

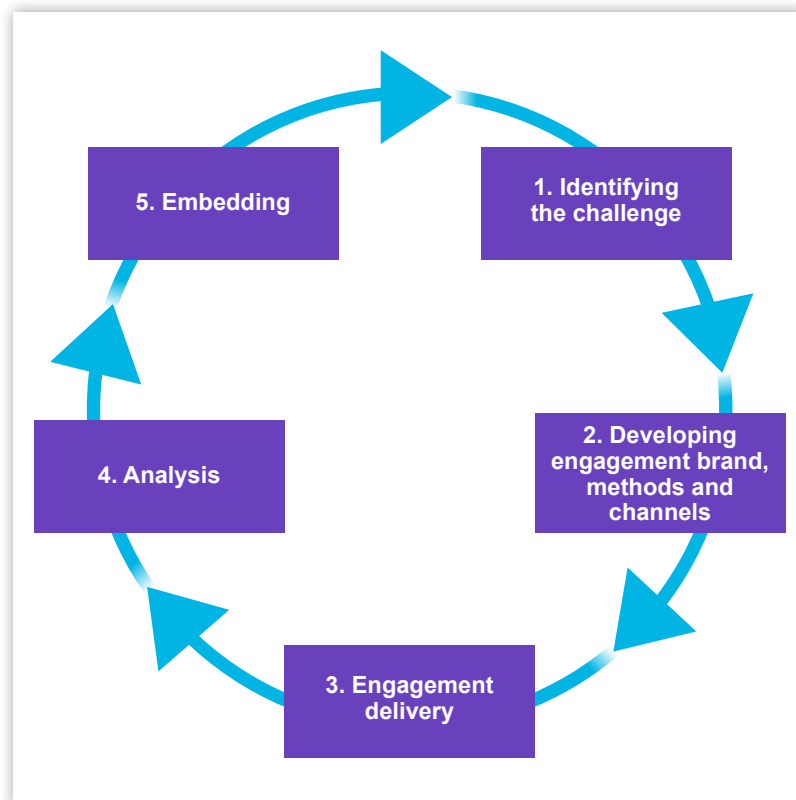


Hackney Council

Embedding Place Leadership Through Engagement – a learning guide

1. Introduction

Hackney used an extensive borough-wide engagement to develop and embed place leadership. This learning guide shows in five steps how to build place leadership and use it to influence policy. It demonstrates how engagement can form part of an ongoing cycle of staying attuned to residents' perceptions and priorities – to help build engagement capacity and improve innovation.



Step 1: Identifying the challenge

Actions: A need was identified to respond to challenges caused by the pace of socio-economic and demographic change over the last 10 to 15 years. There was support for a general place based engagement exercise to delve deeper into residents' views, concerns and priorities.

Learning points:

- Engagement will be most effective when directed towards current residents' concerns and priorities. Use available insight to assess current narratives and area based issues, such as a community tensions log.
- Corporate and political will is imperative before embarking on a large scale engagement piece; building the internal advocate base should come first.
- A barrier to engagement can often be the perceived risk of generating negative views or airing dissatisfaction. Be internally clear about the benefits of an honest conversation and a realistic appraisal.



Step 2: Developing engagement brand, method and channels

Actions: To brand the consultation in a way that reinforced strategic aspirations while being open to resident contributions, a creative workshop was held off-site. Creatives derived from this were tested across the organisation. The scope, methods and outcomes were developed.

Learning points:

- Close working between officers with communications, engagement and policy expertise.
- Engage departments across organisation to assess where engagement needs may overlap - and where themes being covered could support multiple services.
- Set realistic expectations around what engagement will and will not deliver; it will never remove completely the need to make hard decisions.

✓ Collaborative design process

✓ Explore cross-departmental need

✓ Set internal expectations

Step 3: Delivering engagement

Actions: A borough-wide engagement was conducted across Hackney using a range of channels (see table at end of document). Staff across the council were involved directly in the engagement work using times and locations that worked for residents.

Learning points:

- Use an evidence-based approach to identify key groups that require additional engagement, and assess what current assets and channels exist for reaching them directly.
- Move beyond standard channels to help access a wide range of residents - so as to find representative ways of speaking to residents on their own terms.

✓ Analysis of key demographics of service user groups

✓ Mixture of representative and self-selecting channels



Step 4: Analysing engagement responses

Actions: A mixture of internal and external resource was used to analyse data collected across the range of channels. Labour intensive tasks such as data entry of paper surveys were shared across the organisation. Analysis was synthesised to form key themes to assist with a policy response and engagement principles drafted.

Learning points:

- A full analysis plan should be developed alongside the engagement plan, detailing how each channel will build the overall evidence base. Where extensive qualitative data is collected across broad themes, analysis can be resource intensive.
- Where specialist expertise is required, this can be cost effective and add value to the process.
- Feeding back to residents who have participated can build ownership over the process and help strengthen relationships.
- Involving residents in the response to the findings, through co-production workshops can give external reports an authentic voice.

- ✓ Plan how each channel feeds into the analysis
- ✓ Include key staff and experts
- ✓ Involve residents in the outcomes

Step 5: Embedding engagement in policy and future engagement

Actions: Findings were tested and developed corporately to align with council priorities and demands. These were shared through an internal engagement programme called 'Hackney: Change for Everyone'. Engagement templates, tools and approaches were used for specific policy engagement exercises, such as 'Hackney: Schools for Everyone'. Confidence to engage across departments was instilled and shared.

Learning points:

- Whole council engagement activities provide an opportunity for a wide range of teams to be involved in direct engagement. This can shape their perceptions of the borough and build their capacity and confidence for future engagements in their relevant area.
- Each engagement process will provide new relationships, channels, templates and learning. Capturing this and sharing it across the organisation can be very valuable.

- ✓ Include the whole council in the findings and outcomes
- ✓ Evaluate process to inform future engagement and policy

What engagement channel or method to use?

The range of channels and methods used and their key features are shown below.

Channel or method	Detail	Key features
'I Love Hackney' black cab video footage	A black cab was renovated to become a video space that could be taken across Hackney to video people giving their views	Qualitative Generated interest Eye-catching
Direct and interactive surveying	Staff conducted paper surveys and had conversations directly with residents at more than 50 locations including markets, train stations, festivals, health services and cultural events	Qualitative Culture change Visibility
Postal survey	Questionnaires sent to every household and business to complete	Qualitative High levels of participation
'State of the borough' debate	Interactive format debate involving social experts in The City Academy, Homerton, nine questions from residents and school children put before the panel of experts, with videos available on YouTube	Qualitative Interactive Expert input
Targeted qualitative engagement	Focus groups were held with key groups, accessed through different current connections, including with young black men, those living with disabilities, those in temporary accommodation, those in temporary accommodation and the LGBT community	Qualitative Direct Bespoke
Deliberative events	Three deliberative events, recruited through Hackney's e-panel and through stakeholders, providing a collaborative setting to co-produce solutions together.	Qualitative Deliberative Co-production
Representative survey	An external research company was commissioned to conduct statistically robust research across the same themes	Quantitative Statistically robust Independent
Critical reference panel	Local academics provided a critical reference on the process for the consultation	Advisory External expertise