



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy

15 June 2016

1. Introduction

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's (The Council) Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy has been developed to be both a policy document and a practical resource. As a policy document it sets out the Council's commitment to, and its understanding of, what community engagement and involvement means to both the citizens and the Council. As a practical resource it provides a clear definition of 'community engagement and involvement' and provides a framework which will ensure a consistent and co-ordinated approach to community engagement and involvement in the future. It outlines the specific set of standards and considerations that we should endeavour to adhere to across all the Council's functions and services when engaging with the public.

As a policy document the Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy will help the Council achieve its mission and vision, live up to its values and achieve its objectives over the life of the Corporate Plan. It will also help the Council meet its statutory obligations under S75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Planning Act (NI) 2011.

This Strategy is integrally linked to the Council's Corporate Plan and to the current development and future implementation of the new Community Plan for the district, ensuring that everything the Council does is linked to serving and meeting the community's needs.

2. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Corporate Plan

Our vision, mission, values and corporate themes all come from and are reflective of the Council's commitment to the people it serves.

Our Vision:

'Fermanagh & Omagh, the place of choice – where people, communities and businesses prosper'

Our Mission:

'Leading and serving our community, working with others to promote quality of life, quality places and quality services for all'

Our Values:

- **Responsive , accountable civic leadership**
- **Transparent and open**
- **People and community focused**
- **Fair and inclusive**
- **Excellence in performance**
- **Committed to sustainable improvement and innovation**

Themes:

- (1) **People and Community – Quality of Life**
- (2) **Place and Environment – Protecting and Creating Quality Places**
- (3) **The Council itself – Delivering Quality Services**

3. Context

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (the Council) was established on 1 April 2015, one of 11 new Councils established as a result of the Local Government Reform Programme, aimed at delivering **“thriving, dynamic local government that creates vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe and sustainable communities that have the needs of the citizens at their core.”**

The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 places a duty on the Council to consult and engage in relation to the new community planning powers and for the Council to work in partnership with other public, private, community and voluntary sector partners to influence how and where services are provided, hence allowing a more flexible approach to meeting local needs. The new Community Plan will set out the future direction of the Fermanagh and Omagh district, the purpose being to improve service delivery for the benefit of citizens.

The Council also has responsibilities to consult under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Council’s Equality Scheme sets out the commitment of this Council to doing so.

Additionally, the Planning Act (NI) 2011, places an obligation on the Council to consult and involve the community and stakeholders in the development management process as well as the preparation of the Local Development Plan. The Council must produce its ‘Statement of Community Involvement’ outlining how it proposes to engage the community and stakeholders in exercising its planning function. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are specific consultation requirements associated with Planning which fall within statutory guidelines, it will also be in keeping with the Council’s corporate approach to community engagement and involvement.

The Council has developed its Corporate Plan 2015-19 setting out priorities for service delivery over the four years up to 2019, however, as the Community Plan develops and is implemented, the Council will review its Corporate Plan to ensure that the priorities of both plans are fully aligned. Our Corporate Plan commits us to **“Develop and deliver a Community Engagement Strategy”** which will **“ensure the Council is recognised as an engaged and responsive community leader which is customer focussed and performance driven”** alongside a Communications and Customer Services Strategy, all of which are closely linked.

Of the 11 new Councils, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is the largest geographically (2,829km²) but with the smallest population (approximately 113,500), many of whom live in dispersed rural communities across the district. This presents its own challenges for the Council in engaging with its citizens and ensuring that services are accessible to all and provided on an equitable basis across the whole district.

The Community is at the core of delivering on the Community and Corporate Plans. Meeting the needs of the community must be to the forefront of everything that the Council projects and delivers. Effective community engagement and involvement is integral to taking this forward.

Much good and productive community engagement was undertaken by the legacy Councils to inform service delivery and meet customer needs, however, there is a need for a more uniform and structured approach for the new Council, particularly at this stage as we move into the transformation stage.

The development of new strategies and policies, the alignment of service provision and the emphasis on greater collaborative and partnership working to deliver services requires greater focus on community engagement and involvement.

The Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy sets out our commitment to consulting with and involving our communities in shaping service delivery into the future. It will provide a common approach to community engagement across all sections of the Council and for our partners in Community Planning. It aims to raise the profile, improve the quality and achieve better co-ordination of community engagement and involvement, all of which will enhance the decision making process in the long-term.

The Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy is an important step towards building better relationships between, and a stronger understanding of, communities in the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. It will ensure inclusion and involvement, input and influence, and will require leadership, accountability and a willingness to work with others towards common goals.

