

Trefonen Rural Protection Group

Trefonen Rural Protection Group is a formally constituted body that works for the best interests of the community of Trefonen

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CABINET MEETING 11th March 2021

AGENDA Item7 - Local Plan Update to Preparation Timetable

The LDS programme and scrutiny of the Draft Local Plan

We note the intention to delay the presentation of the Final Draft Local Plan to Full Council until July.

We hope that will give the Planning Policy Team time to review all the Regulation 19 consultation responses and make any necessary modifications, so that the Plan can be considered “*sound*” upon examination by the Inspector.

We are presuming that the Final Draft Plan will come back to Cabinet prior to be presented to Full Council?

We also note that on the Place Overview Committee’s Work Programme there is an item to produce an Overview Report to:-

*Understand the Local Plan seeking to respond to the Climate Change emergency.
Comment on the draft plan before its presentation to Council.*

Date TBA.

As you all know, tackling Climate Change is of vital importance, acknowledged by the Council’s Climate Change Emergency Policy adopted in 2019; so ensuring the Local Plan from now until 2038 fully addresses it with all its policies and development proposals is crucial.

Noting the timing of the Local Elections between now and July, with potential changes to Council, Cabinet & Committees, does the current Cabinet have a schedule for these tasks in mind?

Questions

Q1) At what point does the Cabinet expect to ratify the Final Draft Local Plan before it is presented to Full Council in July?

Q2) At what point does Cabinet expect the Place Overview Committee to give scrutiny to the Final Draft Local Plan, in accordance with their Work Programme, before it is presented to Full Council in July?

Current 5year Housing Land Supply and Housing Delivery

The Statement on the Council’s website is for the year to 31st March **2019**. That was published in March 2020.

Previously, these reports were published in the late August/early September following the 31st March year end date, giving an up-to-date supply figure within 6months of the reporting period.

We note that the LDS now shows publication of these Statements in March every year. Is this an intended change in publication date i.e. data will be not be reported until 12 months after the period it relates to; and is that considered to be “up-to-date” in terms of NPPF requirements?

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Is there a Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement prepared for the period ending 31st March **2020**?

When will that be published and, crucially, is it showing a Land Supply and Delivery sufficient to make the current Adopted Plan “*sound*” for the next year?

Looking to the future, do the Officers have any indication of the data for the current period to 31st March **2021**? These may well have been impacted by the pandemic and its restrictions, and the economic repercussions still to come.

It will be those 31st March **2021** supply and delivery figures that will be the current when the Local Plan is scheduled for Adoption in **2022**, with its increased “*High Growth*” Housing Target 15% **over and above** FOAHN identified needs for the county.

Questions

Q3)

a) Is the 5year Housing Land Supply Statement to 31st March 2020 prepared, and when will published?

b) Does it show a supply in excess of 5years?

Q4) What is the anticipated 31st March 2021 position, which would be relevant at the Local Plan Adoption in 2022?

It is a fact that the majority of house building is “Open Market” by private developers, who will only build if they can sell for a good profit, and will sit on existing consents until the market is right.

This not only impacts upon the overall supply of housing but also on the supply of their statutory obligation quota towards your aim of 7,700 Affordable Housing homes within the proposed “*High Growth*” Housing Target.

We have previously expressed concern on that target presenting a risk of an “out of date” Plan **at any time** between now and 2038 due to economic fluctuations completely outside the control of the Council, or even the Government.

An “out of date” Plan holds the inherent risk of exploitation by developers & landowners to gain consent for open market housing on sites **not identified** in the Plan, which will be contrary to the aims of “Right Homes in Right Place” in the Draft Housing Strategy 2020 - 2025.

That could potentially impact on many towns and villages across the whole county with a “free for all” for developers to build what they want rather than for local needs, as occurred in 2014-2015. We are sure that no Councillors would want that situation imposed upon local communities in our county again.

08/03/2021