

PAPER NO. 6

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 8 FEBRUARY 2016

Meeting: Executive

Date: 8th February 2016

Subject: Harborough Local Plan – Evidence Base (including Infrastructure Delivery Plan) and Local Development Scheme

Report of: Head of Planning and Regeneration

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Phil King

Status: For Decision

Relevant Ward(s): All

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update members on the preparation of the Local Plan and specifically:

- To advise members of the need to undertake/ update a number additional evidence studies
- to seek delegated authority to award a tender for the preparation of a comprehensive Infrastructure Development Plan
- advise on a revised timetable for the Local Plan for inclusion in an updated Local Development Scheme.

2 Recommendations:

2.1 To note the commissioning of additional studies required as set out in Table 1;

2.2 To give delegated authority to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to award the contract for preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan up to the limit of £75,000;

2.3 To approve the Local Plan timetable at Appendix A for inclusion in an updated Local Development Scheme and to give delegated authority to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to make any necessary changes to up date and publish the updated Scheme.

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 To keep members informed of evidence requirements for the Local Plan.
- 3.2 To ensure that the Local Plan has a sound and robust evidence base, and that the important Infrastructure Delivery Plan study procurement is not delayed.
- 3.3 To meet legal requirements.

4 Key Facts

Updated Evidence Study Requirements

- 4.1 Arising out of changes to Government advice, and evolving sub regional policy context there is a need to prepare some additional evidence documents and update a number of existing key evidence documents, as set out in Table 1 below. This is to minimise the risk of the Local Plan being found unsound at examination.

Table 1: Key Additional/Updated Evidence Studies
Joint Housing and Employment Needs Assessment (HEDNA)- formerly known as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. (SHMA)
Joint Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)
Gypsy and Traveller Site Identification Study
Playing Pitch Strategy
Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (incorporating Community Facilities study)
Cemetery Study

- 4.2 Officers are progressing the procurement of these studies to inform the Pre Submission version of the new Local Plan and avoid excessive programme delay.

Award of Tender for Infrastructure Delivery Plan Study

- 4.3 The preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a key element of the evidence base required to inform the emerging Local Plan and in particular housing and employment land allocations. The study will:
 - audit a wide range of existing physical, utility and community infrastructure across the District
 - identify new infrastructure requirements, including costs, delivery responsibilities, funding, timing etc. to enable the delivery of the Local Plan proposals

- identify funding gaps, and inform the need for preparing a Community Infrastructure Delivery Schedule.
- 4.4 The IDP is particularly important. It will be a “live” document and will be an important future resource for the Council to monitor the adequacy of infrastructure provision in the District. In the light of this, officers have commenced procurement of the IDP Study (incorporating a Community Facilities study intended to address the need for new community and village halls required as a result of planned new development), with tenders due to be returned on 15th February 2016. At this stage the cost of the study is unknown but is estimated to be in the range of £50,000 to £75,000.
- 4.5 To ensure that there is no delay in awarding this contract it is recommended that delegated authority is given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to award the contract subject to a maximum fee of £75,000. This will ensure the IDP Study is commissioned as soon as possible following the return and thorough evaluation of tenders.

Update of Local Development Scheme

- 4.6 Although there has been no slippage to date, the need to undertake additional or updated evidence as outlined above, together with other matters identified by legal advice, has resulted in a detailed review of the Local Plan Programme to ensure that the right balance is struck between speed of preparation and ensuring that the plan is not found unsound at examination. It is necessary to revise the adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS) based on the following key dates:
- Publication of Draft Submission Local Plan for consultation– Late 2016
 - Submission for Examination –Spring 2017
 - Examination Hearing- Summer 2017
- 4.7 It is recommended that the timetable for the Local Plan as shown in Appendix A be included in a revised LDS. Appendix A compares the proposed timetable with that in the current LDS. The LDS has been updated to accurately reflect the amount of time the Planning Inspectorate advise us they will need to progress the Local Plan through the Examination stage.
- 4.8 The LDS should also incorporate a revised resource plan. Other elements of the Local Development Scheme require updating, such as the position on adopted Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents and the risk assessment. The operational and consequential changes are needed in addition to the timetable changes detailed above and in Appendix A.

5 Legal Issues

- 5.1 It is necessary to update the LDS as set out in this report to ensure the Local Plan follows robust statutory processes and is capable of being found sound at Examination.

6 Resource Issues

6.1 The costs of the additional/ updated studies can be met from within the overall budget available to the Strategic Planning Team for spatial planning.

7 Equality Analysis Implications/Outcomes

7.1 The Local Plan will support the sustainable provision of new homes and jobs and assist the Council in meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Housing Act 2004.

8. Risk Management Implications

8.1 The successful and timely procurement of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Study will help inform and avoid delay to the Local Plan preparation/adoption process with consequent beneficial effect on the following Corporate Risks:

8.2 CR 08 Risk of challengeable planning decisions being taken relating to planning applications for residential development / Risk of planning appeals being upheld relating to residential planning applications.

8.3 CR 10 Local Plan Risks: lack of a sound Local Plan may lead to sporadic development and the inability to defend appeals.

9 Consultation

9.1 Consultation has taken place with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio holder.

10. Options

1. Approval of the revised timetable: this will enable an up to date and sound Local Plan to be adopted in the shortest realistic timescale.

2. Not approving the revised timetable: the LDS will be out of date and the timetable will be unachievable unless we go against legal advice as to what evidence is needed, in which case there is a strong risk that the Local Plan will be found unsound at examination leading to abortive expense and further delay.

11 Background Papers

NA

Previous report(s):

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: N

Ward Members Notified: N

Appendices:

A-Proposed Revised Local Plan timetable for inclusion in a revised Local Development Scheme 2016-2018

APPENDIX A

Proposed Local Plan timetable for inclusion in a revised Local Development Scheme 2016-2018

Timetable – Key Stages		
Stages	<i>Current LDS, January 2015 (period 2014- 2017)</i>	<i>Proposed LDS (period 2016- 2018)</i>
Scoping	Completed June 2013	Completed June 2013
Evidence gathering	June 2013- April 2015	June 2013- Sept 2016
Options preparation and consultation	Completed Jan 2015- Oct 2015	Completed Jan 2015- October 2015
Options assessment and plan writing	Nov 2015 – March 2016	Nov 2015 – Sept 2016
Council Approval of Pre-Submission Local Plan	May 2016	October 2016
Consultation on Publication Pre-Submission Local Plan	June – July 2016	Nov – Dec 2016
Submission to Secretary of State	Sep 2016	March 2017
Examination Hearing	Nov 2016	June 2017
Inspector's Report	Feb 2017	Oct 2017
Adoption	March 2017	Nov 2017