

Coventry City Council Inform, Consult & Involve Strategy 2009/10- 2011/12

Section A: Purpose and Definitions

1. Purpose of the Strategy

- 1.1. This is a strategy to support Coventry City Council to improve the way that it informs, consults and involves local people in its decision making and commissioning processes.
- 1.2. The Council has already identified the need to improve the way it provides and uses information and to co-ordinate its consultation and involvement activities. A new Corporate Research, Information and Consultation team has been set up to undertake this co-ordination role. Particular importance is being placed upon making sure that evidence generated by this work is used to influence City Council services, policies and decisions.
- 1.3. A great deal of effort goes into informing, consulting and involvement activities across the city, including many that are community led. The strategy will enable the City Council to link more effectively into this work and make it easier for local people to influence decisions that affect them.
- 1.4. The strategy will help the City Council to ensure it has a good understanding about local views and needs so that its services can be designed to the best possible standards and so therefore ensuring quality of life is improved.
- 1.5. It will also enable the City Council to make a key contribution to the Coventry Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy outcome 'Coventry will be a more inclusive and cohesive city and people will feel able to influence the quality of services and be involved.' It will also support delivery of the Local Area Agreement target to 'increase the number of people who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their neighbourhood.'
- 1.6. The strategy enables the City Council to evidence that it is responding to a new 'duty to involve', placed upon it by Government, which comes into effect from April 2009¹ and will also help the City Council to further promote local democracy².
- 1.7. The strategy has been developed in line with values set out in Coventry City Council's Corporate Plan and will:

- Be led and championed by elected members;
- Build upon and make better use of skills and knowledge and mechanisms already used to inform, consult and involve local people;
- Promote equality of opportunity and community cohesion;
- Be further developed to support a partnership-wide strategy during 2009/10.

¹ The duty to involve was introduced through the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act and the scope of the duty is set out Statutory Guidance at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeproperous>

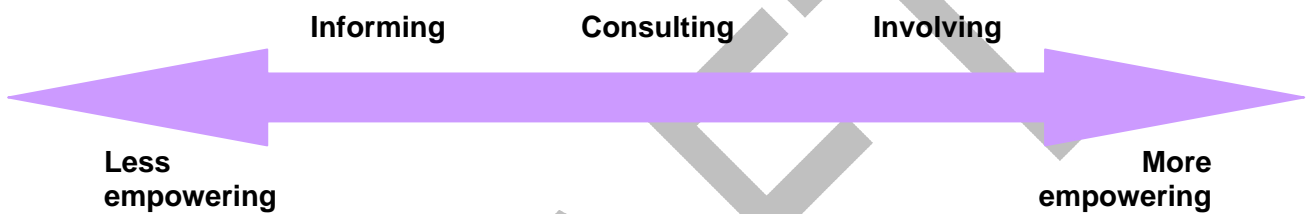
² A new duty to promote democracy is expected to be introduced during Autumn of 2009 as part of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill

1.8. The strategy describes how the Council currently informs, consults with and involves local people, and sets out priorities for the next three years that will allow it to make improvements. It begins by describing what is meant by informing, consulting and involving.

2. Definitions: Informing, Consulting and Involving

2.1. It is essential that City Council elected members, officers and local people have a shared understanding about what is meant by 'informing', 'consulting' and 'involving', that it is made clear to local people which type of activity they are being engaged in and that they understand the extent to which they can influence the Council's decisions. Failure to do so often results in local people feeling disappointed and disempowered.

2.2. *Levels of participation* can be described as a continuum of empowerment.



2.3. *Levels of participation should always be proportionate to the importance of the decision to be made and will require consideration regarding:*

- Whether a decision can genuinely be influenced;
- The added value that involving others will bring compared to the cost of involvement;
- The groups of people affected or interested in the decision and what methods are needed to engage them;
- The extent to which views of local people are already known;
- Avoiding duplication.

2.4. For the purpose of City Council work the following definitions will apply.

<i>Level of Participation:</i>	<i>When it is an appropriate choice:</i>
<p><i>Informing</i> Providing appropriate information about services, policies and decisions</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Collecting or using existing information about the views and needs of local people to inform services, policies and decisions</p>	<p>If a decision has been made and cannot be influenced (e.g. there is a legal requirement to do it)</p> <p>If we already know what local people's views are</p> <p>If it is an internal process issue that does not affect those outside the City Council</p>
<p><i>Consulting</i> Offering an appropriate (one-off) opportunity to have a say about a service, policy or decision</p>	<p>If a range of options has been developed and there is a genuine intention to take on board the views of local people</p>

<p>Involving Providing opportunities to have a say and get involved in activities in a more influential way (on an ongoing basis)</p>	<p>If it is helpful and appropriate to share responsibility for planning or delivering a service When the aim is to empower local people to take over responsibility for an activity</p>
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Local people - definition

2.5. The duty to involve requires the City Council to consider as a matter of course whether it should be informing, consulting with or involving '*representatives of local people*' in decisions and service delivery.

2.6. '*Local people*' means all those affected by or interested in a service, policy or decision. It includes:

- People living, studying, working or doing business in the city
- People using services
- Partner organisations
- Visitors to the city
- The City Council's workforce

2.7. By '*Representatives of local people*', the Government means different types of local people who will either be affected by or interested in a particular service, policy or decision. These are in addition to democratically elected members and must include:

- All ages and all communities
- Vulnerable communities – not just the easiest to engage with the loudest voices
- Third sector organisations in their own right and as advocates for members of vulnerable communities or to help gain access to these

Section B: The current picture

3. Existing City Council mechanisms for Informing, Consulting and Involving

- 3.1. In Coventry there is a range of established strategies and mechanisms for informing, consulting and involving local people. Informing, consulting and involvement activities are in reality overlapping so some mechanisms such as ward forums are used for all three types of activities. Examples of the types of mechanisms the Council uses are given below.

Examples of Mechanisms used for informing

- 3.2. The Council produces a number of **publications** to inform and communicate with both internal and external audiences. Examples of these include Citivision, which goes out to every household in the city, and Insight, which is sent to every employee. Other publications include the consultative Forum Newsletter, the Local Socio-Economic newsletter, ward profiles, Neighbourhood Management newsletter, a weekly list of planning applications, and an annual Community Safety report.
- 3.3. Other mechanisms used to inform members of the public, visitors, Councillors, partner agencies and employees include the **Council's website** and **intranet**, the **Planning Portal**, the **Coventry Direct Contact Centre**, the **Community Safety Partnership website**, **Coventry Partnership website**, **ward forums**, **community notice boards** and **street briefings**.
- 3.4. The **Neighbourhood warden's service** also actively engages with local communities and signposts people to events and services.
- 3.5. The Council also regularly collects evidence of local needs and views, which are used to inform decision-making. Working with the Coventry Partnership, it conducts regular **perception surveys**, such as the Household survey, the Communities that Care and the Place surveys.
- 3.6. **Presentations** and discussions of research findings take place with partners, community and issue groups and provide opportunities for views to be expressed.

Examples of mechanisms used for consulting

- 3.7. The Council has a number of **user forums**, such as the **Carers Forum**, the **Community Empowerment Network**, **Developers Forum**, the **Older People's Forum** and the **Children and Young People's Involvement Network**, which it uses to consult with particular groups of the population.
- 3.8. The Council has embedded mechanisms to consult with disadvantaged and marginalised groups in its governance structures, such as the **Youth Council**, **Voices of Care** group; the **Disability Equality Advisory Panel** and the **Sexual Orientation Advisory Group**.
- 3.9. There are also a range of partnerships and umbrella groups bringing together local groups and communities that the council consults with on the development of strategies and policies. These include the **Coventry**

Partnership; the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Older People's Partnership and other Coventry Ethnic Minority Partnership.

- 3.10. The Council also holds **regular events** to consult with residents and feedback what has happened as a result of consultation. For example, the 'Have your say', 'You said...we did', planning for real and outcome based planning events all give residents an opportunity to shape their local area and the services being delivered to them.

Examples of mechanisms for involvement

- 3.11. The Council has a number of **initiatives**, which involve residents in decision-making. These include the 'Your Neighbourhood Matters' programme, participatory budgeting events, Community Action Groups, and Youth Opportunity Fund.
- 3.12. In regeneration areas, the Council has also established **regeneration forums/steering groups**, which involve local people in shaping major regeneration programmes. These include the Canley Regeneration Community Involvement & Communications framework, and the Swanswell Community Involvement & Communications framework and associated community regeneration forums and working groups
- 3.13. The Council recognises that people belong simultaneously to a number of communities, such as communities of interest and communities of place. As a result, a number of **groups** have been set up which involve residents in helping to decide future policy and how resources should be allocated, such as the Safer Neighbourhood Groups, residents liaison group, Community Action Groups, and residents' focus groups. These groups are also used to consult with communities on particular issues.
- 3.14. The Council and its partners have established a number of **communities of interest partnership boards** involving service users and residents in the design and delivery of local services, such as the Mental Health Partnership, Learning Disabilities Partnership and the Physical and Sensory Impairment Partnership.
- 3.15. Ward Councillors are actively involved in their local community, and hold regular **surgeries** and **ward forums** and are involved in **community walkabouts**.
- 3.16. There is a need to map out the full range of these mechanisms, to understand how effective they are and to consider whether there are opportunities to make better use of these. This will enable the Council to understand how its existing mechanisms for informing, consulting and involving local people can be improved, whether there is duplication that can be removed and whether there are any gaps that need to be filled. Involving partners in this work will help to provide a better experience for local people and help partners to make better use of resources.

4. Key strategic assessments and information collection

- 4.1. The calendar below sets out the key annual assessments and information collection programme for the collection of views for the council's decision-

making processes. This calendar will be developed to include additional activity.

4.2.

Month	Annual Assessments and Information collection
Dec/January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's budget consultation
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety Strategic Assessment • National Place Survey results published
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Economic Assessment
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of the City" assessment • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of Health and Social Care
June/July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed analysis of Household Survey Detailed analysis of local Place Survey
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Area Assessment of Coventry by the Joint Inspectorate
Nov/December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of views about quality of life and services Place Survey or Household Survey

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5. How effectively are Coventry people informed, consulted and involved?

- 5.1. In Coventry 29% of adults surveyed in 2008 said that they feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area³, Coventry has entered into a local area agreement target with Government to improve the score so that at least 33% of local people surveyed feel they can influence decisions affecting their area. [Place Survey national comparator will be added when known.
- 5.2. Evidence suggests that there is no straightforward explanation for what makes people feel more or less influential and that these may differ amongst population groups. Mori research states that feeling more influential about decisions affecting the local area *'is associated with more positive attitudes towards the local area, community and trust in local and central government'*⁴
- 5.3. Local evidence from Coventry Partnership household surveys (2003-2007) suggests that people living in priority neighbourhoods are less likely to feel they can influence decisions. Young people, some minority ethnic groups and routine / manual workers are also less likely to feel influential than other groups, whereas those who are older or Asian are more likely to feel influential. Those already actively involved in improving the neighbourhood (or who would like to be) are also more likely to feel influential as are those living in a neighbourhood where people get on well together and those who feel informed about what is being done to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- 5.4. Clearly a range of factors affects how influential local people feel about decisions affecting their local area. The make-up of the City may offer some explanation for the difference between Coventry and some other areas, given that it is disproportionately young and has a large transient population. Comparison of Coventry to areas that are similar in size or similar in index of deprivation ranking or to Audit Commission statistical neighbours ranks Coventry near the middle of each list – in other words Coventry people's views are fairly average compared to similar areas.
- 5.5. Some of the factors affecting how influential people feel are beyond the direct control of the City Council such as the decision of a local employer to move its premises and jobs abroad or the closure of a local post office. However, many issues can be addressed by the City Council working alone or in partnership with other organisations. These include:
- **Over-consultation / duplication** - some people may be consulted on similar issues several times by different organisations in the city or even by different areas of the City Council;
 - **Under use of existing information** - the Council has a wealth of data about its customers and better use needs to be made of this across the organisation to provide a profile of customer needs and views;
 - **Some population groups do not engage** – for example, fewer people from black and minority ethnic communities use the Contact Centre and therefore less is known about their views and needs;

³ 2008 Place Survey Coventry results – national comparators not available yet.

⁴ Engaging in Public Life: What is the Impact of Participation? (2006-7): Mori

- **Over-engagement some people**- there is a tendency to over-consult and involve some individuals, which means the views expressed are not necessarily representative of the Coventry population and can lead to consultation fatigue for some involved.
- **Poor targeting or wrong methods** - the levels of expertise of practitioners doing informing, consulting and involvement activities is mixed and whilst there is some excellent practice, some activity is not directed at the right people or uses inappropriate methods of communication and engagement;
- **Lack of readiness to engage** – local people or groups sometimes lack the knowledge or information to make meaningful contributions;
- **Unrealistic expectations** - it is not always made clear how much (or how little) influence those consulted or involved can have. This can lead to unrealistic expectations and disappointment;
- **Mislabelling** - some activities are wrongly labelled as consultations when the intention is to provide information and there is no scope to influence a decision;
- **Failure to communicate complex information and lack of information**– this can limit or exclude people from expressing their views
- **Lack of feedback** – failure to let those consulted or involved know about what decision was reached and why;
- **Lack of awareness** – we work with lots of people at neighbourhood level who don't even know they are helping to shape services, policies or decisions;
- There is a range of problems associated with some **statutory consultations**
 - Statutory deadlines are sometimes too short to conduct anything meaningful locally;
 - The timing and conflict of some deadlines means that decisions have to be made before consultations have ended
 - Some decisions will inevitably be unpopular and are constrained by national policy e.g. housing numbers and consultations that suggest there is a local choice will cause resentment.

5.6. The City Council already has in place a number of corporate mechanisms to address these issues and which are designed to improve the co-ordination and quality of informing, consulting and involvement activities. These include:

- A new Corporate Research, Information and Consultation Team, which will oversee quality and co-ordination of information used for decision making and consultation / involvement mechanisms;
- The Corporate Communications Service manage the quality and allocation of resources for all marketing and communications activities;
- Neighbourhood Management service works proactively with local people and partners at an area and neighbourhood level to improve services and quality of life;
- Implementation of the Children & Young People's Partnership Involvement Standards and Participation Strategy;

- Development of the Community Cohesion Strategy, which will involve identifying how representatives from minority ethnic communities, faith-based organisations and gay, lesbian and transsexual groups, and disabled people wish to be informed, consulted and involved;
- The development of the Customer Services Strategy;
- Community Services is reviewing how service users and carers are involved in developing social care provision in the city, which includes some of the City's most vulnerable communities;

5.7. The Coventry Partnership will develop a partnership-wide Inform, Consult and Involve Strategy during 2009/10 and the City Council will continue to support its work to improve co-ordination of informing, consulting and involvement activities and to share good practice. The Council proactively supports the following partnership mechanisms:

- ***Equalities and Community Cohesion Theme Group***, which will oversee development and implementation of the partnership strategy;
- ***Progress, Impact and Evaluation Group***, which commissions joint work to collect and use evidence of local people's needs and views;
- ***Communications Group***, which brings together communication professionals from partner organisations.

Section C: A vision for the future and key priorities for delivery

6. Vision

6.1. The vision that the council's strategy is aiming to deliver is that in Coventry:

- Local people are more likely to feel that they can influence decisions affecting their neighbourhood. This means ensuring that the right opportunities for engagement exist and that local people can see how they have contributed to decisions and understand why choices have been made (even if these are unpopular).
- Local people feel their involvement is a part of the decision-making process and is valued.
- Local needs and interests are better understood and that evidence gathered through informing, consulting and involvement activities is used to improve quality of life and services in the city.

7. Improving Quality and Co-ordination

7.1. If the vision is to be achieved the City Council will need to address issues raised by representatives of local people about the way that it informs, consults and involves them. The City Council will work with local partners and representatives of local people to agree a set of quality standards. It will introduce corporate mechanisms to support employees and elected members to work within the standards and help to co-ordinate activities across the Council and with local partner organisations.

