STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 5
25 JULY 2012	Public Report

Report of the Executive Director of Executive Resources

Contact Officer(s) – Heather Darwin, Head of Service Improvement
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THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1.   PURPOSE

1.1   The purpose of this report is to provide the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the Community Engagement Strategy following a request at your Committee on 7th March following the recent consultation regarding the improvements in the Bridge Street area of the City.

1.2   The Community Engagement Strategy has been developed to replace the current consultation strategy. The strategy sets out the way we will involve local people in appropriate and relevant ways in order to ensure their views and opinions are taken into account when identifying and assessing priorities, identifying solutions to problems and redesigning services.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   The Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee are requested to endorse the Community Engagement Strategy.

3.   LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

3.1   The strategy has been written for adoption by the Council but its remit could be extended across the Greater Peterborough Partnership (GPP). The strategy will be supplemented with a more detailed toolkit for use when identifying, planning, delivering and reviewing community engagement activities. It will also document how the GPP should be looking to identify opportunities to bring together and deliver joint community engagement activities to minimise duplication and maximise the benefits for stakeholders and residents.

Benefits of effective community involvement include:

1. Giving local people the opportunity to influence and shape local services,
2. Generating feedback about local services,
3. Allowing the City Council and GPP to understand the needs of the local community and adapt services to meet these needs

3.2   The outcomes and results of the consultation activities are used to identify and drive service improvement and transformation activity through the Single Delivery Plan.

3.3   The benefits of a joined up approach amongst the Council, partners and agencies is to identify the opportunities to bring together and deliver joint community engagement activities to minimise duplication and maximise the benefits for stakeholders and residents. Partnership.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1   The following activities are currently being undertaken within the Council, across the GPP and other agencies:

The Council has an existing contract with a market research company to operate a Citizens Panel, who are asked to complete a number of annual surveys and some focus groups. Panel members have been recruited to be a representative sample of the demographic profile of the residents of the City. The last survey was in March 2012 with the next survey planned for September 2012, but discussions have commenced to deliver a new engagement vehicle. The outcomes and results of the consultation activities are used to identify and drive service improvement and transformation activity through the Single Delivery Plan.

The Neighbourhood Window is a web based application to display information collected by Peterborough City Council and its partners using GIS mapping technology, to allow authorised viewers to:

- Review characteristics of the City, neighbourhoods and areas;
- Provide information to enable officers to formulate measures to resolve negative issues revealed in these areas;
- Monitor the effectiveness of area strategies through representation of trends;
- Identify opportunities for service re-design using the data, for example linking gritting routes to incidences of slips and falls; and
- Ensure local government decision-makers have an ongoing source of evidence on which to base their decisions and to make comparisons between different parts of the City.

Benefits of using the Neighbourhood Window

- Avoids duplication of data gathering;
- Streamlines overall service delivery;
- Enhances the ability to target resources;
- Ensures effective evidence for Needs Assessments;
- Facilitates clear outcome based decision making;
- Offers panoptic yet specific neighbourhood knowledge;
- Single repository of disparate data;
- A Peterborough project that is wholly owned

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1   The strategy sets out the way the Council and its partners will involve local people in appropriate and relevant ways in order to ensure their views and opinions are taken into account when identifying and assessing priorities, identifying solutions to problems and redesigning services.

5.2   The Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee are requested to note that the Community Engagement Strategy is in addition to the role of Members, as community leaders, and the provisions within the Member Officer protocol in the Constitution.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1   The Community Engagement Strategy is a city-wide project and as such there are no implications for any individual Ward.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1   The Single Delivery Plan, Programme 7 board endorsed a report on the Community

Engagement Strategy at their meeting on 6th December 2011. It was acknowledged there was a risk around the fragmentation of communication activity, which is organisationally based, and could be remodelled to programme areas, in the manner of the Safer Peterborough Partnership.
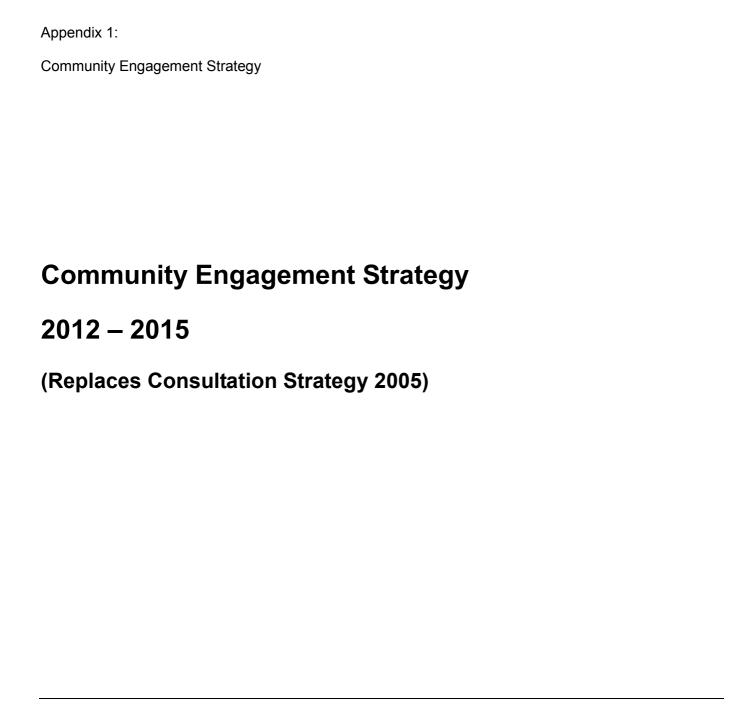
8.   NEXT STEPS

8.1   Following consideration by the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee, the Community engagement Strategy is to be referred to Cabinet.

8.2   The Community Engagement Strategy is to be shared with key partners including the Disability, Race and Faith groups.

9.   BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1   There were no background documents used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.   APPENDICES

10.1   The Community Engagement Strategy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Appendix 1:

Community Engagement Strategy

Community Engagement Strategy

2012 – 2015

(Replaces Consultation Strategy 2005)

v1.0 July 2012

i. Version History

This table records the status, version history & authors of this document

Version	Date	Author	Status	Version History
0.6	08.10.11	Fiona Fowler	development draft	Issued to Heather Darwin, feedback incorporated
0.7	27.10.11	Fiona Fowler	development draft	success measures added
0.8	14.11.11	Fiona Fowler	development draft	issued to Heather Darwin, Rod James, Sharif Al-Rousi, Rachel Thornton for proof read and feedback
0.9	23.11.11	Paul Stevenette	development draft	To Programme 7
1.0	12.05.12	Paul Stevenette	Final Version	Consideration by CMT.

ii. List of Quality Reviewers

This table records the quality reviewers of this document

Name	Role	Date
Heather Darwin	Head of Service Improvement Guidance on content and presentation, feedback	8.10.11, 14.11.11
Rod James	Data Quality Manager, Strategic Improvement Team Initial proof read and feedback	14.11.11
Sharif Al-Rousi	Project Manager, Business Transformation Initial proof read and feedback	14.11.11
Rachael Thornton	Head of Communications Initial proof read and feedback	14.11.11
Marcus Richardson	Head of Performance Mgmt and Information, PCC (CHS) Comment and feedback	
Alison Sunley	Head of 8-19 Service, PCC (CHS) Comment and feedback	
Leonie McCarthy	Social Inclusion Manager, PCC (Operations) Comment and feedback	
Adrian Chapman	Head of Neighbourhoods, PCC (Operations) Comment and feedback	31.01.12
Kate Tonge	Head of Communications, Cambs Police Feedback	

iii. Authorisers for sign off

This table records the pre-defined person(s) required to formally sign off the document

Name	Role	Date	Version
Heather Darwin	Head of Service Improvement	6.12.11	V.09
GPP Programme Board 7		6.12.11	

iv. Distribution when authorised

Internal	External
Insite pages – tbc	PCC Website
SMT, Heads of Service	GPP Partners – tbc

v. Review Date

Next review date: December 2012
Responsible Officer: Customer Information Manager, Strategic Improvement Team
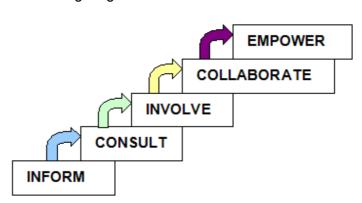
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Executive Summary

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Peterborough City Council and its Partners recognise that resident and stakeholder engagement can make a really positive difference to delivering high quality services. This strategy sets out the way we will involve local people in appropriate and relevant ways in order to ensure their views and opinions are taken into account when identifying and assessing priorities, identifying solutions to problems and redesigning services.

