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From: **Iceni Engagement**
Date: **Updated 27 May 2021**
Title: **JSP Proposed Engagement Strategy – Initial ideas on next steps**

DRAFT AND CONFIDENTIAL

The purpose of this note is to set out some initial thoughts with regards to continuing cross authority, statutory and non-statutory engagement to support the development of a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South West Hertfordshire.

Background

1. The five local planning authorities within South West Herts (Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council) are working in collaboration with Hertfordshire County Council to develop a JSP, with the intention to proactively plan for growth up to and beyond 2050.
2. The JSP will be a formal statutory Development Plan Document, providing the overarching strategic planning framework for the five Local Planning Authority areas.
3. There is also work being undertaken on a wider Hertfordshire county collaboration, involving all other local authorities within the county. This is being done through the Hertfordshire Growth Board. As such, any engagement in relation to a JSP will need to be aware of, and fit within, any wider collaboration work, to ensure consistency in messaging and approach.
4. The JSP team recognises the importance of ensuring that the JSP is not developed in isolation and that in order to help smooth the path of its development, ultimately allowing it to be a successfully adopted planning document, engagement with the wider community and stakeholders should form a pivotal and early part of the plan's evolution.
5. To commence this early engagement with the community, a widespread digital engagement exercise was undertaken between February and May 2020, asking residents across the 6 authorities areas about issues that were important to them. This resulted in 3,270 members of the community interacting and providing nearly 15,000 pieces of individual feedback. The community also provided over 2,000 pieces of 'free text' written feedback, in addition to the poll questions. The overall outcomes of the initial engagement have been written up in full, both from a qualitative and quantitative basis and include:
 - Even spread of ages of respondents, from under 25's to over 65's;
 - Clear emerging consensus on community priorities;
 - Strong basis for ongoing engagement; and

- Over 700 people willing to be engaged during the next stage of work.

A Reminder of Engagement Strategy Objectives

6. The objectives of the ongoing engagement are to continue to:

- Build awareness, understanding and generate interest in the process, resulting in greater participation downstream;
- Directly engage young people in the process and record their views on a series of key issues, with a view to using this initial feedback to frame the later stages of the engagement process, given the importance of their input;
- Establish a true two-way dialogue, enabling all stakeholders (including political) to become actively involved in the development of a plan;
- Allow the South West Herts authorities to effectively communicate the benefits of working together on this workstream; and
- Inform the technical work that has now commenced, by providing information related to priorities, issues and opportunities.

7. The engagement will initially cover the non-statutory stages of the plan preparation but will also start to cover some of the statutory consultation.

Initial Thoughts on Engagement Next Steps

8. In the table below we have set out some initial thoughts on the ways in which to continue the conversation locally, starting to build insight and transparency in the process over time, to both support the key stages of JSP work and promote the benefits of joint working.
9. It would be important to grow the audience at each stage and evaluate ongoing success, alongside recording quantitative and qualitative findings to inform the work.
10. It would also be important to ensure a strong online presence and audience to protect against ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.
11. Proposed engagement activities:

Stage of JSP development	Indicative timescale	Suggested engagement activity
JSP Programme Support	Spring 2021 onwards (ongoing)	<p>Resume six weekly communication officer meetings across the 6 authorities to coordinate engagement activity and consider how it can be built into existing workstreams. Embed JSP programme within comms plans for each authority.</p> <p>Refresh key messages and communications protocols.</p> <p>Map Local Plan timescales and other key events locally and regionally which may impact on engagement programme.</p>

JSP 'one pager'	Now – June 2021	Prepare a short (1 page) briefing note setting out the benefits of the JSP, who is involved and how the work is developing with key next steps – output to be a graphically designed document within infographics, initially for internal purposes but with the intention of being updated and issued to support future JSP consultation and engagement.
'Pre-visioning' Stage	Now – July 2021	<p>Undertake Council officer and Member sessions to brief on JSP progress and to flag upcoming visioning work as well as the SCG.</p> <p>Scope and build the JSP website and content; consider interactive content to build online audience over time including promotional / information video. Website to initially host visioning engagement.</p> <p>Develop JSP branding.</p> <p>Start to build JSP social media presence – Facebook etc.</p> <p>Work with vision consultants to map existing meeting network across the areas and consider attendance schedule over next 3 – 6 months e.g. LEP meetings, relevant Parish Council meetings, Chamber of Commerce, heritage groups, environmental groups etc.</p> <p>Map hard to reach in detail with focus on young people.</p> <p>Undertake briefing meetings with key internal stakeholders and test initial engagement strategy ideas.</p> <p>Email the 700 interested residents who said they would like to be involved as part of the earlier digital engagement exercise to see if they would be willing to take part in an online workshop/ focus group.</p> <p>Develop an ongoing social media strategy, using existing brand to note updates/ ways for people to get involved, register to take part etc.</p>
Launch of JSP Visioning (to be evolved in conjunction with the visioning consultant – Prior and Partners)	July 2021	<p>Launch JSP website to coincide with the start of the visioning work.</p> <p>Launch JSP social media channels to coincide with start of the visioning work.</p> <p>Issue joint SPMG press release to launch JSP vision engagement</p>

JSP visioning work	July 2021 – Autumn 2021	<p>To be refined once vision consultant scope agreed in detail - develop promotional collateral including printed newsletters and flyers, radio and newspaper adverts, posters and email bulletins.</p> <p>Develop strategy for focus group discussions based on issues raised in consultation to date <u>OR</u> develop strategy for community workshops, including those that have cross-authority representation.</p> <p>Consider developing stakeholder group forums – for example a forum with all Chamber of Commerce representatives in attendance and a forum for environmental groups, or heritage groups across all the local authorities.</p>
SoCG and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) approval processes	Autumn 2021	Monitor any external responses/ press in relation to approvals process.
SCI Consultation	Winter 2021	Update the 'one pager' (non stat) and issue in parallel to the SCI consultation (stat). 'User friendly' guide to the JSP.
Regulation 18 consultation	Early 2022	Ensure people focussed, digital approach to statutory consultation building on work to date and setting the tone for long term engagement, ensuring a wider audience is engaged in the process.