

*DRAFT*

# Community Engagement Framework

**October 2008  
Final Draft**



**Brighton and Hove**

# Signatories to the Framework

**2020 Community Partnership** is Brighton and Hove's Local Strategic Partnership and is made up of representatives from the following organisations, partnerships and public, private and voluntary sector:

Advice Services Strategy Group  
Brighton & Hove Arts Commission  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
Brighton & Hove Teaching Primary Care Trust  
Children & Young Peoples Trust Partnership  
City Inclusion Partnership  
City Sustainability Partnership  
Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership  
Community & Voluntary Sector Forum  
East Sussex Fire Service  
Economic Partnership  
Environment Agency  
Healthy City Partnership  
Job Centre Plus  
Learning Partnership  
Learning & Skills Council  
Strategic Housing Partnership  
Stronger Communities Partnership  
Sussex Police  
Sussex Probation Service  
University of Brighton  
University of Sussex

For more information about the 2020 Community Partnership and its members visit:  
[www.2020communityv.ora.uk](http://www.2020communityv.ora.uk)

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Information about the development of the Framework, and copies of the Framework and the accompanying consultation report are available on the 2020 Community Partnership website

# Introduction by Chair & Vice Chair of the 2020 Community Partnership

The Framework has been developed to be both a policy document and a practical resource.

As a policy document it sets out the 2020 Community Partnership's commitment to and understanding of community engagement in Brighton and Hove. As a practical resource it provides a clear definition of community engagement and importantly sets specific standards for community engagement that all Partners must adhere to. It identifies the first wave of priority actions that must be taken to improve community engagement in the city.

As a policy document and a practical tool the Framework will help the 2020 Community Partnership achieve its vision for Brighton and Hove.....

**'.... of a dynamic city that improves and protects the environment, meets social needs and promotes sustainable economic success in an inclusive, just and harmonious way'**

We are not starting from scratch. We recognise that good community engagement activity has and is happening in the city. However, this is the first time that as a group of public, private and community and voluntary organisations we have produced a common approach to community engagement. Through the production and implementation of the Framework our aim is to raise the profile, improve the quality and achieve better co-ordination of community engagement. Our purpose is to improve people's lives and the quality of public services, and make better use of resources.

The Framework has been signed up to by all members of the 2020 Community Partnership and therefore applies to all the different partnerships and organisations in the Partnership.

To produce the Framework we listened to what people have told us, reflected on previous and current community engagement in the city and considered research that has already been done here and elsewhere in the country. This includes consideration of recent developments in national government policy and legislation, particularly Government's white paper 'Communities in Control' and the new 'duty to involve' in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

We have produced a report on our development process so people can see how we have used their comments and suggestions.

The process to develop the Framework was as important to us as producing the final document. Through the process we have begun to strengthen the trust and relationships between the different organisations, groups and sectors. This has

started us on the right path to developing strong and meaningful community engagement that we are all satisfied with.

The production of this document is only the starting point. We see the Framework as our first step towards building better relationships between, and a stronger understanding of, communities in Brighton and Hove. Community engagement is not a single activity; it's a way of working. It's about inclusion and involvement, input and influence. These come with an equal need for responsibility, accountability and a willingness to work with others towards a common goal. As our learning and practice develops, so will the Framework.

Roger French  
Chair of the 2020 Community Partnership

Cllr. Dee Simson  
Vice-Chair of 2020 Community Partnership/Cabinet Member for Community Affairs,  
Inclusion & Internal Relations

## What is the Framework?

The Brighton and Hove Community Engagement Framework:

- Establishes a *common understanding of and commitment to community engagement* across all organisations, partnerships and sectors in the 2020 Community Partnership
- Sets *clear and specific standards for community engagement* that all members of the 2020 Community Partnership are signed up to
- Identifies *priority actions* to be progressed by the 2020 Community Partnership that move us towards achieving the aims of the Framework

# What are the Aims of the Framework?

People have sent some clear messages about what they think about community engagement and what the Framework should achieve. The following key themes have emerged -

- Investment in the development of people in both communities and organisations
- Improvements in information and communication particularly providing feedback
- Better co-ordination and use of resources
- Long-term, resourced, commitment to improving community engagement
- Creation of real opportunities to influence the outcome of decisions and tackle issues in communities
- Developing more creative ways to engage with people and communities that ensure everyone has a voice not just those that 'know how'

In response to these themes we have developed three over-arching aims. Under each of the aims we have identified specific priorities.

**All three aims are of equal importance and achievement of each aim will impact on the achievement of the others.**

## Our Aims

### 1. Improve engagement activity that enhances the lives of people and their communities

*We will do this by –*

- Maximising opportunities for **individuals** and communities to take control over the issues that effect their lives in order to:
  - I. meet their needs
  - II. contribute to their economic and social opportunities
  - III. build active and inclusive communities
  
- Providing **individuals** and communities with the information, advice and **support** they need to develop their confidence, skills, knowledge and ability to:
  - i. participate in community life
  - ii. engage with services
  - iii. engage in local decision-making
  - iv. understand and engage with democratic processes
  - v. come together to take action for themselves

**Individuals** – children, young people and adults

**Support** – for example, informal and formal training, transport to meeting venues, funding for a development worker,

## 2. Improve engagement activity that ensures opportunity for all

*We will do this by -*

- Promoting and supporting processes for effective representation of communities in local and citywide strategic planning and decision-making
- Developing more **creative, tailored approaches** that support engagement opportunities for all sections of the community

**Creative approaches** – for example, an open house event which involves using a local venue as a drop in centre allowing people to gather information and share their views, runs over a whole day or days and which has a range of different interactive activities for people to pick and chose from

## 3. Improve engagement activity that drives up the quality of services and makes better use of resources

*We will do this by -*

- Improving collaboration between residents, community and voluntary groups, business groups and public organisations to ensure that issues and priorities are identified and action taken
- Improving co-ordination between all partners to ensure more effective planning and implementation of engagement initiatives which take into account existing knowledge, structures and groups and reduces duplication
- Developing the capacity of members of the 2020 Community Partnership to carry out high quality community engagement that meets the standards of the Framework
- Ensuring that learning from engagement activity is captured and used to support continual improvement of community engagement in the city



# What is Community Engagement?

## Community

In the widest possible sense we are talking about Brighton and Hove – the city, its neighbourhoods - wards, specific streets or housing estates – and everyone that lives, works, or visits. Our definition of ‘community’ aims to recognise that different people identify themselves in different ways and that we should be sensitive to this when carrying out any type of engagement activity. Moreover, we must not forget that people who see themselves as members of a community are also individual **citizens**.

The **places** in which we live, work and socialise will often include the people we share our lives, interests and backgrounds with. It may be a place with a physical or locally agreed boundary or simply a shared understanding or ‘feeling’ about a place – this is commonly defined as - **a community of place**.

<p><b>Citizen:</b> includes children, young people and adults</p>
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Across the city and within the areas in which we all live some people define themselves in addition to their community of place. This is quite often as part of a group of people with a shared interest or identity/experience – **communities of interest or identity**

A community of interest or identity therefore can include –

- i. people who identify themselves or how they are identified by society, usually by demographic characteristics, for example, children and young people, faith groups, older people, Black and Minority Ethnic people, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people or people with a shared social background
- ii. People with a shared or similar interest, for example, in climate change, art, a local school or allotment
- iii. People with a similar or the same profession or place of work, for example, hoteliers, council workers, police officers, business associations

## Engagement

There are many different words used to describe community engagement – ‘participation’, ‘involvement’, ‘consultation’ and ‘research’ are just a few. All are types of engagement. All are equal in merit. However, because we use the term community engagement to mean any and all of them it can be very confusing.

The Framework defines community engagement in Brighton and Hove as being the following different types of activity:

- **Informing**
- **Consulting**
- **Involving**
- **Collaborating**
- **Empowering**

Four strong messages emerged from the process of developing the Framework about the definition of engagement.

Firstly, that the success any of engagement activity is related to the level of information, support and training that individuals and communities can access. Therefore as well as our range of engagement we want to recognise the role, contribution and importance of community development.

‘Community development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect.

It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives.’ (*The Community Development Exchange* <http://www.cdx.org.uk/what-is-community-development>)

Secondly, that no single type of activity was more or less important than another. For example, the provision of high quality, accessible and relevant information is as important as providing more opportunities for residents to take control.

Thirdly, that it is important that all engagement is linked to decision-making. Residents and communities must be able to see the impact of giving their time, views and energy.

Fourthly, that any barriers that prevent people getting information, giving their views as part of a consultation or getting more involved are considered and addressed as part of the activity.

## Our Range of Engagement

### Informing

To provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

- For example, Community And Voluntary Sector Forum website [www.cvsectorforum.org](http://www.cvsectorforum.org), community newsletters

**CASE STUDY:** The Black and Minority Ethnic Community Partnership followed up standard publicity, including letters, flyers and posters, for an event for International Women’s Day with personal phone calls and e-mails. Recognising that word of mouth can be a powerful tool, they also contacted a range of workers and groups who worked with Black and minority ethnic communities and encouraged them to spread the word.

### Consulting

To listen to communities and individuals feedback on analysis and choices, consider their input and feedback results.

- For example, surveys, focus groups, the citizens’ panel.

**CASE STUDY:** Safety Net, a local organisation that provides training and support in child protection to voluntary and community groups, undertook a consultation exercise to explore child safety in the home for under 5s. In the initial phase they worked with schools and local community organisations to identify parents interested in being involved in the project and worked with them to design a survey. The parents were then supported and trained to work together to undertake the survey with their own families, neighbours and social networks. The consultation was successful and the group are now being supported to formalise and to access further training and development opportunities.

### Involving

To work directly with the community throughout a process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and taken into consideration

- For example, Independent Advisory Group to the Police, Parents Forum.

**CASE STUDY TO BE INSERTED**

**Collaborating**

To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification and deliver of the preferred solution

- For example, local action teams and neighbourhood action groups which involve community groups, residents and public organisations working together to tackle neighbourhood issues.

**CASE STUDY:** Brighton and Hove Library Services sought to develop a model of local ‘ownership’ as part of the redevelopment of Coldean Library. A range of engagement activities were undertaken prior to and during the building of the new library. A key activity included the establishment of a steering group that included all key stakeholders to oversee the development. This enabled strong involvement from community groups, local councillors, a local Registered Social Landlord who all worked closely with Library staff, officers from Adult Social Care and the private developer. A key factor that contributed to the success of the project, as identified by library staff, was the practical support provided by a local community development worker. This enabled effective community involvement and helped enhance the engagement skills of library staff.

**Empowering**

To place final decision-making and control in the hands of the community. This may happen as a result of increased engagement between communities and public bodies or as a result of communities taking action themselves.

- For example, neighbourhood health chests and estate development budgets both of which are pots of funding for community activity to improve either health or housing in an area. Allocation of the funding is decided by local representative forums.

**CASE STUDY:** The Bristol Estate Community Association (BECA), supported by Serendipity Enterprising Solutions (SES) identified disused areas under the tower blocks on their 1950’s built estate. Originally designed as drying rooms the now empty spaces were being used as rubbish dumps and places to carryout anti-social behaviour. BECA worked with the city council’s housing department and the creative industries manager to attract funding to convert a number of these spaces into artists studios. The city council arranged to lease the space to the Association which will manage the studios and re-invest the income into improving their estate. To enable the Association to both lease, rent out, and manage the units SES assisted them in forming a Community Interest Company – a “not for profit” company limited by guarantee – with every adult resident of the Estate being an automatic voting member of the company. The creation of this legal entity has empowered the Association to become more self-sustaining and provided an income stream that residents have direct control over allowing them to decide how the money is spent on improving their community.

# Our Community Engagement Commitment

Our Community Engagement Commitment and our Community Engagement Standards, detailed overleaf, provide the foundation for future improvements to community engagement. By fulfilling our Commitment and working to our Standards we will begin to see real progress towards improving community engagement in the city.

