

Committee: BPAC

Date: 12th September 2019

Wards: All

Subject: Consultation on Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director for Environment and Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing;

Contact officer, Ann Maria Clarke, Strategic Planner, Future Merton

Recommendations:

- A. That the Borough Plan Advisory Committee advise on Merton's Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and to resolve to recommend that Cabinet and Council approve the six week consultation on the draft SCI, to run for six weeks in winter 2019/20.
 - B. That approval of the final consultation draft SCI be delegated to the Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing.
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1. Purpose of report and executive summary

- 1.1 Merton's local communities are those that are most likely affected by development in their local area and more importantly, know the most about their neighbourhood and how they would like it to grow and be shaped for the future. There are many benefits in involving local communities in the planning process for the Council, these include:
 - Benefiting from the detailed local knowledge and perspective of local people and community organisations/groups
 - Community commitment to the future development and growth of their area
 - Greater support for policies, strategies and decisions
 - Improving wellbeing and the environment (built and natural environment) within Merton
- 1.2 Merton's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will involve local people, local businesses, stakeholders and other interested parties when preparing development planning documents and

submitted planning applications. SCI's are a legal requirement and form part of the evidence based documents that supports Local Plans.

- 1.3 In addition, the draft SCI also outlines some engagement principles for developers, who may need to consult with Merton residents regard their development proposals.

2. Details

- 2.1 In 2006 Merton Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). However, since its adoption there have been a number of changes to planning legislation, planning guidance and technological advances such as social media, which have changed the way public consultations and engagement takes place and are carried out. All this means Merton's SCI (2006) requires updating to have regard to these changes.

- 2.2 In accordance with planning legislation, the draft SCI outlines:
- How and when the Council will involve local communities, businesses, voluntary sector and other interested parties in the production of development planning documents for example Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and on submitted planning applications;
 - The planning process;
 - The constraints imposed by regulations and planning policies (national and regional);
 - How the Council will provide feedback to comments made during consultations;
 - The consultation methods to be used.

3. Alternative options

- 3.1 The SCI is a legal (statutory) document that must be complied with by all planning processes including the process of agreeing planning documents and making decisions on planning applications. There are no alternatives.

4. Consultation undertaken or proposed

- 4.1 Subject to Cabinet and Council approval and in line with planning regulations a six week public consultation is proposed on the drafted SCI in winter 2019/20.

5. Timetable

- 5.1 A six week public consultation will be undertaken in winter 2019/20 with adoption to follow after the consultation.

6. Financial, resource and property implications

- 6.1 The costs of preparation of the SCI fall within existing Local Development Plan budget and existing Future Merton staff resource time.

7. Legal and statutory implications

- 7.1 This SCI has been produced under section 18 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to prepare and maintain a SCI

8. Human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications

- 8.1 No implications.

9. Risk management and health and safety implications

- 9.1 No implications

10. Appendices – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- 10.1 Appendix A: draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

11. Background Papers – the following documents have been relied on in drawing up this report but do not form part of the report

- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)
- The Localism Act 2011
- The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 and
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019)

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