



Consultation Protocol



OrgChangeDesign



The Council recognises that effective consultation is at the heart of successful decision-making and strengthens the relationship with all recognised trade unions. The Consultation Protocol has been developed in consultation with all recognised trade unions to ensure consistency of approach and ensure the Council has an organisation-wide consultation framework as part of its transparent and open way of working - and it is this that underpins our approach to formal consultation when undertaking organisational change.

What is Consultation?

Consultation is a 2-way dialogue that allows the trade unions and directly affected employees a realistic and timely opportunity to influence decision-making. It may be a one-off exercise or extend over a period of time.

It involves managers:

- actively seeking out the views and ideas of trade union colleagues and directly affected employees as early as possible and then taking these views into consideration before proposals are finalised and decisions are made.
- providing sufficient information and time to trade union colleagues and employees to enable them to consider the proposals; discussing the proposals and implications with their members; submitting their response with suggested alternatives to any of the proposed changes; and receiving feedback on their response including carefully explained reasons where views are rejected.

The Core Principles of Consultation:

- Our communications will be clear, simple and consistent
- We will be open, honest, and factual
- We will use appropriate means of communication for the situation and face-to-face as much as possible. We will also ensure that accessibility is a key priority and that no group is excluded due to lack of access to documentation.
- We will avoid information overload
- We will listen and act on feedback
- Our communications will be timely and relevant

A summary of key aspects of consultation and supporting resources are covered below.



Full Consultation Protocol

Find out more



When to consult?

Consultation will take place when:

- there is a legal entitlement to consult
- the proposals and policies under consideration would have a significant impact on trade unions or the workforce they represent.

Examples of where consultation will be required include:

- organisational restructuring including creation/deletion/re-design of posts
- reductions in the workforce
- new ways of working which result in a material change to current arrangements
- business transfers

A delegated authority business case outlining proposals will likely be required as part of the consultation process, with formal consultation forming a requirement of the Organisational Change Process. This business case will form a key part of the consultation pack to be shared with trade union colleagues,

directly affected employees, and any other key stakeholders including the Chief Officer People & Organisational Development and Chief Officer Finance.



Consultation will normally allow for a minimum of 2 working weeks for response except where statutory requirements prescribe a set or minimum period that exceeds this. Your P&OD Advisor will be able to advise on the timescale specific to your proposed organisational change.

When consulting, due regard will be given to school holidays that fall within the consultation period and timescales will be adjusted to take account of this as appropriate.

It is important that the period for consultation is clearly indicated from the outset to all consultees, and any changes to end dates are communicated and explained.



An appropriate manager from the Service where change is proposed will lead the consultation process, with support and advice from a P&OD Advisor as required. For example, for a delegated authority business case, the report author will normally lead the consultation.

For corporate issues affecting all Council employees, the lead officer is likely to be the Chief Officer - People & Organisational Development or a representative.

In most cases you will need to consult with:

- [Trade Union colleagues](#)
- Directly affected employees
- Cluster Chief Officer
- Chief Officer Finance
- Chief Officer People & OD
- Other key stakeholders who may be affected by the proposals

You should keep a record of who you consult with and all formal consultation activities. It is also important to keep your P&OD Advisor updated throughout the consultation period.

