

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE		Item 7	Page 1 of 3
Date	25th JULY 2019		
Report Originator	HEAD OF THE NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING & DELIVERY UNIT		
Title	ADOPTION OF REVISED NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the comments received in response to the consultation and to adopt the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for North Northamptonshire in relation to plans prepared by the Joint Planning Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 All planning authorities are required to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how they will consult and engage with people over the preparation of development plan documents as well as on planning applications. The previous North Northamptonshire SCI was adopted by the Joint Planning Committee in 2013.
- 2.2 The JPDU has coordinated the production of the new SCI on behalf of the partner councils. As mentioned at the 25th April 2019 Committee the National Planning Practice Guidance on Plan Making (NPPG) clarifies that the revised SCI does not have to be subject to public consultation before it can be adopted by the JPC and by the partner LPAs. However, following discussions with the partner authorities, it was considered that it would be beneficial to undertake focused consultation on the document to seek wider stakeholder input and ensure buy in and at the April Committee Member's approved the SCI for consultation. This was undertaken for six weeks from 2nd May through to 13th June 2019 and proved to be particularly useful in shaping the final version of the document. During the consultation 7 responses were made from organisations and an individual, two of which were offering no comment on the document. These are included in [Appendix 1](#) along with an officer response.
- 2.3 At the April JPC Cllr Jim Hakewill addressed the Committee and raised some points in relation to the SCI which are detailed in the minutes. Although no formal response was received from Cllr Hakewill, it is considered that the issues he raised regarding consultation on strategic sites, use of social media and Neighbourhood Plans are either already sufficiently addressed within the SCI and/or have been addressed through other responses made during the consultation and responded to accordingly. These are summarised in this report and detailed further in [Appendix 1](#).
- 2.4 Where changes have been made to the SCI, these are shown as tracked changes to the document at [Appendix 2](#). The JPC can only adopt the SCI insofar as it relates to the Joint Core Strategy and other joint plans. It will also need to be adopted by the partner LPAs. It is recommended that the JPC adopts the 2019 SCI in relation to jointly prepared documents and recommends that the partner Local Planning Authorities adopt it in relation to their responsibilities.

3. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

3.1 The 7 respondents were from a variety of consultees as shown in the list below.

Natural England
Historic England
Cambridgeshire Police
Rushden and Higham Council of Churches, Church and Community Planning Partnership.
Rothwell Town Council
Braybrooke Parish Council
1x Resident

3.2 Natural England provided no comment other than that they were supportive of the revised SCI and the emphasis on early engagement. Of the other respondents, Cambridgeshire Police and Rothwell Town Council also provided no comment.

3.3 Historic England sought clarification on the consultation stages of Neighbourhood Plans and a new paragraph (5.4) has been introduced to reflect this.

3.4 One resident commented that they felt further emphasis should be placed on the importance of early engagement, particularly with regard to communities who could be effected by future development. In this instance, allocation sites in draft plans were highlighted as being an area where the public should be better informed. In response to this comment, further text has been added to para 4.6 of the SCI to strengthen this and provides examples of how LPAs could engage with communities at this stage of the plan making process.

3.5 Braybrooke Parish Council provided comments covering a couple of issues. The first being the matter of the unitary authority and the role of Parish Councils come its inception. It is considered that although this is a legitimate concern, at present this is not an issue for this version of the SCI which deals with current planning arrangements. An updated SCI will need to be produced for the unitary authority. Other concerns raised relating to the regard to the role of Parish Councils have been responded to in Appendix 1, but it is not felt that any changes to the SCI itself are required as a result of these.

3.6 The second matter raised by Braybrooke Parish Council relates to electronic communication. Responses identify a couple of issues, detailing what is possible with current General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) regulations in relation to email communication during consultations as well as information on how those who do not use the internet can be reached during consultations. It is considered that the SCI currently deals with these issues sufficiently and/or it is not appropriate to go into suggested levels of detail and therefore no further changes have been made to the document. Further context on the Data Protection Act 2018 has been included in the SCI at para 4.7.

3.7 Rushden and Higham Council of Churches, Church and Community Planning Partnership set out that the SCI should make it clear where consultation is a statutory requirement in terms of plan making. In response to this additional text has been

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provided within para 4.18. It is considered that the document should not be too prescriptive where elements of the plan making process are more flexible. Other minor amendments to wording have been made at paras 6.6 and 6.9 in response to other comments raised.

- 3.8 The revised SCI incorporating changes made following the consultation, is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. As mentioned in para 2.4, the partner LPAs will need to adopt their elements of the SCI. As set out in Item 5, it is considered that an immediate update of the JCS is not necessary. Therefore, application of the revised SCI in relation to the JCS update is likely to be focussed on the early evidence gathering stages before the unitary is formally established. However, the updated SCI is consistent with the requirements of national policy and guidance. It may be necessary to update the SCI should there be future changes in national policy or other changes in circumstances.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Head of the NNJPDU recommends:

- 1. That the Joint Planning Committee approve the responses to the representations set out in Appendix 1 and the changes made to the SCI in Appendix 2.**
- 2. That the Joint Planning Committee adopts the 2019 Statement of Community Involvement in relation to jointly prepared documents and recommends that the partner Local Planning Authorities adopt it in relation to their responsibilities.**

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Appendix 1 – Schedule of Comments on North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix 2 – North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement