

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Sarah Suggitt: Executive Member for Strategic & Operational Planning

To: CABINET 13 March 2023

Author: Andrew D’Arcy: Planning Policy Manager

Subject: Breckland Local Plan: Full Update: Regulation 18 Consultation Report

Purpose: Breckland is undertaking a Full Update of the Local Plan. In preparing this, the Council must consult with local residents to seek their views on the proposed contents of the Plan. We also need to engage with local and regional partners, such as neighbouring local authorities and government agencies under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Recommendation

- 1) That Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Planning to undertake additional community engagement under Regulation 18 as new evidence and information become available prior to the Council’s consideration of the Regulation 18 Draft Plan.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Breckland District Council is preparing an update to the current Plan that once complete will replace the various documents which together form the existing Development Plan for Breckland adopted November 2019.
- 1.2 The preparation of the Local Plan is governed by legislation (The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Localism Act 2011) and also Regulations (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).
- 1.3 The purpose of the Regulation 18 stage of the Full Update of the Local Plan is to engage with local residents and relevant organisations to identify how planning policy can be used positively to help address key issues within the local authority area. The purpose of the public consultations is to allow interested parties an opportunity to indicate if, on balance, they feel that the Local Plan takes the right approach to dealing with these issues or, if not, to highlight an alternative approach. The new Breckland Local Plan will plan for the period to 2046 and the Issues and

Options that is approved for consultation is the first of several rounds of public consultation in the local plan preparation process.

- 1.4 The Council is continuing to prepare up to date evidence that will inform these discussions over the next few months and that will feed into the preparation of the Draft Plan (Preferred Options) towards the end of 2023. This includes important information on topic areas including:

Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment

- 1.5 The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) will look at a wealth of evidence, including population, household and economic growth projections, to assess the need for housing and employment land over the plan period.

Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment

- 1.6 The primary objective of this assessment will be to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in Breckland

Integrated Assessment

- 1.7 The council has a statutory obligation to carry out a sustainability appraisal of all plans and policies. The Integrated Assessment includes elements of an Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment as well as a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment. This integrated approach assesses the impact of the Plan on social, economic, environmental, health and equality objectives.

- 1.8 Future evidence will also be prepared on areas such as flood risk and open space requirements

- 1.9 The Planning Policy Team will also be preparing topic papers and options on the key chapter areas of the Local Plan including

- Urban and Rural Development Strategy
- Rural sustainability
- Settlement boundaries
- Environment and renewables
- Sustainable construction
- Town centres / retail
- The Economy
- Communities

- 1.10 It will be important that key outcomes of this work feeds into the ongoing Regulation 18 consultation.

- 1.11 It will be important to undertake continuous community engagement as additional information emerges and options are refined. It is intended that this will take place in conjunction with the expert community engagement consultants now engaged by

the Council. Members will be kept informed as to these outcomes through the Local Plan Executive Group and the ongoing all member briefings.

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 An alternative option would be to require formal Cabinet approval for engagement on each of the evidence and background papers as they emerge, This would delay consultation and could result in delays to the timetable for the preparation of the Plan. It is important to note that consideration of final options, in the form of the first draft Plan will remain with Cabinet.

2.2 The other option would be to undertake consultation without this formal decision to delegate authority or separate approvals referred to in paragraph 2.1 above. This could lead to the process for preparing the Local Plan being challenged as it is important to demonstrate that it is prepared in accordance with Regulation.

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 It will be important to undertake seamless community engagement as additional evidence emerges and options are refined. It is intended that this will take place in conjunction with the expert community engagement consultants to be engaged by the Council. Members will be kept informed as to these outcomes through the Local Plan Executive Group and the ongoing all member briefings.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 This approach would ensure that the Regulation 18 Consultation is undertaken as required and that in a way that helps to meet the agreed timetable for the production of the Local Plan. An up to date Local Plan provides certainty for developers, land owners, service providers and local residents in terms of where future development will take place.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

Corporate Priorities

5.2 The Local Plan Review aligns with the following corporate priorities in the Breckland Corporate Plan 2020–2023.

- To deliver substantial and continued growth as proposed through our Local Plan, in conjunction with our key partners.

- Enable the effective planning and delivery of housing solutions to meet local needs and aspirations to ensure that our residents including veterans have access to a range of housing options in the district.

Financial

- 5.3 It is considered that the preparation of the Breckland Local Plan can be delivered through to adoption within the Council's budget.

Staffing and Financial

- 5.4 The consultation will need to be balanced with the available resource available to the Council. The appointment of consultants will assist in this process.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

- 6.1 All

7.0 ACRONYMS

- 7.1 None

Background papers:-

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Key Decision: Yes

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service