

## **What needs to be in place?**

### **Issues for consideration**

1. Managing the consultation
2. Planning the consultation
3. Identifying who does what, when and why
4. The consultation document

This section describes a number of management arrangements and planning processes, and discusses the key stages and stakeholders associated with delivering effective post audit consultation.

### **1. Managing the consultation**

Consultation provides an opportunity to bring the work of the CDRP to public notice, celebrate its successes, assess its performance and promote community involvement in its decision making.

CDRPs in planning post audit consultation, must, however, also acknowledge that:

- Particular communities and individual community groups / individuals are often over researched and unwilling to engage in endless rounds of consultation
- Members of the general public along with some relevant organisations and groups of interest are often cynical about the impact their views will have on the development of strategy and on decision making more generally
- Publication of the audit findings and consultation documentation may generate heightened concern and fear about crime and disorder across local communities in the CDRP area.

Careful strategic management of the consultation process is required in order to ensure that the approach and the methods used are able to overcome such issues (or at least address them) and are capable of reaching a representative sample of the general public as well as specific stakeholders including responsible authorities, relevant organisations and partners, and hard to reach and other interest groups.

### **First steps ...**

An appropriate '**first step**' for CDRPs to undertake in thinking strategically about post audit consultation is to:

- Organise a steering group to 'manage' the consultation process, and

- Nominate a single person with overall responsibility for the co-ordination, communication and oversight of the exercise.

The purpose of a consultation steering group is to ensure that the:

- consultation process is effectively managed, and,
- barriers and blockages to action are tackled promptly, opportunities for effective practice are promoted, and that findings are analysed and used appropriately.

The steering group may involve a number of persons and bodies responsible for the planning and coordination of the *audit and strategy process*, although membership of the consultation steering group may vary as a result of staff expertise and experience in relation to doing consultation. In some cases, the consultation steering group may comprise the same personnel as the audit and strategy steering group. Certainly membership should comprise representation from responsible authorities and relevant organisations including partner agencies.

#### **Note 11 The consultation steering group**

The management of the consultation process will involve either:

- The team responsible for managing the audit and strategy process taking responsibility for the management of the consultation exercise as well, or
- A specific consultation team representative of the partners and engaging suitably skilled staff brought together to plan, develop and deliver the consultation exercise

In addition:

- The consultation steering group should nominate one person with overall responsibility for the coordination, communication and oversight of the exercise.

Responsibilities of the post audit consultation steering group will include:

- Setting the consultation terms of reference (see Box 16)
- Planning the consultation and overseeing its implementation
- Setting the consultation timetable and timescales, and ensuring that deadlines are met
- Preparing for consultation and ensuring the completion of all relevant documentation, including all consultation documentation
- Reviewing relevant research / consultation activities that have recently been completed alongside identifying opportunities for 'piggybacking' on relevant other research and consultation activities taking place within the CDRP area

- Tasking persons or bodies to carry out aspects of the process and / or devising a consultation tender and selection criteria, and undertaking the interview process associated with determining who will undertake aspects of the consultation (such as a local university or social / market research organisation). The steering group will also manage the work of the external consultants and act as a first point of contact.
- Reviewing and disseminating the findings of the consultation exercise
- Taking responsibility to communicate with responsible authorities, partner agencies and other relevant organisations at regular intervals about progress, barriers, opportunities and emergent findings
- Reviewing the consultation exercise and exploring the ways in which consultation can be embedded across and within the work of the CDRP and responsible authorities for the period 2005-2008

#### **Box 16 Terms of reference**

Terms of reference provide the foundation and the reference markers that underpin all stages of the consultation exercise. They underpin the determination of the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and provide helpful criteria against which the process can be reviewed and evaluated upon its completion.

The starting point for terms of reference is the legal duty defined in the CDA 1998 as amended by the PRA 2002. Further terms of reference will depend upon locally defined issues and may include articulation of the following:

- √ Reviewing audit findings and emerging themes
- √ Planning and preparation of the consultation exercise
- √ Identifying appropriate methods of consultation delivery with particular reference to partners, the general public and groups of interest.
- √ Identifying consultation outputs e.g. Preparation and circulation of consultation document and preparation, dissemination and feedback of consultation findings and recommendations.
- √ Identifying consultation outcomes e.g. Dissemination and feedback of consultation findings and recommendations, as well as preparation of the strategic priorities
- √ Evaluation and review of the consultation process.

## **2. Planning the consultation**

The construction of a consultation plan is an essential **next step** of the consultation steering group.

#### **Note 12 Consultation planning**

Detailing the importance of consultation planning is another way of saying that a strategic plan of action must be outlined, that this must be agreed at an

early stage by those responsible for managing the consultation process, that it must identify potential barriers to consultation and the ways in which these can be overcome together with the potential opportunities arising from the consultation exercise, and the timetable and timescales for successful completion of the consultation process.

There are a number of reasons why consultation planning is important. These are:

- First, because the key findings and emerging priorities of the audit will form the basis of the consultation documentation. Careful planning is necessary to identify audit completion deadlines, including when the consultation documentation will be ready, and therefore when it will be realistic to consult with relevant persons and bodies.
- Second, because doing consultation is dynamic, can take many forms, and is time consuming and resource intensive. CDRPs must therefore plan carefully what they can do themselves, what they may be able to contract out to relevant research organisations, and what activities they and/or other relevant organisations can do to ‘piggyback’ aspects of the process on to ongoing activities.
- Third, because the time available to deliver consultation as part of the audit and strategy exercise is time constrained, and comprises only a limited number of months within the overall audit and strategy process. A consultation plan will help to identify the consultation ‘window’, while also ensuring some flexibility to take account of slippages in audit completion and opportunities in delivering completion.
- Fourth, because as the Audit Commission (1999) has suggested, most local authorities fail to link the results of consultation with the subsequent development of policies and strategies. A consultation plan will help ensure that adequate time and resources are given to this important stage of the consultation process.
- Finally, because it ensures that some of the more pressing and by their very nature more difficult aspects of doing consultation, such as how and in what ways will the consultation findings feed in to the development of strategic priorities, and what mechanisms will be used to feedback to consultees, will be addressed from the outset of the exercise.

Box 17 identifies the range of issues that need to be addressed when planning consultation.

### Box 17 Planning consultation

Consultation planning should address a number of activities:

- √ Terms of reference
- √ Tasking and preparation
- √ Resourcing including staffing and equipment (hardware/software)
- √ Consultation design and preparation
- √ Dissemination of the audit findings
- √ Consultation documentation
- √ Data collection methodology / methods
- √ Data handling and analysis
- √ Feedback and dissemination of findings
- √ Outputs and outcomes
- √ Evaluation and Review

### Note 13 Joint responsibilities

While the steering group will drive the management and planning of the consultation exercise forward, the process of post audit consultation remains the responsibility of every responsible authority, organisation and person involved in the CDRP.

The Audit Commission (2003) suggests that the identification and engagement of the right people is an essential prerequisite for planning effective consultation. They present a series of case studies promoting ways in which the barriers to engagement can be overcome. These barriers and opportunities are discussed under four sub headings:

- **Getting people interested.** A major stumbling block to consultation is that individuals often are not interested in taking part in consultation. The Audit Commission presents two useful solutions to this problem. First, involvement must be underpinned by ease of engagement and understanding. Second, engagement must be seen to be influencing policy and practice.
- **Involving the right people.** Often consultation fails to involve specific groups with specific needs. Solutions reported by the Audit Commission range from innovative approaches and methods, through promoting active engagement through outcomes.
- **Making use of technology.** According to the Audit Commission, traditional methods of consultation do not necessarily adapt well to current trends and practices. The Audit Commission identifies that first, the use of a wider choice of approaches and techniques are more likely to result in successful community consultation; and second, that unequal access to facilities must be tackled.

- **Shifting awareness.** The Audit commission suggests that consultation fails where it is not seen as a permanent and valued part of the organisation or partnerships approach, influencing the culture at all levels. The solution, according to the Audit Commission is making consultation a permanent and valued part of the organisation's or partnerships approach, influencing the culture at all levels of the organisation.

These points must be kept in mind when planning who does what and why.

**Signpost:** The Audit Commission (2003) Making Connections connecting with users and citizens London: The Audit Commission Website: [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk) 14/06/2004

### 3. Identifying who does what, when and why

The section on **Who should be consulted?** identified the core groups to be consulted. This section details the **core groups that should be involved in post audit consultation delivery.**

Box 18 identifies the range of persons and bodies that should be involved in the delivery of post audit consultation.

#### Box 18 Who should be involved?

- **Responsible authorities** The responsibility for the audit and consultation process rests with the CDRP and in particular the responsible authorities as detailed in the CDA 1998 as amended by the PRA 2002.
- **CDRP partners** The partnership must own the consultation process and all members of the CDRP should be prepared to contribute funding, resources and other 'support' (including resources / support 'in kind') to the process as well as ensuring that staff, and (where appropriate) service users have an opportunity to contribute to the process as consultees.
- **The consultation steering group** The audit and strategy steering group brought together by the CDRP may take responsibility for the consultation exercise. In CDRPs where a separate consultation steering group is formed both groups must work in partnership throughout the audit and strategy process. The steering group will represent the views of the CDRP and will plan and manage the consultation exercise (although operation management should be devolved to a nominated lead person with responsibility for the coordination, communication and oversight of the exercise).
- **Community safety staff** CDRPs operating in major urban centres are likely to have community safety teams who have the necessary resources to carry out the consultation or who can either draw upon those that do (such as researchers and analysts with the responsible authorities) or

secure the funding necessary to appoint external researchers. CDRPs located in smaller urban and rural authorities may only have limited resources available. In smaller and more rural areas responsibility for the consultation can often fall to a single community safety officer. In some CDRPs community safety officers will be responsible for the preparation and delivery of both the audit and consultation process. What ever the size, resources and commitment, it is important that CDRPs and their responsible authorities ensure that the consultation is afforded the time, resources and support to complete the task effectively.

- **‘In-house’ researchers / research departments / teams** Some responsible authorities and relevant organisations will have researchers (such as police analysts; community safety research and evaluation officers) and research departments / teams, as well as community facilitators and community development staff in place to facilitate community consultation. Where such staffing is operational it is appropriate to embed post audit consultation within ongoing programmes and practices of consultation and research.
- **External consultants / researchers** In some CDRP areas all or aspects of the process may be contracted out to independent research consultants selected from university departments and other community or social research providers. While there is some value in such engagement, CDRPs should be mindful of the need to articulate appropriate terms of reference, arrangements for accountability and delivery, and ensure that ownership of the process remains with the CDRP.
- **Councillors and MPs / MEPs** Elected members represent the community and should make a positive contribution that ensures that the right message is conveyed to communities and that communities receive adequate representation. It is important to ensure that elected members are appropriately briefed on crime, disorder and drugs. This is especially so where elected members are appointed to other representative bodies that will be consulted on the audit and strategy.
- **‘Critical friend’** A number of responsible authorities engage the support of a ‘critical friend’ from academia or professional circles. The additional perspective of the ‘critical friend’ may add value to the planning and delivery of the consultation exercise.
- **Local press and media** It is especially important to engage the local press and media during the audit and post audit consultation exercise. Indeed a number of CDRPs include representatives from the local press and television. The role of the media is important in articulating the purpose of the consultation exercise in terms of community involvement in local decision making.
- **Stakeholders, the public, hard to reach groups and other interest groups** The consultation aims to reach stakeholders and the public as individuals or as representatives of interest groups and hard to reach

groups in particular. Often relevant organisations, voluntary and community groups can play an important role in ensuring access to particular groups of interest or at least in identifying who they are and how they may be engaged.

Having outlined who should be involved, it is important also to identify what needs to be done, and who might be involved in doing it. Checklist 5 identifies the activities will be undertaken and by whom. It details the type of activities that need to be carried out as part of the process of consultation. Whilst not prescriptive, it does attempt to identify an appropriate ordering of activities in order to deliver a successful and effective consultation exercise.

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### Checklist 5 Who does what?

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	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Who might be involved</b>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure support / funding for consultation planning, preparation and delivery</li> <li>• Secure appropriate staff, accommodation, IT hardware and software etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible authorities</li> <li>• Partner agencies</li> <li>• Audit steering group(s)</li> </ul>
Tasking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint consultation steering group</li> <li>• Oversee the development / implementation of the consultation plan</li> <li>• Review relevant research / consultation activities within the CDRP boundary</li> <li>• Identify who will be carrying out which aspects of the consultation</li> <li>• Appoint relevant contract staff / commence tendering (where appropriate)</li> <li>• Identify database of consultees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible authorities</li> <li>• Partner agencies</li> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> <li>• Community safety staff</li> </ul>
Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine purpose, aims and objectives of consultation exercise</li> <li>• Identify consultation outputs and outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> <li>• Partner agencies</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm approach and methods to be used</li> <li>• Identify partners and stakeholders for consultation</li> <li>• Develop sampling framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> <li>• Community safety staff</li> <li>• In house research staff</li> <li>• External consultants or / researchers</li> <li>• ‘Critical friend’</li> </ul>

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Disseminating audit findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review audit findings</li> <li>• Publication of consultation documentation and presentations / publicity</li> <li>• Use of press and media</li> <li>• Canvass partners, businesses, organisations, voluntary and community agencies and groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> <li>• Community safety staff</li> <li>• Press and media</li> <li>• Other relevant organisations</li> </ul>
Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver consultation research using a range of quantitative and qualitative methods</li> <li>• Collect and collate feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Safety staff</li> <li>• In house research staff</li> <li>• External consultants or / researchers</li> </ul>
Data handling and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative data</li> <li>• Qualitative data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community safety staff</li> <li>• In house research staff</li> <li>• External consultants or / researchers</li> </ul>
Consultation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write draft report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community safety staff</li> <li>• In house research staff</li> <li>• External consultants or / researchers</li> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> </ul>
Feedback consultation outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate draft report to the Partnership</li> <li>• Finalize consultation report</li> <li>• Feedback consultation outcomes into strategy development</li> <li>• Feedback consultation outcomes to stakeholders and the public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> <li>• Community safety staff</li> <li>• In house research staff</li> <li>• External consultants or / researchers</li> <li>• ‘Critical friend’</li> <li>• Relevant other organisations</li> <li>• Elected members</li> </ul>
Evaluation and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor input and outputs</li> <li>• Identify outcomes and impacts</li> <li>• Determine benchmarks and baseline evidence for evaluation of the strategy</li> <li>• Report findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible authorities</li> <li>• Partner agencies</li> <li>• Audit / consultation steering group(s)</li> <li>• Consultation steering group</li> <li>• Community safety staff</li> <li>• Elected members</li> <li>• In house research staff</li> <li>• External consultants or / researchers</li> <li>• ‘Critical friend’</li> </ul>

The following discussion addresses a number of questions arising from the checklist.

- **Why do you need resources?** Consultation is a dynamic process that requires sufficient resources for its delivery and completion. For example, the cost of publication and circulation of well-designed consultation documentation can be considerable even when undertaken in-house. It is essential that CDRPs establish a realistic assessment of the cost of carrying out the post audit consultation that satisfies the legal duty to consult with partners, the general public and hard to reach groups (as detailed in **What is consultation and why is it important?**) acknowledging that many CDRPs will undertake consultation for many other reasons than just the statutory duty.

#### Note 14 Assessing resources

A realistic assessment must account for:

- Staffing and equipment
- External consultation / 'critical friend'
- Publication and circulation of the consultation document
- Printing of questionnaires, consultation packs and other materials
- Travel, postage and other relevant expenses
- Data collection and analysis
- Preparation, publication and circulation of the consultation report

Where funding is limited responsible authorities and partners must contribute both in cash and in kind. Partners can co-operate materially by 'loaning' appropriately experienced staff, accommodation, materials, IT hardware and software as well as by sharing expenses and expertise associated with aspects of doing consultation.

- **Why consultation design?** The consultation must reach out from the responsible authorities across relevant organisations and partners to members of the public and 'hard to reach' groups and there is no single approach or method that will adequately satisfy the legal duty to consult. Consultation design will account for local contexts and circumstances and will need to determine from the range of methodologies available the approach and methods that are most suitable to secure a representative consultation in the resources available. The audit consultation period is time limited and this will need to be reflected in the consultation design.

#### Note 15 Consultation design

An effective consultation design will draw upon legal requirements, terms of reference, local consultation activities and strategies, appropriate research knowledge alongside sound and ethical principles in order to:

- Establish the kind of quantitative and qualitative data that is needed
- Identify appropriate methods to gather comparable data and information
- Ensure that methods are appropriate for the groups to be consulted

- Provide a sampling matrix that ensures representation of all stakeholders

- **Why is it important to disseminate the audit findings?** The findings of the audit and their timely and appropriate publication and dissemination are a prerequisite to delivering effective post audit consultation. Partner agencies and other relevant community and voluntary groups and organization have a role to play in ensuring that the consultation documentation reaches their staff, clients and service users. It is also important that CDRPs enlist the support of the press and media on their side through this process in order to ensure that the audit findings are disseminated across community groups.
- **Why collect data?** Collecting the views of responsible authorities, partners agencies, the general public and groups of interest will inform the democratic mode of governance in local areas. It should impact upon decision making process. It is essential therefore to ensure data collection procedures are in place in order to capture and collect respondent's views whatever its form and source. In order to achieve this, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods will be appropriate – see **How should consultation be delivered and used?** The consultation will draw upon specific and targeted exercises using particular methods, as well as drawing upon those practices already in place.
- **Why make provision for data handling and analysis?** Data handling and analysis is both time consuming and complex. Appropriate provision for data handling, processing and analysis must be addressed during consultation design, involving sufficient time, staffing, skills, accommodation, secure storage, and IT support including data processing software packages. Quantitative data that has been collected by a questionnaire survey in a uniform way with robust sampling will require statistical packages that permit analysis across variables and testing for significance. Other data collected as part of the consultation exercise will be qualitative data. The analysis may be enhanced by the application of sophisticated qualitative data handling and analysis techniques including the application of qualitative software packages. However, the analysis of qualitative data is also about ensuring that every person has an opportunity to be heard. It is especially important to give voice to the perceptions and experience of the most vulnerable members of the community found in the category described as 'hard to reach' and therefore to explore the ways of handling and analysing data effectively.
- **Why prepare a consultation report?** The consultation plan should allow time for the effective preparation of a report that will convey the outcomes of the consultation. Consideration of the consultation report alongside the draft audit will enable the partnership to assess the local strength of feeling about the findings and priorities identified by the audit. The consultation findings may also highlight particular concerns that the audit process has overlooked. The consultation report will be consistent with the terms of reference and will assess the consultation findings against the audit

findings, examine similarities and difference and show how the emerging strategic priorities have been informed (even reframed) by the process.

#### Checklist 6 Consultation report

The consultation report should include the following:

- √ Aims objectives and terms of reference
- √ Methods of data collection including sampling strategies
- √ Data handling and analysis
- √ Review of consultation findings and conclusions
- √ Outcomes and recommendations for the strategy

- **Why feedback is important?** If the CDRP is to have 'ownership' of the consultation it is appropriate for the consultation steering group, the audit team, partners and relevant other organisations to be engaged in the review of findings and the setting of strategic priorities. In addition, the people who make the consultation possible by taking the time to make written responses, complete questionnaires, attend meetings and forums need to know that their contribution is valued and the impact it has had in developing strategic priorities. The completion of the consultation should ensure the development of the final strategic documentation by:
  - Disseminating the findings of the consultation
  - Validating audit findings
  - Identifying gaps in the audit
  - Confirming audit priorities
  - Ensuring a strategic fit between the audit and consultation findings

#### 4. The consultation document

Preparing the consultation documentation should be the major planning consideration for CDRPs prior to delivering post audit consultation. The key to this documentation is to ensure clarity of communication of the findings and emerging priorities of the audit to:

- Responsible authorities, and relevant other organisations and partners
- The general public
- Hard to reach groups and groups of interest  
(as described in **Who should be consulted**)

This is because the purpose of the consultation exercise is to ensure that the priorities presented in the final strategy document reflect these groups' experiences and perceptions of crime, drugs, disorder and their regulation, prevention and control.

**Note 16 Consultation documentation**

Consultation documentation needs to be circulated widely and effectively across responsible authorities, partners and communities including ‘interest’ and hard to reach groups. You should:

- Give consideration to a range of paper based, electronic and audio-visual formats for the presentation of the key findings and emerging priorities of the audit
- Establish a consultation framework for circulation and canvassing partners, the general public and voluntary and community organizations
- Develop a circulation strategy using existing mechanisms for distribution used by responsible authorities and partners
- Make effective use of local press and media
- Allow sufficient time for people and organizations to make written responses. Cabinet Office (2004) guidance to government departments provides a minimum of 12 weeks for written responses.

Box 19 details the forms of consultation documentation that CDRPs may wish to produce for the purposes of consulting with different audiences on the findings and emerging priorities of the audit.

**Box 19 Forms of consultation documentation**

<b>‘Document’ type</b>	<b>Core target audience</b>	<b>‘Document’ format</b>
Written draft audit report	Responsible authorities / partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full printed report</li> <li>• Word or PDF file on websites / email</li> <li>• CD Rom</li> </ul>
Written consultation document	General public / relevant organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary printed report</li> <li>• Website PDF / email</li> <li>• Interactive Website</li> <li>• CD Rom</li> </ul>
Leaflets, flyers and posters including themed summary documentation	General public / interest / hard to reach groups / relevant organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printed leaflet, flyer, poster</li> <li>• Promotional material</li> <li>• Press / newsletters</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• CD Rom</li> </ul>
Oral presentations documentation	General public / interest / hard to reach groups / relevant organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint presentations</li> <li>• Video and moving images</li> <li>• Websites</li> <li>• Local radio networks</li> </ul>
Video and film	Partners / Public interest / hard to reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive Website</li> <li>• Video / DVD /</li> </ul>

