
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING:	29 FEBRUARY 2024	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	STEFFAN SAUNDERS Steffan.saunders@southderbyshire.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: G

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (**Appendix 1**) is approved for consultation and that a six-week period of consultation is to follow.
- 1.2 That after the consultation, a report summarising the comments made to the consultation, as well as the Council's response and proposed amendments will be compiled and presented to Committee.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement is a document which sets out who should be consulted and when in different scenarios, both for planning policy documents and development management.
- 2.2 The current document was adopted in 2018, but since then there have been legislative updates and changes to practice after the pandemic. It is generally considered good practice to review an SCI every five years.
- 2.3 In light of these updates, a new draft SCI has been drafted and is being presented to Committee for approval for consultation. The new SCI will replace the existing SCI that was adopted in September 2018.
- 2.4 The report provides an up-to-date SCI that addresses all legislative requirements and ensures the public, organisations and other interested parties can input into decisions on planning applications and help inform policy preparation, including the local plan review process.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 The 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (section 18) requires local planning authorities to prepare an SCI which covers how the Council will consult on planning policy preparation and planning applications.
- 3.2 The SCI sets out how the community can get involved in the preparation of local planning policy documents and decisions on planning applications. This SCI provides details of how the Council will consult on planning applications and planning documents, and how respondents can be involved in planning consultations. It also includes information on how to access planning information and documents.
- 3.3 A six-week period of consultation is being proposed. The draft SCI will be published on the Council's website so that residents and stakeholders can readily access what is proposed and how to comment.
- 3.4 Following this period, proposed amendments will be considered before the report is formally adopted by Committee.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 The draft SCI has various sections which address the requirements for such a document. It contains a review of the ongoing local plan review process, including reference to planning policy, the Local Development Scheme, Supplementary Planning Documents neighbourhood planning and current consultation methods.
- 4.2 The SCI has been amended to firstly align to the up-to-date publicity requirements for both planning application processing and Local Plan preparation, and secondly to contain proposals to better engage with certain harder to reach groups. This includes steps such as providing more detail on the methods to be utilised in Local Plan consultations such as engaging with schools, local community groups and area forums, where possible utilising local publications where these are in circulation such as the 'SwadStyle' Magazine, and Melbourne Village Voice. In addition, steps are included to make best use of digital technology such as quick and easy to use interactive maps. There is also reference to in person consultation sessions and that these are distributed throughout the district including in urban areas where in general terms there has been lower response rate to Local Plan consultations.
- 4.3 The local plan review process involves various stages (Reg. 18, 19, 22, 24 and 26) during which phases the SCI defines who is involved in each regulation stage and how each consultation will be undertaken. A comparable amount of detail is provided regarding the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans and the respective stages involved in each form of plan making.
- 4.4 The document discusses current and proposed methods of community involvement, including the local plan consultation database, social media, website materials and in-person events.

- 4.5 The report also contains a section detailing development management practices, including planning application consultations methods and various other applicable commitments such as planning appeals, pre-application advice, planning enforcement and Section 106 agreements. These measures include strict alignment with the required publicity for different types of application set out in regulation, but also includes a number of practical steps such as ensuring that when site notices are displayed, they are done so as far as practicable in locations that are accessible and visible for those with limited mobility.
- 4.6 Furthermore, the document discusses how improvements may be made to the SCI and references various resources.
- 4.7 Appendix A is the Neighbour Notification Policy, which is employed to publicise neighbours of local planning applications.
- 4.8 Appendix B is a Glossary of definitions of various terms contained within the document.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 None directly arising from this report. The costs of delivering the activities required under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (section 18) set out in this report can be met from existing resources.

6.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

- 6.1 None directly arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 6.2 None directly arising from this report. The legal requirements under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (section 18) will be satisfied through the adoption of the new SCI.

Corporate Plan Implications

- 6.3 The SCI assists the plan making process with delivering various improvements to the District by highlighting the importance of participation in planning across the District. Sustainable development, the enhancement of the public realm and effective land use policy can improve the environment of the District. Plans can also address infrastructure deficits, improve the built environment, increase the quantity and quality of housing stock and provide additional employment.

Risk Impact

- 6.4 None directly arising from this report.

7.0 Community Implications

Consultation

7.1 A six-week consultation period is proposed.

Equality and Diversity Impact

7.2 None directly arising from this report. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken for the final document.

Social Value Impact

7.3 None directly arising from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

7.4 The SCI does not have any direct impacts on environmental outcomes. The various Regulations of plan-making are subject to requirements which ensure compliance with existing environmental legislation.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) requires consultation. A report will then be produced summarising the comments made to the consultation, as well as the Council's response and proposed amendments. The Committee will then consider and adopt the SCI subject to any changes required.

9.0 Background Papers

- Draft Statement of Community Involvement