

COMMISSIONER KENNY'S MEETING

Venue: Commissioner Kenny's Office, Riverside House. **Date:** Friday, 1st May, 2015
Time: 2.30 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. Whilst the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 do not apply to this meeting it is still proposed to determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with that Act.
2. Proposed Changes to Town Centre Events Programme - Summer 2015. (Pages 1 - 6)
3. Adoption of a Revised Statement of Community Involvement. (Pages 7 - 53)
4. Exclusion of the Press and Public.
The following items are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to the financial or business affairs).
5. Millfold House Disposal. (Pages 54 - 67)
6. Forge Island. (Pages 68 - 141)

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMISSIONER KENNY

1.	Date:	1st May, 2015
2.	Title:	Proposal to Change the Town Centre Events Programme During Summer 2015
3.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services
4.	Advisory Cabinet Member	Councillor Lelliott

Having considered the report I am minded to:-

Agree the proposed changes to the Town Centre Events programme.

Confidential Appendices (if appropriate) – N/A

I do / do not agree to the information contained in any appendix remaining confidential, for the reasons outlined in the report.

Urgent Decisions (if appropriate) – N/A

The decision needs to be considered urgently (that is without the required 5 clear days' notice) for the reasons outlined in the report.

I do / do not agree to the decision being taken urgently and implemented without the required notice having been given.

I have consulted the following Commissioner regarding the urgency of the decision:-

Commissioner Sir Derek Myers

Commissioner Stella Manzie

(only one Commissioner needs to be consulted)

Key Decisions (if appropriate) – N/A

The key decision needs to be considered urgently (that is without the required 28 days' notice) for the reasons outlined in the report.

I do/do not agree to the decision being taken urgently and implemented without the required notice having been given.

I have consulted the following Commissioner regarding the urgency of the key decision:-

Commissioner Sir Derek Myers

Commissioner Stella Manzie

(only one Commissioner needs to be consulted)

Signed Commissioner [Signed copy retained in office]

Dated 1st May, 2015

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS

1.	Meeting:	Commissioner Kenny's Meeting
2.	Date:	1st May 2015
3.	Title:	Proposed Changes to Town Centre Events Programme – Summer 2015
4.	Directorate:	Resources and Transformation

5. Summary

Proposal to change the format of the town centre summer events programme.

6. Recommendations

That approval to replace Rotherham by the Sea with a five week programme of summer holiday activities across the town centre is granted.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Rotherham by the Sea

Traditionally there has been one Council organised event in the town centre during the school summer holidays – Rotherham by the Sea. The event has been running for the last 12 years and consists of transforming All Saints' Square into a beach for the week during the school summer holidays. Daily entertainment is provided by professional entertainers working to various theme days.

It started out as a two-week event but has been a one-week event since 2005, with an exception of 2014 when Members agreed to extend to two weeks for one year only following a 406 signature petition. The additional costs were covered from the Leader's special projects fund.

The event attracts around 2,000 attendees over the week, attracting a core group of visitors each day. The nature of the event puts increasing pressure on both Council staff and the Police to supervise the area.

Businesses in the immediate vicinity of the Square report additional trading during the week. However, businesses in other parts of the town have said that it has zero effect on their trading.

7.2 Vintage Hop

Following the wish expressed by members of Rotherham Voice to hold a vintage-style event as part of the 2014 Christmas events programme, the Events Team worked with volunteers from local businesses to develop the concept. Over 2,000 people attended the event on Saturday, 29th November, 2014. Feedback from both town centre businesses and members of the public was that the Vintage Hop was "amazing". Many customers commented on the positive atmosphere in the town, and people from out of the area expressed a wish for something similar in their own locality. Feedback from businesses was positive, with many reporting a rise in footfall and sales.

This event was deemed as the most successful event of the year in terms of attracting new customers and spending in the town. It has been agreed through Rotherham Voice to repeat the event in 2015 on an even larger scale, but to bring it forward into the summer (proposed 11th July, 2015) to reduce the risk of adverse weather and to enable further attractions, e.g. tea dance, jive lessons, etc., to be part of the event.

7.3 Proposal

The Rotherham by the Sea event has run successfully for many years but, given the success of other styles of events which have been tried in the town, it is an opportune time to review the summer events schedule. It is proposed to replace this event with a different activity for one day each week during the school summer holidays. This would be over a period of five weeks, avoiding the August Bank Holiday week when many potential visitors are on holiday. A wide variety of activities could include (subject to availability) such as circus skills workshops; street theatre shows; laser quest; space hopper Grand National and opportunities to view/hold birds of prey, culminating in an interactive "school disco" party during the last week, including action dance songs and music that have proved popular during Rotherham by the Sea. In addition Young People's Services and various community associations could be involved to provide additionality to the events.

8. Finance

The current budget for town centre events is £32,024. Rent and rates for a storage unit for event equipment and relevant PRS/PPL licences (£5,000) reduces the available spend on events to £27,024. This budget has traditionally been split between the following core events:

Easter Event	£1,500
Armed Forces Day	£1,000
Rotherham by the Sea	£7,400
2 Minute Silence	£100
Christmas Marketing Campaign	£3,000
Christmas Lights Switch On Event	£4,000
3 x December Christmas Events	£10,000

Moving the Vintage Hop event and its funding to the summer will effectively reduce the available Christmas events budget. Town centre businesses place a great deal of importance on the December trading period and events help to increase footfall across the town. Any reduction in the Christmas events programme could have a detrimental effect on potential trading figures.

There is relatively little support from the businesses for Rotherham by the Sea, the staging cost of which for one week is £7,400.

It is, therefore, recommended that Rotherham by the Sea is removed from this year's events programme and the funding is re-allocated as follows:

£4,000 for a Christmas event
£3,400 for a summer holiday programme of activities as outlined in 7.3.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

A decision to end Rotherham by the Sea in its current form will impact on past visitors. However, the proposed remodelling of this kind of event and extension of other successful events in the town centre will ensure a vibrant and varied events schedule.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The events programme contributes to Priority 1 of the Corporate Plan. The events and entertainment programme is a key driver of regenerating a town and helps to showcase the town and its wider offer to visitors.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with Members with 16 responses being received, in the main supporting the proposal.

The views of the original petition organiser for Rotherham by the Sea have also been sought and she did say that if the proposal goes ahead some people will be disappointed. However, she did acknowledge that there would be no harm in trying something different which would appeal to many different age groups rather than just younger children.

Town centre businesses were consulted regarding the benefits or otherwise of Rotherham by the Sea at the Rotherham Voice meeting on 4th February, 2015, and it was agreed that a survey would be circulated to the retailers to ascertain any benefits and to inform a decision

about the potential relocation of the budget to other events. The closing date for the survey was 3rd April, 2015. Only 11 responses out of 450 were received. All respondees said that the event did not increase footfall and only one respondee said the event increased their sales. 5 businesses said that Rotherham by the Sea had the least benefit to their business.

Should the revised summer holiday events programme be approved, it is proposed that we evaluate the success or otherwise of this at the end of the summer and, if deemed unsuccessful, we could consider the reinstatement of Rotherham by the Sea for 2016 subject to available funding.

Contact Name: *Marie Hayes, Events Manager, Ext. 55501 or e-mail
marie.hayes@rotherham.gov.uk*

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMISSIONER KENNY

1.	Date:	1st May, 2015
2.	Title:	Adoption of a Revised Statement of Community Involvement
3.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services
4.	Advisory Cabinet Member	Councillor Lelliott

Having considered the report I am minded to:-

Agree the proposal.

Confidential Appendices (if appropriate) – N/A

I do / do not agree to the information contained in any appendix remaining confidential, for the reasons outlined in the report.

Urgent Decisions (if appropriate) – N/A

The decision needs to be considered urgently (that is without the required 5 clear days' notice) for the reasons outlined in the report.

I do / do not agree to the decision being taken urgently and implemented without the required notice having been given.

I have consulted the following Commissioner regarding the urgency of the decision:-

Commissioner Sir Derek Myers

Commissioner Stella Manzie

(only one Commissioner needs to be consulted)

Key Decisions (if appropriate) – N/A

The key decision needs to be considered urgently (that is without the required 28 days' notice) for the reasons outlined in the report.

I do/do not agree to the decision being taken urgently and implemented without the required notice having been given.

I have consulted the following Commissioner regarding the urgency of the key decision:-

Commissioner Sir Derek Myers

Commissioner Stella Manzie

(only one Commissioner needs to be consulted)

Signed Commissioner [Signed copy retained in office]

Dated 1st May, 2015.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO COMMISSIONER KENNY

1.	Meeting:	Commissioner Kenny’s Meeting
2.	Date:	1 May 2015
3.	Title:	Adoption of a Revised Statement of Community Involvement
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

5.1 The Council’s Statement of Community Involvement sets out how we consult on the Local Plan and planning applications. The report outlines the outcome of consultation on a draft revised Statement of Community Involvement. Approval is sought for withdrawal of the current Statement of Community Involvement and adoption by the Council of the revised document.

6. Recommendations

- 1. That the current Statement of Community Involvement be withdrawn.**
- 2. That the Council adopt the revised Statement of Community Involvement.**

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires the Council to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out how and when stakeholders can influence new planning policy documents covering Rotherham, how information will be communicated and the ways in which individuals and organisations can comment on planning applications. It is critical in encouraging engagement in the planning process with the communities and stakeholders of Rotherham and a range of other statutory consultees.
- 7.2 Since the existing SCI was adopted in 2006 the national planning context has changed significantly, particularly with the introduction of the Localism Act (2011), National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 7.3 These have introduced changes that mean a SCI is no longer a development plan document and is not subject to independent examination. The contents of what a SCI should contain are also now much less prescriptive. Nonetheless, for a development plan document to be found sound at examination in public it must be demonstrated that it has been prepared in accordance with the Council's adopted SCI.
- 7.4 The current SCI has been reviewed and refreshed to create a new simplified and user-friendly document that is fit for purpose. The former Cabinet approved consultation on the draft document at its meeting of 24 September 2014 (minute C56, 24/09/14).
- 7.5 The Draft Revised SCI was subject to a six-week consultation period between 13 October and 24 November 2014. Representations were received from nine individuals or organisations.
- 7.6 Further detail of the consultation process including a summary of the representations received and the Council's response is set out in the consultation statement at **Appendix 1**.
- 7.7 The key issues raised in the representations received were:
- Comments around the volume of supporting documents made available for Local Plan consultations
 - Concern about the use of the internet for consultations as many, especially older residents have no internet access and there is no alternative
 - Information should be concise, easily accessible and easily navigable on the Council's website
 - Concerns around the number and location of public consultation events

- 7.8 A number of comments were received objecting to the development of particular sites. However, the revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process – it does not set planning policy or allocate sites for development.
- 7.9 In response to the representations received a number of changes to the document have been made. These are set out in Table 1 of the Consultation Statement (Appendix 1). In summary the changes:
- Explain how people can be added to our consultation database to ensure they are notified of future consultations
 - Clarify that where consultation documents are placed in libraries or other locations, that relevant staff are fully briefed regarding the consultation purpose and material
 - Clarify that we must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible. We will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable
 - Clarify that charges for copies of documents will be limited to the costs of reproduction and postage
 - Emphasise that the Council provides free internet access in all libraries
- 7.10 The text of the revised SCI incorporating the above amendments is included at **Appendix 2**. The final version published on our website may include minor formatting and presentational changes.
- 7.11 Following adoption of the revised SCI the Council will be required to carry out future planning consultations in accordance with the document.

8. Finance

- 8.1 The Planning Policy team budget will meet the costs associated with the production and adoption of the revised Statement of Community Involvement.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare and keep up to date a Statement of Community Involvement under The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 9.2 It is important to note that when a development plan document is subject to Examination in Public it is subject to a legal “test of soundness”. The Council must demonstrate the development plan document has been consulted on in accordance with the Council’s SCI. It is also equally important that consultation

on planning applications is carried out in accordance with the SCI so that decisions are not subject to legal challenge.

- 9.3 There are significant tensions in ensuring extensive community participation while meeting the Government's desire for timely determination of planning applications and quicker Local Plan preparation. The revised SCI seeks to balance those aims.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 The Local Plan will work alongside the Community Strategy to deliver local priorities for development and shares a common goal for effective and worthwhile community involvement.

10.2 The pre-application procedures promoted by the SCI will contribute to improving the quality and appropriateness of applications submitted. This will help minimise refusals and reduce the percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1 Revised Statement of Community Involvement: Consultation Statement

Appendix 2 Revised Statement of Community Involvement

Consultation responses are available to view on our consultation website:

http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/sci/draft_sci_2014/draft_sci_2014?tab=list

The Council's Development Management team have been consulted and have helped to draft the section of the revised SCI dealing with the development management process.

The Council's Community Engagement team have been consulted to ensure alignment with corporate aims. The draft revised SCI has also been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

Contact names:

Andy Duncan, Planning Policy Manager
01709 823830, andy.duncan@rotherham.gov.uk

Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planning Officer
01709 823888, ryan.shepherd@rotherham.gov.uk

Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2014

Consultation and Adoption Statement

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Background

1. Since the existing Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted in 2006 the national planning context has changed significantly, particularly with the introduction of the Localism Act (2011), National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
2. These have introduced changes that mean a SCI is no longer a development plan document (DPD) and is not subject to independent examination. The contents of what a SCI should contain are also now much less prescriptive. Nonetheless, for a DPD to be found sound at examination in public it must be demonstrated that it has been prepared in accordance with the Council's adopted SCI.
3. Furthermore, following the experience of over seven years of using the current SCI a number of drawbacks have been identified with the existing document being particularly lengthy (at around 80 pages) and overly detailed in parts.
4. In response to the above issues the SCI has been reviewed and refreshed to create a new simplified and user-friendly SCI that is fit for purpose. The revised SCI is now presented in three sections which explore the:
 - approach to community involvement
 - influencing the Local Plan
 - getting involved in planning applications

Consultation on Draft SCI

5. The purpose of this section is to provide details about the consultation which has taken place on the draft SCI.
6. Cabinet approved consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement at its meeting of 24 September 2014 (minute C56, 24/09/14).

Consultation Period

7. The revised document was published for consultation over a 6 week period, running from 13 October to 24 November 2014. The consultation was timed to tie in with consultation on the Final Draft of the Council's Sites and Policies document which took place over the same time period.

Document Availability

8. The document was made available on the Council's website (see appendix A) and also on the Local Plan consultation website:
<http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal>
9. Consultees were encouraged to view and respond to the document online, which has the following benefits:
 - ✓ Save time - view and download documents/comments online anytime, anywhere
 - ✓ Environmental - electronic systems save paper

- ✓ Keep track of how your comments are processed
- ✓ View and Search comments made by other consultees once they have been processed

10. The Council provides free internet access at all libraries. The Council has also provided a brief guide to registering with and using the Council's consultation website to submit comments.
11. Where consultees did not wish to respond through the consultation website a response form was made available which could be completed and returned via email or post.

Publicity

12. Notification of the consultation was targeted to individuals and organisations who have previously expressed an interest in being involved with the preparation of the Local Plan. Letters and emails were circulated in conjunction with the consultation on the Sites and Policies document which ran in tandem.
13. Notification was sent to 16,096 general and specific consultees, stakeholders including all town and parish Councils and the general public (see Appendix B – consultation letter).
14. Copies of the consultation document and response forms were made available in all libraries within the borough and copies were also available during the public drop in sessions for the Sites and Policies document:
 - 3 Nov 2014, Rawmarsh High Street Centre, Rawmarsh
 - 6 Nov 2014, Dinnington Resource Centre, Laughton Road, Dinnington
 - 13 Nov 2014, Wickersley Community Centre, Bawtry Road
 - 14 Nov 2014, MyPlace, St Ann's Road, Rotherham

Responses

15. In response to the consultation the Council received representations from 9 individuals, organisations or agents on behalf of others:
 - The Coal Authority
 - Highways Agency
 - Natural England
 - Environment Agency
 - Todwick Action Group (Mr Michael Crowther)
 - Mrs Wendy Blackett
 - Mrs Helen Greer-Waring
 - Ms Sandra Morrell
 - Phil Thornewell
16. A summary of the responses received and the Council's response is provided at table 1.

17. The key issues raised were:
- The large amount and technical nature of supporting information made available during consultations
 - The need to provide concise and easily accessible and navigable information
 - The limited ability of some parts of the community to access information online
 - The amount and location of consultation events
 - Concerns around inclusivity
 - How and when the availability of information is communicated to people
 - The availability of documents in libraries
 - Lack of information on how and where to return consultation comments
 - Requiring payment for paper copies of documents
 - Natural England are supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general community by the public, community and other organisations and statutory bodies
18. In light of the comments received the document has been amended as set out in table 1. The following key changes have been made:
- Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 1.6: “If you would like to be added to our database then you can register online through our consultation website at <http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal> or contact the Planning Policy team using the details below.”
 - Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 2.11: “These will be limited to covering reproduction and postage costs.”
 - Add new paragraph after 2.11: “Where consultation material is placed with libraries or in other locations we will ensure that those responsible for holding the information are fully briefed regarding the purpose of consultation and the material provided. However any queries regarding the content should be directed to the Planning Policy team.”
 - Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 2.12: “We help our communities get to information online by providing free internet access at all of our libraries”
 - Insert new paragraph after 2.13: “We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.”

Adoption

19. Following the consultation process a final version of the SCI has been produced, incorporating the changes set out in table 1.
20. The SCI was adopted by the Council at its meeting of xx (minute xx, xxx). Future planning consultations will be carried out in accordance with this document.
21. The final adopted SCI is available on our website at:
www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan

Table 1: Summary of representations received and Council response

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
Q1: Do you have any comments on Section 1 of the Draft SCI?			
Mrs Wendy Blackett	Conserve the natural environment is not Council policy; you do not listen to the residents whatsoever. To build more houses at Throapham is disgusting.	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	No change required.
The Coal Authority	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
The Environment Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
Ms Sandra morrell	Object to the building of homes on the greenbelt land between Todwick and Kiveton Park.	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	No change required
Phil Thornewell	<p>Section 1 reads well, however, using the current Final Draft Sites and Policies consultation exercise as an example, it bears absolutely no resemblance to reality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the process simple - Having thousands of pages of supporting information does little to suggest simplicity is a consideration. • Make it easy for you to get 	The Planning process requires the use of evidence base documents to support decision making and the nature of these is often technical in detail. Furthermore there are documents which the Council is required to produce to comply with relevant legislation such as the Sustainability Appraisal. The Council must balance the need to provide easily	<p>Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 1.6 “If you would like to be added to our database then you can register online through our consultation website at http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal or contact the Planning Policy team using the details below.”</p> <p>Add new paragraph after 2.11: “Where consultation material is placed</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>involved - the sheer volume of 'stuff' makes it very difficult to participate in this process. Having everything available online can be really helpful for those with access to the internet, but many, especially older residents have no access and there is no alternative. Online access is only good where the information is well laid out and easy to navigate. The 4 public consultation events across the borough are all in locations where there is no public transport link from Todwick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inclusive - As above - no evidence of any attempt to be inclusive (of anyone). • Share information with you - Putting stuff on a website simply isn't an effective way of communicating. People need to know it's there and why they should look at it. Sometimes the low-tech 	<p>understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.4 indicates that we will share information using the Council's website, in our libraries and at the Council's principal office whenever this is appropriate and effective. We ensure that libraries and other locations where information is available are briefed regarding the consultation material. It is acknowledged that this could be made clearer in the SCI.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that to encourage the use of information through our website that it should be, wherever possible, concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.</p> <p>The number of and location for public drop in sessions will vary depending upon the type and</p>	<p>with libraries or in other locations we will ensure that those responsible for holding the information are fully briefed regarding the purpose of consultation and the material provided. However any queries regarding the content should be directed to the Planning Policy team."</p> <p>Insert new paragraph after 2.13: "We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable."</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>option can be effective. Why not also make use of the village noticeboard?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make copies of Local Plan documents available - Documents should be available in borough libraries (none of which are on a public transport route from Todwick). Librarians should be made aware of the correct documents for consultation. • Make sure your involvement is effective - My involvement would have been more effective if I had been alerted at the start of the 6 week consultation window, rather than half way through it, and if I had been able to find the relevant information. • Strive to meet our timetable - a cynic might think that this is the only one you really aim to achieve, and that failing to meet all of the others reduces the amount of substantive 	<p>nature of the consultation and also the resources available to the Council; wherever possible we will endeavour to provide these in locations which are accessible to the widest range of people. However we must be realistic and acknowledge that not every Rotherham resident may be able to attend these events.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.6 explains that we maintain a consultation database. It is acknowledged that this could be worded more positively to encourage those interested in the preparation of new planning documents to register their details.</p>	

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>comments you have to deal with.</p>		
<p>Todwick Action Group (Mr Michael Crowther)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the process simple - This process is far from simple. • It's very bureaucratic, with very large and wordy documents, little summarisation, vague, ambiguous and contradictory information. • The sheer volume of information makes it very difficult to participate in this process. Having everything available online can be really helpful for those with access to the internet, but many, especially older residents have no access and there is no alternative. Only providing online access also removes the need for those producing proposals to be concise as they don't have to take account of printing costs - or therefore audience needs. 	<p>The Planning process requires the use of evidence base documents to support decision making and the nature of these is often technical in detail. Furthermore there are documents which the Council is required to produce to comply with relevant legislation such as the Sustainability Appraisal. The Council must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.4 indicates that we will share information using the Council's website, in our libraries and at the Council's principal office whenever this is appropriate and effective. We ensure that libraries and other locations where information is available are briefed regarding the consultation</p>	<p>Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 1.6 "If you would like to be added to our database then you can register online through our consultation website at http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal or contact the Planning Policy team using the details below."</p> <p>Add new paragraph after 2.11: "Where consultation material is placed with libraries or in other locations we will ensure that those responsible for holding the information are fully briefed regarding the purpose of consultation and the material provided. However any queries regarding the content should be directed to the Planning Policy team."</p> <p>Insert new paragraph after 2.13: "We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>Online access is only good where the information is well laid out and easy to navigate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 4 public consultation events across the borough are all in locations where there is no public transport link from Todwick. • Be inclusive - As above - no evidence of any attempt to be inclusive. • Share information with you - just using a website simply isn't an effective way of communicating. People need to know it's there and why they should look at it. Telling me there are changes which affect my village clearly is - so why didn't you? When I phoned and asked RMBC, I was told only those within 50mts were told about the 107 proposed houses - that's about 7 - 100 less than will be built! • Make copies of Local Plan 	<p>material. It is acknowledged that this could be made clearer in the SCI.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that to encourage the use of information through our website that it should be, wherever possible, concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.</p> <p>The number of and location for public drop in sessions will vary depending upon the type and nature of the consultation and also the resources available to the Council; wherever possible we will endeavour to provide these in locations which are accessible to the widest range of people. However we must be realistic and acknowledge that not every Rotherham resident may be able to attend these events.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.6 explains that we maintain a consultation database. It is acknowledged that this could</p>	<p>documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.”</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>documents available - My involvement would have been more effective if I had been alerted at the start of the 6 week consultation window, rather than half way through it, and if I had been able to find the relevant information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive to meet our timetable - The less you tell people what is happening and how to access the correct info, the more easily this aim is to achieve. The failing to meet all of the others reduces the amount of substantive comments you have to deal with. 	<p>be worded more positively to encourage those interested in the preparation of new planning documents to register their details.</p>	
Mrs Helen Greer-Waring	<p>In an area where there are a lot of elderly people who don't use the internet the process has been more difficult. There was no information about how/where to send written comments.</p> <p>Holding so few drop-in sessions has</p>	<p>The consultation website allows comments to be submitted online. However a response form is normally also provided for those wishing to submit comments in writing or by email. The consultation website provides email and postal address details.</p>	<p>Insert new paragraph after 2.13: "We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>impacted on communications and feedback by limiting the opportunities particularly for those people who do not have internet access.</p> <p>Many people in Todwick who don't have access to a car were unable to attend the drop in session because of the withdrawal of the 27 bus service between Dinnington and Todwick which means getting to Dinnington is now much more difficult.</p> <p>The information has not been presented in a clear and easy to read and understand format. It's taken many, many hours of reading, re-reading, searching and then re-reading to try and match up information in respect of particular sites.</p>	<p>The Planning process requires the use of evidence base documents to support decision making and the nature of these is often technical in detail. Furthermore there are documents which the Council is required to produce to comply with relevant legislation such as the Sustainability Appraisal. The Council must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible. It is acknowledged that to encourage the use of information through our website that it should be, wherever possible, concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.</p> <p>The number of and location for public drop in sessions will vary depending upon the type and nature of the consultation and also the resources available to the</p>	<p>information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.”</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
		Council; wherever possible we will endeavour to provide these in locations which are accessible to the widest range of people. However we must be realistic and acknowledge that not every Rotherham resident may be able to attend these events.	
Q2: Do you have any comments on Section 2 of the Draft SCI?			
The Coal Authority	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
The Environment Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
Ms Sandra morrell	Object to the building of homes on the greenbelt land between Todwick and Kiveton Park.	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	No change required
Phil Thornewell	Using only (or almost only) online communications must carry responsibility on the part of the authority to provide concise and easily accessible and navigable information. It's too easy to just give access to documents which you wouldn't dream of inflicting on the public in paper form. 2000+ pages is not a consultation! Forcing those	It is acknowledged that to encourage the use of information through our website that it should be, wherever possible, concise, easily accessible and easily navigable. The Planning process requires the use of evidence base documents to support decision making and	Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 2.11: "These will be limited to covering reproduction and postage costs." Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 2.12: "We help our communities get to information online by providing free internet access at all of our libraries"

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>who cannot access electronic versions to pay for paper copies is likely to disenfranchise particular groups. Public drop in sessions are useful - but if Todwick doesn't warrant one even within local transport range now, maybe there should be a note specifically excluding smaller settlements?</p>	<p>the nature of these is often technical in detail. Furthermore there are documents which the Council is required to produce to comply with relevant legislation such as the Sustainability Appraisal (also known as an Integrated Impact Assessment). The Council must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible.</p> <p>The Council offers free internet access at all of its libraries. This provides opportunities for those without, or with limited access to the internet elsewhere to view planning information online.</p> <p>Where we make a charge for printed copies of documents this will be limited to covering reproduction and postage costs.</p> <p>The number of and location for</p>	<p>Insert new paragraph after 2.13: “We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.”</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
		<p>public drop in sessions will vary depending upon the type and nature of the consultation and also the resources available to the Council; wherever possible we will endeavour to provide these in locations which are accessible to the widest range of people. However we must be realistic and acknowledge that not every Rotherham resident may be able to attend these events.</p>	
<p>Todwick Action Group (Mr Michael Crowther)</p>	<p>Using mainly online communications must carry responsibility on the part of the authority to provide concise and easily accessible and navigable information. It's too easy to just give on-line access to documents which you wouldn't dream of giving to the public in paper form. There are hundreds and hundreds of pages , how do you expect anyone to feel 'consulted'? Asking people to pay for paper copies is likely to put off particular groups/people. Public drop in sessions are useful - but Todwick</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that to encourage the use of information through our website that it should be, wherever possible, concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.</p> <p>The Planning process requires the use of evidence base documents to support decision making and the nature of these is often technical in detail. Furthermore there are documents which the Council is required to produce to comply with relevant legislation</p>	<p>Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 2.11: “These will be limited to covering reproduction and postage costs.”</p> <p>Insert new sentence at the end of paragraph 2.12: “We help our communities get to information online by providing free internet access at all of our libraries”</p> <p>Insert new paragraph after 2.13: “We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	<p>doesn't have buses to the nearest one at Dinnington, so how can everyone have access to them - or the local libraries which need a car to get to them?</p>	<p>such as the Sustainability Appraisal (also known as an Integrated Impact Assessment). The Council must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible.</p> <p>The Council offers free internet access at all of its libraries. This provides opportunities for those without, or with limited access to the internet elsewhere to view planning information online.</p> <p>Where we make a charge for printed copies of documents this will be limited to covering reproduction and postage costs.</p> <p>The number of and location for public drop in sessions will vary depending upon the type and nature of the consultation and also the resources available to the Council; wherever possible we will</p>	<p>process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable."</p>

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
		endeavour to provide these in locations which are accessible to the widest range of people. However we must be realistic and acknowledge that not every Rotherham resident may be able to attend these events.	
Mrs Helen Greer-Waring	<p>I'd like to be able to see the CIL and comment as part of this consultation process but the information is not available until tomorrow when this particular part of the consultation process closes. It would have been helpful to have had all the information available at the same time.</p> <p>I'm interested in the neighbourhood plan concept but I've not had a chance to read all about it yet so can't comment further at this stage.</p>	Where possible we will run consultations together; however this is not always achievable.	No change required
Q3: Do you have any comments on Appendix A: Consultees of the Draft SCI?			
The Coal Authority	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
The Environment Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
Ms Sandra morrell	Object to the building of homes on the greenbelt land between Todwick	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the	No change required

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	and Kiveton Park.	planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	
Q4: Do you have any comments on Section 3 of the Draft SCI?			
The Coal Authority	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
The Environment Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
Ms Sandra morrell	Object to the building of homes on the greenbelt land between Todwick and Kiveton Park.	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	No change required
Q5: Do you have any comments on Appendix B Material Planning Considerations of the Draft SCI?			
The Coal Authority	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
The Environment Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
Ms Sandra morrell	Object to the building of homes on the greenbelt land between Todwick and Kiveton Park.	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	No change required
Q6: Do you have any other comments on the Draft SCI?			
Natural England	Unable to comment on individual Statements of Community Involvement, however supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general	Your comments are noted. It is considered that the revised SCI allows for meaningful engagement at appropriate times in the planning process.	No change required.

Name / organisation	Summary of Representation	Council Response	Document Changes
	community by the public, community and other organisations and statutory bodies in local planning matters, both in terms of shaping policy and participating in the process of determining planning applications.		
The Highways Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required.
The Coal Authority	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
The Environment Agency	No comments to make	Noted	No change required
Ms Sandra Morrell	Object to the building of homes on the greenbelt land between Todwick and Kiveton Park.	The revised SCI sets out how people will be engaged in the planning process; it does not set planning policy, or allocate sites for development.	No change required
Todwick Action Group (Mr Michael Crowther)	My thanks to Phil Thornewell for his research and comments. I am in complete agreement with them.	Noted	No change required

Appendix A: Council website page

The screenshot shows the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council website. At the top right, there is an 'Accessibility' link. The header features the council's logo on the left and a navigation bar with 'Your account', 'News and alerts', and 'Events' on the right. A search bar is also present in the navigation bar. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail reads: 'Home > Environment and planning > Planning and regeneration > A guide to how you can influence planning decisions'. The main heading is 'A guide to how you can influence planning decisions'. The text explains that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how and when you can influence new planning documents covering Rotherham and the ways in which you can comment on planning applications, as well as other forms of consent such as listed building consent or telecommunications applications, such as mobile phone masts. It notes that the SCI has been reviewed and refreshed to create a new simplified and user-friendly version that is fit for purpose. The draft revised document is now presented in three sections which explore the:

- Approach to community involvement
- Influencing the Local Plan
- Getting involved in planning applications




You can view and comment on this document for the next six weeks. Comments must be received by 5pm on 24 November 2014.

