

EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2004

**BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (BVPI) GENERAL SURVEY
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

SUMMARY

This report sets out the key findings of the statutory BVPI survey recently undertaken. These findings show how residents perceive the Council's services, communications and complaints handling. Vickie Chamberlain and Colin Wilby from MORI will be attending the meeting to present the findings to the Executive.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In Autumn/Winter 2003, MORI undertook the statutory Best Value Performance Indicators General Survey with borough residents for the Council. This follows the survey undertaken in 2000.
- 1.2 On MORI's advice the survey was posted to 3,000 residential addresses with a requirement for 1,100 responses. The original survey was followed by two reminders which resulted in a 45% response rate (1,354 responses).
- 1.3 Some groups were over-represented, for example those aged 55+, those not in full time employment and white people. Weighting based on census data were used to ensure that the findings were representative of the borough's population.
- 1.4 It is important to note that the questions asked in the survey were prescribed by ODPM for all local authorities and could not be changed.

2. TRENDS

BVPI	INDICATOR	2000/01 actual	2003/04 target	2003/04 actual
3	Satisfaction with overall service provided by authority	66	68	68
4	Satisfaction of complainants with complaints handling	N/a	40	30
89	Percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness standards	76	80	67
90	Satisfaction with household waste collection	97	93	83
90	Satisfaction with recycling facilities	65	80	66
119	Satisfaction with cultural and recreational activities overall	N/a	N/a	52
119a	Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities	N/a	80	63
119c	Satisfaction with museums and galleries	N/a	60	38
119d	Satisfaction with theatres and concert halls	N/a	60	56
119e	Satisfaction with parks and open spaces.	N/a	80	79

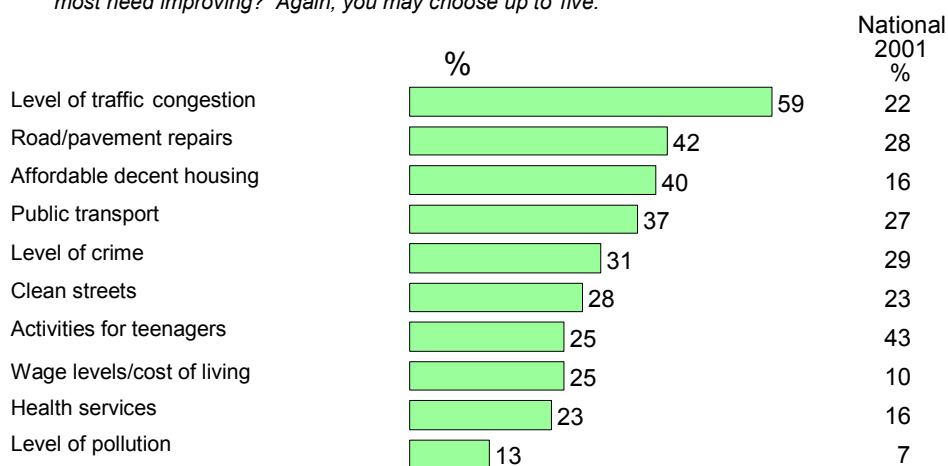
- 2.1 MORI have advised that these trends should be approached with caution. The published data in 2000/01 was not weighted, as the then DETR did not set a prescribed weighting, and the findings for the recent survey may have been affected by a downward trend in the way local authorities are regarded (further information is available on www.mori.com/sri/publications/shtml).
- 2.2 MORI's expectation of national trends at this early stage is that overall satisfaction figures will be lower in many areas, however ratings for individual services should hold up reasonably well.
- 2.3 It is also likely that the data used to set satisfaction targets was not directly comparable, hence the discrepancy between service satisfaction targets and BVPI results.

3. QUALITY OF LIFE

- 3.1 In Guildford, the top five things residents say are the most important in making somewhere **a good place to live** are:
 - ❑ *Low levels of crime (70%)*
 - ❑ *Health services (48%)*
 - ❑ *Clean streets (46%)*
 - ❑ *Affordable, decent housing (40%)*
 - ❑ *Education provision (36%)*
- 3.2 Residents' top ten priorities for improvement are shown below. These should be seen as key issues for the Council and other members of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Most need improving in the borough

Q Thinking about this local area, which of these things, if any, do you think most need improving? Again, you may choose up to five.

