

## Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	28/06/12
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Document Title	East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy

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Designation	Head of Policy & Partnerships
Date	11/07/12

For Office Use Only:	
Library Reference	185/12
Date Received	12/07/12
Bulletin	Jul12

**REPORT TO:** Members Library Service

**DATE:**

**BY:** Head of Policy & Partnerships

**SUBJECT:** East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform Elected Members of the development of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012 and Action Plan.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the development of the East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012 and associated Action Plan.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Consultation and engagement are important activities across the Council, helping to inform our day to day activity, as well as influencing how we work towards longer term objectives. Consultation and engagement exercises provide individuals and communities with the opportunity to shape the services they receive and the places they live.
- 3.2 A working group was established by the Policy & Performance Unit in 2011 to consider developing a Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy. The working group included representatives from Community Learning & Development Services, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Housing and Customer Services.
- 3.3 The working group found that there is already a great deal of activity across the Council, in terms of consultation and engagement. However, we do not have a central overview of what is happening and when. Although most activities are well planned and delivered, we have no mechanism to ensure that everyone is following best practice. There is some evidence of practice that could be improved in relation to consultation and engagement, undermining any findings and opening the Council to criticism and reputational damage with local communities.

3.4 A draft strategy was produced in autumn 2011 and was circulated for comment to key stakeholder groups including Community Councils. A small number of comments were received and have been encompassed within the Final Draft of the Strategy.

3.5 The aim of this Consultation and Engagement Strategy is:-

‘.....to establish a framework for all consultation and engagement activity to help ensure that it is well planned and co-ordinated and carried out in a meaningful and effective manner, following good practice and benefitting all those involved.’

3.6 A set of related objectives have been set as follows:-

1. Develop, strengthen and sustain opportunities for individuals and groups to influence what happens in their communities.
2. Provide opportunities for individuals and groups to shape and influence the development and delivery of Council services, policies and strategies.
3. Manage and co-ordinate consultation/engagement activities to allow us to develop an overview of all activity and to ensure consistency and quality and avoid duplication.
4. Ensure that consultation/engagement activities provide opportunities for participation by all sections of the community, particularly people and groups who are often missed out.
5. Provide variety, flexibility and choice in relation to consultation/engagement activities.
6. Develop best practice in relation to all aspects of consultation/engagement by promoting the use of the National Standards for Community Engagement.

3.7 These objectives form the headings in the Consultation and Engagement Action Plan that is included as an Appendix to the Strategy.

3.8 The Strategy includes a number of key commitments:

- **We will develop a clear picture of consultation and engagement taking place across the Council** - To enable this to happen, individual services will be required to inform the designated lead officer for consultation of all consultation/engagement activities at their planning stage (regardless of the scope or scale of the exercise concerned).

- **We will provide information, advice and support to staff carrying out consultation/engagement activities to help ensure that it takes place to a high standard** - This may involve advising on different methods, helping identify who to consult, assisting with questionnaire design or support with analysing findings. The National Standards for Community Engagement will be promoted in relation to this and the VOiCE tool may also be used to help staff plan their consultation / engagement exercises.
- **We will develop a Consultation Hub** - The Consultation Hub will include details of past, current and planned consultation / engagement exercises and will be available on the Council's website. It will have the facility to enable people to respond online, and will prompt staff to provide information on the outcomes of closed consultation/engagement exercises.
- **We will set up a stakeholder list** - This 'Reaching Communities' list will help staff to identify who they might want to involve in consultation/engagement exercises. It will be updated regularly and made available on the Council's website.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 One of the five principles that underpin the Council Plan 2012-2017 is:-

"Services built around people and communities." Adopting and implementing the *East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012* will provide the Council with a more coherent and co-ordinated approach to consulting and engaging with citizens and stakeholders.

#### **5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out on the East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012. No negative impacts were identified and some actions were identified to assist the policy making a positive impact in relation to equalities.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 **Financial** - The cost of the Consultation Hub will be met from existing budgets.

6.2 **Personnel** - The Strategy will require the designation of a lead officer for consultation and engagement, but this and any other staffing requirements to fulfil the Action Plan will be met from existing staffing resource.

6.3 **Other** – None

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

### 7.1 East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2012.

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<b>DATE</b>	11 July 2012

# **EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**2012 - 2015**

(June 2012)

***This Strategy aims to establish a framework for all consultation and engagement activity to help ensure that it is well planned and coordinated and carried out in a meaningful and effective manner, following good practice and benefitting all those involved.***

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## 1. Introduction

Consultation and engagement are important activities across the Council, helping to inform our day to day activity, as well as influencing how we work towards longer term objectives. Consultation and engagement exercises provide individuals and communities with the opportunity to shape the services they receive and the places they live.

Consultation and engagement are not one in the same thing. The definitions given below show that they are qualitatively different:

- **Consultation** – consultation is where decision makers ‘**seek advice, information and opinions about strategies, policies and services**’.<sup>1</sup> Consultation may involve presenting a set of predetermined options or a draft strategy for consideration / comment;
- **Engagement** – engagement consists of ‘**informing, consulting, involving, listening and responding to communities through ongoing relationships**’.<sup>2</sup> Engagement tends to be a more open process, with participants potentially involved in both generating ideas and reaching decisions.

This Strategy covers both consultation and engagement.

## 2. Why We Need a Strategy

The 2011 East Lothian Resident Satisfaction found that:

- 16% of respondents agreed that ‘I can influence decisions affecting my local area’;
- 10% agreed ‘I would like to be more involved in the decisions my council makes that affect the local area’;
- 44% agreed that ‘my Council is good at listening to local people’s views before it takes decisions’.

Although these findings provide a fairly mixed picture, they do suggest the need to improve opportunities for local people to be involved in consultation and engagement and to ensure that people see that their involvement does influence decision making.

There is already a great deal of activity across the Council in terms of consultation and engagement. However, we do not have a central overview of what is happening and when. Although most activities are well planned and delivered, we have no

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<sup>1</sup> [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)



mechanism to ensure that everyone is following best practice. There is some evidence of practice that could be improved in relation to consultation and engagement, undermining any findings and opening the Council to criticism and reputational damage with local communities.

There is also scope to improve the way in which the Council consults with and / or engages stakeholders in relation to 'corporate' topics such as quality of life issues, overall satisfaction with the Council, views on strategic direction and long term plans and use of the Council budget.

### 3. Aim and Objectives of Strategy

The aim of this Consultation and Engagement Strategy is:

*.....to establish a framework for all consultation and engagement activity to help ensure that it is well planned and coordinated and carried out in a meaningful and effective manner, following good practice and benefitting all those involved.*

The following objectives identify how we will work towards the above aim – we will:

1. Develop, strengthen and sustain opportunities for individuals and groups to influence what happens in their communities
2. Provide opportunities for individuals and groups to shape and influence the development and delivery of Council services, policies and strategies
3. Manage and coordinate consultation / engagement activities to allow us to develop an overview of all activity and to ensure consistency and quality and avoid duplication
4. Ensure that consultation / engagement activities provide opportunities for participation by all sections of the community, particularly people and groups who are often missed out
5. Provide variety, flexibility and choice in relation to consultation / engagement activities
6. Develop best practice in relation to all aspects of consultation / engagement by promoting the use of the National Standards for Community Engagement.

These objectives form the headings in the **Consultation and Engagement Action Plan**.

### 4. Drivers for Consultation and Engagement

One of the five principles that underpin the Council Plan 2012-2017 is: "Services built around people and communities." The Council is committed to, and has been developing a range of ways in which to engage effectively with citizens, customers and communities in order to better develop services around the needs of people and

communities. This Consultation and Engagement Strategy provides the framework for the Council's consultation and engagement activity.

In addition to the Council's principle to have services built around people and communities, there are a number of external drivers for consultation and engagement activity:

➤ **Best Value**

Best Value places a statutory duty on local authorities to ensure that they have arrangements in place to secure continuous improvement in their performance, leading to the provision of better services to local people. Carrying out effective community engagement is a key element of Best Value. Audit Scotland's Best Value 2 Community Engagement toolkit provides a framework for local authorities to assess their progress in relation to community engagement.

➤ **Statutory Requirements at Service Level**

The Council has a statutory requirement to consult / engage in relation to certain services. For example, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places duties on local authorities to consult with individual tenants and tenant groups and to have a tenant participation strategy in place.

➤ **Inspections**

Inspections of council services include consideration of how well the Council engages and / or consults service users. For example, Education Scotland (formerly, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education), considers the extent to which children and young people are listened to, understood and respected and how well children and families are involved in developing key processes, policies and services. The Care Inspectorate (formerly known as SCSWIS - Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland) also looks for evidence of the local authorities collecting the views of social work and social care service users and their carers.

