
Citizens' Panel refresh

1. Summary

Since the last CPP Management Committee meeting, the refreshment of the membership of the Argyll and Bute's Citizens' Panel has been completed.

This paper presents proposals for future surveys, to be carried out in November / December 2010 and February / March 2011.

2. Recommendations

That the Management Committee:

- Notes that refreshment of the Citizens' Panel has been completed.
- Approve carrying out of a survey in November / December, as described below, focussing on Council services and budget issues
- Approve carrying out a separate survey in February / March, including the themes held over from last spring.

3. Panel refreshment

Hexagon Research and Consulting were asked to refresh a third of the Panel (approximately 400 people). To do this, they wrote to, and removed 449 panellists, who had not responded to the two most recent surveys. The recruitment phase then generated 432 new members. The refreshed panel now has 1,253 members.

The new Panel remains representative of the wider Argyll and Bute population by area and by a range of social and demographic characteristics.

4. Future surveys

It is proposed that questions from the Autumn 2009 survey be repeated in Autumn 2010. These relate to:

- Which factors respondents' consider to be important in making an area a good place to live, and which factors they think are most in need of improvement in their local area.
- The measurement of panellists' satisfaction with a range of universal Council services, and with the Council, more generally.

The results of three questions from the latter question set have been incorporated into the Council's Performance Management System (Pyramid), and are being used to monitor progress with the Council's Strategic Communications Strategy, the Council's PPR Strategy, and the Council's Corporate Plan. These relate to:

- Panellists' satisfaction with information on local area meetings
- The degree to which panellists think the Council provides value for money
- Panellists' satisfaction with the way the Council runs things.

Additionally, there has been a proposal that the next Citizens' Panel survey should

include questions relating to the Council's current budget consultation activities. These might relate to the budget options that are due to be developed in November or to the options for change that have come out of the Council's Service Reviews.

As previously agreed, there was no spring survey as partners had not proposed enough content to justify running a survey. The themes proposed for inclusion at that point were:

- Child protection
- Volunteering (AVA)

Since the spring, an additional theme has been suggested by Planning and Regulatory Services (Argyll and Bute Council) for inclusion in an upcoming survey. This would seek information from panellists about their experiences of, and problems with, bogus callers.

It is proposed that these themes, along with any others that Partners wish to put forward, be held over until February / March, to be included in a separate survey.

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