

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM:**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**1 OCTOBER 2009**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **COUNCIL DECISION**

**Corporate Management and Finance: Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Laing**

#### **PLACE SURVEY RESULTS**

1. Summary

This report presents the findings from the release of the national Place Survey data, providing comparative data with the picture nationally and locally, in advance of a special Members Seminar on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

2. Recommendations

1. That the overall report is noted.
2. The date for the special Members Seminar is noted.

3. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

And must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

**Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.**

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**REPORT TO CABINET**

**DATE 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2009**

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**COUNCIL DECISION**

**Corporate Management and Finance: Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Laing**

**PLACE SURVEY**

**SUMMARY**

This report presents the findings from the release of the national Place Survey data, providing comparative data with the picture nationally and locally, in advance of a special Members Seminar on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the overall report is noted.
2. The date for the Special Members Seminar is noted.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Designed primarily for use at the local level, the Place Survey provides information on people's perceptions of their local area and the local services they receive. The statutory survey was conducted nationally between September and December 2008 and is due to take place every 2 years with the next survey being undertaken in the autumn of 2010.
4. Results for all questions were published in March 2009 following the verification checks and the application of the weighting criteria. Notification was then received from DCLG detailing that further verification checks were required to ensure compliance with the Office for National Statistics new Data Quality Standards. A limited set of results, mainly for the questions from the survey relating to the National Indicator set, were then released on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009. At the beginning of September DCLG notified authorities that the remaining outstanding results will be released shortly and an explanation/ rationale for changes made to weightings will also be provided.
5. The information presented below and in the accompanying appendices is based on the partial data release.
6. Appendix 1 provides in graph format the headline analysis showing the results for Stockton compared with the England average, Unitary Authorities, North East Authorities, Tees Valley Authorities and the CIPFA comparator family grouping, as well as quartile position. These results are a mix of March 09 and June 09 released data.

## NATIONAL COMPARISON

7. Compared with the national average Stockton's performance is higher than or equal in 50% of the measures. Areas where Stockton's performance is significantly better than the national average (i.e., more than 3%) are:

- Clear of litter and refuse (↑7.4%)
- Refuse collection (↑ 12.2%)
- Doorstep recycling (↑ 8.5%)
- Satisfaction with the Council (↑ 3.6%)

Areas where Stockton's performance is lower than the national average are:

- Sport/leisure (↓ 3.6%) \*
- Museums/galleries (↓ 7.7%) \*
- Theatres/concert halls (↓ 5.8%) \*
- Parks/Countryside (↓ 6.2%) \*
- Getting on well (↓ 4.2%) @
- Satisfaction with the area (↓3.4%) \$
- Volunteering (↓ 6.9%) \*
- Perception of ASB as a problem (↓ 4.3%) @
- Parental responsibility (↓ 5.2%) @
- Not treating each other with respect (↓ 6.6%) @
- Drunk and rowdy behaviour as a problem (↓ 4.2%) @
- Drug use/drug dealing as a problem (↓ 9.1%) \*
- Perception of good health (↓ 5.2%) @
- Involved in local government decision making ((↓ 6.2%) @

## TEES VALLEY COMPARISON

8. Analysis of the areas identified in paragraph 7 in relation to a comparison with other authorities in the Tees Valley shows that the Stockton does not perform as well as the Tees Valley average in relation to those indicators marked \*. For those measures marked @ the Stockton position is very much in line with others in the Tees Valley. For those measures marked \$ Stockton's position is better than that of the Tees Valley average.

## CIPFA NEAR NEIGHBOUR COMPARISON

9. When compared with CIPFA near neighbours Stockton is lower than average in the areas detailed below:

- Museums and galleries
- Involvement in local decision making
- Perception of anti-social behaviour as a problem

In many other areas the Stockton picture is significantly better:

- Keeping the highway clear of litter (↑ 14.2%)
- Refuse collection (↑ 14.2%)
- Door step recycling (↑ 9.1%)
- Council provides value for money (↑ 5.7%)
- The way the council is run (↑ 8.1%)
- People from different backgrounds get on well together (↑ 3.2%)
- Satisfaction with the area as a place to live (↑4.4 %)
- Think the police and other public services are successfully dealing with anti-social behaviour (↑ 4.1%)

## **PEOPLE, PERCEPTIONS AND PLACE**

10. Following the national release of the Place Survey data in June, IPSOS MORI undertook some analysis of the relationship between individuals' perceptions of their area and contextual factors such as demographic patterns, levels of deprivation and ethnic diversity in order to provide a framework within which to understand perception and performance data. Crucially, it further underlined the need for agencies to work in partnership to meet the needs and aspirations of their communities, marshalling resources across the public, voluntary and private sectors.
11. The report further explored ways in which individual services can build public confidence given that in the main the findings from the Place Survey reinforce the impression that many councils have failed to win the hearts and minds of those they serve, so that even where satisfaction with local areas is increasing and local people accept council services are getting better, they often assume this is in spite of the council rather than because of it.
12. As the focus of local public services increasingly shifts towards delivering the outcomes that matter for local communities, the report, provides an insight into what drives individuals' perceptions of their local areas.
13. The report also gives clear pointers to local authorities about what they can do to turn these trends around and where efforts may be best focussed, acknowledging and identifying those areas that are not within the control of local public services. It also acknowledges that influencing perceptions is not as easy as we might expect and has established 'challenge indexes'.
14. A member's seminar is planned in mid October where Ben Page from MORI will explore this further based on Stockton's data.

## **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

15. There are no financial or legal implications as a result of this report.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

16. There are no risks directly associated with this report.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

17. The report supports all themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

18. The report was not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. The report does not seek approval for a new policy.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

19. Not applicable.

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