The Moray Council

Identifying Priorities for Moray

Report

By

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Contents

Tables and Figures

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.   The overall aim of the study was to gauge views from a range of stakeholders on priorities for action in Moray across the following key themes:

- The Economy
- Employment
- Education & Young People
- Health
- Social Issues
- Housing & Homelessness
- Transport and
- Environment

1.2.   Findings will inform ongoing development and delivery of the Council's Single Outcome Agreement.

Methodology

1.3.   Craigforth undertook the research on behalf of the Council between November 2008 and January 2009.

1.4.   The research sought to engage a range of individuals and organisations, including the following key strands:

- Local community organisations identified through MVSO;
- Moray Citizens' Panel members;
- Each of the Local Area Forums across Moray;
- A range of local, regional and national equalities organisations with an interest or involvement in Moray; and
- Members of the Grampian Patient Participation Forum (PPF).

1.5.   Survey forms were designed in partnership with the Council, with two forms developed for use across the various survey strands.

1.6.   The core of both forms was a series of questions asking for views on the relative priority of key issues under each of the eight themes listed above - specific issues were identified by the Council. This shorter form was used to gauge the views of Panel members, Local Area Forums, equalities organisations and PPF members.

1.7.   Local community organisations received a longer survey form, including an abbreviated set of these core questions, a series of questions on their experience of providing services in Moray and views on their role in tackling issues under each of the eight themes. Copies of the questionnaires used are appended to this report.

1.8.   A postal survey approach was used for most groups, based on contact details held by Craigforth (for the Panel) and details provided by the Council and MVSO (for all other groups). Survey forms were issued in November and December 2008, and reminder letters were issued to encourage response.

1.9.   Direct telephone contact was used for the relatively small number of equalities organisations, with the survey form used as the basis for a short telephone interview.

1.10.   In addition a series of three focus groups were conducted with survey respondents in January. These groups sought to examine in more detail the views expressed by community organisations (one group) and Panel members (two groups).

Response

1.11.   By the time of reporting a total of 756 survey responses or telephone interviews had been achieved.[1] This represents an overall response/success rate of nearly 50%, and includes the following profile of response:

- 601 responses from Panel members (c57%);
- 133 responses from Community Organisations (c29%);
- 2 responses from Local Area Forums;
- 9 interviews with equalities organisations; and
- 11 responses from Patient Participation Forum members.

Reporting Conventions

1.12.   Our reporting is structured in the first instance around questions asked in survey forms, with frequency counts and percentages presented for each question. Some of the questions asked respondents to rate an issue on a scale from 1 (high priority) to 5 (low priority) or to rank the eight themes in order of importance (from 1 to 8). For these questions we use an average ranking score as a key indicator of relative importance.

1.13.   Due to the relatively small sample sizes and respondent numbers for some survey strands, we present tabulated survey results only for community organisations and Panel members. We indicate in the report text the extent to which views expressed by other groups are similar to or differ from those presented in table form.

1.14.   In addition to presenting frequency survey results, we also highlight key issues emerging through more qualitative survey responses (where respondents were able to write in their own answers) and also focus group findings. The focus here is on presenting further detail on the overall views expressed through survey results.

1.15.   Percentage values are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number as appropriate. This means that percentages may not sum to 100%. Respondents were also able to select multiple answers for some questions, and for these percentages may sum to more than 100%.

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[1] This included a number of incomplete survey responses that could not be included in our analysis - in total 712 analysable survey forms/telephone interviews were achieved.
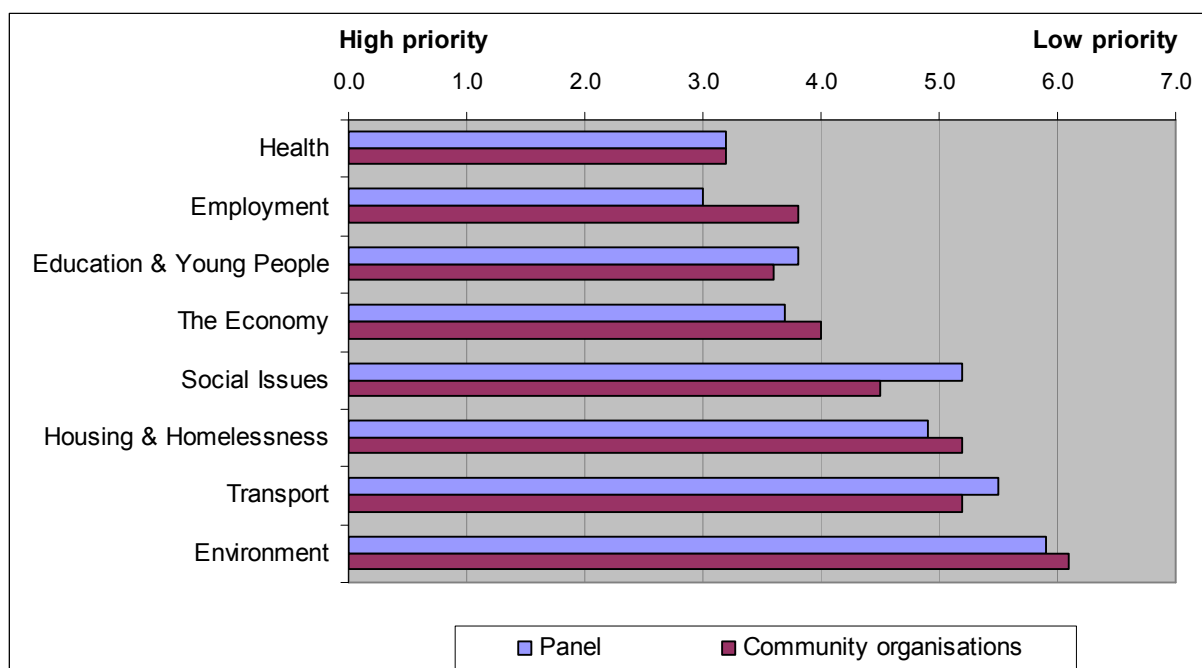
2. PRIORITIES FOR MORAY

2.1.   As outlined in the previous section, all survey strands were asked a "core" of questions seeking to gauge views on priorities for actions in Moray.

2.2.   All participants were asked to rank the eight themes in order of overall priority. In addition, within each theme the survey asked respondents to rate the relative priority of specific issues (from 1 being high priority to 5 being low priority).

2.3.   The set of issues presented to community organisations was an abridged version of that presented to other groups. As a result we present tabular data separately for community organisations and Panel members, and discuss trends for other groups within the report text.

Overall Priorities

2.4.   Survey responses indicate that there is some consensus in the extent to which groups see overall themes as being priorities for action in Moray.

2.5.   Across all groups, health, employment, education/young people, the economy, and to a lesser extent social issues were seen as the most significant priorities. These were generally given average ratings of around 3.0 to 4.0 (out of 8), although there was some variation across groups in terms of the ranking of these top priorities.

- Community organisations saw health and education/young people as the top two priorities, followed by employment and the economy. Organisations also saw social issues as a significant priority.

- In contrast, Panel members saw employment as the top priority for Moray, and gave this a notably higher rating than community organisations (3.0 compared to 3.8). In addition Panel members identified health, the economy and education/young people as priorities. Panel members were less likely than community organisations to identify social issues as a priority for action (ratings of 5.2 and 4.9 respectively).

- Health and education/young people were also seen as high priority themes across other groups. However views differed somewhat on other topics. Equalities organisations ranked social issues more highly than others, and saw the economy and employment as much less of a priority area. In contrast, PPF members rated transport as a particularly high priority, possibly reflecting concerns around transport to access health services raised through focus group discussion.

2.6.   In terms of lower priority issues the environment - and to a lesser extent transport and housing/homelessness - was seen as a comparatively low priority issue for Moray. The environment was not seen as a top priority across any of the survey strands while, as noted above, transport was a significant issue for PPF members and to some extent Panel members.

2.1: Avg Rating of Themes as Priorities for Action

2.7. We now discuss views on specific issues under each of the eight themes in turn.

Health

2.8. The impact of alcohol/drugs on health, and the health needs of a growing older population were seen as the key priorities for Moray.

2.9. For community organisations the growing older population was the highest priority (avg 1.7 out of 5), closely followed by the heavy impact of alcohol on health (avg 1.8). Nearly half of community organisation respondents identified each of these issues as the top priority for action on health.

2.10. Community organisations rated the above average suicide rate in Moray as less of a priority for action than alcohol and the ageing population (avg 2.1), but there remained more than half who felt that this was a high priority for Moray.

2.11. For Panel members the health impacts of drugs, and to a lesser extent alcohol, was seen as the top priority (1.7 for drugs, 1.9 for alcohol). However, this group also felt that the growing older population was a significant priority for action (1.9).

2.12. In terms of other priorities for action, Panel members tended to feel that poor diet and smoking was somewhat less of a priority for action than drugs. Nevertheless there remained a substantial proportion who felt these were high priority issues for Moray.

2.13. Views were broadly similar across other survey strands, with the growing older population being a common priority. In addition PPF members placed a higher priority than others on tackling poor diet, while equalities organisations rated the number of suicides as a higher priority than other groups.

2.2: Health priorities – community organisations

Average Score – 3.2	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
The growing older population with greater health needs	**1.7**	47%	34%	14%	3%	-	2%
The heavy impact that alcohol has on health	**1.8**	44%	36%	14%	2%	1%	2%
The higher than average number of suicides in Moray	**2.1**	29%	35%	12%	8%	4%	12%

2.3: Health priorities – Panel members

Average Score – 3.2	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
The impact of drug use on health	**1.7**	53%	27%	14%	3%	2%	1%
The impact of excessive alcohol intake on health	**1.9**	43%	30%	20%	4%	3%	-
A growing older population with greater health needs	**1.9**	40%	38%	18%	3%	1%	1%
The impact of poor diet/ obesity on health	**2.0**	34%	36%	24%	4%	1%	0%
The impact of smoking on health	**2.1**	37%	30%	24%	5%	4%	-
The higher than average number of suicides in Moray	**2.2**	27%	30%	25%	4%	3%	10%

2.14. Other issues and more detailed views were also expressed through the survey strands (where respondents were able to write in their own answers) and focus group discussions. The key points emerging in relation to health are summarised below:

- Access to health services was raised as a concern by some, including more flexible opening times (eg evenings and weekends) and more conveniently located services. For some this reflected travel issues in terms of accessing central Elgin-based services from more rural areas, particularly in having to travel significant distances for more specialised services (eg Aberdeen or Inverness).

- Some also felt that more action was required to better support individuals to have greater influence over their health care. For many this was a broad point relating to consultation on changes to health services - there was a suggestion that NHS-led consultation does not take sufficient account of the community's views. Specific mention was also made here of people with learning difficulties; views were expressed that this group need the freedom "to make their own choices and mistakes".

- The importance of action to encourage healthier lifestyles was again reinforced, particularly in relation to poorer diet and lack of exercise amongst children and young people. It was suggested that children could be taught better nutritional habits and exercise through the school curriculum.

- Finally, specific reference was made to the Healthpoint service that is being moved to Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin. Some felt that locating the service in a more formal location could have an adverse effect on the sexual health of young people in the area.

Employment and the Economy

2.15. Survey respondents were asked separately about issues relating to employment and the economy to ensure that differences in views on these themes would not be missed. However, survey analysis and focus group discussion suggest significant overlap and links between views on these themes.

2.16. A number of issues emerged as priorities for action in relation to employment and the economy. The key priorities across survey strands appear to be:

- The availability of appropriate employment opportunities;
- Difficulties accessing employment in rural areas, including transport constraints; and
- Lower than average wages.

2.17. Community organisations saw the latter two issues - low wages (1.8) and poor transport links to employment opportunities (1.9) as the key priorities under this theme. In contrast, workforce skills/qualifications and business research were seen as relatively low priorities for action.

2.18. For Panel members, the availability of employment opportunities was seen as the key priority. However focus group discussion suggests that this in part reflects the priorities highlighted by community organisations around those living in rural areas accessing employment opportunities. These concerns also seem to inform the relatively high priority given by Panel members to helping local businesses in Moray - many see this as a potential means of developing more, and more appropriate employment opportunities in Moray.

2.19. While the key priorities identified by community organisations and Panel members were broadly similar, some differences do emerge. Specifically, Panel members felt that improving skills and qualifications in the workforce was a higher priority than community organisations. In contrast, lower wages was seen as more of an issue by community organisations than Panel members.

2.20. There was a high level of agreement across other survey strands in relation to priorities for action on the economy and employment. The only notable variation was the higher priority given by equalities organisations to the transport infrastructure and career development.

2.4: Employment & Economy – community organisations

Employment Average Score – 3.8	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Rural location constraining employment opportunities	2.1	35%	30%	7%	20%	5%	3%
Under qualified workforce	2.3	18%	34%	15%	24%	3%	6%
Economy Average Score – 4.0	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Lower than average wages and output	1.8	44%	24%	8%	21%	3%	-
Poor transport infrastructure	1.9	42%	31%	4%	18%	4%	1%
Extremely low business research and development	2.5	16%	29%	17%	27%	5%	6%

2.5: Employment & Economy – Panel members

Employment Average Score – 3.0	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Employment opportunities and career development, helping people into jobs	1.6	56%	30%	0%	13%	1%	0%
Employment opportunities in rural areas	1.8	42%	38%	1%	17%	2%	0%
Developing a more highly skilled workforce	1.9	38%	38%	1%	20%	3%	0%
Economy Average Score – 3.7	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Helping local businesses	1.8	43%	32%	1%	20%	3%	1%
Child and family poverty	2.1	33%	32%	3%	25%	5%	3%
Lower than average wages and economic output	2.1	30%	33%	2%	27%	5%	2%
Poor transport infrastructure	2.2	32%	29%	4%	25%	6%	4%
Developing deprived areas	2.3	23%	37%	3%	29%	7%	3%
Extremely low business research and development	2.6	15%	23%	5%	32%	13%	5%

2.21. Other key points that were raised in relation to employment and the economy are summarised below:

- A need for more apprenticeships and training was raised by some, particularly Panel members - who tended to see improving skills and qualifications as a higher priority. In this regard it was suggested that offering financial incentives to businesses willing to take on apprentices could be considered. Others disagreed however, suggesting that opportunities for training were there, but that there was little scope for further career development beyond this.

- Action to encourage or make it easier for specific groups to access employment opportunities or training was also suggested. In this regard people with learning difficulties were mentioned, with some feeling that this group can face significant barriers to accessing employment opportunities. Others suggested that language barriers for those with little or no English could be depriving Moray employers of potentially valuable skills.

- A range of suggestions were made in terms of stimulating the local economy, including inward investment, for example by attracting national and international businesses to the area. The need for better road and rail links with other parts of Scotland were seen as a significant disincentive to businesses locating in Moray.

- Others suggested that better use could be made of existing industry within the Moray area. It was suggested that tourism opportunities could be further exploited, although transport was again seen as a barrier here. Some also felt that town centre regeneration should be a priority, particularly in light of recent moves to out of town locations.

Education and Young People

2.22.   Views were somewhat mixed in terms of specific priorities in relation to education and young people.

2.23.   Community organisations identified the impact of low wages and deprivation on young people as the key priority under this theme (1.8). The great majority saw this issue as a high priority for Moray. Fewer numbers identified other issues as priorities for action, although the level of qualifications amongst the Moray workforce was seen as a priority. This was particularly in terms of retention of graduates within the Moray area.

2.24.   For Panel members a range of priorities were identified. These included extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, services for pre-school children and child protection. In addition Panel members agreed that the impact of deprivation on young people should also be given a high priority for action.

2.25.   However Panel members tended to give less of a priority to qualifications within Moray, giving a relatively low priority to the proportion of young people leaving Moray for further and higher education.

2.26.   This broad group of priorities was also highlighted by other survey strands. There was a particular focus on pre-school services and early intervention (PPF members), more opportunities for pupils (equalities organisations) and tackling the number of young people moving elsewhere for further and higher education (Local Area Forums).

2.6: Education and young people priorities – community organisations

Average Score – 3.6	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
The impact on young people of low average wages and high cost of living	**1.8**	41%	34%	7%	13%	4%	-
Fewer graduates employed in Moray elsewhere	**2.2**	24%	34%	17%	17%	5%	3%
Attainment at S5 and S6 is not as good as national comparators	**2.2**	19%	28%	25%	22%	5%	1%
High proportion of young people migrating for further and higher education	**2.3**	30%	29%	7%	19%	8%	7%

2.7: Education and young people priorities – Panel members

Average Score – 3.8	Avg	High Priority		Low Priority			Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Opportunities for pupils, eg additional support, work experience, extra-curricular activity	**2.0**	34%	38%	3%	22%	4%	0%
Early intervention, eg disabled children, under 5 provision of services, childcare	**2.1**	32%	32%	3%	26%	5%	2%
Child protection, eg children's reporters, young offenders, school exclusion	**2.1**	34%	33%	4%	22%	6%	1%
Impact on young people of low average wages and high cost of living	**2.1**	28%	35%	3%	27%	5%	2%
S5 and S6 attainment not as good as elsewhere	**2.2**	20%	30%	22%	23%	4%	1%
Adult literacy and numeracy, lifelong learning	**2.3**	23%	35%	3%	29%	8%	2%
Continuous Professional Development for teachers	**2.5**	17%	33%	3%	33%	11%	2%
Proportion of young people moving out of Moray for further and higher education	**2.5**	17%	30%	5%	31%	13%	3%

2.27. Respondents were fairly comprehensive in their identification of priorities for action through survey responses. Nevertheless a number of other issues and suggestions were raised:

- There was some disagreement around the extent to which the retention of higher qualifications within Moray could be achieved. Many pointed out that the majority of young people would seek to leave the Moray area to undertake higher education, and that the task was to encourage those young people to return after graduation. However some felt that little could be done to attract young people back to the area as this would often be a lifestyle choice based on the rural nature of Moray.

