

# **PLANNING WORKSHOP NOTES**

**Presenter** Roger Buisson

**Facilitation/Notes** Lynda Foster

## **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVE**

By attending this workshop participants will be able to explore with other LAF members the degree to which local planning authorities provide appropriate protection for public rights of way and access land as part of their strategic plan making and when making individual development planning decisions. LAF members will be able to exchange examples of best practice and leave the workshop armed with some ideas as to how they can take action to seek an improvement in the performance of the local planning authorities within their LAF area.

### **Workshop 1**

- Appointing Authority is not linked to Planning Departments within District/Borough Councils
  - Planning Departments do not engage with LAFS as generally perceived to be linked to County Councils
- ? Do Unitary Authorities have the same problem?

**Nottingham City LAF** – *Not having enough information makes it difficult to see things through and can easily lose track of projects. Need advice on how to prevent this.*

**Essex LAF** – *Parish Councils often flag planning issues which are then highlighted through the LAF*

**Mid Lincs LAF** (joint with Unitary Authority) *Don't know how to set about contacting local authorities. Need to find a way in. Advice – go through local councillors*

Debate on councillors - ? How many should attend LAF meetings - ? how many appointed councillors - ? Quorum needed

Point was made about loss of ROWs during summer flooding – budget/contingency made for winter flooding but not for wet weather in summer

Debate on fragmentation –how do you achieve coherence across fragmented unitary counties  
- Issues for a ROW officer sitting in a planning department who now has difficulty engaging with highways dept

**Staffs/Stoke on Trent/Wolverhampton LAF** *HS2 has brought people together*  
- could work well if you have a foot in both camps and build good relationships

**Maidenhead LAF** - *Need more pragmatism through LAFs – if we can move a path 10m to accommodate planning it should be taken as mission accomplished. Ramblers and other groups often too pragmatic*

**Plymouth LAF** - need to keep up to speed with large scale major developments

- **Need Natural England to take the lead**

Paragraph 75 in NPPF not stringent enough – “SHOULD” = OBLIGATION

**North Somerset LAF** - *Have a buddy system in place. Each LAF member has 2 parish councils and attend meetings.*

**Overall Message** Natural England should write to all Local Authorities pointing out their statutory duty to consult LAFS in planning applications

## Workshop 2

- **National policies (NPPF\*) override in absence of a local planning authority plan**
- **Nationally Significant Infrastructure**
- **Local planning authority plan**  
**Back to the future – the Local Plan**  
**[LDF – Core Strategy, Site Specific, SPDs]**
- **In most areas the planning authority is not the highways authority (appointing authority)**

? What would happen if you have both in an enquiry - which has more weight? Which would LPA use?

- National level : single local plan
- Does Local Plan include core strategy? Yes – it will be rebranded in the LP
- A good local plan will be precise and incorporate all parts of the Local Delivery Framework rather than individual documents.
- Appointing Authority not always Planning Authority.
- Unitaries seen as a one stop shop

**Devon LAF** - *District Policies do not always reflect County Council – eg ROWIPs*

**Bucks LAF** – *ROW are ideal way to engage with councils –policy for LAFs to respond. Should be involvement with ROW officer, ROW policy and LAF*

- How do we influence Local Authorities? All have different approaches. ? duty under CROW to consult (not planning law)
- Need to revisit statement of Planning Policy – should be including LAFS
- Clarify statement of community involvement. Councils should make LAFs consultee on Local Plans
- ? Role of LAFs in individual planning applications
- List of statutory consultees needs updating

**Devon LAF** – *Devon Countryside Access Forum has developed a positional statement (see DCAF Planning Position Statement 2012 document)*

**Hertfordshire LAF** - *send out a reminder to LA re statutory duties*

- **Need for National Guidance to send out to Planning Officers**
- What has happened to Supplementary Planning Documents? Dropping off the agenda
- Role for LAFS in enabling District Council policy in relation to new settlements
- Need a generic statement for developers

- A good example of a new development is Northstowe (Cambridgeshire) planned with access and ROW in place
- **Need examples of good practice re new developments**
- **Need 2 -3 examples of engaging with planning services/developers**
- Should ask councillors who attend meetings what they report about

### **OVERALL ACTIONS**

- **Clarify positions as consultees**
- **What to expect from Councillors**
- **Strong steer from DEFRA**
- **Revisit 2009 guidance on exact consultation**
- **Strapline from NE to send out to planning/appointing authorities**