

## **Report to Governance Select Committee**

**Date of meeting:** 4 July 2017 - 7.15pm

**Subject:** Consultation Register 2016/17 and 2017/18

**Officer contact for further information:** Valerie Loftis

**Committee Secretary:** Jackie Leither

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### **Recommendation/Decisions Required:**

**That the Consultation Register for 2017/18 setting out those issues on which public consultation is to be undertaken during the municipal year and those consultation exercises completed during 2016/2017 be noted.**

### **Public Consultation Register**

1. 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, in order to meet the general duty and best practice guidelines.
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 and Policy.
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 we will be consulting residents and 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 directorate carrying out the surveys and where the results were published.
5. The Consultation Register shows the overall objectives for each exercise yet to be undertaken and the methods and groups to consult. This is in order to focus consultation and engagement on priorities and operational issues faced in the coming year.

### **Not included in the Register**

6. It was recognised that in establishing this approach, that the need for some consultation exercises would arise subsequent to the publication of the Register. Regular ongoing satisfaction surveys such as housing report cards, or consultation carried out in relation to planning applications, are not included with the Consultation Register or any estate management consultation (eg, tree regeneration or facilities

proposals in a specific estate). The Council publishes a list of planned consultation exercises on its website.

7. Appendix 1 to this report shows the Consultation Register for 2016/17 and items planned for consultation in 2017/18.

### **Community Engagement and Involvement**

8. The Council carries out a wide range of community engagement and involvement activities. There are eighteen surveys listed in Appendix 1, eight of which were the Council's statutory duty and ten were carried out at the discretion of the service.

Some of the surveys carried out by the Council in the last 12 months were:

- The Draft Local Plan - Preferred Approach
  - The Careline Customer Satisfaction Survey
  - Museums Heritage and Culture, Non-user Museum Survey
9. Of the 18 consultations carried out and planned, ten surveys have/had an interactive/online element using either emails or the Council's website to directly link to consultation. Two surveys used canvassing methods, one used a telephone survey, five were paper based postal surveys, and two used various methods of surveying residents and businesses. One survey was dropped due to poor response issues.

### **Local Plan**

10. The Council's most important and largest consultation last year was the Draft Plan Preferred Approach. The initial findings from the Draft Local Plan consultation were reported to Cabinet on 9 March 2017. This included an analysis of responses received via the questionnaire. Further detailed analysis of all responses, including letters and emails received by the Council, is now being concluded. A further report of the Draft Local Plan Consultation is to be provided to Cabinet on 11 July 2017.
11. As part of the next stage Local Plan production, the Council is required to publish the version of the Local Plan that it intends to submit to the Secretary of State for Examination-in-Public under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
12. On 9 March 2017 the Cabinet agreed an updated Local Development Scheme, which sets out the timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning policy documentation.
13. The Local Development Scheme indicates that the Regulation 19 Publication of the Local Plan will take place in January/February 2018. At this stage the Plan is published, and representations are invited in relation to the 'soundness' and 'legal compliance' of the Plan, which will then inform the Examination-in-Public.

## **Cost**

14. All consultation has a cost whether in officer time, postage or information materials. The majority of the Council's public consultation was carried out in-house, and costs were kept low and within current budgets and accounted for postage and materials only.
15. A total cost of consultation within the current Register is £117,288. Of this cost, £100,000 for 2017/18 was for the Local Plan consultation.

## **Transformation and Internal Consultation**

16. The Council commissioned an external customer satisfaction telephone survey to produce an independent, demographically representative, baseline in order to track the impact of the Transformation programme, in particular the customer services project and realisation of key benefits.
17. Also as part of the Council's 'Transformation' project, Human Resources carried out a survey to determine council employee's readiness for change. The survey gave an overview of how managers and employees feel in key areas of a change management process, i.e. collaboration, culture, implementation and execution, leadership and organisational alignment. The results were evaluated and a number of recommendations were made for each area. The full survey report is available on the Employee Engagement page of the Intranet and the Leadership response document will be published imminently. Staff consultation also included a catering survey.

**Budget provision/Personnel/Land:** £117,288

**Community Plan/BVPP reference:** MT03 and 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 2016 to 2017 and 2017 to 2018**

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?
R1214/CB	Draft Local Plan - Preferred Approach	Start date at end of October 2016 to July 2017	Director of Neighbourhoods	<p>Statutory - 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.</p> <p>The 'Draft Local Plan – Preferred Approach' (the next stage) sets out the sites and policies that the Council think are most appropriate taking into account previous consultation responses and evidence base.</p>	<p>This survey was open to anyone who was interested and included people who live, work and/or do business in the area, using various methods.</p> <p>The indicative estimated cost of approximately £100,000 was agreed in the budget report to Cabinet 1 December 2016.</p>	The responses received to the Draft Local Plan consultation will be published on the Council's website in the near future. Officers are working with external consultants 'Remarkable PR', to extract the data in a format to enable it to be displayed appropriately and to redact personal information and details from responses as required.
0216/SD	Proposed Standards for Nursery Worker Accommodation	Feb/April 2016	Director of Communities	<p>Statutory - Proposed Standard Conditions for the Stationing of Caravans used to Accommodate Workers on Nursery Sites were drafted in order to ensure that the accommodation is safe for people to live in.</p>	<p>A paper-based survey. The draft documents were posted to all site operators of nursery sites in the District in February.</p> <p>We asked for the enclosed questionnaire and any other feedback to be returned to us by 7 April 2016.</p> <p>At no additional cost to EFDC.</p>	<p>The consultation period has been extended and the results are pending the completion and analysis of the results.</p> <p>Following the responses from the horticultural industry a meeting was held and a dialogue entered into. Coinciding with our survey, the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC), also carried out an industry-wide survey on the provision of caravan accommodation for temporary workers in the UK, and has produced a subsequent guidance document.</p> <p>A further meeting is now proposed with interested parties to work together to agree minimum standards and the best way this can be achieved.</p>
0616SD	Private Sector Landlord's Survey	June/July 2016	Director of Communities	<p>Discretionary - Private sector landlords provide housing for local residents and the private rented sector is growing.</p> <p>It is important that all landlords are aware of their responsibilities towards their tenants and the property standards that are required.</p> <p>It is also useful to landlords to be able to keep updated on relevant issues around</p>	<p>A targeted online survey to private sector landlords.</p> <p>12 Landlords responded.</p> <p>Cost – £700.</p>	<p>We carried out an on-line and a paper survey.</p> <p>An on line survey is being kept open and we will be reviewing landlord comments as they arise.</p>

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				letting properties. The Council wants to be able to provide information to landlords in a way that is accessible to them and to include information that they consider useful.		
0616/TC	Service Recognition Survey	July/Sept 2016	Director of Governance	<p>Discretionary - To establish levels of public understanding linked to satisfaction.</p> <p>To assist the Transformation process by improving our understanding of our residents views and implementing changes to our services as a result.</p>	<p>A paper based, service recognition survey was prepared as a 'quiz' and was used at public events such as the North Weald Air Fete (Community Day).</p> <p>Cost £100.</p>	<p>The consultation analysis was used to inform the Transformation Communications project. The survey results suggested that the general public lack an understanding of the range of services provided by various public bodies.</p> <p>The survey form has since been modified to make completion easier and analysis quicker.</p> <p>This consultation was a pilot and has been superceded by the Customer Satisfaction Survey (0317/OS).</p>

