

Lyons Inquiry – response to interim report questions

What is the strategic role of local government?

How important is democracy or accountability in this process?

- ‘OurDevon’ campaign ran in Autumn 2005 encouraging Devon people to have their say on the future priorities for the county through:
 - postal survey distributed to 5000 random households
 - availability of survey through libraries across Devon
 - online survey on DCC website
 - young peoples’ online survey

The first question referred to community leadership- results from 2172 responses received as follows:

Do you think it is important that DCC is a good community leader & responds to big challenges affecting the county & issues of widespread concern?		
	Count	%
Yes, definitely	1245	75.7%
Maybe, if funds are available	348	21.2%
No, not important	51	3.1%
Total	1645	100.0%

- Devon Voice Residents’ Panel survey in December 2004, asked (amongst other communications topics) which word or phrase from 5 groups of words best describes Devon County Council. Results as follows (based on 1025 responses received)

Word/phrase best describes DCC		
	Count	%
Open and accountable	391	44.1%
Trusted	266	30.0%
Secretive	179	20.2%
Untrustworthy	51	5.7%
Total	887	100.0%

Word/phrase best describes DCC		
	Count	%
Improving	542	58.5%
Bureaucratic	211	22.8%
Modern	124	13.4%
Old fashioned	49	5.3%
Total	926	100.0%

Word/phrase best describes DCC		
	Count	%
Accessible	526	56.5%
Remote	248	26.6%
Local - close to you	123	13.2%
Inaccessible	34	3.7%
Total	931	100.0%

Word/phrase best describes DCC		
	Count	%
Responsive	376	41.7%
Professional	223	24.7%
Defensive	162	18.0%
Complacent	141	15.6%
Total	902	100.0%

Word/phrase best describes DCC		
	Count	%
Caring and friendly	315	36.7%
Inclusive	388	45.2%
Unhelpful	102	11.9%
Discriminatory	54	6.3%
Total	859	100.0%

- The same survey also asked whether residents wanted to be kept informed about council activities:

Extent agree with statement 'I want to be kept informed about what DCC is doing that affects me or my community'		
	Count	%
Strongly agree	535	52.6%
Agree	441	43.3%
Neither	36	3.5%
Disagree	3	.3%
Strongly disagree	3	.3%
Total	1018	100.0%

What should local government do for local people and how can we ensure that it is fit for purpose?

- 'OurDevon' campaign (details as above) asked for views on 25 strategic priorities grouped under 5 headings (Giving Devon's children & young people a better start in life, Promoting independence & choice for Devon people, Improving Devon's environment, Celebrating Devon's culture & heritage, and Helping Devon's economy).

Results from 2172 responses received show top 5 priorities as follows:

Priority position	Priority	Count of votes	% of votes overall	% of total votes
1 st	Enabling more elderly & disabled people to live safely at home rather than in residential care	898	43.6%	9.0%
2 nd	Reducing traffic congestion and pollution by making it easier for people to travel by public transport or by walking, cycling or car sharing	861	41.8%	8.7%
3 rd	Reducing amount of waste produced & recycling more	635	30.9%	6.4%
4 th	Helping children & young people lead healthier lifestyles (healthy eating, physical activity, tackling drug/alcohol misuse)	598	29.1%	6.0%
5 th	Working with partners to try to achieve a sufficient supply of affordable housing for Devon	589	28.6%	5.9%

- For all 25 priorities respondents also gave their view on how important it was that the council works to achieve this – answering 'yes, definitely', 'maybe, if funds are available', or 'no, not important'.

What gives people in your area a sense of community?

- Devon Voice Residents' Panel survey June 2004 gave respondents 5 priorities (based on the Mori Quality of Life survey consulted in Devon in 2002) and asked which one was most important to them:

Top priority for quality of life	Count	%
Reducing crime and the availability of drugs	394	34.5%
More affordable housing	342	30.0%
More and cheaper bus services and less road traffic	206	18.0%
Better job prospects	125	11.0%
More facilities for young people	75	6.6%
Total	1143	100.0%

- In the same survey respondents were also asked what the best thing about living in Devon was:

Best thing about living in Devon	Count	%
The access to the coast and countryside	663	57.8%
The peace and quiet	314	27.4%
The good community spirit	97	8.5%
The people and neighbours	71	6.2%
Total	1146	100.0%

- The Best Value user satisfaction survey carried out in October 2003 asked respondents to chose up to 5 things that made somewhere a good place to live:

Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? PLEASE TICK ✓ UP TO FIVE

Access to nature 33.0%	Community activities 13.2%	Health services 59.8%	Low level of traffic congestion.. 33.7%	Road and pavement repairs..... 18.3%
Activities for teenagers... 16.8%	Cultural facilities (eg cinemas, museums) 9.5%	Job prospects... 30.3%	Parks and open spaces 20.3%	Shopping facilities..... 28.3%
Affordable decent housing 43.3%	Education provision..... 24.9%	Low level of crime..... 60.5%	Public transport 26.6%	Sports & leisure facilities..... 8.9%
Clean streets..... 19.6%	Facilities for young children 6.5%	Low level of pollution 15.0%	Race relations..... 1.1%	Wage levels & local cost of living 18.1%
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN)		1.1%	Don't know . 0%	None of these..... 0.1%

- And also which 5 things in their local area most needed improving:

Thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving? PLEASE TICK ✓ UP TO FIVE

Wage levels & local cost of living..... 46.2%	Race relations 1.3%	Level of pollution..... 6.5%	Facilities for young children 10.6%	Clean streets..... 21.3%
Sports & leisure facilities 10.8%	Public transport..... 36.8%	Level of crime..... 26.5%	Education provision 5.9%	Affordable decent housing..... 49.4%
Shopping facilities 19.7%	Parks and open spaces..... 8.2%	Job prospects... 29.6%	Cultural facilities (eg cinemas, museums).... 8.7%	Activities for teenagers .. 30.5%
Road and pavement repairs 30.4%	Level of traffic congestion.... 36.6%	Health services 17.3%	Community activities..... 5.6%	Access to nature 3.4%
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN)		3.6%	Don't know 0.8%	None of these..... 0.5%