

Putting the Public First through Performance Management

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1. Introduction

This briefing looks at how to ensure a user and citizen focus to performance management. It is not a comprehensive guide to either performance management or public involvement (various such guides are listed in the bibliography). Instead it focuses on the relationship between the two.

2. What is the problem?

The evidence suggests that both performance management and public involvement do make a positive difference and that both have been improving in recent years. CPA results suggest that good performance management is correlated with better services. Public involvement can improve services but also has other, more intangible benefits in terms of involvement and democracy.

But is there really a problem with integrating public involvement with performance management? Doesn't it just boil down to making sure all the relevant consultation and market research is taken into account through the performance management process? Isn't it things like: making sure service managers use the latest citizen panel results when writing their service plans; using customer satisfaction as part of the feedback on performance, or engaging with customer focus groups when putting together improvement plans? It might take some time, effort and technical expertise to accomplish, but surely there is no mystery about it?

Actually it is not quite so simple. There are different dimensions to both performance management and public involvement which have to be appreciated, and when they are put together, the permutations of the ways in which the two interact is complex. A broad understanding of these issues is helpful in ensuring a bigger and richer picture is used and ensuring that performance management is driven by the public. It is that understanding that this briefing aims to provide.

Some of the problems are:

- Having a sufficient understanding of both performance management and public involvement to know where the links should be made (for instance, it's not just a matter of feeding consultation into service planning; greater citizen control means that part of the planning function is done by local people themselves). This guide aims to address this by providing an outline of each and how they link up.
- Managing the complexity of information – ensuring all relevant consultation and market intelligence is taken into account.
- Ensuring there is sufficient commitment to public involvement and to performance management for people to have the incentive and motivation to ensure the two are integrated.

There is evidence that performance management makes a difference. From the first round of CPA, there is a correlation between scores on performance management and scores on service performance. This coincides with other academic research (e.g. Bloom et al 2005).

The first round of CPA results showed that many authorities were struggling with performance management, with 64% of all councils scoring 1 or 2 out of 4 for the performance management element of corporate assessments. However, since then a lot of attention has been focussed on improving performance management, and the anecdotal evidence is that this appears to be bearing fruit.

Local authorities have been improving their efforts to involve the public for 15, 20 years or more, and the evidence suggests good progress is being made (e.g. Lowndes et al, 1998, ODPM 2002, Leach et al 2005). According to the latest research "... *there has been a steady increase in the supply of participation opportunities since 1997. There has also been an increasing use of innovative and more deliberative participation methods.*" However, "*members of the public believe that consultation is increasing but they are not always convinced that authorities are taking their views seriously ... The general public have concerns, too, about the lack of feedback following participation exercises.*" (Leach et al, 2005). Although the local government modernisation agenda helped the push towards greater public participation, it was clearly a movement which was happening anyway.

So progress is being made with both performance management and public involvement, but there is more to do. A concern which was raised through the PMMI research, however, was that they were to some extent running in parallel, and more needed to be done, to ensure a user and citizen focus throughout performance management. That is what this briefing note covers.

3. What does success look like

It is easier to get an idea of how public involvement should feed into performance management by considering how it looks in practice. This can be illustrated through two scenarios.

Authority A

“We’re not bad at performance management. We have service plans, monitor PIs, report the results in our annual performance plan. We could improve – like better suites of PIs, spreading good practice uniformly through the authority, taking action on poor performance. Same with consultation – we’re not bad, but we could do better. We’ve got a citizens’ panel, services do their own surveys and we consulted on the budget last year. We could do better by spreading good practice across the authority, cutting down on duplication and making sure we make use of the results of consultation better.

So is our performance management driven by a user and citizen focus? Not exactly driven, but it does feed in there somewhere. We expect service managers to take account of user views when they’re writing their business plans. And we’re all familiar with the citizen’s panel results, so they get taken into account at the corporate level.

To be honest, though, I’m not sure what more we can do. I mean, I’m all for it. But there are a few problems. Like:

- *Our guidance says service managers should take account of user views, but do they? We can’t police them the whole time, nor would we want to.*
- *Resources are tight, we haven’t the time or money to be doing surveys every 5 minutes.*
- *Does the public really have the knowledge to input into, say, our targets for environmental health?*
- *Do they really care? For most of the public, a lot of the services, like social care just aren’t relevant.*
- *Does it make sense to use customer satisfaction as a performance indicator for people we are regulating? (‘How satisfied were you with our attempts to reclaim unpaid council tax?’)*
- *We can’t get our elected members interested in performance management and they don’t really understand survey results – what matters to them is what their constituents are telling them.*

I don’t mean to sound like a whinger, but these are the sort of things our people say to me. And I’ve got to say, I can see their point to some extent.”

Authority B

"We're not bad at performance management or public involvement, and I think we do pretty well in getting user and citizen input, but there's still so much more we need to do.

We've been 'doing consultation' for well over ten years now, and it's pretty well established into our thinking and procedures. We came to performance management a bit later, but in the last three or four years we've gone from 'going through the motions' to really meaning it and using it as a powerful tool to produce results. We did go through a period when the two ran rather independently of each other, but we spent some time addressing that and the two are now tightly integrated.

All service managers regularly involve their customers and stakeholders through a variety of means appropriate to their service area. That includes consultation, but many also climb higher up the 'ladder of participation' in providing choice, in working in partnership with customers and stakeholders to manage and improve the service, and in some cases in devolving control altogether. That means that sometimes there's no need to feed the public's views into the performance management system, because they're already taken into account through the choices they make, or because they are managing the services themselves.

Different service areas appreciate that they need to get feedback in different ways depending on the nature of the service, the nature of the stakeholder and how it fits into performance management. For instance, development control get feedback from their clients, the people they deal with day to day, but they also hear from people in their role as citizens more generally. For the latter, they use deliberative techniques, where they bring together a representative panel of people, talk through the issues, present experts from differing points of view, and let the panel make up their own mind about what they want to see happening and how they think the service is going.

Quite often these exercises are timed to feed into relevant stages of the corporate PM cycle. For instance questions to our citizens' panel regularly ask some broader questions about objectives in a timescale that fits with our business planning. Equally we ask them to look back over the last year, at the end of March and ask questions about satisfaction with individual services and the Council as a whole.

We also try to summarise our understanding about customer and citizen views once a year. There is a written summary (with links to all the detailed sources of evidence) but more important is a roundtable when officers, members, outside groups and individual members of the public discuss the big picture. This does not try to come to a single 'community view' but looks at the rich pattern of knowledge, opinions and wishes across the borough. This then feeds into the council's annual 'state of the nation' debate and a parallel LSP discussion.

We also co-ordinate our consultation across the council and with partners much better than we used to. We have a consultation register, as well as keeping results on a big database, so we don't get the mavericks going off on their own any more. If we're doing work with any particular group like businesses, the voluntary sector or some hard to reach group, we make sure we deal with issues relevant to any part of the council. Those results often feed directly into planning or improving a particular service (which is part of 'performance management' even if outside the business planning process), but the information is also explicitly examined and used at all stages of the performance management cycle at both service / departmental and corporate levels.

So that's it really. Nothing particularly magical – just lots of bits which are done well and feed into each other. It helps that the Chief Exec and Senior Members regard both public involvement and good performance management as critical to our success. And people generally throughout the authority support the principles and the way it is implemented.”

So what has Authority B got that A hasn't? There are six key features:

1. It has a much better sense of the differences between its various stakeholders (users, citizens, others) and how to engage with them most effectively.
2. It does not just operate top-down consultation but recognises that customers can often make their own judgements and choices about service delivery. There is a good understanding of the implications for performance management when services are devolved and citizens empowered.
3. It has set up systems and processes that allow it to co-ordinate its activities and integrate its consultation and PM work efficiently and effectively.
4. Those specialising in working in PM and public involvement each understand the other and the underlying complexities.
5. It has support and leadership from senior managers and members.
6. It has, over time, developed a culture which values and is committed to performance, to public involvement and using performance management as a tool and which is proven to work.

As these examples illustrate, the benefits of public focussed performance management are:

- A better understanding of how people feel, think and behave informs the efforts to improve performance
- There is improved performance which better meets the needs and wants of local people
- Local people feel involved.

4. A Framework for integrating Public Involvement and Performance management

We need to start by setting out the meaning and component parts of both 'performance management' and 'public involvement'.

4.1 Performance Management

The PMMI project has defined performance management as:

Taking action in response to actual performance to make outcomes for users and citizens better than they would otherwise be.

This performance might be at an individual, team, service, corporate or community level. It takes place over different timescales – daily, monthly, annually and longer. It may be part of a formal process or part of every day management.

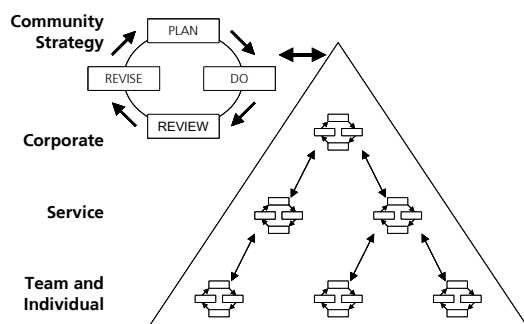
It involves a **plan-do-review-revise cycle**. The stages of this cycle will look and feel different depending where you are in an organisation and over what timescale you are looking at.

PLAN: understanding current performance, prioritising what needs to be done and identifying actions that need to be taken and planning for improvement.

DO: Ensuring that the proper systems and processes are in place to support improvement, taking action and managing risk. Helping people achieve better performance.

REVIEW: Understanding the impact of your actions, reviewing performance, speaking to users and stakeholders about their experience of performance.

REVISE: Using the lessons learned from the previous stage of the cycle to change what you do to ensure that the next time through is more efficient and effective.



