

Committee: Local Plan Scrutiny

Date: 16/09/21

Title: Regulation 18 Local Plan Governance

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan

Report Author: Simon Payne, Local Plan Project Manager
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Key decision: No

Summary

1. This report sets out proposed arrangements for reporting the draft Regulation 18 Local Plan to members for formal consideration.

Recommendations

2. To support the proposed member governance arrangements for formal consideration of the draft Regulation 18 Local Plan in accordance with the details in the foregoing report.

Financial Implications

3. The preparation of the local plan described in this report is provided for in the approved local plan budget of the Council.

Background Papers

4. Local Development Scheme approved by the Cabinet on 20 October 2020
https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10546/Local-Development-Scheme-2020/pdf/Local_Development_Scheme_2020_final.pdf?m=637400862103970000.

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	No impact.
Community Safety	No impact
Equalities	No impact
Health and Safety	No impact

Human Rights/Legal Implications	No impact
Sustainability	Linked directly to the local plan.
Ward-specific impacts	Indirect link to all wards in conjunction with the emerging local plan,
Workforce/Workplace	No impact

Situation

6. The approved Uttlesford Local Development Scheme provides for member consideration of the Regulation 18 draft local plan in early 2022 with formal public consultation of this version of the draft local plan during March and April 2022.
7. There are three procedural steps prior to formal public consultation. Firstly consideration of the draft local plan and evidence base by the Local Plan Leadership Group (LPLG), then Cabinet and finally a decision by Full Council.
8. The extent of the content and supporting evidence base is considerable and there is a programme of reports scheduled to go to LPLG between September and December 2021 relating to eleven separate commissioned studies. Reports are also being provided on certain topics to the Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Group during that period.
9. This report considers the material that will comprise the Regulation 18 draft local plan and the final batch of commissioned studies that will need to be considered alongside the draft plan. The report will set out an approach to ensure members have sufficient time to absorb, examine and evaluate the information.

Reasonable Alternatives for the Spatial Strategy

10. A key stage in the preparation of the draft local plan will be the generation of several reasonable alternative spatial strategies that can then be evaluated against the draft vision and objectives for the emerging plan. It is proposed that an additional meeting of LPLG is arranged in the Autumn 2021 to review the alternatives generated by officers and consultants before the evaluation takes place.

Proposed Series of Member Briefings

11. The material that will need to be considered in conjunction with the draft plan comprises:
 - a. Full version of the Draft Local Plan with all proposed policies and explanatory text
 - b. Full set of Proposals Maps showing all proposed allocations
 - c. Set of Topic Papers summarising the key elements of the draft plan
 - d. Sustainability Appraisal: Final Regulation 18 Report

- e. Equalities Impact Assessment: Regulation 18 Plan
 - f. Infrastructure Delivery Plan: Final Regulation 18 Report
 - g. Transport Study: Final Regulation 18 Report
 - h. Collaboration Partnership Statement on larger Proposed Sites
12. It is proposed that a series of specific member briefings are arranged early in 2022 and prior to the formal meetings of LPLG, Cabinet and also Full Council when the draft local plan is to be considered. The purpose of these briefings will be to allow members to receive a presentation about the findings and proposals and to ask questions in preparation for the debate and discussion which will take place in the formal meetings. In order to manage the work effectively it is suggested that there are four briefings, each of one and a half hours' duration, based on the content set out in paragraph 9 above which will be organised into subject matters/topics.
13. In addition to these briefings it is recommended that a LPLG Member Site Visit day is arranged and this will be an opportunity for members to visit the larger sites that are proposed for inclusion in the local plan. These visits will also be arranged for early in 2022.

Conclusions

14. It is considered that these additional member briefings and meetings are an important improvement to the process. There will be an implication for the local plan timetable with the preparation time for the draft Regulation Local Plan being extended by up to eight weeks however it is not anticipated that the projected Summer 2023 submission date for the local plan would be delayed as a result of these changes.

Risk Analysis

11.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Members are not sufficiently briefed on the content of the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan and that effective decision making does not take place.	2 - Medium risk given that LPLG have a programme of study reports to be received prior to the draft plan report.	3 - The impact would be high given that the Council is committed create a sound local plan	A programme of member briefings and a Site Visit Day.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.