

Report to: Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel



Date of Meeting: 10 June 2010

Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services

Subject: Consultation Plan 2010/11 and Register 2009/10

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Consultation Plan for 2010/11 setting out those issues on which public consultation is planned to be undertaken during the municipal year, and detailing those consultation exercises completed during 2009/10, be noted.

Background

Every year a list of all consultation planned and carried out by the Council is published on the website and brought to the attention of the Finance, Performance Management Scrutiny Panel.

Report

1. During the latter part of 2005, the Audit Commission undertook a User Focus Assessment across Essex, looking at how effectively Councils engaged with local communities, the results of which have previously been reported to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel.
2. As a result of the User Focus Assessment, the need to develop robust consultation proposals in relation to the Council Plan for 2006-2010 and future Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), the Council's Consultation Strategy was adopted in April 2006. All consultation and engagement exercises undertaken by and on behalf of the Council are required to comply with the provisions of the Public Consultation and Engagement Strategy. A revised consultation guide was also produced in 2006 in order to standardise consultation approaches and methodologies wherever possible.

Consultation Plan and Register

3. As part of the Public Consultation and Engagement Strategy a Consultation Plan was developed and included in the Council's annual business planning process from 2006/07 onwards, in order to focus consultation and engagement on priorities and operational issues to be faced in the coming year.
4. The Consultation Plan for 2010/11 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report and sets out the issues on which individual services will be consulting or engaging residents or

customers during the year. The Consultation Plan sets out the overall objective for each consultation exercise, how each exercise will be undertaken and the methods and target groups consulted. In establishing this approach, it has been recognised that the need for some consultation exercises will arise subsequent to the publication of the Plan. It should also be noted that regular on-going satisfaction surveys such as housing report cards, or consultation carried out in relation to planning applications, will not be included within the Consultation Plan. A list of planned consultation exercises is also published on the Council's website.

6. The Consultation Register incorporates the results of consultation exercises undertaken during the preceding 12 months and gives detail as to the purpose, the start and finish dates, the service area carrying out the surveys, where the results were published and some key findings.

Community Engagement and Involvement

7. The Council carries out a wide range of community engagement and involvement activity. There were 25 surveys carried out in 2009/10 and a further 19 are planned for 2010/11. Amongst the larger surveys carried out by the Council in 2009/10 were the Local Strategic Partnership Survey 'Your Voice Matters', The Place Survey 'Tracker' and the Staff Equality Survey. Smaller consultation exercises were targeted at specific groups and projects such as the Conditions to be attached to permanent residential caravan site licences and The Youth Conference 2010 – Peer Consultation. A full list of these surveys can be seen in Appendices 1 and 2 and can also be found on the Council's website along with the start and finish dates and reports on their findings, where possible.

Online Consultation

8. Ten on-line, interactive surveys to reach a wider audience or specific targeted groups have been carried out in the last 18 months. Issues covered in the later part of 2009 and early 2010 using interactive technology were, 'Your Voice Matters, Local Strategic Partnership Survey, The Staff Equality Survey and currently the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Survey (Planning).
9. Many of the online surveys commissioned by the Council are carried out by the Consultation Officer using SNAP, a software application. SNAP enables survey respondents to input their answers directly via the internet. However, where online surveys are not appropriate to the target audience. SNAP can still provide the analysis's of data, manually entered. A second licence was therefore obtained for SNAP during 2010 to allow other officers of the Council to input such data.

National Indicator Place Survey (bi-annual)

10. The National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships, include a 'Place Survey', which is carried out every two years to collect data for citizen perspective indicators. The first Place Survey was undertaken as part of an Essex-wide consortium during 2008. This year, after a review by the CLG, the number of indicators has been reduced from 18 to 13 for 2010. The Place Survey asks the opinion of residents about their satisfaction levels with local services, where they live and local facilities. CLG gathers all Place Survey data and publishes findings nationally.
11. Legislation places a statutory requirement on Local Authorities to conduct Place Surveys every two years. However, many councils including Epping Forest District

Council choose to carry out a 'Tracker' survey in non-Place years, to more closely monitor public perception trends. Results of the 2009 Tracker Survey were reported to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel 22 April 2010.

12. Three parking surveys have been carried out on behalf of Epping Forest District Council by Essex County Council in Loughton, Epping, and Buckhurst Hill.

The Local Development Framework

One of the most significant ongoing elements within the Consultation Plan and Register remains the continued public engagement of Gypsy and Traveller Pitch provision and the Local Development Framework.

The Council has met most of the Gypsy and Traveller provisions outlined in the Government's Direction and has appealed repeatedly for the lifting of the Government's consultation requirements. Following the General Election, the Council is continuing to seek the co-operation of new Government ministers in lifting the Direction.

Lifting the Direction would enable the Council to focus more of its resources on other requirements in the new Local Development Framework. Notably, lifting the Direction would speed up consultation on the Core Strategy and associated issues such as Sustainability Appraisal which have slipped back in scheduling due to the demands of Gypsy and Traveller Consultation.

Reason for Decision:

12. That the Consultation Plan for 2010/11, setting out those issues on which public consultation is planned to be undertaken during the municipal year (Appendix 1) and those consultation exercises completed during 2009/10 (Appendix 2), be noted.

Resource Implications: None

Budget/Personnel/Land: None

Council Plan/Best Value Performance Plan Reference: Council Plan 2006-2010
Section 8 – 'How We Measure Achievements'

Relevant Statutory Powers: None

Background papers: None

Environment/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key Decision Reference: (if required) None

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLAN 2009 – 2010 - 2011

Ref	Subject Matter/Issues	Who Commissioned Survey	Dates	Objectives	Method
8091	1–5 The Birches - Hedge Reduction	Housing Management	Aug 2009 to Oct 2009	To get resident's views on the proposal to reduce height in hedge	Postal
8092	Margaret Close - Hedge Reduction	Housing Management North	Aug 2009 to Oct 2009	To get residents view on the proposal to reduce hedge in height	Postal
8093	Safer Communities Priorities, local community priorities	Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership	5 to 15 Aug 2009	To use the results to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy	Online
9091	England's Lane, Loughton - Fencing	Housing Appeals and Review Panel	15 to 25 Sept 2009	To consider removal of fencing along the footpath	Postal
9092	Local Strategic Partnership/ Planning - Residents views on the future development of the district	Local Strategic Partnership	1 Sep 2009 to 15 Nov 2009	Results will be used as input to the refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy	Leaflet surveys, on-line survey, survey in The Forester
10092	Coopersale - Bus Shelter	Ward Members	22 Oct to 13 Nov 2009	To provide an additional local amenity	Postal
11091	The National Indicator Place Survey Tracker 2009 - Customer satisfaction with services of the Local Strategic Partnership and the local area	Epping Forest District Council and Local Strategic Partnership	Nov to Dec 2009	To track the changes in the perception of residents based on the National Indicator Place Survey 2008	Postal Survey as part of the Essex Working Group.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLAN 2009 – 2010 - 2011

Ref	Subject Matter/Issues	Who Commissioned Survey	Dates	Objectives	Method
1101	Felling and trimming of Trees in Takeley Close	Housing Management North	Jan to Feb 2010	To seek residents views on the proposal to fell and trim trees in communal garden	Postal
1102	Tree felling in Newteswell Drive	Housing Management North	Jan to Feb 2010	To get residents views on the proposal to fell and trim trees in communal garden	Postal
1103	Takeley Close and Newteswell Drive - Replanting Trees in Communal Garden in	Housing Management North	Jan to Feb 2010	To get residents views on proposal to replace felled trees.	Letter
1104	Duck Lane - Removal of shrubs and bushes	Environmental Street Scene	Jan to Feb 2010	To get residents views on proposal to remove shrubs/bushes	Postal
2101	Careline Information Packs, Application Pack and New User Pack	Assistant Director (Operations)	24 Feb 2010 to 12 Mar 2010	To seek service users views on the content, format, text of the packs to ensure they are user friendly and cover all aspects of the Careline Service and Telecare equipment from initial enquiry to installation and after care.	Careline Pack presented to sheltered scheme residents
3101	Shelley Estate in Ongar - The needs and aspirations of the local community	Community Development Strategy requirement	4 Mar 2010	In order to inform the priorities for action for the Council's Community Development and Tenant Participation Teams and support local residents to re-form a Community Association to enhance community cohesion and participation.	A community event, involving information stalls, performances by local groups, entertainment etc and the opportunity to complete a poster style feedback consultation exercise

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLAN 2009 – 2010 - 2011

Ref	Subject Matter/Issues	Who Commissioned Survey	Dates	Objectives	Method
3102	The priority issues for young people living in the Epping Forest District.	The Epping Forest Youth Council	12 Mar 2010	To enable the EFYC to actively engage with their peers in order that they may understand the issues, concerns and priorities that local young people have. The EFYC will then lobby for the appropriate action to be taken in order that these issues are addressed. The EFYC will also form action groups to undertake project work to address the top three priorities raised by young people.	Five focus groups during the afternoon of the "Promoting Local Democracy" Youth Conference event. Focus Groups facilitated by young people, for young people. No direct cost for focus groups as delivered as part of wider youth democracy event.
3103	Limes Farm Estate - Potential community project to improve three communal recreational areas in Chigwell.	Community Development Strategy - SOA Action Plan	Mar 2010	To identify what the local community would like the three areas to look like and to identify volunteers to assist with the project.	Door to door survey and consultation with Limes Farm Community Association
3104	Roundhills - Jockey Railing in stairways, Waltham Abbey	Housing Management North	1 Mar to 14 Mar 2010	To seek residents views on the proposal to install railings to protect Housing greens by preventing vehicles parking on them.	Postal
5101	Oakwood Hill Estate -.The needs and aspirations of the local community	Community Development Strategy - SOA Action Plan	May 2010	In order to identify the needs of the local community and direct provision of services in the most appropriate way. Local residents will also be given the opportunity to join a Community Association.	A community consultation day involving a range of partner agencies providing information stalls and entertainment in order to engage members of the community in a consultation exercise
5102	The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	There is a statutory requirement for public consultation on the draft Scoping Report	17 May to 18 Jun 2010	Consultation on the 'scope' of the Sustainability Appraisal for the future Core Strategy	We will consult via the Epping Forest District Council website (SNAP), letters and email. Hard copies to be made available information centres, libraries, Parish Councils etc.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLAN 2009 – 2010 - 2011

Ref	Subject Matter/Issues	Who Commissioned Survey	Dates	Objectives	Method
5103	Debden Community Consultation Event	Community Services Business Plan 2009/11 - Supported by Assistant Director	14 May 2009	To consult residents regarding local service provision and their wider needs and aspirations in order to support the further development of a sustainable, active community. The event will involve a range of partners, including Epping Forest College, Essex Police, VAEF, Essex Library Service, local schools etc...The event will also enable local providers to signpost residents to key services.	The event is currently at the planning stage, however, it is anticipated that it will follow a similar format to previous consultation events held in Sheering, Roydon, Waltham Abbey and North Weald. A planning meeting scheduled for 26th March 2009.
A101	Buckhurst Hill - To seek residents views and comments on the proposed changes to parking restrictions, carried out by Essex County Council	Cabinet	2010	To review the impact of the parking restrictions imposed in and around Buckhurst Hill in 2007 and introduce changes to mitigate.	Postal survey, display boards where possible and residents access to technical officers to discuss proposals
A102	Loughton Broadway Parking Review - To seek residents views on proposed parking restrictions in the area to better manage car parking, carried out by Essex County Council	Cabinet	2010	To enable decision making on possible introduction of Controlled Parking Zones in the area	Postal surveys in the form of leaflets including a map of the local area, display boards in Loughton Town Council and Local Library
A103	Environment and Street Scene Contact Centre - To improve on the services provided to our customers	Director of Environment and Street Scene	Summer 2010. A four week period to be determined and additional four week period later in the year for comparison.	To obtain views on how customer contact centre staff deal with contacts made by the public	A questionnaire will be sent to randomly selected customers via the computer system. Postage charges and officer time, contained within budget

