

Are we listening?

A Strategy for Community Engagement and Consultation

Scottish Borders Council

v.3 03:04:08

Our Scottish Borders
Your voice

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Your voice

Our Scottish Borders
Your voice

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Introduction to the Strategy

The purpose of this document is to outline Scottish Borders Council's commitment to working with the Borders community.

We define community in this instance as everyone who lives and/or works in the Scottish Borders.

Effective community engagement is central to Community Planning and Best Value. Scottish Borders Council will continue to build on its work to date making sure that the best use is made of resources with all work being cost effective and proportional to the issues being addressed.

It is essential that Scottish Borders Council continues to work closely with Community Planning partners engaging with everyone that has a stake in the services that the local authority delivers.

Our strategy for Community Engagement is based on the National Standards for Community Engagement which detail how we will work with communities through a common set of ground rules. The Standards have not been reproduced in full in this document as they are easily available elsewhere but should be read along side it.

This document has been set out in three parts to make it easier to use. The first section states the Council's commitment to Community Engagement. The second section looks in more detail at one area of Community Engagement – consultation. Both sections are aimed at the Borders community.

The third section sets out guidelines for carrying out consultations and is aimed at anyone who carries out consultations but with specific reference to Scottish Borders Council officials and elected Members.

The Council is also developing strategies for specific departments or working with specific groups of people, e.g. young people. The strategies will together form a comprehensive approach to working with the Borders community.

The Scottish Borders Compact

The Scottish Borders Compact produced by the New Ways Community Planning Partnership, lists commitments made by public sector organisations to working with the voluntary and community sector. This strategy underlines those commitments.

Community Engagement

Introduction

One of Scottish Borders Council's most important stated values is that "we must listen to people and communities and respond." The way to fulfil that value is to engage, communicate and consult effectively.

Under the terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, Councils are required to engage with community bodies as part of the Community Planning process. In this context, the Act states that the main aim of community engagement should be to improve the planning and delivery of services by making them more responsive to the needs and aspirations of communities. Under the Act community engagement must involve consultation, co-operation and participation.

'Are We Listening?', our Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy has been developed in line with recommendations made by a Council Scrutiny Working Group and current law recognising best practice both within Scottish Borders Council and other local authorities.

'Are We Listening?' sets out our commitment to community engagement with particular reference to how we will consult with our communities. It is presented in three sections:

1. Community engagement – this section outlines our commitment to real community engagement.
2. Community consultation – this section identifies our commitment, in more detail, to effective consultation.
3. Guidelines to consultation – this section shows the methods we will use to work towards our commitments identified in sections one and two.

Although there are three sections in this Strategy the document should be read as a whole to gain a full understanding of Scottish Borders Council's approach to working with the Borders community.

Aim

By implementing the National Standards for Community Engagement by way of our strategy we aim to achieve a consistently high standard in the way in which we work with the community.

The Standards will help us make sure that:

- We are open and responsive to the views of our communities.
- Local communities are involved in identifying local needs.
- There is sustained community involvement in planning and decision making processes with continued support as needed.

- Our commitment to involving the community is widely known throughout the Borders.

What is community engagement?

The National Standards for Community Engagement provide a lengthy definition. It is more to the point to say that real community engagement is a two way communication process between organisations and the community.

There are many terms that are used when describing community engagement, including consultation and involvement. However, each term refers to a variety of different methods. The method used will depend on the aim of the exercise. We will make sure that we use the right method for the activity we are carrying out.

Levels of community engagement

There are many methods of community engagement, each falling into one of three categories:

- Information – ‘This is what we are going to do and why.’
- Consultation - ‘These are our options, what do you think?’
- Involvement – ‘We want to work with you to develop the options and make the decisions.’

Different approaches will be necessary for different pieces of work. We will make it clear which level of engagement has been chosen and why throughout the process.

Why should we engage?

Whilst we accept that it is our legal duty to engage with our communities we fully believe that through working with our communities we can deliver the services that meet local needs.

Effective community engagement provides a range of benefits to both Scottish Borders Council and the community. It can:

- Empower people to plan and influence the future of their own community producing a greater sense of community spirit and pride.
- Help keep the community informed of our proposals.
- Provide us with ways of measuring how satisfied the community is with us.

- Encourage people to vote. If people can see that their views do make a difference they are more likely to become involved in the democratic process.
- Build a better relationship between the community and Scottish Borders Council.

