

Inverclyde Council Plan and Partnership Plan

Results of Community Consultation – Surveys, Focus Groups and Community Conversations

October 2022

Inverclyde
council



Inverclyde Alliance

Background

Inverclyde Council is developing a new Council and Partnership Plan that is due to run from 2023 onwards.

The Partnership Plan is a commitment by Inverclyde Alliance partners to work together towards shared aims, with a focus on tackling inequalities and the added value of partnership working. Inverclyde Alliance includes public sector organisations, along with the voluntary sector and businesses.

The Council Plan explains how Inverclyde Council will operate, what its priorities will be, and how it will support delivery of the Partnership Plan.

Vital to the development of our plans are the opinions of the community it is going to serve. With this in mind we have consulted through various methods; surveys, focus groups and community listening events. These were coordinated by Inverclyde Council Community Learning and Development.

The responses we have gathered to date are outlined in this report.

Next Steps

We will give communities an opportunity to respond to this report. The results along with that of wider consultation work will be presented to Inverclyde Council officers, Elected Members, and Inverclyde Alliance members. This will include a more detailed version of this report. They will consider this, as well as statistical information on Inverclyde to develop priorities for the plans. They will need to evaluate where they can best target limited resources to tackle key inequalities in Inverclyde.

Survey Questions

Rank 1 to 7

This part of the survey asked the participants to rank 7 themes.

“Which of these do you think are the key areas in which the Council, our partners, and communities can make the biggest difference? Rank these statements from 1 to 7 (1 being the most important)”

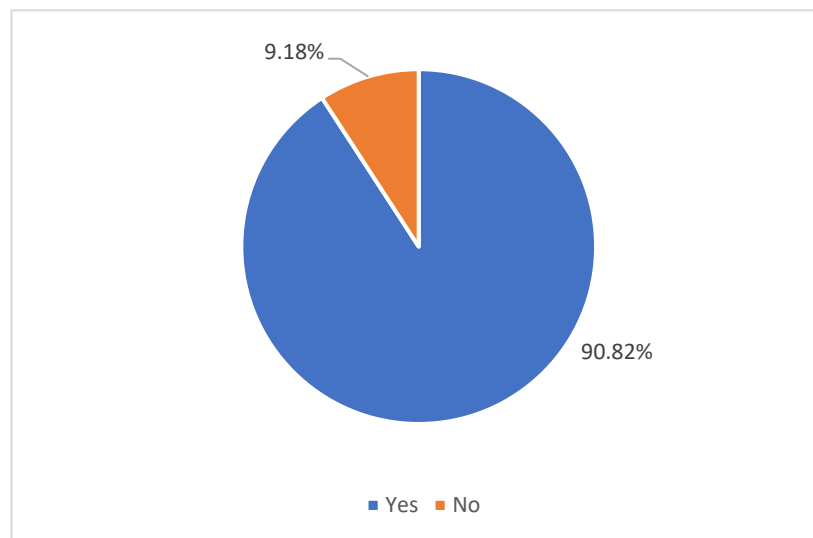
Item	Total Score*	Overall Rank
Increasing employment levels	1512	1
Supporting the creation of good jobs with fair pay and conditions	1289	2
Improving health and wellbeing	1288	3
Having more good quality housing	1231	4
Reducing drug and alcohol misuse	1188	5
Improving our town centres and public spaces	1092	6
Increasing participation in community life	912	7

* Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is a sum of all weighted rank counts.

As can be seen, the highest scoring item was 'increasing employment levels', followed by 'creation of good jobs' and 'improving health and wellbeing'.

