

The Framework Standards

The following guidance and checklist template should be used to help plan any engagement process. Consider each standard and complete the table below to develop your plan. It will be useful to 'test' your plan with an appropriate reference group to ensure your plan is robust.

For help to develop your plan, contact the Communities and Equality Team at Brighton and Hove City Council on 01273 296821.

Clarity of Purpose

Before beginning any engagement activity, we will be clear about why it is happening, what we want to achieve, which engagement activity we will use, who we are seeking to engage with, what can and cannot be influenced, how we will use the information gathered through the engagement activity and what the benefit of being involved will be.

Evidence Base

We will use all available research, knowledge and community intelligence to help us plan engagement activities. We will not carry out engagement activities if the information we need is already available.

Timing

We will allow sufficient time to design and carry out engagement activities that are inclusive and encourage participation from all affected communities. We will also allow sufficient time to ensure that the results of engagement activities can shape our policies, plans and services and that we can 'test back' with communities what they have told us. When timing for activity is set for us by another, for example, national government, we will clearly communicate this to participants.

Resources

We will plan engagement activity carefully in accordance with what the activity seeks to achieve and in the context of available resources and will communicate any constraints clearly. We will recognise the need to resource practical support that helps people to be involved.

Communication

We will always be open, honest, and accountable when sharing information and responding to contributions from all participants. All communication will be jargon free and relevant to the intended audience. We will seek to use a wide range of methods to maximise the opportunity for communication between communities and partners. We will clearly communicate how participants can seek redress if they are unsatisfied with the process. We will also communicate between partners to create joined-up engagement activities and avoid duplication of effort.

Partnership

We will work in partnership with other organisations when and where they have additional or greater expertise, knowledge or experience about engaging with specific communities, with particular recognition of the knowledge and expertise of the voluntary and community sector. The independence of the voluntary and community sector will be respected and recognised in all partnership working.

Quality

We will work to ensure that staff responsible for engagement have the skills and capacity to achieve high quality engagement. Equally, we will work to ensure that communities have the opportunity to develop their skills and capacity to engage if they wish.

Accessibility

We will support a variety of engagement activities to reflect the diversity of the communities in Brighton and Hove. We will be flexible and responsive to the ways that the community wants to engage with us. We will recognise the need to make engagement both formal and informal at different times and for different people and purposes. We will provide practical support to help overcome barriers that some individuals and communities may face to engagement, particularly vulnerable and seldom heard groups in order that they are represented in all community engagement activity and not just single issue activity.

Feedback

We will provide feedback to the community about the engagement activities we carry out and will explain how the community's input contributed to the decision-making process. We will explain how and when we will provide feedback to the community at the same time as we carry out the community engagement exercise. We will also make the feedback as widely available as possible.

Monitoring & Review

In partnership with stakeholders, we will monitor and review the engagement activities we carry out to ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to engage should they choose to, particularly those whose voices are often not heard, and change our practices accordingly. We will learn from our own practice.

Community Engagement Framework Standards Checklist

Please use the Community Engagement Framework standards to help map your activity in the table below

Standard	Activity	Notes / comments
Clarity of purpose: Why		
Clarity of purpose: Who		
Clarity of purpose: What techniques		
Clarity of purpose: What can be influenced		
Clarity of purpose: How will information be used		
Clarity of purpose: What is the benefit of involvement?		

Evidence base – what other information already exists?		
Timing		
Resources		
Communication		
Partnership		
Quality		
Accessibility		
Feedback		
Monitoring and review		