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0716/TC	EFDC and Libraries Contact Service Level Agreement	June 2016	Director of Governance	<p>Statutory – Customers using four of the District’s Libraries (with a service level agreement with the Council), were invited to share their views on the services provided.</p> <p>These services are specific to the Council’s contact point for information and publicity and dispersal of recycling bags.</p> <p>This consultation was to examine if the service level agreement should continue or end on 31 March 2017.</p>	<p>A statistical analysis of users (residents) via monthly returns.</p> <p>A user feedback survey targeting Councillors, (County, District and Parish/Town Council) consulted via email and the Members Bulletin.</p> <p>District Council Officers consulted via the internal staff newsletter - District Lines.</p> <p>Essex County Council Library Service consulted via the Group Manager.</p> <p>At a cost of £100.</p>	<p>A total of eight responses were received from county and District Councillors, Parish/Town, Council Clerks and Essex County Council. The opinions offered by Councillors were generally supportive of SLA, emphasising the importance of providing District Council services district-wide.</p> <p>The quality of service was considered to be good with no negative feedback. Three responses were received from Town Council Clerks speaking on behalf of Loughton, Epping and Sheering. Again these were generally supportive with some reference to EFDC/ECC enquiries made by members of the public to local Town and Parish councils.</p> <p>The most comprehensive response from ECC listed the benefits of the current SLA including convenience for customers, Saturday opening times, access to recycling sacks, advice on common themes such as planning applications, housing matters and provision of agenda/minutes of District Council meetings. The SLA was continued.</p>
0716/AM	Employee Change Readiness Survey	June/July 2016	Director of Resources	Discretionary - As part of the Council’s ‘Transformation’ project, Human Resources carried out a survey to determine council staff readiness for change.	<p>An online (interactive) questionnaire was sent via an email link to all Council staff.</p> <p>Cost to EFDC £500.</p>	<p>The survey report is available on the EFDC Employee Engagement/Surveys page of the Intranet.</p> <p>A follow up document with the Leadership Team’s response to those recommendations is awaiting approval for publishing and when approved will also be available on the Employee Engagement/Surveys page of the Intranet.</p>

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0716/JD	Building Control Approved Inspectors Survey	July/Dec 2016	Director of Governance	Discretionary - A survey to identify homeowners who engaged the use of the approved inspector and when.	An online (interactive) survey was sent to homeowners of properties (clients) where a planning application had been received and an Approved Inspector (AI) had completed the building work.  At no additional cost to EFDC.	This survey was abandoned due to lack of responses and the survey generally was concluded before Christmas 2016.
0716/SL	Staff Catering Survey 2017	July 2016	Director of Resources	Discretionary - To assess the usage of the staff vending machines and the staff canteen "Sharon's Kitchen" used by staff at the Civic Offices, Epping.	An online (interactive) survey was sent to all staff at the Civic Offices.  At no additional cost to EFDC.	The results were a relocation of one vending machine from the staff canteen area, Civic Offices to the Oakwood Hill Council facility building where it could be used more fully.  The results also showed that Sharon's Kitchen has proved to be a popular facility for staff to use.
0916/AM	Open Space Hill House Waltham Abbey	Sep/Oct 2016	Director of Governance	Statutory - To appropriate land having an area of 0.73 hectares at Hill House, Waltham Abbey, Essex, which forms part of an open space for use as a Leisure Centre.	A paper based notice was paced on the council's website and in the Hertfordshire Mercury.  Cost - £753.	There was one response from Football England whose concerns were dealt with by the client department.  The land has now been appropriated for planning purposes following a Member decision.
1016/MM	Careline Customer Satisfaction Survey	Oct/Dec 2016	Director of Communities	Statutory - We assessed the feedback of the Epping Forest Careline clients to comply with Telecare Services Association (TSA) statutory duty.	An online (interactive) survey was sent to Careline clients.  Cost £135 postage.	A random survey of 300 of our 2,500 clients representing 12% of our user base. TSA requires 5% of all our users to be consulted achieving 90% satisfaction.  Overall satisfaction levels were 99%. Results of the survey are in our Careline annual report published on our website.
1216/JT	Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18	Dec 2016	Director of Resources	Statutory - To consult on any proposed changes to the 2016/17 Local Tax Support Scheme.	The responses were collected via the Essex County Council website.  At no additional cost to EFDC.	Cabinet report 1/12/16 on Council website.

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0317/OS	Customer Satisfaction Telephone Survey	Mar/April 2017	Chief Executive's Office	Discretionary - The Council undertook an externally commissioned telephone survey to produce an independent, demographically representative, baseline of customer satisfaction with the council, in order to track the impact of the Transformation programme, in particular the customer services project and realisation of key benefits.	An interactive telephone consultation surveyed a random sample of over 500 residents in the District.  <i>LG Inform</i> questions were used to determine customer satisfaction with the local area and to establish benchmarks.  Also to gather information about customer expectations of customer service and experiences of customer service with EFDC in the last 12 months.  Cost £15,000.	The results are currently being evaluated and will be published during the second quarter of 2017-18.  It is anticipated that this survey will be completed on an annual basis to provide benchmarking and trend analysis of satisfaction.
0317/JR	Museums Heritage and Culture, Non-user Survey	Mar/April 2017	Director of Communities	Discretionary – Epping Forest District Museum conducted a short public survey at locations in Waltham Abbey, Loughton, Debden and Epping, to determine what might attract more visitors to Museums.	Canvassing took place from the 6-10 March using work experience students, from Epping Forest College, based across three locations.  At no additional cost to EFDC.	Overall 328 respondents completed this questionnaire. A further survey is planned for the Summer of 2017. The feedback is being reviewed by the event management team and those who provide the crucial crew training and guidance.
0417/NR	Local Planning Application Validation	June 2016 to June 2018	Director of Governance	Statutory - Consulting on a document revision to the Council's current checklist of local information required to be submitted with a planning application, which includes the addition of a guidance note on the 'Submission of Viability and Financial Appraisals for Affordable Housing', related planning applications. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015 requires this to be reviewed every two years. The previous validation list was produced in 2015.	The local validation list identifies information required to register, assess and validate a planning application on the Council's website.  We are asking any person or organization with an interest in or involvement with planning applications submitted to Epping Forest District Council to respond.  At no additional cost to EFDC.	This consultation will take place over two years and reviewing the results will be ongoing during this period.



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<b>Planned consultation for following 12 months</b>						
0617/MM	Crucial Crew Events Feedback Survey	June/July 2017	Director of Communities	Discretionary – To receive and analyse feedback from the teachers and students attending the June 2017 Crucial Crew events in order to improve and update scenarios and presentations.	A paper based exit survey using postcards will be given to teachers and students of Year 6 children in the district with a prize incentive.	The feedback will go to the event management and those who provide the crucial crew training and guidance.
0717/DB	Corporate Plan 2018-2023	July 2017	Chief Executives Office	Discretionary – We want to seek the views of our stakeholders on the drivers, aims, objectives and impact of the Corporate Plan.	Through a series of focus groups, we will seek to gain the views of staff, partners, customers and businesses, on the draft Corporate Plan 2018-2023.	The findings from the results will be incorporated into the Corporate Plan 2018 -2023.
0817/JT	Local Council Tax Support scheme 2018/19	Aug/Oct 2017	Director of Resources	Statutory - Any changes to Local Council Tax Support that may be required either for financial reasons, or due to legislation amending other state benefits.	A Link on our website and Essex County Council website where everybody - a wide range of people need to respond, not just current Local Council Tax Support recipients. Questions will be agreed by Cabinet.	Once the survey is complete, the results will be reported to Cabinet and any recommendations will be incorporated into the scheme.
0917/LA	Essex County Council Travel Plan Survey	Sep/ Oct 2017	Director of Neighbourhoods	Discretionary – ECC makes available a travel survey for councils to send their staff on an annual basis. This is to gauge the various methods of travelling to the workplace to see if there are ways to encourage more sustainable travel. An action plan is made for improvements depending on how sustainable their travel is as a council overall.	An online interactive link in an all staff email is sent to staff biannually.	There will be information on sustainable travel in the staff newsletter once the survey is completed and analysed in the Autumn.