

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....27th June 2016

1. Title of Item/Report

Stockton-On-Tees Borough Local Plan

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet considered an update on work undertaken since the last report to Cabinet in December 2015 regarding an evidence base review and recommendation as to the most appropriate course of action in respect of the production of a Local Plan and associated documents.

The report sought agreement to delegate preparation, approval and publication of key documentation throughout the plan preparation process to enable the Council to respond as swiftly as possible to changes to the planning system which could affect future progress.

Cabinet were aware of the intention to produce a Regeneration and Environment Local Plan (RELP), made up of three separate documents which identify specific development sites and environmental designations to support and supplement the vision and overarching policies in the adopted Core Strategy.

In 2012, the remit of the RELP was expanded to include policies which would replace the housing strategy within the adopted Core Strategy alongside the existing Regeneration DPD, the Environment DPD and the Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan, forming a single document.

Following consultation in 2012 and March 2015, Cabinet agreed to a review of the evidence base that underpinned the RELP. The evidence base review had taken place and alongside a changing National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had led to the view that in order to achieve the most robust policy position for the Borough, a new Local Plan document ought to be produced, replacing existing policy documents.

Cabinet in December 2015 agreed to the evidence base review and also referenced that two potential courses of action could emerge, those being either:-

- A minor re-draft of the policies within the document and further

re-consultation on a revised RELP; or

- The need to prepare a 'new' Local Plan, as the necessary changes recommended in the evidence base review would be so significant that they would require the Council to return to an earlier stage of plan preparation.

Cabinet noted from the evidence base review provided, that major changes could be required to the RELP to make it 'sound', including major changes to the development strategy of the area and specific site designations.

Cabinet acknowledged other factors now influential to how plan making proceeds and noted that ignoring these matters and progressing the plan, could result in legal and procedural issues being raised should the RELP progress to examination in public.

Officers were also mindful of the Government's recent consultation on their plans to withhold New Homes Bonus payments from Councils that have not submitted a local plan. Indications were that this would apply where a plan had not been submitted before the end of March 2017. The loss of this funding could result in a significant financial implication for the Council.

Given the above changes to the national planning system, officers recommend that in order to achieve the most robust policy position and to be pro-active in adopting new national policies, Cabinet agree to the production of a single Local Plan document which would replace existing policy and all work undertaken to date on the RELP.

It was intended that the new Local Plan would set out a vision and policy framework for the future development of the area, facilitating the delivery the emerging Economic Strategy, identifying and responding to needs and opportunities in relation to all forms of housing, including student accommodation, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure. It would also seek to safeguard the environment, respond to climate change and secure good design.

In the interests of shaping and enabling the future growth of the Borough it was proposed that Cabinet agree to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transportation and the Director of Economic Growth and Development for the production, consultation, and submission of the Local Plan. Under this recommendation, the Local Plan will be presented to Cabinet prior to adoption. Cabinet noted that the production of the Local Plan required a number of supporting documents to be produced and consulted on with key stakeholders and the public. Drafting of these documents was a significant undertaking which would

also need to be programmed in to the timetable for the preparation of the plan and considered in the preparation of the Local Development Scheme.

Cabinet noted the key milestones throughout the preparation and consultation process for preparation of the plan. There was a commitment to continuous engagement with relevant stakeholders, Members and Duty to Cooperate partners throughout the plan preparation process as appropriate to identify and address issues and challenges.

RESOLVED that:-

1.The production of a new Local Plan, which would replace existing policy documents and supersede the previous approach of the production of the Regeneration and Environment Local Plan, be agreed.

2.The production, publication, consultation and submission of the Local Plan be delegated to the Director of Economic Growth and Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport.

3.The production, maintenance and revision of the Local Development Scheme be delegated to the Director of Economic Growth and Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport.

4.The production, consultation and adoption of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement be delegated to the Director of Economic Growth and Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport.

5.Responsibility to inform all relevant stakeholders, partners and authorities of the Councils intention to produce a Local Plan and to consult on the content of supporting documents where required, be delegated to the Director of Economic Growth and Development to

6.Cabinet note the intention to begin a review of the Council's suite of Supplementary Planning Documents.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To fully take in to account the implications of changes to the national planning system and the Council's Evidence Base Review, as well as providing notification of the Council's intention to produce a Local Plan

To ensure that the Council produces a statutory Local Plan as quickly as possible and which meets the Government's deadline and legislative requirements for the production of a local plan.

To provide flexibility to allow the Council to respond quickly to changing legislation, regulations and national planning guidance.

To provide the opportunity to conduct a focused review and update the current Statement of Community Involvement

To inform Members of consultation activity that will take place prior to reporting of future progress on the development of the Local Plan.

To inform Members of the intention to undertake review the Council's suite of Supplementary Planning Documents to ensure they are up to date, relevant and fit for purpose.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Steve Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 12 - Stockton-On-Tees Borough Local Plan as he was a Board Member of Tristar Board

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 5th July 2016

Proper Officer  
29 June 2016