

Towards One Council – Road show Summary Report

Overview

The four roadshows provided an opportunity to raise awareness of the new council, gauge public perception and concerns, and help collate ideas and suggestions for a new Wiltshire Council strap line.

The feedback has enabled a more planned and targeted approach to communication in the transition period.

Whilst the road shows were organised and delivered quickly it was vital to have a clear awareness of public perception and level of understanding about the new council and how it would work.

Statistics

We estimate the roadshows reached more than 1,000 people.

There were 241 entries to the public competition and 292 to the staff competition.

Issues raised

Despite some concerns and criticism of the move to One Council, the overall impression was excellent – people were pleased to have the opportunity to talk direct to the council and to have their queries answered.

Almost everyone knew about one council.

Questions raised were a mixture of local and general subjects ranging from one council to local planning, roads and services. Recycling and potholes were regular queries across the whole county.

The top two concerns were whether the new council would be local and whether costs would rise.

Main issues around the move to Wiltshire Council:

- It won't be local
- It will all move to Trowbridge/Chippenham
- Our local needs will be swallowed up/eclipsed by the bigger picture
- Where will I get my services/can I still go to my local offices
- Cynicism about whether savings can be made
- Will my council tax go up
- Interest in area boards – how will they work?
- Will the new council spend more on improving the roads and pavements
- Positive about the roadshow – and appreciative to talk direct to council
- Virtually everyone knew about the transition to one council but some needed more information about when and what it will mean to them
- Elections? When? How many councillors?
- Will waste collection change?
- Concern about road shows being day time –this will be addressed in future events which will be spread across day and evening.

Salisbury

- What's happening re plastics and cardboard
- Parishing – will we get a city council?
- What's happening to Guild hall?
- Bourne Hill offices future?
- Housing – concern about lack of low cost housing

Trowbridge

- Recycling re plastics and cardboard
- Why AWC – want return to weekly
- Will my waste collection change
- Will recycling services change?
- Trowbridge redevelopment ref old Tesco site/Waterside/Shires gateway
- Concern about recession affecting the future of the town re redevelopment?
- Trowbridge Town hall – what's happening?
- Hilperton Gap – what's happening?
- Potholes and road condition
- Nothing for kids to do in Trowbridge
- Too many empty sites in Trowbridge
- Warminster concerns about policing levels

Devizes

- Too much housing development in Devizes
- Worry about future over development in Devizes
- Concern that town facilities are not keeping up with development – shops etc
- Traffic congestion in Devizes town centre
- Anti social behaviour in Devizes town centre
- When will we get a food waste collection?
- Condition of pavements in town centre
- Lack of wheelchair access in Devizes town centre

Chippenham

- Will leisure centres close?
- Criticism of planning – not enough thought or care taken
- Will we get AWC?
- When will we get a cardboard/plastics collection?
- Future of the Bridge centre site?
- Not enough for young people to do in Chippenham

Publicity

Media coverage of the road show events was good with photographs and articles in:

- Western Daily Press
- Wiltshire Times
- Wiltshire Gazette and Herald
- Salisbury Journal

Plus coverage on:

- BBC radio

- GWR
- BBC TV Politics Show/news.

Strap line

Following analysis of the common words and phrases the campaigns working group have come up with the following suggestions for the new Wiltshire Council strapline:

Wiltshire Council where people come first/matter/count
 listening to you
 working better together
 local affordable reliable
 putting people first

Overview and recommendations for future events

- Invaluable to have district council staff to provide local knowledge and information.
- Publicity materials were attractive, up to the minute and readable. Absence of obvious PR type giveaways minimised possibility of criticism
- General public appreciated us being out there, ready to listen and to get answers to their queries – we need to do this more often is the message!
- GWR help with promotions and targeting of younger age groups was extremely successful
- Attractive luxury prizes helped competition entries
- Entry form was designed to maximise monitoring – eg age groups
- Organisation and staffing was time and resource heavy and needed considerable investment and commitment from a small team
- Plan more lead-in time for future road shows (proposed for January 2009)
- Would recommend staffing on future road shows should include council officers rather than restricting to communications staff. We believe this would be beneficial both to the public and to officers to hear perceptions and concerns and benefit from feedback relating to services and how we work.