



**Life in Wyre
Task Group**

- Draft Report -

Chairman:

Councillor Christine Smith

Task Group Members:

Councillor Emma Anderton
Councillor Marge Anderton
Councillor Lady Atkins
Councillor Colette Birch
Councillor Emma Ellison
Councillor Patsy Ormrod
Councillor Julie Robinson
Councillor Matthew Vincent
Councillor Lynn Walmsley
Councillor Val Wilson

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Chairman: Councillor Michael Vincent

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Introduction

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers quarterly performance reports about the delivery of the council's Business Plan.

A number of the performance measures in the quarterly reports refer to comparative satisfaction scores from the most recent Life in Wyre resident survey. The members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have taken the view that if the satisfaction scores are regularly relied upon as a performance measure, they must be obtained on a sound, reliable and validated basis.

As a consequence, members of the committee have commissioned a task group to review how the resident survey is compiled and how it is used to inform and improve services.

Aims of review

The aims of the review, as specified in the scoping document (see Appendix 1), were as follows:

- To understand the Life in Wyre Residents Survey (LIW) in terms of background, history, analysis, use, relevance, benefits, outcomes
- To consider the results by area and highlight any differences
- To explore possible reasons for the decline in reported satisfaction with (i) parks and open spaces, and (ii) sport and leisure facilities, and any other areas that cause concern
- To consider the costs and benefits of Life in Wyre
- To identify gaps
- To identify areas for improvement (e.g. clarity, brevity, response rates)

The review process

The task group held its first meeting with the Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder and the Policy and Engagement Manager. The group subsequently interviewed the Policy and Performance Officer, the Infusion Manager (Infusion are responsible for administering and analysing the survey) and representatives of the Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group.

Comparisons have been made with similar resident surveys used in other Lancashire local authorities, and a line-by-line analysis of Wyre's current survey has been undertaken.

Summary of evidence provided by Rosie Green (Policy and Performance Manager) and Councillor Vivien Taylor (Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder)

The Life in Wyre Resident Survey (LiW) is a household survey jointly commissioned with the Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group, which is sent out to 3,500 households every two years. The survey is administered by Infusion, a not-for-profit organisation, which is part of Blackpool Council. Households are randomly selected, in order to ensure that the survey is representative. There was a 41% response rate to the most recent survey, one of the best response rates in Lancashire.

The survey results helped to guide the recently adopted Campaigns Plan and are reflected in the council's Business Plan. The Democracy in Wyre campaign has been put in place in the light of the survey results and the Wyre Voice magazine reflects issues identified in LiW.

The survey also incorporates a number of health questions, as agreed with the Clinical Commissioning Group, for which they make a financial contribution.

The survey is seen as providing good value for money. In 2016 Infusion charged £8,250 to administer and analyse the survey, of which the Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group contributed £1,600 (19.4%). The cost of Wyre staff time is not included.

The following additional points were made about the Life in Wyre resident survey, prompted by questions from councillors:

- Some information is gathered through LiW that is relevant to Lancashire County Council (LCC) (e.g. education and highways). A report is prepared for LCC by Wyre officers but it is unclear whether and how the information is used by the county.
- The public's perception of a service does not always reflect the reality of a service (e.g. dog fouling).
- Infusion have an in depth knowledge of the LiW survey as well as detailed knowledge about what the main resident issues are across Lancashire.
- There is often a very simple and logical explanation for any recorded decrease or increase in satisfaction scores, which should be monitored as trends rather than simply as an increase or decrease from year to year.
- The LiW survey has been used for approximately twenty years, the last two editions of which have included a specific section contributed by the CCG.
- There is an incentive for people to return their forms; in 2016 they were included in a draw for a Kindle Fire.
- The survey remains open for approximately three months, the Communications Team actively reminding and prompting potential respondents during that time.

In the subsequent discussion a number of comments were made by councillors about the current survey format. Ideally, the survey should, in their view, be made more concise, an 'easier read' and more accessible for people with disabilities. It might be possible to reduce the number of response options in the multiple choice tick-box sections, for example by offering the choices 'satisfied', 'not satisfied' and 'don't know'.

It is noted, however, that the council delivers a wide range of services and it is helpful to get the public's feedback on all of them. A reduction in length and detail would inevitably mean a reduction in the amount of information gathered, so a balance is required.

Summary of evidence provided by Adam Pearson, Infusion Manager, and Sara Ordonez, Policy and Performance Officer

Adam Pearson (Infusion Manager) and Sara Ordonez (Policy and Performance Officer) informed the task group about the way in which the Life in Wyre Resident Survey was administered, analysed and interpreted.

The survey has been in place for many years, and is carried out biennially. The number of residents involved in the survey and the organisation administering the survey had changed over the years. The current provider, Infusion, is a service provided by Blackpool Council, which operates on a cost recovery basis. 3,500 residents are randomly selected and sent a hard copy of the survey. In addition 324 responses were received on line via the council's website.

It used to be mandatory for all councils to carry out a resident survey but since that requirement was relaxed some local authorities have chosen not to do so. Councils also decide on their own content and format which makes it very difficult to make direct comparisons. Wyre, for example, has recently amended its questions on communications, engagement and relationships with Town and Parish Councils, which makes year-on-year comparisons and direct comparisons with other councils impossible.

It is generally an older age bracket that submit responses to the survey, but the analysis is weighted in order to ensure it is representative. This is a trend that is not unique to Wyre and is related particularly to the postal methodology.

The current Youth Mayor is developing a survey similar to 'Life in Wyre' for younger people in order to make sure that their views are considered.

With an increasing number of self-selected on-line respondents there becomes a greater chance of bias being introduced compared with a controlled sample, but there is nothing that is statistically significant in Wyre's case. Analysis shows that similar resident concerns are received via the postal survey; the two are not dissimilar.

There is not an easy-read, large font version of the survey available, but respondents are invited to request assistance to fill in the form if required. Officers are happy to go through the form line by line on the telephone or in person, if that is necessary in particular circumstances. Provision could be made in response to a specific request, for example, for translation.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously expressed concern about reported decreases in satisfaction levels for (i) sport and leisure services and (ii) parks and open spaces. The reduction from 66% to 63% in satisfaction regarding sport and leisure services is relatively small and statistically insignificant when considering the margin of error. For parks and open spaces the satisfaction figure is one of the highest, so that level cannot always be expected to be achieved. It is also relevant that over time targets move and expectations are increased which make high satisfaction levels more difficult to achieve. It is important to consider trends over a number of years rather than simply comparing two consecutive results.

On some issues the real challenge is to change perceptions, levels of satisfaction not always reflecting the reality of the situation. For example, the statistics on dog fouling show an improvement over time although the public perception does not always recognise that.

Many councils have questionnaires that are eight pages in length in order to cover a wide range of services. The number of questions in Wyre's survey (currently 41) could be reduced but only at the cost of gathering less information. There is no optimum number of questions; it depends completely on what the council wants to find out. Research shows that the length of a survey has a direct impact on the response rate, so again a balance is needed.

The CCG have their own section in the survey, which directly impacts on the space available for the council's questions.

An analysis of the responses broken down by area can be found on the council's website at

http://www.wyre.gov.uk/downloads/download/829/life_in_wyre_survey_results

Summary of evidence provided by Kate Hurry (Head of Communications, Engagement and Development) and Amanda Bate (Community Engagement Manager), Fylde & Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group

The Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) finds the Life in Wyre resident survey very valuable indeed. The CCG has contributed its own targeted questions to the last two surveys (2014 and 2016) and the results have been used to triangulate with information gathered from other surveys and data gathering exercises.

In 2014 the survey was used to find out more about episodic care and how patients make decisions about who they see for treatment. People were also asked about the value of triage services and whether that was generally acceptable, a question that was unlikely to be repeated in subsequent years. This was to inform the development of the CCG's emerging new models of care at that time.

The 2016 survey provided more detail about access to services including GP extended access appointments and why people thought that health services were important. A question was also asked about people's awareness of the CCG and it was encouraging to find that awareness was consistent across all wards and age groups. Some of the questions in the 2016 survey were jointly agreed with the council. These included questions about people's use of online services.

On the assumption that the CCG will continue to contribute to the Life in Wyre survey, the 2018 survey would be used to help develop an awareness of the multispecialty community provider (MCP) care model, of which Wyre Council was a part.

In response to additional questions from members of the task group Ms Bate and Ms Hurry made the following points:

- The CCG relies very much on advice from council officers who, with Infusion, are more experienced in survey design.
- The number of questions posed in the survey is governed by the information needed; it is not simply a case of agreeing a particular number of questions to be asked. The CCG works closely with the council to agree a reasonable approach.
- The questions asked relate to the information that health colleagues require to make decisions about services.
- The task group's suggestion that mental health requires a greater emphasis was noted.
- Raising people's awareness of online services is a priority for both the council and the CCG.
- The MCP business planning process involves the council, so there can be a clear link between some of the questions asked in the survey by the CCG and the council's services.
- The way in which the results from the survey are fed back to respondents and other residents is very important for both the CCG and the council. It would make more sense to respondents and residents, in the opinion of the task group, if this feedback was given as one report, although it was acknowledged by councillors that different timescales for the two organisations could sometimes make this difficult.

Other resident surveys in Lancashire

A review of other resident surveys in Lancashire carried out by the task group proved inconclusive.

Since it became no longer mandatory for councils to carry out a survey according to prescriptive guidelines it has become clear that there is no common approach. Consequently making direct comparisons is very difficult to do, if not impossible.

A variety of different methods are used across the county, including telephone surveys, Citizens Panels, stakeholder surveys, issue-based consultation panels and combinations of all of these. Some councils have not run a resident survey recently (e.g. Lancaster) while others run them annually (e.g. Burnley). Several others were more like Wyre in that they carried out a survey every two years (e.g. Chorley, Pendle and Ribble Valley). Fylde's annual survey is solely website-based and only contains ten questions, while others, including Wyre, have over forty questions.

The content also varies significantly, although Chorley and South Ribble still used survey documents that contained many questions that were very similar to, or the same as, Wyre's. There were no other examples in which the Clinical Commissioning Group contributed their own dedicated questions.

A summary of information from other Lancashire councils is attached at Appendix 2.

Life in Wyre resident survey – a critical review

The task group undertook a line-by-line review the content of the most recent Life in Wyre survey document.

The issues that came from this analysis were as follows:

- i. It is useful to carry out a regular resident survey for a number of reasons – it is a means by which the council can engage with and listen to residents, helps to identify service delivery issues and assists with prioritising service improvements
- ii. The survey, as it stands, addresses the most salient issues.
- iii. The survey feels repetitive to complete. It feels long and wordy. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is a perception shared by others, but equally there are other councils that use a similar format of a similar length (e.g. Chorley, Burnley).
- iv. The number of options offered to respondents (from '*very satisfied*' to '*very dissatisfied*', plus '*never used*') is too many. This could be simplified by offering less response options.
- v. The CCG's continued participation is unusual, when making comparisons with other councils. There is scope to make closer links between the CCG's input and council services.
- vi. A fundamental review of the whole survey might help to address some of these concerns.

Conclusions

- 1) Different councils take very different approaches to resident surveys, some of them choosing not to do one at all (e.g. Lancaster) and others taking a very detailed approach like Wyre (e.g. Chorley, and to a lesser extent, South Ribble).
- 2) From the review of other Lancashire councils, we have found no other examples in which the Clinical Commissioning Group has their own dedicated section of the resident survey.
- 3) A survey of residents is a useful thing to do for a number of reasons - it is a means by which the council can engage with and listen to residents, it helps to identify service delivery issues and assists with prioritising service improvements
- 4) The survey, as it stands, addresses the most salient issues.
- 5) The survey feels repetitive. Duplication could be reduced.
- 6) The survey feels long and not always an 'easy read'. The content could be rationalised and made simpler.
- 7) The number of questions (currently 41) could be reduced but only at the cost of gathering less information.
- 8) The CCG's continued participation in the survey is supported.
- 9) The health questions could include more emphasis on mental health.
- 10) When information is collated for the benefit of Lancashire County Council there should be some direct benefit to Wyre in doing so.
- 11) There is often a very simple and logical explanation for any recorded increase or decrease in satisfaction scores, which was the original concern of the O&S Committee. Many of these changes are not statistically significant. Satisfaction should be monitored over a longer period, not just from one survey to the next. Levels of satisfaction do not always reflect the reality of a situation (e.g. dog fouling).
- 12) The work of the Youth Mayor in devising a similar survey for younger people should be recognised and could be picked up by a new task group on Engaging with Children and Young People, the first meeting of which took place on Tuesday 10 October 2017.
- 13) Raising awareness of online services was a priority for both the council and the CCG.
- 14) Feeding the results from the survey back to respondents and other residents was very important for both the CCG and the council. It would make more sense to respondents and residents, in the opinion of the task group, if this feedback was given as one report.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION ONE

That, because the Life in Wyre survey is of value to the council, and consequently its residents, it continue to be carried out every two years.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

That a full review of the content of the survey be carried out to ensure that

- (i) the survey is shortened if possible, written in plain English to make it an easier read, and without duplication
- (ii) all the questions have a direct link to how services to residents are delivered.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

That the Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group continue to be invited to contribute some questions to the survey, for which a proportionate payment should be made.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

That mental health is given a higher profile in the survey.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

That a proportionate financial contribution be requested from Lancashire County Council in respect of relevant information routinely provided to them following analysis.

RECOMMENDATION SIX

That the results from the survey be fed back to respondents and other residents in a single comprehensive report.

Councillors' attendances

There were five meetings of the task group.

