

**Statement of Community  
Involvement 2025  
Consultation Document**

**Policy and Strategy Team  
March 2025**



**Lichfield**  
District Council

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Councils are required to publish a document detailing how they will engage with their local communities, businesses and other interested parties, in the planning process. This document is called a Statement of Community Involvement.

## What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.2 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Lichfield District Council will involve local communities, businesses and other interested parties in the preparation of planning policy documents and determining planning applications.
- 1.3 This SCI provides clarity on community involvement during the planning process and sets out clear engagement procedures and minimum standards that the council will follow.
- 1.4 The SCI sets out which statutory obligations the council must adhere to in relation to community involvement and engagement; as well as outline what organisations the council must formally invite to comment in relation to planning matters.
- 1.5 There is a legal requirement for the council to carry out public consultation on the following:
- Preparation, alteration and continuing review of the local plan, also known as a development plan document (DPD).
  - Supplementary planning documents (SPDs).
  - Neighbourhood plans.
  - Community infrastructure levy (CIL).
  - Development management (planning application) decisions.

## Why is the SCI being updated?

- 1.6 Section 18 of the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#) (as amended) requires local planning authorities to produce and maintain a SCI.
- 1.7 Our previous SCI was adopted by the council in August 2020, which contained amendments in response to new challenges to undertaking consultation work in the district due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic taught us new methods of engaging with the community; and has highlighted that there may be times for flexibility to vary/adapt methods of community involvement.
- 1.8 This SCI presents an updated explanation on how the council will meet the statutory requirements and standards of consultation required as part of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), incorporating a balance of traditional and new methods of community involvement. It also sets out the additional approaches which we may use to enhance consultation where appropriate.

## Why is community involvement in planning important?

- 1.9 Planning affects us all. The homes we live in, the places we work, the open spaces we enjoy and leisure facilities we use are all a result of planning policies and decisions. It is important to us that our communities are given the opportunity to take part in the planning process at the earliest opportunity, so that decisions can be informed by a range of views from the widest possible range of residents, communities, organisations and businesses.
- 1.10 It is important to note that the actions which are set out within this document represent a minimum requirement in relation to community involvement in the planning process. As such, there may be instances where the council may undertake further consultation work which goes above and beyond the requirements of the SCI. Such an approach enables us to

tailor our approach to each consultation individually to ensure that comprehensive consultation has taken place.

## Lichfield District 2050 Strategy

1.11 This SCI seeks to align with the [Lichfield District 2050 Strategy](#) which is a collective commitment to make Lichfield District the most confident, prosperous, active and green part of the country by 2050, a place which other parts of the United Kingdom aspire to be by delivering four key priorities:

- Confident communities – we will be the place where people across the UK aspire to live.
- Prosperous communities – we will enable Lichfield, Burntwood and our villages to flourish.
- Active communities – we will make Lichfield District the most active in the UK.
- Green communities – we will create the greenest district in the country.

1.12 This SCI reinforces the key message of collaboration within the 2050 Strategy: *'We know this will require hard work and investment, not just from the district council but from the county council, from our town, city and parish councils, our partners in the health and emergency services, our vital network of community, charity and third sector organisations who already contribute so much, and importantly from you, our residents. We cannot achieve and deliver the future we want for the district without you. **When we say, Together We Will, we mean it.**'*

## 2. About our community and district

- 2.1 It is vital to understand the dynamics of our community and priorities of the [Lichfield District 2050 Strategy](#) in order to recognise the needs and challenges that may arise during consultation.
- 2.2 This chapter introduces the context of our district and sets out some of the key challenges faced by our residents, businesses and interest groups when engaging in the planning processes; as well as summarising how we will seek to overcome these.

### Carbon reduction

- 2.3 The Lichfield District 2050 Strategy identifies green communities as a key priority and the council have pledged to do all we can to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- 2.4 Climate change is the most critical challenge we face, and we recognise a need to radically re-think how the district works and lives to become carbon neutral by 2050. We will lead by example as a district council, transforming our own operations, including during the consultation process.

### Accessibility

- 2.5 Lichfield district has a population of 106,436 people ([2021 Census](#)). Currently, approximately 2.4% of the economically active population is unemployed, which is less than the West Midlands (3.9%) and England (3.5%). Lichfield district is seen as an attractive commuter area for Birmingham and the wider West Midlands, and therefore a significant proportion of residents commute outside of the district to work. Given the high levels of commuting, it may be difficult for some residents to access the council offices or event buildings within the district during the working week.
- 2.6 Lichfield district is considered a relatively prosperous area when compared to the regional and national context. However, within some of our communities, there are pockets of deprivation; therefore, the cost associated with accessing consultation documents in person could be a factor which restricts engagement.

### Digitalisation

- 2.7 Digitalisation has increased over recent years, which has enabled the council to reduce the use of paper documents and associated waste. As part of the consultation process, the council will use digitalisation as an opportunity to minimise the production of consultation materials (such as physical printed copies of documents) to support carbon reduction.
- 2.8 Nevertheless, some people have difficulty in accessing the internet and struggle to navigate online to find the relevant consultation documents that they want to respond to. Planning documents can be technical and lengthy; and slow internet access could restrict ease in utilising these documents.

### Engaging the whole community

- 2.9 Whilst the demographics of different communities within the district vary considerably, the district is characterised by a larger than average proportion of over 65s. The overall



population of Lichfield district is projected to increase by a further 8.17% by 2043, with those over 65 expected to make up 27.63% of residents.

- 2.10 It is important for the planning process to try to engage with all ages, both old and young, to ensure all age and interest groups are represented.

## Summary

- 2.11 To help overcome the challenges set out in this chapter, we will:

- Place all matters for consultation on our website, so that information can be always accessed via the internet. This will help reduce the need (and associated costs) to travel to obtain information and reduce the need for printing physical documents.
- When engaging with our communities, we will always be conscious to reduce carbon emissions throughout the process, for example by decreasing waste and minimising the production of consultation materials (such as physical printed copies of documents).
- During opening hours of the council's main office, relevant physical documents, for example the local plan, will be available to view in person during consultation periods. Physical documents may also be available to view at appropriate alternative locations within the district where possible. This will help enable residents who do not use the internet to view the documents in person.
- Have officers available to help via the telephone to locate and understand the documents.
- Seek to involve as wide an age demographic as possible on planning issues through the use of modern consultation tools, such as social media.
- Use accessible venues and facilities for exhibition events and to have documents available in accessible formats on request.

- 2.12 The council recognises that not everyone will want to get involved in the planning process. We also recognise that some residents, businesses and groups may have greater capacity than others to get involved, so where appropriate, we will try and support and encourage those who find it difficult to get involved within planning issues to engage in the planning process.

## Consultation methods

- 2.13 Lichfield District Council will engage with interested parties using a range of consultation methods, including utilising the methods listed below:

### Online engagement:

- Website, social media and email alerts.
- Online platform for consultation (questionnaires, comment boxes and surveys).
- Video conferencing meetings and workshops.
- Virtual exhibitions.

### In-person engagement:

- Undertaking in-person events at appropriate venues within the district.
- Drop-in sessions.
- Exhibitions and informal meetings.

### Written notifications:

- Emails and letters to:
  - Consultees who have requested notification.
  - District councillors.
  - Parish, town and city councils.
- Leaflets with details of the consultation and how to submit feedback.

**Publicising consultations:**

- Advertisements, public notices and news releases in local press, including on relevant websites.
- Posters displayed in the local area.
- Site notices (for planning applications).
- Briefings and meetings to parish/town/city councils and partners to increase awareness.

2.14 The following sections provide detail on how we will engage with our communities in the plan making process and the planning application process.

### 3. Community involvement in plan-making

#### Development plan documents

- 3.1 Lichfield District Council is responsible for preparing development plan documents (DPDs) which are used to guide development proposals and determine planning applications.
- 3.2 The development plan for Lichfield District comprises of the [adopted local plan](#) (Local Plan Strategy 2015, Local Plan Allocations Document 2019 and the Local Plan Policies Map) and any 'made' neighbourhood plans. The adopted plan provides the strategic vision and objectives that set out the council's aspirations for the district's future; allocations for residential and employment development; and sets local planning policies to guide development.
- 3.3 The council is at an early stage of working on a [new local plan](#) for the district, which will take us up to 2043. The timeline for the new local plan is set out within the [local development scheme](#) (LDS), which sets out the programme for plan preparation.
- 3.4 The [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) Regulations](#) outline the various stages in the preparation process for the local plan and when we must formally consult on the document. Whilst we will meet these requirements, we also consider that significant effort should be made to try and engage people during the initial plan making stages, when there is the greater opportunity to influence policies and strategies.
- 3.5 Table 1 details the development plan document process, the minimum consultation methods we will use and the additional actions that we will consider when tailor the approach to consultation.

Table 1: Development plan document process and engagement

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Pre-production (Regulation 18)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish robust evidence base for 'issues and options' within the district.</li> <li>Consult statutory consultees on scope of SA/SEA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal engagement with relevant consultation bodies to identify key issues and scope.</li> </ul>
<b>Draft Plan (Regulation 18)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce draft plan (in accordance with Regulation 18) and consult over 6-week period.</li> <li>Produce SA/SEA appropriate to stage of local plan.</li> <li>Prepare consultation summary and statement.</li> <li>Cabinet considers summary of representations and may take account of these as the plan progresses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish documents on website.</li> <li>Documents available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Notifications sent to relevant persons and groups, as well as all on local plan mailing list, inviting to provide representations.</li> <li>Online consultation portal opens.</li> <li>Parish/town/city councils notified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative methods made available to make comments, such as surveys and questionnaires.</li> <li>Undertake drop-in sessions at council's main office and consider additional alternative locations where appropriate.</li> <li>Press release, social media and email alerts to increase awareness.</li> <li>Proactive measures to promote early</li> </ul>

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Pre-submission (Regulation 19)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce draft Regulation 19 local plan and consult over a minimum 6-week period.</li> <li>Produce SA/SEA appropriate to stage of local plan.</li> <li>Representations given at these stages will be considered by the Inspector.</li> <li>Cabinet considers summary of representations and may take account of these to amend the document.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish documents on website.</li> <li>Documents available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Notifications sent to relevant persons and groups, as well as all on local plan mailing list, inviting to provide representations.</li> <li>Online consultation portal opens.</li> <li>Parish/town/city councils notified.</li> </ul>	<p>engagement in the local plan process, such as leaflet drops in high footfall areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative methods made available to make comments.</li> <li>Press release, social media and email alerts to increase awareness.</li> <li>Undertake drop-in sessions at council's main office and consider additional alternative locations where appropriate.</li> <li>Proactive measures, such as leaflet drops in high footfall areas.</li> <li>Attendance at parish forums/meetings where appropriate.</li> <li>Officers available via telephone and email to assist and advise.</li> </ul>
<b>Submission and examination (Regulation 22)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main issues raised in previous representations are summarised.</li> <li>Plan submitted to Secretary of State for independent examination.</li> <li>Independent examination takes place.</li> <li>Consultation on any 'main modifications' identified during examination as required by inspector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish examination documents on website.</li> <li>Examination documents available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Consultees notified.</li> <li>Local publicity for the examination.</li> <li>Examination may have public hearing sessions (either written or hearings) which are generally open to the public.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific additional actions.</li> </ul>
<b>Inspectors report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning inspector issues report if main modifications not required.</li> <li>If agreed with the council, the inspector can propose changes or main modifications to avoid plan being 'unsound'.</li> <li>Inspector considers representations on main modifications.</li> <li>Hearing may be re-opened.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake further notification/consultation as required by inspector if there are modifications and/or where appropriate.</li> <li>Publish inspector's report online for at least 6 weeks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish inspector's report during opening hours of council's main office.</li> </ul>

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Adoption (Regulation 26)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan adopted if deemed 'sound' by inspector.</li> <li>6-week period for legal challenge to High Court.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish adoption documents on website.</li> <li>Adoption documents available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Consultees notified.</li> <li>Secretary of State notified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press release, social media and email alerts.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor plan against aims and objectives.</li> <li>Review plan regularly, at least every 5 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authority monitoring report produced annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific additional actions.</li> </ul>

## Sustainability appraisal and habitats directive

- 3.6 A [Sustainability Appraisal](#) (SA) and/or strategic environmental assessment (SEA) must be undertaken as part of the local plan process.
- 3.7 The purpose of the SA is to assess the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan. The first stage of the SA is the production of a scoping report to identify the key sustainability issues for the area. Following the scoping report, subsequent versions of the SA are produced to accompany each stage of the plan making process and published for consultation at the same time.
- 3.8 Under the provisions of the Habitats Directive, the council must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site, in terms of impacting the sites conservation objectives. The habitats regulations assessment is prepared and consulted on as a statutory requirement of the local plan.
- 3.9 Other evidence base documents will be prepared and whilst not subject to formal public consultation, if anyone wishes to comment on these documents they can email or write in, and the council will respond accordingly.

