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SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL 1

GOVERNANCE

Date: **Thursday, 26th September 2013**

Time: **7.00pm**

Venue: **Committee Room 3, Ealing Town Hall.**

MEMBERS: Councillors: Anthony Young (Chair), Tej Bagha, Theresa Byrne, Ann Chapman, Tejinder Singh Dhami, Susan Emment, John Gallagher, Yoel Gordon (Vice-Chair), Gurmit Kaur Mann, Rajinder Mann, Zahida Noori, Harvey Rose and Jason Stacey.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Urgent Matters**
   Any urgent matters that the Chair has agreed should be considered at the meeting.

3. **Matters to be considered in Private**

4. **Minutes (09.07.2013)**
   To agree the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 9th July, 2013.

5. **Declarations of Interest**
   To receive any declarations of personal and prejudicial interests in any of the items to be considered at the meeting, and any notifications of dispensations.

6. **Public Engagement** (Report by the Head of Scrutiny and Committees & the Research and Consultation Manager)

7. **Health and Wellbeing Board** (Report by the Head of Scrutiny and Committees)

8. **Panel Operations in 2013/2014** (Report by the Scrutiny Review Officer)

9. **Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday, 28th November 2013

MARTIN SMITH
Chief Executive
16th September, 2013

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Agenda Item 4

SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEW PANEL 1
'GOVERNANCE'

MINUTES

Tuesday, 9th July, 2013

PRESENT: Councillors: Anthony Young (Chair), Tej Bagha, Theresa Byrne, Ann Chapman, Tejinder Singh Dhami, Susan Emment, John Gallagher, Yoel Gordon (Vice-Chair), Rajinder Mann, *Andrew Steed* (Substitute for Harvey Rose) and Jason Stacey.

Also Present

Harjeet Bains	- Scrutiny Review Officer, LBE.
Keith Fraser	- Head of Scrutiny and Committees, LBE.
Ed Hammond	- Research and Information Manager, Centre for Public Scrutiny.
Helen Harris	- Director of Legal and Democratic Services, LBE.
Lee Teasdale	- Committee Administrator, LBE.

1. Apologies for Absence
(Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received for Councillor Gurmit Kaur Mann.

2. Urgent Matters
(Agenda Item 2)

There were none.

3. Matters to be considered in Private
(Agenda Item 3)

There were none.

4. Declarations of Interest
(Agenda Item 4)

There were none.

5. Panel Operations in 2013/2014
(Agenda Item 5)

The Panel gave consideration to a report from the Scrutiny Review Officer advising them of the proposed terms of reference, work programme and co-option and external engagement arrangements for 2013/2014.

It was agreed that the Committee was considered large enough to approach the subject without need for further co-option though relevant organisations and groups would be invited to make presentations at Panel Meetings as required.

The Chair advised Panel members that together with the Vice-Chair and the Scrutiny Review Officer, he had already started on the process of interviewing key Councillors and staff to gather their opinions on the future direction of governance within the Authority.

The Chair requested that all Panel members make arrangements to visit ward forum meetings outside of their own wards to aid in providing a fuller picture in preparation for the meeting of 28 November which would consider neighbourhood governance. The Panel were provided with the meetings timetable for all ward forum meetings.

It was agreed that further areas of interest to consider for recommendations would be deliberated at the end of the meeting following the other agenda items, which would help in providing further contextual information.

6. Current Governance Arrangements at Ealing Council
(Agenda Item 6)

The Panel gave consideration to a report by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services which provided background information on the current governance arrangements at Ealing Council.

Helen Harris, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, attended the meeting and presented the report to the Panel.

The report advised that following the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000, Ealing Council had adopted a new governance structure, moving away from decisions being taken by cross party committees and introducing an executive with a wide ranging leadership role – with a scrutiny function required to be in place to ensure transparency.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 introduced amendments to the Local Government Act 2000 related to local authorities' executive arrangements. This amendment required the adoption of either:

- A Leader and Cabinet executive; or
- A directly elected Mayor and Cabinet executive model.

Prior to the adoption of a model the Council was required to 'take reasonable steps to consult electors and other interested persons'. A consultation was undertaken between 20 July and 30 September 2009. 52 responses were received, with 73% in favour of the Leader and Cabinet model and 27% in favour of the elected Mayor and Cabinet model. On 25 December 2009, Full Council formally adopted the Leader and Cabinet model.

It was advised that section 1.6 of the report was slightly incorrect in advising that any changes to the governance arrangements would require a referendum under the Localism Act 2011. Instead, under the Act, a Council could return to Committee-Style governance if so wished, pending the passing of a resolution at Full Council which following requisite legal and public notices, would take effect from the following May. Only if the Council then wished to change governance arrangements again within 5 years of the decision, would the Council then have to hold a public referendum on the decision.

The Chair thanked the Director of Legal and Democratic Services for her report, and invited Members to comment and ask questions.

The Chair commented on the large number of Committees and backbenchers at the Council. He was advised that there are legal options to consider reductions in the numbers of Councillors, should the Council wish to take that route.

Councillor Byrne commented on the public perception of the Council's governance. She considered that the Council needed to make its actions more transparent to allow for fuller public understanding of the decision making process.

Councillor Stacey questioned the role and usefulness of the Scrutiny function within the governance arrangements, considering that the recommendations arising out of the meetings are often ignored by the Executive.

Due to the presence of an outside speaker, the Chair agreed to take Agenda item 8 as the next item of business.

7. Governance Arrangements in Local Authorities – An External Perspective (Agenda Item 8)

Ed Hammond, the Research and Information Manager for the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) provided a report and PowerPoint presentation to the Panel, which provided statistical information on governance and scrutiny arrangements in other councils throughout the country.

He advised that there were no arbitrary pros and cons to any particular governance structure, and that no one structure could be considered as 'better' than any other. Instead the correct structure for a Council is established around culture, relationships, attitudes and values.

The CfPS had carried out an annual survey, the findings from which were detailed to the Panel. Resourcing and support for scrutiny was on a downward trend, whilst the impact and effectiveness of the function was managing to bear up, though there were indications that many authorities were unaware of the overall effectiveness of the function.

In light of the funding issues that were affecting councils throughout the country, the amount of FTE officers in scrutiny roles had seen a year on year decrease for the previous four years. The average per authority now sat at 2.09 FTE officers. There was also an increasing trend to integrate officers within the democratic services function rather than having scrutiny as a specialist standalone section.

It had been found that those Councils which had a monitoring system in place to judge the effectiveness of scrutiny were 28.4% more likely than those that do not, to perceive the work they do as having a positive impact on local people.

It was found that the average committee size made no difference to scrutiny's effectiveness, though it was found that councils with fewer committees did tend to be more effective. It has also become apparent that councils were increasingly opting for a streamlined committee structure, and timescales for task and finish groups were becoming shorter, most were now much shorter than a year, with some even taking place within a series of clustered meetings in a few weeks with a quick turnaround of reports to Cabinet.

The recommendations that CfPS highlighted included:

- Thinking about the ‘big trends’ locally and nationally, and acting on them. These included welfare reform, commissioning, partnership working and resource constraints.
- Tightening up internal systems and prioritising work more effectively.
- Working on developing a culture of openness and honesty, internally and with partners.
- Focusing on outcomes and impact.

The Chair thanked Mr Hammond for his presentation and invited Members to comment and ask questions.

Discussion took place regarding councils who had chosen to return to a committee based system. Mr Hammond advised that in his experience, the councils who had made the change had found it to be a cost neutral exercise, and he expressed surprise that some London boroughs had chosen to return to the committee system, when it was considered that it would be a more natural fit for a rural district council.

Councillor Byrne asked whether he felt that Scrutiny had failings in certain areas. Mr Hammond advised that he had been made aware of varying levels of success; he had seen some councils whose scrutiny committees had influenced significant changes to decisions on key areas such as council tax levels.

He considered that even without the scrutiny committees recommendations being implemented, it would always be a forum for constructive debate, rather than the more politically minded arguments that could mar debate at full council level. It was emphasised that where councils chose to return to a committee system, they needed to find a way to build full council into a proper decision making system.

Discussion took place regarding possible officer ‘interference’ from those who are looking to shape their reports in a certain way, and view the scrutiny process as a hindrance rather than making use of its constructive function as a ‘critical friend’. It was agreed that this could create a challenging environment and a full understanding of the scrutiny function from senior management level downwards was needed to help counteract such issues. It was considered that the issue of officers being ‘cagey’ with the release of their reports, was an issue that had been highlighted through many of the Council’s Committees, Planning and Cabinet being two that were specifically mentioned.

The Chair asked for Mr Hammond’s opinion on the call-in process. He provided examples of councils where call-ins were considered a regular part of the process and counterexamples where the constitution made it difficult for a call-in to ever take place within an authority. He felt that the call-in process very rarely proved a successful route for implementing changes and that better communication with all councillors earlier in the reporting process, including the scrutiny function, would lead to less councillors feeling they need to resort to making a call-in.

With that, the presentation was concluded. The Chair thanked Mr Hammond on behalf of the Panel for what they considered to be an interesting and thought provoking exercise for going forwards.

8. Scrutiny in Ealing
(Agenda Item 7)

The Panel gave consideration to a report by the Head of Scrutiny and Committees which provided an overview of the current scrutiny function at Ealing Council.

Keith Fraser, the Head of Scrutiny and Committees, attended the meeting and presented the report to the Panel.

A background history was provided, emphasising how the Scrutiny process at the Authority had adapted and evolved since its inception following the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000.

Scrutiny within the authority was considered to work best when the party political element was kept limited. The Council ensured that all three political groups are represented on all Scrutiny bodies. There had also been maintained, a principle of a member of the opposition chairing a Panel and vice-chairs being of an opposing party and involved in all aspects of the work. This was considered a positive reflection of the mature political culture at Ealing Council.

Other key elements to the success of the scrutiny function were considered as the co-operation of the Executive, process avoidance so that Members can focus on areas of interest and maintaining public and partner involvement.

It was noted that over the years, statistically, the majority of recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel had been accepted by the Executive and implemented.

The Chair thanked the Head of Scrutiny and Committees for his report.

9. Panel Operations in 2013/2014
(Agenda Item 5 continued)

The Panel then returned to analysing areas for consideration as part of the Panel's work programme.

Discussion took place around the Forward Plan. The Chair raised the question of whether it would be considered feasible to have the Forward Plan contain more information. It was felt that the amount of background and contextual information provided on forthcoming Forward Plan items did not always allow for Councillors to understand the full implications of forthcoming items. The Panel concurred with this opinion. They also sought a longer run-in period than the current 28 days, the Panel felt that a period of 3 months could be suggested. The Director of Legal and Democratic Services advised that the Forward Plan is regularly scrutinised by the Corporate Board, but positive recommendations as to its future development would be welcomed.

The discussion then moved on to the effectiveness of the call-in process. Councillor Chapman felt that the general consensus was that the Council had too many call-ins and that if reports were better initially with more room given to discussion, then the Council would see a considerable drop in the amount of them. Councillor Gordon concurred, he purported that a lot of recent call-ins had just been information seeking exercises that could have been resolved at an earlier stage or even by email exchange. It was considered that officers needed to recognise at which stage full engagement would be advisable. Councillor Emment stated that Cabinet Members had a responsibility to ensure that any reports going out under their portfolio were sufficiently clear in their prose and detailed enough to allow for Councillors to understand the reasoning behind the decisions being taken.

The Chair then asked the Panel whether they felt scrutiny panels and health scrutiny within the authority were proving to be effective. Councillor Emment considered that scrutiny panels can prove very useful, but there was a need to make them interesting to allow Councillors to feel fully engaged in the topic being considered. She considered site visits and public engagement as important parts of this process.

In discussing Health Scrutiny it was acknowledged that Ealing Hospital and the ‘Shaping a Healthier Future’ programme had dominated the agenda for the previous few years. Now that the Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group (ECCG) was established, Officers were looking to build a strong relationship with them, in which Ealing Health Scrutiny would form an integral part of their decision making processes. Panel Members agreed that a strong relationship with the ECCG was imperative, and that Officers would need to ensure that Scrutiny had a say as early in the process as they could.

All Panel Members agreed that encouraging the public to engage more with the scrutiny process could help foster positive perceptions towards its importance within the Councils decision making processes.

Discussion also took place concerning co-option onto Panels. There was consensus that whilst it was not appropriate to all Panels, co-optees in many cases had made an insightful and knowledgeable addition to the process. Alan Cook on the Health Scrutiny Panel was highlighted as one recent example where a Co-optee had proven a high quality addition to a Panel.

The Chair thanked all present for their input, and considered that some useful ideas were forming for recommendations going forward. He drew Panel Members attentions to the ward forum timetables they had been provided with and reminded that they should all attend at least one ward forum outside of their own ward before the meeting on 28 November.

Councillor Anthony Young, Chair.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm.

Report to Scrutiny	
Item Number:	**6**

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No

Subject of Report: Public Engagement

Meeting: Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - Governance
26th September 2013

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Cabinet Responsibility: Councillor Julian Bell
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Brief: To consider how the Council currently engages with the local community and make proposals for further improvements accordingly.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Panel notes the way in which the Council presently engages with the local community and make proposals for further improvements where necessary.

1. Public Engagement

1.1 The Council, operating in an open, transparent and accountable fashion, provides many avenues for residents and others to engage with the Council other than through their directly elected representatives. Some of these are through complying with the statutory framework and others are local practice.

1.2 Council Meetings

While there is no statutory obligation other than holding meetings open to the public and publishing agendas at least five clear working days in advance Ealing has a number of ways in engaging the public.

a) Although the obligation to hold a debate at Council if a petition reached a certain threshold (1,500 in Ealing) was removed under the Localism Act. Ealing, has kept this provision. It has occasionally been exercised.

b) Up to three petitions may be presented by the public to a Council meeting. The petitioner gets a response from the relevant Portfolio Holder and is then dealt with as a piece of correspondence. It is acknowledged by Democratic Services and the respective Department responds in due course. The text provided to possible petitioners is shown in **appendix 1**

c) Questions from the Public have been part of the engagement mechanism for a while and have recently become more popular. The questioner gets an immediate response from the Portfolio Holder and can then ask a supplementary question. No more than five questions can be asked at a meeting. The text provided to possible questioners is shown in **appendix 2**

1.3 Cabinet Meetings

There is no facility for the public to engage directly with the Cabinet at these meetings although the Chair does sometimes exercise his discretion on some issues in allowing representatives of organisations and members of the public to speak.

Across the country many councils take a different approach to engagement at Cabinet.
The most common approach seems to be a public question time for between 15-30 minutes at the start of the meeting, usually with elements of submitting them in advance and subsequently publishing answers on the website.
Some allow the public to make statements in this time about agenda items.
Less common, but not unusual, is a mechanism for members of the public to make statements or ask questions on specific agenda items, the time allowed for an intervention typically varies from 2 to 5 minutes.
All these mechanisms are strictly controlled in relation to advance notification,

written submission deadlines similar to those Ealing operates for Council meetings.

Less common is the unstructured engagement typified by Swindon's open forum.[1]

Cabinet Open Forum: A Cabinet Open Forum is held at 6:00 p.m. prior to the start of each scheduled Cabinet Meeting, and is normally held in the Council Chamber. The Open Forum is similar to the 'public question time' that happens at most Council meetings but without the need for questions. It provides the chance to meet with Cabinet Members as well as Group Directors and Directors to discuss matters relevant to the Cabinet and its responsibilities. It provides an opportunity to raise issues and give views. The Forum will normally close at 6.30 pm and the Cabinet will then reconvene for the start of the formal Cabinet meeting. If the Open Forum completes its business earlier than anticipated then the Cabinet Meeting will commence at 6:15pm or at the Forum's conclusion.

1.4 Other Bodies

Engagement protocols differ amongst bodies partly reflecting the subject matter. Thus Planning, with the great interest shown in some issues has very strict protocols (see **appendix 3**) *while* other bodies generate limited public interest and so have not developed specific protocols. It is worth noting that the Local Development Plan Advisory Committee, given the intense interest of some groups, has developed a strict and detailed protocol for engagement. This protocol is attached as **appendix 4** to the report.

1.5 Scrutiny

In order to receive evidence from different sources Scrutiny needs public engagement and proactively seeks out engagement. At formal meetings this is sometimes done through co-option and at other times it is through contacting relevant groups to see if they wish to present to, or participate in, a meeting.

Scrutiny does not currently operate formal speaking protocols leaving this to the judgment of the Chair though these protocols are quite common in other authorities.

Scrutiny Members also go out on site visits, hold focus groups or, attend activities relevant to a particular topic or review.

Scrutiny also encourages written submissions on certain topics which are all presented to the relevant panels. Further, from time to time conferences for the public or the voluntary sector are held to both publicise scrutiny and solicit suggestions for topics.

It is also regular practice to ask for suggestions from the public before the work programme for the year is agreed.

[1] http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=285

1.6 **Ward Forums**

These play a crucial role for Ward councillors to engage with their communities and will be the key element of the Panel's next meeting.

1.7 **Community/Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)**

Community Call for Action is provided for in the Police and Justice Act 2006 (crime and disorder matters) and Councillor Call for Action is a power in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (other matters affecting the Borough). The Calls for Action enable Ward Councillors to refer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any of its Panels issues of local concern, which affect all or part of the electoral area for which the Member is elected or any person who lives or works in that area, for discussion and action where other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

CCfAs came into force in April 2009 and members will be aware that there are processes in place although there has never been one in Ealing. These have nationally not really taken off.

1.8 There is also the right to raise a petition to hold an officer to account and to appear before OSC. The text below appears on our website though it has never been used and no one has ever attempted to do so.

Petitions holding an officer to account Your petition may ask for a senior officer of the council to give evidence at a public meeting about which he/she is responsible as part of his/her job. If your petition contains at least 3,000 signatures, the relevant senior officer will give evidence at a public meeting of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The committee may consider that it would be more appropriate for another officer to give evidence. The Committee members will ask questions at this meeting but you will be able to suggest questions to the Chair of the Committee by contacting the Head of Scrutiny up to two working days before the meeting. You will also have three minutes to present your petition to the committee.

1.9 **Other Methods**

Councils have different ways of encouraging public engagement; however over and above methods outlined above some councils operate a mechanism where questions to the Leader can be submitted at any time and the answers published on the Council website.

1.10 **Consultations**

Introduction

Ealing Council is committed to listening to the views of local people when making policies or decisions that impact them.

According to the Best Value Statutory Guidance[2], “authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation.”

Thus the duty to consult, similar to the earlier ‘duty to involve’[3], is a statutory obligation applying to specified public bodies, requiring them to consult and involve individuals, groups, businesses or organisations likely to be affected by their actions. The duty to involve was introduced in the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, and has now been superseded by the Best Value Statutory Guidance.

The Council and LSP partners have also incorporated “Engaging and enabling” as one of the three overarching values in the Community Strategy. This value calls upon the Council and partners to ensure that “everyone feels involved in their community and is empowered to help develop solutions to issues they face, and has the opportunity to be involved in decisions about the services they receive wherever possible”.

As part of this, the Council and partners “will:

• Agree as partners how and when we will consult our communities about decisions we make, and make sure we follow these principles.
• Have a clear and consistent approach to consultation and engagement and ensure we use each other’s knowledge, networks and opportunities for involvement wherever possible.
• Ensure that success at involving local people, and services users’ and residents’ perceptions of services and organisations, are key measures of success in our work as partners.
• Work with residents to understand and set out the relationship between the citizen and the state, through exploring with residents what public services can and will deliver, and what residents can and are expected to contribute themselves, and by supporting local innovation and community organisers.
• Agree a partnership approach to key elements of the Localism Bill, including the Community Right to Buy, Right to Challenge and neighbourhood planning.”[4]

Full details of this are shown in **appendix 5**

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[2] Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-value-statutory-guidance--4
[3] Local Government Improvement and Development; The Duty of Involve, http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=15391881
[4] http://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/2512/ealing_community_strategy

Current process
The Council currently has a robust consultation and engagement process as part of its duty to consult local people in council policies and decisions
.

1. Residents are given an opportunity to have a voice in council decisions through a dedicated 'Have Your Say' section on the council website, which contains details of different ways in which residents can express their views (e.g. consultations, ward forums, petitions, and the online residents' panel).

2. The council regularly consults local people and residents on all of its new (or changes to existing) policies and strategies as well as any instances where a current service is altered in any way. While there is a statutory obligation to consult on changes to certain services (e.g. schools), the council attempts to consult on all its decisions where possible.

   Consultations use a variety of methods, although easy and widespread access to the internet means that online consultations play a predominant role. Online consultations are adequately supplemented with distribution of a paper version where needed. If paper copies are not provided in advance, residents can always contact the council to request one.

   In cases where face-to-face consultation is needed the same is also organised (e.g. with residents in sheltered housing).

3. The council also has a group of residents organised as the Online Residents' Panel. The Panel currently has about 750 members who have signed up to be part of any engagement or consultation activity the council may wish to consult. The Panel's profile is broadly representative of the borough's population in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and employment structure.

   The panel is regularly sent (via email) consultations that are of a borough-wide scope and importance. Recent examples include the consultation on Ealing's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Council Tax Empty Property Discount consultation, and the Discretionary Housing Payments Scheme consultation.

   Results from consultations with the Panel have shown that this method is able to elicit better response from local residents as compared to the general online consultations on the website.

4. Consultations are carried out as per established best practice and guidance from regional and national bodies (as listed in point 8 below) on stakeholders, methods, questions, and timescales

5. In order to improve customer services an on-going 'Customer Services Satisfaction Survey' has also been instituted on the website and in the customer contact centre whereby all residents coming into contact with the council, either online, face-to-face, or on telephone, are requested to

feedback on their experience. Results from this survey are used to constantly improve council services. The survey has partly contributed to the recent refresh of the council website where online forms have been made easier to find and complete.

6. The Council also carries out a Staff Survey and a Residents' Survey every two years to hear, respectively, staff views about working at the council and residents' views on their experiences of living and working in the borough.

7. One way (though not direct) of measuring the success of engagement may be through the biennial residents' survey, which asks two questions related to this aspect. Results from the last five surveys are shown below:

The Council…	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2012**
Involves residents when making decisions	57%	60%	61%	46%	49%
Listens to concerns of local residents	53%	55%	58%	50%	54%

Challenges

8. In the past all consultations were logged, carried out or managed by the corporate Research and Consultation team, ensuring consistent quality and standards across the organisation. However the current team size is now only two full-time staff, which means that there is no overall central control over consultations. The team instead operates according to a devolved model whereby it is possible to provide only advice and guidance to any officer seeking to carry out a consultation. All operational aspects of the consultation are dealt with by the respective department carrying out the consultation. To enable this corporate team provides regular training on SurveyMonkey, a new user-friendly online survey design tool, to other officers across the organisation to carry out their own online consultations. The team plays a more central role in consultations that are wider in scope and consist of important decisions impacting local people (e.g. the Council Tax Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments, etc.). In addition, a comprehensive Consultation Toolkit has been made available on the council intranet for reference of any Council officer wishing to carry out a consultation (http://inside.ealing.gov.uk/info/20056/have_your_say/136/consultation_toolkit). The entire Toolkit is attached as **appendix 6**. The toolkit draws best practice on consultation from national and specialist sources such as the following:

   a. The Cabinet Office Consultation Principles https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance

b. The government's Code of Practice on Consultation
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/2695/code-practice-consultations.pdf

c. The Consultation Charter from the Consultation Institute
https://www.consultationinstitute.org

9. Due to the federated working model described above it is not possible to maintain a central database of all council consultations and their details. However, as per the team's records it is in the Highways and Transport department where the largest volume of consultations (approximately three consultations every month on an average) are carried out – on CPZs, road changes, scheme and improvements etc. Other departments' consultations are less frequent in comparison, averaging about 1-2 consultations every quarter.

10. Responses to 'online-only' consultations are usually lower than others carried out through a range of methods – however this also depends on the subject/ topic of the consultation. In the case of the libraries consultation, for example, about 4,000 online responses were received. Other consultations that are less salient in the public domain can elicit responses ranging from 200-1,000; however this again depends on the subject. CPZ and Highways consultations usually elicit a higher number of responses as compared to other consultations on broader policies such as licensing and gambling etc. (e.g. Hanwell and West Ealing road improvements and Castlebar and Pitshanger CPZ consultations received more than 500 responses as compared to only five online responses to the gambling policy consultation in 2012). However a disproportionate level of importance may not be placed on simply the number of responses received – what is more important is to ensure that all relevant stakeholders and interested parties have been given sufficient opportunity to have their say. Some policies/ decisions are relevant only to a specific section of the borough's population therefore even a small number of responses may be considered sufficiently representative.

11. A further challenge is publicising the consultation widely, largely due to resource constraints. It is not always possible to publicise every online consultation amongst all resident groups; this may partly contribute to low response rates.

Future improvements

12. In future it is planned to further improve local involvement through featuring key council consultations on the Ealing Involved (an LSP initiative) website

and working more closely with the Ealing Community and Voluntary Services (ECVS) to promote consultations amongst local residents.

13. The Online Residents Panel is continuously promoted through the website and will also feature on the Ealing Involved website – this is expected to lead to many more residents joining the panel. The Panel should play a key role in resident engagement and involvement.

14. The corporate team will also explore the use of social media to promote consultations, subject to resource availability.

2. Legal Implications

2.1 The general scrutiny functions and powers and specific role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its panels are set out in the Council Constitution. Any changes to the constitution have to open for consultation with the public and agreed at a meeting of full council.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Support to the Scrutiny Panel is contained within the allocated budget. Value for money will come from the Panel having a well-constructed work programme with each topic for scrutiny having a considered brief and identified outcomes. In the event that recommendations are made to a decision making body these will have the full financial implications clearly described.

4. Other Implications

4.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Ealing Council's Constitution, available at www2.ealing.gov.uk/services/council/council_constitution/.

Consultation

Name of Consultee	***Department***	***Date Sent to Consultee***	***Date Response Received from Consultee***	***Comments Appear in Report Para:***
Internal				
Helen Harris	Director Legal & Democratic Services	10/9/13	11/9/13	
Cllrs Young & Gordon	Chair & Vice-Chair	29/8/13	3/9/13	1
External				
None				

Report History

Decision Type:			
Non-key decision		No	
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	***Date Report Drafted:***	***Report Deadline:***	***Date Report Sent:***
Report No.:	***Report Author and Contact for Queries:***		
	Keith Fraser, Head of Scrutiny & Committees fraserk@ealing.gov.uk 0208 825 7497		

Appendix 1

PROCEDURE FOR THE PUBLIC TO PRESENT PETITIONS TO COUNCIL

The Council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one of the ways residents can let us know their concerns. This guidance note refers to petitions which may be presented to Council.

It does **not** relate to petitions in response to consultations being undertaken by the Council on licensing and planning applications, or those being undertaken statutorily, such as calling for an elected mayor, or calling a senior officer to account.

Further details can be found at the following link

http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200627/committees/1090/petition_scheme

Alternatively you may wish to raise the matter at your local Ward Forum meeting which is attended by your local ward councillors.
The link below gives further details.

http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200916/ward_forums

There are two types of petitions that you may present to Council:

1. Under Council and Committee Procedure Rule Number 9

   The petition organiser, or someone speaking on their behalf, will be allowed up to 3 minutes in which to give some background information and present the petition to the Mayor. The appropriate councillor will then give a response. The Council will not debate the matter.

2. Under the Council's Petitions Scheme

   If you want your petition to be reported to, and debated at, a meeting of the Council, it must contain at least 1,500 signatures. The Council will try to consider the petition at its next meeting, although this may not always be possible. The petition organiser, or someone speaking on his/her behalf, will be given up to 5 minutes to address the Council allowing them to give some background information if they so wish and to present the petition. The subject of the petition will then be discussed by the Council for a maximum of 20 minutes. This will include an opportunity towards the end of the debate for the petition organiser, or someone speaking on his/her behalf, to sum up their case. The Council will decide how to respond to the petition at the meeting.

You may also ask one of your ward councillors to present a petition on your behalf.

Petitions should include:

- a clear, concise statement covering the subject of the petition. This must relate to something which is the responsibility of the authority, or over which the authority has some influence and should state what action the petitioners want the Council to take.

- the name, address and signature of any person supporting the application.
- the name and contact details of the petition organiser or someone to whom the organiser would like any correspondence about the petition to be sent.

Petitions must not be defamatory, frivolous or offensive, be substantially the same as a petition considered by the Council in the last six months, require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information or relate to an outstanding licensing or planning application.

The deadline for giving notice that you wish to submit a petition is noon two clear working days before a Council meeting although it helps if it is submitted before this.

The next Council meeting when your petition may be considered will be on

Tuesday 15th October 2013 starting at 7.00pm.

Deadline for receipt 12.00 on Thursday 10th October

Note that it may be decided to defer consideration of a petition to the following meeting in view of other business to be considered by the Council. Notice of the intention to present a petition must be given in writing, by email or by fax to

Keith Fraser
Head of Scrutiny & Committees
Perceval House
14-16 Uxbridge Road
LONDON
W5 2HL

Tel: 0208 825 7497
Fax: 0298 825 6909
Email: fraserk@ealing.gov.uk

On the evening of the Council meeting you are requested to arrive at Ealing Town Hall at 6.45pm and report to the reception desk. Here you will be met by an officer, normally Mark Howlett, the Mayor's Secretary, who will accompany you to the Council Chamber and confirm the procedures. These do not allow for Powerpoint presentations to be made or handouts to be circulated.

The public gallery of the Council Chamber holds 40 people; for health and safety reasons, this limit cannot be exceeded. These seats are allocated on a "first come, first served basis". There may well be other people seeking to attend the meeting in addition to you and your group.

You and your ward councillors will be notified of the actions taken, if any, as a result of the presentation of your petition to Council.

If you have any queries on the above please phone 0208 825 7497

Appendix 2

PROCEDURE FOR THE PUBLIC TO ASK QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Council welcomes questions and recognises that questions from the public are one of the ways residents can let us know their concerns. This guidance note refers to questions which may be presented to Council.

Alternatively you may wish to raise the matter at your local Ward Forum meeting which is attended by your local ward councillors.
The link below gives further details.

http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200916/ward_forums

You may present a question to Council under Council and Committee Procedure Rule Number 9

You, or someone speaking on your behalf, will ask the question that you submitted in advance. The appropriate councillor will then give a response. You may then ask a short supplementary question which will be responded to. The Council will not debate the matter.

The question should be a question and not a speech.

It must relate to something which is the responsibility of the authority, or over which the authority has some influence.

Questions must not be defamatory, frivolous or offensive, be substantially the same as a question considered by the Council in the last six months, require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information or relate to an outstanding licensing or planning application.

No more than five questions from the public may be submitted at any meeting and an individual can only ask one question at a meeting. They will be taken in the order received.

The deadline for giving notice that you wish to submit a question is noon two clear working days before a Council meeting although it helps if it is submitted before this.

The next Council meeting when your question may be considered will be on

Tuesday 15th October starting at 7.00pm.

Deadline for receipt 12.00 on Thursday 10th October

In order to ask a question you must fill in the attached form giving your name, address and signature.

Note that it may be decided to defer consideration of a question to the following meeting in view of other business to be considered by the Council. Notice of the intention to present a question must be given in writing, by email or by fax to

Keith Fraser
Head of Scrutiny & Committees
Perceval House
14-16 Uxbridge Road
LONDON
W5 2HL

Tel: 0208 825 7497
Fax: 0298 825 6909
Email: fraserk@ealing.gov.uk

On the evening of the Council meeting you are requested to arrive at Ealing Town Hall at 6.45pm and report to the reception desk. Here you will be met by an officer, normally Hitaishi Vaghela, the Mayor's Secretary, who will accompany you to the Council Chamber and confirm the procedures.

The public gallery of the Council Chamber holds 40 people; for health and safety reasons, this limit cannot be exceeded. These seats are allocated on a "first come, first served basis". There may well be other people seeking to attend the meeting in addition to you and anyone who comes along to support you.

If you have any queries on the above please phone 0208 825 7497

Appendix 3

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING COMMITTEES – A PROTOCOL

1. Two weeks before the relevant Planning Committee, a decision will be taken on which items should be placed on the agenda for that meeting.

2. For those applications that are to be placed on the agenda for the meeting, a letter will be sent to people who have responded to notification of the application saying

a) That the report is likely to be on the agenda for the meeting, including the date, time and venue.

b) That the full report including recommendations will be available 5 clear working days before the meeting from the appropriate Committee Administrator or via the Council website.

c) That the committee administrator should be contacted 5 clear working days before the meeting to verify that the application is on the agenda. The intention to make a statement on it must be confirmed by 5.00 p.m. two working days before the meeting.

d) Intended items cannot be guaranteed to make a particular agenda.

e) That, pursuant to the provisions of this Protocol, they may be entitled to speak at the meeting

3. A letter will be sent to the applicants informing them of their right to attend the meeting and (subject to clause 12 below) to make a statement if third parties have already expressed a desire to do likewise on the application. For the purposes of this protocol third parties are understood to be those persons directly affected by a development proposal but who, unlike the applicants themselves, have no right of appeal against any decisions which may be taken by the Council in its role as Local Planning Authority. In this context they must be objectors to the application in question. However**,** in the case of planning enforcement cases the comments from third parties could support the recommendations from officers and the applicant/owner would then be cast in the position of objector.

4. The scheme is available to allow public speaking on items appearing on a Planning Committee agenda.

5. Third parties wishing to make a statement must contact the Committee Administrator by 5.00 p.m. two days (including the day of Committee) preceding the Committee (This will in normal circumstances be Monday 5pm). Such advance notice is necessary in the interest of fairness to give the applicant notice of the intention and offer them the opportunity of reply.

6. People wishing to make a statement must arrive at the committee room 15 minutes in advance of the meeting where they will be met by the Committee Administrator.

7. A list of those requesting the opportunity to make statements will be drawn up by the Committee Administrator and provided to the Chair and members of that committee in advance of the meeting.

8. The applicant will only be allowed (subject to clause 12 below) to speak in response to a third party's statement.

9. Where both a third party and applicant/agent wish to speak, the third party will speak first.

10. Agents/spokespersons acting on behalf of third parties or the applicant may make a statement for them.

11. Only one third party speaker (or their agent/representative) will normally be able to make a statement on a planning application. This restriction will also apply in those cases where there are multiple applications in respect of the same site that are taken together. If agreement cannot be reached on who will speak, selection will be by the Committee Administrator after the drawing of lots.

12. For large planning applications the Chair of the Planning Committee may allow for more than one public speaker. Any changes to the speaking arrangements will be detailed in the letter sent to objectors (Point 2) and applicants (Point 3). Public speaking at Planning Committee is ultimately at the discretion of the Chair.

13. Where an item has been deferred from a previous meeting of the Planning Committee, and speakers addressed that previous meeting, further representations will be permitted in relation to that item. They may cover the same points made when the application was previously considered as the membership for that meeting might be different.

14. Where a report has been deferred from a previous meeting, and speakers addressed that previous meeting, a brief note of the main points made by those speakers will normally be included in the report when it returns to the Planning Committee for decision. The logistics of report production mean that it will not be practical for speakers to check that their comments have been correctly incorporated. Speakers are, therefore, advised to provide a written summary of their speech if they wish to have greater certainty that their words will be accurately reported.

15. At the meeting, speakers will be advised to direct their presentation to reinforcing or amplifying representations already made to the Council in writing.

16. Speakers may distribute a written summary of their speech to members of the committee but documents not previously submitted should not normally be circulated to the committee as all parties may not have time to react and councillors may not be able to give proper consideration to the matter. Speakers will be advised that substantive documents should be submitted to the Planning Officer as early as possible but by no later than 12 midday on the date of the meeting.

17. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes, apart from when an interpreter is used or if the speaker has a learning disability. In such situations, the submission will be limited to six minutes.

18. If the speaker is a wheelchair user or has a hearing impairment they should contact the Committee Section in advance of the meeting to arrange for a portable PA or loop respectively. The Council welcomes the participation of speakers with a disability.

19. If the speaker's first language isn't English and they wish to address the committee, they can either bring a friend to interpret or make a statement on their behalf.

20. The Committee will normally deal with applications involving speakers first.

21. The speakers will be invited to make their statements in advance of any officer input on a case but after any member declarations.

22. Speakers will address the Committee before the Committee discusses the application.

23. As is the case in full Council, the Committee will not question the speakers.

24. The Committee will then debate the application and (where appropriate) reach a decision.

25. Members of the public or their representatives will not take part in the debate. They will not be allowed to question officers, Committee members or applicants.

Revised January 2011

Appendix 4

- Protocol For Public Contributions To The Local Development Plans Advisory Committee

Introduction

1. The work programme will be published on the website http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/14/Default.aspx
 and will be revised after each meeting of the Committee.
 This will give you the maximum notice possible of items that might be of interest.

2. This facility is provided to assist individuals and local organisations in contributing to the development of the LDF. It is NOT a facility for commercial organisations in general to make representations; however the views of local businesses are welcome if they relate to issues around the LDF rather than the interests of any particular business.

Written Contributions

3. Contributions can be from individual residents. Your address and contact details (to ensure contributions are genuine) should be given and while it is expected that your name will be published no further details will be unless you specifically request it (i.e. "Life time resident of East Acton").

4. Contributions can be from local organisations. Contributions should clearly state the name of the organisation and give contact details of a named individual.

5. Contributions should be no more than three sides of A4 paper and submitted as a conventional word-processed document or a PDF. It should be made clear which agenda item they are contributing to.

6. Contributions will be published on the agenda and must be submitted at least ten clear working days in advance of the meeting.

Verbal Contributions

7. Should you wish to speak at the meeting you must contact the Committee administrator at least two clear working days in advance of the meeting. You should indicate which item you would like to contribute to. Your contribution will be limited to a maximum of three minutes- timing, which will be strictly adhered to. However the Committee might ask you questions should they require clarification on any points raised.

8. On the day of the meeting please arrive in good time and identify yourself to the Committee administrator. The order of speaking will be decided by the Chair of the meeting.

Appendix 5 (Engaging and enabling from the Community Strategy)

Ref	Objective	Actions	Measure of success	Lead organisation(s)	Timescale
B1	Agree as partners how and when we will consult our communities about decisions we make, and make sure we follow these principles.	Council community engagement toolkit developed into broader partnership-based approach	Partnership toolkit developed and measures of success agreed	P&P (LBE)	April 2012
		Develop partnership consultation strategy	Strategy agreed	P&P (LBE)	April 2012
		Maintain quarterly meetings of Joint LBE and ECN Planning and the Community Working Group.	Community groups able to input early views on major planning issues.	Planning (LBE) ECN	Quarterly
		Establish and train new Shaping Communities Panels in Southall and West Ealing.			January 2012
B2	Have a clear and consistent approach to consultation and engagement and ensure we use each other's knowledge, networks and opportunities for involvement wherever possible.	Review current and future LSP projects to ensure there are opportunities for involvement.	Consultation plans developed for each project	P&P (LBE)	Ongoing
		Develop and maintain shared partnership consultation database, building on existing ECN web portal.	Database developed and used	P&P (LBE) ECN	March 2012

Ref	Objective	Actions	Measure of success	Lead organisation(s)	Timescale
		Continue to review effectiveness of LSP as a whole to ensure it is focussed on the right issues and engaging with the right organisations and individuals.	Annual review completed.	P&P (LBE)	Annual?
		Maintain links between partnership boards.	Annual report to LSP Executive by each Board, highlighting key achievements and challenges for the partnership.	P&P (LBE)	Annual – first reports April 2012?
B3	Ensure that success at involving local people, and services users' and residents' perceptions of services and organisations, are key measures of success in our work as partners.	Develop partnership approach to customer insight.	Increase in number of people who feel they can influence decisions in their area (residents' survey)	P&P (LBE)	March 2012
		Project start-up identifies these opportunities and measures this throughout.		P&P (LBE)	Ongoing
		Influencing partners so that this becomes a key part of individual organisation's projects.		P&P (LBE)	Ongoing
		Support transition from LINKS to Local HealthWatch.	Local HealthWatch established/	Adults' Services (LBE) Ealing LINK	2012-2013
B4	Work with residents to understand and set out the relationship between the citizen and the state, through exploring with residents what public services	Develop a partnership approach to supporting local social enterprise.	Increase in number of local social enterprises.	LBE ECN	March 2012
		Continue to develop VCS Transition Support Programme.			

Ref	Objective	Actions	Measure of success	Lead organisation(s)	Timescale
	can and will deliver, and what residents can and are expected to contribute themselves, and by supporting local innovation and community organisers.	Explore opportunities for External Funding e.g. through Big Society Bank.			
		Engage with businesses in the LSP.	Business representatives attend and contribute to LSP.	P&P (LBE)	September 2011
		Explore alternative models of delivery as appropriate, including greater links with the local community and the council's value for money programme.	Diversified delivery of public services	P&P (LBE)	Ongoing
B5	Agree a partnership approach to key elements of the Localism Bill / Act, including the Community Right to Buy, Right to Challenge and neighbourhood planning.	All partners nominate assets of community value.	Assets of community value placed on list.	LBE	April 2012
		Promote Community Right to Buy to residents.	No. of residents nominating assets of community value No. of groups expressing interest to bid when assets up for disposal	LBE	April 2012
		Develop programme of awareness raising and training for groups interested in Right to Challenge.	Awareness of right to challenge	LBE VCS	April 2012
		Publicise neighbourhood planning process.	Awareness of neighbourhood planning.	LBE	April 2012

Ref	Objective	Actions	Measure of success	Lead organisation(s)	Timescale
		Signpost residents to support for developing neighbourhood plans.	No. of neighbourhood plans developed.	LBE VCS	April 2012

Appendix 6

Consultations at Ealing

Guidance and Best Practice

April 2012

www.ealing.gov.uk

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Introduction

According to the Consultation Institute, consultation is the dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups, based upon a genuine exchange of views, and normally with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action[1]. It is one of the direct ways in which local people can engage in local democratic processes. Consultation activity should inform and enhance our understanding of people's views and opinions, and form the basis of our policies and strategies.

While 'research' is normally used to find out new facts and to systematically measure the views of a particular group of people at a particular point in time, 'consultation' is a process of seeking information and advice from individuals or groups on a specific subject, policy or strategy.

About this guidance

This guidance has been produced as part of Ealing Council's commitment to improving engagement and consultation with the borough's residents and local people. It has been designed for the use of any officer intending to carry out a consultation at the Council. Through the devolution and diffusion of consultation skills across the wider organisation, this guidance will enable the council to carry out more effective consultation with local people.

The guidance sets out the basic principles of good consultation and outlines the key issues that should be considered while planning a consultation exercise.

It details a range of approaches that may be used for consultation, setting out their respective benefits and disadvantages, and when they should best be used. There is guidance on standard question formats and types that the Council uses, how to use such questions, as well as how to analyse and report the results.

This document also contains a step-by-step guide to using SurveyMonkey – the Council's new online survey design tool. This has advice on how to design an online survey using the tool, publish it on the Council website, as well as how to collect and analyse responses. As more and more consultations at the Council are either completely online or at least have an online component, this guide should provide the required help to officers while carrying out online consultations.

Adequate planning and preparation as well as careful consideration of all the issues involved will lead to a consultation that is of a high standard, delivered on time and one that provides meaningful and actionable results.

[1] The Consultation Charter; The Consultation Institute, http://www.consultationinstitute.org/about-us/

The Duty to Inform, Consult and Involve

The ‘duty to involve’ is a statutory obligation applying to specified public bodies, requiring them to consult and involve individuals, groups, businesses or organisations likely to be affected by their actions.

The duty to involve was introduced in the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act. It took effect from April 2009. Section 138 of the Act imposes a **duty on all local authorities and best value authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way"**[2].

This means that local authorities must consult a balanced selection of individuals, groups, businesses or organisations the authority considers likely to be affected by, or have an interest in, their actions and functions. The duty is wide ranging and applies to the delivery of services, policy, and decision making.

Authorities must not discriminate in the way they inform, consult or involve local people. They must promote equal opportunities for people to engage and get involved[3].

The duty requires authorities to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve *representatives of local persons* (see box below) in the exercise of any of their functions, where they consider that it is appropriate to do so[4]. It specifies the three ways of involving that need to be covered in this consideration:

- **providing information** about the exercise of the particular function
- **consulting** about the exercise of the particular function
- **involving in another way**

Representatives of Local Persons

Within the context of this duty the term “local persons” refers to those likely to be affected by, or interested in, a particular authority function. It should be noted that the term “local persons” is not simply a reference to local residents. It also covers those who work or study in the area (including those who work for the authority); visitors; service users; local third sector groups; businesses; bodies such as parish councils; and anyone else likely to be affected by, or interested in, the function. The term covers children and young people, as well as adults.

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[2] Local Government Improvement and Development; The Duty of Involve, http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=15391881

[3] Op cit.

[4] Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance; Communities and Local Government, 2008; http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/885397.pdf

The phrase *"representatives of local persons"* refers to a mix of "local persons", i.e. a balanced selection of the individuals, groups, businesses or organisations the authority considers likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the authority function. As such, authorities should consider the diverse groups within the community who might be affected by, or interested in, a particular authority function.

Although the duty to involve does not mean that the Council is required to carry out a formal consultation on all its policies, strategies, and decisions, a legal obligation to consult will arise in the following circumstances:

1. Where consultation is required by statute
2. Where common law principles of fairness and legitimate expectation require that people with an interest in the decision be consulted.

Measures to ensure appropriate consultation

In terms of fulfilling the duty to involve one should consider:

• **Accessibility**: authorities should ensure that *representatives of local persons* are informed/consulted/involved in a way that considers their needs. The appropriate method of engagement will depend on local circumstances and the audience the authority is trying to reach. Authorities should monitor the effectiveness of the chosen method of engagement.

• **Proportionality**: authorities should consider the resources needed to inform, consult, and/or involve appropriately. The extent of the engagement should be proportionate to the significance of the issue – both to the authority and to local people – and to the benefits to be gained from involvement.

• **Coordination**: authorities should ensure that activities to inform, consult and involve *representatives of local persons* do not take place in isolation, but as part of an integrated approach across the area. As such, authorities should have a coordinated approach to information provision, consultation and involvement. They should ensure relevant knowledge, expertise and experience are shared between officers and elected representatives and future engagement activities are planned using this knowledge.

• **Partnership-working**: authorities are also encouraged to work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership to co-ordinate information provision, consultation and involvement and to share relevant knowledge.

• **Timing**: authorities should consider when *representatives of local persons* should be informed, consulted and/or involved. In line with best practice it should be as early as possible to ensure that authority functions are shaped around the needs and aspirations of the community.

In practice, the following principles are key to ensuring a consultation is fair and adequate:

1. Consultation should be conducted when proposals are at a formative stage and with an open mind.

2. Residents and local people should be given sufficient information about what is proposed so that they understand the reasons for the proposal as well as how they may be affected in order to be able to provide an informed response

3. Adequate time should be given for consideration and response.

4. There should be genuine consideration of the response to the consultation before the decision is made.

The above is merely guidance and cannot cover all the considerations that may be relevant to decisions as to whether and how to consult. Officers are advised to seek advice from Legal Services on specific consultation proposals if felt necessary.

Planning a Consultation

Establishing the Need to Consult

If you do not have a statutory obligation to consult, you will need to establish a clear need and the objectives for a specific consultation.

Consultation that is not viewed as genuine or as a 'waste of money' is likely to lead to resentment amongst residents and a reluctance to take part in future exercises. Where a formal consultation exercise is not needed it may be appropriate to carry out a communication exercise to inform relevant parties of the decisions or changes that affect them. For example, if a broad decision has been taken but there are still alternate options, this should be made known to the stakeholders through an appropriate channel (online notification, printed material, letters, etc.).

Why you need to consult on a subject will also lead to an understanding of what specific information you want from the consultation. The latter in turn will determine the questions to be asked and the methodology used in the consultation.

In addition, consider the impacts that the subject under consultation might have on the area or community. This will help determine the objectives of the consultation and what information you want to collect through the consultation.

Who are your stakeholders?

A variety of individuals and groups may be affected by or have an interest in decisions made by the Council. They are your 'stakeholders' – as they have a stake in the Council's actions.

Knowing who your stakeholders are will help select the appropriate consultation techniques to maximise their involvement. Your stakeholders may vary according to the issue, but should always include people who will be most affected by the decision and those whose views are often overlooked or under-represented.

You may need to target specific groups to conduct an inclusive consultation. Generically, such groups are sometimes referred to as 'under-represented', 'socially excluded', 'disadvantaged', 'hard to reach' or 'minority groups', and include:

- Children and young people
- Older people
- Minority ethnic groups
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual) groups
- People with special needs
- People who are unemployed
- Young single parents
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Homeless people

It should not be assumed that if a hard to reach group does not respond to a consultation there is a lack of interest or concern in the consultation subject. You need to look at whether there are barriers to their effective engagement, and seek to overcome them if you identify any.
You should seek prior information about engagement with different areas and groups in the borough.

The following criteria should help you decide whom the stakeholders of the consultation should include:

- Professional knowledge about services and needs
- Local, geographical and service based issues
- Which specific target groups the services are aimed at
- Availability of existing networks and links at various levels of strategic planning
- Aims of consultation in the particular context
- The policy context and how it affects the purpose of consultation (statutory requirements, best value and community planning for example)
- Nature of the ‘hard-to-reach’ or ‘socially excluded’ groups in a given context
- The involvement of partners either in the provision of services or in the consultation process

How much will it cost?

Funding will often act as a limiting factor in any consultation project, especially during times of financial pressures on services. At the outset it is advisable to clearly identify the available budget for your consultation project. You should then revisit the funding issue once you have collected all the background information about your project and selected your consultation audience and methodology.

If the consultation is very large or complex in nature it may be more efficient to commission an external contractor for the project. However, in most cases internal Council departments should be able to run their own consultations. During such projects the following expenses are typically incurred, depending on the methodology chosen. Please note that staff time spent on other aspects of consultation projects (e.g. writing reports, promotion, results communications, etc.) has not been included in the following.

Typical consultation expenses

Qualitative research
▪ Costs of recruiting respondents for focus groups, interviews, etc. ▪ Moderation of qualitative sessions (if external resource needed) ▪ Coding and analysing the qualitative open-ended data from the sessions
Postal surveys
▪ Printing and despatch of written surveys for the consultation ▪ Promoting the consultation (if promotion material such as posters/ leaflets etc. are to be used) ▪ Return envelopes and postage ▪ Hiring an external contractor for data capture and processing from completed surveys ▪ Coding and analysis of open-ended responses ▪ Making help available in alternative formats e.g. large-print, braille or audio
Face-to-face surveys
▪ Printing of survey forms or renting PDAs ▪ Hiring fieldwork personnel to carry out the surveys ▪ Coding and analysis of open-ended responses
Online surveys
▪ Coding and analysis of open-ended responses ▪ Making help available in alternative formats e.g. large-print, braille or audio

Timetable

It is important to create a workable and realistic timetable for your consultation, as effective consultation usually takes longer to achieve than is initially thought. Allow time for the following phases and activities during a consultation:

Planning
▪ Seeking management commitment and budget ▪ Obtaining advice on methodology, techniques, project planning, contracts and consultants ▪ Identifying stakeholders, including planning for the inclusion of vulnerable groups ▪ Drafting and finalising questionnaires/ survey instruments ▪ Agreeing a timetable including considering reporting requirements (cabinet meeting dates, other dates etc.)

