

Training Needs Analysis for the Wolverhampton Partnership Skills and Knowledge Programme



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1. Introduction

This report describes the process and presents the findings of a training needs assessment (TNA) undertaken jointly by the Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT) of the University of Wolverhampton and First People, on behalf of the Wolverhampton Partnership. The research was carried out between March and June 2009.

2. Background to the TNA

Since 2002, agencies in the city from the statutory and voluntary sectors have been working together to deliver a joint programme of engagement activities. As part of this the Wolverhampton Partnership has coordinated delivery of a series of training courses designed to support the staff of partner agencies in engaging communities. This has included a programme of community involvement training made up of half day taster sessions, delivered in house by Partnership staff, and also 'extended' 5 day courses focusing on partnership working and Participatory Appraisal, delivered by Wolverhampton University.

In the light of recent government policy and legislation, which puts an increased emphasis on the empowerment agenda, the Wolverhampton Partnership has recently refreshed its Community Engagement Strategy and renewed its commitment to continually reviewing and improving approaches to public involvement and community engagement across the City. It is in relation to this commitment that the Training Needs Analysis was commissioned. The specific objectives of the TNA, as identified in the specification for the assignment are as follows:

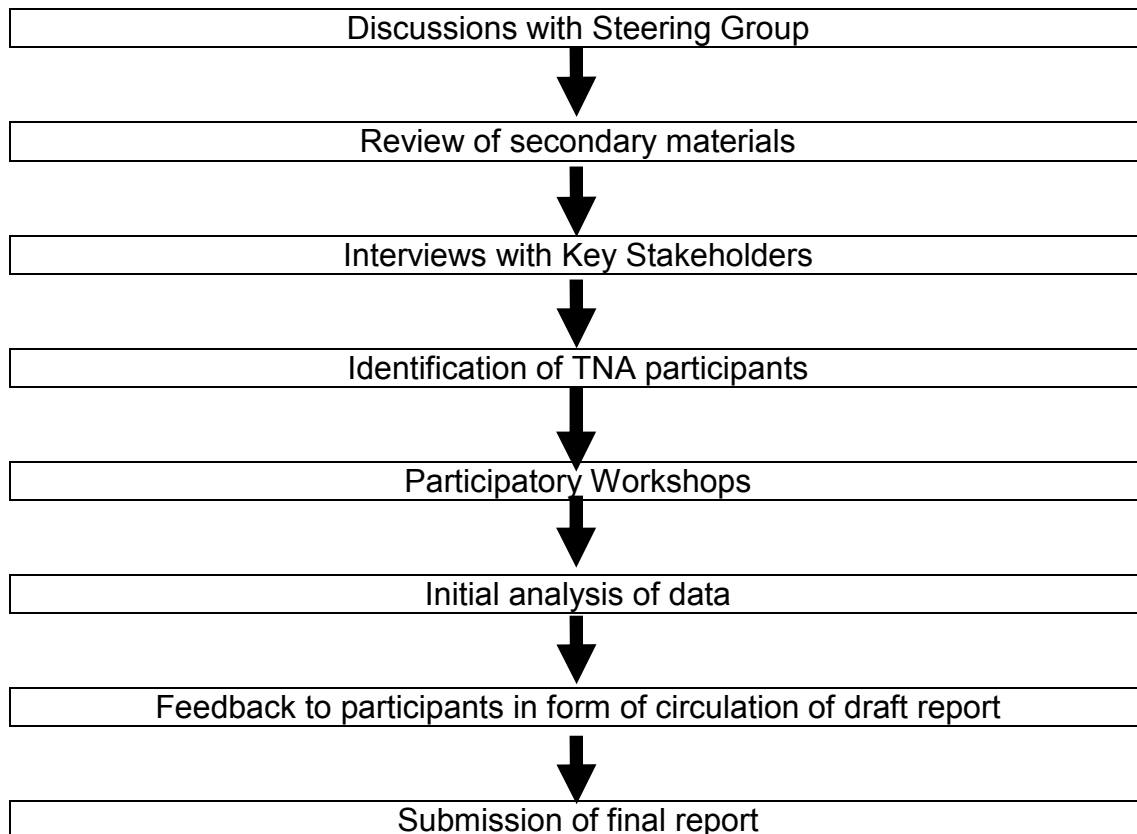
- Evaluate the skills of the existing workforce from various agencies in the context of the Duty to Involve, to ascertain how many of them require policy training and/or know-how on delivering community engagement in order to be able to scope and deliver community engagement activities.
- Evaluate how many staff from various agencies would have an interest in and the requisite skills to support Wolverhampton Partnership in engaging local people in the commissioning process.

3. The TNA Process

The process adopted for this TNA was designed to incorporate a range of perspectives and to build in opportunities for sharing and reflection between partner organisations. The various stages of the process are illustrated in the diagram below:



The TNA Process



3.1 Review of Secondary Materials

To help assess the impact of previous training offered by the Partnership, the consultants reviewed the training evaluation forms completed by workshop participants attending both the half day and five day courses over the last 2 years. Although information captured through these evaluation forms was somewhat limited, an attempt was made to record any key or recurrent themes in the feedback from participants.

3.2 Interviews

In this first stage of primary data collection for the TNA, the consultants made contact with key representatives from a range of partner organisations and conducted brief telephone or face-to-face interviews with them. The questions discussed with respondents during these interviews are listed below:

- Where does community engagement fit within your organisation?
- Which individuals within the organisation are currently involved in community engagement work?
- Who will be involved in the future?
- What community engagement courses offered by the Partnership have been attended by staff of the organisation?



- What has been the impact of that training?
- What additional training do you feel staff need to engage effectively with communities?

These interviews were also used to identify appropriate participants for the workshop stage of the TNA.

A total of 30 interviews were conducted. The agencies and organisations who participated in this stage of the TNA are listed below:

Wolverhampton City Council (including Policy Team, Regeneration, Recycling, Social Services, Education, Youth Service)

Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council

Wolverhampton Homes

Wolverhampton College

Wolverhampton Learning Partnership

University of Wolverhampton

Black Country Connexions

Wolverhampton PCT

Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust

West Midlands Police

West Midlands Fire Service

Wolverhampton Network Consortium

Wolverhampton YMCA

Local Neighbourhood Partnerships

Children's Centres

ABCD – New Deal for Communities

Heantun Housing Association



3.3 Participatory Workshops

Following the interviews, two half-day workshops were organised at the Newhampton Arts Centre. These took place on the morning of 19th May and the afternoon of 20th May; the first was attended by 17 participants and the second by 12 and all but three of the organisations involved in the interviews were represented.

The aim of the workshops was to enable participants to share experiences and reflections across agency and organisational boundaries – but it also provided a valuable opportunity to briefly present to participants the key drivers from recent legislation and policy as both a backdrop and a catalyst for subsequent discussion. As such, the workshop had the following objectives:

- To discuss the changing context for community engagement work in Wolverhampton.
- To reflect on and discuss the implications of this for you and your organisation.
- To identify organisational and individual needs that arise from this.
- To examine if and how the Partnership can respond to these needs through future programmes of training and support.

Following the initial presentation, participants worked through a series of activities designed to prompt reflection on the capacity, both of their organisations and the individuals within them, to respond effectively to the empowerment and engagement agendas.

A full outline of the workshop process can be found in **Annex 1**.

4 TNA Findings

The following sections report and discuss key findings from all three stages of the data collection.

4.1 The Role of Community Engagement within Partner Organisations.

All of the agencies and organisations consulted acknowledged the importance, and in many cases the centrality of community engagement to the work that they do. How responsibilities for community engagement fit into organisational structures, however, differed widely as did opinions as to how well engagement activities are carried out in practice.

As might be expected, organisations in the voluntary and community sector see community engagement as their 'raison d'être'. As a result it is very much woven into the fabric of third sector organisations, as well as a prominent strand in most job descriptions.



Respondents from both the Police and Fire Service also felt that community engagement was a part of everyone's job and that police officers and firefighters 'do community engagement without realising'.

Other organisations were able to clearly locate responsibility for community engagement with particular individuals, teams or units. While, in some cases, it was felt that this enabled individuals to focus on and champion engagement within their organisations, other respondents spoke of the challenges of gaining more widespread interest and support for the work – particularly at management level.

Several organisations or Council departments consulted were currently undergoing restructuring and expressed uncertainty as to where community engagement would fit into future structures. However, for Wolverhampton Primary Care Trust in particular it was felt that current restructuring and the focus on World Class Commissioning was pushing community engagement still further up the agenda and would result in it appearing on many more PCT job descriptions in the future.

In the same way as the PCT is responding to policy initiatives within the NHS, several interviewees mentioned particular changes, policies or legislative drivers specific to their sectors which impact on the role and importance of community engagement. In most cases these service-specific factors have raised the profile of public and community involvement; examples of this include the move to neighbourhood policing, the gaining of Foundation status for Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals Trust, the World Class Commissioning initiative and the launch of Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). In one or two other cases however, namely Wolverhampton College and the University, it was felt that shifts in government priorities and funding had resulted in a reduced focus on widening participation.

4.2 Impact of previous Partnership training

Many of the partner agency representatives interviewed had themselves attended previous courses and were able to speak from personal experience of the impact at an individual level. The following were the most widely cited benefits.

Improved understanding of context and principles of Community Engagement

Several respondents spoke of the value of setting their work in a wider policy context and of having an opportunity to explore/revisit key concepts and principles. This was acknowledged as valuable for both new and longer-standing staff as there is a need for serving staff to periodically update and refresh their knowledge and skills.

Different approaches and techniques for Community Engagement

It was felt that some staff have a tendency to 'stick with what they know' when it comes to community engagement, even when the approach used fails to yield the desired results. Partnership training courses, it was commented,



have prompted participants to think more widely about tools and techniques for involving service users and experiment with 'new' approaches on their return to work.

Confidence-building

Several interviewees spoke of the impact of Partnership training on the confidence levels of staff who attended. It is clear that the practical nature of some of the training courses was particularly important in this regard in so far as they afforded participants an opportunity to develop and reflect on their skills in a relatively safe and supportive environment. The 5 day course on Participatory Appraisal, for example, incorporates a full day of 'fieldwork' during which participants 'practise' the approach with community groups. Evaluation forms for these courses repeatedly state that the fieldwork was the most important part of the course since, for some, it requires them to step outside of their comfort zone and face their fears around community consultation. Doing so not only boosts participants' confidence, but also increases the likelihood of the techniques being integrated into practice on their return to work.

Wider awareness of engagement practice across the City

A further benefit mentioned was that the Partnership training courses promote awareness of what other agencies are doing to engage and work with communities and therefore promotes consistency of approach.

Networking

The opportunity for participants to meet, discuss and share experiences with representatives from other departments and agencies was frequently cited as a positive impact of the Partnership training programme. It was felt by many that running generic courses which were open to all partners very much embodied the principles of partnership working and enabled the forging of links across sectoral boundaries. Only in one case was it felt that this resulted in less-focused and potentially less-productive training.

Contribution to other qualifications and Continuing Professional Development

One or two participants described how useful the training received had been in terms of feeding into and supporting their learning on other accredited courses they were following.

Whilst those respondents who had attended training themselves were able to describe the personal impact of that training, impact at an organisational level was more difficult to discern. Several respondents simply did not know if anyone from their organisation had received Partnership training and one or two confessed that they were only vaguely aware of the programme or it had 'passed them by'.

Only in one case (a Children's Centre Manager) was there mention of systematically cascading the learning from the training to others within the organisation.

4.3 Current Strengths of Partner Organisations in relation to Community Engagement.

Following presentation of the policy and legislative drivers for community engagement, participants at the workshops worked in groups to complete a SWOT Analysis of their organisations. The objectives of this task were to draw out universal and service-specific strengths and weaknesses that might impact on partner agencies' capacity to respond to this fast moving agenda.

