

**Proposed Consultation for Core Strategy Submission Document**

Agenda Item 14

**Portfolio Area:** Cllr Harley Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Culture

**Report Presented by:** Eleanor Dash Planning Policy Manager

**Background Papers:** The Core Strategy  
**Corporate Implications:** Please refer to table at end of report.

**Options:** 1. To approve the consultation strategy as set out below.

2. Not to approve the consultation strategy.

**Risks:** The Core Strategy may not be found 'sound' if appropriate public consultation has not been undertaken.

**Executive Summary**

There will be public consultation on the Core Strategy for 6 weeks between 26<sup>th</sup> April and the 4<sup>th</sup> June. Notification of the consultation will be sent to all interested parties and the document will be available to view on the website and at all libraries within the District. The Council is also proposing two displays at Witham and Braintree (which will not be staffed).

**Decision**

To approve the consultation arrangements set out in this report.

1. This is the final stage of public consultation on the Core Strategy before the document is submitted to the Secretary of State and subject to a public hearing by an independent Planning Inspector. At this stage the consultation process is different from previous events: The Council may decide to make changes in response to representations. However, all the representations made at this stage of the process will be submitted alongside the Core Strategy and the supporting evidence for the Inspector to read and make a judgement on.

2. The draft document has already been sent to key stakeholders who have provided comments, which have been taken into account in this final version of the Core Strategy. Following the approval of the Submission Draft by this Panel, it is proposed that the document is released for a 6 week public consultation period between April 26<sup>th</sup> and June 4<sup>th</sup> 2010. Representations made during the consultation are expected to be reported to the LDF Panel in June and July with submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State

in August. (This timetable may vary if it is necessary to publicise further changes to the Core Strategy.)

3. The Core Strategy and SA/SEA, together with all the evidence base documents, will be available on the Council's website. In addition hard copies of the full document will be made available to view at Causeway House, Braintree, The Centre, Halstead and at all the libraries within the District. A display of the Core Strategy proposals will also be available at Witham library and in Braintree (At various times at Causeway House or the library).

4. Notification of the consultation will be sent to;

- All town and parish councils in the District.
- Statutory consultees including Essex County Council, Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency.
- Neighbouring Parish and District Councils.
- Members of the public, agents, developers and other organisations on the Council's contact list who have expressed an interest in being kept informed on the LDF process, or have responded to previous consultations.

In addition, a notice will be published in the Braintree and Witham Times and the consultation will be publicised on the Council's website.

5. It is intended that wherever possible the Core Strategy will be distributed electronically, for example by sending out copies on CD. This will help to reduce costs in printing and postage and save paper. However, hard copies of the document will be available if requested by Town and Parish Councils and Statutory consultees.

6. A summary leaflet has been produced which includes a brief overview of the document and details of how to respond. This will be available electronically on the website and displayed in libraries and at Causeway House. Witham Town Council and Rivenhall Parish Council have asked for copies of this leaflet and response form, which they can distribute to their residents in areas affected by major growth.

7. The Council will be encouraging all representations to be made via the Limehouse online consultation system, where possible and this will be promoted on the website and within the leaflet and displays. However, written and email responses will also be accepted and the form of those will mirror that of the Limehouse system. The Planning Inspectorate has produced a template response form for this stage of the consultation, which will be used, together with a monitoring form. The response form will be available to download or submit via email on the website and in hard copy.

8. It is important that wherever possible consultees use the response form, as the grounds for objection are limited to whether the document is legally compliant and meets the tests of soundness. A guidance note which includes details of the criteria used to assess 'soundness' and legal compliance has been produced and will be distributed with the response form for reference.

<b>Corporate Implications</b>			
<b>Financial:</b>	Printing, display and distribution costs will need to meet from existing planning policy budgets.		
<b>Legal:</b>	LDF Planning Policy Guidance and Regulations		
<b>Equalities &amp; Diversity:</b>	The information will be available in large print or in alternative formats if requested.		
<b>Customer Impact:</b>			
<b>Environment &amp; Climate Change:</b>	Distribution of the Core Strategy electronically will reduce the amount of paper required.		
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Local Committees		Partners
	Public		Staff
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No		
<b>Public/Private Report:</b>	Public		
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Emma Boaler		
<b>Designation:</b>	Planning Policy Officer		
<b>Ext No:</b>	2511		
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:emma.boaler@braintree.gov.uk">emma.boaler@braintree.gov.uk</a>		