



Background information

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Brighton and Hove



Development process

December 2007

Research into evidence and practice on community engagement conducted. Findings and an overview of local activity presented to the LSP

Agreement by LSP for a strategic approach to community engagement to be developed

Process for identifying VCS representatives agreed and carried out with CVSF

Short-life LSP working group established

12 week consultation period – 2 consultation documents produced and distributed widely to organisations, partnerships and groups in the city

Feedback loop to all groups

Direct responses in writing from individual members of organisations/groups

Discussions at partnerships meetings, for example, domestic violence forum

Tailored meetings with specific communities of interest, for example, council housing tenants

Offer of facilitated discussion at neighbourhood action groups. Offer taken up by some groups

All responses gathered, collated, considered

Early draft 'tested' with respondents via an all day drop-in session

Early draft 'tested' with partners via partnership managers group and LSP working group

Early draft 'tested' with responsible partnership – the Stronger Communities Partnership

Final draft

Copy of draft sent to all respondents

Approval by LSP

Copy of approved document sent to all respondents

Ongoing communications plan

December 2008



How was the Community Engagement Framework developed?

Following a detailed discussion of research findings into community engagement activity in the city in autumn 2007, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), known in Brighton and Hove as the 2020 Community Partnership, approved the development of a Community Engagement Framework for the city in February 2008. The research highlighted a number of issues, including recognition that effective community engagement does drive up the quality of services. In its role to bring key partners together the LSP identified a need to improve the co-ordination of community engagement initiatives and to ensure that staff with a responsibility for delivering engagement support have access to appropriate levels of training and support.

The LSP's intention is that the Framework will pull together agreed over-arching principles of engagement. These principles will be underpinned by an action plan to improve the type and quality of different engagement activity in the city by public bodies and community and voluntary organisations.

The Framework is to be owned by the LSP and signed up to by all key sectors and agencies in the city, including the council, the Primary Care Trust and the Police. The council supported the development of the Framework, which was guided by a working group made up of representatives from the constituent organisations and partnerships of the LSP, including representatives of the community and voluntary sector.

The plan for the Framework development process included a wide range of activities and approaches, and was not solely reliant on the consultation documents. For example, discussions were held with a number of organisations, partnerships and groups that focussed on their own experiences of engagement or of delivering engagement and their priorities for the future. The development process had a degree of flexibility to allow for different groups/organisations to be consulted in a way best suited to them.

Two consultation documents were produced. A full version primarily aimed at large

organisations and partnerships with responsibility for engaging with communities and, in response to recommendations from the working group, the project team also produced a shorter version aimed at smaller community groups. Consultation about the Framework was aimed at partnerships, organisations and groups as opposed to individual citizens. When implementation of the Framework begins the LSP will seek to involve citizens in the design and development of new engagement tools, techniques and structures. This is probably when the Framework will be most meaningful to individuals.

Information about the development of the Framework and records of the working group meetings are available on the 2020 Community Partnership website www.2020community.org/cef

The development of the Framework is a local priority and has not been driven by any national policy or requirement. There is no "must do" or map to describe what an engagement framework should look like. This presents its own complexities and challenges. Taking a collaborative and creative approach has helped to define the way forward, whilst listening to people has offered insight into content, aims and actions.

Full details are available in the Community Engagement Framework Consultation Report.



Equalities impact assessment of the Community Engagement Framework

All public organisations have to complete an equality impact assessment on new or changes to existing policies, strategies and services. The purpose of the assessment is to consider if any changes, or introduction of new policy, will have negative and positive impacts on different communities in the city. Based on the assessment, actions are identified to mitigate any potential negative impact.

As the 2020 Community Partnership is made up of public organisations as well as private and community and voluntary organisations it was decided that an equality impact assessment should be carried out on the Framework.

At the start of the development of the Framework a 'rapid impact checklist' was carried out. This identified several overarching potential impacts of the Framework:

- More co-ordinated engagement activity
- Increased involvement in decision-making
- Better value for money
- Greater accountability
- More community ownership and responsibility
- Improved services that meet the needs of communities
- Increased emphasis on equality

It was considered that the overall impact of the Framework would be positive.

