Community Engagement Strategy

Consultation report

01/12/2023

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Introduction

The council has a corporate priority to be a 'council that listens and works for everyone' in its [Strategic Plan 2022-2026.](#) In support of this, the council is currently developing a new Community Engagement Strategy, which is due to be agreed by Cabinet in April 2024.

We consulted with residents, staff, partners, and elected members to develop the strategy. We aimed to engage with a diverse range of resident's who were representative of the local community. In total, 328 people took part.

Those who participated in the consultation had the opportunity to:

- Provide us with feedback on a draft vision and objectives
- Tell us what good community engagement looks like to them
- Tell us the issues they want the council to involve communities in
- Come up with ideas on how the council can improve its community engagement.

We used various methods to conduct the consultation, including an online survey, online and face-to-face workshops, pop-up stalls in public places, as well as targeted workshops with priority groups.

This report provides an overview of the end-to-end consultation process, an analysis of the key findings, and recommendations. The council will use this report to inform the development of the new Community Engagement Strategy.

Methodology

The consultation ran for six and a half weeks between the 13th of October and the 30th of November. In total, 328 people took part.

Aim and objectives

The consultation aimed to involve diverse stakeholders in developing the strategy.

The objectives were to:

- Understand what good community engagement means to the community and the issues they want to be involved in.
- Get feedback from stakeholders on the draft objectives and proposed ideas for achieving the objectives.
- Provide stakeholders with the opportunity to share their ideas on achieving the vision and objectives.

We wanted participants to feel listened to, engaged, and aware of how the council will consider their input in the strategy development process.

Stakeholders

A stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted by the project team to identify the stakeholders to engage with. The stakeholders we identified included:

Residents	Residents with protected characteristics
Council staff from relevant services	Elected members
VCS organisations	Local businesses
SME Businesses	Statutory partners
Housing Associations	Faith groups
Tenant residents' associations	

To ensure we could involve these groups, we chose the most effective methods to engage with them and decided to deliver a mixture of approaches to meet their different needs.

Engagement methods

The methods we used to engage with the community were:

- Online survey
- 4 X Pop-up sessions across different localities
- 2 x Workshop with staff (one in-person, one online)
- 2 X Workshop with members (hybrid)
- 2 X Workshop partners (one in-person, one online)
- 2 X Workshop with residents who are members of Equalities Networks (hybrid)
- Session with targeted residents (older people, young people, Somali community, Bangladeshi women)
- Meetings with council service areas who are responsible for doing community engagement

Recruiting participants

To inform stakeholders about the consultation and how they could participate, the project team worked with the Communications Service to develop and implement a communications plan that identified the objectives, key messages, target audience, communication methods, and timeline. The methods we used to promote the consultation included.

Creating a webpage for the consultation	Social media campaign
Special bulletin in the VCS newsletter	Article in THCVS newsletter
Article in THNow	Email to internal services

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Advertisement on Ideas Store screens	Email invitation to internal services
Email invitation to partners	VCS organization client groups
Social media campaign for resident and partner workshops	THNow
Messages through Whatsapp	

Equalities considerations

To ensure there were no barriers to stakeholders' participation, we completed an equalities screening form, which identified our target audience, the potential barriers they may face, and the solutions we put in place.

The council put the following solutions in place to minimize barriers to participation:

- o Providing translation services

- o Ensuring all in-person venues were accessible

- o Delivering in-person events at different localities in the borough

- o Writing documents in plain English

- o Offering to pay expenses and provide additional support to residents and voluntary and community sector representatives

Who took part

A breakdown of who took part in each activity is as follows:

Approach	Location	Number of participants
Online Survey	Online	62
Pop-up 1	Whitechapel Idea Store	25
Pop-up 2	Chrisp Street Idea Store	40
Pop up 3	Interfaith Forum	10
Staff workshop 1	Online	12
Staff workshop 2	Town Hall	24
Partner workshop 1	Online	12
Partner workshop 2	Brady Arts Centre	12
Members workshop 1	Town Hall	6
Members workshop 2	Town Hall	1
Workshop with residents who are part of an equalities Network 1	Hybrid – Town Hall and online	3

Workshop with residents who are part of an equalities Network 2	Hybrid – Town Hall and online	6
Workshop with young people	Partner organisation	25
Workshop with Bangladeshi community	Partner organisation	35
Workshop with Somali/Bangladeshi community	Partner organisation	35
Workshop with elderly people	Partner organisation	20
	Total	328

We did not collect demographic data from participants of all our engagement. However, we did collect it from the survey respondents, which can be found in appendix one.

Data collection and analysis

Following the end of the consultation we organised the data and analysed it to draw findings to develop the strategy.

The different methods we used to consult required different data collection and analysis techniques, including:

- **Survey** – We used Let's Talk Tower Hamlets to collate the information. We reviewed statistical data and read through comments to find common themes and essential points to develop the findings.
- **Pop-ups** – We used boards and post-it notes to collect feedback, wrote the information into a document, and looked for common themes to develop findings.
- **Workshops** – We collected information using flipcharts and post-its, wrote it in a document, and reviewed it to identify common themes to develop the findings.

Because the approaches we used involved quantitative and qualitative methods, we triangulated the data by comparing the information from different sources and stakeholders to identify patterns and areas of differences.

How will ideas influence the strategy?

To develop recommendations to inform the strategy, we delivered a meeting with the project team.

We reviewed all the ideas from the research and consultation and prioritised them using an effort versus reward decision making matrix.

The team prioritised which actions they thought would have the most impact. These ideas were used to write the recommendations for this report.

How will we give feedback to participants?

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Following the agreement of the strategy by Cabinet, the team will provide feedback on the impact ideas had on the strategy by:

- Using 'You Said, We Did' format in Let's Talk Tower Hamlets
- Organising an event to launch the strategy
- Writing to those who can't attend the event.

Findings

What does good community engagement look like?

We asked stakeholders who attended the workshops and pop-up sessions what good community engagement means to them.

There were a lot of similarities across the different stakeholders, which we have synthesised in the bullet points below:

- Residents have a right to have a say over the decisions that the council makes that impact their lives, particularly issues that significantly affect them.
- Residents shouldn't be viewed as passive recipients of services whom the council consults with. Instead, the council should enable residents to get more involved in community life and empower residents to become active citizens and community leaders.
- Staff delivering engagement must be friendly and kind and treat the community respectfully; otherwise, it damages relationships and means that communities avoid participating again.
- It can be frustrating and a waste of resources to ask the community about things they cannot influence. The council should be open and honest with communities about what they can and can't influence and explain the reasons why.
- The community can get angry when they participate in consultations and don't hear back what happens. The council should always give the community feedback on the impact of their involvement.
- Tower Hamlets is a diverse place with many residents who speak English as a second language. Therefore, the council's communications must be written in plain English, with translation services provided when necessary.
- Some barriers get in the way of the community participating in community engagement, including language, sessions not being culturally sensitive, timings or venues. The council should identify these barriers and implement effective solutions so those who want to participate can do so.
- Tower Hamlets is a diverse borough. The council should always try to engage with a representative mix of the population when engaging with the community and not just involve the usual suspects.
- The community engages in different ways. Some people prefer online options, whereas others, especially those without digital skills, prefer in-person sessions, so the council should provide a mixture of options to take part in.

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- The Mayor and elected members should be visible by organising meetings with the community and listening and responding to their issues.
- The council needs to be open to changing their minds when engaging the community and make decisions based on the community's best interests and not the political leadership.
- The council has different partnership boards that they lead on or are members of. The council should ensure good representation on these partnerships and boards from residents with lived experience and the voluntary and community sector.
- The council shouldn't just reach out to communities when it has a policy, strategy, and service that it wants the community to help shape. It should also organise ways to identify the issues concerning the community and respond.
- When community engagement events happen, they should be attended by lead members and senior officers responsible for making the decisions so they can speak with the community directly and hear the community's input firsthand.

There were also several differences between stakeholders listed below:

- Residents said they want to be made aware of opportunities using effective methods. They said to rely less on traditional methods such as press releases or social media and instead use WhatsApp and go to the places where communities congregate, such as community centres, community events, and chicken shops.
- Residents said they want their involvement to have a demonstrable impact on decision-making because when that doesn't happen, it damages trust between the council and residents, which means residents don't want to get involved again.
- Staff and members said they are concerned that the council consults with the same groups, often asking similar questions, which leads to duplication of resources and consultation fatigue.

What issues should the council involve the community in?

Most staff and members recognised that the council has limited resources, so we need to prioritise what issues to involve the community in.

Staff and members felt that these include:

- Strategic plan
- Budget
- Service design
- New policies and strategies
- When there is a large amount if investment.
- Regeneration projects

When residents and partners who work directly with communities were asked, interestingly, they talked more about the issues that affect residents and their service users' everyday lives, as well as recent high-profile issues, such as:

- Recycling
- Housing issues such as mould, repair, and rent issues
- Environment, including liveable streets but also litter, graffiti and parks and open spaces
- Community safety issues
- Regeneration projects

Many residents and partners who work directly with residents spoke about being unable to get hold of council staff when they have an issue. There was a desire to improve the telephone system and bring back the One Stop Shops.
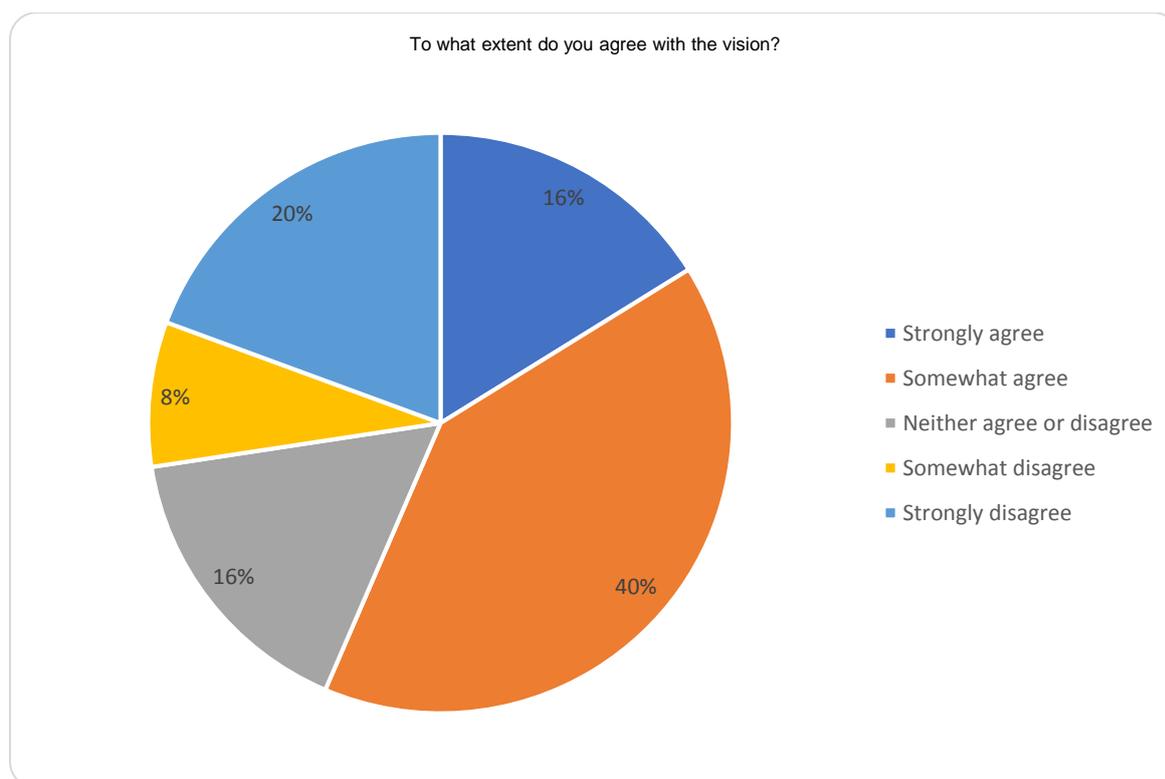
Staff and residents spoke about the importance of the community being able to set the agenda, not just being the council speaking to the communities about what is important to us but listening and responding to issues important to communities.