- Some suggested that more action was required to identify and support those children and young people "falling through the cracks" of existing services. While there was general praise for existing services, the priority given here reflected concerns that a small number of young people were not being captured by services.

- Specific groups were also identified as requiring additional support, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. This group was seen as particularly vulnerable when making the transition into further education.

- Bullying of LGBT pupils was also highlighted, particularly in light of research suggesting that around a quarter of LGBT pupils attempt suicide.

Social Issues

2.28. There was some variation in the priority given to this theme, with community organisations generally seeing social issues as more of a priority for action than Panel members and other survey strands.

2.29. However, the level of priority given the specific issues was broadly similar. In particular, community organisations and Panel members gave very similar ratings to difficulties accessing services in rural areas (each rating 2.2 out of 5), and to the fear of crime (2.3 - 2.4).

2.30. Panel members were also asked to rate the relative priority of a range of other social issues, and here the prevention of anti-social behaviour emerged as a clear priority for action. Indeed well over half of Panel members saw this as the top priority for action in relation to social issues.

2.31. This view was also reflected by PPF members, for whom the prevention of anti-social behaviour was the top priority. This contrasts with the equalities organisations. They identified the rural nature of the area as being a barrier to accessing services.

2.8: Social priorities – community organisations

Average Score – 4.5	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
Rurality being a barrier to accessing services	2.2	33%	26%	2%	29%	6%	3%
Fear of crime	2.3	29%	26%	3%	30%	11%	1%

2.9: Social priorities – Panel members

Average Score – 5.2	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
Prevention of anti-social behaviour	1.6	58%	29%	1%	10%	2%	0%
Support to victims of crime	2.0	33%	35%	2%	23%	5%	2%
Rurality being a barrier to accessing services	2.2	26%	33%	3%	30%	6%	2%
Supporting community engagement	2.4	16%	40%	3%	33%	6%	2%
Fear of crime	2.4	25%	30%	1%	30%	9%	4%

Equalities issues	**3.0**	9%	21%	5%	35%	16%	13%

2.32.   A limited range of other key issues and suggestions emerged in relation to social issues:

- Teenage crime in particular was identified as a priority for action, over and above anti-social behaviour. Panel members in particular felt that community policing had some success in addressing this issue, but that in some areas a stronger police presence after dark could have further benefit.

- It was also suggested more broadly that tougher action on minor offences may help to address anti-social behaviour and crime in the area over the long run.

Housing and Homelessness

2.33.   Housing and homelessness was a theme which relatively few participants identified as a high priority for action. Indeed to an extent some felt unable to comment in detail on issues in this area.

2.34.   Nevertheless, the availability of affordable housing emerged as the highest priority issue within this theme. Around half of Panel members and community organisations ranked this as the top housing and homelessness issue (1.6 and 1.9 respectively).

2.35.   In addition, both groups identified the increase in homeless applications as a somewhat lower priority, albeit still ranked relatively highly at around 2.2 to 2.3 out of 5.

2.36.   Panel members also identified the building and planning of housing as a priority for the Moray area. In terms of new house building this appeared to relate primarily to making it easier for individuals to build their own homes. The broader issue appeared to be around ensuring appropriate control on modifications or extensions to existing housing, while making the process easier and quicker where work is permitted.

2.10: Housing and homelessness priorities – community organisations

Average Score – 5.2	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
Serious shortage of affordable housing	**1.9**	46%	21%	5%	22%	4%	2%
Significant increase in homeless applications	**2.2**	33%	18%	14%	23%	8%	4%

2.11: Housing and homelessness priorities – Panel members

Average Score – 4.9	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
Availability of affordable housing	**1.6**	55%	28%	1%	15%	1%	1%
Building and planning of housing	**2.0**	37%	31%	1%	25%	4%	2%
Increasing number of homeless applications	**2.3**	21%	31%	9%	31%	6%	3%
Support and home-based services to tackle homelessness	**2.3**	24%	30%	7%	30%	5%	4%

2.37. A number of further issues were raised in addition to specific suggestions to tackle the issues discussed above:

- In relation to the provision of affordable housing, abolition of the Right to Buy was identified by some, including specific reference to pressured area status. A number of participants also made specific reference to properties lying unsold given the recent economic downturn, and that consideration should be given to bringing these into use as affordable housing provision.

- Reference was also made to cases of young people struggling to sustain (social or private) tenancies. There was a broad feeling that better support could be provided in these cases, particularly closer working between housing and support services.

- A perceived need for wider provision of shared accommodation was also raised, for individuals who require a higher level of support than can perhaps be sustained in mainstream housing.

- A number of equalities issues were raised in relation to housing. This included migrant workers living in inappropriate housing, with reference made to employers charging unreasonably high rents. It was also suggested that some LGBT residents experience difficulties in maintaining a tenancy (eg social issues with neighbours), and that some feel a need to move to more urban areas with a broader range of accommodation and support opportunities.

Transport

2.38. Transport was generally seen as a low priority in relation to most other themes, although it is notable that community organisations rated transport as a somewhat more significant issue than others.

