

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Report Title:** Long-Term Plan: Town Centres Perception Survey

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## 1. Background

Town centres play a pivotal role in the community, serving as a hub for retail, commerce, social interactions, and cultural activities. Understanding the perceptions, needs, and preferences is an important tool for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

To support the evidence base in developing interventions for the 'High Streets, Heritage & Regeneration' Long-term Plan theme, it is recommended that the Hastings Board commission an independent survey into both residents, visitor and business owners perceptions of the three major town centres, namely St Leonards, Hastings Town Centre and Hastings Old Town.

## 2. Commissioning Approach

To invite suitably qualified external consultants via an open tender process to gather comprehensive insights into the perceptions, opinions, and experiences of various stakeholders regarding the town centre, including its amenities, services, accessibility, safety, cleanliness, and overall appeal and to identify priorities and actions going forward.

An indicative timeline is outlined below.

- Issue survey tender information – Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024
- Deadline for the submission of proposals – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024
- Evaluation of proposals and potential interviews – w/c 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Award of contract and project inception meeting – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Survey development and pre-testing: w/c Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Data collection: w/c Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Data analysis and submission of draft report: by Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024
- Report feedback and final report issued: by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024

### Board Considerations

1. To consider, comment on and agree the draft Town Centre Perceptions Survey brief is set out in Appendix 1.
2. To agree the budget allocation of £25,000 plus VAT for this commission to be funded from the £200,000 revenue capacity funding allocated to the Hastings Board.

## Hastings Long-Term Plan

### Town Centres Perception Survey – Draft Brief

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#### Background

Town centres play a pivotal role in the community, serving as a hub for retail, commerce, social interactions, and cultural activities. Understanding the perceptions, needs, and preferences is an important tool for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

The Hastings Board is preparing a 10 year Long-Term Plan and 3 year Investment Plan to submit to government by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 to secure c£20 million of endowment investment to deliver transformational inventions under three themes:

- Safety & Security
- High Streets, Heritage & Regeneration
- Transport & Connectivity

A copy of the Long-Term Plan guidance and list of policy interventions can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/long-term-plan-for-towns-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-town-boards/long-term-plan-for-towns-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-town-boards>

To support the evidence base in developing interventions for the ‘High Streets, Heritage & Regeneration’ theme, the Hastings Board wish to commission an independent survey into both residents, visitor and business owners perceptions of the three major town centres, namely St Leonards, Hastings Town Centre and Hastings Old Town.

#### Objective

To gather comprehensive insights into the perceptions, opinions, and experiences of various stakeholders regarding the town centre, including its amenities, services, accessibility, safety, cleanliness, and overall appeal and to identify priorities and actions going forward.

#### Scope

The survey will target residents, visitors, and business owners within the town centre and its immediate vicinity. It will cover aspects such as:

1. General impressions of the town centre.
2. Satisfaction with existing amenities and services.
3. Accessibility via different modes of transportation.
4. Safety and security perceptions.
5. Cleanliness and maintenance standards.
6. Suggestions for improvement and desired changes.
7. Demographic information (age, gender, resident / visitor status, etc.).

## Methodology

It is anticipated that the survey will utilise a combination of online and in-person methodologies to ensure broad participation and diverse representation. Methods could include:

1. Online survey distribution through The Hasting Business Improvement District, social media, email lists, and community forums.
2. Physical distribution of paper surveys at key locations within the town centres.
3. On-site intercept interviews, over two weekends, with visitors and residents.
4. In-depth interviews with business owners and stakeholders.

We are keen to encourage innovative approaches and deep analysis to ensure that the Long-Term Plan draws on the needs and aspirations of the local community, visitors and businesses.

## Timeframe

It is anticipated that the work will be conducted over a period of four-six weeks to allow for sufficient data collection, analysis and reporting.

## Analysis and Reporting

Data collected will be analysed to identify trends, patterns, and areas of concern or improvement. A comprehensive report will be prepared, highlighting key findings, recommendations, and actionable insights.

## Stakeholder Engagement

All results will be shared with the Hastings Board relevant stakeholders, including local government officials, business associations, and community groups, to foster dialogue and collaboration in enhancing the town centres' vitality and appeal.

## Budget

A budget of £25,000 plus VAT has been allocated for survey administration, data analysis, and report preparation, ensuring the survey's effectiveness and integrity.

## Timetable

- Issue survey tender information – Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024
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## Fee Proposals

Organisations wishing to submit proposal should respond on no more than eight sides of A4 to the following:

- Understanding of the brief
- Identify any risks associated with completing the commission
- Proposed methodology and timetable
- Two summary case studies of similar commission including lessons learned
- Budget breakdown against key areas of activity
- Two references

Please provide your fee proposal to:

[TBC]

## Contact Information

For inquiries or further information, please contact

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## Ethical Considerations

All responses should be anonymised and treated with confidentiality. Participation will be voluntary, and participants will be informed of the survey's purpose and how their data will be used.