(Further information on performance management is available from the PMMI site at www.idea.gov.uk/performance.)

4.2 Public Involvement

There are two groups of reasons for public involvement:

1. To improve services by making them more relevant, efficient and effective and improving outcomes more generally
2. It is part of the democratic process, giving people a right to more control over their own lives.

Market research is a well-established and sophisticated field, especially in the private sector, with a range of techniques, approaches to market segmentation and means of analysis and application of results. These are generally equally relevant to the public sector. However, public involvement in the public sector also has other facets which need to be taken into account.

Public involvement comes in all shapes and sizes but it is useful to distinguish between:

- *Market research – finding out about people, including what they think and want through surveys, focus groups etc.;*
- *Consultation – allowing for two-way communications, or dialogue with the public;*
- *Participation – Providing for involvement in decision making by the public. Participation allows the public to set the agenda. Participation generally requires a longer-term partnership.*

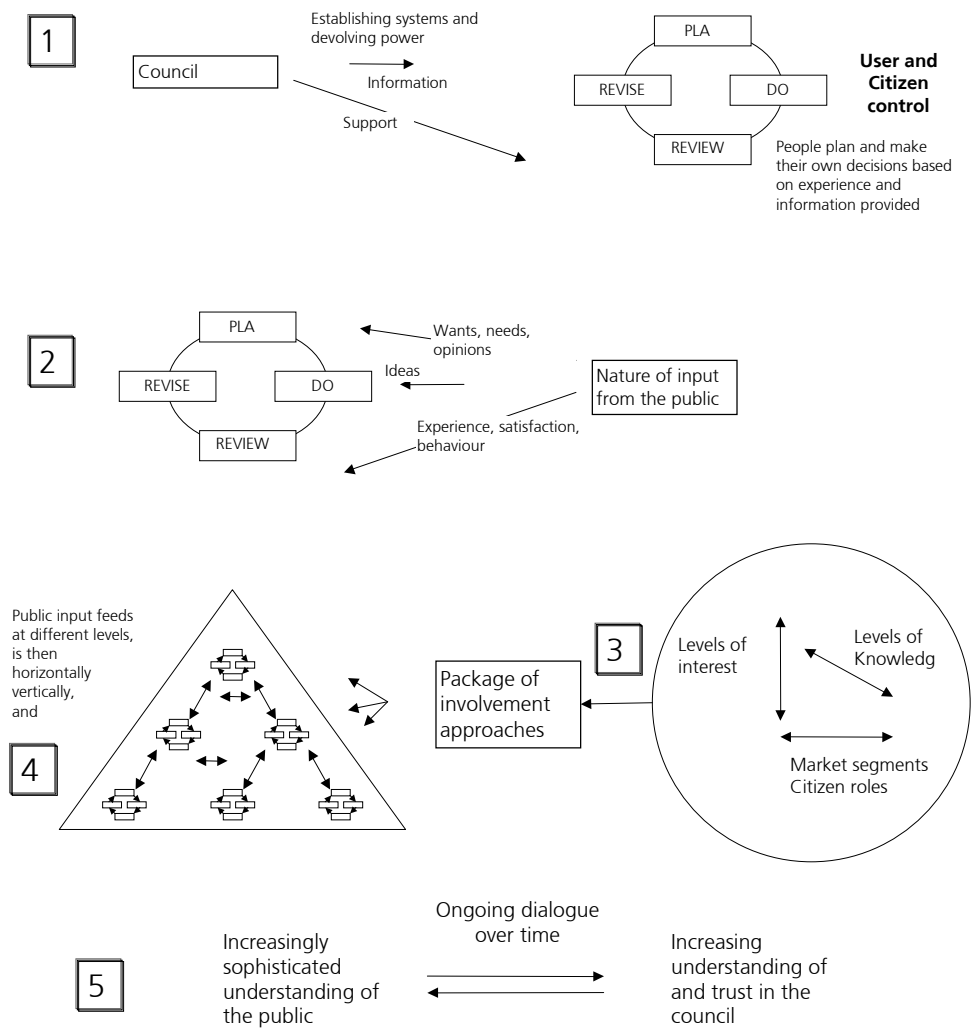
See Section 5.1 for a fuller categorisation of public involvement.

Local government does not just deal with the public as individual recipients of services (for which they pay). It is also regulating and taking a broader community interest role. It therefore needs to involve people in their roles as customers, clients, beneficiaries, citizens and other stakeholders. See Section 5.3 for more detail.

4.3 The Relationship between Performance Management and Public Involvement

Some of the complexity of the relationship between performance management and public involvement is illustrated in the diagram below. All of the elements of this picture are covered in more detail in the sections which follow.

The diagram first shows that it is not just a question of a user and citizen focus informing the council's performance management. The more that power and control are devolved to users and citizens, the more they will be directly responsible for many aspects of performance management.



Secondly it shows the many different sorts of input which can flow from the public to different stages of the performance management cycle, e.g. wants and needs for planning, satisfaction for review.

Thirdly, it shows the range of issues to be taken into account when selecting appropriate forms of public involvement, and how lack of time, interest and knowledge amongst the public needn't be an impediment to widespread public involvement.

The fourth point to emerge from the diagram is the difficult necessity of bringing together all the different sources of information about the public to build a rich picture, and ensuring that this is made available throughout the organisation (and with partners) at the right time and in the right place.

Fifthly, this should be an ongoing process which builds up over time. The council and its partners become better at understanding the public and the

public becomes better at understanding the council, with both sides gradually investing more trust in the other.

5. Understanding public involvement and how it feeds into performance management

The framework described above is now explored in more detail.

5.1 Devolving control and empowering citizens

'Double devolution' is encouraging the move of power from councils to local people. The Government "believe that there is scope to enhance the role of neighbourhoods, so that people in their communities are empowered to help shape decisions about the way services are designed and delivered to them."¹ This builds on the work local authorities have been doing over many years on area panels, neighbourhood involvement and empowering customers through such things as direct payments (giving money in place of social care services to let people make their own decisions on how their care is delivered) and initiatives to increase tenant participation and control.

The significance of this is that rather than customer consultation feeding into performance management by the authority, performance management is (to some extent) devolved together with the power and control. 'Reviewing' services and 'revising' what is done about them may happen implicitly in the choices that customers make, or it may be devolved to other bodies such as neighbourhood forums or tenant's committees.

A useful way of thinking about this is as a spectrum based on the extent of the public's involvement and control. (There are a number of versions of this, mainly based on Sherry Arnstein's seminal 'ladder of participation' (see Appendix 1).

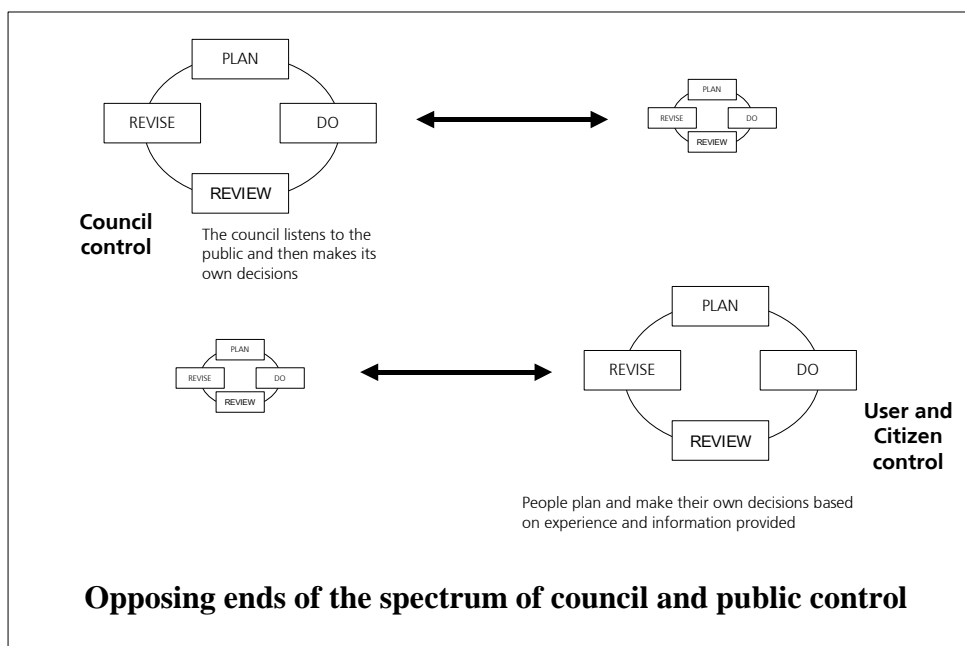
- **User and citizen control** – putting the power, control and responsibility in the hands of people themselves.
- **Co-production** – a recognition of the joint roles of public and council in producing an output. This could be anything from the public's duty to stop dropping litter alongside the council's duty to clear it up, to councils providing support to people to live independently in their own homes.
- **Delegated control** – the formal power (and responsibility) remains with the authority, but immediate control is handed over to the user or citizen. A council might keep ownership and formally responsibility for a community building, but hand over day to day control to a management committee. Or a council might provide funding to someone to purchase their own care.
- **Choice** – rather than asking what people want and then giving it to them, this hands over the decision to the individual
- **Consultation** – giving people an opportunity to give their views. A more open process than market research.
- **Market research** – the standard tools used by the private sector such as market research, focus groups etc.

¹ Empowerment and the Deal for Devolution: Speech by Rt Hon David Miliband MP Minister of Communities and Local Government, ODPM, February 2006

- **Customer intelligence** – this is making use of information which is routinely collected from users and citizens, e.g. electoral registration and council tax information, usage of libraries and leisure centres, etc.
- **Informing** – at the least, this is telling people what is being done to them. However, it can also support other forms of involvement such as feeding back the results of research, or providing useful information to help people manage their own lives

These are points on a continuum rather than absolute categories. Customer intelligence blends into market research which itself blends into consultation. Consultation could vary from publishing a virtually final draft document on which comments are invited, to bringing groups together for open, ‘blue skies’ thinking.

The significance for performance management is that the degree of citizen control may vary between different service areas and between different stages of the plan-do-review-revise cycle as illustrated in the diagram.



Generally the decision on where to be on this spectrum will be a long term one (e.g. delegating to a neighbourhood committee), rather than something which varies frequently, so this can be regarded as an early decision which sets the context or framework for other aspects of public involvement in performance management.

The choice will generally not be about being at a single point on the continuum. Even with a considerable element of ‘co-production’ there may still be a need for informing and consulting. For instance, people given money to purchase their own care will still need information to help them make the choice. There may also need to be consultation and user research to find ways of improving how

the system works. The council will also still need to monitor to ensure that needs are being met. So while there will still generally be a council role in performance management it will tend to be at a higher level – concentrating more on outcomes – and over a longer time cycle.

The problems of dealing performance managing in situations of devolved power and control, mirror the more general problems of performance management in a world of fragmented service delivery. Increasingly, local government services are contracted out or delivered in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors and outcomes can only be achieved by working with partner agencies in the public and other sectors. How can local authorities retain an oversight for the services for which they remain responsible, and ensure that they are able to work?

While local authorities need to have confidence that functions for which they retain responsibility are being delivered effectively, they also need to be prepared to 'let go', and not attempt to micro-manage from a distance. Monitoring should be much more about outcomes than process.

In practice:

We would welcome any examples which illustrate the points in this section, such as issues of performance management related to direct payment, individualised budgets or neighbourhood forums.

Please send them to adrian.barker@idea.gov.uk

More information:

See resources on 'choice' on IDeA Knowledge: www.idea.gov.uk/choice

5.2 User input (wants, needs, knowledge, behaviour etc.)

Customer and citizen input is not just about what people want or how satisfied they are. There are various different sorts of thing to find out, or inputs we might expect, from the public.

These different sorts of information will be broadly relevant to different stages of the plan-do-review-revise cycle, as illustrated in this diagram. This is a simplification, of course, but it may be helpful for making best use of consultation opportunities.

PLAN

- **Wants** - In an ideal world what would people like, at what cost? (In practice care is needed in how this is asked to avoid unrealistically raising expectations).
- **Needs** - Are there things which would be good for people? Who decides?
- **Attitudes** - People's current attitudes may not be well informed, but if that's what they think, that is the reality you have to deal with. Do you need to enter into a dialogue with them?

DO

- **Knowledge** - What do they know about the service? How informed are their opinions? What do we have to tell them?
- **Behaviour** - How and when do they access the service, and what would they prefer? Would later opening help? Is transport an issue?

REVIEW

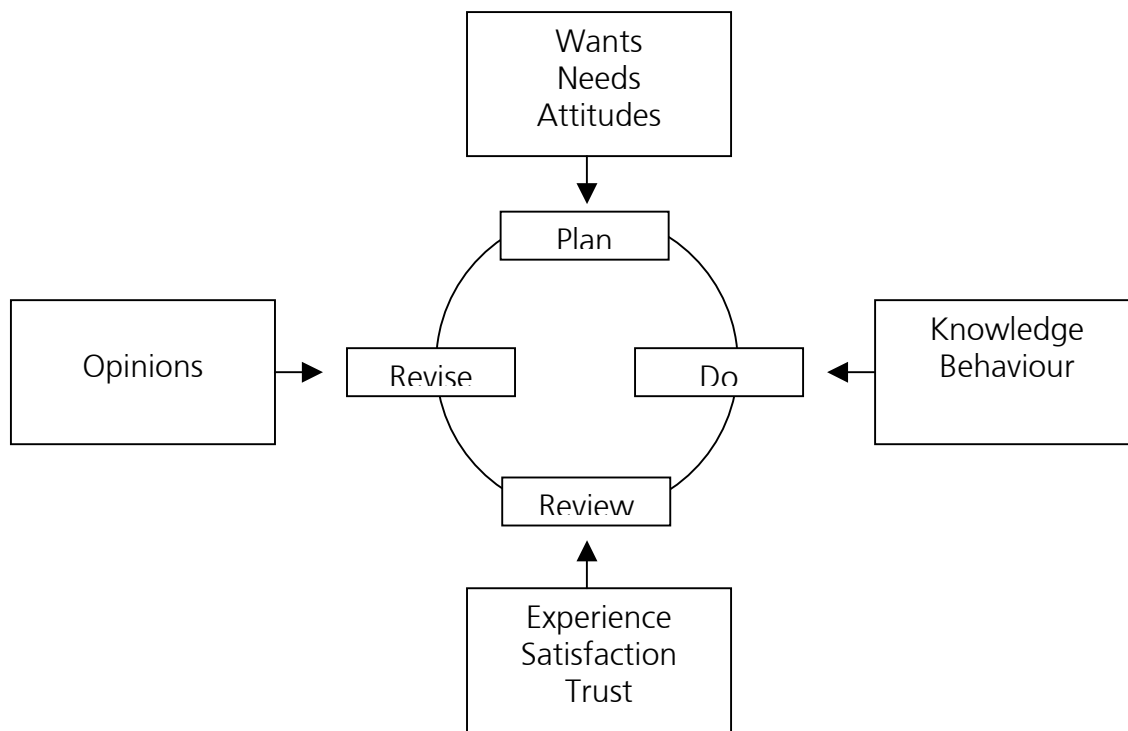
- **Experience** – What is their experience of using the service? How much have they used it? Is their experience typical?
- **Satisfaction** - Do they like what they're getting? How is their satisfaction affected by their expectations?
- **Trust** - Trust that the council will deliver, and that they will tell the truth. According to MORI, "there is no one universal definition of trust. In one sense trust is about honesty and 'telling the truth', but in the context of public services it can also be about wider considerations around service delivery." (<http://www.mori.com/pubinfo/rd/trust.shtml>)

REVISE

- **Considered and informed opinions** – Existing opinions are important, even if poorly informed, but more useful are well informed and properly considered opinions.

(Source: Involving the Public, IDeA, 1999)

Of course, these various inputs (wishes, needs etc.) do not necessarily fit directly and unproblematically into the performance management process. There will often be differences of view and conflicting interests which somehow have to be balanced and managed. Depending on the scale and nature of the issue, there are a range of ways of dealing with this, including seeking a compromise solution (where neither side gets everything it wants), working with stakeholders to develop new 'win-win' approaches, undertaking mediation or consensus building (often with trained facilitators). A key role for members is in helping manage such conflicts (see section 5.8).



In practice:

The LGA / IDeA Reputation Project aims to address the problem of how the public views local government. MORI research has identified 12 core actions that, when delivered well, are proven to have a marked and positive impact on a councils reputation. So the Reputation campaign is about councils working together to deliver these core actions - supported by the LGA and IDeA. The core actions fit into two broad categories: cleaner, safer, greener and communications.

For more information see:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/ProjectReputations.asp?section=59&ccat=965>

“Ipswich Borough Council has set up a team to blitz each ward in turn, tackling small repairs and improvements to make a real difference to every street in the borough. ...

Five community coordinators were appointed to organise tackling each ward street by street by identifying community priorities, preparing action plans, building capacity and developing civic pride within the community.

One by one, each ward was targeted in a phased approach: firstly, a street-by-street audit was carried out by newly-appointed Liveability Project Officers to identify issues that needed to be dealt with, such as mending road signs and paving, cutting back shrubs and de-cluttering the highway by removing redundant signs, or dealing with fly tipping. The officers talked to residents, voluntary and other community groups, and businesses, and leaflets were delivered to every home encouraging residents to report problems or suggest minor improvements. They also took the opportunity to encourage anybody with untidy land adjacent to the street to tidy it up. ...

One of the difficulties of the project has been maintaining public interest. The majority of the public have been enthusiastic, but some have adopted a fatalistic attitude that: "they'll only graffiti the wall again". The community coordinators are working hard to combat this with generally positive results. One key lesson is that the best way to get people on side is to publicise what is happening and how it is making a difference, rather than try to push people into getting involved. Transparency has also been important, in terms of explaining why some things can't be done and what the council is and is not responsible for." From IDeA Knowledge, <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=764893>

Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive

"GMPTTE uses conflict resolution techniques where conflicting or competing community demands exist; such as the issue of bicycles on trams – which is supported by cyclists but of great concern to wheelchair users.

GMPTTE convened a joint session for the groups involving separate workshops; presentations from each group to the other; then a mixed workshop after a lunch break. This approach led to each group gaining a better understanding of the other's perspective, resulted in some resolution and produced a number of recommendations for the Metrolink Phase 3 project."

Source: "Over to You!", Passenger Transport Executive Group, 2006.

More information:

For more information on trust, see (<http://www.mori.com/pubinfo/rd/trust.shtml>) and Diversity, trust and community participation in England, Home Office, 2005 (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/r253.pdf>)

ODPM, *Participatory Planning for Sustainable Communities*, looks at how third party mediation can be used to resolve conflicts and objections to a plan. See <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143436>

5.3 'Customer satisfaction' as a measure for performance management

There is currently renewed interest in using satisfaction as a measure of progress in local government improvement. Surveys of user satisfaction for all authorities were introduced with the Best Value Performance Indicators as a triennial survey, starting in 2000/01.

John Hutton, then a Cabinet Office minister, said in August 2005: *"I can announce today that the Cabinet Office is exploring the possibility of developing a new standard measurement system that can identify, and then track, how satisfied customers are with the public services they get."*²

But how reliable and useful is 'customer satisfaction' as a measure of performance, and how can it be used in practice alongside other measures?

