

	<p align="center">Policy and Resources Committee 17 February 2015</p>
<p align="center">Title</p>	<p align="center">Barnet's Local Plan – Draft Statement of Community Involvement</p>
<p align="center">Report of</p>	<p>Commissioning Director Growth and Development – Cath Shaw</p>
<p align="center">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p align="center">Date added to Forward Plan</p>	<p>May 2014</p>
<p align="center">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p align="center">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix A: Draft Statement of Community Involvement</p>
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<p align="center">Summary</p>	
<p>The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will involve local residents, businesses and community groups in the preparation of planning documents and the consideration of planning applications. First adopted in 2007 the draft SCI has been substantially revised to take into account reforms to the planning system and changes to service delivery in Barnet. The commitments set out in the SCI will ensure that planning processes in Barnet are fair, transparent and inclusive.</p>	

Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. approves the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (attached at Appendix A) for consultation for a period of 6 weeks.**
- 2. notes that following the consultation appropriate changes are made to the SCI and the revised SCI is reported back to Committee for approval and adoption.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Effective community involvement in decision-making is a vital part of supporting communities to become more active and resilient. The Council is developing a range of activities designed to engage the community more effectively. This has several aims: maintaining cohesive communities; understanding what communities want from local services so they can be more in tune with local need – including through co-design; and making better use of council owned community assets. Community involvement in the planning process means that local people have the opportunity to help shape the places and spaces in the Borough where they live, work and study.
- 1.2 The SCI is one strand of the Council's approach to community engagement, setting out Barnet's commitments with regards to community involvement in all planning matters. The document provides the processes by which consultation and engagement will be conducted on planning policy documents and planning applications. The SCI details how we intend to conduct consultation and engagement in order to make the planning process transparent, inclusive and accountable.
- 1.3 The Council's first Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in 2007. Since then, there have been a number of changes to planning legislation as well as technological advances which have changed the way that public consultation is conducted. This draft SCI reflects these changes.
- 1.4 The SCI forms part of Barnet's Local Plan and in relation to all planning matters sets out:
 - What the Council will consult and engage the community on;
 - When the Council will consult and engage the community;
 - How the Council will consult and engage the community; and
 - Who within the community the Council will consult and engage with.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (2012) reinforces the importance of community involvement in the planning process. It states at paragraph 155 :

“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that have been made.”

- 2.2 The Statement of Community Involvement is a statutory document. Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 • requires local planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement, which should explain how they will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and determining planning applications.

- 2.3 The draft SCI is set out in seven sections:

- The introduction provides a summary of the SCI and highlights the main legislation regarding consultation and community involvement in planning;
- the second section outlines how community involvement and engagement complies with Barnet's Consultation and Engagement Strategy and the various methods used;.
- sections three to six set out how we consult and involve the community on matters relating to planning applications;
- section eight relates to how we will involve and engage the community on matters relating to planning policy
- subsequent sections relate to Neighbourhood Planning, Community Infrastructure Levy, Conservation Area Character Appraisals, Article 4(1) Directions as well as applications to carry out works to trees. The final section relates to resource availability for ensuring community involvement.

- 2.4 The main changes to the previous SCI include:

- Recent changes in legislation ie the Localism Act 2011;
- Greater emphasis and information about the Barnet website;
- References to Neighbourhood Planning consultation procedures; and
- References to the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and related consultation procedures.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The alternative option is not to revise and update this statutory document . This may mean that the opportunity to clarify the Council's approach to consultation on all planning related matters is lost.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following approval the draft SCI will be subject to a six week period of public consultation. It will be publicised through the Local Plan Consultation Database as well as the Council's website.
- 4.2 Officers will consider responses submitted to the consultation and propose changes to the SCI. It is expected that the SCI is reported back to Policy and Resources Committee for adoption in June 2015.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.2 All three strategic objectives in the Corporate Plan 2013 - 2016 are embedded within the draft SCI.

In promoting responsible growth, development and success across the borough it ensures:-

- that planning processes in Barnet are subject to clear and transparent consultation protocols. That relevant statutory bodies, residents, local businesses and the local community are involved in all planning related matters.

In supporting families and individuals it ensures:-

- that through provision of a range of communication methods Barnet residents have the opportunity to become involved in planning decision making

In improving satisfaction of residents and businesses with Barnet as a place to live, work and study it ensures:-

- that through clear consultation processes we provide opportunities for residents and businesses to voice their concerns and become involved in shaping the future of the borough.

- 5.3 Consultation and engagement is one of the key ways the Council interacts with and involves local communities and residents, providing them with opportunities to:

- gain greater awareness and understanding of what the Council does
- voice their views and know how they can get involved
- have their views fed into the democratic decision making process

- 5.4 The approach to consultation and engagement within the SCI is consistent with the Barnet Engagement Model as set out in the Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

5.5 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.6 The cost of preparing this draft SPD is included in the Strategic Planning Core Fee budget for 2014/15.

5.7 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.8 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 provide guidance on the preparation and adoption of the Local Plan. Upon adoption the SCI becomes a statutory document that forms part of Barnet's planning policy framework.
- 5.9 Annex A of document 15 (Responsibility for Functions) within the Council's constitution states under function 2 for the Policy and Resources Committee that the Committee is responsible for approving the development of the statutory Local Plan and related documents and Neighbourhood Plans (for adoption by Full Council).
- 5.10 **Risk Management**
- 5.11 Failure to update the SCI could lead to challenges that the Council is not undertaking consultation in accordance with current Planning Regulations and other relevant legislation. This would leave engagement procedures and therefore planning decisions open to challenge because they have not been made in accordance with the statutory SCI
- 5.12 This risk has been managed by ensuring that, at the very least, the minimum consultation requirements set out in the Development Plans Regulations and Development Management Procedure Order are adhered to.
- 5.13 **Equalities and Diversity**
- 5.14 The SCI will help ensure the opportunity is given to all sectors of the community to participate in local planning processes.
- 5.15 **Consultation and Engagement**
- 5.16 The draft SCI will be subject to a six week period of public consultation from February 2015.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Council, 11 September 2012 (Decision item 4.1) approved the Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies for adoption.
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=162&MIId=6671&Ver=4>
- 6.2 Council, 8 May 2007 (Decision item 5) approved the Statement of Community Involvement for adoption
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=120&MeetingId=284&DF=08%2f05%2f2007&Ver=2>