

Allerdale Borough Council

Executive - 09 February 2022

Council - 23 February 2022

Statement of Community Involvement

Portfolio holder	Councillor Marion Fitzgerald Policy, Governance and People Resources
Report from	Nik Hardy- Assistant Chief Executive Policy, Performance and Economic Development
Wards affected	All wards outside the National Park
Is this a key decision	Yes

1.0 The reason for the decision

- 1.1 To consider the content of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and make a recommendation to Full Council regarding its adoption as Council policy.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That Executive recommends to Full Council that the Statement of Community Involvement, as set out in appendix 1 of this report, is adopted.

3.0 Background and Introduction

- 3.1 The Council has a legal requirement to produce a Statement of Community Involvement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to review it every five years, in line with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017.
- 3.2 The current SCI was adopted in 2010 and requires updating, not only to be legally compliant, but to accurately reflect the Council's approach to consultation in relation to planning applications, planning policy documents and neighbourhood planning. This report outlines the purpose of the SCI and how and when the Council will consult the local community, businesses and statutory consultees when carrying out its planning function. The updated SCI can be found in appendix 1 of this report and a summary of consultation responses and how the document has been amended, as a result, can be found in appendix 2. It should be noted that the SCI only applies to the area of Allerdale outside the National Park.

4.0 Content (to include alternative options considered)

4.1 The purpose of the SCI is to set out how and when the Council will consult the public and other stakeholders on planning applications and drafting planning policy documents. It also outlines how the Council will support Town and Parish Councils in their neighbourhood planning role. The draft SCI was published for a 4 week public consultation ending 23 December 2021. A summary of the comments received can be found in appendix 2 of this report.

4.2 Local Plan and Planning Policy Consultation

The level of consultation required for planning policy documents is set out in national legislation and is different for each type of document. Apart from the legal consultation requirements, the SCI outlines additional consultation methods that maybe used by the Council to engage local communities, businesses and statutory consultees.

4.3 It is particularly important, in the initial stages of developing planning policy, that there is ample opportunity for local communities and stakeholders to input into shaping the direction strategy and policies will take. Also, early consultation allows the Council to understand local issues and priorities and to gather evidence which can be used to refine the Council's policy direction. Consultation is therefore frontloaded in the processes and is reflected in the range of consultation methods that are designed to maximise and raise awareness in as many sections of the community as possible. As a minimum the Council will, during the plan preparation stages, run consultations for a minimum of six weeks, notify all consultees required by regulations and those on the planning policy database, publish documents on the Council website, deposit paper copies at the main Council offices and libraries, and issue a press release. Additional consultation methods include use of social media, public exhibitions and drop in sessions, meetings with Town and Parish Councils, and virtual consultations.

4.4 A planning policy consultation database is maintained by the planning policy team and anyone who would like to be notified of consultations can request to be added to the database at any time.

4.5 Planning Application Consultations

4.6 The scale and nature of consultation will vary dependent on the type of planning application. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) set out the requirements.

4.7 Apart from minor planning applications (extensions and alterations to dwellings) consultation methods for planning applications will include site notices, press notices and individual letters to neighbouring properties. All planning application details will be published on the website and statutory consultees and local interest groups, as appropriate, will be consulted. Applicants of large scale development are encouraged to carry out community consultation prior to submitting an application. For minor planning applications letters will be sent to neighbouring properties.

4.8 The SCI also explains how members of the public and other interested parties can participate in the development panel meetings.

4.9 **Neighbourhood Planning**

4.10 Town and Parish Councils can choose to produce Neighbourhood Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. It is their responsibility to undertake the work but there are some aspects of the process that this Council will be required to do. This includes designating the neighbourhood area, check compliance with local and national policy, appoint an independent examiner and organise the referendum. The SCI sets out the roles and responsibilities of Town and Parish Councils and the Borough Council. It also outlines where the Council can provide support to the Parish and Town Councils to help them develop their plans.

4.11 **Conclusion**

4.12 The revised SCI, and the consultation methods it contains, aim to balance the need to make consultation as effective as possible, reaching as wide an audience as possible while ensuring these commitments can be delivered with the resources available.

5.0 **Delivery arrangements**

5.1 The SCI will be delivered through the determination of planning applications, development of planning policy and Neighbourhood planning activity.

6.0 **Implications and Impact**

6.1 **Contribution to Council Strategy Priorities, Outputs and Outcomes**

Thriving towns and villages – supports the delivery of affordable housing, and enables town centres to remain vibrant and relevant.

Invest to grow- by supporting housing delivery and identifying employment land and premises for economic growth.

A cleaner, greener Allerdale- through the protection and enhancement of green spaces and green infrastructure networks, protecting biodiversity and landscape.

6.2 **Finance/Resource implications**

Staff resources and cost of producing consultation material are covered by existing budgets.

6.3 **Legal and governance implications**

Updating the SCI fulfils the legal requirement to undertake a review every 5 years.

6.4 **Risk analysis**

A scored and mitigated risk log

Risk	Consequence	Controls required	Mitigated score
Not to adopt the revised SCI	Potential for legal challenge	Ensure the commitments in the SCI (2010) are delivered as far as possible.	Low

6.5 Increasing satisfaction and service

The SCI's purpose is to ensure that all stakeholders can effectively engage in planning decisions and the drafting of planning policy.

6.6 Equality impacts

Yes

6.7 Health and Safety impacts

None

6.8 Health, wellbeing and community safety impacts

None

6.9 Environmental/sustainability impacts

None

6.10 Other significant implications

None

Appendices attached to this report

Appendix number	Title of appendix
Appendix 1	Statement of Community Involvement
Appendix 2	Summary of consultation responses

Background documents available

Name of background document	Where it is available

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