

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: Monday, 4 January 2021

Report Title: Hastings Draft Local Plan – Regulation 18 consultation

Report By: Victoria Conheady, Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture

Key Decision: Y

Classification: Open

Purpose of Report

To advise Cabinet of the necessity of publishing a draft Local Plan for consultation purposes and the arrangements in place to promote public engagement.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. That the Hastings Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document is published for an eight-week consultation period between January 2021 and March 2021.**
- 2. That the Managing Director has delegated authority in consultation with the Leader to agree any necessary minor editorial changes to the draft Local Plan before it is published for consultation purposes.**

Reasons for Recommendations

1. It is a regulatory requirement to invite the public and stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the new Local Plan for Hastings.
2. In order to ensure the draft document is as up-to-date and accurate as possible at the time of publication

Introduction

1. We are preparing a new Local Plan, in part to respond to Government requirements to update our housing target, but also to help support the Council's approach to tackling climate change through local initiatives. This new plan period extends to 2039 and a first draft of the plan has been prepared for public consultation
2. This report seeks Cabinet approval for the publication of the Hastings Local Plan Regulation 18 for public consultation for a period of eight weeks. This will begin in January 2021 and close in March 2021. This is in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. A draft Sustainability Appraisal will be published alongside the draft Plan, as will a number of other supporting background documents. The purpose of the consultation is to seek a wide range of views from our communities and stakeholders.
3. At this stage in its development, the draft Plan does not form Council policy.

The draft Plan

4. It is a Government requirement that Local Plans are reviewed at least once every five years to ensure that Local Plans are kept up-to-date and that they make available sufficient land for housing development. Nationally the Government is seeking a considerable uplift in the delivery of new homes and has already made significant changes to the current planning system in a bid to promote this. They are also planning further radical reforms as heralded in the recent White Paper. New nationally set housing figures for Hastings are the starting point for the new Plan. As we develop the Plan will need to show how we are considering and to what extent we can meet these housing figures but also how we intend to meet our economic and environmental needs for the future.
5. This first version of the plan is appended to this report (appendices 1 and 2), however please note the full design version is currently in production and will include illustrative mapping, photographs and hyperlinks. This first version is not intended to be a complete draft Plan, but it is supported by considerable amount of background evidence and early engagement. This early engagement includes consultation with infrastructure and service providers to enable the development of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP needs to be developed in tandem with the Plan to help ensure that the Plan, once it has been adopted is deliverable. We have also undertaken consultation with statutory consultees on the development of the scoping report which informs the development of the sustainability appraisal.
6. In addition, as a result of early engagement local residents and stakeholders, a number of key objectives have been developed. From these objectives, the draft Plan sets out a strategy for growth and managing change over the next 20 years. Supporting the development strategy are strategic level policies which cover those areas we must address as set out in the existing national planning guidance. And as part of addressing housing requirements, we have identified four key locations, or development Focus Areas, where significant growth and change could be directed. A suite of development policies, chiefly relating to design, set out what we expect development proposals to achieve before approval for development can be given.
7. An important thread running through the draft document is the Council's vision to making Hastings carbon neutral by 2030. This follows the climate emergency declaration made by

the Council in 2019. The new Plan will need to support the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy.

Consultation programme

8. In January a programme of public consultation and engagement will commence as follows:
- An eight-week consultation period will begin in the week commencing January 25 and will close in the week commencing March 22.
 - Individuals and organisations, including statutory consultees, will be notified of the start of the consultation period via our e-newsletter, direct emails and letters, press release and indirectly via our website; social media; and for example via a press advert(s) seafront and bus shelter posters. Regular reminders will be issued via social media.
 - A pdf version of the Plan will be available to view and download from our website. Printed copied will be posted out on request.
 - To make formal, recordable comments on the Plan, individuals and organisations will be able to use our specialist online Local Plan software. This is our preferred route. It also allows us to publish comments whilst the consultation period is still 'live' helping to create more interest. We will need to clearly highlight the point that comments cannot be made anonymously, though of course we will not publish or share contact details.
 - Alternatively, a paper 'comments' form will be available, and will be both downloadable or can be posted out on request. Comments will also be acceptable via email
 - There will be a considerable amount of supporting documentation (the evidence base) under pinning the draft Plan. This will be made available on our website along with the draft Plan. Hard copies of these various reports and studies can be made available in accessible formats if requested.
 - The website and social media will be critical in terms of promoting engagement and feedback. Because we won't be able to undertake face-to-face meetings, though we can take phone calls, a number of videos are in development which will cover in detail 3 of the draft Plan's core themes – climate change, the economy and housing. There will be a more generalised 'introductory' video explaining why we need to produce the Plan, how to view it and how to make comments on it.
 - In the run up to the formal consultation start date; warm-up information will be available via the website and social media will be utilised.
9. The views and suggestions that are put forward to the Council during the consultation will be reviewed and key issues will be identified and summarised. The feedback will inform the next stage of plan preparation. This may include evidence gathering in addition to those areas we already intend to investigate.
10. The next stage in Plan's development is the Proposed Submission document. This will be published for consultation in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Regulation 19 documentation together with the

supporting evidence base and ‘representations’ (comments) which are submitted as part of this later consultation will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate and the plan will then be subject to a formal independent examination by an Inspector representing the Secretary of State. The timetable and the future steps in the preparation of the Local Plan review are set out in the Council’s Local Development Scheme (which is currently being updated) and are also summarised on the Council’s website.

Other considerations

11. The preparation of a Local Plan and the involvement of our communities at each stage will contribute to improving the quality and support for the Local Plan. The type and location of development proposed in the draft Plan includes mitigation measures, for example enhancing biodiversity and green infrastructure as well as strong approach to tackling climate change through the design and location of new development which is expected to be low carbon and looking towards achieving a carbon neutral future. Budgetary provision has been made for the Local Plan Review in the current and forthcoming financial years. There are no direct financial consequences arising from this report.
12. We will be making copies available for those who do not have access to digital media or need accessible formats. We have a comprehensive ‘risk log’ which includes mitigating the impact of COVID – 19 through reducing social contact by making documents available on-line and having no public meetings. The development of the local plan has been prioritised and the resource implications for the organisation taken in to account. Elements of the plan are designed to address anti-poverty e.g affordable housing. We have a statutory and legal requirement to produce and keep up-to-date, a Local Development Plan.

Timetable of Next Steps

13. Please include a list of key actions and the scheduled dates for these:

Action	Key milestone	Due date (provisional)	Responsible
Approval of the draft plan for 18 consultation purposes	Regulation 18 consultation	Cabinet, 4 January 2021	Planning Policy
Public consultation	8-week Regulation 18 consultation	Jan-March 2021	Planning Policy working with Communication Team

Wards Affected

(All Wards);

Policy Implications

Have you used relevant project tools?: Y

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Y
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	N
Risk Management	Y
Environmental Issues & Climate Change	Y
Economic/Financial Implications	Y
Human Rights Act	N
Organisational Consequences	Y
Local People's Views	Y
Anti-Poverty	Y
Legal	Y

Additional Information

Appendix 1: Hastings Local Plan – Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) Winter 2020
Appendix 2: Hastings Local Plan – Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) Winter 2020 Site Allocation Schedule

Officer to Contact

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