

# Public Engagement Charter

*We will adopt a 'You Said, We Listened' approach to public engagement*

## Our Community Pledge

At East Lindsey District Council we are committed to delivering high quality services which meet or exceed the expectations of the people we serve. To ensure this happens, we will seek the views of residents, businesses, service users public sector partners and organisations. We will find out what people want from us, reflect on how we can do things better and support communities who want to help themselves.

## Why?

We want members of the public to know that when they engage with us, their needs and views will be considered.

**Our Corporate Strategy commits us to:**

*Develop a community engagement approach that enables residents, businesses and visitors to influence and shape the way services are delivered*

This is in addition to our statutory consultation duties and obligations to groups who want to use community rights.

To make this happen we will speak to people early enough for their comments to influence our plans. We will not undertake public engagement for the sake of it and will not ask for views when there are already clear reasons for taking a particular course of action.

## How?

We support the following types of public engagement activity:

- Consulting on changes to policies or the way services are provided - you are able to have your say and express views on proposed changes to policies and services.

- Seeking feedback on our services - you are encouraged to have your say on the services you have used.
- Localism initiative - you can seek advice from us on preparing a Neighbourhood Plan or using other community rights promoted by the Government.

We will use a range of methods to engage with the public including:

- Online and paper consultations
- Feedback forms
- Sampled surveys
- Meetings with stakeholder groups and residents
- Social Media

Details of planned consultations will be published on our website:

[www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/haveyoursay](http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/haveyoursay)

When consulting people we will look to follow the Consultation Principles detailed overleaf. These principles and information about the Localism Act and community rights are also on our website.

## How will we feedback?

We will be clear at the beginning of an engagement exercise about how we will feedback. We will publish consultation feedback reports on our website and promote these through social media.

We will publish annually how public feedback has influenced or changed the way we deliver our services.

## #YouSayWeListen



# Our Consultation Principles

## Consultations should be clear and concise - We will

- Use plain English and avoid acronyms
- Be clear what questions we are asking and limit the number of questions
- Make them easy to understand and easy to answer
- Avoid lengthy documents where possible and consider merging related topics

## Consultations should have a purpose - We will

- Not consult for the sake of it
- Find out if we have a legal duty to consult
- Take consultation responses into account when taking policy forward
- Consult about policies or plans at a development stage
- Not ask questions about issues on which we already have a final view

## Consultations should be informative - We will

- Give enough information to ensure those consulted understand the issues and can give informed responses
- Where possible, include impact assessments of the costs and benefits of the options being considered

## Consultations are only a part of a process of engagement - We will

- Consider the most appropriate way to engage the public

## Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time - We will

- Judge the length of the consultation and take into account the nature and impact of the proposal
- Not consult too quickly and give enough time to consider responses

## Consultations should be targeted - We will

- Consider the range of people, businesses and voluntary groups affected by the policy
- Target specific groups if appropriate, ensuring they are aware of the consultation and can access it
- Think about the needs of particular groups and people with disabilities to help them to have their say

## Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted - We will

- Consider the timing of the consultation to allow enough time for people to respond
- Ensure that groups who need more time to respond than others get sufficient time

## Consultations should be agreed before publication - We will

- Follow decision making procedures before publishing a consultation
- Always publish details of current consultations on our website

## Consultations should facilitate scrutiny - We will

- Publish consultation feedback reports on our website within 12 weeks of the closing date or provide an explanation why this is not possible.
- Summarise responses from consultees and explain how these inform policy
- State how many responses have been received
- Allow appropriate time between closing the consultation and implementing policy

## Consultations should not generally be undertaken during local or national election periods - We will

- Only undertake consultation in these periods in exceptional circumstances

*This document is based on the Government's consultation principles. It does not have legal force and is subject to statutory and other legal requirements.*