

BACKGROUND

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) seeks to promote community involvement when dealing with planning applications, recognising the importance of good communication and promoting community cohesion. Councils are required to set out how and by what means the community will be involved in planning applications. Of particular significance is pre-application and post application measures for major development and other sensitive developments affecting local communities.



Phil Crabtree
Chief Planning Officer

AIMS OF THE PROTOCOL

This Protocol advocates good practice in terms of community and Member participation.



The aim is to make this an integral part of the process of determining the largest and most sensitive planning applications such that community consultation takes place early and is an effective part of the process. Community and Member consultation is important to achieve high quality sustainable developments. Following early consultation and participation, continued dialogue and wider consultation are recognised as key to effective delivery of developments. The responsibility lies with the developer to arrange and carry out any pre-application consultation.

For further details contact:
The Leonardo Building,
2 Rossington Street,
Leeds LS2 8HD

email : dec@leeds.gov.uk
tel : 0113 2224409



Protocol for Pre-application discussions with local communities and Ward Members

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE PROTOCOL

- For effective implementation of the 'Statement of Community Involvement' the responsibilities of the Council and the Developer roles are set out below. The approach to Member involvement should be clarified with Planning Officers at the outset and Members should be consulted as early as possible. Officers will 'signpost' the Developer to relevant Members to include Ward Members and known groups who should be involved in the process particularly for large and sensitive proposals. This might include Area Committees, Town and Parish Councils and local community organisations as these provide a valuable resource for local consultation.



CITY COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES:-

- Agree at the outset whether the application will need to be the subject of community consultation, smaller applications will remain the subject of statutory consultations.
- Agree at the outset in a meeting between Officers and Developers what the requirements are for a 'Statement of Community Consultation'. The requirements for this are set out below under 'Developer Responsibilities', and to agree a structured approach as set out in 'Proforma 1' for pre application consultation.
- Promote good practise for Ward Member and community consultation, such that it becomes an inherent part of the planning application process at an early stage. Examples of good community consultation include the Kirkstall Forge site, a large scale mixed use development to include 1300 residential units and Eden Mount the former Kirkstall Community Centre proposal for 17 apartments.
- Ensure that developers are given guidance as to the form and duration of Ward Member and community consultation, encourage joint working and alert Ward Councillors to the proposals.
- Provide guidance to developers on the appropriate form of consultation. For example public meetings, leaflets, public exhibitions and the establishment of community consultation forums for larger developments, to yield the greatest results, and provide details of suitable venues in the locality.
- Develop and keep up to date a database which includes relevant equality strands to include the young, black and ethnic minority (BME) and disability groups. Consultation with a wider representative group is important to ensure that as many people as possible are involved in the process and applicants are advised on appropriate 'hard to reach' groups.
- Ward Members/ Parish Councillors to feed through their comments in the normal way via letter or email to officers.
- Where appropriate Ward Members will be provided with information throughout the life of the application from pre-application stage in the form of updates, notification of amended plans, information and position statements etc.



DEVELOPER RESPONSIBILITIES

- In conjunction with Planning officers, undertake to consult with Ward Members, Town and Parish Councillors and the community at an early stage of proposal development in order that it can be meaningful and to ensure that all parties benefit from the process.
- Engage in a meaningful pre and post application dialogue and allow sufficient time to carry out consultation.
- Agree a 'Statement of Community Consultation' with the Local Planning Authority which sets out proposals for consultation. In the statement of Community Consultation set out;
 - Proposals for consultation. Being clear as to **why** and **what** you are consulting on.
 - When** consultation will be held in particular with Ward Councillors and wider consultation to include the Community, Stakeholders and Parish Councils. An appropriate programme of consultation should be agreed.
 - Consider and **identify** with the LPA appropriate consultation techniques. Such **techniques** could include exhibitions, questionnaires, stakeholder workshops, Planning for real events, community planning events and drop ins. It is important that the techniques recognise the needs of different communities.
 - Following consultation the 'Statement of Community Consultation' should include a **summary of consultation** responses and how these have been taken into consideration in amending your proposals. This statement should be submitted with your application.
- For larger schemes set out the post application consultation process which will be carried out in the 'Statement of Community Consultation'.
- Identify adequate time, skills and resources for communication with Ward Councillors and Public Consultation.

