

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 07/12/2023

Title: Engagement and Participation Policy – Half yearly monitoring update

Purpose of the report: To provide an opportunity for Scrutiny Committee to consider progress made in delivering the Council's Engagement and Participation policy and in developing a new engagement toolkit.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:

A report on progress of the action plan during 2022-23 was presented to this committee in June 2023. It was agreed that a 6-month monitoring update report is presented in December 2023.

Background

Ceredigion Engagement and Participation Policy 'Talking, Listening and Working Together' includes an action plan on which this report is based.

The Policy is published on our website: [engagement and participation policy ceredigion county council.pdf](#)

Cabinet agreed the recommendations from the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- that all engagement exercises participants should receive the outcome results;
- that a 6-month monitoring update report is presented to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its December meeting.

Current Situation

A consistent feedback method is outlined in the new Engagement toolkit. The importance of feedback will be further highlighted in training on use of the toolkit.

The action plans has progressed. Much of this progress is a result of the revised Engagement toolkit. This is attached at Appendix 1.

The action plan contains four aims. Progress is monitored by a Red/Amber/Green system. Red (no progress made), Amber (some progress made), Green (action is on track or complete).

1. To mainstream effective engagement and participation across Ceredigion County Council.

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 2 x Green and 1 x Amber to 3 x Green.

2. To ensure that we engage with the people of Ceredigion in the best way

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 1 x Green, 1 x Amber and 1 x Red to 1 x Green and 2 x Amber.

3. To meet our statutory duties and responsibilities under legislation

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 1 x Green and 2 x Amber to 3 x Green.

4. To keep up to date with the latest innovations and best practice in the field of engagement

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 2 x Green and 1 x Amber to 3 x Green.

There is further detail in the progress report at Appendix 2.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.

No, this is not a change in policy or service.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: not applicable
Collaboration: not applicable
Involvement: not applicable
Prevention: not applicable
Integration: not applicable

Recommendation(s):

To note the content of the Engagement and Participation Policy – Half yearly monitoring update.

To note the new Engagement toolkit.

Reasons for decision:

To ensure appropriate scrutiny of the Engagement and Participation Policy.

Contact Name: Cathryn Morgan

Designation: Equalities and Inclusion Manager

Date of Report: 16/11/2023

Acronyms:

None

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION TOOLKIT



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Introduction

This toolkit provides tips and advice for planning and carrying out your engagement or consultation campaign. The Appendices at the end of the document contain some templates and suggested text that you can use. [Appendix 1](#) will help you to plan your campaign.

Some people think that engagement and consultation are the same things. This can lead to confusion.

What is engagement?

Engagement is an ongoing process. We develop relationships with residents in Ceredigion, as well as organisations that we work with. We want people to know our thinking when it comes to the future of our services. We may run a specific engagement campaign to gain additional views before developing a new plan or project that results in a change in service.

What is consultation?

Consultations are typically focussed on specific decisions or changes which the Council is considering. There are rules that we must follow to ensure that the dialogue with stakeholders is meaningful and to ensure that the Council is not subject to legal challenge. See Gunning Principles at [Appendix 5](#).

For the purpose of this toolkit, the term 'campaign' will be used for both engagement and consultation.

Co-production

Co-production enables people providing and people receiving services to share power and responsibility. Services and citizens work together in equal, reciprocal relationships. This approach is best practice and requires a meaningful commitment from everyone involved. Please discuss this with your line manager.

There is more information in our [Engagement and Participation Policy](#).

The [National Principles for Public Engagement](#) in Wales is a set of ten principles for engaging with the public and participants. It's a 5 minute read and is well worth the time.

Step 1 - Matters to consider and where to get help

- Why are you undertaking the campaign? What do you need to find out?
- Do you need to undertake your campaign? Use the Consultation Decision Making tool at [Appendix 6](#).
- What will the Council do as a result of the campaign?
- Manage expectations - be clear about what can and can't be achieved.
- Consider the length of your campaign. 8 to 12 weeks is good practice, although there is no set timeframe. Include your campaign in the timeline you have created for the service change. There is a template at [Appendix 4](#).
- Be aware of the 'Gunning Principles' – see [Appendix 5](#).
- How will you feed the results back to your stakeholders, including Leadership Group, Scrutiny committee members, Cabinet members and residents?
- Do you need to undertake an [Integrated Impact Assessment](#)?

