COUNCIL
BULLETIN

Issue Number 41/2018
Friday, 12 October 2018

Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Compiled, designed and produced by
The Directorate of Governance - Democratic Services

Assistant Director – Governance - Simon Hill
Telephone: 01992 564000

PART A - FORWARD DIARY

Key to abbreviations:

CC	Council Chamber	**Cab Off**	Cabinet Office
CR1	Committee Room 1	**CONF**	Conference Room (1st floor)
CR2	Committee Room 2	**CH OFF**	Chairman of Council's Office
MR	Members' Room	**TR RM**	Training Room
TBD	To be decided	**HEM**	Hemnall Street Offices.
TBN	To be noted		
TBC	To be confirmed		Meeting being filmed for subsequent viewing

Other venues are shown in full.

Week One: 15 October 2018 – 21 October 2018

Monday 15 October		~~Joint Consultative Committee~~ - Cancelled		
Tuesday 16 October	7.30pm	Resources Select Committee		CR1
Wednesday 17 October	2.30pm 6.30pm 7.30pm	Licensing Committee Briefing – Area Plans Sub-Committee West Area Planning Sub-Committee West		CC CR1 CC
Thursday 18 October	7.00pm	Cabinet		CC
Friday 19 October				
Saturday 20 October				
Sunday 21 October				

Week Two: 22 October 2018 – 28 October 2018

Monday 22 October				
Tuesday 23 October	7.15pm	Governance Select Committee		CR1
Wednesday 24 October	6.30pm 7.30pm	Briefing – Area Plans Sub-Committee South Area Planning Sub-Committee South		CR1 CC
Thursday 25 October	7.30pm	Asset Management and Economic Development Cabinet Committee		CC
Friday 26 October				
Saturday 27 October				
Sunday 28 October				

Week Three: 29 October 2018 – 4 November 2018

Monday 29 October	7.30pm	Overview and Scrutiny Committee		CC
Tuesday 30 October	6.30pm	Member Training – Risk Management		CR1
Wednesday 31 October				
Thursday 1 November	6.30pm 7.30pm	Chairman's Briefing – Council Council		CR1 CC
Friday November				
Saturday 3 November				
Sunday 4 November				

Week Four: 5 November 2018 – 11 November 2018

Monday 5 November				
Tuesday 6 November	10.00am 7.00pm 7.00pm	Licensing Sub-Committee Epping Forest Youth Council Equalities		CC CC CR1
Wednesday 7 November	6.30pm 7.30pm	Briefing – Area Plans Sub-Committee East Area Planning Sub-Committee East		CR1 CC
Thursday 8 November	7.00pm	Cabinet		CC
Friday 9 November				
Saturday 10 November				
Sunday 11 November				

PART B - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. GRANT AID SCHEME - NOTIFICATION OF GRANT AID APPLICATIONS

We have received an application for Grant Aid funding from the groups named below. If you, as a District Councillor have any pertinent or relevant information please notify us via email at grantaid@eppingforestdc.gov.uk. You must declare an interest if you are involved with the group in any way.

Applicant 1/2

Name of Group/Applicant: Voluntary Action Epping Forest

Nature of Application: At the end of VAEF's accommodation lease at Homefield House VAEF moved temporarily to Council offices at Hemnall Street. VAEF have now submitted a grant aid application to support their accommodation move to new premises. Purchase of equipment to include - carpet tiles, toilet, computer equipment, monitor stands, docking stations, toilet, LED lights fireproof cabinet and lockable cupboards.

Applicant 2/2

Name of Group/Applicant: Youth Employment Services Partnership

Nature of Application: To run motivational conferences for all state secondary schools in the Epping Forest district. To equip young people with the skills and knowledge to be prepared for the world of work and enable them to be ambitious and explore a range of career opportunities. Grant to cover costs of venue hire, refreshments, stationary and printing.

Please advise Louis Walton, Community Grants Officer, of your comments within 14 days from the date this notice was sent.

(Further information: Louis Walton ext 4096)

2. LOWER THAMES CROSSING - CONSULTATION (Pages 11 - 22)

A ten-week consultation on the updated plans for a new Lower Thames Crossing will start on Wednesday 10 October and run until Thursday 20 December.

Please see attached for further details.

3. DISTRICT LINES (Pages 23 - 50)

Please see attached.

4. COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE (Pages 51 - 66)

At its meeting on 24 September 2018, the Communities Select Committee agreed the Council's response to the following consultation documents issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government:

(a) 'A new deal on social housing'; and
(b) 'Use of receipts from Right to Buy sales.'

Copies of each response are attached for members' information.

(Further information: Steve Tautz ext 4180)

5. ESSEX COMMUNITY REHABILITATION COMPANY (Pages 67 - 68)

Please see attached.

6. CHAIRMAN'S DIARY (Pages 69 - 70)

Please see attached.

LICENSING ACT 2003

None this week

GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE - PLANNING

1. Appeals Lodged

EPF/0257/18 – Land adj, 7 & 8 The Poplars Abridge Essex RM4 1BB - Proposed bedroom detached dwelling – Corey Isolda ext. 4380 – Written reps

EPF/3216/17 – Esperanza Nurseries, Stapleford Road Stapleford Abbotts, Essex RM4 1EJ- Outline application to demolish office, boiler house and two glasshouses, erect five dwelling houses, lay out access drive and turning head, amenity and parking areas, form meadow/paddock and alter vehicular access onto Stapleford Road – Jonathan Doe ext. 4103 – Written reps

2. Forthcoming Planning Inquiries/Hearings

None this week

3. Enforcement Appeals

None this week

4. Appeal Decisions

EPF/0752/18 – Clevedon Epping Road Epping Green Essex CM16 6PR - Front fence and electric gates across front of driveway – Allowed with conditions

EPF/1620/18 – Bushey Cottage, 1 Bushey Lea Ongar Essex CM5 9ED - Retention of a front boundary wall (replacement of close boarded fence) – Allowed with conditions

EPF/2947/17 – Bushey Cottage, 1 Bushey Lea Ongar Essex CM5 9ED - Erection of detached outbuilding – Allowed with conditions

5. Tree Preservation Orders

None this week

6. S106 Agreements

None this week

7. Changes to Planning Systems

None this week

PROPOSED PLANNING ENFORCEMENT ACTION

None this week

It is important to note, that when enforcement action has been authorised, this includes any subsequent action under Part VII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, including a prosecution or an injunction.

Principal Planning Enforcement Officer	Jerry Godden	01992 564498
Senior Enforcement Officer	Clare Munday	01992 564114
Planning Enforcement Officers	Sharon Hart	01992 564113
	Jim Gordon	01992 564530
	Zara Seelig	01992 564379
	Mick Mooney	01992 564713
Compliance Officer	Shannon Murphy	01992 564217

PART C - PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISIONS

The notification of decisions taken by individual Portfolio Holders is no longer included in the Council Bulletin.

All members of the Council receive automatic email notification of the publication of each individual Portfolio Holder decision and the call-in period for each decision commences immediately. Members wishing to call-in a decision should complete the attached call-in form and return it to Democratic Services before the expiry of five working days following the publication date of the decision. Members should refer to the Constitution (Article 6 - Overview and Scrutiny) for the rules of call-in.

highways
england

① Nigel Richardson
② Members' Bulletin

Our ref: S42(1)(a)-(c)

Highways England
1st Floor
Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford
MK41 7LW

Epping Forest District Council
The Chief Executive
Civic Offices
323 High Street
Epping
Essex CM16 4BZ

4 October 2018

Dear Derek Macnab,

Lower Thames Crossing: Statutory pre-application consultation between 10 October 2018 and 20 December 2018

Planning Act 2008 Section 42: Duty to consult on a proposed application

Highways England ("the Applicant") is proposing to construct the Lower Thames Crossing, a new road with a tunnel crossing beneath the River Thames, between Kent, Thurrock and Essex, which will create a new link between the A2 and the M25 and reduce the burden on the busy A282 Dartford Crossing. The planned route will run from the M25 near North Ockendon, cross the A13 at Orsett, before crossing under the River Thames east of Tilbury and Gravesend. A new link road will then take traffic to the A2 near Shorne, close to where the route becomes the M2.

The Lower Thames Crossing project ('the project') is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. In order to obtain powers of compulsory acquisition and to gain consent to build and operate the project, Highways England is required to make an application for a Development Consent Order. The application will be made to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), which will examine the application and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will ultimately decide whether the application is granted and whether the Applicant is authorised to use compulsory acquisition powers. The Applicant intends to make the application in 2019.

During the pre-application process, the Applicant must consult with a variety of persons and organisations about the proposed application in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008.

In accordance with Section 42 of the Act, we are consulting with you about this proposed application. More specifically, we are writing to you because you are a statutory consultee under section 42(1)(a)-(c) of the Act. This statutory pre-

Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363
disability confident COMMITTED

application consultation period will take place between 10 October 2018 and 20 December 2018.

The project proposals constitute Environmental Impact Assessment development as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ("the 2017 Regulations"), and so in accordance with regulation 13 of the 2017 Regulations I enclose with this letter a copy of our "Section 48 notice", providing details of our consultation. The "Section 48 notice" has been published in local and national newspapers, in accordance with section 48(1) of the Act.

Further consultation material, including the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), the Traffic Forecasting Report, the proposed scheme drawings, and the response form can be found on our project webpage at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, from the launch of consultation.

A printed copy of the consultation documents, including the PEIR, can be purchased on request by emailing Highways England at info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, phoning 0300 123 5000, or by writing to Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW. Due to the size of the paper documents, a charge of £175 (plus VAT and P&P) will be made for each set of consultation documents. The consultation materials will also be available at deposit locations in the area around our proposed scheme.

Highways England will also be holding a number of public information events in the area local to the project, where members of the project team will be available to discuss the proposals and answer questions. The dates and locations of these public information events, as well as our deposit locations, are listed on the "Section 48 notice" enclosed with this letter.

We encourage you to provide any comments on the project by completing a response form and sending it to one of the three dedicated response channels that are advertised on our consultation webpage and the "Section 48 notice". **The deadline for all responses is 11:59pm on Thursday 20 December 2018.**

Please note that Highways England may be required to make copies of representations available to the Secretary of State. We refer you to the response form for more information on how Highways England handles personal data.

Yours sincerely

David Manning

Development Director

Lower Thames Crossing

highways england

SECTION 48 PLANNING ACT 2008
REGULATION 4 OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009
LOWER THAMES CROSSING
NOTICE PUBLICISING A PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

Notice is hereby given that **HIGHWAYS ENGLAND COMPANY LIMITED** of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ ("Highways England") proposes to make an application ("the Application") under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 to the Secretary of State for Transport for a Development Consent Order. The Application is for the proposed Lower Thames Crossing ("the Project"), which is a proposed new road connecting Kent, Thurrock and Essex through a tunnel beneath the River Thames. The Project's main proposals include:

- Approximately 14.5 miles (23km) of new road, with a maximum speed limit of 70mph, connecting to the existing road network from the A2/M2 to the M25
- Two new tunnels, one southbound and one northbound
- Improvements to the M25, A2 and A13, where the Lower Thames Crossing connects to the road network
- New structures and changes to existing ones (including bridges, buildings, tunnel entrances, viaducts, and utilities such as electricity pylons) along the length of the new road
- A free-flow charging system, where drivers do not need to stop but pay remotely, similar to that at the Dartford Crossing

In addition, any necessary rights and powers will be sought to ensure delivery of the Project, including compulsory acquisition of land and interests/rights in land.

The Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment development ("EIA development"), as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This means that the proposed works constitute development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required. An Environmental Statement containing information about the likely significant environmental effects of the Project will therefore be submitted as part of the Application. Separately, preliminary environmental information will be included in a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which forms part of the consultation materials.

Consultation on the Project proposals will take place from 10 October 2018 to 20 December 2018. Copies of the consultation materials (including documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the proposed development and the PEIR) will be available for inspection free of charge during the consultation period at the deposit locations and times listed in this notice.

Copies of the consultation materials also will be available online free of charge during consultation at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay. The documents that comprise the consultation materials are listed separately in this notice.

A printed copy of the consultation documents, including the PEIR, can be purchased on request by emailing Highways England at info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, phoning 0300 123 5000, or by writing to Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW. Due to the size of the paper documents, a charge of £175 (plus VAT and P&P) will be made for each set of consultation documents.

Any person may comment on the proposals or otherwise respond to this publicity. Responses must be received between 10 October 2018 and 20 December 2018. Responses to the consultation can be made either electronically or by filling in a paper response form. Paper response forms can be printed out from www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay; picked up free of charge from public information events (see accompanying list), information points and deposit locations; or by phoning 0300 123 5000. Responses can be submitted by:

- Filling in the online response form at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay
- Emailing comments or electronic copies of the response form to: LTC.CONSULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD
- Posting comments or paper response forms to: FREEPOST LTC CONSULTATION
- Filling in a paper response form at one of our public information events

Responses must be received no later than 11.59pm on 20 December 2018.

Highways England will consider and have regard to all responses when developing the Application for a Development Consent Order, once consultation has closed. Responses will form the basis of a Consultation Report that will be one of the factors taken into consideration by the Secretary of State when deciding whether the Application can be accepted for examination. Therefore, in providing any comment, it should be borne in mind that the substance of it may be communicated to others as part of the Consultation Report.

If you would like further information about this notice, the consultation or the Project, please contact the project team by emailing Highways England at info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, phoning 0300 123 5000, or by writing to Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW.

Highways England's policy on managing personal data can be found at https://highwaysengland.co.uk/terms-and-conditions.

David Manning, Highways England, 4 October 2018

Deposit locations

Brentwood Library, New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4BP
Monday 9am – 6pm
Tuesday 9am – 6pm
Wednesday 9am – 1pm
Thursday 9am – 6pm
Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Grays Library, Thameside Complex, Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 5DX
Monday 9am – 7pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
Thursday 9am – 7pm
Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday 9am – 1pm

Romford Central Library, St Edwards Way, Romford, RM1 3AR
Monday 10am – 8pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
Thursday 10am – 8pm
Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday 10am – 4pm

Tilbury Hub, Civic Square, Tilbury, RM18 8AD
Monday 10am – 5pm
Wednesday 10am – 5pm
Friday 10am – 5pm
Saturday 10am – 1pm

Dartford Library, Central Park, Market Street, Dartford, DA1 1EU
Monday – Wednesday 8.30am – 6pm
Thursday 8.30am – 8pm
Friday 8.30am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Gravesend Library, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1BE
Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Maidstone Library, Kent History and Library Centre, James Whatman Way, Maidstone, ME14 1LQ
Monday – Wednesday 9am – 8pm
Thursday 9am – 8pm
Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Rochester Library, Rochester Community Hub, Eastgate, Rochester, ME1 1EW
Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 4pm

Public Information Events in Kent

Bluewater Shopping Centre, Bluewater Parkway, Greenhithe, DA9 9ST
Saturday 20 October, 9am – 9pm
Sunday 21 October, 11am – 5pm

Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4LG
Thursday 1 November, 2pm – 9pm

Chalk Parish Hall, Pirrip Close, Gravesend, DA12 2ND
Monday 22 October, 2pm – 9pm

Dover Town Hall, Biggin Street, Dover, Kent, CT16 1DL
Tuesday 4 December, 2pm – 9pm

Mick Jagger Centre, Shepherds Lane, Dartford, DA1 2JZ
Tuesday 23 October, 2pm – 9pm

Doubletree Dartford Bridge, Masthead Close, Crossways Business Park, Dartford, DA2 6QF
Monday 3 December, 2pm – 9pm

Gravesham Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1AU
Wednesday 21 November, 2pm – 9pm

Rochester Corn Exchange, Northgate, Rochester, ME1 1LS
Wednesday 5 December, 2pm – 9pm

Shorne Village Hall, 16 The Street, Shorne, DA12 3EA
Saturday 3 November, midday – 6pm

Public Information Events in Essex

Holiday Inn Basildon, Cranes Farm Road, Waterfront Walk, Festival Leisure Park, Basildon, SS14 3DG
Monday 19 November, 2pm – 9pm

Brandon Groves Community Club, Brandon Groves Avenue, South Ockendon, RM15 6TD
Friday 16 November, 2pm – 9pm

Chadwell Village Hall, Waterson Road, Chadwell St Mary, RM16 4NX
Friday 7 December, 2pm – 9pm

Civic Hall, Blackshots Lane, Grays, RM16 2JU
Tuesday 6 November 2pm – 9pm

Havering College of Further and Higher Education, 42 Ardleigh Green Road, Hornchurch, RM11 2LL
Monday 26 November, 2pm – 9pm

Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BD
Friday 30 November, 2pm – 9pm

Holiday Inn Brentwood M25 J28, Brook Street, Brentwood, CM14 5NF
Wednesday 28 November, 2pm – 8pm

Lakeside Shopping Centre, West Thurrock Way, Grays, RM20 2ZP
Saturday 27 October, 9am – 9pm
Sunday 28 October, 11am – 5pm

