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Chapter 1. The Statement of Community Involvement

1.1 Planning shapes the places where people live and work, so it is right that all people should be able to take an active part in the process.

1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) highlights the importance of engagement with our communities in plan-making and states that:

“Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that have been made.” (Paragraph 155)

1.3 In support of this, Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) under section 18 (Part 1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

What is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?

1.4 The main purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is to set out how the community, business and other organisations with an interest in the development of the District can engage with the planning system. The Tandridge District SCI 2015, explains how and when the Council will engage and consult the community and other interested individuals and organisations in the production of new Development Plan Documents (DPDs), including the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and when dealing with planning applications.

1.5 The SCI provides a framework for future consultation and community engagement. The SCI is not prescriptive and the approach to consultation will vary depending upon circumstances and therefore a flexible approach to all future consultations is required. Certain requirements for consultation and engagement on plan-making and planning applications are set out in legislation. The SCI satisfies these statutory requirements and also seeks to exceed these requirements where appropriate.

Why is a new Statement of Community Involvement required?

1.6 The Council’s first SCI was adopted in 2006 and subsequent revisions of the document were adopted in 2010 and 2012. Since this time there have been a number of changes to both planning legislation/policy and technological advances which have changed the way public consultation is and can be carried out. This revised SCI has been updated to take account of any new and relevant methods which benefit the way in which the Council engages with consultees on
planning matters, whilst complying with new legislation. This SCI 2015 supersedes all previous versions of the document.

1.7 Furthermore, a new Local Plan for Tandridge and several neighborhood plans are being prepared which will contain the planning policies and proposals that will shape the future of the district over the next 15-20 years. It is therefore considered a suitable time to review the current SCI alongside the preparation of the new Local Plan.
Chapter 2 - Planning processes and consultation

2.1 The purpose of the planning system is to manage the use and development of land and buildings. It is how society works to strike a balance between allowing development to support the economy and provide the things it needs like homes, jobs, shops and transport whilst conserving its heritage and the environment.

2.2 The planning system has three main parts to it where consultation plays a key role:

- Plan making (Planning Policy)
- Managing Development (Planning Applications and Enforcement) and
- Neighbourhood Planning

Plan-Making

2.3 The purpose of plan making is to set out how an area will develop over time and to provide a guide for future development. Decisions on planning applications are made having regard to both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Development Plan.

National Planning Policy

2.4 National Planning Policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), together with the national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). These documents provide advice on what should be considered when preparing plans and writing new local policies.

Duty to Co-operate

2.5 There is also a 'Duty to Co-operate' in the plan making process as defined in Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011. As part of a local authority’s Development Plan preparation the Government requires constructive and active engagement with relevant bodies, as part of an on-going process. This is to maximise effective working on the preparation of Plans, especially in relation to strategic matters and those issues which extend beyond administrative boundaries such as roads and flooding.

2.6 Tandridge District Council is committed to meeting this duty and is actively working with neighbouring authorities and other statutory bodies, and will continue to do so, throughout the plan-making process. A full list of relevant consultation bodies, under the Duty and further detail is set out in the Councils adopted Duty to Cooperate Scoping Statement (2014) and subsequent Duty to Cooperate Statements, which is likely to be published at each stage of a Plans production.

Local Policy

Development Plan Documents (DPD’s)

2.8 All documents of the Local Development Plan (LDP)s must be consistent with and have regard to national planning policy and prepared in accordance with the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

2.9 The main document of the LDP for the District Council is the Local Plan. This is currently being prepared and sets out the planning strategy, policies and proposal for
the district; it will set out how the area will develop and change in the long term and will:

- Provide a vision for the future of the area, based on evidence of what is needed and what makes the local area distinctive
- Provide priorities and policies to guide future development
- Allocate land for housing, employment, retail and other uses
- Set out the more detailed planning policies which guide design, layout and other planning matters which are used to manage development and determine planning applications. (Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise).

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.10 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), where appropriate, can be prepared and utilised to add greater detail to policies in the Local Plan. These can be area or topic based. Whilst SPDs do not have the same status as the Local Plan they can be a material consideration in decision taking and determining planning applications. As with documents in the LDPs the statutory requirements for preparing SPDs are set out in the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

2.11 All Development Plan Documents (DPD’s) must be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and in most cases a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and it is common practice to incorporate an SEA into the Sustainability Appraisal as appropriate. The Sustainability Appraisal seeks to assess the environmental, social and economic effects of the implementation of the policies contained in the documents or the effects of not having these policies. The SEA only considers the environmental implications of policies and proposals of a plan.

2.12 The Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of plan preparation and its outputs will be consulted upon at each stage of consultation and alongside the DPD to which the SA/SEA relates.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

2.13 HRA is a requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended; ‘the Habitats Regulations’). The assessment focuses on the likely significant effects of the local development plan on the nature conservation interests of European-protected areas in and around the district, and seeks to establish whether or not there will be any adverse effects on the ecological integrity of these European sites as a result of proposals in the plan.

2.14 Whilst not in the District, the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment, are relevant and require consideration for documents in the Local Development Plan in Tandridge District and potential impacts of policies and ‘knock on’ effects to the SPA will need to be evaluated.

2.15 The HRA is an essential part of Local Plan preparation and will be consulted upon at the appropriate consultation stages alongside the corresponding document.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

2.16 CIL is a charge that is levied on new floorspace which is intended to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure to support development. The statutory process for
preparing a CIL Charging Schedule is set out in the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended) and has associated requirements for consultation.

**Managing Development**

2.17 Most new development, building work and how land and buildings are used, are managed through the process of planning permission. The Council is responsible for the determination of planning applications for such works. The Council receive approximately 2,000 applications per year which range from householder extensions and minor applications to large-scale proposals that include new housing, employment, retail and other development. The LDP is the most important consideration in determining planning applications unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.18 The Council is committed to publicising and/or consulting on all planning applications and welcomes comments on development proposals, whether positive or negative. Local residents, landowners and other interested parties should be made aware of proposed developments that may affect their interests and should know how to express their views on proposals. The Council has a duty to consider all valid planning applications it receives, regardless of whether or not they follow adopted policies.

**Neighbourhood Planning**

*Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders*

2.19 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 set out the statutory requirements for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders. Neighbourhood Plans, once adopted, form part of the LDP and therefore should be prepared in accordance with the Councils main statutory document of the LDP.

2.20 Neighbourhood planning is a way for local groups to take a lead on planning the future of their area. Neighbourhood planning can be led by a Parish Council or by a Neighbourhood Forum, which are specifically set up for neighbourhood planning. Consultation during the preparation stage of these plans is undertaken by the Town or Parish Council and does not therefore need to meet the requirements of this SCI but it would be a useful starting point to help guide consultations.

2.21 Neighbourhood Forums can choose to prepare neighbourhood development orders or a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Local Communities can grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development and set out planning policies in Neighbourhood plans to guide the development of an area, including identifying sites for new housing or safeguarding parks and playing fields.
Chapter 3 - Consultation when plan-making

3.1 This section of the SCI set outs when, who and how the Council will consult when preparing our planning policy documents, both documents in the Local Development Plan and SPDs.

3.2 The minimum requirements for consultation and engagement are set out within the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The scale and extent of consultation will vary depending on the subject of the planning document. For example, consultation on a plan for a specific location i.e. Town Centre, is likely to be more targeted to the area affected than a District wide Local Plan which will be of interest to numerous parties across the Local Authority area.

PLAN-MAKING: When will the Council consult?

3.3 The section below identifies the key stages of plan preparation and the minimum legal requirements (as stated within the Regulations) for consultation of both documents in the LDPs and SPDs.

Development Plan Documents

3.4 There are two main stages of plan production where some form of consultation or engagement is required, this is at the preparation stage (Regulation 18) and at the publication stage (Regulation 19/20): 

Preparation of a Local Plan (Regulation 18): At this stage in the process the Council must consult and invite representations from:

- ‘specific’ consultation bodies (identified in the Regulations);
- ‘general’ consultation bodies (identified by the Local Authority), and
- Interested Residents and/or businesses within the area.

Representation will be sought on what a Local Plan should contain.

Publication of and Representations to a Local Plan (Regulations 19 & 20)

The publication stage plan is the plan which sets out the preferred content, strategy and policies which the Council feel should be examined by the Planning Inspectorate.

Prior to the submission of the document to the Planning Inspectorate, the Council will publish the plan together with associated documents for representations to be made for a period of not less than 6 weeks. As a minimum, copies of these documents will be made available on the Council’s website, and at the Council Offices and each library in the District. Details of the consultation will be published on the Council’s website at the time.

