



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Cabinet

10 March 2026

Report of Councillor Phil Dilks
Cabinet Member for Planning

Revisions to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Cabinet reviews the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and agrees to carry out a public consultation for a minimum of six weeks.

Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Approve the public consultation of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) available at Appendix 2.**
- 2. To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning & Growth, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to make any minor changes to the appearance, format and text of the SCI document, in the interests of clarity and accuracy prior to its publication for consultation.**

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The work required can be contained within existing resources.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer.

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The Council is legally required under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an SCI, which sets out how it will engage with communities who have an interest in matters relating to development in their area.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 It is a corporate Priority in the Council's Corporate Plan (2024-27) to be an effective Council. To do this, the Council will actively and effectively engage with and listen to our residents; this includes through public consultation and engagement with our services including Planning.
- 2.2 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 intends to seek the views of different sectors of the community during the preparation of planning policy documents and when planning applications are received.
- 2.3 The National Planning Practice Guidance states: "*Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement, which should explain how they will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and determining planning applications. The Statement of Community Involvement should be published on the local planning authority's website*"
- 2.4 The current SCI was adopted in 2021. Since then, there have been changes in legislation. The SCI, therefore, needs to be reviewed and updated not only to

reflect the most up to date legislation and regulation changes but the lessons learnt from several years' experience of using it.

- 2.5 The Council is legally required to consult stakeholders, including the public, on a range of planning matters and the minimum requirements are set out in legislation. The SCI will set out the legislative requirements along with any additional steps that the Council will choose to do, as a minimum, when consulting on planning matters. The relevant planning matters include planning applications as well as planning policy documents.
- 2.6 Having a clear arrangement for carrying out consultation will help establish a two-way process between the community and the Council. It provides communities with a clear understanding of when they will be consulted and how they can engage in planning matters in a transparent way.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The SCI sets out how the Council will engage with the community on planning policy preparation, including neighbourhood planning, and on planning applications. It also covers planning appeals and enforcement.
- 3.2 The draft SCI is set out in five sections:
- Introduction
 - Planning Policy Documents
 - Neighbourhood Planning
 - Who is involved in the Plan Preparation Process
 - Community Involvement in Planning Applications
- 3.3 Information is presented in a clear and transparent way for the wider audience and includes clear Headings and Fonts. Tables are used to help guide the reader to make it user friendly.
- 3.4 The SCI also contains links to all the relevant pages on the Council's website and other external sites so the reader can easily find out more information if they wish.

Proposed amendments to the SCI

- 3.5 The reviewed SCI follows a similar format to the existing SCI for the Council. The following changes have been made to the revised SCI in order to update the document and ensure the Council's approach to consultation is robust:
- Update of Council Office Address
 - Consultation text added to explain the role of the consultation, how long the document will be consulted on and how comments can be made
 - To reflect the change in the Coronavirus Act 2020

- Details on why the SCI must be reviewed every 5 years
- Details on the requirements of the Local Plan to be reviewed at least every 5 years from the date of adoption
- Details on the data protection issues
- Additional consultation section updated when consulting on Conservation Areas
- Any out-of-date references, such as consultees that no longer exist or documents that have been revised, have been updated.
- Removal of LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) from the list of Abbreviations as this longer exists
- Inclusion of GLCCA (Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority)

3.6 Under previous planning regulations the SCI was required to undergo an independent examination. This requirement has been removed, and the SCI can be approved and brought into effect more easily by a resolution of Cabinet. Whilst the content and process for preparing a SCI is no longer prescribed by regulation, it is considered good practice to hold a period of public consultation on a draft SCI prior to consideration of representations and subsequent adoption by Cabinet.

3.7 It is proposed to commence the public consultation on the draft SCI on the 13th March 2026 for a period of six weeks. Subject to the number and nature of any representations received, it is anticipated that the representations, together with an officer response to them, will be reported to Cabinet, potentially in July 2026 at which time Cabinet will be requested to adopt the revised SCI.

3.8 The following consultation methods will be used:

- Publish the draft design code on the Council's website and consultation portal
- Hard copies of the document along with consultation forms will be available at the Council offices
- The consultation will be promoted via the Council's social media channels
- Notification emails will be sent to all stakeholders (individuals, organisations or bodies) including Parish and Town Councils.

3.9 The revised draft SCI is located at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s50125/Statement%20of%20Community%20Involvement%20SCI.pdf>

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 To not review and update the SCI and continue to use the existing document. However, the existing SCI does not reflect current requirements set out in legislation or regulations. The Council is also required to review the SCI every five years. The do-nothing option has therefore been discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The Council is required to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement and to subsequently review that document every five years. Whilst it is not mandatory to consult on the draft document, it is good practice to do so.
- 5.2 It is therefore recommended that Cabinet reviews the draft SCI and agrees that it is consulted on to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty.

6. Background Papers

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework

- Link to current adopted SKDC SCI- [Statement of Community Involvement | South Kesteven District Council](#)
- National Planning Policy Framework https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/N_PPF-December-2024.pdf
- Corporate Plan 2024-2027- [South Kesteven District Council Corporate Plan - 2024 to 2027.pdf](#)

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Stage 1 Equality Analysis

Appendix 2: SCI link