## Supplementary planning documents

- 3.10 [Supplementary planning documents](#) (SPDs) are designed to support and add further guidance to policies in the local plan.
- 3.11 These documents are prepared with the involvement of the local community and interested parties. The consultation period will be a minimum four and maximum of six weeks. Whilst they are not subject to independent examination, they are adopted by the council under the authorisation process.
- 3.12 Table 2 details the supplementary planning document plan document process.

Table 2: Supplementary planning document process and engagement

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish robust evidence base for document.</li> <li>Screen to determine if SEA is required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal engagement with relevant consultation bodies or particular SPD expertise to identify scope.</li> </ul>

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Publication of draft (Regulation 12)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of draft SPD.</li> <li>• Consult over 4-6 weeks.</li> <li>• Representations considered by officers and SPD may be amended to take account of these comments.</li> <li>• Consultation statement produced to summarise key issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish document and consultation on website.</li> <li>• Document available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>• Online consultation portal opens, as well as alternative methods to make comments.</li> <li>• Notifications sent to relevant persons and groups, as well as all on local plan mailing list; inviting to provide representations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press release, social media and email alerts to increase awareness.</li> <li>• Parish/town/city councils notified.</li> </ul>
<b>Adoption and publication (Regulation 14)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amended SPD presented to Cabinet for adoption.</li> <li>• Adoption statement produced.</li> <li>• 6-week period for legal challenge to High Court.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultees notified.</li> <li>• Publish adoption document online.</li> <li>• Adoption document available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press release, social media and email alerts.</li> <li>• Parish/town/city councils notified.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor plan against aims and objectives.</li> <li>• Review plan regularly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority monitoring report produced annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific additional actions.</li> </ul>

## Who will we consult?

- 3.13 The Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the legal requirements for consultation and public engagement during the preparation of planning policy documents.
- 3.14 Government regulations identify 'specific consultation bodies' including organisations such as Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England that we are required to consult. In addition, we will consult 'general consultation bodies'. Whilst not an exhaustive list, Appendix A provides further details of the organisations and interested parties the council consults.
- 3.15 The council maintains a database of all its consultees which it reviews and updates. Any individual or organisation can sign up to database to be notified of future consultations at the following website: <https://lichfielddc-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/>.

## How will we engage?

- 3.16 In addition to meeting the statutory consultation requirements, we will utilise a range on consultation techniques as detailed in the 'additional actions' in tables 1 and 2 to tailor the approach to each consultation to enable greater involvement in the plan preparation process including press releases; leaflet drops in high footfall areas; emails to interested parties; and use of social media to increase awareness.

## How can you respond to consultations?

- 3.17 The easiest way that you can respond to consultations on development plan documents, supplementary planning documents is through our [online consultation portal](#). Alternative options to respond will also be available, including by writing or emailing the council using the contact details outlined below.
- 3.18 Further information and advice about development plan documents and supplementary planning documents can be found via the following:
- Website: [planning policy](#) page on our website.
  - Email: [developmentplans@lichfielddc.gov.uk](mailto:developmentplans@lichfielddc.gov.uk).
  - Telephone: 01543 308000.
  - Your local district councillor and/or parish/town/city council.

## What will we do with the comments?

- 3.19 All comments received as part of a planning policy consultation process will be collated, analysed and taken into consideration in the preparation of the next stages of the plan process. Comments will be reviewed and considered by officers and members; and where appropriate changes will be proposed. There may be instances where the council considers that is not appropriate to amend the plan to accommodate the views of a respondent.
- 3.20 The results of consultations will be published on the council's website and a consultation statement will be prepared for each statutory consultation stage where appropriate. The comments received to any consultation cannot be treated as confidential, however, personal information will not be made publicly available in accordance with the Data Protection Act. For information on how your personal details will be used you can view the council's privacy notice, including service specific notices are available on the [council's website](#).

## 4. Community involvement in neighbourhood plans

### Introduction

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers for communities to shape their local area. Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.
- 4.2 Neighbourhood plans are prepared by local communities and set out local planning policies in relation to that area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with both local and national planning policy; and are not able to promote less development than set out in the local plan or be contrary to national planning policy set out by government.
- 4.3 Lichfield district has a number of [neighbourhood plans](#) at various stages and once 'made' they become part of the statutory development plan. There are currently 13 'made' neighbourhood plans in the district (in January 2025).
- 4.4 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 sets out the requirements for publicity and consultation in relation to the preparation of neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders. Depending on how advanced the neighbourhood plan is, it is the responsibility of either the qualifying body such as the parish, town or city council or Lichfield District Council to undertake the consultation.
- 4.5 More information on neighbourhood planning, including information on how to start preparing a neighbourhood plan, can be found on the following websites:

- <https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plans>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/localism-act-2011-overview>

### Role of Lichfield District Council

- 4.6 The preparation of neighbourhood plans is led by the 'Qualifying Body' in Lichfield district this must be the relevant parish, town or city council. The district council has a duty to provide advice and guidance to those groups seeking to prepare a neighbourhood plan.
- 4.7 During the preparation stage, it is the parish, town or city council's responsibility to undertake public consultation and engagement. It is only following the submission stage, that Lichfield District Council takes a lead on finalising the neighbourhood plan.
- 4.8 Once a plan has been prepared and consulted on by the community, it will be submitted to the council and we will provide advice to ensure it meets the relevant legislation and conforms with the local plan. The council will consult on the plan and publicise the details of plan including where it can be found on the council's website. We will then organise an independent examination of the document in collaboration with the relevant parish council where an independent examiner will assess the neighbourhood plan against the 'basic conditions'. The basic conditions are the tests which a neighbourhood plan must pass if it is to proceed to referendum.
- 4.9 If the document is considered to meet the requirements by the independent examiner and the council is also satisfied it does, then it will be subject to a referendum within its neighbourhood area (usually the parish area). This will be co-ordinated by the council, and we will make all the documents available to view on the council's website.



## Engagement in the neighbourhood plan development process

4.10 A summary of the roles of Lichfield District Council and relevant parish, town or city councils in the neighbourhood development process is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Neighbourhood plan process and engagement

Stage	Parish/town/city council	Lichfield District Council
<b>Pre-designation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local community may be consulted about possibility of preparing a neighbourhood plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial advice given about plan process, scope and timescales.</li> </ul>
<b>Area designation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood area designation application sent to Lichfield District Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated approved by council under delegated powers.</li> </ul>
<b>Draft plan preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding grants to financially assist preparation, for example to procure optional planning consultant.</li> <li>Produce draft plan including evidence, aims, objectives, vision and policies.</li> <li>Promote awareness in neighbourhood area and undertake survey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice and guidance on national and local planning policies; legislation; evidence base; and draft policies.</li> <li>Arrange Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening and SEA (if required).</li> <li>Advice on engagement and provide contact details for consultees and relevant bodies.</li> </ul>
<b>Pre-submission draft plan (Regulation 14)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 6-week consultation period using appropriate face to face and online methods.</li> <li>Must consult with specified consultation bodies including the district council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the draft neighbourhood plan and provide appropriate feedback.</li> <li>Provide detail of the specified consultation bodies the qualifying body will need to consult.</li> </ul>
<b>Revise neighbourhood plan following regulation 14 consultation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare the neighbourhood plan for submission, a consultation statement and basic conditions statement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide advice and guidance in relation to the neighbourhood plan, consultation statement and basic conditions statement.</li> </ul>
<b>Submission (Regulation 15)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit neighbourhood plan, consultation statement and basic conditions statement to Lichfield District Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the submitted documents meet the requirements of regulation 15.</li> <li>Undertake a minimum 6-week consultation period.</li> <li>Publish documents and consultation on website.</li> <li>Documents available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Invites for representations sent to relevant persons and bodies.</li> </ul>
<b>Examination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select an examiner in collaboration with Lichfield District Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange independent examination.</li> <li>Publish examiner's report online.</li> <li>Coordinate amendments with parish/town/city council.</li> </ul>
<b>Referendum and making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-promote awareness in neighbourhood area including making document accessible to the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake referendum and publish results online.</li> <li>Once all stages completed, Lichfield District Council will 'make' the neighbourhood plan and issue press release.</li> </ul>

## 5. Community involvement in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

### Introduction

- 5.1 The community infrastructure levy (CIL) allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new developments in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of essential infrastructure to support the associated development.
- 5.2 The council adopted its current [CIL Charging Schedule](#) in April 2016.

### CIL Charging Schedule process

- 5.3 Table 4 details the CIL Charging Schedule consultation process.

