Communication and Engagement Action Plan



PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 - 2027

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2024 - 2027



# ABOUT

This Action Plan supports the implementation of the Partnership’s Participation and Engagement Strategy 2024 – 2027 and Communication Strategy 2024 – 2027. The progress of this plan is monitored through quarterly reporting to the Integration Joint Board.

This plan contains 38 actions, aligned to the outcomes/objectives of both strategies:

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| Action # | Area | Outcome/Objective |
| 1 - 7 | Participation and Engagement | The involvement of people and communities positively impacts on service change and strategy development to ensure that services meet people’s needs and develops trust with our communities. |
| 8 – 14 | Participation and Engagement | Our approach to engagement is inclusive, meaningful and is evaluated to identify learning and improve how we deliver future engagement activities. |
| 15 – 17 | Participation and Engagement | Staff have the necessary knowledge and skills required to deliver effective and meaningful community engagement. |
| 18 – 20 | Communication | Be a champion for Falkirk’s local services and workforce. |
| 21 – 26 | Communication | Build understanding of local services and how to access them. |
| 27 – 33 | Communication | Ensure effective communications across the integrated workforce. |
| 34 - 38 | Communication | Celebrate the diversity of our local communities and workforce. |

# Participation and Engagement

Please note that there are no set timescales to achieving the following high-level actions. We must work towards establishing and embedding a best practice approach to engagement across the next three years. Specific areas of work (with timescales where relevant) have been included to support progress towards achieving these high-level actions.

Outcome: The involvement of people and communities positively impacts on service change and strategy development to ensure that services meet people’s needs and develops trust with our communities.

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| No. | Action |
| 1 | We will take a co-design approach to developing services and strategies by involving people and communities from the start of any process through to decision-making.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * As a GIRFE Partner, we adopt a co-design approach by testing prototypes with people with lived experience in key service areas, e.g., substance use and older people (frailty). (2024) * The Falkirk Dementia Strategy Group co-designs an improved service pathway and new local dementia strategy with people affected by dementia and their carers and families. (2024/25) * The Digital Health and Care Programme Board uses the Scottish Approach to Service Design to develop digital solutions in key priority areas. (2024-2027) * The Falkirk Alcohol and Drugs Partnership host a series of Conversation Cafes on select topics to improve service delivery. (2024) * The Falkirk Alcohol and Drugs Partnership involves service users in the development of a local strategy and delivery plan. * The Falkirk Learning Disability Team involves service users in the development of a local strategy. (2024) |
| 2 | We will include representation of people with lived experience in strategic and operational groups and produce work which addresses the needs and meets the aspirations of people who access or are supported by HSCP services more fully.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Establish a reference/advisory group or forum of people with lived experience to share their views and help shape services. * Representation of service users and carers are involved in Partnership Funding commissioning groups, e.g., Partnership Funding Group and Carers Strategy Group, to help inform investment decisions. * The Falkirk Alcohol and Drugs Partnership establish a Lived Experience Panel. (2024) * Carer representatives are recruited to join the Carers Strategy Group. (2024) * Managers are supported to identify and establish a schedule of opportunities for lived experience involvement in operational and strategic meetings. * Managers meaningfully involve representatives in strategic and operational group meetings and can show how lived experience input has positively impacted on the development and implementation of Locality Plans. * Service user and carer representatives are invited to the Digital Health and Care Programme Board to ensure the views of individuals inform technology projects. (2024-2027) |
| 3 | We will support carers to be involved in the way HSCP services are provided for their cared for person(s) and the support they need in their caring role. We will evaluate their involvement and can show that their suggestions, feedback, and concerns have been considered and is having an impact in decision-making.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Every six weeks, the Carers Centre provides updates from carers and young carers/young adult carers to the Carers Strategy Group to inform how we provide ongoing support to carers. * The Carers Strategy Group allows time for discussion and contributions from its Carer Representative. This includes sending out meeting agenda well in advance with a set agenda item for the Carer Representative to discuss any issues or concerns. * The Participation and Engagement Strategy supports the implementation of the Falkirk Carers Strategy 2023-2026. * Provide support for carers from under-represented communities, e.g., BME communities, LGBTQ+ communities, young carers, etc. This will involve building an understanding of the specific needs of groups and supporting relationships for carers, including both the cared for person and extended family members. * A carer representative will be invited to join the Digital Health and Care Programme Board to ensure carer views inform technology projects. |
| 4 | We will ensure that Carer and Service User Representatives are treated as equal and expert partners and feel confident in undertaking the responsibilities of their role.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * A consistent process for all representatives joining the HSCP is established. This will include a participation agreement template, induction pack, training and mentoring opportunities, and identifying additional support requirements, etc. (2024) * Provide training to recruit service user and carer representatives to join the IJB and Strategic Planning Group, as well as other strategic and operational groups. * Representatives are accessing the Expenses Policy 2023-2026. * Representatives are supported to leave their role through succession planning processes, including exit interviews. * Adopt best practice for Service User and Carer Representative involvement which includes: * Meetings are open and inclusive, allowing time for discussion and contributions from all members of the group. * Language and papers are jargon-free. * Representative contributions are minuted. * Papers are sent out well in advance and Representatives can clarify any information in advance. * The agenda is jointly owned with all group members having the opportunity to request items on it or raise issues of concern. |
| 5 | We will work with partners to regularly engage with local communities to ensure people are meaningfully engaged in decisions made on services which will affect them.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * When planning engagement, we connect with relevant community groups and third sector organisations to strategically engage with people and minimise engagement fatigue. * The Carers Centre is represented across a range of strategic meetings to share insight and support us to engage with carers. * Work with partners to engage with people living with dementia to support the development of our local dementia strategy. (2024/25) * Work with partners to involve people in the implementation of the new model of person-centred, community-led day care services. * Work with people and communities in the implementation of the Community Led Support Strategy. (2024-2026) * Work with Community Planning Partners to involve people to implement the Falkirk Plan and associated Community Action Plans. * Informed by the 2023 Equality Outcomes Monitoring Report consultation, engagement activities will be incorporated into the Digital Health and Care Delivery Plan. (2024) |
| 6 | We will make our decision-making processes transparent and clearly demonstrate how the views of communities have been considered and the reasons for decisions are explained.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Staff use the feedback report and information sheet templates to demonstrate how participant feedback will be used in the decision-making process and outline the next steps in the project, including when decisions will be made. |
| 7 | We will make communities aware of the opportunities they have to get involved.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Identify and develop a schedule of opportunities for people with lived experience to get involved. * Promote opportunities for involvement via HSCP social media and Participate+. |

