

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 13 JANUARY 2015

Title of report	STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
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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 www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 which can found at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/pdfs/uksi_20120767_en.pdf</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 which can be found at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2184/contents/made</p>
Recommendation	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <p>1 NOTES THE RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SET OUT IN APPENDIX B AND;</p> <p>2 AGREES TO THE ADOPTION OF THE NEW STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX A.</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.