

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must require the Cabinet or local authority to respond to a report or recommendations made thereto by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such a response must be provided within two months from the date on which it is requested¹ and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so. This template provides a structure which respondents are encouraged to use. However, respondents are welcome to depart from the suggested structure provided the same information is included in a response. The usual way to publish a response is to include it in the agenda of a meeting of the body to which the report or recommendations were addressed.

Issue: **Consultation and Engagement Strategy**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Neil Fawcett, Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Services

Date response requested: 19 September 2023

Response to report:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different from that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That on issues expected to be contentious political leaders should be accountable via Cabinet or single Cabinet member decision for the consultation and engagement strategy, rather than officers	Already actioned	Officers work very closely with portfolio holders on high-profile consultation and engagement exercises to ensure that cabinet members have oversight of and are accountable for the strategy. For some issues which have significant public interest or which are expected to be contentious, such as the recent engagement exercise on OUFC's response to the council's strategic priorities, the strategy is taken to a public meeting of Cabinet for approval.

<p>That at its next annual refresh of the Communications and Engagement action plan the Council strengthens its road-map for how it will leverage its partnerships to increase the breadth of engagement by including (but not limited to) a) Creating SMART targets for partnership working b) Committing to undertake engagement processes which are representative by design</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>The council already undertakes some representative engagement activity, such as the annual residents' survey. Further representative exercises will be commissioned where appropriate.</p> <p>For budget consultation and engagement exercises, the council has for a number of years used a range of participatory and representative methods to increase the breadth of engagement, from deliberative discussion days and representative surveys to market stall events, large scale public debates and open online feedback forms. Deliberative techniques are also used to engage children and young people, such as our full-day sounding board events.</p> <p>The consultation and engagement team work closely with partners on a range of activity. However, as part of the next annual refresh of the action plan, we will look to strengthen targets around partnership working.</p>
<p>That the Council develop an outline business case for launching Let's Talk Oxfordshire in app form.</p>	<p>Rejected</p>	<p>Let's Talk Oxfordshire is run on third party proprietary software, which means the council is not in a position to develop the software itself. While we can suggest this as a potential future development to the company who owns the software (EngagementHQ), we are not able to directly commission an app version.</p>

		<p>Let's Talk Oxfordshire is already available in a mobile-friendly format, which we believe offers the same functionality as an app. We therefore feel that app version would not offer additional benefit or value over and above the current mobile format.</p>
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