

Item: 10

Policy and Resources Committee: 25 September 2018.

Political Engagement Strategy.

Report by Chief Executive.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the proposed Political Engagement Strategy.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, owing to the variety and complexity of ongoing political engagement, a political engagement strategy document has been prepared, with the aim to achieve maximum focus in respect of political engagement to ensure that the Council's key strategic priorities are vigorously promoted and achieved.

2.2.

That, in addition to the political engagement strategy document, a diagram has been prepared to map out the ongoing key areas of political engagement.

2.3.

That the political engagement strategy document and associated diagram are working documents which will be continuously monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

It is recommended:

2.4.

That the Political Engagement Strategy and associated diagram, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.

3. Political Engagement Strategy

3.1.

The Constitutional Reform Programme Board, comprising the Chief Executive, the Leader and Depute Leader, together with other relevant officials, continues to meet on a weekly basis. Owing to the variety and complexity of ongoing political engagement, a political engagement strategy document was prepared with the aim to achieve maximum focus in respect of political engagement to ensure that the

Council's key strategic priorities are vigorously promoted and achieved. In addition, a diagram has been prepared to map out the ongoing key areas of political engagement.

3.2.

The benefits of focussed and concerted political engagement are amply demonstrated by the success of the Council in securing ferry funding and achieving true empowerment in the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. Owing to continued constitutional uncertainty, standing agenda items for the Constitutional Reform Programme Board include political engagement and Brexit.

3.3.

In addition, the Islands Deal with the three islands councils has a distinct political engagement strategy. Rhoda MacDonald, a London based political communications professional working with Hanover Communications, provides expert support for the leaders of the three islands councils. The appointment of Rhoda MacDonald was considered beneficial to the three islands councils in engaging with the UK Government and building support amongst key decision makers and influencers.

3.4.

The Council's political leadership uses every opportunity to promote Orkney and its priorities whenever sensitivities allow within the Islands Deal engagement framework.

3.5.

The political engagement strategy and associated diagram, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, have been shaped by meetings with the Chief Executive, Leader and Deputy Leader, Chairs and the Senior Management Team. Furthermore, the proposed strategy was discussed with members on 17 September 2018 and feedback received. In particular, further work will be undertaken to illustrate and contextualise the diagram. The strategy document and associated diagram are working documents which will be continuously monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

4. Links to Council Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priorities of Connected Communities; Caring Communities; Thriving Communities; Enterprising Communities and Quality of Life.

5. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities of Strong Communities; Living Well and a Vibrant Economy.

6. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

7. Legal Aspects

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

8. Contact Officers

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9. Appendix

Appendix 1: Political Engagement Strategy.

Appendix 1.

Political Engagement Strategy

Purpose: To enhance and integrate the Council's political engagement in respect of its key strategic priorities.

Aim: To achieve maximum focus in respect of political engagement to ensure the outcomes of the Council's key strategic priorities are vigorously promoted and achieved.

Introduction

The present political environment is fraught with uncertainty. It is considered imperative that the Council focuses its political engagement in an efficient and proportionate manner having regard to resources available. It will be important to build resilience owing to Brexit and other external challenges. Unlike most other councils, the majority of our members are independents and there is little recognised political affiliation.

At present, the Council has various Project Boards to promote key strategic priorities with varying degrees of political input. It is considered that the Council should seek to build on its existing structures with a view to enhancing political input, thereby ensuring clear and consistent messaging through lobbying or other means of political engagement.

Risk

It is considered that a key factor of the strategy will be to pre-empt risks the Council may face. A risk register can be developed to identifies some key risk issues, the triggers that would give rise to them occurring, likely impact, probability of ever occurring and any mitigating factors to reduce impact.