Table 4: CIL Charging Schedule process

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Publication (Regulation 16)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Charging Schedule produced.</li> <li>6-week consultation period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Charging Schedule available online to view.</li> <li>Document available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Invites for representations sent to relevant persons and bodies.</li> <li>Any person can make representations and if requested to do so they will be heard before the examiner at the CIL Examination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> <li>Press release.</li> <li>Parish/town/city councils notified.</li> </ul>
<b>Submission (Regulation 19)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council selects an examiner.</li> <li>Submit relevant documents to examiner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant documents available online.</li> <li>Notify those who made representations and consultation bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press release.</li> <li>Relevant documents available during opening hours of council's main office.</li> </ul>
<b>Examination (Regulation 21)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examiner undertakes hearing and submits recommendations along with reasons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant documents available online.</li> <li>If the council make significant changes, we will produce a 'statement of modifications' which is advertised for a 4-week period.</li> <li>All consultees receive copy of 'statement of modifications'.</li> <li>Examiner decision published online and sent to all who requested notification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press release.</li> </ul>

Stage	Process	Engagement	Additional actions
<b>Approval and publication (Regulation 25)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Charging Schedule approved and date is set for it to take effect.</li> <li>● 6-week period for legal challenge to High Court.</li> <li>● Charging Schedule reviewed in line with local plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Charging schedule and adoption statement published online and press release.</li> <li>● Notify any persons or bodies that made a representation or asked to be notified.</li> <li>● Authority monitoring report produced annually and provides annual update on CIL received and spent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adoption of Charging Schedule promoted to raise awareness.</li> </ul>

## 6. Community involvement in planning applications

### Development management

- 6.1 Development management is the process by which decisions are made on development proposals that are submitted to the district council for the use and development of land and buildings, known as planning applications.
- 6.2 The development management (DM) service is responsible for determining planning applications received by Lichfield District Council. The DM service will determine planning applications once checks have confirmed that the applications align with the national and [local validation requirements](#), which sets out the supporting documents required depending on the development proposals.
- 6.3 Planning applications are considered against current national planning legislation which includes the [National Planning Policy Framework](#); as well as local planning policies set out in the adopted local plan, minerals and waste plan, made neighbourhood plans and relevant [supplementary planning documents](#).
- 6.4 There are several different types of planning application, such as:
- Planning permission (full, outline and variations).
  - Householder consent.
  - Reserved matters.
  - Non-material amendments.
  - Prior approval and permission in principle.
  - Listed Building Consent.
  - Advertisement consent.
  - Notifications.
  - Certificates of lawfulness.
  - Planning in Principle.
  - Discharge of condition applications.
  - Pre-application advice.
- 6.5 We deal with a large variety of these planning applications every year. In addition, the council receives hundreds of planning enforcement enquires each year.
- 6.6 The government has set out minimum standards for consultation planning applications which can be found in Article 15 of the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) Order 2015](#) (DMPO) as amended.

### Planning application process

- 6.7 The process for planning applications and associated engagement can broadly be split into three main stages, these being:
- Pre-application.
  - Live planning applications.
  - Decision making.

