

**Participation Requests Reporting Template 2022/23 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. This template has been created to gather participation request data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. 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 each year, whether using this template or not.

**Please provide information in the sections below and email the completed template by 30 June 2023 to** **community.empowerment@gov.scot** **.**

**Section One – Public Service Authority Information**

Organisation: Renfrewshire Council

Completed by: Stuart Graham Role: Partnerships Planning and Development Manager

Email: stuart.graham@renfrewshire.gov.uk Telephone: 0141 487 1509

Date of completion: 21 June 2023

Are you the Participation Request Lead Contact for the organisation: If not please provide the name, job title and email address for the lead contact for any queries:

Participation Request Lead Officer is:

Laura McIntyre

Head of Policy and Partnerships

laura.mcintyre@renfrewshire.gov.uk

**Section 2: Participation Request Data for 2022/23**

**Please complete following overview table:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total new applications received in 2022/23** | **Total applications received prior to 1 April 2022 which were still to be determined at 31 March 2023** | **Number of accepted applications in 2022/23** | **Number of applications agreed in 2022/23** | **Number of applications refused in 2022/23** |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Where you were unable to accept a participation request, was an alternative process put in place to discuss the group’s issue and work with them or support offered to help them consider how to address their identified need? Please provide details: Not applicable |

2.1 Please provide details of Participation Requests received using the legislation and outwith the legislation in the reporting year which resulted in changes to public services provided by or on behalf of your public service authority and tell us about those changes. Please also include details of requests received prior to 2022/23, which resulted in changes to the way of working being implemented in 2022/23.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Community Participation Body | Was the Participation Request successful? (Y/N) | Previous way of working | Way of working following changes | What difference did those changes make for the users of the service? Did they improve service user experiences or outcomes? | Details of any participation requests considered outwith the formal process e.g. agreements reached that resulted in changes to services. |
| Not Applicable – No applications received |  |  |  |  |  |

**2.2 Please use this space to provide any further comments relating to the above data, such as:**

* **describing the outcome improvement process (whether or not it resulted from a formal participation request)**
* **how the community participation body was involved in designing the outcome improvement process**
* **how the community participation body participated in the outcome improvement process including taking part in decisions and delivering actions**
* **details of any wider benefits, such as improved community engagement and ongoing participation.**

**Section Three – Partnership Working & Promotion of Participation Requests**

**3.1a 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?*

Renfrewshire Council provides financial support to Engage Renfrewshire, the local Third Sector Interface, to support the development of third sector organisations. Engage Renfrewshire activity during 2022/23 includes the following work to support the participation of third sector groups and residents in activities related to community planning:

*• Supporting the Community Planning Partnership, including chairing the Forum for Empowering Communities, connecting Renfrewshire’s third*

*sector to the wider Community Planning agenda and supporting other partnership groups and activities relating to children and young people,*

*employability, connectedness and mental health and wellbeing.*

Engage Renfrewshire works with its membership of 400+ third sector organisations to connect them to relevant opportunities to be involved in the planning and delivery of services broadly. This includes building the influence and contribution of third sector organisations to tackle issues in relation to issues such as health and social care, tackling poverty, community renewal post-covid and strengthening the integration of minority communities within Renfrewshire.

Community Learning and Development staff have particularly worked to ensure that young people have a voice in the development of services through representative structures such as Renfrewshire Youth Voice.

There has also been a strong focus in 2022/23 on the development of the involvement of care experienced people in developing services, through The Promise.

**3.1b Please tell us about any challenges you have had in accessing support.**

No challenges to accessing support encountered during 2022/23

**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 (whether or not they resulted from a formal participation request).*

Through some of the work described in section 3.1a, partners in Renfrewshire have supported public engagement in the development of services generally, rather than promoting participation requests specifically.

**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 particularly interested in any ways you have targeted those with protected characteristics to raise awareness of the PR process or support request submissions.*

Renfrewshire Council works with equalities groups through Diversity Equality Alliance Renfrewshire to provide a channel through which those with protected characteristics can become more connected to and involved with the development of services. Engage Renfrewshire hosts a National Lottery-funded member of staff who has developed the In-Ren network to promote inclusion of minority ethnic groups in particular in community life.

**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 (and also outwith formal participation requests).**

As part of Community Choices and the role of Renfrewshire Council in the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015, Renfrewshire Council allocated a portion of its budget for local communities to decide how it is spent.

Renfrewshire’s campaign to involve local people in budget decisions is known as #YouDecide

£1.2million was made available from the Environment and Infrastructure service's budget (2020-2023) for local people to put forward ideas for infrastructure projects across Renfrewshire. 2,800 project ideas were submitted by local residents and groups that were then submitted for feasibility tests to develop a shortlist of projects to be voted on. A total of 4,800 votes were cast and 50 projects were selected for implementation during 2022-23.

Further information is provided in the link below:

[#YouDecide - giving you the power over decision making - Renfrewshire Website](https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/11737/YouDecide---budget-decisions-made-by-you)

**3.5 Please provide details about any work undertaken to consider wider reviews of participation practice, and any such methods used to engage with communities.**

A review will take place during 2023/24 of arrangements for engaging local communities in localised decision making.

Renfrewshire Council and its community planning partners have sought to engage local residents and community groups in service planning and delivery in a proactive way, rather than reacting to the submission of Participation Requests. Examples of this include the development of a new lived experience panel to inform decision makers about policies and services to tackle poverty, the establishment of a Panel of people and engagement with businesses in relation to climate change and extensive engagement around the differential impact of Covid to inform the rnewal programme.

**Section Four – Additional Information**

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

***For example, we are interested in your reflections about what has gone well and what has gone less well in relation to Participation Requests over the past year?***

The take up of Participation Requests has been minimal in Renfrewshire, in comparison to engagement with other aspects of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) 2015 Act such as community asset transfer. The focus in community engagement locally is on developing and deepening opportunities for communities and service users to have a voice and influence in decisions and service delivery.

***Is there any aspect of the process that you intend to adapt or change in the year ahead?***

There are currently no plans to adapt policies and processes in relation to Participation Requests.

***Have you identified any needs for guidance or support that would support the process?***

The Scottish Parliament review of community planning and the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 may identify further needs for guidance or support.

***If you have developed any case study material or published new information about Participation Requests please share links to those with us here.***

Not applicable

*Any other information:*

*No*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section Five – Community Empowerment Act Review***The following questions relate to the Scottish Government review of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. We would value your feedback as a public service authority concerned with part 3 (participation requests) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Please note, any comments provided here would be anonymised, and would only be used in the context of the review.* 5.1 Has the legislation made it easier or more difficult to work with communities to improve services? Please provide some comments on your experiences as a public service authority engaging with this legislation.The legislation has been helpful in clarifying some of the duties and expectations on Councils and other community planning partners in terms of engaging with local communities. The Act also helpfully sets out the expectations that communities should have in how they can engage in the planning and delivery of services.Communities in Renfrewshire have made considerable use of the community asset transfer legislation, both in relation to Renfrewshire Council and other partners’ assets.5.2 Where can things be further improved, and what needs to change?5.3 Are you aware of what support is available to you e.g. [Scottish Government advice and resources,](https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/participation-requests/) [SCDC’s Participation Request pack](https://www.scdc.org.uk/participation-requests), Social Studies PR Toolbox, when engaging with this legislation, and how you can access this? Is there any support you think you would benefit from when engaging with this legislation. Please provide comments where possible.Yes, aware of available support and guidance available.5.4 What would you like to see now, to further empower Scotland’s communities? Community Planning Partnership guidance remains relevant as it stands. Reinforcing messages about the commitment and accountability required of all community planning partners would help to reaffirm commitment. Conversations about how this can be achieved at national and local level could help re-energise individual partners’ commitment to Community Planning Partnerships. |

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

Community Empowerment Team, Scottish Government