REPORT TO: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT ON: **ANNUAL CONSUMER SURVEY 2013**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

REPORT NO: **16-2014**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report summarises the main findings from the 2013 consumer survey and explains their use.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members:

(i) note the results contained in this report and agree that the issues raised should continue to be addressed as part of the Council's commitment to continuous improvement using the Public Sector Improvement Framework model

(ii) remit the Chief Executive to disseminate the customer contact results to departments for use in staff training on customer care

(iii) invite each Local Community Planning Partnership to consider the key results for their area which will be sent to Chairs and Communities Officers for distribution

(iv) authorise officers to publish the full survey report on the Council's website and make available copies on request as part of the Council's commitment to Public Performance Reporting

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4. INTRODUCTION

4.1 The Council commissions an annual consumer survey to help evaluate progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the Council Plan. The main purpose of the survey is to track over time a core set of questions relating to customer satisfaction and the public's overall perception of the Council as an organisation, and the key results from these are summarised in section 5 below. Graphs showing the long term trends on these core questions are presented in Appendix One. In addition, the survey asks about community safety; satisfaction with information provided by the Council, including on its website; and satisfaction with local facilities, environment and quality of life.

4.2 The survey is conducted by an independent market research company, currently Research Resource. As in the past 6 years, the city-wide survey was based on a sample of over 2,000 citizens, which allows some analysis at ward level for use by Local Community Planning Partnerships.

4.3 Key results from the survey are summarised below. A full copy of the research report has been passed to the Group Leaders and the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Independent members. There is significantly more detail in the full report than can be summarised here and this report focusses on those questions that have been used as Council Plan performance indicators.

4.4 To achieve efficiency savings through economies of scale, the annual consumer survey was again carried out in conjunction with a wider Citizen Survey on behalf of the Dundee Partnership, which covers issues such as neighbourhoods, housing, community involvement, health, employment, community safety and money matters, and focuses in particular on community regeneration areas, although city-wide results are also analysed for comparative purposes. Results on these issues will be reported through the Dundee Partnership, and are included in the full copy of the research report referred to above. A summary of key results for each ward will be sent to each Local Community Planning Partnership.

5. KEY RESULTS

5.1 Customer Contact

5.1.1 A key objective of the survey is to gauge the levels of customer satisfaction perceived by citizens who contact a Council service, either by phone or by visit to an office. Tables 1 and 2 below show the results on a range of satisfaction indicators in 2013 compared to previous years. The % figures shown represent those who said they were very or fairly satisfied.

Table 1 Satisfaction with Telephone Contacts

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Overall Friendliness/Courtesy of Staff	84%	92%	93%	87%	93%	86%	95%	97%	98%	96%
How Quickly Phone Was Answered	85%	91%	91%	94%	94%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%
How Well Staff Understood What Was Wanted	79%	90%	93%	92%	91%	83%	89%	97%	97%	96%
Overall Helpfulness of Staff	84%	92%	93%	87%	93%	86%	95%	97%	98%	96%
Ease of Getting Someone Who Could Help	76%	80%	89%	88%	93%	93%	97%	98%	98%	96%
Outcome of Contact	71%	77%	82%	72%	77%	71%	72%	88%	91%	92%
Average	80%	87%	90%	87%	90%	86%	91%	96%	97%	96%

Table 2 Satisfaction with Office Visits

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Ease Of Getting To Office	96%	98%	100%	94%	96%	98%	98%	99%	97%	100%
Suitability of Office	75%	92%	97%	91%	89%	93%	94%	99%	96%	100%
Overall Friendliness/Courtesy Of Staff	85%	92%	81%	89%	82%	93%	91%	99%	91%	96%
Overall Helpfulness Of Staff	85%	92%	81%	89%	82%	93%	91%	99%	91%	96%
How Well Staff Understood What Was Wanted	82%	92%	87%	94%	86%	91%	89%	99%	89%	94%
Outcome of Contact	62%	88%	80%	76%	56%	77%	75%	90%	71%	75%
Average	81%	92%	88%	89%	82%	91%	90%	97%	89%	93%

5.1.2 Satisfaction with telephone contacts remains very high. Satisfaction with office visits has increased again after the dip in 2012 compared to the exceptionally high score in 2011.

