

CABINET
5 MARCH 2024

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS)

**Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Chris McEwan, Economy Portfolio**

**Responsible Director -
Ian Williams, Chief Executive**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Members' approval for the revised timetable for producing development plan documents to support the adopted local plan.

Summary

2. An up-to-date Local Plan is essential to meet the development needs of the Borough and to enable the Council to shape and maintain control of development.
3. The Local Plan is a framework for growth and aims to ensure that Darlington becomes an even more sustainable location in which people increasingly choose to live, work and visit. Not only does it help to deliver the economic strategy it also makes provision for new housing to meet local needs supporting the needs of our current and future workforce, and other new developments with the provision of key new infrastructure.
4. The success of the Borough is predicated on growth and underpins the future vibrancy of our town centre and our local communities. The Local Plan sets out how Darlington will grow, adapt and change and importantly how this will be achieved and managed. It provides the Council with the required spatial guidance and direction to contribute to and enable the structured development of the Borough – in support of both the Council's drive for a growing economy, building stronger communities and creating opportunities for all.
5. The Darlington Local Plan was adopted in February 2022 covering the period 2016 to 2036. The Local Plan is up to date and not due for review until it is five years old (before February 2027). Whilst the plan remains up to date there are supplementary documents that would help support and supplement the plan and its policies. It is therefore proposed the next few years of work should be primarily focused on development of a new Climate Change Development Plan Document (DPD) and an updated Design of New Development Supplementary (SPD) which was last reviewed in 2011

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Cabinet agree that the attached Local Development Scheme (2024-2027) is approved to take immediate effect.

Reasons

7. The recommendation is supported as the Council is required to have an up-to-date Local Development Scheme (Planning & Compulsory Act 2004, as amended by Section 111, Localism Act 2011).

Ian Williams
Chief Executive

Background Papers

- (i) National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023
- (ii) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- (iii) Town and Country Planning Act (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- (iv) Localism Act 2011

David Hand: Extension 6294

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Local Plan has a role in reducing crime through the promotion of good design and location of development.
Health and Wellbeing	A key objective of Local Plan and supporting documents is to improve people's health and wellbeing by protecting and improving the economic, social and environmental conditions in the Borough.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	Achieving sustainable development is a fundamental objective of the Local Plan. The development of a new Climate Change DPD will enable the council to develop additional policy to tackle climate change matters.
Diversity	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be part of the DPD/SPD preparation process.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The Development Plan Documents will be prepared using existing budgets and will ultimately form part of the Council's Planning Policy Framework.
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	The Local Plan represents the spatial implications of the overarching aims of the Council Plan.
Efficiency	Not applicable
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. As part of the governments planning reforms a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) was issued in December 2023 which expects all Local Authorities to revise their Local Development Scheme (LDS) and to provide the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) with a copy within 12 weeks.
9. The Updated LDS, attached at **Appendix 1**, is a statutory requirement. It sets out the planning policy documents that the Council will prepare over the next three years, when the key stages of preparation will be, the scope of each document, the resources available for, and risks to, their preparation. It will replace the existing LDS 2020 to 2023 which was approved by Cabinet and Council in September 2020.
10. The focus over the next three years will be on producing a Climate Emergency Development Plan Document (DPD) which will enable the council to develop further policy to help meet its climate change ambitions. Whilst its content is yet to be determined it could incorporate a range of new or updated policies on Biodiversity Net Gain, Nutrient Neutrality, Local Nature Recovery, Flood Risk, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Energy and Construction etc.
11. All DPDs need to go through the same adoption process as a Local Plan including public consultation and an examination in public by a government appointed inspector. If the DPD is found sound the Council will then be able to make the decision to adopt.
12. Work is also planned to revise the current Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which was last updated in 2011. SPDs are adopted by the Council.
13. This report proposes that the LDS should take effect the day after the next meeting of Full Council.

Legal Implications

14. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.