



Strategy & Policy Team  
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## **Growth and Communities**

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### **BY EMAIL ONLY**

14 November 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Re: Folkestone and Hythe District Council Statement of Community Involvement**

Thank you for consulting Kent County Council (KCC) on the Folkestone and Hythe District Council Statement of Community Involvement.

The County Council has reviewed the Statement of Community Involvement and for ease of reference, has provided comments structured under the chapter headings and policies used within the document.

### **Enquiries about planning**

The County Council recognises that email addresses and phone numbers have been provided for people to contact Folkestone and Hythe District Council regarding information about planning. However, it is recommended that there is a means for people to contact the Council if they need to request plan-making documents in an alternative format.

### **2. How you can get involved in planning**

The County Council would advise that a [link](#) is added as a footnote to the relevant webpage for the Minerals and Waste Plans prepared by KCC.

### **3. Community involvement in context**

#### **Policy and legislative context**

It is advised that this section references the document complying with the [Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations](#), particularly around the accessibility of documents and websites.

### **4. Our Community Involvement Principles**

#### **Figure 1: Our community involvement principles**

##### *Transparent planning processes*

The County Council would recommend that the first two bullet points in this section are revised to avoid repetition regarding the clarity of the consultation.

### **5. Community involvement in Plan-Making**

KCC notes *Table 1: Community involvement in Plan-Making* in the document and would request clarification on whether all tables in the document work acceptably for screen readers.

### **6. Who we will involve in Plan-Making**

It is advised that the text is amended to confirm the extent of consultation events that stakeholders have been or can request to be involved in. For example, if this is limited to consultation events such as information and participation activities, or if general consultations are also included.

### **7. How we will involve you in Plan-Making**

#### **Leaflets and posters**

The County Council notes that QR codes will be used to link the community back to the Folkestone and Hythe District Council website. However, KCC would highlight that there has been a potential issue with GDPR and QR codes. IP addresses count as personal information and there are issues with these being collected and stored when QR codes are used. It is recommended that this method is further investigated to prevent this issue occurring.

## **Interactive workshops and focus groups (in person and online)**

The text mentions that this format may be more appealing to some people than traditional methods of consultation. KCC would note that in person interactive workshops have been used for many years in planning and would request clarification on whether the online element makes it non-traditional.

## **12. Consultation on a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule**

### **Figure 5: Community Infrastructure Levy Process**

#### *Stage 3 Examination and Adoption*

The County Council would request clarification on whether objectors to the CIL Charging Schedule may be allowed to appear in front of the examiner virtually as well as in person.

## **13. Community involvement on planning and related applications**

### **Table 2: Publicity requirements for all applications**

The County Council would advise that the '*Identified on Council's website*' heading is revised to '*Published on Council's website*' to clarify the status of applications.

## **14. Planning consultation methods**

### **Figure 6: Neighbour Consultation Diagram**

KCC notes that the notification of planning and listed building applications will also be sent to the relevant parish or community council. There are numerous references to parish councils in the document and KCC would request clarification on the terminology of '*community council*' in this text.

### **Local Press**

The County Council would recommend that there is a '*Council Website*' subheading as the information included is not suitable under the current Local Press heading.

## **15. How to make a comment on an application**

The text mentions that people's comments should not include personal data, which is contradicted in the following sentence. KCC would therefore advise that this section amended to reflect that the only personal information that should be included in comments is their name and address.

The County Council would also recommend that the last two paragraphs in this section regarding comments of a defamatory nature are combined to avoid repetition.

## **21. Glossary**

### **Equality Group**

It is recommended that this definition makes reference to the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act, which are also reflected in the Folkestone and Hythe Equality Impact Assessment. The County Council would also highlight that there is a distinction in the protected characteristics between sex and gender identity and reassignment and would therefore advise that the text is revised to recognise this.

## **APPENDIX B: Summary of the consultation stages, duration and methods that the council may use when consulting on a Local Plan**

### **Consultation on Development Plan Documents**

#### **Stage 3: Publication of a Local Plan**

*How we will inform you*

The County Council recognises that digital tools are aimed to be used to inform consultees in the preparation of a Local Plan. KCC would therefore recommend the consideration of document commenting to allow people to directly add comments onto the Local Plan.

### **Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

#### **Stage 2: Publish draft for consultation**

*How we will inform you*

The County Council would recommend that the text is revised to include ‘*the Council’s social media channels*’.

## **General Comments**

The County Council notes that the SCI does not maintain consistent spelling, punctuation and grammar. It is therefore recommended that the document is reviewed and amended as necessary to ensure regularity across the document.

KCC would welcome continued engagement as the SCI progresses. If you require any further information or clarification on any matters raised above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Stephanie Holt-Castle**  
Director for Growth and Communities