Staff and members spoke about significant issues in the borough. On these, there was a desire to see people brought together to learn, discuss, and make recommendations.

A limited number of people from across stakeholders said that communities should be involved in all decision-making and that community engagement should be embedded in all council interactions.

Feedback on the vision and objectives

The council asked survey respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the vision. in the survey and at workshops. The results by stakeholder group are in Appendix One. The results from the survey are below.

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To what extent do you agree with the vision?

16% — Strongly agree
40% — Somewhat agree
16% — Neither agree or disagree
8% — Somewhat disagree
20% — Strongly disagree

There were similarities in comments from the different stakeholders about the vision and objectives, which have been synthesised in the bullet points below:

- Respondents were positive about the vision and objectives in the survey and the workshops.
- Most participants felt that the vision and objectives covered the main areas required for an effective strategy.
- Language for the objectives and the strategy could be phrased more positively and written in plain English, not council jargon.
- The council should align the community engagement strategy with other relevant council and partner strategies.
- The vision and objectives are too top-down and should also be about listening to communities and empowering active citizens.
- 'Closely in partnership', should be included in the vision.

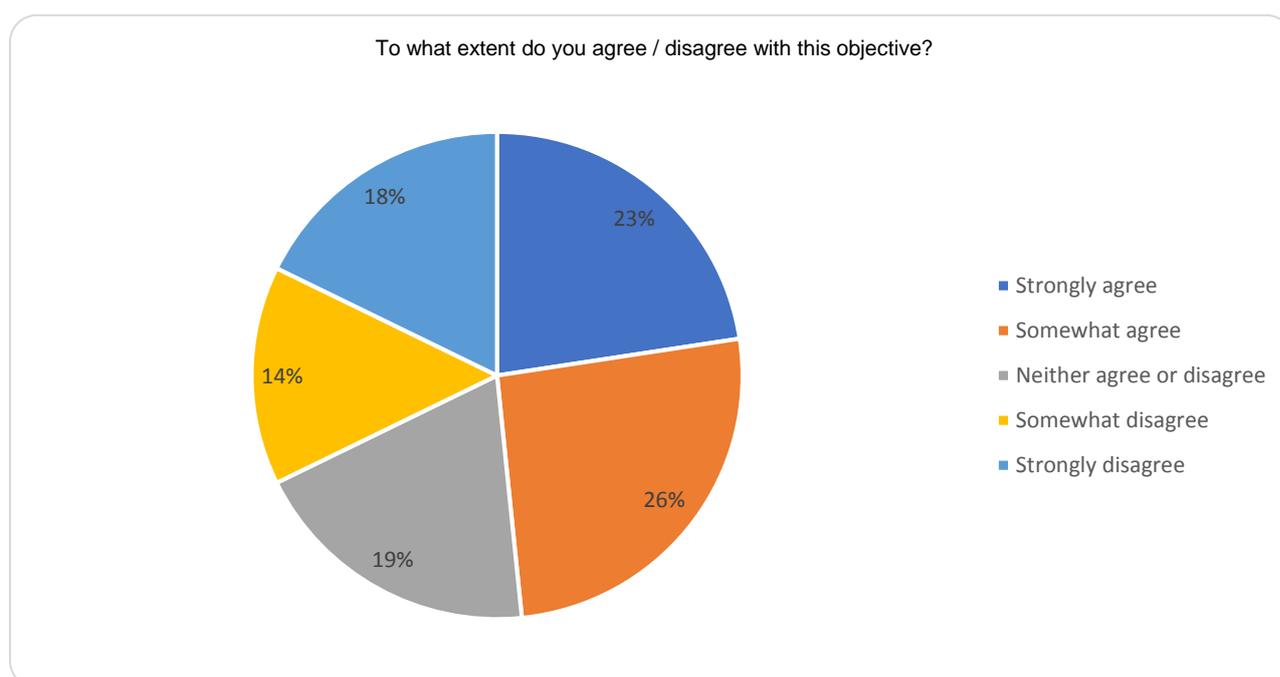There were also the following differences in comments from stakeholders:
- Some partners suggested that the vision needs to be short, and the objectives must be SMART.
- Some residents suggested that the council must work out how to measure the strategy's success and review and adjust it.
- Some partners said the strategy should include a mission and core values.
- Some staff stated that the word meaningful' needs to be defined for objective one.
- Some staff commented that there needs to be a shared understanding of what we mean by community.

We asked stakeholders if they felt any objectives were missing or if any changes were needed. Their suggestions are as follows:

- An objective should say about reaching out to and involving the seldom-heard people.
- An objective should say that engagement leads to good services and better customer satisfaction.
- An objective about building trust with the community by being honest, transparent, and accountable.
- An objective about the council ensuring that residents have a say and feel heard.
- An objective about empowering communities to become active citizens and the next generation of community leaders.
- An objective about embedding co-production.

Objective 1: The council provides meaningful opportunities for the community to influence the decisions that impact their lives.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with this objective.

To what extent do you agree / disagree with this objective?

- Strongly agree — 23%
- Somewhat agree — 26%
- Neither agree or disagree — 19%
- Somewhat disagree — 14%
- Strongly disagree — 18%

During the survey and the workshops, we asked stakeholders to tell us what they thought about the draft objective and to provide ideas on achieving it.

A summary of the comments provided on the objectives are as follows:

- There are currently limited opportunities for meaningful engagement in the decision-making process for residents.
- There needs to be more face-to-face opportunities for communities to influence council decisions.
- The objective should explicitly mention 'empowering communities'.

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- Instead of only mentioning 'meaningful opportunities' it should include 'meaningful and consistent' opportunities.
- Council staff should go into communities, listen to issues, and develop solutions together with communities.
- The Mayor and members should be visible, and accept invitations from resident groups for events.   .

Ideas on how to achieve the objectives:

- Have tea and chat sessions in community where residents can speak to officers and members.
- Utilise 'Citizens Science' as an engagement approach.
- Recruit community champions from different wards who can engage residents from various backgrounds and who council can consult with.
- Recruit and train local people to become community researchers. Community research involves training residents to identifying issues in their community and come up with solutions.
- Have area forums with budgets attached. Area Forums are meetings held locally, often hosted by the local council. They typically comprise residents, councillors, senior representatives from the local authorities, and other key stakeholders, to debate key topics and answer residents' questions face-to-face.
- Restart 'Ask the mayor' events in the community, which the council could deliver with partners.
- Member walkabouts – members organising periodic walkabout, which will be good for members to be more visible and pick up issues.
- Cabinet – not always holding Cabinet in the Town Hall but taking it to different areas of the borough.
- Respond to petitions; when a certain number adds their name, it is debated in the council chamber.
- Bring back One Stop Shops so when residents have issues, they can be resolved quickly.
- Encourage diversity in boards of different organisations so that the organisations are representative and can speak on behalf of the borough's diverse community.
- The council should adopt a bottom-up approach and have community development officers based in communities, whose job is to build relationships with residents and partners and bring people together to act on the important things to them.
- Council should work with communities and partners to co-design / co-produce projects and services, including how the engagement objectives can be delivered, impact can be assessed, and feedback can be given.
- The council needs to work with communities to understand what meaningful opportunities and use the information to assess the engagement opportunities the council is providing.

Objective 2: Community engagement activities are well communicated and are inclusive and accessible for all Tower Hamlets residents.

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Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with this objective. The results are below.
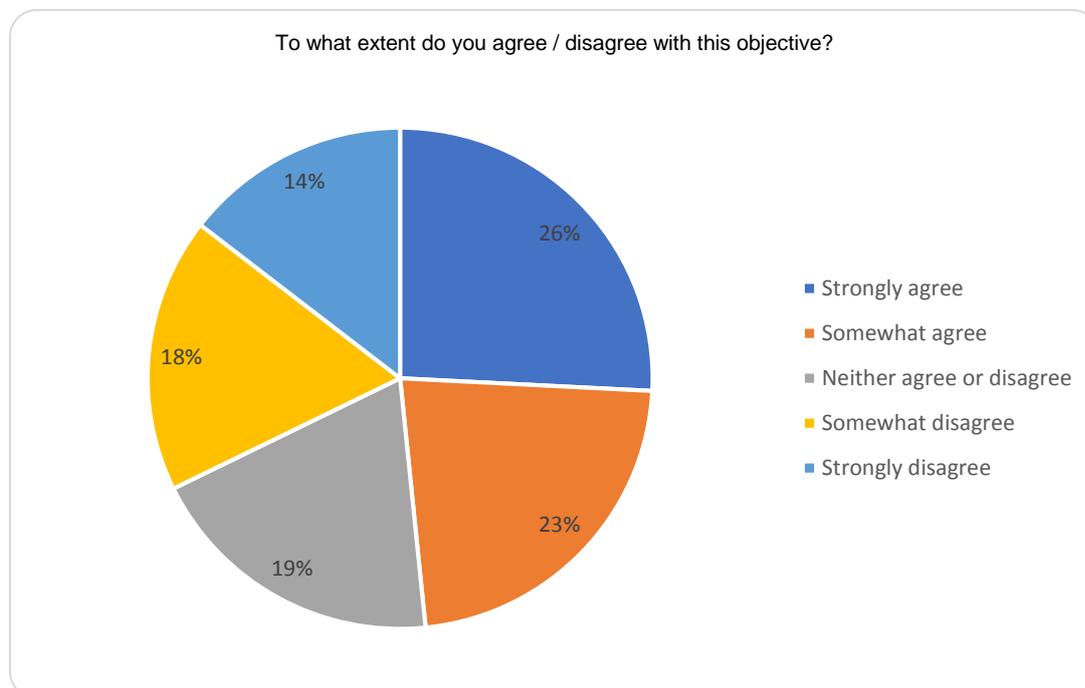
During the survey and the workshops, we asked stakeholders to tell us what they think about the draft objective and provide ideas for achieving it.

