

Meeting	<b>CABINET</b>
Time/Day/Date	5.00 pm on Tuesday, 13 January 2015
Location	Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

All persons present are reminded that the meeting may be recorded and by attending this meeting you are giving your consent to being filmed and your image being used. You are kindly requested to make it known to the Chairman if you intend to film or record this meeting.

The Monitoring Officer would like to remind members that when they are considering whether the following items are exempt information under the relevant paragraph under part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 they must have regard to the public interest test. This means that members must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available to the public.

## AGENDA

Item	Pages
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>	
<b>3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION</b>	
<b>4. MINUTES</b>	
Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2014	<b>3 - 6</b>
<b>5. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</b>	
Report of the Director of Services Presented by the Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder	<b>7 - 70</b>
<b>6. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2015/16</b>	
Report of the Head of Finance Presented by the Corporate Portfolio Holder	<b>71 - 78</b>



## **7. IMPROVING OUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Report of the Chief Executive  
Presented by the Leader

**79 - 86**

Circulation:

R D Bayliss  
R Blunt (Chairman)  
T Gillard  
T J Pendleton  
N J Rushton  
A V Smith MBE

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2014

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T Gillard, T J Pendleton, N J Rushton and A V Smith MBE

In Attendance: Councillors D De Lacy and J Legrys

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Mr R Bowmer, Ms C E Fisher, Mrs C Hammond, Mr G Jones and Miss E Warhurst

### **73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

### **74. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor R Blunt declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in item 9 - Recycling Credits, as a Member of the Cabinet at Leicestershire County Council and would leave the meeting for the consideration of this item.

Councillor N J Rushton stated that should the debate on item 5 – Capital Programmes – General Fund, Coalville Special Expenses and Housing Revenue Account (H.R.A). Projected Outturn 2014/15 and Draft Programmes 2015/16 to 2019/20 go into detail relating to the operations of the market he would declare a disclosable pecuniary interest, as the owner of the indoor market in Ashby de la Zouch and would leave the meeting.

### **75. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no public questions received.

### **76. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**Reason for decision:** To comply with the Constitution.

### **77. CAPITAL PROGRAMMES - GENERAL FUND, COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (H.R.A). PROJECTED OUTTURN 2014/15 AND DRAFT PROGRAMMES 2015/16 TO 2019/20**

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He highlighted the details in the report and advised Members that Policy Development Group would consider the report on 7 January 2015 and Cabinet would be asked to approve its final recommendations on 10 February 2015.

Councillor R D Bayliss highlighted that it was planned to invest £5.29 million in improving tenants homes for 2015/16.

Councillor A V Smith advised Members that, through Section 106 contributions, a wellbeing centre would be developed at Hood Park Leisure Centre which would include refurbishment of the dry side changing rooms.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. Cabinet approves the projected outturn for the General Fund, Coalville Special Expenses and H.R.A. Capital Programmes for 2014/15 and planned financing.
2. Cabinet approves for consultation the draft capital programmes in 2015/16 detailed in:
  - Appendix "A" General Fund and Special Expenses Capital Schemes
  - Appendix "B" for HRA Capital Schemes.

**Reason for decision:** To enable projects to be included in the Programmes for consultation.

## **78. EAST MIDLANDS GATEWAY STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE - LOCAL IMPACT REPORT**

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He thanked the Senior Planning Officer for his hard work on the report and highlighted to Members that the development would provide the creation of jobs for the area, see improvements to the highways infrastructure and improve air quality. He drew Members' attention to the additional information that had been circulated prior to the meeting and advised that the comments made were not planning issues and therefore did not affect the recommendations before them.

In response to the concerns raised by Long Whatton and Diseworth Parish Council, the Director of Services advised Members that at this stage Cabinet was being asked to agree the views of the Council and that the Parish Councils had the opportunity to register their views separately. He also added that the Community Fund would form part of the Section 106 Agreement which was a separate ongoing process, but assistance would be provided to the Parishes where needed to apply for the fund.

Councillor N J Rushton stated that any assistance to the Parish Council would be very useful.

It was moved by Councillor T J Pendleton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

Cabinet agree:

1. To support the contents and findings of the Local Impact Report and confirm that it is appropriate to submit when required by the examining body;
2. To delegate authority to the Director of Services in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to provide a representation to the examining authority supporting the development proposals.

**Reason for decision:** To enable Cabinet to determine the contents of the Local Impact Report which assesses the key impacts on the District as well as a determination as to whether the District Council submit a separate representation either supporting or objecting to the development proposals.

**79. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE-OFFS**

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

Following a question from Councillor R Blunt, the Section 151 Officer advised Members that although collection rates had been below target in the first part of the financial year they were improving and should be on target by the year end.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. Cabinet approves the write offs over £10,000 detailed in this report.
2. Cabinet notes the amounts written off under delegated powers.

**Reason for decision:** To comply with proper accounting practices.

Having declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in item 9 Councillor R Blunt left the meeting and Councillor A V Smith took the chair for the remainder of the meeting

**80. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**Reason for decision:** To enable the consideration of exempt information.

**81. RECYCLING CREDITS**

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

She advised Members that since the September meeting the Council had been served the Direction from the County Council and that Cabinet was being asked to agree to further work being carried out by officers on the use of the contingency sum that they had agreed in September and prepare options on the future recycling collections policy that would be reported back to Cabinet at a later date.

Following questions from Member, The Director of Services advised Members that whilst the District Council was the collecting authority there was no statutory obligation to collect green waste separately to other waste. He added that under the current arrangements, the District Council collects the green waste separately which means the waste is recycled and not disposed of via landfill and therefore creates a saving for the County Council as disposal authority as it does not incur landfill tax charges. These savings are then

currently shared with the District Council as recycling credits and it is these credit payments that the County Council proposes to withdraw. He stated that a further report would be brought to Cabinet detailing the future options for the District.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

Cabinet:

1. Notes the Green Waste Direction served on the Council by Leicestershire County Council on 21 November 2014;
2. Agrees the officers should do further work on this matter and report back to Cabinet once this has been done, which will include recommendations as to the use of the £300,000 contingency sum in the Medium Term Financial Strategy which was previously set aside to mitigate the loss of green waste recycling credits in 2015/16;
3. Notes that officers will also prepare an options report for Cabinet on the future Recycling Collections Policy taking into account the financial implications of Leicestershire County Council's future intentions for recycling credits.

**Reason for decision:** For Cabinet to note the potential financial impact of the withdrawal of recycling credits from 15/16 onwards.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.20 pm

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 13 JANUARY 2015**

Title of report	<b>STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</b>
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 <a href="mailto:trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Director of Services 01530 454555 <a href="mailto:steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Head of Planning and Regeneration 01530 454782 <a href="mailto:jim.newton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">jim.newton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>
Purpose of report	To agree a new Statement of Community Involvement.
Reason for Decision	In accordance with the Council's constitution Cabinet is required to approve the new Statement of Community Involvement
Council Priorities	Value for Money Businesses and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprint Challenge
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The production of a new Statement of Community Involvement has been met from existing staff and financial resources.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	A failure to engage effectively and constructively in the preparation of the Local Plan and in determining planning applications could leave the Council vulnerable to challenge. Having an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement will help to minimise this risk.
Equalities Impact Screening	The Statement of Community Involvement has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.
Human Rights	No discernible impact

Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	<p>Consultation responses, copies of which are held by the Planning Policy Team in Room 102.</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework which can be found at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building">www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building</a></p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 which can found at <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/pdfs/uksi_20120767_en.pdf">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/pdfs/uksi_20120767_en.pdf</a></p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 which can be found at <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2184/contents/made">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2184/contents/made</a></p>
Recommendation	<p><b>THAT CABINET:</b></p> <p><b>1 NOTES THE RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SET OUT IN APPENDIX B AND;</b></p> <p><b>2 AGREES TO THE ADOPTION OF THE NEW STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX A.</b></p>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that in the preparation of Local Plans *“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential”*.
- 1.2 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 North West Leicestershire District Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).



- 1.3 The purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is to set out how the Council will involve the local community, businesses, key organisations and others in preparing its Local Plans, other important planning documents and in processing planning applications.
- 1.4 At its meeting on 29 April 2014 the Local Planning Advisory Committee considered a report in respect of the need to prepare a new SCI.
- 1.5 A further report was taken to the Local Planning Advisory Committee on 3 June 2014 who noted that it was proposed to undertake a consultation in respect of the new Local Plan and the SCI in the summer of 2014.

## **2.0 CONSULTATION ON STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 2.1 Consultation on the Local Plan and the SCI was undertaken between 20 June and 19 September 2014.
- 2.2 As part of the consultation key stakeholders were notified of the Council's intention to prepare a new SCI and views were sought on a range of matters. In addition, a short consultation document (Appendix C) was placed on the Council's website, and the consultation was promoted as widely as possible. Leaflets and posters were distributed via the Community Focus Team and in local libraries. In addition, the consultation was widely promoted on the NWLDC website and through social media.
- 2.3 Officers also attended three events to promote the Local Plan and the SCI, these were:
- Heart of the Forest Festival (Measham - Leisure Centre grounds) 21 June 2014
  - Picnic in the Park (Coalville – Coalville Park) 29 June 2014
  - Music in the Park (Castle Donington – Spital Park) 6 July 2014.
- 2.4 A key aspect of the consultation in respect of the SCI was to try and gain a better understanding of how individuals wanted to engage in the planning process, both in terms of the Local Plan but also the determination of planning applications. The consultation document referred to above set out 12 specific questions, which were aimed at different sections of the community including residents, businesses and town and parish councils.
- 2.5 A total of 9 responses were received in respect of the SCI the consultation from:
- Parish Councils
  - agencies and bodies and
  - members of the public
- 2.6 A summary of the responses to each of the 12 questions set out in the consultation document is attached at Appendix B to this report.
- 2.7 A report was taken to the Local Planning Advisory Committee on 12 November 2014 outlining for members the response to this recent consultation in respect of a new SCI. It noted that a new SCI will be prepared and considered for approval by the Council's Cabinet.

2.8 Members were also advised, that when preparing the new SCI, reference would be made to the existing SCI (2006) and changes considered appropriate would be made.

### **3.0 THE NEW STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

3.1 The new SCI is attached at Appendix A to this report. Furthermore, the Council is able to adopt its own SCI without it being submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. This reflects the spirit of 'localism' that underpins the current planning system.

3.2 In preparing the new SCI, consideration and reference has been made to the following and appropriate changes have been incorporated within the document:

- Changes in legislation, regulation and national policies (for example, by referring to Local Plans rather than Local Development Frameworks, revocation of the Regional Plan and reference to Neighbourhood Plans).
- Use of social media to enhance consultation and engagement particularly, now that the Council no longer publishes the Vision magazine as a means of communication with local communities. Since the existing SCI was adopted there have been significant developments in the field of social media (e.g. facebook, twitter etc) which provides a different way of communication and engaging with people.
- How the Council will engage in respect of consultation on planning applications, including the use of online consultation which was not available at the time the SCI was adopted and the use of e-consultation with Parish and Town Councils.
- Responses received in response to the SCI consultation (Summer 2014).

### **4.0 NEXT STEPS**

4.1 Members approval is sought for the adopted of the attached SCI. Once adopted the SCI will be displayed on the Council's website.

4.2 The SCI satisfies the statutory requirements for consultation and engagement and also seeks to exceed these requirements where appropriate. When the Local Plan is at the stage of being examined the Planning Inspector will consider whether the Council has adhered to the SCI when preparing the plan.

4.3 Once adopted it will provide the framework which will be used to guide all future consultation on planning matters. A specific community engagement plan will be prepared for the new Local Plan based on the new SCI.

### SECTION A: INTRODUCTON AND BACKGROUND

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning shapes the places where people live and work, so it is right that people should be able to take an active part in the process.

1.2 The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) (March 2012) highlights the importance of engagement with our communities in plan-making and states that:

“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that have been made.” (Paragraph 155)

1.3 In addition, Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) under section 18 (Part 1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

1.4 In making decisions as part of the plan making or planning application process the outcome of engagement will be taken in to account alongside all other material considerations.

#### **What is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?**

1.5 The main purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is to set out how the community, business and other organisations with an interest in the development of the District can engage with the planning system. It explains how North West Leicestershire District Council will engage and consult the community and other interested individuals and organisations in the production of new Development Plan Documents (DPDs), including the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and when dealing with planning applications.

1.6 The SCI provides a framework for future consultation and community engagement. It is not prescriptive. The approach to consultation will vary depending upon circumstances and therefore a flexible approach to all future consultations is required. Certain requirements for consultation and engagement on plan-making and planning applications are set out in legislation. The SCI satisfies these statutory requirements and also seeks to exceed these requirements where appropriate whilst also having regard to available resources.

### **Why is a new SCI required?**

- 1.7 The current adopted SCI (2006) was prepared at a time when the Council was working on producing its Local Development Framework and was preparing the North West Leicestershire District Council Core Strategy. However there have been considerable changes to the plan making system since then, including the replacement of 'Local Development Frameworks' with 'Local Plans'.
- 1.8 Legislative changes have led to the minimum legal requirements for consultation on Local Plans (and other Development Plan Documents) and in the determination of planning applications being changed. Therefore the existing SCI no longer reflects the new stages of plan preparation or requirements for consulting on planning applications. A new SCI will allow for these changes to be incorporated.
- 1.9 Furthermore, we are now preparing a new Local Plan for North West Leicestershire which will contain the planning policies and proposals that will shape the future of the district over the next 15-20 years. It is therefore considered a suitable time to review the current SCI alongside the preparation of the new Local Plan.
- 1.10 In addition an updated SCI allows the Council to change its approach on consultation based on experience gained since the production of the existing SCI.
- 1.11 An initial consultation was carried out seeking views on the possible contents of a revised SCI during June 2014 to September 2014. Comments received have been used to inform the preparation of this revised SCI.

### **How is the statement set out?**

- 1.12 Section A sets the background and context for the SCI, including legal requirements and explaining how communities, and other individual and organisations, can be involved in the planning process.
- 1.13 Section B deals with plan-making, providing details on who the Council will consult, as well as when and how we will consult and engage with communities and stakeholders.
- 1.14 Section C explains how planning applications are dealt with and outlines the District Council's consultation arrangements.
- 1.15 Section D provides an overview of the role and process of Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 1.16 A glossary of terminology that has been used is provided within Appendix I.

## 2 WHAT IS PLANNING?

- 2.1 The purpose of the planning system is to manage the use and development of land and buildings. It is how we as a society strike a balance between allowing development to support economic development and provide the things we need like homes, jobs, shops and transport whilst conserving our heritage and the environment.

The planning system has two main parts to it:

- Plan making (Planning Policy) and
- Managing Development (Planning Applications)

### **Plan-Making**

- 2.2 The purpose of plan making is to set out how an area will develop over time and to provide a guide for future development. Development Plan Documents (DPDs) will set out the policies for development within the district. When making decisions on planning applications, they are made having regard to our adopted DPD unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

### National Planning Policy

- 2.3 National Planning Policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), together with the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). These documents provide advice on how the national policies should be applied and also provide guidance for local authorities, both in preparing DPDs and making decisions on planning applications.

### Duty to Co-operate

- 2.4 There is also a 'Duty to Co-operate' in the plan making process as defined in Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011. It is a requirement for the Council to engage with its partners, such as neighbouring authorities and other statutory bodies to consider joint approaches to plan making. North West Leicestershire District Council is committed to meeting this duty and is actively working with neighbouring authorities and other statutory bodies, and will continue to do so, throughout the plan-making process. See Appendix A for a list of the Duty to Co-operate bodies.

### Local Policy

#### *Development Plan Documents*

- 2.5 Development Plan Documents (DPDs) set out the District's policies for development. The Development Plan comprises of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which form the legal basis for all future planning decisions in the district. DPDS must be consistent with and have regard to national planning policy.

- 2.6 The key and main DPD for the District Council is the Local Plan. This will set out the planning strategy, policies and proposal for the district; it will set out how the area will develop and change in the long term and will:
- Provide a vision for the future of the area, based on evidence of what is needed and what makes the local area distinctive
  - Provide priorities and policies to guide future development
  - Allocate land for housing, employment, retail and other uses.

Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan (i.e. the Local Plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 2.7 The current North West Leicestershire Local Plan was adopted in 2002 and so parts of it are out of date. Therefore a new, up to date plan is being prepared that will guide future planning decisions and be in line with current national planning guidance.

#### *Supplementary Planning Documents*

- 2.8 We can also produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to add greater detail to policies in the Local Plan. These can be area or topic based. Although SPDs do not have the same status as the Local Plan they can be a material consideration when making planning application and making planning decisions.

#### *Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*

- 2.9 All DPDs must be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and most DPDs and some SPDs to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the latter normally being incorporated into the former. The Sustainability Appraisal seeks to assess the environment, social and economic effects of the implementation of the policies contained in the documents or the effects of not having these policies. The SEA only considers the environmental implications of policies and proposals in a DPD.
- 2.10 The Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of Local Plan preparation and its outputs will be consulted upon during the various consultation periods

#### Neighbourhood Plan Policy

##### *Neighbourhood Plans*

- 2.11 A Neighbourhood Plan is a community prepared plan which enables local people to guide the future of the area they live and work in. It is prepared by communities themselves with the support of the Council and will form part of the Statutory Local Plan alongside the Local Plan. Two types of body – town and parish councils or neighbourhood forums, can take neighbourhood planning forward. Neighbourhood forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.

- 2.12 Neighbourhood Plans can allocate land for the development, or include policies to guide development, for example, by seeking to protect important local green spaces. These plans must be in conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan and have regard to national planning policy. As from April 2012 Neighbourhood Plans become part of the legal planning framework therefore if they are approved, planning decisions for that area have to be made in line with what they say, as well as the Local Plan for the area.

### **Managing Development**

- 2.13 Most new development, building work and how land and buildings are used, are managed through the process of planning permission. We are responsible for the determination of planning applications for such works. We receive about 1,000 applications per year which range from householder extensions and minor applications to large-scale proposals that include new housing, employment, retail and other development. The Local Plan is the most important consideration in deciding planning applications and planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development (i.e. the Local Plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **3 WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO BE INVOLVED IN PLANNING?**

- 3.1 For the plans that we prepare and the planning applications that are submitted to us to decide, we must consult and engage with people and organisations in making our decisions.

#### **Plan Making**

- 3.2 The Local Plan has to be widely consulted upon and there is a formal process of consultation that all Local Plans need to go through with fixed deadlines. Minimum requirements for engagement are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (The Regulations). There are different stages in the preparation of a Local Plan and there are different opportunities to have a say throughout.

- 3.3 The nature of community involvement will vary depending on the type of planning policy document being produced. For example;

- Development Plan Documents - these must go through specific stages of community involvement before being submitted to a Government Inspector for examination and decision;
- Supplementary Planning Documents - these will also be subject to public consultation (but no independent examination) but will be adopted by the Council itself.

- 3.4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ('The Regulations') sets out the three stages of plan production where some consultation or engagement is required, these are:

- Preparation of a Local Plan (Regulation 18)
- Publication of a Local Plan (Regulations 19)
- Representations relating to a Local Plan (Regulation 20); and
- Submission of a Local Plan and information to the Secretary of State (Regulation 22)

- 3.5 In terms of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) the Regulations set out the two stages of plan production where some consultation or engagement is required, these are:

- Public participation (Regulation 12) and;
- Adoption of supplementary planning documents (Regulation 14)

#### **Managing Development**

- 3.6 Once any planning application has been received and recorded, we will take steps to publicise it, consult and invite comments. The nature, scale and type of planning application will determine how we will engage with the Community. Minimum requirements are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 (DMPO).



### **What is the role of Councillors in the planning system?**

- 3.7 Councillors have an extremely important role to play in the planning process, both as decision makers and as somebody who will represent the views of local people. Before the Local Plan can be submitted for independent examination it must be agreed by a meeting of all Councillors. A number of Councillors also sit on the Local Plan Advisory Committee, which enables cross-party discussion, guidance and support for the development of the Local Plan.
- 3.8 With respect to planning applications, some of these will be determined by the Planning Committee. Although not all Councillors are members of the Planning Committee they can attend the meeting and make representations on behalf of local people.
- 3.9 Councillors will also help you to understand the planning process and assist you to respond to consultations on the Local Plan or planning applications. They will also communicate your views to officers and other councillors so as to ensure that all views are taken into account when determining how the council should proceed.
- 3.10 You can discuss any concerns or views you have with a councillor over the telephone or meet them in person. Councillors have regular surgeries which provide an opportunity for any resident to go and talk to their ward councillor face to face. If you cannot attend a surgery then councillors will try and meet with you separately. You can also write to councillors using either email or a letter.
- 3.11 Information about which councillors represent which area together with information about how you can contact them can be found on the district council's website at: [www.neleics.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.neleics.gov.uk/councillors).

## SECTION B: PLAN MAKING

### 4 Introduction

- 4.1 This section of the SCI set outs who we will consult, when we will consult and how we will consult when preparing our planning policy documents, both DPDs and SPDs. Minimum requirements for consultation and engagement are set out within the regulations however at certain stages in the preparation of planning policy documents; we have the flexibility to undertake our own process of engagement. The scale and extent of this will vary depending on the subject of the planning document. For example, the Local Plan will require widespread consultation across the District as well as with national and regional bodies, whereas an action plan for a particular area or a supplementary planning document on a specific topic, will be much more specific and targeted in terms of its consultation.

### 5 PLAN MAKING: Who do we consult?

- 5.1 Depending on the type of planning policy document there are a number of 'specific' consultation bodies that we must consult and invite to make representations. We also have the discretion to identify general consultation bodies. However these two lists of bodies are not exhaustive and are also related to successor bodies where re-organisations occur. In addition, legislation and regulations are frequently updated and the list of consultees may change over time as a result.
- 5.2 The Regulations set out the specific consultation bodies that we must consult at defined key stages in the production of a Plan. This includes a range of statutory bodies with responsibilities for the environment, infrastructure and mining. A full list of these 'specific consultation bodies' is set out in Appendix B. In addition we must consult with neighbouring authorities, with this group being more tightly specified and also part of the Duty to Cooperate place on local authorities.
- 5.3 We must also consult 'general' consultation bodies at key stages. The types of bodies on this list who will be involved include:
- Those representing the wider community, including the local strategic partnership, parish council, areas forums, and other community groups;
  - Those representing the business community, including chambers of trade and Network Gold;
  - Special interest groups, such as conservation societies and nature conservation bodies;
  - Hard to Reach Groups
  - Developers and those with property and/or development interests.
  - Voluntary groups and groups representing different ethnic, national or faith groups, and groups representing the interests of local people with disabilities.

The current list is set out in Appendix C.

Those 'general consultation bodies' who are consulted will depend on the nature and subject of the planning policy document being consulted upon. The Council can decide which organisations within these general categories it thinks are appropriate to consult.

- 5.4 In addition to the 'specific' and 'general' consultation bodies, we are committed to involving a wide range of other individuals and organisations including members of the Community and 'hard to reach' groups.
- 5.5 Therefore we will maintain a comprehensive database of individuals, community groups and stakeholder groups, who wish to be informed of the production of development plan documents and plan making. This database will be kept up to date as and when is necessary and will be kept under review. These interested individual and groups are asked to provide details of any changes of address etc to enable the database to be kept up to date.
- 5.6 With respect to Hard to Reach Groups we will use a wide range of consultation techniques in seeking to engage with these groups. A full list of these groups and our approach to consultation is provided in Appendix D.

## 6.0 PLAN-MAKING: When do we consult?

6.1 The section below identifies the minimum legal requirements (as stated within the Regulations) for the stages in the preparation of DPDs and SPDs.

### Development Plan Documents

6.2 There are three main stages of DPD production where some form of consultation or engagement is required by the Regulations. These are summarised below.

**Preparation of a Local Plan (Regulation 18):** At this stage in the process we must consult and invite representations from:

- 'specific' consultation bodies (identified in the Regulations);
- 'general' consultation bodies (identified by the Local Authority), and
- Residents or businesses within the area, who we consider appropriate

Representation will be sought on what a Local Plan ought to contain.

Apart from these requirements there is flexibility open to us as to how we carry out the initial stages of plan production. Plan preparation can be an informal and ongoing process and involvement will be possible up to the publication of the Local Plan. However there will be at least one 'formal consultation' period during the Local Plan Preparation stage, normally with a 6-12 week consultation period.

**Publication of a Local Plan (Regulations 19 & 20):** The publication stage plan is the plan which we consider ready for examination. Before the plan is submitted we will publish the plan together with associated documents for representations to be made, for a period of not less than 6 weeks. These documents will be made available at the Council Offices and other defined appropriate places. The Council will invite interested parties (in addition to the specific and general consultation bodies) to make formal representations at this stage. This is the final stage in the process when formal representations on the Local Plan can be made to the Council.

**Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State (Regulation 22):** A copy of the Local Plan and associated documents is submitted to the Secretary of State for 'examination' and an Independent Inspector is appointed to examine the soundness of the plan. The Inspector will also be provided with the formal representations made at the previous publication stage.

It is also at this stage that a Programme Officer will be appointed to assist the Inspector with procedural and administrative matters, organise the Hearing session of the examination and act as a channel of communication between the Inspector, the Council and representors. The Programme Officer is not an officer of the Council, but works under the direction of the Inspector.

The Programme Officer will notify each of the general and specific consultation bodies advising that the documents are available for inspection and where, as well as give notice of submission, to those who requested to be notified. Please note that this is not a stage where we carry out a formal consultation.

**Independent Examination (Regulation 24):** The Planning Inspectorate will notify the council of the date for the Examination in Public (EIP) in order to carry out an examination into the Plan's 'Soundness'. The Programme Officer will notify any person who has made a representation on the pre-submission consultation (Regulation 20) of the date, time, place and name of the Inspector at least six weeks before the opening of the hearing. The Plan is 'examined' by the Inspector to ensure that it is 'sound' and that the appropriate legal and procedural requirements have been met. Please note that this is not a stage where we carry out a formal consultation.

**Adoption (regulation 26):** As soon as reasonably practicable after we adopt a local plan we will make the plan and associated documents available for inspection at the Council Offices and other defined appropriate places. We will also send a copy of the adoption statement to any person who has asked to be notified on the adoption of the Local Plan as well as to the specific and general consultation bodies.

- 6.3 The Consultation Table 1 in Appendix E summarises the key stages of consultation for DPDs. It explains what these stages are, who will be consulted, when and how. This table will form the basis of how the Council will conduct its consultation on Development Plan Documents.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 6.4 The Council will occasionally produce Supplementary Planning Documents to add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan, as well as other DPDS. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) can be area or topic based and is capable of being a material consideration in a planning decision.
- 6.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) states that SPDs should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery. They should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.

**Scoping and Evidence Gathering** – this is not a formal stage that is required in the Regulations. However this stage allows document preparation to begin with evidence gathering from a variety of sources, with a view to identifying possible issues and options. This stage is also likely to involve informal consultation with stakeholders and interested parties, considered appropriate to the subject matter of the SPD.

**Publication Stage (Public Participation) (Regulation 12)** – Copies of the SPD will be made available for not less than 4 weeks at the Council offices and other defined places and on the Council's website. The Council will also invite representations from those individuals and bodies considered appropriate having regard to the lists of specific and

general consultation bodies. This stage is the formal consultation stage when comments are invited on the draft SPD.

**Adoption (Regulation 14)** –Representations received will be considered and when we are satisfied with the content and form of the document, it will be presented to Cabinet for adoption. Once adopted a SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 6.6 The Consultation Table 2 in Appendix E summarises the key stages of consultation for SPDs. It explains what these stages are, who will be consulted, when and how. This table will form the basis of how the Council will conduct its consultation on Development Plan Documents.

## 7 PLAN MAKING: How do we consult?

7.1 The Council recognises that there are different elements to engagement, including

- Providing information, in a variety of ways e.g. in writing, website and social media
- Undertaking consultation – the Council asking for views or comments on what you think about a policy or proposal,
- Participation – active involvement in something such as discussions or workshop etc and;
- Feedback – identifying or explaining how responses received have informed the production of a piece of work such as a DPD.

7.2 In the case of planning policy documents, there is a distinction between ‘formal stages’ of plan production (where the nature of consultation is governed by the Regulations) and ‘ongoing informal consultation and engagement’ with the Community as part of the development and assessment of emerging options and where there is more freedom about how we engage..

### **What are the Legal Requirements?**

7.3 The minimum legal requirements concerning ‘how’ the Council must consult on Development Plan Documents are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012) (The Regulations). These specify the following:

#### Plan Preparation (Regulation 18)

7.4 Notify and invite comments from the specific and general consultation bodies as well as residents or other persons with an interest in the district. To meet these requirements the specific and general bodies along with residents and business will be informed, by letter or e-mail during this stage of plan preparation.

#### Publication of a Local Plan (Regulation 19 & 20)

7.5 We are required to publicise the version of the Local Plan that we intend to submit for examination. This is to provide opportunity for representations to be made that can be considered at examination.

7.6 The regulations also specify that the document must be made available for inspection. We will meet this requirement by making the Local Plan document and supporting documents available in defined locations, including:

- At the Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville, LE67 3FJ
- [At the Libraries throughout the district](#)
- [On the Council’s website](#)

We will advise, by email or by letter, the specific and general consultation bodies, of this stage of plan production, including the availability of documents and inviting representations to be

made, as required by the Regulations. The Council will also advise by email or by letter, residents and business, it considers appropriate, of the above.

#### Submission of documents (Regulation 22)

7.7 A copy of the Local Plan, along with associated documentation including any proposed changes is submitted to the Secretary of State for 'examination'. An independent Inspector is subsequently appointed to examine the soundness of the plan. We will meet the minimum publicity requirements by making the documents available in defined locations, including:

- At the Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville, LE67 3FJ
- [At the Libraries throughout the district](#)
- [On the Council's website](#)

The Programme Officer will notify, by email or by letter, each of the general and specific consultation bodies, as well as residents and businesses, advising of the availability of the document, their availability for inspection and when and where. Other groups and individuals who have requested to be notified of the submission will also be contacted by email or by letter.

7.8 Our database will be used to ensure the required and appropriate stakeholders, including organisations, individuals, community groups and stakeholder groups are informed of the production of development plan documents and plan making.

#### How we will communicate with people

7.9 There are a variety of consultation and engagement techniques available to the Council that go beyond the minimum requirements of the Regulations. We will seek to go beyond the minimum requirements. Furthermore the methods of involving people should be appropriate and relevant to the people involved, and the type of consultation being undertaken. For example, a consultation on the general principle of where development should go will need a much wider consultation than a proposal relating to a specific issue or specific part of the district. Where possible and appropriate, we will go beyond those minimum requirements to promote greater community participation.

7.10 We will give consideration to a variety of methods that could be used during the various stages of the plan making process. Potential techniques that could be used include:-

**Inform by letter or email** statutory and general bodies, relevant groups and to those on our consultation database who have requested to be consulted.

**Publish on the Council's website** – a dedicated page(s) on the Council's website to provide information on the preparation of planning policy documents. Notifications of upcoming consultations will also be available on the website, including dates of consultation, how to make representations and how to view or download the associated documents, including evidence bases. Press releases could also be posted on the Council's website.



The web pages will be kept up to date and will be interactive, allowing representations to be submitted electronically where appropriate.

**Email alert system** whereby stakeholders identified on the Council's database can be provided with the latest information.

**Social Media** – Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media used to publicise emerging documents and consultations and seek views and representations.

**Local media** – Notices published in local newspapers circulating in the area and press releases made available to the local media, as appropriate throughout the plan preparation process, and at key preparation stages.

**Availability of documents** – Hard copies of the documents will be made available for public viewing during formal public consultation at the District Council's offices and local libraries within the District. Hard copies of documents could also be provided to the Parish Councils that have offices and the Council's leisure centres.

**The Planning E-newsletter** - Consideration will be given to the publication of a planning e-newsletter which could be published on our website and distributed to all Parish Councils and District Councillors and stakeholders. It could be used to provide updates on plan preparation and provide notification of consultation events.

**Leaflets/postcards/posters** – this could be a good way of informing local residents about the local plan. Leaflets and posters could be made available at the Council offices, libraries, leisure centres and health centres as well a range of venues frequented by peoples, such as notice boards at Parish Councils and supermarkets in the District.

**Workshops**– These can be employed through the process although the exact format will depend on the issues discussed. They could be particularly useful in gathering information to inform plan preparation. The objectives and expected outcomes of each workshop will be clearly set out beforehand. Workshops will usually involve groups using plans and other visual aids. Careful consideration will be given to venues, timing and participants to ensure that events are as effective as possible.

**Town and Parish Councils** –have an important part to play during the process. Their important role in the local community and their knowledge on local matters is recognised. We will endeavour to make officers available to explain proposals and to help facilitate a well informed debate on the issues under consideration. We will also look at ways to facilitate and enable the Parish Council to help raise awareness of local plan preparation and consultations in their local community. Supporting documents can also be sent to the Parish Councils, such as leaflets and posters, to support local community engagement. Parish Councils will also be advised of Local Planning Advisory Committee Meetings and provided, electronically, with a copy of the agenda. In addition, we will use the existing Parish Liaison meetings to provide information and updates.

**Exhibitions** – These can also be employed throughout the process. Public displays for local residents would allow for progress on plan preparation to be followed, provide advice and information or raise awareness of consultations, as well as provide opportunities to contribute representations to a consultation. Existing community events could be used as venue for such exhibitions. Other appropriate venues may include high street locations, frequented by people, within the district’s town and villages.

**Surveys and questionnaire** - these may be utilised to canvas views on key issues, options, proposal and documents. Existing community events could be used as a venue for the surveys and questionnaires to be carried out.

**Programme of plan preparation** – The Council’s Local Development Scheme will provide information on the timetable for producing development plan documents. Where possible local groups will be advised of forthcoming consultation exercised through e-mail alerts.

**Focused meetings with recognised lobby groups** – These will be considered when requested and where it is clear that there are significant benefits from holding such a meeting.

**Utilise existing established groups** – existing forums and stakeholders will be utilised where appropriate in order to publicise development plan preparation and process including for the purposes of consultation and evidence gathering.

#### *Resources*

- 7.11` Community Involvement of the plan making process will be led by the Council’s Planning Policy Team but will also involve a corporate support across the Council involving the Communications Team and the Community Focus Team, as well as other areas of expertise. It is also appreciated that there may need to be an input from consultants or external facilitators.

## **8. HOW DO WE DEAL WITH REPRESENTATIONS**

8.1 Feedback is also an important element of the process as it is a means of showing those who have responded to the consultation how their views have been taken into account and informed the plan-making process. We will:

- acknowledge all representations received and summaries will be prepared of such representations.

8.2 It should be noted that all comments and representations received are public documents and cannot be kept confidential.

## SECTION C: MANAGING DEVELOPMENT

### 9. INTRODUCTION

- 9.1 This section explains how planning applications are dealt with and outlines the District Council's consultation arrangements.
- 9.2 The majority of planning applications are determined under powers that have been delegated to officers. Major applications and/or those which are contentious or controversial are considered and determined by the Planning Committee which meets monthly. Decisions are taken having regard to the Councils adopted Local Plan, which is the legal basis for all decisions, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 9.3 The government sets targets for the time taken to determine planning applications. These are currently 13 weeks for major applications and 8 weeks for all others. If an Environmental Impact Assessment is required by the scale of development then this period will extend to 16 weeks. Before a decision is made the case officer will prepare a report with a recommendation.
- 9.4 The recommendation will take into account the policies within the adopted Local Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance as well as any consultation comments received. The District Council can only take into account comments relating to material considerations.

### 10. PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

- 10.1 We encourage applicants and developers to seek pre-application advice from the Council prior to the submission of a formal planning application. These discussions are undertaken in confidence. Normally this would involve the submission of sketch drawings and other relevant detail. We aim to provide a response within 20 working days wherever possible, advising on the likelihood of gaining an approval on an informal and non-prejudicial basis as well as giving an indication of what the key policies and planning issues are likely to be. The schedule of charges for pre-application advice as well as the procedures for gaining pre-application advice is available at:
- [http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/planning\\_advice\\_and\\_guidance](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/planning_advice_and_guidance)
- 10.2 Furthermore, in accordance with good practice guidelines, the District Council currently operates a 'development team' approach to major proposals, with a nominated officer co-ordinating the input of other specialist advice on an initial scheme.
- 10.3 The Council also operates a Duty Planning Officer system to deal with simple enquiries, as well as offering general planning and procedural advice. This is available between 1pm and 5pm at the reception at the Council Offices or on the phone on 01543 454580.

### Pre-Application Consultation

- 10.4 We will also encourage applicants to undertake pre-submission consultation with neighbours and local communities prior to making an application. Pre-application discussion should also include the key consultees on the type of development proposed such as the Local Highway Authority, the Highways Agency and Environment Agency.

## **11. MANAGING DEVELOPMENT: When do we consult?**

- 11.1 Upon receipt of a planning application the local planning authority will undertake a period of formal consultation. This will normally last for a period of 21 days although there will be cases a longer period of time will be allowed for comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation.
- 11.2 Depending on the type of planning application being considered, there are a number of consultation bodies that the Council must consult and invite to make representations. In addition, who will be consulted can depend on factors such as how many people would be affected by the proposal and the type of impact likely. The main type of consultation groups include:-
- Public – including consultation with neighbouring residents and community groups
  - Statutory Consultees – this is where there is a requirement in law to consult a specific body who in turn are under a duty to respond, for example, Environment Agency, The Coal Authority
  - Consultation required by a direction – this is where the local planning authority is directed to undertake additional consultation due to specific local circumstance
  - Non Statutory Consultees – these are not required by law but there is a planning reason to engage with these consultees and who are likely to have an interest in the proposed development, for example, Health and Safety Executive.

### Amended Plans

- 11.3 Following submission of a planning application, negotiations can often take place between planning officers and developers, and their agents in order to seek amendments to a submitted scheme. In most cases, upon receipt of amended plans, we will carry out a further consultation on these amendments. This consultation is likely to include re-notification of neighbours, Parish Councils and statutory consultees, depending on the nature of the changes and the likely implications. In view of the tight time scales to determine planning applications the re-notification time is set at 14 days. Very minor alterations to plans will not normally be the subject of re-notification.

### Planning Appeals

- 11.4 If an application for planning permission is refused by the local planning authority, or it is granted with conditions, an appeal can be made to the Secretary of State against the refusal or the conditions attached. There is also a right of appeal if an application is not determined within a specific time. Appeals are examined by an independent Planning Inspector. We will advise neighbours who have previously been notified when appeals are submitted. Further advice on the appeal process is available at:-

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate>

## **12. MANAGING DEVELOPMENT: How do we consult?**

- 12.1 The level of consultation carried out for planning applications, will be proportionate to the type and scale of planning application being determined. In all cases, publicity will meet legal requirements and in some cases, additional publicity will be carried out.
- 12.2 Planning legislation requires certain types of applications, such as works to a listed building, or planning applications that are accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment, to be advertised in the local press. For most types of applications, site notices (s) and/or letters will be appropriate. More detail is provided in the section below.

### Publicity Requirements

- 12.3 The regulations set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations and The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, state how planning applications need to be publicised, either by site notice or individual neighbour notification.
- 12.4 Neighbour notification by letter is the principal method of consultation on most planning applications. For most planning applications, letters are sent to all owners/occupiers of properties that immediately adjoin the boundary of the application site. In addition the Council will notify more widely where an application is likely to have a wider impact than upon immediate neighbours, for example, in conservation areas or where the application site is in an area (e.g. the countryside) where there are no immediate neighbours, but there may be public interest in the proposal. Comments are invited within 21 days.
- 12.5 In addition, a press notice and site notice is also required for the following types of applications:
- Erection of 10 or more dwellings, or a site area of 0.5 hectares or more
  - Erection of 1000 square metres of floorspace or site area of 1 hectare or more
  - An application accompanied by an Environment Impact Statement
  - A departure from the Local Plan
  - A development that would affect the public right of way, under part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
  - Development affecting the character or appearance of a Conservation Area
  - Development affecting the setting of a Listed Building.
- 12.6 Large scale or more complex development proposals may warrant the use of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). This is a project management tool that is agreed between the Local Planning Authority and an applicant. Under the PPA a project plan and programme is agreed. They provide opportunities for joint working, bringing together other parties such as statutory consultees as well as provide opportunity to identify how and what communities should be engaged.

