

South Gloucestershire



## Evaluation Survey Report

June 2017 Survey

South Gloucestershire Council

Report produced by:

Corporate Research & Consultation

Department for Environment and Community Services

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# 1 Key findings

## Viewpoint Panel

- Over half of respondents have been members of the Viewpoint Panel for between two and four years (53%).
- When asked how they would rate their experience of the Viewpoint Panel, almost half of respondents rated their experience as ok (46%).
- The statement which received the greatest agreement score was that the panel 'is an effective way of getting resident's views'. Being 'informed about how my contributions have made a difference' received the greatest disagreement score of 41%.
- When respondents were asked what motivates them to be involved in the Viewpoint panel, the majority said it gives them an opportunity to have their say (82%).
- The most frequently mentioned comments theme was that their views do not make a difference or that the Council do not listen (7).
- The next question asked respondents how likely they are to recommend being a member of the Viewpoint panel to a friend. Slightly over two fifths of respondents chose likely (42%).

## Surveys

- The greatest proportion, of 58%, of respondents complete surveys on a laptop or computer. This was followed by almost one fifth who complete surveys on a tablet (17%), using a paper survey (12%), on a smart phone (11%), or other (2%).
- When asked how often they would like to be involved in Viewpoint surveys or activities, the majority of 62% said three or four times a year.
- Around three fifths of respondents felt as though the language is always easy to understand (62%); the format is always clear and easy to follow (62%); and that they are given enough time to respond (64%).
- Slightly over two fifths of respondents also felt as though survey topics often interest them (44%).
- The largest proportion, of almost two fifths, of members felt that none of the options stop them from getting more involved in panel activities (37%). This was followed by approximately one fifth who felt work commitments get in the way (21%), family commitments (19%) and that survey topics are not relevant to them (17%).
- When asked what is more likely to encourage them to respond to a survey, 'the survey being about a topic I am interested in' received the greatest score (80%).
- The most commonly mentioned theme was that they would like more feedback about survey results and how they are used (15).

## Incentives

- The largest proportion of respondents agreed with the current scheme and felt that the chance to win one of five £20 vouchers was most appropriate (60% or 272 respondents).
- The most frequently mentioned comments theme, with over eighty mentions, was not needing incentives (83).

## Newsletter

- Over half of respondents had not read the Viewpoint Panel newsletter (58%).
- 'The newsletter keeps me informed about how my feedback is used' received the lowest agreement score of 54% (66% combined agreement).
- When asked for suggestions on how we can keep you informed the most frequently mentioned suggestion was by email (11).
- The most frequently mentioned comments theme was wanting more information about the impact of survey results (18). This was followed by suggestions about how to improve the presentation including a friendlier format, charts and graphs, including upcoming topics and pictorial overviews.
- The most frequently mentioned comments theme was not having received a newsletter before (45).

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

This report provides a summary of the findings from an evaluation survey of the Viewpoint citizens panel, which was conducted to understand how the panel could be improved and how we can make it easier for panel members to be involved. The survey was conducted between June and July 2017.

### 2.2 Methodology and analysis

All 1,140 panel members were sent an invitation to take part in the survey either by post (37%) or by email (63%). The survey received a response rate of 44% (498 surveys).

There was an error during the distribution process which caused some members to receive both an online and paper survey. Any duplicate surveys were identified and not included in the analysis.

### 2.3 Reporting

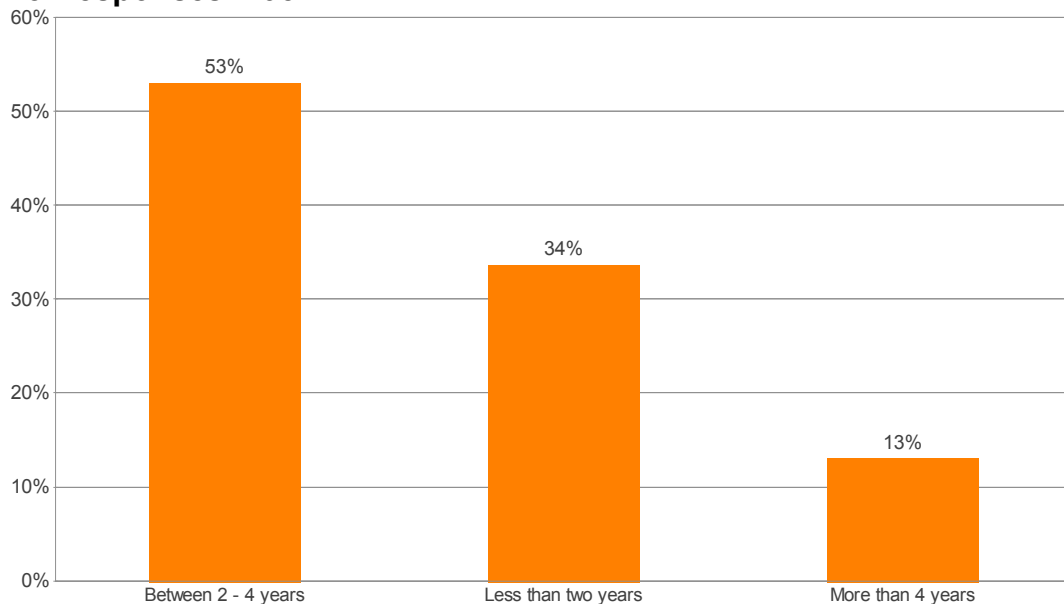
This report presents survey findings by subject area.

**Open text responses** - A separate document listing all open responses for each open text question has been prepared.

### 3 The Viewpoint Panel

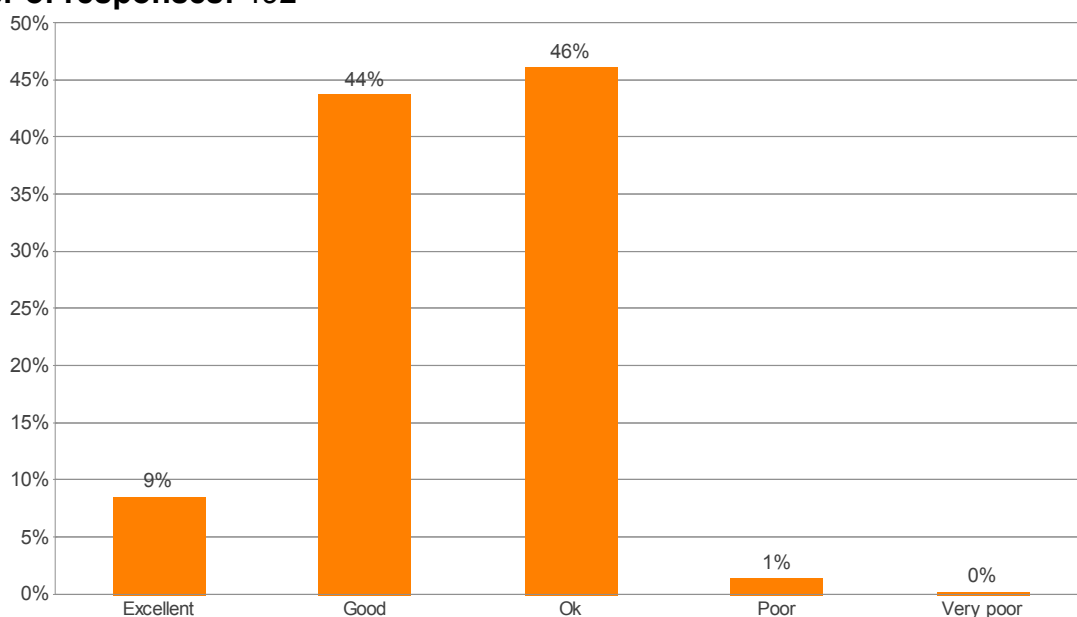
Over half of respondents have been members of the Viewpoint Panel for between two and four years (53%), slightly over one third have been a member for less than two years (34%) and the remainder have been a member for more than four years (13%).

**Figure 1:** Approximately how long have you been a member of the Viewpoint Panel?  
**Number of responses: 495**



When asked how they would rate their experience of the Viewpoint Panel, almost half of respondents rated their experience as ok (46%) and over two fifths said good (44%). The remainder chose excellent (9%) or poor (1%). Two respondents chose very poor.

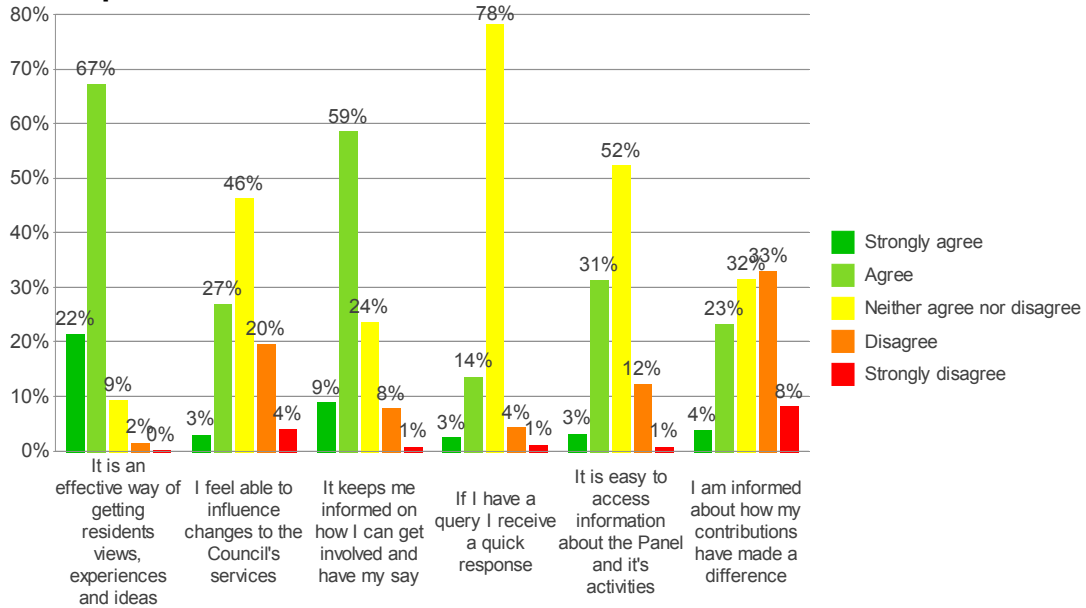
**Figure 2:** Overall, how would you rate your experience as a Viewpoint Panel member?  
**Number of responses: 492**



Panel members were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with various statements about the Viewpoint panel. **The statement which received the greatest agreement score was that the panel ‘is an effective way of getting resident’s views’, receiving a total agreement score of 89%. Being ‘informed about how my contributions have made a difference’ received the greatest disagreement score of 41%.** Receiving a quick response to a query received the greatest neither agree nor disagree score, where the majority of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (78%).

**Figure 3:** Thinking about the Viewpoint Panel, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

**Number of responses:** 498, 497, 498, 488, 496, 497

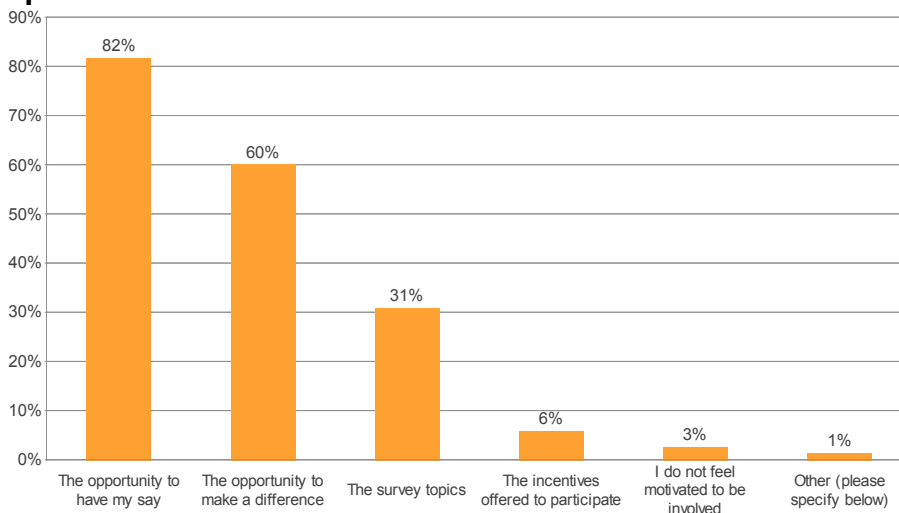


When respondents were asked what motivates them to be involved in the Viewpoint panel, **the majority said it gives them an opportunity to have their say (82%).** Three fifths of respondents felt that it gives them the opportunity to make a difference (60%) and almost one third said the survey topics motivate them to be involved (31%).

As respondents were able to select multiple options the percentages do not equal 100%.

**Figure 4:** What motivates you to be involved in the Viewpoint Panel?

**Number of responses:** 492



Respondents who said that they do not feel motivated to be involved were asked why they do not feel motivated. 28 comments were left in response to this question. **The most frequently mentioned theme was that their views do not make a difference or that the Council do not listen (7).**

*“You seem to ignore the public and do whatever you like”*

*“No resident’s views ever get taken into account”*

The second most common theme was that there is a lack of feedback provided about the outcome of surveys (7).

*“Lack of feedback and sense of value being added”*

Followed by miscellaneous comments (6), such as:

*“If you don't have your say then you can't complain”*

Other comments referred to the topics not being of interest to them (4), the structure of surveys (2), being generally interested in the council (1) and wanting to find out more (1).

**Table 1:** If you do not feel motivated to be involved, please tell us why:  
**Number of responses:** 28 comments

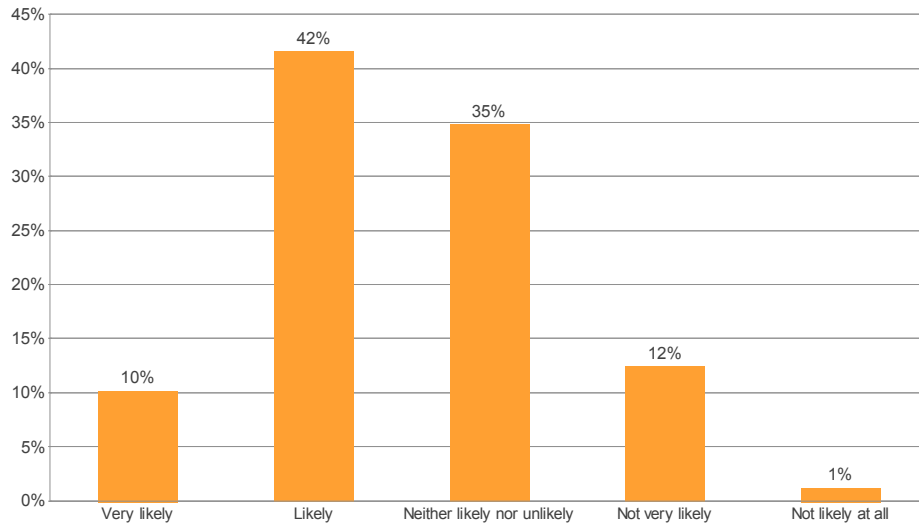
Theme	Number
My views don't make a difference/ the Council doesn't listen	7
Lack of feedback provided	7
Miscellaneous comments	6
I am not interested in the topics / they are not relevant to my life	4
Survey structure	2
Interested in general activities of South Glos Council	1
I want to find out more	1



The next question asked respondents how likely they are to recommend being a member of the Viewpoint panel to a friend. **Slightly over two fifths of respondents chose likely (42%)** and slightly over one third chose neither likely nor unlikely (35%). The remainder felt either not very likely (12%), very likely (10%) or not likely at all (1%).

**Figure 5:** How likely are you to recommend being a member of the Viewpoint Panel to a friend?

**Number of responses:** 492



## 4 Surveys

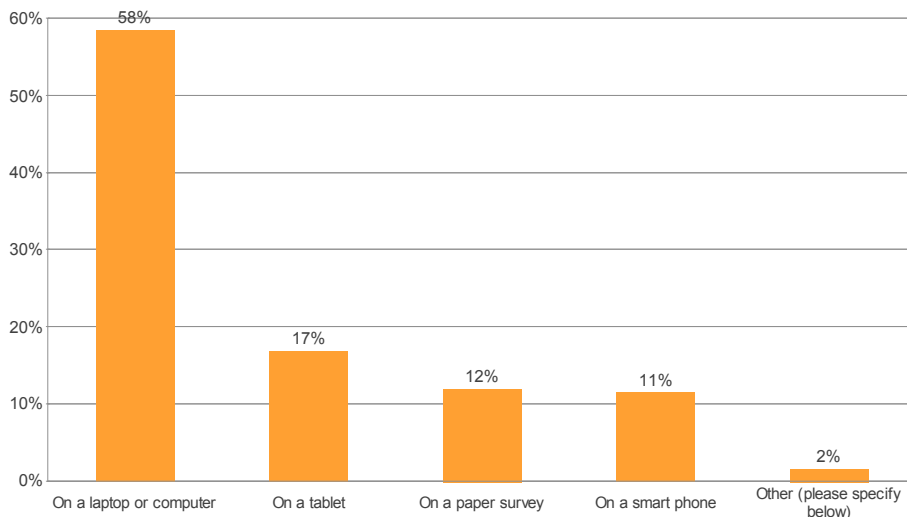
The next section asked panel members about Viewpoint surveys.

The first question asked respondents how they currently complete surveys.

**The greatest proportion, of 58%, of respondents complete surveys on a laptop or computer.** This was followed by a tablet (17%), using a paper survey (12%), on a smart phone (11%) and other (2%).