A summary of the comments provided on the objectives are as follows:

- All stakeholders thought a database of contacts was a good idea. However, it will require someone to manage it so it is updated regularly.
- Along with directory of external organisations the council should create a directory of council services to engage with when developing strategy.
- The council should reach out to residents more rather than expecting residents to come to the council.
- Recognition and reward can be things other than money, like a small trophy, certificate, gift card, work experience, or career development.
- There is a perception that the council mainly uses digital communications, i.e., social media and e-newsletters, to communicate with residents. However, many find more traditional forms of publicity like leaflets, posters, newsletters through the post more effective and visible.
- Many residents are digitally excluded and cannot access digital platforms to access information, so non-digital activities should be provided.
- There is a perception that only a small proportion of the community is being engaged through the council's engagement and communication methods.
- WhatsApp is an effective way to reach large groups of people, including many who are seldom heard.
- The delivery of strategies and policies needs to be inclusive and should not favour one community over others, as it can lead to community tensions.
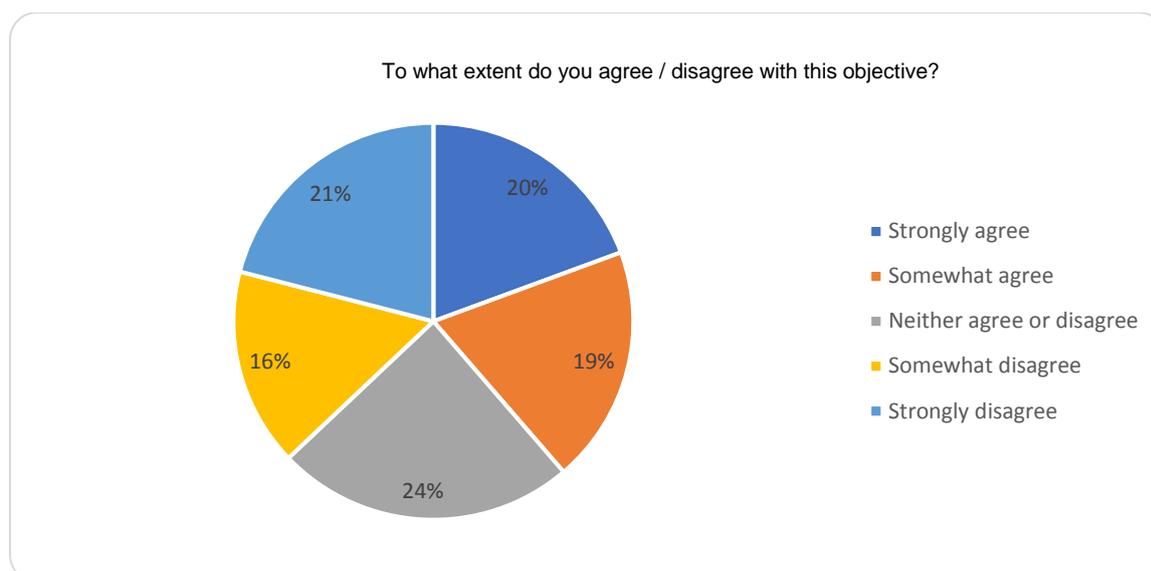
- There needs to be better partnership working with the voluntary and community sector to reach diverse groups seldom heard groups.
- 'Culturally appropriate' should be added before inclusive and accessible.
- Some residents have stated that they are not aware of what's going on and have never been approached to get involved with anything.

Ideas on how to achieve the objectives:

- Have an annual awards ceremony that recognised those who have influenced local decision making. This could be built into the existing Civic Awards.
- Recruit apprentices who gain qualifications and work experience in research and community engagement.
- Better use of videos to promote community engagement opportunities.
- Organise intergenerational sessions with families where they can take part in community engagement together.
- Identify community leaders in communities who have large networks who can promote council messages through Whatsapp and social media.
- Make more use of community media that residents use.
- People have different learning styles so create council communications in different formats, including:
  - Information in different languages
  - Alternative text on all pictures,
  - Using plain English
- Provide opportunities for residents who don't speak English to develop English speaking skills.
- Actively engage with VCS organisations already working with seldom-heard communities.
- Provide adequate time for publicity of engagement activities and events.

Objective 3: The impact that resident's involvement has had on shaping council decisions is communicated effectively.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with this objective. The results are below.

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To what extent do you agree / disagree with this objective?

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

During the survey and the workshops, we asked stakeholders to tell us what they thought about the draft objective and to provide ideas on achieving it.

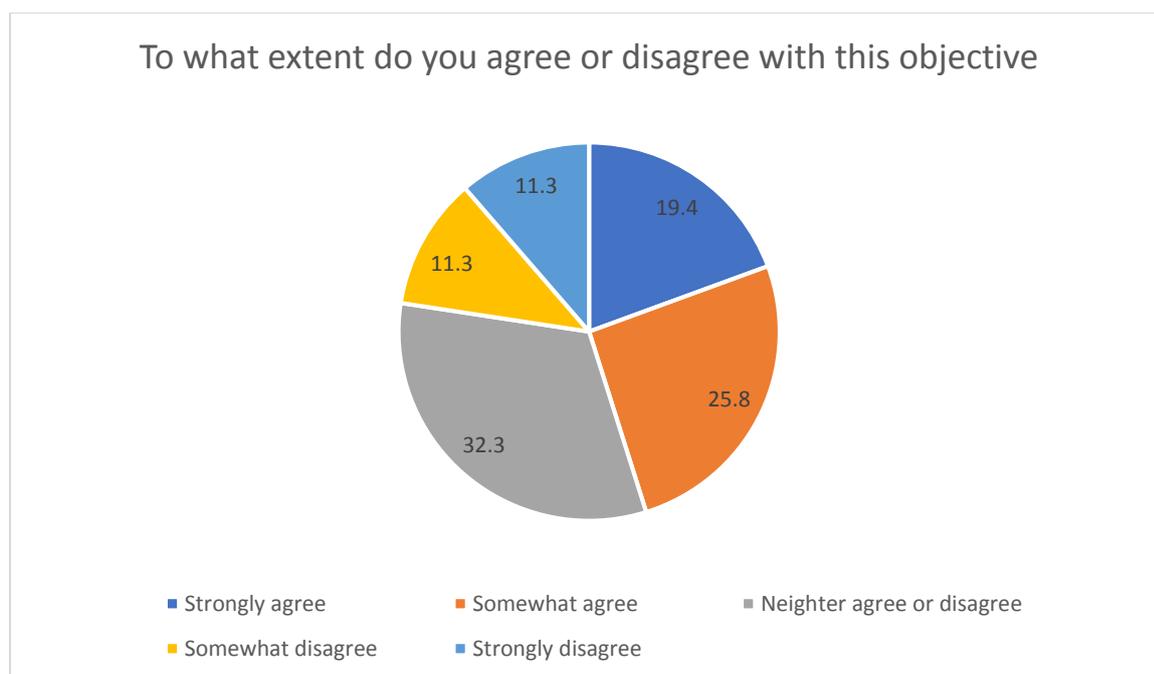A summary of the comments provided on the objectives are as follows:

