

Plymouth Supporting People Team

# Consultation Strategy



A strategy for informing and consulting with service users, providers  
and stakeholders

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# *“Informing, consulting, and involving the people of Plymouth in the Supporting People programme”.*

## Introduction

Consultation is a key theme that runs through all aspects of the Supporting People programme. This demonstrates the value placed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on the involvement of service users, stakeholders and providers in the running, development and improvement of the Supporting People programme.

The involvement of service users, stakeholders and providers must be:

- Inclusive, appropriate and positive for all
- Suitable and appropriate for the task or process
- An opportunity to develop good practice
- Contribute to service improvements over time

From the Supporting People: Administrative Guidance

To ensure that consultation is effective the Plymouth Supporting People team must ensure that:

- We provide appropriate information to all on how and why people's views are sought
- Have explicit levels of engagement
- Have a plan and standards for involving service users, stakeholders and providers, underpinned by a commitment to continuous improvement
- Be clear about how service users, stakeholders and providers contributions will form part of the decision making process
- We use a range of involvement methods which enable everyone to participate in consultation
- We provide feedback to service users, stakeholders and providers who participate, showing how their views have contributed to the decision making process.

From the Supporting People: Administrative Guidance

We have devised four core values and nine standards to enable the Plymouth Supporting People Team to achieve these objectives.

## Informing and Consulting

It is important to recognise the difference between informing and consulting. We have used the following definitions through out this document

**Informing** is an essential part of consultation. For consultation to be effective, service users, stakeholders and providers must be fully informed about the issues they are being consulted on. This will include letting others know about policies, services, decisions or activities. Providing information is the first step in an effective consultative process, but is not in itself consultation.

**Consultation** is a participative activity through which advice, information or opinion is sought. To be successful, consultation must be collaborative and involve service users, stakeholders and providers,

## Why we consult

ODPM expect that all Administering Authorities will engage service users, stakeholders and providers in the planning, development and management of the Supporting People programme.

In addition, Plymouth Supporting People Team believe that we should inform and consult with service users, stakeholders and providers because:

- It is good practice
- It will enable us to develop a programme that is inline with other developments
- Encourage ownership of the programme by service users, stakeholders and providers
- It encourages transparency of decision making and the management and development of the programme
- It increases our accountability to service users, stakeholders and providers

## What we will consult on

We will aim to consult with service users, stakeholders and providers on the following things:

- Service reviews
- Contract monitoring
- Planning for the future
- Needs and supply analysis
- Prioritisation of future developments and spending priorities
- Commissioning
- Remodelling or decommissioning of services
- Supporting People operational issues

## Values

To ensure consultation with service users, stakeholders and providers is an important, valued and meaningful experience, we have adopted core values. These core values inform our approach to informing and consulting. They are as follows:

1. We are committed to involving service users, stakeholders and providers in the planning and delivery of the Supporting People Programme
2. We value the involvement of service users, stakeholders and providers.
3. Service users, stakeholders and providers will have an equal opportunity to get involved.
4. We are committed to continuously improving the way we inform and consult with service users, stakeholders and providers.

## **Standards for Informing and Consulting**

Plymouth Supporting People Team will work towards achieving these nine Standards for informing and consulting with service users, stakeholders and providers. Our commitment to achieving these standards will ensure that the involvement of service users, stakeholders and providers is an integral part of the Supporting People programme in Plymouth.

Further information about how these standards will be achieved is contained in the appendices at the end of this document

### **Standard One**

**We will provide information to service users, stakeholders and providers in an appropriate and timely way.**

### **Standard Two**

**We will be clear about what we will consult with service users, stakeholders and providers on and when and how this will be achieved.**

### **Standard Three**

**We will ensure that we are non discriminatory and provide equality of opportunity for service users, stakeholders and providers whenever we inform or consult.**

### **Standard Four**

**We will be aware of the limitations and constraints of any consultation exercise.**

### **Standard Five**

**We will use existing planning and consultation forums as much as possible.**

### **Standard Six**

**We will ensure that everyone is clear about confidentiality**

## **Standard Seven**

**We will ensure that feedback is always provided to service users, stakeholders and providers following every consultation exercise to ensure that they feel their contributions are valued and have been acted on.**

## **Standard Eight**

**We will ensure that an accessible complaints procedure is in place and that everyone is made aware of it.**

## **Standard Nine**

**We will ensure that we work to constantly improve the way we inform and consult with service users, stakeholders and providers.**

