

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 20 December 2016

Subject: Planning Policy

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Philip

Recommending:

That the report of the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder be noted

Local Plan

The timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme reported to Cabinet on 21 July 2016 for consultation of the Plan under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 has been met. The Cabinet considered the Draft Local Plan on 6 October 2016 and subsequently Full Council agreed the Draft Local Plan for consultation on 18 October 2016. The formal 6 week consultation started on 31 October 2016 and ends on 12 December 2016. Council also agreed that the Draft Local Plan policies should be treated as a material planning consideration when determining planning applications and I am pleased to report that the Council won its first appeal for the Priors Site making use of the site selection evidence used to support the Draft Local Plan.. The Planning Policy Team have provided a guidance note to officers in Development Management to ensure consistency of approach and this will be reported to the Planning Committees.

The consultation strategy for the Draft Local Plan was agreed by Cabinet on 1 September 2016. A new Local Plan website went live on 15 September 2016 www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planningourfuture. Since the start of the consultation on 31 October until 21 November 2016 the website had been visited on 3,854 occasions. As at 22 November 2016 238 online responses had been received, approximately 65 hard copy feedback responses and 851 requests to be registered for updates in addition to the existing database list. Regular monthly e bulletins are being sent out to all those registered.

Staffed exhibitions have been held at 6 locations in the District. These were well attended:

North Weald Bassett: approx. 259
Loughton: approx. 207
Chigwell: approx. 107
Chipping Ongar: approx. 258
Epping: approx. 277
Waltham Abbey: approx. 125

The Planning Policy Team also provided an opportunity for one to one discussions on 22 November 2016 for all the Town/Parish Councils and on request residents groups/amenity societies to discuss the Draft Local Plan to help them in making comments on the Draft Local Plan.

Following consideration of the comments received in response to the Draft Local Plan

consultation, the next stage will be to prepare a plan for publication and to publish it under Regulation 19. As part of this process officers will be establishing a Developer Forum alongside the progression of the Draft Local Plan to provide a basis for ongoing discussions with relevant landowners, site promoters and stakeholders. It is important that the Council liaises closely on an ongoing basis with relevant landowners and promoters of the sites proposed for allocation within the Draft Local Plan, and with other stakeholders as required in order to demonstrate that the Local Plan is 'effective' and that the allocations in the Local Plan will be viable and deliverable, and therefore meet the 'tests of soundness' at Examination-in-Public. Consideration will be given to the use of planning performance agreements on the larger sites to help support the process as a project management tool to set a framework and timetable for masterplanning and other work which will need to be undertaken before the examination of the plan.

We will be reporting to members in detail the consultation response, undertaking further work to support the plan including transport modelling and the preparation of a detailed infrastructure delivery plan and assessing any new sites that come forward together with the employment sites through the site selection process.