

can keep track of progress. Local planning authorities should publish their Local Development Scheme on their website.

- 3.2 Local Development Schemes must also be produced in compliance with any data standard for this purpose published by Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Up-to-date and accessible reporting on the Local Development Scheme in an Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) is an important way in which authorities can keep communities informed of plan making activity. It is therefore considered there is a reputational risk to the Council in not maintaining an up to date LDS, and in not meeting reported milestones.
- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that strategic policies included in Local Plans should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure. It is therefore considered there is a risk to the overall 'soundness' of the Local Plan if the Council cannot provide sufficient longevity to its strategic policies and strategic allocations.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Planned growth provides the best possible opportunity for Shropshire Council to harness growth potential by providing a stable platform for investors and developers. New growth simultaneously imposes an additional burden on local services and facilities, whilst also providing opportunities to secure investment to improve them and provide new infrastructure. The adoption of an up-to-date Local Development Scheme (LDS) will ensure that potential investors into the area have a clear understanding of the timescale for the preparation of the Local Plan. Equally, an up to date LDS will ensure communities are kept up to date with the process of Plan making, which, if followed correctly, supports the delivery of a timely and legally robust Plan.
- 4.2. This report and recommendations create no additional direct financial implications for Shropshire Council.

5. Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1 **Energy and fuel consumption:** The Local Plan Review will include policies to support sustainable energy provision, and include a distribution of development which seeks to reduce the need for travel by private car. The proposed timeframe for the Local Plan preparation will allow the Plan to respond to the emerging Climate Emergency Draft Strategy.
- 5.2 **Renewable energy generation:** The Local Plan Review will include policies to support sustainable energy production. The proposed timeframe for the Local Plan preparation will allow the Plan to respond to the emerging Climate Emergency Draft Strategy.

- 5.3 **Carbon offsetting or mitigation:** The Local Plan Review will include policies to mitigate the impacts of climate change as a result of development. The proposed timeframe for the Local Plan preparation will allow the Plan to respond to the emerging Climate Emergency Draft Strategy.
- 5.4 **Climate Change adaptation:** The Local Plan Review will include policies to support climate change adaptation. The proposed timeframe for the Local Plan preparation will allow the Plan to respond to the emerging Climate Emergency Draft Strategy.

6. Background

- 6.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is effectively the document used by Local Authorities to programme progress on their Local Plan and associated documents. The current LDS was approved by Cabinet on 12th June 2019. This states that a final draft version of the Local Plan (Regulation 19 stage) would be taken to Cabinet in March 2020, and following further statutory consultation that the Local Plan would be submitted to Government for independent examination in July 2020.
- 6.2 Following further consideration of a number of issues (covered below), it is now proposed that an amendment to this timetable is necessary. In summary the proposed change seeks to ensure the Local Plan is supported by a full range of robust evidence base material and has been allowed an opportunity to respond to emerging corporate priorities, in particular climate change. It is considered this minor change to the timeframe will ensure a more robust and sustainable Local Plan and support the achievement of a positive outcome at Independent Examination.
- 6.3 The proposed minor changes to the timeframe for the Local Plan are summarised in the below table:

Local Plan stage	Current LDS timeframe	Proposed LDS timeframe
Cabinet to consider pre-submission version of Local Plan for six week consultation (Regulation 19 stage)	March 2020	May 2020
Consultation on pre-submission Local Plan, subject to Cabinet approval (Regulation 19 stage)	April / May 2020	June/July 2020
Full Council to consider the submission of Local Plan to Secretary of State (Regulation 22 stage)	June 2020	September 2020

Submission of Local Plan to Secretary of State, subject to Council approval (Regulation 22 stage)	June 2020	September 2020
Independent Examination (Regulation 24 stage)	July 2020 – June 2021*	November 2020 – October 2021*
Expected Inspector's Report (Regulation 24 stage)	July 2021*	November 2021*
Full Council to agree adoption of the Plan	September 2021*	January 2022*

***Estimated. Precise timeframe subject to Planning Inspectorate (PINS)**

6.4 One of the key reasons for the proposed timetable change is to ensure the Local Plan has had regard to the Council's emerging response to the Climate Change emergency. The Council have recently created a Climate Change Task Force and have published the Climate Change Strategy Framework in December 2019. This provided a framework for the development of a strategy and action plan to reduce Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and promote adaptation measures and increase the resilience of the Council's services.

6.5 It is anticipated that a draft Climate Emergency Draft Strategy will be published in the spring 2020. It is therefore considered necessary for the Local Plan timetable to be amended to reflect this timescale and to help ensure the Plan responds appropriately to the emerging outcomes of the strategy, including incorporating measures to reduce carbon emissions, improve adaptability and supporting sustainable energy generation and efficiency. The additional two months to the existing timetable will help ensure this coordination happens effectively. This is considered to be especially important as post Regulation 19 stage there is limited opportunity for the Council to proactively make changes to the proposed Local Plan.

6.6 The second key reason for seeking an amendment to the timetable is to ensure the Local Plan is properly supported by a robust set of evidence base documentation. This will allow the Local Plan to provide more resilient arguments concerning the allocation of land for development, as well as the preparation of a new set of Development Management policies.

6.7 The Local Plan must be responsive to emerging evidence in order to have the best chance of being successful at the Examination in Public (EiP). To support this the Policy Team have commissioned further evidence to support the Council's approach to a range of topics, including green infrastructure; water resources and capacity; development viability and town centre enhancements. These complex pieces of work are progressing well and will supplement the Council's existing evidence base to ensure there is a full and comprehensive suite of evidence documents by April 2020. It is therefore considered prudent that in order to ensure the Council has sufficient

opportunity to respond to this evidence, the publication of the draft Local Plan should be amended to May 2020.

- 6.8 In addition it is expected that the Government will be publishing updated housing projections for the Country (broken down to LPA areas) at the end of March 2020. It is considered prudent that there should be an opportunity for the Council to consider this position, and any impact this has on overall housing need for the county, ahead of publication of the draft Local Plan.
- 6.9 It should be remembered that defining the longer term timeframes once the Council has submitted the Plan for Examination is difficult. This is principally due to the uncertainty over the length of the Examination-in-Public process, which is at the discretion of the Planning Inspectorate. At this stage it is considered reasonable to assume a 12 month period for the Examination, although there are examples elsewhere in the Country where this process has taken over 18 months to complete. Cabinet will be kept informed of any likely changes to this longer term timeframe.

Local Plan Period

- 6.10 The adopted Shropshire Local Plan covers the period to 2026 and the Local Plan Review currently proposes to roll this forward by 10 years to cover the period 2016 – 2036. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Local Planning Authorities to have at least a 15 year Local Plan on adoption. The proposed change to the Local Plan timetable will necessitate a change to this timeframe as it is not anticipated that the Local Plan will proceed to adoption until early 2022. However, even without the proposed timetable change, it is considered prudent to ensure some built-in flexibility to the plan period as there is inevitably some degree of uncertainty over the length of the Examination-in-Public and the knock on consequences this presents.
- 6.11 To provide greater resilience, it is therefore proposed to increase the end date of the Plan Period by 2 years to 2038. Such an approach would allow more time for delivery within the plan period on both strategic sites and large-scale housing options in existing settlements. The level of housing need over this longer plan period (22 years) will increase as a result of this. The impact this will have on the overall housing requirement and individual settlement housing guidelines will be subject to Cabinet consideration at the Regulation 19 stage, now proposed in May 2020.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Robert Macey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Local Development Scheme (LDS) – February 2020