

PLANNING POLICY EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL 09 December 2021

Report Title	North Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme
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Relevant Executive Member	Councillor David Brackenbury – Executive Member for Growth & Regeneration

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Local Development Scheme

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To consider the North Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme, ahead of its presentation to the Executive Committee.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council is required by legislation to prepare and publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS). An LDS is a project plan providing a timetable for the preparation of documents that make up the area's Development Plan.
- 2.2 The LDS provides detailed timetables for the Council's next programme of Development Plan Documents, including the North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan, a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Policy, and the remaining stages of the Part 2 Local Plan for East Northamptonshire. Discussions with regards to a review of policies making up the North Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan are on-going. On that basis this LDS only raises that a review of policies will be undertaken, but minerals and waste will not be covered in this version of the LDS. The LDS provided additional information for the reader to understand where Neighbourhood Plans are in preparation.
- 2.3 The LDS is attached at Appendix A.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel consider the Draft Local Development Scheme (LDS) and, subject to any comments/observations on its content, agree that the Draft LDS be advanced to the Executive Committee for consideration.

Reason for Recommendation:

- 3.2 To provide Member input into the timetable for the programme of plans identified in the Local Development Scheme; and to ensure the Council meets its obligation to publish an up-to-date LDS, to meet its requirement as a local planning authority.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a project plan setting out the timetable for the preparation of documents that in this case make up the North Northamptonshire Development Plan. In previous years, the LDS was made collaboratively with each of the North Northamptonshire sovereign authorities and the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning & Delivery Unit preparing their own contributions, to be fed into a single document. Each authority and the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee would adopt their individual elements. Now that North Northamptonshire Council is formed, the LDS will only need to be presented to this single authority for adoption.
- 4.2 Northamptonshire County Council would previously prepare and adopt its own LDS. Now the Minerals & Waste planning function falls within North Northamptonshire Council's remit, a new North Northamptonshire LDS should also include this planning area as well.
- 4.3 The Development Plan for North Northamptonshire is made up of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (adopted July 2016); some saved policies from old Local Plans; other area-based Local Plan policy documents; Part 2 Local Plans; the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Update (adopted July 2017); and various Made Neighbourhood Plans. Once adopted, other Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans prepared by Neighbourhood Plan Groups will also be included within the Development Plan.
- 4.4 Section 15(1) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires that the *"local planning authority must prepare and maintain a scheme to be known as their local development scheme"*. Legislation simply requires that the LDS is brought into effect and published by the Local Planning Authority. To achieve this, two actions need to be carried out:
- i. the Council should resolve that the LDS is to have effect; and
 - ii. it should specify the date from which the LDS is to have effect.
- 4.5 It is believed the Council's constitution requires that the LDS be adopted by Full Council, however this is being investigated. As such, it is proposed that Members of the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel consider the content of the LDS, before the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration present it to the Executive for final comment, and Full Council to be adopted. The Council will continue to publish updates to the plan-making timetable on its website.

Local Development Scheme

- 4.6 The purpose of the LDS is to provide a timetable against which the documents making up the Council's Development Plan can be viewed, allowing any parties interested in taking part in the preparation of the Plan to be notified of the programme and to be involved in its development.
- 4.7 It is considered important to ensure the Council is complying with the necessary tests, by agreeing and publishing a revised LDS.

North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan

- 4.8 Members will be aware that the Joint Core Strategy is the strategic Part 1 Local Plan for North Northamptonshire, providing strategic allocations and the strategic direction for development across the wider area. The Joint Core Strategy will be reviewed/updated through the North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will focus on strategic matters which will, as a minimum, meet the requirement set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, to have a plan that addresses the strategic priorities for the area. The Joint Planning Committee previously agreed that the statutory plan period should be 2021-2041 with the Vision extended to 2050 to align with the Arc Spatial Framework. A separate report has been prepared on this agenda seeking member feedback on the scope of the Strategic Plan.
- 4.9 A summary of the timetable for the Strategic Plan is provided below:
- Issues/scope Consultation - March 2022
 - Options Consultation - November 2022
 - Draft Plan Consultation - June 2023
 - Publication Plan Consultation - November 2023
 - Submission to the Secretary of State - April 2024
 - Examination - September 2024
 - Inspector's Report - April 2025
 - Adoption - September 2025

Part 2 Local Plans

- 4.10 Each of the sovereign authorities had been progressing their own Part 2 Local Plan policies for their areas. The Borough Council of Wellingborough adopted its Part 2 Plan in February 2019; the Part 2 Local Plan for Corby was adopted in September 2021; and the Part 2 Local Plan for Kettering will be presented to Full Council on 1st December 2021 for adoption. The Part 2 Local Plan for East Northamptonshire was Submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2021. The Examination hearing sessions are expected to be held in March 2022. The anticipated timetable for the Part 2 Local Plan for East Northamptonshire is provided below:
- Examination - March 2022
 - Inspector's Report - September 2022
 - Adoption - December 2022

