

FILENOTE

JBA Project Code: 2019s0183
Contract: Cardiff Coastal Design
Client: Cardiff City Council
Date: 3 June 2019
Author: Ben Sullivan and David Revill
Reviewer: Anne-Marie Moon
Subject: Review of Public Engagement Events (14–15th May 2019)



1 Introduction

A two-day public engagement event was held on the 14th and 15th May 2019 to publicise the Cardiff Coastal Defences project and to enable public comment on the outline design proposals.

The event was held in the foyer of the Tesco Extra store in Pengam Green, which is located within the scheme area and will benefit from the project through reduced flood risk. Several alternative venues were considered but the Tesco store was chosen because it effectively acts as the community hub for that area and has a high footfall, providing an opportunity to publicise the project to the largest possible audience.

A range of information materials were presented at the venue. This included information on the existing and future flood risk, summary details of the outline design proposals and an overview of the project programme through to completion of construction.

The event was successfully held over the two days. Approximately 90 people actively engaged in the event, whilst approximately a further 1,000 people would have become aware of the project whilst visiting the store (these individuals did not actively engage with the project, but had their awareness raised by the presence of a stall in the foyer of Tesco).

This filenote presents a summary of the engagement event and its outcomes and identifies a series of recommendations to inform the development of the project and subsequent future engagement events.

2 Event organisation

2.1 Choice of venue

A range of venues were considered for the events. The Tesco Extra store, located immediately north of Rover Way in Pengam Green, was chosen for three reasons:

- There was no obvious alternative community centre in the local area to use as a venue;
- It was considered advantageous to host the event in a venue likely to be visited by large numbers of people, meaning the event would reach both those specifically attending the event and those who were not otherwise aware of it.
- The Tesco store is anticipated to flood during a present day 1 in 200-year event. Under the proposed scheme, it would benefit from reduced flood risk.

2.2 Publicising the event

The event was publicised in three ways:

- Leaflet drop to approximately 500 residential properties on the 3rd May 2019. All residential properties that were due to benefit from the proposed scheme received a leaflet; this provided a brief summary of the flood risk issue and the flood defence project, and advertised the date, time and location of the event. It also contained the web address for the website for the project (www.cardiffcoastaldefences.net), where further project information could be obtained and an email address for the scheme (cardiffcoastaldefences@cardiff.gov.uk), where further scheme information could be requested. The leaflet, website content and email address were provided in both English and Welsh language versions.
- A poster publicising the project and engagement event was placed in 10 community facilities i.e., post office, doctor's surgery, rugby club, etc, on the 3rd May 2019.

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- On 14th May 2019, Cardiff Council's official Twitter account publicised the engagement event, stating when and where the event was taking place and containing a link to the website for the scheme (www.cardiffcoastaldefences.net).

2.3 Information materials

A range of information materials were prepared for the engagement event. A series of four A1 size information boards were produced and displayed in the Tesco store foyer for the duration of the event. Information on the boards was in both English and Welsh. The themes of the four boards were as follows:

- 'Why is this project happening?' – summary of existing and future flood and erosion risks.
- 'What has informed the project?' – summary of community/social/environmental aspects/features that have informed scheme development.
- 'What are we proposing to do?' – outline summary of preferred option and flood risk benefits.
- 'What happens next?' – overview of the project to delivery.

An A4 handout was also prepared, to be offered to attendees. It contained summary information on the flood risk, preferred scheme, and project programme.

A feedback form was also produced. It contained a series of 10 questions designed to enable feedback of the event itself and the scheme proposals presented.

All information materials were provided in both English and Welsh language.

2.4 Event duration

The engagement event took place on the 14th and 15th May 2019. The event began at 12pm and finished at 8pm on both days. This was intended to enable people to attend both during and after the working day and also to attract interest from passing visitors to the store during its busiest periods i.e., during lunchtime and during the post-work rush hour.

2.5 Staff attendance

The event was attended by staff from Cardiff Council and JBA Consulting. A minimum of four staff were present throughout the two days, including a native Welsh speaker. Natural Resources Wales also had a staff member present on the 14th May only, who provided information on flood risk and related NRW activities.

3 Event outcomes

3.1 Attendance

A total of 90 people attended the event over the two days. These people actively viewed the information materials and engaged with the project staff, asking questions about the project and providing opinions. Approximately 50 other people took a project handout and were asked to make contact if they had any questions. Approximately 1,000 other people passed the event whilst visiting the store but did not engage with the event or take a handout; however, it is reasonable to assume that their awareness of the project was increased by having passed the information materials.

Approximately half of the attendees were already aware of the scheme as a result of the leaflet drop and were specifically attending the event. These people lived in the residential areas to the north and west of the store and were likely to benefit from the proposed scheme. The other attendees had no prior awareness of the scheme or event, were visiting the store and took the opportunity to engage in the event. The majority of these people

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worked in the local area but did not live there. A smaller number of people were residents of Tremorfa, Splott, Cardiff Bay and Pen-y-Lan. Figure 3-1 shows the distribution of local attendees engaged with at the event.



Figure 3-1: Distribution of local attendees at the engagement event

3.2 Comments received

The following section provides a summary of the comments received from attendees during the event. All comments provided by attendees were verbal and were recorded by project staff. No feedback forms were completed during the event.

- Attitudes toward the scheme were almost exclusively positive, with broad agreement that improved flood defences would be beneficial. Most attendees voiced their support for the scheme and many expressed their gratitude that Cardiff Council were prioritising funds to protect the areas of Pengam Green and Tremorfa.
- Awareness of the existing flood risk to the area was generally very low. More than half of the attendees who were residents of Pengam Green or Tremorfa expressed surprise that they are at risk and now wanted to further understand the level of risk and the potential consequences of this, particularly in relation to their building insurance premiums. The current and future level of flood risk was explained, and it was confirmed that insurance companies already had access to flood risk information; therefore, no increase in insurance premiums is likely and that increased flood risk protection may benefit insurance provision. Several residents confirmed that they were already aware of the flood risk and stated that this was already affecting their insurance premiums.
- A small number of attendees questioned the purpose of the scheme, stating that they did not believe the area is at risk of flooding. One person stated that they would rather the money was spent on other public facilities. It was explained that the area

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has historically been protected from flooding, but due to climate change, there is a need to improve these defences.



Figure 3-2: Engagement event, 14th May 2019

- Representatives from Tremorfa Park Community Group and Pengam Green Community Group attended the event. These attendees recommended that Cardiff Council use their community social media profiles (particularly Facebook groups) to publicise any future engagement events or scheme information updates. They specifically enquired whether there is scope to relocate the local Traveller Community as part of the scheme, and whether the proposed Rover Way upgrade scheme (to a dual carriageway) was going to be built. They also asked whether construction of the scheme was going to result in traffic congestion on Rover Way.
- A small number of attendees expressed concern about environmental issues in the River Rhymney and the Severn Estuary. Knowledge of the importance of the habitat was relatively widespread with several attendees identifying the use of these areas by birds. It was explained to attendees that environmental assessment forms a key part of the design of the flood defences and that the project is focused on minimising its environmental impacts. It was also explained that due to the imminent threat of erosion of the Lamby Way Tip and continued erosion of the Frag Tip, the scheme would benefit the local environment by protecting it from continued pollution.

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- A representative of the Rhymney Sailing and Angling Club attended the event having seen the event poster displayed in the club boathouse. He raised concern about how Cardiff Council would pay for the project. It was explained that majority funding was being sought from Welsh Government, but that a case for Council funding would need to be made. It was also explained that construction of the scheme is likely to impact on use of the Rhymney River and this might have implications for access to the sailing club and to the river. It was agreed that a further meeting with the club would be needed when further construction phase information is available to ensure that impacts to the club are minimised.
- Several attendees, primarily residents of the Beaufort Square area, raised concerns about flood defences in this area potentially increasing flood risk upstream or downstream. It was explained that one condition of receiving funding from the Welsh Government is that no detriment is caused to other areas.
- Several attendees noted that there is a proposed solar farm to be installed on Lamby Way Tip and asked whether these developments would affect one another. It was explained that whilst the two proposals were not expected to impact one another, cumulative impacts on the environment as a result of the two developments would be assessed during the design of the flood defences and appropriate mitigation applied as necessary.
- Several attendees enquired whether recent news reports on the BBC website and WalesOnline website, which stated that the proposed designs for the defences consisted of a high steel sheet pile wall, were correct. They expressed concern that views would be impacted. It was explained to them that designs were still being finalised, but at present there were no plans to install a high sheet pile wall and that the claims in the media were unfounded.
- One attendee, who was deaf, complained that they had no access to the information as there wasn't a representative that could speak British Sign Language. Their contact information was taken, and an action agreed for Cardiff Council to contact them following the event to discuss the scheme.
- Proposals to enhance the adjacent section of the Wales Coast Path as part of the scheme were very popular with many attendees, including local residents and those from further afield. Many stated that the river could have significant amenity value if the area was more managed.
- A representative from the Living Levels Landscape Partnership attended the event to find out more about the proposed scheme and to raise awareness of the partnership objectives. It was agreed that further engagement with the partnership would be undertaken following the event to explore opportunities to support the partnership's objectives.
- No health and safety incidents or near misses occurred during the event.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations have been made:

- Feedback on the proposed scheme was almost wholly positive, with many attendees voicing support for the project. Only a very small number of attendees expressed concern about the project and the associated use of public funds.
- The engagement event raised awareness amongst the local community and other stakeholders on: (1) the current and future flood risk; (2) the purpose and objectives

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of the project: (3) high level engineering option characteristics; and (4) the project timeline.

- The event was relatively well attended (approximately 10% of residents who received a project leaflet in advance attended the event). The choice of venue was positively received and the venue was probably a significant factor behind the number of attendees. It is recommended that any future public engagement events utilise the same venue.
- The use of the foyer ensured that people visiting the store would need to pass the information materials. This contributed to the number of people who attended the event. However, for future engagement events, it may be more beneficial for the information materials to be positioned immediately inside the store as this has the potential to further increase the visibility of the scheme to store visitors.
- Future engagement events should make use of existing community forums and social media profiles to publicise events and the scheme detailed design.
- The project should consider issuing a formal press release to local media outlets to further publicise the scheme and future engagement events and the means available for stakeholders to access project information and provide comment.
- The project website should be updated regularly during the project to provide further information on the detailed design, environmental assessment and potential environmental and social enhancements. The website provides the key means to disseminate project information, raise stakeholder awareness and enable stakeholder comment prior to any further engagement event.