



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Reg 18 Preferred Options Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan



Purpose

This Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Plan (SCEP) has been prepared to facilitate effective communication and engagement with a range of differing stakeholders associated with the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) and its Regulation 18 Preferred Options public consultation.

Preparing an effective SCEP not only involves communicating technically complex information about land-use planning for minerals and waste management development to a diverse group of stakeholders, but it also includes finding meaningful ways to engage with them. Meaningful engagement allows stakeholders to interact with information and shape the preparation of the MWLP. It also creates interest and a sense of ownership. Opportunities for engagement should be planned strategically at appropriate times for appropriate stakeholders.

Accordingly, the SCEP has been prepared with the following questions in mind relevant to the MWLP and Regulation 18 Preferred Options public consultation to be held between July and September 2025:

- Who needs to know about the consultation?
- What do stakeholders need to know?
- When do stakeholders need to know?
- How do stakeholders get information?
- How can stakeholders engage with information?

This SCEP is not a public document. It has been prepared to compliment the Minerals and Waste Local Plan Regulation 18 Preferred Options project plan and for the benefit of planning and other relevant officers within SCC.

Regulatory Context

Surrey County Council (SCC) is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority (MWPA) for Surrey. The MWPA is responsible for preparing and maintaining an up-to-date local development plan which sets the vision, strategy, objectives, and land-use planning policies for future minerals and waste management development in the county. Any development plan adopted by SCC sets the legal framework for determining planning applications relating to minerals or waste management development. It is also a material consideration for Surrey's 11 Local Planning Authorities (LPA) in preparing their local development plan documents and making their planning decisions.

The Government wants to see all parts of England covered by an up-to-date local development plan. Consequently, every five years, all planning authorities are required to assess whether their local development plan requires review and renewal. Development plans must be effective and compliant with the law and national planning policy and guidance.

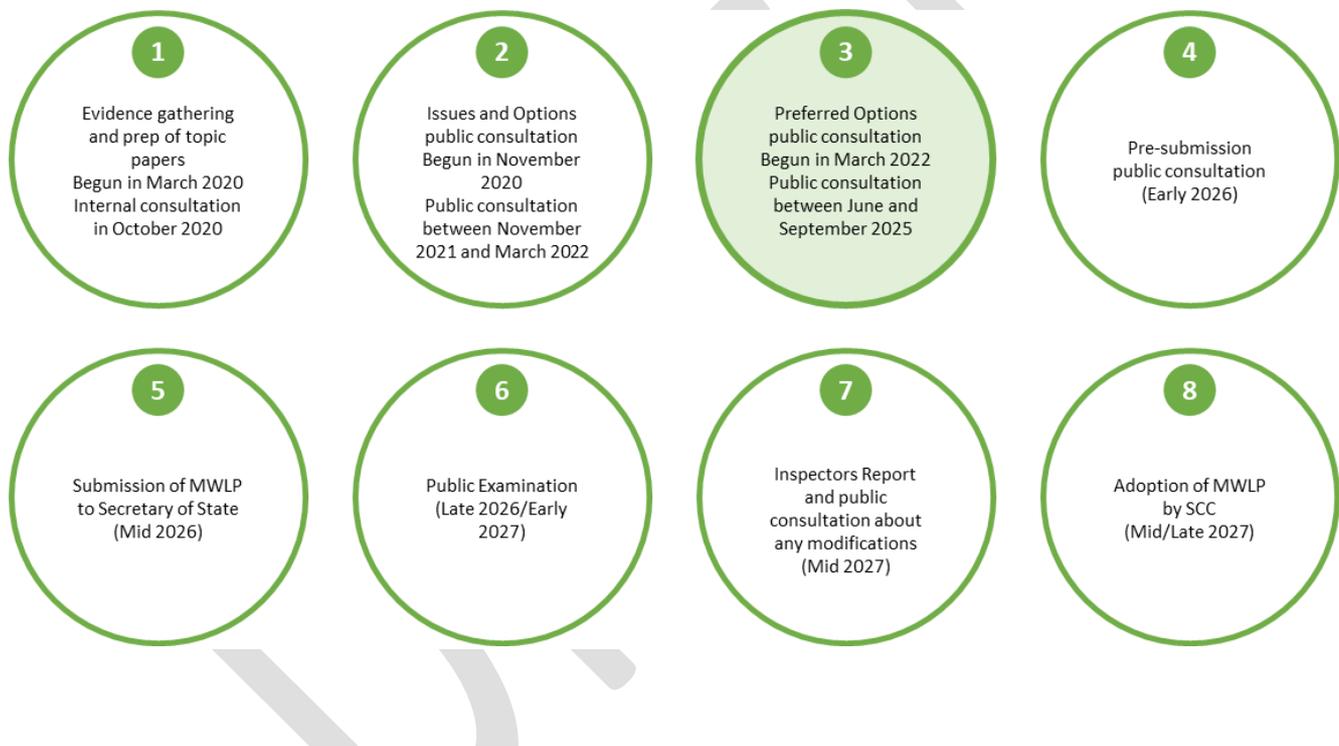
SCC's primary development plan documents for minerals and waste management development were adopted in 2011 and 2020 respectively. Following assessment of these documents SCC resolved to move away from preparing separate local development planning documents for minerals development and waste management development. It has instead decided to prepare Surrey's first joint MWLP.

The MWLP will be underpinned by a positive 15-year vision and seek to deliver sustainable minerals and waste management that provides for a steady and adequate supply of minerals and sufficient capacity to manage Surrey’s waste over that period (2026 to 2041). It will also provide for development that mitigates against and helps Surrey adapt to climate change, and combats biodiversity loss. It will also reflect the growing overlap between minerals development and waste management development (keeping material in the economy as long as possible to prevent waste); and safeguard the county’s valuable mineral resources and waste management facilities from other development.

MWLP Preparation

SCC’s Minerals and Waste Development Scheme sets out the timetable in which the MWLP is to be prepared and adopted. This timetable is reproduced below for convenience:

Diagram 1 – MWLP Preparation



Issues and Options Consultation

In November 2021, the MWPA commenced the Issues and Options consultation which was open for 16-weeks and closed in March 2022. The purpose of this consultation was to: (a) formally notify stakeholders of SCC’s intention to prepare the MWLP; (b) scope relevant challenges and opportunities; and (c) find out what is important to stakeholders in respect of minerals and waste management development.

A wide range of traditional and social media, digital tools, correspondence, meetings, and exercises were employed by officers to notify and engage with stakeholders about the consultation and encourage their feedback. These initiatives included informal discussions with Surrey’s LPAs and other special interest groups (such as the Weald Action Group) prior to commencement of the consultation; written notification of over 650 stakeholders (including

Surrey's Members of Parliament); a [YouTube video](#); a GIS-based and interactive [story map](#); and advertised public drop-in events at public libraries.

The consultation attracted 144 written representations whilst its digital consultation platform attracted over 2,300 visitors and 205 contributions. Over 245 stakeholders watched the MWPA's YouTube video and over 200 stakeholders subscribed to receive news and updates about the MWLP. The use of social media to promote and publicise the consultation resulted in over 334,000 targeted and organic social media impressions with over 580 clicks.

Despite the concerted efforts of officers to publicise the Issues and Options public consultation and meaningfully engage with stakeholders about the same, the consultation attracted a modest response.

However, alongside digital and traditional engagement activities, the MWPA commissioned Lake Market Research to conduct qualitative research and gather informed, in-depth feedback from Surrey residents about the vision and 13-strategic objectives proposed in the Issues and Options public consultation. This comprised two deliberative, virtual focus group workshops held with 53 residents in March 2022. The information collected from these exercises is intended to complement other consultation outputs and provide additional insight from a representative resident audience who do not typically engage in planning consultation exercises (hard to reach groups) and help officers gain a fuller understanding of the perspective of Surrey's range of communities.

Overall, feedback received in response to the Issues and Options public consultation was largely constructive and positive and will be helpful in informing the continued preparation of the MWLP. The MWLP's [digital consultation platform](#) and the relevant Issues and Options consultation material remains accessible to stakeholders.

Preferred Options Consultation

The Regulation 18 Preferred Options public consultation is to be held between July and September 2025. The purpose of this stage of the MWLP preparation process is to consult and engage stakeholders about a draft MWLP document including preferred policy and site options to address the key issues identified relevant to future minerals and waste management development in Surrey.

The consultation will involve communicating preferred planning policies and sites or areas of land to be identified or otherwise allocated or safeguarded for future minerals and waste management development based on a range of general and site-specific technical evidence documents including a Local Aggregate Assessment, an Annual Monitoring Report, a Waste Capacity Needs Assessment, a Strategic Environmental Appraisal and Sustainability Assessment, and Health Impact Assessment.

Stakeholders will be invited to provide their views about the draft MWLP in general and preferred policies and site/land designations in particular. Accordingly, the communication goals for the Preferred Options consultation are to:

- 1. Raise awareness amongst stakeholders about the preparation of the MWLP and how they can contribute to this process.**
- 2. Raise awareness amongst stakeholders about the strategic importance of minerals and waste management development.**

3. **Raise awareness amongst stakeholders about the links between minerals and waste management development and topical issues that are relevant to and have a direct impact on all stakeholders such as climate change and the decline in biodiversity.**
4. **Be accessible to all stakeholders irrespective of their technical knowledge, abilities, and resources, by using plain English and avoiding unnecessary jargon and technical detail and presenting information in a way that allows for ease of stakeholder navigation and understanding.**
5. **Involve and engage with underrepresented audiences such as the black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) community, young people, females, and people with disabilities.**

These goals align with SCC's strategic focus on empowering thriving communities, enabling a greener future, and growing sustainable economy so everyone can benefit. They also correspond to SCC's customer promise principles - listening; making things happen; being open and honest; making things easy and accessible; and building good relationships.

Stakeholders

SCC's [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (October 2019) sets out when, and who the MWPA should consult about the preparation of the MWLP. It also sets out a requirement for the MWPA to involve a wide range of groups, organisations and people who may be directly or indirectly affected by planning decisions in Surrey including statutory organisations, and hard-to-reach groups who may find it challenging to get involved in the planning process.

Accordingly, stakeholders for the purposes of the Regulation 18 Preferred Options public consultation comprise an extensive range of organisations and individuals including:

- The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- Surrey's elected members.
- Surrey residents.
- Surrey LPAs.
- Surrey Parish Councils.
- SCC colleagues.
- Other LPAs and MWPA's.
- Surrey neighbourhood planning groups, resident associations, amenity societies, and special interest groups.
- The Environment Agency.
- Natural England.
- Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Board.
- Surrey Wildlife Trust.
- The County Highway Authority.
- The minerals and waste management industry including representative bodies such as the Minerals Products Association and Environmental Services Association.
- Regional technical forums such as the South East England Aggregate Working Party, and the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group.
- Local technical and strategic forums such as Surrey's Planning Working Group, the Surrey Planning Officer Association, and the Surrey Future Steering Board.

Digital Communication and Engagement

In line with the Government’s agenda to digitise the planning system, the Preferred Options public consultation is to be presented to stakeholders on a digital consultation platform. This approach will facilitate:

- On-line engagement with the consultation as an alternative to traditional methods (e.g. inspecting documents and making representation in writing) thereby increasing the scope and potential for stakeholder engagement (particularly hard-to-reach groups).
- Provision of information and data in a more digestible format and offering stakeholders the option to consume information important to them and delve into varying levels of detail based on their interest and expertise.
- Visible and transparent stakeholder digital participation information and data.
- The use of SCC’s websites, digital publications, and social media channels; and ETI email links to advertise the consultation.
- The use of other appropriate digital platforms/websites to advertise the consultation by way of pop-ups.
- Publicity about the consultation in digital publications such as Surrey News, the Guildford Dragon, and Surrey Matters.
- Provision of an interactive story-map based on SCC’s real-time Geographical Information System (GIS).
- An accessibility menu to cater for a diverse range of stakeholder needs including those relating to neurodiversity, dyslexia, and impaired vision.
- A ‘latest news’ facility which would connect stakeholders with updates about the preparation of the MWLP and the consultation, and notifications and details about related events in the community.

Actions relating to digital engagement are set out below:

Table 1 – Digital Engagement

Activity	Audience	Responsibility	Cost	Due date
Creation of image suite, banners, posters.	All	Design Team	TBC	By Site Allocations Gateway – 31 January 2025
Digital advertising including pop-up banners.	All	Communications Team	TBC	By Site Allocations Gateway – 31 January 2025

Selection of digital consultation platform.	All	Policy Team	No cost.	By Site Allocations Gateway – 31 January 2025
MWLP progress update brochure.	All	Policy Team Communications Team	TBC	By Site Allocations Gateway – 31 January 2025
Google Ad Words campaign, using both search terms and banner advertising.	Targeted	Communications Team	TBC	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025
Finalisation of SCC webpage for consultation, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation Timeline • Consultation Event Dates • FAQs • Link to digital consultation platform • Links to social media platforms. 	All	Policy Team	No cost.	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025
Finalisation of digital consultation platform.	All	Policy Team	No cost.	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025

