

Devon Towns Forum

Involving Communities in Planning

Conference 21st March 2006



Conclusions Session Presented by Jeff Bishop Lead Planning Consultant BDOR Ltd

Following the workshop sessions examining the issues from the 'Planners' and Communities' perspective a Conclusions and Next Steps Session drew the findings of the workshop sessions together to present a summary of conclusions and suggested actions as follows:

Actions for Planners

- A Community Forward Planner should be dedicated to work with Community Groups.
- Involve Community Groups Throughout the development of Community Plans and development of the Planning Process
- Planners need to use plain English

Actions for Community Groups

e.g. Community Planning Groups undertaking Parish Plans, Market Town Plans and Design Statements

- District Councillors need to be more involved in the Community Planning Process
- Funding needs to be available for Training on Planning/ LDF's etc for Community Planning Groups
- Develop mechanisms for sharing thinking and learning from other Community Planning experiences and make better use of available forums and networks e.g. Devon Towns Forum
- Encourage participation of hard to reach groups
- Develop clear communication routes into Local Authority/ Planning Authority to reach all departments e.g. use LSP as conduit and communications channel

Actions for Everyone

Identify and separate out for action the legal requirement for 'representation' and Community Involvement and insure this happens

LSP's should be developed to 'Broker and Process information between Community Planning Groups and Planning Authority'

Ensure 'Planning Literacy' for all parties e.g. Elected Representatives, LSP Members, Officers and Community Representatives

Develop Protocols for LSP's that do not exclude Community Planning Groups

The ODPM should monitor and evaluate their own guidance to assess its application and effect

MCTi, Parish Planning and other Community Planning Groups should be encouraged to engage with Planners as early as possible

Actions for LSP's

- LSP's need to ensure a more focused representation
- LSP's need to:
- Support effective communication to help define roles;
- Identify necessary actions
- Act as an Information hub
- Address and harmonise areas of conflict between elected and non elected representatives
- Develop a Profile of brokering support and facilitation



Glossary:

LDF Local Development Framework (New Planning System)

LSP Local Strategic Partnership (District and County forums for Community, Voluntary, Business and Statutory Agency and Elected representatives to meet and ensure joined up working and to decide local priorities)

ODPM The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Government Office with responsibility for Planning)