

Gateshead Council Local Development Framework



Statement of Community Involvement – SCI December 2007



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Information

This document is available on request in large print, Braille, audiotape and other languages. Please ring 0191 433 3444 or e-mail LDF@Gateshead.Gov.UK

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A new system for planning was introduced in England in 2004. This was done through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. One of the main requirements of the new law is that the community should be more involved in the planning process. Consequently Local Planning Authorities are now required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document, which outlines the Council's strategy for involving community groups, stakeholders and other organisations in the preparation and review of planning policy documents and in the consideration of planning applications.
- 1.2 The objectives and guidelines set out in this document will apply directly to all future Council planning documents prepared under the new legislation. Nevertheless the general approach will mirror that taken in the preparation of other Council plans and strategies and there should be no difference in how the Council involves the community, no matter which policy initiative is being discussed at the time. The SCI has to go through a number of distinct stages prior to its adoption during which time the community; key stakeholders and other consultees have a number of opportunities to influence its form and content.

Gateshead's Demographic Context

- 1.3 The latest official estimate of the total population of the Borough stands at 190,500¹. A general trend has been identified that shows an increase in ethnic diversity within the Borough and that the proportion of the population which is from a minority ethnic group now equates to approximately 3.2%. In addition a long-term trend towards an ageing population within the Borough has also been identified, and is expected to continue². Consequently the needs of these and other hard to reach groups would need to be catered for³. Potential consultation techniques would need to be tailored to take these factors into account. Where possible groups and bodies most relevant to the profile and demography of the area have been identified.

Who we are going to involve and how;

- 1.4 A large number of organisations as well as individuals may have an interest in shaping the future of Gateshead. The new legislation sets out the minimum consultation standards, which the Council must meet. At different stages of the process the Council must write to bodies and organisations, which are specifically named or described in government guidance⁴. In the past the process of preparing development plans was mainly based on formal written methods of consultation with some use of more interactive methods. As part of the new system planning authorities should involve people from all sections of the community in the process at as early a stage as possible.
- 1.5 It is the aim of the Council through this document to take a more inclusive approach to involving the general public, stakeholders and other consultees in planning issues and processes in ways that everyone can understand (for a full consultee list see Appendix 2). There are many different ways in which the Council can involve people and groups, and it is important that a wide range of methods are considered in every consultation exercise. However it should be noted that it is not the purpose of the SCI to specify exactly what type of consultation method

¹ Source: Office for National Statistics mid year estimates 2006

² Source: Office for National Statistics

³ For further details on hard to reach groups please see paragraph 1.11

⁴ Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Development Frameworks published by ODPM 2004 <http://www.odpm.gov.uk>

should be used in every case. Appendix 5 shows a range of different possible methods of consultation, which may be used depending on a variety of different circumstances. The emphasis as set out in government guidance and in this document is on early involvement of the community and other stakeholders in the planning process well before formal consultation begins. However it must be said that the formal processes are important in that they ensure everyone with an interest has a clear opportunity to comment on the proposed plan, document or proposal.

Why involve the community in Planning?

- 1.6 Government guidance has the objective of ensuring that the planning system should generally aim to improve the lives of the widest cross section of society. Different people have differing needs and they may disagree about priorities. It is only through early and effective engagement between the Council, local communities and stakeholders that the best and most sustainable planning outcomes may be achieved. The Council views this as an opportunity to be as inclusive as possible and for the removal of traditional barriers between it and the local community. Planning has in the past largely been seen as a remote and complicated process, which is full of confusing technical terms and jargon. The perception (correct or otherwise) that articulate individuals or groups have dominated community involvement exercises has been a problem.
- 1.7 Effective community involvement requires processes for;
- Notifying and informing communities about policies and proposals in good time;
 - Enabling communities to put forward their own ideas and participate in developing proposals and options, rather than simply commenting when they are fixed;
 - Consultation on formal proposals; and
 - Feedback
- 1.8 The process should improve relationships between the Council and the community allowing community concerns to be identified, understood and addressed. Local expertise, knowledge and opinion are vital pieces of information, which the Council needs in order to plan for the future of the community and make good decisions. Decision-making will be improved allowing resolution of conflict and the minimisation of delay whilst enabling priorities to be fully tested and challenged.

Role of the SCI

- 1.9 The Council in its role as Local Planning Authority will have to comply with the standards and methods of consultation contained in the approved SCI document when preparing and reviewing planning documents within the Local Development Framework (LDF). The result of this would be that the Council would not only meet the minimum statutory requirements as prescribed within the regulations⁵ but would also partake in a wide ranging process of community involvement as described in the SCI document. To comply with the regulations all local development documents must include a statement of consultation, which outlines how the local community and stakeholders were involved in the process. There needs to be a *submission* consultation statement for Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and a *standard* consultation statement for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These statements

⁵Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

have to say who has been involved and how they were consulted; they must also include a summary of the issues raised and how those issues have been addressed.

- 1.10 A failure to meet the standards as set out in this SCI document may result in development plan documents not being able to progress to the adoption stage and may also leave supplementary planning documents open to legal challenge. The primary test for these documents as set out by government guidance (when they are subject to public examination) is that they are deemed to be 'sound'. One 'test of soundness' is that the planning document has been prepared in accordance with the approved SCI (or the relevant regulations if the SCI is not yet adopted). The tests of soundness can be found in Appendix 1.

Hard to reach groups

- 1.11 Effective involvement is important and requires an effort to engage those who have not been involved in the past. These groups are often referred to as '**hard to reach**' groups. These can be any group that is least likely to be able to access Council services as a result of a number of factors such as; physical inaccessibility (e.g. the elderly); language; cultural perceptions & traditions; disengagement with society and social expectations. The definition of a hard-to-reach group is, (for the purposes of this document), 'any population grouping of significant size that, because of a shared location, identity, interest or a pattern of societal discrimination and/or victimisation, is difficult for local authorities and service providers to engage with.'

- 1.12 A core aim of the Council is to improve equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between persons of different racial, ethnic, religious and social groups. The Council currently works in partnership with the Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council (GVOC) and the Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP) and provides copies of all documents in a variety of languages and formats on request. This will continue for the production of the Local Development Framework and during the planning application decision-making process.

- 1.13 There will be ongoing liaison between Council officers (who will be engaged in the preparation of the Local Development Framework), officers involved in the Development Control process and other officials within the Council who deal with consultation and public participation on other corporate initiatives and strategies (e.g. the Community Strategy & Sustainable Community Strategy). The Council also runs a system of area forums, which operate, on a quarterly basis. These have and continue to be used to engage with a wide variety of groups. Other 'reasonable adjustments' have been made by the Council in order to fulfil its statutory obligations (e.g. under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 & the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000). These may include the provision of disabled access to buildings and facilities, auxiliary aids and a provision of services by alternative methods.

Role of Planning Aid

- 1.14 Planning Aid is a voluntary service, which provides free, independent and professional advice and support on town planning matters to disadvantaged community groups and individuals. It is co-ordinated by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Northern Branch and covers the areas of Tees Valley, County Durham, Cumbria, Northumberland plus Tyne and Wear. The Government is funding Planning Aid to enhance its service, become more proactive, and develop a greater role in targeting communities that traditionally do not get involved in the planning system and increase their ability to participate in the system. Planning Aid can provide a useful link to local communities for local planning authorities preparing a SCI or undertaking community consultation on planning applications.

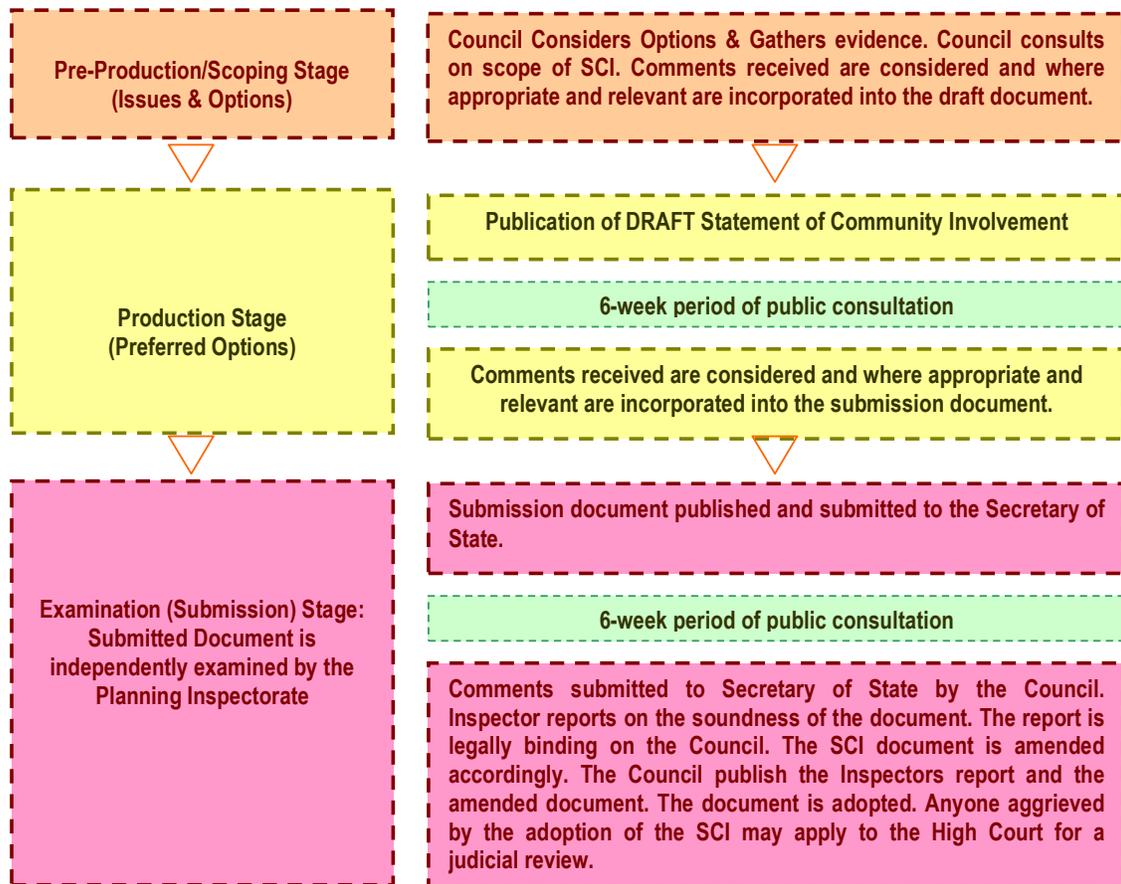
- 1.15 Planning Aid can help you to; Comment on planning applications; Get involved in the preparation of Development Plans; Draw up your own community plan or Apply for planning permission or appeal against the refusal of permission. If you qualify for Planning Aid you will be given advice over the telephone or you will be allocated a volunteer. Planning Aid does not means test but it does apply a set of criteria to help determine whether someone qualifies for Planning Aid assistance. If your local Planning Aid service decides that you do not qualify for Planning Aid you will be sent a leaflet with details of planning consultants in your area. If your enquiry is straightforward it may be possible to give you an answer straight away. If it is more complicated it will be passed to a volunteer who will contact you separately. The volunteer will advise you over the telephone, in writing or by a meeting, depending on the circumstances. The Council will proactively engage with Planning Aid during both the LDF production process and the development control process in accordance with the Planning Aid Concordat 2005.
- 1.16 The contact details of Planning Aid North are as follows; Address: Planning Aid North, Joint Professional Centre for Planning and Landscape, 3rd Floor, Claremont Tower, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Claremont Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU.
Tel: 0191 222 5776. Fax: 0191 2225669
Email address: ntco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Website address: www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Planning Advice Helpline: 0870 850 9803

