

# THE ASSEMBLY

5 APRIL 2006

## REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SCRUTINY PANEL

<b>Title: Final Report of the Community Consultation Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report outlines the work of the Community Consultation Scrutiny Panel, which included scrutiny of questionnaires/surveys used by the Council for consultation purposes, interviews with Council officers leading on consultation within their departments, an officer from the Web Team, representatives from other Councils and members of the Citizens' Panel.</p> <p>All Councils are expected to consult meaningfully with local people and to show that they have responded to the outcomes of consultation. However, the panel found that all Councils are facing the problem of improving the way they consult and a number of them have set up a corporate body called a Consultation Board to co-ordinate and control consultation.</p> <p>With regard to Barking and Dagenham, the panel concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• there is no central authority to control and monitor what consultations are taking place, and priorities for consultation are not clearly established;</li><li>• far more consultations are being carried out than are recorded;</li><li>• at present there is no centrally co-ordinated forward planning of consultation and this leads to inconsistency;</li><li>• duplication of consultation is taking place;</li><li>• the content of questionnaires/surveys needs to be more consistent in approach, e.g. questions are not always helpfully phrased;</li><li>• it is unclear what happens as a result of consultation and we are therefore not able to consistently demonstrate impact;</li><li>• the results of consultation are not systematically fed back to consultees;</li><li>• the cost of consultation is not systematically recorded and monitored.</li></ul> <p>The panel's recommendations are intended to develop a strategic approach to consultation to promote value for money.</p> <p>This report will be submitted to the Executive on 28 March 2006 and any comments made will be reported verbally to the Assembly.</p> <p><b>Wards Affected:</b> All</p>	

**Implications:****Financial:**

It is proposed that the recommendations be implemented initially within the Council's new structure but there may be future resourcing implications.

**Legal:**

The Local Government Act 2000 enacted the Government's reform package which contained a community leadership agenda. This includes listening to and involving local communities and it is a Government expectation/requirement which the Council cannot ignore.

**Risk Management:**

Consultation will feature heavily in the CPA Corporate Assessment. The changes to the CPA Corporate Assessment will put more emphasis on 'the quality and robustness of Councils' own customer surveys, Citizens' Panels and other consultation methods'.

**Social Inclusion and Diversity:** None.

**Crime and Disorder:** None.

**Recommendations:**

This panel, on completion of its work, makes the following recommendations:

1. A review of the methods used for preparing consultation documents and the way consultation is carried out needs to be undertaken and an appropriate strategy developed which has regard to cost effectiveness and is not overly bureaucratic. This should incorporate a review of the current strategy and toolkit;
2. The Council needs to ensure that it has the capacity within the new structure to lead and manage consultation at a senior officer level;
3. Relevant officers should be trained before undertaking consultation;
4. A cross-departmental corporate body called a Consultation Board should be set up to co-ordinate and initially monitor all consultation and it should incorporate any relevant consultative elements of the Research Governance Framework;
5. The Board should monitor/question the following:
  - why is the consultation being proposed
  - who is going to undertake the consultation (in-house or external organisation)
  - what is the rationale for it
  - how are the results going to be analysed
  - how are the results going to be disseminated
  - how are the results going to be fed back in a cost effective way
  - how are the results going to be used to influence decisions and/or policy and/or improve services
  - how will outcomes be monitored;

6. Membership of the Board should include:
  - the Executive Portfolio Holder
  - relevant senior officers
  - an Equalities and Diversity Officer;
7. The Scrutiny Panel should reconvene after a maximum period of two years to review the working of the Consultation Board and assess the financial viability of it;
8. That Members be made aware of results of consultation exercises and alerted to any issues arising;
9. There should be a more systematic approach to the use of existing forums for consultation;
10. A clear distinction between service and corporate related consultation should be maintained;
11. That the contract for the Citizens' Panel be re-tendered, and increased use be made of it, but first there should be a review of the present workings and restraints of the current contract; and
12. Opportunities to share a Citizens' Panel with key partners should be explored.

**Reason:**

Members are asked to agree the recommendations so that consultation can be undertaken in a meaningful, efficient and cost effective way.

