TO: **RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE   3 DECEMBER 2002**

SUBJECT: **CITIZEN'S PANEL - 2002**

FROM: **POLICY SERVICES**

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To provide feedback to members on the citizen's panel during the period December 2001 - September 2002

2   BACKGROUND

2.1   The Citizen's Panel is made up of approximately 1200 residents of Warwick District who have agreed to answer questions relating to their views of Warwick District and the Council in particular, on a quarterly basis.

2.2   Each Panel questionnaire relates to a broad theme. The programme for the 4 quarters reported on in this report has been :

Citizens' Panel - Dec 2001	General Satisfaction Service Satisfaction Service Improvement Complaints
Citizens' Panel - March 2002	Communications Sports Involvement Neighbourhood Satisfaction
Citizens' Panel - July 2002	Environmental Issues Action 21 Planning town Centres Car Parks
Citizens' Panel - September 2002	Social Issues Equalities & Inclusion

3   KEY FINDINGS

3.1   December 2001 Citizens' Panel - Summary

The duty to keep relevant land clear of litter and refuse : Overall, 68% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction that Warwick District Council has fulfilled its duty to keep land clear of litter and refuse.

Satisfaction : with specific service areas (results translated in to scores out of 10) :

Service	Score
Cultural Facilities	8.42
Refuse Collection	8.29
Parks & Open Spaces	8.16
Rent Collection	8.09
Elderly Services	7.87
Sports Centres	7.87
Sports Development	7.81

Children's Play Areas	7.78
Private Sector Housing Grants	7.76
Conservation of Listed Buildings	7.72
Letting Homes & Properties	7.71
Housing Repairs & Inspections	7.63
Planning Development Advice	7.63
Health & Safety	7.58
Food Hygiene Inspection	7.48
Building Control	7.39
Planning Applications	7.28
Management of Empty Properties	7.26
Town Centre Management	7.20
Planning Policy & the Local Plan	7.12
Noise & Air Pollution	6.93
Street Cleansing	6.78

Overall Satisfaction : Environmental Services - Overall, 73.4% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with Environmental Services.

Overall Satisfaction : Planning Services - Overall just over half of all respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with Planning Services (52.2%). Almost 30% of respondents indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied leaving 18% of respondents indicating a level of dissatisfaction.

Overall Satisfaction : Cultural and Recreational Services - Overall 82% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with cultural and recreational services.

Overall Satisfaction : Housing Services - Overall, 46% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with Housing Services. However, 44% of respondents indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied leaving just under 10% of respondents indicating a level of dissatisfaction.

Assessment of specific services : Environmental Services
From the five specific service areas which come under Environmental services street cleansing received the lowest mean score (6.78) and refuse collection the highest (8.29).

Assessment of specific services : Planning and control services

From the 6 specific service areas which come under Planning and Control Services Planning Policy and Local Plan received the lowest mean score (7.12) and Conservation of Listed Buildings received the highest (7.72).

Assessment of specific services : Culture and Recreational Services

From the five specific service areas which come under Cultural and Recreational Services Children's Play Areas received the lowest mean score (7.78) and Cultural Facilities the highest (8.42).

Assessment of specific services : Housing Services

From the 6 specific service areas which come under Housing Services Management of Empty Properties received the lowest mean score (7.26) and Collection of Rents and Service Charges the highest (8.09).

Satisfaction with the Authority as a whole
Overall, 78% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the way the authority runs things as a whole. Just under 15% of respondents indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied leaving 7% of respondents indicating a level of dissatisfaction.

Complaint Handling
Just under 20% of respondents indicated they had contacted the authority with a complaint over the last 12 months. The departments contacted most included:

- Refuse
- Environmental Health
- Planning
- Highways
- Housing
- Street Cleansing
- Parks

Overall, 49% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the way in which their complaint was handled. However, 46% of respondents indicated they were dissatisfied.

Whilst the number of respondents making a complaint against each of the service departments is small the lowest level of dissatisfaction was with Repairs, Housing, Parks and Leisure Services.

3.2   April 2002 Citizen's Panel Summary

Sports involvement
More than half of all respondents indicated that they have participated in a sport or leisure activity in the last 12 months. More than half of those who have taken part in a sport or leisure activity in the last 12 months indicated that they had done so more than four times.

Over 70% of respondents have taken a walk or a hike of two miles or more in the past 12 months. Over a third of those who had taken a walk or hike of two miles or more indicated they had done so more than four times in the last 12 months.

Just 12% of respondents indicated that they have spent any time helping to organise sport on a voluntary basis.

Almost 30% of all respondents are currently a member of a sports club.

The majority of respondents felt that investment in sport would:

- Reduce crime (81%)
- Make the community a safer place (77%)
- Reduce drug-related issues (64%)
- Improve people's health (99%)
- Increase jobs for local people (82%)
- Improve the environment (60%
- Make the area a better place to live (87%)

Just over half of all respondents rated the level of sports provision in their local area as good (52%).

The vast majority of respondents indicated it was important that the council provide local people with the opportunity to participate in sport and physical exercise (95%).

The area in which you live
The majority of respondents indicated that noise is not a problem in their area from

- Aircraft (77%)
- Trains (93%)
- Industrial/commercial premises (95%)
- Road works, construction/demolition (84%)

- Pubs, clubs and entertainment (91%)
- Neighbours (89%)

The majority of respondents also stated that noise from road traffic was not a problem in their area. However, there were differences across the areas ranging from only 5% of those in the Kenilworth area to 20% of those from Warwick indicating that this was a serious problem.

The vast majority of respondents were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (94%). Two thirds of respondents indicated that their neighbourhood had not changed over the past two years. However, 11% of respondents felt that their neighbourhood had declined in the last 2 years.

Communication
The vast majority of respondents have never visited Warwick District Councils Website. Just 9% of those who had visited the website rated the content as poor and 10% rated the layout as poor. Less than 8% of respondents gave a rating of the website overall as poor.

The vast majority of respondents were aware that they can access the Internet at many libraries.

Just 10% of respondents have used a Council Information Kiosk.

More than half of respondents to the survey stated that they have an e-mail address (56%). A third of these respondents indicated they would like to receive information from Warwick District Council by e-mail and just over a third of respondents would like to take part in future consultations by e-mail (36%).

Involvement
Overall, 40% of respondents indicated they would like to be involved in focus group consultations. However, there was a wide variation in interest in taking part across the age groups with just 14% of those aged 16-24 indicated they would like to be involved compared to 58% of those aged 55-64.

More than 60% of those aged 50+ indicated they would like to have their details passed on to receive information about the Senior People's Forum.

3.3   Citizen's Panel July 2002 - Summary

Action 21 : Overall, 17.4% of panel members indicated that they had heard of Action 21 or Local Agenda 21 in Warwick District

The table below shows the top 10 issues (out of a list of 25 issues) in terms of the percentage of respondents indicating very or fairly important.

Issue	*%*
Litter/fly tipping	98.3
Pollution in rivers and streams	98.0
Loss of green spaces in Warwick District	96.4
The need to protect and improve health	95.6
Air pollution from traffic	95.3
Increase in violent crime in Warwick District	94.7
The need to cherish historic fabric of District	92.5
Ozone depletion	90.7
Loss of tropical rainforests	90.3

Global warming/climate change	89.4

The following table shows in order of the most important the actions that respondents considered Warwick District Council should take (top 10 out of 28).

	%
Protect green spaces and open countryside from development	79.9
Provide more/better recycling facilities	78.0
Run campaigns to reduce litter and/or dog fouling	76.4
Protect/improve historic buildings and features	69.2
Manage parks and gardens in a way which encourages more wildlife	68.2
Improve the physical appearance of streets and buildings in the District	66.9
Provide more/better facilities for young people (involving young people)	66.3
Work to reduce unemployment and encourage a vibrant economy	66.1
Reduce energy in offices, buildings and activities run by the Council	65.5
Run campaigns to encourage less waste to be thrown away by local people	65.5

Community Safety
Overall, 53.7% of panel members indicated that they believed the police to be responsible for Community safety. The table below shows those answers given most often.

	No.	%
Police	284	53.7
The public	89	16.8
Warwick District Council	86	16.3
Everyone	79	14.9
Unspecified council	42	7.9
Neighbourhood Watch	29	5.5
County Council	15	2.8
Local Parish Council	13	2.5
Fire brigade	11	2.1

A wide range of responses was given as to what Warwick District Council could do to reduce crime and disorder. The table below shows those responses given most often.

	No.	%
Greater police presence/visible policing	211	39.9
More CCTV	60	11.3
More facilities for young people	46	8.7
Improved lighting	25	4.7
Ensure laws are enforced/improved	22	4.2
Education programmes in school/discipline	21	4.0
Licensing/fewer late nights	21	4.0
Neighbourhood watch wardens	14	2.6
Park wardens	14	2.6
Schemes/action for young offenders	11	2.1

Planning
Overall, 16.6% of respondents indicated 'don't know' to the question of how satisfied they are with the planning of the use of land in Warwick District. Just 1.3% indicated they were very satisfied and 21.2% indicated they were fairly satisfied with this

aspect of the Council's service. Almost a third of respondents indicated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied leaving 28.9% indicating a level of dissatisfaction.

The table below looks at a list of functions carried out within Planning and compares the % of respondents who consider the aspect to be important with the level of satisfaction with that aspect.

	% indicating top 5 importance	% Satisfied or very satisfied	% Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
Protecting the countryside from development	65.1	38.2	26.2
Protecting green spaces within our towns	60.3	53.8	14.7
Helping to make sure new buildings are well designed, look good and are appropriate	49.4	43.1	21.5
Helping to provide affordable housing	45.8	N/A	N/A
Protecting existing residents and businesses from inappropriate new development	45.0	N/A	N/A
Looking after our historic buildings and areas	43.9	61.6	10.6
Making sure that appropriate action is taken against breaches of planning regulations	43.9	19.6	21.1
Making sure that major new housing schemes contribute to improved community facilities	42.0	15.7	11.3
Making sure town centres are prosperous and vibrant	38.2	37.7	26.0
Enabling people to comment on planning issues and have their views taken into account	37.6	N/A	N/A
Reducing the need for people to travel by car by encouraging homes to be near public transport routs/employment/town centres	31.5	17.1	26.5
Ensuring buildings are constructed in a safe and sound way	30.0	N/A	N/A
Encouraging sustainable development	22.7	22.4	11.7
Making decisions about planning as quickly as possible	22.1	19.8	19.0
Encouraging dynamic and vibrant communities in both villages and towns within the district	17.2	18.0	13.8
Encouraging new development in some villages to support local facilities	15.8	15.7	11.3
Making sure there is enough land for new businesses and homes in the area	14.9	31.9	5.9

Town Centres

Overall Appearance

Overall, 69% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with the overall appearance of Town Centres. However, the chart below shows those respondents who visit Royal Leamington Spa Town Centre indicated the highest level of satisfaction with the overall appearance

General atmosphere/ambience

Overall, 56.5% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the general atmosphere/ambience of town centres. Again the chart below shows there was a higher level of satisfaction with Royal Leamington Spa visitors.

Ease of getting to town centre by foot

Overall, 77.6% of respondents expressed a level of satisfaction with the ease of getting to town centres by foot. The chart below shows a high level of satisfaction in getting to all town centres by foot.

Ease of getting to town centre by car

Overall, 61.5% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with the ease of getting to town centres by car. However, a higher percentage of those who visit Kenilworth town centre indicated they were satisfied compared to those who visit other town centres.

Ease of getting to the town centre by public transport

Overall, 36.3% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction in getting to the town centre by public transport, 17.6% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 22.2% indicted a level of dissatisfaction. Almost a quarter of respondents (23.8%) indicated they did not know to this question.

Ease of finding a car parking space in a car park

The chart shows the majority of respondents who visit Warwick town centre indicated they were dissatisfied whilst the vast majority of those who visit Kenilworth town centre indicated they were satisfied

Ease of finding a free car parking space on the street

Overall, 20% of respondents indicated they were satisfied, 15.4% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 61.7% indicated they were dissatisfied with the ease of finding a free car parking space on the street. The level of dissatisfaction was highest amongst those who visit Warwick Town Centre and lowest amongst those who visit Kenilworth Town Centre.

The quantity/availability of public toilets

Overall, more than a quarter of respondents indicted they were satisfied (28.2%) with the quantity/availability of public toilets, 21.3% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 44.7% were dissatisfied and 5.9% indicated they did not know. Those respondents who visit Royal Leamington Spa indicated the highest level of dissatisfaction with the quantity/availability of public toilets and those who visit Kenilworth town centre the highest level of satisfaction.

The quantity/availability of rubbish bins in the street

Overall, 42.5% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the quantity/availability of rubbish bins in the street, 22% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 34.3% indicated they were dissatisfied.

<u>The regularity of street cleaning</u>

Overall, 36.9% of respondents indicted a level of satisfaction with the regularity of street cleaning, 21.7% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 26.1% indicated a level of dissatisfaction.

<u>How concerned are you about being a victim of crime in the town centre during the day time</u>

Overall, 3% of respondents indicated they were concerned most of the time, 18.3% some of the time and 39.6% rarely concerned about being a victim of crime in the town centre during the day. Almost 40% of respondents indicated they were never concerned.

<u>How concerned are you about being a victim of crime in the town centre during the evening</u>

Overall, just under 20% of respondents indicated they are concerned most of the time and 34.2% indicated they are concerned some of the time about being a victim of crime in the town centre during the evening. A quarter of respondents indicated that they are rarely concerned, 11.5% indicated they are never concerned and 9% indicated that this did not apply to them.

<u>Visible police presence</u>

Overall, 17% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the visible police presence in the town centres. Just under 20% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 2.4% indicated they 'don't know'. The majority of respondents indicated a level of dissatisfaction with 38.2% indicating they were fairly dissatisfied and 22.6% indicating they were very dissatisfied with the police presence in town centres. There was a high level of dissatisfaction expressed for all town centres. However, those who visit Warwick town centre expressed the highest level of dissatisfaction.

<u>The use of CCTV and other security measures</u>

Overall, 43.7% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with the use of CCTV and other security measures within the town centre. Almost a quarter of respondents indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 16.7% indicated they did not know. Just 15% of respondents indicated a level of dissatisfaction with the use of CCT and other security measures.

<u>The quantity/availability of rubbish bins in the street</u>

Overall, 42.5% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the quantity/availability of rubbish bins in the street, 22% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 34.3% indicated they were dissatisfied.

<u>How concerned are you about being a victim of crime in the town centre during the evening?</u>

Overall, just under 20% of respondents indicated they are concerned most of the time and 34.2% indicated they are concerned some of the time about being a victim of crime in the town centre during the evening. A quarter of respondents indicated that they are rarely concerned, 11.5% indicated they are never concerned and 9% indicated that this did not apply to them.

<u>Car Parks</u>

<u>How satisfied are you with the number of car parks provided within the following towns?</u>
Royal Leamington Spa : The majority of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the number of car parks in Royal Leamington Spa with 15.6% indicating they were very satisfied and 45.3% indicating they were fairly satisfied.

Kenilworth : The majority of respondents were satisfied with the number of car parks in Kenilworth with 16.5% indicating they were very satisfied and 41.6% indicating they were fairly satisfied. More than 20% of respondents indicated 'don't know' (22.5%).

Warwick : Less than a quarter of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the number of car parks in Warwick with 3.8% indicating they were very satisfied and 19.8% indicating they were fairly satisfied.

The District : Overall, 5.8% of respondents indicated they were very satisfied and 40.7% indicted they were fairly satisfied with the number of car parks in the District overall.

3.4   Citizen's Panel : October/November 2002
Information from this panel has not yet been analysed.

3.5   Use of Citizen's Panel Information
This information has been used for a variety purposes as follows

General information : this has influence Best Value reviews, all service provision, and the development of corporate strategies

Communication mechanisms : this has been used to influence opening times for the call centre and Council offices; channels of communications; the kind of information communicated

Sports Development : will be fed in to the Best Value Review f indoor recreation and will be used to drive service improvement in this area during the Interim

Action 21: Has been used by the new Action 21 Management Board to decide on priorities and focus actions on areas of work that can make a real difference. It also provides baseline information to enable the impact of Action 21 to be measured over the next three years

Planning : this information has been fed in to the Best Value Review of Planning

Community Safety : this has been fed in to the Community Safety Best Value Review

Car Parking and Town Centres : this information has been used to explore trends over the last year - providing direct comparison with the results from the May and June 2001 Citizens Panels

3.6   Full details of the these Panel Surveys (including a breakdown of results Town by town ,

can be found on the WDC Intranet under "Best Value/Consultation

4   OUTCOME REQUIRED

4.1   That Members note the information arising from recent Citizen's Panels

Chris Charman/Dave Barber
Policy Officers

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Areas in District Affected: All

Executive Portfolio Area and Holder:
Customer and Community Services   Councillor David Kohler

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