Who will we engage with?

Using our definition of community we will seek to engage with everyone who lives and/or works in the Scottish Borders. However, we accept that not everyone will want to be involved and we respect that decision.

The National Standards for Community Engagement

To help make sure that we are doing it right we have signed up to the National Standards for Community Engagement produced by Communities Scotland.

These Standards will provide us with performance standards which we can measure ourselves against and in themselves form a strategy for community engagement. The standards have only been included in summary form below as they and a range of supporting information are easily accessible.

Details of these standards are available from the Communities Scotland website or by contacting the Council's Community Engagement Officer at the address on the back of this document.

There are ten standards that we will build into our community engagement activities:

1. Involvement

We will identify and involve the people and organisations with an interest in what we are doing.

2. Support

We will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement within our power.

3. Planning

We will gather information about the need and available resources for the piece of work and use this to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and actions to be taken.

4. Methods

We will agree and use the methods of engagement that are the most suitable.

5. Working Together

We will agree and use clear procedures that enable those involved to work with one another effectively and efficiently.

6. Sharing Information

We will ensure that necessary information is communicated between everyone involved.

7. Working With Others

We will work effectively with others with an interest in the piece of work.

8. Improvement

We will actively develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of everyone involved.

9. Feedback

We will feedback the results of the piece of work to the wider community and agencies affected.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will monitor and evaluate whether what we are doing achieves its purpose and meets the National Standards for Community Engagement.

We will adopt these standards for all our community engagement activities using the accompanying indicators to help us plan, monitor and evaluate our work.

Consultation

Introduction

Consultation is just one method of community engagement but a very important one.

Everything covered in the first section of our strategy relates to consultation but there are other areas of good practice and law that we will follow when consulting.

This section will identify our consultation commitments and outline the procedures that we have in place to make sure that we achieve them.

Why consult?

We believe that people in the Scottish Borders have a right to have a say in how policies are formed and services delivered in their area.

We want our community to continue to play an active part in the decisions that affect them. Consulting with our community is an essential part of our work. We value it because:

- It helps us to plan services and give the community what they want and need.
- It helps us to prioritise services and make best use of limited resources.
- It highlights our commitment to be open and accountable and put our customer first.
- We recognise that we are not always the ones who know best.

In order to make consultation work we are committed to the six consultation criteria in the UK Government's Code of Practice on Consultation details of which can be found in the Consultation Guidelines attached to this strategy.

When will we consult?

We sometimes have a legal responsibility to consult on our proposals and have to do so in a short space of time. However, we also recognise the importance of consulting on more than just these areas.

We will carry out a public consultation on plans that are likely to have an impact on communities, businesses, the voluntary sector or specific sectors of the community.

Who will we consult with?

At the start of any consultation process we will identify who may be affected by our proposals and will do our best to make sure that they know about our consultation and are included. We will identify who we are consulting with in all written documents.

We will actively consult with the six named equalities groups i.e. race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious and philosophical belief and excluded groups.

We will actively consult with people in both rural and urban locations throughout the Borders, recognising that different approaches may be required for each.

We will not exclude anyone from giving us their views. All of our consultations will be available for anyone to take part in.

Methods of Consultation

There are a wide variety of methods available which we will use to consult. These include:

- Customer feedback forms
- Questionnaires and Surveys
- Complaints system
- Focus Groups
- Public meetings
- Use of the media
- Household Survey
- People's Panel

For each consultation we will use the most appropriate methods of consulting with those likely to be affected by our proposals. For large consultations we will always use more than one method of consultation.

More information about methods of consulting is available in the Consultation Guidelines attached to this strategy.

We will make sure that the scope of our consultation is known and what is being asked to comment on is clear. We will make it clear what can and what can't be changed as a result of comments.

All our written consultations will be in Plain English and we will aim to allow a minimum of twelve weeks to respond. We know that we won't always be able

to do this, e.g. planning applications. When this is the case we will give as long as we can and clearly indicate the deadline for responses.

We will try to avoid using jargon, abbreviations and technical terms. Where this cannot be avoided we will explain what we mean. We will test all of our consultation documents, including questionnaires, with people who are not familiar with the subject before sending them out.

We will take advice on the best way to present information to specific groups, e.g. children and young people, to allow them to make their views known to us. The Consultation Guidelines attached to this strategy include details of some organisations that can help us do this.

