

## South Somerset District Council

### Local Plan Review (LPR)

#### Strategy for Public Consultation on the Issues and Options (Regulation 18)

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Consultation on the Local Plan Review (LPR) must be prepared in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2 It is proposed that the Issues and Options consultation takes place over a period of 8 weeks beginning on 19<sup>th</sup> October and ending on 14<sup>th</sup> December. Whilst the statutory requirement is to consult for a period of at least 6 weeks it is considered that a longer consultation period will allow the wider community the opportunity to respond more fully and for the Council to undertake a number of events.
- 1.3 The consultation will commence once the draft document has been signed off by the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Board and District Executive Committee.

#### 2. Consultation Vehicles

- 2.1 A number of consultation vehicles will be used during the course of the consultation period. Table 1 below identifies those to be used during the process. The Consultation Brief is attached as Appendix A.

**Table 1: Consultation Vehicles**

Consultation Vehicle	Comments	Resources
iNovem System: Emails / letters to all consultees Online response facility Comments form	Consultees on database include: Town and Parish Councils Local organisations and businesses Statutory Consultees Agents / developers Members of the public Neighbouring authorities Prescribed Bodies (Duty-to-Cooperate)	Spatial Policy Team
Notices in local news papers	Blackmore Vale Magazine Chard and Ilminster News Western Gazette Fosse Way Magazine	Spatial Policy Team Policy and planning admin
SSDC web site	Link to iNovem Links to evidence base Copy of any simplified summary / leaflet	Spatial Policy Team
Easy to read summary leaflet	A4 leaflet summarising the Issues and Options document in an attractive and easy to understand format.	Spatial Policy Team with graphics support from David Blackwell

<sup>1</sup> South Somerset District Council Statement of Community Involvement, December 2015  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/806406/statement\\_of\\_community\\_involvement\\_final\\_adopted\\_dec\\_2015\\_.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/806406/statement_of_community_involvement_final_adopted_dec_2015_.pdf)

PR / social media	Press release Twitter Facebook	Communications Officer
Council Offices and Libraries	Consultation documents to be made available for inspection at all District Council offices and local libraries across the district.	Spatial Policy Team / area development
Members drop-in session	All elected members to be invited to a drop in session to be held late afternoon / early evening at Brympton Way.  Opportunity to discuss consultation document with officers.	Spatial Policy Team / Development Management
Public exhibitions / drop-in sessions	Open to all including Town and Parish Councillors and elected members. Static exhibition and opportunity to discuss issues with officers. Eight events to be held two in each of the four Areas.  Suggested that events will run from 4pm until 7pm in order to enable those who work or go to school to attend.	Spatial Policy Team with support from Area Development
Duty to Co-operate	Prescribed bodies to be consulted via initial email however specific meeting/s to be arranged as necessary particularly with West Dorset DC.	Spatial Policy Team
Equalities Group	Attendance of a meeting to set out key issues.	Dave Crisfield/ Spatial Policy

### 3. Resources

- 3.1 The Spatial Policy Team will be required to prepare the content of the consultation materials, the opportunity to use David Blackwell for the design and presentation work has been explored and it has been agreed that he can assist, he will be paid for from the Spatial Policy Team budget. Input from external printers will be required for the exhibition boards.
- 3.2 The Spatial Policy Team members will be required to man the drop-in sessions which will extend into the early evening. Support from the Area Development Teams may be sought to assist with the booking of venues. Area Development attendance at drop in sessions would be helpful.
- 3.3 Staff resources will be required during and beyond the consultation period to record and summarize comments received. Those comments not made directly into iNovem will need to be put into the system. This will require Spatial Policy Team resources.
- 3.4 A schedule of the main issues raised during the consultation will need to be produced indicating how they have informed the Preferred Options.

## South Somerset Local Plan Review (LPR) Brief for community consultation

<b>Title:</b> South Somerset Local Plan Review – consultation programme	
<p>Link with corporate agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required as part of the statutory Local Plan process.</li> <li>• To publicise and give an opportunity for community input into the initial stages of the LPR.</li> <li>• The Local Plan help to achieve four of the Council’s key aims set out in the Council Plan 2016-21: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase the focus on Jobs and Economic Development.</li> <li>○ Protect and enhance the quality of our environment.</li> <li>○ Enable housing to meet all needs.</li> <li>○ Improve health and reduce health inequalities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Background</b>	<p>The Issues and Options consultation document highlights key spatial planning issues that have emerged through the updated evidence base and internal monitoring mechanisms followed by options for addressing those issues. This is the first opportunity for wide ranging community engagement on the LPR.</p>
<b>Benefits / Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with statutory regulations.</li> <li>• An opportunity for the community and statutory bodies to comment on the issues and options arising from the evidence base and monitoring.</li> <li>• An opportunity to inform the public about the role of spatial planning in shaping sustainable communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To deliver a programme of public and local stakeholder consultation and involvement in accordance with the South Somerset Statement of Community Involvement and General Equality Duty.</li> <li>• Test identified issues and options.</li> <li>• Build upon the Council’s reputation for high quality engagement and continuous community involvement in shaping sound spatial planning policies.</li> <li>• To inform those who were involved in the adopted Local Plan process and give those who have yet to engage in plan making an opportunity to be involved should they wish to be.</li> </ul>
<b>Deliverables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Series of actions to achieve the objectives and benefits set out above.</li> <li>• Responses to the Issues and Options consultation document either in raising objection or expressing support.</li> <li>• Communications materials to support the above.</li> <li>• A summary report of consultation response to be reported along with the Preferred Options document.</li> </ul>

<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A programme agreed by Local Development Scheme Board and District Executive to be delivered by the Spatial Policy Team - Lead Officer Jo Wilkins.</li> <li>• Staffing from in house service teams primarily Spatial Policy Team and from Area Development at public drop-in sessions.</li> <li>• Communications materials will be produced internally.</li> <li>• Delivery will be varied depending on the media channel being utilised.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public engagement based upon Issues and Options consultation document and materials drawn from it as basis for feedback and involvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Exclusions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minerals and Waste &amp; Transport Planning dealt with by Somerset County Council</li> </ul>
<b>Success criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation strategy agreed by Local Development Scheme Board and District Executive</li> <li>• Process fulfils the legal requirements and LPR review progresses to the next stage.</li> <li>• Positive feedback from the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time – Local Development Scheme sets out a challenging timetable for LPR.</li> <li>• Officer resources (Planning Policy officers, admin, Area Development Teams, David Blackwell).</li> <li>• Process needs to be proportionate.</li> </ul>
<b>Key dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme cannot begin until Issues and Options document has been completed.</li> </ul>
<b>Key assumptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer time available in kind from appropriate teams for input during the lead in time and during the consultation process.</li> </ul>
<b>Risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of potential changes to national policy</li> <li>• Non compliance with statutory regulations and SCI. ACTION: Check Regulations and SCI</li> <li>• Raised expectations from stakeholders not realised. ACTION: use of communications to manage expectations</li> <li>• Use of iNovem system may be off putting to some, particularly hard to reach groups. ACTION: ensure multiple routes for input including letters or reports on behalf of organisations or groups.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree brief for community consultation.</li> <li>• Confirm consultation programme and prepare materials.</li> <li>• Draft programme of events</li> </ul>