



CONSULTATION STRATEGY 2005

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1. Introduction

At Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, effective consultation is at the heart of its commitment to the community. A key value of the Council is that it will “*listen to and respond to the community*”.

The purpose of consultation is to inform the decisions taken by the Council, to help it to take the best decisions based on the views of the community and the wider information available. This information will assist Members in making decisions, for which they have the ultimate responsibility. In addition, there are increasingly important statutory requirements for consultation, for example to support CPA and Best Value.

This strategy, revised in 2005, shows how the Council's consultation process will develop over the next eighteen months. Its aim is to ensure effective and efficient consultation from which the Council gains a greater understanding of its communities, leading to improved services and continuous improvement.

This strategy's companion document, the Consultation Handbook, contains in-depth information about the importance of consultation as well as information on methodologies. The Handbook was last revised in October 2005.

2. Objectives of this Consultation Strategy

Detailed below are the objectives for the fifth year of this consultation strategy:

- To further promote the consultation system and deliver continuous improvement in efficient co-ordination, management and evaluation of consultation.
- To ensure that the statutory obligations placed on the Council regarding consultation and research are fulfilled.
- To ensure that the results of all consultation and research are effectively used to inform the decision-making process.
- To ensure that lessons learned from each consultation are recorded centrally.
- To examine future improvements that the Council can deliver to improve its consultation process.

3. The Consultation Strategy

3.1 The Consultation Process at Epsom & Ewell

The Council already has an established track record of consultation using mechanisms such as the FEEDBACK citizens' panel, user-surveys, non-user surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews and workshops. An 'actual consultation' document has been developed, which records all consultation that the Council has carried out in 2005. This can be found in Appendix A.

3.2 Risk Assessment

There are a number of risks associated with carrying out consultation and, when not managed effectively, they can cause a range of problems. A risk assessment has been developed as part of this strategy, identifying potential issues and how these will be overcome.

High risks include:

- Unrealistic expectations from the public of the impact of consultation.
- Lack of capacity in the Service Improvement Unit.
- Lack of consultation planning.

A full copy of the Risk Assessment can be found in Appendix B, which has been used to inform the development of this strategy.

3.3 Quality Assurance System

It is important that consultation conducted by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is well co-ordinated, well planned and effectively managed to ensure that it is both cost-effective and has a real impact on how the Council considers decisions and relates to the community.

In order to ensure this is the case, the Council has a co-ordination and quality assurance system in place, utilising the skills and experience of its Service Improvement Unit (SIU).

3.3.1 Commissioning and Management of Consultation Projects

The SIU is the centre of excellence for consultation in the Council, and as such is responsible for co-ordinating all consultation within the Council. Some research and consultation for specific services may be organised and managed within individual service units, but must go through the quality assurance system via the SIU.

The SIU, prior to any consultation activity commencing will formally approve all planned consultation through the consultation planning (CD1) form. This form should be completed and sent to the SIU for approval prior to consultation taking place this will help to ensure that best practice research is conducted. Completed CD1 forms will be posted on IRIS as part of the Council's consultation database. A copy of the form and guidelines for its completion can be found in Appendix C.

It is also important that the SIU is involved at the earliest opportunity in the commissioning of any projects with an element of research or consultation. This will help to ensure that any agencies commissioned to carry out work on the Council's behalf conduct best practice research, ultimately helping to ensure value for money.

All consultation must be approved by the SIU prior to commencement. If the SIU does not approve a piece of consultation, the Officer will require authority from a Director and/or Chair of S&R Committee (as consultation 'champion') before the consultation can proceed.

3.3.2 Evaluating Consultation

The Council must assess the effectiveness of all consultation in which it engages. Evaluation is integral to the consultation process as it provides evidence as to how the consultation has been used (essential for CPA) and also allows for lessons to be learnt.

The Post-consultation form (CD2) documents the evaluation process of a consultation project. The form needs to be completed in its entirety before a consultation project can be considered closed. The form is to be completed and emailed to the SIU along with an electronic copy of the full report, which will then be made available in the Council's consultation database. A copy of the CD2 form and guidelines for its completion can be found in Appendix D.

3.4 Monitoring of the Strategy

The mechanism for ensuring departments / service managers adhere to the revised consultation strategy will be through the Service Improvement Unit informing Directors and / or the Chairman of S&R Committee.

Consultation work carried out by the Council will be recorded on the Council's Intranet (IRIS) in the consultation database, and where appropriate on the Council's website. An actual consultation schedule, detailing all projects carried out will also be produced and distributed to Officers and Members on a regular basis, and posted on the Council's website.

3.5 Developing EEBC's Approach to Consultation

As part of this strategy, a provisional schedule for consultation activity that the Council may engage in through to April 2007 has been developed and can be found in Appendix E. This information has been obtained through interviewing key internal stakeholders as part of the revision process for this strategy.

The purpose of this list is to enable the Council to gain an understanding of managers' consultation 'wish list' so that a joined up approach can be developed. Priority will be given to statutory consultation and projects directly supporting the Council's Key Priorities. It should also be noted that delivery of other consultation projects will depend on the capacity of the Service Improvement Unit.

Notable areas of consultation that should take place over the next eighteen months include:

- Consultation linked to the Best Value Review Process (Best Value Reviews of Community Safety and Customer Contact underway for 2005/06. Future programme of service reviews is still to be developed).
- Following on from the Best Value Review of Improving Services for Young People, a method of consulting with young people is currently being developed, in association with the Council's Policy and Partnership team.
- Statutory Best Value Surveys (General, Planning and Benefits) are due to take place in the autumn of 2006. These measure satisfaction with services (Best Value Performance Indicators) as well as various quality of life indicators.

3.6 Development of Consultation

The Service Improvement Unit will look to develop the following areas, where practical over the next eighteen months. More details can be found in Appendix F.

- Developing a mechanism for consulting with young people (dependent on the implementation of other actions in the Best Value Review of Improving Services for Young People action plan).
- Developing and encouraging alternative ways of community engagement (e.g. mobile communications unit and public meetings).
- Developing a more advanced consultation database (improved communications to Officers, Members, partners and the public).
- Improving partnership working (i.e. working across divisions and with external partners on consultation).
- Developing Performance Indicators for consultation (improves feedback on performance / quality of consultation work).
- Taking advantage of the Council's new website for consultation.
- Producing consultation training for officers (building capacity)
- Increasing Members' awareness of consultation activity.
- Holding regular meetings with Service Managers (to improve communications and effective consultation planning).

4. Stakeholders in the Consultation Process

The Council needs to ensure that its consultation processes involve all sections of the community. The range of stakeholders that the authority needs to consult fall into three broad groups:

- The general public i.e. local residents, both users and non-users of services and local businesses. It is important that the approach to consulting residents is all inclusive, demographically representative and includes all sections of community, including those that are traditionally known as 'hard-to-reach'.
- Partner organisations e.g. County Council, Police, health bodies, voluntary organisations, community groups and other statutory consultees.
- Those within the authority i.e. Members, Officers and internal service customers.

4.1 'Hard to Reach' Groups

It is very important for the Council to ensure that the views of all of its residents are considered in the development of policies and strategies, and that the consultation processes used involve all sections of the community.

It is important that the Council has an inclusive approach to consultation as:

- It needs to have a clear understanding of the needs of the whole community in developing policies and planning services.
- Different sections of the community, particularly those from hard to reach or disadvantaged groups, often have views or requirements that are different from the majority. If they are not consulted effectively, their views may not be heard or taken into account.

Those groups traditionally considered as 'hard to reach' include those belonging to ethnic minorities and people with disabilities, as well as the elderly, young people and non-users of services. It is worth noting that some groups are not necessarily 'harder to reach', but very often can be more resource intensive (both in terms of money and time) to reach in consultation exercises.

The Council's approach is to ensure that minority, hard to reach or disadvantaged groups are effectively involved within consultation exercises. The Consultation Handbook includes information about how 'hard to reach' groups can be included in consultation exercises.

4.2 The Role of Members

Members are key stakeholders in the consultation process, as the results of consultation ultimately inform the decisions that they make. It is important that Members understand the importance of consultation in the decision making process as it provides the Council with a better understanding of the opinions and needs of the local community.

Members will be kept informed of consultation happening within the Council on a bi-monthly basis through the development of an 'Actual Consultation Activity' document. Where appropriate, Members will also be consulted on and / or kept informed about the development of certain consultation projects, particularly those that are statutory or corporate / strategic in context.

4.3 Involving Officers

Officers at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council need to be included in consultation. Officers bring a wealth of experience and knowledge of the issues affecting service users that can be used to improve services. In addition, some live locally. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's approach to consultation will ensure that, where appropriate, the views of employees are sought and taken into account as part of the managerial and decision-making processes of the authority.

Appendix A: Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Consultation Activity, 2005

External Consultation 2005

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Commissioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
STATUTORY	Community Safety Strategy (draft) Stakeholders' Consultation Workshop	26 th January 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To feedback the findings of consultation on the Crime & Disorder Audit 2004. To share the priorities identified for the Community Safety Strategy 2005 to 2008. To develop the first year's strategic action plans and associated interventions and targets. 	Workshop	N/A	Katrina Best – Community Safety	None	TBC
STATUTORY	Draft Statement of Community Involvement	Feb & March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain people's views on the draft document, in order to shape the final version (which will be submitted to GOSE). To identify ways to improve methods of consultation that will encourage all parties to become involved in the planning process. 	Questionnaire along with the draft document	20%	Andrew Drummond - Planning	Developing the questionnaire	Officer time
STATUTORY	Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	Feb & March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback to help shape the Scoping Report, which in turn will improve the assessment procedure for appraising planning policy in terms of social, economic and environment issues and their ongoing effectiveness. To identify key indicators against which progress can be checked and then, if necessary, policies can be altered accordingly. 	Questionnaire along with draft report	20%	Andrew Drummond - Planning	Developing the questionnaire	Officer time

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Commi-ssioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
OTHER	Social Centres' Survey	March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain an understanding of users' and non-users' views of the social centres. 	Questionnaire (in the bus pass mailing)	29%	Sally Garbutt – Personal Services	Conducting the research	TBC
OTHER	Sports & Active Leisure Clubs' Survey	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To find out about the activities of sports and active leisure clubs in the Borough. To ascertain satisfaction levels with the Council's Leisure Developments Team. 	Questionnaire to clubs via the post	56.2%	Sam Beak – Policy & Partnerships	Conducting the consultation	Officer time and £50 voucher (free prize draw to boost response rate)
STATUTORY	Open Space, Sport & Recreation Survey	April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain views on a variety of aspects regarding open spaces, as well as sports and recreation facilities (both public and private) in the Borough. To inform relevant policies. To meet PPG 17 requirements. 	Questionnaire to Citizens' Panel (FEEDBACK) members	90%	Andrew Drummond - Planning	Conducting the consultation	TBC
STATUTORY	Friend of the Parks Workshop	14/04/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform the Chairs of Parks of the Open Space & Leisure study. To highlight issues / problems of open spaces based on quality, quantity and accessibility. To identify solutions to the issues / problems. 	Workshop	N/A	Andrew Drummond-Planning	None	As part of a wider study
OTHER	Private Sector Landlords' Evening	12 th May 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To evaluate the evening. To ascertain what improvements, if any, can be made for future events. 	Questionnaire	16 completed evaluation forms	Desanka Bajic - Housing	None	Officer time to develop survey and analyse responses

