

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Communities

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Community Engagement Strategy – Action Plan Update

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board of progress to date with the Community Engagement Strategy action plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Safer Policy and Performance Board:-

- note the content of the report;
- note the contents of the updated action plan; and
- note the format and timescales of the community engagement health check.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Community Engagement Strategy was approved by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board in June 2011 and reported to the Safer PPB in September 2011. Since then a Community Engagement Operational Group has been set up to oversee the delivery of the action plan. This group consists of engagement managers and professionals from across the strategic partnership.

4.0 CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 We are starting to see an increase in partnership working under the strategy. It has been agreed in principal to share resources and training to increase the number and use of mystery shoppers across the strategic partnership to increase resident engagement in the evaluation of services. Overall completion by 2015 remains on course.

4.2 A Community Engagement Health Check is being carried out to evaluate how

well we as a partnership engage with the community. The Community Engagement Operational Group has agreed the approach to be taken, which is set out in Appendix B.

4.3 The final paperwork for the community engagement health check will be sent out by March 2013. The deadline for submitting completed forms will be the end of April/early May 2013.

4.4 The Community Engagement Action Plan has been updated and a “progress” column has been added. The document is attached to this report in Appendix A and outlines where each action is up to. Some of the timescales have been amended to reflect current progress.

4.5 The Community Engagement Operational Group will take the lead on overseeing delivery of the action plan.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Community Engagement action plan is now underway and is on course for completion by 2015. Each action has a progress note attached to it which explains its current status.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The strategy should enable the partnership to create more opportunities for children and young people in Halton to engage with service providers and play a more active role in designing and evaluating the services they receive.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The strategy should enable the partnership to create more opportunities for residents to engage with service providers and play a more active role in designing services they receive. It will enable residents to give genuine feedback about the types of services they feel they need to improve their knowledge, skills and experience to gain employment.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The strategy should enable the partnership to create more opportunities for residents to engage with health service providers and play a more active role in designing the health services they receive.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The strategy should enable residents to engage more with the partnership around issues of community safety and influence how these issues are

addressed.

6.5 Environment and Regeneration in Halton

The strategy should enable residents to engage more with the partnership around environment and regeneration issues and influence how these issues are addressed by the partnership.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are few risks associated with delivering the strategy. The main risk lies in not delivering it successfully. This could lead to a worsening of the relationship between residents and member organisations of the strategic partnership and a lack of residential engagement in public service design and delivery.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The strategy aims to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to engage with the partnership. Where possible equality and diversity monitoring of consultation and engagement, will be carried out to monitor our success. The action plan was equality impact assessed before the strategy was adopted by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct financial implications to delivering this work as it will be delivered using existing staff resources from the council and partners.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

10.1 None under the Meaning of the Act.

11.0 ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Halton Strategic Partnership Community Engagement Action Plan.
Appendix B: Community Engagement Self-Assessment healthcheck .

Appendix A: HSP Community Engagement Strategy Action Plan– Updated November 2012

Note: Greyed-out actions are no longer part of the strategy.

Objective 1: Citizen focused local decision making					
<i>“We are committed to ensuring community and individual input in to the local decision making process. We will ensure that all decisions taken are focused on the needs of individuals and the local community, and that those affected are given meaningful opportunities to help make those decisions.”</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Support Councillors to play a leading role in community engagement	HBC Community Development Community Practitioners Forum Members’ Services	Continuous	Monthly Member briefing Member training Engagement with neighbourhood workers Links to Area Panels and funding streams	Increased resident participation at local area forums.	On going work across area forums, engaging them in the health agenda, and future work around the development of a register of community assets. Looking to develop community activity mapping exercise at an area forum level with Partners. Possibility to use this information to help form neighbourhood plans. SS to speak to Community Development Manager

Continue to produce area profiles and share this information across the partnership.	HBC Research and Intelligence	Continuous	Available across the partnership electronically	Regular area profiles published and available to partners	Area profiles now done and on HBC website. Need to notify Partners and share across partnership.
Develop a set of guidelines for the usage of mystery shoppers/youth inspectors for partnership services	HBC Community Development Team/HBC Corporate and Organisational Policy Team/YOT	April 2013	Incorporated into revised Community Engagement toolkit	New toolkit published and in use	<p>Toolkit updated and revised. Needs to be shared across Partnership and put on new website. Work ongoing with various</p> <p>HHT have a pool of mystery shoppers in place. They are willing to share these across the partnership and discussions have begun to consider shared training and recruitment of mystery shoppers.</p>
Increase awareness of existing engagement mechanisms across the partnerships	HBC Community Development Team/HBC	April 2012	Incorporated into revised toolkit Consultation finder	New toolkit published and in use	It's been agreed that the Strategy and Action Plan need to be touted across the

