

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

CRAMLINGTON, BEDLINGTON AND SEATON VALLEY LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 18 APRIL 2018

Northumberland Local Plan - Update and Spring 2018 Consultation

Report of the Interim Executive Director: Place

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Riddle - Planning, Housing and Resilience

Purpose of Report

To provide the Local Area Council with an update on the Northumberland Local Plan and details on the Spring 2018 Local Plan consultation. A presentation on the Spring 2018 Local Plan consultation will be provided at the Local Area Council.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Local Area Council note the content of the report and the presentation provided.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following key themes in the Corporate Plan for 2018-2021:-

- How - We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone;
- Living - We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for;
- Enjoying - We want you to love where you live;
- Connecting - We want you to have access to the things you need;
- Learning - We want you to achieve and realise your potential; and
- Thriving - We want to attract more and better jobs

Key Issues

The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for Northumberland, covering the period 2016 to 2036. The Local Plan will cover the whole of Northumberland, with the exception of the area of the Northumberland National Park.

At this early stage in the preparation of the new Local Plan, the Council wants to capture high-level views on preferred strategic locations for development and the big issues that need to be tackled in the Local Plan. The responses to this consultation will feed into a more detailed 'Draft Northumberland Local Plan', which will be open to consultation in Summer 2018.

This report will be supplemented at each of the Local Area Council meetings with a presentation on the Spring 2018 Local Plan consultation.

Background

Progress update on the preparation of the Northumberland Local Plan

1. Following the withdrawal of the Northumberland Core Strategy in July 2017, the Council has been working on the preparation of a new Local Plan for Northumberland. Significant progress on the preparation of the new Local Plan for Northumberland has been and continues to be made. The preparation of the full draft plan, which will be consulted upon in the summer of 2018 is proceeding in accordance with the detailed project plan.
2. To date:
 - A number of updates to the existing evidence base studies as well as new studies, including the Economic and Housing Growth Options Study and an update to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, are progressing.
 - A "call for sites" consultation has recently been undertaken and officers are currently assessing the submissions.
 - The draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report has been completed and will be consulted upon during spring 2018.
 - Officers have been working with both internal services and external partners on evidence base study work, as well as obtaining input on draft policies.
 - The LDF Working Group has been reviewing and inputting into the development of draft policies.
 - The Policy Team has also been engaging with Neighbourhood Plan Groups to ensure Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan are compliant with one another.
 - Officers have been working on the preparation of the Spring 2018 Local Plan consultation.
3. Members will recall that on the 16th November 2017 the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government, wrote to the Leader to express his concerns about the Council's failure to adopt a 2004 Act Local Plan and its lack of progress on plan-making. The letter specifically asked the Leader to outline any exceptional circumstances, by 31st January 2018, which, in the Council's view, justify the failure of the Council to produce a Local Plan. In addition to this explanation, he also indicated he would like to hear of any measures that the authority has taken, or intends to take, to accelerate plan publication.
4. The Council's response to the intervention letter was duly sent to the Minister by the deadline date of 31st January 2018. The Council's full response is available on the Council's website via the following link:
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-policy/Plan.aspx#northumberlandlocalplan>

5. The Secretary of State confirmed on 23rd March 2018 that he does not intend to take any further action although he does expect the Council to accelerate its plan preparation programme by up to 3 months and to provide greater clarity in its revised Local Development Scheme timeline by identifying specific months in which milestones will be achieved.

Spring 2018 Local Plan Consultation

6. The Spring 2018 Local Plan consultation commenced on Wednesday 28 March 2018 and runs for 6 weeks, ending on 2 May 2018. The consultation is a spatial survey which seeks views on the preferred locations for housing and employment, as well as seeking views on the key issues the Local Plan should be addressing.
7. At this stage, the Council wants to capture high-level views on the strategic locations for development, it is not consulting on the exact boundary of a development site or the detailed wording of a policy. The responses which are received to this consultation will be feed into the detailed draft Local Plan, which will be consulted upon during the Summer 2018.
8. The consultation is an online, interactive spatial survey and the Council would encourage people to complete the survey online. Hard copies of the consultation form will be also available at Customer Information Centres and Libraries.
9. A presentation on the Spring 2018 Local Plan consultation will be provided at the Local Area Council.

Next Steps

10. Following the consultation, the Council will provide some overall feedback and analysis on where respondents said development should go and what people think are the key issues that the plan should consider. This will be provided alongside the consultation on the Draft Northumberland Local Plan in Summer 2018.
11. The current timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan and consultation is set out in the published Local Development Scheme (November 2017). This is currently being updated to reflect our assessment that we can reduce the time between publication of the Regulation 19 Plan and submission for examination by in the order of 2-3 months. We continue to explore the possibility of reducing the time between Regulation 18 Draft Plan consultation and the Regulation 19 Publication through the use of detailed process analysis and consideration of alternative method and scope of workstreams. We are seeking further time savings including exploring the feasibility of the use of additional consultants if this would reduce the time on the critical path. Specific dates on which key milestones will be achieved will be incorporated into the revised LDS.

Implications

Policy	The Local Plan when adopted will form part of the Council's policy framework.
---------------	---

Finance and value for money	Plan preparation costs will be met from within existing Council's budgets.
Legal	Local Planning Authorities must prepare a Local Plan which sets planning policies in a local authority area. Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework.
Procurement	None.
Human Resources	Work on the Local Plan involves both Council Officers and Members.
Property	The adopted Local Plan will apply to land and buildings owned by the County Council as they apply to land and buildings owned by others.
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken and published alongside each formal stage of the new Local Plan.
Risk Assessment	The preparation of the Northumberland Local Plan has been the subject of a risk assessment.
Crime & Disorder	Crime and disorder considerations will be taken into account in the preparation of the new Northumberland Local Plan.
Customer Consideration	The Local Plan once adopted will bring together and supersede many planning policies from the former County and District Council planning documents into a single document, ensuring consistency in planning policies across the County and thereby making it easier for the public to understand.
Carbon reduction	The new Northumberland Local Plan will include policy approaches relating to climate change and carbon reduction.
Wards	All

Background Papers

None

Report Sign Off

	initials
Finance Officer	AM
Monitoring Officer/Legal	LH
Human Resources	N/A

Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Executive Director (Paul Johnston)	PAJ
Portfolio Holder(s)	JR

Author and Contact Details

Joan Sanderson - Senior Planning Manager (Planning Policy)

01670 623626

Joan.Sanderson@northumberland.gov.uk