

Voice!

Waste Services
Clean City

Roads

Economic Development

Local Transport Strategy

Local Policing



Welcome

Welcome to the 24th citizens' panel newsletter! This newsletter gives feedback to you, a member of Aberdeen's citizens' panel, on the results of the 24th questionnaire that you completed in October 2011. Topics in that questionnaire included waste services, clean city, roads, economic development, local transport strategy, and local policing.

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 25th survey, focusing mainly on the Community Planning themes of 'Wealthier and Fairer' 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. Please also note that Philippa Mason will be returning from maternity leave at the end of February, and will resume her position as City Voice Co-ordinator. We look forward to welcoming Philippa back!

Sharon Wilkinson
City Voice Co-ordinator

Future Questionnaire

This newsletter, and the full results of the 24th questionnaire, is available to view on the Community Planning website www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk.

Internet access is provided at libraries throughout Aberdeen and hard copies will be available at the Marischal College Customer Service Centre and all city libraries. Alternatively, hard copies can be posted to you by contacting me on the details below.

I plan to issue Newsletter No.25, a summary of the results of the enclosed questionnaire in June 2012, along with the 26th 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 and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations.

NEWS

The 24th questionnaire was our first online City Voice questionnaire, using the Survey Monkey software. 46.9% of panellists who completed their questionnaire chose to do so online. We hope that you found it easy to use – we had a great response rate from online panellists. Remember that the newsletter and full report are available at www.aberdeencityvoice.org.uk to download, or to read online! If you would like to change the way you receive your questionnaire, just email me at cityvoice@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

24th Questionnaire - Panel Response

Here are the results of the 24th questionnaire you completed in October 2011. The results have now been analysed and a summary is presented in this newsletter. At the time of issuing the questionnaire, there were 957 of you on the panel – we received 712 questionnaires which gives us an overall response rate of 74.4 %. Thank you to all of you who responded. This response rate is higher than the last questionnaire and we really appreciate you taking the time to complete the questionnaires. 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.

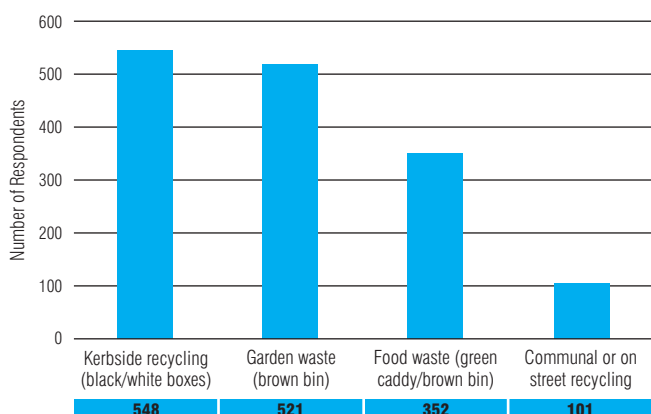
Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished with it



Waste Services

Over the last 4 years, the Waste Service of Aberdeen City Council has asked you questions about waste and recycling in Aberdeen. We asked you which of the services you used - bearing in mind that all panellists may not be offered all of the services. As seen in figure 1 a high amount of you use the kerbside recycling and the garden waste.

Figure 1: If you are offered any of these services, which services do you use?



You were then asked that if you were offered the services but did not use them, what would encourage you to use them. The highest responses were for 'weekly collections for recycling/composting', for kerbside and food collections. Also for kerbside recycling 'if more items were accepted for recycling/composting'. We then asked if you have alternate weekly collections, if you are satisfied with the service. 77% of you were satisfied with the service you receive. The respondents who said they weren't satisfied with the service gave the main reasons being that 'their bin smells', and 'if I go on holiday my waste may not be collected for a month'.

The Scottish Government recently published ambitious targets of 70% recycling/composting by 2025 in the Zero Waste Plan. That still leaves at least 30% of Aberdeen City's waste to be managed. This waste can be sent to landfill or to a facility which can recover heat and power from waste. However, current landfill sites are not sufficient, and there is currently no energy-from-waste facility in the city. As such, either option will require the Council to build new facilities. Of the two options available 95.8% of you stated that they would rather see the construction of a waste-to-energy facility than the development of a new landfill site.

