

# **Report to Governance Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 7 July 2015**

**Subject:** Consultation Register 2014/15 and 2015/16

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**Committee Secretary:** Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

That the Consultation Register for 2015/16 setting out those issues on which public consultation is to be undertaken during the municipal year and those consultation exercises completed during 2014/2015 be noted.

## **Public Consultation Register**

1. In order to meet the general duty and best practice, a list of consultation planned and carried out by the Council is published on the website and brought to the attention of the Governance Select Committee.
2. All consultation and engagement exercises undertaken by and on behalf of the Council are required to comply with the provisions of the Council's Public Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
3. As part of the Public Consultation and Engagement Strategy, a Consultation Register has been included in the Council's annual business planning process since 2006/07. It sets out the issues on which individual services will be consulting or engaging residents or customers during the year.
4. The Consultation Register incorporates the results of consultation exercises undertaken during the preceding 12 months. It summarises the purpose, the start and finish dates, the service area carrying out the surveys, where the results were published and some key findings.
5. The Consultation Register sets out the overall objective for consultation exercises yet to be undertaken, the methods to be used and groups consulted. This is in order to focus consultation and engagement on priorities and operational issues to be faced in the coming year.
6. In establishing this approach, it has been recognised that the need for some consultation exercises will arise subsequent to the publication of the Register. It should also be noted that regular ongoing satisfaction surveys such as housing report cards, or consultation carried out in relation to planning applications, will not be included

within the Consultation Register, nor any estate management consultation (eg, tree regeneration or facilities proposals in a specific estate). A list of planned consultation exercises is also published on the Council's website.

7. The Consultation Register for 2014/15 and items planned for consultation in 2015/16 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

### **Community Engagement and Involvement**

8. The Council carries out a wide range of community engagement and involvement activity. Eighteen surveys are listed at Appendix 1. A total of 72% statutory and 28% discretionary surveys were/are being carried out.
9. Amongst the larger surveys carried out by the Council in the last 12 months were the Car Parking Review and the Tenant Participation Survey. A further district-wide Community Safety Survey is being planned for the summer and autumn.
10. Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan are set to dominate much of the consultation agenda over the next 12 – 36 months. Five separate Local Area Neighbourhood Plans: Epping, Theydon Bois, Buckhurst Hill, Loughton and North Weald Bassett are currently at various points of progress. Consultation for the Local Plan Preferred Options is to be carried out in accordance with a new timetable agreed by Cabinet.
11. Seven surveys highlighted in the Consultation Register had an interactive/online element within the consultation.

### **Internal Consultation**

12. Human Resources will be carrying out further employee 'Pulse' consultation to compare and measure staff attitudes against previous survey results. Staff consultation will also ascertain preferred methods of staff engagement and how money budgeted for staff projects (accrued through the telecommunications masts located on the tower) might be spent.

### **Cost**

13. All consultation has a cost whether in officer time, postage or information materials. The majority of public consultation was carried out in-house and costs were kept low and within current budgets and account for postage, staff time and materials only.
14. A total cost of consultation within the current Register is £97,200. Of this, the most significant item of planned consultation expenditure is the Local Plan. The Local Development Scheme agreed by Cabinet on 11 June set out the proposed timetable for the next round of consultation on the Local Plan. The Preferred Options consultation due to commence in July 2016, is budgeted for £90,000. This figure is an

estimate based on previous consultation exercises, and includes printing costs for consultation documents, hiring exhibition venues etc. This amount is included within the budget update provided to Members (also on 11 June).

### **Appreciative Enquiry**

15. Research into new public and staff engagement and consultation techniques is being undertaken. It aims to:

- enhance current response rates,
- achieve a healthy, motivated high-performing workforce,
- use innovative ways of working that connect people to what they need wherever they are.

A replacement staff guide to consultation called 'Influencing Decisions' will be published on the Council's Intranet in the autumn which will give current information and thinking on the best practices and procedures for effective engagement and introduce the Epping Forest District Council Code of Practice on Consultation.

