

Councillor Sandra Barr – Engaging with Communities examples in other areas

Feed back to scrutiny

The Remit was other authorities' ways of engaging with communities

Example 1: The Big Map

Area: FST Local Agent Suffolk ACRE

Aim: Ensuring the views of local community were captured.

Method: Employed consultants to visit communication with a detailed large map of the area. The map was detailed and had space for people to label their concerns and needs.

Outcomes: A detailed picture was drawn up of the needs and concerns of the local community, which fed directly into the business plan priorities. Some of these priorities will involve further investigative work, while others will influence grant making strategy in the area.

Example 2: Communicate Virtually

Area: Parnwell, Peterborough.

Aim: Ensuring local community had access to information about the programme and the opportunity to respond to activities.

Method: Ran a communication project culminating in the creation of a website (www.positivelyparnewell.org.uk) to raise awareness of Fair Share Trust funded work in the neighbourhood. A logo was designed after a competition in a local primary school, and the site is to be maintained by a local volunteer. Functions of the website include:

- Details of forthcoming events
- Holding photos and downloadable newsletters
- Inviting opinions and responses to consultation.

The 'Friends of Ashfield Fair Share Trust' group on Facebook is also a popular method of communicating – with the local community in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, and wider. The group's fans have regular access to updates on funding and campaigns, invitations to events, news & research, photos and a discussion board, to make the experience truly interactive.

Example 3 - Communicate via:

- word of mouth

- events

- email & websites

- social networking

- newsletters

- leaflets

- consultations

- work plans & updates

Example 4: 'The Gedling Conversation' – an annual consultative campaign

'The Gedling Conversation' – an annual consultative campaign that now runs between June and July each year - to provide opportunities for service areas and residents to meet face-to-face. For a few years this work focused on bringing a 'Gedling Conversation' branded tent to a number of central points across the borough and staffing it with employees from across our service areas, our senior management team, and members. While the tent was up residents had the opportunity to speak directly to officers and politicians about life in Gedling - with no issues off limits. Where it was possible to answer questions immediately they did, and where we needed to find out more information to help address the concern or question they took people's details and forwarded it to the correct departments – following up to ensure that it had been done. They promoted where the tents would be through our social media channels, press releases, and in their residents magazine and ensured that they hosted the roadshows in the areas with the high footfall. They also hosted a number of targeted focus groups for groups who have been underrepresented in our survey responses, specifically diverse communities and young people.