

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CABINET		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT - ADOPTION		
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	16 APRIL 2013		
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES		
<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Helen Pearce</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 023 8083 2886
	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:helen.pearce@southampton.gov.uk">helen.pearce@southampton.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Director</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>John Tunney</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 023 8091 7713
	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:john.tunney@southampton.gov.uk">john.tunney@southampton.gov.uk</a>	

#### **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not applicable

#### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

The Council, as a Local Planning Authority, is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement setting out how and when the council will seek the views of local people, businesses and key organisations when preparing new development plan documents and when planning applications are received. The current Statement was adopted by the Council in 2006. It is now necessary to update it to reflect changing statutory requirements.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) To consider the comments received during the recent 4 week consultation and to agree the Council's response (see Appendix 1).
- (ii) To adopt the revised Statement of Community Involvement (attached as Appendix 2) which has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

#### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (section 18) requires each Local Planning Authority to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement which the Council will then apply when it prepares new plans for the future of the city, and when planning applications are received.
2. When a new plan is assessed at a public examination, the independent planning inspector will check that sufficient consultation was included during the preparation of the plan in accordance with the current Statement of Community Involvement. There have been many changes in the planning system since the last Statement was approved in 2006 and it is necessary to update the Statement in preparation for the final formal consultation on the City Centre Action Plan in June 2013.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

3. The production of the Statement of Community Involvement is a statutory requirement of the City Council.

### **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

4. The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how and when the council will seek the views of local people, businesses and key organisations as an integral part of:
  - making new plans for the future development of the city, and
  - taking decisions on planning applications.
5. Planning law lays down minimum requirements for consultation. In complying with this the council will choose consultation methods appropriate to the document in preparation by balancing cost and time constraints with the likely relevance of the plan to specific communities and/or organisations.
6. The council aims to give the whole community (residents, businesses, voluntary organisations, interest groups, community groups) the opportunity to influence the content of the plans for future development in the city, and to give people affected by specific development proposals the chance to comment on individual planning applications when they are submitted by landowners or developers.
7. In doing this the council will adhere to the following principles:
  - The council's web pages will be used to publicise
    - which planning applications have been received and the closing date for comments.
    - which plans are being prepared and, particularly, when there are time limited opportunities to comment.
  - The web pages will provide clear, succinct information on the web pages to help people to make informed comments
  - The council will give full consideration to all suggestions and comments made.

In addition, when preparing new plans the council will:

- use appropriate consultation methods which are meaningful and proportionate to the document in preparation, whilst aiming to encourage involvement from a broad range of respondents, including groups who seldom make comments
- seek the views of interested parties as early as possible and sensible, to enable them to influence the content and focus of the plan, and identify local issues and opportunities.
- encourage ongoing involvement throughout the preparation of plans including commenting on the issues, the alternative approaches available, and the detailed wording of the proposed policies.
- make consultation documents as clear and concise as possible (minimising the use of jargon) without oversimplifying complex issues.
- provide feedback on how the ideas and comments received within the consultation period have influenced the content and shape of the plan

8. In the main, the Statement of Community Involvement reflects the current practice for consultation. Key changes from the last version, adopted in 2006, are:
  - The increased emphasis on the Council's web pages as a source of information about planning, including viewing planning applications.
  - A more flexible approach to exactly how we will consult people, with more of an emphasis on creating consultation approaches to suit the particular application or plan. This reflects the national change from a heavily prescribed process towards individual councils having the responsibility to decide what works best for their area.
9. Recognising that some people may have difficulties in viewing the information on line, the council provides on line access to its web pages at libraries across the city where the staff are on hand to help if required.
10. The draft Statement of Community Involvement was available on the council's web pages for inspection and comment for a four week period from 8 January 2013 – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013. In addition a total of 134 letters and 82 emails were sent to residents' groups and interest groups in the city. 6 responses were received.
11. A summary of the issues raised during the consultation and the proposed Council responses is attached as Appendix 1. Members are requested to consider the points raised and agree the responses to them.
12. In the main the responses were broadly supportive of the approach, and respondents also set out detailed comments. One key issue arising is the need for an improved website to make it easier to view planning applications and policy documents. It is proposed that this will be undertaken as resources allow.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

13. There are no capital implications. Revenue costs will be kept to a minimum as the Statement of Community Involvement will be published on the council's website, with very few hard copies being produced.

### **Property/Other**

14. There are no property implications.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

15. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (s18) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

### **Other Legal Implications:**

16. None.

**POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

17. The Statement of Community Involvement is a statutory requirement but is not part of the city’s development plan. However, new statutory plans (such as the emerging City Centre Action Plan) will not be found sound at Examination if the public consultation undertaken on the plan is not in accordance with an up-to-date Statement.

**KEY DECISION?** Yes

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	All
------------------------------------	-----

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices**

1.	Draft Statement of Community Involvement
2.	Summary of comments received.

**Documents In Members’ Rooms**

1.	None
----	------

**Equality Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
--	----

**Other Background Documents**

**Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None	
----	------	--