

Feedback from GIR Scrutiny Committee SCI and timetable for the Local Plan 11th June 2020

Comments regarding SCI

- Q) SCI too focussed on Covid. Needs to be more clearly the 5 year review with the limitations imposed by Covid clearly identified but as a stand-alone section. Alternatively, if this document is only for the present scenario then a time bound review period needs to be included.
- A) This is intended as a review of the SCI and picks up many issues that are not Covid-19 related; those that are Covid-19 related will be reviewed when circumstances change.
- Q) Ministerial guidance overrides the SCI so this document should not be seen as a “new” SCI.
- A) No, this is not the case – Ministerial guidance recommends that Local Planning Authorities seek to review their SCI in the light of current conditions but there are changes proposed to the SCI to reflect other changes (such as consultations on planning applications and advice regarding neighbourhood plans).
- Q) SCI needs to be more imaginative in how to reach out to the hard to reach. For example, schools, junior sports’ clubs and junior performing arts groups could be utilised to reach young people. Or, alternatively, don’t give examples of who will be consulted but rather identify the “hard to reach” e.g. young people as a target for consultation rather than specifying which organisations will be consulted.
- A) This will be taken into consideration and the consultation will seek comments on how the Council can best reach out to the hard to reach.
- Q) Cultural organisations should be included as one of the “general consultation” bodies.
- A) This will be considered as part of the consultation.
- Q) Need to make it clear we will provide documents in other languages, large print and braille.
- A) Yes, this change will be made before consultation begins.
- Q) Could the Council not mount outdoor exhibitions as part of its consultation process, utilising the market squares.
- A) This would be challenging given current restrictions on social distancing.
- Q) Why is there no CIL charging review and shouldn’t the reason be explained in the report, with any plan to have said review?

- A) The CIL charging review is not the subject of this report – as advised at the Scrutiny meeting the most appropriate time to review this will be once the Local Plan is adopted.

Comments regarding timing

- Q) Should the consultation period not be extended as was originally requested to take account of Covid?
- A) The policies and proposals have been in the public domain since January – at February Council it was stated that consideration would be given to a possible 8 week consultation, specifically due to the Easter period. The Local Plan Regulations specify 6 weeks as a minimum for the Regulation 19 consultation.
- Q) Is the timing sensible given the retirement of the CEO and pressure on staff due to Covid?
- A) This is irrelevant. A key driver is the need to support the local economy and to deliver much needed housing in the most appropriate locations. It is important to give confidence and certainty to development and investment in order to aid economic recovery. As Head of Paid Service the CEO has confirmed the resourcing to do this is available, if more is required it will be made available and it will not detract from dealing with the Covid Crisis or recovery in other areas.
- Q) Do we have the capacity to undertake the necessary community engagement?
- A) The Regulation 19 consultation is a well-established process and the staff resources are available to support this in line with the proposals set out in the SCI review.
(see also above)
- Q) Do we have the resources to respond to the comments we may receive to the Regulation 19 consultation and to any modifications proposed by the Inspector?
- A) Yes. Main modification stage referred to is a much later stage during the Examination process so it is unlikely to happen until later next year.