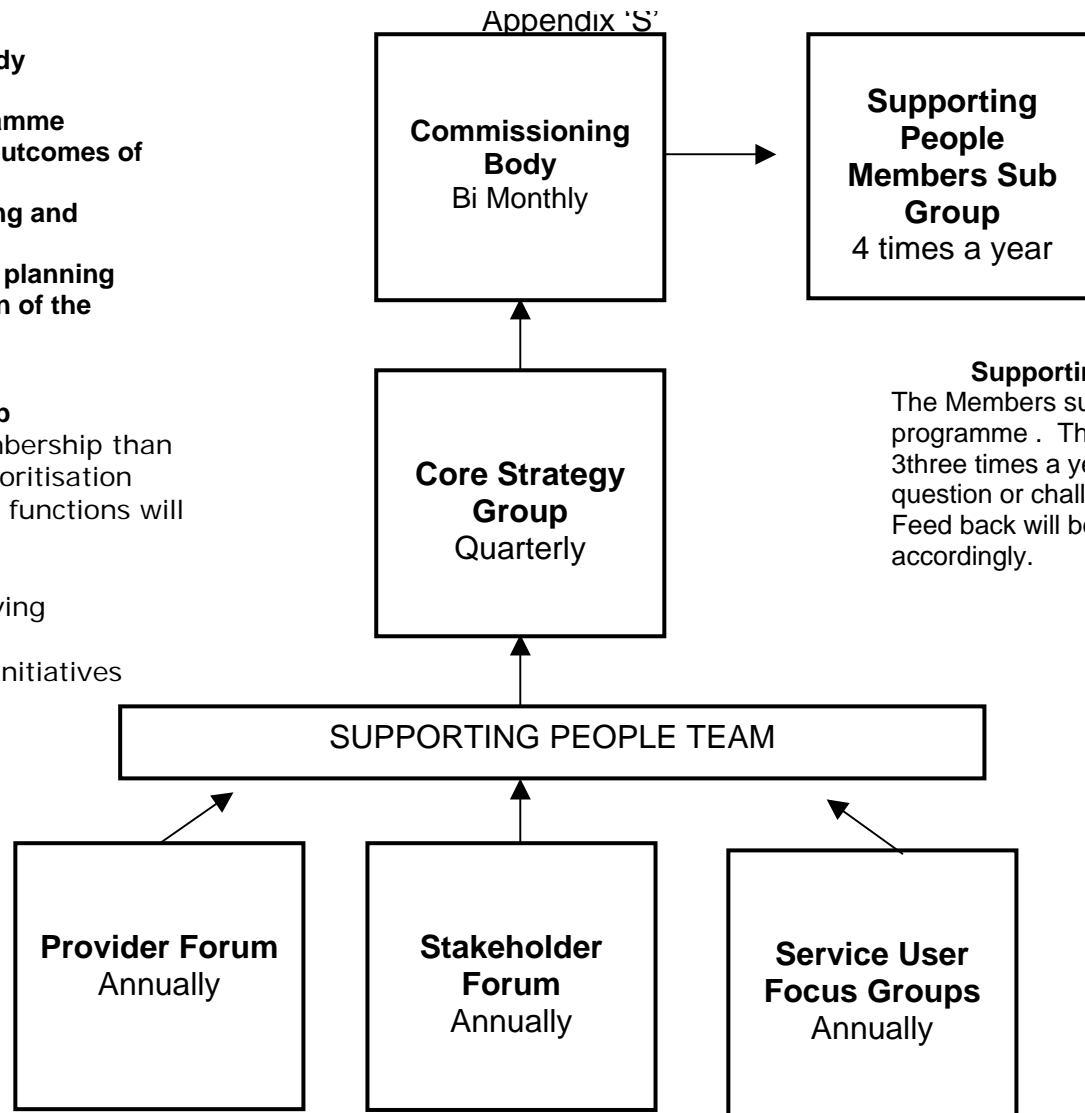
# Consultation

## Structure and Timetable

# Consultation Structure for Supporting People

- Commissioning Body**  
The CB retains responsibility for:
- **Overseeing the review programme**
  - **Making decisions about the outcomes of reviews**
  - **Overseeing the commissioning and decommissioning process**
  - **Overseeing forward strategic planning**
  - **Overseeing the administration of the programme**

- Core Strategy Group**  
The CSG will have broader membership than the CB and will function as a prioritisation group for the programme. Their functions will include:
- Budget monitoring
  - Monitoring progress and driving improvements
  - Developing links with other initiatives



**Supporting People Members Sub Group**  
The Members sub group will examine all aspects of the programme . The Lead Officer will up date the group 3three times a year and give members an opportunity to question or challenge the direction of the programme. Feed back will be given to the CB and actions taken accordingly.

- Provider Forum**  
To increase joint working opportunities, the provider forums have been grouped as follows:
1. Homelessness, young people, drug and alcohol, refugees.
  2. Mental health, learning disability and ABI
  3. Older people and physical disability

- Stakeholder Forum**  
This forum will gain knowledge from our stakeholders on:
- Progress of the programme
  - Needs information
  - Performance of existing provision
  - Current trends or changes
  - Benefit from their experience and knowledge

**Service User Focus Groups**  
The focus groups provide an opportunity for service users to inform the Supporting People Team about their experiences of services. It will provide an opportunity for the Team to shape future service developments in line with the views of service users.

## Consultation and Information Timetable 2005 - 2006

APRIL 05	MAY 05	JUNE 05	JULY 05	AUGUST 05	SEPTEMBER 05
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Core Strategy Group (CSG) to be held early April</li> <li>▪ Members Sub Group</li> <li>▪ Commissioning Body (CB) meeting to be held after CSG</li> <li>▪ Service user and provider newsletters (2) to be distributed by end of week one</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begin planning for service user consultation exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commissioning Body Meeting</li> <li>▪ Review distribution of service directory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Core Strategy Group Meeting</li> <li>▪ Service user consultation begins</li> <li>▪ Members Sub Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commissioning Body Meeting</li> <li>▪ Produce service user and provider newsletters (2)</li> <li>▪ Commence planning for Provider and Stakeholder events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reproduce and distribute newsletters by the end of September</li> <li>▪ Distribute invitations for Provider and Stakeholder events</li> </ul>
OCTOBER 05	NOVEMBER 05	DECEMBER 05	JANUARY 06	FEBRUARY 06	MARCH 06
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CSG to be held early October</li> <li>▪ CB meeting to be held after CSG</li> <li>▪ Continue planning for Stakeholder and Provider events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provider Event</li> <li>▪ Stakeholder Event</li> <li>▪ Members Sub Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CB meeting</li> <li>▪ Service users consultation ends</li> <li>▪ Review content of service directory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CSG</li> <li>▪ Information gained from consultation events through the year is used to inform the annual plan</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Preparation of Annual Plan</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CB (The Annual Plan will be agreed at this meeting)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publication of Annual Plan</li> <li>▪ Begin evaluation of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information received as a result of consultation</li> <li>▪ Consultation action plan</li> <li>▪ Strategy</li> <li>▪ Planning and evaluation tool</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Consultation Action Plans

