



Checklist for Involving Service Users in Events / Meetings

This list is a guide for staff to ensure that both you and the service users you have invited get the best out of the event/meeting you are planning.

Being prepared is key to success. There may be additional things you need to consider.

Remember - "NEVER ASSUME - ALWAYS ASK" those you are involving if you have covered their requirements.

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1	Available reading	Tick
	<p>The following documents are available from the User Involvement Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Good Meetings Guide ● Ground Rules ● Facilitators: Roles and Responsibilities ● A Guide for Service Users to their Roles and Responsibilities in Meetings ● Tips for Managing Difficult Issues in Meetings 	

2	Forms for use	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involvement Information Form for Service Users and Project Organisers - these will act as a prompt for the information you require from those you intend to invite. It will also highlight their requirements and prepare them for the meeting ● Application to Attend an Event and Transport Request Form ● Name cards available for printing with names of attendees ● Expenses Claim Form for Attendance at Meetings/Events ● Involvement Feedback Forms for Service Users ● Involvement Feedback Forms for Professionals <p>(Documents available in large print and alternative formats on requests)</p>	

3	Preparing for the meeting/event	
a)	<p>Make sure you have plenty of planning time – much more than you first think! Consider your target audience, who you will invite, how you will contact them - personal invitation/press articles etc. and what their accessibility needs will be. Ensure people know what their roles will be.</p>	
b)	<p>Plan & book date/times/venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrange meeting times and venue (essential if hoist /personal care is required) to suit attendees - not just professionals' diaries. ● Attendees may have pre arranged care packages at home to 'fit around'. ● It is good practice not to start meetings involving service users prior to 10.30am and to be aware meetings should ideally be no longer than 2 hours unless by prior arrangements. ● Drinks should be available on arrival – people may have been on provided transport for a long time. ● Meetings which are held around lunch time, between 12 and 2pm, food/snack should be provided for service users attending. ● Whole day events require regular comfort breaks with drinks & food. 	
c)	<p>If personal care is required by an attendee liaise immediately with them regarding their needs and plan/ arrange how these will be provided for. If hoist etc. is needed consider booking 'your meeting' at a venue where the equipment required is available. Connect Centres, countywide, have hoists. Plan for the double-up carers. Be aware that a risk assessment maybe necessary with the service user prior to the event. If a service user is bringing their own equipment e.g. hoist, this must be risk assessed prior to the event. If their equipment is then found to be unsuitable this could result in re-planning of the venue to accommodate their needs.</p>	

d)	<p>Provision of Transport : events may need to be planned around the times provided transport can be arranged for attendees. Specialist transport provision (tail lifts etc.) is often restricted and not available prior to 9.30am or between 2.30 – 4.00pm due to school runs etc. Contact User Involvement Team, County Hall, for further details and your transport requests.</p>	
e)	<p>Ensure the venue is fully accessible. This includes access for transport drop off and collect points that may not be at the front of the building. Points to consider, depending on needs of attendees: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are disabled toilets adequate sizes especially if personal care is needed? • Are there enough disabled car parking spaces? • Plan the lay out of the room; the furniture and its size to accommodate the number of wheelchairs users' attending- remember heights & size of wheelchairs vary. • Check the suitability of venue for people with sensory loss - deaf and/or visual – e.g. is lighting adequate for all attendees even in 'break away' rooms. As well as attendees, interpreters require good lighting and no distracting noises. Plan ahead if setting up a hired hearing loop system yourself. Note it can only be fully confirmed as working by the deaf person using their hearing aid so always check with them prior to the start! • Always best to book rooms on ground floor. However, if relying on a lift taking attendees to upstairs room check first as some attendees may not want to use a lift, or they maybe unable to operate it without assistance. If lots of wheelchair users are attending and using the lift it will add considerable time to getting people to/from your event....reconsider your venue! • Check the venue for yourself; seek further advice if any doubts arise. 	
f)	<p>Book speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform them that you would need their presentations/notes well in advance of the event to allow for required formats to be printed/ prepared if forming part of handouts OR if they are required to be sent to attendees in their preferred format prior to event e.g. for use on screen reader by people with visual loss. • Set a deadline date with speakers for this. Allow plenty of time for alternative formats to be prepared. Material produced in boxes, graphs etc. all take time to reformat. Obtaining text only documents of presentations may assist with any required reformatting. • Remember to check the versions of Microsoft required by attendees prior to sending electronic files. 	
g)	<p>Book interpreters/hearing loop/as soon as date is planned if there is any possibility they may be required for your event. Ensure interpreters are sent all the information prior to the event as this is essential to them for their interpreting role.</p>	
<i>For EVENTS consider the following:-</i>		
h)	<p>Book photographer/ensure you have camera. Plan to inform attendees if photographs are going to be taken. Some people may object and not want their photograph taken/used in publicity/placed on websites etc. Asking each person at registration is a good opportunity. Inform photographer of any objections.</p>	
i)	<p>Arrange for flowers/cake if celebrating an event.</p>	

4	Paperwork and administration	
a)	Send out invitations/flyers. Include full venue address, the postcode and telephone number - if possible. Are maps required? Check appropriate formats are used for attendees - ASK never ASSUME. Invitations requiring reply slip should include details for name, address, phone – land and mobile, email address, requirements for dietary, mobility, sensory, personal care and any other needs. State a return by date and give clear postal & email return address. Example of an invitation can be obtained via the User Involvement Team which includes care needs request & transport booking details.	
b)	Prepare registration list and give copy to venue reception if appropriate.	
c)	Prepare delegates pack/agenda in appropriate formats. Consider including details of follow up reports etc.	
d)	Make a task list so team members are aware what they are expected to do on the day. Identify knowledgeable staff for electrical equipment. Circulate list in advance. Take copies on the day!	
e)	Prepare your feedback forms . Have SAE/ Freepost addresses for forms to be returned after the event. Useful if provided transport arrives prior to people having time to complete feedback forms.	
f)	Plan to use the User Involvement Team's feedback forms – available via the team - for both service users and professionals. These are designed to seek views and opinions and record what differences people feel their contributions have made etc. Information from these is likely to be used in our annual returns and inspection and provide real evidence of change and improvement to services. Recording outcomes from your event/meeting is of great value and your help in using these feedback forms would be greatly appreciated.	
g)	Expenses Forms - ensure you have enough copies in required formats, available from User Involvement Team. Plan when you are going to give these out	
h)	Check you have produced enough documents in preferred formats to suit all your attendees' e.g. large print, Braille. Check if any attendees require information in email format prior to event for access via screen reader etc. and send in their preferred electronic format.	

5	Equipment	
a)	Inform your speakers , in advance, of the full requirements of their audience . For people attending with visual loss it would be essential for a speaker to 'talk through' everything that they show in a presentation.	
b)	Gather equipment required , flip chart, information charts & leaflets, sticky tape, scissors, felt tips, post-it's, kitchen roll, pens, paper for attendees etc.	
c)	For meetings prepare name cards for all attendees – plastic holders are available from the User Involvement Team	
d)	Prepare name badges for attendees and for key people/speakers etc. - Take spare badges to the event plus felt tip pens to make names clearer – looks better than biro.	
e)	Consider having a colourful sash to identify key staff or support helpers etc. - They will stand out more!	

f)	Prepare any additional signs required relating to relevant information for your event – where breakaway groups will go etc.	
g)	If appropriate for your attendees and the type of event, provide items that can be held up by them at question time – e.g. traffic lights signs -These can be placed on tables and that way people wanting to ask questions can be seen easier.	
h)	When planning workshop numbers ensure they are not too large and that they will be in area that is not noisy – even from another workshop group - especially relevant if interpreters are required.	
i)	If holding a ' goldfish bowl ' conversation, sharing of experiences , etc. good idea to record them. This could involve identifying several scribes to record all that is said or videoing it. Check with service user for permission prior to any video recording.	
j)	Arrange all the electrical equipment required – microphone, screens, power points, safety covers/tape for electrical leads etc. ensure it is available at the venue or arrange to book & take it.	
k)	Check all electrical equipment is working correctly. If using recording equipment, tapes etc, ensure enough tapes for length of time needed. Consider holding an equipment/technical information meeting. Encrypted memory sticks, including from speakers, require prior checking for compatibility with equipment.	

6	Get to know the venue	
a)	Ensure you know the fire drill details for the venue prior to event including details for exiting upstairs rooms, especially for those who used a lift, as this would not be working in an emergency.	
b)	Ensure staff running event have contact numbers for venue & mobile number details for key staff in advance.	
c)	Organiser to leave a contact mobile number at the Office Base in case direct communication is needed on the day. E.g. contact maybe required with the event organiser regarding transport problems.	

7	On the Day	Tick
a)	Ask staff to arrive in good time.	
b)	Allow plenty of time to set up/test electrical equipment & have two people good at IT/equipment to run it. Test hearing loop system, if required.	
c)	Use safety covers/tape over all wires. Allow for extra covers if portable hearing loop being used as this has additional cables to go around the room	
d)	Set up welcome flip chart / posters etc.	
e)	Named badges: prearrange these into groups/colour coding/alphabetically.	
f)	Check room layout , ensure clear access by wheelchair users up to and around tables. Plan for possible late comers.	
g)	Ensure lighting in the rooms meets attendee's needs, speaker facing the right way and not creating silhouette.	
h)	Place equipment pens, papers, etc. on the tables.	
i)	Arrange jugs of water and glasses for attendees & speakers on tables.	
j)	At least two people to welcome attendees in case of rush of people at the entrance.	

k)	If photographs are to be taken during the event, inform the attendees at registration. Some people may object and not want their photograph taken/used in publicity/placed on websites etc. Inform photographer of any objections.	
l)	Provide drinks on arrival for attendees – service user may have been travelling some distance.	
m)	Announce housekeeping rules/ground rules etc clearly- where toilets are & fire exit details etc.	
n)	Make sure speakers stick to times . Have a strong chairperson/ facilitator.	
o)	Have team members strategically placed around the room to check for people who want to ask questions , identify person to take round roving microphone.	
p)	Ensure lunch is accessible to all, provide support as required – may involve extra people to assist, check sitting, table access etc. meets people's individual needs.	
q)	Hand out feedback forms.	
r)	End your meeting/event on time. Attendees will expect it, over running may cause them problems - care or medication needs etc. Provided transport will have been pre-booked so delaying the collecting time of attendees has potential knock on effect for other people.	

8	After the Event	Tick
a)	Analyse feedback forms/create report - these can be used for record of outcomes and future reference when organising another event.	
b)	Send out reports, place newsletter onto website etc. Inform people when/where this will be available.	
c)	Feedback/inform the User Involvement Team of your outcomes.	

Contact details for the User Involvement Team are:

Adult and Community Services, County Hall

Tel: 01905 766929

Or via SID – go to Adult and Community Services (ACS Homepage) and choose Teams from list on left – then scroll down to User Involvement Team