1.2 The strategy has been written initially for adoption by the Council, but its remit could be extended across the Greater Peterborough Partnership[1] (jointly called the Partners elsewhere in the document). Therefore, most references could equally apply to both the Council and its Partners, although section 2.3 in particular will need to be extended to incorporate the statutory duties of other Partners who adopt the strategy.

1.3 This strategy will be supplemented with a more detailed toolkit for internal use when identifying, planning, delivering and reviewing community engagement activities. It will also document how the Partners should be looking to identify opportunities to bring together and deliver joint community engagement activities to minimise duplication and maximise the benefits for stakeholders and residents.

2.0 Definition

2.1 The following broad definition of community engagement has been agreed by the Partners: 'involving residents, listening to their views and reaching joint decisions on improving services across the City'. However, consultation and engagement can have various meanings and scope for different partners and services, and a key element of this strategy is to identify what community engagement means and how it fits together.

2.2 The varying levels of involvement in the wider context of community engagement are demonstrated in the following diagram:

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[1] The Greater Peterborough Partnership brings together local authority services (including health, fire, police and council) as well as representatives from the public, private, faith, community and voluntary sector. The Partners work collectively to deliver a City wide vision and priorities.

Empowering: allowing local people to have more involvement in changes, sharing responsibility for making decisions and the accountability for the outcomes of these decisions. It will be used when no decisions have been made, there is sufficient time and opportunity to involve people and when Partners are fully able to act on the decisions made. Local examples include:

- Big Scrutiny Event 2011
- The Citizens Power Project through Change makers

Collaborating: working in partnership with local people in each aspect of a decision, including the development of alternatives and identifying preferences. Collaborative partnerships can range from loose affiliations through to the establishment of formal boards or committees. It will be adopted when no decisions have been made, there is sufficient time and opportunity for stakeholder involvement and the project is likely to have a significant community impact. Local examples include:

- Operation CAN do though Residents Advisory group
- "Use said We did"

Involving: working with local people to ensure their concerns are directly reflected in alternatives and solutions. It will be adopted when the success of an initiative is dependant on the involvement of its users, there are a number of possible options, the project is likely to have a significant community impact, and where more in depth public views are required. For example:

- The Midland Road week of action

Consulting: the process undertaken to research and gather the views and opinions of stakeholders to inform service delivery and/or improvement. It will be adopted when there is an opportunity for stakeholders to influence or affect choices and will feed into decision making. Some consultation is governed by statutory guidance and instruction, for example building / planning development and the Council budget. Foe example:

- The Citizens Panel through recent Customer Services involvement

Informing: the mechanisms undertaken to advise our customers and stakeholders of changes, updates and improvements to our services and processes. It would be adopted when the Partners have no control over decisions, when decisions have been made, or a project has limited impact on the community. Local examples include:

- GPP forum
- Neighbourhood committee

2.3 There are specific legal and democratic frameworks that apply to certain aspects of community engagement activities. In addition, there are prescriptive consultation and engagement requirements that cover specific Partner or Council activities and service areas – for example health and planning / building control. This strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure it takes account of up to date legislation and good practice.

2.3.1 Legal duties

Duty to Consult[2] – relevant authorities are under a duty to consult representatives of a wide range of local people.

Duty to Involve[3] – relevant authorities are under a duty to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".

The Localism Act[4] – received royal ascent on 15 November 2011 . Additional duties that will need to be incorporated into the delivery of this strategy, for example new rights and powers for local communities, and reforms to the planning and housing laws.

2.3.2 Democratic duties

Petitions: Peterborough City Council welcomes petitions and recognises that they are one way in which people can let us know their concerns.

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[2] Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended b s137 of the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007)
[3] Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
[4] The Localism Act 2011

Scrutiny: local residents may request that the appropriate scrutiny committee review a subject or matter of concern in the city. It could be about services provided by Peterborough City Council or any other aspects of public services provided in the City.

2.4 This strategy will impact local residents, stakeholders, the wider community who may be invited to take part in consultation activities, or those who might be affected by any changes to service provision that the results may influence. Stakeholders include:
- Residents, customers and the public overall
- Local business and commerce and their employees
- Service users, potential service users, families and carers of service users
- Partner agencies, community groups, voluntary bodies and faith groups
- Staff
- Councillors

3.0 Principles

3.1 In delivering effective community involvement, our principles will be to ensure that:
3.1.1 customers and stakeholders are aware that the Partners actively seek and take account of their views and opinions.
3.1.2 consultation activities have a clear purpose, and the methods are timely and appropriate for the intended outcomes.
3.1.3 Partners identify ways of involving groups of people who are often excluded from traditional consultation activities.
3.1.4 activities encompass and take account of more modern. communication channels such as social media.
3.1.5 information arising from consultation activities is shared both internally and externally with participants, and acted upon appropriately.
3.1.6 the Partners co-ordinate and make best use of resources.

4.0 Objectives

4.1 This strategy (and the operating framework supporting it) is intended to ensure the delivery of the following objectives:
4.1.1 A co-ordinated, systematic and balanced approach to community engagement.
4.1.2 The adoption of methods which respect diversity, are sensitive to the needs of the local community and are consistent with equality legislation and good practice.
4.1.3 The development of innovative and creative methods of community involvement that are consistent with the habits and needs of local people.
4.1.4 Securing good value for money.
4.1.5 Effective monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of activities.

5.0 Benefits

5.1 The benefits of effective community engagement include:
5.1.1 Giving local people the opportunity to influence and shape local services.
5.1.2 Helping Partners to identify opportunities and set priorities
5.1.3 Making sure Partners provide the services residents need and want, both now and in the future.
5.1.4 Building a firm and positive relationship between the Partner organisations and the local community.
5.1.5 Showing local people that the Partners are committed to being open and accountable to them as stakeholders.
5.1.6 demonstrating to local people that the Partners take notice of their views and take appropriate action as a result of listening to them.
5.1.7 Being able to demonstrate monitoring and evaluating performance.
5.1.8 Good use of limited resources.
5.1.9 Generating feedback about services delivered by Partners.
5.1.10 Allowing Partners to understand the needs of the local community and adapt services to meet these needs.

6.0   Current and Future Methods

6.1   The Partners will utilise various methods to deliver an effective community engagement programme, including the following:
   a) information leaflets, notices, flyers, e-mail updates and letters
   b) website updates
   c) telephone surveys
   d) questionnaires and surveys (telephone, paper and electronic)
   e) focus groups
   f)   face to face interviews
   g) workshops and surgeries
   h) public meetings
   i)   social media
   j)   user forums
   k) resident's forums and neighbourhood committees
   l)   consultation / engagement forums
   m) working groups
   n) youth council
   o) Member's surgeries

6.2   For a number of years, Peterborough City Council has recruited and used a Citizen's Panel as a key resource to provide representative feedback, identify local priorities, assess service needs and determine policy development and change. The Panel remains in existence with a review of its existence and future structure to take place during in 2012.

6.3   Civic Commons is one aspect of a jointly funded 2 year external project which is running through to early 2013 and is intended to "combine deliberative participation, capacity building and a social action network"[5]. As it evolves, it is likely to offer alternative options for improving community engagement and participation, which will be relevant to this strategy in the future.

6.4   Another future opportunity which will be evolving during the lifetime of this strategy is how we utilise modern technology, and in particular social media, as an effective community engagement and participation tool. These technologies have the potential to provide enormous benefits to the Partners, once the effective boundaries, resources and management are properly identified and documented.

7.0   Monitoring and Evaluating Progress

7.1   Consultation and engagement activities will be subject to an internal monitoring process, to ensure they comply with the objectives and principles outlined in this document.

7.2   Successful community engagement for the Council and its Partners will be demonstrated in the following ways.

Success measure	How will we know
Better community cohesion and sense of community	Improved results measured through relevant questions asked of residents
More civic participation and volunteering	Increase in the number of registered volunteers measured by PCVS[6] Increase in people willing to be involved in engaging in civic participation activities
People having a greater stake in the local decision making process	Increased participation in consultations New groups set up to engage with officers and influence key local

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[5] E Norris & M McClean *The Civic Commons, A Model for Social Action* (RSA Projects February 2011)
[6] PCVS – Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services

	decisions
Better perception of social relations and the level of anti-social behaviour in the City	Improved results measured through relevant questions asked of residents
Enhanced experiences for service users	Improvement in satisfaction rates for service users following relevant engagement activities, as measured through user surveys

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