

## **Keele Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Note 4 Community Engagement Briefing for Steering Group 27 September 2016**

#### **Begin at the end**

From the very start consideration needs to be given to the end of the process which is the Referendum. This consideration should inform the way you approach your community engagement activities in generating your Plan. Are your activities sufficient to answer the following:

1. Will local people have felt engaged enough throughout the process of developing our NDP to bother to turn out and vote at all?
2. Will there have been sufficient agreement generated throughout the development of our Plan for local people to vote Yes in the Referendum?
3. Will our Plan have been based on meaningful community involvement in generating useful local policies to grow our community how we want?
4. Will we have reached as much of the local community as possible to engage in developing a Plan that is locally relevant?
5. Have we used different approaches for engagement for the sections of community that have not engaged with earlier approaches?
6. Will we have documented sufficient evidence to prove this to the Examiner?
7. Will there have been sufficient trust in the integrity of our Plan development process for local people to turn out and to vote Yes in the Referendum?

#### **How to deliver a successful Neighbourhood Plan**

Five steps to securing community backing for a neighbourhood Plan:

- Make sure a neighbourhood plan is right for your area;
- Proper consultation is vital;
- Ask for help from professionals;
- Keep it simple, and
- Involve the whole community.

#### **Neighbourhood Plans are community led**

The role of the Parish Council in leading and co-ordinating the plan making process. Other community members need to become involved and take on particular roles. It is really important to engage with the whole community, to seek their views and to gain from their local knowledge and experience of the area. Reasons for community engagement throughout the plan making process will be explained.

#### **Scope of briefing**

The briefing will cover the following matters:

- Statutory requirements: Neighbourhood Development Plan, Basic Conditions statement and Consultation Statement

- Raising awareness and gaining support for the Plan
- Gaining an understanding of the neighbourhood
- Community engagement notes, tips and tools
- Engagement to do lists and timescales
- Community engagement strategy including risk management
- Target audiences: engaging with different groups, identifying who to engage with, seeking a balanced and representative plan, “hard to reach groups”
- Ways to engage: concept of different learning styles

**Annex** shows the main stages all neighbourhood plans should progress through.

## **Neighbourhood Planning - a summary of the key stages**

### **Step 1: Designating neighbourhood area**

- Relevant body (Keele Parish Council) submits an application to the local planning authority (LPA) (Newcastle-under-Lyme BC)) to designate a neighbourhood area
- local planning authority publicises and consults on the area application for minimum 6 weeks (or minimum of 4 weeks where the area to which the application relates is the whole of the area of a parish council and is wholly within the area of one local planning authority)
- local planning authority designates a neighbourhood area within the [statutory timescales](#)
- local planning authority publicises and consults on the application for minimum 6 weeks
- local planning authority takes decision on whether to designate the neighbourhood plan area based on the parish boundary

### **Step 2: Preparing a draft neighbourhood plan**

- Parish Council develops proposals (advised or assisted by the local planning authority)
- gather baseline information and evidence
- engage and consult those living and working in the neighbourhood area and those with an interest in or affected by the proposals (e.g. service providers)
- talk to land owners and the development industry
- identify and assess options
- determine whether a plan is likely to have significant environmental effect
- start to prepare proposals documents e.g. basic conditions statement

### **Step 3: Pre-submission publicity & consultation**

- Parish Council publicises the draft plan and invites representations (6 weeks)
- consults the consultation bodies as appropriate

- sends a copy of the draft plan to the local planning authority
- where European Obligations apply, complies with relevant publicity and consultation requirements
- considers consultation responses and amends plan if appropriate
- prepares consultation statement and other proposals documents

#### **Step 4: Submission of a neighbourhood plan proposal to the local planning authority**

- Parish Council submits the plan proposal to the local planning authority
- Local planning authority checks that submitted proposal complies with all relevant legislation
- If the local planning authority finds that the plan meets the legal requirements it:
  - publicises the proposal for minimum 6 weeks and invites representations
  - notifies consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement
  - appoints an independent examiner (with the agreement of the Parish Council)

#### **Step 5: Independent Examination**

- local planning authority sends plan proposal and representation to the independent examiner
- independent examiner undertakes examination
- independent examiner issues a report to the local planning authority and Parish Council
- local planning authority publishes report
- local planning authority considers report and reaches own view
- local planning authority takes the decision on whether to send the plan to referendum

#### **Steps 6 and 7: Referendum and Making the neighbourhood plan (bringing it into force)**

- local planning authority publishes information statement
- local planning authority publishes notice of referendum/s
- polling takes place
- results declared
- subject to results local planning authority considers plan in relation to EU obligations and Convention rights
- If the plan is compatible with EU obligations and does not breach Convention rights – local planning authority makes the plan and it becomes part of the Development Plan for the area

(Based on National Planning Practice Guidance notes)