



Commissioning of Opinion Surveys of Officers and Staff and/or Public (1226/2025)

Abstract

For the purposes of this policy an “opinion” survey is a survey by questionnaire or interview in which the opinions or perceptions of selected persons are solicited. Any data collection exercises such as a count of an activity, a request for a service, or a quiz / poll and which do not include any element of “opinion” surveying are not within the scope of this policy, and MS Forms should be used.

This policy and associated procedure applies to all users who wish to either conduct their own “opinion” surveys or commission such a survey.

Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Colleagues are regularly and increasingly seeking to conduct online “opinion” surveys for their own business needs, particularly since the introduction of the Office 365 “Forms” application.

1.2 The Citizen Focus Team had historically provided resources to build, maintain and analyse opinion surveys, but these resources are now limited.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy provides information on how “opinion” surveys in Sussex Police should be facilitated regardless of whether they are conducted by the specialist teams or local colleagues utilising Office 365 “Forms”. For the purposes of this policy an “opinion” survey is a survey by questionnaire or interview in which the opinions or perceptions of selected persons are solicited. Any data collection exercises such as a count of an activity, a request for a service, or a quiz / poll and which do not include any element of “opinion” surveying are not within the scope of this policy, and MS Forms should be used without reference to any policy.

3. Statement

3.1 This policy and procedure covers all information needed to plan and commission “opinion” surveys. It is the responsibility of every user to know this procedure and to conduct their activities accordingly.

Procedure

1. Approval and notification of Surveys – Sussex Police

1.1 To conduct external or forcewide formal “opinion” surveys exclusively in Sussex, users should use MS Forms. Colleagues can engage with the Citizen Focus team to

ensure they are clear, unbiased and appropriate. There may be occasions when the team could be commissioned to undertake this work using specialist software.

1.2 Consider if other departments may be stakeholders: be aware of any planned internal “opinion” surveys, or recent surveys where data already exists. This is to ensure all new surveys are not duplicating existing surveys (Exit survey, Staff survey, Pulse surveys etc) and can be correctly sequenced and prioritised alongside other surveying that may be planned. This will also ensure that surveys are not duplicating previous work and that we avoid survey fatigue.

1.3 Small “opinion” surveys of 50 users or fewer where the accuracy of the results is not necessarily important may be completed in “Forms” without any reference. We do recommend users always refer to the user guide below.

2. User Guide

2.1 A user guide has been prepared which provides an overview of the Forms application, important considerations, surveying good practice and the basic and more advanced features of Forms. This guide was originally prepared by West Yorkshire Police and we are grateful for their assistance in allowing us to build a Sussex Police version. The guide is provided as Appendix A: User Guide – Using Microsoft Forms.

3. Approval and notification of “Opinion” Surveys across both Sussex Police and Surrey Police

3.1 Requests to conduct or commission “opinion” surveys that are planned to be distributed across both Forces:

If a collaborated team, you must refer to both standalone Force Policies and follow the process for both.

4. Associated Policies

4.1 There are a number of other Force policies which will also normally apply to aspects of surveying. These include:-

- Surrey Police and Sussex Police Information Security Policy (722) - This policy provides an overarching protective security for Surrey Police and Sussex Police information assets and overall strategy for information security throughout both Forces;
- Data Protection Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (780) - This policy outlines how the UK Data Protection Legislation and other enactments dealing with data protection, governs how personal data is processed in the UK (Data Protection Law);
- Sussex only Corporate Identity and Branding Policy (1123) - This policy details the expectations on individuals to maintain professional standards in their communications and consistently apply Force branding;
- Information Management Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1187) - This policy outlines information in relation to Information Assets, Sharing and Disclosure, Data Quality and Retention and Disposal of Information.

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