



INTRODUCTION

This report provides information from Canterbury City Council to assist the Lyons Inquiry into Local Government, particularly on issues related to public engagement. It provides a summary of relevant results from two research projects:

- Community Visioning work undertaken in the Canterbury district, at both estate and ward level, that was completed in **April 2005**. The methodology ensured engagement by all sections of the community (including traditionally hard to reach groups).
- The results (from over 1,000 respondents) of a recent “*Your council, your district, your future*” survey undertaken in **March 2006**

Further details about the two data sources are provided below. Although neither research project was planned and undertaken specifically for the Lyons Inquiry, both have provided data that Canterbury City Council hopes will be of benefit to the Inquiry.

2005 COMMUNITY VISIONING WORK

Canterbury City Council’s Community Development service uses the Community Visioning approach to engage local people in local issues. It is a process that highlights what is good and bad about living in a particular area, and it seeks the views of local people about what needs to be done to help make improvements.

This process has been used at both ward level and estate level in the Canterbury district and has been led by local people. It has been successful in giving local people a way to express their hopes for the future, influence decision makers and come up with their own solutions.

This report provides a summary of three case studies that Canterbury City Council hopes will be of value to the Lyons Inquiry.

(1) Northgate, Heron and Harbour Community Vision (ward level)

Background

This was led by two local Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) partnerships that were made up of representatives from the statutory, private, and voluntary and community sectors. It was completed in April 2005 and was a forward strategy for the three wards marking the end of SRB funding, but also highlighting issues that need to be addressed in the future.

Consultation, summary of methodologies, and response rates (*where applicable*)

A stock-take of the area was produced to get a clear and current picture of what was already happening in the communities and produce area profiles for each ward. This was followed by consultation with residents, which used several different approaches:

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were sent to 1,650 households selected at random in each of the 3 wards (total 4,950 questionnaires). The questionnaires covered a range of issues to find out people’s



concerns and solutions. A total of 579 completed questionnaires were received, giving a response rate of **11.7%**.

Focus groups

68 focus groups were carried out with 'harder to reach' groups, including young people, homeless people, older people, parents, and people with mental health issues. Those involved were asked to identify what they liked and disliked about their communities, what their hopes were, and how things could be made better.

Christmas Quiz

Over 100 people attended a quiz night. As well as being a fun event, the quiz also had a bonus round where individuals were asked to identify the good and bad parts of community life, and come up with ideas on how to improve things.

Minibus Tour

Older people, parents and other residents were taken on a minibus tour of their community, and asked to take pictures of what worried them and what they would like to change. After lunch at a local community centre they discussed how the things that mattered could be improved

Prioritization Event and action plan

After the consultation results had been analyzed, eight key priorities were identified. Stakeholders from all three wards were invited to attend a "*Prioritization Event*" to discuss the eight priorities, and to develop a vision and action plan for the future.

The action plan produced will be delivered by a range of voluntary, community, and statutory sector partners. The action plan and consultation results from the Community Visioning work have also been used in pilot Neighbourhood Management Areas as a basis for estate action planning.

(2) Greenhill Community Vision (estate level)

Background

This Community Vision for a local estate was undertaken by a local residents' association and the final action plan was produced in April 2005.

Consultation, summary of methodologies, and response rates (*where applicable*)

A range of different consultation methodologies were used:

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were sent to 1,000 households on the Greenhill estate that were selected at random. A total of 172 completed questionnaires were received (*each road in the community had at least one respondent*), giving a response rate of **17.2%**.

Photo survey

A photo survey of the estate was undertaken by children and young people.

Focus groups

Focus groups were held with local community groups.

On-street consultation

There was also on-street undertaken with residents.



Prioritization exercise and action plan

A prioritisation exercise took place to identify the top needs, and the results from this exercise were used to help develop the final action plan. The action plan was produced in April 2005, and identifies improvements and coordinated work that needs to be done to meet priorities.

(3) Parish Planning

The council's Community Development service also supports rural parishes in developing parish plans. This involves consultation and action planning to identify what local people like about their parish and what needs improving. Herne and Broomfield, and Bridge are good examples of parish plans. Chartham is an excellent example of a Design Statement.

Links with the Lyons Inquiry

The topic area and issues in the Lyons Inquiry that the council's Community Visioning work are most relevant to are:

Your Local Area: Identify what is most and least important to people within their area

The Community Visioning work undertaken addresses a range of issues covered by Checklist 1, including:

- Businesses
- Childcare
- Community information (*including services, activities, facilities and community spirit*)
- Community safety
- Crime
- Education
- Employment
- Finances
- Health and wellbeing
- Household information
- Links to the area.
- Skills
- Social and leisure time
- Training
- Transport
- Volunteers skills

Community Development work undertaken in the future may also be relevant to the Lyons Inquiry. At present one planned area of work that will be relevant is:

Accountability: Explore what people think local authorities should be responsible for. Is there support for local authorities taking on a "place-shaping" role ?

This issue will be addressed as part of development of a pilot estate agreement in one of the Neighbourhood Management areas.



