



Principal Authorities' Consultation

7. Principal Authorities' Consultation: Overview

Introduction

- 7.1** A key part of the Assembly's consultation programme was to give people the opportunity to comment on local issues that would feed into revised sub-regional strategies.
- 7.2** The Assembly asked for sub-regional advice on the following topics:
- i** Broad scale, type and locations for new employment
 - ii** Number of new houses to be built in each district local authority area

- 7.3** Principal authorities each developed their own options for public consultation, with some aiming to cover all three topics, while others focused on district housing allocations. Consultation was carried out by county and unitary area, not by sub-region.
- 7.4** As sub-regional leads, the South East's principal authorities offered to carry out this consultation on behalf of the Assembly. The principles of this agreement were ratified by the RPC, and the Assembly offered funding to principal authorities to help support six weeks' local consultation in autumn 2005.

- (within overall totals set by the Assembly)
- iii** Critical infrastructure that will be needed.



Principal Authority Consultation Information		
Local authority and weblink	Consultation dates	Consultation contacts
Berkshire unitary authorities	13 Sep - 25 Oct 2005	Stuart Hylton 01628 796749
Brighton and Hove City Council	Sep - 11 Nov 2005	Mike Holford 01273 292501
Buckinghamshire County Council	13 Sep - 31 Oct 2005	Chris Kenneford 01296 382453
East Sussex County Council	19 Sep - 31 Oct 2005	Ellen Reith (consultation programme) 01273 481708 or Mike Langthorne (consultation proposals) 01273 481618
Hampshire County Council	5 Sep - 21 Oct 2005	Consultation helpline 01962 845025
Kent County Council	5 Sep - 17 Oct 2005	Vicky Stephens 01622 221609
Milton Keynes Council	7 Nov 2005 - 6 Jan 2006	Mia Davison 01908 353617 NOTE: Consultation in Milton Keynes is part of a wider ongoing study led by the Milton Keynes Partnership Committee. The outcome will inform the South East Plan, although it is subject to a slightly different timetable.
Oxfordshire County Council	16 Sep - 28 Oct 2005	Policy team 01865 810434
Portsmouth City Council	5 Sep - 21 Oct 2005	Consultation helpline 01962 845025
Southampton City Council	5 Sep - 21 Oct 2005	Consultation helpline 01962 845025
Surrey County Council	19 Sep - 31 Oct 2005	Tony Gould
West Sussex County Council	23 Sep - 4 Nov 2005	Elizabeth Ruffell 01243 753597

This did not apply to Milton Keynes, however, where consultation is being carried out separately to a different timetable. Following earlier consultation, a sub-regional strategy for Milton Keynes and South Midlands was approved in March 2005. This includes planning figures to 2021 and indicative levels to 2031. These figures have been used as the basis for the proposed levels of growth to 2026 set out in the draft South East Plan. Milton Keynes Partnership is currently working to develop a long term vision for the city to 2031, and this will include recommendations for a preferred spatial option for further development of the city in accordance with the overall objectives set in the sub-regional strategy. This work is due to report later in 2006. As a consequence, it is accepted that advice on the district-level distribution of housing arising from the growth of Milton Keynes urban area cannot be provided in advance of the submission of the draft South East Plan to Government in March 2006. It is anticipated that this work will inform the principal authorities' representations on the draft South East Plan and any evidence they submit to the Examination in Public.

- 7.5** Guidance to help ensure consultation consistency across the different areas was produced in August 2005. This work was led by the South East County Councils, with subsequent input from district and unitary council representatives and Assembly social and environmental partners. To ensure its wide availability the Assembly published the guidance on its website. The Assembly also produced a one-page context note explaining how the consultation related to wider South East Plan consultation. Some principal

authorities published this as part of their consultation materials.

- 7.6** Principal authorities were given discretion on consultation dates, with the proviso that sub-regional strategies incorporating consultation comments were required by the Assembly by 9 December 2005.
- 7.7** The Assembly helped promote awareness of principal authorities' consultation by publishing a list of consultation dates and contacts on its website (see Table 6 opposite) and issuing a press release to the region's media.
- 7.8** As part of the sub-regional submissions on 9 December, the principal authorities were asked to provide the Assembly with a statement of consultation. A short guidance note in October 2005 set out a required format which aimed to achieve a strong degree of comparability between principal authorities' consultation reports and the Assembly's own regional consultation report which forms the first part of this document.
- 7.9** The following pages summarise the local consultation information received from the principal authorities, although this has been reorganised into a consistent format.
- 7.10** Summaries of local consultation comments and how the principal authorities have responded are in section 8 of this document. As consultation was carried out by county/unitary area rather than by sub-region the results are presented in the same way, with sub headings highlighting comments relevant to particular sub-regions.

7.11 Consultation information and responses are not included for the Isle of Wight as they conducted separate consultation as part of their LDF work.

7.12 Berkshire Unitary Authorities

Consultation dates: 13 September – 25 October 2005

Consultation methods: Consultation document; summary leaflet; posters; website information; press releases; stakeholder mailing. Individual unitary councils also carried out supplementary work.

Introduction

7.12.1 The consultation took place from 13 September to 25 October 2005. Berkshire-wide consultation work was co-ordinated by the Berkshire Joint Strategic Planning Unit (JSPU), which produced printed material and managed the consultation process with Berkshire-wide stakeholders. The JSPU also handled general public inquiries and provided information and links from its website.

7.12.2 Supplementary local distribution of leaflets and information was handled individually by the six unitary councils which form the JSPU. The unitary councils each developed their own approach to local dissemination of the information as outlined below.

Partnership Working

7.12.3 The JSPU is itself a partnership organisation, working on behalf of the six unitary councils in Berkshire. The JSPU is responsible for developing a Berkshire-wide approach to strategic planning.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.12.4 Key stakeholders, including Government agencies, infrastructure providers and local interest groups were involved in discussions with the JSPU prior to public consultation.

7.12.5 Local representative groups were also included in the consultation process. Groups covering all or most of the Berkshire area were consulted by the JSPU, while those with a more local remit were consulted direct by the relevant unitary council.

Consultation Responses

7.12.6 607 responses were received. There was a strong bias towards older respondents, with 48% of individual respondents aged 40-59 and a further 25% aged over 60. A very high percentage of respondents (58%) lived in Bracknell Forest, with the other unitary councils providing a much smaller percentage of respondents – Wokingham (13%); West Berkshire (11%); Reading (8%); Windsor and Maidenhead (7%); and Slough (3%).

Consultees

7.12.7 Target audiences included: Government agencies; Infrastructure providers; Local Strategic Partnerships; Local interest groups. Public were also targeted via Berkshire-wide media coverage and, in some unitary council areas, by door-to-door delivery of consultation materials.

Materials and Dissemination

7.12.8 The following list summarises consultation activities in the Berkshire unitary authorities:

- i Consultation material was available in electronic and paper forms. This included a summary leaflet made available in public libraries, council offices and public buildings throughout Berkshire. Posters were used to raise awareness of the availability of the leaflet
- ii A more detailed background paper was also made available for reference

in the libraries and council offices where the leaflet was displayed. Both leaflet and background paper were available from the JSPU website, which linked to all six unitary council websites and the Regional Assembly site

- iii Copies of the leaflet were sent to stakeholders across Berkshire and press releases were issued to raise awareness of consultation.

7.12.9 In addition the following consultation was carried out by individual unitary councils in the sub region:

- i Bracknell Forest – copies of the consultation leaflet distributed to every household
- ii Reading – Local Strategic Partnership consulted
- iii Slough – Email consultation of key partners including major landowners and businesses. Parish councils consulted, housing providers and housing interest groups were also consulted
- iv West Berkshire – Coverage of consultation in council newspaper. Parish and town councils consulted. Briefing for Partnership Management Board and key stakeholders
- v Windsor and Maidenhead – Leaflet sent to Local Strategic Partnership, Parish councils and stakeholders. Coverage in council newspaper and press release. Presentation to Local Strategic Partnership
- vi Wokingham – Coverage of consultation in council newspaper and separate questionnaire sent to every household. Five public meetings organised and invitation letters sent to all households. (NB: responses to Wokingham's questionnaire are not included in 607 responses above. Wokingham received 18,225 responses to its questionnaire and commissioned a MORI poll of 1,010 residents. Results are provided in more detail in Wokingham's submission to the Assembly on 9

December 2005 as a supplement to advice received from the main Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region group – both are available on the Assembly website).

Media/Public Interest

7.12.10 Press releases generated coverage in several local newspapers and on three local radio stations.

7.13 Brighton & Hove

Consultation dates: 13 September – 11 November 2005

Consultation methods: Leaflets; direct mail; article in council magazine; public meeting; website information; newspaper advert.

Introduction

7.13.1 Consultation took place from 13 September to 11 November 2005.

Partnership Working

7.13.2 Brighton and Hove were involved in partnership working for the Sussex Coast sub-region via member and officer working groups. Other members of the groups were drawn from Surrey, East and West Sussex county councils and district councils. Representatives of GOSE, SEEDA, the Regional Assembly, social and environmental groups, and economic partnerships were also involved.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.13.3 Statutory undertakers were asked to comment on proposed housing distribution figures and invited to attend a public meeting.

