

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

---

**REPORT TO:** Portfolio Holder for New Communities 1 October 2009  
Portfolio Holder for Planning

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Operational Services) / Corporate Manager  
(Planning and Sustainable Communities)

---

### **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - CONSULTATION ON STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

#### **Purpose**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to be published for consultation, and to give authority to the Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities) to make minor amendments to the document, which will form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for South Cambridgeshire. It provides information on how the Council will involve the community and stakeholders in the planning process.
- 2 This is a key decision because it is included as one of the key aims of the Council to achieve in 2009/10. It was first published in the August 2009 Forward Plan.

#### **Background**

- 3 The Statement of Community Involvement is one of the key documents in the LDF. It sets out when and how the Council will be consulting on the LDF with the community that lives and works in South Cambridgeshire. It also describes the ways in which individuals can have a say on planning applications being considered by the Council.
- 4 The Council in its Corporate Plan for 2009/10 has identified the preparing and consulting on a Statement of Community Involvement as a Council Action to be implemented this year. This action will help achieve the Council's Aim A that states 'We Are Committed To Being A Listening Council Providing First Class Services Accessible To All'. This aim will be realised by the Council listening to and engaging with the local community.

#### **Draft SCI for consultation**

- 5 The Council has produced a draft SCI for consultation for six weeks, which is anticipated to start at the end of October. This sets out the existing tried and tested consultation procedures that South Cambs has been using for consulting on its LDF and planning applications so it is clear who can have a say and when and how they can get involved in the planning process. There are some statutory duties that are set out in national regulations for local planning authorities to follow when consulting on both planning policy documents and planning applications. South Cambridgeshire District Council carries out these statutory requirements and also additional methods have been used to involve the community and stakeholders in planning matters.
- 6 The draft SCI also has provided an opportunity for the Council to reassess how it carries out consultations and to suggest some improvements. It provides an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to suggest ways the Council could improve its current way of doing things.

- 7 The Council will consider the representations on the draft SCI and make any relevant changes to the SCI as a result of comments received. A report will then be made to Cabinet on the representations submitted, and Cabinet will make the decision whether to adopt the document.

**Implications**

- 8 In preparing the SCI consideration has had to be given to the resource implications of this project. The Council has in the past used a variety of methods to consult with the community and stakeholders on planning matters – these are tried and tested methods. The draft SCI does include some suggested additional methods of consultation to be carried out in the future. The Council needs to know from the community how they want to be consulted so that the limited resources that are available for consultation are used in the most efficient and effective way.

Financial	Resources will be used in a more effective and efficient way by having consultation methods on planning matters set out clearly in the draft SCI.
Legal	The Council must prepare a Statement of Community Involvement to form part of its Local Development Framework.
Staffing	Staffing will be required to manage the consultation process, although this can be accommodated within existing resources.
Risk Management	No significant risks.
Equal Opportunities	The Statement of Community Involvement is highlighting how the Council consults currently with the minority or disadvantaged groups and suggests future changes. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the draft SCI.

**Consultations**

- 9 In preparing this draft SCI consultations have taken place with officers in Development Control who are involved with planning applications; New Communities Team – Major Development team who deal with major applications, Section 106 Officer, Community Engagement & Communications Officer, Community Facilities Project Manager; Local Strategic Partnership Manager; and the Equalities and Diversities Officer.

**Effect on Strategic Aims**

- 10 **Commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.**  
 The preparation for consultation of a draft Statement of Community Involvement will directly assist the Council in being a listening council. The SCI sets out how and when people may become involved in planning matters. The community and stakeholders can comment on the draft and respond in saying how they wish to be involved in planning matters in future. The document also highlights how minority and disadvantaged can become involved in planning matters in South Cambs.

<b>Commitment to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for all.</b>
By having clearly set out how consultations on planning matters will be carried out there is the opportunity for people to ensure that planning policy documents and planning applications consider safety and health issues within South Cambs, to ensure that they taken into account in place-making.
<b>Commitment to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live.</b>
By responding to consultations on planning matters residents will feel part of the place making within South Cambridgeshire.
<b>Commitment to assisting provision for local jobs for all.</b>
By producing a Statement of Community Involvement the local community and stakeholders can participate in consultation on planning matters particularly those relating the economy of the district.
<b>Commitment to providing a voice for rural life.</b>
The Statement of Community Involvement sets out clearly how the community and stakeholders can become involved in consultations on planning matters. The SCI will directly provide an opportunity for people to express their views on planning matters in future.

## Recommendations

11 It is recommended -

- That the New Communities Portfolio Holder and Planning Portfolio Holder agree for consultation, as affects their individual portfolios, the draft Statement of Community Involvement:
- That authority be given to the Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities) to make minor amendments to the above document.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Parish Planning Pack produced by South Cambs

**Contact Officer:** Alison Talkington - Senior Planning Policy Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 7113182