4. Linkage to other Council Strategies and Plans

Our Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy will complement other Council Strategies and action plans, and is closely linked to the:

- Constitution and Standing Orders;
- Communications Strategy and Action Plan;
- Performance Improvement Plan;
- Customer Services Strategy and Action Plan;
- Corporate Plan 2015-19;
- ICT Strategy;
- Equality Scheme;
- Good Relations Strategy;
- Linguistic Diversity Policy;
- Fermanagh and Omagh district's Community Plan; and
- Fermanagh and Omagh district's Local Development Plan/Statement of Community Involvement.

5. Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to delivering high quality services for all its citizens and customers. To achieve this, the Council must, when making decisions about improving or changing services, consult the citizens and service users so that decisions are properly informed by public opinion and meet their specific needs. Effective engagement and involvement with citizens and stakeholders will also provide an insight into what the Council is currently doing well and what needs to change.

The Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy sets out a framework for a strategic approach to community engagement undertaken by the Council and as a reference tool for its Community Planning Partners.

The Strategy will:

- Establish a common understanding of and commitment to community engagement across the Council and its Partners;
- Set out specific standards for community engagement and involvement that are agreeable to everyone involved;
- Improve the co-ordination of the community engagement and involvement process across the Council;
- Identify priority actions for the associated Action Plan going forward to 2019 and beyond; and
- Help in the planning and delivery of an appropriate community engagement and involvement process that allows us to achieve the desired outcomes from the engagement process.

6. Aims and Objectives of the Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy

The aim of the Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy is to provide a corporate framework for developing and implementing creative ways to engage with people and communities that ensures 'everyone' has a voice in the Council's decision making process, particularly the seldom heard groups and individuals, which will ultimately drive up the quality of services and make better use of resources.

By working in accordance with the Strategy, we intend:

- To plan for effective and co-ordinated engagement and involvement activities across the Council;
- to maximise opportunities for individuals and communities to have a say through meaningful engagement about issues that affect their lives, in order to meet their needs and build relationships based on mutual respect;
- provide information, advice and support that builds the confidence, knowledge and skills of the citizens to understand and engage in the democratic process;
- develop more creative, tailored approaches to encourage engagement opportunities for all sections of the community;
- ensure learning from engagement and involvement activities is captured and used, ensuring issues and priorities are identified and actioned, to support continuous improvement in service delivery; and

- improve co-ordination in the planning and implementation of engagement and involvement activities across the Council and between Partners (particularly in relation to Community Planning) which reduces duplication and consultation fatigue.

7. Community Engagement and Involvement Principles and Values

The principles and values the Council will aim for in Community Engagement and Involvement activities are:-

- To demonstrate accountable Civic leadership;
- To be inclusive, respectful and fair;
- To be open, honest and transparent;
- That it is meaningful and two-way contributions;
- That it is interactive and responsive; and
- That it is appropriate, effective and meaningful.

And that it:

- Manages expectations and is solutions oriented;
- Subject to evaluation and provides feedback on results;
- Builds and sustains relationships; and
- Empowers our community.

8. Customer focussed Principles

Community engagement and involvement is intrinsically linked to excellence in customer service. There are a number of key principles which guide customer services developments and improvements within the Council. (See Customer Service Strategy). These are in keeping with guidance developed through the Local Government Reform Programme, 'Developing a Customer Focussed Approach to Service Delivery – A Resource for Councils'.

These are:

- **Citizen focussed local government** – providing public sector services in partnership and in a way relevant to customers;
- **Accessible services** – striving to make services available to customers when they are needed, in a location that provides ease of access and through a variety of means for eg, internet, face to face, telephone, by post and digitally;
- **Social Inclusion** – developing and delivering services in a manner that promotes equality and social inclusion;
- **Better use of information** – enhancing service delivery through the improved use of management information to inform policy making and give greater efficiency; and
- **Increased accountability and better value for money** – through enhanced performance management arrangements to ensure an appropriate level of accountability to ratepayers and ensure resources are deployed efficiently and effectively.

9. Good Practice in Community Engagement and Involvement

To support the Council's commitment to effective and meaningful community engagement and involvement, Elected Members and Officers will work to standards as follows:

- **Clarity of Purpose** – at the outset we will be clear about why it is happening, what is to be achieved, which engagement activities will be most effective to use, what can and cannot be influenced in the process, how the information will be gathered and what are the benefits of being involved in the process;
- **Evidence Base** – the Council has compiled a vast array of data in support of the new Community Plan as well as a range of other data of specific relevance to other services and facilities. We will use this data to inform and help plan the engagement activities. If the information or evidence is already available to make sound decisions, then we will not consult for consultations sake, unless statutorily we are required to consult;
- **Timing** – we will allow sufficient time to design and carry out engagement activities that are inclusive and encourage participation from all affected communities. We will ensure sufficient time to ensure that the results of the engagement activities can shape our decisions on new or changing services, policies and plans and that we can test back with the communities what they have told us. If timing is influenced by the constraints of others such as the NI Assembly or central government departments we will communicate this to the public;
- **Resources** – we will plan engagement activities in the context of available resources and what it is we want the activity to achieve. We will, where practicable, resource any practical support required to help people get involved. If there are constraints placed upon us, we will communicate this to the participants;
- **Communications** – We will always be open, honest and accountable when sharing information and responding to contributions made by participants. We will seek to use a wide range of communications methods, as set out in our Communications Strategy, to maximise the opportunity for communications;
- **Partnership** – We will work in partnership with other organisations when and where it is applicable, particularly in relation to community planning. We will communicate with partners to create joined-up engagement activities and avoid duplication;
- **Quality** – We will work to ensure staff responsible for engagement have the knowledge, skills and capacity to achieve high quality engagement;
- **Accessibility** – We will undertake a variety of engagement activities to reflect the diversity of the community in the district. We will be flexible in how we engage with communities to suit their need. We will provide practical support to help overcome barriers that some individuals or communities might face, particularly in relation to the vulnerable and seldom heard;
- **Feedback** – We will provide timely feedback to the community about the engagement activities and explain how their input contributed (or not) to the decision making process and we will communicate the feedback as widely as possible; and
- **Monitoring and Review** – We will monitor and review the engagement activities to ensure all sections of the community have the opportunity to engage, and we will learn from experience how we can improve our engagement activities and process into the future.

10. Co-ordination and Scheduling of Community Engagement and Involvement Activities

The Community Engagement and Involvement Strategy will help the Council embed a culture of engagement and mainstream it, where applicable, into the decision making process going forward.

Co-ordination and planning of engagement activities needs to be formalised to make best use of our resources and to avoid consultation fatigue or duplication. We will develop a Community Engagement and Involvement matrix which Departments/Sections will detail any engagement activities they have planned or propose to undertake over the forthcoming financial year. Where an engagement activity can be undertaken to inform decisions for a number of issues, we will look to combine the activities for mutual benefit.

The PR and Customer Services Section of the Council will oversee the consultation and engagement process, co-ordinating the planning details of engagement activities to be undertaken and providing advice and guidance on the preparatory work and follow up communications with the public. Officers wishing to undertake any form of engagement or involvement should bring it to the attention of the relevant Officers within this section, and together they will work through the action planning checklist.

11. Conclusion

Community engagement and involvement is a process of dialogue with our citizens and stakeholders which will help inform decisions about current service delivery, new service delivery proposals, capital projects and policy decisions. However, there will always be a need to weigh the views expressed against a number of factors such as legislative requirements, statistical data, area profile, local development plan, budgetary information and social, economic and environmental impacts.

The outcome of engagement activities will undoubtedly throw up a range of opinions, with everyone believing their input is of the highest priority. There will be a need for Officers and Councillors to objectively assess the views and recommendations received and make final evidence-based decisions. Those decisions may not always be to the pleasing of all of the citizens and stakeholders, therefore, final outcomes of engagement and involvement activities must be handled with care so that those who have contributed to the process are shown value and provided with a rationale for the final decisions taken. Whilst the Council cannot guarantee full agreement with all proposals and policy changes and in particular those which are controversial, the Community engagement and Involvement process is designed to **improve** the way we **consult and involve** the public in the decision making process and **respond** to their views .



Community Engagement and Involvement – Guidance Notes

The following guidance on effective community engagement and involvement provides direction, in keeping with best practice and is relevant to community engagement for whatever purpose and irrespective of the department, section or activity that it relates to.

What is Community Engagement?

People have a right to have a say in decisions that affect them. In any change process, irrespective of whether it is major change such as in policy direction or a proposed capital project, or something less significant yet important to the citizen such as a change of opening hours or bin collection route, community participation is fundamental. Real change will only happen when those most affected are central to the processes that bring about that change.

What do we mean by ‘Community’ and ‘Engagement and Involvement’ mean?