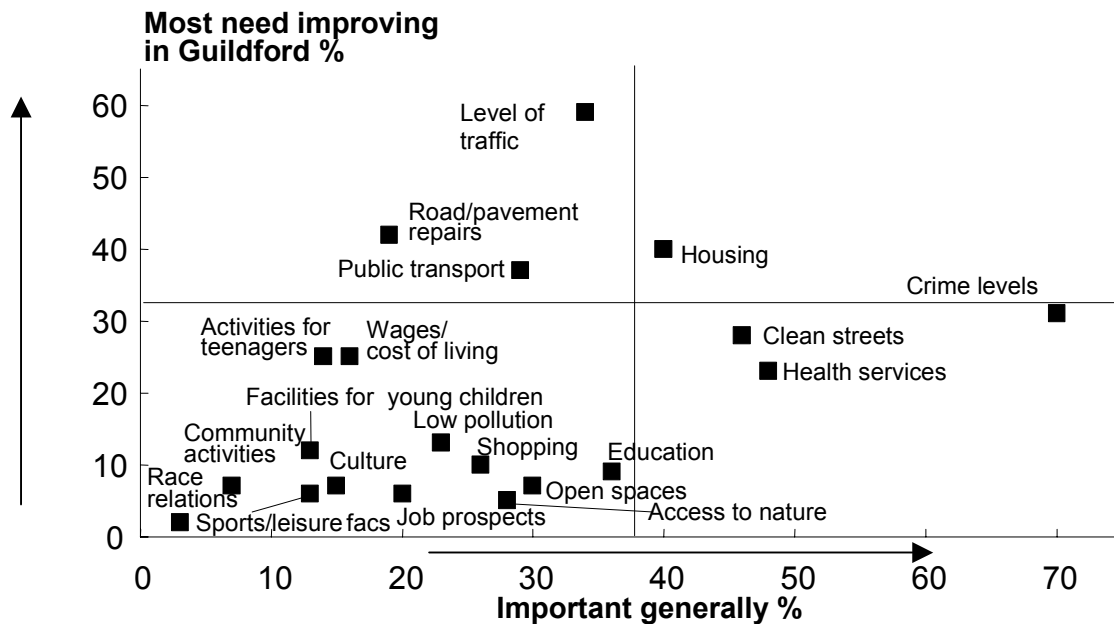


Base: All valid BVPI responses (1,292)

Source: MORI

- 3.3 This chart illustrates what Borough residents think is important generally against what most needs improving in the Borough. The top right hand segment shows that affordable decent housing is a key area for improvement.

Quality of life - Ideal vs needs improving



Base: All valid BVPI responses

Source: MORI

- 3.4 People using or dealing drugs, being drunk or rowdy in public places and vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles are perceived to be the greatest anti-social behaviour problems within the Borough.

4. THE COUNCIL

4.1 General satisfaction

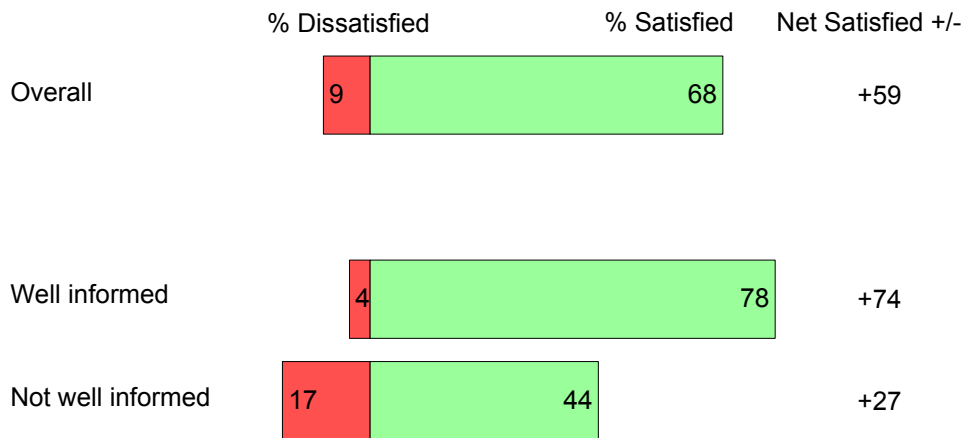
Seven in ten residents (68%) are satisfied with the way the Council is running the area – just eight percent of residents are dissatisfied, with one in a hundred saying they are very dissatisfied. Interestingly, the groups most satisfied are the younger and older groups, ages 18-24, (85%) and ages 65+ (78%).

4.2 Communications

Seven in ten residents feel that the Council keeps them informed, with just three in ten who feel it does *not* keep them informed. MORI has found that there is a correlation between overall satisfaction with local authorities and the degree to which residents feel they are being kept informed by their local authority – there are therefore clear benefits of informing local residents about Council activities: **the better informed people feel, the more satisfied they tend to be with their local authority.**

Impact of information on satisfaction with the Council

Q Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Guildford Borough Council runs things?



