

**Community Engagement Working Group**  
**Output – 2 Dec 2019**

**Community engagement package**

The group considered four linked elements

- Guidance on effective community engagement in local development plans
- Guidance on the promotion and use of mediation
- Regulations and Guidance on Local Place Plans
- Amendments to Pre-Application Consultation

The participants began on four tables and were asked to set out their initial thoughts on the community engagement package. These included:

- Reference to be made to the Place Principle, implications of climate change etc.
- Lots of principles to engagement, but what is the purpose? Should not be siloed as there are a wide range of other non-planning plans impacting on the landscape, good practice may be needed across a range of areas picking up on the 'new' groups set out in the legislation.
- Resources for local authorities and communities – but anchor organisations could act as a 'golden ticket' to make sure engagement is valuable. But that's not true everywhere.

Following this short feedback session, the group split into three to consider: Guidance on effective community engagement in local development plans; Guidance on the promotion and use of mediation; and Regulations and Guidance on Local Place Plans.

With regard to Amendments to Pre-Application Consultation, it was suggested that matters such as a second participatory event were already seen as being good practice – and a 'no-brainer'. There was scope for the setting of good practice minimum standards, and for the experience to be more 'two-way'.

**Guidance on effective community engagement in local development plans**

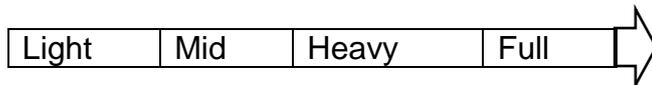
- Link with the place principle to tie in with the national standards.
- Need for easily understood set of principles – collaborative; using case studies; what are, and how do you manage, community expectations
- Where do resources come from? Need to identify community infrastructure / anchor organisations
- Should developers be required to do PAC as soon as LDP published?
- Recognise that there are barriers to community engagement
- How can digital be used?
- Planning, not to be seen as a hierarchy but a ven diagram (see Annex for diagram).

## Guidance on the promotion and use of mediation

- Consideration of possible conflicts with statutory and democratic processes
- Need for changes in current mediation guidance as not led to a step change in the use of mediation in planning. needs to be built into the considerations within the planning system, including education / training. Possible triggers such as a development being contrary to a development plan, or where there is an out of date plan. Are there exemplars?
- A front-end process. Potential opportunity to reduce the number of objectors where people have been involved in a more deliberative process.
- Issues of 'who pays' for mediation, scope to include in fee? But needs to be kept affordable, particularly for communities. Third party 'expert' to support communities suggested.
- As well as the formal Party A v. Party B. mediation process, see value in facilitation processes. Unlikely to be the process of arbitration.
- May be scope to consider practical relationship with local authority based community mediation, and with children and young people through peer mediation.

## Regulations and Guidance on Local Place Plans

- Clarity on links to: community planning; who drives the plan; and scale is needed. But need also to retain flexibility and capture community vision.
- The scope for an LPP steering group, and who should sit on it, essential / desirable members and what is the role of elected members?
- Up to community to decide the shape of the engagement, but what value an LPP participation statement? There is a need for transparency. Communities be proactive rather than react
- What should the balance be between mandatory and advisory requirements?
- The 'need' for the LPP and the drivers for change can come from different sources, what scope is there for a themed LPP? The links between the LDP timeframe to be considered, and does it have to be complete to contribute?
- Need for 'sequencing' – leading to the testing at key stages.



### *Potential Actors*

- Promoter – the community body
  - Landowners / Commercial – participants and support group
  - Council (Planning) – involved / invitees: enablers / supporters
  - Council (Councillors) - invited / notified: 'champions'
  - MPs / MSPs – invited / notified: 'champions'
  - Key Agencies – need for communication

### **Next Steps**

The group were invited to agree to their further involvement and to assist in contributing to the timetable / work programme enclosed in the accompanying paper.

**Planning, not to be seen as a hierarchy but a ven diagram**

