

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

---

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Strategic Commissioning Report (SCC)
<b>DATE</b>	June 2018
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Customer and Citizen Engagement
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	COM/18/013
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Frank McGhee
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Martin Murchie
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1,2,3,4.

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report gives an overview of current arrangements for engaging and consulting with customers and citizens and makes recommendations to further develop this as part of commissioning approach.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the intention that a key principle of the commissioning approach will be the involvement of our citizens.
- 2.2 instruct the Director of Commissioning to undertake an audit and review of existing methods and activity of customer and citizen engagement and report back to the Committee with recommendations which:-
- propose a planned and co-ordinated approach to future engagement and consultation, ensuring that this meets the needs of both the Council and customers and citizens;
  - identify and spread best practice;
  - demonstrate how this will inform future commissioning.
- 2.3 instruct the Director of Commissioning to take forward a joint review, including Council, civic and partner representatives to explore civic representation and involvement, to address the questions detailed at paragraph 3.4.17 below.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Committee considered a report at its meeting in April 2018 which provided an overview of the Commissioning function which is replacing previously dispersed strategic planning arrangements. The report also advised that a consolidated Business Intelligence Unit had been established to support a single approach to capturing, sharing, analysing and using data to support decision making.

3.2 At the core of a model of strategic planning and data driven decision making are the people who use our services. Understanding their needs and their experiences is an essential element to evidence based commissioning. The report considered by the Committee in April 2018, highlighted that to get that understanding it was necessary to listen to the views, opinions and aspirations of the citizens of the City.

3.3 Across previous strategic planning arrangements, a range of activity and models have been established over many years to engage with people, build that evidence base and use it to inform decision making. In consolidating the Council’s strategic planning through a commissioning approach, there is an opportunity to review the existing arrangements and activity in order to identify and spread good practice, as well identify any gaps or duplication. The Committee has also instructed the development of a “Population Needs Assessment” to inform future commissioning. Within the Population Needs Assessment it is intended to include a strong focus on the “Customer and Citizen Perspective” which will be based on views and feedback which the Council and its partners receive from groups and individuals.

3.4 Overview of Current Consultation and Engagement Activity

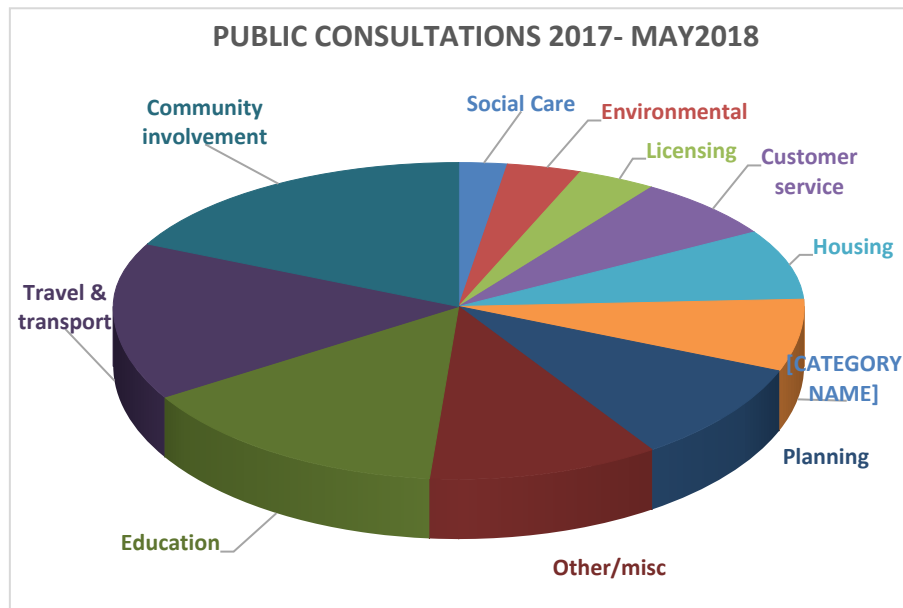
3.4.1 The Council currently undertakes a range of consultation and engagement activity. There are a number of “corporate” methods for this as well as many bespoke arrangements which have been developed and evolved over time by historical services / directorates.

**Citizen Space**

3.4.2 “Citizens Space” is the corporate software package which the Council uses to conduct on-line consultations. These consultations can be “public” or “private” and are accessed on the ACC website Consultation Hub. The volume of consultations undertaken via Citizen Space between January 2017 and May 2018 is shown below.

Public Consultations	79
Private Consultations	168
Total Responses Received	13,878
Average Number of Responses	56%
Users Registered on Consultation Hub	183

3.4.3 A summary of the public consultations show that the subjects covered breakdown as follows:-



3.4.4 It is clear that there is a high level of consultation being undertaken through Citizen Space, across a broad range of topics. To date consultations have been managed by services, rather than co-ordinated through any central process. The number of “Admin Users” for the system is an indication of the spread of its use. As well as the public consultations recorded, there were 168 “private” consultations in Citizen Space. These are often used to collect data/feedback from customers e.g. evaluations of summer activity programmes by community development teams. Whilst Citizen Space keeps a public record of all consultations there is no mechanism in place to ensure feedback and reporting on the outcomes of consultations i.e. “You Said, We Did”.

#### Citizens Panel

3.4.5 “City Voice” is the citizens panel which the Council has managed, on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership, since 2003. There have been 42 questionnaires issued since it was established, currently 2 consultations are completed each year. There is one annual survey sent to all panellists, and a second survey which focuses on the 3 localities. The last consultation was sent to 1,408 panel members, and responses were received from 795. However, a further 42 questionnaires were received from citizens not registered on the panel which brought the total questionnaires received to 837.

3.4.6 The questions included and proposed by all community planning partners, cover a range of issues which affect the community and focus on the four themes which run through the Local Outcome Improvement Plan: Prosperous People, Prosperous Place, Prosperous Economy and Enabling Technology. Findings from the surveys are used to inform and shape service provision and policy and to measure performance. There is a systematic process for reporting back to members of the Panel on actions taken as a result of their feedback.

### Civic Forum

- 3.4.7 The Civic Forum was established in 2002 by the City's Community Planning Partnership and brings together members of Community Councils, Communities of Interest and other Community Groups in the city. It is a consultative forum to represent views, priorities and issues of communities from throughout the city. Members of the Civic Forum sit on a variety of Community Planning groups.

### Community Council Forum

- 3.4.8 The Community Council Forum supports community councils across Aberdeen. It enables them to discuss, share and promote the views of communities throughout the city. The Forum helps to facilitate and coordinate joint activity amongst the community councils where appropriate. There are a number of sub-groups and representatives sit on a range of groups across the Council and also across the Community Planning Aberdeen structure.

### Community Engagement Community Planning Group

- 3.4.9 The Community Engagement Group is one of several groups under the Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) structure. The group brings stakeholders involved in community engagement together from across the partnership. It links the strategic perspective of the CPA Board and the priorities and perspectives of communities across Aberdeen. Its role is to oversee the implementation of CPA's Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy which was approved in August 2016. The Group is currently developing materials to publicise participation requests across the Partnership and has developed 'easy read' versions of the locality plans.

### Participation Requests

- 3.4.10 The Community Empowerment Act introduced legislation giving community groups new rights to participate in outcome improvement processes with public bodies, including local authorities. They are intended to provide opportunities for community bodies to be pro-actively involved in improving outcomes in their area. The Council has had one informal participation request and one formal request, which is currently ongoing, since the legislation was introduced in 2017. The ongoing request is currently being reviewed. Communication materials are being developed for the Council, and other community planning partners, by the Community Engagement Group.

### Other Consultation and Engagement Methods

- 3.4.11 Satisfaction information from service users is gathered extensively across functions using a range of methods, including the Survey Monkey online tool. Examples of services which gather satisfaction feedback from the public on an ongoing basis or have done so in the past are:
- Roads Maintenance
  - Housing Repairs
  - Housing Management
  - Development Management
  - Building Standards

3.4.12 These surveys directly target members of the public who have recently used our services to measure satisfaction with access, customer experience and overall service received. Responses are generally analysed on a quarterly basis with results being reported to Committee and shared on our website/with tenants. Managers also take a pro-active approach in acting on feedback and use it to improve the service we deliver.

3.4.13 A three-yearly survey of all Council housing tenants is also conducted to establish satisfaction on a range of housing issues such as:

- Overall satisfaction with services
- How well tenants feel they are informed
- Housing quality
- Value for money

3.4.14 Results of this survey are reported to the Scottish Social Housing Regulator, shared with tenants and used by Managers to improve the quality of housing provision.

#### Civic Leadership

3.4.15 The Council, at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, considered a report on the Council's governance framework which included a summary of engagement with groups and individuals on the development of "civic leadership" in the City.

3.4.16 The report indicated that the engagement had been welcomed and there was a desire amongst those involved that this must be broadened, deepened and sustained. In considering the report, Council endorsed a number of values and principles upon which further development of civic leadership and engagement can be taken forward. These principles and values (Appendix A) had been suggested by the community representatives who had organised and participated in the engagement. The Council agreed to "refer the development of models for civic leadership and engagement to the appropriate committees in order that they might give active consideration to how civic leadership and collaborative decision making could be strengthened within the areas of their responsibility".

3.4.17 One of the specific issues raised during the engagement was "Civic Representation and Involvement". Questions raised included:-

- how existing engagement groups and forums represented broader views across the city and how we ensure that a fair and appropriate sample of citizens are engaged;
- how they communicated and engaged with each other, with communities and individuals and with statutory bodies, including the Council, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and other agencies;
- how they could be further supported in these roles; and
- the issues and subjects which existing groups become involved in.

3.4.18 It was suggested that a joint review, including Council, civic and partner representatives, be established to explore these questions. This report recommends that such a review is taken forward.

3.4.19 It is recognised that the engagement referred to above took place within a context of a changing policy and legislation. This includes the Community Empowerment Act which places a duty on public bodies to ensure local “voices” are heard in agreeing priorities, as well as giving community groups the right to participate in public decision making. Other initiatives, such as the Participatory Budgeting models funded and supported by the Council, such as 'Your Streets, Your Say' and 'U Decide', are also relevant to civic leadership.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications in auditing and reviewing the Council’s consultation and engagement activity. Any financial implications either from investment or through improving co-ordination will be included with future proposals.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All engagement which the Council undertakes must comply with data protection legislation.

#### 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
<b>Financial</b>	None		
<b>Legal</b>	Compliance with data protection legislation.	Low	Information governance policies and practices in place.
<b>Employee</b>	None		
<b>Customer</b>	Accessibility and suitability of engagement and consultative opportunities for all	Medium	Involving customers and citizens in the design.
<b>Environment</b>	None		
<b>Technology</b>	Not working within new data protection regulation.	Low	Information governance policies and practices in place.
<b>Reputational</b>	Engagement and follow up needs to be sustained.	Medium	Engagement of customers and citizens in the design of processes.

## 7. OUTCOMES

<b>Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Prosperous Economy</b>	Engagement and consultation will impact on all four aspects of the LOIP including economy.
<b>Prosperous People</b>	This approach will be mindful of the aspirations of the people of Aberdeen and their views will inform future commissioning.
<b>Prosperous Place</b>	This approach will be mindful of the developing of Place Partnership and will support their work in key areas of the City.
<b>Enabling Technology</b>	Digital considerations will be a key aspect of engagement and consultation as this is developed.

<b>Design Principles of Target Operating Model</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Customer Service Design</b>	Commissioning will work with Customer services and other colleagues on the design and delivery of engagement and consultation.
<b>Organisational Design</b>	Co-ordinating customer and citizen feedback supports a whole systems approach in future organisational design.
<b>Governance</b>	There will be close working between the Commissioning function and other governance arrangements.
<b>Workforce</b>	A key aspect of developing this approach will be the development of staff's role in creating relationships with customers and citizens.
<b>Process Design</b>	Co-design of future provision and the development of future commissioning which is informed by customer and citizen feedback will be an important aspect of this new approach.
<b>Technology</b>	The use of technology will be important particularly regarding accessibility, analysis of data and performance.
<b>Partnerships and Alliances</b>	As part of the new commissioning approach we will seek to build on existing shared partnership approaches to engagement and consultation.

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Equality &amp; Human Rights Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Privacy Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Children's Rights Impact</b>	Not applicable

<b>Assessment/Duty of Due Regard</b>		
--------------------------------------	--	--

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Target Operating Model – Council Report 11 December 2017  
[Target Operating Model](#) - Council Report 23 August 2017

**10. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

10.1 Appendix A – Principles and Values for Civic Leadership. As agreed by Council on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

Name: Martin Murchie  
Email Address: [mmurchie@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:mmurchie@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01224 522008



Civic Leadership Values and Principles

**Values**

- Independence: We will each make up our own mind.*
- Integrity: Decisions will be made in an open and understandable manner. Information and communication will be open and transparent, and everyone will have the opportunity to influence decisions.*
- Positivity: We will look for solutions not just describe problems.*
- Respect: Understand that everyone has an equal voice and is worth listening to.*

**Principles**

*We will adhere to these values by challenging ourselves, and each other, to:*

- 1. Focus on making the right decision for the people of Aberdeen. Avoid identifying ourselves so personally with a particular position that this in itself excludes constructive discussion.*
- 2. Be prepared to be swayed by the arguments of others and be confident about admitting mistakes or changing our mind;*
- 3. Sustain an intention to involve all relevant stakeholders sharing with them any relevant facts/documents on which decisions and subsequent actions are based.*
- 4. Understand the value of constructive dialogue, listening appreciatively to the thoughts and conclusions of others.*
- 5. Share leadership and responsibility, and take time to communicate the intention of the work we undertake as citizens, and the approach we use to make decisions and initiate actions.*
- 6. Trust and have confidence and optimism in other people's expertise, knowledge and intentions*