

Appendix D – Local Plan Review - Overall approach to community & stakeholder engagement

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Government's proposals for a new planning system include removing the requirement to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and there will be a need to outline our overall ambitions and approach to engagement and consultation for the Local Plan Review (LPR) in the Project Initiation Document (PID). In the interim, this strategy sets out our approach to engagement on the LPR at a high level as an appendix of the draft PID. More detailed Community Involvement Plans (CIP) will be prepared for each stage of participation and consultation.

2. Principles to engagement

- 2.1 The SCI currently sets out how the SDNPA will consult with all stakeholders, including local communities, businesses and public bodies, on planning matters. In anticipation of changes to the planning system, revisions to the SCI are proposed to introduce bespoke CIP for each stage of plan consultation to reach audiences as widely as possible. The following key principles are intended to guide all engagement and consultation activity:
- **Timely** engagement and consultation – allowing early and ample opportunity to engage in policy formulation.
 - **Inclusive** engagement and consultation – which is accessible to all those who want to take part including additional outreach to engage with underrepresented groups.
 - **Effective and efficient** for both those responding to a consultation and for the SDNPA processing and analysing responses.
 - **Clear results and accountability**

3. LPR specific engagement requirements

Current regulations

- 3.1 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set two formal consultation periods for Local Plans:
- Regulation 18: Preparation of a Local Plan
 - Regulation 19: Publication of a Local Plan (Pre-Submission)

New planning system

- 3.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 introduces reforms to the plan-making process which will determine formal consultation periods for Local Plans, these are set to comprise:
- Early participation – new requirement to 'notify' and 'invite' participation at the start of the plan-making process
 - First mandatory consultation (8 weeks)
 - Second mandatory consultation (6 weeks)

4. When we will engage and consult on the LPR

- June/July 2024 (min 8 weeks)

- Jan - March 2025 (min 8 weeks)
- Jan - March 2026 (min 8 weeks)

5. What we will consult on

- Summer 2024: scoping & early participation stage on the LPR (scope of LPR, local issues relevant to the plan, preferred ways of being involved)
- Jan - March 2025: draft LPR (Reg 18) including draft policies, allocations (map based)
- Jan – March 2026: preferred approach (Reg 19) policies, allocations and policies map

6. Who we will engage and consult with

- 6.1 Existing regulations require LPAs to notify specific and general consultees, local residents and business as appropriate, inviting representations on the content of local plan documents. The current list of specific and general consultees is listed in Appendix 3 of the SCI.
- 6.2 As set out in the overarching principles, there is a commitment to inclusive engagement and consultation which is accessible to all those who want to take part. This will mean undertaking additional outreach to engage with groups typically underrepresented in Local Plan consultations. Additional measures may include bespoke consultation materials (content and language), bespoke events; both in-person or online and providing a range of ways to respond (e.g. in writing, via online surveys or by transcribed voice notes).

7. How we will engage and consult on the Local Plan Review

- 7.1 We will be **flexible in our approach** to engagement and consultation on the LPR according to the stage of plan-making. Bespoke Community Involvement Plans (CIP) will be prepared for individual engagement and consultation exercises. These will use the key principles of the SCI, will further the aim to engage underrepresented groups and incorporate, as appropriate, best practice in consultation techniques (e.g. the Government digital toolkit when this becomes available).
- 7.2 We will take a **hybrid approach** to engagement and consultation providing both online and in-person opportunities for people to hear about and make comments on the Local Plan Review. We will make use of digital consultation software to extend our reach, provide an easy-to-use platform to comment on and which simplifies and speeds up the analysing stage for officers. We will also hold in-person events and provide paper copies of documents and surveys for those who do not have access to the internet.
- 7.3 We will be **efficient in our approach**, making use of existing in-person events to extend our reach and align with other Authority engagement activity wherever feasible, for example on the future Partnership Management Plan.