

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Full Council - 10 January 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Kevin Owen (Planning Policy &amp; Conservation Manager)</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Martin Lury (Chair of Planning Policy Committee)</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<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.	
<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.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> There are no financial implications arising from this report.	

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to adopt the updated Statement of Community Involvement following a public consultation period.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Full Council adopts the Statement of Community Involvement (Background Paper 1).

## **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 A draft Statement of Community Involvement was agreed for public consultation at the Planning Policy Committee Meeting of 21 September 2023. Consultation was held between Thursday 28 September and Friday 27 October 2023, and in response to this consultation only one minor amendment has been made to the document.

## **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 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.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The SCI was published for a four-week period of public consultation from Thursday 28 September and Friday 27 October 2023.
- 5.3 The responses were generally supportive of the updated SCI (e.g. Environment Agency and Natural England and Bognor Regis Town Council). A number of comments made suggestions but were not directly relevant or appropriate to the content of the SCI or were of note but did not require changes for example:-
- The degree of weight which should be given to the volume of support/objection.
  - Previous communications with the council on specific applications.
  - Scope for non-development plan documents e.g. the role of Supplementary Planning Documents.
  - Whether all consultation responses should be made public.
  - Concerns about the legitimate use of Community right to Build Orders and Neighbourhood Development Orders.
  - The democratic legitimacy of planning decisions and whether delegation of some decisions to officers should be removed.
  - Concerns that appeal decisions by Inspector are not democratic.
  - The inclusion of Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs).

- The scope for impartial advice - Planning Aid.
- Monitoring of web hits not sufficient on its own to measure consultation effectiveness.
- Whether some consultees are no longer appropriate e.g. Coal Authority.
- The need to ensure that appropriate council expertise including County Council expertise and national organisations are involved in heritage and amenity matters.

5.4 However, one helpful clarification was sought by one respondent with respect to site notices and that these should include a clear description of the proposed development being consulted on. The SCI document has therefore been amended to reflect this minor addition (highlighted in yellow in the SCI).

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

6.1 The options are:

- To adopt the updated Statement of Community Involvement
- Not to adopt the updated Statement of Community Involvement

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

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **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 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:**

Background Paper 1: Appendix 1: Statement of Community Involvement:  
<https://www.arun.gov.uk/statement-of-community-involvement-sci-and-engagement>