

Report to:

SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD

Relevant Officer:

Mrs Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager

Date of Meeting:

5 March 2020

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update on the work undertaken by scrutiny members on the review of Community Engagement Policy.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the update and identify any further work to be undertaken on the proposed Community Engagement Policy.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the Leadership Board has an overview of ongoing work.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 Councillors Wilshaw, Farrell, Galley, Walsh, Hobson, Hunter, O'Hara and Wing were appointed by the three scrutiny committees to carry out a piece of work on the development of the Community Engagement Policy. At the meeting, Councillor Galley was appointed Chair. Due the cross cutting nature of the subject it was considered that a cross-committee approach would be most beneficial and to report back to the

Scrutiny Leadership Board on the work undertaken.

- 6.2 Ms Chloe Shore, Community Engagement Partnership Manager informed the Panel that an audit had been undertaken in 2018 which had produced a number of recommendations around community engagement including the introduction of a policy/strategy to cover why and how to carry out engagement activity. She advised that once a policy had been produced it would be followed by a toolkit in order to aid delivery.
- 6.3 The Panel discussed the draft policy in detail and spoke about how to ensure that departments were adhering to the policy. It was noted that the policy would require embedding and cascading through the organisation. A project plan would be put in place to that end. Each department would be responsible for its own community engagement with an expectation that they would track the engagement undertaken.
- 6.4 The barriers to engagement were also considered such as being physically able to attend venues or requiring childcare. It was also considered important to build trust with residents and ensure there was a valid reason for change which could be communicated effectively.
- 6.5 The role of the Councillor in engagement was discussed and Members felt it was very important. The 'feedback loop' was also considered important with it being essential to communicate back to residents what had happened since they inputted into the consultation/engagement activity etc. It was also considered important to better communicate the good work that the Council undertook and the improvements and differences made to lives in Blackpool. Contact with members of the public should be communicated in a way that made sense, had realistic timeframes and managed expectations.
- 6.6 Social media was also considered and the Panel agreed to ask that the Scrutiny Leadership Board look at the use of social media for scrutiny. It was also noted that the scrutiny public speaking procedure required review. The link between community engagement and the ongoing Channel Shift Scrutiny Review was also noted and it was agreed that any relevant recommendations be fed in as appropriate.
- 6.7 The Panel endorsed the policy and recommended that the strategy be incorporated into the policy as one overarching document, to be circulated back to the Panel by email prior to formal approval.

It was also agreed:

- 1. That the revised Policy/Strategy document be circulated by email to the members of the Panel for final comments.**

2. That any recommendations of the Channel Shift Scrutiny Review relating to community engagement be fed into the policy.
3. That the use of social media to promote scrutiny and encourage public engagement be considered by the Scrutiny Leadership Board.
4. That the implementation of the policy be reviewed by the Scrutiny Leadership Board 12 months after being rolled out.

6.1 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Human resources considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 None.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None.