



## Report to Scrutiny

Item Number:

**Contains Confidential or Exempt Information**

No

**Subject of Report:** *Talk Future Ealing Engagement Review*

**Meeting:** Scrutiny Review Panel 4 – 2018/2019: Future Ealing  
28 February 2019

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**Brief:** To consider the Talk Future Ealing engagement activity undertaken in the summer and autumn

**Recommendations:** To consider and comment on the information provided in the Talk Future Ealing report

## 1. Context

1.1 Talk Future Ealing is the name given to the public engagement around the council's transformation programme, Future Ealing.

1.2 The objectives of the engagement activity were:

- Communicate the new council vision and priorities and how they will make the borough a better place to live
- Deepen understanding of the council's financial context
- Mobilise residents to active citizenship
- Gather insight about how to engage active citizenship.

1.3 The approach adopted was:

- To develop spaces (physical and virtual) where the council could have a conversation with residents about its vision, and provide residents with the opportunity to put questions and suggest ideas to the council's top team
- Spark a conversation with the public about Future Ealing and how we are trying to improve outcomes for local people
- Communicate openly about the council's financial challenges and the need for tough choices ahead
- Ask residents to consider their contribution to the community using the action call #dosomethinggood
- Signpost people to the council's dosomethinggood.org.uk website with the message that big or small your actions can make a significant difference to the community
- Ensure that the style of engagement was accessible in style, content and location.

1.4 Between June and October 2018, the following activity took place:

- The Ealing Bubble website was revamped and updated with information about the many ways that residents can get involved and do their bit to make the borough better
- An online engagement 'room' was launched with information about the council's priorities, Future Ealing goals and financial challenges. It is presented in an easily accessible style and highlights the call to action of Do Something Good; pointing visitors towards to the Ealing Bubble website for ideas on how they can do their bit to make Ealing better.

### Summer roadshows

- 1.5 The Talk Future Ealing roadshows were housed in a large Ealing Council and Talk Future Ealing branded marquee. Those staffing it wore Talk Future Ealing-branded t-shirts.
- 1.6 It was staffed by councillors and council officers and communicated the council's new priorities, Future Ealing outcomes and financial challenges to local people. It also suggested ways that residents could get more involved in their local area and adopt behaviours that could help to make the borough better as well as save the council money.
- 1.7 Residents were invited to come along discuss and their ideas with council officers. There was an electronic feedback kiosk on site that visitors were encouraged to use to record their views via a quick survey.
- 1.8 The roadshow also had a community Bubble Board which visitors were encouraged to populate with their ideas on how to make the borough better and details of local projects that they are involved in.
- 1.9 Leaflets and cards were distributed pointing people towards Bubble, [www.ealing.gov.uk/register](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/register) and the Talk Future Ealing online room.
- The roadshow visited:
- Hanwell Carnival

- Greenford Carnival
- Acton Carnival
- Ealing Jazz Festival (Saturday and Sunday)
- London Mela (Sunday only)

1.10 The Talk Future Ealing roadshow was set up for the day in the Perceval House café so council staff could see the messages given to residents and ask questions.

1.11 All activity was supported through the council's internal and external communication channels with social media pushing readers to Ealing Bubble and the Talk Future Ealing online engagement.

1.12 The roadshow element of the campaign cost circa £6,000. This is slightly more than the cost of a 4pp leaflet distributed door to door via Around Ealing.

## **2. Engagement**

*2.1 Talk Future Ealing roadshows-* Exact numbers of people visiting the roadshow was not recorded, however estimates are that interactions took place with more than 100 residents at each event, with busier events such as Hanwell Carnival and Saturday's Jazz Festival, attracting larger numbers. In addition, thousands of leaflets and cards were handed out.

2.2 Feedback kiosk - We asked five questions:

1. Do you agree that Ealing Council should focus on the following priorities? Good, genuinely affordable homes: 82% agreed, 11% neither agreed or disagreed, 7% disagreed.
2. Do you agree that Ealing Council should focus on the following priorities? Opportunities and living incomes: 83% agreed, 11% neither agreed or disagreed. 6% disagreed.
3. Do you agree that Ealing Council should focus on the following priorities? A healthy and great place to live: 87% agreed, 6% neither agreed or disagreed. 7% disagreed.
4. How well do you understand the financial challenges that Ealing Council faces? 52% understand, 28% didn't know, 20% didn't.

5. How willing would you be to give your time to do something good to make Ealing a better place? 62% would be willing, 27% don't know, 12% wouldn't. Respondents were also asked what they would be willing to do to help.

*2.3 Bubble board* - Almost 200 comments were collected from the Bubble board. These have been collated and are attached to this document. In addition, council representatives noted specific issues or problems that residents raised, along with the resident's contact details. These were passed on to the relevant service to follow up. Around 50 different issues were actioned.

*2.4 Ealing Do Something Good website* - Visitors to the Bubble website increased over the campaign. Between 1 June and 31 October 2017 Bubble had 4,827 new users. Over the same period in 2018, there were 7,858 new users - an increase of 61%. The top three traffic acquisition channels for visitors were Google, Ealing News Extra and Twitter.

