

Have Your Say



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Newsletter

Issue 5: February 2012

Welcome

*Happy New Year to you all!
Welcome to the February
edition of the Have Your Say
Consultation Group
newsletter.*

*Please continue to encourage
your friends and family to sign
up to the group. The more
members we have, the more
representative the views
gathered will be. Your opinions
are important to us.*

Keeping up to date

To keep up to date with current Council consultations please visit the Rochford Council home page and click on the 'Have Your Say' tab at the top of the page.

To find out more about consultations across Essex visit the Engage Essex consultation portal
<http://www.engageessex.org.uk>.

If you have not already done so, sign up with an email address to receive regular surveys and updates on how your views are helping to develop services.

Contact information

For further information on consultation activity and to sign up by email please contact

Andrew Lowing,
Community Planning Officer on
andrew.lowing@rochford.gov.uk
or **01702 318061** or visit the Have
Your Say web page
<http://www.rochford.gov.uk/haveyoursay>. All consultations
featured in this newsletter are
available in hard copy.

Rochford District Council aims to deliver a first class service to all its customers. We see all feedback, whether good or bad, as a valuable way for us to learn and improve our services. Therefore, we welcome all comments, compliments and complaints. Please visit the Have Your Say web page for further information.

Community Forums

Forums are organised by Rochford District Council to enable members of the public to ask questions to the various public bodies in the District. Senior figures from Essex Police, Essex County Council, Rochford District Council, the local Parish Councils and the Health Service attend the meetings to answer questions raised by the public. You are all welcome to attend.

There are two community forums in the District:

West Community Forum held in
Rayleigh – next meeting
13 March 2012

Council Chamber,
Civic Suite,
Rayleigh at 7.30pm.

East Community Forum held in
Rochford – next meeting
20 March 2012 at the
Lecture Theatre,
Hawthorn Centre,
Rochford Hospital,
Union Lane, Rochford at 7pm.

Planning Consultations

The Planning Department at Rochford Council has its own mailing list for residents to join to take part in specific planning consultations. The Have Your Say Group deals with all council consultations that are non-planning related. For more information on the joining the Planning mailing list visit:
<http://rochford.jdi-consult.net/ldf> or call Planning Policy on **01702 318191**.

Housing Allocations

This consultation is still open. If you want to buy a home but cannot afford current market prices, please tell us by completing the online survey. Your response will help identify need for affordable housing in the District and where people want to live. It should take you less than a minute to complete the survey which can be found on the Have Your Say web page.

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Community Safety Partnership Community Events

A series of 'Help Us Preserve Our Open Parks and Spaces' events have been planned for the coming months. Details below:

- Great Wakering Recreation Ground – Friday 17 February 10am to 1pm
- Cherry Orchard Country Park – Saturday 10 March 1pm to 4pm
- Rochford Recreation Ground – Friday 30 March 2pm to 4pm
- Boston Avenue Play Space, Rayleigh – Friday 20 April 2pm to 4pm

Consultation feedback

Recent consultation activity has included:

Ageing Population Strategy

The strategy was approved by the Council Executive in September. Electronic copies can be located on the Council website. Hard copies are available from Andrew Lowing. Thank you to everyone who provided comments.

Budget Survey

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime, Waste and Recycling, Street Cleaning and Litter Picking were identified as the most important services in

the Council's recent budget consultation.

The areas where residents wanted to reduce spending were Sports, Culture and Leisure, Planning / Economic Development and Parks and Open Spaces.

The Budget Survey asking residents to prioritise council services in terms of their importance and whether spending should be reduced or increased was published in the last two editions of Rochford District Matters and made available online on the Council's website. Copies of the survey were also distributed at various Council meetings and venues in order to get as many responses as possible. The Council received a total of 495 responses, 328 by post and 167 online.

Respondents were split over some services. For example:

- Support to the Community was deemed a high priority by 8.6% of respondents and a low priority by 8.1%.
- Public and Environmental Health was a high priority for 11.1% of respondents and a low priority for 6.7%.
- Support to the Voluntary Sector was a high priority for 8.8% of respondents and 9.9% thought

it was a low priority.

All age groups stated that 'Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime' was the highest priority service. As for the services that should see spending reductions the under 25's and the 25-49 age groups' choice was 'Planning / Economic Development' while the 50-64 and 65+ age groups opted for 'Sports, Culture and Leisure'.

The feedback from this consultation has been considered by Members during the budget process.

Communicating with Residents survey

This survey ran in August and September and asked residents to give their views on how the Council currently communicates with them and how they would like to be communicated with in the future. 18% of respondents currently think that the Council communicates very well with the majority 58% stating fairly well. Just over half of respondents, 51%, use the Council's website and Rochford District Matters (RDM) to find out about Council services, news and events. The local press and parish newsletters were also popular responses. In terms of communicating in the future, the website and RDM remained the top choices accounting for 51% of responses.



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