

Scrutiny Panel Meeting, 9 October 2018

Report of the Communications, Culture and Engagement Directorate

1) Introduction:

This report presents information about how the Council currently consults and engages with residents, businesses and a interested stakeholders. It also provides information on the work being done to develop a Council-wide approach to engagement. Appendix 1 provides examples of past consultations, the approach taken, outcome and associated costs.

2) Council consultations

Consultation is an activity that provides local people with an opportunity to influence important decisions. Consultation is a vital part of the Council's decision making process, a tool for the Council to learn from the perspectives of local residents, businesses, the voluntary and community sector and other stakeholders.

The Consultation & Engagement team provides advice and guidance to colleagues across the Council on how best to carry out public consultations, ensuring it meets best practice standards. This includes advice on the best channels for promoting public consultations and advice on planning, developing and analysing the responses to consultations. We help to ensure that all consultations adhere to the standards of the Council's consultation charter, and exceed these standards wherever possible to enable the widest participation.

The team consists of a Consultation and Engagement Manager, two Consultation Officers whose primary function is tenant and leaseholder engagement on housing regeneration projects, and a Senior Consultation Officer currently leading on the Dalston Conversation, and other place-based engagement programmes. There is a second HRA funded Senior Consultation Officer who oversees tenant and leaseholder consultation in Housing, and a Resident Engagement Officer who works chiefly on tenant engagement events. These officers work in the corporate team rather than in the Housing directorate. Their role is partly to ensure that the tenant voice is heard throughout all council consultations, rather than just those relating to the landlord function.

We work with service areas to ensure that consultation processes are adhering to the following six standards, as set out in the

Council's public consultation charter:

- Explain what we are consulting on and why
- Say who we are consulting
- Say how we are consulting

- Tell consultees about the consultation
- Use the results and feedback to residents
- Be inclusive and try to engage a wide audience

This information is provided on the Council's intranet, including the Consultation Guide¹, an internal document to support officers carrying out consultations.

3) **The Council's consultation process and methodologies²**

The Council's consultation process varies according to what is being consulted upon. The Council consults the local community in a variety of ways, the scale of which is often proportional to the potential impacts of the proposal or decisions being taken and dependent on the type of questions we would like answered. We use a variety of methods to consult with the community, including direct consultations with identified stakeholders, online and offline surveys, focus groups, deliberative discussion events, public drop-ins and roadshows.

A key part of the consultation process is ensuring that the consultation is promoted widely so that residents are able to respond. This is done through publicity in the Council's newspaper *Hackney Today* which is published fortnightly. Consultations are also promoted in newsletters such as the Hackney Matters e-newsletter, Our Homes the housing supplement in Hackney Today, Regeneration newsletters, social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter. We also ensure that printed consultation documents are provided at public access points such as key council buildings, neighbourhood hood offices and libraries. For boroughwide consultations, the consultation documents can also be posted to residents on a per request basis.

Example of Controlled Parking Zone Consultation process

For instance, for the implementation of a controlled parking zones (CPZ), there is a two stage consultation process followed as outlined in the Parking Enforcement plan³:

- **Stage 1:** In principle consultation - to gauge the level of support for the introduction of new parking controls from the local community.
 - A consultation summary, questionnaire and Freepost return envelope is posted to those within the proposed CPZ area.
- **Stage 2:** Detailed design consultation - which determines the parking design and operational hours of a new controlled parking zone.

¹ Council's Consultation Guide: <http://intranet.hackney.gov.uk/consultations>

² Please refer to Appendix 1 for case study examples of recent council consultations, methodology used, number of responses received and costs

³ The Council's Parking Enforcement Plan, 2015 - 2020 - <https://www.hackney.gov.uk/pep>

- A consultation summary, questionnaire and Freepost return envelope is posted to those within the area where the CPZ is being implemented.
- **Feedback:** At the end of the stage 1 and stage 2 consultations, a summary leaflet is sent out to those consulted, explaining the results of the consultations and potential implementation dates.

Public Realm/ Streetscene Consultations

The Council regularly consults on proposed changes to the local environment such as public realm changes, traffic reduction schemes - to reduce through traffic and encourage more cycling and walking.

These schemes are often controversial and highly emotive, leading to polarised views from different groups of residents - as was seen with the consultation on London Fields Traffic Management scheme.

We are currently working with the service area to look at how we could further improve the consultation and engagement process on these schemes.

4) Informal and Statutory Consultations

Non-statutory consultations: It is good practice to consult with local people if we are proposing changes that are likely to have a significant impact on their lives. This could include: changes to the way services are delivered, development of policies, strategies, changes to the local area such as roads and the public realm.

