



High Peak Borough Council

working for our community



Statement of Community Involvement

LDF2

Adopted May 2006

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Statement of Community Involvement

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Statement of Community Involvement

Foreword

High Peak Borough Council aims to deliver high quality services that respond to local needs and priorities. To help achieve this, the Council seeks to encourage the community to contribute views and comments on its services and on their priorities, concerns and aspirations.

We are deeply committed to engaging our communities in the decision-making process and are very pleased to have been chosen as a Civic Pioneer, alongside our close colleagues at Derbyshire Dales. It is government recognition that the partnership work we undertake produces positive results and that we are making a very noticeable difference to improving the lives of our local residents.

We have prepared this Statement of Community Involvement to set out the ways in which people can play an active and constructive role in the local planning process. We genuinely welcome people's involvement in planning and hope that by publishing this Statement we can help to increase the levels of public participation in both planning policy and development control.

The Council believes that enabling residents to say what sort of place they want to live in, at a stage when this can make a difference, will lead to the development of more inclusive, accessible, safe and sustainable communities.



Councillor Alan Wells
Executive Member for Economic Regeneration

Statement of Community Involvement

Glossary of terms used

DP	Development Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The documents used to determine planning applications and having a specific meaning and relevance in planning law.
DPD	Development Plan Document <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LDDs that establish planning policies and land use allocations. They form part of the DP performing a similar function to Local Plans.
LDD	Local Development Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the separate planning documents that together make up the LDF. They can be either DPDs or SPDs.
LDF	Local Development Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a portfolio of plans that sets out the Council's planning policy framework.
LDS	Local Development Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a three year programme for the preparation of the LDF, 'rolled forward' each year.
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a partnership of government bodies and other agencies which prepares the Community strategy. In this area the partnership covers High Peak and Derbyshire Dales Districts.
PPS	Planning Policy Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• replaces Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and outlines national planning policy.
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• replaces Regional Planning Guidance (RPG).
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a statement of how the Council will consult the community and other stakeholders when preparing LDDs and dealing with planning applications.

SPD	Supplementary Planning Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDDs that give additional guidance on matters covered by DPDs, similar to the former SPGs. They do not form part of the DP.
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • replaced under the new system by SPDs, SPGs were a less formal means of expanding development plan policy.

Statement of Community Involvement

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 High Peak Borough Council has established a vision “to improve the quality of life in the High Peak”. One of the Corporate Plan’s main aims is to promote social inclusion and enable communities and individuals to participate in this vision. The Council welcomes the opportunity for greater community involvement in planning as a key means of achieving this aim. This Statement of Community Involvement sets out the steps that the Borough Council will take to ensure that local people can have a say in creating the sort of place they would wish to live in.

1.2 The benefits of involving a wider range of people and organisations in decision making include:

- Outcomes that better reflect the views and aspirations of the local community.
- A contribution to the creation of a vibrant, open and participatory democracy.
- Improvement to the quality and efficiency of decisions by drawing on local knowledge and diffusing potential future objections.
- Helping people contribute to their community and gain a better understanding of the way that the Borough Council works.

1.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has placed a duty on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to consult certain bodies and individuals in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Further details of the legislation are available from the government web-site at www.odpm.gov.uk. The consultation requirements underpin this Statement, but the document goes further in mapping out the wider steps that the Council will take to involve and engage the community.

1.4 The Council is seeking to involve local people in the process of preparing the Local Development Framework (LDF), determining planning applications and conserving the built heritage. This Statement of Community Involvement establishes the standards of consultation that the Council will employ in carrying out its main planning functions. It is designed to ensure that members of the public understand when and how they can participate in the decision and policy making process.

1.5 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 also places a requirement on LPAs to ensure that planning decisions are taken with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.

1.6 The UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005 sets out five principles which will form the basis for policy in the UK. These are living within environment limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance and using

sound science responsibly. To help achieve this, a sustainability appraisal will be carried out of all strategies and policies in the LDF. The appraisals will assess the impact of plan policies from an environmental, economic and social perspective.

2. OUR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2.1 High Peak Borough Council is committed to enabling the active participation of local people in building more sustainable communities. The Council will take steps to ensure that people have access to the information that they need to participate in the planning process. This includes providing the opportunity for people to contribute ideas and to take part in developing options, as well as enabling people to make representations on proposals and receive feedback on the progress and outcomes of plans.

2.2 High Peak Borough Council already has a set of adopted principles for community involvement. This statement has been prepared to conform with these principles, taking into account the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and Government guidance in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks. In addition, the Statement has been informed by the experiences of the Borough Council in its active work to engage the local community, recognised by the recent invitation extended to the Borough Council to join a national group of local authorities called the Civic Pioneers Network.

2.3 The Civic Pioneers Network has been established by the Home Office and consists of Councils judged to provide examples of best practice in consulting with residents and leading local communities. The network is based on the belief that local areas that have a sense of community will be safer and stronger than areas with no community spirit.

2.4 This Statement of Community Involvement is further evidence of the Council's commitment to public consultation that exceeds statutory requirements.

Guiding principles for community involvement

Communications Strategy

2.5 The Council's communications strategy was published in 2003 and has amongst its aims to ensure a high level of public understanding of:

- The Council, its role and the services it provides.
- The Council's achievements.
- Their role in contributing to service improvement and delivery.

Consultation Strategy

2.6 In September 2003 the Council published a Consultation Strategy for High Peak. The Council aims to deliver high quality services that respond to

local needs and priorities. To help achieve this the Council seeks to encourage the community to contribute views and comments on its services and on their priorities, concerns and aspirations.

2.7 The Council is an active participant in the Derbyshire Consultation Group, which is made up of all public sector organisations in the County. The aim of the Group is to share resources and expertise and develop best practice in research and consultation across the public sector.

2.8 The Council has a dedicated consultation area on its intranet, where information and guidance on research and consultation and the results of surveys can be accessed by all employees and members.

Local Compact

2.9 The Derbyshire Local Compact is a voluntary agreement between local voluntary, community and statutory organisations. It sets out a framework for how organisations should work together, promoting mutual trust and respect, collaboration and equal working relationships. It also recognises the distinct but complementary roles of different types of organisation and highlights that by working together, we can achieve more for the community.

2.10 The Compact is a practical tool that sets out good practice guidelines covering the aims of each party in relation to:

- Funding and capacity building.
- Communication, consultation and information sharing.
- Supporting volunteering.
- Partnership working.

2.11 High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council are working in partnership with the Councils for Voluntary Service in both areas to form a localised action plan for the Compact (together with Derbyshire County Council). The action plan will include working together on the “Future Builders” initiative to ensure that relevant decision makers use the funding appropriately in High Peak to deliver any necessary community development and capacity building work.

Corporate Equality Plan

2.12 The Council published an Equality Plan in October 2003. This establishes the Authority’s commitment to ensuring its services are accessible to all sections of the community. Legislation (with amendments) including the Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act and Disability Discrimination Act places a duty on the Council to ensure that its services (and information about them) are available to all. This includes those who do not know about services, those who are not confident in using them and those who meet barriers when trying to do so.

2.13 The Equalities Plan identified certain groups that are at risk of exclusion (such as young people, women and ethnic minorities) where

improvements in communications and consultation are desirable. The Equalities Plan also pinpointed the problem of an emerging “digital divide” whereby not all sections of the community are able to access or benefit from improvements to web based information. Details of how the Council proposes to involve “hard to reach” groups in consultation over planning issues is given at Appendix 1.

2.14 Key principles of the Equalities Policy that are taken forward in this Statement are the need to:

- Make services flexible and responsive to the needs of service users.
- Ensure that information is available in accessible formats.
- Ensure that information is targeted (where necessary) towards particular groups, such as ethnic minorities and disabled people.

2.15 In particular the Council will make arrangements for those who have difficulty in communicating in English or who require information in different formats (such as large print or Braille).

Links with other Plans and Strategies

2.16 Planning for the sustainable development of communities in High Peak will bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes that influence the nature of places and how they function. Other relevant strategies are outlined below.

Community Strategy

2.17 A three year Community Strategy for High Peak was published by the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in 2003. An updated strategy will be published in March 2006. Membership of the LSP is at Appendix 3. The Community Strategy sets out a series of aims and actions for improving the quality of life in the Borough.

2.18 The first aim of the 2003 – 2006 Strategy is “Getting communities involved”. It recognises that community involvement is essential to developing and improving the life of the Borough. The strategy seeks to:

- Work with local people so that they become actively involved.
- Provide clear, co-ordinated information to let everyone know what’s happening, so they can have their say.
- Be open and accessible so that everyone is able to take part regardless of their background, age, abilities or other factors.

2.19 The Council’s planning functions are a key tool for implementing the Community Strategy and consequently this Statement of Community Involvement is intended to help demonstrate how members of the community can play their part.

Town Plans

2.20 Town Plans are being developed through local Regeneration Partnerships. High Peak has five such Partnerships, covering Buxton, Glossop, New Mills, Chapel-en-le-Frith and Whaley Bridge. The Partnerships are rooted within each local community and through community involvement are working to develop plans and strategies for the future development of their local areas. This information will be used to inform the development of the policies and proposals in the Local Development Framework through the consultation process.

Area Forums

2.21 In June 2005, the Borough Council established four Area Forums to cover Glossopdale, Central, Buxton and the Hope Valley. The Forums have been set up within the structures of the LSP and will further improve the Council's community engagement and local consultation mechanisms. Action plans arising from the work of the Forums and the Regeneration Partnerships will be co-ordinated with the consultation and preparation of the Local Development Framework.

Parish Plans

2.22 Derbyshire Rural Community Council has worked with a number of Parishes in the High Peak, including Dove Holes, Peak Dale, Tintwistle and Furness Vale, through the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages Scheme. Parish Plans have been prepared by three Parishes in the High Peak local plan area: Dove Holes, Peak Dale and Hayfield.

2.23 Action plans arising from the Parish and Town Plans will be co-ordinated with the consultation and preparation of the Local Development Framework.

Health Checks

2.24 Health Checks have been carried out in five towns: Buxton, Glossop, New Mills, Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith. These Countryside Agency supported schemes aim to understand and tackle the problems and challenges that market towns face now and in the future. By measuring their "health" and ability to provide essential services for the surrounding countryside, action plans have been put together to address the towns' concerns.

3. GETTING INVOLVED IN PLANNING

3.1 This section of the Statement describes how to get involved in the planning process. It identifies the documents, plans and policies upon which the Council will be seeking community involvement and sets out both when community involvement will be sought and who will be involved.

What is consultation being sought on?

3.2 High Peak Borough Council is a local planning authority (LPA). All LPAs are required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). This comprises a folder of documents designed to deliver the planning strategy for the Borough. These documents include Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.



3.3 Together the documents set the framework within which all proposals for new development are considered. The Development Plan sets out both general principles for the assessment of planning applications and site specific proposals.

3.4 The Borough Council will seek community involvement in the formulation and revision of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, Sustainability Appraisals and consultation on planning applications.

Consultation and the planning process

3.5 The following sections set out the various elements of the planning process. Details are given of the consultation arrangements made at the various stages in the preparation of documents and policies and the consideration of planning applications. The range of local groups that the Borough Council will seek to involve at each stage and how this involvement will be facilitated are also highlighted.

3.6 The Council will actively seek to involve people at an earlier stage in the plan preparation process than has traditionally occurred. The aim will be to seek consensus on essential issues early in the plan development process. By enabling individuals, organisations and the Council to share knowledge and views at the stage at which preferred options and proposals are being considered, there will be a genuine opportunity for people to influence plan content.

3.7 The Council will employ a range of methods at each stage of the preparation and revision of Local Development Documents. Further details of each method are given at Appendix 1.

3.8 Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents vary in scope and scale and in the degree to which they impact on people's lives and the neighbourhoods in which they live. It is recognised that public interest in Documents will vary accordingly, thus the style and scope of public consultation has been devised to be appropriate and relevant to the policy decision at issue. For example whilst one policy document might establish the Council's views on re-pointing buildings, another might relate to the location and design of a large residential development.

3.9 Additionally there are a number of different types of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that will be produced, for example the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Area Action Plans. Community Involvement will be designed to reflect the different nature of these documents. For example, the Core Strategy will involve more extensive public involvement by Borough wide public exhibitions than specific Area Action Plans, for which any presentations and exhibitions will be targeted within the relevant area. Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will rely less on public exhibitions and officer presentations and more on newsletter articles and notification by letter.

3.10 See Appendix 4 for a summary of target groups for consultation, the type of Development Document and method of consultation proposed.

3.11 The Local Development Scheme sets out the Council's key planning documents and the timetable for their preparation. It summarises the Documents that will be produced and the timetable of their production. The full Local Development Scheme is published on the Council's web-site at www.highpeak.gov.uk in the Planning Section, under Local Development Framework.

3.12 High Peak Borough Council is working to facilitate consultation and the planning process by ensuring that in future the whole planning system will be available on-line. The Council aims to meet the priority outcomes of the E-Planning Programme Blueprint (ODPM), and in particular the Democratic Renewal targets:

- R5 (public access to online reports, minutes and agendas from past council meetings, including future meetings diary updated daily);
- G3 (citizen participation and response to forthcoming consultations and decisions on matters of public interest (e-consultation), including facilities for citizens to sign up for e-mail and/or SMS text alerts on nominated subjects; and
- G4 (establishment of multimedia resources on local policy priorities accessible via public website (eg video and audio files)).

- 3.13 For planning, it has done this by commissioning for Spring 2006:
- a new integrated planning applications system with web enablement of all documents related to all stages of a planning application; and
 - interactive web-based consultation and response to planning applications and policy.

4. GETTING INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

4.1 Several distinct stages are involved in the preparation of Development Plan Documents. These are:

- The evidence base.
- Preparation of issues.
- Submission to members of Development Plan Select Committee.
- Stakeholder consultation on options and proposals (for five weeks).
- Submission to members of Development Plan Select Committee.
- Public consultation on preferred option and proposals (for six weeks).
- Responses considered and document amended appropriately.
- Submission of Development Plan Document (including the report of the sustainability appraisal) and public consultation for a six week period.
- Examination.
- Report and adoption.

4.2 The stages and how community involvement will be sought at each one, are described in more detail below.

Evidence base and preparation of issues

4.3 At this stage the Council is primarily concerned with gathering a sound understanding of the characteristics of the area plus recent and emerging development trends. Consequently the emphasis will mainly be placed on technical consultation and information gathering. However persons known to be interested in the development plan process will be kept informed and invited to comment. Anyone else interested in progress on the data gathering phase can contact Planning Policy to be placed onto the database.

Methods of involvement

4.4 It is proposed that community involvement will take the form of:

- Liaison with stakeholder organisations (e.g. County Council, statutory bodies).

- Direct communication with interested parties, inviting comments/issues.

Preferred options and proposals

4.5 At this stage the Council is beginning to formulate clear ideas about the development issues that need to be addressed and some of the options for tackling them. This is the main opportunity for the public and outside bodies to influence the Council's thinking. Consequently broad and wide ranging consultation will be carried out, for the statutory six week period, designed to encourage public debate and involvement. Option reports will be prepared, with a questionnaire format, allowing people to give views and comments on each proposed option. A sustainability appraisal report will also be available at this stage, contributing to the review of options.

Target audience

4.6 Principal target groups for planning policy consultation are:

- General public.
- Community and residents groups.
- Residents affected by developments of moderate or high impact.
- Landowners and farmers.
- Town and Parish Councils.
- Regeneration Partnerships.
- Area Forums
- Businesses.
- Amenity groups.
- Developers, house builders and agents.
- Statutory bodies.
- Central, Regional & Local Government.
- Local and regional media.
- High Peak Borough Council Business Managers

Methods of involvement

4.7 Community involvement will be designed to reflect the nature of the DPD, as set out in section 3.9. It is proposed that appropriate methods of involvement will be drawn from the following:

- Local Strategic Partnership.
- Citizens' Panel.
- Officer presentations at Local Council Liaison meetings and meetings of the Regeneration Partnerships, Buxton Partnership and Area Forums.
- Press release and advertisement.
- Letter to all interested persons, statutory and non-statutory consultees as identified in target audience above.
- Distribution of documents to Council Offices and Libraries.

- Public exhibitions.
- Feature in the Council's newsletter.
- Features in other relevant newsletters eg Buxton Partnership, CVS and Local Council Liaison.
- Feature on web-site.
- Corporate seminars.

Submission of Development Plan Document

4.8 By this time, the Council has developed firm policies and proposals for the area and undertaken a sustainability appraisal of them. The submission document, as it is now called, is submitted to the Secretary of State. At this time the Council publish a notice formally inviting representations on the submission document. This stage enables any interested party to formally comment or object to what is proposed. At the close of this formal six week consultation period, all objections received will be published.

4.9 The consultation will be equally broad in its target audience, but narrower in its content and focus, emphasising the detailed proposals now prepared. In line with this more specific approach, residents adjacent to main development sites will be notified of the proposals in their area.

4.10 A standard form will be available for people to use when submitting their comments.

Target audience

4.11 Principal target groups for supporting, or objecting to planning policy are:

- General public.
- Community and residents groups.
- Residents affected by developments of moderate or high impact.
- Landowners and farmers.
- Town and Parish Councils.
- Regeneration Partnerships.
- Area Forums
- Businesses.
- Amenity groups.
- Developers, house builders and agents.
- Statutory bodies.
- Central, Regional & Local Government.
- Local and regional media.
- High Peak Borough Council Business Managers.

Methods of involvement

4.12 It is proposed that appropriate methods of involvement will be drawn from the following:

- Local Strategic Partnership.
- Officer presentations at Town and Parish Council local liaison meetings, Town Partnership Meetings, Area Forums.
- Press release and advertisement.
- Letter to all interested persons, statutory and non statutory consultees, as identified in target audience above, paying particular attention to those who made comments or suggestions at the preferred options stage.
- Distribution of documents to Council Offices and Libraries.
- Public exhibitions and school workshops.
- Neighbour notification.
- Feature in the Council's newsletter.
- Features in other relevant newsletters eg CVS and Local Council Liaison.
- Feature on web-site.
- Corporate seminars.

Examination

4.13 The Examination stage enables independent scrutiny of the Council's proposals in the DPD submitted to the Secretary of State. Only persons who made representations to the Council at the submission stage of the DPD process will have the opportunity to be heard by the Independent Inspector. The proceedings will however be open to the public.

4.14 The Council is mainly concerned to keep interested parties informed of the timing and progress of the Examination. Appropriate methods of doing this would be by:

- Press release and advertisement.
- Letter to those who made representations at the submission stage of the process, statutory and non statutory consultees.
- The timetable relating to the Inspector's Examination to be available on the web-site.

4.15 Where representations on the DPD include proposals for alternative site allocations, the Council will advertise these for a further six week period, immediately after the period for making representations has expired. Otherwise any representations will be made available as soon as possible on the web-site and in Council Offices and libraries, as set out in section 4.22.

Report and adoption

4.16 Once the Report of the Examination has been received, the Council can proceed towards the adoption of the Development Plan Document. The Inspector's Report will be binding, offering no further opportunity for comment or amendment.

4.17 The principal concern at this stage is again to keep interested parties informed of the contents of the Report and of the progress towards adoption. Appropriate methods of doing this would be by:

- Placing a copy of the Report on the web-site.
- Press release and advertisement.
- Letter to all interested persons, statutory and non-statutory consultees, paying particular attention to those who had made earlier comments or suggestions.
- Copy of adopted document made available at all Council offices and Libraries.

DPD and SPD Matters

4.18 In order to maximise people's awareness of the consultation procedures for each document prepared, the Council publishes "DPD and SPD Matters" alongside the document itself. The "Matters" constitute the title of the document; its subject matter and the area it covers; the period within which representations should be made and the address to which they should be sent; as well as an explanation that any representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified that the document has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination (where appropriate) and of the adoption of the document.

4.19 The Matters are published in the local press (the Buxton Advertiser and the Glossop Chronicle) to coincide with the start of each document's public consultation period, as well as when a document is submitted to the Secretary of State. The Matters also appear on the Council web-site and are reproduced on the reverse of letters sent to stakeholder organisations, informing them of the commencement of each public consultation. A copy of the Matters is made additionally available at each location where a document is deposited.

Acknowledgement and response

4.20 It is important that those who take the trouble to comment on planning documents know what has been done in response to their views and how their contribution has influenced the preparation of documents and policies.

4.21 Anyone who has made a comment will be included in an electronic database. Throughout the process of DPD preparation any representations will be acknowledged with a letter giving (where appropriate) details of any reference numbers used to process the communication. At the time of the

submission and adoption the Council will also inform each interested party of the results of their representation.

4.22 In addition, The Council will publish on its web-site a table showing the representations received on a Development Plan Document, together with details of the action taken in response. Anyone wishing to view an original representation may do so by contacting localplan@highpeak.gov.uk.

4.23 The Council will amend a Development Plan Document in the light of comments received on it during each consultation period. The Council will negotiate with objectors to try to satisfy objections wherever possible or to explain in more detail why an objection may not be possible to resolve.

5. GETTING INVOLVED IN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

5.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are a Local Development Document, but do not form part of the Development Plan. They are intended to expand and illustrate Development Plan policy and must be clearly linked to them.

5.2 SPD preparation follows a similar process to that for DPDs, but does not involve formal Examination. The main stages are:

- Evidence gathering.
- Submission to members of Development Plan Select Committee.
- Stakeholder consultation on options and proposals (for five weeks).
- Submission to members of Development Plan Select Committee.
- Public consultation on preferred option and proposals (for six weeks) (including the report of the sustainability appraisal).
- Responses considered and document amended appropriately.
- Adoption of document and inclusion into the Local Development Framework.

5.3 As SPDs tend to deal with more localised areas of policy, or with particular areas of land, community involvement will focus on those people and areas most affected by the document. Consequently the consultation process will be shorter and more selective than for the DPDs. Sustainability appraisal reports will be prepared on all options proposed and a detailed report undertaken of the preferred option. These reports will be available on the Council's web-site.

5.4 The Council will employ a range of methods appropriate for each of the main stages. Further details of each method are given at Appendix 1. A consultation method matrix for the Local Development Framework is given at Appendix 4.

5.5 The Council will amend an SPD in the light of comments received on it during each consultation period. The Council will negotiate with objectors to

try to satisfy objections wherever possible or to explain in more detail why an objection may not be possible to resolve.

Evidence and preparation

5.6 It is proposed that community involvement will take the form of:

- Liaison with stakeholder organisations (e.g. County Council, statutory bodies etc) who have an interest in the policy area.
- Direct communication with interested parties eg for development briefs, contact with landowners and developers.

Options and preferred document

5.7 It is proposed that community involvement will take the form of:

- Press release and advertisement.
- Letter to all interested parties, statutory and non-statutory consultees, relevant to the policy area.
- Distribution of documents to Council Offices and Libraries.
- Neighbour notification (for development briefs only).
- Feature on web-site.

Response and adoption

5.8 It is proposed that community involvement will take the form of:

- Press release.
- Letter to all persons involved in the consultation process.
- Copy of adopted document to be available at all Council offices and Libraries.

