

# Cabinet

16 November 2022

**Report of:** Councillor Alison Freer – Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement

## Residents Survey 2022

<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	All Corporate Priorities
<b>Relevant Ward Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt Information:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Subject to call in</b>	No Not key decision

### 1 Summary

This report provides an update to Cabinet on the 2022 Residents Survey which supports the delivery of the aspirations set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-2024. It includes a breakdown of analysis against each question and is supported by the full findings which are appended to the report. The results of the Residents Survey show a positive picture for the Council with satisfaction increasing from 2019 across most of the questions.

### 2 Recommendation

**That Cabinet:**

- 2.1 **Note the contents of the report and provide any observations or actions to the relevant officers accordingly.**

### 3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Having established a new Corporate Strategy in September 2020, it is important the Council regularly receives and considers feedback from residents to evaluate progress against its priorities. The results of the Residents Survey will be used to focus improvements on key priority services and projects and seek to help inform the Cabinet,

Members and Officers regarding the formation of policy and oversight of delivery. This information will also be used to inform the development of the next Corporate Strategy in 2023/2024.

## **4 Background**

- 4.1 The last Residents Survey was undertaken in 2019 by the Council working with an external company Marketing Means. The results of this survey were presented to Members and used to shape our Corporate Strategy 2020-2024. This feedback identified where the community feel our priorities and focus should be.
- 4.2 We committed to undertake the Residents Survey again in 2022 and Marketing Means were brought in following an extensive procurement process to undertake this survey. The survey took place during June and July, and we received the results in August 2022.
- 4.3 The results bring together this feedback data to look at satisfaction levels on a ward-by-ward basis along with further analysis by age, gender, disability, and other characteristics as required. It looks at satisfaction with the Council and the delivery of the service we provide. It also looks at Melton the place and how residents connect with their local area and how safe they feel. The results highlight how our residents currently engage and communicate with us and how they would like us to moving forward
- 4.4 This insight will help the Council to understand how residents feel the Council is delivering against the commitments contained in its 2020-2024 Corporate Strategy. This feedback data will also provide further customer insight data to support the development of the 2022 refresh of the State of Melton report and shape future service delivery across the Council and work with our partners.

## **5 Main Considerations**

- 5.1 Within each section below there is a breakdown of the results for each question with an analysis of the key changes and any differences highlighted. These summaries provide a snapshot of the survey. They highlight key areas of achievement, as well as any change or trends.
- 5.2 The full report containing the methodology and detailed findings alongside analysis is contained at Appendix 1.
- 5.3 **Overall summary**
  - 5.3.1 **Methodology**
  - 5.3.2 The Melton residents survey was undertaken using a postal survey supported by an online survey. Alongside this an in-street face-to-face survey (identical to the postal survey) was undertaken with a focus on 18-34year old residents in recognition that the response rate to a postal survey from this age group was likely to be low.
  - 5.3.3 A randomly selected sample of 3,667 households was identified with the aim of receiving 1,100 completes during fieldwork. This was the same approach as in 2019 but with a smaller sample size (5,000 addresses were selected in 2019). Each survey carried a unique ID number for identification purposes, to ensure any subsequent reminder mailings were only sent to non-respondents.
  - 5.3.4 All households included in the sample were also provided with the alternative option of completing the survey online if they wished, using their unique login details which were included in the covering letter to give a direct link to the online version of the survey

questionnaire. This link was shortened and simplified for 2022 to help increase take-up online. Letters also included a QR code for direct access to the online survey for those with smartphones.

- 5.3.5 Using an identical questionnaire to that of the postal survey, a team of face-to-face interviewers undertook interviews with 18-34 year old residents at locations across Melton. As a significant proportion of the local authority population lives within Melton Mowbray itself, this is where all in-street interviews took place over a period of approximately two weeks. We interviewed 150 residents across locations which included Melton Mowbray town centre, local parks, Melton Country Park as well as around the area of Brooksby Melton College at various times of the day, on weekdays and weekends.
- 5.3.6 A target was set to achieve 1,100 completed surveys using the postal + online method and a further 150 in-street face-to-face surveys. The combined 1,250 target would then provide an overall confidence level of +/-2.70% based on a total local authority area adult population of 41,347 (ONS Mid-Year Estimates 2020). A confidence level or interval is a measure of how reliable the results from the sample are in relation to the wider population.
- 5.3.7 To provide a representative view of the population of the Borough of Melton the data were weighted by age and gender (using ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates based on the Census 2021). This aimed to reduce any bias due to over- or under-representation of population sub-groups.
- 5.3.8 The next part of the report will look at the results for each question in more detail along with further analysis compared to the 2019 Residents Survey and where applicable the latest 2022 Local Government Association (LGA) telephone satisfaction survey.

## 5.4 **Your Council**

### 5.4.1 **Satisfaction with your local area as a place to live**

Overall satisfaction with the local area as a place to live was 82.7%. 8.3% were dissatisfied. This is a small increase in satisfaction of 2% on the 2019 results (up from 80.5% to 82.7%). The satisfaction levels reported are also similar to the 81% recorded in the LGA June 2022 telephone survey

### 5.4.2 **Satisfaction with the way Melton Borough Council runs things**

The proportion very or fairly satisfied with the way Melton Borough Council runs things was 62.9%. 17.0% were dissatisfied. The 2019 Residents Survey showed a very similar level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among respondents (62.5% and 17.1% respectively). Again, these results are not dissimilar from the LGA June 2022 telephone survey, in which 63% of respondents were satisfied with the way their local council runs things.

### 5.4.3 **Value for Money**

Overall, 39.8% agreed that Melton Borough Council provides value for money, almost a quarter (24.2%) disagreed. This is an increase of 3% on 2019 where 36.9% agreed and 25.5% disagreed. The LGA June 2022 telephone survey recorded higher levels of agreement with the statement. 45% of respondents agreed that their local council provides value for money.

### 5.4.4 **Feelings about Melton Borough Council**

28.2% would speak positively about Melton Borough Council, 19.8% would speak negatively about the council; the remaining 52.0% had no views either way. This shows an increase

(4%) since 2019 in those having no views either way rather than speaking positively (1% decrease) or negatively (3% decrease) about Melton Borough Council.

#### **5.4.5 Concerns of local residents**

Over half of respondents (55.8%) felt a great deal or a fair amount that Melton Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents, the remaining 44.2% replied not very much or not at all. This is a small but significant increase since 2019 when 50.5% felt a great deal or a fair amount that Melton Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents. The remaining 49.5% in 2019 stated not very much or not at all. This is also similar to the LGA's June 2022 telephone survey where 52% of respondents felt a great deal or a fair amount that their local council acts on the concerns of local residents.

#### **5.4.6 Keeping residents informed**

58.5% of respondents felt they were very or fairly well informed by the Council regarding the services and benefits it provides, the remaining 41.5% felt not very well informed or not informed at all. This is not significantly different to the 57.6% of respondents in 2019 who felt they were very or fairly well informed by the Council regarding the services and benefits it provides, when the remaining 42.4% felt not very well informed or not informed at all. Again, this is similar to the LGA June 2022 telephone survey where 57% of respondents felt they were very or fairly well informed by their local council regarding the services and benefits it provides.

#### **5.4.7 Trust the Council**

67.5% of respondents trusted the Council a great deal or a fair amount, 24.8% not very much and the remaining 7.6% not at all. Compared to 2019, this is a significant increase on the 61.4% of respondents who then trusted the Council a great deal or fair amount and a significant decrease from the 29.8% who had responded not very much. These results show one of the largest increases compared with the LGA June 2022 survey. 58% respondents stated they trusted their local council a great deal or fair amount.

According to the Office for National Statistics - Trust in Government Survey, March 2022 42% of the UK population reported that they trusted local government and 55% trusted the Civil Service. High levels of trust are associated with high levels of satisfaction with public services. The response from this survey demonstrates a trust in what we are doing as a Council over and above what we would expect with our peers and a commitment to the services we are providing and the priorities we are delivering.

### **5.5 Your local area**

#### **5.5.1 Belonging to local area**

78.7% felt very or fairly strongly that they belonged to their local area, 18.0% not very strongly and the remaining 3.3% not at all strongly. This is not different to the 77.3% who felt very or fairly strongly that they belonged to their local area in 2019. 18.2% of respondents felt not very strongly and the remaining 4.6% not at all strongly.

#### **5.5.2 Get on well together**

Over half (55.7%) agreed that people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together in their local area, while 7.5% disagreed. Compared to 2019, this is more than the 49.7% of respondents who agreed then that people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together in their local area. There was only a small decrease from 9.1% who disagreed in 2019.

### **5.5.3 People in the local area pull together**

Over half (59.8%) agreed that people in local area pull together to improve the local area, while 14.6% disagreed. Only 0.4% felt nothing needed improving. Compared to 2019, this is an increase on the 53.6% of respondents who agreed that people in the local area pull together to improve the local area, and a small decrease from the 18.7% disagreed (also significant). Only 0.6% had then felt that nothing needed improving.

### **5.5.4 How safe/unsafe residents feel in your local area**

Just over two-thirds (67.6%) stated they felt safe outside in their local area after dark, while 18.5% felt unsafe. This is a slight increase, from the 64.7% of respondents that felt safe outside in their local area after dark in 2019. The decrease in those feeling unsafe (from 21.6% in 2019) is a significant difference.

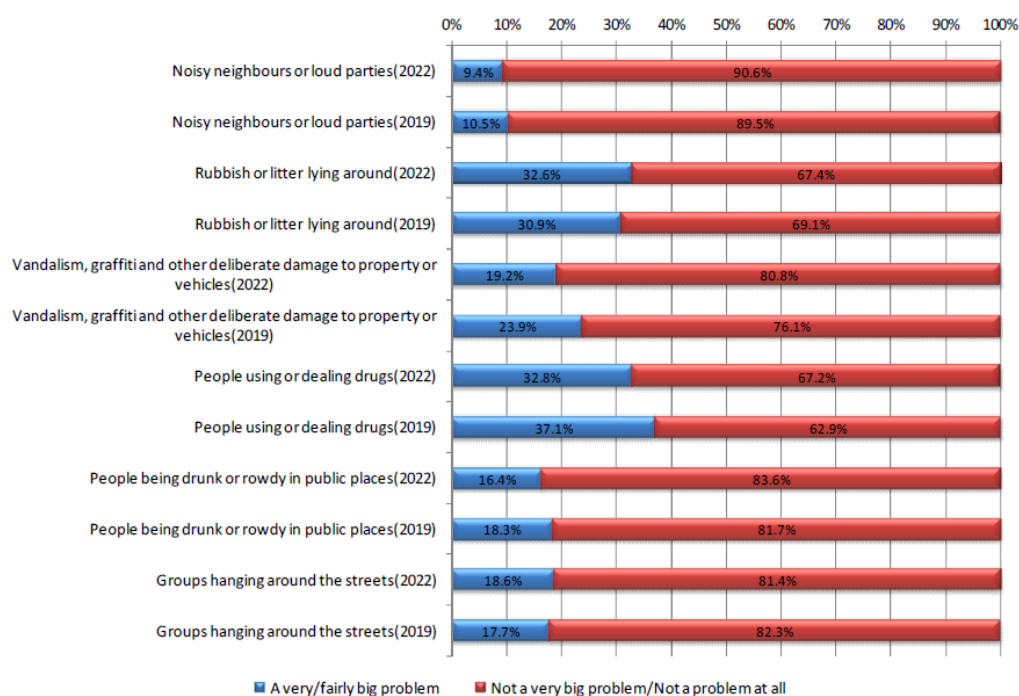
91.0% of respondents felt safe outside in their local area during the day, and only 2.7% felt unsafe. Compared to 2019, this is more than the 88.0% that stated they felt safe outside in their local area during the day, and significantly less than the 4.4% who felt unsafe.

The LGA June 2022 survey respondents reported higher levels of feeling safe both after dark and during the day (76% and 95% respectively) than did Melton respondents in either the 2019 or 2022 Residents Surveys.

### **5.5.5 Problems in your local area**

From the survey, 32.8% of respondents felt 'people using or dealing drugs' was a very/fairly big problem. 32.6% of respondents felt 'rubbish or litter lying around' was a very/fairly big problem. Just under a fifth (19.2%) felt 'vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles' was a very/fairly big problem. 18.6% felt 'groups hanging around the streets' was a very/fairly big problem. 16.4% felt 'people being drunk or rowdy in public places' was a very/fairly big problem. 9.4% felt 'noisy neighbours or loud parties' was a very/fairly big problem.

**Chart 12a: Problems in local area (2022 vs 2019)**



## 5.6 Council Services

### 5.6.1 Satisfaction with Council Services

Satisfaction with Council Services has on the whole improved since 2019 against a backdrop of very challenging circumstances and these are shown in the table below:

	2022 % Satisfied	2019 % Satisfied	2022 % Dissatisfied	2019 % Dissatisfied
Waste and refuse collection	87%	82%	7%	9%
Doorstep recycling collection	80%	75%	7%	10%
Parks and open spaces	74%	66%	10%	14%
Collection of Council Tax	66%	63%	6%	8%
Health and safety of local businesses	59%	55%	6%	7%
Grass cutting	59%	54%	24%	26%
Street cleaning	54%	56%	26%	22%
Promoting the area and encouraging tourism	49%	48%	19%	19%
Sport/leisure facilities	45%	45%	26%	26%
Promoting healthy activities	43%	38%	20%	22%
Support to vulnerable people and families in need	40%	32%	21%	22%
Processing planning applications	37%	37%	22%	22%
Management of council house tenancies	35%	34%	21%	23%
Tackling nuisance and anti-social behaviour	33%	29%	29%	31%
Taking enforcement action against litter	31%	29%	40%	37%
Taking enforcement action against dog fouling	27%	26%	49%	47%

5.6.2 The council service areas with highest levels of dissatisfaction and in need of the greatest improvement were:

Enforcement action against dog fouling

Enforcement action against litter

Tackling nuisance and anti-social behaviour



These three council service areas also had the highest levels of dissatisfaction in 2019. Both taking enforcement action against litter and taking enforcement action against dog fouling had increased dissatisfaction levels on those reported in 2019 with tackling nuisance and anti-social behaviour reducing in dissatisfaction since 2019. However, in contradiction all three areas had increased satisfaction levels with residents since 2019.

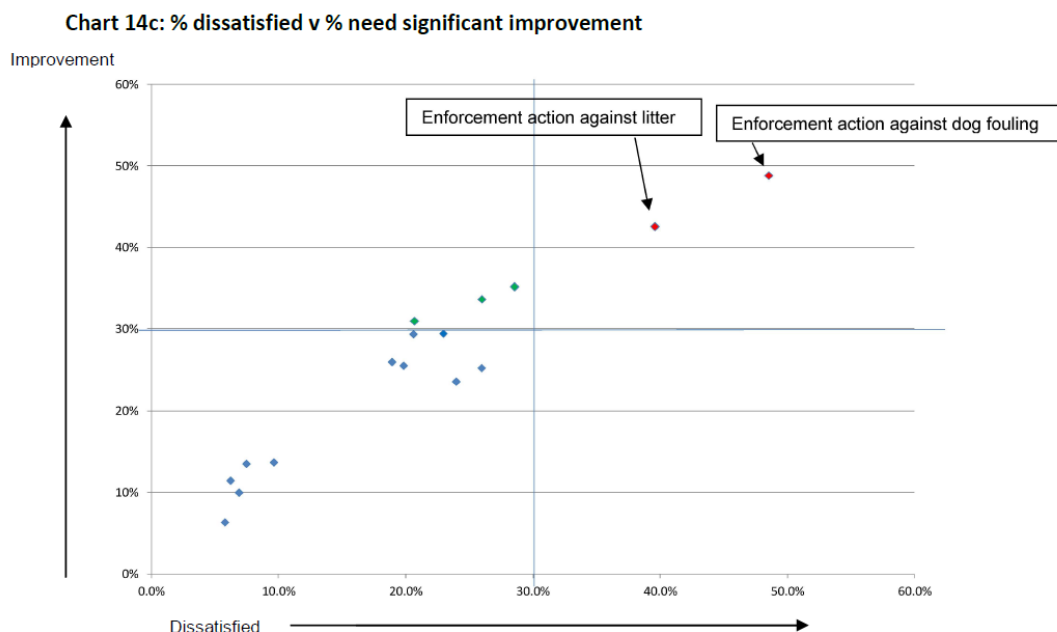
### 5.6.3 Services most in need of improvement

The four council service areas most likely to be deemed as in need of improvement were:

- 48.8% enforcement action against dog fouling (1% increase on 2019, not significantly different)
- 42.5% enforcement action against litter (a significant 5% increase on 2019)
- 35.1% tackling nuisance and anti-social behaviour (a significant 5% decrease on 2019)
- 33.6% sport/leisure facilities (a 4% increase on 2019)

### 5.6.4 Dissatisfaction versus Improvement

From the chart below plotting services on axes of % Dissatisfied and % feeling that the service needs improvement, it can be seen that the services to prioritise for improvement are those highlighted red which appear in the upper right-hand quadrant i.e. highest levels of dissatisfaction and greatest levels of improvement required. Based on the survey alone the two services that should be prioritised are then enforcement action against dog fouling, and enforcement action against litter.



5.6.5 The Council is aware of dissatisfaction in these areas and work is already underway to improve services as reflected in these responses. This includes:

- Greater promotion of work done by legal and services to promote successful action undertaken to act on dog fouling and littering.
- Raising awareness of opportunities to get involved in keeping their communities clean and safe.
- Further investment in developing services (UKSPF and Levelling Up Bids).

- d) Focus on anti-social behaviour management in housing and addressing perception issues.

## 5.7 Information and Communication

### 5.7.1 Current information and communication

Over half of respondents currently find out about the Council and the services it provides through the Council's website (57.5%). The next most common method is through printed information from the Council (42.9%). Well over a third (37.6%) stated that they find out information about the Council's services through word of mouth. These were also the top three methods used in the 2019 Residents Survey.

### 5.7.2 Future information and communication

Well over half of respondents stated that one of their three preferred ways to find out about the Council and the services it provides in the future would be the Council's website (60.3%), while exactly half selected printed information provided by the council (50.0%).

Compared to the 2019 Residents Survey, printed information provided by the Council has decreased 7% from its previous position as the most widely preferred way to find out about the Council and the services it provides and is now the second most preferred method. Conversely, selection of the Council's website as a top three mode of communication has increased by 4% since 2019. A breakdown of preferences by age is shown in the table overleaf.

**Preferred ways to find out about the Council and the services it provides by Age:**

	<b>18-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65-74</b>	<b>75+</b>
Council website	62.4%	62.4%	72.5%	68.6%	58.8%	35.2%
Printed information provided by the council	33.9%	44.1%	41.6%	53.0%	62.4%	70.4%
Council texts, emails and e-newsletters	21.1%	38.1%	41.0%	35.1%	23.9%	19.5%
Direct contact with the council	7.4%	7.0%	9.5%	11.9%	15.3%	15.6%
Council's social media sites	19.4%	39.8%	29.9%	21.4%	9.4%	5.4%
Social media outside the council	26.1%	22.1%	17.9%	14.3%	8.6%	2.0%
Council notice boards in council buildings	4.4%	2.3%	5.0%	5.2%	6.4%	7.1%
Advertising on banners and vehicles	7.0%	8.5%	5.5%	3.9%	7.9%	5.2%
From your local councillor	2.3%	7.0%	14.4%	18.4%	17.1%	20.9%
Local media	17.4%	25.4%	16.0%	21.3%	27.0%	37.4%
Word of mouth	12.8%	9.9%	9.5%	11.0%	16.3%	32.6%
Other	1.3%	1.0%	2.8%	0.9%	1.1%	2.4%

### 5.7.3 Contacting the Council

- 5.7.4 Overall, 59.8% of respondents had made contact with the Council over the past 3 years, while 40.2% had not. Telephone was the most common method of making contact with the Council, used by over two thirds (67.4%) of respondents. Email was the next most common method used by just under a third (31.1%). Just over half of respondents preferred to use the contact method(s) they chose because they are the easiest (55.0%) or most convenient (50.1%)



## 5.8 Involvement/Engagement with the Council

### 5.8.1 Satisfaction with level of engagement your council offers to residents

Overall, 45.1% were satisfied with the level of engagement their council offers to residents, while 20% were dissatisfied. This is a significant increase (7.6%) in satisfaction levels compared with the 2019 Residents Survey. The most common suggestions made by respondents who were not satisfied with the level of engagement from the Council are shown in the table below:

What could Melton Borough Council do to better engage with its residents	*Number of respondents
Respond or act on enquiries / requests / complaints	26
Better / more communication (general)	25
Negative comment about Council	25
Keep residents informed better / more / timely	24
Councillors to improve visibility / engagement / contact with residents	23
More consultation / listen to residents' views	18
Forum / meetings / regular drop ins	16
Be inclusive of whole borough / everyone	13
More written / published information e.g. flyers, newsletters, articles	9

### 5.8.2 Website

Over half of respondents in this year's survey (56.9%) stated they had visited Melton Borough Council's website in the last 12 months, while 43.1% had not. The corresponding figure in 2019 was 59%, though respondents then were first asked whether they use the internet at all and only then whether they had visited the Council's website.

Over three quarters (78.1%) of those who had visited the Council's website in the last 12 months did so to get information or advice. Just under a fifth (18.3%) of those who had visited the Council's website in the last 12 months did so to comment on a consultation/ planning application and 15.3% did so to make a payment. These were also the same top three reasons given in the 2019 Residents Survey.

However, over two-thirds (70.6%) were satisfied with the Council's website, while 9.1% were dissatisfied. This is a slight but not significant increase (+2%) in those who were satisfied compared to the 2019 Residents Survey. There was no significant change in the proportion who were dissatisfied.

Of those that were not satisfied, they identified the following areas as to how we could improve the website.

Suggestions on how to improve website	*Number
Make it easier to navigate to the right page	28
Not currently user friendly	24
Make it easier to find the right person for your query / complaint / problem	10
Not up-to-date	8
Issues with planning section	6
Issues with Reporting Section	5
Improve look / modernise	4

\*Table is based on unweighted data

## 6 Options Considered

6.1 No alternatives were considered as a decision is not required.

## 7 Consultation

7.1 The consultation data contained in the report and the appendix are to inform the Cabinet. Specific queries on findings in this report may be taken up by the Scrutiny Committee, as part of their enquiries into the effective operations of the Council.

## 8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

8.1 The feedback from residents and analysis of the key findings will be communicated to all members and will be shared with the public on the Council's website.

## 9 Financial Implications

9.1 There are no specific financial implications in the report.

**Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services**

## 10 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 There are no specific Legal and Governance implications in the report.

10.2 Sharing and responding to customer feedback in a transparent and timely manner is to be welcomed from a governance point of view, as it provides a transparent mechanism for residents to hold the Council to account.

**Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer**

## 11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

11.1 There are no specific Equality and Safeguarding implications in the report.

## 12 Community Safety Implications

12.1 There is specific feedback information on how safe/unsafe residents feel in their local area and perceived problems affecting local communities. This needs to be reflected on and responded to by the relevant services.

## 13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.1 There are no specific Environmental and Climate Change implications in the report.

## 14 Other Implications (where significant)

- 14.1 The customer feedback is important information for directorates to use to shape their services to meet customer need. The information will also shape strategic policy development and help inform the next Corporate Strategy.

## **15 Risk & Mitigation**

- 15.1 There are no direct risks arising from this report, all risks linked to the feedback provided will need to be considered and responded to by relevant Directorates.

## **16 Background Papers**

- 16.1 No background papers are included with this report.

## **17 Appendices**

- 17.1 Appendix 1 – Melton Borough Council Residents Survey 2022 – summary report v1.2

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