

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting23rd March 2016

1. Title of Item/Report

Scrutiny Review of Consultation

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that presented Elected Members with context, findings and recommendations following the officer led review of practice with respect to Consultation. The review reported into Executive Scrutiny Committee, their scrutiny and challenge were detailed within the report.

The findings were summarised within the report and were in line with the Review's key lines of enquiry.

Executive Scrutiny Committee considered the scope for the review on 15 September 2015. The Committee discussed how the use of social media and Stockton News could be used and considered within the review.

On 24 November, Executive Scrutiny Committee received a report that provided baseline information. Key information provided included statutory requirements, the Council's current process, and developments such as the procurement of a comprehensive consultation webbased solution. This Stakeholder Consultation Portal would be available for the whole Authority to use.

It was also discussed that a combined Consultation, Community Engagement and Communications Strategy would be developed. Members were reassured that:

- membership of the Viewpoint Panel was refreshed periodically
- it was considered important to move towards electronic solutions but it was recognised that not all residents had access to a computer and hard copy consultation was still available
- officers in individual service areas would take corporate advice on surveys relating to their own service provision

On 8 March 2016, the Committee received a report that presented the findings and recommendations of the review. The Committee were also presented with a demonstration of the new 'My Views' Consultation Portal.

Members' questioning and discussion focussed on the usage of the Portal and this was detailed within the report.

With regard to the next steps following the approval of any recommendations, an action plan would be developed to progress the recommendations. Reports on progress on delivery of the action plan would be made to

Executive Scrutiny committee.

RESOLVED that:-

1. A small Corporate consultation resource be maintained to provide strategic consultation advice and guidance for the organisation, including supporting the procurement of external research services as required.
2. Clear guidelines be provided for Directorates about when a consultation should be corporately led or Service- led. This guidance will support the requirement to identify a clear lead for all consultations and will identify the consultations with the broadest potential impact (either financially, reputationally or politically) and where the Corporate Consultation team should be involved.
3. Use of "My Views" be maximised as the single, corporate, consultation software solution and as the single place for any of our stakeholders to access information about any and all of our offline and online consultations and engage in any of our online consultations.
4. Training to key officers continues to be provided on the use of "My Views" and expand the user base.
5. The Council continues to promote and deliver consultation methods training as required across the whole Authority.
6. The Council's Consultation, Community Engagement and Consultation strategies be replaced with one new combined Communication, Consultation and Engagement strategy.
7. The Council continues to participate in sharing good practice, local and regional benchmarking groups to help ensure that corporate advice, support and guidance is current.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To improve consultation coordination across the Council, ensuring consistency and reducing risk (reputational, financial and political) in consultation delivery.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

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

Midnight, 4th April 2016

Proper Officer
29 March 2016