

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 31 July 2012

Subject: Planning Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Richard Bassett

Recommending:

That the report of the Planning Portfolio Holder be noted.

Local Plan

I have been working closely with the Forward Planning group to ensure that we are in a position to start the Community Choice – Issues and Options consultation on 30 July. However after some very useful discussion at O&S on the Statement of Community Involvement it became clear that the existing timescales for the consultation would cause issues with many of the parish and town councils. Therefore following Cabinet discussions I have agreed to extend the deadline for responses to midday on 15 October. As I have previously said it is important that we have as many responses as possible to ensure that we can prove to the Inspector that we have done everything to ensure community engagement and consultation.

I have released all the supporting evidence to go with the Issues and Options consultation document. I signed a Portfolio Holder Decision to release the last document, the Glass House Industry report, last week. The final draft of the Issues and Options and other documentation went to the printers on the 20 July so they will be ready on time for the launch.

Also as part of the consultation we shall be writing to every householder and business to ensure they are fully aware and engaged. We will also be running a series of exhibitions and roadshows during the consultation to help people understand the details and to answer their questions. During the consultation members of the Forward Planning team and myself will be available to answer any questions and we have already has several requests to meet with Parishes to help them get started with the review process. For members information I have attached a copy of the engagement process for this phase of the Local Plan as an Appendix to my report.

Also to help with the engagement process I have been holding a series of briefings for the local press and also have completed a video blog to try to get maximum coverage. I shall be doing regular updates for members during the consultation as well as a formal update at the Local Plan Cabinet Committee on 3 September.

Other Items

I attended the Royal Town Planning Institute Annual Conference where they discussed Localism and Neighbourhood Planning - Theory into Practice. The Conference was about the issues and good practice in both and how you can merge them together. I have all the presentations available on a range of subjects if anyone is interested.

I also received an invitation from the Essex Planning Officers Association to a workshop designed for Portfolio Holders to receive a presentation on and to discuss the EPOA Demographic Forecasts project. This was on 17 July which clashed with O&S but I have asked for an update from the officers.

I have been meeting with various groups in planning and will be conducting reviews on processes and business ideas on how we can improve quality and efficiency in the department.

Appendix – Engagement Process for Local Plan

- 1.0 Engagement by a range of other stakeholders in plan making is required to ensure that a sound plan is submitted and that the plan addresses relevant strategic planning matters that cross authority boundaries - and hence the Council has fulfilled the Duty to Co-operate. This range of stakeholders is also informed during the defined periods of consultation but more specific engagement is also required to ensure close working. The other thread of engagement in plan making therefore engages a range of 'stakeholder' organisations and individuals encompassing the following:
- 1.1 Statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency, water companies, rail providers
 - 1.2 Parish and Town councils
 - 1.3 Neighbouring authorities with whom strategic planning matters are key to delivering the plan and hence fulfilling the Duty to Co-operate
 - 1.4 Other relevant interests such as in EFDC case the City of London Authority as owners of Epping Forest, and Lea Valley Regional Park Authority
 - 1.5 The owners of land and business in the area i.e. future private investors in the area – namely site owners and developers, and business.
- 2.0 The forthcoming Issues and Options engagement period is to include a range of activities shown in the table below.

3.0 Engagement Programme – Epping Forest District Local Plan Issues and Options

Target group	Event	Date / Time
Councillors of the District & Parish and Town Councils	Briefings	18 June 2012
Councillors of the District	Briefing Packs	18 June 2012
Parish and Town Councils	Briefing Packs	18 June 2012
Local Councils	Local Council Liaison Committee	5 July 2012
Press	Press Briefing	18 and 20 July 2012
All previous contacts for local plan matters	Mail out letters informing previous contacts about the engagement period. Approximately 11,000 contacts	25/26 July
Every registered	Leaflet	Beginning 27 July for approximately 4

home and business		days.
ALL	Online documentation and response forms	30 July – 15 th October
ALL	Telephone line – Officers will be on hand to answer any questions during the consultation period	30 July – 15 th October
Facebook & Twitter users	Event information, press releases, members of the public can also ask questions via these social media.	30 July – 15 th October
Commuters	Targeted stations with postcards for commuters	Dates between 30 July – 10 August 2012
General public Theydon Bois area	Unstaffed exhibition – Theydon Bois Village Hall	30 July 2012 – 12 August 2012
General Public Loughton area	Unstaffed exhibition – Loughton Library	30 July 2012 – 12 August 2012
Statutory consultees	Workshop to discuss their future programmes, understanding of current infrastructure capacity and deficits, and methods of future engagement in the plan making process. Technical information exchange. For example Environment Agency, Highways Agency. Invites to go out 17/18 July	6 August 2012
Statutory Consultees	Workshop with amenity/ residents groups. Invites to go out 17 July/18 July	7 August 2012
Statutory consultees	Individual meetings throughout the plan making period. Technical information exchange.	Mid August 2012 onward
General public Waltham Abbey area	Unstaffed exhibition – Waltham Abbey Library	13-26 August 2012
General public Ongar area	Unstaffed exhibition – Ongar Library	13-26 August 2012
Parish and Town Councils	1:1 sessions. Parishes have been advised that meetings on request can be organised to explain further the issues and options paper, ask about their own area and discuss how parishes might provide their responses. Invites to be sent 24	Mid August Onwards

	July.	
Developers/ land owners	Workshop to discuss the views of the industry on delivery of development – what type, how much and where they consider development could occur together with key constraints to development in the district. To supplement information in evidence base such as SLAA.	TBC – approximately mid august
Neighbouring Councils (incl City of London and Lea Valley Regional Park)	Individual meetings throughout the plan making period. Technical information exchange – fulfilling the Duty to Co operate.	Mid/late August 2012 onward
General public North Weald area	Unstaffed exhibition – North Weald Library	28 August – 10 September 2012
General public Lambourne area	Unstaffed exhibition – Stapleford Abbots Primary School	3 September – 16 September 2012
General public Sheering area	Sheering Village Hall, General public drop in session (Staffed, Q&A)	4 September 2012 17.00–21.00
General public Epping area	Jack Silley Pavillion, Epping, General public drop in session (Staffed Q&A)	5 September 2012 17.00-21.00
General public Roding area	Roding Valley Hall, General public drop in session (Staffed Q&A)	6 September 2012 17.00- 21.00
General public Fyfield area	Fyfield Village Hall, General public drop in session (Staffed Q&A)	10 September 2012 17.00–21.00
General public Waltham Abbey area	Waltham Abbey Town Hall, General public drop in session (Staffed Q&A)	11 September 2012 17.00-21.00
Hard to Reach Group Youth Council	EFDC Offices	11 September 2012 19.00 - TBC
General public Abridge area	Abridge Village Hall, General public drop in session (Staffed Q&A)	12 September 2012 17.45 -21.00
General public Roydon area	Roydon Marina, General public drop in session (Staffed Q&A)	13 September 2012 17.30 – 21.00
GRT community/other hard to reach groups	<u>Targeted engagement, hand delivered information.</u>	

We are also open to other parishes requesting local sessions and officers will be available all through the consultation period to answer questions from members of the public or to supply paper copies or information should they not be able to access the reports online.