

CABINET – 17TH OCTOBER 2019

Report of the Scrutiny Commission

ITEM 6 DRAFT CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN (2019-36)

Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the publication of the Draft Charnwood Local Plan (2019-36) and its supporting documents for public consultation.

Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

Reason

The Commission was satisfied that the publication of the Draft Charnwood Local Plan (2019-36) and its supporting documents for consultation was required to enable necessary developments in Charnwood. The Cabinet's consideration of the Commission's views and recommendations was welcomed as part of its decision-making process.

Meeting Discussion

- i. Cross border collaborations and engagement with neighbouring authorities was highly important with regards to the development of the Local Plan. The Council was bound by national policy and legislation, such as the Localism Act 2011, which placed a duty on the Council to co-operate, and a requirement to reach a Statement of Common Ground with partner authorities on strategic planning matters. Furthermore, the Council had developed a Strategic Growth Plan, which further facilitated engagement.
- ii. The new Local Plan had developed substantially in terms of addressing the Council's carbon neutrality target. Climate change had been a key theme throughout the plan with topics including the feasibility of sustainable energy, sustainable travel, tree planting, flood risk and drainage systems and alterations in the processes of developers.
- iii. The Leicestershire International Gateway was a significant influence on the proposals for Shepshed and the north west margins of the Borough.
- iv. Following the completion of the consultation period, a relevant Scrutiny Committee would have the opportunity to review the analysed consultation responses. It was anticipated that this data could be made available by February 2020.

- v. It was significant that the appropriate infrastructure was implemented at the correct time. A site-specific infrastructure delivery plan would be developed in collaboration with colleagues at Leicestershire County Council and other stakeholders, however, at this stage details were not fully available. Further work on infrastructure needs would follow the consultation result, allowing for an understanding of the suitability of the proposals. At the date of the meeting, there had not been reviews of the effectiveness of transport forecasting of previous Local Plans, and it was suggested that this work be undertaken as a learning activity.
- vi. Legacy S106 legal agreements had not always achieved their intended aims; however, significant changes to the law and practice around S106 agreements had been made over the last 25 years such that legal colleagues were now able to ensure that agreements were tightly worded. It was noted that developers were able to vary agreements, for example where affordable housing obligations render the scheme unviable, but the decision whether to accept this was with the Plans Committee, since recent changes to the Council's Constitution.
- vii. The planning authority had engaged with NHS organisations such as Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in order to outline proposals from the Draft Local Plan (2019-36).
- viii. Loughborough, Shepshed and Watermead had been prioritised to with regards to regeneration requirements, whilst other areas of the Borough were not given the same emphasis. The consultation period for the Local Plan provided an opportunity for comments to be made on these priorities or if other areas should be considered.
- ix. The Commission recognised the significant work that had been undertaken by the Local Planning Team in producing the Draft Local Plan (2019-36) and accompanying documentation and thanked them for their efforts.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Scrutiny Commission Procedure Rule 11.12 sets out the procedure by which a report of a Scrutiny Committee should be considered by Cabinet.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The information in this in the Cabinet report is not affected by the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There are no further financial implications associated with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with the recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission.

Key Decision: Yes

Background Paper: Scrutiny Commission Minute 54 2019/20, 14th October 2019

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