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To The Chairman and Members of the Overview
& Scrutiny Commission

Our Ref: HM/L.3.1

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Date 10 December 2015

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

Dear Sir/Madam,

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION - THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2015

I refer to the agenda for the above-mentioned meeting and enclose the following item:

Item No	Report Title	Page Nos
8.	<u>Local Plan</u> Report of the Interim Executive Manager Growth on the consultation process to be undertaken during 2016. <i>To Follow:</i> Plans of villages with settlement boundaries and site representations and associated list List of site representations outside of settlement boundaries	228 - 241

Yours faithfully

Helen McAleer

Senior Democratic Services Officer

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Interim Executive Manager (Growth)
To: Overview and Scrutiny Commission - 17 December 2015
Author: Tim Mills Interim Executive Manager Growth
Subject: Consultation Process for the Breckland Local Plan
Purpose: To review proposals for consultation on Breckland's Local Plan

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission give their views on the proposals for consultation on Breckland's Local Plan

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Breckland Local Plan was agreed by Cabinet on 1 December 2015. The next stage for the plan is for the documents to be subject to six weeks consultation. This will take place from 11 January to 22 February 2016.
- 1.2 A proposed communications strategy has been developed in partnership between the planning and communications teams. This is included at Appendix A.
- 1.3 The strategy sets out key messages that have been developed. These link the plan to the relevant Council's key objectives and explain the planning context. They also establish the benefits of the Plan, the process and that this is a consultation with nothing set in stone.
- 1.4 The strategy envisages using a variety of methods to achieve wide publicity of the consultation. The consultation provides a mixture of opportunities to engage online, through viewing the document at Council and community venues and a series of drop in events in the community. Comments can be made online, on paper or through Council staff.
- 1.5 The strategy sets out the key events proposed. Venues have provisionally been booked for the proposed events in the Market Towns as it was considered important to ensure that we had secured these opportunities given that we know we will need to hold events in these locations. A proposal for rural events has been put in the strategy however members will wish to consider this and shape this proposal.
- 1.6 A set of frequently asked questions has been developed which is included in the strategy. These will form part of the planning for the member briefing and members' comments and suggestions on whether they cover the most frequent issues they anticipate being raised would be appreciated. It is proposed to hold a members' briefing week commencing 4 January 2016. This will ensure that members are familiar with the Local Plan and consultation arrangements. It will also provide the opportunity to ask any questions they think are likely to arise.

2.0 OPTIONS

- 2.1 To confirm that the consultation strategy is likely to achieve the aim of wide publicity and engagement with the Local Plan.

- 2.2 To confirm that the consultation strategy is likely to achieve the aim of wide publicity and engagement with the Local Plan subject to suggested amendments.
- 2.3 To find the consultation strategy is inadequate.
- 3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**
- 3.1 It is recommended that option 2.2 is adopted and that members of Overview and Scrutiny provide views on the strategy and particularly on the areas highlighted.
- 3.2 The input of members will ensure that the strategy is as well designed to meet the needs of local communities as possible.
- 4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**
- 4.1 That wide publicity and public engagement with the Local Plan is achieved. This will ensure that as many people and groups views can be considered before the Local Plan is finalised.
- 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**
- 5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**
- 5.1.1 A balance has been struck between reducing the amount of printing e.g. availability of Sustainability Proposals on line only except where required statutorily and ensuring accessibility to proposals.
- 5.2 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**
- 5.2.1 Consultation has been designed to enable the widest possible engagement from all parts of the community.
- 5.3 **Financial**
- 5.3.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications. Costs of consultation will be met from the Local Plan production budget.
- 5.4 **Staffing**
- 5.4.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications as staffing of events will be from within existing teams.
- 5.4 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**
- 5.3.1 The consultation has been designed to ensure that the widest range of stakeholders and members of the community can contribute to the consultation.
- 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**
- 6.1 All
- 7.0 **ACRONYMS**
- 7.1 None

Background papers:-

Local Plan Preferred Directions Parts 1 and 2

Plans of villages with settlement boundaries and site representations and associated list

List of site representations outside of settlement boundaries

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A - Proposed Breckland Local Plan Preferred Directions Consultation Strategy

Appendix A: Breckland Local Plan Preferred Directions Consultation Strategy

The consultation strategy sets out the list of tasks and events associated with the preferred directions consultation on the Breckland Local Plan. The strategy has been devised having regard to Breckland's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2013), which sets out the consultation requirements for all planning functions. In addition to this it is in accordance with the requirements of regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations (2012). The strategy has also been prepared in consultation with Breckland's communications team.

Under regulation 18, the consultation must run for at least a six week period. The consultation dates agreed through Cabinet are **11th January – 22nd February 2016**.

Key messages

The following key messages will be promoted through the plan. A frequently asked questions section has also been prepared:

The Plan

The Local Plan for Breckland set out a vision for growth to deliver the Council's aspiration that the District develop and thrive. It will support the aims of developing a vibrant economy that continues to grow and building stronger and more independent communities. It identifies the quantity and broad location and key sites for new housing, community facilities, shops and employment.

The Local Plan process lets Breckland set its own housing targets, based on assessed local need, rather than on a national formula.

The Benefit

Having a Local Plan gives us (Breckland Council) greater control over where new developments are built – by identifying a five-year housing supply – and reduces the likelihood of ad-hoc developments that might not be as beneficial to the area.

The Process (as of 1/12/2015)

We're launching a public consultation on 11 January to get views on our Preferred Directions Local Plan documents – available on our website [here](#).

This will be the second public consultation on the Local Plan following the 'Issues and Options' consultation which took place in December 2014/January 2015

The Consultation

Nothing has yet been decided and all the sites put forward remain options – so this is the time for you (residents, businesses and community groups) to have your (their) say on plans that will shape the future growth of Breckland.

Statutory Notifications

The local planning regulations require statutory notifications to be sent to a number of key stakeholders. These requirements are defined within the Statement of Community Involvement and will be in the format of letters and emails. In addition to this we will also write to all people who have pre-requested to be notified of the consultation.

A statutory notification will be placed within the EDP advertising the consultation, the events which are proposed and where the documents can be viewed.

Key Consultation Events

The forthcoming events are proposed:

- Parish Council briefing session. It is intended that this takes place as a double session. The first half of the session would be solely for those parish councils preparing or intending to prepare a neighbourhood plan and would be in the style of a formal meeting. The second half of the session would be aimed at all parish councils and act as a drop in session. Displays boards would be prepared for this and planning officers would be available to answer queries. The provisional date for this meeting is 18th January, in the committee suite.
- Public consultation events are proposed within the five market towns, where officers will be available to answer queries on the Local Plan. It is proposed at these sessions there would be 3 policy planners available and 1 development management officer. The following dates and locations are provisional and subject to agreement.

Town	Location	Provisional Date
Attleborough	Town Council	14 th January
Dereham	Memorial Hall	28 th January
Swaffham	Assembly Rooms	20 th January
Thetford	Guildhall	25 th January
Watton	Queens Hall	First week of Feb – No date confirmed yet

- Four public consultation drop-in events are proposed within the rural parishes. These will occur in villages in the north-east, north-west, south-east and south-west. It is proposed to investigate availability of parish halls in North Elmham, Necton, Mundford and Shropham,

In order to facilitate these events it is proposed that displays are provided. These will be prepared in conjunction with the communications team and reprographics. It is envisaged that these will be in the format of A2 boards on display stands. Whilst a number of these boards will be standard across the District (i.e. around housing target) we would ensure that information is also tailored to specific locations.

A senior member of Capita together with more junior staff and a Development Management Colleague will be present at each event. Senior Council staff will also attend events but are not part of the core staffing.

Posters will be prepared to advertise the consultation events. It is proposed that these should be displayed within suitable venues in advance of the events and may include schools, leisure centres and village halls. In addition to provision of posters to schools it is proposed to request that they include information in any newsletters they are sending out immediately prior to or during the consultation.

Local Plan Printing

It is envisaged that the Local Plan documents will be printed in house. The following Local Plan printing requirements have been identified:

- **Ward members**
1 x copy of both Part 1 and Part 2 document. It is proposed that these should be available for collection at the Members' briefing session.
- **Town and Parish Councils**
2 x copies of Local Plan Parts 1 and Part 2 documents
3 x copies of maps (sites or settlement boundary) including related text. This is found within the part 2 document.
Where there are community hall(s) in addition to a Parish Hall an additional set(s) of documents will be provided.
- **Libraries, Mobile Libraries, Council Presence Offices,**
1 x copy of both Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan document
1 x copy of both Part 1 and Part 2 Sustainability Appraisal
- **Leisure centres, Area Partnership Offices, Healthy Living Centres, Health Centre Attleborough and potentially Aldous Park Football Club**
1 x copy of both Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan document

Social Media

The Local Plan consultation will be promoted through the following social media channels:

- Twitter
- Facebook

Social media will be used in conjunction with press releases as detailed within the tasks list.

