

How to Have Your Say

Statement of Community Involvement



This Statement of Community Involvement explains why Conwy County Borough Council thinks it's important for you to have your say in decisions that affect you. It sets out how the Council will involve people of all ages, from different groups, communities, businesses and organisations to find out what they think. And it explains how this will be done and the feedback that you can expect.

Who is it for?

It's for anyone who is interested in having their say about changes to the services that the Council provides and strategies/policies, and who wants to be involved in improving the future of Conwy County.

Why is community involvement important?

There are many reasons why it's important for you to have your say:

- **Rights** - you have a right to tell us what services you need and how they should be delivered.
- **Decisions** - you can provide the facts and opinions to inform our decision making, so that we make the right decisions..
- **Voice** - your views are important and we want to listen and respond
- **Resources** - resources are limited and we want to ensure that we are doing our best to meet your needs.
- **Change** - you can make a difference
- **Confidence** - we can work together so you have more confidence in what the Council does.

What you have told us

You told us you want us to make sure that people in Conwy:

- Are educated and skilled
- Are safe and feel safe
- Live in safe and appropriate housing
- Are healthy and independent
- Live in a county which has a thriving economy
- Live in a sustainable environment
- Live in a county where language, culture and heritage thrive
- Are informed, included and listened to

The 10 Principles of Public Engagement

There are significant financial challenges ahead, which will mean that there will be changes and difficult decisions to be made. Some of these decisions may not be popular. Getting the community involved will mean that we can work together to find the best way forward.

The 10 Principles are:

1. **Will it make a difference?** You should only be asked what you think if we:
 - Listen to what you have to say
 - Can change things that need to be changed
 - Can keep things the same if needed

2. **Ask the right people** The right people should be asked to take part. These can be:
 - People who use a service now
 - People who might use the service in the future
 - Parents/carers or a guardian of someone who uses a service
3. **Give everyone a chance**
 - You should be given enough time to take part.
 - You should be helped to take part in the way you want to.
 - This means we might run a fun meeting that small children can understand and enjoy and then run a different meeting for adults.
4. **Work with other organisations** - Sometimes different organisations e.g. police, health etc want to find out the same things and get the same people to take part. We should talk to each other and see if we can work together to save time and money.
5. **Talk and write clearly**
 - Information should be given in a way you are able to understand.
 - We should not use difficult words and language.
 - If needed, we should give information in easy read, audio (CD), video (DVD) or in large print.
 - Information should be given in Welsh and English and other languages if needed.
6. **Make it easy for people** - We should think of things that might make it hard for people to take part and find ways to make it easier. This means we should do things like:
 - Hold meetings in rooms that are accessible for disabled people to get into and use
 - Make sure that we hold events in places that you can get to by bus or train
 - Make sure deaf people can get involved by using sign language or subtitles
7. **Help people learn and develop** - We could help people learn:
 - How our organisation works
 - How to be more confident to say what they think
 - How to get involved in their community
 - How to get involved in politics
8. **Time and money**

We should make sure we have enough money and time. We need to have enough time to run meetings, talk to people and understand what you have told us. We may need to spend money on hiring rooms for meetings, buying lunch for people or paying for people's transport.
9. **Tell you what has happened after you have taken part**

When we have listened to what you have said we should let you know what we are going to do. There are lots of things we should do after we have got people to take part. We should:

 - Tell you if we have made a decision that we think you will agree with
 - Let you know about decisions which we think you may not agree with
 - Tell you if we are changing a service because of what you said
 - Let you know why we are not able to do what you asked for
10. **Doing it better next time**

When we ask people to take part we should think about how we can do it better next time. This means we should:

 - Ask you how easy it was for you to take part
 - See if the right people took part
 - Make sure we have found out what we need to know

The next time we ask people to participate we should do it better.

How you can get involved?

The kind of decision being made or strategy/policy being developed will determine how you might be involved.

Sometimes we'll use newsletters, our website, leaflets, posters and meetings to raise awareness and keep you informed. We'll use consultations, surveys, suggestion schemes, feedback forms and workshops or we might contact you directly if you use a service that is being looked at.

You may be asked to have your say as an individual or as part of any groups you are involved with, like residents' associations or support groups.

We'll always be looking at using the latest ways to keep you involved including social media.

Anyone who lives, works or studies in Conwy can give suggestions for future topics for consideration. You can do this by visiting the Council's website at:

www.conwy.gov.uk/scrutiny

All the consultations we do will be included on our Have Your Say Register which can be found at: www.conwy.gov.uk/haveyoursay

How will we use what you have said?

We'll use what you say, together with other research that we've got, to make decisions about what we do and how we deliver our services.

We'll provide you with feedback explaining what we do with the information you give us and summarise by saying:

- We Asked
- You Said
- We Did / We Didn't

so that you are clear about how we have used the comments and information you've given us.

We will keep your personal details confidential. Information you give us about you e.g. age, gender, disability (equality information) will be used to make sure we are talking to everyone we need to.

How will we know if this statement is making a difference?

We'll check to make sure that we are doing what we've said we'll do in this Statement, and every year we'll produce a Community Involvement Report to show what we've done.

How you can help us improve

If you have a suggestion for improvement, a compliment, comment or concern with your experience of something we've done when getting you involved, you'll be able to contact someone to discuss it. You'll find details of who you need to speak to on the website at www.conwy.gov.uk/haveyoursay

Or you can contact haveyoursay@conwy.gov.uk or call 01492 576239 or write to: Have Your Say, Conwy County Borough Council, Bodlondeb, Conwy, LL32 8DU.

If you feel you have not had a positive experience and want to make a complaint you can use the Council's complaint procedure. Details of this can be found at: www.conwy.gov.uk/complaints

You can also contact your County Borough Councillor, contact details can be found at: www.conwy.gov.uk/mq/councillors or calling Member Services on (01492) 576067/8/9 or member.services@conwy.gov.uk