We then asked you about future initiatives to improve recycling and composting in the city. The most popular answer (62.5%) was to have more recycling centres (larger facilities where you can recycle many other items such as batteries, electrical equipment, garden waste, wood, soil/rubble and scrap metal, and safely dispose of household chemicals, paint etc).

This is what we are doing

Questions on Household Waste have now been included in the City Voice for 4 years and this means that we are establishing 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. In terms of future improvements and expansions to waste services, additional Recycling Centres remains far and away the most popular choice with more local Recycling Points coming in second. 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.

It is interesting to note that if the responses from the Central area of the city are looked at in isolation, then the most popular option is for more on-street/communal recycling facilities. We believe that this is due to the higher proportion of flats in this area which cannot be offered the kerbside recycling service. The waste aware team is continuing to increase the number of communal facilities.

Laura Blair - Waste Strategy Officer

Aberdeen City Council





Clean City

We asked you from a list of ten different options, where Aberdeen City Council should be focussing its street cleaning priorities. Figure 2 indicates the responses, with 'litter' being the most popular answer.

Figure 2: Where should Aberdeen City Council be focusing its street cleaning resources?

Litter	58.1%
Fly tipping	43.3%
Litter bins / dog bins	37.1%
Grass/shrub maintenance	35.5%
Dog fouling	33.6%
Chewing gum	30.9%
Weeds	23.7%
Graffiti	20.5%
Bird droppings	10.8%
Fly posting	6.5%

We then asked you if you thought that local residents should be encourage to keep their own neighbourhood clean and tidy (e.g. through clean ups or 'adopt a street' scheme). 76.4% of respondents to this question believe that residents should be encouraged to keep their neighbourhood clean and tidy.

The council currently maintains 159 playparks within the city. The council wanted to find out what you think about these parks and how safe you think they are. We asked you which play areas you particularly liked. Hazlehead Park received the highest response with 49.4%, followed by Duthie Park (46.4%), and Westburn Park (19.9%). We also asked you what you thought was important in a play area. The top 5 answers were:

Figure 3: What do you think is important in a play area?

The play area is clean and has litter bins	70.6%
The play area is local	64.6%
The play area has grassy areas to run around in	58.3%
The play equipment range is suitable for all ages	57.0%
The play area is safely enclosed (it has gates/fences)	52.2%

You were then asked whether you thought the play areas you used were safe. Of those respondents who stated earlier that they used play areas, 93.2% agreed that the play areas they use are safe.

This is what we are doing

For a number of years now the service has supported individuals and communities to undertake clean ups by providing equipment and uplifting the collected waste. The response that 76.4% of respondents believe that residents should be encouraged to keep their neighbourhood clean and tidy reinforces the service's current position and we will now consider how to increase the residents' involvement. It was useful to note that of the play sites identified, (those which we recognise as those most heavily used) (i.e. Hazlehead Park, Duthie Park, The Beach Play Area, Cromwell Road and Seaton Park) display both the highest number of responses from those with a particular liking, as well as those expressing a particular dislike, of a specific play area. Given that these are the most heavily used play area locations in the City, we expected both these figures to be higher than locations less well used. We are encouraged by the high numbers of those expressing their view that that City's play areas are largely safe! The marginal differences between Central, South and North are unsurprising, given the difference equates to no more than 1.3%. Issues relating to vandalism account for perhaps 50% as a proportion of causes or reasons why a play area may not be considered safe. We need to work to reduce this figure further, working toward a near 100% target. Other reasons including location in relation to surrounding roads, rivers, etc. may have influenced opinion, deteriorating condition of ageing equipment, perceived lack of maintenance, or choice of equipment may also have influenced opinion. The results identifying what is important in play areas concur with our own experience and this will help influence future decisions over provision.

The panellists responses will initially be presented to the Service Management Team and will provide good statistical evidence that will be used to determine not only the direction and focus of service delivery but also influence budgetary and policy decisions. Environment Service would like to thank the panellists and the City Voice team for their time and effort in providing this valuable data.

