

Report To: Stockport Partnership
Date: 26th May 2010

Item 6.1

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive, Strategy and Democracy, SMBC

Stockport Survey 2009

1. Introduction

The Stockport Survey was undertaken in autumn 2009 to provide a high level understanding of local needs and priorities based on a robust sample of the population (1139 residents), and allow progress against the 2008 statutory Place Survey to be tracked. Findings can also be compared with the 2003 and 2006 Best Value Performance surveys.

To support the borough wide sample a 'booster survey' was commissioned in the Priority 1 Areas, Adswold and Bridgehall, Brinnington, Lancashire Hill & Heaton Norris and Town Centre, plus Reddish and Offerton. This has produced statistically robust results for these areas which can be compared with the borough average.

2. Background and Purpose of the report

The Stockport Survey contains over 30 questions, many with multiple possible answers. To disseminate the full results of the survey to this group would be both time consuming and of limited value. This report therefore seeks to high-light those issues which were identified as important/ in need of improvement by a significant proportion of people and those issues which are becoming more important/ in need of improvement.

There remains a need to interpret and understand these issues by triangulating survey results with quantitative performance data, and by involving local people in more qualitative engagement, to allow improvement priorities and areas of good performance to be identified and fully understood.

This report is intended to begin this process, disseminating to partners the headline issues and agreeing how these are taken forward. In many cases the findings confirm what we already know and this process is intended to consolidate rather than duplicate existing work.

3. Identified Issues

In summary results from the 2009 Stockport Survey are consistent with those of the 2008 Place Survey. Overall satisfaction with the borough remains at over 80%. Priorities for improvement remain the same as 2008:

- traffic congestion,
- road & pavement repairs,
- activities for teenagers,
- crime and
- clean streets.

There are, however, some factors which are increasing in need of improvement including job prospects and cultural facilities. Clean streets and levels of crime continue to be the most important factors in making Stockport a good place to live, followed by health services.

Looking primarily at those issues which are important to local people, drive overall satisfaction and/ or are in need of improvement the following issues and messages emerge:

3.1 Safer/ Stronger Stockport

3.1.1 Community Safety:

For over three quarters of respondents low levels of crime remain the most important factors in making Stockport a good place to live and are viewed as in need of improvement by 38%.

Perceptions across a range of community safety indicators has remained consistent, though improved perceptions were seen in relation to the proportion of people feeling safe after dark, this increased 14% points to 51%. There has also been an increase in the proportion of people who feel that local concerns about anti-social behaviour are understood by services to 25% from 22%. A similar proportion of people feel service are successful in dealing with ASB.

This positive performance is not replicated in priority neighbourhoods, in Brinnington perceptions of drug use/ dealing remain two and a half times the borough average whilst in Heaton Norris/ Lancashire Hill perceptions of anti-social behaviour as a problem have increased 15% points to three times the borough average. However in Brinnington perceptions of anti-social behaviour as a problem has declined 17% points to 38%, although this remains more than double the borough average.

3.1.2 Community Cohesion:

The proportion of respondents who agree people respect ethnic differences has declined 5% points, whilst the proportion of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhoods has also declined 5% points.

This decline is for the most part replicated across priority neighbourhoods in some case by more than 20% points, with the exception of Heaton Norris/ Lancashire Hill where respect for ethnic differences increased 30% points.

3.1.3 Community Engagement

Over one quarter of respondents would like to be more involved in decision making, however this increases to two thirds dependent on the issue.

The proportion of people who feel able, and informed about how, to influence decision has remained constant between 2008 and 2009 at approximately one quarter, however in priority neighbourhoods of Adswood and Bridgehall, and Brinnington perceptions exceed the borough average and there has been significant improvement between 2008 and 2009.

In Adswood and Bridgehall the proportion of respondents who feel able to influence decisions increased 20% points to 55%, while in Brinnington the proportion of respondents who feel informed about how to influence decision making increased by 14% points to 47% points. Conversely in Heaton Norris and Lancashire Hill the proportion of people who felt able to influence decisions halved to 16%.

3.2 Greener Stockport

3.2.1 A sustainable approach to the natural environment

Satisfaction with a number of key indicators has increased:

Street cleanliness	has increased 6% points to 58%
Waste collection	has increased 6% points to 84%
Doorstep recycling	has increased 10% points to 77%

Overall street cleanliness is now seen as less in need of improvement, (29% of people now see this as a priority compared with 36% in 2008).

Whilst in priority neighbourhoods perceptions remain below the borough average for these indicators positive outcomes were seen in Brinnington where satisfaction with street cleanliness increased 50% to 74%, exceeding the borough average. In the Town Centre satisfaction with waste collection increased 8% points to within the confidence interval for the borough average.

Conversely the Heaton Norris/ Lancashire Hill area saw a significant decline in satisfaction with door step re-cycling which is now 26% points below the borough average and in the Town Centre satisfaction with street cleanliness declined to 21% points below the borough average.

3.2.2 Congestion/ road and pavement

Over half of respondents felt congestion, and road and pavement repairs were in need of improvement. This is consistent with 2008 and remains two of the three factors most in need of improvement after activities for teenagers.

Levels of traffic congestion are viewed as significantly less in need of improvement in priority neighbourhoods, although in Adswold and Bridgehall and the Town Centre the need to improve congestion has risen by 12 and 19% points respectively.

The need for improvements to road and pavements significantly increased in Brinnington, Heaton Norris/ Lancashire Hill and the Town Centre to match or exceed the borough average in 2009.

3.3 Thriving Stockport

While no significant increase was seen in the importance of job prospects the need for improvement increased by 10% points borough-wide and up to 20% in our priority neighbourhoods. Borough-wide 22% of respondents felt job prospects were in need or improvement, this rose to 44% in Brinnington and 50% in the Town Centre.

3.4 Healthy Stockport

Borough-wide health services are the third most important factor in making Stockport a good place to live, this is not reflected in priority neighbourhoods. Satisfaction with health services is good, more than three quarters of respondents are satisfied with GP and hospital services, although there was a small decline between 2008 and 2009.

3.5 Leisure and cultural

Leisure and cultural facilities are seen as increasingly in need of improvement by 11% of respondents compared with 6% in 2008. Although 2009 results are consistent with 2008 for the various services this maintains the decline seen between 2006 and 2008.

Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities declined 11% points to 47% from 2006 to 2009, and usage declined 6% in the 12 months to 2009. Satisfaction in Offerton, Reddish, Town Centre and Adswold/ Bridgehall is significantly below the borough average.

Satisfaction with libraries remains high, with three quarters of residents satisfied with library services, although usage has declined by 4% points. However usage of libraries in our priority neighbourhoods has declined significantly, in the Town centre by 22% to 51%, and in Adswold/ Bridgehall by 11% to 44% compared to the borough average of 65%.

Activities for teenagers are seen as improvement priority by over half of respondents, this is reflected in priority neighbourhoods. In Brinnington, Lanchashire Hill/ Heaton Norris and Reddish activities for teenagers are seen as less in need of improvement than in 2008.

3.6 Appendix 2 details in full the issues and supporting data is summarised. The confidence interval for the survey is an average of 3 and differences of less than 3 are considered statistically insignificant, ie. there has been no change over time, for the borough wide data and 6 for the priority neighbourhood data.

4. Responding to Issues

4.1 In responding to and using the survey results 3 possible next steps are proposed:

1. The survey results are positive and show improvement over time, these messages and the associated activity should be collated and disseminated through the Council's marketing unit.
2. The survey results are not showing improvement, the underlying issues are understood and agreed improvement priorities. Work is already underway through actions in existing service plans to address the issues. These actions should be identified and progress monitored quarterly through existing performance management arrangements and worked in quarterly reports.
3. The survey results are not showing improvement and the underlying issues are not fully understood. Further consultation/ community engagement is needed to develop a clear understanding of any appropriate/ necessary actions. The Council's corporate consultation team with the partnership's Engaging Communities Advisory Groups to work with lead officers to explore routes to further consultation as part of the corporate Engagement Strategy.

4.2 Lead partnership have proposed for each issue, Board Members are asked to consider and comment on the issues summarised above and detailed in Appendix 1.

5. Responding to Inequalities

The booster samples provide a useful insight into understanding where improvement activity may be most effectively targeted and is useful to understand the related borough-wide results.

Priority neighbourhood data will be used by the Neighbourhood Renewal team when developing the neighbourhood management arrangements and associated local area action plans.

6. Next Steps

6.1 Stockport Council

Results have been communicated to Executive Members and Directors to work

identify the appropriate next steps for each of the emerging issues, appendix 1.

6.2 Partnerships

The full survey results will be made available and can be used by partners and thematic partnerships to inform service planning, prioritisation and engagement activity. Board Members are asked to ensure dissemination of relevant findings within their organisation or partnership, and feedback any emerging actions through performance lead officers.

6.3 Timescales

The 2010 statutory Place Survey will be in field from September and it is therefore desirable that progress is made towards addressing the identified issues in advance of this time.

7. Recommendations

That Board Members:

- Comment on any further analysis required
- Work with thematic partnerships to direct and support actions that address emerging issues