It is important to assess the satisfaction of the public (in their various roles, including as customers, citizens etc.). However, this is not the only measure of whether council activities are meeting people's wants and needs. Account has to be taken of levels of knowledge and expectations. It is therefore important that qualitative information is used to help explain and understand particular results of customer satisfaction.

MORI, in work for the LGA, have extensively researched aspects of customer satisfaction.

There are a number of important factors to take into account when using 'customer satisfaction' as a performance measure:

- Most residents do not use most services directly
- Customer satisfaction depends a lot on expectations
- People's satisfaction with individual services is often quite different from overall satisfaction with the council (with people happier with the services they have received directly)
- People's overall satisfaction is strongly correlated with their overall impression of service delivery and value for money, which are strongly shaped by direct council communications and local press coverage (while there is a lack of correlation between levels of, or increases in, council tax and overall satisfaction).

The MORI report also shows that relative levels of deprivation and ethnic fractionalisation are strong predictors of satisfaction ratings for a local authority. Good customer care is very important, and "satisfaction ratings among those residents who have had direct contact with their authority are just as strongly influenced by the way the contact is handled as by the outcome of the contact." (LGA, 2004, p.5).

² Speech to the Social Market Foundation by John Hutton, the then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Cabinet Office minister, 24 August 2005.

According to a review for the LGA and IDeA:

“With regards to the measurement of local government performance, the current schemes in existence primarily consider higher and more centralised levels of government which as a generalisation may be more characterised by transactional relationships. Therefore, care must be taking in applying methods of measurement indiscriminately, where they may be more suited to transactions and shorter term relationships.

“In addition, there may be **conflict in measuring customer satisfaction, and measuring how well an organisation is performing**. This is compatible for some public services, but not others, including those without defined end users. Therefore in some cases, what is being measured is the customer interaction with a public service, rather than how well the organisation is performing as measured through customer satisfaction.”

(Measuring Satisfaction – A Review of Approaches, by FreshMinds Ltd for LGA and IDeA, p.6)

All of this means that care is needed in using customer satisfaction as a measure in performance management. This is not to decry customer satisfaction, just that it should be used carefully and should not be relied on as a coherent, reliable measure of performance on its own. For instance, services involved in regulating businesses will want to provide excellent customer service to immediate clients, and will measure and respond to different aspects of customer satisfaction even though the purpose of the service is to protect the public, not to provide satisfaction to those regulated.

In practice:

We would welcome any examples which illustrate the points in this section.

Please send them to adrian.barker@idea.gov.uk

More information:

“What drives public satisfaction with local government?”, LGA, 2004 (see <http://www.lga.gov.uk/Publication.asp?lsection=59&id=SXEB2A-A7829357&ccat=965> for more information)

Measuring Satisfaction – A Review of Approaches, by FreshMinds Ltd for LGA and IDeA, (28 March 2006)
<http://www.lga.gov.uk/Briefing.asp?lsection=59&id=SXC561-A78395F7&ccat=1145>

The BVPI User Satisfaction Survey website for registered users is at <http://survey.bvpi.gov.uk/>

5.4 The public's knowledge of local government

Most members of the public have little knowledge about local government. So how useful is public input to planning and assessing service delivery if most know little about the services, who provides them, or even that they exist at all?

Although most of the public know little about local government, they know more about their lives, and usually their area, than officials, so it should never be forgotten that expertise is not all one way.

However, on the issues on which feedback is sought, the public will usually not have the same level of knowledge as officials. However, people's existing perceptions, even if ill-informed, are important and have to be understood and dealt with. That is the basis on which they are currently behaving and judging the council. Knowledge of these perceptions may help inform communications activities. When implementing proposals from the 'revise' stage of performance management, a knowledge of what people actually think will be important for knowing how they will react immediately, whatever their views in the long term. For instance, experience from elsewhere may suggest the public will prefer a new road layout, but if current perceptions are sufficiently antagonistic it may produce enough protest to prevent the proposals being implemented.

However, if current perceptions are inaccurate, then they will probably not be a good basis on which to plan for the future, so we also need to know how they would think and what they would prefer if they were fully informed. This can be done by communicating with those who are already well informed, or through 'deliberative' techniques. These involve a group of people being given, or acquiring relevant information, and then giving their opinion.

There is a link between customer types (see section 5.5) and how much they know. Where people are 'customers', the direct recipients of services, they are likely to be very knowledgeable about the service they get (though not necessarily what goes on behind the scenes). However, for something like economic regeneration, while there may be a general social benefit from the activity, most people probably have little awareness of what is being done on their behalf.

Consultation techniques can be classified by whether they are accessing the 'naïve' view, the knowledgeable view or whether they help provide the information (see Appendix 2)

In practice:

Transport for London

Transport for London conducted consultation on a major tramway between Shepherd's Bush and Uxbridge Town Centre. This was a controversial scheme,

with a major campaign against the proposal. By the end of October 2004, over 17,000 had responded to the consultation, with respondents opposing the scheme by two to one. Market research of a representative sample, however, supported it by three to one.

So in this case, it could be argued, the 'real' view of the community was in favour of the scheme, but the opposition to it was also 'real' and still needed to be addressed.

In another consultation, on whether the London Tube should run one hour later in the evening and one hour later in the mornings on weekends, a consultation in 2005 produced more than 54,000 responses (many of them on-line). In this case, market research with a representative sample mirrored the consultation results.

Source: "*Over to You!*", Passenger Transport Executive Group, 2006.

Harrow

Around 300 Harrow residents came together on a Sunday afternoon in October 2005 to discuss priorities for council spending. The 'Harrow Open Budget' meeting was called by the council but organised by the independent 'Power enquiry'. The members of this assembly sat at tables of 10 discussing issues related to council services, spending and council tax before feeding in their views by computer via special key-pads. A panel of 30 was selected from the original 300 to put the views of the assembly to the council and hold the authority to account. One 16 year old participant said,

"I had no expectations before I came – in fact I thought it might be boring! But it's actually been really interesting to hear what other people feel about these issues and to put my view across."

(From 'Harrow People', December 2005,
<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/ccm/content/filestorage-downloads/news-and-events/publications/harrow-people-december-2005.en>)

More information:

For lists of consultation techniques see:

Britain Speaks, Opinion Leader Research, July 2005 –

<http://www.opinionleader.co.uk/news.php?view=summary&newsID=6>

and

People and Participation: how to put citizens at the heart of decision-making, Involve, 2005

<http://www.involving.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.viewSection&intSectionID=400>

5.5 Beyond 'customers' – the different roles of the public

Traditional market research has long distinguished between different target audiences with market segmentation by age, gender, lifestyle and so on. However, in the public sector, we need to be able to distinguish between many different roles the public may play in their relationship with the council, such as user, non-user, beneficiary, council tax payer, resident or citizen (see Appendix 3 for a full list).

A particularly important distinction is between those who use services directly (e.g. leisure centre users) and those who benefit from services without direct involvement (e.g. benefiting from a more pleasant and safer environment as a result of environmental health, trading standards and planning work, without being aware of the work done by those services). This distinction is critical for consultation, because it is hard to get an informed view from people about services which they know little or nothing about. It can also mean it is difficult to know who the 'customer' is. The immediate 'client' of a service may not be the person the service is designed to help.

The distinction between other types of customers and stakeholders is discussed further in Appendix 3.

It can be useful, then, to distinguish between:

- Customers
- Regulated against
- Beneficiaries
- Citizens
- Council tax payers
- Stakeholders
- Those unable to speak for themselves such future generations

Different ways of engaging with these various groups will be needed to have a meaningful input into performance management. For instance, user panels or exit surveys can be used to get the views of direct users of services. Representative bodies of businesses regulated against could be used when planning service improvements relevant to them. Deliberative techniques using representative samples of all residents could be used to ascertain the 'informed citizen' view of plans for the area. And a panel of enquiry could be used as a proxy for those unable to speak for themselves, such as the impact of current planning and environmental policies on future generations.

A fuller list of the different ways in which people in their different roles can be reached at the various stages of the performance management cycle are given in Appendix 4.

In practice:

“One of our committees furthered their understanding of art development work by actually getting up early on a Saturday morning and fully participating (among them 70 and 80 year olds) in a Saturday morning workshop for disaffected young people. As a result, they made a recommendation that art development might be considered as a means of consulting with hard-to-reach young people.

We've also held two 'Question Time' type meetings during reviews of tourism and cycling with a panel of experts (both internal and external) which on each occasion attracted an active audience of around 20 (not bad for this part of the world).

Finally, one of the committees spent several months going out with clipboards around the Borough reporting back on everything from redundant CCTV poles and fly-tipping, to chewing gum and dog bins, which resulted in the development of a Clean and Green team and the purchase of gum removal machines.

Not sure whether any of this is innovative, but it sure beats the committee room and helped publicise scrutiny.”

From Centre for Public Scrutiny, discussion forum (www.cfps.org.uk)

For guidance on making use of customer data, see *Putting the Customer First: Lessons from business*, RSe consulting for LGA, February 2006 (free from <http://www.lga.gov.uk/Briefing.asp?lsection=59&id=SXA387-A78383B0&ccat=1145>)

More information:

See Appendix 3 for a full list of customer types.

See Appendix 4 for ways of reaching different customer types.

5.6 Dealing with public lack of interest

Some would argue that most people really aren't interested in what the council does, so it's a waste of time trying to feed public views into all stages of performance management. However this approach can be self-defeating and miss the opportunities to develop and maximise what interest there is.

Different people have different levels of interest and willingness to get involved with the council. It also varies over time and from case to case. People tend to be more willing to be involved if their personal interests are directly affected. Research suggests that a large majority, 67%, want to have a say in how the country is run, and like the idea of more direct methods of participation, but

“they are often unwilling to put this in practice”. Also “people from lower social economic groups are least likely to get involved.” On the other hand, a relatively large 17% say they do not want to have a say in how the country is run (Third Annual Audit of Political Engagement, Electoral Commission and Hansard Society, 2006).

The key, then is to involve people at the times, in the ways and to the depth which suit them best. Sometimes this will be initiated by the council, and sometimes by the citizen.

‘Consultation fatigue’ is an issue if the same groups are approached repeatedly. However, it should usually be possible to find a wider range of people to approach, so this shouldn’t be an issue. If representative samples are used, as part of market research, a good understanding of the whole population can be found without bothering the same people time and again.

In practice:

Lewes Council

If people have a limited amount of interest in local government and are not prepared to spend much time on it, then opportunities to be engaged must be as simple as possible. Lewes Council, one of the PMMI action research authorities, addressed this in relation to obtaining feedback and keeping the public informed:

We have begun to develop better systems of customer involvement in performance management. The Council uses a range of methods to communicate with service users about performance and to take account of their views, such as user groups, feedback forms, surveys and complaints. The main source of performance information for the general public is through the Council’s website. There has in the past been limited information about the Council’s performance on the website, primarily sitting within the annual Council Plan (BVPP), although service plans are also published on our website. We have recently made quarterly Best Value Performance Indicator information available online, enabling access by the public and other stakeholders. This is currently being developed to include key local PIs.

An internal review of complaints handling showed that the Council-wide system of recording and monitoring complaints required improvement. A more simplified approach has recently been adopted which places reliance on departments to record and respond to complaints in the first instance and to be able to demonstrate how they are using complaints and other customer information. Information is incorporated into service plans and exchanged through the Performance Management Group. The aim is to focus on the positive contribution that complaints can make to service improvement.

North Lincolnshire Council

"Three on-line role-playing games have been developed to help people understand the work of an elected councillor.

North Lincolnshire Council worked in partnership with games developer, Delib, to produce three web games for young people to help them understand better the work of their local council.

***Captain Campaign** portrays issues that affect people at a local, regional or national level and the player has to take actions to gain popularity in order to win their campaign. ...*

***Councillor Quest II** follows a day in the life of a councillor. ...*

***Money Manager** - also available to play on some mobile phones - will look at the difficult decisions councils have to make with limited resources. ...*

These games demystify council processes for people, especially the young, in an enjoyable way. Children can play them and become involved without feeling like they are undergoing a learning process. By understanding the reasons for council processes participants can evaluate the effectiveness of its council and make a more informed choice at election time."

From local e-democracy national project - <http://www.e-democracy.gov.uk/pilots/edemgames2.htm>

The games are available from www.demgames.org

See also www.active-citizen.org.uk

Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive

"GMPTE's innovative education web site - <http://www.dingding.org.uk> - is a free, non-commercial educational tool for children from key stages one to three, and teachers. The web site uses the concepts of public transport and social interaction to explore a diverse range of subject areas including geography, citizenship and art and design. ...

"The site was funded by the Arts Council, local transport operators, the Department for Transport and Neighbourhood Renewal.

"DingDing! Went on to win the Chartered Institute for Logistics & Transport award for innovation; the Integrate award for innovation; the Big Chip award for best e-learning site; and was highly commended in the Big Chip award for best public sector web site."

Source: "Over to You!", Passenger Transport Executive Group, 2006.

Democs

“Democs (deliberative meeting of citizens) is part card game, part policy-making tool that enables small groups of people to engage with complex public policy issues.

It helps people find out about a topic, express their views, seek common ground with the other participants, and state their preferred policy position from a given choice of four. They can also add their own policy positions.”

<http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/democs.aspx>

“The Greater London Authority (GLA) used Democs as part of the public consultation on ‘City Soundings’, the Mayor’s ambient noise strategy. The Mayor invited a group of 40 Londoners, with a particular interest in noise issues, to City hall to play the game. ... the GLA concluded that it was an innovative way of enabling citizens to discuss complex policy issues. They found that it combined some of the strengths of a focus group (deliberative and in-depth discussion) with the accessibility and intuitive strength of a game-playing approach.”

Source IDeA Knowledge Feature (no longer on site)

More information:

See Appendix 5 for a more information.

5.7 Hard to reach groups

There are some groups of people whose views and experiences it is hard to feed into performance management because they are difficult to reach, either because it is hard to identify and find them, or because they are unwilling to be involved with the council. This could include some sections of young people, ethnic minorities, travellers, etc.

Hard to reach groups and individuals are so for a variety of reasons including that they sometimes don’t want to be helped, don’t know how to be helped or can’t access the services they want to, e.g. due various communication or access barriers such as language, mobility or disability.

Two things, in recent years, seem to have helped in getting to hard to reach groups. Firstly greater research and understanding, to find what the obstacles are, what the best means of communications are, etc. Secondly, it has been found helpful to recruit members of the target group to be involved in undertaking the research. This has worked with ethnic minority groups (such as Bangladeshi women), young people, old people, and others.

It is not just about getting hold of these people though. Of course it is imperative that people's needs are addressed properly but authorities also need to keep track of related activity, the time it takes, the effective use of resources and be able to prove the impact that such services have to effectively plan and justify future activity. It's also therefore about collecting information, qualitative and quantitative, to inform, monitor and manage such activity.

In practice:

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

It is not always a question of just getting to 'hard to reach' groups, but also of influencing them.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) has introduced the role of Older Persons Advocate. The majority of the advocates are older people themselves who came from a variety of backgrounds including Health, Care Homes and the Benefits agency.

They focus their attention on reaching and influencing older people by attending relevant Community activities, liaising with partner agencies, PCTs (Primary Care Trusts), Department of Work and Pensions and Social Services. An advocate visits a hospital rehabilitation ward for older people to talk to patients awaiting discharge and many advocates visit day clinics which are appropriate places to meet older vulnerable and socially excluded members of the community.

Such activities generate referrals for Home Fire Safety Checks that are normally performed by firefighters. The checks include the provision of smoke alarms and other equipment together with spreading an awareness of fire safety matters and the other services offered by MFRS. The advocates also give talks directly to groups attended by older people who often refer their friends and neighbours to the services available for older people.

The team of advocates use their individual skills and experience to monitor current issues affecting communities. They belong to many local and national groups and attend many events from simple fetes to forums and local/national conferences. The advocate team greatly assist Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service not only to reach but also influence older people, who are among the most vulnerable in the community.

Stroud District Council

The key is often getting out there and not only finding the hard to reach groups but engaging with them promptly and appropriately. Stroud District Council has at present, seven Neighbourhood Wardens where part of their community role is to locate and visit older and other vulnerable people in need of assistance on a daily basis. Acting as 'linkers', the Neighbourhood Wardens signpost the appropriate services to these vulnerable people so that their needs are

addressed. That can literally mean walking the streets and visiting where older people go or reside, such as sheltered housing schemes, supermarkets, post offices and through local community intelligence, or simply by assisting those who are visibly experiencing difficulties such as those carrying shopping, confused or distressed.

More information:

Save the Children, *diy guide to improving your community: getting children and young people involved*, 2006
(http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk_cache/scuk/cache/cmsattach/3189_DIY.pdf)

Carnegie Young People Initiative
<http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/cypi/publications>

Tower Hamlets, Beacon award winner case study on getting closer to communities: <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/aio/956638>

5.8 The role of elected members

Elected members have a key role in championing both performance management and public involvement, ensuring they are being done effectively and inputting at key points.

In a representative democracy, members are the conduit for the views of the public. In many cases this means taking soundings and drawing on a variety of sources of information. It may also mean deciding when a direct view from the public, for instance, through a referendum, is appropriate. In their representative capacity, they need information from market research and consultation to get a full and fair picture of what local people think. Since there is generally no single, community view, but rather conflicting interests and the wider social good to be taken into account, members have the democratic legitimacy to take a broader community view balancing the different interests, and ensuring minority interests are protected.

The main inputs into the performance management process come in setting the broad policy direction, and acting strategically in the review of performance and revision of approaches. They should ensure full public involvement into each of these stages.

In practice:

The experience of one of the PMMI's action research participants, South Tyneside, is informative. They had arrangements for quarterly performance reporting to both Executive and Scrutiny. They wanted to increase members' awareness and understanding, so ran some training sessions. The sessions went

down very well. They were innovative and interesting (for instance using a 'Who wants to be a millionaire' format). The Members loved it.

At the same time, they reviewed their performance monitoring reports to make them less technical and easier to understand.

However, even after all this, there was still not the level of engagement with the performance monitoring that they had been looking for. The message they took from this was that it is important for Members to be reassured that everything is going OK and that managers are taking the appropriate action. Beyond that, the key is for them to be more involved in performance improvement. They took this a stage further, by involving members in a parks and grounds maintenance pilot project which involved using user feedback to monitor contracts.

More information:

For the full South Tyneside case study and other information from the PMMI project, see www.idea.gov.uk/performance.

6. Performance managing public involvement

How can performance management be applied to the processes of consultation and participation themselves? The same principles, including the plan-do-review-revise cycle, apply as to any other service area. Much of this is considered in the many, existing guides on consultation, participation and engagement. A particularly difficult area, though is reviewing the effectiveness of such activities.

A framework for evaluating consultation is shown in Appendix 6. The ultimate aim is to know whether engaging the public is leading to beneficial outcomes. This may be in terms of the benefits of better services less the costs of public engagement, or the inherent value of active citizenship in its own right. Work has gone on in recent years on measuring the extent of public involvement (see the Library of Local Indicators <http://www.local-pi-library.gov.uk/library.shtml> for a set of relevant indicators). However, it is not always possible to make such assessments, and for management purposes it is often necessary to use process measures (which can be more easily controlled).

