

Citizens Panel Questionnaire Results Summary – July / August 2014

Following the Citizens Panel Questionnaire in August, the results are now available. Below shows the highlights from the questionnaire responses of those who expressed a view;

Cleansing Services

Of those who responded to the question, 86.78% were satisfied the council has kept its public land and public highways clear of litter and refuse over the last year. This is an increase of 0.88% when compared to the previous year.

Public Open Spaces / Grounds Maintenance

It is encouraging to see satisfaction levels remain high across all areas of the grounds maintenance service. The key highlights of these results are below:

- 88.86% of respondents were satisfied with open spaces overall
- 85.47% of respondents were satisfied with the maintenance of shrub beds in the city
- 82.04% of respondents were satisfied with the standard of grass cutting
- 86.35% of respondents were satisfied with the maintenance of parks in the city
- 90.06% of respondents were satisfied with the maintenance of flower beds within the city

Unfortunately a number of negative comments were made regarding this service. A summary of the main comments are below:

- grass cuttings have not been cleared away after the grass has been cut, making streets and open spaces untidy
- increase in the levels of litter in the city centre and open space, together with a rise in the number of overflowing dog waste bins
- notable numbers of complaints were also received around the pruning and maintenance of trees within the city

These comments will be passed onto the relevant service manager for further investigation. It is however also worth noting that a relatively high number of positive comments were also received across this service, especially focused on the flower beds within the city.

Safety in parks and open spaces

The feeling of safety when visiting parks / open spaces in Lincoln during the daytime slightly increased following the previous year, with 83.38% of users always or usually feeling safe within these areas.

It is also encouraging to see the feeling of safety of users of parks and open spaces after dark has also increased, with 50.62% of users always or usually feeling safe after dark.



Of those who didn't feel safe in these areas, the most common reasons for this were;

- people under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- lack of lighting and CCTV
- groups of people / gangs hanging around

Results show the parks which citizen's panel members visit the most within Lincoln are Hartsholme and Boultham Park. From the written comments received, Whitton's park also proves to be very popular amongst citizen's panel members.

Getting Involved in Parks and Public Open Spaces

- It is encouraging to see 315 (87.50%) of respondents support the principle of increased volunteer involvement in our parks and open spaces, with 109 (30.36%) of respondents being interested themselves or know someone who would be interested in getting involved in volunteering and training, if more opportunities were available.

Revenues Service

81.90% respondents were very or fairly satisfied with the revenues service provided by the City of Lincoln Council, with just 4.91% of respondents being dissatisfied with the service.

Suggestions on how this service could be improved included:

- implementing stricter penalties for people who fail to pay
- ensure communication is clear on how to pay council tax and the consequences of not doing so

The council's role in helping to manage the Carbon Footprint of the City

Citizens Panel responses have seen a 1.46% rise in satisfaction levels to 80.63% satisfaction with the councils approach to the city's carbon footprint.

The question was asked to panel members on what they would like to see the council doing about the city's carbon footprint. The most popular suggestions are below:

- continue to do maintain our current approach
- better communication on what we do and how residents can get involved
- introduce a park and ride service
- improve / introduce more cycle paths
- increase the level of greenery and trees in the city
- introduce more solar panels to council properties and new builds
- Improve public transport within Lincoln to help reduce congestion within the city
- improve direct train services to London

Many of these areas feature in existing development plans – but ALL comments have been fed back to the relevant service managers.

Healthy Lifestyles

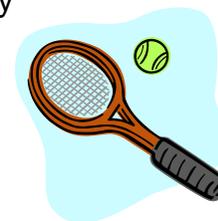
Relatively low numbers of the citizen's panel use the services provided by the Healthy Lifestyles team, however of those who do use these services, satisfaction levels for those respondents who were very satisfied or fairly satisfied for each area of this service were all above 50.00%. The majority of those who do use the service answered that they were neither satisfied or dissatisfied.

Indoor Market Service

56.29% (188) of market users were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall market offer in Lincoln. Of those who responded, 153 (41.46%) visit the market less than once a month. However, it is worth noting, 31.71% visit once a week or more than once a week.

Sport and Leisure

Of those who use the services provides by the Sport and Leisure team, over 55% of respondents were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with each of the elements of this service. These include: Yarborough and Birchwood Leisure Centres, 10k road race, cricket, football and tennis pitches, outdoor play facilities and the overall value for money of those services used.



The most persuading factor which would encourage panel members to participate more in sport is to reduce in the costs of activities available. Improved communication about the services available to residents of the city would also increase awareness further of these facilities.

The three most important aspects which respondents highlighted as being the most important when planning activities for younger people were to ensure sessions are:

- fun and relaxed
- reasonably priced
- use top quality instructors.

Respondents would be encouraged to participate more in exercise if:

- swimming facilities in the city were improved
- they had better health
- more time was available to them

Empty homes in the private sector

14.36% respondents thought the council is doing all it can to deal with the problems associated with empty properties. 15.47% stated that they thought the council could do more to deal with these problems. A further 254 people stated that they didn't have enough awareness of what the authority already does to answer the question fairly.

The most popular suggestions on how we could improve our communication channels for this purpose include:

- use the Echo / Radio / Website / TV to improve awareness of the service
- encourage Estate Officers to communicate the service to residents of the city
- create and promote a direct phone number for reporting empty home related issues and continue to publicise this

A number of suggestions were made by panel members on how they felt the service could be improved. The most common solutions include:

- improve the turnaround time to resolving empty property issues using the powers available to the City of Lincoln Council
- allow the City of Lincoln Council to purchase more empty properties to turn into council homes or to sell on once renovated

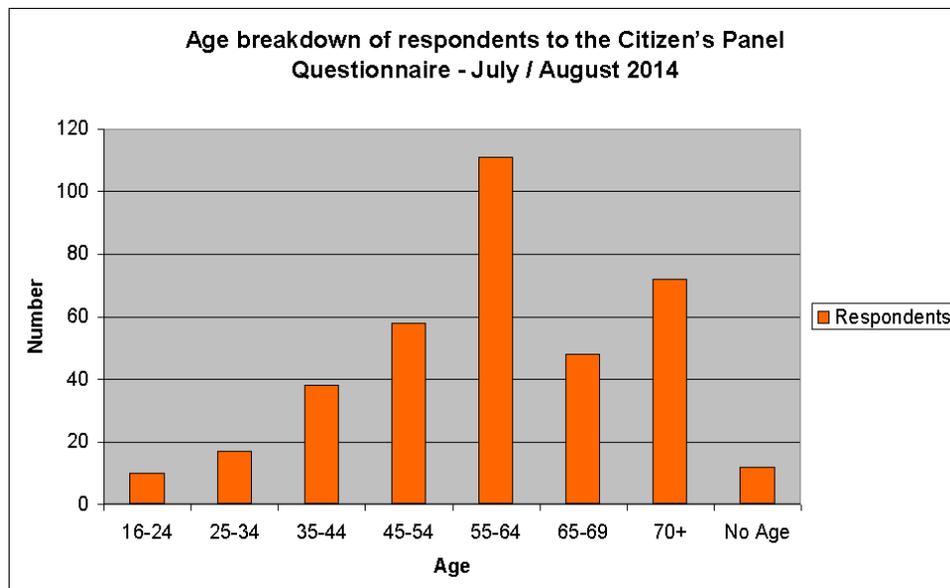
City of Lincoln Council Services

Of those respondents who use the public toilet service, 46.42% were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the service. Unfortunately, there were a further 41.89% respondents who stated that they were either fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. 11.70% stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service.

Satisfaction levels with Parking services overall (not the charges), were reasonably high, with 60.37% respondents being either fairly or very satisfied with the service. A further 18.52% respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; however 21.11% were either fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Although the satisfaction figure is not particularly high, it should be noted that satisfaction has increased over the past year by 13.47%, which is likely to be a result of the re-opening of Lucy Tower Car Park following essential maintenance.

All of the findings above, together with the full questionnaire results and comments received will be passed onto the relevant service manager for their consideration, to support future service planning, and help continue to improve the services we deliver.



4