**Figure 6:** How do you currently complete Viewpoint surveys?

**Number of responses:** 464

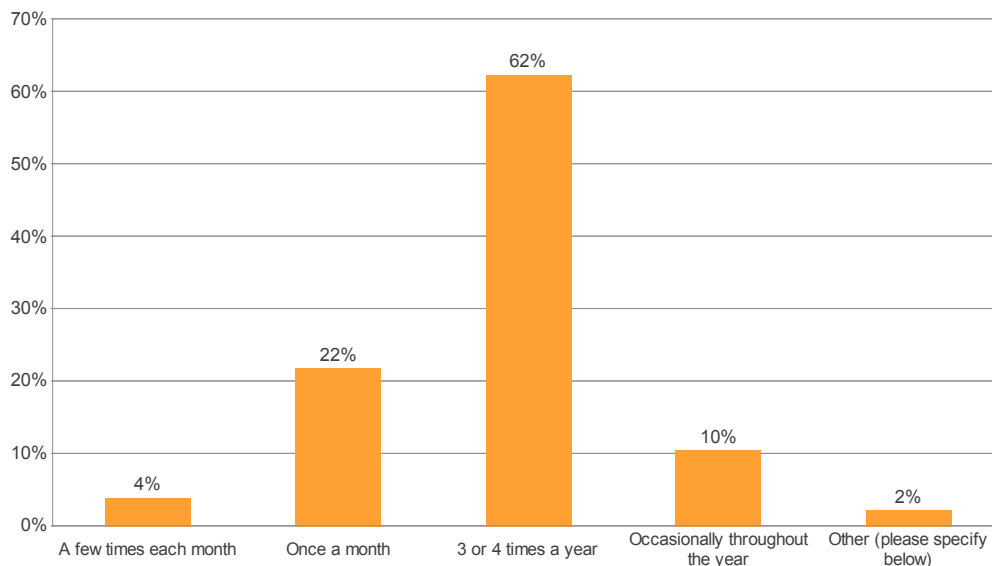


If you currently receive a paper survey and would prefer to complete an online survey, please provide your email address below:

71 respondents provided an email address, all of which were already registered to receive an online version of the survey. This is due to an error when distributing the surveys which caused some members to receive both an online and paper survey.

When asked how often members would like to be involved in Viewpoint surveys or activities. **The majority, of 62%, preferred to be involved three or four times a year** which is how often the panel is currently engaged. This was followed by slightly over one fifth of respondents who would like to be involved once a month (22%).

**Figure 7:** We currently send you three or four surveys a year. How often would you like to be involved in Viewpoint surveys or activities?  
**Number of responses: 490**



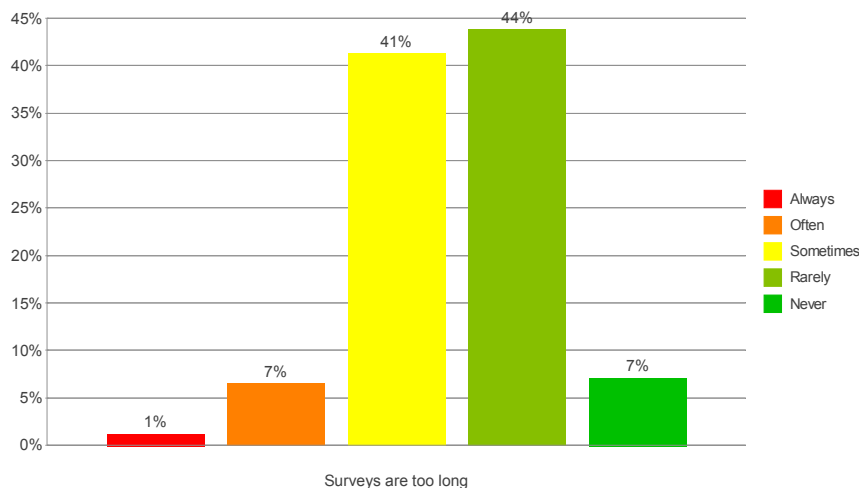
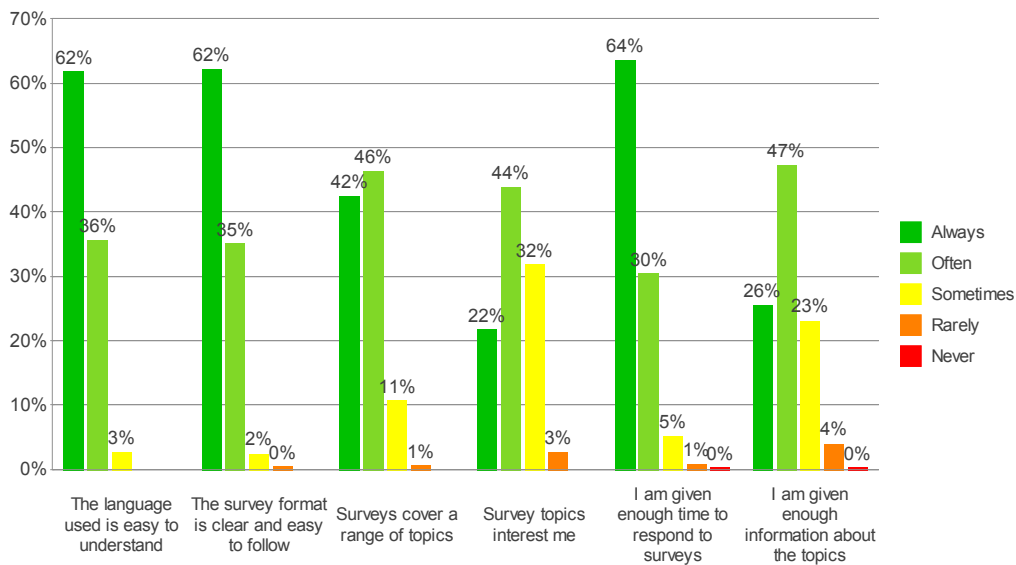
Respondents were asked how often they would agree with various statements about Viewpoint surveys. Three statements received fairly consistent scores, **around three fifths of respondents felt as though the language is always easy to understand (62%); the format is always clear and easy to follow (62%); and that they are given enough time to respond (64%)**. Around one third of respondents also often agreed with these statements (36%, 35% and 30% respectively).

When asked whether they agree that surveys cover a range of topics, almost half of respondents felt as though this was often the case (46%) and slightly over two fifths always agreed (42%). **Slightly over two fifths of respondents felt as though survey topics often interest them (44%)**, followed by almost one third who felt as though this was sometimes the case (32%). This is similar to the agreement with being given enough information about topics, where almost half of respondents felt this was often the case (47%), around one quarter said always (26%) and sometimes (23%).

Respondents were also asked whether surveys were too long, where slightly over two fifths chose sometimes (41%) and rarely (44%).

