



EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REPORT OF: Executive Member for Growth and Development

LEAD OFFICERS: Director of Environment and Operations

DATE: December 2019

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Growth and Development Environmental Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

SUBJECT: National Highways and Transport (NHT) 2019 Network

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) 2019 Network Public Satisfaction Survey have recently been published. Officers will carry out detailed analysis of the results and use the findings to inform policy and budget proposals going forward.

Initial findings from the summary results show that in terms of public satisfaction the authority is below average with significant room for improvement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member:

- Approves the review of the detailed results of the NHT Survey 2019
- Approves the use of the findings of this review to inform policy and budget proposals going forward
- Approves the continued participation in the NHT Network by the submission of an Expression of Interest for the 2020 survey.

3. BACKGROUND

The Incentive Fund Self-assessment process is used by the DfT to reward councils that can demonstrate that their Highway's Service is delivering value for money and carrying out cost effective improvements.

The self-assessment consists of 22 questions covering different aspects of the provision of a Highway Service whereby the council has to score themselves as either Level 1, 2 or 3 (3 being the highest level). Participation in the NHT Network feeds into several of the questions helping the council to eventually rate them as Level 3.

Participation in the NHT Network contributes predominately to 3 of the questions covering:

- Customer satisfaction
- Benchmarking
- Efficiency monitoring

Continued participation is required to either keep or improve these areas to a Level 3 response.

Currently 111 Authorities participate in the NHT Public Satisfaction Survey with 84 of the Authorities participating in the Performance Management Framework (PMF) Network and Customer Quality Cost (CQC) Network

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

NHT Survey

The NHT survey is carried out by Ipsos MORI who normally seek a minimum of 800-1,000 responses as these deliver statistical reliability of +3 at the aggregate level, as well as the scope to look at differences among sub-groups, such as younger vs older residents, with confidence. The response rate for Blackburn with Darwen is historically low (16th lowest in 2017, 3rd lowest in 2018 and 5th lowest this year) and therefore an extra 1000 questionnaires in addition to the minimum number of 3300 are sent out to increase the chance of receiving a statistically reliable number of responses.

This year there were 754 responses with 31 authorities receiving fewer responses.

In addition to the postal survey that forms the basis of the reports and analysis within this report, the council also participates in online surveys per theme, the results of which are available early in 2020. Currently the number of online responses are as follows:

Theme	No of Responses
Accessibility	346
Public Transport	105
Walking/Cycling	42
Tackling Congestion	76
Road Safety	78
Highway Maintenance	210

Summary Results

The 2019 summary results based on the postal survey for Blackburn with Darwen are as follows:

Satisfaction	National Results Average (%age)				BwD Results (%age)			
	2015	2017	2018	2019	2015	2017	2018	2019
Overall	55	54	53	53	52	51	51	50
By Theme:								
Accessibility	74	70	70	70	65	64	60	67
Public Transport	60	61	61	61	55	57	58	58
Walking/Cycling	56	55	54	54	53	53	53	52
Tackling Congestion	51	48	47	48	44	44	44	45
Road Safety	56	55	55	55	54	53	52	52
Highway Maintenance	52	51	49	51	49	48	45	45

The headline conclusion is that in terms of public satisfaction, the authority has generally followed national trends but is still currently below the National Average. With regards to the 6 themes Accessibility, and Tackling Congestion are showing signs of improvement, Public Transport, Walking/Cycling and Road Safety remain fairly constant following national trends but Highway Maintenance is falling further behind the national picture.

The NHT provides two Executive Summary reports for the council. One report shows the authority's 2019 Overall, Theme and Key Benchmark Indicator (KBI) performances against the 2018 performances whilst the other report compares the authority's 2019 performance against the 2019 National Average Performance. These reports are being published on the council's website

Respondents Details

The table below shows the distribution of the status of the respondents to the survey:

28%	Employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)
9.4%	Employee in full-time job (under 30 hours per week)
7.5%	Self-employed full- or part-time
4.6%	Permanently sick/disabled
39.7%	Wholly retired from work
2.1%	Full-time education at school, college or university
5.7%	Something else
2.9%	Not stated

Similarly the ethnicity of the respondents can be analysed which shows that of the 745 respondents, 84.3% were from a White background, 10.2% from an Asian background, 2.2% from other ethnic groups and 3.3% not stated.

Detailed Results

In addition to the summary results, there is a plethora of reports available that analyse the raw data.