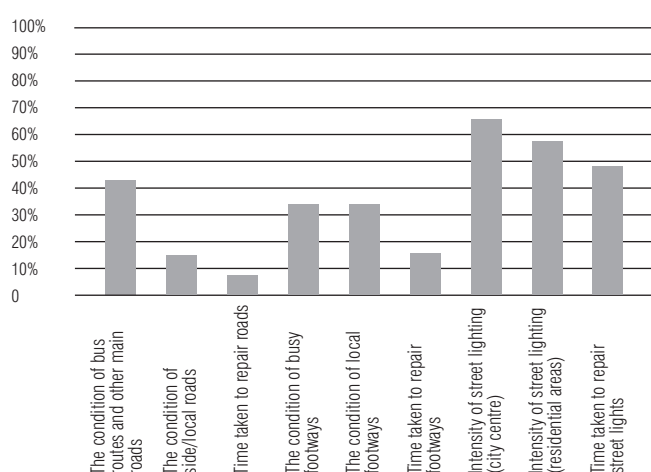
Lorna Graham - Performance & Development Officer
Aberdeen City Council

Roads

Aberdeen City Council maintains 500 miles of road, 1,000 miles of footway and 30,000 street lights. Your responses to these questions are vital to informing the Asset Management Plan for Aberdeen's roads. We began by asking you how satisfied you were with the current level of performance with road and street lighting activities.

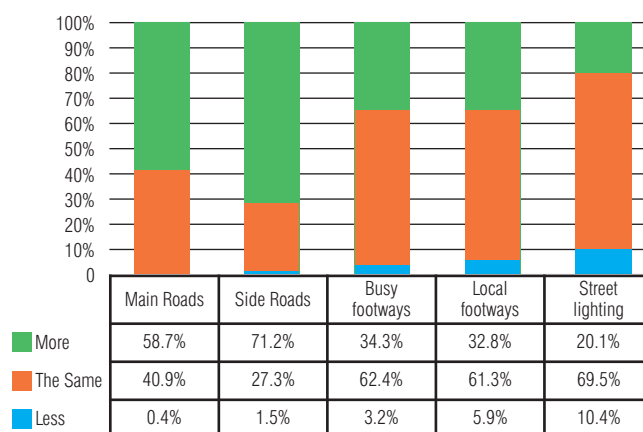
Figure 4 shows the options where you selected you were 'very satisfied' and 'fairly satisfied'. The graph shows that you were most satisfied with the intensity of street lighting in the city centre, followed by intensity of street lighting in our residential areas. The graph also shows that you were least satisfied with the time taken to repair roads, followed by the condition of side/local roads.

Figure 4: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the council's current performance in each of the following areas:



We then asked you questions which would help to prioritise the roads maintenance budget, specifically whether the council should spend more, less, or the same on particular areas. Figure 5 shows that only a small proportion of you would like to see the council spending less. 10.4% of you would like to see the council spend less on street lighting. This highest increase in spending was selected for 'side roads' with 71.2% of respondents selecting this option.

Figure 5: from the areas listed below, which (if any) would you like to see us spend more on, not change spending, or be prepared for us to spend less on?



This is what we are doing

The information is to be used to provide the 'Community Requirements' section of the Roads Asset Management Plan which is currently in the latter stages of being drafted and will become the basis for budgeting for Roads Maintenance in years to come.

The intention is to set the results of surveys of road users alongside the judgement of the Engineers and determine how best to allocate resources. As time goes on we intend to ask panellists these questions again to compare their views as we make changes.

Angus Plumb - Engineer

Aberdeen City Council



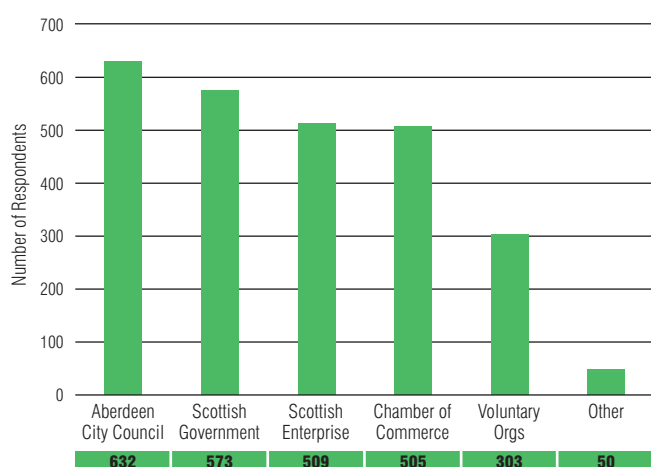
Economic Development

Aberdeen City Council currently delivers a wide range of economic and business development services which support and encourage:

- the growth of local business and subsequent creation of wealth and jobs;
- activities and events designed to promote the city as an attractive place for investment, visitors and skilled workers;
- and, major new development projects and partnership organisations which can contribute to the city's future economic prosperity.

We began by asking you which organisations you believe should be involved in supporting economic and business development within the city. As can be seen from figure 6, Aberdeen City Council was the most popular answer followed by the Scottish Government and then Scottish Enterprise. You were also able to provide information on other groups you thought should be included. These included private companies (e.g. oil companies) (2.5%), private individuals (0.8%), community councils (0.7%), and educational institutions (0.6%).

Figure 6: which of the following organisations should have a role in supporting economic and business development within the city?



We then asked you which areas you considered to be a priority for Aberdeen City Council. The top 5 answers included:

Figure 7: which of these areas do you consider to be a priority?

Attracting new investment and new businesses to the city	69.3%
Attraction of funding from EU and other external funding bodies	65.3%
Attracting tourists	63.6%
New business creation	61.1%
Creating a better business environment in the city centre	56.0%

We then asked you to select from a list of activities, those you thought would help to create a better business environment in the city centre. As figure 8 shows, the most popular answer was 'cleaning buildings', followed by 'more pedestrian walking areas'.

Figure 8: the following activities could help to create a better business environment in the city centre. Which of these activities do you think the council should support?

Cleaning buildings	67.9%
More pedestrian walking areas (like Belmont Street)	59.8%
Pedestrianisation of some/all of Union Street	46.2%
New investment in retail	44.5%
New housing development	34.3%
Re-development of Union Terrace Gardens	30.4%
New office development	16.6%

This is what we are doing

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

Gerry Brough - Project Director

Economic and Business Development

Tel: 01224 523197

Email: gbrough@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Local Transport Strategy

Aberdeen City Council has a Local Transport Strategy (LTS) which sets out their transport policies and actions until 2012. One of the main objectives of the strategy is to encourage more walking, cycling and use of public transport. As these questions have been included in the City Voice for a few years now, I would like to focus on the “new” questions that were added this year.

We told you about ‘Getabout’, which is the regional transport campaign promoting active and sustainable travel across the North East of Scotland. We then asked if you had heard about this scheme - 91.1% of you had not heard of it.

We then asked you if you were aware that Aberdeen city centre has an air quality problem. There was almost an equal split between those that were aware (50.1%) and those who were not aware (49.9%). We then asked if you thought Aberdeen City Council should be implementing projects to improve the air quality. 71.7% of you agreed that they should be implementing projects, 9.1% thought that the council should not, and 19.2% of respondents selected the ‘don’t know’ option.

We then asked those of you who thought the council should be implementing projects, which projects should be implemented. The results were:

Figure 9: If you think the council should be implementing projects to improve air quality, which projects should it be implementing?

Offer junction improvements and roads infrastructure (Third Don Crossing, South College Street)	59.2%
Encourage lower emissions and cleaner vehicles (electric charging infrastructure, emissions testing and banning polluting vehicles)	57.8%
Encourage modal shift and influence travel choice (develop travel plans, improve walking and cycling options, park and rides)	56.9%
Target non-transport improvements (plant trees, biomass reductions)	52.2%
Improve traffic management (priority measures for HGVs and car-sharers)	47.8%
Integrate planning and policy (air quality assessment for major developers, review car parking charges)	41.4%

As can be seen from figure 9, the most popular response was to ‘offer junction improvements and roads infrastructure’.

This is what we are doing

New questions this year were regarding the City’s air quality problems. 50% of panellists know that Aberdeen has an air quality problem principally caused by motorised transport and a very clear majority (72%) believe the Council should be doing something to address this.

