

Meeting:	Strategic Planning Advisory Panel
Date:	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2005
Subject:	Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): Initial Consultation Responses.
Responsible Officer:	Director of Strategy (Urban Living)
Contact Officer:	Charles Alonge
Portfolio Holder:	Planning, Development and Housing
Key Decision:	None
Status:	Public

### **Section 1: Summary**

The Panel agreed, at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2005, the process for progressing the Statement of Community Involvement SCI. Prior to the meeting a letter and questionnaire were sent to all those on the Planning consultation database, asking them to indicate their preferred approach for participating in the preparation of the SCI and the Local Development Framework (LDF). The main purpose was to update the Council's consultation database and to establish the main contact for future correspondence and communication.

The initial consultation period was for 4 weeks between July and August 2005 and this report sets out the results of this exercise. It gives an overview of rate of response and highlights some of the issues raised by the respondents. A breakdown of the responses and the summary of the comments and suggestions is attached as Appendix 1. The detailed responses are attached as Appendix 2.

### **Decision Required**

The Panel is recommended to:-

- (i) Note the comments received following the initial consultation on the SCI;
- (ii) Note progress against the timetable and agree that officers should proceed to formal public consultation on the SCI.

## Reason for report

The Council is required to have an adopted Statement of Community Involvement in accordance with the LDS agreed timetable and Members have requested to be kept informed of the progress. The deadline for the adoption of the SCI is set in the LDS, and adhering to the timetable and the delivery of the programme set out in the LDS are important considerations for Planning Delivery Grant. Public Involvement in the preparation of SCI is deemed to be a positive move towards increasing public awareness at the outset.

## Benefits

The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement. Submission of the SCI to the Government Office for London (GOL) according to agreed timetable and the Inspectorate (PINS) for examination by March 2006 will ensure that the Council's ability to attract appropriate level of Planning Delivery Grant.

## Cost of Proposals

The cost of producing the SCI document is contained within the current Departmental budget. Any associated cost relating to future consultation would be considered in future reports.

## Risks

Delaying the SCI would effectively result in the Council's failure to meet the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable milestones. This may also lead to a reduction in the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG). Equally the failure to proceed accordingly will undermine the Council's commitment to the new planning system as prescribed by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The importance of the provision of adequate resources is important to the success of the whole process.

## Implications if recommendations rejected

This will lead to a failure to meet the approved LDS timetable.

## **Section 2: Report**

### 2.1 Brief History

The SCI is an essential part of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. The Act requires every local planning authority to produce a Statement of Community Involvement as part of the Local Development Framework. The working draft SCI is being developed and the comments received as a result of the initial consultation will assist in the production of the document. A key part of the new planning process will be to demonstrate how information from, and the views of, the community have been taken on board. This report reflects that.

## 2.2 Results of the Consultation

In comparison to other London Boroughs that have carried out similar exercises, the level of response rate was very good and the comments received have helped to update the consultation database which was first set up in 1998 and only partially updated since then. The modified database will inform the future engagement process.

The main findings of the questionnaire predictably revealed that different stakeholders preferred to participate in different ways. For example organisations tended to prefer Focus Groups whilst residents preferred Road Shows, a mixture of stakeholders preferred one-to-one meetings. What the questionnaire revealed was that none of the options suggested could be discounted and this should be reflected in the approach set out in this SCI. The main conclusions reached on the answers to the questions asked are set out on the first page of Appendix 1.

## 2.3 Consultation

The stages for producing the SCI, as set down in the approved LDS, will follow the appropriate procedures, including the formal consultation stage.

## 2.4 Financial Implications

Costs are contained within the approved Departmental budget.

## 2.5 Legal Implications

(Comments included in the report)

## 2.6 Equalities Impact

Effective community engagement promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion.

## **Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents**

### Background Documents:

1. Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
2. Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks.
3. The London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London), Mayor of London, February 2004.