

# Local Plan Policy Advisory Group meeting

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020







# Three key events have influenced the local plan process:

- Proposed governmental reform to the planning system (via the White Paper 'Planning for the Future' and separate consultation on housing targets)
- Covid-19 pandemic
- Declaration of a climate emergency





# HOW AND WHY DO THESE EVENTS IMPACT THE LOCAL PLAN PROCESS?

## Reform:




-  National development management policies?
-  Housing targets significantly increased?
-  Reduced need for evidence base studies?
-  Increased use of design codes to control impacts of development.

## Covid-19:







-  Short term: face to face consultation
-  Longer term: changes to transport patterns, how we work, economy, town centre vitality and types of places we are planning for.

 Climate emergency – Local plan is one of the key means of addressing this (subject to national policy).

# SHORT TERM IMPACT ON THE LOCAL PLAN PROCESS

-  Internal WCC Officer workshop with SDNPA and East Hants LPAs to consider the proposed governmental reforms
-  Officers have attended a number of webinars and events to understand the proposed reforms
-  Consultation on Strategic Issues and Options – paused due to possible change in housing targets

# OUR PLAN FOR MOVING FORWARD

-  Analysed White Paper in detail and produced a 'Local Plan Action Plan' (Cabinet date: 16<sup>th</sup> December)
  
-  Produced an Action Plan: the road map. Enables us to move forward, and in future pivot from the current system to a reformed system.
  
-  Key aims:
  -  minimise unnecessary/ abortive work and expense
  -  ensuring progress continues to be made.
  -  ensure we are ready when reforms come into force

# LOCAL PLAN ACTION PLAN

 A number of workstreams have been identified:

 Engagement

 Options for Accommodating Growth


 Design Codes and Policy

 Getting 'Digital Ready'

 'Skills and Resourcing'

 Each workstream has a number of actions:


 Green: can progress now

 amber/red: require clarification from Government. Timing of these actions will be refined as detail becomes clearer.

# ENGAGEMENT –

 Proposing to undertake a high-level consultation on ‘Strategic Issues and Priorities’ in Feb/Mar 2021. This will:

- focus on the local plan’s vision;
- objectives; and
- key issues and priorities for action.






 The consultation will not include options for accommodating specific housing targets but it will include questions on a strategy for how the future development could be accommodated.

# ENGAGEMENT –





- Local plan branding and new website are being developed
  
- Engagement (Q1 2021) around options for accommodating growth:
  - Parish Councils – SHELAA assessment/ potential growth/ renewal/ protection areas
  - Further ‘Call for Sites’ – to include small sites, self build, land for biodiversity net gain/ carbon neutrality/ nitrate neutrality/renewable energy/green infrastructure
  - the need to front-load technical/ environmental information on site constraints and mitigation, in support of SHELAA sites, to underpin future Design Codes





# OPTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATING GROWTH

-  Explore issues around potential green belt designation and options for undertaking an urban capacity assessment
  
-  Consider options for meeting Gypsy and Travelling Show Peoples' needs
  
-  Once housing target is confirmed:
  -  update evidence base as needed based on revised population projections
  -  Develop strategic options and consult on these






# DESIGN CODES AND POLICY

-  Audit existing design statements in the district  
(e.g. Village Design Statements, Local Area Design Statements, Conservation Area Character Assessments, Design Codes for Strategic Sites).
-  Establish a Design Codes Working Group
-  Review content of existing Design Codes and best practice elsewhere.
-  Explore options for pilot project to update existing VDS and incorporate work that could feed into a Design Code under new system

# DESIGN CODES AND POLICY

-  Once we have clarity on the ‘National Model Design Code’ and process for proving local Design Codes are ‘provably locally popular’, begin to explore options for producing Design Codes collaboratively with a range of stakeholders.
-  Local development management policies – will ask for comments in the Issues and Priorities consultation in Feb / March 2021. May need to refine approach to this as more information becomes available about national policy/ scope for local policy.

# GETTING DIGITAL READY

-  Launch new local plan website - enhanced digital engagement
-  Audit available GIS data, to produce an interactive map for the local plan website
-  Explore existing opportunities offered within the Property Technology (“PropTech”) sector, such as 3D modelling at city scales and digital engagement platforms
-  Explore opportunities for mapping receipt of CIL funds and where invested back into community projects.
-  Consider issues of data ethics and principles/ code for ethical use of data made available by WCC

# SKILLS AND RESOURCING

 Audit of existing skills within the Council:

 Geospatial mapping/ GIS

 Master-planning

 Urban design

 Consider options for filling the role of ‘Chief Officer for Design and Placement’

 Explore external funding options e.g. via Innovation Fund/ Future 2050

 Training to support the delivery of Design Codes

# Questions

