



Exeter City Council

Report on Consultation Work Carried Out in Respect of the Leisure and Museums Draft Strategy Document

Terms of Reference

To report on the consultation process carried out in connection with the draft Leisure and Museums Strategy and provide feedback on the results, as requested by the Head of Service.

Procedure

1. Advice and guidance was sought from Communications Team
2. Advice and guidance was sought from Policy Team in respect of hard to hear communities
3. Consultation "best practice" was shared at a directorate event in January 2008
4. A consultation plan was drafted by Head of Service and Service Improvement Officer with input from unit management team (Appendix 1) and an action plan developed
5. Questions were included in Wavelength 17 and distributed to the Wavelength panel in April 2008
6. The consultation process was launched via press releases and an article published in the Exeter Citizen magazine
7. The draft strategy and consultation questionnaire was given front page coverage and access on the Exeter City Council Website
8. Exeter City Council staff were asked to provide input, using the same questionnaire, via the intranet (again home page access was provided)
9. A bid was successfully submitted to SMT to present the draft strategy at the Community Forum in June 2008 where paper copies of the draft strategy and questionnaires were available
10. Over 150 local voluntary and professional organisations were contacted and asked to complete the questionnaire
11. Organisations with direct access to "hard to hear" groups such as ethnic minorities, disabled people, people with mental ill health etc were contacted and agreed to distribute the draft strategy and consultation questionnaire on behalf of the council
12. Older people in the community had the opportunity to give their views at an annual event held specifically for the over 50s (Getting the Most out of Life), as did younger members of the community at a separate "youth engagement day"
13. A display was erected in the Customer First foyer in the Civic Centre showing the diversity of work carried out by the unit, headlining the aims of the draft strategy and asking members of the public to fill out the questionnaire and post their completed forms into the ballot box provided
14. Feedback was collated by the Communications Team with assistance from the Directorate Support Unit
15. Consultation closes end of July

Findings:

Feedback from all areas of the consultation has been very positive with the majority of the people who responded either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the priorities set out by the unit in the draft strategy. There were two notable exceptions: Within Play the score for the priority "Build a workplace health network to promote healthier lifestyles" was 64.6% with 35.5% saying that this was not important: Within Museum the priority "Make our collections and information more available via the internet and digital formats" scored 66.6% with 33.4% of respondents saying that this was not important.

All four services areas (Canal & Countryside, Museums, Play and Physical Activities) were seen as being important to the city but levels of satisfaction varied considerably.

- Canal & Countryside 92%
- Museums 75.2%
- Physical Activities 63.5%
- Play 49%

Levels of usage also varied.

- Canal & Countryside 78.2% using monthly or more
- Sports/leisure facilities 40.5% using monthly or more
- Play areas/facilities and events 37.7% using monthly or more
- Museums & Galleries 29.5% using monthly or more

A full breakdown of the results is at Appendix 2

Conclusions:

It is widely agreed that the public response to a strategy consultation is not normally very high and we are therefore extremely pleased with the response we have received in this particular case. There are some interesting suggestions to enhance the strategy and some feedback, received via the freetext comments section, to be passed on to other units in the council e.g. Economy and Tourism and Parks and Open Spaces.

Some small adjustments will need to be made to the draft strategy as a result of the consultation process and the final document will then be released in October 2008. The final strategy will be launched via press release and on the internet (front-page with link). The changes which are made as a result of our consultation will be highlighted to ensure the citizens of Exeter can see that their voices have been heard and that their input is valued. All of the organisations which have taken part in the consultation process will also be contacted and directed to the final Strategy document and thanked for their feedback.

Liaising with the Consultation Officer in the Communications Team has been hugely beneficial and an excellent learning experience. This will be carried forward and shared with the rest of the unit for use in future consultation work.

Marie Thornton
Service Improvement Officer

July 2008

Exeter City Council - Leisure & Museums Strategy

Consultation Plan

The Council's Community Scrutiny Committee recently approved a draft Leisure and Museums Strategy. This new document replaces the previous strategy which had been in place for 5 years. Whereas the previous strategy concentrated very much on tangible developments, the new one focuses more on the outcomes the Council would wish to see from its considerable investment in cultural facilities and services. Those outcomes are better health, more opportunities for education and learning, an improved environment, greater community involvement through events around the city and an improved quality of life.

The Council has decided to seek advice and comment from a broad range of interests with a view to improving and adapting the strategy to make it more effective and transparent. It will use different forms of consultation appropriate to the audience.

The audiences are:

General Public:	General users of the Council's cultural services
Voluntary Groups:	Clubs, associations and other organisations which represent general users.
Staff:	All members of the Unit
Colleagues:	Other members of Exeter City Council staff
Professional Agencies:	Organisations representing various interests within the cultural sphere
Hard to hear:	Members or organisations representing groups who face particular barriers in finding out about or using the Council's cultural services

General Public

10 questions will be included in the Wavelength Questionnaire due to be sent out in March 2008.

Residents of the city will be made aware of the strategy via the Council website where they can see a copy, and fill in a structured feedback form (same questions as L&M section of Wavelength questionnaire. Those who choose can telephone for a paper copy of the strategy, which will be sent with the same questions.

The questionnaire will ask if the respondent approves the basic aims of the strategy, if they agree that the outcomes are the correct ones, and ask for ideas on delivering those outcomes.

Voluntary Groups

L&M staff have identified about 200 such groups in the city, and each will be contacted. The contact will contain a short illustrated document on the origins and basic content of the strategy, and a feedback form (same questions as Wavelength) with more free space to set out their own ideas. The groups will be directed to the website for access to the full strategy document, but can request a paper copy as well. Initial contact will be by email, except where this is not an option i.e. no email address. This system will also be used for volunteers working directly with L&M services. Such groups will include sports clubs, friends' organisations, heritage groups, play organisations and so on.

Staff

About 97% of L&M staff – about 90 in all – have attended compulsory one day training sessions, split into three groups. About an hour and a half was spent on each day looking at the draft, and discussing the methods and approach used in the draft. Email will be sent to "Everyone on Email" with link to strategy on website and feedback form with (wavelength) questions.

Colleagues

In the City Council are many colleagues who are crucial to the work of Leisure & Museums – support staff, accountants, IT staff and so on – who have experience and knowledge on our services. They will receive the email as set out above with a footer asking managers to forward paper copies to staff without access to a PC.

Professional Organisations

The consultation will use the same questions and direction to the website. Contact to be made by email unless this is not an option.

Hard To Hear

Following discussions with the Council's Communications Team and Policy Team it was agreed to divide this category as follows:

Young People Leisure activities formed a major part of a youth engagement day in 2007, and these results will be used for the strategy.

Older People An Older People's engagement day was also held in June 2007, and this topic will be addressed.

Ethnic Minorities The Council will approach Exeter Community Initiatives to do a specific piece of work

People with Disabilities The Council will approach Living Options to do a specific piece of work

Mental Health The Council will approach the Mental Health Users Forum with a view to setting up a focus group.

Timetable

The programme of consultation will start in mid April 2008, with a roll-out of contacts with all the groups. It is expected that this will take about a month to reach all the respondents, who will each be asked to respond within a month. The specialist consultations with Hard to Hear groups will be commissioned by the end of April, and should be available by mid June/early July.

Evaluation of the responses will begin as they are returned, but will not finish until the expiry of the month's response period, i.e. end June. It will be completed by the end of July, and a revised strategy, based on the feedback received will be published later in the year (September/October time).

Alan Caig
Head of Leisure & Museums
in association with Marie Thornton
Service Improvement Officer

April 2008

Leisure & Museums – Combined Online and Wavelength Results

The results from the standalone online survey were combined with the 660 results from the Wavelength 17 survey. These figures may vary significantly from the results from Wavelength because of use of an age group weighting model, which uses a multiplier for the results from each age group in order to give a more accurate reflection of the population of Exeter by age group.

