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Supplementary Guidance to the Statement of Community Involvement in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic

6th July 2020

1. This note sets out the temporary changes to the Rugby Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which have been put in place to ensure consultation during the coronavirus pandemic can continue in an effective and safe manner.
2. The first part of this document sets out the modified regulations and guidance relevant to the required changes. Part two lists the temporary changes to the published SCI.
3. Please note that the published SCI and this supplementary guidance document cover the process of consultation for planning policy documents. Consultation on planning applications and the development management process is separate matter covered in separate regulations.
4. These changes are temporary and will be reviewed as the government guidance on coronavirus measures is changed.

Part One- Regulations and Guidance- Development Strategy Documents

5. The government is providing public guidance on measures which must be followed during this coronavirus pandemic¹. At the time of drafting this supplementary guidance these measures include the requirement to maintain social distancing with those outside of your household, the requirement for working from home wherever possible and the banning of mass gatherings.
6. Additionally, the government has introduced new temporary planning practice guidance (PPG)². This aims to ensure planning consultations are still able to run effectively and are safe and adhere to current government guidance on social distancing and other measures.
7. There is no requirement in legislation for changes to an SCI to be consulted on. The Rugby Borough Council policies also do not require this.
8. The government changes to the PPG require LPAs to consider alternatives to face to face events and the inspection of physical documents. Suggestions for alternative activities include virtual exhibitions, digital consultation, video conferencing, use of social media and the provision of documents on the Councils website.
9. The regulations make clear that effective community engagement should continue wherever practicable and that members of the community who may not have internet access should still be engaged.

• ¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

• ² Planning Practice Guidance Paragraphs 076-078.

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10. There is also a new PPG paragraph³ which sets out changes to the Neighbourhood Planning process. This paragraph emphasises the need for Neighbourhood Planning Groups to continue with consultation but to do so in a modified way in line with the government's guidance on social distancing and other coronavirus measures. A key change is that no referendums on Neighbourhood Plans can be carried out until the 6th May 2021⁴. We would advise any Neighbourhood Planning Group planning to run a consultation event in the near future to contact the Development Strategy Team to discuss their arrangements.

Part Two- Changes to SCI Guidance

11. Any meetings, workshops or exhibitions mentioned within the document will now be replaced with phone calls, emails or where practicable, virtual events.
12. Hard copies of documents are usually made available to read in local libraries and at the Town Hall. This will not be possible at this present time but all documents will be available online and, in cases where it is not possible for individuals to view these online, hard copies can be requested to be posted.
13. To ensure that those without internet access are given the opportunity to participate, for consultation which relate to a specific geographical areas (E.g. documents which cover a specific housing site) additional site notices will be displayed in areas close to the area covered by the document.
14. Ward and Parish Councillors and Parish Councils will be made aware of any consultation events and asked to make reasonable attempts to publicise the consultation. We would anticipate that this would be by placing information on notice boards or putting information on their websites and social media sites. Information leaflets and wording will be provided.
15. Our normal procedure, as set out in the SCI, whereby we send out emails and letters to those on the Local Plan consultation database will continue. Details of how to opt-in to this database can be found within the SCI document on page 13.
16. All consultation events will be publicised on the Councils website and social media platforms in line with our normal procedures. The Council is also trialling the use of an app called Nextdoor. If you download the app and sig up to your neighbourhood we may also use this platform to contact about any consultation events.
17. Responses to a consultation will still be encouraged to be submitted by email. However, paper copies will be accepted as will someone submitting an email response on behalf of another person who does not have access to email. In this case permission of the respondent will be required. We would also encourage any community groups or organisations to consider submitting one response on behalf of those they represent.
18. The table below lists the places within the published SCI that these modifications would apply.

³ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph 107.

⁴ In line with the Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

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Place Within SCI	Original Text	Modification/Addition
NDP Table Pages 7 and 8	The 'Council Support and Advice' column of the table on pages 7 and 8 make reference to guidance and advice provided by the LPA to Neighbourhood Planning Groups.	It should be noted that any meetings or advice provided by the LPA will be carried out via telephone, email or video.
Paragraph 2.4.2	<p>"and/or holding evening exhibitions"</p> <p>"Whilst consultation material will be available electronically and the Council will seek to utilise the latest technology, we will also, where possible, make hard copies available in the Council offices and local libraries."</p>	<p>"and/or holding any virtual events in an evening"</p> <p>"Consultation material will be available electronically and the Council will seek to utilise the latest technology. We are unable to make hard copies available to view in the Councils offices and local libraries at this time. However, where people are unable to view these online they can request hard copies to be posted."</p>
Paragraph 2.5.5	"This will usually be undertaken by either a letter or email with meetings as appropriate."	"This will usually be undertaken by either a letter or email with virtual meetings as appropriate."
Paragraph 2.5.9	"Meetings, exhibitions and workshops will be held where appropriate."	"Virtual meetings, exhibitions and workshops will be held where appropriate."
Paragraph 2.5.11	<p>"and hold exhibitions and workshops where appropriate."</p> <p>"Hard copy documents are generally available at Rugby Town Hall and local libraries."</p>	<p>"and hold virtual exhibitions and workshops where appropriate."</p> <p>"We are unable to make hard copies available to view in the Councils offices and local libraries at this time. However, where people are unable to view these online they can request hard copies to be posted."</p>
Paragraph 2.7.2	"Where a meeting with consultees is held, a minute of the meeting will be made and circulated to those in attendance."	"Where a virtual meeting with consultees is held, a minute of the meeting will be made and circulated to those in attendance."
Paragraph 2.7.3	"Where workshops are held, the key outcomes will be summarised and published on	"Where virtual workshops are held, the key outcomes will be summarised and published on the web site and/or circulated to those who attended."

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	the web site and/or circulated to those who attended.”	
Page 16 Public Participation Section of Table	“Members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“Members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 17 Adoption Section of Table	“Members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“Members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 18 Publicising an area application section of table	“Members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“Members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 19 Publicising a plan proposal section of table	“Members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“Members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 21- Preliminary draft charging schedule part of the table-	“members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 22- Publication of draft charging schedule	“members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 23- Modifications to draft charging schedule after publication part of the table	“members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall. They can also request to be sent a hard copy of the document.”	“members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard copies of document can be obtained by contacting the Council.”
Page 24 and 25- Publication of charging schedule	“members of the public can view documents online, at their local library or at Rugby Town Hall.	“members of the public can view documents online. Hard copies will not be available for viewing but hard

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