

Appendix 1

Ward Forum Feedback Survey

Is there anything that could be done to improve ward forum meetings? October 2013

Introduction

A supplementary report of the analysis of comments made by residents who have taken the opportunity to reply to the question: 'Is there anything that could be done to improve ward forum meetings?'

The Ward Forum Feedback Survey

A short feedback form to capture residents' feedback on the effectiveness and operation of the ward forums was introduced in January 2009, initially available in paper form and distributed at the ward forum meetings. In late 2011, an online version of the survey was also made available and ward forum attendees were encouraged to complete the survey online. Surveys can still be completed on paper and returned via the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator for or by post to the Neighbourhood Governance Team. The data and comments received are then inputted by the team.

Key findings from November 2011- October 2013

The qualitative feedback from residents since November 2011 suggest that some of the chairs of meetings may benefit from improved chairing skills, to ensure that agendas are set to include items relevant and engaging to local residents – perhaps by asking residents groups for agenda items and including an opportunity for guest speakers to promote their local service or project - that equitable time is set aside for agenda items and that attendees are able to contribute within a fixed period of time and without intimidation or interruption from others, and of course, that the acoustics of the venue and PA systems are available so residents can hear what others, including those in the audience, are saying.

Residents point out that publicity of ward forums, including agenda items before the meetings, and publishing of notes to the website soon after the meetings, would improve the forums. Suggestions include posters being put up in local shops, churches and park notice boards and meetings being promoted through local schools.

There is a need to engage younger people and ethnic groups in the forums, the perceived demographic of those who attend, and indeed confirmed through equalities data monitoring, are those over 50 and white British

There was some suggestion that there should be more officer attendance at meetings, while others feel there is too much time given to the council informing residents about what is happening rather than listening to what residents are saying. Some wanted forums to be able to discuss planning issues that have implications for the wider community and borough-wide issues, such as the closure of Ealing Hospital, others wanted some matters to be dealt with by sub-meetings.

Occasional comments suggest that the remit of the forums needs to be reiterated – some expect that the majority views of those present should be acted upon, others are concerned that the views of those not present at meetings are not being taken into account: 'The meetings are fine but they do not seem to have the power to change anything. The decisions are made at a different level and the ward forums have no influence whatsoever.'

On occasion, people wanted quicker feedback on issues being raised as it was a long period between meetings. It was also suggested that young people and invited to feedback comments on website

It is also pleasing to note that several responses were positive:

'my first meeting and it ran smoothly '

'in general the meetings seem pretty good and involved...'

'...I am very grateful to say my piece'

'Very good!'

Nothing it was perfect

No – they are much better and deliver far better results than any of the previous Area Committee meetings. These forums are excellent more localised – better attended. Better focusses- more involvement.

Other suggestions

Refreshments and opportunity to see councillors before/after the meeting one to one.

Occasional meetings when councillors have not attended

Up to date map and detail on how to find venues (e.g. Community Centre, Green Man Lane)

Support for having Elthorne and Hobbayne ward forums together as a Hanwell meeting as some residents feel that having separate meetings is divisive, perception that the 'attitude of some of the councillors to actively seek to divide the Hanwell community'.

Site visits before the meeting

Run activities related to the ward discussions

Include local businesses

On-line forum where residents can raise issues and discuss ward matters between meetings...a summary of hot items could be presented at the meetings

Use of audience groups reporting back to main meetings to increase involvement

Vary venues

Start time 7.15 or 7.30 for people coming from work

Information on strategic issues e.g. transport, planning

A few references to lack of accessibility

EG

15 Nov 2013