## Consultation and Information Action Plan

TASK	ACTION	OFFICER	DATE
Get agreement form new consultation structure and meeting frequency from the Commissioning Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Paper to be submitted to the next Commissioning Body Meeting</li> </ul>	Craig	09.02.05
Develop Core Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Select membership</li> <li>▪ Agree Terms of Reference</li> <li>▪ Arrange initial meeting</li> </ul>	All CB Craig	09.02.05 09.02.05 End February
Service User Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agree areas for consultation</li> <li>▪ Agree method for consultation</li> <li>▪ Arrange meetings</li> </ul>	All All All	May 2005 May 2005 July – December 2005

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TASK	ACTION	OFFICER	DATE
Planning for each consultation exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use the planning tool in the Consultation Strategy</li> <li>▪ File completed planning tool</li> </ul>	All	Commence three months before event
Evaluation for each consultation exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use the evaluation tool in the Consultation Strategy</li> <li>▪ File completed evaluation tool</li> </ul>	All	To be completed within one month of event
Service User Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decide format</li> <li>▪ Produce</li> <li>▪ Reproduce and distribute</li> </ul>	All Rachel Alan P	End February 2005 Mid March and September 05 End March and September 05

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TASK	ACTION	OFFICER	DATE
Stakeholder and Provider Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decide format</li> <li>▪ Produce</li> <li>▪ Reproduce and distribute</li> </ul>	<p>All</p> <p>Rachel</p> <p>Alan P</p>	<p>End February 2005</p> <p>Mid March and September 05</p> <p>End March and September 05</p>
Service Directory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete amendments</li> <li>▪ Distribute to Providers, Stakeholders and other appropriate information points</li> </ul>	Administration	End March 05

# Risk Log

# Risk Log

Risk	Probability	Effect	Risk Management
Stakeholders, providers or Service users not demonstrating commitment to the information and consultation process	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that participants are clear about how their views will be incorporated in the decision making process</li> <li>▪ Ensure feedback is provided after each consultation event</li> <li>▪ Encourage ownership of the SP programme by demonstrating changes made as a result of consultation</li> </ul>
Supporting People team not being able to commit the time required for consultation due to other priorities	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete action plans for consultation and informing</li> <li>▪ Have a named officer responsible for ensuring the action plans are implemented</li> <li>▪ Ensure that consultation events are planned well in advance</li> <li>▪ Use the planning tool</li> </ul>
Not having sufficient resources to adequately support the information and consultation action plans	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure the Commissioning Body is committed to consultation</li> <li>▪ Ensure that adequate resources are identified when budgets are agreed</li> <li>▪ Use existing forums where appropriate</li> <li>▪ Work with partner agencies in order to share resources</li> <li>▪ Focus consultation in the most important areas</li> </ul>

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Risk	Probability	Effect	Risk Management
'Hard to reach' groups not being adequately engaged in consultation	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use agencies or individuals with specialist knowledge or contacts</li> <li>▪ Ensure consultation events are organised in such a way as to encourage hard to reach groups</li> <li>▪ Use a range of consultation methods appropriate to the client group</li> </ul>
Stakeholders, providers or service users not being clear about what they are being consulted on	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use the standards for informing and consulting</li> <li>▪ Use the planning tool to appropriately plan consultation events</li> <li>▪ Use the consultation and information action plans to clearly identify what we will be consulting on during the year</li> </ul>
Stakeholders, providers or service users not being clear about how their information will be used to inform decision making	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use the consultation evaluation sheet to monitor to what extent stakeholders, providers and service users feel that their information is being used to inform decisions</li> <li>▪ Use the planning and evaluation tools</li> <li>▪ Always provide feedback to participants</li> </ul>

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Risk	Probability	Effect	Risk Management
Low participation in consultation events	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that people are made aware of up coming events in plenty of time</li> <li>▪ Use the planning tool to organise events which will encourage participation</li> <li>▪ Build confidence in the consultation process by demonstrating decisions made using information gained at previous consultation events.</li> </ul>
Poor quality information received as a result of consultation events	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that participants are well informed and clear about what they are being consulted on.</li> <li>▪ Make sure a range of appropriate consultation methods are used</li> <li>▪ Consider using facilitators to lead sessions where necessary</li> <li>▪ Encourage providers and stakeholders to think about the information they are collecting or need to collect.</li> </ul>
Narrow range of respondents	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use existing consultation forums</li> <li>▪ Take advice from agencies or individuals with specialist knowledge or experience</li> <li>▪ Plan events in ways which will encourage participation</li> <li>▪ Target traditionally 'hard to reach' groups</li> <li>▪ Organise client specific consultation events to ensure their views are incorporated</li> </ul>

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Risk	Probability	Effect	Risk Management
Not achieving the information and consultation action plan outcomes	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delegate responsibility for keeping the programme on track</li> <li>▪ Monitor through supervision</li> <li>▪ Ensure commitment to consultation at organisational, Commissioning Body and team levels</li> <li>▪ Allocate appropriate resources</li> <li>▪ Use performance indicators to monitor progress</li> </ul>

# Consultation Forums

## Generic Consultation Forums

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Stakeholders	Organisations who have an interest in existing or planned provision. Representation at commissioning level.	Core Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service reviews</li> <li>• Contract monitoring</li> <li>• Planning for the future</li> <li>• Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>• Prioritizing future developments and spending priorities</li> <li>• Commissioning</li> <li>• Remodeling or decommissioning services</li> <li>• SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Stakeholders	Organisations who have an interest in existing or planned provision.	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategy and Annual Plan consultation</li> <li>• Planning for the future</li> <li>• Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>• SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Annually
Stakeholders	Organisations who have an interest in existing or planned provision	Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information about the programme at a national and local level</li> <li>▪ SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice Yearly

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting people funded services	Annual Provider Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information about the programme at a national and local level</li> <li>▪ Strategy and Annual Plan consultation</li> <li>• Planning for the future</li> <li>• Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Annual
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting people funded services	Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information about the programme at a national and local level</li> <li>▪ SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice Yearly
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting people funded services	Questionnaire on review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feedback on the review process</li> </ul>	Following every service review completed

