapted to incorporate budget consultation, and public perception questions to help monitor progress against performance indicators in our performance management framework.

1.2 The survey was sent out to 8,000 random households at the end of August and field work took place throughout September 2012. A total of 2,870 valid surveys were returned, giving a response rate of 36% with a confidence level of +/- 1.8%. The data has now been weighted by age and gender.

1.3 Due to the very good response rate we are able to look at the responses at a locality and ward level. This information is not currently available but when released will help us to better understand the gaps in inequalities across Plymouth and identify which areas of the city officers and politicians may wish to focus their efforts.

1.4 Currently we are unable to benchmark our performance against other Local Authorities; we must therefore view our performance with caution until we can confidently benchmark our performance. We are one of a number of Councils working with the LGA to share the results of respective household surveys on LG Inform, the LGA's online benchmarking tool.

2. PART A – LOCAL AREA

1.1 These questions asked the public to tell us what they thought about their 'local area'. Questions were drawn from the former Place Survey and recommendations made by the Local Government Association (LGA). This will enable an analysis of trends and to benchmark nationally against other local authorities in the future. Where possible we have compared results with 2009 Place Survey, the last comparable survey undertaken in Plymouth. Key results are as follows:

- 82% of respondents expressed satisfaction with Plymouth as a place to live. 79% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their local area as a place to live. This is the same result as the 2009 interim place survey. (*In terms of the survey, the local area was defined as the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance of their home*)
- 58% say they feel part of their local area while 52% agree that their local area is one where different ethnic backgrounds get on well together.
- 53% of respondents express their satisfaction with how Plymouth City Council runs things. This is a significant increase on the 2009 survey when only 34% of respondents were satisfied.
- 37% agree that Plymouth City Council provides value for money. This is an improvement from 2009 where just 24% agreed.

- On behalf of our partners (Police, Fire and Health services) we asked people for their opinions on how they run services. For Devon & Cornwall Police, 62% of respondents were satisfied compared to 68% in 2009. For Devon & Somerset Fire Service, 81% were satisfied compared to 79% in 2009. For local Health services, 75% were satisfied. However for Health, we do not have comparable data from 2009.
- We see increased satisfaction with waste collection, recycling and keeping public land litter free when compared to 2009. Satisfaction with culture, sport and leisure provision has also increased over 2009. However, people are less satisfied with local transport information and local bus services.
- Less people feel that that they can influence local decisions than in 2009 (19% compared to 24%). This is significant as in 2009 we benchmarked nationally as one of the worst local authorities
- Overall 42% of respondents felt that they were more informed about Plymouth City Council Services, an increase from 2009 when we achieved 36%. This is reflected when it comes to different aspects of the Council including: registering to vote, Council Tax spending, getting involved in local decision making, standards of service, performance, how to complain, and service provision, where we also see an increase.
- Less than half of respondents (45%) feel that Plymouth City Council acts on local residents concerns. This was a new question introduced by the LGA and there is no trend or benchmarking data currently available.
- We included some new questions to find out the degree that residents currently access our online services and what they are likely to access in the future. The purpose of these questions is to enable our Corporate Services to shape future online service provision. The following services saw the greatest interest if they were available online either entirely or to a greater extent:

Service	Currently Use	Would Use in Future
Report highway defects	19%	64%
Report fly tipping or graffiti	12%	56%
Request rubbish clearance or cleansing	16%	59%
Request housing advice	8%	26%
Register birth, death or marriage	10%	41%

1.2 When asked why residents do not access online services 22% of respondents said they do not have a computer – however it should be noted that while not having a computer, these respondents may have access to the internet via other devices such as smart phones or ipads. 34% said they prefer to use other methods, and 26% didn't know they could.

1.3 Residents were also asked about community safety and when comparing results against the 2009 survey: by day, 89% of respondents feel safer than they did in 2009 (85%) and by night, 54% of respondents feel safer than they did in 2009 (47%).

2. PART B – BUDGET CONSULTATION

2.1 The public were also asked about their priorities for spending and to consider the range of services that the Council and partners provide to their household. Respondents were asked to indicate the service / functions that were most important to them and their household.

2.2 Overall, the results provide a clear indication of the services / functions which more people felt to be important:

- Parks and open spaces (88% of respondents)
- Tackling criminal damage and ASB (84% of respondents)
- Creating and protecting jobs across the city (84% of respondents)
- Refuse collection (80% of respondents)

2.3 They also provide a clear indication of those services / functions that less people considered to be important:

- Museums / galleries (14% of respondents)
- Health promotion services e.g. help to stop smoking, get active, lose weight (18% of respondents)
- Fire prevention services (22% of respondents)
- Subsidising adult learning courses (25% of respondents)

2.4 While the difference in the methodology used and slight variation in the questions asked last year in 'Prioritise our Pounds' makes comparison statistically unreliable, it is worthy of note that creating and protecting jobs across the city was a top priority last year, while subsidising adult learning courses and support for preventative health services again remain areas which less people consider to be important.

2.5 In addition, there are several service areas surveyed that link directly to the Council's pledges. More people felt creating and protecting jobs across the city to be important at 84% and this is reflected in the pledges as a priority for Plymouth. However, services that support the pledge relating to tackling health inequalities such as health promotion services, and mental health services were considered by less people to be important.

2.6 The top and bottom three headlines by service (the key pledge areas are shaded in the table below):

Services that more people felt to be important	% of respondents	Services that less people felt to be important	% of respondents
VIBRANT PLYMOUTH			
Parks and open spaces	88	Museums / galleries	14
Sport and leisure facilities	67	Theatres / concert halls	32
Events and tourism	46	Libraries	42
MOVING PLYMOUTH			
Road maintenance	79	Subsidised non-commercial bus services	33
Footway maintenance	52	Car free cycle and walking routes	36
Road safety in residential areas	49	Inconsiderate parking in residential areas	39

YOUNG PLYMOUTH			
Support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection	67	Subsidised adult learning courses	25
Services for young people, such as youth services	56	Tackling child poverty	42
Support for children with special educational needs	51	Early years support, such as child care, children centres	44
GREENER PLYMOUTH			
Refuse collection	80	Public conveniences	31
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	70	Environmental regulation, e.g. food safety, trading standards, noise control	35
Doorstep recycling	41	Local tips / household waste recycling	36
LIVING AND WORKING PLYMOUTH			
Creating and protecting jobs across the city	84	Improving the quantity of housing	30
Supporting new businesses to grow	60	Increasing visitor numbers to the city	32
Planning the future shape of the city	46	Improving the quality of housing	36
SAFER PLYMOUTH			
Tackling damage and ASB	84	Fire prevention services	22
Tackling acquisitive crime including burglary and vehicle crime	58	Crime prevention services	33
Tackling violent crime including domestic abuse and sexual offences	57	Targeted work in neighbourhoods with the most crime	38
CARING PLYMOUTH			
Support for older people to live independently	75	Health promotion services e.g. help to stop smoking, get active, lose weight	18
Responsive health services e.g. emergency hospital admissions, medication	67	Mental health services	35
Support for people with disabilities	55	Preventing homelessness and help find homes for those in need	38

2.7 The feedback that health prevention is considered by less people to be important is of significant concern given the shared view of the importance of the early intervention and prevention agenda by the Council, Hospitals Trust, Clinical Commissioning Group and Health and Well-being Board. This is also mirrored in the public's perception of crime and fire prevention which are also seen by less people as being important. This may highlight a need to better communicate with the public on the importance and benefits of the early intervention and prevention agenda.

2.8 Some services that enhance the city's cultural offer are also perceived by less people as being important such as museums / galleries, theatres / concert halls and increasing visitor numbers to the city. This may have potential implications for the Growth and Culture Boards given Plymouth's ambitious growth agenda and proposals for a History Centre, the Mayflower 2020 celebrations and likely City of Culture bid 2017.

2.9 Furthermore, 77% of respondents were worried that they or their family would suffer directly from cuts in public spending.

3. PART C – ABOUT YOU

3.1 Of the 2,870 respondents, the following demographic data was reported:

Category	2012 results	2009 results
Gender:		
- Male	49%	46%
- Female	51%	54%
- Transgender	0.1%	N/A
Age:		
- 34 years and under	22%	29%
- 35-59 years	46%	44%
- 60+ years	32%	27%
Disability:		
- Yes	10%	35%
- No	90%	65%
Ethnicity:		
- White British	95%	95%
- All other ethnicities	5%	5%

3.2 The survey also asked respondents to comment on their general health of which 76% reported that their general health is either good or very good. This is a slight improvement over 2009 which reported 73%. In 2012, 17% of respondents said that they are carers for a relative or friend.

3.3 This year we asked the additional question around occupational status. The largest proportion of respondents classified themselves as being in a supervisory, clerical, junior management, professional administrative position at 23%. Whereas the smallest group of respondents were from higher managerial, professional, administrative at 8%.