

PLANNING POLICY EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL

Thursday 24 March 2022

Report Title	North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement
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Relevant Executive Member	Councillor David Brackenbury – Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Schedule of representations received during consultation on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix B: North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement – post consultation draft (including track changes)

Appendix C: Equalities Screening Assessment

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To outline the responses received during consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), including officers' comments to the representations and resulting changes to the document. The report also seeks agreement from Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel to ask that the revised SCI be recommended to Executive and then Full Council for adoption.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Public consultation was undertaken for a period of six weeks during December 2021 and January 2022 on the draft SCI. There is no legal requirement for the Council to consult with the public when updating or reviewing their SCI; however, consultation has been undertaken to keep local communities informed and involved in the process, which is considered to be good practice and will ensure the document has greater credibility.

- 2.2. A number of representations were received during the consultation, which has resulted in suggested amendments to the SCI; the full representations along with the Council's comments and resulting actions are appended to the report at Appendix A.
- 2.3. The revised SCI is also appended to this report at Appendix B, with proposed amendments included as track changes for ease of reference.
- 2.4. This report seeks Member endorsement to accept the proposed changes and recommend the Executive agree the document and forward the updated SCI to Full Council for adoption.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel:
 - (a) Note the representations received during public consultation on the draft SCI and officers' response to the representations; and
 - (b) Endorse the revised SCI and ask that it be recommended to the Executive for approval, and that it be forwarded to Full Council for adoption.

Reason for Recommendations:

- 3.2. To ensure the Council has an up-to-date SCI in place in line with government legislation.
- 3.3. *Alternative Options Considered* – Resolve not to endorse the revised SCI as recommended; however, the Council is required to have an up-to-date SCI in place setting out how the Council will consult on development plans and planning applications.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. It is a statutory requirement under planning legislation for the Council as a local planning authority to have an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The purpose of the SCI is to set out what consultation will take place with the community on planning policy documents and planning applications. It sets out who the Council will consult with, when and how.
- 4.2. A draft SCI for North Northamptonshire was presented to the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel (PPEAP) on 21 October 2021 and subject to the comments made by Members was endorsed for public consultation.
- 4.3. Public consultation was undertaken on the draft SCI for six weeks between 7 December 2021 and 28 January 2022.
- 4.4. Officers contacted 390 individuals and representatives on the North Northamptonshire Planning Policy consultation database, including specific

consultation bodies; parish and town councils; community groups; developers, agents, landowners and individuals that have expressed an interest to be notified of all planning policy related matters for North Northamptonshire.

- 4.5. Full details of the consultation, including a copy of the draft document and information of how to make comments, were uploaded to the Council's [Consultation Hub](#) through the Council's dedicated consultation and engagement team. Part of this process involved notifying members of the North Northamptonshire Consultation Register and the North Northamptonshire Residents' Panel, which includes all individuals and organisations that have requested to be notified of new Council consultation and engagement activities. This was undertaken by the consultation and engagement team in addition to contacting the planning policy consultation database consultees.
- 4.6. Hard copies of the document and a supplementary information sheet were placed in the main North Northamptonshire Council Offices and Libraries including:
 - One Stop Shop, The Corby Cube, Corby
 - Cedar Drive, Thrapston
 - Bowling Green Road, Kettering
 - Swanspool House, Wellingborough
 - Tithe Barn, Wellingborough
 - Corby Library
 - Irthlingborough Library
 - Kettering Library
 - Oundle Library
 - Rushden Library
 - Wellingborough Library
 - Burton Latimer Library (as requested by Town Councillor)
- 4.7. The Council received 49 individual representations to the consultation from 15 respondents including individuals, community groups, organisations and statutory bodies.
- 4.8. The main areas of discussion were the IT arrangements relating to planning applications, details for clarification and requests to be included on the Council's planning policy consultation database for future related consultation activities.
- 4.9. A table outlining the full representations received to the draft SCI, officer's responses to the representations and the actions proposed as a result of the representations received is included at Appendix A. Further discussion on the representations and proposed amendments to the SCI is provided in section 5 of this report.
- 4.10. Public consultation undertaken on the draft SCI and content of the SCI are consistent with the Council's [Consultation and Engagement Framework 2021](#).

