



**Cabinet recommendation for consideration by Council
at the Council Meeting on Wednesday, 20 July 2011**

Cabinet – 31 May 2011

17 Lewes District Council Revised Statement of Community Involvement

The Cabinet considered Report No 88/11 relating to a proposal to progress with the procedure for adopting a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). A copy of the proposed revised Statement was appended to the Report.

The SCI was a document that set out the consultation methods and processes for community involvement in the preparation of planning policy, by way of the LDF, and in the determination of planning applications.

The Council's current SCI had been adopted in February 2006. Since that time, the Government had issued a new Planning Policy Statement 12 in respect of Local Spatial Planning (2008), which had altered the procedure for preparing documents that formed part of the LDF.

In 2008 and 2009, revisions had also been made to the Town and Country Planning Regulations which meant that significant elements of the current SCI were no longer relevant.

Such changes in legislation, together with changing procedures that had been caused by the creation of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), meant that there was a need to revise the SCI which, if implemented, also provided an opportunity to review what were the most appropriate consultation procedures based on the experiences of recent consultations that had been undertaken by the Council and examples of best practice from elsewhere.

In order to prepare the revised SCI, a questionnaire had been sent to over 100 statutory and selected other individuals and organisations which sought views about consultation practices in respect of planning, further details of

which were set out in paragraph 2 of the Report.

Paragraph 3 of the Report provided a summary of the revised SCI and its accompanying background document. Paragraph 3.6 thereof set out a summary of the major changes that had been made to the original adopted SCI, details of which were reflected in the revised document.

Since the consultation on the document, the Coalition Government had unveiled the Localism Bill which contained proposals which, if implemented, would introduce changes to the planning system. It was therefore likely that the revised SCI, if adopted, would be relevant for a limited period.

Paragraph 5 of the Report set out details of the role of the SDNPA in light of the SCI. With regard to Development Management arrangements, the agency agreement between the SDNPA and the Council had been reflected in the revised SCI. Therefore, the revised document would apply to all planning applications that were determined by the Council including those within the National Park that the Council would determine on behalf of the SDNPA. The revised SCI therefore needed to be adopted by both the Council and the SDNPA.

Recommended:

- 17.1** That the revised Statement of Community Involvement, as appended to Report No 88/11, be adopted as part of the Local Development Framework, subject to the inclusion of additional text in Appendix 3 entitled “Speaking at Planning Committees” – paragraph entitled “Time limits for speakers” – relating to the length of time that councillors may speak in respect of planning applications which relate to their ward.

Reasons for the Decision:

To update the current Statement of Community Involvement to ensure that it conforms to the most up to date Planning Regulations and Council practices on consultation.

To ensure that the relationship between the South Downs National Park Authority and the Council, regarding planning matters, is reflected and made clear in the revised document.

(Note: Councillor Jones declared his non-prejudicial interest in this item as he was the Council’s representative on the South Downs National Park Authority, a position to which he had been appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 25 May 2011).

† *Councillors are requested to bring with them to the meeting Report No 88/11 which was circulated with the agenda papers for the meeting of the Cabinet on 31 May 2011. If you require a further copy of the document please contact Trevor Hayward, Committee Officer, on e-mail trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk or telephone 01273 484122*