



Review of Public Consultation

16 March 2020



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Obtaining Evidence Sessions

Session 1 – 16 March:

- Introduction and overview including our approach to consultation,
- Our consultation platforms,
- Presentation from Nicola Moss, Ipsos MORI,

Session 2 – 27 April:

- BMBF and Viewpoint members,
- Market Research overview from Bluegrass,
- Communications Team – social media,
- Planning Department,

Session 3 – 1 June:

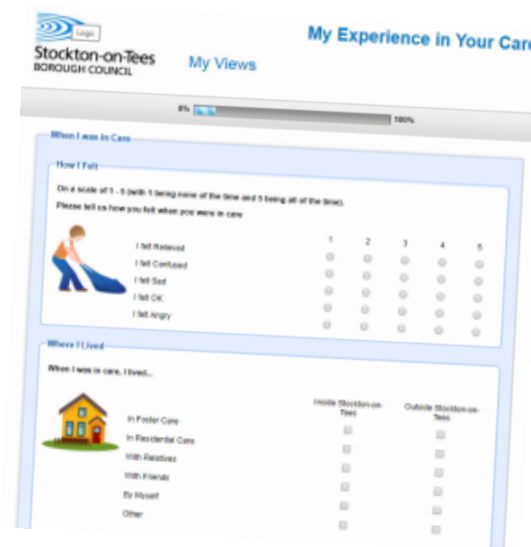
- Other council consultation,
- Case studies – examples of recent consultations.



What is consultation?



“Consultation is technically any activity that gives local people a voice and an opportunity to influence important decisions. It involves listening to, and learning from, local people before decisions are made or priorities are set.”



Why do we consult?

The Local Government Act 1999 includes a general requirement on local authorities to undertake consultation on the provision of services.

- We encourage public participation in the decision-making process and will consult if there is an identified objective to:
 - Understand what our residents think,
 - Better understand our communities,
 - Improve our services,
 - Provide value for money,
 - Keep residents informed and engaged,
- Do we need to consult?
 - Statutory and non-statutory,



Consultations 2019/20

In the last year there have been a total of 93 consultations (including surveys) across all Directorates.

Directorate	Consultations	Responses
Adults & Health	17	1427
Children's Services	9	469
Community Services	3	253
Culture, Leisure and Events	25	1963
Economic Growth & Development	12	3184
Finance & Business Services	6	215
HR, Legal & Comms and Corporate	21	1780
Total	93	9291

2019-20 activity includes major projects, such as for the Residents' Survey and our Town Centre Consultations, which involve a wide range of consultation methods (eg. My Views, public meetings, Viewpoint, face to face market research activity) to smaller consultations on the quality of specific services.

How do we consult?

- The Gunning principles are our agreed reference point for good practice and a consultation is only relevant when these four principles are met:
 - Proposals are still at a formative stage,
 - There is sufficient information to give ‘intelligent consideration’,
 - There is adequate time for consideration and response,
 - ‘Conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.
- Our consultation activity will include surveys, events, public meetings, face-to-face/interviews, feedback, and social media to suit the size/scope of the project.

Consultation Procedure

All Local Authorities have a statutory duty to consult on a variety of services. We go far beyond any statutory duty. We believe that consultation is crucial in helping us make decisions which will affect the Borough and that consultation has a key role in informing and influencing our decision making and activities, we aim to consult with our stakeholders on many aspects of our service planning and delivery.

- Our approach:
 - Activity agreed/discussed as part of Consultation, Communications and Engagement team forward plans,
 - Single point of contact for all consultations,
 - Support across all directorates,
 - Part of Consultation, Communications and Engagement team, providing wider/on-going project support,
 - Consultation portal 'super-users' in each directorate,

Consultation Methods

We use a number of Consultation methods:

- My Views,
- Viewpoint,
- Residents Survey,
- Focus Groups,
- Social Media based consultation,
- Market Research,
- Residents Survey,
- Bright Minds Big Futures (BMBF),
- Employee Consultation,



Corporate and Service-led consultation

- We lead **Corporate Consultations**, which include consultations that may be contentious and/or could result in:
 - Changes to services,
 - Reduction in services,
 - Budgetary changes,
 - Reputational damage,
 - Press related enquiries,
 - Require bespoke promotional materials and support from comms.
- We support **Service-Led Consultations**, which would normally be in the form using surveys to gather information and opinions to:
 - Support an on-going project,
 - Inform service development,

Consultation Portal

Objective Keystone is SBC's current consultation portal, online surveying and stakeholder management system (since 2015)

- Used for all online consultation and for recording paper based consultation,
- Controlled and operated by the Consultation Team with support from 'super-users' across each Directorates,
- Ongoing system development to allow better web based integration within our Internet and intranet and to provide better links with our social media platforms.
- Consultations can be accessed via the portal, our website or via an e-mail link depending on whether the consultation is public or private,

Viewpoint



Viewpoint is the Council's voluntary, residents' consultation panel which seeks the views of residents using regular surveys that cover a range of council services.