Reproductions of the SWOT Analyses produced by the groups can be found in **Annex 2**. The key themes emerging from the exercise are listed and briefly discussed below.

Strengths

- History of and reputation for Community Engagement in the City
- Strong Partnership working
- Structures for Engagement
- Established Links with communities
- Commitment and Enthusiasm of Professionals
- Role of Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council as a bridge between statutory and voluntary and community sectors.
- Strong grassroots-level engagement and service delivery

Participants in almost all groups acknowledged the importance of Wolverhampton's strong track record for both partnership working and community engagement as a key strength which supports their work. Wolverhampton's excellent reputation, both locally and nationally, for citizen involvement (as recognised by the Network of Empowering Authorities) has clearly helped to raise the profile of engagement activities within partner organisations and secure the ongoing commitment of skilled and enthusiastic individuals. This reputation has been further strengthened by Wolverhampton's role as a Pathfinder local authority for the 'Take Part' programme.

The fact that Wolverhampton is, in many ways, ahead of the field in this regard also means that the various structures required to mainstream engagement are already in place and links with residents and community groups, through neighbourhood structures and a range of other fora are already well established. The ability of partner agencies to tap into these existing structures and channels for engagement was seen as an important asset.

Links between the Public and Voluntary and Community Sector were also seen as a strength, and in particular the Voluntary Sector Council's role in reaching and working with small grassroots organisations as well as engaging



with policy was acknowledged as an important facilitator of effective partnership working and engagement in the City.

4.4 Current Weaknesses of Partner Organisations in relation to Community Engagement.

A number of key organisational weaknesses in respect of community engagement were also identified through the SWOT Analysis and are listed and discussed below.

Weaknesses

- Lack of feedback to public/ Not enough sharing of good news stories
- Reliance on 'Usual Suspects'
- Duplication
- Blind spots
- Stigma attached to agency/service
- Lack of capacity to analyse and learn from practice
- Inconsistent approaches
- Failure to adhere to Compact Consultation Code
- Sometimes tokenistic and too late – culture of 'we know best'
- Lack of senior-level support
- Time constraints
- Poor monitoring of engagement

The local authority group in each of the two workshops reflected on several areas in which improvements could be made. It was felt that, possibly because of the strong established links and structures referred to in the previous section, there is a tendency to rely on the 'usual suspects' when consulting. It was felt that this can lead quickly to 'involvement overload' for those individuals, but also means that consultation and engagement continues to have a number of 'blind spots' where the views and concerns of particular groups and communities remain unheard. Two groups particularly mentioned were young people, who have not been included in the neighbourhood structures, and transient communities, including Gypsies and Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and the homeless.

It also emerged in this activity that despite strong partnership working in the city and a shift towards more consistent approaches to engagement, the problem of duplication persists, and that this in turn damages public perception and good will towards engagement initiatives. It was felt that consultation databases have been of limited use in this regard and that the monitoring of engagement across the City could be improved to address this issue.

The Local Authority groups also discussed weaknesses in relation both to *when* in the decision-making process consultations take place, and also the



way in which the results of consultation are fed back to residents. It was acknowledged that the process is still occasionally 'back to front', with the question asked as, 'Do you like what we've done?', rather than, 'What would you like us to do?'. This was seen as a more superficial and tokenistic approach to engagement. The Local Authority staff also discussed the importance of communicating to the public how their views have made a difference i.e. demonstrating that engagement has 'happened' and that people were listened to. It was felt that this is not always very well done and that the public need to 'see the difference' they are making to services as part of securing their ongoing interest in engagement activities.

As ever, one of the organisational weaknesses discussed by participants was a lack of time. Genuine community engagement can be a very time-intensive process and requires a great deal of energy and work; it was felt that this was not always recognised or appreciated by senior management. Furthermore, with every agency working towards achieving their own targets, priorities inevitably compete and community engagement may not always receive the attention it deserves.

There was much discussion of the term 'hard to reach'; it was argued that there is no such thing as a 'hard to reach' group and it is the responsibility of service providers to engage as widely as possible and promote genuine, inclusive engagement. Participants debated how the very rejection of the term 'hard to reach' constitutes an opportunity since it places the onus for change firmly with service providers and ends the implicit 'blaming' of certain communities for making themselves 'hard to reach'.

A final weakness identified by the Voluntary and Community sector group was a lack of capacity to reflect on, analyse and showcase the work that they do with communities. It was also felt that they could be better at tying that work in with citywide policy and strategy.

4.5 External Opportunities and Threats.

Finally, the SWOT Analysis required participants to scan the external environment in which they operate and identify forces that may impact, either positively or negatively, on their efforts to engage effectively with communities.

Among the opportunities highlighted was the current policy environment which was seen as extremely supportive. The reputation of Wolverhampton City Council and Partnership was again seen as a positive force for improvement. The very diversity and relative cohesion of the population of Wolverhampton was also described as an opportunity.

However – several threats were also identified, with the potential to counteract opportunities and strengths. The current climate of political and economic instability was seen as particularly significant, not only for the uncertainty it raises over funding, but also because of the severe erosion of trust it has caused between citizens and public bodies. It was feared that this might well



impact on how receptive residents would be to participating in commissioning with local government and partner agencies. The rise of the British National Party (BNP) as a political force and home for protest voters was also seen as a threat in the political environment with the potential to damage cohesion.

The current cuts in funding or 'savings programmes' were identified as important threats. This was particularly related to funding for the Third Sector. Participants identified the contradiction between the proliferation of policies around community engagement and the concomitant decrease in funding to support the implementation.

Finally, the continuing problem of 'consultation fatigue' was listed as a potential threat to the extension and improvement of engagement activity across the City.

4.6 Commonly Diagnosed Needs

Following the SWOT Analysis activity, participants switched their focus from the organisational to the individual and listed what they saw as the personal knowledge, skills and attitudes required to promote genuine community engagement. The results of this activity (reproduced in **Annex 3**) provided a springboard into the final activity which invited participants to identify future training needs based both on the organisational and individual analyses (see **Annex 4**).

As part of this process, common themes emerging from the interview stage of the TNA process were shared with the workshop participants in order to establish the validity of those responses.

The main training needs identified are discussed below.

4.6.1 Information Needs

TNA participants clearly expressed the need to be kept abreast of policy and legislation relating to community engagement. It was evident from the workshop that, while some partners, particularly in the Local Authority, are very familiar with policy trends and requirements – other partner agencies are much less aware of them. It was felt, therefore, that the Partnership has a definite role to play in the provision of briefings/ updates to other agencies.

Other information needs identified relate to the sharing of best practice across the City. Participants clearly see value in the presentation and analysis of case studies that enable them to see what others are doing, what has worked well/less well, and why. It was felt that this would both enable the spread of best practice and help to avoid duplication and inconsistency of approach.

Finally, there was a request for more information about initiatives within neighbourhoods, for example Local Area Neighbourhood Arrangements (LANA) and Multi Agency Support Teams (MAST) for young people – which are not universally well-known or understood.



4.6.2 Community Engagement

Participants feel that the Partnership has a role to play in the provision of basic community development / engagement training for partner agencies. Some of the sub-topics identified in this area included community profiling and getting to know a community and its dynamics; the rationale for and principles underpinning community engagement; skills and techniques for working with communities.

A further need identified was how to sustain community engagement. Much of the previous training was concerned with initiating communication with communities and establishing relationships. Some participants felt that there is now a need to look at how best to nurture links and sustain interest and enthusiasm for engagement.

4.6.3 Facilitation skills

A number of participants expressed a desire for training in facilitation skills. Representatives from the police and fire services felt this would be particularly useful to them in the many community meetings they attend or chair. They also identified a need for training in presentation skills to enhance their interaction and communication with residents at neighbourhood meetings and events.

A number of participants felt that training in some of the 'softer' i.e. interpersonal skills / qualities that are required for successful engagement could also be developed through Partnership training as these are critical to building relationships within communities and are all too often assumed.

4.6.4 Reaching 'seldom heard' groups

It was clear from all stages of the data collection that the Partnership-led Introduction to Public Involvement Training was very popular with participants and the individual sessions focusing on consulting specific groups were particularly useful. Respondents in the TNA expressed a desire for a continuation of training of that kind since the promotion of inclusive engagement is still a challenge for partner agencies. In particular, skills for cross-cultural consultation, overcoming language barriers and working with different faith communities were identified as needs.

4.6.5 Commissioning

Although some organisations and agencies in the City, particularly in the NHS, are quite far advanced in their thinking and progress towards engaging service users in the commissioning process, other agencies felt specific training was required in this area. It was felt that communities themselves would need information on the commissioning process, but that agencies would also need training on how to go about involving communities in service commissioning and the potentially different demands of this particular form of service user engagement.



4.6.6 Tools and methods

Many participants felt that there is an ongoing need for training in the methods and tools of engagement. This might include revisiting traditional approaches, such as questionnaires and focus groups and learning to do them better, but would also encompass different ways of consulting and engaging communities such as Participatory Appraisal.

4.6.7 Knowledge & Skills for Effective Representation

Although the principle focus of this TNA was the identification of training needs for the staff of partner agencies, several respondents spoke at length of the need for the Partnership to cast its training net wider and offer training for community representatives. It was felt in particular that community members often need training to enable them to better understand and navigate local authority or partnership structures. Participants also felt that community members would benefit from Partnership support in helping them to become effective representatives; understanding their role on a board or panel and developing the skills and confidence to effectively and fairly represent the views of others.

Requests for training of this kind reflect a desire for the Partnership to promote effective engagement from both the service provider and service user perspectives. It was felt that tackling the skills gap from both sides of the equation would ultimately be much more successful than continuing to focus training only on service providers.

4.7 Proposed target groups for future Partnership training

Feedback from the one to one interviews and the workshops indicated a wide range of potential target groups for training:

- The legislation and policy on community engagement has an impact on all public sector service providers. Consequently, the participants in this TNA felt that this needs to be conveyed to all staff.
- As expressed in the previous paragraph, training needs to include interested community members and service users – particularly if they are involved in representing the views of other people.
- Training is particularly required for staff who have community engagement as part of their remit – particularly employees who are new to this role.
- Managers were identified as a particular target group for the following reasons.
 - Ensuring the policies are implemented
 - Support to staff who are involved in community engagement work
 - Involvement in strategic direction to the work
- Commissioners within the PCT



- People who are experienced in community engagement who are interested in developing skills in a particular technique or process

4.8 Issues concerning the delivery of future training

The participants expressed a number of ideas relating to the manner in which community engagement training should be delivered. The following is a summary of the responses:

- Community engagement is new to some services – particularly within the local authority. Training with these groups needs to identify the relevance of community engagement to their work.
- One of the questions the Training Needs Assessment set out to explore with partners was whether skills development might be achieved through means other than the traditional training workshop. Whilst no direct criticism of the workshop format was encountered, it is clearly challenging for some organisations and individuals to ring-fence the time to attend training – particularly when it is spread over a number of days. Consequently, TNA respondents were keen to discuss additional ways in which the Partnership might support them.
- A number of respondents emphasised the need for training to be strongly practical to be effective.
- Training in particular techniques such as focus groups or Participatory Appraisal needs to be reinforced by practice. Participants in the TNA felt it was important for training providers to ensure that people attending such courses have the opportunity to put the training into practice within a realistic time scale following the training.

There were a number of comments about the experience and qualities of people providing the training:

- Trainers should be of a consistently high quality.
- People facilitating workshops about engagement with particular communities e.g. older people, BME communities, young people must have relevant experience of this type of work
- Trainers need to emphasise the importance of developing trusting relationships in communities in order to conduct effective diagnoses of community issues; they should emphasise the importance of participatory engagement rather than consultation. The training related to tools and techniques on community engagement should support this approach.
- Some participants suggested that community members / service users with facilitation skills could be involved in providing training.



