

Report on Crowd Wise Ingenious event, Sheffield, 6th December 2011

Question: Focussing on Sheffield's future landscape for a sustainable transport system, how it may look like in 25-30 years, how to move loads of people, goods, services and supplies in to, out of and around in a low carbon environment without congestion or breaking the bank.

How the event went

The two votes in the table below took place at the start and end of the event. People arriving early were invited to take part in the first vote to become familiar with the voting process and options. The options are described a little more fully in the ballot paper (Appendix 2). Ten people voted in the first ballot. The six engineers who gave presentations in their area of expertise and ensured their ideas related to one or more of the options were:

- Dr Peter Bull, Traffic Information & Control Manager, Sheffield City Council focused on managing information
- Dr Michael Hines, Chemical Engineer, ACAL Energy Ltd talked about the potential of fuel cells to reduce the impact of pollution
- Chris Jones, Graduate Engineer, Network Rail explained how they use information systems to provide a more efficient, effective and safer rail service
- Professor Lenny Koh, University of Sheffield about Supply Chain Management;
- Tim Lynn, Transport & Traffic Engineering Consultant, AMEY Ltd about how to release Sheffield's City Centre road space for cycling and walking;
- Dr Andy Young, Principal Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University

We started the event with four options A, B, C and D (see Table below). Following short presentations, participants in Groups B and C merged to develop their plans on deciding they had similar ideas. After further discussions working with this revised setup, the three options went to a Second Vote in which the whole audience of 24 people took part. The outcome for both ballots is:

First vote			Second vote		
Option	Title	Score (%)	Option	Title	Score (%)
A	Burning issue	75.0	A	Burning issue	54.2
B	Don't Waste It!	62.5	B + C	Don't Waste It + Make the best of what we've got	72.2
C	Make the best of what we've got	35.0			
D	Two feet and a Heartbeat	60.0	D	Two feet and a heartbeat	54.2

Merged Groups B + C about efficiency, was slightly preferred to the two remaining and slightly more radical options.

People liked this event a lot. 89% of participants found the event pretty enjoyable or very enjoyable. 79% found it pretty or very constructive.

Numbers regarding the event's effect concerned with measuring interest levels in engineering were still good if slightly less stellar and are:

- 22% - lot more interested in engineering issues as a result of the event;
- 67% - bit more interested in engineering issues as a result of the event;
- 43% - interest in engineering issues had risen quite a bit or a great deal
- 37% - confidence in talking about engineering issues had risen quite a bit or a great deal.

Reflection and learning

Wendy Stern of Action for Involvement adds, "Crowd Wise is a highly interactive process. It's exciting to feel the buzz of participants tackling crunchy issues put to them in a harmonious way. Seeing our experts and participants collaborating so closely is just what we want. Volunteers, participants and staff who have been to previous events said Crowd Wise is a step up and how much they enjoyed seeing everyone working together.

Although I know sterling CSR work is going on, I've come to conclude our industry leaders have to invest time upfront to recruit more UK talent and our youngsters in to these disciplines by giving up a little fee earning time now; investing in and using CSR budgets innovatively; getting out, mixing with people at grassroots levels will pay dividends in the medium to long term.

In particular, if engineers want more engineers they need a major image make-over across industry disciplines; most lay people just glaze over as I enthuse about this project –a crying shame as it's our most interesting and exciting project.

Many women do not see they have a place in engineering evidenced in my fruitless task of finding female engineering experts. Agency Careers, a Sheffield recruitment agency very kindly made a non-chargeable referral to a woman I hope will join our engineering experts because to date we have no women for the last two events of the series: housing and manufacturing.

I have removed references to "engineer" from event publicity out of concern it led to low turnout at our first two events. Having delivered several highly successful events on the transport agenda, we'd expected a full house yet only *two* women booked or turned up at our transport event – distinctly unsettling with transport such a highly emotive topic, high on the local political agenda."

And all the more striking given strong participant-led demand for our follow-up meeting at 3pm on Thursday 26th January 2012 with the unprecedented involvement of experts keen to join in to help us develop a viable strategic plan to take this agenda forward.

Reflecting on the process, which went more smoothly than the first Sheffield event, it would have been helpful to:

1. Spend more time at the event outset to explain about:
 - a. the RAE Ingenious project,
 - b. nef's role and relationship with Action for Involvement,
 - c. our respective organisations' aims, objectives and remit.
 - d. Crowd Wise
2. Address the challenge of linking engineers' contributions to the topic and options which remains an issue that we are working on for future sessions by giving experts more time between their Briefing and the Event.

Appendix 1**Timetable**

<i>When?</i>	<i>What happens?</i>
1.45	Introductions Results of first vote presented
1.55	Engineers presentations
2.35	Groups develop options
3.05	First presentations
3.15	Groups develop options
3.35	Presentation of options
3.55	Voting
4.00	Break
4.15	Results presented and discussed
4.30	Close

Ballot Paper 1

Date:

Engineering Transport Sustainability

What's the best way to Engineer Transport Sustainably for Sheffield, our region and beyond in a carbon, pollution and hassle free environment without causing congestion or breaking the bank??

In the table at the bottom of the page, rank the options in order of preference (1st, 2nd, 3rd etc.). Rank as many as you like. The more you rank, however, the greater the difference between the one you like best and the one you like least, so the more you will affect the overall result. Also, finding out which options are least liked is as important as finding out which are most popular.

If you rank four options, your first preference gets four points, your second preference gets three points and so on. If you rank three, your first preference gets three points and your second preference gets two point. And so on.

The options

A	Burning Issue We need to find alternatives to oil and gas because they're dirty, wasteful, running out and costing us the earth. Alternatives include fuel cells, electrification, renewables and nuclear.
B	Don't waste it! All transport requires energy. Every time we use energy, we waste lots of it with catastrophic implications for us and our earth so we must use it as efficiently and effectively as we can.
C	Make the best of what we've got The UK transport infra-structure is our most expensive asset, but its capacity cannot meet peak demand; some parts are not fit for purpose so we must use and adapt it using less space and money to meet our needs and our planet's.
D	Two feet and a heartbeat We can use our muscles to improve our health and well-being instead of so many short motorised journeys. With the will and means, we can enjoy many more <i>feel good</i> moments, save money and help our earth by ensuring cars are no longer people's first choice.
E	

Your preferences

1 st - First preference	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	