Consultation Responses

7.13.4 Some 24 written comments were received, plus a further 20 registered verbal comments raised at a public meeting.

Consultees

7.13.5 Stakeholders; Statutory undertakers; Residents; Local Strategic Partnership.

Materials and Dissemination

- 7.13.6** Consultation carried out in Brighton and Hove:
- i Leaflets produced were posted to stakeholders and made available at the Brighton, Hove and Portslade Citydirect centres
 - ii A dedicated webpage was created as well as a dedicated email, address and telephone number to register comments
 - iii An article was published in City News inviting people to register comments via email or phone. In addition, a general invitation to register comments was posted in Brighton's evening newspaper
 - iv A letter asking for comments was sent to 11 statutory undertakers (Southern Water, BG Transco plc, EDF Energy, NTL, BT, Environment Agency, Department for Transport, Sussex Police, Brighton and Hove Buses, British Gas and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service)
 - v A general meeting was held, with invitations sent to 431 stakeholders, including LSP, all Brighton and Hove councillors, 11 statutory undertakers (as listed above) and people who registered an interest via email or telephone. A total of 47 people attended the meeting (including 11 Brighton and Hove councillors).

Media/Public Interest

- 7.13.7** An advertisement in the Brighton Argus raised awareness of consultation and 47 people attended a public meeting.

7.14 Buckinghamshire County Council

Consultation dates: 13 September – 31 October 2005

Consultation methods: Council newspaper with questionnaire; stakeholder mailing; website information; presentations; press release.

Introduction

- 7.14.1** Public consultation on draft district-level housing figures for Buckinghamshire (excluding Milton Keynes) ran from 13 September - 31 October 2005. This followed agreement of information for public consultation at a meeting of the Cabinet of Buckinghamshire County Council on Monday 12 September 2005.

Partnership Working

- 7.14.2** Close joint working between senior members and officers of the county council and all four of the Buckinghamshire district councils characterised the pre-consultation stage.

- 7.14.3** For Aylesbury Vale district, the housing proposals were heavily framed in the context of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy, as published in March 2005. This strategy has been the subject of extensive consultation and an independent Public Examination, during which a very wide range of interested parties and key stakeholders were involved. Records of the processes and organisations/ individuals involved in the preparation of that strategy are separately available from the Government Offices for the South East, East Midlands and East of England.

- 7.14.4** The housing proposals for South Bucks district and the majority of Wycombe district were framed in the context of the emerging sub-regional strategy for the Western Corridor & Blackwater Valley, the preparation of which was progressed through an Officer Technical Group and Member Steering Group comprising representatives of all 18 (initially 19) authorities in that area, plus a limited number of partner organisations.

Stakeholder Involvement

- 7.14.5** Prior to the start of public consultation, various stakeholders had been involved as indicated above. The county council also wrote to all Buckinghamshire parish and town councils well in advance of the consultation to alert them to the forthcoming arrangements.



Consultation Responses

- 7.14.6** A total of 273 responses were received during the consultation period, as follows: 1 unitary council; 4 district councils; 19 parish/town councils; 26 development/business organisations; 4 Government agencies; 1 utility/ infrastructure provider; 1 transport organisation; 14 environmental/ amenity organisations; 5 residents' associations; 6 other organisations; and 192 individuals.

Consultees

- 7.14.7** Consultation was targeted at: Residents; District, parish & town councils; Stakeholders; County council planning consultee database.

Materials and Dissemination

- 7.14.8** The following list summarises consultation activities by Buckinghamshire County Council:
- i The main medium of consultation was an eight-sided A3 newspaper and questionnaire, 20,000 copies of which were printed and made freely available at public libraries and council offices throughout Buckinghamshire. They were also distributed at local meetings and sent direct to all parish and town councils, plus over 1,600 organisations and individuals listed on the county council's planning consultee database. The document was available in electronic format, with an interactive response form, on the county council's website, which could be reached via links from district council and the Regional Assembly websites
 - ii In advance of the public consultation exercise, two editions of the county

council's free newspaper 'The Bucks Times' (distributed to every household in the county) had run features on the South East Plan and flagged up the forthcoming consultation. The county council's web pages had also included regular updates on the South East Plan process and details of the forthcoming consultation

- iii During consultation, presentations were given at 11 local meetings. These included meetings of local committees, Local Strategic Partnerships and Buckinghamshire Economic Partnership
- iv A press release on the housing proposals was issued to all local media at the start of the consultation period.

Media/Public Interest

- 7.14.9** During the consultation period at least 12 articles, features and letters appeared in six local newspapers. The spatial planning pages of the county council's web site recorded 1,337 visits and 5,840 successful hits, although not all of these would necessarily have been in respect of the consultation. A summary of the housing proposals for each county in the South East, with relevant web links, was also provided on the BBC's website at the start of the consultation period.

7.15 East Sussex County Council

Consultation dates: 19 September – 31 October 2005

Consultation methods: Consultation document; questionnaire; website information; direct mail;

residents' panel; workshop; public meetings; press releases.

South East Forum for Sustainability have received papers for all MSG and OAG meetings so that they can circulate these more widely to their own members.

Introduction

7.15.1 Work on developing the sub-regional strategy for Sussex Coast commenced in November 2003. At that time, the Chair of the Assembly's Regional Planning Committee, Cllr Keith Mitchell, invited local authority leaders to engage in preparing a series of sub-regional studies. East Sussex County Council was invited to be the lead authority for this work which, as far as possible, has since been conducted in partnership on an open, transparent and inclusive basis.

7.15.2 The county council carried out major public consultation over six weeks from 19 September to 31 October 2005.

Partnership Working

7.15.3 A Member Steering Group (MSG) was set up to guide the initial sub-regional study and subsequent strategy development process. Work has been progressed on a consensual basis, with the MSG including representatives from all nine of the local planning authorities that form part of the Sussex Coast. MSG also includes representatives of social and economic partners, as well as members from two other West Sussex authorities adjoining the sub-region.

7.15.4 Parallel arrangements for joint working were set up at officer level. As well as representatives from all the local authorities, and social and economic partners, the Officer Advisory Group (OAG) also includes representation of environmental interests.

7.15.5 Both MSG and OAG have met regularly over the past two years, often in joint meetings. Officers from SEEDA, GOSE and the Regional Assembly have also been invited to all meetings.

7.15.6 Co-ordinators for both Regional Action and Involvement South East and the

Stakeholder Involvement

7.15.7 A central feature of the Sussex Coast open and inclusive approach has been engagement with a 'Wider Reference Group' of around 150 key stakeholder organisations in both the study and strategy development process. This group includes local, regional and national organisations from all sectors representing social, economic and environmental interests with some likely strategic interest in the future well-being of the Sussex Coast.

7.15.8 Members of the group have been kept fully informed of the South East Plan process and have also been asked for their input to, and feedback on, emerging policy proposals for the Sussex Coast at key stages.

7.15.9 There have also been a number of separate and direct approaches to infrastructure and service providers to discuss strategy options and essential related infrastructure/service issues and requirements.

7.15.10 We have also worked with a number of umbrella organisations, which have dispersed information more widely through their own memberships. Such partners include Local Strategic Partnerships, the Sussex Economic Partnerships and the Sussex Association of Local Councils.

7.15.11 Local authority websites have been an ongoing and important source of information and communication with the general public to supplement regional and county public consultations.

Consultation Responses

7.15.12 The county council's six-week public consultation from 19 September - 31 October 2005 attracted 1,444 responses,

645 from organisations and individuals plus a further 799 from the county's residents' panel. Excluding the residents' panel, 470 of the 645 responses (73%) were from private individuals and 175 (27%) were from representatives of 164 different organisations.

Consultees

7.15.13 Local authorities; Infrastructure and service providers; Statutory bodies; Parish and town councils; Local Strategic Partnerships; Developers; Environmental/Amenity/Social Groups; Businesses; Individuals.

Materials and Dissemination

7.15.14 The following list summarises consultation activities in East Sussex:

- i The county council published material outlining its proposals:
 - A summary document outlining main proposals in a simple and accessible manner for stakeholders with little or no prior knowledge of the planning system
 - A more detailed document with supporting technical information for stakeholders wanting to understand our consultation proposals in more depth
 - A specially designed questionnaire for responses to consultation.
- ii Copies of consultation documents and a questionnaire were sent to around 1,000 local stakeholders, including organisations on each of the district planning authorities' Statements of Community Involvement database. Distribution to interested RAISE members also helped increase awareness of and participation in the process among 'harder-to-reach' groups. In addition, copies of the summary consultation document and questionnaire were sent to around 1,650 residents who currently sit on the county's residents' panel. Documents and questionnaires were also made

Media/Public Interest

7.15.15 There was quite extensive coverage of the issues in local newspapers throughout the consultation period, and two local radio stations also broadcast interviews with one of the council's senior officers.

- iii Dedicated South East Plan pages on the county council's website provided online access to all the consultation materials as well as comprehensive information about the South East Plan, its sub-regional elements, earlier consultation stages and the respective responsibilities of different authorities under the new planning system. Stakeholders could also complete and submit the consultation questionnaire electronically
- iv The county council issued press releases at the start, and towards the end of the consultation period. Further press releases were issued by the local planning authorities to tie in with the public meetings in each district
- v The county council organised a stakeholder consultation workshop to discuss issues raised by our proposals. Over 200 invitations were sent to local stakeholders and 49 attended, representing a broad range of social, economic and environmental interests
- vi Just prior to and during consultation, county council officers gave presentations and answered questions at a series of 14 stakeholder consultation meetings, including six public meetings.

7.16 Hampshire County Council

Consultation dates: 5 September – 21 October 2005

Consultation methods: Stakeholder consultation document; special edition of Hampshire Now with questionnaire; website questionnaire and information; meetings and briefings; phone helpline; press releases.

Introduction

7.16.1 Hampshire County Council and the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) formulated options for seven weeks' consultation in September and October 2005.

7.16.2 PUSH comprises the 11 councils which are entirely or partly within the South Hampshire sub-region: East Hampshire District Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Havant Borough Council, New Forest District Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Winchester City Council.

Partnership Working

7.16.3 The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) is itself a partnership organisation bringing together 11 local authorities to work together on developing a sub-regional strategy for the area.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.16.4 In addition to meetings of PUSH local authority representatives, stakeholders from the social, environmental and economic sectors were invited to technical workshops/ meetings which formulated consultation options for consideration by joint member steering groups. Following consultation, the stakeholders were invited to meetings which considered the consultation responses.

Consultation Responses

7.16.5 Written responses and completed questionnaires from the stakeholder document 'Where shall we live' totalled 969. Respondents included all Hampshire district councils, 92 parish and town councils, 104 development interests, 131 environmental/amenity/ social groups, and 631 individuals.

7.16.6 7,380 Hampshire residents returned the questionnaire from the special edition of 'Hampshire Now'. This is around 1.5% of the number distributed. Responses showed a bias towards older residents, with 82% of respondents aged 45 or over, compared to 54% of the county's population. The number of replies from each district broadly mirrors the population split amongst districts.

Consultees

7.16.7 Local authorities; Statutory bodies; Parish and town councils; Developers; Environmental/amenity/social groups; Businesses; Individuals.

Materials and Dissemination

7.16.8 The following list summarises consultation activities in Hampshire:

- i** Some 5,000 copies of a stakeholder document 'Where Shall We Live?' were distributed across Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton. Copies were sent to organisations including statutory bodies, all district, parish and town councils, businesses, developers and environmental groups, and to individuals who requested a copy. A reference copy was placed in each public library
- ii** A special edition of the county council's residents' magazine 'Hampshire Now', exclusively dealing with consultation, was distributed to 460,000 homes across the county. This was shorter than 'Where shall we live' and was designed specifically for residents. To overcome distribution difficulties in a few local areas, it was also made available in public libraries, citizen advice

bureaux, museums, GP surgeries, petrol stations and local shops. A bulk supply was also sent to every parish council. Additionally, the questionnaire was put on the county council's website together with other background information

- iii** Two briefing meetings were held – one for parish/town councils and one for social and environmental groups
- iv** Two business breakfasts were arranged for business people/organisations; one in Winchester organised by the Hampshire Economic Partnership and Hampshire County Council and one near Fareham organised by PUSH
- v** Information was made available on the web and a dedicated telephone helpline was open during normal office hours (with a voicemail at other times)
- vi** Three press releases were issued to media across Hampshire – one in July 2005 announcing that consultation would be taking place; one to coincide with the start of consultation in early September; and one when 'Hampshire Now' was published. A letter from the county council's Leader was sent to all media towards the end of the consultation urging residents to contact the county council if they had not received Hampshire Now. An email was sent to the media in the last week of consultation to remind the public of the October 21 deadline.

7.16.9 Complementary consultation activities by partner councils included:

- i** Basingstoke & Deane – Website information plus meetings with stakeholders, town and parish councils and businesses
- ii** East Hampshire – South Area Community Committee held a public meeting. There were also meetings with stakeholders, town and parish

councils. Regular press releases were issued

- iii** Eastleigh – Website information, an article in the council's magazine, plus stakeholder and member meetings
- iv** Fareham – Website information, an article in the council's magazine, public meetings with residents' associations and the Fareham Society. Local Strategic Partnership and Planning Task Group meetings, plus presentations to residents' groups/civic amenity groups
- v** Gosport – Website information, Local Strategic Partnership discussion
- vi** Hart – Website information, an article in the council's magazine, public meetings organised by parishes with attendance by district members. Meeting with Hart Association of Parish Councils
- vii** Havant – Website information, Havant Community Partnership discussion
- viii** New Forest – Website information, meeting with parish councils, press release issued
- ix** Portsmouth – Website information, an article in the council's magazine, Local Strategic Partnership discussion. Press release issued
- x** Rushmoor – Website information, an article in the council's magazine
- xi** Southampton – Website information, an article in the council's magazine, document sent to Local Strategic Partnership, Development Forum, Housing Partnership, Chamber of Commerce and Solent Forum
- xii** Test Valley – Meetings with Andover and Romsey forums, Local Strategic Partnership. Press release issued
- xiii** Winchester – Website information, an article in the council's magazine, five public meetings and discussion by Local Strategic Partnership Board.

Media/Public Interest

7.16.10 Press releases issued resulted in a high level of media interest. There were articles in the majority of the local press, including some large feature pieces. In addition, five radio interviews were given. The telephone helpline dealt with 117 telephone calls during the consultation period.

7.17 Kent County Council

Consultation dates: 5 September - 17 October 2005

Consultation methods: Consultation document; summary leaflet; questionnaire; website questionnaire and information; meetings and briefings; residents' panel; article in council newsheet; mailing to stakeholders; press release.

Introduction

7.17.1 Kent County Council worked with Medway Council on six weeks' public and stakeholder consultation from 5 September - 17 October 2005.

7.17.2 Preparation of a strategy for the London Fringe sub-region, which covers much of Surrey, has been led by Surrey County Council. However, London Fringe includes part of the Sevenoaks District in Kent. By agreement with Surrey County Council, the consultation for that area was undertaken by Kent County Council as part of the consultation for the district as a whole, and the results provided to Surrey.

Partnership Working

7.17.3 Member Steering Groups for the Kent Thames Gateway and East Kent and Ashford sub-regions were set up in 2004. They include all local authorities and representatives of the social, environmental and economic sectors.

7.17.4 The steering groups agreed the consultation process to be followed and in order to pursue a common approach

to consultation, the same consultation document, supporting leaflet and questionnaire were distributed by both Kent County Council and Medway Council. Consultation responses could be received by either Kent County Council or Medway Council, and any responses received by Medway were passed to Kent County Council for analysis.

7.17.5 The county council worked closely with district councils to arrange a public meeting in each district. Each district assigned a lead officer to liaise with the county council during consultation.

7.17.6 Briefings with Kent County Council Local Board members were arranged prior to the start of the consultation, to ensure that they were informed of the public meetings and to avoid clashes with Local Board meetings.

7.17.7 All parish and town councils were informed of the consultation prior to its commencement, and were invited to attend public meetings.

7.17.8 Representatives from the Local Strategic Partnerships were invited to attend a stakeholder workshop, and public meetings.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.17.9 Prior to the consultation, Kent County Council worked with key stakeholders to ensure both the technical and consultation documents were accurate and to obtain early advice and views on the options for distribution of dwellings. In particular:

- i The Kent Housebuilders Forum was invited to comment on the draft dwelling distributions at their June 2005 meeting, and on the consultation options at their September meeting
- ii All members of the Kent Housebuilders Forum were invited to submit comments on the draft housing options
- iii Kent County Council requested that the water industry and regulator in

Kent assist the preparation of the sub-regional strategies, which were submitted to the Regional Assembly in October 2004.

7.17.10 Further advice was sought from the Kent Water Policy Liaison Group in the formative stages of the dwelling options. Specifically:

- i The implications of the scale and distribution of growth for water demand/supply
- ii Any implications for water quality and river flow
- iii The critical infrastructure required to support growth while meeting environmental standards.

7.17.11 Meetings were held with both the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency from January 2005, and throughout the consultation period, to seek their advice on the distribution options. Both agencies were also involved in the stakeholder workshop. The Environment Agency presented their findings on supply and demand of water and interim findings on water treatment. The Highways Agency provided a presentation on Kent's transport network.

Consultation Responses

7.17.12 493 responses were received. Of these, 228 were written replies, 202 were questionnaires and a further 63 questionnaires were completed online.

Consultees

7.17.13 Apart from the public and elected members, the consultation involved approximately 900 organisations, including: Local authorities; MPs and MEPs; Town and parish councils; Transport operators and transport interest groups; Environmental, amenity and rural groups; Landowners; Businesses and business groups; Government departments; Disabled groups; Black and Minority ethnic groups; Health organisations; Education and skills organisations; Local planning and

development consultants; Religious groups; Sports groups; Utility companies; Water companies; Housebuilders.

Materials and Dissemination

7.17.14 The following list summarises consultation materials in Kent:

- i A public consultation document 'South East Plan: Employment, housing and infrastructure in Kent' was placed on deposit at all libraries and council offices across Kent and Medway. It included questions to help stimulate and structure discussion and responses
- ii A supporting summary leaflet including a questionnaire
- iii Consultation documents were sent with a covering letter to some 900 stakeholder organisations
- iv A half-day stakeholder workshop was held, attended by about 60 representatives from local authorities and stakeholder organisations. In addition, a small number of meetings and briefings were held with technical groups and partnerships, and Kent County Council Local Board members, to ensure that they were fully informed and consulted on their views
- v A series of 12 public meetings was held, one in each of the district council areas, and two in Medway
- vi Kent County Council issued a press release explaining the consultation and detailing the public meeting dates. In addition, liaison with the Kent Messenger Group secured media coverage of consultation, to encourage involvement and response. Formal notices in the press were used to publicise details of the local meetings across the county. Notices appeared in local newspapers for two weeks prior to the start of the consultation

- vii A website provided information on the South East Plan, the consultation process, versions of the consultation document and leaflet as downloads, and an on-line version of the questionnaire
- viii Kent County Council residents' panel was surveyed on the choices in the consultation document
- ix An article in Around Kent, Kent County Council's newsheet, encouraged people to submit responses. 180,000 copies of Around Kent were printed and circulated to collection points across the county, including district, parish and town councils, doctors' surgeries, Post Offices, libraries, Tourist Information Centres, stations, McDonalds and some supermarkets
- x Information sent to all Kent County Council staff at the beginning of the consultation helped to channel enquiries properly within the organisation, and highlighted the opportunity to give views.

7.17.15 Medway Council used the same consultation material:

- i All council members and those involved with the Medway Council Local Strategic Partnership received a copy of the consultation document and leaflet/questionnaire
- ii The public consultation document was placed on deposit at all libraries and council offices across Medway, along with copies of the supporting summary leaflet/questionnaire
- iii Two public meetings were held. These were advertised in advance in local media, including via public notices
- iv Information was included on the council's website.

Media/Public Interest

7.17.16 The Kent Messenger Group produced a series of two page articles about the South East Plan, and published details of the public meetings. Additional local press

coverage appeared throughout the consultation period. There was also a feature on the BBC website <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/4244514.stm> covering all aspects of the consultation in the South East region, including details of the Kent and Medway public meetings.

7.18 Oxfordshire County Council

Consultation dates: 16 September - 28 October 2005

Consultation methods: Direct mail; consultation booklet and posters; public meetings; website information; exhibitions; articles in local papers and council publications; press releases.

Introduction

7.18.1 Six weeks' public consultation was held from 16 September - 28 October 2005. Consultation arrangements were agreed by the county council Cabinet on 6 September. Responses were considered by the full council and Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 1 November and 1 December respectively, to feed views into the Cabinet which agreed its decision on 6 December.

Partnership Working

7.18.2 Work has been progressed through the Central Oxfordshire Sub-regional Steering Group. This group comprises representatives of the district councils and of social, economic, environmental and other partners. It is chaired by the Leader of the county council and includes representatives from the Environment Agency, Oxfordshire Economic Partnership, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust and the South East Forum for Sustainability.

7.18.3 District authorities (including a number from adjoining authorities) have been



involved in the process of preparing a housing distribution at all stages, both at officer and member levels. Other partners such as Thames Water and the Environment Agency were also involved on a technical level through informal meetings and working groups.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.18.4 A range of stakeholders (including Government agencies, infrastructure and service providers and other relevant interest groups) were involved prior to the start of the public consultation. Letters were sent in June 2005 asking for technical comments on the county council's preferred strategy; they were consulted again during September 2005. A special briefing for stakeholders was also held during the consultation period.

Consultation Responses

7.18.5 In total 4,049 responses were received. Of these 1,714 were completed on the standard response form in the consultation booklet or the online form, 227 were written responses and 2,108 were received from campaign groups using their own versions of the response forms. The campaign groups included Didcot Town Council, East Hagbourne Parish Council, Steventon Parish Council, and Pegasus Planning representing Bride Parks Ltd.

Consultees

7.18.6 The following groups were consulted: County council members; District councils; Town and parish councils; Citizen's panel; Stakeholders; Oxfordshire Structure Plan consultees; Public.

Materials and Dissemination

7.18.7 The following list summarises activities in Oxfordshire:

- i Plain English consultation booklet including a reply paid questionnaire 'Where should all the new housing go?' – 13,000 copies were distributed. This included copies to all county councillors, town and parish councils, stakeholders, and others previously consulted during Oxfordshire Structure Plan consultations
- ii 700 consultation booklets and posters were distributed to all libraries for public display; all local area offices and one stop shops in Oxfordshire also received consultation booklets and posters for display. Copies were distributed in bulk to each of the five district councils
- iii The citizens' panel (the council's research panel of 3,000 members of the public) received the consultation booklet and were asked to comment on the options
- iv Posters to raise awareness of consultation were sent to libraries, local area offices, one stop shops and district councils
- v Technical background documents were made available to download from the county council's website. These included housing distribution tables, background to main options considered, feasibility study update, options appraisal (including sustainability appraisal) and transport issues
- vi Two briefings were held to explain the consultation options and provide

an opportunity to ask questions. One was targeted at district, town and parish councils; the other at stakeholders, technical specialists, local organisations and developers

- vii All details of the consultation were made available on the county council's website, this included: the consultation booklet, background reports, an online response form, details of exhibitions, press releases, contact information for the planning team (including by telephone and email) and links to the Assembly website
- viii A roving exhibition comprising three exhibition stands and a leaflet dispenser visited 10 locations in the county during the consultation period
- ix Press releases were issued before and during the consultation period and to highlight exhibition dates.

Media/Public Interest

7.18.8 The consultation generated a large amount of public interest and press coverage. In total 26 articles and letters appeared in the Oxford Times, Oxford Mail, Henley Standard, Abingdon Herald and Bicester Advertiser from 1 September - 28 October 2005. This included a full page launch feature in the Oxford Times. There was also coverage in county council publications such as 'Parish News'. Approximately 50 individuals and organisations attended briefings.

7.19 Surrey County Council

Consultation dates: 19 September – 31 October 2005

Consultation methods: Consultation leaflet with questionnaire; website information and questionnaire; mailing to stakeholders; public meetings and press releases.

Introduction

7.19.1 Surrey County Council conducted six weeks' consultation from 19 September to 31 October 2005.

7.19.2 The London Fringe Steering Group chaired by Cllr David Munro as Environment portfolio holder, and including members from constituent authorities and partners, agreed a draft housing distribution and consultation leaflet on 31 August. The county council's Executive Committee endorsed these on 13 September.

