

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



DATE	01/10/2013
PORTFOLIO	Community Services
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PURPOSE

1. The purpose of the report is to advise Committee members of current and planned corporate community engagement activity, and to seek views on the future development and delivery of this activity.
2. The purpose of corporate community engagement activity is to ensure that residents across the borough can have their say on issues that matter to them – ‘whoever you are, wherever you live’. As part of that, residents have regular opportunities to meet key decision makers, and to be in contact with Council officers in relation to services and neighbourhood issues, as well as to input directly into the formal decision making process. Keeping positive channels of communication in place – and publicising these – means that the Council gets feedback and information which helps ensure that we are basing our services and policies on peoples’ views, and helps maintain residents’ satisfaction levels with the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

3. That members comment on current and planned activity, so that their views can be taken into account in future work.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

4. To ensure that activity is taking place on the basis of the Committee having the opportunity to feed into its development.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

5. The community engagement work detailed in this report is complementary to the range of corporate **communications work** which is delivered through the Chief Executive’s Office. This includes work to develop and update the website www.burnley.gov.uk and ensure good linkages with other Council run / linked websites including www.burnley.co.uk , www.visitburnley.co.uk; increasing use of social media; the production of a corporate publication to all households and businesses, the next of which is scheduled for February 2014; and the submission of regular feature articles reflecting

Council and partnership activity to the *Burnley Express*.

6. There will be a major communications campaign between mid-October and mid-January to promote the Council website and in particular the way it can be used for transactions and for tracking jobs and queries. As this campaign begins, a new 'Your Neighbourhood' section will be added to the website, with features on each ward. Members are being asked to comment on draft text for their ward.
7. Other day to day communications work centres on issuing press releases, work with all service units to promote good news stories, handling queries, promotional activity to communicate Council decisions and campaigns, and organising marketing campaigns and events to promote economic development opportunities and achievements.
8. The corporate engagement work of the Council also connects to activity carried out through CRACS – the Collaborative Research and Consultation Service, a partnership hosted by Pendle Council but owned and supported by a number of Councils including Burnley. With the Council's Corporate Policy Officer, CRACS run the Citizen Panel Surveys which feed information into the Council for performance monitoring and tracking issues; run the Feedback Online website through which the Council publicises forthcoming decision making meetings and carries out consultations; carries out short research processes (e.g. collating the statistical information for the ward features mentioned at paragraph 6 above); and supports the Council's consultation and organisational development activities in a number of other ways.
9. The main current and planned community engagement activities are as follows: promoting and supporting **Leaders' surgeries** in Burnley and Padiham Town Hall.
10. **Out and About events** – the Council trailer is regularly used to promote Council services and campaigns at borough wide events, such as the recent Padiham Party in the Park and the Woodland Festival, and community safety initiatives in the town centre. We currently provide a Council presence at many neighbourhood activities organised by Calico housing, and have organised a series of 'Out and Abouts' in local communities with the Council leader, which are promoted in the press and through localised leafleting. Forthcoming sessions include Kibble Bank on the morning of 10th October; Gannow ward on the morning of 16th October; Abel Street at lunchtime on 30th October. There are three further sessions being planned for November.
11. '**Burnley Question Time**' – run on behalf of Burnley Action Partnership, this annual event will take place on Thursday evening 10th October, raising the curtain on Local Democracy Week. The panel will consist of Councillor Julie Cooper, the Member of Parliament Gordon Birtwistle, an educationalist / youth worker, a public health professional, the Chief Superintendent of Police, and students of the Visions Learning Trust / University Technical College.
12. Inputs to and publicity around all key **consultation** processes on Council business, including setting the Council budget for 2014 -15; work with individual service units on particular initiatives, e.g. supporting Streetscene in their Free Compost initiative and their Keep Britain Tidy campaign 'Love Where You Live'.
13. **Neighbourhood working** on issues, especially in support of ward Members, including reactive, problem solving work. A training programme on conflict awareness which is running at present connects to this work.

14. Liaison with Members and residents groups on **Ward Opportunities Fund** proposals.
15. Work on **community provision**, including support to community groups, developing facilities in neighbourhoods, and troubleshooting around these issues.
16. Involvement in **tension monitoring**, and reactive work on trends and issues arising from tension monitoring. Liaison and joint work with other agencies as appropriate.
17. Liaison with the **Council for Voluntary Service**, including joint work with CVS on particular initiatives, and signposting community groups to CVS for advice, support etc.
18. **Engagement** with identity based resident groups, e.g. ELSUN (East Lancs Service Users' Network –for service users with disabilities), the inter-faith network Building Bridges in Burnley, and with the organised youth sector (e.g. Burnley Pupil Parliament, Youth Council). As part of this, the Council is supporting a major event by the Youth Council in the Town Hall on Monday 14th October 2013.
19. Work in **Local Democracy Week** (14th to 20th October 2013) including register to vote events in Colleges; and the launch of a series of 'being a Burnley councillor' information sessions for anyone interested in standing in the local elections in 2014.
20. Maintaining and managing the fourteen council owned **neighbourhood noticeboards** in the borough, and supplying voluntary and community sector organisations with information on community and Council activity.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION

21. All the activity set out here is in line with agreed budget provision.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

22. All the activity set out here is in line with current policy.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

23. Activities set out here are discussed with the Council for Voluntary Service, other agencies and organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sector as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

24. Information on specific initiatives available on request from Mike Waite.

FURTHER INFORMATION

PLEASE CONTACT: Mike Waite ext 3119

ALSO: Tom Forshaw ext 7260

