

	<h2>Policy and Resources Committee</h2> <h3>11 June 2018</h3>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Barnet’s Local Plan – Draft Statement of Community Involvement</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Deputy Chief Executive – Cath Shaw</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>Appendix A: Draft Statement of Community Involvement</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Nick Lynch – Planning Policy Manager (0208 359 4211)  <a href="mailto:Nick.lynch@barnet.gov.uk">Nick.lynch@barnet.gov.uk</a></p>

<h2>Summary</h2>
<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. Initially introduced in 2007 and subsequently revised in 2015, the SCI is being updated to reflect further reforms to the planning system. This includes the introduction of the Brownfield Land Register and Permission in Principle. The commitments set out in the SCI will ensure that planning processes in Barnet are fair, transparent and inclusive.</p>
<h2>Officers Recommendations</h2>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the committee notes the content of the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (attached at Appendix A).</li> <li>2. That the Committee approves the draft SCI as the basis for public consultation. The SCI will then return to the Committee with the consultation responses.</li> <li>3. That the Committee delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to make any necessary changes of a minor nature to the draft SCI in consultation with the Leader prior to public consultation</li> </ol>

## **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. It supports local people to shape their area and the services they receive, making sure that services and policies are effective at meeting local need. 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 sets 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 SCI was adopted in 2007 and substantially revised in 2015. 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 SCI reflects these changes.
- 1.4 The council is legally required to identify suitable people/organisations and to consult with them about our Local Plan. Consultation on the Draft SCI provides an opportunity to update our consultation database, to ensure we are able to contact the right people in relation to policy making within the borough
- 1.5 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 SCI is a statutory document required by Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 in order that local planning authorities set out how they will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and determining planning applications.

2.3 Barnet's SCI is set out as follows:

- 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 seven set out how we consult and involve the community on matters relating to planning applications. This highlights the introduction of permission in principle and the Brownfield Register;
- section eight relates to how we will involve and engage the community on matters relating to planning policy including the new Local Plan;
- section nine relates to Neighbourhood Planning and reflects changes arising from the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017;
- subsequent sections relate to the 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.

### **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 by Committee the draft SCI will be subject to a six week period of public consultation. The results of this consultation will be reported back to Committee with a revised SCI recommended for adoption. Upon adoption the SCI will be used by Development Management and Strategic Planning services as the basis for all planning consultations

### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

#### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

5.1.1 The Corporate Plan 2015-2020's vision for more involved and resilient communities is embedded within the SCI. The vision states that greater community participation, engagement and involvement will be an essential part of the change the council will achieve over the next five years.

5.1.2 The Consultation and Engagement Strategy sets out what good community engagement requires with objectives for local communities and residents to provide them with opportunities to:

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

5.1.3 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.

## 5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 The cost of producing the SCI is included in Re Contract.

5.2.2 Consultation activities in relation to planning policy are funded by the party commissioning the policy work as relevant consultation activity is a requirement for bringing forward policy.

5.2.3 Consultation and engagement activities relating to planning applications are funded by fee income or bespoke arrangement with the developer.

## 5.3 **Social Value**

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

5.3.2 Social benefits will be secured through the opportunities given to the local community and residents to be involved in all planning matters.

## 5.4 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 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 Local Plan.

5.4.2 Under the Council's Constitution, Document Article 7 (section 7.5 Responsibility for Functions) sets out that the Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Council including responsibility for Local Plans.

## 5.5 **Risk Management**

5.5.1 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

5.5.2 This risk has been managed by ensuring that, at the very least, the minimum consultation requirements set out in the Local Plan Regulations and Development Management Procedure Order are adhered to.

## 5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The Equalities, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act, 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.6.2 The SCI will help ensure the opportunity is given to all sectors of the community to participate in local planning processes. It sets out how we will involve the rich diversity of local residents, businesses and community groups in the preparation of planning documents and the consideration of planning applications so that all voices are heard, consultations are accessible and inclusive to different groups including hard to hear voices.

## 5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 The Draft SCI will be subject to a six week period of public consultation where representations received during the consultation will be taken into consideration in revising the final SCI.

5.7.2 The Local Plan database is used for planning consultations and contains approximately 1,300 contacts. Individuals and organisations can request to be added to or removed from our Consultation Database.

## 5.8 Insight

5.8.1 N/A

## 6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Barnet's Statement of Community Involvement, July 2015  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-buildingcontrol/planning-policies-and-further-information/statement-of-communityinvolvement.html>