5.1.3 Of those who had recently contacted the Council, 49% of respondents said that their last contact was to request a service and 95% of these were satisfied. 40% said the contact was to seek information and 91% of these were satisfied. Satisfaction levels for service requests and information are very similar to those in 2012.

5.1.4 The proportion saying that their contact was to make a complaint was 11%, compared to 41% in 2008, 29% in 2009, 19% in 2010, 10% in 2011 and 7% in 2012. Of those who did contact the Council to make a complaint, 65% said they were satisfied or very satisfied that the Council responded reasonably to the complaint, compared to 42% in 2011 and 40% in 2012.

5.1.5 Respondents were asked if they got what they needed in one contact. The percentage saying that they did so, in 2013 and the previous years in which this question has been asked, was:

Customer received what they needed in one contact				
2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
65%	66%	85%	91%	90%

5.1.6 The survey asks respondents whether they receive enough information about the Council and the services it provides. Results for 2013 and the previous years in which this question has been asked are:

Received enough information about the Council and the services it provides										
2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
60%	64%	69%	70%	64%	71%	66%	69%	97%	89%	93%

5.1.7 The survey asks about use of, and satisfaction with, the Council's website. Results for 2013 and the previous years in which this question has been asked are:

Used website?						
2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
32%	22%	31%	27%	18%	18%	28%

Satisfaction with website	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
How easily you managed to find information wanted	87%	93%	99%	94%	99%
Amount of information provided on the website	87%	93%	99%	92%	100%

The Steering Group which manages the development of the Council's website continues to promote its use and monitor satisfaction. Feedback is sought on satisfaction with every page of the site using the GovMetric system. A strategy is in place to increase the number and range of online transactions and an advertising campaign is planned for the launch of the 'secure authentication' service which will expand the range of services we can offer online and allow citizens to opt for 'paperless' services.

5.2 <u>Community Safety</u>

5.2.1 In 2012, a new community safety question was introduced - 'Taking everything into account, how safe do you feel your neighbourhood is as a place to live?'. In 2012, 57% said they felt very safe, 41% felt fairly safe and 1% a bit unsafe. In 2013, the % saying they felt very safe increased to 79%, with 19% saying fairly safe and 1% a bit unsafe.

5.2.2 The survey also includes a question first asked in 2011, which involves respondents saying if they feel the crime rate in their local area has changed in the last 2 years. Results were:

	2011	2012	2013
More crime	6%	8%	5%
About the same	70%	73%	73%
Less crime	9%	2%	2%
Don't know	15%	16%	20%

5.2.3 Asked about the factors which contribute most to the level of crime in their neighbourhood, 38% of respondents said 'don't know' and the only other sizable response was Alcohol/Drugs at 36%.

5.3 **Public Image Profile**

5.3.1 The questionnaire includes a list of ten factors which seek to assess respondents' overall impression of the Council. The statement 'Has sufficient resources' was dropped for 2013 as it was felt this was not a measure of the Council's own performance. The full list of factors is shown in Table 3 below, along with the percentage of interviewees who responded positively in 2013 and previous years. Some other factors have changed over time but the main aim is to use the overall index number of the average of all of the factors. This is shown also as a three year rolling average to smooth out blips potentially caused by timing and change of factors.

