

Executive Meeting**On 24th April 2007**Report Title: **Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement**

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable):

Report of: **Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment**Wards(s) affected: **All**Report for: **Key decision****1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to submit the draft Statement of Community Involvement to the Government Office for London for examination by a planning inspector. The submitted document is subject to further public consultation for six weeks and representations received during this period will be considered by the planning inspector.
- 1.2 The draft Statement sets out the Council's vision and standards for involving the community and other stakeholders in the preparation of planning policy documents and for consultation on planning applications.

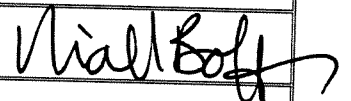
2. Introduction by Cllr Kaushika Amin [Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration]

- 2.1 I am hereby asking my Executive Colleagues for their approval to submit the Draft Statement of Community Involvement to GoL for examination.
- 2.2 In accordance with Haringey's aims to further engage and consult with local stakeholders the document is subject to further public consultation for six weeks.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To approve the Draft Statement of Community Involvement for submission to the Government Office for London and for public consultation for a period of six weeks.
- 3.2 To delegate power to the Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration in consultation with the Assistant Director (PP&D) to approve any changes prior to submission and to publish a public notice of submission and consultation.

Report Authorised by: Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment



Contact Officer: Malcolm Souch, 020 8489 5590

4. Director of Finance Comments

- 4.1 The Planning, Policy and Development budget for 2007/08 contains a provision of £75k to meet the costs of progressing the new Local Development Framework including the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement. Any additional costs arising from the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement and associated public and stakeholder consultation must be contained within the aforementioned provision.

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 5.1 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted and only wishes to comment that the preparation of a SCI is a statutory requirement of the 2004 Act. Individual planning authorities are able to set their own standards provided these meet the requirements of the Regulations and are found to be "sound", applying the tests set out at Appendix 3 of the draft SCI

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 2007
 - The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
 - Planning Policy Statement 12 'Local Development Frameworks', ODPM 2004
 - Haringey's Draft Statement of Community Involvement, January 2007

7. Background

- 7.1 One of the major changes to have emerged from the reforms to the planning system is the emphasis on community involvement. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a public document which sets out the Council's vision and standards for involving the community and other stakeholders in the preparation of planning policy documents and for consultation on planning applications. It identifies how, when, and at what stage local residents, organisations and other stakeholders can get involved. The SCI forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework.
- 7.2 A Members steering group was formed in late 2005 to guide and direct the preparation of the SCI to ensure that the Council produced an appropriate and successful document in accordance with the regulations. The steering group approved the publication of a booklet and questionnaire which raised awareness of planning and the SCI. The results from the questionnaire fed into the consultation draft SCI.
- 7.3 The purpose of this scoping stage was to:
- update existing mailing lists to achieve a "fit for purpose" database for the SCI and LDF

- collate information about Haringey's diverse communities, and information on good practice for community consultation
 - initiate activities to raise awareness on planning amongst local residents, local community groups, officers and businesses
 - seek views and information from potential consultees about the most appropriate ways of engaging them once the SCI is published for public consultation
 - identify gaps for future action for better community involvement
- 7.4 This stage was supported by extensive internal consultation, a number of community events and presentations to a variety of stakeholder groups. Links were made with the 'Have your Say' consultation on the revised Community Strategy.
- 7.5 In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the draft SCI has undergone a six-week statutory consultation period with statutory bodies (Regulation 25) which included adjoining Boroughs, the Highways Agency and the Greater London Authority. This stage was approved by the Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration and lasted for six weeks from 29 September until 13 November 2006. A draft SCI for public consultation was approved by the Executive on 21 November 2006 and the document was subject to public consultation from 15 January until 26 February 2007 (Regulation 26).
- 7.6 The consultation stages have been supported by a number of publicity events and meetings and a focus group. Appendix 3 lists the consultation and publicity activities undertaken on the SCI.

8. Description

- 8.1 The Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement is attached in Appendix 1. The document sets out:
- A description of the Statement of Community Involvement and its purpose, the stages of its preparation and the importance of community involvement in planning matters.
 - The 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 Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.
 - The 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 Submission Draft Statement has taken into account the representations received during the statutory and public consultation stages. In total 201 representations were submitted from 27 individuals and organisations. The representations and responses are attached as Appendix 2. The responses have resulted in some changes to the draft SCI. Generally the representations support the draft SCI and make some suggestions which will improve the document:

- Continue to improve accessibility to documents and officers, building on methods such as the development control forum
- Provide more feedback on responses and decisions in different formats
- Support the consultation bodies proposed, but suggest further groups to be consulted
- Use intermediary bodies to help engage with hard to reach groups
- Need to clearly explain the processes so that groups and individuals understand that their comments make a difference.
- Continue to improve internal processes and methods, ie site notices and the consultee database.

8.3 As part of the public consultation stage a residents' focus group and telephone interviews with businesses, community groups and resident associations were arranged. The key messages from the focus group and telephone interviews were as follows:

- For the community to get involved in planning they must understand the issues. Quality of consultation is more important than quantity.
- Residents appreciate face to face contact but don't necessarily want to be taught about the process. The process should be simpler to understand and to access.
- Availability and presentation of information is generally considered to be good. However, to explain the processes, residents and businesses suggest an easy to digest summary in jargon-free plain English with good illustrations. Suggest a regular planning feature in Haringey People.
- The website is good, but navigation could be easier. Use of email is to be encouraged.
- Community and other representative organisations could help inform and engage the community, especially those with language barriers. Training could be useful.
- Important that young people are engaged through contacts with schools and imaginative publicity.
- Emphasis on giving feedback on consultations and surveys.
- Development control forums are considered valuable and work well.
- Developers should do more to consult on planning proposals

8.4 These messages and comments have been fed into the draft SCI.

9. Next steps

- 9.1 If approved, the draft Statement of Community Involvement, attached as Appendix 1, will be submitted to the Government Office for London in May 2007. The document will then be subject to a further six week public consultation period.
- 9.2 Representations submitted during this stage will be considered by a Government-appointed planning inspector at an independent examination. The inspector will consider whether the SCI is "sound" and will apply nine tests. These tests are listed at Appendix 3 of the draft SCI. The Council will receive a binding report from the inspector and following any amendments recommended by the inspector may adopt the document. It is anticipated that the SCI is adopted in March 2008.
- 9.3 The draft SCI includes proposals to improve consultation. These proposals will be taken forward as an implementation plan. This plan will address:
- Awareness raising activities - including open days, exhibitions, activities with children and young people and sessions on planning with local projects/groups at a neighbourhood level
 - Translation and interpretation - all documents and notification letters to be written clearly in plain English and made available in a variety of languages and formats.
 - Implementation of new software to improve the contact database, on-line consultation and publicity
 - Notification methods on planning applications, including clearer and more visible site notices
 - Pre-application advice and community involvement

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 As part of the recent changes to the planning system, the Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement as part of the Council's Local Development Framework. The draft Statement sets out the Council's vision and standards for involving the community and other stakeholders in the preparation of planning policy documents and for consultation on planning applications. Following public consultation, the draft SCI must be submitted to the Government Office for London and is subject to a further period of public consultation. Representations received during this period will be considered by the planning inspector at an Examination in Public.

11. Equalities Implications

- 11.1 The Statement of Community Involvement identifies how, when, and at what stage local residents, organisations and other stakeholders can get involved in planning matters. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities commitments and priorities, as set out in the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. The community involvement activities and standards identified in the draft Statement have also been based on principle that

different groups and individuals within the community have different needs and requirements for consultation and engagement.

12. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

- Appendix 1: Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement
- Appendix 2: Schedule of Responses to the draft Statement of Community Involvement
- Appendix 3: Pre-submission consultation and publicity activities