‘Community’

In the widest possible sense ‘community’ means the whole Fermanagh and Omagh district; its towns and villages; its wards; its housing developments; its streets and everyone who lives, works or visits the district.

Additionally, different people identify themselves in different ways so it is important to be aware to this. For example, Community can be defined as a group of people that share:

- a **community of place** – a geographic location/place in which they live, work and socialise. It may be a physical place or a shared understanding or feeling about a place;
- a **community of identity** – people who identify themselves or are identified by society by for eg, demographic characteristics, children, young people, sexuality;
- a **community of common interest** - those with a similar interest or hobby, people with a similar profession, place of work or belong to a sporting club; and
- There are also individuals and groups with **common needs**.

‘Engagement and involvement’

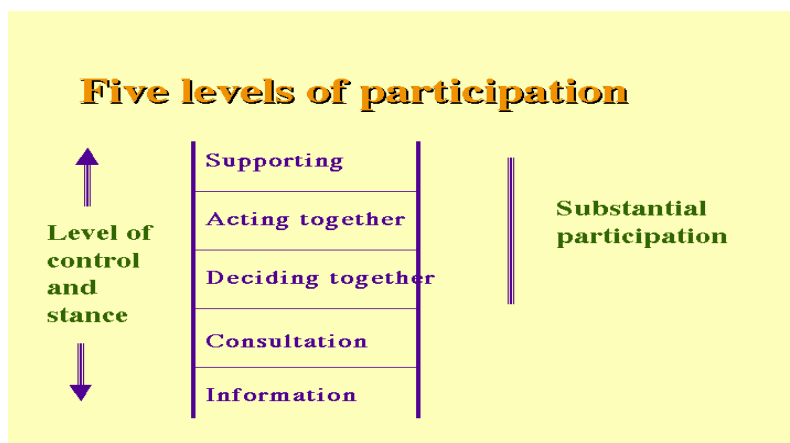
Engagement refers to the range of communications. It can go from simple information giving, to deeper consultation to actually empowering communities.

Engagement can be defined as incorporating the following range of activities:

- Informing
- Consulting
- Involving
- Collaborating
- Empowering

There is no single activity more or less important than the other. Each has its place in the engagement process, but it is important to note that all of them must be linked to **decision-making** so that individuals, groups, communities can see the impact of giving of their time and views. Examples of each activity and how it can be used in community engagement can be found at Appendix 1.

The following diagram explains the activities in a slightly different way through 'The Ladder of Participation' by David Wilcox, setting out the levels of participation and control.



The Benefits of Community Engagement and Involvement

- Building trust between the Council and local people and stakeholders;
- Providing opportunities for communities to influence decisions that will affect them;
- Providing a better understanding between the Council and local communities of the issues which need to be addressed. The community has local knowledge which can lead to better decision making and working towards what the community needs;
- Removal of barriers such as physical, social and language barriers for communities in accessing information or voicing their opinions and needs. It also ensures the community is made aware of what is planned by the Council which helps reduce or remove conflict and may help to move actions more quickly;
- It helps communities to understand the Council's planning processes, its progression against goals and objectives and its rationale for certain decisions to be taken and what is or is not possible and the reasons why;

- Better customer satisfaction in that communities are afforded the opportunity to help shape future Council decisions or the environment which affects them. People will feel more attached to an environment or decision they helped create;
- A sense of ownership, supporting community spirit and encouraging local people to take control of their own communities;
- It builds individual and community capacity, developing new skills and the potential to provide additional resources; and
- It means where applicable we meet our legislative requirements.

How do we reach all Sections of the Community?

Community engagement needs to be planned, with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people and individuals, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest, affiliation or identity to address whatever issue(s) the Council requires to address with them. The engagement exercise, depending on the nature of the issue needs to be broad in scope and inclusive to ensure consideration has been given to the diversity that exists in the Fermanagh and Omagh district.

Good community engagement will help build new relationships and links for the Council and reinforce existing ones established by the legacy Councils. Consideration needs to be given to the most effective methods of engagement that will help reach the wider community, particularly in relation to reaching under-represented or seldom heard groups/individuals. For example, people living in the remote rural areas, those for whom English is not their first language, children, young people, the elderly and those who seldom or never participate.

How can we reach the seldom heard/under-represented?

It is important to remove any potential barriers to participation, so thought should be given to:

- Identifying who falls into this category – who are the unheard in our district?;
- Identifying the most relevant engagement techniques – going the extra mile if needed; thinking outside the box;
- Having a Plan relevant to the engagement requirements – understand the parameters – know what we have control of and what is outside our control to ensure realistic expectations;
- Are interpreter services required – minority languages or sign language;
- Caring/Child care requirements – will we make them available or do we go to an appropriate location where people congregate and feel comfortable in their environment, such as a school/playgroup etc;
- Location – where are the best locations to meet the target audience(s), is it at Youth Clubs, a social event or community group meeting, using the facilities of Umbrella Groups, attending Sporting events or Sports Clubs or engaging on the fringes of an event organised by another (partner) organisation who are agreeable to our attendance, the local library, Shopping Centres, Parochial or Orange Halls etc. (This will be resource intensive but worthwhile. It may be that the first engagement exercises are resource

intensive, putting the foundations in place and then become less so as time goes on, and engagement becomes more mainstreamed.);

- Are incentives needed – a free swim or meal, a voucher for an Arts event or Workshop etc- what might appeal to the target audience and encourage greater participation?; and
- Think about the engagement from both the individuals' and Council's perspective – are there quick wins for both the Council and Community that can be delivered. '*Seeing short-term benefit to my life*' needs to be obvious from the outset for those seldom heard/disenfranchised people to become involved. They are more likely to become interested if they can see that the engagement will help make a difference very quickly to their life and local outcomes. It is easier then for them to go on to see the 'bigger picture'.

Issues to consider when planning and undertaking Community Engagement

- Clarity of aims and objectives of consultation/engagement exercise – what is its purpose?
- Who do we need to consult – is it community wide or a specific interest group/target group?
- Are there special requirements – disabled access, interpreters, childcare/caring requirements, associated costs such as travel or caring costs?
- Depending on the nature of the consultation, it might be valuable to engage with Community Leaders to undertake the consultation on our behalf. This might require some capacity building with Community Leaders but ultimately it will help build community capacity and build relationships between the Community and the Council. This is very beneficial if the consultation requires door to door surveys or face to face interviews as people will be familiar with Community Leaders whilst maybe being wary of Council officials;
- Timings of consultations/engagement activities need to be considered to ensure the widest range of people can be involved – do we plan for a combination of morning, afternoon, evening or weekend events;
- Locations particularly ensuring that rural/remote areas are considered and going to where the people are at and comfortable in their own environment;
- Identify local events throughout the district that match our timetable – try to connect with other events that reach a wider audience for eg Omagh or Enniskillen Agricultural Shows, Festivals throughout the year, Road Shows, Sporting fixtures etc;
- How will the consultation/engagement be resourced both in terms of staff time and other associated costs;
- Consider the required delivery of information/outcomes which might vary across different target groups. Refine, amend and test your engagement techniques to suit varying target groups;
- Ensure you have a method of collecting, collating and if possible or appropriate, a means to display or convey all responses transparently. Record keeping is very important;
- Have a method for acknowledging responses/input and of telling people how their response/input have been/will be acted upon; and

- Be objective and take steps to ensure arguments/differences of opinion on the subject matter are minimised/diffused.

What might get in the way of meaningful engagement?

Consideration should be given to the potential for certain things to get in the way of meaningful engagement, so that as far as possible mitigating factors can be built into the process. Such obstacles could be:

- Personal agendas; gatekeepers; dominant personalities
- Minority views getting majority consensus
- Political sensitivities
- Cultural nuances
- Bureaucracy; red tape
- Previous bad experiences or previous relationship problems
- Poor facilitation
- Capacity issues of people involved
- Tunnel vision or lack of vision of those being engaged
- Territorial issues

Evaluation of Consultation/Community Engagement Events

Evaluation of consultations and community engagement should always be undertaken and the findings shared across the Council, so that we can build a shared knowledge of techniques and good practice.

Evaluations should:

- Review methods used and reflect on what elements worked well, what didn't, and why?
- Were there any gaps?
- Were there any sections of the community who did not engage and were there reasons why?
- Were people happy to continue to be involved in the process and how did we keep that communication open? If not, why?
- What could we improve on in the future?

How would we know that people are really involved?

There are some simple indicators that will help us know if we are getting it right.

These include:

- Positive Feedback;
- Good attendance at events;
- A rapport developing between the Council and the Community/Group/ Organisation or individuals;
- Support for the outcome is evident;

- A feel good factor is evident;
- No or minimal negative publicity or comments;
- People wanting to be engaged/involved in projects/process/decisions; and
- Emergence of community leadership/ownership.

Checklist/Action Planning for Community Engagement and Involvement

| Preparatory Steps | Preparatory Notes |
|--|-------------------|
| <p>1. Overall Aim (What we want to achieve – Impact)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your overall and/or specific aim of this engagement/project • What do you want to achieve? • What impact are you hoping to make? | |
| <p>2. Specific Aim (Why are we doing it – Outcomes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your reasons for involving the community? • Is this a consultation (will people have a say on the future of the business or project) or promoting a project or awareness raising (are you just getting a message out to people to garner support or raise awareness)? • What can be changed and what is fixed? • How much room is there for negotiation on the subject/issue? Will people be able to make recommendations or decisions on the project/issue? • How extensively do you need to consult to overcome potential objections/get the right degree of input etc? • How widely do you need to publicise what you're doing to achieve success? | |
| <p>3. Objectives (How we are doing it – Outputs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify your target audience – who are your stakeholders, who could be affected (positively or negatively) by your plans, remember Section 75 groups • Who is likely to be able to influence the success or failure of your | |

| Preparatory Steps | Preparatory Notes |
|--|-------------------|
| <p>project/activity – will they be the same people who you hope to engage with throughout the project/activity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you want to reach as many people as possible or is a specific group(s) or geographical area(s)? • Who do you want to actively engage in ongoing dialogue? | |
| <p>4. Resources (financial, human)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a budget – what is it? • Who will carry out the work – how many people do you need/how much time can they offer? • Do you have the right skills and resources to carry out consultation/activity? If not, what do you need to do to develop or buy-in expertise? | |
| <p>5. Timeframes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a deadline? • How long do you need for the consultations/activities? • Can you break it down into phases or milestones? • Do you need to factor in planning time and time for collecting and analysing feedback? | |
| <p>6. Methods (see Appendix 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the best methods to use to engage the community? (focus groups, local media, leaflets, surveys, website etc) Do you need a combination of approaches • Look at creative methods of engagement that might attract the hard to reach/seldom heard | |
| <p>7. Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you keep everyone informed/up to date? • How will you feedback to the community, groups, individuals, other stakeholders. Do you need a | |

| Preparatory Steps | Preparatory Notes |
|---|-------------------|
| <p>range of update methods?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often will these communications take place – who will undertake the communications, how much time/resources will this require? | |
| <p>8. Review (Is it working – Improvements)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you on track and achieving what you wanted to achieve/ is the engagement activity still fit for purpose? • How many people did you reach? • Was it successful? • Have you learnt anything from the engagement activities/structure of engagement? • Have your priorities changed as a result of the consultation/engagement activities? • Identify any new considerations/amendment required for future • Each consultation/engagement will only be as good as the last so think about how was the last experience perceived – do we need to rethink the next engagement or do we replicate as it went well? | |

Appendix 1 – Levels of Community Engagement/Relevant Techniques

| Level of community engagement | What is it | What it will do | Relevant techniques |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <i>Informing</i> | Provides information to the individuals, groups, communities to enable them to understand issues, problems, alternatives, opportunities, solutions | Keeps the individuals/target group/locality informed | Social media Website Brochures/newsletters Church bulletins Community newsletters Press Releases Information leaflet Explanatory notes Word of mouth |
| <i>Consulting</i> | Useful for obtaining feedback to inform decision making or to obtain feedback on certain plans or proposals | Keeps people informed, listens to their views and provides feedback on how their input influenced decision making | Annual surveys Questionnaires Focus Groups Telephone, postal interviews Face to Face interviews Surveys Social media Email, website, SMS mobile Facebook Surveys Engage with Community leaders to undertake consultation for you Community events |
| <i>Involving</i> | Direct working with the people/community to ensure that issues, concerns, needs and aspirations are considered | Engages with the community to ensure that concerns and needs are reflected in decisions and service delivery. Provides feedback how their input influenced decision making | User Panels Citizen Forums/Panels Public Meetings Network meetings Community events |
| <i>Collaborating</i> | Working in partnership on aspects of decision making including developing options and identifying preferred solutions | Seeking advice and innovation to find solutions | Community Needs Analysis Focus Groups Service User Forums Advisory Groups |

| Level of community engagement | What is it | What it will do | Relevant techniques |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <i>Empowering</i> | Final decision making is placed with the community | Facilitation and capacity building to ensure community can take responsibility for the design and delivery of services independently | Provision of funding – allocation of budget Community Asset Transfer Direct service delivery Commissioning services from community |

The relevant techniques are not exclusive to the level of community engagement – it can be a mix and match to suit the purpose and extent of your engagement process.