

Appendix A – Election Cycle Consultation 2024/25, Promotion and Engagement Plan

At the Council meeting on 19 October 2023, Council gave approval to consult. A nine-week public consultation was conducted with cross-party collaboration and support on the survey design and engagement plan.

Section 116 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides a specific power for local authorities to hold local “advisory polls”. The result of a Section 116 poll is not binding on the Council or any other entity. It is purely advisory. It does however provide evidence of the public’s views.

Section 116 provides the Council with function to determine who to engage/consult and how the engagement/consultation is to be conducted.

Group leaders collaborated in the design of both the survey and engagement plan. An agreed design principle was to create an accessible format to encourage understanding and engagement.

To ensure that the Council remained compliant with its equality duty as well as gaining the views of all groups within our communities, specific groups across the Equality Act’s protected characteristics received promotional material.

Social Media

Social media posts were scheduled across X/Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn through our social media management platform. In total 21 posts were made from November 14th to January 15th and they generated:

- Reach of 9,982 (this is the number of individuals who saw the posts: please note, Twitter doesn’t provide this figure on the native platform, so the reach here isn’t included)
- 175 direct clicks through to the survey page
- 58 shares, 51 likes
- 1.6 engagement rate (likes, shares, or comments by divided by the number of impressions - this is above the average of 1.2)

There were 4 posts on Nextdoor, which had 2,754 impressions combined, however the platform doesn’t share stats on linked clicks.

In addition to the above, staff members created and shared personal posts on LinkedIn promoting the consultation.

A short video was created and received 3,570 views on X/Twitter and Facebook.

Press

Media releases promoted the consultation with mention within the Leaders Blog and a piece in the Oracle magazine. The story featured in local papers including the Echo.

The consultation was also promoted via the digital bus signed across the city for the duration of the consultation.

Newsletters

The consultation was promoted in several newsletters which Council officer's coordinate and reaches various individuals and groups across Southend. Messages were sent in:

Cems and crems Community Safety Partnership Elective Home Education Family Centres Food safety Fraud alerts General news (14k subscribers)	Internal comms Southend Council Employee Networks Livewell Southend Schools Southend Business Partnership Southend SEND Southend museums also displayed posters
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External organisations

Several external organisations were also asked to promote the consultation within their networks and resident employees:

Arriva BID C2C Citizens Advice DWP Essex Chamber of Commerce Faith Network Fire Fusion Genting Greater Anglia HARP SEE Health Alliance IndiRock	Ipeco Ironworks Leigh Town Council Marlborough Highways Metal Olympus Osbournes Park Inn Police Pride Project Southchurch Rossi SAVS Southend Business Partnership	South Essex College South Essex Homes Southend Airport Southend Carers Southend District Pensioners Association Southend United Football Club Stockvalue Group Surgical Holdings The Roslin Trust Links University of Essex YMCA
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Interactive engagement

Interactive engagement activity included:

- An online presentation with the Economic Crisis and Recovery Group.
- In person facilitated discussion with Southend Youth Council.
- In person facilitated discussion with SAVS hosted Over 55's event.
- Online presentation and discussion with SAVS hosted for VCFSE members.
- In addition, a lesson plan pack was designed for schools who wished to discuss the topic with their older students.