

Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee Tuesday, 13th July, 2010

Place: Council Chamber
Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (Office of the Chief Executive)
Email: gwoodhall@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Tel: 01992 564470

Members:

Councillors Mrs D Collins (Chairman), R Bassett, B Rolfe, Mrs M Sartin, Ms S Stavrou and Mrs L Wagland

PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THIS MEETING

BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee (previously circulated).

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

To note the Terms of reference for the Cabinet Committee, as agreed by the Council on 17 February 2009; minute 113(a) refers.

(1) That a Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee be appointed with the following terms of reference:

(a) To oversee and submit recommendations to the Cabinet as appropriate on:

(i) the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF);

- (ii) the preparation of the Core Strategy including agreement of consultation stages and documentation, and the responses that should be made to any representations received;
 - (iii) the preparation of other Development Plan Documents including agreement of consultation stages and documentation, and the responses that should be made to any representations received;
 - (iv) the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents including agreement of consultation stages and documentation, and the responses that should be made to any representations received; and
 - (v) the revision of the Local Development Scheme and monitoring the achievement of milestones;
- (b) To consider and provide input to consultants' reports which contribute to the establishment of an up-to-date evidence base to influence preparation of the LDF;
- (c) To consider options for joint or coordinated working with other councils, which best meet the needs of this District, as required by the East of England Plan and (where relevant) the London Plan and to make recommendations to the Cabinet thereon;
- (d) To consider the comprehensive review of the East of England Plan, and make recommendations to the Cabinet on any responses to be made;
- (e) To liaise with the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel as appropriate; and
- (f) To work within the budgetary provision for the LDF, as approved by the Cabinet and the Council.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs (6) and (24) of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution requires that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order (6) (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Cabinet Committee and the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

6. TOWN CENTRES STUDY (Pages 5 - 10)

(Director of Planning & Economic Development) To consider the attached report (LDF-005-2010/11).

7. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (Pages 11 - 28)

(Director of Planning & Economic Development) To consider the attached report (LDF-006-2010/11).

8. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

(Director of Planning & Economic Development) To provide a verbal update on any information received from the Government at the meeting.

9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESSExclusion

To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
Nil	Nil	Nil

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Confidential Items Commencement

Paragraph (9) of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00pm at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers

Paragraph (8) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and

- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

Report to the Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: LDF-005-2010/11
Date of meeting: 13 July 2010

Portfolio: Leader

Subject: Town Centres Study

Responsible Officer: Kevin Wright (01992 564095)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To note the content of the Town Centres Study as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base

Executive Summary:

The Town Centres Study provides the first comprehensive assessment of retail and leisure provision across the District's main centres. The study provides an understanding of the current state of retail and leisure provision in each of the main centres. Using this base the study then provides an assessment of future retail and leisure need in terms of both quantity of floorspace and the quality of the offer. This assessment of future need will help to guide decision making on policies in the Core Strategy for each of the District's main centres.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Local Development Framework must be based on robust and up-to-date evidence, and a number of technical studies have been commissioned to provide this evidence. The Town Centres Study provides information about retail and leisure uses in the District's six main centres as identified in the existing Local Plan, which will be used to formulate policies in the emerging LDF.

Other Options for Action:

Not to include the Study as part of the Evidence Base.

Report:

1. PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth requires local planning authorities to prepare an evidence base to plan for town centres in the future. PPS4 requires that an assessment is made of the current health of the District's main centres, that the role of each centre is considered, in particular relative to other centres in the area, and that the need for future retail and leisure development is assessed.

2. Roger Tym & Partners were appointed in March 2009 to undertake the Town Centres Study. At that time PPS6 Town Centres was the national policy that required local planning authorities to assess the main centres within their area. PPS6 was replaced in December 2009 by PPS4 although the need to assess the centres within the District remained. As a

result the decision was made to revise the first draft of the Study to take account of the new PPS4 and to include more up to date financial information that had become available since the completion of the research on the study. As a result of these changes the completion of the study was delayed.

3. The study provides information on the six main centres as defined by the current Local Plan, including coverage of the main uses within each of those centres and the amount of floorspace in each use, the capacity for the centre to grow or change its position within the hierarchy of centres, the interest from retailers that are looking to move into the centre, existing rents within the primary shopping areas, and the ease with which people can assess the centre by different forms of transport.

