

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT - CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

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To: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2nd March 2015

Report of: Sadie Paige

Title of Report: Consultation and Engagement

Summary

Purpose of report: To provide a final report that addresses the outstanding recommendations made during Scrutiny Committee's review of the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-17.

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Councillor Christine Simm

Report author: Sadie Paige

Policy Framework: No

Appendices to report

Appendix 1 – Recommendation 2 principles analysis

Appendix 2 – Recommendation 2 response rate analysis

Appendix 3 – Recommendation 3 pilot report

Background

During its review of the then draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17, on 23rd June 2014, Scrutiny Committee made four recommendations. These are presented below together with City Executive Board's response.

| Recommendation | CEB response | Status |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| 1. To provide a clear statement in the principles on the ambition for engagement focusing on depth as well as breadth. | Merge with recommendation 3. | CLOSED |
| 2. To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement. | To provide this information for all consultations would be a huge piece of work so a sample will be used instead, together with a forward-looking approach. | Included in this report |
| 3. To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee an up and coming engagement/empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report. | Two consultations identified as candidates for the pilot as per CEB suggestion. Project brief created for the pilot, which includes the objectives, and a reporting template. | Included in this report |
| 4. To provide a table that shows how all comments received during the consultation on this Policy Statement have been handled. | Expected at 10 November Scrutiny Committee meeting. | DONE |

Recommendation 2

To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement.

1. Scrutiny was advised that this would take considerable effort, so it was agreed (Cllr Simmons, Andrew Brown) that the following would be provided:
 - A small number (4 or 5) examples of different types of consultations with qualitative comments around the engagement ambitions, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set in the Policy Statement.
 - Information around the response rates that different ‘types’ of consultations tend to attract i.e. what kind of consultations attract a higher or lower level of engagement.
2. The analysis was carried out on all public involvement events that had a close date between December 2013 and December 2014. There were 44 in total.
3. They have been summarised by service area and engagement ambition, see below.

| | Evaluation | Operational | Housing | Supplementary Planning Documents | Strategy/ Policy | TOTAL |
|------------------------------------|------------|-------------|----------|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| City Development | | 1 | | 4 | 4 | 9 |
| Customer Services | 4 | | | | 1 | 5 |
| Direct Services | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Environmental Development | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 5 |
| Housing and Property | | 8 | 2 | | | 10 |
| Leisure, Parks and Communities | 4 | 2 | | | 1 | 7 |
| Policy, Culture and Communications | 3 | | | | 4 | 7 |
| | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 12 | 13 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 44 |

Definition of engagement ambition:

- Evaluation feedback on projects and services, customer satisfaction
- Operational feedback on improvement proposals
- Housing feedback on proposed changes to housing agreements
- Strategy/ Policy includes planning policy

4. From this list four examples have been selected to represent a broad range of service areas and engagement ambitions. They are presented in Appendix 1, together with qualitative comments around the engagement ambitions, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set in the Community Engagement Policy Statement.

5. The response rates for the 44 public involvement activities varied from 5 to 1170. They are presented in Appendix 2. There does not appear to be any correlation between number of replies and engagement ambition, service area, duration of consultation or scope. It should be noted that a low number can result from a low target audience (for example Tower Blocks). It seems very likely that there is a direct relationship between officer time and response rate,

Recommendation 3

To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee an up and coming engagement/ empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report. (To provide a clear statement in the principles on the ambition for engagement focusing on depth as well as breadth.)

6. The suggestion was made to Scrutiny Committee that the pilot comprises consultation on the Tower Block Refurbishments and the draft Culture Strategy 2015-18. Results are presented in Appendix 3.

Lessons learned

7. Increased focus on the principles of engagement have driven other process improvements:
 - Earlier planning of consultations in the report commissioning phase.
 - Increased focus on principles by the Public Involvement Board
 - The need for an evaluation of consultations once completed.
 - The disbanding of the Talkback Panel.

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