

Oldham

Local

Plan

**Statement of Community
Involvement 2021**

July 2021



Oldham
Council

Statement of Community Involvement

The council's vision for the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is that "through a co-operative approach we will enable, empower and encourage all residents and stakeholders of the borough to actively participate in the planning process to help achieve our corporate outcome of engaging and resilient communities".

This SCI is as per the adopted SCI 2020 version but with references to Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) amended to refer to Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.

An Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared to support the SCI 2020. Given the nature of the changes to this SCI (2021) there is no need for a revised EIA as the only changes are in relation to amending GMSF to Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.

If you would like further help in interpreting the SCI please contact planning on the following telephone number: 0161 770 4105.

You can also email the team at spi@oldham.gov.uk. During coronavirus restrictions please make use of email contact as much as possible.

All documents connected with the Local Plan and the SCI are available on the council's [web site](#) ⁽¹⁾.

1 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200585/local_plan

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Oldham Council first adopted its SCI in April 2007. The SCI document identifies how the council will involve the community in the consideration of planning applications, the preparation and revision of the Local Plan, the preparation of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document; and it also sets out policies for giving advice or assistance on neighbourhood planning.
- 1.2** Since the SCI was reviewed and adopted in 2019, the planning department have been deploying new ways of working, new systems and processes to work towards a more efficient and customer focussed service. This has been reflected in section 8 of this revised SCI.
- 1.3** The SCI has also been updated so that Local Plan progress and Development Management decisions can take place under coronavirus restrictions as set out in The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. In such circumstances online methods of communication will be the predominant form of consultation and the council may seek opportunities to make use of representatives that can represent a community or sector, where appropriate.

2 The Planning System and Community Involvement

- 2.1** A key part of the Local Plan is the SCI, which sets out how the council will involve the community in the preparation and revision of the Local Plan, Places for Everyone and the consideration of planning applications.
- 2.2** This SCI defines ‘community’ as all stakeholders with an interest in the future development of the borough, which includes the general public, elected members, community and interest groups, organisations, businesses, land owners, developers, consultants and statutory consultees.
- 2.3** The SCI outlines the techniques that may be used to engage the community at the various stages of preparation of Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA / SEA) (referred to as the 'Integrated Assessment') (Section 4).
- 2.4** Opportunities for community involvement on planning applications are outlined in Section 8.
- 2.5** The SCI was first adopted as council policy in April 2007 after an independent examination and public consultation. It was then reviewed in 2010, 2016 and 2019 in light of revised Regulations and Guidance and the commencement of the GMSF (now Places for Everyone).
- 2.6** The SCI has been updated again to introduce measures to ensure a more efficient planning service in relation to the determination of planning applications. It has also been updated to ensure that work on Places for Everyone, Local Plan and Development Management case load can still progress under coronavirus restrictions, for example removing the requirement to make documents available in libraries.
- 2.7** All DPDs, NDPs (relevant stages) and SPDs that are prepared will have to take account of and comply with the SCI. A ‘Statement’ will have to be published for each DPD, showing how it meets the requirements outlined in the SCI when it is submitted to the Secretary of State. All planning applications that are determined by the council must meet the requirements outlined in this SCI.
- 2.8** This SCI has taken account of the following Government legislation and guidance:
- a. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
 - b. The Localism Act 2011;
 - c. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended);
 - d. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015;
 - e. Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017;

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- f. National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance (2019); and
 - g. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

2.9 The SCI covers the whole borough except that part which falls within the Peak District National Park.

3 The Council and Community Involvement

OUR AMBITION FOR THE BOROUGH

- 3.1** The Local Plan is closely related to the strategies that outline the long-term ambition for the borough and the council, which are set out below.

THE OLDHAM PLAN

- 3.2** The Oldham Plan is a collective action statement for Oldham developed and agreed by the Oldham Partnership. It sets out how we can all best serve the place we love and help its people, districts and businesses thrive. The Plan's ambition is *'To be a productive and cooperative place with healthy, aspirational and sustainable communities'*.

The Oldham Plan



- 3.3** The model to deliver this ambition is based around three fundamental shifts:
1. **Inclusive Economy:** Our vision is for Oldham to become Greater Manchester's Inclusive Economy capital by making significant progress in living standards, wages and skills for everyone.
 2. **Co-operative Services:** Our vision is to collaborate, integrate and innovate to improve outcomes for residents and create the most effective and seamless services in Greater Manchester.
 3. **Thriving Communities:** Our vision is for people and communities to have the power to be healthy, happy and able to make positive choice's and both offer and access insightful and responsive support when required.
- 3.4** These shifts are complemented and supported by a focus on two key enablers - public service reform and empowering people and communities.
- 3.5** It is imperative that the Local Plan is shaped for the place, people, districts and businesses. By aligning the Local Plan to the Oldham Plan ambitions, we can ensure that it does its bit to enable and support the achievement of these shifts.

THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 3.6** The Corporate Plan is part of a wider family of strategies which outline how the council will achieve our co-operative ambition for the borough. The Corporate Plan outlines how the council contributes to the Oldham Plan. The corporate ambition '*To deliver a co-operative future where everyone does their bit to create a confident and ambitious borough*' complements the intention in the Oldham Plan to 'build on our co-operative approach' and 'create a borough where everyone does their bit and everyone benefits'.
- 3.7** The vision is underpinned by three corporate objectives as shown in the image below:

The Corporate Plan - Objectives



- 3.8** The Local Plan is critical to the achievement of these objectives for the borough, particularly in terms of creating an inclusive economy where people and enterprise thrive and enabling thriving communities.
- 3.9** The council is currently preparing the Team Oldham Plan (the new corporate plan) and the revised Local Plan will take this into consideration.

OUR VALUES

- 3.10** The Corporate Plan outlines a clear set of values that show how we will do business. We share these borough-wide values with our residents, partners and businesses:

The Corporate Plan - Values



The Corporate Plan Values

Our values

To help make this ambition a reality we have developed Co-operative Values. We will encourage our staff, citizens and partners to adopt these values in everything they do:

Fairness

We will champion fairness and equality of opportunity, and ensure working together brings mutual benefits and the greatest possible added value. We will enable everyone to be involved

Openness

We will be open and honest in our actions and communications. We will take decisions in a transparent way and at the most local level possible.

Responsibility

We take responsibility for, and answer to our actions. We will encourage people to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. Mutual benefits go hand-in-hand with mutual obligations.

Working together

We will work together and support each other in achieving common goals, making sure the environment is in place for self-help.

Accountability

We recognise and act upon the impact of our actions on others, and hold ourselves accountable to our stakeholders.

Respect

We recognise and welcome different views and treat each other with dignity and respect.

Democracy

We believe and act within the principles of democracy, and promote these across the borough.

3.11 Our approach to community involvement should genuinely embody these values. In terms of community involvement we are particularly keen to promote working with a resident focus through the #ourbit #yourbit #result ethos. The SCI sets out how we will engage communities in the preparation of the Local Plan. For example, residents can get engaged through providing comments and feedback as the Local Plan is prepared and the result will be a Local Plan for the future growth of Oldham that has been prepared together.

#ourbit, #yourbit, #result

The graphic features a teal background. On the left, the hashtags #ourbit, #yourbit, and #result are stacked vertically in large white font. To the right is the Oldham Council logo, which consists of a white circle with a smaller white circle inside, and the text 'Oldham Council' below it. Below the hashtags, a white horizontal line separates them from three columns. Each column has a heading in white: #ourbit, #yourbit, and #result. Under each heading is a short paragraph in white text explaining the meaning of the hashtag.

