



# Raising the profile of the SLT profession to the public

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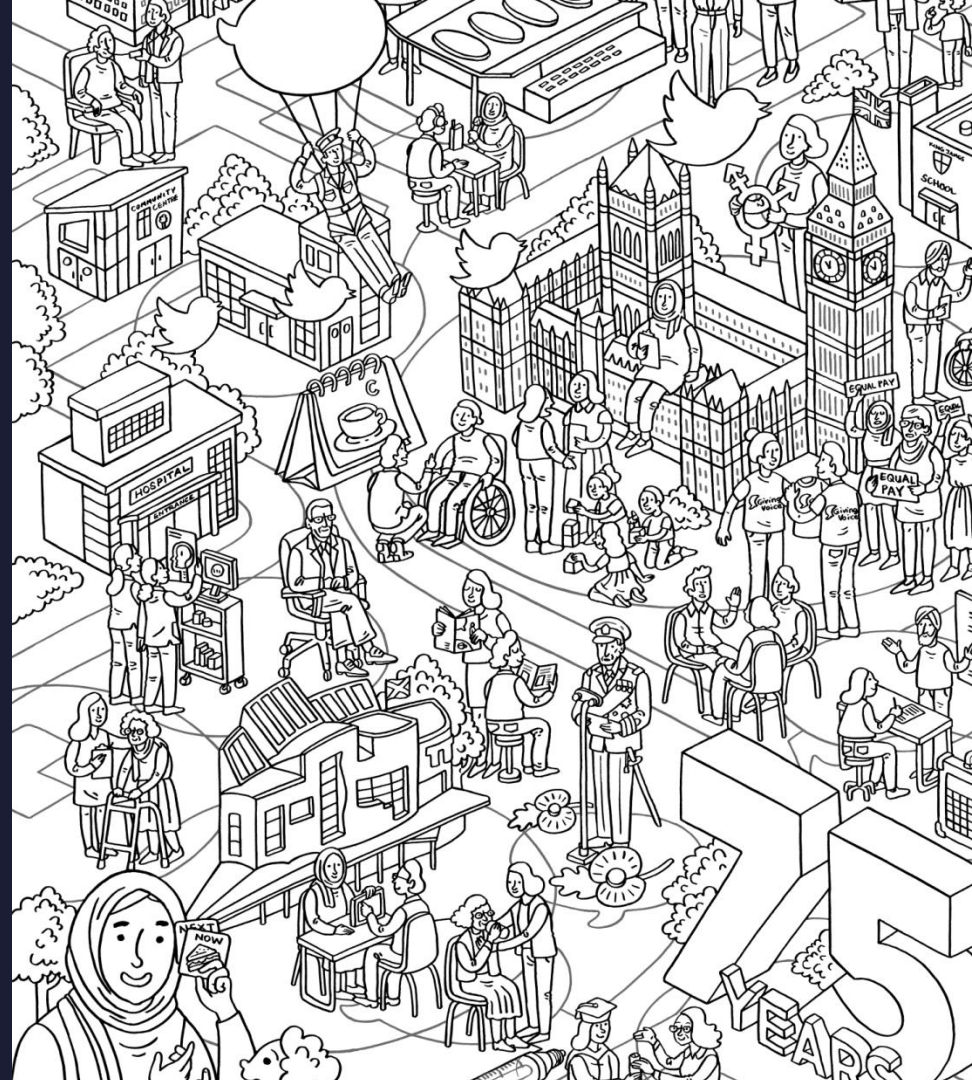
# Why are you raising public awareness?

- Because it's a good thing – for public health, for the community, for your team, for your service
- To improve service users' lives
- To educate the local community about using your service
- To persuade decision-makers to fund, or not to cut
- To win allies for the future (MPs, local media)

Raising awareness should not be haphazard, it should be **part of an influencing plan.**



# How we influence: Stakeholders and tactics



# Key stakeholders and targets

## Who do you think our key stakeholders are?

### Politicians

- Sympathetic to local issues and can make representations to departments or ministers on behalf of constituents
- Distinguish between minister, backbencher and constituency roles

