

Joint Strategic Committee
11 February 2020
Agenda Item 8

ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

Key Decision [No]
Ward(s) Affected: All

Beyond Consultation: Engaging Adur and Worthing - Adur & Worthing Councils' Engagement Guide

Report by Director for Communities

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Committee agreed to consult on the document '*Engaging Adur and Worthing*' in November 2019. This consultation concluded on 17 January 2020.
- 1.2. At the Committee's request, the revised *Engaging Adur and Worthing - Adur & Worthing Councils' Engagement Guide (Attachment A)* is being presented for agreement following the consultation process which involved members of the public, staff and elected members.
- 1.3. A consultation report (Attachment B) has been prepared to provide a summary of the responses received and how officers have sought to incorporate these into the revised Guide. They do not represent a significant change from the draft Guide considered by the Committee in November 2019.
- 1.4. Officers have also used the consultation process to update the Councils' website, as recommended by the Joint Overview and Security Committee, making it easier for our communities to get involved, have their say and stay informed.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Joint Strategic Committee:

- 2.1. Note the comments on the draft Engagement Guide outlined in the Consultation Report (Attachment B).
- 2.2. Agree to the Councils' adopting *Engaging Adur and Worthing - Adur & Worthing Councils' Engagement Guide* (Attachment A), replacing the Adur & Worthing Councils' Consultation Policy Statement.
- 2.3. Note the updates to the Councils' website to support our communities to get involved, have their say and stay informed on the Councils' activities.

3. Context

- 3.1. The Committee agreed to place on consultation: *Engaging Adur and Worthing - A Guide to Adur & Worthing Councils' engagement principles and toolkit* (the Guide) at its meeting on 7 November 2019.
- 3.2. The Guide is designed to inform our communities and to assist Council staff in designing, managing and completing specifically designed engagement activities. This is presented in two parts:
 - 3.2.1. **Part One - Our Engagement Principles** outlines the Councils' definition of engagement, how we engage and our core principles for engagement. Our core engagement principles will be: **Transparency, Inclusivity and Relevance**.
 - 3.2.2. **Part Two - Our Engagement Toolkit** will help Council officers to design, manage and conclude engagement activities. It provides models, poses questions, and gives tips for good practice. This toolkit will be supported by the resources available via the staff intranet and cross team opportunities to share best practice and learning.

The toolkit identifies three core questions when framing an engagement process or activity:

- a. What are your objectives?

- b. Who are your communities of interest?
- c. What is the best way to reach them and meet your objectives?

3.2.3. Throughout the Guide there is a recognition that there is no one or preferred method of engagement. How we engage with our communities will depend upon the nature of the issue or opportunity, as well as the communities we wish to engage with. Instead, there is a range of considerations that underpin the design, management and conclusion of engagement activities

4. Issues for consideration

The Consultation Process

- 4.1. The consultation is intended both to seek the views of community, staff and elected Members on strengthening our engagement with our communities, partners and staff and also to seek views on the draft Guide by asking: *What does good engagement look like?* For our elected Members and staff we also asked: *What support do you need to run engagement activities well?*
- 4.2. The consultation ran until 17 January 2020, and was promoted externally through the Councils' website and social media channels, and internally through the Councils' intranet and staff and members' newsletters.
- 4.3. Over the course of the consultation period, officers recorded 73 views of the Councils' webpage, while on Social Media we averaged 1,400 people reached per post. This resulted in five submissions from members of the public. Over 100 members of staff viewed online notices on the proposed engagement Guide. Officer also appeared before the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 November 2019.

Overview of Comments

- 4.4. Internally, comments received both formally and informally have been constructive and have resulted in further conversations about approaches to engagement and how the Guide compliments other work being undertaken.
- 4.5. Comments from elected Members focused on how the aspirations set out in the Guide will be embedded, and on clarifications as to the relationship between the Guide and the concept of engagement sitting alongside our legal obligations to consult our communities.

- 4.6. External comments have focused on:
- ensuring that good practice is realised,
 - the quality and length of the Guide,
 - the use of models that underpin the approach outlined in the Guide, and
 - providing further clarity on some concepts outlined in the Guide.
- 4.7. Where appropriate, officers have sought to provide further clarity as a result the issues raised. However, the comments do not warrant significant change to the draft that was presented to Joint Strategic Committee in November 2019. Any amendments have been noted in 'How we responded' sections in the Consultation Report ([Attachment B](#)).

Updating our Website

- 4.8. During the consultation, officer took the opportunities to revise the Council web pages relating to how our communities can get involved, have their say and stay informed, by updating www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/get-involved and providing information on how our communities can engage with the Councils on an ongoing basis in one place.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1. Subject to the decision of the Committee, the revised Guide and consultation report will be published on the Councils' website.
- 5.2. The Guide will also be shared and promoted internally with Council staff and support on engagement will be provided where needed.
- 5.3. Current consultations have also begun to be published in the monthly Members' newsletter, to help build awareness of the Councils' current engagement activities.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the revised Engagement Guide. The cost of consultations and engagements is funded from individual service budgets.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. The Toolkit encourages consultation with legal services as early as possible to identify any legal issues and the statutory power or duty that the Councils will use to carry out the proposal.
- 7.2. The Councils are required to carry out statutory consultation in relation to certain matters. The correct statutory process must be followed in these cases.
- 7.3. There may also be other occasions when consultation is required such as where the Councils have made a commitment to consult and there is a legitimate expectation of consultation.
- 7.4. Adopting an updated consultation guide and toolkit will assist officers in carrying out meaningful and informed consultation.

Background Papers

- [Engaging Adur Worthing - how we engage with our communities](#) (Joint Strategic Committee - 7 November 2019)
- [JSC Response - JOSC Review of Consultations](#) (Joint Strategic Committee - 6 November 2018)
- [Scrutiny review of consultations](#) (Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 26 July 2018)
- [Adur & Worthing Councils' Consultation Policy Statement](#)

Officer Contact Details

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Issue considered, no direct issues identified. Our business sector is reference as potential stakeholders staff may wish to involve in engagement activities.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

The social value of engaging with our communities is explored in the Guide, in terms of supporting decision-making, and strengthen the Councils' relationships with our communities.

2.2 Equality Issues

Specific reference is made to identifying communities of interest based on how a person may identify or belong to a specific social, economic or cultural group. There is also reference made to the need to engage with groups and individuals who may not traditionally engage with the Councils, and there may need to be specific methods developed to assist in their participation.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Issue considered, no direct issues identified.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Specific reference is made to identifying communities of interest based on how a person may identify or belong to a specific social, economic or cultural group. There is also reference made to the need to engage with groups and individuals who may not traditionally engage with the Councils, and there may need to be specific methods developed to assist in their participation.

Citizen participation and engagement with public and democratic institutions are strengthened through the provision made in the Guide.

3. Environmental

Issue considered, no direct issues identified.

4. Governance

Developing the leadership of our place and engagement with our communities are strong themes within *Platforms for our Places: Going Further*. The Guide assists the Councils' staff to contribute to informed and engaged communities, strengthening our democratic institutions and enabling greater partnership with our communities to find innovative solutions to economic, social and environmental opportunities and challenges facing Adur and Worthing.

Having good and trust engagement activities serves to enhance the Councils' reputation with its partners and our communities. While additional insight provided by well managed engagement activities will enhance decision-making.

FINAL DRAFT

Engaging Adur and Worthing

Adur & Worthing Councils' Engagement Guide

FINAL DRAFT

Purpose of this Guide

As Councils, we regularly engage with our communities, partners and elected Members on a regular and ongoing basis. We are committed to engage with our communities in a transparent and inclusive way, that is relevant to the issue or opportunity before us.

Throughout the Guide there is a recognition that due to the issues, communities of interest involved and other factors and contexts there is no single approach to engagement. Instead, there is a range of considerations that go into designing, managing and concluding engagement activities.

How to use this Guide

This Guide is designed to inform our communities and to assist Council staff in designing, managing and completing specifically designed engagement activities. This is done in two parts:

Part One - Our Engagement Principles

Outlines the Councils' definition of engagement, how we engage and our core principles which should underpin all our engagement activities.

Part Two - Our Engagement Toolkit

Acts as a starting point to help Council Officers to design, manage and conclude engagement activities by providing models, posing questions, and giving tips for good practice. Staff are encouraged to move through the Toolkit when designing, managing and concluding their engagement activities. The Toolkit is supported by resources available via the staff intranet and opportunities to share best practice and learning.

If you want more information about this Guide and Councils' engagement activities, please visit: www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/get-involved or email: policy@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Part One: Our Engagement Principles

What is Engagement?

We define engagement as:

...a planned activity with the specific purpose of working across organisations, partners and communities to help shape the decisions or actions of the community, partners or organisation relative to an issue or opportunity.

Engagement can include internal engagement with our staff, or engagement with a community based on shared location or shared interests. Engagement activities can have a specific focus, or be part of an ongoing piece of work. Engagement activities may also vary over time or as the context changes.

Why we engage

We have seen how local government engagement with our communities has evolved from a situation in which engagement took place only in regard to matters involving our legal obligations to a situation in which the broader benefits of engaging with our communities have been recognised.

Supporting decision-making

Engagement helps us and our communities to understand an issue from a variety of perspectives. The exchange of information improves understanding and decision-making within the Councils and across our communities.

Deepening relationships

We recognise that our communities want to have a dialogue with us and we also want this to create opportunities to engage on relevant issues. A deeper understanding from a variety of perspectives helps to develop mutually respectful relationships.

Meeting our legal obligations

In addition to our desire to have a greater dialogue with our communities, we also have an ongoing requirement to consult our communities on changes to specific policies set by legislation or which have been established by case law. We may have a specific duty to consult:

- If the requirement has been set out in legislation,
- where there is a promise to undertake public consultation,
- if there is an established pattern that consultation takes place on a particular matter,
- In a case where there will be a significant impact on individuals or groups.

Where we are required to carry out statutory consultation, the correct statutory process must be followed.

Why we don't engage (in a particular way)

There may be times it is not appropriate to engage in a particular way. This can be due to internal or external constraints which exist around the issue. These constraints may relate to time or resources available, to who has the decision-making responsibility or to provisions set out in legislation. We also need to consider the needs of our communities or of specific groups in our communities while at the same time avoiding the risk of people not engaging because we contact them too much (engagement fatigue). We may also have access to other sources of information, which means a particular engagement activity is not suitable or needed.

Our core engagement principles

Transparency

We will be clear about why we are engaging with you, what influence you have and keep you informed about the engagement process and its outcomes.

Inclusivity

Our engagement activities will be designed so as to take into account the needs of the relevant communities of interest and what will encourage engagement. We will try to identify and listen to the wide range of perspectives that may exist within communities or specific communities of interest, and give enough time for engagement.

Relevance

Our engagement activities will reflect the impact and the interest in the issue or opportunities within our communities, and the level of influence our communities have on the issue. How we engage will be determined by what we are trying to achieve, the range and level of interest and the best way to reach those interested, within the Councils' available resources.

