

**Decision Maker:**      **Development Control Committee  
Executive**

**Date:**                      **11<sup>th</sup> July 2016 & 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

**Decision Type:**      Non-Urgent                      Executive                      Non-Key

**Title:**                      **THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI) -  
RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION AND PROPOSED  
REVISIONS**

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**Chief Officer:**              Chief Planner

**Ward:**                      (All Wards);

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1.    Reason for report

This report asks Members to consider the responses to the six week public consultation period, undertaken earlier this year, regarding the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (2016 ) and approve Appendix 2 as the Council's Statement of Community Involvement 2016. The current SCI was adopted in 2006. Since its adoption, there have been a number of changes to the planning system including the removal of need for an SCI to be subject to examination, the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The SCI has been amended to reflect these changes along with technological advances in the way we consult and the pressure on resources. In response to consultation there are two proposed changes to the "Involving the Community in Planning Application Decisions" section of the Revised SCI. Other alterations have been made for ease of understanding.

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2.    **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That Development Control Committee:**

- 2.1    **Considers the responses to the consultation on the draft revised Statement of Community Involvement 2016 set out in Appendix 1 and revised SCI attached as Appendix 2 and recommend to the Executive for approval.**

**That the Executive:**

- 2.2 Considers the comments from Development Control Committee and agrees Appendix 2 as the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.**

### Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment Vibrant, Thriving Town Centres:
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### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: no additional cost
  2. Ongoing costs: No on-going cost
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Planning Services
  4. Total current budget for this head: £3,448,810
  5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budgets
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### Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 91
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
- 

### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
  2. Call-in: Applicable:
- 

### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Borough-wide
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### Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

### **3. COMMENTARY**

- 3.1 The Council adopted the current Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2006, when it was one of the statutory documents required to be produced as part of the plan-making process. The SCI remains a legal requirement and sets out the Council's approach to the consultation undertaken as part of the planning application process as well as the Local Plan process.
- 3.2 Since 2006, a number of legislative and regulatory changes have taken place and consultation techniques have become more technologically advanced, with more residents using the internet and social media.
- 3.3 An update to the 2006 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was agreed for consultation at DCC on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and the Executive on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Consultation on the revised draft took place between 9<sup>th</sup> February and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016.
- 3.4 Consultation was published on the Council's website and available in libraries, the Cotmandene and Mottingham Community Outreach Centres, Community House and the Civic Centre. In addition, over 1500 people and organisations on the consultation database were sent a letter or email informing them of the consultation. The Local Green Space consultation ran concurrently and received over 70 responses. In 2005/6, 149 responses were received when the SCI was first introduced and consulted on.
- 3.4 The response to the SCI consultation was less than expected, however, the document was a revision of an existing document. Eight people or organisations responded via the consultation portal, one via email and one by post.
- 3.6 The summary analysis of responses and officer comments are set out in Appendix 1, (Summary of Consultation Responses). In general, the view was that the SCI provides a clear understanding of how the Council intends to engage with the community, Most respondents considered that the Council is seeking to involve all of the right groups of people in preparing future planning policies and the list of techniques described in the document are sufficiently comprehensive to provide good community engagement. Table 2 has been amended to reflect the greater use of the Council's website and electronic communication; to achieve effective engagement, whilst minimising costs to the Council.
- 3.7 In response to consultation with the public the SCI has been amended to include a reference to the planning application documents only being available to the public once the application is deemed valid and clarifies that documents can be viewed on Planning Public Access.

### **4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The SCI is a legally required document which sets out how a local planning authority proposes to engage with stakeholders and residents in the development plan-making process and planning application process. An up to date revised Statement of Community Involvement will provide clarity on how engagement will be undertaken with residents and stakeholders and that minimum requirements are met.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no expected additional costs to the Council arising from the adoption of the SCI.

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement.
- 6.2 There is no legal requirement to consult on a draft SCI but it is good practice to do so, particularly as the subject matter of the document is community involvement.

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Summary of Consultation Responses

Appendix 2 – Revised Statement of Community Involvement

Non-Applicable Sections:	PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Report to DCC (10/12/2015) and Executive (13/01/2016) - DRR15/109