

Inverclyde Council Citizens' Panel Newsletter

Summer 2017

Dear Panel Member

Welcome to the latest Citizens' Panel newsletter.

We were pleased with the response to the survey issued in Autumn 2016. Sixty-seven 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 2016 survey were:

- priority outcomes for Inverclyde
- community justice
- Inverclyde Council's performance.

The Summer 2017 questionnaire focuses on the protection of vulnerable children and young people; bees, allotments and community food growing; and satisfaction with Council services. We look forward to receiving your completed survey.

This newsletter outlines the key results from the Autumn 2016 survey and our response to your feedback.

1. Priority outcomes for Inverclyde

The first section of the survey began with a brief overview of the community planning process, followed by a description of the role and remit of the Inverclyde Alliance Board. Panel members were then advised that, as the current Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) expires this year, we wished to seek their views on the important issues they think should be addressed in the new Outcome Improvement Plan 2017/22.

The first question asked what Panel members liked most about living in Inverclyde and the top five responses were:

• Environment – countryside and coast	64%
• Location	54%
• Good transport linkages	38%
• Local hospital	34%
• Nice people	24%.

The second question asked respondents what they think are the key issues that should be tackled to encourage people to stay in Inverclyde and the top five responses were:

• Employment opportunities	88%
• Opportunities for young people	65%
• Crime and anti-social behaviour	53%
• Shopping facilities	53%
• Transport system in/across Inverclyde	33%.

The next part of this section of the survey asked about the eight Outcomes in the SOA 2013/17. Panel members were asked to consider the Outcomes and indicate which ones were most important and which were least important by ranking them on a scale of 1-8 (1 = most important and 8 = least important).

The top three Outcomes that respondents gave a ranking of 1, 2 or 3 to were:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The health of local people is improved, combating health inequality and promoting healthy lifestyles 	51%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area's economic regeneration is secured, economic activity in Inverclyde is increased, and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential 	45%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A nurturing Inverclyde gives all our children and young people the best possible start in life 	43%.

In contrast, the Outcomes which respondents gave a ranking of 8 (least important) to were:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inverclyde's population is stable with a good balance of socio-economic groups 	23%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities are stronger, responsible and more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations to bring about an improvement in the quality of community life 	23%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A positive culture change will have taken place in Inverclyde in attitudes to alcohol, resulting in fewer associated health problems, social problems and reduced crime rates 	21%.

We then asked the Panel if they thought the Outcome Improvement Plan 2017/22 should include an Outcome focussed on supporting older people; 82% of respondents agreed that such an Outcome should be included in the new Plan. Additionally, when respondents were asked what they thought are the main issues for older people in Inverclyde, a number of themes emerged including social isolation; transport and parking; personal safety and healthcare provision.

The next question asked how successful Panel members thought the Inverclyde Alliance has been in delivering the eight Outcomes in the SOA during the last three years. The three Outcomes that respondents thought the Alliance had successfully or very successfully delivered are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A nurturing Inverclyde gives all our children and young people the best possible start in life 	40%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs 	40%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities are stronger, responsible and more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations to bring about an improvement in the quality of community life 	29%.

The final question in this part of the questionnaire asked Panel members to choose five aspects – from a list of 20 – that most need improving in Inverclyde; the top three aspects were:

• Job prospects	53%
• The level of crime	41%
• Road and pavement repairs	38%.

Our response to your feedback?

The Citizens' Panel provided a wealth of information that will help inform the development of the Outcome Improvement Plan 2017/22, feeding into the agreement of priorities for the local area.

Panel members told us that the environment (countryside and coast) and our location were the top two things that they like most about living in Inverclyde. Additionally, employment opportunities, as well as opportunities for young people, are the top two key issues that respondents think should be tackled to encourage people to stay in Inverclyde. The new Outcome Improvement Plan will include a focus on employment and economic regeneration and joint children's services planning.

The majority of Panel members (82%) agreed that the new Outcome Improvement Plan should include an outcome focussed on supporting older people and this will be included in the Plan which is being developed over the Summer; Panel members also provided information on what they think are the main issues for older people in the area which will inform the needs analysis of Inverclyde for the document.

In terms of the Single Outcome Agreement 2013/17, Panel members told us that the outcomes around health, economic regeneration and children and young people were most important to them. They also said that the Inverclyde Alliance had been most successful in delivering outcomes around children and young people; high quality public services; and stronger and responsible communities.

It is encouraging to note that the Council's significant investment in our educational establishments was acknowledged and appreciated by Panel members. A number of positive comments were also made about the new retail opportunities in Port Glasgow.

A recurring theme throughout the survey responses is concern about local healthcare facilities, in particular the future of Inverclyde Royal Hospital; additionally, Panel members told us that health services were the most important aspect that makes somewhere a good place to live.

2. Community justice

We introduced the second section of the survey by explaining that community justice is a new model being implemented as part of the community planning process. We then provided details of the membership of the Inverclyde Community Justice Partnership and advised that it aims to deliver a number of key national community justice outcomes.

Panel members were firstly asked to indicate whether they thought a list of statements were part of community justice; the top three statements were:

• Supporting families affected by crime (both the family of those who have committed an offence and families of victims and witnesses)	71%
• Improving life opportunities including housing, education, employment and health for people who have committed offences to help them move on from further offending	63%

• Unpaid work projects in the community	58%.
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In contrast, the statement that the largest number of people disagreed is part of community justice was:

• Supporting people in custody and when they return to their community	14%.
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The next question asked Panel members how confident they were that community justice will make a difference in Inverclyde; the responses were:

• On balance, I think it should make a difference	41%
• Not at all confident	28%
• Slightly confident	27%
• I think it will make a significant difference	4%.

The last question in this section of the survey asked the Panel in what ways they are most likely to get involved in community justice in Inverclyde; the top three responses were:

• Read articles in the local media	53%
• Respond to surveys	40%
• Receive an e-newsletter	19%.

Our response to your feedback?

One of the key outcomes in the National Strategy for Community Justice 2016 is 'communities will improve their understanding and participate in community justice'. The Inverclyde Community Justice Partnership was pleased to have the opportunity to include questions in the Citizens' Panel survey to establish a baseline against which we can benchmark in future years.

There are several key messages from the Panel's responses that will assist us with future engagement with communities. In particular, we are encouraged to see the three statements that respondents said were part of community justice.

It is pleasing to note that people from the local area are open to community justice making a difference and we recognise the importance of being able to demonstrate this.

Finally, it is helpful to note that more than half of the Panel members would be interested in reading articles in the local media about community justice, while 40% have indicated that they would respond to surveys around the topic. Feedback from respondents will inform the future direction of travel for the Inverclyde Community Justice Partnership.

3. Inverclyde Council's performance

The final section of the survey asked about a number of areas that the Council measures its performance against.

- Satisfaction with Council services

Sixty-eight per cent of Panel members said they are satisfied with the services provided by Inverclyde Council while 60% of respondents think those services are good value for money.

Our response to your feedback?

Following a peak in 2014, the number of Panel members who are satisfied with the services provided by the Council has returned to above the 2012 level; a similar trend has emerged regarding whether respondents think Council services are good value for money.

- Influencing decisions and customer feedback

Forty per cent of Panel members said they are satisfied with the way the Council takes residents' views into account when making decisions that affect the local area; a similar number (37%) feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

Our response to your feedback?

While the number of respondents who said they are very or fairly satisfied with the way the Council takes residents' views into account when making decisions that affect the local area is down slightly from the 2014 response, our most recent figure is still 6% more than it was in 2012. In terms of the number of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area, following a spike in 2014, the percentage response rate has almost returned to that reported in 2012.

It is encouraging to note that a high number (72%) of Panel members think that, by working together, local people can influence decisions that affect Inverclyde; although down slightly (by 2%) since 2014, the 2016 response is 19% more than when the question was asked in 2012.

14 July 2017