Partnership Working

7.19.3 The county council acted with the borough and district councils, both through their committees as consultees and also by encouraging, through the districts, involvement of Local Strategic Partnerships at a wider stakeholder level.

7.19.4 A number of districts offered assistance to ensure that the consultation reached a broader cross-section of people. For example, Guildford Borough Council mailed residents' associations and other groups in their area with information, as did Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge councils.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.19.5 Before the start of the consultation, a letter was sent to various infrastructure providers in the county, alerting them to the proposed housing allocations and requesting their response from a technical viewpoint so that these views could be reported back to the public meetings. Approaches were made to Government agencies, utilities, water companies, transport operators and organisations from the sport, health and education sectors.

Consultation Responses

7.19.6 Some 709 completed questionnaires were returned, in addition to a further 70 more extensive written responses from stakeholders such as the borough and district councils, developers and local groups and organisations. The online questionnaire attracted a further 40 responses.

Consultees

7.19.7 Targeted audiences included: Environmental, economic and health organisations; District and borough councils; Town and parish councils; Water and utility companies; Transport companies; Sports, travel and skills organisations; Residents' associations; Builders, property and financial organisations.

Materials and Dissemination

7.19.8 The following list summarises consultation approaches in Surrey:

- i A leaflet 'The South East Plan – The Future of Housing in Surrey' set out the background to the consultation and the options facing the county. This was sent, together with a letter inviting comments, to Surrey borough, district and parish councils, residents' associations and environmental groups, amenity groups, representatives of the business community and higher education establishments, relevant government departments, neighbouring county and district councils and London boroughs
- ii A press release was also issued to highlight the consultation.
- iii The leaflets were also made available to Surrey residents and the wider public at borough and district council offices, public libraries and at County Hall
- iv There was extensive website coverage of consultation, highlighted on the county council's homepage. Details of the issues and the

meetings were published, together with a copy of the leaflet, an online questionnaire and a link to the Assembly website. The website also provided access to more detailed documents which were prepared in advance of the consultation and gave greater information on the overall strategy and the technical work which underpinned the consultation leaflet

- v Four stakeholder meetings were held, with letters of invitation sent to key stakeholders. A policy forum was also arranged by Waverley Borough Council before the issues were discussed by its Executive Committee. The public meetings were advertised on the county council's website and mentioned in the local press as being open to the public
- vi Surrey County Association of Parish and Town Councils arranged an evening meeting for parish councils. All the meetings held in connection with the Plan consisted of a brief officer presentation on the issues, followed by an open forum for discussion.

Media/Public Interest

7.19.9 The consultation itself and the issues were widely covered in local newspapers as a result of the county council's communications exercise, with articles printed in a number of the newspapers published throughout the county. In the local media, some 16 items of coverage appeared in seven local newspapers. Cllr David Munro, Environment portfolio holder on the Executive Committee, gave radio interviews to BBC Southern Counties, the Eagle, Radio Jackie and Delta.

7.20 West Sussex County Council

Consultation dates: 23 September –
4 November 2005

Consultation methods: Consultation document;
summary leaflet;
questionnaire; website
information; direct mail;
meetings

Introduction

7.20.1 The consultation took place from
23 September - 4 November 2005.

Partnership Working

7.20.2 Partners were involved in the work of
the Gatwick Area sub-region via both a
members' group and an officers' group.
Members of the groups were drawn from
Surrey, East and West Sussex county
councils, district councils and Brighton
and Hove City Council. Representatives
of GOSE, SEEDA, the Regional Assembly,
social and environmental groups, and
economic partnerships were also
involved.

Stakeholder Involvement

7.20.3 No information provided.

Consultation Responses

7.20.4 Nearly 800 responses were received.
Mostly completed questionnaires, but
also letters and reports.

Consultees

7.20.5 Stakeholders; District councils; Local
Strategic Partnerships; Town and parish
councils; Residents.

Materials and Dissemination

7.20.6 The following list summarises
consultation activities in West Sussex:

- i Consultation material was issued in
electronic and paper forms. A
dedicated page on the county
council website had information
about the consultation, documents
to download and an online
questionnaire

- ii A detailed consultation document
was published and available
throughout the consultation period
at county council distribution points
such as help points, district council
offices and main libraries across the
county. A leaflet summarising the
information in the document, with
the questionnaire enclosed, was
available at these points. In addition,
the leaflets were posted to parish
councils and Local Strategic
Partnerships' members for
distribution
- iii A dedicated email, postal address
and online questionnaire were
created to register comments
- iv A number of meetings were held
across the county for stakeholders
and public
- v Advertisements, including details of
public meetings and where to obtain
information were placed in local
papers covering the county.

Media/Public Interest

7.20.7 In total around 300 individuals and
representatives of agencies, service
providers, councils and other groups
attended and took part in events around
the county.