However, potential negative impacts were also identified. These were:

- Increased demand on existing resources, both staff and funding
- Slow down in decision making
- Overstretching existing community and voluntary groups
- Conflict between representative democracy through elected councillors and participatory democracy where members of communities represent their own community

Nevertheless it was felt the negative impacts would be addressed through the standards, aims and/or actions of the Framework.

A full equality impact assessment will be carried out on the Framework and any resulting actions included in the more detailed Framework Action Plan developed by the Stronger Communities Partnership.



Legal responsibilities and policy drivers for community engagement

Whilst there is no legislative requirement to have a Community Engagement Framework for the city there are many legal requirements and national policies (policy drivers), particularly for public bodies, to improve how they consult and involve residents in decision-making. The following provides a summary of the key national and local legislation and policies which the Framework will help us to meet.

For all public bodies:

- *'Duty to Involve'* as set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007)
- Findings of the Brighton & Hove Reducing Inequality Review (2008)
- Equality Impact Assessments on all policies, functions and service provision
- Requirements of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (2009)

For all public bodies and the community and voluntary sector:

- Brighton & Hove Compact
- National Government White Paper *'Communities in Control'* (2008)
- National Government *Action Plan for Community Empowerment* December (2007)

For the Police:

- *National Community Safety Plan* (2008-2011)
- *Police and Justice Act* (2006)
- *National Government Green Paper on Policing* (2008)

For the Primary Care Trust and other NHS Trusts:

- *NHS Act* (2006) and the *2007 NHS Operating Framework* (2007)
- Draft consultation on New NHS Constitutions (2008)
- Local Involvement Networks (2008)

For the City Council

- *Community Empowerment Champion status* (2008)
- *Statement of Community Involvement in Planning* (2006)

Moreover, the Framework will support the achievement of a wide range of objectives and strategies of the different 2020 Community Partners. For example:

- the Children and Young People's Plan which aims to *"give children and young people more chances to have their say in decisions that affect the area that they live in"* and *"offer more chances for children and young people to have a say in the decisions that affect them"*.
- The Healthy City Partnership which aims to *"communicate with and secure participation of local communities"*.
- The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership's Community Safety Plan 2008-2011 which aims for *"further development of communities involvement in the work of the partnership and ensuring provision is accessible and suitable for all groups of citizens"*.
- East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service ambition for local communities includes to *"develop our role in Community Leadership, Engagement and Partnership"* and is producing a consultation and community engagement strategy.



Glossary

Aim - a statement of long term goals: what you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it

Capacity - the awareness, knowledge, skills and operational capability that enables people, communities and organisations to achieve their purpose

Citizen panel - involves a representative sample of the local population who have agreed to take part in consultation activity. They can involve between 500 to 3,000 people

Community anchors - community-led multi-purpose organisation, which supports local community activity through community development and capacity building

Community building - a building conceived, managed and sometimes built by the local community for community use. Phrase also used to describe the activity of building a community physically, socially and economically

Community intelligence - information about the communities we serve. This will often be useful in deciding what level of service should be secured or delivered and how

Community-based learning - involves creating new learning opportunities within local communities, but generally outside traditional learning institutions (eg. school, college, university). However, it can involve these traditional institutions particularly when addressing widening participation to learning

Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) - an umbrella organisation for community and voluntary organisations in Brighton and Hove. The CVSF provides opportunities for networking, communication and develops representation to ensure the community and voluntary perspective is included in decisions which affect the people who live, work and play in Brighton and Hove

Community Sector (CS) - the web of personal relationships, groups, networks, traditions and patterns of behaviour that exist amongst those who share physical neighbourhoods, socio-economic conditions or common understandings and interests. It is the community itself taking action to get things done. The community sector ranges from small informal community groups to large multi-purpose community organisations. The community sector covers the entire range of policy and services. Its activities can range from nurseries and playgroups to community centres and village halls; from tenants' associations to environmental groups; from arts and sports groups to credit unions; and from self help groups to scout groups

Community Strategy - local authorities now have to prepare a community strategy for promoting the economic, social and environmental well being of their area with a vision for the future. The expectation is that this will be produced with organisations in the private, voluntary and community sectors via a Local Strategic Partnership