6. GETTING INVOLVED IN CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

6.1 There are specific areas of work where community input is particularly important. For the High Peak, one of these areas is conservation and heritage.

6.2 The Council is working with the Countryside Agency on the preparation of a Landscape Character Assessment of the High Peak local plan area. The results will enable the Council to ensure that developments reflect and protect the high quality of our local landscapes as well as protect and enhance biodiversity in line with the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan.



6.3 The Council's Conservation Team can provide advice and guidance on alterations and development affecting listed buildings and conservation areas. These topics are the subject of separate planning legislation that imposes more rigorous controls on development proposals and building alterations.

6.4 Currently the Council has designated 31 conservation areas within the Borough and periodically undertakes a review of individual boundaries to identify potential extensions or de-designations. Such boundary reviews are normally undertaken during the preparation of a 'Character Statement' for an area. These Statements set out what is important about an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. It is during this process that potential boundary changes are identified and if necessary justified for in/exclusion. As a result Character Statements and boundary alterations are prepared in consultation with the local community.

Conservation Area Character Statements

6.5 The Council will:

- Prepare a draft Character Statement, which will identify any boundary alterations.
- Publish an advertisement within local newspapers.
- Distribute the document to local libraries.
- Distribute the document to local Members, key Officers, Parish Councils, local amenity and special interest groups.
- Deposit the document for view at Council Offices.
- Publish the document on the web-site.

Conservation Area boundary alterations and designations

6.6 The Council will:

- Prepare a draft leaflet identifying the proposed designations.
- Distribute the leaflet to all affected property owners.
- Deposit the leaflets within Council Offices.
- Distribute the leaflet to local Members, key Officers, Parish Councils, local amenity and special interest groups.
- Consult farmers and landowners of neighbouring settlements wherever possible.
- Publish the leaflet on the web-site.
- Publish an advertisement within local newspapers.
- Distribute to local libraries.

Conservation grant schemes

6.7 The Council administers a number of grant schemes to assist with sympathetic works in closely defined areas.

6.8 The Council will:

- Prepare a leaflet which clearly sets out what is proposed.
- Inform every occupier within the areas affected.
- Distribute the leaflet to local Members, key Officers, local amenity and special interest groups.
- Publish an advertisement within local newspapers.
- Distribute information from Council Offices.
- Publish the information on the web-site.
- Provide clear guidance as to what works are covered by the grants.

Conservation Area Management Plans

6.9 The Council will:

- Prepare a draft Management Plan, which will identify specific policies and guidance for specific conservation areas.
- Publish an advertisement within the local newspapers.
- Distribute the document to local libraries.
- Distribute the document to local Members, key Officers, Parish Councils, local amenity and special interest groups.
- Deposit the document for view at Council Offices.
- Publish the document on the web-site.

7. CONSULTING ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

7.1 The Peak District National Park Authority deals with planning applications for development on land within the Peak District National Park. Derbyshire County Council deals with certain matters, such as applications for minerals and waste and for developments associated with schools. High Peak Borough Council determines all other planning applications.

7.2 The Council's Development Control Department is primarily concerned with the determination of planning applications and its role is regulatory. Community involvement is sought on all planning applications.

7.3 The Council encourages pre-application discussions with all developers to consider relevant issues to enable the determination of an application, this may involve community consultation. Where a developer has undertaken community consultation, it will form part of the planning application. Most proposals will require planning permission, although in some case small alterations to residential property will not. The Development Control section can advise on whether specific proposals require planning permission.

Target audience

7.4 At present, target groups for consultation on planning applications are:

- Neighbours affected by the planning proposal.
- Statutory bodies.
- Town and Parish Councils.
- Amenity groups including the Buxton Partnership.
- Crime Prevention Design Officer Derbyshire Constabulary (within Safer Derbyshire Partnership).

Methods of involvement

7.5 A consultation method matrix for planning applications is given at Appendix 5.

The weekly list of planning applications

7.6 The Council publishes a list of the planning applications which it receives each week and includes applications under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, together with applications for determination by the Peak District National Park Authority or County Council.

7.7 The list is published on the Council's web-site and includes information on planning applications received since April 2001. A copy of the list can be sent out each week on request, although a charge is made for this service.

Newspapers

7.8 Certain types of application are required to be advertised locally, these include applications affecting conservation areas and listed buildings. Advertisements will be placed weekly in the Reporter and Advertiser newspapers. The publications are also provided with a copy of the weekly list of planning applications.



Neighbour notification

7.9 Neighbours that may be affected by a proposal are notified by letter that an application has been received and are invited to inspect the application and make written observations within 24 days. A site notice is also displayed for a period of 21 days.

Viewing of applications

7.10 Submitted applications can be viewed either at the Municipal Buildings, Glossop or within the relevant Parish/Town Council Offices or at Buxton Town Hall. The Council's web-site or Customer Service Centre will have details of where submitted applications can be viewed.

Web-site

7.11 In addition to the above, the web-site contains guidance relating to the planning application process.

Amended planning applications/permissions

7.12 Re-notification is not undertaken for minor changes to plans, however significant alterations may require additional consultation. There is a 10-day time period for written responses to amended applications/permissions.

Development Control Committee

7.13 Certain types of application are dealt with under the delegated decision system and therefore do not go before the Development Control Committee. If an application is to be considered by the Committee, those who made objections to the application will be notified of the date, time and location of the Committee meeting; the officer recommendation and asked if they wish to speak at the Committee.

7.14 See Appendix 6 for details of public speaking at Committee on planning applications.

Decisions

7.15 Applicants or their Agents will be notified directly of a planning decision. Third parties can contact the Development Control Team, Customer Service Team, or view the Council's web-site.

