

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Executive

8 December 2022

TITLE:	Statement of Community Involvement
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Anthony McKeown – Council Leader
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mark James - Principal Planning Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	All wards outside of the Peak District National Park

Appendices Attached

Appendix A - Consultation draft Statement of Community Involvement
Appendix B – Schedule of proposed modifications to the adopted Statement of Community Involvement

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 To consider a revised version of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement prior to public consultation.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 That the Executive provides feedback on the draft Statement of Community Involvement ahead of further consideration by the Executive and publication for public consultation.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory planning document which describes how the Council will engage with residents, businesses and other organisations in decision making on planning policy documents and planning applications. Its scope is that part of the High Peak that lies outside the Peak District National Park.
- 3.2 The Council's most recent Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in 2019. Since that time, the Council has agreed to commence the preparation of a new Local Plan. The Covid-19 pandemic also highlighted the need for consultation methods to be adaptable to meet unforeseen circumstances. For

these reasons it has been considered appropriate to update the SCI.

3.3 The next will step will be to subject the updated SCI, appended at Appendix A, to a six week period of public consultation commencing in January 2023.

3.4 It is proposed to bring a further report to the Economy and Growth Select Committee following the consultation to inform members of the responses received to the consultation, and to consider a final version of the SCI. The SCI has also been reviewed by the Local Plan Steering Group.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement is a key document in the context of Local Plan preparation and the determination of planning applications. As such it will help to deliver the Council's corporate aims as follows:

Aim Three: Protect and create jobs by supporting economic growth, development and regeneration

Aim Four: Protect and improve the environment including responding to the climate emergency

5. **Alternative Options**

5.1 The Executive has two alternative options to consider:

Option 1 – Decline to approve a Statement of Community Involvement for consultation. Local planning authorities are required under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) to produce a Statement of Community Involvement. (Not recommended)

Option 2 – Approve a Statement of Community Involvement for consultation. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) describes how the Council will seek to engage with residents, businesses and other organisations in decision making on planning policy documents and planning applications in the part of the High Peak outside of the Peak District National Park. (Recommended)

6. **Implications**

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

No implications

6.2 Workforce

No implications

- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment
This report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Diversity and Equality Policies. The Statement of Community Involvement set outs an approach designed to ensure that all sections of the public, including local organisations and any "hard to reach" groups traditionally under-represented in the planning process, have the opportunity to be involved.
- 6.4 Financial Considerations
No implications
- 6.5 Legal
Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement. As a planning authority, the Council may, at any time, make a revision to a local development document. The involvement of the public in preparing planning documents and the consideration of planning applications must follow the approach set out in the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 6.6 Climate Change
No direct implications.
- 6.7 Consultation
This report recommends that the SCI is subject to a six week period of public consultation.
- 6.8 Risk Assessment
Risks have been addressed in the body of the report.

Neil Rodgers
Executive Director (Place)

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

Current SCI (adopted February 2019)
https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/media/4047/High-Peak-SCI-adopted-February-2019/pdf/High_Peak_SCI_adopted_February_2019.pdf?m=1553776998070

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7. Detail

- 7.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement. The document is required to explain how the authority will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and in determining planning applications.
- 7.2 High Peak Borough Council's SCI sets standards and methods that will be followed for engaging residents, local groups, stakeholders and statutory consultees in:
- The preparation of the plans, policies and guidance that set out what the Borough requires; and
 - The determination of planning applications for new development.
- 7.3 The Council's most recent Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in February 2019. It must be reviewed within five years to accord with legislation. Since this date, the Council has agreed to commence work on an updated Local Plan. In order to avoid a review of the SCI towards the latter stages of Local Plan preparation, a refresh is proposed now. This would mean that all but one consultation on the Local Plan is undertaken in line with a refreshed SCI. Furthermore, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the refresh provides an opportunity to set our provisions for public consultation in the event that future unforeseen events prohibit the standard methods of engagement. A full schedule of proposed modifications to the 2019 SCI is provided at Appendix B.
- 7.4 In addition, updating the SCI enables other amendments to provide factual updates, correct grammatical errors, recognise the possibility of potential planning reforms in England, align methods for notification of policy and application consultations and to reflect resource capacity.
- 7.5 There are minimum requirements for consultation on planning policy documents set out in the Town and Country Planning Regulations which the Council must adhere to. The SCI provides further detail in terms of the stages of consultation and approach that may go beyond the statutory requirements.
- 7.6 The aim of the updated SCI is to:
- inform members of the public and all other interested parties in a clear fashion how they will be notified about our planning policy consultations and how they can give their views on planning applications;
 - ensure the process of making comments is as straightforward as possible, both electronically and on paper;
 - plan consultation carefully to ensure that the opportunity is given for all interested parties to participate in the process, whilst at the same time making the most effective use of Council resources.
- 7.7 The updated SCI is attached as Appendix A to this report. The document is

structured as follows:

- Parts 1 and 2 provide an introduction.
 - Part 3 provides key background information about how the planning system works, the planning policy documents produced by the Council and the preparation process for these documents. The section also covers other considerations the Council must take into account when preparing its planning policy documents, such as provisions made in the Localism Act 2011.
 - Part 4 details methods of engagement to be used during consultation and includes tables setting out who will be consulted at each stage in plan preparation. This section also includes details as to what happens to comments received by the Council. Part 5 covers consultation in the context of the planning applications process.
 - Part 6 focuses on how the Council will ensure equal opportunities in consultation by seeking to involve all sections of the community in the process, with details of the measures proposed to achieve this.
 - Part 7 details the circumstances under which this SCI will be reviewed.
- 7.8 An early draft of the SCI and the schedule of modifications was discussed at the Local Plan Steering Group meeting in October 2022. Feedback indicated a preference for the inclusion of the Protocol on Land Use Planning Matters and Development Control Committee as an appendix to the SCI. This will make the standards for the consideration of applications and management of the Development Control committee more transparent for the public. A further appendix sets out consultation provisions in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Next steps

- 7.9 Subject to approval by the Executive in December, the SCI will be subject to a six week period of public consultation commencing in January alongside the proposed Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and early engagement of the Local Plan.
- 7.10 It is then proposed to bring a further report to Economy and Growth Select Committee, in order to inform members of responses received to the consultation, before a decision is taken by Council to adopt the document.