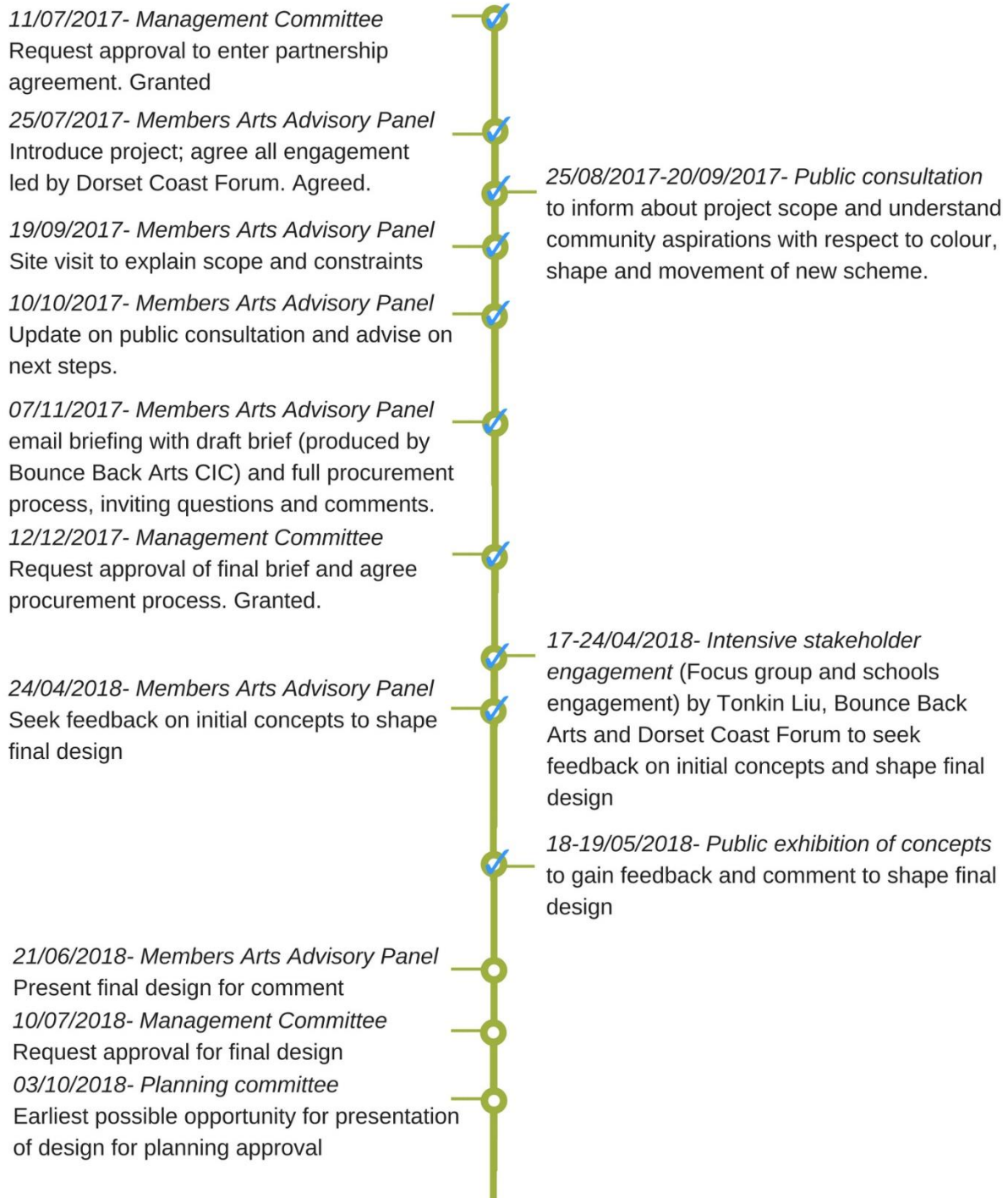


Appendix A: Public Consultation and Engagement

Public and member engagement for this project has been carried out by Dorset Coast Forum according to this plan:

