

Appendix B: Adherence to HM Government Principles 2018

The Consultation Principles 2018 are as follows and below is how we have met these:

Criteria	Guidance	Our approach
Consultations should be clear and concise	Use plain English and avoid acronyms. Be clear what questions you are asking and limit the number of questions to those that are necessary. Make them easy to understand and easy to answer. Avoid lengthy documents when possible and consider merging those on related topics.	A leaflet, clearly outlining the IRMP proposals and giving direction on how to participate, was developed to support the consultation exercise. This, alongside all supporting information published on the websites, were written in Plain English, avoiding FRS terminology where possible. Only five questions posed, to ensure the consultation was concise
Consultations should have a purpose	Do not consult for the sake of it. Ask departmental lawyers whether you have a legal duty to consult. Take consultation responses into account when taking policy forward. Consult about policies or implementation plans when the development of the policies or plans is at a formative stage. Do not ask questions about issues on which you already have a final view.	The proposals being consulted on are part of the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan, and all feedback has been considered to inform the final proposals to be presented to Fire Authority for ultimate decision. We welcome the views of the public, staff and stakeholders, in shaping the changes to our Service.
Consultations should be informative	Give enough information to ensure that those consulted understand the issues and can give informed responses. Include validated impact assessments of the costs and benefits of the options being considered when possible; this might be required where proposals have an impact on business or the voluntary sector.	The consultation document, leaflet, and a supporting presentation were prepared with consideration to this. The data that sits behind the proposals does contain some complexity, which is necessary to demonstrate the rationale for proposals – in the interests of transparency all of this data was also published on the Service website and intranet.
Consultations are only part of a process of engagement	Consider whether informal iterative consultation is appropriate, using new digital tools and open, collaborative approaches. Consultation is not just about formal documents and responses. It is an on-going process.	In addition to the formal consultation activities, informal engagement with staff and key stakeholders commenced as the IRMP proposals were being developed, and informed the final draft. Ongoing engagement will happen with FA, stakeholders and staff following the presentation of final proposals (post consultation) and this will continue through any implementation phase.
Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time	Judge the length of the consultation on the basis of legal advice and taking into account the nature and	With due consideration given to the nature of the proposals, Fire Authority meetings, and the most appropriate consultation activities,

	<p>impact of the proposal. Consulting for too long will unnecessarily delay policy development. Consulting too quickly will not give enough time for consideration and will reduce the quality of responses.</p>	<p>a period of 8 weeks was proposed to ensure proportionate and meaningful consultation</p>
<p>Consultations should be targeted</p>	<p>Consider the full range of people, business and voluntary bodies affected by the policy, and whether representative groups exist. Consider targeting specific groups if appropriate. Ensure they are aware of the consultation and can access it. Consider how to tailor consultation to the needs and preferences of particular groups, such as older people, younger people or people with disabilities that may not respond to traditional consultation methods.</p>	<p>The consultation document was made available on all Social Media Platforms and available in alternative formats upon request. In order to reach as many members of the communities within Tyne and Wear as possible, the consultation was promoted in a variety of ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News articles on our website, intranet, and social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) • Emails and letters to partners and other stakeholders • Meetings with MPs and Council leaders • Correspondence to Community Safety / Strategic Partnerships • Leaflets distributed in a variety of COVID safe ways (i.e. COVID Vaccination Centres, Food Parcels, Sheltered Accommodation, Via Fire Safety Audits and Home Safety Checks) across Tyne and Wear promoting the consultation. • Electronic Tools via Social Media and website. • A dedicated email and telephone facility. <p>We specifically targeted the area of Birtley, targeting HTR / vulnerable / young people and older people.</p> <p>Utilising hard copy surveys and leaflets, we distributed to Sheltered Housing, Schools, Youth Groups, Traveller sites, Community Centres, GP Practices and Religious Buildings.</p> <p>All activities were risk assessed ensuring adherence to the PSED and COVID-19 Compliant.</p>
<p>Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted</p>	<p>Consult stakeholders in a way that suits them. Charities may need more time to respond than businesses, for example. When the consultation spans all or part of a holiday period, consider how this</p>	<p>Consultation activities were tailored to ensure the most effective engagement with various groups. E.g. Hard copy questionnaires delivered to sheltered accommodation residents, an education (via</p>

	may affect consultation and take appropriate mitigating action, such as prior discussion with key interested parties or extension of the consultation deadline beyond the holiday period.	schools) to target parents, guardians and students, and online (due to C-19) live sessions. Prior engagement with representative bodies, staff and stakeholders took place to ensure consulting over the summer period would not adversely impact opportunity to respond.
Consultations should be agreed before publication	Seek collective agreement before publishing a written consultation, particularly when consulting on new policy proposals.	The Service sought approval on the wording of the IRMP proposals, consultation approach, and consultation materials from the Fire Authority. Prior to this, consultation took place with ELT and SLT on consultation materials and wording
Consultation should facilitate scrutiny	Explain the responses that have been received from consultees and how these have informed the policy. State how many responses have been received.	The survey results were analysed by an in-house team who were not involved in the development of the IRMP proposals, and all analysis was quality assured. All response data has been included in the interests of transparency and enable informed decisions.
Government responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion	Publish responses within 12 weeks of the consultation or provide an explanation why this is not possible. Where consultation concerns a statutory instrument publish responses before or at the same time as the instrument is laid, except in very exceptional circumstances (and even then publish responses as soon as possible). Allow appropriate time between closing the consultation and implementing policy or legislation.	All feedback (including data) will be provided directly to employees and key stakeholders, in an open and transparent manner – the consultation report will be published both internally and externally (website).
Consultation exercises should not generally be launched during local or national election periods.	If exceptional circumstances make a consultation absolutely essential (for example, for safeguarding public health), departments should seek advice from the Propriety and Ethics team in the Cabinet Office.	N/A for this consultation timeline.