How your response will be dealt with

- 1.17 The Council is committed to taking account of consultation responses and findings. Consequently it is important for the Council to keep you informed of how your representation is being dealt with. How you make your views known will depend upon which document or proposal you are being consulted on and may in some instances be limited to written representations in order for your views to be formally taken into account.
- 1.18 Appropriate feedback will be provided to those who participate in either the informal or formal consultation exercises on Local Development Documents [LDDs] and as part of the Development Control process. The method of feedback used would be dependent on the particular consultation exercise being carried out; for example if you submit a written representation the Council would endeavour to acknowledge its receipt as soon as reasonably practical. If you request a document, Council officers will direct you to where the document would be available to view or tell you whether you could obtain a copy and if there would be any charge.
- 1.19 The reasons for the selection of preferred options and other matters relating to the production of Local Development Documents will be given in accordance with the government guidance contained in paragraph 4.12 of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Development Frameworks. Decisions on the content of Local Development Documents will be made in accordance with the regulations⁶ and PPS12. Officers will take these into account when making recommendations to Cabinet for ratification.

⁶ Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

Figure 1: The SCI Preparation Process



2. Links with other plans, strategies & corporate initiatives

- 2.1 The SCI will have regard to other Council strategies and initiatives, which promote involvement and participation. The SCI and wider Local Development Framework [LDF] process as well as Development Control [DC] would have regard to these strategies and initiatives and reflect their wider aims and objectives.⁷

The SCI & the Community Strategy (CS) 2004-2007

- 2.2 The Community Consultation & Involvement Strategy (CCIS) was published in 2002 and outlines the overall approach, which the Council takes when involving local communities in matters that may affect them. The Gateshead Community Strategy (CS) sets out a more detailed approach to involving communities and has been influenced by the CCIS. The SCI aims to incorporate the main principles of the CS, which include a coordinated and inclusive approach to consultation and involvement both within and without the Council where all sections of the community have the opportunity to participate.

The SCI & the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) – Vision 2030

- 2.3 The new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is currently being produced by the Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP) and will replace the existing Community Strategy after 2007. The GSP's role as a facilitator of community engagement and involvement (through the Sustainable Community Strategy) enables a wide range of individuals, stakeholders and other groups to

⁷ Including the Gateshead Cultural, Disability Equality, Gender Equality, Equalities, Disability & Deaf Equality strategies. There will also be linkages where appropriate with the Race Equality Scheme and the Gypsy & Traveler policy.

have an input into many various Council initiatives including the planning process. Involving the GSP in the production of The Local Development Framework will assist in compliance with the tests of soundness particularly by supporting the deliverability of Local Development Documents [LDDs] through increased synergy with the spending plans of other key partners. Local Development Documents [LDDs] produced under the LDF (in particular the Core Strategy) will aim to work in tandem with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) incorporating the core themes of social inclusion and involvement. The close alliance between the SCS & Core Strategy will reflect current government guidance⁸ with the aim of coordinating consultation practice between Planning and Environmental Strategy, Development Control and the Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP) ensuring maximum synergy that will in future provide the Council and its partners with a greater degree of flexibility in the development of a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy and an inclusive and transparent Local Development Framework.

3. Community Involvement & the Local Development Framework.

What is the Local Development Framework (LDF)?

- 3.1 As was briefly mentioned in the introduction section, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced major reforms to the development plan system in England. Under new arrangements, the former system of Unitary Development Plans (UDP), Local Plans and Structure Plans will be replaced by a new style Local Development Framework [LDF]. The LDF will comprise a set of Local Development Documents (LDDs) to deliver the Council's integrated spatial strategy. The LDF is a new 'folder' of planning documents, which will be produced, on a rolling programme over the next few years. (See appendix 4 for a diagram illustrating the LDF structure.)

The role of Planning Officers

- 3.2 Planning Officers are generally available by prior appointment to discuss issues raised during the preparation of the planning document. If people are aware of other individuals or groups which share their concerns or that an organisation is already taking up an issue with the Council, then the possibility of a shared meeting should be considered to make best use of limited officer time and other resources. Also the officer contacted may suggest attendance at a future meeting or event, which has already being organised should that meeting or event be discussing issues relevant to their concerns. Additionally it should be noted that if any person wishes to comment on a planning document they should write to the Head of Planning & Environmental Strategy or as otherwise indicated in consultation documents.

Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.3 Currently there is a tier of planning policy, which operates at a regional level called the Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS]. The strategy has a statutory status as a development plan. As a result it has more legal weight and all new local development documents will need to be in line with it. At the time of publication the independent public examination of the RSS has just been completed.

Role of councillors

- 3.4 Gateshead Councillors as elected representatives have an important decision-making role either through the full Council, Cabinet or a specific committee. They have an important

⁸ Planning Together, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Spatial Planning: a practical guide (Jan 07)

function in creating development plans for the Borough. Councillors are always willing to receive and consider the views of their constituents on planning matters, but it should be noted that if any person wishes to comment on a planning document they should write to the Head of Planning & Environmental Strategy or as otherwise indicated in consultation documents.

Town, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings

- 3.5 Town and Parish councils both within and adjacent to Gateshead will be consulted during the preparation of local development documents. They will be kept fully informed of progress throughout the process and made aware of opportunities for their input and arrangements for local public participation. Planning officers will engage with these groups on a regular basis to discuss emerging planning issues and seek their views on how they would like them to be addressed in The Local Development Framework.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs):

- 3.6 DPDs have the highest status of the new type of planning document. As a result they will be subject to the most scrutiny, which includes independent examination by a planning inspector. Consultation exercises for DPDs will need to be in compliance with the SCI and will also have regard to the existing Community Strategy and the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy. The LDF must include the following DPDs;

The Core Strategy – sets out the overall vision, aims, objectives and strategic policies for the borough as a whole.

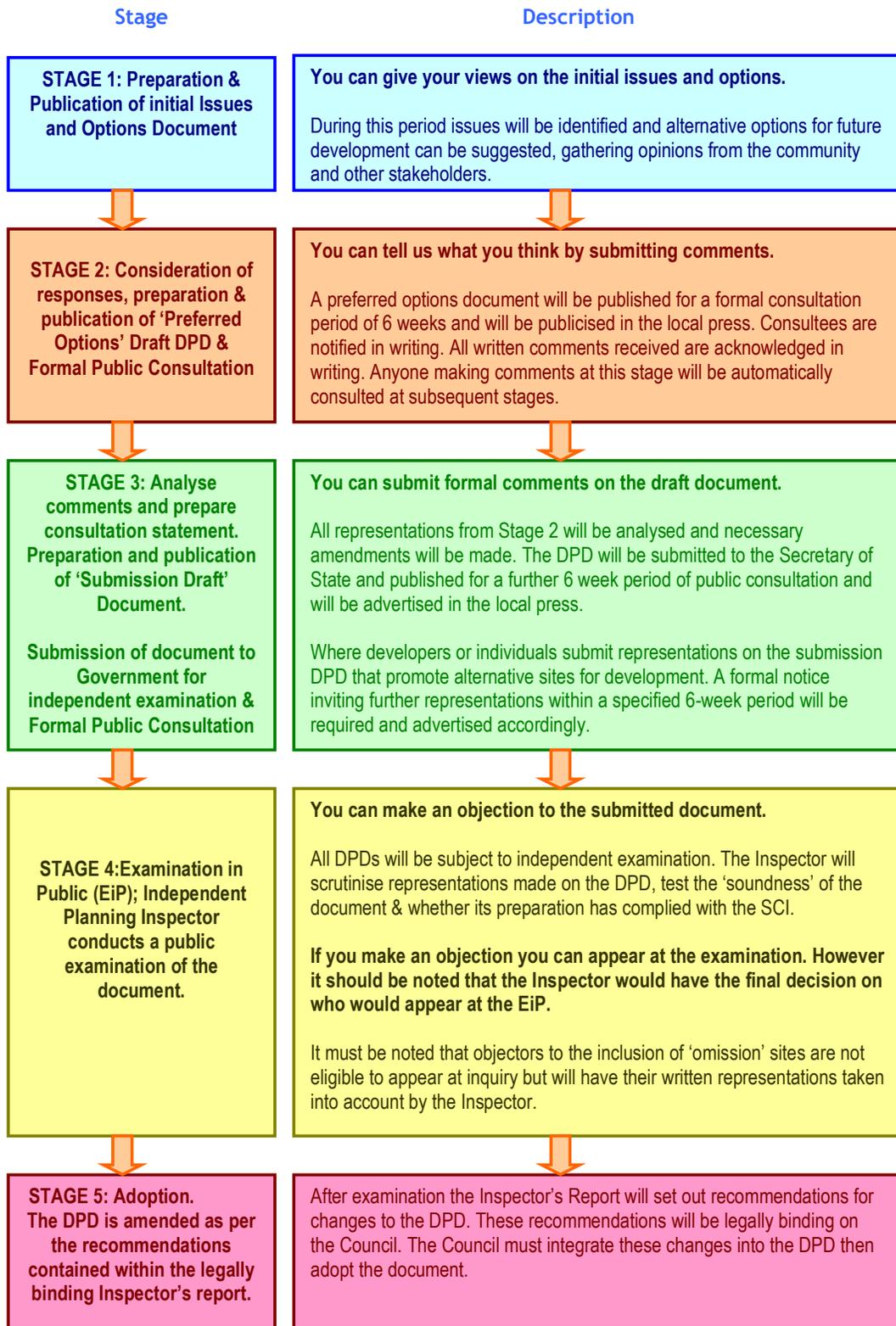
Site Specific Allocations – shows which land is set aside for specific uses of land.

