

Creating a Community Members Map

A community members map is a graphic representation of all the Elected Members that you need to interact with to achieve the best outcomes for the people you serve.

Draw a box which represents you in the middle of a large sheet of paper.

Label this box with your name.

Around this box:

1. Create post-its to represent each of the members that you need to work with to achieve your goals (example ward councillors, political party, committee members)
2. Build the map by placing these post-its around your 'home' box at appropriate distances; the people that can influence your success being the closest.
3. You may wish to indicate the relative importance of each individual relationship by circling them, varying the size of the circle to indicate importance.
4. Add any people or agencies that are 'on the horizon' or who may need to be included in the future – these may be on the periphery of your map at present. This enables you to develop plans to create and develop relationships before they become crucial, or worse, when the members have already developed conflicting aims or ways of working.
5. Move the notes around until you are satisfied with the relative positions of the teams.

Evaluate and Prioritise Team Community Relationships

Once you've identified your community:

On a rating scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates a very poor relationship and 7 indicates an excellent relationship.

Identify which relationships are working well.

1. With which members do I have the best relationships?
2. Why do you have such good relationships with these members?
3. What do you need to do to maintain our relationships with these members?

Identify which relationships need to be developed in the future in order to ensure your success.

1. With which members do you or your party need to improve relationships?
2. How do the political composition and legacy relationships affect your working relationships with other elected members? What other factors are at play?
3. What will be the benefits of developing these relationships? To us? To them?

4. Who will be involved in developing these relationships?
5. What is your approach to communicating with other elected members? Are there spaces for both dialogue and debate with other elected members on council business?
6. What actions do you need to take to develop these relationships?

Review and update your map regularly as part of your Development Plan. Maintaining an up-to-date map of your community will enable you to pro-actively manage relationships to ensure sustainable success.

You may wish to share your map with other members of your party. Ask them to develop community maps from their perspectives and then bring them together as a consolidated team map.

The more others understand the territory as you see it, the more likely they are to collaborate with you to achieve mutually important goals and to highlight opportunities for innovation.

As part of a wider discussion with other members, you may want to identify which members already have good relationships with relevant members that you need to cultivate a relationship with. And also identify how you will ensure that there is a succession plan in place to ensure the continuity of relationship management over time.