
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	11th NOVEMBER 2021	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	ALLISON THOMAS – STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)	OPEN
MEMBERS’ CONTACT POINT:	STEFFAN SAUNDERS. HEAD OF PLANNING AND STRATEGIC HOUSING, TEL: 07971 604326	DOC:
SUBJECT:	EMERGING LOCAL PLAN STRATEGY AND APPROVAL OF UPDATED MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUPTO PROGRESS THE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS03

1. Recommendations

1.1 To agree the membership of the Local Plan Working Group with the proposed political representation of two Labour Members, two Conservative Members, one South Derbyshire Independent Group Member and one Independent.

2. Purpose of the Report

2.1 To provide additional detail regarding Local Plan progress and an overview of some of the strategic decisions that will need to be taken. The timescales for Local Plan preparation will be brought to this Committee in the New Year.

2.2 Given the Local Plan Working Group has not met for several years since it was originally set up following a decision at the meeting of Environment and Development Services Committee on 20 September 2012, it is necessary to revisit its membership in the context of the Local Plan review, the different political makeup of the Council and the need to cooperate with neighbouring authorities in plan preparation. The Working Group is an information sharing one and does not make decisions on policy. This remains a matter for this Committee.

2.3 The intention of the Working Group is to enable an informal dialogue between officers and members with a view to Councilors on the group sharing information with colleagues within their groups prior to this being in the public domain.

Examples of this include site appraisals, potential development strategies, evidence base documents and liaison with infrastructure providers. In order to maximise the effectiveness of this process the membership of the group needs to be revisited by this Committee with a suggested number of members being six with representation from each political group on the Council as follows: two Labour Members, two Conservative Members, one South Derbyshire Independent Group Member and one Independent. Nominations are invited on this basis. There is no need for the membership of the group to be in line with the proportionality requirements that apply to decision making committees. It is considered to be more important that this information sharing working group, for the Local Plan process, contains a cross section of political representation.

3. Detail

- 3.1 In preparing the last round of Local Plans, Amber Valley, Derby City and South Derbyshire Councils worked collaboratively to agree a consistent timeframe, housing numbers split and infrastructure requirements over the Derby Housing Market Area (HMA) geography. This was helpful in the examinations of all three Council's Part 1 Local Plan examinations and was essential in demonstrating compliance with the Duty to Cooperate (DtC).
- 3.2 As with previous local plan work the DtC remains in place, required both as part of the 2011 Localism Act and as part of the 'effectiveness' test of Local Plan soundness. Inspectors have concluded on several occasions, that where there are unresolved disagreements between councils in the same HMA regarding housing numbers in particular, examinations need to be paused to allow time for these to be resolved. This is both time consuming and expensive and delays the implementation of a fully planned approach to development requirements, infrastructure provision and protection of environmentally sensitive areas.
- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has required over several iterations that Local Plans should be long term strategies that provide a policy-led approach for a minimum of 15 years post adoption.
- 3.4 The Government has confirmed the standard method to calculating housing need. The largest city council areas (including Derby) need to provide an uplift of 35% above the standard method.
- 3.5 Derby City Council and South Derbyshire District Council have up to date Local Plans but both Councils will need to review these. Amber Valley Borough Council has recently consulted on 'Alternative Spatial Strategy Options' and need to get a new Local Plan in place as soon as possible. The consultation was based on a plan period up to at least 2038, but the refreshed programme and timetable agreed in June 2021 means that the end date will now have to extend to 2039 to allow 15 years post adoption.

There are a number of points that the Group could initially consider in advance of reports to this Committee for decision. These include:

- The merits of a consistent plan period for each Council with 2039 a suggested end date.
- An ambition to work collaboratively to agree a HMA wide development distribution strategy over the agreed consistent timeframe.
- A commitment to develop a shared evidence base over the whole HMA.
- A commitment to develop a shared approach to sustainability appraisal for the HMA strategy.
- The Council to prepare its own individual local plan having regard to the above points.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 None associated with the working group. To coordinate work with other Councils in the HMA will save both time and money on evidence base reports.

5. Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

- 5.1 Not identified

Legal Implications

- 5.2 None.

Corporate Plan Implications

- 5.3 The work progressed through the Local Plan review is consistent with a number of Corporate Plan themes. These include:
- to enhance biodiversity across the District (Our Environment).
 - to improve public spaces to create an environment for people to enjoy (Our Environment).
 - to promote health and wellbeing across the District (Our People).
 - to influence the improvement of infrastructure to meet the demands of growth (Our Future).
 - to enable the delivery of housing across all tenures to meet Local Plan targets (Our Future).

Risk Impact

- 5.4 There are no significant risks in re-instigating the Planning Policy Working Group.

6. Community Impact

Consultation

6.1 None. Extensive consultation will be undertaken on the progression of the Local Plan.

Equality and Diversity Impact

6.2 None.

Social Value Impact

6.3 Beneficial: the progression of the Local Plan will lead to an up to date policy framework for the provision of environmental enhancements, infrastructure and affordable housing across the District.

Environmental Sustainability

6.4 Beneficial: to secure the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and nature conservation enhancements.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The re-instigation of a Local Plan working group will assist officers in the review of South Derbyshire District Council's Local Plan.

8.0 Background papers

8.1 Report to Environment and Development Services Committee 20th September 2012.