



**AGENDA ITEM: 8.**

**CABINET: 12 January 2016**

**PLANNING COMMITTEE: 14 January 2016**

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**Report of:** Assistant Director Planning

**Relevant Managing Director:** Managing Director (Transformation)

**Relevant Portfolio Holder:** Councillor J Hodson

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**SUBJECT: WEST LANCASHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT  
2016 UPDATE**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet's approval for consulting on the draft West Lancashire Statement of Community Involvement 2016 as attached at Appendix A to this report.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

- 2.1 That the draft West Lancashire Statement of Community Involvement 2016 attached at Appendix A be approved for public consultation, subject to any amendments made by the Assistant Director Planning in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, following consideration of the Statement of Community Involvement by Planning Committee, as per recommendation 2.2 below.
- 2.2 That the Assistant Director Planning be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to make any necessary amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement in the light of agreed comments from Planning Committee, before the document is published for consultation.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- 3.1 That the content of this report and the Statement of Community Involvement attached at Appendix A to this report be considered, and that agreed comments be referred to the Assistant Director Planning for consideration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
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### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which should explain how they will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their planning policy documents and determining planning applications.
- 4.2 There are various legislative requirements for the local planning authority to consult with various stakeholders when carrying out its planning functions. For example, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require public participation when preparing planning policy documents. Similarly, the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 sets out the minimum requirements for consultation on planning applications. Consultation is also required in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy, Neighbourhood Plans, Tree Preservation Orders, and reviews of Conservation Area designations.
- 4.3 The Borough Council first adopted an SCI in July 2007. This original SCI was prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. An Addendum to the 2007 SCI was published in January 2009, reflecting updated (2008) government Regulations. Since 2009, there have been further significant changes to planning legislation, and the revisions to the Regulations referred to in paragraph 4.2 above require a reconsideration of the current SCI and its Addendum.
- 4.4 Furthermore, technology has evolved since the adoption of the 2007 SCI, leading to, for example, the widespread use of social media and mobile telecommunications. The potential of the use of such means of communication in planning consultation and community engagement should be recognised in the SCI.

### **5.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 In view of the changes to national planning law and procedure, it has become necessary to update the West Lancashire SCI. The draft West Lancashire SCI 2016 at Appendix A to this report takes account of the changes to planning legislation and procedure since 2009, and reflects the most up-to-date Regulations. In addition, the document covers a number of additional topics,

such as neighbourhood planning, the Duty to Co-operate and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

- 5.2 It is proposed to publish the draft West Lancashire SCI 2016 for a six week period of stakeholder consultation from Thursday 4 February to Friday 18 March 2016. Any representations received will be considered, and, where appropriate and / or necessary, the SCI will be amended before being brought back to Cabinet.

## **6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS / COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 6.1 The principle of sustainable development is a 'golden thread' running through plan making and decision taking on planning matters. By setting out procedures and standards for community engagement in preparing planning documents and in determining planning applications, the SCI provides stakeholders with clarity on how they may make representations on sustainability (and other) matters, in order that these be taken into account.
- 6.2 The SCI ties in with the 2007 Sustainable Community Strategy vision of West Lancashire being a place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute, and with the key objective of developing community participation and pride in the Borough's neighbourhoods.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. All public consultation in relation to planning documents, planning applications and other planning services that is carried out by the Council is funded through the Planning Service's revenue budget.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 Updating the current SCI to take into account changes to government Regulations and society's increased use of electronic and mobile means of communication will help to ensure that local communities and other interested parties can remain engaged with the Council as new planning policy documents emerge and as planning applications are determined. This will assist in ensuring that the Council continues to adopt sound planning policies and reach robust planning decisions.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore, an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Draft West Lancashire Statement of Community Involvement 2016

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment