

# Individual Decision

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| <b>Title of Report:</b>            | <b>West Berkshire Council Consultation Strategy</b> |            |                                     |
| <b>Report to be considered by:</b> | <b>Anthony Stansfeld</b>                            | <b>on:</b> | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> November 2005</b> |
| <b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>           | ID 1107   |            |                                     |

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## **Purpose of Report:**

1. To define West Berkshire Council's 'Commitment to Consultation'.
2. To set minimum standards and principles in undertaking consultation for WBC staff to follow.

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## **Recommended Action:**

To approve the Strategy for formal adoption by West Berkshire Council.

## **Reason for decision to be taken:**

- To update West Berkshire Council's 2002 Consultation Strategy, highlighting key areas needing to be addressed in conducting consultation.

## **List of other options considered:**

N/A

## **Key background documentation:**

- Copy of West Berkshire Council Consultation Strategy

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| <b>Portfolio Member:</b> | Councillor Anthony Stansfeld   |
| <b>Tel. No.:</b>         | (01488) 658238   |
| <b>E-mail Address:</b>   | <a href="mailto:Astansfield@westberks.gov.uk">Astansfield@westberks.gov.uk</a> |

## **Contact Officer Details**

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| <b>Name:</b>           | Jason Teal   |
| <b>Job Title:</b>      | Consultation Officer   |
| <b>Tel. No.:</b>       | 01635 519102   |
| <b>E-mail Address:</b> | <a href="mailto:jteal@westberks.gov.uk">jteal@westberks.gov.uk</a> |

## Supporting Information

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 This strategy updates the previous strategy from 2002. It provides guidance on what consultation is, as well as when consultation should be undertaken – as well as not undertaken.
- 1.2 The strategy;
- Highlights key areas where we should as a council focus our attentions to improve the way we do consultation, as well as disseminate the findings.
  - Places in context the consultation resources already in place on the intranet (i.e. the Consultation Toolkit and accompanying Calendar) and sets the process and procedures to be followed in undertaking consultations.
  - Clarifies the role of members, service managers and the Consultation Officer in undertaking consultations and provides an Action Plan to ensure successful implementation of the strategy to meet its stated aims and objectives.
- 1.3 The Consultation Officer has recently toured all Senior Management Teams across the authority to formally present the Toolkit and the Calendar on the intranet and tease out any particular issues with consultation and the proposed messages in the strategy.
- 1.4 The strategy has been circulated to all Heads of Service for comment and been put before Corporate Board. Minor amendments from Corporate Board have been incorporated into the Strategy. The Strategy is tabled to be presented to Management Board on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

## Appendices

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Appendix 1 - West Berkshire Council Consultation Strategy.

## Implications

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| <b>Policy:</b>        | This strategy sets out the key principles and standards for consultation across West Berkshire Council. These should followed by all staff undertaking consultation. Further guidance and assistance can be found in the <i>Consultation Toolkit</i> and <i>Consultation Calendar</i> on the intranet. |
| <b>Financial:</b>     | None. The strategy aims to make efficiency savings by the greater availability and use made of existing findings and by improved co-ordination of consultation activities.   |
| <b>Personnel:</b>     | None   |
| <b>Legal:</b>         | None   |
| <b>Environmental:</b> | None   |
| <b>Equalities:</b>    | The strategy help us to adhere more fully to equalities' standards through providing guidance on undertaking more inclusive consultations.   |
| <b>Partnering:</b>    | Once adopted by WBC, this strategy will be presented to the LSP Board. Closer working and sharing of consultation activities and findings with partner organisations is encouraged.  |

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| <b>Property:</b>         | None |
| <b>Risk Management:</b>  | None |
| <b>Community Safety:</b> | None |

### **Consultation Responses**

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#### **Members:**

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| <b>Leader of Council:</b>                                  | As per Management Board on 6 <sup>th</sup> October.      |
| <b>Select Committee Chairmen:</b>                          | Cllr Lundie  |
| <b>P&amp;L Committee Chairman<br/>(where appropriate):</b> | N/A  |
| <b>Ward Members:</b>                                       | N/A  |
| <b>Opposition Spokesperson:</b>                            | Cllr Gaines  |
| <b>Advisory Members:</b>                                   | N/A  |
| <b>Local Stakeholders:</b>                                 | Local Strategic Partnership; Other partner organisations |
| <b>Officers Consulted:</b>                                 | All Heads of Service; Corporate Board                    |
| <b>Trade Union:</b>  | UNISON   |