

## **EXAMINATION OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER WASTE DPD**

**(Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford CC, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan Metropolitan District Councils)**

### **GUIDANCE NOTE FROM THE INSPECTOR**

- 1.** The Examination Hearings into the Greater Manchester Waste DPD will open at 10.00am on Tuesday 28 June 2011. This Guidance Note is being sent to all those who have made representations, and its purpose is to provide an opportunity for procedural and administrative matters relating to the Examination to be explained.

- 2. The Inspector's Role**

The Planning Inspector is appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to independently examine the soundness of the plan. Following the close of the Hearings a short report will be prepared for the Councils with recommendations. Details of the Examination process are contained in The Planning Inspectorate's booklets "*Local Development Frameworks – Examining Development Plan Documents: Procedure Guidance*" (2009) and "*Local Development Frameworks – Examining Development Plan Documents: Soundness Guidance*" (2009). All involved in the Examination process should read these documents which are accessible on the Planning Inspectorate website.

The term "the Examination" applies to the whole process, of which the Hearings form only part. The Inspector may call for the submission of evidence on any topic at any time prior to the completion of the Report to the Councils. The Examination process has already started and will end only when the Report is formally submitted. The Report will contain recommendations which will be binding upon the Councils.

- 3. The Programme Officer**

Mrs Natalie Blackston is the Programme Officer for the Examination ("the PO") and her contact details are on the accompanying letter or email. She is acting as an impartial officer of the Examination, under my guidance. Her main tasks are to liaise with all parties to ensure the smooth running of the Examination, to organise the Hearings Programme, and to ensure that all documents received both before and during the Hearings are recorded and distributed. Copies of all the Examination documents, including the representation forms and further written submissions, will be available in the Examination Library. Procedural questions or other matters that anyone wishes to raise should be raised with Natalie in the first instance.

- 4. The Examination of Soundness**

The Examination is a significant departure from previous Inquiries into objections to Local Plans. These are the key points to bear in mind:

- The starting point is that the Councils have submitted what they consider a sound plan. The focus is on testing soundness and not on responding to objections raised in the representations. Accordingly, a number of matters and issues for discussion will be defined that will test

the plan's justification, effectiveness and compliance with National guidance;

- All those who have submitted representations and are seeking a change to the Plan are entitled to attend and speak at the Hearings. Those who are not attending do not need to submit further written evidence. If they feel further evidence is essential, then they must follow the guidance on content and format given below. Attendance at a Hearing session will only be useful and helpful to the Inspector if you wish to participate in a debate. Those seeking changes should demonstrate why the plan is unsound;
- The Hearings are not planning appeal inquiries and will not be at all confrontational.

**5. The Hearing sessions** will be led by the Inspector, and will take the form of focused discussions to help him arrive at the conclusions. It is necessary to concentrate on the most important matters that go to the heart of the soundness of the plan. Some less important matters may be addressed by further written statements. Those speaking at the sessions may bring with them professional experts, although it will not usually be necessary to formally present evidence. The matters and issues for discussion will be outlined, and then individuals will be invited to make their contribution in response to the points raised.

**6. The Hearings Programme**

The draft programme for the Hearings accompanies this note and may be refined in the light of any further evidence submitted.

**7. Submission of Evidence - Content, Format and Timing**

The evidence base to support the plan will have been produced with a great deal of involvement by all stakeholders. Therefore, the submission of further written evidence should be kept to the minimum. Accordingly, these are the key points to remember:

- **Core Documents** are available in the Examination Library held at the offices of the PO, and therefore it is not necessary to quote extensively from those documents but simply make a reference to note;
- **Statements for a Hearing session**, including those on behalf of Councils, should be sent to the PO by Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011. No statement should be longer than 3,000 words per matter for discussion. Any statements longer than this will be returned for editing. In addition to the paper copies specified below, please send, where possible, e-mailed electronic versions (in Word or pdf format) of all statements and appendices to the PO, so that they can be included on the Examinations website.
- **Statement Format** should be A4, printed on both sides, **with no spiral bindings**. No statement/piece of paper submitted in advance of, or at, the Hearings will be accepted if it fails to be clearly referenced at the top, right hand corner, with the relevant respondent reference and appropriate matter number, eg Respondent 23s statement on Matter 4 should be referenced Matter 4/23; the Councils' Response for the same Matter should be referenced, eg GMGU Matter 4. Any photographs should be submitted no larger than A4 format and be annotated on the back with the appropriate reference. Those appearing at Hearings should send sufficient copies of all statements to the PO for issuing to each participant

for that session, plus three (for the Inspector, GMGU and the Library), e.g. if 4 people are listed for a hearing, then the PO will require 7 copies (to include one unstapled, for further copying). For **written representations**, only three copies of statements (again, just stapled, **not spiral bound**) need be submitted.

**8. Site Visits**

The Inspector will visit sites referred to, unaccompanied by the parties wherever possible. Once the Hearings are over the Inspector can receive no further evidence from any party unless it is something he has asked for.

A Mead  
Inspector

4<sup>th</sup> May 2011