



**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

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**to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
15 JUNE 2021**

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will consult with the community on planning matters. The SCI has been revised and updated. The Committee is requested to approve the revised version for public consultation.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Statement of Community Involvement (at **APPENDIX A**) is approved for consultation purposes.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory document that provides a guideline framework for development management and planning policy consultations undertaken by the Council. The document sets out how the Council will consult with the community, residents and stakeholders. The previous Statement of Community Involvement was approved in November 2018. It is good practice to review SCIs on a regular basis and update them; as a minimum, reviews are required every five years. The Local Development Plan Review has provided the opportunity to update the SCI ahead of the statutory five-year review. This will ensure that the SCI lifespan will cover the whole of the LDP Review process.
- 3.2 The 2018 SCI was thorough but unwieldy and inflexible. The SCI has been edited and updated to make it more flexible, clearer and easier to understand.
- 3.3 The SCI is drafted to reflect the requirements of planning regulations, and provides the flexibility, if resources permit, to use methods of engagement that move beyond the regulatory requirements. It is important that the SCI does not commit the Council to actions that cannot be resourced in all cases, as this could then call into jeopardy decisions and actions taken. This does not, however, preclude the Council from choosing to use additional mechanisms to increase community engagement as and when it is considered appropriate to do so.
- 3.4 There is no requirement in legislation for local planning authorities to consult when updating their Statement of Community Involvement, although it is good practice for authorities to inform the public of their intentions to update this document and of the changes that have been made. This gives the community and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on it. The consultation period will be six weeks long.

## 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement has been reviewed and updated. With this Committee's agreement, the SCI will be consulted upon for six weeks. Following the consultation, any comments received will inform the final version of the SCI, and will be reported back to Members, before the SCI is formally adopted by the Council.

## 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The SCI supports all the Place, Prosperity and Community outcomes (1 to 13) in the Corporate Plan, through the use of technology (outcome 17) and meaningful engagement (outcome 18).

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – SCI provides clear information on how customers will be consulted on planning matters and how to make comments. This will enable communities to better engage with the planning system.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – The SCI is not intended to benefit any one particular group. As such, the SCI is relevant to everyone who will live, work and visit the District.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – The SCI reflects the statutory consultation requirements. Legislation requires that Local Plans are prepared in conformity with an adopted SCI, by reviewing and updating the SCI now, ensures that it reflects the current statutory consultation requirements, and provides a framework for future LDP consultations.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – There are no direct financial implications associated with the report.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – There are no direct human resources associated with the report.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Focusing on digital engagement may reduce natural resource use. However, no consultation process is without a degree of environmental impact.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** - SCI provides clear information on how customers will be consulted on planning matters and how to make comments. This will enable communities to better engage with the planning system. Strengthening the procedures for community involvement will help to enable thriving communities.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Leonie Alpin, Specialist Local Plan.