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Commi-ssioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
STATUTORY	Local Development Framework: Consultation to develop the core strategy - issues & options stage	June and July 2005 (3/6 to 15/7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain people's opinions on the overall issues that will form part of the core strategy. To ascertain whether the options provided are sufficient and acceptable. To receive comments and suggestions for further issues and options. 	Questionnaire to stakeholders and an open evening (later during the consultation period)	46 responses	Susie Peck / Andrew Drummond - Planning	Advice on developing questionnaire	Officer time
STATUTORY	Local Development Framework: Consultation following submission of the Statement of Community Involvement	June and July 2005 (3/6 to 15/7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive comments on the SCI document and make a representation to the Secretary of State prior to its adoption. 	Questionnaire (based on government template)	20 responses	Susie Peck / Andrew Drummond - Planning	Advice on methodology	Officer time
KEY PRIORITIES	Residents' Survey 2005	June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure levels of satisfaction with various services. To obtain feedback on various services. To support the Council's key priorities. To establish whether things have got better, got worse or stayed the same. 	Questionnaire to Citizens' Panel (FEEDBACK) members	88.5%	Directors	Conducting the consultation	TBC
BEST VALUE REVIEW	Best Value Review of Customer Contact: Qualitative research with local residents	July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a baseline of information on local residents' thoughts on the level of customer service provided by EEBC, covering all contact types and all access channels. 	Focus groups and in-depth interviews	N/A	Best Value Review Team	Developing research brief and commissioning research out to external consultant, and management of process	£5,000

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Commissioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
OTHER	Ethnic Minority Ladies Exercise Class Feedback Survey	July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain views and feedback on the course of exercise classes attended. To ascertain what participants would like to see from future courses. 	Questionnaire completed at end of exercise class	20 completed forms	Katie Buck – Youth and Leisure Development Officer	Designing questionnaire, analysing results.	Officer time only
KEY PRIORITIES	Youth Leisure Day	24 th Sept 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain information and views from young people on various subjects. 	Big Brother style Diary Room (qualitative research)	N/A	Katie Buck – Youth & Leisure Development Officer	Conducting the research	£150 plus VAT for the booth, £100 for free prize draw, plus Officer time
OTHER	Building Control Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire	October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain the views of service users regarding this service. To identify potential areas for improvement. 	Questionnaire (through the post)	TBC	Mike Hill, Senior Surveyor	Conducting the consultation	Officer time and approx. £25 for prize draw

Ongoing Consultation (External) 2005

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Commissioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
KEY SERVICE PRIORITY	Environmental Health Out of Hours Noise Service	Ongoing (from January 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure satisfaction levels with this service area. 	Questionnaire sent to service users on a monthly basis	TBC	David Rowley – Environmental Health	Developed survey and analysing results (twice yearly)	Postage and Officer time
STATUTORY	Housing Grants Customer Care Survey	Ongoing (from March 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure customer satisfaction with the housing grants service. To identify potential improvements. Compliance with BV166 #10. 	Questionnaire to service users	TBC	Rachel Kay – Environmental Health	Developed survey and analysing responses (twice yearly)	Postage and Officer time
STATUTORY	Business – Food and Health & Safety Satisfaction Survey	Ongoing (from April 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure compliance with requirements of BV166 #10. To measure customer satisfaction. To identify potential improvements. 	Questionnaire to proprietors of Food and H&S businesses, who've been subject to an inspection	TBC	David Rowley – Environmental Health	Developing survey and analysing results (twice yearly)	Postage and Officer time
OTHER	Licensing Service Customer Care Survey	1 st July 2005 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure customer satisfaction with the licensing service. To identify potential improvements. 	Questionnaire to service users	TBC	Rachel Kay – Licensing Team Leader	Developing survey and analysing results (twice yearly)	Postage and Officer time

Internal Consultation

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Comm- issioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
N/A	2004 Staff Christmas Party	January 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain an understanding as to why people did not attend. To establish satisfaction levels of those who did attend. To find out what improvements can be made. 	Survey via email to all staff	63 completed surveys	Mark Lumley and Sam Beak	Conducting the research	Officer time
OTHER	Staff Active Sport Survey	June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify current physical activity levels within the workforce. To identify ways for the Council to help its workforce be more active. 	Survey via email to all staff (plus hard copies to those staff not on email)	42.8%	Shirley Piotrowski	Conducting the research	Officer time
BEST VALUE REVIEW	Best Value Review of Customer Contact: Officer Audit	7 th June to 8 th July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish baseline information on customer contact across all access channels, targeting service heads and division heads (on behalf of their teams). 	One to one interviews / team meeting interviews	N/A	Review Team	Developing questions to be asked and analysing results	Officer time
BEST VALUE REVIEW	Best Value Review of Customer Contact: Member Audit	4 th to 22 nd July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a baseline of information to feed into the Best Value Review of Customer Contact (contact with the Council, contact to and from local residents). 	Questionnaire via email	76.3%	Review Team	Conducting the research	Officer time
BEST VALUE REVIEW	Best Value Review of Community Safety – Officer Consultation	July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain an understanding of what different service areas in the Council do regarding Community Safety, problems they face and how they think these could be improved for the future. 	One to one interviews	N/A	Review Team	Conducting the research	Officer time only

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month	Objective / Area Covered	Consultation Method(s) Used	Response Rate	Comm-issioned By	Level of SIU Involvement	Cost
BEST VALUE REVIEW	Best Value Review of Customer Contact – Complaints Workshops (with Officers)	August 2005 (10 th and 11 th)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish what Officers define as a complaint. To ascertain what types of complaints different department receive. To identify how different departments process complaints. To generate potential ideas for improvement. 	Workshops (held over lunch)	N/A	Review Team	Conducting the research	Officer time plus lunch
OTHER	Managers' Conference 7 th September 2005	7 th September 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish attendees' views on the conference, its format, most useful and least useful aspects etc. To identify future topic areas for this conference. 	Self-completion questionnaire targeting all attendees	83%	Jean Leighton, Legal & Estates	Conducting the research	Officer time
OTHER	Employee Satisfaction Survey	October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain views from Officers on various aspects of working for the Council. 	Questionnaire	TBC	Directors	Conducting the consultation	Officer time only

Appendix B– Risk Assessment

This risk assessment documents some of the barriers to good (if not best practice) consultation that the Council could face. As far as possible, actions / contingencies have been suggested, and these are reflected in the revised strategy's action plan.

Risk	Consequence	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Action / Contingency
External Risks					
Consultation fatigue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents unwilling to participate in consultation. Unrepresentative consultation. 	H	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good consultation planning (through forms and schedule). Exploring and publicising alternative means of consultation (e.g. through Consultation Handbook).
Those that choose to participate in consultation are not representative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrepresentative consultation. Results do not fully reflect views of public. Setting up false expectations. 	M	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all groups are included in consultation (including additional consultation for specific groups as required).
Unrealistic expectations from the public of the impact of consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissatisfaction from public, partners and the Council on the results of consultation. Setting up false expectations 	H	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding consultation for consultation's sake. Only consulting on things that the Council can realistically change / influence.
Local residents not given enough information to make an informed comment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation results inaccurate. 	M	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that consultees are fully informed of issues.
Internal Risks					
Lack of capacity in Service Improvement Unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to act on an ad hoc basis. Reliance on goodwill of individuals in the SIU to turn last minute requests around. 	H	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation schedule will help to identify areas of priority. Encouraging Officers to involve the SIU in a timely way. Effective publication and training in consultation may help to increase capacity in other service areas, reducing the burden on the SIU. Recruitment and retention of staff.

Risk	Consequence	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Action / Contingency
Lack of consultation expertise within some departments of the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor quality consultation produced which can lead to unrealistic conclusions. Increases pressure on SIU (as have to resolve issues). 	M	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of strategy and publicity of help available from SIU. Training for Officers in consultation methods (through Consultation Handbook and possible lunchtime sessions).
Lack of time to read and assimilate consultation reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council not taking account of consultation in decision-making. Decisions made not reflecting views of the public. 	L	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive summary with recommendation produced for all research projects. Presentation of results given to managers and Members where appropriate.
Cost of consultation / lack of resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation cannot happen or is ineffective leading to poor quality results. Potential misuse of taxpayer's money. 	M	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved awareness of the importance of consultation. Improved understanding of resources through Consultation Handbook.
Lack of awareness as to how the SIU can assist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of poor quality consultation being conducted by service areas. Extra pressure on SIU in having to deal with projects at last minute. 	M	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity of what the SIU does and the service it can offer (e.g. through Consultation Handbook). Encouraging Officers to involve SIU in a timely manner.
Lack of willingness of some departments to follow good practice as well as legal and ethical guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor quality consultation carried out. Potential legal and ethical issues (e.g. not complying with Data Protection Act or consulting with young people without consent). 	H	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity to all Officers of good practice and potential legal and ethical issues (e.g. through Consultation Handbook and Officers Group). Enforcement of Strategy. Ensuring SIU staff continue to be signed up to legal and ethical guidelines through membership of the Social Research Association.
Officers and Directors not adhering to consultation strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor quality consultation carried out. Potential misuse of taxpayers' money. Potential legal and ethical issues. 	H	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity to all Officers of good practice and potential legal issues (e.g. through Handbook and Officers Group). Enforcement of Strategy.

Risk	Consequence	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Action / Contingency
Lack of consultation planning by some departments in the Council / Officers not informing SIU of projects they need help with until the last minute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra burden on SIU at having to pick up projects at last minute. • Potential for projects to have to be delayed due to lack of SIU capacity. • Consultation not completed within required timescales. 	H	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings / contact with service managers. • Consultation schedule. • Managers made aware at appraisal / target setting time, that the SIU must be informed of any planned consultation projects. • Encouraging Officers to involve the SIU in a timely manner.
The Council does not listen or will not do anything.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultees disillusioned with consultation process. Could lead to a lack of willingness to participate in the future. 	M	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't consult for consultation's sake (i.e. on things that we cannot influence). • 'Training' for Officers and Members on the benefits of consultation.
Commissioning projects with research element without involvement of the SIU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality research. • Poor value for money. • Ineffective research brief (or lack of research brief). • Required outputs are not delivered. 	H	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included in strategy that SIU must be included in the commissioning of all projects with an element of research. • Including in the Procurement Strategy that the SIU must be involved at the tendering stage should any element of the tender involve market research.
Poor quality data held by the Council (e.g. on Uniform system).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to use existing databases for consultation without spending time cleaning the data). • Increase in timescales required to conduct consultation. • Increased cost of consultation. 	M	H	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasises to managers the quality of data required. • Council standards for data collection (<i>N.B. This is not something that the SIU can necessarily directly influence</i>).

Appendix C – CD1 Form



CD 1: Consultation Planning

To ensure that consultation projects conducted by the Council and its partners are coordinated, please complete this form and email to @Service Improvement Unit before the project begins. *Please note that the Council's agreed Consultation Strategy states that a member of the Service Improvement Unit team must approve all consultation projects conducted by the Council before any consultation activity commences.*

Subject or title of the consultation project:	<i>Please insert the name of your project</i>
Your name & extension number:	<i>Please insert your name</i>
Please state the objectives of this consultation project: NB Objectives should be 'SMART' (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely)	<i>It is important that you consider the purpose of your research and what it will be used for when setting objectives. The objectives are more than just the questions you will ask, they should outline the aims of your research and what you want to achieve.</i>
Who will be consulted?	<i>It is important that you also consider who your stakeholders are how you are going to contact your consultees. Is the contact information you hold up-to-date? Are there any groups (e.g. user groups) that you could contact?</i>
Please list the <u>key</u> questions:	<i>Outline the questions that you would like to ask in your consultation.</i>
Which consultation technique you will be using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group(s) • Questionnaire • In-depth Interview(s) • Other...please specify 	<i>The method must be suitable for the group you are consulting with. Although a survey may seem simple, in some circumstances an alternative method, such as focus groups, might be more appropriate. Please speak to the Service Improvement for advice on methods and techniques and /or refer to the Consultation Handbook.</i>
Is the consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory • Part of a Best Value Review • To improve services 	<i>Is the consultation part of a statutory or internal review to improve services.</i>
Who will determine the questions asked?	<i>The Service Improvement Unit can help determine appropriate questions.</i>
Please state the beginning and end dates:	<i>It is worth noting that the amount of time consultation takes is often underestimated, and sufficient time must also be allowed for analysis. It is important to consult the SIU about the time you should allow for your consultation, and you should not assume it can be done in a matter of weeks.</i>
How will this consultation feed into the decision-making process?	<i>Consider how you will use the results. There is no point consulting if the results will not be used to make a difference.</i>
How will you give feedback to the participants?	<i>This is vitally important to ensure your consultees are kept engaged. Preliminary feedback should be planned as early as possible.</i>
Please state the name of Service Improvement Unit Officer who approved this consultation project:	<i>A member of the Service Improvement Unit <u>must</u> approve the project before it can commence. It is recommended that you consult the Service Improvement Unit as early as possible in the planning of your consultation.</i>
Is the Service Improvement Unit conducting this consultation project?	<i>The SIU can, dependent on capacity undertake this consultation from start to finish on your behalf. This will need to be scheduled in.</i>

Appendix D – CD2 Form

 <p>SERVICE IMPROVEMENT UNIT</p>	<h3>CD 2: Post-Consultation Form</h3>
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This form needs to be completed in entirety before a consultation project can be considered closed. Please email the completed form to @Service Improvement Unit along with *an attached electronic copy of the full report* that can then be made accessible in the Council’s Consultation database.

Subject or title of the consultation project:	<i>Please insert the title of your consultation.</i>
Date of completion:	<i>When was the consultation completed?</i>
Please state the <u>key</u> findings:	<i>Outline the key results from your consultation.</i>
Please state the response rate as a percentage (postal surveys only):	<i>This relates to surveys where you know the number of people the survey was sent to.</i>
Please state how feedback was given to the participants:	<i>It is important to let participants know how the results are going to be used in order to keep them engaged. If you do not feedback results, it may dissuade people from participating in the future.</i>
When was this feedback given?	<i>If you have not yet given feedback, it is important that you state when you are going to do so.</i>
What key actions resulted from this consultation?	<i>What has been done with results of the consultation and how have they been used?</i>
What decisions were made as a result of this consultation?	<i>How have the results of the consultation influenced (for example), how the service is run? What actions have (or will) arise from the results?</i>
What service improvements were delivered as a result of this consultation?	<i>How has the consultation influenced improvements in the way the service is run?</i>
What cost savings resulted from this consultation exercise (if any)?	<i>Have the decisions made as a result of the consultation had an effect on the way money is spent?</i>
What was the total cost of the consultation exercise (please provide a breakdown of all costs incurred)?	<i>Costs may include postage, data input, cost of any incentives etc.</i>
Please state any lessons learned during the consultation process, i.e. what could be done better next time:	<i>Is there any aspect of the consultation that you feel could have been done differently or any problems that were encountered that could be learnt from.</i>

Appendix E: Provisional Consultation Schedule, October 2005 to April 2007

The provisional consultation activity has been listed by statutory activity, the Council's Key Priorities (as identified in the Corporate Plan, 2003 to 2007), and 'other'. The most important of the planned consultation activities are those that are classified as statutory and those that support the Council's Key Priorities. The remainder (those under 'other') may need to be prioritised, dependent on external factors and internal capacity.

External Consultation

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
KEY PRIORITY	Homelessness	Oct 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction with the homelessness service provided by the Council 	Questionnaire	Karen Lawrence – Housing	Conducting the Consultation	This supports the Council's continued commitment to services for the vulnerable and the elderly.
KEY PRIORITY	Parks and Open Spaces	Oct / Nov 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish public perceptions of parks and open spaces in the Borough 	Questionnaire (FEEDBACK)	Andrew Eperson – Head of Policy and Partnerships	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit of consultation held in October 2003. Possible FEEDBACK consultation.
OTHER	Council new website	Nov 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain users views of the Council's new website 	Electronic questionnaire on website	Mark Lumley – Head of IT	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be done following the launch of the Council's new website
KEY PRIORITY	Gypsies	Nov 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction with the gypsy management service provided by the Council 	TBC	Kevin Ryan - Housing	Not yet known	This supports the Council's continued commitment to services for the vulnerable and the elderly
OTHER	Surrey Youth Games (2005) Evaluation	Oct to Nov 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain participants views on the Surrey Youth Games 	Questionnaire	Sam Beak – Leisure Developments Manager	None	SIU has previously produced a template and guidance for Leisure Developments to use for purposes such as this.

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
KEY PRIORITY	Green Waste Leaflet	Nov 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain ideas from residents about provision of green waste collection 	Leaflet inviting views	Jon Sharpe – Recycling Officer	None	Predominately marketing exercise, but will pose question asking for residents' views.
KEY PRIORITY	Recycling Doorstep Work	Nov 05 to Feb 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain why people do not recycle. To establish what would encourage them to recycle in the future. 	Face-to-face (doorstep)	Jon Sharpe – Recycling Officer	None	Marketing exercise Done in areas previously identified by Operational Service research as not participating in recycling.
STATUTORY	Local Development Framework – Core strategy preferred options	Jan-Feb 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback on the draft document. 	Questionnaire sent out with draft document	Andrew Drummond – Policy Planning Officer	Advising on questionnaire	
KEY PRIORITY	Young People	Jan 06	<p>TBC, but likely to include questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people's website Youth shelters Possible BMX track 	TBC (though Best Value Review recommends that this is done through schools)	Katie Buck – Policy and Partnerships	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an action from the Best Value Review of Improving Services for Young People, and is dependent on the work of Policy and Partnerships. Once a consultation mechanism is set up, it is planned that consultation will be conducted with young people on a regular basis (at least once a year).

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
OTHER	Self-Reliance Games Area.	Jan 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain views on a multi-use games area proposed for the area 	TBC	Sam Beak – Leisure Developments Manager	TBC	To be undertaken with Rosebery (as they are providing some of the funding towards this project).
KEY PRIORITY	Route Call	Jan 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction levels with the Route Call Service 	TBC	Pat Heath – Process Consultancy	Conducting the research	This supports the Council's continued commitment to supporting the vulnerable and the elderly.
OTHER	Environmental Health Pest Control Survey	Early 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain levels of satisfaction with the pest control service. 	Questionnaire to service users	David Rowley – Environmental Health	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This survey was previously ongoing (to October 2004). 'Check- up' to see whether high levels of customer satisfaction have been maintained.
KEY PRIORITY	Green Waste Collection	Feb – Apr 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consult on future options for the Council's green waste collection service 	TBC	Jon Sharpe – Recycling Officer	TBC	Dependent on what Environment committee decide options will be (may not be able to influence the decision in which case consultation will not take place).
KEY PRIORITY	Consultation on Borough Youth Plan	Feb/March 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback from relevant stakeholders (Officers, Members and Partners) on the draft Plan. 	TBC	Andrew Eperson – Head of Policy and Partnerships	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing of this will depend on when the plan is written (which is an output of the Best Value Review of Improving Services for Young People). This supports the Key Priority of Improving Services for Young People.

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
OTHER	Freedom of Information Act	March 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback on the Freedom of Information process. To obtain satisfaction levels with this service. 	Questionnaire to be sent to all people who have requested information	Pat Heath – Process Consultancy	Conducting the research	The Freedom of Information Act came into affect from 1 st January 2005.
OTHER	Car Parking	April 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish views on the Council's car parks from users and non-users. To establish residents' views on decriminalised parking. 	Questionnaire (FEEDBACK)	Jon Gransden – Head of Streetcare	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible FEEDBACK survey. May also be appropriate to utilise other consultation methods (e.g. user survey).
KEY PRIORITY	Meals on Wheels	April 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain levels of satisfaction with the meals on wheels service 	Questionnaire	Ann Lambe – Personal Services	Developing questions and analysing results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the Council's continued commitment to supporting the vulnerable and elderly. Follows on from survey conducted between April and September 2004.
STATUTORY	Local Development Framework – Core Strategy submission consultation	June-July 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback on the draft document. 	Questionnaire sent out with draft document	Andrew Drummond – Planning Policy Officer	Advising on questionnaire	
STATUTORY	Local Development Framework – Housing Site Allocations issues and options	June-July 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback on the draft document. 	Questionnaire sent out with draft document	Andrew Drummond – Planning Policy Officer	Advising on questionnaire	

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
KEY PRIORITY	Social Centres	May 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish satisfaction levels with the social centres. 	TBC	Graham Waters	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation has previously taken place in 2005, when a survey was sent out with the annual bus pass mailing. This consultation will target service users only.
KEY PRIORITY	Rangers	July 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effect of Ranger service (including public perceptions) Visual improvements in parks 	Questionnaire	Jon Gransden – Head of Streetcare	Conducting the Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Key Priority of 'improving the visual appearance of the local environment'.
STATUTORY	Best Value General Survey	Autumn 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain residents' views on the services provided by the Council. To collect Best Value Performance Indicators. 	Questionnaire (questions and methodology set by Central Government)	Sara Childs – Service Improvement Manager	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a statutory survey. Strict guidance will be produced by the ODPM. This is likely to be published in summer 2006.
STATUTORY	Best Value Benefits Survey	Autumn 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain residents' views on the Service provided by the Council. To collect Best Value Performance Indicators. 	Questionnaire (questions and methodology set by Central Government)	Sara Childs – Service Improvement Manager	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a statutory survey. Strict guidance will be produced by the ODPM. This is likely to be published in summer 2006.
STATUTORY	Best Value Planning Survey	Autumn 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain users views on the Service provided by the Council. To collect Best Value Performance Indicators. 	Questionnaire (questions and methodology set by Central Government)	Sara Childs – Service Improvement Manager	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a statutory survey. Strict guidance will be produced by the ODPM. This is likely to be published in summer 2006.
KEY PRIORITY	Accommodation Finding Service	Autumn 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain an awareness of the AFS. To gather clients' perceptions/experiences of the AFS. 	Questionnaire to tenants and landlords	Annette Snell – Housing	Conducting the consultation	This is a follow-up from consultation done in late 2004.