## 6.8 Table 5 sets out the process for planning applications engagement.

Table 5: Stages of planning applications and engagement

Stage	Process	Engagement
<b>Pre-application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtaining pre-application <a href="#">planning advice</a> is recommended before a planning application is submitted.</li> <li>Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to engage with relevant stakeholders (e.g. Staffordshire County Council Highways), the parish/town/city council and the community at the earliest opportunity.</li> <li>The council encourages applicants to engage with owners and occupiers of adjacent land before submitting a planning application.</li> <li>Applicants for major developments (defined later in this chapter) are encouraged to engage and enter the council's planning performance pre-application service and should submit a Statement of Community Involvement and are also encouraged to prepare a masterplan.</li> <li>Whilst the council will not publicise confidential pre-application details, the council may receive a Freedom of Information request which means we would have to disclose information unless there are exemptions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the pre-application stage, the council does not have a formal role in terms of engagement.</li> <li>Where appropriate, the council will encourage applicants to undertake appropriate consultation with stakeholders and the local community, which may include public exhibitions, leaflets, websites, feedback forms.</li> <li>The council may seek to enter planning performance agreements where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Live planning applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Weekly and monthly lists</a> of new planning applications received by the council can be found online.</li> <li>Residents and stakeholders can provide comments (known as representations) to planning applications, which will be publicly available to view on the website (including name and address). Sensitive information such as contact details and signatures will not be published. We reserve the right not to publish any comments that are not considered suitable for public viewing.</li> <li>Retrospective applications will have consultation carried out consistent with that of a standard planning application.</li> <li>When plans are amended or substituted after initial submission, there is no statutory requirement to renotify neighbouring properties, councillors or parish/town/city councils; nevertheless, discretionary re-notification will be undertaken where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents, businesses, interested parties and stakeholders can <a href="#">comment on any planning application</a> open for consultation.</li> <li>The council normally allows 21 days for people to give their views, but this may vary depending on the type of application.</li> <li>The council notifies stakeholders and the community through the E-Planning system, website and site notices.</li> </ul>
<b>Decision making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In most cases, the planning case officer will make a recommendation for decision on the planning application once the consultation period has expired. This is then reviewed by a senior member of the team for final determination.</li> <li>In some cases, the larger and more significant applications are presented to the council's Planning Committee for decision.</li> <li>The decision of the outcome of planning applications will be published on the council's <a href="#">planning application website page</a>.</li> <li>Once a decision has been made, the decision notice will be sent to the applicant/agent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 10% of applications are considered by the <a href="#">planning committee</a>, which can be attended in person or viewed online.</li> <li>Members of the public can register to speak at the Committee.</li> </ul>

## Approach to different types of planning applications

6.9 Table 6 below illustrates the council’s approach to the publicity of different types of planning applications. The table shows what we are required to do, to meet the statutory requirements and what actions the council may take over and above these statutory requirements.

Table 6: Approach to different types of planning applications

	Type of development	What we are required to do	Additional actions
<b>Major</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For dwellings: Where 10 or more are to be constructed (or if no number given, the area is more than 0.5 hectare).</li> <li>For all other uses: Where the floorspace will be 1,000sqm or more (or if area is more than 1 hectare).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post a site notice or take other reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement.</li> <li>Press notice or take reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement.</li> <li>Notify the parish/town/city council.</li> <li>Consult with statutory consultees online, where deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write to all adjoining owners/occupiers.</li> <li>Consult with non-statutory consultees, as deemed appropriate.</li> <li>Advise applicants to consider public exhibitions.</li> <li>Consult adjoining authorities where appropriate.</li> <li>Encourage masterplan consultation for larger housing schemes.</li> <li>Place multiple site notices where necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Minor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development which does not meet the criteria for major development or the definitions of householder or change of use developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post a site notice or take other reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement.</li> <li>If affecting the setting of a conservation area, press notice take reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement.</li> <li>Notify the parish/town/city council.</li> <li>Consult with statutory consultees online, where deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write to all adjoining owners/occupiers.</li> <li>Consult with non-statutory consultees, as deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Householder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defined as works within the curtilage of residential property which require an application for planning permission and are not a change of use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post a site notice or take other reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement.</li> <li>If affecting character of a conservation area or the setting of a Listed Building, press notice or take reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write to all adjoining owners/occupiers.</li> <li>Consult with non-statutory consultees, as deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>

Type of development	What we are required to do	Additional actions
	<p>not possible to discharge this requirement (if affecting conservation area or Listed Building).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify the parish/town/city council.</li> <li>Consult with statutory consultees online, where deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>	
<b>Change of Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applications that do not concern major development or where no building or engineering work is involved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post a site notice or take other reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement.</li> <li>If affecting character of a conservation area or the setting of a Listed Building, press notice or take reasonable steps to publicise the application if it is not possible to discharge this requirement (if affecting conservation area or Listed Building).</li> <li>Notify the parish/town/city council.</li> <li>Consult with statutory consultees online, where deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write to all adjoining owners/occupiers.</li> <li>Consult with non-statutory consultees, as deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>	

## Other consultations

6.10 In addition to the above applications, we also carry out consultation on Permission in Principle and Technical Details Consent for 14 days, excluding bank holidays; we will display a site notice; have a notice on our website; notify the appropriate parish/town/city council of the application; and consult with statutory consultees online.

6.11 Certain types of application do not require or allow consultation with anyone under the legislation. This includes:

- Non-material amendment applications such as where a more minor change is proposed to an approved scheme after the planning decision has been made.
- Condition compliance applications, which is when details are submitted to the council to confirm the details submitted for the purposes of any 'conditions' placed on a planning permission.
- Prior notifications in relation to certain types of development.
- Certificates of lawfulness for proposed use.

## Planning appeals

- 6.12 If a planning application is refused or conditions are imposed on a permission that an applicant is unhappy with, the applicant has the right of appeal against the council's decision. Such appeals are dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 6.13 Appeals can be considered through an exchange of correspondence (known as written representations), at an informal hearing or at a more formal Public Inquiry. All domestic householder appeals, advertisements and some small-scale commercial appeals are exclusively dealt with through a fast-track appeal system, in which no further comments at the appeal stage are accepted by the Planning Inspectorate and only comments received by the time the application is determined are taken into consideration by the planning inspector.
- 6.14 Whichever option is chosen, those who originally commented, and any interested parties, on the planning application are invited to make further representations directly to the Planning Inspectorate. An independent Inspector is then appointed to review the case. If the matter is to be heard by an inspector at either an informal hearing or a public inquiry, then the interested parties including local residents and amenity groups will be invited to make verbal submissions directly to the inspector. The applicant and district council also appear at the hearing or Inquiry. Whilst the appeal process is an independent process operated by the Planning Inspectorate, some of the administration (notifying people, etc.) is undertaken by the district council.

## Openness and transparency

- 6.15 We will aim to make the planning application process as open and transparent as possible. All recent planning application documents are available online and only information exempt under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is withheld from public view.

## Further information

- 6.16 Further information and advice about planning applications can be found via the following:
- Website: [planning and building control](#) pages on our website.
  - Email: [devcontrol@lichfielddc.gov.uk](mailto:devcontrol@lichfielddc.gov.uk).
  - Telephone: 01543 308000.
  - Your local district councillor and/or parish/town/city council.
- 6.17 The [Planning Portal](#) also provides guidance on if planning permission is required, as well as how to make and view planning applications.



## 7. Monitoring and review

- 7.1 The council will monitor the success of community involvement through its [Authority Monitoring Report](#) (AMR).
- 7.2 The AMR monitors the number of users of the district council's online consultation portal and the levels of engagement from members of the public and other stakeholders to public engagement opportunities, such as consultation at various stages of the local plan production.
- 7.3 The AMR is produced annually, and a review of the SCI will be considered where there has been a particularly low level of community participation or issues have emerged in terms of its implementation and significant changes are required to meet new circumstances or legislation requirements.
- 7.4 Amendments to the Local Planning Regulations in 2017 mean that it is now required that local authorities review their SCI at least every 5 years. The next update for Lichfield District Council's SCI will therefore be published no later than 2030.
- 7.5 The council also has a [complaints policy](#) to help us improve our services to our customers and this involves an annual report to the Standards Committee.

### **How can you get in touch if you have any queries about the Statement of Community Involvement?**

For queries related to the Statement of Community Involvement please contact the Policy and Strategy team:

Email: [developmentplans@lichfielddc.gov.uk](mailto:developmentplans@lichfielddc.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01543 308000

Policy and Strategy Team

District Council House

Frog Lane

Lichfield

WS13 6YU

## Appendix A – Consultation bodies

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 specify a number of organisations that local planning authorities should consider consulting when preparing planning policy documents. These are known as ‘specific consultation bodies’ and ‘general consultation bodies’. The regulations allow councils to set out organisations that may have an interest and/or the ‘local planning authority consider appropriate’ to the consultation document being prepared.

### Specific consultation bodies

- Active Travel England.
- Adjoining local planning authorities.
- All parish, town and city councils within and adjoining the boundary of Lichfield District.
- Canal and River Trust.
- Historic England.
- Homes England.
- Marine Management Organisation.
- Mining Remediation Authority.
- National Highways.
- Natural England.
- Network Rail.
- NHS England.
- NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB).
- Public Health England.
- Sport England.
- Staffordshire County Council.
- Staffordshire Police and emergency services.
- The Environment Agency.
- Utilities (e.g. communication, electricity, gas, sewage, telephone and water) companies / operators / undertakers.

### General consultation bodies

In accordance with government regulations, the following general consultation bodies must be consulted where the council consider it appropriate. These may include voluntary groups, as well as groups which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups; disabled persons; different religious groups and persons carrying on business in Lichfield District.

Further guidance on statutory and non-statutory consultees is set out in national guidance online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consultation-and-pre-decision-matters>.