A purple button with a white icon of a document and a checkmark contains the text: 'View and comment on the draft Statement of Community Involvement'.

Below the button is the question: 'Was this information helpful?'.

The footer contains the following information:

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Connect:   

[Terms and disclaimer](#) [Accessibility statement](#) [Website statistics](#) [Site map](#) [Contact us](#) [Location](#)

Appendix B: Consultation Letter

«Full_Name»
«Company__Organisation»
«Address_Line_1»
«Address_Line_2»
«Address_Line_3»
«Post_Town»
«County»
«Post_Code»

October 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

Rotherham Local Plan: new homes and jobs in your community

- Would you like to know where new homes are planned in your area?
- Are you interested in where new jobs will be created?

Then you need to read this letter. The Council is drawing up a new Local Plan for the whole of Rotherham borough. We need your views to help us improve the draft plan.

To find out more visit our website at www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan or come along to a public drop-in session near you.

What is it?

Since 2009 we have consulted on potential sites for new homes, shopping, employment and other new development in Rotherham. These are shown in a **Sites & Policies document**. We now have a final draft plan that we think shows the most suitable sites to take forward. These sites are needed to meet the targets for new homes and jobs shown in the Local Plan Core Strategy.

We have also drawn up policies to guide decision making on individual planning applications and a Policies Map that shows how land in the borough can be used in the future.

Where can I see it?

The consultation runs from **Monday 13 October** to **Monday 24 November 2014**.

The majority of the sites were subject to consultation in summer 2013 and, as a result of comments and more technical work, we have made some changes. Some sites have been removed from the draft plan; some new sites have been added. This is a new version of the plan; you should look at this draft and make any comments you have. Previous comments on earlier drafts are not automatically “rolled forward”.

We are holding **public drop-in sessions** in the borough to show the detail of our proposals and to answer any questions about individual sites. You can find us at:

Date	Time	Venue
3 Nov 2014	14:00 – 19:00	Rawmarsh High Street Centre, Rawmarsh
6 Nov 2014	14:00 – 19:00	Dinnington Resource Centre, Laughton Road, Dinnington
13 Nov 2014	14:00 – 19:00	Wickersley Community Centre, Bawtry Road
14 Nov 2014	14:00 – 19:00	MyPlace, St Ann's Road, Rotherham

You can also see the draft plan at all libraries in the borough during normal opening times.

What else do I need to know?

The Council adopted the Local Plan **Core Strategy** on 10 Sept 2014. It now forms part of the statutory development plan for Rotherham. More detail is available on our website.

We are also consulting on a revised **Statement of Community Involvement**. This explains how we will consult you on the Local Plan and individual planning applications.

We want your views

You can view and comment on the **Sites & Policies document** and the revised **Statement of Community Involvement** using our consultation website at <http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

Comments must be made by **5pm Monday 24 November 2014**.

For further information or help please contact us:

Phone:	01709 823869	Rotherham MBC Planning Policy Planning, Regeneration and Cultural Services Riverside House Main Street ROTHERHAM S60 1AE
Fax:	01709 372419	
Email:	planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk	
Web:	www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan	

If you do not wish to be contacted again, let us know quoting reference:

«**Person_ID**»

Yours faithfully

Councillor Maggie Godfrey

Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods

Statement of Community Involvement

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Statement of Community Involvement

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how and when you can influence new planning documents covering Rotherham and the ways in which you can comment on planning applications, as well as other forms of consent such as listed building consent or telecommunications applications.

1.2. Engagement is key to providing cost-effective services which meet the needs of our communities. It plays a critical role in shaping the places where people live, work and visit. By encouraging engagement, people and communities can be given the information, power and responsibility they need to respond to the challenges and opportunities they and their communities face.

Our approach to community involvement

1.3 Section 1, this section, describes our overall approach to community engagement and involvement in the planning process. There are two further sections on the following topics:

Section 2 - influencing the Local Plan

Section 3 - getting involved in planning decisions

1.4 When we involve you in preparing and revising the Local Plan or consult you on planning applications or other forms of consent we will:

- **Keep the process simple** by writing in plain English and explaining any planning terms that we need to use.
- **Make it easy for you to get involved** by setting out when and where you can provide your comments. We will always try and plan public events so they are accessible to all people and groups and use existing community involvement networks.
- **Be inclusive** by providing information in an accessible format and giving clear advice on how the planning system works, and encourage involvement from those groups that are not usually involved in the planning process.
- **Share information with you** using the Council's website, in our libraries and at the Council's principal office whenever this is appropriate and effective.
- **Make copies of Local Plan documents available** to view at key locations throughout the borough.

- **Make sure your involvement is effective** - all comments received by the authority will be recorded, read carefully and taken into account when they are relevant planning considerations.
- **Strive to meet our timetable** for the preparation and review of the Local Plan and also meet Government targets for deciding on planning applications.

Who will we involve?

1.5 We want everyone to have the chance to have their say on the Local Plan, and on planning applications, wherever it is relevant.

1.6 We maintain a consultation database of individuals, groups and stakeholders who we regularly contact on planning policy matters (that are of interest to them). We will continue to involve individuals, groups and organisations in the preparation of our new planning documents so that everyone has the chance to shape the future of the district. If you would like to be added to our database then you can register online through our consultation website at <http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal> or contact the Planning Policy team using the details below.

1.7 Government regulations require us to ensure that certain groups are consulted at key stages in the preparation and review of the Local Plan, for example the Coal Authority, Environment Agency, English Heritage, Natural England, the Highways Agency and the Homes and Communities Agency. These regulations change from time to time and this list may be amended.

1.8 We are committed to doing everything reasonably possible to make our community involvement inclusive. This means that we aim to give everyone in Rotherham an opportunity to be involved in the decisions that we take. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy explains our approach to inclusion and the Community Engagement Framework seeks to ensure that community engagement underpins and is built into everything that the Council does. Allied to this, the Customer Charter & Customer Access Strategy both give clear and simple advice on what you should expect from us.

1.9 We can make documents available in alternative formats on request. This can include large print, Braille and alternative languages. For assistance with this, please contact p2ptlteam@rotherham.gov.uk

How will we involve you?

1.10 We will keep you informed through a variety of methods including our website www.rotherham.gov.uk, emails, and letters when appropriate. We may also post notices in local newspapers.

1.11 The ways in which you can have your say on the planning process will vary depending on the issue, and different techniques may be used at different stages in the production of a planning document or assessment of a planning application.

The role of planning officers

1.12 The Council's planning officers work in two teams within the Planning Service, which is based at Riverside House:

- The **Planning Policy Team** produces the planning documents that make up the Local Plan and can be contacted for advice on planning policy. They organise and lead the consultations on draft planning documents and consider relevant consultation responses, making changes to draft documents where appropriate.

Web: www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan

Tel: 01709 823869

Email: planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk

- The **Development Management Team** assesses planning applications in accordance with the policies of the adopted Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and any other material considerations including consultation responses and other comments. They can be contacted for pre-application advice for all major developments and other advice on planning applications.

Web: www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning

Tel: 01709 823865

Email: development.management@rotherham.gov.uk

The planning officers from both teams work closely together in preparing planning policies, in the assessment of planning applications and in providing specialist professional planning advice on key development projects with land-use implications.

The role of councillors

1.13 Locally elected councillors have a key role in the planning process in the following ways:

- The Council meeting is responsible for approving and adopting key statutory planning policy documents such as the Local Plan.
- The Council's Planning Board is made up of councillors who make decisions on the more major or controversial planning applications.
- Councillors represent their respective wards and listen to residents' concerns on planning issues (at ward surgeries or public meetings and consultations).

- Councillors can voice their support or make objections to planning applications in writing and speak at Planning Board on behalf of their constituents.

1.14 The role of locally elected councillors in representing the views and concerns of residents in the planning process is very important. However, your views can only be formally taken into account when you make them in writing to the Planning Policy Team within the specified time period for a particular consultation. There are existing rules for the way that councillors and council officers conduct their activities, which ensure that any potential conflicts of interest are resolved in a transparent way.

Planning Aid England

1.15 Planning Aid England is a voluntary organisation linked to the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). Through its network of volunteers, who are chartered town planners, it can provide independent and impartial advice and support for Neighbourhood Planning and other planning matters. Please contact Planning Aid England for further information at www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid to understand what support is available.

Section 2: Influencing the Local Plan

A new planning system

2.1 The Government wants to give local people a greater role in shaping their neighbourhoods, and the changes to the planning system set out in the Localism Act 2011 and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) give communities the opportunity to get more involved in the preparation of planning documents for their areas.

2.2 The Localism Act also introduced the 'duty to co-operate'. This is a legal requirement setting out how local planning authorities, national park authorities, county councils and a number of other public organisations must work with one another in a collaborative manner and to consider joint approaches when preparing their local plans.

Rotherham Local Plan

2.3 The Local Plan will be the new development plan for Rotherham. It will set out the spatial policies, guidance, land use designations and site allocations against which all planning applications and other development proposals in the borough will be assessed.

2.4 It will provide the formal statutory framework for sustainable development and lay the foundations for regeneration and economic growth, while protecting our most valuable built and natural environmental assets.

2.5 Our Local Plan will be made up of the following documents:

Core Strategy – this sets out the vision and strategic objectives for Rotherham up to the year 2028. It includes local targets for housing, employment and retail development and sets out broad locations and amounts of development for the borough. It must comply with Government planning policy. This strategic level document provides the context for any Neighbourhood Plans that might be produced.

Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy – provides a detailed planning framework to manage all types of waste in the three boroughs, including commercial and industrial waste, construction, demolition and excavation waste, hazardous waste and agricultural waste. It allocates new sites to manage waste, safeguards existing waste facilities of strategic importance and sets out criteria for assessing waste management proposals.

Sites & Policies document – this allocates land for a variety of uses, including housing and employment. It also sets out detailed policies that will guide decisions on planning applications.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – this is a tariff-based charging schedule. When planning permission is granted for certain types of development (e.g. housing)

the developer will be required to pay a financial contribution. This will be used towards providing and maintaining the strategic and local infrastructure identified by us to support growth. Infrastructure can be road improvements, schools, health facilities etc.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – these are prepared to provide further detailed supporting guidance where necessary. Although they do not have the same weight as development plan documents they can still form a material consideration in determining planning applications. They can be produced more quickly as they are not subject to an independent public examination, and we will ask you what you think of any draft SPDs at an early stage in their preparation.

In preparing and reviewing our Local Plan we will also publish on our website:

- **Local Development Scheme (LDS)** – setting out what planning documents we will produce and the timetable for their production.
- **Annual Monitoring Report** – setting out the progress made in producing our local plan documents and our (and partners’) performance in implementing planning policies and proposals.

Neighbourhood Plans

2.6 Local communities can now prepare plans for their local areas themselves if they wish to do so. Any community initiated neighbourhood plans will form part of the statutory development plan for those areas of the borough, once they have passed through independent examination and a local community referendum.

2.7 The local planning authority does not prepare Neighbourhood Plans, but the Council does have a duty to provide advice and technical assistance to community groups engaged in Neighbourhood Planning, particularly in relation to the initial designation of neighbourhood areas and neighbourhood forums, as well as the examination process and holding referendums.

Further information can be found on the government’s website by searching for neighbourhood planning on www.gov.uk

Preparing the Local Plan

When will we involve you?

2.8 There are a number of key stages involved in preparing documents for the Local Plan. These stages are required by Government planning legislation and regulations and are designed to ensure that the process is as open and transparent as possible.

2.9 The diagrams below illustrate the key stages in the production of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents as well as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The shaded stages also show when you can get involved in

the planning process – getting involved at the earliest stages of preparation will ensure your views have the most opportunity for being taken into account. DPDs and the CIL will be subject to independent examination, chaired by a Planning Inspector, when people will be able to speak if they have made a formal representation at the last stage of public consultation.

Figure 1: Key Stages in Preparing Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

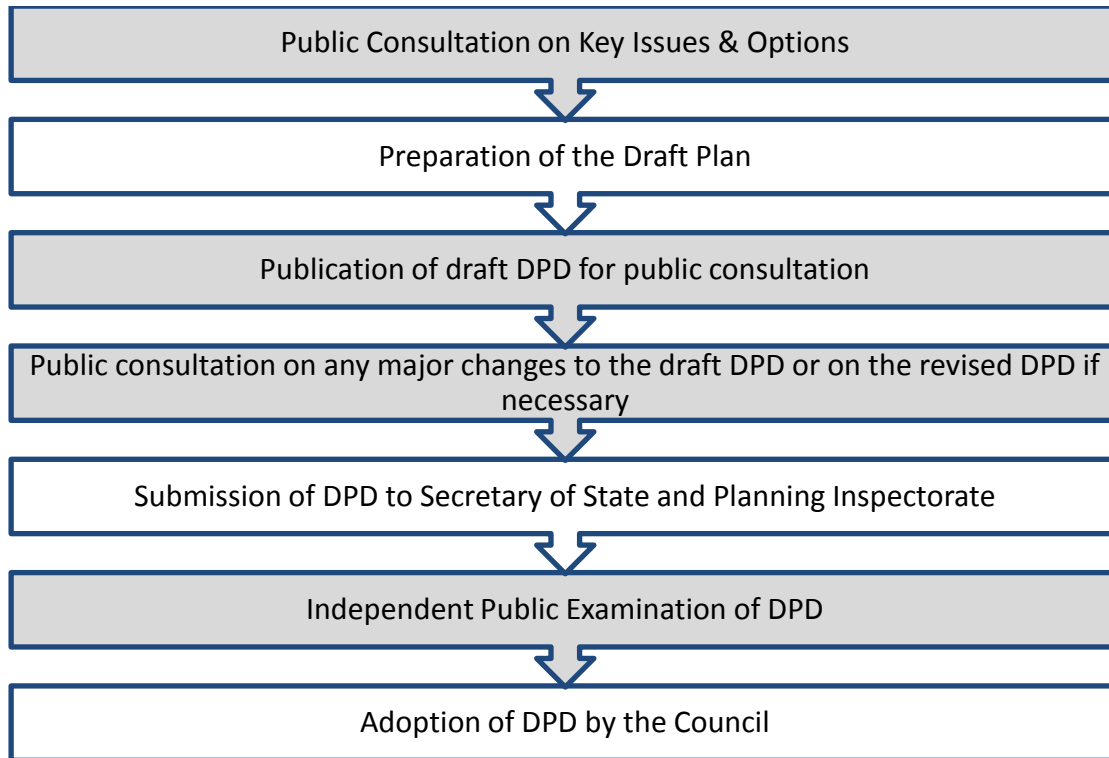


Figure 2: Key stages in preparing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

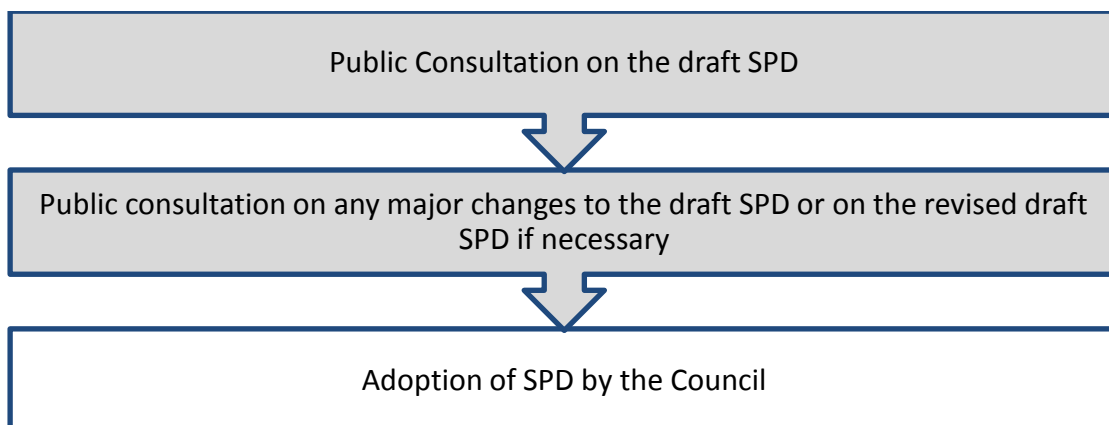
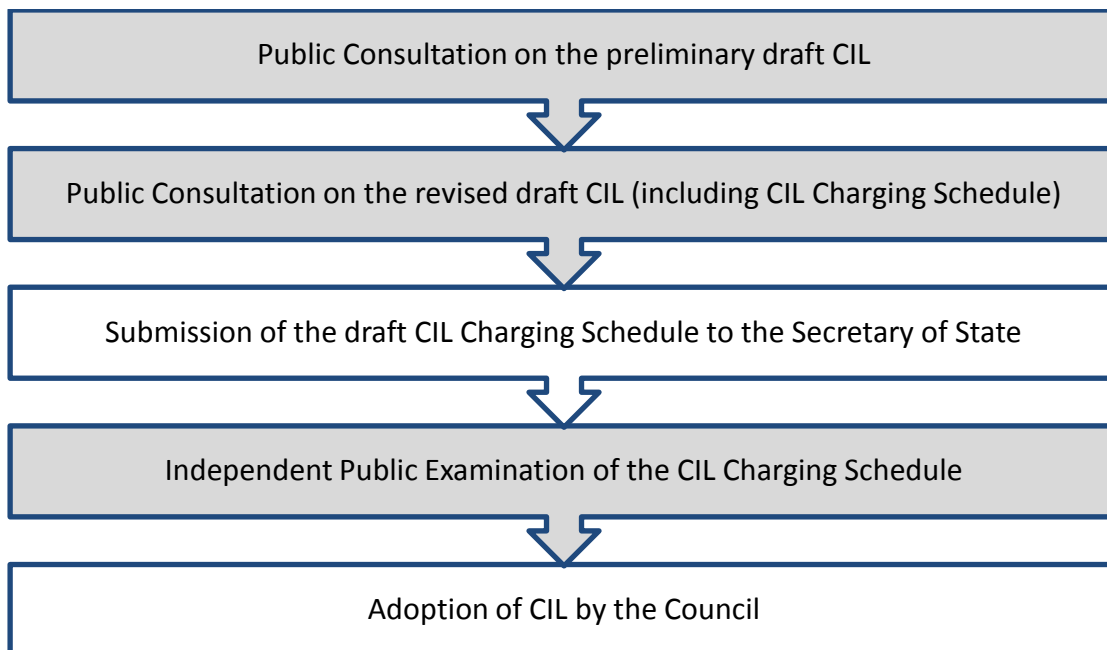


Figure 3: Key Stages in preparing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)



Sustainability Appraisal

2.10 As part of preparing the Local Plan, we assess the social, environmental and economic impacts of each planning document and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents. The key purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to identify and enhance the positive effects of planning policies while minimising any potentially adverse impacts. This process also involves the assessment of any health and equality impacts. Where necessary, we will also carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment on our emerging planning documents.

Publications of documents and fees

2.11 At all stages of preparing and reviewing the Local Plan we will make reference copies of relevant documents available at our principal office at Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham S60 1AE. All of our planning documents will be available to download from our website www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplan. Charges will apply for printed copies and for some background papers but these will be limited to covering reproduction and postage costs.

2.12 Where consultation material is placed with libraries or in other locations we will ensure that those responsible for holding the information are fully briefed regarding the purpose of consultation and the material provided. However any queries regarding the content should always be directed to the Planning Policy Team.

How will we involve you?

2.13 As a modern Council, we strongly encourage electronic communication. This is embodied by the Council's 'Save Time, Do It Online' approach. This has multiple benefits around convenience, cost and the environment (saving paper). It also allows

24 hour access to information. We help our communities get to information online by providing free internet access at all of our libraries.

Website

2.14 The internet is a popular way of communicating planning issues to individuals and groups. A key advantage of the website is that lots of information can be included compared to other formats. We have specific planning policy pages on the Council's website. We will ensure that these pages are regularly updated.

2.15 We must balance the need to provide easily understandable information with the need to ensure a transparent process by allowing all relevant documents to be accessible (which may be technical in nature). Wherever possible we will ensure that the information provided through our website is concise, easily accessible and easily navigable.

2.16 We have an online consultation system so during periods of public consultation people can make comments online <http://rotherham.limehouse.co.uk/portal>. We strongly encourage consultation comments using this system. Commenting online ensures that comments are focussed on the parts of the document you are interested in and requires less interpretation by Council officers. This enables us to make the most efficient use of our resources.

Emails and letters

2.17 For environmental, speed and cost reasons, where you have provided us with an email address we will use this method of communication rather than sending a letter.

Press notices and statutory notices

2.18 Local newspaper notices are less personal but they help to ensure that we communicate as widely as possible and in some cases we may need to use newspaper notices to meet our legal requirements.

Public drop-in sessions

2.19 Depending on the nature of the document, the local areas affected, and the stage of the Local Plan preparation process we may hold public exhibitions. These give people the chance to look at plans and proposals and speak to planning officers in an informal setting. They are effective in engaging people who want to give their views or just gather information.

Using the results of consultation

2.20 All comments we receive will be recorded, read carefully and relevant planning considerations taken into account in preparing and reviewing planning policy

documents. A summary of comments and our response will be published on our website.

Our timescale

2.21 We will make sure that our Local Plan is kept up to date to support planned development of housing and other priorities within the borough. To keep our Local Plan on target we will aim to carry out all our planning consultations in line with our community involvement policies and the latest timetable set out in our Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Section 3: Getting involved in planning decisions

3.1 The Council deals with approximately 2,000 planning applications each year. These range from simple house extensions to large retail or office developments. We also determine applications requiring conservation area consent, Listed Building consent and for work to protected trees. All these types of applications require similar levels of public consultation.

Pre-application process

3.2 In line with national planning policy we place a strong emphasis on early engagement and aim to work with applicants in a positive and pro-active manner.

3.3 Depending upon the scale, nature and potential impact of the development proposal on the local community, it is advised that developers carry out their own pre-application public consultation. For instance, it is advocated that major planning applications be accompanied by their own Statement of Community Involvement. A major planning application is 10 or more dwellings (or a site larger than 0.5 hectares) or 1,000 or more square metres floorspace (or a site larger than 1 hectare).