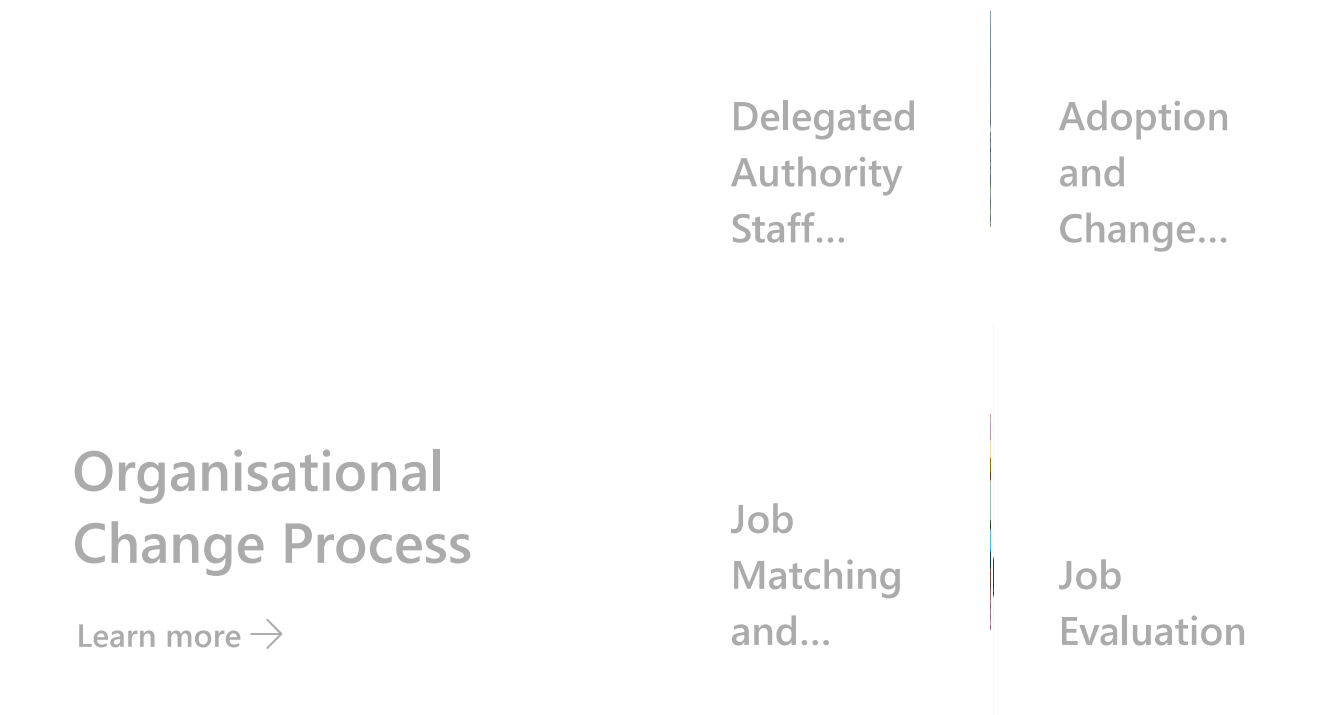
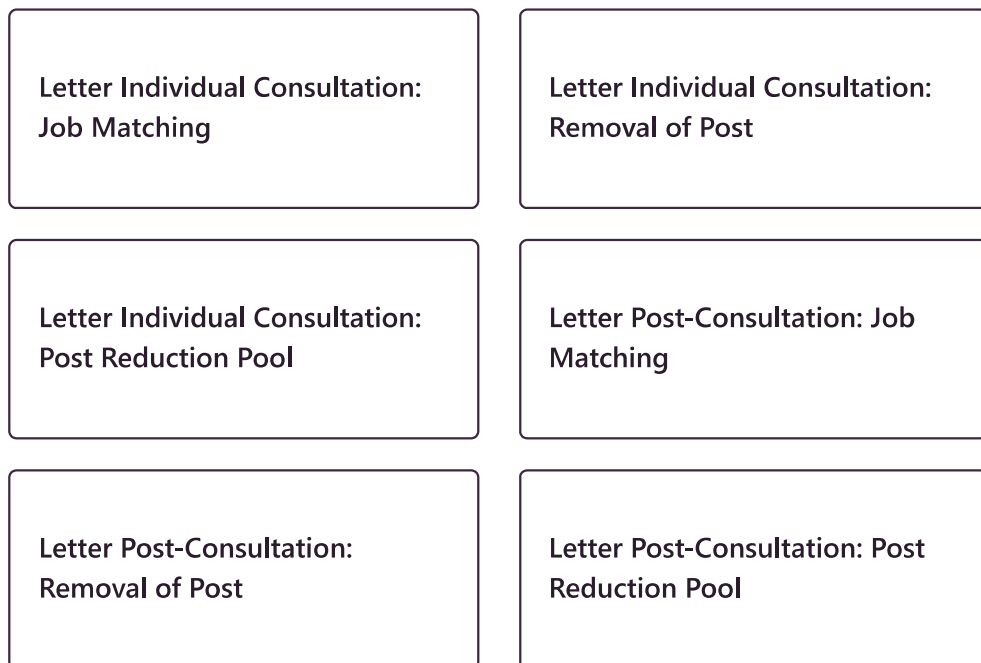
Consultation Resources and Templates

Consultation Protocol

Formal Consultation Checklist

How To Conduct Consultation Meetings

Template Service Redesign Consultation Launch...



Further Support

Contact an advisor from the [Organisational Change & Design](#) team for further guidance and support on undertaking formal consultation, the process and tools.