
Subject:	STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 10 September 2018
Report of:	Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor James Back, Portfolio Holder for Built Environment
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: Cabinet is requested to consider representations received during the consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement. A number of minor changes are proposed, in response to representations received.

Recommendation:

- (i) To approve the proposed responses to the representations received, as shown in Appendix 1.
- (ii) To approve and adopt the Statement of Community Involvement attached at Appendix 2.

1. Summary

1.1 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how, when and where the Council will consult with local and statutory stakeholders both during production of development plan documents, and within the development management function. Cabinet approved public consultation upon a draft Statement of Community Involvement on 14th May 2018, which was duly undertaken. Appendix 1 to this report provides details of the representations received and proposed responses. Appendix 2 comprises a final draft of the SCI incorporating amendments arising from the consultation.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The requirement to produce a SCI is under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004). When a Development Plan Document is subjected to examination in public, the Inspector must be satisfied that it has been prepared in compliance with the Council's SCI and that the SCI itself meets with the requirements set out in the regulations.

2.2 The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017¹ introduced a number of additional requirements for SCIs, the most significant of which was to set out the Council's policies for giving advice or assistance in relation to Neighbourhood Planning. A replacement SCI was drafted for consultation, which takes account of these changes by updating the existing SCI.

2.3 The public consultation on the draft SCI ran for six weeks from Thursday, 24th May until midnight on Thursday, 5th July 2018. The consultation was advertised in local newspapers and via social media and those signed up to '*Keep Me Posted*'. In

¹ Section 6 and Section 13 Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 coming into force 31st July (The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 (Commencement No. 3) Regulations 2018)

addition, a total of 144 consultees were invited to comment. This included the local plan consultation list, parish and town councils, neighbouring parish councils, local community groups and people who have registered their interest in planning consultations. The draft document was available from the Council's website, and paper copies were available at libraries within the District.

- 2.4 In response, the Council received 13 representations from various organisations and individuals. It should be noted that the representations received predominantly related to the existing SCI text and not the changes necessary as a result of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. It is nonetheless clearly appropriate to consider all responses and whether they should be incorporated into the replacement SCI.
- 2.5 The Council's response to each representation received is set out in the analysis table at Appendix 1. Consideration should be given to all the representations in the analysis table, and to the minor amendments and clarifications that are proposed.
- 2.6 The main amendments comprise:
 - a) Additional text encouraging applicants to discuss their proposals with statutory and non-statutory consultees at an early stage.
 - b) Changing the current minimum 4 week consultation period for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) to a standard 6 week period. This is agreed as it would bring consultations on SPDs in line with other Local Plan consultation events.
 - c) Additional clarity that infrastructure service providers such as Kent County Council are consulted with as part of the planning application process.
- 2.7 A final draft of the Statement of Community Involvement is attached at Appendix 2 incorporating all amendments, factual changes or clarifications identified during this updating process.

3. Identification of Options

- 3.1 Option one: To approve and adopt the final draft Statement of Community Involvement attached at Appendix 2, incorporating amendments that respond to representations received during the public consultation.
- 3.2 Option two: Not to approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement attached at Appendix one for consultation.

4. Evaluation of Options

- 4.1 Option one is preferable as this would allow the Council to adopt an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement that accords with current guidance and legislation.
- 4.2 If option two is selected, the Council will not have an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement. This would result in a risk of any future Development Plan Document being found 'unsound' by the Inspector during examination in public.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 There will be no direct financial implications because the report seeks to formalise the approach that is currently used to consult.

6. **Corporate Implications**

6.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer: 'Finance has been consulted and has nothing further to add. (SB)'

6.2 Comment from the Planning Solicitor: 'The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.'

6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: 'This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15> '

7. **Appendices**

Appendix One – Consultation Analysis Table

Appendix Two – Proposed final draft of 'Statement of Community Involvement' (for adoption)

8. **Background Papers**

Statement of Community Involvement - Cabinet report dated 14th May 2017

Dover District Council Statement of Community Involvement - Adopted April 2016

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