



<b>Subject:</b>	Belfast Residents' Survey
<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To update Members on the key findings from the Belfast Resident Survey and to outline next steps in terms of how the data will be used and reported.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Note the key findings of the survey</li><li>• As in previous years, it is recommended that the results from the survey will be communicated through the council website, City Matters and via interlink and that a similar report to this to be brought to the next SP&amp;R Committee. It is also</li></ul>

	recommended that more detailed reports be brought to each of the AWGs so that Members can consider local implications if any arising from these results.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The council undertakes a regular resident survey to help inform strategic planning, in particular the development of the council's corporate plan and now our emerging Belfast Agenda. Information from this research, together with other evidence and data, is used to help set the future strategic direction of the Council and to inform community planning priorities; it is also used to track progress on and inform improvement objectives for council and the city. The survey also helps council fulfil its statutory duty to consult under the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 as it provides reliable resident perception data to inform strategic planning and performance management. The survey, which is based on a representative and statistically valid sample, is normally carried out every two to three years, with the most recent survey carried at the beginning of 2017.
3.2	The survey was carried out by Social Market Research (SMR), to ensure independence and to provide expert assurance regarding the statistical validity and reliability of the data. As with previous exercises, the survey was based on a representative sample of residents and carried out via face-to-face interviews conducted in the home. Approximately 1500 people over the age of sixteen were interviewed across Belfast across all DEAs and electoral wards.
3.3	The fieldwork was carried out between 2 <sup>nd</sup> February and 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017 and sought feedback from residents on the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living in Belfast</li> <li>• Improvement Priorities for Belfast</li> <li>• Your Local Area</li> <li>• Your Wellbeing</li> <li>• Belfast City Council Performance</li> </ul>
3.4	Key findings are set out below; where applicable comparison with the previous survey results from 2014 are provided for trend purposes.

3.5

**Improvement Priorities for Belfast**

Respondents were asked about to indicate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how important or unimportant a range of improvement priorities were for them. The list of improvement priorities were generated using previous research and feedback on what mattered most to local people or for making a successful city. The priorities that ranked highest overall were:

<b>Improvement Priority</b>
Attracting investment to Belfast
Improving people’s health and wellbeing
Supporting our older people
Improving safety, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
Creating more jobs
Reducing poverty

3.6

Whilst it is possible to create a ranked order of importance based on average score, it should be noted that the improvement priorities all ranked highly demonstrating that the emerging council and city strategic plans resonate with people’s concerns.

3.7

**Living in Belfast**

**91%** of those surveyed were satisfied with Belfast as a place to live. The level of satisfaction has remained fairly constant since 2007 and compares favourably to other cities.

3.8

Approximately 4 out 5 people surveyed, felt that in Belfast:

- People are friendly, caring and compassionate (86% - new indicator)
- All people can live life to full (84% - up from 79% in 2014)
- Children and young people can reach their full potential (81% - up from 74% in 2014)

3.9

Whilst approximately 3 out 4 people surveyed felt that in Belfast:

- People share in the economic success of the city (76% - new indicator)
- People are treated with equality and respect (75% - new indicator)
- Older people are treated with respect and dignity (73% - down slightly from 76%)

3.10

There were also high levels of agreement that Belfast:

- Is a good place to visit (92%)

3.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The city centre is vibrant and attractive (87%)</li> <li>- Is a well-connected city (85%)</li> <li>- Is a welcoming and inclusive city (82%)</li> <li>- Is an economically thriving and prosperous city (81%)</li> <li>- Is an environmentally friendly city (80%)</li> </ul>
3.12	<p><b><i>My Local Area</i></b></p> <p><b>91%</b> of those surveyed were satisfied with their local area as a place to live – up from 86% in 2014. However, there are variations across DEAs, initial analysis would suggest those living in electoral areas with higher levels of deprivation recording lower levels of satisfaction. Further more detailed analysis is currently being undertaken.</p> <p>When asked more specific questions about their local area, respondents were also quite positive with improving perceptions across all questions. Over 4 out of 5 people surveyed agreeing that their local area:</p>
3.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- had a strong sense of community (87% - up from 73% in 2014)</li> <li>- people worked together to improve things (87% - up from 69% in 2014)</li> <li>- was clean and attractive (82% - up from 68% in 2014)</li> <li>- 85% agreed that they could access all the services they needed (up from 81%), whilst 76% agreed they could access job and training opportunities (up from 60%)</li> <li>- 82% of respondents agreed that the local area had good parks and green space with 80% agreeing that the parks and green spaces were safe.</li> </ul>
3.14	<p>When asked about perceptions of safety in general, the 2017 results also showed slight improvement with 94% indicating that they felt fairly or very safe in their local area during the day (up from 91%) and 82% indicating that they felt fairly or very safe in their local area at night (up from 80%).</p>
3.15	<p>Perceptions of safety in the city centre also shows improvement with 91% feeling fairly or very safe in the city centre during the day (up from 78%) and 65% feeling safe at night (up from 58%)</p>

3.16	<p>Generally, the good relations questions have tended to score lower in comparison to other issues; however the results from 2017 have increased when compared to 2014. Those surveyed this time were more inclined to agree that their local area was a place where people from different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- racial and ethnic backgrounds got on well together (79% - up from 52% in 2014)</li> <li>- religious and political backgrounds got on well (79% - up from 51% in 2014)</li> <li>- was seen as welcoming to others (84% - up from 69% in 2014)</li> </ul>
3.17	<p>The results also show improvement in the number of people who felt they were [always or mostly] able to have a say on things happening or how services are run in their area - up to 51% from 46%. In 2017, we asked a new question about partnership working – three quarters of respondents (76%) agreed that local agencies and service providers worked well together to support and improve your local area?</p>
3.18	<p>When asked unprompted what one thing do you think would most improve the quality of life in your local area, the issues most frequently mentioned were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less dog fouling</li> <li>- Bins being emptied / more bins</li> <li>- More for children / young people</li> <li>- Improved parking</li> <li>- Jobs / employment opportunities</li> </ul>
3.19	<p><b>Wellbeing</b></p> <p>This year's results also show marginal improvement across the wellbeing questions. Overall satisfaction with life, as scored on a scale of 0 to 10, was 8.2 which compares favourably to other cities.</p> <p><b>Belfast City Council Performance</b></p> <p>Generally resident opinion about Belfast City Council was positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 81% agreed the council makes Belfast a better place to live (up from 69% in 2014)</li> <li>- 74% agreed the council shows good leadership for the city (up from 65% in 2014)</li> <li>- 78% of respondents were satisfied with how council runs things (up from 69% in 2014)</li> <li>- 87% agreed the Council keeps residents either very or fairly well informed about the services it provides (up from 64% in 2014 and 54% in 2010)</li> </ul>

3.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 68% agreed that the Council consults with and listens to the views of local residents (up from 60% in 2014 and 36% in 2010)</li> </ul>
3.21	<p>In 2017 we asked new performance questions, which we hope to use as benchmarks against other councils and sectors moving forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 71% agreed that the council provides good customer service;</li> <li>- 67% rated the council highly [excellent to good] in terms of reputation, 11% felt it was poor with the remainder answering “don’t know”;</li> <li>- 63% rated the council highly [excellent to good] in terms of trustworthiness, 10% felt it was poor with the remainder answering “don’t know”;</li> <li>- 76% agreed that Council should have more power and responsibility for delivering services and developing the city.</li> </ul> <p>The results from the resident survey will play a key part in helping to inform the development of the council’s Corporate Plan and the development of the “Belfast Agenda”. It will also help us to track progress against the key outcomes and objectives within these plans. Survey data relating to council performance and outcomes will be fed into the new performance management arrangements being developed as part of our new obligations under the Local Government Act. Members and partners will have an opportunity to consider these findings in more detail as part of the ongoing community planning development process and through the individual work streams and also through Area Working Group meetings linked to the development of local area planning.</p>
3.22	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no direct resource implications as a result of this report.</p>
3.23	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. However, the information obtained will help inform our good relations work and audit of inequalities.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>None</p>