

Involved and Informed

Dundee City Council Education Department's
**Consultation and
Communication Strategy**

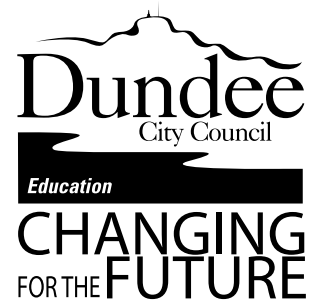
Updated April 2012

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CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

UPDATED APRIL 2012



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Introduction

Effective communication is essential for effective management.

As a department of Dundee City Council, our Consultation and Communication Strategy must take account of and be derived from the Corporate Communication Strategy. Therefore our Consultation and Communication Strategy demonstrates the key principles within the corporate strategy.

- Openness
- Responsibility
- Honesty

Dundee City Council's Education Department is the largest within the City Council with over 3,000 staff and 20,000 pupils spread over more than 70 locations throughout the city. The importance of consultation and communication within the department and with our stakeholders is obvious.

Equalities

Accessible Consultation and Communication: the Education Department has a duty to ensure that, through our systems and processes, we do not discriminate against those who access, or are part of, our service. It is our aim to ensure that all stakeholders can access communications in a manner which affords them equality of opportunity. For example, this could take the form of: providing large print; use of an interpreter, communicator or translator; use of alternative communication systems and technology.

Why Improve Consultation and Communication?

Our aims

Dundee City Council Education Department acknowledges and recognises the role of parents and carers in the education of our children. It is our aim to develop a partnership between the department, schools, parents and the wider community where all feel that their opinions are valued and given proper consideration before decisions are reached.

In this way we aim to deliver the key aims of the Education Department as laid out in the Education Department Service Plan:

Through the work of staff in all establishments and services the Education Department aims to:

- ensure that all learners achieve their highest potential
- ensure equality of opportunity for all
- promote a culture where everyone is valued equally and all achievements are recognised
- ensure that all learners experience the broadest range of personal development opportunities
- work in partnership with the home, the community and other services
- develop an inclusive ethos which supports all staff in providing the highest quality Education Services
- ensure that all services achieve best value consistent with high quality educational provision

Why Do We Consult and Communicate?

We believe in effective consultation and communication because it:

- enables everyone to contribute to the policy making process
- symbolises our commitment to openness and honesty in our practice
- helps our planning, prioritisation and delivery to provide better services
- promotes effective partnership between the home, school and department
- identifies problems quickly enabling matters to be put right before they escalate

In doing this, Dundee City Council Education Department will:

- establish and maintain best practice in consultation and communication
- build consultation and communication into our planning processes
- adopt a range of consultation and communication methods to ensure widespread communication of proposals and reasons for these proposals being made
- acknowledge receipt of responses to consultation exercises
- notify respondents of decisions taken following consultation using a range of methods such as regular Director/Chair of Parent Council meetings, the Involved Parents, Inspired Children Parent Forum, press releases, letters, the parental information section of the Council website, GLOW etc.
- promote equal opportunities through our consultation and communication activity.

Context

Quality management in education

Quality Management in Education 2, (QMIE2) published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), sets out a framework for self-evaluation and external scrutiny through inspection of the Education functions of local authorities in Scotland. This publication is designed to promote rigorous and consistent self-evaluation in the education services of local government. It sets out quality indicators which are used to ensure we monitor how effective we are in consulting and communicating with all stakeholders.

The Dundee City Pathway to Improvement (DCPI) is a framework to drive quality and deliver continuous improvement throughout the organisation. DCIP is an evidence based self assessment model that helps services gauge their performance, identify best practice, areas for improvement and develop effective improvement action plans. This framework, also known as the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) is used across councils and public services in Scotland.

Our Consultation & Communication with stakeholders is self evaluated against this.

Our stakeholders are:

- Members of Staff
- Pupils
- Parents
- Elected Members – Councillors, MSPs, MPs
- Others - Other Council Departments, Outside Agencies, the Press

Mechanisms of Consultation and Communication

The mechanisms used to communicate and consult with stakeholders will continue to evolve. Listed below are some of the many mechanisms used to communicate with stakeholders – this is by no means exhaustive, and will be supplemented by other methods of consultation and communication used at school and service level.

Staff

Chief Executive's Briefing
Dundee Education News
Team Briefings
Staff Liaison Group
Intranet/ Internet
e-mail
Meetings with Trade Union reps JCC/DNCT

Meetings with Head Teachers
Feedback
Staff Meetings
Director's Meetings with Staff
Staff Briefings
Meetings with individuals
Working Groups
Sickness Absence Management
Press Releases and media briefings

'Open Voice' events
Internet, Glow

Pupils

Newsletters
Pupil Councils
Public Events
Individual Pupils' School Reports
Internet, Glow
Press Releases and media briefings
'Open Voice' events

Other Council Departments

Dundee Education News
Working Groups
Regular meetings
Press Releases and media briefings

Parents

Newsletters
Leaflets
Standards and Quality Reports
Parent Contact Evenings
School Handbooks
Meetings with Parent Council Chairs
Internet - DCC Website, School Website, Glow
Advice and Conciliation Service
Public Notices
Parent Services Initiative
Posters
Children & Families Information Service
Meetings with individuals
Press Releases and media briefings
'Open Voice' events
Involved Parents Inspired Children Parent Forum
Director's Meetings with Parents
Representation on relevant Working Groups
Parent Council Meetings

Elected Members

Dundee Education News
Standards and Quality Reports
Scrutiny Committee reports
Public Events
Individual Meetings
Internet
Education Committee Reports
e-mail
Parent Council Meetings
Press Releases and media briefings

Other Stakeholders

Internet and Email
Dundee Education News
Working Groups
Regular meetings
Press Releases and media briefings

The Role of Schools and Services

As the Education Department is spread widely throughout the city, it is important that each school and service has recognised mechanisms for communicating with staff.

It is our aim that every member of staff should have the information available to them to ensure that they can effectively carry out their job. They should also be able to identify where they can access other information of interest to them if they so wish.

Each school and service's needs are different so each has their own consultation and communication plan for dissemination to ensure that all members of staff receive information that will be helpful in carrying out their tasks. This plan should be easily available to all staff and should also be included within the induction process for every new member of staff.

As part of their consultation and communication plan, each establishment should establish an audit cycle to check the effectiveness of its procedures for consultation and ensure that communications are reaching those who require information.

Involving Staff

A range of methods is used to communicate with all staff, and with specific staff groups. The main methods used are outlined below.

Dundee Education News (DEN)

Dundee Education News is published termly and is the main vehicle for communication with all members of staff. DEN carries information from the centre to all establishments. An electronic online version of DEN is available on the department's intranet site <http://dc2intranet/dundeecity.gov.uk>

Email

It is important that e-mailboxes are checked regularly throughout the working day. Head Teachers should be aware that it is possible to allow others to have access to their corporate e-mail, or to have their GLOW mail auto forwarded to their corporate email address. This allows members of administration staff to check e-mailboxes when the Head Teacher is out of school.

GLOW - the national intranet for Scottish School. All staff and pupils in Dundee schools have access to GLOW. Increasingly, information for staff is made available in GLOW and can be accessed both in and out of school.

Director's meetings with staff

Every year the Director of Education undertakes a series of open meetings on a cluster basis for primary and nursery schools and in every secondary school. There is no set agenda and all members of staff are welcome to raise any issue which is of concern to them.

Meetings with Head Teachers

Meetings between the Senior Management Team and Head Teachers occur approximately every 6 weeks throughout the school year. The agenda is agreed at a Pre-Agenda meeting which occurs approximately 2 weeks prior to the meeting and is shared between the SMT and Head Teachers. Head Teachers should arrange to communicate relevant issues raised at these meetings to staff.

Meetings with trade union representatives

Meetings between the Senior Management Team and representatives of teaching and support staff unions take place on a regular basis. Unions will arrange to communicate issues raised at these meetings to relevant staff.

Team meeting/whole staff meeting

Team briefing and whole staff meetings are used as a way to disseminate information through a network of managers, team leaders and supervisors to all employees.

The system provides an opportunity for all staff to receive information on key issues. In addition, opinions can be sought from staff who can also raise issues with section and team leaders. These issues can then be discussed directly with managers.

Staff briefings

Staff Briefings within Dundee House allow the Senior Management Team to brief staff on key issues and policy developments. There is a shared agenda based on issues raised by the Senior Management Team and requests made by staff.

Senior Managers within establishments should have a Staff Briefing system in place to allow them to brief their own staff on these key issues and policy developments.

Working groups and curricular networks

Working groups and curricular networks are established, and will continue to be established as required. Membership of these groups reflects relevant staff across the department. Working groups and curricular networks will ensure that their work is communicated to relevant staff.

Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)/Dundee negotiating committee for teachers (DNCT)

The Joint Consultative Committee for Teachers (JCC) meets four times per year. The JCC is a forum for regular consultation between the Council and its teachers. The JCC consists of Elected Members, Officers of the Council and representatives of the teachers' unions.

The Dundee Negotiating Committee for Teachers (DNCT) has been established as the local negotiating mechanism between the union and management sides in implementation of "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century".

Leaflets/documents

Key policies will continue to be communicated via the Council's intranet and internet.

Education job vacancy bulletin

The Education Department advertises all vacancies through a weekly Job Vacancies Bulletin and on <https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk>. The Job Vacancies Bulletin is e-mailed to all schools every week and Head Teachers have been asked to ensure that this is widely circulated. All jobs are also available in GLOW and on the Council's intranet. Staff have access to the Council's intranet where they can find various materials of relevance to them.

Involving and Informing Pupils

Dundee has a well-established Citywide Pupil Council for secondary school representatives. This meets monthly within the school year to discuss issues brought forward by individual school Pupil Representative Councils (PRCs) and to contribute to the consultation process of the department.

The Pupil Council can also invite the Director of Education and members of the department's Senior Management Team to attend their meetings.

Every Dundee school has a PRC in place to allow two way consultation and communication between the citywide Pupil Council and the wider pupil body.

The Education Department is committed to ensuring that the views and ideas of children and young people are heard and taken into account when planning services. The department ensures that all children and young people with special needs or from minority ethnic backgrounds or groups are consulted and have a say.

This is achieved through schools taking account of the department's Equality Action Plan in their mechanisms for consulting and communicating with their pupils.

Early Years Services have developed a range of strategies to ensure that our youngest children have a voice. Great importance is placed on communicating effectively with children so that they can feel confident and assured in the knowledge that adults will take time to explain and discuss relevant issues.

In addition, it is important that adults listen to and take cognisance of children's points of view. In all daily interactions, staff should have an awareness of the need to consider the views and interest of the young child.

Early Years staff also value and take account of parents' knowledge and views of their child's development and interests through regular informal contact and consultation with parents.

All pupils have access to GLOW and relevant information can easily be targeted to them by means of the All Pupils GLOW Group.

Involving and Informing Parents

Parent Councils are identified as the formal representative body of parents through Act of Parliament.

The Senior Management Team holds regular meetings with the Chairpersons of Parent Councils. These meetings are also attended by the Convener of Education.

The agenda for these meetings is shared, with Parent Councils and parent representatives being asked to contribute agenda items.

Members of the Senior Management Team are also available to attend meetings of Parent Councils if requested.

A focus group of parents are also asked for their views as part of the extended school review process.

The Education Department has a Parental Involvement Officer who has the responsibility for supporting all Parent Councils. She also facilitates the Involved Parents Inspired Children City Wide Parent Forum.

This group is made up of parents from all schools across the city and meets on a regular basis where they are consulted on various matters and have the opportunity to express their views and thoughts. The parent information section of the department's website is updated regularly by the Parent Communications Group who meet to discuss all aspects of Communication that affect parents and organise events.