	Corporate and Organisational Policy Team		or similar database rolled out across partnership		Partnership's various groups and networks, as part of an awareness raising process. This item will be picked up as part of that process.
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Objective 2: Accessible and inclusive engagement					
<i>“We are committed to ensuring that each and every citizen in Halton has equal opportunity to make their voice heard and influence decisions that affect them. We will ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure everybody’s access needs are identified and accounted for.”</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Monitor all participation in engagement activity by protected characteristics Identify groups who are unengaged	Community Engagement Strategy Steering Group/Community Engagement champions	Annually in April	Audit each agency to ensure they are monitoring – include as part of Community Engagement Health check	All engagement events to show equality monitoring statistics	This will be monitored via annual health checks.
Regularly report monitoring information against area demographics to analyse representation	Nominated officers within organisations/Community Engagement Strategy Steering Group	Annually in April	Community Engagement Health check	Health check self-assessment	This will be monitored via annual health checks.
Create and maintain database of community and representative	Community Engagement Representatives/Community	April 2013	Hosted on partnership website, updated by officers across the	Database set up and up to date	Need to liaise with HSTVCA to ensure a comprehensive list is available to

groups in Halton	Engagement Steering Group		partnership		all.
Provide evidence-based guidance on how to identify and reach hard-to-reach groups	HBC Community Development Team/Corporate and Organisational Policy	December 2011	To form part of the revised Community Engagement Toolkit	Increased engagement with hard to reach groups – evidenced through Community Engagement Health check	Completed
Develop guidance to improve effective engagement with unengaged groups in partnership with residents' groups	HBC Community Development Team/HBC Corporate and Organisational Policy Team	April 2012	To form part of the revised Community Engagement Toolkit Include resident's groups in the developments of these guidelines	New toolkit published and in use	Completed but still need to share with specific groups

Objective 3: Open, efficient and effective engagement					
<i>"We are committed to ensuring that all of our engagement activities make a tangible and positive impact on the community and represent best value for money at all times".</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Produce a Community Engagement self-assessment "health check" and conduct on an annual basis to monitor success of the strategy	All partners/Corporate and Organisational Policy Team (HBC)	Annually in April	Health checks submitted to HBC Corporate & Organisational Policy Team/Performance & Improvement	All partners submitting health check	Options for the healthcheck have been reviewed by the operational group and a decision reached. The forms will be sent out in February 2013 for

					completion and return in April 2013.
Promote the use of the Consultation Finder across the partnership	HBC Research & Intelligence	December 2013	Market Consultation Finder through partnership newsletters	Increased partnership use of the Consultation Finder	This is part of the awareness raising work for the strategy and action plan – touting across Partners.
Provide training to partnership officers on the use of the consultation finder	HBC Research & Intelligence	December 2012	Organised training with engagement officers across the partnership	Increased partnership use of the Consultation Finder	Completed
Conduct joint consultations/engagement whenever possible	HBC Community Development/Corporate & Organisational Policy Team	On going	Joint planning and use of the consultation finder Guidelines to be incorporated into new toolkit	Increased number of joined up consultations	Resident's survey 2012 was a joint consultation – this is to be used as an example to follow.
Promote the principles of “ask once use many times” with engagement practitioners across the partnership	Community Engagement Champions	April 2013	Marketing campaign	Increased joined-up working and information sharing across the partnership	This is part of the awareness raising work for the strategy and action plan – touting across Partners.
Review and revise the current	HBC Community Development	April 2012	Item on toolkit included in	New toolkit published and in	Toolkit revised, but this review is

Community Engagement Toolkit and promote its use across the partnership	team/HBC Corporate & Organisational Policy Team		newsletters and on intranet Available on partnership website	use	an on-going process and will be included as part of the awareness raising work. Will be included on the partnership website once website is completed.
Re-establish the Community Engagement Network	HBC Community Development	April 2012	Contact all engagement officers across the partnership, organise quarterly meetings. Senior management to acknowledge nomination of champion	Community Engagement Network meeting regularly	This has been replaced by the Community Practitioners Forum which includes anyone who works within Halton's communities. Need to discuss the issue of training. Item for December 2012 meeting?
Feed information from Consultation Finder into Area Forums and members' briefings	HBC Research & Intelligence	April 2013	Information sent to organisers	Regular information included on Area Forums and member briefings	This will be picked up by Neil McSweeney, Nikki Goodwin and Members Services.

