

Eastbourne

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Technical Update



July 2009

EASTBOURNE
Borough Council



www.eastbourne.gov.uk

The Local Development Framework

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Technical Update 2009

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1 Introduction

"Planning shapes the places where people live and work. So it is right that people should be enabled and empowered to take an active part in the process ⁽¹⁾ ."

1.1 What is Planning?

- 1.1.1** Many building works require planning permission, whether it is to build a new house; a new estate or change a small shop into a flat.
- 1.1.2** Eastbourne Borough Council is usually responsible for making decisions on planning applications. Decisions are based on a number of different factors but the Council's agreed planning policies are very important.
- 1.1.3** Planning policies set out a course of action for decisions on planning applications for the whole town. For example, a policy could say that a hotel will not be granted planning permission to become a house unless it can be shown that it is no longer profitable.
- 1.1.4** Planning policies are, therefore, very important tools in shaping the future of the town as a place to live, work and visit. For example, if the "blue-print" for the town included the aim of supporting and increasing the number of local jobs then it is important to make sure that business land and buildings are kept in employment use because they are likely to be needed to achieve this aim.
- 1.1.5** Planning policies prepared by the Council should accord with the South East Plan, which is prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly (www.southeast-ra.gov.uk). Policies should also reflect the local communities' needs and aspirations, which are set out in the Eastbourne section of the East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 1.1.6** For further information about the planning system, refer to "Creating Better Places to Live: a Guide to the Planning System in England" published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and available free from Planning Policy, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW (telephone 01323 415255).

1.2 Why get involved?

- 1.2.1** Most people have limited contact with the planning system. They may need to make a planning application for an extension to their home, or possibly their neighbour makes a planning application and the Council contacts them for their views.

1 Community Involvement in Planning: The Government's Objectives. ODPM 2004

1.2.2 However many people are interested in their town's future. They want their children to have a decent home and job and they value Eastbourne's environment. They have clear ideas as to the kind of place they would like Eastbourne to be but probably have not realised the important role of planning in helping to achieve these ideas.

1.2.3 The Council values these ideas and wants to hear from the local community both when it is considering planning applications and when it is preparing planning policies.

1.3 About this Statement

1.3.1 This Statement explains how the Borough Council will involve the local community in planning. It is intended to "signpost" opportunities for anyone who wishes to make a contribution to planning for Eastbourne's future.

1.3.2 The Statement has been prepared in two sections:

- Section 1 is an explanation of some of the ways the Council will involve the local community in planning for the town's future;
- Section 2 is more technical and demonstrates that the Council's approaches are soundly based. ⁽²⁾

1.3.3 Section 1 is aimed at the general public who may have little or no experience of the planning system. Section 2 is for the practitioner.

² In demonstrating soundness the Council has had regard to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (CLG, 2008).

2 Involving the Local Community

2.1 A Brief Introduction to the Planning Process

2.1.1 This Statement explains how the local community can be involved in:

- The preparation of planning policy; and
- Decisions on planning applications.

The Local Development Framework

2.1.2 The Council is required by Government to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is a folder containing planning policy documents which are known as "local development documents".

2.1.3 There are two types of "local development document":

- "Development plan documents"; and
- "Supplementary planning documents" which provide greater detail on the way specific planning policies will be put into effect.

2.1.4 "Development plan documents" include a "Core Strategy" which sets the "headlines" for the town in 15-20 years (such as the number of houses needed, the amount and type of employment likely to be required, valued natural environment to be protected etc.). Other "development plan documents" will provide the detail behind these headlines. These will include documents for:

- Specific land allocations (e.g. for housing development);
- Action plans for areas where change is expected or for areas which should be protected from further change;
- Control policies to ensure that development is of the right type and in the right place.

2.1.5 In addition a proposals map will be prepared illustrating where specific policies apply every time a new DPD is adopted.

2.1.6 The process of preparing a Development Plan Document is shown in Figure 1.

2.1.7 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a 'parent' Development Plan Document. The process of preparing a SPD is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1 Development Plan Document Process

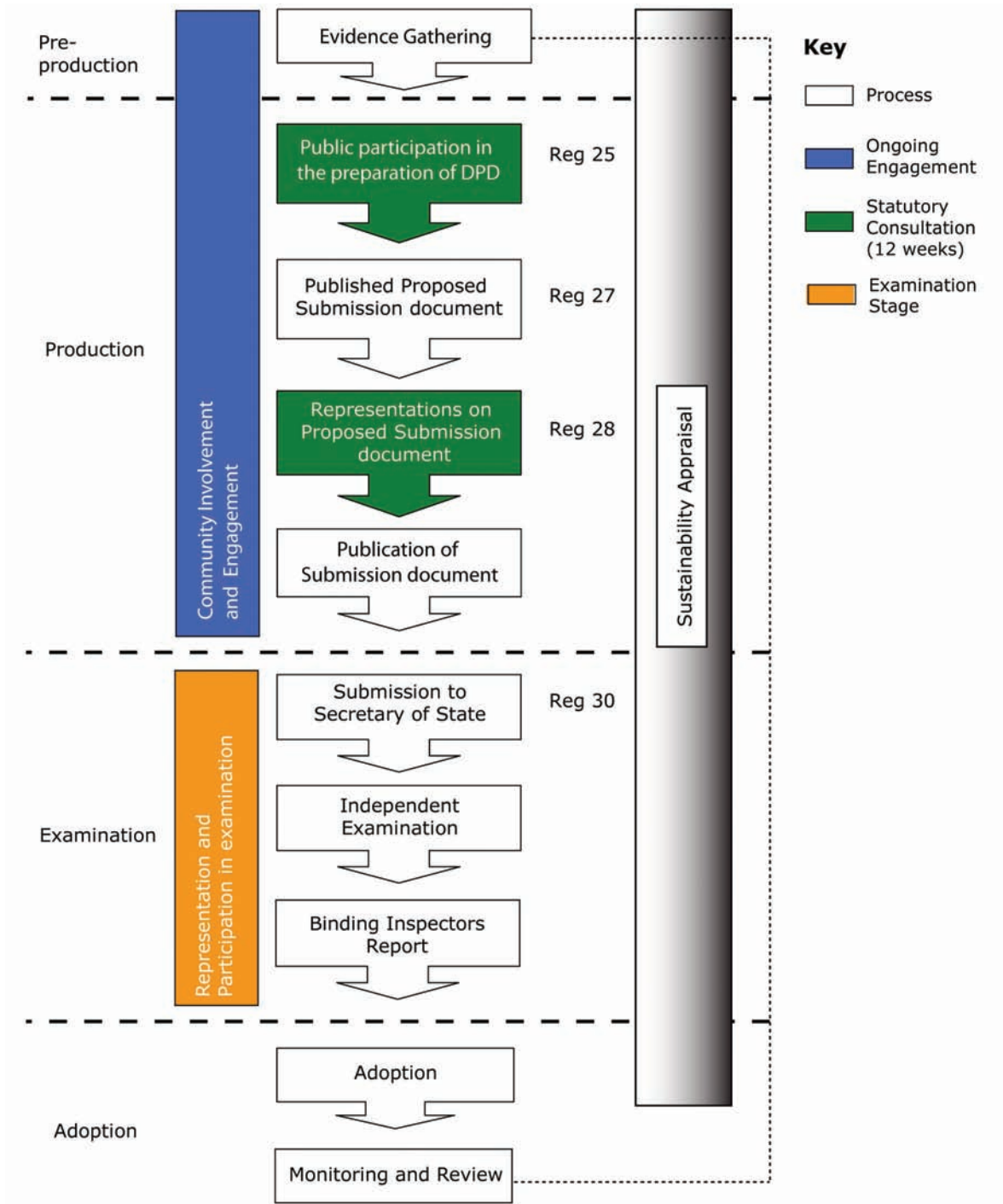
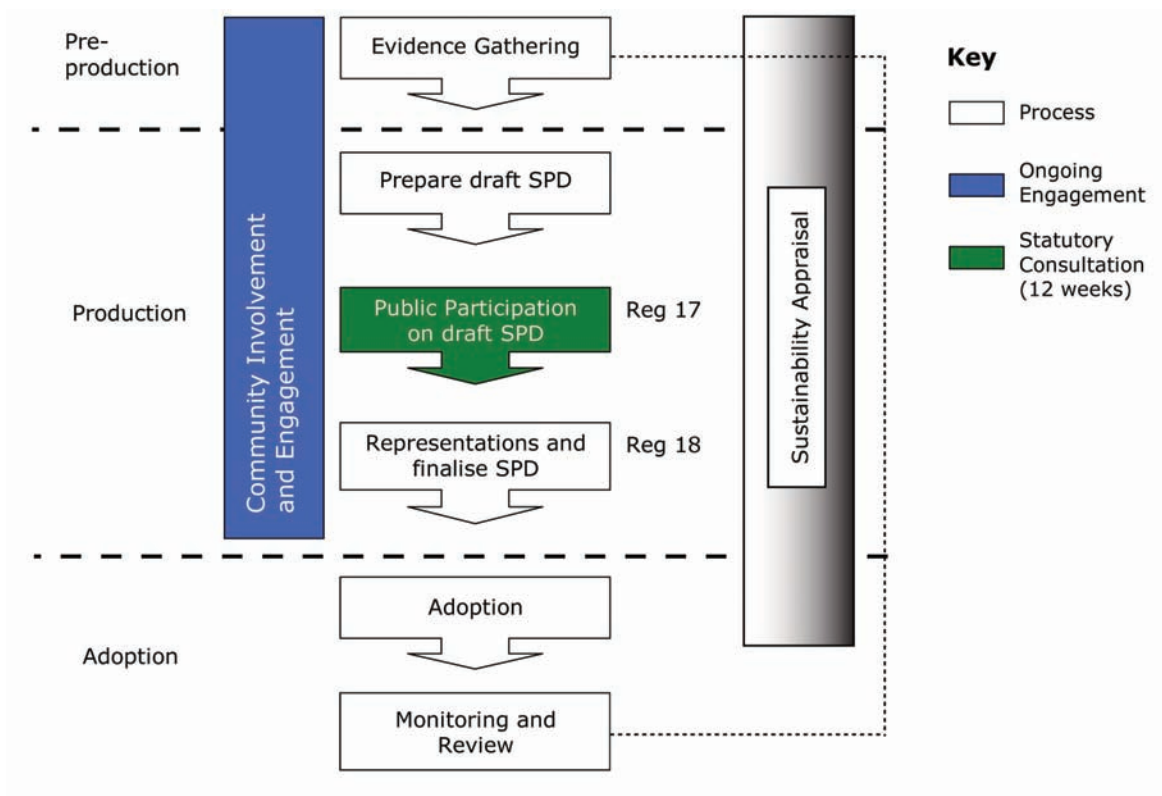


Figure 2 Supplementary Planning Document Process



2.1.8 Government intends that the local community and stakeholders should be involved in all stages of preparation of planning policy. Early involvement in the process is encouraged so that suggestions can be fully explored and included, where appropriate.

2.1.9 In addition to planning policy documents the LDF will include:

- This Statement of Community Involvement when it has been formally adopted by the Council;
- The Local Development Scheme setting out details of each of the planning policy documents to be produced; and
- Annual Monitoring Report setting out progress on the planning policy documents and putting policies into effect.

2.1.10 All planning policy documents are subject to sustainability appraisal to assess social, environmental and economic effects arising at each stage in their preparation. The Government recommends that the local community should have the opportunity to be involved in sustainability appraisals.

Planning Applications

2.1.11 Eastbourne Borough Council receives over 800 planning applications a year. In addition the Council also deals with applications for listed building consent, conservation area consent and advertisement consent. About 44% of applications are for schemes for householders (such as porches, conservatories and other domestic extensions and alterations); 4% are for major developments ⁽³⁾ and 40% are for minor developments and for the change of use of existing buildings. A weekly list of all planning applications received is available on the Council's web-site (www.eastbourne.gov.uk)

2.1.12 It is the Council's usual practice to inform owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties that a planning application has been received on a site and/or display a notice on or near the land to which the application relates for a minimum of 21 days. The extent of neighbour consultation will depend on the nature of the proposed development. All comments from neighbours are taken into account in the determination of the application. If six or more objections are received or the proposal is a departure from the Development Plan or an objector has requested to address the Planning Committee or the application is submitted by or on behalf of a Councillor or certain officers of the Council or the item is referred by the Planning Manager or Councillor, the planning application will be determined by the Planning Committee, which is made up of elected Councillors. In all other cases the Council gives a Planning Officer the responsibility of determining the application on its behalf.

³ Major developments are residential schemes where 10 or more dwellings are to be built or in the case of other uses more where more than 1000 square metres of floorspace is to be built or subject to change of use

- 2.1.13** Objectors have the right to address the meeting on request. This request must be registered with the Council's Development Control section (by telephone, letter, fax or e-mail) by 12 noon two whole working days before the day of the meeting. For example, if the committee meet on a Tuesday, the request would need to be lodged by 12 noon on the previous Friday. Further details on the right to address the Planning Committee are contained in the Council's leaflet entitled "Your Right to Speak at the Planning Committee" which is available on request.
- 2.1.14** Depending on the nature of the planning application and the development proposed the Council may also carry out statutory consultation with organisations such as the South East England Regional Assembly, the Highways Authority, the Environment Agency, Sussex Police and Southern Water. Any representations received from interested organisations will also be taken into account in the determination of the planning application. In addition, applications for major developments and proposals that are contrary to the Council's planning policies are advertised in the local newspaper. Furthermore, on occasions when a proposed development is particularly significant, the Council may arrange a surgery to enable the public to obtain information on the development proposed. The Council will notify statutory consultees by letter giving them 21 days to comment, or in the case of development affecting an SSSI or an SSSI consultation area the Council will notify consultees by letter, giving them 28 days to respond.
- 2.1.15** In the case of development affecting a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area, or the development is not in accordance with the Local Plan, the Council will advertise the proposals in the local newspaper and display a notice on or near the application site, indicating the nature of the development proposed and confirming that the application can be viewed at the Council offices.
- 2.1.16** The Council encourages prospective applicants to discuss their proposals with relevant individuals and organisations prior to the submission of a formal planning application, in order to highlight and address any potential issues and concerns. This is particularly important for major developments and the Council's Planning Officers will be pleased to meet with prospective applicants and discuss their proposals and advise on the ways in which stakeholders and the local community can be involved in refining the scheme before it is formally submitted.

2.2 Who will we consult?

- 2.2.1** The Council has a duty to involve local people in meaningful consultation on the delivery of Council services ⁽⁴⁾ as well as an obligation to consult with 'Hard to Reach' groups ⁽⁵⁾. The aim of the planning service is to consult with anyone who has an interest in the future of the town, as a place to live, work and visit.
- 2.2.2** The Council has drawn the following distinctions in putting together its approach to consultations:
- Stakeholders - these are statutory organisations and others who have a key role in the town's future ⁽⁶⁾;
 - Communities of interest - local organisations who have a common specific interest ⁽⁷⁾;
 - Geographical communities- local communities who represent specific parts of the town ⁽⁸⁾;
 - Individuals - who may or may not be members of one of the above.

Consulting with Stakeholders

- 2.2.3** Government Regulations prescribe a number of important stakeholders that should be consulted ⁽⁹⁾ (Appendix 1). In addition to these it is the Council's intention to involve the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The Eastbourne Strategic Partnership is a body of organisations working together for the town's future. The member organisations are:
- Sussex Police;
 - Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services;
 - Eastbourne Momentum;
 - East Sussex County Council;
 - Eastbourne and District Chamber of Commerce;
 - Eastbourne Borough Council;

4 The Local Government White Paper, Modern Local Government in Touch with the People- DETR 1998 and the Local Government Act 2000.

5 Required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Stakeholders will include the "specific consultation bodies" as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended);

7 Communities of interest will include the "general consultation bodies" as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended);

8 Geographical communities will include the "general consultation bodies" as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended);

9 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

- NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald Primary Care Trust;
- East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Partnership;
- Eastbourne Community Environment Partnership;
- Eastbourne Housing Partnership;
- East Sussex Fire and Rescue;
- Eastbourne Community Network.

2.2.4 It has been agreed that the Strategic Partnership would have the opportunity to endorse relevant planning policy documents before they are agreed for distribution to the wider community ⁽¹⁰⁾.

2.2.5 Within the Strategic Partnership it is proposed to work closely with the Housing Partnership and the Environmental Partnership in the preparation of planning policy documents which are relevant to them. These Partnerships are made up of a number of organisations with specific interest in housing, environmental and regeneration issues in the town.

2.2.6 House builders, developers and landowners who are interested in developing land or buildings for another use are important stakeholders in the town's future. The Council is keen that they should make their interest known at an early stage in the preparation of planning policy documents so that their proposals can be fully taken into account, including exploring any impacts with tenants and leaseholders who make a wider contribution to the local community. Officers will be pleased to meet with house builders developers and landowners to listen to their proposals

Consulting with Communities of Interest

2.2.7 The Council keeps a mailing list of many local organisations who have said they are interested in being consulted on planning policy. This list includes:

- Voluntary organisations;
- Organisations which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups;
- Organisations which represent different faith groups;
- Organisations which represent the interests of disabled persons;

¹⁰ This was agreed at a conference on the Local Development Framework organised for members of the partnership and other key organisations in May 2004.

- Organisations which represent the interests of businesses operating in Eastbourne;
- Organisations which represent amenity, conservation, recreational and other interests.

Additions to this mailing list are always welcome (contact Planning Policy Unit, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW, telephone 01323 415255).

2.2.8 There are many ways by which Eastbourne Borough Council has directly engaged with 'Hard to Reach' groups. This has been made possible through the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership (ESP), which has 10 Core Partner organisations, including the Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services (EAVS). The Eastbourne Cultural Community Network also enables officers to consult on policy planning proposals directly, through focus groups and specialist forums.

2.2.9 The Council recognises that more specialised methods of consultation are needed to ensure that our vulnerable and hard to reach communities have an equal opportunity to have their say. For instance focus groups and visits by planning officers to existing meetings and forums. In addition the Council will be seeking to involve:

- People who do not speak English as their first language;
- Young people;
- People with learning difficulties;
- Minority faith groups and other minority groups.

2.2.10 Planning Policy Documents will be available in other languages through the Eastbourne Borough Council translation service as well as in other formats such as recordings on tape or CD.

Consulting with Geographical Communities

2.2.11 Local Councillors will play a key role in expressing the concerns and issues for local communities. However their involvement can be supplemented and assisted by including local resident and community associations in the process as well. Some associations are included on the mailing list and the Council would be pleased to hear from others. However it is recognised that there are areas of the Borough where such organisations do not exist and efforts will be made to reach these areas.

Consulting with Individuals

2.2.12 Experience has shown that many individuals wish to be involved in the planning process, whether it be commenting on a planning application or making representations on emerging planning policy. This interest is

greatly valued. Please contact Planning Policy Unit, 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW or telephone 01323 415255 to have your details added to the mailing list.

2.3 How will we consult?

2.3.1 The Council will use a number of different methods to enable community involvement in planning matters.

Basic Consultation Standards for all Local Development Documents

2.3.2 Each of the stages in the production of all Local Development Documents will be subject to the same formal consultation procedure. This will allow everyone to make representations about a particular document. This procedure is set out below:

- Copies of all documentation and any supporting information will be available to view on the Council's website at www.eastbourne.gov.uk and at the Council's main office at 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne during office hours for the whole consultation period;
- Copies of the relevant documentation will be sent to all statutory consultees and any other targeted groups where appropriate.
- A notice will be placed in the local newspaper (Eastbourne Gazette) and on the Council's website at www.eastbourne.gov.uk. This will advise where and when the document can be inspected, how copies can be obtained, what the closing date is, and where to send representations.