The process has now begun of offering parents access to GLOW. Here they can find information from National and local sources as well as up to date information from their children's school(s).

Wider Audience Participation

Dundee City Council's Education Department is committed to working in partnership with parents to improve the education of all of our children.

The department, on a regular basis, carries out surveys to establish the level of parental satisfaction with the service being delivered. Results of this survey are used to inform decision making and are fed back to parents and each school as part of the school review process.

The department produces a report on Standards and Quality every year, which is available to parents on request. All schools also produce their own Standards and Quality report which is available to parents.

Most consultation and communication with the wider parent body will be done at school level via school bag mail. This will include newsletters, parental consent letters and information letters.

At school level communication with parents will also include the publication of school handbooks, school Standards and Quality reports, individual pupil's school reports and the opportunity to communicate directly with staff at parent contact and information evenings.

The department will wish to communicate from time to time with the wider parent body and other interested stakeholders as part of a formal legal process. This will be carried out by directly mailing those affected and through the Director/Parent Council Chair and Involved Parents, Inspired Children City Wide Parent Forum.

Most communication from the department to parents is also copied to the City Council's corporate website www.dundee.gov.uk where a range of information is available to all who access the site.

The Department also uses public events to inform the wider population of the work and successes of the department.

Dundee's Integrated Children's Services

The department is also part of Dundee's Integrated Children's Services. Dundee's integrated approach is based on the principles in the national Getting It Right For Every Child Strategy. The partnerships help tackle many of the priority issues in Dundee today. This includes developing early years and early intervention strategies and services; engaging, consulting, listening to and involving young people, children and parents; the role and involvement of communities; and keeping children safe and enhancing education opportunities for children and young people.

Parents of Children in Early Years

Parent Services

Development work is undertaken by Parent Services to strengthen the role of parents in the early years. Working in partnership with other Council Departments, Health and other agencies from the Private and Voluntary Sector, the two Parents Development Workers develop, sustain and maintain a range of universal and targeted services for parents in the community.

Services evolve and change in response to need. These services are wide ranging and below are a few examples of the types of work undertaken:

- Support Groups - for example, the Jigsaw Group - a weekly support group for parents and their children 3 years and under who have an additional support need.
- Family Learning Workshops - for example, Parent and Child Workshops focussing on early literacy and the importance of play.
- Training and Development Opportunities for Staff and Parents - for example, for parents, Choosing Quality Childcare and First Aid Training, and for staff in local authority, private and voluntary sectors Engaging with Parents and The Impact Of The Home Environment On Children's Behaviour.

Development workers also participate in various professional working groups with other partners on an ongoing basis to promote the role of parents and work towards specific shared goals.

Dundee Children and Families Information Service (Chis)

The Children and Families Information Service provides parents and carers with information regarding early years and childcare services in Dundee, and also provides signposting information to other groups and services for families. It operates a telephone helpline and email enquiry service where parents, service providers, and professionals can access information about services in Dundee.

Parents form the majority of service users, and are given the opportunity to provide feedback to ensure information is relevant and accessible to their needs. A range of signposting information and fact sheets are available, and includes links to statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies.

Information locally is available on the Dundee section of the Scottish Government funded www.scottishfamilies.gov.uk (but only where permission has been given by the childcare provider) and signposts to other groups and services under several categories including Parenting, Education, Health, Libraries and Home Based Childcare. Users of the website are also given the opportunity to access and feedback on the service using an online enquiry form.

www.scottishfamilies.gov.uk

Email: cis@dundeecity.gov.uk

Telephone Helpline: 01382 433900

Parental Concerns and Enquiries

Advice & conciliation

The Education Advice, Conciliation and Information Officer is responsible for dealing with issues regarding enquiries, complaints and concerns from members of the public, schools, parents, other agencies and any other bodies, which may require the service from time to time.

Schools and parents have been issued with a leaflet containing the direct line number for this service.

The benefits of this service to the customer are numerous: quick and easy access to someone in the department who will deal with the issue, cut down on delay in response time, someone to listen to the enquiry, concern or complaint, an explanation of how the issue will be dealt with and the knowledge that a named person will respond to the caller.

The Advice and Conciliation Service is available for face-to-face interviews with parents or others who decide to come to the Education Department in person.

The service is also available for mediation if the need arises.

Consultation and communication with schools, other agencies and others in the department may be necessary from time to time in order to establish facts regarding certain issues. This may involve meetings with Head Teachers, members of teaching staff, members of staff from other agencies, Education Officers, Education Service Managers or the Director.

Overall, the main aims of the Advice and Conciliation Service are:

- To be accessible to users of the service and bodies within the remit.
- To be thorough, fair and impartial when dealing with complaints.
- To be flexible in seeking resolutions.
- To work as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- To be open in the way we work while preserving confidentiality.

Involving and informing Elected Members

Enquiries from elected members (Councillors, MSPs, MPs, MEPs) should be addressed to either the Director of Education, the Head of Education (Pre-School, Primary, Communications and Culture) or the Head of Education (Secondary and Support for Learners).

However, it is important that all schools and services are aware of the corporate protocol on dealing with Councillor's enquiries that the Senior Management Team will be adhering to. Particularly important in this protocol are the timescales involved.

Protocol for dealing with Councillor's enquiries

This guidance is intended to ensure that all departments respond in a consistent way to enquiries from Councillors on behalf of their constituents.

I. Timescales

- a response to all Councillors' enquiries must be made within 5 working days.
- ideally, a full response should be given in this timescale. However, if the enquiry is more complicated, a holding response should be made within the 5 days, explaining the action which is being taken to investigate the enquiry and giving an estimated timescale for a full response.
- where a holding response has been given, the aim should be to give a full response within a further 10 working days. Where this is not possible, members should be kept informed of the reasons and given revised timescales.

2. Use of Telephones, E-mail and Letters

- while it may sometimes be helpful to discuss enquiries verbally, this can lead to delays if people are unavailable. Exchange of formal letters can also be time consuming in the case of straightforward enquiries.
- Councillors and their support staff will therefore be encouraged to use e-mail, which has the advantages of speed and providing a reliable record of the progress of enquiries. E-mails relating to Councillors' enquiries will be sent as "high" priority, to alert departments to the need for a response within the timescales set out above.
- responses from departments should always be in writing and may be in the form of e-mails or letters depending on the nature and extent of the information concerned. In drafting responses, departments should be aware that Councillors may wish to forward these on to constituents.
- where contact is made by telephone, if Councillors are unavailable then officers should always leave messages with the Members' Support staff.

3. Contacts

- through experience, Councillors and their support staff will often have knowledge of the appropriate officers in departments for particular types of enquiry, and may approach them directly rather than through Directors. As long as this works well, it is not intended to impose any formal system for tracking enquiries and monitoring responses.
- Directors should ensure that any officers dealing with Councillors' enquiries are familiar with the procedures in this note, and may wish to establish their own internal procedures in relation to Councillors' enquiries.
- In the absence of a formal monitoring procedure, there will be an onus on Councillors to highlight any failures to deal with enquiries in a satisfactory way, by drawing this to the attention of the Chief Executive.

Reports to the Education Committee

The Education Committee is the body responsible for taking policy decisions regarding education within Dundee City Council. The committee comprises 34 members (all 29 Councillors, 3 church representatives and 2 representatives of teachers). The committee meets 11 times per year.

The Director of Education submits reports to the Education Committee for their discussion and decision. The format of committee reports has been agreed corporately,

Draft Reports

1. All draft reports must be marked 'draft' in the top left hand corner of the report. Any report not marked 'draft' will be treated as a final report and processed accordingly.
2. Ensure that reports are e-mailed in the correct format to the appropriate Committee Services Officer. The department originating the report should take responsibility for obtaining the report number, e-mailing draft copies, making amendments and e-mailing the final report to the Committee Services Officer.
3. All confidential reports must be marked 'Confidential' in the top left hand corner of the report and e-mailed under separate cover from public reports.
4. Reports with appendices, plans etc must be merged and e-mailed as one document. Consider whether the appendices are necessary.
5. Reports for different Committees must be e-mailed under separate cover.
6. Under no circumstances should incomplete reports ie missing appendices, plans etc be e-mailed to the appropriate Committee Services Officer. If such circumstances arise and no other alternatives are available, you should arrange for the documents to be scanned onto the system, merged with the report and then e-mailed - scanning is very much a last resort.
7. The report number and draft should be incorporated into the document name.

Finalised Reports

1. Reports require an Equality and Diversity Rapid Impact Assessment Tool (EQIA) statement to be completed as part of the report and attached as a separate document to the report.
2. Delete 'draft' from the top left hand corner of the report and the document name after the report is finalised usually after the Convener's Meeting. If there is no Convener's Meeting 'draft' should only be deleted once all approvals are in place and the final version is agreed.
3. Also please follow the instructions detailed in paragraphs 2-7 above.
4. It is the responsibility of the originating department to ensure that correct reports are e-mailed to the appropriate Committee Services Officer.
5. In the event of amendments being required to a report after the final version has been e-mailed to the Committee Services Officer the whole report will need to be e-mailed again.

Involving and informing other stakeholders

Joint working between departments of the Council is encouraged, and a growing feature of the work of the Education Department. There are a number of corporate mechanisms for consultation and communication that have an impact upon the work of the Education Department.

Corporate employee survey

Every two years the City Council carries out a survey of all staff. Included within the survey is a specific section relating to communication.

Corporate working groups

There are a number of working groups within the Council that deal with issues on a corporate basis. These have representation from the Education Department whenever this is appropriate.

Consultation and Communication issues are also discussed at the City Council's Chief Officers Management team meetings and a corporate working group on communication is in existence.

The Education Department Senior Management Team are heavily involved in consultation and communication with other Council departments and agencies.

The Education Department interacts with a wide range of other agencies. These include statutory, other educational establishments in higher and further education and voluntary organisations. The Department is also involved in a number of multi-agency working groups concerned with issues that have an impact on more than one agency.

These agencies have a key role to play in the development of Integrated Community Schools and the investigation of new and innovative methods of delivery of education within the City.

A large amount of information is shared among agencies and where appropriate safeguards and data protection issues have been addressed, this will be extended.

THE PRESS

As part of the formal legal process the City Council is required to communicate regarding enrolment for school and nursery education. Where this is required it will be arranged through the Council's advertising agency.

Each school and part of the service should consider ways in which the public can be made aware of activities or events which merit wider attention and bring credit to itself and the authority as a whole. It is helpful to establish links with the local press through the Public Relations Department who can be contacted on (01382) 434500.

As part of wider initiatives to develop the corporate image of Dundee City Council it is important that every opportunity is taken to publicise the variety of activities which take place within the different sections of the Education Department and individual education establishments.

Each school and part of the service should consider ways in which the public can be made aware of activities or events which merit wider attention and bring credit to itself and the authority as a whole. It is helpful to establish links with the local press through the Department's Public Relations Officer (434500). The co-ordination of corporate and departmental communication activities is essential for delivering clear and consistent messages.

To ensure effective forward planning and co-ordination, all news releases are issued through the public relations officer.

Similarly, incoming media enquiries are channelled through the Public Relations Department.

In general, it is hoped that public awareness of the work of the Education Department and the individuals within it will be enhanced by maintaining positive links with the local media.

PROTOCOL FOR CONTACTS BETWEEN COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

I. COUNCILLORS' ENQUIRIES

The points below are designed to ensure that all departments respond in a consistent way to enquiries from Councillors on behalf of their constituents.

I.1 Timescales

- a response to all Councillors' enquiries must be made within 5 working days.
- ideally, a full response should be given in this timescale. However, if the enquiry is more complicated, a holding response should be made within the 5 days, explaining the action which is being taken to investigate the enquiry and giving an estimated timescale for a full response.
- where a holding response has been given, the aim should be to give a full response within a further 10 working days. Where this is not possible, members should be kept informed of the reasons and given revised timescales.

I.2. Use of Telephones, E-mail and Letters

- while it may sometimes be helpful to discuss enquiries verbally, this can lead to delays if people are unavailable. Exchange of formal letters can also be time consuming in the case of straightforward enquiries.
- Councillors and their support staff will therefore be encouraged to use e-mail, which has the advantages of speed and providing a reliable record of the progress of enquiries. E-mails relating to Councillors' enquiries will be sent as "high" priority, to alert departments to the need for a response within the timescales set out above.
- responses from departments should always be in writing and may be in the form of e-mails or letters depending on the nature and extent of the information concerned. In drafting responses, departments should be aware that Councillors may wish to forward these on to constituents.
- where contact is made by telephone, if Councillors are unavailable then officers should always leave messages with the Members' support staff.

I.3. Contacts

- through experience, Councillors and their support staff will often have knowledge of the appropriate officers in departments for particular types of enquiry, and may approach them directly rather than through Chief Officers. As long as this works well, it is not intended to impose any formal system for tracking enquiries and monitoring responses.
- Chief Officers should ensure that any officers dealing with Councillors' enquiries are familiar with the procedures in this note and may wish to establish their own internal procedures in relation to Councillors' enquiries.
- in the absence of a formal monitoring procedure, there will be an onus on Councillors to highlight any failures to deal with enquiries in a satisfactory way by drawing this to the attention of the Chief Executive.

2. ISSUES ARISING FROM MULTI MEMBER WARDS

The points below are designed to ensure that all members in multi-member wards are treated impartially, with information and opportunities to attend events and take part in consultations being provided equally and fairly to all members.

2.1 Details of Councillors

- when members of the public ask for details of their local Councillor, officers should always provide the names of all Councillors in the ward in alphabetical order.
- however, constituents have the right to approach the member of their choice, so if they request contact details for a specific Councillor they should be given these. Constituents calling for a specific Councillor should be put through to them or given the option to leave a message, and should only be transferred to another Councillor if they request this.

2.2 Information/Correspondence

- if officers produce information about any issue that relates to the ward, all members in the ward should be given a copy
- when officers are writing to a number of residents within a particular ward regarding matters of general concern, a copy should be sent to all the members within that ward
- when officers write to a resident regarding an issue which only affects that household, the letter should only be copied to members who have been directly involved
- where officers are asked to visit a constituent, they should do so without members being present unless specifically asked by the constituent
- in the context of multi-member wards, there is potential for officers to be contacted by more than one member about the same issue. Officers should ensure that they give consistent responses to all members, and should check with colleagues and managers to see if other officers have dealt with similar enquiries to ensure consistency of response

2.3 Events/Meetings/Consultation

- where Conveners are responsible for invitations to events such as launches of new projects/ initiatives in a particular ward, if any local ward member is to be invited then all members in the ward should receive an invitation.
- where officers are asked to arrange site visits, the opportunity to attend should be given to all members in the ward concerned along with the Convener and Vice-Convener of the relevant Committee(s) at a time convenient for all
- if any public meetings are organised by the Council in the ward, all local members should be informed
- if the Council is undertaking any form of consultation on an issue relating to the ward, all local members should be informed

2.4 Councillors Conduct

- members should not identify themselves as sole representatives of a ward or as representing (or having a particular interest in) only part of a ward
- members may agree among themselves to try to share workload (e.g. on the basis of particular interests or expertise). However, enquiries from individuals or local organisations should only be passed to other members with the approval of those concerned, who have the right to ask that their enquiry be dealt with by the member of their choice.



Dundee
City Council
Education

CHANGING
FOR THE FUTURE

Designed by DCC, Public Relations - PB/07/12