Member engagement

Public engagement



A recap of the actual engagement is summarised below:

- 25th September - 6th October 2017 - engagement to discover the community's aspirations for a new lighting scheme. Four consultation events (attendance est. 300, from which 263 responses received, with a further 26 written responses received subsequently) and an online survey available for 2 weeks (1,700 engaged, 576 responses). Significant engagement through various social media channels, reaching 1,100 people, and eliciting 250 comments relating to the project, which fed in to the development of the design brief.
- 23rd April 2018 - Focus group meeting to review the Designer's concept and feedback on elements which could be improved. The focus group comprised 25 representatives of various key community stakeholders including the BID, Guest House and Hoteliers Association, Greenhill Residents Association, Waterside Community Forum, Weymouth Access Group, WeyForward, WEYProgress, key members of 'WeyPort CCOS' and 'Love Weymouth' Facebook groups.
- 23rd, 24th April, 9th May - schools' engagement to gain feedback on concept and help develop design programmes (75 engaged).
- 18th and 19th May 2018 - engagement to present proposed concept and receive feedback from the community on the outline concept, and to steer the design of the initial programming options for the scheme. Two-day public exhibition (attendance est. 600, from which 350 responses received) & online survey available for 1 week (800 engaged, 175 responses). There was also extensive engagement work through social media reaching 2,000 people (300 comments from active participants).
- 21st June 2018 - a targeted engagement event to ensure final programming options meet social inclusion & equality best practice and ensure as broad appeal as possible for the night time atmosphere created by the scheme (25 attendees).

Feedback from early rounds of engagement have been summarised at www.dorsetcoasthaveyoursay.co.uk/weymouth-promenade-lighting and were used to shape the project at the appropriate times.

Feedback from the most recent round of engagement (to include the Members Arts Advisory Panel, focus group, schools workshops and public exhibition) follows here:

Summary of feedback received April- June 2018

At each engagement opportunity, the team introduced the concept video, explaining that it showed a demonstration of the technical capacity of the proposed scheme. It was carefully described as an opportunity to help shape the design, to comment on the kinds of shape, colour and movement people liked (or not), and was not a 'menu of options'. Detailed conversations were held about how the scheme would work- what infrastructure would be used, where the display would be seen from, technical aspects of the fittings (so far as can be determined at this stage prior to procurement), robustness, life expectancy and maintenance considerations. People were also keen to understand the future options for the scheme, and what the opportunities might be for influencing future programmes (this is yet to be determined).

The team received a wealth of comments from the community along the following themes:

1. 'Bring back the fairy lights' (no discussion of the proposed scheme, simply a stated campaign message).
2. 'I like it' (positive with no explanation or further detail)
3. 'I don't like it' (negative with no explanation or further detail)
4. Positively constructive with specific attributes useful for developing the design further
5. Negatively constructive with considered and specific reasoning, sometimes with alternative suggestions within the scope of the design.

These comments were addressed as follows:

1. This consultation focussed on discussions of the proposed scheme, and did not ask about 'fairy' or catenary lighting. It is clear from some of the conversations and comments received that there remains amongst a section of the community, strong feeling and nostalgia around the previous scheme of catenary string lighting or 'fairy lights', and this has been noted as a risk for this project*. However, because the consultation did not ask about it directly, it would not be fair to those who chose not to comment about 'fairy lights' to infer a broader consensus.

Where possible at the events and online, people making this kind of comment were engaged with directly, and many had constructive conversations with the engagement team. Often, it was noted that there remains a lack of understanding of the physical environment, technical constraints and funding restrictions surrounding the project. Once people were more informed, they felt better able to participate in the discussion; some even changed their views on the proposed lighting, leaving comments like this one, received at the exhibition event: *"Loved the fairy lights but these look interesting! Keeping an open mind!"*. It should be noted however that there remains a section of the community who would not welcome any new scheme except for catenary lighting.

