corporate consultation strategy

May 2004

CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Contents

Consultation is rapidly becoming a core requirement for local authorities and is a key component of the Local Government Act 2000, Best Value Reviews and Comprehensive Performance Assessment. But rather than being treated as a duty, consultation is beginning to be seen as an opportunity to work with communities and tailor services to meet specific, identifiable needs.

With this approach in mind, it is crucial to ensure that there is a joined-up, coordinated approach to consultation at Cheltenham Borough Council. Appropriate use of methods and techniques is the key to this consultation strategy. The decision to use certain techniques over others must be based on how appropriate they are according to each individual circumstance. It is also crucial to ensure any technique will at the very least match the level of expectation placed on it.

Thinking about consultation in these terms can ensure that each division should have the freedom to analyse each potential exercise and decide who is to be consulted and about what, and the right approach and methods to use. This level of autonomy is important to maintain in a diverse organisation like Cheltenham Borough Council.

Note
The consultation strategy itself contains the key aims, priorities and principles to be adopted in carrying out an effective consultation exercise. The Consultation Toolkit details some of the techniques and methods available, key audience groups and recommended techniques for each. The toolkit is the practical document that can be used in divisional consultation exercises.

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2.1 What is consultation?

There are several definitions of consultation that exist, but perhaps the simplest and most straightforward is that put forward in the Audit Commission's *Listen Up!* paper:

a process of dialogue that leads to a decision

This sums up neatly the basic premise of any effective consultation exercise. The use of the term 'dialogue' implies a continual exchange of views and information that is ongoing and fluid, and this is exactly what any consultation exercise should involve. It also suggests the involvement of at least two parties in a two-way process of sharing knowledge and opinions.

Another merit of this definition is that it also relates consultation very closely to decision-making. It should be the aim of any consultation exercise to work towards informing a decision that will affect the lives of those consulted. Any consultation that is carried out without considering this aim could merely waste time and resources.

But consultation is a very broad term and even basic feedback mechanisms can satisfy the aim of informing decisions. There is not always a need to carry out specific proactive exercises. Methods such as service feedback forms can help shape the delivery of future services during periodical reviews.

It is important to clarify that consultation must not be viewed as a threat to officer or member authority. In fact it can complement this authority by providing a larger range of options and ensuring decisions are as representative as possible of the views of the local community. The definition above states that it 'leads to a decision', and this is a crucial point – the outcomes of consultation need careful analysis and it is here where the officer or member roles become vital to the success of the exercise.

Clearly there are a large number of factors for officers and members to consider throughout the decision-making process, and the outcome of a consultation exercise is just one of these factors – but a very important one.

2.2 Why consult?

2.2.1 Statutory obligation
The statutory requirement to consult is becoming more and more important with the onset of Best Value and Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Local authorities now have an obligation to 'consult and seek the participation of such persons as they consider appropriate' in formulating strategies to promote the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of a local area[1]. But authorities are becoming increasingly aware of the value of consultation, seeing it as an opportunity rather than simply a duty. This is something Cheltenham Borough Council recognises and this strategy develops this theme.

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[1] Local Government Act (2000), Part I, Section 3 (1)

2.2.2 Local democracy

If done effectively, consultation can be a process that actively involves internal and external stakeholders in the planning and implementation of local services and corporate strategies. This will make them more accountable and align service-delivery more closely to what the service-users want. In the longer term this should see an increase in local democracy, with positive results for the delivery of services and the image of the council.

2.2.3 Ideas and innovation

Furthermore, if consultees are given adequate information and encouraged to become more involved in the decision-making process at an early stage, a number of options may emerge from the collective local expertise that are fresh, innovative and practical, having approached the issue from a different perspective.

2.2.4 Cost efficiency

Any effective consultation exercise can produce significant financial savings in terms of service delivery as services can be closely tailored to meeting specific, identifiable needs. This should help ensure a high take-up of services and increased revenue.

