

The national Place Survey – results for Cheshire East

Introduction

This paper reports on results for the Place survey in Cheshire East prior councils and compares them to national and regional results.

Recommendations

This paper is for noting. However it raises a number of issues about perceptions of predecessor councils that Cabinet may wish to consider in terms of future responses and engagement with local people.

The Place Survey

The Place Survey was developed by the Department of Communities and Local Government and carried out by local councils in September to December 2008. The survey questionnaire, sampling and survey methods and analytical approaches were all laid down by DCLG. Cheshire County Council Research and Intelligence unit carried out the postal survey in both Cheshire East and Cheshire West areas. Results from the survey were completed by February. However reporting has awaited DCLG statistical review and the production of comparative data which have recently been released.

The survey is intended to provide both local information and comparative benchmark information. A number of questions form part of the new National Indicator Set. The government's aim has been to measure how well its priorities are being delivered by local government and partnerships. The Place Survey provides feedback about local services and information about people's perceptions of their local area. It follows national Best Value Surveys, most recently 2006/07.

A list of National Indicators collected through the Place Survey is shown below.

NI number	Description
NI 1	% of people who believe that people from different backgrounds get on well in their area
NI 2	% of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
NI 3	Civic participation in local area
NI 4	% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
NI 5	Overall/general satisfaction with local area
NI 6	Participation in regular volunteering
NI 17	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
NI 21	Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour
NI 22	Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area
NI 23	Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration

NI 27	Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police
NI 37	Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area
NI 41	Perceptions of rowdy or drunk behaviour as a problem
NI 42	Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem
NI 119	Self-reported measures of people's overall health and wellbeing
NI 138	Satisfaction of people 65 and over with both home and neighbourhood
NI 139	The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently
NI 140	Fair treatment by local services

Details for all these NIs are included on the national indicator table.

Findings and comparisons

A summary and comparison of main survey findings, including both national indicator and other results are given below.

The local area

% either very or fairly satisfied with area as a place to live – NI 5		
Cheshire East	North West	England
84.6	77	80

% very or fairly strongly believe they belong to immediate neighbourhood – NI 2		
Cheshire East	North West	England
61.5	60	59

Public services

Comparisons about the services provided by the council, which referred to the County Council and District Councils' services, show that residents' views tend to be less favourable than in the region or all England. Further detailed analysis of response will aim to build a clearer understanding of the factors underpinning local views.

% very and fairly satisfied with, taking everything into account, the way the council Cheshire County Council and your District Council run things		
Cheshire East	North West	England
40.1	43	45

% strongly or tend to agree that the local council provides value for money?		
Cheshire East	North West	England
23.5	32	33

Satisfaction with services

% very or fairly satisfied with following services		
Service	Cheshire East	England
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	51.4	57

Refuse collection	69.2	78
Doorstep re-cycling	63.7	70
Local tips/household waste recycling centres	70.6	71
Local transport information	38.7	48
Local bus services	41.9	55
Sports/ leisure facilities	45.8	46
Libraries	76.3	69
Museums/ galleries	30.1	41
Theatres/ concert halls	33.7	43
Parks and open spaces	62.3	69

Other aspects of services

The survey asked whether older people get the support they need to live at home and whether people feel they are treated with respect and consideration. Cheshire east compared favourably in relation to these aspects of service delivery.

% think older people receive the support they need to live independently – NI 139		
Cheshire East	North West	England
31	32	30

% agree or tend to agree that they were treated with respect and consideration by local services – NI 140		
Cheshire East	North West	England
72.8	70	72

Local decision making

Cheshire East residents are less likely to believe they can influence decisions, but also less likely to want to be involved.

% definitely or tend to agree that they can influence decisions in their local area – NI 4		
Cheshire East	North West	England
24.2	27	29

% generally speaking would like to be involved		
Cheshire East	North West	England
25.3	27	27

Helping out

The survey asked about unpaid help that people gave, outside of anything that was the requirement of a job. Cheshire East residents have slightly higher involvement in giving help than residents in the region or England.

% who had given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations at least once per month, in the previous 12 months		
Cheshire East	North West	England
23.9	22	23

Getting involved

% In the last 12 months of people who have belonged to groups that make decisions\ affecting the local area		
Cheshire East	North West	England
13	13	14

Respect and consideration

The Place Survey also aimed to explore some issues of community cohesion. Cheshire East residents' responses indicate that people have stronger views about living together as communities than in the region or England. However some 46% of residents indicated that they do not think parents take enough responsibility for their children and only one in five think that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is\ not a problem.

% definitely or tend to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the local area – NI 1		
Cheshire East	North West	England
78.9	74	76

% who think people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a big or fairly big problem – NI 23		
Cheshire East	North West	England
25.6	34	31

% definitely or tend to agree that parents in the local area take responsibility for the behaviour of their children – NI 22		
Cheshire East	North West	England
34.6	27	30

Community Safety

The Place survey collected some detailed information about peoples' perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in their local area and the extent to which they felt the police and other local services were dealing with these problems. Overall residents have fewer concerns about community safety issues than in the region or England generally.

Area	% agree that anti-social behaviour was a very or fairly big problem	% think drunk or rowdy behaviour a big fairly big problem	% seeing drug use or drug-dealing as a very or fairly big problem
Cheshire East	16.5	29.5	26.0
North West	23	32	35
England	20	29	31

Self reported health

Finally the survey asked people to assess whether their general health was good, fair or bad. Overall Cheshire east residents are more likely than average to assess their health as good or very good.

% Describing health in general as\ very good or good - NI 119		
Cheshire East	North West	England
78	73	76

Further analysis

The Place Survey was completed by 6378 residents from 15,000 questionnaires sent out (response rate 42.6%). Analysis has been rigorously overseen across the country and the findings represent some good evidence about the local communities and their perceptions. Further analysis is ongoing to provide information about:

- issues relevant for services
- different geographical communities
- the needs of different groups of people in the local population
- relationships between perceptions and experiences.

There is strong national evidence, supported over a number of years, about the relationship between local authorities' promotion of their services, clear identification of what they do and positive public perceptions. Findings from this survey indicate that the council has a clear opportunity to gain form promoting a public perception of Cheshire East.