

Assessment of advantages and costs of methods of consultation that may be used in policy preparation and development control

Consultation method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Additional Costs
Public meetings and exhibitions – structured to consult about issues of local or borough-wide importance (but could also be used for pre-application consultation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May reach members of the public that are not normally reached. • If staffed, it provides an excellent opportunity for representatives of the Council to exchange information with the public • Can be held locally to any proposed development • Provide opportunity for pre-application discussions and allows the community to comment on evolving proposals prior to submission. • Pre-consultation taking place in a genuine manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and resource intensive • The location and timing of an exhibition may exclude certain groups • Meetings held independently of the council could distort the planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue • Staff time, particularly when working outside of normal hours • Publication of guidelines may be necessary for developers on how to engage and work with the community.
Surgeries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow focus upon individuals and issues • Offer the opportunity to 'dilute' large numbers of people • Provide a one to one service • Can help to diffuse potential objections • Can help access hard to reach groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying who to invite • Staff and resource intensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity • Materials • Venue • Staff time, particularly when working outside of normal hours

Appendix B

Consultation method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Additional Costs
Consultation/ Focus Groups Small groups people who represent sections of the community or residents of a defined area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure views, opinions and concerns of local communities are fed back into the planning process and to the developer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires careful selection of participants to ensure correct representation • Incorrect selection may mean that key views are missed or skewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May require a facilitator and or venue. • Staffing resources
School Workshops/ Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective way of reaching young people • Opportunity to promote Town and Country planning and promote awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only suitable at issue stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation materials • Staff resources
Development Briefs Where change is likely to occur a planning authority may expect to prepare and negotiate with the developer a planning brief either as part of the pre-application consultation or as part of the application submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for pre application discussions and negotiation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning briefs post application submission will have less impact as they may limit influence and impact upon design • Frustrate the applicant • Place further delay in the determination process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff resources
Council Website allows updates on all applications, committee reports and list of decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides easy access to large numbers of people in the community. • Allows the community to be easily updated on progress of applications • 24/7 access • easy to write and update in-house • May encourage some “hard to reach” groups such as young people to take part 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council cannot assess who is using the service • Resource limited to those with access to the internet and the knowledge to use it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff resources - systems need to be in place to post and update material.

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Consultation method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Additional Costs
Media Use of newspapers/ local radio to carry articles and stories about proposed development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows the local community to remain informed and promote engagement within the planning process. • Can reach a wide audience • Can raise profile of the local development framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council cannot assess who uses the service and does not guarantee feedback • The media may slant the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of media space/ air time.
Planning Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes understanding of and engagement in the planning system amongst the local community • Can work on behalf of the local community to ensure that their needs and concerns are met and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to raise awareness of planning aid 	