4.9 Other forms of support

TNA participants were asked to identify other issues that they felt were important in supporting training related to community engagement. The following is a summary of the ideas that were expressed:

Sharing information / experience

Some respondents in the TNA were unaware of the Partnership's Community Engagement database. They felt that an electronic resource would be effective and had the potential to encourage collaboration between partners, enable sharing experiences and expertise and avoiding duplication.

Some of the respondents identified the value of sharing experiences through case studies possibly in the form of a newsletter.

Clinics and Mentoring

A number of participants suggested that the Partnership might support the establishment of mentoring relationships, both within and between organisations. The aim of this would be to share good practice and provide individuals with a sounding board for their ideas; inter-organisational mentoring relationships would have the added benefit of enhancing partnership working and awareness.

Another related suggestion was the establishment of a directory so that people engaged in initiatives would be able to identify contacts with relevant experience.

Toolkit

Some of the respondents identified the importance of a practical tool kit as an aid and reminder about approaches and techniques. (This may stem from a lack of awareness of the Partnership's existing resource pack.)

Training impact

It was suggested that the Partnership might carry out a longitudinal study of people who attend community engagement training to identify the impact on their practice and outcomes in relation to the work they undertake.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

This section of the report is in two parts: Section 5.1 summarises the conclusions and recommendations which emerge directly from the TNA data. These relate to the content and delivery of future training and the potential role of the Partnership in coordinating and supporting community engagement activities. Section 5.2 draws on and responds to many of the issues and constraints identified through the TNA process and proposes a supplementary training model which the Partnership may wish to consider in the future, namely a Training of Trainers strand to the provision.

5.1 Core training provision

Feedback from evaluation forms, interviews and the workshops indicate that courses provided by the Partnership were positively regarded by those who have attended them. We would therefore recommend that these be maintained with some additions and modification as follows:

- The Involving the Involving the Public Introductory Training should be maintained
- Information about developments in Government policy and local drivers about public engagement should be provided to all Partnership organisations in a clear / easy to understand form at workshops and as a component within the Introductory Training.
- The Partnership should continue to provide specific and practical training on engagement techniques for participants who envisage applying the approaches within a reasonable timescale:
 - Participatory Appraisal
 - Pinpoint
 - Community profiling
 - Traditional methods surveys and focus groups etc.
- Methods for sustaining community engagement need to be included in the training programme i.e. relationship building, developing trust over time to enable effective diagnosis of community issues. This topic might most effectively be addressed by sharing and discussing case studies.
- Developing facilitation skills e.g. to assist with conducting community based meetings by public sector agencies or third sector organisations
- Many participants in the TNA had limited knowledge about their potential involvement in the commissioning process. This could form the focus of specific workshop sessions.
- Participants in the TNA from both statutory and third sector organisations felt there was a role for the Partnership to facilitate sessions with community and voluntary organisations to:
 - Improve the knowledge about local authority and / or partnership structures
 - Develop skills to assist people to become effective representatives



It is also recommended that the Partnership consider additional roles it could play in supporting community engagement within partner agencies. These could include:

- The active promotion of training to the voluntary and community sectors – either in the existing format or modified to meet their needs more specifically.
- Use of techniques that share learning and increase awareness and use of the database e.g. a regular e-newsletter / e-shot with links to case studies and the database.
- Inter agency mentoring in the use of techniques.
- Partnership clinics on community engagement.
- Periodic review, updating and promotion of the Resource Pack/ Toolkit to support community engagement work.
- A number of participants identified the need for workers to be introduced to community development skills (through accredited courses). The Partnership may have a role in obtaining information about courses available locally and signposting people as appropriate.

5.2 Training of Trainers (ToT)

During the process of the TNA a number of key issues have been identified which may lead the Partnership to consider alternative/supplementary models for the provision of community engagement training. Some of these factors are outlined below:

- The development of community engagement has a high level of importance within the Partnership because of the local achievements and ambitions in addition to the Government policy initiatives.
- Extending the number of partner agencies (Council, statutory and third sector) in community engagement activity requires an understanding of the context of those organisations in relation to community engagement.
- Sustaining community engagement activity in organisations can be challenging due to staff turnover, restructuring, reallocation of roles etc.
- It is important to encourage partner agencies to recognise that community engagement is a process rather than a consultation exercise / quick fix.
- Currently training is provided by:
 - Members of the Partnership who have become involved in the Public Involvement Network because of personal interest or invitation and have appropriate skills / experience in community engagement
 - External training providers
- There are pressures on the amount of time that people can commit to attending training – particularly at times of financial constraint.



- Currently the invitation to attend Partnership training – particularly the Involving the Public Introductory Training – is through a broad distribution via the partner agencies. Consequently some agencies are regularly represented while others have had little or no involvement.
- It is important that individual organisations' learning around community engagement continues to develop and renew. This in turn helps to energise and reinvigorate community engagement within the Partnership.

To respond to these factors the Partnership might like to consider the development of a cadre of trainers from within partner agencies who would be able to:

- Cascade information, skills and knowledge relating to community engagement to relevant staff within their organisations;
- Tailor training provision to the specific needs of the organisation as appropriate;
- Deliver short, 'in-house' training inputs at times which are manageable and convenient to their colleagues;
- Provide a source of mentoring and on-going support for community engagement within the organisation;
- Guide colleagues in the use of resources such as the database and resource pack;
- Encourage the implementation of community engagement activity.

If partner agencies were willing to nominate an individual to take on this role, the approach has the potential to result in wider engagement in training, more focussed inputs, better targeting of appropriate personnel, and improved overall attendance.

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ANNEX 1: TNA Workshop Outline



Community Engagement TNA Workshop

Objectives:

- To discuss the changing context for community engagement work in Wolverhampton.
- To reflect on and discuss the implications of this for you and your organisation.
- To identify organisational and individual needs that arise from this.
- To examine if and how the Partnership can respond to these needs through future programmes of training and support.