Objective 4: Innovative engagement					
<i>“We are committed to exploring new and creative ways of engaging with the communities we serve and maximising the potential of new technologies”.</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Develop agreed standards for conducting surveys via electronic means	HBC Research & Intelligence/Corporate & Organisational Policy Team	December 2012	Publishing standards	Published standards	On going
Develop the partnership website to allow interaction with users	HBC Marketing	December 2014	Partnership website to be brought “in-house” and developed	Partnership website used interactively by partners and residents	On going
Develop a social media strategy and protocol to promote and co-ordinate the use of social media across the partnership	HBC Corporate & Organisational Policy Team/HBC Marketing	December 2014	Social media strategy sub-group to be set up to coordinate the use of social media and develop the strategy	Strategy published	On going

Objective 5: Using and responding to customer initiated engagement					
<i>“We are committed to maximising the impact of all contact we have with residents, including those which are initiated by the individual”.</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
All organisations to	All partners	Annually	To be decided by	Number of	This will be

monitor and analyse comments, compliments and complaints.			each partner	complaints reported to Community Engagement Strategy steering group on an annual basis Health check item	monitored via annual health checks.
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Appendix B: Community Engagement Strategy

Self Assessment Healthcheck

Using the definitions below, please identify two examples of engagement activity that you have undertaken in the past 12 months under each category.

Information Giving - simple, direct, one way communication. **Either** from partnership agency to public or individual to agency. Keeping people informed of activities, decisions and events. This could be via a mailshot, information on the website, information via email, facebook, twitter or text, or an exhibition. It also includes direct contact from individuals, for example complaints, compliments and other information.

- 1.
- 2.

Consultation –involves a dialogue between parties who listen to each other. For example, options or proposals may be presented to the public who are given the chance to comment on them and ask questions about them. This could also take the form of a survey, delivered online, over the telephone, face-to-face or through the post. Consultation means the right to be heard, not the right to influence or decide.

- 1.
- 2.

Deciding Together – the local community are involved in making decisions with the partnership on what will be done, with the partnership taking these forward. For example, involving local residents on planning new road layouts.

- 1.
- 2.

Acting Together – decisions are made together between local people and agencies of the strategic partnership. The people involved in making the decisions also take part in carrying them out.

- 1.
- 2.

Please complete the table below, assigning a self-assessment score for each type of engagement activity that your organisation undertakes with reference to the guidance notes below.

	Level of planning 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Working in partnership 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Breadth of engagement 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Depth of engagement 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Taking action 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing
Information Giving					
Consultation					
Deciding Together					
Acting Together					

Guidance notes

Engagement Category	Level of planning	Working in partnership	Breadth of engagement	Depth of engagement	Taking Action
<p>Information Giving – simple, direct, one way communication. Either from partnership agency to public or individual to agency. Keeping people informed of activities, decisions and events. This could be via a mailshot, information on the website, information via email, facebook, twitter or text, or an exhibition. It also includes direct contact from individuals, for example complaints, compliments and other information.</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders’ views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of the partnership’s business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as ‘hard to reach’, but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community’s participation.</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is established to monitor progress.</p>
<p>Consultation – this involves a dialogue between parties who listen to each other. For example, options or proposals may be presented to the public who are given the chance to comment on them and ask questions about them. This could also take the form of a survey, delivered online,</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders’ views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as ‘hard to reach’, but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but</p>	<p>1. Engagement is limited to information-giving and quantitative feedback. 2. Engagement is largely quantitative, with isolated examples of more qualitative dialogue. 3. Some departments use creative techniques to gather feedback and engage sections of the community in ongoing</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to</p>

<p>over the telephone, face-to-face or through the post. Consultation means the right to be heard, not the right to influence or decide.</p>	<p>this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>the partnership's business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community's participation.</p>	<p>dialogue, but the approach is not consistent across the organisation. 4. The partnership uses qualitative as well as quantitative engagement where appropriate. Communities can influence the 'big picture' as well as taking part in detailed collaborative work dialogue.</p>	<p>business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is established to monitor progress.</p>
<p>Deciding Together – The local community are involved in making decisions with the partnership on what will be done, with the partnership taking these forward. For example, involving local residents on planning new road layouts.</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders' views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of the partnership's business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as 'hard to reach', but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community's participation.</p>	<p>1. Engagement is limited to information-giving and quantitative feedback. 2. Engagement is largely quantitative. 3. Some departments use creative techniques to gather feedback and engage sections of the community in ongoing dialogue, but the approach is not consistent across the organisation, with isolated examples of more qualitative dialogue. 4. The partnership uses qualitative as well as quantitative engagement. Communities can influence the 'big picture' as well as taking part in detailed collaborative</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is</p>

				work dialogue.	established to monitor progress.
<p>Acting Together – Decisions are made together between local people and agencies of the strategic partnership. The people involved in making the decisions also take part in carrying them out.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders' views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures this is carried out in a high quality manner. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of the partnership's business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as 'hard to reach', but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community's participation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement is limited to information-giving and quantitative feedback. 2. Engagement is largely quantitative, with isolated examples of more qualitative dialogue. 3. Some departments use creative techniques to gather feedback and engage sections of the community in ongoing dialogue, but the approach is not consistent across the organisation. 4. The partnership uses qualitative as well as quantitative engagement. Communities can influence the 'big picture' as well as taking part in detailed collaborative work dialogue. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is established to monitor progress.