

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – 6 December 2022

2022 Independent Resident Satisfaction Survey Results

Accountable member:

Cllr Rowena Hay, Leader of the Council

Accountable officers:

Darren Knight, Executive Director - Place & Communities

Accountable scrutiny committee:

n/a

Ward(s) affected:

All

Key/Significant Decision:

No

Executive summary:

Residents' surveys are frequently carried out by local Councils in order to collect statistically robust views from a representative sample of residents.

Cheltenham Residents Survey 2022 provides a range of resident insight that can help inform current and future decision making, as well as providing a baseline against which future improvements can be measured.

To coincide the development of a new Corporate Plan, an independent resident survey was commissioned to get insight from local people and understand the where they think the Council should focus its efforts. The survey was undertaken by independent market research company

Enventure Research.

The results shows that overall, **90%** of Cheltenham residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, which is a 6% increase when compared to the 2019 results. This is also 9% higher than the Local Government Association (LGA) national polling at 81%.

Recommendations:

- 1. Cabinet acknowledge the 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey results and the baseline they provide for the new Corporate Plan priorities.**
 - 2. The survey is repeated in three years' time to measure the impact of the Council's corporate plan on resident satisfaction levels.**
 - 3. The results are used to inform Council service plans to address areas in need of performance improvement and/or further investigation.**
 - 4. The results from the survey are communicated to the Council's partners that have lead responsibilities for areas where further improvement has been identified.**
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1. Implications

1.1. Financial implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Gemma Bell, Director of Finance & Assets.
Gemma.Bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.2. Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Signed off by: One Legal – legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

1.3. HR implications

There are no HR implications as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Clare Jones, HR Business Partner. clare.jones@publicagroup.uk

1.4. Environmental and climate change implications

There are no environmental or climate change implications as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Laura Tapping, Climate Emergency Programme Officer.
laura.tapping@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.5. Property/asset implications

There are no property implications as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Simon Hodges, Senior Surveyor. simon.hodges@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.6. Corporate policy framework implications

The resident survey results will be used to help inform the new Corporate Plan. Results where applicable will be tracked and benchmarked through the Council's balanced scorecard via Clearview.

Signed off by: Ann Wolstencroft, Head of Projects, Performance & Risk.
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2. Promoting equality and reducing discrimination

- An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed for this report. The survey was a representative sample of the population as set out in the market research methodology statement.

3. Performance management – monitoring and review

- The results will be collated and measured through the Council's performance management system Clearview
 - The results can be subject to review upon request by the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
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4. Background

4.1. Residents' surveys are frequently carried out by local Councils in order to collect statistically robust views from a representative sample of residents. The last resident survey was undertaken in 2019.

4.2. In 2022, the Leader of the Council requested an independent resident satisfaction survey to gain insights from a statistically representative sample of the borough's population to help inform the development of the new Corporate Plan, which will be taken to full Council in February 2023.

4.3. The benefits of undertaking such a survey allows the Council to:

- Compare the views of residents to national data sets;
- Explore priorities at a local level;
- Set baselines/track perceptions of service quality;
- Collect insight to inform strategy - e.g. channel shift and communications plans;
- Collect data on new or emerging issues
- Provide a set of baseline measures for the Council's Corporate Plan and Place Vision

4.4. Following a competitive procurement process, Enventure Research were commissioned to undertake the survey on behalf of the Council. Enventure Research are members of the Market Research Society and comply with industry standards for research, insight and analytics and have significant experience of undertaking resident satisfaction surveys on behalf of local authorities.

5. Survey Methodology and Response Rate

5.1. A questionnaire was co-designed by Cheltenham Borough Council and Enventure Research and included questions designed to understand:

- How the Council could improve residents' experience as a Cheltenham resident
- Satisfaction with the local area
- Whether residents' local area has changed in the past year
- Perceptions of living in Cheltenham
- Satisfaction with the town centre amenities
- Behaviour changes related to climate change
- Perceptions of housing in Cheltenham
- Awareness and perceptions of the Golden Valley Development
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on residents' places of work
- Views on how the Council runs things
- Opinions on whether the Council provides value for money
- The rate at which residents feel council tax should be raised
- Satisfaction with Council services
- How well informed the Council keeps its residents
- Whether residents can influence decisions affecting their local area
- How residents obtain information from and about the Council

5.2. To allow comparisons to be made against previous survey findings, some questions from the 2019 Resident Survey were included, as well as questions from the LGA 'Are You Being Served?' national polling survey to allow for benchmarking on a national scale.

5.3. **A representative telephone survey:** This was conducted with residents of Cheltenham aged 16 and above by a team of telephone interviewers using a CATI methodology (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing), whereby respondents' answers to questions are directly input into survey software.

5.4. In addition, some interviews were undertaken face-to-face at various locations across Cheltenham town centre to ensure hard to reach residents were included, such as those from ethnic minority backgrounds and younger residents.

