

Working with you to shape Stirling's future

Communication and
Engagement Report

February 2018/19

Working with you to Shape Stirling's Future - Priority Based Budgeting (PBB5)

Communication and Engagement Report

Section	Page
Introduction Overview of the approach taken for communication and engagement	3
Summary of Communication and Engagement opportunities Overview of the opportunities, the ways that information was shared with our employees, communities and partners.	3
Our Employees Staff sessions and feedback	4
Our Communities Community Conversations Community Councils responses	5 & 6
Our Young People	7
Our Digital Engagement Online Survey Email responses	8 - 13

Introduction

Stirling Council is committed to delivering high quality services that meet priorities and outcomes that have been agreed with our communities. As such, engagement with staff, the public and with partners is a critical part of the Council's approach to the preparation of its 5-year priority based budget and its business plan. The contributions from the engagement are very valuable and are carefully considered by elected members and directly influence the decision making and the final budget. It is our continuing aim to ensure that all stakeholders can be actively involved in the budget process and that all budget options can be identified, discussed and fully considered.

Summary of Communication and Engagement opportunities

The Communication and Engagement plan aims to present opportunities for:

Our Employees - staff have a key role in both shaping and implementing the business plan and the budget through staff briefing sessions, access to the online survey and the shapingstirling email address.

Our Communities – it is essential that the people who receive our services, can contribute to shaping the nature and level of services delivered through community conversations, community council responses, the online survey and the shapingstirling email address.

Our Young People – it is important that young people feel they have a voice and that we listen to that voice through small discussion sessions and the online survey.

Our Digital Engagement – we will continue to take advantage of electronic means to support our engagement process by running an online survey and accepting comments, questions and suggestions through the shapingstirling email address.

Our Employees

A session was set up for Service Managers, Team Leaders and Head Teachers on 11th January 2018. Over 100 staff attended this presentation on budget followed by service discussions on options.

Service managers cascaded this information to all their staff with an emphasis on staff affected by the options, before 18 January when information was made available to the public. Feedback was asked for at these sessions and where staff were unable to meet feedback was taken through email correspondence. Staff also had an opportunity to contribute directly to the process through the online survey.

Results

- Over 100 Service Managers, Team Leaders and Headteachers at initial meeting.
- All staff informed and feedback recorded at 13 sessions and through email.
- 145 Staff responded to the online survey.
- 2 staff made suggestions through the shapingstirling email address.

Key messages

- Separation of essential overtime from non-essential
- Not enough clarity of information
- Worries on impact on services - fleet reduction, admin support and posts not being filled
- Appears expansion of staff in some areas and now others being cut.
- Parking charges may affect visitors and many felt charges should apply to all including elected members and managers.
- Support organisations to make the transition and be less focussed on Council money.

Ideas

- More savings could be made if the programme/project/improvement officers were a corporate function and all projects/improvement works were managed via the Portfolio Management Office. This would save in duplication of effort and double counting of savings.
- Factoring Fees to be introduced to generate income
- Income Generation – Buy additional leave (salary sacrifice).
- Cheaper petrol from other suppliers.
- Developing opportunities for staff to be seconded – sharing skills, tools etc.
- Foster carers – there could be instances of double paying, incorrect phone allowances and such like during periods of respite. Potentially £25k-£30k p.a.
- Financial contribution from family (means tested) for any external placements.
- Open our own residential unit to sell to other Councils.
- Improve opportunities for more local ASN respite to minimise family breakdown. Use Council premises more fully to support this especially during school holidays and weekends. Save versus external provision.
- Could the Family Firm take advantage of opportunities within the 'Re-use Hub' for our care leavers – either working on the 'up-cycling' or in the shop front? Or even create a charity shop environment for care leavers to work in.

Our Communities

The PBB5 Interim Report was issued on 18 January 2018. This document was published on the Council's internal and external websites and was also made available in hard copy form at subsequent meetings and in Council public buildings. This document is still available on the Council website at <http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/council-and-government/shapingstirling>

A series of 'Community Conversations', open to all, were arranged for January and February, following the publication of the PBB5 Interim Report:

Community Conversations

- 22 Jan Balfour High School (17 members of public)
- 24 Jan Raploch Community Campus (54 members of public)
- 24 Jan Bannockburn High School (16 members of public)
- 25 Jan Callander Youth Project (18 members of public)
- 5 Feb Crianlarich Village Hall (18 members of public)

The sessions included a power point presentation that provided information on the background to PBB5, the options and the financial context including the key messages. This was followed by round table discussions based around the five categories of options. A note capturing the detail of the conversations was taken at each session.

Community Councils

In addition, following the publication of the PBB5 Interim Report, all Community Councils were sent a template to allow them to feedback their views on the options being considered and described in the report. Eight Community Councils returned either the template, a letter or completed the online survey.

Results

- 123 members of the public at community conversations
- 4 Community Council responses on PBB5 template
- 4 Community Councils responded on the online survey

Key messages

Community Conversations

- The Priority Based Budgeting Process, the impact of previous year's savings, lateness in PBB5 consultation, how local authorities are financed and use their resources.
- For Transformation and Income Generation there needs to be evidence that these won't be poor commercial decisions or at the expense of support available to vulnerable groups or existing provision by other organisations.
- The Impact of efficiency and stop/reduce options on communities, people and the staff's ability to deliver services (especially to vulnerable groups and how communities look)
- The Community Conversations on the options is reflected in the results of the online survey.

Community Councils

- A number of options are difficult to understand as they lack detailed financial, management, performance and process information to set the proposals in the correct context.
- PBB does not appear to be set against a clear vision.
- Proposals for co-location of services, people and facilities are generally supported, providing it does not negatively impact on service delivery.
- Viability of more commercial orientated options needs to be considered and explained.
- Need awareness of unintended consequences and impact on other service functions.
- Concern of potential negative economic impact on Stirling caused by several options (grass cutting, car parking charges).
- Will small rural communities lose out due to centralisation of some services and small scale of delivery in these areas that make them inefficient.
- Options must not negatively impact on residents, especially those who are vulnerable.

Our Young People

PBB5 has seen an increase in the involvement of young people either through completion of the online survey, attendance at the community conversations or as part of specific discussions.

Over the period of 1 week, the Communities & People's Youth Team facilitated discussions with young people who attend youth groups in Raploch, Cultenhove, Cornton, Fallin, Plean, Bannockburn and Hillpark. While the focus of the discussions was on the Stop/Reduce options contained within the Interim Report, some groups commented on some other options.

Results

- 13 young people under the age of 16 completed the online survey.
- 118 young people between the ages of 17 and 25 completed the online survey.
- 12 groups participated in the discussions – 5 of the groups were primary 6/7 age, 5 were Secondary 1+ age and 2 community based youth groups.
- 77 young people, all under the age of 16, took part in the discussions.

Key messages

- One group didn't see a problem with sharing headships. (T002)
- Young People thought advertising was a good way to raise income. (IG013)
- They thought the Active Stirling option was optimistic and ambitious and questioned "How can you make something bigger spending less money?" (E034)
- The young people didn't have a problem with increasing the parking charges. (FC037)
- Most young people who took part either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the option to reduce school meal menu options - fussy eating, young people going hungry or going out of school as a concern. (SR040)
- Some young people disagreed or strongly disagreed to the option to reduce the Educational Psychology Service – concern that young people wouldn't get the help they need. (SR044)
- There was a mixed response to the Big Noise option – some thought it was worthwhile and had benefitted from it but others thought it wasn't fair that this opportunity wasn't available in their area. (SR053)
- A mixed response to the payments to the third sector – it would save money but if the service is going to help people it should stay. (SR054)
- A mixed response to grounds maintenance – flowers etc. make the place look nice but if money needs to be spent elsewhere then that's okay. (SR057)
- All disagreed or strongly disagreed to stopping the Deep Cleans citing concerns about environmental health and how places would look. (SR058)
- All disagreed or strongly disagreed to the restructure of Safer, Connected Communities – they benefit from the opportunities the Youth Team offer. (SR059)
- A strong response about grass cutting – worried about where they would play and if the place looks worse people won't look after their area. (SR061)
- Some young people disagreed or strongly disagreed with reducing funding to the Smith Museum. They had been there with the school. (SR063)

Other Suggestions

Schools shouldn't print as much stuff and that would save money.

Our Digital Engagement

The **online survey** provided the opportunity to feedback views on the 42 options presented in the PBB5 Interim Report. The online survey went live at the same time as the Interim Report was published on 18 January 2018. It remained open until 5 February 2018.

There were 1,922 respondents to the online survey. Below is a table of the options listed in accordance with what people were more in agreement with to what they were least in agreement with.

