

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHTS

January 2024

A brief summary of current government consultations of potential interest to RSN members. This is not intended as an exhaustive list of all relevant consultations.

Street vote development orders: consultation – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

This consultation seeks views on the detailed operation of street vote development orders. The government has secured new powers in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 to introduce a new route to planning permission called street vote development orders.

Street vote development orders are a new tool that will give residents the ability to propose development on their street and, subject to the proposal meeting certain requirements, vote on whether the development should be given planning permission. They will support the government's long-term plan for housing – facilitating housing delivery and growth across England in partnership with local communities.

This consultation closes on 2 February 2024.

[Street vote development orders: consultation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/street-vote-development-orders)

Consultation: provisional local government finance settlement 2024 to 2025 – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

This consultation seeks views on proposals for the local government finance settlement for 2024 to 2025.

This consultation closes on 15 January 2024.

[Consultation: provisional local government finance settlement 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2024-to-2025)

The Future Homes and Buildings Standards: 2023 consultation – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

The government is “committed to improving the energy efficiency and reducing the carbon emissions of new homes and non-domestic buildings.”

Energy efficiency requirements for new homes and non-domestic buildings are set by Part L (Conservation of Fuel and Power) and Part 6 of the Building Regulations 2010 (“the Building Regulations”). This consultation sets out government plans for achieving the Future Homes Standard and Future Buildings Standard. It sets out technical proposals for changes to the Building Regulations, the associated Approved Document guidance and calculation methods.

The majority of this consultation has regard to new homes and non-domestic buildings. A small number of sections are also relevant to existing buildings.

This consultation closes on 6 March 2024.

[The Future Homes and Buildings Standards: 2023 consultation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-homes-and-buildings-standards-2023)

Proposals for heat network zoning 2023 – Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Government is seeking views on proposals for heat network zoning in England, to attract investment and give local communities access to cheaper, greener heat sooner.

This consultation provides detail on the role of central and local government, zone identification, requirements in zones (consumer protections, emissions, requirements to connect) and zone delivery (selecting developers and ensuring construction).

Under zoning, central and local government will work with industry and local stakeholders to identify and designate zones where heat networks are the lowest-cost solution to decarbonising heat.

This consultation closes on 26 February 2024.

[Proposals for heat network zoning 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Rapid charging fund: scheme design – Department for Transport

The rapid charging fund (RCF) aims to enable a comprehensive ultra-rapid charging network by funding prohibitively expensive grid connections. Views from this consultation will help design the fund.

This consultation focuses on the design of the rapid charging fund (RCF).

Government are keen to hear from anyone with an interest in the future of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, but especially from:

- motorway service area operators
- chargepoint operators
- electricity distribution organisations
- motoring groups
- fleet providers
- businesses operating on the strategic road network (SRN)
- manufacturers in related industries

This consultation closes on 14 February 2024.

[Rapid charging fund: scheme design - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – Department for Culture, Media & Sport

The UK is planning to ratify the UNESCO 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Government is launching a public consultation on the initial stages of implementation, focusing on the defining and identifying intangible cultural heritage in the UK.

This consultation closes on 29 February 2024.

[2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Gender questioning children: draft schools and colleges guidance – Department for Education

Government is seeking views on their draft non-statutory guidance for schools and colleges about children questioning their gender.

The proposed draft aims to provide guidance and practical support for schools and colleges, including:

- supporting children who are questioning their gender
- protecting children from bullying or abuse
- maintaining child safety and wellbeing

This consultation closes on 12 March 2024.

[Gender questioning children: draft schools and colleges guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Modern leasehold: restricting ground rent for existing leases – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

This consultation sets out a series of options for how the government could intervene to cap the ground rent leaseholders have to pay. The government has already legislated to ensure that new residential leases are restricted to a peppercorn ground rent. This consultation sets out a series of options to extend this protection to existing leaseholders.

The consultation outlines 5 options including;

- capping ground rents at a peppercorn
- setting maximum financial value for ground rent
- capping ground rents at a percentage of the property value,
- limiting ground rent to the original value when the lease was agreed
- freezing ground rent at current levels.

This consultation closes on 17 January 2024.

[Modern leasehold: restricting ground rent for existing leases - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/modern-leasehold-restricting-ground-rent-for-existing-leases)

Analogue Community Radio Licensing – Department for Culture, Media & Sport

Analogue community radio licences will begin to expire from October 2025, and given the need for stations - and Ofcom, who are responsible for managing these licences - to have clarity well in advance of this date, government state that it is now time to review the legislative framework for analogue community radio licensing.

To date, analogue community radio licences have been issued for an initial five years in accordance with the provisions of the Broadcasting Act 1990 and the Community Radio Order 2004, with subsequent Orders amending the relevant provisions such as to enable Ofcom to extend these licences for a further five years on three occasions. These incremental changes to the legislation have balanced both the relative scarcity of analogue spectrum (which has acted as a counter-argument against longer, or indeed perpetual licences), and a desire to ensure that stations have the stability and certainty to develop their services. Government are seeking views in this consultation on whether - and if so, for how long - to legislate to enable licences to be extended again.

They would also welcome views on the current restrictions on the capacity of stations to raise money through advertising and sponsorship.

This consultation closes on 31 January 2024.

[Consultation on analogue community radio licensing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/analogue-community-radio-licensing)

Minimum Service Levels (MSLs) in education – Department for Education

The Department for Education (DfE) is publicly consulting on the most appropriate approach for delivering minimum service levels (MSLs) for education services.

Government state that: “Any minimum service levels regulations we might implement following the consultation would apply on days when strike action is taking place in education services, and help minimise disruption to children and learners across education settings.”

If introduced, regulations would be brought forward under the powers provided to the Secretary of State in the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023.

The Strikes Act amends the legal framework around industrial action by giving the Secretary of State the power to set MSLs for certain key services, including education.

This consultation closes on 30 January 2024.

[Minimum service levels \(MSLs\) in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/minimum-service-levels-msls-in-education)