

# COUNCIL

## Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership Community Engagement Framework 16 September 2009

### Report of the Council Business Committee

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the recommendation of the Council's Business Committee to adopt the LDLSP Community Engagement Framework

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Council adopt the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership's Community Engagement Framework in accordance with the recommendations of the Council's Business Committee and that all future engagement work undertaken by the Council follows the principles of engagement set out in the document and the guidance given in carrying out this work.
2. That the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership be asked to develop a reference list of contact details to complement the framework documents as soon as practicable.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Council Business Committee, at its meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September, considered an urgent business report, attached as Appendix A, regarding a consultation being carried out by the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership. Responses to the consultation were requested by the 7<sup>th</sup> Sept.
- 1.2 Following consideration of the report, the Committee agreed the following :-
  - (1) That the draft response, attached at Appendix A to the report, be agreed subject to adding that the Council would like the reference list of contacts (referred to in paragraph 7) to be done as soon as possible.
  - (2) That the Committee recommends that the Community Engagement Framework be adopted by Council, subject to the outcome of the consultation exercise not significantly changing the draft documents, and that all future engagement work undertaken by the Council follows the principles of engagement set out in the document.
- 1.3 The agreed response, as amended by the committee is attached at Appendix B and this was duly returned to the LDLSP for their consideration. The deadline for responses to the consultation was the 7<sup>th</sup> Sept and at the time of writing this report, the outcome was not known. Once the LDLSP has finalised the exercise, a copy of any amendments will be circulated to Council prior to the meeting.

## **2.0 Proposal Details as Considered by the Business Committee**

- 2.1 The attached report and CEF framework summary (Appendix A) informed the Business Committee of a new statutory 'duty to involve' local people in the decision making process so that they feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area.
- 2.2 The LDLSP has, on behalf of all its partners, developed a Community Engagement Framework (CEF) setting out the principles of effective engagement and best practice in this area of activity. It recognises the value to be gained by working together rather than individually to put community engagement at the heart of service planning and delivery.
- 2.3 All partners are being asked to 'sign up' to the Framework and ensure that all future engagement work undertaken by the Council and its partners follows the principles of engagement set out in the framework documents.
- 2.4 The Committee heard that the council is committed to improving its community engagement and includes in its Corporate Plan - **Priority 7 Support Our Local Communities** ( Priority 7.2 refers) ***“To support the LDLSP’s development of a Community Engagement Strategy”***
- 2.5 The CEF documents include a summary, checklist, and guidance note and the Committee’s response made a number of suggestions for improvements but in particular stressed the need for the documents to be complemented by the further production of a list of reference contacts which would assist users to engage quickly and directly with organisations and groups.
- 2.6 The amended response agreed by the Committee is attached as **Appendix B**. The framework summary is also attached as an appendix to the original report but as the checklist and guidance are lengthy documents they have not been attached but will be available at the meeting.

## **3.0 Details of Consultation**

- 3.1 The CEF has been the subject of extensive consultation across a wide range of community groups. The Council Business Committee agreed a response to the consultation exercise on behalf of the council at its last meeting. Details of that consultation are set out in the attached report and the council’s agreed response attached as Appendix B.

## **4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)**

- 4.1 The options for Council to consider are :-

### **Option 1**

To adopt the Community Engagement Framework as amended following the consultation exercise and for all future engagement work undertaken by the Council to follow the principles of engagement set out in the document and the guidance given in carrying out this work. To further request the LDLSP to develop as soon as practicable a complementary reference list of contact details.

### **Option 2**

Not to adopt the framework at this stage until the further work has been carried out.

## 5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

Option1 is the preferred option. The adoption of the framework will meet the council's Corporate Plan objective in respect of Community Engagement. The Council's own Consultation Policy and procedures will be reviewed to ensure they are aligned with the engagement framework. To delay further will prevent other partners in the LDLSP from working with the council on joint engagement exercises.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The implementation of the Community Engagement Framework will deliver tangible benefits both for local communities and for the LDLSP and its partners, and by working together rather than individually, place community engagement at the heart of service determination, planning and delivery for all partners in the LDLSP.

### RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Sustainable Community Strategy forms a part of the Council's Policy Framework. The Community Engagement Framework forms a part of the LDLSP's policy framework. The council's Corporate Plan includes at Priority 7 – Support for Our Local Communities and at 7.2 "Support the LDLSP's development of a Community Engagement Strategy

### CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

The adoption of the Community Engagement Framework will have positive benefits in support of all aspects of equality impact assessment.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of any future engagement will be dependent upon Services' choice of methods. Any costs incurred in implementing the CEF would be covered by individual Services' current budgets.

### SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 officer has been consulted and has nothing further to add.

### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act places a statutory duty on members of Local Strategic Partnerships to ensure that community engagement informs decision making at all levels.

### MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has nothing further to add.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2009

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