In practice:

We would welcome any examples which illustrate the points in this section.

Please send them to adrian.barker@idea.gov.uk

More information:

See Promoting Effective Citizenship and Community Empowerment, Ch 5, 'Measuring Success', Andrews et al, ODPM, February 2006, pp. 49-53.

A framework for evaluating consultation, IDeA Knowledge: <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=72663>

Library of Local Indicators <http://www.local-pi-library.gov.uk/library.shtml>

Cabinet Office, Interactive Guidance on Consultation, 'evaluating your consultation'
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation/consultation_guidance/evaluating_your_consultation/index.asp

The Practical Effects of Community Involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal: a Toolkit of Indicators, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit:
<http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/publications.asp?did=905>

Audit Commission Area Profiles project, Listening to residents and service users:
<http://www.areaprofiles.audit->

[commission.gov.uk/\(m1roqj45add4mym1o35phb55\)/StaticPage.aspx?info=32&menu=15](http://commission.gov.uk/(m1roqj45add4mym1o35phb55)/StaticPage.aspx?info=32&menu=15)

7. Making it happen – Leadership, Culture and Infrastructure

Like many other areas of activity, there are certain things which need to be in place to develop user and citizen focussed performance management.

7.1 Leadership

If leaders aren't committed to a user focus and to performance management, it won't happen.

Leadership from the very top – the Leader, Cabinet, Chief Executive and Directors – matters. However leadership isn't just about position, and others within the organisation can provide leadership, which may eventually spread more widely. This means championing the importance of public involvement and the need to integrate it with performance management. It also means being proactive and tackling issues which arise head on.

In practice:

In one Local Area Agreement event with partners, the local authority chief executive spoke, to persuade voluntary and community sector (VCS) representatives that the council was serious about the involvement of VCS. The provided a powerful indication of how seriously the council took this.

7.2 Culture

The complexities of both performance management and public involvement are so great that if you tried to plan everything rationally you would collapse under the weight of the analysis. So how can you make sure all the angles are covered? What sort of culture is needed and how do you achieve it?

A commitment to public involvement and performance improvement has to be built into the way everyone does things. This takes time and is easily destroyed in the period it is being built up. However, once established it is very robust. It is possible to build up sub-cultures within the overall organisational culture, so even if the whole council isn't on board it is still possible to make progress.

The key aspects of culture which need to be fostered are commitment to:

- user and citizen focus
- sharing of user and citizen feedback and data
- improved performance
- use of performance management to drive improvement
- putting customers and citizens at the heart of the performance management approach

Four key steps to developing the culture are:

1. **Lead by example** – people believe what they see.
2. **Involve people** (and learn from each other). Integrating public involvement and performance management can be complex when you get into the details, so it is important that all relevant people can contribute to the process
3. **Consistently apply a system that is seen to work**. People often become persuaded by actually doing rather than being told, as long as it works in practice. So if sharing information is seen to make their lives easier and produce better decisions, they are more likely to do that in future.
4. **Train, communicate and persuade**. Behind any culture change there has to be a mass of communication. This is not a once and for all – it needs constant repetition and refresh. However, the messages have to develop enough to keep people's interest.

In practice:

The PMMI case study of Stockton-on-Tees illustrated the way the authority was trying to build a culture of 'customer first' into their performance management:

"Another important culture-change initiative at Stockton has been the 'Customer First' programme, supported by a small team of staff whose aim has been to make the Council more sensitive to its customers. This has included a Council-wide awareness-raising and training programme, development of customer care standards and awards for staff (individuals and groups) that have performed well. The 2003 corporate assessment report commented:

"The extensive preparation and launch of Customer First is a good example of how staff and members are well briefed and clear about their roles and organisational direction."

There is a good practice register on the intranet that includes, for example, information on different cultures and approaches to consulting with minority communities. This information is already leading to higher standards and better understanding of the specific needs of our minority ethnic communities. The register will be extended to include other minority groups, such as people with disabilities, as the implementation of the Customer First programme progresses."

.For the full case study, go to www.idea.gov.uk/performance

More information:

See the PMMI briefing on culture and performance management at www.idea.gov.uk/performance

7.3 Infrastructure

How can we ensure that the user and citizen perspective feeds into all levels of performance management, from individual to community strategy level? How can inputs at one level feed into other levels, and how can we prevent unnecessary duplication?

When input is qualitative – participating in a local area committee, focus group or in-depth interview for example – it is likely to be relevant to many different aspects of council activity. Feedback on crime might also include comments on litter. Requests for thoughts on future plans, might also include comments on how existing services are experienced. A detailed questionnaire on leisure provision might elicit comments relevant to quality of life issues for the community strategy. The problem is to ensure the right information feeds in at the right points, without losing the richness of the original context, and paying attention to the representativeness, or not, of the feedback. While databases and knowledge management tools can be helpful, face to face communications will often be necessary to elicit and share tacit knowledge.

7.4 Timing

The timing of consultation and public involvement may not always fit neatly with formal performance management processes.

There are some things which can be planned in advance. If a service is thinking of doing some consultation, one of the factors in deciding the timing may be how it will fit into the service planning process.

In some cases there may need to be compromises. The latest available customer feedback may have to be used, even if it isn't completely up to date.

7.5 Complexity, Information and Communications

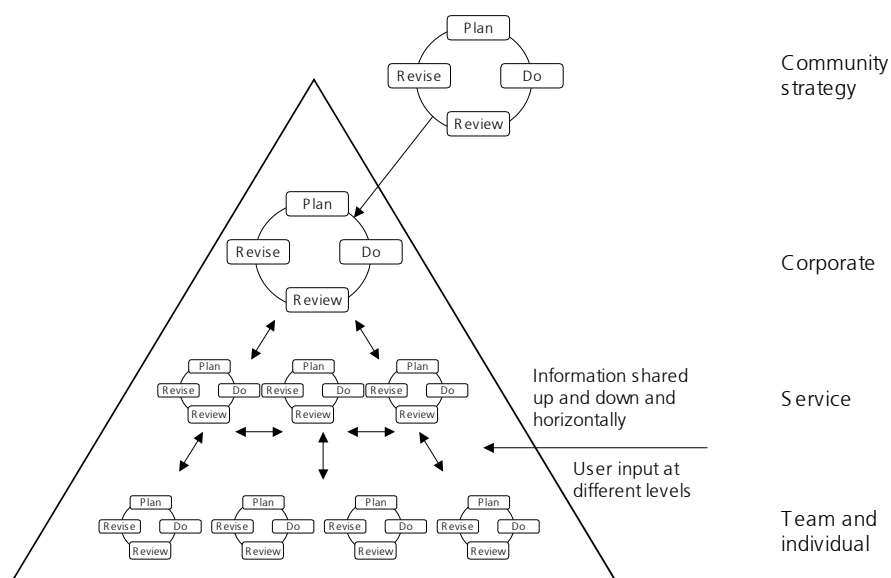
One problem is that even where the principles are understood, the complexity and sheer quantity of user and citizen feedback can make the process of integrating it with performance management very difficult in practice.

This needs to be addressed in three ways:

Firstly, the raw information needs to be made as widely available as possible. This is easier nowadays with sophisticated databases and intranets.

Secondly, there is a need for good summaries, indexing and cross referencing, so that the relevant information can be found quickly and easily.

Thirdly, there is a need for analysis and interpretation, to make sense of the information and how it will be relevant to different circumstances.



Public input feeds into different levels of the performance management process, but information could feed up and down the levels and should be widely shared

In practice:

Bristol City Council, in addition to lots of other useful information about consultation on its website, lists past, present and future consultations – see <http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/consultations/>

Rochdale do a similar thing – www.rochdale.gov.uk

Camden's Having Your Say - <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/having-your-say/> is another example of a portal for consultees.

The **London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham** have built a 'client index' which brings together customer records from most of the key services. They have combined this with data bought in from a commercial data source and can use this for sophisticated mapping and analysis, such as how to make services most accessible to different client groups.

The **London Borough of Harrow** uses a set of Vitality Profiles – over 50 social, demographic, economic and other indicators that provide Harrow and its local strategic partners with an easy to understand and vivid baseline of the well-being of Harrow. The Profiles were originally viewed as useful, contextual information to inform service provision but are now viewed the other way round, so that services and activities are developed and provided to impact on

Harrow's quality of life and well-being. Whilst it's early days, this example illustrates Harrow's intent to use such detailed information about the diversity of users to ensure its and its partners' services impact on those who most need them with maximum benefit – the emphasis being on the ultimate outcomes on and longer term benefits for the community, such as improved health, environment and economy, rather than the processes/services involved.

7.6 Knowledge, awareness, skills and abilities

Key to ensuring that public involvement drives performance management is that relevant people are aware of what needs to be done, have the relevant knowledge, skills and abilities. It is partly about communications and also sustained training and development. It is also useful to distinguish between different levels of skill requirements. Many people, including all service managers, require a basic knowledge of both performance management and public involvement. More detailed expertise should be available on tap.

8. Further Information

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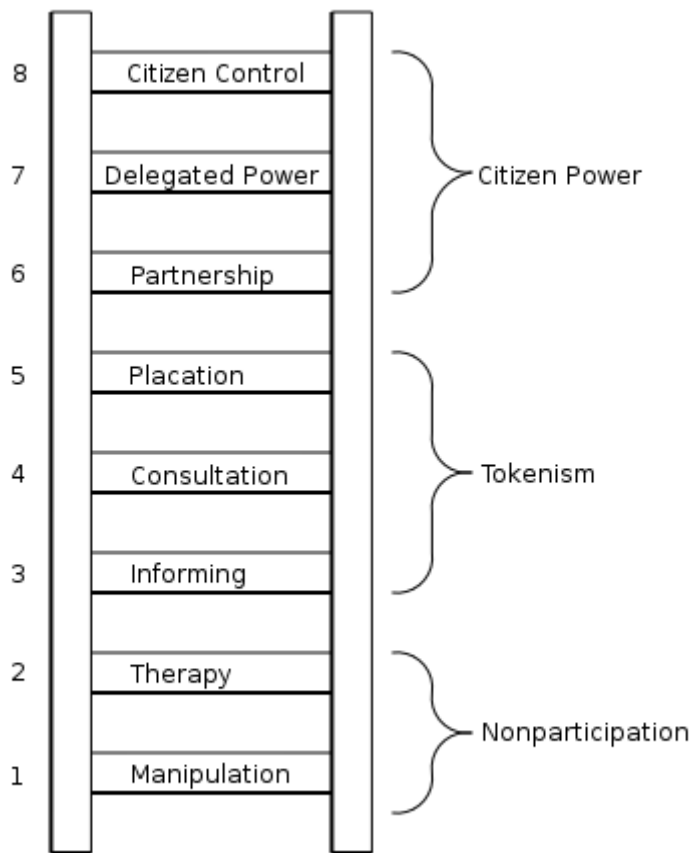
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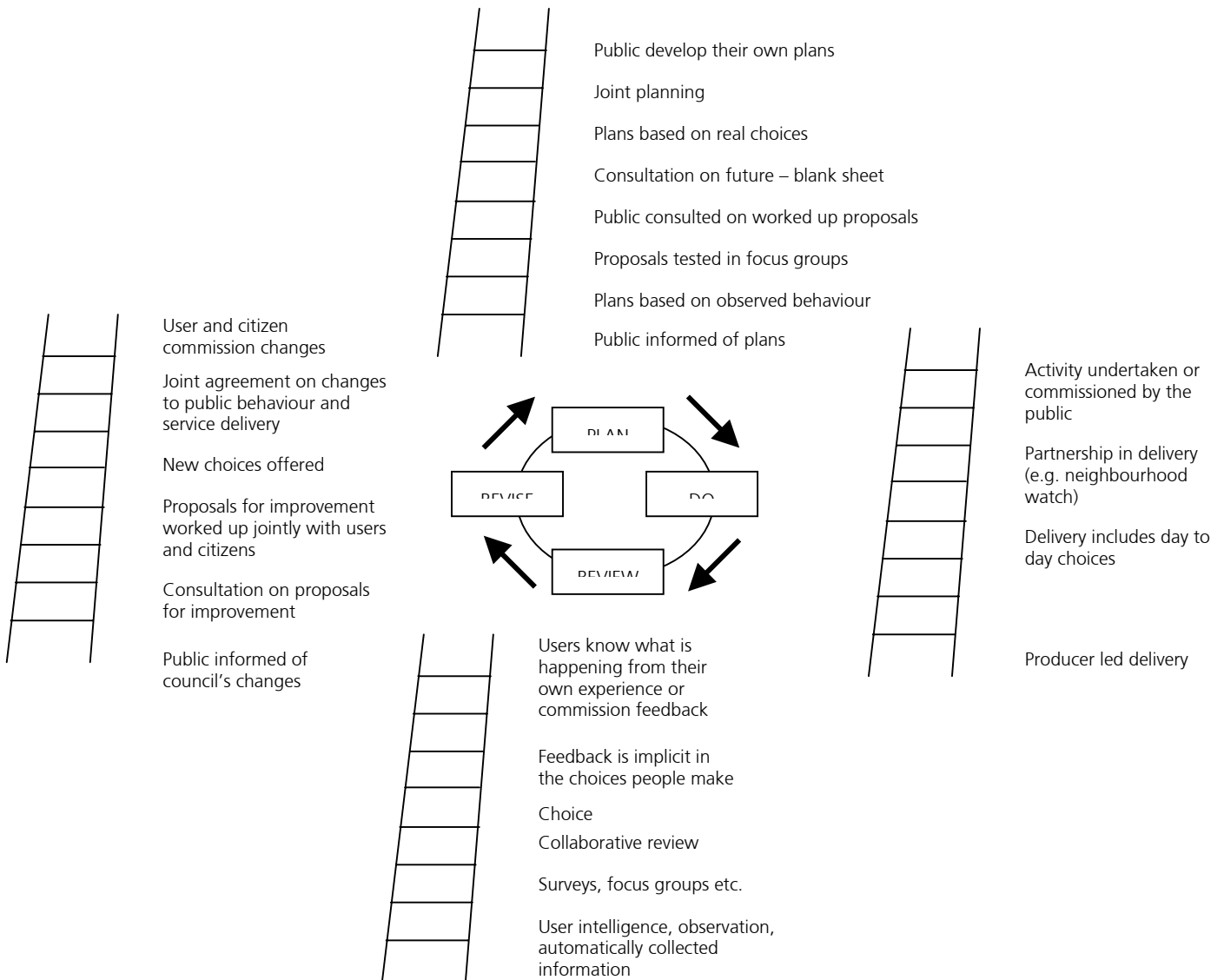
Appendix 1 – The Ladder of Participation

Sherry Arnstein's concept of a 'ladder of participation' has been very influential in people's thinking about public involvement. There is clearly a normative element to it, with citizen participation as the goal. In a number of reformulations the different steps on the ladder are seen more as alternatives, to be used in different ways according to the circumstances, and in combination.



See <http://lithgow-schmidt.dk/sherry-arnstein/ladder-of-citizen-participation.html>) for the original article in full (Arnstein, Sherry, *A Ladder of Citizen Participation in the USA*, Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute, 1971)

The application of the idea of this ladder of participation to performance management can be seen in the following diagram. This shows that the sorts of planning, reviewing and revising which is done, and who by, varies according to how much control is devolved to groups and individuals in the community.



Appendix 2 Choosing Consultation techniques - Representativeness and Knowledge

This is a way of helping to select appropriate consultation techniques, which focuses on the major decisions which have to be taken when choosing techniques. It works on the basis that an authority's consultation will generally include a mix of:

1. qualitative and exploratory techniques which raise questions or attempt to explain qualitative results
2. a statistically representative sample (to cost effectively extrapolate these results to the whole community),
3. inclusive techniques which invite contributions from everyone, and
4. contacts with particular groups (as informed and interested stakeholders, and as a cheap way of receiving feedback which is to some degree representative).

The list of techniques is first of all broken down into these four categories.

The second aspect to be distinguished is how well informed the respondents are. In many cases people may not have all the necessary background information to make sensible comments about the service. This is particularly so for those which they benefit from but do not come into regular contact with (like Trading Standards, Environmental Health or Planning). In such cases, the ideal is to give them the information they need to comment. However, it is also often important to get an idea what the current 'naïve' view is, since that is the reality the authority has to deal with. In other cases, people will already be well informed, because of particular interests or in their role as consumers ('expertise' will therefore vary according to the questions being asked – whether they relate to individuals' experience - as well as the nature of the service – whether most people have regular contact with it). These three categories of 'naïve', 'give knowledge' and 'have knowledge' form the second dimension and are shown in the first column of the table.

Not all consultation techniques fit neatly into these categories. Some, for instance may be used for both 'naïve' and well informed respondents. Equally, some techniques are listed in more than one category. It is, however, a starting point: a way of generating ideas rather than furnishing a final solution. Within each category, techniques are broadly listed in order from least to most expensive.

1. Qualitative / Exploratory

State of Knowledge	Consultation Technique
Naïve view (To find people's current views, even though they may not	Feedback from frontline staff
	Informal contacts

<p>be very well informed. Can be used for any service where people have direct contact with the service. Unlikely to be useful for services which consultees know little about, except to find extent of knowledge/ignorance to inform information dissemination)</p>	Mass media (Aim to build up knowledge over time)
	Involvement in Council committees and business (question time)
	Diaries of usage
	Mystery customer
	Focus Groups (They should be representative but because of numbers, unlikely to be statistically significant). There is some opportunity to give information)
	Depth interview
<p>Give knowledge (Particularly for consulting people who benefit from the service but know little about it: e.g. Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Planning, and other regulatory services. Also useful when obtaining ideas and opinions on the background to services which users may know little about)</p>	Electronic communications, e.g. Internet, Video box (Though can't guarantee people will read the information provided)
	Involvement in Council committees and business (co-option)
	Techniques for involving and hearing as much as possible from the groups being worked with
	Public involvement in hearings and scrutiny committees
	Representative deliberative panels (Where small numbers)
	Citizens' Jury (Representative but not statistically significant)
<p>Have knowledge (For consulting individuals and groups who are already expert, have in-depth knowledge or particular areas of expertise. Can be used where users have direct experience of a service)</p>	Service user groups (When not statistically significant or open to all)
	Desk research – using existing sources of information (May be more or less informed and representative, depending on the particular information)
	Pictures, drama, metaphor
	Depth interview

2. Statistically representative

State of Knowledge	Consultation Technique
<p>Naïve view (To find people's current views, though may not be very well informed. Can be used for any service where people have direct contact with the service. Unlikely to be useful for services which consultees know little about, except to find extent of knowledge/ignorance to inform information dissemination)</p>	Profiles (May also involve some original research)
	Observation (Representative if suitable sample procedure)
	Pilot (Representativeness depends on how typical the pilot is)
	Surveys (including Citizens' Panel)

Give knowledge (Particularly for consulting people who benefit from the service but know little about it: e.g. Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Planning, and other regulatory services.	Deliberative panels / Citizens' workshops (where statistically representative – random selection, more than around 200 people)
Have knowledge (Also useful when obtaining ideas and opinions on the background to services which users may know little about) (For consulting individuals and groups who are already expert, have in-depth knowledge or particular areas of expertise. Can be used on users direct experience of a service)	Direct User Involvement (making choices in use of service, running own services etc.) Service User Group (if large enough randomly selected sample) Exit survey (People are 'expert' in what service they have just received)
	Selected sample

3. Selected bodies

State of Knowledge	Consultation Technique
Naïve view (To find people's current views, though may not be very well informed. Can be used for any service where people have direct contact with the service. Unlikely to be useful for services which consultees know little about, except to find extent of knowledge/ignorance to inform information dissemination)	'Representative' groups Consult employees Area forums (where not open membership) User Panels
Give knowledge (Particularly for consulting people who benefit from the service but know little about it: e.g. Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Planning, and other regulatory services. Also useful when obtaining ideas and opinions on the background to services which users may know little about)	Feedback from other bodies such as Parish Councils Devolved decision to group or joint decision making Interest forums (established by Council) Consensus techniques Special Member Panels (involving members of the public and other stakeholders)
Have knowledge (For consulting individuals and groups who are already expert, have in-depth knowledge or particular areas of expertise. Can be used on users direct experience of a service)	Direct contacts with other public sector bodies Interest groups, specialist and Professional bodies (may need to be given additional information, especially in some areas)

4. Inclusive

State of Knowledge	Consultation Technique
	General request for comments Involvement in Council committees and business (petitions, question time, etc) Open meetings Citizens' Poll (everyone votes; non-binding) Referendum Ballot box

	IT Mediated (All can have access eg through terminals in libraries, but still likely to exclude some)
Give knowledge (Particularly for consulting people who benefit from the service but know little about it: e.g. Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Planning, and other regulatory services. Also useful when obtaining ideas and opinions on the background to services which users may know little about)	General publicity
	Translations, tape, braille and large print versions
	Open days, exhibitions & roadshows
	Citizenship in schools
	Visioning exercise
	Consensus techniques
	Planning for real
	Open weekend conference with briefing, discussion and decision
Have knowledge (For consulting individuals and groups who are already expert, have in-depth knowledge or particular areas of expertise. Can be used on users direct experience of a service)	Open meeting for users
	Panel open to users / service user groups
	Choice in service delivery
	Comments cards
	Open to specialist groups (Not inclusive on its own, but might do as part of open consultation)
	Drama, pictures, metaphor (May be open to all, but also inclusive in the sense of allowing participation by those who would otherwise be excluded)

Appendix 3 – Customer types (customers, citizens, beneficiaries etc.)

In addition to the distinction between the immediate recipients of services and those who benefit from them, discussed in the text, there are a number of other distinctions which can make it hard to know who the customer is.

This is similar to the difference between decisions which can be taken on an individual basis and collective decisions. The latter decisions may be harder to feed into the performance management process.

There are other 'stakeholders' whose role and interest is hard to define. Are parents the customers or beneficiaries of the education service? Is a company submitting a planning application the customer of Development Control? Is the person whose possessions are being removed the user of the bailiff service?

Sometimes people's interest is more general, as a citizen or taxpayer wishing to have a say in how their area is governed. For instance, what should the long term vision for the area be?

There are many other stakeholders including suppliers, customers and partners. The increased importance of partnership working has meant that other public sector bodies, the voluntary and private sectors are seen as more important in achieving the authority's goals, and are important stakeholders. Through LSPs and LAAs they are involved in all aspects of performance management – planning, reviewing performance and revising the approach to achieving outcomes.

Another important group is those unable to speak for themselves. This might include foetuses, which might be affected by smoke or air pollution, or future generations, which might suffer from today's impact on climate change.

A full list of stakeholder types is:

Customers

- *Current users of the service*
 - Paid for at point of service delivery
 - Paid for indirectly
- *Consumers of 'collective goods' (e.g. parks, clean air)*
- *Non-users of the service*
 - Dissatisfied - tried and gone away
 - Not heard about it
 - Not yet appropriate (e.g. no need yet for pest control service)
 - 'Denied customers' - those who want to use services but are not allowed, e.g. people on the housing waiting list, an elderly person refused a home help

- *Internal customers for services provided by one part of the council for another*

Beneficiaries of services

- *For instance parents or employers as the beneficiaries of the education system*

Those regulated and enforced against

- *Those who officers deal with day to day may not be those for whom the service is provided, but their views, attitudes and behaviour may be significant for how the service is delivered. (They may be more or less hostile depending on the circumstances; whether it is having a kitchen inspected, or having a child taken from you into care)*

Other Stakeholders

- *Citizens interested in the well being of their area*
- *Others involved in providing services such as carers or council officers*
- *Some people may be indirectly affected by policies, such as householders who have a development near by*
- *Non-residents who are visitors to the area may be direct customers of council services (such as parks or leisure centres) or more indirect beneficiaries (or sufferers) of the local environment and facilities*
- *Citizens in their role as electors, council tax payers and residents*

Proxy consultees

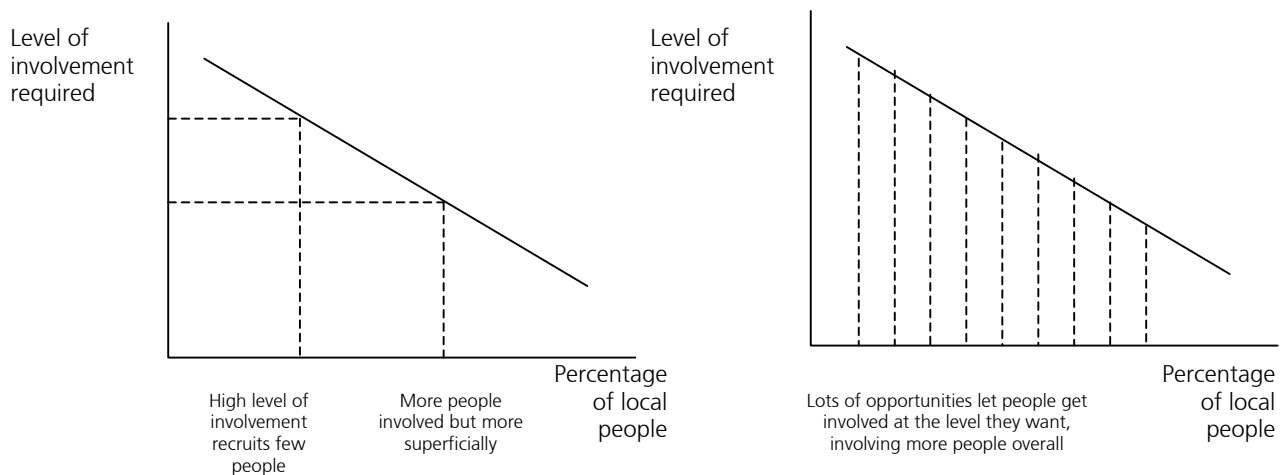
- *Those speaking on behalf of others, such as on behalf of very young children (this needn't preclude also hearing directly from those for whom traditional consultation is hard, such as those with learning difficulties) or future generations.*

Appendix 4 – Ways of reaching different groups within the public

	General	Plan	Do	Review	Revise
Customers	Representative sample surveys Focus groups User panels Representative bodies Observation and data collection	Assess wants, needs, patterns of behaviour.		Customer satisfaction. Survey experience of the service. Pilot variations to service and assess response in practice.	Involve focus groups and user panels to develop and test new ideas.
Regulated	Representative bodies Trade press Open evenings bi-lateral dialogue	Discuss and present options to representative bodies		Customer satisfaction, but assess in the light of different role, and impact for beneficiaries.	Test proposals with representative group of those regulated against.
Beneficiaries / potential users	Deliberative techniques such as citizen's juries. Provide detailed information to get more informed response.	Spend time with representative / proxy groups to work through implications of different approaches to see how they benefit overall.		Impact analysis for the effect policies and services actually having	Use proxy and interest groups (e.g. civic society) to work up proposals. Scrutiny policy development panel.
Citizens	Deliberative techniques such as citizen's juries using representative groups	Visioning exercises, 'blue sky thinking' (e.g. to feed into community strategy).		Impact analysis. 'State of the nation' commission. Scrutiny review.	Scrutiny policy development panel.
Stakeholders	Special interest groups Bi-lateral discussions Partnership forums	Theme groups and panels to work through proposals.		Working groups to develop proposals	Specialist input into developing proposals
Unable to speak for selves	Panel of enquiry Elected Member(s) take(s) champion role.	Policy analysis take sustainable development view into account. Seek views of interest groups.		Forecast of simulate outcomes resulting from policies, and how the various groups will be affected.	Draw on national and international policy debates and academic studies

Appendix 5 Dealing with differing levels of interest

If people are only given one level at which to get involved, then a lot of people won't bother (especially if this means turning out draughty village halls on dark wet evenings to discuss opaque council consultation documents). However, if there are lots of different options, for different circumstances, then there can be more public input overall. This is illustrated in the graph below.



Public input feeds into different levels of the performance management process, but information could feed up and down the levels and should be widely shared

The use of representative samples is also a good way to get a reasonably accurate picture of all local residents without bothering everyone. On other occasions, or at the same time, there can be an open invitation to participate. This latter is unlikely to produce a representative view, but may generate good ideas, provide ideas on what more needs to be researched and ensure that everyone feels they have been given an opportunity to have a say.

Different people may also be more or less prepared to get involved in different aspects of performance management. Some will be more than willing to feed back on how they found a service but less prepared to say what should be done in future. Others may not directly experience particular services but still have a view on what needs to be done to improve the area generally.

Appendix 6 Performance Managing Consultation

This diagram shows the different aspects of public engagement which can be assessed and performance managed. For a fuller description, see the full document at: <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=72663>

A framework for evaluating consultation

