

**Committee:** Local Plan Leadership Group

**Date:**

**Title:** Motion to council on an evaluation framework for the Local Plan – discussion paper

Wednesday, 9  
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**Report Author:** Stephen Miles, Local Plans and New Communities Manager  
smiles@uttlesford.gov.uk

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## Summary

1. An opportunity for Local Plan Leadership Group to discuss the motion to Full Council on an evaluation framework for the Local Plan.

## Recommendations

2. That members discuss the possibility of an evaluation framework for the Local Plan.

## Financial Implications

3. None.

## Background Papers

4. None.

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
Community Safety	N/a
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment (EqHIA).
Health and Safety	N/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with regulations.

Sustainability	Forthcoming policies will need to meet the sustainability objectives of the Council and the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	This work is not included in the officer work plan.

## Situation

6. Full Council on 22 February considered a motion on a possible evaluation framework for the Local Plan. The motion was lost, but some members agreed with the sentiment. The chair of Local Plan Leadership Group has asked that a paper be brought to the group to facilitate member discussion.
7. Members are reminded that the framework that the inspector examining the plan will use will be the National Planning Policy Framework and the associated soundness tests found at paragraph 35. Plans are 'sound' if they are:
  - a. **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs<sup>1</sup>; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
  - b. **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
  - c. **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
  - d. **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.
8. Any evaluation framework developed by the Council must not cut across the evaluation framework the inspector examining the plan will use, it otherwise risks the plan being found sound.
9. Members are also reminded of the draft vision and objectives that the group put together in the spring and was endorsed by Cabinet. This vision and objectives were developed using:

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- <sup>1</sup> Where this relates to housing, such needs should be assessed using a clear and justified method, as set out in paragraph 61 of this Framework

- a. National Planning Policy Framework (plans must be consistent with the NPPF to be sound);
  - b. The approved Uttlesford District Council Corporate Plan;
  - c. The Inspectors' findings on the withdrawn local plan;
  - d. Feedback from the Issues and Options Stage; and
  - e. Other relevant sources (for instance best practice that arises from the longer-term planning response to Covid-19)
10. Officers are currently working hard to bring a draft regulation 18 Local Plan to members in time for the proposed consultation in mid-May. Developing an evaluation framework for the Local Plan is not built into the timetable, and risks drawing away officer resource from developing the Local Plan.
11. It is suggested if the group want to pursue its own evaluation framework and has already developed a draft vision and objectives that these are used as a starting point. It could be that a workshop separate outside of this LPLG is the best forum to allow for good discussion of the merits of a framework.

## Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Developing an evaluation framework draws officer resource away from the Local Plan, risking the timetable	3 – dependant on the amount of time	3 – a delay to the Local Plan timetable increases the period of speculative development and risks government intervention on the Local Plan	This report sets out the risks clearly to members.

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.

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