

Local Plan Community and Engagement Strategy

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Background

Context

The council has a statutory duty to produce a Local Plan. The current adopted Local Plan covers the period from 2017 to 2032/33, except for the Green Belt boundaries which will endure up to 2037/38.

While continuing to implement the current Local Plan, significant updates in national legislation have prompted commencement on a new plan. Executive in April 2026 approved moving forward with the production of a new Local Plan compliant to the updated national regulatory framework.

We are now beginning work on the next Local Plan called 'York Local Plan 2045: A city where history meets the future', which will cover 2029-2044.

The council has a statutory duty to produce a minerals and waste plan document. The current Minerals and Waste Joint Plan was adopted on 27 April 2022 and covers the period from January 2016 to December 2030. The geographical scope of the current Joint Plan is the three minerals and waste planning authorities of North Yorkshire, the City of York and the North York Moors National Park. Instead of progressing a review of the joint plan, the new Local Plan will include Minerals and Waste policies to fulfil our statutory duty.

Local Plans

A Local Plan sets the local spatial strategy and planning framework for development. It should set out how much, and where, land should be provided to accommodate the new homes and jobs that are needed in the city. It should also facilitate new infrastructure to ensure that development is sustainable. This may include new transport measures, schools, shops, community facilities and public open space and sports facilities. The Local Plan should also protect and enhance the high quality natural and built environment and heritage of York. York's Local Plan will also include policy to fulfil its duty as a minerals and waste planning authority.

Once finalised and adopted, the Local Plan will be used to manage development through the determination of planning applications, making it clear where development is acceptable and to help provide certainty for the local community that the development planned is co-ordinated.

The process is governed by statutory guidance which has been followed in the creation of this document. Production of the Local Plan must align with the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2026. This sets out the regulatory framework for plan-making together with the Government's guidance on plan-making.

Statutory stages and indicative timescales (September 2025)

The following sets out the projected timescale at the time of the Local Plan Scoping Consultation. The key milestones following the requirements of the regulatory framework.

Key stages of plan-making	Relevant regulations^{1*}	Anticipated date
Notice of intention to commence local plan preparation made available	Regulation 19(1) / 44(1)	July 2026
Notice of scoping consultation made available	Regulation 20(1) / 45(1)	September 2026
Deadline for receipt of representations in response to scoping consultation	Regulation 20(4) / 45(4)	November 2026
GATEWAY 1: Summary of self-assessment of readiness for local plan preparation made available	Regulation 21(3) / 46(3)	December 2026
Notice of proposed local plan content and evidence consultation made available	Regulation 23(1)(a) / 48(1)(a)	July 2027
Deadline for receipt of representations in response to proposed local plan content and evidence consultation	Regulation 23(4) / 48(4)	September 2027

¹ References to regulations and the Act are shown for preparation of both the Local Plan and Minerals and Waste Plan in the following manner: Local Plan / Minerals and Waste Plan

GATEWAY 2: Observations and advice sought from the “appointed person” in relation to progress on the proposed local plan	Regulation 26 / 51	November 2027
Notice of proposed local plan consultation made available	Regulation 27(1)(a) / 52(1)(a)	July 2028
Deadline for receipt of representations in response to proposed local plan consultation	Regulation 27(4) / 52(4)	September 2028
GATEWAY 3: Observations and advice sought from the “appointed person” on compliance of the proposed local plan with the prescribed requirements	Regulation 31 / 56	October 2028
Submission of the proposed local plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination	Section 15D(1) of the Act *	January 2029
Adoption of the local plan	Section 15EA of the Act *	June 2029

*Notes: *From the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*

Alignment with the City of York Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This consultation strategy has been designed to **fully align with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement** (2026), which sets out the overarching approach to consultation held by the Local Plan Authority.

SCI commitment	How this strategy delivers
Early engagement	Formal scoping consultation before Gateway 1 to shape priorities rather than testing fixed proposals
Inclusive participation	Targeted outreach, community intermediaries, hybrid formats, accessible material
Clear and proportionate consultation	Focused questions at each stage; avoidance of consultation overload
Digital-first, not digital-only	Online tools complemented by paper copies, phone support and in-person events
Transparency and feedback	Published consultation summaries explaining how views influenced the plan
Engaging young people	School, college and university-based engagement at scoping stage
Working with local councils	Parish and ward-based briefings and cluster meetings
Managing expectations	Clear explanation of what is open to influence at each stage

Community and stakeholder engagement strategy

Purpose

- To support the successful delivery of the new Local Plan
- To encourage strong engagement in the process from the public, partners and key consultees
- To ensure compliance with statutory guidance, relevant legislation and case law

Objectives

- Complete all actions required to support the successful delivery of the new Local Plan
- Achieve effective cooperation with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies aligned to national legislation
- Ensure balanced media coverage
- Skilfully manage issues e.g. mis/disinformation
- Achieve high levels of engagement through each consultation stage and obtain meaningful input from residents
- Ensure a series of robust consultations is carried out, including engagement with hard-to-reach groups and people with protected characteristics

Principles

- Early engagement (as soon as possible in the process)
- Be proactive and not assume local people will know how to find and access information
- Help local people understand the plan-making process, what they can and cannot influence, and how their feedback has helped prepare the plan

- Use mixed methods of engagement to gather a broad range of insights and ensure consultations are accessible for all

Resources and skills

Overseeing and delivering the plan will need a high level of communications resource and a wide range of marketing, communications and engagement skills; this will be undertaken between the council's Communications and Strategic Planning Policy Teams. The tasks needed to be completed include:

- Account management
- PR and media relations
- Stakeholder management
- Attending regular meetings
- Updating and monitoring websites, consultation platforms and social media – with robust processes for managing, analysing and summarising digital feedback
- Commissioning interactive visualisations
- Digital storytelling and animations to help the public understand and explore proposals.
- Producing non-digital options for those with limited online access.
- Commissioning alternative formats
- Helping organise and support in-person engagement - workshops and public meetings to encourage participation and discussion, interactive displays and exhibitions to awareness and encourage engagement.
- Analysis and reporting of findings

Governance and roles

- **Lead Officer:** Head of Strategic Planning Policy
- **Member oversight:**
 - Executive – key decisions
 - Planning Policy and Local Plan Advisory Group – cross party working group to discuss and inform preparation;
 - Delegated Officer decisions in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing Planning and Safer Communities for preparation and publishing.
- **Internal coordination:**
 - Strategic Planning Policy Team coordinating input from technical officers including: transport, housing, climate, design and conservation, public health, environmental protection
 - Communication and Engagement Team coordinating press releases, online content and digital feedback
- **External coordination and effective cross-boundary cooperation :**
 - Strategic Planning Policy Team coordinating with North Yorkshire Council, York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority and strategic partners.

Target approach and audiences

We will follow the Government Communication Service (GCS) OASIS campaign planning model. Many of the above audiences are statutory ones and will involve business to business contact. For others, such as businesses and members of the public, we will carry out a stakeholder mapping exercise using the CYC audience segmentation tool and the Government Communication Service Insight Framework to guide our work



Insight framework

Be more curious: bringing it all together

GENERAL	VITAL STATISTICS		WHO THEY ARE		GENERAL LIFESTYLE		
	How many people are like this? Trends? Indices and comparisons?		Key economic or demographic characteristics (individuals age, sex etc.)		How they live. What they like doing. Priorities. Aspirations. Consumer trends. Attitudes to government/life in general.		
THIS AREA / ISSUE	NEEDS, BENEFITS & MOTIVATIONS			BEHAVIOUR – WHAT THEY DO			
	Rational needs, emotional or hidden needs? What motivates them? Who experience 'most' & 'least'? Why the differences?			What drives and triggers action? Barriers to doing/thinking? Where do they do what they do? How frequently?			
	PASSION POINTS			BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES			
	What do they love and hate about this issue? What pleases? What disappoints? "Must haves"? Key words and language people use?			Thoughts, beliefs, attitudes to this? What values do they hold that relate to the issue? What makes them feel good? Bad? Why?			
MEDIA	GETTING INFORMATION & MESSAGES					WHO INFLUENCES THEM	
	Place, time & how they get info	How much info they want/need	Where they get it from-media used	When & where they're most receptive?	Who they do/don't listen to & respect	Who delivers for them? In contact with?	



Government Communication Service

Target approach by phase

For each stage of consultation we will also prepare a detailed engagement strategy as per Annex 1. The following provides an indication of what each phase is and how we may approach consultation.

Scoping Consultation

Phase	Scoping consultation
Purpose	The scoping stage is the first formal phase of the new plan-making system. Under the 2026 Regulations, the scoping stage establishes a clear, consulted-upon framework for the Local Plan to reduce risk, shorten later stages, and support faster examination and adoption. Its purpose is to define the scope, strategic priorities, evidence needs and engagement approach for the Local Plan before drafting policy content, ensuring proportionate and focused plan preparation within the 30-month statutory timetable.
Structure	General introduction as to why consulting: • Key issues and what's new • Vision and plan objectives • Questions focused on York 2032 relevance of our current vision • Questions focused on the proposed approach to engagement
	Themed sections structured by: • What are we doing currently • What has changed? • Questions to inform what approach we should take to address issue

	The consultation material will be topic-based themes of: • Health, well-being and Inequalities • Housing, affordability & Neighbourhood Quality • Economy, jobs and costs of living • Retail, tourism and culture • Transport, movement and active travel • Environment, climate and Green infrastructure • Heritage & Design • Spatial Strategy Options • Minerals and Waste • Engagement and Equalities
Evidence Base	Call for evidence inviting information, datasets, reports or insights to support the Plan.
Call for Sites	Inviting the submission of land for different land uses.
Approach	A consultation tool will be used to manage digital consultation content and responses. The Regulations support a digital-first system, using standardised templates, data standards and online consultation tools where available. We will take a ‘digital first, not digital only’ approach. Specific measures will include: • Easy-read summaries and visual material • Translation on request and targeted outreach to minority communities • Engagement through trusted intermediaries (e.g. community leaders, CVS York) • Information and online access at Libraries • In-person advice at West Offices, by appointment with Strategic Planning Policy team • In person advice from Strategic Planning Policy team via phone/email

Consultees	Detail	Insight	Channels
Those listed under <u>Reg. 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026</u>	e.g. Environment Agency, Natural England Historic England, National Highways, Homes England, Utility providers, Neighbouring local planning authorities and Integrated Care Boards	Focussed on statutory duties, compliance, and risk. Provide technical, evidence-based responses.	Direct contact between organisations
General consultation bodies we consider appropriate, including organisations relevant in the Human Rights and Equalities Assessment (HREA).	e.g. voluntary and community groups, faith groups, business associations and chamber of commerce, environmental and amenity societies, housing associations and groups representing protected characteristics	Focussed on social impacts, equalities issues, accessibility, health, environment, and community cohesion.	Online survey, paper survey, online and in-person engagement
Specific consultation bodies we consider may have an interest in the preparation of the local plan	Additional statutory or quasi-statutory bodies e.g. Canal & River Trust, Fire and Rescue Service and Police and Crime Commissioner	Focussed on issues such as infrastructure capacity, operational constraints and site-specific comments	Direct contact between organisations

Anyone who wishes to make representations at this stage	Potentially residents, landowners, businesses, developers, and interest groups who are not statutory consultees.		Online survey, paper survey, online and in-person engagement
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Consultation on the proposed and final plan

The purpose of the 2 subsequent stages of consultation and engagement on the Local Plan is set out in the following table. Given that the initial Scoping stage focuses on defining the appropriate approach to engagement during plan preparation, we do not make specific reference to the planned approach here. However, the approach will:

- conform to that set out in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (see diagram, right, which describes the scope of consultation methods likely to be engaged)
- accord with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 and its requirement to invite representations from those specific consultation bodies that we consider may have an interest in the preparation of the local plan and appropriate general consultation bodies
- reflect the scoping stage
- be supported by a targeted Consultation Strategy at each stage. The Consultation Strategy for consultation on the proposed Local Plan content and evidence will be submitted and agreed at Gateway 1.

Consultation method	Comment
 Website	All consultation documents will be made available on our website at www.york.gov.uk We will create bespoke consultation websites to support engagement. Online comments forms will be used to gauge views on planning documents.
 Email	E-communications can be a highly efficient and cost-effective way of publicising information about the planning service to the widest possible number of people and organisations. We will only email statutory, specific and general consultees, and those who have asked to be involved.
 Social media	We will promote the use of social media to make involvement easier, more wide-reaching and cost effective.
 Letters	We understand that not all consultees will have access to the internet, and some may prefer to continue to receive written correspondence. Where this is the case, we will only send letters to statutory, specific and general consultees, and those who have asked to be involved.
 Press notice	We will publish formal press notifications of the formal stages of consultation, with details of the duration of each consultation period and how to respond.
 Face-to-face	We recognise that there are occasions when it is preferable to discuss planning matters in person. This could include us attending ward committees, pop-up events, community meetings or being available to meet at West Offices. All consultation documents will be available to view at West Offices via prior appointment.

Phase	Consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence
Purpose	<i>Between Gateway 1 and consultation</i> Under the 2026 Regulations, the purpose of this stage is to develop the appropriate evidence and engagement to inform sound spatial and policy options. It happens in a prescribed number of steps, ending with the Gateway 2 assessment Gateway 1 triggers the start of the 30-month plan-making timetable, 4 months after the published notification of intent to make a Local Plan and after scoping consultation has been carried out. Regulations require that we carry out and publish a self-assessment of readiness to start plan preparation. Beyond Gateway 1, the ‘prepare the plan’ part of plan-making begins. This includes: • publishing a summary of Scoping Consultation, summarising main issues raised on any responses received and how these have been taken into account. • continuing to draft the vision, spatial strategy options, evidence gather, understand land availability and run site selection, • working with key stakeholders (including to prepare and maintain statements of common ground) and draft policies. • Starting the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which should be carried out to understand how spatial options/site selection may result in environmental effects. <i>Consultation on the proposed plan and evidence base</i> Consultation must be carried out on a draft vision and spatial strategy, supporting or prospective evidence, and any other elements (such as initial draft policies). This must be for a minimum of 6 weeks. For SEA, consultation on the level of detail and scope of the environmental report is recommended to be undertaken alongside Plan consultation.

	For this we will complete the proformas at Annex specifying when, how and who we are consulting in detail. <i>Post consultation to Gateway 2</i> We will publish a summary of consultation ahead of Gateway 2, summarising main issues raised on any responses received and how these have been taken into account. Using the consultation and engagement outcomes we will work on finalising the draft plan in readiness for the Gateway 2 assessment. We will further develop the SEA report (and others as necessary) to help predict and evaluate the cumulative effects of the plan. The final stage of 'draft' plan making ends with the Gateway 2 assessment, which involves the Planning Inspectorate providing observations and advice on aspects of the proposed plan in order to resolve potential soundness issues at an early stage and allow the plan to progress towards meeting Gateway 3's 'prescribed requirements'. Any necessary changes to the draft plan should be made, having regard to observations and advice received. This process is anticipated to take 6-8 weeks.
Phase	Consultation on the Local Plan
Purpose	<i>Gateway 2 to consultation on the Local Plan</i> We will publish the outcomes received from the Planning Inspectorate for Gateway 2. We will reflect on the outcomes and work required on the Local Plan and use this, together with our evidence base, to finalise the proposed plan and supporting evidence. <i>Consultation on the Local Plan</i> We will hold a public consultation on the proposed Local Plan, policies, site allocations and designations and evidence gathered. This should involve consultation:

- on the Local Plan, including local plan policies, site allocations and designations and supporting evidence.
- on a strategic environmental assessment environmental report
- with the Mayoral Combined Authority on conformity of the Local Plan with any spatial development strategy covering the City of York area.

The consultation must be for a minimum of 8 weeks.

Post consultation

We will analyse feedback and have regard to it while making any appropriate changes to finalise the Local Plan and submission material for examination (the next stage in the process).

We will publish a summary of consultation (main issues and responses).

Guidance states that this is the final stage of consultation; extra consultations will add significant delays to the plan-making process. However, if changes to the plan require changes to the environmental report, we also need to consider further consultation where the changes are significant.

Risks

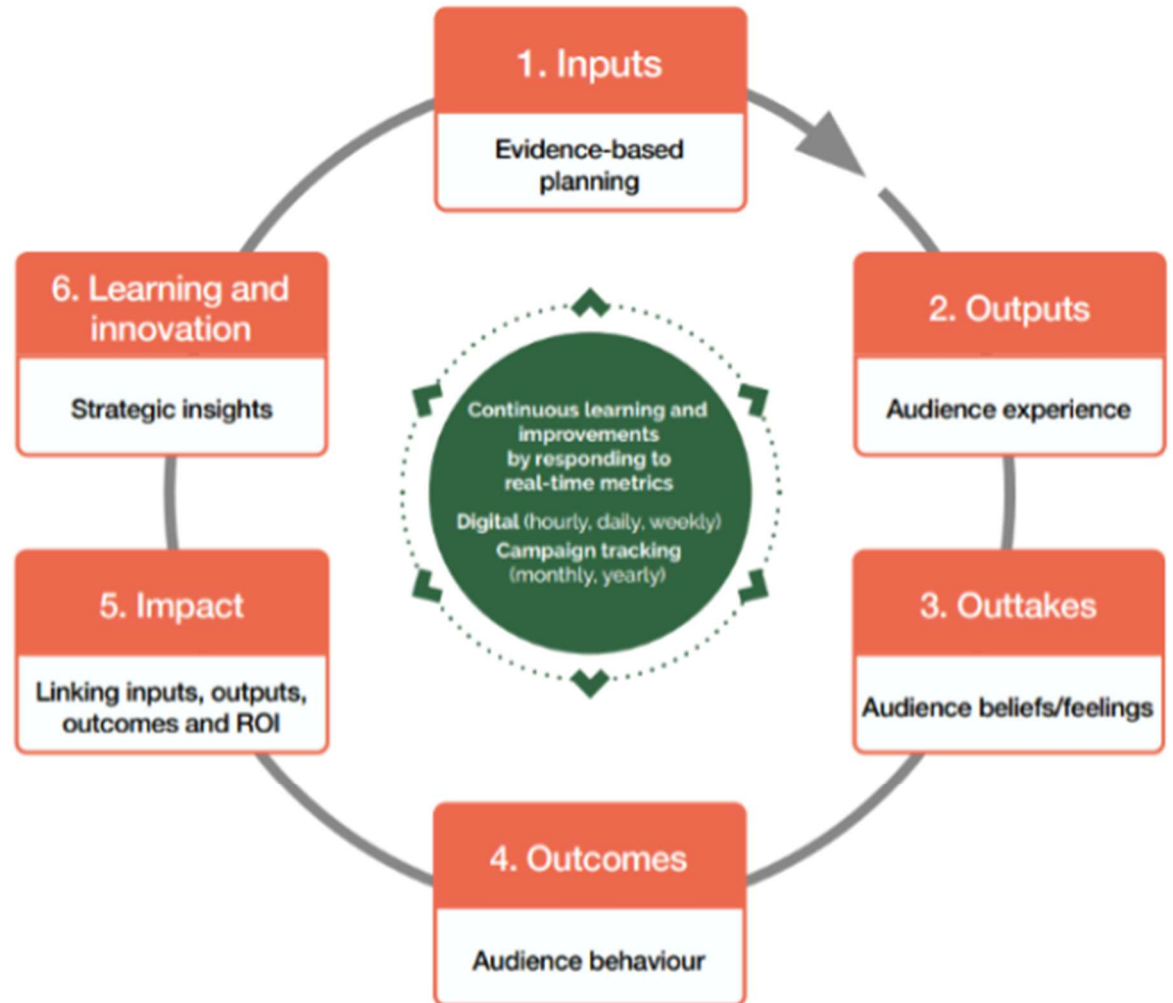
Risk	Potential impact	Likelihood	Mitigation measures	Responsibility
Low participation at early scoping stage	Strategic priorities not locally grounded; Gateway 1 risk	Medium	• Early and wide promotion using multiple channels • Place-based and issue-based engagement rather than generic consultation • Use of simple surveys and visual material	Strategic Planning Policy / Communications
Under-represented Groups	Plan does not reflect York's diverse communities; legal and reputational risk	Medium	• Targeted outreach via community organisations • Engaging groups on their own terms / settings • Hybrid digital and in-person events • Easy-read and translated materials on request	Strategic Planning Policy / Communities
Consultation fatigue due to parallel strategies	Falling response rates; disengagement	Medium	• Clear differentiation between Local Plan and other consultations • Coordinated corporate consultation calendar • Focus on "what's different / what's changed"	Corporate Policy / Planning
Digital exclusion	Inequitable access;	Low–Medium	• Paper copies at libraries and council offices	Strategic Planning Policy / Communications

	SCI non-compliance		• Freepost response options • Officer support via phone and drop-ins	
Unclear feedback loop ('you said, we did')	Loss of trust; challenge at examination	Medium	• Publish concise consultation summaries • Explicit explanations where suggestions are not taken forward	Strategic Planning Policy
Statutory bodies not engaged early enough	Soundness and deliverability risks	Low	• Early officer-level engagement alongside formal consultation • Written position statements where possible	Strategic Planning Policy
High volume of site representations	Programme slippage; analysis risk	Medium	• Standardised digital site submission forms • Clear site assessment criteria published upfront	Strategic Planning Policy
Late objections raising new issues	Programme delay at publication / examination	Medium	• Front-loaded scoping and options consultation • Clear explanation of reasonable alternatives tested	Strategic Planning Policy
Member / community misunderstanding of gateways	Reputational risk; unrealistic expectations	Medium	• Plain-English guidance on the new system • Briefings for Members, parishes and community leaders	Strategic Planning Policy
Legal challenge due to procedural defect	High impact (plan failure)	Low	• Alignment with SCI and Regulations • Robust consultation records and audit trail	Strategic Planning / Legal

Evaluation

We will evaluate communications activities using the Government Communication Service (GCS) evaluation cycle:

1. **Inputs** – what you put in: evidence-based planning and content creation.
2. **Outputs** – audience experience: the experience you delivered and created for your audience through the reach of your communications.
3. **Outtakes** – audience perceptions: what they think, feel or intend to do because of your communication activities.
4. **Outcomes** – audience behaviour: response from and/or behaviour of your audience.
5. **Impact** – what you achieve: in terms of organisation and/or policy objectives and KPIs.
6. **Learning and Innovation** – what you play forward: the lessons you take forward to improve the current or future communication activities.



Annex 1: Detailed consultation proforma

This proforma will be completed in detail for each stage of consultation.

Local Plan Consultation [DATE]
[CONSULTATION TITLE]

1. Who we will consult

Stakeholder mapping

- Statutory consultees
- Specific consultees
- General consultees
- Interest Groups
- Underrepresented groups / People with protected characteristics
- General public
- Members

2. How we will consult

- Internal Consultation
- External consultation
 - Statutory / specific / general consultees
 - General public
- Underrepresented groups / People with protected characteristics
- Member consultation

3. Consultation Timescales

4. How and where documents can be viewed

5. Communications Plan

6. Responding to the consultation

7. Privacy Notice

8. Post Consultation Next Steps