

## **Telling us what you think**

This is a summary of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

## **What is in the Strategy (overall plan)?**

The **strategy** gives the rules about when we will ask you what you think of changes we might make in the future.

## **Why do we need a strategy?**

We know there will be a lot of changes in the Council over the next few years, including:

- Improvements and changes to how we provide our services.
- National changes that will affect the whole Council.

What you think of the changes is important. We want to listen to you and respond in the best way. The strategy helps us to:

- Base our decisions on information from people in the borough of Gedling.
- Improve the way we provide our services by including the people who use them in the changes we decide to make.
- Get a lot of different thoughts and opinions from people so that any results that were not intended or are unfair can be understood properly before decisions are made.

## **What will be different?**

Before we had this strategy (overall plan), we asked you for your opinions when we had to do that by law. That will stay the same.

The strategy says that we will try to do more than this if it seems to us sensible, is useful and is something we can do, and can afford to do.

We won't ask you about everything. We will ask you only about things if we have to do this by law or if we think you can make a real difference.

## **Where can I find the Strategy?**

The full strategy is on the Council website ([link](#)) and we will ask community hubs and libraries to have paper copies there too.

## **What does the Strategy say?**

The Strategy is for the whole Council and all of the services it provides.

It adds to, but it does not replace, what, by law, we need to ask you about.

## **When does the Council have to ask you for your opinion?**

By law, we must ask you what you think about some things the Council does, for example when we are deciding whether to make changes to where houses might be built in the borough of Gedling. **This is called an ‘express duty to consult’.**

We must also ask you for your opinion if we have told you that we are going to consult you or if we have always asked you for your opinion before we have made changes to something. **This is called a ‘legitimate expectation.’**

Finally, we have to ask you for your opinions when the decisions we make will have a big effect on people’s lives.

### **What else will the Council think about before it asks for people’s opinions?**

Our Strategy says that if by law we don’t have to consult you, we will ask ourselves two questions to decide if we should do this. These questions are:

- How useful will it be to consult people?
- Is it possible to have a useful consultation, with the money, the number of staff, and the time that we have?

We will only consult you when we have enough money, time and staff to be able to ask you for your opinions and really listen to what you tell us.

### **How will we consult you?**

The ways we consult people might be different each time. We will work out who we need to get opinions from and then what is the best way to contact them. We will try to consult people by using the things that people already read and by going to places they already go to.

### **Where are consultations made public?**

All consultations are published on the Council website and may also be published in other places, depending on which people need to be consulted.

Our general consultations are published on our [Have your say - Gedling Borough Council](#) pages.

Our planning consultations are published on our [Consultations - Gedling Borough Council](#) pages.