New Meeting arrangements

The Chief Executive, in agreement with the Leader, has agreed new meeting arrangements which are key to achieving the aim of the Strategy. The new meeting arrangements structure monthly meetings follows:

First Monday	All Elected Members and the Chief Executive
Second Monday	All Chairs and the Chief Executive
Third Monday	All elected members, MP, MSP's, and the Chief Executive
Fourth Monday	Senior Councillors and Senior Management Team
If a fifth Monday	To be kept for other sessions to be determined by Chief Executive together with the Leader

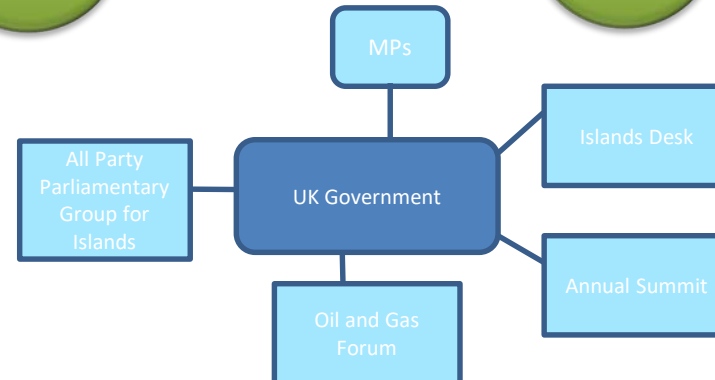
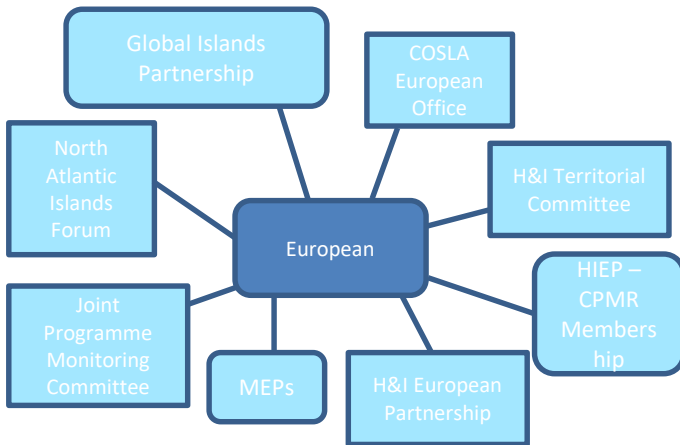
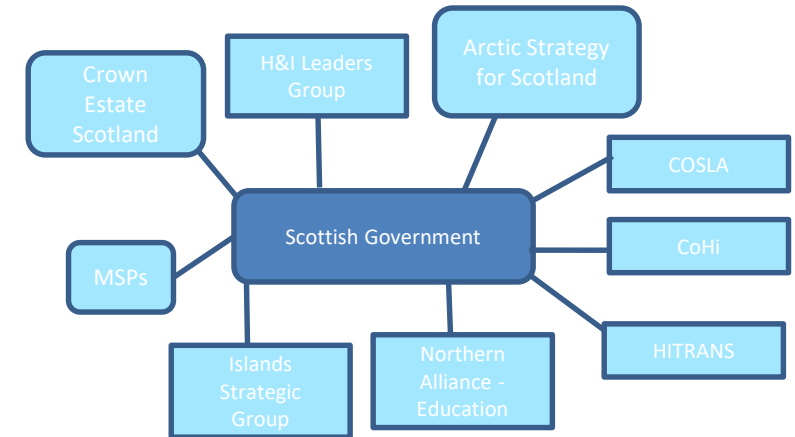
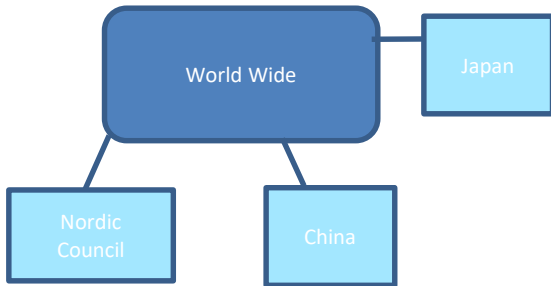
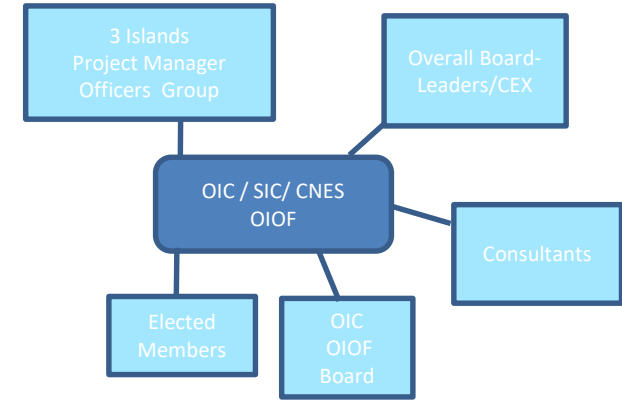
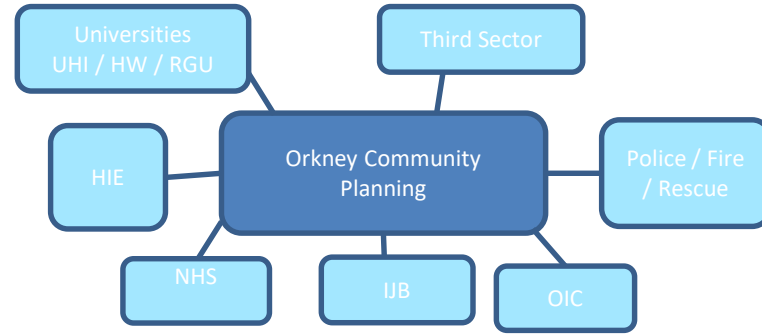
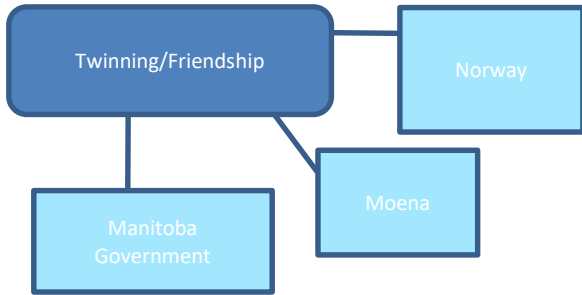
Having regard to the outcomes of the Council's key strategic priorities, these meetings will:

- Provide support for the Political Leader.
- Identify opportunities for political engagement.
- Instruct political engagement.
- Advise and help develop the Council's Political strategy.
- Enhance collegiate approach for effective strategic leadership.
- Raise awareness and commitment to key strategic priorities.
- Allow the Political Leader to co-ordinate/ lead and where appropriate delegate political activity.
- Allow the Political Leader to report effectively to all members.

Political Engagement Strategy Diagram

The attached diagram details the myriad bodies that the Council presently engages with, linking these with the Council Plan and the Orkney Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The diagram demonstrates the extent of ongoing political engagement. The strategy document and associated diagram are working documents which will be continuously monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

Orkney Islands Council Political Engagement Strategy



Key to Acronyms

- UHI – Univeristy of Highlands and Islands
- RGU – Robert Gordon University
- HW – Heriot-Watt University
- HIE - Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- NHS – National Health Service
- IJB – Integration Joint Board
- OIC – Orkney Islands Council
- SIC – Shetland Islands Council
- CNES – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- OIOF – Our Islands Our Future
- CEX – Chief Executives
- MSPs – Members of Scottish Parliament
- H&I – Highlands and Islands
- COSLA – Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
- CoHI – Convention of the Highlands and Islands
- HISTRANS – Highland and Islands Transport Partnership
- MPs – Members of Parliament
- HIEP – Highlands and Islands European Partnership
- CPMR – Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions
- SAM – Single Authority Model
- MEP – Members of European Parliament