

Evaluating Local Governance



New Constitutions and Ethics

Questionnaire to Local Stakeholders 2005

Guidance of completion of questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this survey. This questionnaire is intended to collect the views of local stakeholders on their council's constitution, adopted in response to the Local Government Act 2000. There are also some questions about the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) to be completed by members of the LSP. Please do not fill in this questionnaire if you are a councillor or officer of any local authority.

The questionnaire should take you less than ten minutes to complete, in most cases by selecting the option(s) that most closely matches your circumstances or views.

On completion of the questionnaire, please return it to us using the stamped addressed envelope provided. We should be grateful if you would complete the survey as soon as possible and no later than Wednesday 28th September.

If at any stage you have a query about either the questionnaire or the process, please contact our help-line on 0161 275 0799. You can also email us at stephen.greasley@manchester.ac.uk

With many thanks in advance

Questionnaire to Local Stakeholders

About your relationship with the council

1 Job Title

2 Organisation

3 What is the name of the local authority of which you are a stakeholder (this information was provided with the email or letter accompanying the survey)

_____ Council

4 Are you a member of a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) that works with the council?

- Yes Please answer questions 5, 6 & 7 before going on to question 8
- No Please go directly to question 8

5 What is the name of the LSP of which you are a member?

6 What is the basis of your membership of the LSP of which you are a member?
 (tick all that apply)

- Representing a public sector organisation
 - Representing a private sector umbrella group, private business, or trades union
 - Representing a community group or faith organisation
 - Representing a voluntary organisation
 - Representing another partnership
 - As a private individual
 - Other (please specify)
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7a How far do you agree with the following statements about the LSP?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am clear about the purpose of the LSP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have an LSP in this area primarily because the government requires it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have an LSP in this area primarily because the local partners want it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LSP is creating better understanding and trust among partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LSP is leading to more efficient use of resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LSP is leading to more inclusive governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7b How far do you agree with the following statements about the LSP?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The LSP is leading to more effective ways of working between partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LSP is enhancing the capacity of partners to learn from shared experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LSP is influencing the way in which my organisation carries out its mainstream activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LSP is leading to organisational and cultural change within my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The effectiveness of the LSP is hampered by tensions and conflicts among local partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The effectiveness of the LSP is hampered by tensions and conflicts between local partners and national priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8 Are you currently a co-opted or independent member of a council committee?

- Yes Please answer question 9 before going on to question 10
- No Please go directly to question 10

9 Please indicate which committees you sit on:

Independent member of:

The Standards Committee

The Remuneration Committee

Co-opted member of an:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee that oversees education

Overview and Scrutiny Committee that oversees social services

Co-opted member of another Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Other (please specify)

10 What other relationships have you, or have you had in the past, with the council?

As a member of another partnership body

As a contractor or provider of services to or on behalf of the council

Regular informal contact with members or officers

Service user

Other (please specify)

11 Have you undertaken any of these activities with respect to the council in the last two years? (tick all that apply)

- Given evidence to an overview and scrutiny committee
- Contributed to the development of a policy plan
- Attended an area committee

12 Aside from LSP or council committee meetings, have you met any of the following decision makers to discuss council business in the last two years? (tick all that apply)

- The mayor or leader of the council
- Portfolio holders or executive members of the council
- Officers of the council

Effectiveness of the new arrangements

13 Following the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000, does the council operate:

- A directly elected mayor and cabinet executive
- A directly elected mayor and council manager
- A leader and cabinet executive
- Alternative arrangements
- Don't know

14 Which of the statements below most closely matches your own view about the working of the new arrangements at the council?

- The new system is a significant improvement
- The new system is to some extent an improvement
- The new system has made little difference
- The new system has some disadvantages
- Introducing the new system was a retrograde step
- Don't know

15 How effective are the arrangements for area based decision-making in your authority (for example, area committees)?

- Effective
- Partially effective
- Ineffective
- Area committees are consultative only
- No such arrangements
- Don't know

16a Thinking of changes in the last two years, with which of the following statements would you agree characterise the council?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Decision making is quicker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The role of the leader has become stronger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The leader of the council has a higher public profile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is easier to find out who has made specific council decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The public is more involved in council decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The council is better a dealing with cross cutting issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The council's relations with partners has improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16b Thinking of changes in the last two years, which of the following statements would you agree characterise the council?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is easier to find out about council policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backbench Members are more engaged	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political parties dominate decision making more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is easier for women to become involved in council business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is easier for ethnic minorities to become involved in council business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issues of ethical conduct have a higher profile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17 Thinking overall, do you agree that the current political management arrangements in the council:

	Yes	No
Support visible and effective political leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promote democratic legitimacy and public trust in local government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide checks and balances to guarantee transparency of decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About yourself

Finally, we would be grateful if you would give us some personal information about yourself.

18 Are you:

- Male
- Female

19 And how old were you on your last birthday?

- 18 - 34 years
- 35 - 54 years
- 55 - 64 years
- 65 or over

20 Do you consider your ethnic origin to be:

- White
 - Black - Asian
 - Black - Caribbean
 - Black - African
 - Chinese
 - Other (please state)
-

Thank you for participating in the survey

If you have any further comments about any of the issues raised by the survey please write them in the box below

If there are any issues raised by the survey which you would like to discuss with us, please email stephen.greasley@manchester.ac.uk or telephone 0161 275 0799.

21 Please indicate below any school or educational qualifications you may have:

- Degree / higher degree
 - Professional qualification
 - Higher National Certificate / Diploma
 - GCE 'A' Level / Scottish Higher Grade
 - Ordinary National Certificate / Diploma
 - GCSE / 'O' Level / school certificate
 - CSE (above Grade 1)
 - No school or educational qualifications
 - Other (please specify)
-

22 At present are you:

- In full-time employment (30 hours weekly or more)
- In part-time employment (less than 30 hours weekly)
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Permanently sick or disabled
- Looking after a home / family
- Not working for some other reason