Statutory consultations: The Council has a legal responsibility to consult, in areas such as:

- **Health** – In health and social care, such requirements exist in the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Section 14Z2, which means that we have to involve service users - for instance when the service they receive is likely to change following a re-commissioning process.
- **Environment** – In consultations relating to the development of environmental policy, Environmental Impact Assessments must be carried out, to determine potential effects on the natural environment.
- **Equality** – The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of Equalities objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, Equality Analysis (formally Equality Impact Assessments) must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders.
- **Best Value Duty Statutory Guidance** The Best Value Duty applies to how “authorities should work with voluntary and community groups and small businesses when facing difficult funding decisions. It states that authorities are to “consider overall

value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. To reach this balance, prior to choosing how to achieve the Best Value Duty, authorities remain 'under a duty to consult representatives of a wide range of local persons.

- **Localism Act** - implications for Planning with developers required to engage in pre-application consultation on major schemes - e.g. Britannia Leisure Centre Development.
- **Other relevant legislation:** Road Traffic Act, Town and Country Planning Act

5) **The Council's online citizens' panel, Hackney Matters**

In addition to carrying out consultations, service areas have access to the Council's online citizens' panel Hackney Matters, which provides a practical and cost effective means of capturing local residents' views and feedback about the Council, its services and the local community on a regular, ongoing basis.

Hackney Matters is an online residents' panel, made up of residents from a range of background and ages, who regularly provide feedback on local issues that affect everyone living and working in Hackney.

We recently procured a panel platform, www.hackneymatters.org.uk, which is wholly managed in-house, with a variety of research tools enabling us to carry out a wide range of research activity. We can for instance carry out quick polls, online focus groups, short surveys, long surveys, 'pin-board' allowing panellists to discuss forums etc. Panel members that take part in research activity can earn points which they can redeem for vouchers.

The process of re-registering panel members onto the new platform and taking into account the new GDPR legislation has had an impact on the numbers re-registering. There are currently about 500 panel members, which we are trying to increase to 1000 by Spring 2019, through a dedicated offline and online recruitment campaign.

Recent panel activity has included, quick polls on topics to understand:

- How often residents recycle their food waste
- What would encourage residents to attend a focus group
- How often residents visit parks in the Hackney in the Spring/ Summer
- Satisfaction with customer services at the Hackney Service Centre
- Satisfaction with their local neighbourhood as a place to live

In addition to the quick polls, we have also carried our various Group Talk/ Discussion activities such as: Wick Woodland - understanding whether members use the area, how they use it and whether they have been affected by ASB.

6) Equalities considerations

We closely monitor equalities data in consultation responses. All our consultations are devised to try and reach into as many parts of the community as possible, and we use a variety of channels to reach residents. Hackney Today is widely used to promote consultations, and our reader data suggest that it is widely read by social housing tenants, older people, BAME residents, and people who may be digitally excluded. In some consultations, where we find a group is underrepresented we use targeted focus groups. For example in the recent Schools for Everyone consultation, we found that the majority of respondents were owner occupiers, so we organised a programme of focus groups with social housing tenants to ensure that voice was represented. The approach to engagement that we are developing has a presumption towards taking face to face engagement out into communities, rather than expecting people to come to us.

7) Developing a Council-wide corporate approach to Engagement

Since 'Hackney: A Place for Everyone' in 2015-16, the Council has developed new approaches to engagement, based on the lessons from that project. The election of the new Mayor in September 2016 has led to a shift in political focus towards a more direct style of resident engagement and involvement. This, in turn, has resulted in a new set of expectations about how the organisation should involve residents in decision making and shaping services. The Council has some difficult decisions to make in the coming years about the future of our services, and it is vital that we effectively engage and involve residents in that process. A corporate approach to engagement, shared across the organisation, will help service areas to understand that expectation, and the support that is available to them in meeting it, so that they can plan effectively.

What do we mean by engagement – and how is it different from consultation?

Consultation tends to be a formal process, sometimes statutory, and almost always necessary where the Council is proposing a major change to services, or a project that will have an appreciable local impact. When we consult it is usually on a worked-up proposal or policy, and we are usually asking people for their views on a very specific set of questions. Consultations are not referenda, and the

results are not binding, but consultation data should and does play an important role in the decision making process. Decisions that have not been properly or thoroughly consulted on can be vulnerable to challenge, or even Judicial Review.

Engagement is less easy to define. In essence, it's about achieving a healthy, open, and transparent relationship between the Council and its stakeholders, where residents and businesses can have a voice, contribute ideas and experiences, and help shape the proposals and policies that will affect their lives. It can be carried out on a small scale, through tightly defined focus groups, through larger deliberative events, or on a wide scale using a variety of methods, as we did with 'Hackney: A Place for Everyone' and 'Schools for Everyone'. It can be used to share information with particular groups, as well as to solicit opinion and ideas. It can work through representative structures, such as the tenant and leaseholders' movement or the Youth Parliament, community meetings, such as Ward Forums, or events as informal as a drop-in in a supermarket. It can take the form of co-production or co-design of services or projects, and can involve a variety of stakeholders, from residents and staff, to external partners. It can be used to help us understand the needs, challenges, and aspirations of a particular group, such as in the Young Black Men project.

Many of these engagement methods can work as part of formal consultations, in order to enhance their reach and gain valuable qualitative insight to compliment quantitative data. They can also be used prior to formal consultation, to help shape proposals.

Draft principles of Consultation and Engagement

These principles have been agreed by HMT and are being communicated across the organisation to help establish best practice, to guide managers, and to create a Council wide culture of good engagement.

1. **MEANINGFUL** That we will meaningfully engage residents, businesses, staff and stakeholders, to help them shape proposals that will affect the services they use and deliver, or the areas where they live and work. That we will, where possible, involve residents and other stakeholders, with the co-production and user testing of solutions and delivery models.
2. **TIMELY** That we will build time into planning for service changes, savings proposals, and new projects, for meaningful public consultation and service user engagement and that we will allow the maximum time that is practical for consultation and engagement within any project.
3. **INCLUSIVE** That we will use inclusive outreach methods, and where possible, engage people within their communities, rather than expecting them to come to us. That we will always work to boost engagement with under-represented groups, to ensure that we are hearing the voices of those most affected, and to ensure that we hear a balance of views.

4. **DIRECT** That we will always seek to engage directly with our residents and businesses where possible, rather than relying on the mediation of community leaders, representative groups, and the voluntary sector, whilst we acknowledge what a vital role they can play in helping to facilitate such engagement.

Engagement calendar:

The Consultation and Engagement service has produced an **engagement calendar** which maps out all the opportunities for face-to-face resident engagement across the municipal year, ranging from large scale events such as Carnival or the half marathon, to highly localised community festivals, events in libraries, or estate fun days. All staff have access to the calendar to help them plan service level engagement, or to add activities. This is also available to Members, who wish to identify community engagement opportunities in their wards.

8) Member-led community engagement and ward forums

The current ward forums system was introduced to support backbench members in their community leadership role, allowing members to organise public meetings in their wards, either at regular intervals or led by particular issues. There have been a number of recent meetings where attendance has been very high, particularly where there has been local controversy over traffic management proposals and it is clear that the ward forum system, as it is currently set up, is not suitable for these kind of meetings. It appears that ward forums are becoming conflated and confused with the Council's formal consultation process, and residents' expectation of the meetings are not being met.

The ward forums system is currently under review. This has included an all-member questionnaire and a focus group with backbench councillors.

Consultation	Aim of the Consultation	Consultation Approach	Responses	Cost	Outcome
<p>Neighbourhood Housing Consultation</p> <p>11 week consultation</p> <p>21 Nov to 03 Feb 17 .</p>	<p>To understand how tenants and leaseholders feel about the proposals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the number of Neighbourhood Housing Offices (NHOs) from six to three and expand the remaining offices by retaining staff from the closed ones for improved face-to-face - Improve and move more services online - Provide self-service kiosks - Provide estate staff with tablets, enabling them to take online and office based services to tenants on estates. 	<p>A consultation document, survey and a freepost return envelope to every tenant and leaseholder at the start of the consultation</p> <p>Contact details were also provided on the documents for residents who had questions. Translation and large print request forms were also included as part of the survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey on Citizen Space (Consultation Hub) • Meetings with Neighbourhood Housing Panels. 	<p>1570 (6% of tenant and leasehold households)</p>	<p>Design: £371.25</p> <p>Print: £7796.70</p> <p>Postage (all tenants and leaseholders): £11690.00</p> <p>Total: £19,857.95</p>	<p>Majority of participants supported the proposals - with good representation from elderly groups and residents with a disability</p> <p>The consultation also had a direct impact in setting out the new Housing Modernisation Programme, which has seen the introduction of more Estate Officers, equipped with tablets, taking services to the most vulnerable residents on estates.</p>
Consultation	Aim of the Consultation	Consultation Approach	Responses	Cost	Outcome

