

**CONSULTATION PROCESSES – AN UPDATE  
(Report by Corporate Team Manager)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 A report by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) was submitted to Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011 on their Working Group findings of a review of the Council's consultation and engagement policies, procedures and practices. The Cabinet were informed that the study arose following concerns raised during 2010 by members of the public over perceived weaknesses in the consultation procedures used by the Council and decisions taken following the consultation.
- 1.2 The Working Group identified a number of findings and made a number of recommendations. Cabinet emphasised that these recommendations needed to be considered carefully given their impact on staff time and resources. It was resolved that the contents of the report were noted and that the Managing Director (Resources) undertake further investigations as to how current consultation and engagement processes could be improved and to report back to Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being).

**2. PROGRESS**

- 2.1 Two recommendations have already been achieved, these being:
- Officers should be encouraged wherever possible to utilise the Consultation & Engagement Calendar and Database – email's have been sent encouraging all Heads of Service and Activity Managers to use the calendar and database and twice a year they are emailed requesting completion of the Consultation Forward Plan template
  - A Consultation Forward Plan should be developed which includes an outline of all consultation that were forthcoming over the course of the year – a Consultation Forward Plan was established in July 2011 and was sent to Members in August 2011, this will continue to be updated and circulated to Members twice a year.
- 2.2 All other recommendations contained within the Working Group Report will be considered as part of the review of the Council's Consultation & Engagement Strategy, the remaining recommendations can be found by clicking on the link in Background Information below. The restructure of Policy, Performance & Partnerships and the formation of the Corporate Office has meant that the review of this Strategy has been delayed, it has now been rescheduled to fit in with the Corporate Office project plan; this review will now commence April 2012 and will involve the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) Working Group.

- 2.3 It should be noted that Planning Services are in the process of reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), this statement sets out how and when the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, will seek to engage with local communities regarding planning matters. It replaces our previous Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in 2006, to help people get involved in the preparation of our new Local Plan. The Corporate Office has been consulted as part of this review. A six week public consultation exercise commenced on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 Note the progress made with the Panel's recommendations so far and the rescheduling of the review of the Consultation & Engagement Strategy.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Notes from Cabinet 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011 and copy of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) report on Consultation Processes.

<http://modern.gov.huntsdc.gov.uk:8070/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=37832&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI34812>

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