

Voice!

The Environment
Prosperity + Jobs
Safety in Aberdeen
Transport + Connections



Welcome

Welcome to the 21st citizens' panel newsletter! This newsletter gives feedback to you, a member of Aberdeen citizens' panel, on the results of the 21st questionnaire that you completed in September 2010. Topics in that questionnaire covered the Community Planning themes of Transport and Connections, Prosperity and Jobs, and the Environment - with additional questions on the Council Budget, Adult Protection, the use of Body Worn Video, and Safety in Aberdeen.

Your responses are important in informing and contributing to future plans by all partners of the City Voice. The data is analysed by our research consultants at The Robert Gordon University. As always, all information provided is kept strictly confidential.

The 22nd survey, focusing mainly on the Community Planning themes of Safety, Homes and Health & Social Care is included with this newsletter. Many thanks to all of you who have continued to complete the questionnaires and have returned them promptly over the last couple of years.

Please continue to get in touch if you wish to make any comments on the citizens' panel. You will find my contact details at the end of the newsletter.

Tom Snowling
(for Philippa Mason, City Voice Co-ordinator)

Future Questionnaires

This newsletter, and the full results of the 21st questionnaire, is available to view on the Community Planning website www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk

Internet access is provided at libraries throughout Aberdeen City and hard copies will be available at The Point (Broad Street), and all city libraries. Alternatively, hard copies can be posted out by contacting me on the details below.

I plan to issue Newsletter No.22, a summary of the results of the enclosed questionnaire in June 2011, along with the 23rd Questionnaire.

If you have any further queries or would like to feedback your comments, please contact me:

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Aberdeen City Voice is an initiative by Aberdeen's Community Planning Partnership, including Aberdeen City Council, Grampian Police, Grampian Fire & Rescue Service, Scottish Enterprise, NHS Grampian, Communities Scotland and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished with it



Update

Following the recruitment drive that took place over the second part of last year, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new panellists to the City Voice. The panel current stands at 959 members! Your support has boosted our numbers and ensures that the Panel is now even more representative of our community. Panellists will receive three questionnaires a year along with a newsletter, which updates them on the results of previous consultations and explains how the information you provide, will be used to shape policy, improve service provision, measure performance and apply for funding.

Timetable for 2011

We have now completed the City Voice timetable for 2011. The approximate dates and themes are as follows

Questionnaire 22 February 2011
(Safety, Homes and Health & Social Care)

Questionnaire 23 June 2011
(Locality Planning, Lifelong Learning and Children & Young People)

Questionnaire 24 September 2011
(Environment, Prosperity & Jobs and Transport & Connections)

We 'theme' each questionnaire to make sure that all the Community Planning priorities get a chance to be explored, but each questionnaire also has a small section for additional questions. These questions may be highly topical, one off sets of questions or questions that can't wait for their allocated slot due to time constraints. We try to keep the City Voice timescale both structured and flexible to account for this.

and finally...

just to let you know that Philippa went on maternity leave just before Christmas and gave birth to a son on 20 January. Both are healthy and doing well!

21st Questionnaire - Panel Response

Here are the results of the 21st questionnaire you completed in September 2010. The results have now been analysed and a summary is presented in this newsletter. At the time of issuing the questionnaire, there were 928 of you on the panel - we received 701 questionnaires which gives us an overall response rate of 75.5%. This is just slightly higher than the last questionnaire and it's important to keep the return rates as strong as possible, so if there is a reason you are not replying, please let me know:

- Are the questionnaires too complicated?
- Too long?
- Are we asking about the things of little interest to you?
- What would you like us to ask you about?

Please let me know when you return by letter, email or telephone.

The Council Budget

Aberdeen City Council is planning for the serious economic challenges faced by the public sector across the UK over the next few years. At the time of City Voice 21, the Council was preparing a business plan which would identify its priorities and ensure that it continues to deliver essential services. Scottish Government figures, however, show that this will have to be achieved with significantly less money over the coming years. The Council has made it clear that some of the services which it has delivered in the past may not be possible in the future.

From a list of 22 different Council services, you were asked to identify the five services that were most important to you. Figure 1 shows the services that were selected by at least 300 (out of 701) respondents.

Figure 1: Which Council services are most important to you?

Service	No. of Respondents
Rubbish collection, recycling and street cleaning	459
Care for older people	411
Road and pavement maintenance	401
Schools	338

When asked what services you would like to see the Council spend more on, most of you identified 'road and pavement maintenance' (388 respondents; 55%). Other popular choices were 'care for older people' (47%), 'tackling anti-social behaviour' (38%) and 'schools' (37%).