Older persons Housing Strategy:	<p>The aim of these focus groups was to speak to a range of residents aged over 55 about the housing needs they have currently, their housing needs in the future and the types of communities they would like to live in in the future. The findings from these focus groups were combined with statistical data collected by the Council on housing needs and issues in the borough, and informed the development of an initial set of policies, which will form a Housing Strategy for older people; to supplement the Hackney Housing Strategy 2017-2022.</p>	<p>Recruitment was advertised through the following channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hackney Today • Hackney Matters e-panel • Posters in Neighbourhood offices, Libraries, • Emails to TRA and TMO chairs • Emails to Member Ward Forums <p>Promotion through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older person’s reference group • Hackney Caribbean Elderly organisation • The Factory Asian Elders Project • The sharp end retirement project • Connect Hackney • Age UK • Shelter • Digs – Hackney PRS forum 	<p>3 focus groups were held - 22 residents aged 55 and over with mixed ethnicity and genders attended.</p>	<p>£440</p> <p>Incentives of £20 were offered to those who attended</p>	<p>The focus groups highlighted many issues outside the look, feel and accessibility of housing. .Transport, green space and a diverse and inclusive communities, social isolation were top themes.</p> <p>The findings from this qualitative piece of consultation has actually led to the older people’s housing strategy being paused, as it was widely recognised (as a result of this bit of work) that we need a Older Person’s Strategy more generally and not just with regards to Housing.</p>
Consultation	Aim of the Consultation	Consultation Approach	Responses	Cost	Outcome
Abney Park	Gather feedback to inform a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper surveys (at the park) 	409	Design: £701.25	Abney park was successful

<p>Consultation</p> <p>10 Dec to 27 Jan 17.</p> <p>The consultation launch was timed to coincide with the Abney Park Trust Winter Open Day (10th December) where paper copies of the survey were made available to visitors.</p>	<p>Heritage Lottery Fund grant application for improvements to the park.</p> <p>Consultation to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What parts of Abney Park work well and are enjoyed by the public • What parts are disliked and in need of improvement. • explored how the park can become more inclusive and accessible for Hackney residents through the provision of more facilities, events, workshops and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online surveys • Events (in Stoke Newington, handing out surveys to local residents) • Letters (to the stakeholders) 		<p>Print: £158.75</p> <p>Total: £860</p>	<p>in it's application for funding. Consultation encouraged focus to be on retaining history and wildlife in the park ahead of using the space for major events.</p> <p>More informaiton at: https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/parks-green-spaces/abney-park-improvements/</p>
Consultation	Aim of the Consultation	Consultation Approach	Responses	Cost	Outcome
SEND Funding	Proposals to adjust the funding	Targeted parents and/or carers of	1,481 - the majority of	£3533.50	A public campaign was launched by parents against

<p>Arrangements Consultation</p> <p>31 Oct to 21 Dec 17.</p>	<p>arrangements for SEND children with complex and exceptional needs. The funding is allocated to a school after a statutory assessment has been carried out and the pupil given an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).</p> <p>Context: In Hackney, the 2017/18 shortfall in SEND funding is around £6.1m. This is because of increased demand on the service, a rise in SEND pupil numbers, changes to legislation, and a reduction in funding.</p>	<p>children with SEND - 1,871 families across the borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation summary ● Questionnaire ● Freepost Envelope ● Online survey on citizenspace ● FAQs on citizenspace ● Translated consultation materials - Bangali, French, Polish, Portuguese and Turkish ● A workshop with teachers/heads/Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) ● Two workshops with parents. ● Meetings: Homerton Hospital and Hackney Special Education Crisis campaign representative ● Promotion - in Hackney Today and the Local Offer Website - dedicated website for Education in the borough 	<p>responses received online.</p>	<p>Design, print, 2nd class and postage</p>	<p>the proposals.</p> <p>Cast majority against the proposals so proposed changes not implemented.</p> <p>Co-design working group set up with relevant stakeholders including parents and carers. This work is still progressing.</p> <p>https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-and-consultation/send-funding-arrangement/</p>
Consultation	Aim of the Consultation	Consultation Approach	Responses	Cost	Outcome
<p>Britannia Development</p>	<p>Consultation on the proposed development of the Britannia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation summary, questionnaire sent to 6,535 	<p>479</p>	<p>£8626.25</p> <p>Design, print -</p>	<p>The majority generally supportive of the proposals to develop the Britannia site.</p>

<p>Proposal Consultation 5 Dec to 12 Feb 17</p>	<p>Leisure Centre site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New leisure centre ● New secondary school ● Housing for sale - to fund the development. <p>Funded by sale of housing units on the site</p> <p>Feedback invited on the feasible options for the site.</p>	<p>households in Hoxton East and Shoreditch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Printed copies available at HSC, Town Hall and Britannia Leisure Centre ● Online survey on citizen space ● Email sent by GLL to all Britannia Leisure centre members ● 10 Drop-in- events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shoreditch Park Primary ○ Colville community centre ○ Britannia ● Posters at Britannia, Colville Estate and Shoreditch Park Primary ● Consultation pack sent to parents of Shoreditch park Primary via book bags ● Permanent exhibition at Britannia for the duration of th consultation ● Article in Hackney Today 		<p>consultation materials, posters, Formex boards and distribution</p>	<p>Concerns raised about the quantity and ratio of affordable housing and fact that private housing won't benefit local community.</p>
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