

When deciding where to start on the ladder.

The simple exercise below can be done with staff, members and community groups prior to a decision being made, to help decide at what level to engage.

1. Break the decision down into key parts. For example: The authority needs to save £1.4 million, list every decision under this.
2. Explain to elected members, staff and community groups what each stage of the ladder means
3. Ask people to place the individual decision on where they think it should go on the ladder, along with an explanation.
4. Collect all the responses together and find the most common level of engagement.

E.g. **NB: please note: all these examples are hypothetical.**

X - Elected member **X – Staff member** **X – Community member** **X – Key equality group member**

	Informing	Consulting	Involving	Collaboration	Empowering	Comments
The cost of bins to increase by £10	X X X X X	X X X	X			Although the majority of feedback states that informing is adequate enough, elected members are keen to consult, this needs to be considered
Dog wardens to only work week days, in office hours	X		X	X X X X X	X	The strong results in collaboration are identified here, this is great, but it must be considered this is a bigger strain on resources, especially staff time.
Haslingden market to close		X X		X	X X X X X X	Here people need to be aware of the time this level can take to implement. It might be worth going back to people who suggested this level, to ask for some suggestions on making this work productively.
Council buildings to close between Christmas and New Year	X X X X X X X X X					If the majority of people have identified this, go ahead, using the engagement toolkit to assist.
The council will no longer print anything in colour	X X X X X X X X X	X X X X		X		Although the majority of people see 'inform here' all those who request more engagement are from key equalities groups, you need to find out why, there might be some reason linked to additional needs of some members of the community.
The training and development budget for members to be cut by 50%	X X X	X X X		X X X		There is a split between a number of options, it needs to be considered the cost of doing each section, e.g. staff time, additional resources, the impact of the decision and why people have chosen a certain section.