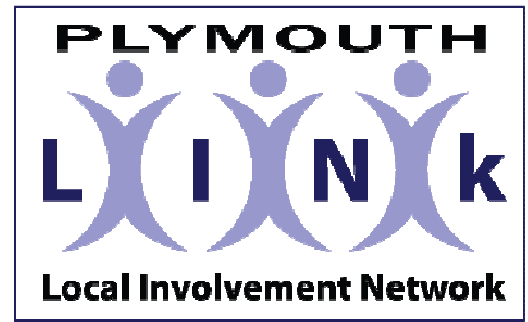


# Communication & Engagement Strategy for the Plymouth LINK



## Introduction

LINKs or local involvement methods will provide opportunities for people to give their views and help to shape local health and social care services.

LINK's aim to:-

- Create a network which represents the local community.
- Offer flexible ways for people to give their views and get involved.
- Reach people and not expect people to come to them.
- Make sure the 'seldom heard' have a voice.
- Communicate with the LINK and the local community.

Effective communication and engagement will help the Plymouth LINK to achieve this and this strategy outlines the main principles of how the Plymouth LINK intends to reach and talk to all of Plymouth's communities.

The LINK will use existing networks in the City to connect services, individuals, organisations, health and social care in order to create a vast web of communication and engagement.

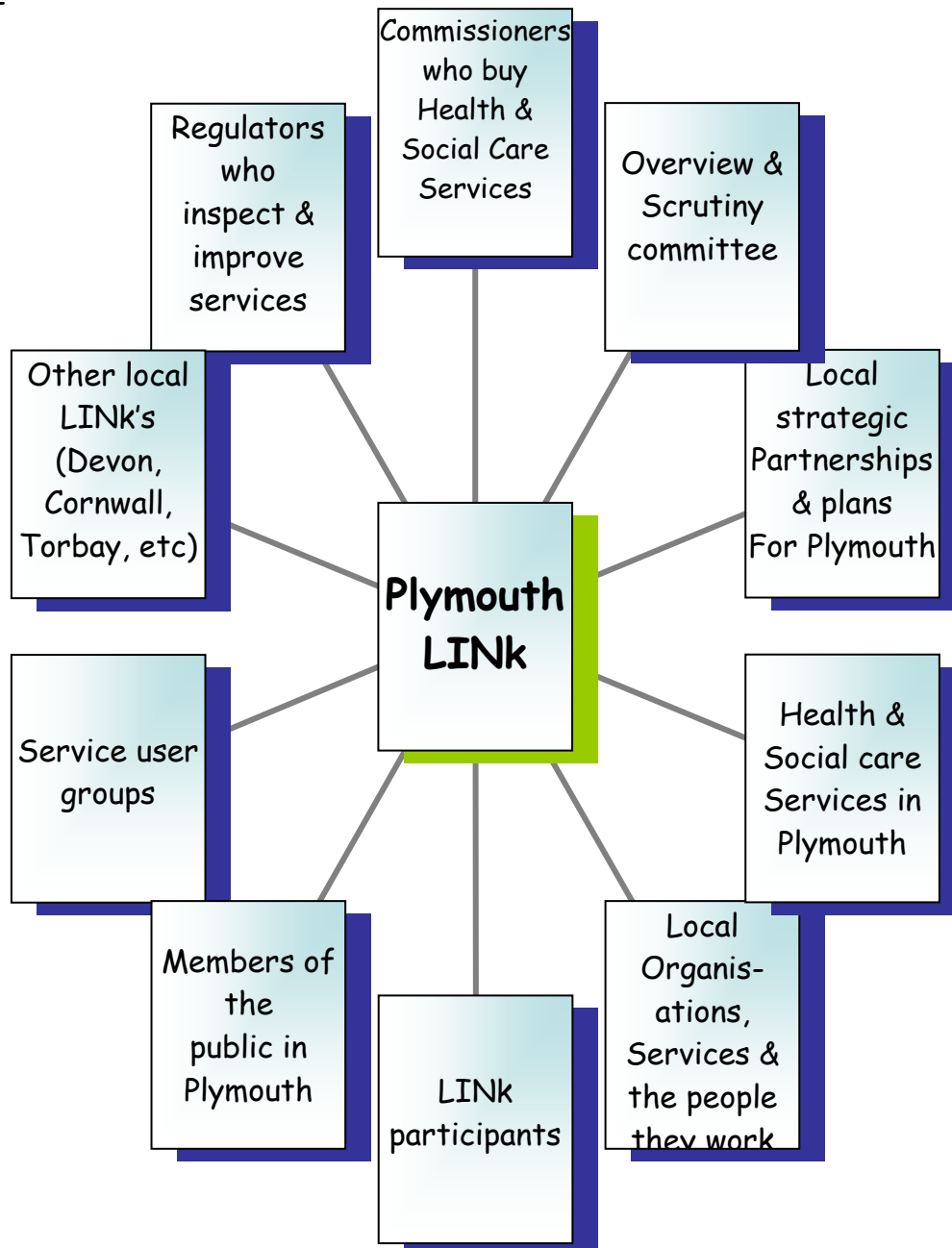
This strategy will use guidance from other LINK's, learning from the early adopter sites and best practice from the City.

## Communication

The Plymouth LINK will need to talk to a lot of different people to make sure that it:-

- Reaches and engages with local communities (and the 'seldom heard')
- Consults with the public about their priorities for services.
- Tells people what the LINK is.
- Develops relationships with people who make decisions about our services.
- Reports on the health and social care issues for local people.

The following diagram shows the range of people that the LINK will communicate with:-



It is important that communication is:-

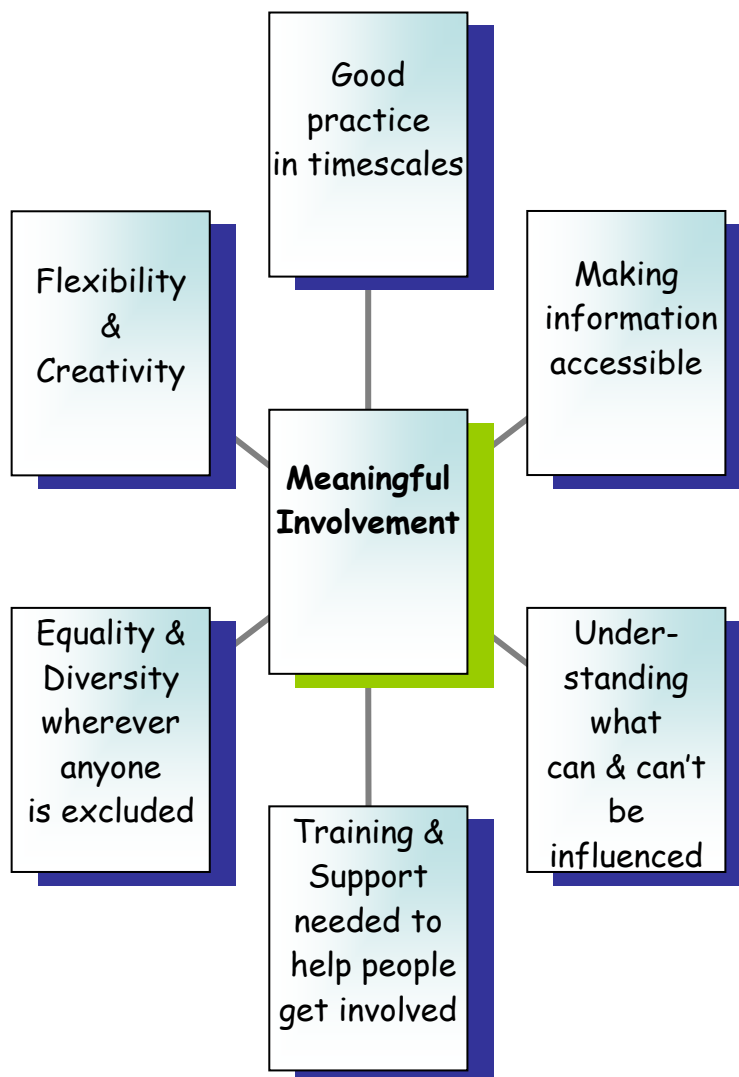
Accessible	In audio, multi-lingual, print, electronic formats to target different groups etc.
Clear	Plain English, no jargon, not over complicated.
Available	In public places, health and social care services, use of newsletters/bulletins, advertising, internet presented to local people.
Transparent	Being open about the way the Plymouth LINK works, makes decisions, spends money.

## Engagement

It is important that the Plymouth LINK creates opportunities that enable anyone in our local community to get involved in anyway they can or choose to. The Plymouth LINK will support its participants to influence health and social care decision making by:-

- Giving their views, experiences and priorities for services.
- Getting involved in research and consultation about service changes, plans and developments.
- Playing an active role in the Plymouth LINKs - Stewardship Group, visiting team and focus groups.
- Becoming a LINK Ambassador and engaging with the public and representing the LINK in groups that make decisions about services.

The Plymouth LINK will work with services to find out how they already engage with people and create opportunities for 'meaningful' involvement that takes into account:-



## **Monitoring Communication & Engagement**

This strategy will be reviewed annually with the Plymouth LINK to:-

- Look at what is working and what needs improving.
- How the LINK is engaging with all sectors of the local community (via mapping).
- Consider best use of resources and how this could be improved.

The Plymouth LINK will monitor the response from the methods of communication used, numbers signed up actively involved in the Plymouth LINK in terms of demographics and feedback from the LINK from their involvement in the opportunities available. The Plymouth LINK is committed to improving the way it communicates and engages with local people.