## **We commit to:**

- **ensuring all community engagement activity has clarity of purpose and makes a difference**
- **Working together where this will improve the quality of community engagement**
- **all community engagement being open and honest and having integrity**
- **being flexible and ensuring community engagement is tailored to people's needs**
- **working to ensure that resources are well targeted and using local knowledge and intelligence to plan and deliver community engagement**
- **treating participants with respect and ensuring feedback is provided to participants and made publicly available**
- **ensuring that processes are reviewed and that we learn from our work and improve practice wherever we can**

# Our Community Engagement Standards

To support our commitment the 2020 Community Partnership and all its members will work to the following more detailed standards:

## Community Engagement Standards

### 1. Planning and Resources

#### Clarity of Purpose

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

#### Evidence Base

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

#### Timing

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

#### Resources

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

### 2. Communication and Partnership Working

#### Communication

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

**Partnership**

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

**Quality**

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

**Accessibility**

We will support a variety of engagement activities to reflect the diversity of our communities. We will be flexible and responsive to the ways that the community wants to engage with us. We will recognise the need to make engagement both formal and informal at different times and for different people and purposes. We will provide practical support to help overcome barriers that some individuals and communities may face to engagement, particularly vulnerable and seldom heard groups<sup>1</sup> in order that they are represented in all community engagement activity and not just single issue activity.

**3. Feedback and Learning****Feedback**

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

**Monitoring & Review**

In partnership with stakeholders, we will monitor and review the engagement activities we carry out to ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to engage should they choose to, particularly those whose voices are

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<sup>1</sup> For this document we are using the term 'seldom heard groups' to refer to individuals and groups who are traditionally underrepresented in engagement activity and who often face additional barriers to taking part. We recognise that during the consultation some of the respondents referred to chronically excluded groups. We wish to acknowledge this terminology and propose that 'seldom heard groups' covers this group also – "those who are struggling to place their foot onto the first rung of the engagement ladder and who are at risk of being even further left behind".

often not heard, and change our practices accordingly. We will learn from our own practice.



## Our Actions

### We asked, You said, We will do

During the process of developing the Framework *key actions* have emerged as being essential in improving community engagement across the city and achieving the aims of the Framework. These actions have been drawn from extensive discussions and feedback from key groups, partners, partnerships and representatives.

The Stronger Communities Partnership will be leading on this work and will be responsible for creating a more detailed action plan that states which organisations will deliver the actions, how and when. See 'Who will monitor and implement the Framework?' for more information about the Stronger Communities Partnership.

Below sets out each of the three over-arching aims of the Framework under which we describe our initial priorities and actions:

#### **1. Improve engagement activity that enhances the lives of people and their communities**

*We will do this by -*

- 1.1 Maximising opportunities for individuals and communities to take control over the issues that effect their lives in order to**
- I.meet their needs**
  - II.contribute to their economic and social opportunities**
  - III. build active and inclusive communities based on mutual respect**

#### Action

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Secure long-term partnership funding for community development work in communities across the city

Explore transfer of assets, such as community centres to community groups, where there will be long-term benefit to the community

Support the development of community anchors (independent multi-purpose community led organisations in neighbourhoods)

Support the development of community buildings as a neighbourhood resource to be used equally by communities and service providers

Support to councillors to be community champions through the provision of ward budgets and staff support

Trial holding an annual 'Ask the Executives' meeting where citizens can come and ask the Chief Executives of the Council, Police and Primary Care Trust questions

- 1.2 Providing individuals and communities with the information, advice and support they need to develop their confidence, skills, knowledge and ability to:**
- i. participate in community life**
  - ii. engage with services**
  - iii. engage in local decision-making**
  - iv. understand and engage with democratic processes**

### *Action*

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Develop a cross sector training and development programme targeted at residents, community groups, 'front line' workers, managers, policy makers, businesses and councillors on how to achieve high quality community engagement

Include engagement skills, knowledge and experience in job descriptions and person specifications as a matter of course for relevant posts in public bodies and community and voluntary organisations

Publish and keep up-to-date a webpage on the 2020 Community Partnership website that provides details of how people can get involved in their local community or with public bodies, and which has links to other key organisations websites

Produce a guide (or identify a place) where clear information and advice is available or accessible to all organisations to follow when carrying out community engagement work and activities

## 2. Improve engagement activity that ensures opportunity for all

*We will do this by –*

### 2.1 Promoting and supporting processes for effective representation of communities in local and citywide strategic planning and decision-making

#### Action

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Agree a common policy for supporting community representatives working collaboratively with service providers (reward and recognition)

Recognise and resource where necessary, new or alternative groups where their influence and ability to engage and represent their communities is stronger than using the usual or more formal routes available

Build a better understanding about representation, about what is already happening and how, and assist individuals and groups in communities to be more representative

### 2.2 Developing more creative, tailored approaches that support engagement opportunities for all sections of the community

#### Action

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Provide funding for groups to hold informal events that bring communities together, with the opportunity of meeting ‘the services’ (public bodies)

Run an annual ‘Get Involved’ campaign culminating in a celebration of active citizenship event

Develop an on-line participation tool that supports two-way dialogue between the citizens and public organisations, starting with the council

Explore the opportunities for more innovative ways to share information with the general public, community groups and local communities. For example, community radio, on-street internet points to access local service information

Promotion of the ‘community mark’ (national award in recognition of a businesses support for a local community)

Build a better understanding about which and how local businesses already support community based activities and develop case studies to use with other businesses

### **3. Improve engagement activity that drives up the quality of services and makes better use of resources**

*We will do this by -*

#### **3.1 Improving collaboration between residents, voluntary and community groups, business groups and public organisations to ensure that issues and priorities are identified and action taken**

##### *Action*

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Develop a partnership funding strategy that recognises the long-term role of the community and voluntary sector in enabling community engagement including engaging with seldom heard groups and neighbourhood based communities.

Develop a policy on how services will be co-ordinated in neighbourhoods

#### **3.2 Improving co-ordination between all partners to ensure more effective planning and implementation of engagement activities which takes into account existing knowledge, structures and groups**

##### *Action*

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Explore the opportunity for a communications hub (regular meeting of Heads of Communications) for public bodies - through which they co-ordinate their communications with residents

Ensure an introduction to and explanation of the Community Engagement Framework is part of new staff induction in public bodies, community and voluntary organisations and business associations

Publish and keep up-to-date a database of recent, current and future consultations, including feedback and outcomes, which is searchable by ward, post code and topic and available to public bodies, the community and voluntary sector, businesses and the general public, and includes the results and the impact of the consultations

Develop a community workers network for workers with a remit around 'engagement' to share information and learning and hold an annual workers conference

**3.3 Developing the capacity of partners of the 2020 Community Partnership to carry out high quality community engagement that meets the standards of the Framework**

*Action*

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Agree a long-term partnership funding arrangement for the Stronger Communities Partnership to provide strategic co-ordination and leadership on community engagement

Develop a volunteering scheme for public sector staff in the voluntary and community sector

Refresh and enforce the common Research Governance Protocol established across the Council, the Police and the Primary Care Trust

**3.4 Ensuring that learning from engagement activity is captured and used to support continual improvement of community engagement in the city**

*Action*

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Establish a review and evaluation process that all partners are signed up to that allows all partners to learn from good practice and mistakes

## Who will Implement & Monitor the Framework?

It is important that we know whether the Framework is making a difference. The Stronger Communities Partnership will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Framework and monitoring its impact. It will be the responsibility of individual members of the Stronger Communities Partnership to lead on delivering the priority actions within the Framework.

In addition, the City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Commission will use its legislative power to monitor public organisations adherence to the Framework and to undertake specific scrutiny panel investigations on priority actions to improve engagement.

The framework will be reviewed annually by the Stronger Communities Partnership and a summary of progress and achievements will be presented to the 2020 Community Partnership and published on the website of the 2020 Community Partnership.

## What is the Stronger Communities Partnership?

The Stronger Communities Partnership is made up of representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector, Registered Social Landlords, the Police, the Primary Care Trust and the City Council including the Cabinet Member responsible for Community Affairs and Inclusion. The Stronger Communities Partnership reports back to the 2020 Community Partnership.

The Stronger Communities Partnership is focused on how residents and different communities get their voices heard and how the voluntary and community sector and the public sector working together can improve the information, support and opportunities communities have to influence and take control of the issues that affect their lives.

The partnership will use a variety of methods to measure the impact of the Framework, including:

- using the new biennial **Place Survey** and specifically the following questions:

**Place Survey** – a new survey introduced by national government in 2008 that all councils in England must carry out every two years. The survey contains questions set by national government that ask people about what they think about where they live and the public services they receive.

- How well informed do you feel about how you can get involved in local decision-making; how to complain about local public services; how well informed to you feel about local public services?

- Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?
- Generally speaking would you like to be more involved in the decisions that affect your local area?
- Overall, about how often over the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to any group(s), club(s) or organisation(s)
- progress against the following indicators as set in the **Local Area Agreement**
  - Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
  - Participation in regular volunteering
  - Environment for a thriving voluntary and community sector
  - Percentage of people who feel that they can get involved with others from different backgrounds
  - Percentage of communities with local communication/involvement mechanisms
  - Percentage of people who are satisfied with opportunities to engage in local decision making
- Completion of a full equality impact assessment on the Framework and implementation of any subsequent equality action plan
- Reporting concerns and issues to the 2020 Community Partnership and to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Commission for investigation
- Sharing experience and progress through the national and regional community empowerment networks and other appropriate regional and national forums
- Requesting partnership members report annually on how they have adapted their practices in light of the Framework

**Local Area Agreement –**  
 an action plan for the city agreed between all public organisations, business and community and voluntary

## What are our Legal Responsibilities and Policy Drivers?

Whilst there is no legislative requirement for us to have a Community Engagement Framework for the city there are many legal requirements and national policies, particular for public bodies, to improve how they consult and involve residents in decision-making. The following provides a summary of the key national and local legislation and policies which the Framework will help us to meet.

For all public bodies:

- Duty to Involve as set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Findings of the Reducing Inequality Review (2008)
- Equality Impact Assessments on all policies, functions and service provision
- Requirements of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (2009)

For all public bodies and the community and voluntary sector:

- Brighton & Hove Compact
- National Government's White Paper 'Communities in Control' (2008)
- National Government's Action Plan for Community Empowerment December (2007)

For the Police:

- National Community Safety Plan (2008-2011)
- Police and Justice Act (2006)
- National Government's green paper on Policing (2008)

For the Primary Care Trust and other NHS Trusts:

- NHS Act (2006) and the 2007 NHS Operating Framework
- Draft consultation on New NHS Constitutions (2008)
- Local Involvement Networks (2008)

For the City Council

- Community Empowerment Champion status (2008)
- Statement of Community Involvement in Planning

Moreover, the Framework will support the achievement of a wide range of objectives and strategies of the different 2020 Community Partners. For example,

- the Children and Young People's Plan which aims to 'give children and young people more chances to have their say in decisions that affect the area that they live in' and 'offer more chances for children and young people to have a say in the decisions that affect them'.
- The Healthy City Partnership which aims to 'communicate with and secure participation of local communities'.



- The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership's Community safety Plan 2008-2011 which aims amongst many things to "further development of communities' involvement in the work of the partnership and ensuring provision is accessible and suitable for all groups of citizens".
- East Sussex Fire Service ambition for local communities includes to "develop our role in Community Leadership, Engagement and Partnership" and is producing a consultation and community engagement strategy.

## How was the Framework developed?

Following a detailed discussion of research findings into community engagement activity in the city in autumn 2007, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), known in Brighton and Hove as the 2020 Community Partnership, approved the development of a community engagement framework for the city in February 2008. The research highlighted a number of issues, including recognition that effective community engagement does drive up the quality of services. In its role to bring key partners together the LSP identified a need to improve the co-ordination of community engagement initiatives and to ensure that staff with a responsibility for delivering engagement support have access to appropriate levels of training and support.

The LSP's intention is that the Framework will pull together agreed over-arching principles of engagement. These principles will be underpinned by an action plan to improve the type and quality of different engagement activity in the city by public bodies and community and voluntary organisations.

The Framework is to be owned by the LSP and signed up to by all key sectors and agencies in the city, including the Council, the Primary Care Trust and the Police. The Council supported the development of the framework, which was guided by a working group made up of representatives from the constituent organisations and partnerships of the LSP, including representatives of the community and voluntary sector.

The plan for the Framework development process included a wide range of activities and approaches, and was not solely reliant on the consultation documents. For example, discussions have been held with a number of organisations, partnerships and groups that have focussed on their own experiences of engagement or of delivering engagement and their priorities for the future. The development process had a degree of flexibility to allow for different groups/organisations to be consulted in a way in which best suits them.

Two consultation documents were produced. A full version primarily aimed at large organisations and partnerships with responsibility for engaging with communities and, in response to recommendations from the working group, the project team also produced a shorter version aimed at smaller community groups. Consultation about the framework has been aimed at partnerships, organisations and groups as opposed to individual citizens. When implementation of the framework begins the LSP will seek to involve citizens in the design and development of new engagement tools, techniques and structures. This is probably when it will be most meaningful to individuals.

Information about the development of the Framework and records of the meetings of the working group are available on the 2020 Community Partnership website [www.2020communitypartnership.org/cef](http://www.2020communitypartnership.org/cef)

The development of the framework is a local priority and has not been driven by any national policy or requirement. There is no “must do” or map to describe what an

engagement framework should look like. This presents its own complexities and challenges. Taking a collaborative and creative approach has helped to define the way forward, whilst listening to people has offered insight into content, aims and actions.

Full details are available in the Framework Consultation Report.

## Equality Impact Assessment Summary

All public organisations have to complete an equality impact assessment on new or changes to existing policies, strategies and services. The purpose of the assessment is to consider if any changes to, or introduction of new policy will have negative and positive impacts on different communities in the city. Based on the assessment actions are identified to mitigate any potential negative impacts.

As the 2020 Community Partnership is made up of public organisation as well as private and community and voluntary organisations it was decided that an equality impact assessment should be carried out on the Framework.

At the start of the development of the Framework a 'rapid impact checklist' was carried out. This identified five overarching potential impacts of the Framework:

- More co-ordinated engagement activity
- Increased involvement in decision-making
- Better value for money
- Greater accountability
- More community ownership and responsibility
- Improved services that meet the needs of communities
- Increased emphasis on equality

It was considered that the overall impact of the Framework would be positive.

However, potential negative impacts were also identified. These were:

- Increased demand on existing resources both staff and funding
- Slow down in decision making
- Overstretching existing community and voluntary groups
- Conflict between representative democracy through elected councillors and participatory democracy where members of communities represent their own community

Nevertheless it was felt the negative impacts would be addressed through the standards, aims and/or actions of the Framework.

A full equality impact assessment will be carried out on the Framework and any resulting actions included in the more detailed Framework Action Plan developed by the Stronger Communities Partnership.

## Glossary

Aim	A statement of long term goals: what you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it
Capacity	The awareness, knowledge, skills and operational capability that enables people, communities and organisations to achieve their purpose
Citizen panel	Citizens' panels involve a representative sample of the local population, who have agreed to take part in consultation activity. They can involve between 500 to 3,000 people
Community anchors	community-led multi-purpose organisation, which supports local community activity through community development and capacity building
Community buildings	Building conceived, managed and sometimes built, by the local community for community use. Phrase also used to describe the activity of building a community; physically, socially and economically
Community intelligence	Information about the communities we serve. This will often be useful in deciding what level of service should be secured or delivered and how. One benefit of data is in facilitating challenge
Community-based learning	Community-based learning involves creating new learning opportunities within local communities but generally outside traditional learning institutions (e.g. school, college, university). However, it can involve these traditional institutions particularly when it is addressing widening participation to learning
Community sector	The web of personal relationships, groups, networks, traditions and patterns of behaviour that exist amongst those who share physical neighbourhoods, socio-economic conditions or common understandings and interests. It is the community itself taking action to get things done. The community sector ranges from small informal community groups to large multi-purpose community organisations. The community sector covers the entire range of policy and services. Its activities can range from nurseries and playgroups to community centres and village halls, from tenants' associations to environmental groups, from arts and sports groups to credit unions, and from self help groups to scout groups
Community Strategy	Local Authorities now have to prepare a community strategy for promoting the economic, social and environmental well being of their area and a vision for the future. The expectation is that this will be produced with organisations in the private, voluntary and community sectors via a Local Strategic Partnership

Compact	The Compact is an agreement between Government and the voluntary and community sector in England. It recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out guidelines for how both parties should work together
Cross-sector	Partnership work involving representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sector
Democratic process	Governance by people as a whole through elected representatives
Equality	Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way, but it recognises that their needs are met in different ways
Equality Impact Assessment	An equality impact assessment is a way of developing a profile of how a policy/function, or service affects different groups, in order to recommend change where needed
Front-line workers	Workers whose role involves dealing directly with members of the public, service users or customers
Inclusive	Accepting and embracing all
Local Area Agreement	A Local Area Agreement (LAA) sets out the priorities agreed between the partners of each Local Strategic Partnership and Public Service Board, and central government
Local decision making	The processes and structures that facilitate decisions being taken by public bodies within a local authority area
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	A partnership comprising of public, private and voluntary groups who work together with the aim of improving the quality of life in the Brighton and Hove. Their work involves identifying local priorities and actions, which inform the community strategy. The LSP in Brighton and Hove is called the 2020 Community Partnership
Mutual respect	Where two or more people have consideration and dutiful regard for each other
Outcome	An outcome is a long term change brought about by an activity. Outcomes refer to long term changes that are anticipated for an area or a group of people as a result of activities. They focus on a particular problem and describe the anticipated change. They are closely related to objectives, but they are more specific. They may or may not be quantified
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	The Overview & Scrutiny Commission co-ordinates the work of the Brighton and hove city Council Overview & Scrutiny Committees. It reviews and scrutinises all matters, decisions made by the Cabinet and service provision relating to the Finance function, and to Central Services, e.g. equality and diversity
Place Survey	A new survey introduced by national government in 2008 that all councils in England must carry out every two

	years. The survey contains questions set by national government that ask people about what they think about where they live and the public services they receive
Policy	An approach to tackling a particular issue which has been agreed by a group with the appropriate authority to set out a policy
Priority	Something that has been identified as an important issue to be addressed
Primary Care Trust (PCT)	Statutory authority that provide primary and community services and commission secondary (hospital) care on behalf of their local population
Public organisations/bodies	Organisations that deliver services that are wholly or partly funded through taxation. They include national, regional and local government and statutory agencies such as the Council, the Police
Regional community empowerment network	Consortium of councils and regional community and voluntary organisations working together to share ideas and best practice on promoting and improving community empowerment
Registered Social Landlords (RSL)	Landlords of social housing that are registered with the Housing Corporation. Most are housing associations but they also include trusts, co-operatives and companies
Research governance protocol	Research Governance is essential to ensure that the public can have confidence in, and benefit from, quality research. A governance protocol ensures high quality scientific research, ethical and financial standards, transparent decision-making processes, clear allocation of responsibilities and robust monitoring arrangements
Resources	Physical entity of limited availability, for example human resource off refers to the quantity and quality of staff in terms of number and skills/ability. It can also refer to man-made resources such as buildings, computers or money, as well as natural resources such as open space or waterways
Service providers	Public bodies/organisations and community and voluntary sector organisations that provides services wholly or partly funded through taxation
Stakeholders	Those that feel they have a stake in the issue - either because they may be affected by any decision or be able to affect that decision. Stakeholders may be individuals or organisational representatives (Involve 2005)
Statutory Authority	An organisation that is required by law to provide public services and receives central or local government funding, for example health authorities and local authorities
Value for money	An assessment of whether the cost of delivering a project or programme is justified by the benefits it produced. The benefits are measured in terms of a key

	result such as the number of people securing employment. Comparison with previous projects or programmes allows the relative value for money to be established
Voluntary sector	The community sector differs from the voluntary sector, which is defined as: 'groups whose activities are carried out other than for profit but which are not public or local authorities. These organisations would normally be formally constituted and employ paid professional and administrative staff. They may or may not use volunteer help'



**Acknowledgements** *(to be inserted)*

**Contacts** *(to be inserted)*

