

**REPORT NO.5**

**REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

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**Meeting:** Executive

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017

**Subject:** Harborough Local Plan – Local Development Scheme Review

**Report of:** Head of Planning and Regeneration

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Phil King

**Status:** For Decision

**Relevant Ward(s):** All

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**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To seek members' approval to a revised timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan and for this to be included in an updated version of the Council's Local Development Scheme for publication.

**2. Recommendations:**

- 2.1 **To approve the revised 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 update and publish the updated Scheme.**

**3. Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 3.1 To update members on the need to revise the timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan and to ensure a revised Local Development Scheme is published in order to meet legal requirements.
- 3.2 To ensure that the Local Plan is as sound and robust as it can be prior to its submission for Examination. This has resulted in need to make a modest adjustment to the timetable for the preparation on the Local Plan.
- 3.3 Slightly extending the timetable will also ensure that there is adequate and appropriate time to enable Executive and other members to be fully engaged in considering final key evidence studies that support the Local Plan.

#### **4. Key Issues**

- 4.1 The Proposed Submission Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation and was subject to Regulation 19 consultation between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017 (8 weeks).
- 4.2 The main highlights of the current and proposed revised local plan preparation work programme are set out in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Local Plan Work Programme Timetable Key Milestones**

	<i>Current</i>	<i>Revised</i>
Submission of the Local Plan for Public Examination	<b>January 2018</b>	<b>March 2018</b>
Examination Hearings	<b>April 2018</b>	<b>June/July 2018*</b>
Receipt of Final Inspector's Report	<b>September 2018</b>	<b>October/November 2018*</b>
Adopt the Plan	<b>October 2018</b>	<b>November/December 2018*</b>

*\*These dates are indicative and are subject to detailed arrangements by the Planning Inspectorate and decisions/recommendations by the Inspector.*

- 4.3 Modest revisions to the programme are necessary to take account of the extension of the regulation 19 consultation period from 6 to 8 weeks (originally programmed for 22<sup>nd</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 (6 weeks statutory minimum) but extended to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017 (8 weeks)), and the consequent knock on impact of reducing the time available before the Christmas period for review of representations and preparation for submission.
- 4.4 The extension of the consultation period by two weeks was considered necessary to ensure that all consultees had sufficient time to consider the significant amount of evidence and supporting documents relating to the Local Plan.
- 4.5 It is recommended that the revised proposed Local Plan work programme as set out in Table 1, above, be approved.
- 4.6 The Local Plan work programme that will accompany these key milestones will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure time is always used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

#### **5 Legal Issues**

- 5.1 The Council is required to prepare a Local Development Scheme under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). It must be made publically available and kept up-to-date to ensure that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress.

## **6 Resource Issues**

- 6.1 The modest additional time extension in the Local Plan work programme detailed in this report does not necessarily result in additional resource requirement as the initial and final dates for inspection are indicative and is still scheduled for completion in the autumn of 2018.
- 6.2 The preparation of the local plan remains complex with ongoing need for evidence based studies, dedicated staffing resource and ancillary costs. In addition, recent Government announcements on the National Planning Process would indicate the need for ongoing expense and review even after an adoption of the Local Plan. Any further resource requirement will be considered as part of the 2018/19 budget process.

## **7 Equality Analysis Implications/Outcomes**

- 7.1 No implications.

## **8. Risk Management Implications**

- 8.1 It should be noted that there are risks associated with extending the period for the preparation of the Plan and these are:
- The length of the Plan period remaining following adoption would be shorter by a modest amount in relation to the recommended post-adoption plan period set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
  - There would be a modestly longer period without an adopted Local Plan in place of approximately 1 month.
  - There is a potential for some reputational risk for the Council in deferring a timetable previously agreed and communicated. Communication, particularly with Parish Councils will be important to ensure the reasons for any deferral and its implications are explained clearly and understood. However, this must be balanced against risk of potentially greater reputational damage if the plan was delayed at a later stage or found unsound for any reason.
  - The Government are currently consulting on a new Standardised Methodology for the calculation of housing needs together with some other matters. It is the Governments intention that the resulting updated NPPF will apply to all Local Plans submitted for Examination after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (or soon thereafter if changes to the NPPF are given effect to later than this date). This new methodology may result in an increase in the District's housing need and if the Local Plan submission is delayed beyond this date then it may be necessary to identify additional housing sites for allocation leading to further delay. It is therefore considered desirable to ensure the Local Plan is submitted for examination prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
- 8.2 Officers will work to ensure these and any other risks that arise are robustly managed. The Executive will be kept up to date, as needed, through further

reports being brought for their consideration as and when these become necessary.

## **9 Consultation**

9.1 The Chair of the Local Planning Executive Advisory Panel/Planning and Regeneration Portfolio holder has been consulted and supports the proposal.

## **10. Options**

10.1 *Retaining the current Local Plan timetable*

This option has been rejected as the extension of the consultation period makes it essential to revise the programme.

## **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 2017-2018**

## APPENDIX A

### Proposed Local Plan timetable for inclusion in a revised Local Development Scheme 2017-2018

<b>Proposed Local Plan Work Programme Timetable – Key Milestones</b>		
<b>Stages</b>	<b>Current Local Plan Work Programme</b>	<b>Proposed Local Plan Work Programme to be included in a revised LDS (period 2016-2018)</b>
Submission to Secretary of State	January 2018	March 2018
Examination Hearing	April 2018	June/July 2018*
Inspector's Report	September 2018	October/November 2018*
Adoption	October 2018	November/December 2018*

*\*These dates are indicative and are subject to detailed arrangements by the Planning Inspectorate and decisions/ recommendations by the Inspector.*