

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: Midlothian Council

Completed by: Annette Lang Role: Group Service Manager (Community Planning Partnership and Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability)

Email: annette.lang@midlothian.gov.uk Telephone: 07880279937

Date of completion: 27.06.23

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 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	n/a	n/a
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:				

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.

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.**

We currently have 2 live requests from previous years; a new secondary school which is still to be built and the other is to ensure reliable access to a park.

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?

We continue to follow the principles in the COMPACT that was agreed with the Third Sector in 202/21 which includes promotion of participation requests. There has been no additional promotion during this period however the information on the application process is available on the Midlothian Council website and our communities lifelong learning and employability staff are the first point of contact for any queries.

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

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).

Wherever possible we try to support community groups to participate in our decision making without the need to pursue a formal Participation Request. Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability (CLLE) continue to encourage groups to initially discuss their request with a senior worker. All information is available on our website and contact details for support are available.

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.

All information can be requested in different languages and formats and within our networks we have equality group representation through our Community Planning Partnership.

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).

The Single Midlothian Plan for 23/27 has been co-designed by representatives of communities and approved by the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board. The Federation of Community Councils has representation at the CPP Board and Working Group.

The community of Dalkeith are involved in the co-design of the Dalkeith Town Centre regeneration.

The Third Sector bulletin is circulated weekly to over 500 people and organisations, this highlights key opportunities for people and organisations to influence the direction of policies and projects.

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.

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?

We have not received any new participation requests during this reporting period.

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

We will actively promote participation requests and offer a training information session for the community and community councils.

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

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

Any other information:

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 provides a formal route for community groups to engage with the local authority when other informal routes have been exhausted.

5.2 Where can things be further improved, and what needs to change?

Increase awareness amongst staff, elected members and the public.

5.3 Are you aware of what support is available to you e.g. [Scottish Government advice and resources](#), [SCDC's Participation Request pack](#), 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.

5.4 What would you like to see now, to further empower Scotland's communities?

Completed by: [A Lang](#)

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Date of completion: 27th June 2023

Please email the completed template by 30 June 2023 to community.empowerment@gov.scot

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

Community Empowerment Team, Scottish Government