

EXECUTIVE

16 MARCH 2006

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT – SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

SUMMARY

The pre-submission draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was available for public consultation for six weeks in October and November 2005. This report sets out the results of the consultation and includes a revised version of the SCI which, it is intended, will be submitted to the Secretary of State with supporting information.

The Executive is asked to agree that the SCI Submission document be approved for a formal six week consultation and submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2006.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the standards to be achieved by the Borough Council in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents and planning applications.
- 1.2. The Draft SCI (see **Appendix 1**, which due to its size has been circulated separately from this agenda) sets out the purpose of the SCI and how it fits in with the Local Development Framework. It also explores the links with the Community Plan. The main body of the Draft SCI sets out how and when the community will be involved in the preparation of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents through different consultation techniques.
- 1.3. The SCI must also set out the Council's policy for involving the community in planning application decisions. This section is split into consultation and engagement at pre-application, application and post application stages.

2. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1. In April 2005 over 200 Amenity Groups and Parish Councils were sent a letter and questionnaire to find out their priorities for the SCI. We also learnt their preferred methods of communication.
- 2.2. In October 2005 the following groups, referred to as the 'specific consultation bodies,' were sent a covering letter, copy of the draft SCI and questionnaire: Highways Agency, GOSE, SEERA, Adjoining Local Authorities, Surrey County Council, Parish Councils, Parish Councils adjoining the Borough and Ward Councillors.
- 2.3. Approximately 1,000 general consultation bodies such as amenity groups, religious groups and disabled groups from the consultation database, were sent a letter explaining where they could read the SCI or view it on the Council's website. They had six weeks to return a questionnaire or send written comments via letter, fax or email to the Council.
- 2.4. In accordance with Regulation 26 of The Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the pre-submission public participation draft SCI was on display at the Planning Reception at the Council Offices, together with a questionnaire for comment. A paper copy of the SCI was made available at all libraries within the Borough. An electronic copy was placed on the Council's website with an electronic questionnaire and an advert placed in the *Surrey Advertiser* newspaper.

- 2.5 42 different respondents commented on the draft SCI. Only a small number of changes to the SCI are proposed, most of the comments received were regarding planning applications. Developers are concerned that too much pre-application consultation has to take place; this has now been scaled down. Respondents were also keen to know which properties will be notified regarding planning applications, more information has been included in the SCI relating to this. Where groups and individuals have asked for clarification further text has been added to the SCI, where appropriate.
- 2.6 The list of detailed comments received, and an Officer response can be found as **Appendix 2**. The revised draft of the SCI Submission document is attached as **Appendix 3**. This document contains proposed new text which is coloured for ease of reference. A number of further minor changes have been made to the SCI to reflect that it is at the submission stage. Appendices 2 and 3 have also been circulated separately from the agenda.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1. Following comments received during the consultation period, the SCI has been improved and updated. Following the Executive's approval, in line with Regulation 28 of the 2004 Regulations the SCI will be submitted to the Secretary of State with a six week consultation period.
- 3.2. When submitting the SCI to the Secretary of State, a consultation statement is required outlining who has been consulted, how they were consulted and a summary of the main issues raised, how the issues have been addressed in the SCI.
- 3.3. Once the above information has been submitted to the Secretary of State the information should be available at Planning Reception and on the Council's website.

4. THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- 4.1. The ethos of the SCI is in line with the Core Values of the Council, in particular 'the Council will focus on providing what the community needs and this will be established through dialogue and consultation, delivered in close partnership with other organisations.' The SCI relates to all of the Key Strategic Priorities, but in particular Environment and Heritage, Social Cohesion and Dynamic Economy.

5. DECISION

To approve the Statement of Community Involvement Submission Document for submission to the Secretary of State and the start of a six week consultation period.

Reason for Decision:

To comply with requirements of The Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

Background Papers:

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks

Creating Local Development Frameworks A Companion Guide to PPS 12

The Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (Oct. 2004)

The Guildford Borough Local Development Scheme March 2005.

A Framework for Assessing Soundness and Focusing Representations on Development Plan Documents and Statements of Community Involvement The Planning Inspectorate 2005.

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