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
STATUTORY	2007 Crime Audit	Early 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain information to feed into the statutory 2007 Crime Audit (which will inform the development of the 2008-2010 Community Safety Strategy). 	TBC	Katrina Best – Community Safety Officer	Conducting the consultation	Consultation for the 2004 Crime audit included a perception of crime survey carried out with the Council's Citizens' Panel, FEEDBACK, and a business crime survey.
STATUTORY	Local Development Framework – Housing site Allocations preferred options	March-April 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback on the draft document. 	Questionnaire sent out with draft document	Andrew Drummond – Planning Policy Officer	Advising on questionnaire	
OTHER	Bourne Hall	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gain an understanding of public perceptions of Bourne Hall, (e.g. staff, value for money, caterers) 	TBC	Graham Waters – Head of Housing, Venues and Personal Services	Conducting the Consultation	
OTHER	Ebbisham Centre	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To follow-up questions asked in the annual 2004 Residents' Survey. To ascertain whether this venue has become more established as a community centre. 	TBC	Corrine Payne – Venues	Conducting the consultation	May be able to be incorporated into a FEEDBACK survey
OTHER	Customer Services (people who have contacted the Council)	TBC	Objectives to be scoped out, but to gain customer satisfaction information from people who have contacted the Council via the Council's Contact Centre.	TBC	Sara Childs – Service Improvement Manager	TBC	This will be an output of the Best Value Review of Customer Contact May be conducted twice a year.

Note: We need to ensure that we do not utilise the Council's Citizens' Panel (FEEDBACK) more than five times a year, and that utilisation is spread out over the year.

Ongoing Consultation

Type	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	Identified By	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	Comments
KEY PRIORITY	Environmental Health Out of Hours Noise Survey	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure satisfaction levels with the out of hours noise service. To identify potential improvements to the service. 	Questionnaire to service users on a monthly basis	David Rowley – Environmental Health	Developed survey and analysing results on a 6-monthly basis	This survey commenced in January 2004.
STATUTORY	Housing Grants Customer Care Survey	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure customer satisfaction with the housing grants service. To identify potential improvements to the service. To achieve compliance with BV 166 #10. 	Questionnaire to service users on a monthly basis	David Rowley – Environmental Health	Developed survey and analysing results on a 6-monthly basis	This survey commenced in March 2004.
STATUTORY	Business – Food and Health & Safety Survey	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure levels of customer satisfaction. To identify potential improvements to the service. To ensure compliance with BV 166 #10. 	Questionnaire to service users on a monthly basis	David Rowley – Environmental Health	Developed survey and analysing results on a 6-monthly basis	This survey commenced in April 2004.
STATUTORY	Licensing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure customer satisfaction with licensing service. To identify potential improvements. 	Questionnaire to service users on a monthly basis	Rachel Kay – Environmental Health	Developed survey and analysing results on a 6-monthly basis	This survey commenced in July 2005.
OTHER	Leisure Developments Course Evaluations	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback from participants of courses. 	Questionnaire to participants	Sam Beak - Policy	None	The SIU will look to become involved in this process.

Internal Consultation

<i>Type</i>	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	<i>Identified By</i>	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	<i>Comments</i>
N/A	Employee Satisfaction Survey	Oct 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction from Council employees regarding the Council as a place to work. To be scoped out. 	Questionnaire via email to Officers (hard copies sent to those without access)	Irene Clarke – Director of HR & Comms	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed that staff surveys will be conducted on a six-monthly basis. There will be a core set of questions that will be asked each time, other questions will differ
N/A	Performance Management	Nov 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain feedback on the Council’s performance management system. To identify improvements that can be made in the future re: performance management. 	Questionnaire	Sara Childs – Service Improvement Manager	Conducting the consultation	
N/A	Annual Legal Services Survey	Jan 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain Officers’ views on the internal legal service. To maintain accreditation. 	Questionnaire via email to service users	Trevor Smith – Head of Legal	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This forms part of the department’s accreditation by Lexcel.
N/A	IT User Survey	Jan 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To measure levels of satisfaction with the IT service To obtain feedback on where service improvements can be made 	Survey via email to Officers and Members	Mark Lumley – Head of IT	Conducting the consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This follows from the survey conducted in June 2004.
N/A	Employee Satisfaction Survey	April 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction from Council employees regarding the Council as a place to work. 	Survey via email to Officers (hard copies sent to those without access)	Irene Clarke – Director of HR & Comms	Conducting the consultation	Follow on from previous staff survey (Oct 05)

<i>Type</i>	Consultation Project Name	Month / Year	Objectives / Area Covered	Likely Consultation Method(s)	<i>Identified By</i>	Likely Level of SIU Involvement	<i>Comments</i>
N/A	Finance Department Survey	Mid 2006/07	To establish the levels of satisfaction with the services provided by both Finance Division teams	Survey via email to service users	Doug Earle – Head of Financial Services	TBC	
N/A	Employee Satisfaction Survey	Oct 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction from Council employees regarding the Council as a place to work. 	Survey via email to Officers (hard copies sent to those without access)	Irene Clarke – Director of HR & Comms	Conducting the consultation	Follows on from previous staff survey (Apr 06)
N/A	Statement of Internal control	By Mar 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain internal awareness of corporate governance 	TBC	John Turnbull – Director of Finance	TBC	
N/A	Employee Satisfaction Survey	Apr 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ascertain satisfaction from Council employees regarding the Council as a place to work. 	Survey via email to Officers (hard copies sent to those without access)	Irene Clarke – Director of HR & Comms	Conducting the consultation	Follows on from previous staff survey (Oct 06)

Additional Subject Areas to be Developed

Some additional areas that could benefit from consultation have been identified below. The Service Improvement Unit will look to develop this activity with the relevant service managers.

- Sustainability.
- Ethnic minority needs.
- Consultation with young people – there are many actions arising from the Best Value Review of Improving Services for young people that will require some element of consultation, either with young people or with the population in general. These will need to be added to the schedule as soon as possible (dependent upon the work of the Council's Policy and Partnerships team).
- Rolling programme to ascertain levels of satisfaction with venues' users (Playhouse, Bourne Hall, Ebbisham Centre etc.).

External Consultation April 2007 Onwards

The Service Improvement Unit is already aware of some consultation that will take place after April 2007. These areas are listed below.

- Licensing Act – 2006/07. This will be a three-year review and revision of the Statement of Licensing Policy.
- Housing Needs Survey – 2008. This will be dependent on securing funds.
- Key Priorities – Autumn 2007. Consultation will need to be done following the 2007 Council elections to feed into the development of Key Priorities for 2007-2011.

Appendix F – Action Plan

The action plan below sets out how the Service Improvement Unit will look to develop the Council's approach to consultation over the next eighteen months. It should be noted that the delivery of these actions is dependent on the capacity and resources available in the Service Improvement Unit.

Action	Outcome	Timescales	Notes
To develop a mechanism for consulting with young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved considerations and understanding of the needs of this group. Enhanced communications with young people. Regular mechanism to 'tap into' young people's views. 	Early 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an action of the Best Value Review of Improving Services for Young People. The SIU will work with the Policy and Partnerships team to develop an effective method of consultation. This delivery of this action is dependent on other factors, in particular the work of the Policy and Partnerships team in developing relationships with local schools.
Development of a more advanced consultation database on the intranet (IRIS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved communications to Officers and Members on consultation taking place. Improved accessibility of past consultation results. 	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The improved database will include details of past and present consultation projects (envisaged will be in a searchable format).
Development of a more advanced consultation database on the Council's new website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved communications to Partners and local residents on consultation taking place. Improved accessibility of past consultation results. 	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The improved database will include details of past and present consultation projects (envisaged will be in a searchable format). Database will also be rolled out onto the Council's new website (dependent on the redevelopment of the Council's new website).
Development of Consultation Performance Indicators and regular reporting as part of quarterly performance management framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved internal consultancy service. Improved two way communications. Feedback on performance / quality of SIU work. Continuous improvement 	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of consultation related PIs will help assess the use, cost and effectiveness of consultation across the Council. Consultation PIs may include details of response rates, actions arising or inclusion of 'hard to reach' groups.

Action	Outcome	Timescales	Notes
To hold regular meetings with service heads / divisional heads regarding their requirements for consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved communications between departments. Better inter-departmental relationships. More advance notice of consultation activity taking place, with a view to the SIU having enough time to input into the process effectively. 	December 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be possible to link to the internal consultation group (see below). Particular effort should be made to contact Managers during appraisal / target setting time to ensure that the need for input from the SIU is taken into account in the setting of any targets related to consultation.
Web-based consultation			
Investigate the feasibility of having internet-based surveys on the Council's new website to gauge the satisfaction of website users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quicker and easier response. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web-based surveys would need to be supported by more 'traditional' forms of consultation to ensure inclusivity.
Further publicise the benefits of being consulted via email to FEEDBACK members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quicker and easier response. Reduced cost of consulting. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently just over 300 panel members are consulted via email (the remainder by post).
Increasing Officers' and Members awareness of consultation			
Publication and promotion of revised Consultation Handbook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared knowledge. Shared learning. Up-to-date consultation and community engagement methods. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Consultation Handbook was last revised in September 2005, and included more information on engagement methods. Promotion and publication of the Handbook should be ongoing throughout the year.
Production of annual consultation report (produced for first time in December 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance communications on what consultation has taken place, how the results have been/are being used, and what has changed as a result. Increased transparency. 	December 2005 and yearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also made available to local residents and partners, and on the Council's website.

Action	Outcome	Timescales	Notes
Ensuring Members' involvement in key consultation projects (e.g. those directly related to the Council's key priorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support from Members Increases visibility and understanding of the consultation process. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members' briefing evenings have been utilised in the past for this purpose.
Member 'champion' for consultation to support the work of the SIU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased support from members. Continued visibility of consultation by Members. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair of S&R is currently unofficial consultation 'champion'.
Promotion of consultation guidelines available on IRIS (using the revised Consultation Handbook)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding of consultation Improved understanding of ethical and legal considerations. 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised consultation guidelines published on IRIS from September 2005 (linked to Consultation Handbook). Following revised guidelines when planning consultation will help Officers to produce better-quality research objectives and ideas, reducing the burden on the SIU.
To establish a formal Consultation Group of Officers who regularly conduct consultation activity, to share good practice, plans and to share experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved communications between departments. Shared knowledge. Shared learning. Better inter-department relationships 	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideally each division should have a consultation representative.
Lunch-time sessions run by the SIU on aspects of the research process (e.g. developing the objectives, survey methods and guidelines that need to be developed).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared knowledge Shared learning Increased capacity within service areas. 	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This could link into the consultation group of Officers (above)
Developing alternative means of community engagement			
To establish a half-yearly Community Forum in the Borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved consultation/engagement with the community. Keeping up-to-date with the latest issues in the Borough. Responding to local residents' concerns. 	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This forum could cover the whole Borough (with members of the public invited) or cover an issue in a particular area/ward(s). This would need to be carefully planned, publicised and have the buy-in of Members.

Action	Outcome	Timescales	Notes
<p>To explore the feasibility (costs, logistics, need and potential usage) of developing a mobile communications unit, to take activities out into the community. The output will be a detailed proposal to enable Members and Officers to make a decision as to whether this should be pursued.</p>	<p><i>Should the feasibility study prove positive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of campaigns / messages from the Council. • Increased visibility in the community. • Increased publicity of work the Council undertakes. • Cross-selling of services in the community. • Developed a mechanism to obtain feedback from the community. 	<p>March 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woking Borough Council successfully utilises a mobile communications unit.