2.39. However, there is a high level of agreement in terms of the specific issues that are seen as priorities for action within this theme.

2.40. Drink driving and safety issues for young drivers emerge as the clear priorities across all survey strands. These issues were rated at around 1.5 to 1.6 (out of 5) by both community organisations and Panel members, and were also generally seen as the top priorities across other survey strands.

2.41. Access to alternatives to car travel was also seen as a priority by some, particularly equalities and community organisations.

2.12: Transport priorities – community organisations

Average Score - 5.2	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Problems with young drivers and drink driving	1.6	47%	39%	3%	10%	1%	-
Access to alternatives to car travel	1.9	40%	34%	4%	15%	3%	3%
Road safety	2.0	35%	31%	3%	25%	4%	1%

2.13: Transport priorities – Panel members

Average Score – 5.5	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't know
		1	2	3	4	5	
Drink driving	1.5	21%	31%	-	31%	6%	3%
The safety of young drivers	1.6	37%	31%	0%	25%	4%	2%
Promoting road safety	1.8	55%	28%	-	15%	1%	1%
Access to alternatives to car travel	2.0	24%	30%	1%	30%	5%	4%

2.42. While drink driving and the safety of young drivers were seen by most as the main priorities for transport in Moray, a number of other issues and specific suggestions did emerge:

- Access to public transport was highlighted by some, indeed a small number saw this as the top transport priority for Moray. Primarily this was around ensuring that rural areas are better served by public transport, including the provision of better information on available services (some felt that people may just not be aware of existing services) and better integration with other forms of transport (eg bus to train, bus to airport).

- The main road safety issue raised was in relation to young drivers. There was some feeling that this was primarily a result of a high number of young drivers in Moray, and the often rural nature of roads in the area. There was some suggestion that additional instruction specifically on using rural roads may be beneficial (similar to the PassPlus scheme), or even some means of limiting access to more powerful vehicles. However it was also suggested that the issue was more of driver age and attitude rather than skill or experience, and that as such any measures around improving driver skills may be limited in their success.

- Wider road safety issues were also raised, including the need to upgrade the A96, appropriate by-passing and traffic reduction in main towns such as Elgin and general improvement to the quality of roads (particularly in more rural areas).

Environmental issues

2.43. The final theme considered was the environment, and this was generally rated as the lowest priority for the Moray area. Nevertheless, specific issues were identified as being priorities for action.

2.44. In particular flood alleviation was generally seen as the key priority for Moray - rated as 1.7 by Panel members and 2.1 by community organisations. For many this issue appeared to reflect a concern around lack of progress in planned flood alleviation schemes. Linked to this was a feeling that the wider community was not being informed of any progress to date or forward timescales.

2.45. More specific concerns were also raised around the permitting of house building on flood plains, and the support required for those now living in these properties.

2.46.   Preservation of the local natural environment was also highlighted as a priority for action. In addition to broad environmental and sustainability concerns, this also appeared to reflect the value placed on Moray's open spaces in terms of the quality of environment for the resident population. The benefit of open spaces in providing opportunities for leisure activity and exercise was highlighted. The importance of Moray's natural environment to the local economy - specifically tourism - was also seen as a key issue.

2.47.   Other environmental issues or concerns raised included:

- The development of wind farms in the area; there was a clear division in views on the extent to which more wind farms should be located within Moray.

- The energy efficiency of homes was also mentioned, specifically the need for help and advice in making their homes more energy efficient. This was seen as particularly significant in terms of reducing fuel bills and addressing fuel poverty in the Moray area.

2.14: Environmental priorities – community organisations

Average Score – 6.1	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
Flood alleviation	2.1	39%	19%	3%	29%	6%	3%
Preservation of the natural environment	2.2	30%	32%	2%	24%	10%	2%
Sustainability and climate change - energy savings and carbon emission reduction	2.4	22%	37%	4%	22%	9%	5%

2.15: Environmental priorities – Panel members

Average Score – 5.9	Avg	High Priority			Low Priority		Don't
		1	2	3	4	5	know
Flood alleviation	1.7	52%	27%	1%	15%	3%	1%
Preservation of the natural environment	2.0	39%	34%	1%	20%	4%	2%
Sustainability and climate change - energy savings and carbon emission reduction	2.2	32%	31%	1%	24%	6%	5%

3. COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS IN MORAY

3.1.   As noted in section 1, a total of 133 survey responses were received from community organisations operating in Moray. This included a number of non-analysable responses and those that were received after survey cut-off; results presented below are based on 105 analysable survey responses and 10 focus group attendees.

Profile of Organisations

3.2.   As the table below indicates, survey responses were received from a wide range of organisations in terms of focus and services provided. Indeed the profile of response compares well with the overall survey sample suggesting that respondents are broadly representative of community organisations operating across Moray.

3.3.   Social enterprise/community development, and environmental/nature and built heritage groups were the largest in terms of survey response. Indeed together these groups accounted for around 1 in 3 survey responses.

3.4.   In addition a substantial number of responses were received from groups focusing on children, young people and families, from sports groups (some of which focus specifically on children and young people) and from groups active in arts and culture.

3.5.   The range of responses received from other groups includes those focusing on disability, health/social care, justice and equality.

3.1: Categories of community organisations[2]

	Num	%
Social Enterprise, Community Development	17	16%
Environment, Natural & Built Heritage	17	16%
Youth, Children, Families	15	14%
Sport	14	13%
Art, Culture	12	11%
Disability, Health, Social Care	9	9%
Church Group	5	5%
Older People	3	3%
Justice, Human Rights, Equality	3	3%
Fundraising	2	2%
Housing	2	2%
Transport	1	1%
Unknown	5	5%
Base	**105**	

3.6.   Community organisations were also asked whether they held a service level agreement for funding, a key indicator of the type of service being provided.

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[2] Aggregated from categories used by MVSO (organisations were not asked to place themselves in a specific category).

3.7. Only 17 of the 105 organisations responding to the survey indicated that they did currently hold a service level agreement for funding, with the remainder indicating that they did not.

3.8. Those with service level funding agreements included a range of organisations in terms of area activity. Most common were those focusing on children/young people/families, health and disability, and justice and equality. Organisations reported providing a range of specific tasks and services within the service level agreement, with these including workshops/training for people with a disability, advocacy and advice services, support to victims of crime and door to door transportation services.

Access and Referrals

3.9. Organisations were asked about the ways in which individuals can access their service, and also other services they may refer individuals on to.

3.10. The great majority of organisations indicated that service users could refer themselves to their service - 78 of the 97 answering this question. The most common means of self-referral were by telephone and/or email, with more than 3 in 4 organisations indicating that services used this route of access. In addition more than half indicated that individuals could access their service in person.

3.11. Organisations also mentioned a range of agencies from which individuals could be referred, although few indicated that this kind of referral was the only means of access to their service. Educational establishments were most commonly mentioned, by around 3 in 10 organisations. Up to around a quarter of respondents also mentioned referral from Council services and job centres.

3.12. A substantial number of organisations mentioned "other" ways of accessing their service, with these typically referring to various publicity methods used by the service. However some also mentioned health services (GP and hospital) referring individuals to their service.

3.2: Access to service

		%
Telephone	66	68%
Email/ website	60	62%
Walk in	52	54%
Schools/ colleges	29	30%
Referral from council	22	23%
Youth groups	20	21%
Job centres	9	9%
Other	54	56%
Base	**97**	

3.13. Relatively few organisations indicated that they regularly refer individuals on to other specific services or organisations; although some commented that they would refer clients to any service they felt appropriate (albeit they may not have formal links with a specific service).

3.14. In terms of the type of agencies that community organisations may refer individuals on to, this is broadly in line with means of access into community organisations. Council services are the most common (mentioned by 25 of 42 organisations). In addition, 18 mentioned referrals to health services.

3.3: Referrals to other services

	Num
Council - total	25
Social Work	*15*
Education	*7*
Homelessness	*11*
Housing	*13*
Other	*17*
Health Services	18
Job Centre/ Employment Services	12
College/ Further Education	11
Other	17
Base	**41**

National Standards for Community Engagement

3.15. National Standards for Community Engagement were developed by (then) Communities Scotland to help improve the quality of both formal and informal community engagement at a local level. The standards provide a framework with specific measures that can help the development and continuing support of working relationships between communities and agencies.

3.16. The survey asked community organisations the extent to which they were aware of the National Standards for Community Engagement, and also how relevant they felt they were to their own activities.

3.17. Awareness was relatively low, with half of respondents indicating that they had not heard of the Standards at all. Of the remaining half with some level of awareness of the Standards, relatively few indicated that they were aware of the substance of the Standards. Indeed only around a quarter of respondents indicated that they knew at least a little about the Standards, and only around 1 in 20 knew a lot about them.

3.18. Clearly this relatively low level of awareness limited the extent to which respondents could comment on the relevance of the National Standards to their own organisation. Having said that, most of those able to comment indicated they felt the Standards had some relevance to them (13 of 23) and only 4 felt they were not relevant.

3.4: Awareness of National Standards for Community Engagement

Awareness	Num	%
Know a lot about	6	6%
Know a little about	18	19%
Have heard of, but don't know much about	24	25%
Not at all	48	50%
Base	**96**	

Barriers Experienced

3.19. Next the survey asked community organisations about their experience of any barriers to achieving their aims and objectives. This included specific questions on the extent to which organisations feel there are local people who could benefit from their service but who are unable to access it.

3.20. A lack of funding emerged by some margin as the most commonly experienced barrier - indeed nearly two thirds of respondents felt that funding constrained the extent to which they could achieve their aims and objectives. This included more than 2 in 5 who strongly agreed that this was the case.

3.21. In addition, three other issues were identified as being significant barriers for community organisations.

3.22. A lack of support and/or incentives for volunteers was identified as a barrier by more than 2 in 5 respondents. In addition, a lack of amenities/facilities and/or premises/equipment were each mentioned by around a third of respondents. These latter two issues appeared to be more of an issue for organisations with more specific requirements in terms of premises and amenities - indeed for a substantial number of organisations these do not appear to be significant issues at all.

3.23. Sports focused organisations or those active in arts/culture appear more likely to see premises and facilities as a barrier to their service. Feedback through the survey and focus group suggests that this can reflect a shortage of appropriate premises within Moray - whether they require a hall-type space on a regular basis or are seeking more specialised sports facilities. However in addition to limited availability, the cost of available facilities was also seen as a sometimes significant barrier for community organisations.

3.24. In terms of other issues relatively few felt that local job opportunities, engagement with local employers or the availability of training for young people was a significant barrier to their work.

3.5: Barriers Experienced

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither / nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Lack of funding	43%	20%	20%	9%	4%	3%
Support/ incentives for volunteers	20%	22%	36%	16%	3%	2%
Lack of amenities/ facilities	15%	22%	29%	18%	9%	6%
Lack of premises/ equipment	16%	17%	30%	23%	11%	4%
Lack of good local job opportunities	4%	13%	48%	14%	8%	15%
Training for young people/ school leavers	3%	13%	48%	14%	9%	14%
Willingness of local employers to assist	2%	14%	37%	25%	9%	14%
Lack of incentive for people to work	5%	9%	42%	20%	10%	14%

3.25.   The survey form and focus group discussions also gave organisations the opportunity to identify other issues or potential barriers to their work.

3.26.   The barriers discussed above appear to be the most significant - indeed many additional comments simply sought to provide further detail on these. However, organisations did raise a number of other relevant issues affecting the extent to which they are able to achieve their objectives:

- In addition to further highlighting the extent to which a lack of funding is a difficulty for some organisations, difficulties in accessing and maintaining funding were also raised. Some, particularly smaller organisations, felt that they lacked the skills and knowledge to successfully negotiate the funding process, and were at a disadvantage when compared to larger and more commercially focused organisations.

- Issues relating to the uncertainty of funding were also mentioned, with some reporting that longer term planning was difficult where organisations were unsure of their funding status on an ongoing year to year basis.

- Indeed some organisations had taken the decision to proceed on the basis of private funding (eg charging service users) specifically to avoid the above mentioned difficulties in accessing public funding.

- Some of the issues mentioned in relation to funding also reflect wider concerns about local regulations and a perceived surfeit of bureaucracy. Many organisations reported that inflexible procedures and regulations can often restrict their work, and that this is often exacerbated by a lack of knowledge within the organisation. Some suggested that organisations often benefit from having members who (by chance) have experience of funding or planning processes for example.

- The inflexibility of regulations was also mentioned in relation to a lack of premises and facilities for community organisations. A number of examples were given where organisations had been unable to access premises as they were pre-booked by private groups, or where the cost of premises was prohibitively high. It was suggested that the provision and costing of local premises should take account of the wider benefit provided by community organisations - for example that organisations be given some degree of preference in access to facilities.

- Direct reference was made to the Single Outcome Agreement in this regard. There appeared to be some variation between groups in terms of awareness of the SOA, and particularly the extent to which it is used to plan and deliver their services. However there was broader agreement that the SOA could be used as a means of identifying organisations that could benefit from preferential access to facilities - for example help to access facilities or reduced costs for those organisations who can demonstrate contribution towards the SOA.

3.27. Organisations were also asked the extent to which they were aware of individuals in the local area who may benefit from but who are unable to access the service.

3.28. Nearly half of respondents felt that this was the case, including around a fifth who were "definitely" aware of potential service users who were unable to access their organisation. In addition a further fifth of respondents could not say if local people were unable to access their service. Only around a third felt that they definitely did not have local people unable to access their service.

3.6: Local people unable to access service?

	Num	%
Yes, definitely	18	18%
Yes, possibly	27	28%
No, not at all	33	34%
Don't know	20	20%
Base	**98**	

3.29. Organisations mentioned a range of potential reasons for individuals being unable to access their service, with the most common being:

- A shortage of suitable premises or facilities means that organisations sometimes have to turn potential service users away.

- A lack of volunteers, or more specifically volunteers with the required skills, was similarly highlighted as resulting in potential service users being turned away.

- Disabled access to premises was also mentioned as a barrier, for example organisations based in upper floor premises without lift access.

- More widely a lack of public transport was mentioned by some organisations - for example for organisations based in the main towns, potential service users living in rural areas can struggle to access the service.

3.30. In addition to the specific barriers and issues mentioned above, some organisations based their suggestion of a degree of "unmet need" on apparent inconsistencies between available data and their own experience. For example some had identified potential service users that they were not otherwise aware of, through published statistics or feedback from other agencies.

3.31. This point also links to feedback provided through the survey on the range of information recorded by organisations about their service users.

3.32. Around two thirds of respondents specifically mentioned types of information recorded about their clients. Amongst these, the most commonly recorded was information on the profile of their clients, the extent and nature of clients' service use, and the extent to which the service met clients' needs. The great majority of respondents indicated that they recorded one or more of these.

3.33. In addition, around half indicated that they recorded the type of support required by clients, and around a third recorded the specific outcome(s) for clients. In addition, a minority of organisations recorded information on routes of referral into and/or out of their service.

3.7: Information recorded

	Num	%
Profile of client	33	54%
Client's use of service	33	54%
Whether the service met the client's needs	32	52%
Support required	30	49%
Outcome for client	22	36%
Where the client was referred from	21	34%
Where the client was referred to	14	23%
Other	14	23%
Base	**61**	

Role in Achieving Outcomes

3.34. Finally for community organisations, the survey sought views on the extent to which organisations felt they had a role to play in achieving outcomes under each of the eight themes. A range of specific issues and outcomes were identified by the Council, and these structured around the eight themes. Organisations were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that they had a role to play.

3.35. Overall, responses suggest that organisations feel that they have the strongest role to play in tackling social and health related issues across Moray. In general around half of respondents felt that they had a role to play in tackling these issues.

3.36. In addition, a substantial proportion indicated that they had a role to play in tackling issues relating to education and young people, the environment, and the economy/employment.

3.37. These overall responses are broadly similar to the top priorities identified by community organisations in section 2 - particularly health, education/young people, and employment. Responses also reflect the general profile of community organisations, and particularly the relatively significant focus on social issues and the environment. This suggests that organisations' own focus and experience has a potentially significant bearing on their views on the extent to which issues constitute priorities for action in Moray.

3.38. The table at the end of this section presents full survey results in terms of organisations' role in tackling specific issues. Below we highlight the key points emerging:

- On *health*, organisations were most likely to see their role in the promotion of healthy lifestyles (eg healthy eating, alcohol/ drugs, smoking). Community care, long term illness and disability were also mentioned by a substantial number - again this reflects in part the relatively large number of organisations focusing on these issues.

- In relation to *employment and the economy*, broader issues around improving deprived areas were more likely to be seen as having a role for community organisations. Organisations were somewhat less likely to see themselves as having a role in tackling more specific issues such as child/family poverty or career and skills development.

- Organisations saw themselves as having a significant role in tackling a number of issues relating to *education and young people*. Providing extra-curricular opportunities for children and young people were by some margin the most common area - this included support and work experience and also more sport/leisure focused activities.

- On social issues, the great majority of organisations felt they had a role to play in supporting community engagement. In addition, prevention of anti-social behaviour and support to equalities groups was also seen as a significant area of focus.

- Few organisations felt they had a role to play in tackling *housing and homelessness* issues. For example less than a fifth felt they had any role in supporting those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

- Similarly, relatively few organisations saw their activities as contributing to tackling *transport* issues. Road safety promotion was the most common area of focus under this theme.

- In terms of *environmental issues*, conservation of the natural environment and wider sustainability issues were identified as areas where organisations felt they have a role. Flood alleviation, although clearly seen by many as a significant priority for Moray, was much less likely to be identified as a specific area of focus for community organisations.

3.8: Role of Community Organisations

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither / nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Health						
Promoting healthy lifestyles	40%	26%	20%	7%	6%	1%
Care in the community, physical/mental disability, and long term illness	19%	24%	34%	10%	8%	5%
Dealing with suicide and self-harm	14%	24%	34%	12%	12%	5%
Employment						
Promoting employment opportunities and career development, assisting people into jobs	10%	26%	32%	9%	18%	5%
The Economy						
Developing deprived areas	8%	33%	26%	9%	16%	7%
Assisting local businesses and developing a more highly skilled workforce	11%	25%	26%	14%	20%	3%
Tackling child and family poverty	9%	20%	35%	9%	19%	7%
Education and Young People						
Providing opportunities for pupils – additional support, work experience, extra-curricular, etc	27%	44%	9%	7%	11%	2%
Amenities for young people – sport and leisure	35%	26%	16%	6%	12%	5%
Continuous Professional Development for educational staff	7%	28%	34%	11%	13%	6%
Child protection – children's reporters, young offenders, school exclusions	16%	18%	26%	13%	18%	10%
Promoting adult literacy and numeracy, and lifelong learning	8%	24%	33%	14%	13%	7%
Early intervention – disabled children, under 5s	16%	10%	22%	16%	22%	14%
Corporate parenting – fostering/adoption	3%	5%	31%	24%	25%	13%
Social issues						
Supporting community engagement	34%	50%	13%	-	3%	-
Preventing anti-social behaviour	22%	35%	22%	13%	5%	3%
Supporting ethnic minorities and migrant groups and equality awareness	15%	32%	36%	6%	7%	4%
Victim support	8%	18%	42%	13%	7%	11%
Housing and homelessness						
Homelessness – support, home based services	8%	7%	34%	13%	24%	13%
Building and planning of housing	1%	7%	37%	13%	28%	13%
Availability of affordable housing	5%	2%	35%	15%	26%	17%
Transport						
Promoting road safety	11%	25%	30%	11%	14%	9%
Assisting with access issues and promoting alternatives to car usage	9%	17%	31%	11%	20%	11%
The Environment						
Preservation/ conservation of natural environment	26%	26%	29%	4%	12%	3%
Sustainability and climate change	17%	31%	34%	3%	12%	2%
Flood alleviation	5%	3%	45%	13%	28%	6%

4. KEY FINDINGS

Priorities for Moray

4.1. The research sought to gauge views on priorities for action in Moray across a range of individuals and organisations:

- Local community organisations identified through MVSO;
- Moray Citizens' Panel members;
- Each of the Local Area Forums across Moray;
- A range of equalities organisations working in Moray; and
- Members of the Grampian Patient Participation Forum.

4.2. There was broad consensus across survey strands in terms of overall priorities for Moray. Health, employment, education/young people, the economy and to a lesser extent social issues were seen as the most significant. The environment - and to a lesser extent transport - was seen as the least significant theme for Moray.

4.3. In terms of the eight themes around which consultation was structured, the following key issues were raised:

- ***Health.*** The impact of alcohol/drugs on health, and the health needs of a growing older population were seen as the key issues.

- ***Economy and employment.*** The key priorities were employment opportunities, with the rural nature of the area being a barrier to accessing employment, as well as below average wages.

- ***Education and young people.*** Views were somewhat mixed, although the impact of low wages on young people, opportunities for pupils, few graduates employed in Moray and the standard of pre-school services emerged as the main priorities.

- ***Social Issues.*** Prevention of anti-social behaviour and difficulties accessing services in rural areas were the main priorities for action.

- ***Housing and homelessness.*** A lack of affordable housing was by far the most significant issue raised.

- ***Transport.*** Drink driving and the safety of young drivers were the most significant issues, with wider road safety issues also raised.

- ***Environment.*** Flood alleviation emerged as the clear priority for all groups, although preserving the quality of the Moray environment was also a significant concern for some.

Community Organisations in Moray

4.4. A wide range of community organisations took part in the research, with social enterprise/community development and environmental/built heritage groups being the most common.

4.5.   The majority of services indicated that individuals accessed their service directly, typically via telephone and email contact. In terms of referrals from specific agencies, schools/colleges and Council services were most common.

4.6.   The most significant barrier affecting organisations' ability to achieve their objectives is a lack of funding. Other common barriers identified by responses were the need for support/incentives to volunteers, and a shortage of premises, facilities and equipment. Nearly half of organisations indicated that they were aware of local people who may benefit from their service but were unable to access it due to a range of barriers.

4.7.   Finally, organisations were asked to consider the extent to which they felt they had a role in tackling a range of issues under each of the eight themes:

- In relation to *health*, organisations most commonly saw their role in the promotion of healthy lifestyles (e.g. healthy eating) and the prevention of substance abuse;

- Organisations were more likely to see themselves as having a role in broader *economy and employment* issues such as improving deprived areas rather than specific employment-related issues;

- *Education and young people* was an area in which organisations saw themselves as having a role to play particularly in relation to provision of extra-curricular activities for children;

- With regards to *social issues* organisations most commonly stated that they could support greater community engagement and prevention of anti-social behaviour;

- Few organisations felt that they had a significant role to play in relation to *housing and homelessness*;

- For *transport*, road safety was the key issue where groups felt they could contribute;

- With regards to the *environment*, conservation of the natural environment and sustainability issues were the key areas where local organisations felt they could make a contribution.