

# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Cabinet – 18 November 2025

### Statement of Community Involvement 2025

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**Accountable member:**

Cllr Mike Collins, Cabinet Member Planning and Building Control

**Accountable officer:**

Tracey Birkinshaw, Director of Planning & Building Control

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:**

Yes

**Executive summary:**

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the community can engage with the planning system. There is a statutory requirement to review SCIs every five years. The last SCI was published in 2023. Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewksbury Borough Council are progressing the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). Each of the three Councils has their own SCI. It is considered an opportune time to ensure that the three SCIs are aligned in the way that they reference the SLP, including any engagement and consultation. This report deals with Cheltenham Borough Council's SCI. Once adopted, when preparing Local Development Documents (other than the SCI), the authority must also comply with the SCI.

## **Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. is asked to adopt the revised Scheme of Community Involvement, attached to the report at Appendix 3 to take effect immediately; and**
  - 2. delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Building Control, to prepare the Statement of Community Involvement for publication correcting any minor errors such as spelling, grammar, typographical and formatting changes that do not affect the substantive content of the Statement of Community Involvement.**
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## **1. Implications**

### **1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

None arising from this report.

**Signed off by:** Jon Whitlock, Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer, [jon.whitlock@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:jon.whitlock@cheltenham.gov.uk))

### **1.2 Legal implications**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 provide guidance on the preparation and adoption of a SCI.

Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires all local planning authorities to adopt a SCI. The SCI is a local development document, and the Council may at any time prepare a revision of all local development documents including the SCI. Under Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), local planning authorities must review Statements of Community Involvement at least once every five years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) do not require a revised SCI to go through an examination process and there is no requirement for local planning authorities to consult when reviewing and updating their Statement of Community Involvement.

Under Section 19(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), in preparing the Local Plan the authority must also comply with their SCI.

The revised SCI sets out how the Council will meet the statutory requirements for consulting on various types of planning documents and through the development management process.

When adopted, the SCI must be published on the Council's website. Once adopted the revised version of the SCI ensures that the Council's approach to community involvement with regards to planning is in accordance with national legislation and is therefore legally compliant.

**Signed off by:** Charlotte Lockwood, Locum Senior Lawyer,  
[legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### **1.3 Environmental and climate change implications**

By accounting for local knowledge and facilitating community opinion into planning, this can accelerate behavioural change and adaptation measures. By ensuring communities can influence decision-making in local planning, this can provide a sense of ownership and therefore help to overcome barriers and unlock solutions (such as community owned renewable energy projects), shaping net zero resilient places, adequate planning for net zero energy infrastructure and access to the natural environment.

**Signed off by:** Maizy McCann, Climate Officer, [Maizy.mcann@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:Maizy.mcann@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities**

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

Taking care of your money

### **1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications**

The SCI in paragraphs 1.10 to 1.14 sets out that the Council recognises that many members of the community are hard to reach or engage with for a variety of reasons and the commitment that we will try to modify traditional consultation methods where appropriate to engage with such groups and individuals. The emerging Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) will be accompanied by Equalities and Health Impact Assessments.

### **1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review**

The statutory requirement is to review the SCI within five years of its adoption.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The SCI sets out how Cheltenham Borough Council will seek the involvement of the community in the planning of the area. All Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required by law to prepare a SCI and SCIs should be reviewed every 5 years. The SCI is a statement of how Cheltenham Borough Council will involve interested parties in matters relating to development in their area.
- 2.2 The previous SCI dates from 2023. The three Councils (Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council) are producing the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). It is considered an opportune time to ensure that the three SCIs are aligned in the way that they reference the SLP, including any engagement and consultation. This report deals with Cheltenham Borough Council's SCI.

## **3 Reasons for recommendations**

- 3.1 The Planning process has to comply with a variety of legal procedures in terms of public consultation and engagement. The SCI sets out how the Council will address these and how the public can expect to be engaged and kept informed. It also sets out local standards for consultation and engagement.
- 3.2 The SCI applies to planning policy including the production of the Development Plan, i.e. the SLP, as well as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which provide local guidance. The SCI also sets out how Cheltenham Borough Council will involve communities in relation to the development management process such as planning applications and related applications. Finally, the SCI sets out how Cheltenham Borough Council will support communities in undertaking neighbourhood planning.
- 3.3 Of relevance to the SCI is the recognition of the increased use of electronic communication as a way of notifying and consulting with communities. Amongst other aspects, the SCI sets out the benefits of consultation and principles for public involvement.

## **4 Alternative options considered**

- 4.1 Because the SCI is a statutory requirement, there is no suitable alternative to its production.

## **5 Consultation and feedback**

- 5.1 There is no statutory requirement for consultation.

## **6 Key risks**

- 6.1 As set out in Appendix 1, the risk can be avoided through having an up-to-date

## Statement of Community Involvement.

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### **Report author:**

John Spurling, Planning Policy Manager (Interim), [john.spurling@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:john.spurling@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Equality Impact Assessment – Screening
- iii. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

### **Background information:**

N/A

## Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1	If the Council does not have an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement, then it will not be performing part of its statutory duty	Director of Planning and Building Control	5	3	15	Avoid the risk	Close	This risk will be mitigated by the Cabinet decision.	18 November 2025

## Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (Screening)

### 1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

#### a. Person responsible for this Equality Impact Assessment

Officer responsible: John Spurling	Service Area: Planning
Title: Planning Policy Manager (Interim),	Date of assessment: 14 October 2025
Signature: <i>John Spurling</i>	

#### b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Policy

If other, please specify:

#### c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Is this new or existing?	Already exists and is being reviewed
Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project	
The three Councils (Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council) are producing the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). It is considered an opportune time to ensure that the three SCIs are aligned in the way that they reference the SLP. This report deals with Cheltenham Borough Council's SCI.	

#### d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:	To ensure that all interested members of the community get involved in the consultation process, whether that be responding to a planning application or commenting on a planning policy consultation.
Objectives:	As above

Outcomes:	As per aims
Benefits:	As per aims

e. What are the expected impacts?	
Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.	Yes
Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?	No impact expected
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Cheltenham Borough Council already has an SCI from 2023. This revised SCI focuses on seeking to align the way that consultation and engagement on the SLP is referenced.	

**If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.**

f. Identify next steps as appropriate	
Stage Two required	Choose an item.
Owner of Stage Two assessment	
Completion date for Stage Two assessment	

**Please move on to Stage 2 if required ([intranet link](#)).**