2006 “YOUR COUNCIL, YOUR DISTRICT, YOUR COUNCIL, YOUR FUTURE” SURVEY

Background, methodology, and response rate

Purpose of survey

The survey combined a range of questions for several different purposes:

- To provide a “tracker” survey for some key questions to assess how views may have changed since the 2003/4 Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) survey
- To trial some of the new questions proposed for the 2006/7 BVPI Survey (*taken from the “Best Value User Satisfaction 2006-07: Consultation” document provided by the ODPM, December 2005*)
- To help with the ongoing Local Development Framework and “futures” work the council is undertaking at present

Summary of methodology

The survey was sent to a stratified random sample of 5,000 households. The sample was stratified to be representative of the whole population of the Canterbury district in terms of:

- The four geographic areas in the Canterbury district (*Canterbury, Herne Bay, Whitstable, and Rural areas*)
- The proportion of student households in the district (*approximately 3% of all households*)
- Property Council Tax bands (*A to H*)

Response rate

A total of 1,018 responses were received out of the 5,000 people who were selected at random to take part, giving a response rate of **20.4%**.

Demographics of respondents

The demographics for the respondents are provided below (*where applicable, figures may not necessarily total exactly 100% due to numeric rounding*). The corresponding demographics for the whole of the Canterbury district (*from the 2001 Census*) are also provided for comparative purposes:

Gender		
Gender	Survey respondents	Canterbury district
Male	42.5%	47.4%
Female	54.7%	52.6%
Transgender	0.2%	(Not an answer option)
No answer	2.6%	0%
Total	100%	100%

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Age		
Age group	Survey respondents	Canterbury district
15 to 19	0.7%	7.3%
20 to 24	2.3%	8.3%
25 to 29	2.9%	5.5%
30 to 34	3.8%	6.2%
35 to 39	4.7%	6.5%
40 to 44	6.0%	6.1%
45 to 49	8.0%	5.9%
50 to 54	7.6%	6.8%
55 to 59	10.6%	5.9%
60 to 64	11.2%	5.1%
65 to 69	10.5%	4.6%
70 to 74	8.2%	4.6%
75 to 79	7.9%	4.2%
80 to 84	7.2%	3.1%
85 to 89	3.7%	1.9%
90 and over	1.1%	0.9%
No reply	3.8%	(N/A)
Total	100%	100%

Ethnic group			
Ethnic group		Survey respondents	Canterbury district
White or White British	English	90.2%	92.6% (White British)
	Scottish	1.1%	
	Welsh	1.0%	
	Irish	1.4%	1.0%
	Any other White background	2.3%	3.0%
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean	0.0%	0.2%
	White and Black African	0.0%	0.1%
	White and Asian	0.0%	0.4%
	Any other Mixed background	0.3%	0.3%
Asian or Asian British	Indian	0.2%	0.4%
	Pakistani	0.0%	0.1%
	Bangladeshi	0.0%	0.1%
	Any other Asian background	0.4%	0.4%
Black or Black British	Caribbean	0.0%	0.1%
	African	0.2%	0.3%
	Any other Black background	0.0%	0.0%
Chinese or other ethnic group	Chinese	0.2%	0.5%
	Any other background	0.0%	0.5%
Total		100%	100%

Results

The “Public Engagement” pack for the Lyons Inquiry identifies 9 topic areas for consideration, and a number of questions per topic area. The 2006 “Your council, your district, your future” survey undertaken by Canterbury City Council was not designed to specifically answer these



questions. However, some of the results from the survey provide information that may be helpful to the Lyons Inquiry.

The extent to which the survey results “fit” the questions suggested by the Lyons Inquiry will obviously vary from issue to issue. Survey results that are felt to provide a reasonably good fit with the suggested questions are provided below, summarised by each of the 9 topic areas and suggested questions.

Where applicable, figures may not necessarily total exactly 100% due to numeric rounding.

Variation: [Explore how distinct people think their community is, compared to other areas](#)

There were no questions in the survey that are directly relevant to this topic.

Your Local Area: [Identify what is most and least important to people within their area](#)

What top three things make an area a good place to live ?			
(Q17) Survey			Most closely- related issue(s) from Checklist 1
Rank	%	Issue	
1	70.1%	Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low crime rate / feel safe
2	34.1%	Reducing road traffic and congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transport • Transport Links
3	27.5%	Protecting and improving the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local environment

What three things do you think most need improving in your area ?			
(Q18) Survey			Most closely- related issue(s) from Checklist 3
Rank	%	Issue	
1	64.6%	Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the level of crime
2	42.7%	Reducing road traffic and congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the amount of traffic on roads • Less congested roads
3	25.9%	Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More affordable housing for local people

What is the top thing that encourages you to live in your area / would encourage you to move to another area ?

Although not an identical question, the following question in the 2006 survey is relevant since the extent to which people feel part of their community will be one of the factors which will influence whether they feel encouraged to stay in their local area or to look to move to another area:

(Q29) Survey: How strongly do you feel part of the community ?

%	Response
7.9%	Very strongly
35.2%	Strongly
29.5%	Not strongly
13.6%	Not at all strongly
10.9%	Don't know / no opinion



[Role of council: Explore whether people identify with their local council and what role they would like the council to play in their local area](#)

Do you associate your local area with your local council ?					
Although not an identical question, some of the answer options in the following question in the 2006 survey are relevant:					
(Q7) Survey: Here are some things that other people have said about their council. To what extent do you think that these statements apply to your local council ?					
Statement	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
Is making the local area a better place to live ?	13.1%	54.5%	20.3%	5.9%	2.4%
Is working to make the area safer ?	10.9%	45.2%	25.4%	6.9%	7.1%
Is working to make the area cleaner and greener ?	17.4%	49.4%	20.9%	5.9%	2.2%
Has improved town centres in the local area ?	15.2%	40.3%	22.4%	15.5%	2.8%

Would you like your council to play a bigger role in your local community ? (if so, how ?)					
Although not an identical question, some of the answer options in the following question in the 2006 survey are relevant:					
(Q7) Survey: Here are some things that other people have said about their council. To what extent do you think that these statements apply to your local council ?					
Statement	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
Promotes the interests of local residents ?	6.1%	40.6%	24.5%	14.2%	10.1%
Listens to the concerns of local residents ?	7.0%	36.3%	26.1%	15.1%	11.1%
Acts on the concerns of local residents ?	3.5%	36.6%	26.0%	15.2%	13.6%

[Accountability: Explore what people think local authorities should be responsible for. Is there support for local authorities taking on a “place-shaping” role ?](#)

Do you think your local council should be able to help you when you have a complaint about ... ?	
Although not an identical question, the following question in the 2006 survey is relevant since this gives an indication of how well people feel the local council currently helps them when they have a complaint:	
(Q12) Survey: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which your last complaint was handled ?	
%	Response
3.4%	Very satisfied
5.3%	Fairly satisfied
2.5%	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
3.1%	Fairly dissatisfied
10.1%	Very dissatisfied

Note: the total of the percentage figures is the total percentage of respondents who have contacted the authority with a complaint in the last 12 months



Trust and satisfaction: [Explore the barriers to public confidence in local authorities](#)

Do you feel satisfied with the job your council currently does ?	
(Q6) Survey: Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the authority runs things ?	
%	Response
5.7%	Very satisfied
49.8%	Satisfied
29.6%	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
11.0%	Dissatisfied
2.0%	Very dissatisfied

Do you currently trust your council to do what is best for the local area as a whole ?					
Although not an identical question, some of the answer options in the following questions in the 2006 survey are relevant:					
(Q7) Survey: Here are some things that other people have said about their council. To what extent do you think that these statements apply to your local council ?					
Statement	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
Is making the local area a better place to live ?	13.1%	54.5%	20.3%	5.9%	2.4%
Is trustworthy ?	12.2%	39.8%	12.4%	6.8%	23.7%
Keeps its promises ?	5.6%	34.5%	17.3%	7.5%	30.2%

(Q13) Survey: Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making by your council?	
%	Response
3.7	Very satisfied
30.7	Satisfied
27.3	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
9.5	Dissatisfied
9.3	Very dissatisfied
16.7	Don't know

(Q14) Survey: Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?	
%	Response
3.6	Definitely agree
26.9	Tend to agree
34.9	Tend to disagree
13	Definitely disagree
19	Don't know



(Q15) Survey: Generally speaking, would you like to be more involved in the decisions your Council makes that affect your local area?	
%	Response
30.8	Yes
21.9	No
40.6	Depends on issue
3.4	Don't know

[Tiers of Governance: Explore people's view on which tiers of governance should be responsible for setting standards. In particular, are there any areas where people would like to see variation in services if it meets the needs of their area better ?](#)

What is the current role of your local councillor ? What do you think their role should be ?	
Although not an identical question, the following question in the 2006 survey is relevant since it asks respondents to think about their involvement with their local councillors and parish council:	
(Q16) Survey: In what way(s) would you like to be more involved in the decisions your council makes ? (please tick no more than two boxes)	
%	Response
7.2%	Joining the Community Panel
44.4%	Answering questionnaires
4.6%	Belonging to a local action group
13.8%	Attending public meetings
22.4%	Through your local councillors
8.2%	Through your parish council
2.5%	Other (please state)

[Services: Explore which services people prioritise and who should make decisions over their provision](#)

There were no questions in the survey that are directly relevant to this topic.

[Efficiency: Explore what people's views are on value for money and how more efficiency can be built into the system by reviewing what role councils play in an area](#)

Do you think that on the whole your local council provide value for money ? (and why ?)					
Although not an identical question, some of the answer options in the following questions in the 2006 survey are relevant:					
(Q7) Survey: Here are some things that other people have said about their council. To what extent do you think that these statements apply to your local council ?					
Statement	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
Is efficient and well run ?	9.7%	46.4%	17.6%	7.0%	14.7%
Provides good value for money ?	7.0%	38.4%	22.9%	14.2%	13.0%
Spends its money wisely ?	5.6%	32.7%	20.8%	14.6%	21.6%

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Input from Canterbury City Council



[Businesses: We are also interested in hearing views from local businesses. If you are carrying out work with local businesses we would be interested in the following types of question](#)

There were no questions in the survey that are directly relevant to this topic.