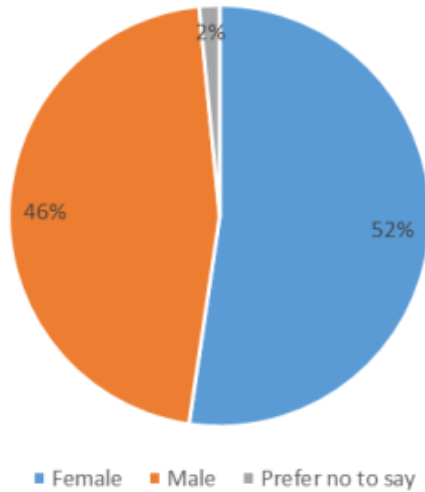
- Current membership, 193 residents from the Borough,
- Members can have their say on key council services,
- Members are sent 10 short surveys and 2 standard surveys per year;
 - Short surveys are online and take 5 mins to complete,
 - Standard surveys can be completed either online or by paper questionnaire and take no longer than 15 mins,
- Surveys are convenient and can be completed anytime, anywhere via tablet, mobile or PC,



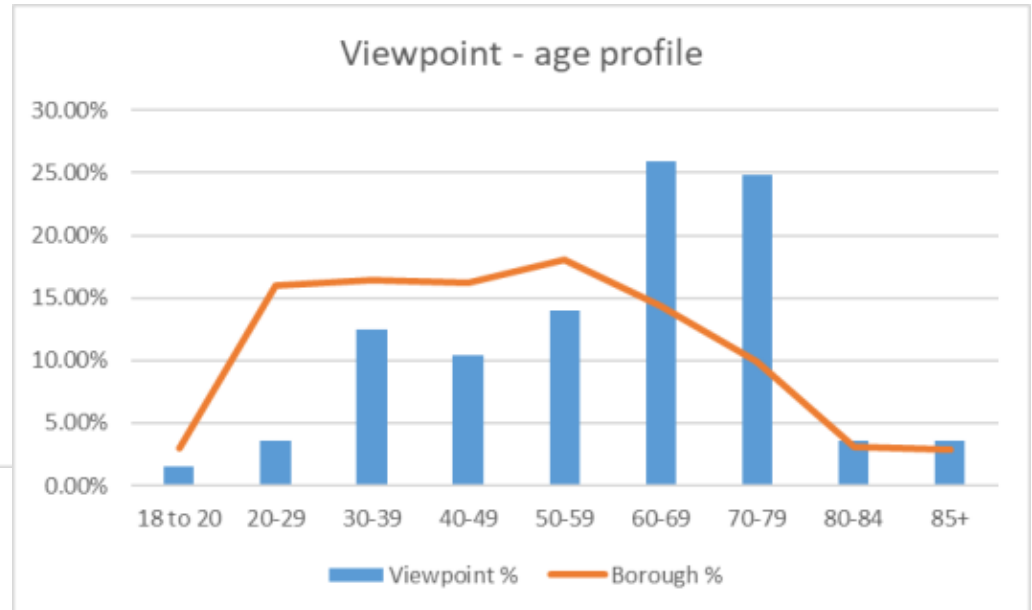
Viewpoint panel profile

Our current Viewpoint membership profile:

Viewpoint - gender profile



Viewpoint - age profile



Viewpoint panel

- Membership by group
 - Asian background, <3.5% of Borough – 0% Viewpoint,
 - Black/Black British background, <1% of Borough – 0.5% Viewpoint,
 - Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, <1.5% of Borough – 0% Viewpoint,
 - White background, 95% of Borough – 96% Viewpoint,
- Hard to reach,
- Health check – reviewed annually, refreshed every 3 years,
- Statistically relevant.



Viewpoint – response rate

2019/20	Viewpoint	Subject	Response %
June	Viewpoint 45	Family Hubs	51.81%
July	Short Survey / Poll	Compliments, Commendations, Comments & Complaints	21.76%
August	Short Survey / Poll	SIRF19	40.41%
September	Short Survey / Poll	Care Home Development	32.64%
October	Short Survey / Poll	Adult Strategy	22.28%
November	Viewpoint 46	Festivals, Events & Specialist Markets	49.22%
December	Short Survey / Poll	SIRF20 poll	23.32%
January	Short Survey / Poll	Safer Stockton Partnership	73.58%
February	Short Survey / Poll	Visual Identity	33.16%
			38.69%

The relationship between Consultation, Communication and Engagement

Consultation is any activity that gives people a voice and an opportunity to influence important decisions.

Engagement is a broader and ongoing process of sharing information and seeking feedback and helps to facilitate strong relationships.

Communications refers to a passing of information, which may be two-way in its interaction but it contains no commitment to make use of what comes back.



Ipsos MORI

“We provide true understanding and make our changing world easier to navigate, so that our clients can make faster, smarter and bolder decisions.”



Nicola Moss from Ipsos MORI

- *What are the principles of good consultation?*
- *What best practice and industry developments exist?*
- *How will the results of the four yearly Residents' Survey be shared and used?*
- *New approaches to consultation (in particular the use of social media in consultation)*