



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8TH DECEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON WASTE MANAGEMENT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MAINTENANCE SERVICES

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with the results of the biennial survey of the Authority's key frontline services including refuse collection, waste disposal, environmental cleansing and streetscene maintenance.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Every two years the Community and Leisure Division (formerly Public Services) undertakes a survey to assess how well we deliver our frontline environmental services. As part of the process we also gauge opinion on what residents perceive as priority environmental matters.
- 2.2 High levels of satisfaction have been maintained for 2015 and these results compare favourably with those of previous surveys. This is reassuring given that the Authority has implemented a number of changes to key services and demonstrates that we are continuing in the right direction to meet the needs and aspirations of our residents.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Public consultation is a key element of how the Community and Leisure Division shapes its services and determines priorities. This ensures that we meet the needs and aspirations of our customers whilst at the same time delivering services that are effective and efficient. This ethos fits in with the "Caerphilly Delivers-Single Integrated Plan" with its aims of contributing to a Greener Caerphilly, a Safer Caerphilly and a prosperous Caerphilly.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 In order to meet the aspirations and needs of our residents and to provide even better services, we asked the public what they think about:
- The quality of their local environment.
 - The range of services that we deliver.

The Survey

The survey took place in August/September 2015. Questionnaires were sent to a random selection of 1500 residential addresses covering properties in all wards of the County Borough. (The survey was available to all on line too).

There were 382 completed questionnaires received equating to a response rate of 25.5%.

Response Rates

Year	Returns	% Returned
2005	336	22.4%
2007	450	30%
2009	400	26.6%
2011	418	27.9%
2013	424	28.3%
2015	382	25.5%

Taking the Holistic Approach

In the early years of our survey work questions focussed on waste collection and cleansing matters. However, over the years as departments have joined together our surveys have become more comprehensive and encompassing. It is worth noting that holistic approach is in line with what the WAO Wales Audit Office has previously commented on seamlessness.

Developing on this “joined up” approach a series of questions on highways, transportation and engineering have been included in this years form. In this way we have covered the key aspects of the streetscene across the County Borough.

Levels of Satisfaction and Service Importance

Residents were asked to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with our services. They were also asked to rate the importance of services.

Waste Management

It is encouraging to see that satisfaction levels for the waste management services have remained high again although in comparison with the previous survey they have dropped slightly. This is possibly attributable to a number of changes and refinements to our collection and disposal services: e.g. the introduction of charging for green garden waste sacks and the implementation of strict site user policies at our Household Waste Recycling Facilities has been the subject of lively debate. Indeed this is evidenced by the feedback received from staff currently undertaking the “Seven Sins” Recycling Awareness Campaign.

Satisfaction Rates for Waste & Associated Services

Function	Importance	Satisfaction	
	2015	2015	2013
Refuse Collection	98.1%	92.7%	95.1%
Street Cleansing	95.3%	77.3%	75.2%
Recycling	93.2%	91.4%	95.0%
Food Waste Caddy Collection	77.4%	77.9%	87.9%
Garden Waste Green Sack Collection	79.7%	73.4%	85.6%
Civic Amenity Household Waste Recycling Sites	84.9%	74.3%	86.1%
Public Conveniences	77.1%	46.6%	48.1%
Grass Cutting & Weed Control	84.4%	63.3%	70.0%

Recycling Collections

Year	Satisfaction Level
2007	84.2%
2009	88.2%
2011	94%
2013	95%
2015	91.4%

The satisfaction level for weekly kerbside recycling collection service compares favourably with previous years results.

Recycling Container

When we asked about satisfaction with the type of container provided for recycling more than 90% of respondents were satisfied (only 2% were dissatisfied with their container). With all the debate about recycling targets and collection systems, we also asked the public about the possibility of changing collection methods to systems involving source segregation of methods with boxes and sacks. Although, some thought source segregation was a good idea, the vast majority of respondents were against change and some commented adversely about several of the Welsh coastal local authorities where source separation schemes operated.

Garden Waste (Green Hessian Sack) Collections

Year	Satisfaction Level
2007	78.7%
2009	77.2%
2011	81.6%
2013	87.0%
2015	73.4%

The introduction of weekly garden waste collection services (operating all year round) has previously resulted in a steady improvement in satisfaction levels. The trend has not continued this year and we have witnessed a slight down turn in satisfaction levels. This may be attributable to the introduction of a charging policy for the green hessian sacks.

Grass Cutting & Weed Control

There has been a drop in satisfaction levels (from 70% to 63%) this year and this may be attributable to the reduction in the grass cutting frequency and/or that conditions may have been more favourable for vegetation growth this year.

Street Cleansing

From the survey results the public regard Street Cleansing as the second most important service we provide (refuse collection was regarded the most important). So it is reassuring that the satisfaction levels for street cleansing had actually improved on those of the 2013 survey.

Year	Satisfaction Level
2007	73.6%
2009	73.4%
2011	69.4%
2013	75.2%
2015	77.3%

Developing on this the public were asked what their priority cleanliness issues are. Yet again, *food on the go* (fast food) litter and *dog fouling* were the top two matters of concern. It is worth noting that fly tipping, cigarette ends and chewing gum were also perceived as major problems too.

Town Centres

82.2% were satisfied with the general cleanliness of their local town centre.

Parks & Play Areas

67% of the public were satisfied with the condition of your local park/play area. Coincidentally, this mirrors the satisfaction level in 2013.

Civic Amenity/Household Waste Recycling (CA/HWR) Sites

Year	Satisfaction Level
2007	79%
2009	77%
2011	82%
2013	87%
2015	74%

The Authority presently operates a network of 6 CAHWR sites which are located across the County Borough. Since the last survey in (2013) there have been a number of major changes to operations. Significantly, this includes the implementation of a strict site user policy which prohibits traders and larger vehicles using the sites. As part of new procedures a permitting system has been introduced to ensure that our sites are not abused and are there simply for the residents of our County Borough to recycle and dispose of their excess wastes. In addition, working hours have been rationalised resulting in each site being closed for at least 1 day of the 7 days per week. These measures could have contributed to a slight downturn in satisfaction levels with this function.

Highways, Transportation & Engineering Services

This is a new element of the survey and it was noticeable that although satisfaction levels were generally lower than waste services their importance to the public was very high. The difference in satisfaction levels is probably due to the fact that the waste services are delivered weekly to all properties 52 weeks of the year. Highways services on the other hand, are arguably not as on 'the doorstep' as much as the Authority's collection teams.

Highways Transportation & Engineering Importance & Satisfaction Levels

Function	Importance	Satisfaction
Road Surfaces (pothole repair)	93.7%	53.5%
Pavement Surfaces	93.1%	67%
Street Lighting (lantern replacement)	88.7%	81.8%
Winter Maintenance (gritting)	92.1%	72.4%
Walking and Cycling Routes (for active travel)	74.9%	62.9%
The Local Rail Service Overall	74.5%	70.1%
The Provision of Rail Park & Ride	69.8%	65.7%
The Provision of off Street Parking	81.8%	55.7%
Pedestrianised Areas	81.5%	71.1%

At this juncture we have no comparable data to review however, there is some interesting information that we can consider. A positive outcome in the highways question was that when asked about carriageway surface treatments 68.2% were satisfied with work undertaken. This information is food for thought and provides a baseline for future comparison and in the meantime allows us to think about where we can target resources and reshape our services.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant equalities implications associated with this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The views of the consultees where appropriate have been reflected in the report.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 This years satisfaction levels have been maintained although there has been a slight dip in satisfaction across the board with the noticeable exception of cleansing which has improved in trying conditions. Two services that have experienced a drop in satisfaction levels are garden waste collections and CAHWR sites. It is possible that implementing certain MTFP measures in these functions have affected results. However, on a positive, satisfaction levels have remained high in the key kerbside collection services. This is important because they are the functions that people see and expect every week of the year.

It is also worth mentioning that since the Authority's last survey in 2013, two Welsh Government commissioned surveys have been undertaken which reveal that Caerphilly is standing out amongst other Councils in Wales. For example, in the *2013 National Survey of Wales* Caerphilly came top of all the Local Authorities for i)provision of high quality services and ii)top for the way it informs local people about how they are performing. In the *2014 National Survey of Wales*, Caerphilly had an 88% satisfaction level for its recycling service (the highest in Wales).

So Caerphilly can continue to be proud of its frontline functions although, there is still room for improvement. To this end the customer satisfaction results and more importantly the comments received will be taken on board and will help us shape our services accordingly and ensure we remain a citizen focussed and caring service provider.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To ensure that service delivery meets the needs and aspirations of our Council tax payers where that aspiration is affordable.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Highways Act 1980, Environmental Protection Acts 1990, Local Government Act 2000.

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