

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Consultation and Engagement Strategy

People, Opportunities, Places



Consultation and Engagement Strategy for the Borough
Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan 2026–
2044



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Engagement Strategy

This Consultation & Engagement Strategy sets out how the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk will involve residents, communities, businesses, councillors, statutory bodies, infrastructure providers and other stakeholders throughout the preparation of the new Local Plan 2026–2044. It explains who the Borough Council will engage, when engagement will take place, how people will be able to participate, and how feedback will be used to shape the plan.

The Strategy is designed to be meaningful, proportionate and accessible. It supports the Council's 30-month plan making programme, aligns with the Local Plan Project Initiation Document (PID), and builds on the communications and consultation approach developed.

The Strategy has been informed by the Scoping consultation responses conducted through September 2026 and will be reviewed after each main engagement stage so that learning from previous activity can improve future consultation, strengthen the audit trail and help ensure the Local Plan reflects local needs, statutory requirements and the distinctive character of the borough.

1. Introduction

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is preparing a new Local Plan to guide development, infrastructure investment and environmental protection across the borough from 2026 to 2044. This Local Plan, once adopted, will replace the current Local Plan 2021–2040 and will provide the local planning policy framework for growth and be used in determination of planning applications.

The Local Plan will address a number of planning policy matters including housing, employment, infrastructure, design, environmental standards, climate change, site allocations, and other locally specific planning matters. It will be underpinned by a robust evidence base, including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment, infrastructure planning, viability work and site assessment.

Engagement is central to this process. The Local Plan will make choices about how growth is planned, how areas are protected, where development may be directed, and how future places can support people's health, wellbeing, opportunities and quality of life. Residents and stakeholders need clear, timely and accessible opportunities to influence those choices that are genuinely open to local input.

1.1 Legal and policy context

This Strategy has been prepared having regard to the Council's statutory duties and the emerging plan making framework, including the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, the



National Planning Policy Framework (2026) and relevant supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

The Strategy also supports compliance with wider requirements including the Equality Act 2010, data protection legislation, Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements, Habitats Regulations requirements and the need to maintain a clear consultation audit trail for examination.

This Strategy draws on the Council's established engagement practice and its [Statement of Community Involvement \(SCI\)](#), while applying the statutory requirements and relevant guidance applicable to the new Local Plan 2026–2044.

1.2 Aims and measurable objectives

The Council's engagement aims are to enable broad and accessible participation, gather evidence to inform the Local Plan, demonstrate how feedback has been considered, and improve engagement throughout plan preparation. The following objectives translate these aims into commitments against which delivery can be assessed.

Aim	Measurable objective	Link to section 6 indicators
1. Reach a broad range of audiences, including those whose views are less often heard.	Before each main consultation, identify priority audiences and record the engagement methods intended to reach them in the consultation delivery plan. After each stage, assess participation using available geographic, demographic and engagement-route information, identifying gaps and follow-up actions before the next consultation.	Reach and Representation: response numbers, event attendance, digital reach and available information about participants will help assess which audiences and places have been reached and where additional outreach is needed.
2. Reduce barriers to participation.	Ensure that the needs of target audiences have been considered and materials are presented appropriately for those audiences. Review at each stage for learning opportunities.	Accessibility: requests for paper copies, alternative formats, adjustments and support will be considered alongside records of how those requests were addressed.
3. Gather informed feedback that strengthens the Local Plan evidence base.	At each main consultation, explain what participants can influence and provide clear questions and supporting information. After each stage, analyse the issues and evidence raised, including place-based, site-specific and	Engagement quality: analysis of the content of responses will show whether the consultation helped participants contribute relevant information. All views will be considered; participants



	policy comments, and record their implications for plan preparation.	will not be expected to provide technical evidence.
4. Make the consideration and influence of feedback transparent.	Set a reporting timetable before each main consultation and publish a consultation summary within that timetable. For the Draft Plan and submission-stage consultations, also publish detailed reports explaining how comments have been considered, any resulting or proposed changes, and reasons where no changes are proposed.	Transparency, supported by section 6.2: publication dates will be checked against the agreed timetable, and the reports will provide the record of how feedback has been addressed.
5. Improve engagement from one stage to the next.	Complete a documented review after each main consultation and before the next stage begins. Record lessons, agreed improvement actions, responsible officers and completion dates, and check progress when preparing the next consultation delivery plan.	Learning, supported by section 6.3: event feedback, officer reflections, stakeholder comments and delivery issues will inform the review and subsequent changes to engagement.

Progress against these objectives will be reported through the monitoring, consultation reporting and review arrangements in section 6. The Planning Policy team, supported by corporate communications and relevant services, will record whether each commitment has been met, explain any shortfalls and identify corrective action. Participation data will be interpreted alongside qualitative feedback and any limitations in the information available; response numbers alone will not determine whether engagement has been successful.

1.3 Approach to engagement

Our engagement strategy is to strengthen the evidence base for the Local Plan through accessible consultation that reaches a wide range of audiences, particularly those affected by the Local Plan whose views are less often heard. We will identify key audiences, understand their needs and barriers to participation, and tailor our engagement activities to help them contribute. We will review what works at each stage and use what we learn to improve engagement throughout the plan-making process.

The Borough Council's approach will be digital first but not digital only. Digital methods will be used to provide clear information, interactive maps, online surveys and regular updates, while in-person activity, printed materials and targeted outreach will be used



where they add value, remove barriers or help reach people who are less likely to participate through formal consultations.

The communications theme for the Local Plan is **People, Opportunities, Places**. This theme will be used to explain that the Local Plan is about place making and is not only concerned with new homes to meet the local need, but also about employment, infrastructure, transport, schools, health, green spaces, heritage, climate resilience and the quality of places across King's Lynn, Hunstanton, Downham Market, rural villages and the wider borough.

The engagement approach will be guided by the following principles:

- **Clarity:** Explain what the Local Plan can and cannot influence, including the difference between legal requirements, national policy requirements and local choices.
- **Accessibility:** Use plain English, accessible venues, online and offline formats, and reasonable adjustments where needed.
- **Inclusivity:** Make extra effort to involve groups whose views are often under-represented in planning consultations.
- **Transparency:** Explain how feedback has been considered and how it influences decisions.
- **Proportionality:** Focus engagement where it can genuinely add value and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- **Evidence and audit trail:** Record engagement activity, responses, learning and decisions clearly.
- **Partnership:** Work with councillors, parish and town councils, community organisations, statutory bodies, infrastructure providers and neighbouring authorities.
- **Gunning Principles: Consultation activities will be guided by** the good practice set out in **these principles**.

1.4 Role of this Strategy

This Strategy provides the formal framework for engagement during preparation of the Local Plan 2026–2044. It supports the Local Plan Timetable, the Project Initiation Document (PID) and the Council's wider communications work. It will help officers, councillors and partners understand the purpose of each engagement stage, the audiences to be reached, the channels to be used and the evidence that needs to be recorded.

The Strategy is a live document. It should be reviewed after each main consultation stage and updated where needed to reflect feedback, changing legislation or guidance, changes to the Local Plan timetable, equality considerations, consultation performance and lessons learned.



2. Local Plan stages and engagement

The Local Plan will be prepared through a series of statutory and non-statutory stages. Each stage has a different purpose and will require a tailored engagement approach. The Council will publish consultation findings after each main consultation stage and use feedback to inform the next stage of plan preparation.

Stage	Indicative timing	Engagement purpose
Call for Sites	January to May 2026. The Call for Sites will also be opened alongside the Scoping Consultation period and the Draft Plan consultation stage, providing further opportunities to submit sites for assessment.	Invite landowners, developers, agents and other interested parties to submit potential development sites for assessment to inform the Local Plan evidence base and site selection. Submission of a site does not mean that it will be allocated or granted planning permission.
Notice of Intention and timetable	June 2026	Provide early notice that plan-making is commencing and explain the timetable.
Scoping Consultation	September 2026	Gather views on what the Local Plan should cover, what people value about places, where development might be best located, how people want to be engaged and what barriers may prevent participation.
Gateway 1 and publication of findings	October to November 2026	Demonstrate readiness to begin formal plan-making and publish findings from the scoping stage.
Plan content, evidence, vision and spatial strategy development	November 2026 to March 2027	Use consultation findings and evidence to shape the draft vision, measurable outcomes, spatial strategy, policy options and site assessment work.
Draft Plan consultation	May to June 2027	Invite comments on proposed plan content, evidence, draft vision, objectives, spatial strategy and emerging policies.
Gateway 2	November to December 2027	Seek observations from the Planning Inspectorate on the draft plan and supporting evidence.



Proposed Plan consultation	April to May 2028	Consult on the pre-submission Local Plan, policy map and supporting evidence before submission.
Gateway 3, submission and examination	September 2028 to March 2029	Demonstrate readiness for examination, submit the plan and support the independent examination process.
Adoption	May 2029	Adopt the Local Plan following examination and publish final consultation and engagement evidence.

2.1 Scoping Consultation

The Scoping Consultation for People, Opportunities, Places ran from 1st to 29th September 2026 and is now complete. It opened the conversation before preparation of the formal draft Local Plan, asking what the Plan should include, what mattered most about the places where people live and work, where development could best be located, and how future engagement could be made easier and more effective. The consultation also provided opportunities to comment on previously submitted sites and suggest further sites for assessment.

Information and consultation materials remain available through the Council's [Scoping Consultation webpage](#) and the [People, Opportunities, Places StoryMap](#).

The consultation combined an online survey and interactive mapping with paper copies, email responses and 12 online and in person events. Events took place in King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton, including at The Place, the College of West Anglia, King's Lynn Food Bank and the town halls. People could contribute through conversations with officers and map-based activities as well as completing a survey. Bright, bold materials and plain English explanations helped explain what a Local Plan is and the issues it needs to address. Promotion included direct emails, press releases, social media, the Borough Council's website, staff and member communications, posters and digital screens.

Alongside Borough wide promotion, targeted outreach included the College of West Anglia and King's Lynn Food Bank. These provided opportunities to hear perspectives through education and community support settings rather than relying solely on formal written responses. Events across the three towns and a mixture of online and in person participation routes gave people different ways to contribute. Parish Councils, Borough Councillors, Landowners, Agents and other interested parties were also invited to take part, bringing local knowledge and information relevant to plan preparation and site assessment.



As part of the Scoping consultation the Borough Council reported more than 300 online survey responses, conversations with nearly 300 people in person, more than 450 emails, over 16,000 views on the interactive site map with more than 1,500 comments. These figures demonstrate substantial participation across several channels and provided a body of feedback to inform the Local Plan evidence base. They are separate measures of activity, not a combined total of unique respondents or a percentage response rate, because people could contribute through more than one route. The headline figures alone do not establish whether all priority audiences and geographic areas were adequately represented.

The scoping stage also collected information about engagement preferences and barriers to participation. This has helped shape this Strategy and establish a contact base of people wishing to stay involved. Detailed analysis and consultation reporting will explain the main issues raised, how feedback informs plan preparation and where further outreach is needed.

3. Governance

Engagement will be governed through the Local Plan project management arrangements set out in the PID. Governance must ensure that engagement activity is planned, resourced, legally compliant, politically transparent and aligned with the Local Plan timetable.

Further details are set out in the Council's [Local Plan Governance Report](#) and the [Local Plan Task Group Terms of Reference and accompanying Cabinet report](#).

3.1 Operational level

The Planning Policy Team will lead day-to-day delivery of Local Plan engagement, supported by corporate communications, GIS, planning technology, administration, legal, corporate policy and relevant service areas. The Local Plan Support Officer / Project Manager will support programme coordination, tracking, risk monitoring and documentation of engagement activity.

Operational responsibilities will include preparing consultation materials, maintaining contact databases, organising events, coordinating officer attendance, managing surveys and digital maps, recording engagement outputs, preparing consultation reports and ensuring equality, accessibility and data protection requirements are considered.

3.2 Strategic level

Strategic oversight will be provided through the Senior Responsible Officer, senior officer engagement and the Local Plan management structure. The Assistant Director, Planning Policy Manager and relevant senior officers will monitor delivery, resource needs, risks, dependencies and alignment with corporate priorities.

Corporate communications will play a key role in ensuring that messaging is clear, consistent and accessible. This includes developing campaign assets, press activity,



social media content, website promotion, member communications and materials for staff and public venues.

3.3 Political level

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Licensing will provide political leadership for the Local Plan. The Local Plan Task Group will provide member oversight and challenge, advising the Portfolio Holder and reporting to Cabinet. Cabinet, and Council where appropriate, will be responsible for key decisions at statutory milestones, including approval of consultation documents where required.

All-member briefings, borough councillor communications and specific member sessions will be used to ensure councillors understand the purpose of each engagement stage and are able to signpost residents and parish councils to the relevant consultation material.

4. Who we will engage

The Local Plan affects everyone who lives, works, studies, invests, owns land, provides services or has an interest in King's Lynn and West Norfolk. Engagement will therefore be broad, but it will also include targeted work with groups who are affected by the Local Plan, but whose views are often less visible in formal planning consultations.

4.1 Strategic cooperation and cross-boundary working

The borough exists within wider housing, economic, transport, environmental and infrastructure systems. The Borough Council will work with neighbouring local planning authorities (including those across Norfolk), Norfolk County Council, adjacent authorities in Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk, combined authorities where relevant, infrastructure providers and statutory bodies to address strategic matters that extend beyond the borough boundary.

Strategic cooperation will support effective plan-making on matters such as housing needs, transport corridors, flood risk, coastal change, water management, utilities, health, education, biodiversity, nature recovery, economic growth and strategic infrastructure. Where appropriate, Statements of Common Ground or equivalent records of collaboration will be prepared and updated.

The [Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework \(NSPF\)](#) provides a shared framework for cooperation between Norfolk's local planning authorities, Norfolk County Council and partner organisations. It sets out shared spatial objectives and agreements on matters including housing and growth, infrastructure, the environment, and health and wellbeing. The Borough Council will draw on the NSPF and its collaborative working arrangements to inform engagement with strategic partners, coordinate evidence and address cross-boundary matters during preparation of the Local Plan 2026–2044.



4.2 Specific consultation bodies and key partners

The Council will consult relevant specific consultation bodies and other key partners at appropriate stages. This will include organisations such as Active Travel England, National Highways, the Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England, Sport England, Homes England, NHS bodies, utilities providers, Norfolk County Council, neighbouring authorities, the Marine Management Organisation, Transport East, Network Rail, town and parish councils and other organisations with statutory or infrastructure roles.

Engagement with these bodies will focus on evidence requirements, infrastructure capacity, site assessment, environmental constraints, deliverability, cross-boundary matters, policy wording and the soundness of the emerging plan.

Reference to all relevant engagement bodies can be found through Regulation 2 of The Town and Country Planning Regulations 2026.

[The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#)

4.3 Residents, communities and local stakeholders

Engagement will seek views from residents across King's Lynn, Hunstanton, Downham Market, rural villages and surrounding areas. It will also include community groups, parish and town councils, borough councillors, businesses, landowners, developers, agents, service providers, voluntary and community organisations, education providers, health partners and people who have previously expressed an interest in the Local Plan.

The Council will use a mixture of broad promotion and targeted outreach. Broad promotion will raise awareness across the borough, while targeted outreach will focus on groups who may be directly affected by long term planning decisions but less likely to respond to traditional consultation methods.

4.4 Priority and under-represented groups

The Council will give particular attention to groups whose voices are less likely to be heard through standard consultation activity, but whose lives, homes, work, health and future opportunities may be affected by the Local Plan.

Group	Reason for targeted engagement	Potential approach
Young people aged 16–25	They are less likely to participate in planning consultations but will experience the long-term effects of decisions about homes, jobs, transport,	College and youth focused events, interactive activities, social media content, simple explainers and targeted sessions through education or youth networks.



	education and climate resilience.	
People employed in West Norfolk	Working age people are often under-represented compared with retired residents, yet the plan will shape housing, employment, transport and economic opportunities.	Workplace engagement, digital surveys, LinkedIn content, employer networks, evening online sessions, town-centre drop-ins and simple workplace-friendly summaries.
People affected by health inequalities, including people experiencing food poverty	The Local Plan can influence social determinants of health through housing, access to services, active travel, green space, employment and neighbourhood design.	Engagement through food banks, community support organisations, accessible paper surveys, trusted intermediaries and small-group conversations.
Rural communities	The borough includes many rural settlements where access, transport and digital connectivity can affect participation and planning priorities.	Parish council networks, rural venue drop-ins, printed materials, local newsletters and clear explanations of settlement, transport and infrastructure issues.
People with disabilities or access needs	Planning decisions affect accessible homes, transport, public spaces and services, and engagement must be available in accessible formats.	Accessible venues, reasonable adjustments, alternative formats on request, clear contact details and online materials designed for accessibility.
Renters, people seeking affordable housing and people on housing waiting lists	These groups have direct experience of housing affordability and need, which is central to the Local Plan.	Targeted outreach through housing teams, community partners, online formats and plain-English summaries explaining housing need and choices.
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities	Specific accommodation needs may need to be considered through the Local Plan and supporting evidence.	Direct and culturally appropriate engagement, working with liaison groups, specialist evidence providers and trusted contacts where available.



5. How we will engage

The Council will use a coordinated mix of communication, consultation and engagement methods. These methods will be selected according to the purpose of each stage, the audiences to be reached, the complexity of the material and the level of influence available.

Approach	Channels and tools	Purpose
Primary information and participation	Dedicated Local Plan webpage or storymap, online survey, interactive maps, FAQs, Local Plan timetable, downloadable documents and evidence library.	Provide the main source of information and enable broad participation.
Direct stakeholder communication	Email notifications to statutory consultees, parish and town councils, councillors, agents, developers, landowners, community organisations and interested parties.	Ensure key stakeholders are notified and invited to participate at each relevant stage.
Digital outreach and awareness	Social media, BCKLWN website tile, LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, digital screens, intranet and council staff communications.	Raise awareness, signpost to consultation materials and provide short, accessible messages.
Press and public communications	Press releases, reminder releases, newsroom articles, Your News, Our News, member bulletin and targeted public notices.	Provide borough wide awareness and reinforce key dates and opportunities to participate.
In-person engagement	Drop-in sessions, exhibition boards, posters, business cards with QR codes, events in King's Lynn, Hunstanton, Downham Market and targeted community venues.	Support two-way conversations, reach people who prefer in person contact and gather place based feedback.
Virtual engagement	Online drop-ins, Teams sessions, Eventbrite bookings and presentation templates.	Provide flexible evening or online participation for people who cannot attend in person.
Targeted outreach	College events, food bank engagement, employer networks, parish channels, community	Improve representation from priority and under-represented groups.



	organisations and trusted intermediaries.	
Internal and member engagement	All-member briefings, councillor emails, staff intranet articles, council lockscreen, employee newsletters and officer briefings.	Equip councillors and staff to promote the consultation accurately and respond consistently to questions.

5.1 Key messages

Communications will raise awareness of the Local Plan, keep people informed of progress and encourage participation, with greater emphasis on engagement than promotion. Consistent, plain-English messages across the StoryMap, consultation materials and campaign assets will explain what the Plan does, what people can influence and how to take part.

The core messages are:

1. **People, Opportunities, Places:** The Local Plan is about shaping the borough's future, not just providing new homes. It considers jobs, supporting infrastructure and services, and the protection of the environment, wildlife, heritage and local character.
2. **Development is needed, but there are choices to make:** The Council must plan for housing and employment needs within national planning requirements. Local people can help identify where development could best be located sustainably, what it should provide and how it can create places where people want to live and work.
3. **Local knowledge matters:** People's views about what they value, what could be improved and what their communities need will be considered alongside technical evidence, infrastructure capacity and environmental constraints when preparing the Plan.
4. **Stay involved, influence the Plan and see how your views are used:** The completed Scoping Consultation was the first of three main consultation stages. Further opportunities will be provided through consultation on the Draft Local Plan and the Local Plan Submission Version, and we will ask people how they would like to participate.

5.2 Accessibility and inclusion

The Borough Council will seek to make engagement accessible by using clear language, providing online and paper participation routes, holding events at accessible locations, offering reasonable adjustments on request, using targeted outreach where barriers are identified and ensuring privacy information is clear when personal data is collected.



Engagement activity should be planned with consideration of timing, transport, digital access, health inequalities, rurality, caring responsibilities, work patterns and language or format needs. Lessons from each stage will be used to improve future activity.

Consultation timing and duration: The Borough Council will meet the applicable statutory minimum consultation periods and consider whether additional time is needed to enable effective participation. When setting consultation dates, it will take account of school and public holidays, seasonal closures, the availability of consultation materials and the complexity of the proposals. Where these factors would materially reduce opportunities to participate, the Borough Council will adjust the dates or extend the consultation beyond the statutory minimum.

6. Monitoring, reporting and review

Monitoring will assess whether the engagement aims and measurable objectives in section 1.2 have been achieved. For each main consultation, the Council will assess performance against the targets and success criteria in section 6.1. Stage-specific numerical targets, baselines and reporting deadlines will be recorded in the consultation delivery plan before launch. After each stage, the Council will report the results for each aim as achieved, partly achieved, not achieved or not assessable, explaining the evidence, any limitations and the action required.

6.1 Key performance indicators

Link to section 1.2	Indicator	Target / success criterion
Aim 1: Reach a broad range of audiences	Reach: participation, event attendance and digital engagement	Before each consultation, set numerical participation and reach targets using the previous stage's results and the planned activity. Report actual results against those targets after the consultation.
Aim 1: Reach audiences whose views are less often heard	Representation: participation across priority audiences and geographic areas	Deliver at least one tailored outreach activity for every priority audience identified in the delivery plan. Set audience-specific participation targets before launch, using available baseline information, and assess whether participation gaps have narrowed afterwards. Delivering outreach alone should not count as achieving this aim.
Aim 2: Reduce barriers to participation	Accessibility: Accessibility checks completed and actions taken to address issues identified.	Provide both online and paper participation routes at every main consultation; complete accessibility checks before launch; record and respond to every support request within a service timeframe agreed



		before launch, providing an appropriate route to participate wherever possible. Report unresolved barriers separately.
Aim 3: Gather feedback that strengthens the evidence base	Engagement quality: Demonstrable link between consultation questions and materials, and evidence needed for development of the Local Plan.	Before each consultation, document how each consultation question and its supporting materials relate to the evidence needed to develop the Local Plan. Success will mean that every question clear purpose linked to a plan-making evidence need, with materials that provide sufficient context for an informed response. Planning Policy and Communications will jointly review the questions and materials against this assessment and relevant best practice guidance before launch, drawing on Local Plan Task Group input where appropriate. Record the review and address any gaps before publication.
Aim 4: Demonstrate how feedback has been considered	Transparency: timely and complete consultation reporting	Publish every scheduled consultation report by its agreed deadline. At Draft Plan and submission stage, provide a recorded response to all substantive issues, identifying changes or explaining why no change is proposed. Public promotion of feedback and how it has been considered.
Aim 5: Improve engagement between stages	Learning: reviews completed and improvements implemented	Complete a review after every main consultation and before the next stage. Give every agreed improvement action an owner and deadline and complete all actions due before the next launch or explicitly report and explain exceptions.

