

Agenda Item IMD41

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD 2018/41

TITLE	Statement of Community Involvement
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning - Stuart Munro, Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement - Simon Weeks
DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME	1 November 2018 FF11 at 13:00
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Services - Graham Ebers, Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That residents and businesses will understand how consultation will take place with the community on planning policy documents and planning applications, so enabling the council's decisions to be influenced by local opinion.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning and Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement agree that Wokingham Borough Council:

- 1) Consults on the draft Statement of Community Involvement as contained in Appendix A.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The council adopted its existing Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2014. Since then, there have been changes to national planning policy and guidance.

As a result of these changes, a review of the SCI is required to ensure it remains up to date. This report seeks authority to consult on the draft SCI which is contained within Appendix A.

Background

What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document that councils are required to produce that sets out how consultation will take place with the community on planning policy documents and planning applications.

The SCI provides clarity on the extent of community involvement that will take place. It further sets out clear consultation procedures and standards that will be followed, so providing transparency for residents and businesses.

Analysis of Issues

Why produce a new SCI?

The council adopted its existing SCI in 2014. Since then there have been changes to national planning policy and guidance, for example it is now a requirement for a SCI to incorporate guidance on how the council will support communities producing neighbourhood plans.

As a result of these changes, a review of the SCI is required to ensure it remains up to date. The main changes to this draft SCI from the existing 2014 version are:

- New introductory chapter;
- New section on Neighbourhood Planning, setting out the ways that we will support groups undertaking neighbourhood plans;
- Increased clarity on the type of engagement activity that people can expect at each stage of the production of planning policy documents;.
- Updated planning applications section to reflect current process timescales.

What consultation will take place?

The draft SCI will be subject to the same consultation procedures as currently defined in the adopted SCI and relevant national regulations. This will be for a period of 6 weeks.

What are the next steps

Following the closure of the consultation, all responses will be carefully considered and an amended draft SCI prepared. This will be reported to a future meeting of the council's Executive for adoption.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Cost of advertisements – covered by existing budget.	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None anticipated

Cross-Council Implications

None anticipated

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Director – Corporate Services	No comments received
Monitoring Officer	No comments
Leader of the Council	No comments received

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

n/a

List of Background Papers

Appendix A – Draft Updated Statement of Community Involvement

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