

Key findings summary report

Knighton Sports and Leisure Centre Consultation



November 2016
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Report purpose:

This feedback report will highlight and sum up the key views, concerns and questions that were captured during the consultation period which closed at 5pm on Monday 7th November 2016.

The summary will then inform and contribute to the discussions to be held around the council's future budgetary position and will help the Cabinet to make an informed decision based on the facts, the figures and views of Knighton residents in response to the need to find savings of £200k from the Leisure Service by 1 April 2017.

Background to the service and purpose of consultation:

In September 2016 the Cabinet considered a proposal to save £200k from the council's Leisure Service's budget by:

- closing Knighton Sports Centre
- commercialising the Staylitttle Outdoor Recreation Centre
- transferring the management of Llanfair Caereinion Leisure Centre to the high school.

In relation to the Knighton centre it was recommended by Cabinet that the views of residents be sought on the proposal before any final decision was made. The town council, residents and interested parties were given the opportunity to also contribute any alternative plans or proposals that they felt could allow the centre to remain open.

Background to the consultation/engagement etc.

To ensure residents could contribute their views, a mixed engagement approach was taken which included:

- **A day-time afternoon drop in session.**

This was held on Thursday 20 October at Knighton Community Centre from 1.30pm – 6pm with the Strategic Director, Head of Service and two officers in attendance to talk to residents and capture their views and comments in a mix of ways. A background information document was provided and a Frequently Asked Questions sheet to try and explain the rationale behind the proposal and give residents some useful facts and figures around usage and current costings. Question sheets and flip chart paper were used to capture views alongside the more informal opportunity to address questions and comments to the officers. Children who came with parents were given the opportunity to draw and comment using post-it notes and the flip chart paper. This resulted in a type of graffiti wall. In total over 150 people dropped by during the four and a half hours and 70 question sheets and 20+ comments were received and logged.

- **An early evening public meeting.**

More than 475 people attended the meeting, held in the Knighton Community Centre on Tuesday 1 November from 6 – 8pm. Top table included the Cabinet member, Strategic Director, Head of Service and Freedom Leisure representative. The mayor of Knighton Sally Vaughan chaired the meeting, which began with a short presentation from the Strategic Director around the council's budgetary position, followed by a statement from Cllr Brown and then the floor was opened to questions. Children from the primary school, residents and other representatives from both the town council, teaching staff and other groups expressed their views and asked a range of questions around the proposal. The meeting closed at 8pm with just under 30 questions having been asked and answered.

- **Information publicised on the “Have Your Say” web pages.**

This web page allowed residents to see documents and information including the full Cabinet report and the appendices, the running costs, FAQs and participation figures for the centre ahead of the public meeting. Contact details were also posted on the page so residents who were unable to attend either of the face to face sessions had the option to either write into or email the council with their views. Over 80 items of correspondence have been received by the council.

- **Social media posts on Facebook and Twitter.** Both the drop in session and public meeting were promoted via the council’s corporate pages and monitored and around half a dozen comments logged and responded to. *The management team at the community centre also kindly offered to promote the sessions via their Facebook pages.*

- **Posters.** A basic poster advertising the events was produced and displayed in the local library and the community centre.

- **Media Coverage.** Two press releases were issued to promote the face to face sessions alongside the other methods to submit comments. The Mid Wales Journal provided excellent coverage on the situation and the consultation options and included quotes from both the Cabinet Member, the mayor and other members of the town council.

Additional Insights into the consultation approach

As a specific and quite emotive proposal impacting on one particular community in the county it was deemed more fitting to reject a traditional type survey approach and instead seek to run the more personal face to face sessions within the town to allow residents to actually meet and speak directly to the key officers involved in delivering the service.

The decision to hold a drop in session followed by a public meeting was agreed to enable more qualitative discussions to take place so residents could seek clarity, ask questions and raise their concerns directly with the key officers who run the service.

Discussions and attempts were made to try and agree and co-ordinate a dual event with the town council to hold a drop-in session followed by a public meeting on the same date but diary clashes prevented this from happening and instead a two pronged approach resulted in a drop in session and then a public meeting being held around ten days later.

Although there was some criticism around the initial consultation process, the end approach hopefully allowed the community to reflect on their conversations with the officers and attend the public meeting with a better understanding of the rationale behind the proposal and pose follow up comments and questions.

The closing date was extended as a result of this approach to allow comments to be fed in post the public meeting date.

Key Findings:

All the views given during the consultation were logged, analysed and coded into key headings. All emails were responded to and a standard response letter sent out to all those who had written in to thank them for their views and explain the process.

- **Overall summary of views given:**

The overwhelming view given from the community was that the leisure centre provided an excellent resource for the town, was well used and usage had continued to improve post the Freedom Leisure management move and should thus receive investment and stay open.

- **Rationale flawed**

Residents felt the proposal and the rationale was flawed and unfair and that Knighton should not be singled out as the key area where savings could be found. A number of residents queried the miles travelled chart and felt that the logic and reasons for ignoring Rhayader and Builth were convenient. Residents also stated that they paid their council tax the same as everyone else in the county and the pain of having to find savings out of the leisure budget should be shared amongst all the centres by reducing opening hours rather than being targeted at Knighton per se.

- **Pool usage and size**

There were a number of comments given by numerous residents that the pool in Knighton was far bigger than the one in Presteigne. Respondents argued that the Knighton pool was used regularly by both school pupils in learning to swim and other residents - in particular those suffering with health issues who had been advised by their GP to swim to alleviate symptoms or sustain a level of fitness.

- **Local economy**

Residents raised concerns about the local economy and stated that the town was already feeling and seeing a systematic reduction in services. This was starting to have a detrimental effect with people talking about moving away from the area. With

an ageing population and declining pupil numbers residents felt the proposal would do little to encourage families to stay in the town. The loss of a centre which was used extensively by other community groups as a base for their sessions was also deemed worrying.

- **Transport**

The inconvenience of catching a bus to Presteigne for non-drivers (including young and older residents), the timing of said buses and the inability for some disabled residents who currently use the Knighton pool to access public transport to travel to Presteigne instead were all raised as areas of concern.

- **Land ownership and history of the centre**

Finally the land that the pool was built on and the history of the town in supporting the running of the centre previously prior to the council taking it over were considered important factors in terms of the heritage and history of the site and the willingness of residents to sustain the centre. Suggestions around a community asset transfer, volunteering and the town council developing a business case were potential alternatives to closure.

Analysis by theme and quotes given by residents

Listed below in more detail are the key headings and topics which came out from the consultation and an overview on the points that were made by the respondents per topic. One or two comments given by a resident per topic are also provided in italics at the end of the summary to give a flavour of the actual views given.

- **Finances / costs of running the centre (119 comments)**

The key view given by residents was that Knighton shouldn't bear the brunt of the savings cut/target and that all the centres should be tasked with making a saving by perhaps closing for one day a week instead of Knighton having to close per se. Some residents queried the figures quoted in the documentation around the running costs, some felt money could and should be found from elsewhere. Suggestions included reducing senior manager/councillor posts instead. There was also a number of views expressed around the contract with Freedom Leisure and a strong feeling expressed that the council and councillors were going back on their word having successfully announced and promoted the successful transfer of the management of the leisure centres to Freedom Leisure via a 15 year contract which had been classed as saving the closure of all centres for the foreseeable future.

"Freedom Leisure took over the centres. Why did we do this as we were led to believe that the LCS would stay open? What was the cost of refurbishment 10 years ago?"

"How much money does the Council put into grants to other bodies, rather than invest in its own services?"

"How does PCC justify the criminal waste of money and resources it perpetrates while systematically demolishing the communities it is supposed to be supporting?"

- **The rationale for closure (101 comments)**

Residents did not feel that the distance travelled criteria was a good or useful criteria to use as the rationale.

"Arising from the engagement session: 1. Why was V4 services engaged when Freedom Leisure should have been given the opportunity to present their view in public of how to proceed? They are a large organisation with expertise in this area. 2. Where is Freedom Leisure's financial information? The budgetary information

provided at the session was opaque - capital and revenue expenditure on the same financial sheet and no information on their financial plans, across Powys, for the future. 3. Why has the full PCC apparently not been given the opportunity to discuss this issue? 4. There is nothing in the written and verbal information that suggests any concern about the health, wellbeing, social cohesion and economic consequences of this decision. What evidence is there that these have been considered?"

"Does matrix take into account usage by people over the border? Needs to be not just Powys population."

- **Usage of the centre (152 comments)**

Residents felt that the usage figures were inaccurate and that there had been an increase in recent months so the proposal was flawed.

"How can we be sure that Knighton has the lowest usage figures? Was this worked out on a pro-rata basis as we are only open 6 days?"

"Pool user. Why isn't the pool open on a Sat/Sunday? Open til 10pm. Close at 9pm weekdays. More early birds. Not just for young people. People are there for a reason – predominantly wellbeing."

"5 schools use – Bucknell, Wigmore, Badshore, Leintwardine and Knighton."

- **The impact on the local area (152 comments)**

A number of comments were made about the impact that the closure of the sports centre would have on the local economy and some of the problems that the town had already faced and were facing with threats to the library, the community centre failing to get a Lottery bid and being a rural border town.

"I don't think that the closure of Knighton Sports Centre will address the objectives set out in your One Powys Plan, if anything, it will be totally the opposite. It will be totally detrimental to the health and well-being of the whole community. More unemployment, more migration of families, drop in children attending the local school and ultimately the closure of Knighton Primary School."

"Important social / meeting point for children."

"Community resilience – losing pool facilities is counter-productive."

- **Presteigne Leisure Centre (86 comments)**

The swimming pool at Presteigne Leisure Centre came up as an issue time and time again with residents stating it was so small that Presteigne residents came to swim in Knighton Pool and the proposed closure would in essence stop people from swimming as they wouldn't be able to access the pool or

want to as it would be too busy and they may not be able to get there due to transport/increased day to day costs/work issues.

“Knighton is a serious swimming pool, Presteigne leisure pool.”

“(Name of person- deleted to protect identity) doesn’t drive / disabled. We go to Knighton LC and use the gym and pool. Pool at Presteigne too small. Don’t want to see Knighton close. Pool figures must be better re: swimming. School to take on LC at Presteigne and have the pool at Knighton. Learning to swim is key to young children. Need the pool re: size issue Knighton v Presteigne. “

“People won’t travel to Presteigne”

“The facilities at Presteigne are not comparable. Part of the draw to live in Knighton is its current facilities.”

- **Capital Investment issues (27 comments)**

The recent refurbishment of both the Flash and the Rhayader Leisure centre by Freedom was also mentioned as being unnecessary and unfair if these savings were needed to be made.

“How have improvements costing over £1 million for Welshpool and £80,000 for Newtown centres been justified? Why not use this money and spread it across all 15 centres in Powys so that each can be utilised efficiently.”

“I note from the consultant’s report that in fact Knighton is not in fact the Centre that would have the fewest affected - that is Rhayader but investment by Freedom Leisure means PCC do not want to look at that option - that is neither fair nor reasonable.”

“Capital investment into some? Why? Who decided? Seems strange.”

- **Marketing of the Knighton Centre (10 comments)**

Better publicity and marketing of the centre was considered to be an alternative option to closure and a number of residents suggested that much more could and should be done to encourage more usage first. Closure should be a final resort if all else failed to keep the centre open.

“Freedom Leisure need to do more / better marketing.”

- **Links to schools including pupil swimming lessons (93 comments)**

The issue of children being at risk if they couldn’t swim was highlighted in numerous conversations and correspondence. The junior school pupils were

regular users of the pool and parents felt it was a crucial part of the school curriculum and shouldn't be put at risk. Transporting pupils to Presteigne for reduced lessons and longer travel times wasn't a popular option. A number of residents made a clear connection between the town having a river and the need to retain the pool so children could learn to swim well.

"My mum was an employee at a local School which has now been closed by PCC but before it closed, the children were encouraged to move to Knighton School. One of the main reasons for this was the School having a Swimming Pool next door, and now you want to take it from them?? When I have children in the near future how will they become competent swimmers with no Leisure Centre in the town...? Presteigne Leisure Centre will be overrun with children wanting to take part in swimming lessons and there will end up being waiting lists/price increases due to the volume!!! This will result in so many more Knighton children not being able to swim."

"I'm a mum to two children 8 & 4 who swim 2x3 times a week at Knighton pool. We swim as a family every week. My daughter 8 struggles so much academically, swimming is her only strength and now it's going to be taken away – also goes to Brownies at centre weekly. Son – 4 swims well, ½ width that's because of the access to such a close pool."

"I feel very strongly that the Sports Centre must stay open, I have 3 children who regularly access the swimming facilities and as they get older will access the fitness suite."

