

**WARDS AFFECTED:**  
**ASPLEY, BILBOROUGH AND LEEN VALLEY**

**ITEM NO .....**

**WEST AREA COMMITTEE**  
**26th July 2006**

**REPORT OF LEAD SERVICES DIRECTOR, CITY DEVELOPMENT**

**SUBMISSION DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING**

**1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report has been written to inform the West Area Committee that the Statement of Community Involvement has now been revised following the consultation period held between 16<sup>th</sup> January and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2006.
- 1.2 The Statement of Community Involvement (now at the Submission Draft stage) sets out how the City Council will consult local people on planning applications and on the preparation of the Local Development Framework, which is being prepared to replace the Nottingham Local Plan (adopted in November 2005). It will be sent to Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2006, and once it is approved it will be ready to be submitted to the Secretary of State. The Statement of Community Involvement must then be published for a further six-week public consultation period. The document has already been subject to continuous informal consultation throughout its preparation and members of the Area Committee may recall that a report on the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement (the previous version) was presented at the meeting held on 16th November 2005. The Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement is available on request and will be available to download on [plan4nottingham.com](http://plan4nottingham.com).

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (a) That it be noted that the public consultation period for the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement will be for a six week period starting in June/July 2006;
- (b) That Members consider and comment on the content of the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement in order to feed into the six-week consultation period scheduled.

**3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the local planning authority will consult the wider community on future planning applications and on planning documents (known as Local Development Documents) which form part of the Local Development Framework. The Statement of Community Involvement must take into account relevant implications of the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act, the Sex Discrimination Act and the Human Rights Act. There is a particular emphasis on involving 'hard to reach groups'. When planning documents forming part of the Local Development Framework are produced, Inspectors can recommend that they are withdrawn if they are not prepared in accordance with the authority's

Statement of Community Involvement, and all Local Development Documents must include a statement showing how the authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement.

### **Preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement**

- 3.2 The Nottingham City Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared as part of the emerging Local Development Framework as set out in the Local Development Scheme. Government Regulations state that the Statement of Community Involvement must be subject to an informal consultation to consider the main issues and options. The informal consultation was carried out between March-September 2005. This must then be followed by a formal consultation on the Pre-Submission draft of the Statement of Community Involvement. Consultation on the Pre-Submission draft of the Statement of Community Involvement took place for a 6 week period during January/February of this year. These comments have now been carefully considered, and where appropriate, incorporated into the Submission Draft of the Statement of Community Involvement.

### **Details of the Pre-Submission consultation**

- 3.3 During the Pre-Submission consultation period held between January-February of this year, an advert containing details of the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement consultation was placed in the Nottingham Evening Post and a press release was published. This was placed in the Nottingham Evening Post, The Topper and The Arrow and Snippets (the newsletter produced by the Nottingham Council for Voluntary Service). Copies of the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement were made available for inspection at the City Council Offices and in all the local libraries branches across Nottingham during normal opening hours. The document was also available for view and download on the Council's website.
- 3.4 Copies of the document were also sent to statutory consultation bodies. In addition, local, regional and national organisations and individuals who are registered as Local Development Framework consultees, all the individuals and organisations on each of the Area Committees' mailing lists, the Community Network and the Local Area Partnerships were each sent a consultation letter, a copy of the summary leaflet (including a freepost questionnaire response form) and details of how to obtain a full version of the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement. In total, 935 individuals/organisations were sent letters during the consultation period. Furthermore copies of the summary leaflet were sent to all Nottingham City Leisure Centres and GP surgeries to display. Presentations on the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement were made to all City Council Area Committee meetings as well as at various sub-group meetings.
- 3.5 A total of 264 representations on the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement were received from 64 respondents. The majority of respondents used the questionnaire provided, to feedback their comments which included open and closed questions. The comments made to the open questions were wide-ranging and in some instances extended beyond the scope of the posed questions, raising matters unrelated to the consultation exercise. Details of the results can be found in the Consultation Statement (available on request and shortly to be placed on the [plan4nottingham.com](http://plan4nottingham.com) website) which summarises the main issues raised, how they have been addressed, and actions proposed. A large proportion of the respondents requested to be added to the Local Development Framework database to be kept

informed of future Local Development Documents produced. Many comments were concerned with the planning applications consultation process such as receiving acknowledgements from the City Council when representations have been received, and increasing pre-application consultation. The Government Office for the East Midlands made comments by assessing the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement against the Tests of Soundness.

### **Amendments made to the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement as a result of the consultation**

3.6 The proposed changes to the revised Statement of Community Involvement include some additions and amendments to improve the content and clarity of the document. In summary, the amendments made to the document and to consultation procedures include:

- Improved section in the Statement of Community Involvement on consultation on Local Development Documents – to give a clearer description of the stages of document production and consultation procedures.
- Improved section in the Statement of Community Involvement on consultation on planning applications – to provide greater clarity on the process and how the City Council consults at each stage.
- The role of councillors and Area Committee Chairs in representing local views in recognised more fully.
- Written acknowledgement of the receipt of representations on Local Development Documents will be given. Systems being put in place to enable acknowledgement of representations received for planning applications.
- Planning website to be changed to include a webpage on studies (i.e. the evidence base) feeding into the Local Development Framework.
- More consultees added to the Local Development Framework mailout database for future consultations.
- Awareness raised of the implications of the new planning system, the planning website and the Weekly List of planning applications.

### **How the previous comments made by West Area Committee have been addressed**

3.7 During the discussion on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005, when the report was presented to the Area Committee, the issues listed below were raised. Details are also provided on how these issues have been addressed in the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement.

- The Area Committee was concerned that member involvement in decisions had not been addressed in the Pre-Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement. This point has been taken on board and there is now a section in the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement entitled: 'The Role of Nottingham City Councillors.'
- Concerns largely related to consultation on planning applications and what was required. A summary table of consultation on planning applications has been inserted in Appendix 7 of the Submission Draft Statement of Community Involvement and this shows what the minimum requirements for consultation are and also shows where the City Council exceeds these requirements.
- Concern also related to there being no requirement for Area Co-ordinators involving Area Committee Chairs in consultation. A new section has been added in the

Submission Draft entitled: 'The role of Neighbourhood Managers and Area Committee Chairs' to address this.

#### **4 NEXT STEPS**

The next stage in the preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement is its submission to the Secretary of State. Following submission, the Statement of Community Involvement will again be subject to public consultation and if objections are received a public examination may be held. In any event, the Secretary of State will appoint an independent inspector to consider the soundness of the document and their report will be binding on the Council. The date for adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement (as set out in the Local Development Scheme) is March 2007. On adoption the Council will need to ensure all Local Development Documents are prepared, and planning applications considered in accordance with its requirements.

#### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

No additional financial implications result from the recommendations included in the report.

#### **6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how local communities and stakeholders will be provided with an opportunity to become involved in the planning process and takes into account requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and the Human Rights Act.

#### **7\* List of background papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information**

None

#### **8\* Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

- The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, 2004)
- Creating Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, 2004)
- Diversity and Equality in Planning: A Good Practice Guide (ODPM, 2005)
- Local Development Scheme (Nottingham City Council, May 2006)

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June 2006