<p><b>Lead Member:</b> Councillor J Denyer</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Lead Member</p>	<p><b>Contact Details:</b> Tel: 020 8599 9997 E-mail: <a href="mailto:john.denyer@lbbd.gov.uk">john.denyer@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Valerie Dowdell</p>	<p>Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8227 2756 Fax: 020 8227 2171 E-mail: <a href="mailto:valerie.dowdell@lbbd.gov.uk">valerie.dowdell@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p>

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Following a Call-In held on 14 September 2005 in respect of the Executive's decision of 19 July 2005 to tender the contract package for the Citizens' Panel and other consultation projects as the existing contract is due to expire in March 2006, the Scrutiny Management Board (SMB) agreed to set up a scrutiny panel to look into all community consultation being conducted across the Council. The terms of reference for the panel and its membership were agreed by the SMB at its meeting on 28 September 2005.
- 1.2 A timeframe of three months was set for the work of the panel, although this was extended as it had not completed its investigations. The panel met on six occasions, 26 October, 16 November and 13 December 2005, 9 and 30 January and 20 February 2006.

## **2. Membership**

### 2.1 Membership of the panel comprised:

Councillor J Denyer (Lead Member)  
Councillor A Agrawal  
Councillor Mrs K J Flint  
Councillor T J Justice  
Councillor A G Thomas  
Councillor P T Waker

2.2 Susan Ritchie, Consultation and Involvement Manager, Customer Access, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, was the panel's external representative.

2.3 Naomi Goldberg, Head of Policy and Performance, Corporate Strategy Department, was the lead service officer (Nina Clark, Head of Democratic Support, for the last two meetings).

2.4 Jane Hargreaves, Interim Head of Learning and Cultural Services, Education, Arts and Libraries Department, was the independent scrutiny support officer.

2.5 Joanne Redwin, Policy and Review Officer, Corporate Strategy Department, also attended the meetings of the panel.

## **3. Terms of Reference**

### 3.1 The terms of reference for the panel were:

1. to examine the extent, effectiveness and financial value of all methods of community consultation used by the Council;
2. in doing so to have regard to:
  - the cost of the different consultation methods used and the value they bring
  - the Council's consultation strategy and how this is communicated
  - the process for deciding what to consult the community on and which consultation method to use
  - any contractual arrangements
  - any statutory or other regulatory requirements, including the expectations of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment process and Performance Monitoring
  - the outcomes of consultation and the link with service policy and service delivery, and how outcomes are shared/communicated
  - how far specific forms of consultation are linked to grant funding;
3. like all scrutiny panels, to consider any related equalities and diversity and health implications.

## 4. The Work of the Panel

- 4.1 Prior to the first meeting of the panel the Lead Member, Councillor Denyer, sent a letter to all Directors/Heads of Service requesting information on all forms of community consultation undertaken within their departments. They were asked to detail whether the consultation was statutory, the frequency, whether it was undertaken solely by the department or in partnership with other organisations, the method and the cost. The responses were submitted to the panel at their initial meeting.
- 4.2 The panel considered the Consultation Strategy and Toolkit, which was produced in March 2003 and which was in the process of being revised in line with a Community Development Strategy and Toolkit. Work has now stopped pending the outcome of this scrutiny.
- 4.2.1 This strategy sets the Council's consultation principles, which state that consultation should be:
- planned well in advance
  - targeted to secure views of the whole community including hard to reach groups
  - cost effective and of a consistent high quality
  - fed-back to participants
  - accessible to the whole Council and its partners
  - used to improve policies and service delivery
- 4.2.2 It puts consultation into the context of the Community Priorities and the Balanced Scorecard.
- 4.2.3 The strategy also sets out existing consultation methods such as the Citizens' Panel, Community Forums, the Local Compact, statutory surveys and Community Housing Partnerships.
- 4.2.4 In addition, there is reference to the range of resources that currently support consultation, which include:
- a Policy and Review Officer within the Policy and Information team who provides support for consultation exercises and manages the Citizens' Panel
  - the Citizens' Panel
  - a central budget
  - consultation representatives within departments
  - the Tenant Participation team
  - Community Development Officers
  - the Council's Employee Development Programme that includes various training courses on consultation
  - the consultation toolkit that accompanies the strategy
  - externally there is a London Consultation Network that meets quarterly to share ideas and best practice

4.2.5 The Head of Policy and Performance commented on how the consultation principles were not being met, namely relating to duplication, token consultation and lack of feedback. The panel also registered their concerns about these issues.

4.3 The panel requested copies of all surveys, questionnaires, etc circulated by departments for consultation purposes over the preceding eighteen months. After consideration of these the panel concluded that duplication of consultation is taking place, there is a need to be more selective about the content of the questionnaires/surveys and methods are required to make consultation more focussed and meaningful.

4.4 Councillor Philip Waker and Joanne Redwin attended a Consultation Learning Event held by Lewisham Council on 2 November 2005 and reported back to the panel. It was noted that Lewisham have a Mayor's Consultation Board, made up of officers from various departments, where officers must seek agreement for consultation via the use of a pro forma. Some consultation projects are then selected for post consultation evaluation.

4.5 Joanne Redwin also reported back to the panel on Croydon Council's Beacon Open Day, which she attended on 10 November 2005. It was noted that Croydon are developing a website to tackle the problem of co-ordinating their consultation and for consultation purposes.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 In order to obtain an overview of how consultation is undertaken within the Council, and by other Councils, the panel undertook a series of interviews.

5.2 The following officers were interviewed to give a general idea of how consultation is carried out in their departments:

- Steven Forbes, Head of Older People's Services, Social Services Department
- Philip Baldwin, Regeneration and Community Partnerships Manager, Social Services Department
- Meena Kishinani, Head of Performance and Strategy, Social Services Department
- Vikki Rix, Research and Development Officer, Social Services Department
- Argiri Papatthos, Performance and Review Officer, Housing and Health Department
- Darren Henaghan, Head of Health and Consumer Services, Housing and Health Department
- Teresa Parish, Group Manager, Leisure Community Services, Regeneration and Environment Department
- Victoria Hunt, Policy and Planning Officer, Department of Education, Arts and Libraries
- Amibola Odunsi, Head of Revenue Services, Finance Department

5.3 The findings from this exercise were:

- officers leading on consultation generally found it difficult to monitor this and were aware that they were not informed about all consultation being carried out within their departments;

- overall it was judged that there would be benefit in having some type of central co-ordination, particularly for rationalisation and forward planning purposes
- information from consultation is fed back through various routes such as The Citizen, Member Matters and Community Housing Partnerships;
- various methods of consultation are used including questionnaires, surveys, telephone surveys, focus groups, workshops and web sites. An external organisation is used to provide mystery shoppers and the contract for this is in the region of £5,000 a year. Officers commented that it would be difficult for the Authority to resource and maintain its own mystery shoppers and the benefit of having it done by an external organisation is that the results can be used to benchmark with other boroughs;
- a major consultation for the Crime, Disorder and Drugs Policy was undertaken with the Community Safety Strategic Partnership, where views were canvassed throughout the Borough, and a main one currently is the licensing consultation on each individual application. Consultation was also carried out to inform the Licensing policy. A consultation diary is kept in Health and Consumer Services to record consultations, the type of questions asked and a small abstract of learning gained from the exercise. This information can then be referred to, to inform new policies, etc;
- with the emerging Children's Services, a lot of the consultation process currently is being focussed on strategy. It is a good opportunity to ask the community how the services should be delivered and what they want. At the moment this is being extended to the wider community using different focus groups;
- a rents user forum has been established as a result of recommendations from a Government inspection relating to the involvement of rent payers and taking their views on board. This has looked at rent collection procedures, activities around take up date and advice, involvement in the rent setting process, service charges and incentives to encourage rate payers to pay their rent promptly;
- as part of the modernisation agenda in Revenue Services, Revenues and Benefits set up focus groups, using the Citizens' Panel, to involve customers and get their views;
- exit surveys for customers that visit Revenue Services reception at 90 Stour Road and telephone surveys relating to customer experience (where customers are asked specific questions about service delivery) have been undertaken;
- a lot of consultation is service specific, does influence decisions and has brought about changes, such as:

#### *Regeneration and Environment*

- sports development – change in start times for after school sessions
- BMX track installed in Old Dagenham Park

#### *Education*

- identifying worst performing indicators from the Annual Schools Survey, feeding these back and working with the schools to improve them

### *Finance*

- new forms being designed for Revenues and Benefits customers
  - a proposed tenant reward scheme to encourage Council tenants to pay their rent promptly;
- although not statutory, a large amount of consultation is recommended by the Department of Health and the Audit Commission, and departments are under pressure to do this;
  - most Social Services consultation is with service users, relating to service delivery issues and finding out what customers think about that service. Some of the work being undertaken uses other agencies, such as the Council for Voluntary Services, particularly with the general user carer forums. Age Direct, which is an older people's National Service Framework health and social care participation group, has been established which has been exceptionally good value for money and has been facilitated from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, although that funding finished at the end of last year. There are routine postal surveys, such as one for people who are receiving direct payments;
  - Social Services tries to link into national events, such as mental health week and carers week, which are held once a year, to give a context for the work they are doing;
  - With regard to Children's Services, Social Services tends not to carry out consultation as such, but they have a very successful participation project which involves a lot of young people in the looked after system in terms of producing a newsletter and attending events.

## **5.4 Consultation at Tower Hamlets Council**

- 5.4.1 The co-opted Member, Susan Ritchie, who is the Consultation and Involvement Manager at Tower Hamlets Council, provided the panel with information about how consultation is carried out within her Authority. Tower Hamlets undertook a Best Value review of consultation, as a result of which Ms Ritchie's team, comprising 2½ officers, was set up in 2004 to rationalise and co-ordinate consultation. All staff are required to liaise with her before undertaking any consultation and there is a consultation lead in each directorate. Consideration was given to setting up a Consultation Board but it was decided not to do this at the time. However, because of difficulties encountered by the team during the past year in carrying out their work, this decision is to be reviewed.
- 5.4.2 Tower Hamlets has used their Citizens' Panel over the last year to develop corporate strategies. Their panel was originally funded through Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.
- 5.4.3 In light of her experience since their new arrangements were put in place, Ms Ritchie said there is much more awareness now of how well consultation can be undertaken and it needs political/organisational leadership.
- 5.4.4 Officers undertaking consultation need to be trained. Although this takes up a lot of officer time it will improve the quality of consultation



5.4.5 Consultation undertaken by external organisations can provide an objective, independent point of view. A central team needs to build up a procurement data base of these organisations, which will save officer time when looking for an appropriate company to undertake a specific consultation.

## 5.5 Consultation at Camden Council

5.5.1 The panel received a presentation given by Debbie Lee Chan, Research Manager, Camden Council, who gave an overview of consultation at Camden and then spoke in more detail about their Consultation Board and 'Camden Talks' which is Camden's Citizens' Panel.

5.5.2 Ms Chan is part of a small research team in the corporate centre comprising herself and two other officers. In 2002 Camden set up a cross-departmental corporate body called a Consultation Board to co-ordinate consultation activity. The Board meets monthly to approve consultations and tries to forward plan as much as possible and develop a strategic approach. Until recently it was chaired by the Executive Member for Community Engagement and also includes a representative for equalities and diversity issues. Lead officers from each department are requested to enter details of proposed consultations on a database, which is on the intranet and is expected to go live on the website soon. The Board also asks officers who are proposing to do a consultation within the next month to come and present to the Board. There are corporate guidelines which officers are asked to follow. The Board also organises training and seminars for officers, produces a bi-annual report of accepted consultations, which includes a forward plan, and asks officers to do a mini-evaluation of their consultations.

5.5.3 Camden Talks, the Citizens' Panel, was recruited in early 2004 by MORI. It is a partnership with the Primary Care Trust and the Police, who use the panel and contribute to the cost. Camden wants to use the panel as a way of engaging with people and promoting active citizenship. It includes 200 young people and 200 from different minority groups and disabled people and they try to use people who do not normally take part in consultative forums. There is an online element in that there is a panel website and a password is given to any panel member who requests it. Debates have taken place online and 70 panel members have been trained to use a PC. A newsletter is circulated to the panel at least twice a year to let them know what has been done with their time and input, and they have been written to twice on different matters, once after the London bombings, which came from the Leader of the Council.

5.5.4 Camden tries to be as organised as possible within their resources, working closely with their teams and with their communications department to publicise their consultations. However, there are issues around staff capacity and costs.

## 5.6 The Citizens' Panel

5.6.1 Barking and Dagenham has had a Citizens' Panel for five years now and it is managed on the Council's behalf by an external company. The contract with this company comes to an end on 31 March 2006. The panel is made up of 1,000 residents who are selected on a quota basis, using Census data, and are representative of the Borough. This means the panel includes a cross section of people, by age, gender and ethnic background. According to good practice

relating to consultation 1,000 is the advisable number of people to have on a panel as it means that responses to surveys are statistically significant.