7.2. We will build upon a lot of good work that is already going on across the city and ensure that skills and expertise are shared across the organisation so that we can work innovatively to engage people that are affected by, or interested in, the decisions that the City Council makes. Elected members will oversee what progress is being made towards achieving the vision and will be instrumental in identifying how local people can be more involved in decision-making. They will be supported to make best use of evidence that results from informing, consulting and involvement activities when making decisions so that the quality of services and life in Coventry are improved.

8. Standards

8.1. Standards will be developed and set through the local compact working with partner organisations from the Coventry Partnership. In the meantime the following interim standards will apply.

8.2. When informing, consulting or involving local people the City Council will:

- **Be clear and honest** – about whether we are informing, consulting and / or involving and make sure local people understand the level of influence on offer
- **Avoid duplication** – make use of what we already know before undertaking new activities
- **Be led by purpose** – Activities will be designed and conducted with purpose in mind (what we are trying to find out)

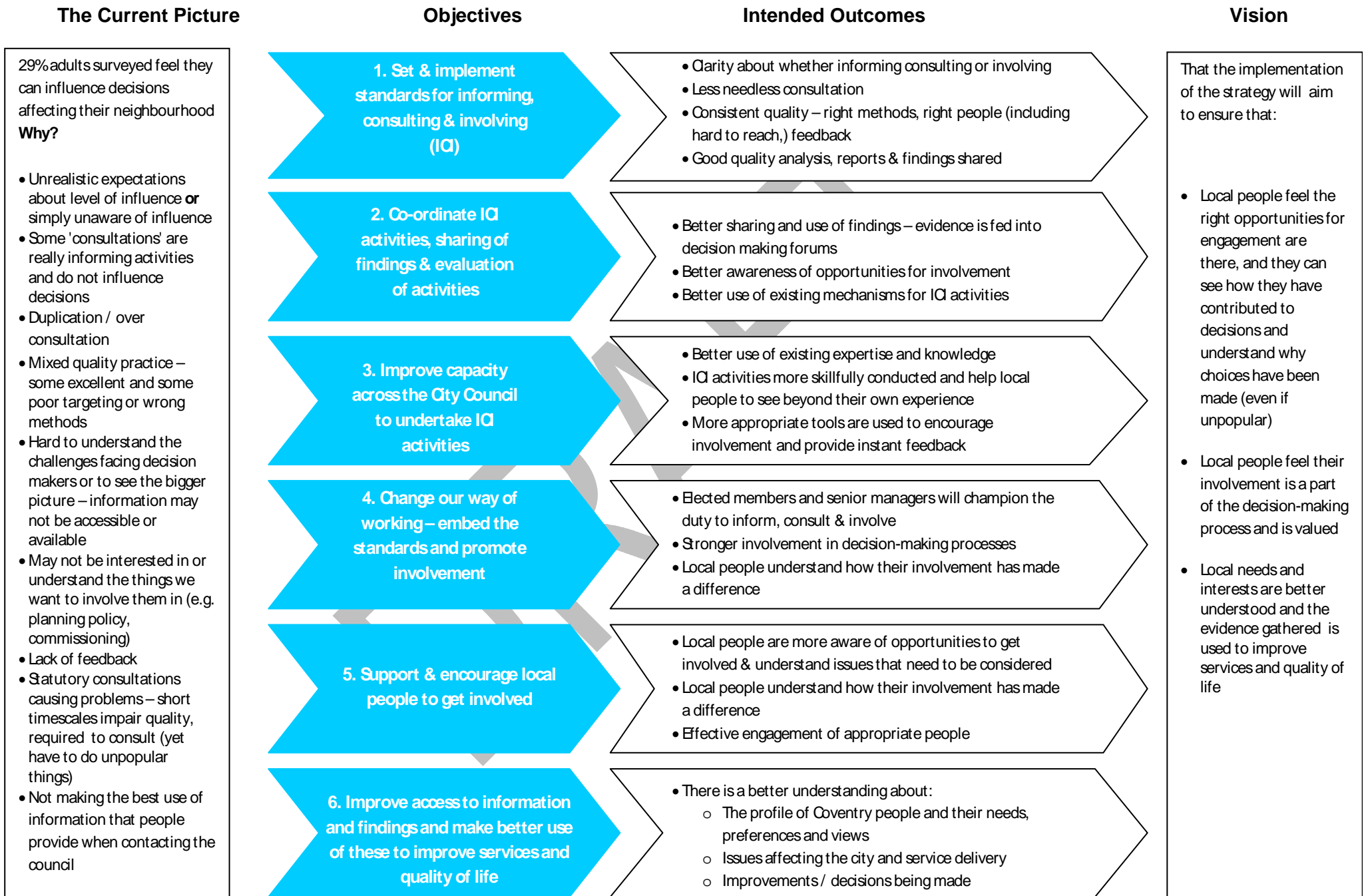
- **Target the right people** – Activities will be appropriately targeted at those interested / affected by the service, policy or decision
- **Be inclusive** – Activities will include groups and individuals who are often otherwise excluded
- **Promote accessibility** – conduct activities in ways that remove barriers to involvement and give plenty of time for responses (12 weeks is the standard for consultation on major decisions)
- **Make it inviting** – make participation inviting through using varied and creative methods
- **Be proportionate** – the amount of effort and costs of informing, consulting and involvement activities will be in keeping with the importance of the decision being made
- **Always feedback** – thank participants for taking part, provide access to findings and let them know how these will / have been used to inform a service, policy or decision
- **Evaluate how well it went** – so that we understand what difference has been made and how informing, consulting and involving activities can be done better in the future
- **Make best use of findings** – results from informing, consultation and involvement activities will be available to all to access
- **Use and share data appropriately** – adhere to the Coventry Information Sharing Protocol so that information is properly obtained, used and shared
- **Collect, analyse and interpret data to high standards** – adhere to the Coventry City Council data standards

8.3. In addition to the consultation standards above, the City Council is working towards a number of **Customer Service Excellence standards**, which include:

- We will have an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of our current and potential customer groups based on recent and reliable information
- We make information about the full range of services we provide available to our customers and potential customers, including how and when people can contact us, how our services are run and who is in charge

8.4. The strategy for achieving this vision is summarised in the diagram set out below at figure 1.

Figure 1 Summary Diagram of Inform, Consult and Involve Strategy



Section D: Implementing the strategy

9 Implementing the strategy

- 9.1 Implementation will be phased and the initial focus will be upon priorities that will support improvements to the quality and co-ordination of informing, consulting and involving activities. This will help the City Council to ensure that it is working in an effective way in advance of encouraging greater participation of local people.
- 9.2 An initial series of strategic objectives and priorities have been identified to deliver the strategy over the next three years. These are set out in Section E of this strategy document below. A more detailed action plan will be developed to support these priorities and this will be in place for the new municipal year 2009/10.
- 9.3 Implementation of the strategy will require action from across the directorates of the City Council and will be corporately supported by the Corporate Research, Information and Research Team. Initial priorities to support the strategic objectives are set out above, and this will be underpinned by an annual action plan.
- 9.4 Implementation of the strategy will be done with the following principles in mind:
- It will build upon existing mechanisms for informing, consulting and involving local people, including the Compact and the Children & Young People's Involvement Standards and Participation strategies.
 - Events aiming to inform should not be badged as 'consultation' or 'involvement' i.e. where there is no opportunity to influence service delivery, policy development or a decision
 - Consultations and involvement events must be logged with the Corporate Research, Information & Consultation Team so that duplication can be avoided and findings are linked to decisions and can be made widely available where appropriate;
 - Corporate co-ordination and support will be provided with the minimum of bureaucracy – it will aim to help not hinder informing, consultation and involvement activities;
 - Creativity and innovation will be encouraged and shared;
 - We will make the most of the skills, knowledge, research tools / equipment that is already held across the Council and within Directorates;
 - Priority will be given to supporting activities that are supporting corporate priorities
 - The initial focus will be on setting standards and monitoring compliance, this will shift towards promoting democracy as quality and co-ordination improves;
 - Informing, consulting and involvement activities should be proportionate and represent good value for money

- We will work with partners to rationalise and make best use of each other's informing, consulting and involvement mechanisms

10 How we will monitor and review success of the strategy

- 10.1 This section sets out how the City Council will review the effectiveness and impact of the strategy so that continuous improvement can be made.
- 10.2 The strategy will be flexible and further developed to take account of anticipated statutory guidance for applying the duty to promote democracy and the development of a Coventry Partnership Inform, Consult and Involve Strategy.

