

**CABINET
28 JANUARY 2020**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - REGULATORY

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PLANNING & TRANSPORT

CURRENT COUNCIL PRIORITY: ATTRACTIVE AND THRIVING / PROSPER AND PROTECT

NEW COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPOND TO CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT / ENABLE AN ENTERPRISING AND CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY / SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF GOOD QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HOMES

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report identifies the latest position on key planning issues affecting the District.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That the report on strategic planning matters be noted.

2.2. That the submissions in Appendices A and B be noted by Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To keep Cabinet informed of recent development on strategic planning matters and progress on the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1. None

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

5.1. The Executive Member for Planning and Transport and Deputy have been briefed on the matters set out above. The Local Plan Project Board is regularly consulted and updated upon matters affecting the Examination.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a Key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. Members will be aware of, and familiar with, many of the issues surrounding the strategic planning matters referred to in paragraph 1.1 above. This report is intended to provide Members with the current positions on these matters. As with previous reports, only those matters where there has been substantive new information or change are reported upon.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Plans and Examinations

- 8.1. **South Cambridgeshire** – An Issues and Options consultation on the [Greater Cambridge Local Plan](#), produced jointly by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, opened on Monday 13 January 2020 and runs until Monday 24 February 2020. Officers are reviewing the consultation material and will prepare a response in consultation with the Executive Member. This will be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.
- 8.2. **Stevenage** – Adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Stevenage will be considered by their Full Council on 29 January 2020. This will set rates of between £40 and £100 per square metre of qualifying development.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan

- 8.3. Responses to the Inspector's letters of 9 July and 9 August 2019 have been [published on the Council website](#). The Inspector's next steps are anticipated in mid-January. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 8.4. The Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan is subject to a separate report to this meeting.

Conservation Area Character Statements

- 8.5. Work remains ongoing on the remaining phases of the Conservation Area Character Statements. The final tranche of Statements will be reported to Cabinet in March with an accompanying recommendation.

Government Announcements

- 8.6. The deadline for responding to the Government's [Future Homes consultation](#), reported to Cabinet in October 2019, has been extended to February 7 2020. A response is being prepared in consultation with the Executive Member and will be reported to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

London Luton Airport

- 8.7. Statutory consultation commenced on 16 October 2019 for eight weeks ahead of formal submission of a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the proposed expansion of the airport to the Planning Inspectorate in 2020. The consultation formally closed on 16 December 2019. However, an extension was agreed for the host authorities until 24 December 2019 due to a delay in the signing of a Planning Performance Agreement.
- 8.8. The Planning Performance Agreement funded specialist consultants to undertake a technical review of the consultation documentation and for the submission of a joint technical response by the host authorities. The joint technical response is attached as Appendix A. The full technical review is available as a background paper and will be published on the Council's website.
- 8.9. In addition a separate NHDC response was submitted in consultation with the Executive Member as resolved at the December 2019 meeting of Cabinet. This is attached as Appendix B to this report.

Other transport, planning and infrastructure matters

- 8.10. **Hertfordshire Draft Rail Strategy consultation** – Hertfordshire County Council [are consulting on the above strategy](#) from 6 January to 31 March 2020. The Rail Strategy is a supporting document for the adopted Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and sets out the County council's aspirations for developing the rail network in Hertfordshire at both the strategic and local level. The document is a review of the previous strategy adopted in 2016.
- 8.11. The aim is to deliver a Rail policy where:

“the county council will support and promote rail use in the county, especially in order to reduce car use. To do this it will:

- *Work with the rail industry and other partners to seek improvements to train services in regards to capacity, journey times, frequency and range of destinations served.*
- *Work with the rail industry and other stakeholders to make rail travel more attractive through improved fares and ticketing, upgraded station facilities and better access and interchange by sustainable modes of transport.*
- *Support Community Rail Partnerships in the county”*

- 8.12. Officers will prepare a response in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport, to be reported to Cabinet in March.
- 8.13. **North & Central Hertfordshire Growth Transport Plan** – HCC have begun [a public engagement exercise on this document](#). The North Central Growth & Transport Plan (NCGTP) is a new transport strategy to help direct and plan transport improvements and investment in Stevenage and North Hertfordshire, developed in line with forecast development to 2031. Public engagement closes on 30 March 2020.
- 8.14. Officers will prepare a response in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport to be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.
- 8.15. The Council's Statement of Community Involvement and draft Developer Contributions SPD are subject to separate reports to this meeting.
- 8.16. An updated version of [the Council's Brownfield Land Register](#) has been published in line with [Government requirements](#). Given the absence of significant tracts of (e.g.) derelict former employment land, North Hertfordshire's register mainly consists of sites previously identified through the local plan process or which are subject to planning applications.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Under the Terms of Reference for Cabinet, the Constitution states that it may exercise the Council's functions as Local Planning Authority and receive reports on strategic planning matters, applications for, approval/designation, consultation/referendums revocations (or recommend revocation) of neighbourhood plans and orders, (except to the extent that those functions are by law the responsibility of the Council or delegated to the Service Director: Regulatory).
- 9.2. The preparation of statutory plans is guided by a range of acts and associated regulations including the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Localism Act 2011. All local planning authorities are bound by a statutory Duty to Co-operate on cross-border planner matters.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no new financial implications arising from this report. The costs of preparing the Local Plan and running the examination are reviewed on a regular basis, and are reported through the quarterly revenue monitoring reports to Cabinet.
- 10.2. The general costs of preparing Supplementary Planning Documents, responding to consultations on neighbouring authorities' Plans, neighbourhood plans and Government consultations and the other activities identified in this report are met through existing revenue budgets or benefit from external funding or other arrangements to recover costs.

- 10.3. The Government has confirmed for 2019/20 that funding is available for local planning authorities (LPAs) in respect of neighbourhood planning. LPAs can claim £20,000 once a date has been set for a referendum following a successful examination. Area designation funding has not been available for the last years to the Council as it has already designated more than five areas.
- 10.4. The financial risks associated with planning were reviewed and updated as part of the budget-setting cycle for 2019/20. Risks are identified in relation to potential additional costs associated with progressing the Plan or any future challenge to it.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. Sustainable Development of the District and the Local Plan are both Cabinet Top Risks. The Sustainable Development of the District has a sub-risk that covers the risks arising from the duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2. There are not considered to be any direct equality issues arising from this report. Future individual schemes or considerations may well be subject to appropriate review to ensure they comply with latest equality legislative need. Any risks and opportunities identified will also be subject to assessment for impact on those that share a protected characteristic.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no new human resource implications arising from the contents of this report. Workload and vacancies are monitored on an on-going basis. Following a temporary internal secondment there are currently no vacancies within the Strategic Planning team with one officer on maternity leave.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1. Appendix A – Host Authorities Joint Technical Response on London Luton Airport Expansion Statutory Consultation – October 2019
- 15.2. Appendix B – NHDC Response on London Luton Airport Expansion Statutory Consultation – October 2019

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1. Host Authorities Joint Technical Review of London Luton Airport Expansion Statutory Consultation documents – October 2019
This document is currently available on request but will be published on the NHDC website in due course