Finalise adverts including social media (SCC LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter).	Targeted	Communications Team	No cost.	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025
Accessibility check for all published documents.	All	Policy Team Accessibility Team	No cost.	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025
Email stakeholders – consultation launch. Stakeholder consultation database would require updating before this date.	Targeted	Policy Team Communications Team	No cost.	Preferred Options Consultation Launch Gateway – 30 June 2025

Printed Communication and Engagement

For stakeholders without ready access to digital means of engaging with the Preferred Options consultation, physical hardcopies of the consultation material will be made available at public libraries throughout Surrey (and at Quadrant Court) for the duration of the public consultation. Stakeholders will also be afforded the opportunity of providing feedback or making representations in writing (email and/or letter). In this regard, and for the purposes of flexibility, the MWPA will continue to accept written feedback and representations from stakeholders for a reasonable period (some 10-days) beyond the close of the consultation.

Similarly, printed adverts in newspapers and magazines, or brochures, posters and flyers can be more accessible to individuals who may not have easy access to digital publications or devices. This includes older residents, those without internet access, or people who cannot or choose not to use digital devices.

Actions relating to printed engagement are set out below:

Table 2 – Printed Engagement

Activity	Audience	Responsibility	Cost	Due date
Identify printed press advertising e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycle for Surrey, Surrey 	Targeted	Policy Team Communications Team	TBC	By Site Allocations Gateway –

Matters and Shelf Life e-newsletters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrey Comet • Surrey Mirror • Guildford Dragon • Woking News • Elbridge Guardian • Surrey Now 				31 January 2025
Send out printed press advertising.	Targeted	Policy Team Communications Team	TBC	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025
Distribution of leaflets and posters advertising launch of consultation. Distributed at prominent locations such as council offices, public open spaces, libraries, SCC contact centre. To include QR code linking to SCC website and/or digital consultation platform.	All	Policy Team	No cost.	By Consultation Launch Gateway – 30 June 2025

Physical engagement

Over the course of 2024 officers will prepare and hold a series of policy workshops with various SCC officers and teams. These workshops will utilise the technical skills, knowledge, and experience of relevant officers and teams to help prepare relevant parts of the draft MWLP particularly in relation to specialist topics (e.g., ecology, landscape, climate change, historic environment, restoration etc.) relevant to minerals and waste management development. They will also facilitate important technical and regulatory engagement with SCC colleagues ahead of the Preferred Options consultation.

To engage directly and in person with Surrey’s residents (and other stakeholders) about the draft MWLP and Preferred Options consultation, officers will hold a series of advertised public events at a range of suitable venues during the 10-week consultation window. Some of these events may be by invitation only and others will be open to all that have an interest in the preparation of the MWLP. These events will be managed by officers and used to facilitate constructive face-to-face engagement with a range of stakeholders particularly residents,

communities and elected members who may be close to preferred site options identified in the draft MWLP.

Officers will also utilise the consultation window to respond to any questions, concerns, or requests made by stakeholders (including residents and elected members), and make themselves available to meet with any special interest groups, resident associations, statutory stakeholders, and elected members to discuss the draft MWLP and Preferred Options consultation where requested, practical, and appropriate.

Actions relating to physical engagement are set out below:

Table 3 – Physical Engagement

Activity	Audience	Responsibility	Cost	Due date
Identification of scope and range of policy formulation workshops.	Targeted	Policy Team	No cost.	By Foundations Gateway – 31 March 2024
Preparation and commencement of policy formulation workshops.	Targeted	Policy Team	No cost.	By Site Allocations Gateway – 31 January 2025
Identification of venues for public events. The MWPA will be supported by other SCC teams at events. MWPA to ensure that venues are accessible.	All	Policy Team Engagement Team	No cost.	By Site Allocations Gateway – 31 January 2025
Confirmation of venues for public events. MWPA to secure venues and cover cost as required.	All	Policy Team Engagement Team	TBC	By Policy Gateway – 31 March 2025

Hold public consultation events.	All	Policy Team Engagement Team	TBC	By Consultation Window End September 2025
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Member engagement

Elected members are important stakeholders for the purposes of the draft MWLP and Preferred Options public consultation. Consequently, officers will seek to keep them informed and engaged leading up to and during the consultation. Since 2020 SCC members have been involved in the preparation of the MWLP as follows:

- In November 2020, SCC’s Cabinet resolved to begin the preparation of the county’s first joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- In March 2021, officers updated the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee (CEHSC) about the preparation timetable for the MWLP and preliminary work done in respect of the first formal stage of the plan-preparation process - the Regulation 18 Issues and Options Public Consultation. At this time an initial member engagement strategy for this stage of the plan-preparation process was agreed with members.
- In September 2021, officers briefed the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth (the Cabinet Member) about the purpose, scope, and range of the Issues and Options consultation and held an all-member briefing session about the same.
- In October 2021, the Cabinet Member, in consultation with SCC’s Cabinet, agreed to the launch of the Issues and Options public consultation.
- In June 2022, officers provided the CEHSC with a written update about the preliminary outcomes of the Issues and Options consultation and the associated implications for the MWLP.
- In May 2023, the Cabinet Member agreed an extension to the timetable for the preparation of the MWLP by 24 months.
- In December 2023, officers provided the CEHSC with a written updated about MWLP preparation progress and challenges since June 2022.

Additionally, officers intend on engaging with members in the following ways leading up to the launch of the Preferred Option consultation in June 2025:

Table 4 – Member Engagement

Action	Date
From December 2023 to June 2025, officers will maintain an open-door policy for members so that they can seek information, ask questions, or raise concern about	

any aspect of the MWLP preparation process including the forthcoming publication of the draft MWLP and Preferred Options consultation.	
Officers will prepare and hold a Q&A session with members of the CEHSC about the preparation of the MWLP.	Early 2024
Officers will provide the CEHSC with a written update about MWLP preparation progress and challenges since December 2023.	December 2024
Officers will prepare and hold a Cabinet Member Briefing about preferred site options (minerals and waste) to be included in the draft MWLP.	By end of January 2025
Officers will prepare and hold a Cabinet Member Briefing about preferred policies to be included in the draft MWLP	By end of April 2025
Officers will prepare and hold an All-Member Briefing about preferred site options and policies to be included in the draft MWLP	Before June 2025
Officers will prepare a written report for SCC's Cabinet seeking approval for Preferred Options consultation to commence.	Before June 2025

Measuring success

The MWPA propose to undertake an evaluation exercise following the Preferred Options consultation to measure the success of the consultation in the context of stakeholder communication and engagement. This exercise will also ensure that stakeholder feedback received during the consultation is considered in future stages of the MWLP preparation process and help identify areas for improvement in future plan-making communication and engagement. How the MWPA will seek to measure the success of the consultation and the metrics to be used is set out below:

Table 4 – Measuring Success

Consultation Aim	Evaluation Metric
To engage all statutory stakeholders.	All statutory stakeholders consulted.
To engage with a wide range and representative sample of non-statutory stakeholders.	Number of non-statutory stakeholders deliberately notified about the consultation. Number of non-statutory stakeholder responses.

	<p>Geographic distribution of non-statutory stakeholder responses (postcodes).</p> <p>Demographics associated with non-statutory stakeholder responses e.g. age, ethnicity, sex, disability etc.</p>
<p>A response rate from statutory and non-statutory stakeholders which is materially higher (+25%) than that received for the Reg 18 Issues and Options consultation.</p>	<p>Total number of statutory stakeholder responses.</p> <p>Total number of non-statutory stakeholder responses.</p>
Consultation Objectives	Evaluation Metric
<p>Raise awareness about the preparation of the MWLP and how stakeholders can contribute to this process.</p> <p>Raise awareness about the strategic importance of minerals and waste management development.</p> <p>Raise awareness about links between minerals and waste management development and topical issues such as climate change and the decline in biodiversity.</p> <p>Be accessible to all stakeholders irrespective of their technical knowledge, abilities, and resources.</p> <p>Involve and engage with underrepresented audiences.</p>	<p>Positive/Negative feedback from stakeholders.</p> <p>Quantification of stakeholder responses targeted towards topical issues set out in the MWLP.</p> <p>Were a wide range of methods of engagement and communication used?</p> <p>Was an enhanced level of accessibility ensured on all published documents?</p> <p>Was every venue used suitable for disabled stakeholders?</p> <p>Were public consultation events held at appropriate times?</p>
Broader evaluation questions	Evaluation Metric
<p>Was setting up the consultation efficient, effective and on time?</p>	<p>Did setting up the consultation go according to the intended timetable?</p> <p>Staff time / resources used.</p> <p>Budgets and costings?</p>
<p>How successful was the engagement, and could engagement be improved for next time?</p> <p>Did all key stakeholders participate?</p> <p>Which methods worked best for which types of people?</p> <p>How easy were responses to analyse and interpret?</p>	<p>Finalised evaluation metrics to be discussed and agreed with Communication and Engagement Teams.</p>

If participation was intended to be representative, was this achieved?	
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If it was intended to reach specific groups, was this achieved?	
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