

# POLICY FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

7 OCTOBER 2013

## REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

### CONSULTATION WITH THE PUBLIC ON CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND BUDGET SETTING 2014/15 AND BEYOND

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose suggestions for Member consideration of public consultation approaches and methods regarding budget planning and priorities for 2014/15 and beyond.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **To agree an approach for consultation connected to budget setting and priorities from the options given in 3.5 below.**

#### 3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Every few years the Council carries out public consultation on service and budget proposals to take into account public opinion when deciding budget allocations.

- 3.2 At the June 2013 Meeting of the Business and Strategic Planning Working Group a discussion took place regarding the approach to budget consultation with the public in order to inform the budget setting process for 2014/15 and beyond during which the following points were made:

- Cost of focus groups considered prohibitive given that to be effective and reflect the demographic they would require professional facilitation;
- Preferred medium for consultation via flyers with the Melton Mail and the website;
- In using digital channels care must be taken not to exclude the vulnerable and those without access to respond electronically
- Make more use of the Members' surgery to get key messages across;
- Form of consultation to shift focus and evolve from the budget to the strategic plan priorities and MTFs.
- Refer policy statement to PFA

- 3.3 The Corporate Plan 2011-2015 identifies the Corporate Priorities are due to be reviewed next year. Consultation undertaken now could be taken into account in that process. Consultation could take place now with the public to give a steer on which priorities the public would prioritise given the current economic climate.

- 3.4 The current corporate priorities that will be reviewed next year and be consulted on now are as below:

#### **1 Support people and businesses through the economic downturn**

This relates to improving financial well-being for people and developing initiatives to maximise income for people and businesses.

## **2 Improving the well-being of vulnerable people**

Support Older and young people to live independent lives

## **3 Reduce re-offending and the impact of offending on the community**

Safer Communities through reducing crime and the causes of crime.

## **4 Meet the Economic needs of Borough**

Improving people's skills and qualifications and attracting more businesses to invest in Melton

## **5 Improve quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods**

Tackling anti social behaviour, developing positive activities for young people and improving the physical environment

## **6 Increasing public confidence & pride in neighbourhoods**

Creating a more cleaner and greener place.

## **7 Maximise the potential of Melton Mowbray Town centre**

Promote and market the town to attract more visitors and increase footfall

## **8 Encourage people to take an active role in their communities.**

Encouraging volunteering and supporting the development of social enterprises for services

## **9 Help provide a stock of housing accommodation that meets the needs of the community**

Provide decent homes and increase the supply of affordable housing

## **10 To provide high performing services that are efficient and meet customers' needs**

Well run council that delivers good services that are value for money

3.5 Consultation could be undertaken in several ways. One or more or all options are available:

- On the web site through electronic methods.
- By working with the Community Forum organisers. This as well as other non- web based methods below will help to ensure those who do not have access to or prefer not to engage with on line methods are not excluded.
- In addition to or instead of the community forum approach a consultation meeting specifically on this issue could be organised.
- The 'market stall and / or Councillor Surgery' approach could also be used to encourage the involvement of more people.
- A special edition of the Melton Mail be produced and distributed.
- A Melton Mail 'flyer' could be produced and circulated.

## **4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Any consultation undertaken will feed into the corporate priorities that will influence budget setting 2014/15 and the corporate priorities for the Council. A review of the Corporate plan is planned for 2014/15, which will involve further community consultation, evidence from partners and analysis of local and regional information to develop priorities that capture the needs and aspirations of our community.

**5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The financial implications can be contained within existing budgets for the options given above.

**6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

6.1 There are no direct legal requirements to this report.

**7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY**

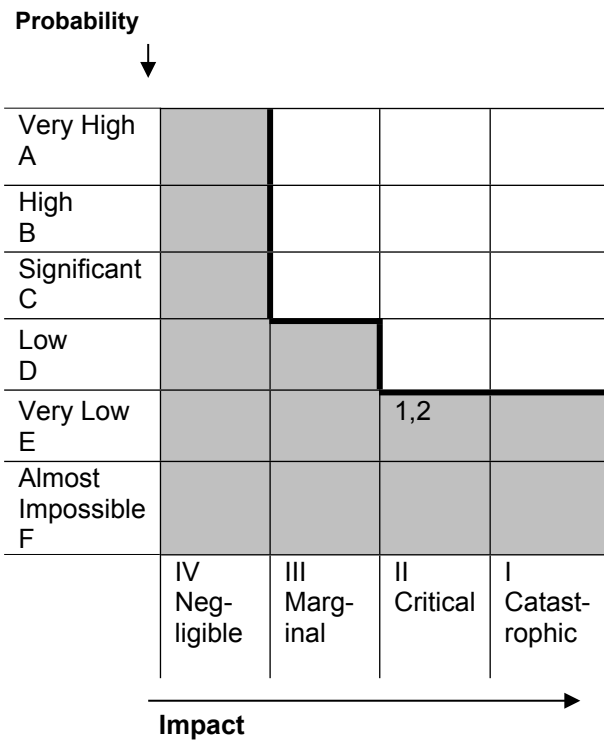
7.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

**8.0 EQUALITIES**

8.1 An EIA will be completed on the approach recommended to identify any potential adverse impact (s) on protected groups.

**9.0 RISKS**

9.1 *To consider and give any Risks related to this report and if there are risks to complete the tables below. If there are no risks identified, then delete the table*



Risk No.	Description
1	The method chosen does not give alternative options to on line facilit
2	Lack of interest/participation from public.

**10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

**11.0 CONSULTATION**

11.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

## 12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

### 12.1 All wards

Contact Officer        Angela Tebbutt

Date:                    25 September 2013.

Appendices :         None

Background Papers:   The Corporate Plan and the minutes of BSWP June

Reference :            X : Committees\pfa/7.10.13