

**Hart District Council
BVPI General User
Satisfaction Survey 2006/7
*Working Draft***



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Summary

Background

This report represents the findings of a postal survey conducted by Marketing Means on behalf of Hart District Council. The survey was primarily conducted for the collection of 'User Satisfaction Performance Indicators' as all authorities are required to do every three years. The previous survey was conducted in 2003/4.

The survey followed strict guidance laid down by the Audit Commission¹. Key guidance included: using the questionnaire supplied, sending it by post to a random sample of addresses and that steps were taken to get as many responses back as possible, including sending at least 2 reminders. This ensured that results across the country are comparable.

The survey was sent out to 2500 households in the District between September and November 2006. A total of 1,242 (51%) completed surveys were received back. This means that Hart District Council has achieved both the required outcome of 1100 responses to the survey and one of the desired outcomes of a minimum 50% response rate. The anonymous data was then submitted to the Audit Commission, which weighted the data. The results contained in this report used the weighted data (*Sections 1.2 and 1.5 of this report*).

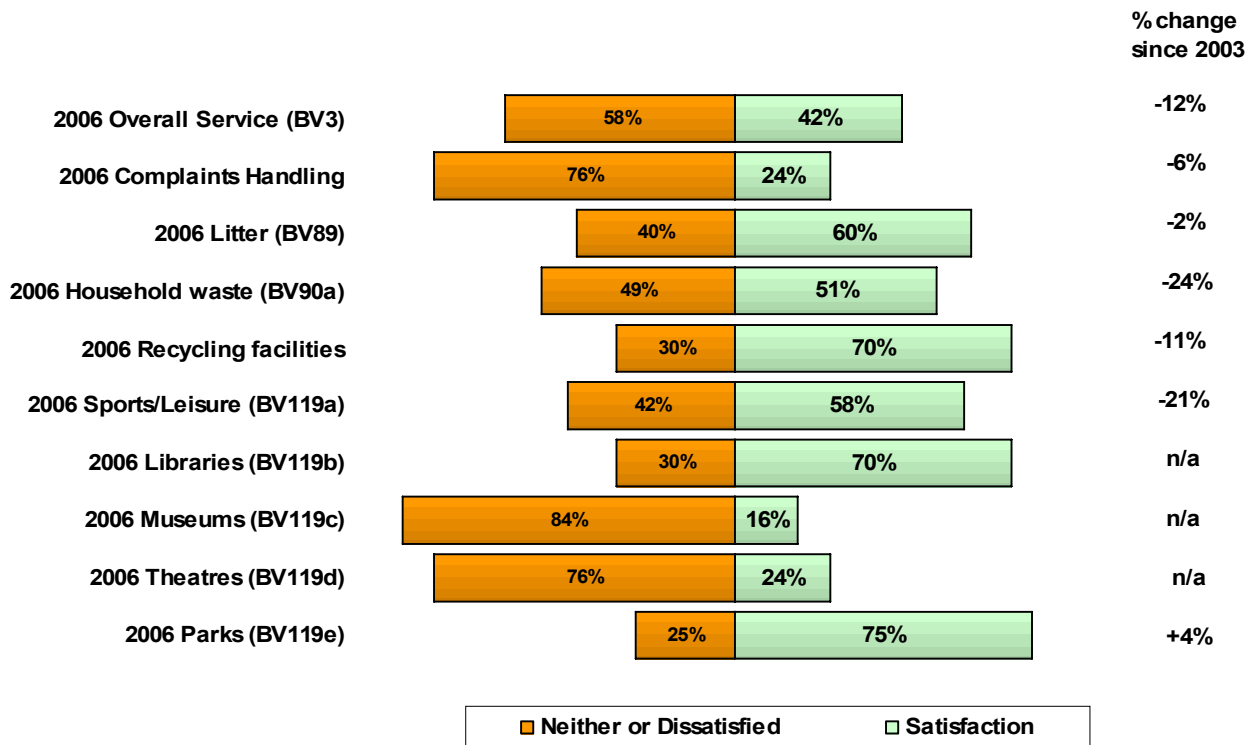
Results: Performance Indicators ('BV's)

The results of the Best Value Performance Indicators obtained from the General Survey are shown below, along with the change compared to the 2003 survey results (*Sections 3.1 to 3.7 of this report*).

The 'satisfaction' questions are asked on a scale of 'very satisfied' / 'fairly satisfied' / 'neither' / 'fairly dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied'. The performance indicators are calculated by adding the percentage of respondents who are 'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' and this is termed 'satisfaction'.

When comparing the survey to the previous year, the first 2 or 3% are ignored as this may be due to normal variations expected between surveys ('sampling error') rather than an actual change. This is known as the 'confidence interval' and should be taken into account when looking at the percentage changes shown in the chart below.

Summary of 'satisfaction' for BVPI General User satisfaction 2006 (with comparisons to 2003)



Source: Marketing Means 2007

¹ Best Value and Audit Commission Performance Indicators for 2006 'Guidance for Understanding the Best Value Surveys' February 2006 DCLG / Audit Commission

Results: other questions

Most respondents are satisfied with Hart as a place to live (79%); although there is no previous result to compare this to, it must be assumed that this is relatively positive (*Section 4.3*).

Respondents think that the highest priority areas for the Council and its partners to address in terms of quality of life in the area are 'Activities for teenagers', 'Level of traffic', 'Public transport' 'Level of crime' and 'Affordable housing', followed by 'Road / pavement repairs' and 'Cultural facilities'; this remains broadly similar to the previous survey (*Sections 4.1 to 4.2*).

However, the factors that appear to have the biggest relationship with overall satisfaction are 'information provision' and 'opportunities for participation in decision making'. This has been shown previously to be a national pattern, with those Councils that are considered to communicate well and involve their communities receiving the highest satisfaction levels overall (*Sections 5.1 to 5.2 and 7.1 to 7.3*).

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with a list of statements of perceptions that could apply to a council. In terms of how the Hart is perceived, the majority of residents tended to agree that the Council 'Treats all people fairly (76%)'; 'Is making the local area a better place to live (69%)'; 'Is working to make the local area cleaner and greener (67%)'; 'Is trustworthy (58%) and 'Is working to make the area safer (58%)'. There was a mixed response for 'Promotes the interests of local residents (53%)'; 'Is efficient and well run' (53%) and 'Acts on the concerns of local residents (52%)'. However, only just over a third of residents tended to agree that it provides good value of money' (36%) (*Section 8.1*).

Satisfaction in context

Satisfaction as an indicator on its own can only tell us so much. It is important to view the numbers in context. For the BV indicators, Marketing Means has looked to contextualise satisfaction in three different ways and these have been shown throughout the report.

1. Comparisons to other surveys

Where possible, this report has sought to put satisfaction in context, both by comparing it to the previous survey in 2003 and other similar authorities' General Surveys. It is important to see the trends for the authority, but it is also informative to compare it with other authorities. This can show whether the respondents are reflecting the 'national mood' or are more influenced by local circumstances. However, the national figures for second tier Councils are not yet available so the figures amongst the 'Hampshire consortium' are quoted.

Overall satisfaction with 'the way the authority runs things' has fallen by 12%. As this is outside the confidence interval of +/-3%, it is 'statistically' significant. When compared to other Hampshire authorities, in general Hart was towards the bottom end (6th or 7th out of 7) of the tables for most of the indicators (*Sections 3.1 to 3.7 of this report*).

2. Expectations analysis

This report contains 'expectation analysis' for some of the Best Value Performance Indicators. 'Expectation analysis' looks at how changing perceptions of performance can impact on the satisfaction ratings of a service or organisation². This is done by comparing the change in the level of satisfaction with a service and the change in the questions that ask if a service has got better or worse' between different surveys. For example, a fall in satisfaction together with an increase in the proportion of respondents that say that the service has got better suggests that their expectations of the service are rising and are harder to fulfil.

In general, it appears that expectations of Hart are not rising and falls in the level of satisfaction are genuine. This shown in the results there is no change or a higher proportion say that the service has it has 'got worse' from the previous years survey (*Sections 3.1 to 3.7 of this report*).

3. Subgroup analysis

Different people use and come into contact with the Council and its services in different ways and for different reasons. Often this is related to demographic factors such as age, gender, where you live and whether you have certain needs such as those who have a disability or permanent illness. These have also been shown where they are significant.

In general the results show that those who are older (aged over 75) are more likely to be satisfied with the services provided than the other age groups and in particular those aged between 35 and 54 are most dissatisfied.

² Ibid.

Those reporting a 'permanent disability or illness' sometimes showed that they were more likely to be satisfied with services than those not reporting any illness. However, it should be noted that this is likely to be a secondary factor related to age as the vast majority of those reporting a permanent illness were over 75.

When the district was divided into three ward groups ('North East', 'Fleet and Church Crookham' and 'Other wards') some results indicated that those living in the North East area of the district appear to be the most dissatisfied with many of the service areas and that those living in the 'other wards' were more likely to be satisfied.

Some results showed differences by how long people had been resident in the area (less than 2 years, 2-10 years and over 10 years). Those who had been resident for 10 years or more showed higher levels of dissatisfaction than those who had lived in the area for shorter periods of time.
(Sections 3.1 to 3.7 of this report).