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Introduction And Framework

This guide has been produced as an aide to managers and others who are aiming to involve the community. This guide is linked to the Community Consultation and Participation Strategy and like the strategy it uses the ladder of participation as a framework to be considered when planning a process of consultation or community involvement. A summary of the Bradford Participation Tool is given below, and more detail is set out in Section B along with details about the sorts of methods it is appropriate to use at each stage. Section A gives some detailed advice about issues to consider when planning your consultation. Section C gives information about existing consultation mechanisms that you may want to use. Section D gives details of various consultation methods that can be used to consult and involve local people. Section E gives details of how to involve socially excluded or hard to reach groups.

Bradford Council has a long history of consultation and participation, with many achievements to be proud of. In particular:

- There are many examples of innovative methods being used.
- There are two particularly innovative district-wide consultation systems in place – the Area Initiative and the Speak Out! Panel.
- There is a rich diversity of methods and approaches.
- There is a particularly well established support system for tenants groups.
- There has been dedicated and skilful work carried out to involve excluded groups.
- There are considerable areas of skills and experience available.
- There are many well established partnerships involving joint working rather than just consultation.
- There is a growing interest in and commitment to participation at both officer and Member level.

This guide aims to build on this past work and equip managers to carry out effective consultation with communities and service users.

The main purpose of this guide is to provide something practical and useable for those wishing to involve local people in decisions about policies and services and to help them choose the most appropriate method, or methods, based upon the experience of others. In particular the guide links to the Council's Best Value Performance Plan and aims to encourage best practice in consultation and involvement in the context of Best Value. Under Best Value, local authorities need to review and improve services against a framework of the four "c's": Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete. Consultation is therefore one of the fundamental principles underpinning Best Value.

Using the Bradford Participation Tool

The Bradford Participation Tool is based on the work of David Wilcox 'Guidelines to effective participation' 1996. The ladder is a starting point when planning the process of community involvement; it is a useful tool to clarify thinking about the stance that is appropriate for any particular issue or situation. In particular by breaking down the potential involvement into five levels it can add greater clarity to the proposed aims and outcomes. Too often in the past

resource holders have made attempts to 'involve the community' without due consideration of what level of involvement they are really offering and making this explicit.

Although the term 'ladder' is used, it is not good practice to assume that 'higher means better'! It is more a case of 'horses for courses' – of choosing the appropriate level. Communities may have their own views on which level is appropriate and where there is a difference this may need to be negotiated at an early stage.

The higher levels of participation as described demand more of participants and require more support and capacity building to enable effective participation.

Level 1: Information

Information giving underpins all other levels of participation, and may be appropriate on its own in some circumstances. The information-giving stance is essentially a 'take it or leave it' approach. However, you are likely to encounter problems if all you offer is information and people are expecting more involvement. It is important to use language and ideas that your audience will find familiar and be clear about why you are just informing rather than consulting.

Level 2: Consultation

Consultation is a higher level of involvement than information giving, and can include researching the needs, attitudes and priorities of communities. In this stance, you may ask for views and perceptions on the problems, offer some options, allow comment, take account and then proceed - perhaps after negotiation. The key point is that you are not asking for help in taking action. Consultation is appropriate when you can offer people some choices on what you are going to do - but not the opportunity to develop their own ideas or participate in putting plans into action.

Level 3: Deciding together

Deciding together means accepting other people's ideas, and then choosing from the options you have developed together. The basics of consultation apply, plus the need to generate options together, choose between them, and agree ways forward. Deciding together can be a difficult stance because it can mean giving people the power to choose without fully sharing the responsibility for carrying decisions through. People need more confidence to get involved at this level and the time scale for the process is likely to be much longer.

Level 4: Acting together

Acting together may involve short-term collaboration or forming more permanent partnerships with other interests. Acting together in partnership involves both deciding together and then acting together. This means having a common language, a shared vision of what you want, and the means to carry it out. To act together effectively partners need to trust each other as well as agree on what they want to do. Each partner needs to feel they have an appropriate stake in the partnership and a fair say in what happens. Acting together is not likely to be appropriate when one party holds all the power and resources and uses this to impose its own solutions.

Level 5: Supporting local initiatives

Supporting independent community-based initiatives means helping others develop and carry out their own plans. Resource-holders who promote this stance may, of course, put limits on what they will support. This is the most 'empowering' stance - provided people want to do things for themselves. They may, quite properly, choose a lower level of participation. Carrying through the stance may involve people in setting up new forms of organizations to handle funds and carry out projects or programmes. It is not likely to be appropriate when community initiatives are seen as 'a good thing' in the abstract and pushed on people from the top down, and where time is very short.

The main focus of the methods and techniques outlined in this guide are those relating to levels 2 and 3 in the ladder, "consultation" and "deciding together", which is often an adequate level of involvement when wanting feedback from residents about particular services. If having read the summary above you think that you are at the stage of working with communities at levels 4 or 5 you can obtain advice from the Council's Community Development Service. That is beyond the scope of this guide.

Section A

Planning your consultation:

- Planning your consultation/involvement:
 - Background
 - Objectives
 - Who to consult
 - Timescales
 - Resources
 - Choosing a method
 - Results and feedback
 - Evaluation
 - Summary of points to consider
- Do I need to consult:
 - What – identify your objectives
 - Who – identify who to consult
 - When – timescales
 - How much – identify resources
 - How – choosing a method
 - Inform – use the results and feedback
 - Evaluate
- Commissioning research and consultation:
 - Preparing a brief
 - Local Research Organisations

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Section A: Planning Your Consultation

Nb: throughout this section of the guide the term “consultation” is used as a shorthand to cover levels 1, 2, and 3 of the bradford participation tool

This section aims to give you assistance in effectively planning your consultation, as there are many things to consider before deciding on an appropriate technique. First you need to consider what you are doing and why you are doing it. Once you have established the objectives for your consultation, the remaining sections of this guide will give you assistance in choosing the appropriate level, mechanism, and method for your consultation.

Planning Your Consultation /Involvement

There are a number of issues that need to be considered before you undertake a consultation exercise, these are outlined below. By thinking about these issues before you start you are likely to save yourself a lot of time and effort.

A good idea before you start is to write out a plan of the consultation. Producing a written plan to identify what needs to happen when and who will do it, will make your consultation run more smoothly. Typically a plan will include the following information.

Background	Why are you doing it?
Objectives	What do you want to achieve?
Who to consult	Whom do you want to consult with?
Timescales	Are your timescales realistic?
Resources	Money, time, and other resources required
Choosing a method	How will you consult?
Feedback	How will you make the results known to those who took part and to others
Evaluation	How will you know it has been successful?

These issues are now considered in more detail

Background

It is important to understand why the consultation is required. This may help you gain commitment for your activity and may also influence the approach you take. Some influences may be:

- A local community
- Legislation
- Elected Members
- Service Needs
- Council Policy
- Partner Agencies

Objectives

If you understand why the consultation is necessary then you should be able to construct clear aims and objectives for it. This in turn will help you to select the appropriate method for your exercise.

There are a number of key points that you should consider in clarifying your objectives.

- Clarify which step on the Bradford Participation Tool you wish to pursue (See Section B of this guide). This will direct you towards the more appropriate methods.
- Clarify why you want the information you are planning to collect and what you are trying to achieve.
- Consider how the results of your consultation exercise will be linked to the decision making process.
- Contact the Community Involvement Advisory Group, your purpose may be influenced by other planned consultation exercises? You may need to consider slightly adapting your purpose to fit in with other planned consultations, rather than two similar exercises taking place at the same time. Constantly consulting the same people causes confusion and leads to poor response rates and a lack of confidence in those carrying out consultation.

Who To Consult

It is important that you are clear about whom you wish to consult, as this will ensure that your exercise is well focussed. Who you wish to consult with will also affect the method you eventually choose to use. There are a number of groups that you may potentially wish to consult with. Examples of these are set out below.

Users of your service

One group of people you are likely to want to consult with, particularly as part of the Best Value process, are the users of your service. For some services this will be fairly small groups of people for others it will be virtually the whole population of the District.

Non-users of your service

There are many non-users of your service who you may wish to consult with, eg those who have stopped using your service, those that you have denied a service to, those who have not heard about your service, those who you regulate or enforce against (for example those whose kitchens you may have inspected or whose child you may have taken into care), those who may benefit from a service without directly using it (for example, local businesses benefit from the education system). As part of determining Best Value, you need to consider all of those who are affected by your service, rather than just those who directly use or receive it.

Local People

You may want to consult with a sample of all residents either District wide or within a smaller community.

Communities of Interest

This term usually refers to people who share particular identity or interest e.g. ethnic groups living in an area. This is an important term because many socially excluded or marginalized people are part of a community of interest. They may not actually be involved in a group or network, but can be called – or call themselves – a community of interest because of a common identity, for example people with disabilities. Some communities of interest are not organised or visible at a local neighbourhood level, eg deaf people may be small in numbers in a particular area, but have very specific experiences and views. It should not be assumed that communities of interest, such as disabled people or Muslim women, only have something to contribute on issues relating specifically to their disability or race. Detailed advice is given in Section E of this manual about contacting socially excluded and harder to reach groups of people.

Both the Bradford District Community Strategy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy make a commitment to engaging with Communities of Interest. Work is going on to develop a process which means that people with a disability, African and African Caribbean people and lesbian and gay people can develop for themselves plans which set out the key issues affecting their community and the kind of services and action they need in respect of all of the main strategic planning areas - housing, environment, community safety, leisure and culture, health and social care etc. The process is in the early stages of development, but the plans from individual communities and managers and service planners can use the summary plans that will be produced around the 7 Key themes. They will flag up priority issues and areas, which may require further consultation. For more information, contact Pat Fairfax, CDPU Ext. 4994

Community Groups

This term usually refers to small-scale locally based groups that are primarily run by their own members. A tenants association is a good example. These can include activity, sports, interest and leisure groups, self-help and campaign groups, as well as locally run groups that provide local services e.g. a management committee of a community centre.

Voluntary Organisations

They are organisations whose activities are carried out not for profit but which are not public or local authorities and which are not led by local residents. They may or may not use volunteer help. At neighbourhood level they may take the form of locally based projects.

Schools

Schools are a special category in their own right, although with local management are increasing similar to voluntary sector organisations. They are obviously key hubs of activity and involvement in any area.

Agencies

You may want to consult with other Agencies such as the Health Authority, Primary Care Trust, Police, Probation, Skills and Learning Council, further education colleges, etc. Many of these will be involved in service provision to a community. Don't forget to include other Council departments.

Partnerships

These may be area based regeneration partners or partnerships between agencies working in a geographical area or a particular theme e.g. the Early Years Partnership.

Businesses

Businesses and business organisations have an important role to play in the local community and should not be overlooked.

Front-line staff

Don't forget to involve your own staff as part of a consultation. They probably know more about the service and its problems than anyone, so listen to what they have to say.

Your Target Population

How much do you know about the people you want to consult? If you are consulting in a particular geographical area do you know how many people live there, and what are their ages and ethnic origins? Does your consultation require you to have information about, for example, the type of housing or the number of single parents?

For many of the more formal research techniques you need to know the characteristics of your community to design a sampling method that will give you reliable results. Even if you are not using research methods it is often worth knowing as much about your target population as possible so that you can ensure that your consultation is relevant to them. The Research & Consultation Service will be able to give you some assistance in identifying the characteristics of small geographical areas.

Once you have got information about the characteristics of the population you will need to consider how best to reach the people you want to target

Language Do you need to provide information in community languages or in different formats? Do you have access to people who can speak community languages or sign language? Do questionnaires need providing in different languages, in large print, in Braille, on tape? The Council's Access to Print Unit will be able to help with producing large print, Braille, or tape versions of any consultation materials.

Access If you are using a building to hold a consultation event, does it have access for disabled people? Do signs need to be in a number of different languages? Is the building "neutral" or may it put off certain sections of the community? Would it be helpful or even essential to hold women only meetings?

Availability Will people be available at the time of day that you want to hold your consultation? Working people may find it difficult to attend meetings during the day. Older people or women may be reluctant to go to an event after dark. Make sure your event does not conflict with other major events such as religious festivals, home football/rugby matches. If you are wanting to engage the Muslim community you should avoid holding consultation events just before Eid, and would be best advised to avoid the Ramadan period altogether.

Payment For some consultation methods you will need to consider paying people a small incentive to take part, this is particularly important to encourage non-activists to participate.

Timescales

If you have a deadline to meet, you need to work backwards from that. Is it feasible to carry out a meaningful consultation in the time you have available? If not, don't do it. If you are thinking about using one of the existing consultation mechanisms, you need to make sure that your timescales fit in. Details of how to find this out are given in Section C of this manual.

Resources

You need to establish what resources are available for your consultation exercise. Do you have any money for it? If not your ability to carry out a meaningful consultation is fairly limited. How much staff time do you have available to carry out your consultation, and what skills do they have? If you need skills that you don't have then there are a number of people with expertise in different aspects of consultation and participation who are listed in Sections C and D of this manual.

You need to make sure that before undertaking consultation exercises you have access to the necessary skills. There is little point in carrying out a consultation exercise unless it is designed in such a way that the results are valid. Indeed, poorly designed or executed consultation exercises can be harmful if decisions are then made on the basis of misleading results. The precise nature of the skills you require will be dependent on the method you need to use, but it is particularly important to have skilled staff available if you are intending to carry out consultation using quantitative research methods such as surveys.

If staff undertaking this sort of consultation lack appropriate knowledge and skills, they may inadvertently make the kind of mistakes that will undermine the credibility of the results. Common problems include:

- using a method that is not appropriate to the topic for consultation;
- designing surveys in ways that do not address all the relevant questions;
- phrasing questions in ways that are likely to skew the answers given;
- using a sample that is too small to give reliable results; and
- using samples for surveys that do not accurately reflect the make up of the population (or of service users).

It is equally important to analyse the results properly. If you are carrying out surveys you need to have appropriate computer software to analyse the data. You also need to involve staff who have a good understanding of the margins of error relating to survey results, and should be able to explain their significance to non-specialists. When results are presented to Members or senior managers it is important that they are given sound advice about how to interpret them.

There are a number of people within the Council who have the expertise to assist with designing and analysing these sorts of consultation exercises. They are listed in Section D of this guide. Alternatively you may wish to consider using external consultants to carry out some aspects of the work for you. Details of how to do go about commissioning research are set out later in this section.

Choosing A Method

Once you have clarified the above issues you can begin to consider the way you are going to carry it out. A range of existing consultation mechanisms are set out in Section C and a number of other methods are outlined in Section D.

When choosing your method you may want to talk about appropriate methods to those with expertise listed in Section C and to the Council's Community Involvement Advisory Group. If you plan to use one of the Council's existing consultation mechanisms you **MUST** talk to the responsible person. For example, if you want to have your issue discussed at a Neighbourhood Forum, you must speak to the appropriate Area Coordinator to plan your consultation and to ensure that the timetable of meetings fits in with the timescale of your consultation.

