

Bristol LGB Forum Consultation Procedure and Policy

January 2003

Consultation procedure

- Forum representatives should be contacted through the Development Worker unless agreed with the individual concerned.
- If a service provider wishes to send information to forum representatives, the development worker will organise these mailings. However the service provider need to supply the materials in the appropriate format and fund postage.
- The service provider should contact the Bristol LGB Forum a least six weeks in advance of events to ensure enough time to for meeting dates to be put into representative's diaries.
- The service provider should consider their request with consideration to the criteria below.
- The service provider should put the request in writing to the Bristol LGB Forum development worker.
- The development worker will then put the written request to the Bristol LGB Forum management committee at the monthly management committee meeting for their consideration.
- The development worker will then contact the service provider to confirm the involvement of the Bristol LGB Forum.
- In cases where the consultation is a one off or particularly long or involved the development worker may represent the Bristol LGB Forum.
- The Bristol LGB Forum management committee might invite the service provider to a monthly management committee meeting to give then an opportunity to ask questions.

Time frame

The service provider should consider the importance of contacting the Bristol LGB Forum with sufficient time to ensure that the Bristol LGB Forum's comments are taken into account before decisions are made.

Briefings and accessibility

The Bristol LGB Forum expects there to be sufficient support for the nominee to participate fully in the process. Details of the context and background of the topic as well as explanations of jargon will be necessary. Meeting are more effective for both the LGB representative and the service provider if LGB representatives are briefed in advance. Best practice is to provide a briefing on the issues in plain language at the time of making the request for consultation.

Volunteers' expenses

Representatives are volunteers, so will need out-of-pocket expenses refunded in cash at any working groups or meetings. These costs may include accessible transport, mileage or childcare costs. These costs are an essential part of consultation and the service provider needs to budget for them.

As the Bristol LGB Forum receives many requests for consultation it limits the amount of processes that it is involved with at one time to ensure that involvement is useful and sustainable.

The Bristol LGB Forum selects priorities by using the following criteria:

- What is the time commitment the service provider expects. For example: when meetings will be: Will they always be during the day, or always in the evening? How frequent will meetings be? How long will the consultation process last?
- What is the consultation process hoping to achieve?
- Is it an issue that is relevant and significant to LGB people, have previous consultations and studies demonstrated this?
- Is it a general issue – it is likely to apply to all, or at least most, LGB people?
- Does it contribute towards addressing inequality?
- Does it lend itself to partnership working?
- Is it achievable, will people (not just members of the LGB Forum Management Committee) be able to see positive improvements in 12 months time?
- How will the service provider keep the LGB Forum up to date with changes after the consultation process has finished?

Bristol LGB Forum representative responsibilities

The representative will not give individual feedback, but will try to give a clear perspective that is representative of the diverse membership of the Bristol LGB Forum

As individuals and as representatives of the LGB community we will endeavour to agree to a consensual response that is balanced and covers all aspects of the topic and ensures an inclusion of issues relating to all members of our community.

The representative will read all briefings prior to meetings/working groups and shall reliably attend and contribute at meetings or give their apologies in advance to the service provider as necessary.