

# London Councillor Survey

*Winter 2012*

London **Communications** Agency



# Foreword

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I am delighted to present to you the first of what we hope will be a series of London Councillor surveys which we intend to conduct in the run up to the London local elections in May 2014.

As you will know, there are regular surveys of politicians and decision-makers across the UK. However London's 1,861 councillors, from the capital's 33 local authorities, are rarely questioned as a group themselves. As the leading public relations company focused on London, we thought it was about time that their opinions were sought and gauged.

This first survey was conducted by YouGov in late October. We presented the headline findings at London Councils' annual meeting of councillors in mid November and now publish this summary document for wider consideration.

Our primary aim with the first survey was to generate interest and robust response. We set a target of receiving feedback from at least 10% of London's councillors; the survey generated 215 responses, or 11.55%. Every borough replied, the highest with 11 councillors, and the lowest only one. By party the response was reasonably reflective of London's make up, and the findings have of course been weighted to reflect the actual representation.

Our second aim was to ask some topical questions that reflected life today in London. To make it easy for the councillors – who like all politicians are inundated with emails – we kept the survey down to ten questions across a range of issues comprising housing, transport/airport capacity, the economy and the Olympics.

We hope that you, our clients and friends across the London scene find this survey interesting and of value to your work. Further details of the survey responses can be found by [following this link to our website](#). We would welcome feedback including ideas for questions for the second survey which we intend to commission in the spring of 2013.

Please contact Chris Madel or Stefan Swift on 020 7612 8498 or [ss@londoncommunications.co.uk](mailto:ss@londoncommunications.co.uk) for more information or with any comments.

Finally, our thanks to YouGov for their help and advice in preparing this survey.

Robert Gordon Clark  
**Executive Chairman**

# Survey Summary

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The headline results from the survey questions are;

- Over half (51%) of London councillors considered creating more school places a top priority for their borough.
- Two out of three councillors believe that London's local authorities did not get enough credit or exposure in hosting the London 2012 Olympics. This is felt more keenly by Labour members (75%) and those away from East London who were not involved in the actual staging of the Games.
- The top two achievements of the Olympics legacy for London councillors are neighbourhood regeneration (33%) and long term foreign investment for London (19%). However the bottom two are large scale project sponsorship (4%) and more powers to the Mayor (1%).
- 49% of Councillors disagree or strongly disagree with plans to build a third runway at Heathrow compared with only 36% who agree or strongly. This compares with 46% of all MPs in a survey carried out in early November.

43%



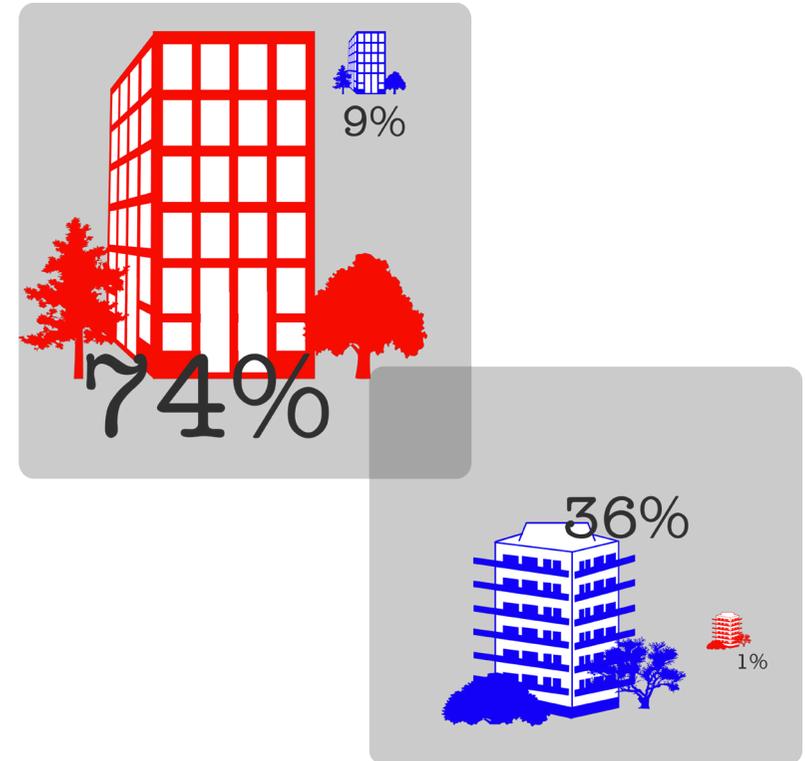
13%



*Only 13% of councillors viewed their local economy as being in bad or very bad condition compared with 43% who answered good or very good and 44% who said moderate. This is an encouraging sign for London's economy.*