The Council will invite interested parties (in addition to the specific and general consultation bodies) to make formal representations at this stage.

This is the final stage in the process when formal representations on the documents within the LDP can be made to the Council.
Comments made and received during the formal consultation period at Publication stage will be collated and made directly available to the Planning Inspector who is appointed to carry out the examination of the plan.

**Submission & Independent Examination of a Local Plan (Regulations 22 & 24)**

At such time that the Council feel that a robust, sound and justified plan has been prepared, the plan, and associated documents (including the full evidence base, Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment) are submitted to the Secretary of State for ‘examination’ and an Independent Inspector is appointed to examine the soundness of the plan.

The Planning Inspectorate will notify the council of the date for the Examination in Public (EIP) in order to carry out an examination into the Plan’s ‘Soundness’. Any person who has made a representation on the pre-submission consultation (Regulation 20) will be notified of the date, time, place and name of the Inspector at least six weeks before the opening of the hearing. The Plan is ‘examined’ by the Inspector to ensure that it is ‘sound’ as per the NPPF (Paragraph 182) and that the appropriate legal and procedural requirements have been met.

Please note that this is not a stage where a formal consultation is carried out and it is the appointed Planning Inspectors discretion as to who is invited to take part and/or appear in the examination process. Yet the Inspector will have access to all previous comments made on the Plan.

**Supplementary Planning Documents**

3.6 The Council will occasionally produce Supplementary Planning Documents to add further detail to the policies in the Development Plan. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) can be area or topic based and is capable of being a material consideration in a planning decision.

3.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) states that SPDs should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery. They should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.

3.8 The following sets out the key and statutory stages which the Council will follow in preparing and adopting SPD’s:

**Scoping and Evidence Gathering**

Whilst not a formal/statutory stage, this allows document preparation to begin with evidence gathering from a variety of sources, with a view to identifying possible issues and options. This stage may involve informal consultation with stakeholders and interested parties, considered appropriate to the subject matter of the SPD.

**Publication Stage (Public Participation) (Regulation 12)**

Copies of the SPD will be made available for no less than 4 weeks on the Council’s website, at the Council offices, libraries in the District and any other defined places that is deemed appropriate at the time. The Council will also invite representations from those individuals and bodies considered appropriate having regard to the lists of specific and general consultation bodies.

This stage is the formal consultation stage when comments are invited on the draft SPD.
Adoption (Regulation 14)

Representations received will be considered and when the Council is satisfied with the content and form of the document, it will be presented to Planning Policy Committee for adoption. Once adopted a SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

3.9 As part of the examination process, the Inspector reserves the right to recommend alterations to the plan, as submitted, which may be necessary to secure its soundness or to make it more robust where necessary. These recommended alterations and the Inspectors Report will be made publically available to view on the Council’s website and at the Council Offices, however, does not constitute a period of public consultation. Once the Council has considered the Inspectors Report in full and subject to it otherwise being found sound, it is a decision for the Council whether to adopt the plan.

**PLAN MAKING: Who will the Council consult?**

3.10 Depending on the type of planning policy document being prepared, there are a number of ‘specific’ consultation bodies¹ that must be consulted and invited to make representations and those who are discretionary but vitally important to the process:

**Specific Consultation Bodies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Coal Authority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Environment Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (Historic England)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Marine Management Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural England</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network Rail Infrastructure Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjoining Local Planning Authorities (including necessary County Councils and adjoining Parish Councils)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant Telecommunications Companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Primary Care Trust / Clinical Commissioning Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant utility companies (including gas, electricity and water)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Homes and Communities Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Consultation Bodies²**

| Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority’s area |
| Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethical or national groups in the local planning authority’s area |
| Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority’s area |
| Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority’s area |

¹ Paragraph 2 - The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
² Those ‘general consultation bodies’ who are consulted will depend on the nature and subject of the planning policy document being consulted upon. The Council can decide which organisations it thinks are appropriate to consult.
Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority’s area, such as voluntary organisations and those that live and do business in the area.

3.11 It is important to note, that those identified in either of the above lists is not exhaustive and the Council are committed to involving a wide range of individuals and organisations. Any interested party can make comment during consultation and/or request to be added to the Council's database at any time and it will be common practice to consult with anyone who has made representation at an earlier stage of consultation, to ensure that parties remain informed and involved as the document progresses.

