

Policy & Resources Select Committee, 18th April 2013

Consultation Guidelines

James Strachan

Assistant Director, Economy, Transport and
Environment

Hampshire County Council



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Consultations are important



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Consultations must be genuine



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The Council's new approach

We will consult...

1. on key issues and proposals;
2. in good time;
3. allowing everyone to take part;
4. using clear, simple information;
5. and we will tell respondents how their views influenced our decisions.

1. We will consult on key issues and proposals

- When the public will be interested
- When they can contribute to the solutions
- When there are options

2. We will consult in good time

- Devise a clear timetable for the overall decision process
- Consult early enough in the decision process
- Give sufficient notice
- Allow enough time to prepare responses and avoid / allow for holiday periods

3. We will consult so as to allow everyone to take part

- Prepare a Communications Plan
- Use appropriate channels for passing information and receiving feedback (online and 'traditional')
- Target towards key stakeholders
- Think about 'equality issues' – avoid discrimination, promote opportunities

4. We will consult using clear, simple information

- Communicate in 'Plain English' and other appropriate languages
- Avoid or define jargon
- Be clear what we will (and won't) do with responses

5. We will tell people how their views influenced our decisions

- List all responses (subject to DPA)
- Prepare an analysis of the responses for the decision-makers
- Include a brief summary of outcomes in decision reports and also publish on the 'Have your say' pages

Open for Business Requirement

“Services are adapted and designed in line with feedback from service users and local residents, using well-established procedures.”

'Have Your Say'

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Consultation Case Study

District / Borough Transport Statements

James Gagg
Transport Team Leader
Hampshire County Council

Context

- Brings together transport and land-use policies in all 11 Districts in context of LTP
- Builds on Town Access Plan work (included extensive community engagement)
- Consistent approach to planning for transport infrastructure – input to Hampshire Strategic Infrastructure Statement
- Better positions HCC for new funding- e.g. CIL, LEP Local Pinch Point etc

Contents

All Transport Statements include:

1. A text section – sets out the transport, policy and funding context and overall key transport objectives for area
2. A transport improvement list – gives detail of proposed transport infrastructure to support key objectives

Consultation Process - 1

- March 2012 Engagement with district/ borough officers
- April 2012 Highway and Transport (H&T) workshops (County Members & district representation)

Issues raised at workshop discussed on 1:1 basis
- June-July 2012 Six-week, web-based public consultation, including questionnaire for feedback (notification sent directly to districts and parishes)

Consultation Process - 2

- Feedback from approx. 300 respondents, including businesses, parish councils & the public
- General support for the draft Transport Statements- majority agreed with key objectives
- Large number of specific comments – summarised and analysed, ***with changes made***
- All statements adopted by Executive Member in September 2012

Management

- Managed as 'living documents,' with opportunity for Members and stakeholders to feedback on transport improvements on an on-going basis
- Annual review of changes at the H&T workshops with Members each autumn, followed by sign off by Director of ETE

New Consultation Guidelines and TS -

1. On key issues and proposals...

- Related to Local Transport Plan and the Hampshire Strategic Infrastructure Statement
- Consultation plans & timescales agreed by H&T Service Stream, March 2012

2. In good time...

- Consultation followed Member engagement at Highways meetings
- Undertaken over six weeks, out of main holiday periods
- Sufficient time allowed for analysis and feedback to Executive Member in Sep 2012
- *Could have been over longer time period?*

3. Allowing everyone to take part...

- Web-based consultation – including via HCC web access points e.g. at libraries
- Work feeding into TS (e.g. TAPs) often included extensive face-to-face engagement with all
- *Could have included focus groups representing those with particular needs?*

4. Using clear, simple information...

- Draft consultation approved via internal process
- Website included information on process and contact details
- *Could have included glossary of terms?*

5. Tell people how their views influenced our decisions...

- Summary of consultation & analysis in Executive Member report, Sep 2012
- Web-site updated with full summary of feedback and how views considered
- *Could have provided feedback on a more individual basis to key stakeholders?*

Conclusion

- Overall, considered sound consultation exercise
- Open, transparent process with evidence of listening and amending documents
- Clear reporting process
- Review against new consultation guidelines indicates generally good – with some opportunity for improvement