ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Strategic Commissioning Committee
DATE	29 January 2019
REPORT TITLE	Review of Aberdeen City Council's approach to Customer and Community Engagement
REPORT NUMBER	COM/19/163
DIRECTOR	Frank McGhee
CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie
REPORT AUTHOR	Michelle Cochlan
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.4, 2.4 & 3.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report sets out the findings of a review of Aberdeen City Council's approach to Customer and Community Engagement and seeks agreement of the areas of improvement identified by the review.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the Committee agree the areas for improvement listed at paragraph 4.2.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 June the Strategic Commissioning Committee considered a report on Customer and Citizen Engagement. This report gave a high-level overview of key arrangements for engaging and consulting with customers and citizens across the Council and recommended that the Council undertakes an audit and review of the Council's existing methods and activity of customer and citizen engagement and report back to the Committee with recommendations for improvement. To this end, a review has been conducted. The full terms of reference for this review includes details of the review team and methodology undertaken and is included in the appendix to the full report.

4. SUMMARY OF AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

4.1 The review report identifies the following areas for improvement to strengthen the Council's current approach to engaging with customers and communities.

4.2 It is proposed that the Committee agree the following:

    i)   the awareness of the Community Planning Aberdeen Engagement, Participation and Improvement Strategy is promoted amongst Council staff (see para 3.1.1 of the full review report at Appendix 1);

ii)   all Chief Officers set out within Service Delivery Plans for 2019/20 the specific actions to be taken to implement the CPA Engagement, Participation and Improvement Strategy; and address any weaknesses in current practice (see para 3.1.3 and 3.2.6 of the full review report at Appendix 1);

iii)   through the Council's Performance Management Framework, the Chief Officer, Business Intelligence and Performance Management ensures that all functions report regularly through agreed monitoring arrangements, including reporting to Council committees, on customer and community engagement activity taking place, including uptake of opportunity, experience of communities and actions taken as a result; (see para 3.1.9 of the full review report at Appendix 1);

iv)   the role of Council's current consultation hub is considered as part of plans to develop a community platform which will provide a single platform for all community engagement opportunities (see para 3.2.7-3.2.10 of the full review report at Appendix 1);

v)   the findings of this review are considered in taking forward the Council's transformation project on developing civic leadership across the city (see para 3.2.12 of the full review report at Appendix 1); and

vi)   the Chief Officer, Business Intelligence and Performance Management complete the development of a customer engagement toolkit and that the toolkit include specific guidance on using digital technology (see para 3.3.8 of the full review report at Appendix 1).

4.3   Please see Appendix 1 for the full review report.

4.4   Following the agreement of the Strategic Commission Committee to these areas for improvement, an implementation plan will be developed and reported to the Council's Corporate Management Team.

5.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7.   MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	None		
Legal	Compliance with data protection legislation.	Low	Information governance policies and practices in place.
Employee	Staff are aware of the processes surrounding customer and community engagements	Low	Staff are trained and made aware of new processes and risks
Customer	Risk of making decisions which do not meet the needs of customers and communities	Medium	The findings of this review will ensure that we improve how we engage with our customers and communities.
Environment	None		
Technology	Lack of training and awareness from both staff and customers of how to use IT platforms for consultation	Medium	The findings of this review include the need to further develop the online consultation hub.
Reputational	Risk of damaging the Council's reputation.	Medium	The findings of this review include the need to raise awareness of community engagement standards.

8.   OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	Engagement and consultation will impact on all four aspects of the LOIP including economy.
Prosperous People	This approach will be mindful of the aspirations of the people of Aberdeen and their views will inform future commissioning
Prosperous Place	This approach will be mindful of the developing of Place Partnership and will support their work in key areas of the City.
Enabling Technology	This approach will be mindful of the aspirations of the people of Aberdeen and their views will inform future commissioning

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	Effective Customer and Community Engagement enables the Council to co-design effective services and interventions with members of the public.
Organisational Design	Co-ordinating customer and citizen feedback supports a whole systems approach in future organisational design.
Governance	There will be close working between the Commissioning function and other governance arrangements.
Workforce	A key aspect of developing this approach will be the development of staff's role in creating relationships with customers and citizens
Process Design	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.
Technology	The use of technology will be important particularly regarding accessibility, analysis of data and performance.
Partnerships and Alliances	As part of the new commissioning approach we will seek to build on existing shared partnership approaches to engagement and consultation

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	No direct impact
Privacy Impact Assessment	No direct impact
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	No direct impact

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Customer and Citizen Engagement

11. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix 1   Full Report on the Review of Customer and Community Engagement

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Final Report on the Review of Aberdeen City Council's approach to Customer and Community Engagement

(Version 4, 7 January 2019)

CONTENTS

1 SUMMARY OF AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1.1 This report identifies the following areas for improvement to strengthen the Council's current approach to engaging with customers and communities.

> **Areas for improvement**
>
> It is proposed that:
>
> i) the awareness of the Community Planning Aberdeen Engagement, Participation and Improvement Strategy is promoted amongst Council staff (see para 3.1.1);
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> ii) all Chief Officers set out within Service Delivery Plans for 2019/20 the specific actions to be taken to implement the CPA Engagement, Participation and Improvement Strategy; and address any weaknesses in current practice (see para 3.1.3 and 3.2.6);
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> iii) through the Council's Performance Management framework, the Chief Officer, Business Intelligence and Performance Management ensures that all functions report regularly through the monitoring arrangements for service delivery plans on customer and community engagement activity taking place, including uptake of opportunity, experience of communities and actions taken as a result; (see para 3.1.9);
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> iv) the role of Council's current consultation hub is considered as part of plans to develop a community platform which will provide a single platform for all community engagement opportunities (see para 3.2.7-3.2.10);
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> v) the findings of this review are considered in taking forward the Council's transformation project on developing civic leadership across the city (see para 3.2.12); and
>
> vi) the development of a customer engagement toolkit is completed and that the toolkit include specific guidance on using digital technology (see para 3.3.8).

1.2 Following the agreement of the Strategic Commission Committee to these areas for improvement, an implementation plan will be developed and reported to the Council's Corporate Management Team which details actions required to take these areas forward and responsible officers.

2   INTRODUCTION

2.1   Customer and community engagement is of the most important responsibilities we have as a Council. It ensures that we are delivering the services that local people need and plays an important role in improving outcomes in Aberdeen. It also contributes to good relationships between the Council and residents.

2.2   Community engagement is a critical way of ensuring that the services the Council delivers for the people of Aberdeen are aligned to the needs of communities. This is especially important at a time when society and services are changing, and resources are under pressure. Community engagement can increase confidence in the Council and support understanding and participation in decision making. Through engagement with our communities, services can better meet demand and capture areas for improvement. In other words, services can become more responsive and lead to improved outcomes by addressing specific issues.

2.3   Engaging with all citizens, not just those who get involved regularly, is instrumental in designing and delivering the right services for those who use them. It enables us to close a feedback loop and ensure that what the Council is delivering is appropriate and required. It also allows the Council to manage expectations in terms of what there is capacity to deliver. Partnership working between the Council and communities is more likely to lead to the co-design of solutions and services that are sustainable and deliver best value. Additionally, it can result in increased community capacity and resilience.

2.4   The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides a mechanism for communities to have a more proactive role in having their voices heard in making decisions regarding how services are planned and delivered. It places a duty on the Council to engage with local people and provides a legal framework to engage local people and encourage them to participate in making decisions that impact them.

2.5   This review considers how the Council is currently fulfilling this duty through its strategic policy framework; current practice in customer and community engagement; and support provided to staff and communities. It also identifies areas for improvement.

3   MAIN FINDINGS

3.1   STRATEGY, POLICY AND PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

CPA Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy

3.1.1   In growing recognition of the importance of customer and community engagement, Community Planning Aberdeen published an Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy in 2016. The development of the strategy was led by NHS Grampian and it sits alongside the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26. The document was endorsed by all members of the Community Planning Partnership, including Aberdeen City Council. It sets out guiding principles for effective community engagement and includes a commitment to develop a Partnership implementation plan. Whilst a Community Engagement Group was subsequently established an implementation plan has not been produced and awareness and use of the strategy is low.

3.1.2   Notwithstanding this, there is much engagement and participation activity taking place.   An overview of progress made by the Partnership in working with communities is reported to the Community Planning Partnership Board via its Annual Outcome Improvement Report. The 2017/18 Report was reported to the Council's Strategic Commissioning Committee on 13 September 2018 and to the Community Planning Partnership Board on 3 December 2018.

Aberdeen City Council's Strategic Policy Framework

3.1.3   There is currently no Council wide strategy which details an overall approach to take forward the Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy. In the absence of such a strategy, there is no single consistent approach to how we engage as an organisation. Whilst significant and effective engagement is undertaken in many areas, there is an opportunity to strengthen current arrangements by ensuring that a consistent approach is developed, and that Service Delivery Plans articulate the Council's overall strategy to improve customer and community engagement across all Council functions.

3.1.4   There are several service specific strategies/ policies on community engagement. Most of which are specifically required by statute

- Community Learning and Development Plan 2015-18
- Strategy for Parental Involvement 2018 - 2021
- Tenants Participation Strategy
- Planning and Sustainable Development Consultation Strategy
- Community Learning and Development Strategic Plan
- Community Council Protocol Sep 2013

3.1.5   The Council's [Target Operating Model](#) (TOM) approved on 23 August 2017 sets out how the Council will redesign its approach to customer engagement through 'Customer Service Design' principles. See section 6 of the Target Operating Model report for further information. There are a number of transformation projects in place to implement the TOM which are specifically considering customer and community engagement practice.

3.1.6   There is no overarching governance group for the Council's customer and community engagement. However, it is within the remit of the Strategic Commissioning Committee 'to approve the Council's strategic approach to joint and integrated commissioning across the public and private sectors to ensure that the needs of customers and citizens are met.' The Strategic Commissioning Committee also considers the CPA Annual Outcome and Improvement Report and has the same overview of working with communities.

Customer	Commissioning	Operations	Resources
Central to ensuring that we are engaging with customers in the most effective and systematic way	Ensures the voice of the customer is at the heart of the commissioning for outcomes approach	Embedding customer and community engagement into daily practice	Ensures that decisions are informed by customer and community needs

3.1.7   Committee reporting guidance requires report authors to detail what consultation/ engagement has taken place. This allows members of any committee to scrutinise what steps the author has taken to ensure that proposals are based on engagement with customers and communities**.**

3.1.8   Responsible services report on progress against the strategies listed at para 3.1.4 to the relevant committees. For example, the Community Council governance review is reported to full Council. The Planning performance framework is reported annually to the City Growth and Resources Committee and Planning Committee. In addition to these performance overview reports, the results of individual community engagement exercises are reported to Committees as appropriate. For example, City Voice, Locality Events outcome reports, Corporate complaints and satisfaction.

3.1.9   Whilst data on engagement is reported to Committee, see tenant participation information below, there is often a lack of data, both quantitative and qualitative, available on the experience of the customer/ community in participating in the engagement activity. Data on the representativeness of communities being engaged and action taken by the Council as a result of engagement can also be inconsistent. The data most commonly available on engagement is the uptake of the opportunity, which provides a limited view of success.

Tenant Participation

Report Type: Scorecard Report
Report Author: Susan McLeod
Generated on: 20 June 2018

Name
Tenant Participation

Code	Description	Last Update	Current Value	Current Target	Date Range 2017/18 Value	Traffic Light Icon
HOUKPIT1a	The current number of Tenant Groups	May 2018	51			
HOUKPIT1b	% of Tenant Groups that are Registered (RTO)	May 2018	35.3%	35%		
HOUKPIT2a	Annual Tenant Participation budget	2018/19	£200,696		£200,124	
HOUKPIT2b	YTD Tenant Participation budget used	May 2018	£21,210		£86,775	
HOUKPIT2c	YTD % of Tenant Participation budget used	May 2018	10.6%		43.4%	
HOUKPIT3	Average annual spend per household	2017/18	£4.05		£7.38 (16/17)	
HOUKPIT4	% of Tenants who responded to our Annual Rent Consultation	2016/17	13.6%			
HOUKPIT5	Number of Annual Performance Reports requested (Post and E-mail)	2016/17	1997			
HOUKPIT6	% of Tenants who requested the Annual Performance Report who provided feedback	2016/17	21.5%			
HOUKPIT7	% of Tenants who felt the Annual Performance Report was easy to understand	2016/17	100%			

Areas for improvement

It is proposed that:

i)   the awareness of the Community Planning Aberdeen Engagement, Participation and Improvement Strategy is promoted amongst Council staff (see para 3.1.1);

ii) all Chief Officers set out within Service Delivery Plans for 2019/20 the specific actions to be taken to implement the CPA Engagement, Participation and Improvement Strategy; and address any weaknesses in current practice (see para 3.1.3 and 3.2.6);

iii) through the Council's Performance Management framework, the Chief Officer, Business Intelligence and Performance Management ensures that all functions report regularly through the monitoring arrangements for service delivery plans on customer and community engagement activity taking place, including uptake of opportunity, experience of communities and actions taken as a result; (see para 3.1.9).

3.2   EXAMINATION OF CURRENT PRACTICE

The ladder of engagement, participation and empowerment

3.2.1   The review team conducted a high level audit of the recurring customer and community engagement activities they became aware of through the review, drawing on information available from the Council's website and through consultation with Chief Officers and key staff. The mapping is not exhaustive and does not include one-off engagement activities – see Appendix 2. The activities have been mapped against the ladder of engagement (as per the CPP Engagement, participation and empowerment strategy) to demonstrate the different levels of engagement taking place across the Council. The ladder is a framework designed to deepen engagement across the Community Planning Partnership by challenging ourselves and local people to take an increasingly collaborative approach to improving outcomes. The ultimate goal is to empower communities to lead on addressing the issues most important to them.