**Budget provision/Personnel/Land:** £97,200

**Community Plan/BVPP reference:** MT05 - Medium Term Aims 2011 to 2015

**Relevant statutory powers:** Consultation is governed by statute and remains under The General Duty of Best Value provided for under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999, as amended by s137 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

**Background papers:** Public Consultation Policy and Strategy

**Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:** None

**Key Decision reference:** None

**Appendix 1**  
**Epping Forest District Council Public Consultation Register 2015 to 2016**

Planned - Registered	Subject Matter/Issues or Title	Start and Finish Dates (estimated)	Who is commissioning Survey	Overview/Objectives and How will the results be used?	Method and Target Group/s/Cost	Decisions on the results and where can they be viewed?
P0514/DO	Car Parking Review Survey 2014	30 May to 31 July 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	The Council looked at a number of principles, including the provision and availability of short stay parking for up to five hours, the tariff structure, different tariffs for different locations, the continuation of limited free parking on Saturdays within each town centre. The Council's existing Parking Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in November 2004.	The survey was available online at <a href="http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk">www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk</a> . We encouraged residents, Businesses, Local Town Partnerships and users of car parks. We used Alpha Parking for car parks interviews. Cost £6,000.	Statutory - Portfolio Holder Advisory Group on the Car Parking Strategy 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015 <a href="http://haako/documents/s61678/C-065%20Car%20Park%20Strategy%20Revised%20Tariff%20Rpt.pdf">http://haako/documents/s61678/C-065%20Car%20Park%20Strategy%20Revised%20Tariff%20Rpt.pdf</a>  Decision was made by Cabinet on 2 February 2015
P0514/CB	Theydon Bois Neighbourhood Plan Area consultation	27 May to 8 July 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	Theydon Bois Parish Council submitted an application to carry out a Neighbourhood Plan. Following receipt of the application the District Council must consult on the proposed area to be covered by the Plan, in this case the entire Parish of Theydon Bois.	All members of the public in Theydon Bois Parish and neighbouring parishes. Also developers who may wish to promote sites for development through the Neighbourhood Plan. Comments by email to <a href="mailto:ldfconsult@eppingforestdc.gov.uk">ldfconsult@eppingforestdc.gov.uk</a> or by post to Planning Policy,	Statutory - The Theydon Bois Neighbourhood Plan area application has now been approved as a Neighbourhood Plan area.
0614/JD	Values and Behaviours PDR Consultation 2014	23 May to 13 June 2014	Management Board	Management Board reviewed the results of the Values and Behaviours Personal Development Reviews and monitored how they impact on staff. Feedback from staff is important and will be taken into account to amend or modify the scheme if necessary or implement further changes.	A link to an email was sent to all relevant staff in grades 8 and above. Cost, officer time.	Discretionary - Management Board decided to take forward a version of the PDR (Appraisal) process that included Values and Behaviours comments and examples, plus any areas for staff improvement/ development. However the scoring element was removed. Decision can be viewed on the Management Board minutes of 20/8/14.
0614/PM	Customer and Members Consultation 2014	28 June to 17 August 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	Cabinet requested that Members and Customers were asked their views on accessing Council services over the Christmas/New Year period.	An online link to the surveys in The Forester and on the website and distributed via email and hard copy questionnaires. Cost, officer time	Discretionary – A report was submitted to the Joint Consultative Committee, 23 October 2014. The JCC recommended to the Cabinet the continuation of the current Christmas/New Year arrangement for the next three years (from 2015/16).

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0914/PG	Crime and Disorder Public Perception Survey	14 July to 15 August 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	The Survey forms part of the CSP Strategic Assessment which lists our priorities for the forthcoming year. Coupled with this we developed a Partnership Plan to address those priorities identified in the Strategic Assessment. We tried to identify any concerns around the efficiency of public services.	We engaged the public from all areas using an online questionnaire or a paper based version for those unable to obtain web access. We engaged Neighbourhood Watch, email families, Town and Parish Councils, community groups, youth groups etc. Cost £300.	Statutory - This was then ratified by Safer, Cleaner, Greener Overview and Scrutiny and also the CSP Strategy Panel. Working as lead agency of the Community Safety Partnership we consulted the local community to identify perceptions of crime and disorder in the Epping Forest District.
NR0814/	Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2015/2016	Aug 2014	Director of Resources	We needed residents views on our Local Council Tax Support scheme – a scheme designed to help people in financial need to pay their Council Tax.	The consultation was available to all on the Council's website or by email or a hard copy request.	Statutory - We have not changed our scheme for 2015/16, so it remains the same as it was for the financial year 2014/15. We will however have to decide each year whether the scheme needs to be changed so there may be changes in future years.
R0814/SZ	Epping Neighbourhood Plan Area Consultation	Aug 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	Epping Town Council identified the area to be covered by the plan as the whole parish. The Council must publicise this proposed area for a period of six weeks so that people can comment on it.	A copy of the application, along with further information on neighbourhood planning was published on the Council's website. Cost, officer time	Statutory – We have now designated Epping as a Neighbourhood Plan area.
R0914/SZ	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council Area Plan	Sep 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council identified the area to be covered by the plan as the whole parish. The Council must publicise this proposed area for a period of six weeks so that people can comment on it.	A copy of the application, along with further information on neighbourhood planning was published on the Council's website. Cost, officer time	Statutory – We have now designated Buckhurst Hill as a Neighbourhood Plan area.
R0914/SZ	North Weald Bassett Parish Area Plan	Sep 2014	Director of Neighbourhoods	North Weald Bassett Parish Council identified the area to be covered by the plan as the whole parish. The Council must publicise this proposed area for a period of six weeks so that people can comment on it.	A copy of the application, along with further information on neighbourhood planning was published on the Council's website. Cost, officer time.	Statutory - Initial report to Cabinet prepared for 9 March meeting was deferred following meeting held with NWB Parish Councillors who requested more time to consider recommending agreement to the application subject to the exclusion of an area to the West of the M11. Cabinet decision to exclude area from Plan 11 June.

