The Highland Council

5th September 2013

Agenda Item	15(ii)
Report No	HC/36/13

Results from the Citizens' Panel 2013 Performance and Attitudes Survey

Report by the Chief Executive

Summary

The survey results from the Citizens' Panel show generally high levels of satisfaction when contacting us, improving satisfaction with most services surveyed over a five year period and positive perceptions of community life in the Highlands. In seeking continuous improvement, several new follow up actions are proposed along with ideas on how we can make the most use of the feedback and improve our survey processes. Other action is already programmed and that should help to sustain and improve perception of us.

1. Background

1.1 The results from our Citizens' Panel survey into views on our performance and on public attitudes are provided for members' attention. The results from the 2013 survey are generally very positive. Some activity already planned should help sustain positive feedback and new actions recommended should help to improve some of the lower scores over time.

1.2 In keeping with previous survey analysis, we have considered if there are any differences in view among different groups in our community, namely by age, gender and disability. This year new analysis is done on the extent to which the public feels we demonstrate our organisational values.

1.3 This year we received 1151 responses from our Panel of 2300 adults, including 410 electronically, providing a 49% response rate. This number of responses along with the sampling method used provides good validity in the results; a 95% confidence level is achieved with a confidence interval of +or- 2.9%. In other words where this level of responses was received, we can be 95% confident that the response we would get if we surveyed all adults in Highland would be within + or – 2.9% of the results from the survey[1].

1.4 The annual survey of the Citizens' Panel contributes towards our Programme commitment that we will continue to measure our progress openly, report on it publicly and listens to communities, to ensure we are delivering services that provide best value for Council Taxpayers.

[1] While this is a very small margin of error, not all respondents answered every question, especially when the questions were about using specific services, so results need to be treated accordingly.

2. Key findings

2.1 The full survey report, provided by the UHI Centre for Remote and Rural Studies, can be accessed on the performance pages of the website http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/howyourcouncilperforms/. As this is a long report, running to around 140 pages, a summary is attached for members. This includes a two page summary of overall results and the highlights are:

1. 90% say they find it easy to contact us.
2. 73% felt their request was dealt with by the first person they contacted.
3. 88% of the Panel say they were satisfied with Services in 2012/13.
4. Of the 45 service areas surveyed, there were more positive views than negative views for 44 of them. Only roads repairs and potholes have more dissatisfaction than satisfaction. This is the first year where only one service is viewed negatively on balance.
5. 19 of the 45 services secured their highest ever net satisfaction ratings in this year's survey. Net satisfaction has decreased for 20 services since 2011 and by 5% or more for 13 of them.
6. The top four most important services for the public are also the top four used by most people; road repairs and potholes, winter road maintenance, refuse/bin collection and recycling facilities. High satisfaction is found with refuse and recycling services.
7. The top 3 most important qualities for us to demonstrate and selected by over half the panel remain as maintaining good quality local services (71% selected this option), listening to local people (59%) and providing value for money (56%). On balance, the Council is viewed positively in demonstrating all of these. We are also viewed positively on being approachable, being helpful, being environmentally friendly, providing value for money and being efficient.
8. On balance fewer people agree than disagree that we involve people in how we spend money (25% compared to 36%) or that we represent their views (24% agree compared to 25% who disagree).
9. All indicators on community life are positive with some of the highest scores ever recorded from our surveys, e.g. 95.5% say they rate the neighbourhood or community they live in as very or fairly good, 97.8% rate their locality as either very or fairly safe and 38% saying the currently volunteer in some capacity with over half of them (60%) saying they do this at least every week and 29% say they are involved in three activities or more. 76% feel we have strengthened the profile of the Gaelic language to a great or some extent.
10. Generally people with disabilities tend to have less positive feedback, but it is generally still positive and largely not negative. Older people, people with school age children and people living here for less than five years tend to view us more positively. 73.6% agree that Highland should do everything it can to get rid of all types of prejudice.

3. Follow up actions

3.1 The results will be fed back to:

1. Staff through the newsletter, management briefings and service briefings;
2. Citizens' Panel members to thank them for taking part in the survey,

advising them of the key results and our follow up action;
3. The general public when we feedback our performance results through the newspaper supplement and in the booklet accompanying the council tax bill. Information will also be included on our web pages and through a press release. We will explore whether it is cost effective to produce a household newsletter in future rather than the newspaper supplement.
4. Partners, especially on volunteering issues fed back.

3.2 Action that is already planned that should help sustain or improve public perception of us includes improvements to customer contact and engagement, improvements to particular services and for community safety. These are set out below :

1. The redevelopment of the website for 2014, including the ability for more self-service and payments;
2. The development of text messaging as a means of communication, linked to the redevelopment of the website;
3. Automating the phone payment line and making it available 24/7 to enable more people to make payments outwith office hours;
4. On-going consultation with disability groups through focus groups and meetings with members;
5. The monitoring and reporting of our complaints policy through the Audit and Scrutiny Committee;
6. New investment to support Programme commitments to repair roads and pot holes;
7. New services to encourage healthy and active ageing, supported by prevention funding and delivered by Highlife Highland;
8. With partners addressing the top three community safety concerns as set out in the Single Outcome Agreement on road safety, alcohol misuse and anti-social behaviour. Also working to reduce the level of worry about being a victim of crime among people with disabilities and improving community safety perceptions in areas of multiple deprivation;
9. With partners working to continuously improve employability services and to provide more affordable housing, both identified in the Single Outcome Agreement;
10. Consulting further on any future budget changes, implementing our Programme commitments on community engagement, including the community challenge fund, to improve perception of how we involve people in how we spend money.

3.3 New action is proposed that should help improve public perception of us. This is:

1. To hold focus groups with older people and people with disabilities to understand what is needed to assist them to use on-line services more and to understand if we need to adapt our self-service points for their needs currently under development.
2. To identify how to support the digital inclusion of older people, people with disabilities and Council tenants better. It is also proposed that this targeted action is included as part of a commitment in our Programme, as set out in the separate annual corporate performance report to this

meeting of the Council.

3. To explore the use of text messaging services particularly for Council housing tenants and people on the housing register.
4. To routinely seek the advice from Disability Access Panels on accessible design (including signage) and privacy in our public caller buildings and especially as part of any new buildings or office rationalisation as set out in our asset management plan.
5. To use the survey results in our customer care training (e.g. awareness of different perceptions of men and women when contacting us) and the need to be sensitive to the circumstances of our high contact groups of people with disabilities, council tenants and people unable to work or are unemployed.
6. To work with the Highland Third Sector Partnership for further support to be offered to people with disabilities to volunteer and to feel more involved in community life.
7. To up-date our Programme with a commitment to work with others to improve voter turnout at elections, given the need to improve perception on representing people's views and our organisational value of valuing others. It would also highlight the work underway through the CPE Committee. Proposed programme amendments are described separately in the annual corporate performance report.