#ourbit	#yourbit	#result
What Oldham Council is doing or contributing to help improve something	How local people, businesses, partners and residents are helping to make change happen	How we are all benefiting from working together to improve Oldham

CUSTOMER CHARTER

3.12 Oldham Council also has a customer charter which sets out our promise to make customer care central to the way we do business. The planning service is part of this promise. Please note that under coronavirus restrictions face to face appointments may not be available.

Customer Charter

We will:

- Make our services easy to use and give you choices where possible.
- Be honest, approachable, professional and polite and always put you first.
- Treat you with dignity, respect and let you know how long it will take to deal with your query.
- Deal with your enquiry straight away where possible or make you an appointment with a person who can help.
- Apologise if things go wrong and do our best to put things right quickly.
- Use your views to help us make improvements to services, give good service and provide value for money.

Help us by:

- Giving us all the information we need to help you.
- Letting us know if you have any special needs.
- Telling us how we can improve our services.
- Asking us to explain anything you're not sure of.

Our Customer Service Standards

When dealing with you in person we will:

- Provide easy access to all our public buildings.
- Keep waiting times to a minimum and aim to see you within 5 minutes.
- See you at the time agreed for appointments.
- If you do not have an appointment we will see you within 30 minutes of your arrival.

When dealing with you by phone we will:

- Aim to answer your call within 20 seconds and deal with your enquiry at that point, wherever possible.
- Welcome you and give you our name.
- When dealing with emails sent to service email addresses we will acknowledge the receipt of your email within 24 hours.

- Provide a full response to your enquiry within 5 working days.
- Give the contact details of the person replying to your enquiry.

When dealing with emails sent to named officers we will:

- Provide a full response to your enquiry within 10 working days.
- Give the contact details of the person replying to your enquiry.

When you write to us we will:

- Acknowledge that we've received your letter within 5 working days. Provide a full response to your enquiry within 10 working days.
- Give the contact details of the person replying to your enquiry.

If you have a complaint we will:

- Acknowledge that we've received your complaint within 5 working days.
- Fully investigate your complaint and provide you with a response within 15 days.
- Give the contact details of the person replying to your enquiry.

Information about complaints and feedback to the council can be found on the council's [website](#) ⁽¹⁾

THE LOCAL PLAN AND THE OLDHAM PARTNERSHIP

- 3.13** The Oldham Partnership brings together proactive and engaged public, private, voluntary and community organisations in Oldham. All of these partners share the common vision 'to make Oldham a place of ambition' and are committed to working with each other and with the people of Oldham to create a productive place with healthy, aspirational and sustainable communities. It is more than a partnership of organisations but a body which is responsible for leading and championing Oldham, not just at the borough level but at the city region and beyond.
- 3.14** The Oldham Leadership Board is the governing body of the Oldham Partnership. It comprises of public sector chief executives, key elected members, business and community and voluntary sector leaders.
- 3.15** The Oldham Partnership will be used as a mechanism to engage with key stakeholders as part of the consultation process for the Local Plan.

1 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200143/complaints_and_feedback/630/complaints_or_feedback_about_the_council

3.16 In developing the Local Plan, the council will endeavour to undertake, where appropriate, joint working with organisations represented on the Oldham Partnership, so as to maximise resources and reduce consultation fatigue. The Oldham Partnership has a proven track record in engaging stakeholders and members of the community on a range of social, economic and environmental issues facing local communities.

COMMUNITY FORUMS

3.17 The Councillors in each District hold a regular series of Community Forums, aimed at engaging with local people on the issues that matter to them. These forums take different formats, depending on the needs of each particular neighbourhood, and the issues under discussion.

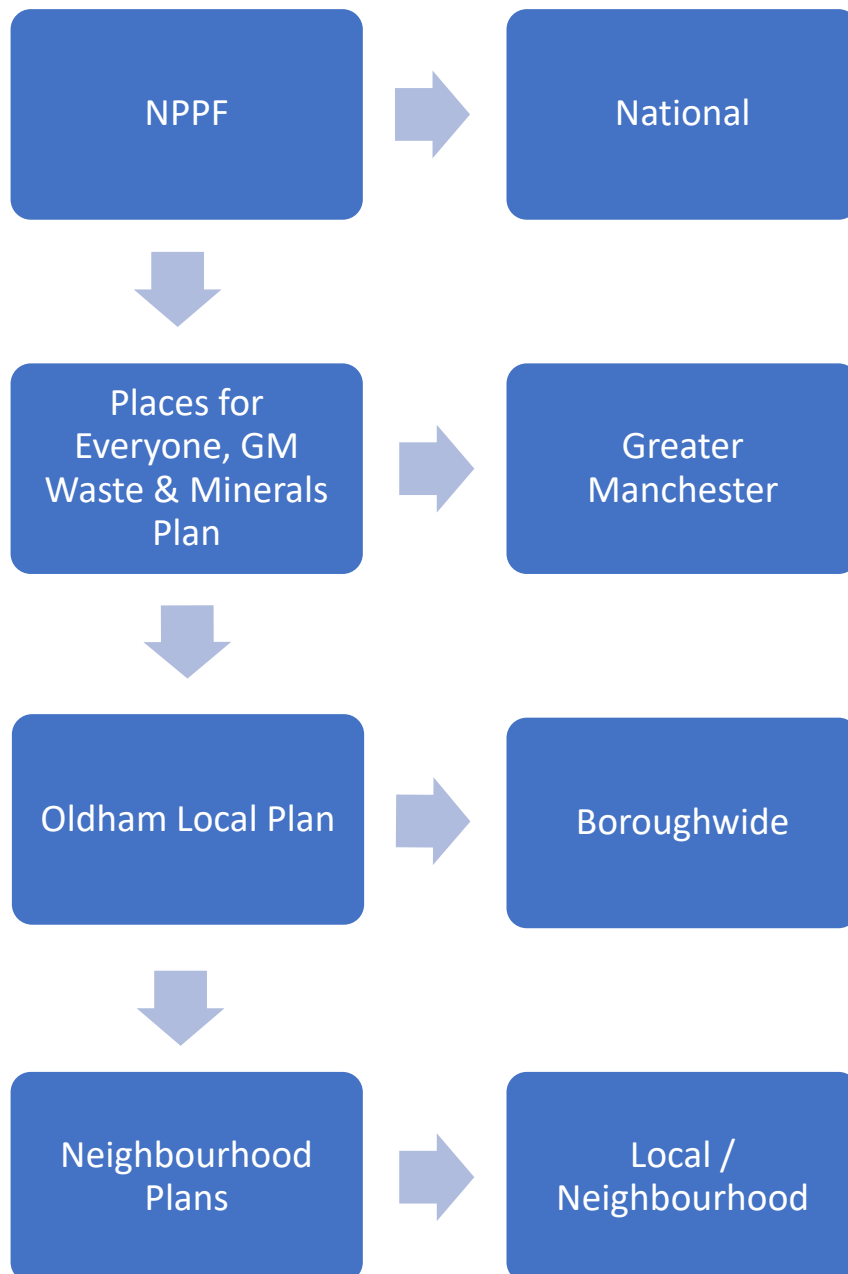
3.18 In developing the Local Plan, the Council will seek (where possible) to utilise these community forums as a mechanism to engage residents across the Borough, and will seek the advice of Elected Members and District teams as to the appropriate way in which to do this, so that the discussion is as relevant as possible to the area in question.

4 Community Involvement and the Local Plan

WHAT PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS ARE THERE?

- 4.1 There are two types of Local Plan documents and depending on the type of document these may form part of the Local Plan or provide additional guidance for implementing policies. The two types of Local Plan documents are:
- 4.2 **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)**, which include documents relating to the development and use of land and which contain the statutory planning policies which guide future development. DPDs form part of the Local Plan. The DPDs we have in place in Oldham are the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (including some saved Unitary Development Plan policies) (the 'Joint DPD'), Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD. DPDs must be in conformity with NPPF.
- 4.3 Oldham Council is currently working on Places for Everyone, which is a Joint DPD, and will form part of the Local Plan for the borough. The Local Plan is also being reviewed which will form a complementary part of Places for Everyone and will provide additional policy direction for Oldham.
- 4.4 **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**, which provide greater detail on the policies and proposals in DPDs. SPDs are not part of the Local Plan but support Local Plan policies and are a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.5 In addition, the Localism Act introduced **Neighbourhood Plans**. Further information on Neighbourhood Plans can be found at paragraphs 4.29 - 4.40.
- 4.6 A diagram of the different tiers of plans is shown below.

Plan Hierarchy



4.7 Other documents include:

- Oldham's **Local Development Scheme** (LDS) is the project plan for the Local Plan and sets out details of the planning documents to be prepared and their timescales. This involves timescales for the various stages of plan preparation, including at the early stages of plan making. This early engagement with the community is an important part of the Local Plan. Methods of how we would engage the community are set out in Table 1. The latest [LDS](#) is published on the council's website ⁽¹⁾.
- Oldham's **Monitoring Report** is the main mechanism for assessing the Local Plan's performance and effects. It reports on housing delivery, amongst other policy areas, duty to co-operate and whether the council is meeting key milestones as set out in the LDS.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy** (CIL) is a charge that is levied on new development floorspace and is intended to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure. There are two main stages of statutory consultation: Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and the Draft Charging Schedule. Oldham Council consulted on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule early 2014. However, progress on CIL has been put on hold until Places for Everyone and Oldham Local Plan review have progressed.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS - THE PROCESS

- 4.8** There are four stages in the preparation of DPDs - Preparation, Publication, Examination and Adoption. These stages are set out by The Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 4.9** Preparation – This preliminary stage involves the gathering of baseline information to assist preparation of the Development Plan Document, evidence base gathering and early engagement with relevant consultation bodies (Regulation 18). This stage includes the drafting of the DPD and supporting documents and it includes various stages of consultation to engage the community.
- 4.10** Publication– The council will then prepare a Publication/Submission DPD and Final Integrated Assessment Report. It will then be published for consultation along with a statement of representations for at least 6 weeks (Regulation 19). Comments will be invited before it is submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 4.11** Examination – The Publication / Submission DPD will be subject to Independent Examination by a Planning Inspector who will test its “soundness” (Regulation 24).
- 4.12** Adoption – The Inspector will produce a report that will be binding upon the council should the council adopt the plan. The Inspector’s report will be published. Any recommended changes would have to be incorporated into the DPD before the council formally adopts and publishes it (Regulation 26).

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS - THE PROCESS

- 4.13** The Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out the stages for preparation of a SPD.

1 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200709/documents_in_the_local_development_framework/230/local_development_scheme

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- 4.14** This includes a statutory period of at least four weeks for public consultation on a SPD (Regulation 12), however, the council will normally consult for a minimum of 6 weeks. The community can then make representations on the SPD (Regulation 13).
 - 4.15** The council will consider those representations and prepare a statement setting out who was consulted, the main issues raised and how those issues have been addressed (Regulation 12).
 - 4.16** The council will adopt the final SPD and make the SPD and its adoption statement available to view and send the adoption statement to anyone that asked to be notified of the SPD adoption (Regulation 14).

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - THE PROCESS

- 4.17** A key aim of national planning policy is the delivery of sustainable development. The government's definition of sustainable development is set out in the NPPF. The NPPF states the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.18** The planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across the different objectives):
1. an economic objective - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 2. a social objective - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 3. an environmental objective - to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.19** Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is mandatory for a DPD. The role of the SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging DPD against economic, environmental and social objectives.
- 4.20** The council is also required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the European Directive 2001/42/EC and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. This assesses the likely significant effects on the environment.
- 4.21** For both Places for Everyone and the Oldham Local Plan review the requirements of the SA and SEA will be met and published in an 'Integrated Assessment' (IA). In recognition that there will be linkages across the various assessments that the council is required to carry out, the IA will also incorporate the following:
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA), required by the Equality Act (2011). An EIA will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people, considering protected characteristics, such as age and disability for example;

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA), recommended by the Department of Health. A HIA assesses the potential effects of the DPD on the health of the borough's population; and
 - the findings from the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which is required by the Habitats Directive (2007). This ensures the protection of the integrity of European protected sites (in Oldham this is the Rochdale Canal and the South Pennine Moors).
- 4.22** A SA is not required for SPDs, however the council must determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required.
- 4.23** There are several opportunities for community involvement during the stages of the IA of DPDs. These are explained below.
- 4.24** Pre-production - The council will carry out evidence gathering at this stage. This may involve engaging with key stakeholders, particularly statutory bodies, to establish relevant policies, plans and programmes and collecting baseline information.
- 4.25** Consulting on the Scope of the IA - The council is required to consult the following three consultation bodies (or any successor bodies) on the scope and level of detail in the IA Scoping Report for five weeks:
- Historic England;
 - Natural England; and the
 - Environment Agency.
- 4.26** The council may also consult other organisations and people in the community to inform this preliminary stage of plan making, however the IA will tend to be targeted at key stakeholders depending on the subject being covered by the DPD or SPD as it is a technical document.
- 4.27** Preparation - During the preparation of the DPD and IA, an opportunity for community involvement will also be available. This will be during the development of the DPD options and refinement of the plan. The options are essentially the approaches that the DPD could take.
- 4.28** Publication - The final opportunity for community involvement for the IA is the formal consultation period. For DPDs this is during the publication of the document before it is examined by a Planning Inspector.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

- 4.29** The Localism Act introduced the ability for a relevant body (a relevant body means a parish council or an organisation or body which is capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum) to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Plans, when adopted, form part of the Local Plan.

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- 4.30** Neighbourhood Plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in Local Plans or spatial development strategies and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. Neighbourhood Plans are assessed through an independent examination before going to a local referendum.
- 4.31** If a Neighbourhood Plan is approved at referendum then it immediately becomes part of the development plan and planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area would be assessed against it. Relevant bodies can also produce Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders.
- 4.32** It is the role of the relevant body to prepare and consult the community on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as they see most appropriate up to 'Pre-submission publicity & consultation' stage, where at this stage the regulations set out how the relevant body must consult the community. However, Oldham Council has a role to advise and assist on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and also has a role at key statutory stages.
- 4.33** Where a Neighbourhood Plan covers another Local Planning Authority, such as the Peak District National Park, a lead authority will be agreed to manage the process, however both authorities will ensure that statutory stages are met.
- 4.34** Oldham Council's role in relation to Neighbourhood Planning is set out in detail in our [Neighbourhood Planning Policy Statement](#) on the council's website ⁽²⁾.
- 4.35** Oldham Council may meet with the neighbourhood group before an application is made to designate a neighbourhood area or forum. Once a neighbourhood area is designated the council would help during the preparation stage of a neighbourhood plan / order through measures such as:
- Providing advice on requirements for neighbourhood planning;
 - Providing available relevant evidence;
 - Providing the strategic policies in the Local Plan and emerging Places for Everyone / Local Plan review;
 - Signposting to useful websites and resources;
 - Providing constructive comments on the draft neighbourhood plan / order and supporting documents; and
 - Being available for engagement with the neighbourhood group, including participation in meetings and consultation, where appropriate.
- 4.36** Oldham Council have responsibility for engaging the community at the following stages of Neighbourhood Planning:
- Publicising an area / neighbourhood forum application;
 - Publicising a designation of a neighbourhood area / forum;

2 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200585/local_plan/1644/neighbourhood_planning

- Publicising a plan / order. This would include notifying any consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement submitted by the relevant body;
- Organising an independent examination;
- Publicising the independent examiners report and plan proposal decisions;
- Organising a public referendum for the neighbourhood area; and
- Publicising the adopted neighbourhood development plan / order.

4.37 The basic process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order is:

Neighbourhood Plan basic process

1. A relevant body state they wish to produce a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order. Oldham Council provides advice and assistance on the designation and preparation process.
2. The relevant body submits a draft Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order to Oldham Council to determine conformity.
3. Oldham Council publicises the Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development order.
4. Independent examination organised by Oldham Council.
5. Independent Examiner's report recommends the draft Plan or Order is submitted to referendum; or modifications need to be made and agreed by both sides then submitted to referendum; or the plan or order is refused.
6. Referendum organised by Oldham Council.
7. If more than 50% of those voting agree, Oldham Council must start using the Neighbourhood Plan or Order as part of the Local Plan immediately for the area and adopt the Plan or Order formally.

4.38 Where Oldham Council is required to carry out consultation on a Neighbourhood Plan this will be in line with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). This includes:

- publicising on the council's website and other ways ⁽³⁾ to bring the neighbourhood plan document to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the area; and
- notifying consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement submitted by the relevant body that the plan proposal has been received.

³ 'other ways' will make use of the methods shown in Table 1, as appropriate

4.39 The timetable for a Neighbourhood Plan and public consultation stages is determined by the relevant body.

4.40 It is likely that a Service Level Agreement between the relevant body and Oldham Council (and adjoining Local Planning Authorities where appropriate) would be prepared to establish the level of assistance provided, as recommended by the Planning Advisory Service.

TALKING TO PEOPLE

4.41 The diverse population of the borough have differing needs that need to be considered when engaging in any consultation exercise. It is recognised that many people and groups that are known about in the borough are marginalised in the planning process. The council's aspiration, as set out in the SCI vision, is that "through a co-operative approach we will enable, empower and encourage all residents and stakeholders of the borough to actively participate in the planning process to help achieve our corporate outcome of safe, strong and sustainable communities". The planning system also places emphasis on community involvement that works to engage with all groups and individuals including those that may not have traditionally been engaged within the planning processes.

4.42 This SCI defines these groups or characteristics, as:

- a. Disabled people;
- b. Particular ethnic groups;
- c. Men or women;
- d. People of particular sexual orientation/s;
- e. People in a Marriage or Civil Partnership;
- f. People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment;
- g. People on low incomes;
- h. People in particular age groups;
- i. Groups with particular faiths and beliefs; and
- j. Other groups that may be affected e.g. vulnerable residents, homeless people, individuals at risk of loneliness, carers or serving and ex members of the armed forces.

4.43 Engaging with all communities including those sections of the community that have not traditionally participated in the planning process will ensure that the widest range of views are taken into consideration when forming the Local Plan. The council will arrange for the Local Plan documents to be made available in alternative formats (such

as large print, electronically, minority ethnic community languages etc), where appropriate, in order to facilitate understanding of the Local Plan, if requested and resources permitting.

4.44 The council will also comply with appropriate equality legislation when preparing the Local Plan and an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken alongside production of this SCI. An Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared to support the SCI 2020. Given the nature of the changes to this SCI (2021) there is no need for a revised EIA as the only changes are in relation to amending GMSF to Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.

4.45 Equalities Impact Assessments (EIA) will be undertaken for DPDs and SPDs.

REPRESENTATIONS ON LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENTS - ENGAGING COMMUNITIES ON THE PRELIMINARY STAGES OF PLAN MAKING

4.46 There will be different stages for community involvement in the preparation of Local Plan documents. Representations on a Local Plan document can be made during its preparation stage (Regulation 18).

4.47 The council will encourage `frontloading` consultation, which means that potential participants are to be encouraged to engage as early as possible in the preparation process. This early stage under Regulation 18 will, where appropriate, aim to make more use of consultation methods such as focus groups, social media etc as outlined in Table 1 to attract a wider and more diverse audience to participate in the Local Plan process. By carrying out methods such as focus groups it is hoped that we can draw out issues from people not traditionally involved in the planning process so that the Local Plan reflects Oldham's diverse communities.

4.48 It is also important that statutory consultees, internal colleagues and other stakeholders are engaged early on in the process to help scope out the baseline information on the borough such as physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics, demographics and infrastructure capacity. Much of this will be collected during the Scoping Report of the Integrated Assessment, however it is important that information is kept up to date throughout the Local Plan preparation.

4.49 The council will also aim, where appropriate, to publish evidence that is prepared for the Local Plan review as it becomes available so that communities can view this early on in the plan making process to give greater understanding of the background and justification to the Local Plan as it emerges. The council will also share available evidence with community groups preparing Neighbourhood Plans as soon as it is available.

4.50 The council will ensure that communities are able to view the LDS on the council's website at all times to be kept informed about which planning documents are being prepared and their timescales. When the LDS is updated a new version will become available. The council reports our progress against the LDS project plan in the Monitoring Report published each year.

REPRESENTATIONS AT PUBLICATION STAGE

4.51 At publication stage (Regulation 19) representations must be based on whether the plan is considered:

- Legally compliant;
- Sound - that it is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy ⁽⁴⁾; and
- Complies with the Duty to Co-operate.

4.52 Representations made at publication stage will be considered by the Inspector during the public examination of the Local Plan. If representations seek changes to the DPD, they should specify the changes being sought to inform the Inspector.

4.53 Any representations made may be considered by the Inspector by way of written representations, although individuals may exercise their right to attend the examination and be heard.

HOW TO COMMENT

4.54 All formal Local Plan consultation documents can now be viewed and comments submitted interactively online during the consultation period via Objective Consultation Portal which respondents will be encouraged to use. To access Objective, please register online at <https://oldham-consult.objective.co.uk/portal>. The council may also prepare official comment forms for the public participation stages of DPDs. The comment forms will be available in both paper format at all formal deposit points and on the council's website, where used. Comments will also be accepted by email and letter (see Appendix 3 for contact details).

4.55 Details of the public consultation, including the document name, consultation dates and detail on how to respond are set out during consultations in the Statement of Availability (Public Notice), and in the email or letter to individuals and organisations on the Local Plan Mailing List. Details are also set out on the council's website.

Example

Annie Mills notices a public notice about a Local Plan consultation. Annie takes note of the deadline for comments and the consultation website.

She has a look through the document online and notices that it identifies a site near her home address. Annie registers herself as a user on the council's consultation portal and submits comments to say what type of development she would prefer the site to be developed for.

Annie knows that she will now receive further Local Plan messages and will find out more about the Local Plan as it is prepared.

4 www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework

WHO TO CONSULT

- 4.56** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), outline the types of 'specific', 'general' and 'other' consultation bodies that should be consulted on the Local Plan.
- 4.57** This SCI does not identify all the separate agencies, organisations or individuals that the council will consult during the plan-making process. It does, however, provide guidance on the type of stakeholders that the council will consult. Appendix 1 lists the types of specific, general and Duty to Cooperate bodies that will be consulted, where appropriate. The specific consultation bodies include the borough's two parish councils – Saddleworth and Shaw & Crompton - who will be consulted at all formal consultation stages during the preparation of the Local Plan.

LOCAL PLAN MAILING LIST

- 4.58** The council has established a mailing list containing details of the specific, general and other consultation bodies and Government Departments specified in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) that will be consulted on the Local Plan (See Appendix 1 for details of the consultation bodies.)
- 4.59** The mailing list also contains details of individuals and organisations that have specifically requested to be kept informed about preparation of the Local Plan.
- 4.60** Anyone can register on our online consultation portal at <http://oldham-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/oc/planning/spi/>
- 4.61** Anyone can be added to, or removed from, the Local Plan mailing list at any time by contacting the council's Strategic Planning and Information section (See Appendix 3 for contact details).

DATA PROTECTION

- 4.62** Information on the collection of personal data and privacy is available via the following link https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200148/data_protection_and_freedom_of_information
- 4.63** The Strategic Planning and Information Privacy Notice and the Development Management Service Privacy Notice can be found via the above link.

CONSULTATION METHODS AND THE LOCAL PLAN

- 4.64** There are a range of consultation methods that the council could use to engage the community in the preparation of the Local Plan. However, it has to be recognised that different consultation methods may be better suited to engaging different sections of the community. The consultation methods used may also depend on the type of Local Plan document in preparation and the stage it is at.
- 4.65** As a minimum all draft DPDs and SPDs ⁽⁵⁾, will at the relevant formal stages for public consultation with the community benefit from the following approaches to community engagement:

5 This does not relate to evidence base documents necessarily

1. Public Notice outlining details of the Local Plan documents will be published;
2. a press release with details of the Local Plan documents will be issued;
3. the Local Plan documents will be published on the council's website;
4. the Local Plan documents will be made available at public libraries; ⁽⁶⁾
5. the Local Plan documents will be made available at the council's principal office, i.e. at Access Oldham; and
6. a letter or email will be sent to those relevant parties on the Local Plan mailing list, including statutory consultees, Oldham Partnership and Oldham Councillors explaining that the Local Plan documents are available for consultation and information on where they can be found.

4.66 Please note that during coronavirus restrictions where public libraries and the council's principal office are closed or restricted to visitors the council will not make use of consultation methods 4 and 5 set out in paragraph 4.65. We will make use of online methods of communication and the council will seek to make use of alternative arrangements as set out in paragraph 4.68.

4.67 Table 1 details the main consultation methods that the council will use as a minimum standard as listed above in paragraph 4.65 and having regard to paragraph 4.66. It also details the consultation techniques that the council may make use of over and above this minimum, if appropriate and resources permitting. The table provides a summary of the benefits and limitations of each consultation method available to the council and also gives an indication of which section of the community the consultation method could be most appropriate at targeting.

4.68 As stated above during coronavirus restrictions the council may not be able to make use of all the methods outlined below in Table 1. In such circumstances online methods of communication will be the predominant form of consultation and the council may seek opportunities to make use of representatives that can represent a community or sector, where appropriate.

6 For library opening times please visit https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200395/find_a_library

Table 1 Types of Consultation Methods

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Availability of documents	<p>Publication of Draft and Submission documents to allow public participation.</p> <p>Copies available at Oldham Council (Access Oldham) and libraries during opening hours.</p> <p>Other formats available on request.</p>	<p>Information available locally to a wide range of readers.</p>	<p>Limited to office / library hours.</p> <p>Some people may have mobility issues / be unable to read.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is not possible. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.</p>	<p>General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations.</p>
Statutory Notice / Letter / email to Statutory Consultees / people and organisations on the Local Plan Mailing List	<p>Notification about document preparation and consultation details.</p> <p>Notice placed in local newspaper, on website, posted or emailed to people on Local Plan mailing list and made available at the council's office and public libraries.</p>	<p>Notice / letter explains consultation details and how to respond.</p> <p>Individuals and organisations that expressed interest in being informed can be directly notified about document preparation and consultation dates.</p>	<p>Individuals may miss the notice and information.</p> <p>Only people and organisations on the Local Plan mailing list will receive information directly.</p> <p>May not be aware of the Local Plan mailing list.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean that the statutory notice cannot be placed in public</p>	<p>Statutory Consultees, General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations, Agents, Developers and Landowners.</p>

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Council Website / Objective Consultation Portal	Documents made available electronically.	Documents can be accessed 24 hours a day, at home or work to a wide range of people. Libraries contain computers that can be used to access the documents.	libraries and at the council's office. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.	
Councillors	Local Councillors are emailed with details of the consultation. Copies of the documents placed in the Members Rooms.	Community representatives' input and endorsement for the document.	Some people may have poor IT skills. Areas may have poor broadband. Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is not possible. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.	General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations, Agents, Developers, and Landowners. Councillors.
Press Release	Press release issued.	Notification of document preparation and consultation dates can achieve wide coverage and reach people not on the Local Plan Mailing List.	Press release may not be published.	General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Council Magazines	<p>"Borough Life" produced three times a year.</p> <p>"Staff Matters" magazine (bi-annual) and Team Brief (weekly) email.</p>	<p>Opportunity for articles about Local Plan preparation and consultation dates. Information can cover the whole borough and reach a wide range of readers.</p> <p>Opportunity for articles about Local Plan preparation and consultation dates. Many of our staff live within the borough so information will reach a wide range of people.</p>	<p>Publication dates may not fit in with Local Plan consultations.</p>	<p>General Public and Oldham Council staff.</p>
Focus Groups	<p>Meetings of specific stakeholders with relevant interest in area / topic invited to provide input into document.</p>	<p>Can gain views from particular groups of people who are under-represented.</p> <p>Can have detailed discussion on particular topics or sites.</p> <p>May be viewed as a more accessible way of engaging people in the planning process.</p>	<p>May need to rely on other organisations to help organise.</p> <p>Relies on people wanting to volunteer time or being able to voice opinions.</p> <p>Minuted discussions rather than written representations.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is difficult to implement. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.</p>	<p>General Public, organisations, Statutory Consultees. Agents. Developers. Oldham Partnership. Landowners.</p>

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Public Meetings	Meetings with the community to provide input into the document.	<p>Opportunity for people and officers to listen to each other and ask questions to officers directly. Can reach a wide range of people.</p> <p>Allows people to engage in the Local Plan without having to read documents.</p> <p>May make use of visual display of information.</p>	<p>May be unawareness about public meetings.</p> <p>People may not be able to make meeting times.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is not possible. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.</p>	General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations.
Meetings of Interested Parties	Meetings of stakeholders with relevant interest in area/ topic invited to provide input into document.	Can address particular issues in detail.	<p>Would just apply to specific organisations / agents etc.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is difficult to implement. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.</p>	Statutory Consultees, Interested Individuals and Organisations, Agents, Developers and Landowners.
Survey / Questionnaire	Surveys/ questionnaires to general public and stakeholders with relevant interest in area or topic invited to provide input into the document.	<p>Useful in engaging people at early stages. Gathers evidence and information to inform plan preparation.</p> <p>Can be online or postal.</p>	Representations may be non planning related.	General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations.

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Exhibition	Exhibition about document can be displayed in venues across the borough to generate publicity.	<p>Opportunity for people and officers to listen to each other and ask questions to officers directly.</p> <p>Can reach a wide range of people.</p> <p>Allows people to engage in the Local Plan without having to read documents.</p> <p>May make use of visual display of information.</p>	<p>Not everyone will see exhibitions.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is not possible. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.</p>	General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations.
Leaflets / Posters	Leaflets and Posters about document can be prepared and circulated around the community to generate publicity.	Reaches a wide area and range of people.	Limited information.	General Public.
Local Plan Helpline	Telephone numbers of council officers available for people wanting details about document.	Opportunity for people and officers to listen to each other and ask questions to officers directly.	Limited to office hours.	General Public, Interested Individuals and Organisations.

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Oldham Partnership	Partnership structure allows relevant stakeholders to be involved in the Local Plan preparation.	<p>Opportunity for people and officers to listen to each other and ask questions to officers directly.</p> <p>Can reach a wide range of people.</p> <p>Allows people to engage in the Local Plan without having to read documents.</p> <p>May make use of visual display of information.</p>	Will only reach those engaged through Oldham Partnership.	Business, Black and Minority Ethnic, Voluntary, Faith and Community groups.
Social Media	Where appropriate publicise consultations via the council's Twitter and / or Facebook page.	<p>Can reach a wide geographic area and a wide range of people, particularly young people. Can target particular ages and postcode areas to target people not traditionally involved in the planning process.</p> <p>Social media seen as a modern way of engaging people.</p> <p>Use of videos would help generate interest.</p>	<p>Limited amount of text.</p> <p>Not everyone will use social media.</p>	General Public.

How we get in touch with people	Method	Benefits	Limitations	Groups most likely to benefit from consultation method
Access Oldham Information Screen	Screen in Access Oldham reception which can promote details of consultation.	Can reach a wide range of people that use Access Oldham to promote details of consultation.	<p>Limited amount of text.</p> <p>Only those visiting Access Oldham will potentially see the screens.</p> <p>Coronavirus restrictions may mean this option is not possible. Please see paragraphs 4.66-4.68.</p>	General Public.
Variable Message Signs	Variable message signs located on A roads around the borough can be used to promote Local Plan consultation.	Can reach a wide range of people in different geographic locations to promote details of consultation.	<p>Limited amount of text.</p> <p>Only people passing signs will see details displayed.</p>	General Public.

5 Reporting Back

- 5.1** The council will acknowledge all comments submitted at public participation stages about Local Plan documents. Any comments submitted cannot be treated as confidential.
- 5.2** All comments will be summarised in a 'Public Schedule of Representations Report'. Where changes are being sought to the DPD or SPD, a 'Responses Report' will indicate whether any amendments will be made along the lines being suggested before the document is submitted for examination in the case of a DPD. These two reports may be combined into a single document.
- 5.3** The Reports will be made available on the council's website as well as in hard copy at the Civic Centre Access Oldham and public libraries as soon as practicable. Please note that during coronavirus restrictions these Reports may only be available online.
- 5.4** All Local Plan documents will be subject to the approval processes outlined in the Local Plan Scheme of Delegation that has been approved by Full Council.

6 Community Involvement in the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document

- 6.1** Nine of the Greater Manchester authorities (including Oldham) are working on the production of a joint plan titled 'Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document'. Places for Everyone will provide the overarching framework to strategically manage sustainable growth and development across the conurbation over the next twenty years or so.
- 6.2** Principally, Places for Everyone will identify the housing numbers and employment floorspace needs and associated infrastructure requirements as well as identifying the key allocations and broad opportunity areas where this growth should be focussed. Further information on the preparation process for Places for Everyone can be found on the [homepage](#) ⁽¹⁾.
- 6.3** Consultation on Places for Everyone is carried out on a joint basis and is in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the nine districts' Statements of Community Involvement.
- 6.4** If you wish to register your interest in being informed of future Places for Everyone consultation please register on the [mailing list sign up](#) ⁽²⁾ page or contact:
- planningandhousing@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk.

1 <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/>

2 <https://greatermanchester-ca.us15.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=0014d640ea6c4781cba40f2f2&id=40152f3438>

7 Duty to Co-operate

- 7.1** The Localism Act requires Local Planning Authorities and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of addressing strategic cross boundary matters in Local Plans. The 'duty to co-operate' is a statutory requirement for all Local Planning Authorities in relation to the planning of sustainable development.
- 7.2** Oldham Council will continue to work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and reflected in the preparation of the Local Plan. The extent to which the council has undertaken this duty will be scrutinised as part of the independent examination of the Local Plan. The bodies that will be consulted on under the 'Duty to Co-operate' are listed in Appendix 1. Specific meetings will take place with public bodies, such as United Utilities, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England and neighbouring authorities as appropriate throughout the Local Plan process.
- 7.3** The council will prepare a Statement of Common Ground, which is a written record of the progress made to address any strategic cross boundary matters during the Local Plan preparation. It outlines where effective co-operation is and is not happening, and is a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries. It is also evidence that the council has complied with the Duty to Cooperate. This will be maintained and made available on the council's website.
- 7.4** In relation to Places for Everyone, GMCA and Local Planning Authorities will ensure that the Duty to Cooperate with neighbouring councils and other prescribed bodies is met, as set out in law to ensure effective and deliverable policies on strategic cross boundary matters.
- 7.5** The Monitoring Report is published annually and outlines any activity relating to Duty to Cooperate.

8 Community Involvement and Development Management

- 8.1 The council is responsible for the processing of all planning applications within the borough. To ensure that people within the borough are aware of proposals and that they have the chance to be involved in decision-making, notification is vital.
- 8.2 As well as setting out the ways in which the council will involve the community in the preparation of the Local Plan, the SCI also sets out the ways in which the council will involve the community in the decision making process for determining planning applications.
- 8.3 The purpose of this section is to set out what the council's decision-making process involves in relation to planning applications and to explain the council's approach to community involvement.
- 8.4 Please note these procedures are subject to change in response to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 or any other enacted emergency regulations.

PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

- 8.5 Developers are currently encouraged to contact the council prior to the submission of a major planning application to discuss a development proposal and any issues that may arise from it. Developers are also encouraged to discuss their proposal with ward councillors and other specific consultation bodies, where appropriate, before submitting a planning application. This has the benefits of allowing relevant issues to be raised and resolved early, providing more time to consider and develop better quality solutions, and removing delay to the formal planning process.
- 8.6 Entering into pre-application discussions with potential developers does not indicate endorsement by the council for a particular application. It simply enables effective communication between the developer, the council and interested parties.
- 8.7 Where the council considers a proposal to be of a scale and/or nature that it is likely to generate significant levels of public interest, the prospective developer will be encouraged to engage with ward councillors, the local community (including Parish Council's) and undertake wider consultation.
- 8.8 The developer will be expected to submit a statement outlining the extent of the consultation completed with the planning application and to explain how the feedback from the consultation process has influenced the submitted scheme.
- 8.9 For more information on the pre-application process and fees please [click here](#) ⁽¹⁾.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO PROCESS PLANNING APPLICATIONS?

1 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200351/planning/2367/pre-application_advice

8.10 The council aims to process planning applications within the Government's target periods. For example, at least 60% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (16 weeks for applications submitted with an Environmental Statement), 65% of minor planning applications within 8 weeks and 80% of other planning applications within 8 weeks.

METHODS OF PUBLICITY

8.11 Consultation and publicity on planning applications does not just involve the public. The council must also consult the appropriate statutory bodies. In deciding which statutory body is consulted, the council must take into account the nature and location of the proposal and the relevant legislative context. Statutory consultees have 21 days in which to respond, however, they will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation. There are also a number of non-statutory bodies, which the council will consult in appropriate circumstances. Consultation periods on planning applications will be time-limited because the council is under a duty to meet the targets outlined in paragraph 8.10.

8.12 The statutory requirements for publicity for all planning applications are laid out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

8.13 There are several stages following the receipt of, and during the processing of a planning application, where the council will instigate community publicity and involvement and these are described below.

8.14 Planning applications and the accompanying plans are available for inspection via Oldham Council's website.

8.15 A weekly list of all planning applications received by the council is made available and publicised in the following ways:

- a. copy emailed to all councillors and groups and individuals who request to be on the mailing list;
- b. the council's website (which will seek to continually improve its functionality for users and develop in line with best practice to ensure that it is: more user friendly; up to date; accurate; simple to navigate; and that funding for the required improvements is in place); and
- c. printed copies of the weekly list can be provided on request, for a fee.

8.16 The list will contain an initial assessment of the level at which the decision will be taken.

8.17 Where a Site Notice is posted, it will be displayed on or near to the application site, for not less than 21 days, during which time online representations may be made.

8.18 Local press advertisements are undertaken in the following circumstances and normally request that any representations are made within 14 days of their publication:

- a. applications with an Environmental Statement;
- b. departures from the Local Plan;

- c. applications that affect a right of way as defined by the Wildlife and Countryside Act;
- d. development affecting the character or appearance of a Conservation Area;
- e. development affecting the setting of a Listed Building;
- f. applications for Listed Building Consent or Conservation Area Consent; and
- g. Major Development.

Major applications are defined as follows:

- a. the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
- b. waste development;
- c. the provision of dwelling houses where -
 - i. the number of dwelling houses to be provided is 10 or more; or
 - ii. the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i);
- d. the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
- e. development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.

NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATION LETTERS

8.19 Site notices are displayed and / or letters are sent to 'adjoining' occupiers in respect of every planning application within which the development requires planning permission i.e not Lawful Development Certificates, or, unless required by legislation, applications for 'prior notification'.

8.20 'Adjoining' in this sense means, as a minimum:

- a. any properties which share a boundary with the application site
- b. in the case of proposals that may have a significant impact on neighbours the notification will be extended to include other properties close by, by additional letters or additional site notices.

8.21 The Development Management case officer will make a judgement as to whether letters will be sent and who will be notified.

8.22 Individual occupiers are invited to inspect the application and make online observations within 21 days.

8.23 When comments are submitted online regarding a planning application via the council website, an electronic acknowledgement will be sent from adoption of this SCI.

WHEN IS WIDER CONSULTATION NECESSARY?

- 8.24** In the case of major planning applications, additional methods of publicity may be used to involve the community in the decision making process in addition to the statutory requirements detailed above. The section below highlights what the council will recommend to applicants.
- 8.25** Government guidance has categorised significant/major developments into three tiers, each of which will require a different level of consultation.
- 8.26** The categorisation will depend upon the characteristics of the application and its conformity with national and local planning policy.
- 8.27** The identification of the nature of the planning application allows the council to determine the type and extent of consultation that needs to be undertaken to ensure the residents of the borough are adequately informed and are able to provide comments that inform the decision making process.
- 8.28** The preparation of the SCI has allowed consideration of the council's current practice for notification and consultation on planning applications. The current practice for many applications is appropriate and will continue.
- 8.29** The council appreciates that it is very often major planning applications that can, in certain instances, be of concern to the residents in the borough. The SCI seeks to widen its consultation and engagement practices in these instances.
- 8.30** The council will adopt a three-tiered approach in line with Government advice which will set out the framework for those applications that will be subject to wider community involvement. Table 2 intends to set out the approaches to community involvement that may be appropriate in each instance.

Table 2 Approaches to Significant / Major Planning Applications

Approach	TIER 1 - Applications where there are issues of scale and controversy, or are contrary to / out of line with Local Plan policy	TIER 2 - Applications broadly in accordance with the Local Plan but raising controversial issue or detail	TIER 3- Applications of a scale or on a site for which the authority requires local community involvement
Public Meetings	yes	yes	
Public Exhibition	yes	yes	
Development Briefs	yes		
Design Exercises	yes		
Website	yes	yes	yes
Media / Leaflets	yes	yes	yes

8.31 The tiered approach allows the council to set out which of the planning applications that it receives need wider consultation and what degree of wider consultation is appropriate. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please note that during coronavirus restrictions community involvement methods may be restricted to online methods only.

Tier Level 1

8.32 Planning applications will be subject to the widest level of community consultation. Appropriate levels of consultation for this tier may include techniques such as public meetings, design type exercises and more wide scale media.

Tier Level 2

8.33 Planning applications in this level will be given 'medium' level wider consultation. Appropriate levels of consultation at this tier may include methods such as general public meetings or exhibitions. The involvement of the community in the area of the proposal will be more appropriate.

Tier Level 3

8.34 These are major developments, which will only have implications at a local level on a site-by-site basis and therefore only the local community near the proposal site need to be involved through consultation.

PROCESS OF INVOLVEMENT

8.35 Where neighbour notification has taken place, the council will not determine planning applications within 21 days of the date of the notification letter. The results of any such notification will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, and on behalf of, the council. The Council has a responsibility to deal with planning applications within a specified time and because of that is not able to engage with/discuss the case with local residents or respond to individual queries.

8.36 Consideration will be given to all representations received later than 21 days provided the planning application has not been determined.

8.37 All representations need to be made online through the council's website, giving the name and address of the respondent; anonymous representations cannot be given significant weight in the determination of a planning application. Representations by letters and emails will not be accepted unless the online system is unavailable. Verbal representations will not be recorded nor taken into account in the decision making process.

8.38 The council will publish individual comments anonymously, however, names and addresses of respondents cannot be treated as confidential and are available for public inspection without exception. Representations are kept on file with the application and form part of the public record, which must be presented upon request.

8.39 Planning applications will often generate much public interest and lead to a large number of objections. The negotiation stage will often result in the submission of amendments to overcome some of these objections. Re-notification of neighbours on minor amendments which can significantly delay consideration of an application is left

to the discretion of the Head of Service. Minor amendments are often made to overcome a particular objection or concern so there may be no need to re-notify in such circumstances.

- 8.40** More significant alterations will require neighbour re-notification. Those persons re-notified will be given a further minimum seven working days to make representations.
- 8.41** Once a decision has been made on a planning application, legislation allows for subsequent applications to be made to the Local Planning Authority for both material and non-material changes. Where material changes are proposed full consultation and notification procedures will be applied.

DECISION PROCESS

- 8.42** More than 90% of all planning applications are determined under delegated powers by the Executive Director and/or Head of Service. However, the Planning Committee determines most of the larger, more complex planning applications.
- 8.43** Ward members can request that an application be referred to Planning Committee for determination. This request will be dealt with in accordance with a protocol approved by Council.
- 8.44** The Planning Committee meets approximately every four weeks in Oldham Civic Centre at 6.00pm. Members of the public can attend if they so wish.
- 8.45** These procedures are subject to change in response to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 or any other enacted emergency regulations. In such circumstances details will be published on the Council's website.
- 8.46** If a planning application is to be considered by the planning committee the details, and officers report, will be published on the Council's website five days before the date of committee.
- 8.47** Members of the public can attend the meeting and have a right to speak in accordance with an adopted protocol/scheme of delegation. The council allows one objector and one supporter to speak on each planning application, each for a maximum of three minutes.
- 8.48** An elected ward councillor can also address the Planning Committee in accordance with an adopted protocol/scheme of delegation.
- 8.49** Planning Committee reports are made available on the council's website five working days before the Planning Committee meeting. Copies of the Planning Committee agenda can also be obtained from the Council's Committee Services Section.
- 8.50** If any further information has been received in connection with an application in the intervening period between the publication of the agenda and the planning committee date, it will be reported to the committee in a 'Late List' document. This is a public document which is placed on the councils website and copies are available at the meeting.

8.51 At the Planning Committee meeting the Chair will introduce each item and will invite those wishing to speak to do so. The Planning Officer in attendance will then bring any necessary information, in addition to that contained in the report, to the Planning Committee's attention.

8.52 A further discussion by Planning Committee Members will follow but members of the public cannot take part in the debate. A decision will then be made and the minutes of the meeting will be agreed at the next available Planning Committee.

POST APPLICATION

8.53 All decisions relating to planning applications are published on the council's website at www.oldham.gov.uk - then click on 'Search for an application'.

COMPLAINTS

8.54 The council sets out its procedures for making complaints or providing feedback about the council on the council's website under [Complaints and feedback about the council](#) ⁽²⁾.

PLANNING APPEALS

8.55 Only applicants have a right to appeal against a refusal of planning permission, against conditions imposed on a planning approval or after certain time periods against the non-determination of a planning application. There are no third party rights of appeal.

8.56 All individuals and organisations that were notified at the time the planning application was originally submitted and all those who subsequently made comments in relation to the planning application, will be notified in writing of any appeal and of how to make their views known. All letters received by the council will be copied and sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

8.57 Where an appeal is to be heard at a public inquiry the council will also erect a site notice and publicise the details in the press.

2 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200143/complaints_and_feedback/630/complaints_or_feedback_about_the_council

Example

Brian Fuller receives a letter from the council telling him that his next door neighbour has applied for planning permission for a side extension.

The letter sets out where to view the planning application, the deadline for comments and the options for sending any comments.

Brian later looks on the council's website at the planning application.

There are a few issues that Brian is not happy with so he registers and submits his comments online.

He writes about the visual impact of the extension, the scale of it and how it will impact on the Conservation Area that the property sits within.

After a period of time Brian checks the decision notice on the planning application via the council's website.

9 Resources and Management of Community Involvement in Planning

- 9.1** There will be resource implications, both financial and staff time, for the council depending on the type of consultation methods used for each Local Plan document. The council's planning policy team will lead on the consultation for Local Plan documents with input from other sections of the council and the Oldham Partnership, as appropriate.
- 9.2** The planning policy team currently comprises of five planners. However, it has to be recognised that its workload also encompasses other planning and corporate work in addition to the Local Plan. Therefore the staff resources that will be available for public consultation may vary during the preparation of the different Local Plan documents.
- 9.3** The planning policy team's budget will include an element for consultations on Local Plan documents.
- 9.4** The council's Development Management section is responsible for managing the public consultation processes on planning applications as outlined in Section 8.

10 Review and Monitoring

- 10.1** The council will monitor, through Oldham's Monitoring Report, the SCI to see how it is performing in terms of involving the community. As part of this the council will evaluate the consultations undertaken in terms of resources used and response rates. The council will also review the success and effectiveness of the various community involvement techniques used and will use the findings to review the appropriateness of the methods and procedures used. If we need to make significant changes to our consultation techniques and methods, we will prepare a new SCI.
- 10.2** The Monitoring Report has to be prepared each year and covers the previous financial year period.

Appendix 1 Consultees on Local Plan and Development Management

A1.1 The lists of consultation bodies are as complete as can be reasonably expected at the time of writing this SCI. There may be other organisations and groups that exist, that may be formed in the future or may succeed these organisations - they will not be excluded from involvement simply because they are not named here.

Duty to Co-operate Bodies

- Calderdale Council;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Environment Agency;
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority;
- Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership;
- Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership;
- Greater Manchester Local Nature Partnership;
- High Peak Borough Council;
- Historic England;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Kirklees Council;
- Manchester City Council;
- Marine Management Organisation;
- Natural England;
- Office of Rail Regulation;
- Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group
- Oldham Council Local Highways Authority / Unity Partnership;
- Peak District National Park Authority;
- Rochdale Borough Council;
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council; and
- Transport for Greater Manchester.

Specific Consultation Bodies

A1.2 The following bodies are specific consultation bodies and will be consulted by the council in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012:

- The Environment Agency;
- Historic England;
- Natural England;
- Highways England;
- Local Planning Authorities, County Councils or Parish Councils, any part of whose area is in or adjoins the borough;
- Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under Section 106 (3) (a) of the Communications Act 2003;
- Any person who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the borough;
- Primary Care Trust;

-
- A person to whom a licence has been granted under the Section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989;
 - A person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986;
 - A sewage undertaker;
 - A water undertaker;
 - Coal Authority;
 - Marine Management Organisation;
 - Network Rail Infrastructure Limited; and
 - The Homes and Communities Agency.

General Consultation Bodies

A1.3 The following bodies are general consultation bodies and will be consulted by the council, where appropriate, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012:

- Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the borough;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the borough;
- Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the borough;
- Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the borough; and
- Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying out business in the borough.

Other Consultees

A1.4 There are a number of other agencies and organisations that the council will also consult with, where appropriate.

Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - is a charge that is levied on new development floorspace and is intended to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure.

Community Right to Build Order - a form of Neighbourhood Development Order that can be used to grant planning permission for small scale development for community benefit on a specific site or sites in a neighbourhood area.

Core Strategy - A Development Plan Document that sets out a long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for the borough. It also contains a spatial strategy, core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework.

Development Management Policies – These are criteria based policies that are required to ensure that all development taking place within the borough meets the spatial vision and objectives set out in the core strategy.

Development Plan Document (DPD) - A spatial planning document that is subject to Independent Examination and forms part of the Development Plan. They can include Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of Land and Area Action Plans.

Duty to Co-operate - a legal test that requires cooperation between Local Planning Authorities and other public bodies to maximise the effectiveness of policies for strategic matters in Local Plans.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) - An EIA will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people, considering protected characteristics, such as age, disability etc.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) - The GMCA is made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils and Mayor, who work with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) - is required by the Habitats Directive (2007). This ensures the protection of the integrity of European protected sites.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) - A HIA assesses the potential effects of the DPD on the health of the borough's population.

Integrated Assessment (IA) - An assessment that incorporates the Sustainability Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements, Equalities Impact Assessment, Health Impact Assessment and the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment into one single document.

Local Development Document (LDD) – The generic term given to all constituent documents of the Local Plan.

Local Plan – The Development Plan for the borough consists of saved policies in the Oldham Unitary Development Plan, and/or Development Plan Documents that replace the saved policies.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – A project plan for the preparation of the Local Plan. It is a rolling three year programme which the council should review and update each year.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Framework which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Neighbourhood Development Order - An Order which can grant planning permission for specific types of development in a specific neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) - Parish and town councils and neighbourhood forums can write a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for their area. The NDP can set out policies and plans for that area, like a Development Plan Document but on a very local scale.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document - A joint plan for nine Greater Manchester districts (including Oldham) that will provide the land for jobs and new homes across the city region.

Saved policies or plans – Existing adopted plans that are saved for three years or until replaced by a more up-to-date replacement plan.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – This sets out the standards that the council will achieve in terms of engaging communities in the preparation of the Local Plan and development management decisions.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – A Supplementary Planning Document provides additional information in respect of policies contained in the Development Plan Documents. It is not subject to Independent Examination and does not form part of the Development Plan, although it can be a material consideration when determining planning applications.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - these assessments promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Development Document against economic, environmental and social objectives.

Appendix 3 Contact Details

LOCAL PLAN

If you require further information about the Local Plan, including the Statement of Community Involvement, please:

- a. Visit the council's [Local Plan webpage](#) ⁽¹⁾.
- b. Visit the objective consultation portal at <https://oldham-consult.objective.co.uk/portal>
- c. Contact the council's planning policy section at:

Telephone: 0161 770 4061/1672

Email: spi@oldham.gov.uk

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

If you have any queries relating to planning applications, please contact the Development Management section at:

Telephone: 0161 770 4105

Email: planning@oldham.gov.uk

ADDRESS

The address for the Local Plan team and Development Management is:

Oldham Council

Planning and Infrastructure

Room 310, Level 3

Civic Centre

West Street

Oldham

OL1 1UH

1 https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200585/local_plan

Appendix 4 Useful Contacts and Websites

Table 3 Useful contacts and websites

Contacts	Websites
Oldham Council Strategic Planning	https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200585/local_plan
Oldham Council Development Management	https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200351/planning
Planning Practice Guidance on Consultation and pre-decision matters	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consultation-and-pre-decision-matters
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/
Planning Inspectorate	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate
Planning Portal	https://www.planningportal.co.uk/