Linford Methodist Church, East Tilbury Road, Linford, SS17 0QQ
Wednesday 14 November, 2pm – 9pm

Orsett Hall Hotel, Prince Charles Avenue, Orsett, RM16 3HS
Tuesday 16 October, 2pm – 9pm

St Mary Magdalene Church, Church Lane, North Ockendon, RM14 3QH
Thursday 22 November, 2pm – 9pm

The New Windmill Hotel, St Mary's Lane, Upminster, RM14 2QH
Saturday 17 November midday – 6pm

Tilbury Community Association, Civic Square, Tilbury, RM18 8AA
Tuesday 30 October, 2pm – 9pm

West Horndon Village Hall, Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon, CM13 3TP
Wednesday 24 October, 2pm – 9pm

List of consultation documents:

- LTC Guide to Consultation
- Consultation leaflets
- Response form
- Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)
- LTC Response to Consultation 2017
- Case for the Project
- Approach to Design, Construction and Operation
- Map books
- Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
- Preliminary Environmental Information Summary
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report
- Traffic Forecasting Report
- Traffic Forecasts Non-Technical Summary
- Section 47 Notice
- Section 48 Notice
- Your Property and Blight
- Your Property and Compulsory Purchase
- Your Property and Discretionary Purchase

04 October 2018

Lower Thames Crossing: consultation announced

A consultation on updated plans for a new Lower Thames Crossing will start next week, Highways England announced today (Thursday 4 October).

Some 47,000 people had their say in a previous consultation on the proposals – a record for a UK road scheme – leading to a preferred route announcement in April 2017 by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling. Now, Highways England is seeking views on an updated, more detailed design which aims to maximise the project's huge benefits in creating a new route between Essex and Kent, relieving pressure on the existing Dartford Crossing and adding extra resilience to the road network. The updated plans also include significant changes to minimise the impact on local communities and the environment.

The ten-week consultation will start on Wednesday 10 October and run until Thursday 20 December.

Tim Jones, Project Director for Lower Thames Crossing, said:

"A new Lower Thames Crossing is a once in a generation opportunity for people in Kent, Thurrock and Essex, significantly improving journeys, connecting communities and boosting the economy. This consultation is an important opportunity for people to share their views on our proposals and help shape the Lower Thames Crossing. I am looking forward to hearing what people think."

There will be 25 public information events are being help across Kent, Thurrock and Essex, as well as and 30 visits to local communities to help people understand more about the proposals and put any questions directly to the project team. At each event,

specialists will be on hand to explain the proposed route, how it would be built and operated, and how Highways England plan to minimise the impact on the local environment and community. All information will also be available online.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Highways England is the wholly government-owned company responsible for modernising, maintaining and operating England's motorways and major A roads.

2. More information about the proposals will be published on Tuesday 9 October under embargo for Wednesday 10 October. Interview opportunities will be available.

3. Details on how to take part in the consultation will be found at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay

4. Details of the public exhibition events are as follows:
   - Orsett Hall Hotel, Prince Charles Avenue, Orsett, RM16 3HS on Tuesday 16 October from 2pm to 9pm
   - Bluewater Shopping Centre, Bluewater Parkway, Greenhithe, DA9 9ST, on Saturday 20 October from 9am to 9pm, and Sunday 21 October from 11am to 5pm
   - Chalk Parish Hall, Pirrip Close, Gravesend, DA12 2ND, on Monday 22 October from 2pm to 9pm
   - Mick Jagger Centre, Shepherds Lane, Dartford, DA1 2JZ, on Tuesday 23 October from 2pm to 9pm
   - West Horndon Village Hall, Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon, CM13 3TP on Wednesday 24 October from 2pm to 9pm
   - Lakeside Shopping Centre, West Thurrock Way, Grays, RM20 2ZP on Saturday 27 October from 9am to 9pm, and on Sunday 28 October from 11am to 5pm
   - Tilbury Community Association, Civic Square, Yilbury, RM18 8AA on Tuesday 30 October from 2pm to 9pm
   - Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane, Gravesend, DA12 4LG, on Thursday 1 November, from 2pm to 9pm
   - Shorne Village Hall, 16 The Street, Shorne, DA12 3EA, on Saturday 3 November from midday to 6pm
   - Civic Hall, Blackshots Lane, Grays, RM16 2JU on Tuesday 6 November from 2pm to 9pm
   - Linford Methodist Church, East Tilbury Road, Linford, SS17 0QQ on Wednesday 14 November from 2pm to 9pm
   - Brandon Groves Community Club, Brandon Groves Avenue, South Ockendon, RM15 6TD on Friday 16 November from 2pm to 9pm

- The New Windmill Hotel, St Mary's Lane, Upminster, RM14 2QH on Saturday 17 November from midday to 6pm
- Holiday Inn Basildon, Cranes Farm Road, Waterfront Walk, Festival Leisure Park, Basildon, SS14 3DG on Monday 19 November from 2pm to 9pm
- Gravesham Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1AU, on Wednesday 21 November from 2pm to 9pm
- St Mary Magdalene Church, Church Lane, Upminster, RM14 3QH on Thursday 22 November from 2pm to 9pm
- Holiday Inn Brentwood M25 junction 28, Brooke Street, Brentwood, CM14 5NF on Wednesday 28 November from 2pm to 9pm
- Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BD on Friday 30 November from 2pm to 9pm
- Doubletree Dartford Bridge, Masthead Close, Crossways Business Park, Dartfrod, DA2 6QF, on Monday 3 December from 2pm to 9pm
- Dover Town Hall, Biggin Street, Dover, CT16 1DL, on Tuesday 4 December, from 2pm to 9pm
- Rochester Corn Exchange, Northgate, Rochester, ME1 1LS, on Wednesday 5 December, from 2pm to 9pm
- Chadwell Village Hall, Waterson Road, Chadwell St Mary, RM16 4NX on Friday 7 December from 2pm to 9pm

5. **Real-time traffic information** for England's motorways and major A roads is available:
   - From the web at www.highways.gov.uk/traffic or from a phone or mobile device at m.highways.gov.uk
   - By phone from the Highways England Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 at any time. (Calls to 03 numbers are charged at no more than a national call to a 01 or 02 number and are included in all discount schemes and call allowances. This applies to all landlines, mobiles and payphones. Call costs will vary depending on your landline or mobile supplier.) Make sure it's safe and legal before you call. Before using any mobile, find a safe place to park. Never stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency.
   - On Apple and Android mobile devices via the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
   - From **Twitter –** there are eight feeds with live traffic information provided by region. For information on roads in the East of England follow us at @Highways EAST or for the full index visit www.highways.gov.uk/twitter.

Issued by Highways England.

For further information please contact SE&Epressoffice@highwaysengland.co.uk, 0300 470 4860. Media enquiries out of hours should be made to Highways England's National Press Office (24hrs) on 0844 693 1448.

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highways england

NOTICE OF CONSULTATION LOWER THAMES CROSSING

SECTION 47 PLANNING ACT 2008
NOTICE PUBLICISING A STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Notice is hereby given that **Highways England Company Limited** ("Highways England") of Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ has published a Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC") for the Lower Thames Crossing in accordance with section 47 of the Planning Act 2008. Under section 47, Highways England has a duty to consult the local community about its proposals in accordance with a SoCC.

The Lower Thames Crossing ("the Project") is a proposed new road connecting Kent, Thurrock and Essex through a tunnel beneath the River Thames. The Project's main proposals include:

- Approximately 14.5 miles (23km) of new road, with a maximum speed limit of 70mph, connecting to the existing road network from the A2/M2 to the M25
- Two tunnels, one southbound and one northbound
- Improvements to the M25, A2 and A13, where the Lower Thames Crossing connects to the road network
- New structures and changes to existing ones (including bridges, buildings, tunnel entrances, viaducts, and utilities such as electricity pylons) along the length of the new road
- A free-flow charging system, where drivers do not need to stop but pay remotely, similar to that at the Dartford Crossing.

In addition, any necessary rights and powers will be sought to ensure delivery of the Project, including compulsory acquisition.

Highways England are proposing to submit an application to the Secretary of State under section 37 of The Planning Act 2008 for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to authorise the Project.

The SoCC sets out how Highways England will consult on the Project and how to get involved.

This notice contains a summary of the consultation details. However, full details of the consultation can be found in the SoCC. This can be inspected along with our consultation materials, online at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay or at the deposit locations during the consultation period from **10 October 2018 to 20 December 2018.** Please note that consultation materials will be available from the start of the consultation date on the website and at the deposit locations, but not in advance.

You can also view the SoCC and the other consultation materials at our public information events, where you can speak with members of the Project Team and share your views. Events will be held at the venues listed below during the consultation period.

The Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment development, which means a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) has been produced and is being consulted on alongside the other consultation documents. It also means that an environmental statement, which will outline the likely significant environmental effects of the Project, will be produced and submitted with the DCO application in due course.

CONTACT US

Email info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk
Post Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW
Phone 0300 123 0500
(Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm)

HOW TO RESPOND TO THE CONSULTATION

Consultation responses can be submitted by:

- Filling in the online response form at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay
- Emailing comments or electronic copies of the response form to: LTC.CONSULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD
- Posting comments or paper response forms to: Freepost LTC CONSULTATION
- Filling in a paper response form at one of our public information events

Responses may be submitted up to 11.59pm on 20 December 2018.

Deposit locations

Brentwood Library, New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4BP
Monday 9am – 6pm
Tuesday 9am – 6pm
Wednesday 9am – 1pm
Thursday 9am – 6pm
Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Grays Library, Thameside Complex, Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 5DX
Monday 9am – 7pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
Thursday 9am – 7pm
Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday 9am – 1pm

Romford Central Library, St Edwards Way, Romford, RM1 3AR
Monday 10am – 8pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
Thursday 10am – 8pm
Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday 10am – 4pm

Tilbury Hub, Civic Square, Tilbury, RM18 8AD
Monday 10am – 5pm
Wednesday 10am – 5pm
Friday 10am – 5pm
Saturday 10am – 1pm

Dartford Library, Central Park, Market Street, Dartford, DA1 1EU
Monday – Wednesday 8.30am – 6pm
Thursday 8.30am – 8pm
Friday 8.30am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Gravesend Library, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1BE
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Public Information Events in Kent

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Saturday 20 October, 9am – 9pm
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Chalk Parish Hall, Pirrip Close, Gravesend, DA12 2ND
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Wednesday 5 December, 2pm – 9pm

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Saturday 3 November, midday – 6pm

Public Information Events in Essex

Holiday Inn Basildon, Cranes Farm Road, Waterfront Walk, Festival Leisure Park, Basildon, SS14 3DG
Monday 19 November, 2pm – 9pm

Brandon Groves Community Club, Brandon Groves Avenue, South Ockendon, RM15 6TD
Friday 16 November, 2pm – 9pm

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Havering College of Further and Higher Education, 42 Ardleigh Green Road, Hornchurch, RM11 2LL
Monday 26 November, 2pm – 9pm

Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BD
Friday 30 November, 2pm – 9pm

Holiday Inn Brentwood M25 J28, Brook Street, Brentwood, CM14 5NF
Wednesday 28 November, 2pm – 9pm

Lakeside Shopping Centre, West Thurrock Way, Grays, RM20 2ZP
Saturday 27 October, 9am – 9pm
Sunday 28 October, 11am – 5pm

Linford Methodist Church, East Tilbury Road, Linford, SS17 0QQ
Wednesday 14 November, 2pm – 9pm

Orsett Hall Hotel, Prince Charles Avenue, Orsett, RM16 3HS
Tuesday 16 October, 2pm – 9pm

St Mary Magdalene Church, Church Lane, North Ockendon, RM14 3QH
Thursday 22 November, 2pm – 9pm

The New Windmill Hotel, St Mary's Lane, Upminster RM14 2QH
Saturday 17 November midday – 6pm

Tilbury Community Association, Civic Square, Tilbury, RM18 8AA
Tuesday 30 October, 2pm – 9pm

West Horndon Village Hall, Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon, CM13 3TP
Wednesday 24 October, 2pm – 9pm

Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363.

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highways england

SECTION 48 PLANNING ACT 2008
REGULATION 4 OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009
LOWER THAMES CROSSING
NOTICE PUBLICISING A PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

Notice is hereby given that **HIGHWAYS ENGLAND COMPANY LIMITED** of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ ("Highways England") proposes to make an application ("the Application") under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 to the Secretary of State for Transport for a Development Consent Order. The Application is for the proposed Lower Thames Crossing ("the Project"), which is a proposed new road connecting Kent, Thurrock and Essex through a tunnel beneath the River Thames. The Project's main proposals include:

- Approximately 14.5 miles (23km) of new road, with a maximum speed limit of 70mph, connecting to the existing road network from the A2/M2 to the M25
- Two new tunnels, one southbound and one northbound
- Improvements to the M25, A2 and A13, where the Lower Thames Crossing connects to the road network
- New structures and changes to existing ones (including bridges, buildings, tunnel entrances, viaducts, and utilities such as electricity pylons) along the length of the new road
- A free-flow charging system, where drivers do not need to stop but pay remotely, similar to that at the Dartford Crossing

In addition, any necessary rights and powers will be sought to ensure delivery of the Project, including compulsory acquisition of land and interests/rights in land.

The Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment development ("EIA development"), as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This means that the proposed works constitute development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required. An Environmental Statement containing information about the likely significant environmental effects of the Project will therefore be submitted as part of the Application. Separately, preliminary environmental information will be included in a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which forms part of the consultation materials.

Consultation on the Project proposals will take place from 10 October 2018 to 20 December 2018. Copies of the consultation materials (including documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the proposed development and the PEIR) will be available for inspection free of charge during the consultation period at the deposit locations and times listed in this notice.

Copies of the consultation materials also will be available online free of charge during consultation at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay. The documents that comprise the consultation materials are listed separately in this notice.

A printed copy of the consultation documents, including the PEIR, can be purchased on request by emailing Highways England at info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, phoning 0300 123 5000, or by writing to Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW. Due to the size of the paper documents, a charge of £175 (plus VAT and P&P) will be made for each set of consultation documents.

Any person may comment on the proposals or otherwise respond to this publicity. Responses must be received between 10 October 2018 and 20 December 2018. Responses to the consultation can be made either electronically or by filling in a paper response form. Paper response forms can be printed out from www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay; picked up free of charge from public information events (see accompanying list), information points and deposit locations; or by phoning 0300 123 5000. Responses can be submitted by:

- Filling in the online response form at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay
- Emailing comments or electronic copies of the response form to: LTC.CONSULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD
- Posting comments or paper response forms to: FREEPOST LTC CONSULTATION
- Filling in a paper response form at one of our public information events

Responses must be received no later than 11.59pm on 20 December 2018.

Highways England will consider and have regard to all responses when developing the Application for a Development Consent Order, once consultation has closed. Responses will form the basis of a Consultation Report that will be one of the factors taken into consideration by the Secretary of State when deciding whether the Application can be accepted for examination. Therefore, in providing any comment, it should be borne in mind that the substance of it may be communicated to others as part of the Consultation Report.

If you would like further information about this notice, the consultation or the Project, please contact the project team by emailing Highways England at info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, phoning 0300 123 5000, or by writing to Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW.

Highways England's policy on managing personal data can be found at https://highwaysengland.co.uk/terms-and-conditions.

David Manning, Highways England, 4 October 2018

Deposit locations

Brentwood Library, New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4BP
Monday 9am – 6pm
Tuesday 9am – 6pm
Wednesday 9am – 1pm
Thursday 9am – 6pm
Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 5pm

Grays Library, Thameside Complex, Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 5DX
Monday 9am – 7pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
Thursday 9am – 7pm
Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday 9am – 1pm

Romford Central Library, St Edwards Way, Romford, RM1 3AR
Monday 10am – 8pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
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Saturday 10am – 4pm

Tilbury Hub, Civic Square, Tilbury, RM18 8AD
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West Horndon Village Hall, Thorndon Avenue, West Horndon, CM13 3TP
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List of consultation documents:

- LTC Guide to Consultation
- Consultation leaflets
- Response form
- Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)
- LTC Response to Consultation 2017
- Case for the Project
- Approach to Design, Construction and Operation
- Map books
- Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
- Preliminary Environmental Information Summary
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report
- Traffic Forecasting Report
- Traffic Forecasts Non-Technical Summary
- Section 47 Notice
- Section 48 Notice
- Your Property and Blight
- Your Property and Compulsory Purchase
- Your Property and Discretionary Purchase

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Response by Epping Forest District Council and the Epping Forest Tenants & Leaseholders Panel to the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government on "A new deal for social housing" Green Paper

Explanatory Note:

This response contains both the Council's formal response – at the member level – agreed at the meeting of the Council's Communities Select Committee held on 24th September 2018 and the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Panel on 12th September 2018. The Council's response answers each of the questions, whilst the Tenants and Leaseholders' Panel's response focuses on specific issues and are shown at the end of each chapter.

Chapter 1 – Ensuring homes are safe and decent

1. How can residents best be supported in this important role of working with landlords to ensure homes are safe?

The Council welcomes Dame Judith Hackett's *"Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety"* and it is important that the Government acts on her recommendations as quickly as possible.

At one level, residents should not have to check that their landlords are ensuring that their homes are safe, since this should be at the forefront of landlords' minds – and most social landlords, including this council, take their responsibilities towards tenants and their safety very seriously. However, it is important that lessons are learnt from the Grenfell Tower tragedy and, as part of this, tenants should be provided with whatever information they feel they need to satisfy themselves that they live in safe accommodation and that their landlord is acting appropriately.

Since it is a requirement that Fire Safety Risk Assessments (FSRA) are undertaken and documented, the Council would support a requirement for all tenants to be provided with a copy of the FSRA for their accommodation, together with the proposed action plan to remedy any issues identified. Indeed, the Council believes that this would help to ensure that tenants understand the importance of keeping fire exit routes clear.

2. Should new safety measures in the private rented sector also apply to social housing?

Yes. The Council believes that the statutory safety measures that apply in the private sector, such as the provision of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms (in rooms containing solid fuel burning appliances) and undertaking electrical checks in properties every five years should apply to social housing.

3. Are there any changes to what constitutes a Decent Home that we should consider?

It is the Council's view that the Decent Home Standard should be seen as the minimum acceptable standard for social homes. Indeed, the Council met the Decent Home Standard many years ago, and has maintained this position ever since.

A property can still have a number of failing components and meet the Decent Home Standard. Therefore, if the Standard is reviewed, any review could consider a property requiring a lesser number of failing components to meet the Standard. Also, since the Decent Home Standard only relates to individual properties, it could be extended to communal areas as well. Although this could include fire safety requirements, the Council feels that this would be unnecessary, since it believes these are adequately covered by the existing Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

However, the main point the Council would like to make on this issue is that if the Decent Home Standard is increased, local authorities (and housing associations) must have sufficient resources available to them to be able to meet the new requirements and meet other aspirations expected by the Government, such as increased council housebuilding. This can be facilitated in two ways, including allowing local authorities to increase their HRA Borrowing Headroom and ensuring that local authorities can charge tenants a sufficient rent in return for the increased investment in their home.

The importance of this can be illustrated by the Council's own experience. When HRA self-financing was first introduced, the Council took the decision to increase investment in its housing stock – and introduced its own "Modern Home Standard", at a much higher level than the Decent Home Standard. This was in addition to investing in the construction of new Council homes. However, the Council had to subsequently take the decision to abandon its Modern Home Standard last year, and revert to the Decent Home Standard, as a result of the Government's decision to force councils to reduce their rents by 1% per annum for four years.

4. Do we need additional measures to make sure social homes are safe and decent?

The Council has no further suggestions to make.

Views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel of Chapter 1

Under this Chapter, the Panel concluded that Fire Risk Assessments are public property anyway. However, they felt that it is crucial that tenants are given a voice but made the point that our Council is very proactive in these matters and do engage tenants, indeed, there was an Item on our Agenda this evening around Fire Safety. The Panel feels that the practices of this Council should be rolled out nationally. The Panel felt that Fire Risk Assessments and other associated information should be on councils websites and updated on an annual basis and available in different languages and set out in a simple and plain manner.

Chapter 2 – Effective resolution of complaints

5. Are there ways of strengthening the mediation opportunities available for landlords and residents to resolve disputes locally?

The Council does not consider this to be necessary. Where considered appropriate, and with some likelihood of success, like many social landlords the Council is happy to fund and utilise existing mediation services.

6. Should we reduce the eight week waiting period to four weeks, or should we remove the requirement for the "democratic filter" stage altogether?

The Council considers the "democratic filtering" of complaints before a complaint can be made by tenants to the Housing Ombudsman as cumbersome, unnecessary and simply delays the timely resolution of complaints by tenants - the process for which is not properly understood by tenants, landlords or "designated persons". Indeed, the process appears contrary to the objectives of the Green Paper, since it dissuades and dis-encourages tenants to make complaints to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS).

In addition to responding to the occasional complaints made to the HOS, the Council also responds to occasional complaints on housing-related issues to the Local Government Ombudsman – and notes that no

democratic filter applies to complaints made to the latter. Therefore, there currently appears to be a two-tier complaints process for complaints to these two Ombudsmen.

The Council supports the proposal in the Government's recent consultation *"Strengthening consumer redress in the housing market"* to bring together redress schemes into a single housing ombudsman service and, if this happens, urges the Government to ensure that no democratic filter is applied to any new service.

In the meantime, whilst noting that primary legislation would be required, the Council would strongly recommend that the democratic filter be discontinued at the earliest opportunity.

7. What can we do to ensure that the "designated persons" are better able to promote local resolutions?

The only way to improve the existing process is to better promote and explain the current cumbersome process to all MPs and local councillors who are currently designated persons.

8. How can we ensure that residents understand how best to escalate a complaint and seek redress?

It is the Council's view that the focus of informing tenants of their ability to escalate their complaint to the HOS should be placed on the point in time when the landlord has provided its last internal response to a complainant and advises them of their ability to make a complaint to the HOS.

In addition to providing leaflets provided by the HOS at this point in the resolution process, the Council would suggest that additional resources should be made available to the HOS by the Government to enable complainants to be able to contact the HOS by phone, or email, to informally discuss their complaint with a members of the HOS's staff first, before the tenant assesses whether or not it is worth them making a formal complaint.

The Council would suggest that there is little point in promoting the HOS to tenants when they first take up a tenancy, since it is a requirement that tenants should first exhaust the landlord's internal complaints process before they can make a complaint to the HOS. Therefore, the Council feels that this would only lead to more premature complaints made to the HOS, which would be referred to the relevant landlord anyway, which we feel is not only unhelpful and wastes time, it would also be confusing for complainants.

9. How can we ensure that residents can access the right advice and support when making a complaint?

The Council encourages any complainants to obtain support and assistance when making a complaint, since this usually ensures that complaints are focussed on the right issues and that the complaint, and how complainants feel, and the redress sought is properly articulated and communicated.

The Council believes that the national network of Citizens Advice is best placed to provide independent support and advice to complainants, and could be promoted as a national organisation able and, hopefully, willing to assist tenants with their complaints. However, the Council is aware of how far Citizens Advice offices across the country are stretched and would suggest that additional Government funding would be required to enable Citizens Advice to undertake such a heightened and more prominent role.

10. How can we best ensure that landlords' processes for dealing with complaints are fast and effective?

The Council is aware that, currently, landlords are able to make their own arrangements for their internal complaints processes. Whilst this flexibility is welcomed, it can lead to complaints from tenants of different landlords being treated quite differently, and with different response times.

The Council therefore suggests that it may now be appropriate for either the Government or the Housing Ombudsman Service to produce, in consultation with social landlords, a framework for landlords' internal complaints procedures and, particularly, the introduction of timescales in which the internal complaints process should be completed – from the date of the initial receipt of the complaint to the final response from the landlord. Clearly, such timescales need to be reasonable and provide landlords with sufficient time to properly consider a complaint at at least 2 internal stages. It also needs to take account of the time taken for complainants to respond to queries and proposed resolutions – indeed, the Council is of the view that complainants should also be given timescales to respond to requests for further information from the landlord and the determination of complaints at different stages of the complaints process.

Moreover, and possibly more importantly, the Council notes with great concern that the Housing Ombudsman Service's current average time taken to determine complaints, from the date they are referred to the Ombudsman, is eight months – which the Council considers to be a totally unacceptable period of time for tenants to have to wait until their complaint has been determined, especially since this period follows the period of time that their complaint has been with their landlord to determine at the local level. We note the Government's recent target given to the Housing Ombudsman Service of 6 months, but consider that this is still far too long.

11. How can we best ensure safety concerns are handled swiftly and effectively within the existing redress framework?

Other than following the normal complaints process, the Council would suggest that the relevant Fire and Rescue Service could play a part in becoming involved in considering tenants' complaints and concerns about fire safety where the landlord is not dealing with the complaint as quickly as required, with appropriate powers to require the landlord to take appropriate action within specified timescales.

Views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel on Chapter 2

The Panel's view is that the timescale for complaints being referred to the Ombudsman should be reduced from 8 weeks to 4 weeks and the democratic filter should be removed. The Panel was unsure about how to "strengthen" mediation. Our Council offers mediation but the main difficulty it encounters is the willingness of both parties to enter into this arrangement.

