

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Planning Policy Committee</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Review of the Statement of Community Involvement</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Kevin Owen (Planning Policy &amp; Conservation Manager)</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Martin Lury, Chair of Planning Policy Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<p><b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b>  The production of an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is required as part of the Local Plan Update. The SCI is therefore an important part of the process to achieving the corporate vision of Delivering the right homes in the right places.</p>	
<p><b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b>  Community involvement is a key element in the planning system in order to ensure that all of those with an interest are actively involved. The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how and when local communities, businesses and organisations will be involved in the planning process.</p>	
<p><b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b>  There are no financial implications arising from this report. Consultation costs will be met from within the Planning Policy Budget.</p>	

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek authority to publish the amended Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Planning Policy Committee agrees to:-
- i. Approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement for a four-week period of public consultation from 28 September closing 26 October 2023;
  - ii. Delegate authority to the Group Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair of Planning Policy Committee to make any minor or factual drafting changes to the SCI and should no material changes be needed, refer the SCI to Full Council for approval;
  - iii. Report the SCI back to this Committee in the event that material changes are needed, before referral to Full Council for approval.

## **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

- 3.2 The document provides guidance on how the planning system works and how the council will inform, consult and involve people in planning decisions within the Arun District Local Planning Authority Area (i.e. excluding that part of the District covered by the South Downs National Park Planning Authority).
- 3.3 The current SCI was last reviewed in 2018 (although temporary updates were introduced during the Covid pandemic to cover public inspection and social distancing which have now finished). Given the time interval, and the decision to recommence the update of the Arun Local Plan, the SCI has now been checked and amended to account for changes in the planning system. The revised version of the SCI also includes a number of factual updates related to the handling of any personal information received during a period of public consultation e.g. as part of the determination of a planning application, or in the process of preparing a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.4 A draft Statement of Community Involvement (attached at Appendix 1) has been prepared, and the council is required to publish it for public consultation.

#### **4. DETAIL**

- 4.1 The Local Planning Authority is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in accordance with section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the council will engage with the public, developers, businesses and other agencies with an interest in the development of the District, as part of the planning system.
- 4.2 This includes the preparation and revision of Local Plans, and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The SCI is also required to be in conformity with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 which establishes requirements for consultation on planning applications. As a result, the SCI also includes procedures for consulting the public on planning, listed building and other applications. Essentially, the SCI also sets out standards and arrangements as to how the council will consult and report back to those engaged in the process.
- 4.3 The council considers that having clear arrangements for carrying out consultation will help to establish a two-way process between the community and the council, especially in terms of the creation of the Local Plan. It will provide the community with opportunities to help shape their local areas and create a transparent, fair and open planning process.
- 4.4 The SCI contains:-
- Information on who and how we will consult when drafting planning documents, and at what stage.
  - Information on when, who and how we will consult on planning, listed building and other types of applications.
  - The techniques available and likely to be used during consultation. It is important that methods can be appropriately tailored to the planning document in question, to allow for changes in the regulations or best practice guidance, and to reflect that new methods of communication and

engagement may become available over the life of the document.

### **Current Position**

- 4.5 Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 requires an SCI to be reviewed every five years starting from the date of adoption of the SCI. The current SCI was last reviewed in 2018, with temporary changes made in 2020 to reflect the restrictions caused by the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 4.6 The SCI will be used in the production of the Local Plan Review and form part of the Local Plan examination process during which compliance with the SCI will be checked in order to ensure that all those with an interest will have been involved at the appropriate time and in the best way possible. It is, therefore, important to ensure that it remains current and up to date.
- 4.7 Following the recommendation by the Planning Policy Committee on 8 June 2023 to lift the pause on the review of the Arun Local Plan (approved by Full Council on 19 July) the SCI has been reviewed. The need for a small number of changes has been identified and now made to the content. These changes ensure that it reflects the relevant legislation, ADC procedures and is fit for purpose. A number of key alterations have been highlighted in yellow within the draft SCI document.
- 4.8 The small number of amendments to the SCI include:-
- Information regarding the legal framework for preparing the SCI and amendments to the relevant legislation.
  - Information regarding the status of the SCI.
  - Factual updates regarding the process for submitting applications and reviewing plans.
  - A factual update on how consultation responses are handled by the department e.g. when determining applications or reviewing local plan representations. This includes how personal information received is to be handled and advice to consultees.
- 4.9 Following any amendments, the SCI should be published for a period of consultation to allow any interested individual to make representations. If agreed, the draft SCI will be published for a four-week period of consultation from 28 September to 26 October 2023.
- 4.10 All representations received will be reviewed and amendments incorporated, where appropriate, into the final SCI. Should there be only minor drafting or factual changes, this report seeks delegated authority for the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair of Planning Policy Committee to make such changes otherwise any material changes will be reported back to Committee.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 No external consultations have yet been undertaken. However, internal consultations have been undertaken including with officers from Legal services, Development Management and the Technical Support.

## **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The council can choose not to update the Statement of Community Involvement. However, this would risk impacting upon the Local Plan when it reaches examination.

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Consultation costs will be met from within the Planning Policy Budget.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Implementing the recommendation will minimise the risk that the council will fail its statutory duty.

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1 The current system of plan making is contained in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA) (as amended) and the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and supported by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

- 9.2 The Authority has a statutory duty pursuant to Section 18 of the PCPA 2004 to prepare a statement of community involvement which is a local development document that sets out the authority's policies on giving advice and guidance for neighbourhood planning and on how it will involve those persons with an interest in matters relating to development in their area on the preparation of specified planning documents.

- 9.3 The Local Planning Authority has reviewed and updated the SCI in order to ensure compliance with regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 which requires it to be reviewed every five years starting from the date of its adoption.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1 There is a need to ensure that staff are continually engaged in this process.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

- 11.2 No additional health and safety risks have been identified in relation to the proposals.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 There are no direct implications for council estate arising from this report.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 The council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. The SCI ensures that all those with an interest in the planning process are involved at the appropriate time using the most suitable methods in order to ensure that they are genuinely involved.

## **14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 There are no implications.

## **15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 There are no implications.

## **16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 There are no implications.

## **17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 There are no implications.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

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### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

The Draft Statement of Community Involvement:

<https://www.arun.gov.uk/statement-of-community-involvement-sci-and-engagement>