3.12 The Council has an extensive database of individuals, businesses, consultancies, landowners and other bodies who will be consulted and these contacts form the core resource for consultation and will be used to notify consultees by email in the first instance or by letter (where an email address has not been provided). From time to time people will be asked if they wish to remain on the list not only to ensure that the database remains current, but also to comply with the Council's obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.13 In order to adapt to the flexible needs of our communities and stakeholders, and to encourage responses, the Council have subscribed to an online consultation portal called ‘Objective’. This has been used previously by the authority during earlier plan making (Core Strategy, Community Infrastructure Levy), but will become more actively utilised in the future and is the primary and preferred way of receiving comments. ‘Objective’ is a widely used online consultation system by Local Authorities across the UK and allows anyone, including statutory consultees and general members of the public, to create an account, register for notifications and submit their responses to active consultations. Those registered on Objective, will be able to ensure that they can keep their contact details up to date, remain involved, manage their notifications or withdraw their interest entirely where necessary.

*Hard to Reach Groups*

3.14 The Council recognises that some sections of the community are not always made aware of the opportunity to express their views via standard consultation arrangements. Specific measures will therefore be undertaken to engage certain groups as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hard to Reach Groups</th>
<th>How they will be engaged?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minority Groups</td>
<td>The Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) Group are often under represented in the planning process. It is important that the SCI meets the requirements of these groups by being in accordance with the Race Relations (amendments) Act 2000. Information on the availability of alternative formats and/or languages can be obtained from the District Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young People</td>
<td>The District Council will seek to engage young people, where considered appropriate, through local schools or organisations which represent younger people, including youth groups such as the Scouts Council and Guide Association.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Elderly People**
Elderly People are often perceived as ‘hard to reach’ because of difficulties in gaining access to information. Elderly individuals can feel isolated and excluded from the community around them and so organisations which represent older people such as Age UK will be informed at all plan preparation stages. The Council may also consider providing additional hard copies of documents at key meeting points, such as the Douglas Brunton Centre.

**Transient Populations**
There are a number of Gypsy and Traveller sites within the District and it is important that those residents on the sites and those who seek transit accommodation in the District are involved in the Local Plan process. In order to involve this group as much as possible existing contacts and representative organisations (e.g. the Gypsy Council) will be contacted, where possible.

**Commuters**
Commuters spend much of their time between districts due to work and may be affected by plans for business or homes and should equally be engaged. Appropriate measures will be put in place to try and engage with this group.

**People with Disabilities**
It is recognised that people with disabilities are under represented in the planning process. It is important that the SCI meets the requirements of these groups and is in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, as amended. All consultation documents will be made ‘accessible’ online. This means that the documents can be read aloud by home computers and translated using electronic braille readers.

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**Duty to Cooperate**

3.15 Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 makes a number of amendments to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the effect of which is to place a legal duty on local planning authorities to co-operate with one another; county councils and other prescribed bodies to maximise the effectiveness within which certain activities are undertaken as far as they relate to a ‘strategic matter’. Paragraph 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (as amended) states that ‘certain activities’ include:

- the preparation of development plan documents;
- the preparation of other local development documents; and
- activities that can reasonably be considered to prepare the way for the preparation of the above two points.

3.16 Being able to demonstrate that the ‘duty’ has been met is a key element of preparing a sound, justified and robust development plan and will therefore be a central consideration in plan-making for the Council.

3.17 Whilst consultation with adjoining Local Planning Authorities and key bodies is a requirement in accordance with the ‘specific’ bodies set out in this document (see paragraph 3.10). The Duty to Cooperate extends beyond this to ensure ongoing engagement takes place outside of and in the intervening periods between the stages of formal consultation. The engagement required by local authorities will vary depending
on the nature of the issues being addressed which can range jointly preparing a development plan document, to determining a shared strategy for overcoming flooding.

3.18 The Council has prepared a Duty to Cooperate Scoping Report (2014) which sets out the key matters which will need to be considered through the ‘duty’ and lists those key bodies that will need to be engaged and consulted with. The document is available on the Council’s website and should be read alongside the SCI, where appropriate. As the development plan evolves, progress will be monitored against this scoping report and an updated Duty to Cooperate Statement will accompany each consultation stage.