4. Changing expectations of our services

4.1 Notable feedback from young people below provides some insights into changing expectations. This offers some insight for future proofing our services.

- While a high level of respondents (73%) felt that their requests were dealt with at the first point of contact, for younger people aged 25-44 years this figure was notably lower at 61%. This is the cohort that makes most use of on-line services, including for payments. They are likely to be more used to self-service and less tolerant of delays in response; an important marker for future-proofing services as this cohort ages.
- Younger people are twice as likely to say it is important for the Council to treat people fairly (67% said that compared to 32% of the panel as a whole), are more likely to say that it is important to be aware of people's needs (57% compared to 39%) and that it is important that we represent their views (33% compared to 19%). This may signal greater value placed by them on matters related to diversity and participation, supporting our equalities work and our targeted action to increase voter turnout.

5. Continuously improving the survey process

5.1 Each year we ask panel members how they find being a member. This year 78% said they felt their views have been listened to, 89% said they found it useful to be a panel member and 90% said they found it worthwhile. 29% said they found it time consuming. Improvement is seen in all of these responses from earlier surveys.

5.2 Improvements to the survey and reporting process are identified below.
<u>Citizens' Panel</u>

We refresh a third of the Citizens' Panel membership each year and in 2014 we will also ensure the overall panel membership is representative of the adult population profile that will be revised from the Census 2011 (data expected late 2013).

While some of the results should be useful for our partners, it would be useful to explore whether the Citizens' Panel could be developed as a source for partner and partnership surveys.

5.3 Further analysis

We will identify feedback that would be relevant for the Carbon Clever Highlands initiative. Our base-line could draw on public perception as one source of data. In addition short profiles for each of 45 service areas surveyed will be provided in a Service briefing pack. These can be used for briefing members further, for use in service self-assessment and for considering any further survey work required.

5.4 Further reporting

Feedback on some questions will be reported more fully at committees. The new questions asked on satisfaction with advice services will be reported to the FHR Committee in August 2013, on community safety and equalities to the CPE Committee in September and December 2013 and on access to the outdoors and community growing to a future PED Committee.

5.5 New survey work

Feedback from the panel does not really help us to understand how we are viewed in partnering; one of our organisational values. It is proposed that new survey work is instigated with partners to understand our strengths and where we need to improve. This could be done with partners in the reviewed community planning structures which are to be in place by end March 2014. Surveys could be about the Council as a partner and about staff behaviours as a way of extending their personal appraisal to include peer review from other organisations. Options for doing this can be developed in early 2014.

6. Implications

6.1 Resource implications

There are no new resource implications arising from this report. The recommendations for further action will be contained within current budgets. The survey costs around £15,000 in research fees, printing and postage.

6.2 Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report, but using the information for understanding how our performance is perceived and being open about that, helps us to comply with our legal duties on public performance reporting.

6.3 Risk implications

There is a risk that our performance is judged solely on public perception. Credible performance reporting should also take into account performance information from other sources as well and ideally combining results from a range of sources. This includes our statutory and local performance indicators, describing our performance against our Programme commitments, professional opinion gathered through self-evaluation and external scrutiny bodies as well as feedback to members from constituents.

6.4 Equalities implications

The summary report attached includes more information this year on the difference in views from community groups and whether they are positive or negative. This can also be regarded as customer profiling and it is extremely useful in tailoring our services to meet the diverse needs of our community. Many of the improvement actions focus on being more aware of the needs of older people and people with disabilities and on the expectations of younger people. This approach helps us to be a responsive public body and to comply with our legal equalities duties. The questions on public attitudes to diversity and equality appear to show improving tolerance and acceptance of diversity in our community.

6.5 Climate Change/Carbon Clever implications

Several questions in the survey will help us to understand how we are perceived on a range of environmental services. This year we will carry out analysis of the results to see if that will help us set a base-line and targets for improvement for the new Carbon Clever Highland initiative.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Members are asked to consider the key findings and summary report attached of the feedback from the Citizens' Panel from this year's survey, noting a strong set of positive results.

7.2 Members are asked to approve the follow up action to communicate the results widely and to approve the specific actions set out in paragraph 3.3 as well as the actions proposed in section 5 of the report to continuously improve the survey process.

Date: 23.8.13

Author: Carron McDiarmid, Head of Policy and Performance. Tel (01463) 702852

Highland Council Annual Performance and Attitudes Survey 2013
Key findings

Contents

1. Summary

The response rate from the Citizens' Panel was 49%. 1151 responses received. This provides good validity and confidence that the results can be generalised to the adult population as a whole.

Key results

On contact

1. Over half the Panel (54.5%) had made contact with us in 2012/13.
2. 90% say they find it easy to contact us.
3. 73% felt their request was dealt with by the first person they contacted.
4. On-line contact continues to grow; approaching nearly a third of all respondents using this method (at 30% in 2013 up from 12% in 2009) and over a third of the Panel (37%) are interested in receiving information on Council services by text messaging to mobile phones.

On satisfaction with services

1. 88% of the Panel say they were satisfied with Services in 2012/13.
2. Of the 45 service areas surveyed, there were more positive views than negative views for 44 of them.
3. Net satisfaction has improved for 23 services since 2011 and in 13 of these the improvement is 5% or greater. When compared to 2009, when the question was asked slightly differently, net satisfaction has improved in 44 of the 45 services.
4. 19 of the 45 services secured their highest ever net satisfaction ratings in this year's survey.
5. In 26 out of 45 services net satisfaction of 40% and over is recorded; in other words for 26 services 40% more people view these services positively than negatively.
6. Net satisfaction has decreased for 20 services since 2011 and by 5% or more for 13 of them. The greatest decreases are found for cycling paths (21% reduction in net satisfaction), registrars for births, deaths and marriages (13%), other sports facilities (10%) and public conveniences (10%); although for all of these there are more people satisfied than dissatisfied.
7. Only one service this year showed greater dissatisfaction than satisfaction compared to 2009 when there were five. In 2013 this was for road repairs and pot holes

On the importance of services and our qualities

1. The top four most important services for the public are also the top four used by most people; road repairs and potholes, winter road maintenance, refuse/bin collection and recycling facilities. High and improving levels of satisfaction are found for refuse and recycling facilities and more people are now satisfied with winter road maintenance than in any previous survey. New investment agreed in June 2013 in roads repairs and potholes should improve satisfaction in future.
2. The top 3 most important qualities for us to demonstrate and selected by over half the panel remain as maintaining good quality local services (71% selected this option), listening to local people (59%) and providing value for money (56%). On balance, the Council is viewed positively in demonstrating all of these.

3. 64% strongly agree or agree that we maintain good quality local services. A majority also agree that we are approachable (59%), helpful (54%) and environmentally friendly (53%).
4. More people agree than disagree that we provide value for money (33% compared to 23%) and are efficient (31% compared to 26%); but on balance fewer people agree than disagree that we involve people in how we spend money (25% compared to 36%) or that we represent their views (24% agree compared to 25% who disagree).

<u>On community life</u>

1. 95.5% say they rate the neighbourhood or community they live in as very or fairly good.
2. 97.8% rate their locality as either very or fairly safe; the highest score in five years since this question was asked in 2009 when 92% felt this way.
3. 97.8% rate the area within a 15 minute walk from their home as very or fairly safe; the highest score recorded and up from 92% in 2009.
4. 73.6% agree that Highland should do everything it can to get rid of all types of prejudice (up from 66.9% in 2011). 26.4% agree that sometimes there is good reason for people to be prejudiced against certain groups (down from 33.1% in 2011). A majority (51.7%) would prefer to live in an area with lots of different kinds of people (up from 46.8% in 2011 and more in keeping with last year's result of 52.1%).
5. 76% feel we have strengthened the profile of the Gaelic language to a great or some extent. Only 7% feel we have not done this at all and down from 9% in 2012.
6. Levels of volunteering remain high, with 38% saying the currently volunteer in some capacity (same as last year and up from 29% in 2009). 60% of those volunteering say they do this at least every week (up from 54% in 2010) and 29% say they are involved in three activities or more (the highest score recorded and with the lowest score of 21% in 2009). 52% say they volunteer in their local community. The main types of volunteering are associated with being part of a management committee or board, for their church or faith group or in their school.
7. Where views differ for particular groups in our community they are highlighted throughout the report. Generally people with disabilities tend to have less positive feedback, but it is generally still positive and largely not negative. Older people, people with school age children and people living here for less than five years tend to view us more positively.

This year analysis of the results according to the Council's values is also provided.

2. Methodology

2.1 The 2013 survey was carried out in May 2013. Results were input and analysed independently by the UHI Centre for Remote and Rural Studies. Their full report runs to 140 pages and is available on-line at http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/howyourcouncilperforms/.

2.2 The survey questionnaire was sent to our 2013 Citizens' Panel, comprising 2300 adults randomly selected from the electoral register and adjusted to be representative of the adult population as a whole based on the population profile from the Census 2001. 750 panel members elected to receive the questionnaire on-line and all others received the questionnaire by post. Each year a third of the panel is refreshed to avoid survey fatigue and to encourage good response rates.

2.3 With 1151 responses received, including 410 electronically, the response rate was 49%. This number of responses along with the sampling method used provides good validity in the results; a 95% confidence level is achieved with a confidence interval of +or- 2.9%. In other words where this level of responses was received, we can be 95% confident that the response we would get if we surveyed all adults in Highland would be within + or – 2.9% of the results from the survey[1].

2.4 Report format

This report highlights the key results of the survey. It also identifies where views differ among community groups as part of our customer profiling and equalities duties. New analysis is done this year on the extent to which the public feels we demonstrate our organisational values.

3. General feedback on scale and types of customer contact

3.1 Key statistics on the scales and types of customer feedback are listed below. This is useful contextual information for the Customer Engagement Strategy and the Customer Contact Transformation Project (part of the Corporate Improvement Programme).

1. 54.5% had contact with the Council in 2012/13 – up from 51% in previous two years.

2. More people report making contact to make a payment (50% in 2013 compared to 37% in 2009) and fewer people report making contact to make a complaint (6% in 2013 compared to 16% in 2009).

3. On-line contact continues to grow, approaching nearly a third of all respondents using this method (at 30% in 2013 up from 12% in 2009). Contact by phone is still the method used most often with 45% of respondents phoning in 2013 but down from 57% in 2009.

4. 34% of respondents had contacted in person and mostly at a service point (7/10 people making a visit did so at a service point and this has increased

[1] While this is a very small margin of error, not all respondents answered every question, especially when the questions were about using specific services, so results need to be treated accordingly.

slightly from 2009); but overall face to face contact is down to 34% from 48% in 2009, indicating fewer contacts in other council offices. This might reflect the Council's office rationalisation programme as well as now forms of contact being available.

5. Most payments are made using direct debit (45% of those saying they made a payment in the last year said they used this method). Payment using debit/credit card was the second most popular way of paying, with 11% saying they did this at a service point and a further 9% saying they did this on line. 12% of respondents said they had paid in cash or by cheque in person in other places (7% in Post Offices and 5% using Paypoint or Payzone facilities in shops and Post Offices). 4% said they had used the Council's phone payment line.

6. Over a third of the Panel (37%) are interested in receiving information about Council Services by text (up from 19% in 2009). This is particularly favoured by younger people (59% of those aged 16-24 years and 40% of those aged 25-44 years), but also by 26% of those aged over 65 years. Texting is also more popular among Council tenants (45% interested) and those living in other rented accommodation, tied housing and living with parents (47%).

7. Just over a third of respondents are aware of that the Council webcasts meetings and that Council information was available through social networking (awareness among 36% of respondents and a slight increase from 32% in 2011).

8. The appetite for interactive/digital TV seems to have fallen back (with 23% now interested in this as a way of receiving information compared to 32% in 2009). The top 3 preferred ways of receiving information on the Council's performance are: in the booklet accompanying the council tax bill, on web pages and by email.

9. 13.9% of the panel said they had made a complaint in the last year, down from a high of 18.5% in 2010. 28% said they were very or fairly satisfied with how we handled their complaint down slightly from 30% in 2010 and 48% were either very or fairly dissatisfied also down slightly from 51% in 2010. While more complainants were dissatisfied than satisfied, a growing number (25% and up from 19% in 2010) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. The reason cited most often for dissatisfaction is the outcome of the complaint (selected by 66% of complainants) with less than half citing the quality of the response or the timescale.

10. <u>Contact with Community Councils</u>

12.8% of the panel said they had made contact with their Community Council in 2012/13. This is down slightly from 16.6% in 2012 but more in keeping with 13% in 2011. Contact rates were higher in more rural and remote wards and among older people (aged 45 years and over). The reason for contact cited most often was on a planning and development issue (39% people chose this option) followed by improving the amenities in their area (27% people selected). Most people not contacting said that was because they had no reason to. Only 9% did not know how to contact their Community Council and only7% did not know that there was a community council.

4. Customer profiling on contact with us

4.1 Understanding the characteristics of our customers and how these vary can help us improve our services, tailor particular responses to their needs and improve our risk management. Customer or market segmentation can be good business practice and it can help us fulfil our legal equalities duties and our commitments in the Fairer Highland Plan. The contact with, and views of, particular community groups from the 2013 survey are outlined below.

Key customers

1. People with disabilities, council tenants and people unable to work or unemployed have higher rates of contact with us; so they are key customers and understanding their needs will help us to be more responsive as an organisation. (Over 60% of people in these groups made contact last year).

Telephony, on-line and face-to-face contact

2. Two thirds of the Panel say the overall speed we answer the phone is good; and for women this reaches 75% compared to 57% for men.

3. Younger people and those with school-aged children are more likely to contact on-line than older people. 43% of all people aged 25-44 years compared to 17% of those aged 65 years and over contacted the Council on-line.

4. 42% of those with school-aged children made contact on-line compared to 22% of those who do not have school-aged children. This may indicate useful information on-line about our services for children and families.

5. Younger people (25-44 years) are also far more likely to pay on-line for Council services using their debit/credit card; 20% said they had paid this way compared to only 1% of those aged over 65 years.

6. Older people are more likely to contact the Council in person (39% of those aged 65+ contacted this way compared to 26% of those aged 25-44 years). Council tenants and people with disabilities are also more likely to contact in person (48% and 44% respectively compared to 34% for the Panel as a whole).

7. Council house tenants are three times more likely to select a Service Point in their top 5 most important services than home owners or those in other accommodation. Council tenants are also more likely to prefer to receive information on our services in Service Points or by separate newsletters.

Text and web services

8. While receiving information by text is gaining popularity it is particularly favoured by younger people (59% of those aged 16-24 years and 40% of those aged 25-44 years), but it is also of interest to 26% of those aged over 65 years. Texting is also more popular among people renting their housing and staying

with parents, so perhaps a useful way of keeping in touch with people on the housing register.

9. Women are also more likely to rate the ease of using the website as good (ranging from 39% to 48% good on different aspects) compared to men (ranging from 24% to 33% good).

Complaints

10. Women and people with school aged children are more likely to be satisfied with how we handle their complaints.

5. Most commonly used services

5.1 The services used in the last year are shown in **Appendix 1**. Those services used by at least half the panel are: refuse/bin collection (94% used this service), recycling facilities (93%), road repairs and pot holes (88%), winter road maintenance (85%), street cleaning (81%), street lighting (81%), pavement maintenance (80%), payment of council tax (67%), public parks and open spaces (66%), public conveniences (61%), libraries (54%) and dealing with flooding (50%). Because we can generalise the panel results to the adult population as a whole, we can safely estimate that these are the most commonly used services. This use is in keeping with that recorded in 2012.

5.2 The most important services to the public

When panel members were asked to select the five most important services to them, the five chosen most often were: road repairs and potholes (selected by 57%); winter road maintenance (selected by 48%); refuse/bin collection (selected by 41%); recycling facilities (32%); and primary education (selected by 19%). The top four most important are also the top four used by most people, and are all in TEC Services.

5.3 Satisfaction levels are high and have been improving for refuse/bin collection (78% net satisfaction and up from 73% in 2011) and for recycling facilities (75% net satisfaction and up from 66% in 2011). Net satisfaction is described more fully in section 8.3 below.

5.4 Winter road maintenance has seen improved satisfaction with net satisfaction at 14%, the highest recorded for this service and improving from a previously negative score of -9% in 2011 (and -23% in 2010) where more people were dissatisfied than satisfied.

5.5 Roads and potholes services have consistently scored the lowest of all our services on satisfaction, with many more people dissatisfied than satisfied, and by a substantial margin; by -61% in 2013. This has worsened from 2011 when the net satisfaction score was -55%.

6. The most important qualities for the Council to demonstrate

6.1 The top 3 most important qualities and selected by over half the panel remain as maintaining good quality local services (71% selected this option), listening to local people (59%) and providing value for money (56%). The Council is viewed positively in demonstrating all of these qualities. Responses on the most important qualities for us to demonstrate are shown on **Appendix 2**.

7. Customer profiling on the most important services and qualities

1. Those with school-aged children (51%) are more likely to identify winter road maintenance among their top 5 most important services than those without school children (36%). They are also more likely, along with people aged 25-44 years, to rate swimming pools and other sports facilities as important.

2. Refuse/bin collections, street cleaning, pavement maintenance and libraries are of particular importance to older people.

3. Recycling seems to be of lower importance to council housing tenants; 22% selected it in their top 5 compared to 33% of home owners.

4. Those with school-aged children are more likely to say that maintaining good quality services and listening to local people are the most important qualities for us.

5. Younger people are twice as likely to say it is important for the Council to treat people fairly (67% said that compared to 32% of the panel as a whole), are more likely to say that it is important to be aware of people's needs (57% compared to 39%) and that it is important that we represent their views (33% compared to 19%).

8. Highlights – where performance is felt to be good and/or improving

8.1 Satisfaction when contacting us

1. 90% say they find it easy to contact us (the same as in 2012). This rises to 97% of those who have lived in the Highlands for less than 5 years.

2. 73% of respondents felt their request was dealt with by the first person they contacted. This is higher than the 70% recorded in 2012 and in keeping with the figures from 2009 which have fluctuated between 69% and 74%.

3. When making contact with the Council, over 70% of respondents regard the Council as good at being helpful (74%), with over 80% of older people and people with disabilities feeling this way. 71% say that the Council is good at understanding what is wanted (71%). 70% say they have good overall satisfaction with the service provided when making contact.

4. When making personal visits, 74% felt that facilities for people with a disability are good (and increased significantly from 61% in 2009) and 66% felt that they are able to reach the right person (an increase from 60% in 2009). A majority of people with disabilities also said that facilities for them were good (65% with only 8% saying they were poor).

5. When contacting by telephone 66% of respondents found the speed with which calls are answered was good (up from 61% in 2009) and 63% felt it was easy to get through to someone who could help (up from 57% in 2009). 57%

felt that the opening hours for contacting by phone were good (an increase from 49% in 2012) and closer to the levels found prior to that.

6. Views on response times to written contact (letters, emails and fax) have improved with 47% rating this as good compared to 35% in 2011 and now higher than any other year in the past four years; although 24% find the response time to be poor. Only 176 Panel members said they had contacted in this way.

8.2 Positive feedback on contact with us – customer profiling

1. The helpfulness of our staff is generally well regarded (74% say it is good), and even more so by people with disabilities (86%) and older people aged 65 years + (81%).

2. A higher proportion of older people (79% compared to 71% overall) also rated our staff as being good at understanding what they wanted.

3. A majority of people with disabilities said that facilities for them when making a personal visit were good (65% with only 8% saying they were poor) and 74% of the panel felt this (a significant increase from 61% in 2009).

8.3 Satisfaction with services overall

1. 88% of the Panel say they are satisfied with Council services; the highest score recorded from all surveys and up from the high of 85% recorded in 2011. 1135 respondents answered this question so the result can be generalised to the adult population as a whole.

2. Of 45 service areas surveyed, there were more positive views than negative views for 44 of them. This is shown on **Appendix 3.** Net satisfaction[2] has improved for 23 services since 2011 and in 13 of these the improvement is 5% or greater. When compared to 2009, when the question was asked slightly differently[3], net satisfaction has improved in 44 of the 45 services.

3. 19 of the 45 services secured their highest ever net satisfaction ratings in this year's survey and those with the highest increase from their previous highest rating were: planning applications and building warrants; services to reduce youth offending; winter road maintenance; housing information and advice; and planning for future land use.

4. The services with the highest net satisfaction ratings of over 70% are: payment of council tax (78%); libraries (84%); walking routes e.g. Great Glen Way (84%); Council Service Points (79%); refuse/bin collection (78%); public

[2] Net satisfaction is calculated by adding the % of respondents who are 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' and then subtracting from that figure the % of respondents saying they are 'very' or 'fairly dissatisfied'.

[3] In 2009 respondents could have said they were satisfied or not even if they had not used the service. In 2010 they were given the option to select 'have not used service' and from 2011 this option was made clearer along with an alteration to the wording so that it specifies the dates between which people have used the service in order to given an opinion. This change should mean the results of the survey from 2011 onwards are more accurate than ever.

parks and other open spaces (76%); recycling facilities (75%); and museums (74%).

5. In 26 out of 45 services net satisfaction of 40% and over is recorded; in other words for 26 services 40% more people view the service positively than negatively.

8.4 Positive views on our qualities

1. 64% strongly agree or agree that we maintain good quality local services. A majority also agree that we are approachable (59%), helpful (54%) and environmentally friendly (53%).

2. While between 33% and 62% of the panel neither agree or disagree on whether we demonstrate the following qualities, more people view us positively than negatively on being a fair employer, being aware of people's needs, telling people what we are doing, treating residents fairly and listening to local people.

3. More people agree than disagree that we provide value for money (33% compared to 23%) and are efficient (31% compared to 26%); but on balance fewer people agree than disagree that we involve people in how we spend money (25% compared to 36%).

4. Compared to 2010 perception overall has improved in being approachable, environmentally friendly, telling people what we are doing, treating residents fairly, providing value for money, being efficient and being a fair employer.

8.5 Positive feedback on our qualities – customer profiling

1. People with school aged children, older people and those living here for less than five years are more likely to agree we maintain good quality services.

2. Younger people (aged 16-24 years) and people with disabilities are more likely to feel that we tell people what we are doing (27% and 23% respectively compared to the panel as a whole with a margin of 21% agreeing).

3. People living here for less than five years are far more likely to agree than disagree that we listen to local people – by 34% compared to 9% for the panel as a whole.

8.6 Positive views on community life, community safety and volunteering

1. 95.5% say they rate the neighbourhood or community they live in as very or fairly good.

2. 97.8% rate their locality as either very or fairly safe, the highest score in five years since this question was asked in 2009 when 92% felt this way.

3. 97.8% rate the area within a 15 minute walk from their home as very or fairly safe, the highest score recorded and up from 92% in 2009.

4. Nearly half of all respondents (49.8%) are not worried at all about being a victim of crime in general and 12.7% have never considered it. 35% say they are slightly worried and 2.5% say they are very worried. The percentages showing any level of worry have decreased from 2012.

5. The top 3 community safety concerns remain as road safety, alcohol abuse and anti-social behaviour; although the number saying these are a concern has fallen across all three types of activity.

6. 71.2% of the panel feel that the area where they live gives them a sense of belonging to a community to a great or to some extent. This is a similar to earlier results.

7. 49% feel very or fairly involved in the life of their community, with the highest score recorded and up from 43% in 2011. 41% feel not really involved and 10% feel they are not involved at all.

8. In keeping with previous surveys, 86% feel their communities are accepting of people coming from outside the Highlands to live in the area (to a great or some extent).

9. 76% feel we have strengthened the profile of the Gaelic language to a great or some extent. Only 7% feel we have not done this at all and down from 9% in 2012.

10. When asked about a range of community services, on balance views were positive about local schools, health services, leisure facilities/event, shops, adult and children's social care services, public transport and energy advice. This is shown in **Appendix 4**. Net satisfaction with public transport has increased from 6% in 2012 to 18% in 2013.

11. 73.6% agree that Highland should do everything it can to get rid of all types of prejudice (up from 66.9% in 2011). 26.4% agree that sometimes there is good reason for people to be prejudiced against certain groups (down from 33.1% in 2011).

12. A majority (51.7%) would prefer to live in an area with lots of different kinds of people (up from 46.8% in 2011 and more in keeping with last year's result of 52.1%). 48.3% would rather live in an area where most people were similar to them (down from 53.2% in 2011).

13. Levels of volunteering remain high, with 38% saying the currently volunteer in some capacity (same as last year and up from 29% in 2009). 60% of those volunteering say they do this at least every week (up from 54% in 2010).

14. Of those saying they volunteer, 29% say they are involved in three activities or more (the highest score recorded and with the lowest score of 21% in 2009) and 52% say they volunteer in their local community. The main types of volunteering are associated with being part of a management committee or board, for their church or faith group or in their school.

8.7 Positive feedback on community life, community safety and volunteering – customer profiling

1. Women, older people, those residents in the area for between 5 and 10 years show a stronger sense of community belonging (76% compared to 71% for the panel as a whole). Rural wards also show higher scores.

2. Over half of those aged 16-24 years (59%), those with school aged children (55%) and those living here from 5-10 years feel very or fairly involved in their communities compared to 49.5% of the panel overall. Rural wards also show higher scores for people feeling involved.

3. Public transport is rated more highly by older and retired people.

4. The lowest levels of worry about being a victim of crime are found among those resident in the Highland for less than 5 years (at 30% very worried or worried compared to 37.6% for the panel as a whole).

5. Younger people are less likely to have discriminatory views about certain groups in the community.

6. Older people (65 years +), retired people and people with children are more likely to say they volunteer (between 46% and 48% compared to 38% for the panel as a whole).

7. People living in rural wards are more likely to volunteer than elsewhere.

9. Where customers generally seek improvement or change

9.1 Areas for improving satisfaction or change in general

1. Only 1 service area has a negative net satisfaction score, in other words where more people view the service negatively than positively. This is the first year that only 1 service is viewed this way; in 2011 there were three and in 2009 there were 5 services viewed negatively. The service affected is road repairs and pot holes with a score of -61%. (75% of the panel were very or fairly dissatisfied compared to 14% very or fairly satisfied).

2. Fewer respondents are rating the Council as good when they make personal visits to offices and services points in terms of opening hours (62% rated this as good in 2009 compared to 55% in 2013) and for waiting time (59% rated this as good in 2009 and 56% rate this as good in 2013. However only 8% and 7% respectively rate these aspects as poor.

3. Perhaps of more concern is the rating on privacy, where only 38% find this as good compared to 40% in 2009 and 24% find it poor compared to 22% in 2009. More people with disabilities find privacy to be poor than good (32% say it is poor while 28% say it is good).

4. When asked about the Council's website, around 45% of respondents find the content to be good; but views on the ease of using the website are less positive. Across a range of questions less than half of the respondents found the website to be good and net satisfaction scores are particularly low for the search facility (9%), navigation (10%), completing on-line forms (19%), links on the homepage (22%) and to a lesser extent the A to Z facility (42% found this good while 14% found this poor).

5. Over a third of the Panel (37%) are interested in receiving information about Council Services by text (up from 19% in 2009).

6. There may be an appetite for improving the Council's social networking (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) as 36% felt this was good while 18% felt it was poor; although the numbers responding to this question are very small (64 people) and therefore not representative.

7. On balance, we are still viewed negatively on representing people's views (although by a smaller margin with 24% agreeing and 25% disagreeing). Interestingly 50% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 19% identified this in their top 5 most important qualities, perhaps indicating some apathy on this issue. However when asked if they felt they could influence decisions affecting their local areas, 42% disagreed (including 11% strongly disagreeing) and 16% agreed. 36% neither agreed nor disagreed.

8. On balance, we are still viewed negatively on involving people in how we spend money, with 25% agreeing we do this and 36% disagreeing (39% neither agreed not disagreed).

9. On balance there are negative views on services to support people into employment and on the availability of housing (see **Appendix 4**). These are

not necessarily about our services, these are areas we work with partners to improve and both are included in the Single Outcome Agreement. For employment services the score does show some improvement from -23% net satisfaction in 2012 to -14% in 2013; but for housing perception is now poorer with a score of -23% in 2013 compared to -11 in 2012.

9.2 Areas for improvement or change: customer profiling

1. People with disabilities:
   The views of people with disabilities on the panel are notable in that while they are mostly positive, they are less positive than the panel as a whole across a range of services and contact.
   - They are less likely to rate opening hours as good, 45% compared to 55% for the Panel as a whole, are more likely to rate privacy in public caller buildings as poor than good, they tend to agree less that we maintain good quality services (although they still rate us positively) and a smaller margin agree we are aware of people's needs (3% more agree than disagree compared to 16% for the panel as a whole).
   - While more people with disabilities agree than disagree that we treat all residents fairly, the margin of those agreeing compared to disagreeing is at 8% compared to 17% for the panel as a whole.
   - They are less likely to feel involved in the life of their community (43% compared to 49.5% of the panel as a whole) and half as likely to rate public transport positively.
   - They are less convinced that we listen to local people, that we represent their views or that we involve people in how we spend money as all have negative scores of -2%, -14% and -18% respectively, showing that more disagree with these statements than agree. These scores compare with +9%, -7% and -11% respectively for the panel as a whole.
   - They show greater levels of worry about being a victim of crime – 48% worried including 5% very worried – compared to those who are not disabled (37% worried including 2% very worried)..
   - They show slightly lower net satisfaction with Council services (79% compared to 88%) but still at a high level. 20% of people with disabilities said they were less satisfied with services than last year. Compared to 15.5% of the panel overall; although the majority said they felt about the same.

2. While a high level of respondents (73%) felt that their requests were dealt with at the first point of contact, for younger people aged 25-44 years this figure was notably lower at 61%.

3. People living in rural wards show lower satisfaction with public transport that town or city areas and in remote areas scores tend to be negative on balance.

4. People in some city wards and wards associated with multiple deprivation are less likely to rate the area within 15 minutes' walk of their home as 'very safe' (under 40% compared to 97.8% of the panel as a whole).

10. Responses according to the our values

10.1 The Council's values are about listening, being open, valuing, improving, supporting, partnering and delivering. **Appendix 5** provides an assessment of the extent to which the public feels we demonstrate these values based on the survey results.

10.2 On balance this shows that the public feel we demonstrate that we listen, we are open, we are about improvement, we are supportive, that we deliver and that we value our environment.

10.3 While improvement can be sought even where performance is good, there is one value where perception in part is poorer. This is in aspects of valuing others and their views and in caring about how we do things. This is indicated in the only two negative scores we have from a list of 13 qualities; representing people's views and involving people in how we spend money. On the latter over a third of people select this among their top 5 qualities so it matters to people. Also more people disagree than agree that they feel they could influence decisions affecting their local areas.

10.4 More positively, perceptions have improved from last year on both qualities. In representing people's views the margin of those disagreeing is at 1%, but interestingly 50% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and only 19% identified this in their top 5 most important qualities, perhaps indicating some apathy on this issue.

10.5 Involving people and representing their views are important features of a healthy democracy. This is recognised in our Programme where one of our seven themes is to empower communities.

10.6 Feedback from the panel does not really help us to understand how we are viewed in partnering, another organisational value.

Percentage of Respondents who indicate they have used these services Appendix 1

SERVICES	People indicating they used a service 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013	1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012 %
Refuse/bin collection	94	94
Recycling facilities	93	92
Road repairs and pot holes	88	90
Winter road maintenance	85	88
Street cleaning	81	82
Street lighting	81	81
Pavement maintenance	80	80
Payment of Council Tax	67	67
Public Parks and other open spaces	66	67
Public conveniences	61	61
Libraries	54	59
Dealing with flooding	50	47
Swimming pools	40	40
Council Service Points	39	40
Museums	35	34
Walking routes e.g. Great Glen Way	35	33
Planning for future land use (Local Plan)	32	33
Other sports facilities	31	31
Planning applications and building warrants	30	33
Cycle paths	28	28
Environmental Health Service	25	24
Registrars for Births, Deaths and Marriages	25	23
Primary education	23	22
Secondary education	23	22
School meals	23	21
Countryside ranger service	22	20
Burials and cremations	21	19
Community learning/adult education	20	21
Trading Standards	19	18
School transport	18	18
Economic development / business support	18	18
Care at home services	18	18
Residential homes disabled/elderly people	18	17
Council housing information and advice	18	17
Pre-school services	16	15
Community Occupational Therapy	14	14
Advice on Benefits	14	14
Services to protect children from harm	14	14
Services to protect adults at risk of harm	13	13
Breakfast and after school clubs	13	11
Services to reduce youth offending	12	13
Gaelic adult learning/ community education	10	8
Gaelic Primary education	9	9
Gaelic Secondary education	9	8
Gaelic Pre-school services	9	8

N in 2013 = 104-1,081

Appendix 2
Respondents' Views as to the 5 Most Important Qualities for the Council to Display

Qualities as Ranked in Order of Importance by Respondents in 2013 Survey	Respondents Mentioning Quality in Their Top 5 (2013) %	Respondents Mentioning Quality in Their Top 5 (2012) %	Respondents Mentioning Quality in Their Top 5 (2011) %
1. Maintains good quality local services	71	73	77
2. Listens to local people	59	57	60
3. Provides value for money	56	58	62
4. Is aware of people's needs	39	36	39
5. Is efficient	36	37	45
6. Involves people in how it spends its money	35	36	38
7. Treats all residents fairly	32	36	36
8. Is environmentally friendly	29	29	32
9. Tells local people what it is doing	28	30	34
10. Is helpful	21	20	18
11. Represents your views	19	20	20
12. Is approachable	17	17	14
13. Is a fair employer	13	12	14

N=1,063 in 2012

Views on our Services: The Net Satisfaction Rate[4] **Appendix 3**

Service	2013 %	2012 %	2011[5] %	2010 %	2009 %
Payment of Council Tax	87	82	82	78	72
Libraries	84	81	89	78	65
Walking routes e.g. Great Glen Way	84	80	83	77	56
Council Service Points	79	74	83	74	72
Refuse/bin collection	78	72	73	74	72
Public Parks and other open spaces	76	73	82	63	48
Recycling facilities	75	72	66	61	57
Museums	74	64	79	59	35
Countryside ranger service	69	67	71	61	39
Registrars for Births, Deaths & Marriages	67	73	80	74	54
Street lighting	67	64	69	63	58
Swimming pools	65	64	62	53	40
Other sports facilities	62	69	72	52	33
Burials and cremations	61	68	68	63	41
Secondary education	60	57	63	60	39
Primary education	59	65	64	74	49
Pre-school services	58	62	65	63	38
Environmental Health Service	54	55	53	33	23
School meals	54	45	60	45	28
Street cleaning	47	43	37	30	30
Trading Standards	46	41	42	38	19
Cycling paths	44	50	65	36	19
Housing information and advice	43	30	30	18	12
Services to protect children from harm	42	28	37	24	14
School transport	41	33	45	51	31
Breakfast and after school clubs	40	24	46	28	7
Community learning/adult education	39	47	41	32	20
Advice on Benefits	35	30	34	20	18
Care at home services	33	23	25	23	14
Community Occupational Therapy	32	30	28	17	8
Economic development / business support	31	35	27	10	3
Services to protect adults at risk from harm	30	28	25	18	n/a
Public conveniences	28	19	38	18	1
Gaelic Pre-school services	27	21	n/a	n/a	n/a
Dealing with flooding	27	18	28	21	19
Residential homes for disabled/elderly people	24	21	32	11	6
Pavement maintenance	21	16	8	6	3
Planning applications and building warrants	19	-2	2	-4	-3
Gaelic Primary education	14	24	n/a	n/a	n/a
Winter road maintenance	14	0	-9	-23	-3
Planning for future land use (Local Plan)	14	3	3	-9	-9
Gaelic Secondary education	7	14	n/a	n/a	n/a
Services to reduce youth offending	7	-13	-9	-27	-27
Gaelic community learning/adult education	1	15	n/a	n/a	n/a
Road repairs and pot holes	**-61**	**-59**	**-55**	**-57**	**-50**

Base: N in 2013 = 104 –1,081

[4] Net satisfaction is calculated by adding the % of respondents who are 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' and then subtracting from that figure the % of respondents saying they are 'very' or 'fairly dissatisfied'.

[5] In 2009 respondents could have said they were satisfied or not even if they had not used the service. In 2010 they were given the option to select 'have not used service' and from 2011 this option was made clearer along with an alteration to the wording so that it specifies the dates between which people have used the service in order to given an opinion. This change should mean the results of the survey from 2011 onwards are more accurate than ever.

Appendix 4

Respondents' Levels of Satisfaction with Services in their Communities

Amenity	Very satisfied %	Fairly satisfied %	Neither satisfied/ dissatisfied %	Fairly dissatisfied %	Very dissatisfied %	Net satisfac-tion rate %
Local Schools	32	42	19	5	2	67
Local health services	32	44	11	9	4	63
Leisure facilities/ events	15	44	23	12	6	41
Shops	17	44	17	16	6	39
Children's Social Care/Social Work services	6	27	57	6	4	23
Public Transport	14	35	20	17	14	18
Adult Social Care/ Social Work services	8	26	50	10	6	18
Access to energy saving advice	6	32	41	15	6	17
Services to help people into employment	2	14	54	16	14	-14
Availability of housing	3	18	35	25	19	-23

N = 535 – 1,123

Appendix 5

Public views on the extent to which the Council demonstrates its organisational values

Listening

Principle: we will listen and respond to our communities, value their diversity and treat everyone with respect

Behaviours: we will consult and pay attention to others, respond, be self-aware and reflect on our impact on others.

Key survey findings:

90% say it is easy to contact us.

Listening to local people is a quality valued by 59% of the public, making it the second most important quality for the Council to demonstrate. As shown below 6% more people feel we demonstrate this quality than those feeling we do not; although this score is lower than in previous years. Other relevant indicators are about being approachable, treating residents fairly and being aware of people's needs. We are also rated positively for all of these qualities.

Qualities	2013 Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neither Agree or Disagree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2013	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2012	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2011
Is approachable	11	48	34	6	1	**52**	**49**	**56**
Treats all residents fairly	6	30	45	16	3	**17**	**5**	**7**
Is aware of people's needs	4	29	47	16	4	**13**	**6**	**17**
Listens to local people	6	30	35	23	7	**6**	**9**	**11**

In addition:

- the customer profiling indicates the views of different groups in the community and in responding to these we will be able to demonstrate that we value diversity in our community and treat everyone with respect; and
- by paying attention to the survey feedback we will be more aware of public perception about us and that will help us to be more self-aware.

Open
Principle: we will be fair, open and accountable.
Behaviours: we are willing to explain, are accountable and open to challenge, are cooperative and non-judgemental.

Key survey findings:
Two relevant perception indicators are about us telling people what we are doing (ranked in 5 most important qualities by 28%) and treating residents fairly (ranked in top 5 by 32%). On balance we are viewed positively on both with scores improving from 2011. In addition, reporting the results of the survey and identifying where improvement is needed could be seen as demonstrating this value.

	2013							
Qualities	**Strongly Agree %**	**Agree %**	**Neither Agree or Disagree %**	**Disagree %**	**Strongly Disagree %**	**Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2013**	**Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2012**	**Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2011**
Tells local people what it is doing	7	37	33	19	4	**21**	**9**	**15**
Treats all residents fairly	6	30	45	16	3	**17**	**5**	**7**

Valuing
Principle: we will enhance our environment and the quality of life in the Highlands.
Behaviours: we care about our colleagues, staff and customers; care about what we do and how we do it; respect others, our services and our environment; and are receptive to the views of others.

Key survey findings
Three relevant perception indicators on our qualities are about being environmentally friendly (in the top 5 values of 29% of people); representing public views (in the top 5 for 19%); and involving people in how we spend money (in the top 5 for 35%). We are viewed positively in being environmentally friendly and more so than in 2011. On balance we are viewed negatively on representing people's views, although the biggest group (half of the respondents) neither disagreed nor agreed with this statement. We also ask if people feel they could influence decisions affecting their local areas and in 2013, 42% disagreed (including 11% strongly disagreeing) and 16% agreed. 36% neither agreed nor disagreed. *While perceptions have improved from last year on involving people in how we spend money, we are still viewed negatively on this quality and given this is among the most important qualities for over a third of people, we should consider how this perception can be improved.*

Qualities	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	2013 Neither Agree or Disagree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2013	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2012	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2011
Is environmentally friendly	7	46	38	7	2	**44**	**45**	**39**
Represents your views	3	21	50	18	7	**-1**	**-7**	**-2**
Involves people in how it spends its money	5	20	39	29	7	**-11**	**-18**	**0.3**

Quality of life indicators might also include those about community life in the Highlands (with generally strong results for rating communities, community safety, being involved in community life and volunteering) and our role in improving these aspects of community life as well as achieving generally high satisfaction levels with our services could also indicate we demonstrate the value we place on supporting good quality of life.

Improving
Principle: we will be efficient and provide value for money
Behaviours: we will analyse and challenge how and what we deliver, take responsibility for change and seek to overcome barriers to change.

Key survey findings
Strong and improving performance are highlighted in section 8 above and include views on contact with us, satisfaction with services and aspects of community life. Identifying areas for improvement based on public perception, as set out in section 11 above, demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement.
Relevant perception indicators might also include being efficient (in the top 5 most important qualities for 36% of people) and providing value for money (in the top 5 for 56%). On balance we are viewed positively in both qualities and there has been improvement in perception over the past two years.

Qualities	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	2013 Neither Agree or Disagree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2013	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2012	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2011
Provides value for money	5	28	44	18	5	**10**	**3**	**8**
Is efficient	5	26	43	21	5	**5**	**-1**	**4**

Supporting
Principle: we will support staff to perform at their best and to have dignity at work.
Behaviours: we will create trust with colleagues, staff and customers; encourage and praise colleagues and staff; empower staff, colleagues, customers and communities; delegate appropriately and support others to achieve.

Key survey findings
Key perception indicators are about us being helpful and a fair employer. 21% rank helpfulness as among the 5 most important qualities for us to demonstrate. Only 13% identify being a fair employer among the 5 most important qualities, but this is understandable from a public survey although staff would probably rank this as more important and we gather staff opinion through the staff survey and other engagement with them and their representatives. Results are shown below and we are viewed very positively in both. In addition, 74% regard us as being helpful when they contact us (section 8.1).

Qualities	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	2013 Neither Agree or Disagree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2013	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2012	Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2011
Is helpful	8	46	37	8	1	**45**	**45**	**46**
Is a fair employer	7	26	62	4	1	**28**	**27**	**26**

Partnering
Principle: we will work in partnership, learn from others and be adaptable in order to provide the best possible solutions for the Highlands.
Behaviours: we will understand and respect the views of others; work collaboratively; be flexible; work to common goals and targets; learn from others; and are unbiased and non-judgemental.

Key survey findings

There are no relevant indicators from the survey on our partnering behaviours. A better source of information would be from our partners and their perception of the extent to which we demonstrate these behaviours.

Delivering

Principle: we will be efficient and provide value for money

Behaviours: we will support the objectives of our teams, service and the Council; deliver according to agreed timescales and standards and take responsibility for our work.

Key survey findings

Much of the feedback in the survey is about our delivery of public services, from the experience people have when they contact us and in their views on how satisfied they are with the service we deliver. The results from the 2013 survey are generally strong and improving. When we ask about qualities, there are relevant indicators as shown below and we are viewed positively and with improvement in all of them. Maintaining good quality services is in the top 5 most important qualities for 71% and in this we have the highest score of 64% agreeing with this and only 10% disagreeing.

			2013					
Qualities	**Strongly Agree %**	**Agree %**	**Neither Agree or Disagree %**	**Disagree %**	**Strongly Disagree %**	**Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2013**	**Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2012**	**Difference between % who agree and % who disagree in 2011**
Maintains good quality local services	10	54	26	8	2	**54**	**51**	**52**
Provides value for money	5	28	44	18	5	**10**	**3**	**8**
Is efficient	5	26	43	21	5	**5**	**-1**	**4**