

Writing a Consultation Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1. A consultation statement must be prepared to accompany the draft plan proposal when formally submitting the document to West Berkshire Council, and such a requirement is set out in the neighbourhood planning regulations 2015 (2).
- 1.2. This advice note explains what a consultation statement is and the information you will need to include when drafting the document.

2. What is a Consultation Statement?

- 2.1. A consultation statement explains how the community has been consulted and their views taken into account during the development of the draft Neighbourhood plan. The statement must set out how the draft plan meets the legal requirements defined in regulation 14 (Pre-submission consultation) and 15 (Plan proposal formal submission) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2.2. The statement must explain how the parish or town council carried out the pre-submission consultation under regulation 14 and summarise any consultation that has been carried out during the development of the plan, a summary of the results of that consultation, the issues or concerns that were raised and how the community's views have been taken into consideration when forming the plan.

3. What do you need to include in your consultation statement?

- 3.1. The consultation statement will need to set out how you have met the following legal requirements as set out in regulation 15(2):
 - (a) *Details of the people and organisations that were consulted:*
- 3.2. You will need to provide details of the people and organisations that you have consulted during the development of the plan. You might want to produce a table (see appendix 1) which can be attached as an appendix listing the community groups and statutory organisations that you have consulted. West Berkshire Council will need this information when publicising the draft neighbourhood plan and associated documents during the six week statutory consultation. Please refer to the Neighbourhood Planning Advice Note 15 for a list of statutory consultees.
 - (b) *Explain how they were consulted:*
- 3.3. You need to explain how you have consulted the local community during the development of the neighbourhood plan. This will include people who live and work in the area, businesses, community organisations, local developers, land owners and other organisations. You will need to include a blank copy of questionnaires, posters or leaflets distributed during any consultation that has been undertaken during the development of the plan and include a summary of the results. You might want to include some photos of the consultation events.
- 3.4. You need to provide details of each consultation that was carried out, when it was held, the type of consultation eg. questionnaire, event, who you consulted and why they were consulted.

(c) Summarise the main issues and concerns raised.

- 3.5. The main issues and concerns raised during the consultation stages of the draft plan will need to be summarised. This can be set out in the statement using a table (see appendix 1) format combining how the issues and concerns raised have been considered and what action was taken.

(d) Describe how you have considered these points in your draft plan

- 3.6. You will need to set out how the issues and concerns raised during the consultation process have been considered when developing the draft plan proposal. You could highlight where the issues and concerns have been addressed in the plan by producing a table (see appendix 1) in the main document or as an appendix. You can then state what action has been taken to address the issue or concern that has been raised.

4. Drafting the Consultation Statement

- 4.1. To help you when drafting the consultation statement for your neighbourhood plan, set out below is a list of suggested headings and appendices that you may want to use.

(a) Consultation Statement

- Contents
- Introduction
- Aims of the consultation
- Background information about the consultation of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Main issues or concerns raised during the consultation
- How the issues and concerns have been considered

(b) Appendices

- A copy of the terms of reference for the steering group
- A copy of questionnaires sent out during the consultation process
- A copy of posters, news articles, adverts, letters or leaflets distributed during the consultation process.
- Photos of consultation events
- Issues report
- Information about the working groups (what they covered, when they met)
- A table setting out members of the steering group and working groups
- A copy of the pre-submission consultation response report from West Berkshire Council Officers
- Community and Engagement Strategy
- Communication flowchart (how the neighbourhood plan steering group will communicate with working groups and parish or town council)
- List of statutory organisations consulted
- List of community organisations consulted
- A summary of the consultation responses
- Copies of steering group agendas and minutes
- Copies of working group or themed group minutes

- Copies of town or parish council meeting minutes where neighbourhood plan decisions have been made

Appendix 1: Recording consultation information

Table 1. Example template to record community groups and statutory organisations consulted during the pre-submission consultation

| Consultation body | Contact name | E-mail | Date response received | Comments |
|-------------------|----------------------|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| Natural England | Consultation Service | consultations@naturalengland.org.uk | 12 March 2020 | No comments received |
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Table 2. Example template to record comments received from local residents during the Pre-submission consultation. Please note: please do not record personal details when recording the comments from local residents e.g. name, address etc.

| Comments received | Comment issue | Action taken | | |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| | | No action | Amendment | Refer to steering group |
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