



## Your Moray - Your Community

**REPORT TO: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP - 16 OCTOBER 2008**

**SUBJECT: CITIZENS' PANEL SURVEY PROGRAMME 2008-09**

**BY: MORAY COUNCIL – COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

### **1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The reason for this report is to ask the Community Engagement Group to determine the subject matter of the two surveys that could potentially be carried out before 31 March 2009.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Community Engagement Group considers undertaking a programme of Citizens Panel surveys for the current financial year.**

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At a previous meeting of the Community Planning Board held on the 29 May 2008 (*para 10 of the Minute Refers*) it was agreed to continue the funding of the Citizens Panel until such time as the outcome of the consultation regarding Area Committees is known.
- 3.2 At the last meeting of the Community Engagement Group held on 3 July 2008, (*para 4 of the minute refers*) it was agreed that funding of the Citizens' Panel should continue on an ad hoc basis for the current financial year, until the outcome of the consultation regarding the Area Committees is complete. The Board requested a report on the surveys carried out under the previous three-year contract and the outcomes.
- 3.3 An evaluation of the Citizens Panel contract is the subject of another paper to this group.
- 3.4 It would be possible to carry out two surveys and produce a newsletter by the end of March 2009.
- 3.5 If the group is minded to conduct the surveys, a decision is required with regard to the subject matter. It may be useful therefore to revisit matters covered in previous surveys in order to gauge whether perceptions have changed over the intervening period.
- 3.6 The first two theme-related surveys in the previous contract dealt with 'Improving Transport Facilities, Choices and Safety' and 'Achieving a Safer

Community'. These surveys were conducted in May 2006 and August 2006 respectively.

- 3.7 If the Group wanted to follow the pattern created in the first contract then the next surveys should perhaps focus on the 'Safer and Stronger' and 'Wealthier and Fairer' themes respectively. However in the light of the evaluation the Panel the group may wish to consider how it should take this forward and may prefer to concentrate on other topics this year.

#### **4 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Community Plan / Theme Plans / Partner Plans**

The Citizens' Panel is a useful source of information, which has the potential to facilitate service planning if used to its full extent. The Moray Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) states that "the influence which the people in Moray will have over decisions which affect their communities and lives and their active participation within communities will increase". The SOA therefore includes a specific commitment under National Outcome 11 to renew the Citizens' Panel contract and to develop use of the Panel. Another paper on this agenda will consider the way forward for the Citizens Panel in the longer term.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

The Local Government Scotland Act 2003 requires that the Partnership engage with the community as part of the Community Planning Process. The Scottish Government is seeking through their National Outcome 11 to "have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others".

**(c) Resources (Financial, Staffing and Risks)**

The Community Planning Board has previously agreed to fund the Citizens' Panel for the current financial year up to a ceiling of £30,000. The total cost of two surveys is approximately £17,625 inclusive of VAT.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The Community Engagement Group considers whether to progress a programme of Citizens' Panel surveys for the remainder of this financial year 2008-09.**

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