New local performance framework - Place Survey

Issued by:
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Addressed to:
The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority
The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer

Please forward to:
Performance and Statistical staff

Summary
This circular provides details of the new Place Survey under which local authorities will ask residents views on local issues. The results will be used to assess how local areas are performing against 20 Citizen Perspective Indicators included in the new National Indicator Set. These new arrangements will replace the Best Value User Satisfaction Survey conducted every three years by Authorities (including Fire and Rescue Authorities).

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Website
www.communities.gov.uk
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1.0 **Background**

1.1 As set out in Fire and Rescue Service Circular 55/2007, there are requirements in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 for upper tier and unitary local authorities to prepare an action plan for their area - the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The targets to be included in LAAs will be drawn from a set of 198 national indicators. Results from a new Place Survey will provide data for 20 of the new indicators.

1.2 The new Place Survey will replace the Best Value User Satisfaction Survey (USS) conducted every three years by Best Value Authorities (including fire and rescue authorities - FRAs). Results from the Best Value USS provide data for Best Value Performance Indicator number 3 about the percentage of citizens satisfied with local services. The Most recent BV USS was undertaken in 2006/07.

1.3 The new set of 198 national indicators replaces the current suite of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for Local Government and FRAs. As 2007/08 will be the last year of reporting against BVPIs, no further BV USSs will be necessary.

2.0 **Place Survey**

2.1 Place Surveys will ask local people for their perceptions about the area in which they live. As the focus will be on ‘place’ rather than on ‘services’, it will only be necessary for local authorities to carry out the survey. FRAs are, however, likely to be interested in the results from Place Surveys.

2.2 The Department is inviting views on the survey proposals by 8 February 2008. Details can be found at:


2.3 Following consultation, it is hoped that the first Place Survey will be conducted in autumn 2008.

2.4 Although the statutory requirement for FRAs to report on Best Value Performance Indicators has been repealed by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, FRAs of course remain free to conduct any local assessments of service users experience and views, either alone or with partners, which they consider would be of benefit to them in shaping local services.

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