Date	Event/Task	Responsible	Action/Comment	Status
16 November	Write and e mail suggested text for Council and Capita's Members newsletter	Communications/ Capita	Advance notification / key messages - wording already supplied to Comms team	COMPLETE
Week commencing 23 Nov	Member/ LPWG requested early notification - Email to all Members and Parish Councils advising them of progress on the Local Plan	Capita	Advising of intention to seek permission to consult. Needs agreement of portfolio holder prior to sending out and only following Strategy Board on 20 th November.	COMPLETE 26/11/15
1 December	Press release following Cabinet endorsement of document for consultation	Communications	Action: 1 st press release sent out 1 st December following Cabinet endorsement. Put press release on website as news item and tweet link.	COMPLETE 1/12/15
Week following Cabinet	Provisional booking of rooms for public consultations in Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford and Watton	Capita	Provisional bookings have been made – Confirmation and additional events will be subject to views of OSC	In progress
3 December	Shopping List of printing and art work requirements	Capita	Needs to include print sizes, paper types, number of pages	
2 December	Town and Parish Forum	Capita	NC to provide a presentation on the Local Plan. Powerpoint presentation drafted will be circulated 27/11/15	COMPLETE 2/12/15
Week following Cabinet	Community Newsletters to go out week commencing 7 December	Capita and Communications	Capita to provide wording for article to be included within community newsletters. Communications to send out. Will include dates of consultation events.	
Week following Cabinet	Website Updates	Capita	Local Plan page to be updated with new information	

Ongoing December	Art work for events web site text and notices written and agreed	Communications and Capita	Communications team to design display boards for consultation events. Capita to provide all words and images to be included on display. Banner for Council website homepage – designed by communications Web text / letters/ notices drafted	
Ongoing December	Email Signatures	Capita and ICT (Discuss format with Comms)	Logo and Consultation dates for staff signatures. Agree wording with TM/PM and communications. Needs to be in place by beginning of January	
Ongoing December	Document printed	Council (Print Room) / Capita	330 Copies of Local Plan required for printing (parts 1 and 2) These are for Members, PC's and Presence Offices 20 Copies of each Sustainability Appraisal, Sent to presence offices only.	
17 th December	OSC consider communication strategy	Capita/Council		
Week Commencing 21 December	Drafting Statutory notification letters, Press Notice for Council sign off	Capita / Council	Formal statutory letters drafted. Funding will need to be agreed Council.	
Week Commencing 21 December	Finalise posters advertising consultation events. Printing	Capita/ Communications	Liaise with communications regarding format	

Week commencing 4 January	Article for school newsletters	Capita/ Communications	Send out articles to be included within school newsletters.	
Week commencing 4 January	Documents distributed	Capita and Print Room	Sent to all Breckland presence offices and libraries and parish councils, and other community venues listed in strategy. SA's only to presence offices.	
Week commencing 4 January	Distribute posters	Capita	Posters should be distributed to schools, leisure centres, mobile libraries, and community venues	
Week Commencing 4 January	Statutory Press Notice EDP for the w/c 4 th	Capita	Statutory notice to be placed in EDP. PM to review and agree	
Week commencing 4 January	Notification letters	Capita	Formal notification letters sent to all specific and general consultees and interested people listed on the consultation database. Letter will advise of consultation events and where the document can be viewed.	
Week commencing 4 January	Arrange Press Release to be available for the 11 th January	Communications	2 nd press release sent out 11th Jan + social media support Newsflash on website linking to consultation Twitter + Facebook Draft to be agreed by PM	

Week commencing 4 January	Website Updates – Consultation Portal	Capita	Planning Policy pages on the Breckland website will be updated to advise of consultation. On-line consultation portal will be updated and documents will be placed here for viewing and comments once consultation opens.(11 th)	
Week commencing 4 January	Contact Centre briefing	Capita and Dylan Powles Contact Centre	Prepare and distribute briefing note to the contact centre staff, advising them of the consultation, what it is about, set dates, where it can be viewed, how people can comment and who they should contact if there are further queries.	
Week commencing 4 January	Member briefing event	Capita	Member briefing on Local Plan. Date needs agreement. To be run as a double session at request of Michael Wassell – one session in the afternoon – second session early evening Member's copies of the Local Plan should be provided at this event. Need to check preferred date with Leader and Exec Member	
Week commencing 4 January onwards	Social Media programme commences and continues throughout six weeks of consultation	Communications with Capita support	Twitter and Facebook programme of information on events. Monitoring and as appropriate response to social media posts	
11 January	Banner on Council website	Communications and Jon Collison ICT	Banner on homepage should link directly to planning policy pages	
18 January 2-7pm	Parish Council event Anglia Room for First Session Norfolk and Dereham Room for display boards	Capita	Parish council event. Proposed to run as a double session. The first half of the session will be just for those PC's who are preparing a neighbourhood plan. It will go through the strategic priorities of the Local Plan and consider how neighbourhood plans	

			can add value to this. The second half of the session will be for all PC's advising them of the key implications of the Local Plan.	
Ongoing January	Press reminders	Communications	Communications to send reminders to press a week before each consultation event in the market towns.	
TBC – intended that these week occur in weeks 2 and 3 of the consultation	Market town consultation events – Drop in sessions in Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford and Watton Rural Drop-in events	Capita	Following each consultation event capita will make a note of how many people attended and the sorts of issues / questions / comments raised and send to comms as material for future press releases	
12 February	Press Release	Communications	Final press release sent week before consultation closes.	

