

Adult Social Care: Consultation Strategy Principles

Consultation should be underpinned by a set of principles that guide officers in the planning and undertaking of activities:

➤ Clarity

- We will be clear about the purpose, scope and sphere of influence of each consultation exercise we undertake.
- We will identify the diversity of knowledge requirements of the consultation process.
- The respective roles and responsibilities of the participants (input) and the Department (as decision makers) will be made clear at the outset.
- All restrictions and limitations on the decision will be clearly stated
- We will use plain language and avoid jargon
- We will provide clear information prior to the consultation event
- The principles will be attached to any consultation document that is used to inform people/groups of events so that they are clear about the commitment made by the Department to this process.

➤ Time

- Engagement should be undertaken as early as possible in the policy making process for the outcomes to have a genuine influence on decisions, policy and service development.
- Sufficient time will be given to allow participants to respond.

➤ Inclusive

- The methods we use will take account of the different communities and their needs; they will be appropriate for the intended audience.
- Prepare and undertake consultation exercises in a manner that is inclusive of people from `not yet reached` groups.¹

➤ Accessible

- Information will be available in a variety of formats and languages
- Every effort will be made to bring the consultation to the attention of stakeholders
- E-consultation will seek to enhance the process of consultation and not disenfranchise the people of Leeds or other Stakeholders.
- The place and timing of events will meet the needs of the Stakeholder groups.

¹ `Not yet reached` refers to those individuals or groups that we have difficulty providing a service to or (and) we have difficulty in consulting with. One can think of traditional groups such as BME, but we must also include children, people with a disability and older people. We would seek to target these groups/individuals.

➤ Transparent

- Consultation will take place before a decision has been taken so as to inform the decision making process.
- The links between the consultation activity and the decision making process will be made explicit.
- We will give feedback on the outcome of the process including why (should we need to) the outcomes did not follow suggestions.

➤ Needed

- Consultation will only be conducted where it is clear why the information is needed and how it will be used.
- We will avoid replication and duplication of consultation has already been undertaken and answers that exist will be taken into account before any further consultation is underway.