

Winchester City Council  
Statement of Community Involvement

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Town and Country Planning (Local Development)  
(England) Regulations 2004

**Pre-Submission Public Participation Statement by  
Winchester City Council, produced in accordance with  
Regulation 28(1) (c), (d) and (e)**

In the preparation of the Winchester City Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and, as required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, a process of preliminary consultation and 'front-loading' was carried out during the period from August 2005 until the publication of a Consultation Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), in March 2006.

This Public Participation Statement indicates who was consulted and the methods used to consult them. The Statement then goes on to set out, in the form of an appendix, a schedule of the issues raised during the six-week period of public consultation held in March-April 2006 and the changes made, following the Council's consideration of all the comments and suggestions submitted at that stage.

Regulation 25: Preliminary Consultation

Our consultation under Regulation 25 was undertaken as indicated through the Council's Local Development Scheme. At that stage, part of our initial contact with partners, stakeholders and local communities of interest was intended to collect information and feedback as to the success, or otherwise, of previous consultation exercises, in order to further develop and shape the methods and practices to be included in a Public Consultation Draft SCI.

Therefore, before preparing the SCI, we consulted with various statutory and other consultees, board members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and City Councillors to gather their views on consultation within and around the area of the Winchester District. This was supplemented by a training seminar for City Councillors and staff, held on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2005.

To alert and engage the wider community, an article setting out the purpose behind the preparation of the SCI and its relationship to the Local Development Framework (LDF) was placed in the Autumn 2006 edition of the Council's 'Perspectives' magazine. This publication is distributed to all households within the District.

As a further part of this preliminary front-loading and to enlarge the scope of the initial consultation process, an SCI questionnaire was widely circulated within the District, during the early part of October 2005 and an online version also made available. Copies of the questionnaire were sent directly to those organisations and individuals who had had previous involvement with the planning policy process, or had expressed an interest in becoming involved.

Leaflets were also printed with the web address of the online questionnaire and e-mails sent with the web address. These leaflets were distributed by a variety of methods which included: making these available at meetings of the City Council attended by the public; at external meetings attended by Council staff and; by distribution at public park and ride car parks.

The questionnaire was, therefore, intended to help open up a wider dialogue with the community and stakeholders, as to how they wished to be involved in the production of the Local Development Framework, other planning and development control issues or the more general range of Council activity.

Responses were received from a range of members of the public and also included some from local residents' associations and specific interest groups. In total, 231 completed questionnaires were subsequently returned, 70 of these having been completed electronically. Respondents were asked to include their postcode when completing the questionnaire and all such postcodes submitted were from within the Winchester District. An analysis of the responses received is attached to the Submission SCI, as Appendix 1, Annex 1c. A specimen copy of the questionnaire form is also attached, at Annex 1d.

As a further part of our initial consultation programme, a 'reaching-out' event was held in Winchester at the beginning of December 2005. This seminar/workshop, which was intended to achieve an added degree of direct engagement with representatives of different community and interest groups from across the District, was well attended and brought together a good mix of both individual and collective interests, including those taking part on behalf of Town and Parish Councils, local businesses, development interests, the police and local providers of education, public transport and other services. A summary note of this Community Event is attached to the Submission SCI, as Appendix 1, Annex 1a.

As a complementary strand in our front-loading approach, we hosted a further 'in-depth' consultation event in December 2005. This took the form of a focus-group meeting, which brought together a comparatively small number of invited representatives from a variety of local stakeholder interests. A summary note of this front-loading event is attached to the Submission SCI, as Appendix 1, Annex 1b.

Both of these events generated a lively and constructive discussion which proved helpful in informing the early stages of the Draft SCI's production.

Additional in-depth engagement with local community and consultative bodies was carried out; with officers attending, making presentations and entering into discussions about the proposed SCI, at meetings of such groups as the Winchester Elderly Care Forum, the Community Safety Partnership and the Natural Environment Forum.

Regulation 25 consultations were also sent to all the necessary bodies, including the Highways Agency, Statutory Undertakers and neighbouring Parish Councils. A full list of the consultations carried out is attached to this Statement, as Appendix A.

### Regulation 26 Consultation

Having produced a Consultation Draft SCI we then carried out a public consultation on the resulting draft document, from March until April 2006, a period of six weeks.

In time for the start of that period, Specific Consultation Bodies, including adjoining local planning authorities and all Parish Councils adjoining the District, as well Town and Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within the District, were sent letters of notification, together with hard copies of the Consultation Draft document.

Other Consultation Bodies, including interest groups, agencies and other organisations, as well as businesses and individuals some of whom were on the planning database from previous consultation exercises, were directly notified of the document's publication. In total, 149 people and organisations received a specific letter, notifying them of the consultation taking place.

As well as being made available at the Council's main offices, the Consultation Draft document was held at all public libraries within the District and, beyond the District, at other main libraries in areas administered by our neighbouring local authorities. The Draft SCI was also made available on the Council's website.

To accompany the Draft document and to attract greater local interest a publicity leaflet was produced and sent to all consultees. Copies of the leaflet and an accompanying poster were sent to all the District's Town and Parish Councils with a request that, where possible, these should be displayed at parish offices, parish halls and other public venues used by the local community.

We placed statutory notices in three local newspapers: The Hampshire Chronicle; The Southampton Evening Echo and; the Portsmouth News. These were displayed on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

We attach a copy of the public notice at Appendix B.

We sent hard copies of the Consultation Draft, together with the proposals matters and details of where the documents were available for inspection, to the bodies listed in Appendix C.

We received a total of 53 separate responses to the publication of our Draft SCI. We also received 31 completed copies of a questionnaire included with the Draft document. We provide a summary of the 192 issues raised in total and the way in which these have been addressed through the Submission SCI, at Appendix D.

This summary is based on reports to the Council's Cabinet in July and August 2006 and the resulting changes. Because the Cabinet wanted to give this matter its undivided attention, it deferred consideration of comments on the Consultation Draft SCI to a special meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2006, at which it was resolved to make various changes to the Draft, prior to making a formal Submission to the Secretary of State.