

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

30 January 2024

**Councillor Rebecca Breese
Cabinet Member for Planning**

Report Title	Updated West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

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List of Appendices

Appendix A – Updated West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To seek approval for an updated Local Development Scheme which sets out a timetable for local plan preparation.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce, and keep up to date, a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out and timetables the local plans they will prepare to plan for development in their area.
- 2.2 The West Northamptonshire LDS was last updated in April 2023, members are now being asked to consider a further update to the LDS to ensure that it is up to date in respect of amendments to the timetable for the production of the emerging West Northamptonshire Local Plan. The content of the LDS has not changed in any other aspect.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) Approves the updated West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme (Appendix A) which is to be brought into effect upon the expiry of the call-in period for Planning Policy Committee decisions.
 - b) Delegates to the Head of Planning Policy and Specialist Services authority to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the Local Development Scheme in its final published form.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce an LDS setting out the Local Plan(s) which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. The LDS must be made available to the public and kept up to date. For West Northamptonshire, an update to the LDS is needed to set out an updated timetable for the West Northamptonshire Local Plan.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The current LDS sets out the Council's timetable for the preparation of the West Northamptonshire Local Plan. This single local plan, when adopted, will replace the WNJCS and the Part 2 Local Plans for Daventry District, Northampton and South Northamptonshire. The Local Development Scheme needs to be updated to reflect changes to the timetable of the local plan.
- 5.2 The updated LDS attached at Appendix A sets out the anticipated timetable for the preparation of the WNLDP and confirms that the next stage of consultation on a draft plan will take place in April 2024 as opposed to the previously anticipated October 2023. This is a consequence of additional time needed to finalise the gathering of evidence base documents. This change has a knock-on effect for the remaining stages with submission for examination expected in April 2025 and adoption in September 2026.
- 5.3 The Council is required to specify the date that the LDS will be brought into effect. It is suggested that this should be upon the expiry of the call-in period for Planning Policy Committee decisions.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The updated LDS presented at Appendix A sets out a reasonable timetable for the preparation of the WNLP based on the resources currently available. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to publish an LDS and ensure that it is up to date. As such, failing to approve an LDS is not an option.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 The costs of producing the updated LDS can all be met from existing resources.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act sets out the statutory requirement for local planning authorities to publish a Local Development Scheme and ensure that it is kept up to date.

7.3 Risk

- 7.3.1 Failure to maintain an up-to-date LDS could result in the WNLP failing legal tests.

7.4 Consultation and Communication

- 7.4.1 Although there is no requirement for formally consult on the LDS and timetable for local plan preparation, the document itself is key to future consultation and engagement activities by ensuring that local communities, businesses, developers, service and infrastructure providers know when they will be able to participate in the process. The Council will continue to communicate to the public the objectives and outcomes of the LDS as and when required at each of the future stages.

7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

- 7.5.1 Not applicable.

7.6 Climate Impact

- 7.6.1 The approval of the LDS does not have any direct implications for climate change. However, the WNLP will include policies to address climate change that will contribute to the Council's ambitions in this respect.

7.7 Community Impact

- 7.7.1 The LDS provides information to the community on the timetable for the preparation of the WNLP and opportunities to be involved.

8. Background Papers

None