This is your campaign. The following teams are available to help and advise you, but they are not able to do the work for you. Contact them to let them know about your campaign when you start planning.

- **Equalities and Inclusion** – for general advice and to ensure corporate oversight of all engagement and consultation campaigns
partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk
- **Performance and Research** – for advice on the questions you may ask and on your analysis report performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk
- **Communications** – for help to promote your campaign
pressoffice@ceredigion.gov.uk
- **Welsh Language Policy** - for advice on our statutory duty to seek public views about the impact our decisions may have on the Welsh language
cymraeg@ceredigion.gov.uk
- **Clic contact centre management team** – so that they have the information needed to deal with any enquiries from the public about your campaign
cs.ccm@ceredigion.gov.uk
- **IT support team** – for help and advice about putting your campaign on our public website servicedesk@ceredigion.gov.uk

Step 2 - Who are your stakeholders?

Identify your stakeholders. They could include service users, people of a specific age, people living in a specific area, other public bodies or simply 'everyone that lives or works in Ceredigion'.

Your stakeholder list should always include Ceredigion County Council Elected Members, Leadership Group, Town and Community Council clerks, the Council workforce, Ceredigion Public Services Board Partners and relevant service user groups and forums. These are listed, with contact details, at [Appendix 2](#).

When you know who your stakeholders are, you will be able to decide how best to involve and communicate with them.

Step 3 - Methodology

You may decide to use various methods to get feedback from your stakeholders. This will depend on your capacity, budget, and the needs of your target audience. It's important to gather examples of people's direct experience of your topic, especially when this gives them an understanding that people who have only heard about such experiences do not have. This is called 'lived experience'.

Methods

- ◇ A questionnaire or survey. This must be available on paper and also on-line.
- ◇ Raise as an agenda item for discussion at a regular meeting of your stakeholders.
- ◇ Link in with the many engagement events run by the Council and our partners. Ask our Equalities and Inclusion team and our Communications team if there are any suitable events coming up.
- ◇ Invite your stakeholders to a focus group - on-line, face to face or 'hybrid.'
- ◇ Organise a 'drop-in' community meeting or workshop.
- ◇ Carry out structured interviews with specific stakeholders, face to face, on-line, or over the telephone.
- ◇ Targeted email or letter, inviting people to give you feedback or asking partners to share the campaign with their networks.

Step 4 - Creating your Campaign

- Write out the background information that your stakeholders will need in order to give you meaningful feedback. Decide on the questions you want to ask. Use plain language, avoid jargon. Don't use leading or ambiguous questions.
- Include a closing date, postal address, email address and telephone number.
- Create a large print version of the information by using the 'select all' tool in Microsoft Word, change the font to Arial 16 and save with a different name. You may need to reformat your document.
- Create an Easy Read version by using resources from our Microsoft Teams site: [Easy Read](#)
- Create a Young People Friendly version. Contact our Children and Young People's Officer for advice: porthcymorthcynnar@ceredigion.gov.uk
- Create a poster for people who don't go online. Include all key information and how to respond off-line. Save this as a jpg or pdf so that it can be easily shared.
- Make sure that you have Welsh and English versions of all your documents.

If you are creating a survey:

- ◇ Include equality monitoring questions as part of your questionnaire, these are available on [Cerinet](#). You will need these for your analysis report.
- ◇ Transfer your survey questions to [Microsoft Forms](#) (or alternative) to create an online version.

If you are running a workshop, structured interview or focus group

- ◇ Try and keep to the topic. Use the questions or subject headings you have developed. This will give you consistency when you analyse your feedback.
- ◇ Collect as much information as you can about those who attend. You will need this for your analysis report.

If you are attending an engagement event organised by someone else

- ◇ You will have competition from other information stands! Create an eye-catching display and think of an interactive activity to collect people's views.
- ◇ Collect as much information as you can about the people you've spoken with. You will need this for your analysis report.