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R0914/GN	Overview and Scrutiny Structure	Sep 2014	Director of Governance	The proposed restructuring of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels from five to four, to closely align to the Directorate structure of the Council.	Councillors and Senior Officers of the Council. Cost, officer time.	Statutory – The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the restructure change <a href="http://rds.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=49306">http://rds.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=49306</a>
R1014/DB	Epping Forest Youth Conference 2014	14 Oct 2014	Director of Communities	The Youth Conference targeted the 11 to 17 age group. The purpose was to raise awareness of Local Democracy Week 2014.	The Conference was attended by 90 pupils from the district including the home educated group. Cost £500	Discretionary - The consultation identified 3 key issues facing young people, bullying, alcohol misuse and stress. They launched a bullying awareness campaign in secondary schools during National Bullying Awareness Week and other initiatives to promote #URNotALone.
R1214/CB	Local Plan Preferred Options consultation	2015/2016	Director of Neighbourhoods	The Local Plan sets out the growth strategy for the District over the next 20 years. An initial consultation held in 2012 identified possible options for development. The Preferred Options is the next stage and will set out the sites and policies that the Council think are most appropriate taking into account previous consultation responses and the evidence base.	All residents consulting on Housing, employment, leisure, open space, environment, Green Belt, town centres. Cost est. £90,000.	Statutory – The Local Development Scheme was agreed by Cabinet on 11 June, which set out our proposed timetable for the next rounds of consultation on the Local Plan. The Preferred Options consultation is now due to commence in July 2016
R1214/RJ	Tenant Participation Survey	Dec 2014 to Jan 2015	Director of Communities	Part of a review of Tenant Participation being carried out by Epping Forest District Council's Tenant Scrutiny Panel	Email link to an online survey to tenants and leaseholders. Cost £50.	Discretionary - New tenant participants were included in our participatory groups.
R0215/SD	Gypsy Roma and Traveller Site Licencing Survey	Feb 2015	Director of Communities	Authorised Gypsy Roma and Traveller sites require a site licence in the same way as other permanent residential sites on the district. The existing site licence conditions on many sites are outdated and we are introducing new standard conditions.	A letter to the GRT community via individual liaison representative. Cost Officer time and materials	Statutory - The proposed site licence conditions were presented to the Council's Cabinet on 11 June 2015, adopting the site licence conditions as the standard conditions for holiday caravan and camping sites in the district.
R0215/SZ	Loughton Town Council Neighbourhood Plan Area Consultation	Feb 2015 to Mar 2015	Director of Neighbourhoods	Loughton Town Council has identified the area to be covered by the plan as the whole parish.	The Communities of Loughton Town Parish, local residents, businesses and interest groups. Cost Officer time	Statutory – The Council has designated Loughton as a Neighbourhood Plan Area.

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P0615/RW	Consultation on Homelessness Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18	June 2015 to Aug 2015	Director of Communities	Homelessness Strategy is a Strategic document considering the Homeless service provided by the Council.	Statutory and relevant agencies and members of the public. Cost £50.	Statutory - Once consultation has taken place from July, comments will be considered before Council adopts document.
July 2015	Crime and Disorder Public Perception Survey	July to Sep 2015	Director of Communities	A public perception survey of crime and disorder issues in EFD as perceived by individual members of the public. The findings will go towards weighting and determining strategic priorities for the Community Safety Partnership to address during the year. This will then be analysed in the statutory annual Partnership Strategic Assessment and annual Partnership Plan developed around those issues of greatest concern.	General public, residents and businesses within Epping Forest District. Est. cost, £300.	Statutory - Cabinet Meeting 3 December 2015
July 2015	Employee Pulse Survey	July and Aug 2015	Management Board	As part of ongoing engagement with staff, to seek their views and to encourage participation.	All Council staff. Focus groups/workshops have been running for staff and there is to be another workshop at the Leadership Team meeting on 1 July and an adapted version at the JCC meeting on 13 July.	Discretionary – JCC Meeting 13 July