# Survey Summary

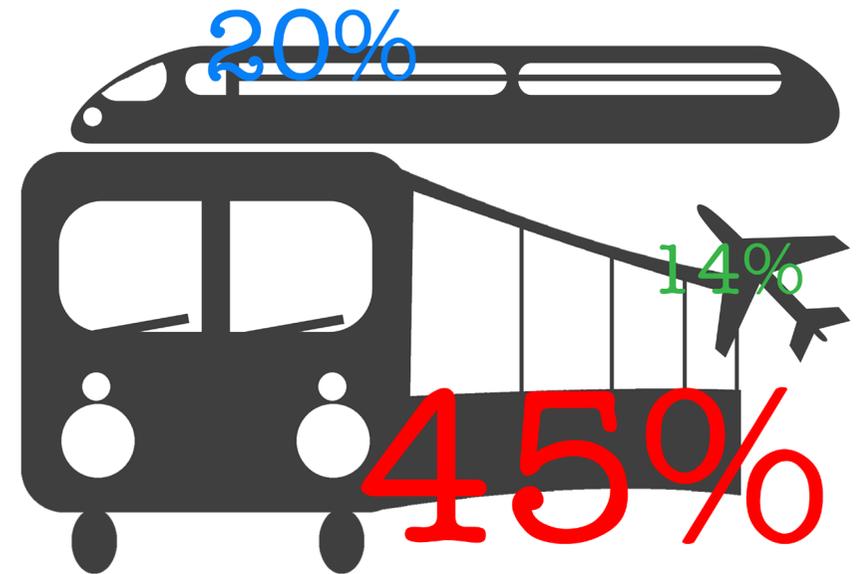
- Councillors in South London (71%) are interestingly more opposed to a third runway at Heathrow than their West London colleagues (59%).
- There is a broad consensus of the need to address aviation capacity in London and the South East with only 12% saying expansion shouldn't take place.
- A new Thames Estuary Airport (37%) and a second runway at Gatwick (34%) are the top two preferences for how expansion should be delivered when those polled were asked to choose their preferences from a list of all aviation options on the table. 32% supported the development of Stansted into a multi-runway airport compared with 28% who said it should just have a second runway. 30% backed a third runway at Heathrow.
- At party political level, a second runway at Gatwick receives the strongest cross party support in addressing aviation expansion need, with the Thames Estuary Airport the clear favourite for Conservative councillors (68%) and Labour councillors are more mixed with 41% backing Heathrow with Gatwick and Stansted not far behind. A majority of Liberal Democrat councillors (47%) believe that aviation expansion should take place away from London and the South East. 49% of councillors do not support a third runway at Heathrow.



*Over half of councillors think more homes will be built in the next two years than the previous two. Labour and Conservative members disagree on what sort of homes they want to see built: 74% of Labour respondents listed local authority social rented homes as a priority compared with 9% of Conservatives. Meanwhile 36% of Conservatives said private rented housing was a priority compared with 1% of Labour councillors.*

# Survey Summary

- The impact of the recession can be attributed to a wide consensus of councillors across all parties saying they would be interested in providing public services in partnership with other organisations (84%). Only 8% did not consider the idea of working with others to be important
- Of the 84% who support working with other organisations, 95% thought that they could work in partnership with other local authorities in the capital. Whilst, 71% would consider working with NHS providers. 49% would look into working with the private sector and only 25% would consider working with central Government.
- Over a third (34%) of councillors tweet or blog at least once a fortnight perhaps showing the growing importance of councillors using social media to engage with their residents.
- Further details of the survey, including the supporting data, and breakdown of opinion by political party, can be accessed via the following link to our [website](#).



*Tube upgrades (45%) and the building of Crossrail II (Chelsea - Hackney line, 20%) were the top transport investment priorities for London's councillors. Airport expansion was a priority for just 14% of respondents perhaps showing that the aviation debate remains more of a national and regional rather than local issue.*

# Methodology

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- YouGov completed online interviews with 215 London Councillors.
- Fieldwork was undertaken between 24 October - 7 November 2012.
- The data has been weighted and is representative of London Councillors by gender, party, council control (i.e Labour, Conservative, Other), and London Plan sub-regions.
- YouGov plc make every effort to provide representative information. All results are based on a sample and are therefore subject to statistical errors normally associated with sample-based information.
- All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 215 councillors and the data is correct at a 95% confidence interval of +/- 6%. Any percentages calculated on bases fewer than 50 respondents must not be reported as they do not represent a wide enough cross-section of the target population to be considered statistically reliable. These figures will be italicised.
- Some questions were given more than one answer. Therefore, the results could add up to greater than 100%.

If you know anyone else within your organisation who would like to receive these briefings please do let us know. Alternatively, if you would rather not be sent this document then please also let us know. We would welcome your views on the content, if you have any comments please contact Stefan Swift on 020 7612 8498.

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