



Comisiynydd
**Cenedlaethau'r
Dyfodol**
Cymru

**Future
Generations**
Commissioner
for Wales



A Journey to Involvement

1: Enabling and embedding a culture of meaningful citizen and stakeholder involvement

2: Working with people and stakeholders to understand their needs, aspirations and ideas

3: Ensuring people's needs, aspirations and ideas are taken into account and reflected in decision-making





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A Journey to Involvement

In the Well-being of Future Generations Act, involvement is defined as part of the 'Sustainable Development Principle' as follows:

A public body must take account of:

(b) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of

i. Wales (where the body exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales, or:

ii. The part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions.



Defining the way of working

As a way of working, involvement is about having rich and meaningful conversations with the people in your community, finding out what matters to them, and reflecting that in the decisions that you take.

A recent UK survey found that only 27% of adults agreed they could personally influence decisions. There is also a feeling of 'consultation fatigue' due to multiple instances of uncoordinated involvement on similar issues, and people are not always able to see how their views are taken on board.

Involvement requires organisations to be open to influence from citizens and stakeholders, moving to a culture of 'working with' rather than 'doing to'. In contrast to consultation, involvement approaches work with people at earlier stages, such as helping to identify issues and potential solutions, and being supported to remain involved right throughout design, implementation and evaluation processes.



Case studies

Throughout the document you will find a number of reports relating to the topic subject. Please read the link if you see this symbol.



Defining the way of working

Where to focus action in contributing to this way of working

Enable a culture of meaningful involvement in your organisation

[\(See involvement journey topic 1: Organisational culture of involvement\)](#)

Work with people and stakeholders to understand their needs, aspirations and ideas

[\(See involvement journey topic 2: Front-facing involvement\)](#)

Ensure you reflect people's needs, aspirations and ideas in decision making and show how you've done this

[\(See involvement journey topic 3: Impact and communication of involvement\)](#)

Enablers

Achieving this way of working is **more likely to happen** when...

- **Organisations enable the space, time and resource for meaningful involvement.**
- **Citizens understand the relevance of involvement to their lives, and see it as a vehicle for making change happen.**
- **Organisations explain the impact involvement has had – for example a ‘you said, we did’ approach, building transparency and trust.**
- **Existing projects prove that good involvement can add value and save long term costs.**
- **Involvement is seen as enjoyable and worthwhile; for staff, organisations and citizens.**
- **Involvement is co-ordinated and not siloed.**



Disablers

Achieving this way of working is **less likely to happen** when...

- **Organisations do not invest in the skills and allow the time to involve people and meaningfully transfer the outcomes into policy and decision making.**
- **Ongoing involvement of a diverse group of citizens and stakeholders is seen as time consuming and confusing due to differing views.**
- **Decision makers are not held to account in relation to public input.**
- **Organisations take traditional 'consultation' approaches to engagement.**
- **Communicating what has changed as a result of involvement is inconsistent, and citizens feel they have 'consultation fatigue'.**





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Involvement

3: Impact and Communication of Involvement

Ensuring people's needs, aspirations and ideas are taken into account and reflected in decision-making

Defining the issue

In 2014/15, 20% of people in Wales agreed that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, compared with 24% in 2012/13.

To ensure transparent, responsive and better designed public services, organisations need to better demonstrate that they are listening to what people have to say and are acting upon it. It is important that organisations are open to change as a result of public and stakeholder involvement, and those changes are deliberated and clearly communicated with the public in a timely manner.

Synergies and connections to other journeys



Journey to a Wales of cohesive communities

Topic 4: Community anchor organisations



Journey to a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Topic 5: Culture available to all



Making **Simple** Changes

Clearly state the extent to which public involvement has the scope to influence a decision in the first instance.

Explore different tools, approaches and methodologies to involving people and shared decision-making, using examples from resources such as Participedia, The Co-production Network and Involve.

Take a 'you said, we did' approach.

Eg

E.g. [Aneurin Bevan Health Board demonstrates how this can be done well.](#)

Eg

E.g. [Public Health Wales explain the importance of transparency and closing the loop.](#)

HOME

Ensure you are valuing and using individual stories as well as quantitative data.

Ensure representation and participation opportunities are available and appropriate for young people, in line with the [Children and Young People's National Participation Standards](#). This means having language that is accessible and the content is tailored for children and young people, ensuring you communicate what difference their involvement will make.

Eg

Ensure opportunities for involvement are engaging and fun; especially when involving young people.

E.g. **Welsh Government** used a poster competition to engage young people around their Low Carbon pathway consultation – [see page 162.](#)

Being More Adventurous

Use weighted decision-making to allow citizens and service users to have a proportion of the final say in a decision.

Eg

E.g. The **Cwm Taf substance misuse strategy** and tendering process involved young people throughout, and gave a percentage of the [final decision-making power to young people](#).

Use participatory budgeting for small projects and pilots.

Eg

E.g. [St Asaph Town Council's Your City Your Choice Project](#) has demonstrated this.

Carry out stakeholder mapping and take a proactive approach to guarantee representation from the diversity of people affected by a decision. This should go beyond ensuring representation of protected groups; involving the views from a variety of circumstances and socio-economic backgrounds.

Demonstrate impact of involvement and why decisions have been made, illustrating them with lived experience examples or case studies.

Evidence the social and financial benefits of citizen involvement.

Eg

E.g. [Welsh Womens Aid demonstrate this through using the Kafka approach](#).

Owning your **Ambition**

Services are designed through co-commissioning, involving service users and stakeholders. This includes the tendering and commissioning criteria, representation in the decision making, and evaluation of the process. This covers initiatives such as a citizens' scrutiny or oversight boards.

There is a long-term commitment to participatory budgeting, with an allocated percentage of budget spent using it.

Eg

E.g. [5% of Paris' budget is allocated by participatory budgeting.](#)

There is regular systematic feedback in multiple formats, and the opportunity for continuing public dialogue and challenge.

The learning and information from public involvement, in local and regional decisions, is shared with and used to influence national organisations and policy.