### Commissioners / decision-makers / budget-holders

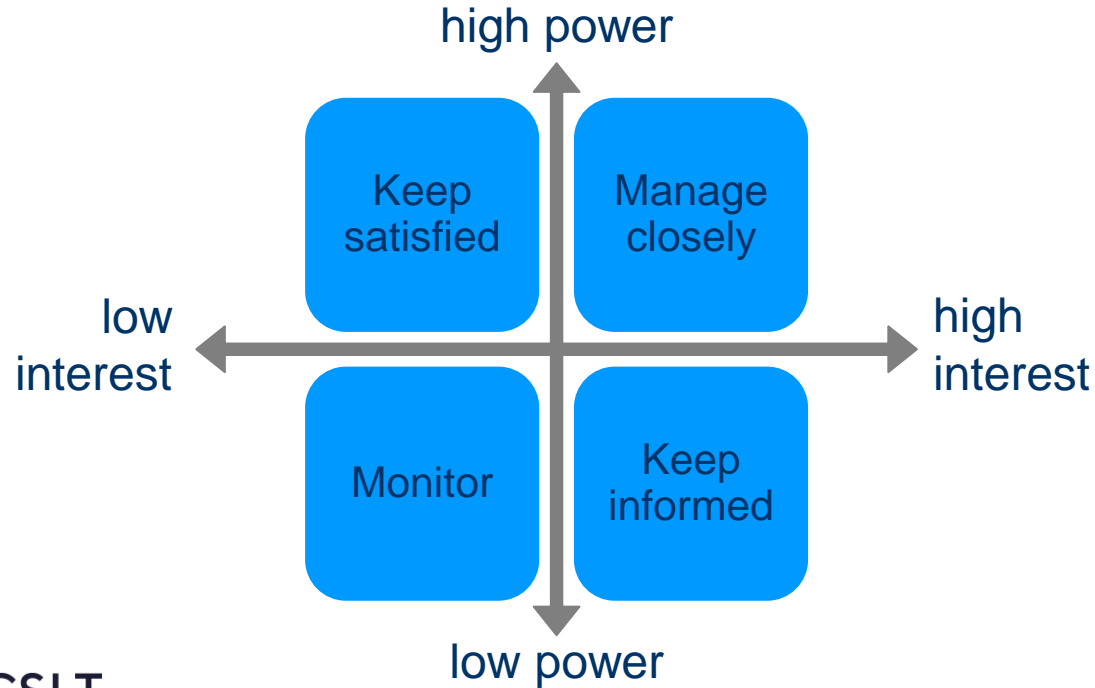
- Plan and pay for SLT services
- Ensure clear and positive knowledge of the work of SLTs

### Councillors and local authorities

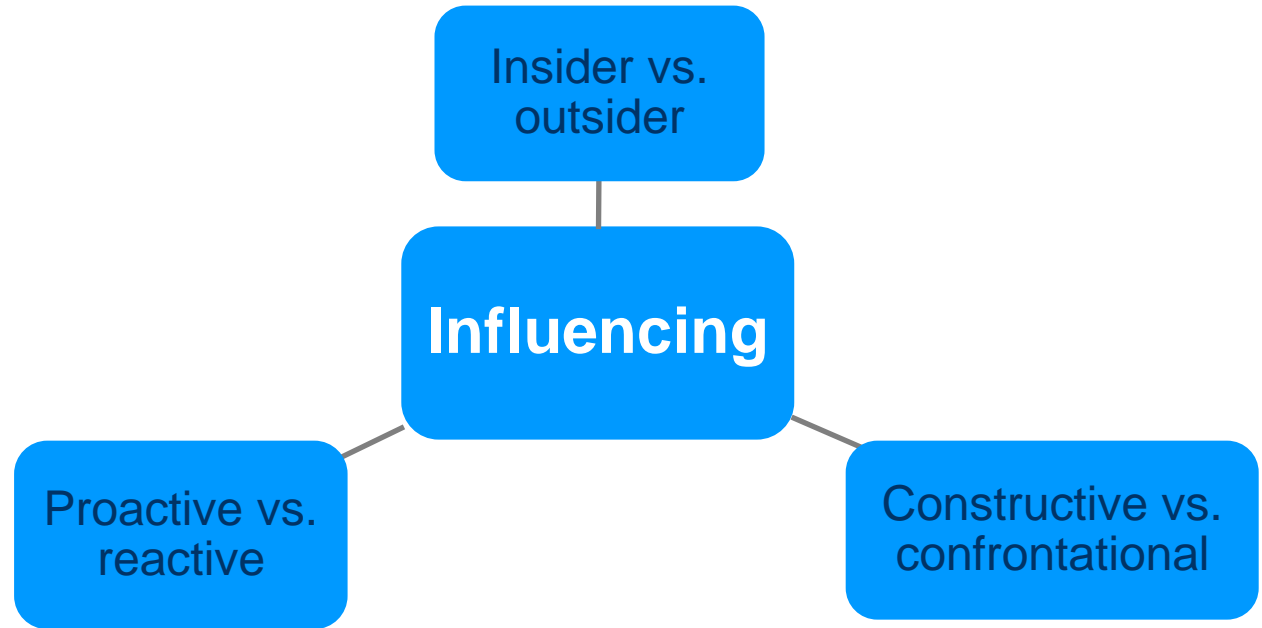
- Make key decisions about local services
- Leaders of each political group are vital to gaining cross-party support