Chapter 3 – Empowering residents and strengthening the Regulator

12. Do the proposed key performance indicators cover the right areas? Are there any other areas that should be covered?

The Council is very concerned that the proposal appears to be returning to the days of national indicators (Best Value Indicators), which were generally considered to be unhelpful and riddled with practical difficulties. Indeed, the Conservative Government at the time considered that they provided little value and took up unnecessary time for landlords – which is the reason why they were discontinued.

In any event, apart from the potential to "name and shame" landlords who, on paper, may compare less favourably with other landlords in one or more areas, there appears little to point to having "league tables" since, in reality, most tenants have little choice in being able to change their landlord.

Social landlords already have a requirement to report annually to their tenants on a range of issues, as part of the Housing Regulatory Standard, and the Council believes that it is for landlords to explain their performance to their tenants and for tenants to form their own view from the information provided.

13. Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators every year?

Please see the answer above. If national KPIs are re-introduced, it is suggested that there would be even less point collecting and publishing if they are not collected and reported annually. Otherwise, landlords who's performance has either improved or deteriorated would not be known until the next set of KPIs were next published which could be a number of years later.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Council does not believe that National KPIs should be collected and reported any more frequently than annually.

14. Should landlords report performance against these key performance indicators to the Regulator?

The Council does not have a view on which body should collect and publish any National KPIs, but would suggest that this could be a service undertaken by one of the existing and established data collection organisations (such as Housemark) under contract to either the MHCLG or the Social Housing Regulator.

15. What more can be done to encourage landlords to be more transparent with their residents?

If performance league tables are introduced, it would seem sensible that all social landlords are required to report on their National Indicators, through their Annual Report, also giving details of how their stated performance compares with other organisations in a consistent, standard and set way.

16. Do you think that there should be a better way of reporting the outcomes of landlords' complaint handling? How can this be made as clear and accessible as possible for residents?

The Council considers that it would be very difficult to report and compare landlords' complaints handling performance unless there is a nationally prescribed process/procedure for dealing with complaints at the local level, with nationally prescribed timescales, including:

- What constitutes a "complaint" ?
- How many internal stages there should be ?
- What levels are compensation are appropriate, in what cases ?

The Council does not think is it appropriate or necessary to do this.

17. Is the Regulator best placed to prepare key performance indicators in consultation with residents and landlords?

See (14) above.

18. What would be the best approach to publishing key performance indicators that would allow residents to make the most effective comparison of performance?

In the Annual Report to Tenants, which should be available on-line and only for those tenants specifically requesting one, as paper copies sent by post.

19. Should we introduce a new criterion to the Affordable Homes Programme that reflects residents' experience of their landlord? What other ways could we incentivise best practice and deter the worst, including for those providers that do not use Government funding to build?

The Council considers linking the provision of grant for new housebuilding to residents' perceptions of their landlord's performance to be very inappropriate.

It is in the national interest for as many social landlords as possible to build as much new affordable housing as possible. League tables and comparisons are riddled with discrepancies and anomalies that the Council does not believe should be used to determine grant levels. The Council believes that grant for new affordable housing should be allocated on the basis of housing need and value-for-money.

20. Are current resident engagement and scrutiny measures effective? What more can be done to make residents aware of existing ways to engage with landlords and influence how services are delivered?

Inevitably, the practice and effectiveness of landlords in respect of resident engagement and scrutiny varies significantly between landlords across the country. In the Council's experience, it is very difficult to encourage tenants to become engaged with the Council as their landlord especially if, generally, their landlord provides a good housing service.

If the Government is concerned about this issue, it could strengthen the Housing Regulatory Framework, but it is the Council's view that it should be left with individual social landlords to continue to engage with their tenants at the level and way in which their tenants want.

21. Is there a need for a stronger representation for residents at a national level? If so, how should this best be achieved?

There are already a number of good, representative national tenants' groups – such as TPAS, TAROE and the Tenants Group of the Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) – with committed, articulate and experienced tenants who willingly give up their time to represent tenants' views.

It therefore appears appropriate and sensible for the Minister and senior MHCLG officials to meet regularly, at least twice a year, with representatives of the main national tenant organisations, with agenda and minutes published and generally available, to discuss their issues and concerns.

22. Would there be interest in a programme to promote the transfer of local authority housing, particularly to community-based housing associations? What would it need to make it work?

The Council has consulted its tenants, on a number of occasions, on whether or not they would like to change their landlord from the Council to another social landlord – whether it be an existing social landlord or a newly-created one. However, our tenants have consistently said that they wish the Council to remain as their landlord – and to stop asking them.

The Council believes that tenants should have the benefit and opportunity to, collectively, transfer their landlord if they are dissatisfied with the service provided and believe that another landlord would provide a better service and/or increased investment in the housing stock. However, the Council strongly believes that tenants and landlords should not be incentivised to transfer their landlord by the offer of significant additional funding, or the repayment of debt, by the Government - at the expense of other tenants nationally who are satisfied with their landlord's service and investment in their housing stock - as has happened in the past.

The desire for tenants to, collectively, transfer their landlord should be solely driven by a genuine motivation to have a better landlord. In such cases, the Council believes that both the Council and tenants should be assisted by the Government to facilitate a transfer.

23. Could a programme of trailblazers help to develop and promote options for greater resident-leadership within the sector?

The Council does not have a view, as long as it is not at the expense of tenants who are not interested.

24. Are Tenant Management Organisations delivering positive outcomes for residents and landlords? Are current processes for setting up and disbanding Tenant Management Organisations suitable? Do they achieve the right balance between residents' control and local accountability?

The Council has no experience of Tenant Management Organisations, and therefore does not feel bale to comment – other than to say that there has never been any interest locally for tenants to form a TMO.

25. Are there any other innovative ways of giving social housing residents greater choice and control over the services they receive from landlords?

The Council already has good structures and channels available to consult tenant and leaseholder representatives through the District-wide Tenants and Leaseholders Panel, which is consulted on all proposed new or amended housing policies and its views taken into account before decisions are made. It is the Council's experience that tenants do not want to have greater control over their housing services and prefer, instead, to get on with their lives – but perhaps that is because the Council's tenants are generally satisfied with the Council's service.

26. Do you think there are benefits to models that support residents to take on some of their own services? If so, what is needed to make this work?

The Council has not identified any desire or demand for resident to deliver their services themselves.

27. How can landlords ensure residents have more choice over contractor services, while retaining oversight of quality and value for money?

It is good practice for residents' representatives to be consulted over specifications for works and services, and the Council considers that the Housing Regulatory Framework could be strengthened to encourage greater involvement in this respect.

28. What more could we do to help leaseholders of a social housing landlord?

In the Council's experience, we receive very few responses from leaseholders when we consult on proposed works and tenders received.

Indeed, for many years we have attempted to keep a district-wide Leaseholders Association going, comprising Council leaseholders, to provide a forum where senior council officers can meet with leaseholders to discuss issues of concern. However, despite numerous attempts to publicise the Association and meetings, it has been necessary to disband the group due to a lack of interest.

We believe that the existing legislation is sufficient in terms of consultation. The main issues we tend to have from leaseholders is in relation to final service charges, in terms of queries about costs of minor and major works on blocks. The Council feels that this is the area where energy should be expended on trying to improve the clarity and level of detail provided to leaseholders.

29. Does the Regulator have the right objective on consumer regulation? Should any of the consumer standards change to ensure that landlords provide a better service for residents in line with the new key performance indicators proposed, and if so how?

The objective set out in the Green Paper seems appropriate.

30. Should the Regulator be given powers to produce other documents, such as a Code of Practice, to provide further clarity about what is expected from the consumer standards?

The Council would always welcome guidance to help clarify any of the standards, providing that they do not fall into the trap of becoming prescriptive. They should allow landlords the flexibility to meet the standards in a way that is most suitable at the local level.

31. Is "serious detriment" the appropriate threshold for intervention by the Regulator for a breach of consumer standards? If not, what would be an appropriate threshold for intervention?

The Council is concerned that if the threshold for the Regulator to become involved in individual complaints from tenants is lowered, it will not only start to duplicate the work of the Housing Ombudsman, it will also become confusing for tenants as to where they should direct their complaint.

The Council feels that the current "serious detriment" threshold, above which the Regulator becomes involved, is appropriate. We feel that the Regulator should only become involved, as a regulatory matter, if there appears to be a systemic failure by a landlord on a serious issue. The Council notes that there already appears to be liaison between the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator on complaints and we suggest that it is in this area where the relationship could be strengthened, so that the Regulator is alerted to concerns about complaints received by the Housing Ombudsman that indicate there could be a systemic failure by a landlord.