- Ensure the council uses print methods to share the impact of resident's involvement.
- Let's Talk Tower Hamlets is not easy for some people to use. Registration is a barrier for people to complete the surveys.
- Work with communities to understand what effective communication from the council means to them rather than making assumptions.
- The council needs to be transparent and honest with residents and partners about what the council can or cannot deliver and the reasons why.
- There needs to be more trust that residents' and partners' voices will be listened to and that their opinions will lead to change.
- Make more use of locations visible to residents regularly to publicize impact, such as supermarket noticeboards, community centres, and billboards.

Ideas on how to achieve the objectives:
- Use existing newsletters from different partners to communicate impact to residents.
- Use personalised methods of communication to residents to say thank you such as having personalised postcards.
- Use public meetings and events.
- Use different visual techniques, such as infographics.

Objective 4: Staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to deliver high quality community engagement.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the objectives. The results are below.

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To what extent do you agree or disagree with this objective

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neighter agree or disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

During the survey and the workshops, we asked stakeholders to tell us what they think about the draft objective and to provide ideas on achieving it.

A summary of the comments provided on the objectives are as follows:

- Two respondents who filled in the survey said the objective reads incorrectly and should say 'high-quality community engagement.'
- A survey respondent said that training should not only be for frontline staff but for council staff and members at all levels.
- Several survey respondents said it is not only about knowledge and skills, but the resources part of the statement is essential to ensure adequate resources to deliver the strategy effectively.
- All workshop participants said they think the objective is a good idea to develop staff knowledge and skills to deliver community engagement effectively.
- A community engagement coordinator will be necessary to ensure good coordination of community engagement activities.
- One resident said we should remove the word necessary because they felt it limits the scope to compliance and training, not continuous learning and development.
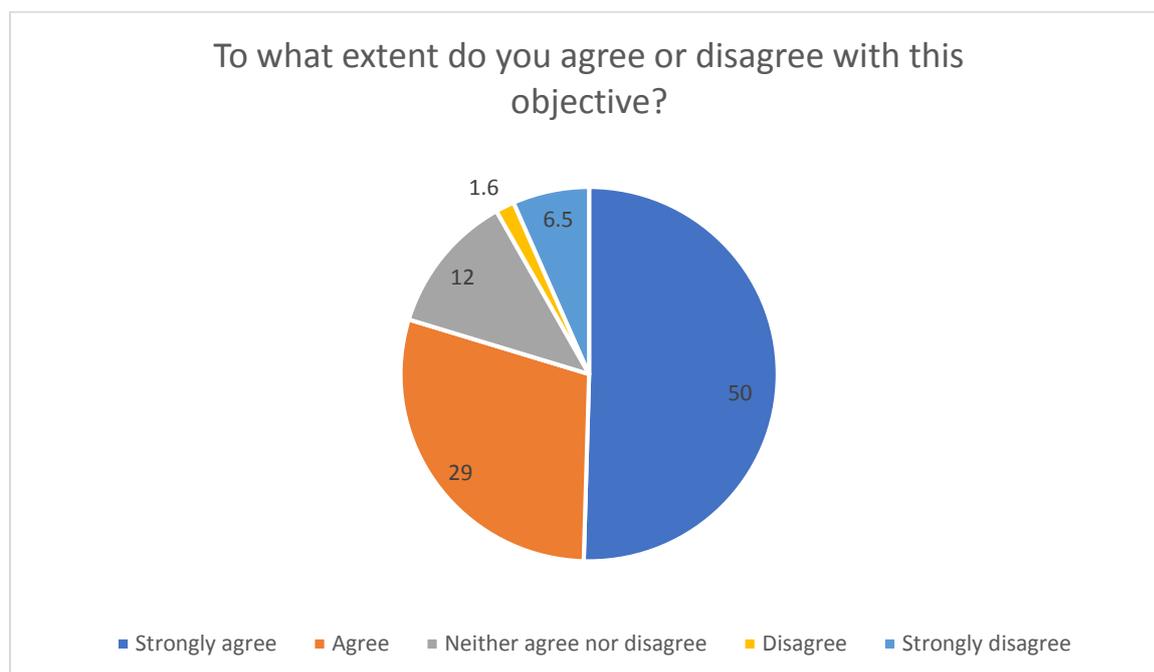
Ideas on how to achieve the objectives:

- Create a community engagement team that leads strategic community engagement projects, supports the workforce to develop their knowledge and skills, and helps coordinate community engagement across the council.
- Developing a how-to guide/toolkit that outlines good practices that staff can use when planning, delivering, and evaluating community engagement.
- Provide training and development opportunities for staff to develop the confidence and skills to deliver community engagement effectively.

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- Develop a bank of good practice case studies that are both written and in video form so other staff can learn from them and gain inspiration.
- When staff start working at the council, they could do a week-long induction to spend time in the community, visit different services, and meet the voluntary and community sector.
- Bring officers together who lead on community engagement periodically to share good practices and lessons learned.

- Set up a community engagement practitioners network through which those involved in community engagement can be supported. This can include a Viva Engage group.
- Put community engagement knowledge, skills, and experience into the job descriptions of key staff to ensure we recruit staff with the ability and desire to deliver good community engagement.

Objective 5: A joined-up approach to coordinating and planning community engagement activities across the council, and with partners, leads to better outcomes.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the objectives. The results are below.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this objective?

- Strongly agree: 50
- Agree: 29
- Neither agree nor disagree: 12
- Disagree: 1.6
- Strongly disagree: 6.5

During the survey and the workshops, we asked stakeholders to tell us what they think about the draft objective and to provide ideas on achieving it.

A summary of the comments provided on the objectives are as follows:

- The council needs to be honest about its challenges and constraints in delivering high-quality community engagement.
- There is lots of support for better partnership working, but some scepticism about whether it can be delivered in practice.

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- The council can't solve every problem in Tower Hamlet's itself, so working with other organisations on shared challenges is essential.
- Staff and partners felt that the council doesn't currently coordinate community engagement well, which leads to consultation fatigue and duplication.
- Voluntary and community sector organisations said that if the council is working in partnership with other organisations, then it needs to treat them as equal partners.

Ideas on how to achieve these objectives:

- Create an engagement calendar at the beginning of each year with the community engagement projects listed.
- All the opportunities for community engagement in council services across the council should be mapped, and the important ones should be prioritized to ensure they have adequate resources.
- At a strategic level, the council should engage the Partnership Executive Group to agree on opportunities to work together to give communities a say.
- The council should attend the partnership meeting for strategic leads in community engagement hosted by Tower Hamlets Together, where they can share upcoming opportunities.
- More opportunities for staff who deliver community engagement to meet up regularly to share their work and lessons learned.
- Identify where organisations have shared interests and pool money and resources to achieve shared goals.
- Create a place to store the results of previous consultations that can be accessed and used by other council services.

Additional insights

Many residents and voluntary and community sector partners said they find it difficult to get hold of a council departments when they have an issue, because no one picks up the phone.

Residents expect the council to get the basics right, such as answering the phone, cleaning the streets, and making housing repairs. If not, this will affect their willingness to participate in community engagement.

Some residents strongly felt that the council needed to listen to the community on other matters, such as complaint handling.

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Recommendations

By analysing the findings from the consultation, the council has identified recommendations for developing the strategy, and a list of actions that will achieve the draft vision and objectives. They are as follows:

Recommendation for developing the strategy

Design principles of good practice – The new strategy should include principles of good practice based on the feedback from stakeholders about what good community engagement looks like. These principles should guide the council's community engagement work.

Prioritising community engagement – The community doesn't want to be involved in all council decisions but wants to be involved in decisions that affect their everyday lives, so the council should prioritise community engagement on those matters.

Demonstrating the importance of consultations – When the council wants to involve the community in important decisions, such as the strategic plan, budget, or strategy development, we must show why it matters to communities and use effective methods.

Getting the basics right – To improve relationships and trust in the community, the council needs to get the basics right. For many residents, this means being able to speak to someone on the phone or in a council building when they have an issue. Residents and voluntary and community sector partners are less willing to engage without this.

More opportunities for co-production – In some instances informing and consulting communities is the most appropriate level of participation. However, the council should find more opportunities to come together with residents with lived experience and other key stakeholders to making decisions on an equal basis. There are different methods and approaches to doing this, and the council should enable its staff to deliver them.

Use plain English – change the vision and objectives so they are written in plain English. Also, write the strategy in plain English.

Adjust the objectives – develop the objectives so they are not as top-down by having an objective about empowering communities to become active citizens and the next generation of community leaders and include to building trust with communities and ensure residents feel heard into the objectives.

Visibility of the Mayor and elected members – To build trust with communities and partners the mayor and elected members should restart the Ask the Mayor events, ensure consistent surgeries, and continue to organise opportunities for the

Mayor and elected members to spend with the community to listen and respond to their issues.

Actions to achieve the draft objectives

The project team worked together to prioritise the actions the council should include in the Community Engagement Strategy. They are as follows:

Objective one: The council provides meaningful opportunities for the community to influence the decisions that impact their lives.

- **Ask the Mayor events** - To share information relevant to the ward hosting the event, helping residents better understand and influence priorities for their local areas.
- **Locality Working** – Working in partnership with Tower Hamlets Together to understand the needs of localities and bring partners and the community together to act on the things important to communities.
- **Annual residents survey** – An annual survey to Understand residents' views of the council and if they feel they have a say over the decisions that affect them.
- **Online engagement** – Review Lets Talk Tower Hamlets and explore an online engagement tool that has a wider range of functionality and enables officers to deliver surveys, polls, crowdsourcing, etc.
- **Tea & chat** - Arrange drop-in sessions where the community members can share their views and issues can be resolved.
- **Community events** – Utilise community events so residents can speak with elected members, senior managers, and services.
- **Participatory budgeting** – Explore how residents can be involved in spending decisions in their localities.
- **Scrutiny** – Explore options for how residents and the voluntary and community sector can be more involved in scrutiny reviews and how these feeds into policy.
- **Citizen's science** – residents and voluntary and community organisations collaborate in the collecting, analysing and recommending on research.

