

CABINET MEETING – 11 FEBRUARY 2015 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I									
Title of Report: Statement of Community Involvement									
Author(s): Deputy Chief Executive									
Purpose of Report: The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Statement of Community Involvement.									
Description of Decision: Cabinet is asked to: a) Approve the Draft Statement of Community Involvement as a statement of how the council will engage the local community and stakeholders in the planning process, as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).									
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes									
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework									
Suggested reason(s) for Decision: To meet statutory requirements by providing a formal statement of how the Council will involve the community in the preparation of the Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications.									
Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected: This is a statutory document therefore there is no alternative option. Failure to produce the document may result in challenges against planning decisions or may jeopardise the adoption of the Local Plan.									
Impacts analysed: <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Equality</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 50px;">Y</td> <td style="border: none;">Privacy</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 50px;">n/a</td> <td style="border: none;">Sustainability</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 50px;">n/a</td> <td style="border: none;">Crime and Disorder</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 50px;">n/a</td> </tr> </table>		Equality	Y	Privacy	n/a	Sustainability	n/a	Crime and Disorder	n/a
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Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? *Yes Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? *Yes	Scrutiny Committee								

REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- a) Approve the Statement of Community Involvement as a statement of how the council will engage the local community and stakeholders in the planning process, as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the Council will engage with local communities and stakeholders in the preparation of development plan documents and in carrying out our development management function for the determination of planning applications within the city. It aims to maximise involvement in the planning process to encourage ownership of the policies and development management decisions that will shape future development in the City.
- 3.2 The Council is required to produce an SCI in order to meet the requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The SCI explains the statutory requirements that the Council must meet at certain stages of planning policy document production and determination of planning applications, and what other consultation or engagement processes may be undertaken in addition to these minimum requirements. This will allow the community to know how and when they will be involved in the planning process. The SCI therefore sets the framework for planning related consultations which will enable the Council to demonstrate how it has met the requirements of the planning regulations. This is a key requirement in terms of plan-making and at the subsequent Examination, the Inspector – in assessing the soundness of the plan - will need to be satisfied that the Council has complied with the approaches to consultation outlined in the SCI.
- 3.3 The council's first SCI was adopted in November 2006. The document under consideration is the first amendment to the SCI and reflects recent changes to the planning legislative context and new ways of engaging with the public and other stakeholders including the growth of information technology and social media.

4.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement is arranged over three parts; the first sets out the background and context for the SCI, the second sets out the council's approach to engaging the community in the plan making process, the third details the consultation and publicity procedures to inform the decision making process through the determination of planning applications.
- 4.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduced a new planning system for England. Under section 18 (Part 2) of this act Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Since the adoption of Sunderland's first SCI in 2006 there have been a number of legislative changes, which mean that the SCI can now be adopted without the need to undergo formal examination by an independent Government Inspector. Additionally, the minimum legal requirements for consultation on development plan documents and in the determination of planning applications have been updated by Government in order to encourage more efficient production of plans and processing applications.
- 4.3 The minimum requirements for community involvement in the production of planning policy documents are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012; for the determination of planning applications, the minimum requirements are set out within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010.
- 4.4 The SCI builds on the minimum requirements set out in the above legislation with a view to achieving maximum coverage, inclusiveness and accessibility balanced against resource and time constraints.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Following approval, by Cabinet the SCI will become operational. The measures set out in the SCI will be used as a basis for undertaking all consultations/publicity relating to the preparation of development plan documents and in relation to planning applications.
- 5.2 The implementation and effectiveness of the SCI will continue to be monitored and if further amendments are subsequently found to required, appropriate revisions will be made to the document and reported back to Cabinet for approval.

6.0 REASON FOR DECISION

- 6.1 The decision is required to meet statutory requirements by providing a formal statement of how the Council will involve the community in the preparation of the Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 This is a statutory document therefore there is no alternative option. There is a clear need to update the SCI and failure to produce a revised document may result in challenges against planning decisions or may jeopardise the adoption of the Local Plan.

8.0 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

8.1 Financial Implications

There are only minor direct costs resulting from the publication of the document, for statutory advertisements and document printing costs. There will be future costs associated with the various consultation and participation stages for each of the development plan documents and in association with planning applications. The more extensive consultation proposed, particularly for hard to reach groups, may add a small percentage over current costs. However these costs can be contained within existing budgets.

8.2 Human Rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

8.3 Equalities and Diversity

An Equality Analysis has been undertaken on the SCI, which concluded that no major change was required to the Policy with regards equality. The SCI clearly sets out an inclusive consultation and involvement process. Consultation and involvement carried out in line with the SCI will help to inform equality analyses of planning and development which will allow us to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative impacts for people with the protected equality characteristics (age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership)

8.4 Legal Implications

The SCI has been prepared in accordance with the appropriate Planning Regulations and City Council procedures.

9.0 List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Statement of Community Involvement

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)
Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010

