Report for the City of Guelph: Community Engagement Policies in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America

Appendix C

July, 2012

Kim Chuong, Kathryn Walton, and Morgan Marini

The Research Shop, University of Guelph
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Introduction

This appendix is part of the project which the Institute for Community Engaged Scholarship/Research Shop, University of Guelph, was engaged to complete on behalf of the City of Guelph. The aim of the project was to identify policies, frameworks and tools on community engagement from Guelph’s list of comparator municipalities in Ontario, as well as national and international cities in the United Kingdom, Australia and the U.S.A. This appendix provides details on some of the cities in Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S.A which we had focused our research, as well as the resources that had been found from various states in Australia, including the States of Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales.

**Australia**

- Melbourne, Victoria
- Onkaparigna, South Australia
- Mosman, New South Wales
- State of Queensland
- State of South Australia
- State of Western Australia
- State of New South Wales (Planning System)

Initial research focused on Adelaide, South Australia, and Perth, West Australia. However, it was soon discovered that most information on community engagement was from State framework and handbooks for local governments on community engagement. Thus, we reported on the community engagement handbooks which had been developed by the these two States as a tool to promote best practice and guide local governments on planning community engagement that would meet legislative requirements, such as the 1999 Local Government Act and the 1993 Development Act. We also researched on Sydney, New South Wales, but discovered that community engagement and its review were embedded as part of the community strategic planning (Sydney 2030 Vision plan), but we couldn’t find a city-wide policy per se on community engagement. The Government of Queensland’s “Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating Community Engagement” (2004) is a great resource for the development of a community engagement evaluation framework.

**United Kingdom**

- Leeds, West Yorkshire
- Manchester, Greater Manchester
- Newcastle, Tyne and Wear
- Teignbridge, Devon
- Thurrock, Essex
Teignbridge is a non-metropolitan district and Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Thurrock are metropolitan boroughs in the United Kingdom. Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) have been established in most local authority areas across the United Kingdom as a result of the 2000 Local Government Act. They are non-statutory partnerships designed to bring together local councils, public sector agencies, businesses, and voluntary and community organizations. The Duty to Involve was introduced in the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, and took effect in 2009. It imposes a statutory obligation on local governments to inform, consult and involve local representatives, groups, businesses or organizations who are likely to be affected by local government actions. The local government policies on community engagement often made mention to this duty to inform, consult and involve.

**United States of America**

- Burlington, VT
- Philadelphia, PA
- Portland, OR
- Santa Rosa, CA
- Seattle, WA

It is important to note that the U.S.A has a country-wide guideline on community engagement: The National Collation for Dialogue and Deliberation’s (NCDD) Core Principles for Community Engagement. Most cities in the U.S.A do not appear to have city-wide formal community engagement strategies, but have project-specific plans which are especially common in the environmental sector. Of the cities listed above, all plans have been structured around the NCDD principles.
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Jennifer Torrance | Community Engagement Officer
T: 03 9658 8591 | F: 03 9650 1112 | E: jennifer.torrance@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Melbourne Community Engagement Framework (2012) – information based on teleconference on 19 June 2012 and document forwarded by contact (graphical representation of framework. See below)

Policy development and staff training:
- In 2009, new Council which was very aware of community engagement; CE was considered a high priority project – thus, having support from top governance from the beginning
- Melbourne is a member organization of IAP2 and 20 staff had been trained and certified by IAP2.
- The City is committed to the IAP2 values and uses them to guide their CE.
- Resistance to CE – internal resistance can be overcome by training, understand the “why” CE is better; also state that this will create less work for you because people know what your project is about
- Framing – use of a different framing of CE e.g stakeholder engagement instead of CE, can also help to overcome resistance
- Use of online social media to encourage people to have a say, along with more traditional formats

Framework is based on four pillars:
1. **People** – purpose is to **increase staff capacity** to design and delivery CE
   - Training program (CE 101 course), mentoring program, facilitator and practitioner networks
     (run a session once a month which offers training and tools on CE, e.g. how to deal with difficult groups), internal reference group to advise on the framework, external advisory group (Council was cautious about involving external community members in the development and review of the framework – thus far, internal review only)
2. **Practice** – embed CE into organizational culture – councillors have quality input from community to make sustainable decisions, better decisions can result in improved policy and services and greater community satisfaction and wellbeing
   - Portal, toolbox, contractor guideline, organizational guideline, planning, advice and support
   - Ensure consistency in the CE process
   - CE Team does not implement the CE projects, but work with staff who will be doing the engagement to help them plan – identify stakeholders, establish goals and purpose of the CE project (use the IAP2 spectrum), get feedback, important to advise community members how their involvement will be used from the beginning
3. **Policy** - development of a policy that underpins corporate values and CE principles – Melbourne is committed to IAP2 values
4. **Performance** – reflective learning and evaluation framework
Recently implemented a form with 14 ranked questions about the CE process – questions such as “do you think you have diversity of opinion?”, “what surprised you overall about the process?”

Evaluation is done internally by project managers.
Website:

Community engagement
Current projects:
- Docklands
- Melbourne Planning Scheme including key precincts of Kensington, North Melbourne and Southbank.
- Swanston Street redevelopment
- new opportunities for Carlton
- Carlton Baths and Resource Centre redevelopment design
- adapting to Climate Change projects
- review of the Street Trading Policy
- city safety and homeless strategy
- Children’s Policy and
- on-line mapping system.

Community Engagement is linked with ‘Lean Thinking’ which is a program to be more economically/business responsible → cost effective

STATE OF VICTORIA Policy

Municipal Association of Victoria site → community engagement link
- CE is used to improve the design and delivery of government services such as Medicare, Centrelink and the Child Support Agency as part of the Australian Government-funded Community Engagement Co-Design Prototype Project.

- About co-design
  - Victoria uses Co-design principles (Don Lenihan). Which is a systematic approach to understanding customers of government services and working with them to design, shape and deliver these services better.
  - The co-design project sits within the service delivery reform agenda established by the Australian Government and underpins DHS’ approach of putting people first to improve the quality of interactions between the community and the government.
  - As well as engaging with customers, co-design draws on all key stakeholders’ combined knowledge, ideas and insights.
  - Started in 2010
This link provides an overview of all the information and tools for consultation on CE. Included on this page is a link to 4 tool kits that are specifically geared towards climate change.

A Working Group in 2003/4 oversaw the development of the Consultation and Engagement website which added information on approaches and techniques to the already existing framework in the “Red Book”

**Community Consultation: Resource Guide (Red Book)** - This Redbook is the product of Victoria’s Best Values Victoria Principles project and Victoria Local Governance Association (VLGA). The BVV Taskforce (2000) conducted seminars etc. to help councils with CE

**Part 1**
**Best Value Victoria Principles:**
Best Value Victoria is a policy which aims help councillors deliver better services to community → 6 best value principles (quality and cost standards, accessibility, responsiveness, continuous improvement, community consultation and reporting)

The Best Value legislation states that councils:
- must take into account community expectations and values when establishing quality and cost standards
- develop a program of regular consultation with its community in relation to the services it provides.

**Part 2**
**Principles of Good consultation**
- **Focus**
  - Be clear on why this is occurring
  - Have a consultation plan/statement of purpose
- **Inclusiveness, accessibility and diversity**
  - Who are the stakeholders? Which are difficult to access?
  - How will you ensure access to these groups? Are venues accessible/suitable?
- **Provision of information**
  - What info is being provided to those people consulted?
  - Is there enough info for them to make an informed opinion?
  - Is the info meaningful and understandable?
- **Timing**
  - When in the process is consultation occurring?
  - Is it early enough to help identify the issues or is it merely seeking comment on already identified issues?
  - Is it early enough for people to feel council is genuinely interested in their opinions
- **Responsiveness and feedback**
APPENDIX C

- Is the decision making process clear, well communicated and transparent?
- How will I provide feedback to respondents?

**Evaluation**
- Is this part of the consultation plan?
- How will council use the outcomes from this evaluation to ensure better consultation practices in the future?
- How will participants contribute to the evaluation process?

**Resourcing**
- Has a proper consultation plan been developed as part of the project or issue planning?
- Are there adequate resources?

**Methods of consultation**

**Pre-consultation:** consultation is set up and information is provided to allow good consultation to occur
- Letter writing to affected households
- Leaflets
- Council newsletter
- Special publications
- Advertisements in newspapers
- Media releases

**Two way/interactive consultation:** more intensive and interactive
- Traditional: more conventional methods
  - Questionnaires
  - Community meetings
  - Focus groups/workshops
  - Steering advisory committee (overview a project/issues)
  - Community leaders:
    - Expert panel
- New and innovative:
  - E-consultations
  - Simulations → role play and hypotheticals
  - Charettes →
  - Large group methods:
    - Search conference: stakeholders meet and mutual learning occurs
    - Real time strategic change: interactive steps between stakeholders to align needs and move towards change collectively
    - Open space technology: provides an open forum, opportunities to share
    - Appreciative inquiry: interviewing and storytelling to draw on best of past and plan successful future plans

*Issues about which consultation takes place → methods vary according to issue*
major strategies and policies
  - municipality wide, involve whole population
  - policies/targeted strategies
  - operational services → service reviews
  - projects/site specific
  - performance → council satisfaction surveys

Consultation planning and process design
1. Identify the issue, project or policy about which consultation is to occur.
2. Ensure that a consultation plan is part of the overall project plan and that there is agreement that adequate resources will be committed to the consultation process.
3. Clearly identify the goal of the consultation process.
4. In order to use the chart, identify into which category the issue most closely fits.
5. Look at the consultation method options for that category of issue. The choice of option will depend on a number of factors including:
   - complexity of the issue
   - who the target groups (affected parties) are
   - whether the target groups are easy to access or not
   - whether the consultation will be 'open' or 'closed'
   - how much time and what level of resourcing is available
   - who in the council is managing/auspicing the consultation process and who will be doing the work.
6. Having selected a preferred method, test it against the 'Principles of Good Consultation' to ensure these issues are being addressed.
7. Make sure that advertising is eye-catching, distinctive and exciting.
8. When implementing the method, be sure that such matters as quality of venue and participant comfort are carefully handled. A good quality, interesting environment and good quality and plentiful refreshments will enhance the process.
9. Information should be easy to read, catchy and feature pictures and cartoons where appropriate. Make sure it provides participants with quality, even-handed information which will allow time to make informed comment on the issue in question.
10. Ensure that the participants are clear about the consultation process, how the information they provide is going to be used and how the decision will be made. Where possible, give participants the possibility of providing input into these issues.
11. Ensure feedback and evaluation processes are in place. Where possible, feedback should occur during as well as at the end of processes so that the benefits of feedback loops can be achieved.
12. Stick to agreed timelines and commitments. This will give participants more faith in the process.
13. Be adventurous and creative. Don’t be afraid to try something new and take advantage of the resource bases and support which is available to you from the Local Government Division, the VLGA and the Municipal association of Victoria (MAV).
Preparing a consultation strategy
- look into other strategies
- look into local government
- consultation process should initially highlight issues in the community
- extensive consultation inside council
- decision makers should believe or be willing to accept consultation enhances decision making
- structure of a consultation strategy should:
  - intro
  - why consult
  - principles of good consultation
  - when/how the council will consult
- be sure to commit to consultation for all council activities
- consultation should occur on the consultation draft
- strategy should be dynamic

Reporting on the principle of community consultation
- report regularly as per the LGA (once a year)
- reporting should be meaningful to the community and should serve to improve service and governance performance
Onkaparinga, South Australia, Australia

Website: [http://www.onkaparingacity.com/onka/council/community_engagement/our_approach.jsp](http://www.onkaparingacity.com/onka/council/community_engagement/our_approach.jsp)

Engagement Framework
Patrice Pearson, Community Engagement Officer, (08) 8384 0116 or patpea@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au

- Framework: Inform → consult → Involve
- Community engagement happens prior to council debate and decision making so that community feedback can help in decision making process (See Decision Making Diagram)
- **Onkaparinga Resident E Panel** – members are recruited randomly to reflect the adult population of age, gender, and geographical location. Membership is for a maximum of a two year period. Members complete about six to eight surveys per year to provide feedback about decision making process. Contact: Jacqui Vandenbroek, Community Engagement Officer (Communications), epanel@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au

- **Case example:** The City entered the Annual Business Plan 2011-12 Community Engagement Project in the IAP2 Core Values Project of the Year Award and is the South Australia regional winner. Brief summary of the project available online.
APPENDIX C

Engagement framework

We are committed to ensuring we provide clear and objective information and offer opportunities for people to participate in decision making that affects them.

INFORM

- providing information to assist understanding of how decisions will be made
- we will use inform when a decision is made for legislative, financial, environmental, or technical reasons
- there is no opportunity to influence the outcome

CONSULT

- obtaining feedback on preferences when there are options available
- we will use consult when input is required on concepts or designs
- there are several options available
- final decisions are being shaped
- issues and concerns are unclear

INVOLVE

- involving people and working together to understand all needs and concerns
- we will use active involvement when we need community knowledge to influence the decision
- there is likely to be a high level of interest
- we need stakeholders to talk with us and each other about complex issues

Why engage?

Whether it’s a task, an activity, a program or a project, much of our work has an impact on, or is impacted by, our communities and the work of other people in the organisation. Whatever we do will be more effective if the people affected by our work:

- understand what we are doing and what it will mean for them
- are involved at whatever level they need to ensure the best outcome.

The approach we use to achieve understanding and involvement with those affected by our decision making is called engagement. It covers levels of participation ranging from informing and consulting to active involvement.

Our approach has been informed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) engagement models.

Our framework provides a structured approach that includes:

- language that clearly explains our approach to engagement and encourages participation in the decision making process
- methods of engagement that offer a range of ways to work with communities such as to inform, consult or actively involve to broaden community participation in the decision making process
- engagement handbook to support staff to plan, implement and evaluate an engagement
- training and development to provide relevant information, knowledge and skills to ensure staff know how to work within the framework
- civic education activities that provide opportunities for school and community groups to increase their understanding of the way we work with and for our communities
- evaluation process that supports continuous improvement and development of the framework

INSTITUTE for COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

College of Social and Applied Human Sciences
University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario Canada N1G 2W1
phone: 519 / 824-4120 Ext. 53029 | email: ices@uoguelph.ca
www.theresearchshop.ca
City of Onkaparinga Engagement Handbook

Website: [http://www.onkaparingacity.com/onka/council/community_engagement/our_approach.jsp](http://www.onkaparingacity.com/onka/council/community_engagement/our_approach.jsp)

- Informed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and won the IAP2 Core Values Awards in 2007.
- Two sections: **Community engagement** and **Internal engagement**.
  - Community engagement - to support staff and enable them to have the resource to work with and for the communities, plan, implement and evaluate the community engagement
  - Internal engagement - guide to support staff on engaging with staff who are affected
- The handbook makes references to engagement of 4 levels (informing, consulting, involving and collaboration) although the government webpage and framework refers only to the first three.

**Stage 1: Planning for Community Engagement**

- **Establish the decision making process**
  - Who are the decision makers? → Council, staff, management, ward councillors, general communities, community groups, external support staff (consultants, tech experts) are all involved
  - How and when decisions makers are involved in the process → be aware of expectations as early on as possible; their expectations drive the decision making
  - When decisions need to be made in the engagement process → use project management software. Stages in engagement depend on stages in the project (think timeframe)
  - How technical and engagement process are managed → each requires separate skill sets
  - How communities participate → depends on method of engagement
  - How related projects impact the engagement → think of project overlap. Consult project register and status boards
  - How to manage communication → project meetings (who need to be involved?, how often? Brief early)
  - How recommendations will be made → all the info gathered from communities and in reports including technical and legislative data need to be taken into consideration when forming recommendations → balance
  - Who makes the final decision → role of council generally, CEO or CMG or manager/team leader
  - How the process will be evaluated → must be discussed with project team on how the process and outcomes will be measured and what will be done with results

- **Clarify the purpose of the engagement**
  - 4 criteria for sustainable decision - technical feasibility, economic feasibility, environmental compatibility, Social acceptability
  - Key points in determining the purpose of an engagement:
    - developing a clear statement, issue or problem
    - Considering the needs and expectations of the decision makers and stakeholders
City of Onkaparinga Engagement Handbook

- Addressing the criteria that determine sustainable decisions
- Ensuring it is a project, issue or problem that decision makers and stakeholders want to explore
- Keeping the purpose simple/straightforward
- To help build relationships between stakeholders and decision makers
  - Meet jointly/individually to clarify purpose
  - Asking questions
  - Provide info/request feedback
  - Maintain regular and effective communications throughout process
- **Expectations may change** as decision makers and stakeholders become more informed

**Identify the key stakeholders**
- Primary stakeholders: direct link with project (elected members, community members directly affected)
- Secondary: have interest in an issue (Staff, business owners)
- Tertiary: do not fit into primary or secondary depending on the nature of engagement (state/federal authorities, gov. and non gov organizations)
- Stakeholders who are decision makers: council in relevant wards
- Stakeholders who are influencers: key community groups, media, staff
- Stakeholders who are affected people: people living in the community, other interested groups and individuals
- Stakeholders who perceive they have a stakehold: activists and special interest groups

**Legislative or discretionary process**

**Select a method of engagement**
- Consider how significant the communities consider the issue to be → this depends on the values the community holds and will influence how they judge events and behaviour and consequently will influence methods/expectations
- Consider
  - Background info (reports, papers, scopes, reviews)
  - Level of community interest as perceived by stakeholders
  - Interest shown by community
  - Underlying values/views of internal and external stakeholders
  - Degree of complexity (single vs. multiple issues)
  - Potential community impact/outrage
  - Political sensitivity?
  - Availability of human, material and financial resource
  - Media interest
- **Community engagement matrix** → designed to help staff with deciding the methods. Use in conjunction with framework and values and expectations
City of Onkaparinga Engagement Handbook

- Consider
  - **Degree of complexity** (clear issue? one, 2 or multiple issues? – low medium, high degree)
  - **Degree of community impact** (low, medium or high impact internally and externally)
  - **Degree of political sensitivity** (low, medium, or high acceptance – internal and external)

**DataWorks engagement record**
- Imperative to keep record of engagements for reference/clarify/verify information
  - Use DataWorks information management system
  - Keep records
  - Provide background info
  - Provide documentation for evaluation

**Evaluation**
- Methodology to evaluate should be selected as part of the planning process
  - Use of quantitative and qualitative measures → process and outcome areas

**Stage 2: engagement strategy**
- Purpose of project has been clarified and methods have been selected. Go through the following tasks to develop and internal and external engagement strategy.
- **Background information**
  - Describes key events that led to the CE
  - Need outline of events, brief history, current status of events, indication of what needs to
City of Onkaparinga Engagement Handbook

- **Engagement objectives**
  - Objectives need to be SMART: Specific and able to describe and action; Measureable, Achievable and accessible, Realistic, recorded and referred to during the process, Time bound

- **Set parameters**
  - Provide limitations, negotiables and non-negotiables
  - Geographic boundaries
  - Budget (more complex methods = more resources
  - Timelines: communities need enough time to participate
  - Legislative: Local Government Act 1999; Development act 1993 and Development Regulations 2008 for land use and development

- **Identify suitable techniques**
  - To facilitate, share info, collect accurate info, bring people together.
  - When selecting a technique, refer to purpose of engagement, consider the engagement objectives, clarify if you are sharing or collecting information and/or bringing people together

- **Identify issues, interests and responses**
  - Direct discussion with stakeholders
  - Surveys/questionnaires
  - Organize/manage issues under headings: stakeholders; needs and interests; issues and impacts; likely positions; response strategies

- **Develop communications**
  - Style of communication sets the tone for engagement with communities
  - Consider barriers such as
    - Information distributed without details or how to contact relevant officer
    - Newspapers (and Onka news which is the City’s column in the local newspaper) aren’t read by everyone
    - Internet access
    - Technical jargon
    - Culture, language, disabilities
    - Information overload
    - Uncoordinated distribution of information (feeling like an afterthought)
  - Should distribute information at a minimum through:
    - Council offices, libraries, community centres
    - Newspapers, websites’ status boards
    - Community forums
    - Project newsletter
    - Project meetings

**Stage 3: implementation**

- **Start-up phase**
  - Project team meets to review purpose; confirm methods, techniques, timeline. Identify
City of Onkaparinga Engagement Handbook

who is responsible for various tasks, complete the schedule sheet; plan activities with the different groups of internal staff (IT staff, administrative staff, etc.)

- **Communications phase**  
  - Depends on methods/techniques chosen

- **Engagement phase**  
  - Direct and indirect contact with communities through the techniques selected e.g. surveys, open house displays, static displays  
  - Consider alternative techniques that can increase interest and participation

- **Evaluation phase**  
  - Having basic evaluation measures in place throughout the process can help to identify areas of improvement and emerging problems.

**Stage 4: recording and feedback** - feedback to communities in a timely and appropriate manner

- **Recording phase**  
  - **Feedback report to community** must have: Intro/background info; outcomes of processes (issues/trends); quantitative and qualitative data; direct quotations from participants; section for questions raised by the community and relevant council responses  
  - **Council report** needs to be succinct and clear, provide info/feedback, identify main interests, degree of agreement/disagreement b/w participants; clarify key issues/trends; make clear and equitable recommendations based on info provided throughout the report

- **Community feedback report and council report phase**  
  - Evaluation at each phase of the engagement. Evaluate measures might include:  
    - What data management criteria will be used to determine the collation and analysis of info?  
    - Was the compiling and distribution of the feedback report completed within the agreed timeframe?  
    - What will indicate if the council report presents a balance of info for the elected members to base their decision making on?  
    - How will the implementation of council’s decision be undertaken with an agreed timeframe?  
    - What can be learned from this stage of the engagement process to manage it more effectively?

- **Final evaluation phase** – overall measurement of the CE process  
  - Insert process evaluation questions on feedback forms distributed during the process  
  - Telephone interviews with random sample of stakeholders during and after process  
  - Convene evaluation/summary meetings with the project team, decision makers and key stakeholders  
  - Use combination of all techniques listed above
City of Onkaparinga Engagement Handbook

- **Final report may include**
  - Intro/description of process
  - Summary of evaluation of each phase
  - Commentary on what worked and what didn’t, areas for improvement, lessons learned
  - Recommendations for future community engagement projects

**Community engagement checklist (p. 30 – 31)** – checklist for each phase to see if each step has been done

**Internal Engagement Guide**

**Why engage**: engagement may have an impact on immediate work environment, across the organization, and externally

**Stage 1: planning**

- **Decisions/purpose**
  - Who are the decision makers? → will determine size and scope of project
  - How and when will decisions be made? → stages? Methods?
  - Why is this being done/purpose?

- **Stakeholders**
  - Who and what will be affected? Typically other staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants, community members,
  - Be aware of their interests – will determine the method of engagement

- **Methods of engagement**
  - How and when you will engage your stakeholders
  - Inform → decision has been made; this is what’s happening and why; this means X for you
  - Consult → do you want this? What it may mean for you? Improvements? Preferred options? Best way todo this?
  - Involve → be involved with planning and implementation; tel us what you want to see happen; how would you like to process with this?; what we are aware of, haven’t considered; need to understand
  - Collaborate → help us understand needs and concerns; help them understand what needs to be achieved; get the best shared outcomes

- **Community Engagement Matrix (inform, consult, involve, collaborate)**
  - How complex?
  - Potential impact?
  - Potential acceptance?

**Stage 2: developing strategy**

- **Issues and risks, engagement techniques**
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- Developing strategy: issues and risks → test them against your selected methods of engagement
- Engagement techniques → consider if people are engaged at the right level, time and resource constraints
- Consider communication options: phone, emails Okanet, meetings, forums, surveys

**Timeline and responsibilities**
- **Dictated by:**
  - requirements of activity or project
  - ability of stakeholders to commit time, resources to the engagement
  - Other current/planned activities or projects that may impact your timing
  - Organizational needs or imperatives
- Who has the best skills to carry these tasks out?

**Stage 3: implementing your strategy**
- **Communicating, monitoring and adjusting**
  - Identify the timeline and then nominate who is responsible for each task
  - Communicating
    - Keep it simple
    - Keep communication relevant
    - Put yourself in the shoes of the stakeholders
  - Monitoring
    - Keep it on track
  - Adjusting
    - Is it following the original purpose? Is it accurate? What needs to be changed?

**Stage 4: feedback and evaluation**
- Closing the loop, reflecting
  - Tell stakeholders when the task is complete → what was done and how you’ve used their contribution
  - Look back on the process: what went well? What would you have changed?

**Internal Engagement Checklist and plan template** – pages 50 – 51.
State of South Australia, Australia

Community engagement handbook: A model framework for leading practice in local government in South Australia (March 2008)

Website of Local Government Association of South Australia:

- Prepared as part of the broader Local Government Community Engagement Project, a joint initiative between the LGA of SA and the SA Government.
- Introduced to Council in mid 2007 when Council was invited to respond to a questionnaire on CE practices and nominate case examples.
- “The principal aim of the Handbook is to provide Councils with a model framework to adapt to local circumstances for effective planning and implementation of community engagement processes for small and large projects.”
- Secondary aims include clarifying the requirements of the Local Government Act and the Development Act 1993, providing a method to select community engagement that meets Council expectation and ways to provide feedback to communities on their input, and outline the importance of implementing the outcomes of the decision making processes.
- Principle that “effective planning needs to precede the selection of techniques”

Definition of Community Engagement:
“Community engagement is about involving the community in decision making processes, which is critical in the successful development of acceptable policies and decisions in government, the private sector and the community.” (p. 1)

Levels of Community Engagement
- Based on IAP2 framework ➔ Inform, Consult, Involve, and Collaborate
- Empower is not included because “under the Local Government Act 1999, the only decision making power which is placed in the hands of the public is that of electing Council Members every 4 years.” (p. 1) – but the term is acknowledged as often used by Councils and other governments about community development and capacity building initiatives, thus “sits at an operational level rather than a decision making level” (p. 2)
  - Alternative definition of Empower as “Providing opportunities and resources for communities to contribute to solutions by valuing local talents and skills and acknowledging their capacity to be decision makers in their own lives.” (p. 2)

Phase 1: Planning for Community Engagements
### Community engagement handbook: A model framework for leading practice in local government in South Australia (March 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Work with decision makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clarify the Decision to Be Made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify Key Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Consider Legislative Requirements (According to Local Government Act 1999 section 50 requires Council must prepare and adopt a public consultation policy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5    | Select a level of community engagement (what are the expectations of the stakeholders)  
- Referenced the IAP2 spectrum and City of Onkaparinga’s Community Engagement Matrix. |
| 6    | Set up and maintain a community engagement record  
- Relevant reports, briefing papers, media releases, survey feedback etc |
| 7    | Establish Evaluation Measures  
- Referenced the following resources:  
  - Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating community engagement  
  - Book 2: The Engagement Planning Work Book, Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment  
- Process and outcome evaluation  
- Use both quantitative (e.g. surveys) and qualitative (e.g. interviews) methods.  
- If evaluation measures are set throughout the process, areas of improvement and emerging problems will be identified early and the probability of sustainable decision being achieved will be increased.  
- Ensure the evaluation measures suit the organizational needs/resources  
- Consider how to evaluate the process against set objectives and use the information gathered to improve outcomes  
- Have a feedback loop to gain maximum benefit from the evaluation process  
- Have template to simply, clearly and accurately record evaluation measures  
- Evaluation template (Appendix 6) |
Community engagement handbook: A model framework for leading practice in local government in South Australia (March 2008)

Phase 2: Planning for community engagement strategy (p. 27-34) ➔ template is Appendix 7

Step 1: gather and record background information

Step 2: Define community engagement objectives

- **SMART objectives**: specific and able to describe and action; measurable; achievable and accessible; realistic, recorded and referred to during the process; time bound

Step 3: Establish community engagement parameters

- These are the limitations, what’s negotiable and non-negotiable. Creates a starting point
- Key parameters: legislative, geographic boundaries, budget, timelines,

Step 4: Identify Key Issues/interests and responses

- Needs, interests, issues and impacts: some are explicit, some are not. What are the stakeholders’ likely positions? Understanding their positions will guide responses

Step 5: Select Suitable techniques for community engagement

- Techniques: used to facilitate engagement or interaction with the community (workshops, questionnaires, public forum etc)
- To determine the technique need to reflect on the planning to date and consider a number of factors
Community engagement handbook: A model framework for leading practice in local government in South Australia (March 2008)

- Being clear on the objectives to be achieved; which techniques are most suited to the level or levels of community engagement selected? What will maximise participation? What will be the most effective way to reach out to different groups/stakeholders? Which will be most suited to the three key areas that techniques can be divided into (info sharing, collecting info, bringing people together)
  - Techniques listed in Appendix 1

Step 6: evaluate phase 2
- How will you know if the CE objectives are being met and designed to achieve outcomes as described in the decision statement?
- What will indicate if the key issues/interests of stakeholders have been identified?
- How will appropriate responses be developed to address the issues/interests?
- How will you know if suitable techniques have been selected to engage stakeholders?
- What can be learned from this phase that needs to be dealt with before proceeding?

Phase 3: Implementing a Community Engagement Strategy (pg 36-37)

Step 1: develop an action plan
- Action Plan template in Appendix 8 (p. 70) – a checklist of tasks from start up to final evaluation
  - Nominate a coordinator in charge of communications and monitoring the progress
  - Guide the team through each stage
  - Monitor activities/emerging issues and develop responses
  - Make necessary adjustments to the Plan and schedules
  - Maintain open communication with team/decision makers and stakeholders

Step 2: complete a task breakdown sheet
- Template in Appendix 9
  - Identify specific tasks
  - Identify action and resources required to complete tasks
  - Assign responsibilities for tasks
  - Set significant dates/timelines
  - Comments
  - When completed

Step 3: evaluate Phase 3:
- How will the Action Plan support the implementation of the community engagement strategy?
- What will indicate if the Action Plan is being co-ordinated effectively?
- How many people registered an interest in being part of the Advisory Group?
- How many people attended the Advisory Group workshop?
- How will you know if the workshop was effective?
Community engagement handbook: A model framework for leading practice in local government in South Australia (March 2008)

- How will you know if the workshop was promoted effectively?
- What can be learned from this phase that needs to be dealt with before proceeding?

See Appendix 6

Phase 4: Providing feedback to stakeholders and reporting to council (39-42)

Step 1: collate and analyse info
Step 2: prepare a feedback report for stakeholders → see Appendix 10 for feedback report template
  - An introduction and background information.
  - Outcomes of the community engagement process, including any key issues or trends identified
  - Quantitative and qualitative data.
  - Exact words and phrases used by people in comments to ensure they recognise their own input and become aware that other people may express different opinions to their own.
  - A section for questions raised by the community and responses provided by Council

Step 3: prepare a report for council
  - The council report needs to
    - restate the decision to be made as stated at the beginning of the community engagement process;
    - provide information and feedback from the community in a way that is clear and succinct;
    - clarify any key issues or trends and any strongly held views by communities;
    - identify if there is common ground between technical and economic feasibility, environmental compatibility, and public acceptability on which to base a sustainable decision; and
    - make clear and equitable recommendations based on the information provided throughout the report.

Step 4: Implementation of the final decision
Step 5: Evaluate Phase 4
  - What data management criteria will be used to determine the collation and analysis of information?
  - How will you monitor the compiling and distribution of the Feedback Report within the agreed timeframe?
  - How will you know if the Council report presents a balance of economic, technical, environmental and social issues?
  - How will you monitor the implementation of Councils decision within an agreed timeframe?
  - What can be learned from this phase that needs to be dealt with before proceeding?

Phase 5: Compile Final Evaluation (pages 44-46)
## Community engagement handbook: A model framework for leading practice in local government in South Australia (March 2008)

### Step 1: Compile final evaluation report
- Use all evaluation info from each phase
- Can also:
  - Insert process evaluation questions on feedback forms distributed during the community engagement process.
  - Conduct telephone interviews with a random sample of stakeholders during and after the process.
  - Convene evaluation/summary meetings with the project team, decision makers and key stakeholders.
  - Use a combination of all the techniques listed above if sufficient resources are available.

### Step 2: Write the Final Evaluation report
The final evaluation report may include:
- an introduction and description of the community engagement process;
- summaries of the evaluation of each phase of the process;
- commentary on what worked and added value, what did not work and detracted from the process, areas for improvement, lessons learned, the sustainable nature of the decision; and
- recommendations for future community engagement projects.

A Final Evaluation Report template is included as **Appendix 11** – report on
1. Background information, 2. Evaluation summary of each phase, 3. Key achievements, 4. Key improvements
APPENDIX C

Community Engagement Show Case: Leading Practice Examples in Local Government in South Australia (June 2007)

- Publication prepared as part of the broader Community Engagement project which is a joint initiative of the LGA and the South Australia Government. Outlines several major projects in the State of South Australia and highlights many of the creative approaches to engagement.
- Mention Section 50 of the Local Government Act (1999 SA) that requires councils to adopt public consultation policy and outline minimum standards. Government is also responsible under the Development Act 1993 where public consultation is required.
- Refers to IAP2 spectrum but with a different definition of Empower (see alternative definition provided in summary of the Handbook above)
- Lists several case studies of community engagement including:

  **Community Building**
  - Peachy Belt ➔ access to info, public transportation, family friendly parks, enhancement of Peachy Belt amenity and safety issues.
  - Mount Remarkable ➔ community capacity building, environmental issues, schools, welfare, business organizations ➔ skills building for the community. This strategy is too new to determine its effectiveness.
  - Marion Historic Village ➔ Aboriginal cultural heritage preservation, enhancement of streetscape and amenity.
  - Adelaide ➔ South West Community Network was created to reduce tensions between residents, businesses and social services ➔ safe community, mixed community, heritage protection and environmental care.

  **Aboriginal Communities**
  - Tappa Iri Reconciliation Agreement.
  - Lartelare, Adelaide: preservation of a historic site/aboriginal heritage conservation.
  - City of Playford: Playford Indigenous Transition Pathways Centre ➔ sustained well-being, leaning and employment outcomes for Aboriginal youth ➔ end intergenerational poverty ➔ very successful.

  **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities**
  - City of West Torrens: won the Jim Crawford Award for Innovation in Libraries 2006 for the New Arrivals Program ➔ engage culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The Harmra centre had huge amounts of behavioural issues due to culture shock ➔ threats, violence, obscene language and damage ➔ developed an extremely effective code of conduct, Family Evening, Police Cadets interaction and Homework Help ➔ HUGE success.

  **Local Democracy**
  - City of Charles Stuart ➔ needed increased voting participation. Some remained static, some positive changes.
  - City of West Torrens: more access to information resulted in the Agenda Forum, very effective for Council Members.
  - City of Marion’s Friends of the Lower Field River: addressing the rapidly declining ecological and...
## Community Engagement Show Case: Leading Practice Examples in Local Government in South Australia (June 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Value of the Area</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) of SA. Youth consulting youth on issues. Creation of the Northern Innovative Community Action Network (Northern ICAN) which funds youth projects.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Playford: addressing Low school retention rates (especially for students with challenging backgrounds). Initiative supported by Northern ICAN. Huge success: job training/expireince, civic life, transferable skills, communications, writing reports, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renmark Paringa Council and youth support committees: Renmark Action Committee for Youth (RACY), Renmark Paringa Youth and Children’s Council and the Youth Network: hugely successful: voice to young people, communications, leadership building, support for young people, community partnerships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Salisbury: North Skate Park: very successful. Addresses vandalism, complaints. Resulted in very positive environment/collaborative and welcoming, intergenerational approach to broader community issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communities of Interest and Collaborative Approaches

| Cities of Holdfast Bay, Marion, Mitcham and Unley | Housing, education, community services. |
| City of Onkaparinga: tidy up of Town square, but maintain the character of the area. |
| Town of Gawler: volunteer charter to forward volunteerism. |

### Strategic Planning, Financial Management and Service Review

| Adelaide Hills Council: budget priorities | Successful strategy of newspaper ads/invitations etc. |
| Alexandrina Council: ensure diverse community profile, and balanced social economic and environmental priorities | Increased community understanding of Council’s planning process developing through the consultation process and need for council to balance the interests of diverse communities when making decisions. |
| City of Burnside Vision 2020: strategic plan with two community consulting phases | Many community members responded to surveys, most agreed or strongly agreed with the strategic directions presented. |
| Mount Gambier: issues regarding residential property site values | City needs to reevaluate the valuation and rating system. After the consultation/implementation with the community, very little negative reaction was received. |
| City of Unley: community bus services, well received. |
| City of Mitcham: guide needed for Council reserves in Mitcham Hills mountain biking trails. Almost 100% of community members who responded supported the draft Strategy which would ensure great riding experience and reduce social or environmental impacts on the reserves or nearby residents. |
| The Barossa Council: new waste collection for residents | This was one of the most successful consultations. Voting slips used. |
| City of Tea Tree Gully: customer satisfaction assessment. Survey data led to a number of key projects and improvements. Now an annual survey that is ongoing in the Council’s CE framework. |
## Mosman, New South Wales, Australia

### Mosman Community Engagement Strategy (2009)

**Website:** [http://mosmanroundtable.net/ces/](http://mosmanroundtable.net/ces/)

- Adopted by Council in 2009
- Strategies: Inform, Consult, Involve (see strategy for specific wordings – similar to IAP2)
- Methodology of each level: Considers the How, When, Who, and Evaluate
- Guiding Principles:
  - Clarity of purpose
  - Commitment - demonstrate commitment to establish credibility and accountability
  - Hospitality – friendly, welcoming environment with appropriate refreshments provided
  - Respect – mutual respect for needs, aspirations, and opinions of all within the community
  - Accessibility – ensure all individuals and groups can access the process, be sensitive to special needs, provide information that is easy to understand and appropriate
  - Communication – two way process of providing accurate and timely information, demonstrate that feedback is valued
  - Evidence – establish good engagement practices that are based on sound research and quality information
  - Flexibility and responsiveness – establish engagement plans that are flexible during the process (time and venue may change due to feedback)
  - Timeliness – ensure participants know how long the engagement process will last and when feedback is expected at each stage of the process
  - Inclusiveness
  - Collaboration – partnerships with relevant community groups, state and federal government, local government partners, other stakeholders, internal sections within council
  - Ethics – adhere to relevant Code of Conduct
  - Don’t over consult – over consult can result in residents feeling that their time is being wasted and comments on why they are being asked again when their feedback has been given before
  - Continuous learning – establish a reporting system to learn, monitor and evaluate success
- Strategy is big on **online engagement**
State of New South Wales, Australia


- “Intended as a source of reference for anyone keen to improve the quality of community engagement in the NSW planning and development system”

**Definition:**
“The term community engagement broadly captures public processes in which the general public and other interested parties are invited to contribute to particular proposals or policy changes. Community engagement has the potential to go beyond merely making information available or gathering opinions and attitudes. It entails a more active exchange of information and viewpoints between the sponsoring organisation and the public, however this public is defined.”

- IAP2 Spectrum of community engagement
- **Benefits:**
  - *Value to communities:* increased access, better information and understanding, sense of involvement, better outcomes
  - *Value for proponents:* better ideas for project, minimized conflicts and delays, establishment of relationships, priorities are tested, value for money is optimized, reputation is enhanced in the community
  - *Value for government:* increased credibility and accountability, satisfied community expectations to be involved, addressing community concerns early in the process which can save money and time, community values and priorities are expressed, deeper understanding of the issue, opportunity for capacity building in the community, make better and more acceptable decisions, fulfill statutory requirements

**Section 4: Opportunities for Community Engagement in the Planning and Development System**

**Plan making**
- **Pre Plan Phase**
  - State, regional and local level
  - Consult to help create vision/values criteria
- **Plan Making Phase**
  - All levels
  - Identify intended outcomes, actions and sustainability indicators
  - Consider environmental, social and economic issues together
  - Develop alternative scenarios
  - Test the draft strategy against the values and aspirations identified in the earlier visioning phase.
  - Use the combined skills and expertise under social/community and cultural planning
### Community Engagement in the NSW Planning System (2003)

Processes to tap into a wider community sector
- Check indicators of engagement (process) and content (output) success

- **Ongoing Monitoring and Review Phase**
  - Use indicators developed in previous phases
  - Once regional strategy is in place, forums and teams will monitor projects
  - Local plans every 5 years

#### Development Assessment
- Community input/continued consultation
- **Pre-lodgment**
  - Development control plans with guidelines
  - How to forums, advisory panels, web based guides etc
  - Other references such as Environmental Impact Assessments
  - Early/effective consultation for consent
- **Pre-determination (exhibition, assessment and decision phase)**
  - Broad public notification and advertising
  - Onsite inspections
  - Independently facilitated meetings between the applicant and community members
  - Public display/exhibition of the proposal incorporating plans and drawings, master plans, models, artists impressions and computer modelling with an associated opportunity for community feedback verbally or by feedback forms
  - Other techniques
    - Establishing a project ‘shop front’ in the local community
    - Distribution of a newsletter describing the proposal/process

- **Post Determination**
  - Those who participated are advised of decision
  - Minutes of meeting are posted

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**Part B: How to Engage**

**Section 5: Leading Practice Principles**

1. Clarity of purpose
2. Commitment
3. Communication
4. Evidence
5. Flexibility and responsiveness
6. Timeliness
7. Inclusiveness
8. Collaboration
9. Continuous learning → monitor and evaluate as you go, modify if necessary
### Community Engagement in the NSW Planning System (2003)

**Section 6: Five-Step Planning Cycle**

- **Design/Plan – follow practice principles**
  - What are the objectives?
  - Stakeholders – who should be consulted?
  - What are the constraints and opportunities?
  - What resources are available?
  - What will be the indicators of success?
  - Deciding on techniques

**Prepare and Organize**
1. Prepare an action plan
2. Where will community engagement events be held?
3. What publicity is needed?
4. What information should be given to participants?
5. Privacy and information management
6. Who will run the community engagement events?
7. What are the measurements of success?
   - Is there a record of the rationale for engaging the participants?
   - Is there a process for checking whether others need to be involved (phone calls, questions, research)?
   - Did the process enable everyone involved to have their say?
   - Was accurate, timely information provided to the participants and did it obviously inform the process?
   - To what extent were the views of those engaged considered/acted upon?
   - Has accurate, comprehensive and timely feedback been provided to the participants both after their involvement and at the end of the process?
   - Were adequate steps taken to make the records and outcomes of the process available to the public?
   - Are the next stages of the process being communicated?

**Implement**
1. What is meant by implementation?
2. Have arrangements been confirmed?
3. Do presentations need to be rehearsed?
4. What difficulties might be faced during community engagement?
5. What strategies are there to deal with difficulties?
   - Decide on strategies to deal with potential conflict, such as:
     - reaching consensus
     - convergence of what can be agreed upon
     - presenting a diversity of viewpoints.
### Community Engagement in the NSW Planning System (2003)

| Keep the program as informal as possible |
| Build trust |
| Develop an understanding that the process is not necessarily about consensus. |
| Don’t be defensive or judgmental about any views or opinions |
| Begin with tentative ideas/strategies. |
| Take an interest in community views. |
| Avoid an ‘us versus them’ approach. |
| Recognise that conflict is healthy and creative. |
| Encourage ownership of the project by all parties. |
| Allow enough time - do not rush a process. |
| Express honesty/openness – make it clear nothing is being hidden. |
| Provide alternative methods for people to have their say. |

#### 6. Ideas for maximising success

- Good communication
- Techniques for meetings and other engagements
- Conflict resolution
- Negotiation

#### Feedback and Follow up

1. **Why give feedback and follow up?**
   - Reassurance
   - Trust
   - Make it timely and accurate

2. **When should feedback and follow up occur?**
   - At each stage of the process
   - Let them know about next steps and if their involvement will be needed

3. **How should feedback be given?**
   - Newsletters
   - Letters
   - Summary reports of meetings/workshops
   - Phone hotlines

#### Evaluate

1. **What are the benefits of evaluation?**
   - Know what works and why
   - Input for future planning
   - Develop appropriate techniques
   - Improve effectiveness of CE techniques

- Assess CE affect on the issues of concern

2. What might an evaluation consider?
   Could break down under the following headings:
   - participation level
   - influence of engagement
   - evaluation of individual activities.
   - Whether objectives are achieved and how well they were achieved
   - Which techniques drew the highest responses and highest level of satisfaction from participants
   - To what extent target groups participated
   - Diverse groups participated
   - Which techniques most effectively and clearly convey information and adequacy of information
   - Adequacy of timing, funding and other resources
   - Cost effectiveness
   - How useful was info obtained
   - Impact of CE on decision making
   - Whether people from all participant groups feel they were listened to and their views adequately recorded

3. Have evaluation techniques been selected?

4. Developing and implementing an effective evaluation strategy
   - Identify the evaluation objectives
   - Identify the design and evaluation techniques
   - Prepare, distribute and publicise the techniques
   - Implement in accordance with the CE plan
   - Analyse and report results
   - Use info to improve future engagements

Section 7: CE Techniques and Tools
   - Charts are provided throughout the document
   - Final technique choice is dependent on:
     - the purpose of engagement
     - legal requirements for engagement
     - who is to be consulted
     - the environment in which engagement is being carried out (political, social, cultural)
     - money, time and skills available
State of Western Australia, Australia

### Integrated Planning and Reporting: Framework and Guidelines (2010) – Western Australia


**Aim:**
- To improve the practice of strategic planning within local government – facilitate good practice and continuous improvement
- To address the minimum requirements that meet the intent of the 1995 Local Government Act and outline processes and activities to achieve an integrated strategic plan at the individual local government level
- does not intend to require a single methodology to be applied by local governments, or to restrict the planning processes undertaken within a local government

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**Figure 1.2 Illustrates the different elements of the Integrated Planning Framework.**

### Integrated planning requires at least two plans:
- strategic community plan → corporate business plan → annual budget
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Strategic community plan</strong> - 10 year + timeframe that provides long term community visions and aspirations, with a 4 year review period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Corporate business plan</strong> activates the Strategic community plan and integrates other plans. Annually reviewed to deliver annual budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Annual budget</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategic community plan** asks: where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?
- Prioritizes: social objectives, economic objectives, environmental objectives, changing demographics and land use etc

**Community Engagement**
- Viewed as essential for the development of the Strategic Community Plan

**Definition:**
Community engagement is “any process that involves the public in solving problems or making decisions, and uses public input to make decisions” (International Association for Public Participation, 2006).

- References the **IAP2 core values and spectrum** as a tool to assist in selecting the level of community engagement
- Engaging diverse communities is important to meet the needs of a diverse and representative range of people. ‘Hard to reach’ groups are often neglected due to a range of barriers - age, gender, ethnicity, language, and mobility. These include culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD), Indigenous, youth, children, seniors, and people with disabilities.
- The Queensland Government and IAP2 resources are referred to as excellent starting points for planning community engagement.


- Designed to assist public officials at all levels to evaluate community engagement activities.

**Definition of evaluation**

“Evaluation is a process of assessment used to generate information about the way in which an activity or program of activities is undertaken (process) and the results of the activity or program (outcomes).

Evaluation involves comparing aspects of process and outcomes to performance standards or expectations to judge the success of the activity or program, taking into consideration that external factors may also have had an affect.” (p. 3)

**Can focus on short, medium and/or longer-term outcomes** — but “the longer-term the outcome, the more likely it is that it will have been affected by factors external to the community engagement activities being evaluated and the more challenging evaluation becomes.”

**Benefits of evaluation**

- improving practice by identifying and articulating lessons and achievements
- contributing to setting best-practice standards and benchmarks
- helping to build an evidence base for innovative approaches to community engagement
- contributing to engagement capability development by providing feedback on performance
- presenting opportunities for further citizen involvement in the evaluation process
- building support for client and community involvement in government planning and decision-making by providing evidence of how effective engagement works.

- Three key purposes to evaluation – summative evaluation, formative evaluation and evaluation research (see diagrams below)

- Three main activities to develop an evaluation framework (see below for details)
  1. developing an evaluation framework and data collection tools
  2. collecting and analyzing the data
  3. interpreting, sharing, reporting and responding to the results
    - larger projects may require setting up new or concurrent project management systems such as evaluation steering committee, systems for reporting and ongoing review, project plans for data collection, analysis and reporting

- no one-size fits all process for evaluation

### Key principles for the development of evaluation frameworks:

1. Evaluation should be an integral part of the planning and management of community engagement activities.
   - Ideally designed at the time of community engagement planning, be part of ongoing management and refinement of activities.
2. Evaluation should be a structured and planned process.
   - Good evaluation needs to be purposeful and focused, based on clear performance criteria derived from the goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes, systematic procedures to gather data, weigh data against criteria carefully and objectively.
3. The scale and scope of the evaluation should reflect the purpose, audience, and the scale and significance of the community engagement activities.
4. Evaluation should, whenever possible, be a participatory activity.
   - Involve representatives from key stakeholder groups, including public sector staff, managers, community participants and others.
5. It is important to undertake an opportunities and risk assessment of all evaluation decisions.
   - Identification of risks is not an excuse to not evaluate, evaluation can change focus to avoid potential risks (e.g. focus on learning and areas where change are possible).

### Step 1: Clearly articulate the community engagement program to be evaluated, including:

- the individual community engagement activities to be undertaken
- the critical success factors for these activities
- the intended short, medium and long-term outcomes of the activities
- the potential external factors that may affect the process and outcomes of engagement – e.g. political and institutional environments, state wide government factors, social environment of the community

**important that the objectives in the community engagement plan must be based on the SMART criteria**
Box 1 summarises the key elements of a good evaluation framework based on the principles above and the steps that will be reviewed in this guide.

**Box 1. Key elements of a good evaluation framework**

- It has been developed through a participatory process.
- It describes in detail the purpose of the evaluation and its intended use, including:
  - who the audience is
  - what they want to know
  - when they want the information
  - in what form they want it
  - how they will use it.
- It describes in detail the methodological approach of the evaluation, including:
  - the evaluation questions
  - the performance criteria and indicators
  - the type of data to be collected
  - how data will be collected, analysed and interpreted
  - who will be involved in the evaluation process.
- It has a clear timetable that is achievable and allows enough time for responses.
- The performance criteria selected reflect the agreed and documented:
  - critical success factors, practice principles or benchmarks
  - intended outcomes of the community engagement activity.
- It includes an explanation of how the intended outcomes relate to the activity through a clear program logic model.
- It uses data collection methods that are appropriate to the research objectives and the research participants.
- It makes an effort to identify and understand unexpected outcomes of the activity.
- It analyses the context of the activity (including the political, social, economic and cultural contexts) in order to understand how this has affected the process and the outcomes of the activity.
- It includes a plan for sharing and using the learnings from the evaluation, including identifying what products and forums (for example, reports, presentations, workshops, or training) will result from the evaluation, and where relevant, how the evaluation will feed into larger scale or meta-evaluation processes.

The purpose of evaluating community engagement in government

There are three key roles or purposes for undertaking community engagement evaluation in government, which are outlined in Table 1 and also illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 1. These roles are not mutually exclusive, rather a good evaluation process should attempt to recognise and provide for all three functions.

Table 1. The three key purposes for community engagement evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Key characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summative evaluation</td>
<td>Contributes to performance monitoring and reporting for public sector accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Focused on the question: ‘Was the activity successful?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Examines the achievement of objectives, in terms of both process and outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Used by government to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– report on achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– increase accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– track progress of programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative evaluation</td>
<td>Contributes to community engagement project or program management and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Focused on the question: ‘What can we do better?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Examines the progress of community engagement against objectives and identifies unexpected barriers and outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is integrated into the community engagement program as part of a continuous improvement cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation research</td>
<td>Contributes to developing a shared evidence and knowledge base for good community engagement practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Focused on the question: ‘What have we learnt?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Explores key research interests, for example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– how to adapt community engagement to better meet the expectations and goals of community and government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– the links between the context, methods, practice and outcomes of engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. The roles of community engagement evaluation

- Performance monitoring and reporting:
  - Performance monitoring and reporting against:
    - business plan
    - strategic plans
    - operational plans
    - managing for outcomes framework
  - SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

- Developing a shared evidence and knowledge base:
  - report findings
  - share learnings
  - compare findings to other studies and literature
  - EVALUATION RESEARCH

Step 1: Clearly articulate the community engagement program to be evaluated, including:

Develop a program logic model
- translate key elements on the community engagement plan to program logic model elements - “Where the process of planning begins with the question of why (the goals and objectives) and then moves20-30 px

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key elements of a community engagement plan</th>
<th>Related elements of a program logic model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information on the background issues, risks</td>
<td>External Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on the institutional context including internal decision-making processes and the role/level and timing of community engagement</td>
<td>Critical Success Factors and External Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement objectives</td>
<td>Short-term, Medium and Longer-term Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principles for engagement</td>
<td>Critical Success Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement methods and techniques</td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality control for engagement methods and techniques</td>
<td>Critical Success Factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The relationship between components of a community engagement plan and program logic model

For a generic program logic model and other examples, see the guide p. 11 - 14

Step 2: Establish the purpose for the evaluation and who to involve

- Decide why you want to evaluate your community engagement program
- Identify who the audience for the evaluation will be
- Decide who will conduct the evaluation (internal vs. external evaluations, consider advantages and disadvantages)
- Decide who should participate in the evaluation (to what extent stakeholders should be involved and in which way – evaluation design, data collection, analysis, interpreting results, developing recommendations, report on findings)

Step 3: Identify key evaluation questions and information requirements

- Write a list of the questions that will guide the evaluation
  - What happened? – open exploratory component of the evaluation, paint a picture of the community engagement program from a range of perspectives, describe process and outcomes
  - What can we do better? – key question that guides formative evaluation, require development of performance criteria, how well the engagement activity progresses towards its targets, what went well and what had not worked so far, internal and external barriers
  - Was the activity successful? -performance can be reported and/or decisions about future actions can be taken.
  - What have we learnt? –a key question is: What works, for whom, in what circumstances?
APPENDIX C


Tip: Choosing evaluation questions

1. Be realistic in what can be achieved
   It may be useful to start by brainstorming all the questions that would be interesting to address then identify the priority questions that can be addressed with the resources available.

2. Think about your audience
   Consider what you determined were the information needs of your audience in Step 2.

3. Consider what aspects of your program logic you would like to test
   In many cases, there is not much research evidence to support the assumptions that go into program logic models. Evaluation presents an important opportunity to test assumptions and build an evidence base of what works for whom, in what circumstances. For example, you might ask:
   - Did the short-term outcomes lead to the identified medium-term outcomes and which factors intervened in this process?
   - If the activity was carried out according to the identified critical success factors, did this lead to the short-term outcomes identified?
   - Were all the relevant external factors identified?

- Identify the types of information required to answer the evaluation questions – **quantitative and qualitative data** – consider if the evaluation question lends itself more to one type of data and what type of information participants most willing to provide

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Information</th>
<th>Strengths/weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Quantitative information related to specific performance criteria and indicators | + Can have increased rigour (reliability) and standardisation of results for accurate reporting  
  - Does not provide much information on unintended outcomes |
| Qualitative information associated with open-ended exploratory questions | + More detailed, ‘rich’ information  
  + Much broader scope with a focus on both intended and unintended outcomes  
  + People may relate better to the results because they are often in the form of ‘stories’ rather than numbers  
  - Data collection and analysis is often more resource intensive  
  - May not be seen as equally credible, reliable and robust compared to quantitative-based methods |

- Establish performance criteria which provide standards by which the practice and outcomes of engagement can be judged – generally based on quantitative data
- The nature of data collected by indicators can be:
  - objective – measuring something tangible or real or
  - subjective – measuring a perception of something.
- Type of indicators can be inputs, outputs, process, outcomes. Indicators are used to measure different aspects of each type.
- "Process indicators measure the quality of activities or outputs against performance criteria related to how an engagement activity should be conducted." (p. 24) – can be based on the factors that are considered to be critical to the success of the engagement, such as based on principles for community engagement
- "Outcome indicators measure the achievement of performance criteria based on intended program outcomes." – range from short term to long term outcomes

### Step 4: Identify data sources and methods

- Identify existing data sources – important to clarify if these data sources are available in the format for the evaluation
- Decide how and when new data will be collected and analysed – understand the differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection, the difference between correlation and causation
- Decide whether the research plan can be implemented – consider time and resources available
- Consider the requirements for privacy and ethics approval
- Develop tools for data collection

## Table 7. Types of indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
<th>Measurement of:</th>
<th>Example Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Inputs            | The human and financial resources used in community engagement | • The calendar time taken  
• Staff costs |
| Outputs           | The activity of community engagement and the associated products | • The number of meetings held  
• The number of information brochures distributed  
• The number of residents contacted |
| Process           | The quality of the outputs | • Participants included residents of all targeted geographic areas  
• Participants' perception of the clarity of the process |
| Outcomes          | The short, medium to longer-term outcomes of community engagement | • Participants' perception of the knowledge they gained in participation (short-term)  
• The number of new partnerships formed (medium-term)  
• The number of changes to policies (medium-term)  
• Participants' perception of changes to the relationship between the community and government (longer-term) |

### Tip: How to choose good indicators

In choosing indicators it is important to consider whether:

- the indicators are measurable
- the indicators are able to show trends over time
- the indicators are clear and able to be understood easily by the intended audience
- the indicators accurately and reliably indicate what they are supposed to
- there is a possibility of responding (based on political commitment and capacity) to issues raised as a result of collecting data on the indicator
- there is current data available or there are available resources and capacity to collect new data
- the data about the indicators can be collected within the timeframe of the evaluation.

Interpreting, sharing, reporting and responding to results link

Results interpretation
- meaning and significance of results determined. This is not always a straightforward process.
  - Different people may interpret the same information in different ways.
  - The most useful way to ensure unbiased results of evaluations: reference group to discuss
    the findings and their meanings. This group should include key people who will need to
    respond to the information and people who participated in the evaluation. This not only
    provides a more accurate way of interpreting evaluation findings, it also provides an excellent
    learning opportunity for those involved.
  - The process of interpretation should also be informed by the information about the political,
    institutional, social and policy context of the community engagement project.

Reporting and sharing results
Determined by the purpose and audience for the evaluation and the project management framework
within which the evaluation will occur, including: the current systems for reporting, the current systems
for on-going review of community engagement activities.
Evaluation findings can be reported and shared through a number of different mechanisms. These
include:
- internal or external government reporting mechanisms
- internal or external research reports
- academic or professional publications
- presenting case studies through showcasing events
- contributing case studies to the Get involved website
- the media
- presentations, workshops or seminars.

Principles to consider in sharing results
- Identify the needs and capabilities of the different audiences – what information each
  audience cares about most and balance that with what is important, consider different
  information formats that might be appropriate for different audience types
- Identify opportunities to discuss the results with key stakeholders - Consider opportunities to
  share information through a two-way mechanism in which results can be discussed and in the
  case of formative evaluation, desirable and feasible changes identified. -> not just written
  reports that not everyone reads
- Make sure results are reported in an accurate and unbiased manner
  - Presentation of data - all assumptions and value judgements are made explicit and that
    data are presented in a comprehensive, rather than selective way.

- Present quantitative results with a clear indication of the reliability of the data.
- Avoid over-generalising results. Ensure that results specify to whom the results apply and the likely timeframe for which the results hold true.
- Avoid making value comparisons between situations. For example, avoid making a judgement that one activity is outperforming another when there may be intervening factors affecting the outcomes.
- Avoid mistaking correlation of data for causality when there is not enough evidence to draw that conclusion.
  - **Make reports user-friendly**
    - easily accessible to those who need to implement changes. Be concise and use plain English with little jargon.
    - Present quantitative results with appropriate contextual statements to aid interpretation. Break up graphs and tables of numerical data with qualitative feedback in the form of stories and anecdotes that illustrate the points that the data are indicating.
  - **Make sure results are reported in a timely manner and shared as widely as possible**
  - **Consider the ethical and political sensitivities and risks attached to evaluation** – important to realize results are vulnerable to misuse and misinterpretation, and evaluations can raise expectations in community or program staff that change may happen. Make sure reports provide clear guidance on the reliability and applicability (scope) of results and how they should be interpreted.

**Responding to results**

In general, evaluations should result in a list of findings and recommendations → lead to improvement strategies/response plan for implementation of those strategies which should detail: → may require negotiation between stakeholders and decision makers. Improvement strategies and response plan should include the issue or problem to be addressed, the desirable changes, who is responsible for implementing the changes, and the timeframe within which changes should be implemented.

**Evaluating the longer-term outcomes of community engagement link**

- **Identifying the longer-term outcomes of community engagement** – two major points to consider
  1. is it a fundamental aspect of the overall policy/program/service delivery development or implementation process it is part of and should it be measured by the outcomes of that process (a means-to-an-end)? and/or
  2. is it likely to contribute significantly to the building of community capacity and other social outcomes and should it be measured against these outcomes (an end-in-itself)?

These decisions involve two main questions:

- a practical question about what can realistically be expected of the community engagement activity being evaluated based on its scale and scope
- a conceptual or policy question around what longer-term social outcomes is the community engagement program or overall agency community engagement strategy trying to achieve.

First question: significant longer-term outcomes can only be expected from community engagement programs of a reasonably large scale and scope in terms of the number of participants involved, the time and intensity of involvement and/or the degree of influence participants have over decisions and/or implementation.

Second question think about the original objectives of the community engagement program – did it envisage that the community engagement would lead to broader social outcomes in the communities engaged? Also consider any policies or strategies your agency has developed around community engagement and the social outcomes for community engagement they describe.

- Measuring the longer-term outcomes of community engagement

Challenges:
- Finding appropriate measures or indicators for outcomes
- Identifying appropriate data collection and analysis methods

- Finding appropriate measures or indicators for longer-term outcomes
Difficult: finding measures that reliably ‘indicate’ that these outcomes have been achieved, --> lack of standard, agreed upon measures of outcomes such as ‘successful policies’ or ‘increased community capacity’.

- Identifying appropriate data collection and analysis methods
Increasing difficulties of establishing causality the timeframe and resource requirements for data collection for long-term outcomes. Difficult to understand the degree to which the community engagement program, rather than other variables, influenced or caused any changes in the outcome indicators being measured. This is referred to as establishing causality

One way that evaluators have tried to address this is through the use of experimental and quasi-experimental approaches which can take account of (often referred to as ‘control for’) as many of these outside influences as possible. However, these approaches can never fully control these influences in natural social settings.

significant limitations on the use of experimental and quasi-experimental approaches in the public sector.
**Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating community engagement (2004)**

- Firstly: true experimental approaches are often impractical in policy settings for ethical and political reasons.

- Secondly, these approaches often have significant data collection requirements, including the need to collect baseline data, data from a comparable (control) setting and time series data. This level of data collection is often beyond the resources available for a project.

- Causality cannot be established in a reliable way → evaluation of longer-term outcomes often relies on the measurement of perceptions of cause and effect → use triangulation

- Timeframe for data collection will often be lengthy → significant challenge for government as the research timeframe often falls outside of normal budget cycles and must be considered when designing evaluation frameworks.
Leeds, West Yorkshire, United Kingdom

Website: http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=7146&Opt=3

Richard Waft
Corporate Consultation Officer
richard.waft@leeds.gov.uk

Louise Tonkinson
Communications and Marketing Manager
louise.tonkinson@leeds.gov.uk

**Note:** Richard Waft and Louise Tonkinson were listed on the policy and toolkit, but emails failed to be delivered to either. Email was then sent to Leeds Initiative who is looking into the right contact that could assist in helping our inquiry.

Leeds Initiative
leeds.initiative@leeds.gov.uk
Website: http://www.leedsinitiative.org/default.aspx

- Founded in 1990, Leeds Initiative is the City’s Local Strategic Partnership, and is responsible for leading the long-term strategy for the City, including driving forward the delivery of Vision for Leeds priorities.

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**Community Engagement Policy – October 2006**
- falls under the umbrella of Leeds Initiative’s city-wide Strategy for Effective Participation.

**Community Engagement Toolkit**
- Designed to help city staff to put the principles of the Community Engagement Policy into practice
- Committed to developing a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to community engagement across the city

**Why is community engagement important?**
- Improve services – good quality services delivered where most needed and services tailored to local needs
- Build citizenship and community pride
- Break down barriers and negative views of organizations – Council becomes more open and accessible; diverse views are taken into consideration

Community Engagement Spectrum/Continuum

- **Six different types of community engagement**
  1. *Researching* needs, priorities and attitudes
  2. *Providing information* to communities
  3. *Consulting* communities about actions/plans
  4. *Involving* communities in shaping plans
  5. *Acting together* – joint decisions
  6. *Empowering* communities to take responsibilities for making decisions or delivering services with council support

- Successful community engagement can be achieved through employing a mix of approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which statement(s) applies to you?</th>
<th>What you need to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I need to find out what issues have influenced service delivery to date and what engagement activity has been carried out so far.</td>
<td>a) You need to carry out <em>research</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I need to tell people what is going on but don’t necessarily need their views to bring about a decision or change something.</td>
<td>b) You need to provide <em>information</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I need to ask citizens, groups, communities or specific service users about their views on the decisions being made about a service, project or a proposal for change.</td>
<td>c) You need to <em>consult</em> people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I need to look at all the options available to a community or group of people and then help them decide which is best.</td>
<td>d) You need to <em>involve</em> people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. We need to reach a decision or conclusion together, based upon the same input from both council and citizens.</td>
<td>e) You need to <em>act together</em> with people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I need to help a community or group with a project that they are developing themselves (through additional support that the council could provide).</td>
<td>f) You need to <em>empower</em> people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Community engagement must take place at all levels** including local councillors, Area Management, area committees which drive the Local Action Plan and are made up of local councillors who meet up six times a year, the five District Partnerships (five wedges) which promote co-ordinated approach to the delivery of primary services. City Council engages with key community representative groups and organizations, including partnership with the parish and town councils, voluntary and faith-based organizations, community groups and resident associations.
APPENDIX C


- **Area management** viewed as vital link between various communities, provide extra presence in the communities, help to prioritize services and understand residents’ views and opinions. Area management teams also report to the District Partnerships.

- The city’s five **District Partnerships** are made up of major organisations who deliver key services such as the primary care trusts, police, key local employers, public utilities and voluntary & community groups, and provide a co-ordinated approach to community engagement and collaborate with the other local public sector services.

- **Leeds City Council will reach out to the diverse communities at three levels:**
  1. **Corporate level engagement:** involves all citizens in city-wide or cross-cutting issues and is carried out to inform city wide developments, thus need broad and diverse views e.g. overall satisfaction with the council, new city-wide initiative, equality issues
  2. **Service level engagement:** is related to service delivery and involves issues that impact upon the users of essential services (e.g. waste collection; recycling) or specific services (e.g. sports centers, museums)
  3. **Community driven engagement:** specifically focuses to improve local services through engaging with specific groups, local communities or neighbourhoods.

**Guiding Principles**

- **Value, know and involve the communities** – citizen’s right to feel they have an investment in, can influence and take an active role in their community
- **Support and overcome barriers** to participation
- **Plan well** – taking a “one size fits all” approach will not work well, methods used to engage need to be appropriate for the area, the community, the issues and the timeframe; involve stakeholders at the earliest point (front loading)
- **Ensure quality of methods**
- **Improve services** – engagement embedded into strategic and service planning
- **Coordinate and share** – ensure that there is no duplication of effort and different parts of the council learn and benefit from the engagement activities that others are undertaking. Use database to register, store and coordinate
- **Build capacity**
- **Communicate well and provide feedback** – people have the right to information about opportunities to get involved and find out about decisions
- **Evaluate and learn** – community engagement should be monitored and evaluated to ensure outcomes are delivered, fit for purpose, and follow best practices

**Who to engage with?**

1. **Elected Members** - Councillors are community engagement champions of their community, and need to be informed and kept up-to-date with key engagement activities. Citizens or community representatives may make their views known to their councillors. Councillors that need to be kept

informed are: 1) Each relevant councillor for the ward that the engagement activity covers, and 2) the executive board member whose portfolio covers the service area

2. Black and minority ethnic groups – Key factors:
   - Different ethnic groups have their own languages and culture and must not be classify together
   - Challenge the stereotypes personally and with other
   - Explore opportunities for training on racial awareness
   - Prior to engagement, project planning must include research into the black and minority ethnic groups in the area, how to develop the relationships, customs and traditions that the groups have, and the languages spoken and written
   - Recruit black and minority ethnic members onto working groups and panels for initiatives or projects
   - Connect and build relationships with existing networks or develop new ones to address gaps
   - Consider the need for translation of leaflets and use of interpreters at meetings
   - Explore local approach, such as community radio or TV

3. Young people – key factors
   - Have positive attitudes, be accessible, have the appropriate resources to support, use information that will inform and involve, have the skills to enable young people’s participation and support them to develop the skills to participate
   - Just sending young people survey or questionnaire to fill in may not be stimulating or interesting. Fun activities such as workshops, social events or creative activities, use of interactive technology can be effective means for engagement.
   - Ask how young people would like their contribution to be recognized, e.g. reward vouchers, being involved in a launch or event. Must be of value to the age group appropriately.
   - Consider rewarding young people for their time and effort, e.g. vouchers for cinema, sports matches, high street stores, mobile phone top-ups
   - Keep meetings or events short; dress appropriately as formal clothes can be a barrier to engagement
   - Consider whether parents or guardians may need to be involved in the activities as well

4. Older people – key factors
   - Be aware of negative attitudes toward older people
   - Use facilities, spaces, and places that are suitable
   - Do not make assumptions about the amount of experience and expertise that older people may or may not have
   - Ensure print, format and content of documents for consideration at meetings is accessible and readable
   - Use appropriate feedback mechanisms e.g. do not assume whether older people have or don’t have access to the internet or email

5. People with disabilities – key factors
   - Ensure appropriate access to services or buildings; carry out access to service audits to listen to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>what people with disabilities say about access needs</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Understand attitudes toward people with disabilities, acceptable and unacceptable behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff should have awareness training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide sign language experts when needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Faith groups – key factors**

| • Develop an understanding of the concentrations of faith groups in the community, the key contacts |
| • Be aware of and sensitive to differences between faiths and their backgrounds |
| • Be aware of faith calendar to ensure activities do not clash with religious events |
| • Consider dietary requirements and suitable premises |

7. **Lesbian, gay and bisexual – key factors**

| • Be knowledgeable of issues pertinent to lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people |
| • Have an agreement that sets out the agreed behaviours, details inappropriate words and spells out clearly that homophobia won’t be tolerated. |
| • Ensure engagement activities take place in a non-hostile environment, held in a safe place at a safe time |
| • Ensure confidentiality from the beginning and throughout |

8. **Refugees and asylum seekers**

| • Important to reassure people whose long term right to remain in the country has yet to be determined that their participation and any information collected will not impact adversely on their applications to stay in the country |
| • Work with voluntary groups working with refugees and asylum seekers |

9. **Involving the community in planning and development of the city**

10. **Stakeholder groups**

| • Find out who the stakeholders are, their representatives or spokespersons, and be clear as to why they are involved |
| • The views of stakeholders will be group representative not individual, may need to keep these views separate |
| • Provide stakeholders with feedback on the outcome of the engagement activity |

**Leeds Voice**

- Establish as a voluntary and community sector development and networking organization
- Aims to ensure the views and opinions of voluntary and community sector groups and organizations are heard
- Uses consultation, communication and information as three main tools to enable people in the voluntary and community sectors to become more involved in local decision making through the Compact for Leeds which is an agreement between the public sector bodies, including the City Council, and the voluntary, community and faith to improve relationships.
- Three teams:

1. Community Link Team which works directly with local communities across the city, provides access and helps link voluntary and community groups.
2. Community Participation Team which helps to ensure that voluntary and community groups are represented across the city and work with the District Partnerships.
3. Forums Team which splits into four forums, environment, health, children and young people, and learning, and take the views of community representatives in these forums.

Methods of Engagement

1. Researching
   - The basic of all engagement activities and should be carried out at the beginning of all engagement activities – involve research on previous or related activities, finding out best practice and whether similar activities have been carried out.
   - Building an area profile may be useful to provide a picture of the quality of life and public services in a local area, identify where support or improvement is most needed.
   - Potential methods:
     - The internet
     - Other local authorities and partners, research associations, local and central government
     - Department contacts

2. Providing information
   - Inform and communicate with the public effectively using plain language and proper grammar; ensure clarity and consistency of information.
   - Two-way communication process – dialogue between citizens and council needs to be continuous, open, inclusive, relevant, clear, secure, and reliable.
   - Communication requirements built into each stage of planning, management and evaluation.
   - Help from Corporate Communications team to prepare and implement communication plans and strategies as part of any engagement activities.
   - Must be in compliance with existing legislative requirements on freedom of information and data protection.
   - Potential methods (see p. 29 – 35 for pros and cons)
     - Council newspaper, council website
     - Media (local TV, radio, newspapers, etc)
     - Promotional literature (leaflets, brochures, posters, flyers, etc)
     - Letter, direct mail or email
     - Advertising
     - Newsletters
     - Exhibitions and roadshow events
     - Community groups and forums, community centers
     - Parish or town council meetings

3. Consultation
   - Two-way dialogue process that leads to decision – Council provides information on key issues, taking views and opinions and then providing information on the findings or decisions made by return.
   - criteria:
     - Consult widely throughout the process
     - Be clear on what the proposal is about, who may be affected, what questions are being asked, and timeframe
     - Give feedback about the responses received and how the consultation influences decision
     - Monitor for effectiveness of the consultation
     - Ensure consultation follow regulation and best practice
   - Potential methods (p. 36 -57):
     - E-consultation – main tools include online surveys, e-forums and e-panels, community engagement database that stores information and is shared across the council – online surveys and e-consultation must be complemented by more traditional methods to include wider views. Online consultation is cost effective and easy to monitor, but must be used with caution
     - Telephone survey, postal survey, face to face survey, citizen panel, newspaper, public meeting, focus group, exhibition and roadshow, local councillor “surgeries” which enable people to meet with their local councillors, district partnership forums, community forums

4. Involving people
   - The key is to reach out and build relationships. Leeds City Council changed its community involvement structure by dividing the city into five wedges which are driven by area committees. Area committees ensure the quality of services being delivered, obtain feedback from local residents, make suggestions for improvement, and ensure that there is co-ordinated approach to service delivery.
   - Potential methods (p. 59 – 62)
     - Council-wide forums, local councillor “surgeries”, district partnership forums, community forums

5. Acting together
   - Taking joint responsibility can help to build stronger relationship, give local residents a greater sense of involvement in the project, build capacity in local communities.
   - Potential methods:
     - City wide events or initiatives, major community regeneration projects

6. Empowering people

- “The principle of empowering people and communities relates to community development and neighbourhood renewal” (p. 65). The community takes responsibility for developing the project independently and makes bid for funding with the support from City Council.
- Potential methods:
  - City wide events or initiatives, community initiatives, neighbourhood renewal

**Evaluation**

- Take into consideration the quality, cost and timeliness of the engagement activity and whether the engagement has been meaningful and findings help to inform decisions.
- Key aims include the methodology was appropriate and effective, responses were credible, participation was maximized, the activity had been cost-effective and meaningful, the activity met its objectives, and the outcomes as stated were achieved.

**Checklist**

- Has the exercise met the aim and objectives set out in the plan?
- Were all timescales met? Can any lessons be learned?
- Did the exercise achieve a good level of response which was of a high quality?
- How many stakeholders did not participate? Why was this?
- Was the exercise cost-effective (financially)?
- Did you promote the activity in all of the appropriate channels?
- Did you feed the results back to all concerned?
- Did you make the findings available to the public?
- Was there any capacity building as a result of the activity?
- And, most importantly...
- Were you able to positively make a decision or take the appropriate action based on the evidence assembled through the engagement activity?

Capacity building through developing the skills and abilities of City staff and citizens in areas such as leadership, innovation, and knowledge sharing, so that communities feel empowered. Capacity building can be beneficial with not yet reached groups.
Manchester, Greater Manchester, United Kingdom

Website:  
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/500006/community_engagement/164/community_engagement/1

Stephen Higgins  s.higgins2@manchester.gov.uk

- The Community Engagement Strategy for 2011-2015 was developed by the Manchester Partnership Community Engagement Task Group. The uploaded version was dated March 2011.
- The Strategy is for Manchester Partnership staff, including City Council, NHS Manchester, Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Fire Service, and Community Network for Manchester. It can also be used as a resource for community and voluntary groups.


- **Purpose:** “To develop strong, empowered and cohesive communities which can bring people together, influence decision making and lead on community action.” (p. 3)
- It aims to
  - Improve coordination of community engagement activity,
  - Improve practice and feedback to community,
  - Increase and strengthen community contribution and influence,
  - Support community action,
  - Increase the participation of seldom heard groups,
  - Support future policy and service delivery that meets community needs.

- **Why** community engagement:
  - better decision making and problem solving
  - sense of place and belonging
  - active communities
  - addressing inequalities and deprivation
  - increase trust between local people and services
  - greater involvement in democratic process

- **Types of engagement:**
  - **Communicating** – giving information
  - **Researching** – investigating to improve service delivery
  - **Involving** people in decision making
  - **Consulting** – seeking comments or feedback
  - **Devolving decisions** – empowering communities to make final decisions
  - **Supporting community action** – placing power, influence and responsibility on communities. Provide support through resources and services.

- **Definition of community engagement** adapted from Community Development Foundation
  - “Developing and sustaining a working relationship between public sector bodies and
community groups so that both understand and act on the needs or issues that the community experiences.” (p. 8)

- **Definition of community empowerment** adapted from the Network of Empowering Authorities and I&DEA 2
  - “Community empowerment is the outcome of engagement and other activities. Power, influence and responsibility are shifted away from existing centres of power, into the hands of communities and individual citizens.” (p. 8)

**Manchester Partnership’s Guide to Working with Communities – March 2011**

- Definitions of community engagement and community empowerment as above.
- Benefits of engagement:
  - For staff – know what really matters for the communities, better targeted and cost effective projects and services, show communities that they can influence decision and encourage ownership, improve social cohesion
  - For communities – increased influence and increased confidence in decision making, build capacity to identify problems and solutions and develop new skills, increased sense of belonging
- Types of engagement as above.
- **When to engage checklist** (p. 16)
  - When communities raise concern
  - Making changes to services, events, activities
  - Developing policy or strategy
  - Identifying resident/service/neighbourhood priorities
  - Budget setting  ➔ Manchester has U Decide Events to enable communities to influence decision making on a specific public budget (a form of participatory budgeting).
    - Steps for doing U Decide Events on p. 15 of the Guide
    - Toolkit for U Decide Events available on website
  - Problem solving
- **Barriers to engagement**
  - For staff – decisions have already been made, not able to see community engagement as a priority, not able to see the benefits, fearful of feedback or complaints, resources, finding time to engage, knowing how and who to engage
  - For communities – too many activities to attend, not able to see the benefits, previous negative experience, over-consultation and lack of changes, lack of time or timescale of activity, lack of confidence/self-esteem, unaware of opportunities to engage, lack of interest, language, literacy or physical barriers, different needs for different communities
- **Twelve steps to planning** (p. 19 – 21)
  - Step 1 – What is the purpose? E.g. Why doing engagement? What is hoped to be achieved?
### Manchester’s Partnership Community Engagement Strategy 2011 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed outcomes?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Step 2 – Deciding the type of engagement and methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Step 3 – Finding out about previous activity, their findings and learning</td>
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<td>o Step 4 – Identifying key stakeholders</td>
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<td>o Step 5 – Deciding the who and how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Step 6 – Finding out about available resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Step 7 – Figuring out sustainability issues such as venues, transportation, food, providing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Step 8 – Ensuring equality and diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Step 9 – Acting on feedback from communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Step 10 – Feeding back to communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Step 11 – Evaluating impact and process, e.g. conclusions and recommendations, deciding whether intended aims and outcomes have been met, unintended benefits. Allow time for reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Step 12 – Hindsight acting on learning – ask participants to evaluate the process, deciding on what worked well and what could be done differently, asking how to ensure what had been learned is built into the process next time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **What happens when engagement doesn’t work**
  - o Community concerns not addressed and services/policies/strategies do not meet their needs
  - o Lack of ownership and services are not used by communities
  - o Communities feel alienated and not listened to
  - o Services may need to be renewed and cost more money
  - o Communities do not feel empowered and become more reliant on services instead of developing their own solutions
  - o Statutory requirements not met

- **Engaging with diverse groups** – information and key contacts for each group (Section 3, p. 24 – 45)
Newcastle, Tyne and Wear, United Kingdom

Website: [http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/your-council/community-engagement](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/your-council/community-engagement)

- **Let’s Talk Newcastle** – a range of activities that was launched across all wards in the city of for local people to talk about issues and policies.
- Four kinds of activities – Talkabout (conversations about local priorities), Walkabout (visits to local communities and services), Thinkabout (gather information and advice from local people on strategic issues to be presented to Council), Decideabout (opportunity for local people to be involved in decision making, such as ward committees)
- Online medium used:
  - [www.letstalknewcastle.co.uk](http://www.letstalknewcastle.co.uk) – local people could register and join the online conversation
  - FaceBook
  - Twitter
  - Email

### Newcastle Community Engagement Strategy

| • An overarching strategy to ensure that all community engagement activities are planned, meaningful and carried out in a timely manner. |
| It aims “to support the Council’s vision of Newcastle as a vibrant, inclusive, safe, sustainable, and modern European city” (p. 2 - 3) |
| • **strong communities**, who can form and sustain their own organisations, bringing people together to deal with their common concerns |
| • **active communities**, where people are supported to improve quality of life in their own communities |
| • **inclusive communities**, where all sections of the community feel they have opportunities to be involved in decision-making and influence public services |

Intended to be revised in 2010 – unable to find any revised edition

**Objectives:**

- **strengthen, develop and sustain opportunities** for local people and groups to influence what happens in their communities
- provide opportunities for communities to **shape and influence** the development and delivery of quality services and policies that reflect local needs and priorities
- **manage and coordinate** engagement activities to ensure consistency, quality and partner participation and avoid duplication
- ensure that community engagement activities **provide opportunities** for participation for all sections of the community, particularly people and groups that are often missed out
Newcastle Community Engagement Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>of community engagement activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>• listen to communities and ensure feedback to participants about the outcomes of consultation and engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provide variety and flexibility and choice in community engagement activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• listen and learn from own and others’ experience and share community engagement skills and knowledge of putting the citizen at the heart of decision-making.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is community engagement?

| • Information |
| • Consultation |
| • Deciding Together |
| • Acting Together |
| • Supporting independent initiatives |

Standards of community engagement:

| • Coordination and partnership |
| • Access and inclusion |
| • Clarity of purpose |
| • Confidentiality |
| • Integrity |
| • Visibility |

Measuring Success – a variety of methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• residents’ survey to measure achievement of two of our local public service agreement targets:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• the percentage of adults who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the percentage of adults who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• monitoring, managing and reporting on the performance of this strategy and action plan regularly in the council and to elected members, partners and the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sharing experience and progress through national and regional civic pioneer networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• acting on feedback from our inspections and external assessments of performance.</td>
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</tbody>
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- Unable to find the toolkit – “Open minds: A guide to engaging communities”
Teignbridge, Devon, United Kingdom

Laura Trist
laura.trist@teignbridge.gov.uk

'Talking Teignbridge' Residents' Panel

- Made up of local volunteers who have agreed to regularly consult with the Council, and who will be the first call for surveys and focus groups on local services. It aims to be representative of Teignbridge, reflecting the mixture of ages, races, sexes, sexualities, faiths, and disability groups that exist around the district.

Teignbridge Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy – June 2011


- A six-week consultation in January 2011 on the community engagement strategy and toolkit, followed by reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April and the Executive in June.
- The aim is to support and improve engagement in the district, and provide guidance for staff and a clear explanation for local residents on how engagement is undertaken. The outcomes of effective community engagement are mentioned to be a better sense of ownership of community activities and a greater sense of belonging, identification of issues for improvement in service delivery, quality of life, equality and diversity.
- The term “Community” – describes different groups of people, e.g. communities of place describe people who are linked geographically; communities of interest describe people who may have shared interests. Categories are not rigid and people may identify themselves in different ways.
- **Central Government mandate** ➔ Local Government Act 1999 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 place a duty on local authorities: A duty to inform, consult and involve.

Levels of engagement – *ladder of participation* (p. 9)

- **Information giving** - one way process where information is provided
  - Involve actively giving local people information through different means, e.g. press releases, newsletters, City website, etc.
- **Consultation** – two way process which involves providing information and allowing the communities to voice their opinions which will be taken into consideration during the decision-making process
  - Involve promoting engagement activities so that local people can join, establishing links
Teignbridge Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy – June 2011

with hard to reach groups, e.g. Talking Teignbridge Residents’ Panel, opportunities to attend and speak at Committees

- **Involvement** – joint up approach between the City Council and communities to identify and discuss the issues and deliver decisions and actions together
  - Involve seeking to build long-term relationships with communities and actively promote the parish and town planning process. Mention of writing a Staff Engagement Strategy in consultation with Council Staff.

- **Empowerment** – shift the power, influence, and responsibility onto the communities. City Council helps build capacity and gradually eases away over time

**Guiding Principles**

- **Purpose** – the consultation and engagement must have a clear purpose, and know what is needed before it starts

- **Open and honest** – engagement is easy to understand. Must tell participants what can and cannot be influenced and changed.

- **Willingness to learn** – willing to listen and learn about people’s views and be prepared to be influenced

- **Accessible to all** – everyone has a chance to be involved and has their say. This means offering meeting times, venues, formats and languages to suit a variety of needs

- **Exciting** – consider a number of approaches to get people interested and involved

- **Targeted** – engagement might be targeted by relevance to certain groups or service users. Targeted approach can save money and time.

- **Length of time** – minimum consultation period of six weeks for large scale policies and strategies, but 12 weeks should be allowed where possible. Shorter timeframe might be justified for engagement with small or specialist groups.

- **Cost effective** – provide value for money. The outcomes must contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process. Documents should go out via corporate mechanisms.

- **Confidentiality** - collection of data in engagement activity and its storage needs to take into account the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.

- **Partnership** – engagement activity should be undertaken in partnership where possible. Coordinated approach allows for sharing of resources, avoiding duplication and consultation fatigue.

- **Feedback** – should be provided to participants showing both the results and how they have influenced the decision-making process within six months after the engagement activity ended.

- **Maximization of information** – make the best use of information across the Council to avoid duplication of effort, consultation fatigue, waste of resources
Main focus is on consultation, but is meant to be used for all four levels of engagement
A working document, and not meant to be prescriptive and rigid
Planning for engagement activity should follow the principles of equality and diversity and accessibility in order to ensure everyone is treated equally.
Guidance for publication:
- Use of plain language that is clear, concise, and free of jargon
- Font style and size (Ariel, font size 12), avoid using block capitals or underlining and use bold letters. This makes it easier for people with visual impairment to read.
- Easy read format for people with learning disabilities
- Large print alongside standard version if needed
- Access statement that notifies people the document is available in other languages or format, and how to obtain
- Branding with city logo

Engaging with specific groups
- Gender - monitor gender balance in participation, and pay attention to contribution and whether one gender is dominating. Ensure that plenty of notice has been given so that people with caring responsibilities can arrange or consider provision of daycare. Be knowledgeable about transgender issues.
- Age – consider how to engage young people and old people (appropriate methods of engagement, meeting places and length, etc).
- Race – consider the need for translation or use of interpreter. Avoid tokenistic gestures of putting people from minority ethnic groups onto a committee or board. Engagement should be meaningful and sincere. Consider the need for dietary requirements.
- Migrant workers may have only basic written and spoken understanding of English, tend to work long hours, and may not want to participate unless they feel safe and know what the information is collected for.
- People with disabilities – choose venues that are wheelchair accessible and accessible by public transport. Ensure information is provided in alternative formats (easy read format, audio version, sign language)
- Sexual orientation – the terms gays and lesbians are more acceptable than homosexual. Ensure confidentiality and hold meetings in a safe place.
- Faith – do not make assumption about a faith group, and remember that faith is often linked to culture. Ensure that engagement activities do not fall on major faith days. Consider dietary requirements, and avoid meetings where alcohol is consumed.
- Rural isolation – make use of the internet and electronic technology. Consult in places where residents will be.
- Social deprivation – communities that are socially deprived experience many barriers including low income, limited access to services, poor education, bad health, low employment rates, poor housing, and high crime rates. They often require additional encouragement or incentives to
Teignbridge Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy – June 2011

participate. Use local community leaders and activists, and keep up to date with events or projects that are taking place in the areas. Ensure that the engagement method is suitable, and provide feedback as these communities often feel that questions and opinions are asked but little is done.

Steps to consulting – p. 27 - 53.
Step 1 – check for information that has already been collected internally or externally
Step 2 – consider who needs to be consulted
Step 3 – write up a consultation plan. Ensure Guiding Principles are followed. Fill out monitoring form to decide who should be consulted (Appendix 1 of toolkit, p. 59). Contact community engagement officer to review.
  o Blank consultation plan is available at http://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13347 and Appendix 3 of the toolkit (p. 61 - 64)
  o Consider When, Who and How, the costs and risks
    ▪ When – local residents need to be consulted well in advance so that there is time for them to respond and their contribution to be taken into account. For large scale policies and strategies, minimum consultation period of 6 weeks, and wherever possible 12 weeks.
    ▪ Who – inclusive and representative of the district or target audience. Find out the profile of the district. Ensure engagement of hard to reach groups. But respect the wishes of anyone who does not want to be contacted.
  o Understand the issues of confidentiality and anonymity, data protection and freedom of information. Ensure that you do what you say you are going to do.
Step 4 – Send information to community engagement officer to be uploaded onto the City website and database.
Step 5 – Carry out the consultation and engagement activity. Remember that it is a two-way process.
Step 6 – Analyze the results (quantitative data, qualitative data).
  o Reporting results – may be helpful to include tables and graphs, counts and percentages, maps, quotes, photographs.
  o Personal information should be removed when publishing.
Step 7 – Feedback internally and externally. City staff fills out “You Said, we did” feedback form within six months of consultation closing which is sent to the community engagement officer to be published on the consultation pages of the corporate website: http://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13653
  o Feedback is a two-stage process: 1) Output – ‘You said...’ 2) Outcome – ‘We did...’
  o Other things to do with the results may include benchmarking, improving services, informing decision makers, press release
Thurrock, Essex, United Kingdom

- **Thurrock Council’s Community Development Service**
  - Website: [http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/community/](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/community/)
  - Aim to support and empower local communities to define their own needs and develop solutions through community governance structures, including community forums and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) ‘Shaping Thurrock’
    - **Community Forums** – 20 forums covering the whole of Thurrock and are non-political voluntary groups made up of local representatives including residents, schools, local businesses, health representatives, and voluntary, community and faith representatives. They aim to provide a way for the public to voice their own views and concerns, strengthen local community networks, develop effective partnerships between local people and the Council, and allocate funding to local initiatives. Forums are regularly attended by local councillors, the police and other agencies.
    - **Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) ‘Shaping Thurrock’** – aim to bring together leaders of strategic organizations and representative networks. Key responsibilities include approving the Community Strategy for Thurrock and review of progress on strategic priorities and targets, achieving greater alignment between the corporate and business plans of partner organisations and the Community Strategy, working to achieve maximum benefit from the many sources of funding available, promoting the engagement of local people including those who are traditionally under-represented, and undertaking an ambassadorial role and promoting the image of Thurrock.
      - There are five boards within the Partnership – Thurrock’s Children Partnership, Health and Well-Being Board, Thurrock Community Safety Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children Board, and Community Engagement Board
      - Website: [http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/community/content.php?page=shaping](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/community/content.php?page=shaping)
Thurrock Community Engagement Strategy 2011-2016

Website: http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/community/content.php?page=strategy_engagement

- Appear to have been developed to strengthen local democracy and increase the involvement of local communities in decision making, and support local councillors in their roles as community leaders through engagement with local communities

Aims
- Ensure all available resources are used for the benefits of local communities
- Increase involvement in communities, enable people to become more independent of public services, bringing people together within neighbourhoods
- Enable people to better shape their communities for the future
- Strengthen local democracy and supporting elected Councillors as community members
- Develop capacity for priority and resource allocation decisions

Three Key Objectives
- Develop and support communities and local people to get involved - provide practical opportunities for people to influence decisions about services in their area, engage communities and empower them to improve their quality of life, work with voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and develop opportunities for people to build knowledge of decision-making processes and participate in civic activities, support community action
- Support Councillors to be leaders for their communities – ensure Councillors have up-to-date information, are aware of upcoming issues, have the skills to engage, have appropriate staff to support their engagement activities
- Making things happen: Establish a coordinated, efficient and value for money partnership approach to community engagement - identify and improve work with voluntary community and faith sector organisations, join up efforts with key partners, share resources and provide value for money to avoid duplication and achieve a more effective use of resources (coordinated approach)

Importance of clear ownership in order for community engagement to be consistent and meaningful across the Council and partners.
- Implementing the Strategy requires the development of a community engagement action plan based on the key objectives above. Implementation plan available at http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/community/pdf/strategy_engagement_2011_plan_v01.pdf and provides details on what kinds of action have been taken to address each of the three key objectives of community engagement, the proposed outcome for each action and whether it has been achieved, the resource available for each, key milestones and lead officer.

Five Levels of Community Engagement - spectrum of engagement
1. Information - We tell people about our plans and services and gather information about attitudes,
### Thurrock Community Engagement Strategy 2011-2016

- **opinions and preferences.**
- **Consultation** - We ask people for their views on specific policies or proposals
- **Deliberation** - We discuss what the issues and priorities are and involve people at various stages
- **Collaboration** - We work together to improve and design new services
- **Partnership** - We maintain an equal and effective working relationship

(see toolkit for more details)

### Stages and Principles of Community Engagement – developed by the Community Involvement Board and key agencies

1. **Planning**
   - Clear and agreed purposes
   - Co-ordinated approach
   - Timing
   - Methodology – fit for purpose, methods taking into account of different needs
   - Justify target audience – justify and communicate why certain audiences have been targeted for engagement
   - Involve – seek advice and involve community when planning to engage with them

2. **Engagement**
   - Transparency – being open and honest, processes used are transparent
   - Inclusive – enable all relevant groups to participate and their views represented
   - Inform and communicate effectively – information given is assessable to all

3. **Evaluation and Feedback**
   - Providing feedback – regularly when engaging the community
   - Right to challenge – community given the opportunity to comment and/or complain about the engagement process and the decisions made
   - Measuring success – evaluate the engagement process against agreed outcomes and make the results available to the community
   - Lessons learned – used to develop better processes and inform future engagement
   - Best practice – recognize and ensure it is used to inform future engagement

### Benefits of the Community Engagement Strategy

- **Improve the quality of services** – more responsive to community needs, better value for money
- **Increase trust in public service providers** – citizens need to know that public organizations are listening to them and their views are taken into consideration, increase opportunities to influence decisions and enable people to take more control of services
- **Take and justify difficult decisions** – involving people in participatory budgeting gives communities a better understanding of the difficult prioritizations and trade-offs, and a stronger sense of
Thurrock Community Engagement Strategy 2011-2016

ownership over the results

- **Promote good community relations** – more interaction between diverse communities and people of different backgrounds and more emphasis on shared goals. Greater openness about decision-making and greater involvement can also remove perceptions of injustice

- **Build resilient community networks**

**How to measure success**

- Quarterly monitoring of the implementation plan to track progress and appropriate measures to address barriers to delivery
- Customer Survey
- Percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place that people of different backgrounds can work well together
- Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area
- Percentage of participants satisfied with the opportunities for participation in decision making provided by the Council
- Local level of volunteering

**Note:** The above indicators do not seem to be used for evaluation of a specific community engagement activity or project. Rather, they appear to measure local democracy and community satisfaction in general.
Thurrock Community Engagement Toolkit (version 3, 2009)

Spectrum of Community Engagement

Note: spectrum is based on David Wilcox (1994) guide to effective participation (information, consultation, deciding together, acting together, supporting), available at http://www.partnerships.org.uk/guide/. Duty to inform, consult and involve is a statutory requirement in the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORM</th>
<th>CONSULT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Information Giving</strong></td>
<td><strong>Information Gathering</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To provide people with information about our plans and services to assist their understanding.</td>
<td>Purpose: To collect information about attitudes, opinions and preferences that will assist our understanding and decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectation:</strong> That information will be accurate, balanced and up-dated as necessary.</td>
<td><strong>Expectation:</strong> That information gathered will be treated and used responsibly and reported honestly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> Newsletters, Website, Exhibition, Thurrock Gazette and other local press, Fact Sheets, Thurrock News</td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> Surveys, Questionnaires, Focus groups, Quality of life survey</td>
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INVOLVE

Involved increases across the spectrum

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliberation</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> To discuss what the issues and priorities are. To actively involve people and facilitate participation.</td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> Working together to improve and design new services</td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> To maintain an equal and effective working relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectation:</strong> That people will be able to share the process, that it will be transparent throughout and that they will have some influence over decisions.</td>
<td><strong>Expectation:</strong> That decision-making will be shared and some resources will be held in common</td>
<td><strong>Expectation:</strong> That local people will be involved in the decision-making process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> Deliberative workshops, stakeholder dialogue processes, service user panels, public meetings</td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> Citizen’s Juries, Negotiation, Shaping Thurrock Partnership</td>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> Local partnership arrangements, delegated decision, Shaping Thurrock (LSP) boards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thurrock Community Engagement Toolkit (version 3, 2009)

Planning

Stage 1: Why are you consulting?
- Principles of clear and agreed purpose, co-ordinated approach and timing
- A mapping exercise to understand the context and situation, where things are on the spectrum of engagement, previous engagement activity, any data or evidence available, perspectives of stakeholders and local people, whether the service or policy has any adverse or negative impact on equality

Stage 2: Decide who to consult
- Principles of methodology fit for purpose and justify target audiences
- Tool 1: checklist to map stakeholders
  - Statutory stakeholders (local MPs, ward councillors, local residents associations, Community Forums and other public sector organisations such as the Police Authority, Fire Authority and the Primary Care Trust (PCT).
  - Key customers – external customers who use the service or pay for the service and internal customers (staff)
  - Non-users – potential users, people who may need to have more information, dissatisfied customers who no longer use the service
  - Organizations with particular expertise
  - Special interest group – people with special needs, people with a shared concern
  - Voluntary, community, and faith sector agencies
  - Community forums – Thurrock has 20 community forums as mentioned above
  - Equality groups
- Tool 2: Seldom Heard checklist
  - Special effort should be made to engage people who are seldom heard, including people who are ‘hard to reach’, difficult to engage’, minorities, or marginalized.
  - Examples of seldom heard group include: Elderly People; Young people; People from ethnic minorities; People with disabilities, mobility difficulties, hearing impairment, visual impairment; People with learning difficulties; Rural communities (include people who are isolated geographically); Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling show people; People who have difficulty reading, writing or speaking English; People on low income.
  - People who are too busy include: Young parents with children; Commuters and are too busy to attend evening meetings; Young urban professionals not affiliated to schools or communities.
- Tool 3: Equalities checklist
Thurrock Community Engagement Toolkit (version 3, 2009)

- To ensure public policies do not have an adverse or negative impact on people due to their disability, age, gender, race or ethnicity, sexuality, religion or faith.
- Equalities monitoring form (Appendix F, p. 28) to be filled out by participants – used to help staff monitor whether engagement is reaching marginalized groups

**Stage 3: Purpose – what do you want to achieve?**

Principles of transparency and inclusive

  - Consider:
    - how the results will be used
    - ensure that the engagement exercise can lead to influence on decision making
    - manage expectations of participants by clearly let them what is trying to be achieved and what they can influence
    - what part of the process the participants will take part in
    - when the participants will receive feedback and in what format
    - how to promote the engagement

  - Tool 4: Objectives Checklist
    - Better awareness of the issues among stakeholders
    - Review and challenge the existing service
    - Identify areas for improvement or unmet needs
    - Measure customer satisfaction: To ensure that priorities are informed by stakeholders
    - Input from stakeholders to ensure policy development that is fit for purpose
    - Comments or suggestions on alternative proposals or options
    - To prevent problems occurring at a later date
    - Build new relationships and increase trust amongst the community

**Stage 4: When to consult**

  - Principle of timing
  - Build a realistic timetable. Allow time for analysis, feedback and evaluation.

  - Tool 5: Planning an engagement process- use timeline grid to plan and itemize
Thurrock Community Engagement Toolkit (version 3, 2009)

Tool 5: Before you start checklist

Ensure the participants know

- who is being consulted and why
- what decisions will be influenced
- who will make the decisions
- how the results will be fed back
- confidentiality request will be respected
- who they can contact if unhappy about the consultation

Ensure that

- plain language is used, jargon free (Appendix G – Jargon Buster on p. 30)
- misleading or ambiguous questions are avoided
- appropriate methods is used– one size does not fit all
- consider how to engage seldom heard groups
- arrangements made for people with special needs
- sufficient time is allowed for people to respond

Engagement

Stage 5: How to consult

- Principle of inform and communicate effectively
- Use spectrum of engagement to decide if inform, consult or involve
- Prior to engagement, consider what method or combination of methods to use, use of qualitative and quantitative data, ensure method is appropriate and if it works for specific groups, cost and budget, timeline, promotion and publicity, and legal issues
Thurrock Community Engagement Toolkit (version 3, 2009)

- Appendix A: Community Engagement Methods (p. 16 – 20) – details on each method and their advantages and disadvantages, for example, advisory committees, focus groups etc.
- Tool 5: Planning an engagement process above
- Tool 6: Before you start checklist above
- Appendix E: Guidance on legal issues (p. 27)

Stage 6: Analyzing the results
- Consider what will be done with the results, including who has the power to make decisions
- Allow sufficient time. Ensure compliance with Data Protection Act (Appendix H: data protection guidance)
- Consider how to balance conflicting results and views
- Analyze responses with open mind
- Clearly identify what the key messages are and where views are conflicted
- Identify priorities and highlight them in the results or feedback
- Ensure analysis gives regard to the impact on equality groups. The analysis may need to input into the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

Evaluation and Feedback
Stage 7
- Principles of providing feedback, measuring success, and right to challenge
- Decide how to inform participants of the results and information of the action taken, who needs to know the results, what the audience need to know (decide at the beginning of the process and participants already informed on that), how to evaluate and monitor
- Evaluation checklist:
  - Did all the stakeholders understand the objectives?
  - Did the methods of engagement match the objectives?
  - At the end of the consultation, can you say that you obtained a representative set of views?
  - Was the process transparent and the timescales adhered to?
  - Was the consultation accessible (e.g. plain English, jargon free, translations, large print available)?
  - Did you reach ‘seldom heard’ people?
  - What were the costs including staff time?
  - Did it lead to a change of policy or service delivery?
  - How many people will be affected by the changes?
- Appendix I: Consultation pro forma (p. 31 – 32) – form is completed and used to advertise the planned consultation to the public through the Thurrock website.
NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement, United States

NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement (2009)

Contact: ncdd@thataway.org

Background Information:
The Public Engagement Principles project (PEP) was launched in mid-February 2009 in response to support Barak Obama’s 21 memorandum on transparency and open government
- The report has been endorsed by many groups concerned with community engagement across the country
- These core principles are currently being distributed around the country to such groups to both gain support and awareness towards the best practices of public engagement
- The core principles were created in order to put in place some guidelines, but those interested in implementing these core principles are encouraged to modify them for their specific needs as each project will have different goals and objectives

7 Core Principles of Public Engagement:

These seven principles reflect the common beliefs and understandings of those working in the fields of public engagement, conflict resolution, and collaboration. In practice, people apply these and additional principles in many different ways.

Principle #1

CAREFUL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Through adequate and inclusive planning, ensure that the design, organization, and convening of the process serve both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants.

In high quality engagement:

Participation begins when stakeholders, conveners and process experts engage together, with adequate support, in the planning and organizing process. Together they get clear on their unique context, purpose and task, which then inform their process design as well as their venue selection, set-up and choice of participants. They create hospitable, accessible, functional environments and schedules that serve the participants’ logistical, intellectual, biological, aesthetic, identity, and cultural needs. In general, they promote conditions that support all the qualities on this list.
APPENDIX C

NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement (2009)

What to avoid:

Poorly designed programs that do not fit the specific needs and opportunities of the situation, or that are run by untrained, inexperienced, or ideologically biased organizers and programs. Such programs fail to achieve the desired objectives and disrespect or exclude relevant stakeholder groups. Public meetings are held in inaccessible, confusing venues, with inflexible schedules that do not provide adequate time for doing what needs to be done. Logistical, class, racial, and cultural barriers to participation are left unaddressed, effectively sidelining marginalized people and further privileging elites, majorities, “experts,” and partisan advocates.

Principle #2

INCLUSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

Equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and democratic legitimacy.

In high quality engagement:

Conveners and participants reflect the range of stakeholder or demographic diversity within the community or on the issue at hand. Where representatives are used, the nature, source, and any constraints on their representative authority are clearly identified and shared with participants. Alternatively, participants are randomly selected to represent a microcosm of the public. Participants have the opportunity to grapple with data and ideas that fairly represent different perspectives on the issue. Participants have equal status in discussions, and feel they are respected and their views are welcomed, heard, and responded to. Special effort is made to enable normally marginalized, silent, or dissenting voices to meaningfully engage — and fundamental differences are clarified and honored. Where necessary, anonymity is provided to enable important contributions.

What to avoid:

Participants are mostly “the usual suspects” — perhaps with merely token diversity added. Biased information is presented, and expert testimony seems designed to move people in a specific direction. People do not feel that it is safe to speak up, or they have little chance to do so — and if they do, there is little sign that they are actually heard. Participants, stakeholders, or segments of the public feel their interests, concerns and ideas are suppressed, ignored, or marginalized. Anonymity is used to protect abuses of power, not vulnerable critics.
APPENDIX C

NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement (2009)

Principle #3

COLLABORATION AND SHARED PURPOSE

Support and encourage participants, government and community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.

In high quality engagement:

Organizers involve public officials, “ordinary” people, community leaders, and other interested and/or affected parties as equal participants in ongoing discussions where differences are explored rather than ignored, and a shared sense of a desired future can emerge. Organizers pay attention to the quality of communication, designing a process that enables trust to be built among participants through dialogue, permits deliberation of options, and provides adequate time for solutions to emerge and evolve. People with different backgrounds and ideologies work together on every aspect of the program — from planning and recruiting, to gathering and presenting information, all the way through to sharing outcomes and implementing agreed-upon action steps. In government-sponsored programs, there is good coordination among various agencies doing work relevant to the issue at hand.

What to avoid:

Unresponsive power-holders deliver one-way pronouncements or preside over hostile, disrespectful or stilted conversations. Patronizing experts and authorities feel they already have all the answers and “listen” only to appease. Engagement has no chance of impacting policy because relevant decisions have already been made or are already in the pipeline, or because those in power are not involved or committed. Loud or mainstream voices drown out all others, while personal stories, emotions, and unpopular opinions are not welcomed.

References to isolated data or studies are used to suppress other forms of input. Involvement feels pointless to participants, lacking clear purpose or a link to action.

Principle #4

OPENNESS AND LEARNING

Help all involved listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn and apply information in ways that generate new options, and rigorously evaluate public...
APPENDIX C

NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement (2009)

*engagement activities for effectiveness.*

**In high quality engagement:**

Skilled, impartial facilitators and simple guidelines encourage everyone involved to share their views, listen, and be curious in order to learn things about themselves, each other, and the issues before them. Shared intention and powerful questions guide participants’ exploration of adequate, fair, and useful information — and of their own disagreements — in an open and respectful atmosphere. This exploratory atmosphere enables them to delve more deeply into complexities and nuances and thereby generate new understandings, possibilities, and/or decisions that were not clear when their conversation began. There is an appropriate balance between consulting (a) facts and expertise and (b) participants’ experience, values, intuition, and concerns. Participants and leaders take away new skills and approaches to resolving conflicts, solving problems, and making decisions. Careful review, evaluation, and a spirit of exploration and innovation improve subsequent engagement work and develop institutional and community capacity.

**What to avoid:**

“Window dressing” public exercises go through the motions required by law or the dictates of PR before announcing a pre-determined outcome. Participants get on soapboxes or are repressed; fight or conform; get overridden or overwhelmed; and are definitely not listening to each other. Facilitation is weak or too directive, interfering with people’s ability to communicate with each other openly, adjust their stances, and make progress. Assertive, mainstream, and official voices dominate. Available information is biased, scanty, overwhelming, or inaccessible — and experts lecture rather than discuss and clarify. Lack of time or inflexible processes make it impossible to deal with the true complexity of the issue. Organizers and facilitators are too busy, biased, or insecure to properly review and evaluate what they’ve do

**Principle #5**

**TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST**

*Be clear and open about the process, and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed.*

**In high quality engagement:**

Relevant information, activities, decisions, and issues that arise are shared with participants and the
NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement (2009)

public in a timely way, respecting individuals’ privacy where necessary. Process consultants and facilitators are helpful and realistic in describing their place in the field of public engagement and what to expect from their work.

People experience planners, facilitators, and participants with official roles as straightforward, concerned, and answerable. Members of the public can easily access information, get involved, stay engaged, and contribute to the ongoing evolution of outcomes or actions the process generates.

What to avoid:

It is hard, if not impossible, to find out who is involved, what happened, and why. Research, advocacy, and answerability efforts are stymied. Participants, the public, and various stakeholders suspect hidden agendas and dubious ethics. Participants not only don’t trust the facilitators but are not open about their own thoughts and feelings.

Principle #6

IMPACT AND ACTION

Ensure each participatory effort has the potential to make a difference, and that participants are aware of that potential.

In high quality engagement:

People believe — and can see evidence — that their engagement was meaningful, influencing government decisions, empowering them to act effectively individually and/or together, or otherwise impacting the world around them. Communications (of media, government, business and/or nonprofits involved) ensure the appropriate publics know the engagement is happening and talk about it with each other. Convening organizations or agencies maximize the quality and use of the input provided, and report back to participants and the public about how data from the program influenced their decisions or actions. The effort is productively linked to other efforts on the issue(s) addressed. Because diverse stakeholders understand, are moved by, and act on the findings and recommendations of the program, problems get solved, visions are pursued, and communities become more vibrant, healthy, and successful — despite ongoing differences.

What to avoid:

Participants have no confidence that they have had any meaningful influence — before, during, or after
### NCDD Core Principles for Community Engagement (2009)

The public engagement process. There is no follow-through from anyone, and hardly anyone knows it happened, including other people and groups working on the issue being addressed. Participants’ findings and recommendations are inarticulate, ill-timed, or useless to policy-makers — or seem to represent the views of only a small unqualified group — and are largely ignored or, when used, are used to suppress dissent. Any energy or activity catalyzed by the event quickly wanes.

**Principle #7**

**SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY CULTURE**

*Promote a culture of participation with programs and institutions that support ongoing quality public engagement.*

**In high quality engagement:**

Each new engagement effort is linked intentionally to existing efforts and institutions — government, schools, civic and social organizations, etc. — so quality engagement and democratic participation increasingly become standard practice. Participants and others involved in the process not only develop a sense of ownership and buy-in, but gain knowledge and skills in democratic methods of involving people, making decisions and solving problems. Relationships are built over time and ongoing spaces are created in communities and online, where people from all backgrounds can bring their ideas and concerns about public affairs to the table and engage in lively discussions that have the potential to impact their shared world.

**What to avoid:**

Public engagements, when they occur, are one-off events isolated from the ongoing political life of society. For most people, democracy means only freedoms and voting and perhaps writing a letter to their newspaper or representative. For activists and public officials, democracy is the business-as-usual battle and behind-the-scenes maneuvering. Few people — including public officials — have any expectation that authentic, empowered public participation is possible, necessary, forthcoming, or even desirable. Privileged people dominate, intentionally or unintentionally undermining the ability of marginalized populations to meaningfully participate.
Burlington, VT, U.S.A.

Burlington, VT, Downtown and waterfront plan: Public outreach and engagement strategy

www.burlingtonvt.gov

Key Documents:
http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/docs/4245.pdf

Date: ongoing project

Purpose:
- Increase public awareness and participation while widening the range of voices and views in the planning process
- The strategy explains how the Planning Commission works and establishes core values for public participation
- Outlines strategies for increasing public involvement and participation in the planning process
- Seeks to develop a proactive public participation process in the City of Burlington that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions and supports early and continuing involvement of the public
- Originally developed for the Downtown & Waterfront redevelopment plan but will be used for others

Goals & Methods:

A. OUTREACH

Goal: Design and implement outreach activities that will facilitate public participation from all segments of the community and all interested and/or affected stakeholders.

- Increase the number and diversity of people involved in the planning process both regionally and locally by identifying members of the public who have expressed an interest in or may be affected by upcoming activities.
- Facilitate effective public participation through early notification and a variety of channels for upcoming events or opportunities for input, providing for adequate time and resources for outreach activities and evaluation of those activities. Outreach should be ongoing and active throughout the process.

Methods: Identify key contacts for each group of identified stakeholders and have them help with outreach throughout the process
### Burlington, VT, Downtown and waterfront plan: Public outreach and engagement strategy

**Online Web Initiative** – Develop an interactive web environment to reach out to the residents and businesses of Burlington and engage them in the planning process.
- Develop a Downtown & Waterfront Plan Website where current information will be housed.
- Use Front Porch Forum to communicate with the public at large
- Develop a Facebook Page to post meetings dates and updates on the process
- Use Constant Contact email marketing, survey tool and event marketing to inform the public and engage stakeholders in the process

**Civic Initiative** – Ensure ongoing contact with community and business leaders and residents who have an interest in the process.
- Work with the media to write and/or produce stories on the process (Seven Days, Free Press, Burlington Community News, CCTV, Television Stations, etc.)
- Make presentations at regular groups/stakeholders meetings – go to them directly
- Develop printed material (flyers, brochures, etc) about the process that will be available at different specific locations in the City (library, ferries, airport, etc.)
- Develop a display that could be used for tabling at events or place in downtown businesses.

**Youth Initiative** – Collaborate with schools and youth-service organizations to increase the current participation of youth in planning.
- Send information on the planning process through the schools

### B. ENGAGEMENT

**Goal:** Provide venues and tools to engage the public in planning dialogue.
- Utilize a variety of activities, events and other public engagement tools so the public can provide meaningful input throughout the decision-making process.

**Methods - Information Resources and Visualization Tools** – The Planning Department will utilize a variety of printed and electronic tools to inform and engage the public
- Use the Downtown & Waterfront Plan Website to gather comments and input on the process

**Education** – The Planning Department will host workshops, seminars, public meetings and forums to educate the public at places easily accessible to interested and affected persons and organizations.
- Speaker Series – make sure those are taped and available on CCTV and webpage

**Involvement** – Feedback from members of the public is essential to creating plans they will then support. Feedback is obtained through surveys and comment forms distributed on-line and in person; at public meetings, workshops, charrettes and open houses; from focus groups and committees; and from other organizations that partner with the Planning Commission in the planning process.
- Poster contest for school kids
Burlington, VT, Downtown and waterfront plan: Public outreach and engagement strategy

- Charrettes
- Downtown/Waterfront Space for education and input
- Surveys – online and in-person
- Public Meetings

**Stakeholders:** A list of key contacts will be developed and kept up to date throughout the process to ensure that all the identified stakeholders are kept well aware of the planning process.

- Citizens – Homeowners, Downtown & waterfront residents
- City Entities – City Council, Boards and Commissions, Employees, Burlington Airport
- Business Community – BBA, Church St Marketplace, GBIC, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Employers who have left or think of coming downtown, Developers, Lake Champlain Transportation Company, Hotels, Business travelers, Burlington Town Center, etc.
- Housing Organizations – VHFA, Champlain Housing Trust, Burlington Housing Authority
- Transportation Organizations – Local Motion, CCTA, CATMA, Taxi companies, Bike/Walk Council
- Institutions and Schools – Burlington School District, UMV, Champlain College, Burlington College, Places of Worship
- Tourists & Recreation – Shoppers & Diners, Tourists (US and Canadians), boaters, sailors, cyclists, pedestrians
- Arts and Entertainment Community – Flynn Center, Local Artists
- Food and Agriculture – Invervale Center, Food Council
- Others – Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs), Refugee organizations, AARP, Disability Organizations, Coast Guard, Social Services Agencies, State representatives

**Tools:**

- **Public Input Web Tool**
  - This web tool was developed after receiving countless public comments during the public outreach and engagement process. In order to keep the planning process open and transparent, Burlington wanted to allow everyone to see the comments and ideas that have been heard at meetings, during the charrette or through email. They also wanted to give the public another chance to add any NEW ideas that might have been missed.
  - While the tool was "live", during the month of April, 672 NEW ideas/comments and nearly 45,000 votes were cast. Currently building another piece of this tool to allow the public to provide their comments on the draft plan once released in early June.
Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A.

Community Engagement - SERVE Philadelphia

www.phila.gov

Contact:
Catie C. Wolfgang
Chief Service Officer
catherine.wolfgang@phila.gov
215.686.0317

Key Documents:
http://www.phila.gov/mocs/community.html
http://volunteer.phila.gov/serviceplan
http://phila.gov/volunteer

Community Engagement:

- The Community Engagement Unit is one of Mayor’s Office of Community Services (MOCS') oldest programs. It empowers communities by providing linkages to resources and services. The Community Engagement Unit (CEU) of MOCS provides a diversity of services ranging from assistance with employment applications, housing referrals, financial management, and mortgage foreclosure and voter registration to low-income residents.

- The Unit also helps to organize neighborhoods by identifying and recruiting individuals to become volunteers, block captains and neighborhood advocates to ensure that Philadelphia's low income individuals feel empowered to take ownership and responsibility for their communities. In cases where individuals are unable to advocate for themselves, qualified staff will act as their "voice" providing with the skills, support, and resources to take on issues important to low-income individuals, their families and the community.

- In addition, Community Engagement Unit partners with a variety of community and faith based organizations, neighborhood advisory councils, community development corporations, municipal departments, public officials, for and non-profits and volunteers to provide a series of development and leadership programs.
APPENDIX C

The Community Engagement Unit has a variety of projects in place to assist and enhance community engagement efforts including SERVE Philadelphia, an initiative to promote and enhance involvement through volunteerism.

SERVE Philadelphia

SERVE Philadelphia is the product of an eight-month assessment and consultation process. The process engaged a diverse group of local and national service experts, non-profit organizations, grassroots community groups, faith communities, schools, colleges, private sector partners, and public agencies in examining the city’s current service landscape and its challenges. Information gathered through the process informed the development of a broad strategy to increase civic engagement that builds on Philadelphia’s long-standing commitment to service.

The ten initiatives outlined in SERVE Philadelphia capitalize on the city’s already strong service infrastructure. Each one is supported by a dynamic combination of partners committed to cross-sector collaboration. Progress towards the goals outlined in SERVE Philadelphia will be reported annually and made available to the public at: phila.gov/volunteer.

3 important goals:
1. Create or elevate volunteer opportunities that impact educational outcomes and contribute to community vitality
2. Make it easier for citizens of every age to volunteer
3. Support both public and private sector efforts to engage more volunteers in ways that have the greatest impact

*Each of the 3 Goals have specific initiatives that have been implemented in order to meet them. These initiatives are run in partnership with the city’s Community Engagement Unit Initiative:

**Education & Community Vitality:**
- *Graduation Coach Campaign* - The Graduation Coach Campaign calls on adults to pledge to help the young people in their lives earn a high school diploma and succeed in college and careers.
- *College Access Writing Clinics* - The College Access Writing Clinics initiative will engage college student volunteers in tutoring high school students at monthly citywide writing clinics as well as regularly scheduled clinics in the School District of Philadelphia’s Student Success Centers.
- *Public Service Areas* - The Public Service Areas initiative will strengthen the capacity of local community groups to revitalize their neighborhoods by teaming City agencies with non-profit and for-profit entities who will work with local residents to develop partnerships, leverage resources, and manage volunteers.
- *Green Philly, Grow Philly* - Volunteers will be recruited to support Philadelphia Parks & Recreation’s ambitious plan to achieve the Greenworks goal of planning 300,000 trees across the city by 2015.
APPENDIX C

- **Volunteer**
  - *Phila.gov/volunteer* - The Mayor’s Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service will develop and manage a one-stop-shop for Philadelphians interested in connecting with onetime and ongoing volunteer opportunities.

- **Support Efforts to Engage Volunteers**
  - *Volunteer After school* - Volunteers will be recruited and prepared to provide engaging afterschool activities in libraries and recreation centers with a limited volunteer base.
  - *Citywide Volunteer Impact Challenge* - Mayor (NuSer?) will issue a Volunteer Impact Challenge in 2011. This call to serve will engage individuals, faith communities and community based organizations in mobilizing residents to address both local and citywide challenges.
  - *Volunteer Recognition Program* - Mayor (NuSer?) will establish a program to recognize individuals who volunteer their time, energy and exercise in order to have a positive impact on the city.
  - *Strategic Volunteer Impact Advisory Group* - An Advisory Group will be convened to align volunteer impact strategies and foster increased collaboration across organizations that engage volunteers. During year one, the Advisory Group will focus on the two major issue areas outlined in SERVE Philadelphia: Education and Community Vitality.
  - *Greater Philadelphia Corporate Volunteer Council* - A Corporate Volunteer Council will be established to increase the private sector’s ability to engage with the city and region’s non-profit community in ways that effectively impact Greater Philadelphia’s most pressing challenges.
### Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

**Portland Outreach and Involvement Handbook 2005**

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<th>Contact:</th>
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<td>AfiAfifa Ahmed-Shafi</td>
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<td>afi <a href="mailto:afifa.ahmed-shafi@ci.portland.or.us">afifa.ahmed-shafi@ci.portland.or.us</a></td>
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<td>503-823-5202.</td>
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**Key Document:**
http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=98500

**Guiding Principles:**
To carry out our commitment, we adopt these guiding principles of citizen involvement:

1. Value civic involvement as essential to the health of the city.
2. Promote on-going dialogue with citizens by maintaining relationships with neighborhood and community groups.
3. Respect and encourage citizen participation by ensuring that City communications and processes are understandable.
4. Reach out to all our communities to encourage participation which reflects Portland’s rich diversity.
5. Think creatively and plan wisely, using citizen involvement processes and techniques to best fit the goals of the particular project.
7. Consider and respond to citizen input in a timely manner, respecting all perspectives and insights.
8. Promote the coordination of City bureaus’ outreach and involvement activities to make the best use of citizens’ time and efforts.
9. Promote ongoing education of citizens in neighborhood and community groups, and City officials and staff in community organizing, networking, and collaboration.
10. Provide financial and technical support to Portland’s neighborhood association network as the primary channel for citizen input and involvement.

**Citizen Involvement:**
- Citizen involvement includes *every* opportunity we have as citizens and city staff to work together toward mutual goals. The form that involvement takes varies with the situation it ranges from a phone call with a citizen to complex advisory committee work. All forms should be respected as effective ways for citizens and City staff to interact to produce a better Portland.
  1. Helps maintain the vitality of democracy
2. Leads to better solutions
3. It’s the Law

### Outreach and Involvement Handbook:

- This handbook is designed to help shape how city staff think about, plan and carry out citizen involvement efforts. It is intended for the City employee new to citizen involvement and outreach, but seasoned veterans will also find useful information and suggestions. This is not a “cookbook” with hard-and-fast rules. Rather, it is a resource both to begin thinking about citizen involvement and to refer to for suggestions along the way. You do not need to reinvent the wheel. This handbook is a distillation of the collective wisdom of many citizens and City staff with years of experience in citizen involvement.

- This Outreach and Involvement Handbook is intended to be a companion piece to the Citizens Handbook, also published by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. The Citizens Handbook is designed for citizens interested in developing and maintaining effective neighborhood associations, working to impact City policy, and improving the livability of their neighborhoods and city.

- First developed in 1995, the city of Portland is currently developing the 3rd edition of the Outreach and Involvement Handbook which will also include a toolkit on community engagement practices.

- The following checklist was developed with the purpose of clarifying public interests and needs in the engagement process. The questions are answered and then are followed with a series of approaches matched with tools and methods. This checklist is designed to make sure city staff are meeting the goals of their community engagement process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. What is the goal of the outreach project?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ What will be different if the outreach project is successful?</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ What is the specific purpose of the project? Will it educate, publicize, or coordinate?</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ How does this project help fulfill your organization’s mission?</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ What are the key objectives of the outreach process? Are they measurable, specific, and doable?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>2. Who are you trying to reach?</th>
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<tr>
<td>□ What specific group or population will be impacted most by the issue at hand? The definition of the “group” may be geographic, such as a specific neighborhood; it may be service oriented, such as people who buy business licenses; or it may be problem-oriented, such as people who live in substandard housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Which other groups will have related concerns? For example, is there another government or private agency it would be beneficial to partner with?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>3. What do you need to share?</th>
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<tr>
<td>□ In order to get informed, thoughtful feedback, how much of an education component must be built into the information sent out? In many City projects there is a need to inform or educate citizens about technical or other complexities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
inherent in the projects. To get thoughtful citizen input and feedback, City staff may need to prepare and present background materials. Take care not to assume the lay person knows all about your project.

☐ What is the most effective & efficient way to communicate that information?

4. **What kind of involvement/input do you want from citizens?** For example, is the emphasis on *informing* or *involving*?

☐ If the emphasis is on *informing*, then your communication is only going one way: so don’t use a process designed for feedback collection.

☐ If the emphasis is on *involving*, think carefully about when and how citizens should be involved. Consider if you most need citizen input to:
  - Generate initial ideas?
  - Create a document?
  - Review and comment on a document draft? A final version
  - Develop recommendations, approve recommendations, or suggest modifications?

☐ Are there different phases in the project during which there are different types of opportunities for citizen input?

☐ What is the best method for obtaining the input you need?

☐ What process will be used to review and act on the input you receive?

☐ How will you let people know how their input has been used to influence your project?

5. **Who else has attempted similar projects before?** Chances are someone else in the City has undertaken an outreach project similar to yours, or has been involved in a different project in your target area. Check with your bureau communications or outreach staff and then call ONI. The more you know about successes — and land mines — the better you can prepare for implementing a successful project.

6. **What type of resources and how much time is required?**

☐ What staff resources will be required? Have you arranged for the resources to be available for your project?

☐ How much time and effort is expected of involved citizens? Are you prepared to communicate clearly to citizens regarding time commitments, meeting dates, and other issues so that citizens who wish to be involved can be well supported in making the effort?

**Tips for Managing Outreach and Participation:**

1. Plan, Plan, Plan
2. Explain the process, expectations and timeline up-front
3. Minimize scheduling conflicts and when possible, coordinate with other city outreach events
4. Use up to date mailing lists
5. Represent the city, not just your bureau
6. Listen to both the question AND the problem
7. Respect citizens’ expertise
8. If you “quote policy” also explain it
9. Make meeting notes easily available
10. Communicate the results of citizen input

Selecting the “BEST” Approach:

- When citizens were asked what the most common mistakes the city makes during outreach events the most common responses were:
  - Not allowing enough time for the event(s)
  - Using the wrong approach for the target group
- The actual approach selected will depend on the following 2 factors:
  - The nature of the target audience. Where the target audience is located and how easy they will be to find may significantly influence the approach. See page 12 for more on defining and locating a target group.
  - The complexity of the issue. Gaining feedback on an issue about which the public is already well-informed can be as simple as sending out a reply card and asking for opinions. However, for many issues, effective information gathering includes an education element as well — before citizens can respond thoughtfully about an issue, they will need an understanding of some of the trade-offs, resource issues, or other factors with which staff are already familiar. Because of this, the complexity of the issue can play a pivotal role in the design of the survey approach.

** Remember: even in the idea-collection stage, the learning is usually two-way; staff teaching citizens and citizens teaching staff.

Selected methods:
- Surveys, interviews and community forums
- Mailers to Neighbourhood associations and other organizations
- Presentations to district collation meetings, neighbourhood association meetings and other organizations
- Public information campaigns
- Advisory Committee and Task force
  - Make sure the major stakeholders are present
  - Spread a broad net to make sure the right people are contacted and involved
  - Invest the time to do it right
  - Use a skilled facilitator
- Project reports- ensure citizen feedback is used and easily identified
Committees - Some Important Considerations:

1. **First things.** Before you embark on forming a committee, consider these questions first:
   - **Roles and Responsibilities:**
     - What is the role of the committee?
     - What are the tasks of the committee?
     - What is the legal authority of the committee?
     - To whom does the committee report — City Council, a particular
       Commissioner, a bureau manager...?
     - What is the structure of the committee — is there an executive committee, are there subcommittees?
     - What are the roles of individual members on the committee?
   - **Requirements and Process:**
     - Is the committee subject to:
       - Open meetings laws?
       - Open records laws?
       - Public notice requirements?
       - ADA accessibility regulations?
     - What resources (City staff support, meeting rooms, equipment) will be needed?
     - What facilitation and/or conflict resolution will be provided?
     - What is the time frame for action by the committee?

2. **Now that you have decided to form a committee...**
   - Here are some key elements that may help ensure success:
     - **A mission statement for the group which includes:**
       - Who is forming the group and why.
       - What the group will accomplish, its outcomes.
       - Who the policy or decision will affect and how they will be included.
       - What process will be used to fulfill the mission and how it will be evaluated?
     - **A stakeholder assessment which includes:**
       - Who will be affected by the decisions the group makes.
       - How stakeholders will be included in the process.
       - How outcomes will be communicated to stakeholders.
       - A mechanism for identifying stakeholders not immediately recognized and for including them in the process.
     - **A recruitment plan which includes:**
       - Demographic goals for group makeup.
       - A timeline.
       - A clear appointment or application process.
       - Follow-up and documentation.
     - **A job description for potential recruits which includes:**
       - A statement of responsibilities of group members.
       - A clear definition of the role members will play (e.g. is the member a
A stakeholder who brings a unique point of view to the group or is the member a stakeholder group member who has representative responsibilities?

- A statement of how much time is involved and an overview of the timeline and process.
- Information on how the process and outcomes will be evaluated.

### A clear group process which includes:
- Clarity about conflict of interest, representation and reporting, and open process. Goals and objectives written by the group after it convenes.

### A communication process that includes stakeholder groups, interested citizens, etc. on a constant basis and may include:
- Distribution of meeting notes or minutes
- Notice of meetings
- Opportunities for hearing/input
- Press releases

### Evaluation/reporting which includes:
- Self-evaluation by the group.
- Constituent evaluation, if appropriate.
- Evaluation by the originating bureau/official.
- A follow-up report or reports which state the impact of the work of the group.
Figure in handbook: Sketch of the typical components of a citizen involvement process. The degree of citizen involvement at each stage will depend on both outreach/information needs and citizen interest. When and where citizen involvement starts and ends, and what forms it takes at each phase are critical decisions. Collaborative decision making can involve a multi-phase citizen involvement process requiring considerable up-front planning and a willingness to see the process through to its conclusion. Like democracy itself, an outreach and participation process is not the most efficient way to make decisions, but it is the most effective way to ensure that the City’s work is aligned with the needs and concerns of the people we are here to serve.

**Communication and Daily Contact:**

- When people think of City outreach and involvement, they often imagine public meetings, advisory committees, or public information campaigns. In its most basic form, citizen outreach and involvement is *any interaction between a City employee and the general public.*
Every contact is an opportunity for the citizen and the City employee to influence and inform each other. These are golden opportunities — too often overlooked or dismissed for City staff to gather informally citizens’ ideas about City practices and policies. If attention is paid to this informal, daily contact, there won’t be a lot of surprises when formal outreach is conducted.

The outreach will validate what the bureau already knows and serve primarily to reassure citizens that the City listens well to the concerns of the people. If City staff doesn’t conscientiously attend to this daily contact, citizens may experience city staff as unresponsive to their concerns. In which case, formal outreach may become little more than a painful exercise in hearing citizens explain the shortcomings of the particular bureau to its staff.

Citizen involvement must be seen as an integral part of City work, not an isolated phase of a project. If a bureau recognizes the value and impact of daily contact between City staff and citizens, it can set systems and skills in place to make the most of every phone call, letter, or face-to-face conversation.
Santa Rosa, CA, U.S.A.

Community Engagement Program
2011 (Still in Development Phase)

http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us

Key Websites:
http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/departments/cityadmin/communityengagement/Pages/default.aspx

http://www.facebook.com/CommunityEngagementSR#!/CommunityEngagementSR

Contact:
Georgia Pedgrift
Community Engagement Coordinator
GPedgrift@srcity.org
707-543-3023

Community Engagement Program:

- Implemented in 2011
- Community Engagement is about giving citizens the tools needed to take a leadership role and work with their community to decide which issues are worth investing in
- Involves a partnership between government and the people that represent it
- Recognizes a collective responsibility for the conditions of the community
- Focus thus far has been the development of the website:
  http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/departments/cityadmin/communityengagement/Pages/default.aspx

Website consists of 4 main sections:

1. Neighbourhood Resources:
   - Provides resources for local residents to organize their neighbourhood and Neighbourhood Watch efforts. There is intention to expand this section to include articles written by local neighbourhood leaders. These articles span a variety of topics from “How-to Neighbourhood” guides to links to frequent city services, Neighbourhood activities and community newsletters

2. Neighbourhood Groups:
   - Provides information on different community groups, homeowners associations and existing neighbourhood associations. Contains a neighbourhood chat section to communicate with those in your area and voice questions or concerns and organize events. Also provides links to different neighbourhood websites

3. Volunteer Santa Rosa
   - Provides up to date links on current volunteer opportunities and positions to allow
Community Engagement Program
2011 (Still in Development Phase)

citizens to get involved in their communities easily.

4. Community Advisory Board
   - The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a 14-member panel of residents from 7 districts across the city. Each is appointed by a member of the City Council and is tasked with representing their district’s neighborhood issues and input to the Council. Each must live in the district he/she represents. They are conduits for neighborhood associations, local organizations, and individuals who want to be involved in local issues.

Next Steps:

- During the upcoming year, Santa Rosa will be working on updating the city’s public involvement process to help departments be more successful in including community members in their processes
- Program has 3 basic goals:
  - Increase public access to, and input on, the public process
  - Support volunteer programs within the City
  - Connect residents to City services
- Included in this framework is the goal of strengthening neighborhood groups and associations. At this point, the program is still in its infancy so they haven’t had a chance to do any metrics.
Seattle, WA, U.S.A.

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide
2009

www.seattle.gov

Key Document:


Contact:

Sol Villarreal - Community Engagement Coordinator
206-427-3062
sol.villarreal@seattle.gov

Purpose:

- The policy is intended to increase access to information, resources and civic processes by people of colour, and immigrant and refugee communities through the implementation of racially and culturally inclusive outreach and public engagement processes.

Guiding Principles:

- Enhance relationships and engagement – through building trusting relationships, increasing accessibility to facilities and services, and providing diverse opportunities to be involved.
- Enrich knowledge gathering – looking beyond surveys as a means to gathering data and feedback to more personalized methods and means. Emphasis is on exchanging information rather than collecting it which enhances engagement in conversations and collaborations and greater ownership.
- Enhance organizational change – organizational changes which allow for shared power between communities and organizations. Community engagement becomes a prominent organizational value that drives everyday decision making processes.

Strategies for Inclusive Engagement:

- Build relationships with target population
- Create a welcoming atmosphere
Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide

2009

- Increase accessibility
- Develop alternative methods of engagement
- Maintain a presence in the community
- Partner with diverse organizations and agencies

Elements of Effective Inclusive Engagement:

- Define scope of work
- Identify stakeholders
- Define roles for public, one’s department, and other stakeholders
- Incorporate racially and culturally appropriate engagement activities using the above-mentioned six strategies
- Create and inclusive public engagement plan – identify key activities, milestones, and products along with timeline
- Staffing and organization - designate a lead public involvement staff, key team members and project manager, establish staff and resource needs from the outset, and identify and internal team for update and advice
- Communication and outreach – create a clear identity and message for the project at the outset, use multiple communication tools for broad outreach with targeted outreach, have a single point of contact for the public, use the media, facilities and technology strategically
- Keep decision makers informed, and present on the results of the public involvement and how it has influenced the project outcomes
- Accessibility and transparency – make sure information is accessible and open with regular updates, and there is transparency in staff contact and relationships with key stakeholder groups.
- Evaluation of overall process and specific engagement activities, and include results of evaluation in report to decision-makers

Public Engagement Matrix: Covers 4 types of engagement and tools for achieving them:

Inform (required for all types of engagement)

- **Goal:** Educate the public about the rationale for the project or decision; how it fits with City goals and policies; issues being considered, areas of choice or where public input is needed.
- **Message to the public:** To keep everyone informed.
### Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide

**2009**

- **Tools:** fact sheets, brochures, websites, open houses, public exhibits and displays, newsletters, newspaper articles
- **Inclusive techniques:** translation of all key documents, interpretation at events

- **Consult**
  - **Goal:** Gather information and ask for advice from citizens to better inform the City’s work on the project.
  - **Message to the public:** Will keep everyone informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
  - **Tools:** focus groups, surveys, interviews, questionnaires, public meetings, door-to-door, workshops and working sessions, deliberative polling, interactive online techniques
  - **Inclusive techniques:** translation of key documents, interpretation at events, provision of childcare, culturally appropriate food, individual meetings with community leaders

- **Collaborate**
  - **Goal:** Create a partnership with the public (key stakeholder groups) to work along with the City in identifying problems, generating solutions, getting reactions to recommendations and proposed direction.
  - **Message to the Public:** Will work with the public to ensure that their concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and show how public input influenced the decision.
  - **Tools:** citizen advisory committee/liaison groups, visioning, consensus building, participatory decision making, charrettes, implementation committee
  - **Inclusive techniques:** translation of key documents, interpretation at events, provision of childcare, culturally appropriate food, individual meetings with community leaders

- **Shared decision making**
  - **Goal:** Decision-makers delegate decision-making power to stakeholders or give them a formal role in making final recommendations to be acted upon.
  - **Message to the Public:** Will implement what the public decides
  - **Tools:** citizen juries, ballots, delegated decisions to specific representative citizen body or voters
  - **Inclusive techniques:** translation of key documents, interpretation at events,
Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide
2009

provision of childcare, culturally appropriate food, individual meetings with community leaders

- **Evaluation Template** (pg. 24 of guide)
  - Criteria
    - Public’s role is identified – reflects the diversity of the community, stakeholders and their interests are fully identified, public’s role is coordinated with key milestones and phases of the planning process, feasible in time and resources
    - A public engagement plan is developed – plan clearly identifies public’s role, include inclusive strategies for engagement and alternative approaches, specific activities, information and staff resources, project milestones and timeline, and mechanisms for ongoing communication and feedback. The plan is clearly communicated to stakeholders.
    - Public involvement results are clear and incorporated into the project – both the engagement process and results are documented, and results are communicated broadly to people who were involved, the broader public and decision-makers
  - The public involvement process is deemed successful – all stakeholders are satisfied that the process has been fair, accessible and has been effective in appropriately involving the public. The process is inclusive and reflective of the community. Decision makers are able to make decisions based on the public involvement results and staff recommendations/proposals. Glossary of key terms, tools and techniques