

RURAL ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

15 JUNE 2011

REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

MELTON STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks Committee approval of the Draft Melton Statement of Community Involvement for the purpose of public consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the Melton Statement of Community Involvement be approved for consultation.**
- 2.2 **That the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods be given delegated powers to make minor amendments following that consultation and subsequently publish the Melton Statement of Community Involvement 2011.**

1.2 KEY ISSUES

- 1.3 Community engagement is an integral part of the spatial planning system. Good community engagement provides opportunities for people to shape the place in which they live, creating better and more sustainable communities.
- 1.4 We need to engage with the community during our plan making. Early and effective community engagement will enable people to participate in identifying key local issues and determine ways to address them. If we get this right, we get better plans.
- 1.5 A Melton Statement of Community Involvement was prepared and adopted in 2006, following examination by the Planning Inspectorate. That document sets out how, when and where the council will consult with local and statutory stakeholders in the process of planning for the local authority area.
- 1.6 There have been changes to the planning system and the regulations that govern the production the Development Plan Documents since the Melton Statement of Community Involvement was prepared. Whilst the consultation we have undertaken to date has met the requirements of the 2006 Statement and the new regulations, a revised Statement of Community Involvement is now necessary to reflect the change in 'stages' required by new legislation (set out at 6.2).
- 1.7 The Draft Melton Statement of Community Involvement 2011 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.8 The Statement should ensure that stakeholders and all sections of the community, including local groups and organisations are informed and actively involved throughout the process of preparing LDF documents. The Statement also describes how we will involve the community when planning applications are considered. The current statutory requirements are limited to public notices in the press, on-site or near site notices and notification of neighbours.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement will be set out the standards we want to achieve when we involve the community throughout the process of preparing documents, what methods we will use and at what stages we will consult the community.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Melton Statement of Community Involvement 2011 is substantially based on the Melton Statement of Community Involvement 2006. It has been prepared by the Policy team with support from officers of the Wellbeing team at Leicestershire County Council. Advice has also been taken to ensure the new legislative requirements are being met given the lack of scrutiny at an Examination for the Statement of Community Involvement itself, but the scrutiny it will face at the Core Strategy Examination.
- 5.2 The Melton Statement of Community Involvement 2011 will be made available in electronic format only (on the Melton Borough Council website and via email), although in limited circumstances printed versions will be prepared. The costs for these will be met within the Melton Local Development Framework Budget.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

- 6.1 A statement of community involvement is required to be prepared by a local planning authority under Section 18(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, changes to the system are such that the Statement of Community Involvement is no longer considered a development plan document and is therefore no longer submitted to the Secretary of State or the subject of an Examination.
- 6.2 Other changes to the legislation are reflected within the Statement; Community and stakeholder engagement is now based on 'pre-production' and 'Publication' of a Core Strategy prior to Submission and Examination, rather than 'Evidence Gathering', 'Issues and Options' and 'Preferred Options'. This is subtle difference, and as a result the Melton Statement of Community Involvement is based substantially on that from 2006 although the opportunity has been taken to alter the 'feel' of the document so it is more appropriate to the community, rather than directed at a Planning Inspector. However, the Soundness of the Core Strategy will still be judged against whether we have undertaken consultation in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement and regulatory requirements for appropriate consultation.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 There are no direct links to Community Safety.

8.0 EQUALITIES

- 8.1 The Statement of Community Involvement intends to engage hard to reach groups.

9.0 RISKS

- 9.1 The risks associated with this report are shown in the table below:

Probability

↓

Very High A				
High B				
Significant C				
Low D				
Very Low E				1
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

→
Impact

Risk No.	Description
1	Development Plan Documents fail to comply with MSCI
2	
3	
4	
5	

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are no direct links to Climate Change issues.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The 2006 SCI underwent formal consultation and no significant changes have been made to the 2011 SCI to undermine the principles established through that activity.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 The Melton Statement of Community Involvement 2011 provides for community engagement activity across the Borough.

Contact Officer: David Pendle
 Date: 19 May 2011
 Appendices: Appendix A – Melton Statement of Community Involvement
 Background Papers:
 Reference: