

Statement of Community Involvement (2016) (Amended Feb 2019)

Temporary update in response to Covid-19 guidance (July 2020)

The Government has issued Planning Guidance stating that local planning authorities should make any temporary amendments that are necessary to their Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to ensure that there are no conflicts between particular commitments within the document and the Government's current Covid-19 guidance on social distancing. The Council will review this update and issue amendments, as necessary. It is intended that the Council will return to operating in accordance with previous practices as early as possible, within the bounds of Governmental advice

The table below highlights those sections of the SCI which are therefore subject to a temporary amendment and explains, in each instance, the nature of that amendment.

Section of SCI	Issue	Update
Figures 4,5,6 (Potential involvement and publicity methods at different stages of Plan production) pp. 16-19 Appendix 3 (Description of community involvement techniques) pp. 37-38	The lists of various involvement methods presented as options include those involving face-to-face engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parish/Town Council workshops - Stakeholder focus groups - Stakeholder meetings - Resident & stakeholder workshops - Public exhibitions 	These methods will not currently be options as regards plan making consultations. Alternative options are discussed later in this update.
	These tables list as potential publicity methods the provision of hard copy documents and posters advertising consultations at libraries within the district, and provision of documents at the Council offices. Many libraries are currently closed and the Council offices are only open for essential visits.	Due to the current closure of the Council offices, they will not currently be used for making hard copy documents available for inspection. Libraries will not currently be used for making hard copy documents available for inspection. Alternative options for making hard copies available are discussed later in this update.

<p>Paragraph 3.10 (The pre-application stage; Community involvement in Planning Proposals and Applications) p.10</p>	<p>This paragraph refers developers to the Council's Community Involvement Protocol, which provides details of a range of community and stakeholder involvement methods that could be employed during the pre-application stage. Again, many of these methods focus on face-to-face engagement.</p>	<p>It is not currently expected that developers use face-to-face engagement methods at the pre-application stage.</p> <p>There are a range of other techniques that could be employed, as discussed in the Community Involvement Protocol, and later in this document.</p> <p>The Council is happy to advise applicants on suitable pre-application consultation methods on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3.15 (The application stage – site notices; Publicising planning applications) p.28</p>	<p>This paragraph sets out the different ways in which the Council publicises planning applications. It states that, where appropriate, site notices will be displayed.</p>	<p>In light of the ongoing controls in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, where there is a statutory requirement to display a site notice this will be undertaken. We will practice social distancing, minimise the number of officers who will undertake this and will use appropriate protective equipment to minimise risk.</p> <p>The statutory requirement includes applications that affect the character or appearance of a conservation area or the setting of a listed building; that are a 'major application' i.e. 10 or more dwellings or 1000sqm or more for non-residential; where the application is contrary to the Development Plan; that are accompanied by an Environmental Statement; that affect a public right of way; or are submitted by the Council. The Council will also advertise by site notice when the proposal is directly adjacent to land where the landowner's address is unknown i.e. agricultural land. In order to minimise the number of journeys to erect the required site notices it is likely that there will be a delay in the Council being able to determine the application.</p> <p>For further details, please visit: https://www.broadland.gov.uk/info/200644/coronavirus/638/development_management_planning</p>
<p>Paragraph 3.26 (The application stage – viewing application details; Commenting on planning applications)</p>	<p>This paragraph states that letters of representation are retained on the application file which is open to public inspection.</p>	<p>Due to the current closure of the Council offices, planning application documents and representations will not currently be able to be viewed at this location.</p>

		<p>All documents and representations will continue to be made available via the Council's website.</p> <p>For further details, please visit: https://www.broadland.gov.uk/info/200644/coronavirus/638/development_management_planning</p>
<p>Paragraph 3.27 (The application stage – speaking at planning committee; Commenting on planning applications)</p>	<p>This paragraph sets out the procedure should a member of the public wish to speak at Planning Committee.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to run Planning Committee, as scheduled, but this will now be on a virtual platform (Zoom) and as such the Committee will not be held at the Council Offices during this time.</p> <p>Public speaking will continue to take place on agenda items. However, this will now be in a virtual format.</p> <p>For further details, please visit: https://www.broadland.gov.uk/info/200644/coronavirus/638/development_management_planning</p>
<p>Appendix 4: Neighbourhood Planning Support, pp. 39-40</p>	<p>This section sets out the range of support that officers are able to provide to Neighbourhood Plan groups in the district. The areas of support listed include various forms of face-to-face engagement, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting with parish/town councillors; - Officer attendance at meetings; - Neighbourhood Plan Network meetings held at the Council offices; - Providing training through a variety of means; 	<p>These areas of support are not currently options where they involve face-to-face interaction.</p> <p>As an alternative measure, Council officers will be happy to attend (or host, if necessary) any virtual meetings that Neighbourhood Plan groups may be holding, in order to provide advice and guidance.</p> <p>Officers will also issue a quarterly news bulletin, via email, to Neighbourhood Plan groups whilst social distancing restrictions are in place, as an alternative to holding Network meetings.</p>

Alternative options in relation to community involvement in plan making

The following sets out temporary, alternative measures that will be considered as options whilst Government guidelines on social distancing and interaction remain in place.

For all consultations in relation to plan making, the Council will consider whether it would be appropriate and feasible to undertake safe and inclusive community and stakeholder involvement. If it is determined that this can be carried out, then the following measures will be considered as options whilst restrictions are in place:

- a) ***Extension to normal consultation time period*** - The Council may decide to extend the normal consultation time period (as set out in Figure 7 of the SCI) in relation to any plan making consultations.

This is because Covid-19 guidance may restrict the ability of certain stakeholder bodies to issue a timely response (e.g. community groups / parish councils that may not be fully operational or have the ability to issue a corporate response within this time). Any such consultation extension will be explained and publicised accordingly.

- b) ***Use of virtual engagement methods*** - During early stages of plan making (stages 1 and 2 of DPD production – Figure 4 of the SCI; stage 1 of SPD production – Figure 5), the Council will consider whether it is appropriate and feasible to use virtual methods to engage with community and stakeholder bodies. Methods to be considered include online exhibitions, virtual presentations and virtual meetings.

- c) ***Availability of hard copy documents*** - Consultation documents and related information will still be available to view and download from the Council website. The Council will also include, in its consultation publicity, details of how those without internet capability can access hard copies of the consultation documents. The SCI currently includes a range of publicity measures, including non-digital measures such as articles in local media and posters in local notice boards, which will still be considered as options and which can include details of how to get in touch.

For any queries on this temporary update, please email ldf@broadland.gov.uk. For further information about how the Council is responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, please visit www.broadland.gov.uk.