2.3.3 The consultation period will last for 12 weeks for a Local Development Document and a period of 12 weeks for a Supplementary Planning Document, as set out in the 'Compact' agreement in the East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy.

2.3.4 Other potential methods are set-out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Methods of Community Involvement

Methods	Main Considerations
Documents available for inspection at Council offices during set consultation period	This is a minimum requirement prescribed by the Regulations at specific stages in the process of preparing planning policy documents.
Letters to statutory and other bodies	The Council has established a mailing list for the LDF based upon the requirements of the Regulations and those who have asked to be advised of planning policy documents. Any individual or organisation can ask to be included on this mailing list.

Methods	Main Considerations
Internet consultation	The Council's web-site has an area set aside for the LDF. This area will be maintained and up-dated on a regular basis. It is intended that this should be the first port of call for the public and professionals seeking detailed information. The web-site will include a feedback form to enable direct contact with the LDF team. The documents will also be published with an interactive facility for ease of commenting by the community.
Media (local press, TV, radio etc)	In addition to statutory requirements to advertise planning applications and local development documents, the Council intends to brief the local press about proposals. Where appropriate the Council may carry out more extensive advertising in the local free paper and seek views on specific local development documents. The Council will also prepare items for newsletters of specific organisations as appropriate, including articles in the Council's own newsletter, the Eastbourne Review.
Leaflets / brochures	Non-technical leaflets can be a useful way of summarising planning policy development documents for a wider audience and will be used as appropriate. These leaflets will be available in different formats upon request.
Public exhibitions	These are a good medium for explaining proposals to a wider audience if they are held in popular locations, such as shopping centres. However they are human resource intensive so will need to be used on a selective basis.
Public canvass / General Survey	Postal or telephone interviews can be a useful means of focusing consultation on key issues. These are only likely to be used for specific projects.
Hotline	All literature sent out by the Council will provide a direct dial telephone number to the relevant officer responsible for the consultation.
One-to-one meetings	These are particularly useful for discussions with selected stakeholders and the Council will continue and build-upon its established contacts.
Public Surgeries	The Council has found public surgeries to be effective as they allow individuals to

Methods	Main Considerations
	express their concerns about planning policy or specific planning applications on a face-to-face basis.
Focus groups (selected groups of participants with particular characteristics)	The Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services has established a community network and it is the Council's intention to access focus groups through this network. Additional focus groups will also be convened, as necessary, to assist exploration of issues in depth. Where a general survey is undertaken opportunity may be taken to recruit a reflector group to explore the issues raised in greater detail. (A reflector group consists of people who have participated in the survey who are invited to discuss the outcomes at greater length).
Action Planning (consultation events for local people who can work with models and / or plans to show how an area works and could be developed / enhanced in the future)	Action planning exercises, such as "Planning for Real" (Trade mark) are very useful for considering and shaping proposals at the very local level but they require careful preparation to be effective.
Targeted measures for hard to reach groups/ people with disabilities	Special measures may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convening specific focus groups; • Providing documents and leaflets in different formats and languages upon request with associated communication support.

2.3.5 The Regulations, which the Council must comply with, prescribe minimum levels of community consultation. The approaches the Council proposes to use would exceed this minimum requirement.

2.3.6 The decision on which method to use will be based on a range of factors including:

- Whether the local community will be directly affected by a proposal set-out in a planning policy document or a planning application;
- The nature of the planning policy document. The Core Strategy as a "headline" document would require much wider involvement than an Action Plan which would only affect local people;
- The stage in the preparation of the planning policy document. The Council is keen to ensure that a variety of methods are used at early stages to encourage greater participation in the plan making process.
- The resources available for community involvement will be an important consideration therefore the Council will work in partnership wherever possible.
- The Council recognises that the increasing need for all services to consult with the local community places significant strain on local

organisations and individuals. Wherever possible it will seek to combine different consultations to avoid overload. It will also prepare a summary of each document it is consulting upon so that local organisations can form an opinion as to whether they want to be involved or not.

- 2.3.7** Based on the above considerations a series of illustrative tables have been prepared to indicate the approaches to community involvement that may be adopted for different types of planning policy documents (Tables 2 - 6) and for major planning applications (Table 7).

Table 2 Core Strategy

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Pre-production and early consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Limited community 	Regulation 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist the development of the evidence base. Consultation likely to be targeted through specific research projects. To engage with individuals / organisations who have an interest in the town's future development so that their views are known early in the process Scoping and criteria for sustainability appraisal 	<p>Will depend on the type of research being undertaken. Likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups General survey (e.g. by post or telephone canvass) to gain wider context, with possible reflector group to explore issues emerging further.
Proposed Submission Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal consultees Stakeholder / community / individuals 	Regulation 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage with individuals / organisations so that they understand the contents of the document. To gather representations on the soundness of the document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings Focus groups Targeted measures for identified hard to reach groups. Web-site

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Submission to Secretary of State	n/a	Regulation 30	n/a	n/a

Table 3 Area Action Plan

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Pre-production and early consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Limited community 	Regulation 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist the development of the evidence base. Consultation likely to be targeted through specific research projects. To engage with individuals / organisations who have an interest in the town's future development so that their views are known early in the process Scoping and criteria for sustainability appraisal 	<p>Will depend on the type of research being undertaken. Likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups General survey (e.g. by post or telephone canvass) to gain wider context, with possible reflector group to explore issues emerging further.
Proposed Submission Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal consultees Stakeholder / community / individuals 	Regulation 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage with individuals / organisations so that they understand the contents of the document. To gather representations on the soundness of the document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings Focus groups Targeted measures for identified hard to reach groups. Web-site

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Submission to Secretary of State	n/a	Regulation 30	n/a	n/a

Table 4 Development Plan Document (Policy)

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Pre-production and early consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Limited community 	Regulation 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist the development of the evidence base. Consultation likely to be targeted through specific research projects. To engage with individuals / organisations who have an interest in the town's future development so that their views are known early in the process Scoping and criteria for sustainability appraisal 	<p>Will depend on the type of research being undertaken. Likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> general survey methods (by post or telephone). Focus groups General survey (e.g. by telephone canvass) to gain wider context, with possible reflector group to explore issues emerging further.
Proposed Submission Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal consultees Stakeholder / community / individuals 	Regulation 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage with individuals / organisations so that they understand the contents of the document. To gather representations on the soundness of the document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings Focus groups Targeted measures for identified hard to reach groups. Web-site

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Submission to Secretary of State	n/a	Regulation 30	n/a	n/a

Table 5 Supplementary Planning Document (additional policy guidance)

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Pre-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in the preparation of the SPD - usually from a technical point of view- in the development of possible approaches. Scoping and criteria for sustainability appraisal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups Specific meetings Face to face meetings
Public Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Limited to relevantcommunity 	Regulation 17	Consultation on draft SPD prior to formal adoption by the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advert in paper Formal consultation letter Focus groups Web-site

Table 6 Supplementary Planning Document (area/site based)

Stage in Plan Preparation	Likely Consultees	Relevant Regulation	Purpose of Consultation / Participation	Possible Techniques
Pre-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Local community 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore possible development options and understand constraints / opportunities Scoping and criteria for sustainability appraisal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups Action planning Face to face meetings
Public Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Local community 	Regulation 17	To present draft brief to local community as a basis for further discussion / refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advert in paper Formal consultation letter Focus groups, particularly including the local community Web-site

Table 7 Consultation on major planning applications

Stage in Application Preparation	Consultation carried out by	Purpose of Consultation	Possible Techniques
Pre-application	Applicant (after advice from Council on the level of consultation and with who)	To ascertain whether there are any critical issues that need to be resolved before the planning application is finalised for submission and to give the local community / neighbours the opportunity to help shape the proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face meetings with key stakeholders including the Council's planning officers; • Exhibition and public surgery; • Focus Group.
Application	The Council	To comply with relevant statutory requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to statutory consultees, neighbourhoods and other interested parties; • Advert in paper if required, face to face meeting, and public surgery if proposed development is significant.

2.4 Sustainability Appraisal

2.4.1 Sustainability appraisal is an integral part of plan making. It is a specific process that identifies the social, economic and environmental effects likely to arise from the different options, policies and proposals within the plan. There are two consultative stages in the process:

- On the scope of the appraisal;
- On the Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanies the proposed submission version of a DPD or when the draft Supplementary Planning Document is sent out for consultation with the community.

2.4.2 Sustainability appraisal is a technical process and the Council will consult with the bodies prescribed in the relevant Regulations. In addition the Council will publish the sustainability appraisal reports on its web-site for public comment and may convene focus groups of other interested parties to scrutinise the approach to the appraisal in greater depth.

2.5 Reporting Back

2.5.1 The Council recognises that it is important to report back on the outcomes of community involvement in the planning process.

2.5.2 The Council will produce a consultation report for each of the stages in the preparation of local development documents and highlight the issues raised and how they have been taken into account. The report will also indicate how the results of consultation have influenced the content of the particular local development document. This report will be made available on the web-site and will be available to individuals / organisations on request. In addition, individuals and organisations will receive a written response to any comment that they have made at statutory consultation stages in the process (see Figures 1 and 2).

2.5.3 The Council realises that it should regularly consult with the local community to find out whether they feel that they have been actively involved in the preparation of planning policy so that it can respond to local perceptions and further improve approaches to community involvement, if necessary. This consultation may be by means of a questionnaire to those who have been involved in the process but the Council may also organise a 'Planning Conference' to reflect on past experiences and also look to future challenges.

2.6 Review

2.6.1 The Statement of Community Involvement will be kept under review through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will highlight any significant changes which have occurred in the types of group that Eastbourne Borough Council wishes to engage with, along with any other techniques for engagement which are to be employed.

3 Technical Background

3.0.1 The document is the submission statement as required by Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008, and previously Regulation 28 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. It has been amended following earlier consultation as prescribed by the Regulations. This document has been prepared within the context of the vision for an inclusive community set out in the Eastbourne section of the East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy.

