



Horsham  
District  
Council

# Statement of Community Involvement



September 2020

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# Statement of Community Involvement 2020

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# Statement of Community Involvement 2020

## Part 1 – An Introduction to Getting Involved in Shaping the Future of Horsham District

### Introduction

- 1.1 Horsham District Council is committed to assisting anyone who wishes to get involved in the Council's planning process, including the preparation of the Local Plan Review, Planning Policy Documents and Planning Applications.
- 1.2 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the ways in which the Council will engage with residents, communities, businesses, local organisations and other interested parties to ensure as many people as possible are able to have their say in planning decisions that affect them.
- 1.3 The SCI provides information on how the planning system works and advises on the manner in which the Council will inform, consult and involve people in planning decisions within Horsham District outside the South Downs National Park. For land inside the National Park, the South Downs National Park Authority, who are the planning authority for this area, prepares a separate Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.4 The Covid- 19 Pandemic has demonstrated that there may be some circumstances, such as the national lock-down, that are beyond the Council's control. The Council has reviewed the consultation measures in light of this experience. During these circumstances, the Council will at all times remain committed to involving the community as much as is practicable, but it may be necessary to vary the main consultation methods set out within this document.
- 1.5 Public Health guidelines can have a profound impact on how local planning departments can operate; In response to the spread of COVID-19, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government published an update on planning matters, including temporary measures to make it easier to operate the planning system: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-planning-update>

### Key Functions of the Planning System

- 1.6 There are two key functions of the planning system: Planning Policy and Development Management

### Planning Policy:

- 1.7 At Horsham District Council the Strategic Planning Team produces a number of planning policy documents such as the Local Plan, and supplementary planning documents which together are used to guide development. The documents must comply with relevant Government legislation and guidance, and there are specific regulatory procedures which must be followed during their production.

### *Community Engagement and Planning Policy*

- 1.8 The government produces planning guidance at a national level. This is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The latest NPPF (February 2019) states, in relation to plan-making, that plans should:

“Be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees” and;

“Be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation”.

- 1.9 The council will continue to engage with existing groups across our district, many of whom are already familiar with and involved in the planning process. We will also explore ways to work closer with groups who are less involved in the process as it is important to capture the views of the whole community.

#### **Development Management:**

- 1.10 Development Management are responsible for the processing and determination of planning applications, applications for works to trees, advertisements and listed buildings. The Development Management team provide pre-application advice and investigate breaches of planning control.

#### *Community Engagement and Planning Applications*

- 1.11 National policy asks local planning authorities to play a key role in encouraging developers and other parties to take advantage of the range of opportunities to engage in the planning process, and involve local communities and stakeholders as soon as possible. Horsham District Council encourages applicants, at pre-application stage, to carry out early engagement with the local community, before submitting a planning application.

### **Structure & Content of the Statement of Community Involvement**

- 1.12 This is divided into three parts:

**Part 1 – An introduction to Getting involved in shaping the future of Horsham District** – this section introduces the Council’s overall approach to community engagement and involvement in the planning process.

**Part 2 – Getting involved in the Preparation of the Local Plan and Planning Policy** – this section provides specific information on how to get involved with and influence the Council as it prepares the Local Plan and other Planning Policy documents.

**Part 3 – Getting involved in Planning Applications** – this section provides information on how to become involved and comment on planning applications for development.

### **Our Values and Vision for Community Involvement in the Planning Process**

- 1.13 Community Involvement and consultation is a key part of any Council’s decision making process.

- 1.14 This Statement of Community Involvement complements the Council’s key objectives and priorities in relation to community involvement in the planning process, as set out in our Corporate Plan <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/corporateplan>

- 1.15 Horsham District Council wishes to ensure that people are involved at an early stage of the Local Plan preparation and in the consideration of planning applications. Planning decisions should take proper account of local views; it is crucial that we engage effectively with our local communities and we will use the following principles as guidance:

- **Communicate clearly** – documents will be written in plain English and will explain any planning terms that we need to use.
- **Early involvement** – we will ensure early involvement with our local communities in

the preparation of Planning Policy documents.

- **Recognising the needs of different groups in the community** – we will communicate in methods that are relevant and accessible to all members of the community.
- **Providing clear opportunities for involvement** – we will provide clear and up-to-date information on our consultation processes and ensure information is provided at the earliest opportunity to allow time to respond.
- **Ease of access to information** – we will communicate through a variety of channels including the Council’s website, and social media, email newsletters, advertisements, public notices and through local venues such as libraries. This communication will be subject to compliance with any government legislation or guidance relating to public health (for example, due to COVID-19). In such circumstances, access to hard copy documentation may necessarily be limited or curtailed – for example in the event of a national or local lockdown, where it is a requirement that offices and public libraries are closed.
- **Provide feedback and share information** – we will ensure that all planning documents, background studies and responses to consultation (Summary of Representations) are available on our website. Hard copy documents of Local Plans will normally be made available, unless instances such as those described above apply, when access to hard copy documentation may necessarily be limited or curtailed. We will keep the community informed in circumstances where this arises.