The younger generation appear to be most concerned with 79% of 16-34 year olds agreeing air quality projects should be progressed. The most popular projects for implementation include junction improvements and roads infrastructure (59%), encouraging low emissions and cleaner vehicles (58%) and encouraging modal shift (57%). The 65+ age bracket believe junction improvements to be the priority (69%), whilst those in the 55-64 age bracket think encouraging lower emissions and cleaner vehicles is the priority, and those in the 16-34 and 35-54 brackets believe encouraging modal shift is the priority.

For air quality improvements the Council continues to progress road junction improvements and infrastructure with the Third Don Crossing enquiry and the AWPR Enquiry all moving forward in 2011. Perhaps critically a number of the pedestrianisation and city centre improvements are dependent on delivery of the AWPR but in the meantime the Council is installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, updating parking policies, undertaking emissions checks, installing a car club, reviewing night time taxi ranks, installing bus lanes, investing in cycling infrastructure and improving measures for HGVs.

If you would like to find out more information on the Local Transport Strategy, please visit Aberdeen City Council website on www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/sl_pla/pla_transportstrategy.asp or view air quality improvements under the CARE North project at <http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/lez/>

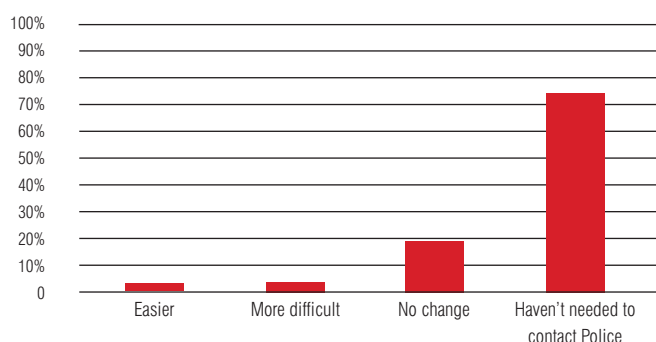
Louise Napier - Senior Planner (Transport Strategy)
Aberdeen City Council

Local Policing

In April 2010 Grampian Police restructured its Aberdeen Division into a series of 13 Local Policing Teams, in order to allow for greater visibility and better communication between Police Officers and the communities in which they work.

We asked you if you had found it easier or more difficult to make contact with your local policing team since the change in April 2010. Figure 10 shows that the majority of you that answered this question, haven't needed to contact the police. 3.4% of you found it easier, while 3.1% of you found it more difficult. A further 19.6% of you found that there was no change.

Figure 10: Since April 2010, have you found it easier or more difficult to make contact with Officers from your Local Policing Team?



Of those that found it easier, the main reasons given are 'officers more visible in community'; 'easy to contact directly (email, phone)'; 'proactive policing in community'; and 'clear info on website'. Of those that found it more difficult the main reasons given are 'lower visibility in community'; 'very dissatisfied with response to contact or crime reported'; 'local police station/box moved or closed'; 'telephone contact system is poor'; and 'very little information'.

We then asked you How do you think safety in your community has changed since the Local Policing Teams were created in April 2010? 84.4% of you thought there had been no change, 12% believe that their community has become more safe, and 3.2% of you believe that your community has become less safe. You were then asked to Think back to any experience you might have had with the Police in Aberdeen in the last year, how successful do you think they have been in working with partners? Again the majority of respondents stated that they haven't needed to contact the police. Of those that have contacted the police, 16% thought there had been no change, 7% thought the police had become more successful, while 0.7% thought they had been less successful. 23.5% of respondents stated that they 'didn't know'.

This is what we are doing

Although it has been more than one year since Grampian Police restructured Aberdeen Division, the process of 'fine tuning' continues, responding to feedback from both within and outwith the organisation. It is therefore very helpful to receive these important results from the City Voice Panel as this will allow us to continue along the road to achieving the best possible model for our staff, our partners, but most importantly, for the citizens of Aberdeen with our 'Local Policing — Closer to You' model.

As an organisation, while we had hoped that respondents would have noticed an overt increase in our visibility, we take comfort that what was a major restructure has enabled us to deliver a seamless service from the public's perspective. Moreover, the significant reductions we have achieved in many crime categories has also meant that fewer people have found it necessary to contact us.

Andy Verredyt - Police Partnership Development Officer
Grampian Police

