

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member – Performance and Governance –
17th February 2010
Cabinet Member – Communities – 24th February 2010

SUBJECT: Public Engagement and Consultation Standards Panel
– Annual Report

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Susan Holden, Equalities Director

CONTACT OFFICER: Jayne Vincent, Public Engagement and Consultation
Manager- 0151 928 2233 ext 380

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL: No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

This report outlines the activities of the Public Engagement and Consultation Team and Standards Panel between December 2008 and December 2009

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Cabinet Members for Performance and Governance and Communities are recommended to:-

- i) Note the contents of this report

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: No

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Immediately following the expiry of the call-in period for this report

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

There are no alternative options.

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework: N/a

Financial:-

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2006/ 2007 £	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £
Gross Increase in Capital expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal:

Risk Assessment: Not applicable

Asset Management: Not applicable

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS:

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	✓		
2	Creating Safe Communities	✓		
3	Jobs and Prosperity	✓		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	✓		
5	Environmental Sustainability	✓		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	✓		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	✓		
8	Children and Young People	✓		

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Public Engagement and Consultation Standards and Framework

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report outlines the activities of the Public Engagement and Consultation Team and Standards Panel between December 2008 and December 2009.

2. Background

- 2.1 Sefton Equalities Partnership has the responsibility for consultation and engagement as part of a multi-agency approach to co-ordinate activity and to embed standards for engagement and consultation across the Borough Partnership.
- 2.2 A Borough Partnership 'Your Sefton Your Say' Public Engagement and Consultation Framework and Pocket Guide has been recently launched that will inform how the Partnership speaks with and listens to its communities and involve them in its work.
- 2.3 The Engagement Framework and the 8 associated Standards will strengthen how Sefton Borough Partnership meets the requirements of the Comprehensive Area Assessment in ensuring that the Partnership is making strong progress with community engagement that demonstrates that it:-
 - knows and works with its communities and understands their needs, and in particular those who may experience discrimination or whose voices are seldom heard;
 - makes sure that it involves its communities in identifying issues that are important to them;
 - asks its communities whether or not the Partnership has achieved the things that are important to them; and
 - works in partnership when it wants to speak with or listen to its communities to avoid duplication of effort and improve efficiency.

3. Public Engagement and Consultation Panel

- 3.1 A key element of this co-ordinated approach has been the establishment of a Public Engagement and Consultation Panel (the Panel).
- 3.2 The Membership of the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel has increased in the 12 month period and now includes representation from Sefton Council, NHS Sefton, Sefton Council for Voluntary Service, Sefton Community Empowerment Network, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and Sefton Young Advisors. The Panel has also asked the Public Engagement and Consultation Manager to explore how the business sector can become involved.

- 3.3 The Panel has been operating to Terms of Reference that outlines its main purpose as being:

To act as an independent quality assurance panel to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of engagement and consultation throughout the Borough

- 3.3 The Panel held its first meeting in December 2008 and has met on seven occasions since. During its first twelve months in operation it has appraised the engagement and consultation proposals as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Proposals appraised by the Panel during the period of December 2008 – December 2009

<u>Organisation/ Department</u>	<u>Engagement or consultation activity</u>	<u>Purpose of activity</u>
Sefton Equalities Partnership	Single Equality Bill	To consult on the creation of a Single Equality Scheme
NHS Sefton	Better Health, Better Life	To consult on the priorities for the NHS Sefton Strategic Plan
SMBC Planning and Economic Regeneration Dept.	Sefton Core Strategy – stage 1	To engage and consult on the Sefton Core Strategy
SMBC Environmental Protection Dept.	Sefton Air Quality Management Areas	To inform the local community of the declaration of the AQMA's and begin the process of engaging local people in the development of an action plan.
Sefton Equalities Partnership	Draft Engagement Framework	To engage and consult on the Draft Engagement Framework
SMBC Legal Dept.	Governance Review	To consult local government electors and other interested persons within the Authority's area before drawing up any proposals to change its executive governance arrangements.