Objective two: Community engagement activities are well communicated, inclusive, and accessible for all Tower Hamlets residents.

- **Database of contacts** - Create a database with contacts of key stakeholders, networks, and forums the council can contact when conducting engagement activities.
- **Recognition and reward** - Agree on an approach to reward and recognition that enables greater resident participation.
- **Equalities Hub and Networks** – Strengthen the work of Equalities Hub and Community Equality Networks to enable residents with protected characteristics to influence council decision-making.
- **Monitoring engagement** – Provide guidance on how to monitor who is responding to our engagement activity so we can identify if particular groups

are not taking part and adjust our engagement programme to ensure that all relevant points of view contribute to our decision making

- **Community connectors** – identifying residents and partners who are well connected and who can promote council communications in a way that happens with social media influencers.
- **Staff inductions** – when staff start at the council, they will get to know the community and spend time in different departments.
- **Publicising engagement** - Ensuring that information and engagement opportunities are publicised in different formats to ensure our communications style meets the needs of diverse communities.
- **Civic education** - Develop a targeted approach to civic education on local democracy through local schools and in Young Tower Hamlets.

Objective three: The impact of resident involvement on shaping council decisions is communicated effectively.

- **Using council communications** – Feeding back to the community by having 'you said we did' sections in the resident's newsletters and promoting outcomes through the council's social media channels.
- **Celebration and information events** – when the decisions are finalised, inviting those who have taken part to a celebration and information event sharing event where appropriate.
- **Annual awards ceremony** – holding an annual awards ceremony to celebrating the impact of community leaders. This could be built into the annual Civic Awards that already takes place.
- **Let's Talk Tower Hamlets** – Use the 'You Said, We Did' function on Let's Talk Tower Hamlets to let communities know about the impact of their involvement.
- **Personalised postcards** – Send everyone who took part a personalised postcard to say thanks and explain their involvement's impact.
- **Infographics** – better use of infographics to share information visually.

Objective four: Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources to deliver high-quality community engagement.

- **Create a community engagement team** - that leads strategic community engagement projects, supports the workforce to develop their knowledge and skills, and helps coordinate community engagement across the council.
- **Refresh the community engagement handbook** – Refresh the council's how-to guide on delivering effective community engagement with accompanying templates. This will be made available on The Bridge.
- **Training and development** - Organise learning opportunities for relevant staff to develop their knowledge, skills, and capabilities through e-learning modules, face-to-face training sessions, learning sets led by different services, or mentoring and coaching opportunities.
- **Co-production academy** – organise training and learning by doing approach on co-production where staff from different services take part in training and have access to coaching on co-production and then deliver co-production projects.

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- **Case studies** - Develop a bank of good practice case studies that are both written and in video form so other staff can learn from them and gain inspiration.
- **Recruit staff with community engagement experience** - Put community engagement knowledge, skills, and experience into the job descriptions and person specifications when recruiting key staff.
- **Member development** – Training and development opportunities for members on how to engage with communities effectively.

Objective five: A joined-up approach to coordinating and planning community engagement activities across the council and with partners leads to better outcomes.

- **Service planning** – During service planning, each service will identify the opportunities for communities to be involved in decision-making, and this will form part of their service plans.
- **Develop a community engagement calendar** - This will act as a central database, setting out details and timeframes for taking part in all council community engagement activities.
- **Community Engagement Network** - Creating a network of staff who do community engagement to come together periodically to update on work and share best practice.
- **Repository of previous engagement results** - Create a place to store the results of previous consultations that can be accessed and used by other council services.
- **Partnership working** - Participate in Tower Hamlets Together's partnership group for strategic leads in community engagement.
- **Lead officers** – Each council division will identify a community engagement lead who will coordinate community engagement.
- **Strategy delivery group** - Establish a working group with officers from relevant departments to monitor, review, and revise the Community Engagement Strategy.

Appendices

Demographic data of survey respondents

Ethnicity	Percentage	Number of responses
Asian British Bangladeshi	23.30%	7
Other Asian Background	6.70%	2
Black / Black British	3.30%	1
Other Black African	3.30%	1
Black Black British Carribean	3.30%	1
Any other background	3.30%	1
White British	36.70%	11
Other White Background	13.33%	4
Prefer not to say	6.70%	2

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Age	Percentage	Number of responses
25-34	16.10%	5
35-44	35.50%	11
45-54	25.80%	8
55-64	16.10%	5
65-74	3.20%	1
75-84	3.20%	1

Gender	Percentage	Number of responses
Man	36.70%	11
Woman	60%	18
Prefer to self-describe	3.30%	1

Is your gender identity the same as the sex you were assigned at birth?	Percentage	Number of responses
Yes	96.70%	29
No	3.30%	1
Prefer not to say	0	0

Religion or belief	Percentage	Number of responses
No religion or belief	40%	12
Muslim	26.70%	8
Christian	20%	6
Buddhist	3.30%	1
Humanist	3.30%	1
Prefer not to say	6.70%	2

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months (include any problems related to old age)?	Percentage	Number of responses
Yes	9.70%	3
No	90.30%	28

Sexual Orientation	Percentage	Number of responses
Gay	16.70%	5
Bi-sexual	6.70%	2
Hetrosexual / straight	66.70%	20
Prefer not to say	10%	3

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Do you have caring or parenting responsibilities?	Percentage	Number of responses
Yes	46.70%	14
No	46.70%	14
Prefer not to say	6.70%	2

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