3.0.2 This document will be reviewed in light of:

- Experience gained of community involvement, including the results of feedback from the local community of their experiences of the process;
- Resource availability;
- Changes in the regulations / legislation.

3.0.3 The Companion Guide to Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning identifies a six step process towards the preparation of a Statement of Community Involvement:

- Step 1: Establish a baseline structure;
- Step 2: Identify main areas where the involvement of the community and stakeholders will be needed to prepare sound documents;
- Step 3: Assess resources available for managing community involvement;
- Step 4: Discuss with the Community and Stakeholders how they wish to be involved in document preparation;
- Step 5 Consider which methods of community involvement to deploy and when;
- Step 6: Identify the process and commitments to reporting back.

3.0.4 This six step approach is considered further below.

3.1 Step 1 - Establish a Baseline Structure

3.1.1 A number of different sources have been used to identify local communities and stakeholders. These include:

- Consultation with those who were previously involved in the preparation of the Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011 either as formal objectors / supporters or who were on the Council's mailing list (this list ran to some 600 contacts);
- Continual update of the Planning service database from a variety of sources including direct contact to check up to date details are retained;
- Bodies and organisations specified in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amended) Regulations 2008;

- The Local Strategic Partnership;
- The Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services Community Network;
- The Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy.

3.1.2 Both the East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's consultation strategy emphasise the need to engage with vulnerable and marginalised groups. In Eastbourne these are considered, but not exclusively, to be:

- Young people;
- Minority black and ethnic groups and other minority groups;
- Persons with learning difficulties;
- Faith groups;
- Particular geographic communities who do not have resident or community associations.

3.1.3 Specific efforts will, therefore, be necessary to reach all such groups.

3.2 Step 2 - Identify main areas where the involvement of the community and stakeholders will be needed to prepare the documents

3.2.1 Although some individuals / organisations will be interested in all of the local development documents prepared by the Council and will wish to be involved at the various stages, they are likely to be in the minority. It is more likely that some local development documents will be of more interest to stakeholders than the local community whilst others will be of more interest to specific local communities. Tables 2 - 7 have been based on the following assumptions, shown in Table 8:

Table 8 Interest in Development Plan Documents

	Stakeholder Involvement	Community Involvement
Core Strategy	✓	✓
Action Area	✓	✓
Site Specific	✓	✓
Supplementary Planning Document - Policy Guidance	✓	-
Supplementary Planning Document - Area/Site based	✓	✓

Where ✓ = likely to be interested
 - = less likely to be interested

3.2.2 Other assumptions made are that the earlier stages in the process of preparing local development documents afford greater opportunity for the community and stakeholders to influence the development of planning policy than the later more consultative stages, so a greater variety of community involvement techniques are indicated for these initial stages.

3.2.3 In particular the Council recognises that it will be necessary to involve specific stakeholder and community expertise early in the process. For example, affordable housing policy cannot be prepared without effective involvement of both Housing Associations and the private house builders. Neither can a site specific housing allocations document be prepared without knowledge of likely sites that might come forward for development, requiring involvement of landowners and agents.

3.3 Step 3 - Assess resources for managing community involvement

3.3.1 The illustrative approaches set-out in Tables 2 - 6 are based on a realistic assessment of the resources likely to be available to undertake community involvement initiatives.

3.3.2 The Planning Policy Manager has responsibility for the day to day management of the Local Development Framework process and will be the lead officer for consultation on Local Development Documents. The Planning Policy Manager will ensure that appropriate financial and human resources are in place for any consultation.

Financial Resources

3.3.3 Consultation will be funded from the service budget which may be supplemented from other sources such as Housing & Planning Delivery Grant. A substantial reduction in the financial resources available could necessitate a review of this Statement to ensure that the consultation methods proposed can still be achieved within budgets.

Human Resources

3.3.4 There are currently 8.7 full time equivalent posts in planning policy and work programmes within the team will be co-ordinated to ensure that staff are available to organise consultation. The Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared in co-operation with colleagues in other Council departments and there is a recognition that consultation needs to be undertaken on a co-ordinated basis to make more efficient use of resources across the Council and to avoid consultation fatigue.

3.3.5 Opportunities will be taken for joint approaches where the Council or its partners are also consulting upon relevant strategies. The Council with its partners is intending to prepare an annual consultation timetable which will assist this process. There is also recognition that consultation should be devolved to the local community wherever possible.

3.3.6 The Planning Policy Manager will also have responsibility for ensuring that appropriate facilities are in place. This will include:

- arranging accessible venues (the ground floor of the Town Hall is accessible);
- arranging induction loops;
- arranging availability of documents in other formats;
- speech to text typists;
- signed presentations for the profoundly deaf.

3.3.7 Resource availability for consultations will be a major consideration when preparing subsequent Local Development Schemes and setting future programmes for preparation of Local Development Documents. It is recognised that consulting on two Local Development Documents at the same time can result in cost saving (e.g. in terms of advertising costs) and may be appropriate for some documents where these are likely to be of more interest to stakeholders than the wider community.

3.4 Step 4 - Discuss with the community and stakeholders how they wish to be involved in document preparation

3.4.1 In preparing this Statement, the Council has undertaken discussion with the local community and stakeholders on how they might wish to be involved in document preparation. Further refinement to the Statement has been made as a result of this consultation.

3.4.2 Activities carried out to inform the original SCI (2005) were:

- A detailed questionnaire to all those who made representations on the Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011 asking about their experience of the process and seeking information about how they would like to be consulted in the future; ⁽¹¹⁾
- A detailed questionnaire to all those on the mailing list for the Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011 seeking information about how they would like to be consulted in the future; ⁽¹²⁾
- Equality Impact Assessment questionnaires to specific groups on their experience of the planning service;
- A stakeholder conference organised to explain the LDF process, explore issues and look at possible consultation approaches;
- A presentation and follow-up discussions with "Altogether Eastbourne" the group charged with delivering the social inclusion agenda at the local level;
- Discussions with the Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services, the Community Network and the Local Citizen's Advice Bureau Manager;
- An internal Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the effectiveness of community involvement in planning policy consultation. This report was also screened for its equalities impact;
- Two focus groups: One group was arranged through the local Community Network and the other was for individuals and organisations on the mailing list who had expressed interest in learning more about the Local Development Framework process.

3.4.3 A report on the consultations undertaken has been prepared and is available from the planning policy unit or the Council's web-site.

3.4.4 As this Statement is an update due to changes in the regulations, the above has not been repeated. However, consultation on the revisions will be carried out for a 12 week period.

3.5 Step 5 - Consider which methods of community involvement to deploy and when

3.5.1 Tables 2 - 7 resulted from the detailed considerations undertaken in steps 1-4 above.

3.6 Step 6 - Identify the process and commitments to reporting back

3.6.1 Reporting back to local communities will usually be by means of reports on the outcomes of consultation. These reports will be available on the Council's web-site and hard copies will be sent on request. In addition, at the statutory consultation stages in the process, individuals and organisations will receive a specific response setting out how any

11 Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011: Follow-up Survey of Objectors (2004) (available on request)

12 Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011: Follow-up Survey of Consultees (2004) (available on request)

representation they have made have been taken into account. Other mechanisms for reporting back will include the local media, newsletters and the Council's own newspaper the "Eastbourne Review".

- 3.6.2** The Council is committed to understanding the local communities' experience of involvement in the preparation of planning policy and decision on planning applications and will implement the measures outlined earlier. Their experience of reporting back arrangements will be an important consideration.

3.7 Consulting on Planning Applications

- 3.7.1** The text contained in paragraphs 2.1.11 to 2.1.16 of this Statement of Community Involvement is considered to comply with the tests of soundness because it describes the Council's policy for consultation on planning applications and for development affecting a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area. In addition to detailing the minimum requirements for consultation as laid down in the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2004 and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it is also clear what type and scale of application should be subject to wider consultation and that on occasions, when a proposed development is particularly significant, the Council may arrange a surgery to enable the public to learn more about the proposals. In the case of SSSI's, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000) provides for Natural England to have 28 days to respond to applications for development potentially affecting a SSSI.
- 3.7.2** Both the text and Table 8 of this document detail the types of consultation expected at different stages of an application's preparation and determination and demonstrates the Council's commitment to pre-application consultation.
- 3.7.3** Furthermore, it is considered that the Council's approach to consultations on planning applications is both accessible and appropriate.
- 3.7.4** Finally, as the handling of planning applications is a statutory function, the Council will make available the necessary resources required to successfully perform this function.

Appendix A Consultation Bodies

Under new Regulation 25 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amended) Regulations 2008, the requirement to consult the public includes specific and general bodies, as well as consulting those residents and/or businesses the council considers appropriate.

A.1 Specific Consultation Bodies

The specific consultation bodies are listed in the The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) and relate to organisations responsible for services and utilities and infrastructure provision.

These are a list of specific bodies **who must be consulted** by the council when preparing development plan documents in which they may have an interest. The specific consultation bodies are:

- the regional planning body
- a relevant authority, any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local council, such as:
 - a council
 - a county council
 - a parish council
 - a police authority
- The Coal Authority
- The Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- The Secretary of State for Transport
- a regional development agency whose area is in, or adjoins, the area of the council
- any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under Section 106 (3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003
- any person who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the council
- any of the bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of the council:
 - primary care trust
 - person to whom a license has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986
 - sewage undertaker
 - water undertaker.

A.2 General Consultation Bodies

The general consultation bodies are also listed in the regulations. The regulations identify five types of bodies as general consultation bodies that relate to voluntary organisations representing certain groups within the community. The general consultation bodies are:

- voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the council's area
- bodies which represent the interests of:
 - different ethnic or national groups in the council's area
 - different religious groups in the council's area
 - disabled people in the council's area
 - people carrying on business in the council's area.

When preparing the development plan document, the council must consult those general consultation bodies it considers appropriate.

A.3 Other Consultation Bodies

The key principle is that the council should carry out public participation that is appropriate for the development plan document being produced.

Depending on the plan being produced, it may be appropriate to consult with other agencies and organisations in addition to those identified as specific or general consultation bodies.