The ladder of engagement, participation and empowerment		
	RUNG (goal)	**TECHNIQUES**
Empowerment	**Self-determination** People implement what they decide	• Public sector stays out of the way or makes available support when requested
	Empowerment Organisations implement what people decide	• Community capacity building • Community Development Trusts
Engagement methods	**Collaboration (coproduction)** Organisations seek people's involvement in identifying issues, outlining options and making decisions	• Participatory decision-making • Citizen advisory panels • Open space events
	Involvement People's concerns inform organisations' proposed decisions	An ongoing process of engagement • Workshops • Deliberative Polling
	Consultation People's views are listened to in respect of organisations' proposed decisions	One-off opportunities for engagement • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings
	Informing Organisations keep people informed of proposed decisions	Providing information • Newsletters • Websites • Exhibitions

3.2.2   It is evident that the Council has many examples of customer and community engagement across the spectrum, from sharing information to enabling communities to increase control of their lives. Engagement at every rung of the ladder has a place and can be equally appropriate in different circumstances. Due to the volume of engagement activity taking place across the Council, the review team was unable to take a rounded view of the effectiveness of our current arrangements. This was also partly due to the lack of data available, however, several examples of best practice did come to light through the review, these have been included in Appendix 2. Notably, the Council has won a number of awards for community engagement in place planning and tenant participation.

3.2.3 Planning has also received Customer Service Excellence accreditation, the UK Government's national standard for excellence in customer service. To gain this accreditation Services are required to evidence, amongst other things, that they have developed and maintained a dialogue with the customer. It is noted that the Council is currently exploring a corporate approach to align with a customer service accreditation framework across all Council functions. Aligning with an accreditation framework provides structure to our efforts but also helps us to achieve consistency and the ability to monitor our performance.

3.2.4 Whilst data, accreditations and awards are useful indicators of the effectiveness of our engagement with customers and communities, working with communities needs to be embedded in our way of working so that we remove the obstacles which prevent communities from being empowered to do things differently. A good example of this shift in mindset is how the Council has been using participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting is a way for people to have a direct say in how, and where, public funds can be used to address local requirements. For the last two years, the Council and Community Planning Partnership has engaged community members in making decisions about how community funding is spent. This involves community members casting a vote in favour of the projects they believe in. A participatory budgeting policy is currently being developed to standardise the Council's approach which has been acknowledged nationally as best practice. The review team noted however that that the Council's Annual Audit Report published in September 18 makes a recommendation that, in the spirit of the CPP's Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy, the Council learns from best practice in citizen consultation during the budget setting process to ensure decisions are aligned with stakeholder views.

3.2.5 Of course, people can feel engaged but not listened to. Without a clear way to feedback the results of consultation ('you said, we did), there is no accountability that the view of our customers were listened to. It is possible to consult, engage and involve people and they will still be unhappy with the process and/or the outcome. For example, although Community Councils have a statutory right to be consulted on planning applications, the Chair of the Community Council Forum felt there was a general perception that Community Councils can often feel ignored. However, there is a sense that this is improving with the efforts which have been made to engage on the Local Development Plan. Even in areas we are performing well we could always do better. Cost is undoubtably a factor and it was recognised that the areas where we are doing well, there are dedicated resources (staff, technology, etc) for community engagement, and often a legislative duty to engage.

3.2.6 The challenge for Council functions is to achieve meaningful and appropriate engagement with customers and communities on important issues in the most efficient way. To do this, functions need to understand who their customers and communities are and assess to what extent they are engaging, involving and empowering these people on an ongoing basis. This self evaluation is critical to ensure that the Council continues to transform and Services are redesigned around the needs of customers and communities. The use of options appraisal will help functions develop a value for money response that meets their objectives.

14

Coordination of customer and community engagement

3.2.7 The Aberdeen City Council consultation hub is the customer facing online platform for public consultations. It is also being used by the Council to undertake customer satisfaction surveys and to offer customers the opportunity to sign up to 'Help Shape Our Services' which will gather feedback in relation to the digitalisation of services. Using Citizens Space software, it displays information about current, forthcoming and closed consultations in one place and has the potential to be a very useful resource for members of the public and staff. However, a survey of staff indicates that awareness of the hub could be improved. There is no information about how aware members of the public are of the consultation hub, other than the response rates to the various consultations. There are examples of consultations with successful uptake, but this is not consistent. For those who do know about the hub, it is possible to subscribe to alerts for future consultations.

3.2.8 The review team felt that if the consultation hub was more widely known to staff and members of the public, there would be scope to further develop it as an online platform for wider community engagement activities rather than just consultations. For example, advertising upcoming community events and festivals, targeted focus groups and consultations, or openings to join community networks such as the Civic Forum or Community Councils. Services could also plan to 'piggy back' these events to maximise opportunities, ensuring a joined up approach to engaging communities. Better promotion of the 'Engagement Hub' to staff and the public will be critical to make best use of the resource.

3.2.9 Improvements could also be made to the design of the hub to make it more engaging to members of the public. This includes enabling the 'you said, we did' functionality of the hub which is not currently utilised but is important to close the feedback loop and demonstrate that we act on citizens' views to build confidence. Another example of reporting in this way is how the Council reports back in terms of customer satisfaction and customer complaints.

