

Neighbourhood Planning

Guidance Note 7

Referendum

July 2016



www.breckland.gov.uk



This guidance note provides information on the Referendum stage of completing a Neighbourhood Plan.

If you need this document in an alternative format, such as in large print or a different language, contact Breckland Council on 01362 656870.



The referendum is the final stage before your Neighbourhood Plan is adopted. If at referendum more than 50% of people vote in favour of the proposals, Breckland Council will adopt the plan as statutory planning policy.

Who can vote?

Everyone on Breckland Council's electoral register (at the date of the vote) within the Neighbourhood Area is entitled to vote. They will receive a poll card informing them when and where to vote.

The referendum will usually take place within 60 days of your 'Decision Statement'. The Council's Electoral Services team will organise the referendum on your behalf and the Council will cover the costs. The referendum will be conducted in the same way Breckland Council run local elections (e.g. residents will be able to vote by post or person). All referendums will be advertised no later than 25 days before the poll is due to take place.

How will the referendum be advertised?

Information regarding any Neighbourhood Planning referendums will be made available on Breckland Council's website, at Breckland Councils Customer Service Centres and in local libraries at least 28 days before the date of the referendum. The following information will be displayed:

- A referendum will be held and on what date
- The question for the referendum- 'Do you want Breckland Council to use the (insert name of neighbourhood area) Neighbourhood Plan to help it

decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area?'

- A map of the referendum area
- An additional map where the referendum area differs to the Neighbourhood Area
- Statement of who is entitled to vote
- The referendum expenses limit applicable and the number of people identified as entitled to vote on which the limit was calculated
- That the referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures similar to those for local government elections
- The address and times at which a copy of the published documents can be inspected
- Along with specified documents, including the draft Neighbourhood Plan, the independent examiners report, a summary of representations submitted to the examiner, a statement that Breckland Council is satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions, general information on town and country planning (including Neighbourhood Planning, to ensure voters have sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision).

Tips to gain support for your referendum

The referendum is make or break for your Neighbourhood Plan. There are several steps you can take to make sure people turn up to vote and support your Plan.

- Ensure adequate publicity is given to your Neighbourhood Plan throughout the process
- Involve a wide range of local residents, businesses and

organisations in each stage of your plan so they feel part of the process

- Ensure a full range of issues are covered in your plan
- Base decisions about your plan on robust evidence, consultation and feedback
- Ensure openness and transparency in all decision making
- Explain options for the plan at regular meetings

Adoption

If a majority is achieved in favour of your Neighbourhood Plan, Breckland Council will adopt it as part of the development plan for the area.

Breckland Council will publish the Neighbourhood Plan on its website and tell those who commented on the proposed Plan and asked to be notified. A hard copy will also be made available on request at Breckland Council's Offices.