To help the whole community take part we will remove barriers to consultation wherever possible:

- We will make sure that all our consultations are available in a range of formats as required, e.g. easy read, Braille and in different languages.
- We will hold all consultation meetings in accessible buildings and, where possible, accessible locations.
- We will do our best to make sure that our consultations do not discriminate against anyone in any way and no-one is prevented from taking part in any consultation.

We will make sure that we are not discriminating against anyone during our consultation by carrying out full Equalities Impact Assessments on our work, information about which can be found in the Consultation Guidelines attached to this strategy.

We will not produce unnecessary expensive, glossy consultation documents.

Household Survey

Scottish Borders Council is committed to carrying out an annual Household Survey to help plan services and monitor the community's satisfaction with our work. Each survey will ask a sample of local residents what they think about Council services and how they are provided. A different sample of residents will be used each year.

New Ways People's Panel

As the lead partner in the New Ways Community Planning Partnership Scottish Borders Council makes use of the People's Panel as a method of consulting with the community.

The People's Panel consists of local residents across the Borders who have agreed to take part in regular surveys carried out by any of the New Ways partners, e.g. NHS Borders, VisitScotland Borders.

We will make sure that the Panel is kept refreshed and remains a representative sample of local people.

Feeding back

We will feedback the results of our consultations. We will provide information about what we have been told what changes will be made as a result of the comments received.

We will make sure that any comments you make that are not directly relevant to the remit of the consultation are seen by the right member of staff.

When specifically asked to do so we will contact individuals with the results of a consultation. Feedback will also be available in our SBConnect newsletter and on our website.

If it is felt comments have not been listened to a complaint can be made using the Council's Complaints system.

Monitoring

The Corporate Information Management Group, consisting of officers from all Council departments, will meet regularly to make sure that all our paper based consultations are in line with our Strategy. This group will:

- Check if anyone has done previous consultation work on a particular subject that produced results which can be shared.
- Approve all consultation plans and documents before the consultation takes place.
- Monitor the publication of the results and feedback.
- Keep a register of all consultations planned by the Council during the forthcoming year.
- Make sure that the results of all consultations are entered into the consultation register to help us monitor the effectiveness of the Council.
- Help to make sure that the results of Council consultations are properly shared.

More information about the Corporate Information Management Group is available from the Community Engagement Officer at the address on the back of this document.

The Role of Councillors

Elected Scottish Borders Councillors have an essential role in consulting with the Borders community about the services which we deliver. Where local consultation is planned we will make sure that Councillors are kept informed and involved.

Councillors are very active within many areas of the community, such as attending local village hall or community council meetings as well as their involvement with special interest groups. They play a vital role in our engagement with the public.

There are five Area Committees in the Scottish Borders. Membership of each Committee includes the Councillors for that area. The Area Committees have a role:

- To inform and consult communities on matters affecting their local area as well as the Borders as a whole.
- To make sure that decision making takes place at a local level within a corporate framework.

Conclusion

This Corporate Engagement and Consultation Strategy highlights Scottish Borders Council's commitment to effective community engagement and consultation.

This strategy will help us to develop joint approaches to consultation through departments in the Council, share the results of our consultations and deliver better feedback.

We will continually monitor how this strategy is working in practice and revise it in line with new legislation and best practice as appropriate.

Consultation Guidelines

Consultation Guidelines

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Introduction

These guidelines have been put together to help us carry out all our consultations in a clear and consistent way.

They will show how we will work towards the commitments we have made in the previous two sections of our strategy.

These guidelines do not form a rulebook and should not be used as a sole reference of good practice.

Advice on planning a consultation is available at any time from the Council's Community Engagement Officer at the address on the back of this document.

The Consultation Plan

A consultation plan should be written for each separate piece of work which clearly identifies the purpose of the consultation and the methods it will use. **The plans for all paper based consultations should be submitted to the Corporate Information Management Group before any further work is undertaken.** You will find it useful to refer to your plan throughout the consultation.

The following template has been developed based on best practice used in this and other Local Authorities. Every consultation will vary depending on who you are consulting with. You may also want to include other areas in your plan to help you in your work.

Why is the consultation being carried out?

What is the main reason for wanting to consult? Is it due to a legal requirement? What do you expect to achieve from the consultation?

What is the consultation about?

What are you asking in the consultation; what can be changed?

Who does the subject of the consultation affect?

Who could be affected by the subject being consulted on? Who should be given the chance to take part in the consultation? Identify in the document or in a covering letter who you are sending copies to.

Have you identified how you will involve the six named equalities groups in your consultation?

What is the budget for the consultation?

The budget and its source should be identified prior to any work being started. This should also include staff time for members of staff that will be needed for any public/focus meetings, preparation of information at start and end of the consultation period, and for evaluation of the results.

When will the consultation be carried out?

We should aim to consult at an early stage on any policy or service development. If this has not been possible, tell your consultees why their views have not already been asked for. It may be that there are legal issues that must be taken into account first.

How long will the consultation take?

It is important that a consultation is not rushed, it should be planned to take place well in advance of the final deadline for your piece of work. Remember to allow time for collecting and acting on the responses from the consultation before presenting any recommendations to Councillors.

Allow for ongoing contact during lengthy consultation exercises.

Which methods of consultation will be used?

You should choose methods that best suit the communities you are consulting with. In most cases a variety of methods will need to be used. Remember that it is our legal duty to actively seek the views of minority groups – just publishing information on the website and in the local press will not be enough.

Guidance from the Scottish Executive highlights the need to give consultees at least 12 weeks to respond to written documents. If this can't be done explain why, e.g. it is in the public interest to get and act on the results as soon as possible,

How will the consultation responses be used?

How will you act on the responses you receive? You must be able to justify why you may not take the action the community wishes.

Identifying what you can and cannot change at this early stage will allow you to make very clear to those taking part what they are being asked to comment on.

How will feedback be made available?

Identify how you will feedback to consultees. It is essential that the community knows that their views have been considered and where changes have been made as a result. It is just as important that they are aware why their views haven't been acted on.

If information is received during the consultation that doesn't relate to that particular piece of work it should be logged and passed to the relevant service.

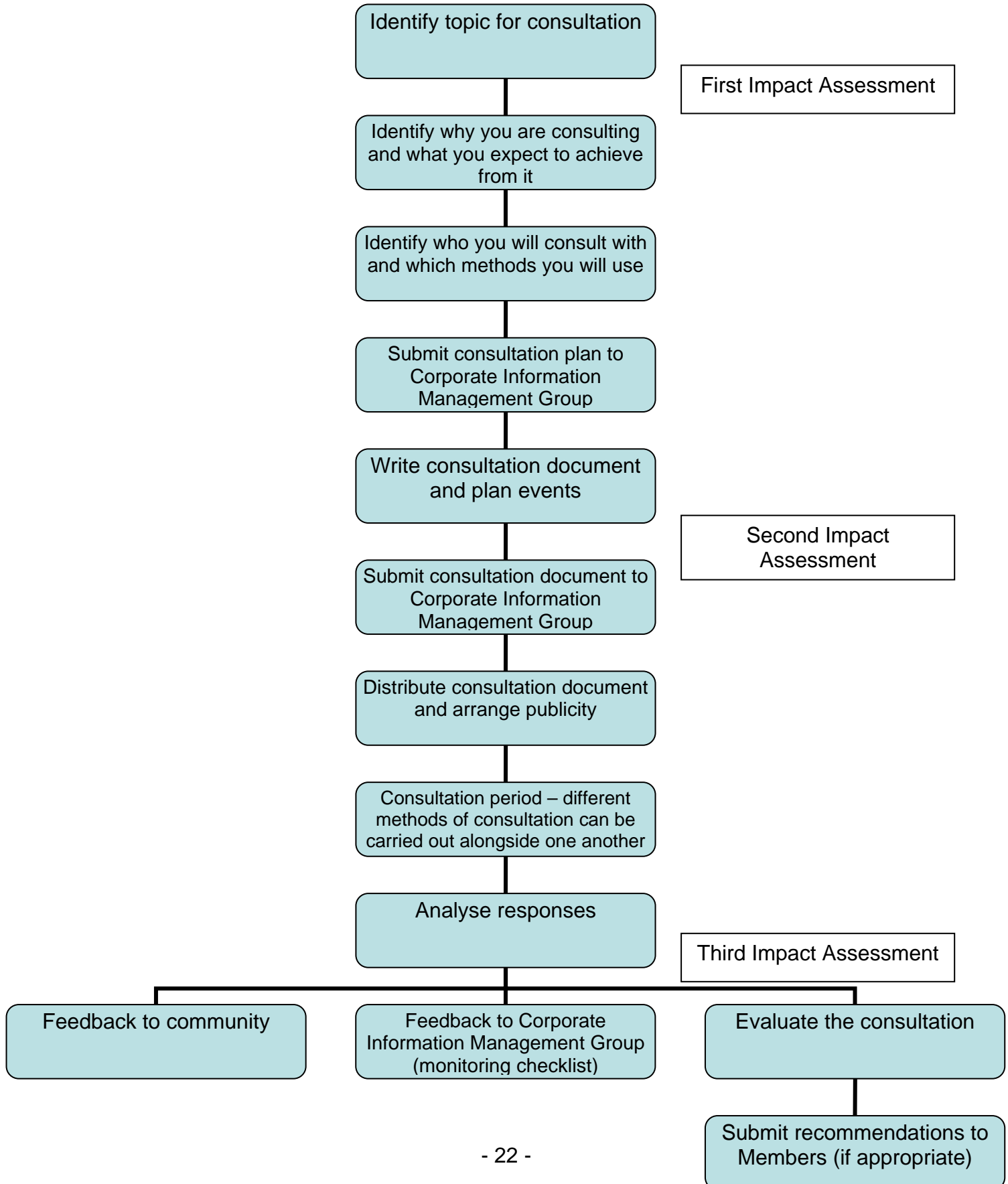
How will the consultation be evaluated?

Evaluation should be carried out throughout the consultation process, e.g. are we consulting with the right groups, are people able to access the information we are providing, are we getting the level of responses expected?

You should be clear from the start about the level of response you expect and what you will do if it is not achieved.

The Consultation Flowchart

The following example shows the steps involved in carrying out a consultation. Some steps can be carried out alongside one another. It is intended only to be used as a guide to help you when planning your consultation.



Equalities Impact Assessments

What is an Equalities Impact Assessment?

An Equalities Impact Assessment is a way of thoroughly assessing and consulting on the effects that a proposed policy, leaflet, guidance note, manner of working, etc, is likely to have on people depending on their race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious and philosophical belief.

The Equalities Impact Assessment is a continuous process throughout the consultation. It is used to identify any concerns about the way the consultation is being carried out, information produced during and after the consultation period, and whether the results will be fully inclusive.

The main purpose of the Equalities Impact Assessment is to pre-empt the possibility that the proposed policy, leaflet, guidance note, manner of working, etc could affect any of the equality groupings (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and philosophical belief) unfavourably.

The Equalities Impact Assessment comprises two stages:

1. Screening the policy etc to see if it is relevant to any of the six equality groupings – all policies must be screened.
2. Fully assessing policies etc identified as being relevant to make sure that they do not have an adverse effect on any of the six equality groupings – any policy which relates to people will need to be assessed.

Why does the Council need to Impact Assess for Equalities?

In April 2003 the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 came into force. Within its provisions, the Act provides a statutory framework for Best Value, Community Planning and a Power of Well-Being. The Act also states that the Council must ensure that everyone is treated equally and no-one is discriminated against in all it does.

It should be noted that within the Act the term “equalities” is used in its widest sense and encompasses not only gender, race, disability and sexual orientation, but also individuals and groups facing discrimination on the grounds of *“age, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions”*, Scotland Act 1998.

Scottish Borders Council is bound by this legislation.

Guidelines on Equalities Impact Assessment are available to Council staff on the intranet or from the Council’s Equality and Diversity Project Group which consists of officers from each Council service.

Engagement/Consultation Methods

The table below gives a summary of just some of the ways in which we can work with the community. How each consultation is carried out will depend on its purpose and target group. Possible uses of the approaches listed are included as guidance.

Method	Description	Pros	Cons	Possible uses	Cost*
Complaints/comments system	System to make it easy for customers to give feedback.	Easy to do. Promotes satisfaction.	Only gets views of vocal minority. Can be mostly negative.	Unsolicited feedback. e.g. Council's Complaints process.	££
Customer feedback forms	System for customers to give feedback about a specific service they have received.	Easy to do. Helps in monitoring services.	Response rate can vary significantly.	Monitor specific service where customers can be easily identified. e.g. SBC Local.	££
Questionnaires and Surveys	Research into customer needs, views etc.	Produces very clear, useful information if done well.	May miss certain groups. Bad surveys give poor information. Can be expensive.	Useful to guide strategy development, e.g. House Condition Survey 2006 carried out by the Housing Strategy service	varies
Focus Groups	Groups of people to talk about issues and share views.	Produces in-depth information/views. Can be used to focus on specific groups.	Discussion may be led by vocal group members – peer pressure.	Proposed policy change that will affect specific group of users e.g. Literacies partnership annual engagement with adult learners through BALSA.	££
Public meetings	Open meeting called on a specific issue.	Allow for expression of views on particular topic.	Can be dominated by minority.	Consultation of proposed strategy that affects the general public e.g. Planning consultation on the	£ - ££

				Local Plan.	
Use of the media	Press release or advertisement of specific issue.	Wide circulation of information.	Information can be edited by media.	Pass on information e.g Community Plan consultation	£
Household Survey	Wide ranging annual survey.	Accurate information producing trends over time.	Time consuming – expensive.	Can be used to inform policy development e.g. Corporate Household Survey carried out annually by the Business Improvement Unit.	£££
People's Panel	List of people who respond to periodic surveys.	Can be quicker and cheaper than one-off surveys.	Can become less representative over time.	Gauge customer satisfaction/awareness. Used quarterly on specific issues e.g. Council Tax leaflet.	£££
Planning for real	Involves communities in developing ideas. Uses 3D model of area to which people attach ideas or comments.	Draws on local knowledge. Can involve whole community.	Takes time to develop.	Consultation on physical development of an area.	££ - £££
Interviews	One to one contact discussion.	Accurate information. Allows for individual expression of views.	Expensive, time consuming	Consult on proposed change in service delivery to vulnerable group.	£££
Mystery shopper	Researchers act as customers.	Allows for user perception.	Does not usually involve real customers.	Monitor Council's customer service	£
Web based consultation	Surveys/individual questions on line.	Immediate results.	Not representative.	Can gather a snap shot of opinion e.g. Supporting Businesses survey carried by Business Improvement Unit on behalf of	£

				Scrutiny.	
Events	Various.	Can produce wide range of views.	Can require large degree of preparation.	Local shows can be used to pass on information e.g. SBC stands at the Border Union Show	varies
Participatory appraisal	Local people conduct own survey and prepare analysis and plan.	Involves community throughout process. Builds community capacity and sense of pride.	May require large amount of training and support.	Can be used when working with a specific community/community issue e.g. Rural Resource Centre work with Newtown and Eildon Action Group	£ - ££
Area Committees	Area based Council committees involving Councillors, officials and communities.	Can allow for good exchange of information.	Can be dominated by Councillors.	Strategy/policy development.	£
Roadshows	Mobile exhibition with Council representatives available for discussion.	Can be good way to take information to community.	Information not always targeted at required audience.	Introduce new service e.g. Recycling mobile information stand.	££ - £££

* Key for costs

£ - low cost

££ - medium cost

£££ - high cost

Questionnaire Design

It is very easy to produce a bad questionnaire and not so easy to produce a good one.

It is important to avoid using jargon, abbreviations or technical language. If it cannot be avoided make sure you explain what you mean.

All written material should be in plain English.

The following points should be used as a guide when writing a questionnaire. However never design a survey on your own – get help from someone who has done several before. The layout, wording and scoring can all affect how people respond and therefore how useful the results will be.

- Keep it short
- Keep it simple – best practice shows that any published document should be able to be understood by anyone 11 years of age and over. This will help to make sure that individuals with learning disabilities and other associated impairments are not excluded from taking part.
- Only ask questions where you can act on the results.
- Make questions as neutral as possible — avoid leading questions that may bias the answers you get.
- Keep your questions as clear as possible – use language that is easily understood.
- Only ask one question at a time.
- Identify how you are going to analyse the results and what software you are going to use as this may affect how you ask your questions. Most departments have SNAP software. This can also be used to create machine readable forms – useful for large scale surveys.
- Be specific about what you are asking. If you are asking about a particular service ask questions about specific areas of it rather than the service as a whole. This will help to identify what people like about your service and where attention is needed.
- Encourage people to be specific in their responses. Where possible use tick boxes where people mark their response, e.g. between 1 – 5 where ‘1’ is ‘not at all satisfied’ and ‘5’ is ‘very satisfied’.
- Where possible avoid using open ended questions where people are invited to make comments. These are very difficult and time consuming to analyse.
- Ensure confidentiality. If you ask for contact details to allow you to send feedback give assurances that personal information will not be held for any other reason or passed on to another department or organisation.
- Follow guidelines on layout and design of material available from the Council’s Corporate Communications Team.
- At the end make sure to thank those who have completed the survey.

- Do not pass any costs of the consultation on to the public. Always include a FREEPOST return address or prepaid envelope. Make copies of documents freely available in paper format and cover all distribution costs. If you cannot make information available in this way, e.g. due to size of document, explain why and identify an acceptable alternative. **However, never refuse to supply information in a format if that is the only method in which an individual can access it.**
- Test your questionnaire first. This may be on colleagues with little or no knowledge of your subject matter or a small sample of the community your questionnaire is aimed at.

Help on how to write in plain English is available from the Council's Corporate Communications Team. Information, including an A to Z of alternative words is also available from:

The Plain English Campaign

01663 744409

info@plainenglish.co.uk

www.plainenglish.co.uk

All written documents should include the following paragraph in a prominent position:

You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various alternative formats by contacting the address below. We can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Name of contact person

Address

Telephone number

e-mail address

Scottish Borders Council has an agreement with the Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) in Edinburgh for getting information produced in other formats and languages. Electronic enquiries are best, and please remember that costs will have to come out of your own budget.

Van Dundas

Manager, Interpretation and Translation Service

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Your voice

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In some instances it may be possible to get information produced locally, e.g. Borders Talking Newspaper produce information on tape for the visually impaired.

How to contact hard to reach groups

Someone said, “there’s no such thing as hard to reach groups, just more expensive to reach.”

It can sometimes be difficult to ensure that a consultation process is fully inclusive. The organisations listed below can help you consult with a wide range of people. They can advise you on the best way to consult and present your information.

This list is not exhaustive and the groups listed should not be used as the only way to engage with these communities.

Older People:

Elder Voice
14 Island Street
Galashiels
TD1 1NU

01896 756626
scotborderev@tiscali.co.uk

Children (under twelve):

Kirstie Farmer
Development Worker
Ishuze Youth Action
Old Corn Exchange
School Brae
Peebles EH45 8AL

01721 724779
kirstie.ishuze@btopenworld.com

Margot Black
Childcare Partnership Manager
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose TD6 0SA

01835 824000
mblack2@scotborders.gov.uk

Gregor Gowans
Children's Information Service

01896 758186
bordercare@scotborders.gov.uk

Young People (12 - 25):

Community Learning & Development Office
Langlee Complex
Marigold Drive
Galashiels TD1 2LP

01896 755110

Jenny Miller
Youth Borders
Langlee Complex
Marigold Drive
Galashiels TD1 2LP

01896 755110
jennym@youthborders.org.uk

People with Disabilities:

Borders Disability Forum and Borders Visual Impairment Network
Roxburgh Street
Galashiels
TD1 1NY

01896 668578
enquiries@bdf.demon.co.uk

Borders Talking Newspaper
Wendy Moss

01361 884206
wendy@borderstalkingnewspaper.org.uk

Carers:

Borders Voluntary Community Care Forum
34 Woodmarket
Kelso TD5 7AX

01573 226969
admin@bvccf.org.uk

People with Learning Difficulties:

Donna Allen
People First Borders
Low Buckholmside
Galashiels
TD1 1RR

01896 752120
donna.pfborders@fsmail.net

Black and Minority Ethnic Communities:

Racial Equality Group
16 Bowden Road
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose TD6 0PU

01835 823328
higgs@stboswells.demon.co.uk

Tenants:

Ethel Pender
Community Participation Co-ordinator
Scottish Borders Housing Association
South Bridge House
Whinfield Road
Selkirk TD7 5DT

01750 724444
e.pender@sbha.org.uk

Voluntary and Community Groups:

Tony Fowler
Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service
Platform 1
Station Road
Duns TD11 3HS

01361 883137
tonyfowler@bavs.org.uk

Morag Walker
The Bridge
Riverside House
Ladhope Vale
Galashiels TD1 1BT

01896 757342
morag.walker@the-bridge.uk.net

Cross Section of Community:

Community Councils
c/o Clare Malster
Community Engagement Officer
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose TD6 0SA

01835 826626
cmalster@scotborders.gov.uk

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender:

LGBT Equality Forum
Alastair Lings
79 Tweed Road
Galashiels
TD1 3DX

01896 757861
07763 850087
alastairlings@yahoo.co.uk

Monitoring checklist

The following information should be submitted to the Corporate Information Management Group at the end of your consultation. This will allow the results to be shared across the Council and to monitor the effectiveness of the consultation.