Step 5 - Communication

- Use the template at [Appendix 3](#) to send the information about your campaign to our ICT service desk.
- Create all your information in Microsoft Word format and use the 'Check Accessibility' button under 'Review' on your toolbar to check that people with a visual impairment will be able to read them easily. Read through [Microsoft: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities](#).
- Ask IT to place the information, documents and links on our [Engagement and Consultations](#) webpage. Ask them not to 'go live' until you are ready.
- When the webpage is ready, but not yet live, create a QR code by right clicking on the blank area of the webpage and click on 'Create QR code for this page'. Place the QR code in your poster for people who do go on-line but don't visit our website regularly.
- Provide information on your campaign to pressoffice@ceredigion.gov.uk. Ask them to promote your campaign in a press release and/or social media post and/or newsletter.
- Provide the information to hrnews@ceredigion.gov.uk if you want your campaign to be shared with the Council workforce as a weekly news item.
- Provide the information to the Clic contact centre management team cs.ccm@ceredigion.gov.uk to help them respond to any enquiries from the public about your campaign

When you are ready to 'go live'

- Send the information about your campaign to our Libraries and Leisure/Wellbeing Centres, asking them to print out and display the poster, and to print out any supporting documents from our Engagement and Consultations webpage on request.
 - ◇ Libraries: Llyfrgell.library@ceredigion.gov.uk
 - ◇ Leisure/Wellbeing Centres: ceredigionactif@ceredigion.gov.uk
- Email or post the information to the list of stakeholders that you have selected. You may want to send a few reminders while your campaign is running.

Step 6 - Using the results

- When your campaign is closed, prepare a message to say that the campaign has now closed and thank all participants that responded. Explain what will happen next.
- Ask ICT service desk to change the information on the [Engagement and Consultations](#) webpage to say, 'thank you' and 'what happens next'. Ask them to move your webpage to the 'closed campaigns' section.
- An analysis report, including examples of 'lived experience,' should be prepared after the campaign has closed. Performance and Research, performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk can provide advice on this.
- Different participants will have diverse needs and preferences for receiving feedback, which should be considered.
- Upload the analysis report (or a link to the Cabinet report) to the corporate [Engagement and Consultations](#) webpage and send by email to the stakeholders that were asked to respond to the campaign.

What may happen next?

- ◇ If your initial campaign is an engagement, you may draft a new plan/policy/strategy and put this out for public consultation.
- ◇ You will take a paper to Leadership Group, Scrutiny committee, Cabinet for a final decision.
- ◇ The new plan/policy/strategy will come into force on a specified date.



If you would like further advice on consultation and engagement, contact the Equality and Inclusion Team via partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk

Appendix 1. Engagement and Consultation Plan Template

Engagement/Consultation Plan for: [name of engagement/consultation]

Version:

Lead officer:

Public campaign starts on: [date]

Public campaign closes on: [date]

Background - What are we planning and why? (This can be copied to a press release and [the webpage](#)).

Stakeholder analysis ([Who](#) do we need to consult with and why?)

Next steps (what will happen as a result of this campaign?)

	Details	Responsible person	Who will this reach?
Online survey			
Paper survey			
Large print version of survey			
Easy Read version of survey			
Young people friendly version of survey			
Poster (with QR code to the webpage)			
Place information on Engagement and Consultations webpage			
Press release and social media posts			
Agenda item at a stakeholder meeting			
Public engagement event(s)			
Focus group(s)			
Community meeting/workshop			
Structured interviews with specific stakeholders			
Targeted email or letter			

Appendix 2: Stakeholder List

Mandatory stakeholder groups

Name of group	Contact details
Ceredigion County Council Elected Members	via ce.democracy@ceredigion.gov.uk
Leadership Group	via your Corporate Lead Officer
Town and Community Councils	via partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk
Ceredigion County Council Staff	post on Tîm Ceredigion MS Teams site
Ceredigion Public Services Board Partners	via partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk

Service user groups

Name of group	Contact details
Our Voice Our Choice <i>Self-Advocacy group for people with Learning Disabilities</i>	ourvoiceourchoiceceredigion@gmail.com Also, offer to post Easy Read copies to them: PO Box 281, Aberystwyth, SY23 9BY
Ceredigion Disability Forum <i>Council led group for people with disabilities</i>	via cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk
Ceredigion Family Centre Network <i>Provider of services to families with younger children in Borth, Lampeter, Aberaeron, Cardigan and Tregaron</i>	carol@plantdewi.co.uk
Armed Forces Veterans Forum <i>Armed Forces community (including disabled people, people with mental health issues, older people)</i>	partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk
Young Farmers clubs <i>Young people aged 10-28 (often rural/Welsh speaking)</i>	anne@yfc-ceredigion.org.uk
Hywel Dda Maternity Voices group <i>Expectant parents</i>	via cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk
Refugees <i>(Translations may be needed)</i>	refugee.resettlement@ceredigion.gov.uk
Youth Council and other youth groups	porthcymorthcynnar@ceredigion.gov.uk
Local Access Forum <i>Advisors to the Council on the improvement of public access to land for outdoor recreation, with regard to land management and conservation</i>	eifion.jones@ceredigion.gov.uk

List of professionals/front line workers

Name of group	Contact details
Children and Young People Service Provider Forum	via partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk
Carers Support providers + Community Connectors	connecting@ceredigion.gov.uk
Early Years, Childcare & Play Strategy group	meinir.paske2@ceredigion.gov.uk
Third sector groups	chesca.ross@cavo.org.uk
Food Banks/Pay as you feel cafes/ Community fridges	via cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk
Hywel Dda Health Board Community Outreach team	robert.allen@wales.nhs.uk
Age Cymru Dyfed	georgia.smith@agecymrudyfed.org.uk
Aberystwyth University	iam14@aber.ac.uk
Wales and West Housing Association	rhiannon.ling@wwha.co.uk
Dyfed Drug and Alcohol Service (DDAS)	adam.whitehouse@d-das.co.uk

Appendix 3: Template text for webpage

Title of Engagement/Consultation campaign

Consultation closes: [\[insert date\]](#)

Paragraph to explain why you are running the campaign – provide the context.

- *Include what will happen as a result of the campaign.*
- *Explain how we will inform people about the results of the campaign.*

Further information:

Add [links](#) to any supporting documents that will help to provide context

How to take part

Complete our on-line survey [\[add link\]](#)

Download a paper copy [\[add link\]](#)

Download a large print version [\[add link\]](#)

Download an Easy Read version [\[add link\]](#)

If you wish to receive the information in a different format, please contact us on 01545 570881 or email cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk

You can also ask for a paper copy from your local Library or Leisure Centre, by calling 01545 570881 or emailing us at cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk

Please return paper copies to your local library or to [\[insert name of team\]](#)
Ceredigion County Council, Canolfan Rheidol, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, SY23 3UE.

If you would like to be updated on the progress of this proposal, please contact us via the contact details above.

Appendix 4. Example Timeline template

Timeline for [insert name of campaign here]	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Engage with stakeholders to assess current views. Carry out desk top research												
Write up your analysis report on the engagement results, prepare an initial IIA and draft the strategy/plan/policy												
Present draft strategy/plan/policy, initial IIA and analysis report to Scrutiny committee												
Present draft strategy/plan/policy, analysis report and initial IIA to Cabinet. Request approval to go out to public consultation (for statutory consultations)												
Public consultation on draft strategy/plan/ policy												
Write up the consultation analysis report, amend IIA if needed and prepare final strategy/plan/policy												
Present final strategy/plan/policy, IIA and analysis report to Scrutiny committee												
Present final strategy/plan/policy, analysis report and IIA to Cabinet for approval												
Publish the final strategy/plan/policy on Council website and send by email to stakeholders and relevant Council teams												

Note: allow 3 weeks for translation of documents at each of these stages.

Appendix 5. Gunning Principles

The Gunning Principles set out the legal expectations of what is appropriate consultation with an emphasis on 'fairness.' The principles can be used in court to determine whether a public body has shown fairness in its engagement, consultations and decision making.

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation.

Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

1. Proposals are still at a formative stage

A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers

2. There is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'

The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response

3. There is adequate time for consideration and response

There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation, despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation

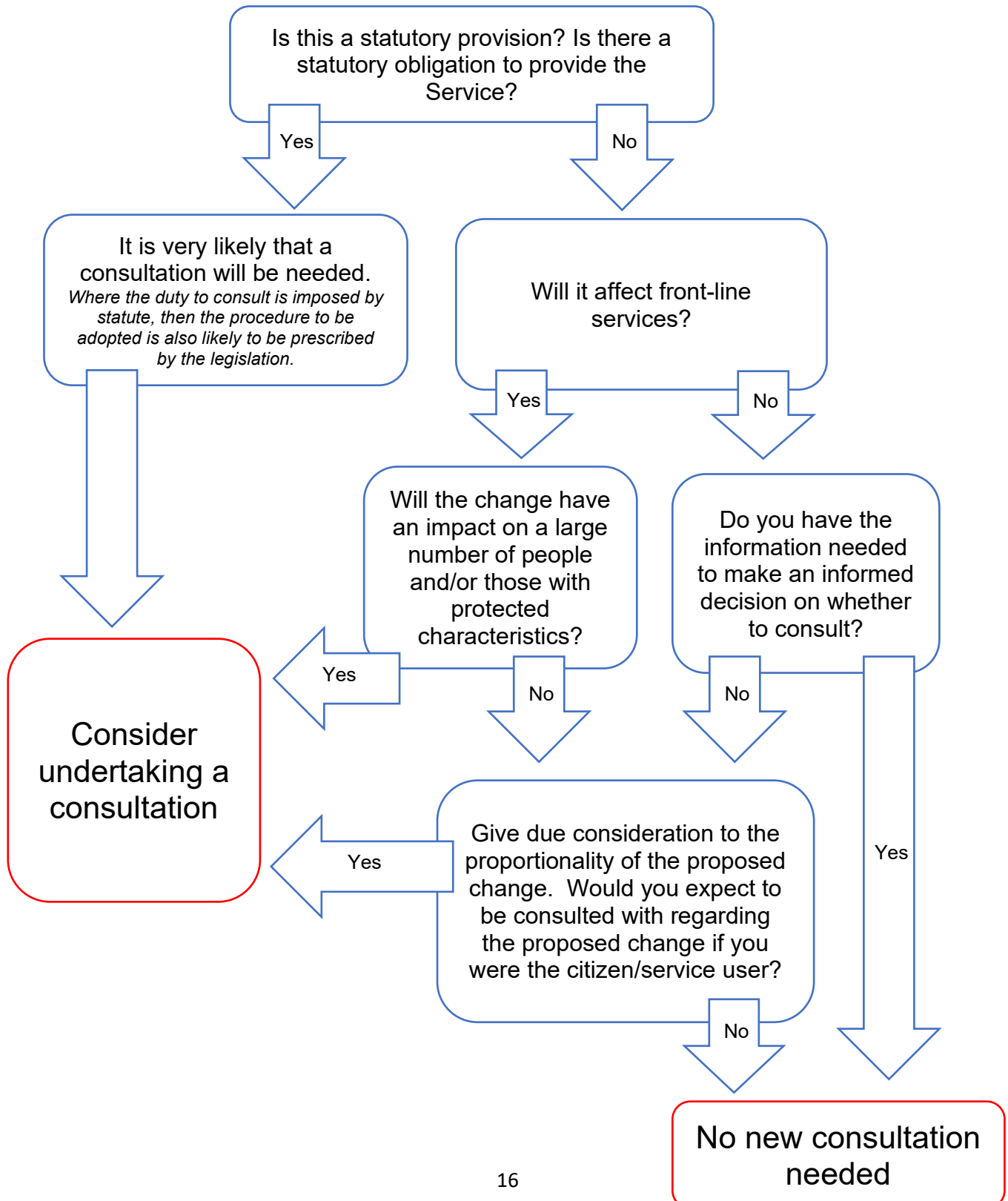
4. 'Conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made

Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

The Gunning Principles underpin our [Engagement and Participation Policy](#).

Appendix 6. Consultation Decision Making Tool

This decision has been developed as a guide to assist decision making but please be advised that consultation requirements will vary from one context to another and should be assessed on an individual basis. Judgments will need to be made on what level of consultation is proportionate to the specific proposal under consideration.



Ceredigion Engagement and Participation Policy ‘Talking, Listening and Working Together’

6 month progress report: 01/04/2023 – 30/09/2023

Aim 1: To mainstream effective engagement and participation across Ceredigion County Council

Action	Progress	RAG status
To develop an Engagement toolkit and deliver training on its use to all Corporate Managers.	The Engagement and Consultation toolkit has been revised, see Appendix 2. Advice has been offered on a one-to-one basis to officers undertaking engagement and consultation campaigns. Group sessions on its use will be offered from December 2023.	Green action is on track
To maintain a timetable of consultation and engagement exercises carried out by all Council Services.	<p>The timetable is held by the Equalities and Inclusion team and is updated on an ongoing basis. 8 campaigns had an end date during the period:</p> <p><u>Consultations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reuse of old library building, New Quay 2. Future use of trust monies of charity ‘Old County School, Tregaron 3. Respite and Day Care provision, Through Age and Wellbeing programme 4. 20mph limits on county roads 5. Ceredigion Housing Strategy <p><u>Engagements</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Views were gathered to inform Ceredigion Strategic Equality Plan 2. Ceredigion Stakeholder survey to inform the Council’s corporate self-assessment 3. Views were sought about Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans 	Green action is on track
To publish an Engagement Annual Report to monitor the developments as we change how we engage with the public.	The 2022-23 annual report was approved by Cabinet in July 2023. The 2023-24 annual report will be presented in June 2024.	Green action is on track

Aim 2: To ensure that we engage with the people of Ceredigion in the best way

Action	Progress	RAG status
To revise and update our list of Stakeholder groups.	The list has been revised and updated. It is included in the revised Engagement toolkit and available to all Council staff.	Green action is on track
To develop the use of online engagement platforms and maintain the use of non-digital engagement methods.	<p>The corporate Engagement and Consultations webpage is updated on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>It has been decided not to progress with the online platform – ‘Have your Say Ceredigion’. Ceredigion ‘My Account’ is being developed and this will be used to develop methods of online engagement with Ceredigion residents.</p> <p>Non-digital methods of engagement are being utilised. The Engagement toolkit will support consistent use across all Council services.</p>	Amber some progress made
To improve the way that we feedback to those who have participated in our engagement exercises.	A consistent feedback method is outlined in the Engagement toolkit. The importance of feedback will be further highlighted in training on use of the toolkit.	Amber some progress made

Aim 3: To meet our statutory duties and responsibilities under legislation

Action	Progress	RAG status
To ensure a mechanism is in place so that the public can attend Council meetings in person or remotely via a hybrid meeting system.	The draft protocol for Attendance at Local Authority Multi-location Meetings and Electronic Broadcasts of Meetings was presented to Democratic Services Committee on 09/06/2023 and approved by Council on 26/10/23.	Green complete
To revise and update our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) tool	The revised Integrated Impact Assessment tool was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and approved by Cabinet. It will be used by officers from 1 st December 2023.	Green complete
To establish an e-petition system and publish a protocol that sets out how the Council intends to handle and respond to petitions.	<p>The Petitions Protocol is listed under Part 5 (Codes and Protocols) of Ceredigion County Council constitution. The constitution is publicly available on the Council's website - The Council's Constitution - Ceredigion County Council.</p> <p>A report on amendments to the protocol, to include e-petitions, was presented to Democratic Services Committee on 20/09/2023 and is scheduled for full Council meeting in December 2023.</p>	Green action is on track

Aim 4: To keep up to date with the latest innovations and best practice in the field of engagement

Action	Progress	RAG status
To review and revise Ceredigion County Council's Engagement and Participation Policy	The current Engagement and Participation Policy was published in October 2022. It will be reviewed in 2025, or before this if required.	Green action is on track
To keep an engagement toolkit up to date for all staff to use.	The engagement toolkit has been revised. It will be kept up to date and be available to all staff after it has been approved and published on the internal staff website.	Green action is on track
To liaise with Engagement and Equalities colleagues across Wales.	<p>The Equalities and Inclusion manager is a member of the Wales Tackling Poverty & Inequality Network and Councils Engagement Leads Network, both run by WLGA.</p> <p>The Equalities and Inclusion team contributes to regional engagement and equality meetings and is currently working with Mid and West Wales Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion managers on a regional consultation exercise to prepare for the revision of our Strategic Equality Plan.</p>	Green action is on track