



**Corporate Policy and
Resources**

17th October 2024

Subject: Moving Forwards Together: Empowering Community Voices

Report by:

Julie Heath – Communications Manager

Contact Officer:

Julie Heath Communications Manager
julie.heath@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To present the Councils Consultation,
Communication and Engagement Strategy
Moving Forwards Together: Empowering
Community Voices (2024-28)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Corporate Policy and Resources:

- 1. Approve the Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: This Strategy includes references to legislation including The Local Government Act 1999, The Equality Act 2010, The Localism Act 2011 and the Data Protection Act 2018 as well as legal case law as appropriate for consultation. This includes the Gunning Principles as established in case R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning 1985.

Financial: FIN/63/25/MT/VA

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Staffing: None

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report **MUST** have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

West Lindsey District Council has a commitment to equality and diversity. It seeks to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. All communication, consultation or engagement will have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Data Protection Implications: It is noted within the strategy that all activities covered under this strategy will adhere to the Data Protection legislation.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: None

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: None

Health Implications: None

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

None.

Risk Assessment:

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council's current Consultation and Engagement Strategy was adopted in 2020 and this report introduces a new strategy to replace this going forward from 2024 until 2028.
- 1.2. When it comes to decision making, we recognise the importance of bridging the gap between the council and the communities we serve ensuring their voices are heard and their views are used to shape council services and programmes. Our approach is centred on supporting positive outcomes for the district which is aligned to our Corporate Plan and its three key strands: 'Our People, Our Place and Our Council.'
- 1.3. This cements our commitment to community involvement, inclusivity and collaboration to achieve shared goals. The overarching vision in our Corporate Plan is that: "West Lindsey is a great place to be where people, businesses and communities can thrive and reach their full potential."

2. Development of Strategy

- 2.1. In developing this new strategy there has been several events undertaken, starting with a strategic away day in January 2024 where both Councillors and Management Team came together to explore consultation and engagement and had the opportunity to hear from guest speakers from Local Trust, The University of Birmingham and New Local.
- 2.2. Following on from this a second workshop was held in July with Councillors to discuss the proposed principles of the Strategy and then views have been sought from organisations such as the Voluntary Sector Services West Lindsey and Parish Councils and from officers within West Lindsey District Council.

- 2.3. On 30 August 2024 the proposed pledges were presented to Leaders Panel along with how these align to the administrations priorities. Feedback on these pledges was positive with only a minor amendment made.
- 2.4. All feedback received has been fed into the Strategy.

3. Proposed Strategy

- 3.1. The new Consultation, Communication and Engagement strategy outlines our pledges for consultation, how we might involve our communities and some of the different pieces of legislation, which involve consultation for the Council, including the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.2. This strategy sets out the Council's approach to a long-term goal of building relationships and trust and in doing this, we will have 3 pledges to underpin our approach:
- **Community Empowerment:** Encourage and enable residents to actively shape, influence and participate in decision-making processes.
 - **Inclusivity and diversity:** provide a platform for all voices to be heard and considered.
 - **Transparency and accountability:** Foster open and honest communication throughout.
- 3.3. The Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy 2024-2028 named Moving Forwards Together: Empowering Community Voices can be found in Appendix 1.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy.