

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 27 September 2016

Subject: Planning Policy

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Philip

Recommending:

That the report of the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder be noted

Local Plan

The Local plan timetable approved by the Cabinet in July is still on track. As members will know the target is to go out to consultation on the 31st October. To this end work on completing the draft plan is well underway. We have been working actively to ensure that members are well informed on the plan.

At Cabinet on the 1st September the consultation programme was agreed. We are proactively working to ensure that the formal Consultation is well publicised. We had a media briefing on the 14th of September and the official launch of the new and improved Local Plan website on the 15th September. The website currently provides some information on the Draft Plan and the Local Plan process to date and will eventually contain the Draft Plan, relevant evidence base and consultation questionnaire. The website currently also contains information on the locations of the static information points and staffed exhibitions. The Website also includes a short video produced especially for the purposes of encouraging our residents to take part in the consultation process. The video includes contributions from the Youth Council as well as other non-Council voices.

The Planning Policy team have been circulating emails to the extensive consultee database with information on the upcoming consultation and issuing information bulletins for Members, MEP's Town and Parish Councils. The aim is to launch the consultation on the 31st of October following Cabinet on the 6th of October and full Council ratification on the 18th of October.

Over the summer significant work has gone in to the activities of the Cooperation Board, where we meet along with representatives of Harlow, Uttlesford and East Herts (the four councils in the SHMA) and several other organisations. We have made significant progress towards signing Memoranda of Understanding covering the area. These MoUs should prove very helpful in being able to demonstrate our commitment to the Duty to Cooperate when it comes to our Examination in Public.

Finally, I want to make clear that the consultation that we are about to undertake is a Regulation 18 consultation. This allows us to receive a wider set of responses on the proposals in the plan. Our partners in the SHMA are all planning a regulation 19 consultation which simply seeks feedback on the soundness of the plan. I want to highlight the amount of evidence that has been collected towards our Local Plan and encourage as many as possible to respond to the plan consultation with good evidence based inputs to help us get the best plan we can.