**Figure 8:** Overall, how often would you agree with the following statements about Viewpoint surveys?

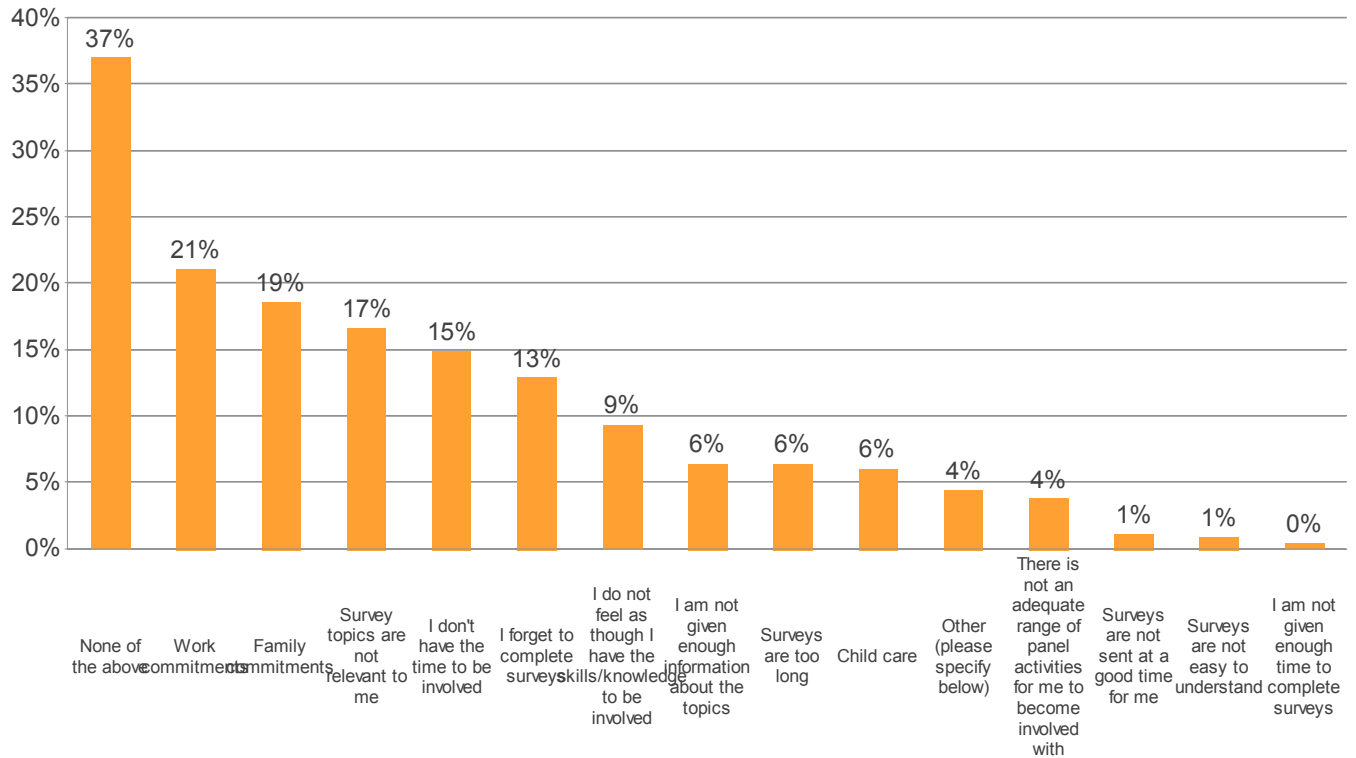
**Number of responses:** 495, 493, 495, 494, 494, 494, 491



The next questions asked members which of the options, if any, stop them from getting more involved in panel activities. **The largest proportion, of almost two fifths, of members 'chose none of the above' (37%).** This was followed by slightly over one fifth who felt **work commitments** get in the way (21%), **family commitments** (19%) and that **survey topics are not relevant** to them (17%).

Other responses included not having time to be involved (15%), forgetting to complete surveys (13%), not feeling as though they have the knowledge to be involved (9%) and not being given enough information about topics (6%).

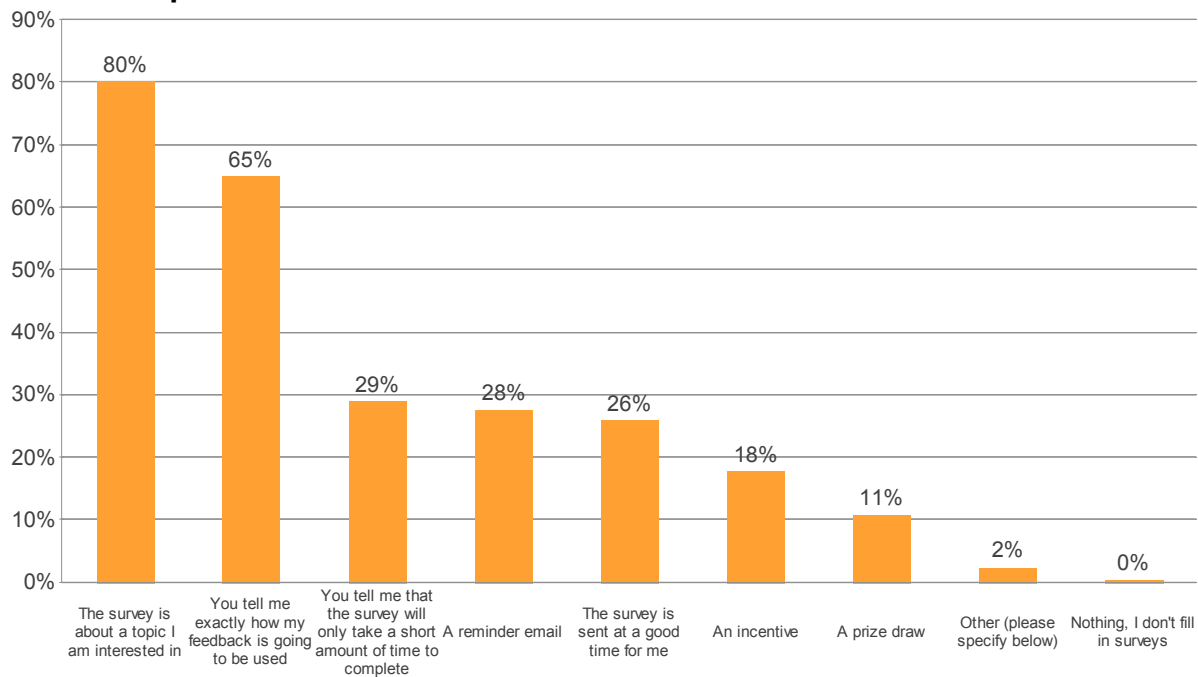
**Figure 9:** Do any of the following stop you from getting more involved in panel activities?  
**Number of responses: 491**



When asked what is more likely to encourage them to respond to a survey, **'the survey being about a topic I am interested in' received the greatest score (80%)**. This was followed by 'being told exactly how my feedback is going to be used' (65%).

