

Participation Requests Reporting Template 2020/2021 for Public Service Authorities

Section 32 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires public service authorities to produce an annual report on Participation Request activity and publish this no later than 30 June each year. Following feedback from stakeholders and in response to one of the recommendations of the Participation Request Evaluation Report published on 8 April 2020, this template has been created to gather participation request data for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. Information provided will help inform policy and practice at local and national level as the data will be collated and shared by the Scottish Government's Community Empowerment Team. However, it is for each public service authority to make their own annual report publicly available by 30 June 2021, whether using this template or not.

Please provide information in the four sections below and email the completed template by 30 June 2021 to community.empowerment@gov.scot.

Section One – Public Service Authority Information

Organisation: Scottish Borders Council Address: Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA

Completed by: Clare Malster Role: Locality Development Co-ordinator

Email: cmalster@scotborders.gov.uk Telephone: 01835 826626

Date of completion: 15/06/2021

Are you the Participation Request Lead Contact for the organisation: Yes

If not please provide the name, job title and email address for the lead contact for any queries:

Section 2: Participation Request Data in 2020/21

Please complete following overview table:

Total Applications Received in 2020/21	Number of validated applications in 2020/21	Number of applications agreed in 2020/21	Number of applications refused in 2020/21	Number received in 2020/21 and yet to be determined	Number received prior to 2020/21 and yet to be determined
0	0	0	0	0	0

2.1 Please provide details of Participation Requests received in 2020/21 which resulted in changes to public services provided by or on behalf of your public service authority and tell us about those changes:

n/a

Name of Community Participation Body	Was the Participation Request successful? (Y/N)	Previous way of working	Way of working following changes

2.2 Please use this space to provide any further comments relating to the above data, such as describing the outcome improvement process and how the community participation body was involved in it, or details of any wider benefits, such as improved community engagement and ongoing participation.

n/a

Section Three – Partnership Working & Promotion of Participation Requests

3.1 Please provide details of any engagement with support organisations such as local Third Sector Interfaces and public sector Community Learning and Development staff or national organisations such as the Scottish Community Development Centre.

For example has any new practices to support Participation Requests been developed from working with other bodies, or any learning gained?

In 2019 Scottish Borders Council (SBC) commissioned Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) to undertake a review of our Area Partnership and Community Fund processes. The final report included recommendations relating to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Work carried out under the Act and relevant information has since become a standing item on our Area Partnership agendas.

We work closely with the Third Sector Interface (TSI) in the Scottish Borders meeting on a monthly basis, where possible, to ensure joined up working across the organisations.

Our Locality Partners meetings (there are five localities in the area), which were established as part of the Scottish Borders response to Covid-19, continue on a weekly/fortnightly basis. These meetings led by CLD and Communities & Partnerships Teams staff bring together Third Sector and community led organisations to share information and identify local solutions to issues being experienced in our communities.

3.2 Please provide details of action taken to promote the use of Participation Requests or support Community Participation Bodies in making a Participation Request.

For example this could include: Support before making a request, such as to determine whether a participation request is the most appropriate route; - Support to make the request such as assist groups to complete forms, or identify appropriate outcomes; and/or Support to take part effectively in outcome improvement processes.

Although Area Partnerships were paused for much of 2020, they resumed in November being held online via MS Teams. A Participation Request update is now available at every meeting to highlight new requests. Updates from groups currently taking part in an Outcome Improvement Processes (OIP) are currently being planned. No OIPs have come to a conclusion yet although the final project reports will also be presented to Area Partnerships for information.

A Community Empowerment Information Pack has been developed and is available on the SBC website as well as being circulated via Area Partnership (AP) distribution lists and being included on each AP agenda. It is a very fluid document being continually updated with new information and links about support available and examples of good practice across the country.

Support is provided to groups who wish to submit a Participation Request. This helps to make sure that what they wish to achieve is accurately captured on the application form.

Participations requests are promoted through the Council's website. We offer advice about when a Participation Request may not be required although we have found that, since this part of the Act was introduced in 2017, the groups that we have supported prefer to use the formal process set out in the Act rather than any processes we previously had in place.

3.3 Please let us know what actions you have been taking to ensure that your processes are inclusive.

For example, this could include accessible information and other support, which enable wider use of participation requests by all population groups including those with protected characteristics.

We are currently identifying a more proactive approach to engaging with all communities in the Scottish Borders and reach out to a wider range of groups and individuals beyond those commonly termed as the 'usual suspects.'

We are exploring different tools with a view to improving accessibility to meetings and support those individuals who are unable to or face challenges accessing online meetings. We are working alongside local access panels to increase involvement and understanding of the Area Partnerships and participation requests along with linking in with local groups that represent the protected characteristics.

3.4 Please outline any plans you have to continue involving local people and local groups in outcome improvement processes as a result of your Participation Request policies.

All of the Participation Requests that have been agreed to date are still in progress although it is anticipated that the Community Participation Bodies will continue to be involved in the longer term.

Section Four – Additional Information

4.1 Please use this space to provide any further feedback not covered in the above sections.

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Subject to the pressures of responding to the Covid-19 emergency situation and recovery – if possible please email the completed template by 30 June 2021 to community.empowerment@gov.scot

If you have any queries please contact Malcolm Cowie, Participation Request Policy Manager at Malcolm.cowie@gov.scot

Thank you!

Community Empowerment Team, Scottish Government