Table 3 Public Image Profile

Public Image Profile	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
Good Range of Services	63%	69%	81%	72%	77%	74%	77%	85%	77%	84%
Friendly Employees	68%	75%	76%	73%	77%	77%	80%	82%	63%	69%
Good Quality Services	60%	64%	72%	66%	74%	67%	74%	81%	73%	79%
Efficient Services	58%	63%	66%	62%	70%	65%	67%	81%	66%	81%
Communicates Well	47%	53%	61%	57%	67%	55%	61%	66%	52%	61%
Promotes Services Well	47%	55%	58%	54%	70%	58%	61%	71%	55%	60%
Value For Money	49%	50%	56%	51%	65%	48%	58%	74%	57%	72%
Listens to Complaints	53%	55%	64%	61%	68%	64%	68%	63%	46%	58%
Has Sufficient Resources	55%	55%	68%	60%	69%	64%	71%	66%	57%	-
Tackles Important Issues for the Future of the City	41%	44%	55%	55%	65%	53%	54%	68%	55%	61%
Ensures Sustainable Use of Resources and Care for the Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	66%	59%	63%	65%	56%	60%
Average	54%	58%	66%	62%	70%	62%	67%	73%	60%	68%
Three year rolling average			**59%**	**62%**	**66%**	**65%**	**66%**	**67%**	**67%**	**67%**

5.3.2 The average score for the public image of the Council across all indicators in 2013 was up compared to 2012, reflecting higher scores on all the individual factors. The factor which received the lowest rating was again 'listens to complaints' but following last year's survey action has been taken to improve how the Council records and responds to complaints and it is pleasing to note a higher level of satisfaction this year.

5.3.3 The survey also asks respondents to state which of the 'public image' factors are of most importance to them, and there is a correlation between the top priorities identified by respondents and the factors on which the Council scored most highly. The top four priorities identified by respondents:

- good quality services
- efficient services
- services which are value for money
- good range of services

also received the top four scores in terms of how our performance is perceived, although in a slightly different order.

5.4 **Local Facilities and Quality of Life**

5.4.1 The survey asks about satisfaction with a range of local facilities, ease of accessing those facilities, satisfaction with aspects of the local environment and how good the neighbourhood is as a place to live. Overall results are set out in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7 below. Additional facilities were added to the list of services in 2012 – social housing, access to free cash machine/auto teller and employment and advice services – so 2011 comparisons are not available for these.

5.4.2 Note that the figures presented in Tables 4 and 5 exclude respondents who stated that the facility did not exist or they never used it - the figures show the % satisfied or % saying access is very or fairly easy of those who expressed an opinion.

5.4.3 Satisfaction with local facilities is shown in the table below.

Table 4 Satisfaction with local facilities

	% satisfied 2011	**% satisfied 2012**	**% satisfied 2013**
Fire Service	100%	100%	100%
Local schools	99%	99%	100%
Local health services	99%	96%	98%
Refuse collection	99%	98%	100%
Community centres and libraries	98%	99% libraries 97% centres	100% libraries 99% centres
Police service	98%	99%	100%
Social care/social work	98%	97%	99%
Social Housing	N/A	94%	90%
Street cleaning	97%	96%	95%
Parks and open spaces	97%	95%	96%
Public transport	96%	97%	98%
Local shops	96%	98%	98%
Sport and leisure facilities	97%	97%	98%
Community warden service	99%	99%	98%
Local youth facilities	85%	93%	87%
Local phone boxes	95%	94%	97%
Access to free cash machine/auto teller	N/A	99%	97%
Employment and advice services	N/A	89%	93%

The 5% drop in satisfaction with Local Youth Facilities is the only significant change.

5.4.4 The % of respondents saying that access to the same facilities is very or fairly easy is shown in the following table:

Table 5 Ease of accessing local facilities

	% very or fairly easy 2011	**% very or fairly easy 2012**	**% very or fairly easy 2013**
Fire service	100%	100%	100%
Local schools	100%	99%	100%

Local health services	99%	99%	98%
Refuse collection	100%	100%	99%
Community centres and libraries	99%	99% libraries 99% centres	98% libraries 97% centres
Police service	99%	100%	100%
Social care/social work	100%	99%	100%
Social Housing	N/A	93%	91%
Street cleaning	100%	100%	100%
Parks and open spaces	98%	99%	99%
Public transport	98%	99%	99%
Local shops	99%	99%	99%
Sport and leisure facilities	99%	97%	96%
Community warden service	98%	99%	98%
Local youth facilities	95%	98%	98%
Local phone boxes	94%	98%	97%
Access to free cash machine/auto teller	N/A	98%	97%
Employment and advice services	N/A	98%	97%

The only facility where the score for ease of access is less than 90% is for social housing, at 91% in 2013. This reflects the availability of social housing in certain parts of the city.

5.4.5 Satisfaction levels with aspects of the local environment are shown in the table below:

Table 6 Local Environment

	% Satisfied						
	2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
Shopping Facilities	85%	80%	87%	94%	97%	98%	98%
Cleanliness of area around home	83%	79%	91%	93%	97%	98%	95%
Cleanliness of streets	71%	78%	91%	94%	97%	97%	96%
Quality and maintenance of open spaces	70%	80%	88%	91%	97%	97%	95%
Condition of roads, pavements and streetlighting	49%	61%	80%	88%	89%	84%	72%
Children's play areas	57%	52%	68%	55%	88%	88%	86%

The results in Table 6 remain positive, showing high levels of satisfaction with aspects of the local environment, although there has been a reduction in the % satisfied with the condition of roads, pavements and streetlighting compared to the high scores achieved in recent years.

5.4.6 As in 2012, the 2013 survey asked respondents to rate how good their neighbourhood is as a place to live in. This question was worded differently than between 2007 and 2011, when we asked people instead about satisfaction with the overall quality of life in their neighbourhood.

Results on this previous question are given below for reference until we can present more long term trend information on the new question.

Table 7 Quality of Life / how good is your neighbourhood

Quality of Life in the Neighbourhood (old question)	% Satisfied				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Very satisfied	43%	31%	50%	40%	52%
Fairly satisfied	46%	55%	45%	54%	47%
Fairly dissatisfied	8%	9%	5%	4%	2%
Very dissatisfied	3%	5%	0%	2%	0%

How good is your neighbourhood as a place to live? (new question)	%	%
	2012	2013
Very good	56%	71%
Good	43%	26%
Average	1%	2%
Poor/very poor	1%	1%

6. **BENCHMARKING**

6.1 The Improvement Service for Local Government in Scotland is supporting the development of a benchmarking group for Councils and other organisations using the Public Sector Improvement Framework, which may provide opportunities to benchmark our customer satisfaction results with other authorities. Data from comparable Councils will be included in future reports if this becomes available.

6.2 The latest results from the Scottish Household Survey were produced in August 2013, covering the results of surveys carried out in 2011 and 2012. This is an entirely separate survey, commissioned by the Scottish Government, and none of the questions used are directly comparable to the Council's own survey. However, there are a number of questions which cover similar areas to those covered in our own survey and outlined above, and do provide an opportunity to benchmark the Scottish Household Survey results for Dundee with the average for Scotland as a whole. Tables 8, 9,10 and 11 below show results from the sections on 'local authority services' and 'neighbourhoods'.

Table 8 - Scottish Household Survey

Agreement with statement 'My Council provides high quality services'	Dundee				Scotland as a whole			
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2007	2009	2011	2013
Strongly agree	7%	6%	7%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%
Tend to agree	39%	37%	37%	34%	38%	35%	37%	38%
Neither agree or disagree	16%	25%	21%	33%	19%	23%	20%	21%
Tend to disagree	20%	16%	15%	14%	20%	19%	18%	17%
Strongly disagree	12%	9%	11%	6%	13%	11%	11%	10%
No opinion	8%	6%	9%	7%	5%	7%	9%	8%

Table 9 - Scottish Household Survey

Agreement with statement 'My Council does the best can with the money available'	Dundee				Scotland as a whole			
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2007	2009	2011	2013
Strongly agree	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%
Tend to agree	29%	33%	33%	27%	34%	32%	32%	35%
Neither agree or disagree	15%	21%	21%	36%	17%	20%	17%	17%
Tend to disagree	23%	18%	22%	14%	21%	20%	18%	18%
Strongly disagree	16%	12%	10%	9%	15%	13%	14%	12%
No opinion	11%	11%	11%	8%	9%	11%	13%	12%

Table 10 - Scottish Household Survey

Agreement with statement 'My Council is addressing the key issues affecting the quality of life in my neighbourhood'	Dundee				Scotland as a whole			
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2007	2009	2011	2013
Strongly agree	7%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Tend to agree	33%	32%	31%	26%	34%	30%	30%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%	25%	24%	38%	20%	23%	21%	23%
Tend to disagree	19%	23%	18%	16%	19%	20%	17%	18%
Strongly disagree	13%	6%	12%	7%	13%	12%	13%	11%
No opinion	11%	8%	11%	9%	9%	11%	15%	13%

Table 11 - Scottish Household Survey

Rating of neighbourhood as a place to live	Dundee				Scotland as a whole			
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2007	2009	2011	2013
Very good	47%	46%	43%	49%	51%	52%	55%	55%
Fairly good	44%	43%	48%	45%	41%	40%	38%	38%
Fairly poor	6%	7%	7%	3%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Very poor	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
No opinion	1%	4%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%

6.3 For the questions in Tables 8, 9 and 10, there has been a fall in the % of respondents who strongly agree or tend to agree with the statements. However, there has also been a fall in the % of respondents who tend to disagree or strongly disagree, with a corresponding increase in the % who neither agree nor disagree. Compared to the figures for Scotland as a whole, Dundee has a higher % of 'neutral' responses and less who are either positive or negative about the statements.

6.4 For the rating of 'neighbourhood as a place to live' shown in Table 11, there has been an increase in the % of Dundee respondents saying their neighbourhood is 'very good', although it is still a bit lower than the Scottish average. The % of Dundee respondents saying 'fairly poor' has fallen and is now lower than the Scottish average.

7. **CONCLUSIONS**

The Annual Consumer Survey continues to provide valuable information on residents' perception of the Council and satisfaction with local facilities and neighbourhoods, as well as the way people access our services. As in previous years, the issues raised by the survey results will continue to be addressed as part of the Council's commitment to continuous improvement through consultation with service users. The long term trends show that the Council is continuing to improve in public perception for customer service and communication.

7.2 The survey provides important information on trends for self-assessment under the Public Sector Improvement Framework, which is a key part of the Council's performance management arrangements to ensure Best Value. The results will be distributed amongst officers and used in training courses in relevant areas.

8 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

9 **CONSULTATIONS**

The Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted on this report.

10 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background paper was relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Citizen Survey 2013 – Research Report prepared for Dundee City Council by Research Resource.

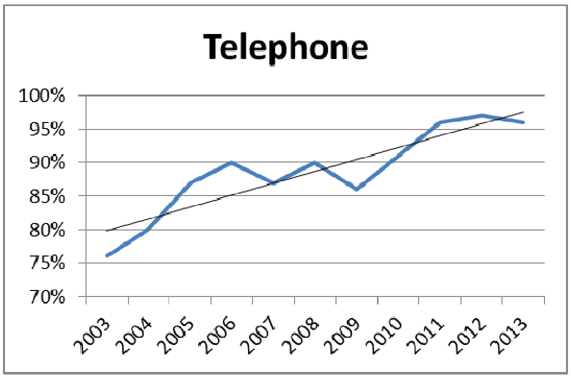
David K Dorward
Chief Executive 06/01/2014

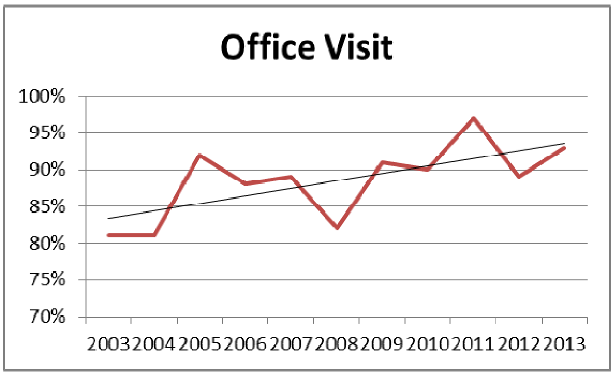
Appendix One

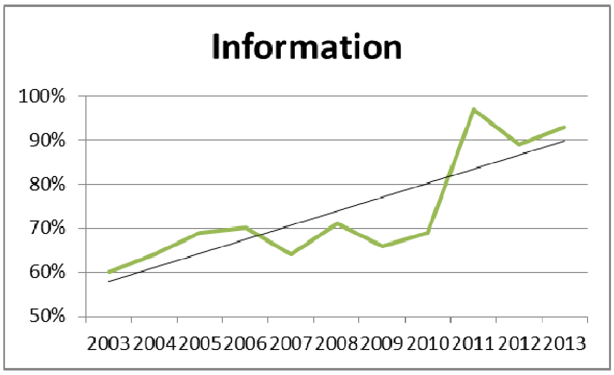
Ten Year Trend analysis

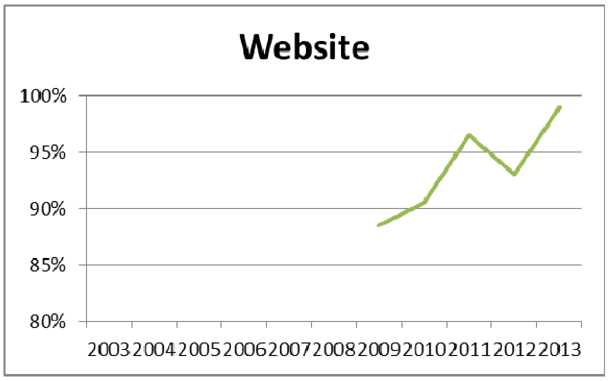
The original purpose of the annual citizen survey was to provide a longitudinal measure related to citizens' perception of the Council as delivering customer service, good communication with citizens and their overall perception of the organisation. Suring the ten year period the website has become more important and the survey also support the local community planning partnerships strategy.

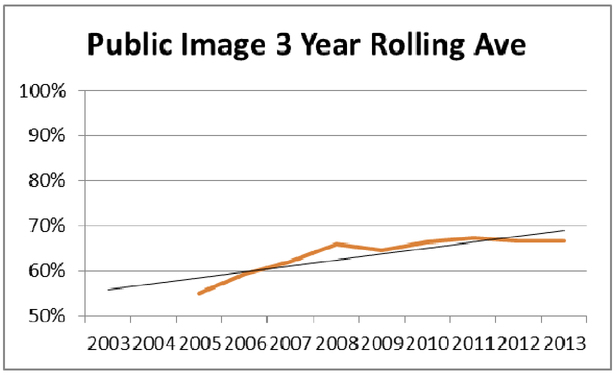
The data is provided in the report and the graphs below show the long term improving trend in all of these main corporate performance areas at the same time as financial and efficiency savings have been delivered.

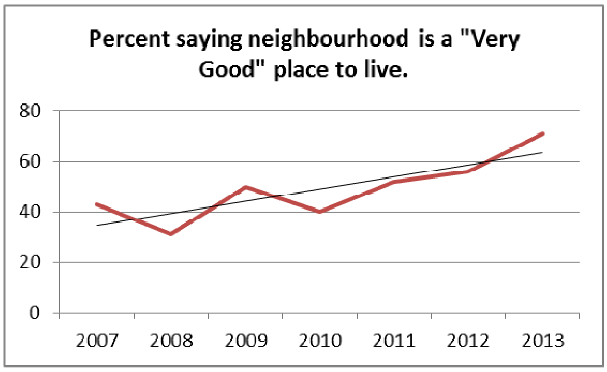












NB in the neighbourhood question, there was a change to the wording in 2012. The question in previous years asked if quality of life in the neighbourhood was very good.