6.2 Consultation reporting

After each main consultation stage, the Council will prepare a report summarising what engagement took place, who was reached, what issues were raised, how feedback has been considered and what changes or next steps are proposed. Where responses fall outside the scope of the Local Plan, they may be signposted or shared with relevant teams where appropriate.

Alongside the consultation summaries for the Draft Plan and submission stage consultations, the Borough Council will produce more detailed reports explaining how



comments have been considered and what changes have been made or are proposed to the Local Plan in response. Where no changes are proposed, the reports will explain the reasons.

At the end of the process, a final Consultation and Engagement Statement will bring together the engagement undertaken during plan preparation and will form part of the material supporting submission and examination.

6.3 Review points

The Strategy will be reviewed after the Scoping Consultation, after the Draft Plan consultation, after the Proposed Plan consultation and at any other point where a significant change to legislation, guidance, timetable, resourcing or engagement risk requires an update.

7. Risk management

Engagement risks will be monitored as part of the Local Plan project risk management process. Risks should be reviewed regularly, escalated where necessary and considered alongside programme, legal, evidence, resource and political risks.

Risk	Potential impact	Mitigation
Low participation or uneven geographic response	Consultation findings may not reflect the range of communities across the borough.	Use targeted outreach, parish networks, drop-ins in different locations, digital promotion and monitoring during consultation.
Under-representation of priority groups	Important perspectives may be missed, particularly from young people, working-age residents and people affected by health inequalities.	Use college engagement, workplace-friendly routes, food bank/community partner outreach and accessible survey formats.
Misinformation or misunderstanding	Public confidence may be undermined and consultation responses may be based on incorrect assumptions.	Publish clear FAQs, explain what is negotiable and non-negotiable, respond quickly to common myths and use consistent messaging.
Confusion between suggested sites and proposed allocations	Residents may assume landowner-submitted sites are already Council proposals.	Ensure explanations are provided in plain English and work with stakeholders to ensure messaging is clear; correct the record where we identify that misunderstanding has occurred



Accessibility gaps	Some people may be unable to participate effectively.	Provide paper copies, accessible venues, reasonable adjustments, contact details and alternative participation routes.
Capacity constraints	Engagement activity may place pressure on the Planning Policy team and communications support.	Forward-plan assets, allocate responsibilities, document processes, coordinate staff attendance and prioritise activity according to impact.
Data protection or privacy concerns	People may be reluctant to provide contact details or demographic information.	Use clear privacy wording, collect only necessary information and explain how data will be used for consultation and future Local Plan updates.
Timeline slippage	Delays in engagement or consultation reporting could affect the 30-month programme.	Maintain timetable reviews, align engagement outputs to gateway milestones and escalate delays early.

8. Responsibilities and delivery

Delivery of this Strategy will require coordinated working between the Planning Policy team, corporate communications, councillors, senior officers, technical consultees and other partners. Responsibilities should be confirmed in advance of each engagement stage through a detailed consultation delivery plan.

Area	Lead or support	Role
Survey design and management	Planning Policy team	Prepare consultation questions, manage responses and maintain the consultation evidence trail.
Data collection and analysis	Planning Policy team, with relevant support	Collate responses, analyse key themes, monitor representation and prepare reports.
Communications assets	Corporate communications	Prepare campaign materials, press releases, website tiles, social media content, newsletters and design assets.



Digital mapping and web content	Planning Policy, GIS and planning technology support	Manage storymap, interactive maps, evidence links and digital access to consultation material.
In-person events	Planning Policy team with communications and venue support	Book venues, provide materials, staff events and record feedback.
Member engagement	Portfolio Holder, Planning Policy team and democratic support	Brief councillors, support member communications and ensure political oversight at key stages.
Specific consultation bodies	Planning Policy team	Notify relevant bodies, coordinate technical input and maintain records of engagement.
Accessibility and equalities	Planning Policy team with corporate policy support	Consider equality impacts, accessibility needs and reasonable adjustments.

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