

Scrutiny Committee, 20 December 2016

Information Bulletin

The Information Bulletin is a document that is made available to the public with the published agenda papers. It can include update information requested by the Committee as well as information that a service considers should be made known to the Committee.

The Council's Approach to Consultation

1. This is an update on the item on the Council's Approach to Consultation presented to the Committee on 7 June 2016. The Committee asked for this update as one of their recommendations.
2. The information relates to a proposed revised approach to consultation within the County Council that has come about, in part, through the Committee's recommendations made at the 7 June meeting.
3. Since the Scrutiny meeting in June, the County Council leadership group has commissioned the Democratic Society to review the County Council's approach to Consultation and also wider engagement work and co-production. The conclusions of this work are expected early in 2017. It is anticipated that the outcomes and recommendations are likely to support many of the findings of the Scrutiny Committee and we will look to incorporate both in the future planning for this area of work.

Progress against the Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

4. To endorse a review and refresh of the County Council's corporate guidance on consultation and engagement.

Through collaboration between the Consultation lead officer and Communications Team, draft corporate guidance is now being designed. This will include any additional outcomes from the Democratic Society work and will be ready for introduction by March 2017.

Key areas this addresses are:

- First steps - Who to liaise with and when, and is it required at all?
- Developing clearer links with the wider organisation
- Revised templates – including revised demographic and equality questions
- Creation of a Consultation database
- A revised and more robust approach to Survey Monkey usage and security
- Guidance on what is Consultation/Engagement/Co-Production
- Improved good practice and consultation law knowledge – Training courses have been identified for key staff to attend early in 2017.
- Our offer – the guidance and support provided by SCC Communications and Consultation leads, the analysis work we can help with and assistance in reporting and feedback.

5. It is anticipated that work to raise corporate awareness of the new guidance will take place from March 2017.
6. A decision around officer capacity forms part of a wider review of the Business Development team which should be resolved by March 2017.

For further information please contact: Julian Brown, Business Development; Email: Julian.Brown@suffolk.gov.uk; Telephone: 01473 265305