	groups	audiotape • Local community television
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- **The draft audit report** This report can be described as a technical document that presents the analysis and findings of the quantitative and qualitative data collected as part of the audit. It will also detail the strategic priorities emergent from that process. This will be the primary document that informs the consultation process. The report should be available to anyone who wants to read it but it should not be forgotten that this is a technical report that informs the work of policymakers and practitioners. It should be circulated to all responsible authorities and partner agencies represented on the CDRP. It can be presented as a hard copy document as well as circulated as a Word or pdf document on the responsible authorities website as well as by CD Rom.
- **The consultation document** The consultation document will provide the basis for consultation with the general public and other interested persons and bodies. The primary objective of the consultation document is to disseminate the core findings of the audit and to inform persons and bodies about the emerging strategic priorities. The report should be published widely, circulated to partners, relevant organisations and the general public. It can be presented as a hard copy document as well as circulated as a Word or pdf document on the responsible authorities website and CD Rom. Key sections of the consultation document will be presented in a form that allows for extraction and publication across local media including in newspapers and on local television and radio.
- **Leaflets, flyers and posters including themed summary documentation / Oral presentations and documentation / Video and film** Summary leaflets and other promotional materials and documentation are able to convey the essential headline information and strategic priorities in clear and concise ways. The printed leaflet will have the widest circulation and has the potential for circulation to every person in the CDRP area. Evidence from the audit and draft strategy will indicate if particular themes require specific consultation. For example if commercial burglary or violence in the night-time economy are highlighted in the audit the consultation may need to make a special effort to consult with employers, workers and customers engaged in the evening entertainment industry. This may mean making provision for a themed consultation summary and / or a themed presentation to reach particular interest or vulnerable groups. However, the public often ignores the invitation to participate when it is set out in leaflet, flyers and posters. Effective consultation will also therefore adopt supplementary methods of communication that can be used to good effect in different contexts. For example simple video or slide presentations can be used in public settings, kiosks, drop in centres and other places that have access to the Internet or community TV. Audit information can be disseminated in public meetings, citizen juries, consultation forums via presentations and on interactive websites. Video and DVD/CD Rom versions can be circulated to partners,

community organizations, voluntary and interest groups. Adapting a common format for use in alternative mediums can help to extend the reach of the consultation through a variety of local networks.

#### **Note 17 Presentation is important**

Consultation documentation must look professional and must be appealing. Professionally produced layouts are desirable that offer illustration using graphics and photographs. Use your discretion to ensure illustration conveys appropriate images that promote local contexts and avoid images that might demonize or stereotypy young people, ethnic groups or places, or that might heighten fear and concern.

It is also important to ensure that the publication of data or other information does not compromise the confidentiality of people who can be identified from the audit process nor infringe information sharing protocols.

In addition it is important that documentation avoids technical language, acronyms and jargon. Ideally documents will use Plain English principles. Furthermore appropriate translation, Braille, large print, audio-visual and electronic formats will be necessary to ensure equal access to the consultation process.

Whatever the type of documentation and format used, it must include discussion of a number of essential elements including:

- The purpose of the audit
- Partnership information and membership
- A review of achievements of the partnership 2002 -2005
- Relevant audit findings and preliminary conclusions
- The draft objectives indicated by the audit findings
- Information about how to take part in the consultation of the ways in which involvement may 'impact'
- Information about how to obtain further documentation and / or information

Box 20 offers a number of helpful hints on producing the consultation documentation.

#### **Box 20 Consultation documentation**

Consultation is about engaging people in a way that they both learn about your objectives and participate in a meaningful way in the local decision making process. Carefully produced documentation is at the heart of any successful consultation. When constructing your consultation documentation you should:

- Keep the message clear and concise, simple and impartial

- Demonstrate how the consultation findings will be used to develop strategic objectives
- Use straightforward examples to illustrate how the strategy might affect members of the public
- Provide translations for people whose first language is not English
- Provide alternatives for people who have difficulties using printed materials
- Keep it brief and include a summary that sets out the main questions and issues
- Make it easy for readers to respond by post, email, and telephone or in person.
- Think of the different ways in which it can be produced – printed hard copy, PDF, Website, video etc.

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