

Forest Heath District Council

(This report not a key decision. This report has been subject to appropriate notice of publication under the Council's Access to Information Rules)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Transport

LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP

26 JULY 2012

LOP12/002

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT(SCI) - PROPOSED CONSULTATION

Summary and reasons for recommendation(s)

This report presents the proposed consultation draft of the Statement of Community Involvement, (SCI), for Members consideration, and seeks the recommendation of approval of the document for a period of public consultation.

The SCI is intended to set out a vision and strategy for involving the community in the preparation of the documents that make up the Development Plan for the District, in addition to identifying how the community can become more involved in the assessment of planning applications. Therefore, the SCI sets out how and when the Council will seek to engage with local communities with regard to most planning matters.

A 'Preferred Option' version of the SCI was prepared and consulted upon in June 2005. A final version of the document was not produced and as a consequence, the Council does not currently have an adopted version of the SCI. The consultation draft presented at Working Paper 1 has taken into consideration responses to the consultation held in 2005 and seeks to finalise the SCI in readiness for adoption.

There is a requirement for LPAs to produce a SCI, (part 18 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004), although the current regulations, (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012), are silent in terms of their preparation procedures. Although the latest regulations are not so prescriptive in terms of how the LPA should prepare/adopt the SCI, advice that we have received from CLG is that it would be prudent to include a period of public consultation, particularly given the document's subject matter. We intend to consult for a period of 6 weeks. Following this consultation exercise, we will seek to finalise the document in readiness for adoption by the Council.

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Local Plan Working Group recommend that the Statement of Community Involvement, (SCI), as presented be approved for public consultation.

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How will the recommendations help us meet our strategic priorities?

1. The preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement, (SCI), and the Development Plan in more general terms relate to a number of Strategic & Corporate priorities including Economic Development, Community Development and Housing.

Wards affected

2. All

Key issues

3. Community Engagement including consultation & development planning.

Other options considered

4. None

Community impact (Diversity and Equality, Sustainability, Other)

5. Increased community engagement in and awareness of the Development Plan and Planning Application processes.

What consultation has been undertaken and what were the outcomes?

6. A 'Preferred Option' version of the SCI was prepared and consulted upon in June 2005. A final version of the document was not produced and as a consequence, the Council does not currently have an adopted version of the SCI. This consultation draft has taken into consideration representations made to the consultation held in 2005 and seeks to finalise the SCI in readiness for adoption.

Financial and resource implications

7. The Statement of Community Involvement, (SCI), consultation exercise can be delivered within the projected Local Plan budget for 2012-2013.

Risk management implications

8. Without evidencing proper community engagement in the planning process there is a risk that the Development Plan Documents that we produce may not proceed to adoption. The lack of a sound development planning framework militates against the proper planning of the District and could place the Council at risk of planning appeals being upheld with the possible award of costs against it.

Legal/Policy implications

9. There is a requirement for LPAs to produce a SCI, (part 18 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004).

Documents attached

Working Paper 1 - Draft consultation version of the Statement of Community Involvement, (SCI)

Background papers

None