

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

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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