## Why Involve Local Communities in Planning Issues?

- 1.16 Planning affects everyone; the homes we live in, the places we work from, tourism, leisure facilities including open spaces where we relax, and routes we use for travel are all a result of planning decisions. Understanding future needs and aspirations of local communities helps Horsham District Council make better planning decisions. Everyone should have the opportunity to influence the outcome regarding new plan-making documents and planning applications.
- 1.17 All our consultation documents and related representations are available for the public to view. There is also an opportunity to comment on draft plans and policies when they are published.
- 1.18 Strategic Planning hold a database of individuals, groups and stakeholders who wish to be contacted in relation to plan-making documents. In order for individuals to comment on consultation documents, and in accordance with the requirements of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, we ask that each individual wishing to be contacted or to express their views, register themselves online. This means when they wish to comment on one of the Planning Policy consultation documents, all they have to do is log in. The Council’s Privacy Policy, which sets out how we will treat personal data, is also available to view online.
- 1.19 If you would like to be added to the database please register by using the following link:  
<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planningconsultations>

## Where can Planning Documents be Viewed?

- 1.20 All current planning policy documents and planning applications are available to view and access on our website: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning>
- 1.21 Subject to any necessary restrictions to protect the public's and individual's health, paper copies of Planning Policy documents are normally available to view at:

Horsham District Council  
Parkside  
Chart Way  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 1RL

Normal Office Opening Hours:  
Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm\*

\* Please note; there may be some occasions when hard copy documents are only available to view by pre-arranged appointment e.g. during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Local Libraries (Refer to individual library for up-to-date openingtimes):

- Billingshurst
- Henfield
- Horsham
- Pulborough
- Southwater
- Steyning
- Storrington

- 1.22 Hard copies of draft Planning Policy documents for consultation will be made available free of charge to Parish and Neighbourhood Councils and Statutory Bodies (one per body).
- 1.23 To cover our printing costs, charges will apply for printed copies and background paper requests. Documents can be made available in alternative formats on request.

## Who can Help Explain Planning Issues?

- 1.24 Information in relation to plan-making and planning applications can be found on the Council's website <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/>. However, if you require further information you may wish to contact the following relevant teams:

### Strategic Planning

[strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk)

01403 215398

### Development Management

[planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@horsham.gov.uk)

01403 215187

- 1.25 Should you wish to contact your local councillor to discuss your views, or seek their help with a planning proposal in your area, contact details of local ward councillors are available on our website: <https://horsham.moderngov.co.uk/mgFindMember.aspx>

## What Other Support for Planning is Available?

1.26 Useful websites that provide information on the planning system include:

- Planning Portal – [www.planningportal.co.uk](http://www.planningportal.co.uk)
- National Planning Policy Framework - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- National Planning Practice Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- Locality – for general information on neighbourhood planning <https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/neighbourhood-planning/>

### **Planning Aid England**

1.27 Planning Aid England offers free, professional town planning advice and support to individuals and communities who cannot afford fees for a planning consultant. It is an independent voluntary organisation linked to the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

1.28 In this area the relevant contact is Planning Aid South which offers a Caseworker (qualified to give independent advice) and a Community Planner who can work alongside communities in helping to plan their neighbourhood.

1.29 For further information about the services available, including how to qualify for Planning Aid assistance, residents and businesses can use the tools on the RTPI website: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>

# Statement of Community Involvement

## Part 2 – Planning Policy

### What is Planning Policy?

- 2.1 Planning Policy involves making plans that help to decide where and when development takes place. These documents are used to help make decisions on planning applications and to plan the future needs of the district by assessing what changes are likely to happen and where. The key Planning Policy document that a council must prepare is its Local Plan.
- 2.2 The Localism Act 2011 places engaging with local communities at the heart of the planning system. The Government encourages councils to seek involvement from local communities on the content of plans from the earliest stage in plan-making. It also guides councils to fully support and encourage the active role communities can play in the plan-making process such as through Neighbourhood Planning.

### Current Adopted Local Plan

- 2.3 The **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF)** is the council's adopted Local Plan and sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031 to deliver the social, economic and environmental needs for the district, outside of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.4 The HDPF is currently under review and the new Local Plan will run to 2037 (with a 2019 base date). The Local Plan Review will consider a range of different issues affecting the district. It will contain policies to protect our high quality environment, and allocations to identify what land should come forward for housing, employment and retail development. The Local Plan will seek to ensure that these allocations are delivered in the right place and at the right time.

