

Agenda item:

Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Economic Development, 19 November 2012

Subject: Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI)

Report by: Assistant Head of Planning Services

Wards affected: All

Key decision (over £250k): No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) sets out the city council's vision and strategy for consulting local residents and stakeholders in the preparation of planning documents and the determination of planning applications. A draft SCI was consulted on in June and July. Changes are proposed following the consultation responses that were received.
- 1.2 Portsmouth City Council adopted an SCI in April 2006. Since 2006 a number of changes have been made to the planning system resulting in the need to update the SCI. A draft replacement SCI was approved for consultation by the Cabinet Member on 8 June 2012¹. Consultation on the SCI took place between June and July.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the SCI to be adopted.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is recommended to:

1. **Approve the SCI for adoption**
2. **Authorise the Assistant Head of Planning Services to make editorial amendments to the SCI prior to publication, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Economic Development.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce an SCI, and may revise the document at any time.

¹ www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/24894.html

3.2 Portsmouth City Council adopted an SCI in April 2006. Since 2006 a number of changes have been made to the planning system resulting in the need to update the SCI. A draft replacement SCI was approved for consultation by the Cabinet Member on 8 June 2012². Consultation on the SCI took place between June and July.

4. Summary of consultation

- 4.1 We received 26 representations. Of those, four were positive representations supporting the SCI and four had suggestions for improvements. The remaining 18 were notifications of receiving the draft SCI.
- 4.2 The suggestions for improvements included restructuring the introduction with additional explanations of certain points, and suggestions for additional services. The comments and the proposed city council responses are set out in Appendix A.

5. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 5.1 A preliminary EIA was carried out on the draft SCI which concluded that a full assessment was not necessary. A preliminary EIA has been carried out on changes to the SCI since then. This has concluded that a full EIA is not necessary.

6. Head of legal services' comments

- 6.1 In light of the substantial changes to planning legislation and the planning system since the Council's original SCI was published it is reasonable for the Council to review the document at this time. Preparation of the Council's supplementary planning documents, (which for these purposes includes the SCI), including the process of public consultation, is regulated in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Publication, consultation with appropriate stakeholders, and receiving and considering relevant representations are necessary steps towards adoption, and the report and recommendation support compliance with the Council's statutory obligations as Local Planning Authority.

² www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/24894.html

7. Head of finance's comments

7.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from the adoption of the SCI.

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Signed by Assistant Head of Planning Services:

Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of responses to SCI consultation

Appendix B – Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2012

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/

rejected by on

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Signed by:



Appendix A: Summary of responses to the SCI consultation

We received 26 representations in total. Of those, 18 were requests to be kept informed about planning consultations, rather than comments on the SCI document, four were positive representations supporting the SCI, and four had suggestions for improvements. The comments and the city council's responses are summarised below:

Comment made and changes sought	City council response and justification
Difficulty distinguishing between paragraphs on planning applications and planning policy documents in the first two sections. Clearer headers and a restructured layout recommended.	The introduction has been restructured to improve legibility and flow. The section title 'The Consultation Process' has also been removed, and merged with the previous 'Introduction' section. Clearer headers have been added, separating out how to find out about planning policy document / planning application consultations and feedback.
The section on 'Statement of Community Involvement' is out of sequence.	The SCI plan preparation process is similar to that of a Supplementary Planning Document, which is why it follows that section. A sentence has been added to explain the role of the SCI section to inform the next update of the document.
There are no dates provided for the SCI in the 'Forthcoming consultations' section.	Dates were not included as the table header was not applicable to the SCI. To clarify this, "n/a" has replaced "-" in the schedule table.
No mention of appeal process in "Figure 5 – the planning application process"	The appeal process wasn't mentioned as appeals are handled by the Planning Inspectorate, not the Planning Service. To help explain the workings of the planning system, a paragraph on appeals has now been added.
Request for third-party referrals of planning applications to the Design Review Panel.	Sentence added which explain that third parties can request a planning application be referred to the Design Review Panel at the discretion of PCC. Sentence also added explaining that the minutes of formal application reviews are publically available through Public Access or by viewing the application's case file.
Request for a service to inform interested individuals or organisations of any planning applications received within a certain perimeter.	A customer can access this service through Public Access, which will email an automated notification for all applications lodged around a specified perimeter of a location. Information about this service has been added to the SCI.
Paper copies of consultation documents should be available outside of public libraries and the Civic Offices.	The Planning Service can supply paper copies of documents to interested individuals and organisations, however this service may require a charge to cover printing costs. A sentence has been added to explain this.
Consultation feedback forms could be supplied in Flagship magazine.	This consultation method would be prohibitively expensive and would not encourage people to read the consultation document thoroughly before responding. As such, this consultation method has not been added.