

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL CITIZENS' PANEL NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2016

Dear Panel Member

Welcome to the latest Citizens' Panel newsletter.

We were pleased with the response to the survey issued in Autumn 2015. Sixty-six 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 2015 survey were:

- *Inverclyde Council's reputation*
- *drugs and drugs misuse*
- *recycling*
- *dementia and stigma.*

The Spring 2016 questionnaire focuses on the Council's Local Development Plan; libraries in Inverclyde; and community safety. We look forward to receiving your completed survey.

This newsletter outlines the key results from the Autumn 2015 survey and what we are doing in response to your feedback.

1. Inverclyde Council's reputation

The first section of the Survey asked questions about the Council and its reputation. Panel members were asked to look at a list of statements regarding the Council and to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each of them.

The top three statements that respondents agreed or strongly agreed with were: the Council promotes environmental sustainability; the Council is helpful; and the Council's staff are professional. It is pleasing to note that the majority of Citizens' Panel members (70%) agreed that the Council promotes environmental sustainability. We are encouraged also to note that more than 60% of respondents agreed both that the Council is helpful (62%) and that our staff are professional (61%).

The top three statements that respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with were: the Council keeps costs down;

our reputation is good; and we communicate well with our customers. However, it should be noted that only 21% of respondents disagreed that the Council keeps costs down. Even smaller numbers disagreed that the Council's reputation is good (19%) and that we communicate well with our customers (17%).

What are we doing with your feedback?

The examination of the Council's reputation on a range of factors by Panel members is a key component in delivering a comprehensive Communications Strategy for the Council. This is the first time questions on this topic have been asked of Panel members and we plan to use the information as a starting point in the long term measurement of the Council's reputation. The Citizens' Panel responses highlight areas where the Council and its partners can work together to further enhance the quality of life in Inverclyde.

2. Drugs and drugs misuse

The first question in this section of the Survey asked Panel members to what extent they thought drug misuse was an issue in their neighbourhood: less than a third (30%) thought it was a major issue in their area; 35% thought it was a minor issue and just under a quarter (24%) said it was not an issue at all.

The issues that arose from drug misuse in Panel members' neighbourhoods were: crime (30%); noise (23%), violence (21%) and drug-related litter (9%), for example, discarded needles.

When Panel members were asked what drugs they thought were an issue in their area, a variety of responses were given including marijuana, heroin, cannabis and so-called 'legal highs'.

The next question in this section of the Survey asked who Panel members thought had responsibility to tackle drug-related issues. Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents said it was the responsibility of Police Scotland to tackle issues relating to drugs; this was followed by individuals (59%). Inverclyde Council, the National Health Service and communities were all scored fairly equally regarding this question at 45%, 43% and 42% respectively.

The final question asked what key priority actions Panel members thought should be taken to tackle drug misuse. Again, a wide and varied selection of views were provided including: more education for primary and secondary pupils; more severe penalties for

drug dealers; carry out a review of the Methadone programme; additional support for people to come off drugs; and more police on the streets.

What are we doing with your feedback?

Panel members' responses provided useful information about the nature of difficulties caused by drug misuse and how they think these issues should be tackled. Further analysis is required of the key priority actions respondents think should be taken forward to tackle drug misuse issues in their communities.

The Inverclyde Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) works with a range of agencies to address alcohol and drug-related harm, including prevention strategies. The ADP delivers a range of drug education and prevention work to young people in all schools in Inverclyde. In addition, young people receive drug-related education from youth services.

The ADP also provides access to drug awareness training for staff across all ADP partner agencies. This work aims to equip staff to better identify needs related to drug misuse and to provide information about where people who misuse drugs can get support. In addition, Police Scotland and community safety staff work in communities to identify areas of concern leading to preventative and enforcement work. These services work closely with housing providers to address specific neighbourhood issues.

Inverclyde
council



3. Recycling

This section of the Survey asked for people's views on the local recycling facilities.

Just over two thirds (67%) of respondents said they used the Council's kerbside food waste recycling service. Reasons that people gave for not using the service include lack of provision in their area and a preference for using food waste for composting purposes.