Governance arrangements

- 10.3 Political oversight of the strategy will be by the Cabinet Member for Policy, Leadership and Governance, who will lead an annual review of the effectiveness and impact of the strategy.
- 10.4 A governance board of senior officers will oversee implementation of both the Inform, Consult and Involve Strategy and the Corporate Communications Strategy.
- 10.5 A mechanism for injecting external challenge into the strategy will be developed with partners in the Coventry Partnership through an anticipated review of the Local Compact.

Success criteria

- 10.6 The following success criteria will be used to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the strategy
- More adults surveyed feel that they can influence decisions affecting their neighbourhood (Place Survey, National Indicator 4)
 - More children and young people feel their views are listened to in decisions about the local area (Tell Us Survey)
 - The Council will be more efficiently responding to customer requests and getting it right first time more often (National Indicator 14)
 - The Council understands corporately what mechanisms are used for informing, consulting and involving local people and how effective these are
 - The Council is making better use of findings from informing, consulting and involvement activities to inform services, policies and decisions

Monitoring & Evaluation

- 10.7 Annual monitoring will include:
- Progress made against priorities and actions
 - Using the Corporate Forward Planner to assess at a corporate level how findings have been used to inform decision making

- Sample checking formal reports to see whether findings from informing, consulting and involvement activities have been accurately and appropriately reflected
- Sample checking operational plans to see if plans for informing, consulting and involving seem appropriate

10.8 An annual evaluation of success criteria will be led by the Cabinet Member and include consideration of:

- Monitoring information
- Consultation tracker – which population groups have been consulted / involved, how strong is the link to decision making?
- Value for money assessment
- Results of peer review / external challenge
- Good practice e.g. from beacon status authorities
- Findings from relevant evaluations and reviews e.g. ongoing review of Your Neighbourhood Matters Neighbourhood Agreements
- What further improvements can be achieved

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Section E: Strategic Objectives and Priorities – 2009/10 – 2010/11

Priorities highlighted in italics have the potential to make a particularly strong impact in ensuring the council informs, consults and involves local people in ways that promote equality of opportunity and community cohesion.

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Lead
1. Set and Implement corporate standards for informing, consulting and involving (ICI)	a) <i>Work through the local compact agreement to set city-wide standards</i>	Coventry Partnership Manager
	b) <i>Set up and implement Corporate Consultation Advisory Service</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	c) <i>Roll out Corporate Communications Central Service</i>	Communications Manager
	d) <i>Linked to Services above, set up an intranet page with help and resources – how to guides, good practice, standards, research tools, where equipment is held etc.</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	e) <i>Develop and implement the Customer Services Strategy</i>	Head of Customer Services
2. Co-ordinate ICI activities, the sharing of findings and evaluation of activities	a) <i>Map out current informing, consulting and involvement mechanisms</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	b) <i>Evaluate the effectiveness of current informing, consulting and involvement mechanisms and make better use of these and whether they can be rationalised</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	c) <i>Evaluate the effectiveness of ward forums</i>	Head of Neighbourhood Management
	d) <i>Develop a forward planner of key events – research / data releases, consultations and involvement events</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Lead
	e) Prioritise which key informing, consulting and involving activities will receive corporate support	Assistant Chief Executive
	f) Develop a forward planner of consultations that the City Council will participate in / respond to	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	g) <i>Set up a manual system to publicise consultations and link them to decisions made</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	h) <i>Procure and set up software for a tracking informing, consulting and involving activities and linking them to decisions made</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	i) <i>Work with the Coventry Partnership to improve co-ordination of Informing, Consulting and Involvement activities across the city:</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop a Coventry Partnership Inform, Consult and Involve Strategy</i> 	Coventry Partnership Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider opportunities to submit proposals to Government under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007</i> 	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider the future of the household survey, how to make best use informing, consulting and involving mechanisms and whether to set up a citizen's panel or other new mechanisms</i> 	Corporate Policy & Research Manager

