

2016-17 Local Authority Trading Company – CONSULTATION PROCESS – January 2018

Introduction

1. The initial consultation on the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company sought views from staff, residents, stakeholders and partner organisations it ran from 15 June 2017 to 13 July 2017. Following on from this more detailed consultation can take place. Under S3(2) Local Government Act 1999 the Council is under a duty to consult service users/tax payers and those with "an interest in the services" before deciding to transfer services or make a Best Value Arrangement.
2. Over the last few years, Southampton City Council has developed an approach to consultation that includes the use of more integrated information, themed information sheets, frequently asked questions and consultation questionnaires that include highlights of the relevant information.
3. This phase of the LATCo consultation will build the approach used in the earlier round of consultation. There will be extensive staff briefings throughout the period leading up to the consultation. This consultation will focus on the individual services which are proposed to move into the LATCo, the outline business assessments, governance and structure for the LATCo and the proposed phasing of services into the LATCo.

Aims

4. Southampton City Council is in a challenging financial position with significant reductions in its funding from central government, at a time when demand for certain services such as adult and children's social care continues to increase. Therefore the aim of this consultation is to:
 - a. Communicate clearly and make residents aware of the financial pressures the council is facing
 - b. Ensure residents understand what is being proposed for the future direction of a Local Authority Trading Company and are aware of what this will mean for them
 - c. Enable any resident, business or stakeholder who wishes to comment on the proposed company the opportunity to do so, allowing them to raise any impacts the proposals may have
 - d. Ensure that the results are analysed in a meaningful, timely fashion, so that feedback is taken into account when final decisions are made
 - e. Provide feedback on the results to the consultation and how these results have influenced the final decision.

Principles

5. Southampton City Council seeks to conduct every consultation in line with the following principles:
 - a. Inclusive: so that everyone in the City (or involved in the consultation) has the opportunity to express their views
 - b. Informative: so that people have adequate information about the proposals, what different options mean, and a balanced and fair explanation of the potential impacts, particularly the equality and safety impacts
 - c. Appropriate: by targeting people who are more likely to be affected and using a more tailored approach to get their feedback, complemented by a general approach to all residents, staff, businesses and partners
 - d. Meaningful: by ensuring decision makers have the full consultation feedback information so that they can make informed decisions

- e. Understandable: by ensuring that the language we use to communicate is simple and clear and that efforts are made to reach all stakeholders, for example people who are non-English speakers or disabled people
 - f. Length: where possible the overall period of consultation should be for at least 12 weeks as there is a compact with the voluntary sector
 - g. Reported: by letting consultees know the results and what we did with their feedback.
6. Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard, which are meaningful, and comply with the following legal standards:
- a. Consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage
 - b. Sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response
 - c. Adequate time must be given for consideration and response
 - d. The product of consultation must be carefully taken into account.

Approach

7. The initial consultation on the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company sought views from staff, residents, stakeholders and partner organisations it ran from 15 June 2017 to 13 July 2017. Following on from this as proposals have developed and have become more detailed further consultation is now going to be undertaken. While the first consultation focused on the concept of creating a LATCo and whether or not any LATCo should have improvement partners the next phase focuses on the individual services which are proposed to move into the LATCo. This phase of consultation will run from 17 January 2018 to 3 April 2018.

Process

8. Southampton City Council will consult on the individual services which are proposed to move into the LATCo, the outline business assessments, governance and structure for the LATCo and the proposed phasing of services into the LATCo with: Elected Members, staff and Trade Unions, residents, stakeholders, partners, contractors and affected service users.
9. The consultation will involve a range of activities to ensure all relevant groups are engaged with, including but not limited to:
- a. Internal consultation with Trade Unions through formal meetings
 - b. Staff consultation:
 - i. Face to face briefings on the direction of travel
 - ii. On the proposals as a whole through the main questionnaire
 - iii. Awareness flyers will also be produced for staff directly affected by the proposals
 - c. Resident and stakeholder consultation:
 - i. Online information and consultation questionnaire
 - ii. Printed consultation questionnaire with integrated information available on request and in libraries, Civic Centre reception and Gateway.
 - iii. Digital information sheets and frequently asked questions produced to support the consultation
 - d. Throughout the consultation there will be regular communications via a range of channels to ensure a wide range of respondents.