<u>Organisation/ Department</u>	<u>Engagement or consultation activity</u>	<u>Purpose of activity</u>
SMBC Supporting People Team	Move-On Supporting People Strategy	The aim was to develop a move-on strategy that is inclusive in seeking the views of clients, partners and stakeholders
SMBC Supporting People Team	Supporting People Commissioning Strategy	To develop a commissioning strategy that is inclusive in seeking the views of service users, partners and stakeholders and aligns with the corporate approach to the commissioning and providing of services.
SMBC Technical Services Dept.	Portland Street Cycle Route Consultation	What issues/ concerns the residents of the Street have and to see if these can be resolved as part of the design of the street.
Finance Dept.	Customer Satisfaction Survey	The purpose of the survey is to gauge customer satisfaction of the service delivered by Sefton Plus
Sefton CVS/Sefton Equalities Partnership	Community Empowerment Network Under-representative Survey	To gain an insight into the views of under-represented, traditionally marginalised communities within Sefton.

<u>Organisation/ Department</u>	<u>Engagement or consultation activity</u>	<u>Purpose of activity</u>
SMBC Environmental Protection Dept.	Gambling Statement	To consult stakeholders on the revisions made to the Policy and whether or not any further revisions are deemed necessary.
SMBC Tourism Dept.	Southport Indoor Market	To inform residents, market traders and businesses in the area of the proposals and to gain their feedback on ways of improving on the proposals.

- 3.4 In addition to this, the Public Engagement and Consultation Team have also supported officers from Sefton MBC, NHS Sefton and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Organisations to develop a further 10 public engagement and consultation proposals.
- 3.5 During the course of the 12 months, the panel has also started to receive feedback and evaluation reports from officers who have carried out public engagement and consultation activity.
- 3.6 The Panel have agreed to appraise the feedback and evaluation reports in accordance with the standards of public engagement and consultation and consider:-
- how the activity was carried out;
 - the opinions of the people taking part on how they found the process;
 - the number of people who took part and the costs of the different methods of getting them involved;
 - how successful different methods were at getting the views of people who are not normally heard, for example, children, young people and people with disabilities;
 - how the results will be fed back to the public; and
 - how will the results influence policies and service plans?

3.7 To date the Panel have received the following feedback and evaluation reports as outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Feedback and Evaluation Reports presented to the Panel during the period of December 2008 – December 2009.

Organisation/ Department	Engagement or consultation activity	Changes as a result of the engagement or consultation
NHS Sefton	Better Health, Better Life	<p>NHS Sefton are strengthening services that tackle conditions such as heart and circulatory disease, chronic lung disease and stroke.</p> <p>More funding is being made available this year for dementia and mental health programmes, for example, a new service for people with Aspergers.</p> <p>More initiatives are being developed to help children and young people to lead a healthy lifestyle, such as Active Sefton</p>
SMBC Planning and Economic Regeneration Dept.	Sefton Core Strategy – Stage 1	The views and issues raised during this stage of consultation will feed into the next stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy which is to develop the Council's 'Preferred Options' which builds on the earlier stage.

Organisation/ Department	Engagement or consultation activity	Changes as a result of the engagement or consultation
SMBC Environmental Protection Dept.	Sefton Air Quality Management Areas	The results obtained will help inform the development of the Air Quality Action Plan. Where residents' proposals cannot be acted on, evidence based reasons will be given in the final plan. This will also be fed back to local residents.
SMBC Legal Dept.	Governance Review	The Council's Constitution has been changed as a result of the consultation to take effect from May 2010.
SMBC Supporting People Team	Move-On Supporting People Strategy	The findings have resulted in amendments to the Strategy action plan and the High Priority Panel Action Plan, feedback from clients identified a number of key misunderstandings relating to homelessness and housing legislation that if not addressed could impact negatively on National and Local performance indicators. This has resulted in the rolling out of training and awareness sessions for staff and clients at homeless and temporary housing facilities

Organisation/ Department	Engagement or consultation activity	Changes as a result of the engagement or consultation
SMBC Supporting People Team	Supporting People Commissioning Strategy	Following consultation, it was agreed that a number of sectorial reviews would be conducted to examine the effectiveness of all funded supported living projects. This is a joint programme in partnership with Health and Social Care, NHS Sefton, Corporate Procurement, Probation and Supporting People.

- 3.8 In addition to this, the Public Engagement and Consultation Team have received an additional 7 completed feedback templates from Leisure Services.
- 3.9 The Public Engagement and Consultation Team intend to continue raising awareness of the team and the Panel and will identify ways of embedding the standards and principles fully within partner organisations. The team have received some feedback from officers who have received support from the team and who have presented information to the Panel and some of the comments received show how the process has helped them. Below are some of the comments received.

“It has introduced a discipline about ensuring consultation is up to standard.”

“The overall experience was very positive and helped us develop a better consultation”.

“It reinforced the importance of thinking carefully through the process from the outset”.

“It helped me to understand Sefton’s approach to consultation and how to go about future exercises”.

“The feedback process will encourage us to use the data we have obtained to make change happen”.

4. Activity Report and Calendar

- 4.1 During its first year in operation the Panel has also asked the Public Engagement and Consultation Team to develop an activity report and calendar to help with the co-ordination of activity taking place in Sefton. Officers from partner organisations are being encouraged to complete their calendars of activity which are then included in the Panel Activity Report that is presented to Panel members at each meeting. The Panel can then select from the calendar the proposals they wish to receive further information on.

5. Public Engagement and Consultation Officers Network

- 5.1 An Officer Network has been established for 18 months now which has mainly been attended by Council officers. Following the launch of the Public Engagement and Consultation Framework the network's membership has been extended to include partner organisations.
- 5.2 At the Officer's Network meeting on 1st December 2009, the Network agreed its Terms of Reference, and it has the purpose of:-

'Ensuring that the principles and standards within the Framework are adopted and implemented'

This will help embed the standards and principles within the partner organisations.

6. Training and Development

- 6.1 During the 12 month period the Public Engagement and Consultation Team have organised and delivered the following training:

- Applying the standards for public engagement and consultation (as part of the Launch of the Framework) – attended by 45 people
- An Inclusive Engagement and Consultation Workshop (as part of Diversity Week) – attended by 25 people
- eConsult training:

NHS Sefton – attended by 5 people

Leisure Services – attended by 5 people

In addition to the above, a number of one-to-one sessions have been delivered for staff from Sefton Council, Sefton CVS and NHS Sefton.

- 6.2 The Public Engagement and Consultation Manager and Officer have also attended a number of training sessions/briefings organised by the Consultation Institute and have both been successful in achieving their Certificate of Professional Development.
- 6.3 The Public Engagement and Consultation Team intend to develop and deliver (depending on demand) a number of training sessions to help develop skills and capacity during 2010 – 2011. They would like to develop the training in partnership and will approach a number of colleagues from the Officers Network about co-delivering the training.

7. Your Sefton Your Say Website

- 7.1 The Your Sefton Your Say website has been developed to help co-ordinate engagement and consultation activity in Sefton and to have 'one place' for resources and information to help officers plan and deliver meaningful engagement and consultation.
- 7.2 The website is also branded to encourage members of the public to take part in consultations that are taking place. Members of the public can use the consultation finder (eConsult) to have their views on local issues.

8. Your Sefton Your Say Public Engagement and Consultation Toolkit and Supporting Guides

- 8.1 To support the implementation of the Standards, the Public Engagement and Consultation Team and officers from the Engagement Team at NHS Sefton have developed a number of toolkits and guides.
- 8.2 A Public Engagement and Consultation Toolkit will be the main document and this will be supported by a Methods Guide and an Inclusive Engagement Guide. It is anticipated that these will be available as PDF documents to download from the Your Sefton Your Say website in January 2010 and will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the information reflects current practice.
- 8.3 The Public Engagement and Consultation Team have also produced a 'Handy Hints' poster, which can be downloaded by officers when planning their public engagement and consultation activity.

9. eConsult System (Consultation Finder)

- 9.1 The Public Engagement and Consultation Officer manages and administers the eConsult (Consultation Finder) system on behalf of Sefton Council, Sefton CVS and NHS Sefton. The system was obtained to satisfy the requirements of the Government Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) project in 2006.

9.2 Between January and December 2009 the Sefton Council system hosted 31 consultations and received over 2500 'hits'. The NHS Sefton system was used to process the results of the 'Better Life Better Health' consultation which received over 7000 responses.

9.3 In December 2009 the system was upgraded for all partners to add additional features.

10. Recommendations

10.1 The Cabinet Members for Performance and Governance and Communities are recommended to:-

- i) Note the contents of this report