Appeals

7.16 Applicants have a right of appeal and there are no third party rights to appeal a decision. The Parish Council and objectors who have formally written are notified of the appeal and procedure. Their views are sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

Trees

7.17 Affected neighbours will be notified directly of application for works to protected trees. The consultation period for works to trees in Conservation Areas will be 14 days and for works to trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders, the consultation period will be 21 days. All applications for works to

protected trees will be listed on the planning application weekly list and a site notice will be displayed.

Enforcement

7.18 The majority of enforcement cases follow a referral from a member of the public and are treated confidentially. Enforcement action often leads to the submission of a planning application.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

8.1 This Statement of Community Involvement will be monitored annually, through the Annual Monitoring Report, to ensure that it remains appropriate and effective. In evaluating consultation, both the outcomes and process will be reviewed.

8.2 Key questions that will be addressed as part of the annual review will be:

- Was consultation carried out according to the policies set out in this statement?
- Did all members of the target audience have an opportunity for involvement in the preparation of Local Development Documents?
- Were there groups of the target audience who made no responses to the consultation?
- Was the overall response rate high enough to give reliable results?
- Were the results disseminated to consultees, the wider public and partner organisations?
- Did community involvement directly shape the preparation of Local Development Documents and inform decisions on planning applications?

8.3 The statement of community involvement will be revised appropriately, according to the findings of the review.

9.0 RESOURCES

9.1 Increased community involvement may require additional time and resources, particularly where capacity may need to be developed within the community itself. The Council is committed to enhanced community engagement and in this regard budgetary provision has been made to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet our obligations.

9.2 At all times the Council will seek to ensure that resources are utilised as efficiently and effectively as possible. Wherever appropriate, the Council will seek to combine and integrate involvement activities to ensure that we do not over-consult people and to make the most efficient use of resources including those of people's time.

9.3 The costs of consultation will be met from the Departmental budget of the Planning Policy and Design Team.

9.4 Further details regarding the costs of consultation are set out in the table at the end of Appendix one.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

PLANNING POLICY CONSULTATION METHODS

Ensuring the involvement of “hard to reach” groups

In undertaking all consultation on planning policy, the Borough Council will pay particular attention to its Corporate Equality Plan published in October 2003. This Plan is designed to ensure that in all its undertakings, the Authority does not exclude those groups of people deemed to be “hard to reach”. When undertaking the broad range of consultation set out in this Statement of Community Involvement, the Borough Council will seek to ensure the involvement of young people, older people, people from an ethnic minority background and disabled people.

Young people

High Peak Borough Council has a Youth Policy Statement. The Statement sets out that the Council recognises the value that young people add to the vibrancy and culture of the High Peak. The Council supports initiatives that aim to include young people in decision-making processes and in service planning that affects their local area. The Statement recognises that there needs to be a greater emphasis upon encouraging young people to have their say and to make things happen for themselves; their needs must be taken into account when planning services.

A High Peak Youth Forum was established in 2004 in order to help understand the views and issues of young people in the Borough. The Council also works closely with the organisation Connexions which provides advice and support services for young people aged 13 – 19, particularly those not in employment, education or training.

Older people

High Peak Borough Council manages “Project Liberation” a campaign to find out how older people feel about living in the High Peak. The Borough Council will work with the voluntary and community sectors to encourage the involvement of older people. High Peak CVS has close links with the activities of a number of organisations supporting older people in the Borough, including Age Concern, the Help the Aged Regional Development Team and the Congress of Older People.

People from a minority ethnic background

High Peak Borough Council in partnership with Derbyshire County Council, High Peak CVS, Police and the University of Derby, has carried out research examining the experience of service users from ethnic minorities in the High Peak. The report of this work will inform the Council's consultation strategy.

Information will be made available in languages other than English on request.

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

PLANNING POLICY CONSULTATION METHODS

Disabled people

Meetings or other consultation exercises will be accessible to disabled people. Meetings will be held in an accessible venue, to include wheelchair access and a hearing loop. Meetings will be well managed to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute. Arrangements will be made for the provision of information in alternative formats as required. Organisations of disabled people will be directly contacted and invited to consultations where relevant.

Direct Communication.

The Planning Policy and Design Team maintains a database of people who are interested in the Local Development Framework and who wish to be kept informed of its progress. We want people interested in and affected by development proposals to have the chance to comment on them. We will add any person, on request, to our database of interested parties and keep them informed of the key stages of the Local Development Framework.

Newspaper and media

Where required under the Regulations, formal advertisements will be published in the Glossop Chronicle and Buxton Advertiser (both weekly) and the London Gazette as required. The Council recognises that such formal notices often only contain the bare facts; we will therefore try and explain in easy terms what is happening at each stage of the Development Plan Documents.

We will issue press releases to the Chronicle and Advertiser newspaper groups, together with High Peak Radio. Press releases to High Peak Radio will make clear that to help promote consultations, an Officer or Member will always be made available for interview if required.

Libraries and Council Offices

Copies of the planning policy documents will be made available at the three main Council Offices at Glossop, Buxton and Hayfield Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith (Chinley).

To provide wider availability of these documents we will also provide planning policy documents to the eight libraries in the Borough, located in Buxton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Gamesley, Glossop, Hadfield, Hayfield, New Mills and Whaley Bridge.

High Peak is also covered by the thirteen mobile libraries operating in Derbyshire, covering rural and urban areas where there is no library building. Each vehicle offers a minimum fortnightly service, with some visiting every week.

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

PLANNING POLICY CONSULTATION METHODS

Public Exhibitions

Public exhibitions provide a means of explaining issues and proposals in a visual format. The Council has used the following venues in the past and will seek to do so again (subject to availability):

Buxton:	Morrisons Supermarket and Spring Gardens Shopping Centre.
Central Area:	Morrisons, Chapel-en-le-Frith; Mechanics Institute, Whaley Bridge; Town Hall, New Mills.
Glossop:	Bradbury House; The Co-op, Gamesley Community Centre.

Citizens' Panel

The Council's Citizens' Panel "ViewPoint High Peak" is one of the ways in which the council listens to the residents of the High Peak. The panel enables the Council and its partners, including Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Police, to monitor public satisfaction with their services, and ask residents any questions of interest. Questionnaires are sent out three times a year.

The Panel was set up in 2001 by sending out a recruitment questionnaire to 6,000 local people, selected at random from the electoral register, inviting them to take part. From the responses to the recruitment questionnaire, 1,000 people were selected and invited to join the panel. Since then, a third of the panel has been replaced each year to enable more residents to take part. The panel is representative of local people in terms of age, gender and geographical area.

Meetings of bodies responsible for promoting local well-being

The LSP will be involved at all relevant stages in the preparation of Local Development Documents.

The Borough Council maintains regular contact with Town and Parish Councils. All 250 Local Councillors and Clerks are invited to bi-monthly Local Council liaison meetings to discuss matters of common interest.

Officers will be available on request to make presentations about development issues and preferred options and proposals. Presentations will generally be made at Local Council liaison meetings and meetings of Regeneration Partnerships and Area Forums.

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

PLANNING POLICY CONSULTATION METHODS

Neighbour notification

The Council recognises that existing residents will be affected by new development proposals close to their homes. Neighbour notification is well established for planning applications, but is rarely employed for development plan proposals. In 2002 and 2003 the Council used neighbour notification to keep residents informed of the main allocations in the Replacement Local Plan.

Following the success of this initiative we will notify by letter all residents adjacent to new residential, employment, commercial or mixed use proposals of more than one hectare area, which are proposed within Development Plan Documents.

Newsletters

During the preparation of the High Peak Local Plan in 2001 – 03 the Council's magazine 'Connect' was used to publicise the Plan's progress. We will use this publication to highlight key stages of the Local Development Framework.

'Connect' is delivered free to all homes and businesses in the High Peak three times a year. The contents and format are designed to do just that – connect the Council and its services with the people we serve. The format and contents were decided after we sought the views of 1,000 local residents.

Features will also be placed in other relevant newsletters eg the High Peak Council for Voluntary Service Newsletter "Communication", the Buxton Partnership newsletter and the Local Council Liaison newsletter "Council Matters".

Web-site

The Council's web-site is at www.highpeak.gov.uk. The Council works with Planning Portal to provide a range of up-to-date Planning information, including planning guidance, making a planning application and viewing current and historic applications. A facility is provided enabling people to comment on applications on-line, as well as to monitor their progress. An interactive version of the Local Plan is carried on the site.

We will place all DPDs and SPDs on the web-site with easy to use, on-line facilities for making comments.

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

PLANNING POLICY CONSULTATION METHODS

SMS Text service

This mobile text service allows residents to send a text message while they are out and about with their mobile phone, ensuring that people can contact High Peak Borough Council from any location for general enquiries and help to keep us informed about local issues.

Call Centre

High Peak Borough Council's call centre is open between 08.00am and 08.00pm on Mondays to Fridays and will take messages and comments relating to planning issues.

Internal communications

Business Managers will be kept informed of progress and invited to contribute at all stages to ensure all appropriate issues and concerns are addressed.

Analysis of consultation methods proposed

Method	Strengths	Weaknesses	Costs
Newspaper and media	In theory can reach a wide audience. High Peak Radio now gives additional opportunities to reach people.	Need to advertise in two papers to ensure coverage of whole Borough, increasing costs.	£550 per advertisement (combined cost both papers).
Documents available for inspection at Libraries and Council Offices	Fulfils part of minimum statutory requirement.	None.	Low, cost of production of documents.
Public exhibitions	Good way of reaching large numbers if well located; allows residents to raise issues directly with Officers and Councillors.	Turnout may be low; resource intensive if permanently staffed; responses can be hard to record unless people return forms.	Hire of room, cost of pre-publicity and display material.
Citizens' Panel	Good way of investigating key issues and themes.	Potential for Panel not be representative of Borough population as a whole; most suited to discussion of broad strategic options.	Preparation and analysis of questions.
Attendance at meetings of local bodies	Good way of accessing particular interests and issues; can enable detailed discussion.	Need to be carefully planned to ensure desired outcomes, need to tailor presentation to specific interest of group; need to ensure feedback provided.	Low cost, staff time in preparation and attendance.
Neighbour notification	Ensures good coverage of affected residents.	Time consuming.	Staff resource intensive.
Articles in local newsletters	Potentially valuable means of reaching public and community organisations, particularly "hard to reach groups".	Needs careful planning in order to meet publication deadlines.	Low, staff time in article preparation.
Web-site	Fulfils part of minimum statutory requirement. Increasingly the first option of choice for people seeking information.	Over-reliance on providing information in this way can exclude those without internet access.	Low cost.

APPENDIX 2

BODIES CONSULTED FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The following bodies are statutory consultee bodies and must be consulted in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations, 2004.

East Midlands Regional Assembly
Government Office East Midlands
Government Office North West
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Highways Agency
Department for Transport, Government Office East Midlands
Department of Trade and Industry, Government Office East Midlands
Department for Education and Skills, Government Office East Midlands
The Housing Corporation, East Regional Office
Ministry of Defence
Buildings and Estate Management Unit, The Home Office
Derbyshire County Council
Peak District National Park Authority
Derby City Council
Derbyshire Dales District Council
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Cheshire County Council
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council
Macclesfield Borough Council
Charlesworth Parish Council
Tintwistle Parish Council
Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council
Whaley Bridge Town Council
Chisworth Parish Council
Hayfield Parish Council
New Mills Town Council
Hartington Upper Quarter Parish Council
King Sterndale Parish Council
Chinley and Buxworth Parish Council
Wormhill Parish Council
The Countryside Agency
The Environment Agency
Highways Agency
English Heritage
English Nature
Network Rail
East Midlands Development Agency
North West Development Agency

Yorkshire Forward
Advantage West Midlands
British Telecom Plc
Ofcom
High Peak and Dales PCT
Government Pipelines
Severn Trent Water Ltd
United Utilities
Transco
British Telecom Plc
The National Grid Company Plc

In addition to the above statutory consultees other organisations, groups and individuals will also be consulted including:

- Businesses
- Community and voluntary groups (including those relating to older people, younger people, minority ethnic communities and disabled people)
- Community safety groups (including the emergency services)
- Local councillors and MPs
- Historical and conservation bodies
- Libraries
- Non statutory Government agencies
- Schools and other educational establishments and organisations
- Transport bodies and groups
- Sport / recreation bodies and groups
- Residents groups
- Bodies representing religious groups
- Developers, house builders and agents
- Housing associations
- Organisations representing energy interests
- Landowners and farmers
- Regeneration partnerships and Area Forums
- Local and regional media

The Planning Policy and Design Team holds a full list of current consultees belonging to the above groups. If you wish to check that your organisation is included on our database, please e-mail: localplan@highpeak.gov.uk.

APPENDIX 3

THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The Derbyshire Dales and High Peak Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) brings together organisations involved in providing services in the Derbyshire Dales and High Peak, including those in the statutory, private and voluntary sectors. It is a partnership which aims to bring added value to community planning and service delivery in the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales.

The LSP is different from other partnerships:

- It is the partnership that brings together all key providers of services and enables them to work together to improve quality of life in the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales.
- It deals with issues of a strategic nature, which need to be addressed through a more co-ordinated approach.
- It works to influence the long-term strategies of member agencies, to meet local people's needs and meet other key local and national priorities.

The LSP has produced two Community Strategies that reflect the issues that are locally significant in the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales. The High Peak Community Strategy works towards improving quality of life by addressing social, economic and environmental well-being. The document addresses key priorities for improving quality of life for people, as identified by the community itself.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Derbyshire Chamber
Derbyshire Constabulary
Derbyshire County Council
Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services
Derbyshire Dales & South Derbyshire Primary Care Trust
Derbyshire Rural Community Council
English Nature
High Peak Borough Council
High Peak Council for Voluntary Services
High Peak & Dales Primary Care Trust
Peak District National Park Authority
Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum
University of Derby College Buxton

APPENDIX 4 CONSULTATION METHOD MATRIX FOR THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Target Group	Core Strategy	Other Development Plan Documents	Supplementary Planning Documents
General public	Web-site. Media. Council Offices and Libraries. Public exhibitions. Council newsletter	Web-site. Media. Council Offices and Libraries. Public exhibitions. School workshops. Council newsletter.	Web-site. Media. Council Offices and Libraries.
Community and residents groups	High Peak CVS Newsletter article. Residents groups	Draft document provided for residents groups. High Peak CVS Newsletter article.	Letter to residents groups. High Peak CVS Newsletter article.
Residents affected by developments of moderate or high impact		Notification by letter.	
Town and Parish Councils	Presentation at Local Council Liaison meeting. Local Council Liaison Newsletter article.	Officer presentation at Local Council Liaison meeting. Local Council Liaison Newsletter article.	Local Council Liaison Newsletter article.
Regeneration Partnerships	Presentation at meeting	Officer presentation at meeting.	Notification by letter or e-mail.
Area Forums	Presentation at meeting	Officer presentation at meeting.	Notification by letter or e-mail.
Businesses	Regeneration Partnerships. Area Forums. LSP.	Regeneration Partnerships. Area Forums. LSP.	Regeneration Partnerships. Area Forums. LSP.

Target Group	Core Strategy	Other Development Plan Documents	Supplementary Planning Documents
Amenity groups	Notification by letter.	Notification by letter.	Notification by letter or e-mail.
Developers, house builders and agents.	Notification by letter or e-mail.	Notification by letter or e-mail.	Notification by letter or e-mail.
Statutory bodies	Draft document.	Draft document.	Draft document.
Central, Regional & Local Government	Draft document.	Draft document.	Draft document.
Local and regional media	Press release.	Press release.	Press release.

APPENDIX 5

CONSULTATION METHOD MATRIX FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consultation method	All applications	Major planning applications
List of planning applications published	Yes	Yes
Press advertisement	Not all	Yes
Neighbour notification	Yes	Yes
Viewing of applications	Yes	Yes
Web-site	Yes	Yes
Development Control Committee	Discretionary	Yes
Public exhibition	No	Yes*
Public meeting	No	Yes*

* Consultation method is dependent upon the nature of the planning application.

APPENDIX 6

PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COMMITTEE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Council has agreed that if a Parish Council and/or neighbours write in about a planning application, they will be notified by letter of the details of the Committee meeting at which the application will be considered, along with the Officer recommendation. Members of the public will have the right to speak at Committee if they wish, whether they are objecting to, or supporting an application.

This appendix sets out to answer some of the questions that someone might have about the procedures followed at a Council Committee meeting and what to expect during the meeting. The purpose of the right to speak is to give members of the public an opportunity to make their views known directly to the Committee.

The Committee meeting

Meetings of the Development Control Committee are held on a Monday starting at 5.30pm in the Council Chamber at the Council's Offices, Chapel-en-le-Frith. The normal committee cycle is one meeting every three weeks.

Who can speak?

Any interested parties who wish to address the Committee, either in support or opposition to any application on the list, are requested to register with the Development Control Team, at least one week before the date of the meeting.

Normally there can be only one objector speaking at Committee and one person speaking in support of an application. Where there is more than one objector or supporter, a spokesperson should be agreed and that person notified to the Committee Clerk. Applicants who have not already registered to speak will be informed of any request to speak by an objector(s), to enable them to reply.

How long are speakers given?

Speakers at Committee are allowed a maximum of 3 minutes each and speakers should confine themselves to the planning merits of the case. Committee Members may then ask them questions. When all the speakers have addressed the Committee on a particular application the Committee will debate the issues and then make a decision.