



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

TUESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY 2005 AT 4.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE

AGENDA

Council Agendas and Minutes are available on our web site at
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/meetings

MEMBERS: Councillors Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., (Vice-Chairman), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. K. M. Gall, R. Hollingworth, G. H. R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck, D. McGrath, D. C. Norton, N. Psirides, J. A. Ruck, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Tidmarsh and C. J. K. Wilson.

1. To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutes
2. To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th November 2004
3. Statement of Community Involvement – including a Presentation and Workshops
4. Sustainability Appraisal – including a Presentation
5. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Administrative Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

S. NIXON
Chief Executive

The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
BROMSGROVE
Worcs.
B60 1AA

28th January 2005

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

Wednesday, 24th November 2004, at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (Vice-Chairman), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. K. M. Gall, R. Hollingworth, G. H. R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck, D. McGrath, D. C. Norton, N. Psirides J.P., J. A. Ruck, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Tidmarsh and C. J. K. Wilson.

01/04 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: that Councillor Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor be elected as Chairman of the Working Party for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

02/04 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: that Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Working Party for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

03/04 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

The Director of Planning Services and the Head of Local Plans gave a general introduction to the Local Development Framework which is to replace the Local Development Plan system. It was noted that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister would be monitoring the Performance of Local Authorities and that it was likely that the award of further planning grant funding would be linked to progress on the Local Development Framework.

It was hoped that the establishment of the Working Party would enable the process to move forward more swiftly although some major documents would need to be finally approved by Cabinet and in some circumstances by Council. It was hoped that the geographical spread of the representation of the Working Party would strengthen the process.

Officers from the Local Plan Section then gave more detailed presentations on the process of producing the Local Development Framework, which was initially based on a three year time frame, together with an overview on the development of a Statement of Community Involvement. During the presentations, Officers responded to a number of questions raised by Members of the Working Group regarding processes and time scales.

It was noted that the next Meeting would be required at the beginning of February 2005 with the objective of considering a Draft Statement of Community Involvement. Following that meeting it was likely that meetings would be required on a monthly basis.

RESOLVED: that the content of the presentations be noted.

The Meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LDF WORKING GROUP MEETING

8TH FEBRUARY 2005

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs M Taylor
Responsible Head of Service	Malcolm Griffiths, Director of Planning Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A key part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) planning system is the requirement on the Council to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI.) The SCI is intended to show how the Council aims to involve the community throughout the planning process and how we propose to resource and manage these proposals.
- 1.2 The Draft SCI puts forward the issues and options the Council has regarding the subject of:
- (i) how we propose to consult the community
 - (ii) who we hope to involve in the process and;
 - (iii) what we will consult on
- These options will be presented to the community through the Draft SCI
- 1.3 Consultants were employed to review the SCI to ensure the document met all government regulations and standards.
- 1.4 The aim now is to take the SCI out to consultation for the statutory period of 6 weeks from 14th of February to 27th of March. The consultation methods discussed in the SCI will be employed during this consultation period.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Members note the contents of the attached Draft SCI.
- 2.2 That the Draft SCI provides the basis for public consultation

3. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)

- 3.1 It is the aim of the Draft SCI to present the issues and options that are available regarding community involvement. Over the 6-week consultation period the aim will be to obtain the views of the community on this subject and consider how they wish to be involved in the process.

- 3.2 The final version of the SCI will outline who the Council will be involving throughout the planning process and how these people and organisations will be consulted in the most effective way. The document will also explain how the Council will manage and resource the process of involvement.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Involving the community in planning, using the most effective methods open to us will help the Council ensure that the needs of the community are being met and will allow the community to see that the Council is keen for the community to engage in the planning process. The SCI will be a step towards a 2-way line of communication on planning matters between the Council and the community.
- 4.2 Successful involvement of the community in the planning process will help the Council to ensure that the decisions that are made are the best decisions possible through using local knowledge and planning expertise.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The cost of consultation will be covered by Planning Delivery Grant and Local Plans Revenue Budget.

6. Attached Document

- 6.1 Draft Statement of Community Involvement

Contact Officer

Name: Oonagh McClean
Email: o.mcclean@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881323

Draft

Statement of Community Involvement



We want you to have your say in your community

Bromsgrove District Council

January 2005



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1. Introduction : Setting the Scene

Planning is the process through which we plan and make decisions about the area we live in. The planning system is in place to make sure that a balance is maintained between protecting our environment and developing our area. Both elements are important in creating a place where people want to live and work. It is essential that the community get involved in planning as the decisions taken affect everyone's lives.

The Government is improving the planning system to make it faster, more responsive to change and to encourage greater community involvement. This document, the *Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)*, aims to outline what we, the Council aim to do to get the community involved in planning matters. In the past, the planning system has been prone to conflict between different parties. The aim is that with effective continuous community involvement, this will no longer be the case. All members of the community can be involved and contribute to the preparation of plans but we must be realistic: many different views will be expressed and they must all be taken into account. This document outlines how you can get involved.

Planning covers two main areas: determining planning applications (development control) and developing planning policy. Community involvement is essential to both processes. This document is mainly concerned with community involvement in developing planning policy. Community involvement in planning applications and the development control process is discussed specifically later.

The old system of planning policy required Local Planning Authorities to produce a '*Local Plan*.' This covered every aspect of planning for a whole area. This took many years to produce and the production process was at times very slow. Now instead of a '*Local Plan*' a '*Local Development Framework*' (*LDF*) will be produced. This is a collection of different documents that can be worked on individually; making the system more manageable and flexible, with different documents being produced as needs change.

The *SCI* should be read alongside the *Local Development Scheme (LDS)*, our timetable for document production. There is a glossary available in Appendix 2 of this document to help explain any planning terms and acronyms. (Any terms that are in *italics* are explained in the

glossary.) This is a draft version of the *SCI*, it has been published for consultation. You have the opportunity to comment on anything in this draft in the questionnaire (Appendix 1) The Final *SCI* will incorporate the consultation results.

2. Purpose and Commitment

The *SCI* aims to: -

- i. **Assist integration with other public participation work in the Council;**
- ii. **Set out how the community will be effectively involved in developing planning policy and decisions on planning applications;**
- iii. **Report on community involvement in the *LDF* process and the outcomes.**

Specifically, the draft *SCI* seeks to answer the following questions: -

- **Why** we will consult;
- **What** we will consult on;
- **How** we should consult;
- **Who** we should consult;
- **When** we will consult;
- **How** we should inform consultees of the outcome.

We, the Council, are committed to involving the community, including hard to reach groups, throughout the *LDF* process. By involving people effectively in the plan making process, we will better understand the needs of the community, and therefore the *LDF* will be better suited to community needs. We are keen to make every possible effort to improve decision-making, minimise any delays and use resources effectively.

3. Why are we consulting?

An important part of the new planning system is this *SCI*. The involvement of the community is a vital part of having an open and transparent planning system that involves and is supported by local people. This *SCI* outlines how we will attempt to involve the community in any way we can and at as early a stage as possible. Community involvement is of benefit to both the Council and the Community.

The benefits for the Council include:

- **Gaining important local knowledge from the community that may otherwise be very time consuming to discover**
- **Getting community support for the plans we make**
- **Reducing the levels of conflict in the system**

The benefits for the Community include:

- **Promoting an inclusive society**
- **People are given a say in their area and their future**
- **Reducing the levels of conflict in the system**

A key to really bringing about all these benefits is the involvement of the community in the decision making process from the beginning.

4. What will we consult on?

All the documents we will be producing are *Local Development Documents* (LDDs). There are two types of LDDs; *Development Plan Documents* and *Supplementary Plan Documents*. The *Development Plan Documents* make up the core of the new system and the *Supplementary Plan Documents* fit around them and enhance them.

Development Plan Documents

The DPDs that we intend to prepare are: -

Core Strategy

This will set out the long-term vision and the key policies and proposals to deliver that vision up to 2021. It will contain a set of primary policies for delivering the core strategy and set the broad locations for development in the future. Once adopted, all other DPDs will have to be in line with the Core Strategy.

Proposals Map

This will illustrate on a map all the policies and proposals contained in DPDs. It will be a separate DPD and will be revised as new DPDs are prepared and adopted.

Generic Development Control Policies

This will contain a generic set of policies against which planning applications for development and use of land and buildings will be considered.

Non-Development Plan Documents

The *SPDs* that the Council intends to prepare are: -

Managing Housing Supply

This *SPD* will contain specific guidance on delivering and managing the supply of housing for the district.

Affordable Housing

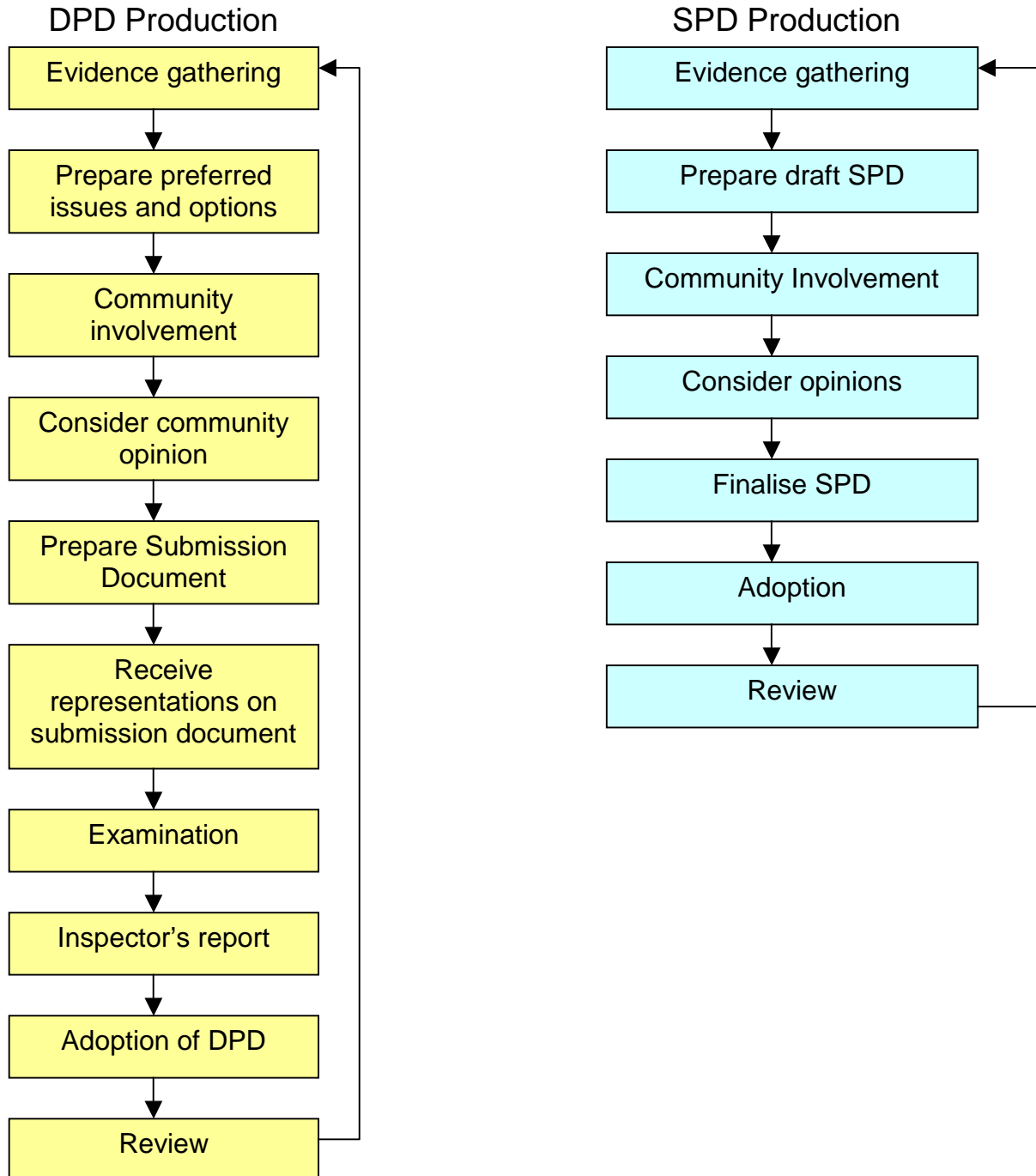
This *SPD* will look into the need for affordable housing in Bromsgrove District and assess how much of any new development would have to be affordable housing.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

As part of every *DPD* and *SPD* produced the Council will have to undertake an SA (a part of which is the *SEA*). The SA is there to assess the environmental, economic and social impacts of the document.

