Statement of Community Involvement

Bournemouth Borough Council
December 2006
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This information can be made available in large print or audio format and can be translated into other languages. Please contact the Planning Policy Section for further information if required.
Contents

1.0 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1
  Statement of Community Involvement ................................................................................................. 1
  Local Development Framework ............................................................................................................. 1

2.0 Principles for Community Involvement ............................................................................................... 3

3.0 Bournemouth Partnership and its Community Plan ........................................................................... 4

4.0 Involvement in Policy Documents and Planning Applications .......................................................... 5

5.0 Involvement in Policy Making in the Local Development Framework ........................................... 5
  The Local Development Scheme for Bournemouth ............................................................................. 5

6.0 Documents Subject to Public Consultation ....................................................................................... 6
  Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) ........................................................................................ 6
  Development Plan Documents (DPDs) ..................................................................................................... 6
    - Core Strategy DPD .......................................................................................................................... 6
    - Site Specific Allocations DPD .......................................................................................................... 6
    - Area Action Plans ........................................................................................................................... 6
    - Generic Development Control Policies .......................................................................................... 6
  Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) ......................................................................................... 6
  Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment .......................................... 7

7.0 Who will be Involved ........................................................................................................................... 8

8.0 Possible Methods of Community Involvement .................................................................................. 10

9.0 When consultation will take place in the production of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) ................................................................................................................................. 12
  Evidence Gathering and Early Involvement (Pre-Production) ............................................................... 12
  Involvement in the Preparation of Preferred Options ............................................................................ 12
  Participation on Preferred Options Document ....................................................................................... 13
  Participation on Submission Development Plan Document ................................................................... 13
  Independent Examination .................................................................................................................... 13
  Adoption ................................................................................................................................................. 14
10.0 When consultation will take place in production of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) ........................................... 15
Evidence Gathering and Early Involvement ........................................... 15
Formal Participation ........................................................................ 15
Adoption ..................................................................................... 16

11.0 Involvement in Planning Applications ........................................... 17
How We Publicise Planning Applications ........................................... 17
  - Pre-submission Discussion ................................................................. 17
  - Amended Plans ........................................................................ 17
  - Weekly List ................................................................................ 17
  - Additional Advice ...................................................................... 18
  - How Decisions on Planning Applications are Made ...................... 18
  - How to Find Decisions on Planning Applications ......................... 18
  - What Happens when an Appeal is Received .................................... 19
Exceeding Statutory Consultation Requirements .................................. 21

12.0 Resource implications of Community Involvement ....................... 22

13.0 Reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement ................... 23

14.0 Independant help and advice from Planning Aid ............................ 23

Appendix A - Examination of Soundness ........................................... 24
Appendix B - Additional Consultation Bodies .................................... 25
Appendix C - Glossary of Terms .......................................................... 27
Appendix D - Statutory Requirements for Publicising Planning Applications .................................................. 29
1. Introduction

The Statement of Community Involvement

1.1 In September 2004 the Government introduced a new approach to the production of local development plans. Part of the change included a shift to provide a system that better engages the community. The Government now requires improved community participation in the preparation of the new Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) when compared to the previous system of Local Plans. Details of how Bournemouth Borough Council will address these issues are set out in this Statement of Community Involvement.

1.2 Under the new system, local communities have greater opportunity for involvement in plan development and implementation at various stages throughout the process. Additional emphasis is to be placed on involving the community at an early stage in the production of Local Development Framework policies. This approach will encourage agreement and reduce disputes at later stages in the process and will also articulate local needs and issues against which policy development will be formulated. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how we will involve the community in the new process. The SCI also sets out procedures for community consultation on planning applications.

1.3 In producing the SCI we wish to ensure that all sections of the community (residents, businesses, amenity and interest groups, ethnic and minority interests, local, regional and national organisations) have the opportunity to be actively involved and engaged.

1.4 Additional opportunities exist for the community to participate later in the process of the production of Local Development Documents (LDDs). The community will be able to comment on all Local Development Documents in a similar way to the outgoing Local Plan production process. All Development Plan Documents (and the Statement of Community Involvement) will be subject to a Public Examination with an independent Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. The decisions of the Inspectorate will be binding on the Council.

1.5 One of the first stages of producing the new Local Development Framework for Bournemouth was to prepare its Statement of Community Involvement. The SCI is the first Local Development Document to proceed to adoption, having been through the independent examination process where the SCI was tested for “soundness”

The Local Development Framework

1.7 The Local Development Framework will consist of a number of Local Plan Documents, which may either be based on a specific geographical area, or be topic based. The Local Development Framework will, therefore, be a portfolio of documents that can be reviewed and updated independently of one another as and when required.

1.8 There are two types of Local Development Documents:

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that have been subject to community involvement, independent testing by the Government Planning Inspectorate and have the weight of development plan status as defined by Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; DPDs include;

- A Core Strategy that sets out the vision, spatial strategy and core policies for the spatial development of the area;

- Site Specific Allocations of land, (for example housing and employment sites);

- Area Action Plans
These DPDs will form the statutory Development Plan with the Regional Spatial Strategy. The Regional Spatial Strategy is produced by the South West Regional Assembly and sets out the scale and location of long term development in the south west region. Policies coming forward in the LDF for Bournemouth must be in general conformity with those in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**, which are not subject to independent testing and do not have development plan status but are subject to community involvement. These expand upon the policies and proposals in the DPDs. They may, for example, give specific design guidance or give details as to how financial contributions, required by certain policies, are calculated.

1.9 It should be understood that policies emerging in the Local Development Framework are not produced in a vacuum, and influences, external to Bournemouth, will affect the outcome in many cases. Policies must take account of current Government advice on planning issues and some matters will be directly affected by decisions taken at regional level. For example, targets for new housing numbers will be set at regional level and the policies in the Local Development Framework will have to set about meeting these targets within the Borough.

1.10 A glossary of terms used in the Local Development Framework are set out in Appendix C.
2. **Principles for Community Involvement**

2.1 The Government have indicated their principles for community involvement in their Planning Policy Statement 12 - Local Development Frameworks. The principles are:

- Community involvement that is appropriate to the level of planning. Arrangements need to be built on a clear understanding of the needs of the community and to be fit for purpose;
- Front loading of involvement. There should be opportunities for early community involvement and a sense of ownership of local policy decisions;
- Using methods of involvement which are relevant to the communities concerned;
- Clearly articulated opportunities for continuing involvement as part of a continuous programme, not a one-off event;
- Transparency and accessibility;
- Planning for involvement. Community involvement should be planned into the process for the preparation and revision of local development documents.

2.2 It is our aim to meet these principles whilst tailoring the Statement of Community Involvement to the particular circumstances of Bournemouth and its community.

2.3 It is our aim to make documents available in easily accessible places, provide feedback on consultation events and hold consultation events close to the communities affected.
3. **Bournemouth Partnership and its Community Plan**

3.1 It is our intention to utilise and develop links to the community already established through the Bournemouth Partnership. These links will be important in developing policies that will address the concerns of the community.

3.2 The Partnership was set up in May 2000 and is open to any organisation with a stake in the future of Bournemouth that is committed to improving the quality of life and services to the public in Bournemouth. The first Bournemouth Community Plan was published in May 2000, was revised in 2004, and is now to be revised every 3 years. It is intended that the existing links and networks will be developed and refined to better engage the community including “hard to reach” groups such as minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and people with learning difficulties. Every effort will be made to combine and co-ordinate Local Development Framework consultation exercises with others being made with the Partnership, for example including information on the Local Development Framework in already scheduled mailings to the Partnership members. More information and an A-Z list of current members of the partnership can be found at www.bournemouth.gov.uk/partner.

3.3 The Partnership now contains 6 Partnership Forums – one for each of the themes in the Community Plan. The Partnership Forum themes are:

- Caring for People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Strengthening Our Economy
- Sustaining Our Environment
- Serving Children & Young People Well

3.4 Three issues have also been identified by partners which cannot be addressed effectively by any one Forum or Partner. They are:

- Transport Matters
- Involving People
- Neighbourhood Services

3.5 These issues will be taken into account when developing policies and proposals in the Local Development Documents. In this way planning may help to play a part in the delivery of local neighbourhood services.

3.6 The Bournemouth Partnership is directly linked into the Local Development Framework via the LDF Steering Group. The Chairs of five of the Partnership Forums in the Bournemouth Partnership make up half of the ten member Steering Group. The remaining five members are elected local Councillors.
4. Involvement in Policy Documents and Planning Applications

4.1 The new arrangements for community involvement referred to in this document fall into two main areas – involvement in policy documents making up the Local Development Framework and involvement in the consideration of planning applications. For clarity these two areas are dealt with in separate sections in this document.

5. Involvement in Policy Making in the Local Development Framework

The Local Development Scheme for Bournemouth

5.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out our programme for the management of the Local Development Framework (LDF). It is a public statement identifying which Local Development Documents (LDDs) will be produced and when.

5.2 The LDS has two main objectives:

- It is the starting point for the community and stakeholders to find out more about which planning policies will apply to a particular place or issue and their status; and

- It outlines the details of and timetable for the production of LDDs over a rolling 3-year period and is reviewed annually.

It is not intended to go into the details of the current LDS for Bournemouth in this document as the LDS will change over time as different documents are commenced, go through the production process, and are completed. The approved Local Development Scheme document is available to view on the Council’s website (http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Residents/Planning_Development/Local_Plans), and at the Council’s offices at the Town Hall Annexe.

The type of documents making up the Local Development Framework (including this Statement of Community Involvement) fall into defined groups most of which are subject to community involvement (an example of one that doesn’t is the Annual Monitoring Report which is a factual document outlining the progress and achievement of the LDF each year). The following paragraphs outline the document types.
6. Documents subject to Public Consultation

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

6.1 The Statement of Community Involvement is itself the subject of consultation with the community. The Planning Inspectorate will test the document for “soundness” at an independent examination (Government guidance on criteria for assessing soundness is attached at Appendix A). The document relates to the process of preparing documents for the LDF rather than setting planning policy.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

6.2 Development Plan Documents contain the planning policies of the LDF. These can include;

- **Core Strategy DPD** - The Core Strategy will set out the central vision, objectives and policies for Bournemouth. The issues addressed in the Core Strategy will be wide ranging including employment, leisure, tourism, shopping, housing and transport. The Core Strategy will set out broad locations for land uses such as housing and employment uses. However specific details of land allocations will be included in a separate document.

- **Site Specific Allocations DPD** - This document will pick up the broad locations for land uses agreed in the Core Strategy and go on to identify specific sites for these uses. The sites identified will be based on a robust and credible assessment of the suitability of the sites taking into account the views of the community.

- **Area Action Plans** - Will provide the planning framework for specific areas of Bournemouth where there are significant opportunities for change, where change is desirable, or areas which are particularly sensitive to change or development.

- **Generic Development Control Policies**: Detailed policies giving criteria for the assessment of planning applications for the use of land and buildings. The policies are likely to relate to issues such as protection of residential amenity, highway issues and visual amenity issues.

Development Plan Documents will be the subject of an independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate and will have development plan status.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

6.3 These are non-statutory documents intended to expand upon the policies and proposals in the Development Plan Documents and will be produced as and when required. These documents are not the subject of an independent examination, but will undergo public consultation. These documents take on a similar role to existing Supplementary Planning Guidance, which we have produced relating to policies in the Bournemouth Borough Local Plan. For example;

- **Tourism**
- **Day Nurseries and Play Groups**
- **Planning Obligations for the Provision of Open Space and Recreation Facilities**
- **Conversion of Properties to Flats**

6.4 Details of the timetable for producing future SPDs will be included in the Local Development Scheme for Bournemouth (see section 5.1 above)
Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

6.5 We are required to undertake Sustainability Appraisals of the documents making up the Local Development Framework. Sustainability Appraisals are mandatory under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The appraisals will incorporate the requirements of the European Directive (2001/42/EC) for Strategic Environmental Assessment of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. Sustainability Appraisals are intended to help planning authorities contribute to the aim to achieve sustainable development in preparing plans and policies. A Sustainability Appraisal Report will be produced for each document.
7. Who will be Involved

7.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 set out the legal requirements for consultation and public participation in respect of the documents making up the LDF. It is our intention to meet, and where possible exceed, the requirements of the regulations.

Specific Consultation Bodies

7.2 The regulations specify that we must consult the following bodies (“specific consultation bodies”) if it is considered that the body will be affected by what is proposed to be covered in a DPD. The specific consultation bodies are:

- Government Office for the South West;
- South West Regional Assembly - The Regional Planning Body;
- South West Regional Development Agency;
- Dorset County Council;
- Adjoining Local Planning Authorities;
- Adjoining Town and Parish Councils;
- The Environment Agency;
- The Countryside Agency;
- Natural England;
- The Highways Agency;
- Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage);
- Department for Transport Rail Group;
- Relevant telecommunications companies;
- NHS South West;
- Relevant electricity and gas companies; and
- Relevant sewerage and water undertakers

General Consultation Bodies

7.3 In addition to the Specific Consultation Bodies we will also consult with “General Consultation Bodies” to seek their views. The Regulations indicate General Consultation Bodies should include:

- Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of Bournemouth;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic, or national groups in Bournemouth;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in Bournemouth;
- Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in Bournemouth; and
- Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in Bournemouth.

Examples of bodies included could be those representing local environmental interests, area forums and transport interest groups.
The particular General Consultation Bodies that the Planning Authority will consult with will be dependent on the subject matter of the document and if the body has expressed an interest in the subject. Certain groups and organisations have specialist knowledge or technical expertise with regard to particular subject areas (e.g. bus and taxi companies on the subject of transport). We will use our knowledge of the local groups and organisations to select those which are most appropriate.

Each selected group/organisation or group/organisation that has expressed an interest will be invited to make representations at relevant stages of the Local Development Framework process including draft issues and options, pre-submission consultation on preferred options and formal consultation on Development Plan Documents when they are submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. The ongoing nature of involvement in the LDF means that groups/organisations that may not have initially expressed an interest can still become involved as the particular document progresses through the process. The timetable for reaching these stages in respect of the Development Plan Documents to be produced in the next three years is set out in the Local Development Scheme.

The list of General Consultation bodies is very much tailored to local circumstances. This document does not contain an exhaustive list of bodies that fall into this category as it is envisaged that the list will be added to and amended as the LDF progresses. A regularly updated list of General Consultation Bodies is available from the Planning and Transport section of the Council. It is anticipated that additional bodies will be likely to come forward for inclusion in the future whilst others may prefer to give their views at the later formal Public Participation stage in the production of Local Development Documents.

The list of General Consultation Bodies will be based on the members of the Bournemouth Partnership together with the extensive range of local groups and organisations listed in the register of contacts maintained by the Bournemouth Council for Voluntary Service (www.bournemouthcvs.org.uk) which classifies the groups and organisations under issue headings e.g. children/young people, learning disabilities, education. The list will be augmented by additional groups/organisations/companies on an in-house Planning and Transport database, which will include those who have come forward and asked to be involved, perhaps on particular issues. New groups and organisations can continue to register their interest in being involved in the process by way of the Council’s website, leaflets that will continue to be made available in public locations such as libraries, or by simply writing to the Planning and Transport section.

PPS 12 indicates a further range of agencies and organisations, which Local Planning Authorities should consider consulting where appropriate, depending on the subject matter of the local development document being produced. There is some overlap in some areas with groups included in the list of General Consultation Bodies. The list of the additional agencies and organisations specified in PPS 12 is attached at Appendix B. We will consult with the relevant groups depending on the subject of the DPD.

We will also consult with individual members of the community who are not members of local groups or organisations. Anyone who wishes to become involved can request that his/her name should be added to the consultation database.

Greater detail of the timing of involvement in document production is given in sections 9 and 10.
8. Possible Methods of Community Involvement

8.1 There are several potential methods of community involvement. These will vary in how they reach people and in terms of resource requirements. A range of involvement methods is set out below. The list is not intended to be definitive and additional methods may be used where appropriate. Alternative methods, suggested by the Community/Stakeholders, will also be considered.

8.2 The type of methods employed will be tailored to suit the subject area of each document/type of planning application, and the resources available to us. It is recognised that some groups in the community are in a better position to participate than others, and that to be successful community involvement should be inclusive. Therefore it is important to ensure that “hard to reach” groups (e.g. disabled people, ethnic minority groups, young people) are engaged in the process. We will seek to use the range of methods available to enable all sections of the community to contribute to the LDF process in a meaningful way.

8.3 We have produced a leaflet with which groups and individuals can register their interest in a subject area, and can indicate their preferred method of involvement. The leaflet continues to be available and can be used to register in the process on an ongoing basis.

8.4 The Statement of Community Involvement must also recognise the limits of our resources and attempts to make most effective use of the resources available. It is our intention to apply the same broad, cost effective, measures to each of the DPD to be produced. However where the need arises for more focused, resource intensive, methods then we will, subject to the availability of resources, seek to utilise these methods in conjunction with local groups and stakeholders. The inclusion of these potential methods in the SCI should not, therefore, be considered as an undertaking that all methods will be available on demand during the production of each document produced.

8.5 Potential methods of community consultation and involvement include:

1) Documents available at Council Offices and other appropriate places (e.g. libraries) in the Borough during consultation periods (minimum requirement);
2) Correspondence with Statutory Bodies (minimum requirement);
3) Website - increasingly used by public and professionals, cost effective and user friendly for most people. Potential to reach large numbers of people but does require internet access so not suitable for everyone. Can be used concurrently as a source of providing information as well as seeking feedback. (Note: internet access available at public libraries).
4) Local Media (e.g. local newspapers - Daily Echo, Bournemouth Journal, Bournemouth Advertiser etc.) - cost effective and user friendly. Potential to reach large numbers of people. The Bournemouth Journal is the Council’s own publication and is widely distributed;
5) Leaflet Distribution - potentially expensive in terms of printing and distribution costs but can produce good feedback if well written and targeted;
6) Public exhibition/display - good for communicating information if locations and times are carefully selected but can be resource intensive;
7) Written/e-mail correspondence - can give good feedback if focused on key questions;
8) One to one meetings with selected stakeholders/organisations, and special interest groups dealing with marginalised sections of the community - resource intensive but can be useful way of involving key groups on specific issues;
9) Public Meetings - resource intensive but open way for people to be included in the debate on policy issues. Some members of the community are more comfortable than others with this type of forum for expressing views;
10) Focus Groups/Workshops - participants are selected depending on the policy issue to provide feedback on public concerns. Potentially resource intensive but can provide useful feedback if appropriate participants are selected;
11) **Area Forums** - resource intensive but open way for people to be included in the debate on policy issues. Some members of the community are more comfortable than others with this type of forum for expressing views. Can be particularly useful when discussing topics which fall wholly within a local area;

12) **Citizens Panel** - can offer a cost-effective way of gaining a statistically valid Borough-wide residents view. Results can be broken down by ward, gender, ethnicity etc with varying degrees of statistical accuracy. The Panel also offers an opportunity to access individual residents for focus group and / or workshop participation, again participants can be selected according to where they live, their age, home tenure status etc.

13) **Steering Group** - The Local Development Framework Steering Group is already in place and will oversee and advise on the production of the documents and policies making up the Local Development Framework. The Steering group has 10 members made up of 5 Local Councillors and a member representing 5 of the Partnership Forums contained in the Bournemouth Community Plan. The meetings of the Steering Group are open to attendance by members of the Public. Dates of forthcoming Steering Group meetings are available on the Council’s website, at the Town Hall and at local libraries.
9. When consultation will take place in the production of Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

9.1 The following table gives an indication of who is involved at each stage up to the submission of the Development Plan Document to the Secretary of State. It is followed by a brief explanation of each stage in the process until the document is adopted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Who is involved</th>
<th>Possible Involvement Methods (see paragraph 8.5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence Gathering and Early Involvement</td>
<td>Selected stakeholders, groups, and organisations</td>
<td>7,8,13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of Preferred Options</td>
<td>Specific Consultation Bodies</td>
<td>3,7,8,10,11,12,13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate General Consultation Bodies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Options Document Participation</td>
<td>Specific Consultation Bodies</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Consultation Bodies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation on Submission Development Plan Document</td>
<td>Specific Consultation Bodies</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Consultation Bodies</td>
<td>(Persons who request notification of the submission of the Development Plan Document are informed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Public</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Evidence Gathering and Early Involvement (Pre-Production)

9.2 The Local Development Scheme indicates the Development Plan Documents to be produced and the timetable for their production. The policies we prepare have to be founded on a thorough understanding of the local area and an up to date evidence base. At this stage we will concentrate on gathering evidence about the local area. This could include undertaking or commissioning studies where required. This process may be assisted by seeking the input of relevant groups and organisations who have specialist/technical knowledge or information which can contribute to the evidence base. This knowledge may relate to a local area of Bournemouth or a subject area. For example the development of policies on shopping could benefit from early input from local traders groups.

Involvement in the Preparation of Preferred Options

9.3 At this stage options will be identified and assessed. From this a preferred option will be identified in consultation with the community. Early in the process for the production of each document we will seek feedback from the Specific Consultation Bodies identified in Regulations and appropriate community and stakeholder groups (General Consultation Bodies) identified on our database. Local Councillors will also have an important role in developing preferred options. A consultation report reflecting comments and concerns received will help to formulate preferred policy options for the subject area covered by the DPD. The comments
will be reported to the LDF Steering Group who will offer advice to Officers during the process of preparing a Preferred Options document, which will then need to be agreed with the elected Members in Cabinet and Council.

**Participation on Preferred Options Document**

9.4 A draft Preferred Options Document will be published following on from the work done at the early engagement stage. The document will be advertised locally together with the draft sustainability appraisal report and the views of the local community, stakeholders and statutory Consultees will be sought over a 6 week period. Duly made representations received will be published on the Council’s website.

9.5 The draft Preferred Option Document will be reassessed in the light of the comments received and any necessary amendments will be made. The comments will be reported to the LDF Steering Group who will again offer advice during this period. The final draft of the document will be put before the elected Members of the Cabinet and Council for agreement. The Council’s responses to the comments received will then be published on the website and the respondents will be sent copies of the Council’s consideration of their specific representation. The document will then be formally submitted to the Secretary of State as a proposed Development Plan Document and will be published on the Council’s website.

**Participation on Submission Development Plan Document**

9.6 The Submission DPD will be submitted to the Secretary of State together with the final sustainability report and will be the subject of a further 6 week period of public participation in which comments can be made on the proposals in the submitted document.

9.7 Some DPDs deal with specific site allocations (e.g. housing, industry etc.). It is likely that some representations on these DPDs will suggest alternative/additional sites or suggest changes to proposed site boundaries. In this instance we will advertise that these changes have been suggested and will undertake a further 6 week period of public participation on the changes using the same methods employed for participation on the Submission DPD.

9.8 The same methods of involvement will be employed if the DPD being produced results in Representations on Site Allocations which would require a further 6 week period of public participation. Feedback about the Council’s response to the representations received will be given in the same way as at the Preferred Options stage. The representations made on the submission DPD, and any changes suggested in the representations, will be considered at the Independent Examination.

**Independent Examination**

9.9 Independent Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State will consider the representations received in respect of the submission DPD and to consider whether the DPD is “sound”. The Inspector will consider which is the most appropriate method of hearing the representations. There are 4 methods available:

- Written Representations;
- Round Table Discussion;
- Informal Hearing sessions; and
- Formal Hearing sessions.

9.10 Following the Independent Examination the Inspector will prepare a report identifying any changes to the DPD he/she considers necessary. The report is binding on the Council.
Adoption

9.11 As soon as is practical after the receipt of the report from the Inspector the Council will formally adopt the DPD. Notice will be given by advertisement in the local media that the DPD has been adopted and notification will be sent to individuals who requested that they be informed of the adoption. The adopted DPD will be made available:

- At the Council Offices and the other locations where the DPD was made available during the production process;
- On the Council’s website.

9.12 The following flow diagram gives a visual indication of the process of DPD production with an indication of where the periods for community involvement and formal public participation fit into that process.

![Flow Diagram]

**Key**

Indicates stages when involvement takes place
10 When consultation will take place in the production of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

10.1 Supplementary Planning Documents are intended to expand upon and/or provide further details in respect of policies in Development Plan Documents. They are not subject to an Independent Examination but are produced with community involvement and are subject to a period of formal public participation. The following table gives an indication of who is involved at each stage and possible methods of involvement that may be employed. It is followed by a brief explanation of who is involved at each stage and which methods of involvement may be employed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>7,8,13.</td>
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<td>Formal Participation</td>
<td>Specific Consultation Bodies</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,11,13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Consultation Bodies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>Persons who request notification of the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document are informed and the adopted document made available.</td>
<td>1,3,7.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidence Gathering and Early Involvement

10.2 The nature and extent of community involvement on an individual SPD will be tailored to the subject area or the geographical area covered by the document. Some organisations/groups will have specialist expertise, which could relate to a particular part of the Borough or a particular technical subject area such as affordable housing or wildlife conservation. A degree of judgement will therefore need to be exercised on which groups/organisations should be involved at the earliest stages of the production of each individual document. This early involvement stage would focus on information gathering and the consideration of issues and options leading to the drawing up of a draft SPD.

Formal Participation

10.3 The statutory consultation period for public participation on an SPD is no less than 4 weeks but no more than 6 weeks. It is our intention that public participation will be undertaken for 6 weeks whenever possible. The draft SPD together with the sustainability appraisal report will be advertised locally and made available at the Council’s offices and other appropriate locations in the town such as libraries. The views of the local community, stakeholders and statutory Consultees will also be sought. The views expressed in the representations received will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the final SPD document. We will prepare a statement, which will include a summary of the main issues raised in the representations and how these main issues have been addressed in the SPD to be adopted.
Adoption

10.4 Once the SPD is adopted the final version will be made available on the Council’s website, at the Council’s offices, and the locations where the draft SPD was made available during the formal participation stage.

10.5 We will also send confirmation of the adoption of the SPD to any person who asks for notification.

10.6 The following flow diagram gives an indication of the process of SPD production with an indication of where the periods for community involvement and public participation fit into that process.
11 Involvement in Planning Applications

11.1 Required standards of publicity and consultation for planning applications, listed building and conservation area consent are set out in government legislation. We have met and exceeded these standards for many years and will continue to do so in the future. The degree to which the required standards are exceeded in the future will be largely dependent on available resources. The following paragraphs show how we currently meet and exceed our obligations and is followed by details of how we intend that these standards will continue to be exceeded in the future.

How We Publicise Planning Applications

11.2 We publicise planning applications in accordance with statutory requirements (Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 and Circular 15/92 Publicity for Planning Applications). The specified requirements are set out in Appendix D.

11.3 It has been our practice for a number of years, in accordance with statutory requirements, to post a site notice in a prominent position outside the site of each planning application. At large sites, or on sites where local residents in more than one road may be affected, more than one notice will normally be posted. The notice will briefly describe the proposal, and will specify a date by which representations should be made (usually a minimum of 21 days from the posting of the notice). All representations should be made in writing (to Planning and Transport, Town Hall Annexe, St Stephen's Road, Bournemouth BH2 6EA) or electronically (planning@bournemouth.gov.uk) quoting the site of the proposed development and the application number.

11.4 Current applications are available to view at the Council’s offices or are available to view via the Council’s website (www.bournemouth.gov.uk) where their progress can be tracked.

Pre-Submission Discussion

11.5 Applicants are encouraged to engage in pre-application negotiation with us. This has a number of potential benefits including that a proposal may be modified to make it potentially more acceptable when it is formally submitted. It should make the process of submitting an application speedier and more certain and help to reduce the instance of the submission of wholly unacceptable proposals. A Planning Advice Note on the Validation of Planning Applications setting out the information required to aid the submission of complete applications is available via the Council’s website.

Amended Plans

11.6 There are instances where an application is submitted without pre-application advice or where further modification is necessary to make the proposal acceptable. If sufficient time is available in the application process an amended plan may be submitted. Where the details of an application are amended, and it is felt that the changes are substantial in terms of their effect upon neighbours a new site notice will be posted pointing this out. Letters are also sent to persons who have already made representations in respect of the particular application. There is no legal requirement to undertake this additional publicity and so in this area we have exceeded and will continue to exceed the statutory requirement.

Weekly List

11.7 We circulate a weekly list of planning application to local press and media as well as local groups and societies who have requested to be included on the circulation list. The weekly list of planning applications is made available on the Council web site (www.bournemouth.gov.uk).
Additional Advice

11.8 We have commenced the publication of a series of “How to” leaflets on various aspects of planning in Bournemouth. Two of those already published give helpful advice on “How to Comment on a Planning Application” and “How to Apply to Speak at a Planning Board Meeting” and are both aimed at giving information on how to get involved in the consideration of particular proposals. Both publications are available free in leaflet form from us and can be downloaded from the website. Two leaflets giving advice on the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act are also available from the Council Offices.

How Decisions on Planning Applications are Made

11.9 The Planning Board, which comprises elected Councillors, have a duty to decide planning and other development related applications. However not all decisions are made by them as, in line with Government advice, most decisions are delegated to the Head of Planning and Transport. It is anticipated that this scheme of delegation will increase delegation to over 90% of applications, which is in line with Government expectations. The criteria for deciding which applications should be considered by Planning Board are available on the Council website and printed copies can be made available on request.

11.10 All comments made on planning applications are taken into account and are summarised in the delegated report or in the report presented to the Planning Board. If a particular application is to be considered by the Planning Board then interested parties can request to speak at the meeting (known as a deputation). Advice on how to request a deputation is outlined in a leaflet and on the Council website.

11.11 The Council website contains details of the dates of the Planning Board meetings, as well as the agendas of items taken to the meetings and the minutes of the meetings.

11.12 At the pre-application stage local Councillors are reminded to keep an open mind and not give an opinion as the pre-judgement of an application could prejudice their position in any future decision making on that matter at the Planning Board. The current code of best practice advises Members against entering into discussion or negotiation directly with applicants or their agents, as it would leave them vulnerable to allegations of being susceptible to lobbying. Both the applicant and objectors in planning matters may approach a local Ward Member but the Ward Member should adopt an impartial stance in dealing with each party.

How to Find Decisions on Planning Applications

11.13 Where interested parties have made representations in writing, we undertake to acknowledge the receipt of the letter, and to inform them in writing of the decision on the application, provided the person making the representation encloses two stamped addressed envelopes with their letter. Alternatively the interested party may wish to telephone Planning and Transport (01202 451323) to find out the decision on a particular application. We have introduced an on-line comment form facility on the website for people to use to make representations on planning applications. The form enables interested parties to request to be informed of the decision via e-mail.

11.14 As well as the list of applications received the website also includes details of the decisions made on applications both by the Planning Board and under powers delegated by the Planning Board to Officers. The website also includes information on past applications back to 1991. Planning applications submitted or decided after 1st August 2005 can be viewed online. Planning applications can be searched either by street name, postcode, date submitted, or application number. The search facility enables application forms, drawings, and decision notices to be viewed and downloaded subject to copyright conditions.
What Happens when an Appeal is Received

11.15 Applicants have the right to appeal to the First Secretary of State if an application is refused, if the applicant considers a condition attached to an approval is unreasonable, or if an application is not decided within the statutory period allowed for consideration by the Local Planning Authority. There is also a right to appeal against the serving of an enforcement notice or if we do not issue a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed or existing use.

11.16 When an appeal is received all persons/organisations who made written representations in respect of the planning application are informed that an appeal has been lodged. Copies of the letters of representation sent to us when the planning application was being considered are passed to the Planning Inspectorate and so it is not necessary for interested parties to re-state their views unless there is something they wish to add to their representation. In addition the occupants of neighbouring properties in the immediate locality of the appeal site will be informed in writing of the appeal whether or not they made representations in respect of the case at appeal. The Case Officer will make a judgement on how wide this additional notification should be.

11.17 Further information on appeals can be found at the Planning Inspectorate website (www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk).
11.18 The following chart gives a visual indication of the planning application process.
Exceeding Statutory Consultation Requirements

11.19 We have for some years exceeded the statutory requirements for consulting the community on planning applications and will continue to do so in future. It is our intention to improve the quality of consultation still further in line with recent Government advice. However the desire to improve consultation and involvement on planning applications must be balanced against the limited resources available to us. The issue of the limits on our resources is acknowledged by Government who advise that the approaches taken should reflect the nature of the applications and make best use of the resources available.

11.20 Pre-application discussion of proposals by the applicant with Planning Officers is encouraged for reasons outlined earlier in this document (see paragraph 11.4). We have produced a Planning Advice Note for applicants which is available via the website, by e-mail and at the Planning and Transport reception. The note is also enclosed with application forms.

11.21 Government advice is that for most “small” applications meeting the statutory requirements will continue to provide a sufficient level of community involvement. This type of application makes up a significant proportion of the applications received by us and would include proposals such as domestic extensions, most changes of use and some residential infill developments etc. For this type of application the existing measures will continue to be applied by us as they meet and exceed the statutory requirements.

11.22 Some applications, which are on a larger scale, in a particularly sensitive location, or are likely to give rise to major controversy in the local area, may require greater community consultation. Government advice is that this will require the participation of the developer or applicant. We will therefore encourage developers/applicants to undertake pre-application discussions and early community involvement. We cannot prescribe that this is done nor can we refuse to accept valid applications if the involvement hasn’t been done or has been done in a way which we do not consider appropriate for the proposal. However failure by the developer/applicant to consult could lead to objections being made that could be material to the final decision made on the application.

11.23 We consider that developers/applicants making planning applications for residential developments of 5 or more dwellings should undertake early community involvement. Developers/applicants will be encouraged to consider the use of the consultation methods outlined earlier in this document (paragraph 8.5). We will also request to be allowed reasonable access to the information relating to the community involvement undertaken to ensure that the consultation undertaken is impartial. It is also suggested that a supporting statement is submitted with the planning applications outlining the measures taken to consult the community.

11.24 Whilst the applicant’s/developer’s role in community involvement is most important in respect of larger, more contentious proposals, we consider that it is good practice to utilise the principles of pre-application discussion and early involvement for all applications where appropriate including proposals which may only impact on one neighbour. This will help to improve the acceptability of submitted applications and reduce grounds for contention.
12 Resource implications of Community Involvement

12.1 The Planning Policy Conservation and Design section of the Authority’s Planning and Transport section will lead the production of the Local Development Framework. However officers from other sections will be involved where specialist input or expertise is required in subject areas such as transport, housing, tourism and open space and may have involvement in community consultation in these areas.

12.2 The Planning Control section of the Authority’s Planning section will be involved in the community consultation associated with individual planning applications.

12.3 By carefully targeting community involvement we will seek to make the best use of the resources available to it. Some methods of community involvement are more resource hungry than others and so these methods will be carefully utilised where they will provide significantly enhanced feedback over other more cost effective methods, or where they are the only realistic ways of engaging hard to reach groups. It is envisaged at this stage that the proposed consultation measures can be met through in house resources. It is not envisaged that the use of external facilitators will be required although if it should prove necessary or beneficial then we will investigate the possibility of using external expertise.

12.4 It is intended that by using existing networks already in place (e.g. the Bournemouth Partnership) and by using other avenues such as the Bournemouth Journal to keep the community informed and involved the available resources can be used to provide effective and meaningful involvement for the community.
13. **Reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement**

13.1 It is our intention to revise the SCI on an ongoing basis having regard to any problems or successes which we experience in consulting on the LDF. Consultation techniques that have not received a good response may be dropped and other, alternative tools and processes may be identified.

13.2 The Council will assess the success of its SCI through its Annual Monitoring Report which will be published in December of each year. Any necessary changes to the SCI arising from the AMR will be made thereafter with further appropriate public consultation carried out accordingly. Regard will be had to any emerging best practice guidance and/or changes in legislation that have been put in place since the SCI was originally published.

14. **Independent help and advice from Planning Aid**

14.1 Planning Aid is a source of free, professional planning advice and help independent of the Local Planning Authority, for groups and individuals who cannot afford to employ a planning consultant (Tel: 0870 850 9807 or website [www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)). Planning Aid is funded by the Government, the Royal Town Planning Institute, and other public, private and charitable organisations. We recognise the value of Planning Aid and have signed up to the Planning Aid Concordat to promote its objectives.
Appendix A

Examination of Soundness: Development Plan Documents will be independently examined by the Planning Inspectorate to consider its soundness. The tests of soundness are from paragraph 4.24 of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Development Frameworks. The presumption will be that the development plan document is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the examination. The Inspector at the examination will consider whether:

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

**Conformity**
- 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;
- it has had regard to the authority’s community strategy;

**Coherence, consistency and effectiveness**
- the strategies/policies/allocations in the plan are coherent and consistent within and between development plan documents prepared by the authority and by neighbouring authorities, where cross boundary issues are relevant;
- 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;
- there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring; and
- the plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.

* The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
Appendix B

A range of agencies and organisations (in addition to the “specific consultation bodies” see paragraph 7.2), which PPS 12 indicates we should consider consulting where appropriate, depending on the subject matter of the local development document being produced. There will be some overlap with local “general consultation bodies”. In addition to the groups and bodies specified in this document we will also maintain a freestanding and continually updated database of groups and organisations making up the General Consultation Bodies (see paragraphs 7.3 - 7.10).

- Age Concern;
- Airport operators;
- Chemical Business Association;
- British Geological Survey;
- British Waterways, canal owners and navigation authorities;
- Centre for Ecology and Hydrology;
- Chambers of Commerce, Local CBI and local branches of Institute of Directors;
- Church Commissioners;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Coal Authority;
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment;
- Commission for New Towns and English Partnerships;
- Commission for Racial Equality;
- Crown Estate Office;
- Diocesan Board of Finance;
- Disability Rights Commission;
- Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee;
- Electricity, Gas, and Telecommunications Undertakers, and the National Grid Company;
- Environmental groups at national, regional and local level, including:
  - Campaign to Protect Rural England;
  - Friends of the Earth;
  - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; and
  - Wildlife Trusts;
- Equal Opportunities Commission;
- Fire and Rescue Services;
- Forestry Commission;
- Freight Transport Association;
- Gypsy Council;
- Health and Safety Executive;
- Help the Aged;
- Housing Corporation;
- Learning and Skills Councils;
• Local Agenda 21 including:
  Civic Societies;
  Community Groups;
  Local Transport Authorities;
  Local Transport Operators; and
  Local Race Equality Councils and other local equality groups;
• National Playing Fields Association;
• Network Rail;
• Passenger Transport Authorities;
• Passenger Transport Executives;
• Police Architectural Liaison Officers/Crime Prevention Design Advisors;
• Port Operators;
• Post Office Property Holdings;
• Rail Companies and the Rail Freight Group;
• Regional Development Agencies;
• Regional Housing Boards;
• Road Haulage Association;
• Sport England;
• The Home Builders Federation;
• Transport for London;
• Traveller Law Reform Coalition;
• Water Companies; and
• Women’s National Commission.
Appendix C

Glossary of Terms

Area Action Plan (AAP)  Will focus upon implementation in areas of change, pressure and regeneration. Will provide an important mechanism for ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for these areas.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)  A report assessing the implementation of the programme detailed in the Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme will be updated annually in the light of the findings of that report.

Core Strategy  A Development Plan Document setting out the vision, spatial strategy and core policies for the development of Bournemouth.

Development Plan Document (DPD)  Planning documents prepared by us which are subject to independent examination by public inquiry.

Local Development Document (LDD)  Individual documents within the Local Development Framework. Local Development Documents will comprise of DPDs, SPDs, SCI, SEAs, and SAs.

Local Development Framework (LDF)  A portfolio of updateable documents which will provide our policies for meeting the community’s aims for the future of their area.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)  The Local Development Scheme sets out the programme for preparing the Local Development Documents over a rolling three year period.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS)  Central Government statements of national planning policy. These will be phased in to supersede existing Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs).

Proposals Map  A map illustrating all the policies and proposals in the Development Plan Documents.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)  A statutory document to replace Regional Planning Guidance for the South West. New local development documents must be in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)  Document setting out how the authority intends to achieve continuous community involvement in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)  An assessment of the environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the Local Development Framework. Required under the European Directive 2001/42/EC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</th>
<th>Non-statutory documents intended to expand upon the policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents. Not subject to independent examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal (SA)</td>
<td>An assessment of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the Local Development Framework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Statutory requirements for publicising planning applications, under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, and Circular 15/92: Publicity for Planning Applications. The specified requirements are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Type</th>
<th>Legal Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development where application accompanied by environmental statement</td>
<td>Advertisement in newspaper and site notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departure from Development Plan</td>
<td>Advertisement in newspaper and site notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development affecting public right of way.</td>
<td>Advertisement in newspaper and site notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Development (see below)</td>
<td>Advertisement in newspaper and either site notice or neighbour notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Development (see below)</td>
<td>Site notice or neighbour notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development affecting the setting of a listed building</td>
<td>Advertisement in newspaper and site notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area</td>
<td>Advertisement in newspaper and site notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permitted development requiring prior notification to local planning authority</td>
<td>Site notice posted by developer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 defines “major development” applications as development involving any one or more of the following:

- The erection of 10 or more dwellings, or, if this is not known, where the site area is 0.5 hectare or more;
- The erection of a building or buildings where the floorspace created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more or the site area is 1 hectare or more;
- The winning and working of minerals or the use of the land for mineral working deposits;
- All waste developments (meaning any development designed to be used wholly or mainly for the purposes of treating, storing, processing, or disposing of refuse or waste materials).

“Minor Development” applications are those not falling within the above definition of “major”.

29