

GATESHEAD COUNCIL AND NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SCHEDULE – JOINT EXAMINATION

EXAMINATION GUIDANCE NOTE

Examiner – Ms Katie Child B.Sc (Hons) MA MRTPI

Programme Officer – Brian Wilson

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Purpose of the Guidance Note

1. This note provides guidance to participants on the procedural and administrative arrangements for the examination.

Dates for hearing sessions

2. The hearing sessions (which are part of the examination) have been arranged for **21st and 22nd April 2016**. The sessions will be held at: The Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH.
3. Two documents are available with this note:

Main Issues and Questions for the examination. These will form the basis of the discussion at the hearing sessions.

Draft hearing timetable – this sets out the timetable for the sessions. This is the first version and details may change.

Scope of the Examination and the Examiner's role

4. The Examination will consider whether Gateshead Council and Newcastle City Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedules meet the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and the CIL 2010 Regulations.
5. The Councils have submitted separate Charging Schedules for examination, based on a joint evidence base. The examination will focus on legal compliance and viability. The Councils should rely on evidence collected whilst preparing the schedules to demonstrate that they are viable. Those seeking changes have to demonstrate why that is not the case.
6. After the hearing sessions, I will prepare a report to the Councils with my conclusions. I will deal with broad issues in my report rather than specifically with each representation made.

The Programme Officer

7. The Programme Officer (PO) is Brian Wilson. He is working under my direction, and for the purposes of the examination is independent of the Council. His contact details are as follows:

Brian Wilson, Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH
Tel. 0191 433 2145
Email: brianwilson@gateshead.gov.uk

8. The main task of the PO is to act as a channel of communication between parties and myself, to liaise with parties to ensure the smooth running of the examination, to ensure all documents received are recorded and distributed, and to maintain the Examination library.
9. Copies of Examination documents can be found on the Councils' Examination websites at:

<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Building%20and%20Development/Community-Infrastructure-Levy/Community-Infrastructure-Levy.aspx>
<http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy>

10. Any participant who does not have access to the Internet should contact the PO so alternative arrangements can be put in hand.
11. Any procedural questions or other matters that you wish to raise with me prior to the hearing sessions should be made through the PO.

Progressing your representations

12. Those who have made representations on the Schedules will by now have indicated whether their views should be dealt with in written form or whether they wish to discuss them orally at a hearing session. Both methods will carry the same weight and I will have equal regard to views put at the hearing or in writing. Attendance at the hearing sessions will only be useful and helpful to me if you wish to participate in the discussion.
13. The list of **Main Issues and Questions** accompanying this note will form the basis of the discussion at hearing sessions.
14. The *Draft hearing timetable* includes a draft list of participants for each issue. This is based on previously indicated wishes. If you think you should be listed at a different or additional session please contact the PO by the end of **Friday 8th April 2016**. Listed participants who no longer wish to participate in the hearings should tell the PO by the same date.
15. A final version of the hearing timetable will be published on the Examination websites about a week before the start of the hearings. It will be for individual participants to check the progress of the hearings, either on the website or with the PO, and to ensure that they are present at the right time.

The hearing sessions

16. The hearings will take the form of a roundtable discussion which I shall lead. They will not involve the formal presentation of cases by participants or cross-examination. There will be a lot to cover and all contributions should be focussed.
17. The hearing sessions will normally run from 10:00 and 13:00 and 14:00 and 17:00 each day. A short break will usually be taken mid-morning and mid-afternoon.
18. Depending on numbers, there may only be space at the table for one representative of each group or organisation. However, there is no objection to the representative changing if notified to the Examiner and others present at the time.
19. Please let the PO know as soon as possible if you have any specific needs in relation to attendance and participation at the hearing sessions.

Hearing statements

20. The Councils should produce a hearing statement for each of the issues and questions set out in the list of *Main Issues and Questions*.
21. Those who made representations may also submit a hearing statement on the *Main Issues and Questions*. However, the preparation of a statement is not a requirement.
22. Hearing statements should be as short as possible, and kept to a maximum of 3000 words for each Issue. Appendices should be included where directly relevant and necessary, and should be as succinct as possible. Statements should clearly indicate which issue/question is being answered, and include page and paragraph numbers.
23. In preparing statements you should be aware of the information and documents on the Councils' CIL webpages, including my Initial Questions to the Councils and their response.
24. Four paper copies and an electronic version of each hearing statement should be submitted to the PO by 5pm on **Friday 8th April 2016**. Unless there are exceptional circumstances it is likely that late submissions will not be accepted.
25. Hearing statements will be posted on the Examination webpages, so they are available to all participants and anyone else who wishes to read them. They will not be circulated directly to participants. However, anyone who is unable to access them on the websites may request copies from the PO.
26. Aside from the hearing statements, no other written evidence will be accepted, unless I specifically request it. The hearing sessions should not be used to introduce new evidence or arguments.

Site visits and close of the examination

27. After the close of the hearing sessions I will visit relevant parts of the area, unaccompanied, if necessary.
28. The examination will remain open until my report has been submitted to the Councils. However, I will not accept any further representations or evidence after the hearing sessions have ended unless I specifically request it. Late or unsolicited material may be returned.

Further information

29. Further information about the preparation and examination of CIL Charging Schedules can be found in the National Planning Practice Guidance:
<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy/>

Katie Child

EXAMINER