* (attendances for the fifth and final meeting on 30 October not yet included) *

Name	Meetings attended (maximum 5)*
Councillor E Anderton	2
Councillor M Anderton	3
Councillor Lady Atkins	3
Councillor C Birch	4
Councillor Ellison	3
Councillor Ormrod	4
Councillor Robinson	3
Councillor Smith	4
Councillor Matthew Vincent	3
Councillor Walmsley	3
Councillor Wilson	4

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 Life in Wyre Task Group – Scoping Document – FINAL
- Appendix 2 Resident Surveys in Lancashire – a summary

26 October 2017

Life in Wyre Task Group – Scoping Document - FINAL

Review Topic	Life in Wyre Residents' Survey												
Chairman	Councillor Christine Smith												
Group Membership	Councillors Emma Anderton, Marge Anderton, Lady Atkins, Colette Birch (Vice Chairman), Emma Ellison, Patsy Ormrod, Julie Robinson, Matthew Vincent, Lynn Walmsley and Val Wilson.												
Officer Support	Peter Foulsham, Scrutiny Officer												
Purpose of the Review	To review the Life in Wyre Survey and to better understand its use and identify areas for improvement to ensure the Council gets best value from the survey.												
Role of Overview and Scrutiny in this Review (mark all that apply)	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Holding Executive to account – decisions</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Existing budget and policy framework</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contribution to policy development</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Holding Executive to account – performance</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community champion</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statutory duties / compliance with codes of practice</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Holding Executive to account – decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing budget and policy framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contribution to policy development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Holding Executive to account – performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community champion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Statutory duties / compliance with codes of practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holding Executive to account – decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>												
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Contribution to policy development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>												
Holding Executive to account – performance	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Community champion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>												
Statutory duties / compliance with codes of practice	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Aims of Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To understand the Life in Wyre Residents Survey (LIW) in terms of: background, history, analysis, use, relevance, benefits, outcomes ○ To consider the results by area and highlight any differences ○ To explore possible reasons for the decline in reported satisfaction with (i) parks and open spaces, and (ii) sport and leisure facilities, and any other areas that cause concern ○ To consider the costs and benefits of Life in Wyre ○ To identify gaps ○ To identify areas for improvement (e.g. clarity, brevity, response rates) 												
Methodology	<p>Interviewing witnesses at task group meetings</p> <p>Reviewing literature</p> <p>Benchmarking with other local authorities</p>												

Scope of Review	The review will be limited to the section of the LIW Survey which relates directly to Wyre Council. It will exclude the Clinical Commissioning Group's section entitled 'Community-Based Health Services'.
Potential Witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder ○ Wyre Council officers ○ Representative from Infusion, research and consultation contractors (Adam Pearson) ○ Representatives from other councils
Documents to be considered	<p>Life in Wyre questionnaire Reports to Council and Cabinet http://www.wyre.gov.uk/downloads/download/829/life_in_wyre_survey_results Comparative data from Family Group of Local Authorities</p>
Risks	None identified.
Level of Publicity	Low
Indicators of a Successful Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendations for areas for improvement ○ Recommendation(s) about future residents surveys and/or how the council might collect residents' opinions about the council and partner services.
Intended Outcomes	Clear evidence base in place to make informed decisions
Approximate Timeframe	3 months
Projected Start Date	18 May 2017

Revised 5 June 2017

arm/o&s/cr/17/0611pf

Resident Surveys in Lancashire - a summary

Council	Survey - type and frequency	Additional information
Blackpool	Household telephone survey last conducted in 2014	Random sample, many of the traditional satisfaction questions
Burnley	Annual satisfaction survey	Combination of Citizens' Panel and online survey
Chorley	Bi-annual resident satisfaction survey. Last one 2015	Very similar to our survey; 8 pages, 28 questions. No CCG input.
Fylde	Ongoing online resident satisfaction survey	Last available results are from 2015
Lancashire County Council		No longer tracks satisfaction or has a Life in Lancashire panel
Lancaster	Street-based residents survey a couple of years ago	Not done anything recently but looking at it again now
Pendle	Bi-annual perception survey; combination of Citizens' Panel and online survey, but also some shorter street interviews and focus group with young people	
Preston	Issue-based consultation panel	
Ribble Valley	Bi-annual satisfaction survey	Combination of Citizens' Panel and online survey
Rosendale	Ran a residents' survey last year which included some satisfaction questions	More of a consultation relating to their business plan including open-access online and paper options
South Ribble	Not carried out a resident survey for many years	Following recent difficulties the LGA commissioned a survey of 550 residents in Jan/Feb 2017. 19 questions covering very similar subjects to Wyre
West Lancs	Annual Citizen and Stakeholder survey; random postal sample	Occasionally run a policy option survey as well