

Local Plan Review (2020 – 2036) Scope, Issues & Options Consultation

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Environment & Development Services:
Councillor I. Pritchard



Date:	27 th March 2018
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Key Decision?	YES
Local Ward Members	All

CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Local Plan Strategy adopted in 2015 commits the Authority to preparing a Local Plan Review. To inform the Review a Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report has been prepared. This Scoping Report, along with evidence base has helped shape the draft Local Plan Review Scope, Issues & Options document. The draft document was then subject of a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Risk Assessment.
- 1.2 The Local Plan Review Scope, Issues & Options document is presented to Cabinet for the purposes of endorsing a public consultation for a six week period (30th April – 11th June). The draft document will also be accompanied by a series of supporting documents. These supporting documents have informed the preparation of the draft Local Plan Review. To assist the engagement with the public an executive summary will accompany the consultation document.
- 1.3 As the Plan progresses these supporting documents will be updated and further evidence base will be prepared.
- 1.4 Work is still being undertaken on the Local Plan Allocations. A separate report will be presented to Cabinet on this matter in May 2018.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the Local Plan Review Scope, Issues and Options document (**APPENDIX A**) for the purposes of undertaking Regulation 18 public consultation.
- 2.2 That Cabinet note the consultation responses received as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report and approve the officer responses (**APPENDIX B**).
- 2.3 That Cabinet approves the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Non-technical summary (**APPENDIX C & APPENDIX D** respectively), Habitat Regulations Screening Assessment (**APPENDIX E**) which accompany the Local Plan Review for the purposes of public consultation.
- 2.7 That Cabinet approve the consultation periods and methods proposed at paragraphs 3.18 – 3.21 of this report for the purposes of the Local Plan Review Scope, Issues & Options consultation.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Plan Review presents an opportunity for the Council to consider and comprehensively review its Local Plan in full. This is not to imply that there are current deficiencies associated with the current Local Plan Strategy or the emerging Local Plan Allocations document, and the commencement of a Review is without prejudice. The Local Plan Review is required to ensure that policies are relevant and up to date given national guidance and the time that will have elapsed since the Plan was originally formulated. It should in any event be noted that the Government is proposing Local Planning Authorities undertake a review of Plans every five years (as identified in the Chief Planner's letter **APPENDIX F**) and as set out in Table 1 below, the proposed timetable for the Local Plan Review would enable Lichfield District Council to meet this timeframe.
- 3.6 On the 5th December 2017 Cabinet considered a timetable for the Plan Review, and this was ratified by Full Council on the 19th December 2017. The agreed timetable is identified in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Local Plan Review timetable

Stage	Commencement date
Local Plan Review Scope, Issues & Options consultation	April 2018
Preferred Options	January 2019
Publication	September 2019
Submission to Secretary of State	January 2020
Examination in Public	March 2020
Adoption	December 2020

- 3.7 The scope of the Local Plan Review is:
- Review vision and objectives;
 - Review policies contained within adopted Local Plan Strategy;
 - Meet requirements of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) inclusive of any legislative update;
 - Identify options to assist with delivery of economic growth, inclusive of housing development;
 - Deal with any gaps in the Local Plan framework; and
 - Review of supporting documents such as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.8 This scope has been informed predominantly by the Sustainability Appraisal (**Appendix C**). In addition officers have a good working knowledge of the aspects of the Plan that require review which has shaped the list identified in the preceding paragraph.
- 3.9 In relation the Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report, this is the first stage in developing a Sustainability Appraisal. This includes the identification of the sustainability context for the plan, establishment and evaluation of baseline information of the area and the development of sustainability objectives which will feature in the appraisal of the future plan options.
- 3.10 Consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency on the Scoping report is a requirement of the supporting regulations. The District Council extended the consultation to include its Duty to Cooperate partners. The document was also placed on the Council's website. The consultation which took place over a five week period closed in January 2018 with 10 responses received. The comments received have been reviewed by officers some of which have led to amendments. The responses have been processed and analysed. None of the respondents considered that the document did not meet the requirements however a number made comments relating to their professional field, the majority of which focused on increasing the depth of the baseline data and minor wording changes to Sustainability Objective 7 which covers water resources and air and water pollution.

- 3.11 The Sustainability Objectives have formed the basis of the Strategic Environment Assessment (**Appendix C**) of likely effects associated with the Local Plan Review Scoping, Issues and Options report. The Non- technical Summary (**Appendix D**) provides an assessable summary of this document.
- 3.12 This initial consultation on the Local Plan Review will be referred to as the Local Plan Review Scoping, Issues and Options consultation. It is designed to be high level and will set out the scope of the Plan Review, identify the key challenges the District faces and pose a series of questions throughout the document. It will not identify revised policies, nor will it allocate land.
- 3.13 Questions are focused on the following themes;
- Vision and objectives – this will help shape the strategic direction of the Plan;
 - Spatial Development Options for growth – this sets out the locational options that could be considered by the Council in delivering growth. It is not envisaged that all of these will be required. However the expectation is that testing will take place to identify the ability of these locations to meet future growth;
 - Evidence base – a list of evidence base is identified which are likely to be required as part of the Plan development;
 - Review of Existing policies – A traffic light system has been developed which sets out which policies officers consider require review;
 - Monitoring framework – this will be developed further once the Plan evolves. However there will be a need for a comprehensive framework to ensure the Plan is effectively delivering; and
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan – This will require comprehensive update as the Plan develops. As the Plan evolves this will become a separate document.
- 3.14 The nature of the document and the questions posed are designed to enable the Council to actively review comments and prepare the subsequent Preferred Options consultation (January 2019). The length of time between the two rounds of consultation is reflective of the need to consider responses received along with the extensive evidence base that will need to be undertaken as part of informing the Preferred Options stage.
- 3.15 It is anticipated that a number of policies adopted in the emerging Local Plan Allocations will be maintained.
- 3.16 In relation to the Local Plan Review there is still a significant level of uncertainty associated with the quantum of growth the District will be dealing with. This requires clarification in order to effectively progress with a Plan Review. Therefore, the timetable (Table 1) may need amending were there any delays associated with clarification over these levels.
- 3.17 Members should also be aware that the publication of the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (GBHMA) Strategic Growth study (**APPENDIX G**¹) represents progress in resolving the unmet needs of the GBHMA conurbation. The report has assisted informing the development of the draft Local Plan Review. However it is now for Local Planning Authorities to take this work forward and test the ability of development options to meet growth options.

¹ [Appendices are also available on the Council's website via this hyperlink](#)

- 3.18 Members should also note that Government are consulting on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supporting guidance. These changes will need to be considered and may have implications for the timetable and content of the Local Plan Review.

Consultation proposals

- 3.19 It is proposed that the following methods of consultation are undertaken.

- Executive Summary of APPENDIX A will assist with identifying the key themes of the Plan. The questions set out in APPENDIX A will be extracted into the Executive Summary;
- Press release;
- Documents to be placed on reception and website;
- Email/letter to everyone on Local Plans Objective database;
- Small unmanned exhibition in Lichfield and Burntwood Libraries;
- Email to Parishes;
- Email to Duty to Cooperate partners;
- Use of corporate social media: Council's twitter and Voice it!;
- Offer of engagement with residents groups;
- Press advert; and
- Manned exhibitions.

- 3.20 These methods are in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

- 3.21 It is proposed that consultation runs for a period of six weeks. Consultation is proposed to commence on the 30th April and close on the 11th June.

Alternative Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet recommends to not commence with the Local Plan Review at this point in time. This present difficulties in meeting the agreed timetable for the completing the Local Plan Review. 2. Cabinet recommends alternative growth options be considered before consultation is undertaken.
Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation is required on the Local Plan Review document and accompanying documents for a minimum of six weeks
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officer time will be needed to run the consultation on the Local Plan Review. 2. The costs of consultation will be met within approved budgets. 3. Officer time will be needed to run consultation events on the Local Plan Review. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. There will be a need to commission evidence associated with the Local Plan Review.
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports the priority of a vibrant and prosperous economy as it assists in the delivery of the planning function of the Council. 2. Supports the priority of a Healthy and Safe communities by ensuring the provision of housing. 3. Supports the priority of Clean, green and welcoming places to live by assisting in allocating land for affordable housing, as well as supporting the delivery of residential and commercial developments.

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken (APPENDIX H)
Crime & Safety Issues	1. There are no crime and safety issues.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Changes to the NPPF are so significant that the current content of the Local Plan Review requires major alterations.	Officers will review the consultation documents associated with the NPPF. Any changes required can be addressed through further consultation	Yellow
B	Evidence required to support the Local Plan Review has a detrimental impact on the proposed timescales and allocated budget.	Consideration of evidence base requirements is an iterative process. Officers will continue engagement with stakeholders involved in shaping evidence base requirements to ensure the initial scope is clear. Project management practices are followed in the preparation and delivery of evidence base. New requirements arising from external factors such as future consultations will be considered by officers.	Yellow
C	Testing the growth options set out within the draft Local Plan Review have implications for meeting the timetable.	Officers will commence work on assessing options during the consultation. This will assist in determining the level of work required. Consultation feedback is expected to assist with considering the various options.	Amber
D	Changes to market conditions alter the ability of the District to deliver needs during the Plan period. This risk could have relevance to neighbouring authorities which in turn impact the ability to their respective needs, such as those arising from the GBHMA area.	Delivery is actively monitored by the Authority. This will continue. However other factors such as changing market conditions are influenced by external factors outside of the Authority's control. A long term change in market conditions may trigger the need to review the Local Plan.	Yellow

Background documents

Local Pan Strategy 2015

Statement of Community Involvement

Local Development Scheme

GBHMA Strategic Growth Study

Relevant web links

[Local Plan Strategy 2015](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement](#)

[Local Development Scheme](#)

[GBHMA Strategic Growth Study](#)