**FULL COUNCIL – 21 DECEMBER 2020**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTERIM SURVEY RESULTS**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 As part of the Corporate Plan development, the Parish Council undertook a community survey in during November/December 2020 to help the Council understand the needs and demands of residents with a view to using the results to help shape a five-year action plan.

**2. SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNITY RESPONSE**

2.1 The below gives a snapshot of the key themes arising from the survey. Detailed analysis of the survey will take place in January.

2.2 A total of 320 residents responded to the survey which had a total of 30 questions.

2.3 Of the 320 respondents, 68.44% female and 30.31% male with 1.25% preferring not to say. 55.31% of respondents were aged between 41-65, 30% were 26-40, 18.13% 66+ and 1.56% aged 25 an under.

2.4 Ten hard copy surveys were submitted. These have been inputted into the online survey, so that the online analysis includes all responses.

**3. KEY FINDINGS**

3.1 It is clear from the survey results that the community is overwhelmingly concerned and impacted by COVID-19; with 53.63% of respondents worrying about their families’ future, and 31.55% concerned about how to support family and friends.

3.2 None of the 320 respondents accessed help from the Parish Council and concerningly, 42.32% of respondents were not aware of support from either the Parish or Boroug Councils.

3.3 Residents were very clear on what priorities the Council should invest in and also how to engage with them.

3.4 The top three answers to the question surrounding what important community resources help residents to live their lives well: -

92.79% (296 respondents) stated green spaces;

42.95% (137 respondents) stated access to a community library/hub; and

40.44% (129 respondents) stated opportunities to socialise/community groups.

3.5 When asked about the importance of digitally enabling the local community: -

27.36% said extremely important/vital

39.62% stated very important

30.50 stated somewhat important

2.52% stating not important

**4. POSITIVE RESULTS**

4.1 Some residents have reported good experiences of the play areas and public open space managed by the Parish with 78.98% stating that this is where the Parish Council adds the most value.

**5. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

5.1 It is clear from the survey that there are several areas that the Parish Council needs to focus improvement. These can be broken down into key themes – communication, involvement and service provision.

5.2 Communication

* Out of the 319 responses to the question whether residents stay informed about the Parish Council activities on social media, 61.44% of residents that they accessed the social media page and 38.56% stated they did not.
* 71.52% of residents would like to be engaged via social media. The Council needs to increase its social media presence, with daily posts to actively engage residents.

5.3 Involvement

* Only 47.81% residents feel that they are involved in decision making and many comments request increase in community surveys/polls, having online meetings and e-newsletters.

**Comments:**

* The Council has held live streamed Council meetings from May this year and publishes agendas and minutes on its website. Alerts are also posted on social media informing residents of the meetings. The Council has also since February, sent out a monthly e-bulletin and residents can sign up to this via the website. Clearly, the Council needs to work on its marketing and community engagement.

5.4 Service Provision

* Whilst the Council had set up a Climate Change Task & Finish Group, engaging with the students at Wyvern Collage and drafting an action plan, little has been done to move this forward. It is clear from the survey that sustainability is a key priority for residents, with 94.84% of respondents giving high and somewhat high priority to future sustainability projects.
* In response to the question what sustainability projects the Council should deliver in the future: -

73.75% stated safe walking & cycling routes

67.81% stated more wildlife friendly flowers and bulb planting

40.63% requesting electric car charging points

**6. FUTURE PRIORITIES**

6.1 In establishing what means the most to residents, the survey asked what the Council’s future priorities should be. 67.4% of respondents stated crime and safety initiatives and 63.01% enhancements to public open space.

6.2 When asked about what new projects should be delivered, 61.83% of residents asked for wildflower and bulb planting, 57.73% requested upgrade/additional CCTV and 54.89% requested that the Scout Hut be removed, and a café/social enterprise hub be put in its place.

**Comments:**

* The Council’s Officers hold regular safety meetings with statutory partners including the Police. The Police and the Council regularly liaise and have held several crime prevention/awareness sessions and beat surgeries at the Council premises. Clearly, more advertisement of these is needed.
* The Ground staff have recently, with the help of the local Scouting Groups, planted over 5000 mixed plant bulbs in the verges and public open space in the parish. The Clerk also has plans to hold a wildflower seed bomb making day with the local schools for planting in the Council’s open space.
* The Budget Task & Finish Group have recommended, as part of the budget process and upgrade to the Council’s CCTV including the purchase of a solar powered roving CCTV camera.
* The Café Task & Finish Group will shortly be submitting a project proposal for phase 2 of the community facilities at New Century Park to include the installation of a (temporary) building housing a not-for-profit community café and social enterprise space.

**7. FAIR OAK LIBRARY**

7.1 The Council used the survey to gain an understanding of why some residents did not access HCC’s library (which will close on 31 December) and 69.23% of residents said they would engage with the library if offered a community café. This will be passed onto the Library Task & Finish Group volunteers for their information.

**8. RESIDENTS’ VIEWS MATTER**

8.1 The Parish Council needs to listen to individuals and families in our community and will continue to channel collective voices into action. The Council will do this by developing a Corporate Action plan with SMART targets. It is proposed that the Action Plan be reviewed annually.

8.2 The Clerk also suggests the development of a Community Engagement strategy with clear targets. Alongside this, it is also suggested that regular surveys and polls be undertaken utilising digital communication tools which appear to have the widest reach to residents.

8.3 The draft Climate Change Action Plan also needs to be reviewed and actioned by the Council in light of the survey results.

**9. NEXT STEPS**

9.1 The full survey results will be published on the Council’s website and a link to this will be sent to all members.

9.2 Using the results of the survey the Parish Clerk will develop a draft Corporate Action Plan. The draft plan will be put to the community for their views and then finally adopted by the Full Council.

9.3 The timescales for this process is suggested as: -

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| **ACTIVITY** | **DATE** |
| Interim findings of community survey | 21 December (Full Council) |
| Full analysis of survey results | 21 December – 4 January |
| Draft Action Plan development | 4 January – 18 January  |
| Community Consultation of draft Action Plan | 19 January – 16 February |
| Final approval/adoption of the Action Plan | 22 February 2021 |
| Action Plan marketing | February – March 2021 |
| Review of plan | February 2022 |

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That the Council notes the interim survey results; and

10.2 That the Clerk commences the development of the Corporate Action Plan to the timescales set out in paragraph 9.3 above.

**For more information please contact:**

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