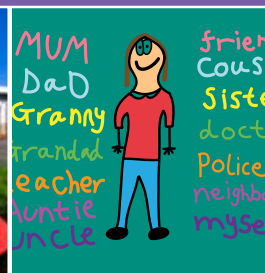




2011

# Communication and Consultation Policy Statement



# Communication and Consultation

## Part A – Rationale

Communication and consultation is essential in providing the highest possible quality of services for children, young people, parents and carers, local communities and our partners.

The establishment of a clear, open and timely approach to communication and consultation is essential in ensuring improvement across all parts of our Service.

## Part B – Policy Principles

The Key Principles upon which this policy statement is based are as follows:

### **Communication**

- The content, format and style of all communication and consultation should reflect the Service's **Statement of Intent**.*
- Communication is a dynamic, two-way process based on listening, responding and understanding.*
- Communication should be open, informative, purposeful, based on mutual respect, and take account of the needs of particular audiences.*

### **Consultation**

- Consultation is the process of actively offering customers, partners and employees both formal and informal opportunities to influence the decision-making process. It includes seeking views, listening and responding, and is adapted to the needs of particular audiences.*
- Feedback from consultation is valued and acted upon appropriately.*

## Part C – Policy Outcomes

The main outcomes arising from this policy statement are as follows:

### **Communication - We will:**

- provide regular, accurate, up-to-date information;*
- use straightforward, accessible language, only using technical terms where absolutely necessary;*
- take account of the needs of particular audiences;*
- make full use of the range of communication methods available, particularly IT;*

- respond efficiently and effectively to requests for information, enquiries and complaints;*
- clearly communicate decisions;*
- use information from individuals, groups and communities to inform decision-making, and shape improvements to our services.*

**Consultation** - We will:

- consult on all major issues which affect stakeholders;*
- seek views to inform our improvement process;*
- use straightforward, accessible language;*
- use a variety of ways to consult;*
- take the needs of particular audiences into account;*
- inform all stakeholders of the outcomes of consultation and how the responses have influenced decision making.*

## Part D – Responsibilities

### Communication

**All Employees will:**

- contribute to open communication;*
- keep themselves and others informed and up-to-date.*

**Leaders and Managers will:**

- be accessible, approachable and promote open and responsive communication;*
- communicate strategic decisions clearly and on time;*
- demonstrate high level communication skills;*
- develop and operate effective two-way communication systems;*
- provide advice and support to employees in relation to communication;*
- promote the use of straightforward, accessible language;*
- adapt communication and information to the needs of particular audiences.*

**All Employees will:**

- actively participate in formal and informal consultations.*

**Leaders and Managers will:**

- promote the value of consultation and feedback across the Service;*
- positively encourage customers, partners and employees to give their views on issues which affect them;*
- demonstrate that consultation affects decision making;*
- implement opportunities for appropriate consultation;*
- encourage customers, partners and employees to participate in formal and informal consultations;*
- ensure that those involved in consultation receive appropriate feedback;*
- ensure that consultation is tailored to the needs of particular audiences;*
- provide advice and support to employees in relation to effective consultation.*