

## **Portfolio Holder's Introduction**

I am delighted to introduce the District Council's Leisure Services 'Community Engagement & Consultation' Work Plan for 2007.

Effective and regular communication with users and non-users in the District is a key role for the Leisure Services Team. Consultation and communication ensures that the services we provide and you pay for, continue to meet your needs and aspirations.

### **Cllr Chris Williams Portfolio Holder for Community Services**



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## Section 1: Introduction

Research conducted by MORI has consistently emphasised the importance of good communication. Further analysis supports findings from the 'Connecting with Communities' initiative, which demonstrates the impact that good communication can have on overall ratings of a Council.

To be successful, communication must focus on the issues that are shown to impact on residents perceptions; quality of services, value for money, and efficiencies. They should ideally look to close the communication-consultation loop i.e. tell people how they can have a say and demonstrate how those who have given their views have had a real impact. (*Local Government Association – What drives public satisfaction with local government? LGA research report 20/04*).



As a section the Leisure Service Team are committed to finding out what you think about issues that affect you. This is to help develop and improve the services that we currently provide and help us focus on other issues that may influence the provision and quality of sports, leisure and physical activity initiatives within the District.

Analysis of the results from the 2006 work plan have helped to shape and improve the way in which the team operates a number of our services. These include the following:

- Improved cleaning of the wet side changing areas of the leisure centres during peak periods of usage.
- The District Council's commitment to keep the recreation ground paddling pool open.
- The introduction of customer verbal comments and case studies to capture users opinions and experiences of leisure services.

This document sets out the methods of consultation and communication. Section 2 is the detailed work plan of community engagement and consultation activities which are proposed to take place during 2007.

## **Aims of the Work Plan**

1. To enable the Leisure Services Team to have a clear understanding about whether the services it provides meets the needs and expectations of the public and service users.
2. To enable people to have a say in the decisions that affect them at District level.
3. To ensure that consultation is undertaken cost effectively and in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication.
4. To ensure that consultation results are shared and used effectively to improve leisure services.
5. To provide information and feedback to improve service development within the District Council.
6. To gather data sets and benchmark the trends against information obtained during the 2006 consultation programme.

## **What will the team do with the results of the consultation programme?**

1. The department will feed back the results of consultation to those involved and inform them what it plans to do as a result of the consultation process.
2. The department will summarise all consultation results, place them on the Council's web site, and report issues of significance to the Head of Community Services.
3. The department will maintain a rolling programme of consultation initiatives with users and non-users of the service.



## **Leisure Services Areas**

- Sports Development.
- Leisure Centres.
- Play Areas & Skate Park.
- Sports Pitches & Pavilion.
- Community Sports Coach programme.
- Active Communities Programme  
i.e. Health Walks.

## The People of the District

Stratford-on-Avon District has about 250 towns and villages spread over a predominately rural area covering 979 square kilometres. This makes it one of the largest Districts in England and means access to services and the delivery of services are both major issues for residents.

Age Group	Number	% of Population
0-4	5,993	5.4%
5-15	14,403	12.9%
16-19	4,610	4.1%
20-24	4,515	4.0%
25-29	5,446	4.9%
30-44	24,337	21.8%
45-64	31,972	28.7%
65-74	10,680	9.6%
75-84	6,907	6.2%
85+	2,621	2.4%



The most recent comprehensive assessment of the people in the District available was taken in the 2001 Census. The population, as measured in that Census, was 111,484 of which 48% were male and 52% female.

A significant factor is that the age of local residents is 42, compared with an average age of 39 across England as a whole. Almost 50% of the population is over 45, with only 18.3% under 16 years old. The proportion of the elderly aged 85+ has increased by nearly half over the last 10 years and this trend is expected to continue.

With over 98.7% of the population of the District being white, residents from black and minority ethnic communities face isolation, and can find it difficult to obtain support or help within the District.

In February 2004 the unemployment rate in Stratford-on-Avon District was 1.2%, compared to 1.7% in Warwickshire and 2.5% for the whole of the UK. Much of the employment within the District is dependent on tourism and farming. Many residents of the District commute to higher paid jobs outside, while the lower paid jobs within the District are often filled by people commuting into the District.

