

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G. N. Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	n/a
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To endorse the new Community Engagement Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to resolve that

- 2.1 that the Community Engagement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 be noted and endorsed.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report; however, having a robust Community Engagement Strategy will help the Council to understand the needs of residents supporting the design and delivery of more relevant, coordinated and appropriate services, which are generally more cost effective. Working towards the aims of the strategy could also be beneficial in regards of the council's reputation and may help to reduce potential complaints.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 The Community Engagement Strategy addresses the legal standards surrounding consultation, including the doctrine of legitimate expectation (common law) and the Gunning Principles (1985).
- 3.3 Other specific legislation, including the Local Government Act 1999 and the Equality Act 2010 must be taken into account where appropriate.
- 3.4 Certain functions of the Council, including planning and community safety have statutory requirements to consult.
- 3.5 Failure to consult or inadequate consultation could leave the Council open to challenge through a judicial review.

- 3.6 The strategy will be reviewed every four years or sooner to comply with changes to the law or policy and practice.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7 The strategy will help all parts of the Council, staff and Elected Members, in ensuring that we design and deliver appropriate services which meet the needs of our communities. It will also help in providing a clear direction for service areas around community engagement and the support available.
- 3.8 Consultation on the strategy was also undertaken with several service managers/officers, including the Community Safety Manager and the Senior Marketing and Communications Officer. The Unison representative has been consulted on the strategy and expressed support for the content and structure.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9 The Community Engagement Strategy sets out our approach to enabling residents and customers to be informed, involved, share their opinions and influence decision making. The Systems Thinking approach that the Council has adopted necessitates looking at what we do from the customers (or residents) point of view and understanding their different and sometimes multiple needs (including those who do not actively engage with the Council). By listening to residents and customers and recognising different needs, the Council will be better placed to design and deliver appropriate, coordinated and relevant services to the communities it serves.
- 3.10 The strategy supports the Council's approach to equality and diversity and will form overarching principles for how we engage all members of our community. Consultation and engagement are a key process in considering the equality impacts that decisions and policies may potentially have on the public.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Community Engagement Strategy

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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