

Guidance 4 – Exchange of Information, Code of Good Practice

Introduction

It is of mutual benefit of Aberdeen City Council 'the Council', Community Councils and the communities that they serve that constructive discussion, consultation and information exchange takes place in a positive and meaningful way. This document is intended to help ensure that these organisations exchange information, explanations and guidance in a way that will be beneficial for the whole community.

The Council shall:

1. Consult with Community Councils on all issues where consultation with the public is a statutory requirement.
2. Advise Community Councils of planning applications in their areas by way of circulation of the Weekly List of Applications (there is also a separate Planning Concordat).
3. Notify Community Councils of Licensing applications relating to Liquor or Street Processions via email.
4. Advise Community Councils of Traffic Orders in their area via email.
5. Acknowledge written communication from Community Councils within 5 working days and reply in full within 20 working days, unless otherwise advised more time is required.
6. Provide appropriate support to empower Community Councils to make informed decisions on matters of concern.
7. Provide Community Councils with contact details of Elected Members and a list of Chief Officials.
8. Provide Community Councils with an electronic copy of the agenda front sheets of all Council Committees with advice on where to access full papers
9. Nominate an officer of the Council to act as Community Council Liaison Officer.
10. Endeavor to meet reasonable requests for officer attendance at Community Council meetings.
11. Encourage effective consultation with Community Councils over matters of common interest by providing sufficient information in adequate time to allow the Community Council to provide a considered response.
12. Involve Community Councils in any consultations arranged through public meetings.
13. Give Community Councils the opportunity to participate in the processes that lead to decision making on issues relating to their areas.
14. Encourage Community Councils to participate in Community Planning activities.

Community Councils shall:

1. Advise the Council on local opinions concerning matters of interest.
2. Advise the Council on matters requiring attention or action.
3. Appoint a named contact to be main contact for the Community Council (usually the secretary) whose details will be available to the public and to Council Officers.
4. Appoint a Planning Officer to be the contact for consultation on planning related matters.
5. Appoint a Licensing Officer to be the contact for consultation on licensing related matters.
6. Engage in Community Planning activities to improve local outcomes for the community.
7. Actively seek the views and opinions of the community and be able to demonstrate that steps have been taken to engage the local community in order for the views expressed to the Council and other bodies to be a fair representation of the community.
8. Express the views of the community on proposed planning, licensing or projects for applications going before the Council which should include positive support for acceptable schemes as well as objections from the community.
9. Respond to written communications from the Council and other organisations within a reasonable time, taking into account the schedule of Community Council meetings, providing an acknowledgement in the first instance.
10. Inform the Council in advance of any consultations being arranged via public meetings.
11. Invite Council officers, representatives of statutory bodies and other organisations to attend Community Council meetings when appropriate.
12. Encourage the local community to raise issues with the Community Council so this can be shared with the Council.