

Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Local Plan Cabinet Committee Monday, 26th November, 2012

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Local Plan Cabinet Committee**, which will be held at:

**Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping
on Monday, 26th November, 2012
at 8.00 pm .**

**Glen Chipp
Chief Executive**

**Democratic Services
Officer**

Gary Woodhall
Office of the Chief Executive
Tel: 01992 564470
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors R Bassett (Chairman), W Breare-Hall, Mrs A Grigg, D Stallan and C Whitbread

PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THIS MEETING

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To be declared at the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee held on 3 September 2012 (previously circulated).

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE (Pages 5 - 6)

To note the revised terms of reference for the Cabinet Committee, as agreed by the Leader of Council on 28 June 2012 (as attached).

5. PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION AGREED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

No decisions taken since the last meeting.

6. LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS – BRIEFING FOLLOWING CONSULTATION PERIOD (Pages 7 - 18)

(Director of Planning & Economic Development) To consider the attached report (LPC-006-2012/13).

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs (6) and (24) of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution requires that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order (6) (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Cabinet Committee and the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

8. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESSExclusion

To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
Nil	Nil	Nil

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Confidential Items Commencement

Paragraph (9) of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00pm at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.

- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers

Paragraph (8) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

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Local Plan Cabinet Committee – Terms of Reference

- 3.1 To oversee and submit recommendations to the Cabinet as appropriate on:
 - (a) agreement of documentation for consultation on the draft plan/preferred option and documentation to seek pre - submission representations on the proposed Local Plan;
 - (b) the final form of the Council's Local Plan (ie the version to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination in Public); and
 - (c) responses that should be made to any representations received following consultation on the Local Plan and related documents and supplementary planning documents.
- 3.2 To be responsible for all aspects (except those matters specified in 3.1 above) including but not restricted to:
 - (a) monitoring of the achievement of milestones within the Local Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy preparation and review process;
 - (b) agreement of engagement strategies for consultation periods as necessary;
 - (c) agreement of documentation for consultation on the Issues and Options; and
 - (d) agreement of draft options and policy wording to be used as the basis for Sustainability Appraisal.
- 3.3 To note, receive and, if necessary, agree officer reports on consultants' studies which contribute to the establishment of an up-to-date evidence base to influence preparation of the Local Plan.
- 3.4 To agree options for joint or co-ordinated working with neighbouring Councils, which comply with the Council's duty to co-operate and which best meet the needs of this District.
- 3.5 To respond to the Planning Services Standing Scrutiny Standing Panel as appropriate.
- 3.6 To monitor within the budgetary provision for the Local Plan, as approved by the Cabinet and the Council.
- 3.7 That the membership of the Committee comprise of members of the Cabinet, the number to be determined by the Leader of the Council.
- 3.8 That the Committee will be chaired by the Portfolio Holder responsible for Planning matters.

N.B. (1) In the event that the Council's Cabinet is constituted according the pro rata membership requirements of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989, any political group not having representation on the Committee by virtue of one of the named Cabinet portfolios shall nominate one member of the Cabinet to serve on this Committee.

(2) In the event that seats on the Cabinet are allocated by the Leader of Council solely to one political group, or to an alliance of one or more groups forming an administration, seats on the Sub Committee shall only be allocated to members of that group or alliance who have seats on the Cabinet.

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: *LPC-006-2012/13*
Date of meeting: *26 November 2012*



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Planning
Subject: Local Plan – Briefing following Issues & Options Consultation
Responsible Officer: Kassandra Polyzoides (01992 564119)
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To note the outcome of the Local Plan Issues & Options consultation; and
- (2) To note ongoing evidence base work for the Local Plan.

Executive Summary:

The Issues & Options consultation concluded on 15 October 2012. There was a large number of representations submitted and interest generated regarding the consultation as a whole. Drop in sessions were well attended and public engagement was generally constructive. Forward Planning are focused on processing and analysing the representations in order to progress to the next stage of the Local Plan preparation, the Preferred Options. The team are also focusing on commissioning, progressing and completing key pieces of evidence work that will inform the Local Plan.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To provide an update on the Local Plan Issues & Options consultation.

Other Options for Action:

None.

Report:

1. The Issues and Options (I&O) Consultation was launched on 30 July and ended on 15 October 2012. The means by which the consultation was publicised included:

- (a) evening drop in sessions around the District;
- (b) information on the Council Homepage and Planning pages <http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/contact-us/consultation/planning-our-future>;
- (c) our Facebook, Twitter accounts and Forward Planning consultation phone line;
- (d) a static exhibition at the Civic Offices throughout the length of the consultation period including questionnaires and a submission box;

(e) letters or emails to individuals who were on our database from previous Council planning policy consultations;

(f) letters or emails to anyone who owns land within any of the potential development/ opportunity areas within the consultation document. This letter was used to ask owners if at this stage, they agreed for their land to be considered;

(g) consultation boxes (questionnaires, I&O documents, leaflets, posters etc) provided to all Town & Parish Councils;

(h) consultation boxes (questionnaires, I&O documents, leaflets, posters etc) provided to the residents' associations we had on our database;

(i) leaflets distributed to Epping Forest District residents;

(j) leaflets handed out at a number of the District's tube and rail stations, and some rail stations just outside the District; and

(k) a rotating series of exhibitions at all the Libraries in the District.

2. A detailed report of the consultation methods, including the number of attendees at the drop in sessions is available in Appendix I.

3. The number of representations received was 5625 of which 114 were statutory bodies, 264 landowners, 3158 residents, 2089 group responses. The representations are currently being processed and a decision was made to outsource this piece of work in order to ensure that the timetable for meeting the Local Plan continues on track. As the representations are being indexed the Forward Planning team will be working to analyse the results. The information from the I&Os consultation will be used to inform a series of Member workshops in the new year aimed at EFDC and Town & Parish Members. The programme of workshops is intending to draw out the key themes and preferred options for the district over the new plan period. The output from the workshops will be used to inform the preferred options report for the LPCC and Cabinet in early 2013 that will lead to the preparation of the draft preferred options document for consideration by LPCC. It is currently anticipated that the Preferred Options consultation will take place in the Autumn of 2013. The LDS which was published in June 2012 will be updated to take account of the new target dates. Further details outlining the content of the Member workshops are available in Appendix II.

4. The Forward Planning team is in the process of reviewing the consultation methods used for the Issues & Options to make proposals to Members for the next stage of consultation, eg reviewing sending leaflets or letters to all residents and businesses as most Councils do not follow this approach. It may therefore be a consideration that advertising in the press and on high streets is increased for the next rounds of consultation instead of home delivered letters/leaflets. There are also discussions being had with regards to the drop-in sessions, their overall effectiveness as a method of engagement and their impact on staff and on the timetable. The Essex wide Planning Policy Forum Group that EFDC officers attend will be providing information on other Councils' approaches to Local Plan consultation, which will also be considered as part of the officers proposals to Members for the next stage consultation. Responses to the consultation for the Statement of Community Involvement will be taken into account during this review.

5. The evening drop in sessions, held in towns and villages in the District, were overall well attended and included information boards and all the documentation associated with the consultation. A group of officers was present at each drop-in session to answer questions

and provide information on responding to the consultation.

6. Managers are maintaining staffing levels of the Forward Planning team in order to continue to progress work efficiently and avoid negative impact on remaining staff. Three members of staff have either left or advised their managers they will be leaving by early 2013 and recruitment is taking place to fill these posts.

7. Work on the Local Plan evidence base is ongoing and there are a number of studies being commissioned or considered:

- (a) Climate Change - this will enable a review of existing policies; make them more robust in relation to climate change;
- (b) GRT (a potential Essex-wide update of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is being discussed with other Essex authorities via EPOA (Essex Planning Officers Association);
- (c) additional work (Glasshouse study) – attempting to identify potentially suitable areas of land elsewhere in the district for glasshouse development;
- (d) SFRA (Level 2 for identified preferred sites);
- (e) Transport Assessment for identified preferred sites;
- (f) Sustainability Appraisal - consultants taking the role of ‘critical friend’ and Forward Planning team delivering core work; and
- (g) DVDs for individual distribution to the local travelling community asking for information about future needs and advising of the Preferred Options consultation next year.

Resource Implications:

Outside of staffing issues as discussed in the main report and addressing these in a timely fashion an update on the Local Plan budget is due to be reported to Local Plan Committee in early 2013.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Recent appeal decisions related to EFDC would suggest that the Council will become increasingly vulnerable to planning applications if progress of the Local Plan is not made in accordance with the current timetable.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The timely implementation of the Local Plan is necessary in order to provide the Council with effective controls over development in the District. It will also provide a framework in parallel with the Corporate Objectives in determining the Council’s long term aspirations and objections.

Consultation Undertaken:

Issues & Options Consultation (July- October 2012)

Background Papers:

Local Plan Issues & Options document
Local Plan Issues & Options questionnaire

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The Local Plan Issues & Options Consultation has a separate EqIA.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? Yes

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? Yes

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
The ability for effective engagement to take place with hard to reach/minority groups.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
By way of choosing a variety of routes for publicising the Local Plan and Issues & Options consultation. By devising specialist formats for ongoing engagement i.e. DVDs.

Engagement/update methods used for Community Choices Issues & Options

General methods

- **drop-in sessions** in various locations throughout the district within September, held in the evenings to allow as many people to attend as possible, manned by Forward Planning staff so that local people can ask questions, discuss issues, and take consultation documents. In many cases local people have taken multiples copies of documents to give to neighbours, friends etc. The original 6 sessions arranged were:
 - 4th Sept – Sheering Village hall, Sheering
 - 5th Sept – Jack Silley Pavilion, Epping
 - 6th Sept – Roding valley Hall, Buckhurst Hill
 - 10th Sept – Fyfield Village Hall, Fyfield
 - 11th Sept – Waltham Abbey Town Hall, Waltham Abbey
 - 12th Sept – Abridge Village Hall, Abridge
 - 13th Sept – Roydon Marina Village, RoydonA further 7 sessions were arranged following demand, which were:
 - 17th Sept – Epping Hall, Epping
 - 18th Sept – Loughton Council Chamber, Loughton
 - 19th Sept – Bumbles Green Leisure Centre, Nazeing
 - 20th Sept – Chigwell Parish Council Offices, Chigwell
 - 25th Sept – Ongar Town Council, Chipping Ongar
 - 26th Sept – Theydon Bois Village Hall, Theydon Bois
 - 27th Sept – North Weald Village Hall Lounge, North Weald
- **letters (2-sided)/emails** to anyone who has been involved in a planning policy consultation in the past (via the contact details they gave us at that time), and statutory consultees etc. notifying them of the consultation (over 8,000 people, bodies etc.). These were sent out on the 26th July
- **letters (2-sided)/emails** to anyone who owns land within any of the potential development / opportunity areas within the consultation document (from a Land Registry search), asking whether they are interested in their land being considered for potential future development and inviting their comments on the consultation. The vast majority of these were sent out on the 26th of July. Results on searches for the potential development areas ONG-D, ONG-E ONG-G were received later from Land Registry. Due to this unavoidable delay, the letters regarding these areas were sent out on the 16th August
- **letters (2-sided)/emails** to all those who submitted land for consideration through the Call for Sites, stating whether or not their site had been included in the consultation at this stage and inviting their comments on the consultation. These were sent out on the 26th July
- **our website** <http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/contact-us/consultation/planning-our-future> where comments can be made online, or electronic copies of documents can be downloaded and either filled in electronically or printed and posted. The Consultation documents etc. were available on the website on Monday 30th July (the first day of the consultation period) and have been available ever since
- **hard copies** of consultation documents supplied to all the Parish and Town Councils in the district:
 - 15 x Community Choices consultation document
 - 5 x Community Choices questionnaire
 - 5 x Frequently Asked Questions

- 5 x Statement of Community Involvement consultation document
- 5 x Statement of Community Involvement questionnaire
- 2 x Sustainability Appraisal
- 1 x A4 poster
- 25 x leaflets

We notified the Parish and Town Councils that they were available on the 27th July. Various District Councillors took these to deliver to their Parish Town Councils.

