

REPORT TO	DATE OF MEETING
Cabinet	15th June 2011.

Report template revised February 2007.



SUBJECT	PORTFOLIO	AUTHOR	ITEM
Community Involvement Review	Leader	Denise Johnson	4

SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Council has previously agreed to a comprehensive review of its arrangements for Community Involvement. This report sets out how councillors and the public will be engaged in shaping the outcome of the review. The review will take place during the summer months. The report also identifies the context in which the review is taking place.

Effective community involvement underpins the delivery of all the Council’s corporate priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. note and agree the consultation processes; and
2. agree the membership of the Community Involvement Member Working Group proposed in the report

DETAILS AND REASONING

The Council has previously agreed to a comprehensive review of its arrangements for Community Involvement. This review covers all aspects of how the Council engages with the community and partners on meeting priorities and the area’s needs. It is timely to conduct this review given significant changes in national policy and the need to run value for money services within a challenging financial climate. Similarly partner organisations operating throughout the Borough have needed to reorder themselves and it is therefore important we ensure our arrangements remain aligned with others in an effective way.

It is essential that consultation and engagement with the public and partners is thorough and inclusive. The Council already holds information from a number of different sources on the public’s view of the Council’s services. Resident surveys show the public to be very satisfied with the services the Council provides for them. The review will aim to build on this success.

The Council faces major policy decisions in the coming year and beyond. This comes at a time when funds available to the Council are reducing and external funding streams are changing. This is a challenge when looking at the Council delivering high quality services to its residents. But the Council does not work alone in delivering improvements to the community. The Council has a strong leadership role, working with partners to get the best for the area it serves. The key roles that ward councillors have to play in any future arrangements will therefore need to be considered as part of the review.

The review of Community involvement will focus on how the Council works externally to achieve priorities working alongside the local communities. How the delivery of local priorities are to be resourced and how we need to be organised internally to provide support going forward will feature as important considerations.

Key to developments and activities going forward is the Local Development Framework. The Local Development Framework consultation is ongoing and Members have taken the lead in how this process is delivered. Significant changes on the funding mechanisms around planning developments are proposed nationally and Neighbourhood Plans may identify priorities for areas. The processes will be Member led, with Councillors working with partners and the community. The Community Involvement review will address support for Members in this role.

The review of Community Involvement is being held within this context. With the potential for significant funding through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process the challenge is to ensure that corporate and local actions are aligned, prioritised and funded. Also the LDF process involves partners and the community in setting these priorities and in managing expectations when helping to shape the services provided in the community.

It is important that the Community Involvement review has regard to the wealth of information already held by the Council from e.g. residents and businesses on what they see as priorities. This is available through e.g. our Customer Information system, numerous forums, as well as existing surveys. Also there have been separate related reviews conducted in recent years from which we can draw valuable information and avoid duplication of effort, e.g. scrutiny committee reviews. Therefore we are not starting the review from scratch.

To ensure the review takes account of Councillors and residents views it is proposed that the Council will consult over the summer months as follows:

Member Consultation

- All Councillors will be consulted individually. This will be through Cllr Connect.
- A Community Involvement Member Working Group, consisting of the Leader (Chairman) and four members of the Council, one of whom to be a member of the opposition group, will be established to provide oversight to the review.
- The Community Involvement Working Group will need to liaise closely with the Local Development Framework Working Group.
- Community Involvement will be an item for the August 2011 Scrutiny Committee agenda.
- Outcomes of the review will be considered by Cabinet and Council in September 2011

Public Consultation

Consultation will be through

- The Citizens Panel.
- Partners e.g. South Ribble Strategic Partnership, Lancashire County Council, Police, Health, Parish and Town Councils.
- Young People.
- Businesses.
- Regular attendees of the Area Committees will be approached for their views.

WIDER IMPLICATION

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas listed below, and the table shows any implications in respect of each of these. The risk assessment which has been carried out forms part of the background papers to the report.

FINANCIAL	The review will have regard to optimising the opportunities through funding streams being made available through the Local Development Framework and other sources. The review will also seek opportunities to reduce administrative costs where possible. Partners will also be approached to reduce duplication where possible and streamline processes. The Council has identified a budget efficiency target of approximately £350,000 for Community Involvement for 2011/12.
LEGAL	There are no legal implications arising from the community involvement review at this stage.
RISK	The full risk assessment forms part of the background papers to this report. The main points for consideration are summarised here:- The review will mitigate the risk of the Council not engaging with the community effectively. The review will help ensure that resources are targeted at the right projects to make the most difference to residents, businesses and visitors to South Ribble.
Staffing, Training and Development	Any staffing issues arising from the Community Involvement review will be addressed in accordance with the Council's human resources policies and procedures and be the subject of consultation with the trade union and staff affected. Such matters were previously delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, and the Cabinet member with responsibility for Finance and Resources and other relevant Cabinet Members (min 107(7) refers).

<i>Asset Management</i>	<i>Corporate Plans and Policies</i>	<i>Crime and Disorder</i>	<i>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money</i>
<i>Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion</i>	<i>Freedom of Information/ Data Protection</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Health Inequalities</i>
<i>Human Rights Act 1998</i>	<i>Implementing Electronic Government</i>	<i>Staffing, Training and Development</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Risk Assessment