4. The project brief required that the study be carried out in accordance with PPS6, later replaced by PPS4, and in addition that an assessment be made of existing Local Plan policy on retaining a percentage of retail frontage within the six main centres (policy TC4). In carrying out the research a household telephone survey and visitor survey were conducted. The household telephone survey was used to assess the shopping patterns of residents within the District for their main food and grocery, top up, non-food shopping and leisure activities. The visitor survey provided information on the reasons why people visited each centre, likes and dislikes of each centre, comparison goods shopping behaviour and the demographic profile of visitors.

5. Both surveys were carried out by NEMS market research. 800 people were interviewed across the study area for the telephone survey. This number of interviewees is statistically robust as a sample of the total population and is consistent with similar surveys conducted in other local authority areas. For the visitor survey 500 random interviews were carried out on the street across the six centres. Again this number of surveys is statistically robust and enables the significance of the results to be measured. In addition to these surveys, Roger Tym & Partners made contact with Epping Town Council, Waltham Abbey Town Centre Partnership, Loughton Town Council, Loughton High Road Town Centre Partnership, Ongar Town Forum and Buckhurst Hill Parish Council as part of a stakeholder consultation.

Key Findings

6. The study looked at the centres of Epping, Loughton High Road, Waltham Abbey, Loughton Broadway, Chipping Ongar and Buckhurst Hill, the six main centres as defined in the existing Local Plan.

7. In some respects the District is unique as it is located on the edge of Greater London and some parts have excellent access via public transport into the City of London and the West End. In addition there are several higher order centres located a short distance outside the District, including Harlow, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Romford and Ilford, that draw a significant amount of retail and leisure spending away from the District. The household telephone survey asked interviewees about their spending in these centres along with specialist shopping centres such as Lakeside and Bluewater. The District has no town centres that perform a similar role to these surrounding larger higher order centres. The six centres in the District are all of a lower order and provide services and facilities that reflect their size and role relative to the surrounding centres.

8. Nationally there has been a trend of people spending more in larger higher order centres to the detriment of smaller local centres. Also there has been a rise in alternative forms of retailing, in particular trading over the internet. The smaller centres in the District may be susceptible in future to these changes to shopping patterns and habits.

9. Changes are suggested to the existing hierarchy of centres. In the Local Plan the six centres are defined as follows: Principal (Epping, Loughton High Road, Waltham Abbey), Smaller (Loughton Broadway, Chipping Ongar) and District (Buckhurst Hill – Queens Road East). Based on the assessments of vitality and viability for each centre the study recommends that the hierarchy for the six centres is revised.

10. Taking into account the definitions for different centres used in PPS4 the suggested revision is to Town Centre (Epping, Loughton High Road) and Small District Centre (Waltham Abbey, Loughton Broadway, Chipping Ongar, Buckhurst Hill). Those suggested as Small District Centres do not fully meet the district centre definition in PPS4. However they do have a wider role than the definition given for local centre and therefore the compromise of Small District Centre is recommended. However variations on this suggested terminology can be considered as part of the Local Development Framework process.

11. In terms of future development for the centres in the District, capacity is identified for comparison retailing and convenience retailing. Comparison retail covers non-food items such as clothing, furniture and electrical goods for which some comparison is normally made before purchase. Convenience retail covers everyday items such as food, newspapers and drinks which are purchased regularly. Capacity is also identified for food and drink leisure uses; this includes bars, restaurants and entertainment venues such as cinemas, bingo halls and bowling alleys.

12. The quantitative need for new floorspace for the District is summarised in Table 8.2 on page 88, Volume 1 of the Town Centres Study (see Appendix 1 to this report). The figures showing quantitative need are for the periods 2009 to 2016, 2009 to 2021 and 2009 to 2031. This is as per the guidance in national policy to look at need within 5 and 10 years and to provide indicative figures for the full extent of the plan period. The figures for 2031 are indicative only and less weight is put on these given the length of time into the future.

13. The headline figures for the District are:

(a) capacity for A1 comparison retail is identified up to 2016 of 13,700 sqm and up to 2021 of 21,600 sqm;

(b) capacity for A1 convenience retail (superstores or supermarkets) is identified up to 2016 of 3,700 sqm and up to 2021 of 4,900 sqm; and

(c) capacity for A1 convenience retail (small foodstores or deep discounters) is identified up to 2016 of 3,600 sqm and up to 2021 of 4,800 sqm

14. To put these figures in a real world context the following stores in the District have gross floorspace figures as follows; Tesco, Epping (2,760 sqm), Sainsbury's, Loughton (4,150 sqm) and the recently opened Lidl, Waltham Abbey (1,640 sqm). In line with national policy new retail capacity would need to be located in the existing six centres. The study suggests locating new retail at the following locations; St John's in Epping, at the Brown's car showroom site in Loughton (granted planning permission for retail in May 2009), along with intensification of the existing floorspace in that centre and on the sites previously identified for redevelopment in Loughton Broadway. The study also suggests some small scale redevelopment in Waltham Abbey, Chipping Ongar and Buckhurst Hill although it acknowledges the limited number of available sites, at present, in those centres.

15. The figures for comparison and convenience retail are based on an increased market share scenario. This approach seeks to increase the share of the market that the six centres have for all retail spending by residents of the District. In practice this means a change of shopping patterns through the development of new retail floorspace within the District. The

figures are based on “front loading” this additional floorspace into the earlier part of the time period to bring about the change in shopping patterns and hence market share.

16. In qualitative terms the study gives a clear message that there is reasonably high levels of expenditure leakage from the district for both comparison and convenience goods and there is an opportunity to “claw back” some of this expenditure to the District. In addition there is modest overtrading of the existing foodstores. This existing overtrading combined with expenditure leakage to larger stores outside the district means there is scope to improve the convenience retail offer in order to increase choice and competition. Also in terms of improving the retail quality of the centres there is scope to accommodate national multiples to provide for local needs and provide a balance between independents and higher order operators. Requirements for floorspace indicate there is demand, in particular from some clothing operators, to occupy space in the larger centres i.e. Epping and Loughton High Road.

17. For leisure the assessment found that there was potential for development to improve the local commercial leisure provision. The summary of quantitative need shows a floorspace need for bars, cafes and restaurants (A3, A4 and A5 uses). For other commercial leisure uses there is some scope for cinema provision within the District. However the study concludes that due to the lack of higher order centres in the District and large centres such as Harlow and Romford being nearby there is not expected to be scope for a multiplex cinema within the District. The study suggests a more realistic option would be to encourage a small art house cinema to improve competition and provide an alternative to a large multiplex.

18. The quantitative figures for new retail floorspace within the District have been disaggregated by the consultants who make a recommendation as to how the new floorspace could be split between the six centres. However as the study points out the final decision on the location of new retail floorspace will be made within the Core Strategy.

19. The review of the Local Plan policy on retail frontages (policy TC4) states that the frontages policy is generally performing well and there are no major gaps in the shopping frontages. The recommendation is made that future policy on retail frontage may need to separate out primary and secondary frontage (in line with PPS4). For any new secondary frontage the policy could be relaxed to encourage new non-retail operators (in particular higher quality A3/A5 food and drink leisure uses) to enter the market and provide a greater diversity of uses.

Resource Implications:

This study cost £42,437 (excluding VAT) and has been funded by the LDF budget.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None relevant

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None relevant

Consultation Undertaken:

None at this stage, although the study will be part of the Evidence Base for the Core Strategy and will therefore be subject to public consultation at appropriate times.

Background Papers:

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

None

Equality and Diversity:

Preparation of the Local Development Framework as a whole will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment at a later date.

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? N/A

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? N/A

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A

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Report to the Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: LDF-006-2010/11
Date of meeting: 28 June 2010

Portfolio: Leader

Subject: Local Development Framework Engagement Strategy

Responsible Officer: Kate Hallé (01992 564481).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the principles and methods set out in the Local Development Framework (LDF) engagement strategy be approved as an approach for consulting the community in the forthcoming preparation of spatial development plans.

Executive Summary:

This report sets out an approach to engaging with key stakeholders, interested parties and the community in the early stages of the forthcoming Local Development Framework (LDF). The Council is committed to providing the local community with opportunities to shape the place in which they live and has developed an approach to engagement designed to make this achievable.

The recent change in Government has created some uncertainty about the future direction of the planning system – it is yet to be confirmed whether local planning authorities will be required to continue with spatial planning in the LDF format. As such the approach set out below is designed to be flexible; setting out a series of principles for future engagement. The report focuses on engagement at the evidence base stage as it is considered that this element of the planning process will remain, however the system may be altered.

Any devolution of decision making and increased public participation in policy making and planning can have an impact on officer time and resources. The aim is to produce an engagement strategy that is:

- (a) focused using both tested and innovative methods;
- (b) provides an adopted structure/format for officers and the community to work with; and
- (c) is cost effective.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To provide a formalised and adaptable strategy for engaging with key local stakeholders and the general public in the production of spatial plans (currently the LDF).

Other Options for Action:

To not approve a Local Development Framework Engagement Strategy. However,

stakeholder and public engagement is a statutory requirement in the production of the LDF and the Core Strategy may be found unsound if there is no robust evidence of this.

Report:

Communicating positively with the community

1. Positive and effective communication is essential in order to engage successfully on spatial planning, particularly with the general public where consultation fatigue and previous negative consultation experiences can act as a barrier.

2. The Council has previously produced a draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to set out its approach to consulting with the community on the LDF and planning applications. This engagement strategy will feed into the development of the SCI which, subject to new changes in the planning system, will be adopted at a later date.

3. The Council has a corporate consultation strategy which is compatible with the approaches set out within this engagement strategy and will be cross-referenced when consultation tasks are developed in more detail.

4. It is suggested that the following methods are considered in order to communicate a strong, positive message that will encourage people to become involved with planning for the future of their community:

(a) *LDF branding* - develop a simple and recognisable 'brand' for the LDF. This can include logos, straplines, and a design theme to emphasise linkages between LDF components and attract attention from the general public;

(b) *Principles of engagement* - develop a set of principles of engagement for the LDF to ensure that a consistent approach that allows the Council to meet and exceed its statutory consultation requirements;

(c) *Alternative consultation methods* - Consider alternative consultation methods as well as more traditional methods such as writing letters and making documents available in local libraries. More innovative methods such as poster campaigns, social media, the use of a dedicated website or a family fun day have the potential to attract a significant level of interest and engage with a wider section of the community; and

(d) *Partnership working* - Work closely with other Directorates within Epping Forest District Council. There may be opportunities to link in with other consultation activities and the feedback received.

Principles of engagement

5. A series of principles of engagement have been developed to ensure a consistent approach that allows the Council to meet and exceed its statutory consultation requirements. This approach also helps to tailor engagement activities to ensure that the Council gets as much useful consultation feedback as possible within the resources available. Unfortunately consulting directly with everyone in the district is unmanageable in terms of budgets and officer time. These principles are:

(i) the level of community involvement should be appropriate to the role of the plan or study in question;

(ii) Engagement should form part of a continuous programme, not be a one-off event;

- (iii) public involvement should be transparent and accessible;
- (iv) consultation methods used should be appropriate to the communities concerned;
- (v) use information gathered through other consultations where possible – e.g. the Local Strategic Partnership has just undertaken consultation for a revised Sustainable Community Strategy, which can form part of the LDF evidence base;
- (vi) produce accessible report summaries of consultation results at the end of each DPD stage;
- (vii) all communication throughout the LDF consultation should be directed through generic telephone and email contacts rather than named team members, e.g. *Contact the planning team on 01992 564517, email us on LDFconsult@eppingforest.gov.uk*;
- (viii) consultation questionnaires need to be very carefully developed if they are to engage with the desired audience and provide meaningful feedback that can be analysed within the Council's resources and LDF timescales. There should be a mostly quantitative, theme-based approach to questionnaire design. Questionnaire design should be engaging, accessible and user-friendly; and
- (ix) consideration should be given to the use of prize incentives where undertaking wide public consultation through questionnaires – e.g. may be appropriate for Core Strategy Issues and Options (complete our questionnaire, enter into prize draw). Chelmsford Borough Council found this approach helpful with their CS Issues and Options.

Preparation and evidence gathering (stage one)

6. Engaging with the community in the preparation and evidence gathering stage is the first element of consultation in the production of an LDF Core Strategy. In the event that the planning system is altered it is anticipated that the Council's spatial planning policies will still require a robust evidence base which will include community engagement as part of the new Government's localism agenda.

7. There is currently a statutory requirement to engage with the community in the production of a Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD). PPS12 states that the evidence base should be comprised of:

- *participation* – evidence of the views of the local community and others who have a stake in the future of the area; and
- *research/fact-finding* – evidence that the choices made by the plan are backed up by the background facts.

8. The guidance also states that the need to engage with the community is proportionate to the job being undertaken by the DPD and that early and effective involvement of key stakeholders and the community should ensure that there are fewer objections or issues arising at a later stage.

Consultees

9. Government planning guidance identifies four main types of consultee groups for DPD production (see Appendix 1 for a draft list). The Forward Planning department already maintains an up-to-date database of relevant consultees and this will be used to form the

groups set out below:

(a) *Statutory consultees* – There is a statutory requirement for the Council to consult with all bodies in this group. Consultees in this group include adjoining local authorities, English Heritage, Thames Water;

(b) *General consultees* – The Council has statutory discretion over which general consultees it consults, although as the Core Strategy is such a significant part of the LDF it is suggested that they are all involved. They include local voluntary bodies, religious groups, residents' associations, local businesses and action groups;

(c) *Other interested parties* – The Council has statutory discretion over which other interested parties it consults with. This group is mostly comprised of regional/national bodies including CABE, National Trust, Friends of the Earth, etc;

(d) *General public* – The Council has a statutory requirement to demonstrate that the 'views of the community' have formed part of the DPD evidence base.