Other common options were 'telling me that the survey will only take a short amount of time to complete' (29%), a reminder email (28%) and 'the survey is sent at a good time for me' (26%).

**Figure 10:** Which of the following are more likely to encourage you to respond to a survey?  
**Number of responses: 490**



Respondents were given the opportunity to share any other comments about Viewpoint surveys. 61 comments were made in response to this question. **The most commonly mentioned theme was that they would like more feedback about survey results and how they are used (15).**

*“Great idea - but could do with more feedback about the issues we comment on”*

*“I don't recall receiving direct feedback/updates as to what has been done off the back of the surveys. Email would be fine. I think this would complete the process and maintain engagement”*

This was followed by comments about survey design, including comments about needing a wider range of answers to questions and more comments questions (10).

*“Questions often feel restrictive in the way that they can be answered - more space needed for narrative answers”*

*“Some of choices are restrictive and there isn't a box that fits my point of view and these spaces for people's comments are not always available”*

Some respondents felt that their opinion is valued and surveys provide an opportunity to be involved (9), whilst other respondents felt their views do not make a difference and the Council do not listen (8).

*“Excellent opportunity to become involved in contributing to the community. S. Glos council obviously wish to receive residents' opinions”*

*“I do not mind completing them but I have no confidence they will influence the outcome”*

Other respondents made miscellaneous comments (7), referred to topics needing to be of interest to them (5), normally receiving an online survey (5) and wanting more background information on the topics (3).

**Table 2:** Please use this space to share any other comments about Viewpoint surveys:  
**Number of responses:** 61 comments

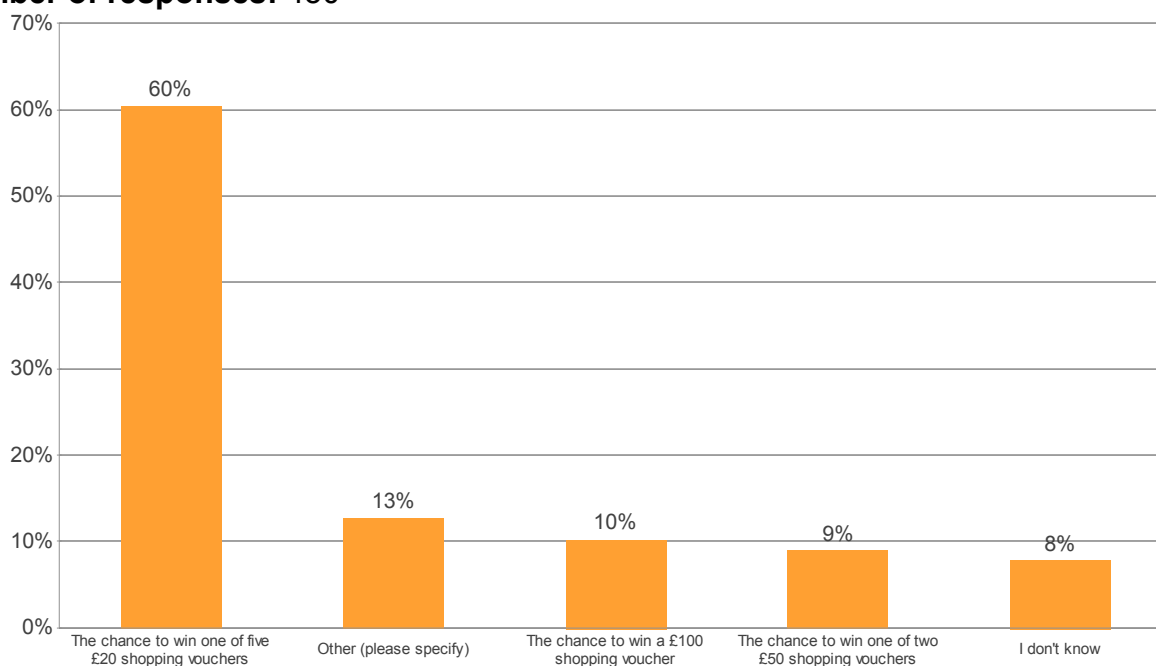
Theme	Number
Need more feedback	15
Survey design	10
My opinion is valued / surveys provide an opportunity to be involved	9
My views don't make a difference / Council don't listen	8
Miscellaneous comments	7
Topics must be of interest to me	5
I normally receive an online survey	5
Would like to have more background information about topics	3
Topic suggestions	2
Prize draw suggestion	1
Query regarding how representative the panel is	1

## 5 Incentives

We wanted to understand what incentives members felt were most appealing. **The largest proportion of respondents agreed with the current scheme and felt that the chance to win one of five £20 vouchers was most appealing** (60% or 272 respondents).

**Figure 11:** We currently offer all respondents the chance to win one of five £20 shopping vouchers as a thank you for participating. We are currently reviewing the incentives for completing surveys. Which of the following options is most appealing to you?

**Number of responses:** 450



This was followed by 13% of respondents who chose other. These respondents were asked to specify or provide suggestions, in which 132 comments were left.

**The most frequently mentioned theme with over eighty mentions was not needing incentives (83).**

*“No incentive needed!”*

*“Seems a bit sad you've got to offer incentives - particularly as I assume the public are indirectly paying for them through council tax”*

This was followed by other suggestions such as providing a choice of vouchers or tickets, such as restaurants, the cinema and amazon (9); or a subsidy for council services such as council tax, green bins and MOTs (8).

This was followed by other comments which made other suggestions/points (5), such as:

*“Cash!”*

*“But it does depend on how many surveys you get completed...”*

Other respondents said that they do not reply for the incentive but it is a nice treat (5), donations to charities (4), receiving a voucher for every survey/after ten surveys or once a year (4) and having multiple smaller value prizes e.g. £5 vouchers (4).

