

Evaluation of Consultation against the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation

Criterion	Commentary	Action
Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.	A full 12 weeks was allowed for the consultation process, although this meant that timescales were constrained at the beginning and end of the consultation period in order to meet the deadlines to submit a report to Cabinet. Advocacy groups were briefed on the consultation on the Friday before the consultation formally commenced.	There needs to be a greater lead-in time for future consultations to allow more time for preparation and the potential involvement of partners and stakeholders in contributing to the development of the consultation proposals and processes.
Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.	The consultation documents followed a standard format and attempted to provide information in a way which made them clear and understandable and would facilitate analysis. An addendum letter was sent out about the Meals on Wheels consultation to provide additional additional information on the proposed charging structure. As a consequence the consultation period was extend to 5 January 2007.	A greater lead-in time identified above would allow a wider reference group to be consulted about the clarity, style and format of the consultation documents which should ensure greater clarity about the proposals.
Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.	<p>The consultation documents were made as clear and concise as they could be, although this may have elicited some criticism as described above.</p> <p>2,400 consultation packs were sent out to individual service users, voluntary, community and faith groups as well as Partner Organisation and Elected Members. The consultation document was made available in different community languages as well as tape format and was available for download from the internet. In addition posters were distributed via libraries and GP surgeries and other relevant settings. There was extensive coverage in the press. Four Public Meetings were held in different location and at different times of</p>	See above

Appendix 3

	the day.	
Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.	A summary of the responses received has been produced as part of the report to Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation process	The Cabinet report and appendices will be available on the internet. As part of the implementation of any Cabinet decision relating to these proposals, consideration will need to be given as to how this will be communicated to service users
Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.	<p>A designated consultation coordinator was assigned to the four consultations impacting on Community Care Services.</p> <p>This evaluation of the consultation process has been included as part of the report to Cabinet</p>	<p>A consultation co-ordinator should be assigned to all future consultations. Consideration should be given to developing a training programme for all those involved in developing consultations.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given as to how future consultations will be resourced. There are actual costs attached to producing and disseminating information as well as opportunity costs attached to the involvement of staff</p>
Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.	Although this consultation concerned proposed changes to policy rather than the introduction of Regulations a partial Equality Impact Assessment on the consultation process has been carried out which is included in the report to Cabinet.	The partial Equality Impact Assessment recommends that carrying out of impact assessments on each of the service areas as part of the implementation of any Cabinet decision.