

Report Title: **Draft Statement of Community Involvement**

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable):

Report of: **Andrew Travers, Interim Director of Environmental Services**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key decision**

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (see Appendix 1) to go out to consultation with the public and general consultation bodies, which is a legal requirement. The draft Statement sets out the Council's vision and standards for involving the community and other stakeholders in the preparation, revision and alteration of Local Development Documents (which will form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF)) and consideration of planning applications.

1.2 Depending on the comments received from the public and general consultation bodies the draft Statement may be amended. Following this stage, the draft Statement of Community Involvement may be amended in light of the comments received and then a submission Statement of Community Involvement will be submitted in Spring 2007 to the Government Office for London (GoL) for examination by a planning inspector.

2. Introduction by Executive Member

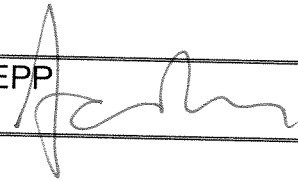
This report is brought to the Executive to seek its approval for the draft Statement of Community Involvement which outlines practice for involving the community in planning.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Executive approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement for consultation with the public and general consultation bodies.

3.2 To delegate power to the Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration in consultation with the Assistant Director (PEPP) to approve any changes prior to public consultation and to publish a public notice of consultation.

Report Authorised by: Shifa Mustafa, Assistant Director, PEPP



Contact Officer: Malcolm Souch, 0208 489 5590

4. Director of Finance Comments

4.1 The budget setting process for 2006/07 approved additional revenue investment of £75k to meet the costs of completing and adopting the UDP and progressing the new Local Development Framework. Any additional costs arising from the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement and associated public consultation will be met from the currently approved PEPP budget for 2006/07.

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

5.1 The initial consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement is an "executive" function which can be authorised by either the individual Lead Member or by the full Executive Meeting. The decision to authorise the submission of the draft Statement of Community Involvement to the Secretary of State is a "non-executive" function which must be referred to the Planning Applications Sub-Committee.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

6.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- Creating Local Development Frameworks ODPM 2004
- Community Involvement in Planning ODPM 2004
- Diversity and Equal Opportunity in Planning 2004
- Haringey's Local Development Scheme 2006
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
- Planning Policy Statement 12 "Local Development Frameworks" ODPM 2004

7. Background

7.1 One of the major changes to have emerged from recent reforms to the planning system is the gradual replacement (over three years) of Unitary Development Plans (UDP) with Local Development Frameworks (LDF). The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will be a public statement setting out the Council's vision and procedure for community involvement in development plan-making and consideration of planning applications. As such, one of the requirements for preparing the Statement of Community Involvement is that it must link with other community involvement initiatives in the Council such as the Community Strategy.

7.2 In accordance with the Regulations, the draft Statement of Community Involvement must undergo a six-week statutory consultation period first with statutory bodies (adjoining Boroughs, Highways Agency and the greater London Authority (GLA)) and

then with local community (public) and other stakeholders (general consultation bodies).

- 7.3 The vision for Haringey as set out in the Community Strategy (2003-2007) is to *'measurably improve the quality of life for the people of Haringey by tackling some of our biggest problems and making it a Borough we can all be proud of'*. Within this context the involvement and participation of the local community and other stakeholders in the preparation of Haringey's Local Development Framework and planning applications is essential to achieving this vision. The Community Strategy is currently under review and is set to be adopted in Spring 2007.
- 7.4 *'Haringey Council is committed to improving communication channels between the Council and the local community'* (Haringey Council Consultation Strategy: Guiding Principles). The Council's strategy for community involvement in planning will implement, where practicable, the eight guiding principles for consultation identified in the Haringey Consultation Strategy. The Statement of Community Involvement will also take forward the principles (values) and commitments (promises) of the Haringey COMPACT by promoting and enhancing our working relations between the voluntary and community sector in the Borough.
- 7.5 In accordance with the Regulations, the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) must undergo a six-week statutory consultation period first with statutory bodies (adjoining Boroughs, Highways Agency and the greater London Authority (GLA)). This stage was approved by the Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration on the 15th September 2006, with the Statement set to go out to consultation in late September. Later the document will go out to consultation with the local community (public) and other stakeholders (general consultation bodies).
- 7.6 In light of the representations received from statutory bodies, local community and other stakeholders, the draft Statement will be amended to inform the production of the submission Statement of Community Involvement which will be submitted to the Secretary of State through the Government Officer for London (GoL) for independent examination. The document will be examined by a planning inspector to determine whether the draft Statement is 'sound' and has been prepared in accordance with the nine tests of 'soundness' as set out in PPS12. See Appendix 2 for details of the nine tests of soundness.

8 Description

- 8.1 The draft Statement of Community Involvement is attached in Appendix 1. The document sets out:
- A description of the Statement of Community Involvement, the aims by which it has been produced, the stages for its preparation and the importance of community involvement in planning matters.
 - Council's corporate vision and standards for community involvement, the Statement's relationship to the Community Strategy, Haringey Consultation Strategy and Haringey - COMPACT. As well as, details about the make-up of

Haringey's population and communities, and the target groups that need to be involved in planning.

- Information about Haringey's Local Development Framework, how the different documents fit together, the preparation stages of Local Development Documents and Supplementary Planning Document.
- Proposed approach to community involvement and consultation on planning policy documents and planning applications.
- The resources and skills available to involve the community and other stakeholders on the production of the Local Development Framework.

8.2 The Statement has taken into account the views, ideas and good practice elsewhere identified during the scoping stage and builds upon the existing good practice in Haringey for community engagement in planning. The key concerns raised during the scoping stage can be summarised under the following areas:

- Early contact is needed
- Access to information needs to be improved
- Reducing barriers is vital
- Appropriate methods for consultation should be identified
- Collaboration on consultation events to prevent consultation fatigue
- Providing feedback
- Clarity in decision making process for planning applications

8.3 **Proposals for consultation on planning matters** – issues and concerns raised during the scoping stage have been taken into account in the draft Statement of Community Involvement. See Appendix 5 for proposed community involvement methods for particular planning policy documents and planning applications. Below is a summary of activities for more effective community involvement and consultation.

8.4 ***Planning Policy and Planning Applications***

- Awareness raising activities - a programme of activities will be undertaken to raise awareness of planning amongst local communities. Officers will work with communities and residents on improving their understanding of planning and to widen participation for effective consultation on the LDF process and planning applications. These activities include:
 - minimum once a year open days and seminars on planning;
 - exhibitions at local community events;
 - a programme of activities with children and young people involving local schools, colleges and neighbourhood projects; and
 - introductory sessions on planning with local projects/groups at the neighbourhood level.

- **Translation and interpretation** - all documents and notification letters for LDF documents and planning applications will be written clearly in plain English, with a full explanation of abbreviations. We will also use accessible formats such as Braille, audio tape, easy words and pictures, different languages (available on request) and electronic formats.
- **Access to information** - LDF documents will be made available in community venues such as libraries and on the Council's website. We will also work with the Communications Team right from the outset to deliver a co-ordinated approach to how information is delivered to local people as part of the process of preparing LDF documents. The Planning service will widen its use of Council publications such as Haringey People and local newspapers to advertise consultations and provide information on how individuals and groups can get onto the planning consultation database. In addition, we will also use accessible venues and facilities.
- **Collaborative working** - the Council will work with other Council services for a joined up approach to consultation, where practicable and to avoid consultation fatigue or duplication. We will also work more closely with structures that have developed in Haringey over recent years. Such as Neighbourhood Management, Borough wide Conservation Area Advisory Committees, Development Control Forums, Tenants Forums, Residents Associations, and local projects.

8.5 **Planning applications**

- **Pre-application discussions** - pre-application discussions will be available to applicants and are intended to provide specific planning advice concerning the development of a particular site and provide greater clarity to the applicant by identifying planning issues and requirements before the application is submitted.
- **Pre-application community involvement on major schemes** - developers of major development proposals will be advised to involve and consult with local communities early and in a meaningful way before applying for planning permission. The Council will recommend Planning for Real exercises or similar activities to be undertaken by developers and expect that these activities reflect good practice in line with the Council's consultation principles.
- **Neighbour notifications** - Appendix 6 sets out minimum proposals to notify and consult neighbours and local groups about planning applications in their area.
- **Weekly planning list & statutory publicity** - A weekly planning list of applications registered with the Council will also be forwarded to interested parties. The Council also places adverts in local newspapers on particular applications that are submitted. See Appendix 7 for details of the weekly planning list and for guidance on the statutory publicity procedure.
- **Internal departments** - see Appendix 8 for proposals to notify and consult internal Council departments on planning applications

