

Report To: Policy and Resources Committee

Date: 7 February 2012

**Report By: Head of Organisational Development,
Human Resources and Performance**

Report No: PR051/12/AM/LF

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Subject: Young Citizens' Panel Pilot Survey

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Committee about the newly established Young Citizens' Panel and highlight the results from a pilot survey that has been carried out.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 Inverclyde Young Citizens' Panel is a new and innovative way of engaging with young people aged 12 to 21. It was set up following a successful bid to the SOA Development Fund in September 2010.

2.2 There were a number of factors that led us to explore how we could go about consulting with young people.

- It emerged that engaging with young people was a problem for all partner organisations involved in the delivery of the SOA as young people are a traditionally hard to reach group.
- Population decline in Inverclyde has been selective and has had a greater impact on young people. It is therefore vitally important that we find out from young people why they are leaving Inverclyde and what we can do to encourage them to stay.
- Although members of Inverclyde's Citizens' Panel are aged 17 +, young people 17-21 are under represented on the main Panel.

2.3 Inverclyde's Citizens' Panel was established in 2007 and has proved to be a highly successful method of carrying out ongoing consultation with residents aged 17+. It was therefore decided to establish something similar for young people but to adapt the methodology.

2.4 We worked with Education Services, Notre Dame High School, Community Learning and Development and the James Watt College to develop a suitable methodology. Further details regarding the methodology can be found in the background section of this report.

2.5 Following the development of a suitable methodology, a pilot survey was carried out in spring 2011. The survey covered a number of topics including living in Inverclyde, education, health, community safety and leisure and sport.

2.6 The pilot was very successful and a summary of the key results can be found in section 5.0 of this report.

2.7 Following the success of the pilot the Young Citizens' Panel will now be rolled out to all Secondary Schools. This will increase the number of young people participating in the Young Citizens' Panel and enable regular surveys to be carried out.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- a. Note the content of this report.
- b. Agree that regular surveys are carried out through the Young Citizens' Panel
- c. Agree that the feedback from the Young Citizens' Panel is used to inform service development.

Alasdair Moore

Head of Organisational Development, Human Resources & Performance

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Inverclyde Young Citizens' Panel is a new and innovative way of engaging with young people aged 12 to 21. It was set up following a successful bid to the SOA Development Fund in September 2010.

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- It emerged that engaging with young people was a problem for all partner organisations involved in the delivery of the SOA as young people are a traditionally hard to reach group.
- Population decline has been selective and has had a greater impact on young people. It is therefore vitally important that we find out from young people why they are leaving Inverclyde and what we can do to encourage them to stay.
- Although members of Inverclyde's Citizens' Panel are aged 17 +, young people aged 17-21 are under represented on the main Panel.

4.3 This led us to think about what we could do to engage with young people in an innovative way. Due to the success of Inverclyde's main Citizens' Panel we came up with the idea to establish something similar for young people but to adapt the methodology.

4.4 The following methodology was developed for the Young Citizens' Panel through extensive consultation with partner organisations:

- We worked closely with Notre Dame High School to develop a suitable methodology to involve secondary school pupils in the Young Citizens' Panel. The school took part in the pilot survey where hard copies of the questionnaires were given to pupils in S1 to S6 to complete during Personal and Social Education classes. Teachers were given notes so that they could explain to the pupils the purpose of the questionnaire and also get feedback from the pupils about how we could improve the questionnaire in the future. Following the success of the pilot we are now rolling it out to the other seven secondary schools in Inverclyde.
- We also worked closely with the James Watt College to identify a method of engaging with their students who are aged 17-21 and stay in Inverclyde. Due to difficulties in targeting young people under the age of 21 and who stay in Inverclyde, it was decided that the best method was to set up a stand in the foyer during breaks and lunch time and approach students to ask them to complete a questionnaire.
- The questionnaires were distributed to youth groups through Community Learning and Development. In addition, we consulted with these groups when drafting the questions so that we could ensure they were suitable for young people.
- The questionnaires are posted to the home addresses of young people under the age of 21 who work for Inverclyde Council and partner organisations.
- Flyers for the Young Citizens' Panel were handed out at youth events and we have a group of young people who have signed up take part and who are sent copies of the questionnaires.

4.5 The establishment of the Young Citizens' Panel will have a number of benefits not only the Council and its partners but also the young people who take part. It will provide the Council and its partners with a method for ongoing engagement with young people and will also contribute to the achievement of all eight local outcomes in Inverclyde's Single Outcome Agreement. For example:

- SOA 1 Depopulation – As young people are most likely to leave, feedback from the Panel will be integral to our approach to tackling depopulation by helping us to engage with young people, understand their reasons for leaving and establish what would encourage them to stay.
- SOA 2: Social Regeneration – This local outcome is responsible for developing capacity building and resilience within communities and also for community engagement.
- SOA 3: Economic Regeneration – The Panel will help us to find out what young people think of the developments that are taking place to regenerate Inverclyde.
- SOA 4: Employability – Feedback from young people about what they would like to do when they leave school will influence the work of the Employability Outcome Delivery Group.
- SOA 5: Health Inequalities - Young people will be consulted on whether services meet their health needs and whether they receive enough information about health related issues. This feedback will inform the Health Inequalities Outcome Delivery Group.
- SOA 6: Alcohol Misuse - We will consult with young people on their views and use of alcohol. This will inform the approach taken to tackling alcohol misuse, particularly by the Young Persons Alcohol Team.
- SOA 7: Best Start in Life for Young People – one action within SOA 7 is to embed more participatory approaches in service delivery and evaluation by enabling children and young people to have an influence. The Young Citizens' Panel will help us to achieve this.
- SOA 8: Environment – We will obtain the views of young people on what we should be doing to tackle environmental issues.

4.6 Membership of the Young Citizens' Panel will give young people the opportunity to:

- Have their views heard and influence service delivery - this will help young people to feel more engaged, realise that their views matter and are important to those shaping service delivery in Inverclyde.
- Inform what action is taken to address strategic issues facing Inverclyde, such as alcohol misuse and economic regeneration.
- Help improve Inverclyde and make it a better place to live.
- Promote active citizenship by encouraging young people to play an active role in their local community.

4.7 As far as we are aware Inverclyde is the first local authority to use the concept of a Citizens' Panel to set up something similar for young people.

5.0 PILOT SURVEY

5.1 A pilot survey was carried out in spring/summer 2011. The topics covered included Living in Inverclyde, Education, Health, Community Safety and Leisure and Sport. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed and we achieved a response rate of 38%.

5.2 Some of the key results that emerged from the survey are listed below:

Living in Inverclyde

- 60% of respondents told us that they plan to stay in Inverclyde after leaving school/college, while 40% plan to move elsewhere. The top three reasons for young people indicating they would leave Inverclyde are to go to college/university (40%), to access better employment opportunities (32%) and to live somewhere with better leisure and shopping facilities (20%).
- Respondents indicated that the most important issue that would encourage them to stay in Inverclyde after they leave school/college would be improved job prospects, 70% of respondents indicated this. This is followed by lower levels of crime and anti-social behaviour (42%), affordable decent housing (40%) and better shopping facilities (32%).
- These results will be used to inform the development of an action plan to tackle depopulation that is currently being developed through the SOA.

Education

- The majority of young people (36%) said that they would attend college after they leave school and of those, 67% said they would like to access a college course at the James Watt College in Greenock.
- Respondents indicated that the main barriers to going to College, University or Training were cost of fees (44%), living expenses (40%) and cost of transport (30%).
- The main aspect that would encourage a young person to undertake a College, University or Training course was a guaranteed job at the end of the course, 60% of respondents stated this.
- These results will be considered by the Outcome Delivery Group for SOA 4: Employability.

Health

- The two main services that young people have accessed in the past 12 months are GP/Family Doctor (81%) and Dentist (77%). This is followed by local accident and emergency department (23%), sexual health – Sandyford (12%) and mental health – Inverclyde Association for Mental health (6%).
- Young people indicated that the most important health services for them are a GP (89%), Dentist (89%) and a Local Accident and Emergency Department (86%).
- These results will be passed to the CHCP and considered by the Outcome Delivery Group for SOA 5: Health Inequalities.

Community Safety

- 80% of all respondents said that they feel either very or fairly safe walking in their area during the day. However, the number of people who feel safe walking in their area after dark is significantly lower. 42% said they feel either very or fairly safe and 44% said they feel either a little or very unsafe.

- The three main crimes that young people are most worried about experiencing in their local area are being physically assaulted or wounded (64%), being mugged/robbed in the street (30%) and being verbally abused or assaulted (60%). Members of the main Citizens' Panel were asked a similar question in the Autumn 2011 survey. Having their car damaged by vandals is the crime that members of the main Citizens' Panel are most worried about experiencing (54%). This is followed by being the victim of property crime (50%) and being assaulted or pestered in the street or a public space (47%).
- The main factor that young people stated would help them feel safer in their area was improved lighting on streets, back courts etc – 51% stated this. Other developments that would make young people feel safer included more facilities for young people (46%), high profile police patrols (43%) and tougher sentences in the courts (43%). Members of the main Citizens' Panel were asked the same question in 2011 and high profile Police patrols (71%), more facilities for young people (41%) and improved lighting on streets, back courts etc (38%) were the top three factors they said would help them feel safer.
- These results will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership and the Outcome Delivery Group for SOA 2: Social Regeneration / Area Renewal.

Leisure and Sport

- The two main leisure facilities/activities in Inverclyde that respondents are satisfied with are swimming pools (80%) and Gyms (80%). This is followed by outdoor football pitches (68%), indoor football pitches (66%) and exercise classes such as Zumba (66%).
- Just over half of all respondents (57%) said that they currently participate in a sport or leisure activity several times a week, with a further 16% participating once a week. 8% said they participate several times a month, 4% said once a month and 14% less often.
- Respondents indicated that they would like the following additional sports and leisure facilities in Inverclyde. Hockey and basketball, climbing wall, parkour (free running), dodge ball training, snowboarding/skiing facilities, mini golf, water sports, go karting, skate park and more football pitches.
- The main factors that would encourage young people to participate in a sports or leisure activity more often are better weather (58%), reduced cost (50%) and a friend to go with (33%).
- These results will be passed to the Regeneration and Environment Directorate and used to influence future service development.

6.0 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CITIZENS' PANEL

- 6.1 Following the development of a suitable methodology and the success of the pilot survey, the Young Citizens' Panel will now be rolled out to all secondary schools in Inverclyde. This will greatly increase the number of young people completing questionnaires. We will also continue to work with the James Watt College and Community Learning and Development to ensure that as many young people as possible have the opportunity to take part. Future questionnaires will also be sent to employees under the age of 21 and young people who attended youth events and signed up take part and we will investigate additional ways in which we could reach young people.

6.2 Regular surveys will now be carried out through the Young Citizens' Panel. This will allow an ongoing dialogue to be established with young people and provide trend information. All services will be given the opportunity to ask questions in future surveys. Several services have already expressed an interest in using the Young Citizens' Panel. The results from future surveys will be reported to this Committee.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

Money from the SOA Development Fund covered the costs of the pilot survey. The cost of future surveys will be met through the existing budget for the Citizens' Panel.

7.2 Personnel

None

7.3 Legal

None

7.4 Equality and Diversity

The Citizens' Panel is representative of the population of Inverclyde in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability.

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 Extensive consultation was carried out with Notre Dame High School and James Watt College in the development of the questionnaire. The results will be widely disseminated to ensure that appropriate action is taken to address issues of concern.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Young Citizens' Panel Pilot Survey Report.