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Lead
3. Improve capacity across the City Council to undertake ICI activities	a) <i>Develop a database & network of City Council expert practitioners</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	b) <i>Set up a corporate peer training / peer support programme to help skill-up those consulting / involving local people</i>	Head of Customer Services
	c) <i>Encourage sharing of research tools and equipment already held</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	d) <i>Develop a suite of e-tools that encourages democratic involvement and help to improve informing, consulting and involvement activities</i>	Head of Democratic Services
4. Change our way of working—embed the standards and promote involvement	a) Support elected members to develop / lead programme of activities to better involve local people in processes	Performance & Scrutiny Manager
	b) Report and review how local people have / will be informed, consulted or involved through:	
	i) Adding commentary on to Operational Plans and monitoring whether it is appropriate	Performance & Scrutiny Manager
	ii) Adapting the Corporate Forward Planner to demonstrate how communities' views have informed decisions	Performance & Scrutiny Manager
	iii) Adding commentary to all City Council formal reports and monitoring whether this is appropriate	Head of Democratic Services

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Lead
	c) Use an existing corporate working group to embed new ways of working across directorates	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	d) <i>Embed learning about standards and processes in Corporate Management Training courses</i>	Head of Customer Services
	e) Work through the local compact to develop a mechanism to introduce external challenge about how well the City Council is adhering to the standards	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	f) <i>Monitor and evaluate how well the City Council and directorates have informed, consulted and involved different groups of people and what impact this has had on decision making</i>	Cabinet Member Policy, Leadership & Governance Supported by Corporate Policy & Research Manager
5. Support and encourage local people to get involved	a) <i>Continuously review the effectiveness of engagement activities and whether appropriate 'representatives of local people' are participating</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	b) <i>Work corporately to develop and share innovative / effective techniques for engaging black and minority ethnic communities and other under-represented groups in informing, consulting and involvement activities</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	c) <i>Develop a corporate capacity building programme for supporting local people to develop skills to engage</i>	Head of Neighbourhood Management
	d) <i>Review and improve involvement of users and carers in ongoing development of social care provision in the city</i>	Community Services User Development Manager

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Lead
	e) <i>Continue to implement the Children and Young Peoples Participation Strategy</i>	Children's Champion
	f) Understand the Government's expectations regarding the Duty to Promote Democracy and recommend how to further develop this strategy	Head of Democratic Services
	g) <i>Develop a mechanism to publicise decisions made and let people know whether or not they have influenced decisions made (linked to 4b)</i>	Communications Manager
	h) Conduct a communications campaign to get employees to let communities know when they are being consulted or involved in something that will influence a decision	Communications Manager
	i) <i>Understand how the Council's workforce can be utilised as a pool of community representatives to be consulted / involved</i>	Head of Customer Services
	j) <i>Continue to support groups working with new communities</i>	Head of Neighbourhood Management
	k) <i>Develop the website so that it fully exploits technological developments encourages ongoing two-way engagement and feedback between the City Council and local people</i>	Communications Manager
	l) Agree a payments and reimbursement policy	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	m) <i>Support multi-agency partnerships to develop specifications / funding bids for complex consultation and involvement projects and commissioning of community-based providers to undertake specific projects e.g. NDC, CEMAP, CEN5</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager

⁵ New Deal for Communities, Coventry Ethnic Minority Action Partnership, Coventry Community Empowerment Network

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Lead
6. Improve access to information and ICI findings and make better use of this to improve services and quality of life	a) <i>Set up a Corporate Information & Enquiry Service, including web-based access to data and library of research reports</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	b) <i>Produce accessible performance reports to tell the story of why priorities have been set, how the Council has performed and improvements planned</i>	Performance & Scrutiny Manager
	c) <i>Make better use of information, including Mosaic and information provided through complaints and enquiry mechanisms, to produce corporate profiles of our customer's preferences, needs and views</i>	Customer Services Manager
	d) Proactively disseminate key research / data reports and findings from key consultation and involvement activities	Corporate Policy & Research Manager
	e) <i>Develop a Coventry Economic Bulletin on the website and link to Insight</i>	Corporate Policy & Research Manager