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. Representations strongly support the principle of early and meaningful engagement through the planning process, as advocated within the SCI, along with additional community engagement where possible, increased use of social media and the advice and assistance offered by the Council in relation to neighbourhood plans.
 - 5.2. The main proposed amendments to the SCI as a result of the consultation, include the following:
 - Table 1, which sets out the specific and general consultation bodies for engaging at consultation stages for local plans, has been updated to include: town councils, parish meetings, lead local flood authorities, and civic societies.
 - Examples of 'hard to reach' groups are included at paragraph 2.16.
 - References and hyperlinks to the Council's Consultation Hub and Scheme of Delegation have been added.
 - Clarification is provided in paragraph 3.8 that the normal period for consultation on a planning application is 24 calendar days from publication.
 - Reference to parish meetings has been included alongside parish and town councils at paragraphs 3.4 and 3.10.
 - Clarification has been provided at paragraph 3.20 that the IT limitations preventing publication of all consultee comments relates specifically to minerals and waste applications, but that comments can be made available upon request.
 - 5.3. Other minor changes are proposed where these add clarity or correct a typographical error. The full schedule of representations received during the consultation, officer comments to the representations and resulting actions and changes to the document are included at Appendix A.
 - 5.4. The area Development Management teams have been consulted on the representations, comments and resulting changes to the SCI, to ensure a consistent approach is being taken across North Northamptonshire.
 - 5.5. The revised SCI incorporating all changes proposed following public consultation, which are shown as tracked changes, is included at Appendix B to this report.
 - 5.6. Members are asked to review the proposed changes to the SCI, which are considered to improve the clarity and usability of the document, and take these forward within the final document for endorsement by this Panel prior to presenting to Executive and Full Council for adoption.
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6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Following review and endorsement of the proposed amendments to the SCI within Appendix B, the next step is for the updated SCI to be presented for consideration by the Executive, with a view to adopting the document by Full Council thereafter.
- 6.2. The SCI has been added to the forward plan for consideration by Executive on 14 April 2022.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1. The adoption of the SCI will have resource and financial implications in terms of undertaking consultation and engagement activities for plan making and processing planning applications; however, these activities will be carried out by the planning policy and development management teams through existing budgets.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. The SCI is a legal requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (section 18) as amended by the Planning Act 2008, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. The adoption of the SCI will contribute to meeting the Council's corporate objectives as outlined within the Corporate Plan 2021-25, in particular objective 5: Connected communities. The preparation and content of the SCI is consistent with the Council's [Consultation and Engagement Framework](#) and Corporate Plan objectives.

7.4. Risk

- 7.4.1. There are no risks arising from the adoption of a new SCI; however, it is a statutory requirement that the Council has an up-to-date adopted SCI in place.

7.5. Consultation

- 7.5.1. National Planning Practice Guidance on Plan Making clarifies that a revised SCI does not have to be subject to consultation, but it is good practice to do so. Public consultation has been undertaken for a period of six weeks between 7 December 2021 and 28 January 2022 on the draft SCI. Comments received are considered as part of this report.

7.6. Consideration by Scrutiny

- 7.6.1. None at this time.

7.7. Equality Implications

- 7.7.1. An Equalities Screening Assessment has been completed for the SCI in consultation with the Council's Equalities team and is appended to the report at Appendix C. This demonstrates that the SCI has a positive impact on identified equality groups.

7.8. Climate Impact

- 7.8.1. The SCI sets out methods to engage members of the public in the planning system, which will increase opportunities to comment on issues relating to climate change.

7.9. Community Impact

- 7.9.1. The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the Council will consult with the local community on planning issues and how the Council will support the preparation of neighbourhood plans. This will have a positive community impact as it will help local communities to shape the environments in which they live.

7.10. Crime and Disorder Impact

- 7.10.1. None directly related to this report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1. Planning Policy EAP on 21 October 2021 [Report on Statement of Community Involvement for North Northamptonshire](#) (Agenda item 5)