



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

# Cabinet

14 September 2021

**Report of:** Councillor Nick Robins

Cabinet Member for Planning and  
Planning Policy



## Statement of Community Involvement 2021

This report seeks approval of the Councils updated version of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which has been amended to take into account recent legislative changes and respond to the COVID19 pandemic.

### Report Author

Jake Horton – Planning Policy Officer



01476406466



[j.horton@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:j.horton@southkesteven.gov.uk)

Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
<b>Growth</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>All Wards</b>

<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Shaza Brannon – Principal Planning Policy Officer	17 August 2021
<b>Approved by:</b>	Nicola M <sup>c</sup> Coy-Brown - Director of Growth and Culture	18 August 2021
<b>Signed off by:</b>	Councillor Nick Robins - Cabinet Member for Planning and Planning Policy	6 September 2021

### Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

- 1. Cabinet approves the revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which incorporates changes in legislation; the recent COVID19 pandemic; and findings from a six week public consultation on the proposed changes to the document.**

# 1 The Background to the Report

## **Background**

- 1.1 The Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in accordance with section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the council will engage with communities who have an interest in matters relating to development in their area.
- 1.2 Section 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2017 requires an SCI to be reviewed every five years starting from the date of adoption of the SCI.
- 1.3 The Council's current SCI was adopted in 2018. However, since this time, the Councils Local Plan to 2036 has been adopted; a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been published; and the council has committed to reviewing the adopted Local Plan for submission to the Secretary of State in 2024.
- 1.4 Additionally, the emergence of the COVID19 pandemic has also greatly affected the way in which the community can participate in Planning matters. The Government have published national guidance in relation to COVID 19 to ensure that planning functions can continue to operate within current circumstances and be flexible in case of further restrictions.
- 1.5 These changes, documented in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4, need to be reflected within the SCI and therefore the council has produced a revised version of the document for 2021(**Appendix 1**).

## **Purpose of the Statement of Community involvement**

- 1.6 The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the community, businesses and others with an interest in the development of the District, can engage with the planning system. This includes the preparation and revision of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) (commonly referred to as Local Plans), preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and procedures for consulting the public on planning, listed building and other applications.
- 1.7 The SCI outlines how organisations and individuals can be involved in the plan making process and in the consideration of planning applications. It also sets out standards and arrangements as to how the Council will consult and report back to those engaged in the process.
- 1.8 Having clear arrangements for carrying out consultation will help to establish a two-way process between the community and the Council. It will provide the community with opportunities to help shape their local areas and create a transparent, fair and open planning process.
- 1.9 The SCI contains:
  - Information on when, who and how we will consult when drafting planning documents.
  - Information on when, who and how we will consult on planning, listed building and other types of applications.

- The techniques available and likely to be used during consultation. It is important to retain a degree of flexibility so that methods can be appropriately tailored to the planning document in question, to allow for changes in the regulations or best practice guidance, and to reflect that new methods of communication and engagement may become available over the life of the document.

## **2 Consultation and Feedback Received, Including Overview and Scrutiny**

- 2.1 A 6 week public consultation on the draft revised SCI was undertaken between the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 and the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2021. There is no requirement to consult on the SCI, however, it is good practice to do so.
- 2.2 The SCI consultation document was made available to view and access from the Council website.
- 2.3 A general notification of the consultation was sent out via email and letter to those on our consultation database, including town / parish councils, statutory bodies and Ward Cllrs.
- 2.4 The council received 24 comments from various consultees, including both statutory and non-statutory
- 2.5 The draft SCI has been refined, taking into account the comments made during the consultation. The key findings from the consultation have been presented in **appendix 2** which presents a summary of comments received and if any action was required in response to the consultation. The consultation statement also outlines the key headline changes made to the document as part of the update process, which includes the necessary caveats regarding how consultation methods may be impacted due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.6 The document has not been to overview and scrutiny committee

## **3 Available Options Considered**

- 3.1 Option 1: The recommended revision of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (as shown in Appendix 1) is approved to reflect the specific requirements arising from national guidance and procedures on dealing with coronavirus implications.

## **4 Preferred Option**

- 4.1 The recommended revision of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (as shown in Appendix 1) is approved to reflect the specific requirements arising from national guidance and procedures on dealing with coronavirus implications.

## **5 Reasons for the Recommendation (s)**

- 5.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended provides that the Council must prepare a Statement of Community Involvement, which is a statement of the authority's policy as to the involvement in the exercise of its functions.

## **6 Next Steps – Communication and Implementation of the Decision**

- 6.1 If approved at Cabinet, the next step would be to seek the approval of Full Council to adopt the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 6.2 The Statement of Community Involvement would be placed on the South Kesteven website.

## **7 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

**Financial Implications reviewed by: Richard Wyles, Section 151 Officer**

## **8 Legal and Governance Implications**

- 8.1 The council is legally required, under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to produce an SCI, to set out how we will engage with our communities who have an interest in matters relating to development in their area.

**Legal Implications reviewed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive**

## **9 Equality and Safeguarding Implications**

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact screening assessment has been undertaken (**Appendix 3**) and the outcomes found that no major change to the report was needed. The equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or for negative impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken into consideration as the SCI seeks to ensure that all members of the community are able to engage with planning matters.
- 9.2 There are no safeguarding implications arising from the report.

## **10 Risk and Mitigation**

- 10.1 The Council would be at risk if it did not have an updated SCI in place: it is a legal requirement as per the implications listed above.

## **11 Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

## **12 How will the recommendations support South Kesteven District Council's declaration of a climate emergency?**

- 12.1 A key change to the proposed SCI, is that it is no longer a minimum consultation requirement to send printed hard copies of documents to deposit locations (i.e. libraries or other SKDC council offices). Computer access is free at the libraries and available to all, including those, for example, with sight or hearing impairments. In line with our aim to

reducing carbon emissions, under the climate change agenda, the Council will therefore make an assessment of practically before hard copies are sent to deposit locations. This approach will also help reduce costs.

### **13 Other Implications (where significant)**

13.1 None

### **14 Background Papers**

14.1 Link to the currently adopted 2018 SCI -  
<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=25104&p=0>

### **15 Appendices**

15.1 Appendix 1 – Statement of Community Involvement (2021)

15.2 Appendix 2 – Consultation Statement

15.3 Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment