

# CASSI Review of Consultation

## Service Position Statement

<b>Service baseline / Initial Challenge</b>	<b>Consultation</b>
<p><b>Description of current service</b></p> <p>Who provides the service?</p>	<p>Consultation Activity is carried out by 1.5 staff in the Corporate Policy, Performance and Partnerships Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research and Consultation Advisor (P/T)</li> <li>- Residents Panel co-ordinator</li> </ul> <p>Additional specialist advice and support is provided on consultation activity by the engagement and diversity teams.</p> <p>Consultation with children, young people, parents and carers in the design and delivery of services in CESC also takes place through the “PIC” (Participation, Involvement &amp; Consultation) network. The service does not have a dedicated resource.</p> <p>The Over 50’s and Youth Forums are supported by CESC and provide a consultation vehicle on Council and PCT policy and services.</p>
<p>History how service was formed and why it exists</p>	<p>The Corporate consultation function has been in place since the formation of the unitary authority. The PIC Network was formed in 2006.</p>
<p>How is the service provided?</p>	<p>The service is provided directly by the corporate teams and also through provision of support to consultation activity across the authority.</p> <p>Direct Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of the Council’s Citizen’s Panel (“Viewpoint”), co-ordinating questionnaire based research, analysing and reporting results and arranging and chairing focus group meetings.</li> <li>- Co-ordination and publication of the Consultation Plan, Chairing of the Council’s Consultation Working Group.</li> <li>- Management of the large scale “Tell us what you think” events for the Council &amp; partners.</li> </ul> <p>Support to consultation activity across the Council is by providing technical advice eg. On the form of consultation, questionnaire design etc.</p> <p>The PIC consultation activity is provided through the PIC steering group, a multi-agency partnership who deliver the PIC action plan. The Over 50s and Youth forums are supported by CESC staff as part of other roles.</p>

## CASSI Review of Consultation

### Service Position Statement

<p>What influences impact on the service( political social, economical, technological)?</p>	<p>There has been a growth in the demand for consultation service to inform policy development and service delivery, this is in line with the national agenda to increase the role of the community in public services.</p>
<p>How does the service perform?</p>	<p>The Service performs well but is struggling to meet the challenge of an increased demand for consultation activity combined with reduced resources.</p>
<p>What does inspection tell us about this service?</p>	<p>The April 2008 Corporate Assessment states that:</p> <p>“The Council has a strong and effective consultation mechanism” (para. 40)</p> <p>“Priorities take account of views expressed by partners and residents including LSP” )para. 50)</p> <p>“The Council is well informed about the views of older people” (para.121)</p> <p>The Joint Area Review of Children’s services:</p> <p>“There is an extensive consultation with young people...PIC network provides a good focus for consultation activity and for promoting participation...” (para. 58)</p>
<p>What resources are used?</p>	<p>See Finance/Resource Allocation section below.</p>
<p>What assets are used to deliver the current service?</p>	<p>Standard office resources.</p>
<p>Are there any limitations or barriers affecting the delivery of the service?</p>	<p>The consultation activity is delivered by a small team.</p>
<p>If the service is outsourced or provided by a third party, how are service standards monitored?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

## CASSI Review of Consultation

### Service Position Statement

<p>Could the service be provided through a different mechanism?</p>	<p>The Service could be outsourced or delivered in partnership with other public sector organisations – either other public services in Stockton or other Tees Valley Local Authorities.</p> <p>The service could be delivered through individual service areas.</p>
<p><b><u>Customer</u></b></p> <p>Who are the customers what are their needs now?</p>	<p>All Services within the Council. There is no comprehensive measure of the actual demand for consultation services as the Consultation Working Group and the Consultation Plan which is update quarterly by nominated officers within each Service Grouping has become out of date. There is evidence that consultation activity is taking place across the services without corporate involvement and there are capacity issues in the corporate team.</p>
<p>How are service users consulted and how do their views shape delivery?</p>	<p>Service users are consulted through the Consultation Working Group. However see comment above</p>
<p>How satisfied are the customers?</p>	<p>The Viewpoint Survey mechanism is well used and respected by those who use it. However there is evidence that the consultation service is not well enough marketed within the Council. In some cases potential service users are not aware of the service. There is a separate issue about capacity within the team which must be addressed before the service marketed to internal customers.</p>
<p>How do you communicate with your users?</p>	<p>Through the Consultation Working Group.</p>
<p>How are these services promoted / marketed?</p>	<p>The service is not marketed</p>
<p>What do Viewpoint Surveys/ internal audit reports tell us about the service?</p>	<p>A Viewpoint Survey on Viewpoint was carried out in 2006. It found an overall net satisfaction with Viewpoint of 90% with 92% of panel members feeling very or fairly well informed about Viewpoint Consultation Focus Groups were held in August 2006. In overview the findings were positive but recommendations were made improvements in the process.</p> <p>A “Tell us what you think” Members Survey in 2008 found that 91% of respondents were aware of consultations before they took place all or some of the time.</p> <p>64% stated that they had access to results of consultations all or</p>

## CASSI Review of Consultation

### Service Position Statement

	<p>some of the time</p> <p>64% of Members felt that there were more occasions when they should have an active role in consultations</p>
Are there customers who could use the service but don't?	Yes. The service could be marketed to external organisations however this would require additional resources.
Are there customers using the service who shouldn't be?	No
Who are the customers of the future and what are their needs?	All services in the council plus possibly external customers.
What is the likely demand for these services in the future?	The requirement to consult users is likely to continue to increase in line with the national agenda.
What do complaints/compliments tell you about these services?	None of significance.
<b><u>Aims &amp; Objectives</u></b>	
Is the service required by statute?	A statutory duty to consult does exist for some services.
Is there a statutory level of service?	No
Is the service responsive or proactive or a mixture?	Proactive.
Is the service needed?	Yes to support the statutory requirement and the national agenda. The service also provides a valuable service in helping to develop and inform service provision.

## CASSI Review of Consultation

### Service Position Statement

<p>What would happen if the service was not provided either in whole or part? How would the service react to new pressures what capacity would be required to deal with additional / new demands?</p>	<p>The council would need to continue to meet the statutory duties. The discontinuance of discretionary consultation would lead to the loss of valuable data for service and policy development and a negative impact in corporate assessment.</p>
<p>Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships etc?</p>	<p>All Councils carry out Consultation Activity.</p>
<p><b><u>Relevance / Context</u></b></p> <p>How does the service fit with the overall aims of the Council?</p>	<p>The service supports all the aims of the Council.</p>
<p>How does the service contribute to key policy areas?</p>	<p>The service provides a key tool in the development of the key policies and in the assessment of performance.</p>
<p>What policies, plans and strategies impact on the service e.g. statutory, policy, function , other services?</p>	<p>Communication, Engagement &amp; Consultation – A Strategic Framework Dec 2008.</p>
<p>Are there any political judgements / decisions involved in determining the level of service?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b><u>Financial / Resource considerations</u></b></p> <p>What are the capital and revenue costs of the service? What is the level of external 3<sup>rd</sup> party expenditure?</p>	<p>The annual Corporate Consultation activity totals £102k: Employee Costs £56k MORI Survey £25k Viewpoint £21k</p> <p>The PIC Network has a £24k allocation.</p>

## CASSI Review of Consultation

### Service Position Statement

What contracts or other arrangements are in place (spend analysis)?	None
What is the Council commitment to the contracts/ other arrangements?	N/A
Do you have any charging policies?	No
How have Gershon efficiency savings impacted on the service and how were the service planning to meet future Gershon efficiency targets?	The service is at minimal levels.
How will the current financial climate affect the service?	Limited impact
How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective?	The service could be tested through investigation of partnership or outsourcing options.
Do external contracts offer value for money?	It is possible that a joint arrangement with another public service could deliver efficiencies or increased capacity.
<b><u>Service Drivers</u></b>	
What do we need to change and why?	The service needs to grow to meet demand.
What are the main drivers of change?	Increased demand for the service due to the national agenda and the requirements of the performance regime.