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to stay, to grow!**

Staveley Town Deal Consultation and Engagement Protocol

Protocol Endorsement

All partners / project sponsors are asked to officially endorse the principles of this Consultation and Engagement protocol, in support of the successful delivery of the Staveley Town Deal and related projects:

Name of partner / project sponsor:

Lead officer:

Signed:

Date:

1.0 Purpose of the Consultation and Engagement protocol

- 1.1 To set out an agreed set of consultation and engagement processes and standards relating to the Staveley Town Deal.
- 1.2 The protocol covers the management of consultation and engagement activity in relation to:
- The overarching programme, as led by Chesterfield Borough Council
 - Any consultation and engagement activity as required under Government funding regulations
 - The specific projects within the scope of the Staveley Town Deal, as led by Chesterfield Borough Council or the named project sponsor

2.0 Introduction to Consultation and Engagement

The emphasis of any consultation and engagement activities should be listening and opening up dialogue as opposed to simply informing. Opportunity should be provided for feedback to help shape services and plans.

To engage with customers we need to understand who they are, what they want, how best to engage with them and when it is most likely we will be able to. Providing feedback following engagement and consultation processes is an essential part of the approach.



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The Consultation Principles Guidance (2018) should be closely followed and used to inform the way Consultation and Engagement activities are carried out.

2.1 At the start of the consultation and engagement planning process:

- Ensure that the objectives of any consultation are clear e.g. to gather new ideas or test options.
- Only use community engagement and consultation processes when there is a real opportunity for people to influence and change decisions and services. Be honest where decisions are non-negotiable.
- Ensure that consultation is undertaken when there is a statutory requirement to do so, and where it is good practice to do so.
- Ensure that community engagement activities are realistic and that expectations are not raised unnecessarily or unrealistically.
- Adhere to the Staveley Town Deal Equalities Impact Assessment

2.2 When starting consultation:

- Coordinate community engagement activities with partners, to avoid duplication and 'consultation fatigue'.
- Begin engagement early in policy development when the policy is still under consideration and views can genuinely be taken into account.
- Make sure that timeframes for consultation are appropriate to the nature and impact of the proposal (e.g. the range of interested parties or complexity of the issue). Timescales may vary between 2 and 12 weeks.
- Establish the timing and length of consultations on a case-by-case basis and make sure they are realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response.
- Avoid consulting during holiday periods, where possible, and if not, make allowances within the timeframe.
- Avoid consultation exercises during the six-week period before local or national election periods.

2.3 How to consult:

- Consider the most appropriate type of engagement for each circumstance. The type and scale of consultation will be appropriate to the potential impacts of the proposal.
- Ensure that the consultation captures the full range of stakeholders affected.
- Provide information in an easily understandable format, using plain language and clarifying the key issues.
- Take into account particular needs and work with participants to overcome where possible any difficulties they may have to enable them to fully participate in the activity.
- Make sufficient information available to stakeholders to enable them to make informed comments.



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- Ensure that, where appropriate, equalities monitoring takes place, and that survey data is broken down into 'protected groups' (eg. age, disability, gender etc). (The CBC Policy Team will give guidance on when equality monitoring is appropriate).
- Ensure that participation is voluntary and that participants can withdraw at any time.
- Ensure that the rights and dignity of all participants are respected at all times, and give careful consideration to activities, information and questions to ensure that they do not offend, cause distress or embarrassment.
- Treat information confidentially, with particular regard to the Data Protection, GDPR and Freedom of Information Acts.
- Ensure adherence to health and safety regulations when undertaking in-person engagement activities.

2.4 Who to consult:

The audiences we engage with are many and varied. This means it is vitally important that each engagement activity is carefully planned to consider which audiences (or parts of them) need to be targeted. What is appropriate for one initiative may be completely different for another.

Typical audiences include:

- Residents
- Partners
- Trade Unions
- Tenants
- Suppliers
- Customers
- Businesses and investors (both new and established)
- Voluntary & Community Sector
- Special interest groups
- Universities and Education Providers
- MPs
- Visitors
- Government agencies and / or regulatory bodies
- Board Members
- Potential new residents as new homes are built and occupied
- Residents' panels, Themed Focus Groups and Sub Groups to the Board

2.5 Feedback and transparency:

- Be open and transparent about the aims of community engagement activity and what stage of development the policy or proposal has reached.
- Be clear about what aspects of the policy or proposal being consulted on are open to change and what decisions have already been taken
- Ensure participants know what they are agreeing to take part in and how the information will be used.



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- Ensure that information obtained from community engagement activities is honestly interpreted and enable participants to be part of the analysis process if they wish to.
- Publish consultation responses, including number of responses, and how they have been used within 12 weeks of the end of the consultation. If this is not possible, a public statement should explain why.
- Have clear processes to feedback on community engagement activity and outcomes and give reasons if unable to deliver on expectations in a timely manner and appropriate manner.

2.6 Software packages:

Any software package used to undertake consultation activity should be appropriate and fit for purpose. The Council has already invested in a range of consultation and engagement tools including a highly efficient survey, data capture and analysis tool, SNAP.

This software can be used to produce online questionnaires, polls and quizzes suitable for a variety of stakeholders. Web surveys can be used on a range of devices including PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones.

SNAP is also used to create paper surveys which can then be scanned for automatic data capture. The same survey can be produced in a number of different formats (eg, paper, web) with all of the responses collated together for analysis.

Security levels are maintained both for the service itself, for the platform it is running on, and for the backup and support services behind it.

“Free” survey software packages such as Survey Monkey etc should not be used. An assessment undertaken by Derbyshire Community Engagement Partners and Chesterfield Borough Council identified significant data protection and security challenges with many of these free packages.

2.7 Consultation fees

Chesterfield Borough Council's Policy team can offer an in-house community engagement service to deliver extensive consultation and engagement work to support the Staveley Town Deal. Hourly rates for the service are currently £21 per hour for Policy Officer support and £13 per hour for Assistant Policy Officer support.