

Report to: Cabinet Meeting – 4 October 2022
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Keith Girling, Organisational Development & Governance
 Director Lead: Deborah Johnson, Customer Services & Organisational Development
 Lead Officer: Ella Brady, Transformation & Service Improvement Manager, Ext.5279

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open, Key Decision
Report Title	Consultation & Engagement Strategy
Purpose of Report	Cabinet to review the Consultation & Engagement Strategy and associated action plan with the aim of seeking approval.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: a) approve the Consultation & Engagement Strategy and associated Action Plan, considering any recommendations from the Tenant Engagement Board; b) endorse the creation and use of operational guidance for officers to sit below this strategy; and c) request that Policy & Performance Improvement Committee review the impact of this strategy after one year.
Alternative Options Considered	Not applicable
Reason for Recommendations	To put an appropriate framework in place to ensure decision making is informed by resident views and services are shaped by an understanding of resident priorities and needs.

1.0 Background

1.1 The current [Consultation and Engagement Strategy](#) required updating in line with the Council's values and engagement aspirations.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 Community engagement is important as it enables the Council to maintain an understanding of local priorities and needs. This understanding is then used to positively influence service design and delivery. This enables the Council to adapt and improve ways of working by utilising feedback and knowledge gained to better meet the needs of residents. Engagement is a key tenet of the Council's values demonstrating to residents that it is trustworthy and transparent in its operations.

- 2.2 Consultation and Engagement does not cover customer feedback. This is a separate process about listening and working with communities to gather their views/insights.
- 2.3 The Consultation & Engagement Strategy (**Appendix One**) outlines the Council's high-level approach to, and supporting principals for, engagement. To ensure communities and stakeholders are involved in decisions making and can influence the future of where they live by directing change and informing service developments. This 5-year strategy is supported by an action plan (**Appendix Two**) which ensures key practices in the strategy are delivered, for example the development of operational guidance to be used by officers to support the delivery of quality engagement. This operational guidance will also be shared with consultants/third parties consulting on the Council's behalf and they will be required to follow the principals outlined in the strategy and supporting guidance.
- 2.4 This strategy is key to decision making being informed by resident views and services being shaped by an understanding of resident priorities and needs.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, Officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

3.1 Financial Implications

The development of this strategy has no direct financial impact. The cost of any individual consultation/engagement activity will be approved in its own right, as required.

3.2 Legal

The strategy, action plan and associated operation guidance have been developed with the support and input of legal colleagues.

3.3 Data Protection

The strategy, action plan and associated operation guidance have been developed with the support and input of information governance colleagues.

3.4 Equalities

The strategy has been developed considering and recognising the importance of all residents being listened to through engagement and consultation, and this is recognised in the different styles of engagement outlined and the principals of engagement. The operational guidance also provides officers with detailed advice on considering equalities, inclusion and how to reach different audiences.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None