

REVISED LOCAL PLAN PROGRAMME

| | |
|---|--|
| Head of Service: | Viv Evans, Head of Planning |
| Wards affected: | (All Wards); |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | |
| Appendices (attached): | Appendix 1: Draft Local Plan Programme (August 2020) |

Summary

The Local Plan Programme sets out the timetable for the new Local Plan. It has been updated following the Coronavirus Pandemic, which has caused unexpected delay to the existing published Local Plan work programme.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) consider and approve the revised Local Plan Programme August 2020 attached at Appendix 1**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The delivery and implementation of the Epsom & Ewell Local Plan contributes towards all of the Council's Key Priorities. The new Epsom & Ewell Local Plan is critical because it will set out how sustainable growth will be delivered during the forthcoming plan period.

2 Background

- 2.1 The purpose of the Local Plan Programme is to set out the processes and timetable for the preparation and production of the Borough Council's Local Plan. Typically, the Council's Programmes have set out a rolling three-year project plan - that seeks to inform both the process and all of the interested parties and partners about how and when the Local Plan will be brought forward.

Licensing and Planning Policy Committee

6 August 2020

- 2.2 Progress against the milestones identified in the Programme is monitored through our Annual Monitoring Report. In the past we have amended and revised our Local Plan programme to take account of circumstances that have brought about a change in our plans. Revisions have normally been triggered by changes in national planning policies, such as the revocation of regional plans and the publication of an update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and the consequential changes in our approach to plan-making.
- 2.3 Our last Local Plan Programme was published during January 2020. That Programme identified milestones that would have seen further public consultation under Regulation 18 in May-June 2020.
- 2.4 However, timescales have slipped. This is due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, which has had a significant impact on all aspects of day to day life. In relation to the Planning system, it has required different process and procedures being adopted and temporary relaxations of some permitted development. The Pandemic has also highlighted other issues in relation to the environment (e.g.sustainable travel and climate change) and economy (e.g retail) which may need further consideration.
- 2.5 The updated timetable reflects the impacts of the pandemic and provides a project plan for moving forward. However it is important to be aware that the government has announced it's intention to reform to the planning system in England. The details and implications of this are unknown at present.

Local Plan Programme

- 2.6 The updated programme attached as Appendix 1 outlines a project plan for the preparation, production and consultation of the new Plan and associated supporting evidence. The timetable identifies key milestones during document production. We will use these milestones to monitor the performance of our Programme.
- 2.7 In order to be successful, we will need to manage the process and our resources (both internal and external) carefully. The adoption of this timetable will provide a clear project plan for preparing the new Local Plan.
- 2.8 The key milestones over the next twelve months are:
- Winter 2020 - Final Issues & Options Consultation (Regulation 18 Part 2)
 - Summer 2021 - Pre-Submission Public Consultation
 - Autumn 2021 - Submission to the Secretary of State
 - Winter 2021 - Public Hearing
 - Autumn 2022 - Estimated date of Adoption

Licensing and Planning Policy Committee

6 August 2020

- 2.9 Member engagement will form a key part of the process mapped out by the key milestones identified above. Both consultation documents will be the subject of reports coming before the Licensing & Planning Policy Committee, as will the decision to progress to submission to the Secretary of State.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 3.1 Impact Assessment
- 3.2 In the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan we face a number of risk areas. These include the continued absence of a 5 year housing land supply and the additional measures introduced through the outputs of the Housing Delivery Test.
- 3.3 Having an up-to-date Local Plan Programme is a key measure in mitigating the possible risk of direct government intervention. The government encourages local planning authorities to up-date their Local Plan Programmes as often as necessary.
- 3.4 Recent experiences have demonstrated that the Local Plan process is susceptible to unanticipated impacts that are outside of our control. When unforeseen matters arise, we will need to respond clearly, quickly and decisively. We will need to ensure that all our partners and interested parties (in the Local Plan) have a clear understanding of actions and why we have taken them. We will need to communicate the impact of such actions on our programme in a timely manner.
- 3.5 The Coronavirus pandemic remains a risk to the program and forthcoming planning reforms will be monitored closely.
- 3.6 The other notable risk to our Local Plan Programme is the retention of experienced staff, and the recruitment of their replacements. The Planning Policy Manager post is currently vacant.
- 3.7 Crime & Disorder
 - 3.7.1 None arising
- 3.8 Safeguarding
 - 3.8.1 None arising
- 3.9 Dependencies

Licensing and Planning Policy Committee

6 August 2020

3.9.1 The Council's Local Plan timetable continues to be dependent on the continued path of the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular for the Regulation 18 consultation process, and any future changes to the National Planning Policy Framework that impact on local authority plan making,

3.10 Other

3.10.1 None arising

4 Financial Implications

4.1 The preparation and production of our new Local Plan involves the Planning Policy team and various external specialists engaged to assist with the production of the evidence base. Wider teams across the Council, including legal services, procurement and communications are key to assisting with the various elements of the work programme. Contributions from these sources will be particularly valuable during the public consultation and Duty-to-Cooperate stages of the process.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The Local Plan budget was last updated and agreed at Strategy & Resources Committee in September 2019. Officers should ensure that the revised Local Plan Programme is completed within the agreed budget envelope.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

6.2 The new Local Plan will contribute towards delivering the Council's Visions and objectives identified in its Four Year Plan.

6.3 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.4 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

6.5 The Local Plan itself has a key role in implementing a number of key objectives that are set out in our Climate Change Action Plan.

6.6 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

Licensing and Planning Policy Committee

6 August 2020

6.7 In order to comply with government safety guidance due to COVID-19, consultation procedures may need reviewing. Consultation procedures are outlined in a separate document the Statement of Community Involvement. The Statement of Community Involvement was published in 14 November 2019 and will need reviewing in the context of COVID-19.

6.8 **Partnerships:**

6.9 The Council has a duty to cooperate with relevant stakeholders in the preparation of a Development Plan. The Committee will receive information on progress with the Duty at appropriate points in the process.

7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Revised Local Plan Programme 23 January 2020

Other papers:

-