

Why are we doing this?

Wrexham Council has made significant progress in improving consultation and engagement with the public in recent years, and have been commended by Wales Audit Office for work in this area. Some improvements and achievements include:

- An online consultation and engagement hub – ‘Your Voice Wrexham’ – shared with Public Services Board partners
- An increase in the number of consultations conducted, and an increase in the number of responses (e.g. in 2015 WCBC carried out 24 consultations on ‘Your Voice Wrexham’ – with around 4,400 of you taking part. In 2017 we carried out 43 online consultations, with around 11,700 people responding)
- Increased interaction with the public through social media and other online platforms.

We know that we’ve made significant progress in this area, however there is now a need to broaden the focus from being predominantly on formal consultation, to ‘involvement’, and **we want to work with you to develop these plans.**

The requirement to consider how we more effectively ‘involve’ citizens and work collaboratively **with them** is highlighted in a number of places including:

- **The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011** - emphasises the importance of placing public engagement at the core of what we do and giving every person the chance to contribute to local decision making.
- **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** - identifies the involvement of people as key to the principles of sustainable development, and essential to future service delivery.
- **The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014** – says that Local Authorities must put in place transparent arrangements where people are equal partners in designing and operating services.
- **Wrexham Public Service Board ‘Well-being Plan’** - says that public sector organisations and communities need to talk and listen to each other in order to improve well-being in Wrexham.
- **WCBC’s Council Plan** - says that we will consult and involve local people in planning and delivering services. Not only consulting with people on how we plan and deliver services, but engaging with them to deliver co-produced services or to make it easier for people to help their family, neighbours and themselves.
- **WCBC’s Single Equality Plan** - Sets out a commitment to ‘reduce inequalities in representation and voice’.

In addition there are a number of related plans and strategies which exist within WCBC. These should reflect the vision and direction of travel within this corporate involvement strategy, so that they will complement, support and strengthen each other.

This Involvement Strategy will focus on three areas of involvement: Consultation, Engagement and Co-production.

It is important to note that other terminology is used in some areas, particularly with regards to children and young people, where the term commonly used is ‘participation’. We would consider the terms ‘participation’ and ‘involvement’ to mean the same thing for the purposes of this strategy.

Our Vision ...

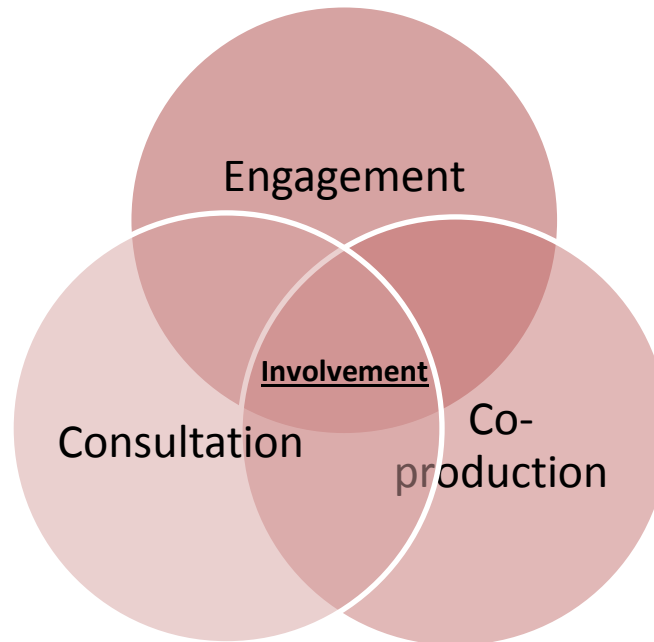
All people have access to the information they need to influence the planning and delivery of services. They are engaged and consulted with on decisions which affect them, and where possible we work together to design and deliver services.

Consultation is ...

an exercise to gather people's views on specific proposals to help make a decision.

We aim to ...

1. Ensure that we consult on the right things, in the right ways, at the right times, with the right people
2. Ensure that consultations across the organisation are conducted to a consistently high standard
3. Ensure that consultation findings are considered, and used to make informed decisions at all levels
4. Ensure we communicate honestly with people about the outcomes of their involvement.



Engagement is ...

an ongoing conversation where we listen to what people want to tell us, and seek to understand their views on a range of areas.

We aim to ...

1. Ensure that there are appropriate and accessible ways for people to engage with us on issues that are important to them
2. Analyse and understand people's views, from a range of sources, and use this information (along with other intelligence) to inform our decisions
3. Develop links and effective relationships with different people and communities across the county borough
4. Recognise and acknowledge the value that engagement has added to our work.

What success will look like?

A reduction in the gap between how important it is to local people that the Council listens to them and how satisfied they are that this is happening, so that we are moving closer to meeting public expectation. (37% in 2016)

We will also measure the gap between how important it is to local people that they are involved in the design and delivery of Council services and how satisfied they are that this is happening (not measured previously).

Co-production is ...

working with people and communities in equal partnership to develop and deliver services that matter together.

We aim to ...

1. Ensure that we work to a consistently high standard across the organisation, when co-producing services
2. Develop partnerships with relevant individuals, groups and communities, to share and make use of their knowledge and experience
3. Embed a culture of co-production across the organisation, and use this approach wherever it is appropriate.