The Proposals Map – illustrates the geographical extent of policies in a colour map, which would be updated as necessary to reflect other DPDs.

Area Action Plans – For areas undergoing major change or requiring special protection.

Other Specific DPDs – To cover for example specific topics such as housing, employment or retail development or to amend development control policies. Figure 2 briefly illustrates the stages in the production of DPDs.

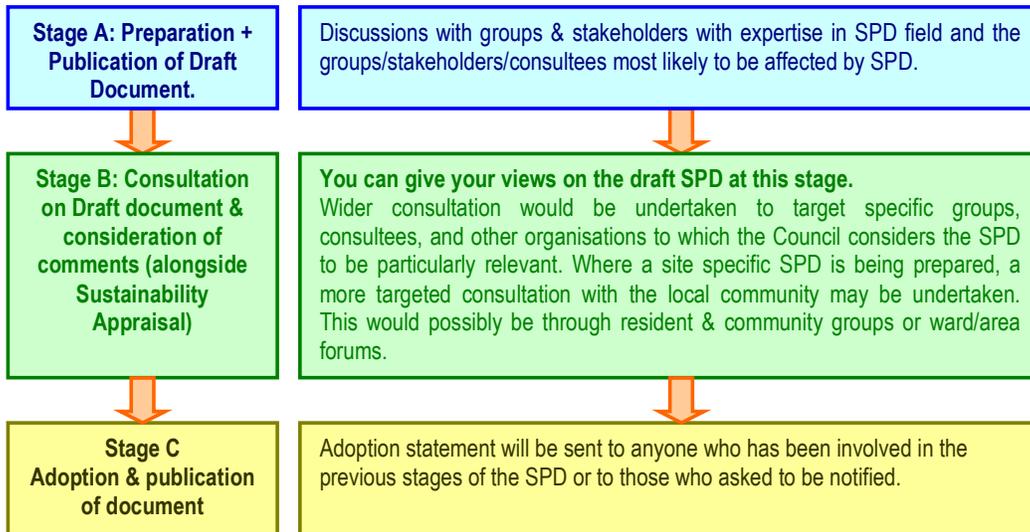
Figure 2: Development Plan Document Production Process



Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):

- 3.7 SPD's do not have development plan status i.e. they are not statutory planning documents and are not subject to independent examination. They cannot be used to rewrite adopted policies or for the allocation of land for specific uses. They will as with all Council documents have substantial community involvement as part of their preparation. In addition they will be subject to sustainability appraisal and will constitute a material consideration in the determining of planning applications. Figure 3 illustrates the SPD production process.

Figure 3: The preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document [SPD]



Other documents in the Local Development Framework:

- 3.8 **Local Development Scheme [LDS]** – Sets out the details, methods of production and timescales relating to the local development documents. The Local Development Scheme has recently been revised and contains details for the re-deposit Unitary Development Plan, the Statement of Community Involvement and the Core Strategy DPD. The LDS is reviewed annually as part of the Annual Monitoring Report (see below).
- 3.9 **Statement of Community Involvement [SCI]** – Specifies how the Council intends to involve communities and stakeholders in the process of preparing local development documents and in the development control process.
- 3.10 **Annual Monitoring Report [AMR]** – Reports on progress being made in relation to the production of LDF documents.
- 3.11 **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** – Whilst preparing local development documents within the LDF the Council must also undertake a sustainability appraisal. For Development Plan Documents this process has to incorporate the requirements of the European Union *Strategic Environmental Assessment* directive 2001/42/EC. At each stage of the document production process the sustainability appraisal will examine the social, environmental and economic effects of policies & proposals.
- 3.12 The Council's methodology for sustainability appraisal has expanded upon the work already done at the regional level by SUSTAINED (the region's Sustainable Development Round Table).

SUSTAINE has produced a Regional Sustainable Development Framework called the 'Integrated Regional Framework'. The framework contains 17 objectives & recommendations on carrying out sustainability appraisals.

- 3.13 In line with these recommendations, whilst preparing and implementing sustainability appraisals for planning documents, the Council will consult key stakeholders on the scope, key issues & detailed objectives for each appraisal process. It will also consult a wide range of other stakeholders on identifying and testing options against the agreed sustainability objectives as part of the wider consultation process. Finally the Council will prepare and publish interim and final sustainability reports in conjunction with the formal drafts of the related planning document.

Keeping the Local Development Framework up to date

- 3.14 Circumstances change over time and consequently the programme of local development documents within the LDS may very well change in the future. The most reliable source of information on changes to the LDF programme will be the Council's LDS website⁹, which will be continually updated as soon as the new information is available. Addresses for this and a range of other useful websites can be found on page 23. For individuals without access to the Internet, then similar information will always be available by letter or telephone upon request. The Council may produce newsletters at different periods to update interested individuals and organizations on progression of the Local Development Framework.

Access to Local Development Documents [LDDs]

- 3.15 Information relating to the drafting of the Local Development Documents will be available to the community through in a number of ways;
- In either hard copy or electronic format.
 - Copies of all documents will be made available to view at Gateshead Council buildings.
 - A request for information can be made available in Braille, large print or translated into another language.
 - When necessary the Spatial Development team will offer advice and assistance over the telephone and at the Development & Enterprise reception area.
 - The local community can request that information be sent to them by post at a reasonable cost.

How to get involved during the preparation of the Local Development Framework; a discussion of possible consultation methods.¹⁰

- 3.16 **Draft Documents;** All draft documents will be available for inspection at Gateshead Council buildings and local libraries during the set consultation period. The document in question will provide details of how and when to make representations.
- 3.17 **Letters to statutory bodies;** Gateshead Council is in the process of identifying and maintaining a database of all statutory consultees who will be consulted in writing when key documents are released in draft form. This database will be continually updated.

⁹ See page 24

¹⁰ It should be noted that the list of possible consultation methods discussed in this section is neither exclusive nor exhaustive and that the consultation method used will need to be appropriate for the consultation exercise relating to the particular document being prepared at the time.

- 3.18 **Briefing workshops**; Briefing workshops are simple, easy to organise working sessions held to establish a project agenda or brief. They can simultaneously:
- introduce people to the project;
 - help establish the key issues;
 - get people involved and motivated;
 - identify useful talent and experience; and
 - identify the next steps needed.
- 3.20 Briefing workshops are useful at the start of a project or action-planning event and can act as a public launch. Potential users of the project will be invited to attend a workshop to discuss either a range of subjects or just a single issue. Similar workshops may be helpful on different topics (for example housing, jobs or areas of open spaces). These will be held in accessible locations and may need to be held over a number of days and varying times to ensure all sections of the community have an opportunity to attend.
- 3.21 **Newspaper Supplement – Council Magazine**; Newspaper supplements are one of the most effective ways of spreading planning and development ideas to large numbers of people and generating public debate. They are particularly useful for presenting proposals from action planning events. The Borough Council’s free publication ‘Council News’ that is sent to every household in the Borough, and the ‘Business Briefing’ magazine will (where appropriate) be used to disseminate information about the Local Development Framework process, emerging issues and consultation events.
- 3.22 **Planning for Real**®; “Planning for Real” can be used to help communities develop simple models to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their area can be improved. It is a highly visible, hands on community development and empowerment tool, which people of all abilities and backgrounds find easy and enjoyable to engage in. A large 3 dimensional model of a neighbourhood is constructed, preferably by local people, using cardboard cut outs for buildings pasted onto a base plan fixed to polystyrene of cardboard. This could be used specifically to address areas where major change is proposed (for example, housing renewal areas). It may be appropriate for the Council to attend special events organised by the community with the aid of external facilitators with expertise in the “Planning for Real” field. The use of an external facilitator will increase the credibility of the conclusions of a “Planning for Real” exercise.
- 3.23 **Review Session**; Review sessions are a useful way of monitoring progress and maintaining momentum. They can be held weeks, months, or even years after an action planning event or other community planning initiative. All those involved in previous activity are invited back to a session, lasting up to one day. Invitations can also be sent to those who may wish to become involved in the future. A programme is designed to review progress, evaluate earlier initiatives and determine the next steps. A report of the session is written up and circulated.
- 3.24 **Masterplanning**; Masterplanning combines a series of workshops, exhibitions and seminars to generate professionally produced urban design proposals that can be influenced by local opinion. They are a good way of generating significant public debate and providing an impetus for implementation. An overall design concept is agreed by the organisers (such as vacant sites or rundown estates). Teams of professionals are selected by open competition to prepare improvement schemes for each of the selected sites. The chosen teams facilitate design workshops with local residents, prepare proposals and present them in an interactive

exhibition. A final, highly publicised seminar is held to debate the results and generate momentum for the scheme's implementation.

- 3.25 **Planning Focus Meeting**; The planning focus meeting includes one or more meetings between the development industry and Local Planning Authorities. It provides a forum for the development industry to introduce projects and explain their various components and considerations. Planning focus meetings are valuable because they deal at an early stage with matters that might otherwise delay the assessment process. They help clarify the main policies, criteria and guidelines that will be used by the Local Planning Authority in assessing and determining projects. Their purpose is to establish a sound basis that ensures projects are adequately described and their implications are properly identified and addressed. The Local Planning Authority will be able to suggest the areas and groups the developer needs to engage with regarding their proposal before formal submission of their scheme.
- 3.26 **Public Meetings - area, town and village meetings**; Public meetings can help the Council to present information and proposals within a framework that enables immediate discussion and feedback. These will be particularly relevant to core strategies, area action plans and planning applications. These meetings represent an open and inclusive way for people to engage in robust debate on the key issues. Public meetings will be used in conjunction with other techniques and not as the only consultative tool as the participants do not always reflect the views of the wider community.
- 3.27 **Web-based consultation – bulletin board/discussion groups**; The Internet provides quick and efficient opportunities for interested stakeholders to engage in the planning process. The Internet offers the following potential uses:
- Timely, accurate information on site plans, opportunities, constraints, commissioned studies;
 - A platform on which organisations can respond to issues known to be of community concern;
 - A way for organisations to invite stakeholders to comment on the specific proposals and a means of receiving feedback; and
 - An interactive medium allowing discussion and debate.
- 3.28 All formal consultations undertaken by the Council on the production of the Local Development Framework will be published on the Gateshead Council website at <http://www.gateshead.gov.uk>; and a link to these documents will be located on the development plans section. Members of the public will be able to make representations on this web page or alternatively comments can be emailed to LDF@gateshead.gov.uk. This presents people with the opportunity to respond on-line, and provides the Local Planning Authority with a facility to give feedback to consultation exercises
- 3.29 **Press and public relations**; The Council will inform the community of key consultation dates during the production of the Local Development Framework by issuing appropriate press releases.
- 3.30 **Community Forums**; The Council will where appropriate (through Gateshead Strategic Partnership) consult Local Area Forums that are already established in the Borough with the aim of widening the community involvement in the Local Development Framework process. These Forums will be used as a channel to inform the local community of the stage reached in

the review process, to provide opportunities for their input and participation and to explain key issues affecting local areas.

- 3.31 **Public Exhibitions;** As part of the formal consultation exercises for the preparation of the Local Development Framework, it is proposed that a series of exhibitions or road shows are held throughout the Borough. These will be held at accessible venues. Planning Officers will be available to answer community questions.
- 3.32 **Existing networks;** There are a range of existing meetings and forums, which can be tapped into, including Gateshead Strategic Partnership, Gateshead Access Panel, Gateshead Community Network (Empower Gateshead), and Gateshead Voluntary Organisation Council. There are a number of Forums covering particular sections of the community which can be used to engage 'hard to reach' groups as defined in paragraph 1.11.

Opportunities for Public Participation

- 3.33 The principle opportunities for public participation in the plan making process will be at each key stage reached in the production of documents that comprise the Local Development Framework. The proposed dates of each key consultation stage will be set out in the Council's revised Local Development Scheme. At each key stage, consultation will be carried out over a statutory six-week period. During these periods, the Council will consider only duly made representations received in writing or by e-mail. On conclusion of each period of consultation, officers will prepare a summary of all the written representations received which will be made publicly available in both hard copy and electronic format. In due course the Council will provide a response to all representations received during future statutory consultation exercises, which will also be made publicly available at the locations given in Appendix 7 of this document and on our website, www.gateshead.gov.uk. Revised Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents will be produced after the consideration of representations made to the Council on both draft local development documents and other different community involvement exercises. As previously mentioned, the Council currently holds a database of consultees, which will be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis as necessary during the LDF process. The Council will also consult with additional stakeholders where it is deemed appropriate.

4. Community Involvement & Development Control.

What is Development Control?

- 4.1 Gateshead Council in its statutory role as the Local Planning Authority, deals with all planning applications in the Borough. This process is called development control (DC). A key element of the DC system is an up to date development plan. At the moment this is the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the Unitary Development Plan but will in future be the RSS and the Local Development Framework, which have already been described previously. The development plan itself does not indicate how each planning application should be determined. Planning law and guidance from the government does allow local authorities to be reasonably flexible in deciding each case. Generally planning applications will be required to conform to the provisions of the development plan, but there may be other material considerations, which are applied, in granting or refusing of planning permission. Guidance does place an important role of seeking and taking note of the views of residents and other stakeholders and there are a number of legal regulations which set out who should be consulted. This section of the SCI describes how the Council will involve individuals, the wider community, stakeholders and interested groups/organisations in the DC process.

Pre-application advice

- 4.2 Government guidance encourages local authorities to take a Development Team Approach (DTA) to improve overall efficiency & reduce the likelihood of disagreements at the application stage. This should involve a co-ordinated approach between officers within the Council and provide a series of set procedures for the involvement of others from outside the organisation. The Council places a great emphasis on the benefits of seeking pre-application advice for all types of development. For major schemes the Council offers a DTA, which is reviewed regularly to improve the DC service.
- 4.3 Additionally there is robust encouragement from central government for consultation and community involvement exercises to be undertaken by either the Council or the potential developer before planning applications are made. The nature and extent of the pre-application consultation exercise will depend on the scale or impact of the proposed development. Judgement will need to be applied as to the significance of each case and which method of pre-application consultation would be most appropriate. Firstly developers, who are considering a community consultation exercise, should undertake a scoping-exercise as set out in section 5 of this document reflecting the guidance outlined in appendix 3. Those should include immediate discussion with the Council in its role as local planning authority where it can advise on how a development proposal does or does not comply with current planning policy. The Council may also assist in the mapping of community & stakeholder interest. The need for the support for community organisations may also be discussed. Council officers would be willing to provide advice on what level of pre-application consultation would be appropriate.

Weekly List

- 4.4 Once an application has been received it is recorded on a weekly list which is published on the Council's website and available for public inspection at the civic centre. Other sections within the Council also receive a copy of the list and Town Councils are notified of applications via this method. The statutory planning register, which lists all current applications and past decisions, is also available for inspection.

Neighbour Notification

- 4.5 Consultation letters are currently sent to the occupants of all neighbouring properties that share a boundary with, or that are opposite to the site of the application and that may be affected by the proposed development. The majority of applications require only neighbour notification possibly supplemented with a site notice. Occupiers of premises most likely to be affected by a proposal (usually immediate neighbours) are notified in writing that an application has been received and that it can be inspected at the Development & Enterprise reception or on the Council's public access website; <http://planning.gateshead.gov.uk/publicaccess/> and commented on in writing within 21 days, or 28 days in the case of an application potentially affecting a SSSI or that is in a SSSI consultation area¹¹ (it should be noted that representations must be received in a written format either by letter, e-mail, fax or via the website). The level of neighbour notification is usually at the discretion of the case officer, however this should be restricted to a level that fully reflects the extent and nature of the particular application. The results of any such consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, and on behalf of, the Council.

Site notices

- 4.6 These enable a wider level of publicity to be afforded to applications and are used when a proposal's impact is such that it requires wider consultation than can be achieved by neighbour notification alone.

Newspaper notices/Advertisements

- 4.7 These will normally only be required for major development or specific types of development (such as development within conservation areas and/or affecting a listed building) unless the adjacent landowners are unknown and will usually be carried out alongside neighbour notification.

Consultees

- 4.8 In addition to the above methods of consultation, the Council is legally obliged under the regulations to consult a number of statutory consultees in addition to other relevant non-statutory consultees. Statutory Consultees are consulted in accordance with the Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 and its subsequent amendments as well as other relevant Statutory Instruments and legislation¹². The views of all consultees are classed as being material considerations in determining planning applications.

Amendment of a development proposal

- 4.9 In some instances proposals are changed after an application has been submitted. It is at the discretion of the Council to decide whether further publicity is required. When this happens there is no statutory obligation to publicise but it is considered that to do so would provide a customer friendly service. Publicity on such matters should be undertaken in the following circumstances;

- Were representations received previously sufficient to justify further publicity?
- Are the proposed changes/amendments significant? [For an assessment of whether amendments are significant, the case officer should take a view and confirm this with a senior officer].
- certain representations cover the matters now under consideration?

¹¹ In accordance with Section 28 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

¹² Including ODPM Circulars 06/2005 & 08/2005, and DEFRA Circular 01/2005.

- Are the matters now under consideration likely to be of concern to parties not previously notified?
- 4.10 If it is decided to undertake further publicity, it is not always necessary for a further 21-day period. 14 days or less will be a sufficient period to allow further comment and the case officer should agree any shorter period with a senior. This type of flexibility allows adequate publicity when warranted and avoids excessive delay when it is not justified.
- 4.11 It is currently not normal practice for the Council to arrange public meetings or other events in relation to specific applications, although officers will attend meetings organised by others if practicable and usually only when the applicant and/or agent is present. A list of all of the decisions reached by the Council on planning applications are available on the Gateshead Council website, along with copies of the development control committee agenda and minutes. A weekly list of applications received can be either e-mailed or posted to community groups and other stakeholders.

Major Applications

- 4.12 It is noted that a small number of applications (not necessarily just those on large sites) may have a wider ranging impact than just affecting neighbouring occupiers or landowners. Consequently on occasion the Council will consult a wider range of residents and other groups/organisations through the usage of formal consultation letters. Consultation in relation to “large scale” (i.e. major) applications could additionally include press releases, residents meetings, wide postal consultation and the display of plans and documents. A degree of flexibility is built into current procedures, whereby the characteristics of a particular planning application will be taken into account when determining the appropriate methods of public consultation and involvement. Major applications are defined as applications for residential development where 10 or more dwellings are to be constructed or, if this is not known, where the site area would be 0.5 hectares or more. For other types of development applications are considered to be major where the floorspace would be equal to or greater than 1,000 square metres or more, or the site area would be 1 hectare or more.

Role of applicant/agent

- 4.13 The Council encourages developers to undertake pre-application discussions and consultation as early as possible in formulating a scheme (see appendix 3). They will be encouraged to liaise with Council officers with the aim of agreeing an appropriate method or methods of consultation. This approach would;
- Provide an opportunity for the developer to explain his/her proposal prior to the general public and other consultees forming opinions based on inaccurate information.
 - Potentially save time in obtaining a decision on a planning application;
 - Produce more certainty about the outcome;
 - Create a more sustainable and acceptable development; and
 - Avoid appeals and call-in procedures.
- 4.14 The Council expects developers when consulting on planning proposals to:
- Explain proposals to relevant interested groups, individuals and stakeholders in addition to residents, workers and users of the area around the site of the proposed development.
 - Request the views of people in the community and consider them; and;

- Submit with the application, a report explaining the process they have followed, a summary of community comments/views received and clearly demonstrate how they have been taken into account during the finalisation of the scheme for submission.

