



## Levels of planning policy

All plans and policies should fit in with the tiers of policy above them, culminating in **national planning policy** prepared by the Government.

### **Responsibilities for preparing the strategy**

>Agencies at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels are all involved in preparing the regional spatial strategy (*reference: PPS 11, paragraphs 2.21-26*).

The prime responsibility for preparing the strategy belongs to the regional planning body, which is the regional assembly.

Local authorities will help to develop the regional policies,

### **together with**

- County councils
- Metropolitan borough councils
- Unitary authorities
- National park authorities.

District authorities are involved to a lesser extent.

### **By law**

The regional planning body must seek the advice of all these local authorities within its area to help in preparing, reviewing and implementing the strategy. This includes asking for advice on specific policies dealing with only part of the region.

>Each local authority in return must offer advice to the regional planning body when the regional planning body asks for advice.

>The regional planning body can delegate the preparation of policy for the spatial strategy to any of these local authorities or to a district council, where there is also a county council, provided they agree.

As a result, local authorities can have significant influence over regional planning policy.

Sub-regional planning is also part and parcel of the strategy. The regional planning body decides where sub-regional policy is needed. But the detailed proposals are drawn up in the first instance by local authorities in the region, unless the regional body and the authorities re-allocate the tasks (*reference: PPS 11, paragraphs 1.13-14 and 2.27-30*).

### **Fitting in with local planning policy**

>The regional spatial strategy will influence the local development frameworks prepared by all local authorities.

County councils prepare minerals and waste local development frameworks and local transport plans. These are treated as local documents rather than regional documents but they too must conform to the regional spatial strategy.

### **Focusing on what is 'regional'**

The new regional spatial strategies are meant to focus on their particular place in the 'hierarchy' of planning responsibilities (reference: PPS 11, paragraphs 1.5-7).

### **They should**

- Be prepared on a more inclusive basis than before, through partnership and by involving the community within the region
- Avoid restating national policy at the regional level
- Avoid obvious generalised statements and platitudes
- Confine their coverage to regional and sub-regional issues
- They must not go into the level of detail that should be left to the local development frameworks
- They should not provide a checklist of everything the local frameworks should cover
- Focus on delivery, making it clear what is to be done by whom and when
- Be monitored, with results feeding back into the delivery and review of policy
- Not be site-specific

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