2.2.5 Other potential benefits

If done diligently and efficiently there are a host of benefits to consultation:

> ► **Encouraging our stakeholders to become more fully involved in the council's decision-making process**
>
> ► **Assisting decision-making about policies, priorities and strategies;**
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> ► **Targeting services more closely to what people want, avoiding what they do not want – cost efficiency;**
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> ► **Increasing responsiveness to need;**
>
> ► **Improved take-up of services;**
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> ► **Potential problems with changes to services can be identified early;**
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> ► **Improving local democracy;**
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> ► **Strengthening the council's role in community leadership;**
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> ► **Improving the council image;**
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> ► **Improving community understanding of council work;**
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> ► **Generating new ideas;**
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> ► **Testing out proposed ideas before implementing them;**
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> ► **Planning, providing and monitoring quality of performance;**
>
> ► **Promoting sustainability in improving existing services and introducing new ones; and**
>
> ► **Helping the community to contribute to meeting their own challenges**

2.3 Who to consult?

There are many stakeholder groups that can be consulted over specific issues, some of whom are harder to reach than others.

2.3.1 Targeting

One of the most crucial points in any exercise is to tailor the approach and methods used towards the target audience. Identifying who is to be consulted is very important and can have a strong influence over the methods and approach adopted.

Achieving a blend of innovation and effectiveness is the key to selecting consultation techniques, but a major factor lies in a local authority having a realistic working knowledge of the specific character of its stakeholders.

2.3.2 Stakeholder categories

Below are some of the main categories of stakeholder that may be consulted (the list is also in the *Consultation Toolkit*, with some suggested methods for inclusion).

▶ **Residents**
▶ **Council tax payers**
▶ **Service users**
▶ **Private sector organisations**
▶ **Public sector organisations**
▶ **Voluntary sector organisations**
▶ **Community partners**
▶ **Other partnerships**
▶ **Schools**
▶ **Neighbourhood groups**
▶ **Faith/cultural groups**
▶ **Council staff**
▶ **Councillors**
▶ **Other councils**

2.3.3 Hard-to-reach groups

An argument often levelled at consultation is that it gives too much of a say to an unrepresentative vocal minority. There are grains of truth in this view, and this can be demonstrated by the fact that some groups are easier to consult than others. Barriers such as age, language, geographical isolation, time and a general indifference need to be overcome through careful use of methods and approaches.

These stakeholder groups are bundled together under the heading *hard-to-reach* groups. Overall, this term is pretty accurate – it takes considerable more initiative, imagination and effort to effectively and inclusively consult with certain community groups – but the term can perhaps imply that the fault lies with these communities.

This is inaccurate. The term describes a situation which is characterised by a lack of understanding or cohesion, and it is this that must be overcome.

The following is a list of the common hard-to-reach groups. A fuller account is provided in the *Consultation Toolkit* which includes some suggested methods for including these groups and also some existing representative groups in Cheltenham.

- ▶ **Young people**
- ▶ **Older people**
- ▶ **Disabled people**
- ▶ **Black and minority ethnic groups**
- ▶ **People with caring responsibilities**
- ▶ **Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community**
- ▶ **Socially-excluded groups**
- ▶ **Homeless people**
- ▶ **Travellers**
- ▶ **Non-users of council services**

Cheltenham has a number of representative bodies for these groups in existence. However, the longer-term future of some of these organisations is not secure and any consultation exercise needs to account for this.

It is very important that procedures are in place to consult these groups and to encourage them to participate in decision-making processes. They may represent relative minorities, but are all users of different services. Many also have specific needs that would not otherwise be identified and these have to be addressed. Furthermore, while each group individually only forms a minority of the population, collectively they form a significant part. And as one of the council's values is 'Equality of opportunity for all', it is essential that committed attempts are made to reach these hard-to-reach groups.

2.3.4 Promoting consultation

It is vital that consultation exercises are promoted effectively to increase awareness and encourage participation, and also to demonstrate that the council is listening to people's views. Promoting both the consultation and the results should form part of the consultation planning process.