➤ **How Good Is Our Council? (HGIOC)**

This is the framework used by the Council for self evaluation. Amongst other things, it requires services to consider how well they engage and consult service users. A number of the Quality Indicators used in HGIOC ask how services know about stakeholders' needs; how they know whether service users are satisfied with services and the extent to which stakeholders are involved in shaping service provision. (A full list of relevant HGIOC Quality Indicators is contained in Appendix 1).

➤ **East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement**

The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (ELCPP) Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is the overarching plan for East Lothian. The SOA states the Partnership's commitment to working towards an East Lothian which has 'strong and vibrant communities where residents are responsible and

empowered and have a positive sense of wellbeing' – effective consultation and engagement with communities clearly makes an important contribution to meeting this outcome.

➤ **National Standards for Community Engagement**

National Standards for Community Engagement ([www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/](http://www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/)) were developed in consultation with communities and reflect best practice in community engagement (see Appendix 2 for a list of the National Standards). Encouraging consultation / engagement activities that reflect the National Standards is identified as one of this Strategy's key objectives, and actions related to this are contained in the associated Action Plan.

VOiCE (Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement) is a software tool that has been developed to assist in planning engagement that reflects the National Standards. The Council is keen to encourage the use of VOiCE as best practice (visit [www.voicescotland.org.uk](http://www.voicescotland.org.uk) for more information).

➤ **Equalities Legislation**

Under equalities legislation there is a legal requirement for the Council to consult and engage equalities communities in relation to the development of policies, strategies and procedures. Consultation with equalities communities forms part of a wider Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA).

## 5. The Current Picture

Consultation and engagement currently takes place at both Corporate and service level. Some services have their own strategies and have developed approaches that enable them to consult and engage stakeholders effectively. Other services are in the early stages of developing their approach to consultation and engagement.

East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy provides an overarching, strategic approach to consultation and engagement for the Council and its services. It does not replace existing service level strategies, but places them within the context of a coherent Council approach. Existing service level strategies are outlined below.

As a member of East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (ELCPP) the Council also subscribes to a number of Partnership strategies that address consultation / engagement – again, these are outlined below. The Council is the lead member of the ELCPP with statutory responsibility for community planning.

### 5a. Consultation and Engagement at a Corporate Level

In recent years one of the main vehicles for consultation / engagement at corporate level has been the East Lothian Residents' Survey (see below). The 2009 'You Pay

Have Your Say' Budget Consultation (again below) also presented an opportunity for people to influence decision making at a corporate level.

- ***The East Lothian Residents' Survey***

The Council has carried out large scale residents' surveys for a number of years (2000, 2005, 2009, and 2011). This survey has been carried out by different research companies and has involved face-to-face interviewing of a randomly selected sample of residents (allowing the findings to be generalised across the whole population). In the last two surveys, the sample size has also allowed analysis at multimember ward level. The survey has covered quality of life issues and customer satisfaction / overall satisfaction with the Council.

- ***You Pay, Have Your Say – Budget Consultation***

A major community consultation was carried out in the autumn of 2009 to allow residents, businesses and local groups to express their views on how the Council should spend its money over a three year period (2010-13). People were invited to take part by attending community consultation events or by writing, emailing or contributing to a blog. A 'Spending Choices' paper was produced to provide background information for participants.

- ***Customer Contact Strategy 2009-2012***

This Strategy covers the corporate approach to achieving "Customer Service Excellence". It includes a commitment to customer consultation - "To consult regularly about the services we provide, to use any feedback they give us to improve our service and in turn, we will feedback to them what we are doing and how we are performing". The Strategy also includes a commitment to carrying out regular surveys.

## **5b. Consultation and Engagement at Service Level**

Although we do not currently record consultation and engagement taking place across different Council services on a central register, we know that there is a significant level of activity.

This takes place at varying levels, ranging from service users completing satisfaction questionnaires to extensive consultation exercises involving a range of opportunities for stakeholders to take part (surveys, public meetings, road shows, etc).

Some Services have strategies that detail their approach / commitment to consultation and engagement; other Services do not have such documents, but this does not necessarily mean they are not involved in this kind of activity.