### Local Planning Documents

- 2.5 There are two main types of planning documents; Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents:
  - **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)** are formal plans that set out policies for a particular geographical area. They are subject to public consultation and the process of Sustainability Appraisal to test how the plan meets social, economic and environmental aims. Development Plan Documents are tested at an independent examination before they can be formally adopted by the Council.

The Horsham District Planning Framework is an example of an adopted DPD. Neighbourhood Plans are also a type of Development Plan Document – the key difference is that the local community prepares these documents, but once it has been tested by an Independent Examiner and passed a referendum, it forms part of the adopted development plan.

A Policies Map often accompanies a DPD. These maps are used to show the locations of land use designations (e.g. areas at risk from flooding or listed buildings) and allocations for development. The adopted Policies Map is revised when new DPDs are adopted.

The Council will undertake Sustainability Appraisals (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) of Development Plan Documents when they are being prepared. This will test the policies and proposals against social, environmental and economic objectives, and suggest how plans can be modified to minimise any negative effects. The SA/SEA will be published for public consultation alongside the DPDs where appropriate.

- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** are used to expand upon the content of a Development Plan Document to provide additional detail and guidance. They do not contain or set out planning policies. They can cover a range of topics or be used to provide more information about individual sites. An SPD is subject to consultation and may sometimes also require a Sustainability Appraisal. Although SPDs are not subject to independent examination, they do need to obtain approval by the Council before they are adopted. SPDs are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the adopted development plan.

### **Local Development Scheme**

- 2.6 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the production timetable for the planning documents that this Council will publish. It provides a starting point to see what documentation will be produced and at what stage individuals can become involved in the preparation process. It is regularly updated to reflect the Council's priorities for plan making. The progress that is made towards meeting the timetable is reviewed each year and if necessary the Local Development Scheme is updated. Any update to the Local Development Scheme will be discussed at a Council Cabinet meeting. The date for any update will be published on the Council's Forward Plan.

### **Production of Planning Documents**

- 2.7 The Council is required to produce new planning documents, or update existing documents in line with legal and other requirements set out by Government.
- 2.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 requires that Local Planning Authorities prepare Local Plans that set out a positive vision for future development. These plans must be supported by evidence – such as the amount of affordable housing or the type of employment land which is required.
- 2.9 The NPPF provides the framework for local authorities and the local communities to prepare local and neighbourhood plans that reflect their vision and aspirations through the planning process. The NPPF recognises that early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses and the community is essential.

2.10 The type and amount of consultation which takes place will depend on the type of document that the Council is preparing, with a greater amount of consultation required for the preparation of Local Plan documents.

2.11 The key stages for preparing the Local Plan and other Development Plan Documents are set out by law in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The regulatory stages for the preparation of the Local Plan are summarised below:

<b>Stage 1</b>	Regulation 18	Public and stakeholder consultation participation in preparation of DPDs. This is often referred to as <b>'Issues and Options'</b> consultation.
<b>Stage 2</b>	Regulation 19 + 20	Publication of a draft planning document and the opportunity for stakeholders to make formal representations (under Regulation 20, consultation is six weeks). This stage is often referred to as the <b>'Proposed Strategy'</b> .
<b>Stage 3</b>	Regulation 22	Submission of documents to the Secretary of State – the 'Proposed Strategy' documents and the formal representations are formally sent to the Secretary of State – The Planning Inspectorate or 'PINs'
<b>Stage 4</b>	Regulation 23 to 25	Examination process – An independent Inspector is appointed by the Planning Inspectorate to test the plan.
<b>Stage 5</b>	Regulation 26	If the plan is successful at Examination it can be formally adopted by the Council and used to determine planning applications.

2.12 Horsham District Council will look to involve people as early as possible and will invite feedback on draft documents. The Council will also work to ensure that people are kept informed throughout the document production process.

## Meeting Regulatory Requirements

2.13 There are statutory consultation requirements which the Council must adhere to, as set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). Subject to any changes in government legislation or guidance, including those connected to public health, in order to meet these requirements the Council will:

- Publish all documents and supporting information on the Council's website, including details of where and when copies of the documents can be viewed and how people can comment.
- Make all consultation documents and supporting information available for the public to view at our Council offices during the normal office opening hours

throughout the consultation period, which is a minimum of six weeks for a DPD and a minimum of four weeks for an SPD. In certain circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, access to hard copy documentation may necessarily be limited or curtailed.

## Planning Document Preparation Process

2.14 The methods of consultation used by the Council are varied depending on the nature of the Planning Policy document, the stage of the document being consulted on and the geographical scope or nature of the planning issue being considered in the document. These will vary depending on the type of document that is being prepared, but may for example include meetings and exhibitions as appropriate.

