

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Director of Regeneration
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Development
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	Review of the Statement of Community Involvement
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A successful and ambitious town
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?:	Yes
Why:	Non-Urgent Decision

Executive summary

This report seeks approval for a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The Council is required to prepare an SCI, to explain how it will involve the community in the preparation of local development documents (such as the Local Plan), the preparation of neighbourhood plans, and on planning applications.

The Council adopted its SCI in March 2020. The legislation requires that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years and, where appropriate, updated.

Following a review of the SCI, a small number of amendments are proposed to reflect the most up to date National Planning Policy Framework and changes to the way the Planning Services operates.

The implications of the recommendations have been considered by the appropriate officers of the Council and are set out in the main body of the report.

1. Purpose

1.1 To seek approval for a revised Statement of Community Involvement.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive

- Approves the revised Statement of Community Involvement.
- Delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development, to make changes to the Statement of Community Involvement as a result of future reviews.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare an SCI, to explain how it will involve the community in the preparation of its Local Plan, the preparation of neighbourhood plans, and on planning applications. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years.

3.2 The Council's current SCI was adopted in March 2020. In order to comply with the legislation a review must be completed by 17th March 2025.

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to prepare an SCI, to explain how it will involve the community in the preparation of local development documents (such as the Local Plan), the preparation of neighbourhood plans, and on planning applications. They should set out how the Council will meet the legislative requirements in undertaking its planning activities, as well as any additional engagement it may do beyond what is legally required. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 also require the Council to review the SCI at least every 5 years.

4.2 The Council's current SCI was adopted in March 2020. Since then, there have been a number of changes to national planning policy and legislation, and also the way the Council delivers its planning service, meaning that there are some aspects of the SCI that are out-of-date. It is important that the SCI remains up-to-date as it helps to ensure compliance with statutory duties. This will be particularly important as the new Local Plan is finalised this year.

4.3 Officers have completed a review of the SCI and are recommending a small number of changes:

Change	Reason
Update the wording regarding the 'Tests of Soundness' that are relevant in preparing Local Plans.	To align with the wording in the most up-to-date National Planning Policy Framework.
Update text regarding the delivery of a free pre-application advice service.	The Council has introduced charges for pre-application advice to help ensure sufficient resources to deliver a high-quality service.
Update the font, text size and colours throughout the document.	To comply with accessibility requirements.
Update contact details.	New contact details.

4.4 There is no statutory requirement to undertake public consultation on the SCI.

4.5 Following approval of the revised SCI, the Council's website will be updated to replace the previous SCI with the new version. The SCI will be used as appropriate by the Council's Planning Service.

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

5.1 **Not to update the SCI.** This will mean that we would not comply with the legislation regarding reviewing the SCI every 5 years. There would be potential compliance issues, particularly with preparing the Local Plan.

6. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	The costs associated with reviewing and updating the SCI are limited and met entirely through approved in-year revenue budgets.
Legal	There is a statutory duty to prepare an SCI in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that SCIs are reviewed every 5 years. A review of the Middlesbrough SCI must be complete by 17 th March 2025.
Risk	O8-055 - If the Council doesn't respond effectively and efficiently to legislative changes it could be in breach of statutory duties in relation to service delivery and fail to make the most of opportunities. The SCI has been reviewed in accordance the legislation and latest Government guidance. This will provide the opportunity to best ensure legislative requirements will be satisfied, so this will have a positive impact on this risk.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty	An impact assessment has been completed on the Review of the SCI and is attached to this report at Appendix 1. This

and Community Cohesion	concluded that there will not be an adverse impact on individual human rights.
Climate Change / Environmental	The Review of the SCI does not impact on Climate Change or the Environment.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The Review of the SCI does not impact on Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers.
Data Protection	There are no Data Protection or GDPR issues regarding the Review of the SCI. The public engagement associated with the delivery of the Council's planning functions will involve the collection and processing of personal data in accordance with statutory requirements. Given this statutory basis, there are no concerns that the implementation of the SCI could impact adversely on data protection or GDPR.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Update the Council's website to replace the old SCI with the new SCI	Alex Conti	17 th March 2025

Appendices

1	Initial Impact Assessment	
2	Statement of Community Involvement 2025	

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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