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| <p><b>1. Executive Summary</b></p> <p>1.1 The Overview Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of consultation. A Task Group consisting of five members of the Scrutiny Committee were appointed to carry out the review.</p> <p>1.2 The Terms of reference of the review were:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">To investigate the way in which Gravesham Borough Council consults with its residents and to formulate a code of practice by which the whole authority would operate</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">To ascertain how other local authorities/public service providers consult with their stakeholders</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">To examine the recommendations of the Auditors/CPA where these organisations believe that Gravesham Borough Council can improve its consultation with residents.</p> <p>1.3 The context in which the review was undertaken was the increased amount of public and stakeholder consultation identified by the Local Government modernisation agenda.</p> <p>1.4 Three evidence gathering sessions were held with witnesses from Gravesham Borough Council, The Greater London Assembly and the Consultation Institute.(Notes on these sessions are reproduced in Appendix 1)</p> <p>1.5 Recommendations.</p> <p>1.5.1 Develop a consultation strategy and link it in with the communication strategy due for publication in March 2005.</p> <p>1.5.2 Consolidate, co-ordinate, maintain and update existing databases of contacts and consultations through an individual or group within the council.</p> | <p>1.5.3 Investigate the possible introduction of a consultation toolkit to ensure consistency and a more professional approach across the authority.</p> <p>1.5.4 Ensure that there is feedback of results to the participants and others who have an interest. Examine alternative methods (could possibly use parish council's newsletters, local ward pamphlets, residents groups, local press amongst others).</p> <p>1.5.5 Co-ordinate stakeholder groups such as voluntary groups, special interest groups, young people etc. and use these groups for more focussed consultation.</p> <p>1.5.6 Exploit alternative new technologies for communication and consultation. (such as discussion boards on the website, use of texting etc.)</p> <p>1.5.7 Develop the expertise within the council on software such as 'SNAP'. Get Members involved at an early stage and make use of their local knowledge.</p> |
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