At the time of the 2001 census 23.9% of those people aged 16 – 74 held a degree level or higher qualification compared to the county figure of 20.7%. Those without qualifications were 24.1% which is lower than the county figure of 27.8%. In 2003 64.2% of young people at Key Stage 4 obtained five or more grade A - C GCSEs which is significantly higher than the county average of 54%.

## The people of the District (continued)

While household income is above average at £29,600 against the national average of £26,200 – (2002) this is distorted by a small proportion of extremely wealthy households. It is significant that 17% of households have an average income of less than £10,000 per annum.

In 2001 there were 48,659 homes in the District. 5,920 households are in receipt of means-tested benefits, a figure that includes 3,797 pensioner households.

Over 2,000 children live in benefit dependent households. These households are widely spread and not concentrated in any specific communities.

Almost half the households in Stratford on Avon District have 2 or more cars which are amongst the highest level in the Country. However over 6,400 households do not have a car and are therefore reliant on other forms of transport.



## How does Stratford on Avon District compare to other Districts?

### Economic Well-being

- Average size economy - 182nd out of 408 Local Councils
- Productivity - 104th
- Economic change - 301st
- Industrial structure - 116th
- Business & enterprise – 113th
- Education & Skills - 177th
- Labour market - 70th

### Environmental Well-being

- Housing affordability - 314th
- Accessibility (Road & Rail)- 286th
- Local services (Post Offices & Banks) - 249th
- Amenities (Leisure Centres) - 145th
- Natural environment - 75th

### Social Well-being

- Age profile- average age 41.6 years – 55th highest
- Population up 10.7% 1991-2004 - 364th
- Occupational profile - 168th
- Prosperity - 44th most prosperous place to live
- Deprivation- 39th least deprived area
- Life expectancy - 80.2 years - 86th highest
- Crime - 32nd safest place to live

**Overall Stratford on Avon District is rated 11th in the State of Britain report (2005/06)**

## Consultation and Communication Methods

The Leisure Services Team employs a variety of methods for communicating and consulting with residents. Using a combination of methods we can provide a targeted and more comprehensive consultation programme to users and non-users of the service.

The table below details the list of consultation and communication methods to be employed to engage users and non-users of the service within the District.

<b>Non users of the service</b>	<b>Users of the service</b>
SDC Review Newsletter	SDC Review Newsletter
SDC Press Release	SDC Press Release
Citizens Panel	Citizens Panel
Youth Panel	Youth Panel
SDC Web Site	SDC Web Site
School Pupils (Colleges, Secondary & Primary)	School Pupils (Colleges, Secondary & Primary)
Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)	Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)
General Satisfaction Survey	General Satisfaction Survey
Parish Council Forum	Parish Council Forum
Specific Focus Groups	Specific Focus Groups
SDC Sports Festivals	SDC Sports Festivals & Tournaments
National Bench Marking Service at Leisure Centres	Opinion meters (SLM)
	Sports Forum
	Leisure Centre Forums
	National Bench Marking Service at Leisure Centres
	Sports Club - Leisure Directory Questionnaire
	After School Club Questionnaire
	Recreation Ground Questionnaire
	Hi 5's Activity Programme
	Coach Volunteer Network Forum
	Community Sports Coach – Holiday Scheme
	ILEAP – Disability Sports
	'In 2 Sport' Newsletter
	PACE Scheme – (Exercise Referral)
	SDC Health Walks
	Replay – 50+ Activity Groups
	Community Sports Coach – Swimming Scheme

## Users & Non-Users of Leisure Services

A number of groups appear in both the users and non-users columns, it is important that the District Council provides all residents with the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Leisure Services Team's activity programme.

Through consultation and communication with non-users of our service the Leisure Services Team will be able to research and establish the reasons why some residents choose to remain non-users. i.e. time, cost of activity and transport issues.

Analysis of the consultation results will enable the team to understand the many reasons behind the current level of non-usage by residents. Increased knowledge supported by research will help influence targeted promotional campaigns, to help raise the awareness of existing sporting and recreational opportunities and develop new activities to encourage increased participation.



The table below details a list of users and non-users of the service within the District.

<b>Non Users of the service</b>	<b>Users of the service</b>
General Public	General Public
Parish Councils	Parish Councils
Citizens Panel	Citizens Panel
Youth Panel	Youth Panel
Primary Care Trust (PCT)	Primary Care Trust (PCT)
Disability Groups	Disability Groups
	Primary & Secondary Schools
	Colleges (FE & HE)
	Community Centres & Village Halls
	Sports Leisure Management (SLM)
	Sports Clubs & Voluntary Organisations
	Sports Clubs – Pavilion Users

## Frequency and Consultation Method

The table below identifies the users and non-users groups, identifies the consultation and communication methods to be employed and their frequency to engage residents regarding the performance of the leisure services activities within the District.

Consultation Methods	Frequency of Publication or Meeting
Parish Council Forum	1 x per year
Citizens Panel Questionnaire	2 x per year (Feb/March –Sept/Oct)
Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)	1 x every 2 years (Next planned for 2008)
Specific Focus Groups	As and when required
SDC Youth Panel	1 x per year
General Satisfaction Survey (BV)	1 x every 3 years (Next planned for 2009)
Hi 5's Questionnaire, Verbal Comments and Case Studies	4 x per year (School holidays: Easter, May half term, Summer break and October half term)
Leisure Centre Forums	2 x per year (at each site)
PACE Scheme Questionnaire (Exercise Referral Scheme)	1 x per year (feedback given by patients to leisure centres and GP's)
Sport & Leisure Directory Questionnaire	1 x per year (Next planned for Dec 2007)
Opinion Meter - Leisure centres	4 x per year (1x each site)
In 2 Sport Newsletter	3 x per year
Sports Club Forums	1 x per year
SDC Web Site - Quick Poll	2 x per year
National Benchmarking Service (Year 2 Shipston & Southam)	2 sites x per year
Coach Volunteer Network Forum, Questionnaire, Verbal Comments and Case Studies	1 x per year
After School Sports Club Questionnaire, Verbal Comments and Case Studies	1 x per year
Recreation Ground – Play Areas	1 x per year
ILEAP – Disability Sports, Verbal comments and Case Studies	1 x per year
Community Sports Coach – Holiday programme Easter & Summer, Questionnaire, Verbal Comments, Case Studies	1 x per year
SDC – Health Walks - Questionnaire, Verbal Comments, Case Studies	1 x per year
Replay 50+ Groups - Questionnaire, Verbal Comments, Case Studies	1 x per year
Sports Clubs – Pavilion Users	1 x per year
Community Sports Coach - Swimming Programme	1 x per year

## Verbal Comments and Case Studies

Analysis from the 2006 Sports Development Quest assessment identified the traditional method of collecting customer feedback (Your Views questionnaires) could be improved if alternative methods of capturing levels of satisfaction were employed. These may include the use of verbal feedback and case studies.

*Quest assessor comments:* 'Although there is a programme of regular research, greater usage could be made of verbal compliments from customers and partners'.

'The team may wish to consider undertaking work to demonstrate the outcomes that the services are achieving. This could be achieved through case studies'. (Strategy section 1: Research – Areas for improvement. Quest Report Sept 2006).

In 2005 – 48 'Your Views' questionnaires were completed and in 2006 – 60 were completed with a total of 360 individual young people participating in the Hi 5's activity programme. Each child/parent is given a 'Your Views' questionnaire and a pre-paid envelope to increase the number of respondents and reduce the reasons ('I don't have the time' 'I have to go the children are waiting') for not completing a questionnaire.



Although there has been an increase in the number of questionnaires completed it is still not in sufficient quantity, less than 25% of users. A figure of 50% return rate is required to assess the effectiveness of the summer staff training programme and the quality of the activity sessions that have been delivered during the school holidays.

**Action point:** During 2007 a pilot scheme for collecting verbal comments and compiling case studies from parents and young people will be introduced at the District Council's holiday activity programmes.

## Use of incentives to increase levels of customer feedback

In 2006 the use of incentives was used (1 x six months membership per site and 2 x £50 vouchers per site) during the National Benchmarking Surveys at Stratford and Studley leisure centres were employed to great effect (a minimum of 350 questionnaires completed in 9 days).



