

**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 28 February 2013

**Lead Member/Officer:** Lead Member for Customers and Communities

**Report Author:** Corporate Director: Customers

**Title:** Engaging with our communities and redefining our approach to being 'An Excellent Council Close to the Community'

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**1. What is the report about?**

This report comprises of two sections, namely:

- (i) How the Council intends to engage with the communities in Denbighshire; and
- (ii) Redefining our approach to developing the 'Close to the Community' element of our mission statement of being 'An Excellent Council Close to the Community'

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To seek the Committee's views on how the Council progresses with the theme of Getting Closer to the Community and how we best engage with residents.

**3. What are the recommendations?**

That the Committee:

- 3.1 comments on the possible approaches to improve engagement opportunities with residents and interested groups; and
- 3.2 comments on the revised approach to the definition of being An Excellent Council **Close to the Community**

**4. Report details**

- 4.1 A comprehensive overview of how the Council intends to engage with the County's communities and its revised approach to fulfilling its ambition on being an 'Excellent Council Close to the Community' can be found in the Annex to this report.
- 4.2 Attached to the Annex are appendices detailing recent and forthcoming engagement exercises, and a chart outlining the themed strands developed for the purpose of securing further improvements with respect to getting close to the community.

**5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

This topic contributes directly to the Council's overarching mission statement of being an Excellent Council Close to the Community. This approach is expected to permeate the corporate priorities and service delivery.

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

The issues covered in this report are to be delivered through funding identified for the delivery of the seven corporate priorities and funding for direct service delivery.

**7. What consultations have been carried out?**

The approach proposed in this report has been discussed at CET and SLT and with the Lead Member. A number of specific aspects have been considered previously by Town & Community Councils and more generally in terms of the development of the Town/Area Plans.

**8. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

While there are no direct costs associated with this report, improving our engagement with communities should begin to affect where and how we deliver services in the future.

**9. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

The absence of a clear and refreshed plan, places the Council at risk of not being able to deliver its mission statement in full. There is also a risk that the Council may distance itself from the communities.

**10. Power to Make the Decision**

Article 6.3 Council Constitution  
S2 Local Government Act 2000  
Part2 Local Government Wales Measure 2009

Article 6.3.3(c) of the Council's Constitution stipulates that "...scrutiny committees may consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options".

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