

Committee: Audit and Scrutiny Committee	Date: 28 July 2020
Subject: Local Development Plan Member Working Group Update	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Phil Drane, Director of Planning and Economy	Public
Report Author: Name: Phil Drane, Director of Planning and Economy Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk	For Information

Summary

The Local Development Plan (LDP) Member Working Group is an established engagement between Officers and Councillors focussed on delivery of the Council's Local Plan and related work. Its purpose was approved by Policy, Projects and Resources Committee in September 2017.

The work of the working group is monitored by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee as part of the committee's work programme. This report provides an update on the most recent meeting of the working group and planned meetings for 2020/21.

Updated Terms of Reference for 2020/21 have been agreed by the working group, as set out in Appendix A. The most recent working group meeting took place on 16 June 2020. This followed receipt of initial questions from the Planning Inspectors appointed to oversee the examination of the Local Plan. Notes and actions from the meeting are enclosed in Appendix B.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

R1. Note the update provided in this report and the appendices enclosed.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The Local Development Plan (LDP) Member Working Group is an established engagement between Officers and Councillors that has taken place over a number of years alongside preparation of the Council's Local Plan. It has also considered related work to the Local Plan. The purpose of the working group is to consider the Local Plan and associated documents before they are considered by the Council (Ordinary or Extraordinary Council) and/or Planning and Licensing Committee as appropriate. This purpose was approved by the Council in September 2017 (Item 114, Policy, Projects and Resources Committee, 19 September 2017).
2. Audit and Scrutiny Committee monitors the work of the LDP Member Working Group as part of its work programme. An update on the working group's activities so far during 2020/21 is provided in this report.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

3. Updated Terms of Reference for 2020/21 have been agreed by the working group, as set out in Appendix A. This includes the responsibilities of the working group, membership, frequency, etc.
4. The most recent working group meeting took place on 16 June 2020. This followed receipt of initial questions from the Planning Inspectors appointed to oversee the examination of the Local Plan. An opportunity was taken to go through each of the themes raised by the inspectors, including the underlying initial questions. Officers presented an overview and the timescales by which responses would be provided. Notes and actions from the meeting are enclosed in Appendix B. These notes are draft until agreed at the next working group meeting.
5. Moving forward, working group meetings have been set to take place bi-monthly with the next scheduled for 1 September 2020.

Reasons for Recommendation

6. As part of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee work programme, an update on the work of the LDP Member Working Group is provided.

Consultation

7. The Local Plan and associated documents are subject to public consultation.

References to Corporate Plan

8. The Local Development Plan is an important vehicle for the delivery of many objectives set out within the Council's Corporate Strategy Brentwood 2025. This includes growing our economy, protecting our environment, developing our communities, and improving housing.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Director of Corporate Resources

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

9. There are no direct financial implications. There are appropriate budgets included within the Medium term financial strategy to resources the LDP.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Director of Law and Governance

Tel & Email: 01277 312500/amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

10. The procedures which the Council is required to follow when producing a Local Plan derive from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

The legislation states that a local planning authority must only submit a plan for examination which it considers to be sound. This is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as being:

- Positively Prepared:** based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements;
- Justified:** the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
- Effective:** deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
- Consistent with national policy:** enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

In order for the draft Local Plan to pass the tests of soundness, in particular the 'justified' and 'effective' tests, it is necessary for it to be based on an adequate, up to date and relevant evidence base. The Council also has a legal duty to comply with the Statement of Community Involvement in preparing the Plan. (S19(3) 2004 Act).

In addition the Council also has a legal "Duty to Co-operate" in preparing the Plan. (S33A 2004 Act).

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Planning and Economy

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

11. The Local Development Plan is a key vehicle for the delivery of economic growth, in line with the Council's objectives to grow the economy. It is important that the delivery of the Plan is scrutinised through elected representation.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

12. None.

Background Papers

- Corporate Projects report, Item 114 Policy, Projects and Resources Committee, 19 September 2017, Brentwood Borough Council

Appendices to this report

- Appendix A: Local Development Plan Member Working Group Terms of Reference 2020/21
- Appendix B: Local Development Plan Member Working Group Notes and Actions, 16 June 2020