

## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Gedling Conversation and Satisfaction Survey 2019

**Date:** 27 June 2019

**Author:** Director of Organisational Development and Democratic Services

### **Wards Affected**

Borough wide.

### **Purpose**

To seek agreement for the programme of activities for the Gedling Conversation and Satisfaction Survey 2019.

### **Recommendation**

**THAT** the programme of activities for the Gedling Conversation and Satisfaction Survey 2019 set out in the report be approved.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

### **Background**

1.1 In 2018 we conducted the sixth annual Gedling Conversation. Gedling Conversation represents a set of consultations aiming to seek the views of local residents, businesses and partner organisations about how our performance has been over the previous years and what our priorities should be over the coming year.

The following consultation methods have been used during the Gedling Conversation campaigns so far :

- Residents' Satisfaction Survey – organised biennially
- Face to face consultations - organised annually

## 1.2 Residents' satisfaction survey

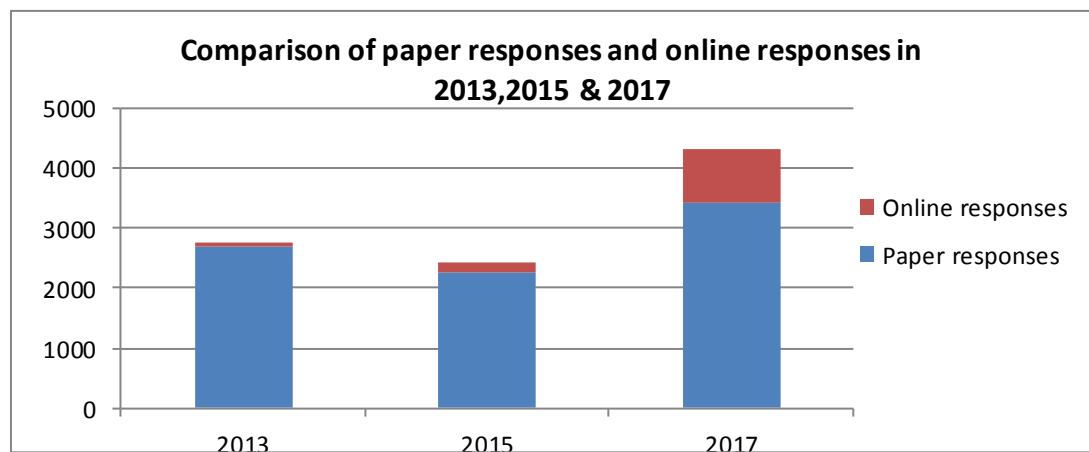
Since 2013 the Residents' Satisfaction Survey has been conducted using the following two main methods:

- a paper survey has been delivered to each household in the borough; and
- it was also available to be completed online.

It was apparent that the proportion of the online respondents to the survey significantly increased in 2017, when compared to previous years.

## 1.3 In 2017 the survey generated a response rate of 3,422 responses, representing 6.7% of households. By comparison, in 2013 we received 2,694 replies which represented 5.2% of all households.

In 2017, out of total of 3,422 replies received 26.3 % replies were online, which is a significant increase from 2013 when only 3% of all replies were online. This is mainly due to the usage of social media and 'Keep me posted' to promote the survey.



It is expected that the number of the online respondents will increase further in 2019 because the most recent figures show 26,213 'Keep Me Posted' engaged subscribers and 27,384 of social media followers.

## 1.4 Face to face consultation

Face to face consultations have also been organised annually during the Gedling Conversation campaigns.

For a few years this work focused on bringing a 'Gedling Conversation' branded tent to a number of central points across the borough and staffing it with employees from across our service areas, our Senior Leadership Team

and Members. While the tent was up residents had the opportunity to speak directly to officers and members about life in Gedling - with no issues off limits. Where it was possible to answer questions immediately we did, and where we needed to find out more information to help address the concern or question we took people's details and forwarded it to the correct departments – following up to ensure that it had been done. From all queries received during the roadshows only about 30% were related to GBC services and the rest mainly to Nottinghamshire County Council services.

- 1.5 In the past two years we altered that approach in response to feedback from some of our more rural communities that it wasn't always possible to get to central locations. Last year we arranged for officers from our Senior Leadership Team, Service Managers to visit all of the wards in the borough, giving residents a more informal opportunity to discuss issues, raise concerns and meet our employees. Ward Members were also invited to attend. The main topic for the conversation with residents during those visits was 'Life in Gedling' in general and in their local area.
- 1.6 This type of consultation was particularly useful for more in depth consultation revealing small issues before they become big ones and allowing all wards within the borough to be included. It helped local people to see and meet real people from across the organisation, which helps to build relationships and confidence in Gedling Borough Council as an organisation. It also gave the opportunity to Service Managers, who had never had a chance before, to interact with local residents.

## **Proposal**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the next wave of Gedling Conversation will include two main parts:

- Residents' Satisfaction Survey 2019; and
- Face to face consultation conducted at events or with groups /organisations across the borough

## **2.2 Face to face consultation**

- 2.2.1 It is proposed that targeted face to face consultation should take place at borough and local events or with relevant groups/organisations. The results of the Satisfaction Survey will be analysed to ascertain whether there is a need for more in depth, targeted, face to face consultation on a borough wide basis, in certain areas or with specific groups. Some possible topics for conversation might include whether people think that their local area has got better or worse to live in over the past two years; how satisfied are they with the local services and amenities in the local area; is there enough suitable housing in the borough; is it easy to find out about jobs available locally?

- 2.2.2 It is proposed that the events at which we will talk to residents and those groups/organisations we will engage with will be agreed between Senior Leadership Team and the Portfolio holder for Resources and Reputation and, where proposals relate to consultation specifically with young people, the Portfolio holder for Young People and Equalities.

## **2.3 Satisfaction Survey**

- 2.3.1 The data received from the Residents' Satisfaction Survey is important for:

- developing our strategies and understanding what our residents think and need; and
- identifying any areas where there might be a need for further improvement.

- 2.3.2 Based on previous experience of what went well, for the next satisfaction survey, it is proposed that we:

- use predominantly the same questions as in the previous year, so that we can compare the results
- print and distribute hard copies of the survey to each household in the borough
- use social media in order to promote the survey and share information to a wide audience that will capture both urban and rural area and target the underrepresented age groups in previous consultation
- employ a research agency to manage the response handling and data input of the surveys, plus produce initial calculation tables. This will enable the Customer Insight Officer to use already collated data for analysis, and produce a summary report soon after all feedback is received and present it.

- 2.3.3 The Satisfaction Survey will be promoted, available online and hard copies distributed the week commencing 26 August 2019. A copy of the survey questions are attached at Appendix 1 for Members' information. It is to be noted that the survey will be properly designed prior to issue. The Survey will close on 27 September with an initial analysis report expected 8 November.

## **Alternative Options**

- 3.1 The Council could decide not to carry out a further Gedling Conversation or Satisfaction Survey exercise but, given the importance residents clearly attach to the Council listening to their concerns, such an approach would not fit with residents' expectations. In addition the Survey results provide useful information to the Council about how it is performing in the eyes of its

residents.

- 3.2 Various techniques and initiatives could be included in the Conversation programme but on balance it is felt that the proposals set out above represent the best balance between need and available resource at the present time.

### **Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The cost of the activities outlined above can be accommodated from existing agreed budgets.

### **Appendices**

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Copy of the satisfaction survey questions.

### **Background Papers**

- 6.1 None.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

To enable the Council to continue important and effective communication with, and seek the views of, the residents of the Borough.