

Angus Council

Participation Requests – Find out More

Find out more about Participation Requests

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 introduces a new way that communities can get involved in how the Council and other public sector services are planned and delivered; **this is called a Participation Request. Participation Requests came into force on 1st April 2017.**

Participation Requests are focused on extending and improving community participation in improving outcomes for communities. This enables communities to request to participate in decisions and processes which are aimed at improvement. This doesn't replace anything that was already in place but will add to the ways in which communities can work with us.

If you would like help to understand Participation Requests, to submit one or to find out if we're the correct Public Authority to submit your request to, you can contact our Community Engagement Officer at communityplanning@angus.gov.uk or contact [Voluntary Action Angus \(VAA\)](#) who are the independent Third Sector support in this area.

Other useful information on Participation Requests and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 can be found on the websites of the [Scottish Community Development Centre](#) and the [Scottish Government](#).

You can also find out what public consultations are currently happening across the Council area by visiting our [consultations diary](#), alternatively you can get involved in everyday [conversations](#) about where you live.

We have prepared a helpful list of Frequently Asked Questions which we hope will help you understand the process for submitting and being involved in a Participation Request.

What is a Participation Request?

Participation requests are a new process to allow community groups to talk to public authorities about local issues and local services.

Where a community believes it could help to make an improvement, it will be able to request that the public body takes part in a process to improve that outcome.

Communities might use the Act to discuss with service providers how they could better meet the needs of people who use that service, to offer

volunteers to support a service or even propose to take over the delivery of the service themselves.

The Scottish Government has produced guidance on [Participation requests](#).

So if I want to influence what Angus Council does, is this how I should contact you?

Participation Requests don't replace any existing ways that communities can tell us what you think and we would always encourage our communities to speak to us about anything they would like to see done differently because we might be able to resolve things quickly and easily. For example, if you have suggestions for improvements to your local school, their Parent Council would still be the most appropriate people for you to contact since we already work with them to improve outcomes.

The Participation Request process is available for communities who are looking to engage in more formal dialogue with the Council and other public sector organisations.

Who can submit a participation request?

To make a Participation Request the community organisation needs to be a "community participation body" as defined in the Act. It can either be a community controlled body, a community council, a community body without a written constitution or a body designated by the Scottish Ministers.

Requirements for a community controlled body

A community controlled body does not have to be incorporated, but must have a written constitution which must include the following:

- A definition of the community to which the body relates.
- Provision that membership of the body is open to any member of that community.
- Provision that the majority of the members of the body are to consist of members of that community.
- Provision that the members of the body who consist of members of that community have control of the body.
- A statement of the body's aims and purposes, including the promotion of a benefit for that community.
- Provision that any surplus funds or assets of the body are to be applied for the benefit of that community.

Requirements for a community council

When making a request the community council should engage with local people in the area that could be impacted by the outcome improvement process, and think about how the proposals may affect them.

Requirements for a community controlled body without a written constitution

A community participation body could also be a more loosely associated group of people. A group must have similar features to a community controlled body but has no written constitution. It will be for the Council to determine whether the group meets the requirement under the Act.

Designation

The Scottish Ministers can designate a body to be a community participation body. They will do this by making an order. Ministers can either designate an individual body, or could designate a class of bodies.

Support for communities to determine what sort of organisation they want to be is available from [Voluntary Action Angus \(VAA\)](#) or the Council's [Local Community Planning Teams](#).

I'm part of a community group but we don't all live in the same place. Would we be eligible to submit a request?

A community can cover:

- a geographical area e.g. a housing estate, village, town etc.
- a group of people who have something in common e.g. values, religion or identity
- a group of people who come together around a common interest e.g. fishing

Who can I submit a participation request to?

You can submit a participation request to Angus Council here:

Participation Requests can also be submitted to:

- Dundee and Angus College
- Police Scotland
- NHS Tayside
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Tactran
- Scottish Natural Heritage

A Participation Request may request that more than one public service organisation works in partnership on your community's improvement outcome.

Can I use a participation request to tell the Council about something I don't like?

Your community can submit a request to be involved in changing or improving something in the community. The request is about improvement – it might be motivated by something your group doesn't like, but it is not a complaints process. Your community's request should be about what improvement you would like to see, and how you can get involved to help that happen.

When should I expect to hear about my request once I've submitted it?

Your request will be checked to ensure that it is valid (see guidance on what constitutes a valid request). You will receive notification within 14 days on whether your request has been confirmed as VALID. Once we have received a valid Participation Request your community should receive a decision on whether your request has been granted within 30 days – if we need any further information from your community in order to make that decision we will contact you.

If the request involves another public body as well as Angus Council then your community will receive a response within 45 days – this is to give us time to contact the other public body and establish whether they agree to participate in the process.

If your community's request has been accepted then the Outcome Improvement Process will normally start within 90 days of you receiving our decision.

What is the Outcome Improvement Process?

In your community's request, you will tell us what the outcome is that you would like to see improved. If your Participation Request is accepted, then within 90 days we will have started the process of working with your community to look at how that outcome can be improved.

When we tell your community that your request has been granted we will

- describe the operation of the outcome improvement process
- specify what stage it has already reached
- set out how the community will participate in the process
- identify others that are part of the process and how they will participate

What happens if my request is refused?

If your request is refused we will explain the reasons why. There is no right of appeal. However we will submit a report to the Scottish Government annually which will outline all requests received, the decision made, the results of any outcome improvement process, and the reasons any requests were refused.