



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 01 November 2016	Matter for Decision
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Title: **New Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation (Preferred Options)**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council is currently producing a new Local Plan. The expected timescale of the Plan period is 2016 to 2036, subject to evidence base allowing. This however could change to 2016 to 2031 if evidence base does not allow the plan period to run to 2036. The Local Plan will contain planning policies that drive as well as shape sustainable development throughout the Plan period. The Plan will also protect and enhance the Borough's historic heritage and green open spaces.
- 1.2. In producing a Local Plan the Council is required to undertake a number of formal public consultations at specific times and milestones (as set by national legislation and the Council's Local Development Scheme). So far, for the new Local Plan, the Council has undertaken the first stage of public consultation; this took place between Monday 12th October and Monday 23rd November 2016.
- 1.3. The first stage of public consultation (Regulation 18 - as termed by national legislation) ran for a 6 week period and focussed on the Key Challenges that the Borough was expected to face during the plan period. The document highlighted the key challenges and asked the public and other stakeholders to comment on these as well as add any more if they felt it necessary to do so.
- 1.4. All of the comments that were received through the first stage of consultation have been considered and responded to by the Council. The comments and the responses have been taken into account when producing the Preferred Options document for consultation. The Preferred Options document contains the Council's preferred approaches to delivering sustainable development for the Plan period 2016 – 2036 (or 2031 as mentioned above) and will be publicly consulted on for a 6 week period commencing on Friday 4th November 2016.
- 1.5. Once adopted the New Local Plan will supersede the Saved Local Plan, the Core Strategy and the Town Centres Area Action Plan.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1. Approve the New Local Plan Preferred Options document for the purposes of public consultation commencing Friday 4th November 2016 for a period of 6 weeks
- 2.2. Note that an all Member Briefing will be held following the Preferred Options consultation to inform the process of preparing the submission version of the Local Plan.

3. Information

3.1. The Council has already undertaken the first stage of public consultation for the new Local Plan (Key Challenges – Regulation 18 consultation). The Key Challenges consultation and its outcomes helped shape the production of the Preferred Options Local Plan document. The Preferred Options document is in essence a draft new Local Plan that contains the vision, objectives and preferred policies; that seek to fulfil the vision and the objectives over the Plan period up to 2036.

3.2. **Structure**

The format of the document has a similar structure to the Council's adopted Core Strategy. The structure of the document is set out as below:

1. **Introduction** - The document begins with an Introductory Chapter that sets out national planning policy, the Council's Corporate Priorities and sets out the strategic context of the Borough and the wider Leicester and Leicestershire region (for example the Strategic Growth Plan).
 2. **Spatial Portrait** - The document contains a Spatial Portrait chapter that highlights the specific characteristics of the Borough, for example physical, social, environmental, historic and economic. This chapter also sets out the key challenges that the Borough will face now and in the future.
 3. **Vision and Objectives** - The document then illustrates the vision and objectives that the Council wish to meet to ensure that sustainable development is delivered and the Borough is a safe and prosperous place to live.
 4. **Policies** - Chapters 4 through to 10 contain all of the planning policies that the Council wishes to adopt to deliver the vision and objectives set out in the previous chapter.
 5. **Delivery Plan** - This section sets out how and who will deliver the policies that will contribute towards fulfilling the vision and objectives. It also contains the infrastructure delivery plan sets out what infrastructure is required to deliver development and who is expected to deliver the infrastructure.
 6. **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework** - The final chapter of the Plan highlights the key targets of each of the policies and objectives and their relevant performance indicators. Each indicator will be monitored to ensure that the policies are up to date and deliver what they should.
- 3.3. A full version of the document that is to be publicly consulted on is contained within Appendix 1.
- 3.4. To ensure that the New Local Plan fulfils certain required directives and legislation, a Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared for this Preferred Options stage of the Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal will also be consulted on in public. Consultation will be for the same time period as the Plan; 4th November 2016 for 6 weeks.
- 3.5. Although not necessarily required at this stage of the Plan, prior to the Local Plan submission stage the Council will need to ensure that all of the approaches and policies set out within the Plan are appropriately evidenced. Evidence base production is ongoing. Key pieces of evidence base include; the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), the Retail Capacity Study, transport and infrastructure testing and the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment (AHVA).
- 3.6. An all Member Briefing will be held following the Preferred Options consultation to inform the process of preparing the submission version of the Local Plan.
- ### 4. **Conclusion**
- 4.1. It is important that the new Local Plan contains all of the appropriate and relevant elements that successfully deliver sustainable development that responds to local

community need.

- 4.2. The approaches set out within the document are similar to those set out within existing development plan documents, such as the Core Strategy. They have been successful in shaping sustainable built development within the Borough since their adoption and it is felt that they will in the future hence why they are to be carried forward in the New Local Plan.

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Implications	
Financial (CR)	Provision is made for the costs of preparing the Local Plan in the Council's budget. The budgetary position is reviewed on an annual basis.
Legal (AC)	The preparation of the new Local Plan will need to comply with the requirements of the NPPF and NPPG.
Risk (AT)	<p>CR1 Decreasing Financial Resources - It is a statutory requirement that the Council prepares a Local Plan, however, it is costly taking into account the requirement for evidence, public consultation and Examination. There are financial implications in moving away from a plan period to 2036 to a plan period with the potential to undertake an early review however this needs to be balance against the risk of the Plan being found unsound.</p> <p>CR2 and CR3 Partnership Failure/Political Dynamics - The Duty to Co-operate requires partnership working with other councils in Leicester and Leicestershire. There is a risk of difficulties in these relationships in considering strategic cross boundary planning issues or if one of the councils was to identify that it cannot meet its housing need, thus triggering the potential that it might have to be accommodated in another council area. The Strategic Planning Group and Member Advisory Groups are in place to mitigate this risk.</p> <p>CR4 Reputation Damage - The Government has stated that councils should have Local Plans in place before early 2017, otherwise there is the risk that it may intervene. It has also stated that league tables will be issued setting out progress in preparing Plans. The Council needs to ensure that adequate resources are in place to enable the plan preparation timetable is met and effective influence at a strategic level to ensure that strategic decisions do not delay plan preparation in the Borough.</p> <p>CR9 Economy - Having a Local Plan in place is important in order to provide certainty to businesses wishing to locate in the Borough.</p>
Equalities (AT)	<p>An Equality Assessment will be carried out for the Preferred Options document.</p> <p>Equality Assessment:-</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Initial Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Full Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>