



Community Governance Review (CGR) – High Wycombe Area Consultation and communications plan

1. Background

- 1.1 In carrying out a Community Governance Review, the Council must consult:
- the local government electors for the area under review; and
 - any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the Review.
- 1.2 The Committee is asked to consider the draft consultation and communications plan for the High Wycombe Community Governance Review.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Council will publicise and carry out the consultation transparently. All representations received that meet the criteria for a valid response (i.e. received with a name and full address and not a duplicate response) will be taken into account.
- 2.2 The Council will follow established best practice and engage with a cross-section of interests including the public, the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils, neighbouring parish councils, current councillors for the areas affected and adjacent to it, and the relevant Member of Parliament.
- 2.3 Consultation will also include, but not be limited to local businesses, local residents' associations, local public and voluntary organisations such as schools or health bodies, Thames Valley Police, and the Charter Trustees of High Wycombe.
- 2.4 The Council will publish all decisions taken during the Review, together with the reasons for those decisions.

3. Consultation principles

- 3.1 Case law has resulted in a set of principles known as the Gunning Principles. They set out the legal expectations of robust and appropriate consultation.
- 3.2 When we consult, we must adhere to the Gunning Principles:
- consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage

- sufficient information to allow for intelligent consideration and response must be provided
- adequate time must be given for consideration and response
- the product of consultation must be conscientiously considered

4. Consultation approach

4.1 All households in the unparished area of High Wycombe (circa. 34,000 households) to receive the following through the door:

- information booklet
- postal survey
- free post return envelope

4.2 The aim of the booklet is to provide sufficient information, in a clear and easy to understand way, to allow for intelligent consideration and response (Gunning Principle 2).

4.3 Content to include:

- background information to the review
- current governance arrangements in High Wycombe, including High Wycombe Town Committee, the Charter Trustees and Mayor, the Community Board
- frequently asked questions on creating a town council
- how to have your say (postal survey, online survey, email or letter)
- how to request materials in another format or language

4.4 In order to submit a postal or online response, respondents will be required to provide their name and full address as mandatory. Responses without a name and address will not be accepted.

4.5 This is to ensure we consider the views of electors and residents directly affected by the proposals. It is a requirement of a CGR to consult local government electors in the area under review.

4.6 The respondent's name and address will be verified against the Electoral Register to check if the respondent is an elector. However, a respondent does not need to be registered to vote to take part.

4.7 The information will also be used as part of quality assurance checks to ensure multiple responses have not been received from the same individual, or submitted fraudulently (such as via a bot). Duplicate responses will not be accepted and will be marked as invalid.

- 4.8 If a respondent does not have a fixed abode, we are proposing that they can submit a response using the address of a local homelessness charity. Homelessness charities will be briefed and provided with the consultation materials.
- 4.9 Stakeholders not responding as an individual (e.g. organisations, community groups) can take part online, by email or by letter. They will be required to provide their organisation name and address.
- 4.10 A market research agency will receive the postal responses. They will input the hard copy responses into a digital format, including free text comments. The agency will tabulate the data and provide an Excel, PDF and raw data output. The agency will password protect all data files with respondent details. The council's Business Intelligence Team will complete the verification process and analyse the responses.
- 4.11 The analysis will highlight any differences in responses from those who have been verified as an elector living in the unparished area of High Wycombe compared to responses that meet the criteria (name and address provided, not a duplicate) but are not on the Electoral Register.

5. Legal considerations

Equalities

- 5.1 Demographic information (age, disability, ethnicity and sex) will be optional information respondents can provide. Demographic information will be separated from name and address for verification purposes. Postcode and demographic data (where provided) will be anonymised and used to understand if responses are demographically and geographically representative of communities in High Wycombe.
- 5.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed regarding the plans and a number of mitigations have been identified and put in place to ensure the accessibility of the consultation process.

Data protection

- 5.3 The consultation responses will include personal data so the Council can ensure appropriate consultation has taken place and to monitor demographic engagement. All such data will be collected and processed in accordance with relevant data protection requirements and principles by both the Council and the market research agency and will not be used for any other purpose.
- 5.4 A Privacy Notice for the consultation will be published on the Council's website and signposted to in the consultation materials to ensure transparency.

6. Communications approach

6.1 All information provided to residents as part of the consultation will be factual.

6.2 We will run a multi-channel awareness campaign, using a mix of free, council-owned and paid-for channels, to increase the visibility of the campaign in the local area, in addition to reaching a bigger audience and have a greater chance of converting awareness to completion of the survey

6.3 The multi-channel campaign will include the following channels:

- social media – Buckinghamshire Council platforms and posts in local groups
- print collateral – leaflets and posters at key locations
- outdoor advertising and digital screens at High Heavens and High Wycombe bus station
- hyper-targeted radio advertising with BAUER radio across a range of DAB stations
- pop up activity with officers present at locations within the unparished area

6.4 Information will also be shared with all local media outlets that cover the unparished area of High Wycombe

7. Key stakeholders and community organisations

7.1 We will contact the following key stakeholders to invite them to take part in the consultation:

- MP for Wycombe Parliamentary Constituency
- Political parties (i.e. Wycombe Conservatives, Wycombe Liberal Democrats, The Wycombe Constituency Labour Party, Wycombe Independents, Chiltern Green Party)
- High Wycombe Town Committee
- High Wycombe Charter Trustees
- Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC)
- Association of Charter Trustees
- Neighbouring parish councils
- Housing associations (i.e. Red Kite Housing, Home Group Housing, Thrive Housing)
- Blue light services (i.e. South Central Ambulance Service, Thames Valley Police, Bucks Fire and Rescue Service)

- Colleges and universities (i.e. Buckinghamshire New University, Buckinghamshire College Group)
- High Wycombe Business Improvement District (HWBIDCo)
- LEAP
- Cultural organisations (i.e. Wycombe Swan Theatre, Wycombe Museum)
- Community Impact Bucks
- Citizens Advice

7.2 Community organisations will also be contacted to inform them of the consultation and that they can take part via the online survey. We will also request they promote the consultation with their networks where appropriate.

8. Next steps and review

8.1 If the Committee approves the Terms of Reference, timeline and consultation and communications plan, the consultation will launch on Monday 12 February and close at 23:59pm on Sunday 7 April.

