

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Corporate Director of Children & Learning
to
Cabinet
on
8th January 2013

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Agenda Item No.

Family on Sea Consultation
Children & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee
Executive Councillor: Councillor James Courtenay
A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the committee of the Family-on-Sea consultation commissioned by the Success for All Children Group and provide the responses submitted as part of this consultation. The committee may wish to consider these responses alongside The Success for All Children Group annual report 2012, on this agenda, in contributing to the considering the Success for All Children Group priorities for 2013/14.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the outcomes of the consultation.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Success for All Children Group funded Family-on-Sea as a pilot consultation methodology. The purpose of the pilot was to see if a simple one question consultation would encourage residents to participate and engage with the consultation and provide useful feedback for the Success for All Children Group and wider members of the Southend Together partnership family.
- 3.2 The question asked was "What do you feel could be improved for families in Southend-on-Sea? Your answer can be about any service, facility, area or anything in Southend-on-Sea.
- 3.3 Methods of providing feedback included an email account specifically set up for the consultation and post-cards and post boxes placed in specific community locations (children's centres and the 7 libraries across the borough). Schools were contacted directly to advertise the consultation; many advertised this in newsletters and on the front page of the school websites.

Post cards and post boxes were placed in the Customer Contact Centre at the Civic Centre and a promotional stall was used in the High Street during August.

3.4 In total 260 responses were contributed.

3.5 The response comments fell into 10 top level categories, and within those up to 2 further sub-category levels.

Category	Percentage	Number
Leisure	35.5%	91
Facilities	15.6%	40
Environment	13.6%	37
Children's Centres	10.1%	26
Parenting	7.8%	19
Travel	7%	20
Welfare support	3.9%	10
Looked after children	3.1%	5
Community	1.9%	7
Health	1.9%	5
Total	100%	260

The top level categories can be summarised as follows:

Leisure pulls together a range of comments covering the availability and cost of activities along with suggestions for additional leisure facilities.

Facilities bring together a range of comments about existing public facilities with a particular focus on parking and public toilets.

Environment includes comments about the built environment, street scene, beach, highways and dog mess.

Children's Centre comments on children's centre sessions, types of groups and compliments on service and quality.

Parenting covers a wide range of subjects related to parenting including breastfeeding and parenting groups

Travel brings together a range of comments from the accessibility (lack of) at Southend East station, cycle paths and places to cycle and road safety.

Welfare support includes comments about housing, tax, council tax and support for starting or getting back to work.

Looked after children and carers were provided with feedback cards, the feedback focussed on aspects of caring or being looked after.

Community covers a range of comments on community cohesion, anti-social behaviour and aggressive dogs.

Health covers health services and comments on smokers and smoking in public

3.6 A full breakdown of the responses received is available at appendix 1

4. Other Options

None

5. Corporate Implications

5.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

The consultation supports the Success for All Children Group in contributing to the Corporate Priority of Continuing to Improve Outcomes for Vulnerable Children

5.2 Financial Implications

None – the project was funded by the Success for all Children Group

5.3 Legal Implications

None

5.4 People Implications

None

5.5 Property Implications

None

5.6 Consultation

This was an open public consultation.

Children & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee considered this item on the 26th November 2012. It was resolved that the report be submitted to Cabinet for consideration with a numerical breakdown included in the appendix against the percentages.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The consultation was promoted through children centres, schools and libraries as well as a stall in the high street. Residents were offered a range of methods to respond to ensure the consultation was inclusive.

5.8 Risk Assessment

None

5.9 Value for Money

The survey cost £250 and generated 254 responses. This compares very favourably with the cost and response rate of other consultations. There is something to learn from the approach taken for future consultations.

The findings of the survey will be used to inform future priority setting.

5.10 Community Safety Implications

Some of the responses relate to community safety. These will be shared with the appropriate services.

- 5.11 **Environmental Impact**
Some of the responses relate to the environment. These will be shared with the appropriate services.
- 6. **Background Papers**
None
- 7. **Appendices**
 - 7.1 **Appendix 1 – Overall Findings.**



Success for all

Success for All Children Group

Family on Sea consultation pilot analysis

The Success for All Children Group funded Family-on-Sea as a pilot consultation methodology. The purpose of the pilot was to see if a simple one question consultation would encourage residents to participate and engage with the consultation and provide useful feedback for the Success for All Children Group and wider members of the Southend Together partnership family.

The question asked was "What do you feel could be improved for families in Southend-on-Sea? Your answer can be about any service, facility, area or anything in Southend-on-Sea.

Methods of providing feedback included an email account specifically set up for the consultation and post-cards and post boxes placed in specific community locations (children's centres and the 7 libraries across the borough). Schools were contacted directly to advertise the consultation; many advertised this in newsletters and on the front page of the school websites. Post cards and post boxes were placed in the Customer Contact Centre at the Civic Centre and a promotional stall was used in the High Street during August.

The consultation did not ask members of the public to provide any profile data such as age, sex, ethnicity or postcode.

In total 260 comments were contributed to the family-on-sea consultation, 98% on postcards, this benchmarks favourably with the Council's budget consultation which had 303 responses in 2011 and 167 this year (2012).

Next steps

It is proposed that the results of the pilot consultation are shared with directorates across Southend Borough Council and other relevant partner organisations so that the voice of families and young people can be incorporated in priority or action planning for 2013/14.

Overall findings

Top level analysis

The 260 comments were categorised into 10 top level categories as set out in the table below.

Category	Percentage	Number
Leisure	35.5%	91
Public amenities/Facilities	15.6%	40
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Detailed findings

Second level analysis – the top four issues

The second level of analysis refines further the classification of the comments. The table below sets out the top four areas at the second level of analysis.

Comments in the Leisure category were refined into comments relating to the availability of activities, new facility suggestions and cost of activities. 38% of the comments in the Leisure category were about the availability of activities. This equates to 16% of the total 260 comments.

	Top level	Second level	% of total (256)	% of top level category
1	Leisure	Availability of activities	16% (39)	38%
2	Leisure	New facilities	9% (24)	26%
3	Leisure	Cost of activities	6% (15)	16%
=3	Leisure	Park facilities	6% (15)	16%
4	Public amenities	Parking	5% (13)	32%
=4	Public amenities	Toilets	5% (13)	32%

Third level analysis – the top five issues

The third level of analysis further refines the comments. The table below sets out the most frequently raised third level comments. For example, 35% of the comments on the availability of activities were about activities for teenagers (this represented 5% of the total 256 comments). 69% of the comments about Public toilets related to mother and baby facilities (this represented 4% of the total 256 comments).

Rank	Top level	Second level	Third level	% of total (256)	% of second level
1	Leisure	Availability of activities	For teenagers	5%	35%
2	Public amenities	Public toilets	More / better mother and baby facilities	4%	69%
3	Leisure	Cost / availability of activities*	Free swimming*	4%	22%
4	Leisure	Suggestions for new facilities	Park in central Southend	3%	29%
5	Leisure	Availability of activities	Pre-schoolers	3%	23%

- Free swimming appeared as both comments about availability and comments about the cost of <18 year old swimming.

Leisure – detailed breakdown

The table below sets out the full breakdown of the second and third level analysis of the leisure category.

35% of the comments received about the availability of activities focussed on activities for teenagers.

29% of the comments within the new facilities comments were requesting a play park facility in either Warrior Square or another location in central Southend.

Top level	% of total	Second level	% of total	Third level	% of Second level
Leisure	36% (96)	availability of activities	16% (39)	For teenagers	33% (13)
				free swimming	25% (10)
				For pre-school	18% (7)
				For pre-teens	10% (4)
				For families	8% (3)
				In winter months	5% (2)
		new facilities	9% (24)	park in central Southend	29% (7)
				Other (miscellaneous facilities)	29% (7)
				Skateboarding facility	13% (3)
				off road	8% (2)
				Soft play	13% (3)
				water park	8% (2)
		cost of activities	4% (10)	general	40% (6)
				Cliffs Pavilion	33% (2)
				Free entry to the pier	33% (2)
		promotion of events	1% (2)	too discreet to analyse further	
		older people	0.4% (1)	too discreet to analyse further	
		park facilities	6% (15)		

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- I think there should be more stuff for teenagers as if we had more facility there might be less crime - Owen, 13
- something like a non-alcoholic pub or coffee shop for young people only
- more free or cheap classes for 2-3 years old
- All Council Gyms and Pools free to under 18s
- More low cost activities for children aged 8-11

- We need a play area for families living in the town centre, the warrior square area would be an ideal place for a play space.
- I think Southend could really benefit from a park facility right in central town, that could be closed at night to keep it nice and clean
- would like to see more leisure activities for families

Public amenities – detailed breakdown

In the Public amenities category Parking and Public toilets received the same number of comments (both 5% of the total 256 comments). However, the third level category of better or improved mother and baby toilet facilities received made up 69% of the public toilet comments.

Top Level	% of total	Second level	% of total	% of top level	Third level	% of second level
Public amenities	16% (41)	parking	5% (13)	32%	cost of parking	46% (6)
					Mother and baby	31% (4)
					Parking in Leigh	8% (1)
					Disabled parking	8% (1)
					school parking	8% (1)
		Public toilets	5% (13)	32%	more / better mother and baby facilities	69.2% (9)
					more facilities in general	23.1% (3)
					cleanliness	7.7% (1)
		accessibility with buggies	2% (5)	12%		
		libraries	2% (5)	12%		
		Railing near water fountain on city beach	1% (2)	5%		
		park cafes	1% (2)	5%		
		more restaurants with play areas	0.4% (1)	2%		

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- Mum and baby friendly toilets - need to be able to fit Buggy in with space to go to toilet too
- Better toilet facilities for mothers with buggies
- more control on baby/mother parking

- having introduced my 2 daughters to Southchurch library it is a wonderful service - I would say even better than Southend as it is more friendly and has lots to do.
- the water feature for the children is a great idea but there needs to be a fence to stop the children running onto the road
- Shops need to be buggy and child friendly

Environment – detailed breakdown

The key concerns in the environment theme were dog mess and cleanliness of streets in Southend both making up 3.5% of the total comments and 24% of the Environment comments.

Top level	Second level	% of total	% of top level
Environment		14.5% (37)	
	dog mess	3.5% (9)	24%
	street scene/litter	3.5% (9)	24%
	beach	3.1% (8)	22%
	Potholes	1.6% (4)	11%
	dog walks	0.8% (2)	5%
	pavements	0.4% (1)	3%
	architecture	0.4% (1)	3%
	recycling	0.4% (1)	3%
	Shoebury common	0.4% (1)	3%
	trees	0.4% (1)	3%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- The seafront looks great, now start putting money into the estates i.e. scluney square, kursaal and victoria wards
- More dog wardens to control the amount of dog 'poo' on the pavements in the park, on the beach. Give them more power to fine offenders. Fine those dog owners who pick up dog poo in bags then throw the bags into hedges etc. We see it all the time.
- Designated beach area for dog owners to walk their dogs
- more recycling bags per household
- Southend has such Victorian splendour - exploit this and don't waste money on ugly new buildings that don't compliment this

Children's Centres – detailed breakdown

Comments from drop boxes placed in children's centres covered a number of the top level categories, however many of the comments did focus on the children's centres themselves. 4% of the total 256 comments (or 42% of the comments on children's centres) were compliments about children's centres (or a specific children's centre). Other comments ranged from requests for additional afternoon sessions, comments on funding cuts and age ranges served.

Top level	Second level	% of total	% of top level
Children's Centres		10% (26)	
	compliments	4% (11)	42%
	afternoon sessions	2% (5)	19%
	funding	1% (3)	12%
	types of sessions	1% (3)	12%
	age range served	0.4% (1)	4%
	facilities	0.4% (1)	4%
	multi-lingual staff	0.4% (1)	4%
	not targeting services	0.4% (1)	4%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- We need more focus on children aged 5-8 years. Local sure start centres should be able to provide adequate sessions for children of this age group. I love our local centre but my son is 6 (nearly) and being passed on.
- If the Surestart Centres can offer more toddler play sessions in the afternoon. My local Surestart in Eastwood Primary School only has them in the morning on Tuesday and Thursday.
- mother and baby groups in the afternoon for those who work in the mornings; support groups in the afternoon
- I use the Hamstel children and family centre and always receive such a lovely friendly welcome. Staff are polite and always help with any questions that I have

Travel – detailed breakdown

Comments about travel made up 8% of the 256 feedback comments. 3% of the overall comments (or 40% of the travel comments) were about cycle places or pathways in and around Southend

Top level	Second level	% of total	% of top level
Travel		8% (20)	
	cycle places/paths	3% (8)	40%
	bus routes	1.2% (3)	15%
	cost of public transport	1% (2)	10%
	ease of travel	1% (2)	10%
	Southend East accessibility	1% (2)	10%
	buggy friendly transport	1% (2)	10%
	West Road crossing	0.8% (1)	5%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- There is no lift at Southend East train station - not helpful for pushchairs or disabled people
- No lift platform at Southend east station - not easy to use with a buggy
- more cycle paths. Its too dangerous for young children to ride on the roads - but we feel antisocial riding on pavements
- I strongly feel that as a local resident, there should be a pedestrian crossing at a midway point along West Road and that a speed limit should be imposed

Parenting – detailed breakdown

In total 7% of the comments were about parenting issues. 42% of the parenting comments were about breastfeeding, either breastfeeding support or a lack of places to breastfeed within the town. 21% of the parenting comments were suggesting a need for more focussed groups or activities for dads and children to attend.

Top Level	Second Level	% of total	% of top level
Parenting		7% (19)	
	breastfeeding	3% (8)	42%
	focus on dads	2% (4)	21%
	groups	1% (3)	16%
	nappy scheme	1% (2)	11%
	school holidays	0% (1)	5%
	gifted and talented	0% (1)	5%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- More breastfeeding facilities so I can feed my baby when I am shopping.
- dad events weekend and evenings

- More dad focussed baby groups or call them parent and baby and not 'mother and baby' it puts dads off
- cloth nappy service /scheme

Welfare Support – detailed breakdown

In total 4% of the comments were about welfare support.

Top Level	Second Level	% of total	% of top level
Welfare support		4% (10)	
	council tax	1% (2)	20%
	getting back/starting work	1% (2)	20%
	housing	2% (4)	40%
	support for low income families	1% (2)	20%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- More support to get parents back into work - being able to do back to work courses where you can take a baby along too (with a creche)
- lower council tax for low income families so that they can feed their family well
- There needs to be more opportunities for young people to work

Community – detailed breakdown

Comments about community in Southend made up 3% of the total number of comments, with 43% of community comments about the availability and publicity of community events.

Top Level	Second Level	% of top level	% of second level
Community		3% (7)	
	community events	1% (3)	43%
	policing	1% (2)	29%
	aggressive dogs	0.5% (1)	14%
	anti-social behaviour	0.5% (1)	14%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- More opportunities for families to start community projects
- to ensure that community events are offered to all areas of people so that we can understand about culture
- More police around York Road and Southchurch Avenue areas as drug taking and selling is a daily occurrence
- Get the drunks off the street and the drugs so kids stop seeing it.

Health – detailed breakdown

2% of the comments related to health issues; the need for eczema and ADHD service and anti-social smoking in town.

Top Level	Second Level	% of top level	% of second level
Health		2% (4)	
	quality of services	1%(2)	50%
	smoking	1%(2)	50%

The following represents a selection of the comments received:

- Improve the medical services for children with eczema. The dermatology service provided by Basildon Hospital is not child-centred or child-friendly and the consultant maintains opinions which are contrary to NICE Guidelines and current research. Conflicting advice is given by health visitors, GPs and medical staff leaving families confused, disempowered and suffering. The only shining light is Alison Davis, specialist nurse for allergies, but medical staff do not appear to have heard of her and referral was by chance. Following 3 years of suffering following local treatment, my son's eczema was brought under control after 1 visit to a London hospital.
- stop people smoking in doorways and bus stops especially the Victoria plaza/argots. Can never walk through without people blowing smoke in children's faces

Looked after Children – detailed breakdown

2% of the comments were from children in care and foster carers who were given the opportunity to respond to the consultation. Each response was a comment about either being a child in care or a foster carer. Comments included:

- Better consultation and mutual agreement re contact. Also a quick phone call post court to advise me what went on would be very grateful from the child's s/w. Often it's a Friday and have been left not knowing outcome till following Monday
- Views of foster carer important as they know the child better than social workers, they live with them 24 hours a day
- social worker to come when they should do