

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Planning Committee – 6 June 2019

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Review of the County Council's Statement of Community Involvement

Purpose of the Report

To inform the Planning Committee of the proposed revisions to the County Council's current Statement of Community Involvement, and the intention to consult the public on the revised document.

Recommendation

That the Planning Committee welcomes the Revised Statement of Community Involvement ([Appendix 2](#)): to keep it up-to-date; to ensure effective community involvement at all stages of the planning process; and, to provide an opportunity for comments to be made prior to adoption.

Background

1. The County Council adopted their first Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2006, and a revised SCI was adopted in 2014.
2. Regulations came into force on 6 April 2018 [[The Town and County Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2017](#)] which require local planning authorities to review their local plans and SCIs every 5 years. [Planning practice guidance on plan reviews](#) states that: "it is important that Statements of Community Involvement are kept up-to-date to ensure effective community involvement at all stages of the planning process. Therefore, a local planning authority should regularly review and update their Statement of Community Involvement to reflect any changes to engagement."
3. We have conducted a review of the SCI comprising three main tasks:
 - Review of consistency with legislation. Checking for any new consultation requirements to be incorporated into the SCI, and also checking for commitments in the SCI that are no longer have a basis in legislation.
 - Updating links. Ensuring that hyperlinks within the documents still work and lead the reader to the latest versions of the relevant information.
 - Comparison with the latest practice elsewhere: Reviewing recently produced SCIs from comparable authorities.
4. A bonus of the review has been that it will deliver some financial savings. Since the current SCI was adopted, changes in planning legislation have reduced the burden of some of the costliest forms of communication, but we can only

implement those changes once our SCI has been reviewed. For example, the current SCI, reflecting the legislation which applied at the time of drafting, requires the adoption of a new minerals or waste local plan document to be advertised by public notices in the local press across the plan area. When the latest Minerals Local Plan was adopted in 2017, this involved the placement of 3 notices at a total cost of just under £1,700. Though the requirement has been omitted from the latest legislation, we remain bound by the commitment in our SCI.

5. The revised draft SCI and a table summarising the revisions are appended to this report (see [Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 3](#) respectively). The revised draft SCI will be made available for public consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks, as required by the Regulations.
6. Relevant comments will be considered, and if significant changes are required, the Planning Committee will be informed before the document is submitted to the Cabinet for adoption.
7. Our timetable for adoption of the revised Statement of Community Involvement is shown in the table below:

Stage of preparation	Timetable
Prepare Draft Revised SCI	
Inform the Planning Committee.	6 June 2019 Planning Committee
Publish Draft Revised SCI for 6-week consultation period	12 June to 24 July 2019
Inform Planning Committee of the results of the consultation (only if significant changes are required).	1 August 2019
Seek approval from Cabinet to adopt the revised SCI (replacing 2014 edition).	21 August 2019

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List of Background Papers

1. [Statement of Community Involvement](#) – Adopted February 2014
2. [Planning practice guidance on plan reviews](#) - Updated 15 March 2019

Appendix 1

Equalities implications:

This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on Equal Opportunities.

Legal implications:

[Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#) now requires that a local planning authority must review their local plan and Statement of Community Involvement every 5 years starting from the date of adoption of the documents.

Failure to consult in line with an up-to-date SCI could undermine the soundness of our replacement Minerals or Waste Local Plan in due course.

Resource and Value for money implications:

No specific budget is allocated for the review of the Statement of Community Involvement as this work is undertaken in conjunction with the planning tasks of the Planning, Policy and Development Control Team.

The review has highlighted the potential to deliver some savings by removing the requirement to place press notices across the whole county to announce the adoption of our Minerals and Waste Local Plans.

Risk implications:

Officers are satisfied that there are no direct risk implications arising from this report and reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement ensures that the Council's consultation processes remain consistent with the requirements of current legislation.

Climate Change implications:

The Statement of Community Involvement does not have significant implications for the management of carbon emissions by the Council.

Health Impact Assessment screening:

Not applicable.

Appendix 2 Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement (June 2019)

(also available via our [Minerals Local Plan document library](#))

Appendix 3 Table of revisions to the Statement of Community Involvement (June 2019)

(also available via our [Minerals Local Plan document library](#))