2.15 The following table provides details of the planning document production process and the opportunities for consultation and participation. The methods vary to allow flexibility to ensure the right consultation processes are used for each individual document and that the relevant audiences are notified.

Key Stage of Production	What the Council Will Do	Opportunities for Involvement
<b>Early Engagement</b>	<p>Collect evidence to input and support production of document.</p> <p>Formulate initial aims and objectives.</p> <p>Consider all issues and any alternatives which may come forward.</p> <p>Commission technical studies.</p> <p>Identify relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.</p> <p>Prepare content of draft document and supporting Sustainability Appraisal.</p>	<p>Register personal contact details on the online Strategic Planning consultation system.</p> <p>Provide details of any sites that may be considered suitable for development via the Strategic Housing &amp; Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)</p>
<b>Publication and Consultation</b>	<p>6 week (minimum) consultation period for DPDs (statutory requirement). Includes both the DPD and associated Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>4 week (minimum) consultation period for SPDs (statutory requirement).</p>	<p>Review consultation document and any supporting evidence-based documents.</p> <p>Attend public exhibitions, if any are scheduled.</p> <p>Submit a formal representation to the Council detailing your comments, support or objection and state whether you wish to</p>

	<p>All consultation documents will be made available for inspection on the Council website and where possible, subject to Government advice and guidelines on public health (for example, due to COVID-19) at relevant libraries.</p> <p>Appropriate advertising of the consultation.</p> <p>Formal notification of the consultation to statutory consultees.</p> <p>Notification of consultation to all that have registered on Strategic Planning consultation system.</p>	attend the Examination Hearing (DPDs only).
<b>Examination and Adoption</b>	<p>Submit DPDs and supporting documents to Secretary of State for independent examination.</p> <p>Summarise and make publicly available all representations received during consultation.</p> <p>Produce Statement of Compliance to demonstrate the SCI has been followed.</p> <p>Make publicly available the report issued by the Planning Inspector.</p> <p>DPDs/SPDs to be adopted by Council.</p>	<p>Hearing sessions of Local Plan Examinations are public and anyone can observe.</p> <p>Only those participants specifically invited by the Inspector (via a Programme Officer) will be able to speak at a hearing session.</p>
<b>Monitor</b>	<p>Monitor the plan to show how the planning policies set out in the Local Plan are being achieved.</p> <p>Review the plan where/when necessary.</p> <p>Produce an annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).</p>	Consider content of AMR

## Who will be Consulted?

2.16 The Council is required to send details of planning document consultations to certain organisations or bodies. These are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The following organisations are considered statutory consultees and **must** be consulted:

- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Highways Agency (now known as Highways England)
- Within or Adjoining County Councils (West Sussex and Surrey County Councils.)
- Adjoining local authorities (Arun, Adur & Worthing, Brighton & Hove, Chichester, Crawley, Mid Sussex, Mole Valley, South Downs National Park and Waverley)
- Parish Councils / Neighbourhood Councils (including those which adjoin the District)
- NHS Sussex
- Sussex Police
- Homes and Community Agency (now known as Homes England and Regulator of Social Housing)
- Relevant electricity and gas companies
- Relevant sewerage and water undertakers
- Relevant electronic communication companies
- Network Rail
- Coal Authority
- Marine Management Organisation

2.17 In addition to the statutory consultees (as listed) and members of the general public there are many other groups and organisations that will have an interest in Planning Policy documents. These consultees and stakeholders will have a variety of different interests and priorities and could contribute expertise and knowledge across a range of subject areas. The following consultees/stakeholders are examples of groups who may be contacted and involved where appropriate:

- Local residents' associations
- Local environmental organisations
- High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit (advises on the management of the AONB)
- Airport Operators
- Agents and developers
- Local business groups and forums
- Youth groups
- Older persons groups / organisations
- Local community partnerships
- Faith groups
- Disability groups
- Sports and open space organisations
- Transport organisations

2.18 **If you would like to be automatically notified of new consultations please register your details on the Strategic Planning consultation system:**

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planningconsultations>

2.19 Horsham District Council wants our plan-making to fully consider and take account of community views. The Council will ensure that our consultations on Planning Policy documents are as extensive as possible. Depending on the scope of the consultation and taking into account any Government legislation and guidelines in relation to public health, for example, due to COVID-19, the methods, which are employed can include one or more of the examples set out below:

- Make consultation material clearly available on our website
- Notify everyone registered on the Strategic Planning consultation system
- Publish news releases to local media
- Social Media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter)
- Public exhibitions (staffed and un-staffed)
- Publish leaflets, newsletter, bulletins (paper and/or email)
- Publish formal notices in newspapers circulating across the District (this is a statutory requirement)
- Hold public meetings
- Workshops (Parish / Neighbourhood Councils, Stakeholders)
- Publish response forms and questionnaires
- Targeted work with specific interest groups
- Targeted work with community groups and voluntary organisations

## **Duty to Co-operate**

2.20 Some planning issues, such as planning for housing and employment needs or understanding the transport impacts of development may cross beyond the boundary for Horsham District. In these cases the Council needs to take into account the neighbouring council's policies and proposals. This work falls under a legal process known as the 'Duty to Co-operate'. This duty ensures that the Council works with nearby councils and other public bodies to plan effectively for sustainable development that extends beyond our own administrative boundaries.

