

 <b>COUNCIL</b> <b>25 JANUARY 2012</b>		<b>Agenda Item No. 16</b>
<b>Title</b>	Local Plan Timetable	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Dave Barber	
<b>Service Area</b>	Development Policy Manager	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	1st December 2011	
<b>Background Papers</b>		

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	No

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Relevant Director	13/1/12	Bill Hunt
Chief Executive	13/1/12	Chris Elliott
CMT	16/1/12	
Section 151 Officer	13/1/12	Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance		N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	13/1/12	Cllr Les Caborn
<b>Consultation Undertaken</b>		
Please insert details of any consultation undertaken with regard to this report.		
Consultation has been undertaken with key infrastructure providers including WCC Education; WCC Transportation		
<b>Final Decision?</b>	Yes	

## 1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report set out revisions to the Local Plan timetable to enable partners (notably Warwickshire County Council Transportation) to undertake infrastructure modelling work in relation to site options.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Local Plan timetable set out in Appendix 1 be approved

## 3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Discussions have taken place with Warwickshire County Council transportation and education to map out the work that needs to be done to establish the infrastructure requirements of potential development options. It is clear from these discussions that it will not be possible for a robust understanding of the infrastructure requirements of potential development options to be achieved within the timescale agreed at Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011, particularly as work is still taking place to establish what the options might be.

- 3.2 The timetable set out in appendix 1 suggests a two month delay in agreeing preferred options. It is still a tight timetable, but it is considered likely to be achievable and has been discussed with the County Transportation team. There remain some risks associated with it – although these are significantly reduced as a result of the extension. These are:

- There is a risk that achieving a political consensus on the best option will be hard and could result in delays.
- There is a risk that proposals may come forward which require a re-examination parts of the evidence base and infrastructure requirements so that we can continue demonstrate our options are sound.
- Some of the work required to bring forward sound Preferred Options alongside a clear understanding of infrastructure to go with it is not within the control of WDC. Whilst we will continue to work closely with partners to maximise the likelihood of them being able to work to our timetable, there remains a risk that their resources could be diverted or reduced thereby impact their ability to respond on time.

- 3.3 Clearly, given that the Council's current Local Plan is nearing the end of its life, it is critical that a new Local Plan is brought forward as quickly as possible. However, as emphasised in the report to Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December, it is also critical that this plan is soundly based on evidence. The timetable set out in appendix 1 provides an approach with balances these two critical dimensions.

- 3.4 The timetable agreed at Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012 proposed that the Investment Strategy and Delivery Plans for key strategies would be agreed by Council alongside preferred options. The revised timetable set

out in Appendix 1 of this report proposes that these are agreed alongside the Draft Local Plan. The reason for this change is that it will not be possible to finalise these plans until we have a clear idea where growth can be accommodated. These therefore need to be completed alongside the preparation of the draft Local Plan. The principles of our strategic approach (agreed at Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December) will still feed in to both the Preferred Options and the initial work on the Delivery Plans to ensure they align. Lead officers for the Delivery Plans are already working on these with a view to identifying our approach for issues which are not dependent on growth locations.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 An alternative option would be to pursue the existing timetable agreed at Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December. However given the timescales required to complete the transport work and given potential issues in identifying options and the preferred option this would
- a) be extremely difficult to achieve as key pieces of evidence would not be complete,
  - b) carry significant risks for the soundness of the Plan which could be challenged at an Examination in Public,
  - c) make it impossible to develop infrastructure requirements alongside the preferred options.

This option has therefore been rejected

- 4.2 Another option that has been considered to explore with the County Council whether anything could be done to compress their timetable. However, due to the specialist nature of the modelling software, this is not possible.

#### **5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 There are no direct budgetary implications of this report, although a more significant delay to the timetable through to adoption could result in delays to our ability to access some of the funding streams associated with development as set out in section 5 of the report to Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December.
- 5.2 However, the amendments to the timetable suggested in this report are unlikely to result in a significant delay to the adoption of the Local Plan as there is strong possibility that the period between submission of the draft Plan and the adaptation of the Plan could be shortened, particularly if we ensure that our approach and decisions are based on sound evidence.

#### **6. POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1 This report does not change the relationship between the Local Plan and the Council's wider policy framework as set out in Fit for the Future, the Sustainable Community Strategy and associated plans. The revised timetable set out below suggests that this wider policy framework (including reviewing our themed strategies) is reviewed in line with the

Local Plan and that proposals are brought forward to Council in May along with Local Plan Preferred Options.

## 7. **BACKGROUND**

7.1 Discussions have taken place with various infrastructure providers about the timescales they are likely to require to enable a sound understanding of the infrastructure requirements of developments to be achieved.

7.2 Particularly important in this is the transport infrastructure. However the specialist and complex nature of the work required for transport infrastructure means that it is not possible for this work to be completed in time to prepare soundly based Preferred Options for Council on 28<sup>th</sup> March.

7.2 Warwickshire County Council fully understand the importance of moving forward as quickly as possible on the Local Plan. However they also understand the importance of the Plan having a sound approach to infrastructure development and the importance of WDC and WCC working together (rather than in conflict) on this.

7.3 Within this context, the following timetable has been agreed with the County Council for transport infrastructure:

- 19/1/12: WCC to feedback with initial comments on the implications of the strategic vision and some initial conceptual ideas developed to interpret this vision
- Late Jan: WDC/WCC meet to discuss implications of comments to enable evidenced development options to be drawn up
- w/c 6/2/12: WDC prepare options and send to WCC for micro modelling
- w/c 13/2/12 to w/c 9/4/12: WCC undertake micro-modelling and technical work in relation to options and develop draft report
- w/c 9/4/12: WDC and WCC meet to discuss transport implications of options
- w/c 16/4: Preferred options, including transport infrastructure, prepared

## APPENDIX 1: Revised Local Plan Timetable

### PART 1: Developing Preferred Options

- w/c 13/2/12: **Emerging Options** prepared and submitted to WCC for transport modelling
- w/c 27/2/12: **Setting the scene** – introducing emerging options and evidence to support these options
  - Briefing for Group Leaders
  - Briefing for Executive
  - Briefing for partners
  - Briefings for Councillors in geographical groups
- w/c 12/3/12: **Initial Feedback** – political preferences for options to feed in to further discussion about the Local Plan and locality plans
  - From Group Leaders
  - From Executive
  - From Partners
  - From geographical groups Councillors
- 19/3/12 to 16/4/12: **Building a proposal** (working to ensure we can put forward preferred options and infrastructure proposals that are soundly based) – building on initial member feedback, the evidence and feedback from infrastructure providers.
- 23/4 to 4/5: **Drafting a Proposal** – briefings and discussion with Group Leaders/CMT; Executive/CMT; Key Partners/CMT on:
  - draft preferred options,
  - infrastructure proposals,
  - locality plans,
- w/c 7/5\*: **Complete report** – finalise draft of report, prepare final plans
- 14/5 to 21/5: **Decision**
  - w/c 14<sup>th</sup> May\*: presentation to each Group at Special Group Meetings
  - w/c 21<sup>st</sup> May\*: Full Council makes decision

\* these dates are subject to final agreement on the best date for a Special Council Meeting to be agreed in consultation with the Chairman and Group Leaders.

Through until w/c 16/4/12 the Development Policy Team will be

- a) completing the evidence base required to support the Preferred Options
- b) liaising with neighbours and partners as part of or Duty to Cooperate
- c) liaising with all infrastructure providers so that infrastructure proposals can be brought forward alongside preferred options

Between 16/4/12 and 11/5/12 the Development Policy will be drafting the Preferred Options along with the “headlines” of the Infrastructure Delivery

Plan. This will address the full range of issues to be covered in the draft Local Plan

## **PART 2: Preferred Options to Adoption**

- Confirmation of Preferred Options – May 2012
- Consultation on Preferred Options – June/July 2012 (minimum 8 week consultation)
- Completion of investment strategy and delivery plans for other key strategies (economic development; health and wellbeing; sustainability; housing; community safety) – Late 2012
- Approval of Draft Local Plan, investment strategy and delivery plans at Council - late 2012 / early 2013
- Publication of draft Local Plan - February 2013
- Consultation on draft Local Plan - March/April 2013 (6 week consultation)
- Submission to Secretary of State - June 2013
- Pre-hearing meeting – July/August 2013
- Examination in Public Hearing – October/November 2013
- Receipt of Inspector's report – February/March 2014
- Estimated date for adoption – March/April 2014