



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Council
Date of Meeting:	28 th September 2006
Report from:	Head of Regeneration
Title of Report:	Chester-le-Street Local Development Framework – Adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement
Agenda Item Number:	12

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to inform Members that the Chester-le-Street Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement was subject to a Public Examination by written representations between May and July this year. The Planning Inspectorate has concluded that, subject to some minor amendments, that the Statement of Community Involvement is “sound”. The Planning Inspector’s report, and its recommendations, are binding upon the Council and must be adopted.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The Planning Inspectorate’s recommendations are binding upon the Council and must be adopted.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan identifies the requirement to address the needs of our communities in a positive and inclusive way. The Statement of Community involvement is a key tool to ensure that the Council promotes equality of opportunity, strong communities and access to services for all our community.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

The Inspectors fees and publication costs associated with adopting the Statement of Community Involvement will be met through the Local Development Framework budget.

4.2 Legal

Future Local Development Documents must be prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Statement of Community Involvement.

4.3 Personnel

There may be a requirement to appoint consultants to assist with consultation in the future

4.4 Other Services

There are no direct implications arising from this report for other Service Teams.

4.5 Diversity

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Planning Authority will engage with the community.

4.6 Risk

There are no risks associated with this report.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

There are no Crime and Disorder implications associated with this report.

4.8 Other Implications

There are no other implications arising from this report.

5 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 represents a major reform of the planning system. The Government's objective is to produce a more flexible plan-making system; the Local Development Framework. The LDF will comprise of a Local Development Scheme which sets out the work programme, a Statement of Community Involvement, a range of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and an Annual Monitoring Report. In terms of preparation of documents, the Statement of Community Involvement is subject to public examination.
- 5.2 The Statement of Community Involvement explains how the Council intends to engage those who have an interest in matters relating to development in their area and the preparation of documents. The Government sees the Statement of Community Involvement as very important in their aim of a more inclusive planning system. Whilst it has always been acknowledged as best practice, the Statement of Community Involvement will formally set out how Local Planning Authorities will engage their community in the planning system.
- 5.3 Following the publication and consultation on the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement last year, the document was subject to a Public Examination by written representations at the beginning of 2006. The purpose of the examination process was to consider the 'soundness' of the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 5.4 Planning Policy Statement 12 sets out nine tests that a Statement of Community Involvement should meet if it is 'sound'. The Inspector concluded that the Statement of Community Involvement would meet the tests of 'soundness' subject to some minor amendments. The Planning Inspectors report and recommendations are attached as Appendix 1. This report, and its recommendations, identifies how the Council will meet the tests of soundness. These recommendations are binding upon the Council and must be adopted.

6 RECOMMENDATION

The Council adopts the Statement of Community Involvement

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HEAD OF REGENERATION