

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM:**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**22 NOVEMBER 2007**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET DECISION**

**Corporate and Social Inclusion – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Laing**

#### **COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

1. Summary

This report introduces the draft Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework and recommends Cabinet to approve the document. The Framework formalises and re-iterates our commitment to all three areas of our current work.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to approve the draft Communication Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

Approval of the new Communication Consultation and Engagement Framework will ensure the Council promotes the good practice in this area and achieves greater coordination of these activities across the Council.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or

giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;

- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

**Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.**

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## **CABINET DECISION**

### **COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

#### **SUMMARY**

This report introduces the draft Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework and recommends Cabinet approve the approach it outlines. Approval of the new Communication Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework will ensure the Council promotes the good practice in this area and achieves greater coordination of these activities across the Council.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to approve the draft Communication Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework.

#### **DETAIL**

1. The Council has a strong track record in communicating, consulting and engaging with its residents, for example through Stockton News and the biennial IPSOS MORI residents survey. The Council and its partners are continuing to develop their approach to engagement through a variety of means, most notably through the area partnerships.
2. The Corporate Policy Select Committee reviewed corporate consultation as part of its 2006 – 2007 work programme and made a series of recommendations, one of which was the production of a revised consultation strategy.
3. As a result the draft Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework has been produced which takes on board the recommendations of the Select Committee. It is informed by national drivers to increase levels of community involvement and also pulls together the large amount of work already undertaken by the Council into a simple strategic document.
4. The draft Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework is underpinned by a series of supporting documents which offer support and guidance for officers in carrying out their communication, consultation and engagement activities. An example is the annual Consultation Plan for 2007/08 which is updated quarterly. Appendix 2 is that updated to Quarter 2, to September 2007

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5. There are no financial implications arising as a direct result of this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6. The draft Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework helps the Council achieve its various legal obligations in terms of resident involvement.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

7. The Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

8. The Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework will inform service delivery and assist in achieving targets and outcomes across the Community Strategy.

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

9. The Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been found to have a positive impact in terms of the Council meeting its equality aims and duties.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

10. The Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategic Framework has been informed by the Corporate Policy Committee review of Corporate Consultation. It affects all wards in the borough equally. It has not been subject to specific external consultation.

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### Background Papers

Corporate Policy Select Committee, Corporate Consultation Review

### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

The Framework affects all wards in the borough equally.

### Property

At this stage there are no links to the Capital Programme and Asset Management Plan.