

‘A’ ITEM

	<p align="center">REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2019 CABINET ON 12 FEBRUARY 2019 AND COUNCIL ON 1 MARCH 2019</p>	
	Key Decision	YES
Corporate Priority: People/Place/Prosperity/Council	Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr H Phillips – Portfolio Holder for Transformation

REPORT OF DIRECTOR: (RB) – 19/026

WARDS AFFECTED: “All”

**SUBJECT: UPDATE TO THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT 2019**

RECOMMENDATION (S): It is recommended:

- i) That Members recommend that Council adopt the revised Statement of Community Involvement and that it is used thereafter as the basis for consultation on both the Policy and Development Management elements of Planning.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):

Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), local planning authorities must prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). A local planning authority’s SCI is a statement of their policy for involving interested parties in matters relating to development in their area and should be reviewed at least every five years.

Additionally, the Planning Inspector who examined the Local Plan, whilst confirming that all consultation requirements had been met, recommended that in light of comments from consultees that the SCI be reviewed at our earliest convenience.

HIGHLIGHTED RISKS:

The Council must have an up to date Statement of Community Involvement in place to meet the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. All development documents are required to comply with the SCI as part of the public examination (Test of Soundness) as set out in the Regulations.

It is important to ensure that the right balance of consultation is achieved. Insufficient consultation may result in little meaningful input from the community and potentially the production of a document that does not respond to local issues and aspirations and fails to meet the tests of soundness. Similarly too much consultation may result in consultation fatigue, inefficient use of resources and the creation of unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved. Responding to technology changes can help ensure that all parts of the community can be involved in the planning process. Failure to do so may result in poor levels of engagement with parts of the community who digest their information in different ways to that of more traditional consultation methods.

In respect of Development Management many processes have changed in recent years in relation to consultation on planning applications and other duties. The current SCI is out of date and without being updated and adopted it could result in potential confusion over what consultation is proposed / required. Such ambiguity can lead to complaints from residents if it is considered that the Planning Service is not addressing consultation requirements satisfactorily.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the second update to the SCI with the first document adopted in 2007 and updated in October 2013.
- 1.2 Community engagement remains fundamental to the delivery of a sound Local Plan and the consideration of the communities' comments in relation to planning applications; large and small.
- 1.3 The updated Statement of Community Involvement is appended to this report.

2. CORPORATE AIMS

- 2.1 Explain how the proposed decision supports the Council's Corporate Aims

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

3.1 Issues for Members' consideration are:

- Updated methods of consultation as a result of lessons learnt with the production and adoption of the Local Plan 2017, specifically for future housing allocations;
- The impact of data protection on the Local Plan consultee database;

- Updated consultation methods for Development Management and Street Naming and Numbering.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 It is not a statutory requirement to consult on the SCI. However, a 6 week consultation process took place with stakeholders in early 2018 to seek views on engagement in planning. Fifteen responses were received with many of these simply acknowledging the consultation or confirming that existing arrangements were adequate. A small number made suggestions which, if appropriate, are covered in the assessment.

5. ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 A consultation took place in early 2018 to ask consultees whether the current methods could be enhanced and to seek suggestions. Whilst the response was limited a significant proportion of respondents were content with existing methods. A small number were not satisfied with current methods or did not feel that their comments and concerns were taken on board during the production of the previous Local Plan. On this latter point it should be noted that all comments were considered and the independently appointed Planning Inspector was provided with all consultee comments to assist and guide the determination of whether the Plan was sound.
- 5.2 Notwithstanding the above it is always the intention of the Local Planning Authority to improve consultation methods and take stock and learn from previous experience. The single biggest issue during the Local Plan publication was new housing sites. These attracted the most objections, however, people still complained that these sites were not publicised sufficiently. Whilst the methods previously used were considered adequate by the Planning Inspector some amendments are proposed to attempt to address these concerns.
- 5.3 In future reviews of the Local Plan that involve potential housing allocations further advertisements will be placed around the sites in question and social media will be utilised further; whether such sites are proposed for inclusion or dismissal. This is set out in Chapter 3 of the revised SCI under the heading 'Housing Sites'.
- 5.4 One suggestion was that we should look at using text message alerts. This has been considered, however, it is not considered practical as an efficient means of consultation. People do change mobile numbers quite regularly and there is additional scope for people to be missed off or for unwanted messages to be delivered to persons who have taken ownership of a pre-owned phone.
- 5.5 However, with the ever increasing use of smart phones (and smart devices) a method we already use is twitter and this is potentially a better option. If a person nominates to receive updates by twitter this would overcome any potential issue of changing mobile phones as their twitter handle will simply

'carry over' to a new device. It is therefore proposed to increase the use of twitter to:

- Notify of commencement of consultations;
- Notify people of consultation events being held (both early notification and on day of);
- Notify updates of new housing sites being submitted for allocation in a Local Plan;
- Remind consultees of the closure of a consultation exercise;
- Provide updates on other Local Plan and policy matters as considered relevant.

5.6 Whilst the Local Planning Authority does not have its own Facebook page it will, when appropriate, make use of the Borough Council's page. Other social media sites will also be investigated including Instagram, YouTube and other platforms.

5.7 The final comment related to better feedback on planning matters (once things are decided or completed). In terms of the Local Plan, updates are provided at appropriate points that notify consultees on the progression and/or adoption of documents. It is not practical to contact each consultee with a bespoke response on their individual comments due to the sheer volume of comments received on Local Plan documents; for example the Local plan received circa 1500 individual comments at the draft stage. Comments are generally grouped together by topic area and a response made accordingly. How this influences the production of the Local Plan (or other document) is set out either in publicly available reports to Council Committees or in the documents submitted to Government (again all publicly accessible in what is termed the Local Plan library – both online and in paper copy at the Town Hall).

5.8 It should be noted that feedback is provided on the progress of planning applications if the person making the comment signs up to 'track the planning application' on the web-based Public Access portal.

5.9 Other changes have been made to the SCI that reflect changes previously implemented in Development Management's consultation methods that have been introduced since the previous SCI.

6. IMPLICATIONS

(a) Policy

6.1 The Statement of Community Involvement will be set out the standards we want to achieve when we involve the community throughout the process of preparing documents and considering planning applications, what methods we will use and at what stages we will consult the community.

(b) Financial

- 6.2 The Statement of Community Involvement is prepared under current budgets for Planning Services. The Council's Statement of Community Involvement 2019 will be made available in electronic format only (on the Scarborough Borough Council website and via email), although in limited circumstances printed versions will be prepared.
- 6.3 The methods of community involvement included within the document will all be carried out within existing budgets.

(c) Legal

- 6.4 A Statement of Community Involvement is required to be prepared by a local planning authority under Section 18(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, changes to the system are such that the Statement of Community Involvement is no longer considered a Development Plan Document and is therefore no longer submitted to the Secretary of State or the subject of an Examination.
- 6.5 The Council must have a Statement of Community Involvement in place to meet the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. All development documents are required to comply with the SCI as part of the public examination (Test of Soundness) as set out in the Regulations.

(d) Planning Implications

- 6.6 The planning implications are as described under (a) Policy.

(e) Communications (use of social media, consultation etc)

- 6.7 The draft document was consulted upon prior to this report drafted and included the use of social media in respect of the Planning Authorities twitter account and the Borough Council. The document itself is about consultation and includes the use of social media.

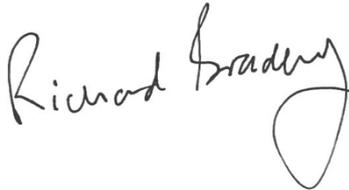
(f) Equalities and Diversity

- 6.8 The SCI promotes the involvement of all sectors of the community and can therefore be seen to be beneficial to the promotion of community engagement and equality.
- 6.9 I have considered whether the following implications arise from this report and am satisfied that there is no identified implications will arise from this decision in relation to Staffing Implications, Crime and Disorder Implications, Health and Safety implications, Co-operation with Health Authorities, Human Rights Act or Environmental implications.

7. ACTION PLAN

7.1 If there is an action plan which arises from this report identify this plan.

Objective	Target
A. Report considered by P&D	7 February 2019
B. Report considered by Cabinet	12 February 2019
C. Report considered/adopted by Council	1 March 2019



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Background Papers:

Please give details of all publicly accessible (non private) background papers applicable to the report.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR.

Risk Matrix

Risk Ref	Date	Risk	Consequences	Mitigation	Current Risk Score	Target Score	Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer	Action Plan
1	15 Jan 2019	The SCI is not updated and brought into effect	<p>Not meeting statutory requirements of updating the SCI at least every 5 years.</p> <p>The risks associated with not having an up to date SCI are that the community and other organisations/stake holders are not adequately aware of the progress with the Local Plan and fail to become involved at critical Consultation stages. This would go against the Council's agreed principles of community cohesion and participation.</p> <p>The same principles exist for Development Management and could result in complaints from neighbours or other parties if process and consultation methods are not updated and set out clearly in the SCI.</p>	Update and adopt the SCI.	C2	A2	Planning Services Manager	Adopt SCI as set out in report. Review within 5 year period.

Glossary of Terms

Risk	An event which may prevent the Council achieving its objectives
Consequences	The outcome if the risk materialised
Mitigation	The processes and procedures that are in place to reduce the risk
Current Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score with the current mitigation measures in place
Target Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score that the Council is aiming to achieve
Service Unit Manager	The Service Unit or Officer responsible for managing the risk
Action Plan	The proposed actions to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to the target score

Risk Scoring

Impact	5	[Hatched]				
	4	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]
	3	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]
	2	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]
	1	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]	[Hatched]
		A	B	C	D	E
	Likelihood					

Likelihood:

A = Very Low
 B = Not Likely
 C = Likely
 D = Very Likely
 E = Almost Certain

Impact

1 = Low
 2 = Minor
 3 = Medium
 4 = Major
 5 = Disaster