

## BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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<b>Report Originator</b>	Head of Development Services	Fwd Plan Ref No: -	
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All	30th January 2014	
<b>Title</b>	NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT		

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Members' agreement for the North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to be presented to Full Council for adoption.

### 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Local planning authorities are required to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), setting out how they will consult and engage with people in the preparation of Development Plan Documents, as well as in determining planning applications. The North Northamptonshire SCI has been prepared by the Joint Planning Unit, on behalf of the partner councils. Members will recall the submission of a draft Statement of Community Involvement to this committee, on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013, for its consideration and comment. The Council submitted comments to the Joint Planning Unit, endorsing the draft SCI, and proposing further refinements. The Joint Planning Committee can only adopt the Joint Core Strategy and other joint plans, the SCI therefore must be adopted by each of the partner local authorities.

#### **Summary of Consultation Responses**

2.2 In total, 21 responses were received to the consultation, these included Desborough and Burton Latimer Town Councils. Three statutory consultees made submissions (English Heritage, Environment Agency, and Natural England) all had no comments to make on the contents of the document. In addition, the Highways Agency, Bedford Borough Council, West Northamptonshire JPU, Irchester Parish Council, the Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and NNDC noted the document but had no specific comments to make.

2.3 The Joint Planning Committee met on 14 November 2013 and agreed officers' responses to the representations made to the consultation, and approved a series of changes made to the SCI. Officers of the district/ borough councils gave detailed consideration to the responses received to the consultation. It also agreed to adopt the 2013 Statement of Community Involvement in relation to jointly prepared documents and recommended that the partner local planning authorities adopt it in relation to their responsibilities. The final version of the SCI, showing track changes, is attached at Appendix 1.

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- 2.4 A summary of responses to the consultation, and officer responses, are summarised below.
- 2.5 A comment received from a member of the public in relation to Chapter 4 with regards the methods of consultation on development plans, suggested that the local press should be added, for those residents that don't look at the authority websites or are not on the consultation databases. Statutory press notices are no longer required by the Development Plan Regulations, but press releases will be issued at key stages. Reference to this has been made at paragraph 4.4 of the SCI.
- 2.6 Both Kettering and East Northamptonshire Councils requested more information on the Duty to Cooperate to be included within Chapter 4 on 'Consultation: Local Plans', specifically listing the Duty to Cooperate consultation bodies. In addition, Kettering Borough Council suggested that more information on how to meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate be included.
- 2.7 It was considered that the document should list the Duty to Cooperate consultation bodies and this has been added as table 2 of the document, after paragraph 4.10. It was reported that there is currently very little guidance on how local authorities should meet the Duty to Cooperate, and the Localism Act lets the local authorities choose the most appropriate method. The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) provides ideas and case studies on its website and the draft National Planning Practice Guidance sets out various considerations. It was agreed that nothing further be added to in the SCI on this matter.
- 2.8 Within Chapter 5 of the document 'Consultation: Development Proposals and Planning Applications' definitions of 'significant' developments are provided This is split into 'Large-scale developments' and 'Locally significant developments'. Kettering Borough Council and Collyweston Parish Council submitted responses on the definition of 'Locally significant developments'. Both were concerned that development in rural areas should be considered under this heading due to the impact some development can have in smaller scale settlements. It was considered that wording already within the locally significant definition equally applies to development in the rural area, and as such it was agreed that no further wording was required.
- 2.9 A further amendment has been introduced at paragraph 5.12, to remove the requirement that "*Planning applications deemed significant that are not accompanied by a Statement of Local Engagement when submitted may incur difficulties in being registered as a valid application by the planning authority*". This is considered too onerous, and is not set out within the Council's local validation requirements. Developers/ applicants will still be encouraged to submit a Statement of Local Engagement, this follows advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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2.10 Several other minor comments were made to the consultation, where appropriate these have been amended within the document and can also be found at Appendix 1. They are also summarised below for reference:

Paragraph	Change
4.4	Additional wording to reflect that where plans directly affect a particular community, planning officers will, where possible, attend a meeting with the Town or Parish Council. However due to resource pressures, the use of combined meetings and forums will be preferred where more than one community is affected.
4.6	Additional wording to reflect the need to contact each authority to be included in their consultation database.
4.9 Table 1	The addition of the National Health Service as a specific consultation body.
4.10	Addition of housing provision in the list of topics that authorities should work together on through Duty to Cooperate.
4.20 – 4.22	Additional section outlining how the conclusions from consultation will be dealt with.
5.7	Change ‘land use considerations’ to ‘material planning considerations’.
5.9 and table 1	The addition of residents groups and Neighbourhood Planning Groups into general consultation bodies for local plan preparation and planning applications where appropriate.
5.11	A factual error was identified and 1 hectare has been changed to read 1,000 square meters in the explanatory note.

2.11 Some responses received were considered not to require any changes to the document. These are outlined in the table below:

Response	Reason for no change
Further guidance on consultation techniques and what would be expected to be used in practice.	As every application and circumstance is different this would be difficult to do. Dialogue with the local authority means that specific information in relation to that application can be given as set out in paragraph 5.13.
Request to set out guidance for developers on how best to demonstrate that the view and opinions of the local community have been taken into account.	
The six week consultation for plan preparation is not long enough.	Six weeks is the consultation period prescribed by the Development Plan Regulations. However wherever possible the planning authorities will give advance notice of consultations.
Concern that 21 days consultation for planning applications is not long	This is no change from the current situation. The 21 day time frame is set

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<p>enough, especially where some town and parish meeting cycles are on 28 days.</p>	<p>out in the Development Management Procedure Order 2010 and is to enable the planning authority to consider responses while determining the application within the 8 or 13 week timescale set by central government. Input from the town and parish councils is important and the planning authorities will, where possible, be flexible on deadlines in order to secure this. However this needs to be dealt with on a case by case basis rather than the norm set out in the SCI.</p>
<p>Further clarification on electronic consultation methods.</p>	<p>This is covered sufficiently within paragraph 2.8.</p>
<p>Request that hard copy documents are sent to all Parish and Town Councils as a matter of course.</p>	<p>In the interest of resources it is considered appropriate to only provide hard copies of documents when requested.</p>

2.12 Your officers recommend that amendments to the SCI, agreed by the Joint Planning Committee, should be welcomed. Officers therefore ask that Members of this committee endorse the revised SCI, and invite Full Council to adopt the document.

### **3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

3.1 The draft SCI was subject to thorough consultation, Kettering Borough Council acted as a consultee in its development.

### **4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement will set out the standards to be achieved in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of the Council's Development Plan Documents and Development Management decisions.

### **5. USE OF RESOURCES**

5.1 None directly related to this report. The costs borne in consulting on the Council's Development Plan Documents, and in consulting on planning applications are accounted for in the Development Services revenue budget.

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### 6. **RECOMMENDATION**

Members note the contents of this report, and recommend to Full Council that the revised Statement of Community Involvement be agreed for adoption.

Title of Document: North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement –  
Changes Post Consultation for Adoption

Date: November 2013

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