Consultation methods

10. There are a variety of consultation methods proposed for each consultee group at the preparation and evidence gathering stage. These are set out in more detail in Appendix 2.

Formal letter: Core Strategy content

11. Sets out the subject of the Core Strategy and invites representations on what the statutory consultees consider it should contain. The letter should suggest some key themes on which the Council is inviting comment in order to make feedback more manageable (Relevant group: Statutory consultees, general consultees, other interested parties).

Formal letter: Evidence base

12. Each time the Council consults on an evidence base report or study a letter should be sent to each of the statutory consultees. The letter should consider suggesting key themes on which the Council is inviting comment in order to make feedback more manageable (Relevant group: Statutory consultees, general consultees, other interested parties).

Stakeholder meetings

13. It is important to undertake meaningful dialogue with key stakeholders in order to identify issues for the Core Strategy to address and to start thinking about what options may be appropriate. A programme of meetings should be developed with appropriate statutory consultees such as neighbouring planning authorities. The meetings should use a pro-forma to ensure that discussion remains focused and that there is useful output for informing the next stage of the Core Strategy (Relevant group: Statutory consultees, general consultees).

Organisation Issues questionnaire

14. It is important to offer the organisations within the general consultee group the opportunity to provide the Council with their views on the vision and issues for the Core Strategy. This can be achieved through a thematically designed questionnaire, to accompany the formal letter. It is important to offer this group two methods of commenting as some organisations will be quite formal and expect to be treated as such, whilst others will be less so and will require a more accessible and less time-consuming approach (Relevant group: General consultees).

LDF summary leaflet

15. The LDF summary leaflet will introduce the LDF and explain in plain-English the key milestones and documents that are involved. This leaflet could be the start of a new identity for the LDF, helping to create a more positive relationship between the Council and the local community. The leaflet will include headline information from this LDF engagement strategy so the community can see in advance when it will be able to participate and how. It may be possible to also distribute this information through existing formats, e.g. The Forester newsletter. It should be noted that the content of this leaflet will be subject to any changes to the present planning system made by the new Government (Relevant group: General consultees, other interested parties, general public).

Stakeholder Issues Workshop

16. All General Consultees (plus adjoining LPAs) should be invited to attend a Stakeholder Issues workshop. The purpose of the workshop will be to identify the key issues for the Core Strategy to address and get feedback on the development of a vision for the plan. Registration prior to the workshop will be mandatory for health and safety management and to enquire whether particular access arrangements are required (Relevant group: General consultees).

Hard-to-Reach groups

17. Engagement with these groups should be covered through the invitation to the Issues Workshop, potential stakeholder meetings and LDF summary leaflet. However, they should be contacted early in the engagement process to understand any specific requirements they may have.

18. Guidance from CLG identifies 'hard-to-reach groups' as bodies which represent the interests of the following within the local authority's area:

- Different ethnic or national groups;
- Different religious groups;
- Disabled people; and
- People carrying on business.

(Relevant group: General consultees).

LDF web pages

19. The LDF webpage on the Council website should set out all the information contained within the LDF leaflet including links to evidence base reports, indicative timescales, link to Facebook page and information of future engagement opportunities (Relevant group: Statutory consultees, general consultees, other interested parties, general public).

Facebook

20. It is proposed that the LDF team set up Facebook page for the LDF. The Core Strategy / LDF branding launch can be first news item. The page will provide access to the LDF summary leaflet, news on consultations and links to the Council's LDF pages. It is recommended that the facility for the general public to comment directly on the 'wall' is disabled as it will be difficult to monitor abusive comments and it would be more constructive to direct people to the appropriate consultation channels. This method should be particularly successful for engaging with younger people (Relevant group: General consultees, other

interested parties, general public).

Further early public engagement?

21. Ideally consultation with the general public would be carried out at this early stage in order to gain a thematic overview of key issues for Epping Forest over the plan period and a vision for the future.

22. If the Council decides further information on the views of the community is required then a good approach would be to add a Vision and Issues questionnaire to the LDF/planning process summary leaflet. Any questionnaire produced at this stage should be clear and concise, use plain language and rely on quantitative data where possible whilst allowing a carefully controlled opportunity for more general comment.

23. Once there is more information available about the direction of the planning system under the new Government the Council will need to consider whether this is something it wishes to do or whether the results of the SCS Community Engagement plus feedback from Statutory/General consultees on evidence base studies are sound enough to produce a robust evidence base on which to develop a spatial plan.

24. It should be noted that front-loading with the community is considered good practice. This means involving people from the start of the plan process. The Council needs to demonstrate that it has had an open dialogue with the community from the first stage of the plan, rather than the first thing people see being a series of development options at a later stage.

Evidence base studies

25. It is considered that involving the general public in consulting on technical evidence base studies can be counter-productive; in some cases resulting in confusion and consultation fatigue.

26. It is suggested that the approach to engagement on evidence base studies is not to contact the general public directly, rather to create awareness of and provide access to reports via the LDF webpage. This could include a few thematic questions set out on the website to encourage the general public to respond in a manageable way if they chose to do so.

27. It is suggested that local community groups (identified in Appendix 1) are sent a plain-English letter and summary guide explaining the study and what the Council is seeking their views on. Statutory consultees (identified in Appendix 1) will receive a formal consultation letter.

Resource Implications:

An estimate for the costs of public engagement throughout the preparation of the LDF was presented to Cabinet in December 2007. It will be appropriate to reconsider this budget and the amounts that have been attributed to various functions once the proposals of the Coalition government become clear.

Legal and Governance Implications:

No relevant implications

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

No relevant implications

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (June 2008)
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008
Communities and Local Government – Plan Making Manual
EFDC Consultation Strategy – A Guide to Consultation 2006/2007

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

Risk to the LDF not being found “sound” by the Inspector at the public examination due to insufficient consideration of the views of the local community.

Equality and Diversity:

Preparation of the Local Development Framework as a whole will be subject to an on-going Equality Impact Assessment, as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. The finalised Engagement Strategy will identify issues relating to equality and diversity in spatial planning. It will then set out methods for ensuring that these issues are considered throughout any consultation undertaken e.g. the provision of materials in a format suitable for blind or visually impaired people.

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
None.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
None.

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Statutory consultation bodies

Hertfordshire County Council
Essex County Council
Mayor of London
Brentwood Borough Council
Chelmsford Borough Council
London Borough of Enfield
London Borough of Havering
London Borough of Redbridge
London Borough of Waltham Forest
East Herts District Council
Harlow District Council
Braintree District Council
Uttlesford District Council
Borough of Broxbourne
City of London
Town and Parish Councils
The Environment Agency
English Heritage
Natural England
Secretary of State for Transport
London Development Agency
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
Mobile Operators Association
Essex County Council Schools Service
National Grid / Transco
Npower Renewables
24 Seven Utility Services
NTL
Thames Water Property Services Ltd
Three Valleys Water
Anglian Water Services
British Telecom PLC
West Essex Primary Care Trust
Epping Forest Primary Care Trust
Essex Strategic Health Authority
Network Rail
Highways Agency
Homes and Communities Agency
Police authority

General consultation bodies

Organisations that represent groups within the community, including 'hard-to-reach' groups. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive, additional work will be undertaken to develop it further.

BME

East of England Black and Minority Ethnic Network
Barking and Dagenham Punjabi Welfare Association
Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College

Disabled

Epping Forest District Access Group
Chigwell Disabled Group
Epping Forest District Access
Essex Disabled Peoples Association

Religious groups

LSP Multi-faith forum
Quakers Religious Society of Friends
Epping Forest Youth for Christ
St Edmund's Roman Catholic Church
Church of the Immaculate Conception
Lee Valley Church
Diocesan Office
St John's Church
Chigwell and Hainault Synagogue
St Mary's Church
St Alban's Church
St Mary the Virgin Church
All Saints Church – Epping Upland
Waltham Abbey
St Mary's Church
St Elizabeth's C of E Church
St John the Baptist Church
Loughton Chigwell and District Synagogue
St Thomas Moore Roman Catholic Church
St Michaels Church
St Marys Church
Buckhurst Hill Baptist church
St Nicholas Church
Trinity church
St Martins church
Ongar United Reform church
St Winifred's Church
St Andrews Church
Loughton and Union Baptist Church
United Reformed Church Epping
All Saints Church
Chigwell Covent Chapel
Forest Evangelical church
Goldings Hill Free Church
Princes Road Evangelical Church
St James Church
St John's Church