**PLAN-MAKING: How will the Council consult?**

3.19 The Council recognises that there are different elements to consultation and engagement, including:

- Providing information, in a variety of ways e.g. in writing, website and social media
- Undertaking consultation – the Council asking for views or comments on what you think about a policy or proposal,
- Participation – active involvement in something such as discussions or workshop etc and;
- Feedback – identifying or explaining how responses received have informed the production of a piece of work such as a DPD.

3.20 In the case of planning policy documents, there is a distinction between ‘formal stages’ of plan production (where the nature of consultation is governed by the Regulations) and ‘ongoing informal engagement and participation’ with the Community as part of the development and assessment of emerging options. Due to the nature of the plan-making process it is not possible to stipulate how and where informal and non-statutory consultation and engagement will be needed but the Council will keep this under review and respond accordingly.

**How will the Council let you know that the consultation is taking place?**

3.21 Plan making regularly effects a broad spectrum of individuals, residents, groups and demographic. Therefore, a fundamental aim of any plan related consultation must be to ensure that those who engage are from all sections of the District so that the comments and views received represent the widest possible cross-section of the community and our stakeholders. Whilst there are those that regularly take the opportunity to get involved in the plan-making, it’s important that the Council take steps to ensure that those that aren’t already on the database, or are unaware of the process, are made aware and for this reason the Council will use publicity and other methods to bring consultation to the attention of those that are encouraged to ‘have their say’.

What the Council will do

3.22 Compliance with our statutory duties as set out by the regulations, are paramount to achieving a sound plan, as such, the Council will ensure these minimum requirements are met and will form the basis of every plan related consultation the Council undertakes.

**Direct Notification & Mailout**

3.23 Consultation is recognised as the opportunity for the Council to inform the community and stakeholders that a formal consultation on a planning policy document is taking place. The first, and most important step to raising awareness of a consultation will
be to contact all those listed on the Local Plan database (see paragraph 3.12) and
directly notify them about how and where people can get involved. This will primarily be
done through the Council’s preferred method of an email, however, where no email
address has been provided, a letter will be sent by post.

3.24 The main documents that are being consulted upon and any associated legal papers will
be published and made available to view in hard copies at the Council Offices and in all
libraries in the District for the consultation period. Hard copies of the documents
associated with the consultation, can also be purchased by general members of the
public, groups and businesses and will be charged at the cost price, a charge for
postage will also be payable where applicable. Requests to purchase copies can be
made directly to the Planning Department who will be able to advise on the costing of
different documents and arrange a convenient time for documents to be printed, posted
and/or collected.

What the Council may do

3.25 In addition to the consistent use of the Local Plan database and to promote greater
participation, where possible and of benefit, The Council will seek to go beyond the
minimum requirements and use methods which are appropriate and relevant to the
people involved, and the type of consultation being undertaken. The Council will give
consideration to a variety of methods that could be used which could include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email alert system</td>
<td>Stakeholders identified on the Council’s database can be provided with the latest information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Twitter, Streetlife and other forms of social media used to publicise emerging documents and consultations and signpost people to where responses can be submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>Use the Council’s ‘Magazine’, with district-wide circulation to inform all households of consultations and provide information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local media</td>
<td>Notices published in local newspapers circulating in the area and press releases made available to the local media, as appropriate throughout the plan preparation process, and at key preparation stages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Business E-newsletter</td>
<td>Notifying the business community of consultation via the business e-newsletter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaflets/postcards/posters</td>
<td>This could be a good way of informing local people about the consultation. Leaflets and posters could be made available at the Council offices, libraries, Parish Councils, leisure centres as well anywhere frequented by people who either live and/or work in the District such as notice boards at train stations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>These could be employed through the process although the exact format and those invited would depend on the issues to be discussed. Workshops could involve the use of plans and other visual aids. Careful consideration will be given to venues, timing and participants to ensure that events are as effective as possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Town and Parish Councils

Town and Parish Councils have an important part to play during the process. Their important role in the local community and their knowledge on local matters is recognised. The Council will look at ways to facilitate and enable the Parish Councils to help raise awareness of a plans preparation and consultations in their local community.

Supporting documents can also be sent to the Parish Councils, such as leaflets and posters, to support local community engagement.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions could be employed throughout the process. Public displays, for local residents, either manned or unmanned, could allow for consultation on plan preparation to be publicised and raise awareness. Existing community events could be used as venue for such exhibitions. Other appropriate venues may include high street locations within the district’s town and villages.

Surveys and questionnaire

These may be utilised to canvas views on key issues, options, proposal and documents. Existing community events could be used as a venue for the surveys and questionnaires to be handed out.

Utilise existing established groups

Existing forums and stakeholders will be utilised, where appropriate, in order to publicise development plan preparation and process including for the purposes of consultation and evidence gathering.

CD/DVD

Development Plans, in particular, include a significant amount of evidence to support and inform their preparation. As such, where appropriate, the Council may provide DVD/CDs of the documentation for interested parties to allow them to access the information from their own computers in their own time. This may also assist in negating any issues with internet download speeds and access, whilst also providing information in a more sustainable format than paper. Again the Council will advise if a necessary cost has been attached to the distribution of DVDs/CDs.

**PLAN-MAKING: How will the Council deal with responses?**

3.26 The comments received through consultation, and how the Council responds to them, is a key part of the plan-making process and will be a factor in determining the soundness of the document which will be assessed at Examination. As such, following each consultation, the Council will collate the responses, consider the comments and prepare a Statement of Consultation.

3.27 The Council can only accept comments that are in a written format and received within the formal consultation period. To make the comment valid, all responses (including petitions) will need to include a contact name and address (which could be an email or home address); anonymous submissions may not be accepted. This not only enables the Council to demonstrate that responses received and considered are legitimate, but
also avoids unnecessary criticism which could arise if comments are taken out of context or incomplete.

3.28 Any petitions received must include a lead contact against whom the response will be attributed to. Whilst a note of the number of signatures associated with the petition will be recorded, it will only be the lead contact that will receive any further notifications relating to relevant plan-making matters.

3.29 Much effort will be made to ensure that those wishing to submit their comments understand that this must be done in writing and by utilising the council’s Objective system in the first instance (see paragraph 3.13). However, email or handwritten responses can also be submitted where the internet is not available or appropriate. Officers will not record the comments or the views of individuals which are presented to them verbally, unless it arises from discussions in a formal workshop environment or in instances where the individual is prevented from being able to write themselves, be that through disability or illiteracy.

3.30 It should be noted that all comments and representations received are public documents and cannot be kept confidential. However, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Council will not publish personal details other than a name and/or unique reference number.

3.31 Any responses received which are considered to be offensive, and/or in breach of the Equalities Act 2010, will be disregarded and not accepted as a valid response.

3.32 Any responses received outside of the consultation period are likely to not be taken into account and therefore the Council ask that comments are submitted within the advertised consultation period
Chapter 4  - Managing Development

4.1 Development management is an integral part of the planning process and is the delivery mechanism for the development plan. The Council has published a Development Management Charter which sets out how the Council will deliver the Development Management Service ³ to users, including applicants, appellants and the wider community and should be read in conjunction with this Statement of Community Involvement.

4.2 The Council is committed to publicising and consulting on all planning applications and welcomes comments on development proposals, whether positive or negative. Local residents, landowners and other interested parties should be made aware of proposed developments that may affect their interests and should know how to express their views on proposals. The Council has a duty to consider all valid planning applications it receives, regardless of whether or not they follow adopted policies. The Council provides a number of ways to find out about applications in an area via its web site and emailed alerts.

4.3 The Council will consult on applications in accordance with the statutory requirements set down in law as per the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, referred to as “the Order” hereafter.

MANAGING DEVELOPMENT: When will the Council consult?

Planning Applications

4.4 Upon receipt of a planning application the local planning authority will undertake a period of formal consultation. This will normally last for a period of 21 days although there will be cases where a longer period of time will be allowed for comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation. The Council will not make a decision until all of the relevant consultation periods have expired although all consultees should aim to respond as quickly as possible.

Amended Plans

4.5 Following submission of a planning application, negotiations can often take place between planning officers and developers, and their agents in order to seek amendments to a submitted scheme. In some cases, upon receipt of amended plans, the Council may carry out a further consultation on these amendments. This depends substantially on the nature and the extent of the amendment or the additional information submitted. This consultation is likely to include re-notification of neighbours, Parish Councils and statutory consultees, depending on the nature of the changes and the likely implications. In view of the tight time scales to determine planning applications the re-notification time is usually set at 14 days.

Planning Appeals

4.6 If an application for planning permission is refused by the local planning authority, or it is granted with conditions, an appeal can be made to the Secretary of State against the refusal or the conditions attached. There is also a right of appeal if an application is not

determined within a specific time. Appeals are examined by an independent Planning Inspector. The Council will advise neighbours who have previously been notified when appeals are submitted. Further advice on the appeal process is available at:

http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate

Planning Performance Agreement

4.7 Large scale or more complex development proposals may warrant the use of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). This is a project management tool that is agreed between the Local Planning Authority and an applicant. Under the PPA a project plan and programme is agreed. They provide opportunities for joint working, bringing together other parties such as statutory consultees as well as provide opportunity to identify how and what communities should be engaged. Whilst a PPA in its own right does not require consultation, it is an exercise where much liaison between a variety of parties will take place and consultation with one another over the course of the process to reach a mutually agreeable decision/scheme.

MANAGING DEVELOPMENT: Who and how will the Council consult?

4.8 In accordance with the Order, consultations will be undertaken, as required, with statutory authorities such as the County Highway Authority, Environment Agency and English Heritage and also with other non-statutory bodies and organisations where their advice would assist in the determination of an application.

4.9 Parish Councils are a democratically elected tier of local government, close to and accountable to their electors. The Council encourages them to express their views on planning applications and in line with their representative role it is anticipated that they will comment on applications reflecting the views of the wider community. Parish Councils will be advised of applications received in their area.

4.10 Neighbour notification by letter is the principal method of consultation on most planning applications and the Council will write to advise the occupiers of those properties that can be identified that adjoin the application site. In addition, where development is proposed that would be visible from a street the Council will consult those identified properties that are opposite. Where there are no adjoining properties to consult, or where there is land adjoining the application site for which there is no addressable property and the owner is not known, the Council will erect its own site notice on the application site in order to meet the statutory requirements. The Council will send the applicant or their agent a site notice, which they are encouraged to display. However, this is not part of the statutory consultation and failure to display it will not affect the processing of the application.

4.11 Where the development affects a listed building, conservation area, public right of way or tree(s) covered by a Tree Preservation Order, or is a ‘major’ application, the statutory requirements do include the display of a site notice and/or advertisement of an application in a local newspaper. The Council will comply with this requirement in accordance with the Order. In circumstances where there is also land adjoining the site for which the owner is now known; only this notice will be posted by the Council.
Inspection of Applications

4.12 All valid applications can be viewed on the Council’s web site and it is possible to search for applications registered as valid between specific dates. Planning applications are also available for inspection at the Council Offices during normal working hours. Parish Councils are also advised of all applications for planning permission in their area. Some parishes make their own arrangement to display copies of applications at the local library, in other cases at the parish office or other locally available property. You should contact your Parish Council clerk for further information. Details of Parish Councils can be found on the District Council web site.4

MANAGING DEVELOPMENT: How will the Council deal with responses?

4.13 Comments may be made by anyone regardless of whether they have received a letter or been individually consulted and may support or object to a proposal, although the Council can only take into account material planning considerations.

4.14 Comments should be submitted as soon as possible and the Council will not determine any application within a period of 21 days from the date on which consultation letters are sent out, or where there is an extension to the consultation brought about by amended plans. Occasionally, it may be necessary to write and publish reports on planning applications for the Planning Committee agenda before the expiration of the formal consultation period and in such cases comments received post-publication will still be reported either orally at the committee meeting or as a late item.

4.15 All comments received on planning applications will be published on the Council’s web site for inspection, subject to data protection rules which mean that personal data such as signatures, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses will be redacted prior to publication. Where the Council considers that the content of letters are potentially libellous or defamatory, contain abusive, obscene or racist language or contain information that should not be distributed then it reserves the right to remove the offending information before publication, with or without the consent of the author. However, the Council will retain an unaltered copy of the letter on the planning file which would be available for inspection although not by published means. Those commenting on planning applications should ensure that they are satisfied that the content of their letters would not open them to legal challenge.

4.16 The Council will neither acknowledge nor respond to letters commenting on applications, nor enter into correspondence on the details or merits of proposals. The response to letters received in respect of planning applications will be set out in the report written by the case officer.

4 http://www.tandridge.gov.uk/YourCouncil/CouncillorsMeetings/ParishCouncil/default.htm
Chapter 5 - Neighbourhood Plans

5.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are a new tier of development documents introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and regulated by The Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations) 2012, as amended 2015.

5.2 A NDP is a community prepared plan which enables local people to guide the future of the area in which they live and work. NDPs can add detail and local objectives to the Council’s Local Plan. Tandridge District Council will support neighbourhoods in the preparation of their plans where appropriate and guidance and advice is provided on the Council’s website.

5.3 Notwithstanding this, the approach to consultation will be a matter for the individual Neighbourhood Planning bodies in preparing their plans and is therefore outside the scope of this SCI. Therefore the following section is primarily provided for information although it does identify the Council’s role in the NDP process.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AREA: When and who do the Council consult?**

**Application and publicity of a Neighbourhood Area Designation (Regulation 5, 6 and 7)**

5.4 A parish council or designated community group can start the preparation of a NDP through an application to designate a neighbourhood area. The application is submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The Local Authority must publicise the application for a minimum 6 week period and then determine whether the proposed area is considered an appropriate neighbourhood area. The Local Planning Authority must make a decision on the application within a reasonable period of time. Once approved, or refused, the council must publish the decision on their website and if refused publish the reasons for refusal. To ensure that this requirement is met, in addition to publicity on the website, the Council will advertise the designation in the local paper.

**Plan preparation (scoping and evidence gathering)**

5.5 Document preparation will be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Group. This is a community-led stage with no statutory requirement for consultation and the District Council cannot therefore prescribe who is consulted. However it is anticipated that this stage will usually begin by scoping community opinion, understanding aspirations and evidence gathering. It may also involve informal consultations, such as surveys and exhibitions, with a range of relevant stakeholders and interested parties. The method of consultation is to be determined by the community group preparing the Plan.

**Pre-submission consultation and publicity (Regulation 14)**

5.6 This is a community-led consultation and it is the responsibility of the group preparing the plan to publicise the draft neighbourhood plan or Order for at least six weeks and invite comments. They should consult anyone who may be affected by the draft plan or
order and in a way which brings the draft document to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. In addition, the consultation bodies referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning regulations 2012 (see below), must also be consulted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A local planning authority, county council or a parish council any part of whose areas is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coal Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Homes and Communities Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural England</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Environment Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic England</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network Rail Infrastructure Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Highways Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Marine Management Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications providers relevant to the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Primary Care Trust in any part of the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility providers (gas, electric and water/sewerage) relevant to the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodies which represent the interest of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodies which represent the interest of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodies which represent the interest of person carrying on business in the neighbourhood area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Plan Submission to Local Authority and Publicity (regulation 15 & 16)

5.7 This stage is a local authority led stage. Where a plan is submitted to the local planning authority, the submission must also include a map or statement which identifies the Plan area, a Consultation Statement, the proposed NDP, a basic conditions statement and other associated documents.

5.8 After receiving the plan proposal the local planning authority must publicise the proposed NDP and associated documents on their website, as a minimum, in a way which is likely to bring the proposal to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. This publicity period will run for a minimum of 6 weeks and will invite comments. The Council must also notify any consultation bodies referred to in the submitted Consultation Statement, including those bodies specified under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Examination Stage (regulation 17 & 18)

5.9 All neighbourhood plans will be submitted and undergo an independent examination to determine whether the plans meet the necessary criteria and accord with national and local policy.
5.10 An examiner will be appointed to assess the Plan against basic conditions. Representations made through the ‘Plan Submission to Local Authority and Publicity’ stage will be submitted to the examiner. The examiner will be a person with a good understanding of the planning system, such as an academic, a planning officer from a different planning authority or a planning inspector who will be appointed by the relevant planning authority.

5.11 The examination will usually take the form of written representations, unless the examiner considers it necessary to hold a public hearing. If a public hearing is held the examiner will invite participants to attend. Upon completion of the examination the examiner will make one of three following recommendations:

- The plan should proceed to the referendum stage as submitted
- Proposed modifications to be made by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and then proceed to referendum.
- That the Plan does not proceed to referendum

Referendum (Guided by the Neighbourhoods Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012)

5.12 If the Council is satisfied that the NDP meets the legal requirements it will publish its decision along with details of where the decision statement and examiner’s report can be inspected. The Council will arrange a referendum as soon as is practically possible and give a minimum of 28 working days’ notice before the date of the referendum. A positive vote of 50% of those who vote plus 1 will ensure the Plan proceeds to full Council to be ‘Made’.