Compact - 'The Compact' is an agreement between Government and the voluntary and community sector in England. It recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out guidelines for how both parties should work together

Cross-sector - partnership work involving representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sector

Democratic process - governance by people as a whole through elected representatives

Equalities - the process of recognising people's different needs, situations and goals and removing the barriers that limit what people can do and be



Glossary

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - explores where our approaches or actions may have different impacts on different communities. We use them to take action to prevent discrimination and encourage good community relations and equality

Front-line workers - workers whose role involves dealing directly with members of the public, service users or customers

Inclusive - accepting and accomodating all

Local Area Agreement (LAA) - sets out the priorities agreed between the partners of the Local Strategic Partnership, Public Service Board, and central government

Local decision making - the processes and structures that facilitate decisions being taken by public bodies within a local authority area

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - a partnership comprising of public, private and voluntary groups who work together with the aim of improving the quality of life in the city. Their work involves identifying local priorities and actions, which inform the community strategy. The LSP in Brighton and Hove is called the 2020 Community Partnership

Mutual respect - where two or more people have consideration and dutiful regard for each other

Outcome - a long term change brought about by an activity. Outcomes refer to long term changes that are anticipated for an area or a group of people as a result of activities. They focus on a particular problem and describe the anticipated change. They are closely related to objectives, but they are more specific. They may or may not be quantified

Overview and Scrutiny Commission - co-ordinates the work of the Brighton & Hove City Council Overview & Scrutiny Committees. It reviews and scrutinises all decisions made by the Cabinet and service provision relating to the Finance function, and to central services, eg. equality and diversity

Place Survey - a new survey introduced by national government in 2008 that all councils in England must carry out every two years. The survey contains questions set by national government that ask people about what they think about where they live and the public services they receive

Policy - an approach to tackling a particular issue which has been agreed by a group with the appropriate authority to set out a policy

Priority - something identified as an important issue to be addressed

Primary Care Trust (PCT) - statutory authority that provide primary and community services and commission secondary (hospital) care on behalf of their local population

Public organisation/body - deliver services that are wholly or partly funded through taxation. They include national, regional and local government and statutory agencies such as the council and the Police

Public Service Board (PSB) - comprises the key public sector organisations in an area and includes representatives from the voluntary and community sector and the local government office. It is responsible for delivery of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) on behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership



Regional community empowerment network

- consortium of councils and regional community and voluntary organisations working together to share ideas and best practice on promoting and improving community empowerment

Registered Social Landlords (RSL)

- landlords of social housing that are registered with the Housing Corporation. Most are housing associations, but they also include trusts, co-operatives and companies

Research governance protocol

- Research governance is essential to ensure that the public can have confidence in, and benefit from, quality research. A governance protocol ensures high quality scientific research, ethical and financial standards, transparent decision-making processes, clear allocation of responsibilities and robust monitoring arrangements

Resources

- physical entity of limited availability, for example human resource refers to the quantity and quality of staff in terms of number and skills/ability. It can also refer to man-made resources such as buildings, computers or money, as well as natural resources such as open space or waterways

Service providers

- public bodies/organisations and community and voluntary sector organisations that provides services wholly or partly funded through taxation

Stakeholders

- those that feel they have a stake in the issue – either because they may be affected by a decision or be able to affect a decision. Stakeholders may be individuals or organisational representatives

Statutory Authority - an organisation that is required by law to provide public services and receives central or local government funding, for example health authorities and local authorities

Stronger Communities Partnership (SCP)

- exists to lead, develop and support active community engagement in strategic planning and decision-making processes, in order to improve local service delivery, partnership working and reduce inequalities in Brighton and Hove

Value for money - an assessment of whether the cost of delivering a project or programme is justified by the benefits it produced. The benefits are measured in terms of a key result such as the number of people securing employment. Comparison with previous projects or programmes allows the relative value for money to be established

Voluntary Sector (VS) - the community sector differs from the voluntary sector, which is defined as: 'groups whose activities are carried out other than for profit but which are not public or local authorities. These organisations would normally be formally constituted and employ paid professional and administrative staff. They may or may not use volunteers'

