

Report to Cabinet

22 September 2016

By the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development

KEY DECISION



**Horsham
District
Council**

Not Exempt

Draft Statement of Community Involvement

Executive Summary

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory document which sets out the ways in which the council will engage with residents, communities, businesses, local organisations and other groups to ensure as many people as possible are able to have a say in planning decisions that affect them.

The document provides guidance on how the planning system works and advises the manner in which the council will inform, consult and involve people in planning decisions within Horsham District, excluding the area within the South Downs National Park.

The current SCI was reviewed in 2013. In response to changes in the planning system and feedback from consultation bodies an updated and revised SCI is now required.

A draft Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared for public consultation.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve the following recommendations:

- i) To approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement, attached at Appendix 1, for a 6 week period of public consultation.
- ii) That the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development has delegated authority to agree minor editorial changes prior to publication.

Reasons for Recommendations

- i) To enable the draft SCI, which satisfies current legislation, to go forward for consultation
- ii) To undertake minor editorial or typographical amendments.

Background Papers: Statement of Community Involvement (2013)

Wards affected: All

Contact: Dr Chris Lyons, Director of Planning, Economic Development & Property,
Barbara Childs, Head of Strategic Planning & Sustainability

Background Information

1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 It is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for a local authority to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The document sets out the standards to be met by the authority in terms of community involvement, building upon the minimum requirements set out in Planning Regulations.
- 1.2 The current SCI was reviewed in November 2013 and incorporated minor editorial changes which were made under Delegated approval. In light of changes to the planning system, (for example updated planning legislation now refers to Local Plans rather than Local Development Frameworks) and recent feedback from consultation bodies, a revision and update of the authority's SCI is needed.
- 1.3 The draft SCI seeks to address these changes and update the Council's commitment to community involvement throughout the planning process. The updated SCI has been reviewed to reflect 'plain English' guidance and the Council's own communication guidelines. The SCI is public statement which lets communities and organisations know when and how they can be involved in both the preparation of planning policy documents and decisions on planning applications.

2 Relevant Council policy

- 2.1 The Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) provides the policy framework for future strategic planning in the district. It informs the public of the location of future strategic development and provides a timeframe in which development will take place.
- 2.2 The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.
- 2.3 In addition to the requirements of Planning Regulations the SCI must take into account those of the Constitution. The document should address the consultation requirements for planning applications, as well as any future Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents as set out in the Local Development Scheme.

3 Details

- 3.1 Following the adoption of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) in November 2015 and recent feedback from consultation bodies, the SCI has been redrafted for consultation.
- 3.2 A revised SCI has been developed through discussions with relevant sections of the Council, including the Strategic Planning & Sustainability Team and Development

Management, as well as taking into account the consultation feedback received to date. It is attached at Appendix 1 of this report.

3.3 It is a requirement under the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2008 to notify 'specific bodies' of the intention to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement and invite representations about what the content of the statement may be.

3.4 The draft SCI has been produced in order to seek the views of these specific consultation bodies. It will also be publically available on the website and in local libraries. A six week period of consultation on the draft SCI is proposed.

4 Next Steps

4.1 If agreed, the draft SCI will be published for a six week period of consultation from 23 September 2016– 4 November 2016. All representations received will be analysed and incorporated, where appropriate, into the final SCI, which will be reported to Cabinet on 24 November 2016 for approval for future use.

5 Views of the Policy Development Advisory Group and Outcome of Consultations

5.1 The Planning & Development Policy Development Advisory Group considered the draft SCI on 8 September 2016 and endorsed its contents subject to the wording on the Council's constitution being clarified. This updated wording has now been inserted.

5.2 The Monitoring Officer and the Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted during the preparation of the document and they support its contents.

6 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected

6.1 The Council could continue to rely on the existing SCI from 2013. However, this document is out of date and therefore this course of action is not recommended.

7 Resource Consequences

7.1 There are no financial or staffing consequences.

8 Legal Consequences

8.1 There are no legal implications of this report.

9 Risk Assessment

9.1 Updating the existing SCI will reduce the risk of challenge to the adoption of new planning policy and decisions made on planning applications.

10 Other Considerations

10.1 If the consultation is not agreed and does not go ahead, the Council will not be able to develop an up to-date SCI. This could result in a risk of any future Development

Plan Document being found 'unsound' by the Inspector during an examination in public.