

Management Response

Local Authority: Blaenau Gwent CBC

Report title: Service User Perspective: Community Engagement – Blaenau Gwent Council

Issue date: May 2019

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
P1	Ensure that community engagement is targeted to capture the views of as many people affected by the service change as possible	Better targeted community engagement	Y	Y	To be progressed through implementation of the Engagement Strategy The Bridging the Gap programme includes Strategic Business Reviews on enablers such as behavioural insight and multi-disciplinary teams to support including views from the community and stakeholders	As part of the mid-term review of the strategy in 2020 Aligned to delivery of the councils MTFs and Bridging the Gap Programme	Andrew Parker (AP), Service Manager Policy and Partnerships Anne Louise Clark (ALC), Chief Officer Commercial Bernadette Elias (BE), Head of Governance & Partnerships
P2	Promote and utilise the support of the Corporate Engagement Team to maximise potential benefits from the engagement	Better results through using specialist team	Y	Y	To be progressed through implementation of the Engagement Strategy	As part of the mid-term review of the strategy in 2020	AP BE

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P3	Evaluate each engagement approach to establish when it is most appropriate to use	Better use of community engagement resources	N	Y	To be progressed through implementation of the Engagement Strategy	As part of the mid-term review of the strategy in 2020	AP BE
P4	Develop a coordinated approach to community engagement that eliminates the current silo approach practiced in parts of the Council	More positive perception of engagement by local citizens.	Y	Y	To be progressed through implementation of the Engagement Strategy	As part of the mid-term review of the strategy in 2020	AP BE
P5	Reinforce the importance of genuine community engagement amongst staff at all levels within the Council	Better response to citizens who engage with the Council.	Y	Y	Hold briefings Session for Elected Members and officers to continue to raise awareness of the national principles of engagement	July 2020	AP BE
P6	Develop new, innovative and efficient ways of engaging local people by asking them for their ideas and involving them in developing new approaches	Community engagement that better meets local needs/preferences.	N	Y	Undertake a scoping exercise for potential of a pilot project to explore opportunities for more effective dialogue through Social Media platforms	August 2020	AP
P7	Develop a 'live' approach to community engagement with ongoing dialogue, feedback and communication across the Council – where community engagement is not managed as an isolated event	Community engagement as an ongoing process instead of time specific.	Y	Y	To be progressed through implementation of the Engagement Strategy	As part of the mid-term review of the strategy in 2020	AP BE
P8	Identify local people who because of their roles currently have access to large numbers of people on a daily basis who could potentially work with the Council to help it engage more effectively such as, but not restricted to faith groups	A better 'reach' into the community to support community engagement	Y	Y	To be explored as part of the work with community groups via the engagement team networks	April 2020	AP

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P9	Share learning from community engagement activity to promote good practice and prevent repeats of poor practice	Continuous improvements to community engagement approaches and processes	N	Y	Through regular user research on Strategic Business Reviews and commissioning of services we will develop a library of 'lived experiences' to help inform decision and share learning.	Aligned to delivery of the councils MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme	ALC
P10	Review how the Council can most effectively engage people with protected characteristics to ensure appropriate inclusion in the process and value for money from their involvement	Better inclusivity and value for money of community engagement	N	Y	Identify Key Networks and People within the Community. Work in partnership with the forums and the potential to target specific groups e.g. LGBT.	2020- 2021 linked to the Strategic Equality Plan delivery	AP
P11	Improve the timing and transparency of community engagement and the decision making process	Better understanding by local citizens of the way their views have contributed to decisions leading to a more credible perception of community engagement	Y	Y	To be progressed through implementation of the Engagement Strategy	As part of the mid-term review of the strategy in 2020	AP BE