

## 18 Tough Questions When Planning to Develop Participation

Consider each question in relation to your service/team.

1. What are we aiming to achieve?
2. Where have we got to so far?
3. What will service users/carers/staff get out of it?
4. Are we prepared to resource it properly?
5. Why have we not done it before?
6. Are we prepared to involve service users/carers/staff from the start?
7. Are we being honest with the service users/carers/staff?
8. What are our expectations?
9. Are we prepared to give up some power?
10. Are we prepared to take some criticism?
11. Do we recognise this as a long-term commitment?
12. Are we prepared to build in changes long-term and not just have a one-off event?<sup>1</sup>
13. Are people across my organisation convinced of the need to change?
14. How do senior managers actively demonstrate support and commitment for participation?
15. How integral is participation to my service/team culture?
16. Which cultural type best describes how participation currently fits in my service/team - is it communication-focused? consultation-focused? negotiation-focused? or participation-focused?
17. Which culture type would I like my service/team to become?
18. How clear and committed are our *partners* to participation?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Questions 1-12 reproduced from National Youth Agency (2004) Involving children and young people – an introduction. Leicester

<sup>2</sup> Questions 13-18 adapted from Kirby *et al.* (2003) Building a culture of participation. London: DFES