Execution/ Fieldwork
▪ Identifying and/ or recruiting respondents (if qualitative) ▪ Notice your respondents may require for attending meetings/ consultation events ▪ Drafting consultation documents ▪ Creating and publishing online surveys ▪ Printing and despatching postal surveys ▪ Consultation open (4-12 weeks depending on subject)
Analysis and reporting
▪ Entering collected data ▪ Analysing results ▪ Drafting and finalising reports

By agreeing a timetable that takes into account all of the above factors you should be closer to creating a workable consultation timescale that will allow you to create an effective consultation with meaningful results.

Fieldwork times may also vary greatly depending on the nature of your consultation. Generally the recommended time is 4 weeks for smaller scale consultations but many can last 6 weeks or even up to three months. This time scale will vary depending on the number of people to be involved with consultation, and its nature, scope and complexity. This should be taken into consideration when planning your timetable.

Promoting the consultation

A final important step before and during a consultation is to promote and publicise it adequately. The method used to do this should differ in accordance with the stakeholders involved as different people and communities react differently to different communication methods. Following are a few examples of methods you can use to inform people:

- Posters
- Newsletters, leaflets and advertisements
- News items in the council magazine Around Ealing
- Information stalls/ exhibitions at key venues
- Open days
- Public meetings
- Word-of-mouth

Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. You may have to use a combination of the above to appropriately inform people about an on-going consultation. Methods such as exhibitions are probably going to be the least cost effective or practical for most council consultations. Online advertising on the Council website is the most common method. Incentivising participation is about encouraging as many people as possible to participate in the consultation. The more people complete the survey, the more confident one can be that the results at the end are representative and accurate.

Choosing a consultation methodology and technique

Survey Methods

Selecting an appropriate methodology for your consultation is the most critical step in ensuring that the consultation is a success. It can play a large part in eliciting a good response from your selected audience.

Consultation methodology is largely determined by the profile of your stakeholders as well as the subject of consultation. If you wish to generate new ideas about an alternative model of service delivery, focus groups and workshops with your key stakeholders will be appropriate. However if you need to gauge general public opinion on a proposal regarding a council service that impacts most residents of the borough, you will need to consult a larger and more representative section of the borough's population. For other consultations, e.g. views about a service for older people, you will need to target the consultation more efficiently to ensure the intended audience has a fair opportunity to take part.

The wide variety of consultation subjects also means that you will need to decide what consultation methodology would be most appropriate to use. This is discussed in the sections below.

Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed?

Quantitative consultation techniques are used when there is an interest in knowing the numbers of people who have a particular characteristic, attitude, need or behaviour, etc. The most common methods used are online, postal, or telephone surveys and face-to-face interviews.

Quantitative research provides answers to specific questions and quantifiable results, but usually doesn't provide any insight into the reasons behind why people are answering the way they are.

Quantitative consultation is most useful for:

- Measuring agreement or disagreement with a proposal
- Measuring satisfaction
- Measuring usage
- Measuring change in attitude or behaviour
- Monitoring population composition

Qualitative techniques, on the other hand, do not lend themselves to the collection of data that can be subjected to statistical analysis. Qualitative consultation asks people's views and opinions and is generally used to gain greater understanding of an issue or a specific population group by direct interaction with people.

Qualitative consultation is most useful for:

- Testing ideas
- Understanding barriers and incentives
- Consulting with small or distinct population groups

In some cases, especially when consulting on an important issue that affects a large proportion of local people in the borough, using a mixed methodology can be most appropriate. Designing a consultation exercise that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative elements enables both the size of an issue to be determined and its depth explored. Some examples of ways to combine these elements are:

- A focus group could be used to test a questionnaire before it is used
- A workshop or public meeting could receive the results of a quantitative consultation and discuss the findings and how any changes could be implemented
- A focus group could be used to get people's views on issues so that the topics of a questionnaire can be decided
- A questionnaire can have both open ended questions as well as closed questions in it, in order to provide structured answers as well as detail

Survey techniques

Survey techniques are the actual tools that you will be using to collect the information you need from a consultation. These range from online, paper, telephone, and face-to-face surveys, to focus groups, workshops, in-depth interviews, workshops, and public meetings. These are described in more detail in the following sections.

As access to computers and the internet has become fairly high, a large majority of consultations at the Council are either completely online or at least have an online component. However, the profile of the stakeholders being consulted means many consultations still need a postal survey element.

Online Surveys

Useful for
- Reaching a wide audience quickly;
- Areas/ groups where access to computers/ internet is likely to be high

Strengths
- Very low cost in terms of distribution and administration.
- Large amounts of data can be automatically analysed and responses tracked in real time. Increases accessibility for many groups e.g. young people, at any time convenient for them.
- Online questionnaires allow for layers of questions, e.g. hyperlinks to other sources of information, and better routing, e.g. question sections that only appear when a particular response is chosen.

Weaknesses
- Still requires expertise and careful consideration in drafting concise and neutral questions.
- May be misunderstood - clarity is a main concern and difficult to explain complex issues.
- Requires access to computer and awareness of opportunity to participate.

- Making people aware of the existence of online questionnaires can take as much effort as paper surveys.
- Inappropriate for certain areas/ groups e.g. older and disabled people

Paper Surveys

(Including self-completion paper questionnaires delivered by post, email, or distributed in locations frequented by the target audience)

Useful for
- Collecting views from large sections of respondents on a range of issues, using structured questions
- Consulting with groups where internet access/ usage is likely to be inadequate

Strengths
- Can be used for both structured and open-ended questions.
- Relatively lower costs than face-to-face.
- Allows respondents time to consider answers and check information.
- No bias from anyone leading the interaction.
- Majority of skills required to conduct are 'back-office'.

Weaknesses
- Requires careful planning, consideration and expertise to design a good questionnaire.
- May be misunderstood - clarity is a main concern and difficult to explain complex issues.
- Cannot control who responds - in terms of numbers or representation - and certain population groups may be more likely to respond.
- Risk of low response rate.

Considerations
- Design, layout and length will be of vital importance to success.
- Pilot and trial the questionnaire before finalising it.
- Accessibility and communication needs - for those with disabilities or whose first language is not English.
- Costs of distribution and return of questionnaires, data entry and storage.

Paper surveys are usually posted to respondents, but can be handed out directly to potential respondents. They are self-administered by the respondent, which means there is little or no control over how they complete the survey; people may answer questions incorrectly (e.g. answering a single choice question with multiple responses).

An associated but often overseen cost within postal surveys is the cost of the return envelopes. When conducting a postal survey you should always include a second class return-addressed envelope to allow the respondents to return the survey to your department or the designated address. If you carry out frequent and regular consultations, it may be advisable to set-up a Royal Mail freepost account, the details of which should be printed on to the return envelopes before including them in the survey packs.

Face-to-face interviews

Useful for:
- Obtaining statistically robust information through a systematically selected random sample
- Administering interview questions
- Obtaining views of those who might not engage in other ways

Strengths:
- Good samples produce accurate results and the ability to probe at length and more deeply than with written questions.
- Easy to control who is targeted and who responds - can tell in advance of any deficit in representation.

Weaknesses:
- Costly, time consuming and resource intensive exercise throughout.
- Questions require as much consideration as for a written survey.
- Interviewers need to be sensitive and skilled.
- Less suitable if anonymity is a concern.
- Potential for interviewer bias in recording results or asking leading questions.
- Does not produce statistically reliable information if sampling is not robust.

Telephone interviews

Useful for: Gaining wide and quick access to the community, in particular those considered to be in the 'hard to hear' communities.

Strengths
- Lower cost than face to face interviews while retaining many of the advantages such as ability to select samples.
- Relatively quick process with flexibility around timing and location.
- Can track respondents and monitor representation easily.

Weaknesses
- May be viewed as intrusive by some.
- Can allow for greater error in interpretation than face-to-face interviews.
- Needs to be kept short and cannot explore in as much depth as face-to-face interviewing.
- May not be suitable for some groups without easy access to phones, or with certain disabilities.

Considerations
- Telephone surveys are often commissioned to be conducted by specialist research companies who can lead on all aspects of this form of engagement.
- Specific thought will need to be given to the skills and suitability of interviewers and any sensitive questions included.

Residents/ Citizens'/ Users' Panels

Useful for:

- Obtaining the views of a representative sample of the population very quickly.
- Seeking views on specific issues or proposals, sometimes ahead of a full public consultation.
- Monitoring change in views over time.

Strengths

- Can measure views of particular groups or sections of the population selected from a pool.
- Can track change over time and develop continuing dialogue with local people / service users.
- Provides immediate feedback
- Members are volunteers and therefore more likely to participate.
- Specific needs and interests are known in advance and so engagement can be tailored to meet these.
- Once panel is established, using it is low cost and fast to use - more efficient than regular one-off surveys.
- Panel members are aware of their role and therefore require fewer introductions to engagement as those never previously engaged with.

Weaknesses

- Only measures the views of those who have sufficient interest to sign up and devote time to it.
- Members become increasingly 'expert' over time and less representative of population as a whole - opinions can be personal and anecdotal.
- Requires commitment to recruit members on a rolling basis - regular maintenance required.
- Requires resource and commitment to secure representative population; some parts of population may require more intensive targeting for recruitment.
- Still requires additional forms of engagement to be used in conjunction.
- Success depends on commitment from services / organisations to act on results and findings.

Considerations

- Survey topics for citizens' panels require careful consideration - useful results require targeting at subjects of interest to the panel and a focus on experiences is helpful.
- Carefully planned and specific service user panel surveys and groups can help inform service planning and resource allocation - but the commitment from decision-makers to act on the results of findings is vital.
- It is important to inform residents what has happened as a result of their involvement.

Focus Group Discussions

Generally consisting of 8-10 people, focus groups use trained facilitators to work through detailed discussion on defined topics.

Useful for

- Discussing a specific issue or set of issues in great detail.
- Exploring in more depth issues identified by prior forms of engagement, or as an initial step in deciding how to tailor future engagement - good complement to other forms.

Strengths

- Can enable in depth understanding of a variety of views in a relatively short amount of time.
- Adaptable and flexible - can be tailored to needs of groups, e.g. specific ethnic minority communities who may feel or be excluded from other forms of engagement (such as those who do not read or write English).
- Encourages participation and involvement in a group atmosphere.
- Members can be recruited to meet specific criteria.

Weaknesses

- Commissioning from an external organisation can be a lengthy and expensive process. Internal resource should be considered first.
- Recruitment for the focus groups can be challenging to organise.
- Requires skilled facilitators and analysts.
- Can only effectively gather opinions of a relatively small group.
- Outputs may not be quantifiable or representative of the entire community.
- Can exclude those who are not comfortable in groups, who cannot travel or who find communication difficult (depending on the methods used).
- May not be appropriate if the issues to be discussed are sensitive.

Considerations

- Discussion guide/ moderation/ facilitation needs to be expert and focussed.
- Venue needs to be accessible and convenient for all.
- Recruitment is often challenging and tends to be done through an external organisation, which makes the process expensive and lengthy.
- Group composition - representative and ease of communication, as well as any specific cultural needs.
- Recording information - sometimes groups are recorded on video or audio to enable more detailed analysis after the event (ensure that participants are aware of and consent to this). Notes and written records are also vital.
- It is always worth considering refunding expenses and offering incentives, particularly if your target audience is a group who are disadvantaged and less likely to participate without costs being covered.
- Consider working in small groups or conducting paired interviews if a larger focus group is not appropriate, e.g. due to sensitive issues being discussed.

Consultation Events/ Workshops

Useful for: Developing group solutions to issues; maximising collaborative problem-solving and encouraging joint-working

Strengths

- Useful for discussing complex issues in a structured, facilitated way that invites input from all.
- Can make use of a range of interactive techniques to appeal to a range of people.
- Good for generating ideas and innovative options.
- Maximises feedback from participants.

Weaknesses

- If a very large number of participants are invited this makes it too resource intensive and sometimes difficult to manage.
- Group work can 'hide' varying views - e.g. hostile participants in groups viewing this form of working as a way of neutralising their views, or influencing others.
- Excludes those who do not buy into the way the issues are framed or stated initially.

Considerations

- Events like these are most effective when experienced and independent facilitators are used. Consider using people from other areas of the organisation to offer an independent perspective in facilitation.
- Will require careful consideration over starting assumptions - participants will need to be signed up to these or will challenge from the start.
- This process will be by invitation only - care will need to be taken in deciding who to invite dependent on the issues to be discussed, and ensuring they are reflective of the communities whose views are sought.
- Requires careful planning, structuring and facilitation to obtain effective group working and outcomes.
- Useful for building relationships as well as solving problems or exploring issues - need to be clear over which of these is the priority.

Asking the right questions

Once you have considered all the issues listed in the previous sections the process of drafting questions should be started. The questions should aim at obtaining the information needed to achieve the consultation objectives.

Question types, formats and wordings should, where possible, follow the standard set by the corporate Research and Consultation team over the years, which is in line with the Market Research Society (MRS) code of conduct and other research quality standards/ best practice.

As consultations also reflect the way the Council communicates and engages with local people, due care should be taken to ensure that these are designed in a clear, accessible, and consistent manner.

Information obtained from a consultation is as good as the questions that are asked of the participants. Questions of an inappropriate type may damage the Council's reputation, and in extreme cases even invite legal challenge.

The following sections provide more detail about some standard types of questions and the appropriate ways of drafting them.

