
SUBJECT **REVITALISING THE HEART OF CHESTERFIELD – STAGE 2 VISION DOCUMENT
COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

The purpose of this note is to set out proposals for stakeholder communication and engagement for the RHOC Vision Document.

The consultation exercise follows a previous consultation exercise undertaken during December 2020 - January 2021 which had over 700 responses and which helped shape the designs that have been developed to date.

The objective of the strategy is to set out the options and opportunities for meaningful engagement and feedback around the layout and function of the proposals contained within the Vision Document. The feedback will help inform further planning and design updates at later design stages.

Project Team

The RHOC Project Board will oversee and steer the development of the project including the consultation exercise. The board is chaired by Cllr Sarvent and includes Cllr Collins, as well as a broad range of council officers with an interest in supporting Chesterfield town centre. Dialogue with the traders will be supported by officers also working with the Market Champions

1. Stakeholder Mapping

There are four key groups the consultation must try to successfully engage at this stage: market traders, key stakeholders, local businesses and members of the public/ town centre users.

2. Stakeholders

Market Traders

In addition to the consultation exercise (Opinion Survey) undertaken during December 2020 - January 2021 there have been two virtual meetings (April and May 2021) and two face-to-face open consultation events (June 2021) with market traders to help identify key issues and also gain their opinion on the designs to date.

The purpose of ongoing trader engagement is to maintain and develop an in-depth understanding of the traders' opinions regarding the current use of the market, and the proposed design work so that we can adjust and co-design the details to suit the traders as best as possible. The council needs to maintain an understanding of how their businesses work, who they see as their key customers, operational issues which can be addressed to help their businesses, understand their aspirations for the market and their businesses over the coming years and so we can plan how the market can facilitate them.

Ensuring traders feel involved in the process has been and will be of vital importance through open and ongoing communications.

Key Stakeholders

Stakeholders that have a specific input into the market through a professional or social role will be proactively approached to provide comments on the Vision Document. This will include but not limited to: members, town centre management, market management, representatives of local groups such as disability groups, local heritage group(s), town centre event organisers, Civic Society, Destination Chesterfield, Derbyshire County Council, NMTF, NABMA etc.

Local Retailer/ Businesses

Local retailers and businesses are important stakeholders; markets are key town centre footfall drivers and help support a strong uplift on local businesses through diverse and secondary spending.

Where contact details are available an email will be sent to retailers that includes some background to the project and a link to the virtual consultation and survey to enable more detailed feedback to be given.

Public/ Town Centre Users

Successfully reaching and engaging with members of the public and town centre users is critical for the consultation exercise and in helping to shape the future plans for the market and the wider public realm and open spaces.

3. Methods of Engagement

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the approach to public consultation must comply with appropriate restrictions at the time. It has therefore been assumed that consultation will largely be undertaken online through the following media:

Project website - a mobile friendly dedicated project landing page hosted on www.chesterfield.gov.uk will be the main point of contact and will include brief explanatory text, images and link to the virtual consultation room.

Virtual consultation room – this will enable visitors to view the plans and accompanying written statements to help provide more detailed information on plans where applicable.

Snap questionnaire - to record feedback.

Social media – awareness raising and to help further the reach, and link back to the virtual consultation and questionnaire.

Whilst an online approach to consultation is the most efficient and safe format given foreseen social distancing restrictions, it is recognised that not all residents will have internet / smartphone access. We will also explore wider accessibility i.e. a public exhibition of the proposals in an accessible venue (unmanned), such as Market Hall and the opportunity to provide written responses to the questionnaire.

4. Communication

CBC will issue press releases to inform the wider public about the consultation opportunity. Social media links via CBC will be made available to stakeholders for wider sharing.

5. Programme

It is intended that the consultation exercise will run from 2 August 2021 through to 12 September 2021 inclusive. This timeframe should mean that significant number of stakeholders have the opportunity to respond; providing vital & meaningful feedback on the designs that have been developed so far.

It is anticipated that the analysis of the information will take around 3 – 4 weeks at which point the data will be presented to the Project Board for review.