Base: All valid BVPI responses (1,122)

Source: MORI

5. COUNCIL SERVICES

5.1 The majority of residents feel that the quality of Council services has remained the same over the past three years. This is positive given the fact that expectations of public services are rising nationally. Three in ten (28%) feel that general performance has improved, and only 14% feel that performance has got worse.

Overall satisfaction with the Council

	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All valid BVPI responses</i>	%	%	
Transport services	43	20	+23
Environmental services	52	8	+44
Planning services	26	12	+14
Cultural and recreational services	52	5	+47
Housing services	21	6	+15

Source: MORI

Percentage responses for 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' are not shown.

As is typical, we find users of specific services are more satisfied than non-users.

Proportion satisfied with service departments			
	Users	Non-users	All
<i>Base: All valid BVPI responses</i>	%	%	%
Transport services	59	23	43
Environmental services	73	36	51
Planning services	52	19	26
Cultural and recreational services	80	31	51
Housing services	63	15	21

Source: MORI

5.2 Shopping facilities, sports and leisure facilities and clean streets are areas perceived to have improved in the borough most of all over the past three years. Generally, traffic congestion, wage levels and cost of living and affordable decent housing are perceived to have deteriorated most of all during the past three years. These changes are not unique to Guildford, as MORI have found that they are reflected across the country.

5.3 Environmental services

Two thirds of residents are satisfied with the cleanliness of their area, with four in five satisfied with the waste collection service overall. Satisfaction is also high with recycling facilities and doorstep recycling collection and these are services that are generally perceived to have improved over the last three years.

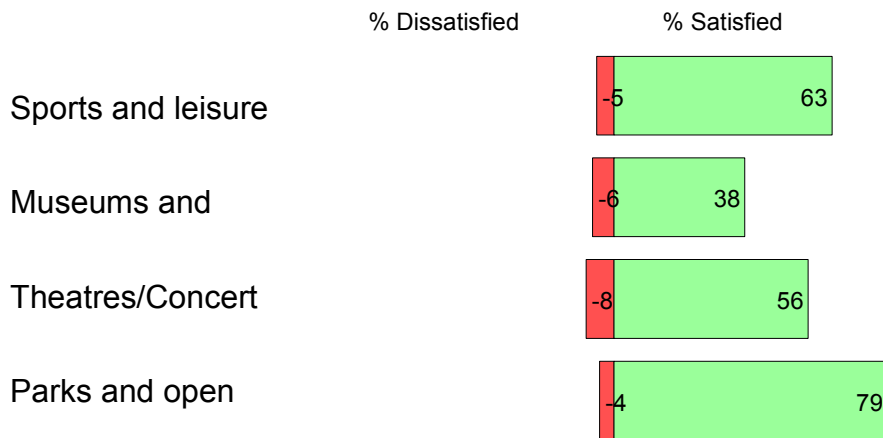
- 66% are satisfied with local recycling facilities
- 72% are satisfied with doorstep recycling (new indicator)
- 83% are satisfied with household waste collection

5.4 Cultural and recreational services

While over half of residents are satisfied with cultural and recreational services, just one in twenty are dissatisfied. MORI has found that service users are usually more satisfied with cultural and recreational services, and this is true in Guildford – four in five users are satisfied.

BVPI 119 - Cultural and Recreational Services

Q Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide



Base: All valid BVPI responses

Source: MORI

6. COMPLAINTS

6.1 Around one in six residents claim to have contacted the Council with a complaint within the past twelve months. Of these, three in five are dissatisfied and one third are very dissatisfied. It will be important for the Council to be seen to be addressing complaints issues, though the new customer care policy may address some of these issues.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 This information provides a valuable insight into satisfaction with the Council's services. The findings should be noted by Members and senior managers, be fed into the three year planning process and be used when setting or reviewing targets and priorities. The results highlight the importance of good communications as well as service standards in influencing satisfaction levels (see 4.2 above).

8. DECISION

8.1 The findings have highlighted a number of areas to be looked at in greater detail. The Executive is therefore asked to agree:

- (I) That the Head of Communications be requested to review the Council's communications in light of the findings and make recommendations consistent with MORI's findings. This will inform the review members wish to undertake.
- (II) That the significance of the results for how the Council's services are communicated to residents and users provides background for the forthcoming Communication Strategy.
- (III) That Service Unit managers review their future targets in light of the findings.

ITEM NO. 5

- (IV) That the findings are also used to influence the work of LSP partners through the Community Plan for services where the Council has no direct control.
- (V) That the customer care group monitor complaints in line with the new complaints handling system and review the new corporate 'Customer Care' policy as required.

Reason for Decision:

To address MORI's findings.

Originator:

Toni Noble, Marketing Officer

Tel: (01483) 444339

E-mail: NobleT@guildford.gov.uk