

We Want Your Ideas!

Warrington's Corporate Consultation Strategy

1. Introduction

We want to improve how we consult with people who live in Warrington. This is Warrington Borough Council's first consultation strategy and aims to give you information about how the Council will ask your views and involve communities in making decisions. Your views will help to determine how the Council works so that our services and the things we spend money on reflect the needs of local people.

2. What is consultation?

Consultation is a very broad term and has a number of different meanings. Warrington Borough Council is using the word 'consultation' to mean:

'A process of dialogue that leads to a decision'.

Put simply, this is two or more people, or groups of people, exchanging views and information.

It is important that we consult with local people before making any big changes to the way services are delivered.

3. What are we trying to achieve?

We aim to:

1. Show how important the Council believes consultation is.
2. Improve Council services by making sure that your views are a key part of how we make decisions
3. Have clear standards across the Council for consulting people.
4. Make consultation useful so that you know what we've done with your input

5. Improve the way we and other organisations co-ordinate any consultations with local people
6. Make it clear how we reach decisions.
7. Promote a mutual trust and respect between the Council and people living in the borough
8. Ensure that everyone living in the borough has the opportunity to take part in consultation exercises.

As a result, we have developed five key points to make sure we, and you, get the most from any consultations:

Point One

Establish Council guidelines for all consultation activity.

Point Two

Provide clear corporate standards, advice and support on consultation activity and good practice.

Point Three

Make sure that everyone living in Warrington can take part in relevant consultation exercises.

Point Four

Use the results of consultation activities to improve and deliver services that meet local needs.

Point Five

Continually learn from and improve consultation exercises.

4. Why consult?

To make sure we provide value for money and quality services that meet people's needs, we need to involve local people in helping us decide what services should be provided.

The benefits of consultation include:

- Planning for the future
- Deciding priorities
- Making financial choices

- Encouraging our communities to become more involved in the Council's decision-making process
- Debating proposals for change
- Implementing local initiatives
- Designing and targeting services to meet local needs
- Checking out satisfaction with services
- Monitoring the impact of change
- Improving the community understanding of Council work
- Testing out proposed ideas before implementing them

5. Who to consult?

The Council wants to consult as widely as possible.

We will use a range of consultation methods with local people and communities to meet their needs in order to get reliable results. Some groups of people may need specific methods of consultation, such as:

- Some children and young people, including looked-after children and disabled young people
- Some older people, such as those who are housebound
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Black and minority ethnic groups, particularly those who do not speak English
- Homeless people
- Travelling communities
- People in full time employment

This is not a full list of all the groups that the council will consult with - anyone is free to give their views on council services.

6. How to consult?

Consultation takes many forms and we will use a variety of methods including:

- Surveys
- Customer comments and complaints
- Forums and public meetings
- Interactive websites
- Question and answer sessions
- Seminars / workshops
- Local -newspapers and radio/television
- Informal discussions
- Focus / discussion groups
- Presentations / briefings
- Questionnaires / feedback
- Play and arts events
- Publications like “The Wire”
- Formal referendum
- One Stop Shop

7. What to consult on?

The Council is committed to consulting with its communities in the following areas:

- Reviews of services
- Best Value Satisfaction Surveys
- Budget proposals
- Role of Councillors and MPs

8. More information?

Please contact the Research Team, Chief Executive's Unit on 01925 442802 / 442025
Website: www.warrington.gov.uk/consultation

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(Punjabi)

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