St Mary Magdalen Church
St Mary the Virgin Church
St Marys Church
St Stephen's Church
St Thomas Moore Roman Catholic Church
Waltham Abbey Baptist Church
Methodist Churches

Voluntary (group by theme)

Residents Associations

Loughton Residents Association
Waltham Abbey Residents Association
Green Lane Residents Association
Paternoster North Residents Association
Green Lane Residents Association

Conservation / Forest

North Weald Bassett and District Rural Preservation Society
Voluntary Action Epping Forest
Abbess and White Roding Conservation Society
Theydon Bois Rural Preservation Society
Abbess, Beauchamp and Berners Roding Conservation Society
Epping Forest Countrycare
Naezing Conservation Society
Hainault forest Community Association
Conservators of Epping Forest
Trustees of Naezing Wood or Park
Friends of Epping Forest
Rural Community Council of Essex
Tree Warden Coordinator for Loughton

Action Groups

Bassett Community Action Group
Roydon Action Group
Keep Nazeing Green
Naezing Action Group

Leisure

West Essex Rambles Association
North Weald Airfield Users Group

Other

Forest Vederer
Loughton and District Historical Society
Theydon Mounth PC / Essex Bridleways Association
Epping Society
The Inland Waterways Association
Hills Amenity Society
Home Start Epping Forest
Buckhurst Hill Meeting Room Trust
The Roydon Society

Business

Buckhurst Hill Town Centre Partnership
Buckhurst Hill Town Centre Partnership
Epping Town Centre Partnership

Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership
Loughton High Road Town Centre Partnership
Ongar Town Centre Partnership
Waltham Abbey Partnership
Federation of Small Businesses
Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership
Ongar Town Forum
Interact – Bridges to Work
Debden Traders Association
Lee Valley Growers Association
Village Rural Shops
Essex Security and Fire Protection Service Association
Alliance

Gay and lesbian community

The Council has a stand at Essex Pride in September 2010 and opportunities to engage through this will be explored.

Other consultation bodies

This list is based on suggestions from the CLG Plan Making Manual on the PAS website. They are suggestions of who the local authority may wish to consult if appropriate to the Core Strategy.

Age Concern
Airport Operators Association
British Geological Survey
British Toilet Association
British Waterways and other canal owners and navigation authorities
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
Chambers of Commerce, local CBI and local branches of the Institute of Directors
Chemical Business Association
Church Commissioners
Civil Aviation Authority
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)
Crown Estate Office
Diocesan board of finance
Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
Electricity, gas and telecommunications companies and the National Grid Company
Environmental groups at the national, regional and local level such as the CPRE, Friends of the Earth, RSPB
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Fire and rescue services
Forestry Commission
Freight Transport Association
Gypsy Council
Health and Safety Executive
Help the Ages
Higher and further education institutions
Home Builders Federation
Homes and Communities Agency
Learning Skills Council
Local Agenda 21 organisations
National Playing Fields Association
Passenger transport authorities

Passenger transport executives
Port operators
Post Office property holdings
Regional development agencies
Regional housing boards
Regional sports boards
Road Haulage Association
Sport England
The Theatres Trust
Train operating companies
Transport for London
Traveller Law Reform Project
Water companies
Women's National Commission

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Appendix 2 : Preparation And Evidence Base - Engagement Process Schedule Draft June 2010

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	WHO WE WILL CONSULT	HOW WE WILL CONSULT	WHEN WE WILL CONSULT	WHAT WE WANT TO FIND OUT	NOTES	REGS
1 Preparation and evidence gathering	Formulation of a robust evidence base on which (along with national / regional guidance) the Issues and Options will be developed.	Statutory consultees MUST be all of them (see Appendix A) <i>e.g.</i> East of England RA Adjoining authorities Environment Agency English Heritage Thames Water	Formal letter – Core Strategy content Setting out the subject of the CS DPD and inviting representations on what the CS should contain. June Formal letters – Evidence base Set out plain-english guide to each evidence base study we produce and how to make comment. tbc Stakeholder meetings Programme of meetings with appropriate statutory consultees (e.g. neighbouring LAs) using a pro forma to seek their view on key issues and ‘vision’ for the future. Jun-Aug	tbc	Thematic overview of key issues for EF over the plan period and views of the community on what the vision’ for the future should be.	PPS12 states that the evidence base should be comprised of ‘evidence of the views of the community and others that have a stake in the future of the area’.	Reg. 25
		General consultees EFDC have discretion over which general consultees they consult, however as CS is significant should be all. <i>e.g.</i> Voluntary bodies Minority ethnic groups Religious groups Disabled people Local businesses Residents Associations Action Groups	Formal letter - Core Strategy content Setting out the subject of the CS DPD and inviting representations on what the CS should contain. To include a questionnaire to ensure responses are structured. June Formal letters – Evidence base Set out plain-english guide to each evidence base study we produce and how to make comment. tbc LDF summary leaflet mailout Setting out LDF process, consultation approach and how to get involved. June Stakeholder meetings Programme of meetings with appropriate general consultees (e.g. forums for disabled people or ethnic groups) using a pro forma to seek their view on key issues and ‘vision’ for the future. Jun-Aug Invite to CS Stakeholder Issues Workshop Brief introduction to CS and workshops to identify views on key issues and a vision for the future Include adjoining authorities from statutory consultee list in this. Aug Hard-to-Reach groups Open a dialogue with these groups and discuss best methods of working with them to identify	tbc	Thematic overview of key issues for EF over the plan period and a ‘vision’ for the future.	Need to decide whether LDF leaflet should just set out our approach or whether we should take this opportunity to get some feedback on the vision and issues for the next stage. Issue of demonstrating early engagement / front-loading Vs time and resources	Reg. 25

		<p>their vision aspirations and issues. <i>tbc</i></p> <p>Council website Information contained within the LDF leaflet including links to evidence base reports, indicative timescales, link to Facebook page, future methods of engagement.</p>				
	<p>Other interested parties EFDC have discretion over which general consultees they consult, however as CS is significant should be all.</p> <p><i>These are general/regional - national bodies e.g.</i></p> <p><i>CABE</i> <i>CBI</i> <i>Civil Aviation Authority</i> <i>National Trust</i> <i>Friends of the Earth</i> <i>Forestry Commission</i> <i>etc</i></p>	<p>Formal letter - Core Strategy content Setting out the subject of the CS DPD and inviting representations on what the CS should contain. To include a questionnaire to ensure responses are structured. <i>June</i></p> <p>Formal letters – Evidence base Set out plain-english guide to each evidence base study we produce and how to make comment. <i>Tbc</i></p> <p>LDF summary leaflet mailout Setting out LDF process, consultation approach and how to get involved. <i>June</i></p>	tbc	Thematic overview of key issues for EF over the plan period and a 'vision' for the future.		Reg. 25
	<p>General public</p>	<p>LDF summary leaflet mailout Setting out LDF process, consultation approach and how to get involved. List evidence base studies. If FREEPOST questionnaire – very simple, max 10 questions, quantitative responses only. <i>June</i></p> <p>Need to consider distribution options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All households in district – e.g. Chelmsford BC put a flyer in Council tax bills ▪ Selection of a cross-section of Epping Forest residents (MOSAIC) ▪ Use of existing LDF database, based on Gypsies and Travellers consultation ▪ Leaflet drop inside local newspaper. ▪ Distribution through libraries, community centres, tube stations, local shops and pubs <p>Potential to add a few questions related to the Core Strategy to the next Place Survey carried out by the LSP – due this autumn. Will be a cost of approx £500 per question. Representative sampling, run by Mori.</p>	tbc	Thematic overview of key issues for EF over the plan period and a 'vision' for the future.	<p>Need to decide whether LDF leaflet should just set out our approach or whether we should take this opportunity to get some feedback on the vision and issues for the next stage.</p> <p>It might be that the general public object to not having the opportunity to express their views in the formation of the evidence base on which the CS Issues and Options will be based.</p> <p>Issue of demonstrating early engagement / front-loading Vs time and resources/consultation fatigue.</p> <p>Potential to use results from other forthcoming consultations – e.g. LSP / Place Survey. Concern that the Autumn may be a little late to form part of the</p>	Reg. 25

			<p>Evidence base studies Consider best approach is to list evidence base studies in LDF summary leaflet (use plain English guide) and inform that they will be available to view and comment on our website. <i>n/a</i></p> <p>Facebook Set up Facebook page for the LDF – Core Strategy launch can be first item. Add the LDF summary leaflet, news on consultations and links to the Council's LDF pages. Probably wise to disable facility for viewers to write on the page – difficult to monitor and given the current relationship between Council and certain residents groups may be more productive to steer them towards other communication channels to comment. Particularly good for engaging with younger people. Launch June</p>			<p>evidence base prior to Stage 2: Issues and Options.</p> <p>Potential to use results from recent previous consultations. E.g. The Sustainable Community Strategy has 'visions' and 'issues' – some of this will be relevant to the CS.</p>	
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