- ***Tenant Participation Strategy 2007-10***

The Council has a statutory responsibility to consult individual tenants and tenants groups and to have a tenant participation strategy in place. The Tenant Participation Strategy outlines the various ways tenants can participate, for example, as individuals responding to surveys etc, as a member of a tenants and residents group or through membership of the East Lothian Tenants and

Residents Panel. It also identifies the Council resources committed to supporting participation.

**Contact details:**

James Coutts - [jcoutts@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:jcoutts@eastlothian.gov.uk) - 01620 827483  
[http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?downloadID=297](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=297)

- **Homelessness Service – Service User Involvement Strategy 2011-13**

This Strategy outlines how service users will be involved in the design, development and delivery of homelessness services. This includes providing opportunities for involvement, but also equipping service users with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to participate.

**Contact details:**

Catherine Johnson - [cjohnson@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:cjohnson@eastlothian.gov.uk) - 01620 827390  
[http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?downloadID=631&fileID=4461](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=631&fileID=4461)

- **Adult Social Care Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy**

Currently under development

**Contact details:**

Liza Noble - [lnoble@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:lnoble@eastlothian.gov.uk) – 01875824381

- **Parental Involvement Strategy**

The Parental Involvement Strategy outlines the Council's approach to encouraging the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and education. This ranges from improving communication and information flow between home and school to involving parents / carers more in schools, in most cases through participation in parent groups.

Contact: Val McIntyre - [vmcintyre@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:vmcintyre@eastlothian.gov.uk) - 01620 827264  
[http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/675/consultations\\_on\\_education/754/education\\_consultations](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/675/consultations_on_education/754/education_consultations)

- **Planning & Development**

Planning and Development do not have a specific strategy covering consultation / engagement. They do, however, have a statutory responsibility to consult on both the Strategic Development Plan and the Local Development Plan and are required to produce a Participation Statement detailing how they will do this. Consultation is also carried out on a more ad hoc basis in relation to a wide range of other planning / development matters.

Contact: Paul Zochowski - [pzochowski@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:pzochowski@eastlothian.gov.uk) – 01620 827264

## 5c. Consultation and Engagement at Community Planning Level

Community Engagement is one of the 'cross cutting themes' in the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement and the Partnership has its own Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan (see below).

Community / third sector organisations are engaged in the Community Planning Partnership through their membership of a most of the partnership groups that are in place.

Local Community Planning is one of the key mechanisms by which East Lothian Community Planning Partnership engages local communities – more information on this can be found in the “Reaching Communities” section below.

The following community and engagement partnership strategies are in place:

- ***East Lothian Community Engagement Strategy 2010-13 (East Lothian Community Planning Partnership)***

East Lothian Community Planning Partnership's (ELCPP) Community Engagement Strategy (and associated Action Plan) outlines how the Partnership plans to strengthen and further develop community engagement activity.

Contact: Meriel Deans - [merieldeans@nhs.net](mailto:merieldeans@nhs.net) - 0131 5368025 or 07738075232  
[www.eastlothiancommunityplanning.org.uk/engagement](http://www.eastlothiancommunityplanning.org.uk/engagement)

- ***East Lothian Learning Partnership Community Learning and Development Strategy 2011 (ELLP)***

The diversity of East Lothian's communities and the importance of capacity building are recognised in relation to developing effective and meaningful consultation and engagement.....

Contact: Myra Galloway - [mgalloway@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:mgalloway@eastlothian.gov.uk) – 0131 6534075  
<http://ellp.net/about.php>

- ***Children and Young People's Participation Strategy 2011-13 (East Lothian Community Planning Partnership)***

The Children and Young People's Participation Strategy outlines ELCPP's commitment to achieving the effective participation of children and young people in the services provided by community planning partners.

The emphasis of this Strategy is on participation, which suggests a more active and ongoing involvement in decision making (in comparison with consultation or engagement). There is also an emphasis on individual children and young people and their individual wants / needs – for example, participation in developing personal plans. Participation in relation to broader issues is, however, also

covered, as is collective participation, for example, being part of a Pupil Council or Youth Forum.

Contact: Jane Ogden-Smith – [jogden-smith@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:jogden-smith@eastlothian.gov.uk) – 01620 827755  
[http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?fileID=4735](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=4735)

## 6. Reaching Communities

There are a number of organisations / structures already in place which provide valuable means of reaching both geographic communities and communities of interest. The Council needs to make sure that services looking to consult communities know about these organisations / structures, so they can make appropriate contact with them.