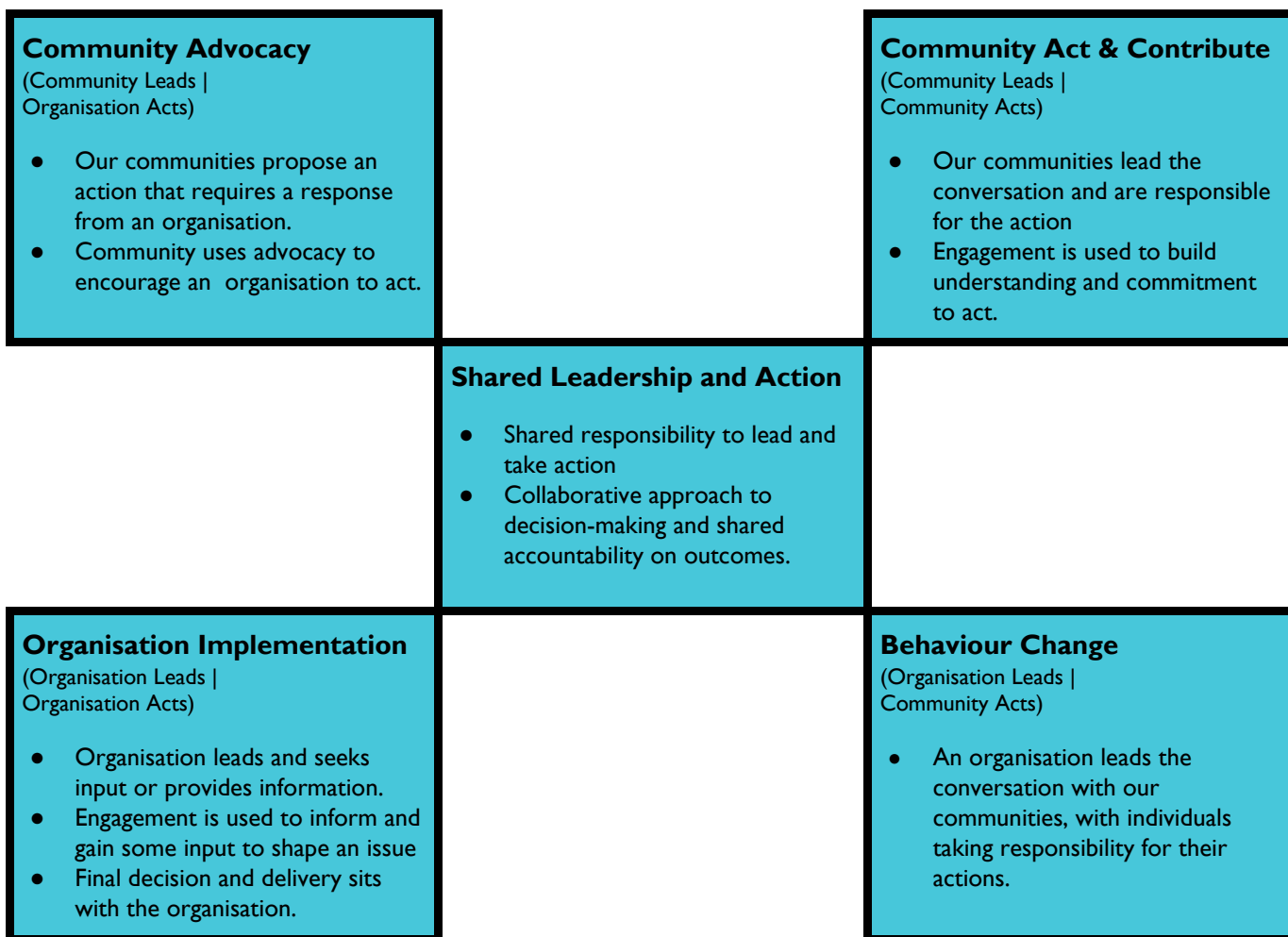
Part Two: Our Engagement Toolkit

Models of Engagement

These models of engagement can help us to understand how the Councils (the organisation) and our communities can define and lead engagement activities, and who will act as a result of the engagement activity. Over the course of an engagement activity you may seek to move from one model to another.

Using these models of engagement help us get the best out of any activity by starting to identify:

- who we involve and the impact they will have,
- how we engage - what methods we may use to achieve the engagement objectives, and
- what resources and roles are required.



Types of Engagement

Engagement ranges from sharing information, through consulting on peoples' views, to involving, collaborating and empowering people directly in a process.

No type of engagement is better than another. The type of engagement used will depend upon the nature of the issue being considered and the level of influence that those being engaged with have in the final decision.

Each type of engagement will also inform the methods and tools to support an engagement activity and achieve your objectives. You may also use different types of engagement over the course of an engagement activity.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Engagement Goals	Providing balanced and objective information to assist our communities of interest to understand the issue, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	Obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	Working directly with relevant communities of interest throughout a process to enable their concerns and aspirations to be heard, understood and considered.	Partnering with those being engaged with in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identify identification of preferred solutions.	To place the final decision in the hands of those we are engaging with.
Promise to those being engaged	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in alternative being developed and provide feedback.	We will work together to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the final decision as much as possible.	We will implement your decision.

Framing your engagement activities

Core Questions

There are three core questions when framing an engagement process:

1. What are your objectives?
2. Who are your communities of interest?
3. What is the best way to reach them and meet your objectives?

Communities of Interest

Across our communities people can define themselves by their interests, identity, experience as well as where they live - some examples are people:

- who often identify themselves or are identified by society, by demographic characteristics, for example, children and young people, faith groups, older people, black and minority ethnic people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people or people with a shared social background.
- with a shared or similar interest, for example, in climate change, art, a local school or an allotment.
- with a similar or the same profession or place of work, for example, hoteliers, council workers, police officers, business associations.

Deeper questions

Your objectives

- Is it clear why you are engaging and what you are trying to achieve?
- It is important to manage expectations - what is the real level of influence your communities of interest can have on this issue?
- What resources do you have available to undertake the engagement (time, staff, technology, finances, networks)?
- What is the role of elected Members before, during and after the engagement activity - how will they be kept informed or involved?
- What does success look like? How are you going to capture learning from this activity?

Your communities of interest

- Who are the communities of interest on this issue?
- What are the best ways to engage with your communities of interest?
- What information do your communities of interest need to be engaged?
- What questions can be possessed in order that your engagement is meaningful to you and your communities of interest?
- Is there value in targeting specific groups or individuals, compared to seeking the views of the whole community?

