

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Head of Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration

REPORT NO. PLA532

DATE: 10th October 2005

TITLE:	Local Development Framework – Statement of Community Involvement
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	Yes
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	17 th May 2004
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key Decision

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Planning, Affordable Housing Cllr Smith, Economic Portfolio Holder
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Planning, Conservation & Affordable Housing
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	Minor
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	Minor
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS 12) & Companion Guide

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is one of the documents that forms part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF). The SCI sets out how and when the Council intends to involve the community and what form that involvement will take.

1.2 The draft Statement of Community Involvement was put out for pre-submission consultation between the 22nd April & the 3rd June 2005 and a significant number of comments were received. Amendments have been made to the document in light of comments received and a final document has been prepared for submission to the Secretary of State.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Cabinet is recommended to consider and endorse the Council's response to each representation made on pre-submission, summarised in Appendix A of this report.

2.2 Cabinet is recommended to approve the Statement of Community Involvement, attached to this report at Appendix B for submission to the Secretary of State and publishing for a 6 week formal representation period in accordance with the Regulations.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 In April this year information on the draft Statement of Community Involvement was sent out to over 1000 bodies/individuals including parish/town councils, community groups, business interests, developers/agents, landowners, residents associations and tenants compacts.

3.2 Main Issues Raised in relation to the draft SCI

Some 121 responses to this consultation were received. A wide variety of detailed matters were raised, a summary of which is attached as Appendix A. However, some of the main issues raised were as follows:

- Requests for additional key groups be referred to in the SCI &/ included on the LDF database (for example it was suggested that developers/landowners should be added to this list)
- Suggestions were made for additional community involvement methods to consider
- Expressions of support either for general content or for specific point within the SCI
- Requests for alteration/improvement to the Council website
- Scepticism about the new planning system/real use of consultation
- Suggestions that reference be made to additional Regulations concerning DPD/SPD community involvement
- Comments unrelated to the SCI (other planning matters)
- Various typographical (grammatical/spelling errors)

3.3 Main Changes to the SCI in response to Issues Raised

Extensive changes to the SCI have been made in response to issues raised by pre-submission consultation as can be seen from the main document. The main changes to the document can be summarised as:

- A large number of additional groups have been added to the LDF consultation database
- A number of additional consultation methods have been included e.g. Dovetailing/piggybacking. Some suggestions were not included however, due to their significant resource implications. Methods for consultation have also been made clearer through the inclusion of a consultation methods table.
- Reference has been made to those regulations which implement the Act (2004) that specifically relate to consultation through the inclusion of appendices in the SCI summarising community involvement in Development Plan Documents (DPD) & in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

3.4 Test for Soundness

The government requires that the Statement of Community Involvement meets the following nine tests of soundness:

1. that the local planning authority has complied with the minimum requirements for consultation as set out in Regulations (The Town & Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004)
2. that the local planning authority's strategy for community involvement links with other community involvement initiatives e.g. the community strategy
3. that the statement identifies in general terms which local community groups and other bodies will be consulted
4. that the statement identifies how the community and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner
5. that the methods of consultation to be employed are suitable for the intended audience and for the different stages in the preparation of local development document
6. that resources are available to manage community involvement effectively
7. that the statement shows how the results of community involvement will be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents
8. that the authority has mechanisms for reviewing the statement of community involvement
9. that the statement clearly describes the planning authority's policy for consultation on planning applications.

It is felt that the revised document meets these tests.

3.5 If cabinet approve the SCI for submission to the Secretary of State the document will be submitted in November 2005 (to follow the Issues & Options due to end on 11th November). A formal Submission Statement will also be submitted summarising all consultation undertaken in relation to the SCI. This will follow a standard format set down by GOEM, but will be available for cabinet to view prior to submission if desired. If approved, the SCI will also be made available for six weeks formal public representation in November and December 2005. (The Issues & Options Consultation is being sent out in October and it is felt best to start consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement after this to avoid any confusion.) Examination of the SCI would then be expected in February 2006, with adoption following receipt of the Inspectors binding report in April 2006. As such the SCI will be the first document in the LDF to be adopted.

3.6 Once the SCI is adopted all LDD's and planning applications must be subject to the appropriate community involvement and consultation set out in the Adopted SCI

4. CONTACT OFFICER

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