

Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy Examination

Inspector's Guidance Notes for Hearings March-April 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 These notes are intended to help those considering participating at the forthcoming hearings. They summarise the most important points made in my original Guidance Notes in 2011 (ID/5). The general principles set out in those remain relevant except where amended here.

1.2 With these Notes the Programme Officer (PO) is also distributing a hearings programme, which follows the outline programme I indicated at the beginning of the year.

2. The Hearings

2.1 Only those who have made representations relating to unsoundness relevant to the matter under discussion and who have indicated in advance that they want to participate at a hearing will be allowed to speak. The hearing sessions are open to all to observe, but questions or comments from non-participants will not be allowed. Those who submitted representations in support of the submitted plan or a published change do not have a right to participate in any hearing on that policy and will not be able to do so.

2.2 A draft list of relevant participants has been included for each hearing on the programme. Because the hearings take a topic approach and a number of the Council's published changes cover more than one topic it is not easy for the Programme Officer (PO) to readily identify all legitimate participants. Please let the PO know by **Wednesday 12 March 2014** if you consider that you should be included among the participants because you want to be heard at a particular hearing and your representation is relevant to the matters being discussed. In addition, please let the PO know if you have been listed for a particular session, but no longer wish to attend or your representation is not relevant to it. A final list of hearing participants will then be published on the Examination page of the Council's website.

2.3 Please note that the venue for the first week is the Illustrious Suite at Bath Rugby Club. The following 2 weeks are at the Guildhall. Each day will start at 10.00 except for any sessions on Fridays which are half days at most and will start at 9.30.

2.4 Attendance at a hearing session is only helpful if you wish and need to participate in a discussion on the issue. **I will give equal weight to views put at a hearing as those expressed in writing.** Repetition of points is not required in either format.

3. Hearing Agendas and further material before the hearings

3.1 Within the next few days the PO will distribute my agendas for the hearings for the first 2 weeks to the participants listed in the hearing programme and they will be published on the Council's website. The agendas for the final week will be issued by Thursday 20 March.

3.2 I indicated in ID/44 that I would not be asking for further statements prior to the hearings as I already have a large volume of evidence and detailed representations on most matters and further repetition of points would be

unhelpful. I therefore emphasise that the agendas being issued are the agendas to structure the discussion at the hearing and not for further written responses (with the limited exceptions referred below). The first batch of agendas are being published well in advance simply to be helpful to everyone and to assist parties see the scope of the various hearings (at least for the first 2 weeks).

3.3 Further material may however be submitted by the deadline below on the following matters (but only by those who have made a relevant representation).

3.4 Any additional responses to new evidence published by the Council after the November/December consultation (or earlier documents not previously referred to or included in the Core Documents list), namely :

- Keynsham Core Strategy Options: Highway Impact Assessment (February 2014, CD12/18)
- Costs of Building to the Code for Sustainable Homes, Element Energy/Davis Langdon (September 2013, CD12/1)
- B&NES Response to the House of Commons Standards Review (October 2013, CD12/2).
- House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee, Code for Sustainable Homes and the Housing Standards Review, Eight Report (November 2013, CD12/3).
- Third Party Delivery of Renewable Energy in Bath and North East Somerset (February 2014, CD12/8)
- Renewable Energy Assessment Core Strategy Greenfield Sites, Regen SW (February 2014, CD12/9)

3.5 The following should also be submitted:

- Any alternative calculations (not arguments) regarding the 5 year housing land supply;
- Any alternative wording that is being suggested for insertion in the Core Strategy relating to its future review.

3.6 From the Council I request:

- A factual update on the progress relating to the removal of the Windsor Road Gas holder and decontamination of the surrounding utilities site.
- A factual update on the latest timetable/security of funding/progress on detailed design and implementation relating to the central Bath flood risk management project.
- The precise policy wording (and changes to the Concept Diagrams) where the Council has accepted in Statements of Common Ground that revised wording for the allocation policy is necessary or desirable (eg arising from SCG with English Heritage).
- The latest position with regard to further research on the possible field lynchets on land at Weston.

3.7 The deadline for all such further submissions referred to above is **5pm Friday 14th March.**

3.8 Submissions should accord with the following requirements:

- All statements should be on A4-size paper.
- For statements which are no more than 4 sides of A4 (including appendices): 1 electronic copy and 1 paper copy should be submitted.
- For statements which are more than 4 sides: 1 electronic and 3 paper copies should be submitted.

- If no electronic copy can be submitted, then 3 paper copies are required whatever the length of the statement.
- All paper and electronic copies need to be received by the PO by the deadline.

3.9 Given the range of participants likely to be taking part in most of the hearings and the number of questions to be addressed (as set out in my agendas) it is essential that substantial time is not taken up with procedural or legal matters which have not been properly scheduled. There should not be a need for further written material on any matters not listed above. If, however, any party is intending to raise substantial legal or procedural matters at a hearing, the matter should be set out in writing by the above deadline. I will then decide how the matter will be handled, such as by an exchange of written material or, if a hearing is justified, scheduling a hearing session for that purpose which may have to be at the end of the planned hearings.

No further written material will be accepted after the above deadline or at the hearings unless I have requested it.

Thank you.

**Simon Emerson
Inspector
March 2014**