The majority of people (81%) said they presented their outdoor food waste container for collection on a weekly basis. Seventy-nine per cent of Panel members said they are now more aware of possible waste when purchasing food while 40% said their awareness of portion sizes when preparing food had increased.

Almost two thirds (65%) of Panel members said they use the kerbside glass recycling service. Around the same number (62%) present their glass box for collection on a fortnightly basis, while a third (33%) present it monthly.

Reasons that people gave for not using the kerbside glass recycling service include lack of provision in their neighbourhood as well as choosing to use one of the Council's Neighbourhood Recycling Points instead, with the latter option chosen by 50% of those respondents. Similar numbers chose to recycle their glass at supermarkets or at our Recycling Centres (19% and 18% respectively). A fifth (20%) of Panel members said they do not recycle their glass items.

Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents said they had used the new recycling facilities at Pottery Street. Panel members who had used the facilities were then asked to rate them: 78% said they were very good and 22% said they were good. Further, 99% of respondents said they found the facilities at Pottery Street easy to use.

When asked where they recycle their textiles, more than two thirds (67%) of Panel members said they used a charity shop, while just over a quarter (28%) used the facilities at one of our Neighbourhood Recycling Points. Smaller numbers – 19% and 14% respectively – recycle their textiles at our Recycling Centres or at a supermarket.

The last part of this section of the Survey asked a few general questions about recycling in Inverclyde. Just under half (46%) of Panel members said they were aware that additional blue bins, food waste containers and glass recycling boxes are available free of charge by calling the Council's Recycling Helpline telephone number ☎ 01475 715901.

When asked how satisfied they were with the quality and provision of recycling facilities in Inverclyde, the vast majority (93%) said they were very or fairly satisfied.

What are we doing with your feedback?

We are pleased to see the largely positive responses from Panel members to the questions about recycling. In particular, we are encouraged that respondents are identifying the quantities of waste they are producing (food waste, for example) and that this is informing decisions on waste behaviour which could lead to positive results regarding waste minimisation.

However, it is noted that responses from 16-24 year old Panel members are less positive. Officers from the Council's Environmental and Commercial Services team will therefore drill down into these results to identify potential reasons and thereafter develop targeted intervention campaigns to ensure that this group is catered for. This could perhaps take the form of increased use of social media and technology which is a communication method widely utilised by this age group.

4. Dementia and stigma

In this section of the Survey, the first three questions were for people with dementia i.e. Panel members were asked to respond only if they had dementia. Because of the relatively low number of people who replied to these three questions, it would not be appropriate to make the responses publically available, in order to protect the anonymity of respondents.

For the remaining questions about dementia and stigma, Panel members were asked to respond only if they cared for someone who has dementia.

Eight per cent of respondents who stated that they care for someone with dementia said they had concealed or hidden the diagnosis of the person that they care for.

When asked if they had ever been avoided or treated differently when caring for a person with dementia, 16% of respondents said that they had. Examples of how people had been avoided or treated differently included family and friends distancing themselves and others not realising that the person was ill.

The next question asked Panel members how they coped with being avoided or treated differently; examples included staying at home more, as well as discussing the issue.

In terms of including people with dementia in everyday life, the Panel was asked to suggest ways that this could happen. Suggestions included providing opportunities for social interaction, as well as treating people with dementia the same as everyone else.

The final question in this section of the Survey asked for suggestions about how society can ensure that people with dementia are not stigmatised. A recurring theme in Panel members' responses was information, education and raising awareness about dementia.

What are we doing with your feedback?

'Making Wellbeing Matter in Inverclyde' is the Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership's mental health improvement plan and one of the main actions is the re-establishment of the Inverclyde Anti-Stigma Partnership. This Partnership will seek to challenge stigma experienced by local people in relation to dementia, as well as a wide range of other issues, for example, mental health and disability.

We asked Panel members questions on dementia to gather views to help us to establish background information on trying to understand issues associated with dementia and stigma. The responses will contribute to the future planning of, and inform the direction of travel for, the Inverclyde Anti-Stigma Partnership. This locally-gathered data will also support other sources of research on this important topic.