You said	We listened
Customers were unhappy with the length of the automated message at the beginning of their call.	We updated the automated message so that it was shorter.
Customer advised that the email communications they had received in relation to reporting a roads and street lighting issue via the Aberdeen City Council website contained conflicting information.	We updated our systems to ensure only accurate information was provided and the incorrect reference numbers were removed.

3.2.10 There is currently no single team responsible for coordinating customer and community engagement or maintaining the consultation hub. At the moment, the Research & Information Team has responsibility for granting Services access to post consultations on the hub, but is not responsible for undertaking quality assurance. Maximising the value of the hub would be supported by co-ordination and support to services. This includes maintaining a forward planner of future engagement activity that is linked to Council priorities. See example of forward planner for tenants participation below.

3.2.11 The recent implementation of a corporate Customer Feedback Team, has enhanced the council's focus on engaging with our customers through complaints, compliments, comments and suggestions and learning from customer feedback.

Civic Leadership

3.2.12 If information sharing and consultation are at the lower end of the ladder of engagement, civic leadership is at the higher end of community empowerment. Civic leadership is about members of the public working to make a difference in the civic life of their community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to find ways to make a positive impact. Examples of civic leadership are volunteering, community building, voting, political participation, social entrepreneurship and citizen juries, all of which allow the Council to engage effectively at different levels. The Council recognised the value of civic leaders and in May 2018 it committed to the development of civic leadership in the City so that it is broadened, deepened and sustained. A transformation project is currently underway to take this forward. The review team recognises civic leadership and community engagement to be two sides of the same coin. Both aiming for positive collaboration on important issues affecting people, families and communities. Therefore, the findings of this review will help the Chief Officer for Early Intervention and Community Empowerment in taking forward the civic leadership project.

Areas for improvement

It is proposed that:

iv) the role of Council's current consultation hub is considered as part of plans to develop a community platform which will provide a single platform for all community engagement opportunities (see para 3.2.7-3.2.10);

v) the findings of this review are considered in taking forward the Council's transformation project on developing civic leadership across the city (see para 3.2.12);

3.3   SUPPORTING STAFF AND COMMUNITIES TO COLLABORATE

Advice, guidance, support and tools

3.3.1   Across the Council there are people with a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience in customer and community engagement. The Research and Information Team is a corporate resource for functions/ clusters seeking advice and guidance on consulting with the public. There are also people within functions with this level of expertise in specialised areas. For example, Communities Team, Planning and Tenants Participation. The Customer Development Team are available to support with customer co-design, journey mapping and customer feedback.

3.3.2   The most common method of customer and community engagement is consultation by survey (See Appendix 2). However, there are limitations of using surveys and they only go so far in terms of our ambition to empower communities. Staff across the Council would benefit from more support to understand the range of mechanisms available to engage communities in terms of the ladder of engagement and how to select the most appropriate depending on the circumstances.   This would require a coordinated and proactive approach to supporting functions/ clusters.

3.3.3   The Research and Information Team is primarily focussed on providing assistance to staff across the Council related to research, statistics, analysis and consultation. This includes responsibility for City Voice, the Council and Community Planning Partnership's Citizen's Panel. The team has also begun drafting a Council Customer Engagement Toolkit. Due to the central importance of the Customer and Community Engagement in the Council's Target Operating Model, it is recommended that the Toolkit is progressed as a priority to provide an important reference document for staff and signposting to additional resources, support and advice. There are many best practice examples of community engagement toolkits which can be found online – See Appendix 3.

3.3.4   As already mentioned, there is existing capacity across the Council and an opportunity to build capacity within functions/ clusters. Leadership of an effective network of customer and community engagement champions across the Council will unlock potential to strengthen our current arrangements. Organisational Development and Customer Experience Officers have a key role to play in building capacity across the Council and exploring alternatives to class based training, including the development of an OIL course.

3.3.5   This network should be represented on the Community Planning Partnership's Community Engagement Group, which is a Partnership wide group looking at how we can harness our collective resources in community engagement and share best practice across partner organisations. Best practice examples of engaging with communities which came to light during the review included the involvement of community members on outcome improvement projects (in Northfield a community member is leading an improvement project on reducing inappropriate gaming and internet safety). Also, housing tenants are being trained up as mystery shoppers to contribute to the quality improvement process.   Events and festivals are another way we are reaching out to explore important issues with people in their own community settings, for example the Arts and Climate Change mini-festival in Middlefield last year. We are also testing

innovative engagement methods with young people from Harlaw Academy and Youth groups. These are the types of excellent engagement methods that need to be shared more widely across the Council and Community Planning Partnership to stimulate ideas elsewhere.

Representativeness and Engaging the Hard to reach

3.3.6   The review team did not explore the issue of representativeness in depth, but highlights it within this final report as one of the biggest challenges facing functions/clusters in engaging customer and communities; both in the selection process and those responding. There is much written about social research methods, when a representative sample might be required and how to achieve this. Generally speaking, a representative sample is useful if you are conducting broad population research on an issue, for example environmental planning, asset management, community satisfaction, and transport studies. These projects are all similar in that they each impact on the community as a whole and so a broad cross-section of the community must be represented in order for appropriate decisions to be made. This is in contrast to much smaller impact consultations that are either aimed at community development (relationship building), behaviour change or more general and smaller scale issues where interested parties can self-select to take part. City Voice is an example where the Council seeks to achieve a representative population sample through its citizen panel. It is proposed that the toolkit being developed for staff as discussed at para 3.3.3 should include advice, guidance and techniques for staff on how to achieve the most representative sample appropriate to the objectives of the engagement.

3.3.7   A representative sample is likely to involve engaging hard to reach groups and those at risk of being marginalised for reasons such as their age, religion, socio-economic status, lifestyle and circumstances. Inclusive public engagement is about recognising the unique circumstances of hard to reach groups and addressing the barriers to engagement. Traditional methods of engagement, such as public meetings and workshops, don't always work. It is recommended that the engagement toolkit should help staff to think beyond the usual methods of engagement to encourage all members of the community to voice their opinions, ideas and concerns. This should also signpost to the organisations supporting people at risk of being seldom heard as listed in the Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy. The CPA Community Engagement Group will be key to supporting the development of the toolkit and sharing best practice.

3.3.8   Technology offers an exciting opportunity to modernise the way we engage with our communities. Fifteen years ago the best way to reach communities was to call a town hall meeting, attend a group meeting or go door-to-door. In the age of technology and connectivity, everyone has a platform and everyone has a voice. Technology allows people to participate across geography, regardless of timing, and without physical or psychological barriers. Digital inclusion is increasingly important to the Council as more aspects become digitised and technology continues to develop. In choosing a digital model for engaging with communities, staff must ensure appropriate supports are in for communities at risk of disengagement through technology, e.g. where age, health and/ or low income is a factor.   For example, Blackwood is a care at home and housing support provider which offers residents a touch screen home hub tablet device.

18

3.3.9   Use of options appraisal will help functions/ clusters conduct a cost/benefit analysis when it comes to making decisions about options for digitalisation of community engagement. Consideration should also be given to alternatives for people who are not now and may never be online.

Areas for improvement

It is proposed that:

vi)   the development of a customer engagement toolkit is completed and that the toolkit include specific guidance on using digital technology (see para 3.3.8).

APPENDIX 1

<div align="center">

TERMS OF REFERENCE
REVIEW OF CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1.1 On 7 June the Strategic Commissioning Committee considered a report on Customer and Citizen Engagement. This report gives an overview of current arrangements for engaging and consulting with customers and citizens across the Council and recommends that the Council undertakes an audit and review of existing methods and activity of customer and citizen engagement and report back to the Committee with recommendations for improvement.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This review will include the Council's arrangements for customer and community engagement across all functions. This includes joint arrangements with community planning partners. The review will not consider the effectiveness of individual partner arrangements.

3. AIM & OBJECTIVES

3.1 The aim of the review is to consider the effectiveness of the Council's current arrangements for engaging with customers and communities to identify recommendations which can strengthen our approach to inform future commissioning.

3.2 Objectives:

- Examine the Council's current practice in customer and community engagement;
- identify and share best practice;
- 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;
- demonstrate how this will inform future commissioning.

4. KEY DELIVERABLES AND TIMESCALES

4.1 This review is planned to take place during July to December 2018. The key deliverables are as follows:

|	
• Project team established	July
• Complete desk top analysis	August
• Further evidence gathering	August
• Identification of best practice	August
• Consultation with stakeholders	August
• Consultation on draft findings	September
• Committee lead in times	17 October
• Final report to Committee	29 January

5. PROJECT TEAM

5.1

Project Sponsor	Martin Murchie, Chief Officer
Project Board	Strategic Commissioning Committee
Project Manager	Michelle Cochlan, Community Planning Manager
Project Team	Elsie Manners, Community Planning Officer Catriona Mallia, Development Officer Jo Mackie, Locality Manager for Torry Karen Finch, Community Council Liaison Officer David Dunne, Senior Planner Sharon Wilkinson, Senior Research Officer Lucy McKenzie, Customer Experience Officer Emma Shanks, Customer Experience Officer Paul Smith, Corporate Communications Manager
Key Stakeholders/ Consultees	Martin Murchie – Chief Officer (Business Intelligence and Performance Management) Neil Carnegie – Communities and Housing Area Manager Jacqui McKenzie – Chief Officer (Customer) Derek McGowan – Chief Officer (Early Intervention and Community Empowerment) Gale Beattie – Chief Officer (Strategic Place Planning) Mark Riley – Chief Officer Stephen Shaw Graeme Simpson Aberdeen City Council Extended CMT Third Tier Managers Jonathan Smith – Chair of Civic Forum and Community Council Forum Carol Hannaford, Tenant Participation Officer
Benchmarking/ best practice	Other Councils/ organisations Improvement Service

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 The research methodology will include:

- Audit of customer and community engagement arrangements across the Council
- Desk top analysis of relevant legislation, strategies, policy, reports etc,
- Gathering of evidence of Council best practice/ case studies etc
- Consultation with key stakeholders/ consultees listed above
- Survey to third tier managers
- Discussions/ interviews with external representatives e.g. colleagues from other Councils and external organisations where relevant

- Consultation on draft report with Extended Corporate Management Team
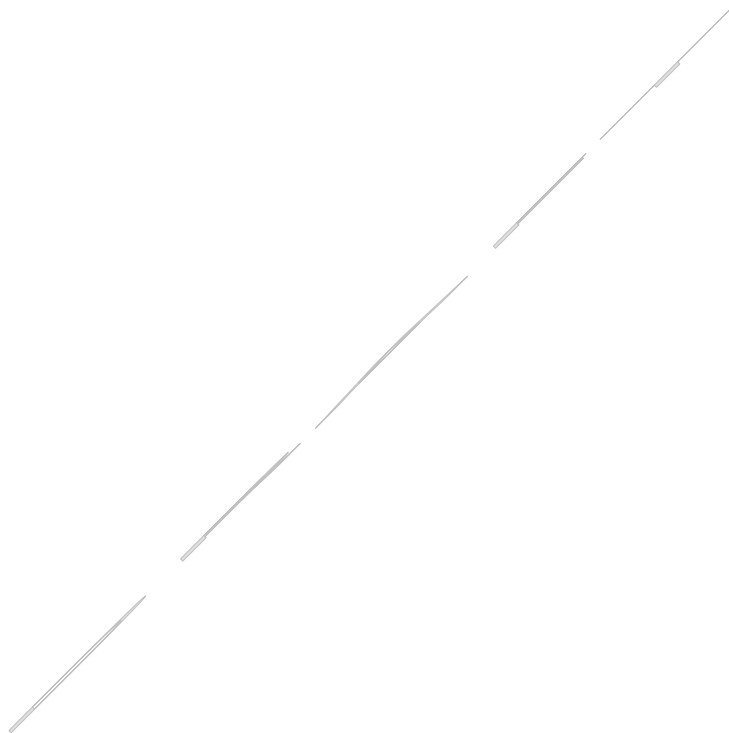
APPENDIX 2 –MAPPING OF ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE LADDER OF ENGAGEMENT

The following table includes the Council's recurring customer and community activities which were identified through the review. The list is not exhaustive and does not include one off engagement activities. We have also included further information on areas recognised to be best practice.

Self Determination: People implement what they decide *E.g. Public sector stays out of the way or makes available support when requested.*
• Civic Forum • Community Councils and Community Council Forum • Youth Council • School Councils • Tenants' Forums • Powis Residents Group • Guide to starting a tenant's association
Best practice examples of self determination
Powis Residents Group The Group was formed in September 2012 to take forward initiatives to improve the local area and liaise with partners such as Aberdeen City Council on behalf of local residents. The group has taken forward many initiatives, including improving the greenspace in the surrounding area. In the past 5 years since the group was formed it has won multiple awards, including the Beautiful Scotland Residential Community Award twice. The group has also won the Rita Buchan Participation cup which is an award in memory of Rita Buchan. She was the first tenant in Aberdeen to win a National Tenant of the Year Award, and she championed Tenant Participation in Aberdeen City Council. This award is presented annually in Rita's memory as she sadly passed away in 2016.
Guide to starting a tenant's association A guide on starting a tenants association was published in 2007. It details how the Council will support a tenants group and how to start one. As of August 2018, there are 54 tenants groups across the city.
Empowerment: Organisation implement what people decide. *E.g. Community capacity building, Community Development Trusts*
Participatory Budgeting
Best practice examples of empowerment
Participatory Budgeting The Communities team within the Council has worked with local people to come up with a participatory budgeting (PB) model which has been branded UDecide. Volunteers from each targeted community form a steering group to organise and deliver the groups. In 2018, four PB events took place in George Street, Castlehill, Pittodrie and the city centre and in the three regenerations areas. Bids were received from 125 local groups, individuals and organisations, and 389 residents voted on the proposals.

Collaboration: Organisations seek people's involvement in issues, options and decisions.
E.g. Participatory decision making, Citizen advisory panels, Open space events

- Civic Forum Representation on Community Planning Partnership Board and sub groups
- Asset Transfer Request process
- Participation Requests process
- Fairer Aberdeen Board
- Locality Partnerships
- Housing Service Review Group
- Disability Equity Partnership
- Taxi Consultation Group

Best practice examples of collaboration

Participation Requests

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 introduced participation requests as a new means that which community groups can request to have a greater involvement in, and influence over, decisions and services that affect their communities and community lives. It allows them to request to work with a public service authority and get involved in an outcome improvement process. Community Planning Aberdeen is working with communities and partners to develop communication materials that can be used by all partners to promote participation requests.

