

East Suffolk Council on public consultation and engagement

Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement for Infrastructure

Thursday 1 October 2020 | Virtual Conference

Lisa Chandler Energy Projects Manager, East Suffolk Council

Lisa will be a leading a session on 'Stakeholder view on the engagement and consultation process: when and how to engage?' at Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement for Infrastructure, which will take place virtually on Thursday 1 October 2020.



What is the most common challenge you face in dealing with public consultations?

I primarily deal with DCO applications so public consultations are run by promoters, the recurring difficulty is explaining this to the general public and helping them to understand local authorities role in the process. A common mis-conception is that we are the determining authority for all planning application. However, we like to support our town and parish councils so often run our own events during public consultations in order for them to help inform the Councils position.

What advice would you give someone starting to plan their consultation strategy?

Assume the public know very little about the process and encourage them to take a role in the process. We often hear from those with the loudest voices, but it is important to make sure the quiet voices get a say too. This can sometimes require facilitated events and the careful management of attendees in particular at public meetings.

How can you adapt your engagement throughout the development and construction of the project?

Always remember who the audience is and how best to engage with them, this may be through regular updates, meetings with town and parish councils, through the local authority or councilors. Each project in each location will have different demands and what works well in one area may not in another so a flexible approach is important. Also – ask your audience how they want you to engage with them – that includes the public and local authorities!

How could COVID-19 change the way consultation and engagement is conducted going forward?

Covid-19 has opened up new opportunities for engagement, we have carried out virtual engagement events that have worked as well as in person events, some people who may not have been able to travel or may have been at work were able to attend. The possibility for less travel is enticing to all and the ability to engage virtually, provided there is provision for those with inadequate broadband, connectivity, facilities etc, is definitely the way forward. The possibility of hybrid events / meetings is a great opportunity.



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Hear from Lisa and many more expert consultation specialists...

...at Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement for Infrastructure, taking place virtually on Thursday 1 October.

Ticket prices start from £199 + VAT, for full details of the conference how to secure your place visit: <https://bit.ly/3c9Ejlk>

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