

Members' Library Service Request Form

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Document Title	East Lothian Citizens' Panel

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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Depute Chief Executive – Partnerships and Community Services

SUBJECT: East Lothian Citizens' Panel

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide information in relation to the development of an East Lothian Citizens' Panel.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Citizens' Panels provide a cost effective method of consulting a cross section of the population on a regular basis. The introduction of an East Lothian Citizen's Panel will help to fulfil some of the consultation needs of East Lothian Council and its community planning partners.
- 3.2 Around 2,000 local people will be recruited to the East Lothian Citizens' Panel. Panel members will be sent a survey to complete at least twice a year. There will also be an opportunity to contact Panel members on an ad hoc basis in relation to other issues between surveys and to invite them to take part in focus groups and other consultation events.
- 3.3 The East Lothian Partnership (21 August 2013) agreed to the development of a Citizens' Panel. A number of partners also agreed to contribute to the costs of setting up and running the Citizens' Panel in its first year.
- 3.4 Panel costs in the initial year include the recruitment of Panel members and administering two Panel surveys. The following list gives a breakdown of how the Citizen's Panel will be funded during its first year of operation (£12,000 in total):

- East Lothian Council - £2,000
- The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service – contribution of £2,000
- NHS Lothian – contribution of £2,000
- East Lothian Partnership – contribution of £4,000 from Partnership budget
- Safer East Lothian Fund – contribution of £2,000

In addition, Queen Margaret University has agreed to provide support in terms of carrying out analysis of survey returns, representing a significant cost saving.

- 3.5 It was decided to outsource the recruitment of the Panel given the relative complexity of this task. A procurement process was completed and social research consultancy Craigforth identified to carry out the recruitment and refreshment of the Panel at a cost of £3,160. Most of the other work related to running the Citizens' Panel will be carried out in-house. The main costs that will be incurred include printing, postage and data input.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The development of a Citizens' Panel reflects a commitment made in the Council's Consultation and Engagement Action Plan.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This Report of not applicable to the wellbeing of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. The methodology used in the recruitment of the Panel will however ensure that the membership is representative of the general population, reflecting demographic factors including gender, age and ethnicity.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – The Citizens' Panel will be supported by financial contributions from a number of community planning partners, including the Council. The actual cost to the Council is significantly less than that of the bi-annual Residents' Surveys that was carried out previously. The Council's contribution will be met from existing budgets.
- 6.2 Personnel – Corporate Policy and Improvement staff will support the running of the Citizens' Panel – this commitment can be met from existing staffing.
- 6.3 Other – none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

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