

Report to Neighbourhood Select Committee

Date of meeting: 15 November 2016

Subject: Update Local Plan

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Committee Secretary: A Hendry ext.4246

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To note the update on the Local Plan: Draft Local Plan approved for public consultation

Report:

1. The Draft Local Plan has been produced in response to the Community Visioning consultation in 2010/11 and Issues and Options Community Choices consultations which took place in 2012, and in liaison with our neighbouring authorities through the Cooperation for Sustainable Development Board. The Draft Local Plan has been prepared in compliance with the national planning requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance and regulations. Since 2012 the Council has prepared an extensive evidence base to inform the development of policies for the Draft Local Plan. The draft policies have been developed in close and regular consultation with key stakeholders including Members (District and Parish) and officers at a series of workshops taking into account the commissioned evidence and consultation responses. Regular updates and reports have been provided to the Cabinet. The Draft Local Plan sets out the Council's preferred approach to development in the District for the period up to 2033 including the amount of new homes and jobs that the plan seeks to achieve, the distribution of that development between settlements, and the approach to the natural environment and green infrastructure. The purpose of the Plan is to deliver the vision and objectives for the District whilst contributing to sustainable development as described in the National Planning Policy Framework to achieve economic, environmental and social progress. This means taking a balanced approach to meeting the needs of existing and future residents, businesses and visitors, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment and built heritage and addressing the impacts of a changing climate.

2. The Draft Local Plan sets out:

- The Council's vision and objectives for the District's development over the plan period;
- Policies to ensure that development delivers high quality, sustainable homes, drive the quality of design and maintain our high quality built and natural environment;
- The future distribution for housing growth and requirements for affordable housing;
- Policies to build a strong, competitive economy and the future distribution for new employment land space and thus new jobs;
- Policies to maintain and enhance the vibrancy and vitality of our towns centres;
- Policies to support a sustainable transport and road infrastructure network and;

- Proposals for delivery including a draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to demonstrate the infrastructure requirements necessary to support the site allocations and other proposals.

3. It was agreed at full Council on the 18th of October that the Draft Local Plan be subject to a six week statutory consultation 31st October to 12th December 2016. We have been working with our neighbouring local authorities (East Hertfordshire, Harlow and Uttlesford) to achieve a cross border understanding of the level of growth needed in our area. The objectively assessed housing need for the Strategic Housing Market Area is approx 56,400 homes. Having considered the most recent population and household projections and undertaken an assessment of the amount of growth that could be accommodated in the four authorities the evidence has shown that the maximum amount of growth that could be accommodated for the Plan period is 51,100 homes. Of these homes 11,400 are required in our district. The Draft Local Plan proposes the allocation of approximately 3,900 of the 11,400 new homes, on strategic sites within Epping Forest District on the edge of Harlow.

4. The new Local Plan website is now live and can be accessed here: www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planningourfuture. The website is a one stop shop, so stakeholders can find the relevant information quickly, whilst accessing the technical detail if they are interested in further reading. An online questionnaire is also available on the website, so it is convenient for people provide us with feedback. In order to make processing, analysing and providing feedback of the consultation outputs easier, we are urging people to submit electronic questionnaires. We are therefore also asking that Members in speaking to the public to do the same.

5. Each Councillor will have received a Members briefing pack, which provides a guide to the Draft Local Plan and consultation. The pack also contains posters for the consultation events and the consultation FAQs. Town and Parish Council's and other community representative bodies will have also received a similar consultation pack to assist in the promotion of the consultation and providing stakeholders with accurate information on the Draft Local Plan.

6. An increased effort has been made to promote the consultation via Social media: you can follow and share our social media posts - @eppingforestdc and www.facebook.com/eppingforestdc and #EFDCLocalPlan. Where appropriate officers are using social media to address any major misconceptions or issues associated with the Draft Local Plan, as well as using these routes as a way of keeping stakeholders up to date.

7. Following consideration of the comments received in response to the Draft Local Plan consultation, the next stage will be to prepare a plan for publication and to publish it under Regulation 19. This will be the document that the Council considers is ready for examination. The Publication Plan must be published together with other "proposed submission documents", for a six-week period to seek stakeholder representations as to the soundness of the Plan before it can be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. In the meantime decision makers can give weight to the relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan – the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given – in accordance with paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council has agreed that some weight will now be given to the Draft Local Plan when determining planning applications.

Reason for decision: Non applicable

Options considered and rejected: Non applicable

Consultation undertaken: Previous consultations relevant to the Draft Plan include the

Community Visioning exercise 2010 and the Community Choices- Issues and Options consultations 2012.

Resource implications: The current Draft Local Plan and consultation are being prepared/conducted using existing Planning Policy Staff and consultants as per the current Local Plan budget.

Budget provision: Local Plan Budget

Personnel: Planning policy team

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference: NA

Relevant statutory powers: NA

Background papers: Full Council minutes 18th October 2016

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: The Draft Local Plan has been subject to an Interim Sustainability Appraisal.

Key Decision reference: (if required)