How you engage

- What are the best ways to reach communities of interest and meet your objectives?
- What will make your communities of interest want to engage with you and provide them with a positive experience?
- Who, within the Councils or otherwise, can actively support your engagement and how can they do this? Are these people or organisations potential partners in your engagement activity?
- Are there other issues which may impact on your engagement?
- How and when are you going to communicate progress and/or feedback?

Role of elected members

As representatives - supporting engagement activities

Elected Members have an important role in our engagement activities. As representatives of our communities they can:

- advise officers on particular communities of interests or sensitivities the Councils may need to consider when planning an engagement process,
- help to promote engagement activities to their constituents, as well be engaged in the process themselves, and
- use the outcomes from engagement to be kept informed of the views of our communities on issues and provide important input into the decision-making process.

As decision makers

Engagement outcomes are one of many of the important inputs that an elected Member will consider as part of a decision-making process. In this process, as a representative, a Member needs to include service, financial and legal considerations, policy and political objectives, and a weighing up the range of views expressed through engagement activities and the media. In the majority of cases the Councils' officers have a responsibility to present information available and make a series of recommendations based on an analysis of that information. Sometimes feedback from an engagement process may be out of scope, or contradictory, or include recommendations that are unachievable owing to other considerations or constraints.

It is ultimately the responsibility of elected Members (or other decision-makers) how they want to use this information as part of their decision-making.

Managing your engagement process

Good practice to your engagement

Managing each engagement process will be different depending on the issue, the context and the resources available. However, there is general good practice that you may consider.

Be clear about the scope of the engagement

You should be clear about why you are engaging, what you want to achieve, who you are seeking to engage with, how they can engage, what they can and cannot influence, how you will use the information gathered, and what are the benefits being involved.

Use existing evidence and insights

No engagement activity starts from nowhere. Use available research, knowledge and community intelligence to help plan and to provide context to those who you are engaging.

Timing

Allow sufficient time to design and carry out your engagement activities and to incorporate the outcomes from these into policy, plans or service design.

The duration of engagement activity will depend on the context, issues and resources, but a general rule of thumb is between six and eight weeks. Holidays in August and Christmas and the Purdah period before elections in May should be avoided or compensated for.

The Councils' engagement webpage and the Councils' engagement community of practice should also be referred to in order to identify other planned engagement activities and avoid risking engagement fatigue in our communities, or communities of interest.

Honest and clear communications

Communications should be open, honest and clear. They should be jargon free and relevant to the intended audience. A range of communications channels and opportunities managed by the Councils, other partners and in our communities can be used to inform people about an engagement activity and update them on it. Choose communication channel(s) that will reach your intended audience, keeping in mind you may have to change how you present your messages slightly to get the best out of different channels.

You should also include a contact if people want to find out more or seek clarification. This contact should be monitored and accessible during and after the engagement period.

The Councils' Communications team will be able to help about using communications channels:

news@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Legal Considerations - The Gunning Principles

The Gunning Principles have formed a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed, and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions. Through case law, consultations have been defined as legitimate only when four principles are met:

- 1. proposals are still at a formative stage** A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
- 2. there is sufficient information to give ‘intelligent consideration’** The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
- 3. there is adequate time for consideration and response. There** must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set time frame for consultation, despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
- 4. ‘conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made** Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

In the context of the Guide these principles would apply to ‘consult’, ‘involve’, ‘collaborate’ and ‘empower’ engagement activities.

Tapping into expertise

We have a range of expertise across the Councils and in our communities who assist in accessing specific communities of interest and gain specific insights. Where possible and appropriate these should be involved. For example:

- Place & Economy - Business Sector (including the Chamber of Commerce)
- Wellbeing - Community and Voluntary Sector (including Community Works)
 - Community Works - the Councils’ Community and Voluntary Sector support partner is a local umbrella organisation for the community and voluntary sector and can ensure engagements reach particular communities of interest
- Human Resources - Engagement Training and Staff
- Legal Service - to identify any legal issues and the statutory power or duty that the Councils will use to carry out the proposal.

Accessing various and new perspectives

Consideration should be given to how you access a variety of views from people beyond those who regularly participate in the Councils' engagement activities.

Depending on the scope of the engagement consideration should be given to how you access individuals and groups who are often not heard from due to limited access to engagement and communications channels or for other reasons (physical, economic, social or cultural). When engaging specific groups, especially young people, people with disabilities or learning difficulties or people who are vulnerable, it may be necessary to develop specific approaches to engagement.

External partners may help you or provide advice about accessing these groups.

Concluding your engagement process

Analysis

After your engagement activities (or appropriate milestones) you will have to take your raw data and intelligence to develop your understanding of what the response to your engagement activity has been. This may range from analysis of the numbers and demographics of those who engaged, to an analysis of the main points raised and recommended courses of action.

This analysis may also help in your reporting, feedback and evaluation. Your analysis should be considered in the context of other information you have available when preparing final recommendations and taking further action.

Any responses from an engagement process that are out of scope, contradictory or include unachievable proposals can be noted and may provide insight for future use. It will ultimately be the responsibility of elected Members (or other decision-makers) as to how they want to use the information as part of their decision-making.

Reporting

Decision-makers are formally told about planning for engagement activities and about the outcome of these, through Council reports.

In the *Engagement and Communication* section of a report you should outline:

- what internal and/or external engagement activities have been planned or occurred
- the main points raised through the engagement process and how these points have
- how engagement outcomes and decisions have been or will be communicated.

You may wish to attach a more detailed engagement report outlining the engagement activities and outcomes in more detail.

Feedback

It is important you conclude an engagement activity by providing feedback to those who participated. In providing feedback you should consider:

- the messages are clear and understandable,
- using a 'you said, we did' approach, outlining a clear reasoning on how the feedback was considered and used, and how decisions were reached.
- what the next steps are and whether there are opportunities for further involvement.

Evaluation

Evaluation includes establishing how an engagement activity went; it provides you and your colleagues

with information as to what went well and may guide you as to what you would do differently next time.

Evaluation can be done by reflecting within your team and/or getting feedback from those who participated in the engagement activity.

There will be opportunities within the Councils to share what you have learned. You may also want to include this in your reporting (if relevant to the decision-making) and as part of your engagement feedback.

Additional Support and Resources

This toolkit is supported by the resources available via the staff intranet and opportunities to share best practice and learning through an engagement community of interest. Our engagement community of interest will also assist the management of engagement fatigue.

For more information please email: policy@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Consultation Report

Engaging Adur and Worthing - Adur & Worthing Councils' Engagement Guide

Background

[Joint Strategic Committee](#) agreed on Thursday, 7 November 2019 to place on consultation the draft *Engaging Adur and Worthing - A Guide to Adur & Worthing Councils' Engagement Principles and Toolkit*. This consultation activity ran until Friday, 17 January 2020.

The focus of the consultation was seeking community, staff and elected Members' views on strengthening our engagement with our communities, partners and staff and seeking views on the draft Guide by asking:

What does good engagement look like?

In the case of our elected Members and staff, we will also be asking:

What support do you need to run engagement activities well?

The consultation was promoted externally through the Councils' website and social media channels, and internally through the Councils' Intranet and staff and Members' newsletters.

Over the course of the consultation period officers recorded 73 views of the Councils' webpage, while on social media 1,400 people were reached, on average, per post. This resulted in five submissions from members of the public. Over 100 members of staff viewed online notices on the proposed Engagement Guide. Officers also appeared before the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 20 November 2019.

Overview of Comments

Internally, comments received both formally and informally have been constructive and have resulted in further conversations about approaches to engagement and how the Guide compliments other work being undertaken. Comments from elected Members focused on how the aspirations set out in the Guide will be embedded, and clarifications about how the relationship between the Guide and the concept of engagement sits alongside our legal obligations to consult our communities.

Externally, comments received have focused on:

- ensuring that good practice is realised;
- the quality and length of the Guide;
- the use of models that underpin the approach outlined in the Guide, and
- providing further clarity on some concepts outlined in the Guide.

Where appropriate we have sought to provide further clarity as a result of the issues raised, however, they do not warrant a significant change to the draft that was presented to the Joint Strategic Committee in November 2019. Any amendments have been noted in the '*How we responded*' sections to comments captured during the consultation process.

Our response to what you said

What good engagement looks like

These comments will also be carried forward to further activities with staff, developing the Councils' approach to engagement:

What you said	How we responded
<p>It should be stimulating, enjoyable, engaging, honest, targeted, evidenced-based, time-bound and have an excellent mechanism for reporting back to all interested audiences.</p>	<p>There are a number of references to the points raised in this comment throughout the Guide. The following sections in the draft Guide have been updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our Core Principles (p.4) ● Deeper Questions - how you engage (p.8)
<p>The proof of the pudding - evidence that you have actually engaged in a meaningful way, e.g. 'you said - we did'. Rather than we asked you and did what we wanted anyway.... The current leaning towards pushing stuff out on your website is lazy and is not accessible to elderly folk.</p>	<p>The Feedback section (p.11) makes reference to good practice in reporting back on engagement activities.</p> <p>'Honest and Clear Communications' (p.9) encourages the use of a range of communications. Channels should be used to keep people informed. The wording has been strengthened in this section.</p>
<p>The proof is in the pudding - I would like to see more of 'you said we did'. Not much evidence of that at the moment. There are no suggestions about demographics and how to use them when looking at particular sorts of issues. If you want to engage elderly people the current practice of putting information online is lazy and you need to think of different ways to communicate with them on issues that are relevant to them.</p>	<p>In addition to the response above 'Tapping into Expertise' (p.9) makes reference to the Councils, staff members and parents who can access certain groups.</p> <p>'Access Various and New Perspectives' (p.10) encourages staff members to consider accessing individuals and groups not often heard from, with reference-made groups being based on their geography, and social, economic or cultural/ethnic demographics. Further resources will be provided through the staff Intranet.</p>
<p>Engagement works in at least two ways and needs to satisfy all involved. As an individual I've tried to engage with the Council on several issues, e.g. Fernhurst Recreation and grass cutting regime; the inefficiency and crazy cost of the Cultural Service; unauthorised vehicular access in Bost Hill; and keeping the toilets on the Goring Greensward open all year. In every case responses have been very slow in coming and, other than with the reopening of the toilets, full of flannel. To get responses to my queries on</p>	<p>The Feedback section (p.11) makes reference to good practice in reporting back on engagement activities.</p> <p>This Guide is supplemented by resources on the staff Intranet and exchange of good practice among staff.</p>

<p>the Cultural Service I had to raise a complaint via your Standards Officer. This is totally unacceptable. I am still waiting for responses on deliberations about the Bost Hill issue and Fernhurst many months after they were promised. Quite frankly it seems there is no point in trying to constructively engage with the Council. It appears you will just do what you want anyway. How can you convince me otherwise?</p>	
<p>Not ignoring residents of Sompting village and parish by lumping it under Worthing or Lancing.</p>	<p>'Access Various and New Perspectives' (p.10) encourages staff members to consider accessing individuals and groups not often heard from. Further resources will be provided through the staff Intranet.</p>
<p>Providing clear information as to what is proposed and giving indication whether I can affect change.</p>	<p>Our Core Principle - Transparency (p.4) addresses this comment.</p> <p>This issue is also addressed in 'Framing your Engagement Activities' (p.7-8).</p>
<p>..feedback we sometimes receive where communities have felt consultation could be 'tokenistic'. This related to:</p> <p>1) some local groups have reported before that people have tried to consult with them. If they haven't got back to them on one email address due to leave or other, then the X communities' views have not been included. Their response to this is "I'm not the only X person in Adur and Worthing". So considering how people ensure their engagement is representative.</p> <p>2) being clear about the purpose and scope of engagement helps create a transparent and open partnership on equal footing - where all parties know what's on the table.</p>	<p>Addressing the issues raised:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This has been addressed under 'Honest and Clear Communications' (p.9) 2) There is reference to this point throughout the Guide. <p>It is the expectation that through further promotion of the Guide, support, and peer-learning, these concerns will be addressed in the future.</p>

What good engagement looks like

What you said	How we responded
<p>This guide is badly put together. It is badly written and full of errors. It is insulting to the internal and external people to which it is meant to be targeting.</p>	<p>The Guide has been further reviewed and proofread.</p> <p>Resources will be included on the staff Intranet page. We are encouraged that many of the</p>

<p>There are excellent best practice engagement resources available (online) http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/ which officers could use to improve the Council's Guide. Officers could also talk to some of the winners of the Engage Awards 2019. There are public and private sector organisations who have won awards for the interesting engagement work they are doing: https://engageawards.co.uk/</p>	<p>issues raised in the standards are reflected in the Guide. A range of national and international practices were reviewed to develop the Guide. We have sought to distil the core ideas and adapt them to the needs of Adur & Worthing Councils.</p>
<p>11 pages to read!! Rather than a theoretical mishmash it would have been better to put in some actual methods to do things. Then everyone does it in the same way; members of the public get used to how things are done and might engage more.</p>	<p>Throughout the Guide there is a recognition that due to the issue, communities of interest involved, and other factors and contexts, there is no single approach to engagement. Instead, there is a range of considerations that go into designing, managing and concluding engagement activities.</p>
<p>I wonder how many staff and elected Members will read 11 pages - I am not sure I am any the wiser on whether this will improve the Councils' approach to engaging with its community. Lots of old-fashioned management theory but a toolkit should be something people use on a regular basis i.e. things to use.</p>	<p>We have sought to provide a concise, but informative guide. 'The Purpose of the Guide' (p.2) has been revised to provide clarity for those using the Guide.</p> <p>The Guide acts as a starting point to help the Councils' officers to design, manage, and conclude engagement activities. The Toolkit within the Guide is supported by resources available via the staff Intranet and provides opportunities for staff members to share learning.</p>
<p>Unfortunately, it reads like a lot of bureaucratic twaddle and, in 2020, should be totally unnecessary. I seem to have missed the word 'listen' which should be integral when the Council seeks to engage or receives an attempted engagement from external sources. Listen and respond in a timely manner and follow up promised actions.</p>	<p>Staff members are encouraged to move through the Toolkit when designing, managing, and concluding their engagement activities to meet our communities' expectations of good quality engagement experiences. The significant work and effort to produce good engagement activities...</p> <p>'Listen' has been incorporated into the 'Inclusive' Principle (p.6) and 'The Models of Engagement' (p.5)</p>
<p>Nothing about disability and ways to interact e.g. deaf, blind, dyslexia etc.</p>	<p>Reference to engaging with people with disabilities is made under 'Accessing Various and New Perspectives' (p.10).</p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Page 5 diagram - really nice overview. I might give a sentence or two to introduce it: <i>below are some of the ways our organisation and the community can work together to make decisions</i> etc. 2) Maybe define 'engagement fatigue' if you can in a few words 3) Maybe something about managing expectations 4) Community Works is the local umbrella organisation for the Community and Voluntary Sector and can ensure engagements reach particular communities of interest 5) I would avoid the 'usual suspects' phrase. What are you actually trying to say here? Ensuring a representative voice? I like the 'not often heard from'. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The introductory text to 'Models of Engagement' has been revised further (p.5) 2) 'Engagement fatigue' is clarified on p.4. 3) This has been made more explicit under 'Deeper Questions - Your Objectives' (p.7) 4) Community Works has been referenced under 'Tapping into Expertise' (p.10) 5) This heading has been amended to 'Accessing Various and New Perspectives' (p.10)
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Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Officers appeared before the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) on Thursday, 21 November 2019 seeking the Committee's views on the draft Guide. Full details, including a recording, are available via the [Adur & Worthing Councils' website](#). Members posed a number of questions to Officers. In addition to the responses provided to Members we have sought to use the issues raised to strengthen the Guide. Officers' engagement with the Committee was also very helpful in developing the [Background Paper and Frequently Asked Questions - Engaging Adur and Worthing](#), also made available on the Adur & Worthing Councils' website.

What you said	How we responded
<p>In the same paragraph it states: <i>'No type of engagement is better than another'</i>. The point about needing to be flexible in consultations is clear, but the five models of engagement are quite distinct. It is clear what they are, but what is less clear is the circumstances that each one should be chosen. How do we ensure consultations don't default to the 'Organisation Implementation' when a more complex and empowering mode of consultation is more appropriate?</p>	<p>Members were informed that the document had been designed to be flexible and that issues would be assessed on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Further to this, through sharing of best practice, resources, and support, we hope Officers will be encouraged to explore new ways to engage with our communities.</p>
<p>A Member asked if the document would offer more detail on the difference between our legal obligations for consultation and engagement outlined in the Guide.</p>	<p>Further to the response provided to JOSC, this point has been clarified under 'Why we Engage - Meeting our Legal Obligations' (p.3)</p> <p>Specific reference to the 'Gunning Principles' has been made under 'Managing Your Engagement</p>

	pProcess - Good Practice to Your Engagement' (p.10)
Regarding the 'Engaging Adur and Worthing' document, the 'you said, we did' mechanism ensures feedback to the public but doesn't in itself guarantee meaningful incorporation of consultation responses into decision-making. Does the process have any mechanism to ensure that consultation feedback has been fully incorporated into decision-making on an issue?	Further to the response provided, the 'Role of Elected Members' (p.8) and 'Concluding Your Engagement Processes - Analysis' (p.12) have been revised.