**Table 3:** We welcome your suggestions about what incentives you would like to see us offer:

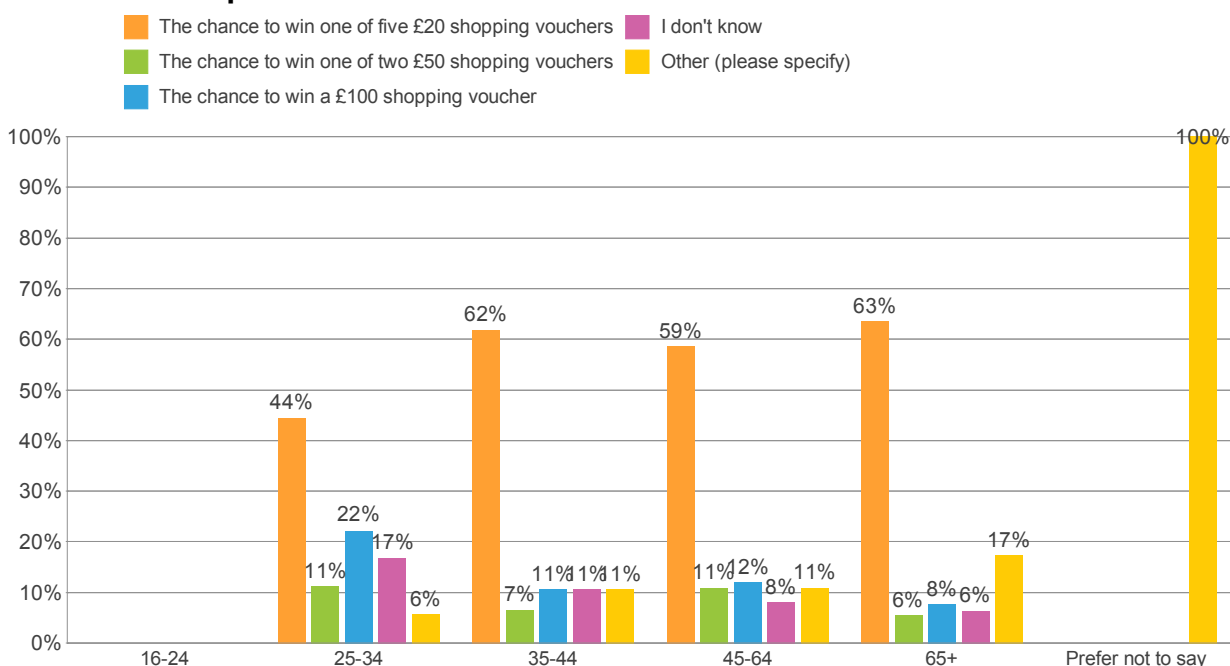
**Number of responses:** 132 comments

Theme	Number
No incentives / do not need an incentive	83
Have a choice of vouchers/tickets e.g. restaurant, cinema, amazon, boots, travel, FirstBus	9
Subsidy for council services e.g. council tax, green bin, MOT, leisure centre, libraries	8
Other comments	5
Do not reply for incentive but is a nice treat	5
Donation to NHS / schools / charity	4
Receive voucher after every survey / after 10 surveys / once a year	4
Have multiple smaller value prizes	4
Other council 'experiences'	3
My views making an impact is enough of an incentive	3
Wasn't aware there was an incentive/would like to know who wins	3
How are we entered into the prize draw?	2
Option already specified	2

When comparing the response from different age groups, the largest proportion of individuals from each age group preferred having the chance to win one of five £20 shopping vouchers.

**Figure 12:** Incentive by age

**Number of responses:** 450



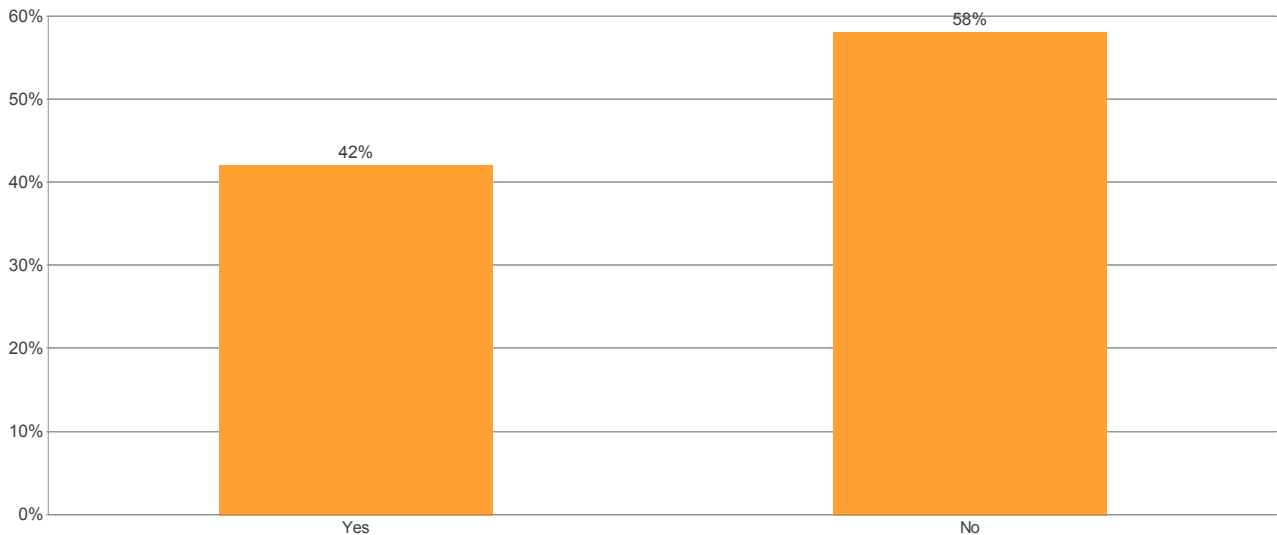


## 6 Newsletter

We have recently started producing a Viewpoint newsletter. We wanted to hear member's views on the newsletter and any suggestions to make it more useful.

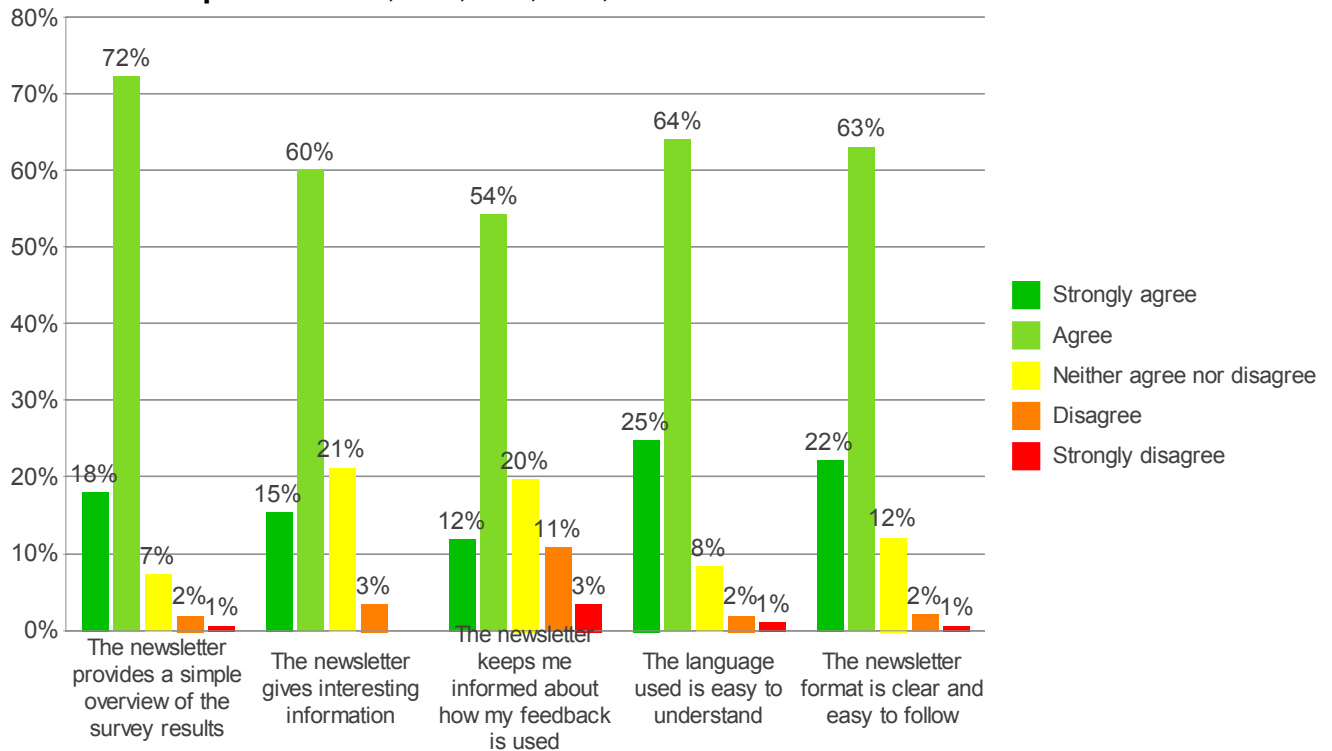
**Over half of respondents had not read the Viewpoint Panel newsletter (58%)** and slightly over one third had (36%).

**Figure 13:** Have you read the Viewpoint Panel newsletter?  
**Number of responses:** 480



Of the respondents who have read the Viewpoint Panel newsletter, **the majority agree with each of the five statements.** ‘**The newsletter keeps me informed about how my feedback is used**’ received the lowest agreement score of 54% (66% combined) and highest disagreement score (14% combined), while ‘the newsletter provides a simple overview of the survey results’ received the highest agreement score of 72% (90% combined agreement).

**Figure 14:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
**Number of responses:** 206, 203, 203, 206, 198



Respondents were given the opportunity to tell us if there are any other ways they would like us to keep them informed. 38 respondents made a comment.

**The most frequently mentioned suggestion was by email (11),** closely followed by wanting more information about how their feedback will be/is used (10).

*“I want to know how the survey results are used not just the results”*

Several respondents wanted to see more pie charts and graphs (6).

*“A much fuller description of all of the results preferably in graphical form and some idea of the results i.e. were they acted on?”*

The full list of themes are provided overleaf.

**Table 4:** Please use this space to tell us if there are any other ways you would like us to keep you informed:

**Number of responses:** 38 comments

Theme	Number
By email	11
Would like more feedback on survey results and impact	10
More pie charts and graphs	6
I have not seen a newsletter	4
Other suggestions/comments	3
Newsletter could be more succinct	2
Would like to see trend data	1
Should publish results to local papers	1
No suggestions	1
Newsletter is clear and easy to understand	1

Respondents were then asked to make any suggestions about how we could improve the newsletter. 37 respondents made a comment.

**The most frequently mentioned theme was wanting more information about the impact of survey results (18).**

*“It would be helpful to know if surveys have influenced decisions/direction”*

*“How about using the newsletter to provide more updates. For example, there doesn't appear to be an outcome for Community Resilience. As only 44% of respondents know where to get help from their community, I'd be interested to know how that information is being used and what's being done to improve awareness”*

**This was followed by suggestions about how to improve the presentation including a friendlier format, charts and graphs, including upcoming topics and pictorial overviews.**

**Table 5:** Please use this space to make any suggestions about how we could improve the Viewpoint newsletter or anything else you would like us to include:

**Number of responses:** 37 comments

Theme	Number
Would like more information about the impact of results	18
Presentation suggestions	6
I have not received a newsletter	5
No suggestions	3
Other comments	2
Would like an online forum / regular meetings	2
Analysis by area	1

The final question gave respondents space to share any other comments about the Viewpoint panel, to which 101 comments were left.

**The most frequently mentioned theme was not having received a newsletter before (45).** This was followed by wanting more feedback on survey results and the impact of the results (14).

*“Happy to give my opinions in the questionnaire when sent, but would like to receive information on exactly what action is taken as a result of the information received. If no feedback then the survey has NO use to me and will be a waste of my time filling it in”*

Some respondents shared that they feel listened to (10).

This was followed by miscellaneous comments (7), asking how they are entered into the prize draw (7) and feeling that their views don’t make a difference (6). The full list of themes is available below.

**Table 6:** Please use this space to make any other comments about the Viewpoint Panel:  
**Number of responses:** 101 comments

Theme	Number
I have not received a newsletter	45
Would like more feedback on survey results and impact	14
Feel listened to	10
Miscellaneous comments	7
How are we entered into the prize draw?	7
My views don't make a difference / Council don't listen	6
Topics not always of interest to me / panel should be involved in choosing topics	5
I normally receive an online survey	4
Query regarding how representative the panel is	4
Waste services	3
Query regarding cost of panel	2
Limited budget / cuts	2
No comments	1
Need younger topics to encourage young people	1