



Committee and Date

Cabinet
8 March 2021

Item

Public

LOCAL PLAN: UPDATE ON PREPARATION TIMETABLE

Responsible Officer

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1. Summary

- 1.1 The sole purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to agree an update to the Council's Local Development Scheme, i.e. the timetable for preparation of the Local Plan Review. The proposed change to the programme is a direct result of the extension to the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) consultation into the Local Plan, which took account of the additional 'lockdown' restrictions which came into force on 5th January 2021.

2. Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approves the proposed revisions to the Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1) which establishes the ongoing timetable for the Local Plan Review.

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3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004(as amended). This must specify (among other matters) what development plan documents, such as the Local Plan, will be prepared and which will comprise part of the development plan for the area. The LDS must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress on local planning matters. Local planning authorities should publish their Local Development Scheme on their website. 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).

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. The adoption of an up-to-date LDS will ensure that potential investors into the area have a clear understanding of the timescale for the preparation of the Local Plan.

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 LDS is the document used by Local Authorities to programme progress on their Local Plan and associated documents. The current published LDS was approved by Cabinet on 7th December 2020. This states that Full Council will be asked to consider the Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Examination in March 2021.
- 6.2 The currently published timetable assumed a seven week consultation period for the pre-submission (regulation 19) version of the Plan. Following Cabinet approval on 7th December 2020, this consultation commenced on 18th December 2020 and was due to close on 5th February 2021. However, in light of the additional 'lockdown' restrictions which came into force on 5th January 2021, consideration was given to the potential impact this would have

on the opportunity for Shropshire's communities to respond effectively. In response, as part of a package of measures the length of the consultation was extended by three weeks and therefore closed on Friday 26th February 2021. As a result of this extension to the regulation 19 stage consultation, and taking into account the need to give due consideration to all duly made responses to the pre-submission Local Plan consultation, it is no longer considered the published timetable for the submission of the Local Plan is achievable.

- 6.3 The new proposed timetable indicates that Council approval will be sought to submit the Local Plan for examination in July 2021. It is considered this provides a positive and realistic timeframe, and one which continues to respond effectively to the Government's expectations on local authorities to maintain an up-to-date local plan for their area.
- 6.4 The proposed timetable also looks beyond the submission date and seeks to identify a realistic timeframe for further key milestones up to the point of adoption of the Local Plan. However, it should be noted the length of the independent examination and the publication of the inspector's report (and thus the date of adoption) will be dictated largely by the Planning Inspectorate, and will therefore need to be kept under review.
- 6.5 The proposed change to the timeframe for the Local Plan is summarised in the following table and captured within the proposed LDS in Appendix 1 to this report:

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)	December 2020	December 2020
Consultation on pre-submission Local Plan, subject to Cabinet approval (regulation 19 stage)	December 2020 – early February 2021	December 2020 – late February 2021
Full Council to consider the submission of Local Plan to Secretary of State (regulation 22 stage)	March 2021	July 2021
Submission of Local Plan to Secretary of State, subject to Council approval (regulation 22 stage)	April 2021	July 2021
Independent examination by Planning Inspectorate (regulation 24 stage)	April 2021 – March 2022	July 2021 – May 2022*
Expected inspector's report	March 2022	May 2022*

Full Council to agree adoption of the plan	May 2022	July 2022*

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

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)

Local Member

Councillor Robert Macey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Local Development Scheme (LDS) – March 2021