

Item 9 - Question Time

To the Leader of the Council

“Could you please give me details of how communities have been involved in the decision making process of the Redesign Board as outlined in Section 3 of the remit of the Redesign Board?”

Response to Mrs L MacDonald

The remit of the Redesign Board builds on the work done in the first year of redesign in 2016/17. During that time, communities were involved and influenced the Redesign Board through:

- Responding to a survey of the Citizen’s Panel to inform the peer reviews undertaken for those services which everyone has access to: street lighting; waste; street cleaning; public toilets; and public and community transport. The survey also gauged views on the public appetite for being more involved in providing some of these services themselves.
- Engagement with a wide range of community bodies, including Community Councils, from across the region. This happened over 2 engagement events (the 2nd event had over 90 participants) and led to plans now being developed to create a single point of contact for community bodies to help them to do more in their communities. It also led to community bodies agreeing to run some training and development for Council (and partner) staff. This offer will be taken up.
- During this time redesign resources agreed by the Council supported the work of the Commission on Highland Democracy. That included gathering views and perspectives from many local events, social media engagement and surveys of both the Citizens’ Panel and newly created Staff Panel (as Highland residents as well as employees).
- Making sure we include the customer voice in all Lean reviews carried out – this is a defined step in the process and draws on data we already have from customer feedback, complaints, Member views and any surveys. In some cases new surveys are commissioned. So far all Lean reviews have designed new processes to improve the experience of customers, service users and staff.

In addition in 2017/18 so far community involvement has continued to influence the Redesign Board by:

- Including new questions in the annual survey of the Citizens’ Panel in Summer 2017. These were all about involving communities and covered: how people define their community; involvement in community activities; how much influence people feel they have over decision-making in their communities; if they feel they have little influence, why that is; the extent to which they would like to be involved in decision-making in their area; views on

community involvement; awareness of the Council offering participatory budgeting (PB); willingness to be involved in PB; interest in taking part in community discussions about how local services are provided and making choices about these within our budget limits; views on community involvement and contact with Community Councils. Feedback was shared with the Board for the workshops on 14th November and 5th December 2017 when the Board considered how to develop its Communications Plan. Further workshop discussion is planned on communication with communities in the Spring this year.

- So far one peer review from the 2017/18 phase of reviews has concluded and the Board's recommendations were agreed at the People Committee in January 2018. That was for music tuition and that review gathered the views of the people using that service (parents and pupils) as well those providing the service. Methods included surveys and focus groups. That feedback influenced the review team's recommendations which were agreed by the Board and the People Committee.
- Two other peer reviews have been concluded through the Board and the recommendations from the Board are reported to Members at this meeting of the Council. Both reviews affect internal arrangements. They are on staff using their own cars for their jobs (grey fleet) and procured legal services. In each review the views of staff affected by them have been gathered and have influenced the recommendations.
- Three other reviews are underway and will report later. They are for commissioned preventative services for children, car parking and building trades services. Up-dates on these reviews are provided in the separate redesign report to this meeting of the Council.

Other work is in progress and due to be considered by the Board before the end June 2018 as set out in the remit. That includes feeding into the national review of local governance, responding to Members' ideas on developing localism from their local workshops, trialling a new type of 'community review', improving the community asset transfer process and monitoring our response to any participation requests.