You were also asked which services you would be prepared to see the Council spend less money on. The services that were identified by at least a quarter of respondents were - planning and development of land and public buildings (280 respondents; 40%), social work for criminal justice (27%), and museums, galleries and theatres (27%).

This is what we are doing

These City Voice questions signalled the start of the Council's community engagement activity across the City as part of an extensive campaign to gauge the opinions of the widest possible range of people - from residents, visitors and businesses - on what their priorities are for the next five years.

The results from the City Voice survey will now be considered by the Council as they continue to develop the Council's Business Plan for the next five years.

Tom Snowling - Senior Research Officer
Aberdeen City Council



Over the last three years, we have asked you questions about the waste and recycling collection services in Aberdeen. We wanted to find out if you think these services have improved, and to seek your views on new services that are due to be introduced over the next few years.

The results this year showed us that 603 people (88% of all respondents) had access to kerbside recycling, of whom more than eight out of ten use it. This is an increase on last year's figures. Almost all respondents who are not served by the kerbside recycling service but are provided with communal recycling collection facilities use these communal facilities. Most of you (83% of respondents) have access to the kerbside garden waste collection service and it is used by more than nine people out of ten.

Recent Service Changes

In May 2010, Aberdeen City Council introduced alternate weekly collections for those properties with an individual wheeled bin which are also offered the kerbside recycling service. 42% of you had concerns about this change. The most common concerns are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: What is your one main concern about the change to this service?

Concern	No. of Respondents
If I go on holiday my waste may not be collected for a month	80
My waste will smell if not collected each week	78
I have a large family and I don't have enough space to store non-recyclable waste	38
There is an increase in fly tipping	35

70% of respondents who have a brown bin for food waste collections use it. Of the 30% of people who do not use the brown bin, some compost food waste in their garden, while others claimed not to produce food waste.

Waste Management Initiatives

Even after waste minimisation and recycling activities, there is still waste that needs to be disposed of. Currently, all general waste collected from refuse bins in Aberdeen is sent to a landfill site just outside the Bridge of Don. This site is expected to be full soon and decisions will have to be taken on how waste will be disposed of in the future. The Council has to meet tough targets to reduce the amount of waste for both environmental and financial reasons. The alternative option to landfill is to use waste treatment options that use the waste to generate heat and electricity.

Over 90% of you wanted a facility that uses non-recyclable waste to generate heat and power. Only 34 people (5% of respondents) wanted to see a new landfill site developed in the city.

You were asked if you thought that households who create more waste should pay for the collection and/or disposal of their additional waste. The results showed a completely even split between respondents who approved of the proposal and those who were against it.

The Council is currently developing initiatives to expand recycling and composting facilities in the city, and was keen to establish which of these initiatives City Voice panellists believed would be most effective. The results were aggregated and the main ones shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Which recycling and composting initiatives do you think would be most effective?

Initiative	No. of Respondents
More recycling centres	431
More on street/communal recycling facilities	274
Reverse vending machines	267
More local recycling	256

This is what we are doing

Household Waste questions have been included in the City Voice for three years, so we have good data on changing service availability, service use and attitudes to waste and recycling. The results help us to plan marketing campaigns, identify areas for improvement and gather feedback on service changes.

It is pleasing that uptake of both kerbside and on-street recycling facilities has increased although the results also show that we have a lot of work to do to provide convenient facilities for flats and areas of the city without the kerbside recycling scheme.

On the question of whether or not households who produce more waste should pay more, there is a need for debate on this issue and we are looking to the Scottish Government to start this discussion at a national level. In previous questionnaires we asked if people had concerns about the change to Alternate Weekly Collections (AWC) of refuse; it is interesting to see that after its introduction, there has been a drop in the percentage of people with concerns.

We are working to improve existing and introduce new services to increase recycling and composting; one of the new questions for the 21st City Voice was about what initiatives people think would best achieve this. By far the most popular choice was to increase the number of Recycling Centres in the city. This is a particularly encouraging result as we have been working to increase the number of Recycling Centres and it is good to know that this is in line with what residents want. Modern, appropriately sized, Recycling Centres can recycle up to 70% of the waste they take in and can therefore make a significant contribution to recycling rates.

Laura Blair - Waste Strategy Officer
Aberdeen City Council

Information Services

Aberdeen City Libraries provide a range of information services and resources relating to employment and careers. As the provision of information services is constantly being reviewed, Aberdeen City Libraries was keen to find out the level of awareness and need in the community for services relating to finding employment and careers information.

You were presented with a list of business and careers information services that are offered by Aberdeen City Libraries and asked to indicate which ones you were aware of and which ones you had used in the past year. Many of you were aware of the Business Information service at the Central Library (262 respondents; 37%), followed by the Careers Information Point at Airyhall Library (25%) and the Patent Information service at the Central Library (19%).

Eighty people stated that they had looked for careers or employment advice in the last 12 months. But only a small number had used the library careers information service. The most popular was the Business Information service at the Central Library, which had been used by 20 respondents in the last year, i.e. 3% of all respondents.

You were asked whether you believed that Aberdeen City Libraries should continue to provide support and information on careers and employment. Most of you (439 respondents; 72%) believe that Aberdeen City Libraries should continue to provide support and information on careers and employment. Only 58 respondents (10%) felt that Aberdeen City Libraries should not continue to offer such support and information, while 113 respondents (19%) do not know whether this should be done.

This is what we are doing

Only 80 people had actively sought careers/employment information in the last 12 months and of these only four had specifically used the library careers information service. The most popular sources of information were the internet and newspapers, services that are also available within libraries. This suggests that we should continue with the general provision of information access but not to allocate excessive resources into the specific provision of careers/employment information.

The libraries also offer wider business, patent and European information. The survey showed that awareness levels for these services are good; however the actual numbers claiming to have used these services is disappointingly small. The reasons for people not taking up the services more fully will need to be identified by further evaluation of services.

There is clearly a demand for the range of services offered and it was gratifying to see a positive response to continuing to provide support and information on careers and employment. The survey also showed that different age groups and even different parts of the city had their own preferred ways of obtaining information and services. This information will be very useful as part of developing Library & Information service plans across the city and input into the planned review of services to maximise future delivery effectiveness.

Susan Bell - Information Services Manager
Aberdeen City Council



Aberdeen City Council has a duty to protect people at risk in the community. These people may include children or adults who are unable to protect themselves from someone harming them, because of a disability, mental disorder, illness, physical or mental infirmity. The Council also has a duty to raise public awareness of this issue and to ensure that residents know what to do if they suspect an adult is at risk from harm. The Council wanted to find out how aware panellists are of these issues, in particular adult protection issues, and whether they know what they should do if they suspected an adult to be at risk of harm.

Most respondents (58%) were not aware of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, which protects adults at risk from harm. But the majority (527 respondents; 75%) stated that they would tell the police if they suspected that an adult was at risk of harm. Significant numbers of respondents stated that they would tell the social work duty team (41%) or a family member/friend (32%).

A small number of respondents were aware of an at-risk adult who had been reported to Aberdeen City Council. Most of them felt that the person was listened to, had received help promptly, and that harm was prevented.

This is what we are doing

When we first asked you about adult support and protection 24% of respondents said they knew about the legislation. This figure has increased to 42%, which is good, but we clearly still have a considerable way to go to continue to raise awareness.

Almost overwhelmingly you said you would report any concerns about an adult at risk, with only two people saying they would tell no one. We now have an Adult Protection Unit and it is good to see that 22% of you said you would contact the Unit directly with any concerns. The majority of the referrals received by the Unit come from the police, so it is interesting to see that 75% of respondents said they would tell the police.

These results will be reported to the Adult Protection Committee, which will discuss how the information will be used to help us to improve services, promote greater awareness of adult support and protection and to help inform us how to continue to engage with members of the public.

Sally Wilkins - Planning and Development Manager
Aberdeen City Council



Local Transport Strategy

Aberdeen City has a Local Transport Strategy (LTS) which sets out the Council's transport policies and actions until 2012. One of the main objectives of the Local Transport Strategy is to encourage more walking, cycling and use of public transport. To find out what impact the strategy is having, the Council asked you to tell them about your current travel patterns.

The majority of you stated that you drive to work or your place of study. Excluding people who do not work or study, 55% of you stated that you drive to work. Just over 20% of you walk to work and 10% take the bus.

The results show that the most frequently cited reason for travel to work in a car (either as a driver or passenger) was that your car was essential to performing your job (117 respondents; 17%), that public transport was not quick enough (15%), that public transport is not reliable (14%), that public transport is not frequent enough (13%) or that public transport is simply not available to you (13%).

You were also asked how often in the previous week you had travelled more than a quarter of a mile by bicycle or foot. Most of you had not used a bicycle for travel (87%) or pleasure (86%) on any day in that week. Figure 3 shows the reasons for not cycling that were given by at least 150 respondents.

