

Local Plan Review Update

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
Lead Head of Service	<i>Philip Coyne (Interim Director for the Local Plan Review) and Rob Jarman (Head of Planning and Development)</i>
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mark Egerton (Strategic Planning Manager)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	<i>All</i>

Executive Summary

At the 10 March 2020 meeting of this committee, Members resolved that officers provide a short, written update at each meeting of this committee, concerning any slippage and/or progress on delivering the Local Plan Review to the timetable agreed. This report provides the requested update.

Purpose of Report

Noting

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the report be noted

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee	13 th April 2021

Local Plan Review Update

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the 10th March 2020 meeting of the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (SPI) Committee, Members resolved that officers should provide a short-written update at each meeting of the committee, concerning any slippage and/or progress on delivering the plan to the timescale agreed. This report provides the requested update.
- 1.2 Significant progress is being made on the Local Plan Review Regulation 19, 'draft for submission' documents. This includes a series of studies and topic papers that will form part of the wider evidence base for the Local Plan Review document itself. Drafting of the Local Plan Review document has now also commenced and will be informed by the latest evidence base.
- 1.3 Many components of the evidence base inter-relate and it is important for the implications of one specialist study, for example, to inform the potential, broader policies and proposals within the Local Plan Review documents. Good examples are the transport and air quality modelling, which are ongoing and are feeding into a variety of policies in the Regulation 19 documents. Another example is the responses to the Regulation 18 Preferred Approaches consultation, where a significant number of responses were received with a large number relating to a variety of key areas in the Local Plan Review.
- 1.4 In addition to the above, some studies are required to test the overall plan and its proposals. This includes a viability assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Finally, whilst work on garden communities and other key components of the spatial strategy is progressing well, it is considered that additional time will help inform and justify the proposals for these major, multi-faceted and complex schemes.
- 1.5 Officers are also mindful of the need to brief Members on the latest information and proposals, prior to public consultation commencing on the Regulation 19 documents and associated evidence. This includes changes to government policy with regard to affordable housing, with the introduction of First Homes, as well as emerging matters, such as biodiversity net gain.
- 1.6 Once the Regulation 19 documents are subject to publication and consultation, stakeholders, the public and others with an interest in the borough will have the opportunity to consider whether they believe the documents are sound and legally compliant. This is an important series of tests and will provide Maidstone Borough Council, as Local Planning Authority, important information as it seeks to proceed to submission of the documents and associated evidence base. Indeed, if, following Regulation 19 consultation, the Council decides to undertake further work and/or consultation on the Local Plan Review, there will be associated time, resource and cost implications.
- 1.7 In light of the above, officers consider that a short delay to publication and consultation on the Regulation 19 Local Plan Review document would be

beneficial as this would reduce the likelihood of further consultation being needed prior to submission of the documents and associated evidence base.

- 1.8 A change to the timetable will require an update to the published Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme currently indicates that the Regulation 19 consultation will commence in June 2021.
- 1.9 Officers intend to bring a revised Local Development Scheme, with a new timetable for the Local Plan Review, to the 6th July 2021 meeting of this committee. Should this Committee agree to the revised Local Development Scheme and Local Plan Review timetable, the final decision regarding the publication of a new Local Development Scheme will be taken by Full Council at its meeting on 14th July 2021.
- 1.10 Given that the current Local Development Scheme indicates that the Regulation 19 consultation will commence in June 2021, a note will be placed on the Council's website letting those with an interest in the Local Plan Review know that the timetable is under review and that a revised Local Development Scheme will be taken to the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee, for consideration.

2 RISK

- 2.1 The report is presented for information only and has no direct risk management implications. Risks associated with the LPR are dealt with through the usual operational framework and have been previously reported.

3. REPORT APPENDICES

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