**13. MANAGING DEVELOPMENT: Who do we consult?**

13.1 The Council is ‘required’ to consult various organisation and bodies and is advised to consult others depending on the type of application, as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure Order) (England) (2010) (DMPO). A list of the statutory consultees is provided in Appendix E. A list of the non-statutory consultees, as defined in national policy and guidance, is provided in Appendix F.

13.2 We also send plans to the Parish Councils as part of the consultation exercise and those neighbours notified of applications are advised that they can, by prior arrangement with the Parish Clerk, view the plans at the Parish Council Offices. Previously hard copies of the plans were sent to the Parish Council however we are currently trialling arrangements for Parish Councils to access the planning applications by viewing the details on line. This trial is ongoing and feedback received from the users will be used to inform whether this approach will continue.

13.3 In addition to planning applications, there are other types of applications that can be submitted to the Councils for determination. These are listed in the table below along with details of who and how we will usually consult on these applications, depending on the particular circumstances

Application type	Consultation
Lawful Development Certificate (existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbour Notification</li> <li>• Parish/Town Council</li> <li>• Site Notice</li> </ul>
Lawful Development Certificate (proposed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbour Notification</li> <li>• Parish/Town Council</li> <li>• Site Notice</li> </ul>
Advertisement Consent Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbour Notification</li> <li>• Parish/Town Councils</li> <li>• Councils Conservation Officer if the application site is on a Listed Building</li> <li>• Highway Authority if the sign is illuminated and is fronting public highway</li> </ul>
Prior Notification Applications	As scheme is permitted development and does not need the benefit of planning permission, generally there is no consultation. However some consultation maybe undertaken depending in the nature of the proposal and whether local knowledge is appropriate to situation.
Hedgerow removal notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish/Town Council</li> <li>• Site Notice</li> <li>• Council’s Tree Officer</li> <li>• Any relevant statutory consultees</li> </ul>



Tree Preservation Orders(TPOs)/works to trees protected by TPOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbour Notification</li> <li>• Parish/Town Council</li> </ul>
Work to trees in a Conservation Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish/Town Council</li> </ul>
Discharge of Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant Statutory Consultees</li> </ul>
Environment Assessment 'scoping opinion'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant Statutory Consultees</li> </ul>
Environmental Assessment 'Screening opinion'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

Table 1: publicity on other planning applications

What happens to comments made on an application?

- 13.4 People are able to respond online through the Councils website. Alternatively comments can be submitted by email or by letter. All comments must be made in writing and contain the name and address of the author. All comments received are public documents and cannot be kept confidential. All written representations received on all applications are summarised in the report on the application and are considered before a decision is made.

**14. HOW ARE APPLICATIONS DETERMINED?**

- 14.1 Some 90% of planning applications are determined under delegated powers by authorised officers of the Council. However, most major and/or controversial applications are reported to the Planning Committee for decision by Members of the Council. If an application is to be determined in this way we will inform the applicant/agent and anyone who has submitted comments on a particular application (including the Parish Council) of the date of the meeting and their right to speak at the meeting. Ordinarily there is a right for one objector or supporter, the applicant or agent and a Parish Council representative to speak at the Planning Committee. Each speaker has no more than three minutes. A guidance note is sent to all interested parties advising of the procedure and issues which are planning related and those which are not. These guidance notes are available also available on the Council's web site at:

[http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/speaking\\_at\\_planning\\_committee](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/speaking_at_planning_committee)

- 14.2 A list of planning decision is available on the Council's website. In addition, anyone who submitted comments in respect of a particular planning application is notified of the decision. Where appropriate, Parish Council and the Leicestershire County Council Highways Authority are sent a copy of the decision notice.

## **15. WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

15.1 Information on planning applications can be found in a number of places.

### Website

15.2 Current planning applications including plans, application forms and drawings, as well as some historical applications, can be viewed online on the [Council's web site](#). This is available by individual property or by weekly list.

15.3 For those older applications that are not available on line, the documents can be made available for inspection by arrangement during office hours. For those who do not have access to a computer the Council provides access to the online system at the District Councils offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville. Access to the offices is between the hours of 8.45 am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

15.4 Decision notices for planning applications submitted and determined since 2008 can also be viewed on the Councils website.

### The Weekly List

15.5 A list of valid planning applications registered and planning decisions made are updated in 'real time' on the District Council's website.

### *The Planning Register*

15.6 Applications for planning permission will be entered on a register. Maintaining a planning register is a statutory obligation and the information is available on the District Council's website for inspection by arrangement during office hours.

## SECTION D: NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS

### 16. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- 16.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are a new tier of development documents introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and regulated by The Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations)
- 16.2 A NDP is a community prepared plan which enables local people to guide the future of the area they live and work. NDPs can add detail and local objectives to the Council's Local Plan. North West Leicestershire District Council will support neighbourhoods in the preparation of their plans where appropriate and guidance and advice is provided on the Council's website.
- 16.3 Notwithstanding this, the approach to consultation will be a matter for the individual Neighbourhood Planning bodies in preparing their plans and is therefore outside the scope of this SCI. However the Council will publicise consultation on Neighbourhood Development Plans where appropriate, primarily by using the Councils' website. Therefore the following section is primarily provided for information although it does identify the Council's role in the NDP process.

### 17. STAGES AND CONSULTEES IN THE PREPARATION OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA DESIGNATION

- 17.1 **Application and publicity of a Neighbourhood Area Designation (Regulation 5, 6 and 7)** - A parish council or designated community group start the preparation of a NDP through an application to designate a neighbourhood area. The application is submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The Local Authority must publicise the application for a minimum 6 week period and then determine whether the proposed area is considered an appropriate neighbourhood area. The Local Planning Authority must make a decision on the application within a reasonable period of time. Once approved, or refused, the council must publish the decision on their website and if refused publish the reasons for refusal. To ensure that this requirement is met, in addition to publicity on the website, the Council will also notify the following of the application and decision:
- Adjacent local authorities to the neighbourhood area
  - Adjacent parish councils
  - The County Council within which the neighbourhood area is located
  - District councillors to whom the area relates.
- 17.2 **Plan preparation (scoping and evidence gathering)** – Document preparation will be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Group. This is a community-led stage with no statutory requirement for consultation and the District Council cannot therefore prescribe who is consulted. However it is anticipated that this stage will usually begin by scoping community opinion, understanding aspirations and evidence gathering. It may also involve informal consultations, such as surveys and exhibitions, with a range of relevant stakeholders and

interested parties. The method of consultation is to be determined by the community group preparing the Plan.

- 17.3 **Pre-submission consultation and publicity (Regulation 14)** – This stage is a community-led consultation stage. The community group preparing the plan must publicly consult on the draft plan in a way which brings it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. They must also ensure to consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning regulations 2012 whose interest the qualifying body may be affected by the proposal for a minimum of six weeks. Appendix G provides a list of these consultees.
- 17.4 **Plan Submission to Local Authority and Publicity (regulation 15 & 16)** – This stage is a local authority led stage. Where a plan is submitted to the local planning authority, the submission must also include a map or statement which identifies the Plan area, a Consultation Statement, the proposed NDP, a basic conditions statement and other associated documents.
- 17.5 After receiving the plan proposal the local planning authority must publicise the proposed NDP and associated documents on their website, as a minimum, in a way which is likely to bring the proposal to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. This publicity period will run for a minimum of 6 weeks and will invite comments. The Council must also notify any consultation bodies referred to in the submitted Consultation Statement, including those bodies specified under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood planning (General) Regulations 2012. (Appendix G)
- 17.6 **Examination Stage (regulation 17 & 18)** – an examiner will be appointed to assess the Plan against basic conditions. Representations made through the ‘Plan Submission to Local Authority and Publicity’ stage will be submitted to the examiner.
- 17.7 The examination will usually take the form of written representations, unless the examiner considers it necessary to hold a public hearing. If a public hearing is held the examiner will invite participants to attend. Upon completion of the examination the examiner will make one of three following recommendations:
- The plan should proceed to the referendum stage as submitted
  - Proposed modifications to be made by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and then proceed to referendum.
  - That the Plan does not proceed to referendum
- 17.8 **Referendum (Guided by the Neighbourhoods Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012)** – If the Council is satisfied that the NDP meets the legal requirements it will publish its decision along with details of where the decision statement and examiners report can be inspected. The Council will arrange a referendum as soon as is practically possible and give a minimum of 28 working days notice before the date of the referendum. A positive vote of 50% of those who vote plus 1 will ensure the Plan proceeds to full Council to be ‘Made’.

- 17.9 Upon a successful vote for the community to accept the NDP as a planning document for the area the Council will bring the document into legal force as an extant and active planning document. The Council will publicise the decision on its website as a minimum, in a way which is likely to bring the proposal to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area and notify anyone who asked to be notified of the decision. Details of where and when the neighbourhood plan can be inspected will also be provided.

## **Appendix A**

### **PLAN MAKING – Duty to Co-operate Bodies**

The prescribed bodies (in addition to local planning authorities and County Councils) which are subject to the Duty to Co-operate include;

- The Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- The Civil aviation Authority
- The Homes and Communities Agency
- The Primary Care Trust
- The Office of Rail Regulation
- The Highway Authority (both the Highways Agency and Leicestershire County Council)

## **Appendix B**

### **PLAN MAKING - Specific Consultation Bodies**

- The Coal Authority
- The Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- The Highways Agency
- A 'relevant' authority in or adjoining the Local Planning Authority (Including Local Planning Authorities, County Council, a Parish Council and a Local Policing Body)
- Electronic communication code systems operators
- Primary Care trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006 or continued in existence by virtue of that section
- Electricity providers
- Gas providers
- Sewerage Undertakers
- Water Undertakers
- Homes and Communities Agency

## Appendix C

### PLAN MAKING – General Consultation Bodies

Please note that this list is not exhaustive. The Council has a live database which can be amended at any time.

Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland  
Ancient Monuments Society  
Ashby Chamber of Trade and Industry  
Ashby Woulds Forum  
Ashby Coalition for Town Centre Enhancements  
Ashby de la Zouch Civic Society  
Ashby de la Zouch Endowed Schools Foundation  
British Waterways  
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd  
Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (Leicestershire and Derbyshire) and other environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace  
Castle Donington Volunteer Bureau  
Church Commissioners for England  
Civic societies and local resident associations  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Coal Authority  
Commission for Architecture and the Built environment  
Community Appraisal Groups  
Confederation of British Industry  
Confederation of British Industry- East Midlands  
Council for British Archaeology  
Country Land and Business Association  
Crown Estate  
Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group  
Disability Rights Commission  
East Midlands Airport  
East Midlands Development Agency  
East midlands Tourist Board  
Equality and Human Rights Commission  
Federation of Small Businesses  
Forestry Commission  
Freight Transport Association  
Freight on Rail  
Garden History Society  
Guide Association  
Gypsy Council  
Health and Safety Executive  
Heart of the National Forest Foundation  
Help the Aged



Housing Corporation  
Historic period societies (e.g. Georgian Society, Victorian Society, Twentieth Century Society)  
Home Builders Federation  
Ibstock Community Enterprises Ltd  
Leicestershire and Leicester City Learning Partnership  
Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Leicestershire Constabulary  
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services  
Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council  
Leicestershire Wildlife Trust  
Marleine Reid Community Action  
National Farmers Union  
National Forest Company  
National Playing Fields Association  
National Trust  
Network Gold  
Network Rail  
North West Leicestershire Partnership for Safer Communities  
Parish Councils  
Parish Plan Groups  
Primary Care Trusts  
Relevant bus companies  
Relevant train operating companies  
Royal Society for the protection of Birds  
Rural Community Council  
Resident Associations  
The Scout Association  
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings  
Sport England (East midlands Region)  
Sustrans  
The Theatres Trust  
UK Coal Ltd  
Volunteer Bureaux  
Woodland Trust

Appendix D

**PLAN MAKING – Hard to Reach Groups**

A number of Hard to Reach Groups and are set out below:

Hard to Reach Groups	Approach for Engagement
Ethnic Minority Groups	The Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) Group are often under represented in the planning process. It is important that the SCI meets the requirements of these groups by being accordance with the Race Relations (amendments) Act 2000. All documents produced from the Council will be made available in alternative languages where these are requested. Information on the availability of alternative formats can be obtained from the District Council.
Young People	The District Council will seek to engage young people, where considered appropriate, through local schools. We will also work with the Customer Focus Team, to identify ways in which we can engage with those within this group. Organisations which represent younger people, including youth groups such as the Scouts Council and Guide Association could be contacted.
Elderly People	Elderly People are often perceived as hard to reach because of difficulties in gaining access to information. Elderly individual can feel isolated and excluded from the community around them. Organisations which represent older people such as Help the Aged and Age Concern will be informed by direct mail at all plan preparation stages. In addition hard copies of documents could be provided with communication by email for this 'group' as their access to the internet may be limited.
Transient Populations e.g. New residents, students, commuters, Gypsies/travellers	There are several Gypsy and Traveller sites within the District and it is important that those residents on the sites and those who seek transit accommodation in the District are involved in the Local Plan process. Gypsies and Travellers can be a very difficult to reach group. In order to involve this group as much as possible existing contacts (including Leicestershire County Councils Gypsy Liaison Officer) and representative organisations (e.g. the Gypsy Council) will be contacted, as well as direct contact where this is possible.
People with Disabilities	It is recognised that people with disabilities are under represented in the planning process. It is important that the SCI meets the requirements of these groups and is in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

	<p>1995, as amended. All consultation documents will be made available in Braille where these are requested. Documents will also be made available in electronic formats that can be read aloud by home computers where these are requested.</p>
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Appendix E

Table 1: Consultation on Development Planning Documents

Stage	Purpose	Who	How
<p>Preparation of a Local Plan document (Regulation 18)</p>	<p>Plan preparation which can be informal and ongoing process with involvement possible right up to its publication.</p> <p>There will be at least one formal consultation period during the Local Plan Preparation stage, normally with a 6-12 week consultation period.</p>	<p>Specific and general consultation bodies</p> <p>Those registered on the Councils database, including those residents or business within the area where appropriate.</p> <p>Duty to Co-operate bodies</p>	<p>Letter, email, website, press releases.</p> <p>Documents will be made available at the Council Offices and at other locations considered appropriate.</p> <p>Other potential techniques that may be used include: Town and Parish Councils, workshops, utilise existing established groups, social media, public exhibitions, community events.</p>
<p>Publication of a Local Plan Document (Regulation 19 &amp; 20)</p>	<p>Consultation on the proposed submission document.</p> <p>Consultation will be undertaken for a minimum of 6 weeks.</p>	<p>Specific and general consultation bodies</p> <p>Those registered on the Councils database, including those residents or business within the area where appropriate.</p> <p>Duty to Co-operate bodies</p> <p>Those who responded to the plan preparation consultation</p>	<p>Letter, email, website, press releases, social media.</p> <p>Documents will be made available at the Council Offices, district libraries and at other locations considered appropriate.</p> <p>Statement of representations procedure and statement of fact will be sent to specific and general consultation bodies.</p>

Stage	Purpose	Who	How
			<p>Letters and emails will be sent out with the following information-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-consultation period</li> <li>-how the Plan can be seen, along with the places and times that the Plan can be viewed.</li> </ul> <p>Other potential techniques that may be used include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town and Parish Councils, workshops, utilise existing established groups, social media, public exhibitions, community events.</li> </ul>
<p>Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State</p> <p>(Regulation 22)</p>	<p>Submission of a Local Plan and all associated documents in accordance with Regulation 22</p> <p>This is not a stage where formal consultation is carried out by the Local Planning Authority (LPA)</p>	<p>Specific and general consultation bodies</p> <p>Duty to Co-operate bodies</p> <p>Other interested parties considered appropriate.</p> <p>Those who requested to be notified.</p>	<p>Notification of the submission of the document will be carried out by the appointed Programme Officer, by letter and email.</p> <p>Notification will advise of the availability of the plan for inspection and where and when it can be inspected.</p> <p>A copy of the Submission document and associated documents will be placed on the Council's website, at the Council Offices, and at the districts libraries.</p>

Stage	Purpose	Who	How
Independent Examination(Regulation 24)	<p>Independent examination of the plan by an Independent Inspector.</p> <p>This is not a stage where formal consultation is carried out by the Local Planning Authority (LPA)</p>	<p>All those who made representations.</p>	<p>The Programme Officer will advise of the examination hearing sessions by letter or email, at least 6 week before its start.</p> <p>Publish on the Council's website and provide a hard copy on display at the Council, a notice setting out the date, time and place at which the hearing is to be held and the name of the Inspector appointed to carry out the independent examination.</p> <p>Other potential techniques used may include press releases and social media.</p>
Adoption (Regulation 26)	<p>Adoption of the plan by the Local Planning Authority.</p>	<p>All those who made representations.</p> <p>Specific and general consultation bodies.</p> <p>All those who asked to be notified.</p>	<p>Letter, email, website, Press Releases, Social Media.</p> <p>The Plan and associated documents will be made available at the Council Offices and at other appropriate locations.</p> <p>A copy of the Adoption Statement will be sent to the Secretary of State as well as those who asked to be specifically notified.</p>

Table 2: Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents

Stage	Purpose	Who	How
Scoping and Evidence Gathering	Evidence Gathering and preparation of Draft SPD	Stakeholders and interested parties, considered appropriate to the subject matter of the SPD, will be engaged.	Letter, email, website.  Documents will be made available at the Council Offices and at other locations considered appropriate.  Other potential techniques that may be used include: Town and Parish Councils, workshops, utilise existing established groups, social media, public exhibitions, community events.
Public Participation (Regulation 12)	Consultation on the Draft SPD.  Consultation period of a minimum of 6 weeks.	Specific and general consultation bodies  Duty to Co-operate bodies  Those registered on the Councils database, including those residents or business within the area where appropriate.	Letter, email, website, press releases, social media.  Copies of the SPD and any supporting documents will be made available at the Council offices and the districts libraries, as a minimum, for public inspection.  Other potential techniques that may be used include: Town and Parish Councils, workshops, utilise existing established groups

<p>Adoption (Regulation 14)</p>	<p>Adoption of the SPD by the Local Planning Authority</p> <p>This is not a stage where consultation is carried out by the Local Planning Authority (LPA)</p>	<p>The following will be notified of the adoption of the SPD:</p> <p>Specific and general consultation bodies</p> <p>Duty to Co-operate bodies</p> <p>Those registered on the Councils database, including those residents or business within the area where appropriate.</p> <p>Anyone who has specifically asked to be notified when the SPD is adopted.</p>	<p>The adoption statement and the SPD will be made available at the Council offices, the district libraries and other appropriate locations, and published on the Councils website.</p> <p>Notification of the adoption of the SPD sent to individuals, bodies and organisations will be in writing, either email or letter.</p> <p>Press releases and social media will also be used to inform of adoption.</p>
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Appendix F

**MANAGING DEVELOPMENT – Statutory Consultees**

Statutory Consultees	Type of Development
The Canals and River Trust	Certain types of development likely to affect canals or nearby areas
The Coal Authority	Certain types of development in areas where the Coal Authority has notified to the local planning authority that it is an area of coal working, and for minerals exploration on land that has been identified as containing coal.
Crown Estates Commissioner	Certain minerals planning applications where the Crown Estates Commissioners have given notice to that land in their area contains silver or gold.
Department of Energy and Climate Change	Mineral developments where the Department for Energy and Climate Change have given notice to the local planning authority that the land in their area contains gas or oil.
Department of Transport (administered in practice by the Highways Agency)	New Development likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic entering or leaving a trunk road.
Environment Agency	The Environment Agency are a statutory consultee to Local planning authorities for several types of planning application related to its statutory duties on flood risk, protection of land and water quality, mining operations, waste regulation and fisheries.
English Heritage	English Heritage are a statutory consultee to Local planning authorities for several types of planning application including development that would affect the setting of a Listed Building, development that would affect the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, development likely to affect the site of a scheduled monument and Applications for Listed Building Consent for works on a Grade I or Grade II* listed Building.
Forestry Commission	Statutory requirement under <a href="#">paragraph 4 of Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990</a> or mineral operators to consult the forestry commission if the proposed form of post-extraction restoration is for forestry.
Garden History Society	For development likely to affect any park or

Statutory Consultees	Type of Development
	garden on English Heritage's <i>Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England</i>
Health and Safety Executive	The Health and Safety Executive issues consultation zones to the local planning authority and should be consulted on certain developments in the vicinity to major accident hazards.
Highways Agency	Developments likely to affect the strategic road network, and certain other highway matters.
Local Planning Authority	The adjoining local planning authority will usually need to be consulted where an application is likely to have an impact on a neighbouring area. Where there is a County Council, the district council is required to consult the county council in certain cases and may not decide the application for 21 days or the county council has responded (if earlier).
Local Highway Authority	The Local Highway Authority will need to be consulted where the proposed development will either involve a new access to the highway network, or an increase or change in traffic movements.
County Planning Authority	Specific requirements exist for consultation with County Planning Authorities, reflecting their responsibilities as planning authorities for certain specific matters.
Natural England	Certain developments affecting Sites of Special Scientific Interest, involving the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, or in an area of particular natural sensitivity or interest which appears to be affected by development that could have significant implications for major accident hazards. Natural England must also be consulted on development (including permitted development) likely to have a significant effect on a European (wildlife) Site in England or European Offshore Marine Site under the <a href="#">Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010</a> (as amended).
National Parks Authorities	Specific requirements exist for consultation with National Parks authorities in relation to development likely to affect land in a National Park

Statutory Consultees	Type of Development
Parish Councils	<p>Whilst Parish Councils are not statutory consultees, they do have a role as a consultee in the planning application process.</p> <p>The Local Planning Authority must consult the Parish Council if they have requested that they do so. There is also a legal requirement to notify the Parish Council of the decision on planning applications if they have requested that they Local Planning Authority do so.</p>
Rail Network Operators	Development likely to result in a material increase in the amount of traffic using a level crossing over a railway.
Sport England	Planning applications where the development is likely to affect the use of land as playing fields.
Theatres Trust	Development involving any land on which there is a theatre.

APPENDIX G

**MANAGING DEVELOPMENT – Non-Statutory Consultees**

Non – Statutory Consultees
Emergency Services and Multi-Agency Emergency Planning
Forestry Commission
Health and Safety Executive
Ministry of Defence
Office of Nuclear Regulation
Police and Crime Commissioners
Rail Network Operators
Sport England

Appendix H

**Consultation Body as defined by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012**

Consultation Body
A local planning authority, county council or a parish council any part of whose areas is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority
The Coal Authority
The Homes and Communities Agency
Natural England
The Environment Agency
English Heritage
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
The Highways Agency
The Marine Management Organisation
Any person to whom the electronic communication code applies.
Any person who owns or controls electronic communication apparatus
A Primary Care Trust in any part of the neighbourhood area
A person with a licence under the Electricity Act, in any part of the neighbourhood area
A person with a licence under the Gas Act, in any part of the neighbourhood area
A sewerage undertaker, in any part of the neighbourhood area
A water undertaker, in any part of the neighbourhood area
Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area
Bodies which represent the interest of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area
Bodies which represent the interest of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area
Bodies which represent the interest of person carrying on business in the neighbourhood area
Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area.

## GLOSSARY

**Development Management** – The management or control of development proposals through the planning system.

**Development Plan** – comprises of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which form the legal basis for all future planning decisions in the district.

**Development Plan Documents (DPD)** – Documents prepared by the local planning authority (including the Local Plan) setting out the main spatial strategy, policies and proposals for the area. These documents will be statutory documents and subject to an independent examination by an Inspector. They will undergo rigorous procedures of community involvement and consultation. DPDs must be consistent with and have regard to national planning policy.

**Duty to Cooperate** – Created by the Localism Act 2011. It places a legal duty on the Council to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with certain specified bodies to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation relating to strategic cross boundary matters.

**Examination** – The purpose of the Examination is to consider if the development plan is sound. The majority of representations made at Examination will usually be written representations. However, in some instances a Planning Inspector may allow representations to be examined by way of oral hearings, for example round table discussions, informal hearing sessions and formal hearing sessions.

**General Consultation Bodies** – Organisations defined by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 that are required to be consulted at key stages of plan production. They include bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic, religious or national groups, disabled persons and business in the local planning authority's area.

**Hard to Reach Groups** – Groups of people or organisations within the community that have traditionally been more difficult to engage in the planning system. They include older people, religious, disabled and ethnic minority groups.

**Local Development Document (LDD)** – The collective term covering Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)** – A three year project plan outlining the Councils programme for preparing the Local Plan.

**Local Plan** – Collective term for the Development Plan Documents that set out the spatial vision and strategy for the Borough including policies and proposals. The Local Plan is a key part of the development plan.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – It sets out the government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. It replaces much of the national advice previously contained within planning policy statements, planning policy guidance and circulars. It is a material consideration in the preparation of Local Plan documents and when considering planning applications.

**Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)** – A plan for the neighbourhood area which is prepared by an authorised community group. The plan must be in general agreement with the overall plan for the local authority area and can include general planning policies and allocations for new development.

**The Planning Inspectorate** - The Planning Inspectorate is an executive agency of the Department for Communities and Local Government. It deals with planning appeals, national infrastructure planning applications, examination of local plans.

**Planning Performance Agreements** – Up front agreements between a developer and a local planning authority that set out all the information required and the timetable for delivering a decision on a large

application. They are an opportunity to establish a collaborative relationship based on good communication and regular exchange of information. This should allow a process to be agreed which allows the local planning authority to project plan the work needed to determine the application.

**Specific Consultation Bodies** – Organisations defined by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 that are required to be consulted at key stages of plan production. They include neighbouring and parish councils, key service providers, Government departments and non-government organisations.

**Stakeholders** – A person or organisation with an interest or concern in something.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – Outlines the approach of the authority to involving the community in preparing the Local Plan and planning applications.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)** – Documents that expand on policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** – An appraisal of the social, economic and environmental implications of a strategy, policies and proposals. The SA seeks to ensure that proposals contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

**Tests of Soundness** – The tests outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework that DPDs are judged against.





**SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION**

**LOCAL PLAN GENERAL**

1. Are you aware of any organisations which may represent a specific interest that should be consulted?
  - 3 responses received suggesting The Friends of Ashby Bath Grounds, Ashby Branch Labour Party and Parish Councils

**RESIDENTS**

2. Where else could we make hard copies of documents available?
  - 3 responses received suggesting a number of locations including Ashby Town Council offices, Tesco Supermarket Ashby, Leisure Centres, Parish Council Offices and Post Offices
3. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others or amendments
  - 3 responses received suggesting informative articles in local newspapers, more road shows (for example outside Tesco's in Measham), a clear list of all meetings and information about ward member details should be available on website (easily accessible and not waded through lots of pages on the internet) and in paper form.
4. How would you like to be involved in plan making?
  - 2 responses received which identified taking part in Neighbourhood Plan development, responding to consultations, attending public meetings and through the Parish Council
5. What methods of engagements do you think work best?
  - 2 responses received, one replying that not sure so suggest all methods are used and one which favoured Face to Face meetings

**TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS**

6. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others or amendments
  - 2 responses received which suggested that the Parish Liaison meetings be increased to 4 times a year with specific meetings around the Local Plan added if required, all email correspondence to be acknowledged and responded to, a list of meetings and Ward Member details should be easily accessible on the website and Parish Clerks to be advised of Local Plan Advisory Meetings and a copy of agenda and minutes provided.
7. How would you/your organisation like to be involved in plan making?

- 2 responses received which identified taking more notice of Parish/Town Councils when decisions are made, Parish Council's being fully engaged at all levels and through all stages and all information to be sent to the Parish Council and in turn will endeavour to attend all meetings, respond to all relevant parts of the consultation process.

8. What methods of engaging do you think work best?

- 2 responses received which favoured face to face meetings and direct and regular updates from meetings held at the District Council for example, LPAC, removing reliance of updates from ward members or having to trawl website to find information.

## **BUSINESSES**

9. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?

- 2 responses received one of which supported the suggested approaches and the other stating that it was good to see meetings taking place in the business sector.

10. How would you /your organisation like to be involved in plan making?

- 1 response received which suggested by inviting businesses to meetings

11. What methods of engagement do you think work best?

- 1 response received suggesting fact to face meetings

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

12. Are the consultation methods [suggested] appropriate? Please suggest other ways in which you could be notified of planning applications

- 3 responses received which suggested that whilst the methods were appropriate they could be improved, it was suggested that individuals should be informed automatically by email of all new planning applications in an area, use parish councils more as the people who live in the community and listen more appropriately to their views when voiced and site notices to be more visible to residents. There was also a comment on the current Pilot scheme for e-consultation with Parish Councils, and paperless planning applications, which it was suggested was not working and makes commenting on the planning applications very difficult. It would suggest that the original consultation methods be re-instated.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

- The Coal Authority is a specific consultation body which must be consulted on development plans.
- The Local Planning Authority has defined responsibilities regarding Neighbourhood Development Plans which should be set out in the SCI. Many SCIs now refer to the obligations set out for consultation in the 2012 Neighbourhood Development Plan

Regulations. Under Schedule 1 this lists the prescribed consultation bodies, which include The Coal Authority.

- not all parish councils have offices at which plans can be viewed
- When responses from statutory consultees are received, the Council should post these immediately on their website along with the application details.
- Viability appraisals are critical in the determination of planning applications and there will be occasions when the public interest is such that it is reasonable and appropriate to make the details of viability appraisals generally available for public scrutiny. Therefore NWLDC must warn developers that any viability appraisal may be placed in the public domain, which is something, addressed in the Environmental Information Regulations.

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# North West Leicestershire STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

## CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

June 2014



## Statement of Community Involvement

As Local Planning Authority, North West Leicestershire District Council has to make many important decisions about where new development should go. This is done through the planning system. Consultation with local communities is an important part of this. To help make sure that our consultations are appropriate we have to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Before considering the SCI it is useful to outline how the planning system works.

### What is planning?

.....

The purpose of the planning system in the UK is to manage the use and development of land and buildings. It is how we as a society strike a balance between allowing development of land and buildings to support economic development, and provide the things we need like homes, jobs, shops and transport whilst conserving our heritage and the environment.

The planning system has two main parts to it:

- Plan making and
- Managing development.

### Plan Making

The purpose of plan making is to set out how an area will develop over time and to provide a guide to future development. The main document is the Local Plan, but other documents can also be produced some of which are outlined below.

#### The Local Plan

The Local Plan will set out the planning strategy, policies and proposals for the district; it is intended to do a number of things:

- It will provide a vision for the future of the area, based on evidence of what is needed and what makes the local area distinctive
- It will provide priorities and policies to guide future development,
- It will allocate land for housing, employment, retail and other uses

The Local Plan will be the main consideration in determining planning applications.

## **Supplementary Planning Documents**

In addition to the Local Plan the council can produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). SPDs supplement policies within the Local Plan and can be area or topic based. For example, the council has existing SPDs on affordable housing and retail. Although SPDs do not have the same status as the Local Plan they can be a material consideration when making planning decisions.

## **Neighbourhood Plans**

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by communities themselves with the support of the Council. Neighbourhood planning can be taken forward by two types of body - town and parish councils or neighbourhood forums. Neighbourhood forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should be the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhood Plans can allocate land or policies for the development of land in a neighbourhood if the majority of voters in the neighbourhood give approval. These plans must be in conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan and have regard to national planning policy.

Some neighbourhoods already have plans, often called Parish Plans. Neighbourhood Plans are different as from April 2012 they became part of the legal planning framework. This means that if they are agreed, planning decisions for that area have to be made in line with what they say, as well as the Local Plan for the area.

*Please note that as Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by local communities they are not included as part of the SCI.*

## **Managing Development**

The management of development is done through the determination of planning applications.

### **Planning Applications**

Most new development, building work and how land and buildings are used, are all managed through the process of planning permission. This is called development control or development management.

We receive about 1,000 planning applications per year which range from householder extensions and minor applications to large-scale proposals including new housing, employment, retail and other development. The Local Plan is the most important consideration in deciding planning applications and planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan (i.e. the Local Plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## What is the role of Councillors in the planning system?

Elected members have an extremely important role to play in the planning process, both as decision makers and as somebody who will represent the views of local people. Before the Local Plan can be submitted for independent examination it must be agreed by a meeting of all councillors. The Planning Committee is required to determine planning applications. Although not all councillors are members of the Planning Committee they can attend meetings and make representations on behalf of local people.

Councillors will help you to understand the planning process and assist you to respond to consultations on the Local Plan or planning applications. They will also communicate your views to officers and other councillors so as to ensure that all views are taken in to account when determining how the council should proceed.

You can discuss any concerns or views you have with a councillor over the telephone or by meeting them in person. Councillors have regular surgeries which provide an opportunity for any ward resident to go and talk their councillor face to face. If you cannot attend a surgery then councillors will try and meet with you separately. You can also write to councillors using either e-mail or a letter.

Information about which councillors represent which areas together information about how you can contact them can be found on the district council's website at: [www.nwleics.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/councillors)

## How can I be involved in planning?

.....  
For the plans that we prepare and the planning applications that are submitted to us to decide, we must consult and engage with people and organisations in making our decisions.

Local Plans have to be widely consulted on; there is a formal process of consultation and examination that all Local Plans need to go through, with fixed deadlines. There are many stages in the preparation of a Local Plan and there are different opportunities to have your say throughout.

In terms of planning applications, for some large proposals developers will consult with residents and affected groups before making an application to the local authority (from April 2012 developers have been required to do this by law for certain applications). Once any planning application has been received and recorded, we take steps to publicise it, consult and invite comments.

To set out how and when we will consult and engage with stakeholders, organisations, businesses and residents on plans and planning applications we are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).



## What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

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Local authorities are required by law to publish a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out how the council intends to involve the community in plan making and in deciding planning applications.

Our latest SCI was adopted in October 2006. Since then there have been many changes, in both legislation and advances in technology providing us with more ways to engage through digital media.

We therefore need to prepare a new SCI to provide a framework for community engagement which is up to date, flexible, deliverable and cost-effective.

Once the new SCI is adopted, the Council will follow the procedures for consultation and engagement set out in the document. This will be tested by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the Local Plan; failure to consult in accordance with the SCI would result in an unsound plan.

The SCI should be a clear statement enabling the community to know how and when they will be involved and how we intend to meet or exceed the minimum requirements set out in the regulations for both plan making and the consideration of planning applications.

## What are we required to do?

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### Local Plan

There are regulations on who the council must consult and minimum legal requirements concerning how we consult on the Local Plan.

We must consult with the following:

- 'Specific consultation bodies' which includes a range of bodies with responsibilities for the environment, infrastructure, mining and we must also consult neighbouring authorities. Consultation with this latter group is more tightly specified, and is also part of the Duty to Cooperate placed on local authorities.
- 'General consultation bodies'. These are voluntary groups, groups representing different ethnic, national, or faith groups, businesses in the area, and groups representing the interests of local disabled people. The council can decide which organisations within these general categories it thinks are appropriate to consult.

**1. Are you aware of any organisations which may represent a specific interest that should be consulted?**

The council is also required to make documents available for inspection during any consultation at defined locations, which should include:

- At the Council Offices, Coalville, and at other such places within the district that we consider appropriate (documents to be available during normal opening hours), and
- On the Council's web site. (We have an online response system that we could use called Citizen Space, this will allow us to receive online responses to our consultations).

We have gone further to try and enable interested parties or individuals to be engaged in any consultations we undertake by setting up a database of contacts. You can request to be added to our database if you wish to be notified of consultations.

### **Planning Applications**

Planning legislation sets out a minimum standard of publicity and notification of applications, depending on the nature of the application. More complex and contentious applications may require additional consultation arrangements depending on the nature of the particular proposal.

Legislation requires that for all major applications the application must be publicised either by:

- A site notice displayed in at least one place on or near the development site for at least 21 days, or,
- Serving notice on adjoining owners or occupiers, and,
- Advertisement in a local newspaper

### **How could I be consulted?**

.....  
Consultation methods and processes for engagement need to be as relevant and effective as possible based on the different stages of the plan-making process and the nature of planning applications.

In general we want to increase our use of electronic communication, online representations and social media as much as possible as these are easier and more efficient ways of communicating. For those that find it difficult to access electronic communication we will continue to make hard copies of consultation documents available. Where a person does not have an email address, letters shall be sent to

them informing them of the consultation and written representations will be welcomed.

Set out below are some suggested additional ways in which we could engage and consult with local people in addition to what we are required to do.

## **Local Plan – how might we consult you and keep you up to date:**

.....

### **Residents:**

Documents will be made available on the Council’s website and at the Council Offices, Coalville. In addition documents will also be made available at the public libraries within the District during their normal opening hours.

### ***2. Where else could we make hard copies of documents available?***

- We will continue to use our database to which people’s contacts details can be added to to ensure they are informed of any consultations
- Inform people via email or letters of any consultations we are undertaking and/or progress on the Local Plan
- Use social media to let you know of consultations or other important news, for example when a report is to be considered by the council
- Place information in local/community newsletters (e.g. Ashby Life)
- Place information on local websites (e.g Leicestershire Villages/AboutMyArea)
- Use the council’s e-newsletter (which will replace Vision magazine)
- Provide information at Community Events (such as Heart of the Forest Festival and Picnic in the Park)
- Information placed on community notice boards

### ***3. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?***

### ***4. How would you like to be involved in plan making?***

### ***5. What methods of engagement do you think work best?***

### **Town/Parish Councils:**

- Emails/letters to inform you of consultations we are undertaking
- Regular emails to inform you of progress on the Local Plan

- Provide information at Parish Liaison Meetings
- Hold workshops with parishes to engage with Parish Council members

**6. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?**

**7. How would you / your organisation like to be involved in plan making?**

**8. What methods of engagement do you think work best?**

### **Businesses:**

- Emails/letters to inform you of consultations we are under-taking
- Regular emails to inform you of progress on the Local Plan
- Utilise the quarterly Business Focus Newsletter to provide information/updates
- Use social media to inform you of a consultation
- Add your details to our database
- Provide information via the council's e-newsletter (which will replace Vision magazine)
- Meetings held with the business sector

**9. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?**

**10. How would you / your organisation like to be involved in plan making?**

**11. What methods of engagement do you think work best?**

## **Planning Applications – how might we consult you and keep you up to date**

.....  
For all planning applications:

- Letters are sent to all owners/occupiers of residential properties that immediately adjoin the boundary of the application site
- Site notices are posted where an application is likely to have a wider impact or is in an area (e.g. in the countryside) where there are no immediate neighbours, but there may be public interest in the proposal, or where the proposals would affect the setting of a listed building or conservation area.

In addition the Council's Public Access system for planning applications is available on our web site and can be used to obtain details of current planning applications. This is available by individual property or by weekly list. Plans are also available to view at the Council Offices in Coalville (during normal opening hours).

Plans are sent to Parish Councils\* as part of the consultation exercise and those neighbours notified of applications are advised that they can, by prior arrangement with the Parish Clerk, view the plans at the Parish Council offices.

*\*A pilot scheme is currently being undertaken by some Parish and Town Council's whereby planning applications are being sent via e-consultation rather than providing hard copies. If we get several hard copies of major applications one will be sent to the relevant Parish Council, otherwise all applications, minor or major, will be in electronic format. We will consider the success of this pilot scheme.*

### **12. Are these consultation methods appropriate?**

**Please suggest other ways in which you could be notified of planning applications**

## **How can I respond to the Statement of Community Involvement Consultation?**

Before we prepare a our new SCI we would like to invite you to consider how you would like to be involved in planning decisions in the future. We will consider your responses in preparing a new SCI.

The closing date for comments is Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014. All comments must be received before 5.00pm on that day.

The consultation information is available to view and / or download from our website at:

**[www.nwleics.gov.uk/localplanmysay](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/localplanmysay)**

Please e-mail your response to: **[planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)**

Alternatively, you can provide comments via post to the following address: -

**SCI Consultation, Planning Policy, North West Leicestershire District Council  
Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville LE67 3FJ**

Hard copies can also be obtained from Main Reception at the District Council offices, and at the public libraries in the District (during their normal opening hours).

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**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 13 JANUARY 2015**

Title of report	<b>COUNCIL TAX BASE 2015/16</b>
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Nick Rushton 01530 412059 <a href="mailto:nicholas.rushton@nwleicesterhire.gov.uk">nicholas.rushton@nwleicesterhire.gov.uk</a>  Chief Executive 01530 454500 <a href="mailto:christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Head of Finance 01530 454520 <a href="mailto:ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>
Purpose of report	To determine the Council Tax Base for the 2015/16 Financial Year.
Reason for Decision	Statutory requirement to facilitate the setting of Council Tax for the forthcoming Financial Year.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Homes and Communities
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	These are set out in Section 2 of the report.
Link to relevant CAT	None.
Risk Management	Controls are in place to ensure the correct calculation of the Council Tax Base.
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable.
Human Rights	There are no Human Rights implications.
Transformational Government	Not applicable.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	As report author the report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory

Consultees	None.
Background papers	None.
Recommendations	<p><b>1. THAT THE CALCULATION OF THE COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR EACH PARISH AND SPECIAL EXPENSE AREA FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16, AS SHOWN IN APPENDIX 2 TO THE REPORT, BE APPROVED AND ADOPTED.</b></p> <p><b>2. THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE) (England) REGULATIONS 2012 SI 2012/2914, THE AMOUNT CALCULATED BY NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL AS ITS COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16 SHALL BE 29,664.</b></p> <p><b>3. THAT THE AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT FOR EACH TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL DETAILED IN APPENDIX 3 BE APPROVED FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16.</b></p>

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires that the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2015/16 be determined by no later than 31 January 2015. This is a necessary component in the setting of the 2015/16 Council Tax. Cabinet has delegated powers from Council to approve the Council Tax Base.

## **2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council Tax Base is a measure of the relative taxable capacity of the District (and of each part of the District as listed in Appendix 2). It is expressed as the equivalent number of Band D properties in each area. The Council Tax Base multiplied by the Band D Council Tax gives the total Council Tax receivable for the forthcoming financial year.

- 2.2 The budget requirement of this Authority, and of its Precepting Authorities, to be met by the Council Tax charge is divided by the Council Tax Base figure to arrive at the level of Council Tax to be levied on a Band D property in order to generate that amount of Council Tax income. The actual levy on properties in other Bands is calculated on a pro-rata basis using the following ratios:

Band A = 6/9 of Band D,  
Band B = 7/9 of Band D,  
Band C = 8/9 of Band D,  
Band D = 9/9 of Band D  
Band E = 11/9 of Band D,  
Band F = 13/9 of Band D,  
Band G = 15/9 of Band D  
Band H = 18/9 of Band D

- 2.3 Where the precept relates to only part of the District (i.e. Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) the appropriate Council Tax Base of the part (as shown in Appendix 2) is used. Accordingly, all Precepting Authorities will be informed of their appropriate Council Tax Base for 2015/16 once the total Council Tax Base has been determined.



### **3.0 CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE**

- 3.1 The Council Tax Base calculation for the financial year 2015/16 has been carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. Appendix 1 shows the actual number properties on the Council Tax database as at 30 November 2014 by Council Tax band.
- 3.2 A bad debt provision of 2% of the base has been applied to allow for non collection and banding appeals.
- 3.3 The adjusted figures for each Parish and Special Expense area are set out in Appendix 2. The respective Council Tax base for each Parish and Special Expense area is used as a basis for charging Special Expenses and Parish Precepts to the Council Tax payers of the appropriate parts of the District.
- 3.4 On 1 April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was replaced by a new Local Council Tax Support Scheme. The new support scheme introduced new discounts into the Council Tax Base calculation, which reduced the tax base significantly in comparison to previous years. For 2014/15 revisions were made to the scheme which reduced the level of Council Tax Support Discounts given which in turn increased the Council Tax Base. For 2015/16 there are no proposed changes to the Scheme.
- 3.5 From 1 April 2013 the Government also replaced Council Tax Benefit Subsidy grant with Council Tax Support grant but reduced the level of funding by around 10% for 2013/14. Funding was reduced further for 2014/15 following the withdrawal of Transitional funding. The grant is intended to pay for the Council Tax Support Discounts. Town and Parish Councils do not receive these Government grants in their own right and the District Council intends to continue to pass on to them an element of its own grant to compensate them for the Council Tax Discounts in 2015/16 as it did in 2013/14 and 2014/15 . As there are no proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme this means that Town and Parish Councils will receive similar levels of grant from the District Council to maintain their level of funding. For the year 2015-16, the District's funding from the Government (excluding New Homes Bonus) is expected to be reduced by around 15%.
- 3.6 The Council's Council Tax Support Grant for 2015/16 is now included in mainstream Government funding. Whilst the District Council is under no obligation to pass on this grant, the Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 18 November 2014 to allocate part of its grant to Town and Parish Councils again in this year's budget to assist them in maintaining their current level of funding. The District Council has calculated that a total of £100,076 is needed in grant support to maintain existing funding levels.
- 3.7 The attached Appendix 3 shows the proposed allocation of Council Tax Support grant to Town and Parish Councils. It shows the estimated Town and Parish Council Precepts, recommended grants and total estimated funding available for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

### **4.0 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES (BUSINESS RATES)**

- 4.1 The funding system for Local Government from April 2013 includes the "localisation" of business rates. As part of the Government's business rates distribution formula, North West Leicestershire District Council will initially retain 40% of all business rates collected within the District, 9% will go to Leicestershire County Council, 1% will go to the Fire Authority, and the remaining 50% known as the "central share" will go to Central Government. The Government will then redistribute the central share to Local Authorities using formula grant methodology. There is however also a complex system of "top-ups" "tariffs" and "levies" which results in the District as a "tariff" authority paying a 50% levy on its 40% of additional business rates back to Central Government.

- 4.2 Local Authorities are required to provide details of expected Business Rates income for the following year to the Government by 31 January and this is done on a form called NNDR 1. As business rate income has become a fundamental part of the new funding system for Local Government, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has introduced a requirement for the NNDR 1 form to be formally approved. The expectation is that the approval process is to be in line with approval of the Council Tax Base. The Head of Finance as the Council's Chief Finance Officer has the delegated authority to approve and submit the form.

## COUNCIL TAX BASE

COUNCIL TAX BAND	RATIO TO BAND D	NUMBER OF BAND D EQUIVALENTS AS AT 30 NOV. 2014	NON COLLECTION RATE 2%	COUNCIL TAX BASE 2015/16
A	6/9	4,425	89	4,336
B	7/9	7,849	157	7,692
C	8/9	5,374	107	5,267
D	9/9	5,167	103	5,064
E	11/9	4,123	82	4,041
F	13/9	1,898	38	1,860
G	15/9	1,351	27	1,324
H	18/9	82	2	80
		<b>30,269</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>29,664</b>

**APPENDIX 2**

**COUNCIL TAX BASE  
PARISH AND SPECIAL EXPENSE AREAS**

Parish / Special Expense Area	Council Tax Base	
	2014/2015	2015/2016
APPLEBY MAGNA	420	<b>420</b>
ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH	4,621	<b>4773</b>
ASHBY WOULD'S	1,068	<b>1096</b>
BARDON	12	<b>13</b>
BELTON	289	<b>292</b>
BREEDON-ON-THE-HILL	388	<b>404</b>
CASTLE DONINGTON	2,185	<b>2253</b>
CHARLEY	77	<b>75</b>
CHILCOTE	56	<b>56</b>
COALVILLE	5,640	<b>5719</b>
COLEORTON	518	<b>529</b>
ELLISTOWN AND BATTLEFLAT	761	<b>758</b>
HEATHER	308	<b>312</b>
HUGGLESCOTE AND DONINGTON LE HEATH	1,236	<b>1247</b>
IBSTOCK	1,786	<b>1882</b>
ISLEY WALTON-CUM-LANGLEY	27	<b>27</b>
KEGWORTH	1,125	<b>1178</b>
LOCKINGTON-CUM-HEMINGTON	238	<b>237</b>
LONG WHATTON AND DISEWORTH	728	<b>728</b>
MEASHAM	1,460	<b>1487</b>
NORMANTON-LE-HEATH	62	<b>63</b>
OAKTHORPE, DONISTHORPE AND ACRESFORD	763	<b>772</b>
OSGATHORPE	179	<b>180</b>
PACKINGTON	348	<b>343</b>
RAVENSTONE WITH SNIBSTON	742	<b>763</b>
SNARESTONE	123	<b>128</b>
STAUNTON HAROLD	61	<b>60</b>
STRETTON-EN-LE-FIELD	19	<b>19</b>
SWANNINGTON	430	<b>433</b>
SWEPSTONE	252	<b>255</b>
WHITWICK	2,620	<b>2625</b>
WORTHINGTON	532	<b>537</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>29,074</b>	<b>29,664</b>

## APPENDIX 3

## ESTIMATED PARISH PRECEPTS

	2014/15 Estimated Parish Precept	2014/15 Recommended Grant	2014/15 Parish Total Budget Requirement	2015/16 Estimated Parish Precept	2015/16 Recommended Grant	2015/16 Total Estimated Parish Total Budget Requirement
PARISH	£	£	£	£	£	£
APPLEBY MAGNA	13,562	938	14,500	13,562	938	14,500
ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH	327,906	24,763	352,669	338,692	24,763	363,455
ASHBY WOULD'S	81,681	12,071	93,752	83,822	12,071	95,893
BELTON	13,213	787	14,000	13,350	787	14,137
BREEDON-ON-THE-HILL	14,000	875	14,875	14,577	875	15,452
CASTLE DONINGTON	243,578	4,717	248,295	251,158	4,717	255,875
CHARLEY	3,818	182	4,000	3,719	182	3,901
COLEORTON	13,815	185	14,000	14,108	185	14,293
ELLISTOWN & BATTLEFLAT	58,234	2,757	60,991	58,004	2,757	60,761
HEATHER	10,444	1,053	11,497	10,580	1,053	11,633
HUGGLESCOTE & DONINGTON LE HEATH **	24,385	1,885	26,270	69,815	6,123	75,938
IBSTOCK	130,381	7,499	137,880	137,389	7,499	144,888
ISLEY WALTON -CUM-LANGLEY	368	27	395	368	27	395
KEGWORTH	92,081	2,919	95,000	96,419	2,919	99,338
LOCKINGTON CUM HEMINGTON	6,904	346	7,250	6,875	346	7,221
LONG WHATTON & DISEWORTH	35,000	594	35,594	35,000	594	35,594
MEASHAM	94,570	8,908	103,478	96,319	8,908	105,227
OAKTHORPE, DONISTHORPE & ACRESFORD	40,989	4,011	45,000	41,472	4,011	45,483
OSGATHORPE	3,793	191	3,984	3,814	191	4,005
PACKINGTON	19,000	0	19,000	18,727	0	18,727
RAVENSTONE WITH SNIBSTON	48,693	3,250	51,943	50,071	3,250	53,321
SNARESTONE	6,176	0	6,176	6,427	0	6,427
STAUNTON HAROLD	100	0	100	98	0	98

	<b>2014/15 Estimated Parish Precept</b>	<b>2014/15 Recommended Grant</b>	<b>2014/15 Parish Total Budget Requirement</b>	<b>2015/16 Estimated Parish Precept</b>	<b>2015/16 Recommended Grant</b>	<b>2015/16 Total Estimated Parish Total Budget Requirement</b>
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
SWANNINGTON	15,878	2,122	18,000	15,989	2,122	18,111
SWEPSTONE	5,370	0	5,370	5,434	0	5,434
WHITWICK *	29,048	2,623	31,671	172,534	15,073	187,607
WORTHINGTON	9,000	685	9,685	9,085	685	9,770
	<b>1,341,987</b>	<b>83,388</b>	<b>1,425,375</b>	<b>1,567,408</b>	<b>100,076</b>	<b>1,667,484</b>

\* The Recommended grant reflects costs being transferred from Special Expenses to Parishes.

## NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## CABINET – 13 JANUARY 2015

Title of report	<b>IMPROVING OUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Richard Blunt 01530 454510 <a href="mailto:richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Chief Executive 01530 454500 <a href="mailto:christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Head of Legal and Support Services 01530 454762 <a href="mailto:elizabeth.warhurst@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">elizabeth.warhurst@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>
Purpose of report	To update Cabinet on progress with the Improving our Customer Experience (ICE) Programme.
Reason for Decision	To note the progress of the ICE Programme
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications: Financial/Staff	As contained within the report
Link to relevant CAT	The Programme is being undertaken with a project management methodology, reporting to a Programme Board led by the Chief Executive. Detailed progress reporting is provided to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
Risk Management	A risk assessment for the programme has been undertaken. Risks are identified through a risk register, with planned mitigations and actions to minimise impact. They are routinely reviewed and updated to ensure appropriate control.
Equalities Impact Screening	EIAs will be undertaken for those individual projects where it is appropriate.
Human Rights	None discernible from the body of the report
Transformational Government	Programme will deliver improvements to service delivery
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory

Consultees	ICE Programme Board
Background papers	<p><a href="#">Developing a customer service vision for North West Leicestershire (Cabinet 17 July 2012)</a></p> <p><a href="#">General Fund and Special Expenses Revenue Budgets 2013/14 (Cabinet 5 Feb 2013)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Medium Term Financial Strategy - 2014/15 to 2017/18 (Cabinet 11 June 2013)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving our Customer Experience (Cabinet 5 March 2013)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving our Customer Experience Programme Update (Cabinet 24 September 2013)</a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Improving our Customer Experience Programme Update (Cabinet 4 March 2014)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Provisional Financial Outturn 2013-14 (Cabinet 29 July 2014)</u></a></p>
Recommendations	<b>THAT CABINET NOTES THE PROGRESS OF THE ICE PROGRAMME</b>

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In July 2012, Cabinet agreed a strategic approach to the improvement of customer services. In addition Cabinet approved, through the General Fund budget paper in February 2013, a further transfer to the Value for Money Fund to support investment in projects aimed at delivering future savings.
- 1.2 In March 2013, Cabinet endorsed the Improving our Customer Experience (ICE) Programme as one of the Council's processes for securing improvements in customer experiences and budget savings. In addition, Cabinet agreed through the Medium Term Financial Strategy report at the June 2013 Cabinet meeting to set aside £250,000 from the Value for Money Reserve for the ICE Programme, in addition to £70,000 already agreed in the capital programme.
- 1.3 In September 2013 and March 2014 Cabinet noted updates on the development of the ICE programme, setting out the programme governance structure, work streams, key projects and budget.
- 1.4 In July 2014, Cabinet approved the allocation of £300,000 from the Value for Money Reserve for Phase 2 of the ICE Programme, and an additional £100,000 from the Value for Money Reserve for the Best Employee Experience (BEE) Staff Development Programme.
- 1.5 The ICE programme aims to significantly improve our customers' experience of service delivery, so they receive services that they value, in the most efficient and accessible way, when they need them. The programme focuses on providing technological improvements to enable our staff to provide an improved service, open up income generating opportunities, and developing digital service delivery to enable customers to interact with the Council in ways that they find are convenient, efficient and cost effective.



- 1.6 Longer term cultural change for the organisation and its personnel will ensure continuous improvement, enabling the Council to maximise opportunities presented by new and emerging technologies.
- 1.7 Phase 1 of the programme will be completed in Quarter 4 2014-15 once the first tranche of technology improvements identified in the reports presented to Cabinet in September 2013 and March 2014 have been delivered.
- 1.8 Phase 2 will also commence in Quarter 4 2014-15 with a focus on customer and staff communication to drive channel shift across all services. It will embed and extend the technology improvements delivered in phase 1 increasing the range of services that can be accessed online via the website and deliver projects to improve office and business efficiency, for example by using tablet computers and document scanning systems within the Council offices. These efficiency improvements will free up staff time to work more closely with customers, ensuring service development is focused on the areas our customer value most.
- 1.9 The programme will leave an improved technological infrastructure to allow staff to serve customers more efficiently and customers to have access to a wider range of self-service options; delivering dynamic services that utilise technology and support customers to become more independent of the Council.

## **2. ICE PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE UPDATE**

- 2.1 Four work streams were created to deliver phase 1 of the programme, reporting monthly to the ICE Programme Board, which is led by the Chief Executive:
  - 2.1.1 Customer Services Improvement workstream – Lead: Head of Legal & Support Services
  - 2.1.2 Web & Self Service Improvement workstream – Lead: Head of Housing
  - 2.1.3 Systems Improvement workstream – Lead: Head of Community Services
  - 2.1.4 Delivering Excellence workstream – Lead: Head of Legal & Support Services
- 2.2 The projects set out for the Customer Services Improvement workstream have been completed and the planned customer improvements are being consistently delivered so this workstream has been closed down.
- 2.3 The other workstreams are currently under review as part of the transition to phase 2 of the programme. Details of any updates to the governance structure will be provided in a future update to Cabinet.
- 2.4 Programme benefits and impacts continue to be monitored both through the Programme Board and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), with any resultant decisions being taken through the Programme Board, CLT or Cabinet as appropriate to delegated authority levels. The scope of the ICE Programme, and specifically the work of the Programme Board, has been extended to include oversight of all corporate projects. This change is to allow efficient management of resources across all projects and to avoid any risk associated with overlapping or conflicting requirements or priorities.

## **3 PHASE 1 WORKSTREAM PROGRESS UPDATE**

### **3.1 Customer Services Improvement workstream**

This workstream focused on making it quicker and easier for our customers to contact us by telephone and at the Council offices by making a number of technological improvements targeted to improve the efficiency of Customer Services processes. Improvements

implemented in October 2013 include call recording, call centre wallboards, telephony improvements, a front desk queuing system, CCTV for reception and improvements to the call centre environment.

Customer feedback is collected through telephone surveys and the use of a standpoint system in the reception area for visitors to the Council offices, with customers consistently reporting overall satisfaction levels in excess of 95% for the telephone and face to face channels.

In addition to the service benefits, efficiencies in the Customer Services operation have meant that it was possible to reduce the size of the team by not backfilling a temporary vacancy, yielding a cost saving of £27,000 per annum against ICE expenditure of £52,000. The service improvements are therefore self-funding with a payback period of less than 2 years.

The planned customer improvements are being consistently delivered so this workstream has been closed down; reporting to Cabinet will continue via quarterly performance reports.

### 3.2 Web & Self Service Improvement workstream

This workstream has given our customers online access to an increasing range of self-service options at a time and place of their choice through changes to the Council's website implemented in June 2014, which has been re-designed to make it easier to find information and enhanced to support smart phones and tablet computers.

As the drive to encourage customers to interact with the Council online continues and use of the website increases, data collected from the website will be analysed to allow focused development of additional services where usage patterns suggest that they will be most valued by customers. In order to validate this analysis, customers will be surveyed using new mechanisms delivered through this workstream including text messaging and online surveys.

The same computer system (the Customer Gateway) that offers self-service options to our customers via the website will be used by Customer Services Officers from Quarter 4 2014-15 onwards, giving them quicker access to other Council ICT systems. This will improve our customer experience by reducing the duration of phone calls and face to face appointments, and allowing more issues to be resolved at first point of contact.

The new website and customer gateway system were used to support voting for the £20,000 for 7 Community Funding Initiative in October and November, with over 2,000 customers registering online accounts to allow them to vote and opt to receive updates on future website development. These same accounts can be used to further simplify online interaction with the Council, since once a customer logs on they will not need to enter their address or contact details again. The system proved stable and reliable with no significant issues encountered during this first large scale interactive use of the new website.

As well as giving customers the convenience of accessing a wide range of Council services at a time of their choosing, the lower cost of online access will deliver financial benefits. In order to achieve payback in a 3 year period, a target of 45 high-value customer interactions per day must be established, which will reduce Customer Services costs by an estimated £40,000 per annum. As at December 2014, 12 transactions per day are being completed. It is expected that this number will increase significantly in Quarter 4 2014-15 as new online options for accessing waste services are introduced.

It is anticipated that this workstream will be closed down once the planned benefits are consistently being delivered. Ongoing development of the website will become the responsibility of a Website Improvement Group.

### 3.3 Systems Improvement workstream

There are two separate threads to this workstream:

- A new waste management system has been procured and is in the final stages of development and testing, ready to go live in Quarter 4 2014-15. The new system will make it quicker and easier for customers to request services such as replacement bins or bulky waste collections, either on the phone or via the website, as well as reducing operating costs by helping us manage assisted collections, missed bins and other planning processes more efficiently.
- Customers will be offered more electronic payment options to reflect changing demands and customer preference. These will include an option to set up Direct Debits online for services such as trade waste collection or Lifelines and a single easier to use card payment system for use by all services. It was anticipated that these improvements would be delivered by December 2014, but this work has been delayed because of the Co-Operative Bank's withdrawal from the corporate banking sector and the need to establish new banking arrangements. Work has now restarted, with the planned improvements due to be in place by April 2015.

### 3.4 Delivering Excellence workstream

Our customers expect us to focus improvements on the services and issues that are important to them. This workstream is ensuring that the ICE Programme does this by undertaking customer consultation and reviewing feedback to help deliver customer-focused improvements. The workstream is also making sure that changes are made in a cost effective and timely manner and our customers and staff are kept informed by overseeing strategic and financial planning for the Council and the communications plan for the ICE programme:

- Strategic and financial planning for 2015/16 is in progress. The process for 2015/16 builds on the previous year's process through the addition of specific requirements for procurement and communications and various enhancements to improve consistency across teams. All team plans have a specific focus on outcomes for customers, which should lead to increased customer satisfaction.
- This workstream also lead to the introduction of a robust monthly performance monitoring process, with CLT meeting monthly since April 2014 to review operational performance based on data presented in performance dashboards that have been created every month for all teams, with a view to identifying opportunities for improving service.
- Customer communication focused on promotion of the website and included a social media campaign, magnetic advertising signs on council vehicles, a press release that was reported locally and information packs sent to parish councils and members. The number of customers engaging with the council through Twitter has increased dramatically over recent months, with 277 visits to the website in November coming directly from Twitter. Staff have been kept updated at the Chief Executive Roadshows and through briefings to Trade Unions.

### 3.5 Phase 1 summary

Workstream	Improvement	Outcome	Financial Benefit
Customer Service Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call recording</li> <li>• Call centre wallboards</li> <li>• Front desk queuing system</li> <li>• Improved customer services office environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More calls answered / fewer calls abandoned</li> <li>• Queuing time information improves experience of waiting; less time spent waiting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £27,000 saving per annum through reduced requirement for agency staff (achieved)</li> </ul>

Web & Self Service Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redesigned website</li> <li>New customer gateway system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easier to find information online at any time of day</li> <li>Increasing range of online services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£40,000 saving per annum through reduced requirement for agency staff (27% achieved)</li> </ul>
Systems Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste management system</li> <li>Payment systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to book wide range of waste services online</li> <li>Able to pay online with card or set up direct debits for wider range of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£11,700 saving per annum through reduced fuel costs due to fewer missed bins (target)</li> <li>£10,400 saving per annum through increased recycling revenue as backoffice staff time freed up to promote recycling (target)</li> <li>£4,500 saving per annum through decommissioning old ICT system (achieved)</li> <li>Improved debt recovery performance as easy for customers to pay up front</li> </ul>
Delivering Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved service and financial planning process</li> <li>Customer communications plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More information about what the Council is doing and more opportunity to help shape plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better management information to drive future performance improvements &amp; savings</li> </ul>

#### 4 PHASE 2 PLANS

- 4.1 The second phase of the ICE Programme will build on Phase 1 through further development of the website and the introduction of smart phone apps in order to extend the range of customer contact options. The programme will also include targeted initiatives to engage staff through phase 2 of the Best Employee Experience (BEE) programme and the use of technology, and to better understand and manage direct to service customer contact. A second phase of Planning For the Future (PFF) projects will include systems improvements to allow management information to be collected in a more timely and less costly manner. Office efficiency will be improved through a second wave of scanning / document management initiatives.
- 4.2 The BEE programme originated in 2011 to review and refine HR processes and enhance the employee experience.
- 4.3 Phase two of the BEE programme began in early 2014. An external coaching partner has been engaged to offer specialist knowledge and capacity to move BEE onto the next level. This will raise the Council's level of performance and focus on delivering first class customer service. This will create a natural link between the BEE and ICE programmes which will be overseen by a shared programme board going forwards.
- 4.4 The Council is continuing to develop an organisation that encourages and enables all staff to take responsibility for finding solutions, creating opportunities for improved performance.

#### 5 PHASE 1 BUDGET UPDATE

- 5.1 The phase 1 ICE Programme budget covers the costs of the projects set out in section 3 of this report as follows:

Strand	Expected Costs	Expenditure/ Commitments to 31/12/2014
Customer Services Improvement	£55,000	£52,000

Web & Self Service Improvement	£190,000	£154,000
Systems Improvement	£95,000	£92,000
Delivering Excellence	£20,000	£1,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£360,000</b>	<b>£299,200</b>

- 5.2 The budget for the programme is currently on track, and it is likely that all workstreams will complete under budget. Some expenditure is yet to be undertaken for longer term projects, including further development of the website.
- 5.3 Programme funding for phase 1 was agreed (by Cabinet in February 2013) from the Value for Money Reserve (£250,000), with additional contributions from the Capital Programme (£70,000) and Service budgets (£49,000) bringing the total available budget to £369,000. (Note that the available funding exceeds the expected costs following a downward revision of cost estimates.)
- 5.4 It is still anticipated that a return on investment for phase 1 will be generated by year 3 of the ICE programme (2016/17). The majority of expected savings will be derived from efficiency gains in customer services. Firstly, increased use of self-service options will reduce the number of calls taken by Customer Services Officers and secondly, improved systems will simplify systems access reducing the time taken on each telephone call. The combined effect of these changes will be a lessening of the demand for temporary and agency posts in Customer Services.

## 6 PHASE 2 BUDGET UPDATE

- 6.1 Programme funding of £300,000 for phase 2 was agreed by Cabinet in July 2014 from the Value for Money Reserve, with an additional £100,000 from the Value for Money Reserve agreed specifically for the BEE Staff Develop Programme.
- 6.2 Funds have been provisionally allocated to cover project costs as follows, subject to further development of business cases by project owners and scrutiny by the ICE Programme Board:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Expected Costs</b>
ICE-2 Website	£60,000
ICE-2 Smart Phone Apps	£20,000
ICE-2 Telephone System Improvements	£45,000
ICE-2 BEE Connected	£40,000
PFF-2 Real Time Performance Data	£100,000
PFF-2 Electronic Office	£35,000
BEE Staff Performance Programme	£100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£400,000</b>

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