"I am a parent of 3 children. They are aged 10, 8 and 5. They have all learned to swim through lessons at Knighton Sports Centre. They attend holiday activities during school holidays and I use after school club when needed. Closing the centre would affect my family greatly. Children should have access to a sports centre in their town. Especially when child obesity is on the rise. I work at Knighton Primary School and watch children swim weekly, some of whom would not learn to if the centre closed. I believe this is an issue that could become dangerous. The community paid for and built it, Powys took it off the community and now you want to close, now you've had enough."

- **Land issues (15 comments)**

The history of the site was much discussed and commented upon and a view expressed that the town had actually built the pool in the first instance with money left to them. There was a concern that the site was on Church of Wales land and that it could be sold off and the community wouldn't be able to consider alternative options even if they wanted to do so because once closed the decision would be a private one and not in the public domain.

“There is also the question of ownership of the swimming pool, as it was built by public donations and fund raising events.”

“What is the nature of any caveats on the land? Does this present any issues? Is this in the public domain?”

- **Health links (114 comments)**

It was clear that the sports centre was considered by a large percentage to be a lifeline in relation to their health and wellbeing. A number of residents who had health issues used the pool on a regular basis. A group from Presteigne travelled to Knighton to use the pool weekly as it was a much bigger pool. Residents explained that they were worried about being able to maintain their health and fitness if the pool closed because they wouldn't be able to make a regular journey if at all to Presteigne. A number of residents quoted arthritis, heart conditions, high blood pressure etc. as conditions and had had referrals from their GP to exercise and used the centre to do so. Some disabled residents stated that they would not be able to physically get on a bus to go to Presteigne and for those who didn't drive this would mean extra difficulties in their lives.

“The government has promoted healthy lifestyle with regular exercise, many of the elderly in Knighton have been referred by their doctors to the Leisure Centre to improve their fitness before or after an operation. Many of these retired people could not afford to travel to use other facilities as suggested by the Cabinet, i.e. Presteigne Leisure Centre.”

“This is so important for the area to stay open, keep healthy. Use it for school, Guides, Rainbows, and Brownies in the youth wing.”

“I started exercise classes 5 years ago because of a damaged spine. I was on a repeat prescription of painkillers but have not taken any for more than 4 and a half years. We want a full public consultation. Knighton people raised the money for the pool.”

“Closure of pool causes stress in community / not valued, decline mental health.”

- **Freedom Leisure role and remit (34 comments)**

There was a real lack of understanding around the Freedom Leisure contract and a clear feeling that the people of Knighton were being let down by the council and been lulled into a false sense of security when the council announced the successful transfer and retention of all the leisure centres less

than two years ago. The staff at the centre were praised by residents and concerns expressed about their jobs and livelihoods by some.

“PCC and Freedom Leisure were investing £1.9million into leisure facilities across Powys. Rhayader to receive £335,000 Brecon £485,000 and Welshpool £1,1 million. Could this sum not have been spread more evenly through the county, or had it already been decided that Knighton was expendable? We assumed that when Freedom took on the running of the centre last year it was on a 15 year contract with no threat of closure. Assuming they were happy with the running costs at that time why the sudden change of policy?”

- **The V4 report (consultant’s report into options to save the £200k target) (11 comments)**

The cost of employing consultants to conduct a review was queried by a percentage of residents and some of the figures and information were queried and deemed to be inaccurate. In particular reference made to the primary school being interested in using the building for extra class room space without due consent and inaccuracies around the use of so called mobile classrooms did not bode well with the school who felt that if this was inaccurate then there would be other inaccuracies too and that we should not be reliant on said report to make a decision.

“The V4 report asks why energy products are not realistic or sustainable. Colocation of a sports centre with secondary schools and not primary. There are no description of the two pools given in the Cabinet paper. There is no model of staffing regimes or opening hours. There is a lack of information given to cabinet to make a decision. Question should be how to keep the leisure centre open, not how to save £200k. Must make savings of management fees. £144k savings of management fees made, along with other 2 proposals leaves £76k which isn’t very much to save from elsewhere.”

- **Transport issues (53 comments)**

The issue for those without a car to get to another centre was an obvious area of concern and a reason to sustain the centre where it was.

“It was stated that it was fine to close Knighton as Presteigne is a viable option - Viable for whom may I ask? Not for those parents who don't drive, not for my friend's disabled mother who only has a disability scooter and whose disability is helped by swimming and sports. The schools budgets have also been cut - thanks for that also - therefore meaning the school itself would not be able to cover transportation costs to get our children to another venue to learn to swim - so this would fall onto the parents - again, this would not be feasible as many parents struggle day to day as it is.”

“Making parents responsible for transporting children to Presteigne pool discriminates against families without transport or resources. The very people who should be prioritised!”

“No bus service from Whitton to Presteigne.”

- **Cllrs/Political issues (32 comments)**

Residents were quite critical of the role and remit of the Cabinet and commented on the make up from a geographical view that there was little or no representation from anyone in the Radnorshire area.

“I understand Transparency is what every council is striving for and I noticed that the 'Informal Cabinet' was referred to several times, I think on Tuesday evening. There is a widespread understanding that these extended, informal discussions, of which there is no formal record, are where the real decisions take place - and lines are agreed. The Cabinet meetings which follow are often tightly controlled - and give members of the public little reassurance that there is not already a broadly agreed script for the discussion. Why aren't these important proposed closures put before the whole assembly so all our representatives can have a democratic voice?”

“Two schools have closed and now possibly the sports centre, this is a big hit on small Knighton and East Radnor. Decisions by cabinet can be very impersonal. Please ask cabinet colleagues to have a think about the impact their decisions have on small communities like ours.”

- **The consultation process itself (117 comments)**

Initial complaints were received around the lack of information and the process itself by some residents. The publication on the website of all the information and the Cabinet report helped to allow for more transparency of the rationale behind the proposal. The feedback from the drop-in session and public meeting was good in that people felt they'd been able to have their say even if they were not happy with the proposal. Several praised the officers who had led the discussions at the drop in sessions.

“Feel consultation events waste of money when decisions already been made.”

“Community should have had more time to come up with proposals.”

“Full breakdown of costs – complete breakdown being made publicly available.”

- **Community Asset Transfer and use of volunteers (13 comments)**

One of the options around the future of the centre was the transfer of the building to another organisation. Some residents raised this as a specific alternative option. The local member and town council were looking at drawing up a business case and seeking more time to do so now that more detailed figures around running costs etc. had been released. Not enough time had been given to the community to come up with a Plan B and to undertake a community asset transfer in such a short space of time was deemed difficult. If the decision by cabinet was to go ahead with the proposal to close the centre there was a call for this to be considered more fully.

“Revisit the figures of how much the sports centre makes – how much could the community raise to keep it open?”

“What support can PCC give to community to look into CAT?”

- **Alternative solutions (63 comments)**

A mix of alternative solutions were put forward by residents from consideration of the transfer to the community (as above) to savings to be found elsewhere from the council’s budget. Increased charges for activities, reduced opening hours across all the leisure centres, use of volunteers, better marketing of the centre, contribution in costs from Powys Teaching Health Board (health links) and lobbying the Welsh Government for more money were all suggestions put forward.

“As exercise is an important part of good health, both physical and mental, is it possible for some money being taken out of other health related budget?”

“When Freedom took over Knighton was in a bad place, but based on current financial years figures the footfall has over taken Presteigne. Why are we here to talk about Knighton and not Presteigne?”

“This centre and swimming pool was started by the people of Knighton, I am possibly one of the few surviving members of what was called The Swimming Pool Committee, our aim was to raise funds to build a swimming pool for the town and district, we revived the carnival and show to raise funds. Surely the most sensible thing to do would be to close all 15 leisure centres for one day a week which would save more than £200,000 and the 15 facilities would be available for everyone throughout the rest of the week.”

“If sell Staylitttle – make up all £200k.”

“People are prepared to forego free swims (needs to be fair and equitable and put off people on lower incomes) – people will pay extra – increase rates.”

“Disgusted by the decision to close the sports centre – please read all the comments made tonight at the meeting and take points seriously. We needed to see the whole figures of Powys Leisure Centres and to see what impact Knighton has. Primary school affected, health, the economic value to town. We need to find a solution not a closure – Consult that!”

- **Miscellaneous comments (82 comments)**

Some interested residents also commented on additional topics which have been all logged under the miscellaneous heading. These included comments on energy consumption, Saturday opening request, inviting MPs to get involved etc.

Overall response rate:

More than 1,000 residents attended either the drop-in event, the public meeting or emailed with their comments on the proposal, with petitions received with in excess of 2,500 signatures.

With a total population of 3,020 residents in Knighton this gives a response rate of around 30 - 33% (excluding the petition data).

Note: It is not possible to give a precise response rate as there were residents from outside of Knighton who gave their views and there will also be a number of people who may have attended the drop in session, written in, emailed and attended the public meeting who were Knighton residents and have been counted more than once.

However it is clear that the response rate is robust and a good representation of the community as a whole.

The responses received included:

- 150+ people who attended the drop in session.
(70 question sheets were completed and handed in and 20+ comments made on the flipchart paper and a graffiti wall produced by the children)
- 475+ people who attended the public meeting. At the meeting 28 questions were posed and answered and two petitions handed in.
- 80 items of correspondence were received in the form of both letters addressed to the head of service/Cabinet member and emails. Some residents wrote letters and emailed into the council on more than one occasion to clarify information or seek answers.
- 3 petitions. One from Leintwardine Primary School with 10 signatures and two handed in at the public meeting – one with 1800 signatures and one with 711. These have been acknowledged and will be considered through the proper channels.
- There have been 7 FOI's received relating to Knighton Sports Centre.

Profile data:

Although we didn't seek profile data as such it was noted that members of all ages and both genders attended the drop in session, the public meeting and wrote or emailed in to express their views including pupils from the primary school.

In terms of a population, Knighton is split into two local super output areas by the Office of National Statistics (ONS)

Knighton 1 and Knighton 2. In 2012 the ONS release their mid-year population estimates which gives some basic information about the town. Understanding the profile and make-up of a town is important when taking decisions around future service delivery as are the views themselves and the table below will allow members to consider the two aspects in context of the town and in comparison to other towns.

Data	Knighton 1	Knighton 2	Presteigne 1	Rhayader
Total population	1432	1588	1533	2077
0 – 15 year olds	16.9%	14.8%	10.6%	15.2%
16 – 29 year olds	14.5%	14.8%	12.9%	13.9%
30 – 44 year olds	15.4%	14.8%	9.1%	13.1%
45 – 64 year olds	28.4%	30.3%	30.8%	27.3%
65+	24.8%	25.7%	36.6%	30.4%
Residents receiving DLA (Disability Living Allowance)	84	73	64	133
Residents receiving the severe element	18	24	9	39
Residents with a limiting long term illness.	19%	22%	24%	26%
No of households	639	753	740	987
Average household size	2.18	2.1	2.3	2.03

A good cross section of the Knighton community attended the face to face sessions including parents with children from both the primary school and some young people who are pupils at John Beddoes High School.

Retired residents, parents and their children were well represented and a number of residents with disabilities also turned up to express their views around the centre and the positive impact it had on their health and well-being – in particular regarding the use of the swimming pool.

Conclusion:

Overall it is clear from the consultation exercise that Knighton residents do not want their sports centre to close.

They feel the council is acting unfairly in considering to close the centre when usage figures have increased and when all the other centres will remain open. Residents feel their market town is equally deserving of a pool and that Knighton's swimming pool is well used by not just its own community but by residents who travel from Presteigne due to the pool being bigger.

Residents are already feeling the budgetary pressures with the threat to their library and the recent news that the Lottery Bid to transform the community centre wasn't successful is also causing concern. As a border town there is also a perception/feeling being expressed that Cabinet members – who are predominantly from the North of the county – are being selective in where services are being cut to protect their constituents and communities. Cllr Graham Brown explained that the cuts are affecting all communities not just Knighton.

A note about market research and consultations

When conducting market research companies use a margin of error and confidence level to ensure that their results are robust and representative of the population they are seeking views from.

A consultation however isn't market research as people make a conscious decision to respond (or not) and are not contacted and asked to take part. When conducting a consultation you can sometimes only hear the views of the people who are either strongly in favour or strongly object to a proposal. The silent majority may not have given a view. However when we analyse any consultation results we do consider how robust they are in terms of the population of interest.

Given that nearly 500 residents turned out to the public meeting, that 150 came to the drop-in session and that we received over 100 items of written/email correspondence and three petitions with over 2500 signatures it can be deemed to be robust a representative sample. When conducting consultation exercise Powys County Council works to the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales. <http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles>