

Committee: Audit and Scrutiny Committee	Date: 8 March 2022
Subject: Local Development Plan Member Working Group Update	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)	Public
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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 meetings of the working group.

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 several years alongside preparation of the Council's local plan. The purpose of the working group is to consider the local plan and associated documents before they are considered by the Council at a relevant meeting or committee. 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 is provided in this report on the activities of the working group.
3. In addition to the working group, a separate Dunton Hills Garden Village Project Delivery Board regularly meets to provide oversight as the scheme progresses. Dunton Hills Garden Village is a key part of the local plan strategy for growth and so there is inevitably some cross-over between the issues discussed by the project board and LDP Member Working Group. The project board includes

representation from lead members of Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council, CEG as master-developer and majority land promoter, West Horndon Parish Council, and Homes England (representing the Government / Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, regarding the delivery of garden communities). The purpose and membership of the project board was approved by the Council in March 2019 (Item 383, Policy, Projects and Resources Committee, 19 March 2019). A supporting governance framework is in place for the project, which sets out the purpose of the project board and the supporting technical steering group that meets regularly.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4. Audit and Scrutiny Committee was last provided with a LDP Member Working Group update on 12 January 2022 (Item 259). Since then, the working group has met on 9 February 2022 (see Appendix A for draft meeting notes that have not yet been approved by the group). Discussion focussed on the current local plan examination process as the inspectors' final report was awaited. On receipt of the inspectors' report this will be published and inform a recommendation to the Council regarding adoption of the plan.
5. There has not been a meeting of the Dunton Hills Garden Village Project Delivery Board or Technical Steering Group in the period since the last update to Audit & Scrutiny Committee. An update on the currently live outline planning application for the garden village is to be brought to Planning & Licensing Committee soon. Work towards finalising detailed design guidance specific to the garden village is to be aligned with adoption of the local plan.

Consultation

6. The local plan and associated documents are subject to public consultation.

References to Corporate Strategy

7. The local plan is a key 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, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and S151 Officer

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8. There are no direct financial implications. There are appropriate budgets included within the medium-term financial strategy to resource the local plan and associated documents.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and Monitoring Officer

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9. The procedures that 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.
10. 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:
 - a) Positively Prepared: based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements;
 - b) Justified: the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - c) Effective: deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - d) Consistent with national policy: enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.
11. 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).
12. In addition, the Council also has a legal "duty to cooperate" in preparing the plan. (S33A 2004 Act).

Economic Implications

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13. The local 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.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager (Communities, Leisure & Health)

Tel/Email: 01277 312634/kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

14. The local plan considers equality and diversity issues.

Health & Wellbeing Implications

Name/Title: Jo Cory, Corporate Health & Wellbeing Officer

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15. The local plan includes provisions to maintain and improve health and wellbeing in the borough.

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

16. Delivery of the local plan is monitored through the Council's strategic risk register.
17. The local plan is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal.

Background Papers

- Local Development Plan Member Working Group Update, Item 259, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, 12 January 2022
- Local Development Plan Member Working Group Update, Item 131, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, 28 September 2021
- Local Development Plan Member Working Group Update, Item 76, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, 6 July 2021
- Dunton Hills Garden Village Project Governance, Item 383, Policy, Projects and Resources Committee, 19 March 2019
- Corporate Projects Report, Item 114, Policy, Projects and Resources Committee, 19 September 2017

Appendices to this report

- Appendix A: Local Development Plan Member Working Group Draft Notes, 9 February 2022