

## Community Outlook Forum



Date	8 September 2005
Venue	Council Offices, Derby Road, Wesham
Committee members	Louis Rigby (Chairman) Susan Fazackerley (Vice-Chairman) Richard Fulford-Brown, Karen Henshaw, Kiran Mulholland, William Thompson, Stephen Wall, Colin Walton
Other Councillors	Tim Ashton
Officers	Dave Joy, Oliver Shimell, Carolyn Whewell, Peter Welsh

### 1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

### 2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Community Outlook Forum meeting held on 29 June 2005 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

### 3. Substitute members

There were no substitute members.

### 4. Review of outside bodies

Carolyn Whewell (Overview & Scrutiny Officer) informed members that the aim of this review was to evaluate the value to the Council, of Councillor representation on outside bodies.

The Corporate Plan outlined the key priorities for 2005/2006. One of the Council's "high" priorities this financial year was for Annual reports to be submitted to the Community Outlook Forum by all members representing Fylde Borough Council on external bodies.

The Scrutiny Management Board had advised that the Community Outlook Forum should undertake a light touch review.

There were several important issues members needed to consider in the reviews, most notably, the benefits brought to the Council and the outside body by councillor

representation on the body. Other issues to be considered were; the type of outside body and any legal implications for the Council, how much input was required from the Council and what criteria we used to define defunct partnerships and whether continued representation on these bodies was necessary.

Memberships of some outside bodies were a given statutory requirement therefore these needed to be reviewed differently to the rest.

Members went on to consider the most appropriate methods to conduct the review.

Following consideration the Forum RESOLVED for the annual reports to be submitted in the form of a questionnaire and that members should complete a questionnaire for each body on which they sat. It was also agreed that an additional questionnaire be sent to each outside body. The item will aim to return to the Community Outlook Forum in November.

#### 5. Partnership working annual report

Dave Joy (Executive Director) informed members that the Council's Policy for Partnership Working included a protocol for reviewing partnership performance that required an annual review of the Council's Partnership Working to be reported to the Community Outlook Community Forum. This was the first such annual review to be reported. It followed an extensive programme of partnership reviews, which had taken place over the past twelve months. Mr Joy advised the Forum that they could consider whether they wished to request individual partnerships to report on their work to future meetings of the Committee and suggested that because of budgetary implications it would be advisable to request representatives from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Age Concern to attend a future meeting of the Forum.

Members sought information on what progress had been made with service level agreements following the reviews and also what progress CAB had made in attracting external funding. As this information was not readily available it was agreed that representatives from CAB and Age Concern be requested to attend the November meeting of the forum.

Accordingly, the Forum RESOLVED that representatives from CAB and Age Concern be requested to report to the Forum on a quarterly basis and that they be requested to attend the Community Outlook Forum meeting on 14 November 2005.

#### 6. Community engagement

Dave Joy (Executive Director) presented the report and apologised on behalf of councillor Paul Rigby who was unable to attend the meeting. Mr Joy informed members that as part of its Capacity Building support to the Council, officers of the Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA) had been working with Councillor Rigby, the Executive Briefholder for Community Engagement, to develop policy options on the subject of Community Engagement.

Members considered the report prepared by councillor Rigby, (a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda) and were mindful that any consultation undertaken in respect of community engagement be carried out as diversely as possible.

Following consideration of the report it was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the report and detailed below be supported.

## Recommendations

- **At the service level**

- Service comments and queries from elected members should be made in the first instance to *Fylde Direct*
- Officer and service manager responsibilities should be further clarified and made available to members in order for them to better understand the organisation
- Ward members concerns over trends in queries and complaints should be brought to the attention of the appropriate brief holder or champion
- Collectively members display a range of engagement activities - individual members could learn from one another by referring to the list of activities and suggestions from their colleagues in Appendix A
- A network of officers involved in consultation should be brought together under the guidance of an Executive Director in order to share and promote effective, good practice eg. with regard to 'hard to reach' groups and expanding the use of SNAP software; opportunities for internal 'shadowing' should be explored
- That officer network should consider the guidance documents *Using surveys for consultation* and *Local authority research effectiveness* and other good practice guides to determine how these can be adopted within the council, including exploring the potential for joint work with partners and other agencies to maximise efficiencies
- The officer network should determine how the existing Consultation Strategy can be fully implemented, with particular regard to the annual co-ordination of consultation, ensuring that staff have appropriate skills and that professional advice is sought when appropriate
- The officer network should identify where service consultation is not taking place and explore the potential for further service engagement
- Those conducting consultation exercises need to ensure feedback is given to consultees and that we publish the results, adopting a '*You said...we did...*' approach.

- **At the strategic level**

- Make full use of the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) People's Panel to provide reliable evidence of views on key issues affecting citizens and council decisions
- Undertake strategic consultations eg on corporate objectives and priorities (eg Listening Day) to feed into the annual planning cycle between April and June.