

**Minutes of the Programme Officer meeting with Residents at Coal Aston Village Hall on Thursday 4 October 1.30 pm**

**Those present at the meeting:**

Louise St John Howe (Programme Officer)

George Newton (NEDDC Planning Policy Officer), taking notes on behalf of the Council.)

A number of residents from Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh. (Some of whom were representing Dronfield Green Belt Group and Dronfield Civic Society)

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**Introduction given:**

Louise started off by explaining the Programme Officer is an independent officer of the examination, appointed by the Council and working under the direction of the Inspector.

It was explained that George Newton was present to represent the Council, and to take notes which would then be published on the website, in order to ensure openness and transparency for all parties.

Introductions were then made by the residents attending the meeting, and which group they represented, if they were a member of a group.

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**An informal discussion then took place:**

**Q:** Clarification on the deadlines for the hearings and on the information required by that date was requested. .

**A:** All requests to speak at the hearings need to be sent to Louise by 5pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> October. For people to speak, they have to have sent in a representation to the Regulation 19 version of the Plan (Publication Draft Local Plan Feb 2018), and have raised an objection in their representation about the Matter being discussed and to be looking for a change to the plan. .

Louise reminded the Group that those who wanted to speak should tell her the sessions in which they wished to participate so she could ensure they were taking part in the most appropriate session.

It was also explained that if representors do not wish to take part in the hearing sessions, they can still submit a written statement in response to the Inspector's Matters and Issues. All hearing statements must be sent to the Programme Officer in electronic format by the deadline which is 5.00 pm on 22 October, 2018 and three hard copies should also be posted to the Programme Officer. .

Louise confirmed that written representations carry exactly the same weight as oral submissions.

The Hearing Statements should only cover those Matters and issues raised in the Representors response to the Regulation 19 consultation,. It is not necessary to respond to all the Inspector's MIQ's on a particular matter covered by the Representor's Regulation 19 response.

Louise also explained that Representors could arrange for others to speak on their behalf at the hearing sessions if they did not wish to take part themselves, but should notify her if someone else would be representing them at the hearing sessions.

**Q:** Questions were raised over how the Hearing Sessions will be run.

**A:** Louise explained that the Hearing Sessions will be a non-confrontational round table discussion, led by the Inspector. The Inspector will have read all the representations and hearing statements and will direct the discussions during the hearing sessions. The discussions will not involve any cross examination, and any questions to other participants must be addressed through the Inspector.

Louise also made it clear that the inspector is examining the Plan as submitted and that this does not include suggesting any changes to the Plan which do not relate to soundness. There will be no discussions on any alternative sites which are not allocated sites in the submitted Local Plan, but this does not preclude discussion on the site selection process.

Louise then went on to explain the arrangements for the Hearing Sessions. The Council will have three or four seats at the table, whilst other speakers will have one. There is some scope for more seats to be offered though discussion with the Programme Officer, but it would depend on ensuring fairness for all representors who are participating.

Spectators are very welcome at the hearing sessions. The Programme Officer has to ensure that everyone who wishes to listen to the discussions can do so, although it may be necessary for there to be an overflow room to accommodate everyone.

Louise advised that it is not helpful for the Inspector to listen to repetition of the same points. To ensure there is as little repetition as possible, it is best if groups of representors who wish to take part in the hearing sessions select one of their number to represent them all. It is not necessary to have the same person taking part in each session, and different people can be selected by the group to take part in different matters as appropriate.

Points already made in the representations at the regulation 19 stage should not be repeated in the written statements, as the Inspector will have already read all the representations and will be aware of the issues that are being raised by Representors.

Those who are taking part in the discussions at the hearing sessions will have a card with their name on which they should turn on end to indicate they would like to speak.

WiFi, Laptops and Notes are allowed in the Hearing Sessions. Seating arrangements will be made for those who are not speaking, but who are accompanying the Participants so t they will be able to sit close to the participants to assist them.

**Q:** Clarification was asked about how the Inspector will deal residents, and the use of 'Planning Jargon'.

**A:** Louise made it clear that the Inspector quite understands that residents are normally not planning experts, and will ensure that all participants understand the process. She will lead the discussions at the hearing sessions and will also make sure that all those taking part have the opportunity to put their points to the examination. If at any stage in the hearing sessions a participant does not understand the terminology being used they should ask for an explanation.

**Q:** Queries were made over how the Inspector will take the 2018 NPPF into account.

**A:** Louise responded by saying that the Plan will be examined under the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), not the 2018 NPPF.

**Q:** Questions were asked over the outcome from the Examination.

**A:** Louise explained that the Plan can either be found sound, or be found sound if changes (main modifications) are made or that the Plan is not sound regardless of any changes that could be made. If the Inspector finds that the Duty to Co-operate or the legal requirements have not been met, neither of these can be rectified by changes (main modifications) to the Plan.

Louise then went on to explain that any main modifications proposed to the Local Plan will be consulted upon before the Inspector writes her Final Report.

Following the consultation on any proposed man modifications to the Plan, the comments received will be sent to the Inspector who will then prepare her report which will be sent to NEDDC for fact checking. Following the fact check, the Inspector's final Report will be sent to the Council, and it is then a matter for the Council when the Inspector's Report is published. Delivery of the Inspector's Final report to the Council is the formal termination of the examination process..

**Q:** A question was then raised about the communications from the Inspector

**A:** Louise will send out emails and letters to Regulation 19 respondents when required, but it is the responsibility of Representatives to make sure that they keep up to date with the progress of the examination. They can do this by checking the examination pages of the North East Derbyshire Council website.

**Q:** A question was asked over whether or not the Inspector will be visiting the allocation sites.

**A:** Louise explained that the Inspector will be visiting different parts of the District, and will also familiarise herself with the allocated sites in the local Plan.

**Q:** Finally questions were raised over the Council's Duty to Cooperate, and whether an Adopted Plan can be reopened for discussion if it is found that the Local Planning Authorities did not cooperate properly.

**A:** Louise explained that the DTC is not about the different authorities agreeing, but instead is whether there is evidence that efforts have been made to cooperate.

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This ended the discussions, after which the meeting was also ended, with Louise getting thanked for her time and the information she gave out.