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People Funded Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letters notifying of review of their service</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires on their services</li> <li>▪ Individual and collective meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service Review</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	During each service review
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People Funded Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategy and annual plan development</li> <li>• Planning for the future</li> <li>• Needs and supply analysis</li> </ul>	Annually
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People Funded Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Newsletters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information about the programme at a national and local level</li> <li>▪ SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Annually

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People Funded Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inclusive Forum ?</li> <li>▪ Service User Conference ?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information about the programme at a national and local level</li> <li>▪ Feedback on service users priorities</li> <li>▪ SP operational issues</li> </ul>	Annually

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**OLDER PERSONS CONSULTATION FORUMS**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Supporting People Older Persons Supporting People Strategy group	Inclusive meetings Providers Stakeholders Service user reps PCT, housing, social services	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Needs</li> <li>▪ Strategy proposal and development</li> <li>▪ Review strategy/up date</li> <li>▪ Aggregate information from SH stats</li> <li>▪ Identify barriers to OP housing</li> <li>▪ Develop, monitor projects</li> <li>▪ Encourage multi agency cross agency working</li> </ul> 5. Develop priorities for funding	Quarterly
Older Persons Programme Board (Joint Commissioning Board)	Chaired by PCT senior managers. Membership includes commissioners, service user representation, social services, voluntary and community groups, PCT and the Senior Citizens Forum	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSF Older People People</li> <li>▪ Commissioning priorities</li> <li>▪ Links to other strategies</li> <li>▪ Future priorities</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	Monthly
Senior Citizens Forum	Local Councillor representation, membership from retired local professionals and active community reps.	Membership meetings  Committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All service of developments at national and local level which affect older peoples housing</li> </ul>	Quarterly

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Older Persons Voluntry and Community Network	Membership includes active local voluntary and community groups, PCT lead for older people and Social Services	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local priorities</li> <li>▪ Funding</li> <li>▪ New developments</li> <li>▪ Needs information</li> </ul>	Monthly
Sheltered Housing Forum	Forum for sheltered housing managers and local managers	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Future developments</li> <li>▪ Priorities</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Care and Repair Advisory Group	Membership includes PCT, Social Services, Housing and the independent sector	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Future developments</li> <li>▪ Priorities</li> </ul>	Quarterly Monthly

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Regional Housing Forum	Consults on wider housing strategy matters for the South West	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regional Housing Strategy</li> <li>▪ Housing care and support for older people</li> <li>▪ Consultation</li> </ul>	Twice yearly

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**Domestic Violence Consultation Forums**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Domestic Violence Network	Multi agency forum for discussion and planning around domestic violence issues.	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementing and developing strategy</li> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Prioritising future developments and spending priorities</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling / decommissioning</li> <li>▪ City wide issues</li> </ul>	Bi monthly
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provider Forum</li> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Bi monthly and at the time a service is reviewed
Stakeholders	Organisations or individuals who have an interest in existing or planned provision including commissioning managers from the PCT and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholder consultation events</li> <li>▪ Letters at time of service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Bi monthly and at the time a service is reviewed

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**Physical and Sensory Impairment and Acquired Brain Injury Consultation Forums**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Steering Group for the Physical and Sensory Impairment and ABI Strategy	Strategy implementation group	Multi agency meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementing and developing strategy</li> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Prioritising future developments and spending priorities</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling / decommissioning</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> <li>▪ City wide issues</li> </ul>	Bi monthly
Disability Action Network	Representatives from the statutory and voluntary sector and service users meeting to discuss current issues relating to needs	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> </ul>	Monthly
Stakeholders	Organisations or individuals who have an interest in existing or planned provision including commissioning managers from the PCT and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholder consultation events</li> <li>▪ Letters at time of service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provider Forum</li> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> <li>▪ Letters</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
City Partnership Board for Different Abilities	Multi agency decision making forum for learning disability provision in the City	Multi agency meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Prioritising future developments and spending priorities</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling / decommissioning</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> <li>▪ City wide issues affecting people with different abilities e.g education, transport etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bi / Monthly</li> </ul>
Service Users	Focus groups with users of learning disability services in the City	Facilitated focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Prioritising future developments and spending priorities</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quarterly</li> </ul>
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provider Forum</li> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed

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**Learning Disabilities/Difficulties (people with different abilities) Consultation Forums**

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> <li>▪ Letters</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed
Stakeholders	Organisations or individuals who have an interest in existing or planned provision including commissioning managers from the PCT and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholder consultation events</li> <li>▪ Letters at time of service reviews</li> <li>▪ Individual meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Monthly and at the time a service is reviewed

Appendix 'S'

**Homelessness Consultation Forums**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Plymouth Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention Forum	<p>Multi agency group that implements the recommendations made by Plymouth's homeless strategy forum.</p> <p>Stratory and non statutory agencies attend, including Health, Social Services, Housing and non statutory agencies who work with the homeless and those in need of Housing advice in Plymouth</p>	Meeting as a group by invitation	Needs and supply analysis Priority setting Operational issues	Bi monthly
Homeless Strategy Implementation Group - Plymouth	<p>Multi agency group developing strategy for homelessness for Plymouth</p> <p>Senior managers and team leaders attend from statutory and non statutory agencies. Police, Community Safty Partnerships, Housing, Socail Services, Health and non statutory agencies who work with the homeless and those in need of housing advice.</p>	The group meet, decide, task and action sub groups of this forum	Contract monitoring Needs and supply analysis Priortiy setting	Bi monthly

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Providers	Providers currently receiving supporting people funded services	Provider forum Review process One off meetings Site Visits	Service reviews Contract monitoring Planning for the future Needs and supply analysis Priority setting Commissioning Re modelling and decommissioning Operatoinal issues	As needed
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Appendix 'S'

**Drugs & Alcohol Consultation Forums**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Drug and Alcohol forum (Plymouth)	Relevant agencies meet as part of strategic development of services in Plymouth.	Meeting as a group by invitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Drug and Alcohol panel	Statutory and non statutory agencies meet and deliberate over statutory allocation of vulnerable service users of Supporting People services and other.	Meeting as a group by invitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Monthly
Providers	Providers currently receiving Supporting People funded services	Provider forum Service reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Re modelling and decommissioning</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Once every three months

Appendix 'S'

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Service users	<p>Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People funded services.</p> <p>Future service users who are not currently receiving Supporting People funded services.</p>	<p>Interviews during service reviews</p> <p>Letters and questionnaires</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Meeting on ad hoc basis with non Supporting People service users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Re modelling and decommissioning</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	<p>Time of service review. When commissioning new service and as part of 5 year strategy. Non Supporting People service users on ad hoc basis.</p>
Stakeholders	<p>Harbour Centre (statutory and non statutory) Plymouth DAAT, Broadreach, Hamoze House and other non statutory organisations. All services related to interventions with Drug using and alcohol abusing service users and those agencies who have a vested interest in this client group.</p>	<p>Stakeholder consultation group/events</p> <p>Letters and telephone calls at the time of service reviews.</p> <p>Informal and formal meetings with organisations and joint working practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Re modelling and decommissioning</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	<p>Planned as Twice yearly or 3 monthly</p> <p>Times of service review</p> <p>As and when required to attend meetings and provide presentations.</p>

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**Ex-offenders Consultation Forums**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Cross authority group for community safety	Commissioning, decommissioning advisory role. Probation led group attended by supporting people teams from across the South West. Strategic planning across the South West and local level.	Meeting as a group by invitation. Guest speakers and other attendees specifically related to the development of cross authority strategy and implementation of current and future services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Probation meetings with Business manager and development officer	Commissioning and decommissioning issues and joint commissioning of housing related support services.	Meetings Joint review of services Contract monitoring Joint stakeholder meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Re modelling and de commissioning</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Bi monthly
Providers	Providers currently receiving supporting people funded services	Provider forum  Service reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs &amp; supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Re modelling or decommissioning</li> <li>▪ Operatoinal issues</li> </ul>	Once every three months

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Service Users	Clients who are currently Receiving Supporting People funded services	Interviews during service reviews Letters and questionnaires Focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ commissioning</li> </ul>	Time of service review. When commissioning a new service and as part of 5 year strategy.
Stakeholders	Devon and Cornwall Probation service, The Harbour Centre and Plymouth DAAT make up the majority of those who have a direct working interest in Supporting People funded services. However, all other service providers and related supporting people services are stakeholders as ex offenders can fit any Supporting People category of service user.	Stakeholder Consultation group/ events Letters and telephone calls at time of service review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Need and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Planned as Twice yearly or 3 monthly  Times of service review

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**Asylum Seekers and Refugees Consultation Forum**

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Asylum Seeker and Refugee group	<p>Full Working Party + Sub – groups: Advice Accommodation Education Employment Health Art and Culture</p> <p>Sub groups are made up of specialists in each area and the organisations that provide these services. The full working party meets at the end of the cycle and brings together all the findings of the sub groups and plans actions accordingly. Includes public, voluntary and private providers.</p>	The full working party and all the subgroups meet on a quarterly cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Purpose: Share information, coordinate services, develop 5 year plan, review progress, problem solve.</li> <li>▪ Set priorities</li> </ul>	Quarterly cycle for each group.

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Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
<p>Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board</p>	<p>Strategy group that co ordonates the work of the teenage pregnancy co ordinator and is responsible for the strategic planning of services for the client group in the City</p> <p>Membership includes vountary sector agencies, Connexions, health, social and housing partners, teenage pregnancy co ordinator, sure start plus and Supporting People</p>	<p>Meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Needs analysis</li> <li>▪ Future planning priorities</li> <li>▪ National policy and strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Bi monthly</p>
<p>Youth Homeless Provision Group</p>	<p>Small focus group tasked with evaluating the available provision and evidencing up met need for this client group.</p> <p>Also acts as a steering group for the Youth Inclusion Project</p> <p>Membership includes Social Services, Homeless Person's Unit, Voluntary Sector agencies, Connexions, Youth Offending Team and Supporting People</p>	<p>Meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Needs analysis</li> <li>▪ Future planning priorities</li> </ul>	<p>Monthly</p>

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**Young Person's Consultation Forum**

Appendix 'S'

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Providers	Providers currently delivering Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provider Forum</li> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> <li>▪ Letters</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed
Stakeholders	Organisations or individuals who have an interest in existing or planned provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholder consultation events</li> <li>▪ Letters at time of service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed

## Mental Health Consultation Forums

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Local Implementation Team Mental Health	<p>Commission decision making body for mental health services for the PCT.</p> <p>Joint Commissioning Board membership includes voluntary sector agencies, service users, social and housing services and the PCT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quarterly meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning decisions</li> <li>▪ Joint funded initiatives</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Plymouth Mental Health Forum	<p>Plymouth Mental Health Forum is a service user led feedback organisation for people who are affected by mental ill health. It enables the voice of service users and carers to be heard by the people who are providing mental health services in Plymouth to bring about discussion and change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Forum attend SP consultation events</li> <li>▪ Forum meetings attended as needed</li> <li>▪ Informally as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> </ul>	As needed
Providers	<p>Providers currently delivering Supporting People funded services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provider Forum</li> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed

Appendix 'S'

Organisation/Group/Individual	Description	Method of Consultation	Area for Consultation	Frequency
Service Users	Clients who are currently receiving Supporting People funded services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews during service reviews</li> <li>▪ Letters</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Contract monitoring</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed
Stakeholders	Organisations or individuals who have an interest in existing or planned provision including commissioning managers from the PCT and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholder consultation events</li> <li>▪ Letters at time of service reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service reviews</li> <li>▪ Planning for the future</li> <li>▪ Needs and supply analysis</li> <li>▪ Priority setting</li> <li>▪ Commissioning</li> <li>▪ Remodelling or decommissioning services</li> <li>▪ Operational issues</li> </ul>	Twice yearly and at the time a service is reviewed
STR Project Team (Support, Time and Recovery)	Workgroup overseeing the implementation of the STR programme in Plymouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monthly meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ STR implementation and the cross over with the SP programme</li> </ul>	Monthly

# Consultation Methods

## Consultation Methods

There is no one 'right' method that will work for any given circumstance. All sorts of conditions influence which methods give you useful information, and there are no guarantees that just because one method worked well once it will do so again. But here are some general common-sense messages that will help you choose your approach.

The most important tip is not to rely on just one method. Using more than one method increases the chances of a better response - both in terms of quality and quantity. Be prepared, though, for what you will do if different methods come up with different results. Be aware that there isn't a single 'user's view', and consensus between all users is highly unlikely.

Knowing something about the people you want to consult helps you choose the most suitable methods. Table 1 (below) gives some general advice on which methods to try, and why. It can be useful to use one method to help development of another; for example a focus group to consider the design of a questionnaire. But if you want to link methods in this way, make sure that you are talking to the same audiences: the focus group would need to be representative of the people you actually wanted to reach with the questionnaire, or their views would be less relevant.

Target groups	Which consultation methods – and why
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent and regular users</li> <li>• Individuals and special interest groups who know about your service</li> <li>• The general public if your service or the issue is popular or particularly important</li> <li>• Staff</li> </ul>	<p>For these groups try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postal and face-to-face questionnaires</li> <li>• Draft documents for comment</li> </ul> <p><i>because:</i> they are already aware of the issues, are (probably) interested, and don't need detailed additional information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrequent users</li> <li>• Potential users</li> <li>• Broad interest groups</li> <li>• Non-users</li> </ul>	<p>For these groups try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Open days</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Discussions</li> </ul> <p><i>because:</i> they need information before they are able to respond.</p>

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Think about the type of response you are likely to get from different groups. Be prepared for differing responses from people who are expert in your service or area, and those who are less familiar with it. Decide how you are going to weight views. Whose opinions are most important? Can you please everybody? How are you going to explain what decisions you have taken to different people?

Table 2 (below) indicates the types of views you might expect from different people.

**Table 2**

Who is being consulted?	What sort of views/comments can you expect?
Individual users	Personal view of service as individual has experienced it. Snapshot of service.
User groups/panels/meetings	'Non-expert' view from users of your service. Can help you see a different perspective.
Representative groups	Considered thoughts and proposals based on good knowledge of the service you provide and what users of your service want. Sometimes views may be stronger than those of the average user.
General public	General perception of service. Can be useful indicators of problems and preferences with service provision
Sounding boards (non-users)	Relatively impartial views on proposals - useful for testing out proposals and plans.
Staff	Experience of a range of customers' views, combined with knowledge about the practical aspects of providing the service.

**Method**

**Open or Public Meetings**

**Description**

Arranged for members of the public to find out about and express their views on a particular issue. Attendance is open to any interested member. The issue to be discussed will be widely publicised

**Points to consider**

- Have clear objectives for what you want to achieve from the meeting
- Don't use as your only method of consultation. Traditionally open meetings are better attended by middle aged or retired people. Also they are unlikely to attract a representative audience
- Think about your target audience and organise your meeting at an appropriate time and location
- Try and use the opportunity to gain as much information as possible. You may wish to consider having short questionnaires for attendees to complete
- Publicise the meeting as widely as possible to reach your attended audience
- Make sure that your meeting is well structured
- Make sure the person chairing the meeting is well prepared and able to keep the discussion focussed
- Think about breaking the meeting up into smaller group if it is very large
- Make sure you record the points raised
- Make it clear to participants how their views will be taken forward

**Advantages**

- Can be a good way of encouraging dialogue between a service and its users
- Provides local opportunities for people to comment on matters that affect them directly or indirectly
- Offers a convenient and transparent way to demonstrate public consultation
- Can be use to inform the public at the same time as getting views

**Disadvantages**

- Attendance is often very low
- Opinions of those present are not always representative
- Attendees ability to contribute to a discussion about service wide, strategic priorities can be limited by a lack of knowledge
- Contributions will mainly be about local, topical or personal concerns

**Use this method to**

- Get a feel for public opinion on a particular topic or issue
- Inform the public

<b>Method</b>	<b>Using Representative Groups</b>
<b>Description</b>	Representative organisations may be made up of people who have a particular interest or strong views. They may be advice agencies, single interest groups or support groups. They may carry out their own research or have feedback on users experiences.
<b>Points to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Identify groups that could be considered representative</li><li>▪ Be clear about the area the group is working in, who they represent and how they work</li><li>▪ Discuss how you can best work together</li><li>▪ Decide if the organisation can help you by carrying out research and the cost implication of such a request</li><li>▪ Allow enough time for the group to respond</li></ul>
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Numbers to be dealt with are manageable</li><li>▪ Allows you to tap into information being collected by independent organisations</li><li>▪ Can provide quantitative and qualitative information</li><li>▪ Can help you get the views of particular groups including hard to reach groups</li><li>▪ Relatively quick and cheap</li><li>▪ Gives you a chance to explore views in depth</li><li>▪ Allows you to discuss detailed solutions with people with technical knowledge</li></ul>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The views expressed may not be representative</li><li>▪ May not provide statistical information</li><li>▪ Finding the right group may be time consuming</li><li>▪ Groups may require a considerable amount of time to respond</li></ul>
<b>Use this method to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Discuss general and specific issues of relevance to a particular group of users</li></ul>

**Method**

**Focus Groups**

**Description**

Focus groups are normally made up of 8-10 people led by a trained facilitator in a one off discussion on a particular topic. Focus groups allow you to explore issues in considerable depth and people can bounce ideas off others. Focus groups are particularly useful if you want to find out what specific groups of people think about your service

**Points to consider**

- Time your focus group to fit in with its members
- Think carefully about it's composition, you may need more than one group to be representative
- Use a skilled facilitator to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and that the discussion is not dominated by one or two people
- Start the group with something simple
- Make sure your group members know that they are valued. For example make sure they know how to get to the session, provide transport and how their views will feed into the decision making process
- Offer incentives for participation
- Make sure you make an adequate record of the meeting

**Advantages**

- Lets you find out what is important to users
- Users may feel more confident in groups and say things they would not say on their own
- Groups allow people to spark ideas off one another
- Provides information about what people think and why
- Can help you get through to non users
- Can include people who do not read and write

**Disadvantages**

- Must use an experienced facilitator
- Group views can tend to the norm
- Difficult to prioritise issues
- Does not provide statistical information. It gives you the 'why' not the 'how many'
- Feedback will not be typical of the views of all users
- Lack of confidentiality in the group may inhibit some participants

**Use this method to**

- Get qualitative views from all audiences
- Particularly useful for accessing potential and non users

<b>Method</b>	<b>Questionnaire Based Surveys</b>
<b>Description</b>	Questionnaires will provide you with statistical information in response to set questions. Surveys can be conducted face to face, by post or over the phone. This kind of research will tell you what proportion of people think something, but not necessarily why.
<b>Points to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The usefulness of the survey will depend on the questions you ask, so think very carefully about what you choose to ask</li><li>▪ Pilot your questionnaire on a small group</li><li>▪ Avoid leading questions</li><li>▪ Don't ask a question if you cannot act on the results</li><li>▪ Pay attention to the design and lay out of the questionnaire and the differing needs of service users</li><li>▪ Don't make it too long</li><li>▪ If your questions are complex, you may need to employ someone to conduct an interview</li><li>▪ Think about how to remove barriers for users. Consider language, literacy, alternative forms of communication</li><li>▪ Allow people to make their comments anonymously</li><li>▪ Think about sample sizes and composition</li></ul>
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ They allow you to get views from a widely representative group of users</li><li>▪ Information is statistically reliable</li><li>▪ It allows you to compare information year on year</li><li>▪ Requires a relatively low level of interaction</li><li>▪ Allows you to analyse large samples quickly</li><li>▪ Good method of getting the views of non users</li></ul>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Only gives you answers to the questions you ask</li><li>▪ Poorly written surveys can give misleading results</li><li>▪ Can be unreliable if the sample is small or response rate is low</li><li>▪ Can be difficult to get the views of disadvantaged or minority groups</li><li>▪ Analysing results can be expensive</li><li>▪ Difficult to obtain qualitative information</li></ul>
<b>Use this method to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Discuss general issues with users</li><li>▪ Can be targeted to particular groups</li><li>▪ Can be focused on specific issues</li></ul>

<b>Method</b>	<b>Written Consultation Exercises</b>
<b>Description</b>	<p>Designed to provide a formal means by which people can be invited to comment on policies and proposals. All documents should be concise, clearly laid out and written in simple language. An ideal structure would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Summary</li><li>▪ Description of issue, proposal or problem</li><li>▪ The purpose of the consultation</li><li>▪ The issue on which views are being sought</li><li>▪ An explanation of what decisions have been made to date and why</li><li>▪ Other sources of information about the issue</li><li>▪ An explanation of who is likely to be affected including an impact assessment</li><li>▪ Deadline for responses and a timetable for the rest of the decision making process</li><li>▪ Name, address and telephone number and email address of who to contact if people have queries</li><li>▪ A list of people being consulted</li><li>▪ A statement that responses will normally be made available unless they are confidential</li></ul>
<b>Points to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Think about providing the document in different formats</li><li>▪ Allow people enough time to reply</li><li>▪ Publicise the exercise well</li><li>▪ Let respondents know the results quickly</li><li>▪ Produce and make available a summary</li><li>▪ Be prepared to explain your conclusions</li></ul>
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Can provide users with detailed and comprehensive information</li><li>▪ Gives you considered views based on accurate information</li></ul>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ May get few responses</li><li>▪ Unless the information is provided in several formats, people with literacy problems or those whose first language is not English will be excluded</li><li>▪ Can be expensive</li><li>▪ Can be a lengthy process</li><li>▪ Analysing responses is a skilled job</li></ul>
<b>Use this method to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Get views on detailed and potentially complex information from interested parties</li></ul>

<b>Method</b>	<b>Open Days, Roadshows and Exhibitions</b>
<b>Description</b>	Informal opportunities for people to meet you and find out what you do. Most useful for getting across the message that you are approachable and want people to be involved in what you are doing. They are ways of contacting people who are not currently working with you, but might in the future.
<b>Points to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Think carefully about the venue and time of your event</li><li>▪ Make sure you publicise your event using a variety of methods</li><li>▪ Make sure your display or presentation material is appropriate</li><li>▪ Make sure the practical arrangements are well organised</li><li>▪ Make sure you get as much feedback as possible from attendees.</li><li>▪ Those commenting are self selecting and as such this cannot be used as your sole method of consultation</li></ul>
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Gives the public flexibility of when to attend</li><li>▪ Arouses interest by giving the public something to see or do</li><li>▪ Can generate ideas for change</li><li>▪ Gives people the opportunity to meet staff and understand the organisation</li><li>▪ It is an easy way to publicise services and provide information</li><li>▪ Can help you to contact potential and non users</li><li>▪ Gives quick feedback</li></ul>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ People who attend may not be representative</li><li>▪ Won't provide statistical information</li><li>▪ You will only receive feedback on the information presented.</li></ul>
<b>Use this method to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Inform audiences who are relatively unfamiliar with your service</li></ul>

Taken from: Code of Practice on Consultation – Guidance Cabinet Office

## Methods of Consultation

Consultation Method	Giving Information	Getting Information	Representative Views	Quantitative Views	Qualitative Views	Specialist Views
Open or Public Meetings	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓
Using representative groups	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Focus Groups	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
Questionnaire based surveys	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓
Written consultation exercises	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Open days, road shows or exhibitions	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

