

CABINET 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Questions from Charles Green

Questions for Cabinet meeting on 7th September 2020, submitted on behalf of CPRE Shropshire by Charles Green, concerning Agenda item 8: Statement of Community Involvement.

We welcome the update of the Statement of Community Involvement, which Shropshire Council acknowledges to have been reviewed to link in with the review of the Local Plan.

The current Regulation 18 Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan is a 341-page document with over 13,000 pages of supporting evidence. The present consultation on it is for only eight weeks, ending on 30th September. This new Statement of Community Involvement is only a 27-page document, yet it is proposed that it will be open for consultation for 12 weeks, extending to the end of November or beyond.

Question 1: The Statement of Community Involvement has been updated to link in with the review of the Local Plan. Why are the two relevant consultation periods not also linked, and proportionate; why cannot the Local Plan consultation period be extended to match the end date of the consultation on this updated Statement of Community Involvement?

The updated Statement of Community Involvement says on its page 9 that the council will aim to provide sufficient information to enable an effective response to any consultation, and on its page 11 that the Development Plan Document Stage of consultation must be supported by evidence. However, nearly five weeks into the current eight-week consultation on the draft Local Plan, several items listed as **KEY** evidence supporting the **KEY** Strategic Approach (policy SP2) have still not been published, thereby hindering an effective response to the consultation. The outstanding items listed in my latest email of 17 August to Eddie West, Liam Cowden and Robert Macey were (1) Shropshire Economic Development Needs Assessment (2020), (2) Shropshire Retail Study (2020), (3) Shropshire Authority Monitoring Report (current), and (4) Shropshire Implementation Plan.

Question 2: Are these above four items of evidence actually in existence yet, when exactly will you be publishing them and what extra consultation time will you be allowing once you are able to add them to the evidence base

Response:

Q1 The suggested consultation period for the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is considered to be appropriate and reasonable. This is in the context of the SCI being subject to a single period of consultation ahead of its proposed adoption by the Council. The current

consultation on the draft Local Plan is the fifth consultation on the Plan at the Regulation 18 stage, and this has meant that the public and other consultees have had significant opportunity to input into the Plan's preparation in a meaningful manner. The current 8 week consultation now being carried out is additional to the six week consultation at the Regulation 19 stage of Plan preparation, now scheduled for late autumn 2020, in line with national regulations for plan making.

Q2 The current draft Local Plan consultation is supported by a wide range of evidence and information. We have sought to make the vast majority of this available during the consultation period at Regulation 18. The Council will be seeking to make available additional evidence, including the items referenced in Mr Green's question, as soon as possible within the current consultation period to 30th September. All relevant evidence documents will then be available at the statutory Regulation 19 stage of consultation in late autumn 2020.