

ISG Stakeholder Engagement Principles

Principle	Check
1 Leadership – effective stakeholder engagement must be led from the top of the organisation.	
2 Commitment – to listen to stakeholders' views and act on or respond to them.	
3 Objectivity – an open approach not just to obtaining stakeholders' views but to interpreting them. Seek to understand views on a range of topics and on all aspects of the business plan, rather than pre-determining their priorities or seeking to endorse your own priorities.	
4 Engage ongoingly and early in the business plan process, review and improve throughout - An ongoing process that is embedded across the business – not just a stand-alone business planning/price control review exercise.	
5 Be clear what you want to achieve with “engagement” – have clear policy objectives and measures of impact; (incl. where you most need to engage). In particular define the key questions that need to be answered or actions you need stakeholders to take.	
6 Before engaging, undertake a gap analysis – what do we know already, what does third party insight tell us, what does our BAU insight tell us, what do we still need to find out where bespoke engagement is required? What insight needs updating?	
7 Evidence based – use a full range of available sources of info to identify priorities, views and challenges (e.g. operational insight, bespoke research).	
8 Gather evidence through a range of methodologies and tools including willingness to pay, qualitative research, surveys, complaints intelligence, market data.	
9 Who do we need to engage with to answer those question/deliver the outcome we need? Define and map your interested and impacted stakeholders. Recognise the different threads of the public interest – stakeholders, customers, consumers, citizens, communities (geographical and interest). Acknowledging it will not be appropriate to engage all stakeholders on all issues.	
10 Ensure you choose the right engagement method for the audience you need to reach. Understand the “spectrum of participation” and the difference between each part of that spectrum: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower, co-delivery. Consider more innovative approaches where it could improve outcomes.	
11 Engagement should be neutrally designed, useful and appropriately contextualised to help participants give informed views. This includes impartial information and targeted approaches to tailor engagement to suit the knowledge and awareness of different groups.	
12 Be accessible to all (e.g. in consideration of the tasks, timelines, contact person, tech., locations, challenges of communication, etc.).	
13 Be inclusive in the round: work with stakeholder groups, consumer and civil society groups to gather the fullest range of views and partners. Be aware that those who often participate i.e. the “usual suspects” are not always representative. Seek to plug the gaps in representation.	
14 Understand difference – avoid statements like ‘stakeholders said’ / consumers said – and pull out differences in views between different groups, and the reasons for them. Understand and balance the differences between different segments. Understand and balance the differences between existing and future stakeholders.	
15 Be responsive – seek to adopt a flexible process to engagement, responding to the information revealed as the process progresses.	
16 Transparency – to build stakeholder trust and show that you take their views seriously (incl. how you have considered views, assessed the options, weighted and managed trade-offs). Make clear what you changed as a result of insight and learning. Proactively feedback to stakeholders how their views have made a difference.	
17 Demonstrate impact of engagement – ensure that the engagement design process plans for and allows evaluation of success.	