



Item

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

To:

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Open Spaces

Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee [25/06/2019]

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for adoption following the conclusion of public consultation. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017, state that LPAs in England must review their SCI every five years to ensure it is up to date and reflects current legislation and best practice. The SCI has been prepared to ensure that the LPAs are in accordance with this regulatory requirement.
- 1.2 In the context of the Greater Cambridge area, the new SCI sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils as part of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service will consult on planning policy documents and planning applications, ensuring that the two councils are consistent in their approach to engagement with local communities. The SCI will replace the adopted SCI of Cambridge City Council (2013) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (2010).

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

1. Adopt the Statement of Community Involvement (2019) for Greater Cambridge, prepared jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. Agree that the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development is granted delegated authority, in liaison with the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Open Spaces, and the Chair and Spokes for the Planning Policy and Transport Scrutiny Committee, to make any editing changes prior to publication.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduced the requirement for local authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement, and new regulations came into force on 6 April 2018 which require that SCIs must be reviewed at least every five years from the date of adoption. The current Cambridge City SCI was adopted in November 2013 and the SCI for South Cambridgeshire District Council was adopted in 2010. Short addenda to both documents were adopted during 2018, setting out the approach of both Councils to providing support to Neighbourhood Forums, community organisations and Parish Councils that are preparing Neighbourhood Plans or Development Orders.
- 3.2 The SCI sets out how the public will have an opportunity to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, interest groups and individuals within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning application process aiming at shaping where we live, work and trade.
- 3.3 The SCI gives an introduction to the overall planning process, and then moves into detail about how stakeholders can get involved in the preparation of plans including Local Plans (which includes Area Action Plans), Supplementary Planning Documents and

Neighbourhood Plans. A further section identifies the mechanisms by which stakeholders will be provided an opportunity to engage in the planning application process. Finally, an overview of the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan or Order is provided, followed by the broad support available to community groups that are preparing such documents.

- 3.4 The SCI is drafted to reflect the requirements of planning regulations, and provides examples where the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) may, if resources permit, use methods of engagement that move beyond the regulatory requirements. It is important that the SCI does not commit the LPAs to actions that cannot be resourced in all cases, as this could then call into jeopardy decisions and actions taken. This does not, however, preclude the Council from choosing to use additional mechanisms to increase community engagement as and when it is considered appropriate to do so.

- 3.5 Whilst there is no mandatory requirement for consultation on a draft SCI, the Executive Councillor at the Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee in January 2019 agreed that the draft SCI should be published for six weeks from Monday 11 February to Monday 25 March 2019. The consultation period was carried out in accordance with the requirements for Supplementary Planning Documents (see Table 2 of the SCI attached at Appendix 1).

- 3.6 There were a total of 12 representations received during the consultation period and they have been considered when preparing the SCI attached at Appendix 2. Of the 12 representations received, seven were objections, four were comments/no comments and one was support. As shown in further detail in the Consultation Statement (attached at Appendix 2), a number of the objections referred to the difficulties of navigating and responding to planning applications using Public Access (Idox). A detailed response to these issues has been set out within the Consultation Statement. In summary, a single amendment is proposed to the SCI on the basis of the representations received, which is to include direct links to the webpages for viewing or commenting on planning applications for both Councils (see page 17 of Appendix 1). A small number of editorial corrections have also been made in addition to some further explanation on some of the terminology referred to in the document.

4. Implications

a) Financial Implications

None.

b) Staffing Implications

None.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Yes – attached in Appendix 3.

d) Environmental Implications

None.

e) Procurement Implications

None.

f) Community Safety Implications

None.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

None at this final stage of the SCI process. The SCI was published for public consultation for six weeks and publicity of this consultation was in accordance with the requirements of consulting on Supplementary Planning Documents. The consultation document was made available on the council's website and at the Customer Service Centre throughout the consultation period. This is set out in the Consultation Statement (attached at Appendix 2).

6. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Equality Impact Assessment

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement (2019)

Appendix 2 - Consultation Statement

Appendix 3 - Equalities Impact Assessment

Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Terry De Sousa, Senior Planning Policy Officer, tel: 01223 - 457371, email: terry.desousa@cambridge.gov.uk.