5.5. Interviews took approximately 12 minutes for an interviewer to complete with a respondent. Interviewer shifts took place at different times, on both weekdays and weekends (including at peak times). Before launching the survey, the questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents who were asked to take part and provide feedback on their experience. This helped ensure that the questionnaire was easy to understand, would elicit useful responses, was of a suitable length and that the

questions were asked in a non-biased manner to collect valid and reliable data.

- 5.6. In total, **1,100** telephone interviews were completed, with research taking place from 7 September to 6 October 2022. Quotas for the survey were set on age, gender and area of Cheltenham based on mid-year population estimates in 2020, to provide a sample that was broadly representative of Cheltenham residents.
- 5.7. **Online survey:** This provided all residents with the opportunity to take part in the survey, an online version of the same questionnaire used in the representative telephone and face-to-face survey was made available for residents to complete.
- 5.8. The online survey was hosted and managed online by Enventure Research between 20 September and 5 October 2022. The survey was open to people aged 16 and above who lived in the borough. The online survey was promoted via the Council's website and social media channels, such as the Council's official Facebook (boosted post), Twitter and LinkedIn pages. The online survey received **246** responses.
- 5.9. In total, **1,346** responses were received to the survey.

6. Statistical Confidence

- 6.1. As the survey was undertaken by a sample of people who live in Cheltenham, all results are subject to sampling tolerances. Based on ONS mid-2020 estimates, the Cheltenham population of those aged 16 and above is 95,371, meaning that the 1,100 representative sample size will provide **an accuracy of +/-2.9% at the 95% confidence interval.**
- 6.2. This means with a result of 50%, we can be 95% sure that if we interviewed all residents then the result would be between 47.1% and 52.9%.

7. Benchmarking

- 7.1. Some of the questions asked in the Cheltenham Resident Survey are also asked by the Local Government Association (LGA) in a national tracker survey, which is administered to a representative sample of 1,000 British adults using a telephone survey methodology.
- 7.2. Results from the Cheltenham Resident Survey have been compared where the same question has been asked in the national survey. The survey that the results have been compared with what was undertaken in June 2022.
- 7.3. Where questions have been repeated from the previous Cheltenham Resident Survey conducted in 2019 the results have been included for comparison. It should be noted that the methodology of this year's survey is different to that in 2019, which utilised a postal methodology, so results are not necessarily directly comparable, but will give a good indication of trends in attitudes and perceptions.

8. Key Findings

8.1. A summary of the some of the high level results from the representative sample of residents surveyed are briefly summarised below. The full detailed report, results and analysis is set out in Appendix 1.

- Overall, **90%** of Cheltenham residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, which is a 6% increase when compared to the 2019 results. This score continues to be higher than the national Local Government Association (LGA) benchmark polling at 81%
- A total of 81% of residents felt Cheltenham has either got better or not changed much over the last twelve months
- 78% of residents felt Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and an exciting place to live
- 89% of residents would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live
- 80% of residents felt Cheltenham has a positive future
- 68% of residents choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car with a further 18% willing to make this change in the next few years
- Satisfaction with how the Council runs things has increased by 4% and now at 59% and is broadly in line with the Local Government Associational Benchmark national polling for local authority satisfaction levels
- 76% of residents felt there was a need for more affordable homes to buy and rent
- In relation to the Council's plan to make Cheltenham the Cyber Capital of the UK through the Golden Valley Development, 75% of residents who are aware of this project, felt it will be positive for the local economy
- Satisfaction with safety during the day is 87% but this drops to 44% after dark.
- Only 44% of residents felt they have the opportunity to grow their career in Cheltenham
- 88% of residents were satisfied with the parks and open spaces
- 72% of residents were satisfied with the cleanliness of streets in their local area
- 83% of residents were satisfied with household collections for domestic waste
- 81% of residents were satisfied with household collections for recyclables
- Whilst only 61% of residents were satisfied with the range of shops available 88% were satisfied with the range of events in Cheltenham

8.2. Residents were also asked to state one thing they feel the Council should do to improve Cheltenham. The top themes from the representative sample are

summarised below:

- The most common response related to better roads/path maintenance (28%) (This is the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council and not Cheltenham Borough Council)
- No issues/nothing (11%)
- Cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter (8%)
- More car parking needed/more disabled car parking/ reduce cost of parking (8%).

8.3. The top theme from the online survey is summarised below:

- Regeneration of the High Street was important, with 18% suggesting High Street regeneration/encourage businesses.

8.4. The results and insight will be shared with other organisations the Council works closely with such as Gloucestershire County Council (the highways authority), Cheltenham BID, GFirstLep, UBICO, Chamber of Commerce, Parish Councils, Cheltenham Police, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner and others.

8.5. In summary, these are a very positive set of results and show an overall improvement based on the 2019 survey. The full detailed report, results and analysis, are set out in appendix one and the infographic summary in appendix 2.

9. Key risks

9.1. No risks have been identified with this report.

Report author:

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Appendices:

- i. 2022 Independent Resident Survey Results Full Report
- ii. Infographic summary

Background information:

None.