- **Site notices** - will be made user friendly and particular attention will be paid to visibility and readability of the notices. For major applications a site notice will be displayed on all publicly accessible boundaries of the site. For all other applications a single site notice will be displayed in a prominent location on or near the site.
- **Local newspapers and Haringey publications** - to comply with the Regulations, the Council will issue press notices during particular formal consultation periods.
- **Website** – LDF documents will be provided on the Council website and it will also contain details of consultations on planning policy documents together with all the relevant supporting documents. Where appropriate, we will also update the corporate consultation calendar with relevant consultation activities undertaken in planning policy. Information provided on the website about planning applications will also be improved. This includes providing a detailed checklist (validation procedure) of the documentation applicants and agents are expected to provide with their application. The website also allows the public to view past and current applications, view their drawings and photographs, comment on applications, view decision notices, view officers report, view decision notice and view appeal decisions.
- **GIS** - we will also use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) more effectively as a tool for public consultation especially for LDF documents and Sustainability Appraisals (SA).
- **Development Control Forum** - see Appendix 9 for proposed changes to the Development Control Forum terms of reference. The Forum has been a successful innovation for how the Council consults on major and sensitive schemes. Because of this success we are widening who will be able to chair meetings to:
 - A Senior Manager within the Planning Service; or
 - An appropriate Council Member (which may include the Chair of relevant Area Assembly or the Lead Member for PEPP)

9 Consultation

- 9.1 Before preparing the draft Statement of Community Involvement and to prepare the ground for a sound consultation process on the draft document, a scoping exercise was undertaken to inform the content and scope of the document. Activities were conducted with local residents and officers from across the Council. See Appendix 3 for further details.
- 9.2 **Statutory body consultation** - following this process and the production of a draft Statement of Community Involvement the document must undergo a six-week statutory consultation first with statutory bodies (adjoining Boroughs, Highways Agency and the greater London Authority (GLA)) followed by wider public consultation in January for a further six-weeks. The public consultation in January is slightly later than originally planned for November to December due to the Christmas break. Details of the consultation requirements are set out in the Regulations.

- 9.3 **Public consultation** – this stage follows consultation with statutory bodies and involves consulting individuals, national and local community and voluntary groups, businesses and other stakeholders.
- 9.4 **Public Consultation Strategy** - in preparation for the formal public consultation, we are currently putting in-place a programme of community engagement events from September onwards to raise awareness of the Statement of Community Involvement and build the capacity of local people to be able to participate in the formal public consultation in January. The public consultation in January is slightly later than originally planned for November to December due to the Christmas break. See Appendix 4 for details of these activities which will come under the following heading:
- Attending community events
 - Working with young people and schools
 - Community outreach
 - Promotion and publicity

12 Conclusions

- 12.1 As part of the recent changes to the planning system Haringey Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement as part of the Council's Local Development Framework. The Statement sets out how, when and at what stage the Council will involve the local community and other stakeholders in planning matters affecting the Borough. In accordance with the Regulations the document should go out to formal consultation first with statutory bodies and later with the wider community for six weeks respectively.
- 12.2 The Statement of Community Involvement is intended to raise the standard of how local Councils involve communities in planning matters, the benefits of which would include improving decision making processes and producing plans and proposals that are responsive to local needs and vision for the area.

13. Equalities Implications

- 13.1 The Statement will set out how, when, and at what stage the local communities and other stakeholders can get involved in planning matters. Preparation of the draft Statement has involved adhering to the Council's equal opportunities commitments and priorities, as set out in the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, which is concerned with age, disability, gender, religion or belief and sexuality. The community involvement activities and standards identified in the draft Statement has also been based on principles that different people and groups within the community have different needs and requirements for consultation and engagement in planning matters. The draft Statement has set out creative and fit for purpose methods for involving individuals and groups that do not respond to traditional methods of consultation.

14. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

- Appendix 1 – draft Statement of Community Involvement
- Appendix 2 – Nine tests of soundness
- Appendix 3 – Scoping and pre-consultation activities

- Appendix 4 – Public consultation strategy
- Appendix 5 - Propose community involvement methods for relevant planning
- Appendix 6 – Weekly planning list & statutory publicity – press adverts
- Appendix 7 - Consultation policy - neighbour notification
- Appendix 8 - Consultation Policy – internal departments
- Appendix 9 - Development Control Forum terms of reference