	Code	Option	No of respondents	No of comments
1	E033	In-house operating model for Wellgreen Multi-storey Car Park	1,142	103
2	IG0012	Re-use hub	1,261	173
3	IG0015	Solar canopies at The Peak and Castleview Park & Ride	1,260	115
4	IG0013	Advertising revenue generation from Council assets	1,249	161
5	T004	Shared public sector property service	1,384	90
5	E029	Council Tax income surplus	1,136	138
7	T001	Establish Children's Services multi-agency locality teams	1,387	145
8	IG0014	Lower Polmaise expansion project	1,245	103
9	E036	Reduce Business Improvement Team	1,125	54
10	E032	Review fleet	1,127	116
11	E031	Ensure best value operating model for Wallace Monument	1,128	109
12	IG0016	Road barriers repair and inspection service	1,248	119
13	E021	Remove vacant Adult Assessment & Partnerships Quality Assurance post	1,139	74
14	E027	Reduce staff overtime	1,148	153
15	E024	Demand analysis for younger children entering care	1,132	91
16	IG008	Recruitment of foster carers	1,244	117
17	E034	Active Stirling efficiencies	1,131	162
18	IG007	Recruitment of adoptive families	1,248	135

19	E030	Review advice services	1,125	98
20	E035	Review and renew user agreement with McLaren Community Leisure Centre	1,129	112
21	IG009	Investment in private rented sector	1,246	152
22	IG0011	Station Square office development	1,252	216
23	E065	Reduce funding for Central Scotland Joint Valuation Board	1,110	54
24	E064	Delay reinstatement of Loan Charges Budget	1,110	43
25	FC038	Review Council concession policy	1,110	68
26	E025	Reduce administrative staff numbers	1,136	146
27	SR053	Revised partnership agreement with Sistema Scotland – Big Noise Raploch	1,113	224
28	T003	Enhanced support for independent living	1,382	215
29	E020	Reduce Adult Assessment & Partnerships business and finance Staff	1,134	106
30	SR054	Review Communities & People payments to third sector organisations	1,083	117
31	FC067	Increase telecare charges	1,102	88
32	E023	Reduce Children’s Services Business Support staff	1,136	99
33	T002	Increase number of schools with shared headships	1,395	277
34	SR061	Reduce grass cutting	1,101	194
35	SR059	Restructure and redesign Safer, Connected Communities Service	1,067	98
36	SR044	Reduce Educational Psychology Service	1,098	139
37	SR057	Reduce grounds maintenance	1,102	275
38	SR040	Reduce school meals menu choice	1,109	276
39	E022	Reduce numbers of Education Central Support staff	1,142	181
40	FC037	Increase car parking charges	1,133	322
41	SR058	Stop deep cleans of communities	1,098	166
42	SR063	Reduce funding to Smith Art Gallery & Museum	1,120	289

Results

- 1,922 completed the online survey including 4 community councils; 8 schools, nursery or Parent Councils; 6 community organisations; 10 third sector organisations; and 3 other groups.

Comments to those Options people most agreed with

In-house operating model for Wellgreen Multi-storey Car Park (E033)

- General agreement – but why wasn't it done before
- Do not sub-contract services – bring everything in-house to keep the full benefit
- Worries that this will mean parking charges will increase
- Consider re-tendering or selling
- Will bringing in-house not make it more expensive to operate?

Re-use hub (IG0012)

- General agreement – surprised this is not already happening
- There are already charity and online services that do this – how will this affect them?
- Could this be done working along with the third sector (Transition Stirling)
- Could it be done throughout the Council area
- Could it provide skills for unemployed people, re-training opportunities or rehab
- Could be supported by free uplifts
- Goods often do not need recycled but could be sold as is from waste sites
- Moray Council have a fabulous scheme

Solar canopies at The Peak and Castlevue Park & Ride (IG0015)

- Worries over initial costs to set up and the amount of time to see profit
- Concerns as to the look of the site and whether this would be discreet and attractive
- Concerns over the phrase 'commercialising the site' and what this means
- Why not use other sites around the area – schools and all Council buildings
- Are there enough electric cars in the area

Advertising revenue generation from Council assets (IG0013)

- Concerns over safety on roundabouts and roads – distraction, eyesore
- Will this affect the aesthetic look of the area – be tacky and unattractive so not in keeping with historic area
- Council should take a pride in services not cheapen them
- Concerns over the suitability and ethical nature of advertisers – caution over the relationship with private sector and political canvassing
- Consider local companies and not big business - Could the third sector get discounted rates?

Shared public sector property service (T004)

- Should have been done before this.
- More information is needed to respond to this.
- Having a shared/joined up public service or shared agreement seems a good idea. Closer ties would be a great thing, positive and beneficial on all fronts as long as service delivery is not affected.
- Buildings that are under-utilised and under-advertised should be a shared service based e.g. Old Town Jail, Police Station.
- Existing services should be looked at i.e. Customer First, sell Old Viewforth - Merging would further decrease the service delivered.
- Could public building be use more in the evening and weekends for social/learning activities by organisations/community?
- Save money by smarter out of hours office lighting and reducing the heating in currently over heated buildings even 1 degree would make a significant saving.

Council Tax income surplus (E0029)

- People were surprised that there could be a surplus.
- Reduce the Council tax if there is a surplus or refund people.
- Council Tax should be increased (for some properties).
- Various ideas were put forward for how the money could be spent – save in reserves, improve local services which are not good, home care, schools.

Comments to those Option people are least in agreement with

Reduce school meals menu choice (SR040)

- More information is needed on what this means in practice – fewer meal choices or three week menu reduced. Two week menu would be suitable.
- Extremely important main meal for some children and links to obesity concerns and healthy minds so important to maintain standards.
- Meals may need to be more child friendly – secondary works better than primary.
- In agreement as long at choices are nutritious and healthy with a vegetarian option.
- Limiting choice will result meals being less appealing and in children bringing in unhealthy lunches or going out to eat fast food.
- Concerns over children with allergies who are limited at the moment.
- Take away the soup option and give fruit for dessert and look at portion size for young children.
- Increase prices for those that can afford it.
- Have full review of school meals.
- Work with local supermarkets and surplus food.

Reduce numbers of Education Central Support staff (E022)

- More information is needed on the impact of this and clarity on the option – which staff does this refer to. People disagreed with this being support for learning assistants.

- How will this affect service delivery and will it put more pressure on teachers and other staff? Higher paid staff will end up doing admin work.
- We should be investing in our Education system which is already struggling.

Increase car parking charges (FC037)

- Parking in the city is already expensive. This will only discourage tourists and shoppers from using the city centre and affect businesses – people will go elsewhere.
- Council staff should pay for parking as other people – those on low salaries should be protected from the charges. This charging should include all staff including schools and other facilities.
- Council staff should not have to pay to come to work, it will affect moral.
- Comments varied from increasing charges slightly would be acceptable, to those who want charges scrapped completely to encourage footfall.
- Public Transport should be improved to make this work and give people alternatives. Especially in rural area this is a problem.
- This will encourage parking in residential areas.
- Increase charges for illegal parking and have standard fee across carparks.
- Parking technology should be better – machines and different ways to pay.

Stop deep cleans of communities (SR058)

- The rotating arrangements for 3 years deep clean are vital to prevent quickly degenerate into unacceptable state.
- Quality of environment is important to health & well-being, and supporting local economy.
- Involve community and community services more in deep cleans, supporting sense of pride.
- Cleaning should be increased.
- Unsure where they occur, and what they entail.

Reduce funding to Smith Art Gallery & Museum (SR063)

- The Smith supports the cultural wellbeing of the city, and is an integral part of the City Deal.
- It is a tourist attraction which stimulates Stirling's economy, and a vital part of Stirling's identity.
- Vital service to the local community including community groups, organisations and valuable volunteering opportunities.
- The outreach provision provides excellent educational value to schools.
- This option doesn't connect with the vision of the city deal and administrations priorities.
- The Smith should make a small admission charge, and explore developing robust business plan.
- It is out of date, and out of touch and should become self-sufficient.
- Reduce not stop.

The shapingstirlingsfuture@stirling.gov.uk email address allowed anyone to feed in comments, questions and suggestions at any time. Every submission was acknowledged and a response is given to every question received.

Results

- 8 comments were received
- 9 questions were received
- 4 suggestions were received

Key messages

Comments were in regards to the Smith Art Gallery, Third Sector Funding, Dial- a- Journey and various options.

The questions in regards to the Smith Art Gallery, participation in University research, 3rd Sector Funding, budget announcements, Stirling council membership of external agencies, deep cleaning, and outstanding monies due for Council assets.

Suggestions from Stirling Council employees in regards to fly tipping and income generation and 2 from members of the public about the Smith Art Gallery.