

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET HOUSING AND PLANNING PANEL – 16 MARCH 2017
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE)

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS)

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report proposes a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable for the preparation of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.
- 1.2 The LDS is the Council's official timetable for the preparation and adoption of the Local Plan and other planning documents for the borough.
- 1.3 The revised timetable reflects that it has taken longer than originally anticipated to analyse some 3,000 representations received to the Proposed Submission Local Plan consultation exercise.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Panel agrees the revised Local Development Scheme and recommends that it be adopted by Cabinet on 4 April 2017.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 Since the first LDS was prepared in 2005 there have been a number of changes to the planning system and decisions by the Council in the light of responses to previous rounds of public consultation which have resulted in changes to the Local Plan timetable. The last version of the Local Development Scheme was agreed by this Panel in September 2016.
- 3.2 One of the procedural requirements for the Local Plan as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2014 is that it is prepared in accordance with the LDS.
- 3.3 The programme now needs to be amended for the final time to reflect that it has taken longer than originally anticipated to analyse representations to the Proposed Submission Local Plan consultation document.
- 3.4 The Plan is now scheduled for submission to the Secretary of State in late April 2017. This will mean that an Examination in Public is likely to take place in summer 2017 with receipt of the Inspector's Report in autumn 2017 and adoption in late 2017.
- 3.5 The revised LDS is attached to this report as Appendix A and has been prepared on the premise that the Council do not make any major modifications prior to Submission Local Plan. Should Members decide to make major modifications to the plan the timetable will need to be revisited to account for another round of public consultation.

4 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Council's Business Plan 2015-2018 contains corporate priorities to meet the borough's housing need, help build a strong local economy, protect and enhance the environment and maintain a safe and healthy community.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Section 15 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by Section 111 of the Localism Act 2011 and Section 34 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out a requirement for the Council to produce a LDS for the preparation and adoption of the Local Plan and other planning documents.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with the preparation and adoption of a revised LDS.
- 6.2 The cost of preparing the Local Plan is anticipated within the Planning Policy budget for 2017/18 and a one-off growth bid has been agreed to cover the cost of the Examination in Public.

7 Risk Management Implications

- 7.1 Once the Local Plan or other planning document has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, one of the legal tests of whether it is sound is whether or not it has been prepared in accordance with the LDS.
- 7.2 A Risk Assessment relating to the Local Plan timetable is set out in the LDS.

8 Security & Terrorism Implications

- 8.1 There are no security and terrorism implications arising from this report.

9 Procurement Implications

- 9.1 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

10 Climate Change Implications

- 10.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

11 Policy Implications

- 11.1 The LDS is not a planning policy document in itself, but does set out a timetable for preparing and adopting the Local Plan and other planning documents, which will contain policies that will be used to make planning decisions.

12 Equalities and Diversity

- 12.1 There are no equalities or diversity implications arising from this report.

Name of author: Sue Tiley
Title: Planning Policy and Implementation Manager
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