- **laminated leaflets** highlighting the consultation, supplied to Parish/Town Councils who requested them, which were then offered to all who were interested
- **hard copies** of consultation documents supplied to residents associations that we know of in the district
 - 15 x Community Choices consultation document
 - 5 x Community Choices questionnaire
 - 5 x Frequently Asked Questions
 - 5 x Statement of Community Involvement consultation document
 - 5 x Statement of Community Involvement questionnaire
 - 2 x Sustainability Appraisal
 - 2 x A4 posters
 - 25 x leaflets

We notified the Residents Associations/Groups through a letter/email on the 1st August stating that we had an information pack (contents as above) was available and asking would they please arrange for collection.

- **hard copies** of consultation documents at the EFDC Housing Offices in Loughton Broadway, and Limes Farm in Chigwell, as follows:
 - 50 x Community Choices consultation document
 - 50 x Community Choices questionnaire
 - 100 x Frequently Asked Questions
 - 10 x Statement of Community Involvement consultation document
 - 10 x Statement of Community Involvement questionnaire
 - 2 x Sustainability Appraisal
 - 2 x A4 posters
 - 100 x leaflets
- **a summary of** the consultation document was prepared, of which we sent out email/paper copies to Parish/Town Councils and residents associations that we know of, on 2nd August.
 - **extra hard copies** supplied to Parish/Town Councils and residents groups on request.
- **leaflets** sent via a distribution company to households and business addresses within the district. The distribution began on the 27th July and was completed within a few days. Where reports of non-delivery have been received we have investigated with the distribution company via satellite trails of the people making deliveries. Isolated distribution issues in the district were quickly rectified.
- **leaflets** given out either during the early morning or early evening outside tube stations and rail stations which are within or immediately adjacent to the district, to engage commuters
 - 30th July a.m. peak - Loughton Underground
 - 31st July p.m. peak - Epping Underground
 - 1st August a.m. peak - Chigwell Underground & leaflets left at Chigwell newsagents.
 - 1st August a.m. peak - Buckhurst Hill Underground

- 2nd August a.m. peak - Roydon Station
 - 2nd August a.m. peak - Epping Underground
 - 7th August a.m. peak - Epping Underground
 - 9th August a.m. peak - Buckhurst Hill Underground
 - 14th August p.m. peak - Roding Valley Underground
 - 15th August p.m. peak – Broxbourne Station
 - 17th August p.m. peak – Sawbridgeworth Station
 - 30th August a.m. peak - Waltham Cross Station
- **2 sets of information exhibitions** (with banners, hard copies of consultation documents and a ballot box to leave comments in) touring various libraries and other locations in the district as follows:
 - 30th July to 10th August - Loughton Library
 - 30th July to 10th August - Theydon Bois Village Hall
 - 13th August to 24th August - Ongar Library
 - 13th August to 24th August - Waltham Abbey Library
 - 28th August to 7th September - North Weald Library
 - 3rd September to 14th September - Stapleford Abbots Primary School
 - 10th September to 15th October - Sainsbury's, Loughton
- **hard copies** at libraries (not including exhibition supplies at various locations in the district as follows (supplies topped up on request via telephone):
 - Epping Library
 - North Weald Library
 - Ongar Library
 - Loughton Library
 - Chigwell Library
 - Waltham Abbey Library
 - Buckhurst Hill Library
 - Loughton Broadway (Epping Forest College)
- At the start of the consultation period, each library received:
- 40 x Community Choices consultation document
 - 100 x Community Choices questionnaire
 - 50 x Frequently Asked Questions
 - 5 x Statement of Community Involvement consultation document
 - 20 x Statement of Community Involvement questionnaire
 - 1 x Sustainability Appraisal
 - 2 x A4 posters
 - 100 x leaflets
- **static exhibition** at the Civic Offices for the whole of the consultation period, with banners, hard copies of consultation documents and a ballot box to leave comments in. There is also a supply of documents at Planning Reception in the Civic Offices
 - **briefing for Parish/Town Councils** on 18th June, at which information was distributed. Invitations for this briefing were sent on the 11th June
 - **meetings with any Parish/Town Council** in the district who wishes to meet with us (many Parish and Town Councils are then disseminating information themselves through their newsletters etc.). We invited them to request a meeting via letter/email invitations sent out on 26th July. We have attended/will attend the following meetings:
 - Waltham Abbey Town Council – 6th August
 - Nazeing Parish Council – 9th August
 - Theydon Bois Parish Council – 16th August

- North Weald Parish Council – 20th August
 - Epping Town Council – 21st August
 - Buckhurst Hill Parish Council – 30th August
 - Loughton Town Council – 3rd September
 - Ongar Town Council – 7th September
 - Sawbridgeworth Town Council (re: Lower Sheering/Sheering) – 24th September
 - Moreton, Bobbingworth & the Lavers Parish Council - 24th September
 - Epping Upland Parish Council - 24th September
- **meetings with residents groups when requested** – officers have already met with Waltham Abbey Residents Association and Thornwood Action Group
 - **our consultation telephone line** 01992 564517 (which is on all of our consultation materials, website etc.) - for anyone who wishes to be sent hard copy documents or electronic copies of documents, or ask any questions about the consultation
 - **our consultation email address** LDFConsult@eppingforestdc.gov.uk (which is on all of our consultation materials, website etc.) - for anyone who wishes to be sent hard copy documents or electronic copies of documents, ask any questions about the consultation, or submit comments. We also receive and reply to queries and comments through an older email address ContactFP@eppingforestdc.gov.uk, and have received and replied to others through the Council's generic ContactUS@eppingforestdc.gov.uk email address and our personal work email addresses
 - **technical workshops** held on 7th August, for the County Council, neighbouring authorities, government departments, utility companies, health bodies, environmental agencies etc. Letters/email invitations were sent for these on 27th July
 - **non-technical workshops** held on 8th August, for residents groups, amenity groups, action groups, conservation groups, BME groups, business groups etc. Letters/email invitations were sent for these on 27th July.
 - **speaking with members of the public at reception** at the Civic Offices, outlining the consultation and giving out consultation documents
 - **press briefings** on the 18th (Ongar Gazette) attended by Tom Carne, Cllr Bassett and IW, and on 20th July (the two Local Guardians) attended by Tom Carne, Cllr Bassett, JP and IW. these were held on these dates in order for information to be included in the 26th July newspapers
 - **press releases** the first of which was made on 22nd July, so that it would be in time for the agenda deadline of 28th July for Local Plan Cabinet Committee
 - **meeting with the Youth Council** (young people elected by their peers) on the 11th September
 - **video on the EFDC website** by Cllr Bassett, explaining the reasons for the consultation, outlining issues and urging people to respond to the consultation (further videos to help people to comment online, and to engage Gypsy Roma Travellers are also being produced)
 - **EFDC Facebook page** updated re: consultation events etc.
 - **EFDC twitter account** updated re: consultation events etc.