Results And Feedback

Consultation is not something that should be done for the sake of it. You need to make sure that there is a clear mechanism for feeding the results of your consultation into the decision making process.

It is equally important that you think about, how you will let those who participated in the consultation exercise know about the results. If you carry out consultation and participants never find out any further information, they are likely to assume that their input had no effect and so are less likely to participate in future. When you are identifying resources for the project, those needed to feedback information should be included. Participants are likely to be interested not only in the results, but more importantly what changes have been made in policy and / or service delivery as a result of the consultation.

Consultation is a dialogue between local people and the Council, and the quality of that dialogue will have an impact on how the council is perceived. It is important to remember that there are many factors that influence policy in addition to the results of consultation, and this needs to be built into the dialogue so that there is shared knowledge and understanding of this context.

Evaluation

Evaluating the effectiveness of your consultation is vital, and should not be left to the end of the process. It will be much easier to do if you have included it in your initial planning. An evaluation does not need to be complex, if you have planned properly, identified what your success and failure criteria are and how you are going to measure them, then the evaluation process should be reasonably straightforward.

Effective evaluation tells you what worked and what did not (and why). It helps to make sure that you get the best value for money from your time and effort. If one particular method doesn't work, try to work out why. Problems are always much clearer with hindsight, and help you avoid pitfalls next time. Equally, if something works well, try to assess why it was successful, so that you and others can build on it.

If you are able to answer the question "what would I do differently or the same next time? Your evaluation will have been valuable.

Some of the issues you will need to consider as part of your evaluation are set out below.

Objectives Were clear objectives for the consultation set e.g. why are you doing it? What do you want to find out? who are you going to ask? How are you going to do it? What are you going to do with the results?

Were the objectives explained to, and understood by, all relevant staff and those consulted.

Who you consulted You need to be able to assess whether:

You got the views from those you wanted;

You were successful in consulting with minority, disadvantaged and hard to reach groups;

Different groups responded to different methods;

You gave feedback to those consulted;

The people consulted felt that the consultation was worthwhile.

Timescale You need to be able to assess whether:

The timetable was clear and kept to, if not why not;

Enough time was left for people to participate.

Resources You need to be able to examine value for money. Some methods are much cheaper than others, but the information you get may not be of any use to you. You will need to assess whether:

You budgeted adequately;

You made savings in particular areas or overspent in others, and why;

There were unforeseen costs, and what they were;

You had all the necessary skills available.

Methods You need to be able to assess whether:

The methods used were right for your objectives;

If you used more than one method, which worked better than others and why;

You got the required information.

Information provided If any information was provided as part of the consultation process you need to be able to measure whether the information was:

Easy to access;

Relevant to the consultation;

Produced in plain language and easy to understand;

Available in other languages and formats if appropriate.

Effect of the consultation The key question with any consultation is “has anything changed as a result?” You need to be able to assess whether:
You got views that you could use;
You have made use of those views;
The consultation has made some identifiable change in service or policy;
The consultation has changed the relationship between you and those consulted.

Consultation Calendar

The Council’s Consultation Calendar is on Bradweb and aims to help all employees know about consultation with local people that has already happened on specific issues and also future consultation that is planned. The intended outcome is that we don't re-invent the wheel or ask the public the same questions the following week from a different department. If you have already conducted a consultation exercise, you will already know from your own experience that people are much more likely to respond if they have not recently been asked the same or similar questions. In addition, contact details for specific pieces of work will provide opportunities for learning about different consultation methods and exchange of information across the Council. Hopefully, the Calendar will help things become more coordinated.

Clearly, this will be most useful if everyone helps to keep the document up-to-date. If you are planning a consultation event, or have already completed one that is not shown here, please contact Louisa on 433879 with details.

Summary Of Points To Consider

1. Ideally consultation activities should be part of your service planning process so that the results can feed directly into your service provision. Don’t wait until it is too late to change your plans before you consult, otherwise you are not taking consultation seriously.
2. Don’t ask for views if you can’t or won’t do anything with them. Be clear about what can and can’t be changed.
3. Can you learn from others? Consult experts if you need to (names of those with expertise in different elements of consultation are mentioned throughout this guide). However, work out what is right in your situation, don’t just consult in a certain way because its what everyone else is doing.
4. Is there some consultation work that has already been done that you can use instead of doing your own consultation? It is much better to use existing information that has been collected about community priorities where possible rather than re-invent the wheel. For example, in response to the Neighbourhood Renewal agenda many neighbourhood and interest-based communities are producing Action Plans.
5. Think about a package of consultation measures rather than just using the same technique each time.

6. Think about how to reach all the people you need to (e.g. people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority groups, people who have stopped using your service or who may have been refused your service). Consult Section E of this guide for more information about consulting with harder to reach groups.
7. Should you consult your front line staff as well as your service users?
8. Be sensitive to those you want to consult, encourage them to give honest views (e.g. by assuring confidentiality).
9. Publicise your consultation, so that people realise that you are committed to listening to them.
10. Report back on what views you have received and, most importantly, what you have done as a result.
11. Evaluate your consultation carefully, and learn lessons for next time.
12. Make sure your consultation events or activities are up on the Consultation Calendar.

Do I Need to Consult?

This section gives details about some of the questions you need to ask yourself before embarking on a consultation or involvement exercise. The information is largely the same as that set out above but in a useful flow chart form.

What: identify your objectives

<p>Have you set clear objectives for your community consultation or participation? Have you identified the appropriate level on the ladder of participation? Have you defined what it is you want to know? Are you clear about why you want the information and what you are trying to achieve? Are you clear about the scope for making changes as a result of your consultation? Will the results of your consultation influence the decision making process and / or service delivery? Do you have the commitment of those able to make change? Have you checked the consultations database?</p>	<p>If NO to any questions, reconsider what you need to do to turn them into a YES. If they remain NO, do not consult</p>
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If YES to all above then go to the next stage. (If you think you are at the stage of working with communities at level 4 or 5 on the ladder of participation then contact the Community Development Service before going further).

Also put details of your planned consultation into the “Consultation Calendar”

Who: identify who to consult

<p>Have you defined who your target audience is for the consultation ? E.g. Local people, service users, defined communities or sections of the community, other organisations, businesses, voluntary groups, front line staff. Have you given thought about how you might involve harder to reach groups? e.g. young people, those refused a service</p>	<p>If NO think about these issues before going further</p>
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If YES go to the next stage

When: timescales

<p>When do you need the information you aim to collect ? Is it feasible to consult within the timescale?</p>	<p>If NO do not consult</p>
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If YES go to the next stage

How much : identify resources

What financial resources are available for the consultation?
What staff time is available for the consultation?
What staff skills are available for the consultation?
What resources are required to provide feedback to local people / participants?

How: choosing a method

Have you referred to Sections C and D of this guide in order to assess available methods of consultation? Have you found a method that meets your needs, resources and timescales? Have you identified the individuals or groups you will consult with?	If you don't have the resources to carry out your ideal consultation you need to amend your plans or obtain more resources.
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After choosing your method and carrying out your consultation you need to

Inform: use the results & feedback

Make sure that the information you have collected is used in decision making.
Make sure that you inform participants about the results of the consultation and associated changes in policy and service delivery.

Evaluate

Assess the success of your consultation.

- Have the desired outcomes been achieved?
- Has it influenced or led to changes in policy and / or service delivery?
- Has it changed the relationship between you and your service users?
- What has been the impact on satisfaction with services?

What lessons have you learned that may change the way in which you consult next time?

Please ensure that you include details of your consultation in the consultation calendar.
Contact Louisa on 01274 433879.

Commissioning Research And Consultation

There may be occasions when you need to commission a research or consultation exercise from an outside consultant. In particular, external consultants often carry out large-scale surveys involving face-to-face interviews by trained interviewers, although elements such as questionnaire design or data analysis may be kept in-house if the necessary skills are available. Using a specialist research organisation has a cost but potentially brings a number of advantages, such as:

- confidence that exercises will be properly designed and carried out
- ready access to trained interviewers
- knowledgeable analysis and presentation of results
- confidence that the exercise is unbiased, which may be particularly important on controversial or politically sensitive issues

Preparing A Brief

If you wish to use the services of a research company you need to be very clear about what you want to find out. You will need to write a formal research brief that contains enough detail about the project to allow the consultant to design a research proposal. This stage is particularly important because if it is ambiguous or unclear you may not get answers to all of the questions you need to cover.

The brief should include:

Background	The context to the work and why it is being undertaken.
Objectives	What the research is designed to explore, measure or explain and what you intend to do with the results.
Scope	The extent of the work including any limits or constraints.
Target Audience	Who you want to reach, e.g. all adults, parents, a particular age group. Include any issues relating to minority ethnic communities and disability.
Topics	Questions that seem, at this early stage, to need answering.
Deliverables	Outputs you require, e.g., written reports, statistical tables, electronic data files for further analysis, presentations.
Methodology	You may wish to suggest the research methodology, or ask the consultant to propose a suitable method within the time and budget available.
Resources	You may wish to specify your budget and ask the consultant to tell you what they can do for the price, or you may just ask them to quote a cost for your specification.
Budget	How much is likely to be available for the work.
Timing	A timetable of when a proposal is required, when you want the research to start and when you need it completing by.

Information	Request the Company's conditions of business, the names of the people who will be carrying out the work and their experience of similar work.
Contact	Provide a contact name to allow further discussion and clarification if necessary.

Costs

The Council has financial regulations regarding the use of external consultants, see Section 10 of: <http://www.bradford.gov.uk/council/constitution/2003/pdf/PART3G.pdf>

At the present time (March 2003) the regulations require competitive quotations to be obtained from four sources for contracts between £4,000 and £60,000. A decision can be made not to seek competitive quotations if this is felt to be inappropriate or impracticable but this must be agreed with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services. Formal tenders are required for contracts expected to exceed £60,000 and must comply with the Standing Orders for Contracts.

Selecting A Consultant Or Agency

If you decide to invite quotations from a number of potential consultants it is common practice to contact no more than four. Developing a research proposal is a time consuming job for a research organisation and they may not bother if they think that their chances of getting the job are slight. It is usual practice to invite the Consultants to present their proposals to you.

When selecting a particular consultant you should consider:

- Evidence that the consultant has understood the brief and the problems to be researched. Have they added to your ideas?
- The overall approach suggested, including a statement of the research objectives, sampling techniques, fieldwork methods, data handling and analysis. Does this meet with your expectations and, if not, are convincing alternatives presented and explained?
- The experience of the researchers assigned to the project.
- The consultant's ability to deal with any issues relating to ethnic minority communities or disability.
- The cost, usually a global sum. The proposal should, however, be clear about what the cost includes and what additional costs may be incurred. Are you satisfied that they are offering value for money?
- Do they feel right? Do you think you can trust the organisation and work with their staff?

Appointing A Consultant Or Agency

When you appoint a consultant it is normal to send them a commissioning letter, which along with your brief and the consultant's proposal form the contract for the research.

If you need assistance to develop a research brief and appoint an external consultant please contact Richard Smith in the Research and Consultation Service on 01274 433839.

Section B

Choosing the level, the Bradford Participation Tool

- Level 1 – information
- Level 2 - consultation
- Level 3 – deciding together
- Level 4 – acting together
- Level 5 – supporting local initiatives

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This section now gives more detail about using the ladder of participation, and the sort of methods that it is appropriate to use at each level.

LEVEL 1: INFORMATION

Information giving underpins all other levels of participation, and may be appropriate on its own in some circumstances. However, you are likely to hit problems if all you offer is information and people are expecting more involvement.

Basics

- The information-giving stance is essentially a 'take it or leave it' approach.
- People may not accept they can't have a say. Is there really no alternative to the ideas you are putting forward?
- Your information will be judged on who you are and your style as well as what you say.

Where appropriate

Information-only may be appropriate when:

- You have no room for manoeuvre and must follow one course of action - for example, where there is a clear legal requirement.
- An authority is reporting a course of action that is essentially internal and doesn't affect others.
- At the start of a consultation or other process, with the promise of more opportunity to participate later.

Methods

Consider the following:

- Print: leaflets, newsletters, etc.
- Presentations at meetings.
- Briefing the media through press releases and press conferences.
- Advertising through posters, radio, and press.
- Film or video.

Guidelines

- Use language and ideas that your audience will find familiar.
- Be clear about why you are just informing rather than consulting

Information checklist

Before taking an information-giving stance, consider:

- Are you clear which interests you are informing, and how much they know already?
- Are they likely to be satisfied with only information?
- Can you present your proposals in a way people will understand and relate to?
- Have you identified appropriate communication methods for the time available and audience?
- Are you prepared to change your stance if people want more than information?

LEVEL 2: CONSULTATION

Consultation is appropriate when you can offer people some choices on what you are going to do - but not the opportunity to develop their own ideas or participate in putting plans into action.

Basics

- Consultation means giving people a restricted choice and role in solutions. You may consult on the problems, offer some options, allow comment, take account and then proceed - perhaps after negotiation. You are not asking for help in taking action.
- All the basics of information giving apply, plus the need to handle feedback.

Where appropriate

The consultation stance is likely to be most appropriate when:

- You want to improve a service.
- You have a clear vision and plans to implement a project or programme, and there appear to be a limited range of options.
- These options can be set out in terms that community interests can understand and relate to their own concerns or needs.
- Your organization can handle feedback and is prepared to use this to choose between or modify options.

It is inappropriate when the following apply

- You aren't going to take any notice of what people say. You are seeking to empower community interests
- You are not clear what you wish to do and are seeking ideas.
- You don't have the resources or skills to carry out the options presented, or other means of implementing.

Methods

A wide range of consultation mechanisms and methods are set out in Sections C and D of this guide.

Guidelines

- Consider what response you want and how you will handle it as well as what you are presenting.
- Make clear how realistic the different options are, and what the pros and cons are as you see them.
- Be open about your own role, who ultimately takes decisions, how and when this will be done.
- If a consultative committee is used ensure it has clear terms of reference.

Consultation checklist

Before taking up a consultation stance consider:

- Are you clear which interests you are consulting, and have you the means to contact them?
- Are they likely to be satisfied with consultation?
- Can you present your vision and options for achieving it in a way people will understand and relate to?
- Have you identified appropriate communication methods for the time available and likely participants?
- Can you and your colleagues handle the feedback?
- Have you arranged for a report back to those consulted?
- Are you prepared to change your stance if people want more than consultation?
- Are you just seeking endorsement of your plans?

LEVEL 3: DECIDING TOGETHER

Deciding together is a difficult stance because it can mean giving people the power to choose without fully sharing the responsibility for carrying decisions through.

Basics

- Deciding together means accepting other people's ideas, and then choosing from the options you have developed together.
- The basics of consultation apply, plus the need to generate options together, choose between them, and agree ways forward.
- The techniques are more complex.
- People need more confidence to get involved.
- The time scale for the process is likely to be much longer.

Where appropriate

Deciding-together may be appropriate when:

- It is important that other people 'own' the solution.

- You need fresh ideas.
- There is enough time.

Deciding together is inappropriate when the following apply

- You have little room for manoeuvre.
- You can't implement decisions yourself but also need joint implementation. In other words the stance that needs to be adopted is 'acting together'.

Methods

Consider the following methods:

- Information-giving methods to start the process.
- Stakeholder analysis to identify who should be involved.
- Brainstorming, Surveys to develop some options.
- Cost/Benefit Analysis to make choices.
- Planning for Real, and other simulations as powerful overall techniques.
- Action planning to decide what next.

Guidelines

- Plan the process before you start. Give yourself enough time.
- Define clearly the roles and responsibilities of the different interests - who has a say, who will take action.
- Be open and honest about what you want to achieve, and any limits on options.
- If you set up any organisational structures, agree clear terms of reference and powers.

Checklist

Before taking up a deciding-together stance consider:

- Are you prepared to accept other people's ideas? What are the boundaries?
- Are you clear whom it is appropriate to involve?
- Are you clear about what you want to achieve, and the boundaries to any ideas you will accept to get there?
- Do you have the skills to use joint decision-making methods?
- Do you have the authority to follow through with solutions that are decided with others?
- Have you involved colleagues who need to be part of the solution?

LEVEL 4: ACTING TOGETHER

Acting together may involve short-term collaboration or forming more permanent partnerships with other interests.

Basics

- Acting together in partnership involves both deciding together and then acting together.
- This means having a common language, a shared vision of what you want, and the means to carry it out.
- Partners need to trust each other as well as agree on what they want to do.
- Effective partnerships take a long time to develop - shot gun marriages are unlikely to work.
- Each partner needs to feel they have an appropriate stake in the partnership and a fair say in what happens.

Where appropriate

Acting together may be appropriate when:

- One party cannot achieve what they want on their own.
- The various interests involved all get some extra benefit from acting together.
- There is commitment to the time and effort needed to develop a partnership.

Acting together is not likely to be appropriate when the following apply

:

- One party holds all the power and resources and uses this to impose its own solutions.
- The commitment to partnership is only skin deep.
- People want to have a say in making decisions, but not a long term stake in carrying out solutions.

Methods

Consider the following methods:

- Information giving methods to start the process.
- Methods for deciding together to create a shared vision.
- Team building exercises.
- Design exercises.
- Business planning exercises.
- Interim structures like working parties and steering groups as a focus for decision making and accountability.
- Longer-term structures through which you can work together.

Guidelines

As for Deciding together, plus...

- Spend time getting to know and trust each other.
- Plan for the long-term sustainability of any organisational structure that is needed to implement and maintain schemes.
- Develop a common language, shared vision and corporate accountability.

Checklist

Before taking up an 'acting together' stance consider:

- Are you clear about what you want to achieve, and how flexible you are in pursuing that vision?
- Have you identified potential partners?
- Do you have any evidence that they share a similar vision, and are interested in a partnership with you to achieve it?
- Do you have the time and commitment necessary to form a partnership?
- Are you prepared to share power?

LEVEL 5: SUPPORTING LOCAL INITIATIVES

Supporting independent community-based initiatives means helping others develop and carry out their own plans. Resource-holders who promote this stance may, of course, put limits on what they will support.

Basics

- This is the most 'empowering' stance -provided people want to do things for themselves. They may, quite properly, choose a lower level of participation.
- Carrying through the stance may involve people in setting up new forms of organisations to handle funds and carry out projects or programmes.
- The process has to be owned by, and move at the pace of, those who are going to run the initiative - although funders and others may set deadlines.

Where appropriate

This stance may be appropriate:

- Where people are interested in starting and running an initiative.
- Where there is a commitment to empower individuals or groups within the community.

It is not likely to be appropriate when the following apply:

- Community initiatives are seen as 'a good thing' in the abstract and pushed on people from the top down.
- Where there is no commitment to provide training and support.
- Where there aren't the resources to maintain initiatives in the longer-term.
- Where time is very short.

Methods

Consider the following methods:

- Providing training and support for example, on involving local people as researchers into the community's health needs.

- An offer of grants, advice and support - perhaps conditional on some commitment being made by the other interests involved.
- Workshops for helping community groups create a shared vision and plan their action.
- Team building exercises.
- Commitment planning.
- Business planning exercises.
- Workshops on design, fund-raising and publicity.
- Visits to similar projects.
- Interim structures like working parties and steering groups as a focus for decision making and accountability.
- Longer-term structures controlled by community interests.
- Development trusts.

Guidelines

- Be clear about your role and whether produces any conflict between, for example, controlling resources and helping community interests develop their own ideas and organisation.
- If you are controlling resources make sure you have agreement from your colleagues and can deliver what you promise before you start.
- Be realistic about the time the process will take.

Checklist

Before taking up a 'we will support community initiatives' stance consider:

- Do you understand the different interests in the community and their needs?
- Have you contacted existing community and voluntary sector organisations?
- Will your colleagues support the stance?
- Do you have skills and resources to offer?
- Are you clear about the role you are playing?

The Levels in Summary

This grid is an aid to understanding the different levels. The stance of the resource holder associated with each level is summed up in an every day sentence.

Level/stance	Typical process	Typical methods	The stance of the resource holder
Supporting	Capacity Building	Advice Support Funding	'We can help you achieve what you want within these guidelines'
Acting together	Partnership building	Partnership bodies	'We want to carry out joint decisions together'
Deciding together	Consensus building	Workshops Planning for Real Strategic Choice	'We want to develop options and decide actions together'
Consultation	Communication and feedback	Surveys Meetings	'Here's our options – what do you think?'
Information	Presentation and promotion	Leaflets Newsletters Displays	'Here's what we are going to do'

Section C

Choosing the Mechanism, A Guide to Using Existing Community Consultation and Participation Mechanisms:

- Neighbourhood forums
- “Speak Out!” panel
- Community development network
- Special forums
- Constituency advisory groups
- Area based conferences
- Locally based partnerships
- Consultation by Young People
- Food forum
- Bradford area occupational health and safety forum
- Asian business forum
- Private sector housing newsletter
- Tenant involvement service

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SECTION C: CHOOSING THE MECHANISM, A GUIDE TO USING EXISTING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS

This section describes a number of the community consultation and participation mechanisms that exist already, and are available to use. There is a description of each mechanism and information about the sorts of consultation each is good for and any costs associated with their use. A contact name is given for each mechanism, as soon as you have decided that you may want to use a particular mechanism you should get in touch with that person.

Neighbourhood Forums

- Summary** Neighbourhood Forums are public meetings that take place in local communities three times a year. There are 90 Neighbourhood Forums across the District. Local people, Council departments, and other organisations can arrange for issues to be put on the agenda for discussion. Meetings are advertised publicly and anyone who has attended a previous meeting receives a personal invitation.
- Examples** Neighbourhood Forums discuss a wide range of issues. You can make use of them for a number of purposes. Informing the public about a changed or new service (eg the introduction of wheeled bins). Seeking views about the quality of a particular service to assist with service planning. Seeking views about a particular local issue (eg proposed housing development, planning applications, closure of service). Involving the public in making decisions about a local area (eg the introduction of traffic calming, location of dog fouling signs, location and development of play areas). Conducting a district wide consultation (eg community safety, unitary development plan). Providing information about local services (eg advice centres, youth clubs, playgroups, pensioner groups). Consultation about local regeneration (eg building a picture of the needs and aspirations of local people to improve their neighbourhood).
- Useful for** Usually a good combination of consultation and informing takes place. The Area Coordinators offices have built up good relationships within most communities, this benefits consultation by other agencies and departments. Getting a wide range of views from a cross section of the neighbourhood and identifying issues of major community concern.
- Not useful** Those attending Neighbourhood Forums are unlikely to be representative of the whole area, therefore should not be used for getting numerical feedback from the public.
Unable to deal with more than one “big” issue per meeting.
Some groups of people less likely to attend meetings, for example, neighbourhood forums not the best way to consult with young people.
- Equal Rights** Area Coordinators have already thought about a range of Equal Rights issues. For example, access to buildings by disabled people, interpreting into Asian languages where appropriate, holding some meetings during the day to encourage elderly people or women with children to attend. You need to think about whether your particular consultation has any additional equal rights implications.
- Costs** The mechanism is there for Council departments and other organisations to make use of. The main cost will be the time of your staff in planning the consultation and attending the Neighbourhood Forum meetings. However, if your consultation requires the distribution of information to those on the mailing list, you will be expected to contribute towards the cost of producing and distributing the

information. Similarly, if your consultation requires translation or interpretation of “technical” language you will be expected to contribute to the cost of that.

How to use In order to get your issue discussed at Neighbourhood Forums there are a number of steps to go through. Like any consultation using neighbourhood forums requires careful planning and preparation. If your consultation is with just one forum or with several forums within one constituency you need to:

- Contact the Area Coordinator (see below)
- Allow 2 to 3 months planning time or you may miss the next cycle of forums.
- Discuss any leaflets or materials you would want to include in the Forum mailings.
- Agree any groups of people you specifically want to consult.
- Agree which Officers will attend the Forum(s).

There may be cases when you wish to consult with all or most of the 80 Forums. In this case:

- Meet with the Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service and the Area Coordinators as soon as possible.
- Allow six months to plan and prepare for the consultation, this way it gives time to get the people you want to consult to the Forums.
- Prepare leaflets and publicity so that the timing coincides with Forum publicity.
- Be prepared to consider having Officers attend some (or all) of the briefings and Neighbourhood Forum meetings. This can be as many as 80-90 over a ten week period.
- Consider any visual aids and equipment that will help the public respond to the consultation.

Contact

Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service	Tel: 01274 431447
Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01535 438008
Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431066
John Breen Bradford South Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431155
Mohammed Taj Bradford West Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 432597
Chris Flecknoe Shipley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 437074

“Speak Out!” Panel

Summary	“Speak Out!” is a joint initiative between Bradford Council and Bradford Health Authority. It is a panel of 2,500 local residents balanced with the local population at large in terms of age, gender, ethnic origin, employment status, and geography. Panel members are sent postal questionnaires about 4 times a year.
Examples	“Speak Out!” has been used to obtain public views about a range of different policy and service related issues. The panel has been used to ask about perceptions of crime and fear of crime as part of a wider consultation about crime and disorder. The information was used to develop a crime and disorder reduction strategy. Panel members were also asked for their views of the education system as part of a fundamental review of schools in the District. “Speak Out!” has been used to develop performance indicators as part of the Best Value process, and also been used to ask about levels of satisfaction with particular aspects of services. On occasions a whole “Speak Out!” survey has been based around specific groups of services (eg recreation, services for older people).
Useful for	Straightforward issues that can be easily understood by recipients of postal questionnaires. Good for asking about services which most people use (eg refuse collection) or about policy issues about which most people are likely to have a view (eg crime). Best used for District wide issues, but has been used on a Constituency basis.
Not useful	Complicated issues which require explanation or discussion. Shouldn’t be used to ask about specialist services used by only a small proportion of the population. Don’t use to ask about issues or services about which most people have little knowledge (panel members won’t respond if they see the questionnaire as a test!). Not suitable for finding out the views of people in small geographical areas (smaller than constituency). We normally get below average response rates from young people and panel members from minority ethnic groups, “Speak Out!” is not suitable if responses from these groups are of particular interest.
Equal rights	Large print versions of the questionnaire are available to panel members who request them as are tape versions. Asian language speakers who cannot read or write English are offered face to face or telephone interviews.
Costs	Each “Speak Out!” survey costs about £8,000. This is paid for by the service(s) making use of the panel. The panel originally cost £25,000 to establish and the three organisations contribute £8,000 between them each year to maintain it. The maintenance involves replacing a third of panel members each year.
How to use	In order to ensure that panel members do not receive several questionnaires at once a forward plan of surveys is drawn up by the three organisations. The Council will only get to use “Speak Out!” twice in a year, so if you are hoping to use “Speak Out!” you need to plan it well in advance. A decision about the topic for a “Speak Out!” survey is generally made about 3 months in advance to allow time for the questionnaire to be designed and printed.

There is a three-year forward plan of “Speak Out!” surveys, closely linked to the programme of Best Value reviews. If you want your service to be included in the forward plan, please contact Mike Barnett (ext.2221) in the first instance.

If you are successful you then need to think about transferring your topic into questions to be included in the questionnaire. In particular you will need to ensure that your questionnaire is easy to understand, the Research & Consultation Unit will be able to provide assistance.

Contact For general information about “Speak Out!” and assistance in questionnaire design contact Mike Barnett, Senior Research Officer tel:01274 432221.

You may also wish to contact people who have made use of “Speak Out!” in the past to find out how it helped them. Some examples are:

Crime & Disorder	Gillian Mayfield	432035
Waste Strategy	Damian Fisher	432411
Libraries	Jane Heap	434681
Grounds Maintenance	Dick Webb	432409

Community Development Network

Summary	There are Community Development Networks within each of the Area Panel areas. It consists of people who work in the community, active individuals, and service providers who carry out community development activity. They develop community development activities for each area. There is a District wide Network day every two years.	
Examples	Community development networks provide a forum for people to work together on an area basis to address community needs. They have in the past been used to consult on issues such as health needs and community safety.	
Useful for	Accessing the views of activists and community leaders. Good for developing partnership working. Good for discussing broad policy type issues.	
Not useful	Not good for locally based issues (Neighbourhood Forums are better). Not the mechanism to use if you want representative numerical feedback.	
Equal Rights	Community Development networks reflect community activity in the area, and each of the five areas is different. It can't be guaranteed that all communities choose to be involved.	
Costs	Most costs are built in, but you will need to provide any consultation materials you want to use. In addition you will need to send an officer to the meeting.	
How to use	The first step is to contact the appropriate Area Coordinator if the consultation is limited to one area. The Area Coordinator will be able to tell you when the next meeting is due to take place and whether the Community Development Network is an appropriate forum for your consultation. If your consultation is District Wide you will need to contact the Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service.	
Contact	Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service	Tel: 01274 431447
	Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01535 438008
	Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431066
	John Breen Bradford South Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431155
	Mohammed Taj Bradford West Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 432597
	Chris Flecknoe Shipley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 437074

Special Forums

Summary	Special Forums are one off events, which are normally locally based in clusters (like Neighbourhood Forums), but can be Area or Constituency based. They are used to discuss specific issues of high public interest												
Examples	Special forums have been called in response to public concern about specific issues such as Thornbury roundabout, or the Denholme BSE incinerator. Also special forums have been held to discuss policy related issues such as the modernising local government debate.												
Useful for	Discussing issues which are of great importance to the wider community.												
Not useful	Less high profile issues (Neighbourhood Forums should be used). Those attending Special Forums are unlikely to be “representative” of the whole population. Other forms of consultation (eg sample surveys) are more useful for obtaining representative numerical feedback.												
Equal rights	Area Coordinators have already thought about access to buildings, interpreting into Asian languages where appropriate, holding some meetings during the day to encourage elderly people or women with children to attend. You need to think about whether your particular consultation has any additional equal rights implications.												
Cost	If you need a Special Forum to be called you will be expected to contribute toward the cost of organising the forum. For example, hiring of venues, mailing out details of the meeting(s), preparing any consultation materials.												
How to use	The first step is to contact the appropriate Area Coordinator if the consultation is limited to one locality or area. The Area Coordinator will be able to agree an appropriate timescale with you. As with any consultation careful planning and a realistic timescale are key to a successful consultation. If your consultation is District Wide you will need to contact the Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service.												
Contact	<table><tr><td>Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service</td><td>Tel: 01274 431447</td></tr><tr><td>Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator</td><td>Tel: 01535 438008</td></tr><tr><td>Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator</td><td>Tel: 01274 431066</td></tr><tr><td>John Breen Bradford South Area Coordinator</td><td>Tel: 01274 431155</td></tr><tr><td>Mohammed Taj Bradford West Area Coordinator</td><td>Tel: 01274 432597</td></tr><tr><td>Chris Flecknoe Shipley Area Coordinator</td><td>Tel: 01274 437074</td></tr></table>	Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service	Tel: 01274 431447	Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01535 438008	Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431066	John Breen Bradford South Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431155	Mohammed Taj Bradford West Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 432597	Chris Flecknoe Shipley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 437074
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Constituency Advisory Groups

Summary	Shipley has a Constituency Advisory Groups which is constituency based and consist of neighbourhood forum representatives, local Councillors, local interest groups, and major service providers in the area. They meet prior to each Shipley Community Area Panel.	
Examples	Constituency Advisory Groups generally discuss policy related issues and matters that will be decided at the Community Area Panel, or area based service delivery issues.	
Useful for	Providing considered feedback on policy related or thematic issues.	
Not useful	Feedback at a small area level. If you need representative or quantifiable feedback.	
Equal Rights	Efforts are made to ensure that all sections of the community are represented, but this cannot be guaranteed.	
Costs	You will be expected to attend the Advisory Group meeting(s) and briefings to consult about your issue. You will be responsible for providing any consultation materials.	
How to use	The first step is to contact the appropriate Area Coordinator if the consultation is limited to one area. The Area Coordinator will be able to agree an appropriate timescale with you. As with any consultation careful planning and a realistic timescale are key to a successful consultation. If your consultation is District Wide you will need to contact the Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service.	
Contact	Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service	Tel: 01274 431447
	Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01535 438008
	Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431066
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Area Based Conferences

Summary	Consists of individuals and organisations from the whole Constituency. Everyone on a Neighbourhood Forum mailing list is invited and they are widely advertised. They take place once a year and attract between 100 and 180 people.	
Examples	Area conferences have been used to determine issues and priorities around the Community Plan, and to review its implementation.	
Useful for	Consulting with residents about Constituency or District wide issues.	
Not Useful	Small area issues (Neighbourhood Forums are better). Unlikely that those who attend will be representative of the whole community, therefore not useful in obtaining representative numerical feedback	
Equal Rights	All sections of the community are invited but it cannot be guaranteed that all will attend. You need to discuss with the Area Coordinator any particular equal rights issues that may be relevant to your consultation.	
Costs	As a minimum you will need to pay for a mail out, other advertising material, any consultation material and room hire. You will also need to ensure that you have staff available to assist with organising the conference and to be there on the day to carry out the consultation.	
How to use	Your first step is to contact the Area Coordinator, or if it is a District wide consultation, the Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service. The Area Coordinator may agree to organise an Area Conference, but more likely will be able to give you advice and assistance in arranging your own.	
Contact	Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service	Tel: 01274 431447
	Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01535 438008
	Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431066
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Locally Based Partnerships

Summary	A number of locally based partnerships exist in different parts of the District, and they are available for detailed consultation on specific issues. They consist of concerned residents and local community groups, but on a smaller scale than Community Development networks.	
Examples	Examples of Community based partnerships exist in Clayton, West Bowling, Thornton, Shipley town centre Braithwaite Partnership, Frizinghall Partnership, Horton Grange Partnership. They generally discuss community and economic issues.	
Useful	Useful for getting detailed feedback on specific issues that affect the particular locality.	
Not useful	For representative or numerical feedback from an area. For District or area consultations.	
Equal rights	Local Partnerships tend to reflect the makeup of the local community, but this cannot be guaranteed.	
Costs	Your costs will be mainly in terms of staff time spent planning and undertaking your consultation. However, you will also need to pay for producing any consultation material.	
How to use	You will need to contact the appropriate Area Coordinator, who will be able to tell you if there is a locally based partnership in your area of interest and when and where it meets. As with other consultations you will need to carefully prepare in conjunction with the Area Coordinator and fit in with the necessary timescale.	
Contact	Janice Thornton Head of the Neighbourhood Support Service	Tel: 01274 431447
	Patrick Lawton Keighley Area Coordinator	Tel: 01535 438008
	Bhulla Singh Bradford North Area Coordinator	Tel: 01274 431066
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Consultation By Young People

Summary	Young people are in the best position to carry out research and consultation with other young people. This is often facilitated by the Youth Service or by the Children's Participation Project.
Examples	Young people were organised by the Youth Service to carry out consultation with other young people about their views about, and experience of, crime and disorder as part of a wider audit of crime and disorder. Forums and conferences have also been held around issues of particular interest to young people such as housing and homelessness.
Useful for	Young people know best how to approach other young people and about the sorts of consultation techniques most likely to appeal to their peers.
Not useful	Unlikely that feedback will be representative of all young people. You also need to be aware that young people aged under 16 can't be interviewed or consulted in any formal way without obtaining permission from their parent or guardian.
Equal rights	Need to ensure that you use a cross section of different young people, so that no groups are excluded. Need to think about locations for consultations and who might be excluded from attending.
Costs	This can vary depending on the methods used. The very minimum would be staff time to prepare the consultations, payments to the young people carrying out the consultation, and a small "hospitality" fund to encourage other young people to get involved.
How to use	Consultations with young people can be carried out in a wide variety of ways. The Youth service may be able to facilitate a consultation if it is an issue of particular interest to them, you would need to contact a Youth Services Officer in the first instance, there is one for each constituency. The Children's Participation Project regularly carries out consultation exercises, you may wish to discuss your issue with them to see if they may facilitate the consultation.
Contact	Heather Esiri Tel: 01274 393741 Youth Service Munaf Patel Tel: 01274 720340 Children's Participation Project

Food Forum

Summary

The Food Forum meets twice a year. Its objectives are:

- To discuss guidance required by businesses.
- To disseminate information relating to changes to legislation, UK and EC Industry Guides, Codes of Practice e.g.
- To facilitate the organisation of seminars, workshops and short courses.
- To promote the exchange of information between businesses and Local Authority.
- To act as a consultation body for proposed new legislation, codes of practice and guidance.
- To participate as appropriate in national, regional or local projects for the purpose of enhancing food safety.

The Food Forum consists of representatives from the following organisations: Housing and Environmental Protection, Bradford Chamber of Trade, Trade Association of Asian Restaurant Owners, Bradford Branch of the National Association of Master Bakers, Bradford Butchers Retail Association, Licensed Victuallers Association, Bradford Retail Action Group, major retail organisations and other recognised bodies representing small and medium sized businesses.

Housing and Environmental Protection also produce a newsletter 'Feeders Digest' twice a year (March/April and October/November). This is circulated to Food Forum members and to all registered Food Premises in the Bradford District.

Examples

Issues that members of the Food Forum have been consulted on include the Butchers HACCP, Food Standards Agency, Best Value, genetically modified foods and E-coli 0157 Sampling Survey.

Useful for

Disseminating information on legislation and topical food safety issues. Gaining views from members of the group for example, to provide a response to proposed government legislation.

Not useful

Would be of limited use unless food related.

Equal Rights

The Forum is sensitive and flexible to the needs of the different partners. For example, Basic Food Hygiene Training for Chinese businesses was identified as a need. The training was arranged and delivered in a Chinese language.

Costs

The main cost will be officer time in producing briefing notes or attending meetings and a mailing charge for specific mail shots.

How to use

Initially please speak to Sandra Walbran, Food Safety Manager, Environmental Protection and Waste Management.

Meetings take place around April and October each year. A briefing note would need to be provided or the officer would be invited to speak at the meeting.

Contact

Sandra Walbran, Food Safety, Environmental Protection and Waste Management

Tel: 01274 434666

Fax: 01274 430839

Bradford Area Occupational Health And Safety Forum

Summary

A unique partnership of over 200 public, private, voluntary and trade union organisations in the Bradford area working together to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of people at work. The Forum Working Group has 16 elected members and meets every 4 – 6 weeks. Health and Safety presentations are held on a quarterly basis on key topics. The Forum produces the 'Well at Work' newsletter twice a year. This is circulated to Forum 'members', 1,500 small and medium sized enterprises, GP surgeries, all libraries and voluntary sector groups across the Bradford District.

Examples

Disseminating information and obtaining views. Invite Working Group members to comment on Central Government's consultative documents. Presentation on topics can be given e.g. Education Social Work Services gave a presentation on employing young people.

Useful for

Only of use for issues relating to occupational health and safety.

Not useful

-

Equal Rights

The Forum seeks to attract more contacts from the Asian business community and organisations representing the Asian community as this is currently limited. Housing and Environmental Protection have worked with the Health & Safety Executive and others to specifically reach Asian businesses.

Costs

The main cost will be officer time in producing briefing notes or attending meetings. If the officer were to host the meeting they may have to provide the room and refreshments. Appropriate articles for the newsletter would be included free of charge. A mailing charge for specific mail shots.

How to use

Place an item on the Forum Working Group agenda (meetings are held every 4-6 weeks). Include an article in the 'Well at Work' newsletter or circulate information to Forum members.

Contact

Geoff Twentyman, Health and Safety at Work, Environmental Protection and Waste Management

Tel: 01274 433928

Fax 01274 430839

Private Sector Housing Landlords Forum

Summary The inaugural meeting of the Landlords Forum was held on February 24th 2000. Following consultation with landlords it has been decided that future meetings of the Forum will be held three times a year.

The objectives of the Forum are:-

- To disseminate information relating to changes to legislation, Codes of Practice, etc.
- To promote the exchange of information between landlords and the Local Authority and other enforcement agencies.
- To act as a consultation body for proposed new legislation, Codes of Practice and guidance.
- To facilitate the organisation of seminars, short courses on issues relevant to rented private sector housing.

It is intended that the Landlords Forum will include individuals and representatives from Managing Agents and Corporate landlords.

Useful for Dissemination information on legislation and topical issues relevant to private sector housing.
Gaining views from members of the group, for example to provide a response to proposed government legislation.

Not useful Would be of limited use, unless housing related.

Equal Rights The Forum is open to all landlords and aims to be sensitive and flexible to the need of the different members.

Costs The main costs will be officer time in producing briefing notes or attending meetings.
There would be a mailing charge for specific mail shots.

How to use Initially please contact Julie Rhodes, Environmental Health Manager, Specialist Private Sector Housing, Housing and Environmental Protection.

Meetings will take place around February, June and October each year. A briefing note would need to be provided and/or the officer/representative of the organisation would be invited to speak at the meeting.

Contact Julie Rhodes, Specialist Private Sector Housing, Housing and Environmental Protection
Tel: 01535 618281
Fax: 01535 618044

Private Sector Housing Newsletter

- Summary** "Let's Talk" is a newsletter produced by Housing and Environmental Protection for landlords of residential property. The first edition was distributed to all landlords known to the Council in February 2000, after which further issues will be produced twice yearly (February and August).
It is intended that the newsletter will act as a mechanism for disseminating information on legislation and other topical issues relating to housing. It will also be used to promote the proposed Landlord's Forum and University Accreditation Scheme. It may also be used as a vehicle for receiving feedback from landlords on consultation documents and proposed changes to legislation and policy.
- Useful For** Disseminating information on housing related issues.
It is also hoped that it will provide a mechanism for consulting landlords of rented property on a variety of issues.
- Not Useful** Would be of limited use, unless housing related.
- Equal Rights** The newsletter will be circulated to all landlords known to the Council.
- Costs** The main cost will be officer time in the preparation of articles.
Appropriate articles for the newsletter could be included free of charge.
There would be a mailing charge for specific mail shots.
- How To Use** Initially please contact Julie Rhodes, Environmental Health Manager, Specialist Private Sector Housing, Housing and Environmental Protection.
- Contact** Julie Rhodes, Specialist Private Sector Housing
Tel: 01535 618281
Fax: 01535 618044

Tenant Involvement Service

Summary The Tenant Involvement service is based in the Housing Directorate. The service supports and develops tenants, residents, and other stakeholder groups across the district.

The aim of the service is to provide tenants, residents and other stakeholders with the opportunities to be involved in the decision-making forums within housing and within other council departments.

The service supports a well-developed structure of involvement, which is used by Housing and for wider Council consultation.

66 Tenants/Residents Groups.

4 Area Federations.

1 District Federation.

1 Monitoring Group.

1 Ethnic Minority Forum

1 Housing Forum Sub Group.

Each of these groups meets once a month with Housing officers, senior officers and Elected members to discuss and make recommendations concerning housing and related service issues.

Members of the District Federation have places in the Councils political structure.

The service also supports the Tenant Resident and Stakeholder Monitoring group. This group directly evaluates and monitors services delivered by Housing Directorate.

The group makes monthly reports to the District Federation, which is then fed, into Council committees.

Examples New legislation has been introduced under Best Value, to ensure tenants are given a greater say in how the services they receive are delivered. Tenant Compacts have been developed in partnership with users to set specific targets for service delivery.

The Tenant Compacts developed cover, how do be more involved in key issues around, Crime Reduction, Race & Housing Issues and in the strategic decisions through the District Compact.

Compacts outline new ways of being involved and consulted.

Housing and Environmental Protection produce a quarterly newsletter Housing News that informs and consults with all council tenants.

The Tenant Involvement Section produces a quarterly newsletter, which is used for consultation with members of tenants & resident groups.

Useful for	<p>The Tenant Involvement Service provides support to individuals who wish to become actively engaged in tenant & resident group work. Providing opportunities for tenants and resident groups to become involve at all levels where decisions are taken.</p> <p>Individual users will find the service useful for gaining access to a range of forums that can be used to air individual views about the services provided by Housing and other council departments.</p> <p>The service also provides access and support for tenants & residents to engage in broader issues around housing and tenants rights, by providing the opportunity for contact with National tenant organisations and European Tenants movement.</p> <p>The Tenant Involvement Service is potentially useful to any service that wants to consult or involve Council tenants</p>
Not Useful	You won't be able to obtain quantifiable information from tenants.
Equal rights	<p>Tenant Involvement is a key service promoting equal rights. Encouraging groups to embrace equality issues, and promote active involvement of traditionally excluded groups.</p> <p>The service supports an ethnic minority forum for the development of issues concerned with Race and Housing.</p>
Costs	<p>The Tenant Involvement Service provides resources and support to groups/individuals who wish to represent their community and who meet certain criteria.</p> <p>If you wish to make use of the Tenant Involvement Service to assist with a consultation or involvement e to assist with a consultation or involvement exercise there may be costs involved.</p>
How to use	Please contact Cathy Kaye, as below.
Contact	<p>Cathy Kaye Senior Manager Tenant Involvement</p> <p>Tel: 01274 434452</p> <p>Fax: 01274 434818</p>

Section D

Choosing the Method, A Guide to Community Consultation and Research Methods:

- Face to face interviews
- Telephone interviews
- Self completion questionnaires
- Focus groups
- In-depth interviews
- Community visioning
- Mystery customers
- Consulting representative groups
- User complaints and comments scheme
- Public meetings
- Road shows/exhibition/open days
- Citizens' jury
- Service user groups
- Planning for real
- Workshops
- Fish-bowl Technique
- Useful Contacts

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SECTION D: CHOOSING THE METHOD, A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND RESEARCH METHODS

This section sets out a number of different community consultation and research methods that you may wish to consider using. For each method, a general description is given along with examples of how each has been used in the past. Contact numbers are given for people who have expertise in using each method. The section ends by giving contact numbers of people with general expertise in research methods who may be able to give you some assistance.

Face to Face Interviews

Summary	Face to face interviews are commonly used to obtain information on views, attitudes and behaviour. They are usually conducted by trained interviewers using a structured questionnaire. The interviewer is able to clarify any ambiguities, explain issues, answer queries etc.
Examples	<p>Face to face interviews are regularly used in the Council to obtain the views of service users, consult the public etc.</p> <p>The Youth Service has used face-to-face interviews to find out about the needs and wants of young people and this information has been used to inform provision.</p> <p>Transportation and Planning have used them to find out how different road proposals would affect trade to a small shopping centre.</p> <p>Face-to-face interviews were used to obtain base-line information in the New Deal for Communities Area (Little Horton). Residents were questioned about their views on the area, local problems, housing conditions etc. Similar household surveys have been carried out by SRB projects.</p>
Useful for	Providing fairly detailed information on a representative sample of the population. The problem of non-respondents, and whether they differ substantially from respondents, is minimised, as the response rate using this method tends to be fairly good.
Not useful	Not appropriate for complex or in-depth issues or where the respondent needs time to think about an issue.
Equal Rights	Where the views of minority or 'hard to reach' groups are needed, quota sampling can be used to ensure that they are included in the survey. Face-to-face interviews can also be used in addition to other methods (e.g. postal questionnaires) to contact hard-to-reach groups. Respondents do not need to be able to read or write. Asian language respondents who do not speak English should be offered an interview with an Asian language interviewer
Costs	<p>The cost of using this method will vary according to the length of the interview and the sample size.</p> <p>A door-to-door survey of 500 residents will cost around £10,000.</p>
Time scale	Allow at least 3 months.
Contact	The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advice on undertaking research and can help in commissioning research from external organisations. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839.

You may wish to contact other people who have made use of face-to-face interviews in the past to find out how they have been useful:

- Housing Needs and Conditions Alistair Nugent Tel: 432497
- New Deal Baseline Survey David Mosley Tel: 431441
- SRB Baseline and monitoring surveys Mike Barnett Tel: 432221

Telephone Interviews

Summary	Telephone interviews are personal interviews over the phone, usually conducted by trained interviewers using a structured questionnaire. They tend to be used when a large representative sample is needed and the time scale for the survey is short.
Examples	A survey of Bingley shoppers used telephone interviews to obtain information on residents shopping habits and how the town could attract more custom. A telephone survey was used to gather opinions from people who had been granted a Community Learning Account, about how they have benefited from the training or learning they had undertaken, and particularly whether it had helped them obtain a job.
Useful for	This type of survey can be useful where the subject matter is simple and straightforward and a quick, low budget consultation is required. Telephone interviews usually generate a better response than postal questionnaires but are not as good as face-to-face interviews in this respect.
Not useful	Not appropriate for lengthy interviews (more than about 10 minutes), complex or in-depth issues or where the respondent needs time to think about an issue. Where visual aids are needed.
Equal Rights	Excludes those without a telephone who may be more disadvantaged. Excludes many of those with a hearing impairment. Respondents do not need to be able to read or write. Asian language respondents who do not speak English will require an Asian language interviewer.
Costs	If done in house, telephone surveys can be expensive in terms of staff time. External cost is about £10 per interview.
Time scale	Allow 1-2 months
Contact	The Policy and Research Unit can offer general advise on undertaking research and can help in commissioning research from external organisations. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839.

You may wish to contact other people who have made use of telephone interviews in the past to find out how they have been useful:

Bingley Shoppers Survey	Phil Williams	tel: 434635
Community Learning Accounts survey	Mary Johnston	tel: 434035

Self-Completion Questionnaires

Summary	<p>This is a popular survey method that can be used to examine a wide range of issues. It is important that questions are clearly worded, as there is no interviewer to explain them. Most questions tend to be of a multiple-choice format as these are easy and quick to complete. Self-completion questionnaires are often postal surveys.</p>
Examples	<p>The Council regularly uses self-completion questionnaires to consult members of the public about Council services, priorities or proposed changes.</p> <p>Recently a postal questionnaire/leaflet was used to inform the public about the Council's proposal to modernise the political structure and to find out their views on it. Questionnaires were sent to all individuals on the electoral register (about 344,000).</p> <p>Self-completion questionnaires have also been used in staff surveys. A survey on the training needs of disabled staff used self-completion questionnaires and the information from it was used to inform a training strategy and programme.</p> <p>Transportation and Planning have also used self-completion questionnaires to examine communication in the Division.</p>
Useful for	<p>When a large number of people need to be consulted and the subject matter is simple and straightforward. Where a reasonable response rate can be expected. Where most questions can be asked in a multiple-choice format (open ended questions often get a poor response). When budgets are limited.</p>
Not useful	<p>Where the subject is complicated or qualitative information is required. The response rates to self-completion questionnaires vary greatly depending on a number of factors, including the subject matter, the survey population, the follow-up, whether any incentive is offered etc. Response rates to postal questionnaires, in particular, can be very poor (typically 10-20%). Some groups may be more likely to respond than others and it is often difficult to determine whether respondents are representative of the total population.</p>
Equal Rights	<p>Respondents must be able to read and write. For Asian language respondents who do not speak English the questionnaire may need to be made available in different languages. However, many Asian respondents who cannot read English can also not read other languages, a taped version may be more appropriate. Respondents with visual impairments will need to be accommodated (e.g. with large print, Braille and/or taped versions of the questionnaire).</p>
Costs	<p>One of the cheapest forms of survey - cheaper than face to face and telephone interviews. If done in-house, costs can be very low, mainly printing and postage. However, they do require a large amount of staff time for data entry and analysis. Access to a suitable computer package for analysis will be necessary. If an external organisation is used costs are variable, depending on sample size and length of questionnaire.</p>

Time scale 2-3 months

Contact The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advise on undertaking research and can help in commissioning research from external organisations. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839.

You may wish to contact other people who have made use of self-completion questionnaires in the past to find out how they have been useful:

- Staff surveys John Warbuton
Human Resources Department
Tel: 432130
- Training Needs of Disabled Staff Sandra Broadbent, Training & Devt.
Officer, Tel: 437691
- Large postal surveys Phil Williams, Research and Consultation
Tel: 434635

Focus Groups

Summary	Focus Groups are informal discussion groups, usually of about 8-12 people with a trained facilitator. The groups normally run for about 1½ hours. In order to ensure that a group works well together, members generally share broadly similar experiences (in practice this tends to mean that they are of a similar age, sex, class, ethnic origin etc.). Focus groups are used to examine issues in more depth where the researcher is interested in views, attitudes and opinions. The facilitator's role is to manage and direct the group, ensuring that the relevant issues are addressed. Focus groups are usually held somewhere comfortable and quiet with refreshments available to encourage participants to relax.
Examples	As part of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Audit, focus groups were held with some hard to reach groups to find out their views on crime and disorder in the District. Focus groups were held with Asian women and victims of domestic violence. Housing have used focus groups to examine the housing needs of the African Caribbean community.
Useful for	As well as a main method of research, focus groups can be used before a quantitative survey to identify key issues and question areas. They can also be used after quantitative research to explore issues that have come up in more depth. Can be used to focus on certain groups in the community that may be of particular interest or not typically picked up using other research methods (e.g. the Asian population, non-users of services, the unemployed etc.). Focus groups can highlight issues that the researcher has not thought about. Being part of a group may encourage some people to speak out when they otherwise may not have. Useful for evaluating visual materials, such as leaflets, posters, newsletters etc. and getting spontaneous reactions. Can be a good way of consulting people who cannot read or write.
Not useful	Because only small numbers are involved, focus groups are not statistically representative. Results cannot be generalised to the wider population. One person could end up dominating the group and influencing what others say. Focus groups tend not to work so well with certain groups (e.g. young people). They are not appropriate for examining personal or embarrassing issues. Analysis of the information derived from focus groups is time consuming.
Equal Rights	Depending on the needs of group members you may need to consider accessibility issues relating to the venue (e.g. physical access for disabled people, accessibility by public transport, whether the venue should be local or central etc.) Consideration may need to be given to how those with hearing impairments can be accommodated. Asian language facilitators may be needed.
Costs	If run in house, minimum costs are about £10-15 per participant (to cover expenses). Other costs could include room hire, refreshments, admin costs, childcare and transport costs for participants. External costs are about £1,000 per group. This cost would include designing, recruiting and facilitating a focus group and producing a report of the findings.

Time scale 1-2 months

Contact The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advice on using focus groups and can help in commissioning them from external organisations. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839

You may wish to contact other people who have made use of focus groups in the past to find out how they have been useful:

- Crime and Disorder Gillian Mayfield, Senior Policy Officer, Tel: 432035
- Housing Needs Alistair Nugent, Housing strategy, Tel: 432497

In-Depth Interviews

Summary	These are face-to-face interviews with a skilled interviewer. They tend to last between 1 - 2 hours, which allows time for the interviewer to build a rapport with the respondent. The interviews tend to be semi-structured i.e. the interviewer has set question areas to cover, but there is scope for probing an issue in more depth or for following up new issues that the respondent highlights. In-depth interviews can be taped to ensure accuracy in recording responses, but this can also be off-putting to the respondent.
Examples	<p>Housing have used in-depth interviews to examine attitudes to social housing amongst Asian households and to obtain information on likely future housing patterns.</p> <p>A community survey in Gillington found that satisfaction amongst Pakistani service users was far lower than for other users. In-depth interviews were used to examine the reasons for this in depth.</p>
Useful for	In Depth interviews conducted before quantitative research can be useful in providing background information, identifying key issues, the most appropriate language to use etc. After quantitative research, depth interviews can be used to explore findings in more depth. Useful when little is known about a subject area or where the subject matter is sensitive or personal. Good for understanding attitudes and behaviour. Allows the use of written and visual materials. Can highlight issues that the researcher has not thought about. For researching complex issues that cannot be adequately addressed using a structured questionnaire.
Not useful	Where a large representative sample is needed or quantifiable data is wanted. If only small numbers are involved (as is usually the case), depth interviews are not statistically representative. Fieldwork and analysis of the interviews is time consuming.
Equal Rights	Hard to reach groups can be targeted. Respondents do not need to be literate. Asian language respondents will need Asian language interviewers and appropriate cultural awareness. It may be difficult to undertake in-depth interviews with those with severe hearing impairments unless signers can be used.
Costs	£100-£200 per interview if commissioned externally. If carried out in-house the main cost is staff time (allow at least half a day per interview plus time to transcribe and analyse the tapes).
Time scale	1-2 months
Contact	The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advice on using in-depth interviews and can help in commissioning research from external organisations. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839

You may wish to contact other people who have made use of in-depth interviews in the past to find out how they have been useful:

- Housing Gillian Mayfield, Senior Policy Officer, Tel: 432035

Community Visioning

Summary This is an exercise that helps a community to establish an image of the future it would like. The idea is to involve the community in identifying the issues that matter and in creating a shared vision. Methods used in community visioning can be quite diverse but usually involve getting people together to discuss/consider the issue with the help of a skilled facilitator. The aim is to achieve a consensus – i.e. a shared vision.

Examples Bradford has recently used community visioning to develop the 2020 Vision. The process involved a large number of different groups, including the public, voluntary organisations, community groups, young people, other agencies, Council staff, the business community etc. A series of meetings and events were held where these groups were able to have their say on how they would like to see Bradford develop in the next 20 years.

An example of one of the 2020 visioning events is set out below.

The aim was to bring together a good cross section of women: Girls and young women; women with small children; middle aged women; older women; women who are and women who are not working outside home; women with disability. The Community Development Service organised the event jointly with the Millan Centre. This is a women's project, which has a good reputation within the community and has experience at organising events that attract large numbers of women. Working with people involved in the centre was the key to the success of this consultation.

For the 2020 Vision work one consultation event was targeted principally at Muslim women, and was attended by 85 women.

It was agreed that the best way to encourage more women to participate in this consultation process was to organise an event that would offer a combination of socialising, entertainment and discussion. This was seen as a way to encourage women to get involved who did not have any previous experience of or may be put off by the idea of a 'consultation'.

The entertainment took the form of traditional music, singing, drumming and dancing, with mendhi (henna painting), and food was provided.

In order to reduce the barriers to women's participation a crèche was provided. Leaflets were produced in English and Urdu. The wording on the leaflets was carefully chosen to encourage interest and confidence that this was an event where everyone could participate and contribute.

Leaflets were circulated to groups, schools, mosques and workers across the district, with the offer of transport being available for groups who were travelling from other areas.

There was a group specifically for girls and young women with facilitators that were known to many of the participants.

A small number of deaf young women attended the event and they participated in the discussion groups and plenary with the aid of an interpreter.

Useful for Community planning and the corporate aspects of Best Value.
Encouraging creative thinking.

Not useful Where a representative view is required.

Equal Rights Can be designed to ensure that minority and hard to reach groups in the community are involved (see example above).

Costs This can vary greatly depending on the scale of the exercise, but is usually between £5,000-£10,000 per event.

Time scale Again, this can vary greatly depending on the scale of the exercise, but usually takes between 1-3 months.

Contact Pat Fairfax Tel: 434994
Kersten England, Tel: 434910

Mystery Customers

Summary	This involves someone posing as a customer and assessing the service they receive in detail. The contact could be face to face, by phone, by post or a combination of these.
Examples	Young people with disabilities have acted as mystery customers to Council services and given detailed feedback on the service they received.
Useful for	Evaluating the quality of front line services. Providing detailed information on a service.
Not useful	In most cases it is not practical to use a large enough number of mystery customers to make this technique statistically representative. To assess some services a 'real' case is needed e.g. a planning application. It is important that the exercise is presented to staff positively and that good as well as poor practice is highlighted. If staff are not told about the exercise they may see it as underhand. Alternatively, if they are told, this could influence their behaviour.
Equal Rights	The "mystery customers" need to reflect the make up of actual service users.
Costs	If done in-house and staff are trained, this method can be fairly cheap. A reciprocal arrangement could be made with another organisation to reduce costs.
Time scale	2-3 months
Contact	The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advise on using mystery customers and can help in commissioning research from external organisations. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839

Consulting Representative Groups

Summary	This technique involves the Council writing to or visiting a number of groups that may be representative of a wider community (e.g. community groups, residents groups, pressure groups, business forums etc.). Groups are consulted to find out their views on an issue or proposal. These groups are often a good source of information. In order to facilitate this type of approach the Council is currently involved in developing a database of community and voluntary groups.
Examples	This is a widespread technique used by many services on a regular basis. One example is that as part of the Crime and Disorder Audit the Council wrote to a large number of statutory, voluntary, and private sector organisations operating in the District, with a view to identifying their current activity around community safety activities.
Useful for	Obtaining the views of a wide range of groups in the community. Identifying key issues for particular sections on the community. Can be used in addition to other methods of consultation. Providing in depth, qualitative information on views, attitudes etc.
Not useful	Members of representative groups may be those who hold strong views and opinions and not always actually represent the wider area. Not useful if statistically representative results are required.
Equal Rights	Consulting representative groups may be a way of including harder to reach and minority groups in a consultation.
Costs	Low – as costs are generally in house.
Time scale	1-2 months
Contact	For information about progress with the database of community and voluntary organisations contact: Pat Fairfax 434994

User Complaints and Comments Schemes

Summary	<p>These usually take the form of complaints or comments forms that are available at service points and reception areas or can be sent out to users on request. Schemes are most effective when there is a system in place to ensure that the complaints/comments are dealt with, responded to within a certain time period and form part of regular service reviews. Complaints and comments schemes should be well publicised to encourage feedback.</p>
Examples	<p>The Council has a complaints form and a code of practice for dealing with complaints. Services sections have their own monitoring systems and review complaints at least annually.</p> <p>Bradford Council's sports centres and swimming pools have a comments card scheme where customers are asked a few questions about the quality of service they have received and are given the opportunity to comment on any aspect of the service. From the comments cards, 4 weekly summaries are produced which are reviewed by service managers.</p>
Useful for	<p>Unlike most other consultation methods, complaints/comments forms provide continuous feedback on a service. Useful for identifying problem areas and as a source of new ideas and suggestions.</p>
Not useful	<p>Do not provide balanced or representative feedback from service users as people tend to complete these forms when something has gone wrong or they are not satisfied – i.e. the focus is on the negative. Complaints schemes are not useful for monitoring performance as a good scheme should encourage complaints.</p>
Equal Rights	<p>Respondents must be literate. For Asian language speakers who do not read or write English, forms will need to be made available in different languages. Those with visual impairments will need to be accommodated (e.g. with large print or Braille versions of the form). Complaints that deal specifically with race, gender, or disability should be recorded.</p>
Costs	<p>Minimal in-house running costs.</p>
Time scale	<p>1-2 months to set up.</p>
Contact	<p>The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advice on user complaints and comments schemes. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839</p>

You may wish to contact other people who have made use of comments schemes in the past to find out how they have been useful:

Sports centres comments scheme

Steve Warner, Area Contract Manager
(Bradford North), Tel: 01535 681763

Road shows / Exhibitions / Open Days

Summary	<p>These can be used to inform and consult the public about new proposals or changes. Information can be given through a wide variety of means including visual displays, presentations, videos, slides, photos etc. Other consultation methods can also be incorporated to obtain immediate feedback from those attending e.g. questionnaires, suggestion boxes and face-to-face interviews. Members of staff and Councillors can be made available to explain the proposals, answer any queries etc.</p>
Examples	<p>In April 1999 an exhibition in City Hall was used to inform the public of the proposals put forward by different developers for the new Odsal Stadium. Those attending could complete a questionnaire, which asked for their comments on the different proposals, any concerns or objections they had etc. The exhibition was advertised in the local press. It ran from mid afternoon to early evening to allow as many people as possible to attend.</p> <p>Exhibitions were also used to consult local residents about the UDP where a site was complicated. An exhibition was held in Addingham, for example, where there was concern about a housing site design and the impact it would have on the historic core of the village. The exhibition ran from mid afternoon to mid evening and included displays of the plans, along with photos. Specialist officers were there to talk to local residents about specific aspects of the plan.</p>
Useful for	<p>When visual presentation of a proposal is appropriate (e.g. new building developments, road schemes etc.).</p>
Not useful	<p>Those attending are unlikely to be representative of all service users and, therefore, those completing questionnaires, interviews etc. will also not be representative.</p>
Equal Rights	<p>Varied opening times should be considered to enable different sections of the community to attend (e.g. those working, mothers with young children, the elderly etc.). Consideration should be given to the accessibility of venues.</p>
Costs	<p>Vary greatly depending on the length of the exhibition/roadshow, cost of venues, materials, advertising etc.</p>
Time scale	<p>1-2 months</p>
Contact	<p>You may wish to contact other people who have made use of exhibitions in the past to find out how they have been useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Odsal Stadium Exhibition• Planning <p>Richard Schofield, Senior Property Services Officer, Tel: 432409 Andy Haigh, Group Plan Manager, Tel: 434050</p>

Citizens' Jury

Summary	<p>A panel of between 12 and 20 people, meet for 2-5 days to examine an issue in depth. Members of the jury are chosen from the general public to reflect the make-up of the community but, as the numbers are so small, cannot be truly representative. They hear evidence from expert witnesses, discuss the issue and their final recommendations are reported back to the Council. Although the Council will take the final decision they are committed to taking full account of the jury's recommendations.</p>
Examples	<p>Wigan Council held a 4 day citizens' jury with 16 residents in May 1999 to help decide on the pattern of school holidays across the borough. The jury's task was to examine the relative merits of the existing 3 term system against either a 4 or 5 term system. The jury heard evidence from local and national experts including representatives of parents, governors, students, head teachers and teachers, unions and the business community.</p> <p>Grimethorpe village in South Yorkshire ran the first young people's citizens' jury in November 1999 involving twelve 11-16 year olds for 2 days. Jurors were asked to recommend ways in which young people could help reduce levels of crime and drug use locally. Evidence was heard from local residents, academics, the police, the local MP and the Leader of the Council.</p>
Useful for	<p>Important, complex and controversial issues where public input is needed. Fully involving citizens in the decision making process. Where the Council is committed to acting on the advise of the jury - the jury will quickly lose credibility if it's recommendations are not given considerable weight.</p>
Not useful	<p>Where there is a need to consult large numbers. Where a representative view from the public is required. Jurors are not representative of the public and as they have been given much more information than the general public, may view the issue differently.</p>
Equal Rights	<p>The venue needs to be accessible and convenient for all participants. Jurors with hearing impairments would have to be accommodated (e.g. with signers, written material, a hearing loop). Asian language jurors would need translators.</p>
Costs	<p>Experience from citizens juries held elsewhere indicates that the costs can be anything from £15,000 to £25,000. This depends on the level of expenses paid to jurors and the amount of bought-in expertise. This excludes other staff time, which is likely to be considerable.</p>
Time scale	<p>2-3 months</p>
Contact	<p>Although a Citizens' Jury has not been used in Bradford before, the Policy and Research Unit will be able to provide further information and advise. Contact Mike Barnett, Senior Policy Officer, Tel: 432221</p>

Citizens'
Workshop

A variation on the citizens' jury is a citizens' workshop, where participants meet for a day to consider an issue. This would be suitable for less complex issues. A citizens' workshop has the advantage of being a lot cheaper and would be easier to recruit to as less time is required.

Service User Groups

Summary	These are small groups of service users, usually between 8 and 12 people, brought together to discuss a service or particular service issue. They can be used for a variety of purposes, e.g. to involve users in decision making, for market research or to provide more in-depth qualitative information on an issue. Whatever the purpose and role of the group, it is important that this is made explicit to participants so that they have realistic expectations. Group participants should broadly reflect the characteristics of service users. User groups generally meet on a regular basis, which enables a rapport to develop and trust to be built up between group members. Membership tends to be time limited so that members do not become 'experts' or empathise too much with the Council.
Examples	User groups are used by Bradford sports centres and swimming pools where users need to be consulted in more depth about a particular issue that has been highlighted through the comments card scheme (see examples under 'User Complaints and Comments Schemes'). These user groups are held as and when required and do not have a fixed membership.
Useful for	Obtaining users' views on proposed changes. Obtaining new ideas and suggestions. Identifying problem areas early.
Not useful	Where the views of a large representative sample are required. Findings from user groups cannot be generalised to the wider population. One person could end up dominating the group and influencing what others say. Excludes non- users.
Equal Rights	The venue needs to be accessible and convenient for all participants, and should ideally be neutral (not a Council office). Information may need to be provided in different languages and formats. You may need to think about providing transport and child care to ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to attend.
Costs	Costs are minimal but include room hire, refreshments, staff time in running groups and recruiting members.
Time scale	3-4 months
Contact	The Research and Consultation Service can offer general advise on service user groups. Contact Richard Smith, Policy Officer, Tel: 433839 You may wish to contact other people who have made use of service user groups in the past to find out how they have been useful:

- Sports centre user forums

Steve Warner, Area Contract
Manager (Bradford North), Tel:
01535 681763

Planning for Real

Summary	<p>Planning for real is where local people are actively involved in planning changes to their environment. Although a variety of visual materials can be used such as videos, slides, maps etc., this exercise usually involves planning using a large 3D model of the local area. The scale is such that people can see their own houses. The model can be prepared in advance by members of the community. Participants are asked to give their ideas by adding comments cards to the model. There are pre-prepared comments cards, which, depending on the purpose of the consultation exercise could indicate street lights, double glazing, trees, playground equipment etc. Participants are, however, also encouraged to put their own suggestions on the cards. Council officers are available to offer advice. This technique, which was developed in the 1970's, can be a fun way of directly involving the community and giving them a sense of ownership of their area. It also tends to remove confrontation, which is often present in traditional public meetings.</p>
Examples	<p>Locally, Planning for Real has been used by Pat Fairfax, Community Development (Tel: 01274 327762) and Ian Kenning, Newlands Partnership (Tel: 01274 432512). The Newlands Partnership used Planning for Real to involve local people in determining priorities for redesigning parts of the area.</p>
Useful for	<p>Directly involving a community in planning, development and other environmental issues. Empowering local residents and giving them a sense of ownership. Obtaining new ideas and suggestions. Encouraging informal discussion of ideas.</p>
Not useful	<p>Obtaining the views of a large, representative sample of the population.</p>
Equal Rights	<p>A technique that does not require literacy or require all residents to speak the same language. Choice of venue, format of information, access, child care, and transport need to be considered.</p>
Costs	<p>Can vary greatly depending on whether an external company is used or the exercise is done in-house. If external consultants are used allow between £5,000 and £15,000. There is a lot of planning, administration and time involved.</p>
Time scale	<p>2-3 months</p>
Contact	<p>The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation has patented Planning for Real and has a range of information and training sessions: The Poplars, Lightmoor, Telford, TF3 3QN Tel: 01952 590777</p>

Workshops

Summary	<p>Workshops are used by the Transportation and Planning Department as an alternative to the more confrontational public meeting and are structured to stimulate discussion and ideas around specific issues as part of an informed debate.</p> <p>They are generally used at an early stage in the formulation of policy so that different viewpoints and innovative solutions can be properly examined and incorporated. It is made clear that the purpose of the workshop is not to defend existing policy but to look to the future and do things differently if necessary.</p> <p>Workshops may run for a half day with the actual discussion taking up 1 1/2 - 2 hours. Participants are invited to represent a cross section of interests and divided into groups of about 10, each with a facilitator. The groups are deliberately structured to include a broad spectrum of backgrounds and agendas. The facilitator ensures that the debate centres around the key issues and that each participant has a chance to contribute.</p> <p>At the end of the session all groups come together and compare their conclusions to see if there is a consensus emerging.</p>
Examples	<p>As part of work on the Bradford City Centre Strategy, workshops have been held on the future of towns and cities with a wide range of organisations and internally with relevant Council officers.</p> <p>A series of workshops is being held in Saltaire to gauge public reaction to the proposal to make Saltaire a World Heritage Site.</p>
Useful for	<p>Has proved more fruitful in getting feedback from interested organisations than the alternative of public meetings or written comments. Similar to focus groups in that it can raise issues that had not been thought of. Mixing groups from different backgrounds helps each to better understand the others point of view e.g. house builders/property developers can be in the same discussion group as representatives of wildlife groups or residents groups.</p>
Not useful	<p>Success of method depends on whether participants can be considered representative, the terms of reference for discussion and abilities of facilitator to control the session. Analysing the discussion is time consuming.</p>
Equal rights	<p>The workshops have included disabled participants so choice of venue is important for accessibility. Ethnic minorities are deliberately targeted for the contribution they can make to the discussion from their perspective.</p>
Costs	<p>A typical workshop might cost £500-600 to run. This includes room hire and refreshments but not staff time for organisation.</p>
Time scale	<p>Two months to organise and evaluate.</p>
Contact	<p>Transportation and Planning have made widespread use of workshops Dave Preece 01274 434552 will be able to give you more information.</p>

The Fish Bowl



- Summary** This is a listening game, which is useful for getting detailed views and information from a large group of people.
- How to do it**
1. You start off in small groups of between 4 and 6 people, who are tasked with talking about a particular issue. Each group writes down their thoughts and views on a piece of flipchart paper with a marker pen for about 15-20 minutes
 2. The whole room then re-groups, moving their chairs into 2 circles: one circle is a large “fish-bowl” round the outside of the room and the other small circle is the “fish” in the middle of the room. This is a listening exercise.
 3. The small circle are the fish, and one person from each group should sit in this small circle and tell everyone in the room about what was discussed in their group. One person volunteers to write all new thoughts and ideas added to a flipchart paper in the middle. Fish only speak of new ideas and thoughts that have not already been noted.
 4. The large circle is the fish-bowl and these are the listeners – they must listen very carefully to what the fish are saying to check that this is an accurate description of the views put forward by their little groups.
 5. Any listener who disagrees with what is being said by the “spokes-fish” of their group can go up and tap them gently on the shoulder. This means that they will swap places.
- Useful for** Large group of people 40-60 people when you want to get people’s views on a subject. The small groups are useful for talking about difficult issues, which might be sensitive for example health.
- Not useful** Small groups of people or getting specific answers to pre-determined questions.
- Equal Rights** People with mobility difficulties may need help with re-arranging chairs in the room.
- Resources** Flipchart paper, marker pens, chairs, tables, time of facilitator.
- Timescale** Allow 1.5 hours for this exercise plus time in moving furniture.
- Contact** The Research and Consultation Service can offer advise on undertaking this exercise. Contact Karen Done, Tel: 01274 434688

Useful contacts who can assist with research and consultation

Below is a list of people who will be able to give you advice about some or all of the research and consultation methods described in this guide.

Research & Consultation	Mike Barnett	432221
	Karen Done	434688
	Richard Smith	433839
Community Development	Mick Charlton	434970
	Janice Thornton	431447
Housing	Alistair Nugent	432497
Education	Maggie Peel	431727
Social Services	Mark Ayres	432986

Section E

Involving Socially Excluded or Harder to Reach Groups

- What is a “hard to reach group”?
- Why consult with “hard to reach” groups?
- Specific issues for different “hard to reach” groups
- Ethnic Minority Groups
- People with Disabilities
- Young People
- Homeless People
- Gay & Lesbian Community
- Inactive Majority

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What is a “Hard to Reach” Group?

The groups who can be defined as “harder to reach” may be different with each consultation. Generally they are those groups or individuals who are likely to be excluded from a consultation exercise unless special efforts are made to include them.

Examples of groups who may not readily participate are:

- people with little spare time, eg working single parents;
- people who do not understand written or spoken English well;
- those who feel culturally isolated;
- those who feel alienated from, or even suspicious of, the Council that is trying to consult them;
- those with no permanent address;
- those who are not interested in being consulted.

The following pages set out some examples of “harder to reach” groups, and ways in which they can be involved in consultation exercises.

In many cases there are community organisations who represent specific groups of people. Whilst these groups cannot be considered an adequate substitute for consulting individuals, they can be a useful starting point. A list of community and voluntary organisations in Bradford is available from Pat Fairfax (tel: 754994) in the Council’s Community Development Service (see p63 for more detail).

Why consult with “hard to reach” groups?

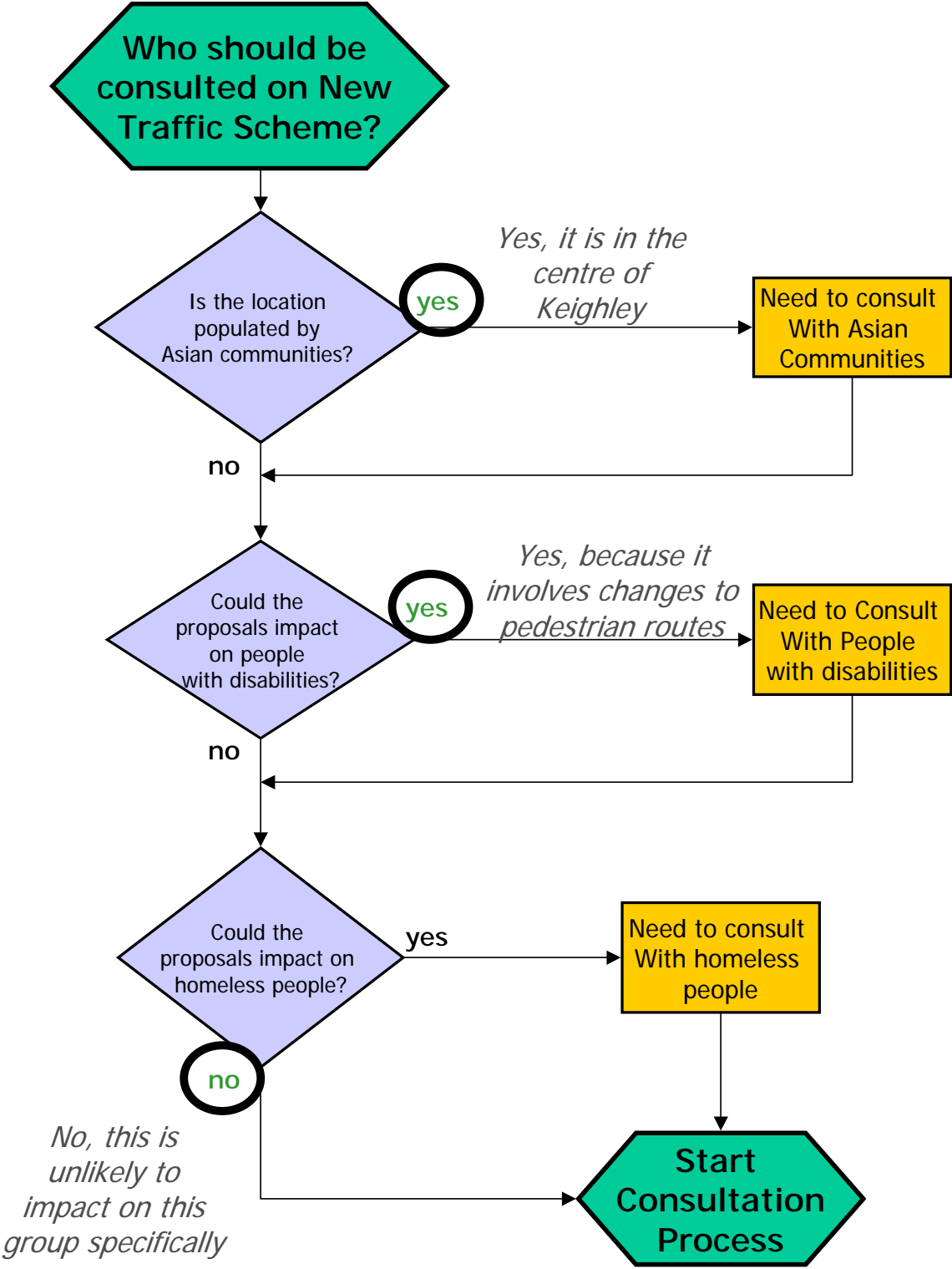
There is an increasing requirement to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to participate in consultation exercises. It is therefore good practice to ensure that everyone is enabled to participate. Although “hard to reach” is a convenient way of describing those that we struggle to consult with, it is in some ways misleading. By labelling some people “hard to reach” implies that the problem lies with them when, in reality, it is the Authority’s job to make sure that its consultation exercises are inclusive. It may be harder work and a bit more expensive to locate, interview and interpret the views of these groups, but they are not fundamentally any harder to reach.

Making consultation inclusive is important because:

- consultation exercises often need to find out the views of an accurate cross-section of the population as a whole; and
- different sections of the community may have needs or views that are different from those of the majority and, if they are not consulted effectively, these needs or views may remain invisible.

Flow-chart for deciding whether to consult with hard-to-reach groups

Example scenario: Consultation on New Traffic Scheme



Specific Issues for Different “Hard to Reach” Groups

Ethnic Minority Groups

Ethnic minority groups are not in any sense a homogenous group, and in fact some ethnic minorities will be much harder to reach than others. Some key points to consider are set out below.

- How will you be able to contact the ethnic minority residents you want to consult (see p10).
- There may be even less previous involvement with, or understanding of, the consultation process. This needs to be clearly explained.
- How are the Council perceived by the group? What needs to change, if anything, to increase trust and confidence?
- Respect needs to be shown for cultural issues (eg separate meetings may be needed for men and women amongst Asian communities).
- Is there a need to use researchers or facilitators from the same cultural background as the target group?
- Is there a need to have interpreters available?
- Make sure your consultation takes account of cultural / religious needs (eg prayer times, Ramadan).
- Some groups of Asian women are very unlikely to attend meetings outside the home (eg Bengali, Pataan), so it may be necessary to find different methods to consult these women.
- For written consultation exercises consider having the information translated into the main Asian languages or recorded verbally onto tape in those languages. The main languages are Urdu, Punjabi, Gujerati, Bengali, and Hindi.

For a practical example of a consultation exercise targeted at Asian Women see p60 of this Guide.

For practical assistance in getting consultation material translated or interpreted contact the Interpreting and Translation Unit (tel: 01274 436541).

South Asian Women

Bradford District has a wealth of diverse ethnic minority communities. There are areas with concentrations of communities from the South Asian origin. Within these communities there are women from various backgrounds, cultures and religions e.g. Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Bangladeshi, Punjabi, Gugerati, Christian and Pathan. Broadly speaking all these are Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani women from South East Asia.

There are a number of issues to consider and practical steps that can be taken to help the participation of women from these communities. The guidelines now describe and discuss these in further detail.

Purdah and Izzat

The “Women only” concept is well accepted in all Asian cultures. Hindu, Sikh, Christian and Muslim women have their own religious circles. Hindu women meet at the Temple whilst Sikh women meet at the Gurdawara for religious communal purposes. In most cases Muslim women are likely to meet at a house for Friday prayers although some space is now created for women in mosques. Muslim communities particularly believe in ‘women only’ provision as a religious requirement. Purdah, meaning belief in women only provision and Izzat, meaning moral code of conduct and respect for the whole family.

Media and Photographs

In most cases dealing with the media and taking photographs is potential a sensitive issue for Asian women. It is likely to be more objectionable amongst Muslim women than Hindu or Sikh women. It is best to ask women beforehand and make it clear to them why and for what purpose the photos are required and where the photos will be displayed.

Communication of Language barriers

The linguistic needs of Asian women need to be catered for. It has been identified many times that language is the main barrier to communication and therefore participation. If interpreting is required then it is important to ensure that the translating and interpreting is undertaken in the attendees language and dialect. For community consultation purposes any translating and interpreting should be done through a qualified bi-lingual female. There are a few useful points that will be helpful in considering language issues:

- Don't assume that because women are from a particular community that they will not speak English
- Be aware that many women will not speak English or have English as a second language
- Women may speak a language but may not be able to read or write in the language
- Pictures/ visual images/ videos/ audio tapes can be a less formal way of presenting information

The following languages are predominantly spoken in the Bradford District: Urdu, Dindi, Bengali, Sylheti, Punjabi, Pushot, Hinko, Mirpuridi Dialect. If you need an interpreter or translator you can contact the Gulberg Centre on 01274 435541.

Venue

The venue should be a place to meet that is non-threatening. These can be places where women are used to meeting such as the local school, drop-in centre and local community centres. Here are a few tips when considering a venue:

- What other activities are taking place at the venue and will this put women off from attending?
- Do women require transport to enable them to attend?
- Do signs need to be in different languages and large print?
- Is the building “neutral” or may it put off certain sections of the community?
- Is there a male caretaker, if so is he going to be around?
- Is there a room for prayers for Muslim women?

Times and dates of meetings

Experience of working with Asian women and contact with the community centres indicates that the best time to hold an event or consultation with Asian women who are not at work is when children are at school. The most popular times for women with children seems to be 9-11am and 1-3pm. If holding the meeting at a local community centre, it is best to check with them to advise on which would be the best time. If you are planning an event at a local school, it will be useful to liaise with the Home School Liaison officer who may be able to advise and guide you through their experience of suitable times for local women. Make sure when arranging consultation that these do not conflict with other major events such as religious festivals or religious days.

Dietary Requirements

If you are organising a meeting where food will be provided then it is important to note the following points:

- Distinction needs to be made between Halal and non Halal meat as Muslim women will only eat Halal meat and most Sikh women will only eat non Halal meat
- Any food should not contain alcohol, i.e. past sauces
- The food should be cooked according to Asian culinary style
- Vegetarian food should be served separately from any meat dishes
- All foods should be clearly labelled when presented
- The majority of Sikh women will not eat eggs

It would be most useful to send out a form to complete asking if women have any dietary requirements in order to meet the needs of women who will be involved in consultations.

For the supply of food you could contact:

- City Hall, Bradford on 01274 432264
- Beggars banquet at St Peters House, Bradford 01274 431441

Shaking of hands

Some women may not feel comfortable shaking hands with men. This is for religious reasons. It may be better to let the women take the initiative to shake hands.

People with Disabilities

Bradford Council endorses a social model of disability, believing that people are not disabled by their condition or impairment but by the way that social, physical or attitudinal barriers are created by society. Any consultation therefore needs to identify how barriers to participation by disabled people can be broken down or overcome.

Disabled people are not a homogenous group, and different issues need to be considered when consulting with different groups of people. This section gives some general guidelines about consulting with disabled people, however, much more detailed guidelines about contact with disabled people can be found in the Council's guide to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 "Managers Guidelines: Removing Barriers to Employment and Service Delivery. A good practice document for Bradford Managers", which is available on BRADWEB.

Mobility Impairments

There are a number of issues to take into account when wanting to consult with residents who have a mobility impairment. When consulting with people who have a mobility impairment the venue is very important. The following points need to be considered

- Is there ramped access to the building?
- Is the event on the ground floor? If not is there a lift large enough to take a wheelchair?
- Are any break out rooms within easy access of the main event?
- Are there accessible toilets?
- People may have a mobility impairment but not use a wheelchair, and it is important to meet their needs.
- People who use wheelchairs may find transport difficult as public transport may not be accessible. It might be beneficial to use accessible taxis or a minibus.

Some people with mobility problems find it so difficult to get out that the only feasible way of consulting them is to "go to them". Consulting people on a one to one basis in their own home.

In any consultation you need to give the option of the consultee having a non disabled carer or support worker with them.

Hearing Impairments

Many people experience a loss of hearing. If people use a hearing aid they may benefit from an induction loop. This is a system that is fitted around the perimeter of a room. This can be a fixed or portable system. There is a special setting on hearing aids to enable the user to hear conversation through a microphone within the loop. It is important to remember that to be effective the system is used in conjunction with a microphone. All speakers have to use the mike at all times and you will need a roving mike for questions from the floor. In a group discussion people will have to speak one by one and use the mike when they do speak. Many people lip read so it is important to face the hearing impaired person when you speak. Lip reading alone is not sufficient and is better as an additional aid to communication.

British Sign Language (BSL)

Many deaf people use BSL as a means of communication. It is a language in its own right combining facial expression, hand movements and body language. BSL has its own grammar and structure. It is Council Policy to use qualified sign language interpreters and these can be booked through the Centre for Sensory Needs at Morley Street (tel: 01274 435001). The Centre can give advice on whether to book interpreters or communicators and how many may be needed. As with all interpreting it is very intensive work and you may need more than one interpreter. Again it is important to remember that the interpreter is translating the deaf persons comments and all questions should be addressed directly to the deaf person.

Lip Speaking

Some people may prefer a lip speaker as an aid to communication, again the Centre for Sensory Needs can advise but it is important to ask all people what assistance they may need before they attend.

Many people may be disabled with no outward sign. If planning a consultation event it is important to have space on the invitation forms to let people tell you what they might need.

For specialist advice about involving people with hearing impairments contact the Centre for Sensory Needs (tel: 01274 435001).

Visual Impairment

When producing written information consider how this can be made accessible to people with a visual impairment.

People with a visual impairment use a variety of methods to access written material. It is important to remember that colour and light are key parts of vision. The contrast of type on paper and the font used can have an effect on ease of reading. In general use a simple font, Arial is recommended, use left hand alignment for text as this gives people a starting point on each line. Try to consider the colours you use shades of the same colour for paper and text can be harder to read. A good contrast is best. If you are trying to make material accessible for visually impaired people it is important to consider the whole event, are signs and name badges large enough? Are you planning on using video, Powerpoint or OHPs? These all need to be either thoroughly explained or large enough to be seen

Large Print

Any written material should be in size 12 as a minimum although RNIB recommend size 14. If your consultation is specifically aimed at visually impaired people then use 16 point bold, as it is estimated that over two thirds of visually impaired people can read text at that size. However, vision is individual and people will have a preferred size of font. It is important to ask people what they prefer, this can be done on invitations to events. The Access to Print Unit can translate documents into large print.

Braille

People who have little or no vision may prefer information in Braille. Documents can be translated into Braille relatively cheaply and quickly by the Access to Print Unit at Bradford Library. However, you need to be aware that there are relatively few fluent Braille readers

(approximately 40,000 nation wide out of an estimated 1 million people with a visual impairment).

Tape

The Access to Print Unit can also translate documents onto tape, it will depend on individual preference and the length and type of documents whether people prefer tape or Braille. It is best to ask people what they prefer.

The signage for any meetings also needs to be considered. Make it large enough for most partially sighted people to read.

Consulting with visually impaired people in their own homes is an option to consider.

For specialist advice about involving people with a visual impairment contact the centre for sensory needs (tel: 01274 435001). The Access to Print Unit is based at Bradford Central Library (tel: 01274 433675)

Speech Impairments

People with speech impairments may find it harder to participate in meetings, group discussions or focus groups. This does not mean that they do not want to participate. It is important to take the time to allow them to speak. If you do not understand then ask them to repeat, do not try to guess or pretend to understand as this will only cause confusion. They may be able to write comments down or ask a support worker to explain. If an individual is working with a support worker then remember to direct questions to the individual and not the support worker.

Dyslexia

People who have dyslexia may find written material difficult, focus groups and interviews can be beneficial as they do not rely on written material. Some people with dyslexia find that coloured paper can be a real help in reading and may request blue paper. If there are handouts then it is helpful if people can have them prior to the meeting so people have a chance to digest the meaning at home. Stress can affect the ability to read.

People with a Learning Disability

There are about 1400 people with a learning disability in the Bradford District. Creating opportunities where people can express their views and get involved in a way that suits them is the challenge. Thinking about how you look and come across is important, since people in 'suits' may be seen as 'authority' and inhibit or scare some people. Similarly, 'Council badges' give a similar impression. Letting people know your name and what you do is important, but a formal council badge may not be a good idea. It will also be useful to think about how you will explain what the council does and what you want to talk to them about. 'Body Language' can be important – don't look as though you are in a rush, think about how you are coming across.

A consultation exercise with people with learning disabilities may take longer than some – that doesn't mean a longer meeting, but it may mean fitting less into a session and allowing more time for people to understand and talk around the issues. It might be that you need to rethink

how you present information completely by using pictures, visual images, videos or story boards.

Designing a consultation project for this target group will require some expertise in order to make the exercise effective and worthwhile for both researcher and participants. **BRADFORD PEOPLE FIRST** are a good organisation to make contact with if you want to consult with people with a learning disability. (See the information about them at the end of this section) They can advise on making information more accessible, providing someone with you in meetings that can 'translate' what you are saying, or support in order to participate e.g. personal assistance, signers, community language translation. In addition, further information on planning a consultation project for people with a Learning Disability is available from Pat Fairfax at the Community Development Policy Unit (details at in Appendix A).

Young People

Young people are often very difficult to consult using traditional methods, therefore it is necessary to use more innovative methods to engage them.

Consultation with young people is often best carried out by young people themselves. In particular, young people are able to converse naturally and use language that may appear patronising if used by an older person. The Council has in the past commissioned the Bradford Children's Participation Project (see p40) to carry out specific consultations with young people.

Successful consultation with young people normally contains some element of "fun". With a consultation about Council services this is hardly likely to be obtained from the subject matter of the consultation, the "fun" element could come from:

- the approach used in the consultation (eg drama, video diaries, use of disposable cameras);
- the venue used for the consultation (could be somewhere exciting to young people (eg Bradford City football stadium);
- the thank you reward given for participating (eg take part in our consultation and then we will show you a film, give you tickets for a disco, etc.).

It is unwise to consult young people on a one-to-one basis as this is generally too intimidating. It is also advisable to consult them in a location where they are likely to feel comfortable; this could be their home or a local meeting place, but not council offices or posh hotels.

If you are involving a young person under 16 in your consultation you will need parental permission.

Consultation with young people generally works best if all participants are of a similar age. Mixing genders is also often best avoided. Mixing ages and genders can lead to situations where some young people feel the need to establish their authority or accept the dominance of others.

As with other groups, keeping young people informed about the results of consultation is very important.

The Bradford Children's Participation Project provides a Participation Training Package for those who provide services to children, to enable them to involve children and young people in decisions about those services. For further details contact the Children's Participation Project (tel: 01274 720340)

An exciting development in Bradford is the newly established Bradford and Keighley Youth Forum, which was set up in September 2002, with 30 young people elected on the forum representing the 5 constituencies of Bradford District. If you want to get an issue discussed at the forum and get the views of young people through a formal mechanism, then contact David@bydp.org For more information about the Youth Forum and a description of the recently elected Youth Members of Parliament (YMPs), you could visit the website, which is: www.bkyouthparliament.com

Homeless People

Homeless people are a particularly difficult group to consult with. There are few representative groups for homeless people, and individually they may be too concerned about finding a home and dealing with day-to-day problems to get involved in consultation. However, homeless people are likely to have particular needs that may not be met through mainstream services and are often unable to access services that they need because of their situation. Research carried on the health needs of homeless people suggests that they are over five times more likely to have problems getting onto or staying on a G.P.s list than the general public. (See www.crisis.org.uk/pdf/gppolicybrief.pdf for more information about healthcare and homeless people.)

One feeling that is sometimes portrayed by homeless people, is that there is little sympathy for their situation by people in authority as if it is in some way their fault that they are homeless. Research carried out by organisations such as Crisis (who are a good contact if you want to find out more about homeless people) suggests that up to two-thirds of people who become homeless and for 90% of young people who become homeless, this is due to family conflict. (see www.crisis.org.uk/pdf/TroubleBrief.pdf for more information) This is important to bear in mind when preparing your consultation so that you present yourself in a way that is not going to be challenging or intimidating.

It is possible to access the views of homeless people through hostels such as Norman Bank (tel: 01274 431558). However, homeless people are a group who because of their situation need to be treated with great sensitivity. More informal methods of consultation tend to work best, for example in depth interviews with individuals, pairs, or small groups of friends, as opposed to more formal methods such as large meetings or focus groups.

Where consultation relates to service provision, consultation needs to be handled in a particularly sensitive way. Homeless people are often vulnerable and their responses to questions may be skewed by the response that they think the Authority wants to hear. It needs to be made clear that responses are treated in confidence and not linked to individual applications for services.

Gay & Lesbian Community

This section is a basic guide on how to consult more effectively with Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people. Non-LGB people often assume that LGB people will get involved in local or neighbourhood based consultations because “there’s no problem, you don’t need to tell people you’re gay”. However, understanding how LGB people feel about **‘being Out’** and **‘passing’** is vital for effective consultations with LGB communities.

- **‘Being Out’** refers to making others, particularly non-LGB people, aware that you are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.
- **‘Passing’** is a term used to describe when individuals (historically, Jewish, Black and Disabled people) do not reveal their identity in order to escape hostility or persecution.

In our society non-LGB people widely assume that someone is heterosexual unless they are contradicted. This means that LGB people have to decide to ‘Pass’ or be ‘Out’ each time they meet a new heterosexual i.e. several times a day. This can be very tiring and stressful and LGB people may not wish to be in situations where they have to do this e.g. at a consultation forum with lots of potentially hostile strangers. It is also appropriate to approach the issues of confidentiality as a matter of personal safety rather than assuming a person wishes to be private about their sexuality.

In order to be sensitive to the above, it is worth noting the following when consulting with LGB communities.

Setting up and delivery

- Use a twofold approach – ensure generic consultations are as accessible as possible to LGB people AND provide targeted consultation for LGB communities.
- Involve LGB organisations as partners – some organisations are willing to facilitate a bridge between the statutory sector and local LGB communities e.g. Bradford LGB network. Remember however, the LGB community sector is very underdeveloped. You will need to support this work with resources including - secretarial support, expenses, publishing and distribution facilities and ‘gay friendly’ support from paid workers.
- Train all staff that work on the project in LGB equalities issues – particularly ensure they use appropriate language and are familiar with the issues. People using inappropriate language, appearing ignorant or uncomfortable are very off-putting to potential participants. (see end for training contacts)
- Give LGB staff on your team *an opportunity* to take a lead in this work but do not *expect* them to want to do so.(if you are not aware of any LGB staff, ask yourself why? You may have a problem with homophobia in your department)

Publicity

- Use the LGB press – local and national magazines and local newsletters.
- Publicise your consultation widely in the local press, GP surgeries, libraries etc.
- If you use posters, make sure the contact information is readable from several yards distance so LGB people can read it safely without obviously doing so.
- Ensure a contact number goes directly to the person dealing with the consultation – not a receptionist who may ask the person to explain why they are calling. Consider using a well-known LGB organisation as the contact point.

- Ask LGB organisations to send ready prepared postings through their own mailing lists – pay for this valuable service
- Advertise in LGB pubs and clubs and other social venues. However this will only reach LGB people who use the ‘gay scene’

Meetings

- Use central venues – choose ones where people can leave anonymously and safely
- Make it clear if non-LGB people will be present or not
- Make registration simple – ensure the first person to meet participants is ‘gay friendly’, preferably LGB themselves and not general reception or security staff (unless they meet the criteria – do groundwork on the venue).
- Don’t use signing in sheets – ask participants to sign up voluntarily for a mailing list for future information (make sure this is kept confidential)
- Remember that general good access principles still apply – provide access for Disabled people, interpreters, signers, child and other care expenses.
- Make sure assistant staff e.g. crèche workers and personal assistants and interpreters are LGB people. Non-LGB staff may compromise participants’ personal safety by inadvertently ‘Outing’ them. People may prefer to make their own arrangements for childcare which you can pay for.
- Do not meet in work hours – LGB organisations rarely have paid staff to come to meetings. Many LGB individuals and volunteers in groups cannot get time off work for LGB consultations.

Timescales

- Avoid tight timescales, however in exceptional circumstances it is better to consult at shorter notice than not at all. Contact LGB network for advice on how to contact people with less notice.
- Good practice means allowing at least 3 months preparation time – sending out publicity in at least two stages a month apart. This allows trust to build up, changes to be made and most importantly time for information to reach people.
- In LGB communities the most effective mode of communication is word-of-mouth and personal contact. This takes time.
- Many LGB organisations only meet monthly and will only be able to help you slowly.

Organising principles

- Much of LGB life is ‘homosocial’ i.e. it is organised through separate women’s and men’s networks and often, organisations. This needs to be reflected in planning. Target Lesbians and Gay men separately and signal that Bisexual men and women are specifically included.
- Single gender consultation and the provision of women-only spaces at mixed events works well.
- LGB people may belong to other communities also. The complexities of LGB people’s identities in Bradford needs to be reflected in targeting. For example Black and Minority ethnic LGB people often have different networks to white LGB’s and are often more isolated.
- Consider holding focus groups for LGB people who experience additional discrimination and exclusion.

Inactive Majority

The population can be broken down into a number of different segments. There are “activists” who regularly seek to involve themselves in Consultation. They will give you their views whether you ask them or not. A second segment are those who are relatively easy to reach in consultation exercises, and who respond to surveys and vote in local elections. The largest segment, the inactive majority, are a “harder to reach” group, as a serious effort is required to obtain their views. This group is often not considered as a hard to reach group, and consequently their views are often left unexplored. In many ways they are a crucial group, as they are most likely to be disillusioned and disinterested with the Council and its services. By improving relationships with this group, the Council is better placed to enhance the quality of life of other excluded groups and for the population as a whole.

The disinterested nature of this group makes it difficult to get them to participate in consultation exercises. However, it can be done using qualitative research methods such as focus groups. The Council has recently commissioned focus groups with “inactive” residents both for a consultation about modernising local government and for consultations about crime and disorder.

For more information and advice contact Mike Barnett (tel: 01274 432221).

APPENDIX A

Information and Contacts

Target Group

Ethnic Minority Groups

Contact

Keighley Asian Women and Children's Centre
Ambriya Khatoun
Marlborough Street Eastwood Centre
Keighley
BD21
01535 667359

Roshi Ghar (Day Care facility for Asian women with mental
ill health
Khalda Ashrafi
13 Scott Street
Keighley
West Yorkshire
BD21 2JH
01535 691758

Karmand Community Centre – Robina Ahmed
Barkerend Road BD3 9EP
01274 669593

Pakistani Community Centre – Raheela Maheed
White Abbey Road
Bradford BD8 8EJ
01274 724506

Hindu Cultural Society – Mrs S Joshi
321 Leeds Road, Bradford
BD3 9LS
01274 725923

Bangladeshi Porishad – Shafia Choudry
31 Cornwall Road, Bradford
BD8 7JN 01274 722069

Milan Centre (learning centre for women and children)
Zahida Laher
Victor Street
Manningham BD9 4RA
01274 480691

People with Disabilities

BRADFORD PEOPLE FIRST
Tel: 01274 744151
140-148 Manningham Lane
Bradford
BD8 7JL
bradfordpeoplefirst@btopenworld.com

Young People

Bradford and Keighley Youth Forum
Mick Chandsoor Tel: 0733 3451732
David Holt Tel: 0773 345139
BK Youth Parliament
Youth Service
Bakerend Road, Bradford
BD3 9BD
www.bkyouthparliament.com

Homeless People

Norman Bank
Tel: 01274 431558

Crisis
64 Commercial Street, London E1 6LT
Tel: 0870 011 3335
Fax: 0870 011 3336
Email: enquiries@crisis.org.uk
www.crisis.org.uk

Shelter
88 Old Street, London EC1V 9HU
Tel: 020 7505 4699
Email: info@shelter.org.uk
www.shelter.org.uk

Lesbian Gay and Bisexual
Communities

Bradford Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Network
Tel: 01274 733858
Mob: 07866 020193
E: lgbnet@clara.co.uk
Fax: 01274 306815
Post: 17-21 Chapel Street, Bradford, BD1 5DT

Consortium of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual voluntary and
community organisations.
Regional development officer:
Tel: 01274 308882
Mob: 07951 579380
E: north@clgb.org.uk

Local Government Guidelines on LGB inclusion (as above)
'Supporting inclusive communities' lesbians, gay men and
local democracy – ISBN 1 84049 226 0 Code No: EQ002

Copies can be purchased from:
IdeA Publication Sales
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG
Tel: 020 7296 6600
Fax: 020 7296 6523

General advice on consulting with
hard to reach groups

Community Development Policy Unit
Community Development and Lifelong Learning
1st Floor, Jacobs Well, Bradford, BD1 5R
Tel: 01274 434994
Fax: 01274 437754
E: pat.fairfax@bradford.gov.uk

Labyrinth consultancy (private sector)

Specialise in work that links community development to
organisational development

Tel: 01535 647443
Fax: 01535 647482
E: labyrinth.consultancy@virgin.net
Web: www.labyrinth-consultancy.com
Post: 7-9 Prince Street, Howarth, West Yorkshire, BD22
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