

Consultation Plan

Appendix C

The Council is required to consult its proposed scheme with the public and preceptors. Any new scheme must be in place by 31st January 2013, we have identified the following consultation strategy;

<p>Prepare initial Publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft article for website• Published on website• Draft article for Council newsletter• Council newsletter circulated	<p>The initial stage focused on advising Havering residents and Council Tax payers that central government are ending the current Council Tax Benefit scheme to be replaced by locally designed schemes, subject to reduced funding.</p> <p>It also advised that we would be consulting residents on aspects of the scheme in October.</p> <p>An article was placed on the Havering Council website and posters in Havering Council's public sites and libraries.</p>
<p>Prepare consultation with the Greater London Authority (GLA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise GLA of options/consultation and outcome	<p>One of the requirements placed on local authorities is that we include major preceptors in the consultation process.</p> <p>After Cabinet identified the options to be put up for consultation in their July meeting we consulted with the GLA accordingly.</p> <p>Advice was sought from the Legal and Communications Team as to the detail and extent of the required consultation.</p> <p>The consultation outcome is included in this report to the December cabinet.</p> <p>As a principle, the GLA will be kept informed throughout the new scheme implementation.</p>
<p>Consultation Period for GLA</p>	<p>The consultation ran from July 2012 to November 2012.</p>
<p>September Cabinet approval of draft final scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on GLA consultation outcomes drafted	<p>The outcome of the GLA consultation was reported at the September Cabinet meeting.</p> <p>This report was intended to help inform Cabinet on the final design of the Local Council Tax Support scheme and other changes to Council Tax charging scheme.</p> <p>Cabinet were also be made aware of any new</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report signed off by project team • Report approved by Cabinet 	<p>issues (ICT or financial) which might significantly affect the operation, delivery or integrity of the scheme based on the shortlisted options.</p> <p>The Full Council will then be invited to sign off on the draft scheme to be in place from April 2013</p>
<p>Prepare consultation with residents and affected Persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider & procure appropriate service providers and communications media • Design questionnaire (including consultation on questions with front and back office staff) • Questionnaire signed off 	<p>Once Cabinet approved the draft final scheme to be considered, a consultation document was prepared that allowed residents to comment on aspects of the scheme.</p> <p>The questionnaire was drafted in consultation with the Communications team & Equalities Team to ensure that it was understandable and accessible, ensuring clarity for residents.</p> <p>The consultation process was initially planned as an online exercise whereby residents would be able to take part by visiting the Havering website. Paper copies of the questionnaire were also made available.</p> <p>We will also engaged an external provider to undertake the consultation on Havering's' behalf and to collate and analyse responses to ensure timescales are met.</p>
<p>Consultation Period for residents on agreed draft final scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on website • Meetings with external providers/partners 	<p>The consultation ran for 6 weeks for residents starting 4/10/12 and ending 14/11/12.</p> <p>During this period we also met representatives from Havering's community groups, social landlords, internal staff and voluntary organisations (plus members of the public) and canvassed their thoughts on the final option put forward for consultation.</p>
<p>Option Consultation analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from meetings with external providers • Consultation outcomes published 	<p>During the consultation process, we collated and analysed the responses received to brief members and senior officers of the progress of the consultation process.</p> <p>At the end of the consultation process, a full analysis of the responses received was undertaken. This has been incorporated into a report to Cabinet in December. Once this report has been considered and a decision made by the</p>

	Full Council a further article for residents and Council Tax payers will be drafted advising of the results of the consultation.
December Cabinet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report drafted • Report signed off • Submitted for inclusion on Agenda • Agreed by Cabinet 	Following the completion of the consultation with residents and affected persons, a full report has been submitted for the December Cabinet meeting to Consider the outcomes of the consultation and formally agree the details of the final scheme.
January Full Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report drafted • Report signed off • Submitted for inclusion on Agenda • Agreed by Council 	<p>Following the completion of the consultation with residents and affected persons, a full report will be submitted for the January Full Council meeting to consider the outcomes of the consultation and formally agree the details of the final scheme.</p> <p>Once the design has been ratified we will complete work on drafting the Council Tax Support policy document and the guidance manual and procedures for operational staff.</p>
Final scheme publicity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Articles and press statements • Published on website • Press release to local press 	<p>On confirmation of the scheme design, a detailed article will be drafted and published both on the website and through the local press and other outlets.</p> <p>This will report on the outcome of the consultation process, the additional consideration given by Cabinet and the high level design of the new scheme, including the likely impact on residents.</p>
Contact Customers affected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify affected customers • draft information letter • Issue information letter 	<p>Once the design of the local Council Tax Support scheme has been agreed by the Full Council, we will identify where possible those households affected by the changes, using current Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax data.</p> <p>Each household will be contacted directly and advised of the changes to the level of support they will receive and/or the increases Council Tax payable.</p>