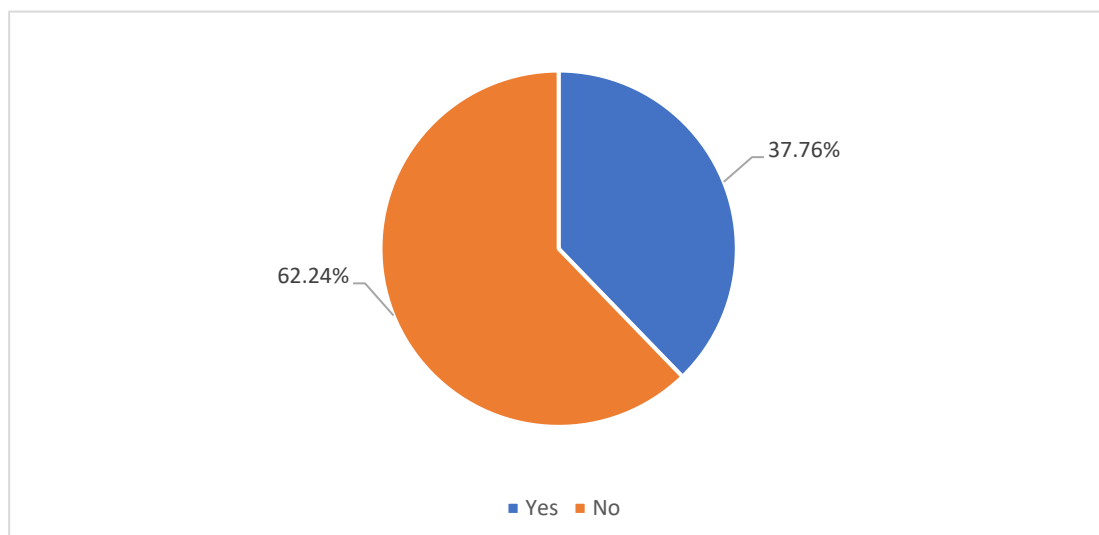
Vision

We asked people to give feedback on the vision for the plans - "Getting it right for every child, citizen and community in Inverclyde" is a shared vision across the Council and Inverclyde Alliance so that we have a consistent approach. 9% of respondents did not agree with this vision, with 91% supporting it.



Community Empowerment

We then asked would you like to be more involved in your local community, for example, have your say on local priorities and how funding is allocated. 62% said no and 38% answered yes.



One Thing

We asked respondents *What one thing matters to you the most, that would make a difference to Inverclyde over the next 10 years?* The responses to this question have been collated to identify the most common themes and then ranked from most frequently to least frequently made.

Theme	Ranked	Context
Community/ies	1	This was the most commonly used word. However, the use of it is quite varied due to how the broadness of its meaning. Participants used the word in relation to safety, policing, and wellbeing. More specific to communities though were community regeneration, community events, keeping a 'sense' of community, togetherness, centres/ groups, and inclusivity. Themes of strengthening of the community, as well as opportunities for communities to bond and flourish were apparent.
Jobs	2	The other most popular theme was that of jobs. Participants noted the need for long-term and permanent jobs in the area, as well as being 'well paid' jobs. The common thread throughout participant comments was that there needs to be investment in the area to create a long-term jobs that are able to retain a population. The sense that this should stem from new infrastructure and employment could be seen in their comments.
Employment	3	'Employment', much as the same as above was in relation to long term investment to create sustainable jobs. Attracting employment opportunities was the thread here, with participants seeing the need for something new to happen, rather than building on the existing. Employment opportunities for young people was also mentioned and this again touches on retaining the younger population in order to combat depopulation.
Young People	4	Young people was a theme that was cross cutting and linked into various issues Inverclyde faces; depopulation, job opportunities, and social activities. Participants comments saw the interlinked nature of these issues. One issue that did reoccur was that there should be an increase in youth club provision. Participants saw this as a way of engaging younger people and keeping them away from anti-social behaviour.
Housing	5	Housing comments were quite broad and mainly related to poor housing and not enough of an affordable supply. Comments were also made about young and old people, and that these should be a priority demographic to get housing. Building more social housing that can accommodate larger families was also noted.
Roads/Pavements	6	Comments on 'roads' related both to the condition of the roads as well as traffic. 'Pavement' comments were mainly concerned with the condition as well as foliage obstructing pavements. Traffic was mentioned in relation to congestion and there being no alternative routes.
Bus	7	Whilst transport in general was mentioned, comments relating to buses were high. When participants elaborated further, they mentioned; 'more buses', affordability, and making sure routes reach new and future developments.
Shops	8	Shops were mentioned in relation to both attracting people into the area as well as for employment opportunities. Participants referred to current shops in Inverclyde as needing regenerated, as well as being insufficient.

		<p>'Better shops' was the general consensus, with other participants stating that they would like affordability prioritised.</p> <p>From the comments, participants made it clear that they see that shops not just fulfilling the purpose of being a place where locals can purchase things, they see it also as a means of attracting visitors as well as potential new residents.</p>
Regeneration	9	<p>The broader comments regarding regeneration were concerned with specific areas of Inverclyde, or opportunities for activities.</p> <p>Participants comments were varied, however, the general thread connecting them was that they wanted Inverclyde to show off its beauty in a modern way.</p> <p>The comments made by participants display the civic pride they have in the area.</p>
Education	10	<p>Comments on education were quite broad, with some highlighting the importance of linking education to employability in the local area and others linking it to keeping young people away from crime.</p>
Greenock	11	<p>Greenock was the most mentioned locality. Again, reference to Greenock was in relation to regeneration and the town centre was the main area in which participants wanted to see improvement.</p>
Drug(s)	12	<p>Comments on drugs tended to be linked to crime. Participants main concern was that reducing/tackling the amount of drug use would benefit the area.</p>
Poverty	12	<p>Participants noted that tackling/decreasing the level of poverty in the area would benefit it in the next 10 years.</p>
Transport	12	<p>Transport in general was mentioned in reference to travelling into Inverclyde, commuting, and the overall provision with the local authority area. Some participants felt that increased provision could help attract people to visit the area, as well as move to the area and commute out from it. Overall, there was a general sense of dissatisfaction with the transport infrastructure and the feeling that an improvement to this could greatly benefit the area.</p>
Crime	13	<p>General comments about 'reducing' crime were made. Crime was often mentioned next to anti-social behaviour and drug use.</p>
Traffic	14	<p>Participants comments on traffic related mainly to congestion.</p>
Gourock	15	<p>Gourock was mentioned in relation to not being an afterthought to other areas, transport, and regeneration. Comments relating to regeneration were quite general but referred to the sea front and more street cleaning.</p>
Sustainable	16	<p>Sustainable was mentioned in relation to employment. The participants who used it talked about making sure that the employment was sustainable in the sense that the opportunities were long-term and could hold skilled workers in the area.</p>
Mental Health	17	<p>Comments made around mental health related to accessible provision and resources around to help support good mental health.</p>
Schools	17	<p>Comments relating to schools revolved around funding and making sure that young people have equal opportunities to gain qualifications.</p>

The following quotes provide illustrations of responses to this question.

- “Target areas using SIMD data and swamp those areas with staff to support drug and alcohol rehabilitation, improved access to employment/employability training, improvements to housing and when that area is complete and the life chances improved for everyone in that area, move onto the next.”*

- *“Working with local people in their own community”*
- *“We need an overarching plan that would positively promote Inverclyde as the best place to live, work and invest in - focus on the benefits and strengths of the area and in the people.”*
- *“It is about collective work and responsibility. It needs a big vision, large ambitions and the ability to actually follow through.”*
- *“We must raise the expectation level of residents and support employers into Inverclyde. Residents must also be aware and not scared to travel and work out with Inverclyde. It is a very local community with restricted awareness of wider opportunities.”*
- *“Education from birth to death, engage all ages.”*
- *“Support local businesses who employ people on good wages, and conditions to reduce poverty. Encourage new businesses with start up plans and on going support. Create more good housing for local people whether employed or not, and for incoming workers. Make sure that private landlords provide good service, and best practice for reasonable rents. If residents enjoy good housing and have work, the dependence on alcohol and drugs will drop, money will be spent locally, and the town centre will be supported, health and wellbeing will improve, with folk becoming more outgoing in their communities.”*
- *“Involve community in decision making”*
- *“Build houses that are affordable”*
- *“With the Council taking the lead, encourage active participation by community groups and the public in taking a pride and interest in the area”*
- *“I feel there is some good work being done across Inverclyde especially such activities as the local engagement groups but I feel that we need to think creatively of how we can involve residents who are vocal about how they want change but do not want to input.”*
- *“Creating good quality free spaces, what is happening at the waterfront looks great with the seating and benches.”*

How should we, working together, tackle your top key areas?

This question differed from the previous question as it focused more on how we should work together, as opposed to what we should prioritise.

The most commonly used theme was “community”. Participants were calling for the Council/Alliance to work more closely with, or to empower communities. Participants noted things like “involving” the community, “educating” community members to participate, promoting “involvement” in the community, “communication” with the community and the community being advocates for Inverclyde.

Respondents also described the importance of attracting businesses into Inverclyde, in order to increase local employment. Improving the supply of social and/or appropriate housing was mentioned by a number of respondents.

Is there anything else that should be a key area?

When asked if there was anything else that should be a key area there was a lot of overlap with comments made in previous questions. An additional theme that emerged was the cost of living crisis and how best to support people who are struggling with utility and food prices. In addition to providing targeted assistance the importance of well paid jobs in order to give people more flexibility in their budgeting was raised.

There were also specific areas of interest raised by individual participants. Some examples of comments include:

“Working together will encourage a sense of community spirit as well as giving the groups a feeling of pride in their area.”

“Health and Wellbeing, particularly mental health services. Also better education should be given to kids on the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Good mental health support from an early age.”

“Bus routes/times need looked at and more bus stops/routes closer to local nurseries eg. Larkfield Early Learning Centre”

“Opportunities for children from low income families local to them as in the last few years children have been excluded from attending such things as playschemes based on their family circumstances and surely no matter where they come from all children are blank slates and social inclusion leads to better health and social outcomes. “

Summary of Findings

The main priorities identified through this consultation are jobs and quality employment, followed by housing and young people. The theme of community was also key, especially in terms of how we work together.

Participants also commented on the interrelationship of themes, i.e. from having a strong economic base there is a ‘trickle down’ effect in the sense that an employed and well-paid population will improve housing demand, retain the population (young people) to stay in Inverclyde and increase local spend.

Young people
Community
Good jobs
Housing
Employment
Health and wellbeing