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION REGISTER 2009/10

Ref	Title Subject	Start Date	End Date	Report Date, Committee	Method and Cost	Key Results	How will the Results be Used	Where can the Results be Viewed
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2009

3091	Conditions to be attached to permanent residential caravan site licences	Mar-09	Oct-2009	Report to be presented to Cabinet	Postal consultation carried out by Park Home Legal Services	Three responses were received from site owner and residents associations relating to certain clauses within the proposed new licence. These were considered and, where appropriate amendments were made.	The results will be used to implement the new licence.	File kept within Housing Directorate, Private Sector (Technical
3092	Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012	Mar-2009	Jun-2009	Feedback passed to Director of Housing for incorporation into the final published Housing Strategy	Conference held at Jubilee Court sheltered housing scheme. Draft strategy posted to stakeholders with opportunity to feedback (those not attending the conference). Consultation with Tenants and Leaseholders Federation. Cost approximately £500	Feedback was noted and relevant comments were reflected in the final Housing Strategy, no changes were made to the Strategy	To complete the final Housing Strategy 2009 - 2010	Results held within the Housing Directorate. Final Housing Strategy downloadable from the Council's website.
3093	Homelessness Strategy 2009/10 - 2011/12	Jun-2009	Jul-2009	21 Aug 2009 Housing Portfolio Holder Report	Postal - £60	No adverse comments were received	Comments were considered and no changes were made to the Strategy	As an appendix to the Portfolio Holder report

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION REGISTER 2009/10

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4091	Shelley Open Space	Apr-2009	Apr-2009	N/A	Postal survey - Minimal cost	29 residents surveyed, all of whom live within the vicinity of the land in question. Of the 29 households, 15 did not respond to the survey, 7 were in favour of a change of use of the land proposed by Ongar Town Council	The results will help inform the Housing Directorate of public opinion when deliberating on the proposals presented by Ongar Town Council	Civic Offices - Housing Management North
5092	Gladeway, Waltham Abbey - Trees at entrance	May-2009	Jun-2009	N/A	Postal survey - Minimal cost	Out of the 12 residents consulted (living within the locality of the trees) 9 residents were in favour of the tree removal/replacement. 2 residents were not in favour	Four trees are to be removed and replaced with suitable alternative trees, in accordance with the majority view.	Results can be seen on the Housing Gladeway General File.
5094	Housing Clients - Post Interview Survey	May-2009	May-2009	N/A	Survey completed in person or by pre-paid post.	27 people were interviewed and nobody felt that the interview could be improved	To maintain a good service.	Within Housing Directorate/Housing Information & Strategy
6092	Epping - Parking Review	Jun-2009	Jul-2009	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Transport	Postal survey, display boards in the Civic Office with letter drop facilities, some residents spoke to officers of Essex County Council (ECC) and Epping Forest District Council, email responses. Cost met by ECC	Designs were changed when the majority were against the proposed changes.	There will shortly be a formal statutory consultation under the Traffic Management Act.	Essex County Council Offices in Harlow

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION REGISTER 2009/10

Ref	Title Subject	Start Date	End Date	Report Date, Committee	Method and Cost	Key Results	How will the Results be Used	Where can the Results be Viewed
8091	1-5 The Birches -Hedge to side and rear	Aug-2009	Oct-2009	N/A	Postal - Minimal cost	The majority had no objections to the proposals to reduce the hedge height	The hedge will be reduced to approximately 6ft.	On general file and held by the Area Housing Manager
8092	Margaret Close to Crooked Mile - Hedge in alleyway Leading from	Aug-2009	Oct-2009	N/A	Postal - Minimal cost	There were no objections to reducing the hedge height	The hedge will be reduced to approximately 6ft.	On general file and held by Area Housing Manager
8093	Safer Communities Partnership Priorities Selection	Aug-2009	Aug-2009	17th August 2009 to Safer Communities Partnership	Online and distributed by Police Officers - £300 and Officer time	Results are used in an ongoing way to improve the service offered	To help develop full consultation exercise for Safer Communities Scheme	Minutes of the Strategic Assessment Group - Safer Communities Partnership
9091	Englands Lane, Loughton - Fencing	Sep-2009	Sep-2009	Informal report to Housing Appeals and Review Panel October 2009.	Postal - Minimal cost.	There was insufficient support for removing the fencing.	The fencing will not be removed.	Results held at the Area Housing Office, The Broadway, Loughton
9092	Your Voice Matters Survey 2009	Sep-2009	Nov-2009	Reported back to Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Stakeholder Conference on 11 Dec 2009 and to LSP Board	Leaflet surveys, on-line survey, survey in The Forester. Actual cost £12,000	Key issues for the future that were identified, the environment, tackling emissions, protecting the green belt, crime	The results will be used as input to the Sustainable Community Strategy refresh	A report of survey results has been written and will be published on the One Epping Forest website
10091	Coopersale - Bus Shelter	Oct-2009	Nov-2009	N/A	Postal survey - Minimal cost	The results were passed to Ward Members who will recommend whether to go ahead with the bus shelter	Following Ward Members decision the report will be submitted to the Housing Portfolio Holder for a final decision	Results held within Housing Directorate

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION REGISTER 2009/10

Ref	Title Subject	Start Date	End Date	Report Date, Committee	Method and Cost	Key Results	How will the Results be Used	Where can the Results be Viewed
11091	The National Indicator Tracker Survey 2009.	Nov-2009	Dec-2009	Apr-2010	Postal survey, cost £6k approximately	Various indicator results some with a positive trend. There was one significant negative result – NI119 Overall health and wellbeing (-4.1)	The results will be used to enhance performance within the Council and its partners.	The Council's website in the Consultation Section and The One Epping Forest Website Observatory.
2010								
1101	Takeley Close – Felling Trees	Jan-2010	Feb-2010	N/A	Postal - Minimal cost	No residents objected to the proposal.	The trees will be felled and trimmed as planned	On general file held by Area Housing manager
1102	Newteswell Drive - Felling Trees	Jan-2010	Feb-2010	N/A	Postal - Minimal cost	One resident objected to the proposal and twenty one abstained	The trees will be felled and trimmed as planned	On general file held by Area Housing Manager
1103	Takeley Close and Newteswell Drive – Replanting Trees	Jan-2010	Feb-2010	N/A	Letter - Minimal cost	One objected and thirteen abstained	The trees will be replanted as planned	On general file and file held by Area Housing Manager
1104	40-46 Duck Lane - To remove the shrubs/bushes outside	Jan-2010	Feb-2010	N/A	Postal - Minimal cost	No objections to the proposals	The shrubs and bushes will be removed completely	Results held on the general file by Area Housing Manager.
2101	Careline Information Packs	Feb-2010	Mar-2010	N/A	Careline Pack presented to sheltered scheme residents - Minimal cost	Residents happy with the new format of the Careline Packs and the information contained within.	The new Careline Pack with be printed and implemented	Results fed back to the Housing Information and Strategy Team

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PUBLIC CONSULTATION REGISTER 2009/10

Ref	Title Subject	Start Date	End Date	Report Date, Committee	Method and Cost	Key Results	How will the Results be Used	Where can the Results be Viewed
A101	Buckhurst Hill - Parking Review	2010	2010	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Transport	Essex County Council (ECC) - Postal survey, display boards where possible and access to technical officers to discuss proposals - Cost met by ECC	Designs were changed to reflect majority view provided it was feasible and safe to do so.	The changes to designs will be used to carry out the formal Statutory consultation on the scheme towards the end of May 2010	Essex County Council Offices in Harlow
A102	Loughton Broadway - Parking Review	2010	2010	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Transport	Essex County Council - Postal surveys in the form of leaflets including a map of the local area, display boards in Loughton Town Council and Local Library. Cost met by ECC	Technical Officers of Essex County Council collated all responses and presented them to local District and County Councillors. The changes were then agreed.	To better inform the design process and allow formation of final statutory consultation process in July 2010	Essex County Council Offices in Harlow