

Summary of Comments made on the Consultation Draft version of the Peterborough Statement of Community Involvement (May 2012)

A total of 58 separate comments were received on the Consultation Draft version of the Statement of Community Involvement. There was some overall support for the document and individual sections, and no fundamental objection to it as a whole. The majority of comments were seeking changes to specific sections, paragraphs or appendices. All of the comments can be seen at <http://consult.peterborough.gov.uk/portal/planning/peterborough/sci/s2c>

This is a summary of the main points made, arranged in chapter order, together with the council's response (references to paragraph numbers are to those in the Consultation Draft version, which are not necessarily the same in the final version).

Chapter 1: Introduction, and general comments	
Summary of main comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough in the document about the way that the council will engage with people who cannot read, are blind or have significant visual problems, or are deaf. Various specific sentences, paragraphs and tables highlighted where the council would need to make material available in a different format, instead of relying on written text, plans etc. • In some places (for example, Appendices 4 and 5, Figures 3 and 5) the font size is too small for people with visual impairments. • There needs to be some consistency over the use of the phrases "officer", "planning officer" and "planning policy officer" throughout. • It would be sensible to change the structure of the document so it deals with planning applications etc after the local development framework and neighbourhood planning. • In paragraph 1.0.12, will the council listen to people's concerns?
Response	<p>New section added into chapter 1 to explain steps we will take to meet the needs of members of the community with disabilities – for example, to supply information to people who are blind or have visual impairments, and to record their comments or responses on a planning matter, to provide web pages that are compliant with international accessibility guidelines, to use venues for meetings and exhibitions that are accessible for all, and to make hearing loops available at meetings of committee, cabinet and council. Figures 3 and 5 enlarged so font size is larger. Use of the term "officer" has been standardised throughout wherever appropriate. Structure of the document is considered appropriate, so no change needed. No change necessary to para 1.0.12.</p>

Chapter 2: The pre-application process, planning applications and planning compliance	
Summary of main comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rules for speaking at Committee should be changed to allow less time for ward councillors to speak; to give the Committee the discretion to allow more time for other speakers; and to give objectors the chance to rebut misleading or erroneous statements made by applicants, agents or officers. • You should put the comments on planning applications from statutory consultees on your website. • Regarding section 2.3 (Developer pre-application consultation with the community), the council should only require consultation that matches the national thresholds and requirements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding section 2.3 (Developer pre-application consultation with the community), the council should require consultation for potential schemes that are much smaller than the suggested national size threshold; and should refer to the size threshold in the main text (not just the Appendix 1). • In section 2.4 it should be made clear that statutory consultees have 21 days to respond from the date they receive all the necessary information (not from the date of first notification). • In table 3 a reference to impact on the environment should be added.
Response	<p>Rules for speaking at committee have recently been reviewed and revised, so no further change considered necessary. Comments on planning applications are already placed on our website. Section 2.3 and Appendix 1 amended to take account of the fact that the new duty for developers to consult on proposals before submitting an application have not been brought into effect by the Government. Therefore the text makes it clear this is purely advisory at this stage; it is not possible to set any threshold as a requirement. Footnote has been added to para 2.4.6 to explain when 21 day consultation period starts. Reference to the environment included in table 3.</p>

Chapter 3: How you can be involved in planning for Peterborough's future	
Summary of main comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be a way in which objections made to a plan at one consultation stage should be able to be carried forward to each subsequent stage. • Methods of consultation identified in para 3.2.4 should also appear in para 3.4.1. • Para 3.2.8 should give an indication of the types of locations where documents can be seen e.g. libraries. • The Duty to Co-operate section (para 3.1.14 onwards) provides little comfort that there will be co-operation between neighbouring authorities. • Reference to infrastructure providers and prescribed bodies should be included in the Duty to Co-operate section (para 3.1.14 onwards). • In section 3.1 there should be reference to minerals and waste plans; and the difference between DPDs and SPDs should be explained. • In paras 3.2.18 to 20 there should be a reference to the possibility of further written statements. • Para 3.2.5 should say how long the informal consultation period prior to publishing a DPD might last. • There should be more creativity in the range of consultation and engagement that the council uses.
Response	<p>It is not possible for objections made to a plan at one stage to be carried forward to each subsequent stage, because the law does not allow for this; the content of the plan will change from one stage to another; and some respondents may have died or moved away in the intervening period. Potential methods of consultation in section 3.4 have been extended to match those in 3.2.4. Para 3.2.8 amended to refer to public libraries as places where documents might be available for inspection. Duty to co-operate section is considered appropriate as a summary in the SCI, but has been amended to include reference to prescribed bodies. Para 3.1.1 revised to clarify the distinction between a DPD and an SPD and figure 2 replaced with a new version showing minerals and waste plans. Paras 3.2.18 and 19 clarified regarding the role of written statements at the DPD examination. Para 3.2.5 revised to refer to "at</p>

	least four weeks” for the informal consultation period. Range of consultation techniques are considered appropriate for the nature of consultations and the budget available.
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Chapter 4: Neighbourhood planning in Peterborough

Summary of main comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In para 4.1 (options for local communities) the legal status of documents should be made clear. • In para 4.1 (options for local communities) it should be made clear that the neighbourhood planning option is the only one that is community-led. Also, it is not the case that one option has to be chosen over the other three. • Paragraph 4.2.16 should include a bullet point about green infrastructure. • Paragraph 4.2.18 should include a bullet point about flood mitigation and habitat provision. • Section 4 should clarify who makes the application for a neighbourhood area, if the proposed area covers more than one parish. • Can the representatives of a proposed neighbourhood planning group speak at committee when their application for the designation of an area comes up for decision? • In para 4.3.7 it would be helpful if contact telephone numbers were given, as well, as website addresses, for people who cannot use the web. • In para 4.4.13, surely one hour is not long enough for an exploratory meeting with the council about a possible neighbourhood plan. • In the section for tips on drawing up a neighbourhood plan, (para 4.4.61) there should be references to working with key bodies such as statutory consultees, and disabled people should be added to those groups who might need special efforts to be included.
Response	Figure 3 amended to make clear that neighbourhood planning options are community led; and to make clear the legal status of SPDs and neighbourhood plans and orders. Para 4.1.3 amended to clarify that a local neighbourhood may proceed with more than one option to shape its future. Reference to green infrastructure included in para 4.2.16, and flood mitigation and habitat provision included in para 4.2.18. Telephone numbers added into para 4.3.7. Limit of one hour for a meeting has been deleted from para 4.4.13. References to working with key stakeholders and the need to engage with disabled people have been added to para 4.4.61.

Appendices

Summary of main comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Appendix 1 it might be worth listing all the statutory consultees. • There are quite a few terms that ought to be explained in the Glossary. • In Appendix 1 there is a cross-reference to a section which does not exist elsewhere in the document.
Response	Not appropriate to list all statutory consultees in Appendix 1. Glossary has been expanded with additional definitions of terms used in the document. The error in the cross-reference in appendix 1 has been deleted.

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