

Big Conversation Survey 2016/17

Theme Analysis

Your Council



April 2017

Feedback and Insight Team, Commissioning Support, Shropshire Council

This paper summarises the Big Conversation 2016/17 results for the theme: Your Council (also referred to as 'How the council operates').

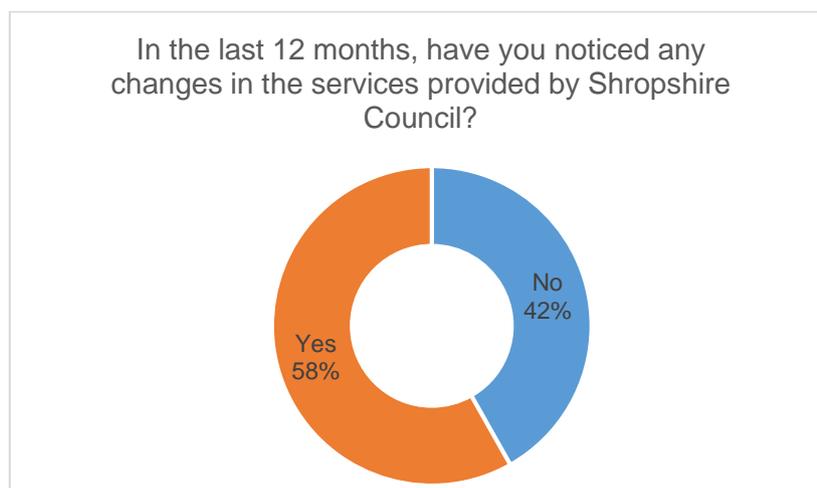
The work undertaken on the Big Conversation 2016/17 is reflected in a number of different reports. The reports include a full report of all the survey feedback, reports on the work undertaken to engage with specific groups and communities of interest (those who were not as well engaged in 2015/16) and a short summary of the main issues raised. Please use the website and contact details at the end to find out more.

Your Council

In total 276 respondents completed the survey and their responses to the Your Council theme are shown below. The section on page 2 named 'Targeted Engagement by Project Partners' highlights the findings from engagement work undertaken with groups who were not well represented within the Big Conversation surveys.

In the last 12 months, have you noticed any changes in the services provided by Shropshire Council?

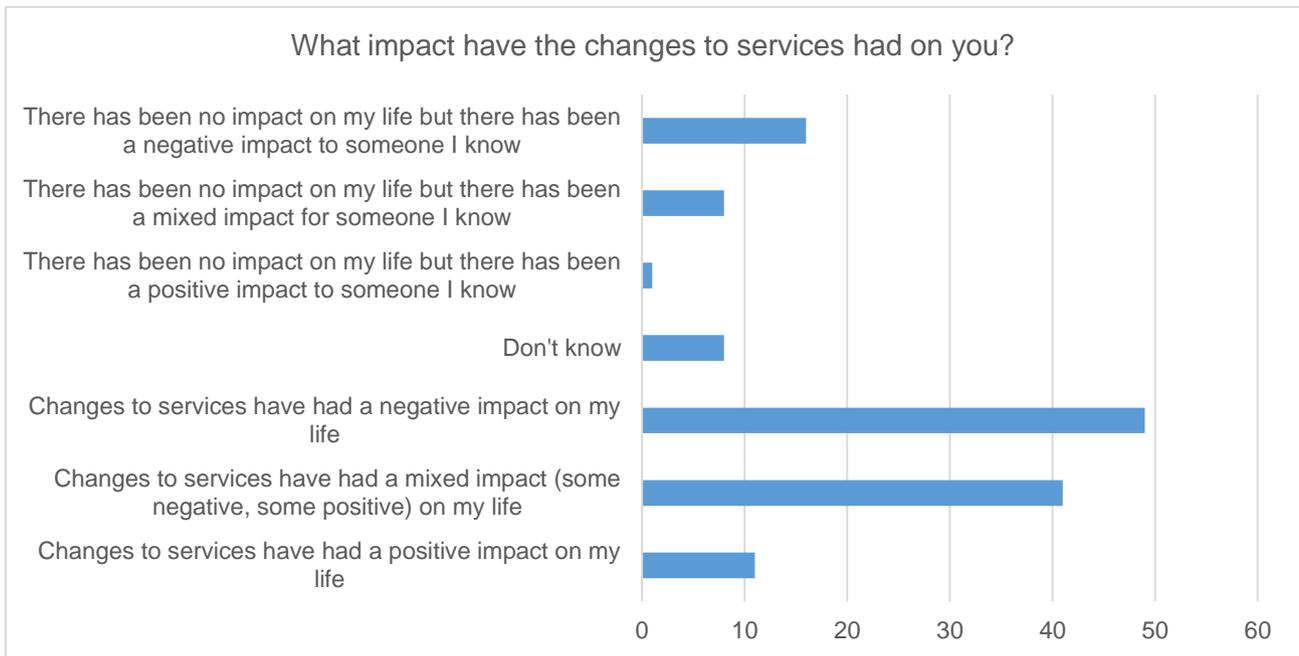
- The Big Conversation survey 2016/17 highlighted that 58% of people have noticed some changes in the services provided by Shropshire Council in the last 12 months. 42% have not.



What impact have the changes to services had on you?

- The impact of the change is mixed among the survey respondents. 8% believe changes have been positive for them personally, 31% have found the changes mixed (some negative and some positive) and 37% report a negative impact.

- 19% of survey respondents reported that change has had no impact on them.
- Reporting an impact on someone else, survey respondents who haven't experienced change themselves report the following: 12% have seen a negative impact of Council services changes on someone else, 6% have seen a mixed impact on someone else (some positive and some negative) and 1% report a positive impact of change on someone else.



Targeted Engagement by Project Partners

In addition to the survey, targeted engagement took place in early 2017 with the following groups:

- Children and young people under the age of 25.
- Carers and people using services likely to be most impacted by future changes (including those over the age of 75).
- People who either do not have the skills and equipment to complete online surveys or choose not to engage online.
- People with a disability that make the completion of online surveys and engagement more difficult.
- People on lower incomes likely to find the self-funding of services difficult.

The targeted engagement work was undertaken by:

- Carers Trust 4All (Carers)
- Shropshire Housing Support Group with Shropshire Council's Adult Social Care (People on lower incomes, those who would find self-funding services and people who find online surveys difficult).
- Taking Part (People with a disability or find the completion of online surveys difficult).
- Shropshire Council's Community Enablement Team and Business Design Team (Young people aged under 25).

722 participated in the targeted engagement work and they commented:

Positives:

- Library services are mentioned and praised amongst most groups and are seen as important as sources of information about what's going on, for accessing online services and keeping in touch.

- People suggest that the young carers service has improved.
- There is some praise for the Shropshire Recovery Partnership.
- There were some comments concerning services for Asylum Seekers – they are seen as well-meaning but feedback is that more thought is needed where asylum seekers are placed. In particular there is a need to be able to access language courses easily.

Areas of concern:

- Use of computers is low among the groups targeted for engagement (children and young people are the exception).
- People with disabilities highlighted that:
 - The welfare system is complex (system and language) for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues. Support is needed.
 - Information from the Council should be accessible and easy to read.
 - Service cuts worry people. People with a disability report having seen negative changes to services such as services closing, funding cuts, loss of support staff, reduced services (street lights, gritting).
 - The impact of cuts have a negative impact on feelings of safety and loss of social interaction.
 - People have mixed feelings about paying for services including:
 - Being able to afford to pay for services.
 - Being asked to pay for services that currently receive for free.
 - Potential to contribute depending on potential charging rates.
 - Concern that if unable to pay then they would lose their independence.
- The Council needs to do more to lobby Government for more funding taking into account Shropshire’s rurality, low wages, higher levels of need and older population.

Please read the full reports for more detail. The full reports help to highlight the different issues of each target group and provide a better understanding of local perceptions.

Summary of main issues: Your Council

- Concerns over the severity of cuts.
- Requests for greater visibility of, and communication by, Shropshire Council.
- Fears that the Council doesn’t listen and then act on concerns expressed by residents.
- Concerns that there is a lack of policy and plans – both locally and nationally.
- Requests to improve partnership working.

Example Comments

“Be serious about promoting a vision about how Shropshire Council, other organisations (voluntary, private and public) and citizens can work together to improve the lives of citizens and communities throughout the County. Put Council financial, staff and physical assets and resources into backing up and following through on the type of vision outlined above.”

“I think the Council is in a no win situation given the severity of cuts. You are asking us to choose between cutbacks to service A or service B, whereas all public services are important. It’s all very well expecting people to ‘do more’ themselves, this depends on having resources to be able to do so. I think the council should do more to defend our public services in general.”

“Publicity needs to be pointed and obvious.”

“Let us know much, much more about what you ARE doing.”

“Listen to the residents and act accordingly, don’t ignore them.”

“Engaging with people who are not confident in or are unable to take part in surveys/activities – the hidden voices need to be heard.”

“SC takes too long to reach decisions and then implement them. This leads to frustration and cynicism...you need to be swifter, sharper and smarter.”

“The Council’s activities amount to tinkering around the edges not helped by a complete lack of Government policies and strategies.”

“I am disappointed with Shropshire Council – they are cutting too many services.”

Contact Us

For more information concerning the Big Conversation results please contact Shropshire Council's Commissioning Support Unit.

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