

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**26 NOVEMBER 2009**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE,  
ADULT SERVICES AND  
SOCIAL INCLUSION SELECT  
COMMITTEE**

### **CABINET DECISION**

**Access and Communities – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor David Coleman**

#### **EFFICIENCY, IMPROVEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION (EIT) REVIEW OF COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

1. Summary

This report presents the findings of the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee following the EIT review of Communication, Consultation and Engagement.

The review examined all of the Council's communication, consultation and engagement with the public, employees, Councillors and partners and considered how services could be further improved, whilst realising efficiency savings.

2. Recommendations

**1. That a centralized Communications team be created which combines all media, marketing, employee communications, web development and internet content responsibilities within the Council. Strategic leadership of the team will be provided by a Head of Communications.**

**2. That the procurement of marketing services, advertising, printing, design services, brand development and photography be centralized and delivered by the communications team through 4 year framework agreements.**

**3. That a review of the Design and Print service is undertaken in the final quarter of 2009.**

**4. That a clear Council protocol for using the corporate Consultation team be established.**

**5. That the possibility of delivering a consultation services for other public sector organisations be explored.**

**6. That a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy be produced to provide a co-ordinated and strategic approach to community engagement and involvement. The Strategy will include a strategic framework on funding for and use of community buildings. The Strategy will be completed by 31 March 2010.**

**7. That a single Community Engagement team be created to deliver the Community Engagement Strategy. The team will be in place by 31 March 2010 to deliver the strategy in recommendation 6 above.**

**8. That an Employee Engagement Strategy be produced that brings together all current engagement activities and as part of this process that an employee suggestion scheme with clear feedback route be introduced. The strategy and scheme will be in place by 31 December 2009.**

**9. That the Communications, Engagement and Consultation teams consider and report back to the Select Committee on the detailed service improvement opportunities included in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of this report by 31 March 2010.**

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To improve Council communication, consultation and engagement whilst seeking to achieve service efficiencies.

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**

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#### **SUMMARY**

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The review examined all of the Council's communication, consultation and engagement with the public, employees, Councillors and partners and considered how services could be further improved, whilst realising efficiency savings.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That a centralized Communications team be created which combines all media, marketing, employee communications, web development and internet content responsibilities within the Council. Strategic leadership of the team will be provided by a Head of Communications.**
- 2. That the procurement of marketing services, advertising, printing, design services, brand development and photography be centralized and delivered by the communications team through 4 year framework agreements.**
- 3. That a review of the Design and Print service is undertaken in the final quarter of 2009.**
- 4. That a clear Council protocol for using the corporate Consultation team be established.**
- 5. That the possibility of delivering a consultation services for other public sector organisations be explored.**
- 6. That a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy be produced to provide a co-ordinated and strategic approach to community engagement and involvement. The Strategy will include a strategic framework on funding for and use of community buildings. The Strategy will be completed by 31 March 2010.**
- 7. That a single Community Engagement team be created to deliver the Community Engagement Strategy. The team will be in place by 31 March 2010 to deliver the strategy in recommendation 6 above.**
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**9. That the Communications, Engagement and Consultation teams consider and report back to the Select Committee on the detailed service improvement opportunities included in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of this report by 31 March 2010.**

## **DETAIL**

1. The attached report presents Cabinet with the findings of the EIT review of Communication, Consultation and Engagement undertaken by the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee between June and October 2009.
2. The review formed part of a three year programme of EIT (Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation) reviews covering all services provided by the Council. The programme aims to ensure that all services are reviewed in a systematic way to ensure that they are provided in the most efficient manner, provide value for money and identify opportunities for service improvements and transformation. The Select Committee review examined all of the Council's communication, consultation and engagement with the public, employees, Councillors and partners. The overall aims of the review were:
  - To communicate what we do more effectively and to improve perceptions of the Council and the area
  - To identify options for future strategy, policy and service improvement that will deliver efficiency savings and sustain/improve high quality outcomes for Stockton residents. To make effective use of technology and transform the way we communicate, consult and engage with local communities, our staff and key stakeholders.
3. Following consideration by Cabinet an action plan will be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how approved recommendations will be implemented detailing officers responsible for action and timescales.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4. The financial impact of the communications recommendations is still being evaluated in detail as the new procurement arrangements are being developed. Indications based on spend over the last two years and early work on new procurement arrangements indicates that the total savings will be in the order of £300,000.
5. The recommendations relating to consultation are cost neutral; any additional work to carry out consultation services in partnership with other public sector organisations would be on a cost sharing basis.
6. The recommendations relating to engagement are cost neutral.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. Consultation has taken place with affected employees and Unions.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

8. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

9. The review supports all Core Improvement Themes but, in particular, Stronger Communities: Strong Community Involvement

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

10. The recommendations have been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and the recommendations have, at this stage, been assessed as having a positive impact. A copy of the impact assessment has been placed in the Members' Library. It will be important, however, to review the impact of the recommendations as part of the monitoring of the Select Committee Review.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

11. Consultation has taken place with all Councillors, employees, Viewpoint and Unions. Full details are set out in the Select Committee report.

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### Background Papers

None

### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Not ward specific

### Property :

None