*2.5 Ward forums* - These meetings were well attended, with residents from outside the ward coming along as well as residents from within the ward. Attendance at the meetings ranged between 40 to 130 residents at each event.

*2.6* The meetings gave residents the opportunity to meet senior council officers face-to-face and put their questions to them. A wide range of questions were asked by residents (some very local to the area), but most focused on the council's priorities, financial challenges and what they mean for local people.

*2.7* Attendees at these meetings tend to already be involved and engaged in community matters; often representing local places of worship, neighbourhood watch groups or resident groups. As such, they are crucial to building awareness and advocacy in the local community.

*2.8 Talk Future Ealing online room* - Approximately 1700 people visited the room with 53 comments left. The room closed at the end of November.

*2.9 Social media interaction* - Over Twitter and Facebook, we:

- Published 89 posts relating to the Talk Future Ealing campaign
- These have generated 1,400 link clicks

- Shares and retweets has resulted in a reach of 1.4million page impressions over the campaign.

*2.10 Internal communications* - The council's internal communication channels were used to promote the Talk Future Ealing roadshow to colleagues and point them in the direction of further information. In September, the displays were set up in the ground floor café and colleagues had the opportunity to find out more about our discussions with residents to put their questions and comments on Future Ealing to the director for strategy and engagement.

*2.11 Around Ealing (137,000 distribution)*- A three-page spread was published in the June 2018 edition with information about Future Ealing outcomes and promoting our Talk Future Ealing campaign.

- A single page story, publicising Talk Future Ealing roadshow visits to ward forums was published in the October 2018 edition.
- Both articles were published online on the Ealing News Extra website.

### **3 Conclusions**

3.1 The Talk Future Ealing campaign was designed to help contextualise some of the tough decisions facing the council and to start conversations in the community about rethinking the role of residents in supporting local services.

3.2 The roadshows and ward forum meetings enabled the council to demonstrate its corporate approach to radically rethinking its services so that they are focused on delivering outcomes that improve residents' lives. By bringing services together under one banner, there was also a value to showing staff, as well as residents, the council working together to deliver its strategic aims.

It also provided an opportunity to highlight ways in which many residents are already making an active contribution to the community and show others the value of getting involved and how they could do this.

3.3 The programme was a successful and cost-effective way to meet directly with residents on a one-to-one basis and to talk with them about the council's priorities, our challenges and our vision for the future. Through the sessions it was clear that residents

valued the opportunity for direct engagement, particularly for areas of change that they care most about. The council will harness this learning in our approach to working with communities to develop active citizenship plans and in consulting on changes to services including libraries and children's centres.

3.4 For people who couldn't come along to one of the roadshow events, we hosted a website so that people could engage with our ideas online. This was supported with a successful social media campaign which also increased online traffic to [dosomethinggood.org.uk](http://dosomethinggood.org.uk).

3.5 We note that most people are willing to do something to help improve their local area, but many do not want to be tied to long-term volunteering. To engage as large a number of residents as possible, it is important to present a range of opportunities with varying levels of commitment. It is also critical that there are opportunities for residents who want to engage to be clear how they can be enabled to do so.

#### **4. Next steps**

4.1 Talk Future Ealing was a specific programme of activity which has now finished, but the strategic drivers that underpinned it will continue to be relevant to:

- Raise awareness amongst the public of the pressures the council faces
- Engage the public in the choices that the council must make
- Involve and engage the community in creating solutions

4.2 A focus on engaging residents and highlighting opportunities for them to contribute will continue to be a key element of the council's strategic communications priorities.

4.3 The council is also looking to develop its approach to engagement through the active citizen theme (presented to the last scrutiny panel). The development of this approach within the neighbourhoods' outcome review will shape future direction. However, examples of early workstreams which will be informed by the learning from Talk Future Ealing and the approach taken include:

- The refresh of the [www.dosomethinggood.org](http://www.dosomethinggood.org) platform (previously Ealing Bubble) which is currently underway and will re-launch by early March.
- It will have the following improvements:

- Presentation of a wider range of opportunities for residents and businesses to volunteer or get involved and improve neighbourhoods in line with the council's 'active citizens' agenda
- A cleaner, refreshed design to make it simpler for users to navigate and find information
- Making it easier to upload projects, share ideas with others on social media and secure funding for community projects
- The engagement and consultation around the future proposals for library and children centre provision
- The design and focus of the small grants programme that will be introduced during 2019/20

**4. Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

**5. Financial Implications**

As set out in the report.

## Consultation

<b>Name of Consultee</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Date Sent to Consultee</b>	<b>Date Response Received from Consultee</b>	<b>Comments Appear in Report Para:</b>
<b>Internal</b>				
Director	Strategy & Engagement	7 Feb	12 Feb	Throughout

## Report History

<b>Decision Type: Non- Key Decision</b>	<b>Urgent item?</b> No		
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	Date Report Drafted:	Report Deadline:	Date Report Sent:
XX.XX.06	XX.XX.06	XX.XX.06	XX.XX.06
Report No.:	Report Author and Contact for Queries:		
	First and Surname, Job Title		