North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Policy

- 4.11 A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for North Northamptonshire was published in March 2019. Members have indicated the desire that addressing gypsy and traveller accommodation needs should be considered on a North Northamptonshire basis. As such, with the results of the GTAA forming the basis, it is proposed to investigate a series of initiatives aimed at delivering against the identified need. This will be initiated by commissioning the authors of the GTAA to undertake further interviews with those families with an identified need, and those who did not take part in the first survey, but a proportional need was assumed. Options for making provision, which will be properly assessed through the development plan process and planning applications, could include existing site extensions, site intensifications, potential enforcement of sites occupied by non-travellers, and new site provision.
- 4.12 In advance of early public engagement, officers will take the evidence and background work gathered and, working with specialist consultants, prepare material to form a consultation on the options available for provision. The projected timescale for the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Policy is set out below:
- Early stakeholder and community involvement - June 2022
 - Draft Plan Consultation - April 2023
 - Publication Plan Consultation - Sept 2023
 - Submission to the Secretary of State - February 2024
 - Examination - June 2024
 - Inspector's Report - Sept 2024
 - Adoption - December 2024
- 4.13 It is acknowledged that local plan policy development may be necessary in other topic areas, town centres being one. The LDS is only required to address timescales for Development Plan Documents, therefore only addresses the timescales for those Plans set out in this report. It is worth noting that the preparation of Development Plan Documents is just one element of the programme of work undertaken by the Planning Policy team. Prioritising these and other work streams is challenging whilst the full resources available to the team are unclear, and the Council reviews the staffing structure and full work programme to match. It is however possible to review the LDS at a future date.
- 4.14 The proposed draft LDS is attached at Appendix A. Members of the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel are asked to review the LDS, suggest any amendments, and agree the draft LDS to be reported to be endorsed by Members of the Executive, before being adopted by Full Council.

5. Implications (including financial implications)

5.1 Resources and Financial

- 5.1.1 There are no specific resources or financial implications arising from this report. The costs of progressing each of the Local Plan documents is accounted for with the Planning Policy budget.

5.2 Legal

5.2.1 The LDS is required under Section 15(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Formulating the timetables within the LDS, keeping them up-to-date, and making it publicly available on the Council's website will ensure that the Council complies with the necessary tests in preparing a Local Plan for Examination.

5.3 Risk

5.3.1 The risks from setting out an LDS is often associated with that of slippage to those plans identified within it. Every effort has been made to be as realistic as possible, yet also challenge the programme in terms of progress. Causes of delay are varied but can include loss of key staff, time appointing consultant input; complexity of evidence; expansive consultation responses and complexity; planning reforms; progress with the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework; competing priorities; to name but a few. It is also recognised that some issues of developing policy may need to be added to the LDS, the fact that these are not included within this one does not mean they cannot be added in the future, it just means a timetable has not been identified yet.

5.3.2 In March 2020, the Government set a 'clear deadline' of December 2023 for all authorities to have up-to-date Local Plans in place. Government can intervene in Local Plan processes where they consider there is a lack of progress being made, plans are out of date, or there are high housing pressures and intervention would have an impact. It is considered that the risk of this is very low in North Northamptonshire. There will be a package of up-to-date Part 2 Local Plans in place and substantial progress will have been made in preparing the Strategic Plan within the wider context of the Arc Spatial Framework. As previously discussed by the Joint Planning Committee, a significant number of policies in the Joint Core Strategy are still considered to be working effectively in the development management process.

5.4 Consultation

5.4.1 No consultation is necessary in agreeing an LDS, consultation is however a fundamental part in the development of each of the Development Plan Documents.

5.5 Consideration by Scrutiny

5.5.1 Comments/observations on the content of the draft LDS will be made by Members of this Executive Advisory Panel and considered for inclusion in subsequent versions ahead of adoption.

5.6 Climate Impact

5.6.1 Climate change will play a fundamental consideration throughout the preparation of those Development Plan Documents, and Neighbourhood Plans, identified within the LDS.

5.7 **Community Impact**

- 5.7.1 The Local Development Scheme has limited direct community impact, but the Development Pan Documents and the timetables contained within it do. Consultation with the community will be a significant part of the development of those documents.

6. **Background Papers**

- 6.1 North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) – March 2019
https://www.kettering.gov.uk/downloads/file/18695/north_northamptonshire_gt_aa_march_2019