2.21 The Government expects councils to work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that 'cross border' issues are co-ordinated effectively and clearly reflect the policies of each of the councils affected.

2.22 Horsham District Council works closely with its nearby councils in regards to strategic priorities and areas of common interest. These partnerships help us to meet our Duty to Co-operate.

## **Adoption of Planning Documents**

2.23 The final stage in the production of a planning document is the formal process of Adoption. A Development Plan Document must be presented to Council to consider if it should be adopted as Council Policy. Supplementary Planning Documents are presented to Cabinet for consideration to adopt.

**Full Council** is made up of all 48 Councillors for the District, representing 22 Wards. It is responsible for approving or adapting the Council budget and other key documents affecting the whole district, such as Development Plan Documents and Plans and Strategies (such as the HDPF). Members of the public are able to attend meetings of the Council and may ask questions

at the start of the meeting, as outlined in Part 4I of the Constitution.

**Cabinet** consists of seven Councillors of the majority political party plus the Leader of the Council. Each Cabinet Member has responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activity. For Planning, the relevant Councillor is the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development. There is one Policy Development Advisory Group (PDAG) per Cabinet Member. Where relevant, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development will be briefed on a planning document at their Planning and Development PDAG. PDAGs are not open to members of the public; however, a copy of the agenda and minutes of each meeting is available to view on the Council website.

- 2.24 In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), as soon as is reasonably practicable after adoption, the Council will send a copy of the adoption statement to any person who has asked to be notified of the adoption.

## **Neighbourhood Planning**

### **What is Neighbourhood Planning?**

- 2.25 Neighbourhood planning is an important part of the Government's Localism agenda. It aims to give local communities greater power to shape development by taking a more active role in the preparation of planning policies at a local level.
- 2.26 Local communities who wish to play an active role in planning for their area can now do two things:
- Prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan setting out the vision, objectives and planning policies to shape development of their neighbourhood and/or;
  - Seek a grant of permission directly for certain types of development in their neighbourhood through a Neighbourhood Development Order or a Community Right to Build Order.

### **Neighbourhood Development Plans**

- 2.27 A neighbourhood plan can build upon the strategic policies set out in the Council's Local Plan and allows local people to influence the location, appearance and type of development that comes forward in their local parish or neighbourhood.
- 2.28 The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans must undertake at least two stages of consultation: the first by the local community, the second by Horsham District Council. The plan then undergoes independent examination.
- 2.29 If the Examiner concludes that the plan (with or without recommended changes) meets a set of tests known as the 'basic conditions', the next stage of plan preparation is to hold a referendum. The local community is asked to vote on whether the plan should be used to determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan area. If more than 50% of vote is in favour of the neighbourhood development plan, it comes into force and the plan will be 'Made' by Horsham District Council unless exceptional circumstances arise (a similar process to the formal adoption of a DPD). Once 'Made'; the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the council's development plan and will be used together with the planning policies set out in the Local Plan to determine planning applications for the area it covers.

## Who Leads Neighbourhood Planning in an Area?

2.30 In Horsham District, the vast majority of which is parished, it is the Parish Council who prepares a Neighbourhood Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan can cover all or part of a parish and in some cases may involve a number of parishes if they choose to 'cluster'. In unparished areas, where there is a desire from the community to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, it is necessary to form a Neighbourhood Forum. Alternatively, a Parish Council can include unparished areas, subject to the approval of the Local Authority who designate the Neighbourhood Plan area.

## What is the Role of Horsham District Council?

2.31 The Government is encouraging communities to get involved in plan production and consultation, either by responding to Local Plan consultations or by producing a Neighbourhood Plan. It is recognised that this requires a significant commitment from local communities in terms of time and resources.

2.32 The Council is required to provide advice and assistance and support on a range of issues, including consultation and the process of document production. Consultation procedures for Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders are set out in the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

2.33 There are six stages in making a Neighbourhood Plan. It is our duty as the planning authority to support organisations at every stage. The following table outlines the support that will be provided by the Strategic Planning Team at each stage:

Key Stage of Production	What the Council Will Do
Stage 1: Area Designation	<p>Provide advice on the legal process of designating a plan, on joint neighbourhood plans (clustering) and guidance on completing the form.</p> <p>Once an application is received to designate an area for Neighbourhood Planning the LPA must determine on the validity of the application within a specific timeframe and publish the outcome of the application.</p>
Stage 2: Drafting & Consulting	<p><b>Planning Advice, guidance and documents:</b> Neighbourhood Planning Officers at the Council will provide planning advice and guidance to help local community organisations.</p> <p>Provide information and support on how to prepare and collate evidence to support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. If appropriate this may include updates on emerging planning practice and useful general guidance notes on plan making.</p> <p><b>Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA):</b> The Council will undertake Screening to consider whether Sustainability Appraisal of a Neighbourhood Plan is required to support the process of plan preparation.</p> <p><b>Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA):</b> The Council will provide a Habitat Regulation Screening Assessment screening opinion to ensure the legal requirements to consider the impacts of a plan on certain nature conservation sites are considered.</p>

	<p><b>Drafting the Neighbourhood Plan:</b> The plan will mainly be drafted by the local community organisation together with any consultant that the community may appoint. Where appropriate Neighbourhood Planning Officers will provide guidance and advice on the legal requirements for consultation and publicity for Pre- Submission and Submission.</p> <p><b>Consultation of the Pre Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan:</b> Under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Horsham District Council is a formal consultee. The Council will therefore provide a formal response to a neighbourhood planning group as part of this consultation</p>
<p>Stage 3: Submission and Consultation</p>	<p><b>Prior to Examination:</b> Once the Neighbourhood Planning Group has a plan which it wishes to be put forward to Examination, the plan will be formally submitted to Horsham District Council together with a number of other documents which are required under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>Horsham District Council will check to ensure that the necessary documents have been received. If all information has been provided, the Council will hold a public consultation in line with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). Comments will be invited over a minimum 6 week period.</p>
<p>Stage 4: Independent Examination</p>	<p><b>Examination:</b> The Council will appoint an independent Examiner with input from the neighbourhood planning group, and will send the appointed person copies of the proposed plan, relevant documents and the representations made. The expectation is that examinations of neighbourhood plans will normally be undertaken through written representations. If required the Council will work with the Examiner and relevant parish/neighbourhood council to organise any hearings the Examiner may request.</p> <p><b>Modifications:</b> If an Examiner recommends modifications are made to the plan in order to meet the Basic Conditions prior to proceeding to referendum, the Council will explain and discuss the modifications with the qualifying body. Modifications which are significant material changes may require further consultation or re- examination. It is for the Council to make the final decision on whether to progress the plan or go out to consultation again, reopen the examination or proceed to the referendum stage.</p> <p><b>After the Examination:</b> The Council will publish and share the Examiner’s Report, the Decision Statement and the Neighbourhood Development Plan. If the NDP meets the basic conditions, the Examiner will recommend that it proceeds to Referendum Stage.</p>

<p>Stage 5: Referendum</p>	<p>The Council will arrange for the Referendum in accordance with the timescales set out in legislation unless agreed otherwise by the parish.</p> <p>If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'Yes', the Council will bring the Neighbourhood Plan into legal force.</p> <p>If the plan does not pass Referendum the Council will provide advice on the next steps.</p> <p>The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in mandatory restrictions on movement since March 2020 to prevent transmission of the virus and protect vulnerable groups. The Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus)(Postponement of Elections and Referendums)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020 prevents any referendum on neighbourhood plans being held until 5 May 2021 at the earliest. Government guidance indicates that during this period, following the issue of a decision statement, 'significant weight' can be applied to the plan by the decision maker when considering planning applications.</p>
<p>Stage 6: Making the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)</p>	<p>Once the plan has been brought into legal force, it is considered 'Made'. The Council will then use it to determine planning applications and guide planning decisions in the Neighbourhood area.</p>

- 2.34 If you are interested in getting involved with the production of a Neighbourhood Plan or would like to find out further information, please visit our website:  
<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning>

## Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

### What is CIL?

- 2.35 The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge that local authorities can impose on new development in their area. The money raised can be used for infrastructure that the Council and communities want.
- 2.36 The following table provides details of the CIL Charging Schedule production process and the opportunities for consultation and participation:

Key Stages of Production
Consultation on Final Draft Charging Schedule (Minimum of 4 weeks)
Submission of CIL to Secretary of State
Examination by Independent Planning Inspector (appointed by Secretary of State)
Adoption of Final Charging Schedule by Full Council

- 2.37 The Government has proposed significant changes to the current system of Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 contributions in its White Paper, which was published in August 2020:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907647/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907647/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf)  
Subject to the outcome of any changes to CIL / S106, the Council will take account of these changes once finalised.

