

REPORT TO: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC GROUP ON 23 APRIL 2009

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATION

**BY: MORAY COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Community Engagement Strategic Group is asked to agree the process for consulting with the wider public on the proposals for establishing a Community Support Unit and in establishing a fund to support community engagement.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Engagement Group approves the proposals for the consultation process outlined in this paper (see appendix 1).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It was agreed at the Community Engagement Group held on 22 January 2009 that it arranges a consultation for the Moray Councils proposals for support of community engagement in Moray.
- 3.2 At a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10 March 2009 (para 21 of the minute refers) it was agreed to establish a Community Support Unit within the Moray Council and to review funding to support the engagement of community councils and area forums. It was also decided that both the proposals should be put out to public consultation and that following consideration, the committee agreed that the Community Engagement Group would circulate the proposals for consultation.
- 3.3 The recent restructuring of community planning has highlighted the need for effective community engagement and support being given to the community in order that they can fully participate in the process of community planning.
- 3.4 The establishment of the Community Engagement Theme Group with its clearly defined role and remit provides an opportunity to develop the quality and level of community engagement in Moray, to ensure that the partnership meets the National Standards for Community Engagement.
- 3.5 It is important that a targeted consultation and engagement process is undertaken on any proposals to ensure that the process meets the National Standards for Community Engagement.

4 **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

The Single Outcome Agreement has identified outcomes, which include increasing the influence that the people of Moray have over decisions, which affect their communities and lives and their active participation.

(b) Policy and Legal

Community planning has a clear statutory basis under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The Local Government Scotland Act 2003 requires that the partnership engage with community bodies as part of the community planning process which reinforces the fact that community engagement is now central to the running of government. In particular, the Act places a duty on local authorities to work together with all public bodies and '*with such community bodies or persons as is appropriate*' in developing a community plan. Statutory Guidance from the Scottish Executive on community planning describes it as having the aim of "making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on public services, which affect them". The "Voluntary Sector Compact", which was agreed between the voluntary sector and the community planning partners, ensures that policy or procedural changes, which impact on the voluntary sector, are taken into account during the decision-making period. The Council and its partners should be aware that the effective participation and engagement of the voluntary sector incurs accompanying costs and in implementing measures to help to meet these.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

Moray Council staff will carry out the consultation process and the Moray Council will meet any cost for the process.

(d) Consultations

The Trade unions and staff directly affected by these proposed changes have already been informed and are part of the consultation process. The list of potential consultees is attached in appendix 1.

5. **CONCLUSION**

5.1 The Moray Council is proposing to establish a Community Support Unit and is reviewing its financial support to Community Councils and Area Forums. The Community Engagement Strategic Group is asked to approve the proposals to consult on the proposals.

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Background Papers: