

Committee: Cabinet

Date:

Title: Local Development Scheme

Thursday, 7 July
2022

Portfolio Holder Councillor Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Stansted Airport, Infrastructure Strategy and the Local Plan

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Key decision:
No

Summary

1. The Council has already started work on a new Local Plan, the Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the draft timetable for producing the Local Plan.

Recommendations

2. That Cabinet adopt the LDS of the Local Plan.

Financial Implications

3. The approved budget for the Local Plan in 2022-23 includes sufficient provision for the work needed through to the end of March. Adequate provision will need to be made in preparing the budgets for 2023-24 and 2024-25 in the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy.
4. The proposed changes to the timetable will extend the period for which the district is at risk of speculative development, this will extend the period during which the Council is likely to face further appeals.

Background Papers

5. No additional papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report.

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	The draft timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
Community Safety	No impact
Equalities	No impact

Health and Safety	No impact
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with regulations.
Sustainability	N/a
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/a

Situation

7. The Council has already started work on a new Local Plan, the Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the draft timetable for producing the Local Plan.
8. The timetable within this LDS builds in two stages of consultation and then a third opportunity for representations to be made.
9. The first stage of consultation (Issues & Options) allowed for an extensive series of conversations with the community and other stakeholders to allow them to inform the development of the plan. This stage of consultation won a RTPI regional award for excellence for the way it engaged with residents and other stakeholders.
10. Following this stage of consultation the Council has been considered what has been said and has been drafting a 'preferred options' style plan. To support this stage of the plan, substantial evidence base has been and is being developed to support the proposed strategy, policies and allocations.
11. Following the preferred options consultation the Council will consider what changes are appropriate taking into account the representations made. The Council will then publish a final 'submission draft' plan, inviting representations on it. These representations along with the draft plan will then be sent to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.
12. A project plan has been prepared to support this timetable. This project plan will evolve over time and as necessary, the LDS will be updated. The Local Plan Project Board will monitor adherence to the Project Plan and any necessary interventions to maintain planned progress. The Leadership Group and Scrutiny Committee will be advised by the Board of any significant issues.
13. The most recent change to the timetable, reflected in this updated LDS allows for the evaluation and consideration of an additional, late emerging, option. Officers and key members consider that this option is a realistic option that is worthy of exploration, and it is best to include it in the regulation 18 consultation rather than it potentially appear in the regulation 19 publication period without previously being consulted upon.

14. Changing the Local Plan timetable is not an unusual occurrence in Local Planning Authorities across the country.

Risk Analysis

15.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The proposed changes to the timetable extend the period for which the district is at risk of speculative development	4 – there will be a longer time before a Local Plan is adopted	2 – the longer time period before which a Local Plan is adopted will mean the district is at risk of speculative development for longer	Exploring this option will allow for the exploration of a potentially more sustainable pattern of development, allowing for a better case to be put for the plan at examination. Any opportunities to 'make up' the time following the regulation 18 consultation will be taken.
That the timetable proposed in the LDS slips	1 – there are unknown factors in the production of a Local Plan that require consideration and may result in slippage	4 – government intervention would significantly damage the reputation of the Council	The project plan supporting the LDS is actively managed by the Council's Scrutiny Committee.
That the government introduces a new system for producing Local Plans	4 – the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes some significant changes	3 – the changes currently proposed could result in a radically different Local Plan	The Council will monitor further consultation and changes.

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.