



Leicester  
City Council

# Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission

## **Draft Leicester Local Plan - Public Consultation**

Date of Commission meeting: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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Report of the Director of Planning, Development &  
Transportation

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: all
- Report author: Fabian D'Costa
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- Report version number: 1

### 1. Summary

This report outlines the revised timetable for the Local Plan including provisions for consultation and scrutiny.

### 2. Recommendations

That EDDT Scrutiny Commission is recommended to note public consultation for this stage of the replacement Leicester Local Plan as set out in the report, and the revised timetable, and to comment as appropriate.

### 3. Draft Local Plan

#### 3.1 Background

Public consultation on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) was due to commence on the 23rd March 2020. However, due to the ongoing Covid 19 crisis it was decided to postpone the consultation to a time when we could fully engage with stakeholders and members of the public.

We are now intending to start public consultation on the 14<sup>th</sup> September and will consult on the same draft plan and supporting documents that were originally prepared for March consultation.

There is some additional evidence that has since been completed (Water Cycle Study, Employment Study, Local Housing Needs Study). We will be consulting on these in parallel with the draft plan. However, this evidence does not inform the policies and strategies of the current version of the draft plan and will be considered at the next stage of the plan process.

#### 3.2 Planning for the Future – White Paper

Members may also be aware that the Government has recently announced fundamental changes to the planning system through the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper. Key changes include:

- Three categories of land in Local Plans- Protect, Renew and Grow
- Duty to Co-operate abolished - could be very significant in terms of agreeing unmet need

- New methodology for working out housing targets
- Plans should be more about standards and less about policy- the Government will write national Development Management policies.
- Possible scrapping of 5 year Housing Land Supply requirement
- Emphasis on Design and Placemaking

The changes are currently being consulted on and are unlikely to be in place for at least 12 to 18 months. In view of this we intend to continue with the Local Plan as it would provide an emerging framework for growth in the city and would also allow the public and stakeholders to respond to our draft proposals at this stage.

Relevant aspects of the White Paper will be brought back to Scrutiny in due course.

#### **4. Local Plan Timetable**

Subject to emerging Government policy (White Paper: Planning for the Future) and any associated changes in plan making requirements, the current timetable for the Local Plan is as follows:

- Issues and Options - Public Consultation (Complete)
- Emerging Options, Sites and Development Management Policies – Public Consultation (Complete)
- Full Council 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (Complete)
- Public Consultation (Reg 18) to commence 14th September 2020 for 12 weeks
- Submission Local Plan Consultation (Reg 19) – Autumn 2021
- Adoption Summer/Autumn 2022

It is intended to use a variety of methods of communication for consultation on the Local Plan. These include letters; leaflet drop; e-mails; press releases; social media; and online workshops and ward meetings. Other suggestions from the Commission would be welcome.

#### **5. Details of Proposed Scrutiny**

Scrutiny of the Local Plan will be carried out at draft stage, submission and modifications stages (After the Local Plan examination).

During the public consultation a full round of reports to each relevant Scrutiny Commission will be carried out, to allow them to review in detail, the plan and policy elements which come under their remit. Decisions will be captured as part of the formal consultation process. We also intend to report back to Overview Select Committee (OSC) after its been through the various Scrutiny Commissions.

The plans, at appropriate stages, will also be referred for consideration at Full Council.

## **6. Financial, legal and other implications**

### 6.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications from this report as support for the development of the Local Plan is being resourced through existing staffing and operational budgets.

Paresh Radia – Finance (tel: 0116 454 4082)

### 6.2 Legal implications

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report as it simply outlines the revised timetable for public consultation of the draft local plan. Any changes to planning policy will be brought into effect by the formal local plan process in due course.

Commercial, Property and Planning Team (tel: 0116 454 1408)

### 6.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Land use and development have been identified as key factors which will affect Leicester's ability to respond to the climate emergency declared on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019. The Local Plan therefore represents an important opportunity to ensure that, as far as possible within the legal framework set by central government, including for the viability of development, changes to the city's land use and built environment support the necessary rapid progress towards carbon neutrality and climate-adaptation.

The Committee should note that the council's proposals for responding to the climate emergency include "Land use, green space and development" as one of six key themes.

Duncan Bell, Corporate Environmental Consultant (tel: 0116 454 2249)

## 6.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Meaningful consultation on the local plan will be an important method of collating evidence around any potential equalities implications and should aid the authority in paying due regard to the aims of the PSED. The local plan is a high-level document. In order to foster a meaningful approach to assessing the equalities impacts, in the initial stages a high-level assessment of potential equalities implications is being undertaken to indicate the key issues and where more intensive focus is required in the following stages of local plan development.

Therefore, prior to a final decision on the local plan in 2022, at the next 'submission' stage of consultation in autumn 2021, a more detailed impact assessment on policies will be undertaken drawing upon equality information and the results of consultation and engagement activity. Building an evidence base is a vital part of equality impact assessment and should include protected characteristic groups (through established groups, support organisations and individually as part of a representative sample of consultees) and other groups at risk of exclusion. A key part of this will be understanding how current policies and issues affect different groups. This will be an iterative process and should be undertaken in such a way that equalities considerations influence the final decision.

Where disproportionate negative impacts on any protected characteristic/s are identified, decision makers must consider steps to mitigate those impacts. It is important that, throughout the process of decision making, decision makers are aware of and act upon their duty to pay due regard to the PSED.

## 6.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None applicable

7. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)? - **No**

8. Is this a "key decision"? If so, why? - **No**