

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

Date of meeting: 12th March 2008

Agenda Item: 8

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROTOCOL

Issue

The 2007/08 Community Strategy Action Plan included an action for the 'Creating Opportunities For All' Theme Group to establish good practice protocols for engaging with Hard to Reach Groups and individuals.

Details

The attached protocol has been developed by the Theme Group, and requires the adoption of the Board to complete the identified Community Plan action.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board approve and adopt the new Community Engagement Protocol: -

Contact: **Jo Smith, South Derbyshire CVS**
Tel. (01283) 219761
Email. jo.smith@south-derbyscvcs.org.uk

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

South Derbyshire LSP Community Engagement Protocol

Introduction

Purpose

To establish a common approach within the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership when engaging with the community.

Background

South Derbyshire LSP through the work of the Creating Opportunities For All Theme Group has agreed the need to engage with and involve the communities of South Derbyshire, particularly the harder to reach communities in the planning and delivery of services. It is important that this is done in an effective and efficient way. The LSP recognise that each partner agency may have to adhere to the specific requirements of their agency when carrying out community engagement initiatives, however this protocol is intended to aid a partnership approach locally.

Definition of Community Engagement

Community engagement refers to the two way discussions between those that make the decisions and those that are affected by them. There are various levels of participation. See Appendix 1

The protocol

This protocol provides partners in the South Derbyshire LSP, guidance in planning and carrying out a community engagement initiative. Further support and advice may be sought from South Derbyshire CVS and Derbyshire Rural Community Foundation.

Step 1. Scoping

To define your initiative clearly before undertaking the work i.e. Why? What? When? Who?

Why?

There should be a clear reason(s) for the engagement initiative. Things to consider:

Is there information available from another source?

Has the community in question already given its views, priorities or preferences through some other means? E.g. Citizens panel, community interest forum etc

If this is so you may not need to do a full extensive exercise but simply supplement what is available.

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

What?

If you are going ahead, what level of engagement is needed? This relates to your purpose.

The four levels of engagement are:

Information exchange

Consultation

Joint decision making

Community empowerment

See Appendix 1 for further information

When?

The timing should take account of what else is happening to avoid clashing with other initiatives or to allow for it to be integrated with another initiative.

Other considerations

Does it meet the Derbyshire Compact Requirements?

Does it fit the timetable of meetings for reporting?

Are there funding/planning deadlines to be met?

If there is an inflexible deadline the level and scope of the engagement should be determined by this.

Who?

You need to identify the people and or groups within the voluntary and community sector who have an interest in and a contribution to make to the issue.

They will include some or all of the following:

Citizens

Service Users/customers

Community groups

Community representatives

Voluntary organisations

Forums

You need to consider **equality and diversity issues** and should consider the profile of the local community i.e.

Children and young people

Older people

People with disabilities

Minority ethnic groups

Lesbian/gay /bisexual/ transgender community

Women

Gypsy/travellers

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

In addition you will need to consider elected members and partner agencies and any other stakeholders.

Knowing who you are engaging, the purpose and the level of influence you can offer will give you a basis from which to work.

Step 2. Produce a Community Engagement Plan

Using the template at Appendix 2 and based on the scoping exercise produce a draft plan.

Discuss the draft plan with relevant partners, LSP theme groups, strategic coordination group and key community representatives and get any agreements required.

Identify appropriate funding for the initiative

Check the plan for quality:

e.g.

Sustainable - Does it make best use of time and resources; will it contribute to the LSP achieving its vision/ strategy?

Inclusive - Does it involve all the right people, particularly those who may find it hardest to participate?

What will you do to support this happening?

Commitment - Is it clear at what level you are asking people to participate and their level of influence?

What are the mechanisms for giving people feedback on the results and decisions made?

Good Practice – Are you using appropriate tools for the job and abiding by agreed principles of community engagement?

Make any necessary changes and share final version with all partners.

Your plan will show:

1. The appropriate level of community engagement for the initiative
2. The target groups and partners
3. What has already been decided and what is open to influence by the community
4. How the initiative will feed into the LSP planning processes.

The level of detail should reflect the scale of the engagement initiative.

Step 3 Implement the plan

Things to consider

Communication

Use of plain English in any documents, leaflets press releases, discussions etc.

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

Take account of those people for whom English is not their first language or who may have a visual or hearing impairment, or a low basic skill level. Is the language appropriate to the target groups? Young people speak differently to older people.

Timing

To be Compact compliant 12 weeks should be allowed for full consultation exercises where you are expecting community and voluntary organisations to be able to respond.

If this is not possible, the initiative must be of a manageable scale and appropriate methods should be used to ensure a meaningful engagement is achieved.

Things to consider

Get people involved early, inform people of what is going to happen and what you are expecting them to do.

Prepare people and identify what they will need in order to participate, summarise the key points of why you are doing it, what you are hoping to achieve and why you want them to be involved.

For involved pieces of work do the participants have any training needs to enable them to engage?

What specific support do the harder to reach communities need? Ask them what they need.

Transparency and Confidentiality

Be clear about the record keeping.

How will peoples input into the process will be recorded, reported and stored?

Who will have access to the information at every stage of the process and later?

Venues for Meetings

Think about practical issues, accessibility, transport, peoples 'comfort zones'

Meetings/Focus Groups think about timing for your target group. Consider evenings, weekends etc school runs, child or caring responsibilities.

Feed Back

Ensure participants are offered/given feedback on the recommendations and the outcome of the initiative.

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

Appendix 1

Levels of Participation

In order to make a community engagement initiative meaningful it is important to decide the most appropriate level of participation. It is important to be realistic and honest about what you require and what you can offer in terms of outcomes.

1. Information exchange

We are planning to Have you any information that we should take into account?

This is the lowest level and as such the information given may enable minor changes to an already substantial plan but the end product will not be influenced by the community.

2. Consultation

We are planning to What should we consider before we make a decision?

A clear opportunity to influence the decision but the decision will be made elsewhere and the communities views may or may not be taken into consideration.

3. Joint Decision Making

We are considering..... Will community organisations send representatives to a joint project team to help develop a proposal and see it established? An extended involvement in the decision making process, where ideas are debated and consensus sought. The final decision will still be made elsewhere.

4. Community Empowerment

Your community is invited to apply for.... and establish and manage.... This gives control to the community within a framework (maybe financial) with agreed aims and objectives.

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

Appendix 2

Community Engagement Agreement

Title: Give the initiative a name

Purpose: What does the initiative aim to do; specify whether it is:

- Information exchange
- Consultation
- Shared decision-making
- Community empowerment

Influence: Say how (if) the results will influence decision-making.

Stakeholders: Identify all those with a direct interest in the process and/or results, including, voluntary and community groups, LSP theme groups, elected members, partner agencies, SDDC/ DCC services
Say how they will be consulted on and involved in the Community Engagement.

Approach: Outline the basic sequence of events and any steering/working groups that will be created

Consultees: List all the groups/populations/individuals to be 'engaged'.

Scope: List all the main elements (i.e. topics/issues) that the initiative will focus on.

Methods: State what community engagement methods are to be used (include what level of engagement it is and efforts to include communities of interest and hard to reach groups).

Decision Making: State who will receive the outputs (e.g. consultation responses) and be responsible for deciding the outcome.

Timescale: Set out with approximate dates each of the main steps in the stages of the community engagement initiative. Explain any external deadlines you have to meet e.g. SDDC/ DCC budget setting process; DDEP deadline).

Feedback: Explain how and when participants and the public will be informed of the results of the engagement and any ensuing decisions/actions.

Contact: Who is responsible provide the name, title and contact details for the lead person responsible for conducting the community engagement initiative.

Other: Include any other details that help clarify your initiative.

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Report to the Board

Appendix 3

Useful Information

Local Contacts

South Derbyshire CVS

46-48 Grove Street

Swadlincote

DE11 9DD

01283 219761

Email office@sd cvs.org.uk

Website www.sd cvs.org.uk

Derbyshire Rural Community Council

Church Street

Wirkesworth

Matlock

Derbyshire

DE4 4EY

01629 826053

Email drcc@derbysrcc.org.uk

Website www.derbyshirercc.org.uk

Development of Citizens Advice Bureau services in primary care

Background

In 2007/08 Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust identified recurrent funding of £50k to support the development of Choosing Health in the South Derbyshire locality.

It was agreed that £28k would be used to support the development of Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) services in primary care. This was used to fund services in the following four practices, for 1 session (half a day advice session plus half a day for follow up) per week:

- 1) Wellbrook Surgery in Hilton
- 2) Heartwood Surgery in Swadlincote
- 3) Newhall Surgery (adviser is based in the Old Post Centre in Newhall, but surgery have signed up to referral scheme, and we are prioritising surgery referrals)
- 4) Melbourne Surgery (based at senior citizens' centre in Melbourne; surgery have signed up to referral scheme & get priority appointments)

Developments

Subsequently Derbyshire County PCT has identified further funding to develop Citizens Advice in primary care across the County. It was agreed that the PCT should increase the funding per session to achieve full cost recovery (FCR), which is approximately £8.5k, as compared to £7k without FCR. Approximately £36,000 has been allocated for South Derbyshire to support the increase to FCR and to support further sessions.

This will allow for three further services to be funded in South Derbyshire in:

- 1) Woodville Surgery (based at Goseley Community Centre)
- 2) Overseal surgery
- 3) Church Greasley

The practices have been identified based on deprivation data and through liaison with the CAB and the practices.

The provision start date for these services is 1st April 2008.

Released funding

The above proposals create a surplus of approximately £5k which will be released to the LSP.