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Local Plan?

The Local Plan for Breckland should set out a vision for growth and identify the quantity and broad location and key sites for new housing, community facilities, shops and employment.

Part of the Plan includes making sure we have identified a five-year land supply. The policies that make up the Plan will be used as the basis for making future planning decisions.

Why do we need a Local Plan?

We want Breckland to develop and thrive, so we need a Local Plan that will help us plan development across the district properly and enable growth where we need it most.

If we don't have a Local Plan, development will still happen, but decisions will be taken with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework without local people having a say on setting local policies.

Having a Local Plan gives us (Breckland Council) greater control over where new developments are built and reduces the likelihood of ad-hoc developments that might not be as beneficial to the area.

What stage are we at now?

Cabinet recommended on 1 December that the draft Local Plan documents be published, with a six-week public consultation to be launched on 11 January 2016.

The Preferred Directions Local Plan documents are available on our website [here](#)

This will be the second public consultation on the Local Plan following the Issues and Options consultation in December 2014/January 2015

The Local Plan Preferred Directions is made up of the following documents:

- **The Preferred Directions Part 1** - outlines the Council's preferred directions on strategic policies and development management policies.
- **Emerging Site Options Part 2** - identifies all the land which has been promoted by landowners and developers within the market towns and local service centre villages. Initial assessments of these sites has taken place but no preferred options have yet been chosen – this will be part of the next stage in the preparation of the Local Plan.
- **The Sustainability Appraisal Part 1** - shows how we have considered the potential **social, environmental and economic effects** of the Preferred Directions' policies on the draft plan.
- **Interim Sustainability Appraisal Part 2** - for emerging sites. Shows how we have considered the potential **social, environmental and economic effects** of the **Emerging Site Options** on the draft plan.

What are the timescales for consulting on and agreeing the Local Plan?

Following the preferred directions consultation, which begins on 11 January 2016, there will be further opportunities for the public to comments, through the:

- **Pre-submission publication** – Before we submit our draft Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for their approval, we will publish this document for six weeks, giving the public and other stakeholders a final chance to let us know if they think our plan is technically and legally sound.

- **Public examination** of the document – When we submit our plan to the Planning Inspectorate, there is a chance for individuals or organisations to have their views heard at the examination.

These stages are planned to take place in 2016. The pre-submission publication is planned to take place in the summer with submission to the Planning Inspectorate during the autumn. It is intended that the document will be formally adopted at the end of the year subject to the Planning Inspectorate's timing of the Public Examination.

Why do we want people to have their say on the Local Plan?

The Local Plan is still draft, which means nothing has yet been decided and all the sites put forward remain options – so this is the time for residents, businesses and community groups to have their say on plans that will shape the future growth of their community and the district.

By taking part in our consultation, residents, businesses and organisations can give feedback on proposals which – combined with other sources of evidence like studies on local need for housing, employment, retail and infrastructure studies – will help shape the final document.

How can I find out more about the Local Plan

The Preferred Directions Local Plan documents are available on our website [here](#)
Hard copies of the Preferred Directions Local Plan documents are available to view at:

- Libraries
- Presence Offices
- Mobile Libraries

How can you have your say?

Comments need to be submitted to the Council between 11 January and 22 February 2016.

You can submit comments:

- **Online** – via our consultation portal: <http://consult.breckland.gov.uk/portal>
- **By email** – with the subject heading 'Local Plan Consultation' to planningpolicyteam@breckland.gov.uk
- **By post** – marked 'Local Plan Consultation', to Planning Policy Team, Breckland Council, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, NR19 1EE

We are also holding a series of public drop-in sessions where you can find out more about the Local Plan. Details to be confirmed.

How does the Local Plan fit with neighbourhood plans?

Neighbourhood Plans can add value to – and need to conform with – the strategic priorities of the district's Local Plan, by providing additional local detail to guide development in their areas.

So this is a good time for communities to identify areas where they wish to develop suitable neighbourhood plan policies and review how best to align these to the overarching Local Plan.

Until the Local Plan is agreed, how are planning decisions being made?

Until the new Local Plan is adopted in 2016, the current suite of Local Development Framework (LDF) documents remain as adopted policy. Planning applications are determined in accordance with the LDF, National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.