A variety of media is available for this purpose and can include *The Clarion*, local newspapers and radio and promotional material.[2] In the case of targeting specific audiences by providing material in a variety of languages, via community groups or through business or tenant's associations can also be highly effective.

The reasons for the consultation and the options on offer need to be communicated clearly so that public expectation remains informed and realistic. A brief idea as to the process and timescales should also be included along with how people can become involved.

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[2] A fuller list of communication methods currently used by Cheltenham Borough Council is available in the Internal and External Communication Strategies. See the Communications Manager for more details.

2.4   Key principles

There are five key principles which should underpin any consultation exercise:

COMPETENCE

Careful consideration and planning is required to prevent ineffective, resource-intensive exercises. Both the design and implementation of exercises and how best to engage the target audience need to be carefully considered.

RELEVANCE

Consultation must be seen as being relevant to decision-making through evidence that the results are used to influence the outcomes. This must be made clear to consultees and feedback is important.

INCLUSION

Certain audience groups are easier to consult with than others, but it is this scenario that produces the risk of engaging an unrepresentative sample. Careful planning and examination of approach and methods are needed to engage the wider community.

STRUCTURE

It is important from both a financial and a strategic point of view not to allow any exercise to get out of hand. A structured approach that realistically plans every stage of the exercise from the start needs to be developed and adhered to.

USE OF RESULTS

However well an exercise is planned and implemented, the results obtained must be taken into consideration and linked to the decision-making process. How the results are to be used should be included in the planning stage and fed back to consultees.

2.5   Timescales

There is no hard or fast rule about the setting of deadlines or timescales, but it is a key consideration and links in closely with the accessibility of relevant information. Any deadline that is set applies with immediate effect, and consultees need to be able to access the information they need easily and quickly. This becomes particularly relevant in exercises where consultation is invited rather than sent directly to consultees.

It is also useful to consider the type of consultation that is being carried out and the subject matter and format. For internal written consultation, a minimum of four weeks is good practice for a deadline, and if the consultation involves external parties this may have to be increased to eight or twelve weeks.

2.6   Feedback

One of the main shortcomings of an effective consultation exercise is the failure to adequately feed the outcomes and results back to the consultees. Feedback is an integral part of any exercise and should be incorporated into the planning stages. The stakeholders who took time to participate or respond to consultation events should be informed how their involvement affected the decision:

Whilst we can easily track back decisions and show that we have been listening to what people want we frequently forget to report back to those same groups. They can too easily be left in the dark – and they notice.[3]

It may be useful to consider the following:

→ **Which findings do not require any action?**
  (e.g. it is a low priority or the results are currently very good)

→ **Which things cannot be changed in the short-term?**
  (how will this be communicated?)

→ **Which results require further communication?**
  (clarification of what, how, who or where?)

→ **Which results highlight the need for action?**
  (what are the next steps?)

The methods used to feedback will also depend largely on the stakeholder group that is identified. As with choosing the correct method to consult in the first place, it is also important to select the correct method to feed the results back, and again finding the right blend of methods will ensure the best possible levels of inclusion.[4]

The scope of the feedback can also be tailored to meet the levels of interest of different groups. Particularly with controversial issues, feedback can just be given on the outcome of certain topics. What is clear it that an open account of the findings and related outcomes will be valued by consultees, even if they are not what was desired or if a decision will not be reached for some time.

Results must also be published honestly and not only highlight what the council has done well, but also where we can look to improve. This will build public confidence and should encourage greater public participation in future events. In such a case where the results may not be flattering, contextualising them may help to give a fuller picture as to the reasons behind it.

> These principles and their ingredients represent the main areas of good practice that should be closely adhered to in order to achieve an effective consultation exercise. The variety of consultation exercises that are possible means that not all of the principles will be as obvious or appropriate as others, but they should all be considered to some extent. The information concerning timescales and feedback should also be carefully considered and if done correctly should help ensure any exercise is as effective as possible.

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[3] 'Open all ears', Stewart Hutton, *Policy: Reaching the hard to reach*, Winter 2002, page 1
[4] A full list of communication methods that can be used to give feedback is available in the Internal and External Communication Strategies. See the Communications Manager for more details.

3.1 The need for a strategic approach

To ensure the best use is made of available resources, it is important to coordinate consultation activities on a corporate scale. Cheltenham Borough Council is too small an authority to have dedicated consultation staff in each division, or even corporate-wide, and so the issue of coordination becomes central to achieving effective consultation.

Taking a strategic approach should make sure that consultation exercises are carried out competently and consistently. This would also involve a sharing of knowledge and good practice which in turn will help develop consultation techniques and mechanisms.

Another benefit to a strategic approach is in preventing 'consultation fatigue'. Joint working and communication in consultation exercises should allow a sharing of resources, but also encourage divisions to consult specific groups at the same time. It can even help prevent unnecessary consultation by sharing results that may reduce the need to consult in the first place.

Developing a strategic approach can be done either by building upon existing structures and procedures or by introducing a new corporate system (or through a combination). Generally the situation at Cheltenham Borough Council is such that the procedures that are in place at present, although undocumented, are sufficient for the purposes for which they are carried out – in other words they are appropriate. Therefore the onus will be on improving communication links between divisions and building upon these existing procedures.

3.2 Strategic aim

To ensure that consultation activities carried out by Cheltenham Borough Council engage our communities in an appropriate, efficient and effective way.

The term 'engage' is a positive one and supports the need to carry out ongoing dialogue with stakeholders that will produce informed, practical results. The phrase 'appropriate and effective' is also crucial to any consultation exercise and an essential part of the planning process.

3.3 Strategic objectives

a) IMPROVING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

a) 1   The approach to consultation should encompass a redistribution of power through negotiation with communities and transparent feedback of results, whilst reserving the power of Cheltenham Borough Council to judge the feasibility or legitimacy of any proposal.

a) 2   To involve *hard-to-reach* groups, full use should be made of the various community groups in the town and the county to act as representatives of

these certain sections of society. This will be of great value in achieving optimum inclusion.

a) 3   Consultation will also need to be structured and phrased in such a way that tailors it to each specific audience. The audience should be assured that their views will be considered in influencing the decision-making, how the results obtained will achieve this end, and that the opinions expressed will have a visible impact on the proposal.

Actions:

In recognition of the roles of the community fora in representing hard to reach groups in Cheltenham, we will work with them to develop consultation processes that meet their needs

We will review the membership of the citizen's panel to ensure that it reflects the diversity of the borough.

In the absence of area committees, we will work with ward councillors to develop effective consultation channels with local residents.

b)   IMPROVING OUR APPROACH

b) 1   Consultation should be seen as an opportunity rather than simply a duty. Any consultation exercises should be diligently planned and be flexible enough to be opened up beyond the limitations of the exercise. Careful monitoring to prevent digression may be needed, but this approach will ensure the proposal's wider context or cross-cutting influences are identified.

b) 2   Corporate measures should be introduced to raise the profile of effective consultation at council level to prevent exercises being carried out with poor planning and little interest from either side. This is a waste of resources and a waste of an opportunity.

b) 3   A central consultation database should be set up that will coordinate exercises, share results and good practice, and ultimately promote effectiveness and cost efficiency.

b) 4   New methods and practices should be embraced and any procedures put into place should remain fluid enough to allow new innovations to be incorporated and used instead of or alongside existing techniques. The importance of striking the correct balance should be remembered.

b) 5   The five key principles – COMPETENCE, RELEVANCE, INCLUSION, STRUCTURE and USE OF RESULTS – should be used as a basic checklist when planning a consultation exercise. To be effective each principle must have been at least considered and ideally visibly demonstrated in the planning stages.

Actions:

We will bring the viewpoint contract back in-house and manage the citizens panel through the purchase of consultation software

We will establish a consultation database

c) IMPROVING HOW WE COMMUNICATE & FEEDBACK

c) 1 The results of consultation should be widely publicised and at the very least communicated to stakeholders who took part in the exercise and/or will be affected by the decision.

c) 2 There should be a clear indication of how the results will be used to inform the decision that is to be made. This should relate back to the information given at the outset of the exercise that states why it is being conducted.

c) 3 It is also advisable to state which ideas and suggestions will not be used and why. This honesty and openness will be appreciated by stakeholders and help people to focus on what is realistically achievable.

Actions:
We will produce a newsletter that will be distributed to all viewpoint members that will summarise the findings of recent consultation exercises

We will use the Clarion

d) IMPROVING OUR EVALUATION – learning from experience

d) 1 It is important for divisions to carry out regular evaluation exercises after consultation. Evaluation should in fact be built into the original planning of the exercise to consider the costs of the exercise and how successfully the aims and expectations were met.

d) 2 Periodic corporate audits against the council's business plan, and using any individual divisional strategies, should be carried out alongside regular divisional evaluations to ensure compliance with good practice is maintained.

d) 3 Evaluation should be honest and open to be of good long term use and to make consultation as relevant and worthwhile as possible in the future.

Actions:
We will carry out periodic evaluations of our consultation exercises

e) BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

e) 1 The Council is required to develop a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) that will set out the policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of documents within the Local Development Framework. There is scope to involve the council fully in signing up to this, as well as involving the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership in the community planning process.

e) 2 This consultation strategy will provide a strategic reference document that will sit under the SCI and remain a useful guide to the principles behind good consultation.

Actions:
We will assist in the preparation of the SCI

We will consult widely on the SCI

We will support the corporate adoption of the SCI

3.4   On what issues will we consult?

In order to make informed decisions and reinvigorate local democracy, the council is committed to consulting its key stakeholders in four main areas:

3.4.1   Key Thematic Strategies
Stakeholders will be consulted on development of key thematic strategies, including:
- Housing investment strategy
- Community cohesion strategy
- Regeneration Framework
- Green Space Strategy

In addition to this will be full participation in agreeing the shape and direction of the community plan and the Local Development Framework. The council will also consult on local projects or issues that affect, or will affect, the lives of those that work or live in the Borough. At this strategic level, consultation on these cross-cutting issues will be done in partnership through the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership.

3.4.2   Corporate Significance
Consultation on these types of issues will encompass statutory consultation and areas of major importance to the Council. This type of consultation will include consultation on services undergoing a Best Value Review, or other type of service review, and the Best Value Satisfaction Surveys. In addition, the Council will also consult annually on its budget proposals.

3.4.3   Services and Improvement
To ensure that the Council achieves continuous improvement, it is necessary to learn the needs and opinions of local people and other stakeholders. The Council will consult service users to plan future service development and improvement. This type of consultation may include internal and external stakeholders to ascertain the levels of satisfaction with services. The Council will also consult with non-service users, to ascertain why they do not use the services, and to find out what changes (if any) would encourage them to use the service.

3.4.4   Proactive Community Engagement
Effective consultation requires an on-going dialogue between councils and the local community. Consultation projects should also recognise the vital role that other organisations play in this dialogue. Such groups, including local residents' associations and youth forums, are also utilised by the Council to ensure effective and meaningful consultation.

3.5   Links to other strategies

3.5.1 *Our future, our choice* – The Community Plan
The community plan makes the statement early on that consultation is 'at the heart of the community planning process'[5]. This is reflected in the amount of consultation that was carried out with stakeholders, with local organisations, with the *Viewpoint* panel, and at area committees. The results of these consultation exercises informed the

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[5] *Our future, our choice*, Cheltenham's Community Plan, page 4.

evolution of the plan from its first draft into the final document. But this does not mark the end of the process. Consultation on the plan will be widespread and ongoing in a bid to keep the plan current and organic.

3.5.2 The Corporate Business Plan

On the back of the emerging community plan came the new business plan, and the decision to consult with both members and employees on the purpose and values, and on the key priorities. Member workshops were held and seven staff sessions, five at the Town Hall and two specific sessions at the depot. Employees were asked to think of three new priorities for the council and three current priorities that could be afforded less emphasis to help focus service delivery effectively. This approach helped create ownership of the plan and was appreciated by staff on the whole.

A similar event to raise awareness of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment inspection was held. The purpose of this event was to inform staff of some of the work that the council was doing that was helping to deliver it's priorities. Speakers from the officer staff gave short 'sound bite' presentations (some using PowerPoint) that got the message across to staff in a concise and informal manner. This approach worked well and was carefully tailored to meet the expectation placed on the exercise.

3.5.3 Communications Strategy

The communications strategy deals with methods and tools that are useful for communicating with staff and members. This has close ties with this strategy as many of the tools can be used for consultation as well.

3.5.4 Compact with the Voluntary and Community Sector

The Compact between the Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in England has some interesting guidelines for consulting with the VCS and consulting in general. It states that consulting with the VCS presents an 'opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on Government policy on behalf of the people and causes they work for'[6]. It makes mention of the specific methods and approaches that can be considered and is a useful reference tool.

3.5.5 Statement of Community Involvement / Local Development Framework

The SCI will set out the Council's policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of Local Development Documents within its Local Development Framework and in making significant development control decisions. The SCI will be drawn up in consultation with key partners, landowners, developers and the local community and will provide a clear public statement enabling all relevant parties to know when and how they will be involved in the preparation of local development documents.

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[6] *Compact – Consultation and Policy Appraisal: a Code of Good Practice*, page 2.

Effective consultation is not an easy thing to achieve. There are obstacles that need to be overcome, some of which can be accounted for and some which cannot. One of the largest obstacles that face any consultation exercise is indifference. If a stakeholder group do not wish to respond to or become involved in an exercise then there is very little that can be done. Incentives can be offered in the form of a competition, but overall if someone does not want to be consulted then that is the bottom line.

In such a situation, communication and feedback becomes very important, as does information provision. Adequate information should be provided at the outset of any exercise to allow stakeholders to make an informed decision as to whether they wish to reply to consultation or not. After the exercise it should then be emphasised that the opportunity to respond was given to all stakeholders.

It should be mentioned that on certain exercises a lack of response from some stakeholders may not be a bad thing. On the more open consultation exercises that are not sent to any specific stakeholder group, it is more useful to receive replies from people who have an interest in the subject or proposal being consulted upon. All responses are valid and should be acknowledged as such, but some responses will be more relevant and appropriate to the decision that is to be made.

This document has provided strategic guidance to ensure any consultation exercise is carried out effectively and for the right reasons. Some of the many principles behind consultation are included to be taken into consideration, particularly in the planning stages. The *Consultation Toolkit*, which complements this strategy, contains some more practical, operational guidance for planning an effective consultation event.

task	timescale	who will be responsible	resources	how will we know when we've been successful
gain cabinet agreement	May 2004	Policy & PR	none	Consultation strategy agreed by cabinet
circulating the consultation strategy and toolkit to all divisions	May/June 2004	Policy & PR	none	Feedback from divisions and from follow-up meetings
review *Viewpoint*	June 2004	Policy & PR	Time	Panel membership reviewed, new consultation system in place, *Viewpoint* relaunched
bring *Viewpoint* panel back in-house	June 2004	Policy & PR	none	Contract reviewed brought back in-house
continue and refine *Viewpoint* newsletter to feed results back to panel members	June 2004 (ongoing)	Policy & PR	No extra resources	Template finalised and newsletter sent regularly
using other media tools to consult and feedback results (e.g. *The News, The Clarion)*	June 2004 (ongoing)	Policy & PR	Time	Regular slots allocated in *The News* and *The Clarion*
purchasing and implementing professional consultation software	June/July 2004	Policy & PR ICT Programme Board	A budget of £8000 has been identified to purchase the software Administration/set up time	Software installed and used Corporate buy-in achieved
developing a corporate consultation calendar	2004	Policy & PR	Set up time	Consultation calendar developed and placed on shared drive

setting up consultation contacts within each division/team	2004	Policy & PR ADs Divisional representatives	Contact time	Database of consultation contacts established
developing a mechanism for divisional consultation contacts to communicate information	2004	Policy & PR Divisional representatives	Set up time	Mechanism established and being used
working with community fora to develop consultation processes that meet their needs	2004	Policy & PR	Time	Consultation processes developed that meet specific community needs
work with ward councillors to develop effective consultation channels with local residents	2004	Policy & PR	Time	Residents' consultation channels established
carrying out periodic evaluations of our consultation exercises	2004 (ongoing)	Policy & PR Divisional representatives	Time	Evaluations carried out in each division/team and fed back to be analysed corporately
assist with the development of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	February 2005	Policy & PR	to be determined	SCI developed
adopt SCI	2005	Policy & PR	to be determined	Approval of SCI by Planning Inspectorate

There are a number of best practice guides and strategies available, many of which helped shape this strategy. Some of them may be useful for specific types of consultation; others have some good generic ideas.

NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND GUIDANCE

'19 ways to reach the hard-to-reach', *Policy: Reaching the hard to reach,* winter 2002

Code of practice on written consultation, Cabinet Office, November 2000

Code of practice on consultation, Cabinet Office (Regulatory Impact Unit), January 2004

Connecting with users and citizens, Audit Commission, 2002

Guidance on community cohesion, LGA/ODPM/Home Office/CRE/The Inter Faith Network

Hear by right – Standards for the active involvement of children and young people, LGA/The National Youth Agency

Listen Up! Effective community consultation, Audit Commission, November 1999

New Council Constitutions: Local Government Act 2000 – Guidance to English Local Authorities, ODPM

New roles for old: Local authority members and partnership working

'Open all ears', *Policy: Reaching the hard to reach*, winter 2002

Parish Plans: Guidance for parish and town councils, The Countryside Agency, March 2003

The Consultation Charter, The Consultation Institute

The Market Research Society Code of Conduct, July 1999

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIES AND DOCUMENTS

Consultation and tenant involvement strategy 2001-2003, Cheltenham Housing (CBH)

'"4 Cs" Strategies: Consult', *Best Value Strategies for the '4 Cs': Consult, Compare, Challenge and Compete*

Internal communications plan

Interim Budget 2003/4 – Consultation, Finance & Asset Management division

Our business plan 2004-2007, November 2003

Our future, our choice, Cheltenham's community plan, October 2003

Sport & Play (Health & Wellbeing) Youth Sports/Activities Project policies and procedures, 2003

CBC CHARTER MARK APPLICATIONS

Development Services (Built Environment) Charter Mark Application, 2001

Engineering Services (Integrated Transport) Charter Mark Application, July 2001

Environmental Health and Licensing (Public Protection) Charter Mark Application

Festivals & Entertainments Charter Mark Application, August 2000

Private Sector Housing (Neighbourhood Regeneration) Charter Mark Application, August 2001

Tourism (Economic Development & Tourism) Charter Mark Application, 2001

STRATEGIES FROM OTHER AUTHORITIES

A Consultation Strategy for Cotswold District Council, April 2001

Corporate Consultation Strategy 2002-2003, Stratford-upon-Avon District Council

Public Consultation Strategy, Bristol City Council, September 2001

Revised Corporate Consultation Strategy, Luton Borough Council, June 2002

Worcester Community Strategy, Worcester Alliance, January