**Action point:** In 2007 the District Council will pilot the introduction of targeted incentives (free child places at Hi 5 activity programmes and family swims) to encourage greater participation by children and parents in the customer feedback programme. The pilots will use the Hi 5 Easter and summer activity programmes to evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme.

## Section 2: Community Engagement & Consultation Annual Work Plan 2007

The activities planned for the first six months of the year are set out in the following table:

Month	Consultation activity	Format	Lead Dept	Budget	Objective of Consultation
January	SDC Leisure & Culture Web Pages	Quick Poll	LST	SDC Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet
February	Holiday Activities – High school	Questionnaire Verbal Comments Case Studies	CSC	SDC Officer time	Level satisfaction, Service improvement
March	Youth Panel – Summer holiday Programme In 2 Sport – Newsletter	Focus Group  Newsletter	H&R  LST	SDC Officer time	Service improvement, Information outlet  Information outlet
April	Hi 5's - Easter Programme SDC Heal Walks Replay 50+ Groups  Sports Club Forum Coach Volunteer Network Community Sports Coach – Holiday Programme	Questionnaire Verbal Comments Case Studies  Forum Forum Questionnaire Verbal Comments Case Studies	SD  LST CSC CSC	SDC Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement Level of satisfaction, Service improvement Level of satisfaction, Service improvement  Mapping & Audit, Service improvement, Information outlet, Mapping & Audit Level satisfaction, Service improvement Level satisfaction, Service improvement
May	Leisure Centre Forum  Opinion Meter - Stratford Sports Clubs – Pavilion Users	Forum  Questionnaire Questionnaire	LST  SLM LST	SDC Officer time  SLM Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet Level satisfaction Level of satisfaction, Service improvement
June	SDC - Web Site After School Sports Club	Quick Poll Questionnaire Verbal Comments Case Studies	LST CSC	SDC Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet Level satisfaction, Service improvement

**Key:**

**LST:** Leisure Service Team, **SD:** Sports Development, **C&P:** Change & Performance, **H&R:** Housing & Revenue, **CSC:** Community Sports Coach  
**SLM:** Sports Leisure Management

## Section 2 Cont: Community Engagement & Consultation Annual Work Plan 2007

The activities planned for the second half of the year are set out in the following table:

Month	Consultation activity	Format	Lead Dept	Budget	Objective of Consultation
July	In 2 Sport – Newsletter Leisure Centre Forums	Newsletter Forum	LST LST	SDC Officer time SDC Officer time	Information outlet Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet
	Opinion Meter - Shipston	Questionnaire	SLM	SLM Officer time	Level of satisfaction
August	Hi 5's – Holiday programme ILEAP – Summer Sports Activities (Disability Sport group)	Questionnaire Verbal Comments Case Studies	SD ILEAP	SDC Officer time ILEAP	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement Level of satisfaction, Service improvement
	Community Sports Coach's – Holiday Programme		CSC	SDC Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet
September	Citizens Panel	Questionnaire	C&P	SDC Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet
	National Benching Marking Service	Questionnaire	LST	2 x £850 per site SDC Officer time SLM Officer time	Level of satisfaction, Service improvement
October	Parish Council Forum	Forum	MS	SDC Officer time	Service improvement, Information outlet, Level of satisfaction
	Hi 5's – Half Term Programme	Questionnaire Verbal Comments Case Studies	SD	SDC Officer time	Level satisfaction, Service improvement
	Opinion Meter - Studley	Questionnaire	SLM	SLM Officer time	Level of satisfaction
November	In 2 Sport – Newsletter Leisure Centre Forum	Newsletter Forum	LST LST	SDC Officer time SDC Officer time	Information outlet Level of satisfaction, Service improvement, Information outlet
	December	Opinion Meter - Southam Leisure Directory - Update	Questionnaire Questionnaire	SLM LST	SLM Officer time SDC Officer time

### Key:

**LST:** Leisure Service Team, **SD:** Sports Development, **C&P:** Change & Performance, **H&R:** Housing & Revenue, **CSC:** Community Sports Coach  
**SLM:** Sports Leisure Management, **MS:** Member Services