32. Should the Regulator adopt a more proactive approach to regulation of consumer standards? Should the Regulator use key performance indicators and phased interventions as a means to identify and tackle poor performance against these consumer standards? How should this be targeted?

It is not felt that key performance indicators will be able to form a robust basis for monitoring by the Housing Regulator, or for determining interventions – since there are so many external factors affecting performance. The Council would re-iterate its earlier point that the Housing Ombudsman should be alert to concerns about failures in the service provided to housing customers and notify the Regulator if it appears that there may be a systemic failure to meet the consumer standards.

33. Should the Regulator have greater ability to scrutinise the performance and arrangements of local authority landlords? If so, what measures would be appropriate?

The Council does not think this is necessary, since local authorities are already scrutinised by its external auditors and complaints about service failures are dealt with by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

34. Are the existing enforcement measures set out in Box 3 adequate? If not, what additional enforcement powers should be considered?

The list of enforcement measures in Box 3 is extensive and wide-ranging. The Council therefore considers that the list is adequate

35. Is the current framework for local authorities to hold management organisations such as Tenant Management Organisations and Arms Length Management Organisations to account sufficiently robust? If not, what more is needed to provide effective oversight of these organisations?

The Council does not have any experience of TMOs or ALMOs and therefore does not feel sufficiently informed to comment.

36. What further steps, if any, should Government take to make the Regulator more accountable to Parliament?

The Council considers the current accountability arrangements appropriate.

The Tenants and Leaseholders Panel's views on Chapter 3

The Panel considers Tenant Selected Performance Indicators and monitors the Council's performance against these targets. The Panel feels this arrangement to be an effective way of tenants managing performance and could be rolled out nationally. The Panel is against the introduction of league tables as they are concerned that it is extremely difficult to compare like-for- like services across different authorities. The Panel considers that performance indicators should be publicised.

The Panel considers that the number of complaints should have no effect on funding received by landlords. It considers that if the landlord receives less funding for this reason it would mean a lessor service being provided and therefore even more complaints being received. The Panel also considers that many complaints are received by councils from people who believe that it may influence their council in providing them with services which they may not be eligible for.

The Panel considers that this Council's engagement strategies are effective. However, although the Council is a member of ARCH, it considers that there may be scope for all Chairs of Resident Panels in Essex to meet up on a 6 monthly basis to share good practice.

The Panel considers that there would be no interest at all in the Epping Forest District and observed that those that have transferred to a Housing Association or TMO have regretted taking this course.

Chapter 4 – Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities

37. How could we support or deliver a best neighbourhood competition?

Whilst the Council agrees that, sometimes, there is a stigma attached to being a Council tenant, we do not feel that holding competitions will go any way to removing any stigma.

38. In addition to sharing positive stories of social housing residents and their neighbourhoods, what more could be done to tackle stigma?

Again, the Council feels that "sharing positive stories" at the national level will do little to remove any stigma. The Council does agree, though, that councils can help to promote positive messages about their housing service and the tenants who live in their housing. This can be through local media releases, housing newsletters to tenants and posts on social media, to show the benefits of being a Council tenant.

39. What is needed to further encourage the professionalism of housing management to ensure all staff deliver a good quality of service?

The Council supports the proposal within the Green Paper to introduce housing customer service courses for housing staff, through the Chartered Institute of Housing. Another suggestion could be to introduce a national awards scheme for customer service, which would provide a positive mechanism to promote good customer service.

40. What key performance indicator should be used to measure whether landlords are providing good neighbourhood management?

Neighbourhood management is a very important service provided to tenants. However, the Council does not feel that one, or even a small number of, indicators could adequately reflect the full scope services provided through neighbourhood management. Services include dealing with ASB, grounds maintenance and communal repairs.

However, if neighbourhood management is to be measured through a performance indicator, it is suggested that it should be based on tenant satisfaction of neighbourhood management in their area, which could form part of the tri-ennial STAR tenant satisfaction survey undertaken by most social landlords.

41. What evidence is there of the impact of the important role that many landlords are playing beyond their key responsibilities? Should landlords report on the social value they deliver?

Whilst many councils provide additional social value beyond their key responsibilities – and often promote and explain such social value locally – the Council does not feel that there should be a requirement placed on social landlords to formally report on this, not least for the many different forms that this can take. For example, our Council contributes financially to the local Citizens Advice to enable them to fund two debt advisers who work around the District. We also provide a garden maintenance scheme for older and vulnerable tenants; other landlords will provide different social value schemes that are required locally.

42. How are landlords working with local partners to tackle anti-social behaviour? What key performance indicator could be used to measure this work?

Our Council tackles anti-social behaviour in a very co-ordinated way, through joint working between housing officers, community safety officers and the Police. Indeed, the Council has recently introduced a Community Safety Hub to bring services together in a co-ordinated way.

However, again, the Council does not think that an appropriate performance indicator could be introduced that can adequately capture this information and used to compare between landlords.

The Council also has concerns over the time involved in seeking to collect data to inform this performance indicator.

43. What other ways can planning guidance support good design in the social sector?

The Council feels that the design of housing in the social sector is best left with the professional development management (planning) staff in local authorities to ensure compliance with the recently revised NPPF, overseen by local councillors who represent the views of local residents. This can be supplemented by the use of Quality Review Panels for larger developments. For example, our Council has introduced a policy, through its latest version of its Local Plan, where the proposed design of larger developments (in excess of around 50 dwellings) must be externally reviewed by a Quality Review Panel comprising external representatives with backgrounds in urban design.

44. How can we encourage social housing residents to be involved in the planning and design of new developments?

Our Council has recently introduced "development management forums" for larger developments, whereby public meetings are held by the Council and the developer to enable local residents to become involved at the earliest stage of the planning process – as part of the pre-planning application process - which enables residents to provide comments direct to developers and development management officers in order to influence designs before they are finalised for the subsequent planning application.

The Tenants and Leaseholders Panel's views on Chapter 4

The Panel noted that the Council is a member of ARCH who is undertaking some work on tackling stigma in terms of social housing. The Panel believed that stigma comes from the top and the problem rests with "the elite" and should not be left at the door of local councils. The Panel also discussed the reducing police numbers which is not assisting housing estates.

Chapter 5 – Expanding supply and supporting home ownership

45. Recognising the need for fiscal responsibility, this Green Paper seeks views on whether the Government's current arrangements strike the right balance between providing grant funding for housing associations and Housing Revenue Account borrowing for local authorities.

The Council does not feel that the right balance is currently being struck between the provision of grant funding and HRA borrowing. This is simply because there is potentially no limit for the provision of grants, predominantly provided to housing associations, whereas there is a borrowing cap for all local authorities' HRAs.

The Council would strongly urge the Government to remove the HRA Borrowing Caps and enable local authorities to borrow for the HRA in accordance with the principles of prudential borrowing.

46. How we can boost community-led housing and overcome the barriers communities experience to developing new community owned homes?

The Council welcomes the provision of Government funding to assist with the promotion of community-led housing and the various national studies that have been produced on the establishment of, for example, community land trusts.

The Council encourages the Government to continue to provide funding and advice on the role that community led housing can play to involve local communities in the development of housing

47. What level of additional affordable housing, over existing investment plans, could be delivered by social housing providers if they were given longer term certainty over funding?

One of the current inhibitors to the provision of additional affordable housing is the ongoing uncertainty over future rent levels, which have a direct effect on the amount of additional affordable housing that can be provided. The Council welcomes the certainty given by the Government on rent increases of CPI + 1% for

5 years from 2020. However, the original rent guarantee provided to landlords in 2012 was for a 10 year period, and the Council encourages the Government to consider extending the period of the latest rent guarantee for at least 10 year period as well.

48. How can we best support providers to develop new shared ownership products that enable people to build up more equity in their homes?

The Council supports shared ownership products as an excellent way for first time buyers to access the home ownership market.

One of the barriers that many applicants for shared ownership experience, though, is that the predominance of shared ownership occurs on new developments or on relets, which may not be in a suitable or preferred area for many applicants. However, it is the Council's view that shared ownership could be more attractive to a larger range of potential applicants if applicants were given greater choice over where they could be purchased, through the re-introduction of "Do it yourself shared ownership (DIYSO)". DIYSO was very popular a number of years ago, whereby housing associations were given grant to purchase properties off the open market chosen by applicants, which were then sold to them on shared ownership leases.

The Council introduced a scheme a number of years ago, called Open Market Home Ownership, whereby the Council gave an interest-free loan to a housing association partner to part-fund the purchase of an existing property on the open market, chosen by an applicant, which was then sold to the applicant on a shared ownership lease. The rent paid by the applicant met the housing association's loan costs for the share of the property not funded by the Council's interest free-loan. When additional tranches of equity were purchased by the applicant, the capital receipt was shared between the Council and housing association, with both the Council and housing association benefitting from the increase in property values. From the Council's point of view, the return has been far greater than the return that would have been received from investment. However, the scheme had to be discontinued due to a lack of capital resources.

It is the Council's view that a similar scheme could be operated nationally to boost shared ownership, through interest-free loans being provided to housing associations by Homes England and operated in a similar way to the Council's Open Market Shared Ownership Scheme.

The Tenants and Leaseholders Panel's views on Chapter 5

The Panel felt that not all councils can afford to meet with these requirements and in addition it's very difficult to identify available land but they consider there will always be a need for social housing.

(The Tenants Panel noted that the implications of the Green Paper may require them to revisit their own Tenant Participation Agreement with the Council).

Response by Epping Forest District Council
to the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government
on the "Use of receipts from Right to Buy sales" Consultation Paper

Explanatory Note:

This response contains both the Council's formal response – at the member level – agreed at the meeting of the Council's Communities Select Committee held on 24th September 2018 and the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Panel on 12th September 2018. The Council's response answers each of the questions, whilst the Tenants and Leaseholders' Panel's response focuses on specific issues and are shown at the end of each question (where appropriate).

Question 1:
We would welcome your views on extending the time limit for spending Right to Buy receipts from three years to five years for existing receipts but keeping the three year deadline for future receipts.

The Council welcomes the proposal to extend the time limit for the use of existing receipts from three years to five years, and the flexibility that this gives.

However, the Council would strongly urge the Government to apply the five year time limit to future receipts as well. Like the Government, local authorities want to utilise their RTB receipts quickly too. However, it is not always possible to have the resources available to provide the required funding for the balance of the costs – especially whilst borrowing caps are in force for housing revenue accounts (HRAs). Moreover, it is likely that the current high number of existing properties purchased off the open market will continue, in order to ensure that receipts are spent before they have to be handed to the Government.

The Council would also suggest that local authorities that have already passed RTB receipts to the Government that could not be used within 3 years, as a prudent approach to avoid paying interest, should have these RTB receipts returned if they could have been spent within the proposed 5 year period.

The Views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

The Panel's view is that receipts currently held should be retained for up to 5 years as this will give more time to get developments completed.

Question 2:
We would welcome your views on allowing flexibility around the 30% cap in the circumstances set out in the consultation paper, and whether there are any additional circumstances where flexibility should be considered.

The Council welcomes the proposed flexibility set out in the Consultation Paper. However, it is noted that the main flexibility is in relation to the provision of homes for social rent. For its Council Housebuilding Programme, the Council has adopted the use of affordable rents, in line with the Government's previous policy that new homes could only be developed for affordable rent, and not social rent. The Council would therefore welcome the flexibility and ability for the proposed 50% cap on the use of replacement receipts to be applied to affordable rented properties too.

This would provide much-needed flexibility to councils and is likely to facilitate additional Council housebuilding, since only the remaining 50% of the cost would need to be funded from other sources, as opposed to 70% as at present. This will be particularly useful where a council is at its spending cap and does not have the ability to fund the other 70% from other sources. In such cases, less Council homes would be provided and it could also place even greater pressure on the Council's ability to spend all of its RTB receipts within the current and proposed (for new receipts) 3 year timescale.

The views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

The Panel considers that the cap should be increased to 50% for the build costs of both social and affordable rented properties in all areas.

Question 3:
We would welcome your views on restricting the use of Right to Buy receipts on the acquisition of property and whether this should be implemented through a price cap per unit based on average build costs.

The Council does not agree that restrictions should be applied to the use of RTB receipts on the acquisition of property, especially based on average build costs – since costs vary significantly within the proposed regional areas.

For example, the Council is located in the South East region, in the commuter belt around London, where acquisition, build and land costs are very high. This can be compared to other parts of the region, for example Norfolk, where the costs are so much lower.

The Council would suggest that flexibility be given to local authorities to determine for themselves whether it is the best use of their resources to purchase properties off the open market and not apply any price cap, as is the case at present.

The views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

The Panel favoured the option of a price cap.

Question 4:
We would welcome your views on allowing local authorities to use Right to Buy receipts for shared ownership units as well as units for affordable and social rent.

The Council welcomes the proposal to allow receipts to be used for shared ownership homes, which provides local authorities with maximum flexibility to utilise receipts for the form of tenure they consider most appropriate on different sites.

Question 5A:
We would welcome your views on allowing the transfer of land from a local authority's General Fund to their Housing Revenue Account at zero cost.

The Council supports this proposal, provided that local authorities are given the flexibility to transfer the land at any cost between zero cost and full market value.

Views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

The Panel considers that Council land is Council land.

Question 5B:
We would also welcome your views on how many years land should have been held by the local authority before it can be transferred at zero cost, and whether this should apply to land with derelict buildings as well as vacant land.

Since the proposal to enable local authorities to transfer land at zero cost is to help increase the delivery of housing, the Council cannot see any reason for restricting this to a specific number of years. We also feel that this ability should apply to land with derelict buildings, as well as to vacant land.

Question 6:
We would welcome your views on whether there are any circumstances where housing companies or Arm's-Length Management Organisations should be allowed to use Right to Buy receipts

Since ALMOs and housing companies are owned by local authorities that generate the RTB receipts, and often undertake new building on behalf of the local authority, the Council feels that it is appropriate for local authorities to allow such bodies to use RTB receipts.

Question 7:
We would welcome your views on allowing a short period of time (three months) during which local authorities could return receipts without added interest.

The Council welcomes this proposed allowance.

Question 8:
Do you have any other comments to make on the use of Right to Buy receipts and ways to make it easier for local authorities to deliver replacement housing?

The issues that the Consultation Paper raises are the main issues on which the Council wants to comment.

Question 9:
Should the Government focus be on a wider measurement of the net increase in the supply of all social and affordable housing instead of the current measurement of additional homes sold and replaced under the Right to Buy? If the target were to change, we would welcome your views on what is the best alternative way to measure the effects of Government policies on the stock of affordable housing.

The Council agrees that the focus of the measurement of the net increase in the supply of all social and affordable housing should widened.

The Council agrees the proposal set out in the consultation paper that suggests that Government drops the current target and measures all the social and affordable housing that has been sold or lost against the total number of additional social and affordable housing provided - so that it is clear whether there has been an increase rather than a loss overall. This would mean that all properties sold under the Right to Buy would be included rather than just those above the baseline forecast in 2012, as well as new social housing bought or built by local authorities and housing associations, regardless of how this has been funded.

Views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

The Panel's view is that the 1-1 target is not always achievable.

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Dear Partner Colleagues and Stakeholders,

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation has published its report into the work of Essex CRC today. It can be found by following the link below:

https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/essexcrc/

Thank you very much to those of you that supported us during the inspection, and for those that attended the Stakeholder focus group. You will see that the report highlights an outstanding approach to working in partnership, which is a credit to us all.

The CRC has been recognised for the range of services we deliver, including our community payback (unpaid work) scheme. The inspectors also said that our Through the Gate service is 'showing promise'.

It is our case assessment and risk management practice that requires the most improvement. We already have a comprehensive action plan in place to address these concerns, and I will of course share our progress against this as requested.

Please do contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

With kind regards

Alex Osler
CRC Director

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Chairman's Events October/November

Date	Event	Venue	Attending
Thursday 11 October	Cream Tea	Valentines Mansion, Ilford	Chairman of Council
Friday 12 October	Basildon Charity Dinner	Barleylands, Billericay	Chairman of Council
Sunday 14 October	High Sheriffs Justice Service	Chelmsford Cathedral	Chairman of Council
Saturday 10 November	Remembrance Tribute WW1 Dance Production	Epping Forest District Museum	Vice Chairman of Council
Sunday 11 November	Remembrance Sunday		

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Notification of Call-In of Portfolio Holder Decision under Paragraphs 45-52 of Article 6 (Overview & Scrutiny) of the Constitution

This form must be signed and completed and the original returned to the Proper Officer in person no later than the fifth working day following the publication of the decision to be called-in

Decision to be called-in:
Decision reference:
Portfolio:
Description of decision:
Reason for call-in

Members requesting call-in
(3 members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or 5 other members)

Members Name:	**Signed:**
Lead member:	
Office Use Only: Date Received:	

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