Community involvement in the processing of a delegated application

- 4.15 Delegated applications are those, which by virtue of their scale or nature do not raise significant policy issues or do not have other material considerations that would lead to them being of greater complexity. These for the most part include;
- household extensions
 - advertisements
 - shop fronts & alterations
 - individual dwellings
 - changes of use
 - listed building & conservation area consents

The community will be involved in much the same way as it is currently.

Community involvement when an application goes to committee

- 4.16 Officers under the Authority's scheme of delegated powers determine the majority of applications. However under some circumstances applications will go to the Planning and Development Committee. These are generally applications that are likely to be more contentious by nature or scale and often receive more publicity and require more scrutiny by Members. The following types of application are currently determined by planning committee;
- Major Applications.
 - Applications which would have significant environmental or economic impact.
 - Applications which have given rise to 3 or more objections.
 - Applications which have been referred by Council Members.

- 4.17 The committee report is made available to the public at least five working days before the meeting. All those who made representations on the application will be notified in writing of the details of the meeting and offered the opportunity to speak at the committee. The committee meeting is a useful way of voicing your concerns over a planning proposal. It should be noted however that only planning issues would be taken into consideration and that the final decision rests with the elected Councillors. A total of three minutes is allocated to supporters of, and objectors to, a development proposal.

Notification of decision

- 4.18 A letter is sent to the applicant advising him/her that a decision has been reached. If permission is granted then a certificate is also sent to the applicant/agent. It must be noted that there is no statutory duty on the Council to notify persons who have made representations of the decision made on any application. However it is considered important that they be kept informed, generally a letter to representatives, which explains the decision, would be satisfactory. This would apply to both applications decided by committee and under delegated powers. In circumstances where an application has attracted very wide interest, other methods such as a press release or the direct contact of a local group may be necessary.

Community Involvement if an application goes to an appeal

4.19 If planning permission is refused, applicants or their agents have the right to appeal against the Council's decision. The appeal is lodged with the Secretary of State for the Environment. There are currently no provisions for a third party to appeal against a decision (objectors cannot make an appeal). An appeal has to be made within 6 months of the Council's decision and can only be made if;

- Planning permission has been refused.
- An applicant is dissatisfied with a condition of a permission imposed by the Council.
- The Council fails to make a decision on an application within the statutory time period¹³, unless agreement has been reached to extend that period.

4.20 The Planning Inspectorate [PINS] handles the administration of appeals on behalf of the Secretary of State. The applicant should contact the Inspectorate if he or she wishes to make an appeal. When an appeal is received, the relevant Local Planning Authority, original neighbour consultees & any other consultee which made a written representation are notified in writing.

Enforcement Issues

4.21 When complaints about alleged breaches in planning control are received they will be promptly recorded and investigated in accordance with established procedures. All cases are dealt with confidentially and therefore no public consultation is currently undertaken. Complainants will at all times be advised of the outcome of the investigation and on what action if any the Council will decide to take¹⁴.

General issues

4.22 The Council cannot refuse to accept valid applications because it disagrees with the way in which an applicant has consulted the community. However, failure by the applicant/agent to consult could lead to objections being made which could be material to the determination of the application. Evidence of a lack of pre-application consultation may result in requests for additional information, delays in determining the application or possibly a refusal that could have been avoided.¹⁵

How may the service improve in the future?

4.23 There is a constant need to find an acceptable balance between achieving performance targets and meeting other objectives such as increasing the amount of community involvement. Due to recent improvements in consultation procedures resulting from the introduction of the ability for proposals to be viewed on the Council's website and comments to be submitted electronically changes to the development control consultation process are not currently being proposed but will be monitored and reviewed when appropriate.

¹³ 8 weeks for minor applications, 13 weeks for major applications and 16 weeks for applications that require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

¹⁴ It should be noted that anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

¹⁵ The Council has a statutory obligation as the Local Planning Authority to consider all valid applications that are submitted.

5. Steps to ensure effective Community Involvement.

5.1 The SCI covers consultation and community involvement in relation to three specific areas of planning;

- Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents as part of the Local Development Framework.
- Development Control decision making in relation to planning applications.
- The increasingly important phase of discussions and negotiation with potential developers prior to submission of a planning application.

5.2 This section sets out a general principles and related actions that should be followed in any significant consultation exercise. The need for such an exercise in the development control process has already been explained in section 4. The following paragraphs set out the steps that should be considered and followed if appropriate depending on the consultation exercise and it should be noted that each exercise will be different and all steps may not necessarily be the same in each instance. It must also be noted that the start of any consultation process should be accompanied by a 'scoping' exercise, which is carried out to ensure that the provisions of this SCI are met.

Scoping Exercise

5.3 It is essential that the purpose of any community involvement exercise is clear and explained at an early stage. For all consultation or community involvement exercises other than in routine development control cases, it is essential that the lead organisation (often the Council itself) should produce a **Community Involvement Scoping Report**. This report need not be published formally, though for larger exercises it may be advisable to do so and even invite comments before it is finalised. If possible scoping of community involvement & consultation should be carried out alongside the scoping of the sustainability appraisal.

5.4 The Community Involvement Scoping Report must cover the following;

- The nature of the overall planning process underway & what it will produce.
- How the community involvement process will influence decision-making
- The relationship of the planning exercise to the existing, wider planning framework.
- The extent of previous consultation exercises in the area & how outcomes they produced can be used.
- Identification in principle of which parts of the local community & which other stakeholders are to be involved.
- Outline the proposed actions with a timetable.
- Estimate the resources required & how they are to be found.

Discussions with the Council as Local Planning Authority

5.5 The Council itself will in all probability carry out the majority of consultation exercises covered by the SCI. It should be noted however that when an outside agency or organisation leads the consultation exercise it is vitally important the scope of the consultation is discussed with the Council as planning authority before any actions are taken.

Mapping of community structures & stakeholder interest

- 5.6 The person/organisation or group leading the exercise should have as complete an understanding as possible as to which local organisations might have an interest in a particular planning document or development proposal. The Council will if necessary assist external organisations in creating a list of interested groups, individuals and stakeholders. Additionally for some exercises there will be a legal requirement to consult specific organisations with a local, city, regional or national remit such as government agencies etc.

Building capacity & creating partnerships

- 5.7 Government guidance emphasises the need for meaningfully involving communities at an early stage of a process. This 'front-loading' partnership approach with an emphasis of early discussion is positively encouraged. Where some sections of the wider community & other stakeholders may be able to grasp sometimes-complex issues other sections of the community may not. The leaders of the exercise should carefully consider the need for financial or in kind support to community groups, which are harder to reach. The Planning Aid North service would be a useful partner in this type of endeavour.

Undertaking consultation and encouraging participation.

- 5.8 The central thrust of any consultation exercise will be the range of methods, which will be used to inform and involve individuals and organisations in the planning process. A range of possible consultation methods and at which stage they may be appropriate is outlined in Appendix 3, their potential benefits and limitations are also discussed. The range of methods is neither exclusive nor exhaustive and is not necessarily prescriptive nor comprehensive, consequently it will be up to the person(s) leading the exercise to decide which method is most appropriate to their particular consultation process. It should be noted however that some more formal consultation processes such as those for the preparation of development plan documents or the determination of a planning application will have to meet the minimum statutory consultation standards prescribed in the relevant regulations.

Ensuring an opportunity for involvement for everyone.

- 5.9 When preparing written and other material whilst planning the exercise, those leading it should make sure that all the relevant information relating to the exercise is accessible to everyone with an interest. Individuals and groups should be made to feel welcome to participate in planned activities. Attention should be given to the creation of clear, concise and understandable documents which should be readily available and where possible in translation or braille and in forms usable by persons unable to read conventionally sized print. Charges for documents should where possible be kept to a minimum.
- 5.10 While the use of electronic formats including the Internet is positively encouraged it should be noted that all documents and material should also be available in conventional printed form. It will need to be decided how to best involve hard to reach groups including the young, old and minority ethnic or religious communities. All events should have easy physical access so that everyone can attend events without having to make special arrangements. If necessary arrangements should be made to cover caring responsibilities and help with transport to less accessible venues.

Giving feedback

- 5.11 At the end of each stage (or for shorter exercises at the end of the process) it is important that there is a clear statement showing exactly what has been done. It should also include what consultation responses have been received and how these have influenced the decision-

making process up to that point. This should then be communicated to those who have been involved in the exercise. However it must be noted that it will not normally be possible for everyone's views to be fully taken on board, although all participants must be sure that their opinions have been considered.

Undertaking evaluation & external assessment

- 5.12 At the end of each stage (or for shorter exercises at the end of the process) it is important that there is an evaluation of what has actually happened on the ground set against the expectations and standards set out in the SCI. This evaluation should also highlight the general successes and failures of the consultation exercise. Although it is not a requirement of this SCI, it might be useful for larger exercises (particularly those commissioned by organisations with a financial interest in the outcome) to seek an independent assessment of the exercise. Such an evaluation would be best if started at the same time and ran in tandem with the main exercise.

6. Procedural issues, resources & monitoring/review.

Resources and management of the process

- 6.1 It is important that the consultation exercise, (which implements the increased focus of government guidance on greater community involvement), is properly managed and that there are enough resources available to carry it out. The Director of Development & Enterprise Group has the overall responsibility for co-ordinating both the Local Development Framework process and the Development Control function. The Director is also responsible for coordinating transport policy through the Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear. Within the D&E Directorate the Head of the Planning & Environmental Strategy Service through the Spatial Development, Area Action Plans, Environmental Strategy and Housing Market Renewal Teams is directly responsible for the production and co-ordination of the Local Development Framework. The Head of Regulatory Services through the Development Control Team is directly responsible for the Development Control function. Both divisions have or will identify resources for community involvement exercises under their remits, ranging from mainstream revenue funding, Planning Delivery Grant or from other sources. Work on the Bridging NewcastleGateshead (BNG - Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder) programme is one such example. Every effort will be made to ensure that community involvement exercises are coordinated and where possible integrated.
- 6.2 Should landowners, developers or external organisations choose to carry out pre-application consultation exercises (which is encouraged by this SCI document) they themselves will be responsible for the financial cost. However the Council may wish to cooperate with and possibly take part itself in these exercises. The Council may also consider contributing to the cost of exercises, which it partakes in, but this should not be assumed in the first instance. There may be opportunities for using skills and experience within the community itself, though some support (either financial or in kind) may be required.

Monitoring and review of the process

- 6.3 The progress on the preparation of the documents named in the Local Development Framework will be monitored by the Council. The success of their respective community involvement exercises will be assessed against the criteria outlined in their Community Involvement Scoping Reports. The effectiveness of community involvement within the development control process will also be periodically reviewed. The Council will also research emerging best practice in other local authorities. Additionally the need for a review of the SCI document will be considered annually in conjunction with the preparation of the Local Development Framework's *Annual Monitoring Report*, the conclusions from which may also

trigger a review of the SCI. The SCI would therefore be appropriately revised to take into account any new issues arising as a result of the experience gained. A revision of the Local Development Scheme may also trigger a review of the SCI if deemed necessary.

References

- Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- The Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
- Community Involvement in Planning: The Government's Objectives, (ODPM 2004)
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (ODPM 2004)
- Creating Local Development Frameworks: A Companion Guide to PPS12, (ODPM 2004)
- Statements of Community Involvement and Planning Applications (ODPM 2004)
- Promoting Effective Citizenship and Community Empowerment: A guide for local authorities on enhancing capacity for public participation, (DCLG 2006)
- Planning Together, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Spatial Planning: a practical guide (DCLG 2007)

Useful web sites

Community Planning Online - <http://www.communityplanning.net/index.htm>

Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) - <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

Government Publications online – <http://www.opsi.gov.uk>

Planning Aid – <http://www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk>

Gateshead Council - <http://www.gateshead.gov.uk>

Gateshead Council Community Consultation & Involvement Strategy -
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Council%20and%20Democracy/say/community.aspx>

Gateshead Community Strategy -
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Council%20and%20Democracy/policies/GSP.aspx>

Gateshead Re-deposit Draft Unitary Development Plan -
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Building%20and%20Development/devplans/redeposit.aspx>

Gateshead Statement of Community Involvement
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Building%20and%20Development/devplans/sci.aspx>

Gateshead Local Development Scheme
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Building%20and%20Development/devplans/Local%20Development%20Scheme.aspx>

Appendix 1: Tests of Soundness for Development Plan Documents

The tests of soundness fall into three categories:

- Procedural tests;
- Conformity tests
- Coherence, Consistency and Effectiveness test

Procedural tests

- i. the plan has been prepared in accordance with the local development scheme;
- ii. it has been prepared in compliance with the statement of community involvement, or with the minimum requirements set out in the Regulations 47 where no statement of community involvement exists;
- iii. the plan and its policies have been subjected to sustainability appraisal;

Conformity tests

- iv. it is a spatial plan which is consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the regional spatial strategy for the region or, in London, the spatial development strategy and it has properly had regard to any other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas;
- v. it has had regard to the authority's community strategy;

Coherence, consistency and effectiveness tests

- vi. the strategies/policies/allocations in the plan are coherent and consistent within and between development plan documents prepared by the authority and by neighboring authorities, where cross boundary issues are relevant;
- vii. the strategies/policies/allocations represent the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and they are founded on a robust and credible evidence base;
- viii. there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring; and
- ix. the plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.

Appendix 1a: Tests of Soundness for SCIs + Guiding Principles for Community Involvement

The tests of 'soundness' for the SCI are set out in PPS12¹⁶ as follows;

- i) Local planning authority has complied with the minimum requirements for consultation as set out in Regulations;
- ii) Local planning authority's strategy for community involvement links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy;
- iii) Statement identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted;
- iv) Statement identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;
- v) Methods of consultation to be employed are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of local development documents;
- vi) Resources are available to manage community involvement effectively;
- vii) Statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents;
- viii) Authority has mechanisms for reviewing the statement of community involvement;
- ix) Statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications.

A number of **guiding principles for community involvement** have been identified by central government in the document "Community Involvement in Planning: The Government's Objectives"¹⁷. These are;

Community Involvement that is appropriate to the level of planning: Different methods of consultation will be appropriate depending on the nature of the process involved and the circumstances of the LPA. There needs to be a clear understanding of the needs of the target groups and arrangements should be made which are fit for purpose.

Front Loading of Involvement: Community involvement policies should provide opportunities for participation at the earliest stages.

The methods used to encourage involvement should be relevant to their experience: Consideration must be given to the facilities available to communities & stakeholders and how they are most likely to be involved. Preferred methods of consultation/involvement should be identified. Planning Aid can play an active role.

Clearly articulated opportunities for continuing involvement: local communities should be able to see how the process develops at its various stages with effective feedback.

Transparency and accessibility: The process should be clear, so that people know when they will be able to participate, and the ground rules for doing so. Involvement in the planning system should extend beyond those who are familiar with the system, to difficult to reach groups.

Planning for involvement: Community involvement should be planned in from the start of the process for plan preparation or consideration of significant development proposals, to enable timely involvement. Consideration should be given to how processes for community involvement in planning can best fit with other involvement processes, particularly in respect of Community Strategies. Project plans should avoid unnecessarily long, drawn out processes.

¹⁶ Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Development Frameworks

¹⁷ Published by the ODPM 2004. Available online at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk>

Appendix 2: Details of Consultees *this list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.

Specific Consultation Bodies (These are consultation bodies who must be consulted on all Development Plan Documents in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004)

- a. The Regional Planning Body – North East Regional Assembly + Association of North East Councils
- b. Any local planning authority for an area adjacent to the area covered by the proposals. [Castle-Morpeth District Council, Chester-le-Street District Council, Derwentside District Council, Durham County Council, Newcastle City Council, Northumberland County Council, North Tyneside Council, South Tyneside Council, Sunderland City Council & Tynedale District Council.] [Parish Councils - Lamesley Parish Council, Heddon-on-the-Wall Parish Council, North Lodge Parish Council, Urpeth Parish Council, Hedley Parish Council, Horsley Parish Council, Prudhoe Town Council & Shotley Low Quarter Parish Council.]
- c.
- d. The Environment Agency
- e. Highways Agency
- f. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England
- g. Natural England
- h. Network Rail
- i. Regional Development Agency whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority (One North East)
- j. Any electronic service provider to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a directive given under Section 106 (3) (a) of the Communications Act 2003
- k. Any electronic service provider who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority; and
- l. Any of the bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of the local planning authority:
 - i) The Northumberland, Tyne & Wear Strategic Health Authority;
 - ii) A person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986;
 - iii) A person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989.
 - iv) Sewage undertaker(s); and
 - v) Water undertaker(s).

Government Departments

The Government Office for the North East [GONE] would normally be consulted as the first point of contact for central government departments. Additionally departments or agencies would be consulted as necessary where LDDs would potentially have an impact on their land holdings.

- a. The First Secretary of State (through Government Office for the North East)
- b. Home Office;
- c. Department for Education and Skills (through Government Office for the North East)
- d. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- e. Department for Transport (through Government Office for the North East)
- f. Department of Health (through relevant Regional Office of NHS Executive)
- g. Department of Trade and Industry (through Government Office for the North East)
- h. Ministry of Defence
- i. Department of Work and Pensions
- j. Department of Constitutional Affairs
- k. Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- l. Office of Government Commerce (Property Advisers to the Civil Estate)

General Consultation Bodies

- i) Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the authority's area;
- ii) Bodies that represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the Authority's area;
- iii) Bodies that represent the interests of different religious groups in the authority's area;
- iv) Bodies that represent the interests of disabled persons in the authority's area; and
- v) Bodies that represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the authority's area.
- vi) Bodies that represent the interests of young persons in the authority's area.
- vii) Bodies that represent the interests of elderly persons in the authority's area.

Other Consultees (Gateshead Council will where appropriate consult with the following agencies and organisations in the preparation of local development documents)

- Age Concern Gateshead
- Ancient Monuments Society
- Airport operators
- Bridging NewcastleGateshead (Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder)
- British Chemical Distributors and Traders Association
- British Geological Survey
- British Waterways, canal owners and navigation authorities
- British Youth Council
- CEN (Community Empowerment Network)(Gateshead)
- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
- Chambers of Commerce, Local CBI and local branches of Institute of Directors;
- Church Commissioners
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Coal Authority + other mineral operators.
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)
- Commission for New Towns and English Partnerships
- Commission for Racial Equality
- Communities England
- Council for British Archaeology
- Crown Estate Office
- Diocesan Board of Finance
- Disability Rights Commission
- Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
- the National Grid Company;
- Environmental groups at national, regional and local level, including:
 - I. Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)
 - II. Friends of the Earth (FoE)
 - III. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB); and
 - IV. Wildlife Trusts;
- Equal Opportunities Commission;
- Forestry Commission
- Freight Transport Association
- Friends Families and Travellers
- Gateshead Access Panel
- Gateshead Forum for Older People
- Gateshead Deaf Forum
- Gateshead Forum for people with learning disabilities
- Gateshead Carers Association
- Gateshead Mental Health User Forum
- Gateshead Visually Impaired Forum
- Gateshead Youth Council
- Gateshead Housing Company/other RSLs
- Great North Forest
- Gypsy Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- Help the Aged
- Housing Corporation
- Learning and Skills Councils
- Local Agenda 21 including:
 - I. Civic Societies
 - II. Community Groups
 - III. Local Transport Authorities
 - IV. Local Transport Operators; and
 - V. Local Race Equality Councils
 - VI. Local Equality Groups
- Local Bus & Taxi Operators
- Local Historical, Antiquarian or Archaeological Societies
- Waste Operators
- National Playing Fields Association
- NewcastleGateshead Initiative
- NewcastleGateshead City Development Company
- North East Renewable Energy Group (NEREG)
- Passenger Transport Authorities
- Passenger Transport Executives
- Police Architectural Liaison Officers/Crime Prevention Design Advisors;
- Port Operators
- Post Office Property Holdings + Royal Mail
- Rail Companies and the Rail Freight Group
- Regional Development Agencies
- Regional Housing Boards
- Regional Sports Boards
- Road Haulage Association
- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
- Sport England
- Sustainable Development Commission
- The Home Builders Federation
- The National Trust
- The Theatres Trust
- Travelling Showman's Guild
- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Services
- Twentieth Century Society
- Viewpoint Gateshead Council Citizens' Panel
- Waste Operators
- Water Companies
- Women's National Commission

Appendix 3: Recommended community involvement to be undertaken by developers & agents (advice by Gateshead Council)

When should a developer start to consider Community Involvement?

Gateshead Council encourages developers to undertake pre-application discussions and early community consultation on significant applications as early as possible in the design of their scheme. Consultation discussions before a formal application is made can help to avoid unnecessary objections being made at a later stage, due to a possible lack of understanding or otherwise.

What are the benefits to the developer of a Community Involvement Exercise?

A genuine exercise can:

- Provide an ideal opportunity for the developer to explain his/her proposal, prior to the general public formulating unfavourable opinions based on inaccurate information;
- Potentially save the developer time in obtaining a decision on a planning application;
- Produce more certainty about the outcome;
- Create a more sustainable and acceptable development;
- Avoid appeals and call-in procedures.

What type of development would benefit from a Community Involvement Exercise?

Developers should regard Community Involvement as an opportunity to explain and refine their proposals rather than a process that acts as a restraint on their intentions. People who live within an area are often very interested to learn about proposals that may have an affect on them. They also understand that new development can bring many advantages in addition to the disadvantages. These may include an increase in jobs or more local facilities for the community to use and enjoy. Small-scale proposals such as house extensions or advertisements for example, would not normally require a Community Involvement Exercise.

Examples of methods used to involve the community and other stakeholders

Open House Event

Open house events allow those promoting development initiatives to present to a wider public and secure reactions in an informal manner. They are less structured than a workshop and more informal than a traditional exhibition. Open house events can be organised at any stage of the design and development process by any of the parties. They can last from a few hours to several weeks. It is recommended that a venue be arranged with a number of displays on the proposals and options. Organisers should be present to deal with queries and engage in informal debate. The material collected should be analysed afterwards and used to further develop the initiative.

Action Planning Event

Action planning events allow people to produce plans of action at carefully structured sessions at which all those affected work creatively together. They can be used at any stage of the development process and provide an alternative to reliance on bureaucratic planning. The nature of the action-planning event is decided on and agreed by the main parties involved. There are many common types and the scope for inventing new formats is unlimited. Events may last for an afternoon, a weekend, a week or a month. Preparation takes place including arranging timetables, venues, publicity, equipment, technical support, and background information. The event is held, often assisted by a facilitator or team of facilitators from elsewhere. Proposals for action are formulated. The event is followed up to ensure that proposals are put into action. "Planning for real" © could also be used (as previously explained). Other useful methods for community planning can be found on the Community Planning website - <http://www.communityplanning.net/index.htm>

Additional advice from Gateshead Council Development Control Service

The Planning Officers at Gateshead Council are happy to be contacted to give guidance on whether your proposal would benefit from a Community Involvement Exercise and how it may be achieved.

Appendix 4: Gateshead Local Development Framework Family Tree



Key: Part of the Statutory Development Plan

Appendix 5: Discussion/Description of possible consultation methods; [It should be noted that the list of possible consultation methods discussed in this section is neither exclusive nor exhaustive and that the consultation method used would need to be appropriate to the consultation exercise being undertaken at the time.]

Consultation Method	Description	Potential Advantages	Potential Disadvantages	Potential Resource Implications
Public notices on sites	A notice providing a description of a development proposal, informing the public about the planning application and stating where a copy of the plans may be viewed. It should be located on the site in a high profile visible location or beside the existing or proposed access. Notices are often used in conjunction with press advertisement or neighbour notification.	In theory can reach a wide audience Is most likely to be seen by regular users, so targets the groups most affected by the proposals	Unlikely to be read widely. Often needs to be accompanied by other consultation methods. Can be subject to vandalism.	Cost of each notice is minimal and is sometimes covered by an applicant
Newspaper notices & adverts	Notify local magazines or newspapers in order to inform large numbers of people of key consultations. They can take out an advert in the publication or include a supplementary flyer to be delivered with the publication.	Can inform large numbers of people relatively easily Generates public debate	Not inclusive of everyone. Excludes those who don't buy the publication.	Cost of advert or flyer – can be expensive
Press releases	The issue of a statement to the media designed to inform the public of key issues and consultation events.	Can provide wide publicity of proposals	Cannot guarantee that the press will report No editorial control.	Minimal costs, if any
TV & radio interviews	Can be used to inform the community of key issues and consultations and to obtain public views.	The opportunities offered by new technologies can make participation easier and more enjoyable Provides a quick response	Can exclude significant groups Can have technical problems Relies on broadcasters to invite No editorial control	Minimal costs, if any
Council News	The Council's free Newspaper which is sent bimonthly to every household in the borough and can be used to provide information about the planning process, emerging issues and consultation events.	Reaches all households. The Council has editorial control.	Publication schedule may not coincide with the events. Not guaranteed that all residents will read it. Non-residents do not necessarily receive it.	Minimal if part of the existing publishing schedule Special edition would be costly
Displays at libraries, customer service centres, etc.	An exhibition or display held in a public library where audiences can be informed of an issue or service. The aim is to take the information to the community.	Gives flexible terms of attendance (i.e. not restricted to one time of day or location), so can be inclusive. Provides information for all. Can generate an informed public debate if used effectively. Can be left un-staffed.	Can only reach library users, so can exclude certain groups - May be limited space Only limited information is available and it is more difficult to respond, unless accompanied by some form of comment cards or questionnaire	Cost varies depending on display materials, but does saves on staff time compared to a roadshow.

Local leaflets & newsletters	Delivery of specially produced leaflets or summary documents informing residents of planning issues and inviting feedback	Reaches all households	Can be seen as junk mail and discarded; Response rate is likely to be low	Printing costs; Delivery costs – e.g. Royal Mail door-to-door, staffing.
Council meetings	Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings of the Council, except those meetings, or parts of meetings, where confidential or restricted information is being discussed. Public notice is given in advance of meetings including whether or not they are open to the public. The public can sometimes speak.	Residents and stakeholders can see decision making process in action Many meetings (e.g. Area and Ward Committees) encourage participation Council officers attend and can be asked questions directly	Language used is sometimes very technical Not necessarily intended for community involvement Can be long and dull and political debate can put some people off	Most of the potential cost already met by the Council at the centre.
Public meetings	An open meeting where the Local Authority presents information and proposals within a framework which enables immediate discussion and feedback. Can be used to get a feel for public opinion on a particular topic/issue and to inform the public.	Provides local opportunities for people to comment on matters that affect them directly and indirectly. A convenient and transparent way to demonstrate public consultation/build up good relationships. Can be used to inform at the same time as getting views from the public. Attracts individuals as well as group representation. Can meet relatively large numbers of people at the same time. Can generate informed public debate if used effectively.	Self-selecting, as not everyone would be able to make it at the same time, so may not be representative of the wider community. Contributions will be specific and about local, topical or personal concerns rather than service-wide strategic priorities Can be intimidating for individuals to voice opinions if too large Can have a low turn out. Can be confrontational	Cost of meeting depending on venue, display materials, staffing. Staff time + resources.
Open days, roadshows, etc.	One or more exhibition or display held in accessible locations where audiences can be informed of an issue or service. They can have the opportunity to meet planning officers, who are available to answer questions. The aim is to take the information to the community using a wide range of media.	Gives flexible terms of attendance (i.e. not restricted to one time of day or location), so can be inclusive Forum to listen as well as to inform Promotes good relations as direct contact between public and decision makers Good way of reaching large numbers if well located Can generate an informed public debate if used effectively	Can have a low turn out, especially if venue is poor Resource intensive if permanently staffed Responses can be difficult to record unless used with some form of comments card or questionnaire Could be confrontational if issues are very sensitive	Hire of a location. Cost of publicity. Cost of Display material. Staff time + resources.
Planning for Real®, Enquiry by Design, etc	Helps communities develop simple models to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their area can be improved. Can use three dimensional, models which can be moved around, being used to identify problems and solutions as well as making comments by attaching post-it notes to the buildings.	Is high profile, hands on community involvement. People of all abilities and ages find it easy and enjoyable to engage in, so can reach 'hard to reach' groups, such as young people or those with literacy difficulties. Can be a useful way of gaining an understanding of local issues and concerns for both the planners and the community. Allows the discussion	Needs to be carefully organised, publicised and managed, so is resource intensive More suited to specific local interest Requires concerted follow up to show actions and results	Cost per event, depending on scale and complexity.

		of problems in a non-confrontational way Uses local knowledge well in the plan making process	Can be time consuming and often requires an external specialist to increase credibility of the conclusions	
Written consultation	Publishing and distributing documents with a request for comments from the public, interest groups and statutory bodies. Can be used to gain detailed and potentially complex views from interested parties. This is often a statutory requirement, so has to be carried out anyway by the local planning authority.	Can provide users with detailed and comprehensive information. Gives considered views of respondents based on accurate information. Letters to house are more likely to elicit a response than press notices, etc.	Tend to get a low response. Analysing responses can be resource intensive. Open-ended questions or prose can be difficult to analyse. Interest groups can be over-consulted, leading to consultation fatigue. Contact lists can go out of date very quickly and can be time consuming to maintain	Printing costs, Postage costs, Time to maintain database, Time to analyse results and respond accordingly
User comments & complaints	Comment cards or complaints forms placed at the point of service delivery or more widely via the internet to gather detailed information from individual users.	Can be used to monitor and improve services by helping to identify recurring problems. Provides information on strengths and weaknesses. Shows users that you are serious about putting things right	Not representative as only negative responses tend to be made. Service delivery may not necessarily be the focus of spatial plans.	Relatively low cost.
Questionnaire surveys	A structured survey used to get views from a widely representative group, which is statistically reliable. It allows comparative information year on year if the same questions are asked. Can be face-to-face, postal or conducted over the telephone or internet.	A good method of obtaining views of a representative sample, which is statistically reliable Enables changes over time to be tracked. Established methods of analysing data. Possible to use or adapt approaches that are already in use By interview, more in depth views can be obtained	Results can be unreliable if there is a poor response rate. A poorly designed questionnaire can give misleading results, for example if the questions are 'leading'. Postal response can be low. Results can sometimes raise as many questions as they answer. Could miss out some groups, for example if they don't have a telephone or internet access	Staff Time to prepare questions. Cost of interviewer and analysis. Postal/ telephone costs.
Focus groups	A group of around 10 people meet to discuss an issue for 1-2 hours with the help of a skilled facilitator. Often used to help identify key issues or questions for a broader survey or to explore issues in more depth.	Enables you to discover what is important to users Groups allow people to spark ideas off one another. Provides a greater depth of understanding – answers the 'why' as well as 'what' people think. Can focus on particular 'hard to reach' groups	Does not provide statistical information Feedback is not typical of all users, so not representative Dominant participants can monopolise discussions. Can produce a large volume of text which is difficult and time consuming to analyse	Cost per group, depending on staffing and 'neutral' venue costs. Time to analyse results.
User panel	Regular meetings of user groups with either open or fixed membership, which can be orchestrated by the local authority or requested by users. Is often used to get reaction to ideas and proposals for improvement.	A useful sounding board to test plans and ideas. Can generate new ideas and provide early warning of any potential problems Creates a continuing dialogue with users which helps	Can be unrepresentative Requires strong input and commitment from management. Should not be used as only means of consultation	Staff time; Cost of recruiting members; venue hire; Advertising costs Time and cost of analysing results

		build up trust. Gives relatively quick feedback. Concentrates on issues from the users' perspective	The nature of the group (how representative it is and its right to make recommendations) varies greatly Requires a turnover of membership to maintain integrity	
Residents' panel	A representative group of around 700 residents, which reflects the demography of the city, who are used as a sounding board to test specific options or proposals. They can be used to assess services and develop views about future needs and goals. Resident focus groups are also used as a means of community interaction and discussion.	Recruited on a voluntary basis so more likely to be committed, therefore providing a good response rate Likely to be representative Can be used to investigate key issues/themes Gives reasonably quick feedback once it is set up Cost effective as it can be used many times	Response rates can vary from expected results, particularly if residents are over consulted. As members become experienced and knowledgeable of the system they can become less representative of the population as a whole Level of drop out is quite high. Difficult to engage young people on the panel. Requires the ability to read and write More suited to discussing broad strategic options than specific issues	Time to prepare questions Time to analyse responses
Community and other interest group representation	Involvement of representatives from a specific group or sector of the community (which can include businesses) in a formal steering group or other similar body. For example, a representative from a specific geographical neighbourhood, a local tenants association, or a specific community or voluntary group. These representatives then help access and engage with their respective group.	Members can be nominated by their group, so likely to be representative Can effectively involve 'hard to reach' groups Can be used to investigate key issues/themes Can generate new ideas and provide early warning of any potential problems. Enables groups to understand conflicts and compromises reached	May not be representative of the population as a whole Dominant participants can monopolise discussions Can be time consuming, particularly for the representatives	Staff time Cost of recruiting members Venue hire
Citizens' juries	A group of 12-16 'lay' citizens; recruited to be broadly representative of the community, hear evidence from a range of specialist witnesses over several days before making final recommendations to the commissioning body. Is used to obtain detailed, considered views from the public on a particular issue.	Allows detailed debate and provides informed feedback on complex issues Provides an opportunity for the members of the jury to make a real contribution to public affairs Generates media interest so can stimulate wider debate	Expensive; Only works best where organisations have already made considerable progress on their consultation; May not be representative of the general public who haven't heard expert evidence. Jurors can be unwilling to give their time and effort unless the results are binding	Cost depending on venue, recruitment, incentives, staff time, length of hearing, etc.

Ballots, referenda, etc	People are asked to vote either for or against an option or a limited number of options. Can be useful to get a mandate for a particular action. Can also use deliberative polling, where a representative sample of people is initially polled on an issue, after which they learn more about the topic through being given information, asking questions and participating in discussions. They are then polled again based on the new evidence.	<p>Easy to interpret results</p> <p>Allows everyone to have a say and in becoming increasingly easy for people to participate</p> <p>High profile and can stimulate further debate</p> <p>Provides a clear mandate for action</p>	<p>Results can be based on superficial, uninformed responses with no way of finding out how much is understood</p> <p>Provides no qualitative information, you only get a yes/no answer</p> <p>Can be expensive. Can be seen to set a precedent. Often gets a low turn out and may not be representative</p>	<p>Cost of producing information leaflets</p> <p>Cost of publicity</p> <p>Cost of ballot papers</p> <p>Cost of counting responses</p>
Participatory appraisal	This is a family of approaches and methods, which enable communities to develop and analyse their own representative, realistic and inclusive portrait of the issues that matter to them, using local knowledge of life and conditions. By empowering local people to conduct their own modes of investigation, communities can plan and act on their own outcomes developing more community-based solutions.	<p>Interactive rather than extractive approach</p> <p>Uses a variety of methods to elicit the same information which enable verification</p> <p>Allows different types of people to contribute in a way that they feel comfortable and to the level and extent chosen by them</p> <p>Allows the views of those people who are usually most difficult to reach to be represented</p>	<p>Cannot cover a wide range of issues, needs to be focused</p> <p>Exercise needs to be undertaken by a group of people trained in the techniques. Time consuming collating and drawing together the information collected to draw conclusions. Timescale to undertake activity will be variable and will not be evident at the beginning of the task</p>	<p>Requires specialist facilitators</p> <p>Staff time to conduct and to collate results</p>
Residency periods	Community engagement through a set period of residency (around 1 week) where a developer or consultant, with the support of the Council, can live in the community, meeting the residents and local stakeholders, as well as experiencing the locality for themselves.	Hands on experience of the location, so can pick up issues which may not be discovered through questions or discussions. Can build up personal relationships with stakeholders and residents. Allows residents to ask questions	<p>May not get a fair reflection of the locality in a short residency</p> <p>Very time consuming</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Living expenses (accommodation, etc.)</p>
Stakeholder meetings	Much like a public meeting, but with people who are already involved or are known to have an interest	<p>Often well attended as stakeholders already have an interest and are more motivated to share their views</p> <p>Is an informed debate as stakeholders already have some knowledge of the issue. Networking opportunities between participants</p>	<p>Can exclude groups who aren't part of an existing network</p> <p>Certain stakeholders can dominate the agenda. Is a danger of over-consulting, which could lead to consultation fatigue.</p>	<p>Cost per conference, depending on scale, venue, publicity and catering costs</p> <p>Staff time</p>
Web site	An up-to-date page or collection of pages on the internet, which can be used to provide information and to obtain feedback in an easier way.	<p>Quick and efficient way of keeping everyone up to date</p> <p>Interactive medium</p> <p>Usage is spreading rapidly</p> <p>Provides a quick response and can make participation easier and more enjoyable</p> <p>The opportunities offered by new technologies</p>	<p>Excludes significant groups who lack internet access, so unlikely to access some 'hard to reach' groups</p> <p>Technical problems</p> <p>Relies on people checking the website, so may require advertising</p>	<p>Set up costs if there is no current host and format in place</p> <p>Very low running costs</p>

		<p>Relatively cheap once set up</p> <p>Can save on printing costs</p>		
Email & bulletin board	<p>Messages sent via the internet either to individuals or groups informing them of key issues and inviting feedback, or to a bulletin board with limited or open access.</p>	<p>Quick and efficient way to provide users with detailed and comprehensive information</p> <p>Provides a forum for debate</p> <p>Usage is spreading rapidly</p> <p>Likely to provide a high response rate</p> <p>Gives considered views of respondents based on accurate information</p> <p>Can save on printing costs</p> <p>Personalised messages are more likely to elicit a response</p>	<p>Excludes significant groups who lack internet access, so unlikely to access some 'hard to reach' groups</p> <p>Technical problems</p> <p>High response rate can be difficult to collate and open-ended questions or prose can be difficult to analyse</p> <p>Interest groups can be over-consulted, leading to consultation fatigue</p> <p>Contact lists can go out of date very quickly</p>	<p>Cost of setting up and maintaining contact lists</p> <p>Staff time to collate responses</p> <p>Saves on printing and postage costs</p>
CD ROM	<p>The storing and distribution of documents in an electronic format on a CD Rom, to be viewed on a computer. Will often be sent in a form of written consultation instead of enclosing printed documents.</p>	<p>Can provide users with detailed and comprehensive information</p> <p>Saves on printing costs</p> <p>Allows users to view electronically which facilitates searching for relevant sections</p>	<p>Requires access to a computer, so could exclude groups without access to a computer.</p> <p>Technical problems</p> <p>Still relies on written consultation, so contact lists need maintaining and can go out of date very quickly</p>	<p>Saves printing costs</p> <p>Cost to produce CDs</p> <p>Postage costs</p> <p>Time to maintain database</p>

Appendix 6: Glossary of terms

AAP – Area Action Plan

AMR – Annual Monitoring Report

DC – Development Control

DPD – Development Plan Document

GSP – Gateshead Strategic Partnership

GVOG – Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council

LDD - Local Development Document

LDF – Local Development Framework

LDS – Local Development Scheme

LPA – Local Planning Authority

LSP – Local Strategic Partnership

MORI – Market and Organisation Research International

ODPM – Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

PINS – The Planning Inspectorate

PPS - Planning Policy Statement

RSS – Regional Spatial Strategy

RTPI – Royal Town Planning Institute

SA – Sustainability Appraisal

SCI - Statement of Community Involvement

SPD – Supplementary Planning Document

TPO – Tree Preservation Order

UDP – Unitary Development Plan

Submission consultation Statement – A statement issued by the Local Planning Authority at the submission stage which outlines consultation carried out during the previous stages of the document production process.

Pre-submission draft document: Document published at the preferred options stage, which is sent out for public consultation.

Standard consultation Statement: A statement issued by the Local Planning Authority at the preferred options stage prior to the commencement of public consultation. It outlines the informal consultation carried out at the issues and options stage.

Submission document: A Development Plan Document, which is ready to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.

Tests of ‘soundness’: Criteria used by the Planning Inspectorate to assess the quality of Development Plan Documents.