On the other hand, we also need to ensure that the organisations / structures have the support they need to enable them to respond effectively and that they are not overwhelmed by demands on their time and resources. The Consultation and Engagement Action Plan outlines how we plan to do this.

An outline of some of the relevant organisations / structures in place is available in a separate 'Reaching Communities' document.

## 7. Key Commitments

We have made a number of **key commitments** to help us work towards achieving the objectives outlined above:

- **We will develop a clear picture of consultation and engagement taking place across the Council**  
To enable this to happen, individual services will be required to inform the designated lead officer for consultation of all consultation / engagement activities at their planning stage (regardless of the scope or scale of the exercise concerned).
- **We will provide information, advice and support to staff carrying out consultation / engagement activities to help ensure that it takes place to a high standard**  
This may involve advising on different methods, helping identify who to consult, assisting with questionnaire design or support with analysing findings. The National Standards for Community Engagement will be promoted in relation to this and the VOICE tool may also be used to help staff plan their consultation / engagement exercises.
- **We will develop a Consultation Hub**  
The Consultation Hub will include details of past, current and planned consultation / engagement exercises and will be available on the Council's website. It will have the facility to enable people to respond online, and will prompt staff to provide information on the outcomes of closed consultation / engagement exercises.
- **We will set up a stakeholder list**  
This 'Reaching Communities' list will help staff to identify who they might want to involve in consultation / engagement exercises. It will be updated regularly and made available on the Council's website.

An Action Plan (see Appendix 3) has been developed giving more detail of what we plan to do to deliver on these commitments and to achieve our Strategy objectives. The East Lothian Council Consultation and Engagement Action Plan will be monitored and updated by the lead officer for consultation.



## Appendix 1: How Good is Our Council?

The following How Good is Our Council Quality Indicators relate to consultation / engagement:

- Do service users feel valued and that their views are taken into account? (QI 2.1)
- To what extent do service users help to develop services? (QI 2.1)
- How satisfied are service users? (QI 2.1)
- To what extent are community representatives supported in building capacity and identifying local priorities? (QI 4.1)
- Do active community members display improvement in their confidence, skills and abilities as a result of being involved? (QI 4.1)
- How satisfied are members of the community with the Service? (QI 4.1)
- Do members of the community feel a sense of ownership regarding changes to services? (QI 4.1)
- To what extent are partners and communities involved in determining how priority needs are met? (QI 4.1)
- To what extent can community and voluntary groups influence the activities being delivered by the Service? (QI 4.1)
- How well are community and voluntary groups engaged in developing or delivering services? (QI 4.1)
- How well are stakeholders engaged to identify priorities and needs? (QI 5.1)
- How well does the Service react to, and use, service user feedback? (QI 5.2)
- How well are minority groups and individuals consulted by the Service and involved in service provision? (QI 5.3)
- To what extent are stakeholders involved in evaluating performance (QI 5.4)
- How committed are staff and senior managers to engaging with stakeholders (QI 6.2)
- Are the communication and consultation methods used by the Service effective for all stakeholders? (QI 6.2)
- How much of an impact does the participation of stakeholders have in improving services? (QI 6.2)
- To what extent are stakeholders involved in policy development? (QI 6.2)

## Appendix 2: National Standards for Community Engagement

The ten National Standards for Community Engagement are as follows:

1. THE INVOLVEMENT STANDARD

We will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement

2. THE SUPPORT STANDARD

We will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement

3. THE PLANNING STANDARD

We will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken

4. THE METHODS STANDARD

We will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose

5. THE WORKING TOGETHER STANDARD

We will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently

6. THE SHARING INFORMATION STANDARD

We will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants

7. THE WORKING WITH OTHERS STANDARD

We will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement

8. THE IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

We will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants

9. THE FEEDBACK STANDARD

We will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected

10. THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION STANDARD

We will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement

More information on the National Standards for Community Engagement and associated materials are available from the Scottish Community Development Centre website – [www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/](http://www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/)

### Appendix 3: COUNCIL CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN 2012

#### Objective 1: Develop, strengthen and sustain opportunities for local people and groups to influence what happens in their communities

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1.1) Continue to develop / strengthen the Local Area Forums in Musselburgh, North Berwick and Dunbar	CLD	Ongoing
1.2) Roll out Local Area Forums to all other ward areas	CLD	By Mar 2013
1.3) Ensure Local Area Forums as accessible and inclusive as possible	CLD	Ongoing
1.4) Encourage people to stand for Community Council elections	Democratic Services	By Oct 2012
1.5) Consider training needs of Community Councils (survey of newly elected CC members followed by training programme) – see 3.1	Democratic Services and CLD	Oct 2012 – Mar 2013
1.6) Establish Consultation Hub on the ELC website, including the functionality to respond online	Policy & Partnerships	By Oct 2012
1.7) Deliver community capacity building training in relation to consultation / engagement	CLD	Ongoing

#### Objective 2: Provide opportunities for individuals and groups to shape and influence the development and delivery of services, policies and strategies

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
2.1) Support Council services to carry out consultation / engagement through the provision of information, advice and practical help	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
2.2) Make information resources available on the ELCPP website for carrying out effective consultation / engagement (toolkits, etc) – signpost to this from ELnet – see 5.2	CLD and Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
2.3) Establish and maintain a stakeholder list identifying groups / organisations that may be	Policy & Partnerships	By Dec 2012

consulted / engaged re policy development (in partnership with ELCPP) – see 4.1	and ELCPP	and ongoing
2.4) Consider how to further develop the way we consult / engage stakeholders in relation to ‘corporate’ topics such as quality of life issues, overall satisfaction with the Council, views on strategic direction and long term plans and use of the Council budget through on-going dialogue with stakeholders (for example, through use of a Citizens’ Panel or similar; bi-annual residents’ surveys; service users’ feedback) – see 5.1	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing

**Objective 3: Manage and coordinate consultation / engagement activities to allow us to develop an overview of all activity and to ensure consistency and quality and avoid duplication**

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
3.1) Establish an online Consultation Hub of past, current and future consultation / engagement exercises – see 1.5	Policy & Partnerships	By Sept 2012
3.2) Promote online Consultation Hub and encourage use (initially and then on an ongoing basis)	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
3.3) Promote ELCPP Consultation Network and encourage involvement of ELC Officers	Policy & Partnerships; ELCPP	Ongoing
3.4) Develop a Question Bank (including Customer Focus and potentially Residents Survey questions)	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
3.5) Identify a lead designated officer (within Policy & Performance) and individuals in each Service to be the key contacts in terms of providing information on consultation / engagement activity	Policy & Partnerships	By Sept 2012

**Objective 4: Ensure that consultation / engagement activities provide opportunities for participation by all sections of the community, particularly people and groups who are often missed out**

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
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4.1) Establish and maintain stakeholders list (including organisations / networks representing hard to reach communities and equalities groups) – see 2.3	Policy & Partnerships	By Dec 2012 and ongoing
4.2) Liaise with stakeholder groups on how they would like to be consulted / what works best for them (and incorporate this information on stakeholders list)	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
4.3) Identify resources that will help officers to reach those often missed out of consultation / engagement exercises (to be made available via the Council and ELCPP websites)	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
4.4) Develop good practice guidance re consulting equalities groups	Policy & Partnerships	By Dec 2012
4.5) Develop a set of questions to be included in relevant consultation exercises to look at the potential impact on equalities groups	Policy & Partnerships	By Dec 2012
4.6) Consider how to include an ‘equalities field’ in the Consultation Hub pro forma	Policy & Partnerships	By Dec 2012

**Objective 5: Provide variety, flexibility and choice in relation to consultation / engagement activities**

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
5.1) Consider development of alternative means of consultation / engagement (e.g. online, touch screen terminals, etc) and encourage Services to consult / engage using a range of methods – see 2.4	Policy & Partnerships	By March 2013 and ongoing
5.2) Support the development of ELCPP website content re consultation / engagement methods (‘Tools for Engagement : Information & Resources’) – see 2.2	CLD and Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing

**Objective 6: Develop best practice in relation to all aspects of consultation / engagement by promoting the use of the National Standards for Community Engagement**

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
6.1) Promote the National Standards for Community Engagement	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
6.2) Promote use of VOiCE tool as means of planning engagement exercises that reflect	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing

National Standards for Community Engagement		
6.3) Promote VOiCE and other consultation & engagement training	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
6.4) Require inclusion of National Standards for Community Engagement in any service level Strategy relating to consultation / engagement	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing
6.5) Promote Community Engagement Network across the Council	Policy & Partnerships	Ongoing