

Title of Report:	Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	15 May 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2726

Purpose of Report: To consider the draft revised Statement of Community Involvement

Recommended Action: That the draft revised Statement of Community Involvement is approved by the Council for formal public consultation

Reason for decision to be taken: The production of a Statement of Community Involvement is a statutory requirement

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
Town and Country Planning (Local Government) (England) Regulations 2012

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- CSP2 – Promoting a vibrant district**
- CSP4 – Protecting the environment**

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:

- CSP5 - Putting people first**
- CSP7 - Empowering people and communities**
- CSP8 - Doing what's important well**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy priorities and principles by:

Continuous community involvement in the planning system will ensure the Council does what's important well.

Portfolio Member Details	
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	10/03/14

Contact Officer Details	
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Implications

Policy:	The SCI sets out how the Council will involve the community in the preparation of planning policy documents and in the consideration of planning applications
Financial:	The implementation of the SCI can be met from existing budgets.
Personnel:	The SCI can be implemented using existing staff and resources
Legal/Procurement:	The SCI will meet the Council's requirements under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	
	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:		
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)		
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality		<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The requirement to prepare an SCI was introduced in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Council adopted the first SCI in July 2006. As the planning process has gone through some changes, such as the revocation of regional strategies, publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the introduction of neighbourhood planning and the Community Infrastructure Levy, the SCI now needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect the most up to date processes and procedures that we will use.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 Our draft revised SCI is attached in Appendix A. It clearly sets out our policy for involving the community (including local people – those who live in, work or visit West Berkshire, parish and town councils and other organisations which represent key community interests, such as the North Wessex Downs AONB) in:

the plan making process such as Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, the Community Infrastructure Levy and Neighbourhood Plans

the consideration of planning applications within the District.

- 2.2 It has been informed by the key principles in the Council's Consultation Policy.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 The measures outlined in the Statement of Community involvement show how the Council will involve the whole community, including difficult to reach groups such as gypsies and travellers, in the preparation of planning policy documents and in the consideration of planning applications

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 If Members consider the Draft SCI is suitable for formal consultation then the next steps will be for officers to invite comments on the draft document through a formal six week consultation before seeking full Council approval to adopt the final revised SCI in September of this year.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The principle of 'continuous community involvement' underpins the planning system. This means that the people and communities who will be affected by the Council's planning policies should be directly involved in the plan making process and the consideration of planning applications. The Government considers that this approach is essential in order to achieve local ownership and legitimacy for the policies that will shape the future distribution of land uses and development within the District. The aim is to produce consensus at an early stage and therefore minimise the need for a lengthy and controversial examination process.

2. The role of the Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out how it intends to achieve the principle of continuous community involvement. The Council is expected to tailor its SCI to the specific needs and characteristics of the District and involve representatives of all those interested in the planning of the area.
- 2.2 The Council adopted its first SCI in July 2006. As the planning process has gone through some changes, such as the revocation of regional strategies, publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the introduction of neighbourhood planning and the Community Infrastructure Levy, the SCI now needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect the most up to date processes and procedures that we will use.

3. Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.1 Our draft revised SCI is attached in Appendix A. It clearly sets out our policy for involving the community (including local people – those who live in, work or visit West Berkshire, parish and town councils and other organisations which represent key community interests, such as the North Wessex Downs AONB) in:

the plan making process such as Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, the Community Infrastructure Levy and Neighbourhood Plans

in the consideration of planning applications within the District.

- 3.2 It has been informed by the key principles in the Council's Consultation Policy and Equality Policy.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 If Members consider the Draft SCI is suitable for consultation then the next steps will be for officers to invite comments on the draft document through a formal six week consultation before seeking full Council approval to adopt the final SCI in September this year.

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement
Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Will be consulted as part of the preparation of planning documents

Officers Consulted: Bryan Lyttle, Gary Rayner, Caroline Walsh, Liz Alexander, Matthew Meldrum, Rebecca Williams and Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/A