Other stakeholders: service users and service user organizations, other professions, media and the public

# Stakeholder analysis



# Style and tactics



# Evidence isn't everything

Scientists think 'but the evidence says...'

However, **for decision makers:**

- What am I **legally required** to do?
- What **mandates** have I been given?
- Can I **afford** it?
- What will my **stakeholders** think?



# Avenues for influencing

**Social media:** campaigns, videos, challenges

**Events:** demonstrations, presentations, webinars

**Media:** local press stories, trade press, adverts

Consider **who** you are trying to influence and **what about**. A bake sale and a riot both raise public awareness, but in very different ways – what is the best **avenue** for your purpose?



# How do you do it?

Consider the power of **numbers** and **stories**, human interest and images

The media want **drama, conflict** or **novelty**

**Ethics** and **permissions**

Getting the **message** right



# Influencing: A current RCSLT example



# Gathering evidence: Building back better survey

Nov 2020 – Feb 2021: over **500 responses** from children and adults across the UK

**Accessible** formats: EasyRead, aphasia-friendly, Talking Mats, Welsh language

Gathered service users' **experiences of speech and language therapy access** during the first national lockdown

# Setting the stage: Immediate influencing

Publication of the **Building back better report**

Sector **letter to the Prime Minister** urging the Government to implement the report's policy calls – signed by a **coalition of over 80 organizations**

**Letter to parliamentarians** sharing the results of the survey and asking them to support the report's policy calls

**Presentation on the survey findings** by Dr. Judy Clegg at the APPG on Speech and Language Difficulties

# Beyond RCSLT: Maintaining a sector coalition

Partner organizations **involved** in survey design, **supported** survey distribution and promotion

**Sector letter** showed broad support for policy calls

Continued sector support via **online promotion** and **citations** in partner publications – Oracy APPG report, Neuro Rehab Times, Cochlear Implanted Children's Support Group magazine, Moving Forward Stronger (Alzheimer's UK)

# Supporting members: Tools for local influencing

Breakdowns by **condition** (in progress), by **nation** (complete), and by **region** in England (in progress)

Videos and social media graphics highlighting **key figures**

Online tools for SLTs and non-SLTs to **email their local MPs** asking them to support better access to speech and language therapy and to implement the report's policy calls

Toolkit with **guidance on engaging with your local MP** and **printable speech bubbles** to pledge support

# #BuildBackBetterSLT: Reaching wider audiences



From SLTs...to students...to community members...to pets!



# Keeping the momentum up: #FundSLT petition

**#FundSLT petition** on Parliament website calling on the Government to fund improved support for people who have communication and/or swallowing needs

10,000 signatures **achieved**, Government have issued a response

Continued **online campaign** to reach 100,000 signatures, which would secure a **debate in Parliament**



# Bringing it home: Your local influencing skills



# What does local influencing mean to you?

Who are the **people** / **structures locally** that it is important for you to influence?

What role might **public awareness raising** play in this?

What **vehicles** and **tactics** might work best?

# Honing a message: the elevator pitch

An elevator pitch has three main parts:

- **Introduction:** who you are and what your job is
- **What you do:** a succinct summary of your work/service
- **Take home message:** informing your stakeholder of the difference you make to service users and your organization

# Taking action: the elevator pitch

Here are some tips for preparing your elevator pitch:

- Write in **your own words**
- Be **yourself**
- Keep it **natural**
- Avoid jargon – use **everyday language** understandable to a layperson
- Try to keep it as near to **200 words** as possible

# Taking action: the elevator pitch

If you had **thirty seconds** to sell a stakeholder on supporting speech and language therapy services...

## What would you say?



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## Director of Policy and Public Affairs



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