

SUBJECT:	<i>Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan 2014-2036 Regulation 18 and Issues and Options Consultation</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Councillor Peter Martin, Chiltern Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development Councillor Nick Naylor, South Bucks Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Peter Beckford, Head of Sustainable Development</i>
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WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>All wards within both Chiltern and South Bucks districts</i>

1. Purpose of Report

Following the agreement from both Chiltern and South Bucks district councils to prepare a joint local plan and approval of a Local Development Scheme, Cabinet is asked to consider the first stage of the joint local plan process; namely consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Issues and Options consultation. Cabinet is also asked to consider future delegation of Cabinet decisions on the Joint Local Plan to the Joint Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Cabinet approves the document attached as Annex 1 to this report for public consultation.
2. Public consultation is carried out so as to comprise:
 - a) Commencement on 18th January 2015 and to run until 5 pm on 11th March 2015
 - b) Details to be included on the Council website
 - c) Invitations to Duty to Co-operate organisations to comment and to meet prior to the close of consultation
 - d) Invitations to comment to be sent to all town and parish councils
 - e) Details to be sent to all individuals and organisations on the Council consultation database
 - f) Documents to be available in all libraries serving communities within the plan area
 - g) An pre-consultation press briefing/conference and a number of press releases during the consultation period
 - h) Information and updates on Council social media
 - i) A pre-consultation briefing presentation invited to all council members, town and parish councils, Chiltern and South Bucks County Council members and MPs
 - j) Two evening meetings early in the consultation period, one at Chiltern Council Offices and one at South Bucks Offices, with invitations to town and parish councils and key known stakeholder local groups/organisations.

3. Authority is delegated to the Head of Sustainable Development for the preparation of associated public consultation and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development to agree any necessary changes to the document in Annex 1 prior to its publication and any alterations to public consultation arrangements approved under Recommendation 2.
4. That Cabinet decisions and recommendations in relation to the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan be delegated to the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee and that the terms of reference of the Joint Committee be amended accordingly.
5. That subject recommendation 4 being approved by Cabinet at both authorities, the Inter Authority Agreement between Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils dated 19 January 2012 be amended to incorporate the new terms of reference for the Joint Committee.

2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The recommendations are in accordance with the Council approved Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement; complies with necessary legislation/regulations and is considered necessary for meeting the Government objective for councils nationally to have produced local plans by early 2017. Enabling the Joint Committee to deal with Local Plan matters and make recommendations to the respective Councils will simplify the executive decision-making process whilst maintaining effective oversight by each Council.

3. Content of Report

- 3.1 Annex 1 contains a recommended public consultation document for the emerging Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan 2014 – 2036. This is a combined consultation document for the initial scoping of the plan required under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and an Issues and Options consultation.
- 3.2 Prior to the Council agreeing to undertake a Joint Local Plan with South Bucks District Council both councils were preparing separate evidence bases and undertaking work on separate local plans. However much of this work was being undertaken jointly and through shared service arrangements and so a combined evidence base to-date has enable the consultation to identify key issues and options at this stage.
- 3.3 Annex 1 is self-explanatory. Before the consultation can take place both Chiltern and South Bucks cabinets need to approve the document and consultation process. For this reason Recommendation 3 is included in this report to enable any changes from either Cabinet to be agreed under delegated authority and avoid the need for further reports to Cabinet. In addition Recommendation 4 is included to avoid this potential issue for future decisions on the Local Plan and to enable both council cabinets to make a joint decision for future consultations and joint recommendations to their respective Councils when required.

- 3.4 The recommended public consultation period is for 8 weeks whereas the statutory minimum period is 6 weeks. An extra two weeks is recommended at this stage of the plan process to give extra time for local residents and groups in particular to help scope the plan and respond to the range of identified issues and options, promoting the opportunity to front load plan-making with consultation. Subsequent consultations are recommended to follow the statutory 6 week consultation period as the consultation issues will become narrower and the plan will be entering into the formal stage of preparation.
- 3.5 Cabinet has power under the Discharge of Functions Regulations to delegate any of its functions to a Joint Executive Committee. For example as part of the Inter Authority Agreement between the respective Councils signed in January 2012, cabinet functions in respect of the shared senior management and shared services programme were delegated to the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee. To ensure the process for taking cabinet level decisions and making recommendations on the joint Local Plan is as timely and effective as possible, it is recommended that executive functions in respect of the Local Plan are also delegated to the Joint Committee. The existing terms of reference for the Joint Committee will need to be amended accordingly. Each Council would still retain the final decision-making role in respect of the Local Plan.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 This report is to approve a key stage public consultation document on the Joint Local Plan. The Chiltern and South Bucks Planning Policy Member Reference Group have been consulted on the draft document and as far as possible comments have been incorporated.
- 4.2 A report will be taken to the Council's next Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the consultation process.

5. Options

- 5.1 The key alternative options are to prepare separate Regulation 18 and Issues and Options consultations (however this would not comply with the approved Local Development Scheme, cause plan delay and is not considered necessary due to the position reached on key evidence base studies) or to bring forward consultation at a later date (which is not recommended as this would mean an unnecessary delay in preparing the plan).

7. Corporate Implications

- 7.1 *Financial* – Cabinet and the Joint Committee have considered the financial implications for progressing a Joint Local Plan, of which the costs of this consultation was part. This consultation can be carried out within approved budgets.
- 7.2 *Legal* – legal and regulation requirements have been fully considered and complied with.

- 7.3 *Environmental Issues and Sustainability* – these are integral considerations to the local plan and the plan process will be subject to a formal Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulation Assessment, all of which will have been the subject of separate scoping consultation prior to the local plan consultation.
- 7.4 *Partnership* – Partnership working is a key part of the local plan process through the Duty to Co-operate (a continuous process) and with others such as the Bucks Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and Bucks and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership. In addition key parts of the evidence base has been prepared in partnership.
- 7.5 *Crime and Disorder and Social Inclusion* – these will be important considerations for the local plan, its consultation processes and evidence base.

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 8.1 The Joint Local Plan, of which this stage is a key part, will help deliver the following Council objectives:

“We will deliver cost effective, customer focused services” – a joint plan will help provide best value for money services and the consultation will Listen to our customers

“We will work towards safe, healthy and cohesive communities” – through the plans policies, proposals and allocations and in engaging with key partner organisations and town and parish councils.

“We will strive to conserve the environment and promote sustainability”

9. Next Step

- 9.1 The public consultation will be carried out as approved after which the Council will carefully consider all representations alongside the existing and new additions to the evidence base and duty to co-operate discussions with a view to preparing a preferred options consultation in October/November 2016 and full draft plan in March 2017 for further public consultation.

Background Papers:	
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