

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL CITIZENS' PANEL NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2014/15

Dear Panel Member

Welcome to the latest Citizens' Panel newsletter.

We were pleased with the response to the survey issued in Spring 2014. 65% of you completed a questionnaire and provided valuable feedback that will be used to improve services provided by the Council, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport.



Topics in the Spring 2014 survey were:

- *community safety*
- *public transport.*
- *the Council's InView newspaper*
- *Scottish Fire and Rescue Service*
- *access to e-mail and the internet*

The Winter 2014/15 questionnaire focusses on the Council's Budget for 2016/17. We look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire.

This newsletter outlines the results from the Spring 2014 survey and what we are doing to tackle the issues you raised.

Here are some of the key results from the Spring 2014 Survey

1. Community safety

Just under three quarters (72%) of respondents said they are fairly or very satisfied with Inverclyde as a place to live.

Respondents were asked to consider a variety of crimes and state how worried they were about each of them. Three crimes generated the most responses: 'having your car damaged by vandals' (48%); 'being the victim of property crime (not car related)' (42%); and 'being assaulted or pestered by anybody while in the street or any other public space' (37%).

When Panel members were asked to look at a variety of different issues and state how much of a concern these are in their neighbourhood, the most common issue was 'rubbish or litter lying around' (34%). This was followed by 'people using or dealing drugs' which was a concern to 23% of respondents. The third most common concern was 'vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property' (17%).

13% of respondents said they noticed a reduction in anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months. Additionally, more than half the Panel members said anti-social behaviour is not an issue in their neighbourhood. The number of people who had noticed

no reduction in anti-social behaviour was 30%.

43% of Panel members are aware of the Council's Freephone Inverclyde Anti-Social Behaviour Helpline number to report anti-social behaviour (0800 01 317 001).

What are we doing with your feedback?

We recently completed the Inverclyde Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2014/18 and feedback from the Citizens' Panel will be used to inform development of the Strategy's actions. Reconfiguration of the Council's anti-social behaviour services is also underway. Responses from the Spring 2014 Citizens' Panel survey regarding neighbourhoods noticing a reduction in anti-social behaviour and an awareness of the Anti-Social Behaviour Helpline number to report anti-social behaviour, will be focussed on within the reconfiguration process.

In addition, the Community Safety Partnership in Inverclyde has ratified proposals to make changes to the current arrangements of the Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Group to focus on more community safety-orientated issues rather than anti-social behaviour. This should allow both the Partnership and the Council to respond to the wider issues raised by the Citizens' Panel.

2. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)

Just under a quarter (24%) of respondents said they had received or experienced a service from the SFRS, for example, an emergency incident or a home fire safety visit. Most people (95%) said their experience of the SFRS was a positive one. A quarter of respondents who had not previously had a home fire safety visit said they would wish to request one.

Just under three quarters (72%) of respondents said they were either fairly or very satisfied with the SFRS provision in Inverclyde. 72% also said they are either fairly or very satisfied with the quality of service provided by the SFRS in Inverclyde.

What are we doing with your feedback?

SFRS will continue to deliver home fire safety visits in order to reduce dwelling fire figures. The Service's aim is to increase preventative service provision to the public leading to a reduction in the emergency service provision required by fires and other emergencies.

The findings of the Spring 2014 Citizens' Panel survey will be reviewed by the SFRS Local Senior Officer to further improve service efficiency and also to improve service provision to individual communities based on assessment of risk.

3. The Council's InView newspaper

Just under two thirds (63%) of respondents said they received a copy of InView. The majority of respondents think InView is either good (46%) or fair (35%) while 6% think it is excellent and 5% stated it was poor.

Just over half of respondents (52%) who received InView through their door said they read selected articles in it and a further 43% said they read it cover to cover. The top three articles that people are most likely to read are 'news updates' (51%), 'what's on' (32%) and 'features' (31%).

On the frequency of publication, 43% of respondents felt InView should be circulated four times a year. A further 23% thought it should be published monthly and 20% preferred its current frequency, twice-yearly.

In terms of the quality of the articles in InView, 48% thought it was poorly written, with a further 47% having no opinion.

Just over half (57%) of respondents liked the current newspaper style of InView, while 29% said they would prefer

it as a magazine. Smaller numbers of respondents said they would prefer it to be online (7%) or as an e-newsletter (5%).

What are we doing with your feedback?

In response to the type of articles that Panel members said they preferred to read, we have included more news items in the Winter 2014 edition of InView, together with a 'what's on' section on the back page of the newspaper. Additionally, the publication includes a four page feature on the Council's budget setting process.

Because of the challenging financial position the Council faces at present, it is not possible to publish InView more often than its current frequency of twice a year. However, Panel members who have access to the internet may wish to visit our website which contains a host of information about the Council including news items, committee papers, a dedicated 'events' section together with digital editions of InView. To visit the website  www.inverclyde.gov.uk.

4. Access to e-mail and the internet

Three quarters of respondents said they currently have access to e-mail or the internet from home while just over half of Panel members (52%) have access to e-mail or the internet for personal use outside the home.

The most common device through which people access the internet from home was a personal computer/laptop (78%), followed by a tablet device such as an Ipad, Kindle etc (31%) and a mobile/phone (22%).

What are we doing with your feedback?

Much of the information from the Panel demonstrates that

the Council is right to be developing a Digital Access Strategy that will allow the public to make use of the internet (at home, at work or from a mobile 'phone) to access Council services. If people can interact or request services via e-mail, text or the internet, this type of access effectively extends much of the Council's service availability, as the public can contact us whenever it suits them.

Other ways of contacting the Council will remain for those who do not wish to use e-mail or the internet as a method of communication.

5. Public transport

85% of respondents said they have access to a bus stop within five minutes walk of their home. Almost two thirds (64%) said they have access to a train station within 10 minutes walk from their home.

The top three elements of the train service that respondents were most likely to be satisfied with were 'ease of access' (85%), 'journey times' (84%) and 'frequency of the train service' (84%). In contrast, the two elements which people are mostly likely to be dissatisfied with were 'cost of train fare' (39%) and 'value for money of the train fare' (35%).

The improvement that most people who are regular bus users have noticed is the quality of bus stop facilities with the provision of raised kerbs, new shelters and timetable (display) cases. 32% of respondents said there has been a lot of improvement with these issues and 53% said a little improvement.

22% of respondents said there has also been a lot of improvement regarding 'personal security at those locations where lighting has been improved', with a further 50% saying there has been a little improvement. Additionally, 20% of respondents said there has been a lot of improvement regarding 'the level and quality of bus services', with a further 50% saying there has been a little improvement.

What are we doing with your feedback?

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) said the fact that access to train stations is rated highly is very encouraging as there has been a considerable amount of investment from the rail industry in access schemes in the last few years. The Inverclyde area does fairly well regarding the number of stations and the frequency of service.

While SPT is unable to do much about price and general cost issues other than administering the Concession Fares Scheme on behalf of local authorities and some ticketing products, it should be noted that costs are substantially supported by central government via the rail franchise.

It is gratifying to note that the provision of improved bus infrastructure is acknowledged, particularly regarding raised kerbs etc. Infrastructure, bus stations and information are all seen as important to Panel members and SPT will continue to work towards meeting the majority of local aspirations.

The issues of cost, comfort, cleanliness and courtesy of staff raised by Panel members are areas which the public transport industry strives to address. For example, cleanliness and punctuality form part of SPT's Quality Regime which aims to ensure that specific standards of passenger service quality are maintained.