1. Lead Officer.
2. Job Title.
3. Service/Department.
4. Purpose of Consultation.
5. Which New Ways/Corporate Plan theme(s) is the consultation relevant to?

Strong, inclusive and safe communities
A robust and dynamic economy
Protection and enhancement of our natural environment
Improved health and well-being
Learning for everyone
A well connected Borders

6. Which area(s) did the consultation cover?

Berwickshire
Cheviot
Eildon
Teviot and Liddesdale
Tweeddale
Borders wide

Please specify if the consultation took place on a smaller scale e.g. in specific towns or with a specific group of people.

7. Consultation period

Start date
End date

8. Who did you consult?

Older people (50+)
Children (under twelve)
Young people (12 - 25)
Disabled people

Black & Minority Ethnic Communities
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender)
Tenants
Faith groups
Migrant Workers
Cross section of community
Other
Please specify

9. Number of people consulted

10. Number of responses received

11. Method of Consultation used:

Complaints/feedback forms
Questionnaires and Surveys
Focus Groups
Public meetings
Use of the media
Household Survey
People's Panel
Planning for real
Interviews
Mystery shopper
Web based consultation
Events
Participatory appraisal
Area committees
Other
Please specify

12. Key findings from consultation

13. Has feedback been given? (Please include details of when and how).

14. What has the consultation achieved? (e.g. how have responses affected service change, development of policy)

Code of Practice on Consultation – The Six Consultation Criteria

The following criteria have been developed by the UK Government for use in Government departments. They are, however, an example of good practice and where possible should be used during any consultation undertaken by Scottish Borders Council.

1. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
2. Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescales for responses.
3. Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
4. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
5. Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.
6. Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

Glossary

Area Committees The five Area Committees in the Borders are responsible for making decisions on issues that affect that Area Committee area only, e.g. planning, local parades and town twinning.

Best Value Good value to the public.

Community Everyone who lives and/or works in the Scottish Borders.

Community Engagement A two way communication process between organisations and the community.

Community Planning The involvement of a wide range of public, voluntary, community and private sector bodies in the planning of services in line with local priorities.

Consultation Plan A plan that details why, when, with who and how a consultation will be carried out.

Corporate Information Management Group Set up under the Council's Corporate Information Management Strategy the group consists of officers from all services within the Council. It is responsible for monitoring how information is used within the Council.

Equalities Impact Assessment An assessment process that the Council must follow to make sure that any documents it produces which are available to the public do not discriminate against any group in the community.

National Standards for Community Engagement Recommended rules that anyone working with communities should follow.

New Ways Community Planning Partnership The group of organisations in the Borders working to make sure that everyone in the Scottish Borders is able to have their say about local services and priorities.

Plain English A nationwide campaign fighting for the use of plain English in public communication.

SNAP software Computer software for questionnaire design, publication, data collection and analysis.

References

Scottish Borders Council Corporate Plan 2006-2009

Scottish Borders Community Plan 2006 – 2016

Scottish Borders Compact June 2005

How the Council Consults and its Effectiveness (September 2005), Scottish Borders Council Scrutiny Working Group

Consultation Strategy and Guidance Notes (2001), Northumberland County Council

National Standards for Community Engagement (2005), Communities Scotland 2005. <http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk>

The A to Z of alternative words (2001), Plain English Campaign

Framework for Engaging with Communities (2001), Middlesbrough Partnership

The Community Engagement Toolkit (2004), Dundee City Council

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 Best Value Guidance, Scottish Executive

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 Community Planning Advice Note 5, Effective Community Engagement, Scottish Executive

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 Community Planning: Statutory Guidance, Scottish Executive

Consultation Good Practice Guidance (June 2004), Scottish Executive

Community Involvement Partners in Salford (2005)
<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/communityinvolvement>

Consultation Strategy, Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council

Code of Practice on Consultation (2004), Cabinet Office

How to Consult Your Users (2001), Cabinet Office

Consultation Toolkit, North Lincolnshire Council

You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various alternative formats by contacting the address below.

The Community Engagement Officer can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Business Improvement Unit
Scottish Borders Council
FREEPOST GL19
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MELROSE, TD6 0SA

www.scotborders.gov.uk

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Our Scottish Borders
Your voice