

Item 05 - Local Plan - Regulation 18 - Consultation

The attached report was considered by the Development & Conservation Advisory Committee on 11 October 2022. The relevant Minute extract is below.

Local Plan - Regulation 18 - Consultation (11 October 2022, Minute 18)

The report was presented by the Planning Policy Team Leader and the Strategic Planning Manager, who outlined the draft of the Local Plan to be issued for consultation. The Plan covered the period up to 2040, and emphasised making best use of land in existing settlements. The plan focuses on the key themes of promoting health and well-being, delivering Net Zero and supporting high quality design. They advised that the draft Plan listed three tiers of development density, but that these would be further refined in each case to ensure development respects local character and the environment.

They outlined the Community Involvement measures of the Consultation. In addition to the Council's website, mailing list, and social media accounts, the Plan would be publicised on a new consultation portal. Three drop-in sessions would be held in person in the urban centres of the District, with an additional session over Zoom. Commuters and secondary schools would be specifically targeted also to ensure the Council received feedback from those demographics, as they had previously been under-represented in responses.

They updated the Committee on the evidence base for the Local Plan. The Character Study had been completed and was due to be published shortly. The Strategic Transport Study baseline stage is complete and junction modelling is currently underway where the gap analysis had identified data gaps. The second stage of assessing the impact of the planned growth across the District, will take place in 2023.

They further updated the Committee on the discussions with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC). The Draft did not contain finalised policies, but instead aimed to establish whether the scope and coverage of the plan was sufficient. This allowed the Council to respond to changes in national planning policy as they occurred. In response to questions, they outlined the measures to make the Plan accessible and prevent technical knowledge from being a barrier to participation in the Consultation.

They further explained the role of the Character Study in evidencing local context and density. It would allow the Council to take an active role in assessing the capacity of sites for development, by identifying sensitivity to change within an area.

The Committee discussed the role of schools in the Consultation process, and the possibility of addressing a larger number of them. They heard that providing resources to more schools would be looked into, and that it was important to encourage responses from this younger demographic as they tended to be underrepresented in previous consultations. They further discussed the inclusion of specific encouragement of renewable energy and sustainable design in the Plan.

Resolved: That the report be noted, and that the Committee recommend to Cabinet that

- a. The content of the “Plain Text Version” of the Regulation 18 Consultation Draft Local Plan at Appendix 1 be approved for public consultation purposes;
- b. The presentation and formatting style of the consultation document, as reflected in the Indicative Formatted Version at Appendix 2, be agreed;
- c. The authority to approve the final formatting and presentation of the Regulation 18 Consultation Draft Local Plan and any minor preconsultation text changes, be delegated to the Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services and the Development & Conservation Portfolio Holder; and
- d. The withdrawal of the December 2018 Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan, which was submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2019, be recommended to Council before the Regulation 18 Consultation Draft is issued for consultation.