### Monitoring and Review

- 2.38 The Council is required to prepare an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for the Local Plan every year. The AMR provides information on the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which the planning policies set out in the Local Plan are being achieved. The AMR also sets out the Council's latest position in terms of five year housing land supply.
- 2.39 The Statement of Community Involvement will be reviewed every five years unless there are changes to legislation, Government guidance or local circumstances that indicate an earlier review is required.

## Statement of Community Involvement

### Part 3 – Development Management

#### What is Development Management?

- 3.1 Development Management is a positive, proactive approach to shaping, considering, determining and delivering development proposals in a local area to achieve the local planning vision and objectives.
- 3.2 The Development Management team are responsible for determining planning applications across the District and also operate an agency arrangement with the South Downs National Park Authority. This means that the majority of applications within the part of the National Park which fall within the district of Horsham are dealt with by the Development Management Team on behalf of the National Park Authority.
- 3.3 Decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with Development Plan documents, which include 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans unless additional material considerations indicate otherwise.

#### Pre-application Planning Advice

- 3.4 We offer a comprehensive pre-application planning advice service where we discuss and provide a professional input into proposals before the submission of an application. Advice can be provided in writing, via a meeting, as well as a general non-site specific advice service over the telephone. Further information can be found online: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/Pre-Application-Planning-Advice>

#### Pre-application Consultation

- 3.5 Pre-application consultation is carried out by or on behalf of the applicant / developer before a planning application is submitted to the local authority. Seeking pre-application advice is strongly encouraged and is a best practice approach, as set out within Government guidance. The pre-application process can identify potential problems or improvements that could be made to proposals at an early stage. We recommend that any development scheme is developed involving consultation with local residents, organisations and other key stakeholders in addition to the Council and prior to submitting any planning applications for major developments and other complex developments, which would invoke significant public interest. The applicant should consider the outcome of any public consultation to help inform the submission of any planning application.
- 3.6 Local residents can benefit from this by providing their input to help ensure the development is acceptable in planning terms. It can also assist developers by understanding the communities' aspirations and reducing the scope for objections at a later stage.

- 3.7 Developers undertaking pre-application consultation with local communities and stakeholders are asked to address the following:
- Set clear objectives and agree the consultation approach with the Development Management Team, including who will be consulted.
  - Let people know what the scheme is proposing, and be clear about what they can influence when making comments.
  - Use different engagement approaches to maximise opportunities for people to influence the proposals. In particular steps should be taken to involve any seldom-heard groups that could be affected by a proposal.
  - Submit a statement alongside the final planning application outlining the community involvement work that has been undertaken. This should include a summary of any responses received at consultation, and should explain how feedback has influenced the proposals.
  - When developers are proposing to amend a scheme which already has permission they are still encouraged to undertake pre-application consultation with the Council, local communities and stakeholder. They are also requested to submit a statement as part of a final application clearly setting out what the proposed changes are.

## **Planning Application Publicity**

- 3.8 When a planning application is received and once valid there is a statutory period of 21 days during which anyone with an interest can comment on a proposal. The Council is only statutorily required to publicise certain types of applications but will ensure that these are appropriately published. Our approach to notification of planning application is to:
- Produce a Weekly List of registered planning applications which is available to view through the online planning service 'Public Access' which can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/view-and-comment-on-planning-application>
  - Advertise relevant applications in a local newspaper.
  - Publish details of all planning applications online with supporting documents and plans. Applications can be searched by address, individual application number, and advanced search options are available.
  - Consult all parish/neighbourhood councils, statutory consultees and other relevant organisations on applications within their parish/neighbourhood or administrative area.
  - Undertake notification according to the type of application; methods of notification may include adjoining neighbour notifications and/or displaying site notices.
- 3.9 The legal requirements for consultation on submitted planning applications is set by the Government in legislation including The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order (2015) as amended.
- 3.10 Where revised plans are submitted as part of an application these will be given a reduced consultation period if re-consultation is required.

3.11 Applicants are required to publicise applications where:

- An environmental statement is submitted, after the application has been made to the Council
- Certain types of development for agriculture, forestry and for the demolition of buildings

## Commenting on a Planning Application

3.12 We welcome any comments, whether in support of an application or objection to it, but in making a decision we can only take account of planning considerations. Comments must be submitted to the Council within the 21 day consultation. Comments received after the consultation period has expired will be taken in to account wherever possible up to the point that the application is determined.

3.13 Comments **received in response to a planning application are a matter of public record and cannot be treated as confidential**. The Council reserve the right not to publish any comments or parts of comments that are not considered suitable for the public to view. These include comments that are offensive, personal or of a defamatory nature.

3.14 We collect your name, address, email address and telephone number when you make a comment. We use the data you give us to verify your identity and to help ensure that the process of making comments is not left open to abuse.

3.15 Since the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) we do not publish the name of a person making a comment. We will also not publish your email address, telephone number or signature to the public.

3.16 The content of comments form part of the Statutory Register and we have a duty to make this information available to the public. Comments can be made online via the following link: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/view-and-comment-on-planning-application>

**By Email:** [planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@horsham.gov.uk) or

**By post:** Development Management, Horsham District Council, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, RH12 1RL

## What can I Comment on?

3.17 If you comment on a planning application it is important that your comments relate to planning matters, as it is only these matters that can be taken into account by the Council when making a decision. Some of the issues considered to be planning matters are:

- External appearance and design
- Highway safety, traffic and parking issues
- Impact of street scene or character of the local area
- Issues of noise, privacy, disturbance and amenity
- Drainage
- Overbearing or overshadowing
- Loss of trees or impact on conservation areas

*This list is for guidance only and is not exhaustive; there may be other relevant issues that you would like to comment on that are material to planning.*

3.18 Some issues are not regarded as planning matters and are not usually taken into account when reaching a planning decision. These include the following:

- Loss of private view
- Property value
- Possible future uses outside the scope of the application
- Private property matters such as boundary and ownership disputes, covenants or private rights of way
- Personal matters relating to the identity of the applicant
- Moral issues or applicant's motives
- Matters covered by other legislation such as building regulations, licensing or restrictive covenants

## Making a Decision

3.19 Planning applications are determined according to the Development Plan and other material considerations. Often, planning permission may be granted subject to conditions to ensure that the development is acceptable, or to prevent certain impacts or activities arising from the proposal.

3.20 There are two ways decisions are made on planning applications determined by the Council: Planning Committee and delegated decisions:

**Delegated Decisions** – The Council receives a large volume of applications each year, and it is impractical for all applications to be determined by the Planning Committee. Planning legislation permits the Council to delegate the determination of certain planning applications and other types of planning related applications to officers rather than the Planning Committee.

**Planning Committee** – The Planning Committee comprises elected councillors and is responsible for making decisions on applications received by the Council, excluding those which fall within delegated powers in accordance with the Council's constitution.

3.21 The constitution states that the following criteria must be met to elevate a planning application to be determined at planning committee:

- Where the Head of Development considers the application should be presented to the Planning Committee for a decision.
- The case officer recommendation is contrary to the view of the relevant Parish or Neighbourhood Council and the Parish or Neighbourhood Council has requested the opportunity to address the Committee.
- A Councillor requests that the applications be determined by the Committee and this request is made in writing within 35 days of the validation of the application.
- Where eight or more persons in different households or bodies from within the District make a written representation (to include email), which discloses a material planning consideration within the consultation period and is inconsistent with the Development Manager's recommendation.
- The decision would conflict with the Council's planning policy (i.e. it would be a 'departure' from the Development Plan).

- 3.22 Please note that there are certain types of applications, which are not planning applications, and which given their minor nature or the legal framework for their decision making will not be determined by planning committee.
- 3.23 Please note that this is a simplified list and subject to change. Up-to-date decision making procedures are set out in the Council's constitution which will always take precedence. For further information view the Constitution online at:
- <https://horsham.moderngov.co.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=Constitution&ID=233&RPID=109197>
- 3.24 Committee reports are available five working days before Committee. On applications reported to Committee the Council operates a policy of public speaking provided that you are registered to speak no later than 12.00 noon on the last but one working day before the day of the meeting. Please refer to the Constitution, a link to which is provided above, for full details on public speaking at meetings of the Council.

### **Notification of Decisions**

- 3.25 Once a decision has been made on an application, either by the Planning Committee or by delegation, the Council will notify the applicant/agent of the Council's decision.
- 3.26 All decision notices are made available for inspection at the Council offices and are available to view on our website through the Public Access system as well as the accompanying officer reports, which set out the planning considerations and recommendation for approval or refusal.

### **Appeals**

- 3.27 If an application is refused or not determined within statutory timeframes, the applicant may exercise their right to appeal. When the Council is notified of an appeal by the Planning Inspectorate, the Council will notify interested parties of the appeal and provide a copy of comments made on the application to the Planning Inspectorate. Interested parties will be advised on how they can participate in the appeal process, including the venue and time of any informal hearing or public inquiry.

## Contact Us

3.28 Please find below a list of useful contact details:

<b>Section</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Strategic Planning	01403 215398	strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk
Neighbourhood Planning	01403 215129	neighbourhood.planning@horsham.gov.uk
Development Management	01403 215187	planning@horsham.gov.uk

**Postal Address:** Horsham District Council, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH121RL  
**[www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk)**