1. Background to the TNA & Objectives of the workshop.
2. Introductions
3. The Context: Short presentation on the key national policy drivers relating to community engagement and local initiatives & responses.
4. SWOT Analysis:

Aim:

- For participants to identify and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their particular organisations in relation to the delivery of the Partnership's ambitious agenda for community engagement.
- To identify supportive and hindering forces in the external environment which impact on their work.

In groups, participants conduct a SWOT analysis for their organisations in relation to the context presented.

SWOT ANALYSIS





Participants should list internal strengths and weaknesses in responding to the community engagement agenda and external opportunities and threats (indicating those in both cases that are organisation specific).

5. Individual Training Needs:

Participants identify what they consider to be the key **knowledge**, **skills** and **attitudes** required to work effectively in community engagement.

Listed on 3 flipcharts: Knowledge
Skills
Attitudes

Discussion: Which are pre-requisites for the job?
Are they 'trainable'?
Do they need continual refreshing/ updating?
Where are the common 'gaps' in terms of existing skillsets?

6. Based on the needs identified through the SWOT and the composite picture of Knowledge Skills and Attitudes, Participants build up a picture of the community engagement training and support that would benefit their organisations.

Discussion/ grouping of cards under:

Types/ Modalities of training
Who for? Etc

Training in what?	For whom?	How? (Modalities/Methods)	Other issues

8. Feedback, Summary and Next Steps



ANNEX 2: SWOT Analyses

Local Authority Group 1

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong links between LSP & WCC• Neighbourhood structures in place• Willingness & commitment of professionals (grass roots level)	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of inclusion of YP in neighbourhood structures• Lack of info from LNP to residents• Lack of trust between citizens and public bodies• Use of 'spin'• Current political instability/balance of power• Consultation fatigue• Lack of commitment to engagement at senior level
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More info to residents in different forms• Joint working	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recession• National & local politics• Savings plan is affecting the type of conversation with public, affecting trust• Express & Star• Rise of BNP <p>capacity ↗</p>

Police and Fire Service

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect of the community • A 'constant' – a service always needed • No 'competition' (other service providers) for our unique services • Open to change • Pro-active • Prevention work & innovative initiatives • Based in neighbourhood/locality: accessible • Experience: may staff with lots of experience in engaging/talking to public 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No competition could be a weakness if we don't ensure we continually improve our service • Uniform could be a barrier • Authority – people can be reluctant to be seen to talk to police etc • Staff turnover results in lack of continuity (promotion etc) • No formal training in 'how to engage/talk to police' • Cascading awareness of 'community engagement' through a large organisation with many staff • We find that we engage mainly with those who come forward to engage with us
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement can help to educate & break down barriers/perceptions in the long term • New ways to 'engage' with communities – being adaptable – going out to the community • Open up to new areas of provision & engagement to reflect community needs (e.g. family learning) • Utilise partners – eg Asylum seeker team deliver WMFS home safety checks for us as our uniforms are a barrier & relationships already established • Network • To pro-actively 'target' community groups more • LAA & CAA is an opportunity to get 'buy in' from our orgs. for engagement 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government priorities can change quite frequently & our targets may not reflect local community issues • Prevention & engagement are hard to measure • Perception of service users may not accurately reflect real stats. • Time management – core duties v's engagement

Voluntary & Community Sector and Neighbourhoods

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grassroots level engagement & service delivery • Small orgs delivering real support in communities • WVSC, WNC are good at reaching & working with these orgs. to engage with policy etc • Tools, methodology & expertise to provide a range of ways in which people say they can positively be informed about and influence policy & practice 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCS lack of capacity at organisational level to focus on analysing & showcasing what we do best & how to tie it up with citywide strategy/policy • We want information available in plain language about policy & practice to do our work effectively with communities, groups, organisations
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies & Policy context is supporting involvement/engagement from National Government Level 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding available & funding budget cuts from LA • Political climate (change in power lack of knowledge of VCS) • Equality of partnership working

WLP, LNPs, PCT and Wolverhampton Homes

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wolverhampton Homes, Learning Partnership & NHS/PCT has infrastructure to enable participation – e.g. addresses enrolment registration with GP's	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Gypsy/ traveller involvement in our community groups/events/networks• Organisations (such as NHS) can easily ignore people “in transit” e.g. refugees, migrants, travellers, homeless etc
<p>Localities Communities Interest Groups</p>	
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different ways to participate – meetings – texts – email – conversation – contact	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unless participation is really influential then it becomes superficial• Ineffective feedback• Squeaky wheels get the grease

Fire Service, ABCD, Heantun Housing

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicated comm. Regen team (2 vacancies) clear priorities• Good links with community• Provision of essential service• Not threatening• Data rich• Massive amount of organisations & partners working together• Core value	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing of risk based info to important agencies• Specific agenda's of champions• Slow things down – perceptions• Time – spend – other targets• Not golden thread through org – cultural shift needed
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop future community leaders/activists• Join up, find out, do it• Existing community champions• Excluding hard to reach: what is 'hard to reach'? • Re look at who is 'hard to reach'	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where to draw the line in terms of info sharing especially where people do not wish to be engaged• Communities' expectations of conditions issue

Local Authority

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gearing up – ahead of the game (recognised by NEA's) • Good examples already • Have an engagement framework • P.I.N.G • Strong partnerships (joint commissioning) • Work plan around DTI & plans to expand it • S.U involvement – heavily involved in commissioning • LNP's • Good national profile • Take part programme • Identified our weaknesses • Past training programme – evaluation for future delivery • Adapted & changed (not static) • Diversity of our city – good level of cohesion 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non consistent • Not embedded in all areas • Communication (fluctuates) methods of • Culture of 'we know best' • Sometimes back to front • Can be tokenistic & seen as an opt in – opt out • How we monitor engagement • Duplication • Our accountability to the public • Feedback • Public perception – staff & members perception/buy in • Marketing good new stories 'you said, we did' • Consultation overload/involvement overload • Usual suspects • Transient nature of volunteers • Not joined up
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of city • DTI • A lot of good will in the city • More representative – include & involve more people • NEA – build on position/reputation • Drivers – move things forward – accelerate pace • Staff/skills/knowledge • Improve partnerships & develop consistency • Share best practice 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic climate • Political climate • Savings programme • Lack of trust • No national directive on how to join it up • No additional funding • Timing – lack of realism

YMCA, LINK and Children's Centres

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent rep's on the board (children's centre) • Partnerships (C.C) • YMCA – target marketing too hard to reach & community groups • Partnership working is strong in the city • Neighbourhood employment & skills boards • Support a wide range of diverse community groups • Project's whose roles are to ensure people have a say and get involved in Health & Social Care. Mental health empowerment – Learning disability – drug service user involvement – LINK • Health & Social care officer. Ensure vol, sector orgs involved 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma's attached to the agency/service • Where you have projects that aim at specific target markets, people can 'just miss' on participation • Target market - & follow-on. Post 5 yrs (children's centre) • People don't adhere to the compact consultation code • Too many directories which aren't linked • Data bases • Partnership working can also distract you from your focus • We focus on the 'consultation' does this distract from the 'purpose' of the consultation • Not funded to work with young people until the LINK? A new area to work on • Diversity missed – opportunity to develop • Process of consultation • N.E.S.B.S
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law • Diversity of local population • The partnership 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government targets can be counter productive • Constant changes of expectation delivery etc • Consultation fatigue • Lack of incentives to participate • Funding local of & restrictions • Use of Jargon & management speak • The decision has already been made • Stat bods not involving people appropriately i.e. time of meetings – last min invites – papers sent late – venues – transport etc etc



ANNEX 3: Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Charts

Knowledge Skills & Attitudes for Community Engagement

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underpinning values, principles of community development • Understanding of different communities/groups & the need to engage in different ways • Understanding of policies/strategies/government drivers & how engagement work fits in • The context of why we should do it in plain terms from the perspective of the community (rather than management) • The history of the local community • Equality & diversity • The make-up of the local community • Knowledge of local community interest group (gained via experience) • Knowledge – who’s doing what (e.g. other organisations) • Knowledge – policies – procedure – targets • Understanding collective action • What are the structures & what is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to feedback information in a number of ways • Languages – actual – social – emotional – interests • Ability to use the information in a beneficial way for the people • Limited resources to be used in different ways for different activities • To work with partner agencies to achieve the best outcomes • Presentation skills • Capacity building • Persuasion & Motivation – especially with those who will resist your efforts • Joined up working not working in ‘silos’ • Listening • Ability to tailor methods/approach to different groups/orgs • Communication & relationships • Acknowledging the experience that different groups may have & not ‘belittling’ people with lesser skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-judgemental – open minded – hearted • Honest (no bullshit – or blagging) • Tenacity – stamina – perseverance • Passion • Treat people as an equal • Don’t patronise or flatter or baffle • Acknowledging the importance of feedback even when negative • Open to other’s opinions & perspectives • Approachable • Not using ‘spin’ • Workers in the sector who are in it for the job & not the purpose • Open to innovative ideas not scared of trying new ways to engage • Recognising that young people should be part of the planning process and included from the beginning in ways they feel appropriate – not a last minute add on at the end. This still happens

Knowledge Skills & Attitudes for Community Engagement

<p>their purpose? Are they achieving?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to give feedback • Policies • Action learning sets to share practice – personal & group development • Still need more local stats/info for evidence • Context • Issue of payment of young people needs to be addressed across the city and the strategy applied consistently • Regular updates of changing demographics of Wolverhampton and its individual areas • Of groups that are not usually consulted • Of different community work initiatives taking place in Wolverhampton • What they are hoping to achieve – what they can offer/deliver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better joined up working with realistic timescales for engaging young people on the whole process • Micro –sensitive, subtle, individual. Macro – broad, policy, organisations • Can do person who will do and act on feedback • Open friendly personable workers • Listening skills to be open to new ideas • Recognition that young people have their own lives and commitments as well as being part of city engagement. Tendency to flog a willing horse. Need to reach under • Listen – understand – act • Partnership working (e.g. not being controlling or competitive) • Information getting to many more people – being honest about what is achievable • How to talk to people • Bringing services & Community 	<p>far too often</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open – honest – trustworthy – approachable • Honesty • Support of senior management to involvement engagement • Open attitude to listen & act on views gathered • Local people create better designs • There needs to be a change of attitude to the youth service and young people to enable effective engagement of Y.P in communities • Take the long view – a 50yr plan
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Knowledge Skills & Attitudes for Community Engagement

	<p>round the table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tools kits of skills/techniques for different ages, race etc• Communication• People	
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Knowledge Skills & Attitudes for Community Engagement

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider all data sources – think outside the box • Well supported by organisations • Consultation techniques – knowledge of legislation – quality standards – how to communicate • Barriers • Different techniques • Of the community and the area (each have different needs) • Partnerships & joint working • About what’s going on and/or how you can find out • Protocols, sensitivities & constraints • About the process of engagement • Legislation & policy & governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro active • Confidence to approach & talk to people • Local knowledge • Empathy • Range of tools • The skills for community groups to prevent research that is valid and stands up to scrutiny • Good communicator • Awareness of culture • Ability to identify what is important to your community – don’t just jump on the band wagon • Getting people on board who are not usually involved – beyond the usual suspects • People skills/communicate – active listening • Innovate • Honest – broken – mediator • Creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open • Valuing people • Keep it real for everyone • Honest & genuine • Willing to fail/take risks/manage risks • Firm but fair • Without prejudice/anti discriminating • Treat everyone with dignity & respect • Realistic • Sensitivity • Empathy/social skills • Want/desire to work with communities • Being honest • Emotional intelligence • Motivated & motivational • Positive • Patience/resilience/understanding/equality/open to difference • Impartially non-judgemental • Being prepared to change & embrace new ways •

Knowledge Skills & Attitudes for Community Engagement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your community • Cultural awareness know your comm. – real experience • Collate data sources – don't rely on census • Cultural awareness • Who is doing what & where – directory • What's already working/build on this – share good practice/info • All the policies effecting the work • Finding people in your target market/research methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptable to change • Time management • Confidence • Ability to deal with elected members • To build a rapport • Monitoring & feedback • Planning & organisation • Managing budgets/people/resources • Active listening & not interpreting what communicating is saying • Adaptable personality • Delivering different techniques & facilitation • Being open minded about findings/non judgemental • Objective research/agenda free consultation 	
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ANNEX 4: Training Needs Tables

Training Needs Table

In What?	For Whom?	How?	Other Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community development – principles – skills – techniques • Professional level training in community engagement & development • What is engagement & why do we do it & what are the benefits • Cultural issues – awareness • Facilitating discussions with public, chairing meetings, presenting • People influencing commissioning • Peer support & learning across partnership • Train VGO's to analyse & report on community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New community based workers • Community development workers • Fire-fighters – community advocates – Police Officers PCSO's • Patients Community Group's & commissioners • All those involved in eng/cd • To help commissioners/funders/ policy makers know what is being achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pin point • WVSC & partnership to plan & deliver 	

Training Needs Table

In What?	For Whom?	How?	Other Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic community engagement training • Understanding the dynamics of communities • Awareness raising & personal/professional development • Participatory appraisal training • Youth service staff are UNV locally or nationally qualified so less need for skills & knowledge training. However, very real need for regular policy & strategy briefings to ensure good networking & joined up partnership working. Especially lately with many significant changes that is hard to keep aware of. The introduction to today's session that gave an overview could be a first of regular briefings • Community development skills related to sustaining community involvement in supporting (youth) initiatives • Different groups and communities in Wolverhampton – where they are and how best to involve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community based volunteers • All staff • PCT commissioners • People in statutory agencies with no previous experience of community engagement • Senior managers/policy makers/strategic thinking's need no challenge themselves & be challenged through training • Openness to continuous learning ability to not be uncomfortable about not being an expert • Interview panels • Assisting community members of LNPs to develop; to see the bigger picture of community issues/needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular briefing notes & mailed out to staff who work in involvement e.g. demographics • Reflective practice groups • Delivered by people who know • Practical • Action sets need to be planned ahead & used at critical points. So that learning doesn't need refreshing • Action learning set • Let people experience different types of consultation for them to recognise the pitfalls/benefits/ease. Possibly do a role play of good/bad practice • The people who attend could be given ways to disseminate their knowledge gained to other colleagues as it is unlikely that many staff could commit much time to the training • Skills training directly linked to practice needs • Extend the Involving the Public Introductory Training to a full day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some type of directory knowing who to go to • Ability to sat 'sorry we got it wrong' • Longitudinal survey of people who used training & to what purpose & outcome • Trainers running workshops must have a working knowledge of group they are talking about (does that make sense) i.e. if running session on BMT commitments it must have worked in those communities • Attitudes not trainers prerequisite = personal skills

Training Needs Table

<p>them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting local people to be representatives • Information on the commissioning process for communities • Useful to be given the 'bigger picture' and recognise where you fit into it • Community engagement programme I attended was excellent • How local people are to be involved in commissioning • Training on the different requirements including current legislation and then local requirements • Training on different methods but not just using usual methods, introduction of new and innovative methods and particular groups • Performance management & evidence gathering impact assessments • Overview of other organisations in Wolverhampton and the community work that they do • Some technique though not necessarily whole training days e.g. focus groups could run alongside other techniques rather than stand 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical examples reflecting what worked and not worked • Community representatives to deliver the 'why' & 'benefits' of doing engagement case studies • Training delivered by community members (re involvement in the training) • Practical, interactive & case studies & shadowing engagement workers 	
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Training Needs Table

<p>alone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development for local people to build confidence to effectively engage with service providers so they can influence • Community based training e.g. members of one or two LNPs • Training in the qualities of engagement i.e. developing trust and participation with people in communities and diagnosing the key issues • Addressing cultural differences to develop community engagement • Information about the current legislation • Surveys & questionnaires – recognising that they don't work for a lot of groups & have poor returns • Knowledge about what different sectors have to work to e.g. duty to involve & to create a better understanding & help people to work in a 'joined up way'. Equalities training as a whole not just BME/cultural. Current community engagement works well 			
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Training Needs Table

Name	In What?	For Whom?	How?	Other Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places of worship • Faith officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed by community, starts the consultation process, makes the link • Personal equalities & attributes – confident/empathic/motivated – may influence others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABCD 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any org 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounding boards/pool of people to talk to (that do comm. Eng well)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comm dev – accredited – certain students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comm dev staff and org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heantun Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising existing skills & strengths (including common sense) building on these 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service users/tenants/staff/students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking it to things that make sense – have a point. To it i.e. real meaning for the people you are involving • Make more existing relations & opportunities. Support planning & support services/tenant & landlord etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to each other!! Share ideas, good practice joint work opportunities

Training Needs Table

Name	In What?	For Whom?	How?	Other Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YMCA (Marie) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involving the public training – it worked well A focus on the ‘purpose’ of consultation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How you use the findings Network of individuals with expertise & experience that you could contact with questions 1 -2 – 1 Development opportunities 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement Workers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of people who have a skill or have worked with a group i.e. young fathers that can be contacted On-line tool so you can watch methods in action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More about support & mentoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service users/ community activists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involving public training – methods/knowledge i.e. legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Sessions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WRCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating with adults engaging adults & the community empowering adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Year’s staff – me, family support staff, community workers, families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive tools/frameworks Networking opportunities Newsletters of good news stories/work carried out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping it workable for all Consistency in quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building capacity of community activists Coaching & mentoring skills Engagement as part of councils induction Training on facilitation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open training up to young people/activists Everyone who has a role to play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Techniques that need a minimum or writing Sharing ideas with other training within the council More informed in peoples work settings/venues more community based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willingness to participate Capacity