



REFLECTIVE EVALUATION

Assignment 2

PROGRAM: BA BUSINESS

MANAGEMENT

MODULE: COMMUNITY

ENGAGEMENT

MODULE CODE: LCBB4002

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Introduction

Community engagement is a strategic process. The purpose of the process is to work with people in the community and also address the issues that are having an impact on their lives and well-being (Holzer, Ellis and Merritt, 2014). The Ealing Council is a community organisation that works for the development of the community and engagement of the community members in the London Borough of Ealing. The Ealing Council offers an extensive number of services that benefit the local populace, including areas such as housing, recycling, waste management, recreational facilities, and library resources. These services are designed to enhance the standard of living for inhabitants and foster sustainable growth within the local area. The organisation is committed to providing strong and effective support that serves the requirements of the general population. The organisation has several principles and also have implemented several strategies. These will be reflected throughout the report. This report will also provide some recommendations which the council can use in future to have a seamless process in their community engagement.

The principles used by the council

There are several principles and standards which has been adopted by the Ealing Council. The council use these principles and standards based on different purposes and situations. Some of the standards and principles used in different contexts are discussed below,

The very first principle followed by the Ealing Council is **transparency**. Transparency is a key principle for every council. The Ealing Council also emphasise a lot on transparency. It refers to openness and clarity in every operation of the council including making critical decisions and also sharing important decisions with the stakeholders. While the importance of transparency cannot be overstated, there are several challenges which are associated with the implementation of the principle in real life (Holzer, Ellis and Merritt, 2014). It can be challenging for some councils to maintain the balance of transparency as they will have to protect confidential information regarding their organisations and also the people associated with it. Besides this, ensuring transparency within the organisation may be often difficult due to the significant number of resources it may require to ensure that all the stakeholders of the organisation can access the relevant information easily and it may not be feasible every time (Scanlan and Johnson, 2020). However, it is the responsibility of the Ealing Council to ensure that they maintain transparency within the organisation and also practice transparency while communicating the decisions and actions to the public. They should also ensure that all the relevant parties can access all the relevant information without facing any issues.

The Ealing Council also emphasises a lot on **accountability**. Accountability refers to the process of assessing the actions or conduct of an individual or entity with respect to an attached accountability. This pertains to the accountability of the council in defining and rationalising its actions and choices to its stakeholders. In order to guarantee that the council runs justly and successfully, accountability is essential (Benneworth, 2018). However, it might be difficult to make the council accountable, especially if the council has a lot of influence and authority. In certain instances, the council's accountability may be constrained by constitutional or regulatory structures that fail to provide adequate supervision of its actions. It is, however, imperative that Ealing Council assumes responsibility for its actions and implements corrective measures to rectify any unintentional mistakes or inaccuracies that may arise during every phase of its operations.

Another key principle followed by the Ealing Council is **inclusivity**. The concept refers to the necessity of involving all stakeholders, especially those who are most impacted by the council's actions, in the decision-making process. Councils can ensure equitable access to their support and service offerings by adopting inclusive behaviours that cater to all people living in the community. The implementation of this measure may serve as a means to mitigate

instances of discrimination and advance principles of social equity. Legal requirements place a duty on councils to advance equality and fight prejudice (Scanlan and Johnson, 2020). By placing inclusivity as a priority, councils can make sure that their actions are fulfilling their obligations and maintaining the civil rights of every individual within their community. Although inclusivity holds significant importance, its practical implementation can pose challenges. Stakeholders with particular interests may encounter restricted entry to decision-making procedures, especially those who belong to marginalised or vulnerable groups. Furthermore, guaranteeing inclusivity might require substantial investment in promotion and participation initiatives, which might not always be possible. The Ealing Council needs to do things to involve a variety of stakeholders and make certain that their inputs are addressed.

Another key principle for a council is **efficiency**. The concept corresponds to the necessity of ensuring that the council functions in a way that is efficient and effective, optimising the utilisation of the resources at its disposal. A council places a high value on efficiency since it maximises resource utilisation while minimising waste and raising prices (Joshi and Pargman, 2015). The implementation of efficient practises by councils may contribute to enhanced service provision to their members, and higher standards of living within their communities, alongside optimal utilisation of public funds. Furthermore, by becoming more efficient, councils are able to react more quickly to changing conditions and demands, such as abrupt increases in the need for a specific service or unforeseen reductions in funding (De Weger et al., 2018). Councils can ensure a consistent level of services even in difficult circumstances by being agile and adaptable. The emphasis on efficiency, meanwhile, could occasionally come at the cost of other crucial principles like inclusion or transparency. In addition, attaining efficiency might require substantial investments in equipment and systems, which can sometimes not be practical. Even though the Ealing Council focuses greatly on efficiency, it should focus more on this which could help the council to accomplish its stated objectives in time and in a cost-effective manner.

Fairness is another key principle which is followed by the Ealing Council. Following this principle can help this council to ensure that it is operating fairly and treating all its stakeholders impartially and equally, removing any bias from the process. The council should also take necessary steps to ensure that it can avoid conflicts of interest and also make sure that the decisions taken by the council are based on fairness.

Fairness is critical for the council while making decisions that can impact the people living in the community (Joshi and Pargman, 2015). However, it can be very challenging to achieve fairness particularly in instances where there is a conflict of interest among the stakeholders and also in situations where there is not enough information available. Political and economic

implications can also influence the council's actions where they may not be able to ensure fairness every time.

The strategies used by the council

The council uses several strategies which are helping them in their process of engaging communities. First of all, the council uses several methods of consultation such as surveys, social media platforms, online forums and also public meetings. The council always makes an attempt to establish both informal and formal engagement systems so that they can involve their stakeholders while making key decisions. The Ealing Council has also set up a Community Engagement Forum for providing a platform for the individuals of the communities to take part in decisions within their own communities (Council, 2017). The process of community engagement is also helped by the process of taking feedback from the members of the community. The Ealing Council recognises this fact and also tries to incorporate the feedback of the community members into the decision-making process. For taking feedback from the people of the community, they use online surveys, and social networks and also held regular public meetings. They also provide frequent updates on its official; website and also uses other channels to make sure that the people in the community are engaged and are taking part in the decision-making process. The council also works in collaboration with local schools, religious organisations and also other entities for engaging with the community on particular issues.

Another key strategy implemented by the Ealing Council is community empowerment. They empower the individuals in the community by providing them with the necessary resources and helping them to actively participate in various activities within the community. The Ealing Council has implemented various measures so far to enhance the ability of the community and the people such as providing financial assistance to organisations that serve the community, offering training and development opportunities to the people of the community and supporting several community-based projects.

Future direction

The organisation can take some steps which can help them to make the community engagement process even more effective. These are,

- **Using new technologies:** The council can make use of new technologies to reach a wider audience and engage them. This will make the process a lot easier for the organisation and also the community members.
- **Engaging diverse groups:** The council can also try to engage diverse groups within the communities. For this reason, they can have outreach programs and also work with other community-based organisations.

- **Evaluating the process and adapting:** The authorities of the council should also evaluate their current processes and then make necessary changes so that they can make the process more smooth and more seamless. This will also help them to reach a wide range of people.

Conclusion

The Ealing Council is a community-based organisation that endeavours to promote community development and foster community engagement among members residing in the London Borough of Ealing. The Ealing Council provides a wide range of services that are advantageous to the community, encompassing domains such as housing, recycling, waste disposal, leisure amenities, and library provisions. The aforementioned services have been developed with the aim of improving the quality of life of residents and promoting sustainable development in the surrounding region. The organisation is dedicated to providing robust and efficient assistance that caters to the needs of the broader community. The organisation has several principles and also have implemented several strategies. The council's community engagement principles are centred on a core set of principles. These are transparency, accountability, fairness, efficiency and inclusivity. The council has been using several strategies like surveys, public meetings, virtual platforms, and social media. The implementation of these strategies can facilitate the incorporation of community perspectives into decision-making processes. The Ealing Council expresses a positive outlook regarding the potential of these strategies to foster social cohesion among the various communities.

Some recommendations for the Ealing Council are,

- They should make sure that their programmes are inclusive and that they are able to engage everyone and not discriminate
- The Ealing Council should devise an extensive strategy to involve the community people. The strategy should align with the aims and objectives of the organisation.
- They also need to increase their reach by increasing the number of platforms and communication channels through which people can reach them.

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