

**FULL COUNCIL**

**16<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES**

**MELTON LOCAL PLAN FORWARD PLAN – THE STEPS BETWEEN ‘ISSUES AND OPTIONS’ AND ‘PREFERRED OPTIONS’ (DRAFT MELTON LOCAL PLAN)**

**1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 On 30th April 2014 Full Council agreed a timetable and vision for the Melton Local Plan. In accordance with that timetable Full Council gave its approval to consult on the Melton Local Plan Issues and Options from 06 October to 12 January 2015.
- 1.2 The production of the Local Plan is on track and this report sets out the stages of work needed between Issues and Options through to the Preferred Options to feed into this document (Draft Melton Local Plan). The production of the Preferred Options for May 2015 will require a coordinated effort and to achieve this, Officers will require strategic direction from Members to inform and guide the process and any key issues that are to be addressed. Such strategic direction will ensure that unnecessary work is not undertaken and will reduce the risk of delay. It will also ensure that the choices needed to be made between now and May 2015 are undertaken transparently.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Council notes the stages of work set out in the report and the need for strategic direction through the programme of Full Council Meetings between now and May 2015.**

**3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 On 30th April 2014, the Council agreed a formal timetable and programme of work as set out in the Melton Local Development Scheme (LDS) that is necessary to develop the Melton Local Plan. The key stages of Local Plan preparation can be summarised below:
- a) Preliminary Engagement – Consultation on what the plan ought to contain including views on the vision for the Borough (completed);
  - b) Issues and Options – Consultation underway (6th October 2014 to 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015);
  - c) Preferred Options/Draft Plan – Consultation on a draft strategy for the Borough including preferred development sites (May 15<sup>th</sup> – August 15<sup>th</sup>);
  - d) Pre-submission Draft Plan – An opportunity for people to submit representations on the plan for consideration as part of the Examination in Public – (January – February 2016);

- e) Submission and Examination in Public – Planning Inspector holds an Examination in Public (July 2016 – April 2017);
- f) Adoption (May 2017).

- 3.2 Attached at Appendix 1 is a forward plan of Full Council meetings where members will be asked to consider evidence and provide strategic direction to officers to guide the preparation of the Melton Local Plan Preferred Options (Draft Plan).
- 3.3 The Preferred Options (Draft Plan) will be considered by Full Council in its entirety in June 2015 at which point Members will be asked to decide whether to formally approve the document for 12 weeks of public consultation.
- 3.4 Following consultation on the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) all comments will be considered and the Draft Local Plan will be modified and considered again by Full Council before formally inviting representations to be considered as part of an Examination in Public.

#### **4 PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL MEETINGS THROUGH TO MAY 2015**

- 4.1 On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Members will be asked to consider the response received to the Issues and Options consultation and will be asked to provide direction on the overall level of development to be planned for in the Borough. At the same meeting Members will also be asked give direction on the proposed approach to advancing a number of policy areas which depending on the approach could have significant resource implications. Approaches to “village envelopes” and “protected open areas” will form part of this discussion.
- 4.2 Also at this meeting, Members will be asked to consider the overall level of development to be planned in the Borough and the roles of Melton Borough’s settlements and the relationships that may exist between them. This will be set out in a piece of Local Plan Evidence which is informed by the Issues and Options response as well as work undertaken with the Melton Local Plan Reference Groups.
- 4.3 On the 25<sup>th</sup> February, Members will be asked to consider evidence which looks at the development potential of Melton Mowbray as a location for the focus of development in the Borough. Guidance from Members on this will also help establish the level of development needed in each of the Borough’s communities outside of Melton Mowbray.
- 4.4 Building on the work undertaken with Council in February, at an extraordinary Council meeting in March, Members will be asked to consider in greater detail the roles, opportunities and threats associated with development in the Borough’s villages and consider the impacts of alternative patterns of development. On the basis of the evidence provided it is hoped that members will be able to give strategic direction to a preferred pattern of development. This guidance will allow officers to develop preferred options for the more detailed policy areas and large scale site allocations and other site allocations which will be needed to deliver the preferred pattern of development in the Borough in an efficient manner.

- 4.5 Also at the March Council, Members will be asked to approve an update to Melton Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Methodology, which will allow Officers to robustly and transparently develop the evidence needed alongside the Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal to be able to select and justify the selection of the preferred site allocations to be included as part of the Preferred Options (Draft Melton Local Plan).
- 4.6 The pre-election period for the May 2015 election runs from 23 March to 07 May. During this period it is not expected that any detailed Local Plan matters will be considered by Full Council. Instead the direction given up until this point will provide Officers with the information necessary to develop the detailed policy work needed to prepare the Preferred Options (Draft Melton Local Plan).
- 4.7 In May/June after the election Members will be presented with a package of documents necessary for them to consider giving approval to commence a 12 week public consultation on the Melton Local Plan Preferred Options (Draft Plan) for the Borough.

## **5 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The stages of work explained in the report and detailed in Appendix 1 are necessary to shape the development of the Melton Local Plan in a transparent, timely and efficient manner. Any direction given by members at the stages suggested does not prejudice any formal decisions needed as part of the development of the Melton Local Plan.
- 5.2 This report essentially explains to members the work to be undertaken between now and May/June and highlights where the Full Council guidance will be needed.

## **6 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no significant unknown financial or resource implications arising from this report. The Local Plan Issues and Options consultation will be an intensive exercise, and will have a significant resource implication on the Planning Policy Team. However this will be met through the existing Local Plan budget arrangements.

## **7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

- 7.1 Preparing a Local Plan in accordance with a Local Development Scheme and a Statement of Community Involvement are requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (as amended) 2004 and the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012. This report communicates the work needed between now and May 2015 and set out an approach which will ensure the Melton Local Plan is developed robustly and transparently.

## **9 COMMUNITY SAFETY**

- 9.1 There are no significant community safety implications arising from this report.

## 10 EQUALITIES

- 10.1 The report communicates the stages of work needed on the Local Plan between now and May 2015 it has no direct impact on equalities.
- 10.2 However each stage of preparation of the Melton Local Plan is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal of each option. The Sustainability Appraisal is based upon a detailed framework which incorporates Equalities Impact Assessments.
- 10.3 Therefore equalities impacts are addressed as a continued thread through the process of preparing the Melton Local Plan.

## 11 RISKS

Probability



Very High A				
High B				
Significant C		1		
Low D				
Very Low E				
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

Impact →

Risk No.	Description
1	Due competing demands on the resources of the Planning Policy team the programme set out in the report is delayed.

## 12 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 12.1 Part of the evidence base for the preparation of the Melton Local Plan will be relevant Climate Change Studies concerning appropriate Policies.

## 13 CONSULTATION

- 13.1 Each of the stages of work described in the report will be informed by the response to the Melton Local Plan Issues and Options consultation. Furthermore as the Local Plan moves through its stages of work towards May 2015, further consultation will be undertaken with the Melton Local plan Reference Groups and specific stakeholders as and when required.

## 14 WARDS AFFECTED

14.1 This report refers to matters that affect the whole Borough.

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Date: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Appendices: Appendix A: Melton Local Plan Issues and Options to Preferred Options (Draft Plan) key Steps

Background Papers: None