

Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No. 07/18

Date: 9 August 2018

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Purpose:

To inform Members of the National Highways and Transport Survey Results 2017

Background

At the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 June 2018, Members requested information on the National Highways and Transport Survey Results 2017. This was in light of the Work Programme Item on 'Information on the levels of finance needed to be invested in the highways network in order to maintain current levels of technical performance' which will be presented by the Head of Highways, Maintenance and Parking to committee on 16 August 2018 in response to a request by the Committee (Minute 899 March 2016 refers).

Introduction

The NHT survey is administered by measure2improve (m2i) and conducted by leading market research company Ipsos MORI.

This survey measures public satisfaction with highways and transport services in local authority areas. It is a national survey and therefore allows comparison of performance between local highway authorities on an individual, peer group or regional basis. It also facilitates the identification of areas for improvement as the Council achieves a better understanding of how Medway is performing in the eyes of the public.

The NHT survey started with 33 councils participating in 2008. The 2017 survey has seen yet another increase in participation with 112 authorities taking part, meaning the survey reach has been growing by an average of 8.8 authorities every year. Medway is one of 43 unitary authorities participating in 2017 and uses this peer group for benchmarking results, the Department for Transport

Self-Assessment, monitoring the progress of the Local Transport Plan and funding bids.

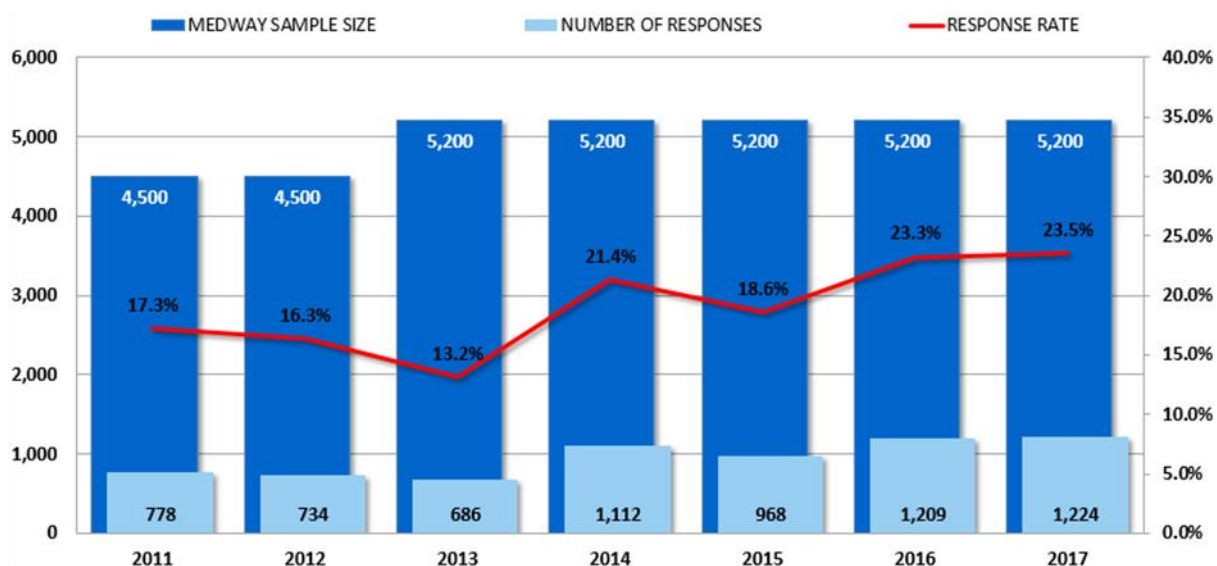
Medway has participated for 7 consecutive years, meaning 7 years of comparable data is now available.

Methodology

The NHT Survey is a postal survey which is run annually during June and July. The deadline for responses for 2017 was 21st July 2017. The recipients are chosen at random and responders are able to complete the paper survey or, if they prefer, the survey can be completed online. The survey asks respondents to rate their satisfaction levels with different areas of the highways and transport service.

For 4 years, Medway has opted for an additional 1,900 surveys to be sent on top of the standard volume of 3,300, to assist in the volume of returns. The cost for 2017: £14,244 (£11,870 + VAT). For the first time in 2017, authorities had the choice of whether to send the original 12-page questionnaire or a new 8-page version, introduced in an attempt to attract a higher response rate and a younger demographic. In order to produce an 8-page version of the questionnaire, a number of questions had to be removed. The detailed questions concerning Public Transport, Information for the Council, Tackling Congestion, Taxis Minicabs & Community Transport, Rights of Way, Provision of Cycle Routes and Bus Stops were removed from the 12-page version of the questionnaire. As a result, authorities that selected the 8 page version no longer have a complete set of scores. When benchmarking against the unitary authority peer group, rank placements will be either out of 43 or 22 dependant on the results available due to authorities in the group using the different surveys. For consistency in data, the 12-page survey was used within Medway.

26 Public Satisfaction Key Benchmarking Indicators (KBI) and 97 Benchmarking Indicators (BI) were reviewed.



5,200 surveys were sent out to households in Medway in 2017 with 1,224 responses, which calculates to our highest return rate of 23.5%. This is a 0.2 percentage point increase from last year's results.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
NUMBER OF AUTHORITIES	70	75	70	78	87	106	112
- OF WHICH ARE UNITARY AUTHORITIES	35	40	36	43	43	43	43
AVERAGE SAMPLE SIZE	5,028	5,026	5,031	3,847	3,649	3,767	3,583
AVERAGE NUMBER OF RESPONSES	886	808	767	892	775	920	897
AVERAGE RESPONSE RATE	17.6%	16.1%	15.2%	23.2%	21.2%	24.4%	25.0%

Our response rate is -1.5% lower than the national average rate of 25% (which is also the highest national return rate since the survey began), but due to our increased volume sent, we received a higher volume of responses than the average.

Most of the surveys actioned by Ipsos MORI seek a minimum of 800-1000 responses as these deliver statistical reliability of +3 at the aggregate level, as well as the scope to look at differences amongst sub groups such as younger v older residents with confidence.

The margin of error has been calculated at +/-2.79% for 2017.

Findings

All 26 Public Satisfaction Key Benchmarking Indicators (KBI) and 97 Benchmarking Indicators (BI) have been reviewed.

Observations were reviewed using the following themes:

- Accessibility
- Public Transport
- Walking and cycling
- Tackling congestion
- Road Safety
- Highway maintenance

A full breakdown of the results can be found at <https://nhtsurvey.econtrack.com/>

A summary of the KBI results can be found at Appendix A.

Each year the Council holds a residents and professional driver's focus group to share and discuss the NHT survey results. On 21 May 2018 a focus group was held where we shared the NHT survey results for 2017 (Appendix B).

Officers asked the focus group to identify:

- Why they felt the Council was performing at these levels
- What the Council could do differently to improve performance
- What were their top three suggestions to improve performance

NHT 2018

Medway Council will be participating again this year. The surveys will be delivered to a random selection of residents in July 2018. Initial results from the survey will be published by Measure2improve in Oct/Nov.

Conclusion

Officers across the Council are now using the 2017 NHT Survey results to assist them when resource planning and setting priorities. All achievements will be fed back at the next professional driver and resident's focus group to be held in 2019.

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