These reports include:

- Question Response Analysis
- Year-on-Year Performance
- Historic KBI Performance
- Historic BI Performance
- Historic Theme Performance
- Benchmark Summary Report
- KBI, BI, KQI & QI Comparison Reports
- Individual KBI & BI Comparison Reports
- KBI & BI Maps
- Historic Theme Comparison Report

The headline results from the detailed reports are best summarised by considering the Analysis of the Key Benchmark Indicators in the final report against all 111 highway authorities that took part in the survey:

	BwD Score	NHT Average	Variance	Rank of 111
01. General KBI				
KBI 01 - Overall (local)	50	53	-3	103 rd =
KBI 02 - Overall (national)	50	53	-3	104 th =
02. Accessibility KBI				
KBI 03 - Ease of Access (all)	71	75	-4	107 th
KBI 04 - Ease of Access (disabilities)	60	64	-4	101 st

KBI 05 - Ease of Access (no car)	71	70	1	46 th
03. Public Transport KBI				
KBI 06 - Local bus services	50	60	-10	104 th
KBI 07 - Local bus services (BVPI104)	49	60	-11	63 rd
KBI 08 - Local bus services (BVPI 103)	42	47	-5	52 nd
KBI 09 - Taxi/mini cab services	68	66	2	35 th =
KBI 10 - Community Transport	55	57	-2	85 th =
04. Walking/ Cycling KBI				
KBI 11 - Pavements & Footpaths	51	55	-4	87 th =
KBI 12 - Pavements & Footpaths (aspects)	51	58	-7	110 th
KBI 13 - Cycle routes and facilities	52	51	1	49 th =
KBI 14 - Cycle routes and facilities (aspects)	53	50	3	25 th =
KBI 15 - Rights of Way	54	57	-3	96 th =
KBI 16 - Rights of Way (aspects)	53	54	-1	44 th
05. Tackling Congestion KBI				
KBI 17 - Traffic levels & congestion	42	43	-1	59 th
KBI 18 - Management of roadworks	48	52	-4	96 th =
KBI 19 - Traffic Management	51	55	-4	68 th
06. Road Safety KBI				
KBI 20 - Road safety locally	50	56	-6	109 th
KBI 21 - Road safety environment	55	56	-1	68 th =
KBI 22 - Road safety education	51	52	-1	70 th =
07. Highway Maintenance/ Enforcement KBI				
KBI 23 - Condition of highways	29	36	-7	97 th
KBI 24 - Highway maintenance	46	52	-6	106 th =
KBI 25 - Street lighting	61	64	-3	93 rd
KBI 26 - Highway enforcement/obstructions	44	49	-5	111 th

The overall results are unfortunately again disappointing across the board with only 4 KBI's recording above the national average.

There are however encouraging signs of improvement when the council's 2019 ranking against the 111 other authorities taking part is compared to its 2017 rankings. Only 22 of the KBI's were measured in 2017 but in 16 of them, the council increased its ranking, 9 of which were double figure increases. Of the 6 KBI's where the council's ranking has decreased, all 4 of the Highway Maintenance/ Enforcement KBI's are included, the worst being KBI 23 – Condition of highways where the ranking dropped from 76th placed authority down to 97th placed authority.

The following services:

- Management/maintenance road drainage/gullies/drains
- Management/maintenance of pavements
- Management/maintenance of street lighting

are the top three areas which the public feel that it is not acceptable to reduce the level of service. All these services lie within the Highway Maintenance/ Enforcement KBI area where public satisfaction has decreased since 2017.

Officers will now carry out detailed analysis of all the results and local action improvements plans will be developed, implemented and progressed with service leads. The findings will also be used to inform policy and budget proposals going forward.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The survey results will inform any review and updating of existing policies each of which will be taken through the Council's approval procedure.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Customer Satisfaction surveys and customer feedback on the highway maintenance service are key elements of the DfT Incentive Funding Self-Assessment and the NHT Network Public Satisfaction Survey is a DfT recognised national standard for collecting much of this information.

Failure to carry out the survey could reduce the council's self-assessment grade which would impact negatively on future DfT Incentive Funding. The loss of Band 3 grading would result in the loss of between £226k to £323k funding for Highway Services, depending upon whether the grading reduced to Band 2 or to Band 1

The cost of the 2019 survey was £21.6k (inc VAT) and the anticipation is that the 2020 survey will be a similar cost.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

VERSION: 1

CONTACT OFFICER:	George Bell
DATE:	28 th November 2019
BACKGROUND PAPER:	NHT Executive Summary Reports