

Title of Report:	West Berkshire Statement of Community Involvement (Revised 2014)
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	18 September 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2846

Purpose of Report: To consider responses to the representations on the draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement and to consider adoption of the Revised Statement of Community Involvement.

Recommended Action: That the Council:

- 1). agrees the responses to the representations on the draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement
- 2). Adopts the Revised Statement of Community Involvement

Reason for decision to be taken: The production of the 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**
- CSP6 - Living within our means**
- 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 is important well.

Portfolio Member Details	
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	25/07/14

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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:** Not Applicable
- Legal/Procurement:** The SCI will meet the Council's requirements under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Property:** Not Applicable
- Risk Management:** Not Applicable

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"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The requirement to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was introduced in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Following changes to the planning system, such as the revocation of regional strategies, the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) neighbourhood planning and the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy, the SCI needed to be reviewed and updated.
- 1.2 Consultation on the Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement (DRSCI) was held for six weeks between 23rd May and 4th July 2014 and a total of 20 responses were received. The Councils' proposed response to the representations is attached at Appendix B.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 Following the consultation there is only a single change proposed to the DRSCI;
 - i) Under Appendix A change from Thames Water (sewerage and water undertaker) to Thames Water (water supply and sewerage undertaker).

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 The Revised SCI clearly sets out that it is based on the fundamental principles of inclusiveness and equality for all. It acknowledges that people suffer from exclusion and can be hard to reach for a variety of reasons. In addition, it acknowledges that although some types of people or groups may be small in actual numbers, they could be disproportionately affected by planning policies and decisions. The SCI does not set out in detail how every 'hard to reach group' will be engaged in the planning process as the exact nature of our consultation will vary and will depend on the nature of the document being produced and the stage we are at in the preparation of that document. As each planning document is produced it is taken to Planning Policy Task Group who confirm that the consultation processes proposed are appropriate for that particular item.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is recommended that a minor amendment is made to the DRSCI relating to Thames Water and that the Revised Statement of Community Involvement (as set out in Appendix C) is adopted by the Council.

Report

5. Introduction

- 5.1 The requirement to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was introduced in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Following changes to the planning system, such as the revocation of regional strategies, the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) neighbourhood planning and the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy, the SCI needed to be reviewed and updated.
- 5.2 Consultation on the Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement (DRSCI) was held for six weeks between 23rd May and 4th July 2014 and received a total of 20 responses. The Councils' proposed response to the consultations is attached at Appendix B.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultation on the Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement for West Berkshire (DRSCI) was held over six weeks between 23rd May and the 4th July 2014.
- 6.2 In addition to the usual practice of making the DRSCI available in libraries, the main council buildings and the web site, all those on our Register of Consultees were sent either an email or letter notifying them of the consultation.
- 6.3 Only twenty responses were received, ten of which offered no comment.
- 6.4 There was a particular concern amongst groups from Hungerford that the Council had not sufficiently acknowledged the role of parish plans and that the DRSCI had redefined the relationship between community, neighbourhood plans and parish plans. In addition, a couple of respondents wished for the Council to repeat text from the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order) 2010, and one, Thames Water sought to clarify its functions with regards to West Berkshire.

7. Response

- 7.1 Appendix B details the individual responses to each of the comments made by the respondents to the DRSCI. The only proposed change to the DRSCI is as a result of the comments received from Thames Water.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix B - SCI Consultation Summary and Council Response

Appendix C - Revised Statement of Community Involvement

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: As per paragraph 6.2

Officers Consulted: Paula Amorelli

Trade Union: None