REPORT TO: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 9 FEBRUARY 2015**

REPORT ON: **ANNUAL CONSUMER SURVEY 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

REPORT NO: **20-2015**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report summarises the main findings from the 2014 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 7 years, the city-wide survey was based on a sample of 800 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

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Overall Friendliness/Courtesy of Staff	92%	93%	87%	93%	86%	95%	97%	98%	96%	96%
How Quickly Phone Was Answered	91%	91%	94%	94%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%	98%
How Well Staff Understood What Was Wanted	90%	93%	92%	91%	83%	89%	97%	97%	96%	96%
Overall Helpfulness of Staff	92%	93%	87%	93%	86%	95%	97%	98%	96%	96%
Ease of Getting Someone Who Could Help	80%	89%	88%	93%	93%	97%	98%	98%	96%	98%
Outcome of Contact	77%	82%	72%	77%	71%	72%	88%	91%	92%	91%
Average	87%	90%	87%	90%	86%	91%	96%	97%	96%	96%

Table 2 Satisfaction with Office Visits

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Ease Of Getting To Office	98%	100%	94%	96%	98%	98%	99%	97%	100%	96%
Suitability of Office	92%	97%	91%	89%	93%	94%	99%	96%	100%	100%
Overall Friendliness/Courtesy Of Staff	92%	81%	89%	82%	93%	91%	99%	91%	96%	95%
Overall Helpfulness Of Staff	92%	81%	89%	82%	93%	91%	99%	91%	96%	95%
How Well Staff Understood What Was Wanted	92%	87%	94%	86%	91%	89%	99%	89%	94%	88%
Outcome of Contact	88%	80%	76%	56%	77%	75%	90%	71%	75%	67%
Average	92%	88%	89%	82%	91%	90%	97%	89%	93%	90%

5.1.2 Satisfaction with telephone contacts remains very high. Satisfaction with office visits has decreased slightly, due to falls in the % satisfied with the outcome of the visit and with how well staff understood what was wanted.

5.1.3 Of those who had recently contacted the Council, 72% of respondents said that their last contact was to request a service and 95% of these were satisfied, the same as in 2013.. 19% said the contact was to seek information and 84% of these were satisfied, down from 91% in 2013.

5.1.4 The proportion saying that their contact was to make a complaint was 9%. Of those, 70% said they were satisfied or very satisfied that the Council responded reasonably to the complaint, compared to 42% in 2011, 40% in 2012 and 65% in 2013, continuing the positive trend in satisfaction with responses to complaints.

5.1.5 Respondents were asked if they got what they needed in one contact. The percentage saying that they did so, in 2014 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**	**2014**
65%	66%	85%	91%	90%	85%

5.1.6 The survey asks respondents whether they receive enough information about the Council and the services it provides. Results for 2014 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**	**2014**
60%	64%	69%	70%	64%	71%	66%	69%	97%	89%	93%	90%

5.1.7 The survey asks about use of, and satisfaction with, the Council's website. Results for 2014 and the previous years in which this question has been asked are:

Used website?							
2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
32%	22%	31%	27%	18%	18%	28%	24%

Satisfaction with website	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
How easily you managed to find information wanted	87%	93%	99%	94%	99%	99%
Amount of information provided on the website	87%	93%	99%	92%	100%	98%

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 to promote the 'secure authentication' service which will expand the range of services which the Council can offer online and allow citizens to opt for 'paperless' services.

5.2 **Community Safety**

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?'. The results since are:

	2012	2013	2014
Very safe	57%	79%	77%
Fairly safe	41%	19%	21%
A bit unsafe	1%	1%	1%

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	2014
More crime	6%	8%	5%	5%
About the same	70%	73%	73%	78%
Less crime	9%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	15%	16%	20%	15%

5.2.3 Asked about the factors which contribute most to the level of crime in their neighbourhood, the only sizable response was Alcohol/Drugs at 54%. 30% of respondents said 'don't know'.

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 last year 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 2014 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

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Good Range of Services	69%	81%	72%	77%	74%	77%	85%	77%	84%	69%
Friendly Employees	75%	76%	73%	77%	77%	80%	82%	63%	69%	63%
Good Quality Services	64%	72%	66%	74%	67%	74%	81%	73%	79%	66%
Efficient Services	63%	66%	62%	70%	65%	67%	81%	66%	81%	66%
Communicates Well	53%	61%	57%	67%	55%	61%	66%	52%	61%	59%
Promotes Services Well	55%	58%	54%	70%	58%	61%	71%	55%	60%	60%
Value For Money	50%	56%	51%	65%	48%	58%	74%	57%	72%	62%
Listens to Complaints	55%	64%	61%	68%	64%	68%	63%	46%	58%	57%
Has Sufficient Resources	55%	68%	60%	69%	64%	71%	66%	57%	-	-
Tackles Important Issues for the Future of the City	44%	55%	55%	65%	53%	54%	68%	55%	61%	62%
Ensures Sustainable Use of Resources and Care for the Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A	66%	59%	63%	65%	56%	60%	62%
Average	58%	66%	62%	70%	62%	67%	73%	60%	68%	63%
Three year rolling average			**62%**	**66%**	**65%**	**66%**	**67%**	**67%**	**67%**	**64%**

5.3.2 The average score for the public image of the Council across all indicators in 2014 was down compared to 2013, although generally up on the results in 2012. The biggest % falls relate to the good range and quality of services, although these remain the factors on which the Council scores highest.

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. Some facilities were only added to the list of services in 2012 – social housing, access to free cash machine/auto teller and employment and advice services – so 2011 figures are not available for these.

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

Table 4 Satisfaction with local facilities

	% satisfied 2011	% satisfied 2012	% satisfied 2013	% satisfied 2014
Fire Service	100%	100%	100%	100%
Local schools	99%	99%	100%	100%
Local health services	99%	96%	98%	99%
Refuse collection	99%	98%	100%	98%
Libraries and community centres	98%	99% libraries 97% centres	100% libraries 99% centres	99% libraries 97% centres
Police service	98%	99%	100%	99%
Social care/social work	98%	97%	99%	99%
Social Housing	-	94%	90%	93%
Street cleaning	97%	96%	95%	97%
Parks and open spaces	97%	95%	96%	97%
Public transport	96%	97%	98%	95%
Local shops	96%	98%	98%	99%
Sport and leisure facilities	97%	97%	98%	95%
Community warden service	99%	99%	98%	93%
Local youth facilities	85%	93%	87%	84%
Local phone boxes	95%	94%	97%	96%
Access to free cash machine/auto teller	N/A	99%	97%	99%
Employment and advice services	N/A	89%	93%	92%

Compared to 2013, the results do not vary by more than 3 percentage points with the exception of the Community Warden service where satisfaction has decreased by 5 percentage points..

5.4.4 The % of respondents saying that access to the same facilities is very or fairly easy is shown in the table below. These figures include those who said the facility or service 'doesn't exist' or they never use it which explains why the figures are generally lower than for satisfaction.

Table 5 Ease of accessing local facilities

	% very or fairly easy 2011	% very or fairly easy 2012	% very or fairly easy 2013	% Very or fairly easy 2014
Fire service	94%	89%	97%	98%
Local schools	86%	96%	70%	82%
Local health services	98%	95%	97%	98%
Refuse collection	99%	98%	96%	98%

Libraries and community centres	-	92% libraries 83% centres	82% libraries 67% centres	80% libraries 54% centres
Police service	95%	89%	97%	98%
Social care/social work	58%	46%	30%	44%
Social Housing	-	50%	41%	48%
Street cleaning	98%	96%	89%	97%
Parks and open spaces	94%	95%	95%	95%
Public transport	93%	94%	93%	95%
Local shops	97%	96%	96%	98%
Sport and leisure facilities	82%	81%	70%	78%
Community warden service	42%	44%	43%	35%
Local youth facilities	55%	58%	42%	46%
Local phone boxes	62%	54%	38%	49%
Access to free cash machine/auto teller	-	89%	83%	97%
Employment and advice services	-	53%	35%	48%

The services regarded as easy to access by less than 50% of respondents are community warden service, social care and social work, local youth facilities, social housing, employment and advice services and phone boxes.

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**	**2014**
Shopping Facilities	85%	80%	87%	94%	97%	98%	98%	98%
Cleanliness of area around home	83%	79%	91%	93%	97%	98%	95%	97%
Cleanliness of streets	71%	78%	91%	94%	97%	97%	96%	99%
Quality and maintenance of open spaces	70%	80%	88%	91%	97%	97%	95%	96%
Condition of roads, pavements and streetlighting	49%	61%	80%	88%	89%	84%	72%	76%
Children's play areas	57%	52%	68%	55%	88%	88%	86%	89%

The results in Table 6 remain positive, showing high levels of satisfaction with aspects of the local environment.

5.4.6 As in the past 2 years, the 2014 survey asked respondents to rate how good their neighbourhood is as a place to live. This question was worded differently 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**	**% 2014**
Very good	56%	71%	68%
Fairly good	43%	26%	28%
Fairly poor	1%	2%	3%
Very poor	1%	1%	1%

6. **BENCHMARKING**

Every two years, this report contains results from the Scottish Household Survey on questions which cover similar topics to those in the Council's own survey. The next Scottish Household Survey results at a Dundee level will not be published until 2015, so will be included in next year's report on the 2015 survey.

7. **CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 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.

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 2014 – Research Report prepared for Dundee City Council by Research Resource.

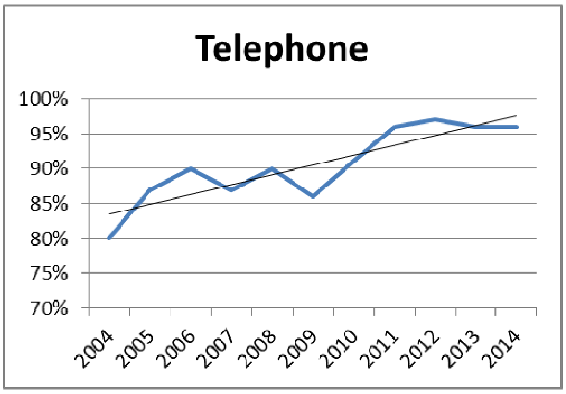
David R Martin
Chief Executive 30/01/2015

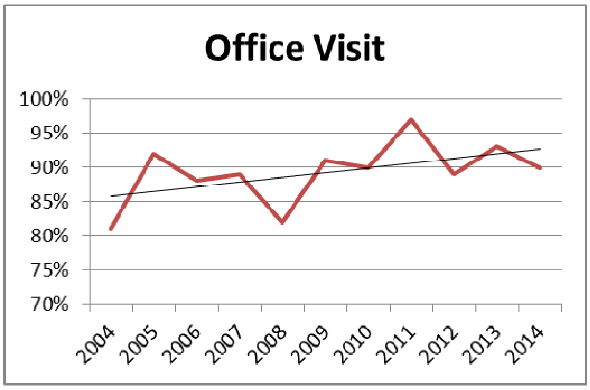
Appendix One

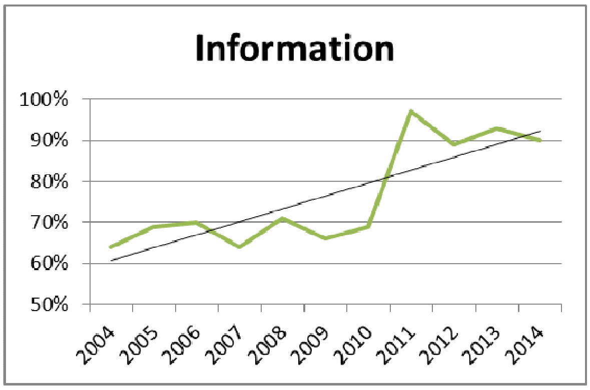
Ten Year Trend Analysis

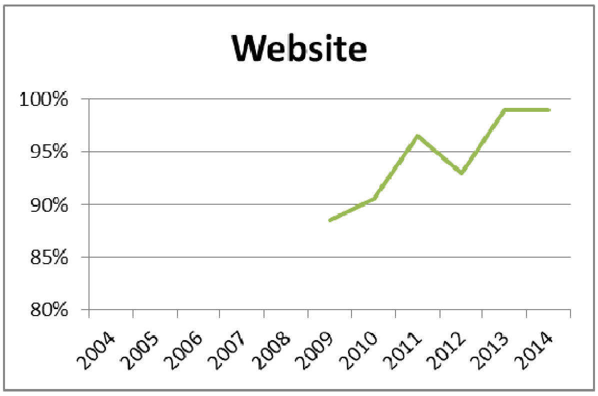
The original purpose of the annual consumer survey was to provide a longitudinal measure related to citizens' perception of the Council as delivering customer service and good communication with citizens, and their overall perception of the organisation. During the last ten years the website has become more important and the survey also provides support for the local community planning partnerships' strategy to improve satisfaction with neighbourhoods.

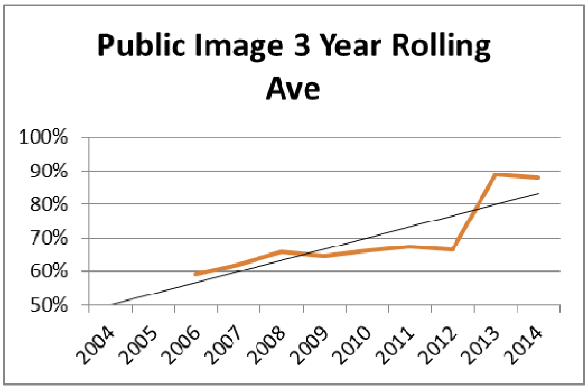
The data below is provided in the report and the graphs show the long term improving trend in all of these main corporate performance areas at the same time as financial and efficiency savings have been delivered.

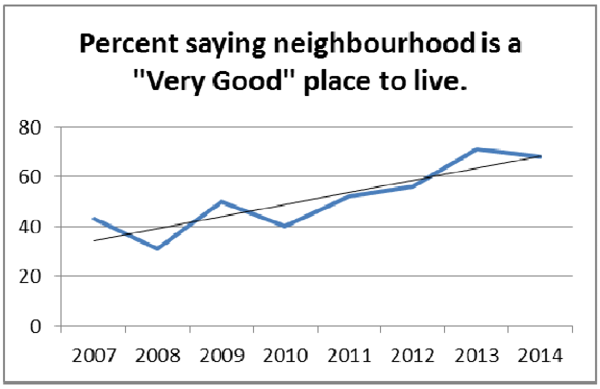












NB in the neighbourhood question, there was a change to the wording in 2012. The question in previous years asked about satisfaction with quality of life in the neighbourhood.