



Glasgow City Council

**Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement
City Policy Committee**

Report by Director of Community Empowerment & Equalities

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**PARTICIPATION REQUEST ANNUAL REPORT AND PROPOSED
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Purpose of Report: To provide the Committee with an annual report with regards Participation Requests submitted to Glasgow City Council, and to advise that this annual report will be submitted to the Scottish Government, as required by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Recommendations:

The Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement City Policy Committee is asked to note this report and that it will be submitted to the Scottish Government, as required by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No ✓

consulted: Yes No ✓

1. Background

- 1.1. On 1st April 2017 the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 came into force. The Act introduces a range of new elements of community participation and consultation including Participation Requests. The Scottish Government has published regulations and guidance on how the Participation Requests aspect of the Act should be implemented. This guidance includes a requirement for the Council to publish an annual report and a responsibility to promote Participation Requests.
- 1.2. This Committee (on 08/03/18) and the City Administration Committee (on 19/05/18) agreed a process for dealing with participation requests.
- 1.3. On 1st April 2017, Part 3 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 came into effect when 'The Participation Request (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations came into force. The regulations require a public service authority to 'promote the use of participation requests by publishing on a website or by other electronic means (including by use of social media) information explaining how a participation request may be made to that authority. The Regulations set out a timetable that public service authorities must follow in processing requests and with regard to the publication of statutory reports and notices'.
(Further information is available from the LGiU Scotland Briefing: <https://www.lgiuscotland.org.uk/briefing/all-together-now-how-are-we-doing-with-participation-requests/>)

2. Communication and Promotion

- 2.1. The Scottish Government's guidance states that promotion should go beyond established community organisations and should target the wider community, particularly disadvantaged and marginalised groups. In terms of methods, the guidance states that public service authorities must promote the use of Participation Requests by publishing on their website and through social media.
- 2.2. A section on Participation Requests has been included in Community Council's weekly news bulletins which include information on what Participation Requests are and how they can submit their own.
- 2.3. There is also a page on the Council's website (<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=21071>) which contains the following information;
 - What is a Participation Request?
 - Further information (its context within the Community Empowerment Act)



- Who can make a request?
- Making a Participation Request (this section gives information on who can make a request)
- What is a 'public service authority'? (a list of authorities as listed in the Scottish Government's Guidance to which a request can be made)
- How long does it take?
- Received Participation Requests
- Annual Report

3. Improved Communication Strategy

- 3.1. As this is a new process the Participation Request working group have created a more robust communication strategy for both Council staff and the wider public.
- 3.2. Glasgow City Council already offers robust engagement process throughout the Council's services. As stated in the Scottish Government's guidance Participation Requests are not a complaints procedure but "should rather be viewed as an opportunity for communities to establish formal dialogue with public service authorities". It is unclear at the moment whether promoting Participation Requests may increase the number of formal requests received by the Council, however, they will increase the level of engagement across other Council consultative processes.
- 3.3. Community groups are encouraged to contact the Council prior to submitting an official request. This should reduce duplication and allow for groups to be directed to established engagement processes.

4. Internal Communications

- 4.1. The chair of the Participation Request working group attended the Corporate Management Team to detail the process and explained what is required of each service. Each service director has been instructed to identify a lead officer to deal with requests. A briefing pack for Lead Officers has been developed. This will be finalised over the next few weeks and published on Connect in June 2019..
- 4.2. As Elected Members are likely to have initial interaction with community groups for this process, a tailored briefing pack for Elected Members has been developed and will be provided to Elected Members in June 2019
- 4.3. In order to reach the wider Council staff an article was included in the January edition of the Insider magazine. A banner will be added to the Connect Intranet in June 2019 which links to internal resources and the external dedicated page on the Council's website.
- 4.4. Further resources have been developed including a Managers Briefing, Privacy Statement (as per the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations) and a PowerPoint presentation. All of these resources will be added to the

Council external website or Connect, as appropriate in June 2019.

5. External Communications

- 5.1. As well as the dedicated webpage, there will be a series of scheduled posts on Glasgow City Council's and Glasgow Community Planning Partnership's social media accounts with branding created specifically for Participation Requests, to allow for instant recognition.
- 5.2. The social media promotion will coincide with a press release to the media in particular; Third Force News, local weekly newspapers, and Housing Scotland Newsletter.

6. Communications with Hard-to-Reach Groups

- 6.1. Participation requests forms and guidance will be made available in different languages and formats, including large print, braille and BSL, on request.
7. We will work with both voluntary and community groups which represent and work with hard-to-reach groups within our local communities to promote the process. Literature will also be distributed and display in prominent local buildings (GPs, libraries, community centres, councils service offices, etc.) highlighting the process and how to get involved.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

- 8.1. To ensure that the process is accountable and transparent, there are a number of requirements placed on the Council as outlined below;
- 8.2. Decision Notice
Once a request has been validated and a decision has been made on whether to accept or reject the request the Council must issue a decision notice to the community participation body. The decision notice should set out the decision and, if the Council refuses the request, the reasons for the decision. This must be done within 30 working days from the validation date or 45 working days if more than one public service authority is involved or a longer period of time if agreed between the Council and the community participation body.
- 8.3. Outcome Improvement Process Report
When an outcome improvement process has been completed the Council must publish a report on the process. The report must summarise the following;
 - the outcome of the process, including whether the outcome has been improved
 - describe how the community participation body that made the request influenced the process and outcomes

- explain how the Council will keep the community participation body and others informed about changes in the outcomes of the process

8.4. Annual Report

Annual Reports cover each year from 1 April to 31 March and must be published by 30 June. The Report must set out the following;

- the number of requests received
- the number of requests agreed and refused
- the number of requests which resulted in changes to a public service provided by, or on behalf of, the Council
- any action taken by the Council to promote and support the use of Participation Requests

9. **Annual Report 2017-2018**

9.1. During the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 Glasgow City Council received 3 Participation Requests. The requests have been received from Community Councils. Community Councils as a whole already engage well with the Council, and utilise established engagement processes.

9.2. In two instances, the request was approved and an outcome improvement plan agreed. The third request was rejected and further evidence is being sought which may inform to a new request.

9.2.1 **Craigton Community Council**

The Council approved the request and agreed an outcome improvement plan to be implemented from 13 August 2018. A copy of the outcome letter can be found on the Council's website at: <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=42968&p=0>

9.2.2 **Woodland & Park Community Council**

The Council rejected the request, with consideration to Section 24 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill 2015, on the basis that the desired outcome is not an improvement in the Community Council's area. The request required further evidence which would could be obtained through the HMO consultation which was underway. The Woodland & Park Community Council would continue a dialogue with the Council services and participate in the consultation process along with other stakeholders. A copy of the decision letter can be found on the Council's website at: <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=41760&p=0>

9.2.3 **Mount Florida Community Council**

The Council approved the request and agreed an outcome improvement plan to be implemented from 10 August 2018. A copy of the outcome letter can be found on the Council's website at: <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=42532&p=0>

9.3. In addition to the above, the following enquiries have been received which may develop into participation requests:

9.3.1 Merchant City & Trongate Community Council

For the conversion of the NCP car park on Ingram Street into an attraction green space facility for residents and visitors. MCTCC is seeking community opinion and gathering additional information in preparation for a participation request.

9.3.2 Pollokshields Community Council

To tackling the litter/recycling/community issues with in the community and improve residents understanding of these issues. PCC has set up a steering group led by residents that is developing a Local Action Plan

In both instances, the Community Council has been provided with a copy of the Participation Request application and the initial enquiry referred to the appropriate service for support and assistance.

10. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: None

Legal: To ensure the Council complies with Part 3 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

Personnel: The true impact on staffing resources is not known. There may be an increase in requests once they are more widely publicised. Once a request has been agreed the process may require significant resources, the level of resource may vary according to the request.

Procurement: None

Council Strategic Plan:

Specify which theme(s) and outcome(s) the proposal supports

Participation Requests support Resilient and Empowered Neighborhoods and A well Governed City that Listens and Responds

Strategic Priority 92.

Equality Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

Yes, in particular, outcomes 8 and 10:
8. Service users with protected characteristics are provided with targeted, improved and more accessible information about the services provided by the Council Family

10. People with protected characteristics are more regularly and systematically involved in service delivery design by the Council Family.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

It will be important for the Council to monitor the types of organisations making Participation Requests.

An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been completed and a copy can be accessed on the Council website

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17533>

**Sustainability
Impacts:**

Environmental: Not Applicable

Social: Participation Requests could have a positive impact on local communities by providing greater opportunity for community empowerment.

Economic: Participation Requests could assist in regenerating the wider community and result in more participative working

**Privacy and Data
Protection
impacts:** A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been completed and no risks have been identified.

11. Recommendations

The Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement City Policy Committee is asked to note this report and that this will be submitted to the Scottish Government as per our statutory requirement.