** Re-instatement of this type of scheme has been thoroughly investigated by the project team. It has been shown to be impossible with the existing infrastructure and grant funding budget available and therefore not within the scope of this scheme.*

- 2&3. Positive/negative comments with no additional information were noted, but were not of further use to feed back in development of the design. Over all the platforms combined there was a balance of negative and positive comments about the proposed scheme.
- 4&5. All comments with constructive and/or detailed elements were analysed in detail to aid development of the design. These related to:
 - **Colour & brightness.** People felt that the intended 'ambient' displays between the 'active' scenes should be well-lit rather than dark. There was no strong consensus about colour within the 'active' scenes, with a range of opinions given.
 - **Pattern and movement.** The slower, calmer scenes were enjoyed most, although there was significant support for more active displays at particular times, or for special occasions such as carnival or Christmas. Concerns were expressed in regard to the very busy patterns shown, and their potential health effects on vulnerable people; this has been addressed by the project team to ensure that all options being considered conform to the Equality Act 2010, and follow appropriate best practice for inclusive lighting displays.
 - **Relationship with other seafront assets.** Residents enjoy the traditional aspects of Weymouth's Seafront and are keen for this project to reflect that. However, there was no clear consensus on how best the community wanted to achieve this, with some people relishing the opportunity for an 'exciting new design' to complement the old, and others requesting a 'more traditional approach'. Of particular concern was how the fittings would attach to, and lighting display fit in, with the Victorian columns at Greenhill; this has been carefully addressed by the project team.
 - **Relationship with other seafront lighting.** Some participants welcomed this scheme as an opportunity to increase the level of pedestrian lighting on the esplanade, although the engagement team made clear throughout that this is an arts scheme rather than one which was attempting to provide lighting for public safety, and that the level of light would change as the programming changed. There were also concerns that, when laid against the backdrop of existing streetlighting, the light from the LED strips within this proposal could be lost if poor quality fittings are used to save costs; the team has worked to address this.
 - **Programming and flexibility.** The flexibility of the scheme's programming options was generally well received, with both enthusiastic and sceptical participants welcoming the idea that, if designs were not well received, they could be revised or removed after a suitable period of time.

Participants also asked the team if the community would have ongoing opportunities to contribute to lighting designs displayed; this has yet to be determined but would be welcomed.

- **Layout and infrastructure.** This consultation focussed on the programming aspects of the display, though more detailed conversations were had in relation to how the scheme would work, how it would be mounted, signal distributed etc. Most concerns related to robustness of the fittings, and the impact of weather elements on them in what is a harsh environment. The knock-on impact of this on maintenance costs was also a concern. Both concerns will be addressed by the project team through the procurement process for the fittings. There was support for the lack of additional clutter through using existing street furniture, and for the innovative use of vertical structures to connect and highlight the sweep of the iconic Weymouth Bay.
- **Running time.** Participants were asked to indicate what time of night they'd like the display to finish. Responses showed a strong preference for switch-off between midnight and 1am, with some people suggesting this could be varied according to the season.

Based on the feedback received across all engagement platforms on the proposed design for the Weymouth Seafront Lighting Scheme; Dorset Coast Forum's recommendations to the design team are:

- Slow gentle movement of lights and low-key colours to maintain the traditional feel of a Georgian seaside town.
- To use the flexibility of the scheme to celebrate events taking place in Weymouth and to have different scenes at the weekend to that of week days.
- Ensure the design meets social inclusion and equality best practice.
- Carefully consider the impact of the scheme on the tradition 'feel' of the Greenhill area and to ensure the Victorian light columns maintain their structural integrity.
- Lighting scheme to be switched on at dusk and off at 1am each night of the year.
- Project team to establish a process for on-going conversations with the community to influence future programming.