Locality Partnerships

In early 2017 local events were held across the three regeneration areas to develop priorities for the Locality Plans. Hundreds of local people attend these events to develop priorities for their communities. Since then, a Locality Partnership Board has been set up in each area to take the plans forward. Each Partnership has a commitment to have over 50% representation from local people who sit on the board.

Torry
Seaton, Woodside and Tillydrone
Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Northfield and Heathryfold

Housing Service Review Group

The tenant service review group was established in 2004 to review Council services. It was renamed in 2012 as the Housing Service Review Group. The group is comprised of volunteers and reviews Council services and have made several recommendations to help improve the offer from Council. It is a registered tenant organisation and has 20 members who have all undertaken training to enable them to conduct reviews. Reviews have been conducted in a number of services, including Housing Management, Community Safety and Repairs. The group developed a guide to how they conducted these reviews for services to understand what to expect.
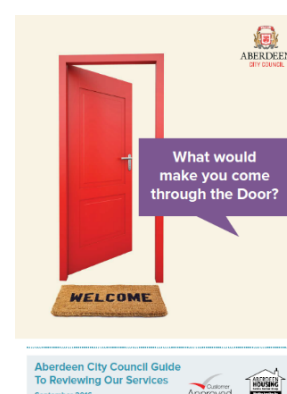
Involvement: People's concerns inform organisations proposed decisions.

E.g. An ongoing process of engagement, Workshops, Deliberative polling

- Local Development Plan Youth Engagement Programme
- Local Development Plan meetings with agents and developers

Best practice examples of involvement

Local Development Plan Youth Engagement Programme
The principal aim of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) Youth Engagement Programme was to promote and encourage the important role young expressing how they think they should be designed and planned. Two rounds of youth engagement were held as part of the preparation of the ALDP 2017, the first at Pre-Main Issues Report Stage and the second at Main Issues Report Stage.

AWARD

Aberdeen City Council – Engaging Young People in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan

**Consultation: People's views are listened to in respect of organisations proposed decisions.**
E.g. Opportunities for engagement, Focus groups, Surveys, Public meetings

- Petitions and deputations at Council Committees
- Statutory consultation with Community Councils
- Tenants Satisfaction Survey 2017
- Annual Rent Consultation
- City Voice
- Satisfaction questionnaires
- Place Standard
- Consultation Hub
- Play park consultations
- Statutory consultation with school communities
- Public access to planning portal
-

Best practice examples of consultation

Place Standard
A number of services have used the Place standard tool across the council, including the Community Learning and Development (CLD) and Planning Services. A recent Survey had 360 responses – the largest survey ever completed on Place Standard.
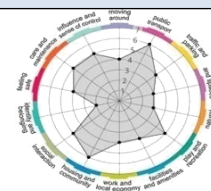
Consultation Hub
The Council's Consultation Hub helps members of the public find and participate in consultations of personal interest. The explains that a consultation is a process where the Council asks for views from members of the public to help inform decisions on a specific topic. The programme, Citizen's Space, that collects this information is used widely across the public sector in the UK.

Informing: Organisations keep people informed of proposed decisions.

E.g. Providing information, Newsletters, Websites, Exhibitions
• Tenant Participation • Newsbite Tenants Magazine Issue 46 Summer 2018 • Tenant Participation Web Pages • Community Justice newsletter • Communities newsletter • Planning Performance Framework Annual Report • Your Housing Performance Report • Newsletter for Agents and Developers

Best practice example of informing

Your Housing Performance Report
An annual report on housing performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter that is prepared annually in collaboration with the Housing Service Review Group. For the 2017/18 report, a short video was produced along with a summary paper version.

APPENDIX 3   BENCHMARKING/ GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Community participation and engagement strategies and toolkits

[Aberdeenshire Consultation Toolkit](#)

[Dumfries and Galloway Community Participation and Engagement Strategy](#)

[Scottish Borders Community Engagement Toolkit](#)

[West Lothian Community Engagement Toolkit](#)

[The Manchester Community Engagement Toolkit](#)

National standards for community engagement
[The Seven National Standards](#)

Equality in Community Engagement
[Promoting Equality in Community Engagement – Evidence Review](#)

Consultation Practices within Scottish Authorities
[Improvement Service Report](#)

Budget consultation in Local Authorities
[Edinburgh budget simulator](#)

[Highland Council Budget Consultation 2017/18](#)

[Herefordshire Council Budget Consultation Presentation 2019/20](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Council Budget Consultation 2018-21](#)

Self-Evaluation framework
[Public Service Improvement Framework](#)

Consultation with young people
[MOMO app - a digital participation tool](#)