Figure 4: If you don't travel by bike to work, go shopping or visit friends, why not?

Reason	No. of Respondents
I don't own a bike	268
The weather	162
No safe route	155

In answer to the question on how often you use the bus, the most frequently offered response was 2-6 days per week (161 respondents; 24%). However, only a slightly smaller proportion (21%) stated that they never use the bus service in Aberdeen.

On the issue of safety when travelling by bus or train in the evening, a clear majority of you believed that you would be either very safe or fairly safe. 4% of you felt you would not be safe travelling by bus in the evening, while 3% felt they would not be safe on the train.

You were presented with a list of potential improvements that might encourage you to use a bike, public transport, walk or car share. The most popular options were cheaper public transport (337 respondents; 48%), more reliable public transport (42%) and more frequent public transport (38%).

This is what we are doing

This year's results show some surprising changes in your travel habits, suggesting that the Council's transport policies are proving effective, although it is appreciated that other factors are also affecting travel decisions. As in previous years, the main mode of transport to work amongst participants is driving, followed by walking and then taking the bus. For the first time since 2007, the numbers driving to work have fallen. This decline is quite notable, from 58% in 2009 to 55% in 2010. The results reveal a corresponding increase in the number of people walking to work, and slight increases in the number of people travelling to work as car passengers and travelling by bus. Conversely, the number of people who said they never use the bus has more than doubled since last year, suggesting that, although more people are using the bus to travel to work, fewer people are choosing to use the bus for non-work journeys.

The results clearly show that further work is needed in certain areas, most obviously in the realm of public transport. You reported some improvements since last year, but also a lot of deterioration in public service.

We will be forwarding the City Voice results to bus and train companies, as well as working on a number of measures to improve public transport provision.

These results will form a core part of the LTS Annual Monitoring Report. If you would like to find out more information on this, please visit the Aberdeen City Council website at www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/pla/pla_transportstrategy.asp

William Hekelaar - Planner
Aberdeen City Council



Road Management

(a) Road Safety

Aberdeen has one of the lowest rates of road accidents in the UK. This has been achieved through a mixture of increased road awareness and various safety initiatives. The Council was keen to find out how you felt about a number of these initiatives. You were asked to rate the level of importance you attached to 13 different road safety initiatives. The most popular initiative was road safety education for children, which was identified by 469 people - i.e. 70% of all respondents. School crossing patrols and low speed zones around schools were also identified by over 50% of respondents.

(b) Parking

Eight out of ten people had parked in the city centre at least once in the previous 12 months, mostly in Union Square (157 respondents), Bon Accord (155), On street (149) and Denburn (138). In general, you found it easy to find a parking space at city centre parking locations. The key factor in deciding where to park was convenience to location, which was rated as very important by 306 people (60%). Just over half of you had not found the electronic car park information boards to be useful when parking in Aberdeen city centre.

(c) Roadworks

The aspects of roadworks in which the greatest proportion of you believe that the Council does a very good job were advanced notification of major works (86 respondents; 13%), barriers and signing at roadworks (11%), measures for pedestrians (9%), and advanced signing of areas to avoid and diversion signing (8%). The aspects of roadworks in which the greatest proportion of you believe that the Council does a very poor job were the verbal information given by workmen to the public (19%), working hours on site (16%), and information and reason for works at roadwork site (15%).

Responses to the question on the time taken for repairs show that the Council acts very fast at repairing traffic lights (99 respondents; 16%). The activities in which the largest proportion of respondents believes the Council acts very slowly are treating pavements during ice/snow (58%), repairing the road surface (56%), repairing pavements (40%) and treating roads during ice and snow (35%).

This is what we are doing

We were unable to get any comments on your responses to the questions on Road Management. If you wish to find out more about this topic and how the City Voice feedback will be used, please contact:

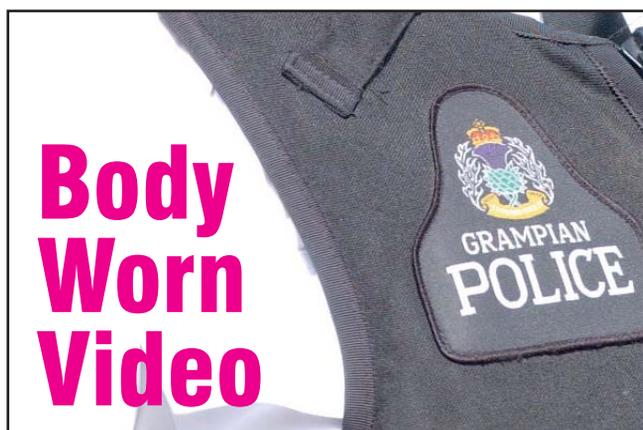
Mike Cheyne, Enterprise Planning & Infrastructure

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In June 2010, Grampian Police launched the Body Worn Video (BWV) pilot in some areas of the City. This pilot involved some police officers wearing cameras on their uniforms and body armour, similar to the size of a mobile phone. Grampian Police were keen to evaluate the BWV pilot to see whether it had the public support to be rolled out on a wider basis.

Most of you had not heard of the BWV pilot prior to reading about it in the City Voice. Awareness was higher among male than female panellists. Most of the people who were aware of the pilot had read about it in a newspaper or magazine (199 respondents; 66%) and only 3% from speaking to a police officer. Newspapers and magazines were identified as a source by 73% of males and 59% of females; and speaking to a police officer was selected as a source of information by 10% of males and 4.5% of females.

Most of you (63%) felt that BWV cameras would have no impact on how safe you feel, while 36% stated that it would make you feel safer. When asked about the impact of these cameras on your local community, most of you (56%) felt that they would make your community safer. There was a difference between male and female panellists' responses: 52% of males stated that cameras would make their community safer, compared with nearly 70% of females. When asked about BWV cameras in general, over three-quarters of you supported their use.

This is what we are doing

Grampian Police, having completed an internal and preliminary evaluation into the use of Body Worn Video (BWV) are now embarking upon a national one, overseen by the Scottish Government, alongside Strathclyde Police. This is due for completion at the start of the next financial year and the information surrounding individuals' perception will be an invaluable part of it. It is straight-forward enough for the Police to extract raw crime statistics, however, equally important is the question of perception and how safe people feel and whether or not this is mirrored by how safe they actually are.

The results from the BWV questions were particularly interesting in relation to the gender pattern surrounding the issue of which other agencies might use them, and was not something that had been foreseen. The results of these questions will be passed to partner agencies for their information as this may help to inform any future decisions, positive or negative, in this regard.

Sgt Andrew Verreydt
Grampian Police

Safety in Aberdeen

Aberdeen's shops, restaurants, pubs and clubs are busier than ever, but by-products of the increased numbers of people coming into the city centre, especially at night, include alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour. As a result, this behaviour may also have the effect of discouraging people from coming into the city centre. To combat this, Grampian Police have reorganised officers on foot patrol in the City Centre area and set up a series of Local Policing Teams. These new teams allow for better communication between police officers and communities.

Most of you had either not noticed a change in the number of police officers (38% of respondents) or did not know if there had been a change (30%). Almost a quarter of you had noticed an increase, while almost 10% stated that they had noticed a decrease in the number of police officers on foot patrol in Aberdeen city centre.

Only a small proportion (10%) of you had spoken to a police officer on foot patrol in the city centre over the past two years, but most were either very satisfied (49%) or satisfied (33%) with the responses they received. When asked if you would be more likely to visit the city centre after hearing about a successful police operation there, most of you stated that you would be indifferent, while just over one in five stated that they would be more likely to visit the city centre.

45% of you believed that antisocial behaviour had increased over the past two years, while 14% thought that it had decreased. The remainder of respondents thought that antisocial behaviour had either stayed the same (23%) or they did not know how it had changed (17%).

This is what we are doing

It is pleasing to see that some respondents have noticed an increase in the number of Police Officers on foot within the City Centre. Grampian Police launched 'Local Policing, closer to you' in April 2010 to help make the police more visible in our communities, so that is certainly a positive result.

It doesn't surprise me that only 10% of you have spoken to an officer in uniform. It isn't often that individuals will interact with an officer unless they have been the victim or perpetrator of a crime. I am pleased to see that the majority of you who had spoken to a police officer were satisfied with the response you got. Whilst it is disappointing to hear about those who were dissatisfied, that is useful information.

Again, it is refreshing to see almost half of you stated that media updates had either increased or stayed the same. 'Local Policing, Closer to you' is about keeping in touch with our communities and I would hope that this figure will increase in the future. I am disappointed to note the number of you who felt that antisocial behaviour in Aberdeen had either increased or stayed the same, this is information I will feed into the organisation to ensure we continue to focus on that priority.

The information provided will form part of the wider review of the divisional restructure, it will also be compared to previous City Voice results to ascertain if any significant improvements have been made.

Inspector Kate Stephen
Grampian Police