- **Updates at other meetings** which officers attended such as those with amenity groups, on progress with the new Local Plan

Other methods organised for EFDC Councillors:

- **letters to Members** including hard copy consultation documents sent directly to home addresses via the courier system on 26th July
- **briefings for Members** on 18th June on the consultation period, content of the consultation etc.
- **briefings for Members** on 9th and 12th January on progress with the Local Plan and ideas for future consultation
- **workshops/briefings for Members on Evidence Base documents** held as and when these documents have been progressed, e.g. the Open Space Sport and Recreation Study, and the Strategic Land Availability Assessment
- **updates in the Council Bulletin** for Members, on progress with the Local Plan, progress with Evidence Base documents, workshops, consultation events etc.
- **updates to Local Plan Cabinet Committee** on a regular basis, on progress with the Local Plan, budget, progress with Evidence Base documents, workshops, consultation events etc.
- **Local Plan Cabinet Committee minutes** which are regularly placed on the agenda for Cabinet meetings

Issues & Options Drop-in sessions attendance from 4/9/12 to 27/9/12

Date	Location	Total attendees	Highest headcount at any one point*
04/09/12	Sheering Village Hall, Sheering	55	
05/09/12	Jack Silley Pavilion, Epping	<i>See next column</i>	60
06/09/12	Roding Valley Hall, Buckhurst Hill	52	
10/09/12	Fyfield Village hall, Fyfield	<i>See next column</i>	22
11/09/12	Waltham Abbey Town Hall, Waltham Abbey	126	
12/09/12	Abridge Village Hall, Abridge	32	
13/09/12	Roydon Marina Village, Roydon	112	
17/09/12	Epping Hall, Epping	94	
18/09/12	Loughton Council Chamber, Loughton	22	
19/09/12	Nazeing Leisure Centre, Bumble's	58	

	Green, nazeing		
20/09/12	Chigwell Parish Council Offices, Chigwell	<i>See next column</i>	40
25/09/12	Ongar Town Council, Chipping Ongar	158	
26/09/12	Theydon Bois Village Hall, Theydon Bois	103	
27/09/12	North Weald Village Hall Lounge, North Weald	31	
	Total attendees counted	843	n/a

* Where a drop-in session was very busy, we were not able to count people as they came in, and so we took headcounts at regular intervals. This column shows the highest headcount during the evening at any one point.

Epping Forest District Council

Member workshops on the Local Plan

The Epping Forest District Local Plan is probably the most important policy document to be produced for the District in the next 20 years. It will guide investment in homes, jobs and infrastructure up to 2031 by allocating land for new homes and jobs. It will support the vitality of towns and countryside whilst protecting the most cherished assets for future generations by setting future green belt boundaries.

Three workshops are to be held to involve members and key officers in the process of narrowing down the options for inclusion in the next stage of Plan preparation: The Preferred Option stage. The workshops will give Councillors an opportunity to further understand the issues involved in plan making and the evidence - including what the people of the district had to say during the Issues & Options consultation.

These interactive workshops are designed to result in a report to Local Plan Cabinet Committee in early 2013 that will give a steer to officers to focus the next stage of detailed flood risk, transport and sustainability assessments prior to the selection of a preferred strategy.

A further fourth workshop will be held that will consider the implications of further evidence and a preferred option for the emerging plan to be published Autumn 2013 for consultation.

Workshop 1 will involve presentation and discussion of the evidence and its implications across the district, and for different places in the district. Participants will explore different ways of addressing the key issue of growth for the future within the context of the wider evidence base. The results of Workshop 1 will be analysed and reported back to participants and inform workshop 2.

Workshop 2 will explore the impact of the plan vision and objectives, on the choices for growth and broad locations for development. Discussion on emerging policy themes and priorities critical to deciding the future of the district will take place. The roles of individual towns and the suitable directions of development for them will be explored.

Workshop 3 will address the future of towns in more fine grain and this will involve testing the likely future impact of different policy choices against the Council's aspirations for the futures of settlements and the rural areas. Participants will focus on a small number of settlements but will be able to comment on the work of others.

In order to be most effective it is requested that you sign up for all three as these are intended to be a programme of workshops and consistent input is desirable.

We will be signing up one Town and Parish representative per Council.

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