

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....30th September 2010

1. Title of Item/Report

Community Engagement Strategy

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet was reminded that at its meeting held in November 2009 it had agreed recommendations coming from the EIT review of Communications, Consultation and Engagement, undertaken by the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee. Recommendations included the production of a Community Engagement Strategy and the bringing together of the disparate engagement functions across the Council into a single team.

The Community Engagement Strategy was provided to members and had been produced following a review of a variety of other Engagement Strategies, good practice guidelines and in discussion with:

- A range of staff involved in engagement activity across the council;
- Key stakeholders including; Catalyst, Stockton Community Groups and Residents Association, Lead Cabinet Members
- Corporate Management Team
- The EIT review lead officer

The strategy set out The Council's commitment and approach to engaging with local communities, whether those communities were based on geography, social groups, common interest or background and circumstances. It described a set of underpinning principles for services to use in their engagement activity and against which they could be challenged. It detailed what had been achieved so far, what more the Council planned to do as well as providing information on the range of ways communities could engage with the council.

It also set out who the strategy was aimed at, described what the Council meant in Stockton-on-Tees by community engagement and why it felt it was important to have a strategy.

The Community Engagement Strategy was just one of a suite of documents that was aimed at being clear about how communities could

help influence and shape services and be supported to actively contribute to the solutions. The other documents, which would be presented to future Cabinets included:

- A revised consultation strategy;
- A new communications strategy;
- A revised COMPACT;
- A new asset transfer policy;
- A reshaped voluntary and community sector support fund following the consultation last year

It was explained that a 'my community' section had been created on the councils website which was currently in the process of being populated and would be further developed as part of the implementation of the strategy. A section of Stockton News was allocated to 'Stronger Communities' and would be used as part of our approach.

Members noted that following the departure of the Assistant Chief Executive from the authority in March 2009, the policy functions within that portfolio had been with the Head of Performance and Partnerships on an interim basis. The communication function was with the Head of Communications following successful recruitment to that post. The interim arrangements had worked well. As part of the reshaping of the team members were asked to approve to formalise the interim arrangements and delete the Assistant Chief Executive post from the establishment.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the Community Engagement Strategy, as appended to the report be approved.
2. the deletion of the Assistant Chief Executive post from the establishment be approved.
3. the formalising of the current interim arrangements be approved i.e., the policy function transfers to the Head of Performance and Partnerships and is subject to Hay evaluation.

### 3. Reasons for the Decision

Completion of a recommendation from the Cabinet report on the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation of Communication, Consultation and Engagement.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councilor Mrs Beaumont declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Community Engagement Strategy as she was a Board Member serving on Tees Valley Riverside Community College.

Councilor Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Community Engagement Strategy as he was a Board Member serving on Catalyst.

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

By no later than midnight on Friday 8 October 2010.

Proper Officer  
04 May 2010