

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL CITIZENS' PANEL NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2020

Dear Panel Member

Welcome to the latest Citizens' Panel newsletter.

Thank you for responding to the survey issued in Autumn 2019. Forty-nine per cent of you completed a questionnaire and provided valuable feedback that we will use to improve services provided by the Council.



Topics in the Autumn 2019 Survey were:

- *protection of vulnerable children and young people*
- *Inverclyde Council's performance*
- *satisfaction with Council services.*

The Summer 2020 questionnaire focuses on Inverclyde Council's Adoption Service; the provision of free sanitary products; and West Blackhall Street and Walking and Cycling in Greenock Town Centre. We look forward to receiving your completed survey.

This newsletter outlines the key results from the Autumn 2019 survey and our response to your feedback.

I. Protection of vulnerable children and young people

The first section of the Survey comprised two parts: child protection and Corporate Parenting. We advised the Panel that we wanted to find out what they thought about services to protect children to help us improve those services.

We introduced this section of the questionnaire by outlining the membership and purpose of the Inverclyde Child Protection Committee. We also advised that, working with the local community, we try to make sure all children in Inverclyde are protected from harm.

Seventy-five per cent of Panel members told us they were confident that the relevant services in Inverclyde will protect children and young people and help them if they are at risk of harm; this represents an increase of 5% from 70% from when the question was last asked in 2017. A similar number of respondents (77%) also said they were confident that the necessary action would be taken if they contacted an agency with a concern, an increase of 6% from 2017.

Corporate Parenting

We introduced this part of the questionnaire by advising that Corporate Parenting is the collective responsibility of the Council, our Elected Members (Councillors), employees and partner agencies to make Inverclyde the best place in Scotland for children and young people who are looked after¹ and who are leaving care.

We also explained that the Inverclyde Corporate Parenting Group works together to listen to the views and experiences of looked after children and those

leaving care, adding that work with the local community is also important to ensure that looked after children and young people live safely and, through education, leisure and access to work, grow up to be healthy, confident, responsible and able to contribute as effective citizens in the local area.

Fifty-nine per cent of Panel members said they are confident that Corporate Parents in Inverclyde safeguard and promote the welfare and wellbeing of looked after children and those leaving care, an increase of 6% from 2017.

Just under two thirds (65%) of respondents said they were not aware of the Council's Corporate Parenting Strategy; this response broadly mirrors that provided in 2017.

Our response to your feedback

The feedback from the Citizens' Panel provided useful information that Inverclyde's Corporate Parenting Group will take forward. For example, we note that 65% of Panel members were not aware of Inverclyde's Corporate Parenting Strategy; this information will be shared with the Health and Social Care Partnership's Communication Group, with the recommendation that links to the Council's website are promoted on the public information screens in areas of high footfall with the aim of drawing attention to useful information and highlighting areas of work.

¹ When a local child or young person becomes 'looked after', Inverclyde Council has responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare and wellbeing. The child or young person may be looked after at home, with relatives/friends, in foster care or in a residential placement.

2. Inverclyde Council's performance

Volunteering

Thirty-nine per of Panel members told us they had provided unpaid help to organisations or groups in the last 12 months.

Culture and heritage

This section of the Survey concerned Panel members' attendance at culture and heritage events. We began by asking respondents if they had attended a number of events and places in the last year, both in Inverclyde and outwith the area; the most popular responses were:

	In Inverclyde %	Outwith Inverclyde %
Cinema	45	32
Theatre, for example, pantomime/ musical/play	38	32
Library (including mobile and online)	33	5.

The next question asked the Panel if they had taken part in a number of cultural activities. The top three activities that respondents said they had participated in were:

	In Inverclyde %	Outwith Inverclyde %
Read for pleasure (not newspapers, magazines or comics)	68	27
Used a computer/social media to produce creative work of any kind	23	8
Crafts such as knitting, wood, pottery etc	20	4.

Our response to your feedback

The Inverclyde Cultural Partnership is pleased to note that 94% of respondents have visited places of culture in Inverclyde in the last 12 months and that cultural participation is also high (at 93%) in the local area. The Scottish average for cultural attendance is 81% and cultural participation is 76% according to the most recent Scottish Household Survey (2018), so Inverclyde residents are significantly more likely than average to engage with culture.

Evidence shows that participation in arts, culture and heritage activity can have a positive impact on people's physical, mental and social wellbeing, as well as contributing to social and economic regeneration, promoting tourism, developing local talent and innovation, and making the Inverclyde area a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Positive results in this area of the Survey

would suggest that cultural life in the local area is thriving and that this may have knock-on positive effects on the Strategic Priorities in the Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017/22: Repopulation; Inequalities; and Environment, culture and heritage.

3. Satisfaction with Council services

The final section of the Survey asked how satisfied respondents were with seven Council services. Panel members were asked to answer this question only if they had used the service in the last 12 months.

The following table outlines the 2015, 2017 and 2019 responses of the Panel to this question:

Council service	% who were satisfied or very satisfied		
	2015	2017	2019
Parks and open spaces	82	87	81
Refuse collection	84	84	76
Leisure services	81	83	77
Libraries	81	79	77
Local schools	81	77	77
The McLean Museum and Art Gallery	87	74	58
Social care or social work	64	53	56.

Our response to your feedback

The Council is acutely aware of the importance of providing high quality services to local residents and visitors to the area, particularly with the aim of retaining and enhancing Inverclyde's population. It is therefore pleasing to note that Panel members' satisfaction with these Council services is generally high, with five of the seven services attracting a score of more than 70%.

Social care or social work services attracted the lowest satisfaction rating in all three reporting periods; this may reflect the fact that respondents had not used this particular service in the last year and therefore responded to the question accordingly. However, it should be noted that our performance in this area improved between 2017 and 2019, rising from 53% to 56%.