From: Code of Practice on Consultation – Guidance  
Cabinet Office

# Planning and Evaluation

Appendix 'S'  
**Consultation Planning Tool**

<b>Title of Consultation Event</b>	
<b>Objectives of the Event:          What do I want to achieve?</b>  Objectives should be SMART <b>S</b> specific <b>M</b> measurable <b>A</b> achievable <b>R</b> relevant / realistic <b>T</b> time based	1.  2.  3.  4.  5.
<b>To be completed by?</b>	
<b>Do I need to consult?</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What information already exists?</li> <li>▪ Has anyone else consulted on this issue?</li> <li>▪ What existing research is there?</li> <li>▪ Will this information be used to inform decision making?</li> </ul>	
<b>Who do I need to consult with?</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider who the consultation event will be targeted at.</li> <li>▪ Are there specific organisations who need to be involved?</li> <li>▪ Does your event need to be representative or are you trying to reach a specific group?</li> <li>▪ How many people do you need to involve in the exercise?</li> <li>▪ Be specific</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>What method (s) will I use?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Refer to the consultation methods section of the strategy.</li> <li>▪ Which methods have been successfully used in the past?</li> <li>▪ What kind of information do I want to gain? (qualitative or quantitative)</li> <li>▪ Is the method appropriate for the client group?</li> <li>▪ Will it provide an equal opportunity for people to contribute, including differently abled and hard to reach groups.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>What resources will I need?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specialist support e.g. interpretation services or people who can sign</li> <li>▪ Human resources</li> <li>▪ Financial resources</li> <li>▪ Time</li> </ul>	
<p><b>How will the information collected be used to inform the decision making process?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Am I consulting on something that can be changed?</li> <li>▪ How will I use the results of the consultation event?</li> <li>▪ How will they inform the decision making process?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>How will I give feedback to participants?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What method will be most appropriate?</li> <li>▪ Do I have the resources to do it?</li> <li>▪ What help will I need?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>How will I evaluate my consultation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What methods will I use?</li> <li>▪ How will participants contribute to the evaluation process?</li> <li>▪ What resources will I need?</li> <li>▪ How much time will I need to complete the evaluation?</li> </ul>	

**What are the limitations and constraints of this consultation exercise?**

- What is likely to prevent me achieving my objectives?
- What are the limitations that will effect the validity or quality of the information I receive?

Appendix 'S'  
**Consultation Evaluation Tool**

<p><b>Were the objectives of the consultation event achieved?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider how you can measure the success of each objective.</li> <li>▪ Consider the extent to which each objective has been achieved.</li> <li>▪ Was the objective achieved within the time scale set for the consultation</li> <li>▪ Identify any outstanding tasks</li> </ul>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>
<p><b>Was the method (s) used appropriate?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Was the information gained of sufficient depth, quality and quantity?</li> <li>▪ Did the method (s) work better with some groups than others?</li> </ul>	<p>What are the learning outcomes from this exercise?</p>
<p><b>Participation and accessibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider the level of participation and the numbers attending the event. Was it appropriate?</li> <li>▪ Did the people you targeted your event at attend?</li> <li>▪ Was there diversity in the participants or did one or two groups dominate?</li> <li>▪ Was there representation from the traditionally 'hard to reach' groups?</li> </ul>	<p>What are the learning outcomes from this exercise?</p>
<p><b>Organisation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider the organisation and planning for the event. Are there things that could have been done differently?</li> </ul>	<p>What are the learning outcomes from this exercise?</p>
<p><b>How has the information been used?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In what way has the information gained from this event changed or informed policy, planning and decision making in the Supporting People programme?</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>Standard One: Was information provided to participants in an appropriate and timely way?</b></p>	<p>Our evaluation</p> <p>Information from the participants evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Two: Were participants clear about what was being consulted on?</b></p>	<p>Our evaluation</p> <p>Information from the participants evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Three: Were we non discriminatory and provide equality of opportunity for participants to contribute?</b></p>	<p>Our evaluation</p> <p>Information from the participants evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Four: Were we aware of the limitations and constraints of our consultation event?</b></p>	<p>Our evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Five: Did we use existing planning or consultation forums?</b></p>	<p>Our evaluation</p>

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<p><b>Standard Six: Were we clear about confidentiality?</b></p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Information from the participants evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Seven: Was feedback provided for participants? Did it show how their information was used to inform decision making?</b></p>	<p>Evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Eight:</b></p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Information from the participants evaluation</p>
<p><b>Standard Nine: What have we learnt? What could we do better next time?</b></p>	<p>Our evaluation</p>

## Consultation Evaluation Sheet

Plymouth Supporting People team are committed to informing and consulting with service users and carers, stakeholders and providers. Thank you for attending today's event. We would like to know what you thought of it and any suggestions you have for future events.

1) Were we clear about what we were consulting on?

Yes / No .....

2) Was the information we provided clear and easy to understand?

Yes / No .....

3) Have you been told how your contribution will be used to make decisions?

Yes / No .....

4) Did the time and location of the event make it easy for you to attend?

Yes / No .....

5) Did you feel you had the same chance as others to contribute?

Yes / No .....

Do you have any other comments or suggestions you would like to make?

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THANK YOU

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Author	Publication
Plymouth City Council Department for Social and Housing Services	Consultation Handbook June 2001
ODPM	'Supporting People guide to user involvement for organisations providing housing related support' May 2003
ODPM	'Supporting People Administrative Guidance' October 2001
North Tyneside Council	'Involving You – A strategy to inform, consult and involve people in the Supporting People Programme' April 2004
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Plymouth Supporting People Team	'Communications and public relations strategy' April 2003
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ODPM	'Supporting People Workbook – Developing an approach to user involvement for Local Authorities' 2003
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