Outcome: Our approach to engagement is inclusive, meaningful and is evaluated to identify learning and improve how we deliver future engagement activities.

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| No. | Action |
| 8 | We will improve our understanding of who we are engaging with and proactively seek participation from under-represented groups to ensure participation represents our local population and the people who access or are supported by HSCP services.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Develop and establish a consistent approach to collecting equalities data from participants, in multiple accessible formats (e.g., easy read, digital, paper copies, etc.) to better understand who we’re engaging with. (2024) * Participation equalities data is stored in a database and is regularly updated and compared to local data to ensure our engagement is representative of our service users and local population. (2024/25) * Relationships are built with local community organisations and groups to build our knowledge of the needs of our target audience and provide opportunities to engage directly with people in their communities. |
| 9 | We will ensure our engagement processes are accessible, inclusive and reflect the diversity of communities, and is informed by Equality and Poverty Impact Assessments (EPIA).  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Staff develop Equality and Poverty Impact Assessments (EPIA) throughout the engagement process to ensure activities do not negatively impact on protected groups and any identified reasonable adjustments can be made to support participation. Additionally, EPIAs will identify positive impacts and will support staff to design activities which will have positive outcomes for protected groups. * Staff collect participation data to support the development of EPIAs to ensure any decisions made are not negatively impacting on protected groups. EPIAs also support decision making which will have a positive impact on protected groups. |
| 10 | We will meaningfully involve the people and groups who are the focus of our engagement and provide support for people to get involved.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * An Inclusive Engagement Resource and Engagement Planning tools are available for staff to support engagement with groups to meet their participation needs. * Staff plan their engagement events to engage directly with people in their communities as opposed to organising centralised events and expecting people to come to us. * Staff provide alternative approaches as solutions to participation barriers when planning engagement. * Staff ask and listen to participants about what support they need to participate and take appropriate action to support involvement. |
| 11 | We will use a range of effective engagement methods to involve people in our engagement activities.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * The Community Engagement Toolkit includes information and resources on a range of engagement methods. For example, the Inclusive Engagement Resource provides information on what staff need to consider when engaging with groups. * Feedback provided on Care Opinion from service users and their families and carers is used to improve and make changes to services. * Development of Care Opinion guidance and internal procedure will support staff to better understand how to use Care Opinion as a feedback mechanism to improve service delivery. (2024) |
| 12 | We will provide people timely and accessible information in a variety of formats that meets their needs (e.g., easy read documents, talking mats, large print, audio, Braille, different languages, induction loops, etc.)  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Produce accessible communication guidance to improve the range of formats and materials used to support engagement activities. * Promote Communication Access UK Training to all staff. |
| 13 | We will keep people and communities informed of progress during the engagement process and provide feedback on the outcome of the engagement.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Staff use feedback report template for informing participants of the outcomes of their engagement activity, including how their feedback will be used in the decision-making process. |
| 14 | We will evaluate how effective ongoing engagement is to improve people’s experience of engagement and share this learning across the HSCP to inform future practice.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Staff are using the Engagement Self-Evaluation tool to evaluate their engagement activity and share their learning with others. |

Outcome: Staff have the necessary knowledge and skills required to deliver effective and meaningful community engagement.

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| **No.** | **Action** |
| 15 | We will undertake training and awareness raising with staff to support them to engage with people and communities.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Offer facilitation training for staff to support the involvement of lived experience representatives in strategic and operational meetings. * Develop engagement planning training to support staff to plan and carry out engagement activities and make effective use of the Community Engagement Toolkit. * Promote external community engagement training to staff. * Promote the Participation and Engagement Strategy and Community Engagement Toolkit to support staff to carry out community engagement across the HSCP. |
| 16 | We will ensure that staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, and know where to seek advice, to plan and deliver meaningful engagement on behalf of the HSCP.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * Improve and update information on the HSCP Colleague Hub so staff are aware of the Community Engagement Toolkit and the support available. * Support from the Policy and Planning Team is available for staff and working groups undertaking their own engagement activities. |
| 17 | We will actively seek out good practice and learning on community engagement from both within and outside the HSCP and share it with others.  Examples of activities include (but not limited to):   * HSCP representatives regularly attend Community Empowerment Action Team (CEAT) meetings to learn and share best practice with colleagues from across Falkirk Council. * Staff regularly attend community engagement webinars from Healthcare Improvement Scotland to learn best practice. |

# Communication

**Objective:** Be a champion for Falkirk’s local services and workforce.

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| **No.** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| 18 | Implement a structured annual media activity calendar which allocates communication resources throughout the year to a range of services and teams. Identify budgetary spend where appropriate. | 2024 |
| 19 | Maintain a list of top-target award ceremonies and ensure nomination opportunities are promoted to teams, offering support to submit as high-quality nominations as possible. | 2024 |
| 20 | Continue to support the recruitment and retention working group, and Integrated Workforce Plan, by promoting a range of roles and career opportunities across the Partnership. | Recurring |

**Objective:** Build understanding of local services and how to access them.

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| **No.** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| 21 | Improve and update information available on the Partnership website, signposting where appropriate to partner organisations. There is an immediate opportunity to improve the information currently split between Falkirk Council and Partnership websites via a planned refresh of the Falkirk.gov.uk site. | Recurring |
| 22 | Develop and publish videos to raise awareness of the range of work and services across the Partnership - supporting recruitment, celebration of staff success, and updates provided to the Board. | Recurring |
| 23 | Continue to develop and maintain the Partnership’s social media presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formerly twitter). A YouTube channel is maintained for hosting public-facing video and audio content. The Partnership will link with and share Council and NHS Forth Valley social media content where appropriate. | Recurring |
| 24 | Support the Digital Health and Care Programme Board to improve signposting to digital resources. | 2024 |
| 25 | Improve signposting information to Living Well Falkirk, a tool which helps people access self-management advice and information about support and tools which may suit them. | 2024 |
| 26 | Establish a communication survey which measures progress against communication areas highlighted within the Partnership’s Strategic Plan. | 2026 |

**Objective:** Ensure effective communications across the integrated workforce.

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| **No.** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| 27 | Continue to update and promote resources available on the Colleague Hub – providing guidance on inclusive communication, language, and Plain English. | Recurring |
| 28 | Introduce a new recurring communication piece from the Partnership’s Chief Officer and Senior Leadership Team. | 2024 |
| 39 | Introduce summary updates of Board decisions, service developments, and inspection results. | 2024 |
| 30 | Produce a Crisis / Incident Response Communication Handbook for internal use. This resource will complement existing guidance, measures, and training provided by the local Regional Resilience Partnership. | 2027 |
| 31 | Relaunch the Communicating for Falkirk brand guide with communication standards ‘hints and tips’ which includes inclusive communication and equalities guidance. | 2025 |
| 32 | Establish structured points of contact with services. This could include recurring ‘communication surgeries’ or communications input at team meetings. This approach aims to reduce the range of ‘ad hoc’ requests upon the Partnership’s communication resources. | 2024 onwards |
| 33 | Offer communication training to services. | Biannually |

**Objective:** Celebrate the diversity of our local communities and workforce.

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| **No.** | **Action** | **Timescale** |
| 34 | Produce guidance for implementing accessible communication standards, identified within the Communication Strategy, which will improve the range of format options available and improve access to services. | Immediate |
| 35 | Support actions within the Partnership’s Equalities and Human Rights Workplan to establish a new staff/community equality group and to foster good relations across communities. | Recurring |
| 36 | Identify a list of awareness days /months /weeks and cultural holidays which link to local activity, for promotion by the Partnership. Key messages which link to improving access to support should be set out for each. Please note: The Partnership acknowledges that commitment to inclusion and diversity must go beyond this calendar-led communication action. | 2024 onwards |
| 37 | Support the work of employee diversity, inclusion, and belonging networks established by our partner organisations. These will foster an internal shared culture and support network, and identify how teams can raise awareness of cultural and demographical barriers to improve access to their services. | 2027 |
| 38 | Promote Communication Access UK Training to all staff. The Partnership’s Communication Officer has completed the Communication Access UK accreditation, and implemented its principles within the Communication Strategy. All staff should be encouraged to undertake this free course to improve the support offered to people who access their service. | 2024 |