

## Questions from Charmian Spickernell

**To Councillor Bridget Wayman – Cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

### Question

Re. publicity for the Waste and Recycling Consultation:

1. Is there a standard process of publicising public consultations?
2. If so, why was this not followed for the Waste and Recycling consultation which began on 4 September?
3. Why was it sent 4 days later only to Parish Councils?
4. Why was the Council's data base not used?
5. Why was there no publicity in the Press until 3 weeks after the start date?
6. Why did it take a month for paper copies to reach the Libraries and then only because they were requested at an Area Board Meeting?

### Answer

1. **There is no defined standard process as it depends on the size and audience for the consultations – some for example would be direct to a user or affected group.**

**In this instance the waste and recycling consultation had a generic release via the Wiltshire Council web site, consultation portal, Our Community Matters web sites and Community Engagement Managers contact lists for each community area. The council's contact list is now part of the community area lists.**

**Officers will have attended 16 area board meetings by mid-October. Although the remaining two area boards were not able to schedule an agenda item on the consultation, it was covered under a chairman's announcement. In attending the area boards we are engaging with residents who would pass on news of the consultation through their respective networks in turn.**

**We work closely with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and they have sent the consultation link out on our behalf to local environmental groups and their wider network. The Wildlife trust are also promoting the consultation at events they are attending during the consultation period.**

2. **The generic release process has been followed.**
3. **In addition to the generic release set out above, a specific communication was sent to the parish councils to take advantage of the wide reach of their respective networks. Although this was four days**

after the general release this still left several weeks for residents to reply.

4. The council's data base has been used when the consultation was released and follow up emails are now in hand.
5. There is no standard guidance which states that the press should be notified of a consultation immediately after it goes live. A press release was sent out during the week following the consultation going live and put on the council's news portal on the website, with many weeks left for people to respond. It is the media's choice whether and when to publish or broadcast stories following a press release, if at all. On this occasion the press release was well covered by media -  
<https://www.spirefm.co.uk/news/local-news/2382321/wiltshire-council-talks-rubbish/>  
[http://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/15544036.All\\_change\\_on\\_rubbish\\_collections/](http://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/15544036.All_change_on_rubbish_collections/)  
[http://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/15537812.Have\\_your\\_say\\_on\\_recycling\\_changes/](http://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/15537812.Have_your_say_on_recycling_changes/)

A further press release is also planned for when there is a month left for people to respond, and other PR opportunities will be considered ahead of the deadline.

The consultation has also been promoted extensively on Wiltshire Council's social media feeds (collectively around 20,000 followers) and will continue to be so and included in the council's weekly parish newsletter.

At the time of writing, 1,916 people have responded to the consultation which, as it stands, is in the top five response rates for any council consultation over the last six years.

6. A print version of the consultation has been available since the start of the consultation period. We had not originally planned to distribute hard copies but to provide them to residents who requested the consultation in this format. 400 copies of the consultation have now been distributed to Wiltshire's libraries in response to a request at Pewsey Community area Board meeting. We did not distribute hard copies of the consultation initially as we did not know whether there would be demand for this format and we were endeavouring to minimise costs.