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County Council

# Oakham Task and Finish Group

25<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## Communications and Community Engagement





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## In this presentation

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- Why engage the community?
- If so, what are our requirements?
- Previous community engagement
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- Delivery and resources
- Next steps



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## Why co-ordinate communication and engagement?

- There are different levels of involvement from different groups
- Communications comes in many forms – emails, letters etc
- There is a need to co-ordinate communications to ensure consistency about the work of the TFG so people don't hear different things from different people



## Why engage the community?

An effective communications and community engagement strategy would form a connection between the TFG and the community, while providing evidence. It could help by:

- **Providing greater transparency on the work of the TFG**
- **Eliciting evidence on perceptions of the town centre that influence usage**
- **Ensuring that the community is involved in decision-making**
- **Involving the widest possible number of people and businesses, not just those who are more pro-active in setting out their point of view**



## Type of engagement

The Local Government Association toolkit sets out four levels that should be considered at the start of the process, depending on the desire to see different levels of involvement.

### **Inform**

Minimal external input in decision-making, other than informing people of the decision made (usually press releases, social media)

### **Consult**

External views sought and taken into account (as above and a survey/questionnaire)

### **Partner**

Collaboration with others for shared decision making (as above and workshops, meetings, drop-ins etc)

### **Empower**

Support for community-led decision making (establish a community-led decision making group)



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## Previous engagement

Rutland County Council prepared a major stakeholder engagement strategy as part of considering initial ideas for a Oakham Town Centre.

The engagement exercise was heavily focused on highway solutions, with a choice given between One-Way, Two-Way or Neither Option.

We need to look at building a different approach – with greater levels of involvement that look at broader issues.



## Potential scope for work

The TFG is asked to consider the potential scope and requirements for any future engagement exercise.

Do we want to understand:

- How people currently use the town centre and how that usage has potentially changed?
- Factors that influence the usage of the town centre as a shopping and night time destination?
- Potential improvements that could influence increased usage?



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## Delivering and resourcing it

If the TFG would like to see maximum input from the wider community in the evidence gathering exercise a range of options existing for delivering it.

Rutland County Council would be happy to provide some elements of operational and logistical support, if required, particularly when it comes to promoting the work and producing some of the materials, such as a survey.





## Delivery and resources

Method	Details	Audience	Insight	Resources
<b>Surveys</b>	Surveys distributed across Oakham	All	Quantitative	TFG (design) RCC (hosting, publicity and analysis)
<b>Workshops</b>	Invitation to specific groups (stakeholders, businesses and residents) to workshops to discuss issues facing the town centre in detail	Segmented to different groups	Qualitative	TFG



## Delivery and resources

<b>Web page</b>	Establish a web page with details of the TFG's work that allows people to submit comments and/or link to questionnaire.	All	Quantitative/ Qualitative	TFG/RCC
<b>Drop-ins</b>	Drop-in surgeries that allow people to provide feedback directly	All	Qualitative	TFG (staffing the drop-ins) RCC (promotion and logistics)
<b>Working group meetings</b>	Meetings with stakeholder groups, including business forums, Oakham Town Council, resident associations, amenity groups, Rutland Youth	Stakeholders	Qualitative	TFG



## Publicity

Method	Details	Audience	Resources
<b>Press releases</b>	Press releases targeted at local media (newspapers and radio)	All	RCC
<b>Social media</b>	Social media via RCC	All	RCC
<b>E-newsletter</b>	Monthly update via RCC's community newsletter (5,000 distribution)	All	RCC



## Publicity

Method	Details	Audience	Resources
<b>Posters</b>	Posters in libraries and community centres	All	RCC
<b>Letters/emails</b>	Targeted letters and emails to specific groups	Stakeholders and businesses	TFG, with logistical support from RCC
<b>Leaflets</b>	Leaflets distributed to the area	All	RCC print, TFG distribution



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## Next steps

If the TFG agrees to implement a community engagement strategy it is recommended that a sub-group is established to steer the work, with a person nominated to lead that group.

The aim should be to launch the work by the end of May over a six-week period. This would allow the findings to be reported in September.

We also need to recognise the need for longer-term effective engagement on delivery of the town centre improvements which has started with the establishment of the TFG