Structured or closed ended questions

Structured or closed ended questions are those that limit the possible responses to a specific question. These can be of single- or multiple-response types.

Single response questions

Single response or single choice questions allow only one out of the possible limited number of response options. The simplest type are 'yes/ no' questions, whereas others may allow respondents to pick one option out of a list. An example is given below.

1. Do you think that the proposed scheme will be beneficial to the local residents?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Another example of a single response question is:

1. How frequently do you visit your local library?

- ◯ Everyday
- ◯ Once a week
- ◯ Once in two weeks
- ◯ Once a month
- ◯ Once in six months
- ◯ Less often

Multiple response questions

Multiple response questions allow respondents to select as many options from the response list as apply to them.

In terms of layout multiple-choice questions look identical to single choice questions. However when designed using an online survey design tool such as SurveyMonkey, multiple response questions have a square checkbox for ticking instead of a circular radio button. While completing online, multiple response questions allow the respondent to tick multiple boxes, which is not possible if the question is formatted as a single choice one. On a paper survey, it is always advisable to have an explicit instruction for the respondent as to the type of question (e.g. “Please tick one option only”, or “Tick ALL that apply”).

An example of a multiple response question is given below:

1. What areas of the proposition do you think will be the most beneficial?

- ☐ Improved highways
- ☐ Improved signposting
- ☐ Improved safety on the roads
- ☐ Improved public access
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

Closed ended questions are often more efficient in terms of collecting and analysing responses as they offer pre-coded options for the most common responses. The question in the above example could have been asked as an open ended qualitative question, but putting key points in a list to pick from makes it easier for respondents to select an appropriate response, as well as speeds up the analysis of results.

Unstructured or open-ended questions

Unstructured or open-ended questions are usually about trying to understand people’s views and opinions without restricting them to one or a few specific responses or ways of responding. While being more time consuming to analyse, certain questions must be asked in an open-ended manner in order to yield the richness and depth of insight needed on the issue under consultation. A standard open-ended question which should almost always be asked towards the end of the survey is:

1. Please provide in the box below any additional comments or suggestions you may have about (the issue in question).

This allows the respondent to add any other comments or viewpoints that they may not have had an opportunity to provide earlier in the questionnaire. It also provides them an opportunity to point out other but related issues that might have been overlooked in other sections of the consultation. While all this content can take a lot of time to analyse, it can bring to light different streams of thought that one might not have considered while writing the questionnaire.

Dichotomous and scaled questions

Dichotomous questions allow only one of the two response options to be chosen, e.g.

1. Do you think that the proposed scheme will be beneficial to the local residents?

- Yes
- No

Scaled questions, on the other hand, allow for more granular responses on a 'bipolar' level, i.e. where responses vary from one extreme to the other on a particular dimension. Considering the above question, the response options can be used on a 3-point scale (note that 'don't know/ can't say' is not considered a point or a response on a scale) in the following manner:

1. Do you agree or disagree that the proposed scheme will be beneficial to local residents?

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know/ can't say

To achieve even more granular responses, the scale can be changed to a 5-point one, as below:

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed scheme will be beneficial to local residents?

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know/ can't say

Other examples of scaled questions:

1. How easy or difficult was the online parking application process?

- ○ Very Easy
- ○ Fairly Easy
- ○ Neither Easy nor Difficult
- ○ Fairly Difficult
- ○ Very Difficult
- ○ Don't know/ can't say

2. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the online parking application process?

- ○ Very Satisfied
- ○ Fairly Satisfied
- ○ Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- ○ Fairly Dissatisfied
- ○ Very Dissatisfied
- ○ Don't know/ can't say

3. How informed or uninformed were you with the online parking application process?

- ○ Very Informed
- ○ Somewhat Informed
- ○ Neither Informed nor Uninformed
- ○ Somewhat Uninformed
- ○ Very Uninformed
- ○ Don't know/ can't say

Filter or Routing Questions

Sometimes you have to ask the respondent a question to determine if they qualify to answer the subsequent question(s), on the basis of a certain demographic characteristic, usage of a service, or interest in a specific subject. This requires using a filter or contingency (routing) question.

An example is given below:

1. Have you visited the Ealing Council website www.ealing.gov.uk in the last six months?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

2. What was the purpose of your most recent visit to the Council website?

- ○ Seeking general information
- ○ Using an online service (such as paying Council tax, making a planning application etc)
- ○ Take part in a consultation

Other (please specify)

Equalities Monitoring Questions

In order to analyse the differential impact the proposals under consultation may have on different groups, and to make consultation more inclusive, a set of questions to record the respondents' demographic characteristics should be used.

The Council uses a standard template for this section. It should also appear as a separate section in the survey, with its own introduction as to the purpose of this information and how it will be used, shared and reported. Such a notice (usually referred to as a 'fair processing notice' or a 'privacy policy') is legally obligatory under the Data Protection Act 1998.

What to ask

As many as possible of the nine main protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 should be monitored. The nine protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Race/ Ethnicity, Religion, Sex, Sexual orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, and Marriage and civil partnership.

Monitoring of these characteristics should be based on an assessment of how the service under consultation might impact differently on different groups. It is generally adequate in most cases to ask questions about the following characteristics:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Location (i.e. full postcode – this can be used for further geographical analysis of results)

Note that location is not a demographic characteristic in its own right but this information is helpful in a geographical analysis of how responses differ by different parts of the borough.

In many other cases you will need to monitor the other protected characteristics. There are standard ways of framing questions for these characteristics – please contact the Research and Consultation team if you need help in this regard.

This information helps to ensure we can make research and consultation more accessible and inclusive and to see how inclusive the current consultation has been. All personal information should be kept completely confidential and used for research purposes only. It should not be transferred to any third party.

Examples of equality monitoring questions

Your gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to disclose

Your age

- 24 or below
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 or above
- Prefer not to disclose

(Note that the age-bands can vary depending on the subject of consultation. If you think that there can be a wide variation in responses by age, you are advised to use narrower age bands than 10- or 15-year ones).

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as having a disability if s/he 'has a long term physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / Prefer not to disclose

For ethnicity, all consultations should use the 2011 Census ethnic classification, which is as below:

White

- ◯ English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- ◯ Irish
- ◯ Gypsy / Irish Traveller

Any other White ethnic group

____

Mixed / Multiple

- ◯ White & Black Caribbean
- ◯ White & Black African
- ◯ White & Asian

Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic group

____

Asian / Asian British

- ◯ Indian
- ◯ Pakistani
- ◯ Bangladeshi
- ◯ Chinese

Any other Asian / Asian British ethnic group

____

Black / Black British

- ◯ African
- ◯ Caribbean

Any other Black / Black British ethnic group

____

Other

- ◯ Arab

Any Other ethnic group

____

Location:

As noted above location is not a demographic characteristic in its own right but this information is helpful in a geographical analysis of how responses differ by different parts of the borough.

Full Postcode

____

Question types to avoid

As mentioned earlier information obtained from a consultation depends to a large extent on the questions asked. Certain types of questions do not allow 'true' responses from the respondents, hence these should be avoided. Examples are given below.

Leading/ biased questions

Leading questions are questions framed in a way which evokes a specific response from the individual being questioned. Consider an example (hypothetical) below:

1. Do you agree with this proposal, as it will mean the Council achieves £XX savings which can be spent on providing more important services to residents elsewhere?

- Yes
- No

Here the question is clearly 'leading' the respondent to tick 'yes' as the answer as it pressures them to agree to a seemingly logical proposal for making savings.

Similarly, some questions may bias the respondents towards answering in a particular way. An example is given below.

1. Do you agree that the proposed scheme will be beneficial to the local residents?

- Yes
- No

Phrasing the question with only the word 'agree' means that there is a slight bias towards leading people to agree with the phrase that the proposed scheme will be beneficial.

A non-biased way to phrase the previous question is:

What do you think about the proposed scheme?

- It will be beneficial to local residents
- It will not be beneficial to local residents

By removing the words agree and 'beneficial' from the question the focus of respondents' thoughts is brought back rather than potentially leading them to your own view.

When writing questions on behalf of the council this implied impartiality is vital.

Compound questions

Compound or ‘double-barrelled’ questions are those that ask about more than one – potentially contrasting – issues of the respondent but allow them to answer about only one. For example:

1. Do you think that the proposed scheme will be beneficial to the local residents and that the parking restrictions are fair?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

The above question asks two completely separate questions but only gives one set of options to respond. This doesn’t allow the user to respond to the question appropriately e.g. it doesn’t allow for a situation where someone may think that the proposed scheme will be beneficial but that the parking restrictions are unfair.

The correct way in this case will be to allow two separate questions to deal with the issues of benefit to residents and fairness of parking restrictions.

Designing a Survey, Data Collection and Analysis

There are several ways of creating a survey and collecting data for a consultation, each with their own benefits and disadvantages.

As access to the internet becomes available to an increasing number of residents and local people in the borough, consultations using a purely online method or a combination of online and another method are recommended as standard. However, exceptions must be made where the key stakeholders are unlikely to have access to a computer or internet, e.g. older people, people with disabilities, deprived groups with limited English proficiency, etc.

Paper surveys are commonly used in some services where it is imperative to consult a small, targeted area of the borough. For instance, for a CPZ consultation the Highways department would commonly send postal surveys to households in the area affected by the proposal (while also informing them of the availability of an online option if desired).

Designing an Online Survey

The Council uses an online survey design tool – **SurveyMonkey** – to produce online surveys. This tool should be used, in conjunction with this guidance, when designing an online consultation. SurveyMonkey designs, publishes, stores and analyses the responses to an online consultation in an easy and user-friendly manner.

Licence for this web-based application is held by the corporate Research and Consultation team and is available for use by any council officer wishing to design an online survey. You should contact the corporate team for details on how to access the tool, as well as for any training and support in this regard. A detailed user guide to the SurveyMonkey tool has been included in this document as an appendix.

All online surveys should be created using SurveyMonkey and published on the ‘Consultations’ page of the Ealing council website.

Once your survey has been created you will need to submit it, along with any consultation documents you have created, to the corporate Research and Consultation team for uploading to the ‘consultations’ page of the website. This is in turn approved by the web team and made ‘live’ **within five working days** of submission. The following items will need to be submitted to the R&C team before it can be published on the website:

- The web link to your SurveyMonkey questionnaire
- Your consultation documents, including the introductory text for the website
- Confirmed start and end dates for the fieldwork phase of the consultation

Creating consultation documents

In order to effectively communicate the objectives, method and outcomes of the consultation, you are strongly advised to contact the corporate Marketing and Communications team. They should be able to help design the documents needed to publicise the consultation, the background information, and any other promotional material. This is especially true of complex consultations where the proposals may be controversial (e.g. redesigning a service for older people, closing down an advice centre for a disadvantaged community).

Background documents are intended to be read before the respondents take part in the consultation. This will allow them to fully understand what you are proposing before answering questions about it. Providing this information to respondents should help make sure that your survey answers originate from informed decisions about the subject rather than just speculative reactions.

Consultation documents can vary widely in their content. They can include pictures, maps, contextual information or a combination of all three. The main point to consider when drafting consultation documents is that they must provide as much information as needed to enable participants make an informed decision about the subject, while also keeping them clear, concise and easy to understand.

At the end of the fieldwork period, you can collect the data from your survey quickly and easily using SurveyMonkey. The application automatically stores the collected results and allows you to output them as an Excel file for direct analysis or use in another data analysis tool.

Paper Based Surveys

When creating a paper-based survey it is important to consider your distribution methods carefully. If surveys are to be sent out to targeted households you will need to pay for postage (normally 2nd class) to the households and a 2nd class postage paid return envelope. The survey pack should also include a cover letter explaining the subject and purpose of consultation, as well as any other supporting documents that will help the respondents gain as much as information about the subject as possible in order to make an informed decision.

If surveys are handed out at a specific site or hand-delivered to households, onwards postage costs may not be involved; however you would still need to allow for the respondents to return their surveys without incurring an expense. In such cases other measures may be suitable, such as a collection box at a central location that can be used by respondents to drop their completed surveys into. In other cases front line members of your service may be able to personally collect the completed surveys. One must note here that these approaches are less desirable as involvement of council officers in data collection may be seen as biasing or pressurising residents and local people to respond.

Data entry and analysis

Online consultations make data collection easy. More manual methods can be both costly and time consuming to collect data. Paper based surveys, for example, require someone to manually type in the information or, if you have a larger consultation budget, you can get external data capture companies to scan the collected data. This costs more money (usually between 50p and £1 per survey) but can be invaluable in saving time and automating the process. If you are going to have the data scanned this will have to be decided in advance of the survey having been created as some scanning will require the survey to be produced in a very specific way.

For contacts details of data processing companies please contact the Research and Consultation team.

Reporting of Results

Findings from most consultations are used in cabinet or other departmental reports. These are normally made up of tables, graphs and charts, and a narrative explanation of the same. The report should include details of the background of the consultation, methodology used, number and types of responses received, and finally the results.

For more detailed and formal research or consultation reports please contact the Research and Consultation team for a template and further guidance.

Feedback to stakeholders

Reasons

If people have contributed their time and effort by participating in a consultation it is important to communicate its results and outcomes back to them. Not doing this may discourage people from contributing to future consultations. Depending on the subject, the following groups of people are likely to have an interest in the results of your consultation:

- The residents and local people
- The general public
- Other stakeholders
- Internal colleagues
- The Corporate Board
- Cabinet and other Members

You will need to carefully consider what information is published and when. All information will need to be distributed and approved internally before being made public. It is advisable to contact the corporate Marketing and Communications team if you need help in creating feedback documents.

Methods for Feedback

The suggestions below are for a range of audiences. Who you want to receive the information should determine your final delivery methods. Also important is how the information can be made relevant and interesting to that audience. A standard method of disseminating consultation results at the Council is to publish them on the ‘Consultations’ (or ‘Have Your Say’) page of Ealing Council website. However you may use other methods as well:

- Follow up meetings
- Leaflets
- Around Ealing magazine
- Local press

Internally you could consider the following methods:

- E-mail
- Team meetings
- Presentations
- Reports
- Staff presentations

Important Points to Consider

When drafting the feedback documents it is important to consider the following:

- Plain language should be used in written feedback. This should allow people who are less familiar with the subject matter the ability to read and fully understand the results. This applies to both internal and external publications.

- There should also be appropriate graphical displays of data, for example pie charts and bar charts.
- Be aware that alternate formats e.g. large print or community languages may be needed in case of some consultations. This will be especially important with public feedback documents.
- Key points from the full survey results should be most prominent. This allows the reader to easily see the key information from the survey.
- Feedback about the consultation should be timely and occur soon after the consultation process itself.
- Feedback should be published on the Ealing website where necessary. You will need to contact the web team and arrange for them to upload your results documentation similarly to how your online consultation will have been uploaded.

Appendix 6

Consultation Planning Checklist

Having considered all of the issues discussed so far in this guidance it may be helpful to refer to the following checklist of questions to ensure that you have considered the various aspects involved in a piece of consultation.

Question	Check
Is it clear what you are consulting on? What information do you wish to obtain from the consultation?	◎
Who are you consulting with? Have you identified all your stakeholders?	◎
How will you ensure all stakeholders are able to participate in the consultation? Does the project meet the requirements of the Ealing Council Equalities Scheme?	◎
Have you considered how much time, budget, and staff are available?	◎
Do you need to inform and/or involve the relevant corporate Marketing and Communications team (e.g. PrintOut, Webteam, Communications)?	◎
Is another internal department consulting with the same stakeholders or on similar issues at the same time? Would forming a partnership on this project be beneficial? Would the overlap be detrimental to the quality of one or both consultations?	◎
What methodology (postal surveys, online surveys, interviews, focus groups, mixed, etc.) will be most appropriate for this project?	◎
If an online survey is intended, do you or a member of your team know how to access/ use the council’s online survey creation tool (SurveyMonkey)?	◎
How long will the consultation last? Including other things, does the timetable allow sufficient time for people to respond?	◎
How will the consultation be promoted/ publicised?	◎
Have you planned data entry, analysis, reporting of results?	◎
Have you considered how the results of the consultation will be disseminated to stakeholders?	◎

Contact Details of Research and Consultation team

The contact details of the corporate Research and Consultation team are as below:

Rajiv Ahlawat
Research and Consultation Manager
Policy and Performance
5th Floor, Perceval House
Direct line: 020 8825 6380
Email: AhlawatR@ealing.gov.uk

Ryan Ashlee
Research and Consultation Officer
Policy and Performance
5th Floor, Perceval House
Direct line: 020 8825 5316
Email: RAshlee@ealing.gov.uk

Appendix 1: SurveyMonkey Manual

Appendix 2: New consultation submission form

Appendix 3: Past consultation submission form

www.ealing.gov.uk

Report to Scrutiny	
Item Number:	**7**

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No

Subject of Report: Health & Wellbeing Board

Meeting: Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - Governance
26th September 2013

Service Report Authors: Keith Fraser, Head of Scrutiny & Committees
fraserk@ealing.gov.uk
0208 825 7497

Scrutiny Officer: Harjeet Bains
Scrutiny Review Officer
Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk
Tel: 020-8825 7120

Cabinet Responsibility: Councillor Julian Bell
(Leader of the Council and Policy Overview Portfolio)

Director Responsibility: Helen Harris
Director of Legal & Democratic Services
harrish@ealing.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8825 8156

Brief: To review the current governance arrangements of the Board in conjunction with the role of the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel and make recommendations accordingly.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Panel notes the way the HWB operates and make proposals for further improvement if necessary

1. HWB

1.1 The Council was required, under the Health & Social Care Act, to set up a formally constituted Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB). This replaced the partnership bodies that had been previously in existence though Ealing, like many other authorities, had been operating the HWB in Shadow Form during the last municipal year. In April Council formally constituted the Board and its membership.

1.2 The HWB has had two meetings and is slowly developing its operating practices. For example, the second meeting restructured the agenda to identify specially- items for decision, items of strategic interest and items for information. They also have agreed Terms of Reference (TOR), attached as **Appendix 1.**

1.3 It is worth noting that the LGA published, in early September a “Health and wellbeing board development tool”.[1] an updated version of a tool originally produced some while ago. The page on Governance is shown in **Appendix 2**

1.4 **Health Scrutiny**

The Health & Social Care Act also gave Councils greater flexibility in the way they operated Health Scrutiny with the key power of referral to the Secretary of State. This power was given to Full Council meetings; Ealing, along with many other authorities, promptly delegated this power to the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel (HASS).

1.5 Given that this left the Council with two bodies looking at related issues it is important that they play their respective roles without duplication or omission. While this relationship is at an early stage it already follows some key principles:

- Reports should not automatically go to both bodies- neither HASS automatically pre-scrutinising HWB report or HASS receiving HWB reports.
- However this does not preclude either body involving the other should it be an appropriate issue
- Both bodies publishing Forward Plans will enable members to identify items of interest
- HASS will scrutinise the work of HWB annually, via an update report. -

2. Legal Implications

2.1 The general scrutiny functions and powers and specific role of the Panel and the HWB are set out in the Council Constitution.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Support to the Scrutiny Panel is contained within the allocated budget. Value for money will come from the Panel having a well-constructed work programme with each topic for scrutiny having a considered brief and identified outcomes.

[1] http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/health/-/journal_content/56/10180/3638628/ARTICLE

4. Other Implications

4.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Ealing Council's Constitution, available at www2.ealing.gov.uk/services/council/council_constitution/.

Consultation

Name of Consultee	*Department*	*Date Sent to Consultee*	*Date Response Received from Consultee*	*Comments Appear in Report Para:*
Internal				
Helen Harris	Director Legal & Democratic Services	11/9/13	12/9/13	
Cllrs Young & Gordon	Chair & Vice-Chair	29/8/13	3/9/13	
Dr Bal Kaur	Director Public Health	16/8/13	11/9/13	
External				
None				

Report History

Decision Type:			
Non-key decision		No	
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	***Date Report Drafted:***	***Report Deadline:***	***Date Report Sent:***
Report No.:	***Report Author and Contact for Queries:***		
	Keith Fraser, Head of Scrutiny & Committees fraserk@ealing.gov.uk 0208 825 7497		

Appendix 1

www.ealing.gov.uk

The Health & Wellbeing Board

2013/2014

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

These terms of reference set out how the Health & Wellbeing Board will operate and its roles and responsibilities.

The Health & Wellbeing Board will aim to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of Ealing and reduce current inequalities in outcomes.

The Board will provide collective leadership to improve health and wellbeing and enable shared decision-making and ownership of decisions in an open and transparent way.

The Board will address health inequalities by ensuring quality, consistency and comprehensive health and local government services are commissioned and delivered in Ealing.

It will lead on improving the strategic coordination of commissioning across NHS, social care, and related children's and public health services.

It will bring together the key Council, NHS, public health and social care leaders in Ealing to work in partnership.

POWERS

The **Functions** and **Roles** of the Health & Wellbeing Board, as set out in the Council constitution, are:

1. To encourage people who arrange for the provision of any health or social care services to work in an integrated manner for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of the people in the area
2. To encourage people who arrange for the provision of any health-related services in the area to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board and/or with people who arrange for the provision of any health or social care services.
3. To exercise the functions of the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group ("") in relation to the preparation of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessments ("JSNA") and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies ("JHWBS")
4. To give an opinion on whether the council is discharging its duty to have regard to the JSNA and JHWBS
5. To consider the CCG's commissioning plan and any revision of it and to give an opinion to the CCG on whether the plan takes proper account of the JHWBS and to give the NHS Commissioning Board a copy of the opinion
6. To consider the CCG's annual report and to give the NHS Commissioning Body its views on the CCG's contribution to the delivery of the JHWBS
7. To undertake or oversee the production of pharmaceutical needs assessments.
8. To undertake any other functions of a health and wellbeing board which may from time to time be specified by legislation or recommended by the Government as best practice for health and wellbeing boards

The Council and Committee Procedure Rules (see Constitution) shall apply to Health & Wellbeing Board.

These are:

Rules 5 (notice and summons to meetings), 6 (chair of meeting),8.5 (operating on the basis of 2/3 of the committee members), 14.4 (only one member to stand at a time), 14.2 (Right to require notice in writing), 14.13 (points of order), 14.14 (personal explanation), 14.15 (respect for chair), 16 (voting), 17 ((minutes), 18 (record of attendance), 19 (exclusion of public), 20 members' conduct), 21 (disturbance by public), 22 (filming), 23 (committees), and 28 (interpretation of rules of procedure).
The Regulations provide that all Members of the Board and any subcommittee may vote unless the council directs otherwise following consultation with the Board.

AREAS COVERED BY HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

To provide strategic and organisational leadership in developing the
Health and Wellbeing Strategy vision for health, adult and children's social care

To assess the needs of the local population and lead the statutory Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Ensure that all relevant partners have regard to the JHWS and JSNA when exercising commissioning functions

Develop solutions to complex challenges outlined in the JSNA and JHWBS

To promote integration and partnership across areas, including through promoting joined up commissioning plans across the NHS, social care and public health;

To support joint commissioning and pooled budget arrangements, where all parties agree this makes sense;

Partners will work together to jointly agree the best use of resources, their mobilisation and coordination to deliver agreed priorities.

Review performance against key outcome indicators and be collectively accountable for outcomes and targets specific to performance frameworks within the NHS, Local Authority and Public Health.

Individual cases will not be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership for 2013/2014 is:

Role / Position	Name	Substitute
Chair –Leader of the Council	Cllr Bell	**Any Councillor as per the constitution**
Vice Chair- The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health	Cllr Walker	
The Portfolio Holder for Childrens Services	Cllr Anand	
The Shadow Member for Health and Adult Services	Cllr Stafford	
The Executive Director of Children and Adults (in his capacity as the council's statutory director of adult social services and director of children's services)	David Archibald	Stephen Day
The Director of Public Health	Dr Jackie Chin	Dr Bal Kaur
A representative of the Local Healthwatch organisation	Carmel Cahill	
Chair of the clinical commissioning group	Dr Mohini Parmar	
Vice Chair of the clinical commissioning group	Dr Raj Chandok	
Accountable Officer clinical commissioning group	Rob Larkman	
Acting CEO The North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	David McVittie	
Chief Executive West London Mental Health Trust	Steve Shrubb	
Acting Deputy CEO The North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	Dr William Lynn	
Representative of Ealing Community Network	Andy Roper	Antony Beswick - Smith
A representative of the NHS Commissioning Board –NHS England (when required)	Alex Gordon	Karen Clinton

PARTNER INVOLVEMENT IN THE WORK OF THE BOARD

The Health and Wellbeing Reference Group which brings together key partners to inform the strategy, decisions, work and performance management arrangements of the HWB.
The following Partnership Boards will also perform a consultative and advisory role:

.Learning Disability Partnership Board

Older Persons/Long Term Conditions Partnership Board

Mental Health Partnership Board

Safeguarding Adults' Partnership Board

Carers Partnership Board

Drug and Alcohol Task Group

Children and Young People Board

OTHER EXTERNAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE WORK OF THE BOARD

All meetings will be held in public and there is always seating available for observers. Participation in the meeting is entirely at the discretion of the Chair and members of the public have no speaking rights.
However if there was a particular issue where they wanted to make a contribution they should contact the committee administrator well in advance of the meeting.

KEY CONTACTS

- Corporate Board – Chief Executive and Executive Directors
- Cabinet
- Shadow Cabinet
- Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Officer support for the Health & Well–Being Board

Committee administrator
Laurie Lyle Lylel@ealing.gov.uk 0208 825 7380

Head of Scrutiny & Committees
Keith Fraser fraserk@ealing.gov.uk 0208 825 7497

July 2013

Appendix 2

Type	Activity
Young HWB	HWB membership, governance, operational structures, scheme of delegation and mechanisms for engaging partners are clear, transparent and accessible to the public. Partners are clear about their individual and collective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. The HWB understands its accountabilities in relation to other partnerships. HWB accountabilities are incorporated into partner governance arrangements The HWB has dedicated and skilful officer support, available to all members of the HWB. The HWB has an agreed set of outcome measures, matched to its priorities. Local Healthwatch is empowered to act as an independent and effective voice for users, communities and the public. The relationship between scrutiny and external regulators is agreed and an initial effectiveness review has been completed.
Established HWB	A clear framework exists for deciding on contentious issues. Decisions of the HWB are accepted and acted on by all member organisations. HWB partners are able to have honest discussions about budgets and financial positions. The HWB invites peer scrutiny and works constructively with regulators and scrutiny bodies. The HWB reviews itself regularly against benchmarks and adapts plans as necessary. The HWB receives regular and timely updates on progress against indicators and takes corrective action if necessary. The HWB can demonstrate it has considered and acted upon the views of local people, feedback obtained from the community and evaluation of citizen experience. The HWB seeks assurance on progress towards integrated care

Type	Activity
Mature HWB	The wider system understands how the HWB and related structures operate. Reporting and governance is evaluated across partners and streamlined where appropriate. Systems are in place to ensure decisions result in direct action across the partnership. Resources are pooled where appropriate, whether in back office functions or integrated commissioning, with good governance. Barriers to achieving priorities are identified and reviewed, and plans are in place to overcome/minimise these. The HWB regularly demonstrates and communicates its achievements of outcomes. Whole system safeguarding mechanisms are in place, including accountabilities.
Exemplar HWB	Integrated decision making, commissioning and governance are the 'norm' for the HWB. The HWB has an integrated 'whole system' (rather than individual organisation measures) outcomes framework of high level indicators, supported by a 'dashboard' across the health and wellbeing system. Budget planning is open and resources are directed to support agreed priorities and improvements forlocal communities. Risk sharing agreement exists between the LA, CCGs and other relevant partners.

Extract from LGA HWB Improvement Tool – Page 7 "Governance, Risk sharing and assurance of outcomes.

www.ealing.gov.uk	**Report to Scrutiny**
	Item Number: 8

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No

Subject of Report:	Panel Operations in 2013/2014
Meeting:	Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance 26 September 2013
Service Report Author:	Harjeet Bains Scrutiny Review Officer bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120
Scrutiny Officer:	Harjeet Bains Scrutiny Review Officer bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120
Cabinet Responsibility:	Councillor Julian Bell (Leader of the Council and Policy Overview Portfolio)
Director Responsibility:	Helen Harris Director of Legal and Democratic Services harrish@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 8159
Brief:	To consider feedback on Council Consultations and agree the agenda items and actions (including external engagements and planned visits) for the next meeting.
Recommendations:	The Panel is asked to consider the Panel Member feedback and approve the agenda items and actions for the next meeting on 28 November 2013.

1. Panel Operations in 2013/2014

Councillor Feedback on Council Consultations

1.1 The Panel Members were asked to undertake a small exercise in reviewing the Consultations Section (http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations) of the Council's website and provide feedback of their findings.

1.2 The written feedback provided to the Scrutiny Review Officer as at Friday 13 September 2013 has been included in ***Appendix 1*** to this report.

1.3 The Chair is asked to invite any further verbal feedback from Panel Members.

1.4 The Panel is asked to consider all the feedback presented and make recommendations for further improvements accordingly.

Updated Work Programme

1.5 The Updated Work Programme is attached as ***Appendix 2*** to this report for the Panel's consideration and agreement.

1.6 The forward plan identifies topics to be addressed at each meeting. It is a rolling programme of work that will be amended throughout the period. Items can be addressed as and when they arise or come to the attention of the Panel.

1.7 An updated Work Programme is presented at each Panel meeting. This allows the Panel, officers and others to know well in advance the topics of enquiry that will be addressed throughout the year; schedule items into the Work Programme accordingly and track the progress of issues.

External Engagement

1.8 The Panel is asked to consider and agree how else they would like to engage local people and other key stakeholders in the next main topic for consideration, ***Neighbourhood Governance****.*

1.9 With the agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair, the Scrutiny Review Officer has presently sought views on Ward Forums from:

- all the Council's Elected Members (by email);
- Panel Members on their visits to Ward Forum meetings within the borough (other than their own) and those of other Local Authorities (by email and Visit Feedback Form);
- the attendees of Ward Forum meetings (by email through the Neighbourhood Coordinators Team using the Ward Forums mailings list);
- publicising in the Council's Around Ealing magazine and Community Websites – W3, Ealing Today and Ealing Community Network.

1.10 The Panel is asked to suggest any other ways in which they wish to seek views on neighbourhood governance.

Guidance on Selecting Topics

1.11 General guidance on selecting a scrutiny topic is that it should be:

- specific (there is a clear remit/question to answer);
- achievable (in the time given and the resources available);
- likely to generate productive outcomes;
- timely and relevant (a community or Council priority); and
- of public interest.

1.12 The Panel is asked to consider and agree the agenda items and actions for the next meeting on 28 November 2013.

2. Legal Implications

2.1 The general scrutiny functions and powers are set out in the Council Constitution.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Support to the Scrutiny Panel is contained within the allocated budget. Value for money will come from having appropriate agenda items on the Work Programme that will help the Panel to achieve the key expected outcomes.

4. Other Implications

4.1 There are no other implications arising.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Ealing Council's Constitution, available at http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200892/decision_making/597/council_constitution

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Terms of Reference, Work Programme, Agendas, Minutes and Reports available at http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/36/Default.aspx

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Agendas, Minutes and Reports, available at http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/34/Default.aspx

For information about Scrutiny in Ealing, including meeting dates and work programmes, go to:
http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200892/decision_making/344/scrutiny
Current agendas and reports are available at
http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees.aspx

Report Consultation

Name of Consultee	*Department*	*Date Sent to Consultee*	*Date Response Received from Consultee*	*Comments Appear in Report Para*
Internal				
Keith Fraser	Head of Scrutiny and Committees	16.09.13		
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	N/A		
Jenny Jones	Head of Finance	N/A		
Cllr Anthony Young	Panel Chair	15.08.13		
Cllr Yoel Gordon	Panel Vice Chair	15.08.13		
External				
None				

Report History

Decision Type:		***Urgency item?***	
Non-key Decision		No	
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	***Date Report Drafted:***	***Report Deadline:***	***Date Report Sent:***
N/A	06.08.13	17.09.13	16.09.13
Report No.:	***Report Author and Contact for Queries:***		
	Harjeet Bains Scrutiny Review Officer Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk Tel: 020-8825 7120		

Appendix 1

Councillor Feedback on Council Consultations

Panel Member		***Comments***
1.	Cllr Ann Chapman	Reasonably easy to locate although no reference to consultations on LBE home page – by using a-z of services, consultations listed under 'C' and then offers options of looking at past or current consultations. Individual consultations have introduction and then survey to complete. Surveys are clear and easy to complete. Content of surveys not brilliant in all cases. This is also an issue for paper based surveys – councillors have contributed considerable ideas to for example, CPZ and LIP paper consultations in the past to refine officers' initial suggestions. Not always clear what stage in the process the consultation relates to and what, if any, impact any responses will have in formulating policy or influencing decision making. For example, current LIP consultation (which follows earlier detailed local consultations) just asks for general (free text) feedback. How would this be analysed/used? Listed buildings register survey is very brief and again non-specific. Questions: – why does LBE consult and does our expectation of the process match that of residents? – what is the best medium for successful engagement? – is a conventional webpage enough or should other media such as Facebook be used? – how do residents get to know about consultations and when they are 'active'? – what response rate does the Council get to online consultations?
2.	Cllr John Gallagher	I have just used the link. The content is as exciting as paint drying. When I clicked the pages previous consultations did not come up and the residents' survey took a long time. It was all taking a long time to come up. I doubt most people will bother. I am certainly not going to look for a questionnaire taking so long with the introduction.

Appendix 2

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - 2013/2014 Governance

Work Programme

Item No.	Item Details	Brief/Comments
Meeting 1 - Tuesday 9 July 2013		
1	Panel Operations in 2013/2014 *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris/Scrutiny Review Officer - Harjeet Bains)*	To consider and agree the Terms of Reference for the Panel (including co-option arrangements and external engagement). To consider, plan and agree the agenda items for all the Panel meetings in the year including additional visits.
2	An Overview on the Council's Current Governance Arrangements (including the quasi-judicial elements) and the Implications of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of Governance *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris)*	To consider the current governance arrangements of the Council and the implications of the Localism Act 2011 and identify any areas for further review at future meetings.
3	Governance Arrangements in Local Authorities - An External Perspective *(Presentation by Local Government Association - Ed Hammond, Research and Information Manager, Centre for Public Scrutiny)*	The presentation to provide an external perspective on governance arrangements in local authorities. Useful Background Publications for circulation to Panel Members: - Changing Governance Arrangements (Centre for Public Scrutiny - Policy Briefing 4, December 2010) - Musical Chairs (Centre for Public Scrutiny - Practical issues for local authorities in moving to a committee system) plus two Appendices: 1. Showing the different governance options on a spectrum. 2. The case study authorities in detail Available at www.cfps.org.uk/committee-system.

Item No.	***Item Details***	***Brief/Comments***
4	Scrutiny Function *(Head of Scrutiny and Committees - Keith Fraser)*	To review the current governance arrangements of the function and make recommendations accordingly.
Meeting 2 - Thursday 26 September 2013		
1	Public Engagement (including Petitions, Community/Councillor Calls for Action, Consultations, etc.) *(Head of Scrutiny and Committees - Keith Fraser/ Research and Consultation Manager - Rajiv Ahlawat)*	To review how the Council currently engages with the local community and make proposals for further improvements accordingly. *This item is also being covered in the interviews of key Councillors and Officers that are presently being conducted by the Chair and Vice Chair on the Council's current governance arrangements and future direction of governance.* *In addition, the Panel Members have been asked to undertake a small exercise in reviewing the Consultations Section of the Council's website and provide feedback on their findings.*
2	Health and Wellbeing Board *(Acting Director of Public Health - Bal Kaur/Head of Scrutiny and Committees - Keith Fraser)*	To review the current governance arrangements of the Board in conjunction with the role of the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel and make recommendations accordingly.
3	Updated Work Programme for Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - 2013/2014: Governance *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris/Scrutiny Review Officer - Harjeet Bains)*	To consider and agree the agenda items for the next meeting of the Panel.
Meeting 3 - Thursday 28 November 2013		
1	Neighbourhood Governance *(Executive Support Manager - Anita Hamilton)*	To review and make recommendations on the neighbourhood governance in the borough. *As part of this review, actively seek the views of the local community and visit different neighbourhood ward forum meetings both within and outside the borough.*
2		

Item No.	***Item Details***	***Brief/Comments***
3	Updated Work Programme for Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - 2013/2014: Governance *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris/Scrutiny Review Officer - Harjeet Bains)*	To consider and agree the agenda items for the next meeting of the Panel.
Meeting 4 - Thursday 6 February 2014		
1	Cabinet and Council *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris/Head of Scrutiny and Committees - Keith Fraser)*	To review in detail the current governance arrangements of these functions and make recommendations accordingly.
2		
3	Panel to Draw Conclusions and Make Recommendations for inclusion in their Final Report *(Chair - Cllr Anthony Young/ Vice Chair - Cllr Yoel Gordon)*	To consider all the information/knowledge gathered during the course of the year to draw conclusions and make recommendations for inclusion in the Final Report.
4	Updated Work Programme for Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - 2013/2014: Governance *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris/Scrutiny Review Officer - Harjeet Bains)*	To consider and agree the agenda items for the next meeting of the Panel.
Meeting 5 - Thursday 3 April 2014		
1		
2	Draft Final Report of Scrutiny Review Panel 1 - 2013/2014: Governance *(Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Helen Harris/Scrutiny Review Officer - Harjeet Bains)*	To consider and agree, with any amendments, the Panel's final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix 2

Item No.	Item Details	Brief/Comments
Planned Visits		***Comments***
1	Neighbourhood Ward Forums in the London Borough of Ealing	The Panel Members have been provided with the Meetings Timetable for all Ward Forum meetings and asked to attend the Autumn round of meetings outside of their own Wards.
2	Isleworth and Brentford Area Forum Meetings in London Borough of Hounslow	To be held at 7.30pm in the Brentford Free Church, Boston Manor Road (Half Acre), Brentford, Middlesex, TW8 8DW on ***Thursday 19 September*** and ***Thursday 21 November 2013***.
3	Brent Connects Area Forums in London Borough of Brent	***Brent Connects Harlesden*** 7.00pm on Tuesday 15 October 2013 in Tavistock Hall, Tavistock Road (next to Burger King drive-thru), Harlesden, NW10. ***Brent Connects Kilburn and Kensal*** 7.00pm on Tuesday 1 October 2013 in Kensal Rise Primary School Hall, Harvist Road, Kilburn, NW6. ***Brent Connects Kingsbury and Kenton*** 7.00pm on Tuesday 22 October 2013 in Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9. ***Brent Connects Wembley*** 7.00pm on Wednesday 2 October 2013 in Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9. ***Brent Connects Willesden*** 7.00pm on Wednesday 16 October 2013 in College of North West London, Denzil Road, Willesden, NW10.
4		
5		
6		