



Statement of Community Involvement

March 2022



Cannock Chase Statement of Community Involvement 2022

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is produced by the Planning Policy Section of Planning Services at Cannock Chase Council. To order further copies or for information:

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1. Introduction

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Sec 18), requires the Council to produce a 'Statement of Community Involvement' (SCI) that sets out how the Council intends to achieve continuous community involvement in the preparation of plans and decision making for planning applications. Communities are involved through a process that;

- Is transparent and accessible – where information is readily available in a form that is easily understood and accessible, where the more traditionally hard to reach groups are fully engaged;
- Promotes participation and involvement – with clear opportunities for people to participate and make their views known, with the decision-makers clearly identified.

This document is a revised and updated version of the Council's SCI adopted in 2018. It also reflects elements of the temporary SCI Addendum (December 2020) which was adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic but ceased to have effect as of the 31st December 2021. This is to enable the Council to be responsive to any future Government-imposed restrictions. The SCI does not propose new planning policy or identify new development sites, but primarily considers how best to involve different sectors of the community in plan preparation and in determining planning applications.

This document reflects the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015, the Localism Act 2011 (as amended), Section 13(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) (as at December 2021).

The SCI will be reviewed at least every five years and will reflect the most up to date national legislative, policy and guidance at the relevant time. Where changes to national legislation, policy or guidance give rise to updated provisions for publicity and consultation prior to any review of the Councils' SCI, the Council will reflect the most up to date requirements in practice accordingly.

2. The Overall Approach to Community Involvement

The SCI sets out how all sections of the community, from individual members of the public through to representative organisations, have a range of better opportunities to participate in planning in the District. It deals with community involvement in the preparation of the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and in the determination of planning applications as well as community involvement in other planning procedures such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Neighbourhood Planning.

The aim of an SCI is to make the planning system accessible to a wide range of people, leading to communities being well informed about how and when they are able to take part in the planning process. This is intended to result in greater participation and a more efficient and inclusive decision-making process. Clearly, the scale of community involvement in the planning system has to reflect the resources the Council has available. To ensure the most efficient use of resources the approaches used have sought to make use of existing established networks wherever possible.

For community involvement to be successful, an inclusive approach is required that recognises the varied needs of different sectors of the community and the fact that some groups are better equipped to participate than others. Therefore, the Council seeks to apply the most effective way of enabling people to contribute throughout the process. This statement sets out how all sections of the community have the opportunity to participate in the better planning of the District through an approach which has taken into account its character and communities.

Involving all sectors of the community in plan making and decision making has benefits for the Council through increased awareness of planning issues. It can also help to generate a feeling of inclusion by the community in policy formulation. People living and working in the district can contribute their knowledge and understanding of the locality, its past and its distinctive and valuable features which might otherwise be overlooked. Stakeholders also have a key role to play in providing expertise in specialist areas that the Local Plan team may not have.

It is the role of the SCI to set the framework to allow the community of Cannock Chase to take an active part in planning its future. The Council's vision for the SCI is that:



“Everyone is given the opportunity to influence the future planning of Cannock Chase District and consequently take ownership of the Local Plan through stakeholder and community involvement.”

3. The Local Community

Understanding the characteristics of the district can help to identify any groups of residents who may have particular needs and therefore may be 'hard to reach'. This information will assist the Council when involving local people in the planning process.

The district has a growing population of 101,484 in mid-2020, an increase of 4.1% since the 2011 Census. The trend of an aging population is evident with the proportion of residents aged 65+ standing at 19.3% of the overall District population in 2020 and projected to rise faster than the national average. The number of households is expected to increase by 9,389 households between 2018 and 2043: an increase of 21.8%. Whilst the number of households across the majority of age groups is expected to rise, the number of older-age households is forecast to see particular growth in the district. Households with a household reference person aged 75-84 are projected to increase by around 79% (2018-2043) whilst households with a household reference person aged 85+ are expected to increase by almost 100%.¹

The majority of the population (96.5%) at the 2011 Census described themselves as 'White British', a smaller proportion than at the 2001 Census (97.5%). The district is becoming more ethnically diverse with the 2011 Census revealing a larger number of residents (3.5%) identifying with a variety of ethnic groups.

According to the Indices of Deprivation (IoD, 2019) Cannock Chase is ranked overall as the 126th most deprived local authority district in England, where 1 is the most deprived and 317 the least deprived. Cannock Chase is ranked 13th most deprived in the West Midlands region.

Across the seven domains of the IoD 2019, Cannock Chase is most deprived in the domain of education, skills and training which measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population. Cannock Chase is ranked 37 out of 317 local authority districts for education deprivation. In 2020, 30.8% of Cannock Chase residents aged 16-64 were estimated to have qualifications equivalent to NVQ4 and above, which is below the West Midlands and national averages.²

Cannock Chase is ranked 89 out of 317 local authority districts in England for employment in the IoD 2019 where 1 is the most deprived and 317 the least deprived. Employment deprivation is measured based on the proportion of the working age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. However, the District is ranked more positively for income with a ranking of 112 out of 317 based on the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income.

In 2019, the largest proportion (22.5%) of employee jobs were in the Wholesale and Retail trade (including repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles). Manufacturing, Transportation and Storage and Human Health and Social Work Activities also made-up considerable proportions of employee jobs. Data from 2021 highlights that the proportion of the districts' workers in SoC Major Group 1-3 of managerial, professional and technical occupations group is lower than the regional and national averages. The proportion of the districts' workers in the SoC Major Group 4-5 of administrative and skilled trade occupations is higher than the regional and national averages. Whilst the District economy has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, data from 2021 shows the district unemployment rate was below the regional and national averages.

¹ ONS 2018-based Household Projections (2020)

² See Nomis Labour Market Profile for sources of employment- related data

3. The Local Community

The IoD 2019 ranks Cannock Chase 106 out of the 317 local authority districts in England for health deprivation and disability where 1 is the most deprived and 317 the least deprived. The district is within the more deprived 50% of local authority districts for this domain which measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The 2011 Census indicates that 20.7% of residents experienced a long-term limiting illness which was above the England average of 17.6%. The presence of long-term limiting illness increased to 60.9% among residents aged 65+, again higher than the England average of 51.5%.

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened some of the health and economic outcomes for deprived communities. 13.1% of Cannock Chase residents were estimated to be living in the most deprived national quintile in 2019 which is above the Staffordshire average. As at March 2021, 22% of Cannock Chase residents were reliant on Government support; this was the highest rate in Staffordshire (alongside Tamworth).

Work undertaken for earlier SCI 's identified the following groups of people as being potentially 'hard to reach':

- the elderly,
- young people,
- people with learning difficulties,
- the blind,
- the deaf,
- ethnic minority groups, which are relatively small,
- the disabled and those who have long term limiting illnesses.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for people to 'shield' due to age or health reasons has highlighted the potential for these groups to be hard to reach too. All of the above groups may be found concentrated in certain areas within local communities, particularly in the more deprived areas within the district.

Particular challenges to overcome in engaging with hard to reach groups may include:

- physical access to information and venues e.g. ability and/or willingness to travel to consultation events and access hard copies of materials available to view at venues.
- electronic access to information e.g. ability and/or willingness to access and use electronic materials, and/or the use of suitable electronic communications for a range of different groups.
- interpretation of information available e.g. understanding the implications of the proposals and planning procedures.

To help overcome these challenges we will, where possible:

- Utilise a range of communication channels including the Council website and corporate social media accounts, press releases, local newspapers and magazines, letters and email.
- Using virtual communications methods as appropriate and available, including online videos, presentations and conferencing.
- Provide hard copies for reference within accessible locations across the district and provide free copies of the materials to residents upon request.
- Have officers available to provide assistance via the telephone and/or email to locate and interpret the information.

3. The Local Community

- Have officers attend consultation or similar events/meetings of other organisations to complement Council-run public exhibitions, where available and appropriate.
- Use accessible venues and facilities for exhibition events at a range of locations.
- Provide a variety of ways to respond to consultations e.g. email, letter, comments forms, or other means dependent upon the group (as appropriate).

Recent experience in progressing the Local Plan for the District has indicated that the elderly and young people are potentially less hard to reach than some of the other groups by using methods of engagement such as social media, workshops in schools or appropriate community events. Other groups remained harder to target and Support Staffordshire is a useful organisation for facilitating contact with local groups, including making contacts with stakeholders in more deprived areas. These existing networks, and new networks that may be established over time, will be utilised as far as possible and as appropriate to the nature of the consultation taking place. In utilising third party networks it will need to be borne in mind that the Council will not necessarily be in control of how a consultation is publicised and/or circulated by these organisations.

4. Involving the Community – General Approach

Community Involvement is about communicating information to people and gaining information from people in a collaborative process. The aim is to enable people of all abilities, race, sex, gender, religion, sexuality or age to access information which allows them to become involved collaboratively in planning the future of the district. The Council will be seeking to facilitate the involvement of the wider community through the approach outlined in this Statement. This is a critical element of the concept of “Localism” which now underpins the planning system.

There are a number of important benefits of achieving community and stakeholder involvement and subsequent buy-in, these include:

- Community commitment to the future development of an area;
- Promoting regeneration and investment, creating certainty and commitment to change;
- Providing a strong basis for successful negotiations on development proposals, including developer contributions; and
- Providing a robust basis for addressing difficult decisions – it is important that in seeking to build consensus addressing controversial issues is not avoided.

By involving the community in its widest sense it is possible to identify more clearly local priorities and needs. In addition, through local knowledge or personal understanding of the issues, solutions can often be identified more easily. Without the close involvement of the community there will be no ownership of the Local Plan and hence delivery will be much more difficult.

Those who may have a role or an interest in shaping the planning of the area, including local people, local organisations, local community groups, landowners and developers, regional organisations, national organisations and Government agencies should actively engage in the processes for plan making and determining planning applications. The level of engagement will vary depending on the nature of the plan or proposal.

The key to successful community involvement is engaging right across the community regardless of age, gender, race, religious values etc. It is important therefore that a range of different techniques for engagement that consider the different requirements of the different sectors of the community are employed, and a flexible approach is taken to take advantage of opportunities and address issues as they arise.

Council Members. Councillors are kept up to date with relevant information and Councillors in turn keep constituents in their wards informed of progress on the Local Plan and on any key planning application issues for their area. Policy development is considered by an informal Member/Officer working group with formal reporting via Cabinet and Council where appropriate. Working groups are established as and when necessary. Planning applications are decided by a Planning Control Committee unless delegated to Council officers.

Parish/Town Councils. As community representatives at the grass roots, Parish and Town Councils both within and adjoining the district will have the opportunity to be frequently involved in all aspects of relevant planning, by being consulted on planning applications and planning policy documents.

4. Involving the Community – General Approach

Local People. The Council wishes to ensure that no one is excluded from the planning process and will therefore seek to make use of the groups/networks that already exist in parts of the district, including the third sector organisations operating in the District and resident or special interest groups. In addition, the Council will pass information on relevant issues to the established community groups and attend meetings when requested, wherever practicable. The Council maintains a Local Plan database which local people can request to be added to in order to be kept informed of relevant plan-making public consultations (with personal details maintained in accordance with the Councils' Privacy Notice- see section 8 for further details).

Neighbouring Authorities and Communities. Development proposals not only affect communities within a local authority's boundaries, but can directly or indirectly affect neighbouring communities. The Council will ensure that neighbouring local authorities, Parish Councils, and residents within adjoining local authority's areas are given the opportunity where appropriate to be involved in the planning process in Cannock Chase District. Where evidence might need to be considered by neighbouring authorities when producing or updating plans, this will be shared at the earliest opportunity. The importance of cross boundary co-operation has been recognised by the introduction of a "Duty to Co-operate."

National, Regional and Local Organisations. The Council understands that many local, regional and national organisations have to deal with a significant amount of information being forwarded to them for comment. Existing networks/stakeholder groups will be utilised wherever possible and the Council will maintain its Local Plan database of organisations to ensure that they are all made fully aware of key stages of consultation. Organisations can request to be added to the database at any time. Networks may include those operated by the third sector and those which the Council is already a member of (such as the Cannock Chase Community Safety Partnership, which brings together a number of partners to reduce crime and disorder).

Agents/Developers. This group includes landowners and those with potential development interests. Many of these are already involved in planning applications, are aware of the Local Plan and are likely to maintain their involvement. Within the area, there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise that will contribute to the delivery of the Local Plan and SPDs.

Business Groups. A number of existing business networks are already established within the District and officers will utilise these groups, working closely with officers in economic development, to generate a two way flow of information. The creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) has provided an increased opportunity for engagement with the business community.

Hard to Reach groups. The sectors of the local community who may be harder to reach, were identified in section 3 and efforts will be made to ensure that they are not excluded from planning processes (as set out in section 3).

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

General Standards of Public Consultation

The following general standards will be adhered to at all stages of plan making where consultation is undertaken. These will be applied to Local Plans, SPDs and CIL charging schedules

- Place relevant documents on the Council website together with any supporting information needed to enable people to understand what they are being asked to comment on and state where and when documentation can be inspected;
- Make available all relevant material for inspection at the Council Civic Centre in Cannock for the period during which comments are being sought. Additionally other public venues within the District will be used, where available and appropriate;
- Contact specific, general and other consultees who may have an interest in the document and invite to make representations, advising where and when the relevant material can be inspected, how copies can be obtained, the closing date for representations and where to send any representations;
- Issue adverts and/or press releases to local newspapers circulating in the area, as appropriate, advising where and when the relevant material can be inspected, how copies can be obtained, the closing date for representations and where to send any representations. Use the Council's website, Council magazines in circulation (as appropriate) and social media channels to raise awareness of consultation events.
- Make available jargon free English summary documents and/or leaflets as appropriate;
- Provide appropriate advice and information to the public as requested;
- Produce a report summarising consultation methods and representations made.
- Provide a range of ways to respond to a consultation (e.g. email, letter, comments forms) as appropriate to the statutory stage of plan making.

Policies and procedures for plan making can change over time in response to changes in national legislation, policy and guidance. The Council will undertake consultations in accordance with current legislation, policy and practice that is in place at the relevant time. The Planning Policy team will liaise with the Councils' Communications Team to develop an effective consultation plan for consultation events.

These standards (and the proceeding standards for specific aspects of plan making) may need to be varied in response to circumstances beyond the Councils control. For instance, Government - imposed restrictions on movement and social interaction as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given that the Councils' approach to publicity and consultation in part reflects legislative requirements, any changes will be in accordance with temporary or updated legislation.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

In these instances, the Council may be limited in its ability to provide hard copies of documents for inspection and may restrict/suspend face-to-face meetings, in person public exhibitions, and the in person attendance of workshops/events.

Therefore, the Council website will be the primary source for consultation documents and an email address and phone number for the Planning Policy Team will be provided on the website or via the main switchboard to enable everyone to obtain further information or assistance.

The Council will continue to communicate and engage and will endeavour to provide alternative methods of engagement including (where appropriate technology is available) virtual presentations, video conferencing, teleconferencing/telephone appointments and email.

Where remote means of communication are not possible (or are likely to be ineffective) the Council will endeavour to attend in person meetings with organisations and stakeholders, if requested. These will need to be arranged in a location that is compliant with any restrictions that may be in place at the relevant time and undertaken in accordance with such restrictions. For example, social distancing was required during the COVID-19 pandemic and shielding of vulnerable groups which may have included staff members.

Any changes to the methods of consultation used will be clearly communicated and explained via available channels, including the Council website, social media and letters or email (as appropriate).

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

The Local Plan and Area Action Plans (AAP's)

The Local Plan provides the key local statutory planning policy framework for the District. Effective community and stakeholder involvement in its preparation is therefore very important.

In applying the general standards of consultation set out earlier in this document, the Council will ensure consultation and engagement is in accordance with statutory provisions and in line with the relevant Regulations. This will include consultation with specified statutory bodies and other parties at the necessary stages of the plan making process.

The Council will publish on its website (www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy) all completed evidence used for developing the Local Plan (including jargon free English summary documents where appropriate). It will also provide a record of what evidence has been commissioned and the expected date for completion and publication of this (on request).

The most up to date Local Development Scheme (the project timetable for Local Plan documents) will be published on the Council's website at the above link. The Local Development Scheme requires the approval of full Council before it can be published.

Evidence documents will be available to comment upon as part of Local Plan consultations.

For each specific stage of Local Plan making the following additional standards will apply:

Regulation 18: preparation of a Local Plan

This statutory stage requires the Council to consult on the subject of the Local Plan (for example is it district wide or a more targeted action plan) and what that plan ought to contain. Usually, this will be done in the form of an issues, or issues and options paper.

For this stage we will:

- Discuss the scope of the plan, issues needing to be addressed, and options for dealing with these (as appropriate) with partners and in existing forums/groups that the Council is a member of and/or is made aware of.
- Arrange events and/or workshops to discuss issues and proposals, as appropriate. Place emphasis on understanding community views at early stage of plan making. Take account of issues raised and seek to address issues arising as far as possible.
- Organise 'face-to-face' discussions if requested and appropriate.

Preparation of Draft Local Plan

This is a non statutory stage and will not apply for all Local Plans. Where a draft Local Plan (which may sometimes be called 'preferred options' or similar) is produced we will:

- Seek consensus in emerging planning policy position as far as possible via discussion with partners and in existing forums/groups that the Council is a member of and/or is made aware of.
- Arrange events and/or workshops to discuss issues and proposals, as appropriate.
- Organise 'face-to-face' discussions if requested and appropriate.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

Regulation 19 Stage: Publication of Local Plan

For this stage we will:

- Send a statement of the representations procedure and a statement of the fact that the proposed submission documents (including a consultation statement) are available for inspection and the times at which they can be inspected to all of the consultees that were invited to comment in earlier plan making stages.
- Publish for a minimum six weeks consultation period.
- Seek views on whether the document is legally compliant and sound.
- Discuss outstanding issues with partners and existing forums/groups (that the Council is a member of and/or is made aware of).
- Organise 'face-to-face' discussions if requested and appropriate.
- Publish a statement outlining the consultation undertaken to date, summary of the main issues raised and how those issues have been addressed.

Submission of Local Plan

For this stage we will:

- Submit the document and relevant supporting information (including a consultation statement) to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
- Notify specific and general consultation bodies that the documents are available for inspection at the above locations.
- Notify others who have requested to be informed when the document is submitted.

Examination of Local Plan

An Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State, will examine the document. The Inspector will consider whether the preparation of the plan has been legally compliant. For this stage we will:

- Publish details of the time and place at which the Independent Examination is to be held and the name of the Inspector.
- Notify those who made representations at the Publication stage (and have not withdrawn their representations) of relevant matters the Inspector will discuss at the Examination Hearings. If the Plan is legally compliant the inspector will then consider whether the document is 'sound'. (It will be considered sound if it is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy).
- Publish documents relevant to the Independent Examination on the Council's website.

Publishing the Inspector's report

For this stage we will:

- Publish the Inspectors recommendations and reasons for those recommendations at the Council's Civic Centre in Cannock and on Council's website.
- The Inspector who carried out the Independent Examination will produce and publish an Inspector's Report. Notify those who have requested to be notified of the recommendations, that the recommendations are available. The Inspector will recommend that the document is: Adopted; Adopted with recommended modifications (if the Council asks the Inspector to suggest modifications to make the document sound); or Not adopted.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

Adopting the Local Plan Document

For this stage we will:

- Publish the Local Plan Document, Adoption Statement, Sustainability Appraisal Report (and adoption statement) and details of where and when the document can be viewed

If the document is recommended for adoption (with or without recommended modifications) the Council will consider the Inspector's report and whether it wishes to adopt the document as recommended by the Inspector.

- Send a copy of the adoption statement to the Secretary of State.
- Send copy of the Adoption Statement to anyone who has asked to be notified of the adoption of the document.

If the Council decides to adopt the document, this will be by the Full Council, with any main modifications as required

- Issue a press release and use the Councils' corporate social media to advertise the adoption of the Local Plan Document.
- Where applicable, incorporate Main Modifications suggested by the Inspector to ensure the plan is sound and potentially additional modifications (any additional modifications must not materially affect the policies).

It should also be noted that there is now a requirement (introduced on April 6th 2018) to review Local Plans five years from adoption to see if any policies need to be updated. If they do not, the Council must publish its reasons for this decision. If policies do need reviewing, then the processes for consulting on a Local Plan will be followed as set out above and in line with statutory procedures.

As outlined above, some of these methods of consultation and engagement may need to be varied in response to circumstances beyond the Councils control. For instance, Government - imposed restrictions on movement and social interaction as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

SPDs are produced to support and elaborate the policies contained in the Local Plan. They provide additional information and policy guidance to support the implementation of a policy. The procedures for SPD preparation are slightly more straightforward than for the Local Plan, as set out below:

Early Community Involvement

- Nature of community involvement will depend on the nature of the document being produced.
- If a site specific SPD is being produced for a major development site, early community involvement will focus on those who live and work in the vicinity of the site. The Council's approach will focus on involving local residents, businesses etc. from the local area, and any events (which may include public exhibitions or workshops, for example) will wherever possible be held within that community.
- If the SPD is of a more technical nature the Council's approach will focus more on engaging specialist stakeholders
- Main purpose of this stage is to gather information to consider issues and options.

Formal Consultation

- Consult for no less than 4 weeks and no more than 6 weeks.
- For site specific documents, continue emphasis on engaging those directly affected by the proposal. Notification of the details of the SPD sent to those occupiers of residential or commercial properties adjoining the site together with arrangements for consultation.
- Where considered appropriate to the nature of the document, hold public events and advertise locally.
- Publish a statement summarising who has been invited to respond to the consultation and the methods of responding to the consultation.

Adoption

- Publish a statement summarising who was invited to respond to the consultations, the main issues raised by the representations and how these have been addressed.
- Post details of the adoption of the final SPD, information on where and when copies of the SPD and Adoption Statement can be viewed, and the appropriate Cabinet report on the Council website.
- Send a copy of the Adoption Statement to those who have been asked to be notified of the SPD adoption.

As outlined above, some of these methods of consultation and engagement may need to be varied in response to circumstances beyond the Councils control. For instance, Government - imposed restrictions on movement and social interaction as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

Sustainability Appraisal and other Evidence Base documents

A Sustainability Appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a Plan is carried out from the outset of the Local Plan preparation process to ensure decisions are made which accord with sustainable development. Regulation 4 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 defines certain organisations with environmental responsibilities as consultation bodies – in England these are Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The Sustainability Appraisal will be published for consultation comments as required by most recent and up to date provisions of the legislation alongside the appropriate stages of the Local Plan.

Other Evidence Base documents may involve targeted specific consultations as part of their production, dependent upon their nature, as and when appropriate. All Evidence Base documents that are finalised and published will be available for comment as part of Local Plan consultations.

The Duty to Co-operate

The Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) place a duty on local planning authorities and other bodies to cooperate with each other to address strategic issues relevant to their areas. The ‘Duty to Co-operate’ came into effect in November 2011 and requires continuing constructive and active engagement on the preparation of DPDs and activities relating to the sustainable development and use of land, in particular in connection with strategic infrastructure. Paragraphs 24-27 of the NPPF (2021) set out advice on maintaining effective so-operation on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. The Council will engage in Duty to Co-operate as required by the most recent and up to date provisions of the legislation.

The bodies that are bound by the Duty are:

- Local Planning Authorities
- County Councils
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes England
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Office of Rail and Road
- Local Integrated Transport Authority
- Highways Authorities

Local Nature Partnerships and Local Enterprise Partnerships are not subject to the requirements of the duty, but local planning authorities and county councils in England, and prescribed public bodies must cooperate with them. Local Planning authorities must have regard to their activities in the preparation of Local Plans.

The Council reports on its activities under the Duty to Cooperate via the Authority Monitoring Report.

Duty to Co-operate Statements of Common Ground and Statement of Compliance

- In order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed under the Duty to Cooperate and progress in addressing these. The Council will produce statements of common ground alongside the Local Plan having regard to national planning guidance.
- In the Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations (March 2021), the Planning Inspectorate states that in order to demonstrate compliance with the duty to co-operate the most helpful approach is for the Local Planning Authority to submit a statement of compliance with the duty. The Council will produce a Statement of Compliance at the Local Plan Publication stage which will set out how the District Council has cooperated with other bodies in the production of the plan. This will include a listing of the organisations involved, a record of meetings and other consultation, a summary of the issues and details of the outcome achieved. In addition, the Council will include consultation with other bodies, beyond the prescribed list, where this is of relevance.
- Where the Duty to Co-operate gives rise to any significant changes to the content of the Local Plan, these will be subject to consultation in accordance with the procedures set out in this SCI.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

The Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, the legislation for which came into force in April 2010. The levy allows local authorities in England and Wales to raise contributions from developers to help pay for infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. Local authorities who wish to charge the levy must produce a Draft Charging Schedule setting out CIL rates for their areas – which are to be expressed as pounds per square metre (£/ sq m), as CIL will be levied on the gross internal floor space of the net additional liable development. Before it is adopted by the Council, the Draft Charging Schedule has to be approved by an independent examiner.

The requirements which a CIL Charging Schedule has to meet are set out in:

- The Planning Act 2008
- The CIL Regulations 2010, as amended (which also set out consultation requirements)
- The National Planning Practice Guidance (section on CIL).

Consultation is an important requirement in preparing a CIL because of the need for it to fit local circumstances and to have a positive impact on development. The Guidance (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 25-010-20190901) states that:

When deciding the levy rates, an authority must strike an appropriate balance between additional investment to support development and the potential effect on the viability of developments.

This balance is at the centre of the charge-setting process. In meeting the regulatory requirements, charging authorities should be able to show and explain how their proposed levy rate (or rates) will contribute towards the implementation of their relevant plan and support development across their area (see Regulation 14(1), as amended by the 2014 Regulations).

The Council's CIL Charging Schedule was approved by the Inspector on 10th February 2015 following submission for Examination on 31st October 2014 after a six-week consultation period. The Council at its meeting on 15th April 2015 agreed to commence introduction of charging on 1st June 2015. The Council has produced a 'CIL Guidance for Landowners and Developers' document which sets out in detail how CIL will operate in the district. The CIL charge will apply to new floor space resulting from most types of residential development, including in some cases change of use to residential, and some major retail developments. It does not currently apply to other forms of built development. The CIL charging rate is arrived at using evidence of infrastructure needs, funding gaps and development viability. The Council publishes an Infrastructure Funding Statement annually which details which infrastructure projects are expected to be funded via CIL receipts and planning obligations, drawing upon the Infrastructure Delivery Plan accompanying the Local Plan.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

CIL Charging Schedule

In Cannock Chase District, the general consultation measures set out in section 5 will apply to each consultation step required for producing a CIL charging schedule or review. The CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) governing these consultation stages will be adhered to.

The relevant consultation stages are:

Draft charging schedule

- Publish draft schedule and relevant evidence (including 'Statement of the Representations Procedure')
- Consult with prescribed 'consultation bodies' including neighbouring local planning authorities, Staffordshire County Council, Parish Councils and other parties (those who work live or operate a business in the area; voluntary bodies; or bodies that represent business in the area) as appropriate.
- There is no statutory period for consultation. The Council will consult for at least four weeks in accordance with national guidance, but when considered appropriate a period of six weeks consultation will be provided for.
- Accept valid requests to be heard before the examiner at the CIL examination
- Produce and publish statement of modifications (if necessary) following consultation on the Draft Charging Schedule. Inform those persons previously invited to make representations that the statement has been published.
- Accept valid requests to be heard before the examiner at the CIL examination on modifications (within 4 weeks of the statement of modifications being published/submitted for Examination).

Examination

- Submit and publish a statement of representations summarising representations received and how they have been taken into account.
- Notice is given to those who have requested to be notified of the submission for examination.
- Relevant parties for the examination hearings sessions are notified at least four weeks in advance, or two weeks where a statement of modifications has been published and one or more requests to be heard made.
- The Examiner is encouraged to share the draft programme for the hearings at an early stage and inform those who wish to attend (and similar for pre-hearing meeting if considered necessary).
- Notice is given to those who have requested to be notified of the examiner's report upon publication of the Examiners recommendations.

Adoption

- The Charging Schedule is formally adopted by full Council resolution (if approval is recommended by examiner). The commencement date is inserted into the charging schedule and notice given to those who have requested to be notified of adoption.
- There is a six month period for 'correctable errors' to be made known to the Council. If required Council to republish charging schedule with 'correction notice'.

Prior to the publication of the Draft Charging Schedule the Council will collaborate with neighbouring/overlapping local authorities and other relevant stakeholders to inform the evidence base and Draft Charging Schedule (in accordance with national guidance).

The CIL Regulations (2010, as amended) allow for more than one stage of consultation prior to Examination, if considered necessary. If further stages of formal consultation are

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deemed necessary by the Council these will be undertaken with reference to the general standards for consultation and the CIL Regulations; the methods used will be appropriate to the nature of the consultation.

As outlined above, the methods of consultation and engagement may need to be varied in response to circumstances beyond the Councils control. For instance, Government - imposed restrictions on movement and social interaction as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consultation and engagement in respect of the Community Infrastructure will continue to be undertaken in accordance with the general standards of consultation and CIL Regulations, taking account of the measures necessary to comply with any Government-imposed restrictions as detailed above.

5. Involving the Community – Plan Making

Neighbourhood Planning

There are three main mechanisms for Neighbourhood Planning – Neighbourhood Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build. Each enables a community to achieve different things.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a way of helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work. It can be used to:

- Develop a shared vision for a neighbourhood.
- Choose where homes, shops, offices and other development may be built.
- Identify and protect important local green spaces.
- Influence what new buildings should look like.

A Neighbourhood Development Order can help to implement a shared vision by granting planning permission to certain types of development in certain locations, without the need to submit a planning application to the local planning authority. A Neighbourhood Development Order can apply to all of a Neighbourhood Plan area, or a particular site within the neighbourhood.

The Community Right to Build (CRTB) allows local communities to undertake small-scale, site-specific, community-led developments. It is a particular type of Neighbourhood Development Order which allows community organisations in some cases to bring forward small scale development on specific sites without following the usual planning permission process. However, a CRTB need to be in conformity with the Local Plan and, if applicable, the Neighbourhood Plan for any given area. A CRTB needs to relate to an approved Neighbourhood Area. As with Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders, a CRTB is subject to an independent examination and a referendum and the Local Authority needs to be involved in these stages in the same way.

The process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and a Neighbourhood Development Order is similar. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders are not prepared by the local planning authority. There are two types of ‘qualifying body’ that can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan or a Neighbourhood Development Order:

- **Parish and Town Councils:** In areas where a parish or town council exists, these are the organisations which will usually be responsible for a Neighbourhood Plan, but other parts of the community may prepare a plan if they are established as a neighbourhood area. A Neighbourhood Plan can, but does not have to, cover the whole area of the parish or town.
- **Neighbourhood Forums:** Where a parish or town council does not exist, community members, including those with business interests in the area, can come together to create a neighbourhood forum. Only one neighbourhood forum is allowed to exist for each neighbourhood to be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan.

Consultation and community involvement are important elements in the Neighbourhood Planning process. At the issues and draft plan stages, this will be the responsibility of the plan making body, but the District Council has a significant role at the other stages identified below, including, the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area, the proposed creation of a Neighbourhood Plan Forum, the Independent Examination and the Local Referendum.

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The requirements for consultation are set out in the 2012 Town And Country Planning, England - The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), In each case, the regulations refer to the need for the District Council to; - *“publicise..... on their website and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the area application to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the area to which the area application relates”*

The NPPG explains the Neighbourhood Plan system including the key stages and considerations required.

The Council’s role in Neighbourhood Planning

The Planning Policy pages on the Council’s website will be used to provide further information and keep stakeholders up to date, including a dedicated web page; the Council will ensure that the Qualifying Body preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, Neighbourhood Development Order or CRTB is informed by email:

- a) as to where the Evidence Base is located and when it has been updated; and
- b) as to where the Local Development Scheme (the project timetable for Local Plan documents) is located and when it has been updated.

The District Council will make available Neighbourhood Planning guidance to Parish and Town Councils and Neighbourhood Forums.

The Council will not produce a Neighbourhood Plan, Neighbourhood Development Order or CRTB on behalf of a local community but will give assistance and advice to Qualifying Bodies preparation process to facilitate proposals, including advice on consultation.

The Council, as the local planning authority, will, if requested, administer the formal designation of Neighbourhood Area(s) to be covered by Neighbourhood Plan(s). Where relevant the Council will formally approve a Neighbourhood Forum.

The Council will check a draft Neighbourhood Plan, Neighbourhood Development Order or CRTB to ensure that it meets all the relevant legislation and regulations and that it generally conforms to the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

Subject to the above, the Council will undertake the statutory stages of consultation required to be carried out by the local authority and arrange an independent examination of a Neighbourhood Plan, Neighbourhood Development Order or CRTB.

If the plan passes an examination, the Council, as local planning authority, will arrange a local referendum. If the referendum supports the document, the Council will adopt it as part of the overall development plan (which includes the Local Plan). Should post-adoption modifications become necessary, the Council will offer guidance and support on the process.

Parish and town councils and Neighbourhood Forums will be encouraged to apply the principles set out in this SCI to their own consultation and community engagement programmes.

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The Council will undertake the statutory consultation stages in accordance with the relevant regulations, taking account of the general standards of consultation for plan making (as appropriate).

As outlined above, the methods of consultation and engagement may need to be varied in response to circumstances beyond the Councils control. For instance, Government - imposed restrictions on movement and social interaction as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If compliance with Government-imposed restrictions results in the statutory stages of a Neighbourhood Plan being temporarily suspended (e.g. referendums) this will be clearly communicated and explained via available channels, including the Council website, social media and letters or email (as appropriate).

6. Involving the Community – Planning Applications

This section sets out how people have the opportunity to become involved in the decisions being taken on individual planning applications.

The Government sets out minimum standards for consultation on planning applications in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. There are three main categories of application, which require differing levels of publicity:

Categories of Planning Application

1. All applications subject to an environmental assessment, all applications which are a departure from the Development Plan, and all applications affecting public rights of way are required to be publicised by the display of a notice on the site, and by the placing of an advertisement in a local newspaper.
2. Other applications defined as “major” applications by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 are required to be publicised by the display of a site notice or letters written to adjoining neighbours, and by placing an advertisement in a local newspaper. Major applications are those comprising a residential development of more than 10 dwellings, or residential development in outline form on a site of 0.5 hectares or more, or the erection of other buildings creating 1,000 square metres of floor space, or outline applications on sites of 1 hectare or more.
3. All other applications are publicised by the display of a site notice or letters written to adjoining neighbours (with some exceptions e.g. Non-Material Minor Amendment applications and Lawful Development Certificates for proposed development).

For the following application types, newspaper advertisements may be required in addition to site notices and/or neighbour notification:

- Applications for Listed Building Consent,
- Applications affecting the setting of a Listed Building
- Applications affecting the character or appearance of a Conservation Area

The Council’s policy on publicity for planning applications was adopted in June 2003 following a “Best Value” review of the Planning Service. It exceeds the statutory requirements and guidance set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The categories of applications to which the Publicity Policy applies are:

- Applications for full planning permission
- Applications for outline planning permission
- Applications for approval of reserved matters where these include one or more element involving siting, design, means of access and landscaping
- Advertisement applications
- Applications for Listed Building Consent
- Applications for prior notification of telecommunications, agricultural and forestry development
- Applications for Certificates of Lawfulness of Existing Development.

6. Involving the Community – Planning Applications

Significant amended or additional details relating to any of the above categories of application received whilst an application is being processed are also publicised.

A considerable amount of negotiation takes place on a large number of applications, particularly the major ones. This is a very important and crucial part of the development control process, steering development towards a more acceptable form and therefore acting in a positive manner. This dialogue between planning officers and developers and their professional advisors is something which the Government and this Council actively encourages.

Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 makes it a requirement for applicants for a development of a description specified within a development order to carry out a pre-application consultation on the proposed application and to demonstrate how they have taken account of the responses resulting from that consultation.

In addition, to the above categories of planning application there are publicity requirements for applications related to more recent procedures: Permissions in Principle and Prior Approvals.

Permission in Principle

The Permission in Principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed residential-led development ('Permission in Principle') from the technical detail of the development ('Technical Details Consent').

Permission in Principle cannot be granted for habitats development, householder development or Environmental Impact Assessment development. At present, Permission in Principle for 'major' residential-led development can only be granted through entry of a site in Part 2 of the Councils' Brownfield Land Register. Other 'minor' residential-led development on previously developed land can be granted Permission in Principle through an application route. The Government is currently reviewing the potential for Permission in Principle to be applied to major developments via the application route.

Provisions for applications for Permissions in Principle (PiP's) for minor residential development of land have been in place since 1st June 2018. A consequent application for Technical Details Consent (TDC) has then to be determined in accordance with the Permission in Principle; the result would be the grant of full planning permission.

Permission in Principle can also be triggered when suitable sites are entered in Part 2 of the Council's Brownfield Land Register (subject to undertaking necessary publicity, notification and consultation). Technical Details Consent can be obtained via an application process in accordance with the Permission in Principle granted via a Part 2 Brownfield Register.

Community involvement procedures will follow the requirements set out in the relevant regulations and order. The current procedures and consultation/publicity/notification requirements that the Council will adhere to are set out in:

- Town & Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017
- Town & Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017,

6. Involving the Community – Planning Applications

Key requirements include the need for site notices; website-based notices; directly consulting key persons, bodies or authorities (where necessary). The time periods for consultations are also specified e.g. publicity must be undertaken for at least 14-21 days depending upon the Permission in Principle route.

Prior Approval

This process is for proposals where applicants must submit either a prior approval or prior notification form to the Council prior to a development taking place which represent 'permitted development'. This can include proposals for larger householder extensions, demolition and telecommunications. The Council will adhere to the specific notification and publicity requirements for individual proposals in accordance with the most up to date legislation at the relevant time of the application. At present, applications for prior approval for development which are subject to permitted development rights will be processed in accordance with Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Forms of Notification of Planning Applications

1. Newspaper advertisement

The following categories of application are publicised by way of newspaper advertisement:-

- Applications including an Environmental Statement.
- Departures from the Development Plan.
- Applications affecting public rights of way.
- Major applications (see above).
- Applications for Listed Building consent.
- Applications for development affecting the setting of a Listed Building or a Conservation Area.

2. Site notices

Brightly coloured site notices are displayed in connection with all application categories with the exception of Prior Notifications, Non-Material Minor Amendments and Lawful Development Certificates (for proposed development).

3. Notification by letter

Occupiers of properties, whether residential or business or community services (e.g. schools, churches, community halls) are notified by letter of all application categories with the exception of Non-Material Minor Amendments and Lawful Development Certificates (for proposed development). Notification by letter involves those neighbouring properties directly adjoining the application site boundary.

Content of notification letters, site notices and newspaper advertisements

All the published material contains a description of the application, where it can be viewed, the timescale for responses and the offer of an appointment with the case officer to discuss the matter. Information is also given about the Council's Consultations Charter relating to planning applications, a copy of which is enclosed with the notification letters. The Charter also refers to the Local Code of Conduct for the Planning Process which explains the decision-making procedures, copies of which are available at Council offices and also on the Council's website.

Policies and procedures for publicising planning applications can change over time in response to changes in national legislation, policy and guidance. Therefore applications will be publicised in accordance with current legislation, policy and practice at the time the application is being processed.

The most up to date arrangements for publicising planning applications can be found on the Council's website.

Other ways in which information can be obtained on applications being considered by the Council are:

- **Weekly List of Planning Applications.** This is made available on the Council's website and contains basic information about the location of the proposed development and a description of it.

6. Involving the Community – Planning Applications

- **Availability of copies of applications.** Hard copies of applications can be viewed, by appointment, at the Council's Civic Centre. To conform with the Government's targets for electronic communication, the Council provides all information on 'live' planning applications and those determined after 2010 on the Council's website.
- **Parish and Town Councils.** Parish and Town Councils are notified as part of the consultation process and invited to inspect applications on the Council's website.
- **Exhibitions and presentations.** For applications which would involve major new development affecting a substantial area of the district, e.g. large new housing estates, employment sites or town centre redevelopment, plans are displayed in an appropriate location close to where the development is taking place.
- **Home visits.** People notified of applications, but who are unable to visit Council Offices to view plans because of mobility problems can arrange for a home visit by the Case Officer.
- **Officer meetings.** Case officers are available, by appointment, at the Civic Centre to meet people wishing to discuss applications in which they have an interest.

Responding to Publicity about Applications

All comments which people wish to be taken into account in the decision-making process need to be made in writing either by letter, email or by completing a comments form available at Council offices. Anyone can respond to a planning application consultation; responses are not limited to those parties that have been directly notified.

Timescale for responses

21 days is allowed for responses to initial notification of applications and a minimum of 10 days for re-notification on amendments.

6. Involving the Community – Planning Applications

Consultation on Planning Applications and other applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning Acts

This part of the process includes both the statutory requirements for consultation prior to decision being made on applications, most of which are included in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and non-statutory consultation with organisations with expertise to contribute to the process.

Pre-Application Advice. Planning officers are available to offer pre-application advice by telephone, meeting or in writing. Meetings are based on a 'Duty Officer' system. There are fees for pre-application advice for specified types of developments, which the Council may update over time. The most up to date pre application charges will be publicised on the Council website. Other professional 'in-house' advice can be made available at this stage for example from Landscape Architects, Arboriculturalists, and the Council's Ecologist.

Article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 relates to the duty to respond to consultations within 21 days, which is an appropriate target in relation to the provision of pre-application advice.

External advice from other organisations (such as the Environment Agency, Natural England or Highways England) should be sought separately and may be subject to the pre-application charges of those organisations. External consultees, such as the Canal and River Trust and Historic England, welcome consultation at an informal level where issues may benefit from their early involvement.

