

## REVISED LOCAL PLAN PROGRAMME

<b>Head of Service:</b>	Viv Evans, Head of Planning
<b>Wards affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	
<b>Appendices (attached):</b>	1: Draft Local Plan Programme (March 2021)

### Summary

The Local Plan Programme sets out the timetable for the new Local Plan.

The current Local Plan Programme has been updated following various Government announcements on changes to planning, including significant planning reform, and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These have caused unexpected delays to the existing published timetable.

### Recommendation (s)

**The Committee is asked to:**

- (1) consider and approve the revised Local Plan Programme (March 2021) at Appendix 1**

## 1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To set a clear timeframe for the delivery and implementation of the Epsom & Ewell Local Plan. The new Epsom & Ewell Local Plan contributes towards all of the Council's Key Priorities and 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 the timetable for the preparation and production of the Borough Council's Local Plan. It sets out a project plan that seeks to inform how and when the Local Plan will be brought forward.

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- 2.2 Progress against the milestones identified in the Programme is monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report. The Local Plan programme may be reviewed to take account of changes to planning or external circumstances which has impacted on the timetable. Revisions have previously been triggered by changes in national planning policies and consequential changes to the approach to plan-making.
- 2.3 The last Local Plan Programme was published in August 2020. That Programme identified milestones that would have seen further public consultation under Regulation 18 in November-December 2020.
- 2.4 However, timescales have slipped. This is due to various Government announcements proposing specific changes to the planning system and more wider significant reforms to planning. The proposals have created a period of uncertainty for many Local Planning Authorities considering how they proceed with their Local Plans. This has caused unexpected delay to plan programmes. This is compounded by the continued challenges created by the Coronavirus Pandemic.
- 2.5 Following further clarification from Government in response to the various proposals for changes to the current planning system and clarification on the likely timeframe of the proposed planning reforms, the local plan programme has been updated.

## **Local Plan Programme**

- 2.6 The updated timetable outlines a project plan for the preparation, production and consultation on the new Plan and associated supporting evidence. The timetable identifies key milestones during document production.
- 2.7 The key milestones over the next twelve months are:
- Winter 2021 - Final Issues & Options Consultation (Regulation 18 Part 2)
  - Summer 2022 – Pre-Submission Public Consultation
  - Autumn 2022 – Submission to the Secretary of State
  - Winter 2023 – Estimated date of Adoption
- 2.8 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

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3.1.1 In the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, this poses a number of risk areas. These include the continued absence of a 5 year housing land supply and the additional measures introduced through the Housing Delivery Test.

3.1.2 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 update their Local Plan Programmes as often as necessary.

3.1.3 The implementation of proposed planning reforms remains a risk to the program as does the Coronavirus pandemic. These will be monitored closely.

3.1.4 The other notable risk to our Local Plan Programme is the retention of staff and staff turnover. Staffing issues and resources will be closely monitored and reviewed where necessary.

## 3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arising from this report

## 3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arising from this report

## 3.4 Dependencies

3.5 The Council's Local Plan timetable continues to be dependent on any future changes to the Planning legislation and National Planning Policy that impact on local authority plan making. At present it is also dependent of the continued challenges created by the Coronavirus pandemic.

## 3.1 Other

3.1.1 None arising from this report

## 4 Financial Implications

4.1 The preparation and production of our new Local Plan involves the Planning Policy team and various external specialists commissioned 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.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Any update to the Local Plan budget as a result of the revised timetable will be considered in a report to Strategy & Resources Committee. Any requirement for additional funding will be subject to approval by that Committee.

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## 5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 A Local Development Scheme is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
- 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:**
- 6.7 In order to comply with government safety guidance due to COVID-19, consultation procedures needs reviewing. Consultation procedures are outlined in a separate document the Statement of Community Involvement. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was published in 14 November 2019. A further report was taken to the 10 September 2020 Licensing and Planning Policy Committee for an Addendum to the SCI in the context of Coronavirus pandemic. The Addendum was approved for the purpose of public consultation. The public consultation on the Addendum has not yet been undertaken.
- 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 6 August 2020

### **Other papers:**

- None