3.4 These consultations should be carried out at an early stage in the design process, to enable community views to be incorporated into the submitted proposal. The form of consultation will need to be tailored to suit the particular circumstances of the site, the proposal and location. The Council can provide advice on what level of pre-application consultation would be appropriate, for example through a public meeting, an exhibition, or other forms of community involvement. Further information and advice is available at www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning. To ensure that decisions are taken in a fair and open manner, the Council's planning officers would not normally take part in these public meetings or exhibitions other than to provide background information.

3.5 As a minimum, the consultation statement submitted with the planning application should include:

- the houses, businesses and local community groups consulted,
- the methods and timing of consultation, and
- feedback and information on how the views were addressed in the development proposal.

3.6 To aid potential applicants in this process, the Council offers a pre-application service to help resolve issues at any early stage. Depending on the scale of the proposal there may be a fee for this service.

Planning applications

3.7 The Development Management Team is responsible for assessing all planning applications for development, advising the Council's Planning Board on major and other types of applications, determining certain types of planning applications, providing advice on development proposals and dealing with any unauthorised development in the borough.

3.8 All decisions taken on planning applications must be made in accordance with the adopted development plan unless any other material considerations indicate otherwise, including national planning guidance or site specific matters relevant to a particular case. Please refer to Appendix B to find out what a 'material consideration' is.

Getting involved in planning applications

3.9 The publicity procedures we follow on planning applications are laid down by Government legislation and regulations including Planning Practice Guidance. The council meets all of these minimum statutory requirements and we also publicise on a wider basis than the statutory minimum wherever possible to ensure that we maximise opportunities for community involvement.

3.10 All submitted planning applications must receive some form of publicity by law. We do this in one of the following ways, or by a combination of these methods depending on the type of application or other circumstances (e.g. if an application is later revised):

- an individual letter to adjacent occupiers/residents (neighbour notification)
- posting of a site notice at or near the site
- a local newspaper notice

3.11 Planning applications, including supporting documents and corresponding plans and elevation drawings, can be viewed online at www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning and are also available to view at Riverside House. Planning officers are available at Riverside House to give advice on current or proposed applications (it is a good idea to make an appointment if you wish to speak to a particular officer).

3.12 Comments on planning applications must be made in writing within 21 days from the date of our notification letter or within 21 days from the date of a press notice or site notice appearing. Please note that comments submitted after the 21 day publicity period has expired may not be considered because a decision may have already been made on the planning application.

You can make comments online at: www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning

By e-mail to: development.management@rotherham.gov.uk

By post to: Development Management, RMBC, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham S60 1AE

Decision making and planning board

3.13 Most minor planning applications are determined under delegated powers by the Planning Manager as set out in the Council's Scheme of Delegation. The Council's Planning Board makes decisions on major applications, and in certain other circumstances as detailed in the Council's Constitution. These circumstances include where a large number of written representations (more than five) against a development proposal have been made which conflict with the planning officer's recommendation.

3.14 For those applications determined by Planning Board, the Council allows public speaking at the committee meeting to give the public an opportunity to speak during the decision making process. Guidance on how members of the public can speak at Planning Board is distributed to those who formally request to speak.

3.15 Planning Board agendas are published on our website, five clear working days before the meeting, followed by the publication of the minutes of the meeting.

3.16 As part of the Council's commitment to an open and transparent planning process, the Council's Constitution includes codes of conduct for members and officers. Probity rules accord with the Planning Advisory Service guidance 'Probity in Planning' published in April 2013. Further information is available on the Planning Advisory Service website at <http://www.pas.gov.uk/probity>

Notification after Planning Board

3.17 Anyone making comments will be individually notified of the Council's decision on the application within ten working days of the decision being made, unless a proposal has generated a lot of representations (more than 30). In this case the decision will be publicised in the local press rather than by individual letter.

3.18 The Council also compiles a weekly list of planning decisions and these are also available to view on our website.

Written representations, informal hearings and public inquiries

3.19 Letters are sent direct to those people who were notified on the original application (as well as any other people who submitted comments on the application) giving notice of an appeal being lodged against the Council's decision, and providing them with the opportunity to make representations to the Planning Inspectorate (with the exception of appeals submitted under the householder appeal service). Under the householder appeal service there is no opportunity to make representations to the Planning Inspectorate, however representations submitted in relation to the planning application are forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate by the Council. A site notice will only be posted in the case of a public inquiry.

Other information

3.20 The Development Management Team also investigates alleged breaches of planning control. For further information please see our website at www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning or telephone Planning Enforcement for advice on 01709 823865.

Appendix A: Consultees

The list below outlines the organisations and other bodies that we are legally required to consult and involve in preparing our planning documents. This is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. These regulations may change from time to time and this list may be amended.

Barnsley Borough Council
Bassetlaw District Council
Bolsover District Council
Chesterfield Borough Council
Doncaster Borough Council
North East Derbyshire District Council
Sheffield City Council

Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber Of Commerce
Civil Aviation Authority
Coal Authority
Environment Agency
Highways Agency
Historic England
Homes and Communities Agency
National Grid
Natural England
Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
Severn Trent (water and sewerage undertaker)
Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership
Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust
South Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority
Sport England
Town & Parish Councils within Rotherham
Western Power Distribution
Yorkshire Water (water and sewerage undertaker)

Plus other relevant gas, electricity and electronic communications network infrastructure providers.

Other consultation bodies can include the following:

- (a) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority's area,
- (b) bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area,
- (c) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area,

- (d) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area, and
- (e) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area.

In addition to these groups listed above, we will also seek to involve and consult a wide range of other interest groups and organisations, developers and consultants, as well as local residents and businesses. If you would like to be added to our consultation database, or need to amend your existing contacts, please email us at planning.policy@rotherham.gov.uk or call on 01709 823869.

Appendix B: Material Planning Considerations

What is a material consideration?

When a decision is made on a planning application, only certain issues are taken into account; these are often referred to as 'material planning considerations'.

Material considerations can include (but are not limited to):

- Local, strategic, national planning policies and policies in the development plan
- Emerging new plans which have already been through at least one stage of public consultation
- Pre-application planning consultation carried out by, or on behalf of, the applicant
- Government and Planning Inspectorate requirements – circulars, orders, statutory instruments, guidance, and advice
- Previous appeal decisions and planning inquiry reports
- Principles of case law held through the courts
- Loss of sunlight (based on Building Research Establishment guidance)
- Overshadowing/loss of outlook to the detriment of residential amenity (though not loss of view as such)
- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Highway issues: traffic generation, vehicular access, highway safety
- Noise or disturbance resulting from a use, including proposed hours of operation
- Smells and fumes
- Capacity of physical infrastructure, e.g. in the public drainage or water systems
- Deficiencies in social facilities, e.g. school capacity
- Storage and handling of hazardous materials and development of contaminated land
- Loss or effect on trees
- Adverse impact on nature conservation interests and biodiversity opportunities
- Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas

- Incompatible or unacceptable uses
- Layout and density of building design, visual appearance and finishing materials
- Inadequate or inappropriate landscaping or means of enclosure

The weight attached to material considerations in reaching a decision is a matter of judgement for the decision-taker. However the decision-taker is required to demonstrate that in reaching that decision that they have considered all relevant matters.

Generally, greater weight is attached to issues raised which are supported by evidence rather than solely by assertion. If an identified problem can be dealt with by means of a suitable condition the local planning authority is required to consider this as an alternative to refusing an application.

What is not a material planning consideration?

The following issues are not relevant to the decision (there are further non-material planning considerations not included in this list):

- Matters controlled under building regulations
- Private issues between neighbours
- Opposition to the principle of development when this has been determined by an outline planning permission or appeal
- Applicant's personal circumstances (unless exceptionally and clearly relevant e.g. provision of a facility for someone with a physical disability)
- Previously made objections/representations regarding another site or application
- Factual misrepresentation of the proposal
- Opposition to business competition
- Loss of property value
- Loss of a view

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