



Report to Cabinet

Subject: Satisfaction Survey 2005

Date: 8 September 2005

Author: Head of Cabinet Office

1. Purpose of the Report

- To inform members of implementation of the proposal to carry out an annual satisfaction survey in September/October 2005

2. Background

Councils are required to carry out a satisfaction survey every three years as part of Best Value requirements. The last of these surveys was carried out in 2003.

As part of the 2005/06 Budget/Service Plan, Council agreed to carry out this survey annually from 2005 onwards. This will allow performance against a range of key satisfaction measures to be tracked on an annual basis.

Through the inclusion of supplementary questions, it will also allow the Council to set benchmarks and measure progress towards its priorities. This is an important commitment made as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment Improvement Plan.

3. Proposal

A final draft questionnaire has been produced and is attached for information at **Appendix A**. The draft has been discussed with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and with Senior Management Team.

Most questions included in the statutory triennial satisfaction survey are repeated here – these are set in normal type. As outlined above, they are included to ensure continuity and to allow comparisons to be made over time.

For reasons of space, some have been simplified (for example, multiple questions about various aspects of the quality of services have been omitted, while retaining the question about the overall quality of each service), while others have been omitted where they are of less relevance to Gedling Borough Council (for example, the question about museums is not included).

New questions included are set in italic type. Most have been included to allow for benchmarks to be set and/or progress to be measured against council priorities, as explained above.

There is also a set of questions included to explore budget priorities for the Council for future years. Recent Audit Commission guidance on Use of Resources suggests it is good practice to consult on budget options, and the survey represents an opportunity to reach a large number of households at a suitable time in the budgetary cycle.

The final order and precise wording of the questions may be changed, depending on advice from contractors who have been engaged to carry out the fieldwork and analysis.

It is proposed that the questionnaires will be circulated in the community from late September onwards. The technique used will match that required for the statutory triennial survey, to make comparisons as reliable as possible. The only proposed change is to work with a smaller sample size (1,650 has been suggested by contractors, rather than 2,500 distributed in 2003), since on the basis of previous return rates this is likely to generate a sufficiently robust response rate, while keeping costs down. The sample will be generated randomly from the Postal Address File and each survey will incorporate a covering letter.

All members will be informed that the survey is being carried out.

4. Resource Implications

Costs of carrying out the survey can be met from within existing approved resources.

Results may help inform future resource allocations.

5. Recommendation

Members are recommended to endorse the questionnaire and the proposed method of implementation.