

Our Commitment : The 7 Key Rules of Consultation

It is our aim to work within the following rules following when carrying out any consultation :

1. Time consultations well and allow sufficient time to respond

- Consultations should be timed to allow the results to influence policy/proposal development
- The timing of consultations should consider the availability of target groups
- Wide scale public consultations, eg borough-wide or large parts of it, should run for a period of 12 weeks and for no less than 6 weeks
- Reasonable time will be allowed for people to respond to a consultation

2. Clearly present relevant information and encourage informed opinion

- The consultation should clearly state the proposal, why we are consulting, and how we will use the findings
- The consultation should provide enough information to enable consultees to give an informed opinion and not simply an instant reaction
- This information should be written in plain English

3. Be well targeted and reach out to seldom heard groups

- The views of those people/areas most affected by the proposal should be sought
- Attempts should be made to listen to the views of non-users, especially when service changes are being consulted on
- Attempts should be made to include the views of groups frequently excluded or overlooked
- Consultations should consider the needs of people with impaired sight or hearing or people whose first language is not English

4. Offer genuine options and ask objective questions

- Where options are offered, they should be realistic and deliverable
- Surveys and questions should be written in an objective way allowing people to express their views

5. Be well planned, managed and coordinated

- The Council's Consultation Toolkit contains step-by-step instructions to enable us to effectively manage consultations

6. Be well communicated

- We will publicise consultations and make attempts to let people know they are happening
- Major consultations – eg. borough-wide or affecting a large number of people – will be publicised by the Council's website, press release and in Council publications such as 'Melton Mail' and the Tenants' Newsletter

7. Provide fair, accessible feedback

- We will publish the findings of consultations and later how they have been used
- The findings will be reported in a balanced way