

## STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**Cabinet Member** Cllr Richard Chesterton

**Responsible Officer** Head of Planning and Regeneration – Mrs Jenny Clifford

### **Reason for Report:**

To consider a revised draft of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) be approved for public consultation.

### **Relationship to Corporate Plan:**

Implementation of the revised Statement of Community Involvement will help to ensure that our services are accessible and meet the needs of our community as well as helping to maximise the potential health and well-being of our communities.

### **Financial Implications:**

The revised Statement of Community Involvement commits the Council to carrying out specific consultation procedures which will have financial implications.

### **Legal Implications:**

Failure to follow the revised Statement of Community Involvement (once adopted) could lead to the Council's planning policy documents being found unsound and decisions legally challenged.

### **Risk Assessment:**

Failure to follow the revised Statement of Community Involvement (once adopted) could lead to the Council's planning policy documents being found unsound and decisions legally challenged which would waste significant Council resources.

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is required by section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It is intended to set out in detail how the Council will consult on its local plans, supplementary planning documents and planning applications. If the Council does not accord with its provisions in publicising a local plan then it may be found unsound. A planning application which has not been consulted on in accordance with the SCI could be legally challenged and planning permission potentially quashed.

1.2 The Council's existing SCI was adopted in 2012 to reflect the provisions of the Planning Act 2008, Localism Act 2011, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This review has been undertaken to take account of recent changes in planning legislation and to reconsider the most effective methods of community involvement in the planning process.

## **2.0 Proposed Revisions**

- 2.1 A number of policies have been removed from the previous Statement of Community Involvement where it was considered that the information was either outdated or repeated elsewhere. The SCI has also been updated to remove all references to out-dated terminology such as Local Development Frameworks, Community Strategies, Local Strategic Partnerships whilst also no longer referring to the Council offices in Crediton.
- 2.1 The Statement of Community Involvement has been revised to encourage the use of electronic communication methods where possible. However, the Council will still make paper copies of all planning documents available and where requested, provide a hard copy to parish and town councils, statutory consultees and local voluntary organisations. The requirement to publicise preparation and publication stages of the local plan through newspaper notices has been removed, although the SCI now includes the use of social media as a method of publicising future planning consultations.
- 2.2 The review separates the consultation requirements for masterplans from all other Supplementary Planning Documents. Policy SCI4 'Masterplans' states that the Council will carry out two stages of consultation and use direct contact methods to consult immediately adjoining residents who are likely to be affected. Policy SCI5 covers all other SPDs and sets out that the Council will carry out one stage of consultation on the draft document. In both cases, the level of consultation will endeavour to be proportionate to the likely impact of the plan.
- 2.3 The policy on 'Minor Applications Pre-Application Consultation' has been removed and replaced with a paragraph on non-major applications in the supporting text. This advises applicants to liaise with the community and discuss proposals with their neighbours before submitting an application.
- 2.5 The Planning Policy Advisory Group has considered and approved the SCI following the incorporation of a number of agreed amendments. If approved by Cabinet a six week period of consultation on the draft document is proposed, which will begin on 23 May 2016, closing on 4 July

2016. Following the consultation period a finalised document will be presented to Cabinet and then Council for adoption.

**Contact for more Information:**

**Circulation of the Report:** Cllr Richard Chesterton (Cabinet Member), Planning Policy Advisory Group, Management Team, Finance, Audit, Legal Services, Head of Planning and Regeneration

**List of Background Papers**