5.6.2 Once established it is the purpose of the panel to be used for a variety of surveys and focus group work.

5.6.3 The Scrutiny Panel invited two members of the Citizens' Panel to meet with them to give their views. Their responses to Members' questions were as follows:

- they confirmed that they had been serving on the Citizens' Panel for approximately a year and before joining they had had no involvement with other groups or Councillors;
- as members of the panel they have been involved in a comprehensive range of issues, including attending refuse and street cleansing and revenue workshops, and both felt that there had been improvements in their local areas as a result of their consultation;
- both confirmed that they are happy with the forms of consultation used and, when asked whether they felt online contact would be welcomed by panel members, one said that he would welcome it but the other felt that it would be very restrictive for a lot of people.

5.6.4 The Panel was pleased to hear that being part of the Citizens' Panel had made these residents view the Council in a more positive light and made them more aware of issues within the Borough. They felt that their views were listened to and acted upon and what they do is meaningful.

## 5.7 **Community Forums**

5.7.1 The panel interviewed Nina Clark, Head of Democratic Support, Corporate Strategy Department, about consultation in relation to Community Forums and the review of them which was being undertaken. Ms Clark confirmed that the review was still ongoing but that consultation is only a small part of the role of Community Forums, which are mainly a mechanism for Members to engage more with their communities.

## 5.8 **Internet Consultation**

5.8.1 The panel received a presentation by Joseph Havill, Research and Development Project Manager, Corporate Web Team, on a new e-consultation system which is being developed by the Web Team. Jack McKeown, e-Government and ICT Strategy Manager, was also present to answer the panel's questions.

5.8.2 Due to e-Government requirements, requests from officers for an e-consultation system, and after looking at what was available in the market place, the team have produced a system in-house. External consultation systems usually cost approximately £1,000 per month ongoing to run, so a huge saving will be made by doing this in-house, although there are resource issues to be considered.

## 5.9 Research Governance Framework

- 5.9.1 Meena Kishinani, Head of Performance and Strategy, and Vikki Rix, Research and Development Officer, Social Services Department, advised the panel about the Research Governance Framework (RGF) as it was thought that the requirements to implement this could link into a corporate Consultation Board.
- 5.9.2 The RGF was published by the Department of Health in 2001 and all local authority social care departments are required to implement it. The aim of this framework is to improve the quality of social care research and prevent duplication and it will be part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) in the future.
- 5.9.3 The RGF covers any activity that involves the collection of information from, or about, individuals who may be service users, their relatives or friends, members of the public or departmental employees. The RGF also includes consultations, surveys and audits that are carried out in relation to Best Value reviews. Specifically the research covers surveys, focus groups, evaluations, audits and student projects.
- 5.9.4 In order to implement the RGF Social Services needs to set up a panel to:
- Scrutinise and approve proposals
  - Monitor the quality of research studies
  - Scrutinise and sign off completed research studies
  - Keep a record of all applications/assessments and their outcomes (for both external and internal research) on a local register
  - Send details of approved research to the National Social Care Research register
  - Communicate and disseminate research findings and promote best practice.
- 5.9.5 If the framework is implemented corporately and work is undertaken in partnership with other boroughs, set up grant funding of £7,000 could be secured from the Department of Health. Negotiations are underway to establish a partnership with another borough.
- 5.9.6 The panel accepted that consultation is one element of research and therefore there is a link, and undertook to consider this when compiling their recommendations.

## 6. Equalities and Diversities

- 6.1 The panel considered reports on the impact on consultation of the BAD Youth Forum, the Disability Equality Group and the Barking and Dagenham Refugee Forum and noted that:
- 6.1.1. **BAD Youth Forum** – this forum, which was set up in 2001, has a diverse range of young people with various ethnic origins, backgrounds, gender, race, beliefs and abilities. It was re-elected in October 2005 with representatives from all schools in the Borough and ten youth groups. The forum focuses on quality youth work being delivered throughout the borough, in both statutory and voluntary sectors.

- 6.1.2 **The Disability Equality Group** – this group, which was established in 2004, comprises Council officers, local strategic partners and local disabled people and their representative organisations. Achievements include improvements on accessibility of buildings, improved interpretation and translation facilities, improved partnership working with disabled people.
- 6.1.3 **The Barking and Dagenham Refugee Network** – this group, which was established in 2004, comprises refugees and organisations that work with refugees in the Borough. It has now agreed its terms of reference and has a Local Cohesion Plan which will be implemented over the next three years.
- 6.2 The panel felt that the Council now has some good representative groups and forums and there should be a more systematic approach for directing people to use them for consultation.
- 6.3 The panel also felt that more use could be made of Social Services forums to consult with hard to reach groups on wider issues.
- 6.4 The panel noted that Revenue Services had consulted, through the Equalities and Diversity Officer, with faith groups, the Youth Forum, disabled people and ethnic minority groups, on issues around impact assessment. This consultation has informed the way Revenue Services implemented the findings from the impact assessment activity.

## 7. Analysis of Consultation

- 7.1 At their first meeting the panel was provided with a copy of the consultation database which holds information on past, present and planned consultation. All departments are requested to keep this updated. The panel requested a summary and analysis of the database information for 2004/05, together with the information gathered in response to Councillor Denyer's request for information about consultation.
- 7.2 The panel considered the summary and analysis of consultation. It was noted that:
- it was likely that not all the costs had been captured, as there was probably consultation being conducted that was not being recorded on the consultation database;
  - meetings, forums and events were excluded from the exercise as it was felt that there was not enough information to present a full and fair picture;
  - some regeneration projects involved grant funding from external agencies such as the London Regional Development Agency, European Regional Development Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Sustainable Communities Fund from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the London Riverside Single Regeneration Budget.

7.3 The conclusions drawn from this exercise were:

- it is generally cheaper to conduct consultation via the Citizens' Panel than it is to employ external consultants on an ad hoc basis;
- in general there seems to be very little consultation being conducted – just 39 consultations were recorded;
- consultation is happening in some departments far more than others;
- there is a need to look at consultation across the Council to ensure that all departments and divisions are consulting and feeding this into their service development in an effective and meaningful way.

## 8. Consultees

Members of the Community Consultation Scrutiny Panel

Jane Hargreaves, Interim Head of Learning and Cultural Services, Education, Arts and Libraries Department

Susan Ritchie, Consultation and Involvement Manager, Customer Access, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Nina Clark, Assistant Chief Executive (Democracy and Partnerships)

Joanne Redwin, Policy and Review Officer, Corporate Strategy Department

### **Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:**

- The Consultation Strategy and Toolkit (March 2003)
- Agendas and minutes of meetings held on 26 October, 16 November and 13 December 2005, 9 and 30 January and 20 February 2006

## ACTION PLAN FOR THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SCRUTINY PANEL

Recommendation	Responsibility for implementation	Deadline for Implementation	Estimate of Cost	How progress will be monitored
<p>A review of the methods used for preparing consultation documents and the way consultation is carried out needs to be undertaken and an appropriate strategy developed which has regard to cost effectiveness and is not overly bureaucratic. This should incorporate a review of the current strategy and toolkit.</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive (Democracy and Partnerships)/Group Manager – Policy and Partnerships</p>	<p>July 2006</p>	<p>Within existing resources</p>	<p>Progress report to the Scrutiny Management Board six months after the final report is approved by the Assembly</p>
<p>The Council needs to ensure that it has the capacity within the new structure to lead and manage consultation at a senior officer level.</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive (Democracy and Partnerships)</p>	<p>April 2006</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“</p>
<p>Relevant officers should be trained before undertaking consultation.</p>	<p>Group Manager – Policy and Partnerships/Assistant Head of HR (Learning and Development)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“</p>

Recommendation	Responsibility for implementation	Deadline for Implementation	Estimate of Cost	How progress will be monitored
A cross-departmental corporate body called a Consultation Board should be set up to co-ordinate and initially monitor all consultation and it should incorporate any relevant consultative elements of the Research Governance Framework.	Assistant Chief Executive (Democracy and Partnerships)	August 2006	“	The Scrutiny Panel to reconvene after a maximum period of two years to review the working of the Consultation Board and assess its financial viability.
Members be made aware of results of consultation exercises and alerted to any issues arising.	Consultation Board	Ongoing	“	Progress report to the Scrutiny Management Board six months after the report is approved by the Assembly.
There should be a more systematic approach to the use of existing forums for consultation.	Consultation Board	Ongoing	“	“
The contract for the Citizens' Panel be retendered, and increased use be made of it, but first there should be a review of the present workings and restraints of the current contract, and opportunities to share a panel with key partners should be explored.	Group Manager – Policy and Partnerships	Report back to the Executive July/August 2006	“	“