

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021
title: LOCAL PLAN UPDATE
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principal author: COLIN HIRST – HEAD OF REGENERATION & HOUSING

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Members with an update on progress with the Local Plan and agree proposed amendments and adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To progress the Local Plan Review.
- Corporate Priorities – To be a well-managed Council, delivering efficient services.
- Other Considerations – To keep under review the resource implications of the Council's services.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will be aware that work is progressing to carry out the review of the Local Plan. At the meeting of this Committee held on 15 April 2021, Members received a report on the updated Local Development Scheme, which sets out the programme to develop the new Local Plan. Minute 1146 refers. A copy of the Local Development Scheme can be viewed using the following link:

<https://democracy.ribbonvalley.gov.uk/documents/s1187/LDS%202021%20FINAL.pdf>

2.2 Work is currently underway to form the baseline evidence from which the Issues and Options consultation stage programmed for January 2022 will be based. Officers are currently drawing together a range of evidence documents to feed into that work. When the Local Plan budgets were agreed (Minute 482 refers) resources were allocated for consultancy services in some key areas of evidence. At the meeting of this Committee held on the 29 July 21 (Minute 181 refers) it was agreed to appoint consultants to provide support to undertake The Strategic Housing and Employment Land Study.

3 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

3.1 Town Centre Health Check

3.1.1 As part of the evidence base relating to the main centres, the Council undertakes regular monitoring of issues relating to each of the centres in the borough. (Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley). This latest report provides a comprehensive town centre health check reflecting the approach set out in National Planning Guidance. This latest report updates the previous Health Check published in 2018. A copy of the new report can be found at the following link:

https://www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk/downloads/download/8018/service_centre_health_check_2021

3.1.2 Members will note from the report that no new significant issues have been identified in the review and that each of the centres still demonstrate relative strength when measured against the indicators. The main findings in relation to each centre to be considered as part of the local plan review remain the need to

be confident that additional retail growth can be adequately accommodated should it be required. The outcome from the Retail study, one of the planned evidence documents will provide an important steer on the extent to which this will be an issue.

3.2 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

3.2.1 As part of the plan review the SCI has been updated and was published for consultation. The published document can be viewed using the following link:

https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/downloads/file/13432/statement_of_community_involvement_sci_2020

3.2.2 The only comments arising were in connection with the arrangements for public speaking at Planning Committee with concerns expressed that the approach of allowing speakers 3 minutes was too restricting and should be amended. There were no other issues identified from the consultation.

3.2.3 In regard to public speaking arrangements these are part of the Councils constitution and standing orders and consequently are not a matter that the SCI itself can amend. To clarify this matter, it is proposed to amend the wording to the relevant section of the SCI such that it will refer to the Standing Orders as follows

20. Planning Committee

20.2 Members of the public can participate in these meetings by making a verbal representation about an application, and where objections are to be raised the applicant has the right to respond. The rules for public speaking at committees are set out in the Council's Constitution and Standing orders.

3.2.4 No other changes are proposed to the SCI other than adoption date and necessary references and members are asked to agree its adoption and publication with the amendment proposed at 3.2.3 above.

3.3 Consultancy

3.3.1 Members will recall that in setting the budget for the local plan it was proposed that a series of commissions would be placed with consultants to help deliver the evidence base. At present there are two live commissions underway. These are the production of the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) comprising the SA scoping report. The second is the Economic evidence and Strategic Employment needs work which will inform the need for employment land and any workforce growth. Both of which will be the subject of future reports to this committee.

3.3.2 Costs are being obtained for the agreed consultancy support to update the Strategic Housing and Employment Land study which will enable that piece of work to progress.

3.4 Summer Mailing

3.4.1 A mailshot to those respondents registered on the Local Plan data base was sent out in August with a view to inviting those who wished to be kept informed of the local plan process to confirm that they wished to remain on the council's mail list for the local plan. This will enable the development of an up-to-date consultation list ready for the formal consultation stages, the first of which is anticipated in

January 2022. It also prompted the opportunity to view existing published evidence documents and was the vehicle to invite comments on the SCI. In addition, consultees were invited to respond to the Call for Sites exercise as a preliminary to the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Assessment (SHELA) work and to inform the councils understanding of possible options. The call for sites submissions as previously resolved by this committee will be discussed by the Development Plan Working Group as the options work is progressed before being presented to this committee.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Budget provision for the Local Plan has been put in place and the activities set out in this report are contained within it. Members will recall that the agreement to commission support for the SHELA was an additional area of expenditure that would require to be considered in the first instance at the mid-year budget review process and subsequently as part of ongoing monitoring of the Local Plan process, including the issues that emerge and the budget implications for years 2 and 3 of the programme.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The Council is required to keep planning policies up to date and it is envisaged by Government that Local Planning Authorities will have in place by December 2023 an up to date and adopted Local Plan. The Council must make progress on the Local Plan to meet this Government target.
- Political – There is significant interest in the plan-making process and development issues in the borough and the Council needs to ensure it takes steps to have up to date and robust evidence in place.
- Reputation – The matters in this report would demonstrate that the Council is a well-run authority.
- Equality & Diversity – The Local Plan process includes measures to protect equality and diversity considerations.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Note the updates in this report regarding Local Plan progress and agree the Statement of Community Involvement is amended at section 20 as set out in paragraph 3.2.3 of this report and that the SCI is adopted and published.



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BACKGROUND PAPERS
Local Development Scheme.

For further information on the Health Check Report please ask for **Mark Waleczek**, extension 4581.

For further information on the Local Plan and its process please ask for **Colin Hirst**, extension 4503.