Q1 – Overall aims of the strategy

Q1a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Improve their health through increasing physical & mental activity	Strongly agree	312	45.9%
	Agree	335	49.3%
	Neither	29	4.2%
	Disagree	4	.6%
	Total	680	100.0%

Q1b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Learn through attending events & activities at the museum	Strongly agree	179	26.3%
	Agree	426	62.5%
	Neither	47	6.8%
	Disagree	5	.7%
	Strongly disagree	24	3.6%
Total	681	100.0%	

Q1c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Have greater community involvement through events around the city	Strongly agree	214	31.7%
	Agree	349	51.7%
	Neither	107	15.9%
	Disagree	5	.7%
	Total	676	100.0%

Q1d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Enhance the environment through improving or conserving the Valley Parks	Strongly agree	359	52.8%
	Agree	296	43.5%
	Neither	24	3.5%
	Disagree	1	.1%
	Strongly disagree	0	.1%
	Total	680	100.0%

Q1e

		Count	Column Valid N %
Improve the quality of life by improving satisfaction with the services on offer	Strongly agree	272	41.6%
	Agree	309	47.3%
	Neither	68	10.3%
	Disagree	5	.7%
	Total	653	100.0%

Canal & Countryside

Q2a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Run activities and events	Very important	223	32.8%
	Important	365	53.7%
	Not very important	85	12.5%
	Not important at all	7	1.0%
	Total	681	100.0%

Q2b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Encourage volunteers to get involved with works in the valley parks	Very important	193	28.3%
	Important	395	58.1%
	Not very important	90	13.2%
	Not important at all	3	.4%
	Total	680	100.0%

Q2c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Improve interpretation so visitors are better able to understand what is happening	Very important	194	28.4%
	Important	349	51.0%
	Not very important	130	19.0%
	Not important at all	11	1.6%
	Total	683	100.0%

Q2d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Improve the canal's facilities for boat users, canoeists anglers, walkers & cyclists	Very important	386	56.6%
	Important	250	36.6%
	Not very important	45	6.6%
	Not important at all	1	.2%
	Total	682	100.0%

Physical activity

Q3a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Keep facilities such as swimming pools & sports centres up to date & in good condition	Very important	543	79.3%
	Important	133	19.4%
	Not very important	6	.8%
	Not important at all	4	.6%
	Total	685	100.0%

Q3b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Build a workplace health network to promote healthier lifestyles	Very important	125	18.4%
	Important	332	49.0%
	Not very important	201	29.7%
	Not important at all	20	2.9%
	Total	678	100.0%

Q3c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Promote & enable more participation events for physical activity	Very important	201	29.6%
	Important	406	59.7%
	Not very important	66	9.7%
	Not important at all	7	1.0%
	Total	680	100.0%

Q3d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Continue to improve our sports development activities with young people in & out of school	Very important	439	64.3%
	Important	229	33.5%
	Not very important	11	1.7%
	Not important at all	3	.5%
	Total	682	100.0%

Play

Q4a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Help communities organise their own play activities and programmes	Very important	190	28.1%
	Important	415	61.3%
	Not very important	63	9.3%
	Not important at all	9	1.3%
	Total	677	100.0%

Q4b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Use our new play rangers to make the city's parks safer & more interesting for play	Very important	327	48.3%
	Important	305	44.9%
	Not very important	39	5.7%
	Not important at all	7	1.1%
	Total	678	100.0%

Q4c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Run our holiday play schemes at full capacity	Very important	243	35.8%
	Important	327	48.2%
	Not very important	104	15.3%
	Not important at all	5	.7%
	Total	679	100.0%

Q4d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Refurbish play areas & skate parks with equipment to keep them up to date & in good condition	Very important	418	61.5%
	Important	238	35.0%
	Not very important	17	2.5%
	Not important at all	7	1.0%
	Total	680	100.0%

Museums

Q5a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Make our collections and information more available via the internet and in digital formats	Very important	105	15.7%
	Important	341	50.9%
	Not very important	205	30.6%
	Not important at all	19	2.8%
	Total	670	100.0%

Q5b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Continue to work closely with schools & teachers to develop national curriculum based programmes so that we can offer direct benefits to young people Use our collections to help schools with their national curriculum work	Very important	311	46.2%
	Important	332	49.2%
	Not very important	26	3.8%
	Not important at all	6	.8%
	Total	674	100.0%

Q5c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Continue to improve the care & documentation of our large collections so that everyone can enjoy & learn from them, now and in the future	Very important	307	45.5%
	Important	351	52.1%
	Not very important	16	2.3%
	Not important at all	1	.1%
	Total	674	100.0%

Q5d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Present a varied programme of temporary exhibitions and events to ensure we offer something of interest to everyone in our community	Very important	377	56.0%
	Important	266	39.5%
	Not very important	29	4.3%
	Not important at all	1	.1%
	Total	673	100.0%

Q5e

		Count	Column Valid N %
During the closure of the main museum, work with partners to take our events & activities all over the city and beyond	Very important	250	37.1%
	Important	319	47.4%
	Not very important	95	14.2%
	Not important at all	8	1.2%
	Total	672	100.0%

Q6

		Count	Column Valid N %
Q6 How strongly do you agree that this is the best way of measuring the success of our services?	Strongly agree	214	32.9%
	Agree	389	59.8%
	Neither	35	5.3%
	Disagree	9	1.4%
	Strongly disagree	4	.6%
	Total	650	100.0%

Q7 – How important is each service to the city?

Q7a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Canal and countryside	Very important	478	70.5%
	Important	195	28.8%
	Not very important	5	.7%
	Total	679	100.0%

Q7b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Physical activities	Very important	281	41.7%
	Important	341	50.5%
	Not very important	50	7.4%
	Not important at all	3	.5%
	Total	674	100.0%

Q7c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Play	Very important	298	44.3%
	Important	336	50.0%
	Not very important	36	5.3%
	Not important at all	3	.4%
	Total	673	100.0%

Q7d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Museums	Very important	307	45.4%
	Important	343	50.7%
	Not very important	26	3.8%
	Not important at all	1	.1%
	Total	676	100.0%

Q9 – How satisfied are you with each of the following services?

Q9a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Canal and countryside	Very satisfied	162	23.8%
	Satisfied	460	67.6%
	Neither	41	6.0%
	Fairly dissatisfied	13	1.9%
	Very dissatisfied	4	.6%
	Total	680	100.0%

Q9b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Physical activities	Very satisfied	39	5.8%
	Satisfied	385	57.4%
	Neither	201	30.0%
	Fairly dissatisfied	39	5.8%
	Very dissatisfied	7	1.0%
	Total	670	100.0%

Q9c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Play	Very satisfied	33	4.9%
	Satisfied	335	50.1%
	Neither	270	40.4%
	Fairly dissatisfied	29	4.4%
	Very dissatisfied	2	.2%
	Total	668	100.0%

Q9d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Museums	Very satisfied	93	13.7%
	Satisfied	395	58.4%
	Neither	153	22.7%
	Fairly dissatisfied	28	4.1%
	Very dissatisfied	7	1.0%
	Total	676	100.0%

Q10 – How frequently have you used the facilities in the last 12 months?

Q10a

		Count	Column Valid N %
Sports/leisure facilities and events	Daily	27	4.8%
	Weekly	162	28.7%
	Monthly	89	15.9%
	Within last 6 months	160	28.4%
	Within last 12 months	126	22.3%
	Total	564	100.0%

Q10b

		Count	Column Valid N %
Museums and galleries	Daily	8	1.3%
	Weekly	32	5.3%
	Monthly	133	22.4%
	Within last 6 months	220	37.0%
	Within last 12 months	202	34.0%
	Total	595	100.0%

Q10c

		Count	Column Valid N %
Canal and countryside	Daily	87	13.4%
	Weekly	185	28.6%
	Monthly	213	32.9%
	Within last 6 months	119	18.4%
	Within last 12 months	43	6.6%
	Total	646	100.0%

Q10d

		Count	Column Valid N %
Play areas/facilities and events	Daily	17	3.6%
	Weekly	89	18.9%
	Monthly	107	22.9%
	Within last 6 months	128	27.1%
	Within last 12 months	129	27.5%
	Total	470	100.0%

Text from standalone online survey

Q1

There are now two museums - RAMM and St Nicholas Priory! We also want visitors to learn through visiting new exhibitions as well as events and activities.

The swimming pools in Exeter need a massive amount of work done on them, they are filthy and really unattractive. basic things like having changing rooms to take your shoes off before you go through to the shower areas are needed.

Increase understanding and sense of ownership of the city - sense of belonging and shared responsibility - through involvement with events, volunteering and decision making

Increase opportunities through consultation with geographic communities and communities of interest

Access to the Arts and creative activities

A strong policy driven strategy that provides a variety of opportunities for swimming is the hallmark of a serious attempt to widen participation.

Q2

Working across departments to deliver the best and most meaningful products

The Canal/Estuary area brings the water related environment right into the city, providing an ideal opportunity for formal and informal leisure activity.

Providing facilities is good but the events should be left to organisations / clubs to run for themselves.

More cycle paths

Ensure water quality is fit for open water swimming

Q3

To capitalise on the success of local talent the council must put competition swimming and other aquatic sports at the forefront of its thinking. To combine this with collaboration with local sports science and health expertise is an opportunity not be mi

Support of non-mainstream activities to encourage those who feel excluded from team events or from activities which require high levels of fitness. Air quality is important, so monitoring and improving noise, pollution and smells will help.

Offer discounted costs during early morning/late evening to encourage use by workers.

GP referrals for leisure centre use - both council run (free) and private run (big discounts on membership)

More support should be given to providers of sport/martial arts/yoga classes in the city. Despite a wealth of this activity, there aren't clear links to the city's health agendas. These classes are a regular means of exercise & social interaction for many

Assist voluntary organisations with their premises / grant applications etc rather than the Council owning all the facilities

Allow the expansion of current sporting activities by allowing them space to grow, and not inhibiting them

Q4

Work with existing organisations to create and deliver activities appropriate to diverse communities

The priority and resources put into making new play areas should be balanced with the need to provide resources for older play areas. Where antisocial behaviour has proved to be a problem, facilities provided should be re-evaluated to better serve needs.

Support community involvement in decision making and running of small schemes in addition to Council run large schemes

Offer coaching in skate parks and basketball courts

I don't think you should refurbish things for the sake of doing it. Some of the older play areas were actually nicer than they are now e.g. ship playground on the quay. There seemed to be nothing wrong with it prior to refurbishment

Develop more culture based play to include theatre, music, art and dance.

Q5

We shouldn't forget that the Youth Service has an important part to play too. They should be considered as partners in certain elements of the strategy.

To provide a layered approach to learning and information so that visitors to the Museum can approach the collection at a level suitable for them. This can be partly achieved through developing IT as in first part of this section.

To enable RAMM to collect objects relevant to current and future generations

RAMM has a national and international profile - this should be upheld as a good advocate for the city and to promote tourism

more advertising for events. Exeter seems a bit slow sometimes.

Improved methods of advertising the museum and all of its activities.

Improve staff development and address morale issues to ensure quality and sustainability of increased service requirements

How about an Egyptology exhibition at the Pyramids when it finally closes.

Emphasise point 4, get in a variety of exhibitions and exciting activities

Develop the participation of families and Early Years children and settings in Museums and museum activities

Q6

The physical activity measure (although government inspired) is too rigid and ignores the subjective benefits of participation is sport and active recreation.

It's all quantitative measures. How about some quality measures too? People say they are enjoying exercise more because of the city council or people are learning new things about the city in which they live and getting more of a sense of place?

If more people felt they had a sense of ownerships of events, activities and local-decisions

By rates of participation in organised activities. From the current usage to what they could be in 1yr-5yr in the future. I.e. how the club (what ever it may be) has grown due to more awareness of the activity from the council and general public.

Are these points particularly measurable i.e. will we know if we are improving and meeting targets?