5. Stages of Document Production

Figure 1 : Stages of Document Production



Stage 1: Issues and Options (Evidence Gathering)

As part of the Issues & Options stage, we have to gather evidence to inform the document. The Council has already carried out major evidence gathering studies on issues such as housing, employment and Bromsgrove town centre that will inform the production of the LDDs. Evidence gathering is still taking place to identify relevant groups and organisations that may wish to be involved in the *LDF* process. (No actual Issues and Options Document is produced)

Stage 2: Preferred Issues & Options

The next stage (except for the LDS) is the production of a Preferred Options document, which will set out the available options along with the Council's opinion of the best option. People will be invited to make comments on this document for a *statutory* six-week period. The Council will publicise the document through the methods outlined in the *SCI* so that as many people as possible have the opportunity to feed their views into the process.

Stage 3: Submission Document

After the six-week period of consultation a 'submission document' will be produced. This will consider the views received. This document will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Consultees will be notified of this further stage and then there will be another six-week period to make formal representations on the documents.

Stage 4: Examination

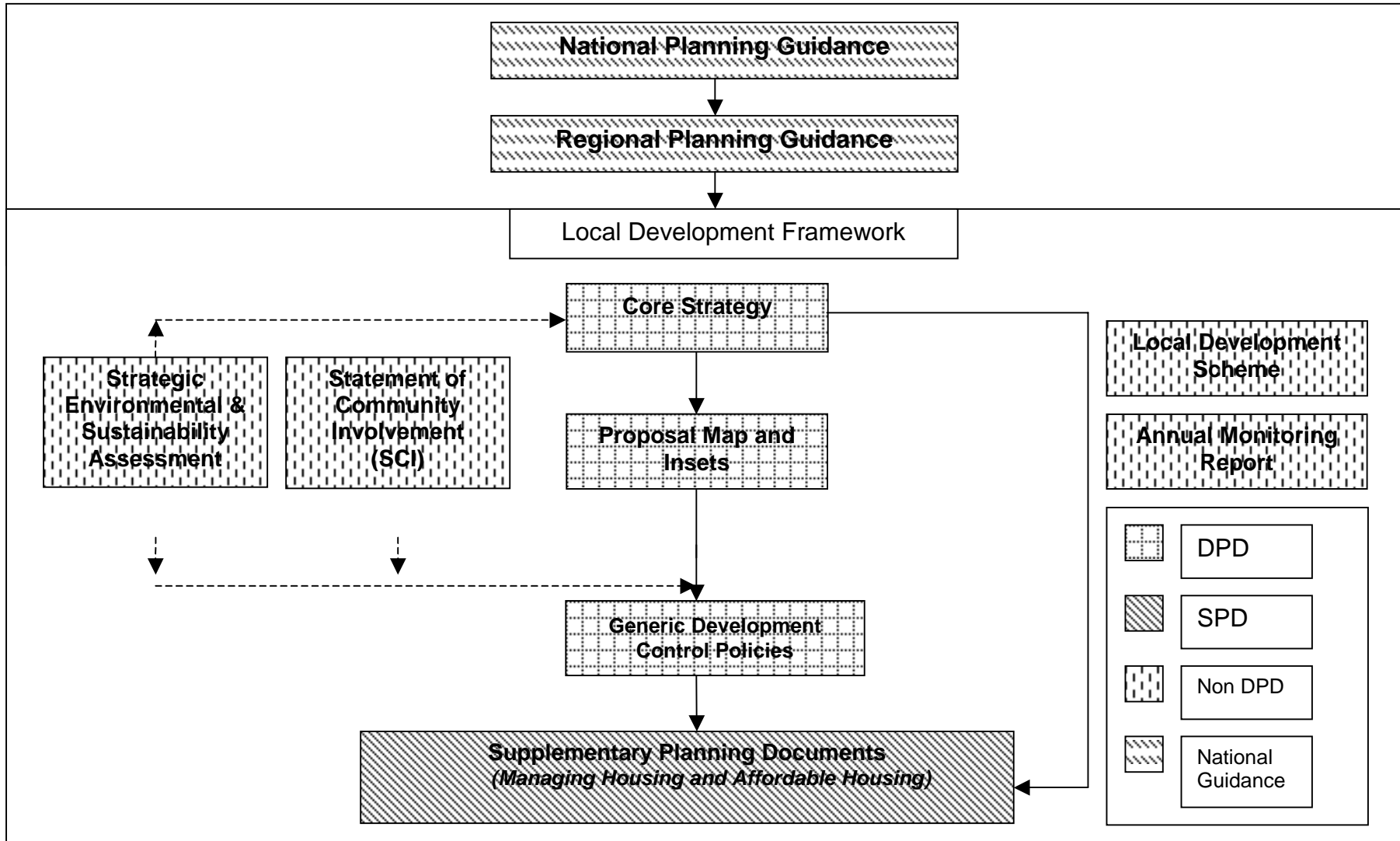
A public examination will then be held. A Planning Inspector, who is independent of the Council, will consider and evaluate all of the representations received and will decide if any changes are necessary. The Inspector's findings will be contained in a Report that they produce. A key change under the new system is that the Inspector's Report will be binding on the Council.

Stage 5: Adoption

The Council will then adopt the relevant document.

The following page shows all the parts of the new system and how they fit together.

Figure 1 : The 'Parts' of the LDF



6. Evidence Gathering for SCI

As part of the authority's evidence gathering, the Local Plans team started to compile a contact management database, which will be used throughout the production of the *LDF*. The database contains contact details of potential *stakeholders*.

The Local Plans section already had a number of databases that held contact information for many organisations/individuals who had been involved in the plan-making process or who had requested to be kept informed of future plans for the District. These databases were amalgamated and updated to form a new contact management database. You can be added to this database by filling out your details on the questionnaire in the back and sending it to us, alternatively you can give us your details online at <http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=4949>

The Local Plans section contacted other departments within the Council, including Community Safety, Best Value, Housing, Economic Development, and Leisure & Recreation, to obtain contact details of organisations (e.g. of the Local Strategic Partnership) who might be interested in future plans for the District.

The Local Plans section also carried out additional research to identify organisations/individuals (particularly community groups) who operated in the area and might wish to be involved in planning decisions. The Council used information held by the County Council, contacted the Parish Councils, used search engines on web sites and used Officers' local knowledge to identify potentially interested groups.

7. Production of SCI

Issues & Options

A letter, questionnaire and a leaflet explaining the new planning system were sent to 268 individuals/organisations. This information was targeted towards local community groups/organisations within Bromsgrove District and individuals on the Citizen's Panel, who had expressed an interest in planning matters. The purpose of this informal involvement was to gain peoples' opinions on the most appropriate way of conducting further consultation for the *SCI*.

In total we received a very positive response of 41 completed questionnaires, as well as a number of letters. This represented a response rate of approximately 18%. Around 25% of those who responded had never been involved in the planning process before.

The responses we received showed support for the methods the Council was already using, as ways of informing and consulting the community, as well as gaining new ideas that hadn't previously been considered. The results from this informal involvement have been used to inform the production of the *SCI*. Also an *LDF* working group was also set up comprising of Ward Councilors from all over the district. They are geographically representative of Bromsgrove District.

The working group was established to be present throughout the whole *LDF* process to ensure the highest standards are maintained. A presentation was given to them on the new system and the *SCI*; they were also given the questionnaire to complete. As well as this an exhibition was held at a Local Strategic Partnership (*LSP*) event to make them aware of the *LDF* process in the hope of involving them in further consultation at a later date. They were also given leaflets on the new planning system and questionnaires.

8. How will we consult?

Under the new planning system, more emphasis has been put on involving the community. When consulting, we will take into account the differences between the individuals and organisations we are seeking to involve and make every attempt to use the best method possible to ensure that everyone gains as much as possible from the consultation.

The Council aims to uphold a number of principles: -

Table 1 : Council Aims and Principles for Community Involvement

Principle we aim to uphold	How we will do this in practice
Ease of accessibility to information	Have documents and hold events in the most suitable places for people to make use of
Transparency	Keep lines of communication open through the Council's website and newsletter
Appropriateness	Choosing the best method possible for involving people
Genuine attempts at consultation	Only involve people when they can have a real influence on the outcome of a plan

Production

The following table over the page assesses different types of techniques and their appropriate use.

The pros and cons of many involvement techniques are discussed in the following table. A distinction is made between the different ways of engaging the community in the process. Engagement can be about: **informing** people about plans for their area, **consulting** people about the plans for their area or actually **involving** them in making the plans for their area. We would like your feedback on the techniques described in the table. Which techniques should we use and when?

Table 2 : Consultation Techniques

Options	Description	Pros	Cons	Does it inform?	Does it consult?	Does it involve?
Newsletter, e.g. Council Chat	Council produced and sent to homes to inform the public of plans	Regularly updated; Reaches large numbers	Can be costly; Can be time consuming; May not be read	Y	N	N
Exhibitions	Displays of plans to bring them to the public's attention and gain their opinions	Gives opportunity for comments; Can be effective publicity	Few may attend, those who do may not be representative; Who is reached is very time dependent.	Y	Y	N
Questionnaires	Sent out to homes to gather opinions on certain topics	Low in cost and time; Reaches many people; Detailed replies; Easy to analyse data	Not good for complex questions; Can get few responses; Viewed as dull; Hard to reach may not reply	Y	Y	N
Focus Groups	Facilitated group discussions, used to get views and new ideas	Can be geared towards the hard to reach; Can be complex and in depth; Allows for interaction	Costly; Time consuming; Difficult to analyse results; Expertise is necessary; Suitable venue must be found	N	Y	Y
Forums, e.g. 'Spotlight' meetings	Regular meetings with interested parties to get views and inform	Inexpensive; Flexible; Regular way of involving; Creates links to the community; Makes use of existing forums	May not involve the hard to reach; Certain people may dominate discussion; Trained managers are a necessity	N	Y	Y
Public Meetings	Large scale structured meetings	Inexpensive; Flexible; Involves large numbers	Turnout can be poor Attendees may not represent community Can be difficult to organise	Y	Y	N
Workshops	Organised discussion groups	Can go into detail; Large numbers can take part; Everyone actively participates	Requires skilled managers; Can be difficult to organise; Can be expensive; Time consuming	Y	Y	Y
Physical Planning	Consultation meeting using 3-D plans as illustration	Easy to set up; Entertaining; Can deal with complex issues; Can involve those who normally would not	Costly; Needs suitable venue; Cannot ensure representative	N	N	Y
Citizen's Panel	Group of local volunteers who will be regularly consulted on a wide range of topics	Making use of groups already in place	Can be unrepresentative	N	Y	N

9. When will we consult?

This table shows the timetable for the production of the documents that will make up the *LDF*. The table shows the stages of production that each document will go through.

Table 3: Timetable for Document Production

Document Name	Start preparing Issues and Options	Consultation on Preferred Options	Consultation on Submission version	Estimated Examination Date	Estimated date for Binding Report	Estimated Adoption Date
Local Development Scheme	October 04	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	February 05
Statement of Community Involvement	October 04	February 05 / March 05	July / August 05	October 05	January 06	March 06
Core Strategy	November 04	September / October 05	June / July 06	December 06	June 07	September 07
Proposals Map	N/A	N/A	June / July 06	N/A	N/A	September 07
Generic Development Control Policies	September 05	September / October 06	July / August 07	After September 07	After September 07	After September 07
Affordable housing SPD	January 05	N/A	November / December 05	N/A	N/A	June 06
Managing Housing SPD	December 04	N/A	September / October 05	N/A	N/A	February 06

10. Who will we consult?

We need to know the different communities there are in the District in order to develop and implement an effective *LDF*. We know that communities are made up of individuals and organisations and we know that communities can be both of place, e.g. Wythall Resident's Association or of interest, e.g. the Bromsgrove Choral Society and we have made every attempt to contact all those we can. As a basic minimum for consultation the government has outlined a list of *statutory* consultees who must be notified of any *Development Plan Documents* and when planning applications are received. This can be seen in Appendix 3.

As part of our initial evidence gathering for the *SCI*, we asked people the question; who are the key communities to involve in the new *LDF*? In many cases, people identified very broad communities of interest, e.g. disabled people, the business community, etc. The Council have included all of these broad communities of interest and have identified organisations that represent such communities, consulting with local groups where possible.

The table on the following pages is the Council's first assessment of communities, other than *statutory* consultees, who may wish to be involved in the *LDF*. Hopefully many other groups will ask to be involved, kept informed and actively take part in the planning process. This list will be refined and developed throughout the consultation process, to ensure that the Council involves all those communities who wish to be involved. A special effort will be made to involve those groups that have been highlighted as being 'hard to reach'. These are groups that may not traditionally have been involved in the planning process and are therefore ending up even further marginalised in society. The Council will make sensible attempts at involving these members of the community. As part of the Council's evidence gathering work, which has included working closely with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) as well as learning from past planning consultation exercises, the Council has identified those groups who are 'hard to reach'.

Table 4: Communities we are considering consulting

Community	Description	Hard to Reach	Potential Interests
Communities of Interest			
Elderly	Approaching old age	Y	Elderly peoples' needs, e.g. housing provision, service accessibility
Young People	11 – 18 year olds	Y	Service accessibility; sport and recreation provision
Young Adults	18 – 24 year olds	Y	Access to affordable housing, employment
Young Children and Families with Young Children	Under 11's and their parents or guardians	Y	Provision of services
Single Parent families		Y	Housing needs;
Social Housing Providers	Registered social landlords		Provision of affordable housing
Private Housing Landlords			Housing Issues
Private Housing Owners		Y	Housing Issues
People in Housing Need		Y	Provision of affordable, well maintained housing
Homeless People		Y	Housing Needs
Black and Ethnic Minorities	As defined by the Census	Y	Access to affordable housing
Carers	Looking after those with illness	Y	Service accessibility, transport
People with Disabilities		Y	Building design; Street layout; Service accessibility; transport
Self Employed		Y	Suitable premises; IT
Unemployed People		Y	Access to employment
Employees			Transport, access to premises
Micro Enterprise	Enterprises with up to 5 employees	Y	Employment sites and premises
Small to Medium Enterprises	Enterprises with 5 to 20 employees		Employment sites and premises; transport infrastructure;

Medium and Large Enterprises	Enterprises with 20+ employees		Employment sites and premises; transport infrastructure;
Agricultural businesses	Primary agricultural businesses (owners and tenants) and agricultural supply businesses		Premises; agricultural diversification; countryside conservation
Agricultural Employees	Employees of agricultural businesses		Investment in agriculture, agricultural diversification
Councillors	Elected representatives at County, District or Parish Level		Ensure needs of electorate recognised
Members of Parliament			Ensure needs of constituents recognised
Public Transport Providers	Rail and bus operating companies		Development of new routes, provision of route infrastructure, subsidies, integrated transport
Community Transport Providers			Development of new routes, provision of route infrastructure, subsidies, integrated transport
Public Transport User Groups	Groups advocating public transport improvements	Y	Development of new routes, provision of route infrastructure, integrated transport
Transport Infrastructure Providers and Sustainable Transport Interests	Organisations responsible for providing and managing road, rail, waterways, and those promoting sustainable transport		Development of new routes, provision of route infrastructure, integrated transport
Agencies (Central government)			Various – some with <i>statutory</i> interests
Agencies (Regional)			Various – some with <i>statutory</i> interests
Agencies (County level)	Agencies responsible for delivering services at a County level		Various – some with <i>statutory</i> interests
Agencies (local government)	District, County and Parish Councils		Various – some with <i>statutory</i> interests
Health Services and Organisations promoting Health and Well being	Organisations providing primary and acute care, and working to promote health and well being		Health care infrastructure; Service accessibility
Strategic and Local Partnerships	Partnerships developing community and regeneration plans covering Bromsgrove District		Various – link to Community Strategy

Emergency Services			Design for community safety/accessibility by emergency personnel
Rural Service Providers	Small enterprises providing services to rural communities, e.g. Post Offices, Village Shops		Premises, Transport
Telecommunications and IT Providers			Communications
Utility Providers	Organisations supplying water, gas, electricity and sewerage		Infrastructure provision
Tourism Operators and Providers	Enterprises offering visitor attractions		Premises, Transport
Countryside and Nature Conservation	Organisations working to protect and enhance the natural and semi-natural environment of the District		Conservation of natural environment
Built Heritage and Conservation	Organisations working to promote the cultural and built heritage of the District		Conservation of cultural and historic built environment
Community Safety	Organisations working to promote safety and address crime		Development design
Community Organisations	Community and voluntary organisations working to promote community well being		Various
Arts and Culture	Organisations promoting the arts and culture		Arts and culture provision
Sports, Leisure and Recreation	Organisations promoting participation in sport, leisure and recreation (formal and informal)		Sports and recreation provision; transport
Schools and Colleges	Educational Establishments		Development and improvement of education premises, transport
Design Organisations	Organisations providing (or with an interest in) services in urban, landscape, and architectural design		Design quality, consistency of advice
Development Industry			Identification of development sites and opportunities

Faith Groups			Development and improvement of premises
Communities of Place			
Village	Named nucleated settlement		All issues relevant to that area
Town	Bromsgrove, Hagley, Wythall		All issues relevant to that area
Parish			All issues relevant to that area
District	Whole of District		All issues relevant to that area

11. Community Involvement in the Development Control Process

As well as developing planning policy, Bromsgrove District Council deals with about 1500 applications for planning permission or advertisement consent, listed building consent and conservation area consent each year. The system by which applications are determined is known as development control. This is how most people come into contact with the planning system, when decisions are made about their area. You can use this e-mail address; d.hammond@bromsgrove.gov.uk to find out about development control matters.

The proposed changes to the planning system are intended to encourage greater community involvement, improve the transparency of the decision making process and give more certainty to applicants. However, it is important we balance this against the cost and speed of decision-making in the best way possible. The Council will ensure that it at least meets its legal requirements for consultation. In many instances, the Council goes beyond what is legally required.

This *SCI* sets out good practice to engage those who have an interest in planning applications. The following table summarises what we will be doing at each stage regarding consultation on planning applications. The Council encourages applicants to engage in pre-application discussion with the community, at a level that is appropriate to the size and nature of the proposal.

Table 5: Community Involvement in the Development Control Process

Stage 1	Pre-application	Prior to the submission of an application. Applicants have the option of contacting an Officer for advice on the Planning Help line open from 10am to 4pm on weekdays on 01527 881346 . The Council's Website (www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/planning) offers advice and links to other websites that may be of use. Developers proposing major developments ¹ will be advised by the council on the community involvement they should conduct. (This is explained in the next section)
Stage 2	Application Received	Once an application has been made, letters will be sent out to everyone whose land abuts the development and the <i>statutory</i> consultees (Appendix 3). A site notice or a notice will be placed in the most relevant newspaper ² in certain circumstances ³ . A site notice will be put up if all abutting landowners cannot be found. Weekly lists of all applications and plans will be available, at the Council House, on the Council's website and in all Parish Council Offices and libraries in the District. Anyone can make a representation on an application but it must be within 21 days of the application being registered.
Stage 3	Determination of Application	The Officer will consider the merits of the application and any representations that have been made. They will then write a report and recommendation. A decision based on this report will be made by the Director of Planning although the Planning Committee will determine applications in certain circumstances ⁴ . The public can attend Committees and the dates will be online ⁵ . The Committees' agendas (5-9 days in advance) and minutes (2-3 weeks after) will be available on the Council's Website and in libraries, the Council House and at Parish Council Offices.
Stage 4	Notification	Anyone who made a representation will be informed of the outcome of the application by letter ⁶ within 7 days of the decision. Decision notices can also be viewed on the Council's Website.
Stage 5	Appeal	Applicants may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a decision if the planning application has been refused or if it was not processed within 8 weeks. They may also appeal against specific conditions imposed. If an inquiry is to take place a notice will appear on the site or in the relevant newspaper at least 7 days after the notification from the Planning Inspectorate. Letters will be sent out to all <i>statutory</i> consultees (Appendix 3). Appeal papers and the Council's written evidence are available from the Council House.

There is extra detail on the information in the table on the next page.

Key to table on previous page

- ¹ Major developments are defined by the Council as those that meet any of the following criteria: -
- the number of residential dwellings to be provided is 10 or more;
 - the residential development site area is 0.5 hectare or more and it is not known how many residential dwellings are proposed;
 - the provision of a building or buildings with a floor space of 1000 sq m or more; development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.
- ² Notices will be placed in the relevant newspaper covering the District, e.g. the Bromsgrove Advertiser, the Bromsgrove Standard, the Redditch Indicator, the Stourbridge News, The Birmingham Post.
- ³ A site notice will be put up or a notice placed in a relevant newspaper if: -
- the application is a departure from the Local Plan,
 - it affects a public right of way,
 - it is in a Conservation Area or is a listed building,
 - it has an environmental statement attached or
 - it is defined as major ¹
- ⁴ Applications currently determined (September 2004) by Planning Committee are: -
- Major developments (see below for definition);
 - If the Ward Councillor requests that application is reported to Committee;
 - If Officers want to take application to Committee.
- ⁵ Members of the public can attend Planning committee but cannot currently speak at Committee. This situation is currently under review and it is hoped that a trial period of public speaking at Committee will begin in 2005.
- ⁶ If there are more than 12 objectors then a notice will be placed in the relevant newspaper (see above).

Major Applications

Regarding any major applications (as defined above¹) that the Council receives, a tiered approach will be employed. This means that different levels of involvement will be used depending on the individual circumstances of each case. It is difficult to be prescriptive about the levels of community involvement as each case is different. As the Council has to consider resources, developers will be encouraged to conduct community involvement. For applications that may prove controversial developers will be advised to hold a public meeting, or to attend a pre-existing one to gain public support early in the process. They will also be advised to put forth a development brief outlining their plans for the sites.

12. Links with other Community Initiatives

The Local Development Framework will not be developed in isolation from the Council's other strategies, but rather there will be links with other community initiatives, such as the Community Plan. The Community Plan is a ten –year strategy, which aims to provide a coordinated approach to improving the quality of life for everyone in Bromsgrove. Many of the aims and objectives of the Community Plan will be delivered through the *LDF*.



The Community Plan will be updated at least annually to take account of emerging new issues. Bromsgrove's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), The Bromsgrove Partnership, is responsible for the Community Plan. The *LDF* will be developed with as much input as possible from the LSP. A key part of the process will be information sharing and combining consultation events.

13. Access to Information

The Council recognises the importance of effective communication. All Local Development Documents will be available at the locations below for review:

- The Council House
- All District Libraries
- The Council Website www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/localplans

We will also advertise in the local press at the Preferred Options stage and prior to submission to the Secretary of State stating where and when the documents can be viewed. The LDD's will be available in a variety of different formats including: -

- Paper copies – leaflets, posters and paper copies of documents, which will be placed in key community locations;
- Electronic Versions –that can be e-mailed to interested individuals/organisations;
- Website – proposals documents, proposals matters, availability of proposals documents for inspection (with times, locations, places) will be published on the Council's website – www.bromsgrove.gov.uk People will be able to respond online;

You can use this e-mail address l.plans@bromsgrove.gov.uk to tell us what you think and to request more information regarding planning policy and the *LDF* process.

14. Planning Aid

West Midlands Planning Aid is part of the Royal Town Planning Institute. It is an independent service that will provide free advice on planning matters to those groups and individuals who cannot afford professional fees. The service can help communities to prepare themselves for getting involved with the *LDF* and the development control process. The Council has and will continue to look to the Planning Aid service for advice throughout the *LDF* process, as they may be able to facilitate and encourage more effective involvement.

15. Informing Contributors of Outcomes

The District Council will develop and maintain the contact management database of those people and organisations involved in the *LDF* process, to enable a two-way flow of information at different stages of developing planning policy. We are committed to incorporating the consensus views raised through involvement into the preparation of the LDDs. At both the Preferred Options stage, and also at the Submission stage of the *DPDs* (only Submission for *SPDs*), the Council will: -

- Acknowledge written comments with a letter or e-mail;
- Record comments from public meetings and forums and feed these into the process;
- Produce a summary of written comments received during meetings and make these publicly available on the Council's website www.bromsgrove.gov.uk
- Produce a report to Members listing all written comments received, Officers' response and a recommendation as to what changes, if any, should be made.

This report will also be available on the Council's website www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

The Council will also keep contributors informed, where possible, through using: -

- The Local Media, e.g. press releases;
- Newsletters such as Council Chat, distributed to all households in Bromsgrove District;
- Officer presentations to *stakeholder* groups who have been involved in participation events and those who contact us to request a presentation.

The Council is also required to monitor the effectiveness of policies and proposals contained in the LDDs. The first Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will be produced in December 2005 and will be available at the Council Offices and on our website www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

16. Resources and Management

The Council needs to resource and manage the process effectively as community involvement can be very time and resource intensive. The resources needed to deliver the *SCI* are: -

Staff

The Local Plans team will primarily carry out community involvement, with assistance from staff within other sections as appropriate. Sharing good practice within the Council as well as with other authorities will help this delivery. Attempts will be made to combine our community involvement with that of other departments in the Council in order to use resources most effectively.

Consultants

They may be employed to help facilitate involvement.

Equipment and Materials

Production of displays, maps and images will aid involvement. Appropriate information technology will enable more advanced techniques.

Venue hires and other direct costs

To maximise community involvement, the Council will seek to address any barriers, such as accessibility difficulties. The Council will run events in locations that are appropriate to maximise such involvement.

The timetable of production

The timetable of document production was set up so the consultation periods for different documents could coincide whenever possible to cut down the number of events and therefore cut down on cost.

The resources that are available: -

Planning Budget.

Planning budget for 2004-5 takes account of the need to fund the community involvement as set out in the *SCI*. Part of the budget is specifically set aside for the purpose of community involvement. This will be put to use in the most effective way possible.

Planning Delivery Grant.

Central Government rewards the Council with a Planning Delivery Grant (PDG), based on performance. Unfortunately it is not possible to estimate future PDGs as they may change annually.

The head of Local Plans will manage the overall process. Our aim is to make the best possible use of the resources we have available to us.

17. Legal Duties

The Race Relations Act (2000) set out the duty of The Council regarding racial issues. We have a duty to remove any unlawful discrimination and to promote equality. Community involvement must reflect this. The Council must also comply with the duty outlined in the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) to provide a public service that doesn't discriminate against disabled people by providing them with a lower standard of service.

18. Monitoring

It is important to ensure that the *SCI* works as well as it can and to improve it if there is a need. This process will be one of continuous learning. The *SCI* will be: -

- Monitored on an annual basis and will then be the subject of a review if the monitoring highlights such a need;
- Formally reviewed at least once every three years;
- Monitored to ascertain whether the standards set in the *SCI* are being achieved. The results of this monitoring process will be set out in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

Monitoring will help to determine whether: -

- The *SCI* effectively engages community involvement and if not, why not?
- The techniques used are working and if not, why not?
- There are any improvements that could be made.

19. Conclusion

This draft version of the *SCI* has been published and made available to give the community the opportunity to be involved in making the decisions on how they want to be involved in planning in the future. To get involved please fill out the questionnaire in the appendices or online at <http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=4949> Using the best community involvement techniques will help us make the best decisions for Bromsgrove District.

Appendix 1: Feedback on Draft SCI

We wish to receive your comments about how the Draft Statement of Community Involvement can be improved. The questions seek to identify areas where we would like your input. Please provide your contact details so we can keep you informed of the process. Thank you for taking the time to complete the form.

Q1a Does the SCI clearly explain what the SCI aims to do? (See page 2)

Yes No

Q1b If No, how can the SCI be improved?

Q2a Other than the Community Plan, are there other community initiatives that should be linked to the LDF process? Yes No

Q2b If Yes, please specify

Q3a Does the SCI clearly explain how the Council intends to involve the Community? Yes No

Q3b If No, how can the SCI be improved?

Q4a Are the list of techniques sufficiently comprehensive to involve the community? Yes No

Q4b If No, please indicate what techniques we should use

Q5a Do you feel that the type of consultation identified is the most appropriate ways of involving the community? Yes No

Q5b If no, please suggest other means for seeking public involvement?

Q6 Which methods do you consider are most appropriate to involve 'hard to reach groups'? (See page 9)

Q7a Have we identified the main communities of interest? (See pages 12-14)

Yes No

Q7b If no, please tell us which additional communities of interest should be included?

The results will be made publicly available at the locations listed on page 18. Thank you for completing this questionnaire. We would be grateful if you could complete the table below. Please return this questionnaire to Local Plans Section, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA. This questionnaire is also online at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/localplans

Name	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
E-mail	

If you **do not** wish to be contacted about the LDF process, please tick this box

Appendix 2: Glossary

Local Development Framework (LDF)

This is the portfolio of LDDs (*Local Development Documents*). This will be the framework for delivering the planning strategy and policies for Bromsgrove District.

Local Development Documents (LDD)

These documents will contain the policies and could be either Development Plan Documents (*DPD*) or Supplementary Planning Documents (*SPD*). These are the documents that make up the LDF.

Development Plan Documents (DPD)

These will be the key documents of the LDF they will contain development plan policies and be subject to independent examination.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Each SPD will cover a specific issue, which will provide additional guidance for policies in the *DPDs*.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

This document is a 3 year project plan for the production of documents in the LDF.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

This document will show the progress of plan production set out in the LDS and how effective the development plan policies have been.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The environmental assessment of plans and policies. As required by an EU Directive.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

An appraisal of the environmental, social and economic impacts of specific policies and proposals. Will be undertaken at the same time as the SEA.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

A partnership of members from many different bodies responsible for the Community Plan

Statutory

Based on a legal requirement

Stakeholders

Person with a share and/or an interest

Appendix 3: Statutory Consultees

Consultee	Statutory Consultee for Development Plan Document	Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications
Regional Government body – Government Office of West Midlands (GOWM)	Y	
Regional Planning body - GOWM	Y	
Regional Development Agency – Advantage West Midlands	Y	
DEFRA (Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs)	Y	
County Council – Worcestershire County Council	Y	Y
Adjoining Local Planning Authorities -	Y	Y
Town and Parish Councils -	Y	Y
Environment Agency	Y	Y
Countryside Agency	Y	Y
English Nature	Y	Y
English Heritage	Y	Y
Strategic Rail Authority	Y	Y
Relevant Telecommunications company	Y	
Strategic Health Authority - West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority	Y	
Relevant electricity and gas companies	Y	Y
Relevant sewerage and water undertakers	Y	
Equal Opportunities Commission	Y	
Local Airport Operators	Y	
Health and Safety Executive		Y
Secretary of State for Transport		Y
Rail Operators		Y
Local Highways Authority		Y
The Coal Authority		Y
The Theatres Trust		Y
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)		Y
Waste Regulation Authority		Y
British Waterways		Y
The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment		Y
Council for British Archaeology		Y
Council for the Protection of Rural England		Y
Forestry Commission		Y
Highways Agency		Y
Sport England		Y

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP

8TH FEBRUARY 2005

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs M Taylor
Responsible Head of Service	Malcolm Griffiths, Director of Planning Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will report on the extent to which the implementation of plans will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined.
- 1.2 When undertaking the Sustainability Appraisal of planning policies and documents the Council must also have regard to European Directive 2001/42/EC which requires the formal strategic environment assessment of plans.
- 1.3 The Council will need to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of each Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Document that is produced. The process of assessing the sustainability of policies will be built into the process of plan preparation and help inform the selection of policies. A final report will have to be produced alongside each new planning document justifying the selection of policies and providing information on the environmental impact of policies and how harmful effects can be mitigated.
- 1.4 As the process of environmental assessment is a specialist field that is outside the scope of general planning expertise, Planning Delivery Grant money has been used to appoint Consultants to provide training for Officers, assist the early on in the process and verify sustainability work. The appointed Consultants will partner the authority through the process until adoption of the Core Strategy in 2007. The appointment of Consultants will help ensure that planning documents produced by the Council are sound and fit for submission to the Secretary of State.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of the Report.

3. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 3.1 The land use planning system has a key role in delivering sustainable development and reflecting the aspirations and priorities of local communities. As such to promote sustainable development it is essential that sustainability considerations are built into the preparation and adoption of plans. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will report on the extent to which the implementation of plans will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined.

3.2 Section 39 of the new Planning Act requires local development documents be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The Government has set out four aims for sustainable development, they are:

- i) social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- ii) effective protection of the environment;
- iii) the prudent use of natural resources; and
- iv) maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

3.3 Local planning authorities must also build into their sustainability appraisals the requirements of European Union Directive 2001/42/EC which requires formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of certain plans and programmes. All Local Development Documents that the Council prepares will require this assessment. The Government through guidance has attempted to include the requirements of the European Directive into the production of the Sustainability Appraisal. This will simplify the process to prevent unnecessary duplication of work. As such whenever reference is made to Sustainability Appraisal, this will also include the requirements of the European Directive (SEA).

4. APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS

4.1 A brief was sent out in early December 2004 to over 20 Consultants with expertise in the field of Sustainability Appraisal. This brief required Consultants to assist the Council in the field of sustainability appraisal and verify the work for compliance with legislation and good practice guidance.

4.2 Five Consultants sent back quotations for the work. As well as details of the quotation Consultants also were required to submit supporting information highlighting how they would support the Council in the process of Sustainability Appraisal. A detailed assessment was undertaken of the supporting information and a preferred Consultant was selected.

4.3 On opening the quotations the preferred Consultant was also found to be the lowest quote that covered the full requirements of the brief. As such Hyder Consulting have been appointed to assist the Council in the process of Sustainability Appraisal. Hyder quoted £8,811. The supporting information provided by Hyder also clearly defined their role and it is Officers view that the Council are getting extremely good value for money.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 That Members note the report and support Officers throughout the process of sustainability appraisal of future plans and policies.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are financial implications in terms of appointing consultants to verify the SA. However, these will be funded through already approved Planning Delivery Grant monies.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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