Staffordshire County Council Transportation, Education, Flood Risk, Historic Environment and Planning (for waste, minerals and County matters) teams provide pre-application services that may incur a charge. The most up to date information should be sought from the County Council website and relevant teams.

Application Consultations – Statutory. Consultees are notified as part of the consultation process and invited to inspect applications on the Council's website. The Highway Authority also provides advice via visits to the District Council by Highway Engineers, when required.

Application Consultation – Non-Statutory. This includes both internal (other Council departments) and external bodies with expertise relevant to particular types of application. Consultees are notified as part of the consultation process and invited to inspect applications on the Council's website.

The means of publicity and consultation may need to be varied in response to circumstances beyond the Councils control. For instance, Government - imposed restrictions on movement and social interaction as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given that the Councils' approach to publicity and consultation reflects legislative requirements, any changes will be in accordance with temporary or updated legislation. If means of publicity such as site notices are restricted, the Council will notify anyone that is

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likely to have an interest in a relevant planning or listed building consent application through a notice on the Council website (or any alternative means as required by legislation).

In the instance of Government-imposed restrictions, the Council will limit/suspend face-to-face meetings. The Council will continue to communicate and engage via alternative methods (where appropriate technology is available) including virtual presentations, video conferencing, teleconferences/telephone appointments and email.

Where remote means of communication are not possible (or are likely to be ineffective) the Council will endeavour to attend in person meetings with organisations and stakeholders, if requested. These will need to be arranged in a location that is compliant with any restrictions that may be in place at the relevant time and undertaken in accordance with such restrictions. For example, social distancing was required during the COVID-19 pandemic and shielding of vulnerable groups which may have included staff members.

Any changes to the means of publicity and consultation used will be clearly communicated and explained via available channels, including the Council website.

The decision making process

The Council's published Local Code of Conduct for the Planning Process explains how decisions are made on planning applications. It sets out which decisions are delegated to officers and how comments made as a result of publicity on applications are considered, in most cases, by the Planning Control Committee before making a decision. The provision for people to address the Planning Control Committee when it is meeting to determine applications is also explained. Finally, the local Consultations Charter which is sent out to people notified of planning applications includes a list of relevant planning considerations at a general level and what are not, in order to assist people in making comments which can be taken into account in the decision-making process. Information received from Statutory Consultees as a result of consultations will be taken into account when drafting any necessary conditions and Section 106 agreements.

Process following a decision

A letter is sent to everyone who has submitted written comments (whether by post or e-mail), advising them of the decision on the planning application (whether or not it was determined by officers under delegated powers or at Committee). Copies of planning decisions are provided as a matter of procedure. The decision, if taken at Committee, is also publicised in the Committee minutes on the Council's website.

Appealing a decision

If an applicant has an application refused or disagrees with conditions attached to the granting of permission they have a right of appeal. This right of appeal does not extend to a person notified of an application – known as a third party.

If and when an appeal is received, anyone who wrote in on the application is notified in writing of the appeal, and information is provided on how to make their views known (either in writing in a written representations appeal, or in person at an informal hearing or public inquiry). There is no need to re-submit previous information sent in on the planning application as all this information will be copied and sent to the Inspectorate. Councillors are also notified.

6. Involving the Community – Planning Applications

Where an informal hearing or Public Inquiry is to be held to consider an appeal a site notice is erected and the appeal is publicised in the press, including the date, time and the location of the hearing/Inquiry. Third parties are able to attend both informal hearings and Inquires and speak subject to the discretion of the Inspector, who may limit the number of individuals wishing to make very similar points.

7. Management and Monitoring

The Council's Planning Teams seek to adopt a positive approach to involving external groups and individuals in planning processes. By ensuring that community involvement is targeted and realistic the Council aims to make the best use of the resources available to it, recognising that existing networks linked to other plans and programmes will be particularly valuable. In determining the most appropriate and effective means of community involvement in different instances, the Council will take into consideration costs and benefits to ensure best value is achieved. The costs of community involvement will be met from dedicated budgets. Where possible, joint community consultation and engagement will be undertaken. Community involvement in the Development Management process, following procedures in Section 6, is an integral part of the processing of planning applications.

The management of resources and their availability for community involvement will be dependent on the progress made on the preparation of relevant documents. Monitoring progress in plan making and an assessment of the success of various community involvement exercises will inform the Council on the need to review, and where necessary, amend the SCI.

The effectiveness of the Councils' publicity and consultation methods can be monitored and evaluated in various ways including providing the opportunity for comments on the consultation methods themselves as part of representations submitted; responding to specific concerns that may be raised during a consultation process and learning from this to improve the next consultation event e.g. requests for additional information or public exhibition locations; reports from the Communications team on the 'reach' and response rates e.g. number of 'visits' to the website arising from corporate social media posts and the degree of local newspaper/social media coverage; and monitoring attendance levels of public exhibitions. Feedback from local Councillors is also an important source of information for evaluating effectiveness.

The SCI will be reviewed as appropriate in the light of changes in national legislation and policy, joint working experiences and consultation with stakeholders. This might include changes to reflect best practice in community/stakeholder involvement, managing expectations more effectively or addressing specific problems or concerns in relation to joint working. We are legally required to review the SCI at least every five years.

It is the Governments' intention to move towards the reporting of key Local Plan information and monitoring (including developer contributions) in an Open Data format. This has recently been tested via the Brownfield Registers. Open Data standards effectively seek to ensure that each Local Authority is reporting key information in the same way (using compatible software) so that the data can be readily gathered, combined and analysed by the Government. This is likely to require some additional resources in order to be compliant with the required Open Data standards (as learnt from experience with the Brownfield Register).

8. Data Protection

For many aspects of the planning process we will need to gather personal data. Our reasons for this, and the type of data required will vary depending upon the particular procedure and stage in the process.

When we collect such data we will ensure that we do so in a clear and legally compliant manner to fulfil the requirements of current data protection legislation. The relevant Privacy Notices can be found on the data protection pages of the Councils website at www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/privacynotices and can also be found on all forms which we use for consultation purposes.