

Welcome to the seventh issue of the Citizens' Panel bulletin. This issue features updates on the upcoming annual meeting, gives feedback on recent consultations and also fills you in on current news.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact [citizenspanel@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:citizenspanel@chelmsford.gov.uk) or telephone 01245 606478 or 01245 606572.

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## **Annual meeting of Citizens' Panel – 5 December 2011**

The next annual meeting of the Citizens' Panel will take place on **5 December 2011** at Chelmsford Borough Council. There will be two sessions, one at **14:00** and the other at **18.30**.



The meetings will feature two presentations, the first one from the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Sustainable Communities which will look at the challenges faced by the Council following the new coalition Government, including fiscal policies, planning, benefits and homelessness. The second presentation will be on the new Arts and Sports Strategy which looks at how Chelmsford can continue to grow as a destination for high quality arts and sports. There will be time for questions and answers after each presentation.

If you would like to attend please contact Penny Frost on 01245606478 or email [citizenspanel@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:citizenspanel@chelmsford.gov.uk) by **Friday 25 November 2011**. Please let her know if you have any special requirements.

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## **Consultation Feedback**

### **Customer Access Survey 2011**

Some of you took part in the Customer Access Survey 2011 which looked at how customers contact us and their preferred way of accessing services. We received 409 responses and the key findings are as follows:

- Of the 409 respondents, 75% have contacted the Council in the last year.
- The most popular enquiries in 2011 were: to book tickets (18%), make a payment (14%) and make an application (13%).
- The majority of respondents contacted the Council via telephone at 57%, followed by 51% of respondents selecting contacting the Council in person; whilst email/website were chosen by 47% of respondents.



- The most popular way of finding information about the Council is via the website (65%), the Council's Life newspaper (38%) and local media (27%).
- The awareness of different Council services available online has increased and we have received very high levels of satisfaction on all different ways of contacting us.

Following the feedback, Chelmsford Borough Council has now produced an action plan, which includes website improvements and increasing the availability of services online (please see the link below).

### **Healthy Homes Survey**

The Council consulted on how we could help residents to make their homes a safer and better environment to live in and strengthen the local housing market. We received a total of 139 surveys being completed by residents, landlords, businesses, community representatives and health professionals. The results have influenced changes in the policy that will be going to the Council's Cabinet. The full results and a draft version of the policy can be found using the link below.

### **Town Centre Survey**

Firstly, we would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused by the initial technical issues with links to this survey.

The results are currently being analysed and will be addressed by the relevant service areas. However, initial results show positive feedback including comments on the Moulsham Street improvements and planned John Lewis development. Various areas of improvement were also identified which included cleanliness, safety after dark and parking. Further information will be available following a full analysis.

**Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to complete any of our surveys.**

**Results of all consultations can be found at:** [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/consultationresults](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/consultationresults)

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## **Current Consultations**

**The Future of Sports & Arts in the Heart of Essex** survey aims to find out how we can ensure that Chelmsford continues to grow as a destination for high quality sports and arts.

**Draft Housing Assistance Policy** is available for comments so that we can ensure that funding is directed to residents who most need it due to health and safety risks in their home environment and who are unable to fund improvement work independently.

**To take part in these surveys please go to:** [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/haveyoursay](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/haveyoursay)

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## **Event outcomes**

### **Personal Safety Workshops for Older People (Crucial Crew for Older People)**

The Safer Chelmsford Partnership and the Older Persons' Partnership Action Group worked together to deliver two personal safety workshop sessions in June, which were attended by 110 people from across the borough. The workshops covered planning for an emergency, fire safety in the home, crime reduction and doorstep crime. Excellent feedback was received and the event will be repeated again in 2012. For more information see [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/55plus](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/55plus) (Activities and Information tab).

## **2011 Older People's Information Day**

This year's event took place at the Chelmsford Cathedral on 14 March and was attended by over 350 residents. The event featured presentations about community safety, emergency planning, power of attorney, pharmaceutical advice and benefits. There were also over 30 information stands highlighting various services available within the borough for the over 55s.



For details of next year's event and other information, please see [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/55plus](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/55plus)

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## **Upcoming Events:**

- Moulsham Street's Christmas lights event is **on Saturday 26 November** between 12pm - 5pm
- Chelmsford High Street Christmas lights event is **on Sunday 27 November** between 12pm- 16.45pm, [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/christmas](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/christmas)
- Christmas Late Night Shopping begins in Chelmsford town centre on Thursday nights starting on 1 December. Please check details of individual store opening times for more information.
- Christmas Memorial Services, **Sunday 11 December**, at 2pm and 5pm at Chelmsford Cemetery and Crematorium, [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/christmasmemorialservices](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/christmasmemorialservices)
- Holocaust Memorial Day, **Thursday 26 January 2012**, at 7.30pm at Chelmsford Borough Council, [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/holocaustmemorialday](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/holocaustmemorialday)

Please see: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/calendar](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/calendar) for more information about events.

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## **What's Happening**

**Chelmsford's Bid for City Status:** Chelmsford's bid to receive City status in 2012 in celebration of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee has been submitted, but the result won't be announced until early 2012. It is important that our bid continues to gain support whilst the bids are being considered by The Queen and her Ministers. To view a copy of Chelmsford's bid and pledge your support, please visit [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/citybid](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/citybid)

**High Chelmer Market and multi storey car park:** Following structural building works the first four levels of the car park have now re-opened. 277 spaces are now available, but the car park is still operating reduced opening hours, from 8.30am to 9pm Monday to Saturday, and 10am to 5pm on Sundays. The remaining floors will be available from 21 November. Please see: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parking](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parking) for more information.

**Moulsham Street** improvements were completed ahead of schedule, with the road re-opening on 17 October. The improvements include wider pavements for shoppers and a narrow road which will reduce traffic speed. Please see: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/moulshamstreet](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/moulshamstreet) for more information.

**Primark** is due to open in May 2012 in the High Chelmer Shopping Centre.

**John Lewis** is due to open in spring 2014, together with many more High Street shops.

## Available Services:

**Customer Service Centre** (Monday to Thursday - 8.45am to 4.45pm; Friday - 8.45am to 4.15pm) deals with queries relating to Housing, Council Tax, Benefits, Concessionary Fares and Parking Permits. Appointments and drop in available.

We have also teamed up with other local organisations, which now have a presence at the Customer Service Centre:

- **Fire Service** (first Monday of every month, 10:00-13:00) offers advice about fire safety and prevention in the home, including fitting smoke alarms and how to plan an escape from a fire. No appointment is necessary.
- **Chelmsford Women's Aid** (first Thursday of each month, 09:00-16:30) works with women and their children whose lives are affected by domestic abuse and offer them support and advocacy as required. This is a drop-in service.
- **Citizens' Advice Bureau** (Monday-Friday, 10:00-16:00) offer advice and no appointment necessary.
- **Hyde In Touch** (every Thursday from 14:00) support to vulnerable people in keeping the home they are already in, or finding and maintaining a home in their local community. To make an appointment please ring 01245 607154.
- **Victim Support** (second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 10:00 to 12:00) this independent charity gives free and confidential support and information to victims of crime. You can drop in or make an appointment on 0845 4565 995
- **One Place Online Help** introduce people to computers and the internet enabling them to gain new skills, opportunities, services and savings. To make an appointment call Vikkie Massey on 01621 774532 or via [vikkie.massey@one-place.org.uk](mailto:vikkie.massey@one-place.org.uk)

**Mobile Customer Information Service** is available at different locations across the Borough each month. See [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/mobileinfo](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/mobileinfo) or call 01245 606891

**Hylands House:** [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/hylands](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/hylands) or call 01245 605500

**Theatres:** [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/theatres](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/theatres) or call 01245 606505

**Museums:** [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums) or call 01245 605700

**Do it online!** You can now access many Council services 24/7, for example:

- Apply for Benefits: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/benefits)
- Apply for Housing: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/housingapplication](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/housingapplication)
- Pay for Council Tax: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/payment](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/payment)
- Apply for Parking Permits and Tickets: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parkingpermit](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parkingpermit)
- Order Recycling Replacements: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/recyclingrequestform](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/recyclingrequestform)
- 'Do It Online' directory is available at: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/doitonline](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/doitonline)

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**We hope that you find this newsletter helpful.  
Thank you for being a member of the Chelmsford Citizens' Panel.**